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INTRODUCTION

1 ELEGY AND IAMBUS AS POETIC FORMS

By the time elegy and iambus become visible to us in the mid-seventh century BC they are well-established poetic forms with a long history, though these pre-literary traditions are obscure. The Spartan Tyrtaeus, one of the first poets whose work has survived, composed his elegies with Doric speakers in mind but wrote in the Ionic dialect, since this was already a traditional feature of elegy (see §5 below). In general, the technical mastery of the earliest seventh-century authors (Archilochus, Semonides, Callinus, Tyrtaeus, Mimnermus) indicates that elegy and iambus had been flourishing for some time, and not only in Ionia. Both forms are strikingly diverse in their subject-matter and tone, and the poets, often using the first person (see §3 below), speak directly about fundamental human concerns.[1]

Elegy. Though elegy is easy to define formally as poetry composed in elegiac couplets (see §5), this uniformity should not be allowed to obscure the breadth of its content and style, ranging from poetry about grief (e.g. Archil. 13*) and erotic desire (Mimn. 1*) to mythological narrative (Archil. 17a*) and political or military exhortation (Callin. 1*).[2] The flexibility of elegy made it one of the most widely used poetic forms throughout antiquity, and we can see its variety reflected in the largest surviving corpus of early elegy, the 'Theognidea', which blends political and social commentary with sympotic banter and homoerotic song.[3] Moreover, the vagaries of transmission and the stereotyping of particular authors in antiquity mean that we have only a partial view of these poets: Tyrtaeus, for example, tended to be quoted for his rousing war poetry (12*) and Mimnermus for his reflections on youth and old age (2*), but the selection process does not give us a representative picture of their

[1] A similar diversity and personal perspective are evident in Archaic and Classical lyric poetry. Despite the modern (Romantic-period) idea of 'lyric' as a single form encompassing lyric (both solo and choral), elegy, and iambus, it makes sense to see them as distinct genres, even if the boundaries between them are fluid. On definitions of 'lyric', ancient and modern, see Budelmann 2018: 2–4.

[2] On various aspects of elegy, see West 1974: 1–21, Adkins 1985, Herington 1985: 192–3, Bowie 1986, 1990, 2016b, Fowler 1987: 86–103, Bartol 1993: 18–30, 46–60, Gerber 1997b, Kurke 2000: 54–7, Irwin 2005: 19–111, Aloni and Iannucci 2007: 3–108, Faraone 2008, Garner 2011, Lulli 2011, Budelmann and Power 2013, Swift and Carey 2016.

[3] See the headnote to Theognis in the commentary.

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work (for the former's historical elegy, see Tyrt. 5–7*; for the latter's mythological narrative, see Mimn. 12*).

The variety of early elegy is potentially further obscured by the form's association with mourning and lamentation. By the late fifth century the term ἔλεγος was used to describe songs of mourning (e.g. Eur. *Tro.* 119, *Hel.* 185, *IT* 146), and later writers frequently connected elegy with grief or claimed that elegy originated in lament (e.g. Hor. *Ars P.* 75 *uersibus impariter iunctis querimonia primum*). However, the surviving examples of Archaic elegy tell a different story, since only a few have anything to do with mourning (e.g. Archil. 13*, Simonides' Plataea Elegy*). So unless a whole foundational tradition of lamentatory elegy has vanished without trace,[4] the particular association of elegy with mourning is likely to be due to a later narrowing of the genre, akin to the narrowing definition of iambus as invective poetry evident from the fifth century onwards (see below). Although elegy was deployed for laments and funerary epitaphs in the Archaic period, this was only one aspect of its use. But it is the later sense of elegy as intrisincally mournful, and especially the tendency to compose epitaphs in elegiacs, which has shaped the modern notion of 'elegy' and 'elegiac', even though this was a relatively minor feature of a highly flexible form.

Most surviving elegy was performed at *symposia* (see §2), with pieces ranging from single couplets to 100 lines (cf. Solon 1–3*),[5] but the elegies performed at public festivals (e.g. Tyrt. 4*, Simon.10–16*) could be much longer, some of them well over a thousand lines.[6] In these the poet or speaker addresses the entire city or community, while elegies performed at *symposia* typically have a narrower audience in mind and may be addressed to a particular friend or political faction (e.g. Thgn. 39–52*; see §4). Public elegy tends to take a wider view of history, stretching back to the foundations of cities or their colonies,[7] while sympotic elegy is more focused on the here and now – for example, in reflecting on the proper conduct of the *symposion* itself (Xenoph. 1*) or foregrounding the speaker's erotic desires, friendships, and political allegiances – but there is no need to posit a rigid division between the two occasions or their functions, since sympotic elegy can also take the long view, especially in its liking for philosophical reflection (e.g. Sol. 13*), and both types can deploy narrative

[4] An unlikely scenario: see Bowie 1986: 22–7, contra Page 1936; cf. Harvey 1955: 170–1, Nobili 2011.
[5] See Bowie 2016a. The longest extant elegy is Solon 13*, which is 76 lines.
[6] Bowie 1986: 30–4. On public elegy, see further §2.
[7] See Dougherty 1994.

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and heroic myth, as do Archilochus' Telephus and Simonides' Plataea poems (Archil. 17a*, Simon. 10–16*).[8]

Elegy was sung to the accompaniment of *auloi* (reed pipes, usually played as a pair; cf. Thgn. 239–43*), but here too one must allow for variation: if no aulete was available to play for a drinking-party, or a particular symposiast simply could not sing, a more recitative-like chant could be used, without melodic accompaniment.[9] More formal public occasions would feature well-rehearsed auletes and singers, but the repeated and relatively simple elegiac metre presumably entailed fairly straightfoward tunes, so that even the amateur sympotic performer of elegy might feel less daunted than he would by the more complex melodies of lyric poetry; in addition, he did not have to accompany himself (as in lyric) but had a professional aulete to guide his voice.

Elegy's metrical similarity to the hexameter of heroic epic and didactic not only enabled it to incorporate and adapt their formulae, themes, and tone, but is also likely to have shaped its development.[10] Elegy's perceived closeness to these serious genres discouraged the use of scurrilous or obscene language and subject-matter, whose absence perhaps constitutes elegy's most marked difference from iambus. Elegy's engagement with the genres of Archaic Greece extended well beyond epic to all varieties of lyric poetry, from erotic song to religious hymns. Flexible in both length and theme, elegy was the most adaptable form of Greek verse, and it continued to flourish well after Simonides (the latest poet, for reasons of space, in this selection). The songful *symposion* flourished throughout the fourth century and beyond, shaping the development of elegy, which remained a highly malleable form, used for consolatory tales of unhappy love (Antimachus' *Lyde*), learned aetiology (Callimachus' *Aetia*), mimetic hymns (Callim. *Bath of Pallas*), didactic (Nicander's *Cynegetica*), and much else besides, including countless epigrams.[11]

Iambus. Like elegy, iambus can be defined metrically, as poetry composed in iambic trimeters and other closely associated forms: trochaic

[8] On narrative elegy, see Bowie 2001a, 2001b, Lulli 2011.

[9] For elegy sung to *auloi*, see Bowie 1986: 14, Bartol 1993: 46–51. Budelmann and Power 2013 stress variation in performance.

[10] For elegy and epic, see Archil. 1*, 2*, 5*, 17a*, Callin. 1*, Tyrt. 12*, Mimn. 14*, Sol. 1–3*, 4*, 5*, 13*, Thgn. 237–54*, Xenoph. 1*, Simon. 11*, and Garner 2011: 19–38 on the adaptation of epic formulae. On elegy and didactic, see Semon. 1*, 7*, Sol. 4*, 13*, Thgn. 19–26*, 27–30*, 53–68*, 1197–202*, Xenoph. 1*, and Hunter 2014: 123–66 on Hesiod and the *symposion*.

[11] On expansion of the genre in post-Classical Greek elegy, see Lightfoot 2009: x. Cameron 1995: 70–90 outlines the creation of new sympotic poetry (especially elegiac epigram) in the Hellenistic period.

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tetrameters, choliambics, and epodes (see §5).[12] Although some scholars have argued that it is more accurate to understand *iambos* as a term referring to poetry with a particular content (especially invective, vulgarity, and sex), of which the iambic rhythm was characteristic,[13] there is no need to prioritize content over metre, since ancient authors use *iambos* to refer to both features (metrical and generic), and rhythm is perceived as part of its meaning from the seventh century onwards (cf. Archil. 215).[14] In addition, much early iambic poetry contained none of the abusive or low material allegedly typical of the genre (cf. Semon. 1*, Sol. 36*).

Of course, this is not to deny that invective, vulgarity, and sexual exuberance are important aspects. And although attacks against enemies or expressions of erotic desire are found in all types of early Greek poetry (e.g. Sappho 31, Alc. 129), they generally avoid the vulgar language, reference to body parts, and obscene content of iambus (e.g. Archil. 42*, Hippon. 92*).[15] The association of iambus with mockery is seen in the figure of Iambe, a female servant in the house of Celeus at Eleusis, whose jokes and teasing cheer up the grieving Demeter (*HHDem.* 202–4). But whereas Iambe's mockery is gentle and beneficial, that of the iambic poets is much more caustic, and they attack their enemies in various ways and for a variety of reasons: Archilochus, for example, uses the fable of the fox and the eagle to expose Lycambes' treachery in breaking his promise to betroth one of his daughters (172–81*); in revenge he seduces his former fiancée's younger sister and destroys the entire family's reputation (196a*). Similarly, Hipponax has illicit sex with the mistress of his enemy Bupalus (16–17*, 84). These iambic attacks are intended to be entertaining and are often humorous, but they also communicate serious ideas: conventional morality is implicitly affirmed, as the poet's public display of his enemy's crimes reinforces a variety of social norms (oath-keeping, for example, or guarding unmarried daughters).[16]

But there is much more to iambic poetry than invective and vulgar humour: it can be moralizing (e.g. Archil. 19*, Semon. 7*, Hippon. 115*), philosophical (Semon. 1*), or political (Archil. 114*, Sol. 36*).

[12] On iambus, see West 1974: 22–39, Bartol 1993: 30–41, 61–74, Brown 1997, Kurke 2000: 51–4, Steinrück 2000, 2009, Bowie 2001b, 2002, Kantzios 2005, Hedreen 2006, Rosen 2007a, Carey 2009, Lennartz 2010, Rotstein 2010, Swift and Carey 2016.

[13] E.g. West 1974: 22.

[14] Bartol 1993: 32–4, Rotstein 2010: 224–5; for metrical versus content-based conceptions of iambus, see Lennartz 2010: 86–100.

[15] In lyric Alcaeus' 'potbelly' (φύσγων), applied to Pittacus, is about as rude as it gets (129.21). Homeric insults can be vigorous (e.g. *Il.* 1.225 οἰνοβαρές, κυνὸς ὄμματ' ἔχων, κραδίην δ' ἐλάφοιο), but are never obscene.

[16] See Brown 1997: 41–2.

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Like elegy, iambus is a wide-ranging and flexible form: it uses narrative (much of it apparently autobiographical: see §3), embedded speech (Archil. 196a*), fables (Archil. 172–81*, Semon. 7*), parody (Hippon. 3a*, 32* 34*), and many other literary devices. And far from being sealed off from other genres, it constantly interacts with them, sometimes parodically (as in the mock-epic language and mock-didactic tone of Semon. 7*), sometimes seriously (as when Solon's iambics echo the political *paraenesis* of elegy: 36*). Each poet had a distinctive style and persona(e): Hipponax, for example, plays up the low-class nature of his character and actions – as a thief (3a*) or a pauper begging Hermes for wealth (32*, 34*, 36*) – and goes further than his iambic predecessors in situating himself on the margins of respectable society (see 92*). Unfortunately, much of this variety of tone and subject-matter was lost in the course of transmission, especially when invective came to be seen (from the Hellenistic period onwards) as the defining feature, narrowing the genre and obscuring the range of Archaic and Classical iambus.[17]

Like most small-scale early Greek poetry, iambus was primarily performed at the *symposion*,[18] but it could also be performed at musical contests (μουσικοὶ ἀγῶνες)[19] and civic religious festivals,[20] though few now believe that its performance was tied to fertility cults of Demeter and Dionysus.[21] Its mode of performance was no less flexible: ancient sources speak of spoken, recited, and sung iambics (to the accompaniment of *auloi* or stringed intstruments).[22] As with elegy, it is best to allow for variation, depending on the performer's ability, the availability of musicians, and the formality of the occasion. Iambic poetry continued to

[17] See Rotstein 2010: 319–46, 2016.

[18] Cf. e.g. Archil. 173*, where the speaker says to Lycambes 'you turned your back on the great oath sworn by salt and table', constructing himself as a fellow symposiast whose enemy has violated the bonds of the sympotic *hetaireia*.

[19] Cf. Heraclit. B 42 DK (= D21 Laks–Most) τόν τε Ὅμηρον ἔφασκεν ἄξιον ἐκ τῶν ἀγώνων ἐκβάλλεσθαι καὶ ῥαπίζεσθαι καὶ Ἀρχίλοχον ὁμοίως. On iambus at *mousikoi agônes*, see Rotstein 2010: 256–60.

[20] For iambic poetry at public gatherings and the *symposion*, see Bartol 1993: 65–70, Bowie 2001a: 61–2, 2002: 38, Kantzios 2005: 1–33, Rotstein 2010: 253–78.

[21] The evidence for the ritual origins of iambus in cultic mockery and bawdiness (cf. West 1974: 23–7, 1997: 496) is tenuous: see Rotstein 2010: 180–2 (on the story of Iambe). In any case, the scope of surviving iambic poetry shows that by the seventh century the genre had developed well beyond its cultic origins (if it had any) to embrace a variety of themes and purposes.

[22] Bartol 1993: 61–5. One cannot be certain, but it seems plausible that trimeters tended to be spoken or recited, epodes and trochaic tetrameters sung: see Dale 1963: 46–8, West 1974: 33, Lloyd-Jones 1975: 13, Bartol 1993: 63–4, Rotstein 2010: 229–52.

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be written throughout antiquity,[23] though the Alexandrian canonization of Archilochus, Semonides, and Hipponax (as counterparts to the nine lyric poets), together with an increasing focus on invective (see above), influenced the subsequent perception of its range and character.[24]

2 PERFORMANCE AND MOBILITY

The predominantly oral culture of Archaic Greece offered a variety of occasions for the performance and enjoyment of elegiac and iambic poetry, but the most important venues were *symposia* and festivals. Discussions of the *symposion* tend to retroject the model of Classical Athens back on other cities and earlier periods; we have little hard evidence for the *symposion* on (for example) seventh-century Paros, beyond the clues given in Archilochus' surviving poetry. Nonetheless, the frequent references to the *symposion* in elegy and iambus, including 'rules' for its proper conduct (see Xenoph. 1*), allow us to piece together a more or less consistent picture of aristocratic entertainment and male bonding.[25] Archaeological evidence suggests drinking groups of around fourteen to thirty men, reclining in pairs on couches arranged around the edge of the men's banqueting-hall (or ἀνδρών). This relatively small-scale and exclusive environment encouraged poetry purportedly directed at the poet's friends (as when Archilochus addresses Glaucus, or Theognis his beloved Cyrnus), but this intimacy is in part a fictional ploy which fosters the bonding of each sympotic group that performs and enjoys the poetry,[26] while the tone of the poetry itself can range from shockingly flippant (Archil. 5*) to solemn and moralizing (e.g. Semon. 1*).

In an important strand of sympotic poetry, typified by the elegies of Theognis, the sympotic group identify themselves as ἀγαθοί (e.g. Thgn. 31–2*, 37*), members of a social elite whose proper behaviour and civilized values complement their noble birth. No longer able to rely on

[23] On 'minor' iambic poets through to the late fourth century BC, see Carey 2016.

[24] Hipponax was particularly influential in the Hellenistic period: Callimachus' book of *Iamboi* opened with Hipponax returning from the Underworld (fr. 191 Pf.), while Herodas used choliambics to depict low-class urban life in his dramatic *Mimiamboi* (monologues and dialogues): Kerkhecker 1999, Acosta-Hughes 2002, Zanker 2009. For the variety of post-Classical iambus, see Cavarzere *et al.* 2001, Nesselrath 2007, Rosen 2007b.

[25] On various aspects of the *symposion*, see Murray 1990, 2018, Lissarrague 1991, Stehle 1997: 213–61, Slings 2000, Catoni 2010, Hobden 2013, Węcowski 2014, Cazzato *et al.* 2016.

[26] Even if we assume that Theognis' Cyrnus was a real person (unlikely: see on Thgn. 19–20*), most performances of the poetry about him will have been by amateur symposiasts rather than by the famous poet himself.

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their wealth or status to mark themselves as a superior class, many aristocrats of the Archaic and Classical period appreciated the exclusivity of the *symposion* and the kind of poetry in which aristocratic manners and ideology were inculcated. When the drinking session was over, a rowdy procession (κῶμος) through the streets would further cement the cohesion of the all-male group. But there is much more to sympotic poetry than confirmation of group identity and the symposiasts' sense of belonging to an elite,[27] and poets explore all manner of topics, including sex (e.g. Archil. 42–3*, 196a*), gender stereotypes (Semon. 7*, Hippon. 68*), youth, maturity, and old age (Mimn. 1*, Sol. 27*), soldiering (Archil. 2*, 5*), military defeat (Archil. 17a*), patriotism (Callin. 1*, Tyrt. 12*, Sol. 1–3*), the mutability of fortune (Semon. 1*, Mimn. 2*, Sol. 13*), grief (Archil. 13*), the corruption of wealth (Sol. 4*), contentment with one's lot (Archil. 19*), and the value of poetry itself (Archil. 1*, Thgn. 237–54*, Xenoph. 2*).

Several Greek festivals featured competitions in music and poetry (μουσικοὶ ἀγῶνες).[28] An agonistic context has been suggested for Simonides' Plataea Elegy*, but it is much likelier to have been commissioned for a Panhellenic festival within a few years of the battle.[29] Similarly, the focus on foundations, victories, and historical and mythological narrative throughout public elegy (cf. Tyrt. 4–7*, Mimn. 14*, Xenoph. 3*) supports its performance and reperformance at civic festivals, with no need for poetic competitions to motivate its composition. Civic festivals may also have been the venue for Solon's political iambus (36*) and Archilochus' Lycambes poems (see on 172–81*).

Different performance contexts are reflected in the poetry, especially in the sphere of politics: whereas the *symposion* fosters poetry aimed at men who think themselves (or who aspire to be) the community's ἀγαθοί, the poetry performed at public festivals is addressed to the whole community and so tends to display more egalitarian values. Thus, Solon foregrounds his initiative in calling a public meeting to resolve the political crisis facing Athens, an imaginary gathering mirrored in the festival audience listening to his poem (36.1–2*). So skilful is Solon's evocation of civil strife and public exhortation that later tradition pictured him rushing into the agora to perform his poem on

[27] In any case, larger and more inclusive civic banquets (see Schmitt Pantel 1992) will have encouraged poetry with a broader appeal: cf. e.g. Solon's attempts to reconcile the aristocratic elite and the discontented δῆμος (5–6*, 36*).

[28] See Herington 1985: 161–6; also n. 19 above.

[29] See the headnote to Simonides. Though not a funeral, this festival will have focused on commemorating the war dead. As it happens, our earliest reference to a poetic contest is connected to a funeral: Hesiod boasts that he won first prize with a hymn at the funeral games of Alcidamas in Chalcis (*WD* 654–7).

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Salamis (Plut. *Sol.* 8.1–2). The 'agora' probably stems from a misunderstanding of the poem's opening lines (see on 1.2*), though *Salamis* is likely to have been composed for a public occasion such as a civic festival. A related misunderstanding is present in the idea that some martial elegy (including Tyrt. 12*, but excluding sympotic poems like Callin. 1* and Mimn. 14*) was composed for recitation during military campaigns as a parade-ground performance to prepare the soldiers for imminent battle. There were, however, *symposion*-like gatherings both at Sparta itself (in *syssitia*, communal meals of citizen-soldiers) and on campaign (in the king's tent, among a select group of commanders), and these smaller, select groups, in part akin to the aristocratic *symposia* of Ionian communities, probably formed the original audiences of Tyrtaeus' martial elegies.[30]

Finally, it is important to bear in mind that poems could migrate from one performance context to another and that this would affect how they were received. And since poets were no doubt aware of this, they may have composed some works with different venues in mind. Thus Semonides' so-called 'Satire on Women' (7*) is well suited to performance at the all-male *symposion*, but it would be no less effective in the mixed setting of a public festival, where it could provoke mutual teasing between the sexes. A similar move between *symposion* and more public performance may inform Solon's political elegies, in which Solon seeks to persuade the Athenians in general and not (unlike Theognis) a narrow elite (cf. Sol. 4–6*, 9–11*). Conversely, poems such as Simonides' Plataea Elegy*, composed for first performance at a large-scale festival, could be reperformed at any Greek *symposion*, where a tale of heroic excellence and Panhellenic valour would be well received. Moreover, the poets themselves were part of Panhellenic cultural networks that encouraged travel in search of new engagements and commissions: Xenophanes of Colophon is said to have worked in Zancle, Catana, and Elea in Sicily, for example, while Simonides of Ceos plied his trade all over the Greek world (including Andros, Athens, Sicily, and Thessaly).[31] Thus poets had an interest in ensuring their work had broad appeal and could be performed on a range of occasions.[32]

[30] Cf. Bowie 1990: 224–9. By contrast, Tyrtaeus' political elegies, including his *Eunomia* ('Good Government'), were written for public festivals: see on Tyrt. 4*.

[31] On Panhellenic networks and poets' travels, see Stewart 2017a: 33–64.

[32] Tyrtaeus, Solon, and Theognis, whose poetry is closely tied to a particular city, nonetheless address contemporary problems of political and social turmoil that have purchase well beyond their notional audience of Spartans, Athenians, and Megarians. Similarly, some poets create a strong sense of local identity (especially Tyrtaeus and Solon; cf. D'Alessio 2009), but this is compatible with performance elsewhere.

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3 POETS AND PERSONAE

What unites the various forms of Greek personal poetry (iambic and elegiac as well as lyric) is their basis in the world of the speaker (the 'I' of the poem), whose ideas and experiences come to the fore. Whereas genres like epic and tragedy typically focus on the mythical past, and the 'I' of the poet is foregrounded only occasionally (as in epic) or not at all (as in tragedy), much of this poetry appears to spring from the speaker's feelings and responses in the here and now. At first sight this kind of poetry seems highly familiar to us. The Enlightenment's emphasis on the individual as socially, politically, and artistically determinative culminated in the Romantic idea that spontaneous, genuine feeling is the basis of the best or truest poetry. Wordsworth's famous definition of poetry, in the Preface to his *Lyrical Ballads* (1802), as 'the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings', encapsulates a conception of the art, as founded on the poet's personal emotional response to the world, which remains influential. However, while ancient personal poetry purports to express the speaker's response to the world, and while it no doubt draws on the poet's (and audience's) personal experiences, the goal of the ancient poet is not to reflect on his own experience, but to construct a persona which the audience will find both credible and engaging.[33]

In other words, poets are performers too and their goal is not unmediated self-expression, but the creation of a persona suited to the conventions of their chosen poetic form, the occasion of its performance, and the purpose for which they have composed the work.[34] There is no sharp dichotomy of real (or autobiographical) versus fictional, but a spectrum of possibilities, with different degrees of fictionalizing, and every poet is free to move along this continuum as s/he sees fit. So, for example, we have evidence that Glaucus (addressed by Archilochus) and Bupalus and

[33] On persona in Archaic poetry, see Slings 1990, Morrison 2007: 45–57. The tendency to read the poems (auto)biographically, ignoring the centrality of persona, began in antiquity: cf. e.g. the fifth-century author Critias' tirade against Archilochus as slavish, poor, abusive, adulterous, lecherous, arrogant, and a military deserter (Archil. 295). The ancient lives of the poets are largely based on the same approach: see Lefkowitz 2012.

[34] Thus we should beware of the idea that because much of this poetry is (or purports to be) 'personal', it is somehow less traditional or less concerned to interact with earlier literary works. Again this is a modern notion: the philosopher Immanuel Kant, for example, claimed, 'Among all the arts poetry holds the highest rank. It owes its origins almost entirely to genius and is least open to guidance by precept or examples' (*Critique of Judgement*), expressing a conception of poetry as the pure expression of the individual, not subject to literary tropes and traditions – the very opposite of ancient poets, lyric or otherwise, who are always aware of what genre they are writing in and its history.

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Athenis (addressed by Hipponax) were real people.[35] But even if the poets are making some of their narrators engage with historical figures, this does not mean we can equate a poem's narrator with the historical author or overlook the fact that figures like Glaucus and Bupalus are made part of a fictional world.[36] An additional complication is the difficulty of saying who the speaker actually is: it is clear that the narrator of Alcaeus fr. 10, 'me, a pitiable woman', is not the poet himself but a female persona, but unless Aristotle had told us that the speaker of Archil. 19* was Charon the carpenter (*Rh.* 3.17.1418b28), we might have assumed it was Archilochus himself advocating a life of contentment with one's lot.

We may see real human lives as having a narrative structure, but there the story is lived before it is told – fiction (including poetry) is different, since the poet can construct a story without having lived it. Narrative, including personal narrative, is often taken to be a defining feature of iambus,[37] but it is no less important to elegy (as in Theognis' tales of social upheaval, told by an embittered aristocrat) and other forms of early Greek poetry (as when Hesiod creates the personae of cantankerous farmer and wastrel brother to suit the needs of his didactic *Works and Days*). Personae and their stories abound in Greek poetry, not least because poets and their audiences enjoy the spectacle and experience of *mimêsis* (pretending to be someone else), seen by Aristotle as not only a defining human characteristic but also a fundamental part of poetry and music (*Poet.* 4.1448b3–23). The poets create identities which later performers will enjoy, and learn from, adopting.

A single poet can deploy a variety of personae: Archilochus and Hipponax, for example, both act as guardians of morality, preaching the importance of keeping oaths (Archil. 172–81*, Hippon. 115*), but Archilochus can also play the part of unscrupulous seducer (196a*) and Hipponax the roles of beggar and thief (3a*, 32*, 34*). Just as the *symposion* and festival context reassert traditional social hierarchies,[38] so many poems transmit cultural roles and expectations – for example, what it is to be a proper aristocrat (Thgn. 53–68*, 183–92*), a good soldier (Archil. 17a*, 114*) and patriot (Callin. 1*, Tyrt. 12*, Mimn. 14*, Sol. 1–3*), or a virtuous woman (Semon. 7*, Thgn. 1225–6*, Hippon. 68*) – but also play with these social roles, exploiting the audience's expectations for

[35] See the headnotes to Archilochus and Hipponax.

[36] So with Solon, a poet with a significant role in Archaic history, we need to distinguish between the historical author and the various personae he creates, even if the overlap between the two is unusually large in his case.

[37] See Bowie 2001b; also Bowie 2002: 40 'telling stories is an important generic mark of *iambos*'.

[38] On 'role ascription' (division by age, gender, social status, etc.) at festivals, see Parker 2011: 217–18.

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poetic effect (e.g. Archil. 5* on putting personal survival above honour on the battlefield). In conclusion, the poetic 'I' and its persona always track the needs of genre and occasion and are constructed to make the most compelling appeal to the audience, whether the goal of the narrator is to conduct the ideal *symposion* (Xenoph. 1*), act as a reconciler between warring political factions (Sol. 4–6*, 36*), or ruminate on the best approach to life (Semon. 1*, Mimn. 1–2*).

4 SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Elegy and iambus are valuable historical sources for Archaic Greece, not least because little prose literature of the period has survived.[39] Of course it is important not to be misled by the conventional label 'Archaic' into thinking that the poetry of this period is somehow primitive or simple – on the contrary, it is among the most impressive and sophisticated ever written. Similarly, in historical terms the Archaic age is one of great expansion and experimentation. This section will briefly consider how some of its most distinctive aspects are reflected in elegiac and iambic poetry.

Expansion and contact with foreign cultures. The growth of colonization and trade led to increasing familiarity with non-Greek cultures and encouraged the mobility of the poets themselves.[40] Various factors encouraged colonization and emigration, from a growing Greek population in need of new land to the desire for personal profit.[41] Archilochus is said to have joined the Parian colonization of Thasos (see 2.1–2*, 5.1*, 17a*; cf. frr. 21–2, 102, 228), Semonides to have led a group of Samian colonists to Amorgos, and Hipponax's attack on a treacherous friend reflects Greek trade and colonization around the Black Sea coastline and inland Thrace (115*). Growing awareness of other cultures also contributes to Hipponax's parodic treatment of Lydian language and religion (Hippon. 3*, 3a*, 32*, 92*). This mockery is a reminder that interaction with foreigners not only enhanced a growing sense of Greekness,[42] but also led to xenophobia: Archilochus (19*) and Xenophanes (3*) reject Lydian luxury as decadent excess. Since Greek elites of the period increasingly adopted eastern clothing, hairstyles, jewellery, and perfume, these poetic attacks on luxury lifestyles have a political as well as a racial edge.

[39] See Fowler 2000 and 2013 on early prose mythography. For the influence of elegy and iambus on the development of historiography, see Bowie 2001a: 62–6.

[40] Archil. 1* asserts the speaker's role as both soldier and poet. For a soldier's pride in his profession, see also Archil. 2*.

[41] See Graham 1983, Dougherty 1993, Boardman 1999.

[42] Cf. e.g. Archil. 102, where the poet describes his fellow settlers in the northern Aegean as Πανέλληνες.

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