LEXIS
Poetica, retorica e comunicazione nella tradizione classica

12./ 1994
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EXORCISING HIPPONAK: PETITIONERS AND BEGGARS
IN GREEK POETRY

Cissic: When you want something, Hardy, how do you ask for it?
—Peter Greenaway, Drowning by Numbers.

I. The poet Hipponax clearly enjoyed something of a renaissance in
the Hellenistic period. Leonidas of Tarentum and Alcaeus of Messene
both wrote imaginary epitaphs for him; so did Theocritus. He seems
to have berated the mime writer Herodas in a nightmare. His pre-
ferred metre, choliambics, was taken up again by Callimachus, Her-
udas, Phoenix of Colophon, Cercidas and others. And, perhaps most
notably, he returned from the dead to address the Alexandrian schol-
ars in Callimachus’s *iambus* 14. Various explanations of Hipponax’s
new-found popularity have been offered: a Hellenistic interest in
recherché vocabulary, for example, and in uncanonical writers. I want
to offer here a more specific suggestion as to why the unlikely figure
of Hipponax so preoccupied the Alexandrians.

Of the scanty fragments of Hipponax that have come down to us,
at least four seem to share a common form and theme: an address to a
god followed by either a request that he supply ‘Hipponax’ with var-
ious useful items (a cloak, woolly boots, money, etc.) or a reproach
for not doing so. Fr. 32 (= 42 Dg), addressed to Hermes, is the fullest
example:

`Ερμή, φαλCORD. `Ερμή, Μουσεύ, Κυλλήνια,
έπενδυμαι τοι, κόρτα γάρ κακός βιγάδο
και βομβακίζω...`

---

1 Citations and numeration follow the 2nd ed. of West’s *Iambi et Elegi Graeci* for
Hipponax (though I have given Degani’s Teubner numbering on first citation); the
OCT for Homer; the 8th ed. of Snell-Maschler for Pindar; Hall and Golder’s OCT
for Aristophanes; Gow’s *Bucolici Graeci* for Theocritus; Pfoffer for Callimachus.
Uncredited translations throughout are my own.

2 *AP* 7.405, 7.408; Theocritus Ep. 19.

3 Herodas 8; the identification, it should be said, is not absolutely certain.

4 On Hipponax’s Nachleben cf. in general the comprehensive treatment of E. Dega-

5 I shall be distinguishing throughout between Hipponax, the author of various
poems and ‘Hipponax’ a character who appears and/or speaks in those poems; the
distinction is important enough to warrant the slight typographical inconvenience.

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Hear me, silver-bowed one, who frequent Chrysε and holy Kυλη and rule over Tenedos, Smιnθεus. If ever I roofed you a pleasing temple, or if ever I burnt you fat thighs/ of bulls and goats, fulfill this wish: / let the Danaans pay for my tears through your shafts.

Here we have a vocative and epithets (άργυρότατος, δε Χρυσόν άδμη-

βέβηλος, Σμινθεύς), a request verb (κληθεί με), a ηγομονείται (εί

ποτέ) and finally a request (τελευτῶν Δαναῶν έμά δόξαν σοι τέλεσον).

Note that the object of Chryses’s prayer is verbal (τελευτῶν) and

vague: he asks, that is, not for something, but that something should happen, nor does he suggest too specifically what that something should be. This is standard practice when humans make requests of the gods in Homer10. It would be bad form to specify in too much detail what one hopes to receive; Chryses discreetly and properly leaves the exact manner in which the prayer is to be fulfilled up to the god11.

Hippokax purposely confuses this divine address form with a subject matter more appropriate to a human addressee. By asking outright for specific objects, and by asking for the quotidian things he does, he identifies himself not as a petitioner (like Chryses) but as a beggar12. It is part of the beggar’s identity that he lacks αἴτως, as Telemaeus points out at Hom. p. 352. The beggar, unlike the peti-

tioner, comes right out and says δός μοι. And he demands specific

10 The pattern δός / δότε, for example, is regularly followed by an infinitive; if an ac-

cusative does follow it will be formally abstract. For infinitive cf. e.g. Hom. 1.351

τελευτῶν, Κ 281 ἐπὶ νύμχη, ηγομονείται, γ. 60 νύμχη, λ. 327 ἄληθεν, λ. 530 μεν ἦν

ἄληθεν, κοίτη, etc. For abstract object cf. Hom. Η 203 νύμχη, ζ. 198 ἄληθεν κοίτη

και ἄληθεν (this latter has a parodic flavor, since one god is addressing a prayer to

another, and asks for abstract objects that are in fact in physical form). Note also

Solon fr. 13.3-4 W δέδων μοι: δότε, καί... δέδων ἔχειν ἄθυτον. Obviously

different are cases where δός μοι means nothing more than ‘hand me’ or ‘pass me’

(often with an epexegetical infinitive), as at Hom. γ 46-47 δός... δέδων... σεῖον, as

well as the fixed phrase δός χείρα (e.g. Hom. Υ 75).

11 Note that Chryses’s utterance is a prayer, not a curse; in the latter case punish-

ments are often envisioned in considerable detail (cf. most obviously Hippokax fr.

II 115 W = 194 Dg).

12 The specificity of Hippokax’s demands is hard to parallel even in actual preserved

prayers where one might expect it to appear. An Ostan graffito, for instance, in-

structs Ερμῆ δίκαια κέρδος: Ἐξτίκειος δίδω. Here the petitioner asks Hermes

for money, just as Hippokax did, but (and this is typical) contents himself with a

vague κέρδος, rather than Hippokax’s χρήματα / στηλίον δέξισθαι. I draw this

reference from H. S. Versnel, Religious Mentality in Ancient Prayer, in Faith, Hope

items, usually food and clothing. Thus ‘Hipponax’ in fr. 39 (=48 Dg) begs an unidentified addressee for barrow goats to make porridge with. Phoenix of Colophon’s mendicants call out χείλα πρόσωπος κριθέναι ... ἡ λέκος πυρῶν / ἡ ἄρτον ἡ ἱματίαν ἢ ὅτι τὰς φρίζες, concluding with the appeal δός, ὀι <δ>·νας, δός καὶ ὑμῖν μιὸν νύμφη (fr. 2.1-3; 19)\textsuperscript{13}. The children who sing the Rhodian swallow song appeal to their listeners with similar bluntness:

παλάδαι σὺ προκύψαις
ἐκ πίνους ὁμοὶ
σου τε δέσπατρον
τυρᾳ τε κάσωστρον

PME 848.6-9

[Wheel out the dried fruit/ from your rich household/ and a cup of wine/ and a cheese plate.]

So too at Hom. ξ 178 Odysseus, naked and penniless, is forced to demand of Nausicaa δός ἐκ ἐρείπων ὁμορομολογήθηκα, while Dikaiopolis’s wheedling succession of δός μοι requests at Acharnians 407ff (a ἱπποκαντον at 415, Telephus’s ἑπάρκεια at 431, etc.) suggests that he is already rehearsing for his role as beggar in the following scene.

Hipponax imports this grubby figure into a more elevated context. Indeed, he systematically travesties the hymal form we are accustomed to from epic. In fr. 32 a high-sounding invocation is followed, not by the adducing of a past relationship to justify the request, but by a more down-to-earth reason: κάρτα γὰρ κοικώς βργα. In fr. 34, the hypomnestis is turned upside-down; the addressee is cursed for never in the past (οὔτε καί) having fulfilled the poet’s request. Fr. 38 contains a mock invocation: οἳ Ζεὺς, πάτερ <Ζεύς>, θεῶς ὁ Ολυμπιώτατος πάλμω, where the Lydian πάλμως is totally inapproriate: «Ο Zeus, father Zeus, shah of the Olympian gods...»\textsuperscript{14}. The effect is ludicrous; Chrisytes has become a panhandler.

\textsuperscript{13} I cite the text of Phoenix from J.U. Powell, Collectanea Alexandrina, Oxford 1925. On this and the following example compare R. Miehlisch, Bittelgedichte, RhM 95, 1952, 312-27; on the Phoenix fragment see also G. Wills, Phoenix of Colophon’s Κορώνωμα, CQ n.s. 20, 1970, 112-18.


II.

No one wants to be ‘Hipponax’. No one wants, that is, to be seen as a shabby mendicant, shamelessly demanding that his addressee give, give, give. But when one is in the awkward position of having to ask a superior for something, the role is always a risk. Epic generally deals with the problem by means of the hymal style Hipponax parodies; the hymn’s formulaic structure effectively masks any uneasiness on that score. The hypomnestis in particular assumes a sense of obligation in the addressee which distinguishes the whole transaction from a casual mendicant’s appeal.

Another option is to eliminate the need for such requests altogether, through the ἔκςεια system. Thus in Hom. α Telemachus addresses ‘Mentes’:

οἵλ ἥγε υἱῷ ἑτέρων, ἑπενήγημεν ἐπὶ δόκῳ
ὁρος λογοποίησεν τὸ τετορόμενον τὸ φιλοῦ κῆρ
δόρου ἐγὼ ἐπὶ υἱῷ κῆρ, χαίρως ἐνι θεῷ
τυφλός, μάλις κκαλόν, ὅ τε κεφαλᾶν ἑστήκα
ἐξ ἐμη, ὡσ φιλοῦ εὐεισί βοῶσαι διότι.

Hom. a 309-13

[But come on now, stay for a while, even though you are eager for the road, until having washed and enjoyed yourself/ you can go down to your ship with a gift, rejoicing in your heart/ a worthy gift, a first-rate one, which shall be a keepsake to you/ from me, such as guest-friend gives to guest-friend.]

‘Mentes’ and Telemachus are social equals here. ‘Mentes’ does not have to ask for a gift; Telemachus offers it spontaneously, and in the implied expectation that at some future date their roles will or could be reversed (εὗρος εὐεισί διδώσει). But sometimes characters are forced to make a request of a potentially hostile addressee, one who is neither a god nor a έξονος. It is important in these cases that the request be phrased so as not to offend the potential patron; otherwise it will misfire. At the assembly on Ithaca in Hom. μ Telemachus says straight out to the suitors οἵλ ἥγε µοι δούτε ἥγε θεόν (π 212); he asks them bluntly for a physical object in the accusative case. He is received in chilling silence, and after Mentor vainly rebukes the assembly, the suitor Leocritus sneeringly suggests that Mentor go about getting hold of a ship himself, as for Telemachus, τελεῖτε δ’ ὧνου ὧν ποτε ταύτα (π 256). The assembly dissolves, and Telemachus comes off looking like the
brash and naive young man he is at this stage of the poem. When it comes to asking for things from people more powerful than you, periphrasis and evasion are the order of the day.

We can see that illustrated much later in the poem, in Hom. ξ, by a request that does not misfire. Here we are in the hands of the master of evasion, Odysseus himself, who is now disguised and being hosted by Eumaeus. As the men sit around in the hut after dinner, it begins to pour with rain:

τὸίς Ἔδει Οδυσσέως μετέειπεν, συρκέτως περιπτίζον ἐπὶ ποιοίς ἰδίως χρίσατον πέρα, ὥς τι' ἐπέκρον ἄλλου ἐπιτρέπειν...

Hom. ξ 459-61.

[And Odysseus spoke to them, making a test of the swineherd/ to see if he would take off his cloak and give it to him/ or urge one of his companions to ...]

But instead of simply asking for the cloak (as Telemachus simply asked for a ship) Odysseus does something else: he tells an elaborate story involving a fictitious night patrol at Troy when ‘Odysseus’ cunningly procured a cloak for him. And he prefaces this elliptical, hinted request with a defensive introduction:

eὐξάμενος τί ἔπεκεν ὤμοις γὰρ ἀκόης ἤλεγον τι' ἐβόησεν πολύμυρον περὶ μαθέων ἀσέχει καὶ τῷ ἱππακόμοις ἀκόης, καὶ τί ἐπεκεκόρεσκεν τῷ πέρ τ' ἄρρηται θεμέλει.

Hom. ξ 463-66.

[Wistfully I'll tell you a tale. For wine impels me, / distracting stuff that incites ever serious people to sing/ and have fun and dance/ and sometimes it calls up speeches better left unmade.]

Eumaeus interprets this ἔπος perfectly:

ὁ γέρου, ὦμοις μὲν τοῖς ἀπόστων, ὀνομαζόμενος οδὴ τί ποιό παρά μοίνας ἐποιοκρατεῖ ξειτες-
τί ὅτι ἐσθίετο δεύτερον οὔτε τοιά τοι ἀλλα...

Hom. ξ 508-10.

[Old fellow, that was an excellent parable you told,/ and you certainly didn't say

something inappropriate or base; / you won't want for covering or anything else ...]

The scene is meant to be comic, of course, as it is comic when Athena similarly calls Odysseus’s bluff at ν 287ff. But the comedy is grounded in a basic uneasiness with this particular situation: having to ask a superior directly for something you need. This is simply a speech situation that Greek never quite developed an adequate formula to handle15. Hence Odysseus’s avoidance of the Hipponoean δόσις χαλάτι-
ναυ in favor of a roundabout story (which even so requires a pre-
emptive apology), and Eumaeus’s half-teasing assurance that he has not taken the story the wrong way.

III.

The features that work to blur epic requests (hymnal style, appeals to ἔνδοξα, periphrasis and evasion) are also typical of epinician. And not surprisingly. Writing in a genre based more obviously than any other on patronage, Pindar and Bacchylides run the risk of demeaning not merely their characters, but themselves16. Pindar is particularly expert at making a basically rather vulgar transaction (flattery for cash) into something much muddier and more high-sounding. He does it perhaps most clearly toward the end of Pythian 1, which is addressed to Hieron of Syracuse:

eκάθεῖ τί εἰς ἀργον παραμένειν εἴπον τῷ φιλίτε τοῖς ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ ἑλεῖ
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15 And not just Greek, of course. Compare the staple scene of American situation co-

spontaneous outburst of enthusiasm evoked when a ἔξων succeeds: ἔξων δὲ ἐν προσθεσμίαις / έναν τόπον οὐκ' ἀγαθὰν πολλὰς σιδερέων ἐσχάλων (Ol. 4.4-5). Similarly Pindar and his muse can stand παρὰ δόξης / ἀδικίας (Pyth. 4.1), just as Hieron is addressed as ὁ δὲ Φαλαι (Pyth. 1.92; note in the same passage Croesus's περιβάλλων ἀρετὴ = financial generosity). Sometimes both terms are used: ἔξως εἰμι: σκοτεινῶν ἀπάθειαν γίνομαι, / ἀδικίας ἔτη ὑπαίτιον ἐν ἀδικίας / ἀδικίας ἐπεί οὐκ οὐκ οὐκ οὐκ οὐκ οὐκ (Nem. 7.61-3). In the latter case Pindar's special relationship with Aegina may justify the words; whether Arkelas and Hieron would have considered Pindar a ἔξων is more dubious.

An equally tempting option is to turn the patron into a god and the poem into a hymn; this is a move with a significant future ahead of it20. Things are already headed this way, one could argue, when Pindar directly addresses Hieron with an ἢν ... invocatio or a χάριν dismissal (as at Pyth. 2.67)21, or spins a defining relative clause off his name (cf. Ol. 1.11ff. ἑρακλεΐον ἔστιν, ἐφεδροτέους δὲ ἀμφιβατείναι ἐν παλιότητον). All of Pindar's patrons, for that matter, are made to straddle the boundary between human and divine; all of them risk repleying the myth of Bellerophon as Ol. 13 presents it to us, or imitating the Ixion of Pyth. 22. But the key mythological exemplum here is Heracles, whose liminality in this respect partially explains Pindar's preoccupation with him throughout his career (καὶ ἀνέφθετο ἐς Ἡρακλεΐος ἄνθρωπος μή περιβάλλει, as the poet himself notes at Pyth. 9.87). At Pyth. 2.88, for example, Pindar sternly advises Hieron ἥπειρον τὸν θεόν οὐκ ἔριζε (cf. Ol. 5.23-4, Isthm. 5.12-6), yet in Ol. 9 Heracles does just that: he takes on Apollo, Poseidon and Hades single-handedly and without any apparent ill-effect. Pindar then rebukes himself - ἀπὸ μοι λόγου / τοῦτον, στόμα, ῥήσεως (Ol. 9.35-6) - but his misgivings here are more than a little disingenuous. His assumed nervousness lest his patron, like Heracles, transgress the boundary between human and divine is in fact the highest form of praise; the patron is implicitly assumed to be capable of such

17 I should emphasize that I do not take Pindar to be actually submitting his bill in this passage. Rather, he dramatizes the patron-client relationship as a kind of preemptive strike on any scoffers in the audience, and even ingenuously turns it to his advantage: only a professional could praise Hieron adequately. But the basic uneasiness remains.

18 Note that Bacchylides 5, written for the same victory, uses the Croesus paradigm as well; was Hieron, with his magnificent gifts to Delphi, consciously cultivating the persona, or was it so obviously apt as a model that Pindar and Bacchylides hit on it independently?

19 W.H. Race, Style and Rhetoric in Pindar's Odes, Atlanta 1990, 122 n. 7 comments that terms like φίλος «elevate the poet's relationship to his patrons above mere contractual duty (χρηματ.)». Cf. Gold, 28: «Pindar was careful and clever enough always to refer to the matter of recompense in close proximity to praise of άξιον». Pindar's use of άξιον has often been noted; for a recent treatment see L. Kurke, The Traffic in Praise, Ithaca and London 1991, 135-59.

20 An approach already embryonic in Homer; cf. Odysseus's comparison of Nausicaa to Artemis (Hom. Χ. 149-52).

21 Elroy Bundy, Studia Pindarica, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1986, 78 goes so far as to call the passage «a hymn to Hieron».

22 Cf. also the opening of Bacchylides 5, on which see Race, 184.

23 Cf. Race, 191-5 on the 'ne plus ultra' theme in Pindar.
transgression\textsuperscript{24}. There is a thin line between praise and flattery, and Pindar, who only flirts with the idea of a deified human patron, usually stays on the right side of it. Epinician poets are particularly vulnerable to the ψύχος that Pindar takes such care to avoid. After all, to outsiders tediously ignorant of epinician convention they might easily be mistaken for hired toadies. «Simonides? That man would go to sea in a sieve if the price was right» claims Aristophanes' Trygaeus, and his assessment was the one that found its way into the reference works and secondary literature of the Hellenistic period\textsuperscript{25}.

Even the gracefully vague Pindaric stance invited parody, as when (\textit{Birds} 904ff.) Aristophanes introduces a vagrant poet who arrives singing encomia to the newly-founded Cloud-Cuckooland. Pisthesairos, in hope of buying him off, tells the priest left over from the previous scene to take off and hand over his spolâs. The poet, in order to extract a matching citâdos from his new 'patron', then tells an allusive parable - in fact, a Παύδαρευο πόσις (939) like that of Pyth. 1 (or Odysseus' αἶνος in Hom. ξι)

\begin{quote}
νομάδεσχοι γὰρ ἐν Σκότοις
ἀλώτου Σιρέτων,
θα διστακτόνωσκον ἔρεος σὺ πέσσωνται,
ἀλλὲς δ' ἢ ἔρα σπολάς βοῶς κητώνως,
ξένους δ' τοι λέγουσι.
\end{quote}

\textit{Birds} 941-45.

[For among the Scythian nomads/ wanders Straton,/ who possesses no shuttle-woven clothing./ Unhonored goes the spolas without a chiton - if you get my meaning.]

Pisthesairos does indeed: συμφ' ὑπὲρ τῶν κητωνίσκων λαβέτων. Only Pisthesairos' enlightened attitude toward the arts keeps this vagrant from being sent packing like the other visitors to Cloud-cuckooland.

24 H. Pelliccia, \textit{Pindarus Homericus: Pythian 3.1-89, HSCP 91, 1987, 47 has doubted this kind of breakoff (exemplified most famously at \textit{Ol.1.52}) the "false-start recursus". Like all instances of recursus it simultaneously affirms what it purports to deny - in this case that men can vie with gods.}


Aristophanes' parodic poet is distinctly reminiscent of the persona we saw Hipponax assuming above: a bombastic and scruffy figure perpetually trying to wangle a new set of clothing from his addressees\textsuperscript{26}. Here the poet wants a σπολάς and a χίτων, just as 'Hipponax' was in need of a warm χλαύνα. And for much the same reason: compare Pisthesairos' aside to the poet at 935 (πάντως δὲ μοι ρητὸν δοκεῖς) with 'Hipponax's' justification of his petition in fr. 32 (κάρτα γὰρ κακὸς ρητὸν). The 'Hipponax' of fr. 32 and the poet in the \textit{Birds} are recognizably the same stock character, one related to the comic poets' avaricious Simonides. Just as the \textit{Birds} poet attempts unsuccessfully to cloak his mendicant status in a parable, so 'Hipponax' attempts to wrap his bathetic petition in a hymnal mist. No one is fooled. Instead, we recognize that respectable but complacent speech conventions are being mercilessly guyed. Parody can stick only if its target leaves an opening for it\textsuperscript{27}. And when a speech form is ripe for parody an Aristophanes or a Hipponax will come along to skewer it.

IV.

«I have not brought my muse up to be a tradesman, as Simonides did», Callimachus virtuously asserts in an iambic fragment\textsuperscript{28}. The tones are those of a man who is shocked, shocked to find that patro...
narge is going on here. For the Alexandrian poets could not even claim to be outside consultants, like a Pindar or a Simonides; they were directly dependent on the largesse of one particular patron. Maintaining an image of independence under these circumstances was a tricky proposition. Clearly it would be out of the question for the Alexandrians to pose as Ptolemy II Philadephos’s ἕνως. But the special circumstances of Ptolemaic rule in Egypt made the application of divine address forms to a human patron, already pioneered by Pindar, peculiarly tempting. Theocritus XVII, the encomium of Philadephos, is perhaps the clearest example of this experimental trend.

The poem begins traditionally and unexceptionally in hymnal style: Ἐξ Δῶς ἀρχώμεθα καὶ ἔς Δᾶ ἁγιεῖτε Μύσατι (1). The poet then turns to the subject at hand, Ptolemy, represented as a Zeus among men: ἄνθρωπος τοῦ Πτολεμαίου ἐνί πρώτηι λεγέθω / καὶ πύρμος καὶ μένος (3-4). We learn in the genealogical section immediately following that Ptolemy’s father has been deified (τῆν καὶ μοιχόρουν πατρὸν ἱερόμνον ἔθηκεν / θεοκράτος, 16-17) and now sits facing his ancestor Heracles (a significant exemplum). After dealing with Ptolemy’s mother Berenice (similarly deified), the poet moves on to Ptolemy’s own birth, narrated so as to parallel the birth... of Apollo, with Cos playing the role of Delos:

Κόσμος δ’ ἄλογον θεόν,  
μόνε καὶ καθολικον μέγις τερεφερεις διήνυσον.  
Τισίν θεός γένεσις, τούς δὲ με τὸν θεόν διψαν ἔδωκεν  
Πτολέμιος, καθισματικὸς θεὸς.  

[And Cos cried out in triumph looking on him, and holding the child in her hands, said, “May you be fortunate, child, and may you honor me as much as/ Phoebus Apollo has honored blue-sunned Delos.”]

Theocritus goes on to praise the wealth and vastness of Egypt, and Ptolemy’s own generosity. In particular, he notes the king’s open-handedness to literary types like himself:

οὐκ ὀλιγότας τις ἄνθρωπος καὶ ἐκάλους  
μετὰ ἑπταθάμους λυγοῦν ἀκαμέλης ἀπὸ ψωμί,  
ὁ δὲ διάκριτος ἀνδρόμαχος ἄπαντες τέχνης.

[Nor has any man/ who knows how to sing a sweet song in the sacred contests of Dionysos come to him/ to whom he has not given a handout equal to his skill.]

The poet then briefly praises Ptolemy’s sister and queen, noting that their incestuous union is paralleled by that of Zeus and Hera, and concludes with a hymnic valediction (χαίρε ἱερὰ Πτολεμαίει, 135) and a promise to regard Ptolemy as a θυγατέρας - and soon, clearly, to become a fully-accredited deity.

In a milieu in which such poems could be written, it is scarcely surprising that self-conscious reflection on the very awkward relationship of petitioner to addressee, poet to Ptolemy, should make an appearance in its own right in the Hellenistic writers. That relationship, in fact, is precisely the subject of Callimachus’s Iambi 1 (fr. 191 Pf.).

In that poem the ghost of Hipponax, granted a short sabbatical from Hades, addresses the assembled scholars of Alexandria (or so the diegesis informs us). He tells them the story of the cup which an Arcadian gentleman named Bathycle was willed on his deathbed to the...
wisest of the Seven Sages. His sons offer it to Thales, who modestly demurs and passes it on to Bias of Priene. Having made the round of all seven in this way, it returns to Thales, who dedicates it to Apollo. The end of the poem is in shreds, but Hipponax apparently indulged in a few pointed personal comments before returning to Hades (κόποσαλῶν ὥρη, 97).

Now, the Batycle's story is a story about patronage. It presents a model of an orderly, unproblematical patronage system in which intellectuals (the Sages) are spontaneously offered a reward (the cup) by an individual (Bathycles) who imposes no further obligation on the recipients. The diegesis makes explicit what we could surely have guessed from the extant portions alone: the Batycle's story was intended to be exemplary for the Alexandrian scholars.35 They are the Seven Sages; the benevolent Bathycles is Prolemys. The story shows the Hellenistic patronage system in the rosiest of lights.

So far so good. But why Hipponax? His role as the founder of the iambic genre might explain his appearance in the first poem of Callimachus's collection. But then why does he tell this peculiar story? The only answer so far proposed is implausible: that Hipponax himself wrote a version of the Batycle's story and that «Callimachus paid him the fitting compliment of making him the narrator of the tale»36.

His appearance is the odder in that the values the Batycle tale exhibits (emotional restraint, modesty vis-à-vis the gods, mutual respect among intellectuals) are scarcely those that Hipponax is known to have stood for. Who is the sometime antagonist of Boupalos to lecture the Alexandrians on avoiding feuds? Even his utterances

35 ὄπιστατες θεῶν ἱππονᾶκας συγκαλόμενα τοις φιλόλογοις εἰς τὸ Πομηνίαιος καλομένους Ἐσαρρίβειας ἡμών ὅσοτος καὶ ἐλας ἀπογορεύει, ἴδονεν Ἰππώλειον...
36 So Dawson, 24. The proposal seems to have been made first by F. Jung, Hipponax Redivivus, Bonn 1929, 25ff., and is now an idée reçue, taken for granted by e.g. Clayman, 13 and M. Despey λαμβάνειν καλοῖς: Genre, Occasion, and Imitation in Callimachus fr. 191 and 202P, TAPhA 122, 1992, 319. The evidence rests on frs. 63 (= 65 Dg) καὶ Μοῦνον, ὅθεν ἔποιησιμ [ἐνώπιον ἑνόρθων συνφρόνησαν πίστειν] and fr. 123 (= 12 Dg) καὶ διδαξάθηκεν Βασίλειος τοῦ Προμαχός κρέσσουν. Neither of these necessarily comes from any such narrative (the person who is Βασίλειος κρέσσουν in fr. 123, for example, need not be another of the Sages) nor can they possibly come from the same poem, as the supporters of the theory imply; one fragment is in choliambics, the other in trochaic tetrameter catalectic. We know, moreover, that Callimachus took his version of the story from Leandrius of Miletus (cf. D.L. 1.28), and not from Hipponax.

within Iambus 1 contrast sharply with the moral of his story. He compares the scholars themselves to flies around a goatherd (ὡς πορ' σῖληλα μώνα, 26), and mocks one in particular for his baldness and breathlessness (ὁ ψαλικόρχος τὴν πυὸν ἀναλάμματι, 29). He sneers also at Pythagorean dietary taboos (cf. 62-3), and seems to have ended by specifically abusing one or more contemporaries of Callimachus. Thales's φόνος is thus narrated by the very antithesis of φόνος.

I suggest that attempts to explain why Hipponax is the right person to tell this story are doomed to failure. He tells it, in fact, because he is precisely the wrong person, the most inappropriate narrator imaginable. Hipponax's presence is designed, in other words, to jar with the very story he tells.38 To be sure, Hipponax's cringing persona, his shabby begging appeals, seem a far cry from the urbane Callimachus or the elegant Theocritus. Yet in some respects the resemblance may have been too close for comfort. Given the contemporary renovation of archaic hymnal style for panegyrical begging letters like Theocritus 17, it is easy to see how texts like Hipponax fr. 32 could have taken on new resonance, becoming radically subversive in a way their original author could not have imagined.39 For the Hellenistic poets, like the 'Hipponax' of fr. 32, found themselves asking 'Zeus' for cloaks and frocklets and sandals and wooly boots and a lot of money and a library.

The Hipponax of Iambus 1 thus represents a profound uneasiness wonders why the chief mover of these quarrels is suddenly wishing them away, but feels the question is unanswerable. G.O. Hutchinson, Hellenistic Poetry, Oxford 1988, 51 suggests with typical vagueness that «we are intended to savor [Callimachus's] divergence from the spirit of his model».

38 Such an intentional contrast between inner narrative and frame is typical of Hellenistic practice, though it can best be observed in Callinus 64 and the second half of Georgias 4.
39 Cf. F. Bing, The Well-Read Muse, Göttingen 1988, 82 on the Callimachean citation of Hesiod's ταξις ἐκ δή λαὸς Βασιλείας at Hymn 1.79: «while accurately resuscitated into the contemporary poem, these words acquire there a different shade of meaning, tinged by the personality of the Hellenistic author who invoked them and by the alien environment created for them ... The quotation thus does not differ substantively in function from the device of resurrecting an archaic author such as Hipponax into 3rd cent. B.C. Alexandria. Both respond to that aforementioned need for meaningful continuity ..., establishing a bridge to the past and allowing that past to speak in the here and now - albeit with a voice transformed by the filter of its new surroundings». As Bing points out elsewhere, the need for a bridge already implies the existence of a chasm.
at the heart of the Hellenistic aesthetic. Has he returned from Hades, a reformed character, to instruct us all in philological etiquette? Or is he intended to remind us rudely of our true position in the Alexandria of the Ptolemics? In this sense the spectre of Hipponax, grumpy, ill-attired, and subversive, haunts not only Iambus 1 but all of Hellenistic poetry. Well might Leonidas of Tarentum advise wayfarers to make no noise passing Hipponax’s tomb, lest they awake him - τά γὰρ πετυρτομένα κείων / ρήματα πηματεῖν οἶδε καὶ εἶν τ’ Αἰδηφὸν 40.

Ithaca

Gregory Hays

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40 An earlier version of this paper was read at the 4th CorHaLi Colloquium on Les Formes de l’individuallité dans la poésie grecque archaïque (Lille, May 15-17, 1993). I am grateful to P. Aronoff, J. Barrett, V. Citti, Gw. Compton-Engel, P. Pucci and especially H. Pelliccia and Ch. Segal for their comments and suggestions.

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TRAGEDIA E SACRIFICIO

La poesia dei greci non è lettura di individui solitari, chiusi in se stessi, in silenzio. È comunicazione orale, richiede un pubblico che ascolti il recitativo o il canto: si vincola soprattutto alla festa, a un ozio che è compagnia con altri e attività, immersione in un rituale che muta secondo ogni festa e ogni momento di essa.

Così la recitazione o il canto accompagnano chi mangia e beve insieme, si intramezzano con il gioco e si associano alla danza. Come nel cuore della festa si annida il sacrificio, così nel cuore della poesia, il cui luogo è la festa. Conviene qui solo ricordare la vecchia concezione del poeta come sacerdote e indovino; sebbene in Grecia le sue funzioni appaiano differenziate nelle nostre prime testimonianze scritte, è anche chiaro che si mantiene una relazione fra questi professionisti anche quando sono considerati lavoratori di utilità pubblica, ἤμερες γυμνοὶ. E la relazione che esiste fra sacrificio e poesia si mantiene chiaramente in diversi modi: tanto quando si confondono poema e vittima - e Pindaro parla (fr. 86a Snell) di immolare un ditiramo - come quando la vittima è offerta come equivalente del poema, come premio al poeta - in senso come dice Sventro, economico, e così «il ditiramo vincitore vale un toro, si scambia materialmente per un toro» 2 La tragedia ha nel suo nome ciò che vale, ciò che la città dà per essa: un ἔθνος, un maschio caprino 3. Così, a misura che la tragedia equivale al capro, il poeta si converte in dispensatore e amministratore delle carni della vittima. Come il sacerdote divide e distribuisce la carne della vittima, così il poeta tragico fa con il suo tema e le sue parole. In entrambi i casi, il destinatario è lo stesso e collettivo: gli ateniesi nella festa e nello spazio dedicato al dio, a Dioniso.

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1 Quello che accade in Hom. p 384-85.
3 Tespi, test. 2 e 8 Snell (nell’ultimo dei quali si dice che il premio è per il coro, cosa che poco importa per il ragionamento che qui seguo); cf. A. Pickard-Cambridge, Diathymia, tragedy and comedy, Oxford 1962 (revised by T.B.L. Webster), 69; W. Burkert, Greek tragedy and sacrificial ritual, GRBS 7, 1966, 91 ss.

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