LEXIS

Poetica, retorica e comunicazione nella tradizione classica

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SOMMARIO

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EXORCISING HIPPONAX: PETITIONERS AND BEGGARS IN GREEK POETRY[1]

Cissie: 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[2]. He seems to have berated the mime writer Herodas in a nightmare[3]. His preferred metre, choliambics, was taken up again by Callimachus, Herodas, Phoenix of Colophon, Cercidas and others. And, perhaps most notably, he returned from the dead to address the Alexandrian scholars in Callimachus's *Iambus* 1[4]. 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 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 various useful items (a cloak, woolly boots, money, etc.) or a reproach for not doing so[5]. Fr. 32 (= 42 Dg), addressed to Hermes, is the fullest example:

> Ἑρμῆ, φίλ' Ἑρμῆ, Μαιαδεῦ, Κυλλήνιε,
> ἐπεύχομαί τοι, κάρτα γὰρ κακῶς ῥιγῶ
> καὶ βαμβαλίζω...

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-Maehler for Pindar; Hall and Geldart's OCT for Aristophanes; Gow's *Bucolici Graeci* for Theocritus; Pfeiffer 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. Degani, *Studi su Ipponatte*, Bari 1984, 19-115.

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.

δὸς χλαῖναν Ἱππώνακτι καὶ κυπασσίσκον
καὶ σαμβαλίσκα κἀσκερίσκα καὶ χρυσοῦ
στατῆρας ἑξήκοντα τούτέρου τοίχου.

[Hermes, dearest Hermes, son of Maia[6], Cyllenian one,/ I pray you, for I'm really cold/ and my teeth are chattering ... / give Hipponax a cloak and a frocklet/ and sandals and woolly boots and sixty / staters of gold on the side].

Fr. 34 (= 43 Dg) is not explicitly addressed to Hermes, but in it 'Hipponax' reproaches his addressee for never having supplied a χλαῖνα and ἀσκέραι; it seems likely that it belongs to the same poem as fr. 32. Similarly fr. 36 (= 44 Dg) complains that Plutus has never dropped by to offer 'Hipponax' thirty minae of silver, while fr. 38 (= 47 Dg) asks why Zeus has never supplied the poet with a comparable stipend.

These poems are funny not simply because of the pathetic contrast between 'Hipponax's' grandiloquent address (Ἑρμῆ, Μαιαδεῦ, Κυλλήνιε, ἐπεύχομαί τοι) and the workaday items requested (σαμβαλίσκα, κἀσκερίσκα κτλ.)[7], but more specifically because they confuse and travesty fixed and rather delicate guidelines for making requests. Already in Homer, Greek has a fixed way of petitioning gods[8]. The elements are well-known: the speaker first addresses a god in the vocative, itemizes the god's epithets, uses a verb of appeal (κλῦθί μευ or εὔχομαι, for example), makes mention (*hypomnesis*) of a past relationship between speaker and god that justifies a petition[9], and finally makes a request of some sort. A standard example is Chryses's address to Apollo in Hom. A:

κλῦθί μευ, ἀργυρότοξ', ὃς Χρύσην ἀμφιβέβηκας,
Κίλλαν τε ζαθέην Τενέδοιό τε ἶφι ἀνάσσεις,
Σμινθεῦ, εἴ ποτέ τοι χαρίεντ' ἐπὶ νηὸν ἔρεψα,
ἢ εἰ δή ποτέ τοι κατὰ πίονα μηρί' ἔκηα
ταύρων ἠδ' αἰγῶν, τόδε μοι κρήηνον ἐέλδωρ·
τείσειαν Δαναοὶ ἐμὰ δάκρυα σοῖσι βέλεσσιν. Hom. A 37-42.

6 Degani, 190-91 would translate «Maia's whelp» *vel sim.*, perhaps rightly.

7 Cf. Ezra Pound's *The Lake Isle*: «O God, O Venus, O Mercury patron of thieves,/ Give me in due time, I beseech you, a little tobacco shop ...».

8 Fundamental is E. Norden, *Agnostos Theos*, Leipzig, 1913, 143-76. For a clear recent treatment cf. W.H. Race, *How Greek Poems Begin*, YCS 29, 1992, 13-38, with the bibliographical references at 19 n 17.

9 This can range from an elaborate flashback often beginning εἴ ποτέ to a simpler justification like δύνασαι γάρ.

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

Here we have a vocative and epithets (ἀργυρότοξ', ὃς Χρύσην ἀμφιβέβηκας,... Σμινθεῦ), a request verb (κλῦθί μευ), a *hypomnesis* (εἴ ποτε) and finally a request (τείσειαν Δαναοὶ ἐμὰ δάκρυα σοῖσι βέλεσσιν). Note that the object of Chryses' prayer is verbal (τείσειαν) 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 Homer[10]. 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 god[11].

Hipponax 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 beggar[12]. It is part of the beggar's identity that he lacks αἰδώς, as Telemachus points out at Hom. ρ 352. The beggar, unlike the petitioner, 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 accusative does follow it will be fairly abstract. For infinitive cf. e.g. Hom. Γ 351 τείσεσθαι, Κ 281 ἐπὶ νῆας... ἀφικέσθαι, γ 60 νέεσθαι, ζ 327 ἐλθεῖν, ι 530 μὴ Ὀδυσσῆα ἱκέσθαι, etc. For abstract object cf. Hom. Η 203 νίκην, Ξ 198 φιλότητα καὶ ἵμερον (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 ὄλβόν μοι ... δότε, καὶ... δόξαν ἔχειν ἀγαθήν. Obviously different are cases where δός μοι means nothing more than 'hand me' or 'pass me' (often with an epexegetic infinitive), as at Hom. γ 46-47 δὸς... δέπας... σπεῖσαι, as well as the fixed phrase δὸς χεῖρα (e.g. Hom. Ψ 75).

11 Note that Chryses's utterance is a prayer, not a curse; in the latter case punishments are often envisioned in considerable detail (cf. most obviously Hipponax fr. 115 W = 194 Dg).

12 The specificity of Hipponax's demands is hard to parallel even in actual preserved prayers where one might expect it to appear. An Ostian graffito, for instance, instructs Ἑρμῆ δίκαιε κέρδος Ἐκτίκῳ [δί]δου. Here the petitioner asks Hermes for money, just as Hipponax did, but (and this is typical) contents himself with a vague κέρδος, rather than Hipponax's χρυσοῦ / στατῆρας ἑξήκοντα. (I draw this reference from H.S. Versnel, *Religious Mentality in Ancient Prayer*, in *Faith, Hope and Worship*, (ed. H.S. Versnel), Leiden 1981, 8).

items, usually food and clothing. Thus 'Hipponax' in fr. 39 (=48 Dg) begs an unidentified addressee for barley groats to make porridge with. Phoenix of Colophon's mendicants call out χεῖρα πρόσδοτε κριθέων ... ἢ λέκος πυρῶν / ἢ ἄρτον ἢ ἴμαιθον ἢ ὅτι τις χρῄζει, concluding with the appeal δός, ὦ <ἄ>ναξ, δὸς καὶ σὺ πότνα μοι νύμφη (fr. 2.1-3; 19)[13]. The children who sing the Rhodian swallow song appeal to their listeners with similar bluntness:

παλάθαν σὺ προκύκλει
ἐκ πίονος οἴκου
οἴνου τε δέπαστρον
τυροῦ τε κάνυστρον

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. ζ 178 Odysseus, naked and penniless, is forced to demand of Nausicaa δὸς δὲ ῥάκος ἀμφιβαλέσθαι, while Dikaiopolis's wheedling succession of δός μοι requests at *Acharnians* 407ff (a ῥάκιον at 415, Telephus's σπάργανα at 431, etc.) suggests that he is already rehearsing for his role as beggar in the following scene.

Hipponax imports this grungy figure into a more elevated context. Indeed, he systematically travesties the hymnal 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 κακῶς ῥιγῶ. In fr. 34, the *hypomnesis* is turned upside-down; the addressee is cursed for never in the past (οὔτέ κω) having fulfilled the poet's request. Fr. 38 contains a mock invocation: ὦ Ζεῦ, πάτερ <Ζεῦ>, θεῶν Ὀλυμπίων πάλμυ, where the Lydian παλμύς is totally inappropriate: «O Zeus, father Zeus, shah of the Olympian gods...»[14]. The effect is ludicrous; Chryses has become a panhandler.

[13] I cite the text of Phoenix from J.U. Powell, *Collectanea Alexandrina*, Oxford 1925. On this and the following example compare R. Merkelbach, *Bettelgedichte*, RhM 95, 1952, 312-27; on the Phoenix fragment see also G. Wills, *Phoenix of Colophon's* Κορώνισμα, CQ n.s. 20, 1970, 112-18.

[14] I borrow the apt translation of B. Knox in P.E. Easterling and B.M.W. Knox, eds. *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature*, I, Cambridge 1985, 161. Cf. O. Masson, *Les Fragments du poète Hipponax*, Paris 1962, 103-04.

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 hymnal style Hipponax parodies; the hymn's formulaic structure effectively masks any uneasiness on that score. The *hypomnesis* 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 ξενία system. Thus in Hom. α Telemachus addresses 'Mentes':

ἀλλ' ἄγε νῦν ἐπίμεινον, ἐπειγόμενός περ ὁδοῖο
ὄφρα λοεσσάμενός τε τεταρπόμενός τε φίλον κῆρ
δῶρον ἔχων ἐπὶ νῆα κίῃς, χαίρων ἐνὶ θυμῷ
τιμήεν, μάλα καλόν, ὅ τοι κειμήλιον ἔσται
ἐξ ἐμεῦ, οἷα φίλοι ξεῖνοι ξείνοισι διδοῦσι.

Hom. α 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 (ξεῖνοι ξείνοισι διδοῦσι).

But sometimes characters *are* forced to make a request of a potentially hostile addressee, one who is neither a god nor a ξένος. 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. β, Telemachus says straight out to the suitors ἀλλ' ἄγε μοι δότε νῆα θοὴν (β 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, τελέει δ' ὁδὸν οὔ ποτε ταύτην (β 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:

> τοῖς δ' Ὀδυσεὺς μετέειπε, συβώτεω πειρητίζων
> εἴ πώς οἱ ἐκδὺς χλαῖναν πόροι, ἤ τιν' ἑταίρων
> ἄλλον ἐποτρύνειν...
>
> 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:

> εὐξάμενός τι ἔπος ἐρέω· οἶνος γὰρ ἀνώγει
> ἠλεός, ὅς τ' ἐφέηκε πολύφρονά περ μάλ' ἀείσαι
> καί θ' ἁπαλὸν γελάσαι, καί τ' ὀρχήσασθαι ἀνῆκε,
> καί τι ἔπος προέηκεν ὅ πέρ τ' ἄρρητον ἄμεινον.
>
> 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:

> ὦ γέρον, αἶνος μέν τοι ἀμύμων, ὃν κατέλεξας
> οὐδέ τί πω παρὰ μοῖραν ἔπος νηκερδὲς ἔειπες·
> τῷ οὔτ' ἐσθῆτος δευήσεαι οὔτε τευ ἄλλου...
>
> 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 handle[15]. Hence Odysseus's avoidance of the Hipponactean δὸς χλαῖναν in favor of a roundabout story (which even so requires a preemptive 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 ξενία, 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 themselves[16]. 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:

> εὐανθεῖ δ' ἐν ὀργᾷ παρμένων
> εἴπερ τι φιλεῖς ἀκοὰν ἀδεῖαν αἰ-
> εὶ κλύειν, μὴ κάμνε λίαν δαπάναις·
> ἐξίει δ' ὥσπερ κυβερνάτας ἀνήρ
> ἱστίον ἀνεμόεν. μὴ δολωθῇς,
> ὦ φίλε, κέρδεσιν ἐντραπέ-
> λοις· ὀπιθόμβροτον αὔχημα δόξας
> οἷον ἀποιχομένων ἀνδρῶν δίαιταν μανύει

[15] And not just Greek, of course. Compare the staple scene of American situation comedy in which a character nervously rehearses various ways of asking his boss for a raise. Similarly, plentiful examples could be adduced in English of petitions formulated in periphrastic ways, and of resulting parody. Thus the child asks «can I go outside to play?» [=may I?] only to have his mother respond «I don't know, can you?» [=are you able?]. Conversely, the petitioner himself may wryly acknowledge the transgressive nature of the speech-act, as in the disarming «Can I bum a cigarette off you?».

[16] On patronage in epinician see L. Woodbury, *Pindar and the Mercenary Muse: Isthm. 2. 1-13*, TAPhA 99, 1968, 527-42 and B.K. Gold, *Literary Patronage in Greece and Rome*, Chapel Hill and London 1987, 18-30.

καὶ λογίοις καὶ ἀοιδοῖς. οὐ φθίνει Κροί-
σου φιλόφρων ἀρετά.
τὸν δὲ ταύρῳ χαλκέῳ καυτῆρα νηλέα νόον
ἐχθρὰ Φάλαριν κατέχει παντᾷ φάτις...

Pind. *Pyth*. 1.89-96.

[But remaining in flourishing temperament/ if you wish always to hear/ sweet speech, do not stint too much on your outlays/ but like a steersman throw/ your sails to the wind. Do not be tricked,/ my friend, with easy gains/ the sound of man-outliving fame/ alone conveys the character of men now gone/ through writers and poets. Imperishable is Croesus's good-natured virtue. But the pitiless-minded, brazen-bull-roaster/ Phalaris - a bad reputation embraces him everywhere.]

Do not, that is, be put off by the expense of hiring a Pindar; the investment will pay off handsomely in the end[17]. Note the vague abstracts (δαπάναις; φιλόφρων ἀρετά), metaphorical periphrasis (ὥσπερ κυβερνάτας ἀνήρ...) and especially the paradigmatic exempla (Κροίσου...; νηλέα νόον...Φάλαριν). Croesus here functions as the archetypal good patron, often paired with archetypal λόγιοι (Solon at Hdt. 1.29ff., for example), while Phalaris, who notoriously roasted one of his own artistic employees in the employee's own product, is an especially apt foil for a more civilized Sicilian tyrant[18]. This is an eminently tactful, even witty, performance.

The evasive periphrasis is one way to get around an uncomfortable speech-context, but Pindar is also willing to apply the other epic solutions, regardless of their increasing inapplicability.

Hence, for example, his persistent tendency to portray himself as his patron's ξένος or φίλος[19]. Thus Pindar's ode is presented as the

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 pre-emptive strike on any scoffers in the audience, and even ingeniously turns it to his advantage: only a *professional* could praise Hieron adequately. But the basic uneasiness remains.

18 Note that Bacchylides 3, 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 (χρέος)». Cf. Gold, 28: «Pindar was careful and clever enough always to refer to the matter of recompense in close proximity to praise of ξενία». Pindar's use of ξενία has often been noted; for a recent treatment see L. Kurke, *The Traffic in Praise*, Ithaca and London 1991, 135-59.

spontaneous outburst of enthusiasm evoked when a ξένος succeeds: ξείνων δ' εὖ πρασσόντων / ἔσαναν αὐτίκ' ἀγγελίαν ποτὶ γλυκεῖαν ἑσλοί (*Ol*. 4.4-5). Similarly Pindar and his muse can stand παρ' ἀνδρὶ φίλῳ (*Pyth*. 4.1), just as Hieron is addressed as ὦ φίλε (*Pyth*. 1.92; note in the same passage Croesus's φιλόφρων ἀρετά = financial generosity). Sometimes both terms are used: ξεῖνός εἰμι· σκοτεινὸν ἀπέχων ψόγον, / ὕδατος ὥτε ῥοὰς φίλον ἐς ἄνδρ' ἄγων / κλέος ἐτήτυμον αἰνέσω. (*Nem*. 7.61-3). In the latter case Pindar's special relationship with Aegina may justify the words; whether Arkesilas and Hieron would have considered Pindar a ξένος 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 it[20]. Things are already headed this way, one could argue, when Pindar directly addresses Hieron with an ὦ ... invocation or a χαῖρε dismissal (as at *Pyth*. 2.67)[21], or spins a defining relative clause off his name (cf. *Ol*. 1.11ff. Ἱέρωνος ἑστίαν,|| θεμιστεῖον ὃς ἀμφέπει σκᾶπτον ἐν πολυμήλῳ / Σικελίᾳ)[22]. All of Pindar's patrons, for that matter, are made to straddle the border between human and divine; all of them risk replaying the myth of Bellerophon as *Ol*. 13 presents it to us, or imitating the Ixion of *Pyth*. 2[23]. But the key mythological exemplum here is Heracles, whose liminality in this respect partially explains Pindar's preoccupation with him throughout his career (κω-φὸς ἀνήρ τις, ὃς Ἡρακλεῖ στόμα μὴ περιβάλλει, as the poet himself notes at *Pyth*. 9.87). At *Pyth*. 2.88, for example, Pindar sternly advises Hieron χρὴ ... πρὸς θεὸν οὐκ ἐρίζειν (cf. *Ol*. 5.23-4, *Isth*. 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 - ἀπό μοι λόγον / τοῦτον, στόμα, ῥίψον (*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

20 An approach already embryonic in Homer; cf. Odysseus's comparison of Nausicaa to Artemis (Hom. ζ 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[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 ψόγος 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's Trygaeus, and his assessment was the one that found its way into the reference works and secondary literature of the Hellenistic period[25].

Even the gracefully vague Pindaric stance invited parody, as when (*Birds* 904ff.) Aristophanes introduces a vagrant poet who arrives singing encomia to the newly-founded Cloud-Cuckooland. Pisthetairos, in hope of buying him off, tells the priest left over from the previous scene to take off and hand over his σπολάς. The poet, in order to extract a matching χιτών from his new 'patron', then tells an allusive parable - in fact, a Πινδάρειον ἔπος (939) like that of Pyth. 1 (or Odysseus's αἶνος in Hom. ξ):

> νομάδεσσι γὰρ ἐν Σκύθαις
> ἀλᾶται Στράτων,
> ὃς ὑφαντοδόνατον ἔσθος οὐ πέπαται
> ἀκλεὴς δ' ἔβα σπολὰς ἄνευ χιτῶνος.
> ξύνες ὅ τοι λέγω.
>
> *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.]

Pisthetairos does indeed: συνῆχ' ὅτι βούλει τὸν χιτωνίσκον λαβεῖν. Only Pisthetairos's enlightened attitude toward the arts keeps this vagrant from being sent packing like the other visitors to Cloud-cuckooland.

24 H. Pelliccia, *Pindarus Homericus*: *Pythian 3.1-80*, HSCP 91, 1987, 47 has dubbed this kind of breakoff (exemplified most famously at *Ol.*1.52) the «false-start recusatio». Like all instances of recusatio it simultaneously affirms what it purports to deny - in this case that men can vie with gods.

25 Cf. *Pax* 698-99: (Sophocles has become a second Simonides) Ερ· Σιμωνίδης; πῶς; Τρ· ... κέρδους ἕκατι κἂν ἐπὶ ῥιπὸς πλέοι. Cf. J.B. Bell, Κίμβις καὶ σοφός; *Simonides in the Anecdotal Tradition*, QUCC 28, 1978, 29-86; M.R. Lefkowitz, *The Lives of the Greek Poets*, London 1981, 49-53.

Aristophanes's 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[26]. Here the poet wants a σπολάς and a χιτών, just as 'Hipponax' was in need of a warm χλαῖνα. And for much the same reason: compare Pisthetairos's aside to the poet at 935 (πάντως δέ μοι ῥιγῶν δοκεῖς) with 'Hipponax's' justification of his petition in fr. 32 (κάρτα γὰρ κακῶς ῥιγῶ). The 'Hipponax' of fr. 32 and the poet in the *Birds* are recognizably the same stock character, one related to the comic poets' avaricious Simonides. Just as the *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[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[28]. The tones are those of a man who is shocked, *shocked* to find that patro-

26 The stance is common in Bettelgedichte: Cf. Martial, 6. 82 ("*Cur ergo*," *inquit* "*habes malas lacernas*?"/ *respondi* "*quia sum malus poeta*."/ *hoc ne saepius accidat poetae*,/ *mittas*, *Rufe*, *mihi bonas lacernas*) and the Archpoet's appeal to Archbishop Rainald for winter woolens, no. 184 in F.J.E. Raby, *The Oxford Book of Medieval Latin Verse*, Oxford 1959. Merkelbach cites *Carmina Burana* 91 Schmeller (= 129 Bischoff) *Ergo mentem capite similem Martini*:/ *vestibus induite corpus peregrini*. He draws attention also to a suggestive passage in a choliambic fragment attributed to Phoenix of Colophon by A.D. Knox, *Herodas*, *Cercidas and the Choliambic Poets*, Cambridge and London 1929, rev. 1946: τί πόλλ' ἀείδω; μωρίη γὰρ ἡ λέσχη· / στεῖλον με χλαίνῃ·.../ νῦν γὰρ ᾧ κατέσταλμαι / κατερρύηκε κἀς τὸν Ἀίδην βαίνει... (Knox fr. 4. 24-7).

27 A modern parallel is the American poet A. Hecht's, *Application for a Grant*, in *The Venetian Vespers*, New York 1979, where a speaker addresses the «Noble executors of the munificent testament/ Of the late John Simon Guggenheim, distinguished bunch/ Of benefactors». Adapting Horace's *Od.* 1.1, the poet then airily discourses on the satisfactions of various professions before making his own choice: «As for me, the prize for poets, the simple gift/ For amphybrachs strewn by a kind Euterpe,/ With perhaps a laurel crown of the evergreen/ Imperishable of your fine endowment ...».

28 Fr. 222 Pf.: οὐ γὰρ ἐργάτιν τρέφω / τὴν Μοῦσαν, ὡς ὁ Κεῖος Ὑλίχου νέπους.

nage 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[29]. Maintaining an image of independence under these circumstances was a tricky proposition[30]. Clearly it would be out of the question for the Alexandrians to pose as Ptolemy II Philadelphos's ξένος. 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 Philadelphos, is perhaps the clearest example of this experimental trend[31].

The poem begins traditionally and unexceptionably in hymnal style: Ἐκ Διὸς ἀρχώμεσθα καὶ ἐς Δία λήγετε Μοῖσαι (1). The poet then turns to the subject at hand, Ptolemy, represented as a Zeus among men: ἀνδρῶν δ' αὖ Πτολεμαῖος ἐνὶ πρώτοισι λεγέσθω / καὶ πύματος καὶ μέσσος (3-4)[32]. We learn in the genealogical section immediately following that Ptolemy's father has been deified (τῆνον καὶ μακάρεσσι πατὴρ ὁμότιμον ἔθηκεν / ἀθανάτοις, 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

29 On the Ptolemies as patrons cf. briefly Gold, 33-8 and the much more detailed treatment in P.M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, Oxford 1972, I. 305-35, II. 462-94.

30 What the Alexandrians needed to avoid can be exemplified by the 3d c. A.D. appeal of the Oxyrhynchan *grammaticus* Lollianus, first published by P.J. Parsons, *The Grammarian's Complaint* in *Collectanea Papyrologica*, II, Bonn 1976, 409-46. The emperors Valerian and Gallienus are addressed in fawning terms: «Your heavenly magnanimity (ἡ οὐράνιος ὑμῶν μεγαλοφροσύνη)... which has extended its benevolence to the whole of your domain, the civilized world ... has given me too confidence to offer your heavenly genius (τῇ θείᾳ ὑμῶν τύχῃ) a petition ...», viz. that he should be assigned the income from a small orchard near the city (tr. Parsons). Neither Lollianus nor his addressees would have felt any uneasiness at such an address, of course, but in the early Hellenistic period it was still new and awkward.

31 On this poem cf. most recently Gold, 32-3 and F.T. Griffiths, *Theocritus at Court*, Leiden 1979, 71-82. The latter offers a more sympathetic assessment than A.S.F. Gow, *Theocritus*, II, Cambridge 1952, 325-47 («though not devoid of merit in some details [the poem] seems stiff, conventional and sycophantic»). Even among Theocritus's more political productions the poem has regularly taken second place to XVI, on which see most recently Gold, 30-32 and the fuller analysis by Griffiths, 9-50.

32 Note that Ptolemy receives a more extended version of the hymnal sing-first-and-last formula than Zeus himself.

of Apollo, with Cos playing the role of Delos:

Κόως δ'ὀλόλυξεν ἰδοῖσα,
φᾶ δὲ καθαπτομένα βρέφεος χείρεσσι φίλῃσιν·
" ὄλβιε κοῦρε γένοιο, τίοις δέ με τόσσον ὅσον περ
Δῆλον ἐτίμησεν κυανάμπυκα Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων.

17.64-7

[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-snooded 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[33]:

οὐδὲ Διωνύσου τις ἀνὴρ ἱεροὺς κατ' ἀγῶνας
ἵκετ' ἐπιστάμενος λιγυρὰν ἀναμέλψαι ἀοιδάν,
ᾧ οὐ δωτίναν ἀντάξιον ὥπασε τέχνας.

17.112-14

[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 (χαῖρε ἄναξ Πτολεμαῖε, 135) and a promise to regard Ptolemy as a ἡμίθεος - 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 *Iambus* 1 (fr. 191 Pf.)[34]

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 Bathycles willed on his deathbed to the

33 Cf. Pind. *Ol.* 1.14-17.

34 The basic discussions (in addition to Pfeiffer's condensed commentary) are C.M. Dawson, *The Iambi of Callimachus*, YCS 11, 1950, 11-24; D.L. Clayman, *Callimachus' Iambi*, Leiden 1980, 11-16.

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 (κἀποπλεῖν ὥρη, 97).

Now, the Bathycles 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 Bathycles story was intended to be exemplary for the Alexandrian scholars[35]. They are the Seven Sages; the benevolent Bathycles is Ptolemy. 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 Bathycles story and that «Callimachus ... paid him the fitting compliment of making him the narrator of the tale»[36].

His appearance is all the odder in that the values the Bathycles 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?[37] Even his utterances

35 Ὑποτίθεται φθιτὸν Ἱππώνακτα συγκαλούντα τοὺς φιλολόγους εἰς τὸ Παρμενίωνος καλούμενον Σαραπίδειον· ἥκουσι δ' αὐτοῖς κατ' εἴλας ἀπαγορεύει φθονεῖν ἀλλήλοις...

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. Depew ἰαμβεῖον καλεῖται νῦν: *Genre, Occasion, and Imitation in Callimachus frr. 191 and 203Pf.*, TAPhA 122, 1992, 319. The evidence rests on frs. 63 (= 65 Dg) καὶ Μύσων, δν Ὠπόλλων / ἀνεῖπεν ἀνδρῶν σωφρονέστατον πάντων and fr. 123 (= 12 Dg) καὶ δικάζεσθαι Βίαντος τοῦ Πριηνέως κρέσσον. Neither of these necessarily comes from any such narrative (the person who is Βίαντος...κρέσσον 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.

37 Clayman, 14 notes that Hipponax's speech presents «a most ironic spectacle ... one

within *Iambus* 1 contrast sharply with the moral of his story. He compares the scholars themselves to flies around a goatherd (ὡς παρ' αἰπόλῳ μυῖαι, 26), and mocks one in particular for his baldness and breathlessness (ὁ ψιλοκόρσης τὴν πνοὴν ἀναλώσει, 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 αἰδώς is thus narrated by the very antithesis of αἰδώς.

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 woolly 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 Catullus 64 and the second half of *Georgics* 4.

39 Cf. P. Bing, *The Well-Read Muse*, Göttingen 1988, 82 on the Callimachean citation of Hesiod's tag ἐκ δὲ Διὸς βασιλῆες 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 substantially 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 Ptolemies? 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 - τὰ γὰρ πεπυρωμένα κείνου / ῥήματα πημαίνειν οἶδε καὶ εἰν Ἀΐδῃ[40].

Ithaca Gregory Hays

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