

## Greek and Latin Metre VIII

### Greek Lyric I

#### Origins:

- Broadly speaking, the various threads of Greek metre can be arranged into three families, whose origins were geographically determined: (i) Ionian, (ii) Aeolian and (iii) Dorian.
  - (i) The Ionian tradition was much the most successful in its influence upon future poetic practice, for it encompassed dactylic metres (including the hexameter and its pairing with the pentameter in the elegiac couplet) and iambic and trochaic metres (including dimeters, trimeters and tetrameters). The majority of metrical forms in the Ionian tradition are stichic, i.e. repeated in rows, and these have been treated sufficiently in Lectures III-VII.
  - (ii) The Aeolian tradition could also be called simply the Lesbian tradition, since it refers primarily to the metrical forms employed by Sappho (early 6<sup>th</sup> cent. B.C.) and Alcaeus (early 6<sup>th</sup> cent. B.C.), who were both natives of the island of Lesbos (in the NE Aegean).
  - (iii) The Dorian tradition is the least influential of the three, and refers to the metrical forms originating from the Western Greek world, esp. Magna Graecia and the South/Western Peloponnese.
- These three once distinct traditions started to converge in the late sixth century B.C.; by the middle of the fifth century, poets could draw upon the full breadth of these inherited traditions as suited their purpose, genre and taste. Nevertheless, in most cases the separate characteristics of these streams can be seen distinctly in Greek (and Roman) poetry of subsequent centuries.

#### Aeolian/Aeolic:

The primary features of Aeolic metre can quickly be adumbrated:

- Its metrical forms are based upon a fixed number of syllables per line: as a result, the possibility of resolution / contraction / substitution (on the principle of  $- = \cup\cup$ ), seen regularly in Ionian metres, is not a feature of Aeolic metre (at least, in its original state).
- Instead, the metre proceeds by a fixed arrangement of *cola*, each of which are given distinct names based upon their scansion (see overleaf); most positions are fixed to be long *or* short.
- The only scope for freedom in the scansion of Aeolic verse is in the opening element(s) of several *cola*: in certain metrical forms the first two elements of the line are both *anceps*: this variable opening is known as the 'Aeolic base'. For instance, in the 'glyconic' colon, the first two elements are free:

$$\underline{\cup} \quad \underline{\cup} \quad - \quad \cup \quad \cup \quad - \quad \cup \quad -$$

The first two elements are thus often written  $\times \times \dots$

- In the case of Sappho and Alcaeus all combinations are possible for this opening base ( $\cup-$ ;  $-\cup$ ;  $--$ ;  $\cup\cup$ ) but in later poets the pairing of two shorts here is avoided. In this case it is conventional to mark the first two syllables instead as  $\circ \circ \dots$
- In some metrical forms this opening Aeolic base lacks its first syllable, and the metrical colon thus appears to open with a simple *anceps*.
- However this 'Aeolic base' scans, it must always be followed by a long.
- A common (but not requisite) feature of Aeolic *cola* is the presence of the choriamb ( $-\cup\cup-$ ) at its heart.

## A Checklist of Aeolic rhythms:

Glyconic	× × – ∪ ∪ – ∪ –
Pherecratean	× × – ∪ ∪ – –
Enneasyllable	× – × – ∪ ∪ – ∪ –
Telesillean	× – ∪ ∪ – ∪ –
Reizianum	× – ∪ ∪ – –
Phalaecean	× × – ∪ ∪ – ∪ – ∪ – –
Hipponactean	× × – ∪ ∪ – ∪ – –
Hagesichorean	× – ∪ ∪ – ∪ – –
Aristophanean	– ∪ ∪ – ∪ – –
Dodrans	– ∪ ∪ – ∪ –
Adonean	– ∪ ∪ – –
Penthemimer	× – ∪ – –
Lecythion	– ∪ – ∪ – ∪ –
Ithyphallic	– ∪ – ∪ – –
Ionic dimeter	∪ ∪ – – ∪ ∪ – –
Anacreontic	∪ ∪ – ∪ – ∪ – –

### Other cola (not Aeolic):

Paroemiac	× – ∪ ∪ – ∪ ∪ – –
Ibycean	– ∪ ∪ – ∪ ∪ – ∪ –
Praxillean	– ∪ ∪ – ∪ ∪ – ∪ ∪ – ∪ – –
Wilamowitzianus	– × – × – ∪ ∪ – (choriambic dimeter)
sometimes:	– ∪ ∪ – × – × –
Dochmiac	basically ∪ – ∪ ∪ – but potentially × ∪ ∪ ∪ × ∪ ∪
Kaibelianus	∪ ∪ × – ∪ – ∪ –
Penthemimer	× – ∪ – ×

## Dorian:

- The major poets representing the early Dorian tradition are Alcman (7<sup>th</sup> cent. B.C.) of Sparta, Stesichorus (c.640-555 B.C.) of Sicily, and Ibycus (late 6<sup>th</sup> cent. B.C.) of Calabria and Samos.
- The tradition's most celebrated exponents were from the subsequent century: Simonides (c.556-468 B.C.) and Bacchylides (5<sup>th</sup> cent. B.C.) of Ceos, and Pindar (c.522-443 B.C.) of Thebes. These poets skilfully united Dorian elements with the Aeolic and Ionian traditions.
- Dactylic rhythms are particularly common, stitched together in various forms (often with single long elements to fuse units).
- Asymmetric cola, regularly seen in Aeolic, are more rarely found in Dorian.
- Dactylo-epitrite is perhaps the most famous metre: the fusion of the dactylic colon or 'hemiepes' (– ∪ ∪ – ∪ ∪ –) with shorter (– ∪ ∪ – and ∪ ∪ –) 'dactylic' forms, as well as with shorter (– ∪ –) and longer (– ∪ – × – ∪ –) 'epitrite' forms, often in a bewilderingly complex arrangement. *Syllabae ancipites* are usually long.
- A typical example of dactylo-epitrite metre in full flow is provided by Pindar:

Pindar *Olympian* III.1-5:

1 Τυνδαρίδαις τε φιλοξείνοις ἀδεῖν καλλιπλοκάμῳ θ' Ἑλένα  
2 κλεινὰν Ἀκράγαντα γεραίρων εὐχομαι,  
3 Θήρωνος Ὀλυμπιονίκαν ὕμνον ὀρθώσας, ἀκαμαντοπόδων  
4 ἵππων ἄωτον. Μοῖσα δ' οὕτω ποι παρέστα μοι νεοσίγαλον εὐρόντι τρόπον  
5 Δωρίῳ φωνὰν ἐναρμόξαι πεδίλῳ.

1 – ∪ ∪ – ∪ ∪ – | – | – ∪ – | – | – ∪ ∪ – ∪ ∪ –  
2 – | – ∪ ∪ – ∪ ∪ – | – | – ∪ –  
3 – | – ∪ ∪ – ∪ ∪ – | – | – ∪ – | – | – ∪ ∪ – ∪ ∪ –  
4 – | – ∪ – | – | – ∪ – | – | – ∪ – | – | – ∪ ∪ – ∪ ∪ – |  
5 – ∪ – | – | – ∪ – | – | – ∪ – | –

– | – ∪ –

I pray that I may be pleasing to the hospitable sons of Tyndareus and to Helen of the beautiful hair while I honour renowned Acragas by raising my song in praise of Theron's victory at Olympia, won by the choicest of horses with untiring feet. With this in view the Muse stood beside me when I found a shining new method to fit the splendid voice of the victory procession to the Dorian sandal.

- To the Dorian tradition we owe the so-called ‘triadic’ arrangement of metrical structures, in which one (often elaborate) arrangement of various cola (a ‘strophe’, στροφή) is repeated by the same arrangement (an ‘antistrophe’, ἀντιστροφή) before a third, different arrangement of metrical structures marks off the exchange (an ‘epode’, ἐπώδός [sc. στροφή]).

### Greek Choral Lyric:

- The commonest area to encounter ‘lyric’ metres is the choral verse of drama, that is in the odes (στάσιμα, ‘stasima’) between spoken episodes in Attic tragedy and comedy.
- Unlike spoken dialogue, choral metre was (i) *sung*, (ii) *accompanied by music* and (iii) *accompanied by dancing*.
- About song (i) and music (ii) we know nothing with certainty about the fifth century. Some subsequent papyri (3<sup>rd</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> cent. B.C. onwards) present the vocal settings of parts of Euripides’ choruses, although it is keenly debated whether these reflect the tragedian’s original settings. For music, we know that the flute, cithara and pipes were among the primary instruments used. Experts have tentatively reconstruct the fragmentary evidence, e.g.:

#### EURIPIDES, *Orestes* 338–44

	[ κατολοφυρομαι ]	339
	] Π Ρ C    ρ φ π [	
[ κατολο]φυρομαι	ζ ματερος[ αιμασας ]	339–338
	] Ζ                    ι Ζ Ε Δ[	
[ οσαναβ]ακχευει	ζ ομεγα[ σολβοσου ]	338–340
	] Π Ρ C            ι Ζ [	
[ μονιμο]σεμβροτοις	ζ ανα[ δελαιφος ]	340–341
	] C Ρ Π C Ρ ζ φ C-[	
[ ω ω σ τ ι]ρακατουθοα[ε]τινα[ ξασδαι ]		342
	] φ π Ρ Π            ?[	
[ μ ω ω ν ]κατεκλυσεν	ζ ζ δ[εινων ]	343

322 ... τα - να - ὄν αι - θέρ' ἀμ - πάλ - λεςθ', αἰ - μα - τος  
339 κα - το - λο - φύ - ρο - μαι, κα - το - λο - φύ - ρο - μαι

323 τι - νύ - με - ναι δι - καν, τι - νύ - με - ναι φό - νον,  
338 μα - τέ - ρος αἰ - μα σās, ὁ σ' ἀ - να - βακ - χεῦ - ει·

324 κα - θι - κε - τεύ - ο - μαι κα - θι - κε - τεύ - ο - μαι,  
340 ὁ μέ - γας ὄλ - βος σὺ μό - νι - μος ἐμ - βρο - τοῖς·

325 τὸν Ἀ - γα - μέμ - νο - νοος  
341 ἀ - νὰ δὲ λαι - φος ὡος

326 γό - νον ἔ - ἀ - σὰτ' ἐκ - λα - θέσ - θαι λύσ - σαισ  
342 τις ἀ - κά - του θο - ἄς τι - νὰ - ξας δαι - μῶων

Pap. Vienna G 2315 (3<sup>rd</sup> cent. B.C.), E. Pöhlmann & M.L. West (edd.), *Documents of Ancient Greek Music* (2001) 12-13

- About dance (iii) we know nothing, other than the names of some bizarre moves.

- Still, considerable information can be gained from careful analysis of choral metre as transmitted in our manuscripts (even when scribes were baffled), since *the quantitative arrangement of syllables was the major organisational principle*.
- Choral songs were sung by the chorus or by one of the small group of actors who were allowed, by conventions of production, to sing.
- As we have seen in other metres, feet are subdivisions of metra, and are sometimes useful as units of analysis instead of metra. More commonly in choral metre, however, metra, which are subdivisions of cola, are the most useful unit of analysis; it is possible, however, for a given line (period) to be a single colon, which it is not necessary (or perhaps viable) to analyse in any smaller form. More than one colon can make a period, and an indefinite number of periods makes a strophe.
- One of the most difficult tasks in editing Greek choruses is determining how and where cola begin and end: the evidence provided by manuscripts is almost invariably misleading, since (i) it is unclear how the Attic tragedians arranged their choruses in written form, and (ii) the textual transmission of these choruses, since knowledge of their structure soon lapsed, resulting in their being written in an arrangement bearing little relation to their true metrical form. Colometry – the arrangement of such cola – did not reach a passable level of competence until the 20<sup>th</sup> cent.
- The structure of a strophe is regularly repeated in a so-called antistrophe in Greek choral lyric. The metrical identity (or rather equivalence) of these two stanzas is called *responsion*.
- Responsion is usually denoted by the symbol ~, e.g. ‘Soph. *Ant.* 332-41 ~ 342-51’.
- Often Greek choral episodes are triadic in structure (after the Dorian tradition), with the strophe and antistrophe followed by an epode of a different metrical structure (but often the same broad metrical character).
- N.B. The Dorian origin of choral episodes is regularly reflected by the use of the Doric dialect (in which inherited  $\bar{a}$  remains as  $\bar{\alpha}$  throughout, rather than  $\eta$ ).
- By the fourth century B.C. the importance of choral episodes had decreased, and manuscripts ceased to transcribe the choral elements (so our knowledge of the medium vanishes).
- The various broad metrical categories of Greek odes number at least eight in number: aeolic, ionic, iambic, dactylic, dactylo-epitrite, anapaestic, dochmiac and cretic-paeonic.
- Period end is marked by *brevis in longo* or hiatus.
- Sometimes, instead of pauses and the concomitant *brevis in longo*, synaphea is observed, and therefore adjacent lines are treated as a metrical unit in scansional terms: elision or hiatus, as well as word division, can thus occur over lines. When word division occurs, typically only one syllable carries into the next colon: this licence, sometimes known as ‘dovetailing’, is marked with  $\int$ . Often synaphea is observed in random lines and not according to an obvious principle.
- In order to make a start on understanding the metre of a given chorus, the advice is to go to a competent recent edition (i.e. OCT or Teubner: Page / West of Aeschylus; Lloyd-Jones & Wilson / Dawe of Sophocles; Diggle of Euripides) and take a look at the *conspectus metrorum* generally found at the close of the edition. In many cases this will provide a scansion of each line (and pairs in responsion) as a crib; turning to the relevant lines in the text, you may well find that strophe, antistrophe and epode (etc.) are explicitly marked as such, which should help with orientation. Although it is possible that the colometry chosen by the editor(s) is open to dispute, there should be a defensible arrangement of cola (single or plural) to each printed line.

A specimen choral ode: Eur. *Hec.* 444-54 ~ 455-65 (aeolo-choriambic)

444-54	~	455-65
1 αὔρα, ποντιάς αὔρα,		1 ἡ νάσων, ἀλήρει
2 ἄτε ποντοπόρους κομί-		2 κόπα πεμπομέναν τάλαι-
3 ζεις θαὸς ἀκάτους ἐπ' οἶδμα λίμνας,		3 ναν, οἰκτρὰν βιοτὰν ἔχουσαν οἴκοις,
4 ποῖ με τὰν μελέαν πορεύ-		4 ἔνθα πρωτόγονός τε φοῖ-
5 σεις; τῷ δουλόσυνος πρὸς οἶ-		5 νιξ δάφνα θ' ἱεροῦς ἀνέ-
6 κον κτηθεῖς' ἀφίξομαι; ἦ		6 σχε πτόρθους Λατοῖ φίλα ὦ-
7 Δωρίδος ὄρμον αἴας;		7 δῖνος ἄγαλμα Δίας;
8 ἦ Φθιάδος, ἔνθα τὸν		8 σὺν Δηλιάσιν τε κού-
9 καλλίστων ὑδάτων πατέρα		9 ραῖσιν Ἀρτέμιδος θεᾶς
10 φασὶν Ἀπιδανὸν πεδία λιπαίνειν;		10 χρυσέαν ἄμπυκα τόξα τ' εὐλόγησω;

1	— —   — υ υ —   —	pherecratean
2*	— ≡   — υ υ —   υ —	glyconic f
3*	— ≡   — υ υ —   υ — υ — —	phalaecean
4	— υ   — υ υ —   υ —	glyconic f
5	— —   — υ υ —   υ —	glyconic f
6	— — — υ   — υ υ —	wilamowitzianus f
7	— υ υ —   υ — —	aristophanean
8	—   — υ υ —   υ —	telesillean f
9*	— υ   — υ υ —   υ ≡	glyconic
10	— υ   — υ υ —   υ ≡ υ — —	phalaecean

### Marching Anapaests:

- When choruses moved (typically on entering and leaving the stage) they often employed a metre that reflected the rhythm of military marches, namely the anapaest [*Märschanapäste*].
- The form used was the anapaestic dimeter (with medial caesura), often marked by catalexis.
- This is called a 'recitative' metre (παρακαταλογή), halfway between spoken and sung, and probably accommodated by pipes:

υ υ - | υ υ - || υ υ - | υ υ -  
- ω | - ω || - ω | - -

often with catalectic closure ... ω - | -

- The metre is also found in lyric contexts, especially within laments [*Klaganapäste*].
- E.g.: Soph. *Ant.* 834-5: ἄλλὰ θεός τοι καὶ θεογεννῆς  
ἡμεῖς δὲ βροτοὶ καὶ θνητογενεῖς.

### Why not scan the following?

τάδε μὲν Περσῶν τῶν οἰχομένων  
Ἑλλάδ' ἔς αἶαν πιστὰ καλεῖται,  
καὶ τῶν ἀφνεῶν μαὶ πολυχρύσων  
ἑδράνων φύλακες κατὰ πρεσβείαν  
οὓς αὐτὸς ἄναξ Ξέρξης βασιλεὺς  
Δαρειογενῆς  
εἴλετο χώρας ἐφορεύειν.

Aesch. *Pers.* 1-7

λεπαδοτεμαχοσελαχογαλεο—  
κρανιολειψανοδριμυποτριμματο—  
σιλφιοτυρομελιτοκατακεχυμενο—  
κιχλεπικοσσυφοφαττοπεριστερα—  
λεκτρυονοπτοκεφαλιοκιγκλοπε—  
λειολαγωοσιραιοβαφητραγα—  
λοπτερυγών. σὺ δὲ ταῦτ' ἀκροασάμε—  
νος ταχέως ταχέως λαβὲ τρύβλιον.

Ar. *Eccl.* 1169-76

The Pronomos Vase (c. 410-400 B.C.)

