

Greek and Latin Metre X

Odder (mostly Horatian) metres

The Aeolian Legacy:

We encountered in Lecture VIII Aeolian metre in its original (Lesbian) setting, in which Sappho and Alcaeus deployed a great variety of metrical forms, mostly of a lyric (that is, non-stichic) nature, and particularly in the sapphic and alcaic stanzas (Lecture IX). Aeolian rhythms were employed across Greek literature in later centuries, both as important building blocks in Greek choral lyric but also as self-standing elements in more experimental Hellenistic poetry, often in stichic form. Their employment in Latin metre is broad but almost entirely stichic in character.

1) Asclepiads:

- One of the most common elements in later stichic poetry that was drawn from the Aeolian tradition was the asclepiad, so called because regularly employed by the poet Asclepiades (3rd cent. B.C.), of whom only a few epigrams survive.
- The Aeolic nature of the rhythm of the typical asclepiad can be easily shown by comparison with the glyconic:

× × | – ∪ ∪ – | ∪ –

The form of the basic asclepiad is the glyconic lengthened by the insertion of a choriambic element (–∪∪–) as follows (it is sometimes known as the ‘lesser asclepiad’):

× × | – ∪ ∪ – ∩ | – ∪ ∪ – | ∪ –

E.g. Alc. *fr.* 112.10 ἄνδρες γὰρ πόλιος πύργος ἀρείσιος

- This is often found in a yet longer form, extended by the introduction of another choriambic element. This is known as the ‘greater asclepiad’:

× × | – ∪ ∪ – | – ∪ ∪ – ∩ | – ∪ ∪ – | ∪ –

E.g. Alc. *fr.* 50.1 καὶ τὰς πόλλα παθοίσσας κεφάλας κάκχέέ μοι μύρον.

- As we have seen with other Aeolian rhythms, the opening Aeolic base is in reality a pair of anacipitia that can be long or short, but not both short (i.e. οο).
- In the transfer of the metre from Greek to Latin, caesurae were regularised where marked above and the Aeolic base was bolstered such that it was always spondaic; if the transmitted text is sound at *Carm.* I.15.24 and 36, this poem also allows a trochee in the Aeolic base.
- You are most likely to encounter asclepiads in the multifarious ways that Horace adopts them in his lyric poetry:

2) Horatian Lyric continued:

- Horace wrote 103 odes plus the *Carmen Saeculare*, of which (as seen in Lecture IX) 37 are in alcaics and 25 are in sapphics; 34 odes are one of five different 'asclepiad' metres.
- These five different metres consist of different arrangements of only four metrical building blocks: the (lesser) asclepiad, the greater asclepiad, the glyconic and its catalectic counterpart the pherecratean.

a) The First Asclepiad (*Carm.* I.1, III.30, IV.8)

- This metre simply consists of the (lesser) asclepiad arranged κατὰ στίχόν:

— — | — ∪ ∪ — ∴ | — ∪ ∪ — | ∪ — repeated *ad lib.*

E.g. Maecenas atavis edite regibus,
o et praesidium et dulce decus meum
sunt quos curriculo puluerem Olympicam
collegisse iuuat, metaque feruidis... Hor. *Carm.* I.1.1-4

- Caesura (or diaeresis) is regular after the first choriamb.

b) The Second Asclepiad (*Carm.* I.11, 18, IV.10)

- This metre simply consists of the greater asclepiad arranged κατὰ στίχόν:

— — | — ∪ ∪ — ∴ | — ∪ ∪ — ∴ | — ∪ ∪ — | ∪ — repeated *ad lib.*

E.g. nullam, Vare, sacra uite prius seueris arborem
circa mite solum Tiburis et moenia Catili.
siccis omnia nam dura deus proposuit, neque
mordaces aliter diffugiunt sollicitudines. Hor. *Carm.* I.18.1-4

- Caesura (or diaeresis) is regular after both the first and second choriamb.
- Second asclepiads were adopted earlier in one Catullian poem (30) but the two caesurae are not always observed, e.g.:

si tu oblitus es, at di memine|runt, meminit Fides,
quae te ut paeniteat postmodo fac|ti faciet tui. Cat. 30.11-12

c) The Third Asclepiad (*Carm.* I.3, 13, 19, 36, III.9, 14, 19, 24, 25, 28, IV.1, 3):

- This metre consists of four alternating lines: glyconic, lesser asclepiad, glyconic, lesser asclepiad:

— — | — ∪ ∪ — | ∪ —
— — | — ∪ ∪ — ∴ | — ∪ ∪ — | ∪ —
— — | — ∪ ∪ — | ∪ —
— — | — ∪ ∪ — ∴ | — ∪ ∪ — | ∪ — repeated *ad lib.*

The Ionian Legacy:

3) Dactylic (and iambic / trochaic) variants:

- Dactylic rhythms are relatively common outside their original Ionian contexts of hexameters and elegiac couplets: dactylo-epitrite runs were common in metres of Dorian origin; dactylic elements regularly crop up in Greek choral lyric; and dactylic sequences were employed as elements in subsequent Hellenistic poetry, from which they duly filtered into various lyric sequences in Latin from Horace onwards. The various forms of the last primarily require focus:
- (i) the alternation of dactylic hexameters with tetrameters (Hor. *Carm.* I.7, 28; *Epod.* 12):

- ɔ̄ | - ɔ̄ | - ∴ ɔ̄ | - ɔ̄ | - ɔ̄ | - -
 - ɔ̄ | - ɔ̄ | - ∴ ɔ̄ | - - *repeated ad lib.*

E.g. quo nos cumque feret melior fortuna parente,
 ibimus, o socii comitesque. Hor. *Carm.* I.7.25-6

This is known as the first archilochian, since it is also found in the poetry of Archilochus (mid-7th cent. B.C.). The dactylic tetrameter on its own is sometimes called the alcmanian (after Alcman, 7th cent. B.C.).

- (ii) the alternation of dactylic hexameters with the dactylic hemiepes (*Carm.* IV.7):

- ɔ̄ | - ɔ̄ | - ∴ ɔ̄ | - ɔ̄ | - ɔ̄ | - -
 - ɔ̄ | - ɔ̄ | - *repeated ad lib.*

E.g. diffugere niues, redeunt iam gramina campis
 arboribusque comae Hor. *Carm.* IV.7.1-2

Contraction is not employed in the hemiepes.

- (iii) the alternation of dactylic hexameters with the iambic dimeter (*Epod.* 14, 15):

- ɔ̄ | - ɔ̄ | - ∴ ɔ̄ | - ɔ̄ | - ɔ̄ | - -
 ɔ̄ - ɔ̄ - | ɔ̄ ∴ - ɔ̄ - *repeated ad lib.*

E.g. nox erat et caelo fulgebat luna sereno
 inter minora sidera Hor. *Epod.* 15.1-2

This metrical arrangement, as well as (iv) are often classed as ‘pythiambic’.

- (iv) the alternation of dactylic hexameters with the *pure* iambic trimeter (*Epod.* 16):

- ɔ̄ | - ɔ̄ | - ∴ ɔ̄ | - ɔ̄ | - ɔ̄ | - -
 ɔ̄ - ɔ̄ - | ɔ̄ ∴ - ɔ̄ ∴ - | ɔ̄ - ɔ̄ - *repeated ad lib.*

E.g. altera iam teritur bellis ciuilibus aetas
suis et ipsa Roma uiribus ruit.

Hor. *Epod.* 16.1-2

In certain metres dactylic and iambic elements are fused together in two parts of the same line:

- (v) the alternation of dactylic hexameters with a line comprising an iambic dimeter followed by the dactylic hemiepes (an iambelegus) (*Epod.* 13):

— ̄ | — ̄ | — ∴ ̄ | — ̄ | — ̄ | — —
 ̄ — ̄ — | ̄ — ̄ ∴ | — ̄ | — ̄ | — *repeated ad lib.*

E.g. te manet Assaraci tellus, quam frigida parui
fundunt Scamandri flumina lubricus et Simois.

Hor. *Epod.* 13.13-14

This is known as the second archilochean.

- (vi) the alternation of an iambic trimeter with a line comprising a dactylic hemiepes followed by an iambic dimeter (a reverse iambelegus) (*Epod.* 11):

̄ — ̄ — | ̄ ∴ — ̄ ∴ — | ̄ — ̄ —
 — ̄ | — ̄ | ∴ ∴ ∴ ̄ — ̄ — | ̄ — ̄ — *repeated ad lib.*

E.g. simul calentis inuerecundus deus
feruidiore mero arcana promorat loco.

Hor. *Epod.* 11.13-14

This is known as the third archilochean.

- (vii) the alternation of a line comprising a dactylic tetrameter followed by a trochaic clausula (also known as an ithyphallic) with a catalectic iambic trimeter (*Carm.* I.4)

— ̄ | — ̄ | — ∴ ̄ | — ̄ ∴ | — ̄ — ̄ — —
 ̄ — ̄ — | ̄ ∴ — ̄ ∴ — | ̄ — — *repeated ad lib.*

E.g. soluitur acris hiems grata uice ueris et Fauoni,
trahuntque siccas machinae carinas.

Hor. *Carm.* I.4.1-2

This is known as the fourth archilochean.

- (viii) In one *Ode* (II.18) a catalectic trochaic dimeter (also known as a lecythion) is alternated with a catalectic iambic trimeter:

— ̄ — ̄ | — ̄ —
 ̄ — ̄ — | ̄ ∴ — ̄ ∴ — | ̄ — —

The anacreontic on its own is not found in Latin poetry except in the poetry of Claudian (5th cent. A.D.).

5) Galliambics:

- A very odd metre, associated with the followers of Cybele (Galli), originates from an anaclastic and catalectic version of the ionic (vv---) dimeter/tetrameter:

v v - v | - v - - | v v - v | - v -

- However, the latter half of the line almost always has resolution of its antepenultimate syllable (the last syllable often being *brevis in longo*):

v v - v - v - - :| v v - v v v -

- Nevertheless, contraction and resolution are possible in several places, such that the full scheme of the line is:

vv vv v vv v vv vv :| vv vv v vv v -

- Word division (diaeresis) is regular at the mid-point of the line.
- The galliambic is attested in only a very small number of cases, and only one complete poem survives in the metre, Catullus 63 (93 galliambic lines κατὰ στιχόν):

super alta uectus Attis celeri rate maria,
Phrygium ut nemus citato cupide pede tetigit,
adiitque opaca siluis redimita loca deae, Cat. 63.1-3

- A particularly resolved and contracted line respectively are as follows:

ego mulier, ego adolescens, ego ephebus, ego puer 63
iam iam dolet quod egi, iam iamque paenitet 73

Sotadeans:

- A relatively rare metre occasionally attested in Greek and Latin is the sotadean, named after the Hellenistic poet Sotades (3rd cent. B.C.).

- - | v v - - | v v :| - v | - v - -

- The lines is probably best analysed as an (always spondaic) Aeolic base followed by an ionic metron then the anacreontic (that is an ionic trimeter with anaclasis between the second and third metra).

- An alternative analysis would be to posit *ionici a maiore* (not *a minore*), i.e. – – ◡ ◡, as the base:

– – ◡ ◡ | – – ◡ ◡ ∴ | – ◡ – ◡ – –

i.e. two normal *ionici a maiore* followed by an ithyphallic.

- Stichic sotadeans are found among the fragments of pre-Augustan poets (Ennius, Varro), in Petronius and once in Martial:

has cum gemina compede dedicat catenas,

Saturne, tibi Zoilus, anulos priores

Mart. III.29

- It is fair to assume that they were of a ‘low’ literary and linguistic register.

One Remaining Horatian metre:

- *Carm.* I.8 is an experimental exercise in Aeolic metre building upon elements found in the sapphic stanza. For this reason the metre of this ode (not found elsewhere, so scarcely worth naming) is sometimes called the greater sapphic.
- A short aeolic length is alternated with a longer version:

– ◡ ◡ – | ◡ – –

– ◡ – – | – ◡ ◡ – ∴ | – ◡ ◡ – | ◡ – –

If we compare this scheme with the sapphic hendecasyllable

– ◡ – – | – ◡ ◡ – | ◡ – –

we may observe that the first line lacks the first four syllables of the hendecasyllable, whereas the second line is the hendecasyllable expanded by a choriambic second metron.

E.g.

Lydia, dic per omnis
hoc deos uere, Sybarin cur properes amando

Hor. *Carm.* I.8.1-2

“But you’re still much farther ahead; I’m just asclepiad.” (M. Adams)

FIN
