The Outskirts of <u>Iambos</u>

Panel Proposal

While the genre of <u>Iambos</u> is most commonly thought of as an archaic Greek phenomenon, iambic poetics seems to rear its ugly head throughout classical antiquity and beyond. In the typical literary-historical accounts, <u>Iambos</u> proper is deployed to describe the work of Archilochus, Hipponax, Semonides and other, more shadowy characters who inhabit the archaic Greek poetic landscape. Those poets who do compose iambic verses in later periods, e.g., Callimachus, Horace, etc., are seen purely as imitators or adapters—their archaic models contribute significantly to the interpretation of their iambic poetry. Of course, in the case of Callimachus and Horace, this derivative status is based on the poets' own words (cf. Call. <u>Ia</u>. 1.1-4 and Hor. <u>Ep</u>. 1.19.23-25). The question arises, then, why focus attention on the derivative nature of a poem? Is this simply a symptom of the anxiety of influence or does it have a more integral role to play in the iambic mode? Given the liminal character of the archaic Greek iambographers, this panel examines such derivativeness as constitutive aspect of <u>Iambos</u> from the earliest period. In short, the archaic Greek iambographers tendency to showcase, in their poetry, their own faults and failings, their distance from Greek cultural and poetic norms, can be seen as an essential feature of the iambic mode and, as such, is used and transformed in subsequent iambicizing texts.

This panel will investigate the implications of this self-consciously distant aspect of iambic poetics by looking for ways in which the iambic mode is marshaled in texts that seemingly lie outside the purview of what is traditionally considered authentic <u>Iambos</u> (i.e., limited to that composed in archaic Greece). Scholars have begun to investigate the variegated spectra of the iambic mode (e.g., Cavarzere, Aloni, and Barchiesi 2001, Rosen 2007, and Worman 2008), but much work remains. In an effort to begin to fill in the gap, the panelists will discuss the iambic aspects of a wide variety of texts, ranging from Xenophanes to Julian. In the end, this panel will have swept through the back alleys of the iambic mode and illuminated some of the dark corners of iambic influence.

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Xenophanes, the Cercopes, and Pindar's Beautiful Monkey

In this paper I argue first that that the so-called "*sillos*" is a para-iambic genre with roots in Sicily and the western Greek colonial context and then that this type of performance lies behind Pindar's statement – notoriously resistant to interpretation – about the beautiful monkey in *Pythian* 2.

The Colophonian poet Xenophanes seems to have moved to eastern Sicily and southern Italy some time in the mid to late sixth century. He was known even in antiquity as a bitter critic of traditional morality. Thus he earned the epithet "castigator of Homer" from Timon, a later writer of the very genre, called "silloi" (sometimes translated 'parodies' or 'lampoons'), in which Xenophanes himself had written. The Suda says that *sillainein*, the verbal form of *sillos*, means "to distort the mouth in mockery, to throw out insults through the eyes; for a 'sillos' is a 'mimic', either that or it means 'blame', but also 'badmouthing' and 'scoffing'". Aelian fancifies an etymology of Silenus from *sillainein*, and connects the genre directly to the performance of *psogos.*

Sillos is also, as it turns out, one of the proper names given to the Cercopes, mischevious twin bandits who roam outside the boundaries of society, living as tricksters, making obscene jokes, lawless and deceptive. They were depicted in monumental art in – and only in – Paestum and Selinus. Woodford (1992) notes their unusual popularity in various media in western Greece before dropping out of the artistic repertoire in the fourth century. Furthermore, our literary sources suggest these monkey-like beings have their origin in an iambic context: they were once outside of society, had *kakoêtheia*, performed obscene harangues, were featured in at least one work entitled *Iamboi*, and were eponymous to the genre made famous by Xenophanes and Timon for its blameful invective and irreverent criticism. The one named Sillos may have been particularly well-known for making faces at people, mocking, insulting, and blaming them. The fate of these foul-mouthed brigands was to be, in one version, turned to stone, and in another, turned into monkeys and placed on the eponymous island of Pithecussae. The pictorial record confirms the apelike characteristics of these iambic figures. Since there are no native simians in the Greek world, what we are left with is a connection in a western Greek context between the characteristics of apes and those of the iambic-like genre to which they were related.

This is an important insight for interpreting a notoriously difficult passage in Pindar's second Pythian ode, for Hieron the tyrant of Syracuse. Following a discussion of Archilochus (*Pyth.* 2.52-56), the introducion of an ape, a fox, and a wolf in the second half of the poem open the possibility of an iambic interpretation for the notoriously difficult to interpret so-called "Castoreion". The ape has in particular caused problems, not least because of its enigmatic context and the scholia's insistence that the ape is Bacchylides. What is said about the ape is simply this (*Pyth*. 2.72-73): "The ape is beautiful to children, always beautiful." Hubbard has recently reemphasized that, in spite of Pindar's literary rejection of Archilochean *psogos* earlier

in the ode, there is no reason he cannot use later an almost sub-literary trope from Archilochean fabular ainos in constructing his own "affirmative, encomiastic composition" (Hubbard 1990, 77). The usual interpretation of the ape, informed by comedy and later sources, is as a clever flatterer or trickster who has the ability to deceive naïve children (Connors 2004). However, it is the fox who is, in fact, the very figure of deceptive flattery in *Pythian* 2; Hubbard notes that it would be very strange if Pindar had meant for both animals, ape and fox, to be clever, deceptive tricksters. However, attempts to associate the stupid, ugly ape with this or that various historical person or category of people miss the point; what is needed is an understanding of the specifically western Greek associations of apes and *iambos* so as to interpret the passage in context. Ultimately, Pindar's fabular ape is a "negative foil", just as is the myth of Ixion central to the first half of the poem, representing the iambic performance mode and its inappropriateness in an epincian context.

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Iambic Parody of the Sacred: Genre and Religion in Herodas

Herodas' *Mimiambs* directly appropriate the iambic mode; however, interpreting the nature and function of Herodas' claim to *iambos* proves particularly problematic. The *Mimiambs* are idiosyncratic in form and content and, additionally, little is known about the context in which his poetry was produced, performed, and/or read. In part to compensate for these difficulties, scholars regularly apply a simple arithmetic to explain Herodas' *Mimiambs*. The poems as we have them result from (and therefore can be interpreted in terms of) generic addition: one part mime plus one part *iambos* produces *mimiamb* (e.g. Cunningham 1971, 12-17). However, the question of what exactly in the *Mimiambs* is mimic and what is iambic is not always clear. This is due in large part to the difficulty of our evidence about early Greek mime (and to a lesser extant *iambos*); but even more damaging is the fact that mime and *iambos* likely shared many key features, notably parody, obscenity, dialogue, and mockery of women. Indeed, if Herodas' output had been identified with the title "*Iamboi*", it is possible that no one would be more troubled with that label than with the attested "*Mimiamboi*".

The dominant reading of the *Mimiambs* as realistic slices of daily life, a view crystallized in the decades immediately following their publication in 1891, has in recent years been thoroughly supplanted by a consensus which locates the *Mimiambs* in the high literature of Alexandria. (Most recently Fountoulakis has argued, upon the fertile critical substrate of poem 8, that Herodas "tries to persuade his audience of the high artistic status of his poetry" [319]. See also Hunter 1993, Mastromarco 1984.) While such views have admirably illuminated problems of performance, they go astray in assuming that generic mixture was a quality indicative of an Alexandrian aesthetic to which Herodas aspired. In this paper, I show how approaches to Herodas' poetry as a hybrid genre are fundamentally flawed and argue, in contrast, that the *Mimiambs* develop and re-envision a specifically iambic mode. This mode, moreover, had a very particular social function. Through analysis of Hellenistic convention of titling, I argue that the term *Mimiamboi* does not indicate a "mixing" of genres, but rather is itself a joke about the nature of Herodas' development of *iambos*. Building upon this generic reorientation towards the poem, I focus on Herodas' parody of religious ritual, a central tool of the iambic mode. I show how analysis of parody in *Mimiambs* 4 and 8 explains key features of each poem that have consistently confounded modern interpretations. Finally, I turn briefly to the question of audience in order to suggest how the religious parody of poems 4 and 8 indicates an audience made up not of the elite literati of the court (as almost all scholars currently assume), but rather a target audience composed primarily of the highly literate but non-elite professional classes in the mid-3rd century BCE. For such an audience, the mockery of Herodas' *Mimiambs* is an aggressive gesture of self-definition and class consciousness directed against elite court poetry which so often defines for modern scholars "Alexandrian" poetics.

The bulk of the paper focuses on analysis of *Mimiambs* 4 and 8. Scholars have focused in poem 4 especially on the central section of artistic description (Cunningham 1971, 127. Similarly Headlam and Knox 1922, Zanker 2006). Building on Positano (1973) and contra Cunningham, I argue that the apparent *ekphrasis* of poem 4 is part of the larger religious frame when the poem is interpreted in terms of parody. Through comparison with religious parody in archaic *iambos* (e.g. Archilochus fr. 182-3, Semonides fr. 24, Hipponax fr. 3-3a, 32, 25, 38, 40, 92), I show how

Herodas develops this distinctively iambic mode of mockery in *Mimiamb* 4. Likewise, in *Mimiamb* 8, the role of Dionysus and the *askoliasmos* is the touchstone for interpretations of Herodas' poetic program (e.g. Rosen 1989, Fountoulakis 2002). In contrast to such assessments of Herodas' generic self-consciousness, I show how the Dionysiac scenario of *Mimiamb* 8, like the treatment of religion in poem 4, utilizes an iambic mode of parody in order to achieve its humorous effect.

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The Iambic Voice of Catullus 8

The first two iambic (in the metrical sense) poems in the Catullan corpus, 4 and 8, exhibit some problematic characteristics. Poem 4 strangely reports the speech of a little boat, about to embark upon retirement—hardly the kind of material typical of the archaic iambic tradition. Poem 8 elegantly details the poet-persona's now-failed relationship with a woman. Again, not exactly the stuff of Iambos. Both poems have in common, however, an arresting use of narrative voice; i.e., both poems force the reader to come to terms with the purported speaker of the poem. While it is not my purpose to read poem 4 in detail, it is important to mention it as an example of the way in which Catullus re-imagines the iambic tradition. As many have noted, poem 4 has a distinctly Hellenistic tone, one not too distant from that employed by Callimachus in his Iambi. The strange ventriloquism of Callimachus' seventh Iamb offers an interesting parallel for such an impossibly "epigrammatic" speaker and highlights the way in which voice figures in later, iambic poems. In Catullus 8, composed in choliambics, the meter of Hipponax and that featured by Hipponax' most famous imitator, Callimachus, although not put in the mouth of a speaking object, Catullus' poet-persona is nonetheless called into question. In a way, Catullus signals his Callimachean debt by deploying his choliambs for such a non-Hipponactean effect, the description of his own failing masculinity. Catullus, like Callimachus before him, signals his affinity to the archaic poet precisely through the distance he creates between his poetry and that of Hipponax. Still, given the pervasive influence of the tone and material of archaic Greek iambic in the rest of the corpus (cf. Heyworth 2001), why has Catullus chosen to write such uniambic, albeit Callimachean, iambic poems?

It is the contention of this paper that Catullus is not simply signaling his adherence to a Callimachean iambic precedent in this poem, but that he is injecting his voice into the iambic tradition writ large. The author's self-apostrophe requires readers to reflect upon the voice of the poet-persona of the poem, a reflection encouraged by the circling rhetoric of the poem. In Judith Butler's (1990) terms, this voice is performative, i.e., it highlights the fact that it is part of an on-going construction of the Catullan ego represented in this poem. It is precisely this performative poet-persona that characterizes the predominant speaking voice of archaic Iambos. Whereas the archaic iambographers represented themselves as violently active men, their actions often were a response to their masculine faults. Moreover, the very violent acts they depict themselves reveling in reveal their problematic relationship to archaic Greek social norms. This social distance, enhanced by the song culture of archaic Greece, is transformed in the book culture of Hellenistic Greece and Rome. An archaic audience member might reflect on Archilochus fr. 196a W with a hearty "Only in Iambos!" Catullus, in poem 8, creates an iambic distance precisely by forcing his reader to ask, "Who is this Catullus and what's he doing in this choliambic poem?"

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Discipline and Punish: Iambic Violence and Invective in Horace and Lucilius

Satire is a violent genre that understands itself as explicitly related to Iambic. It is filled with images of slashing and biting (Keane 2006: 4, 45, 49-64). It is a discourse that is, as Horace 1.4 says, widely perceived as an assault. The origin of this imagery can be traced to Lucilius. His satire not only ridiculed vice but directly assaulted the political enemies of his patron, Scipio Aemilianus. Lucilian satire was a weapon in the cultural warfare that sought to define what it meant to be a <u>civis</u> <u>romanus</u>, a <u>bonus</u>, a <u>nobilis</u>. It was also an invective discourse that stigmatized deviations from those norms and did not shrink from naming names.

The connection between iambic poetry and satire was openly acknowledged. Apuleius refers to Lucilius in his <u>Apologia</u> with the epithet <u>iambicus</u>, and Lucilius directly refers to Archilochus (27.732). The importance of iambic poetry to satire is also underlined by Horace. In <u>Satires</u> 2.3.11-12, Damasippus accuses the poet of wasting space in packing Plato, Menander, Eupolis, and Archilochus to take with him to the Sabine farm.

Horatian satire, however, differs from its Lucilian model in important respects. It seldom attaches the names of prominent citizens to its objects of attack and protests that it does not seek to attack at all. It is often the butt of its own jokes. In this paper, then, I demonstrate that Horatian satire represents an internalization of the genre's traditional iambic violence as a discourse of self-formation.

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Hairacles and the Laughing Cercopes

In the surviving fragments of his poetry, Archilochus twice juxtaposes monkeys, laughter and exposed bottoms – once in his version of the fable of the fox who laughed at the Ape King, who was trapped with his derriere sticking up in the air (frr. 185-87), and again in his evocation of the story of the Cercopes (fr. 178; cp. Sem. fr. 34). The Cercopes were monkey-like dwarves who stole Heracles' club and lion-skin, but were caught by the hero, who strung them upside-down over his shoulder. When they laughed at his swarthy rear, however, he gave up his anger and released the mischievous thieves. In both stories, the combination of humanoid form, mockery and the exposure of someone's naughty-bits captures the riotous spirit of much of archaic *iambos* (now thematized around the Cercopes by Rosen 2007). I will explore the pairing of Archilochus and the Cercopes in three late instantiations of the iambic mode: Dio's "First Tarsian" Oration (*Or.* 33), Lucian's *Pseudologistes*, and Julian's *Misopogon*. These texts share two striking narrative tricks: first, the author dons the mantle of Archilochus through the assertion of some biographical point of contact ("Archilochus was like this and so am I."); and second, someone is insulted as being like one of the Cercopes (in Dio: the Tarsians; in Lucian: the unnamed target of his abuse; in Julian: himself). In an era in which the form of *iambos* had fallen out of fashion after its Hellenisitic popularity, these authors declare the iambic intentions of their oratorical prose texts by creating a connection with the most famous poet of archaic *iambos*. Biography, thus, establishes tone. And given the increasingly rigid rules of decorum against outbursts of passionate anger in the post-philosphic world of the Roman Empire, these imperial authors could also foist some responsibility for their abusive tone onto their models. And finally, the impish reputation of the Cercopes also suggests the potential for a comical defusing of their iambic aggression.

In addition to recalling a particular iambic narrative, stories about the Cercopes bring us face to face with the human body deprived of all trappings of civilizing norms. The Cercopes see the world upside-down figuratively and literally as they are forced to look at Heracles' hairy rear. Through them, the civilized body is uncovered and a shameful, private part is fetishized and put on public display. These naughty little gnomes see the heroic form at its least heroic, and as childlike imps they themselves only "ape" the human body. References to the Cercopes, therefore, immediately focus these iambic texts on the degraded, dissected and reconfigured body (cp. Worman 2008). The three authors I will discuss indeed present the human body as the problematic centerpiece of their texts. Dio fixates on some bodily sound made too commonly and too casually by the Tarsians (Kokkinia 2007 argues that Dio refers to flatulence, though previous commentators have assumed that this sound – whatever it may be – to emanated from the mouth); Lucian attacks his enemy as a bad sophist and as promiscuous as famous old Timarchus, and even imagines this man's tongue and beard seceding from his body in order to bring formal charges against him; and after Julian's subjects in Antioch had teasingly told him to plait ropes from his long, bushy beard, he responds to their taunts with intimate details about the lice that run through his whiskers and the only time he ever vomited.

According to Kristeva's theory of the abject, such magnifications of bodily noises, functions and parts in stark isolation should elicit feelings of horror that bring to mind the disgusting reality of mortal decay. But the Cercopes, who look an inverted world squarely in the eye and laugh, save us from such angst. Their example of human parody frees us and frees these

texts from the full brunt of archaic *iambos*' murderous efficacy. Dio, Lucian and Julian, therefore, derive their iambic poetics by aligning themselves with Archilochus, and they temper the Archilochus' fury, inappropriate for Roman elites, with the laughter of the Cercopes.

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