

Aesthetic and Ethical Criticism in Herodas' *Mimiamboi*

BY

Benjamin M. Slagowski

Submitted to the graduate degree program in Classics and the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

---

Chairperson Pamela Gordon

---

Emma Scioli

---

Michael Shaw

Date Defended: April 22, 2013

The Thesis Committee for Benjamin M. Slagowski  
certifies that this is the approved version of the following thesis:

Aesthetic and Ethical Criticism in Herodas' *Mimiamboi*

---

Chairperson Pamela Gordon

Date approved: April 22, 2013

## Abstract

This paper examines Herodas' interest in aesthetic and ethical criticism throughout his *mimiamboi*. This serious concern with such elevated topics is appropriate, and perhaps even expected, given Herodas' clear effort in the eighth *mimiamb* to locate his new genre of poetry within the iambic tradition in general, and the Hipponactean strain of *iambos* in particular. Analysis of the fourth, sixth, seventh, and eighth mimes demonstrates a keen awareness of the poet's craft, poetic techniques, and contemporary aesthetic values. While playing the role of aesthetic critic, Herodas promotes an ideal reader of his poetry, and instructs this reader in how best to contemplate his poems. The first, third, and fifth mimes all show an interest in pronouncing statements dealing with ethical behavior and elevated philosophical concerns. As an ethical critic, Herodas does not issue clear statements establishing or promoting proper ethical conduct, but foregrounds topics of great general interest to a wide Hellenistic audience. Ultimately it shall become evident that Herodas' poetry concerns itself with the same elite, intellectual issues that proved of interest to his contemporaries.

## **Acknowledgments**

I would like to thank Professor Pamela Gordon for the many hours she has spent reading drafts, providing valuable feedback, and offering general advice on this project and others. The writing of this paper has been a far more manageable task because of her guidance. I would also like to thank the other members of my thesis committee. Professor Emma Scioli has offered a great deal of support throughout the entire project, but I am especially appreciative of the many comments she has provided on the topics of ekphrasis and dreams. Professor Michael Shaw has offered encouragement and many constructive comments resulting in a much more polished final paper. I must also offer one final thank you to my friends and family members who have heard a great deal more about Herodas and his mimes than they might ever have expected.

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1: Herodas and the Iambic Connection to Ethical and Aesthetic Criticism .....	4
1.1: Introduction.....	4
1.2: The Mimes of Herodas.....	9
Chapter 2: Aesthetic Criticism in Herodas' <i>Mimiamboi</i> .....	11
2.1: <i>Mimiamb</i> Eight.....	11
2.2: Dream Interpretation .....	18
2.2.1: Herodas and the <i>Mouseion</i> .....	19
2.3: The Programmatic Significance of <i>Mimiamb</i> Eight.....	23
2.4: Herodas as Hipponactean Aesthetic Critic in <i>Mimiamb</i> Four.....	26
2.5: Contemporary Criticism and Aesthetic Values in <i>Mimiamb</i> Four.....	28
2.5.1: Kynno and Kokkale's Technical Vocabulary .....	33
2.5.2: <i>Mimiamb</i> Four's Interest in Verisimilitude .....	34
2.6: Kynno and Kokkale as Anti-Models for how to Read Herodas.....	41
2.7: Aesthetic Criticism in <i>Mimiamb</i> Six.....	56
2.8: Conclusion.....	60
Chapter 3: Ethical Criticism in Herodas' <i>Mimiamboi</i> .....	62
3.1: The Generic Interest of <i>Iambos</i> in Ethical Criticism.....	62
3.2: Ethical Statements in Herodas.....	67
3.2.1: <i>Mimiamb</i> Three and Parent-Child Relationships.....	68
3.2.2: <i>Mimiamb</i> Five and the Status of Slaves.....	72
3.2.3: <i>Mimiamb</i> One and Female Fidelity.....	76
3.3: Conclusion.....	79
Conclusion.....	81
Works Cited.....	84

## Introduction

Scholarship on the trio of definitive Hellenistic authors of poetry, Callimachus, Apollonius of Rhodes, and Theocritus, inevitably must address the complexity of these poets, their learnedness, allusiveness, and self-awareness of their position as poet and the craft they practice. Their style defines what we modern scholars think of as Hellenistic poetry. It is with an understanding of the basic idea of Hellenistic poetry and the poetic voice of this era that I approached the mimes of Herodas, a relatively obscure author who probably wrote during the rule of Ptolemy II Philadelphus. As I proceeded to read the roughly 800 lines that have survived, seven mimes almost fully preserved, an eighth that is mostly preserved, and very small fragments of several more mimes, I was struck by the subtlety of his poetry. Ever present in Herodas' short scenes is a tension that begs to be explored. Low-class characters using vulgar language in scenes reminiscent of those familiar from the comic stages of both Greece and Rome were consistently touching on serious topics of great interest. With my own interest piqued, I dipped into the scholarship focused on Herodas' mimes that had been penned over the course of the last century following the discovery and publication of the *mimiamboi* in 1891 by F.G. Kenyon, the great British paleographer to whom we also owe the first edition of Aristotle's *Athenaion Politeia*. In surveying past scholarship I was struck by the tendency to focus on individual mimes and questions of performance at the expense of recognizing the subtle complexity of the mimes as a whole. It is in hopes of bringing this complexity to the forefront that I have written this paper.

The primary objective of this thesis is to demonstrate that Herodas' mimes

consistently feature serious commentary on elevated topics that often appear at odds with his humorous characters and scenes. Pervasive throughout the mimes are statements voicing ethical and aesthetic criticism. Such statements demonstrate an interest in the poet's craft and reception of poetry, and also an awareness of moral and philosophical topics of considerable importance and relevance to his audience. The presence of these elevated concerns demands that Herodas be recognized as more than just a vulgar, comic wit.

Central to my argument that Herodas gives voice to ethical and aesthetic criticism is showing that he locates himself within the iambic tradition, and that such statements are an important part of the iambic genre as a whole. I will begin by offering a brief survey of evidence showing that *iambos* is an appropriate genre for ethical and aesthetic criticism, and that examples of both types of criticism can be found in iambic poetry of both the Archaic and Hellenistic periods. With the connection between iambic poetry and ethical/aesthetic criticism established, I will demonstrate that Herodas firmly places himself in the iambic tradition. As evidence for this, I will examine in full the eighth mimiamb, which I will argue is a programmatic piece designed both as a response to criticism from Herodas' peers and as an appeal to the authority of his literary predecessors necessary to legitimize his new genre. Having established Herodas' connection to *iambos* and demonstrated the genre's interest in ethical and aesthetic criticism, I will then turn to examples of such forms of criticism throughout the mimes. One chapter will be devoted to aesthetic criticism, focusing particularly on the fourth mime. A second chapter will address ethical criticism, examples of which tend to be more obscured and fleeting when compared to statements of aesthetic criticism. These

two chapters together should fully demonstrate Herodas' interest in elevated topics.



## Chapter 1: Herodas and the Iambic Connection to Ethical and Aesthetic Criticism

### 1.1: Introduction

The archaic genre of *iambos* experienced a revival among Hellenistic poets and authors.<sup>1</sup> Apollonius of Rhodes and other ancient scholars wrote works on the history of the genre as a whole, and collected, edited, and studied the poems of individual iambographers, including Archilochus, Hipponax, and Semonides.<sup>2</sup> The meters and themes of archaic iambic poetry were adopted and re-worked by a variety of authors, including Callimachus and Herodas, both of whom will be discussed more fully below.<sup>3</sup> Of the canonical iambic poets, Hipponax in particular received preferential treatment in the Hellenistic age. Both Herodas and Callimachus openly adopted Hipponax as their model, and a third poet, Phoenix, was clearly and heavily influenced by the works of Hipponax. Callimachus and Herodas are especially deserving of closer study, because not only did they both write choliambic poetry, but they also both claimed to have been directly influenced by Hipponax and styled themselves as his literary descendants.

The Hipponactean corpus, consisting of poems composed in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE,

- 
- 1 Scodel (2010) briefly discusses the revival of iambic poetry and the general influence of philosophy on the genre. She examines the surviving *iamboi* of Phoenix, Callimachus, and Cercidas in particular.
  - 2 See Rotstein (2010), 112-147 for a detailed examination of the reception and study of iambic poetry from the fifth-century and beyond. The grammarian Diomedes authored a study of the iambic genre. Apollonius of Rhodes produced a work on Archilochus. There is a reference to an edited edition of Hipponax by Hermippus of Smyrna in a 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE source. See also Rotstein 29n13 for a discussion of the evidence of edited editions of Archilochus, Hipponax, and Semonides produced in the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BCE.
  - 3 Examples of Hellenistic iambic poets include obvious figures such as Callimachus and Herodas, but also more obscure individuals. Cercidas wrote meliambos, a combination of melic and iambic poetry. Phoenix of Colophon, roughly contemporary with Callimachus, adopted Hipponax as a model for his iambic poetry; see Scodel (2010), 252- 255 for a brief discussion of Phoenix' poetry. Macho wrote iambics with a moral and philosophical message. See also Rotstein (2010), 51-57 for very brief discussion of several other iambic poets.

is unfortunately ill preserved. Almost all surviving fragments are in the choliambic meter, which would later be adopted by Phoenix, Callimachus, and Herodas. From the extant fragments it is evident that Hipponax' poems were largely concerned with conflict between the poetic persona and an ἔχθρός that often resulted in a scathing, vicious attack issued by the poet.<sup>4</sup> Hipponax often refers to himself by name in his poems, and tends to present himself as a violent drunkard.<sup>5</sup> The targets of his invective pieces are varied, but three names are of special interest: Boupalus, Athenis, and Mimnes.

Benjamin Acosta-Hughes has analyzed the treatment of these three characters in Hipponax, paying particular attention to the fact that all three were artists.<sup>6</sup> Clear invective attacks against Boupalus and Mimnes are preserved in fragments, while Athenis is mentioned only once in an unclear context. In the case of Mimnes, Hipponax' poetic wrath was inspired by the artist's failure to paint a ship properly.<sup>7</sup> Athenis and Boupalus are connected in a story that survives only in the testimonia to Hipponax' life, in which it is related that the pair had sculpted a statue of Hipponax that offended him.<sup>8</sup> In response to the sculpture, he composed such vicious poetic attacks that the sculptors chose to commit suicide. While Athenis is mentioned only once in the extant fragments (Degani Fr. 70), his fellow sculptor, Boupalus, appears several times as the subject of

---

4 Bowie (2001), 26 has identified the following as general features of iambic poetry: “narrative; speeches embedded in narrative; ψόγος (vituperation) ...; self-defence that naturally led to criticism of others; just occasionally reflection or exhortation.” Of these features, vituperation and narrative are especially prominent in Hipponax. Examples of self-defense are evident in his attacks on Athenis, Boupalus, and Mimnes. Rosen (1988), 3 identifies the “antagonism between poet” and enemy, which results in a *psogos*, as the main feature of iambic poetry.

5 Bowie (2001), 10-11.

6 Hughes (1996).

7 Degani Fr. 39.

8 Bowie (2001), 9-11 offers a brief account of the conflict, as does Hughes (1996). Rosen (1988) identifies the sexual connotation of Boupalus' name and its importance to how Hipponax portrayed Boupalus in his poems.

invective lines.<sup>9</sup> Acosta-Hughes has persuasively argued based on evidence from the testimonia and surviving fragments featuring invective verses directed against these artists that Hipponax “presents himself as a critic of aesthetics” and ethical behavior.<sup>10</sup> As such a critic, Hipponax will prove very influential on later Hellenistic iambographers.

Hellenistic poets seized on the Hipponactean persona as an authoritative voice for ethical and aesthetic criticism. Herodas and Callimachus both styled themselves as the heirs of Hipponax.<sup>11</sup> While there is no declaration of an explicit connection to Hipponax, the poetry of Phoenix is also filled with language and themes clearly borrowed from the earlier iambographer.<sup>12</sup> Examination of the choliambic poems of Callimachus, Phoenix, and Herodas reveals that the iambic genre in general was suited for ethical and aesthetic criticism, and that appeals to the language, themes, and poetic structures found in Hipponax lent authority to ethical and aesthetic judgments made by Hellenistic poets. For Herodas, in particular, the authority of a Hipponactean persona will be critical for defining and defending his own poetry; this will become evident in the next chapter. It is important to recognize that elevated criticism was very much a part of the iambic genre, and that iambic poems must not be dismissed as simple “low” pieces

---

9 See Degani's index for fragments where Bupalus appears. According to Degani, he is mentioned 12 times. This is an impressive number when one considers the fragmentary nature of the Hipponactean corpus and the relatively small amount of poems that have come down to us.

10 Hughes (1996), 211-212. Hutchinson (1988), 49 claims that Hipponax' poems were not inspired by any “moral indignation,” but were simply intended to entertain. He does, however, note that later poets writing *iamboi* did address moral issues. I believe Hutchinson is essentially correct in that the *point* of Hipponax' poem may not have been moral or aesthetic criticism. Still, just by issuing invective statements focusing on an individual's moral failings Hipponax is embracing one set of ethical values and rejecting another. A helpful view of invective poetry is offered by Nappa (1999), who notes that invective poetry is concerned primarily with “the exclusion of certain individuals, actions, groups, or qualities, and therefore it seeks to define the community to which the speaker belongs.”

11 See Callimachus' first and thirteenth iambs and Herodas' eighth mime. In all three poems clear references are made to Hipponax. It can be no small coincidence that all three of these poems are also important programmatic pieces in their respective authors' corpora.

12 Scodel (2010), 252-255 briefly touches on the evocation of Hipponax in the surviving poems of Phoenix.

aimed at entertaining an audience or denigrating an opponent. A brief look at two iambic poems of Callimachus will serve as evidence for this claim.

The influence of Hipponax on Callimachus has already been well studied.<sup>13</sup> His name appears in the first of Callimachus' *iamboi*, where he rises from the Underworld to speak to Callimachus' critics. The language of the Callimachean Hipponax is more refined and less vulgar than the original. The figure of Hipponax himself highlights this change, when he says that he has not come to sing of his battle with Boupalus (ἦκω ... φέρων ἴαμβον οὐ μάχην ἀείδοντα τὴν βουπάλειον, lines 1-4), but declares that he has instead come for a much more striking and important reason: to end strife and envy between the scholars he has summoned.<sup>14</sup> Callimachus has chosen to foreground Hipponax as a character in his poem to aid in defining the poetic program that he will follow in his iambic poems, and to encourage any potential critics to respond peacefully to his poetry, perhaps in anticipation of the negative reactions he will later encounter.<sup>15</sup> Herodas, too, will feature Hipponax in his eighth mime, but unlike Callimachus will do so in response to criticism rather than in anticipation.

There is another reference to Hipponax in Callimachus' thirteenth iamb, where the poetic persona (presumably Callimachus himself) twice refers to Ephesus, where Hipponax lived until being expelled, according to the *Suda*, as the homeland of choliambic verses (lines 13-14 and 63-66). Another reference to Hipponax may be found

---

13 See Edmunds (2001); Hughes (1996); Kerkhecker (1999) on Iambs I, V, and XIII; Hutchinson (1988), 48ff.; Acosta-Hughes (2002), 21-103.

14 Kerkhecker (1999), 34-35. The reason for Hipponax' coming is found in the *Diegesis*, and is not made explicit in the extant fragments. Still, the authoritative voice of Hipponax does shine through in the surviving fragments. He commands the gathered crowd to be silent (σωπῆ γενέσθω, line 31) and to write down his speech (καὶ γράφεσθε τὴν ῥῆσιν, line 31).

15 Kerkhecker (1999), 48.

in line 7 if Acosta-Hughes' reading of τὸ Μιμνεῖον is accepted.<sup>16</sup> The context of the allusions to Hipponax in this poem is again, as in the first iamb, that of strife between poets, probably Callimachus and his critics, whose disagreement had reached the point of physical violence (ἄοιδὸς ἐς κέρασ τεθύμωται κοτέων ἄοιδῶ, lines 52-53). Facing criticism, Callimachus appeals to Hipponax as an iambic authority, just as Herodas will later do himself. The elements of aesthetic criticism in Hipponax' *iamboi* make him an especially appropriate model for Callimachus to use when defending his own poetry. Such a defense must naturally include aesthetic judgments of his critics' own poetry or their aesthetic values. The peaceful reception advocated by Hipponax in Callimachus' first iamb has not occurred, and so in the thirteenth iamb Callimachus naturally returns to the Hipponactean persona to voice a response to his critics and a defense of his own works. The closing lines of the thirteenth iamb have a bite that is reminiscent of Hipponax' own invective and largely absent from Callimachus' other iambic poems.<sup>17</sup>

Two conclusions can be drawn from Callimachus' *iamboi* that will prove important for analysis of Herodas' *mimiamboi*. First, it is clear from allusive language and direct references that Hipponax was esteemed by Callimachus as an iambic authority and exerted considerable influence on Callimachus' own *iamboi*. Second, references to Hipponax and his poetry were considered especially appropriate by Callimachus in the context of aesthetic criticism and defense of his own poetry.<sup>18</sup>

16 Hughes (1996), 213-215 argues that τὸ Μιμνεῖον should be read instead of the traditional Μίμνερος. Kerkhecker (1999) does not seem to be aware of this suggested reading. He follows Pfeiffer's reading of ὁ Μίμνερος.

17 Kerkhecker (1999), 267 writes that beginning at line 63 "the focus narrows, and it becomes clear that all the high-minded sermonizing has an Iambic sting in its tail. This is, after all, about self-defence, and it gives a certain mischievous pleasure to see Callimachus leave the moral high ground to establish his own claims and make his adversary eat his words."

18 Callimachus is, however, careful to clarify that he is not a mere imitator of Hipponax. While he does employ the Hipponactean persona as an authority for his own programmatic poems interested in

Callimachus accepted iambic poetry in general and the Hipponactean strain in particular as an appropriate genre for aesthetic criticism. The prevalence of this form of criticism helps ensure that Callimachus' poems are raised from the typical “low” subject matter associated with iambic poetry to a more elevated, philosophical level, and demands that the audience take him and his poetry more seriously. This contrast between a “low” genre and serious contemplation of art and ethics becomes even more striking in Herodas, whose vulgar characters and scenes are quite consistent with the typical expectations of iambic poetry and mime, but are often used to raise questions of contemporary art criticism and ethical dilemmas that seem out of place in such a “low” genre.

## 1.2: The Mimes of Herodas

It is now time to consider directly the mimes of Herodas. Throughout the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries most scholarship presented Herodas' mimes as vulgar, comic sketches intended primarily for entertainment.<sup>19</sup> This view has continued to exist due in no small part to the failure to recognize that the same concern with aesthetics and ethics found in Callimachus is also present in Herodas. This interest should not be surprising if one recognizes that both Herodas and Callimachus adopt Hipponax as their model. The

---

aesthetics, he also is sure to emphasize the uniqueness of his own brand of *iambos*. See Acosta-Hughes (2002), 89-91 for a succinct summary of the view of Callimachus that emerges from the first and thirteenth iambs. Briefly, in Acosta-Hughes' view the first iamb “confirms Callimachus as a Hipponactean voice,” while the thirteenth iamb is an “affirmation of his different, distanced iambic voice.”

19 For an extreme example of this view, see Davenport (1981), ix-xiv, who imagines the mimes being performed on the street with the help of props. In his view, Herodas' mimes “are not comedies, but comic moments,” and his characters “fools.” On the tone of the mime, Nairn (1904), xi writes that they are “vulgar, sordid, even vicious.”

perception of Hipponax as an aesthetic and ethical critic has already been adequately demonstrated by Acosta-Hughes, as discussed above. If Herodas openly adopts Hipponax as his model, and it will soon become clear that he does, in fact, do so, then the presence of aesthetic and ethical criticism in his mimes is not only appropriate, but should perhaps even be expected.<sup>20</sup>

Having considered the literary tradition from which Herodas' *mimiamboi* descend, I will now look at elements of aesthetic criticism in his mimes. My analysis will proceed from the assumption that it is accepted that the importance of aesthetic and ethical criticism is inherent in the iambic genre, as discussed above. In the case of a skeptical reader who does not accept this assumption, however, I hope to show that aesthetic criticism features prominently in the surviving mimes of Herodas, even if one does not accept that this is an expected element of the iambic genre within which he works. I will first begin with analysis of the eighth *mimiamb*, in which Herodas makes clear his connection to Hipponax and consciously locates his poetry in relation to traditional classification categories. I will then move to mimes in which aesthetic criticism is clearly present, primarily mimes four, six, and seven.

---

<sup>20</sup> Hughes (1996), 206 clearly recognizes that the mimes of Herodas fit into the “tradition of ethical and critical commentary,” but chooses to focus on the *iamboi* of Callimachus. Hughes' identification of elements of aesthetic and ethical criticism in iambic poetry and his offhand reference to Herodas inspired the general direction of this paper.

## Chapter 2: Aesthetic Criticism in Herodas' *Mimiamboi*

### 2.1: *Mimiamb* Eight

Any argument focusing on elements of aesthetic criticism in Herodas' mimes ought to start with the eighth *mimiambos*. It is in this mime that Herodas openly declares himself a follower of Hipponax and directly addresses critics of his poetry. This mime is, then, the best evidence we have for how Herodas viewed himself and the genre (*mimiambos*) he had created. The eighth mime is fragmentary and the absence of key passages makes interpretation difficult and at times controversial. Despite these shortcomings, the poem is a clear comment issued by the poet intended to defend his mimes from critics and define his influences. In this sense it is a programmatic piece that inherently addresses poetic aesthetics, similar in many ways to the first and thirteenth iambs of Callimachus discussed above. The primary difference between Callimachus' first iamb and the eighth mime of Herodas is the position of each poem in the overall corpus of the author. Callimachus' poem opens his book of iambs and is an early attempt to define his poetic program in anticipation of the response with which it will meet. Herodas' eighth mime, however, appears to be a response to criticism that he has already received. Herodas will appeal to Hipponax as an iambic authority to defend himself and his poetry.

The eighth *mimiambos* opens with the narrator (presumed to be Herodas himself) rousing his sleeping slaves (lines 1-14). One slave in particular, Annas, is singled out to hear a dream that is related in lines 16-64. The dream opens with the narrator dragging a goat (τράγον, line 16). Lines 20-39 are badly damaged, though a few



observations can be made. The narrator appears to have been engaged in a conflict with some goatherds (αἰπόλοι, line 20). A man appears dressed in a spotted fawnskin (στικτῆς νεβροῦ χλανιδίῳ, line 30), wearing a cluster of ivy (κόρυμβα ... κίσσι', line 32) and boots (κοθόρνου, line 33). Most modern scholars assume this man to be Dionysus, as his style of dress is consistent with depictions and descriptions of the god in other sources. Lines 33-39 are poorly preserved, but there is a clear reference to Odysseus and Aeolus' gift to him of the bag of winds (Αἰόλου δῶρον, line 37). The speaker then explains how he competed in the *askoliasmos*, and seems to have emerged victorious (40-47). Lines 48-57 are completely missing.

When the narrative resumes at line 58, a new character has appeared: an old man threatening to strike the narrator with his staff (τῆ βατηρίῃ κόψω, line 60). The narrator addresses the crowd assembled in his dream (ὧ παρεόντες, line 61; these are presumably the goatherds from line 20 unless a new group of characters has been introduced) and calls on the young man (again, presumably Dionysus) to witness the old man's aggression. There is a brief pause in the description of the dream (lines 65-66), and then the narrator presents his interpretation (lines 67-79). The lines offering the interpretation present some difficulties, but this passage will nevertheless prove to be especially important. He predicts that many among the Muses will pluck his *corpus* and labors (τὰ μέλεα πολλοὶ κάρτα τοὺς ἔμοῦς μόχθους τιλεῦσιν ἐν Μούσῃσιν, lines 72).<sup>21</sup> He claims to have won a prize (τὸ ἄεθλον, line 73) competing in the *askoliasmos*, although he accomplished it together with the angry old man (κῆ τῷ γέροντι ξὺν' ἔπρηξ'

---

<sup>21</sup> I have taken the translation of *corpus* for τὰ μέλεα from Zanker (2009). This best captures the dual sense of the word μέλεα as both a physical body and the poetic body of work.

ὄρινθέντι, line 75). He mentions κλέος (line 76), though the context is not entirely clear. Finally he makes the claim that he has learned to sing choliambic poetry following Hipponax (μετ' Ἴππώνακτα τὸν παλαι[ τὰ κύλλ' ἀείδειν, lines 78-79). Here the narrative of the mime ends and questions of interpretation begin.

The eighth mime has long been viewed as Herodas' attempt to define the new genre he has invented and defend his poetry from criticism.<sup>22</sup> There have been no serious efforts to debunk this view. Any scholarly disputes involving this mime tend to focus on subtle differences in interpretation. As I am interested primarily in the elements of aesthetic criticism and connections to Hipponax that are evident in this poem, I will largely sidestep such debate, except where directly relevant to understanding the aesthetic stance adopted by Herodas in this mime.

The narrative structure of the mime – an individual recounting a dream in which he encounters an earlier poet or the Muses – was a common literary *topos* among Hellenistic poets.<sup>23</sup> An educated audience, whether readers or viewers, would have understood the dream setting as an early signal that this particular *mimambos* will in some way examine Herodas as a poet and his work. It is, therefore, appropriate to explore the symbolic meanings of the characters, scenes, and objects in the mime. The narrator, in the guise of a simple rustic character, can be identified with Herodas.<sup>24</sup> The goatherds who have attacked him (he claims to have been beaten: ἔσσωμαι, line 19)

---

22 See Cunningham (1971), 194; Rosen (1992); Rist (1997); Fountoulakis (2002); Zanker (2009), 224-226 and 233-235; Mastromarco (1984).

23 The most notable Hellenistic example is Callimachus. This *topos* may be traced back to Hesiod. An interesting Roman parallel is found in Ennius, who claims to have been inspired in a dream by Homer. A dream also appears in Theocritus, *Idyll* 21. Bion's dream (Fr. 10, Gow 1969) features interaction between the persona and Eros. On this see Gutzwiller (2007), 96.

24 This identification has long been accepted. See Headlam and Knox (1922), lii-lvi; Cunningham (1971), 194; Zanker (2009), 224-26 and 233-35.

should be identified with the critics of his poetry. Attempts have been made to connect the goatherds to specific contemporary poets, such as Callimachus or Theocritus, or their followers, but such postulations are impossible to confirm. The next character to appear is easily identified as Dionysus, or at least a representative of the god, by the clothing he is wearing, of which his style of footwear, the κόθορνος, will prove particularly important in making this connection. Herodas and the goatherds then engage in the *askoliasmos*, a rite associated with the rural Dionysia.<sup>25</sup>

A clear connection to Dionysus and dramatic performance is evident throughout the dream. The goat the narrator is dragging, the appearance of Dionysus in general and the specific reference to him wearing the κόθορνος, a style of boot representative of tragedy, and the performance of a Dionysian ritual, the *askoliasmos*, all point to a dramatic context or connection.<sup>26</sup> The references to the goat and the κόθορνος of Dionysus are maybe indicative of a tragic connection specifically, not just a general dramatic connection.<sup>27</sup> Andreas Fountoulakis has proposed that Herodas is trying to convince his audience that the origins of mime are connected to poetry sanctioned by Dionysus, and in doing so “invest his poetry with the authority and prestige” granted to dramatic poetry.<sup>28</sup> This is necessary because mime was typically considered a low form

---

25 Jones (2004), 142-144.

26 Further evidence of a connection to Dionysus can be found in the narrator's interpretation of the dream, when he refers to goatherds violently cutting up the goat (ἐκ βίης ἔδαιτρεῦντο, line 69). It has been proposed that this may be a reference to the *sparagmos* associated with Dionysus, as seen in Euripides' *Bacchae*. Rist (1997), 357 rejects this interpretation – correctly in my opinion. I do, however, believe that the scene still has clear connections to Dionysus. Herodas considers the cutting of the goat a performance of rites (τὰ ἔνθεα τελεῦντες, line 70), which is supportive of a ritual context.

27 See Kirby (2004), 171 for both a brief summary of popular proposals concerning the linguistic connections between the words *tragos* (goat) and *tragoedia* (tragedy), and also other possibilities explaining the origins of the word *tragoedia*. See Headlam and Knox (1922), on line 33 for discussion of the κόθορνος and its connection to Dionysus.

28 Fountoulakis (2002), 301.

of entertainment. The widespread negative view of non-literary mime may also have been taken of Herodas' poetry if he could not convince his audience of connections to a more respected genre, such as tragedy.<sup>29</sup> Even if Fountoulakis' interpretation is rejected, it seems clear that Herodas invokes Dionysus primarily to earn credibility for himself; whether this is because mime has Dionysiac origins is not a critical issue. That Dionysus sanctions his poetry is clear both from Herodas' referring to the goat, which is understood to be representative of his poetry,<sup>30</sup> as a gift from Dionysus (δῶρον ἐκ Διωνύσου, line 68), and the claim that he received a prize (ἄεθλον, line 73) for his success in the *askoliasmos*.

While the presence of Dionysus is intended to grant authority to Herodas' poetry, the quarrel with the unnamed γέρον presents a more difficult challenge. The first question that must be answered concerns the identity of the old man, who first appears (and speaks) in the extant text at line 59 and is again mentioned near the end of the mime at line 75. Doubtlessly he would have first appeared somewhere in the lines preceding his speech (48-57), but these are missing. Scholarly consensus is heavily in favor of identifying the old man as Hipponax, though Archilochus has also been proposed as a possibility.<sup>31</sup> The strongest piece of evidence encouraging the

---

29 Zanker (2009), 235n9 finds this proposal “attractive” but says that more evidence is needed to show that there was a connection between Dionysus and mime in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. While I believe Zanker is correct in holding some reservations, Fountoulakis is very clear in stating that it was Herodas' goal to convince his audience of this connection, not that the connection had earlier been made or won widespread approval. That the view eventually won out is shown by Fountoulakis (2002), 311-13.

30 See Rist (1997), 358; Fountoulakis (2002), 303; Rosen (1992), 206; Cunningham (1971), 193.

31 See Rist (1997) for the argument in favor of Archilochus. I am largely unconvinced by her claims, which are predicated on the belief that before writing choliambic poetry Herodas had written iambic invective in the style of Archilochus. While this is certainly possible, it makes little sense to include a reference to Archilochus in a piece dedicated to defining the poetic programs of his choliambic mimes. The list of scholars who support identifying the old man with Hipponax is lengthy, but see Knox (1925) and Zanker (2009) for both an early and late view of such an identification. Knox is largely responding to Herzog (1924).

identification with Hipponax is the use of a phrase at the end of line 60 (τῆ βατηρίη κόψω) that parallels a surviving fragment of the iambic poet (τῆ βακτηρίη κόψαι, Degani Fr. 8, West Fr. 20).<sup>32</sup> The description of the old man as angered (ὄρινθέντι, line 75) lends some additional support to this identification, as Hipponax was generally regarded as a cantankerous, violent old man in the Hellenistic age.<sup>33</sup>

There is, however, a problem with this identification that was recognized by Cunningham.<sup>34</sup> Why does Hipponax quarrel with Herodas, who views himself as a follower of the iambographer? The answer may lie in the dual nature of the new genre. Herodas is not writing choliambic poetry directly derived or descended from Hipponax' invective, but a new form of poetry that has resulted from fusing together *mimos* and *iambos*. Hipponax is evidently displeased with the resulting *mimiambos*, and so violently attacks the younger Herodas.<sup>35</sup> The narrator addresses the onlookers (ὦ παρόντες, line 61) and then calls upon the young man (Dionysus) to witness his treatment at the hands of the old man (μαρτύρομαι δὲ τὸν νεηνίην, line 63). The language here is reminiscent of the ancient custom of calling on bystanders to observe a crime, so as to secure witnesses for a trial.<sup>36</sup> Such language is appropriate here as the old man and Herodas are about to be judged by Dionysus.<sup>37</sup>

---

32 Zanker (2009), 231 explains Herodas' exclusion of the kappa as a "learned rationalization of the short α in Hipponax' βακτηρίη." Cunningham (1971) offers a similar explanation.

33 Degani (1984).

34 Cunningham (1971), 194.

35 For relevant discussion see Rosen (1992), 212, who makes a similar point. Fountoulakis (2002), 310 responds to Rosen by arguing that Hipponax would not be angry with Herodas for mixing iambic poetry with dramatic poetry, since drama was a well respected genre. Instead, Hipponax is angry because Herodas has combined iambic poetry with mime, which was held in low esteem.

36 Fountoulakis (2000), 28.

37 One puzzling aspect that I have not seen addressed is the question of why Herodas would call on the goatherds, who have been understood as his rivals, as potential supporters in the event of a trial. Are the goatherds and Herodas reconciled after his successful efforts in the *askoliasmos*? Has he convinced them of his poetic skills?

Full understanding of the judgment of Dionysus at line 64 (ὁ δ' εἶπεν ἄμφω τὸν δορέα ...) is just barely out of our grasp. The end of the line is missing, as are the details from the ten lines preceding Hipponax' speech (48-57). The key to making sense of the young man's judgment is probably a missing verb that takes δορέα, which can be interpreted two ways, as its object. This noun is either best translated as “the skinner” or “the flayer” from δορεὺς,<sup>38</sup> or as a form of δορά, “skin” or “hide.”<sup>39</sup> I will very cautiously argue for the second option.<sup>40</sup> If this view is adopted, the passage would be translated as: “And he said that we both [*missing verb*] the hide.” An infinitive of some sort would then be expected, probably suggesting that the hide was to be given to or shared by both the narrator and the old man. I have adopted this view based on the narrator's interpretation of the dream in lines 67-69. He says that he alone of all those trampling the wine skin had won the prize (70-71), even if he had accomplished it together with the old man (κῆ τῷ γέροντι ξὺν' ἔπρηξα, line 75). This statement suggests that they had a shared accomplishment. If the δορέα mentioned at line 64 is understood as the skin given as a prize, then the narrator's remark at line 75 is clarified.<sup>41</sup> The shared accomplishment mentioned by the narrator is a reference to their poetic success. Both

---

38 Zanker (2009) translates it as flayer, interpreting it as a *nomen agentis*. It is translated as “the officer” in the 1922 Headlam and Knox edition, which is explained by a note ad loc.

39 See Cunningham (1971), ad loc.

40 Rosen (1992) and Pisani (1952) both support this reading.

41 One other proposal is put forth in Headlam and Knox that may make some sense, but can, I believe, be dismissed. The noun δορέα can be translated as “flayer” (as discussed above), and in this sense may refer to a whipping. The legal nature of the scene signaled by ὦ παρεόντες and μαρτύρομαι might encourage such a translation. See Headlam and Knox (1922), 394-95 for discussion of the legal language. The major problem with this reading is that the remaining lines of the poem make no reference to the old man and Herodas sharing in any sort of a whipping or punishment. The only act they have shared in has a positive connotation, and is much more likely to refer to their shared success in either the *askoliasmos* or their sharing of Dionysus' approval. Since the end of the poem is fairly well preserved with only a few endings to certain lines missing, there is no possible place at the end of the poem where a punishment scene could have occurred. Of course, the scene need not actually take place in the dream, as the narrator has woken up, but an allusion to it would be expected somewhere in the remaining lines of the mime.

were awarded the hide by Dionysus, signaling that both have his approval. The importance of securing Dionysus' approval has been discussed above, but to restate it simply, the awarding of a prize by Dionysus grants authority to Herodas' poetry and validates the new genre. This validation is critical to defending himself from his detractors' attacks.

## 2.2: Dream Interpretation

Following the judgment of Dionysus is the interpretation of the dream. The narrator recalls again that he had dragged a goat from a ravine (αἶγα τῆς φάραγγος ἐξεῖλκον, line 67), and calls it a gift from Dionysus (δῶρον ἐκ Διωνύσου). The goat, as mentioned above, has been interpreted as representing Herodas' poetry.<sup>42</sup> This same goat is violently cut up (ἐκ βίης ἐδαιτρεῦντο, line 70) and consumed (ἐδαινυντο, line 70), by the goatherds, who are described as performing rites (τὰ ἔνθεα τελεῦντες, line 70). Though not perfectly clear due to a missing word in the manuscript, Herodas seems to compare this behavior to how his mimes will be treated. He says that many among the Muses will pluck (τιλεῦσιν ἐν Μούσησιν, line 72) his works. These lines have generally been interpreted in a negative way: critics will “tear apart” his poetry, much like the goatherds violently took and cut up his goat earlier in the dream. I would, however, like to propose another possible reading.

---

<sup>42</sup> One possible metaphor I have not seen discussed is the φάραγξ, the ravine. This is mentioned twice: at line 67, and earlier at line 16. The dragging of the goat out of the ravine may be referring to the invention of a new poetic genre. The long ravine (φάραγγος ... μακρῆς, lines 16-17) may refer to the long tradition of poetry in general, or perhaps even iambs in particular.

### 2.2.1: Herodas and the *Mouseion*

Lines 69-70 are evocative of a sacrifice scene; this is made particularly clear by the reference to performing the rites (line 70). I believe these same verbs may metaphorically refer to a positive, or at least neutral, treatment of Herodas' poetry. The performance of rites and the dividing or carving of the goat may be a reference to the general reception of poetry by those associated with the *Mouseion*, with whom Herodas surely would have been familiar. Close attention was given to poetry by scholars supported by the Ptolemies in Alexandria. These scholars were responsible for diligently collecting, editing, and storing new editions of Homer, Hesiod, and other canonical poets.<sup>43</sup> Herodas may well mean that his poetry will be received and treated in such a manner. The feasting on the meat (κρεῶν, line 70) may refer to the “digestion” or reception of his *mimiamboi* by the highly educated literary elites. A possible reference to members of the *Mouseion* has been seen in line 72 (ἐν Μούσησιον).<sup>44</sup> The “plucking” of his works (τὰ μέλεα, line 71) may, in fact, be a reference to the performance of his *mimiamboi*.<sup>45</sup> The verb τῖλλω is used in this sense by Cratinus to refer to the plucking of the lyre (τῖλλουσῶν μέλη, Kock Fr. 256).<sup>46</sup> It could also be a metaphor for literary analysis, although I readily admit there is no evidence to support the use of this verb in

---

43 As I have discussed above, the iambographers Archilochus, Semonides, and Hipponax all received this same treatment. See Rotstein (2010), 112-147 for discussion of scholarly interest in the iambographers in the Hellenistic age.

44 Crusius (1905), 75-76.

45 How Herodas' works were performed is a thorny issue. The most complete study of this question is Mastromarco (1984), whose views are contentious, to say the least. Zanker (2009), 4-6 offers a brief overview of possible performance contexts, favoring recitation (group or solo) as more likely than active performance. He also admits of the possibility that the mimes were circulated as written texts intended to be read.

46 Τῖλλω is more often used of plucking a bird's feathers. This may also signal that Herodas is referring to the scholars of the *Mouseion*, who were famously compared to birds by Timon of Phlius.



such a way.

I believe the many references to specific poetic genres in the interpretation part of the dream also point to a clear connection to the activities of the Mouseion, whose members were interested in categorizing poetry. The word μέλος (line 71) is generally used to refer to lyric poetry, a genre distinct from epic and tragedy.<sup>47</sup> Herodas also uses the term ἔπεα (line 76), which is most often used of epic poetry but here of his iambic poems.<sup>48</sup> One finds a direct reference to iambic poetry in general at line 77 (ἰάμβων), and to performance of choliambic poetry specifically at line 79, when he mentions singing sczons (τὰ κύλλ' αἰδεῖν). I believe that the heavy concentration of these generic terms in the final ten lines of the poem suggests that Herodas is concerned with how his poetry will be classified and received. Such a concern is natural for the poet of a new genre writing at a time when there was great scholarly interest in classification of poetry. He recognizes that his poems may be (or perhaps more likely, already have been) met with skepticism or criticism since they are so innovative, and accordingly strives to place himself in an already established tradition. In the final four lines of the poem he very carefully engages in classification himself. He moves from the broad category of ἔπεα to the more narrow genre of *iambos*. Of course, as he is following a Hipponactean model, he then must further define his poems as choliambic poetry (κυλλά).

I would like to argue that he takes this self-classification one step further, assuming one accepts a reference in line 79 to Callimachus' thirteenth iamb. Herodas writes that he will sing his choliambos to the future descendants of the sons of Xouthos

---

47 Plato makes a clear distinction between epic, tragic, and lyric poetry in the *Republic*. See 379a and 607a.

48 See Zanker (2009) and Cunningham (1971) on line 76. Both cite a comic fragment found in Page (1941), 324. The fragment uses ἔπεα in a broad sense similar to how Herodas uses it.

(τὰ κύλλ' ἀείδειν Ξουθίδης †επιουσι†, line 79).<sup>49</sup> Herodas makes a learned reference here to the Ionians, who were the descendants of Xouthos. This line may be responding to the final lines of Callimachus' thirteenth iamb:

οὔτ' Ἔφεσον ἐλθὼν οὔτ' Ἴωσι συμμείξας,  
 Ἔφεσον, ὅθεν περ οἱ τὰ μέτρα μέλλοντες  
 τὰ χολὰ τίκτειν μὴ ἀμαθῶς ἐναύονται  
 (Pfeiffer Fr. 203, 64-66)

Having come neither to Ephesus nor having mixed with the Ionians,  
 to Ephesus, where those intending to produce choliambic verses  
 are learnedly inspired.

Callimachus mentions Ephesus and the Ionians because of their close connection to Hipponax. By claiming that he never traveled to Ephesus he is purposefully distancing himself from his literary predecessor. In doing so he emphasizes that, though inspired by the earlier iambographer, he has crafted his poetry in a unique manner, as an innovator rather than imitator.<sup>50</sup> Thus, when Herodas says that he will sing to the Ionians, he is separating himself from Callimachus and aligning himself more closely with Hipponax. To borrow the biologist's classification scheme, Callimachus and Herodas are both in the same family ἔπεα, the genus *iambos*, and the species *choliambos*. They then split, with Callimachus' poetry falling into one sub-species and Herodas' into another. Much as Callimachus strives to distance himself from Hipponax, Herodas distances himself from Callimachus to avoid comparisons to a famous contemporary fellow poet. This explains the use of terms marking poetic genres, which would have been well understood by his educated audience.

While distancing himself from Callimachus, Herodas aligns himself more closely

<sup>49</sup> See Cunningham (1971) and Zanker (2009) for discussion of the possible corruption of επιουσι.

<sup>50</sup> Hughes (1996), 209.

with Hipponax.<sup>51</sup> The primary reason he does this is that unlike Callimachus, who is innovating *within* the iambic genre, Herodas has adopted the choliambic meter for use in a new genre, and so needs to appeal to an authoritative literary predecessor to validate the iambic half of his new *mimiamboi*. The quarrel with the old man in his dream is indicative of Herodas' awareness that his poetry may be criticized for straying too far from the established conventions of choliambic poetry. He first needs to make clear to his critics that he is following Hipponax as an authority, and then must show that his new genre is legitimate. He makes his debt to Hipponax very obvious in line 78, where he openly acknowledges that he has come after Hipponax (μετ' Ἴππώνακτα τὸν παλαι[ ]). The sense of μετὰ may be twofold: it certainly reflects the temporal relationship between the two poets, but it may also be a humble acknowledgment that Herodas does not aspire to surpass Hipponax in skill or reputation.<sup>52</sup> With Hipponax established as his authoritative predecessor, Herodas must also show the legitimacy of his new genre. This is accomplished by Dionysus' decision to award the goatskin to both the narrator (Herodas) and the old man (Hipponax). Herodas' decision to move outside of the “pure” Hipponactean choliambic tradition and include elements of *mimos* is thus validated.

---

51 Klooster (2011), 53 sees evidence of Herodas aligning himself with Hipponax in the early lines of the poem (8-9), when the primary character (Herodas) threatens to beat his slave with a stick. This is paralleled later in the poem by the old man's threat to beat the narrator of the dream (lines 56-57). This tendency towards violence is very Hipponactean, and an early signal, in Klooster's view, that Herodas is imitating Hipponax.

52 A much later parallel may perhaps be found in Statius' *Thebaid*. In the closing lines of Book XII, Statius addresses his epic and prays that it lives on, but advises it not to attempt to surpass the *Aeneid* (*nec tu divinam Aeneida tempta*, line 816). I cite this example because it is such a clear instance of a poet openly acknowledging his debt to a predecessor, yet not aspiring to surpass that predecessor.

### 2.3: The Programmatic Significance of *Mimiamb Eight*

One additional way in which Herodas signals his debt to the iambic genre is evident in the very structure of the poem. The first seven mimes are largely driven by dialogue between two characters.<sup>53</sup> In all but the second mime dialogue between two or more characters makes up the full content of the mime. In fact, the eighth mime is the only surviving mime in which there is just a single speaking part, since when the young man and the old man speak it is reported by the narrator.<sup>54</sup> The eighth mime is, then, one long, mostly uninterrupted narrative. Herodas may well have chosen to craft his poetic statement in such a fashion to reflect his awareness of the iambic genre, in which narrative played a crucial role.<sup>55</sup> This is just one more subtle way in which Herodas links himself to the iambic tradition.

The mime appears to end with a claim that he will win fame for his poetry (κλέος, line 76). Unfortunately, the condition of the papyrus does not quite allow us to understand precisely how he lays claim to this future fame. Nevertheless, this boastful claim contributes to his efforts to validate his poetry and defend it from criticism. By asserting to his audience that he will win future fame he is justifying the creation of a new genre.

If the order of the mimes preserved in the manuscripts corresponds to the original order in which Herodas composed and circulated the mimes, then it would

---

53 The exception to this is the second mime, which consists entirely of Battaros' speech, uninterrupted except by two lines. It may be that Herodas wrote more mimes like the second, but the limited evidence that we have suggests that the majority of his mimes consisted primarily of dialogue between at least two characters.

54 This may even be an example of "meta-mime," especially if one favors solo recitation as the performance mode of the mimes.

55 See Bowie (2001).

seem that the eighth mime responds to previously voiced criticism.<sup>56</sup> Herodas has identified both a source of and reason for criticism of his poetry lightly disguised in a symbolically rich dream. The behavior of the goatherds in the dream suggests that other poets in general and members of the Mouseion in particular were his greatest critics. If we do not place too much weight on the order of the manuscript and allow for the possibility that the eighth mime was produced before his other mimes, then it might be argued that the poem was composed in *anticipation* of criticism from these groups.<sup>57</sup> The reason for their criticism is made evident by the old man and young man, Hipponax and Dionysus respectively. They represent the joining of *mimos* and *iambos*. The anger of the old man is aroused by the fusion of the two genres, a fusion that may have been deemed improper by literary elites in light of the negative view of mime as a genre in the Hellenistic period. Iambic poetry, in contrast, was an established genre of recognized importance that received considerable attention in the Hellenistic era, as discussed in the previous chapter. Herodas turns to the authority of Dionysus to validate his poetry, but is careful to advertise very clearly his strong debt to Hipponax. Both figures lend authority to the new genre. He defines the newly invented *mimiambos* by placing it within a recognized generic hierarchy and by distinguishing himself from Callimachus, an established iambic figure.

It is clear from the eighth mimiamb that Herodas is keenly aware of the poetic

---

56 Unfortunately there is no good evidence for how the poems were disseminated. The manuscript may not be indicative of the order in which the poems were released to Herodas' audience. It is possible that the eighth mime was circulated early in his career as a programmatic piece intended to define his new genre in anticipation of critical attacks rather than in response to such attacks.

57 If this is the case, the dream mime aligns more closely with the programmatic dream poems of the poets mentioned above, such as Hesiod and Ennius, which appear at the beginning of their works and define the poet's program in advance.

landscape in which he exists and that he is in touch with established poetic aesthetics of the time. He recognizes his debt to both mime and iamb, and anticipates that the combination of these previously distinct genres will earn him criticism. The very structure and content of the eighth mimiamb, however, shows that he can skillfully meld the two genres together. The everyday setting of a countryside farm and the vulgar, low-born characters are in keeping with the traditional settings and characters of *mimos*, while the heavy emphasis on narrative and the response to aesthetic criticism of poetic rivals is fully in keeping with the style and themes of *iambos*. The choice of defining his poetic program within the setting of a dream is suggestive of a keen awareness of literary *topoi*.<sup>58</sup>

The decision to include a symbolic dream in the eighth mime is worthy of more consideration, because I believe that it is reflective of the manner in which Herodas expects his audience to contemplate his mimes. It is interesting and unusual that the dream is interpreted within the poem itself.<sup>59</sup> The interpretation offered by the character in the eighth mime provides a clue to Herodas' audience for what to expect from his poetry and a model for how to approach his work. Just as the dreamer must probe deep beneath the surface to fully understand the symbolic nature of his dream, so must Herodas' audience search for deeper meaning in his poems. The necessity of searching for deeper meaning will soon become apparent in my discussion of the fourth mime,

---

58 The programmatic inspirational dream is common in didactic poets, such as Hesiod and Callimachus. This programmatic device does not seem to be borrowed from iambic poetry, but is perhaps better understood as a signal that Herodas is a typical Hellenistic poet familiar with the same poetic techniques as his contemporaries. Herodas' dream blends features of the inspiration dream with features of the symbolic dream, such as that seen in *Odyssey* 19.

59 Other examples of this include *Odyssey* 19.535-569 and Ovid's *Amores* 3.5. That Herodas is thinking of the *Odyssey* and Penelope may be signaled at line 5 by the participle formed from the verb κνώσσω. This same verb is used to describe a sleeping (and dreaming!) Penelope in Book 4, line 809. In this scene Penelope sees the image of her sister, who has been sent to her by Athena.

which is also concerned with establishing the model of an ideal audience for his poetry. Implicit in defining an ideal reader (or viewer/listener) is an endorsement of specific aesthetic values. As I have already argued, concern with aesthetics should be expected of an author who so clearly advertises his connections to the iambic tradition.

#### **2.4: Herodas as Hipponactean Aesthetic Critic in *Mimiamb* Four**

As Herodas' understanding and awareness of his influences and generic *topoi* have now been demonstrated, I would like to turn to identifying instances in the mimes where he takes on the Hipponactean role of aesthetic critic. In the remaining pages of this chapter it should become quite evident that not only does Herodas clearly embrace the role of aesthetic critic, but that he is well suited to such a role. It is a natural progression, I believe, to move from the eighth mime to the fourth. Both demonstrate a strong interest in aesthetics in contemporary poetry and art. Furthermore, both help guide the audience of his poetry in their interpretation of his poems. In respect to this function, both mimes are important programmatic pieces intended to influence the reception of his mimes. The fourth mime will reveal a strong knowledge of Hellenistic aesthetics in both poetry and the plastic arts that carries over into the sixth and seventh mimes. A constant tension between the low-brow nature of *mimos* and the elevated statements of aesthetic criticism borrowed from *iambos* will become evident, and will serve to obfuscate the poet's own view.

The tension between high and low elements is most evident in the fourth mime, which deals directly with criticism of objects of visible arts. The mime features two

women with speaking roles making an offering at a temple to Asclepius and viewing and critiquing the pieces of art in and around the temple.<sup>60</sup> The tendency in past scholarship has generally been to dismiss the women as unsophisticated viewers who fail to appreciate and properly critique the pieces of art.<sup>61</sup> Following such a view, Herodas' goal is to make his audience laugh by making sport of uneducated, lower class individuals. If this is true, it is a clear example of Herodas playing the role of aesthetic critic. He takes aim at the aesthetic values of a particular class and holds them up for mockery. Implicit in this act is a rejection of the values voiced by the women and, presumably, support for another set of aesthetic values that he does not make apparent in the poem.<sup>62</sup>

Such a reading of the fourth mime is, I believe, largely correct, but does not fully appreciate the complexity of this particular mimiamb. I will propose that the fourth mime be interpreted as a sort of metaphor for the way in which Herodas' own mimes were viewed and an instructive piece demonstrating how *not* to view his poetry. Just as

---

60 The temple is often identified as the Asclepion on the island of Kos, though the accuracy of this assertion is of no great importance for this paper. See Sherwin-White (1978), 350-52 for evidence that the fourth mime takes place in the Asclepion on Kos. Cunningham (1971) disagrees with this association, believing that none of the works known to have been in the temple at Kos are mentioned in this mime. Zanker (2009), 104-108 and 122-129 rejects Cunningham's claim and offers support for Sherwin-White's view. He follows Sherwin-White in proposing that the fourth mime may, in fact, have been composed to mark the renovations to the temple and increase in cult activities. He sees a parallel to this in Theocritus *Idyll* 15, which may have been composed for the Adonia.

61 Goldhill (1994), 222 sees the pronouncements of the women as "far removed from the Hellenistic *sophos*." He echoes this sentiment in a more recent article (2007), stating that he believes the women are mocked. DuBois (2007), 48 believes that the women are painted as "ridiculous and ignorant," and that they primarily act as a "foil" for knowledgeable viewers. Skinner (2001) offers a different view of the women in the fourth mime. She sees the women as representative of a unique female viewing style developed in the poems of Erinna, Nossis, and Anyte. The fourth mime is an attempt by Herodas to "[discredit] the poetic efforts" of these female authors (p. 222).

62 Yacobi (2000), 716 believes that when a reader determines that a narrator (in this case the two women, Kynno and Kokkale) is unreliable they are at the same time deciding that the author disagrees with the narrator and supports an alternative viewpoint. Herodas' efforts to make the women an object of mockery is very similar to what is done by the speaker in invective poems. By attacking an individual for their views or actions the speaker is rejecting those values and promoting their own. See Nappa (1999), who is interested in Catullus' invective poems, but makes many good points relevant to invective poetry in general.



the interpretation of the dream in the eighth mime is instructive, so too is the viewing experience of the women in the fourth mime. Herodas encourages his audience to reject the women in the fourth mime as ideal viewers, and to learn the proper way of consuming his poetry, using the two women as an anti-model. It will become apparent by the end of this discussion that the fourth mime demonstrates keen awareness of Hellenistic aesthetic values that were applicable to both literature and physical pieces of art, and that Herodas expects his audience to recognize these values. Herodas presupposes a parallel between viewing visual art and reading (or listening to) poetry.<sup>63</sup>

### **2.5: Contemporary Criticism and Aesthetic Values in *Mimiamb Four***

Graham Zanker sees the very structure of the fourth mime as evidence for Herodas' close engagement and familiarity with contemporary Hellenistic art criticism and popular aesthetic qualities. In his 2004 book focused on the act of viewing in Hellenistic poetry and visual arts, he discusses the trend in both literature and the plastic arts of encouraging readers or viewers to supplement details for a given scene.<sup>64</sup> The act of supplementation draws a reader into the work and encourages deeper reflection on the work's meaning. Herodas demands his audience members supplement various details throughout the fourth mime as the women move throughout the temple complex offering brief commentary on various pieces of art that capture their attention. Evidence of this technique is seen in the demonstratives used by the women when

---

<sup>63</sup> Modern scholars have noticed this parallel as well. See Fowler (1989) and Zanker (2004).

<sup>64</sup> See Zanker (2004), 72-102. He offers numerous examples of this trend in both the visual arts and literary works.

pointing to different objects.<sup>65</sup> The women do not give full descriptions of the objects viewed, but short snippets that require the audience to fill in the gaps using their own knowledge.<sup>66</sup> In employing this supplementation technique Herodas signals his own familiarity with contemporary artistic techniques, skillfully incorporating a technique popular in the visual arts into his own literary art.

Before further discussion it will be beneficial to outline briefly the “plot” of the fourth mime. As has been stated, mime four features two women at an Asclepion making a thank offering to Asclepius for curing a sickness. The names of these two women are debated, but I will settle on Kynno and Kokkale.<sup>67</sup> The mime opens with Kynno greeting various gods associated with Asclepius, apologizing for the meager offering she has brought (a rooster), and ordering her friend Kokkale to set down a votive tablet (lines 1-20). The pair then begins to inspect and comment on various pieces of art, including a statue from the sons of Praxiteles (lines 20-26), a girl looking at an apple (lines 27-29), a boy strangling a goose (lines 30-34), and finally a statue of a woman named Battale, with whom the women are familiar (lines 35-38). Their examination of the art objects is then interrupted by an extended scene of verbal slave abuse prompted by Kynno's frustration at her slave Kydilla's failure to obey her orders

---

65 Zanker (2006), 367.

66 Zanker (2009), 124 recognizes that the act of supplementation would have been far easier for Herodas' ancient audience than it is for a modern reader of his poems. If the Asclepion described in the fourth mime is, in fact, real, it is quite likely that at least some of Herodas' audience had at some point seen the temple and the actual objects described in the poem, making the act of supplementation even easier. For those who had not, familiarity with similar temples and pieces of art would have enabled them to imagine a level of detail not accessible to a modern audience.

67 Zanker (2009) identifies these as the names of the characters in the mime, following Headlam and Knox (1922). See Zanker's note on page 104. Cunningham (1971) believes Kokkale to be the name of a slave accompanying Kynno based on the tone of the order at lines 19-20. He believes that her friend is named Phile, who is not introduced until line 27. Cunningham's 2004 Teubner text follows the same part distribution as his earlier commentary. Whatever names one adopts, it is clear from the text that Kynno has been to the temple previously and is familiar with the artwork, while Kokkale (or Phile) is visiting for the first time.

to fetch the temple attendant, and the entrance of the women into the pronaos (lines 39-56). The women resume examining the art, with Kokkale commenting on various figures in a painting (56-71) and Kynno praising the talent of Apelles (lines 72-78). The mime concludes with the temple attendant entering and the women making their final offerings to the god (lines 79-95).

While I wish to pay the most attention to the language of the assessments offered by the women of various pieces of art, it is useful to consider briefly the atmosphere created by the passages of the poem that surround (lines 1-20 and 79-95) and interrupt (lines 39-56) their contemplation of the artwork. It is in these parts of the poem that Herodas helps guide the way in which his audience will view the two women and emphasizes their low-class status.<sup>68</sup> The offering of a rooster (ἀλέκτορος, line 12), the meagerness of which is emphasized by referring to it as merely a second course (τάπιδορπα, line 13), is the first hint of their status.<sup>69</sup> Kynno's elevated language at this part of the poem is comically epic. In her eyes, this is no ordinary rooster that she will offer to the god, but the herald of the walls of her home (ὄντιν' οἰκίης τοίχων κήρυκα θύω, lines 11-12).<sup>70</sup> If Herodas intends this line to produce laughter, as I believe is the case, it may be indicative of the general attitude he expects his audience to adopt towards Kynno and Kokkale. Lines 21-38 feature the women viewing pieces of art, but is

---

68 Yacobi (2000), 712ff. argues that “(un)reliability” is not a character trait of a narrator (the role of which Kynno and Kokkale play in the fourth mime), but that it is a “hypothesis that readers make.” This hypothesis is flexible and can be reformed at various points in the texts. Herodas' efforts to emphasize the low-class status of the women is intended to influence his elite audience to infer that the women's statements lack reliability.

69 See Zanker (2009), Cunningham (1971) and Headlam and Knox (1922) on lines 12 and 13. All point out the connotation of ἐπίδορπα and comment on the humble nature of this offering. Zanker notes that a rooster was the only offering that could be afforded by the lower classes.

70 Kynno has already earlier used the nouns τεῖχος and οἰκία at line 7 in a distinctly epic context when making reference to Podaleirios and Machaon, two warriors who fought at Troy. The contrast between these two passages is humorous. See Headlam and Knox (1922), ad. loc.

interrupted by a lengthy slave abuse scene. This, too, draws attention to the vulgar rank of the two women, and stands in sharp contrast to the respectful opening lines, in which Kynno addresses the various gods and goddesses associated with the Asclepion.<sup>71</sup> The angry words she directs towards Kydilla are more suited for a stock slave abuse scene in comedy than the religious environment in which the fourth mime takes place. The concluding lines of the poem (79-95) follow more commentary on objects of art, and again draw attention to the low-class status of the women, primarily in the references to the poor thank offering they have brought. The women make reference to their own poverty and meager offering when expressing the wish of coming back to make a greater offering (ἔλθοιμεν αὖτις μέζον' ἴρ' ἀγινεῦσαι, line 87). The overall effect of these lines is to emphasize the non-elite status of the women.

I believe it is important to establish the picture of the women that emerges from the parts of the poem that do not feature their critiques of the artwork in the temple. The primary issue faced by anyone interpreting this mime is understanding just how Herodas wants his audience to receive Kynno and Kokkale's comments. Some may be tempted to show this by focusing solely on what is said about the artwork and which aesthetic qualities the women notice and using this information to conclude that the women are ignorant. This approach requires full knowledge of which aesthetic qualities were appreciated in art by a Hellenistic audience in general and Herodas' audience in particular. While we can deduce to some degree which qualities were widely valued, the fact remains that it is very difficult to pin down precisely how a “sophisticated” member

---

<sup>71</sup> Headlam and Knox (1922), 174 see a parallel to Kynno's opening hymn in a mostly preserved hymn found in Athens near an Asclepion and provides a transcribed version of this text. The similarities suggest that Herodas has adopted the language and style of religious hymns. The elevated nature of Kynno's opening lines stand in stark contrast to her behavior throughout the rest of the mime.

of Hellenistic society would assess pieces of art. Without this knowledge, attempts to demonstrate that Herodas intends the women in mime four to be examples of bad viewers using only their spoken lines rely on the risky assumption that we (meaning present day scholars) fully understand Hellenistic aesthetics and the proper way of viewing art. If, however, it can be demonstrated that Herodas casts the women as ignorant and unsophisticated outside of the context of critiquing artwork, it is more reasonable to expect that they will show themselves to be equally ignorant and unsophisticated when it comes to viewing and appreciating artwork. I have followed this approach in hopes of demonstrating that the audience is expected to view Kynno and Kokkale as lower class, uneducated women whose statements and actions would be more at home on the comic stage than among a gathering of educated critics. The mixing of characters of low social status with (as will soon be shown) technical terminology and appreciation of contemporary aesthetics creates ironic tension. Thus it is best to approach the comments they make regarding the pieces of art with a healthy air of skepticism, and to assess carefully their pronouncements.

As the mime progresses, it becomes increasingly clear that Kynno and Kokkale focus on aesthetic qualities of the art objects that are known to have been widely valued in contemporary Hellenistic Greek society. They also employ a technical vocabulary that demonstrates knowledge of art criticism, despite the fact that Herodas has characterized them as uneducated in other parts of his poem. Placing technical, seemingly educated statements in the mouths of common, uneducated characters creates the tension that has been discussed above. Furthermore, it complicates how the audience is to interpret the remarks. Before delving further into this issue I would like first to examine several

statements made by the women to illustrate their use of technical vocabulary and to elucidate which particular qualities they find appealing in the works of art.

### 2.5.1: Kynno and Kokkale's Technical Vocabulary

The use of technical vocabulary is easy to document. After setting down the votive tablet, Kokkale turns her attention to the statues of the various gods that Kynno has just pointed out. She refers to them specifically as ἄγαλμα (line 21), a term reserved for statues of divine figures.<sup>72</sup> The specificity of the term used for the statues of the gods is emphasized several lines later, when Kokkale turns to another statue of a woman named Batale, with whom she is evidently familiar. Here she uses the term ἀνδριάς (line 36), which is reserved for human subjects.<sup>73</sup> After their viewing of the objects is interrupted by the slave abuse scene, they turn again to viewing some sculptures and remark that Athena herself seems to have chiseled them (ταῦτ' ἔρειξ Ἀθηναίην γλύψαι τὰ καλά, lines 57-58). The verb employed here, γλύφω, is another technical term used of sculptors.<sup>74</sup> More technical terms are used in their discussion of the painting of Apelles. Kynno says that his lines are true (ἀληθιναί, φιλη, γὰρ αἱ Ἐφεσίου χεῖρες ἐς πάντ' Ἀπελλέω γράμματ', lines 72-73). Both the adjective ἀληθινός and the noun γράμμα have specific, technical meanings applicable to art.<sup>75</sup> I will discuss ἀληθινός further below. It

<sup>72</sup> See Zanker (2009), ad. loc and Zanker (2004), 141-143. Both Headlam and Knox (1922) and Cunningham (1971), ad. loc. comment on the accusative form of λίθος that appears with the feminine article in the same line as the form of ἄγαλμα (line 21). This form may be of some importance. In Attic Greek the feminine form of λίθος refers to worked or precious stones. Herodas often slips Attic forms and constructions into his mimes, as might have happened here; see Zanker (2009), 7-11 and Cunningham (1971), 211-17 for help on Herodas' dialect. Headlam and Knox (1922), xxix write that "the cast and construction of his sentences is for the most part fluent Attic."

<sup>73</sup> Zanker (2009), ad. loc.

<sup>74</sup> Zanker (2009), ad. loc. Headlam and Knox (1922) note that the term is limited to relief sculpture, whereas the verb πλάσσω is used of sculpture in the round.

<sup>75</sup> For discussion of the adjective ἀληθινός see Gelzer (1985), and Zanker (2009), ad. loc. See Pollitt

is fairly obvious from these examples that Kynno and Kokkale possess and employ a technical vocabulary in their critiques of the various pieces of art. Whether the audience is to be induced to agree with their assessments by the authoritative weight of the technical vocabulary remains to be seen.

### 2.5.2: *Mimiamb* Four's Interest in Verisimilitude

Of more interest than the use of technical terms are the aesthetic qualities on which the two women focus their attention. As will become clear in the various examples from the text that I will soon discuss, Kynno and Kokkale focus especially on the realistic qualities of the various pieces at which they are looking. They are drawn to pieces that “have the look of life and day.”<sup>76</sup> An interest in and appreciation of common subjects is apparent in not only the literature of Herodas' contemporaries, but also the plastic arts.<sup>77</sup> Viewers had a particular interest in lifelike art. In literary descriptions of art (*ekphraseis agalmaton*) readers and listeners had a great appreciation for accounts that were filled with “visual vividness,” for which they used the term *enargeia* (ἐνάργεια).<sup>78</sup> Literary accounts that possessed this quality of vividness seemed almost to come alive to

---

(1974) on technical usage of γράμμα.

76 Zanker (2009) translates line 68 (οὐχὶ ζοῆν βλέπουσι κήμερην πάντες) in this way. So, too, do Cunningham (1971) and Headlam and Knox (1922) interpret it, and take *Iliad* 18.61 as its source.

77 Theocritus' *Idylls* are an excellent example. They feature for the most part lowly herdsman in scenes set outside the city. Some, such as *Idyll* 15, are set in the city and feature scenes of everyday life and common characters. See Burton (1995) for a treatment of these so-called urban mimes. Sculptors, painters, and other artists who worked in physical mediums moved from the idealized subject matter of Classical Greek art to more mundane scenes featuring a variety of everyday subjects, such as fisherman, old women, and animals. See Fowler (1989) for an excellent introductory summary of the themes popular in art (both literary and physical) in the Hellenistic period. Zanker (2004) offers a similar study, though he is mostly interested in how art was viewed. Onians (1979) also provides a useful study in artistic preferences of the Hellenistic audience.

78 See Zanker (2004), 9. He follows an earlier study by Graf (1995), who in turn cites Dio Chrysostom (12.55-83). Webb (1999) also notes the importance of *enargeia* in ekphrasis. Webb (2009), 87-106 has an entire chapter dedicated to the use of *enargeia* in ancient ekphrases.

the viewer, and were mirrored by realist depictions of scenes and characters in the plastic arts. Several examples of this appreciation for lifelike qualities in art are evident in the fourth mime.

Before looking at specific examples of how the women describe the works of art in the temple, I would like to discuss the specific ekphrastic tradition on which Herodas seems to be drawing. Many of the most popular ekphraseis from antiquity are found in epic poems, with Homer's ekphrasis of the shield of Achilles being one of the best known examples. The ekphraseis in Herodas, however, seem to owe a debt to another popular tradition, that of ekphrastic epigram. Hellenistic ekphrastic epigram was an extremely popular genre, of which thousands of lines by many poets still survive.<sup>79</sup> One popular theme of Hellenistic epigram is to riff on dedicatory epigrams from the Classical and pre-Classical periods that were inscribed on objects dedicated in temples. In Hellenistic epigrams, however, the object to which the epigram refers need not be real; the poem can exist merely as a literary text, without detracting from a reader's ability to understand the content of the epigram.<sup>80</sup> Many of the ekphrastic passages in Herodas' fourth mime exhibit this same quality – the women refer to objects in a temple with which Herodas' audience may or may not have been familiar. Another key difference between Hellenistic epigram and its earlier forebears is the focus on the lower classes and mundane scenes of life.<sup>81</sup> A feature of such epigrams is humor and invective, which

---

79 Bruss (2010), 118 estimates 4,700 lines by 60 or more poets from the *Garland* of Meleager alone. Philip of Thessalonica's *Garland* adds thousands of additional lines from poets working in the period between Meleager and Philip's own time.

80 Bruss (2010), 121.

81 Bruss (2010), 132 remarks that earlier epigram focused on the lives of the elite classes and “[reflected] the interests and ideology of a part of the population wealthy enough to commission poems and the monuments to inscribe them on.” Anyte's collection of epigrams to pets is an example of the more mundane subject matters of interest to the Hellenistic audience.



suggests a debt to the genres of comedy and iambos.<sup>82</sup> Herodas himself owes a debt to these very same genres, and features scenes depicting lower class characters and their concerns. Recognizing the parallels in the ekphrastic passages in the fourth mime and Hellenistic epigram allows us to draw on a vast corpus that helps to understand how Herodas intended his audience to react to Kynno and Kokkale, and how a sophisticated viewer would respond to visual objects of art.

I would like to look at just one particular example from Herodas where a debt to Hellenistic ekphrastic epigram is evident, although most of the ekphrastic passages in the fourth mime exhibit similar qualities. Following their praise for the statue by Praxiteles' sons (discussed above), Kynno directs Kokkale's attention to another piece of art, presumably a statue:<sup>83</sup>

ὄρη, φίλη, τὴν παῖδα τὴν ἄνω κείνην  
βλέπουσας ἐς τὸ μῆλον· οὐκ ἔρεῖς αὐτήν  
ἦν μὴ λάβῃ τὸ μῆλον ἐκ τάχα ψύξειν;

Look, friend, at the girl, that one looking up  
at the apple. Would you not say that she  
will soon faint if she does not grab the apple?

(Lines 27-29)

Several things are noteworthy. First is the use of a verb of speech (ἐρεῖς) followed by a statement that reflects on the lifelike quality of the piece of art. This formula will be repeated elsewhere in the fourth mime. The use of a second person verb, particularly an imperative (ὄρη, here directed at Kokkale), is paralleled in many Hellenistic epigrams,

<sup>82</sup> Bruss (2010), 129 and 134 notes this debt.

<sup>83</sup> It is possible that this was a familiar scene in ancient art. Headlam and Knox (1922) ad. loc. cite two vases (one by Assteas and another by Sotades) that contain an image of a girl in the Garden of the Hesperides. Cunningham (1971), ad. loc. believes “there is no reason to suppose a close connection between these [other images] and what is here described.” Zanker (2009), cites a variety of scholars in favor of pushing such a connection, including Lehman (1945), 430-3 and Webster (1964), 158-9 and 432.

in which the viewer, or perhaps more aptly, the reader, is addressed by the (imagined) object. Of course, in literary Hellenistic epigram riffing on dedicatory epigram the narrative voice is the object itself, while in the fourth mime it is a character who exists within the poem. Another similarity to Hellenistic epigram is the interest in what might happen were the inanimate object actually alive. The women in mime four do this when they invent a narrative outside of the scene depicted by the statue, imagining the girl fainting. This is typical of a Hellenistic viewer, who was interested in psychological portraiture, according to Graham Zanker.<sup>84</sup> Many examples of this are evident in the thirty-six poems from the Anthology focusing on Myron's Heifers, which will be discussed in more detail below.

The women then move from the girl looking at the apple to a boy strangling a goose (τὴν χηναλώπεκα ὡς τὸ παιδίον πνίγει, line 31).<sup>85</sup> Kynno's comments on this statue are reminiscent of her earlier statement regarding the girl and the apple. Once again she comments on how the statue is almost alive, remarking that one might be led to believe it would speak were it not a stone (πρὸ τῶν ποδῶν γοῦν εἴ τι μὴ λίθος, τοῦργον, ἐρεῖς, λαλήσει, lines 32-33). Just as she imagines an extended narrative (fainting) for the girl looking at the apple, so does she imagine that the statue of the boy is on the cusp of speaking. Though both are clearly carved out of inanimate material, they have been worked in a realistic style such that the women can easily imagine them

---

84 Zanker (2004), 66-71. Pollitt (1986), 59ff. traces the development in the field of portraiture of the interest in showing a subject's personality and psychological state.

85 This particular piece has been associated with the Vatican's "Boy with an Egyptian Goose." See Zanker (2009) ad. loc. and p. 126. Headlam and Knox (1922) believe that this is the piece mentioned in Pliny (*NH* 34.84) from the sculptor Boethus. Cunningham (1971), ad. loc. rejects this view, citing the work of Herzog, who found that Boethus' piece should be dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE. See also Ridgway (2006) for analysis of this statue, including brief discussion of the reference to the statue in Herodas' fourth mime.

coming to life. This is stated almost explicitly in Kynno's next line, when she states that soon humans will put life into stones (μᾶ, χρόνῳ κοτ' ὤνθρωποι κῆς τοὺς λίθους ἔξουσι τὴν ζοὴν θεῖναι, lines 33-34).

Kokkale then shifts the conversation to the lifelike qualities of another statue, that of Batale, daughter of Myttes. From these names it has been deduced that she was a hetaira.<sup>86</sup> Particular attention is drawn to how she is standing (οὐκ ὀρθῆς, Κυνοῖ, ὄκως βέβηκεν, lines 35-36). It is possible that she is in a pose consistent with a woman of her profession.<sup>87</sup> Whatever Batale's profession and position, Kokkale's final comments on this statue are of great interest. She emphasizes the realistic depiction of Batale by claiming that anyone who has seen this statue has no need of seeing the real Batale (βλέψας ἔς τοῦτο τὸ εἰκόνημα μὴ ἐτύμης δείσθω. lines 37-38). The statue is so lifelike that it can stand as a replacement for the real woman, even if someone has not seen her (εἰ μὴ τις αὐτὴν εἶδε Βατάλην, line 37). The adjective ἔτυμος (line 38) highlights the Hellenistic appreciation of realistic depictions of individuals (and “things” in general). I will discuss this adjective in more detail further below, but for now it is enough to note simply that the Hellenistic viewer valued art that was true to life, and it is on this trait that Kynno and Kokkale seize.

The objects on which the women have commented at this point in the mime are only loosely connected to the religious context of the Asclepion and the reasons for the

---

86 Cunningham (1971) ad. loc. says of the full name that it one “no respectable woman would bear.” Batale is related to the verb βαττᾶρίζω (to stammer). Zanker (2009) ad. loc. helpfully adds that stammering was considered effeminate. On the name “Myttes” he notes that it is connected to the noun μύτις, which “denoted a man with an unbridled sexual appetite.”

87 Headlam and Knox (1922) believe her pose to be reflective of her character. One sees here an example of the Hellenistic audience and artist's interest in capturing the personality of a subject. See note above.

women's own visit by the fact that they are in the sanctuary. Besides the ἀγάλματα treated in the first 26 lines, the next three pieces (the girl looking at the apple, the boy strangling the goose, and the votive statue of Batale) are “secular” objects (as much as this term can be applied to any object in a temple). I will return to this point later, but for now it is enough to note that the women do not offer any commentary on the possible religious context of these pieces. Such commentary is particularly conspicuous in their discussion of the statue of Batale. This statue was surely dedicated as a thank offering to Asclepius, presumably for curing her of some unspecified illness.<sup>88</sup> The girl looking at the apple may also have had a religious connection to the temple that the women fail to notice. It has been proposed that the statue of the “Girl under the Apple Tree” in New York University's Institute of Fine Arts is a copy of the statue mentioned in Herodas. In this copy there is a snake wrapped around a tree. The snake is the symbol of the doctor's guild, which was closely connected to Asclepius.<sup>89</sup> The religious context of the next piece is likewise ignored.

Another example of the women focusing on lifelike qualities and ignoring possible religious contexts for the artwork is seen after their viewing is interrupted by the abuse of the slave Kydilla. Kokkale is transfixed by a painting of a naked boy participating in a sacrificial procession. She imagines the wound he would have if she were to scratch him (τὸν παῖδα δὴ τὸν γυμνὸν ἦν κνίσω τοῦτον οὐκ ἔλκος ἔξει, lines 59-60). Again, she is fascinated by imagining the subject of the painting existing outside of the static scene in which he is depicted. The lifelike quality of his flushed skin (αἶ σάρκες

---

88 See Zanker (2009), ad. loc.

89 Cunningham (1971), ad. loc. sternly warns that this interpretation ought not be attempted. Zanker (2009), ad. loc. offers a brief but convincing case for why such an interpretation is possible, drawing on the research of Massa Positano (1973) and Di Gregorio (1997).

οἷα θερμὰ θερμὰ πηδῶσαι, line 61) briefly captures her gaze before she turns to the instrument he is holding, a pair of silver fire-tongs (τῶργυρέων δὲ πύραυστρον, line 62). These, too, are painted in such a way that they are capable of deceiving a viewer into thinking they are, in fact, a pair of real silver tongs. She imagines the shock of two men (Myellos and Pataikiskos) upon seeing the tongs caused by believing that they are actually made of real silver (δοκεῦντες ὄντως ἀργύρεων πεποιθῆσθαι, line 65).<sup>90</sup> The adverb ὄντως here is essentially parallel to the form of ἔτυμος in line 38. Other characters in the scene include two men, one described as hook-nosed (γρυπῶς, line 67) and the other as bristly-haired (ἀνάσιλλος, line 67). Non-idealized subjects are appropriate for Hellenistic artwork, which featured imperfect individuals who did not tend to appear in idealized Classical art.<sup>91</sup>

Kokkale ends by commenting on the bull that is also part of the sacrifice scene. She is filled with fear by the lifelike appearance of this bull, and says she would have shouted out if was not inappropriate for a woman (εἰ μὴ ἐδόκευεν τι μέζον ἢ γυνὴ πρήσσειν, ἀνηλάλαξ' ἄν, lines 69-70). Here yet again one finds an example of a viewer imagining an image coming to life and existing and acting in a world outside of the painting. Kokkale claims to be afraid of the bull doing her some harm (μὴ μ' ὁ βοῦς τι πημήνη, line 70). The lifelike quality of the bull in the sacrifice scene is further emphasized by the next line, in which Kokkale claims that the bull is looking askance at

<sup>90</sup> Zanker (2009) and Cunningham (1971), ad. loc. both point out the significance of these names. A certain Myllos, according to Hesychius, was mocked for foolishness. Myellos, the corrected form necessary to fit the meter, is not otherwise attested. A Pataikion (the diminutive form of which appears here) was known for chicanery and thievery.

<sup>91</sup> Fowler (1989), 66-78 looks at a variety of “grotesque” character types that appear frequently in Hellenistic art, including physically deformed individuals, drunk old women, and bald men. She sees many parallels to these types in Herodas' mimes, such as Gyllis in the first mime, who is an elderly tippler, and Kerdon in the seventh mime, a bald shoemaker.

her (οὐτῷ ἐπιλοξοῖ, Κυννί, τῆ ἑτέρῃ κούρῃ, line 71). One may here imagine the Mona Lisa (or any similar painting), whose eyes notoriously seem to follow the viewer.

Kokkale notices and reacts to this phenomenon.<sup>92</sup> It is very difficult to read these lines without thinking of the series of epigrams taking Myron's Heifer as their subject. This connection again suggests that Herodas' ekphrastic passages are best interpreted in a manner similar to Hellenistic epigrams posing as inscriptions. Following line 71, Kynno speaks briefly on the prowess of Apelles. The temple attendant will then enter and the women will offer no further comments on the artwork in the temple.

## **2.6: Kynno and Kokkale as Anti-Models for how to Read Herodas**

From the examples cited above it should be clear that the two viewers featured in the fourth mime are drawn to pieces of art done in a realistic style that depict subjects in such a way that suggests to the viewer that the piece is on the brink of coming to life or that encourages the viewer to imagine the subject reacting to a touch or some other outside stimulus. It should be no surprise that the women are drawn to such pieces. Scholars working on Hellenistic art and aesthetics have noticed this interest in lifelike depictions in the companion fields of poetry and physical art.<sup>93</sup> Mundane subject matters and scenes become increasingly popular in the Hellenistic period and there is a decrease in the idealized images of the Classical period.<sup>94</sup> Thus, Herodas' fourth mime

---

92 See Koenderink, et. al. (2004) for a scientific study of this phenomenon. Zanker (2009), ad. loc. believes that this effect, commonplace today, may have been a novelty for Herodas' audience.

93 Fowler (1989), 4 notes that common subjects in Hellenistic art and poetry included various members of the lower classes and scenes of everyday life. Running parallel to this interest in new subjects was “an increasing realism” made possible by advancement in techniques and technical abilities.

94 Pollitt (1986), 140 remarks that realism “supersedes” the idealistic depictions of the previous age. Inwood and Gerson (1997), xv see a similar shift in philosophy. Platonic idealism gives way to “empiricism, materialism, and naturalism.”

features viewers examining pieces of art that were evidently in style at the time of composition. It will be important to keep in mind as we consider how Herodas intended his audience to view Kynno and Kokkale that they both appreciate aesthetic qualities that were valued by contemporary Hellenistic society. Despite this, I will argue that Herodas does not cast the two women as respectable critics worthy of emulation, but that he instead holds them up as models for how not to view art in general and his own poetry in particular.

Before delving into this claim, I would like to look at other examples from Hellenistic poetry in which emphasis is placed on the verisimilar qualities of art objects. I would like to start first with part of an epigram by Nossis:

τὸν πίνακα ξανθᾶς Καλλῶ δόμον εἰς Ἀφροδίτας  
εἰκόνα γραφάμενα πάντ' ἀνέθηκεν ἴσαν.

Kallo dedicated this votive tablet in the temple of blond Aphrodite,  
painted with an image wholly alike (the real Kallo herself).

(Palat. Ant. 9.605)

The image on the πίναξ is recognized by the narrative voice of the viewer as a stand-in for the real Kallo herself. Kokkale expresses a similar sentiment when viewing the statue of Batale in Herodas' fourth mime (lines 37-38; see page 38 above). The importance of a truthful or realistic representation is evident in another of Nossis' epigrams, in which the viewer is looking at the portrait of a child and is struck by how closely the child resembles her mother (ὡς ἐτύμως θυγάτηρ τᾶ ματέρι πάντα ποτῶκει; Palat. Ant. 6. 353, line 3). The adverb formed from ἔτυμος should remind us of line 38 in Herodas, and perhaps also of ὄντως in line 65, which is used by Herodas to essentially mean the same thing as ἔτυμος. Emphasis is placed on the importance of truth to an original in art

objects in other epigrams of Nossis as well.<sup>95</sup>

The series of thirty-six epigrams in the Greek Anthology that take Myron's Heifer as their subject are likewise interested in the craftsman's skill in creating a statue that appears alive to the viewer, and offer perhaps the closest parallel to the ekphrastic passages in Herodas' fourth mime. In almost all of these epigrams some witty comment is made that plays with the idea that the viewer is looking not at a statue, but a real cow.

Poem 9.714 (Palat. Ant.) is representative of the collection:

Βοίδιον εἶμι Μύρωνος, ἐπὶ στήλης δ' ἀνάκειμαι.  
βουκόλε, κεντήσας εἰς ἀγέλην μ' ἄπαγε.

I am Myron's heifer, and I am set up atop a base.  
O cowherd, having goaded me, lead me to the herd.

Here, of course, the piece is acknowledged to be a statue, yet the “punchline” of the epigram is that this statue is so lifelike that the viewer ought to treat it as a real cow.

This same feature is found in 9.714, in which the viewer is asked if he/she wishes to lead the cow home (οὐκ ἐθέλεις εἰσαγέμεν μέγαρον, line 2). Likewise, another epigram states that the cow is so realistic that it is fair to say that Myron did not mold the sculpture with his hands, but that he gave birth to it (Μύρωνος χεῖρ οὐ πλάσεν, ἀλλ' ἔτεκεν, 9.726, line 2). In another a bull is tricked into pursuing the cow, beguiled by Myron's deceptive craft (Ταῦρε, μάτην ἐπὶ μόσχον ἐπείγεται· ἔστι γὰρ ἄπνους· ἀλλὰ σ' ὁ βουπλάστας ἔξαπάτησε Μύρων, 9.734). One could cite numerous other examples where attention is called to the lifelike quality of the statue in the form of a statement imagining the cow is real. So, too, do the women in Herodas' fourth mime find themselves captivated by the girl who seems about to faint, the statue of Batale that

---

<sup>95</sup> See Palat. Ant. 6.354 and 9.604 for examples.



could be a replacement for the real woman, the boy whose flushed skin would bleed should he be scratched, the silver fire-tongs that would excite any thief who happened to set eyes on them, or the sacrificial ox whose frightening glare stirs up terror in Kokkale's heart. The women in the fourth mime are clearly interested in the same features that excited other Hellenistic viewers.

And yet, I believe that Herodas does not want his audience to accept Kynno and Kokkale as authoritative figures for how to view art. To support this claim, it is necessary to consider what makes a good viewer, and for this it will be useful to consider ekphrasis as a poetic device and its role in ancient poetry. The basic definition of an ekphrasis can be disputed, with some scholars arguing for an expansive definition while others prefer a more limited application of the term. For the purposes of this paper I will work with a somewhat more narrow definition: “the representation in words of a visual representation.”<sup>96</sup> This definition is closer to the specific sub-category of ekphrasis called *ekphrasis agalmaton*, which is the description of works of art by a literary viewer. It is this form of ekphrasis that we see in the fourth mime. Central to ancient ekphrasis is *enargeia*, or visual vividness, which has been discussed above.<sup>97</sup> The goal of *enargeia* in oratory, according to ancient authorities such as Quintilian and Longinus, is to stimulate an emotional reaction from the audience, such that they are persuaded by the orator.<sup>98</sup> The descriptions of scenes, characters, and objects must be brought to life by

---

96 Bartsch and Elsner (2007), i. Du Bois (2007), 45 notes that this is a “reductive definition,” but adopts it herself. Zanker (2004), 7 gives as a definition: the “ocular presentation in literature of any phenomenon in nature and culture.” Webb (2009), in her introduction (pp. 1-11), gives a good overview of the broad definition of ekphrasis that was used in the ancient world.

97 See Goldhill (2007), 3-7; DuBois (2007), 45; Zanker (2004), 25.

98 Goldhill (2007), 3-8 discusses various “rhetorical handbooks,” including those of Quintilian and Longinus.

colorful descriptions that stimulate the senses of the audience.<sup>99</sup> It should be noted, however, that ekphrastic descriptions need not fully re-create for the audience the object being described, as this is not the primary function of the rhetorical device.<sup>100</sup>

If the point of *ekphrasis agalmaton* is not to re-construct pieces of art for the audience, it is necessary to ask just what is the point? Fortunately, a great deal of scholarship has already asked this very question and proposed one possible answer. An ekphrasis is instructive and intended to teach the reader (or listener) how to view art. Simon Goldhill has argued that “ekphrasis is designed to produce a viewing subject,” and that “poems are written to educate and direct viewing as a social and intellectual process.”<sup>101</sup> In this view he is certainly not alone.<sup>102</sup> If ekphrasis is intended to be instructive, then it must be recognized that there is a right and wrong way to view pieces of art. This, as has already been noted, is the central question of the fourth mime – are the women “good” viewers or “bad” viewers? To answer this we must first define what constitutes a good viewer and examine examples of Hellenistic poetry that features such a viewer.

I will define a good viewer as an individual who does not simply notice and appreciate certain aesthetic qualities of a piece of art, but one who is led by observation to analysis and interpretation of the pieces viewed. Goldhill has stated that a viewer should not stand “awestruck” before a piece of art, but that the act of viewing “should produce commentary.”<sup>103</sup> The ideal ekphrastic viewer offers not just any commentary,

---

99 See, for example, Fowler (1989), 176 and Zanker (2004), 55-66 on optics.

100 Zanker (2004), 7. Goldhill (2007), 2 writes that description “is always subordinate to the work of analysis, or to the work of responding.”

101 Goldhill (2007), 2.

102 See, for example, Zanker (2004), 7.

103 Goldhill (2007), 18. As Goldhill notes, he is following Lucian's description of a sophisticated viewer.

but statements that are reflective of the views of an elite, intellectual class.<sup>104</sup> This is taken for granted when dealing with ekphraseis in epigrams or other genres, such as history or rhetoric, where the description of an object and commentary on it are issued from an authoritative figure, such as the narrative voice in an epigram or historical report. This authoritative voice behind an ekphrasis is usually a member of the elite class whose opinions can generally be interpreted as reflective of the widespread views of a sophisticated upper class.<sup>105</sup> Having previously stated that an ekphrasis is instructive, it can now be added that they specifically instruct the audience member in elite, intellectual beliefs and values.

One final point on what constitutes a good or bad viewer will prove particularly illuminating in the discussion concerning how Herodas characterizes his women and how he wants his audience to react to their responses to the art in the temple. Longinus, in his rhetorical work *Περὶ ὕψους* (*On the Sublime*), discusses the powerful effect *enargeia* can have on an audience. He writes that an orator is not only able to persuade an audience member, but can enslave him (οὐ πείθει τὸν ἀκροατὴν μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ δουλοῦται, 15.9). Goldhill seizes on the importance of this passage, and argues that “a good listener knows to resist, to be critical.”<sup>106</sup> If a similar line of reasoning can be

---

He argues that the production of commentary happens in the epigrams related to Myron's Heifer, believing that the epigrams do not respond to the sculptor's work, but to the “tropes of verisimilitude” (17). The epigrams do not merely note the lifelike nature of the statue, but engage in an intellectual discussion that has its basis in an awareness of art criticism and the widely held aesthetic value of a realist portrayal of nature. It is this engagement with an intellectual tradition that is missing in the remarks of the women in Herodas' fourth mime.

<sup>104</sup> DuBois (2007), 46.

<sup>105</sup> Although it may be obvious, I am referring here to ancient ekphraseis. Even in the ancient world there may be exceptions to this general statement. The ekphrastic epigrams of Nossis and Erinna come to mind. It is possible, though, that these still represent the elite, male-dominated viewpoint.

<sup>106</sup> Goldhill (2007), 4. Webb (2009), 131-166 explores how *enargeia* was used in rhetoric as a persuasive tool.

applied to the effect of *enargeia* in art and ekphrastic descriptions it may help to understand the reactions of the women in mime four.<sup>107</sup> They are moved by the vividness of the artwork in the temple to emotional responses, much like the orator can stimulate the emotions of an audience. This emotional response prevents critical detachment and analysis. A sophisticated viewer is able to resist the allure of *enargeia* and remain at a distance, which allows proper reflection.

It will be instructive to return again to the epigrams dealing with Myron's Heifer. I have previously stated that both the narrative voices of these epigrams and the women in the fourth mime focus on the lifelike quality of the art objects that they take as their subjects. This is true, but the responses to the realistic qualities are quite different. Herodas' women point out the verisimilar nature of the art objects and imagine the responses or actions of the pieces of art were they truly alive (the girl would faint, the boy would bleed, and so forth). Most of the authors of the thirty-six epigrams, however, react in a different way. Simon Goldhill has briefly examined these epigrams in the context of a longer article on the purpose of ekphrasis, and argued that the epigrams are not primarily concerned with description of the statue, but a response to the "tropes of verisimilitude."<sup>108</sup> The poets exhibit an intellectual interest in the duplicity of the statue.<sup>109</sup> The only response offered by the women in Herodas, however, is amazement.

To show the great difference between the responses of the poets of the epigrams and the women in the fourth mime, let us again consider again one of the ekphrastic epigrams mentioned above:

---

<sup>107</sup> I believe that this reasoning can be applied to ekphrastic passages. See Goldhill (2007), 6 for support of this view.

<sup>108</sup> Goldhill (2007), 17. See pp. 15-19 for his analysis of these epigrams.

<sup>109</sup> Squire (2010), 592 makes this same point.

Ταῦρε, μάτην ἐπὶ μόσχον ἐπείγεται· ἔστι γὰρ ἄπνους·  
ἀλλὰ σ' ὁ βουπλάστας ἐξαπάτησε Μύρων.

Bull, in vain do you long for the heifer, for it is lifeless.  
But Myron the cow-sculptor has deceived you.

(Palat. Ant. 9.734)

This poem is certainly dependent on the premise that the statue is lifelike, but the narrator does not stop after noting the realistic nature of the statue, but instead proceeds to a more sophisticated response. Goldhill identifies this as a feature common to all the poems in this collection.<sup>110</sup> The sophistication of this epigram is eloquently stated by Squire, who identifies the “Janus-faced concern with not only the promise of the sculpture to come to life but also its failure to do so” as the “most striking” feature of this series of epigrams.<sup>111</sup> In the very first line the narrator plays with the idea of the realistic nature of the statue (the lusty bull is deceived), but quickly undercuts this by emphasizing that it is, after all, just a statue (it is breathless or lifeless – ἄπνους). The second line plays emphasizes the skill of the craftsman, Myron, and implicitly the deceptive nature of art.

The sophistication of this short poem is more obvious when considering Kokkale's response to the ox in the painting. She imagines the ox as if it were alive, just like the previously discussed epigram, but fails to undermine this by noting that the image is, in fact, lifeless. Even more important, however, is her failure to offer any commentary on the duplicitous nature of the piece or the role of the artist. The following lines spoken by Kynno emphasize this. She focuses on the truth of Apelles' depiction

<sup>110</sup> Goldhill (2007), 17 notes that following some indication of the lifelike quality comes “a more pointed, cleverer retort.”

<sup>111</sup> Squire (2010), 601.

(ἀληθιναί, line 72), which should be contrasted directly with the deceptive nature of Myron (σ' ὁ βουπλάστας ἔξαπάτησε Μύρων) noted in the above poem. The sophisticated response of the authors of the epigrams play with the *tropes* of verisimilitude,<sup>112</sup> while Herodas' women merely notice the verisimilar qualities of the art objects. This contrast helps to make clear the failure of the women to be moved to intellectual commentary and contemplation, both of which are the marks of a good viewer.

It is necessary to recognize that interpretive difficulties are introduced when ekphrastic descriptions and related commentary are issued from a source other than the narrative voice, as happens in mime four. The art objects are not described from the poet's point of view, but from that of two characters within the poem. Statements issued from an authoritative third-person narrator are generally more objective and authoritative. At the very least, a third-person narrative voice clearly marks that the evaluative statements issued by a character within the poem reflect only the opinion of that character. In Book 1 of the *Aeneid*, for example, it is perfectly clear that the interpretation offered of the images in Hera's temple in Carthage belongs to Aeneas himself; it is obvious that he is a viewer and his reactions are the result of his emotional experiences. In the fourth mime, however, the subjectivity of the viewers (Kynno and Kokkale) is not signaled by a distant narrative voice. The audience of the poem must recognize the fallibility of the two women through whose gaze the images are filtered. Once this fact is recognized, Herodas' audience must carefully consider the source of any

---

<sup>112</sup> See again Goldhill (2007), 16. He notes that the authors of the epigrams “all respond to the tropes of verisimilitude.”

evaluative or critical statements and use their knowledge of the source to judge these statements.

In the case of Kynno and Kokkale, the audience must bear in mind that the women are not representative of the intellectual elite, but the very opposite. As discussed previously, both women appear to occupy ranks within the lower, uneducated parts of society. Both women show familiarity with Hellenistic aesthetics and technical terminology that at first glance suggests they are part of the same intellectual discourse in which the narrative voices of various epigrams participate. Yet, their statements are undercut by two things. First, they are very clearly *not* part of the intellectual elite, which immediately casts suspicion on their aesthetic pronouncements. Second, and more importantly, despite an understanding of the proper words, the women fail to go beyond the phase of viewing and emotional reaction to the interpretative phase that includes commentary and deeper reflection. This is best exemplified by two failures of the women to respond in a sophisticated manner. First, the women fail to offer any commentary on the religious context of the objects viewed; this failure is emphasized by the appearance of the temple attendant directly following their discussion of Apelles' sacrifice scene and Kynno's spirited defense of the painter. It seems appropriate that objects in a temple should produce some commentary related to the context of the artwork, but Kynno and Kokkale do not appear to make the obvious connection between the dedication of art objects in a temple and the religious significance of such an act. The second failure is their general inability to offer any commentary beyond that centered on the lifelike qualities of the various art objects they view. They are enslaved by the vividness, the *enargeia*, to such a degree that they cannot offer detached commentary or

assessment. This is made most evident by contrasting their responses to lifelike pieces of art with those of the narrative personae in the epigrams dealing with Myron's Heifer. In both of these cases they fail to hold up as an example of good viewers.

Rather than end the discussion here by claiming that Herodas is simply making sport of uneducated viewers of art, I would instead like to propose that he is setting forth a sort of “anti-model,” not only for viewers of art in general, but specifically for the audience of his poems.<sup>113</sup> Consider briefly the scenes and subjects of the art objects on which the women focus. They are composed of mundane, everyday scenes and non-idealized subjects, the very same types of scenes and subjects featured in Herodas' own mimes. They are interested in the realistic depictions and lifelike qualities of the artwork in the temple. Again, these very same qualities have been noted in Herodas' mimes by a variety of scholars.<sup>114</sup> I think it is no great leap to suggest that Herodas intends the artwork viewed in the temple of Asclepius in the fourth mime to serve as a parallel to his own poetry, especially given his awareness of genre and his own poetry evident in the eighth mime.<sup>115</sup> Graham Zanker has recently argued that poets of the Hellenistic era “set down in words the way in which their contemporaries observed works of art,” and that this is done consciously.<sup>116</sup> Herodas intends his audience to recognize the parallels that exist between a viewer of works of visual art and the reader (or listener) of poetry.

---

113 Yacobi (2000), 714 discusses the ways in which “deficient” viewers of art objects can be “manipulated for a variety of ends.” Taken with the view of Goldhill (2007) that ekphraseis should be instructive, I believe that it is clear that Herodas has employed Kynno and Kokkale for instructive purposes.

114 Nairn (1904) calls Herodas a “convinced and uncompromising realist.” Headlam and Knox (1922), ix view the mimes as lively “illustrations of private life.” Fowler (1989) and Zanker (2004) at various points comment on connections between characters in Herodas' mimes and known sculptures or paintings.

115 Fowler (1989), 5-22 argues that Hellenistic poets are aware of the parallels between their form of art and the visual artwork produced by sculptors, painters, and so on.

116 Zanker (2004), 4. Fowler (1989) adopts this same idea.



Kokkale and Kynno then come to represent receivers of his poetry who fail to reach the contemplative stage of viewing (or in this case, reading or listening) expected of an artist's audience that results in commentary.

If this is accepted it becomes evident that Herodas intends his audience to analyze his mimes and not merely note the surface qualities of realism that are at first evident. At several places in the text Herodas seems to warn viewers of committing such a mistake. These warnings are placed in the mouths of the two women, who comically fail to realize that they are doing exactly what they warn others against doing. For example, when discussing the reaction of the (potential) thieves to the silver fire-tongs first mentioned at line 62, Kokkale mockingly imagines their eyes popping out in excitement (ἐκβαλεῦσι τὰς κούρας, line 64) as they are deceived by the painting. This is almost exactly what Kokkale does several lines later, when she remarks that she is almost moved to screaming (ἀνηλάλαξ, line 70) by the lifelike appearance of the bull glaring at her. Likewise, Kynno berates her slave Kydilla for standing awestruck in the temple, gaping around (τῆ ᾧδε χῶδε χασκεύσῃ, line 42). Kydilla's gaze is compared to that of a crab (ὄρεῦσα καρκίνου μέζον, line 44). This scene is especially comic, because Kynno finds fault with Kokkale for staring in awe at the various objects of art that Kynno and Kokkale themselves have both just focused on in an excited manner. It is also another instructive example of an improper act of viewing. Just as the two women mock those who they imagine to have been deceived by the verisimilitude of the art, so does Herodas ridicule the audience members of his poems, represented by the characters in his fourth mime, who focus only on the realistic qualities of his own poetry.

Another example of Herodas guiding his audience appears in Kynno's lines

following Kokkale's reaction to the bull. Responding to her friend's appreciation of the painting's lifelike vividness, she praises its painter, Apelles. Herodas' decision to include the name of this famous painter is no small coincidence, whatever his association with the Asclepion at Kos.<sup>117</sup> Besides the fineness of his lines (to which Kynno clearly alludes), Apelles was also known for paintings so deceptively true to life that one could predict (through physiognomy) when the subject of his portraits would die.<sup>118</sup> Apelles should be viewed as a parallel to Herodas himself. Both are skilled in lifelike depictions, and both deceive their audience. Apelles does so through the illusion that his paintings are alive. Herodas does so through the realistic qualities of the characters and mundane settings of his mimes that lull his audience into the belief that the mimes only operate on an obvious level and nothing of importance is hidden beneath the surface. They fail to probe deeper and notice the less obvious elements of his poetry, such as aesthetic statements.<sup>119</sup> Kynno then prescribes a punishment for those found guilty of not viewing properly the works of Apelles. She declares that whoever has viewed Apelles works without giving them just consideration (μη παμφαλήσας ἐκ δίκης, line 77) ought to be hung up in a fuller's shop (ποδὸς κρέματ' ἐκεῖνος ἐν γναφέως οἴκῳ, line 78).<sup>120</sup> This statement is both comical and serious. It is sure to provoke laughter from an educated audience that recognizes the failure of Kynno and Kokkale to view properly the artwork in the temple. At the same time, it is also a warning for those who fail to give Herodas'

---

117 See footnote 60.

118 Pliny *Natural History* 35.36: *Imagines adeo similitudinis indiscretae pinxit, ut — incredibile dictu — Apio grammaticus scriptum reliquerit, quendam ex facie hominum divinantem, quos metoposcopos vocant, ex iis dixisse aut futurae mortis annos aut praeteritae vitae.*

119 This certainly has been the case in much of the early scholarship on Herodas after the original publication of the papyrus, and persists in some scholarship of the current period.

120 This may be an echo of Hipponax. See Degani Fr. 174.

poetry fair consideration and recognize that beneath the thick layers of paint depicting mundane scenes and lifelike characters exists serious commentary on Hellenistic aesthetics and ethics.

Marilyn Skinner has taken another view of the fourth mime. Rather than viewing it as a programmatic paradigm for how Herodas wants his own poetry to be viewed, she believes that Herodas composed the fourth mime primarily as a reaction against the influence of various female poets – Erinna, Nossis, and Anyte, for example – on his fellow male Hellenistic poets. In Skinner's view, various aspects of the fourth mime, such the setting in an Asclepion, an experienced “guide” leading a “protégée,” and language reminiscent of dedicatory epigrams, all encourage the audience to recognize a connection to the unique female viewing perspective developed primarily in ekphrastic epigrams.<sup>121</sup> This “feminized perspective” was, in Skinner's view, gaining acceptance among male poets. She identifies Theocritus' fifteenth *Idyll*, which features two women at the Adonia, as friendly to this female perspective. In her view, Theocritus “affirms the feminine ekphrastic tradition.”<sup>122</sup> Though it is impossible to establish whether Herodas' or Theocritus' poem came first, it is the general trend embodied by Theocritus' poem that Skinner finds important. She believes that Herodas' mime satirizes the female perspective embraced by Theocritus in a misogynist attempt to prevent the spread of female poets' influence that had begun with Erinna.

Simon Goldhill responds to Skinner's claim and rejects the existence of a unique “female viewing subject.”<sup>123</sup> Goldhill's primary criticism is that the ekphrastic epigrams

---

<sup>121</sup> Skinner (2001), 221.

<sup>122</sup> Skinner (2001), 216. Burton (1995), 107-108 also sees Theocritus as friendly to female viewpoint.

<sup>123</sup> Goldhill (2007), 10.

cited by Skinner exhibit no obvious signs of a uniquely feminine voice. In his view, the unique female elements identified by Skinner can also be found in ekphrastic epigrams produced by males.<sup>124</sup> He proceeds to dismiss various examples put forth by Skinner on the same grounds, that the examples of a unique “female aesthetic” given by Skinner are in fact found in examples of ekphrasis that can be traced as far back as Homer.<sup>125</sup>

Goldhill argues that the female writers of ekphrastic epigram have been primarily influenced by epitaphs written by men, and that these are the examples they imitate.<sup>126</sup> His final comment on the matter is that the women of both Herodas' fourth mime and Theocritus' fifteenth *Idyll* are ironically mocked, and as a result a “socially normative effect” is felt.<sup>127</sup> I am persuaded by Goldhill's rebuttal of Skinner's argument regarding the fourth mime, but do still find value in Skinner's argument. Even if the fourth mime is not necessarily responding to a unique female viewing perspective, the complexity of the fourth mime clearly demands greater attention than it has received in the past. I will shortly come to a discussion of the possible influence that I believe Nosiss and Erinna did have on Herodas' work, which, while not related to the “female viewing subject,” does indicate that Herodas was aware of female poets and that their innovations in another poetic genre had a profound effect on his mimes.

In summary, I believe the primary goal of the fourth mime is to define an ideal viewer not just of visual art, but also of Herodas' poetry. If my reading is adopted the fourth mime should stand as another example of Herodas playing the role of aesthetic

---

124 Goldhill (2007), 11 argues that “every aspect of this poem's [Palat. Anth. 6.352; an ekphrastic epigram of Erinna cited by Skinner] language, structure, and argument is easily paralleled in ekphrastic writing produced by men.”

125 Goldhill (2007), 12.

126 Goldhill (2007), 14.

127 Goldhill (2007), 15.

critic, which is expected of him as a literary descendant of Hipponax. The fourth mime is a programmatic piece, much like the eighth mime, in which Herodas guides the reception of his poetry. He does so by providing an example of ignorant viewers commenting on pieces of art that feature qualities parallel to those found in his own mimes, namely lifelike scenes and characters. He signals to the astute audience member that his poems demand deep contemplation and should lead to intellectual commentary, just as would be expected from a sophisticated viewer of art. The fourth mime is an excellent example of Herodas' strong connection to the genre of *iambos*, of which aesthetic criticism was a prominent feature. In his veiled attempt to guide his viewers to reject the statements of Kynno and Kokkale, Herodas adopts the voice of the aesthetic critic borrowed from his literary ancestor, Hipponax.

### **2.7: Aesthetic Criticism in *Mimiamb Six***

While the fourth and eighth mimes are the most obvious examples of Herodas commenting on the workings of his poetry and playing the role of aesthetic critic, other examples can be cited where he makes clear allusions to the poet's craft. The sixth mime, in particular, demonstrates awareness of the genre within which he works and provides an excellent illustration of the need for the deeper reading and contemplation suggested by the fourth mime. The mime features two women, Koritto and Metro, discussing a dildo that Koritto has acquired from a certain Kerdon, who runs a secret business out of his home. Koritto has loaned the dildo to her friend Euboule, who in turned loaned it to Nossis. It is from Nossis that Metro first learned of the dildo's

existence and became interested in acquiring one for herself, prompting her visit to Koritto. On the surface, then, the mime is simply about two women chatting about the best place to buy dildos. A deeper meaning, however, emerges when looking more closely at the language employed by Herodas and recognizing his tendency to comment seriously on his own poetry.

Perhaps the most clear signal that Herodas will use the dildo as a metaphor for his own poetry is the repetition of the verb ῥάπτω (“to stitch”) used in reference to its construction.<sup>128</sup> This verb appears at lines 18, 43, 47, 48, and 51. Jacob Stern has convincingly argued that the *baubon* of interest in the sixth mime is an excellent parallel for Herodas' own poetry: ugly on the surface, but with “hidden layers of meaning.”<sup>129</sup> It is a particularly apt metaphor for Herodas' new genre *mimiambos*, which, as discussed previously in relation to the eighth mime, combines the low-brow, vulgar subject matter of mime with the biting aesthetic and ethical criticism found in Hipponactean *iamboi*. Kerdon's dildos are much the same.<sup>130</sup> On the surface they are an object few respectable Greek women would profess to own;<sup>131</sup> even Herodas' women are concerned with the harm that may be done to their reputations by public knowledge of their possession of such an object, as seen when Metro asks Koritto if she will slander her if she reveals the name of the dildo's maker (διαβαλεῖς ἥν σοι εἶπω, lines 22-23). Yet beneath an “ugly” exterior is a great deal of craftsmanship, such that Koritto compares Kerdon's skill to

---

128 Ford (1988) discusses the connection of the verb to terms such as a ῥαψωδός and ῥαψωδία, as well as the metaphorical use referring to the composition of poetry. See also Stern (1979), 253ff.

129 Stern (1979), 252.

130 The very topic of dildos links Herodas to the most famous author of mimes, his predecessor Sophron. It is quite possible that Sophron's mimes featured women viewing dildos, perhaps in a setting more like that seen in Herodas' seventh mime. See Hordern (2004) on fragments 23 and 25.

131 The exception, perhaps, might be on the comic stage, where one would almost be shocked to learn of a woman who did *not* possess a dildo

that of Athena (τῆς Ἀθηναίης αὐτῆς ὀρθὴν τὰς χεῖρας, οὐχὶ Κέρδωνος, δόξεις, lines 65-67). This is reminiscent of the fourth mime when Kokkale is struck by a relief carving (ταῦτ' ἐρεῖς Ἀθηναίην γλύψαι τὰ καλά, lines 57-58). So, too, does the description of Kerdon's craftsmanship (τὰς χεῖρας, line 66) echo Kynno's praise of Apelles' craftsmanship in the fourth mime (ἀληθιναὶ ... χεῖρες, line 72).

Koritto continues to sing Kerdon's praises in the following lines. The *baubon* is wonderfully straight (ὀρθά, line 70). The straps are made of a soft wool, not leather (οἱ δ' ἱμαντίσκοι ἔρι', οὐκ ἱμάντες, lines 71-72). When describing the smoothness or softness of the dildo Koritto uses a highly literary phrase, comparing it to sleep (ἀλλ' ἡ μαλακότης ὕπνος, line 71).<sup>132</sup> The effect of the women's commentary is to draw attention to the dildo as a work of art, not merely a sex toy. Readers (or perhaps viewers) who do not probe past the surface of the mime would doubtlessly have been entertained by the comic themes,<sup>133</sup> while those who look for a deeper meaning are rewarded by another glimpse of Herodas' keen self-awareness and concern with presenting his poetry in a sophisticated light.

Another element of aesthetic criticism in the sixth mime deserving of attention is the reference to two well known female poets, Nossis and Erinna. When Koritto asks Metro where she'd seen the dildo, Metro tells her that Nossis, the daughter of Erinna, had it (Νοσοῖς εἶχεν ἠρίννης, line 20). The use of these names can be no small coincidence. Both were rough contemporaries of Herodas, and well known poets at

---

<sup>132</sup> The most obvious comparison noted by many commentators is to *Iliad* 10.2: μαλακῶ δεδημημένοι ὕπνω. Theocritus also provides several parallels, such as at *Idyll* 5.51: ὕπνω μαλακώτερα, or 15.125: μαλακώτεροι ὕπνω. See also Stern (1979), 253.

<sup>133</sup> See Finnegan (1992), 29-34 for one such example of a reading where emphasis is given to the obvious "comic depravity" of the women.

that.<sup>134</sup> It would appear that Herodas makes another allusion to the same women in the seventh mime. Kerdon, the shoemaker, offers a long list of the various shoe styles he has available, among which are “Nossises” (Νοσσιδες, line 57) and “Baukises” (Βαυκιδες, line 58). Baukis is, of course, the companion of Erinna, to whom the *Distaff* is directed. The bawdy nature of the sixth and seventh mimes at first encourages the view that Herodas intends to insult these female poets. Headlam and Knox remarks that “the choice of two such names proceeds clearly from malicious cynicism.”<sup>135</sup> Given the prominence of aesthetic criticism in iambic poetry, this view is certainly defensible. There is another possible view, however, that I find more compelling.

Jackie Murray has suggested that Herodas' references are not intended as insults, but rather that the sixth and seventh mimes together suggest “imitation and playful appreciation” of poetic contributions made by Erinna and Nossis.<sup>136</sup> The key, according to Murray, is recognizing that mimes six and seven form a dipytch.<sup>137</sup> Murray suggests that six and seven together metaphorically allude to Herodas himself consciously writing a dipytch; the sewing of the dildos in the sixth mime and shoe-making in the seventh are both metaphors for writing poetry. I have already noted that the references to Nossis and Erinna are obvious. Scholars generally accept that mimes six and seven ought to be read together, and the assertion that they form a dipytch seems fair. What connection, then, is there between Herodas' reference to Nossis and Erinna, and the

---

134 Zanker (2009), ad. loc. dates Erinna to the first half of the third century and Nossis to the first twenty years of the third century. Some debate exists concerning Erinna's *floruit*, but this is generally accepted.

135 Headlam and Knox (1922), ad. loc. Cunningham (1971), ad. loc. expresses the same view, and also adds that this “is one of the very few occasions when [Herodas] is not totally impersonal.”

136 Murray (2008).

137 See Rist (1993) and Kutzko (2006).



diptych as a poetic technique? Murray's response depends on earlier scholarship showing that Erinna's epigrams dealing with Baukis (Gow-Page 1 and 2) are an example of a diptych. Leaping off from here, Murray suggests that Herodas is signaling a poetic debt to his poetic predecessor's technique.

Whether or not one accepts Murray's view is not essential to the point I would like to make regarding the significance of Herodas' decision to include a reference to these two famous poets. The very fact that he *does* make a reference to Nossis and Erinna at all is just as important as why he does so. Whatever one believes Herodas' motivations for including the reference is, either as a respectful nod to a fellow poet or as an invective barb, the same thing can be said: it is another example of Herodas adopting an aesthetic position and playing the role of aesthetic critic. Understood in a positive light the reference embraces and praises Erinna's use of the diptych structure in her poems. Likewise, if interpreted as an invective barb the reference attempts to exclude Erinna and Nossis from the poetic community. This is consistent with the persona of the iambographer and the aims of invective poetry, which inevitably privileges one group while excluding another.<sup>138</sup> Both interpretations support the primary argument made in this chapter that Herodas' mimes are concerned with aesthetic criticism, particularly in relation to poetics.

## **2.8: Conclusion**

The aim of this chapter has been to identify first Herodas' connection to an

---

<sup>138</sup>See Nappa (1999), 266 on this point. He is concerned with Catullus, but the general points made in his article regarding iambic poetry, specifically of the invective variety, are pertinent to this discussion.

established tradition of aesthetic and ethical criticism present in iambic poetry, specifically in the poetry of Hipponax and authors who adopt a Hipponactean persona. This is evident primarily in the eighth mime, in which Herodas openly identifies himself as a literary descendant of Hipponax and demonstrates both a keen awareness of his place in the poetic tradition and a desire to define the manner in which his poetry is received. Attention was then paid to points in the mimes where Herodas comments on contemporary Hellenistic aesthetic qualities of art and his own poetry. I examined the fourth mime in detail and proposed that in it Herodas provides an “anti-model” for his audience. He rejects the individual who focuses only on the realistic qualities of his mime without being moved to deeper contemplation and commentary. The sixth mime provides a useful model for this with various layers of interpretation. On the surface the mime is little more than a comic, perhaps misogynist, sketch of two women discussing dildos. Look closer, however, and the dildo becomes a remarkably fit metaphor for Herodas' own art, demonstrating again a strong awareness of the generic pressures of *mimos* and *iambos* ever present in his poetry. Such examples reveal, in my opinion, that while Herodas' mimes are meant to be entertaining and comical, they are also keenly interested in serious topics. I will continue exploring this in the coming chapter focusing on ethical criticism in his mimes.

## Chapter 3: Ethical Criticism in Herodas' *Mimiamboi*

### 3.1: The Generic Interest of *Iambos* in Ethical Criticism

This chapter will focus on what I have elsewhere called ethical criticism. I would like to begin by defining what I mean by this term, to avoid confusion with the phrase of the same name coined by Northrop Frye in his 1957 work *Anatomy of Criticism*. I use ethical criticism in this paper to refer to the ethical or moral judgment of the behavior of an individual or group. In some cases these judgmental statements are clearly concerned with promoting one set of values over another. More often, however, statements in Herodas and his iambic predecessors pronouncing ethical judgments are inherent in a verbal assault on another character for a perceived flaw or moral failure. This is a key element of iambic poetry, as I have already discussed previously and will demonstrate in more detail below. The very act of insulting an individual's conduct reinforces and promotes the value system favored by the invective voice.<sup>139</sup>

One defining feature of iambic poetry is a statement of blame or censure, a *psogos*.<sup>140</sup> These statements are often couched in hostile terms as personal attacks on the character or behavior of the addressed individual. Ethical judgments of the attacked individual's conduct are often inherent in such attacks. While invective assaults may be humorous or entertaining, they are also of a serious nature, as they can be used to establish the “boundaries of ethical conduct.”<sup>141</sup> It is possible to trace this tradition of

---

<sup>139</sup> Nappa (1999), 266.

<sup>140</sup> Hughes (2002), 205 and 218; Rosen (1988); Rotstein (2010), 86-97; Bowie (2001), 1-7. It is of course important to note, as many of these scholars do, that *psogos* is not a feature of all iambic poems. In other words, a poem can be classified as *iambos* even if it lacks a direct verbal attack.

<sup>141</sup> Acosta-Hughes (2002), 220.

ethical criticism in iambic poetry from Archilochus and Hipponax down to Hellenistic writers of iambs, such as Callimachus, and even further to Latin iambic poetry, which is best exemplified by many of the invective poems of Catullus.<sup>142</sup> A close reading of Herodas' mimes reveals that he shares the same interest in ethical criticism as his fellow iambographers. This should come as no real surprise given his clear effort to locate himself and his poems in the iambic tradition.

Despite the common presence of ethical critical statements in the mimes and other more traditional examples of iambic, it should be obvious that there is a major difference between Herodas and authors such as Archilochus and Hipponax. Statements of an ethical nature in the other iambographers are issued from the mouth of a poetic persona in the first person and often directed against an external rival who is easily imagined by the audience as a real individual.<sup>143</sup> This is not the case in Herodas, where the statements are inevitably placed in the mouths of characters within the mimes, and generally made in response to another character's actions, though not necessarily phrased as an insult. In Herodas, an additional layer is created between the poet and his poem by the fact that ethical statements are issued by characters, not the poetic persona. This makes it necessary for the audience to consider carefully the source of any statement when evaluating its intended message, much like Herodas demanded of his audience in the fourth mime. As discussed above in the section on aesthetic criticism, this creates difficulties in interpreting such statements and the author's own view. This difficulty will become more clear when looking at specific examples in the mimes. First,

---

<sup>142</sup> See Nappa (1999) on Catullus' invective poems.

<sup>143</sup> Rosen (1988) examines archaic iambographers' interest in using humorous names for the characters in their poems. Some characters may be representative of real life individuals, while others are simply fictional.

however, it will be helpful to look briefly at examples of ethical criticism in other iambographers, both to show that ethical criticism is a common feature of iambic poetry and to provide examples of the types of ethical statements common in the iambic poets.

Archilochus is a good starting point for examples of ethical criticism in early iambic poetry. I would like to start first with fragment 124b (West), which is clearly concerned with ethical behavior. The text is as follows:

πολλὸν δὲ πίνων καὶ χαλίκρητον μέθυ,  
οὔτε τίμον εἰσενείκας .....  
οὔδ᾽ ἐ μὲν κληθεὶς ..... ἦλθες οἷα δὴ φίλος,  
ἀλλὰ σ<εο> γαστήρ νόον τε καὶ φρένας παρήγαγεν  
εἰς ἀναιδείην.

Drinking much and unmixed wine,  
neither having chipped in for the cost .....  
nor having been invited ..... you showed up as if you were a friend,  
but your belly led both your mind and wits astray  
to shamelessness.

This poem is directed at a certain Pericles, who was evidently in the habit of crashing dinner parties.<sup>144</sup> While lacking the violent, abusive language found in many of Hipponax' poems (and for which Archilochus, too, was known),<sup>145</sup> the ethical statement is clear. The use of the term ἀναιδεια signals that Archilochus is targeting the ethical shortcomings of his enemy. Inherent in Archilochus' poem is a condemnation of

<sup>144</sup> Athenaeus 1.14 (Kaibel).

<sup>145</sup> Archilochus' malice is most often directed at Lycambes. Ancient testimonia preserve the popular story that Archilochus grew angry with Lycambes after he reneged on an agreement to allow the poet to marry his daughter, Neoboule. Archilochus responded by writing abusive poems directed at Lycambes and his daughter, which led to them committing suicide. The veracity of this account is surely suspect, and is better understood as evidence for the ancient view of the expected persona of an iambographer rather than as reliable biography. So, too, should the story of Hipponax and the sculptors, Bupalus and Athenis, which is clearly influenced by the pseudo-biographical Archilochean tradition, be treated. See Carey (1986). Hawkins (2008) has recently looked at the relationship between Archilochus and Lycambes, and proposed that Lycambes played the role of a poetic rival, who critiqued *iambos* as a genre and also gave voice to ethical and aesthetic concerns. Archilochus' poems respond to this criticism. The poet responding to criticism and justifying his style and the genre within which he or she is working reminds me of Herodas' eighth mime and his attempts to defend himself against his critics, while also demonstrating that his new genre is legitimate.

gluttony. Numerous other examples could be cited from Archilochus' corpus, but for this paper it is enough to show that ethical judgment of behavior is a general feature of Archilochus' poetry.

Hipponax followed Archilochus' example and crafted poems that featured biting invective loaded with ethical criticism. A common target of his is Boupalus, who has been discussed briefly above. Physical threats against Boupalus are common; in various fragments the poetic voice threatens to hit him in the face (κόψω Βουπάλου τὸν ὀφθαλμόν, Degani Fr. 121) and in another makes a reference to causing him to cry (κλαίειν κελεύων Βούπαλον, Degani Fr. 86, line 18). Unfortunately in neither of these fragments do we see an example of ethical censure. Still, ethical terms are applied to Boupalus in other fragments, suggesting that when Hipponax targets him it is often to point out a moral failure. The adjective *τάλας* is applied to him in fragment 18, doubtlessly in its pejorative sense. In fragment 20 we see a better example of ethical criticism, when Hipponax refers to Boupalus as a *μητροκοίτης*, an incestuous individual. Though such sexual insults are commonplace, they still depend on ethical norms to have any effect; in this case the attack is predicated on the ethical standard of an individual refraining from incestuous relations.<sup>146</sup> While the fragmentary nature of the Hipponactean corpus makes extensive analysis difficult, it is nevertheless clear from these fragments that his poems featured an interest in ethical standards.

One final example from Hipponax' corpus may serve as additional evidence that he engaged in criticism of individuals for failing to meet ethical standards.<sup>147</sup> The

---

<sup>146</sup> Catullus offers an interesting later parallel. His poems aimed at Gellius (88-91, for instance) all attack Gellius for incestuous behavior.

<sup>147</sup> See Acosta-Hughes (2002), 32ff. on criticism in Hipponax. Also of interest is Rosen (1988), who analyzes Hipponax' relationship with Boupalus and the conventional form of iambic blame poetry.

Strasbourg epode, edited first in 1899 by Reitzenstein, is the best evidence for this.<sup>148</sup> In this poem the iambic persona expresses the desire that he see his enemy suffer a terrible fate as a shipwrecked slave in Thrace (Degani Fr. 194, lines 4-14). Of greater interest is the reasons that the narrator gives for this wish. He states that his enemy has wronged him (μ' ἠδίκησε, line 15) and trampled on an oath (λ[ά]ξ δ' ἐπ' ὀρκίοις ἔβη, line 15). The severity of such transgressions is highlighted by the final preserved line, in which it is revealed that the betrayer was a close friend of the iambic persona (τὸ πρὶν ἑταῖρος [ἐ]ών, line 16). The implications of justice and morality suggested by Hipponax' use of weighty words such as ἠδίκησε and ὀρκίοις indicates the poem's concern with ethical criticism. The punishment suggested in the opening lines of the poem is the recompense demanded by the poet for the failure to adhere to ethical standards.

The iambic poems of Callimachus show clear traces of Hipponactean influence.<sup>149</sup> Statements voicing ethical concerns can be found in various poems. I will look only briefly at one of these, the fifth iamb (Pfeiffer Fr. 195).<sup>150</sup> It is evident at several places in the poem that the poetic voice considers himself a moral guide for the subject of the poem, a certain schoolmaster named Apollonius, according to the diegesis. He classifies his words as συμβουλή (line 1), meaning counsel or advice. In addition, he calls himself a Bakis, Sybil, laurel, and an oak tree (ἐγὼ Βάκις τοι καὶ Σίβυλλα καὶ δάφνη καὶ φηγός,

<sup>148</sup> See Kirkwood (1961) for discussion of the authorship of this piece and the history of scholarship prior to the publication of his article. On the basis of “style and spirit” Kirkwood argues that this piece actually belongs to Archilochus. In the fifty intervening years since the publication of Kirkwood's article, however, scholars have moved away from this view in favor of identifying Hipponax as the author of this fragment. See Acosta-Hughes (2002), 220, and Degani (1983), 168ff.

<sup>149</sup> See Acosta-Hughes (2002), 21-104 for an excellent in-depth discussion of the influence Hipponax had on Callimachus' poems. Kerkhecker (1999) touches on Callimachus' debt to Hipponax in various places; see pp. 28-30 on the first iamb and pp. 143-146 on the fifth iamb. Cameron (1995), 372-373 discusses how Callimachus avoided following Hipponactean conventions. Hipponax' influence on Callimachus is thus betrayed by the latter poet's efforts to distinguish himself from his predecessor.

<sup>150</sup> Another example is the third iamb. Acosta-Hughes (2002) deals extensively with this poem.

lines 31-32), all of which are associated with prophecy and divinely inspired advice. Thus, the speaker's advice is given additional force. Unfortunately, the preserved fragments do not contain a direct reference to ethical failings of Apollonius. The diegesis, however, reveals that Apollonius was engaging in inappropriate sexual activities with his students; this is hinted at in the preserved lines by references to a burning flame (line 24) and horses (lines 26-29), both of which are common metaphors for erotic love. Callimachus has here clearly targeted the sexual misconduct of an individual and warned him to reform his behavior. No *psogos* is evident in the remaining fragments, but the basic iambic interest in censuring unethical behavior is present.

As Callimachus' fifth iamb demonstrates, iambic poems need not always contain a *psogos* and censured individual. This will be seen in Herodas' mimes as well, and may also be observed in other iambic poems. The Hellenistic poet Cercidas is an illuminating example. He, like Herodas, fused together two previously distinct genres – melic poetry and iambic poetry – to form a new one, *meliambos*.<sup>151</sup> Many of Cercidas' poems explore general philosophical and ethical issues without attacking the conduct of a particular individual. This same tendency is evident in some poems of Archilochus, too, in which he deals with general philosophical topics without attacking an individual.

### **3.2: Ethical Statements in Herodas**

Having looked at examples of ethical criticism in other iambic authors I would now like to turn to Herodas. It becomes apparent after looking at examples from

---

<sup>151</sup> See Cruces and Daroca (1994) for discussion of the unique meter of Cercidas' poems.



Herodas' mime that his ethical statements are not always framed as a direct attack on another individual. The examples discussed below do all feature confrontation of two individuals, which is reminiscent of the conflict between poetic voice and enemy in the traditional iambic invective poems, but do not necessarily contain a *psogos* in the traditional iambic sense of the term. Present in the mimes that I will discuss is an interest in elevated philosophical and moral issues. The lack of an authoritative poetic voice in the mimes necessitates placement of these ethical critical statements in the mouths of Herodas' characters, who in most cases, I believe, are not even aware of the serious nature of the ethical issues inherent in their own statements. The fact that such elevated concerns are present in scenes featuring low class characters who often exhibit traits of stock comic characters is consistent with the ironic tension in Herodas' scenes featuring aesthetic criticism, and was probably intended for humorous purposes. Still, the ethical issues presented in the mimes are of great importance, and so while Herodas' own views may be impossible to discern, it is at least worth noticing that he is concerned with serious questions that were likely of interest to an elite audience. The fact that the poems are concerned with topics of general interest to Herodas' audience is more important than questions regarding Herodas' own views, as it is quite possible that the views expressed within his poem do not reflect the his own personal views.

### **3.2.1: *Mimiamb* Three and Parent-Child Relationships**

The third mime features a mother (Metrotime) complaining about her son (Kottalos) to his school master (Lampriskos). The first 57 lines of the mime are devoted

to Metrotime's monologue, in which the behavior of her son is related to the schoolteacher. Kottalos is a poor student who would rather spend his days gambling than studying. He neglects his lessons (lines 8-18) and is quick to run away from home should his parents scold him (36-41). His antics have not only caused Metrotime mental anxiety, but have also brought financial troubles upon her home (ἔκ μεν ταλαίνης τὴν στέγην πεπόρθηκεν, line 5; see also lines 44-49). Lampriskos responds to Metrotime's complaints by promising to punish her son (lines 58-70). Kottalos is hoisted up on the shoulders of some of the other students and whipped (lines 71-92) Finally, he is let go, and the mime ends with Metrotime resolving to put chains on his feet to ensure he comes to school in the future (lines 94-97).

Obscured by Metrotime's vicious language and cruel desire to see her son whipped – she urges Lampriskos not to stop thrashing him (οὐ δεῖ σ' ἐκλήξαι, Λαμπρίσκε· δείρον ἄχρις ἥλιος δύσῃ, lines 87-88) – is a hint of the reciprocal, nurturing relationship that existed between parent and child in the ancient Greek world.<sup>152</sup> A parent would take care of a defenseless child with the expectation that the same child would care for the elderly parent when he or she could no longer do so. This expectation meant that parents were expected to invest in their child's education and upbringing with the understanding that they themselves would someday reap the rewards of their early efforts. Evidence of this institution is found as early as Hesiod in his description of the conditions that will exist among mortals of the iron age just before Zeus destroys them in the *Works and Days*. In addition to general strife between kinsmen, Hesiod

---

<sup>152</sup> The Athenian tragedians were especially interested in this relationship. See McDermott (1989), 81-93 for a discussion of the importance of this institution in Athenian society and the implications of violating its tenets, specifically in reference to Euripides' *Medea*.

remarks specifically on the failure of children to nurture their elderly parents (οὐδέ μὲν οἷ γε γηράντεσσι τοκεῦσιν ἀπὸ θρεπτήρια δοῖεν, lines 187-188).

The implications that Kottalos' behavior have for Metrotime's own future is suggestive of an interest in the reciprocal nurturing relationship that exists between them. Metrotime emphasizes the lack of resources available to her and her husband, which in turn highlights the importance of Kottalos' education for their future well-being. Metrotime is willing to make sacrifices in the present, perhaps recognizing it as an investment in her future. She calls attention to the difficulties of paying the schoolmaster (καὶ τριηκὰς ἢ πικρὴ τὸν μισθὸν αἰτεῖ κῆν τὰ Ναννάκου κλαύσω, lines 9-10), and again to the price of the roof tiles (τρὶ ἤμαιθα κλαίουσα ἑκάστου τοῦ πλατύσματος τίνω, lines 45-46) broken by Kottalos climbing about on the roof. Her characterization of her husband as an old man who has problems with his ears and eyes (γέρον ἀνὴρ ὡσὶν τε κῶμμασιν κάμων, line 32) is, perhaps, a glimpse of her own future, when she herself will be dependent on another for survival. So, too, is the effect when she mentions the limited means of Kottalos' grandmother, whose generosity is taken advantage of by her son (ἀλλὰ τὴν μάμμην, γρηῦν γυναῖκα κώρφαν ἡν βίου, κείρει, lines 38-39). All the passages cited above either emphasize the present poverty of the family, caused at least in part by Metrotime's decision to send her son to school, or look ahead to the future, when Metrotime in her old age will rely on her son.

While the previous examples hint at an interest in the reciprocal, nurturing relationship between parent and child, an even more obvious reference can be found. While lamenting Kottalos' inability to spell, Metrotime remarks that it was foolish for her to have sent him to school instead of to the fields (ὥστ' ἔγωγ' εἶπα ἄνουν ἑμαυτήν,

ἦτις οὐκ ὄνους βόσκειν αὐτὸν διδάσκω, γραμμάτων δὲ παιδείην, lines 26-28). She follows up this remark with an explanation of the reason that she wanted him to have an education: to provide support for her in her old age (δοκεῖσ' ἄρωγδὸν τῆς ἄωρις ἔξειν, line 29). This clear statement of her reasons for sending Kottalos to school help frame her entire monologue, and is suggestive of a philosophical concern beyond what might be expected from an otherwise comical scene.<sup>153</sup> Implicit in the scene is the fear of parents that efforts to educate their children in hopes of securing a better future for themselves will fail, and that their children will fail to hold up their end of the mutually beneficial relationship that exists between parent and child. This would amount to a major ethical failure on Kottalos' part.

It is impossible to assert with any certainty Herodas' reasons for including this element of ethical criticism in his mimes besides the obvious point mentioned previously, that ethical criticism is a feature of iambic authors, which Herodas considers himself to be. It cannot be shown that the statement is indicative of Herodas' own views, since his viewpoint has been thoroughly obscured by the additional layer of separation that results from the ethical pronouncement being issued by a character of the mime instead of by the narrative voice of the poetic person common in the examples from iambic poetry discussed above. I think it likely in this mime and the other examples to be discussed shortly that Herodas' aim in including elements of ethical criticism in his mimes is to force his audience to consider, for at least a brief moment, deeper philosophical issues. While *Metrotime* might come across as a humorously overbearing

---

<sup>153</sup> Zanker (2009), 79 sees parallels in New Comedy and Plautine comedy in *Lampriskos* and *Metrotime*. See also pp. 95-97 for analysis of the humor in this particular mime.

mother for much of the mime, at the core of her complaints (whether she is aware of it or not) is an important issue likely relevant to the majority of Herodas' audience. If they are the type of audience member that is moved to contemplation by art, that is, if they are unlike the women in the fourth mime, then they will laugh, but while laughing they will also think. This is an appropriate response to Herodas' poetry, which mixes low humor with elevated concerns, producing a constant tension that demands to be explored.

### **3.2.2: *Mimiamb* Five and the Status of Slaves**

The fifth mime provides yet another instance in which serious philosophical concerns lurk beneath the surface of what is, otherwise, a scene reminiscent of the comic stage. In this case it is Bitinna, a woman of unclear social and marital status, who Herodas humorously employs as an unconscious voice for such concerns.<sup>154</sup> The question at hand in the fifth mime is that of the indistinct status of a slave as a possessable object and human. Herodas creates considerable tension by using one of the most “tyrannical” and cruel characters in his entire corpus to lend a voice to such an elevated philosophical and moral issue. The basic premise of the mime is simple. Bitinna is angry with her slave Gastron, with whom she has had a sexual relationship, for taking up with another woman. In a rage she decides to punish him; most of the mime consists of Bitinna speaking with Gastron, trying to ascertain his guilt and decide

---

<sup>154</sup> See Zanker (2009), 153-55 for discussion of Bitinna's status. No decisive statement can be made on the matter; Bitinna may be married, widowed, or independent. Fountoulakis (2007) has proposed that she may be a hetaira or a woman of similar social standing. Arnott (1971) argues that she is married and not a hetaira. Cunningham (1971) does not comment on her status, except to say that she is a “free woman.” See also Konstan (1989).

on a suitable punishment. Ever present in the dialogue is the contrast between δοῦλος and ἄνθρωπος, both categories to which Gastron belongs. In the background is the question of how to reconcile belonging to both.

Following Bitinna's opening lines in which she accuses Gastron of sleeping with another woman (lines 1-3) is Gastron's assertion that he is, in fact, a slave and that she may treat him as she desires (δοῦλός εἰμι· χρῶ ὅτι βούλη μοι, line 6). Yet his status is evidently not so clear as it first appears. Bitinna remarks that she was responsible for raising him up to a rank among humans (ἐγὼ μὲν, Γάστρων, ἢ σε θεῖσα ἐν ἀνθρώποις, line 15).<sup>155</sup> Appropriate for such an elevated discussion is Bitinna's use of the ethical verb ἀμαρτάνω (line 16) to describe her failure in judgment when she raised him up to a level of society usually inaccessible to slaves. Bitinna then shifts, telling Gastron he needs to learn that he is a slave and her property (δεῖ σ' ὀτεύνεκ' εἰς δοῦλος καὶ τρεῖς ὑπὲρ σευ μνάς ἔθηκα γινώσκειν, lines 20-21). In just 20 lines Gastron has identified himself as a δοῦλος, while Bitinna has stated that she gave him a place among ἄνθρωποι, before again reminding him that he is, in fact, a slave. The alternating use of the opposed terms should draw an attentive and reflective audience member's attention to Gastron's odd status.

Following Bitinna's order given to another slave to bind Gastron comes a new protest from Gastron. He asks Bitinna to forgive his mistake (ἄφες μοι τὴν ἀμαρτίην ταύτην, line 26). He continues to protest, claiming that he is only human after all, and that he simply made a mistake (ἄνθρωπός εἰμι, ἥμαρτον, line 27). Gastron's use of

---

<sup>155</sup> I am reminded here of the *cena* in Petronius' *Satyricon*, in which the freedman Trimalchio, angered with his wife Fortunata, reminds her that he is largely responsible for her current free status: *de machina illam sustuli, hominem inter homines feci* (74).

ἄμαρτάνω and the related ἄμαρτία echo Bitinna's earlier language in line 16. Bitinna, however, rejects his claim by ordering him off to the ζήτρειον (line 32), a place where slaves were punished and a word familiar to the comic stage.<sup>156</sup> Gastron's final words are spoken at line 39; he will remain present “on stage,” so to speak, but silent. Gastron's status as a slave initially appears to be certain after this point; he is referred to as a fellow slave (σύνδουλον, line 56), by Kydilla, who will be discussed below, and as a sevenfold-slave (ἑπτάδουλον, line 75) by Bitinna.<sup>157</sup> True to Bitinna's inability to make up her mind earlier in the mime, however, she reverts again to calling him an ἄνθρωπος (line 78). This is the final term she applies to him.

Beginning at line 39 with Gastron's last spoken line a new slave comes to the forefront, one who also occupies a confused position in Bitinna's household. This slave, named Kydilla (she is first mentioned at line 9; this same name is given to another slave in the fourth mime), is twice identified as a δούλη (lines 44 and 54) by Bitinna. Kydilla is sent by Bitinna to bring back Gastron after she has sent him away to the ζήτρειον to be whipped, as she has changed her mind and now wishes him to be tattooed instead.<sup>158</sup> Kydilla intercedes on Gastron's behalf, calling upon Bitinna by the endearing term τᾶτι (line 69) and praying that her daughter, Batyllis, finds a good husband and gives her grandchildren (lines 69-71). She asks Bitinna to forgive (ἄφες, line 72) Gastron's mistake (τὴν μίαν ταύτην ἄμαρτιν, lines 72-73), echoing the very same language used by both characters earlier in the mime. Bitinna is at first unwilling to relent, but she

---

<sup>156</sup> See Headlam and Knox (1922) and Zanker (2009), ad. loc. for comic parallels. Zanker also mentions the tendency in Roman comedy of sending a slave to the *carnifex* as a Latin equivalent.

<sup>157</sup> Cunningham (1971), ad. loc. says that ἑπτάδουλον is “comic exaggeration.” The phrase also appears in Hipponax (Degani Fr. 190, line 2). See also Zanker (2009), ad. loc.

<sup>158</sup> See Jones (1987) on tattooing in antiquity. See pp. 147-48 specifically for tattooing as a punishment for slaves.

finally does so, citing her love for Kydilla as the reason. She says that she loves Kydilla no less than her own daughter (ἦν οὐδὲν ἥσσον ἢ Βατυλλίδα στέργω, line 82) and mentions that she raised Kydilla with her own hands (ἐν τῆσι χερσὶ τῆς ἐμῆσι θρέψασα, line 83). Bitinna's use of the verb στέργω (to love) is important, as this is the verb used of the love between parent and child.<sup>159</sup> Also important is the verb τρέφω, which is used to describe the nurturing and rearing of a child. Kydilla's status is, like Gastron's, confused. She is very clearly referred to as a δούλη, yet Bitinna's language is also reflective of a mother-daughter relationship. The status of both characters is intentionally left ambiguous.

As in the third mime, no clear ethical message emerges from the fifth mime and no definitive boundaries for ethical conduct are established. There is perhaps a general interest in the status of slaves and what it means to be an ἄνθρωπος present in the fifth mime, but it would be a gross overstatement and misreading of the text to draw any definite conclusion as to what Herodas' own views were. All that can be said is there is an interest in an ethical subject, but any indication of the poet's own view is obscured by the removal of the poetic voice from the poems. Causing even more difficulty is the fact that within the fifth mime the characters fail to make any decisive statements regarding the status of slaves, or even appear to recognize that they are addressing such a weighty philosophical issue. At least in the mimes dealing with aesthetic criticism Herodas' characters had very pronounced views that could be critiqued. The absence of well defined ethical views makes it difficult to do anything more than simply point out the

---

<sup>159</sup> See LSJ 1.1. Aristotle's *Eud. Eth.* 7.1241b uses the verb φιλέω to describe the love between parent and child. There are, of course, many exceptions to this.



presence of ethical topics in the mimes, and note that the characters Herodas employs to give voice to ethical statements lack authority and appear themselves to be unaware that they are addressing important issues of great relevance to much of Hellenistic society.

### **3.2.3: *Mimiamb One and Female Fidelity***

One mime in which a clear ethical statement is issued by a character still fails to provide any hint of Herodas' own views, but is an early signal that the mimes will include ethical judgments. The first mime features two primary characters, Gyllis, an old procuress, and Metriche, a younger woman whose partner has been away in Egypt for ten months. Gyllis has come to convince Metriche that her partner, Mandris, has left her and will not be returning from Egypt. But no matter, for Gyllis has found a suitable companion in love with Metriche and ready to replace Mandris, a young, wealthy, successful athlete named Gryllos. The first 66 lines of the mime are spent on introductions, friendly banter between the two women, and Gyllis singing the praises of Gryllos to convince Metriche to accept him as a lover. I will not examine these lines in detail, interesting though they are, but would instead like to look at Metriche's warning to Gyllis immediately after the elderly procuress has urged the younger woman to stop waiting for her partner and listen to Gyllis' plea to give her affections to the athlete Gryllos (πείσθητί μευ, line 66).

Metriche begins her response by simultaneously insulting Gyllis for her age and wits (Γυλλί, τὰ λευκὰ τῶν τριχῶν ἀπαμβλύνει τὸν νοῦν, lines 67-68). That this is intended as a rebuke is clear when Metriche's earlier attitude is taken into account.

Early in the poem she responded to Gyllis' gloomy comments on old age with what appears to have been a joke (μη τοῦ χρόνου καταπεύδεο· [.....] γὰρ, Γυλλί, κήτέρους ἄγχειν, lines 17-18).<sup>160</sup> There is no such playful attitude later in the poem. Metriche tells Gyllis she would not have kindly endured such words from any other woman (ταῦτ' ἐγὼ ἐξ ἄλλης γυναικὸς οὐκ ἂν ἠδέως ἐπήκουσα, lines 69-70). She then issues a (hypothetical) physical threat similar to those seen in Herodas' iambic predecessors, claiming that she would have taught such a woman to sing a lame song while limping (χωλήν δ' αἰδεῖν χῶλ' ἂν ἐξεπαίδευσσα, line 71) and to consider her door hateful (τὸν οὐδὸν ἐχθρὸν ἠγεῖσθαι, line 72).<sup>161</sup> The phrase αἰδεῖν χῶλά is surely a reference to Herodas' own choliambic meter, also known as limping iambs, and an early signal that Herodas' poems will be styled on Hipponax' *iamboi*. This playful reference to the choliambic meter is especially appropriate for a passage that very closely resembles a typical iambic *psogos* reminiscent of Hipponax.

Following her threat, Metriche explains more fully the reasons for her anger, and in doing so indirectly criticizes the conduct of others and draws up the “ethical boundaries” identified by Acosta-Hughes. She warns Gyllis never to come back bringing such a story (σὺ δ' αὖτις ἔς με μηδὲ ἓνα, φίλη, τοῖον φέρουσα χῶρει μῦθον, lines 73-74). She is referring here, of course, to the young Gryllos' passion for her and Gyllis' advice that she should give up on her current relationship. She then defines the proper course of action for a woman whose partner is away. She tells Gyllis that she will continue

<sup>160</sup>The textual corruption here makes it difficult to understand precisely what Metriche is saying, but ἄγχειν seems to have a sexual connotation. Cunningham (1971), ad. loc. cites *Anacreont.* 57.21-2 as a parallel.

<sup>161</sup>The choice of the adjective ἐχθρός to describe Metriche's home may be a reference to the tendency of iambographers to cast the object of their wrath as an enemy. She is framing her relationship with Gyllis in traditional iambic terms.

waiting, and warns Gyllis against mocking Mandris (τὴν Πυθέω δὲ Μητρίχην ἕα θάλλειν τὸν δίφρον· οὐ γὰρ ἔνγελᾶι τις εἰς Μάνδριν, lines 76-77).<sup>162</sup> Here we see a clear ethical stance taken by Metriche regarding her fidelity towards her partner, voiced in the traditional format of an iambic invective poem. Implicit in Metriche's attack on Gyllis is a rejection of the procuress' own ethical beliefs, which would encourage Metriche to abandon her partner and transfer her affections elsewhere.

While Metriche's statement is clear, it is still impossible to argue for any evidence of Herodas' own opinion being suggested by her words. The first mime may, however, give some indication to the types of topics of interest to Herodas. Lines 26-35 feature a sort of encomium of the attractions of Ptolemaic Egypt. Though humorously placed in the mouth of the Gyllis, it seems likely that this sort of comic praise was welcomed by the Ptolemies.<sup>163</sup> The encomium is worthy of closer examination. Gyllis praises a great variety of institutions and benefits for an individual found in Ptolemaic Egypt, notably: power, personal reputation, wealth, sexual pleasures, the Mouseion, the temple of Ptolemy II Philadelphus II and Arsinoe II, and the good king (again, referring to Philadelphus). Zanker, in his discussion of this passage, notes that Gyllis' list is arranged in a “comic disorder,” with serious institutions, such as the Mouseion (line 31), juxtaposed with more frivolous pursuits and pleasures such as wine (οἶνος, line 31) and

---

<sup>162</sup> The verb γελάω reminds me of the Homeric hero's concern with being laughed at by his or her enemies. Euripides' *Medea* provides the clearest example. She expresses the pain of hearing her enemies laughing at her several times, such as at 797 when addressing the chorus: οὐ γὰρ γελάσθαι τλητὸν ἔξ ἐχθρῶν, φίλαι. Dillon (1991), 345 calls tragic laughter “malevolent in the extreme.” Metriche's strong reaction and use of heroic language is perhaps undercut by her reconciliation with Gyllis. For discussion of laughter in Homer see Levine (1982), who on p. 97 observes that “laughter generally implies a real or imagined physical or moral superiority over another person.” Such laughter is deserving of punishment; the suitors will have one last laugh at Telemachus (οἱ δ' ἄρα πάντες ἐπ' αὐτῷ ἠδὲ γέλασσαν μνηστῆρες, 21.376-77) before Odysseus cuts them down.

<sup>163</sup> See Zanker (2009) ad. loc. and pp. 37-38.

women (γυναικες, line 32). The comic juxtaposition of the serious and trivial in these lines is consistent with the poetic technique Herodas employs elsewhere in his poems. In the fourth mime we saw lower class, uneducated women describe works of art using the language of intellectual discourse. Likewise, in the various mimes discussed above we have seen vulgar characters raise questions and concerns of serious ethical and moral importance. The tension created by Gyllis' deliverance of the encomium and the order of the attractions is the same tension evident throughout the rest of Herodas' mimes.

### **3.3: Conclusion**

Besides aiding in creating humor and the ironic tension prevalent in Herodas' poetry, the presence of the encomium in the first poem also signals his connection to and interest in Ptolemaic Egyptian culture. I would like to develop this point by suggesting that the ethical issues on which Herodas focuses were topics of great interest in Ptolemaic society of Herodas' day. Featuring prominently in the three mimes discussed above are primarily issues dealing with the household and family: parent-child relationships are the focus of the third mime, while fidelity in male-female partnerships is at the forefront of the first mime.<sup>164</sup> The family unit saw changes in the Hellenistic era in which Herodas wrote and lived, so it is quite possible that these mimes are a reaction to such changes.<sup>165</sup> The fifth mime focuses on the difficult distinction

---

<sup>164</sup> The third mime also deals with education, another hot topic in Ptolemaic Egypt. Ptolemy II Philadelphus passed measures promoting education, while other elites of the Hellenistic era had a hand in establishing new schools. See Morgan (2010), 517.

<sup>165</sup> It is in Ptolemaic Egypt that the earliest marriage contracts are found. Such contracts deal with a variety of topics, including dowry, death, and divorce. See Yiftach-Firanko (2003).

between human and slave, and may be a reaction to the introduction of chattel slavery to Egypt by the Greeks, which was previously uncommon in Egypt.<sup>166</sup> I will state one last time, as I have already done previously, that there is no need to search for Herodas' own views in his decision to include relevant contemporary issues in his mimes.

In addition to any other possible reasons for including ethical statements, it is important to keep in mind what may well be Herodas' primary motivation: humor. While I have endeavored to show that the mimes do contain serious moments and ideas, in the end they are certainly meant to be entertaining. Placing elevated statements of an ethical nature in the mouths of characters who occupy the lower ranks of society and whose morals are, in many cases, suspect is comical. Of course, just because the characters are often objects of ridicule need not mean that their statements are of less value or that the mimes as a whole are unable to touch on important topics. Greek Old Comedy was particularly successful in combining vulgar characters and intellectual themes, featuring characters who crack risqué sexual jokes while probing the institutions at the core of Athenian public life. While Herodas' poems do not address the same weighty topics, it ought to be recognized nonetheless that serious ethical concerns are given play in his sketches.

---

<sup>166</sup> See Von Reden (2007), 131 and Davies (1984), 299-300 for brief discussion of chattel slavery in Ptolemaic Egypt.

## Conclusion

This paper began with an overview of the features of iambic poetry, focusing particularly on the ancient iambographer's concern with aesthetic and ethical criticism. Statements critical of aesthetic values and judgmental of moral and ethical behavior are recognized as a feature of iambic poetry. If an author locates himself/herself in the iambic tradition, then it is highly likely that their poetry will demonstrate this same feature. Adopting this simple hypothesis, I have endeavored to show two things: first, Herodas consciously locates himself within the iambic tradition; second, his mimes demonstrate an important feature of iambic poetry that has often gone unnoticed or unappreciated, statements of aesthetic and ethical criticism.

It is the eighth mime that provides key insight into Herodas' view of the new genre, *mimiambos*, that he has invented. The odd fusion of *mimos* with *iambos* exposed Herodas and his poems to criticism. In response to such critiques he produced and circulated the eighth mime as a programmatic piece defending his new genre while assigning it a place within the traditional poetic classification scheme. In this poem he appeals jointly to Dionysus and Hipponax, the former to lend dramatic *gravitas* to the low-brown genre of mime, and the latter as an iambic authority whose own poetry provided the model from which Herodas would draw the iambic spirit of his *mimiamboi*. By the end of the eighth mime Herodas has openly adopted Hipponax as his model, defended his poetry from critics, defined his new genre using existing poetic classification terms, and ended on an optimistic note predicting fame and success for himself and his work. The eighth mime is of the greatest importance for this paper

because it firmly places Herodas within the iambic tradition.

With Herodas' iambic allegiance clearly shown in the eighth mime, I then turned my attention to statements of aesthetic and ethical criticism in his mimes. I have argued that the fourth mime, featuring two women viewing artwork in a temple, are intended to serve as an “anti-model” for the ideal audience of Herodas' poems, relying on the parallel between a viewer of visual arts and the reader/audience of poetry. Infused in the entire fourth mime are Herodas' own aesthetic values and awareness of his own poetry and poetic voice. Using the parallel between visual art and literary poetry he teaches his audience to reflect actively on his poetry and to look beyond the obvious realistic qualities noted by so many scholars, and represented by the female viewers focus on the versimilar qualities of the objects of visual art in the fourth mime. He promotes as an ideal viewer one who is moved to contemplation by art. I have argued that Herodas' interest in aesthetic values, particularly as related to his poetry, extend throughout his corpus, and have worked to demonstrate that his mimes demonstrate elevated concerns that have received too little attention.

From elements of aesthetic criticism I moved on to ethical criticism, which I have used to refer to statements judging moral or ethical behavior. Such statements are often placed in the mouths of characters whose dispositions appear at odd with elevated philosophical and moral concerns; in fact, in most of the examples it appears that the characters are not consciously aware of the issues they are raising. One of the greatest difficulties in dealing with these ethical statements is understanding Herodas' own view. I have not attempted to do so, as his views are thoroughly obscured by the placement of such statements in the mouths of characters who are not part of the elite, intellectual

discourse of which Herodas and his audience were participants. Instead, I have suggested that the ethical and philosophical concerns raised in the mimes correspond roughly to broad trends, such as the changing structure of the family, sweeping the Hellenistic world at the time of Herodas' composition of the mimes. I have tried to show that an interest in ethical issues is, in fact, present in the mimes, as such an interest has received little attention.

As the previous concluding paragraphs suggest, one of the primary goals of this thesis has been to demonstrate that Herodas is very much interested in the same elite, intellectual topics explored by his fellow Hellenistic poets. His mimes are indeed humorous, filled with stock characters and scenes from the comic stage, vulgarity, and a biting wit. But the *mimiamboi* also explore topics of a weighty nature, include contemporary aesthetic values, the poet's craft, the parallels between visual art and poetry, and philosophical and ethical concerns of interest and immediate relevance to his audience. The ideal reader, as established in the fourth mime, will not seize only on the surface qualities so obvious to anyone, but will be moved to a deeper contemplation of the more subtle elements hidden beneath the surface, and then on to commentary.



## Works Cited

- Acosta-Hughes, Benjamin. *Polyeideia: the Iambi of Callimachus and the Archaic Iambic Tradition*. Berkeley: UC Press, 2002.
- Arnott, Geoffrey. "Herodas and the Kitchen Sink." *Greece and Rome* 18 (1971): 121-132.
- Bartsch, Shadi and Jas Elsner. "Eight Ways of Looking at an Ekphrasis." *Classical Philology* 102 (2007): i-vi.
- Bowie, Ewen. "Early Greek Iambic Poetry." *Iambic Ideas: Essays on a Poetic Tradition from Archaic Greece to the Late Roman Empire*. Ed. Antonio Aloni, Alessandro Barchiesi, and Alberto Cavarzere. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001. 1-28.
- Bruss, Jon. "Epigram." *A Companion to Hellenistic Literature*. Ed. James Clauss and Martine Cuypers. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2010. 117-135.
- Burton, Joan. *Theocritus' Urban Mimes: Mobility, Gender, and Patronage*. Los Angeles: UC Press, 1995.
- Cameron, Alan. *Callimachus and His Critics*. Princeton UP, 1995.
- Carey, C. "Archilochus and Lycambes." *Classical Quarterly* 36 (1986): 60-67.
- Cruces, J and J.C. Daroca. "The Metre of Cercidas." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 102 (1994): 81-94.
- Cruisus, Otto. *Herondae Mimiambi*. Leipzig: Teubner, 1905.
- Cunningham, I.C. *Herodas Mimiambi*. Leipzig: Teubner, 2004.
- . *Herodas Mimiambi*. London: Oxford UP, 1971.
- Davenport, Guy. *The Mimes of Herondas*. San Francisco: Grey Fox Press, 1981.
- Davies, J.K. "Cultural, social and economic features of the Hellenistic world." *The Cambridge Ancient History*. Ed. A.E. Astin, M.W. Frederiksen, R.M. Ogilvie, and F.W. Walbank. Cambridge UP, 1984.
- Degani, Enzo. *Studi su Ipponatte*. Bari: Adriatica, 1984.
- Degani, H. *Hipponax Testimonia et Fragmenta*. Leipzig: Teubner, 1983.
- Di Gregorio, Lamberto. *Eronda: Mimiambi (I-IV)*. Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 1997.

- Dillon, Matthew. "Tragic Laughter." *The Classical World* 84 (1991): 345-355.
- DuBois, Page. "Reading the Writing on the Wall." *Classical Philology* 102 (2007): 45-56.
- Edmunds, Lowell. "Callimachus Iamb 4: From Performance to Writing." *Iambic Ideas: Essays on a Poetic Tradition from Archaic Greece to the Late Roman Empire*. Ed. Antonio Aloni, Alessandro Barchiesi, and Alberto Cavarzere. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001. 77-98.
- Finnegan, R.J. "Women in Herodian Mime." *Hermathena* 152 (1992): 21-37.
- Ford, Andrew. "The Classical Definition of ΠΑΨΩΙΔΙΑ." *Classical Philology* 83 (1988): 300-307.
- Fountoulakis, Andreas. "Bitinna and the Tyrant: Some Remarks on Herondas 5.74-77." *Philologus* 151 (2007): 230-243.
- . "Herondas 8.66-79: Generic Self-Consciousness and Artistic Claims in Herondas' Mimiambos." *Mnemosyne* 55 (2002): 301-19.
- . "Ὡ παρεόν[τες in Herondas 8.61." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 131 (2000): 27-28.
- Fowler, Barbara. *The Hellenistic Aesthetic*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989.
- Gelzer, T. "Mimus und Kunsttheorie bei Herondas, Mimiambos 4." *Catalepton: Festschrift für Bernhard Wyss zum 80 Geburtstag*. Ed. C. Schäublin. Basel, 1985. 96-116.
- Goldhill, Simon. "What is Ekphrasis For?" *Classical Philology* 102 (2007): 1-19.
- . "The Naive and Knowing Eye: Ekphrasis and the Culture of Viewing in the Hellenistic World." *Art and Text in Ancient Greek Culture*. Ed. S. Goldhill and R. Osborne. Cambridge UP, 1994. 197-223.
- Graf, F. "Ekphrasis: Die Entstehung der Gattung in der Antike." *Beschreibungskunst-Kunstbeschreibung*. Ed. G. Boehm and H. Pfothner. München: W. Fink, 1995.
- Gutzwiller, Kathryn. *A Guide to Hellenistic Literature*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007.
- Hawkins, Tom. "Out-Foxing the Wolf-Walker: Lycambes as Performative Rival to Archilochus." *Classical Antiquity* 27 (2008): 93-114.

- Headlam, Walter and A.D. Knox. *Herodas the Mimes and Fragments*. Cambridge University Press, 1922.
- Herzog, R. "Der Traum des Herondas." *Philologus* 36 (1924): 27-66.
- Hordern, J.H. *Sophron's Mimes: Text, Translation, and Commentary*. London: Oxford UP, 2004.
- Hughes, Benjamin. "Callimachus, Hipponax, and the Persona of the Iambographer." *Materiali e discussioni per l'analisi dei testi classici* 37 (1996): 205-216.
- Hutchinson, G.O. *Hellenistic Poetry*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1988.
- Inwood, Brad and L.P. Gerson. *Hellenistic Philosophy: Introductory Readings*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997.
- Jones, C.P. "Tattooing and Branding in Graeco-Roman Antiquity." *The Journal of Roman Studies* 77 (1987): 139-155.
- Jones, Nicholas. *Rural Athens Under the Democracy*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.
- Kerkhecker, Arnd. *Callimachus' Book of Iambi*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999.
- Kirby, E.T. "Greece: The Forms of Dionysus." *Greek Drama*. Ed. Harold Bloom. Broomall, PA: Chelsea House Publishers, 2004. 169-210.
- Kirkwood, G.M. "The Authorship of the Strasbourg Epodes." *TAPA* 92 (1961): 267-282.
- Klooster, Jacqueline. *Poetry as Window and Mirror: Positioning the Poet in Hellenistic Poetry*. Leiden: Brill, 2011.
- Knox, A.D. "The Dream of Herodas." *The Classical Review* 39 (1925): 13-15.
- Koenderink, J. J., A.J. van Doorn, A.M.L. Kappers, and J.T. Todd. "Pointing out of the picture." *Perception* 33 (2004): 513-30.
- Konstan, David. "The Tyrant Goddess: Herodas's Fifth 'Mime'." *Classical Antiquity* 8 (1989): 267-282.
- Kutzko, David. "The Major Importance of a Minor Poet: Herodas 6 and 7 as a Quasi-dramatic Diptych." *Beyond the Canon*. Ed. M.A. Harder, R. Remco, F. Regtuit, and G. C. Wakker. Leuven: Peeters, 2006.

- Lehman, K. "The Girl Beneath the Apple Tree." *American Journal of Archaeology* 49 (1945): 430-433.
- Levine, Daniel. "Homeric Laughter and the Unsmiling Suitors." *The Classical Journal* 78 (1982): 97-104.
- Massa Positano, L. *Eroda: Mimiambo IV*. Naples: Libreria Scientifica Editrice, 1973.
- Mastromarco, Giuseppe. *The Public of Herondas*. Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1984.
- McDermott, Emily. *Euripides' Medea: The Incarnation of Disorder*. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State UP, 1989.
- Morgan, Teresa. "Ethos: The Socialization of Children in Education and Beyond." *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman Worlds*. Ed. B. Rawson. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.
- Murray, Jackie. *Poetically Erect: Erinna and Nossis in Herodas 6 and 7*. APA, 2008, Chicago, IL. Unpublished conference abstract. Retrieved from: [http://apaclassics.org/images/uploads/documents/abstracts/Murray\\_1.pdf](http://apaclassics.org/images/uploads/documents/abstracts/Murray_1.pdf)
- Nairn, J.A. *The Mimes of Herodas*. London: Oxford UP, 1904.
- Nappa, Christopher. "The Goat, the Gout, and the Girl: Catullus 69, 71, and 77." *Mnemosyne* 52 (1999): 266-276.
- Onians, John. *Art and Thought in the Hellenistic Age: The Greek World View 350-50 B.C.* London: Thames and Hudson, 1979
- Page, Denys L. *Select Papyri: Literary Papyri: Poetry*. Cambridge, MA: Heinemann, 1941.
- Pfeiffer, R. *Callimachus Fragmenta*. London: Oxford UP, 1949.
- Pisani, V. "Glosse a Eroda." *Paideia* 7 (1952): 89-94.
- Pollitt, J.J. *Art in the Hellenistic Age*. Cambridge UP, 1986.
- . *The Ancient View of Greek Art: Criticism, History, and Terminology*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1974.
- Ridgway, Brunilde. "The Boy Strangling the Goose." *American Journal of Archaeology* 110 (2006): 643-648.
- Rist, Anna. "A Fresh Look at Herodas' Bucolic Masquerade." *Phoenix* 51 (1997): 354-63.

- . "That Herodean Diptych Again." *Classical Quarterly* 43 (1993): 440-444.
- Rosen, Ralph. "Mixing of Genres and Literary Program in Herodas 8." *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 94 (1992): 205-16.
- . "Hipponax, Boupalos, and the Conventions of the Psogos." *TAPA* 118 (1988): 29-41.
- Rotstein, Andrea. *The Idea of Iambos*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010.
- Scodel, Ruth. "Iambos and Parody." *A Companion to Hellenistic Literature*. Ed. James Clauss and Martine Cuypers. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2010. 251-66.
- Sherwin-White, Susan. *Ancient Cos. An historical study from the Dorian settlement to the Imperial period*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978.
- Skinner, Marilyn. "Ladies' Day at the Art Institute." *Making Silence Speak: Women's Voices in Greek Literature and Society*. Ed. Andre Lardinois and Laura McClure. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2001. 201-222.
- Squire, Michael. "Making Myron's Cow Moo?: Ecphrastic Epigram and the Poetics of Simulation." *American Journal of Philology* 131 (2010): 589-634.
- Stern, Jacob. "Herodas' Mimiamb 6." *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 20 (1979): 247-54.
- Von Reden, Sitta. *Money in Ptolemaic Egypt*. Cambridge UP, 2007.
- Webb, Ruth. *Ekphrasis, Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2009.
- . "Ekphrasis Ancient and Modern: The Invention of a Genre." *Word and Image* 15 (1999): 7-18.
- Webster, Thomas Bertram. *Hellenistic Poetry and Art*. London: Methuen, 1964.
- Yacobi, Tamar. "Interart Narrative: (Un)Reliability and Ekphrasis." *Poetics Today* 21 (2000): 711-749.
- Yiftach-Firanko, Uri. *Marriage and Marital Arrangements. A History of the Greek Marriage Document in Egypt*. München: C.H. Beck, 2003.
- Zanker, Graham. *Herodas Mimiambos*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2009.
- . "Poetry and Art in Herodas, *Mimiamb* 4." *Beyond the Canon*. Ed. M.A.

Harder, R. Remco, F. Regtuit, and G. C. Wakker. Leuven: Peeters, 2006.

---. *Modes of Viewing in Hellenistic Poetry and Art*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004.