

THE INBETWEENNESS OF SYMPOTIC ELEGY

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Abstract: This article revisits the question of how elegy was performed at the *symposion*, and argues that, rather than being either musical or non-musical, elegy situates itself between speech and song. None of the passages in which elegy mentions song are clearly self-referential: they tend to be generic, set in the future, concerned with other performers and other compositions or altogether too slippery in their language to pin them down. Moreover, there are a number of elegiac pieces that appear designed to allow symposiasts to shift from song to speech or speech to song, thereby introducing a new mode of performance, and so are themselves transitional. These observations about the way elegiac texts position their own performance are complemented by considerations about their actual performance. Evidence both from ancient musicologists and from other tonal languages suggests that inbetween modes of delivery were common in Greek poetry and the metrical shape makes elegy a prime candidate. The final section of the article turns to the difficult term *elegos* in fifth-century drama. It argues that several of these passages draw on inbetweenness as one association of *elegos* and thus decreases the gap between *elegos* and surviving elegy. A coda points out that the elegiacs in Euripides' *Andromache* are a further example of elegy transitioning between two modes of performance.

Keywords: elegy, *symposion*, performance, *elegos*, *Andromache*

How was elegy typically performed in the Archaic and Classical *symposion*? In the late 19th and for much of the 20th century, the *communis opinio* held that it was sung to the accompaniment of the *aulos*: it was melic poetry. Then, in the 1960s, articles by D.A. Campbell and T. Rosenmeyer pointed up the weakness of the evidence, both internal and external, for the melic and aulodic character of elegiac performance in the *symposion*.¹ Elegy, they argue, was more likely to have been normally recited without a set melody (that is, without *melos* beyond the natural 'melody' coincident with pitch accent) and without instrumental accompaniment, in the manner of verse in *kata stichon* metres such as dactylic hexameter and iambic trimeter. Rosenmeyer makes much of the fact that what serves as our earliest literary testimony for elegiac performance, Aristotle *Poetics* 1.1447b, groups elegiac with epic poets as composers of verse without musical setting, in contrast to melic poets and performers such as dithyrambographers and citharodes. Aristotle simply takes it for granted that, as Rosenmeyer puts it, 'elegiac poetry is non-musical'.²

Since E.L. Bowie's influential 1986 article on elegiac occasion and performance, however, scholarly consensus has again grown around the view that elegy was routinely sung to the *aulos*, both at *symposia* and at festivals. For Bowie, sympotic elegy was, or at least could be, minimally melic, performable by amateurs with even the most limited musical skills. It could be sung 'to a tune that [was] presumably, like the couplet's metre, simple and repeated', and thus far less technically demanding than more metrically and melodically elaborate lyric monody.³ A more emphatic argument for melic performance has recently been made by C. Faraone, who holds that early elegy had a far richer musical structure than was previously thought: aulodic melodies may

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¹ Campbell (1964); Rosenmeyer (1968). Note also the concise discussions in Herington (1985) 36–39 and

Gerber (1997) 96–98, which owe much to Campbell and Rosenmeyer. All of these scholars concede that elegy could have once been sung to the *aulos* at public musical contests by professional or talented amateur competitors. Their focus, like ours, is on the problematic nature of the evidence for elegiac performance in the *symposion*.

² Rosenmeyer (1968) 217.

³ Bowie (1986) 14.

have extended beyond the repetitive unit of the single elegiac couplet, unfolding over large, quasi-strophic ('stanzaic') groupings of distinctly inflected couplets.⁴ Such a performance practice, as musically complex as that of lyric monody (or even choral poetry for that matter), would have all but disappeared by the fourth century BC, when the general musical competency of symposiasts was greatly reduced. Poetic recitation would now have been the rule, and the melic performance of elegy forgotten – hence Aristotle's treatment of the genre as non-musical.

In this article, we revisit the problem of early elegy's performance in the *symposion*. Our approach departs from those of most earlier scholars in its avoidance of essentializing categorizations: elegy as either essentially melic and aulodic – whether in the minimal fashion envisioned by Bowie or the maximal style conjectured by Faraone – or essentially unmelodic and recited without instrumental accompaniment. Such categorizing depends on necessarily biased interpretation of the references to performance within the elegiac corpus, which, as we will see in section I below, are highly ambiguous.⁵ Often, the music evoked in elegy is purely notional, idealized. In several cases, discussed in section II, elegy evokes more tangible sympotic musical performances, yet it seems to implicate itself in these performances while at the same time subtly detaching itself from them. Such self-referential ambiguity is, we argue, a definitional aspect of sympotic elegy's generic rhetoric: its internal language of performance leaves its performative status open to variability in accordance with the occasion, allowing for both sung and recited delivery, committing to neither. This flexibility in self-positioning is one aspect of what we call the 'inbetweenness' of elegiac performance.

In section III, we move beyond rhetorical representation to consider elegy as inbetween also in terms of actual performance practice. That is, elegy may quite often have been realized by symposiasts not at the extreme poles of unaccompanied speech or aulodic song, but somewhere along a fluid continuum between the two. As we show, intermediate modes of delivery, positioned between the spoken and the sung, are attested across a wide range of musical cultures, including that of ancient Greece. Elegy seems, for a variety of reasons, a strong candidate for such inbetween delivery.

In the final section, we propose that elegiac inbetweenness, both conceptual and actual, has left its traces in Euripides' deployment of the term ἔλεγχος and the curious placement of elegiac verses within his *Andromache*.

I. References to musical performance in elegy

The first of our four sections looks at how sympotic elegy refers to musical performance of poetry. We are expanding here on Campbell's and Rosenmeyer's observation that few if any references to music and other matters of performance in elegy are explicitly self-referential. Lines 531–34 in the Theognis collection make a good starting-point.⁶

αἰεὶ μοι φίλον ἦτορ ἰαίνεται, ὀππότε' ἀκούσω
 αὐλῶν φθεγγομένων ἱμερόεσσαν ὄπα·
 χαίρω δ' εὖ πίνων καὶ ὑπ' ἀλητῆρος ἀείδων,
 χαίρω δ' εὐφθογγον χερσὶ λύρην ὀχέων.

My heart is always warmed whenever I hear the *auloi* sounding a lovely voice. I delight in drinking well and singing to the *aulos*-player's accompaniment, and I delight in holding in my hands the tuneful lyre.

⁴ Faraone (2008). For other reassertions of sympotic elegy as melic, see Bartol (1993) 46–51; Aloni and Iannucci (2007) 101–07.

⁵ The little external literary testimony there is for the performance of elegy is all post-fifth century and of questionable historical value – Aristotle *Poetics* 1.1447b included – especially when applied to the *symposion*. Pausanias preserves an Archaic inscription relating to

competitive public (rather than sympotic) elegy, but his interpretation of it is problematic: see n.46. For elegiac performance in the Archaic and Classical ceramic record, see n.35.

⁶ All elegiac texts are cited from West's (1989–1992) *IEG*². Translations are from Gerber (1999), adapted. ἀείδων in this passage is Pierson's widely accepted emendation of the manuscripts' ἀκούων.

This is a statement about proper sympotic forms of entertainment: drinking, listening to the *aulos*, singing, playing the lyre. Like many sympotic vase-paintings, it provides a synthetic image of what are blatantly separate activities. Of course the lines *may* be performed as self-referential, if an *aulos* is present and the right gestures are made, but as far as the text goes they make, above all, a generic statement (αἰεῖ). Despite the phrase χαίρω δ' ... ὑπ' ἀλλητῆρος ἀείδων, this is anything but a clear-cut statement about elegiac performance.

Similarly elusive generic phrasing occurs in several elegiac pieces that refer to music-making.⁷ Elsewhere, elusiveness derives from the fact that it is somebody else, not the performer of this piece, who is to do the singing. Dionysius Chalcus 1 is a case in point.

δέχου τήνδε προπινομένην
τὴν ἅπ' ἐμοῦ ποιήσιν· ἐγὼ δ' ἐπιδέξια πέμπω
σοὶ πρῶτῳ, Χαρίτων ἐγκεράσας χάριτας.
καὶ σὺ λαβὼν τόδε δῶρον αἰοιδᾶς ἀντιπρόπιθι,
συμπόσιον κοσμῶν καὶ τὸ σὸν εὖ θέμενος.

... receive this *poiēsis* pledged as a toast from me. I am sending it from left to right for you first, having mixed in the graces of the Graces. Do you take this gift and pledge me *aidai* as a toast in return, adorning our *symposion*.

'This' piece is a *poiēsis*, a 'poem', while somebody else is to perform 'songs', *aidai*.⁸

Yet another strategy is to situate the performance not now but in the future, as for instance in Theognis 761–64:

φόρμιγξ δ' αὖ φθέγγοιθ' ἱερὸν μέλος ἠδὲ καὶ αὐλός·
ἡμεῖς δὲ σπονδὰς θεοῖσιν ἄρεσσάμενοι
πίνωμεν χαρίεντα μετ' ἀλλήλοισι λέγοντες,
μηδὲν τὸν Μῆδων δειδιώτες πόλεμον.

Let the lyre sound forth holy song and the *aulos* also, and after offering libations satisfying to the gods let us drink, making pleasant conversation with one another and fearing not the Median war.

This is the only instance of the marked term μέλος in elegy – a noteworthy absence when compared with the frequency of the word in lyric – but the holy lyre- and *aulos*-song or songs are yet to be performed. Here, and with considerable frequency elsewhere, elegy puts music-making in the future.⁹

Several further passages could be adduced, between them demonstrating that elegiac poets usually avoid clear statements about the mode of delivery (see nn.7–9). Terms like αὐλός, ἀλλητῆρ, ἀεῖδειν, αἰοιδῆ, λύρη and φόρμιγξ abound in our elegiac corpus but very few of the instances may be said to be overtly self-referential.

What about those few, though? It is only fair to acknowledge that not quite all musical references in elegy slot smoothly into the pattern we have described, but we maintain, firstly, that exceptions are very rare indeed, and, secondly, that on closer inspection those more challenging passages have further stories to tell. We shall try to demonstrate this for the passage cited most frequently in attempts to refute Campbell and Rosenmeyer, Theognis' famous, perhaps even programmatic and therefore highly significant, piece about giving wings to Kyrnos (237–43).

⁷ Thgn. 3–4, 973–78, 1063–68.

⁸ Others are doing the singing also at Thgn. 825–30 (discussed below).

⁹ Cf. Thgn. 993–96; Ion 27.7. We will examine further examples in the next section.

σοὶ μὲν ἐγὼ πτέρ' ἔδωκα, σὺν οἷς ἐπ' ἀπείρονα πόντον
 πωτήσῃ καὶ γῆν πᾶσαν ἀειρόμενος
 ῥηϊδίως· θοίνης δὲ καὶ εἰλαπίνησι παρέσση
 ἐν πάσαις, πολλῶν κείμενος ἐν στόμασιν,
 καὶ σε σὺν αὐλίσκοισι λιγυφθόγγοις νέοι ἄνδρες
 εὐκόσμως ἐρατοὶ καλὰ τε καὶ λιγέα
 ᾄσονται ...

I have given you wings with which you will fly, soaring easily over the boundless sea and all the land. You will be present at every feast and banquet, lying on the lips of many, and lovely young men accompanied by the clear sounds of little *auloi* will sing of you in orderly fashion with beautiful, clear voices ...

Both West and Bowie use these lines as a particularly strong piece of evidence for the view that elegy was typically sung.¹⁰ As is often pointed out, the verb *aeidein* covers a variety of modes ranging from instrumentally accompanied song to heightened poetic speech, modes that its default English translation 'sing' fails to convey,¹¹ and therefore it does not provide much evidence by itself. But while *aeidein* as such is vague, here the musicality of the 'singing' is evident from the adverbial qualification *λιγέα* (as West points out) and the accompaniment of *αὐλίσκοι*. And while the 'singing' takes place yet again in the future, the future is firmly linked to both past and present by what precedes. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that it is Theognis' own elegiac pieces that are presented as to be sung in the future.

But the passage is more complicated than that.¹² The complication turns on the nature of these sung performances: where do they take place and who are the performers? We believe that the common assumption that Theognis is describing *symposia* is in conflict with the language he uses. *Kyros* will lie on everybody's lips *θοίνης ... καὶ εἰλαπίνησι*. *Θοίνη* (only here in early elegy) is a 'feast', a more public and more large-scale event than a *symposion*, and so is *εἰλαπίνη* (only one other occurrence in early elegy).¹³ The nature of these feasts is hard to pin down; Theognis, it seems, is purposefully unspecific, allowing various associations. One such association is epic. Line 239 appears to be related to *Iliad* 10.217 (*αἰεὶ δ' ἐν δαίτησι καὶ εἰλαπίνησι παρέσται*), also in the context of talk about future fame. The dating of both Theognis and the *Doloneia* is difficult and hence the intertextuality cannot be pressed, but epic feasts certainly spring to mind. Further scenarios emerge as one looks at the next two lines: *νέοι ἄνδρες* singing *εὐκόσμως* and with clear voices. The use of the diminutive *αὐλίσκοισι* supports the impression that *νέοι* is not a generic instance of the celebration of youthfulness that is so common at the *symposion* but a specific reference to young performers. The only other occurrence of the word in early Greek song is in Pindar's *daphnephorikon*, with reference to a girls' chorus.¹⁴ Higher-pitched *auloi*, it would seem, accompany higher-pitched performers. So when do youths perform at public events? Very prominently, first of all in choruses, and so the passage can be construed as imagining *Kyros*' fame spreading from elegy to choral lyric. Or, a further construction, listeners may think not of epic feasts or youthful

¹⁰ West (1974) 13; Bowie (1986) 14, n.7.

¹¹ In other words, the semantic nuance of *aeidein* is dependent on context. For *aeidein* denoting the recitation of heightened poetic speech rather than song proper, see, for example, Aristoph. *Clouds* 1371 (reading defended by Renchan (1976) 88–92; Wilson (2007) 79), *Peace* 290; Plat. *Tim.* 21b. Further discussion of *aeidein* in Rosenmeyer (1968) 220–21; Herington (1985) 13–14, 38; Nagy (1990) 21, 110.

¹² Here we are developing a brief remark by Campbell ((1964) 64).

¹³ For analysis of the terms, see Casevitz (1990) 211–15; Schmitt Pantel (1992) 270–71.

¹⁴ *Fr.* 94b.14M. There is one further instance in Classical literature, in drama: Soph. *fr.* 768 Radt, 'For he is blowing no longer on *auliskoi* but with savage blasts, without a mouthpiece'. Evidently, the diminutive can be marked.

choruses but festival contests of monodic *aulôidia*. The sixth- and fifth-century iconographical record indicates that young singers were especially celebrated competitors at such events.¹⁵ Sympotic elegy, Theognis' claim would be, turns into public elegy (on which more below, section III).

What then is one to make of this passage? We suggest that Theognis is making his prediction about Kyrnos' future fame in extremely slippery language which gestures towards future performances at public events at least as much as at Kyrnos' sympotic afterlife. The point is probably not so much that he really expects these kinds of high-profile transformations of his elegies. Rather, his claim is likely to be self-consciously hyperbolic, and thus in keeping with the hyperbole that characterizes the whole piece.

Far from posing a counter-example, then, we suggest this passage is another instance of elegy talking about musical performance in what is not a straightforwardly self-referential way, and something similar we believe holds for the small number of other candidates for musical self-reference in the elegiac corpus.¹⁶ Unlike lyric, especially choral lyric but also monody, which eagerly advertises itself as being sung and being performed to the accompaniment of musical instruments, elegy flirts but does not commit.¹⁷

II. Elegy introducing song and speech

Among the varied metasympotic content in the Theognidean corpus – the broadly functional verses with which symposiasts could comment on and direct the flow of action and entertainment over their cups – there are several discrete sets of couplets that seem to involve the deployment at the *symposion* of the conceptual inbetweenness of elegiac performance. That is, these short pieces evoke musical performances that (as in the passages discussed above) are not easily taken to be performances of the pieces in question, and yet (in contrast to the passages discussed above) are not idealized, abstract or in some distant future; they are presumably actual sympotic interventions, occurring in immediate proximity to the delivery of the elegiac lines that evoke them. These pieces thus closely adhere to, yet still rhetorically distinguish themselves from, the musical event proper. Elegy thereby situates itself as the bridge between non-musical and musical expression, mediating transitions between the two registers as the drinking party follows its variable course.

A number of couplets offer symposiasts brief proemial scripts of generic applicability, with which they might cue up the performance of a discrete *aulos*-accompanied song to follow directly after. Let us look first at one such proemial passage, Theognis 1055–58:

¹⁵ On boy aulodes (a class very likely attested for the fourth-century Panathenaia in *IG II²* 2311, line 22a in the restored text of Shear (2003) 104) on sixth- and fifth-century vases, see Shapiro (1992) 60–62. Page (1936) 215–16 assembles testimonia for (non-sympotic) aulodic elegy; cf. Bowie (1986) 24.

¹⁶ They are as follows. Firstly, Sol. 1 ends κόσμον ἐπέων ᾠδῆν ἀντ' ἀγορῆς θέμενος; but (1) ᾠδῆν has been suspected of being an intrusive gloss, (2) κόσμον ἐπέων does not suggest music and there is no clear indicator of music such as mention of an instrument, and cf. n.11 for the semantics of *aeidein*, and (3) not altogether unlike Thgn. 239–43, the passage gestures at public rather than sympotic performances (see below, section III on public performances of elegy). Secondly, Sol. 20 asks Mimnermus to change his text and 'sing' it differently, quoting the new version; but (1) again the

musical reference is not strong, turning on just the word ἀεῖδεν and (2) even though Solon quotes the text, this is Mimnermus' putative performance, and Mimnermus' poetic persona may have been as much that of professional festival aulode (or aulete) as that of sympotic amateur (Strabo 14.1.28; Ps.-Plut. *De mus.* 8.1133f). Thirdly, Sim. 11.23–24 (Plataea elegy) μελ]υφρόνα κ[όσμον ἀοι]δῆς ἢ ἡμετ]έρης; but (1) this is evidently a public performance, (2) again the word in question is from the root *aeid-* and (3) there are strong Homeric overtones. Each of these passages would need full discussion, but, even if they all had to be treated as unambiguously referring to musical performance of elegy, the significant point remains that there are only three of them.

¹⁷ For example, Sapph. 118, 160V; Anacr. 373; Bacch. *fr.* 20B.1–3M.

ἀλλὰ λόγον μὲν τοῦτον ἐάσομεν, αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ σὺ
 αὔλει, καὶ Μουσῶν μνησόμεθ' ἀμφοτέρου
 αὔται γὰρ τάδ' ἔδωκαν ἔχειν κεχαρισμένα δῶρα
 σοὶ καὶ ἐμοί, <μέλο>μεν δ' ἀμφιπερικτίουσιν.

But let us be done with this talk (*logos*); play the *aulos* for me, and let us both pay heed to the Muses. For it is they who have given you and me these charming gifts, and we are well known to those who dwell around here.

These lines seem intended to script a timely transition to melic song from a preceding *logos*, by which would most likely be meant some form of prosaic ‘table talk’.¹⁸ It is also possible that *logos* refers to the previous recitation of an elegiac poem. Some in fact have heard in ἀμφιπερικτίονες, ‘dwellers round’, a playful rejoinder to Callinus 1.2–3, where the word appears in a context of martial exhortation which is (at least on its surface) far from amenable to the carefree sympotic music-making envisioned here: Callinus’ speaker asks a group of young men whether they do not feel ashamed before the ἀμφιπερικτίονες to continue their party while war looms.¹⁹

In either case, the Theognidean lines signal an emergent shift in the expressive tone of the *symposion*: it is time now for proper music, which the speaker and his prospective accompanist are especially well suited to provide. K. Bartol concludes that the promised musical performance should be elegiac, on the grounds that ‘its proemium was executed in this metre’.²⁰ But there is no compelling reason to think the ‘gifts of the Muses’ in question are necessarily elegiac; they could be perhaps, but their formal status need not be determined by the proem. We might compare Ion 32, an elegiac hymn of sorts addressed to the 11-stringed lyre, or *kithara*, which conceivably represents a proem to a more formally complex citharodic song performed with that instrument. There is also Theognis 761–64, discussed above, which calls for the striking up of ‘holy *melos*’ with lyre and *aulos* to accompany pre-convivial libations. The musical performance so described is presumably a sympotic paean, a kind of song generally composed in lyric meters rather than elegiacs and sung by the sympotic group as a whole, in the manner of a chorus.²¹

Theognis 1055–58 features a rather elaborate version of a motif we see in other elegiac verses with a potentially proemial function: the request to an aulete to begin piping the tune. At Theognis 1041–42, the speaker calls out:

δεῦρο σὺν ἀύλητῆρι· παρὰ κλαίοντι γελῶντες
 πίνωμεν, κείνου κήδεσι τερπόμενοι.

Over here with the aulete! Let’s drink and laugh at the side of the weeper, taking delight in his woes.

G. Cerri has made the attractive argument that this couplet turns on riddling, paradoxical symposiastic humour: the weeper is none other than the aulete, whose instrument had traditional associations with lament, associations which had no place in the *symposion*, where musical delight, *terpsis*, and bonhomie were the rule.²² Yet the couplet also achieves the practical purpose

¹⁸ On sympotic speech genres, see Bowie (1993).

¹⁹ For the sympotic context of Callinus 1, see Tedeschi (1978); Irwin (2005) 32–33. See van Groningen (1966) 392–93 for views on the possible allusion to the poem in Thgn. 1058. Callinus 1 does not, but elsewhere elegy does call itself *logos*: most clearly the sympotic Adesp. Eleg. 27.2 (possibly late); cf. Xenophanes 7 and (perhaps) 1.14.

²⁰ Bartol (1993) 48.

²¹ See Rutherford (2001) 50–52; cf. Käppel (1992) 51–54. It is noteworthy that while the Theognidean *sylloge* begins with short hymns to Apollo, Artemis, and the Muses and Graces (1–18), it does not contain such a hymn to Zeus, the usual addressee of the sympotic paean. See further discussion of these hymns later in this section.

²² Cerri (1976). The aulete is made the butt of a joke also in Adesp. Eleg. 19.

of allowing the symposiast to cue up – in a sociable, witty and seemingly spontaneous fashion appropriate to the *symposion* – the necessary performative configuration for the song to come. He playfully asserts his claim on the accompanist's time, even while underlining the collective experience of the music to come: all present will take delight in it.

The aulete receives special mention in what may be another proemial sequence, Theognis 939–42:

οὐ δύναμαι φωνῆι λίγ' ἀειδέμεν ὥσπερ ἀηδών·
καὶ γὰρ τὴν προτέρεην νύκτ' ἐπὶ κῶμον ἔβην.
οὐδὲ τὸν ἀλλητὴν προφασίζομαι· ἀλλὰ μ' ἑταῖρος
ἐκλείπει σοφίης οὐκ ἐπιδευόμενος.

I cannot sing with a bright, clear voice, like the nightingale, for last night too I went on a revel (*kômos*). And I won't use the aulete as an excuse. But my companion (*hetairos*), who's not lacking in musical ability (*sophiê*), lets me down.

The passage again seems to provide a generic preface to an imminent musical event, this one, however, conveying a less enthusiastic qualification of that event. When called upon to sing, any symposiast who was either unskilled, unready, genuinely hung over or disingenuously self-deprecating could resort to these elegiac lines to apologise in advance for a potentially weak melic performance, or simply to bow out of the musical proceedings and pass the singing on to another.

Yet the second couplet presents difficulty. In what sense has the speaker's musically talented *hetairos* 'let him down'? Did the symposiast next in line to sing suddenly leave the room, leaving the unprepared speaker to take his place? Or did plans for a duet somehow fall through at the last minute? Such scenarios are possible, but improbable. M. Vetta offers an appealing solution.²³ He links these couplets with the next one in the collection, 943–44:

ἐγγύθεν ἀλλητῆρος ἀείσομαι ὄδε καταστάς
δεξιός, ἀθανάτοις θεοῖσιν ἐπευχόμενος.

Nearby the aulete I shall sing, thus taking my place to the right, offering prayers to the immortal gods.

Vetta sees the three couplets forming a *catena simposiale*. One symposiast delivers the initial couplet, in which he claims he cannot match the voice of the nightingale, by which he means the aulete (a comparison attested elsewhere, above all at Aristoph. *Birds* 676–84). The singing is then left to a second symposiast, who also demurs: he will not involve the aulete in his excuse making, it is just that his *hetairos*, who is, despite his protestations, actually quite musical, has put him on the spot. Finally, a third symposiast takes over, 'capping' the previous two by declaring his intention to pair up with the aulete and really sing, so breaking the elegiac chain of musical deferral.²⁴ If Vetta's reading is correct, we have in these lines an elegiac proem scripted as witty ensemble piece, in tune with both the collaborative and competitive ethos of the *symposion*.

²³ Vetta (1984).

²⁴ In line 944, δεξιός should accordingly be taken not to mean that the singer takes his place to the right of the aulete but to the right, either literally or figuratively, of the previous speaker. That is, it should be understood in terms of the sympotic practice of passing speech and song *epidexia*, from left to right; the third symposiast is taking a musical turn in the rightward sequence that

should have been taken by the other two. Cf. Dionysius Chalcus 1.2, 4.1, with Vetta (1984) 122–24. For sympotic *epidexia* in general, see Węcowski (2002). The sense of δεξιός as 'sophisticated, adroit' is probably in the background as well; it certainly suits the context. On musico-poetic *dexiotês* in the *symposion*, see Ford (2002) 32, 189–95.

Although we may be tempted to take ἀείσομαι in line 943 as a self-referential ‘performative’ future referring to singing in the present, the participial phrase ‘offering prayers to the immortal gods’ (ἀθανάτοις θεοῖσιν ἐπευχόμενος) in 944, which describes the subject of the singing, would seem to indicate that the song proper has not yet begun. What will that song be? An elegiac hymn such as those to Apollo, Artemis, and the Muses and Graces included at the beginning of the Theognidean *sylloge* (1–4, 5–10, 11–14, 15–18)?²⁵ Perhaps, but can we be sure those hymns were properly sung? Their phraseology closely resembles that of the *Homeric Hymns*, which were, after all, rhapsodically declaimed rather than melodically sung with instrumental accompaniment.²⁶ We might think rather of melic hymns of sympotic proportions such as those by Alcaeus (for example 307, 308) and Anacreon (for example 348).²⁷ A well-known calyx-krater of around 510–500 BC, attributed to Euphronius, depicts a symposiast singing a melic hymn to Apollo, accompanied by pipes.²⁸

Let us conclude this section by looking at Theognis 825–30, a piece which ostensibly aims not to introduce but to bring an end to a current musical performance, and so presumably to effect a transition from *melos* back to *logos* (or at least some less explicitly musical form of expression). In this case the music belongs to the post-sympotic *kōmos*, when melic performance is taken to its expressive extremes, with singing, *aulos*- and lyre- (or *barbitos*-) playing, and dancing happening all at once.²⁹

πῶς ὑμῖν τέτληκεν ὑπ’ αὐλητῆρος ἀεΐδειν
 θυμός; γῆς δ’ οὔρος φαίνεται ἐξ ἀγορῆς,
 ἦ τε τρέφει καρποῖσιν τὲν εἰλαπίναις φορέοντας
 ξανθῆσιν τε κόμαις πορφυρέους στεφάνους.†
 ἀλλ’ ἄγε δῆ, Σκύθα, κείρε κόμην, ἀπόπαυε δὲ κῶμον,
 πένθει δ’ εὐώδη χῶρον ἀπολλύμενον.

How do you endure in your hearts to sing to the piper’s accompaniment? From the marketplace there is visible the mortgage-marker of the land that feeds with its fruits those who wear crimson garlands on their blond hair at feasts. Come, Scythes, crop your hair, bring your revel (*kōmos*) to an end, and grieve for the fragrant land that is being lost.³⁰

The identity of Scythes and the dire circumstances surrounding his *symposion* are obscure to us, and probably were too to the symposiasts who reperformed these lines.³¹ But despite the obscure specifics, it is entirely conceivable that this passage took on a generic force over time, its original exhortative urgency redeployed, probably with a sense of humour, as an all-purpose ‘last call’ for bringing the party, or at least its exuberant song-making, to a close. With similar purpose might symposiasts have delivered Adesp. Eleg. 8, ‘No longer do I care for fine-sounding songs (*melē*), no longer for singing and dancing (*molpē*)’.³²

²⁵ Cf. Vetta (1984) 123, n.27.

²⁶ Cf. van Groningen (1966) 10; Richardson (2010) 85. It is worth noting that the initial Theognidean hymn to Apollo has ἀείσω (4), which is probably intended as a ‘performative’ future, as it is in the *Homeric Hymns* (10.1, 15.1, 23.1, 30.1). In the *Hymns*, however, and probably in Thgn. 4, self-referential *aeidein* does not describe accompanied melodic singing but rather unaccompanied recitation.

²⁷ Cf. Vetta (1984) 123, n.27. In general on religious activity, including religious song, at the *symposion*, see Hobden (2011).

²⁸ Munich 8935; Martin (2003) 168, fig. 20.

²⁹ See the emblematic komast on a red-figured kylix (Erlangen 454, Frontisi-Ducroux and Lissarrague (1990) 242, fig. 7.16), who holds a *barbitos* and dances while singing of how he ‘revels to the *aulos*’. Cf. Thgn. 1065–66.

³⁰ The translation is entirely that of Gerber (1999) 293, who follows Bravo (1990) 45–46 in taking Σκύθα as the vocative of the proper name Scythes. The textual problems in the middle of the passage do not directly affect the argument made here.

³¹ Bravo (1990) attempts a reconstruction of these circumstances.

³² Cf. pertinent remarks on the performance of Callinus 1 in Irwin (2005) 49 n36.

Whatever the performative conditions of these passages may have been, the important observation to be made is that elegy again situates its performer, at least in terms of textual representation, on the margins of song proper. What is more remarkable, however, is that these lines offer the symposiast a *persona loquens* voicing clear *opposition* to *auloi* and songs. Again, on any generic occasion, such opposition was more likely to have been put on than genuinely felt. But it speaks to the rhetorical and conceptual flexibility of elegy vis-à-vis music that its performer can occupy a notionally ‘unmusical’ position as well as the ‘pro-musical’ position inherent in the proemial lines.

III. The performance of elegy

Until now our discussion has concentrated exclusively on matters of rhetoric and self-presentation and has avoided the factual question of what elegy sounded like. The case we have put forward for sympotic elegy as intermediate both in its reluctance to refer unambiguously to its own performance and in its occasional role of creating a bridge between speech and song should indeed be able to stand irrespective of how elegy was in fact performed. Yet that is not to deny that the mode of performance is germane to our topic, and we shall therefore in this section change tack and ask whether elegy’s intermediateness at the level of the text had a counterpart at the level of performance.

The first thing to say is that there will have been considerable variation, in several respects. Firstly, as is well known, the performance of elegy underwent significant diachronic developments: already by the time of Aristotle it was possible to treat it as a genre without music. Secondly, there will have been a good deal of variation from occasion to occasion. Not all *symposia* were the same, and neither were all symposiasts. Sometimes *aulos*-players will have been available and sometimes not, and the symposiasts’ attainments in *mousikê* will have varied too. The flexibility created by the elusive performance references is almost certain both to reflect and to encourage flexibility in actual performance. The texts comfortably accommodate accompaniment not just by the frequently mentioned *auloi* but also by strings, or indeed performance without instrumental accompaniment, as well as performance both with a more and a less marked melody. This kind of musical variation is in fact a natural corollary of the variation elegy exhibits in various other ways, and will have been a cornerstone of its popularity.³³

Important, though, as recognizing this flexibility is, it does not absolve us from asking how elegy was performed *typically*. Flexibility there will have been, but where was the centre of gravity? With the diffidence imposed by the limits of the evidence we want to propose that typical performance was indeed musically intermediate, but with yet another, third, form of variation, that between public and sympotic elegy. Considerations about the need to accommodate different circumstances and skills weigh less heavily for public performances, which will usually have been carefully rehearsed and will have drawn on expert performers. What is more, as we saw in section I (and n.16), several of the very few elegiac texts that come close to describing themselves as performed musically are public or gesture towards the public, and this text-internal evidence goes with external evidence we have for aulodic elegy at festival contests (n.15). There is then some reason to believe that public renderings of elegy were typically accompanied by the *aulos* and typically had a reasonably pronounced melody (though it is worth pointing out that even in the public sphere there is evidence for variation).³⁴

³³ For the variability of elegy in terms of content and occasion, see Sider (2006).

³⁴ In a tale of the past, the Critias of Plato’s *Timaeus* (21b) speaks of rhapsodic contest (ἄθλα ... ῥαψωδίας) for boys at which Solon is performed (the verb is *aeidein*, on which cf. n.11) and Diogenes Laertius (9.18)

reports that Xenophanes performed his own works, listed as hexameters, elegies and iamboi, as a rhapsode: evidence that unaccompanied declamation of elegy was at the very least imaginable. On both passages, see Herington (1985) 192–93.

Allowing for this difference between public and sympotic elegy, we contend that elegy was *characteristically* performed in an intermediate way. It occupies in practice the same kind of place between the spoken and the elaborately musical that it occupies in concept, with public performances *characteristically* sitting higher on the scale than those at *symposia*. Why do we think that? In the absence of virtually any good contemporary external evidence,³⁵ one is forced to start from the poetic texts, and, as we have seen, those point towards some kind of inbetweenness. An intermediate kind of performance is the most obvious way of rendering the pieces that create transitions between speech and song, and also makes most sense of the non-committal flirtation with full musicality that occurs throughout our corpus.

But central as the internal evidence is for our case, there are also some important non-textual observations to be made. In particular, we consider it crucial to realize that, far from being some abstract theoretical idea, the notion of intermediate modes of performance is common in most cultures and well established also in ancient Greek musical scholarship, as we shall now set out.

The categories speech and song are a major area of investigation in ethnomusicology and have produced a considerable body of literature.³⁶ Interestingly for our purposes, scholars working in this area take it for granted that there is a continuum rather than a sharp divide between speech and song. In the West one can think of recitative in opera, the singsong of evangelical preachers or the melodically reduced delivery of many country and hip-hop acts, to list just three of the many diverse forms in question. More immediately relevant to ancient Greece is the evidence

³⁵ The iconographic evidence is inconclusive too, as already Herington (1985) 36–38 saw. In their ‘catalogue of singers of lyric verse in Attic red figure’ Csapo and Miller (1991) 381–82 list three paintings possibly associated with elegy. (1) Munich 2646: a cup by Douris. In the tondo a young aulete plays and a reclining symposiast tilts back his head in the posture that is generally taken to connote song. From his mouth issues the phrase ΟΥΔΥΝΑΜΟΥ (sic). οὐ δύναμαι is a formulaic opener, but it has been thought to refer specifically to the οὐ δύναμαι of Thgn. 695 or 939 (the beginning of the proemial refusal to sing discussed above); references in Csapo and Miller (1991). If so, the combination of aulete plus ‘singing posture’ would seem to suggest that elegy was perceived as very much sung rather than ‘inbetween’ as we argue. Yet quite apart from the question of whether οὐ δύναμαι really does allude to elegy, the interpretation of the image is complicated in that the symposiast’s mouth is only minimally open or even closed. If there *is* a connection with the Theognidean refusal to sing, might there be a visual pun? The aulete is ready to accompany and the symposiast is poised to sing, yet, according to the Theognidean ‘script’, he cannot; with the more or less closed mouth, the artist literally renders this inability to deliver. In any case, whether or not there is such a pun, the shape of the mouth suits inbetween performance at least as well as full-on singing. (2) Athens National Museum 1357, unattributed cup. In the tondo a symposiast, head thrown back, sings ὦ παίδων κάλλιστε, again a generic address but also the beginning of Thgn. 1365. This time the mouth is clearly open (though not wide open), but there is no aulete shown. Rather the performer holds castanets – a purely percussive rather than melodic instrument. (3) Rome

Villa Giulia 50329, a fragment depicting a symposiast, head thrown back, uttering the words σοὶ καὶ ἐμ(οί), which occur in Thgn. 1058 (from the proemial run discussed above), though again generic enough. Clearly a singing posture, but it is difficult to do much with the small fragment. The only elegiac poet to appear on a pot seems to be Solon, in a difficult painting by Oltos (London E 19). The name is inscribed next to one of three dancing youths. Schefold (1997) 80 raises the possibility that this is an error and the name should go with one of the bearded figures on the other side, two of whom dance and one plays the lyre. With reference to our argument in section II we note that two of the three potentially elegy-related pots on Csapo and Miller’s list may be alluding to proemial pieces, perhaps reflecting a degree of prominence or typicality of such pieces.

³⁶ The classic article (now out-of-date in certain respects) is List (1963). For an overview of the field until the early 1990s, see Feld and Fox (1994) 30–32, 36–37; and for a recent textbook statement, Miller and Shahriari (2009) 2. Notably, the continuum between speech and song is of interest not just to scholars of culture and perceptions but also those working on objective acoustic phenomena (for example, recently, Gerhard (2005)). An encyclopaedia entry puts it as follows: ‘Most cultures identify speaking and singing as two distinct forms of vocal production. Yet between these two terms can lie a multitude of indeterminate forms. Attention must be paid both to contextual, locally meaningful emic definitions and to aural commonalities in order to account for all the different forms of singing that occur’ (Herndon (1989) 99). We would argue that elegy’s rhetorical caginess about its own performance is an indirect, yet nonetheless emically meaningful reflection of its aurally objective inbetweenness.

gathered by ethnomusicologists working on tonal languages. Since in these languages speech is centred on variation in pitch there is even more room for working the continuum between speech melody and musical melody. South African musicologist P. van der Merwe puts it well.

Most African languages have, then, a built-in tune. Many also have a marked distinction between long and short syllables. This makes ordinary speech musical, and greatly narrows the gap between speech and song. ... When ordinary speech is so melodious, a little stylization is enough to make it satisfyingly musical; which helps explain the common use in Africa of recitative styles of singing, and the frequent transitions between a speaking and singing delivery. Even out-and-out song is generally an enhancement of speech in West Africa. Speech tones are transformed into a melodic line, with greater or lesser freedom according to custom and language, and speech rhythm is regularized to fit the metre.³⁷

There is no reason to doubt that these phenomena were to the fore already in ancient Greek poetic culture; Greek too is, after all, a pitch language and early Greek poetry (no matter how melodious) strictly observes differences between long and short syllables. Rather than operating a sharp binary between spoken and sung poetry as is common in work on early Greek literature, we think it more appropriate to start from the assumption of a continuum, a continuum defined by several parameters: elaborateness of melody, rigidity of melody (viz. relationship with speech melody), elaborateness of rhythm, rigidity of rhythm (viz. relationship with speech rhythm), use of instruments, number of performers and so on.³⁸

Viewed from this perspective, inbetween modes of performance of ancient Greek poetry are very much to be expected, and the only question is on what genres they centre. A brief look at the ancient musicologists supports this conclusion. Various post-Classical sources explicitly refer to modes of intermediate delivery. One such style is what Nicomachus of Gerasa (*fl.* probably early second century AD) calls *meleazein*, between full singing – in which the voice clearly articulates the melodic pitch intervals between syllables – and speaking or reading aloud – in which the voice runs on continuously, without clear pauses to mark pitch intervals.³⁹ Another, better known but difficult term is *parakatalogê*. In so far as our exiguous evidence permits a considered judgement, *parakatalogê* describes a reduced-melody vocal delivery to the accompaniment of the *aulos* (or less typically the lyre).⁴⁰ Other texts, such as the following testimonium preserved in the pseudo-Plutarchean *De musica*, avoid technical terms: ‘they say that Archilochus first demonstrated the practice of having some iambs spoken to instrumental accompaniment and others sung’.⁴¹ It is impossible for us to tell just how melodic this ‘speaking to accompaniment’, λέγεσθαι παρά τῆν

³⁷ van der Merwe (1989) 34.

³⁸ Note the related suggestion by West (1981) and Hagel (1994–1995) that hexameters were originally sung to a tune that did not altogether cancel out the pitch accents of the words, and the more radical suggestion by D’Angour that before Euripides all performed poetry, including lyric, maintained the contours created by the pitch accents (D’Angour (2006) 276–83; (2007) 293–95). Barris (2011) 13 puts it this way: ‘The quantitative nature and the musical accent of the ancient Greek language meant that Greek recitation was a phenomenon far closer to song than to our poetry’.

³⁹ He describes it as follows: ‘Anyone who, while conversing, or recounting something, or reading aloud, makes clear distinctions between the magnitudes associated with each note, dividing and shifting the vocal sound from one to the next, is said not to be speaking or reading, but to μελεάζειν’ (*Harmonicum encheiridion*

2.239 Jan; trans. Barker (1989) 249). Cf. Arist. Quint. *De musica* 5.25–6.7, a passage that strongly suggests Nicomachus refers to the rendering of poetry. Both Aristides and Nicomachus derive their distinction between continuous speech and intervallic song from Aristoxenus of Tarentum. See *Elem. Harm.* 1.9–10, where, however, Aristoxenus does not explicitly acknowledge an intermediate mode. See further, Barker (1989) 404, n.25.

⁴⁰ Ps.-Arist. *Problems* 19.6; Ps.-Plut. *De musica* 28.1140f–41a. See Moore (2008) for a thorough review of the scholarship on *parakatalogê*; cf. Nagy (1990) 27–28, 46–49. Note also the notion of speaking to the *aulos* at Xen. *Symp.* 6.3–4, with the effect that the words are ‘embellished by the sounds’ (ἠδύνεσθαι ἄν τι ὑπὸ τῶν φθόγγων).

⁴¹ 28.1141a. A main source for the information in the *De musica* on Archilochus was the late fifth-century BC writer Glaucus of Rhegium. See Rotstein (2010) 230–32.

κροῦσιν, was – it may have involved ‘an element of melody greater than everyday speech’⁴² – but, in any case, this is a further kind of inbetween form, listed by pseudo-Plutarch separately from *parakatalogê*; and, what is more, one that unlike *parakatalogê*, which tends to appear in references to drama, is connected with an Archaic sympotic poet.

Admittedly, none of these texts talks about elegy, and, in any case, their value as evidence for details of Archaic or Classical practice is uncertain at best, but what they demonstrate clearly is what ethnomusicology makes one expect, namely that inbetween forms of one sort or another were well established in ancient Greek *mousikê*; and they thus add to our confidence in following the poetic texts where they take us: to the conclusion that Archaic and Classical elegy was typically performed in intermediate modes. We suspect furthermore that not just at public events but also in the *symposion* it was typically performed in modes that were higher on the scale than *parakatalogê*, and higher perhaps also than the form often associated with *parakatalogê*, the iambic trimeter.⁴³ But we would not want to press that point since we are aware of just how thin the evidence is – above all the relative frequency of musical terminology in elegiac and trimeter pieces and Aristotle’s famous dictum that the trimeter is the metre closest to speech (μάλιστα ... λεκτικόν, *Poet.* 4.1449a24) – and, in any case, with so much variation perhaps one should not be too specific even when looking only for the typical.⁴⁴

Instead, we shall finish our discussion of elegiac performance with one last, and rather different, consideration in favour of regarding intermediate modes as the most typical. It is, quite simply, that formally, too, elegy is an intermediate form. Consisting of a hexameter and a pentameter, it repeats every two lines and is thus longer and more varied than the stichic hexameter,⁴⁵ while more regular than most lyric forms. Of course, elegy is not altogether alone in this respect (again iambus rears its head, this time the epodic structures rather than the trimeter), and, of course, metrical form is by no means fully determinative of delivery as is illustrated by changes in the delivery of hexameters and indeed elegy itself, but even so it is fair to say that there is every chance that in terms of metrical elaborateness the elegiac couplet was perceived as intermediate between hexameters and trimeters, on the one hand, and lyric metres, on the other.

IV. ἔλεγος and elegiacs in fifth-century drama

By way of coda we shall attempt to adumbrate the relevance of elegiac inbetweenness to a notorious difficulty in scholarly work on the genre: the use of the term ἔλεγος in fifth-century Attic drama.

After only a single previous occurrence, in the Delphic Echembrotus inscription of 586 BC as reported by Pausanias,⁴⁶ ἔλεγος appears five times in extant Euripides and once in Aristophanes. In contrast to the term ἔλεγεῖον, which seems to have an unproblematic content-neutral metrical usage like ‘elegiac couplet’ or ‘poem in elegiacs’ straight from its first appearance in the late fifth

⁴² Moore (2008) 158.

⁴³ Herington (1985) 38, acknowledging variation, briefly speculates that sympotic elegy is likely not to have been sung but delivered as ‘unadorned speech (*legein*) or nonmelodic chant (one sense of *aeidein*)’. Cf. Rosenmeyer (1968) 221, n.21. But, the more willing one is to accept a continuum, as we do, the less attractive it becomes to rule out all forms of melodization.

⁴⁴ Iambus too was flexible: see Rotstein (2010) 229–78.

⁴⁵ The analysis of Barnes (1995) shows that hexameter and pentameter were still treated in various respects as a unit; above all there is more enjambment and more internal clause-division in elegiac hexameters than in stichic hexameters. Pointing in the same direction, Barris (2011) 75, n.256 notes that hiatus is less frequent in the

elegiac hexameter (15% vs 25% in ordinary hexameters). Bartol (1993) 93–94, n.40 argues against Rosenmeyer’s view that the elegiac couplet is inherently unmusical.

⁴⁶ Paus. 10.7.5–6, also included in both West’s and Gentili and Prato’s editions, s.v. ‘Echembrotus’. We agree with Bowie (1986) 23 that Pausanias’ lament-centred interpretation of ἔλεγος in the inscription is a misreading, and that it helps us little with the fifth-century passages. In fact, we wonder whether Pausanias perhaps misunderstands the form μέλεα, deriving it from μέλεος (‘miserable’). Note in any case that the collocation μέλεα καὶ ἐλέγους suggests that Echembrotus’ ἔλεγχοι may not have been identical with his μέλη, and that the inscription therefore could be said to chime with the case we are putting forward for inbetweenness as an aspect of the usage of ἔλεγος.

century,⁴⁷ ἔλεγχος raises difficult questions. At least five of the six fifth-century occurrences come in contexts of lament, as does the only run of elegiacs in tragedy, in Euripides' *Andromache*. A strong connection between elegy and lament is pervasive in later centuries,⁴⁸ and one popular way of approaching fifth-century ἔλεγχος has therefore been to postulate a tradition of lamentatory elegy that goes back to the Archaic period. The scholar to do so most influentially was D.L. Page in 1936, and new evidence has strengthened his case since then, not least in the past two decades.⁴⁹ It seems now reasonably certain that elegy could be used for lamentatory purposes well before the fifth century, and that Euripides would have been familiar with this tradition.

On the other hand, even with this new evidence it is still obvious from our surviving corpus that elegy was used for many other purposes and that lament is only one strand, in fact not the most prominent. There remains therefore much value in the argument Bowie put forward in 1986 to the effect that ἔλεγχος originally meant either 'precisely what we mean by "elegy"' or 'a song sung to the *aulos*', and that the foregrounding of lament in Euripides was a new development.⁵⁰ The particular scenario Bowie puts forward has Euripides, always quick to exploit intellectual developments, adopt the connection of elegy with lament from the theorizing of a contemporary thinker such as Hippias, who may have thought about sepulchral epigram or about the etymology εἰ λέγειν.⁵¹ Bowie, then, agrees with Page and his successors that ἔλεγχος in Euripides means something like 'sung lament', but thinks that this is a sharp deviation from an original meaning more in line with the elegiac corpus.

Our aim here is neither to adjudicate between the two rival views nor to propose a comprehensive theory of our own. Rather, more modestly, we hope to be able to develop a further perspective on ἔλεγχος; not an exclusive perspective but one that can sit side by side with others. In fact, it seems important to us to stress the likelihood that what we find in Euripides and Aristophanes is a prism of various meanings. The debate over ἔλεγχος has sometimes lost sight of the fact that words, not least genre terms, can have complex webs of meanings and associations. A. Rotstein recently demonstrated this kind of complexity for ἴαμβος,⁵² and it is *a priori* possible, even likely, that by the late fifth century ἔλεγχος too had accumulated complex associations that cannot be captured with a one-word dictionary definition. Its semantic range may well have included several or even all of the definitions previously suggested: lament (whether or not reinforced by etymologizing); the metrical meaning attached to elegy today and proposed by Bowie for earlier periods; and the performative connotations that Bowie proposes as an alternative. As in the case of ἴαμβος, the precise semantics of any one occurrence will then have been shaped by the context. Our argument here is that a further facet of the complex and to some degree malleable semantics of ἔλεγχος was (as one should expect) the actual and conceptual inbetweenness typical of the genre, and that Euripides repeatedly put this facet to good effect.

⁴⁷ The first instances, none of them datable precisely, are: Thuc. 1.132.2–3; Critias eleg. 4.3; Pherecrates 162.10 K-A; Ion of Samos M-L 95c = *CEG* 819.

⁴⁸ This includes the notion of an origin of elegy in lament, which is frequent in ancient scholarship; see Hor. *AP* 75–78 with the note in Brink (1971) and Lulli (2011) 12–13.

⁴⁹ Page (1936), who postulates a specifically Peloponnesian threnodic tradition. His views are developed by West (1974) 4–7, who does not commit to the Peloponnesian in particular and doubts an early metrical meaning. The most important new evidence, not available to Bowie in 1986, is as follows: Simonides eleg. fr. 22, thought by some to be lamentatory, by others to be erotic; the Plataea elegy, which while not lamentatory does commemorate the dead; a sixth-

century elegiac epitaph of originally ten lines on a *polyandrion* in Ambracia (*SEG* 44.463; see there for editions and discussions); and a number of shorter funerary epigrams that adopt a more or less lamentatory tone (see Cassio (1994) 106–13). Faraone (2008) 132–35 provides a summary with primary and secondary references, to which add: Aloni and Iannucci (2007) 14–16, 68–69, 203–04; Nagy (2010) (sympathetic to growing evidence for lamentatory elegy); Lulli (2011) 12–20 (plaintive associations of the *aulos* catalyse focus on strongly lamentatory associations of elegy); Nobili (2011) (later testimonia for Peloponnesian threnodic elegy).

⁵⁰ Bowie (1986) 22–27, quotations from pp. 26, 27.

⁵¹ On this kind of etymologizing, see West (1974) 7–9.

⁵² Rotstein (2010).

A passage from the recitative section of Hecuba's anapaestic lament early in *Trojan Women* illustrates what we mean (115–21).

οἴμοι κεφαλῆς, οἴμοι κροτάφων
 πλευρῶν θ', ὥς μοι πόθος εἰλίξαι
 καὶ διαδοῦναι νῶτον ἄκανθάν τ'
 εἰς ἀμφοτέρους τοίχους μελέων,
 ἐπιούσ' αἰεὶ δακρύων ἐλέγους.
 μοῦσα δὲ χαῦτη τοῖς δυστήνοις
 ἄτας κελαδεῖν ἀχορευτοῦς.

Alas for the temples of my head and for my sides! How I long to roll my back and spine about, listing now to this side of my body, now to that, continually entering upon ἔλεγχοι of tears! This too is music for those in misfortune, to sound their ἀχορευτοὶ troubles.⁵³

The conceit that unhappy utterances are music that isn't music is semi-conventional in tragedy, and one can see why 'choros-less' is often rendered unmetaphorically as 'joyless', but this passage (and indeed some others that use the same conceit) is so rich in music- and sound-related terminology that the metaphor comes back to life, if it ever was dead.⁵⁴ The ceaseless ἔλεγχοι Hecuba describes herself as entering upon, or longing to enter upon, will be very much 'inbetween': they will be a kind of utterance that oxymoronically may be described as both music and the sounding of troubles 'without song-dance'. The associations of elegy that Euripides exploits here do not just include whatever connections the genre had with lament but also its intermediate place on the scale from speech to music.

With a view to the inherently complex meaning of ἔλεγχος that is the basis of our discussion here, a further observation suggests itself. For the passage to make good sense it is by no means necessary that ἔλεγχος simply means 'lament'. Not only are there several terms of lament immediately preceding the lines in question (for example 106 στενάχειν, 111 θρηνησαι, 115 οἴμοι), which must colour the listeners' understanding of ἔλεγχοι, but the ἔλεγχοι themselves are qualified as ἔλεγχοι 'of tears'. Nor, of course, is it necessary that ἔλεγχος simply means something like 'musically intermediate utterance': again the context does the work. What Euripides appears to be doing is activate or emphasize the nuances of ἔλεγχος that he requires for his specific purposes.

A similar poetic strategy marks our next passage. Here is Iphigenia, persuaded by a dream that her brother is dead and her family and home destroyed, using lyric anapaests to voice her despair before the women of the chorus (*Iphigenia in Tauris* 143–49):

ὦ δμῳαί,
 δυσθρηνήτοις ὡς θρήνοις
 ἔγκειμαι, τᾶς οὐκ εὐμούσου
 μολπᾶς [βοᾶν] ἀλύροις ἐλέγους, αἰαῖ,
 ἐν κηδεῖοις οἴκτοισιν.
 ἄταί μοι συμβαίνουσ' ἄται
 σύγγονον ἀμὸν κατακλαιόμεναι ...

O servants, in what painful lamentations am I enmeshed, lyreless ἔλεγχοι that make a song that is not well-Mused, ah ah, amidst wailings of grief! It is disaster, disaster that has come upon me, and I mourn for my brother...

⁵³ The Euripides text here and below is from Diggle's OCT. Translations of this and the *IT* passage are from Kovacs's Loeb, adapted (especially where musical terms are concerned), and of the *Helen* passage

from Burian's Aris and Phillips, again adapted.

⁵⁴ On absence of music as absence of joy and presence of evil, see Barker (1984) 69–73. Specifically for ἀχορευτοῦς, see Finglass (2007) on Soph. *El.* 1069.

τᾶς οὐκ εὐμούσου μολπᾶς ἀλύροις ἐλέγοις is a very striking phrase. This is the same kind of oxymoron as in the previous passage, except with an unusual degree of elaboration: song-dance, but not overseen by the Muses (or ‘unmusical’), and without lyre. Depending on the restoration of the text there may be a ‘shout’ too.⁵⁵ If the *Trojan Women* passage had a whiff of conventionality about it, this does not. Iphigenia describes what is an emphatically paradoxical kind of delivery for her ἔλεγχοι. Are they musical or are they not? In the minor key that befits tragedy, Euripides is developing elegy’s characteristic performative inbetweenness.

As in Hecuba’s lament in *Trojan Women*, moreover, he is making the context do much of the work. We just saw that the context makes us imagine the acoustic quality of Iphigenia’s ἔλεγχοι. The context also brings out their threnodic character as they are sandwiched between θρήνοι and οἶκτοι, and qualified as ἄλυροι. It is, of course, possible that ἄλυροι simply reinforces an established and exclusive meaning, ‘lament’ (be it long-standing or the result of recent etymologizing), but, to say the least, the passage would certainly work if ‘lament’ was in this period still one of several connotations. In fact, one might even argue that ἀλύροις ἐλέγοις will have been a more pointed expression if ἔλεγχος of itself had a certain semantic breadth and was given its specific nuances here by ἄλυροι.⁵⁶

The third and last instance of ἔλεγχος we shall look at is drawn from the *parodos* of *Helen*, an *amoibaion* between Helen and the chorus.⁵⁷ It starts with Helen calling on the Sirens to come and accompany her as she sings of her misery, using what are for the most part distinctly musical terms, above all to describe the performance she hopes for from the Sirens but also when referring to her own song (167–78). The Sirens are to play the Libyan *aulos* (λωτός), ‘panpipes’ (σύριγγες) or ‘lyres’ (φόρμιγγες), performing ‘songs’ in response to her own ‘songs’ (μέλεσι μέλεα), ‘music in tune with her dirges’ (μουσεῖα θρηνήμασι ξυνωιδά), as she herself is singing a ‘παιάν for the dead’.

The chorus, not of Sirens but of captive Greek women, enter and do indeed sing in response, but as they do so they create a marked break from the heightened musicality that pervades Helen’s language.

They were doing their laundry, they tell us, as they heard a noise (184–90):

ἔνθεν οἰκτρὸν ὄμαδον ἔκλυον,
 ἄλυρον ἔλεγον, ὅτι ποτ’ ἔλακεν
 < > αἰάγμα-
 σι στένουσα νύμφα τις
 οἷα Ναιῖς ὄρεσι †φυγάδα
 γάμων† ιεῖσα γοερὸν, ὑπὸ δὲ
 πέτρινα γύαλα κλαγγαῖσι
 Πανὸς ἀναβοᾷ γάμους.

There I heard a pitiful din, a lyreless ἔλεγχος, – what some bride shouted out once. (...) groaning with anguish, like a Naiad in the mountains who lets escape a mournful [wail] †fugitive from marriage, † and through the rocky hollows shouts with shrill cries of her mating with Pan.

These, emphatically, are not musical terms. Helen’s utterance is now configured as ‘noise’ (ὄμαδος), comparable to the ‘shrieks’ and ‘groans’ (ἔλακεν ... αἰάγμασι στένουσα) and shrill cries (κλαγγαῖσι ... ἀναβοᾷ) of a Naiad in flight. It is in the midst of this unmusical language that they use the term ἔλεγχος. The connotations of lament are obvious, but rather than simply a synonym

⁵⁵ βοάν should probably be deleted; see Platnauer’s (1938) note and Diggle’s apparatus for options of keeping it.

⁵⁶ Here, as in the next passage, the absent instrument is the lyre, not the *aulos*. The *aulos*, with its specific associations with lament (enshrined perhaps

even in sympotic elegy: see above on Thgn. 1041–42), would be a less suitable instrument to invoke. Further on the preference for the lyre in similar phrases, see Diggle (1994) 101–02.

⁵⁷ With different concerns, the musical references in this song have recently been discussed by Ford (2010).

of Helen's own θρηνήματα, we suggest, ἔλεγος – again 'lyreless' ἔλεγος – suits the chorus' lowering of the level of musicality by several notches exactly because it goes beyond simple speech but stays well short of full musicality. As in *Trojan Women* and *Iphigeneia in Tauris*, though in a subtly different way, Euripides employs ἔλεγος in a passage that turns on a mix of discrepant performance terms. And for that matter, also as in *Trojan Women* and *Iphigeneia in Tauris*, whatever was the established meaning of ἔλεγος, he shapes it through the context, wedging the term between 'pitiful din' and 'anguished groaning'.

These three passages, then, suggest that associations of musical inbetweenness were an aspect that attracted Euripides to the term and an aspect with which he worked creatively, and therefore that it should be an aspect also of our own attempts to put together the difficult story of ἔλεγος. It was, as we have stressed, by no means the only aspect, not in the three passages we discussed, and neither was it, we should add, in the three we did not discuss, which in fact do not all give the same kind of emphasis to inbetweenness.⁵⁸ But one aspect it undoubtedly was.

To conclude, we would note that inbetweenness of various kinds also characterizes the intriguing run of elegiacs in the *Andromache* (103–16). For Page, these lines, marked by Doric alpha, were the centrepiece of the argument for an ancient Peloponnesian tradition of sung, lamentatory elegy. For others, Andromache's tragic elegy is an instance of *sui generis* Euripidean formal experimentation, devoid of any allusion to traditional elegiac threnody (which, on this view, never existed in any definitive sense).⁵⁹ The truth may, of course, involve some combination of both these views.

The two sides do at least agree that the actor playing Andromache would have sung the elegiac lines in question to the accompaniment of the *aulos*. The presence of the Doric alpha, whether or not it is seen to allude to a distinctly Peloponnesian performance tradition, has been taken as a guarantee of their melic delivery. This may well be so. But in the light of our remarks on elegy as an intermediary between speech and full-blown song, we may want to consider Andromache's elegy within its immediate context in the play. It lies, after all, exactly between 'speech' – the series of recited iambic trimeters in which Andromache begins to bewail her fate (91–102) – and the iambo-dactylic strophic song of the chorus which begins at line 117.

Was there a sonic and performative correlate to the structural middleness of the elegiac section? We might speculate that, despite its Doric colouring, it fell short of truly melodic song, that it received the sort of inbetween performance we suggested was elsewhere associated with elegy. Such an intermediate style of delivery could conceivably have served as an effective simulacrum of lament, a form for which there is abundant cross-cultural evidence of inbetween modes of performance and overall instability of formal musical expression.⁶⁰

But we need not go that far. We might instead think of the *Andromache* elegy's inbetweenness not as a distinct performative category but rather in terms of relative expressive intensity. The three-part progression from unaccompanied iambic trimeter to (probably) sung and accompanied

⁵⁸ Inbetweenness probably plays no role at Aristoph. *Birds* 217. Eur. *IT* 1091, a syntactically difficult passage, again blends different musical terms, though less emphatically than the three passages we discuss here. Eur. *Hypsipyle fr.* 752g.9 Kannicht is the most complex of all the six passages, and would repay extensive discussion. Lament is considerably less prominent here than in the other five, if present at all (perhaps proleptically, as the journey will not be a happy one?). The *aulos* seems to play a role, but in a perverse way, as Orpheus has his κιθάρις 'sing' to give the rhythm to the rowers, normally the job of the *aulos*. Regularity of rhythm is evoked, and this may be a further reason for Euripides' choice of the term ἔλεγος,

one of the few metres in which one long equals two shorts. Overall, what seems clear is that the musical references are mixed in a virtuoso way that purposefully eludes any straightforward interpretation.

⁵⁹ Brief recent discussion in Faraone (2008) 129. Bowie suggests that Euripides may be alluding to an aulodic and elegiac *Sack of Troy* composed by the Argive aulete-poet Sacadas ((2001) 52–53; cf. Faraone (2008) 132).

⁶⁰ References collected in Feld and Fox (1994) 39–43. For acoustic variation in ancient Greek lamentation, including 'unmusical' elements, see Sultan (1993) 103–09.

elegy to choral aulodic song constitutes a crescendo of musical intensity. Sitting in the middle of this crescendo, the elegiacs act as *de facto* bridge between the extremes of unmusical *logos* (as tragic iambic trimeters represent it) and *melos* in its fullest expression.

Indeed, our observations in section II on sympotic elegy's proemial relationship to subsequent musical performances apply to Euripides' tragic elegy as well. First, the iambic section, with its programmatic reference to 'lamentations, wailings and tears' (θρήνοισι καὶ γόοισι καὶ δακρύμασιν, 92), sets the stage for the musically intensified elegiac lament. The elegiacs in turn serve as proem for the choral song, which, along with the chorus itself, makes a dramatic entrance: the first strophe begins with a hexameter (117), picking up exactly where Andromache leaves off with her last elegiac pentameter, but now with the full force of choral melic.⁶¹ The relatively thin *melos* of elegy is thus echoed and amplified by the relatively richer music of the chorus.

Quite apart then from the debate over the specific antecedents of the elegiac passage in the *Andromache* (or lack thereof), it may well have been the case that traditional aspects of inbetweenness in elegiac performance informed Euripides' choice to situate the passage in the play as he did.

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⁶¹ See Nagy (2010) 26–30 for the way in which the transition from elegy to choral melic in the *Andromache*

reflects traditional patterns of solo-group interaction in antiphonal lament.

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