

Threnodic Elegy in Sparta

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MOST STUDIES concerning the new elegy of Simonides for the fallen at Plataea acknowledge the Spartan commission of the ode and the role played by the Spartan leader Pausanias in the extant fragments. It has been argued that the poem was composed to celebrate the Spartan soldiers who died at Plataea and was performed at a public festival which involved cultic ceremonies at the common graves.¹ The Spartans, in fact, were buried on the battlefield according to the Spartan custom, and Thucydides testifies that they received offerings by the inhabitants of Plataea and were venerated as heroes.² Later sources attest that an annual festival called Eleutheria was instituted, possibly by the Athenian Aristides, in order to honour the *Plataiomachoi*, but the fifth-

¹ A. Aloni, "L'elegia di Simonide dedicata alla battaglia di Platea," *ΣPE* 102 (1994) 9–22, and "The Proem of Simonides' Plataea Elegy and the Circumstances of its Performance," in D. Boedeker and D. Sider (eds.), *The New Simonides: Contexts of Praise and Desire* (New York 2001) 86–105; C. O. Pavese, "Elegia di Simonide agli spartati per Platea," *ΣPE* 107 (1995) 1–26; G. Burzacchini, "Note al nuovo Simonide," *Eikasmos* 6 (1995) 21–38; L. Sbardella, "Achille e gli eroi di Platea," *ΣPE* 129 (2000) 1–11; D. Asheri, "Simonide, Achille e Pausania figlio di Cleombroto," *QUCC* 77 (2004) 67–73. A. Schachter, "Simonides' Elegy on Plataia: the Occasion of its Performance," *ΣPE* 123 (1998) 25–30, and P.-J. Shaw, "Lords of Hellas, Old Men of the Sea: The Occasion of Simonides' Elegy on Plataea," in *The New Simonides* 164–183, acknowledge the Spartan commission but locate the performance in other contexts, the Isthmian games or the shrine of Achilles near Sigeum.

² Thuc. 3.58.4; Isoc. *Plat.* 14.61. On Spartan burial customs see M. Nafissi, *La nascita del kosmos. Studi sulla storia e la società di Sparta* (Perugia 1991) 290–341; N. Richer, "Aspect des funérailles à Sparte," *CCG* 5 (1994) 51–96.

century origin of this festival is not certain and has often been questioned.³ As a matter of fact, we cannot confidently state for which occasion the poem was composed; nevertheless, the literary genre to which this poem seems to belong requires a public occasion such as a festival or a musical *agon*.

The discovery of the papyrus has confirmed a thesis advanced well before by Bowie, according to whom elegy could have been performed not only in the private setting of the symposium but also at public occasions.⁴ Several features of the Plataea elegy recur in odes performed before large audiences: the mythic content, the substantial length, the proem dedicated to a semi-god, and, finally, the epic language. A poem like this certainly had the function to recall to everyone's memory the events that took place during the battle, yet a strong threnodic character cannot be denied. The poet laments the death of those who died young and declares that by assuring them eternal *kleos* he will provide a compensation for the grief of their families and city. The funeral origin of elegy and its mournful character has often been denied by scholars, since no attested elegy has overt threnodic function.⁵ Nevertheless, as

³ Plut. *Arist.* 21; Diod. 11.29.1–2; Strab. 9.2.31; Paus. 9.25.5. See the objections of J. N. Bremmer, "The Rise of the Hero Cult and the New Simonides," *ZPE* 158 (2006) 15–26, and previously L. Prandi, *Platea, momenti e problemi della storia di una polis* (Padua 1988) 153–179.

⁴ E. L. Bowie, "Early Greek Elegy, Symposium, and Public Festival," *JHS* 106 (1986) 13–35; cf. A. Aloni and A. Iannucci, *L'elegia e l'epigramma dalle origini al V secolo* (Florence 2007) 74–85, 199–203.

⁵ T. G. Rosenmeyer, "Elegiac and Elegos," *GSCA* 1 (1968) 217–231; Bowie, *JHS* 106 (1986) 13–35; K. Bartol, *Greek Elegy and Iambus. Studies in Ancient Literary Sources* (Poznan 1993) 25–28; L. K. Kowerski, *Simonides on the Persian Wars. A Study on the Elegiac Verses of the "New Simonides"* (New York 2005) 115–119. The existence of some form of threnodic elegy connected with *ἔλεγος* and with funerary epigram is substantially accepted by B. Gentili, "Epigramma ed elegia," in *L'épigramme grecque* (Vandœuvres/Geneva 1967) 37–81; M. L. West, *Studies in Greek Elegy and Iambus* (Berlin/New York 1974) 4–7. The problem of threnodic elegy has been recently reexamined: C. Nobili, "Omero e l'elegia trenodica," *Acme* 59 (2006) 3–24; Aloni and

Page stated, a primeval form of funeral elegy was performed in the Peloponnese in archaic times and was recalled by later authors such as Euripides in the elegiac lament of Andromache and Callimachus in the *Bath of Pallas*.⁶ Aloni argued that this form of elegy might represent the best antecedent for Simonides' elegy, given also its Spartan commission.⁷ In this paper I investigate the characteristics of this obscure school of elegiac poets and try to show to what extent they might be connected with Sparta.

The first aulodes

The scanty sources concerning the origins of elegy attest that it was first performed by aulodes. Elegy developed side by side with the aulodic and auletic nomoi and was originally conceived as an aulodic nomos, i.e. as a kind of song in elegiac distichs, performed to the accompaniment of the aulos. The pseudo-plutarchean treatise *On Music* says that ἐν ἀρχῇ γὰρ ἐλεγεία μεμελοποιημένα οἱ αὐλωδοὶ ᾄδον⁸ and lists a series of aulodic nomoi, including a nomos called Ἔλεγχοι:⁹ it must have

Iannucci, *L'elegia* 13–19, 203–204; A. Aloni, “Elegy,” in F. Budelmann (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Lyric* (Cambridge 2009) 168–188.

⁶ D. Page, “The Elegiacs in Euripides' *Andromache*,” in *Greek Poetry and Life. Essays Presented to Gilbert Murray* (Oxford 1936) 206–230.

⁷ Aloni, *ZPE* 102 (1994) 9–22 and in *The New Simonides* 86–105. On other similarities between the fragments in the Plataea papyrus and various kinds of laments (elegies and epigrams) see Kowerski, *Simonides* 130–145.

⁸ [Plut.] *Mus.* 8, *Mor.* 1134A. Other authors do not mention the original connection between aulody and elegy but consider either Mimermus, Callinus, or Archilochus as the inventors of elegy (Marius Plot. *Sacerd.*, *Gramm.Lat.* VI 509–510 = *Mimn. test.* 20 G.-P.; Didym. fr.1, p.387 Schmidt *ap.* Orion *s.v.* ἔλεγχος). Cf. Aloni and Iannucci, *L'elegia* 111–114.

⁹ *Mus.* 3, 1132C: οἱ δὲ νόμοι οἱ κατὰ τούτους, ἀγαθὲ Ὀνησίκρατες, αὐλωδικοὶ ἦσαν. Ἀπόθετος, Ἔλεγχοι, Κωμάρχιος, Σχοινίων, Κηπίων τε καὶ †Δεῖλος καὶ Τριμερής. ὑστέρῳ δὲ χρόνῳ καὶ τὰ Πολυμνήστεια καλούμενα ἐξευρέθη. The corrupt Δεῖλος might stand for Ἐπικήδειος, as Westphal suggests. Cf. F. Lasserre, *Plutarque. De la musique* (Lausanne 1954) 22–27; A. Barker, *Greek Musical Writings I* (New Brunswick 1984) 251–252; M. Paterlini, “I nomoi di Clona,” *RCCM* 43 (2001) 105–108.

been a threnodic *nomos* and have shared many features with the *ἐλεγεία*. The gloomy character of early aulody is confirmed by a passage of Plutarch: ἡ θρηνηωδία καὶ ὁ ἐπικήδειος αὐλὸς ἐν ἀρχῇ πάθος κινεῖ καὶ δάκρυον ἐμβάλλει.¹⁰ As we shall see, many of the sources on primeval forms of elegy and aulody allude to their threnodic features.

The first reported aulode is Olympus, who lived in Phrygia and was credited with being the pupil of Marsyas; he was believed the first to teach the musical *nomoi* to the Greeks.¹¹ According to some sources there was a second aulete named Olympus who was a descendant of the former, but there is no good reason to think that they originally were two distinct figures.¹² The most famous invention attributed to the latter was an auletic *nomos* (musical piece for solo aulos) for Apollo, called *polykephalos*, while the first one invented an aulodic *nomos* (solo or choral song accompanied by the aulos), called *harmateion*. Olympus was also considered the inventor of the *synaulia*, the unison playing of two or more auloi at funerals. The *Suda* (s.v. Ὀλυμπος) says that he was a ποιητῆς μελῶν καὶ ἐλεγείων, but what constantly recurs in the testimonies is the funerary character of his playing: he wrote either θρηνητικοὶ νόμοι or ἐπιτυμβίδιοι.¹³ Moreover, the *polykephalos* *nomos* certainly had a gloomy melody, for Pindar attests that it was first invented by Athena: it imitated the *threnos* sung by the heads of the Gorgons over the killing of Medusa by Perseus and took its name from this episode;¹⁴ the same can be said of

¹⁰ Plut. *Quest.conv.* 657A. Cf. also [Arist.] *Prob.* 19.1, 917b19–21.

¹¹ [Plut.] *Mus.* 5, 1132F; 7, 1133D–F; *Suda* s.v. Ξοναυλίαν and Ὀλυμπος; schol. Ar. *Eq.* 9. Cf. H. Flach, *Geschichte der griechischen Lyrik* (Tübingen 1883) 118–146; on the history of ancient aulody, M. L. West, *Ancient Greek Music* (Oxford 1992) 327–340.

¹² Cf. R. Ballerio, *Plutarco. La musica* (Milan 2000) 32–33.

¹³ *Suda* s.v. Ξοναυλίαν; Poll. 4.78. Cf. Flach, *Geschichte* 118–146.

¹⁴ Pind. *Pyth.* 12.7–27; schol. Pind. *Pyth.* 12.39. See West, *Ancient Greek Music* 214; E. Cingano, *Pindaro. Le Pitiche* (Milan 1995) 672–680; J.-P.

the *harmateion*, which appears in a passage of Euripides' *Orestes* and is unequivocally explained by the the glossae and scholia as the *threnos* sung as the chariot dragged Hector's body.¹⁵

Olympus inaugurated a school of Phrygian aulody, whose most renowned member was Mimermus; he was both a famous aulete (coming from a family of auletes) and a composer of elegies.¹⁶ Mimermus himself composed threnodic nomoi, as is shown by Ps.-Plutarch's mention of the nomos *kradias* (fig-branch nomos) performed during the Ionian festival of the Thargelia: the mournful sound of the aulos accompanied the flagellation of the *φαρμακός* with fig-branches.¹⁷

Another important school of aulodes developed in the Peloponnese, and even though it is often connected to the Pythian musical contests, it had many contacts with Sparta.¹⁸ The first exponent of this school was the aulode Clonas, who lived in the second half of the seventh century, i.e. a short time later than Terpander.¹⁹ Ps.-Plutarch says that both Tegea and Thebes claimed the paternity of Clonas; but the Arcadian origin is far more probable, as Arcadia played a major role in the development of music in the seventh and sixth centuries, as shown by the creation of the musical contest of the Apodeixeis (see below) and by the Pythian victory of the Arcadian Echem-

Vernant, "La voce della Gorgone," in D. Restani (ed.), *Musica e mito nella Grecia antica* (Bologna 1995) 189–202.

¹⁵ Eur. *Or.* 1384 and schol., which records also another version according to which it was a form of *hymenaios*, sung when the bride was led to the groom's house on the chariot.

¹⁶ Strab. 14.1.28–29: ἄνδρες δ' ἐγένοντο Κολοφώνιοι τῶν μνημονευομένων Μίμνερος ἀλητῆς ἅμα καὶ ποιητῆς ἐλεγείας.

¹⁷ [Plut.] *Mus.* 8, 1134A; Hesych. s.v. *κραδίας νόμος*; *Suda* s.v. *φαρμακός*.

¹⁸ Sparta was traditionally considered one of the most important centres for aulos performances: cf. F. Berlinzani, "Sparta e la mousiké," in F. Berlinzani and F. Cordano (eds.), *La cultura a Sparta classica* (Milan forthcoming).

¹⁹ According to Hellanicus (*FGrHist* 4 F 85) Terpander won the first competition of the Karneia in 676/5 B.C.; on his chronology cf. A. Gostoli, *Terpander* (Rome 1990) ix–xi. For Clonas see [Plut.] *Mus.* 3–5, 1132C–1133B; Poll. 4.78; Abert, "Klonas," *RE* 11 (1921) 875–876.

brotus in aulody. Clonas is said to have composed aulodic nomoi, elegies, *prosodia*, and *epe*: τὸν πρῶτον συστησάμενον τοὺς αὐλαδικοὺς νόμους καὶ τὰ προσόδια, ἐλεγείων τε καὶ ἐπῶν ποιητὴν γεγονέναι.²⁰ It is difficult to establish the exact meaning of *epe* in this passage since, as has been recognized by Gentili, the term does not refer exclusively to hexametric poetry, but also to elegy and, in general, to every form of dactylic poetry.²¹ Much clearer is the term *prosodion*, which refers to songs performed during processions: at the time of Clonas they were accompanied by the flute and composed in dactylic metra, as the much-discussed prosodion of Eumelus shows.²²

Clonas was credited with being the inventor of the nomoi *Apothetos* and *Schoinion*:²³ the first must be connected with Sparta, because in Sparta there was a place called Apothetai, on the slopes of Taygetus, where the newly-born who presented any malformation or weakness were exposed and abandoned to die.²⁴ This cruel practice in its ritual manifestation was accompanied by the mournful sound of the flute; it is not hard to recognize in this early musical genre a strict relation with threnodic elegy. About the *Schoinion* little can be said: it is probably evoked by Pindar in his second dithyramb, where it means

²⁰ Heraclid. Pont. fr.157 Wehrli = [Plut.] *Mus.* 3, 1132C.

²¹ B. Gentili, "Preistoria e formazione dell'esametro," *QUCC* 26 (1977) 7–37, at 35–36.

²² *PMG* fr.696. Cf. A. Debiasi, *L'epica perduta. Eumelo, il Ciclo, l'occidente* (Rome 2004) 39–48; M. Caprioli, "Considerazioni sul prosodio a Delo di Eumelo di Corinto," *ARF* 9 (2007) 19–38; G. B. D'Alessio, "Defining Local Identities in Greek Lyric Poetry," in R. Hunter, I. Rutherford (eds.), *Wandering Poets in Ancient Greek Culture* (Cambridge 2009) 137–167, at 137–145. On the aulos accompaniment of earlier prosodia cf. Poll. 4.82.

²³ A problem arises since Ps.-Plutarch repeatedly affirms that they were aulodic nomoi, whereas Poll. 4.79 and Hesych. s.v. *σχολίωνων* call them auletic.

²⁴ Plut. *Lyc.* 16.1. Cf. Flach, *Geschichte* 257–259; Lasserre, *Plutarque* 23. For a different interpretation cf. Barker, *Greek Musical Writings* I 252.

“contorted like a rope.”²⁵

What seems certain is that Clonas operated in Sparta a short time after Terpander and performed aulody at Spartan festivals and rituals; we might even wonder whether he was involved in the first musical *katastasis*, which was inaugurated by Terpander and involved monodic songs. The activity of Terpander is usually connected with the institution of the kitharodic contests at the Karneia, which came to have great success and attracted famous kitharodes like Arion and Timotheus.²⁶ In addition to the kitharodic competitions, other musical performances are attested at the Karneia: Euripides mentions ἄλυροι ὕμνοι performed in praise of Alcestis at the Spartan Karneia.²⁷ The word ἄλυρος must be intended as a reference to aulos performances, possibly of threnodic character;²⁸ this whole passage of the tragedy, in fact, is a lament by the chorus over the death of Alcestis, and Euripides elsewhere explicitly calls ἄλυρος ἔλεγος the funeral lament accompanied by the aulos.²⁹ It is tempting to associate Clonas’ presence in Sparta at the

²⁵ Cf. J. I. Porter, “Lasus of Hermione, Pindar and the Riddle of S,” *CQ* 57 (2007) 1–21, at 18–21. It could also derive its name from a bird (Arist. *Hist.An.* 610a): cf. Ballerio, *Plutarco* 24. But Lasserre, *Plutarque* 23, argued that the term could mean “nomos of the reeds” and may have been related to the Spartan ritual of the collecting of reeds (Plut. *Lyc.* 16.13).

²⁶ On the Karneia see M. Pettersson, *Cults of Apollo at Sparta: The Hyakinthia, the Gymnopaïdai and the Karneia* (Stockholm 1992) 57–72; N. Richer, “Les Karneia de Sparte (et la date de la bataille de Salamine),” in W. G. Cavanagh et al. (eds.), *Sparta and Laconia. From Prehistory to Pre-modern* (Athens 2009) 213–224.

²⁷ Eur. *Alc.* 445–451. On the meaning of ἄλυρος as “accompanied by the flute” cf. Arist. *Rhet.* 1408a.

²⁸ Cf. A. Brelich, *Paides e parthenoi* (Rome 1969) 152–153; D. Susanetti, *Euripide. Alceste* (Venice 2001) 215–216.

²⁹ Eur. *Hel.* 185, *IT* 146. Cf. R. Kannicht, *Euripides, Helena II* (Heidelberg 1969) 73; A. Allan, *Euripides. Helen* (Cambridge 2008) 173. In other tragedies the word ἄλυρος is connected with a mournful and tragic situation (Soph. *OC* 1221–1224; Eur. *Phoen.* 1028). On the meaning of ἔλεγος cf. West, *Studies* 4–6.

time of the first *katastasis* with the introduction of threnodic aulodic songs at the Karneia.

Another aulode closely linked to Clonas, although much younger, was Polymnestus, who lived at the end of the seventh century: he may have been a contemporary of Alcman, who mentions him.³⁰ He was born in Colophon, so that we cannot exclude that he had early contacts with the Phrygian school of aulodes inaugurated by Olympus.³¹ After youth he moved to Sparta, as the evidence on many of his works implies: he was thus one of the several foreign poets and musicians who were invited to Sparta in archaic times.³² Heraclides Ponticus affirms that he composed the same kind of poems as his predecessor Clonas (including aulodic *nomoi* and elegies), which establishes a clear relationship between the two aulodes.³³ Polymnestus was considered the inventor of the *nomos Polymnesteion*, which was quite popular and was often mentioned by playwrights because of its lascivious and relaxed tone.³⁴ He also composed the aulodic *nomoi Orthioi*, which bear the same name as the kitharodic ones.³⁵

His ties to Sparta are of various kinds: Alcman, as well as

³⁰ On Polymnestus of Colophon cf. [Plut.] *Mus.* 3–5, 1132C–1133B; 8–10, 1134A–E; 12, 1135D; Hesych. s.v. *Πολυμνήστειον ᾄδειν*; Strab. 14.1.28–29 = Pind. fr.188; schol. Ar. *Eq.* 1287a; *Suda* s.v. *Πολύμνηστος*; Paus. 1.14.4.

³¹ His father was Meles; according to a Colophonian tradition ([Plut.] *Vit. Hom.* 1.4) Homer's father had the same name, so that we can argue that even Polymnestus belonged to a family of poets. Cf. Flach, *Geschichte* 172–178.

³² On foreign poets in Sparta see D'Alessio, *Wandering Poets* 137–167.

³³ Heraclid. Pont. fr.157 Wehrli = [Plut.] *Mus.* 3, 1132C–D; 5, 1133A.

³⁴ Ar. *Eq.* 1287; Cratin. fr.338.

³⁵ [Plut.] *Mus.* 10, 1134D. On aulodic *nomoi* called *Orthioi* cf. Poll. 4.73; schol. Ar. *Ach.* 16; *Suda* s.v. *Ὀρθιασμάτων*. Polymnestus was also considered the inventor of the hypolydian *nomos* (probably corresponding to the Lydian mode, cf. West, *Ancient Greek Music* 227–228) and widened the intervals called *ἐκλυσις* (release, $\frac{3}{4}$ tone falling) and *ἐκβολή* (discharge, $\frac{1}{4}$ tone rising). Cf. [Plut.] *Mus.* 29, 1141B.

Pindar, mentions him,³⁶ and Polymnestus himself composed a hexametric or more probably elegiac poem (ἔπη) for the Spartans dedicated to Thaletas, the well-known Cretan musician who was brought to Sparta by Lycurgus (Paus. 1.14.4). Most importantly, he participated in the second musical *katastasis*, which took place between the end of the seventh century and the first half of the sixth and involved the reform of some major musical festivals such as the Endymatia at Argos, the Apo-deixeis in Arcadia, and the Gymnopaidiai at Sparta ([Plut.] *Mus.* 1134). This musical reform was promoted by important authors of paeans of the time such as Thaletas of Gortyn, Xenocritus of Locri, and Xenodamus of Cythera, and by two aulodes, Polymnestus of Colophon and Sacadas of Argos.

Sacadas was a famous aulete and aulode of Argos which during the sixth century was renowned for its musicians and for the musical experiments they carried out:³⁷ Herodotus says that at the time of Polycrates, the Argives were considered the first amongst the Greeks in musical practice.³⁸ Sacadas won three times consecutively the newly-instituted Pythian musical contests (586, 582, and 578 B.C.)³⁹ with an auletic *nomos*, the famous *nomos Pythikos* that was ever after performed at Delphi by generations of auletes. It was divided into five movements

³⁶ [Plut.] *Mus.* 5, 1133B = Alc. fr.225 Calame; Pind. fr.188. The Doric form of his name used by Pindar, Πολύμναστος, is a trace of the Spartan adoption of this poet.

³⁷ On Sacadas see [Plut.] *Mus.* 8–10, 1134A–E; 12, 1135C; Paus. 2.22.8, 6.14.9, 9.30.2 (= Pind. fr.269), 10.7.4; Strab. 9.3.10. Abert, “Sakadas,” *RE* 1A (1920) 68–69; E. Hiller, “Sakadas der Aulet,” *RhM* 31 (1876) 76–88; Page, in *Greek Poetry* 206–230; Porter, *CQ* 57 (2007) 1–21; J. C. Franklin, “Songbenders of Circular Choruses: Dithyramb and the Demise of Music,” in B. Kowalzig and P. Wilson (eds.), *Dithyramb and Social Change* (Oxford forthcoming).

³⁸ Hdt. 3.131. Cf. B. Kowalzig, *Singing for the Gods. Performances of Myth and Ritual in Archaic and Classical Greece* (Oxford 2007) 129–131; Franklin, in *Dithyramb*.

³⁹ On the date of the first Pythian festival see K. Brodersen, “Zur Datierung der ersten Pythien,” *ZPE* 82 (1990) 25–31.

and imitated the duel between Apollo and the serpent with innovative musical effects that recalled the phases of the struggle, such as the final *syrimos* to represent the hisses uttered by the dying serpent.⁴⁰ At the first festival in 586 there was also an aulodic competition; it was won by another member of the Peloponnesian aulodic school, Echembrotus of Arcadia, who performed some threnodic elegies, so sad and gloomy that the aulodic contest was suspended after that:⁴¹

In the third year of the forty-eighth Olympiad, in which Glaucias of Crotona was victorious, the Amphictyons offered prizes for minstrelsy as hitherto, and added competitions in flute-playing both with and without the accompaniment of the voice. The victors proclaimed were Melampus, a Cephallenian, in minstrelsy; Echembrotus, an Arcadian, in singing to the flute; and Sacadas, an Argive, in flute-playing. This same Sacadas was also victorious in the next two Pythiads. On the same occasion they for the first time offered prizes for the athletes, the events being the same as at Olympia, except the four-horse chariot-race: they also added foot-race for boys in the long and the double courses. But in the second Pythiad the prizes were discontinued, and crowns were substituted. They also discontinued the singing to the flute, because they deemed the music was inauspicious. For the tunes were most doleful, and the words sung to them were dirges (*ἡ γὰρ αὐλωδία μέλη τε ἦν αὐλῶν τὰ σκυθρωπότατα καὶ ἐλεγεία* {*θρήνοι*} *προσαδόμενα τοῖς αὐλοῖς*). This is proved by the votive-offering of Echembrotus: it is a bronze tripod dedicated to Hercules at Thebes, and bears this inscription: “Echembrotus, an Arcadian, dedicated to Hercules this pleasing gift for a victory which he gained at the games of the Amphictyons, singing tunes and dirges (*μέλεα καὶ ἐλέγους*)

⁴⁰ Paus. 2.22.8: *Σακάδα μνημῆμά ἐστιν, ὃς τὸ αὐλημα τὸ Πυθικὸν πρῶτος ἠΰλησεν ἐν Δελφοῖς*. On the structure of the Pythikos nomos cf. Poll. 4.78–84 and Strab. 9.3.10, who curiously does not mention Sacadas. Cf. Hiller, *RhM* 31 (1876) 76–88; Barker, *Greek Musical Writings* I 51–53; Porter, *CQ* 57 (2007) 10–11.

⁴¹ Paus. 10.7.4 (transl. Frazer).

to the Greeks.” So the contest in singing to the flute was discontinued.

Echembrotus performed some threnodic elegies that were typical of the Peloponnesian school, but we do not know why the aulodic contest was suspended: as West notes, threnodic elegies were common and it seems highly suspect that the Amphictyons banned them from the festival merely because of their mournful tone.⁴² Even after Sacadas, the Argive school of auletes continued to dominate the Pythian auletic contest: it was won six times consecutively by the Sicyonian Pithocritus, who also introduced the practice of playing the aulos during the pentathlon at Olympia (Paus. 6.14.9).

Sacadas was a great experimenter: he was a *ποιητῆς μελῶν τε καὶ ἐλεγείων μεμελοποιημένων* ([Plut.] *Mus.* 8, 1134A) but was better known for his inventions: he created a new type of aulos, probably named *σακάδιον*.⁴³ A statue seen by Pausanias on Mt. Helicon represented Sacadas as smaller than his flutes, but according to Pausanias the sculptor misunderstood the Pindaric passage which mentioned Sacadas’ instrument; it has been argued that the *σακάδιον* produced lower and deeper sounds.⁴⁴ Pausanias adds that Pindar mentioned Sacadas in a proem, which may have been a sort of homage to a poetical genre practiced both by aulodes and kitharodes. According to Ps.-Plutarch he also invented a revolutionary kind of aulodic nomos, called *trimeles*, performed by a chorus and made up of three strophes, each in a different mode, Doric, Phrygian, Lydian (the primitive modes used by aulodes at that time).⁴⁵

⁴² West, *Studies* 5 and *Ancient Greek Music* 337.

⁴³ Hesych. *s.v.* *Σακάδιον*.

⁴⁴ Paus. 9.30.2 (= Pind. fr.269). Cf. Hiller, *RhM* 31 (1876) 77; F. D’Alfonso, “Sacada, Xanto e Stesicoro,” *QUCC* 51 (1995) 49–61, at 54–55. The auletes began their performances with a proem, called *προαύλιον*: Arist. *Rhet.* 1414b19.

⁴⁵ [Plut.] *Mus.* 8, 1134A–B. On the *trimeles* cf. Flach, *Geschichte* 282–285; Lasserre, *Plutarque* 23; West, *Ancient Greek Music* 214; Franklin, in *Dithyramb*. It is improbable that the definition of the nomos *trimeles* given by Ps.-

Sacadas also was among the musicians who promoted the second musical *katastasis* and, as we shall see, it can be argued that he played an important role in the introduction of elegy in the musical programme of the *Gymnopaediai*.

Elegies at the Gymnopaediai

We must now examine the passage of Ps.-Plutarch concerning the second musical *katastasis* and the reform of the festival, which involved at least two aulodes, Polymnestus and Sacadas.⁴⁶

Now music was first organized at Sparta under the direction of Terpander; for its second organization Thaletas of Gortyn, Xenodamus of Cythera, Xenocritus of Locri, Polymnestus of Colophon, and Sacadas of Argos are said to have been chiefly responsible, since it was at their suggestion that the festival of the *Gymnopaediae* at Lacedaemon was instituted and so too the *Apodeixeis* in Arcadia and the so-called *Endymatia* at Argos. Thaletas, Xenodamus, and Xenocritus were composers of paeans, Polymnestus of so-called Orthian pieces, and Sacadas of elegiacs (*οἱ δὲ περὶ Πολύμνηστον τῶν Ὀρθίων καλουμένων, οἱ δὲ περὶ Σακάδαν ἐλεγείων*). Others, like Pratinas, assert that Xenodamus was a composer not of paeans but of hyporchemes; and of Xenodamus himself a song is preserved which is evidently a hyporcheme. Pindar too employed this kind of composition. That there is a difference between the paean and the hyporcheme will be seen from Pindar's works, as he composed both *Paeans* and *Hyporchemes*.

Plutarch is correct. The passage (*μεταβολή*) from one mode to the other was a sophisticated technique, which was used by later dithyrambographers such as Melanippides, and required great vocal skill: Aristotle (*Pr.* 19.15, 918b) says it was usually performed by professional solo singers. Barker, *Greek Musical Writings* I 251, assumes that the *nomos trimeles* was rather made up by three sections, like the kitharodic *nomos tetraoidios* in four parts and the auletic Pythian *nomos* in five.

⁴⁶ [Plut.] *Mus.* 9–10, 1134B–E (transl. Einarson/De Lacy). The whole passage probably drew on the work of Heraclides of Pontus. Cf. A. Barker, "Heraclides and Musical History," in W. W. Fortenbaugh and E. Pender (eds.), *Heraclides Ponticus* (New Brunswick 2009) 273–298.

Polymnestus too composed nomes sung to the auloi (καὶ Πολύμνηστος δ' αὐλωδικούς νόμους ἐποίησεν), but whether he employed the Orthios nome in his music, as the writers on harmonic assert, we are unable to say definitely, as on this point the ancients are silent. Whether Thaletas of Crete composed paeans is also disputed. Thus Glaucus, who asserts that Thaletas is later than Archilochus, says that he imitated Archilochus' music, but expanded it to greater length, and also used in his music the paeonic and cretic rhythms, which Archilochus had not employed, nor had Orpheus either or Terpander; for Thaletas is said to have developed them from the aulos music of Olympus (ἐκ γὰρ τῆς Ὀλύμπου αὐλήσεως Θαλήταν φασὶν ἐξεργάσθαι ταῦτα) and so gained the reputation of an excellent composer. With regard to Xenocritus, a Locrian from Italy, it is disputed whether he composed paeans, for it is said that he composed on heroic themes involving action. Hence some call his pieces dithyrambs. Glaucus says that Thaletas was older than Xenocritus.

Two of the festivals mentioned in this passage are quite obscure: no reliable evidence concerns the Argive Endymatia, but the name seems to evoke a ceremony in which the ephebes first received their arms.⁴⁷ A reference to the Arcadian Apodeixeis is probably to be found in a passage of Polybius on the Arcadians' fondness for music: young men used to appear in the theatres before all the citizens, performing dances and military songs (*embateria*) accompanied by auloi.⁴⁸ We can thus assume that both these festivals had a military character, and at least the Apodeixeis involved aulodic performances.

⁴⁷ At Argos there was a festival called Hybristica (Plut. *Mor.* 245E) where men and women exchanged clothing, but there are no grounds to think that it was the same as the Endymatia.

⁴⁸ Polyb. 4.20.12: καὶ μὲν ἐμβατήρια μετ' αὐλοῦ καὶ τάξεως ἀσκοῦντες, ἔτι δ' ὀρχήσεις ἐκπονοῦντες μετὰ κοινῆς ἐπιστροφῆς καὶ δαπάνης κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν ἐν τοῖς θεάτροις ἐπιδείκνυνται τοῖς αὐτῶν πολίταις οἱ νέοι. Cf. N. Robertson, *Festivals and Legends. The Formation of the Greek Cities in the Light of Public Ritual* (Toronto 1992) 156–157; P. Ceccarelli, *La pirrica nell'antichità greco-romana. Studi sulla danza armata* (Pisa/Rome 1998) 17 n.34, 119, 222.

Far better known are the Spartan Gymnopaïdai, which like the Karneia and the Hyakinthia were celebrated in summer in honour of Apollo and constituted one of the most important religious and musical festivals of Sparta.⁴⁹ A major role was played by young men who had to face an endurance test before the eyes of the whole citizenry, dancing naked under the open sun a slow and highly choreographic dance called *gymnopaidiké*;⁵⁰ it is probable that the festival also included the armed dance that in Sparta was usually called Kastoreion.⁵¹ It was thus similar to what we know of the Endymatia and the Apo-deixeis, where enrolling the young men into the military ranks of the city constituted the main aim of the festivals.

The festival also involved performances of paeans in honour of Apollo. Sosibius, a Laconian historian of the Hellenistic period, attests that at the Gymnopaïdai choruses of young men sang songs of Alcman and Thaletas and paeans of Dionysodotus, an otherwise unknown Spartan musician: “there is a chorus composed of the most beautiful boys, another one composed of the best men: they dance naked and sing the songs (ᾠματα) of Thaletas and Alcman and the paeans of Dionysodotus” (*FGrHist* 595 F 5). A few passages from the lexica and from Bekker’s *Anecdota graeca* confirm that there were performance of paeans, whereas other sources refer only to

⁴⁹ See H. T. Wade-Gery, “A Note on the Origin of the Spartan Gymnopaïdai,” *CQ* 43 (1949) 79–81; Brelich, *Paides*; Pettersson, *Cults* 42–56; Robertson, *Festivals* 147–165; B. Sergent, “Le sens d’une danse spartiate,” *DHA* 19 (1993) 161–178; N. Richer, “Les Gymnopédies de Sparte,” *Ktema* 30 (2005) 237–262; J. Ducat, *Spartan Education. Youth and Society in the Classical Period* (Swansea 2006) 265–274.

⁵⁰ Plat. *Leg.* 633C and schol.; Luc. *Salt.* 10–12; Aristoxenos (fr.103 Wehrli = Athen. 630C) said that it was characterized by τὸ βαρὺ καὶ σεμνόν.

⁵¹ Schol. Pind. *Pyth.* 2.127; Luc. *Salt.* 10–12; Aristoxenos (fr.108 = Athen. 631B) said that the Spartans performed the armed dance and the *gymnopaidiké* in the agora, before proceeding into the theatre for the other shows. Cf. Robertson, *Festivals* 155–156; Sergent, *DHA* 19 (1993) 161–178; Ceccarelli, *La pirrica* 99–108.

hymns to the gods or choruses to Apollo.⁵²

Accordingly, a distorted reading of the pseudo-plutarchan passage has assigned the musical reform of the *Gymnopaïdiai* only to Thaletas, Xenodamos, and Xenocritus who composed, in a more or less controversial way, paeans; by contrast, Polymnestus was credited with operating at the Arcadian *Apodeixeis* and *Sacadas* at the *Endymatia* of Argos, in his home town.⁵³ I do not think that the passage from Ps.-Plutarch supports that view: the poets are mentioned all together and no distinction is made between the three festivals. Furthermore, if *Sacadas*' involvement in the *Endymatia* is acceptable given his Argive origins, there is no reason why Polymnestus, who lived in Sparta and composed poems for the Spartans, was excluded by the reform of the *Gymnopaïdiai* and only connected with the *Apodeixeis*. The passage from Ps.-Plutarch, in my opinion, unequivocally says that all these poets contributed to the second musical *katastasis* and to the reform of the musical performances at the three Peloponnesian festivals.⁵⁴

In this case, we must consider the possibility that the musical program of the *Gymnopaïdiai* included not only performances

⁵² *Anecd. Bekk.* I 32: *γυμνοπαΐδια· ἐν Λακεδαίμονι κατὰ τὴν ἀγορὰν παῖδες γυμνοὶ παιᾶνας ἦδον εἰς τιμὴν τῶν περὶ Θυρέας*; 234: *γυμνοπαΐδια· ἐν Σπάρτῃ παῖδες γυμνοὶ παιᾶνας ἄδοντες ἐχόρευον Ἀπόλλωνι τῷ Καρνείῳ κατὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ πανήγυριν. Et. Magn. s.v. γυμνοπαΐδια· γυμνοπαΐδια ἑορτὴ Λακεδαιμονίων, ἐν ἣ παῖδες ἦδον τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι παιᾶνας γυμνοὶ εἰς τοὺς περὶ Πυλαίαν πεσόντας. Suda s.v. γυμνοπαΐδια· χοροὶ ἐκ παίδων ἐν Σπάρτῃ τῆς Λακωνικῆς εἰς θεοὺς ὕμνους; Paus. 3.11.9: οἱ ἔφηβοι χοροὺς ἰστᾶσι τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι.*

⁵³ Hiller *RhM* 31 (1876) 77–79; Lasserre, *Plutarque* 159.

⁵⁴ Cf. also A. J. Podlecki, "Poetry and Society in Archaic Sparta," in J. Harmatta, *Actes du VII^e congrès de la Fédération Internationale des Associations d'Etudes Classiques* (Budapest 1984) 175–182, who argues that the poets were not all strictly contemporary but successively introduced some modifications to the program of the festival. According to Eusebius (ap. Jerome *Chron.* 1.94 Helm), the *Gymnopaïdiai* were founded in 668 B.C.; Thaletas lived at the time of Lycurgus and was certainly much older than Polymnestus, who composed an ode for him, and *Sacadas*, who lived in the sixth century (his Pythian victories are dated 586–574).

of paeans, but also of aulodic nomoi and elegies.⁵⁵ If Thaletas, Xenocritus, and Xenodamos are explicitly described as ποιηταὶ παιάνων, Polymnestus and those belonging to his school composed nomoi Orthioi, whereas Sacadas and his successors composed elegies (οἱ δὲ περὶ Πολύμνηστον τῶν Ὀρθίων καλουμένων, οἱ δὲ περὶ Σακάδαν ἐλεγείων).⁵⁶ But Polymnestus and Sacadas are not the only poets connected with aulody in this passage concerning the reform of the Gymnopaïdai.

The author of the treatise, in fact, prompts many doubts about the performance of paeans, which he attributes to the other three poets. He says that Pratinas considered Xenodamos as a composer of hyporchemes, whereas according to Glaucus of Rhegium, Thaletas, whose activity as composer of paeans is confirmed by other sources,⁵⁷ composed poems like those of Archilochus, i.e. iamboi or elegies, which were accompanied by the aulos (μεμιμῆσθαι μὲν αὐτόν φησι τὰ Ἀρχιλόχου μέλη); he was also credited with being a pupil of the famous aulode Olympus (ἐκ γὰρ τῆς Ὀλύμπου ἀλλήσεως Θαλήταν φασὶν ἐξειργάσθαι ταῦτα).⁵⁸ Such a view is confirmed by Sosibius (F 5) who, concerning the performances at the Gymnopaïdai,

⁵⁵ Cf. F. Cordano, “La musica e la politica, ovvero gli *auloi* ad Atene,” in V. De Angelis (ed.), *Sviluppi recenti dell’antichistica* (Milan 2004) 309–325, at 313–314.

⁵⁶ The author of the treatise is puzzled by the statement concerning Polymnestus, because he knows that this musician was famous as aulode (Πολύμνηστος δ’ αὐλοδικὸς νόμους ἐποίησεν), whereas the nomos Orthios was a famous kitharodic nomos, invented by Terpander. The only possible explanation is that the famous kitharodic nomos derived from an older aulodic nomos called Orthios. Cf. Lasserre, *Plutarque* 24–25; Barker, *Greek Musical Writings* I 252.

⁵⁷ Strab. 10.4.16: ὡς δ’ αὐτως καὶ τοῖς ῥυθμοῖς Κρητικοῖς χρῆσθαι κατὰ τὰς ᾠδὰς συντονωτάτοις οὖσιν οὓς Θάλητα ἀνευρεῖν, ᾧ καὶ τοὺς παιᾶνας καὶ τὰς ἄλλας τὰς ἐπιχωρίους ᾠδὰς ἀνατιθέασι; Porphyry. *V.Pyth.* 32: ἀρμολόμενος πρὸς λύραν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ φωνὴν καὶ ἄδων παιᾶνας ἀρχαίους τινὰς τῶν Θάλητος.

⁵⁸ Podlecki, in *Actes* 175–182, argues that Thaletas introduced in Sparta songs for military training accompanied by auloi.

ascribes the paeans to Dionysodotus alone and ᾄσματα to Thaletas and Alcman. Even Xenocritus, who is mentioned by Pindar and Callimachus as a composer of paeans, may have written dithyrambs, i.e. a kind of ode generally accompanied by the flute.⁵⁹ If Ps.-Plutarch prompts so many doubts about the activity of famous paeon authors, it means that he knew for certain that other genres, such as aulody, were included in the programme of the Gymnopaediai and the other Peloponnesian festivals.

The commemoration of the fallen in the battle of Thyrea

We can now try to establish for what reason and in what context Sacadas, Polymnestus, and perhaps even Thaletas introduced in the Gymnopaediai elegiac and aulodic performances. As we have seen, at that time elegies and aulodic nomoi mainly had a threnodic character and accompanied certain gloomy rituals such as the exposure of children at the Apothetai. They maintained the same features even when they were performed in agonistic contexts, as the example of Echembrotus at the first Pythiad shows. In Sparta threnodic elegies may have been very popular because, as is often reported by the sources, the laments over the dead kings or soldiers were part of the musical usages of the city.⁶⁰ Tyrtaeus (fr.12 W.) mentions the mourning of the whole citizenry over the dead soldiers, and it has often been noted that this may have influenced later threnodic production, such as epigrams and funerary orations.⁶¹ However, I think that the passage of

⁵⁹ On Xenocritus see M. G. Fileni, *Senocrito di Locri e Pindaro (fr. 140b Sn.-Maehl.)* (Rome 1987).

⁶⁰ Hdt. 6.58; Plut. *Lyc.* 21.1. Cf. Nafissi, *La Nascita* 277–290.

⁶¹ W. Jaeger, “Tyrtaeus on True *Arete*,” in *Five Essays* (Montreal 1966) 101–142, at 133–140; C. Fuqua, “Tyrtaeus and the Cult of Heroes,” *GRBS* 22 (1981) 215–226; N. Loraux, *The Invention of Athens. The Funeral Oration in the Classical City* (Cambridge [Mass.] 1986) 55, 99, 104. Even Simonides’ elegy for Plataea is much indebted to it, as E. Stehle has pointed out: “A Bard of the Iron Age and His Auxiliary Muse,” in *The New Simonides* 106–119, at 114–119.

Ps.-Plutarch suggests a closer relation between threnodic elegies and the *Gymnopaïdai*.

In fact, many sources attest that during the *Gymnopaïdai* there was a commemoration of the fallen at Thyrea: this battle was fought in 546 B.C. between Spartans and Argives for control of the Thyreatis, the border region between Argolid and Laconia. The war between the two cities over this land was long, lasting for several centuries, interrupted by only short periods of peace; it must be contextualized into the long-lasting enmity between Argos and Sparta from the eighth to the fifth century which became, in Vannicelli's words, "the main theme of Peloponnesian history in the archaic age."⁶² The first episode of this long war was the battle of Hysiae in 669, won by the Argives:⁶³ a view of Wade-Gery, much disputed, would set the foundation of the *Gymnopaïdai* in 668 in relation to the defeat, as an attempt to restore confidence in the ranks of the army.⁶⁴ The battle of Thyrea, won by the Spartans, put an end to the conflicts for quite a long time—the "battle of the Champions," recounted in detail by Herodotus, who seems to rely on local sources.⁶⁵ The Spartans occupied the Thyreatis until the

⁶² P. Vannicelli, *Erodoto e la storia dell'alto arcaismo (Sparta-Tessaglia-Cirene)* (Rome 1993) 67–85, esp. 78.

⁶³ Paus. 2.24.7. P.-J. Shaw, *Discrepancies in Olympiad Dating and Chronological Problems of Archaic Peloponnesian History* (Wiesbaden 2003) 158–182, proposes a new chronology for the battle, placing it at the beginning of the fifth century as antecedent to the battle of Sepeia.

⁶⁴ Wade-Gery, *CQ* 43 (1949) 79–81; cf. also G. L. Huxley, *Early Sparta* (London 1962) 54–55; P. Cartledge, *Sparta and Lakonia. A Regional History 1300 to 362 BC*² (London/New York 2002) 109. On methodological objections to the supposed synchrony of these events see Shaw, *Discrepancies* 176–182.

⁶⁵ Hdt. 1.82. As Brelich (*Guerre* 22–34, *Paides* 189–190) has pointed out, the conflict over the Thyreatis was not limited to single conflicts, but continued over the centuries, taking on a ritual character. Herodotus' account in fact presents some ritual aspects, such as the number of fighters (three hundred), the suicide of the survivor, and the haircut, that recur in other crucial battles (e.g. Thermopylae, Hdt. 7.208, 232). Cf. D. Asheri, in *A*

fourth century, when it was finally recovered by the Argives after the battle of Leuctra.

Sosibius, the Hellenistic collector of Spartan traditions, attests that the fallen at Thyrea were commemorated every year at the Gymnopaïdai by choruses of young men, called *Thyreatikoi*, who wore crowns made of palm leaves (F 5).⁶⁶

Thyreatikoi: the name which the Lacedaemonians give to certain crowns, as Sosibios says in his *On Sacrifices*. He states that they are now called crowns of feathers, although in fact they are made of palm-leaves. They are worn, according to him, in commemoration of the victory at Thyrea, by the leaders of the choruses which are staged during the festival which also involves the Gymnopaïdai. The choruses are as follows: in front, the chorus of *paides*, and on the left the chorus of *andres*. They dance naked and sing songs (*ᾠματα*) of Thaletas and Aleman, as well as païans of the Lakonian Dionysodotos. [transl. Ducat]

The passages from the lexica and *Anecd.Bekk.* (n.55 above) confirm that at the Gymnopaïdai naked boys sang either paeans or hymns for those who died at Thyrea. These passages have been much disputed because, from Bölte onwards, it has usually been assumed that the commemoration of the fallen at Thyrea was added to the program of the Gymnopaïdai only after the battle of Leuctra (371 B.C.), when the Thyreatis was re-conquered by the Argives, and until then the commemoration was held in the same place where the battle was fought, at Parparos, in a festival that included athletic and musical contests.⁶⁷ Unfortunately, the information concerning this festival and its connection with the battle of Thyrea is meagre: the Parparonia certainly existed in the fifth century and hosted

Commentary on Herodotus Books I–IV (Oxford 2007) 139.

⁶⁶ The crowns, originally made of feathers, were not exclusive to the Gymnopaïdai but were probably used in other Spartan festivals: cf. Wade-Gery, *CQ* 43 (1949) 79–81.

⁶⁷ F. Bölte, “Zu Lakonischen Festen,” *RhM* 78 (1929) 124–143, at 130–132; Pettersson, *Cults* 51; Sergent, *DHA* 19 (1993); Shaw, *Discrepancies* 178–180; Richer, *Ktēma* 30 (2005) 237–262.

athletic competitions, as the Damon inscription attests (*IG* V.1 213). They may have also involved poetic contests if the Hesychius entry refers to this epoch,⁶⁸ but the only claim of a connection between Parparos and the battle of Thyrea is in the late grammarian Choeroboscus.⁶⁹ It is very strange that neither Herodotus nor Pausanias who visited the battlefield record such a name.⁷⁰ Pliny, moreover, attests that Parparus was the name of a mountain in Argolid, and it is not easy to imagine how the battle could have taken place on a mountain; Pausanias rather describes it as a plain, dominated by the Mt. Parnon.⁷¹

I am more inclined to the view of those who treat more cautiously the scanty information about the Parparonia and consider the reconstruction advanced by Jacoby and Bölte as a fascinating but uncertain hypothesis. Robertson, for example, in his ample study dedicated to the Parparonia, argues that it was an Argive festival dedicated to Zeus, like many other Peloponnesian mountain festivals, above all that of Zeus Ithomatas.⁷² We cannot even exclude the possibility that both the Parparonia and the Gymnopaïdai commemorated the

⁶⁸ Hesych. s.v. Πάρπαρος· ἐν ᾧ ἀγὼν ἦγετο καὶ χοροὶ ἴσταντο.

⁶⁹ *Gramm.Gr.* IV.1 297: Πάρπαρος· τόπος ἐν ᾧ περὶ Θυρεῶν ἐμαχέσαντο Ἀργεῖοι καὶ Λακεδαιμόνιοι.

⁷⁰ Hdt. 1.82; Paus. 2.38.5–6. It is not even mentioned in the fictive epigrams of the *Palatine Anthology* which commemorate the fallen in the battle (7. 244, 229, 430–432, 720, 721).

⁷¹ Paus. 2.38.5: ἰόντι δὲ ἄνω πρὸς τὴν ἠπειρον <ἀπ' > αὐτῆς χωρίον ἐστίν, ἔνθα δὴ ἐμαχέσαντο ὑπὲρ τῆς γῆς ταύτης λογάδες Ἀργείων τριακόσιοι πρὸς ἄνδρας Λακεδαιμονίων ἀριθμὸν τε ἴσους καὶ ἐπιλέκτους ὁμοίως. Attempts have been made to identify Mt. Parparos with the Mt. Zavitsa or with a hill below mount Parnon, where an inscription containing the word ΠΑΡΠΑΟ has been found: W. Pritchett, *Studies in Ancient Greek Topography* III (Berkeley/Los Angeles 1980) 110–115; J. Christien and Th. Spyropoulos, “Eua et la Thyréatide. Topographie et histoire,” *BCH* 109 (1985) 455–466. But see the objections of Robertson, *Festivals* 179–207.

⁷² Robertson, *Festivals* 179–207; cf. also the doubts about the Parparonia expressed by Brelich, *Guerre* 22–34.

battle of Thyrea;⁷³ but certainly “for the Gymnopaïdai the tradition of ‘Thyreatic’ crowns and commemorative paeans is sound and uniform.”⁷⁴

Jacoby and Bölte interpreted the first lines of the fragment of Sosibius as a reference to the Parparonia, which took place at the same time (ὄτε καὶ) as the Gymnopaïdai.⁷⁵ But such an interpretation is contradicted by the last lines of the fragment, where a reference to the famous *trichoria* is usually recognized. As Ducat has now demonstrated, the whole fragment concerns the Gymnopaïdai (the expression ἐορτῇ ταύτῃ must apply to what follows, not what precedes) and there is no allusion to an earlier phase when the Parparonia and the Gymnopaïdai constituted two different festivals: the ambiguous sentence starting with ὄτε καὶ must be read simply: “in the festival where the Gymnopaïdai are also celebrated.”⁷⁶

However, the whole passage clearly is corrupt, for the expression of the last lines is elliptical: a chorus of *paides* and a left-side chorus of *andres* are mentioned, but the phrase presupposes mention of a right-side chorus, which may have been formed of old men.⁷⁷ The *trichoria* was a well-known Spartan custom, which attracted the attention of many ancient authors because it represented the harmonic coexistence of all the age classes in the city;⁷⁸ in fact, the division of the citizenry into age groups recalls the military character that we have envisaged at the Gymnopaïdai. It is well explained by a statement in Plutarch’s *Lycurgus*: during their festivals three choruses, of *paides*, *andres*,

⁷³ Wade-Gery, *CQ* 43 (1949) 79–81; Nafissi, *La nascita* 303–306.

⁷⁴ Robertson, *Festivals* 163.

⁷⁵ Bölte, *RhM* 78 (1929) 124–143; Jacoby ad *FGrHist* 595 F 5.

⁷⁶ Ducat, *Spartan Education* 269.

⁷⁷ Wyttenbach and Kaibel emended the passage to <γ>, ὁ μὲν πρόσω παίδων, ὁ δ’ ἐκ δεξιῶν γερόντων, ὁ δ’ ἐξ ἀριστο<ερ>οῦ ἀνδρῶν. The presence of old men in the festival is confirmed by another fragment of Sosibius (F 8).

⁷⁸ Poll. 4.107 considers Tyrtaeus the inventor of the *trichoria*.

and *gerontes*, sang a traditional song in alternating voices.⁷⁹ The context is not explicitly stated, but scholars agree that the festival that included the performance of the *trichoria* was the Gymnopaidiai, on the basis of Sosibius.⁸⁰ It is interesting that in the lines before the section on the *trichoria*, Plutarch discusses the funeral laments, saying that the Spartans attributed great importance to musical education, particularly to the songs that praised those who bravely died for Sparta (*Lyc.* 21.1). The digression about the *trichoria* is thus integrated into a passage that concerns laments over the dead: we can possibly conclude that this is due to the fact that the Gymnopaidiai commemorated the fallen at the battle of Thyrea.

As the passage of the pseudo-plutarchan treatise *On Music* attests, Polymnestus first and Sacadas later are connected with elegiac performances at the Gymnopaidiai. Since elegiac poetry performed by the early poets of the Peloponnesian school mainly had threnodic features, we can plausibly argue that it was related to the commemoration of the fallen in the war over the Thyreatis. Polymnestus may have been the first who introduced aulody or elegy in the programme of the festival and Sacadas renewed the same practice in the first half of the sixth century. We cannot exclude that this Argive poet was invited to Sparta to reform the musical programme of the Gymnopaidiai after the victory of the battle of Thyrea in 546. If this is the case, we must conclude that Sacadas competed at the Pythian contests in 586–578 as a young man, and some forty years later, as an old and acclaimed poet, he was invited to Sparta to renew the commemoration of the fallen at Thyrea with his innovative music.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Plut. *Lyc.* 21; cf. *Inst.Lac.* 238A–B, *Laud.ips.* 544E; schol. Plat. *Leg.* 633A.

⁸⁰ Bölte, *RhM* 78 (1929) 124–143; Pettersson, *Cults* 43; Robertson, *Festivals* 158–161; Richer, *Ktēma* 30 (2005) 237–262; Ducat, *Spartan Education* 268–271.

⁸¹ Cf. Podlecki, in *Actes* 181. Shaw, *Discrepancies* 177, rather believes that Sacadas' victory in the second Pythiad, when Cleisthenes of Sicyon also

Conclusions

The performance of threnodic elegy to commemorate the fallen at Thyrea constitutes the best antecedent for the performance of Simonides' elegy for the fallen at Plataea. A solid tradition of threnodic elegy was rooted in Sparta since early times and Simonides certainly drew on it when he composed his elegy: the echo of Tyrtaeus' fr.9 is just one of the many possible connections with this rich (and mostly unknown) musical tradition. Even though no sure inference can be drawn about the performance of Simonides' elegy and the cults in honour of the fallen at Plataea, the example of the *Gymnopaidiai* (and possibly of the more obscure *Parparonia*) confirms that public ceremonies either on the battlefield or at home are securely attested in Spartan society.⁸² No wonder that those who died at Plataea fighting against the Persians received the same honours of those fallen in the perpetual war with Sparta's most hated enemies.

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won the chariot race, must be set around 546: if this was the case, the coincidence with the battle of the Champions was even closer.

⁸² The parallelism between the celebrations of Thyrea and Plataea have been detected by Nafissi, *La nascita* 301–305; D. Boedeker, "Paths to Heroization at Plataea," in *The New Simonides* 148–163, at 151.