

## 480 BCE as Marker in Greek Literary History

André Lardinois

andre.lardinois@ru.nl

1) The traditional overview of Greek literary history:

1. Archaic Literature 800-480 (or 500) BCE
  - a) Epic
  - b) Lyric
2. Classical Literature 480-330 (or 300) BCE
  - a) Drama
  - b) Philosophy
  - c) Historiography
  - d) Rhetoric
3. Hellenistic Literature 330-30 (or 50) BCE
4. Greek Literature from the Roman period 30 BCE-476 (or 450) CE

2) Saïd, Trédé & Le Boulluec (1997) 109

“L’âge classique et l’éclat d’Athènes: des guerres médiques à Chéronée” (“The classical age and the glory of Athens: from the Persian wars till Chaeronea.”)

3) Lesky (1971) 279

“Die hohe Zeit der attischen Klassik ist von zwei Kriegen umschlossen. Der Peloponnesische brachte nicht allein das Ende von Athens Machtstellung, er führte ebenso den Verfall der inneren Kräfte herbei, die das Zeitalter der Perikles trugen. Entbunden aber hatte dies nach seiner Zeit langsamen Reifens der gerechte Kampf, den das griechische Volk um seine politische und geistige Existenz zu führen hatte.“ (The height of the Athenian Classics is bounded by two wars. The Peloponnesian War did not only bring to an end the political power of Athens, but also led to the decline of the inner strength that had marked the age of Pericles. The just war that the Greeks had to fight for their political and spiritual survival [= Persian wars], had unleashed this [inner strength] after a period of slow maturation.)

4) Snell (1953) 252

“The discovery of *humanitas* among the Greeks was not the work of philosophy. In fact, the gracious urbanity of the new concept forms a definite contrast to the cold severity of conceptual thought. It springs from the ideals of the Attic society of the last part of the fifth and the fourth centuries before our era.”

5) Aristophanes, *Frogs* 52-54 (the god Dionysos is speaking)

καὶ δῆτ' ἐπὶ τῆς νεῶς ἀναγιγνώσκοντί μοι  
τὴν Ἀνδρομέδαν πρὸς ἑμαυτὸν ἐξαίφνης πόθος  
τὴν καρδίαν ἐπάταξε πῶς οἶει σφόδρα.

And then, as I was on deck reading to myself  
the *Andromeda* a sudden longing  
seized my heart, you don't know how hard.

6) An alternative periodization of ancient Greek literature

800-400 BCE: First Period of ancient Greek literature

400 BCE – 0: Second Period of ancient Greek literature

0-400 CE: Third Period of ancient Greek literature

### Select Bibliography

- Brock, R and S. Hodkinson, eds. 2002. *Alternatives to Athens: Varieties of Political Organization and Community in Ancient Greece*. Oxford.
- Easterling, P.E. and E.J. Kenney, eds. 1985. *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature, Volume 1: Greek Literature*. Cambridge.
- Ford, A. 2003. From Letters to Literature: Reading the “Song Culture” of Classical Greece. In *Written Texts and the Rise of Literate Culture in Ancient Greece*, ed. H. Yunis, 15-37. Cambridge.
- Henderson, J., ed. and transl. 2002. *Aristophanes: Frogs, Assemblywomen, Wealth*. Loeb Classical Library Nr. 180. Cambridge, MA.
- Koning, H. 2010. *Hesiod: The Other Poet. Ancient Reception of a Cultural Icon*. Leiden
- Lardinois, A, forthcoming. Sappho's Silent Children: When and why were Sappho's songs first being read? Paper read at the 6<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the Network for Study of Archaic and Classical Greek Song. Online. July 2, 2021.
- Lesky, A. 1971. *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur*. Third revised edition. Bern & Munich.
- Rutherford, R. 2005. *Classical Literature: A Concise History*. Oxford.
- Saïd, S., M. Trédé and A. Le Boulluec, *Histoire de la littérature grecque*. Paris 1997.
- Snell, B. 1953. *The Discovery of the Mind: the Greek Origins of European Thought*. New York. Translated from the German.
- Wecowski, M. 2018. When Did the Symposion Die? On the Decline of the Greek Aristocratic Banquet, in *Feasting and Polis Institutions*, eds. F. van den Eijnde, J.H. Blok and R. Strootman, 257-72. Leiden.
- Zerubavel, E. 2003. *Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past*. Chicago.