

# Hyperbaton in the Greek Literary Sentence

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**M**Y AIM IN THIS STUDY is to draw attention to the rhetorical use of hyperbaton, i.e., a wider than necessary separation of two or more syntactically closely connected words or groups of words, for signaling or reinforcing the end of syntactical and semantic units in the Greek (and, by analogy, Latin) literary sentence. I argue that, since one of the most salient functions of hyperbaton in Greek literary language is to signal or reinforce the end of a colon<sup>1</sup> or sentence,<sup>2</sup> the figure belongs to the set of those rhetorical devices that should

<sup>1</sup> I use the term “colon” to designate a syntactically, semantically, and rhythmically more or less complete segment of the sentence, i.e., the written equivalent of the intonational unit in spoken language (for W. Chafe’s term “intonational unit” see E. J. Bakker, *Poetry in Speech: Orality and Homeric Discourse* [Ithaca 1997] 47 ff.). My notion of colon has been formed by E. Fraenkel’s fundamental studies of the colon in Greek and Latin literature (“Kolon und Satz: Beobachtungen zur Gliederung des antiken Satzes, I,” *NachrGötting* [1932] 197–213 [= *Kleine Beiträge* I 73–92]; “Kolon und Satz: Beobachtungen zur Gliederung des Antiken Satzes, II,” *NachrGötting* [1933] 319–354 [= *Kleine Beitr.* I 93–130]; *Noch einmal Kolon und Satz* [Munich 1965]); the results of Fraenkel’s pioneering work have been amply confirmed, e.g., by studies in the development of ancient punctuation (R. W. Müller, *Rhetorische und syntaktische Interpunktion: Untersuchungen zur Pausenbezeichnung im antiken Latein* [Tübingen 1964] 124–127), and by application of pragmatic analysis of language use on Ancient Greek (H. J. M. Dik, *Word Order in Ancient Greek: A Pragmatic Account of Word Order Variation in Herodotus* [Amsterdam 1995] 36 n.67).

<sup>2</sup> By sentence I mean the syntactically and semantically complete unit the end of which would in modern languages be marked by a period.

be considered the ancestors of the later developed system of punctuation.

The words “wider than necessary separation” in my definition of hyperbaton perhaps deserve further explanation, especially since, as my examples will show, the definition includes not only the separation of a noun and its attribute, but also the separation of such phrases as a verb and its direct or indirect object, a verb and its adverb (including tmesis), a verb and a complementary infinitive, or the elements of a prepositional phrase.<sup>3</sup> First, “necessary” indicates that I do not include separation caused by the standard rules of Greek grammar, such as the placement of postpositive particles after one or more words at the beginning of an utterance, or placement of attributive genitive between the article and the noun. Second, “wider” indicates that I do not count as a case of hyperbaton an instance in which, for example, a verb and its object are separated only by the subject. On the other hand, “wider” does not always refer to actual distance, since the separation of an adjective and a noun by a verb is one of the most common cases of hyperbaton.<sup>4</sup> In general, only when a part of speech is arguably placed farther away from its governing word (or vice versa) than it should be, I label the case as an instance of hyperbaton. The narrower notion of hyperbaton as separation of the substantive from its attribute, dominant in recent literature,<sup>5</sup> threatens to obscure the underlying principles of the phenomenon I wish to explore.

The use of hyperbaton for signaling or reinforcing the end of

<sup>3</sup> Also: genitive and the verb it depends on; subject and predicate; parts of a genitive absolute; interrogative pronoun and a noun; demonstrative pronoun and a noun; accusative and infinitive; comparative and genitive of comparison. Cf. L. Lindhamer, *Zur Wortstellung im Griechischen: Eine Untersuchung über die Spaltung syntaktisch eng zusammengehöriger Glieder durch das Verbum* (Leipzig 1908) 9–45 (who limits *Spaltung* to the cases in which the phrase is divided by a verb); also J. Schnayder, “Hyperbaton Xenophontis exemplo illustratur,” *Eos* 56 (1966) 57–58 (whose list of phrases is wider).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Lindhamer, *Wortstellung* 9–45 (prose); J. A. de Foucault, “L’hyperbaton du verbe,” *RevPhil* 38 (1964) 59–69 (poetry).

<sup>5</sup> E.g., A. M. Devine and L. D. Stephens, *Discontinuous Syntax: Hyperbaton in Greek* (New York 2000).

syntactical and semantic units belongs to the features of oral tradition. Working in this tradition, or under its strong influence, Classical Greek authors had at their disposal a number of devices to reinforce the intonational segmentation of speech in a way that enabled the listening audience to follow it easily, clearly distinguishing its constituent parts. Some of these devices were purely lexical—for example, postpositive particles in both Greek and Latin clearly mark the beginning of an utterance.<sup>6</sup> Other devices exploit the rhythmical, morphological, and semantic properties of the words. In poetry, it was the metrical structure of the verse that would provide the author with the means to clearly articulate his speech, and the audience with a set of expectations that could direct and facilitate their reception. But various other devices could be used for additional reinforcement of metrical structure.<sup>7</sup> Among them, certain figures of speech have a prominent place. For example, consider the instances of repetition, chiasmus, and *parisa* in the following verses from the *Iliad*:<sup>8</sup>

- [1] ἄλλ' ὄδ' ἄνῆρ ἐθέλει περὶ πάντων ἔμμεναι ἄλλων,  
 πάντων μὲν κρατέειν ἐθέλει, πάντεσσι δ' ἀνάσσειν,  
 πᾶσι δὲ σημαίνειν ...  
 But this man wishes to be above all other men,  
 he wishes to dominate all, and rule over them all,  
 and command over them all ... (1.287–289)

In prose, on the other hand, the meter is replaced by a less prominent rhythm. Thus for example Aristotle considers the paeon ending with a long syllable to be a convenient signal for the end of a period (*Rh.* 3.8 1409a). Since in prose rhythm cannot support the entire structure of discourse, the figures of speech become even more important for its organization. In

<sup>6</sup> The Alexandrian grammarian Nicanor, in the time of Hadrian, used the lexical indicators as the basis of his elaborate system of punctuation (see L. Friedländer, *Nicanoris περὶ Ἰλιακῆς στιγμῆς reliquiae emendatiores* [Berlin 1857] 2–5; D. L. Blank, “Remarks on Nicanor, the Stoics and the Ancient Theory of Punctuation,” *Glotta* 61 [1983] 48–67).

<sup>7</sup> For a useful discussion of such devices in Pindar see G. Maurach, “Pindarische Gliederungszeichen,” *Eos* 76 (1988) 217–235.

<sup>8</sup> Quotations from Homer are from the Teubner text of M. L. West, *Homeri Ilias* (Stuttgart 1998).

the absence of metrical pattern, the dominant σχήματα λέξεως<sup>9</sup> of early Greek literary prose, such as antithesis, isocolon, and chiasmus, are used to structure the speech.<sup>10</sup> The following example from the *Corpus Hippocraticum* provides illustration for such use of antithesis, isocolon, and homoioteleuton:<sup>11</sup>

- [2] ἀλλ' οἷσι [δὲ] ὑπὸ ψύχεος φανερώς αὐτοῦ μόνου γίνεται, μηδενὸς ἄλλου συμπαραγενομένου, πᾶσιν αὕτη ἡ ἀπαλλαγὴ, ἐκ μὲν τῆς ψύξιος διαθερμανθῆναι, ἐκ δὲ τοῦ καύματος διαψυχθῆναι, ...  
But those who are manifestly affected by cold alone, accompanied by nothing else, they all suffer the same change, warming up from the cold, cooling down from the heat, ...  
(*VM* 18.3)

The great number of the σχήματα λέξεως which reinforce syntactical structure of speech reflects grammatical flexibility of the word order in Greek (and Latin). This flexibility was exploited particularly for demarcation or reinforcement of the colon or sentence ending. Postponement of the verb to the last place in the period, a feature prominent in Demosthenes, and one of the main characteristics of the periodic style in Golden Latin prose, is one well-known instance of such a manipulation of the word order. The effect of the postponement of the verb in the periodic style is that the main verb, being extracted to the final position in the period, emphatically completes its sense and rounds it off. Demarcation of the end of the whole utterance is thus achieved by a deliberate extrapolation of the

<sup>9</sup> I.e., the figures of linguistic formulation.

<sup>10</sup> S. R. Slings ("Figures of Speech and their Lookalikes: Two Further Exercises in the Pragmatics of the Greek Sentence," in E. J. Bakker [ed.], *Grammar as Interpretation: Greek Literature in its Linguistic Context* [Leiden/New York 1997] 171–192) shows how the figures such as anaphora, antithesis, and chiasmus are used as organizational strategies within the clause or sentence in non-literary language. For example, analyzed according to the principles of functional grammar, many cases of anaphora show that, instead of being a literary "ornament," the figure is used to divide transmitted information into chunks, and thus functions as a "chunking device." In claiming these figures as property of grammar rather than style, Slings revives the ancient feud between the grammarians and rhetoricians over the domain of figures and tropes.

<sup>11</sup> I quote from the Budé text of J. Jouanna, *Hippocrate* II.1 *De l'ancienne médecine* (Paris 1990).

verb to the end of the utterance. This feature is usually combined with a rhythmic *clausula*, so that the two effects, semantic completion and rhythmical signal, reinforce each other.

The effect of completion and rounding off the sense of a syntactical unit may also be achieved by hyperbaton. The figure consists of at least two separated elements of the same phrase, and it is the second or the last element of the phrase, the one that comes after the intervening part(s), that closes the sense of the syntactical unit and thus indicates its end. For example:

- [3] ἐπιπλέοντες γὰρ τὰς νήσους κατεστρέφοντο, καὶ μάλιστα ὅσοι μὴ **διαρκῆ** εἶχον **χώραν**. κατὰ γῆν δὲ ...  
 For attacking with ships they subdued the islands, especially those men who did not possess sufficient land. By land ...  
 (Thuc. 1.15.1)<sup>12</sup>

The second element of the phrase separated by the verb εἶχον, namely the noun *χώραν*, completes the sense of the phrase and rounds off the syntactical and semantic unit, as the continuation of the text, *κατὰ γῆν δέ*, confirms.

This function of hyperbaton in the Greek literary sentence has so far been mainly overlooked by scholars.<sup>13</sup> As for poetry, it is obvious that hyperbaton is one of the inevitable consequences of the metrical structure superimposed on speech, and *prima facie* the figure did not seem to call for further inquiry, apart from the study of the connection between the poetic word order and its metrical convenience. An analogous trend was developed in the study of prose: Roman rhetorical textbooks connect hyperbaton with the motive of seeking for a

<sup>12</sup> Quotations from Thucydides are from the OCT of H. S. Jones and J. E. Powell, *Thucydides historiae* (Oxford 1963).

<sup>13</sup> With very few exceptions. J. de Vries (*Untersuchungen über die Sperrung von Substantiv und Attribut in der Sprache der attischen Redner* [diss. Göttingen 1938] 4–11, 35–74) divides the cases of separation in Attic orators into two groups, the first comprising the separations that occur at the end of the sentence; in connection with this group, de Vries discusses the cohesive role of separation in the structure of the sentence of Attic orations. P. Hummel (*La syntaxe de Pindare* [Louvain/Paris 1993] 443–444) makes a general observation that separation in Pindar underlines syntactic cohesion and outlines the contours of syntactical units.

*clausula*, i.e., rhythmic ending of colon or period,<sup>14</sup> and this connection has inevitably directed scholarly attention from the semantic aspect of separation to the rhythmic effect sought in the second element of hyperbaton, channeling research into the task of cataloguing the most prominent metrical patterns that serve as *clausulae*.<sup>15</sup>

The most important reason, however, for overlooking this function of hyperbaton was the dominant understanding of the semantic effect of the figure in terms of emphasis<sup>16</sup> and focus.<sup>17</sup> The explanation of the mechanism of separation in Latin prose which J. Marouzeau offered in 1922 may be used to illustrate this approach. In separation, writes Marouzeau, the arrangement of words is such that the reader or listener has to preserve in mind the attribute until the moment when the noun will occur; it is this suspension, this prolongation in the consciousness of the listener, that puts an emphasis on the attribute.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, in the most recent work on hyperbaton in Greek, Devine and Stephens interpret hyperbaton exclusively in connection with the focus in the sentence.<sup>19</sup> It is beyond any doubt that

<sup>14</sup> E.g., *Rhet. Her.* 4.44; *Quint. Inst.* 8.6.64. Cf. E. Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa* (Leipzig/Berlin 1909) 65–69; de Foucault, *RevPhil* 38 (1964) 68.

<sup>15</sup> E.g., Norden, *Kunstprosa* 909–960.

<sup>16</sup> Concluding his chapter on hyperbaton with discussion of Lindhamer's list of five motives for its use in Greek, J. D. Denniston (*Greek Prose Style* [Oxford 1952] 58–59) is doubtful regarding the fourth motive, namely seeking for *clausulae*, on account of the uncertainty of their rhythmic laws in Greek. Regarding emphasis, he writes: "The fifth motive [sc. emphasis] seems to be far more important than the rest."

<sup>17</sup> In pragmatic language analysis, a clause is explained as a chunk of new information connected to the already-given information; the connecting element, the thing "about" which a predication is given, is called topic; focus is the most important new information in reference to the given topic (see Dik, *Word Order* 23–30).

<sup>18</sup> J. Marouzeau, *L'ordre des mots dans la phrase latine* (Paris 1922) 219. Cf. de Foucault, *RevPhil* 38 (1964) 68.

<sup>19</sup> E.g., they conclude that the main type of hyperbaton in Greek, namely a discontinuous phrase in which the noun is preceded by its modifier, is in prose consistently associated with strong focus; in verse they allow that the hyperbaton encodes not only strong focus, but also weak focus (Devine and Stephens, *Discontinuous Syntax* 107). For a similar conclusion about hyper-

this approach yields valuable interpretative results; what I wish to suggest here is that it does not exhaust all the aspects of the use of this figure in Greek (and Latin) literature.<sup>20</sup>

Thus I argue that the suspension described by Marouzeau is one of the most effective ways of signaling or reinforcing the end of a syntactical and semantic unit, and the pause it entails. But it is not only the expectation created by an attribute and fulfilled by the eventual occurrence of the noun that effectively rounds off a clause; in the cases where an appositive attribute follows the noun, the link that our mind creates after being directed back towards the preceding separated noun rounds off the clause in an equally efficient way. For example:

- [4] τοῦ δ' ἐπιγνομένου χειμῶνος ἀρχομένου εὐθὺς οἱ Λακεδαιμόνιοι, ἐπειδὴ τὰ Κάρνεια ἤγαγον, ἐξεστράτευσαν, καὶ ἀφικόμενοι ἐς Τεγέαν **λόγους** προύπεμπον ἐς τὸ Ἄργος **ξυμβατηρίους**. ἦσαν δὲ αὐτοῖς ...

After the beginning of the following winter the Lacedaemonians, after they celebrated the Carnean festival, immediately marched out, and upon arriving at Tegea they sent to Argos proposals for agreement. They had ... (Thuc. 5.76.1)

In the second part of the sentence, the adjective ξυμβατηρίους is separated from the noun it modifies, namely λόγους (the focus, i.e., predication about the topic, οἱ Λακεδαιμόνιοι). Here it is not the fulfillment of expectation that rounds off the unit, since λόγους does not create any immediate expectation in the mind of the reader; the sentence is rather rounded off by the fact that ξυμβατηρίους adds new information to λόγους, creating a connection that spans the last section of the sentence.<sup>21</sup>

By now I have described two main types of separation, the one in which the second element closes the sense of the phrase

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baton in Greek see H. J. M. Dik, "Interpreting Adjective Position in Herodotus," in Bakker, *Grammar* 55–76, at 75–76; in Latin, see J. R. de Jong, "Hyperbaton en informatiestructuur," *Lampas* 19 (1986) 323–330.

<sup>20</sup> The third prominent way of interpretation, which I do not discuss here as it is not relevant for my argument, stems from Ps.-Longinus, according to whom hyperbaton conveys emotional excitement: *Subl.* 22. Cf. de Vries' "Ausdrucksintensität" (*Untersuchungen* 77 ff.).

<sup>21</sup> Also, note that the structure of the sentence conforms to O. Behaghel's law of increasing cola ("Beziehungen zwischen Umfang und Reihenfolge von Satzgliedern," *IndogermForsch* 25 [1909] 110–142).

by fulfilling expectation, and the other in which the second element closes the sense of the phrase by adding a circumstance.<sup>22</sup> In the remainder of this study I seek to provide some typical examples of the use of hyperbaton for demarcation of the end of colon or sentence in Greek verse and literary prose. My examples come from Homeric poetry, elegy, and fifth-century poetry and prose.

*Hexameter: Homer*

Let us consider the opening lines of the *Iliad*:

- [5] **Μῆνιν** ἄειδε, θεά, **Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος**,  
 οὐλομένην, ἣ **μυρί'** **Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε'** ἔθηκεν,  
**πολλὰς δ'** **ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς** Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν  
**ἠρώων**, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἐλώρια τεύχε κύνεσσιν  
 οἰωνοῖσί τε πάσι, **Διὸς δ'** ἐτελείετο **βουλή**,  
 ἐξ οὗ δὴ τὰ πρῶτα διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε  
 Ἄτρεΐδης τε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς.  
 The wrath sing, goddess, of the son of Peleus, Achilleus, the  
 deadly wrath, which put on the Achaeans infinite griefs, and  
 hurled many mighty souls of heroes to Hades, and gave their  
 bodies as prey to the dogs and all the birds, and the will of  
 Zeus was accomplished, since the moment when first the son  
 of Atreus, lord of the people, and divine Achilleus stood  
 apart in quarrel. (*Il.* 1.1–7)

The first line is framed by the opening noun and its attributes,<sup>23</sup> and the editor (M. L. West) adds a comma after the attributes, at the end of the verse. In line 2, οὐλομένην is in apposition to μῆνιν. Once again, the punctuation of the editor indicates that the participle is followed by a pause. The same sort of separation occurs in lines 3 and 4, where ἠρώων, fol-

<sup>22</sup> The two modes remind one of the distinctive features of Aristotle's λέξεις κατεστραμμένη and λέξεις εἰρομένη (*Rh.* 1409a ff.). Cf. Bakker, *Poetry* 36–39.

<sup>23</sup> Fraenkel (*Noch einmal*) demonstrates that in both Greek and Latin the insertion of a vocative occurs strictly at the boundary between the cola or semi-cola. Pragmatic analysis of language use confirms and clarifies his findings. According to this analysis, μῆνιν ἄειδε is a self-contained clause consisting of the topic (μῆνιν) and the focus (ἄειδε), while Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος is a tail (“tail” provides additional information about the clause). Cf. S. R. Slings, “Information Unit and Metrical Unit,” in A. Bagordo and B. Zimmermann (eds.), *Bakchylides* (Munich 2000) 113–130, at 114–115.

lowed by a pause, modifies *πολλὰς ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς* from the preceding line.

In line 5, after the attribute *Διὸς* the sense is not complete until we reach the noun *βουλή*, which rounds off the clause framed by the two separated elements. For this type I shall use the term “framing hyperbaton.”

In line 2, *μυρία* and *ἄλγεα* are followed by the verb *ἔθηκεν*, which completes the sense and ends the clause. The reason why in this case the separated adjective and noun do not round off a clause is the fact that they cause another separation, i.e., that they are interlaced with another separated phrase, namely the verb *ἔθηκεν* and its indirect object, *Ἀχαιοῖς*. The conclusive effect of the second hyperbaton is strengthened by interlacing with the preceding one. I shall call this type “interlaced hyperbaton.”

The most frequent type of hyperbaton in Homer occurs at the end of the verse, so that the end of a syntactical unit coincides with the end of the metrical unit, as in the following example:

- [6] *ἀλλ' ὄδ' ἀνὴρ ἐθέλει περὶ πάντων ἔμμεναι ἄλλων,*  
But this man wishes to be above all other men (*Il.* 1.287)

Since in most such cases the phrase is separated by a verb occupying the dactyl in the penultimate foot, it is clear that in Homeric poetry this pattern of separation should be interpreted in connection with the fixed metrical position in which the verb occurs.<sup>24</sup> This type I shall call “closing hyperbaton.”

When the end of a colon does not coincide with the end of the verse, it coincides with some other metrical boundary, e.g., bucolic diairesis:

- [7] *οὐ μὲν σοί ποτε ἴσον ἔχω γέρας, ὅππότε Ἀχαιοί*  
I never have a prize equal to yours ... (*Il.* 1.163)

or penthemimeral caesura:

- [8] *τιμὴν πέρ μοι ὄφελλεν Ὀλύμπιος ἐγγυαλίξαι*  
*Ζεὺς ὑπιβρεμέτης · ...*

<sup>24</sup> See C. W. Conrad, *From Epic to Lyric: A Study in the History of Traditional Word-Order in Greek and Latin Poetry* (New York 1990) 63. For the type of hyperbaton in other genres see de Foucault, *RevPhil* 38 (1964) 59–69.

Olympian Zeus who thunders on high should at least grant me honor; ... (*Il.* 1.353–354)

Another kind of separation, tmesis, also regularly signals the end of a syntactical unit which coincides with the end of the verse:

- [9] ἀλλὰ κακῶς ἀφίει, **κρατερὸν δ' ἐπὶ μῦθον ἔτελλεν**.  
But he sent him away harshly, and charged him with a strong command: (*Il.* 1.379)

In this example, we see again two separated interlaced phrases: the phrase *κρατερὸν μῦθον* is separated by *ἐπὶ*, the first part of the following separated phrase the second part of which, *ἔτελλεν*, will actually round off the colon. Even if tmesis is apparently not felt in Homer as strongly as in later Greek poetry and prose, the syntactic link between the adverb and verb is strong enough to allow the main point of the present analysis.

In example [5], the apposition *οὐλομένην* did not coincide with the end of the line. According to traditional syntactical analysis, this is an apposition with a force of added predicate: “and it was a death-dealing wrath”;<sup>25</sup> according to pragmatic language analysis, the participle is a tail,<sup>26</sup> and thus a self-contained informational unit.<sup>27</sup>

In the cases in which the second element of hyperbaton marks the end of a verse, but does not seem to mark the end of a syntactical unit, one can always rely on Fraenkel’s classification of the phrases that are occasionally expanded into cola. For example:

- [10] οὐ γὰρ ἐγὼ **Τρώων ἔνεκ'** ἦλυθον **αἰχμητάων**  
δεῦρο μαχησόμενος ...  
For I did not come in order to fight here because of the Trojan spearmen ... (*Il.* 1.152–153)

In this case, the circumstantial participial phrase *δεῦρο μαχη-*

<sup>25</sup> Conrad, *From Epic* 68.

<sup>26</sup> See Slings, in Bagordo and Zimmermann, *Bakchylides* 115. Cf. the appositional role of Ἀχιλλεύς in ὁ δὲ οἱ σχεδὸν ἦλθεν Ἀχιλλεύς (*Il.* 22.131), adduced by Bakker, *Poetry* 92.

<sup>27</sup> Informational units basically correspond to intonational units in oral communication. See Slings, in Bagordo and Zimmermann, *Bakchylides* 114.

σόμενος is treated as an individual colon;<sup>28</sup> in the way of an apposition, the phrase brings one's mind back to the verb ἤλυθον, and thus entails a pause.<sup>29</sup>

A wide span of hyperbaton in Homer is rare, but possible:

- [11] οὐ τις ἐμέο ζῶντος καὶ ἐπὶ χθονὶ δερκομένοιῳ  
 σοὶ κοίλης παρὰ νηυσὶ βαρείας χεῖρας ἐποίσει  
**σὺμπάντων Δαναῶν.**  
 No one among all the Danaans will, while I am alive and  
 look upon the earth, put his heavy hands upon you by the  
 hollow ships, (*Il.* 1.88–90)

According to my statistical analysis, in 611 verses of Book One of the *Iliad*, hyperbaton occurs 83 times (including 11 cases of tmesis), i.e., once in 7.4 lines. The second element in it always marks the end of a syntactical and semantic unit, except if it is the first hyperbaton in an interlaced group (7 cases). The most frequent type is closing hyperbaton (55 instances), much less frequent framing hyperbaton (14), and the least frequent interlaced hyperbaton (7).<sup>30</sup>

*Elegy:* Theognidea

As in Homer, the most frequent type of hyperbaton in the *Theognidea* is the closing hyperbaton, the second element of which occurs at the end of the verse (either hexameter or pentameter), as for example

- [12] τοῦτ' ἔπος ἀθανάτων ἦλθε διὰ στομάτων.  
 this verse came through your immortal lips. (18)<sup>31</sup>

Hyperbaton may also mark the end of a colon shorter than the whole verse, and then its second element most often coincides with caesura, for example:

- [13] ἢ με φίλει καθαρὸν θέμενος νόον, ἢ μ' ἀποειπὼν  
 either love me with an honest mind, or ... (89)

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Fraenkel 1932 and 1933, *passim*. Bakker (*Poetry* 146–155) demonstrates a high degree of coincidence of informational units with metrical units in Homeric poetry.

<sup>29</sup> For a detailed discussion of the patterns of separation of substantive and attribute regarding the metrical structure of the verse in Homer see Conrad, *From Epic* 45–71.

<sup>30</sup> The category of interlaced includes two or in rare cases three hyperbata, all of which are reckoned in the totals given here and below.

<sup>31</sup> Text: M. L. West, *Iambi et elegi Graeci* I<sup>2</sup> (Oxford 1989).

Hyperbaton may also span a greater length within a couplet, for example:

- [14] οὐδείς πω ξεῖνον Πολυπαΐδη ἐξαπατήσας  
οὐδ' ἰκέτην θνητῶν ἀθανάτους ἔλαθεν.  
No mortal man, Polyraïdes, upon deceiving a guest-friend or  
a suppliant, has ever escaped the notice of the immortals.  
(143–144)

In the previous example hyperbaton frames a colon. Hyperbaton that frames a verse is less frequent:

- [15] ἄφθιτον ἀνθρώποις αἰὲν ἔχων ὄνομα  
having a name that will never perish among mankind (246)

Interlacing may be complex:

- [16] εἴ μ' ἐθέλεις πλύνειν, κεφαλῆς ἀμίαντον ἀπ' ἄκρης  
αἰεὶ λευκὸν ὕδωρ ρεύσεται ἡμετέρης,  
If you want to wash me, from the top of my head unpolluted  
clean water will always flow, (447–448)

Interlaced elements may occupy a whole line:

- [17] ἄλλα σε πέμψει  
ἀγλαὰ Μουσάων δῶρα ἰοστεφάνων·  
but you will be accompanied with the splendid gifts of the  
violet-crowned Muses; (249–250)

In the *Theognidea*, tmesis is avoided. The sample of the same length as Book One of the *Iliad* contains no instance of this sort of separation.

A noteworthy phenomenon in elegy is the concentric grouping of hyperbata, as in

- [18] κέρδεα δημοσίωι σὺν κακῶι ἐρχόμενα.  
gains that come with public disaster. (50)

As in the case of interlacing, we may observe that the inner hyperbaton reinforces the outer one.

In elegy, vocative is used quite often to separate two syntactically close elements, e.g., Πολυπαΐδη in line 143 [14].

In the first 610 lines of *Theognidea*, hyperbaton occurs 146 times, i.e., once in 4.2 lines. Most prominent is the closing hyperbaton (76 instances), while the percentages of framing and interlaced hyperbata are approximately the same (22 and 24 instances respectively).

#### *Lyric meters: Pindar*

Pindar's use of hyperbaton displays the same patterns we have seen in Homer and in elegy. Hyperbaton rounds off the

syntactical units the end of which regularly coincides with the end of a metrical unit, such as verse:

- [19] ἄριστον μὲν ὕδωρ, ὃ δὲ χρυσὸς αἰθόμενον πῦρ  
 ἄτε διαπρέπει νυκτὶ **μεγάνορος** ἔξοχα **πλούτου**·  
 Best is water, and gold like blazing fire shines in the night far  
 above man-exalting wealth; (*Ol.* 1.1–2)<sup>32</sup>

Or caesura:<sup>33</sup>

- [20] σὺν ἄρματι θοῶ κλείξειν ἐπικούρον εὐρῶν ὁδὸν λόγων  
 παρ' **εὐδείελον** ἔλθων **Κρόνιον**. ἐμοὶ μὲν ...  
 With the swift chariot, having found as help in celebration in  
 song a path of words, having reached the far-seen hill of  
 Cronos. I ... (*Ol.* 1.110–111)

When a separated phrase does not mark the end of a clause, it is interlaced with another separated phrase, e.g.,

- [21] Ἐν ἀνδρῶν, ἐν θεῶν γένος· ἐκ **μιᾶς** δὲ **πνέομεν**  
**ματρὸς ἀμφοτέροι**·<sup>34</sup>  
 One is the race of man, one the race of gods; but we both  
 breath from one mother; (*Nem.* 6.1–2)

Or:

- [22] Χάρις δ', ἅπερ **ἅπαντα τεύχει τὰ μείλιχα θνατοῖς**<sup>35</sup>  
 and Grace, who brings to mortals all that is soothing (*Ol.*  
 1.30)

As in elegy, interlacing in Pindar is often more complex than in Homer:

- [23] Δεῦτ' ἐν χορόν, **Ὀλύμπιοι**,  
**ἐπὶ τε κλυτὰν πέμπετε χάριν, θεοί**,  
 Come join the band of dancers, Olympian gods, and bestow  
 on them your well-known goodwill, (*Dith.* fr.75)<sup>36</sup>

Finally, wider separation is also more frequent than in Homer:

<sup>32</sup> Text: H. Maehler and B. Snell, *Pindari carmina cum fragmentis I Epinicia*<sup>8</sup> (Leipzig 1987).

<sup>33</sup> I.e., a regular word-end in the middle of a line.

<sup>34</sup> For the subject and predicate closing a syntactical unit compare verses 11–12 and 26 of *Iliad* 1.

<sup>35</sup> Conveniently combined with hexameter ending. For the indirect object and verb closing a syntactical unit compare verses 2, 260–261, 348, and 545 of *Iliad* 1.

<sup>36</sup> Text: H. Maehler, *Pindari carmina cum fragmentis II* (Leipzig 1989).

- [24] ... υἷὸν εἶπητις ὅτι οἱ **νέα**  
κόλποις παρ' εὐδόξοις Πίσαζ  
ἔστεφάνωσε κυδίμων ἀέθλων πτεροῖσι **χαίταν**.  
Say that in the famous valley of Pisa his son has crowned his  
youthful locks with the wings of glorious prizes. (*Ol.* 14.22–  
24)<sup>37</sup>

In 116 lines of Pindar's *Olympian* 1, hyperbaton occurs 42 times, i.e., once in 2.8 lines. The distribution of the three main types of hyperbaton closely corresponds to the ratio we saw in Homer: I count 24 cases of closing, 8 of framing, and 5 of interlaced hyperbaton.<sup>38</sup>

*Iambic trimeter: Sophocles*

In respect of the use of hyperbaton to mark the end of a syntactical and semantic unit, the iambic trimeters of the tragedians both follow the Homeric tradition and continue the tendencies of lyric meters. Let us examine some examples from Sophocles' *Antigone*.<sup>39</sup>

First, the tragedians show a strong awareness of the line as a compositional unit, and thus hyperbaton frames a whole line more frequently than in Homer,<sup>40</sup> e.g.,

- [25] **ποίαν** παρεξελοῦσα δαιμόνων **δίκην**;  
What divine law have I transgressed? (921)

Hyperbaton may have a wide span, and, for example, frame a sentence occupying two lines:

- [26] **τί** δ', ὦ ταλαίφρον, εἰ τόδ' ἐν τούτοις, ἐγὼ  
λύουσ' ἄν εἴθ' ἄπτουσα προσθείμην **πλέον**;

<sup>37</sup> For most prominent *Satzfiguren* in Pindar see A.-I. Sulzer, *Klytaisi Daidalosemen Hymnon Pylchais* (Bern 1970).

<sup>38</sup> We may briefly compare these results to those of W. Breitenbach's study of the separation of grammatically correlated words in the choral odes of Euripides (*Untersuchungen zur Sprache der euripideischen Lyrik* [Stuttgart 1934] 242–262). Breitenbach, whose criteria of separation are somewhat different from mine, lists for example 59 cases of separation in 336 lyric lines of *Alcestis*; these, according to my count, comprise 23 cases of closing, 18 of framing, and 9 of interlaced hyperbaton (Breitenbach recognizes the last category as *Kreuzung*).

<sup>39</sup> Text: H. Lloyd-Jones and N. G. Wilson, *Sophoclis fabulae* (Oxford 1990).

<sup>40</sup> The tendency is comparable to the treatment of the hexameter line by the Neoteric poets in Rome. See H. Patzer, "Zum Sprachstil des neoterischen Hexameters," *MusHelv* 12 (1955) 77–95, at 80–84.

But, my poor dear, if this is how things are, what more might I add by trying to loosen or tighten? (39–40)

Sometimes closed lines can be explained as cola only in terms of Fraenkel's classification, or in terms of pragmatic analysis. Consider the following example:

- [27] ἐγὼ δὲ **σῶ** ποδαγὸς ἐσπόμην **πόσει**  
 πεδίον ἐπ' ἄκρον,  
 And I followed your husband on foot to the end of the plain,  
 (1196–1197)

The hyperbaton closes the line and colon, and the following prepositional phrase constitutes a separate colon,<sup>41</sup> and could be labeled as tail in terms of pragmatic analysis.

In iambic trimeters of Sophocles, interlaced hyperbata are common:

- [28] καὶ **μείζον'** ὅστις ἀντὶ τῆς αὐτοῦ πάτρας  
**φίλον νομίζει**, τοῦτον οὐδαμοῦ λέγω.  
 And the man who has higher esteem for a dear one than for  
 his fatherland, that man I count nowhere. (182–183)

In interlacing hyperbata, Sophocles explores various possibilities of interplay with metrical structure. For example, the first hyperbaton may mark the end of a verse, the second the end of a colon, coinciding with caesura:

- [29] Ἐτεοκλέα μὲν, **ὃς πόλεως ὑπερμαχῶν**  
 ὄλωλε **τῆσδε**,  
 Eteocles, who fell fighting for this city, (194–195)

A whole verse may be composed of two interwoven hyperbata:

- [30] ἐπεὶ γὰρ **αὐτήν** εἶλον ἐμφανῶς ἐγὼ  
**πόλεως ἀπιστήσασαν ἐκ πάσης μόνην**,  
 For since I caught her plainly disobeying me alone from the  
 whole city, (655–656)

In 891 iambic trimeters of Sophocles' *Antigone*, hyperbaton occurs 201 times, i.e., once in 4.4 lines. Unlike in Homer, the *Theognidea*, and Pindar, the prominence of closing hyperbaton (72 instances) and framing hyperbaton (71) is almost equal; interlaced hyperbaton is much less prominent (29).

<sup>41</sup> For a prepositional phrase as colon cf. Fraenkel 1932 and 1933, *passim*.

*Prose: Antiphon*

Antiphon is our earliest representative of Attic oratory. His *On the Murder of Herodes* is written in plain style, and it is not marked by very frequent or complex hyperbata. Regarding the relationship of hyperbata and the end of syntactical units, we find examples of all the three types, i.e., closing,

- [31] πλοῦς τε ἡμῖν ἐγένετο, καὶ **τᾶλλ'** ἀνήγετο **πλοῖα ἅπαντα**,  
weather favourable for sailing returned, and all the other  
ships took off, (24)<sup>42</sup>

framing,

- [32] ἔπειτα κελεύεις τοὺς δικαστὰς **ἀνωμότοις** πιστεύσαντας **τοῖς**  
**μαρτυροῦσι** φόνου δίκην καταγῶναι,  
therefore you ask the judges to pass their sentence for murder  
believing unsworn witnesses, (12)

and interlaced,

- [33] καὶ μὴ **ἄκριτον ἀποθανεῖν αὐτὸν ὑφ' ὑμῶν**.  
and not that he is put to death by you without a trial. (48)

In the first 50 paragraphs of the speech *On the Murder of Herodes* hyperbaton occurs 37 times, i.e., once in 1.3 paragraphs. The total number consists of 14 closing, 10 interlaced, and 3 framing hyperbata.<sup>43</sup>

*Prose: Thucydides*

Hyperbaton is one of the most conspicuous features of the prose edifice of Thucydides. Ps.-Longinus calls him δεινότατος in regard to his use of hyperbaton (22), and Dionysius of Halicarnassus regards τὸ τραχὺ τῆς ἀρμονίας (roughness of composition) as one of the four most striking features of Thucydidean style.<sup>44</sup> The hyperbata of Thucydides, as Dionysius observes, are often violent, and sometimes, in combination with other features of his style, obscure the sense of the

<sup>42</sup> Text: F. Blass and Th. Thalheim, *Antiphontis orationes et fragmenta* (Leipzig 1914).

<sup>43</sup> De Vries, *Untersuchungen* 111, includes in his list of hyperbata *On the Murder of Herodes*. My list differs slightly from his (e.g., I do not include cases like 28.8, but I do include 36.5).

<sup>44</sup> Along with the poetic words, variety of the figures, and swift expression (*Thuc.* 24.11).

text;<sup>45</sup> however, their role in reinforcing the syntactical breaks is indisputable.<sup>46</sup> The patterns of hyperbaton in Thucydides are the same ones we have detected so far; in addition to this, there are noticeable similarities between his hyperbata and the hyperbata we found in lyric and tragic genres. Thus in Thucydides we find complex interlacing:

[34] ὅσῳ ἀληπτότεροι ἦσαν τοῖς πέλας, τόσῳ δὲ **φανερωτέραν ἐξῆν αὐτοῖς τὴν ἀρετὴν διδοῦσι καὶ δεχομένοις τὰ δίκαια δεικνύουσι.**

The more difficult to catch they are for their neighbors, the more obvious virtue they should display in offering and accepting just treaties. (1.37.5)

[35] **πολλὰ δ' ἂν καὶ ἄλλα τις ἀποδείξειε τὸ παλαιὸν Ἑλληνικὸν ὁμοιοτρόπα τῷ νῦν βαρβαρικῷ διαιτώμενον.**

And one could point out many other customs in which the old way of life of the Greeks was similar to the one of the barbarians today. (1.6.6)

Also, separation of the two elements of a phrase can be considerably wide:

[36] Ἀγαμέμνων τέ μοι **δοκεῖ** τῶν τότε δυνάμει προύχων καὶ οὐ τοσοῦτον τοῖς Τυνδάρειω ὄρκοις κατειλημμένους τοὺς Ἑλένης μνηστήρας ἄγων **τὸν στόλον ἀγεῖραι.**

And Agamemnon, it seems to me, gathered his force by surpassing his contemporaries in military power, and not so much by leading the suitors of Helen bound by the oaths to Tyndareus. (1.9.1)

A syntactical unit may also be framed by the two elements of the separated phrase:

[37] **ἄλλων** γοῦν μεγέθους πέρι ἐν νεῶν καταλόγῳ **οὐκ ἐμνήσθη.**  
Anyway, he did not mention others regarding their size in his “Catalogue of Ships.” (1.10.4)

In some cases the separated unit should be explained in the light of Fraenkel’s classification, or through pragmatic analysis:

[38] κατὰ γῆν δὲ **πόλεμος**, ὅθεν τις καὶ δύναμις παρεγένετο, **οὐδεὶς** ξυνέστη· πάντες δὲ ...

<sup>45</sup> For example, see the combination of periphrasis and hyperbaton in 3.82.7, discussed by Dionysius at 31.4.

<sup>46</sup> As Norden (*Kunstprosa* 99) puts it, Thucydidean word order abandons clarity of thought, but not the rhythm of the speech.

And on land no war from which strength was gained took place; ... (1.15.2)

The framing phrase *πόλεμος οὐδεὶς* is what Fraenkel would call a “weighted subject,”<sup>47</sup> while in terms of its pragmatic function the phrase would be the focus of the sentence, preceded by the topic, and followed by the verb.

In the first 50 paragraphs of Book One of Thucydides, hyperbaton occurs 62 times, i.e., once in 0.8 paragraphs. The number includes 41 instances of closing hyperbaton, 8 of interlaced hyperbaton, and 4 of framing hyperbaton.<sup>48</sup>

#### Conclusion

The examples I have adduced provide illustration of the ways in which hyperbaton is used to reinforce the syntactical break in the Greek literary sentence. As we have seen, the main patterns of arrangement including hyperbaton at the end of a syntactical unit are closing (ABCDC), framing (ABCDA), and interlacing (ABCBC). To summarize the results of the statistical analysis in a tabular form:

	Homer	<i>Theog.</i>	Pind.	Soph.	Antiph.	Thuc.
Number of lines/chapters	611	610	116	891	50	50
Closing	55	76	24	72	14	41
Framing	14	22	8	71	3	4
Interlaced (2x or 3x)	7	24	5	29	10	8
Total	83	146	42	201	37	62

My choice of examples showed that these patterns of hyperbaton cross not only the boundaries between different poetic genres and their particular representatives, but also the more deeply set boundary between poetry and prose. Like some other stylistic features of literary language, hyperbaton, upon close examination, emerges as one of the more prominent or-

<sup>47</sup> “Erweitertes Subjekt,” Fraenkel 1932 and 1933, *passim*.

<sup>48</sup> Counting as *Spaltung* only a separation caused by the insertion of a verbal form (verbum finitum, participle, or infinitive), Lindhamer (*Wortstellung* 47–48) has found 26 instances in 104 syntactically favorable sentences in Thucydides.

ganizing strategies of exposition. Initially, hyperbaton belongs to the oral resources of Greek language. In writing, it is systematically exploited for deliberate display of the structure of discourse. Comparison between written works and works meant to communicate the spoken word confirms this tendency. For example, Lindhamer's study of *Spaltung* shows that in terms of percentages, the works of Plato are behind those of Herodotus and Xenophon.<sup>49</sup> The future path of development of the written (or literary) sentence will lead from the use of aural σχήματα λέξεως to the visual system of punctuation, which will eventually define the modern concept of sentence.<sup>50</sup>

In a paper delivered in 1908, J. P. Postgate sums up his comparison between syntactical order in the modern sentence and syntactical order in the ancient sentence: "The modern sentence, to put it roughly, is an arrangement in line, the ancient one within a circle."<sup>51</sup> I hope that this study clarifies one particular aspect of Postgate's notion of circular movement in the classical literary sentence.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Lindhamer, *Wortstellung* 64–65. A. Szantyr (*Lateinische Syntax und Stilistik* II.2.2 [Munich 1965] 689–690) outlines a similar development in Latin, i.e., from archaic to artistic hyperbaton.

<sup>50</sup> For example, G. Nunberg (*The Linguistics of Punctuation* [Stanford 1990] 19–23) distinguishes two grammars of written language, namely lexical grammar and text grammar. While in lexical grammar the sentence is defined syntactically, prosodically, or semantically, in text grammar it is defined as a unit customarily presented as bracketed by a capital letter and a period.

<sup>51</sup> "Flaws in Classical Research," *Proceedings of the British Academy* (1907/8) 161–211, at 167.

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