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# THE RHAPSODOI: A Study of the Development of their Role, Repertoire, and Performance in Society

## Abstract:

The purpose of this essay is to consider the development of the *rhapsodoi*'s role, repertoire, and performance in society, from the perspectives of cultural and musical studies. I suggest that the *rhapsodoi* have not been fully studied by scholars who have, in the main, followed Plato in his discussion of the *rhapsodoi*. In his work *Ion*, Plato considers the *rhapsodoi* as simply reciters of Homeric epics. I argue against this view, to suggest that the *rhapsodoi* must have played a crucial role in Greek society in view of the fact that they were able to change the status of Homeric poetry to *paideia* (education) for Greek citizens. This essay will discuss how the development of the *rhapsodoi* was bound up with the cultural status of Homeric poetry. I will consider this in relation to the general development of *mousike* (music) which included poetry. In this essay, I hope to have provided a fresh understanding of the significance of the *rhapsodoi* in Greek society.

**Key Words:** Ancient Greece, Poetry (Epics), Homer, Aoidoi, Rhapsodoi

## Introduction

The musical performer described in Homeric poetry was called the *aoidos* (αοιδός), who sang (αείδειν) stories of gods and heroes to musical accompaniment. The *aoidos* was replaced by the *rhapsodos* (ῥαψωδός), who was responsible for the preservation of Homeric and other epics from the sixth century B.C.<sup>1</sup> The *aoidos* and the *rhapsodos* were similar in that they both 'performed' epic poems, mainly Homeric poetry. The *rhapsodos*, however, used no musical instruments. It is puzzling that, with the emergence of the *rhapsodos* in the sixth century B.C., the performer of Homeric epics should have given up musical accompaniment and discarded the musical characteristics or elements of the epics.

<sup>1</sup> The 'aoidos' has been conventionally translated into the 'bard'. The 'rhapsodos' is normally translated into the *rhapsode*, the reciter, or the minstrel. In this essay, I intentionally avoid using the term 'recite' or 'reciter' for the *rhapsodos*, because I do not have any definite ideas whether the *rhapsodos* 'recited' or 'sang' poems. Thus, I rather use the terms 'perform' or 'performer'. Cf. LSJ s.v. "ῥαψωδός": 'reciter of Epic poems, sometimes, applied to the bard who recited his own poem; professional reciters, especially of the poems of Homer'.

On the other hand, Greek lyric poetry was always sung, usually in the accompaniment of musical instruments, such as the *lyra* or the *aulos*, to sustain melody, give rhythm, and, possibly, arouse the listener's feelings.<sup>2</sup> As for choral poetry, the *kithara* and the *aulos* underwent radical and innovative development, in such a way so as to give full scope to their musical ability, particularly in the accompaniment of choral songs and dances in dithyramb, as well as tragedy and comedy, which were dedicated to Dionysus at festivals. In fact, instrumental musicians, such as poet-composers or composer-performers, became influential throughout the development of poetic culture in the Greek society, in the sixth and the fifth centuries B.C. It was at around that time that the *rhapsodoi* were active in performing Homeric poems in public.

In relation to this point I will consider why the *rhapsodos* gave up using musical instruments, why only Homeric epic poetry, distinct from other literary genres, endured the shift in its performance from the *aoidos* to the *rhapsodos*, and whether what the *rhapsodos* performed could be regarded as *mousike*. Moreover, it is of interest that the *rhapsodos* must have played a crucial role in the transmission of Homeric epics in cultural context.<sup>3</sup> Plato's *Ion*, which depicted the *rhapsodos*, in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C., as a mere reciter of Homeric epics, has become the orthodox view of them. Though many classical studies have referred to the *rhapsodos*, most of them tend to follow the image of Plato's *Ion*. In this sense, I should point out that there is no comprehensive and detailed study of the *rhapsodos*, which may be due to lack of evidence.<sup>4</sup> Burkert (1987), Nagy (1996), and Ford (1988, 1999, 2002) discuss the *rhapsodos* from interesting points of view.<sup>5</sup> With regard to musical aspects of the *rhapsodos*, West's article (1981) is the only study that we have at present, but it lacks cultural aspects of the *rhapsodos*. It must also be noted that the history of music has overlooked the Homeric epics and the *rhapsodos*.

This essay will consider the development of the *rhapsodoi*'s role, repertoire, and performance in society, from the perspectives of cultural studies and musical studies, from the sixth century B.C. to the fifth century B.C. Firstly, I will examine the development of the role of epic performers from the *aoidos* to the *rhapsodos*. Secondly, I will discuss the role of the *rhapsodos* in society, and consider in what way the *rhapsodos* changed the repertoire and performance of Homeric poetry. In addition, I will consider the elevation in the cultural status of Homeric poetry, which must have affected not only the role of epic poets but also their choice of repertoire, and of performance. In these discussions, special attention will be paid to the relation between

<sup>2</sup> West (1993) pp.vii-viii.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. There were *Homeridai* on Chios, who were thought as direct descendants of Homer. They were performers as well as interpreters of Homeric epics. Pfeiffer (1968), pp. 11-12, Nagy (1982), pp. 22-3.

<sup>4</sup> Herington collected all original references to the *rhapsodos* in Greek literature, (1985), pp. 167-76.

<sup>5</sup> Nagy suggests that the *rhapsodos* was an ultimate recomposed performer in terms of *mimesis*.

epic performers and musical instruments that accompanied them. In answering these questions, I hope to gain an exhaustive understanding of how the *rhapsodoi* were able to capitalise upon the cultural status of Homeric poetry, in contrast to the development of *mousike* and other various genres of poetry.

### Epic Performers: from the *Aoidos* to the *Rhapsodos*

#### The *Aoidos*

First of all, it is necessary to make clear the difference between the *aoidos* and the *rhapsodos*. In this respect, I will try to determine the characteristics of the *aoidos* by examining the descriptions of them in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*,<sup>6</sup> since it is only through Homeric poetry that we know about Homeric performance. *Aoidoi* refer to solo singers in Homeric epics, who were regarded as epic singers like Homer himself.<sup>7</sup> The epic was sung by the *aoidos* in hexametre poetry.<sup>8</sup> They accompanied their songs mostly with *φόρμιγξ* (*phorminx*), a stringed instrument, which is assumed to have been a round-based box lyre,<sup>9</sup> or sometimes with *κίθαρις* (*kitharis*).<sup>10</sup> Homer appears to have regarded the *phorminx* and the *kitharis* as one and the same instrument, since the term *κίθαρίζειν* is used for 'playing *phorminx*' in the *Iliad*.<sup>11</sup> When the *phorminx* and the *kitharis* are mentioned in Homer, most of them are used with a verb *αείδω* (sing).<sup>12</sup> Even if without *αείδω*, they imply close connections to songs and dance.<sup>13</sup> At the beginning of the *Iliad*, the poet invokes Muses with *ἄειδε*, who presides over any form of the arts including playing musical instruments.

<sup>6</sup> I have not found any inclusive studies about the *aoidos* and other musical aspects in Homeric poetry. As for the *phorminx* and the *kitharis*, Maas and Snyder discuss them in detail, (1989), pp. 3-7.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Plato, *Laws*, 658b, *Republic*, 600d. Plato thought that both Homer and Hesiod 'ῥαψώδεον'.

<sup>8</sup> The early *kitharodes* also played Homeric and other epics. Cf. Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 10.7.2-8.

<sup>9</sup> West (1992), pp. 50-53. The *phorminx* gradually gave way to the lyre-type instrument represented by the *kithara*, which flourished in the fifth century B.C. The term 'φόρμιγξ' is used twenty one times in Homer. The verb 'φορμίζειν' is used for the performance by Phemios three times (*Od.* 1.155, 4.17-8, 8.266), two of which (1.155, 8.266) are played as *ἀναβόλῃ*, some prefatory pure instrumental notes of the *phorminx* before the *aoidos* begins to sing. Cf. West (1981), p. 122.

<sup>10</sup> The term 'κίθαρις' is used five times in Homer (*Il.* 3.54, 13.731, *Od.* 1.153, 1.159, 8.248). 'Κίθαρίζειν' is used twice (*Il.* 2.600, 18.570).

<sup>11</sup> *Il.* 18.569-71.

<sup>12</sup> According to West's analysis, I understand the term *αείδω* as 'sing'. West (1981), pp. 113-5.

<sup>13</sup> The *phorminx* with *ὕμνατος* (*Il.* 18.493-5); with *μολπή* (*Od.* 21.430); with *φιλοπαίγμονος ὀρχηθμοιο* (*Od.* 23.133-4); with *μολπῆς τε γλυκερῆς καὶ ἀμύμονος ὀρχηθμοιο* (*Od.* 23.144-5); *κίθαριν καὶ ἀοιδὴν* (*Il.* 13.731). There are two exceptions, which do not allude to songs clearly: Apollo is said to have the *phorminx* at a wedding (*Il.* 24.63); Hector blames Alexandros for his weakness, saying that the *kitharis* will not help him. (*Il.* 3.54) Both of them seem to be concerned with the skill of playing instrument, including the skill of singing to its accompaniment.

In the *Odyssey*, the *aoidoi*, both Demodokos, at Alcinous' house in Phaeacia, as well as Phemios, at Odysseus' house in Ithaca, always sing (ἀείδειν) to the accompaniment either of the *phorminx* or of the *kitharis*. They are hired as professional singers to entertain their masters and houseguests, although the *aoidoi* seemed to have originally travelled around and been invited to sing.<sup>14</sup> Demodokos sings not only in a private house but also at an agora (*Od.* 8.109, 8.254). They are highly respected, called θεῶς ἀοιδός (divine *aoidos*) (*Od.* 1.336, 8.43, etc.), and θεοῖς ἐναλίγκιος αὐδῆν (like the gods in voice) (*Od.* 1.371, 9.4). Demodokos is said to be λαοῖσι τετιμένον (honoured by the people) (*Od.* 8.472, 13.28), and Phemios is called πολύφημος ἀοιδός (a famous *aoidos*) (*Od.* 22.376). For the *aoidos* it is said that πᾶσι...ἀνθρώποισιν ἐπιχθονίοισιν ἀοιδοὶ τιμῆς ἔμμοροί εἰσι καὶ αἰδοῦς (among all men upon the earth the *aoidoi* win honour and reverence) (*Od.* 8.479-80). It is because their skills of singing are given by the god and Muses: οὐνεκ' ἄρα σφέας οἶμας Μοῦσ' ἐδίδαξε, φίλησε δὲ φῦλον ἀοιδῶν (for the Muse has taught them the paths of song, and loves the tribe of the *aoidoi*) (*Od.* 8.480-1); Μοῦσ' ἄρ' ἀοιδὸν ἀνῆκεν ἀειδέμεναι (the Muse moved the *aoidos* to sing) (*Od.* 8.73); ὃ δ' ὀρμηθεὶς θεοῦ ἤρχετο, φαῖνε δ' ἀοιδῆν (Demodokos, moved by god, began, and let his song be heard) (*Od.* 8.499).<sup>15</sup> However, Phemios once describes himself as αὐτοδίδακτος (self-taught) (*Od.* 22.347). From this word, Maas and Snyder infer that there were established experts who taught professional skills of epic singing to younger men,<sup>16</sup> whereas Burkert says that 'this sets him apart not from divine inspiration but from merely reproductive performance of epic song'.<sup>17</sup>

They sing ἔργ' ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε (deeds of men and gods) (*Od.* 1.338), τε θεοῖσι καὶ ἀνθρώποισιν (for gods and men) (*Od.* 22.346), ἵνα ᾗσι καὶ ἐσσομένοισιν ἀοιδῇ (in order that they might be a song for those yet to be born) (*Od.* 8.580), and also ὃ κεν τέρπῃσιν αἰείδων (he gives delight with his song) (*Od.* 17.385). Their repertoire includes songs of such stories as the return of the Achaeans (*Od.* 1.326ff.), the quarrel of Odysseus and Achilles (*Od.* 8.74ff.), the love of Ares and Aphrodite (*Od.* 8.267ff.), and the Trojan horse (*Od.* 8.500ff.). The *aoidos* seemed to have already possessed these songs, or themes, in their repertoire, and people also may have been familiar with them. This may be inferred from the following descriptions: Penelope says that the story of the return of the Achaeans 'always' distresses her (*Od.* 1.341); the fame of the story of Odysseus and Achilles was reaching broad heaven (*Od.* 8.74). Even if the repertoire of the *aoidos* had been established to some extent, Demodokos is likely to have sung in his own way. He sang of the Achaeans well ὥς τὲ που ᾗ

<sup>14</sup> *Od.* 17.386.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *Od.* 8.44-5.

<sup>16</sup> Maas and Snyder (1989), p. 6.

<sup>17</sup> Burkert (1987), p. 48.

αὐτὸς παρῶν ἢ ἄλλου ἀκούσας (as perhaps one who had yourself been present, or had heard the tale from another) (*Od.*8.491). We may assume from this that people expected him to improvise, that is, to sing in his original, creative way, so as to describe various scenes from epics, with his own words and phrases, and possibly, with the effect of his musical accompaniment.<sup>18</sup> The *aoidos* could have reproduced his phrases at each performance within a frame of traditional themes.

There are some references to singers in the *Iliad*, though we do not know whether they are professional or not.<sup>19</sup> Achilles sings to the *phorminx* (*Il.*9.186-91), and there is a tale of Thamyris, in which Muses took away his divine song (ἀοιδὴν θεσπεσίην) and made him forget how to play the *kitharis* (*Il.*2.594-600). The only singers called the *aoidoi* in the *Iliad* are mourners (*Il.*24.720). The *phorminx* is played at the gods' feast (*Il.*1.603), and also when a boy sings the Linos song (*Il.*18.569). Both Achilles' singing to the *phorminx* (*Il.*9.186) and the word of Hector, which shows Alexandoros' skill of playing the *kitharis* (*Il.*3.54), may imply that playing stringed instruments constituted essential education for the Athenian aristocracy of later times.<sup>20</sup>

There are no descriptions of pure instrumental music in Homeric epics.<sup>21</sup> Whenever people use musical instruments in Homeric poetry, they sing to the accompaniment of the instrument. We also see the close relationship between songs and instruments from such descriptions as κίθαριν καὶ ἀοιδὴν, which was given as a pair by the god to someone (*Il.*13.731). Similarly, the description of Odysseus stringing the great bow, ὥς ὅτ' ἀνὴρ φόρμιγγος ἐπιστάμενος καὶ ἀοιδῆς ῥηιδίως ἐτάνυσσε νέω περὶ κόλλοπι χορδὴν (*Od.*21.406-7), conveys an idea of the interrelation of song and instrument.

To sum up, the *aoidoi* in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were singers who sang Homeric poems to the accompaniment of the *phorminx* or the *kitharis*. Homeric poetry comprised songs sung by the *aoidos*. The *aoidos* was the only performer who accepted a responsibility to transmit Homeric poetry in the epic age.

<sup>18</sup> Barker says that Homer seemed to be concerned with 'the merit of new themes and words'. I will discuss this point later on. Barker (1984), 26 n21.

<sup>19</sup> Those who sing (ἀείδειν) are: gods at the gods' feast (*Il.*1.604), the young Achaeans (*Il.*1.473), Achilles and his comrade (*Il.*22.391), Circe (*Od.*10.221-3), some goddess and women (*Od.*10.254-5), a drunken man (*Od.*14.464), and a nightingale (a daughter of Pandareus) (*Od.*19.519). Siren's song is called ἀοιδὴ (*Od.*12.44, 12.183ff.).

<sup>20</sup> Maas and Snyder (1989), p. 6.

<sup>21</sup> 'Αὐλός' as a musical instrument is used only once at wedding with 'φόρμιγξ', (*Il.*18.495), and for the army (as an alarm whistle?) (*Il.*10.13). 'Σὺριγξ' is as a pan's pipe (*Il.*18.526), and for the army with the *aulos* (*Il.*10.13). 'Σάλπιγξ' (trumpet) is used only for alarming of the coming enemy (*Il.*18.219).



## The Emergence of the *Rhapsodos*

### The *Rhapsodos*

Following the *aoidos*, the *rhapsodoi* appeared as professional performers of Homeric epics.<sup>22</sup> A term ῥάψωδός is probably derived from ῥάπτειν (Pindar, *Nem.*, 2.1-3, to sew or stitch together), rather than ῥάβδος (Ibid., *Isthm.*, 4.38-9, a staff or a prop).<sup>23</sup> The term ῥάπτειν (stitching) may have originally implied that the *rhapsodos* creatively composed their own poems. The *rhapsodos*' performance, ῥάψωδία, means 'the solo presentation, in public, of a poetic text without musical accompaniment', and 'the performance of poetry without a μέλος'.<sup>24</sup> The earliest extant description of the *rhapsodos* is ambiguous. There are some allusions and references to the *rhapsodos* in literature from the time of Pindar, in the first half of the fifth century B.C., to the third century A.D.<sup>25</sup> Most of them briefly mention the *rhapsodoi* or the importance of Homeric poetry, whereas Plato and Xenophon described them in an ironical way. It cannot be denied that Plato's *Ion* provides further information on the *rhapsodos* in the fifth century B.C. For example, according to Plato's *Ion*, the *rhapsodos* travelled around Greece to perform poetry (Plato, *Ion*, 530a), *Ion* says that he is good at embellishing Homer (530d6-7), standing on a bema (535e2) with gorgeous dresses (535d2), and performing in front of twenty thousand people (535d4-5). The *rhapsodos*' role was to interpret the poet's thoughts for his audience (534e4). Some *rhapsodoi* sang Hesiod and Archilochos (531a2, 532a5-6), which may refer to old iambic and elegiac poetry. In *Ion*, no suggestion is found of a musical instrument (e.g. 533b).<sup>26</sup>

### Introduction of the *Rhapsodos* into Musical Contests

The earliest literary source of the *rhapsodos* is unclear. It is said that the *rhapsodos* appeared in contests at the Great Panathenaia between 566 and 514 B.C.<sup>27</sup> According to Pseudo-Plato's *Hipparchus*, the contest of Homeric epics was first formally introduced by Hipparchos. Hipparchos was known as a lover of arts (φιλόμουσος), and associated with his brother, tyrant Hippias.<sup>28</sup> Both of them were sons of Peisistratos of Athens, who is thought to have established the Panathenaic festival in 566 B.C.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Plato, *Timaeus*, 21b. Many boys learned epics for *rhapsodia* contests. They were amateur performers.

<sup>23</sup> Some vase-paintings show the staff in the *rhapsodos*' hand.

<sup>24</sup> Ford (1988), p. 303, p. 300. Ford minutely discusses on the definition of the *rhapsodia*.

<sup>25</sup> Herington (1985), pp. 167-76. *OCD*<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Plato, *Laws*, 810b. A term ἄλυσσ' is used for poets. These poets, who seem to have been the *rhapsodoi* in the context, did not use the *lyra*.

<sup>27</sup> Herington (1985), p. 86. Davison suggests that it was 530 B.C., (1958), p. 39.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Aristotle, *Athenian Constitution*, 18.1. Here, Hippias is said to have been the eldest and wisest of the brothers.

Pisistratus's son Hipparchus, of Philaidae, who was the eldest and wisest of Pisistratus's sons, and who, among the many goodly proofs of wisdom that he showed, first brought the poems of Homer into this country of ours (τὰ Ομήρου ἔπη πρῶτος ἐκόμισεν εἰς τὴν γῆν ταυτηνί), and compelled the rhapsodes at the Panathenaea to recite them in relay, one man following on another (καὶ ἡνάγκασε τοὺς ῥαψωδοὺς Παναθηναίους ἐξ ὑπολήψεως ἐφεξῆς αὐτὰ διέναι), as they still do now. He dispatched a fifty-oared galley for Anacreon of Teos, and brought him into our city. Simonides of Ceos he always had about him, prevailing on him by plenteous fees and gifts. All this he did from a wish to educate the citizens (ταῦτα δ' ἐποίει βουλόμενος παιδεύειν τοὺς πολίτας), in order that he might have subjects of the highest excellence; for he thought it not right to grudge wisdom to any, so noble and good was he. (Pseudo-Plato, *Hipparchus*, 228b-c)

From this description, it appears that Hipparchos first introduced the Homeric poetry into Athens and the *rhapsodos*' contest at the Great Panathenaea, and the *rhapsodoi* were forced to perform Homeric epics in relay.<sup>29</sup> It also appears that Anacreon and Simonides, both of whom were famous skilled lyre-poets at that time, were brought to Athens by Hipparchos. Another point that arises from this description is that Hipparchos intended to educate citizens by Homeric poems. It must be regretted that there are no comments about musical instruments at the *rhapsodos*' first appearance in the music contest at festivals.

Since there are only a few literary sources that mention the first appearance of the *rhapsodos* in public space, they can be of only limited value to the historian, and remain controversial. For instance, Diogenes Laertius tells that Solon introduced the rhapsodic contest at Panathenaea (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, 1.57). There are also some depictions of the *rhapsodos*, before the setting of contests by Hipparchos, on vase-paintings.<sup>30</sup>

From the information above, however, we may assume that Hipparchos played a direct role in forming Homeric epics in performance by the *rhapsodos* in Athens.<sup>31</sup> The establishment of festivals including the *rhapsodos*' performance of Homer at contests was intended, largely, to make Athens politically and economically more

<sup>29</sup> It is called a 'Panathenaic rule' by some scholars. Shapiro (1993), p. 101, p. 103.

<sup>30</sup> Davison (1958), pp. 38-9. The literary sources that show the participation of the *rhapsodos* in the Panathenaea are the following: Plato, *Ion*, in the late fifth century B.C.; Lycurgus, *Against Leocratos*, p.102, in the fourth century B.C.; an inscription (IG II<sup>2</sup> 2311) in the early fourth century B.C. (it lacks the first line which may have been read as the *rhapsodos*, but it is unclear. Cf. Davidson (1958), p. 37); Cicero says that Peisistratos brought together the scattered songs of Homer and arranged them. Cicero, *De oratore*, 3.137. Davison suggests that Hipparchos may have reorganised the existing contests rather than established the first *rhapsodos*' contests, (1958), pp. 38-9.

<sup>31</sup> Shapiro (1993) argues the role of Hipparchos in detail.

powerful and attractive at the time of the Peisistratid Athens.<sup>32</sup> The introduction of the *rhapsodos* to the festival was one of Hipparchos' policies. Hipparchos regarded Homeric epics and music as effective means of centralising political power, and as a method by which to educate citizens to be good. Hipparchos must have known that Homeric poetry was 'the sole verbal vehicle of the group *paideia* and the Hellenic way of life' for the Greeks.<sup>33</sup> In fact, what set the Panathenaia most sharply apart from other Hellenic festivals was the *rhapsodos*' contest.<sup>34</sup> The *rhapsodos*' contest remained the centrepiece of the festival among those of the *kitharistes*, the *kitharodes*, the *auletes*, and the *aulodes*. At this point, the *rhapsodos* had no musical instruments. Quite on the contrary, the *rhapsodos* appears to have concentrated on the narrative of Homeric poetry instead. Hipparchos' keen interest in introducing Homeric epics into public space in Athens, and his views on how they should be performed, could be seen as a crucial moment for the *rhapsodos* in developing the performance of Homeric epics, as the foundation of *παίδεια*, which referred to Greek education, in society.

### The *Rhapsodos*' Role, Repertoire, and Performance

By the introduction of the *rhapsodos*' contest at the Panathenaia, the cultural status of Homeric epics definitely started to be changed. Conversely, it may be said that social and political demands for Homeric poetry established the *rhapsodos* as a person who could bear the responsibility of performing Homeric poetry in society. Both, in fact, are likely to be true. In any case, when the *rhapsodos* appeared at contests, Homeric poetry seems to have shifted from songs, sung by the *aoidos* to musical accompaniment, to become an essential part of *paideia* for the citizens, performed by the *rhapsodos* without accompaniment of musical instruments. In this chapter, I would like to examine the role, repertoire, and performance of the *rhapsodos* in greater detail, considering, in particular, the social situation around epic performers.

<sup>32</sup> Herington (1985), p. 92. From the 560s B.C., many monumental works were achieved in Athens, and Athens became a panhellenic artistic centre by the effort of Peisistoratos, a tyrant of Athens, his son and successor, Hippias, and Hippias' brother Hipparchos.

<sup>33</sup> Havelock (1963), p. 125.

<sup>34</sup> Herington (1985), p. 86. Shapiro (1993), p. 93. Cf. Herington (1985), pp. 175-6. Besides in Athens, the rhapsodic performance also seemed to be seen in Crete, Delos, Epidauros, Olympia, Samos, Sikyon, Sparta, and Syracuse. However, there are a greater number of references to Athens than those to other places.



## 1. Role

### The Role of the *Rhapsodos*

The epic performers changed the place of performance from private spaces into public spaces, by obtaining opportunities to perform at contests. With an increase in the size of audience, the function of epic singers must have changed, to correspond to social demand. Above all, the preservation of epics ascribed to Homer beyond the epic age, that is, the preservation of cultural identity of the Greeks, owed a great deal to the *rhapsodos*. In the course of transmission, the *rhapsodos* may have gradually interpreted and reshaped the original form of Homeric epics, altering the meaning of epics, as occasion demanded.<sup>35</sup> As Pfeiffer suggested, the *rhapsodoi* were 'poetically gifted or at least poetically minded people, who made the first attempt at interpreting the heritage of the epic age'.<sup>36</sup>

Particularly in the fifth century B.C. in Athens, the didactic function of Homeric epic, as a means of educating citizens, came to be emphasised. Most importantly, the *rhapsodos* was not to create or reproduce epic poems freely, as the *aoidos* may have done, but to perform the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* correctly in public, and at the same time, to interest the audience as much as possible. It may be said that, at this point, the main role of epic singers had possibly shifted from singing poetry as songs, to transmitting and interpreting the contents of Homeric poetry, through their performance, for the citizens in Athens. The *rhapsodos* came to be responsible for Homer as *paideia* for the Greeks in public performance.

Moreover, because of its competitive character, the contest at festivals must have provided a good opportunity for the *rhapsodos* and other musicians to establish their fame.<sup>37</sup> Contests may have led to the development of the professional musician.<sup>38</sup> This must be one of the reasons why Socrates ironically criticised Ion, a *rhapsodos*. As the cultural status of Homeric poetry came to be higher, as Burkert points out, 'it is clear that this name [Homer] is the trademark on which the rhapsodes were professionally dependent; no wonder they were engaged in Homeric propaganda'.<sup>39</sup> This lends strength to Socrates' view that the *paideia*, in which the *rhapsodos* accepted the responsibility of performing Homeric epics for citizens, should be criticised, since the *rhapsodos* knew nothing about Homeric poetry, but simply memorised and performed some passages of them.

<sup>35</sup> Pfeiffer (1968), pp. 5-6.

<sup>36</sup> Pfeiffer (1968), p. 8.

<sup>37</sup> Kemp (1966), p. 216.

<sup>38</sup> Artists' guilds '*technitai*', including the *rhapsodos*, appeared by about the third century B.C. Before that time, there was no real attempt to organise the profession. Kemp (1966), p. 213. The *rhapsodos*, as a member of *technitai*, remained active until the third century A.D. Cf. Sifakis (1967), Lightfoot (2002). I have not examined the recent research of the *technitai* by Le Guen (2001) and Aneziri (2002) yet.

<sup>39</sup> Burkert (1987), p. 49.

## Homeric Epics as *Paideia*

The didactic function of Homeric epics, namely as the *paideia* for the Athenians, remained secure until the fourth century B.C.<sup>40</sup> Herodotus, in the fifth century B.C., claimed that the poetry of Homer and Hesiod was important to the Greeks, because it taught them their gods (Herodotus, *The Persian Wars*, 2.53.1-3). According to Isocrates (436-388 B.C.), an orator, Homeric poetry was a canon, from which Greek people should learn the wisdom of their ancestors.

Moreover, I think that even the poetry of Homer has won a greater renown because he has nobly glorified the men who fought against the barbarians, and that on this account our ancestors determined to give his art a place of honour in our musical contests and in the education of our youth, in order that we, hearing his verses over and over again, may learn by heart the enmity which stands from of old between us and them, and that we, admiring the valour of those who were in the war against Troy, may conceive a passion for like deeds. (Isocrates, *Panegyricus*, 159)

Lycurgus (c.390-c.325 B.C.), an Athenian statesman, explained that Homeric poetry was thought of as more important, and more useful instruction for life, than law. Homeric poetry, in his view, depicted 'life itself, selected the noblest actions and so through argument and demonstration converted men's hearts' (Lycurgus, *Against Leocrates*, 102). Furthermore, an orator named Aeschines (c.397-c.322 B.C.) quoted Homeric epics many times in his speech of the *Against Timarchus*, to demonstrate what the 'elite literary culture' was 'to a mass audience'.<sup>41</sup>

But since you make mention of Achilles and Patroclus, and of Homer and the other poets—as though the jury were men innocent of education (*ἀνηκόων παιδείας*), while you are people of a superior sort, who feel yourselves quite beyond common folks in learning (*ἱστορίᾳ τὸν δῆμον*)—that you may know that we too have before now heard and learned a little something, we shall say a word about this also. For since they undertake to cite wise men, and to take refuge in sentiments expressed in poetic measures, look, fellow citizens, into the works of those who are confessedly good and helpful poets, ... I will speak first of Homer, whom we rank among the oldest and wisest of the poets. (Aeschines, *Against Timarchus*, 141-2)

Aeschines regarded people who did not know Homeric epics as uneducated men. It was thought essential for well-educated Athenians in the fourth century B.C. to know Homeric poetry, and to be able to quote and comment on it freely at any time, as seen in Aeschines' speech, as well as in Plato's dialogue. Homeric poetry established for itself a high social status, at least in Athens. As a new model of Greek education, that is, as *paideia*, the Homeric poetry played a role of the cultural identity of the Greeks, and helped to define what it meant to be a real Greek.

<sup>40</sup> Goldhill (1986), pp. 140-4.

<sup>41</sup> Ford (1999), p. 231.

## 2. Repertoire

### The Repertoire of the *Rhapsodos*

Epic songs were repeatedly performed by the mouth of singers like the *aoidoi*. It is likely that the practice of memorising poetry, sustained over a long time, encouraged the development of a certain repertoire of epics.<sup>42</sup> As we have examined, some traditional themes were performed even by the *aoidos* in the *Odyssey*, although they may have been freely devised within fixed frames. If frequently performed, however, the repertoire of epic singers would come to be based on a minor variation of words. In fact, even before Hipparchos' setting of *rhapsodos*' contests at festivals, there seemed to have been individual episodes taken from epics, of 500-800 lines or so. For example, according to Aelian (165/70-230/5 A.D.), the *rhapsodos* performed separate poems like 'The funeral games of Patroklos', 'The catalogue of ships', 'The story of Circe' etc. (Aelian, *Varia Historia*, 13.14).<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, the Panathenaic rule of the *rhapsodos*' performance by Hipparchos could have narrowed the repertoire of the *rhapsodos*, and have also encouraged the routine memorisation described above.<sup>44</sup>

### Homeric Epics as 'Classics' Repertoire

In the *Odyssey*, it says that τήν...ἀοιδὴν μᾶλλον ἐπικλείουσ' ἄνθρωποι, ἥ τις ἀκούοντεςσι νεωτάτῃ ἀμφιπέληται (men praise that song the most that comes the newest to their ears) (*Od.* 1.351-2). In view of the creative way of performing epic songs by the *aoidos*, Barker suggests that Homer was concerned with 'the merit of new themes and words'.<sup>45</sup> In the fourth century B.C., however, the idea, found in Homer and Pindar, that 'new songs are good' began to be changed. The idea that 'well-known melodies are better' began to prevail. This change may have taken place as melody came to be seen as an important element in music. Typical of this change were the views that 'what is familiar is more enjoyable than what is not' (Pseudo-Aristotle, *Problems*, 19.5), 'such a thing [a new style of song] should not be applauded, nor should the poet be so understood', and 'people should beware of change to new forms of music' (Plato, *Republic*, 424b-c).<sup>46</sup>

<sup>42</sup> *New Grove Dictionary*, s.v. "aoidos".

<sup>43</sup> Other examples of the repertoire are: The battle by the ships, The Doloneia, The aristeia of Agamemnon, The Patrocleia, The ransoming, and The breaking of the oaths, from the *Iliad*; Pylos, Sparta, Calypso's cave, The raft, Alcinous' tales, The Cyclops story, The Necyia, The bath, The murder of the suitors, In the countryside, and At Laertes' house, from the *Odyssey*.

<sup>44</sup> Shapiro (1993), p. 104.

<sup>45</sup> Barker (1984), 26n21. Cf. Pindar, *Ol.*, 9.48-9.

<sup>46</sup> Barker (1984), p. 190, p. 140. We should take account of the whole context of Plato's argument about the poet.

In my opinion, this transformation of attitudes may be closely associated with the establishment of Homeric epics as 'classical' poetry. The more various kinds of musical styles developed, particularly with musical instruments, in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C., the more people needed the classics, representative of what was unchanging in life, to reassure them and to confirm their cultural identity. The *rhapsodoi* appears to have accepted the responsibility of establishing Homeric epics as classics, performing traditional Homeric poetry and bringing the past into life. In order to accomplish this, musical instruments may have been thought unessential to the epic performer.

### Written Texts

More important, perhaps, was the increase in literacy, which saw a transition from oral tradition to the use of written texts. Though epic poems, as a memory of social experiences, basically continued to be transmitted in oral tradition, the written text became increasingly useful to people as a means of memorising poems by the fifth century B.C. The earliest evidence for a written text of Homer is that of Theagenes of Rhegium, 'who first wrote on Homer', in the last half of the sixth century B.C.<sup>47</sup> We do not have any obvious reasons that the *rhapsodos* wrote down texts.<sup>48</sup>

Herodotus described Kleisthenes, tyrant of Sikyon about 600-570 B.C., as follows:

Kleisthenes going to war with Argos, put an end to the rhapsode-contests in Sikyon because of the Homeric epics; for in them the Argives and Argos are celebrated almost everywhere. (Herodotus, *The Persian Wars*, 5.67.1)<sup>49</sup>

Some studies conclude from this description that the *rhapsodoi* presumably did not improvise Homeric epic freely, and that their performances were tied to the text of the songs, and also they had no musical instruments.<sup>50</sup> The *rhapsodos* might have already had some repertoire such as 'the story of Argos'. According to Xenophon, though the *rhapsodoi* recited epic poetry accurately, they were silly (Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.2.10). Considering that they did not create poems but just repeat them from memory, their performance seemed to owe to written texts.<sup>51</sup> It may be suggested that the development from oral to written tradition helped fix the *rhapsodos*' repertoire, and at the same time, that this required the *rhapsodoi* merely to brush up their skill of memorisation.

Havelock suggested that the transition from orality to literacy had an immense impact on the entire Greek culture. He inferred that the *rhapsodos*' contest at festivals

<sup>47</sup> Pfeiffer (1968), p. 10.

<sup>48</sup> Edwards (1987), p. 26.

<sup>49</sup> Herington (1985), p. 167.

<sup>50</sup> Edwards (1987), p. 26.

<sup>51</sup> Edwards (1987), p. 26.

was the first moment for the *rhapsodos* to 'get into written circulation'.<sup>52</sup> In the space of this essay, it is possible only to assume that the *rhapsodos* may have contributed to the formation of fixed texts of Homeric epics, and the performances based on them.

### 3. Performance

#### The Performance of the *Rhapsodos*

When epic singers stopped reproducing or creating poems of their own due to the social demand and the establishment of texts, they ceased to be composer-performers like lyric and choral poets. The *rhapsodoi* did not need music accompaniment, because their foremost concern was with performing Homeric epics effectively in front of the Athenians. Their principal creativity lay in their mode of performance.<sup>53</sup>

This is exactly what Socrates took exception to in *Ion*. Socrates thought that the *rhapsodos* was just a mouthpiece for Homer. In Plato's *Ion*, the *rhapsodos*, Ion, was said to be an interpreter of poets (Plato, *Ion*, 534e4). Since poets were interpreters of the gods, the *rhapsodoi* were merely interpreters of interpreters (535a9). The *rhapsodos* played the role of imitating reality.<sup>54</sup> When Ion recites something pitiful, he sheds tears, and when he recites something fearful, his hair stands on end and his heart beats fast (535c5-8). He also weeps and is frightened (535d-d5), according to the scenes, which he is reciting. He performed in front of over twenty thousand people (535d4-5), constantly worried about his evaluation by the audience, which effected his earnings (535e-e6). Even if ironical, these descriptions may contribute to our understanding of the *rhapsodos*' performance in the fifth and the fourth centuries B.C.

On account of the Panathenaic rule at rhapsodic contests, the *rhapsodoi* were appointed at random, to perform immediately following the previous competitor. It is assumed that they needed to devise a way of performing that would interest the audience more than previous or latter competitors had: using gesture and vocal skills, they may have been able to 'create suspense in an audience that knew the text intimately', and have entertained the audience through the use of 'skills of character building'.<sup>55</sup> The principal aim of their performance was to transmit Homeric poetry and to educate citizens, but at the same time, the *rhapsodos* may have engaged in entertaining the audience with excessive physical and emotional expression, as we can see in *Ion*. Consequently, we may say that the *ῥαψωδοί* were recognized not by the genre of their songs or by their ability to memorize but by their way of performing'.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Havelock (1963), p. 125.

<sup>53</sup> Shapiro (1992), p. 73.

<sup>54</sup> Dorter (1973), p. 71.

<sup>55</sup> Wiles (2000), p. 15.

<sup>56</sup> Ford (1988), p. 306.



## The Role of Instrumental Accompaniment in Performance

It is not clear when the accompaniment of epic singers by musical instruments disappeared.<sup>57</sup> The *aidoi*, the former epic singers, seemed to sing in unison to the *phorminx*, as Pseudo-Plutarch explained that 'οἶονται δὲ καὶ τὴν κροῦσιν τὴν ὑπὸ τὴν ᾠδὴν τοῦτον πρῶτον εὐρεῖν, τοὺς δὲ ἀρχαίους πάντας πρόσχορδα κρούειν' (and it is thought that he [Archilochus] first invented the accompaniment that is of higher pitch than the song, whereas his predecessors had all let the accompaniment follow the melody) (Pseudo-Plutarch, *On Music*, 1141b). Since the *phorminx* had four strings, the *aidoi* seemed to use only four tones. Therefore, early Greek hexameter poetry, that is, the Homeric epic, may have been sung to four fixed notes. The melody of song was assumed to be governed by natural word accents and sentence intonation.<sup>58</sup>

The *phorminx* of the *aidoi* may have enhanced 'the effect of the narrative and to provide continuity between scenes'.<sup>59</sup> According to Havelock, however, musical accompaniment in epic performance may have assisted to preserve the metre of poems. The movement of fingers upon a stringed instrument was tied to the physical memory. Since epics did not have strophe like lyric poetry, it is assumed that playing instruments helped the *aidos*, and the audience also, to memorise and recall words or phrases of epics. Havelock says that 'the melody and the dance are thus the servants of preserved statement and are not in the oral stage of culture practised very much for their own sake.'<sup>60</sup>

## Was the *Rhapsodos*' Performance *Mousike*?

Meanwhile, Greek lyric and choral poetry began to be composed with μέλος. As Plato explains that it consists of λόγος, ἁρμονία, and ῥυθμός (Plato, *Republic*, 398d), the *melos* was 'the whole complex of text, rhythm, and pitches and their functional relationships'.<sup>61</sup> The *phorminx* and the *kitharis*, which used to be played by the *aidos* in Homeric epics, gave way to the *kithara* of lyric poets. Musical instruments started to be developed with the *melos* in lyric and choral poetry. Almost at the same time, the *rhapsodos* gave up musical instruments. In accordance with the rise in cultural status of Homer, the *rhapsodos* concentrated on the narrative of Homeric poetry. The

<sup>57</sup> Kemp (1966), 215n2.

<sup>58</sup> West (1981), pp. 115-6. Here, I use the term 'melody' not in a sense of *melos*.

<sup>59</sup> Kemp (1966), p. 214.

<sup>60</sup> Havelock (1963), pp. 150-1.

<sup>61</sup> Strunk ed. (1998), p. 10. The *harmonia* had 'the much broader sense of an entire complex of relationships among pitches' (Ibid.). Cf. Aristotle, *Poetics*. Poetic arts produce *mimesis* in ῥυθμῶ καὶ λογῶ, καὶ ἁρμονίᾳ (1447a). Dithyramb, tragedy and comedy use ῥυθμῶ καὶ μέλει καὶ μέτρῳ (1447b).

performance of words and metre appeared to them to be more important than the artistic expression with musical instruments.

Whether the *rhapsodoi* sang or recited in their performance is a confusing problem. Returning to Plato's *Ion*, Socrates uses 'ᾄδειν' for the *rhapsodos*' performance twice (ᾄδετε 532d, ᾄδης 535b).<sup>62</sup> Ἀδελν or ἀείδειν was the term used for the *aoidos* in Homeric epics. In other places, Socrates and Ion use 'λέγειν' (535c, etc.) and 'εἴπεν' (535b, etc.) referring to Ion's performance. From the context, we may, possibly, infer that these words were interchangeable. According to Herington, 'the rhapsode's delivery of verse had a certain incantatory quality, above the level of ordinary colloquial utterance but well below the level of song'.<sup>63</sup> It may be said that Plato was simply not conscious of a separation in the usage of these words when he talked about the *rhapsodos*.

At any rate, the *rhapsodoi* did not seem simply to speak. A possible explanation for this may be partly due to the intonation of the Greek language, which by nature has effective arrangements of rhythm and pitch, such as onomatopoeia.<sup>64</sup> The fact that the *rhapsodoi* wished to perform well for the purpose of *paideia*, may also have contributed to a sense that they did not simply speak their words. Their performance, therefore, was probably something between ἔπεα (poetic speech) and ἀοιδή (unmelodic song).<sup>65</sup>

Interestingly, no example of the vocabulary of μουσική and μουσικός can be found in Homeric poetry.<sup>66</sup> Epic poems were simply called ἀοιδή (song) sung by the ἀοιδός. There was no pure instrumental music in Homer, and the *phorminx* and the *kitharis* displayed their ability no more than as accompaniment to songs. Afterwards, with the emergence and development of the *rhapsodos*, and the improvement of other poetry genres in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C., perhaps, the idea of *mousike* and *mousikos* began to be newly established. The *mousike*, associated with the *melos*, appears to have referred mainly to poetry sung to musical instruments, in which the instrument played a more positive, effective role in performance. In this sense, the *rhapsodos*' performance cannot be classified as *mousike*. On the other hand, the *mousikos* was 'one who understood music in both its scientific and practical forms',<sup>67</sup> and later came to imply an 'educated man', as playing the *lyra* began to be adopted as a compulsory education for the Athenians.<sup>68</sup> I would like to suggest that the

<sup>62</sup> Cf. The term 'ᾄδειν' is used five times in total in *Ion*: Tynnichus composed the paean which everyone sings (ᾄδουσι) (534d); the god sang (ᾄσεν) the finest song (534e); anyone sing (ᾄδῃ) the work of other poet than Homer (536b).

<sup>63</sup> Herington (1985), p. 13.

<sup>64</sup> Edwards (1987), pp. 117-9.

<sup>65</sup> Ford (1988), p. 305.

<sup>66</sup> The earliest reference to the term *mousike* is in Pindar (*Ol.*, 1.15). In the fifth century B.C., Herodotus (*The Persian Wars*, 6.129.2, music after dinner), and Thucydides (*History of the Peloponnesian War*, 3.104.3, μουσικός ἀγών) mentioned it. As for *mousikos* as a musician, I have not been able to find this word until Plato.

<sup>67</sup> Strunk (1998), p. 10.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. LSD s.v. "μουσικός": 'opp. ἀμαθής'.

conceptualisation of the *mousike* and the *mousikos* may have had a close relation to the development of various poetic genres, including the *rhapsodos*' epic performance, in the fifth century B.C., and also that both words should be considered in terms of *paideia*. However, a more detailed study of this topic is needed.

### Conclusion

In the sixth and fifth centuries B.C., people enjoyed various poetic genres of epic, lyric and choral poetry, all of which tended to be specialised. As I have already suggested, before that time, epic performers, such as the Homeric singer, *aoidos*, were divided into two extreme figures: one was the *rhapsodos*, who was responsible for maintaining and reproducing Homeric poetry in performance; the other was the instrumental musician, who developed instrumental music, expanding its capacity through the introduction of artistic features that went beyond the mere accompaniment of speech. Or, rather, to characterise this separation in a slightly different manner: in his performance, the *rhapsodos* was responsible for *paideia*, together with text and metre (λόγοι and μέτρον); while the other poet-musicians were responsible for *mousike* with the *melos* in their performances.

Shapiro explains that the *rhapsodos* became 'increasingly professionalised in the course of the sixth century, [as they were] desperately trying to turn the Homeric poems into "classics" in order to compete with the newer and more appealing musical genres of choral and monodic lyric'.<sup>69</sup> The transition of the epic singer's role to the *paideia* led to the formation of a repertoire made up of classics. This new repertoire, which placed emphasis on the mode of performance without musical accompaniment, may have helped to specialise the function of the *rhapsodos*. Moreover, it is true that, particularly in the last third of the fifth century B.C., by which time the *rhapsodos* had gained a good status in society, older, more traditional art forms were beginning to break-up. Consequently, music, metrics, acting styles, and visual arts underwent considerable change.<sup>70</sup> One notable change was the expansion of theatrical performance, with the introduction of the new music of Timotheus, a composer and *kitharodos*, and the work of Euripides. The *rhapsodos* must also have been influenced by, and simultaneously contributed to, this new artistic stream.

We may conclude that the change in the cultural status of Homeric poetry to *paideia* definitely affected the development of the *rhapsodos*. This shift may have caused a break in the transmission of Homeric poetry in performance between the *aoidos* and the *rhapsodos*, distinct from lyric and choral performance. During this period of transition, the Greeks may have considered that if Homeric epics were to perpetuate

<sup>69</sup> Shapiro (1993), p. 104.

<sup>70</sup> Herington (1985), p. 13.

their cultural identity, the *rhapsodoi* would have to assume the responsibility of preserving Homeric poetry as an essential part of *paideia*. The social demand of the circulation of the *rhapsodoi* in the *paideia*, brought epic performers into public space, where they were free to develop their repertoire and the mode of performance. The change in the cultural status of Homeric poetry encouraged the abandonment of musical instruments, and specialisation in the different genres of poetry. The fact that the history of music has paid so little attention to Homeric poetry may be accounted for by the absence of instrumental music in Homer, since instrumental music may have been regarded as a defining characteristic of *mousike*. More importantly, however, the *rhapsodos*' performance was originally not regarded as *mousike* but as *paideia*.

This study has attempted to describe the development of the *rhapsodos*, which was bound up with the cultural status of Homeric poetry, in social and musical context. Other interesting topics that arise from the discussion on the *rhapsodos*, include the establishment of the concept of the *mousike*, and the expansion of instrumental music performed with poetry in the fifth century B.C.

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## Povzetek

## RHAPSODOI:

*študija o razvoju njihove vloge, repertoarja in nastopanja*

Namen tega članka je kulturološko in muzikološko pretehtati, kako je potekal razvoj rapsodove performativne vloge in razvoj rapsodovega repertoarja. Rapsodi (*rhapsodoi*) so kot izvajalci homerske epike nasledili aojde (*aoidoi*) v 6. in 5. stoletju pr. n. št. Čeprav so se znotraj klasičnih študijev že mnogi ukvarjali s problematiko rapsodov, jih je večina sledila *Ionu*, v katerem Platon rapsode opisuje kot recitatorje homerskih epskih pesnitev. Je pa tudi res, da so primarni viri o obravnavani problematiki zelo skopi, kar nam pomaga razumeti, zakaj o rapsodih še vedno ni bila napisana celostna in natančna študija. Istočasno je vredno pripomniti, da je vprašanje izvajanja homerske epike in vprašanje rapsodov zgodovina glasbe prezrla v celoti.

V članku so raziskani pogoji, v katerih so bili rapsodi povezani s kulturnim pomenom, ki ga je uživalo homersko pesništvo. Slednje je pretehtano upoštevajoč védenje o razvoju antične *mousiké*, ki je vključevala tudi pesništvo. V razpravi se dotikam vprašanja, zakaj rapsodi niso uporabljali glasbil in zakaj je bila edino homerska epika tista izmed vseh pesniških zvrsti, ki se je obdržala kot performativni žanr tako pri aojdih kot tudi pri rapsodih. Povedano bolj splošno, zanima me, če lahko rapsodično umetnost označimo kot muzično oziroma kot *mousiké*.

Danes velja, da je sprememba vloge, ki jo je doživelo homersko pesništvo, ko je privzelo edukativno vlogo (*paideia*), vplivalo tudi na razvoj vloge, ki so jo imeli rapsodi. Grki so v tem času sprememb morebiti smatrali, da je homerska epika imela nalogo performativnega nosilca njihove kulturne identitete, a od rapsodov je bilo pričakovano, da bodo ohranili homersko pesništvo kot temeljni del vzgoje.

Vse to je tudi vzpodbudilo opustitev uporabe glasbil in vodilo k nastajanju drugačnih pesniških oblik. Odgovor, zakaj je zgodovina glasbe posvetila homerskemu pesništvu tako malo pozornosti, morebiti lahko poiščemo v dejstvu, da je bila instrumentalna glasba, ki je sicer odločilno opredeljevala *mousiké*, v homerskem pesništvu bolj malo uporabljana. In nenazadnje, rapsodova dejavnost ni bila prepoznana kot *mousiké* ampak kot *paideia*.

Upam, da z razpravo o vseh teh vprašanjih podajam vpogled v to, kako so se rapsodi umestili v procese, ki so sicer opredeljevali homersko pesništvo.