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a new close-mid [ɔ:] distinct from inherited /o:/ (so, e.g., Ruy Pérez 1956). This fronting must have taken place at a date between the first and second compensatory lengthenings, since the second introduced a new [a:] which did not shift. The development had an important impact on the writing system, since East Ionic, which lacked the phoneme /h/, adapted the redundant sign eta <H> to write the new vowel /æ:/. An early inscription from Naxos (*IG* xii.5.21, ca. 650 BCE) preserves this state of affairs in the spelling <KΑΣΙΓΝΕΤΗ> = Attic *kasignētē* ‘sister’, where the epsilon <E> is used for inherited /ε:/ and the eta <H> for /æ:/ < /a:/. Eventually /æ:/ would merge with /ε:/ in → Ionic, taking its spelling with it (whence the usual spelling of <H> for /ε:/), and partly also in → Attic, except after *e*, *i* and *r* where it merged instead with /a:/.

Overcrowding among the back vowels may also be the motivation for the second main example, the fronting of [u:] to [y:] (a high front vowel with lip-rounding), it being ‘pushed’ out of the way perhaps by the raising of [ɔ:], spelled *ou*, to [u:]. If so, the corresponding shift of short [u] to [y] must have been for reasons of symmetry between the long and short vowel systems. Alternatively, the fronting may have happened first (compare Latin [u:] > French [y]), leaving a gap into which [ɔ:] was ‘dragged’. From the 6th c. BCE Ionic inscriptions sometimes spell the [au] and [eu] → diphthongs *ao*, *eo* instead of *au*, *eu*, perhaps showing that the change had already taken place. It certainly had by ca. 350 BCE when → Boeotian adopted the Ionic alphabet and used *ou* rather than *u* to spell its own [u, u:] vowels (previously spelled *u*), but conversely *u* for the equivalent of Attic-Ionic *oi*, a diphthong which had probably monophthongized in Boeotian to [y:]. The original value [u, u:] of upsilon is preserved in the spellings of presumably onomatopoeic *mukáomai* ‘moo’ and *kókkux* ‘cuckoo’, and in the diphthongs *au* and *eu* (and before → monophthongization also *ou*).

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RUPERT THOMPSON

Vowels

The vowel system of late fifth-century Classical Attic is well known for its asymmetry, as it has almost twice as many front vowels as back. Considerable debate surrounds this topic, and one is hard pressed to find any two (synchronic or diachronic) accounts of the Attic vowel system that agree in all their details. See Brixhe (1996); Threatte (1980) for the inscriptional evidence; Lejeune (1972), Meier-Brügger (1992), Rix (1992), and Sihler (1995) for diachronic overviews; Sturtevant (1940) and Allen (1987) for a wealth of ideas and data on the phonetic quality of Greek vowels.

The inventory is comprised of twelve vowels. There are four high front vowels /i i: y y:/, which are differentiated by → length (i vs. i:, y vs. y:) and lip rounding (i vs. y, i: vs. y:). There are three mid-front vowels, all of which are unrounded: mid /e:/, which is represented by the digraph <ει> (and in this context is thus a “spurious diphthong”), lower mid /ε:/ <η>, and a final short mid-vowel <ε>, the phonetic status of which is disputed. It may lie somewhere between /e:/ and /ε:/ (in which case it would be a mid-front /ɛ/), or it may be equivalent in aperture to one of the long vowels; in light of this uncertainty, I label it simply /e/. (It should be noted that there is considerable variation in the description of these vowels, and in the phonetic symbols used to represent them; e.g., the first and second mid-front vowels are elsewhere referred to as “long tense” and “long lax,” respectively, with the corresponding symbols /ɛ/ and /ɛ̃/.)

There are three mid-back vowels, all of which are rounded: mid /o:/ <ου>, lower mid /ɔ:/ <ω>, and the short vowel /o/ <ο>, the phonetic status of which is disputed. As with /e/ above, the height of /o/ may correspond to /ɔ:/ or /o:/, or may lie in between (i.e., mid-back /ɔ/). For the most part, /e/ and /o/ behave as the short counterparts of /e:/ and /o:/. Strings such as /ee/ or /oo/, for instance, contract to /e:/ and /o:/, respectively (elsewhere the details are more complex, and involve morphological conditioning; see Allen 1959:246–7; Sommerstein 1973:56–59, 102–104; Probert 2010:97–99). At other times, however, /e/ and /o/ correspond to /ε:/ and /ɔ:/: some verbs with an initial /e/ → augment to /ε:/ (e.g. *egeírō* ‘awaken’, pres. *ege.rɔ:*, impf. *ε:ge.ron* <ἔγειρον>), while others augment to /e:/ (*ékhō*, ‘have’, pres. *ek̄hɔ:*, impf. *ek̄hɔn* <εἶχον>). These two processes

are not merely a question of phonological fusion, however, as there are also morphological and lexical conditions on their operation (see Sommerstein 1973:10–12, 18, 51, 61–3, 181).

Finally, there are two low-central /a/ vowels, which are distinguished by length. Both vowels are written <α>; the difference in length can be seen in how they affect → syllable weight in meter.

The vowel system undergoes considerable change in the course of the 5th century BCE and the description above is valid only for the late 5th century. During the 5th c., the most significant development is the fronting and rounding of earlier /u u:/ to /y y:/ (when exactly this change takes place is a matter of debate; Threatte 1980:337, for instance, places it later). This is followed by a later change in which /o:/, written <ου>, is raised to /u:/ (see Samuels 2006) (→ Vowel Fronting; → Vowel Changes).

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