Alcman and the Evolution of Early Sparta

A thesis submitted by

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Abstract

This thesis studies the poet Alcman within the context of archaic Sparta's socio-political development. What is the relationship between Alcman's poetry and its context of early Sparta? I suggest that Alcman's lyric production should be primarily understood as instrumental in promoting the ideology of the new Spartan state in the seventh century BC, rather than as the heritage of a hierarchical aristocratic society doomed to be overcome by the Lycourgan reforms.

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Alcman and the Evolution of Early Sparta

Chapter One

In 1968 Ehrenberg defined the scholarly practice of theorizing about the history of archaic Sparta as "intellectual gymnastics."[1] The scarcity and unreliability of sources on early Sparta — Alcman, Tyrtaeus, and potentially the *Great Rhetra* (Plut. *Lyc.* 6) are the extant archaic literary evidence — lead to the inherent fallibility of any cogent explanation.[2] The continuous transformation of Sparta's historical image and reputation is hardly a surprise. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, for example, the debate between "primitivists" and "modernists" offered different, even opposed, interpretations of the Laconian *polis*, such as Lévesque's identification of Sparta with the *ancien régime* and Rousseau's association of Spartan laws with the ethical values of patriotism and collectivity.[3] Recent scholarship has aimed to normalize the history of Sparta, deconstructing the traditional austerity attributed to the *polis*, evaluating the implications of non-Spartan sources, and re-assessing the transition from the Archaic to the Classical period.[4]

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[1] See V. Ehrenberg, *From Solon to Socrates: Greek History and Civilization during the 6th and 5th Centuries B.C* (London, 1968), 380; as quoted in M. Lupi, "Testo e Contesti. La Grande Rhetra e Le Procedure Spartane Di Ammissione Alla Cittadinanza," *Incidenza Dell'Antico. Dialoghi Di Storia Greca*, no. 12 (2014): 18, fn. 24.

[2] See M. I Finley, "Sparta," in *The Use and Abuse of History* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1975), 143. On the possibility of studying early Spartan history, see C. G. Starr, "The Credibility of Early Spartan History," Historia: Zeitschrift Für Alte Geschichte 14, no. 3 (1965): 257–72.

[3] P. C. Levesque, *Études de l'histoire Ancienne et de Celle de La Grèce*, vol. I (Paris: Fournier Frères Libraires, 1811), 305–7 ; Rousseau: "Oublierais-je que se fut dans le sein même de la Grèce qu'on vit s'élever cette cité aussi célèbre par son heureuse ignorance que par la sagesse de ses lois, cette République de demi-dieux plutôt que d'hommes?" in "Discours Sur Les Sciences et Les Arts [1750]," in *Selections from the Works of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, ed. C. Gauss, 2nd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1920), 34. For a discussion of Rousseau's view of Sparta, see P. Cartledge, "The Socratics' Sparta and Rousseau's," in *Sparta: New Perspectives*, ed. S. Hodkinson and A. Powell (Swansea: Duckworth The Classical Press of Wales, 1999), 311–37.

[4] For a summary of twentieth–century re-evaluations of Spartan scholarship, see S. Hodkinson, "Transforming Sparta: New Approaches to the Study of Spartan Society," *Ancient History: Resources for Teachers*, no. 41–44 (2015): 1–12. For the "normalization" of Sparta, see M. Lupi, "Le Origini Di Sparta e Il Peloponneso Arcaico," in *Storia d'Europa e Del Mediterraneo. II: La Grecia* (Roma: Salerno Editrice, 2007), 378. Ollier used the term "mirage" to indicate how non-Spartan authors (beginning in the mid-fifth century) shaped a distorted image of Sparta, in F. Ollier, *Le*

This thesis studies the poet Alcman within the context of archaic Sparta's socio-political development. In modern studies, his poetry has been enigmatic since the discovery of the *Partheneion* papyrus in 1855.[5] Since antiquity, sources about this poet have been contradictory: his life has been dated variously,[6] his provenance has been questioned (either from Sparta or Sardis, although the discovery of Ox. Papyrus 2389 could have solved the issue),[7] and what role he played in Sparta is still uncertain.[8] Could his poetry not only constitute the oldest known example of choral lyric, but also have been instrumental in forging the Spartan identity in the seventh century?

Alcman seems to belong to an established Spartan poetic tradition. The poet Terpander of Lesbos is considered the first victor of the citharodic competition at the Carneia in 676 BC,[9] a contest that inaugurated visits of foreign poets, who found Sparta "a congenial field for the display

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Mirage Spartiate: Étude Sur l'idéalisation de Sparte Dans l'antiquité Grecque de l'origine Jusqu'aux Cyniques., vol. 1 (New York: Arno Press, 1933), 42 ff. Ollier's idea was later studied in greater detail by E.N. Tigerstedt, *The Legend of Sparta in Classical Antiquity*, vol. I (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1965).

[5] A useful review of the bibliography on Alcman's poetry is found in D. E. Gerber, "Greek Lyric Poetry Since 1920. Part D: From Alcman to Fragmenta Adespota," *Lustrum* 36 (1994): 9–49.

[6] Alcman is said to have lived in the seventh century BC, but it is impossible to precisely date him. The most important evidence is Ox. Pap. 2390 fr. 2, col. II (= fr. 80 d–f Calame), published in 1957, which mentions the Eurypontid king Leotychidas I, who ruled during the last quarter of the seventh century (see Hdt. 8.131.2). The *Suda* sets the floruit of Alcman in XXVII Olympiad = 672/668 BC. Eusebius gives two different dates, namely that the poet was born in the fourth year of the XXX Olympiad = 657 BC (*Chron.* 94 Helm) and that he was famous in the second year of the XLII Olympiad = 609–608 BC (*Chron.* 98 Helm). About Alcman's chronology, see (among others): M. L. West, "Alcmanica," *The Classical Quarterly* 15, no. 2 (1965): 188–202; F. D. Harvey, "Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 2390 and Early Spartan History," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 87 (1967): 62–73; C. Calame, *Les Chœurs de jeunes filles en Grèce archaïque II: Alcman* (Roma: Ed. dell'Ateneo, 1977), 21–22.

[7] The discussion revolves around Sparta and Lydia, as shown by the testimonia collected in D. A. Campbell, *Greek Lyric, Volume II: Anacreon, Anacreontea, Choral Lyric from Olympus to Alcman.* (Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press, 1988), 336–59. A source even considered him a slave: Heraclid. Lemb. *Excerpt. Polit.* (= Arist. fr. 372 Rose), probably due to the disbelief that a poet such as Alcman could have been from militarized Sparta. Cf. C. Neri, *Lirici Greci: Età Arcaica e Classica* (Roma: Carocci, 2011), 93: "questi biografi erano poco inclini (per filoatticismo o altro) a riconoscere un pedigree culturale al 'rozzo' capoluogo laconico". The Ox. Papyrus 2389 (published in 1957) might put an end to the question because it explicitly mentions the problem that Aristotle and others misinterpreted Alcman's birthplace.

[8] The Suda (A 1289) credits him with six books of lyric songs.

[9] Ath. 635e; ps.-Plut. *De mus*. 9 (= Plut. *Mor*. 1134b).

of their talents."[10] In the seventh and sixth century BC, poets seem to have been, in fact, more numerous in Sparta than in any other Greek *polis*,[11] and their oral public performances seem to be always associated with civic festivals.[12] It could be that these civic gatherings existed before the seventh century; only by this time, however, music and dance played a crucial role in Spartan society.[13] In this context, the poet is not only an artisan of public performances, but also a conveyor of social values. Calame defines him as "l'enseignant par excellence puisque c'est lui qui a la capacité ... de communiquer le savoir nécessaire à la reproduction du système social."[14]

Alcman exclusively composed for oral performances, with an immediate purpose, and for a local destination.[15] Evidence suggests that his poems were not written down before the fourth century BC, whether in Sparta or Athens.[16] What does remain of his verses reveals the picture of a poet that was γλυκὺς, "sweet" (Anth. Pal. 9. 571) and treated love and beauty themes. Pausanias

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[10] P. Cartledge, *Sparta and Lakonia: A Regional History 1300-362 BC.* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 111.

[11] This tradition was attested in antiquity: Athenaeus (14.632f–633), for instance, claims that at Sparta the musical practice was more intense than in other cities. Ps.-Plut. (*De mus*. 9) mentions the names of Thaletas the Gortynean, Xenodamus the Cytherean, Xenocritus the Locrian, Polymnestus the Colophonian, and Sacadas the Argive.

[12] E.g. Terpander at the Carneia or Thales for the foundation of the Gymnopaedia (ps.-Plut. *De mus*. 9). See A. Brelich, *Paides e Parthenoi* (Roma: Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1981), 186ff. On the importance of orality and its social consequences, see the classical work of E. A. Havelock, *The Muse Learns to Write: Reflections on Orality and Literacy from Antiquity to the Present* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2005), 65.

[13] Calame, *Les Chœurs de jeunes filles II*, 35. Thucydides (5.16.3) states that the Spartan kingship, when it was originally founded, was accompanied by dancing and sacrifices.

[14] C. Calame, *Les Chœurs de Jeunes Filles En Grèce Archaïque. I: Morphologie, Fonction Religieuse et Sociale* (Roma: Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1977), 399. For the idea of "master of truth", see the work of M. Detienne, *Les Maîtres de Veritè Dans La Grèce Archaique* (Paris: F. Maspero, 1967), 18ff.

[15] F. Cuartero, "La Poética de Alcmán," *CFC* 4 (1972): 382: "la ingenuidad de las expresiones de amor, el humorismo rural de ciertas imágenes nos revelan inmediatamente una poesía compuesta con finalidad inmediata y destino local."

[16] C. Carey, "Alcman from Laconia to Alexandria," in *Archaic and Classical Choral Song Performance, Politics and Dissemination*, ed. L. Athanassaki and E. L. Bowie (Berlin de Gruyter, 2011), 445–47. A sixth-century inscription (found during the 1924-1928 excavations of Sparta, SEG 11.625) carrying a metrical dedication to Athena was associated with Alcman by T. A. Boring, *Literacy in Ancient Sparta* (Lugduni Batavorum, 1979), 42, and it could constitute the earliest written evidence of the transcription of Alcman's poetry. This hypothesis has been recently disproved by V. Kousoulini, "The 'Hymn to Athena' (SEG 11.625) and Alcman's Early Reception," *Classical World* 108, no. 3 (May 15, 2015): 325–41.

(3.15.2) even notes that the charm of Alcman's songs was not affected by the Laconian dialect, the least musical of all. The most valuable extant fragment is known as the *Louvre Partheneion* (1 PGM = 3 Calame), a text that has a length of approximately a hundred lines and is accompanied by an abundance of scholia annotations.[17] The composition, dedicated to a mysterious Dawn-goddess and other deities, is organized in two main parts: the narration of the myth of the Hippocontids and what seems to be a ceremony of a female chorus of ten or eleven members praising the beauty of their leader, Hagesichora, and her assistant, Agido.[18] In v. 36, a sentence of traditional wisdom (*gnomē*) connects the two sections:

ἔστι τις σιῶν τίσις

there is a certain vengeance of the gods[19]

In the second half of the poem, vv. 60–4 indicate the religious aspect of the ceremony:

ταὶ Πεληάδες γὰρ ἇμιν
Ὀρθρίαι φᾶρος φεροίσαις
νύκτα δι᾽ ἀμβροσίαν ἅτε σήριον
ἄστρον ἀυηρομέναι μάχονται.

for the Pleiades, rising through the ambrosial night
like the star Sirius, fight against us as we carry a plow to Orthria.

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[17] Recent philological and thematic analyses of the *Partheneion* are K. Tsantsanoglou, *Of Golden Manes and Silvery Faces.* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012) and C. O. Pavese, *Il grande Partenio di Alcmane* (Amsterdam: Hakkert Editore, 2015).

[18] There are two main topics in the song: the dynastic conflicts in Sparta between Hippocoon and his sons and Tyndareos and his sons (for the myth, see Strab. 10.2.24 and Apollod. 3.123–125) and the girlish discord between Agido and Hagesichora during the preparation and before the performance. For a list of interpretations of the deity of the *Partheneion* (e.g. Artemis, Helen, Aphrodite), see E. Robbins, "Alcman's Partheneion: Legend and Choral Ceremony," *The Classical Quarterly* 44, no. 1 (1994): 9 fn. 13, and, recently, Pavese, *Il grande Partenio di Alcmane*, 57–58, and Tsantsanoglou, *Of Golden Manes and Silvery Faces*, 68–69.

[19] Unless otherwise indicated, translations are my own with the help of D.L. Page, *Alcman, the Partheneion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), C. Calame, *Alcman* (Roma: Ed. dell'Ateneo, 1983), and Campbell, *Greek Lyric, Volume II*.

The *Partheneion* contains the typical structural elements of Bacchylides' and Pindar's epinician odes, namely myth, *gnomē*, present time, religious inspiration, and self-celebration.[20]

Alcman's poetry seems to fit the system of values of the archaic aristocratic society. Calame's anthropological study concludes that the ceremony described in the *Partheneion* was not only a religious festival, but also a rite of passage, a transition from childhood to adulthood. In the Archaic social system, the female chorus aimed at preparing maidens for their predetermined role in society[21] – though one may wonder to what extent this female ritual initiation is comparable to the Spartan male *agōgē*.[22]

The evident difference between Alcman's poetry and the spirit of the barrack-based military society of Classical times[23] has attracted scholars' attention. The traditional interpretation argues that Alcman and the performance of female choruses represent an earlier and culturally flourishing Sparta in contrast with the later militarized one, whose values are reflected in the verses of the poet-soldier Tyrtaeus.[24] This view of Spartan history assumes an opposition between art and militarism, two aspects that, however, could have coexisted as soon as the early Archaic period

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[20] Neri, *Lirici greci*, 267, and Pavese, *Il grande Partenio di Alcmane*, 70. See also D. E. Gerber, *A Companion to the Greek Lyric Poets* (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1997), 228: "we find the elements that we see so clearly two centuries later in the epinician odes of Pindar: there is a myth told, with attendant moralizing and theological reflection, and there is much about the occasion and the performance."

[21] Cf. Plut. *Lyc*. 14.4, 19, 21.

[22] Cf. J. Ducat, *Spartan Education: Youth and Society in the Classical Period*, trans. E. Stafford, P.-J. Shaw, and A. Powell (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2006), 245: "Alcman's poems allow us a glimpse of the bonds of affection uniting younger girls with more senior members, and this homosexual relationship, which itself also has a tutelary function, is as much a part of their education as is the case with its male counterpart." Furthermore, it is important to underline the recent rejection of the traditional view of the uniqueness of Spartan state-driven upbringing focused solely on physical training. Scholars now hypothesize the presence of a parallel artistic education as well as the co-existence of both public and private structures (see the summary in Hodkinson, "Transforming Sparta: New Approaches to the Study of Spartan Society," 25–6).

[23] The association of Sparta with a military camp is in Isoc. 6.81. A view of Sparta as a totalitarian state that controls every aspect of the citizens' lives is found in Plut. *Lyc*. 24.1.

[24] For example, see B. Snell, *Poetry and Society: The Role of Poetry in Ancient Greece* (Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1971), 130.

and specifically after the First Messenian War, as ancient sources suggest. Plutarch (*Lyc.* 21.3), for example, says that Terpander thought that the Spartans attached the same importance to music and military virtue.[25]

Spartan militarism does not appear to have dominated over other civic aspects.[26] As Van Wees notices, archaic Greek warfare and military training was subordinated to the social and cultural ideas of the upper classes and was thus unspecialized and focused on general fitness and leisure pursuit.[27] Accordingly, Alcman's poetry could fit Tyrtaeus' military themes.[28] For example, fr. 41 Page (= 143 Calame) correlates the playing of the lyre to combat. By comparing this fragment with Pindar fr. 199 and Terpander fr. 6 Bergk (= Plut. *Lyc*. 21. 4), Janni argues that the war–music association could be, in fact, a *topos* of Greek lyric.[29]

Sparta's cultural flourishing extended beyond the poetic realm, as the excavations conducted at the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia (approx. 700 BC) demonstrate.[30] The enormous material evidence found — artifacts ranging from approximately 750 to 500 — is an indication of the new

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[25] See also ps.-Plut. *De Mus*. 26, who mentions that the Spartans listened to pipes before their battles. Also cf. Plut. *Mor*. 238b, Ath. 12.517a., Aristoph. *Wasps* 1060 ff.

[26] Hodkinson, "Transforming Sparta: New Approaches to the Study of Spartan Society," 30.

[27] H. Van Wees, "War and Society," in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare*, ed. P. A. G Sabin, H. Van Wees, and M. Whitby (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 280. The only reference to Spartan military training is found in Xenophon (*Const. Lac*. 11), who, however, adds that οὐδὲν οὐδ᾽ ὁπωστιοῦν χαλεπὸν μαθεῖν, "nothing whatsoever [of the military practice] is hard to learn" (11.6).

[28] Robbins, "Alcman's Partheneion: Legend and Choral Ceremony," 224. See Calame, *Alcman*, 550.

[29] P. Janni, *La Cultura Di Sparta Arcaica* (Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1965), 93.

[30] R. M Dawkins, ed., *The Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia at Sparta: Excavated and Described by Members of the British School at Athens, 1906-1910.* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1929). For a brief overview of the sanctuary of Orthia, see Cartledge, *Sparta and Lakonia*, 308, Appendix 5; G. O. Hutchinson, *Greek Lyric Poetry A Commentary on Selected Larger Pieces.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 72, esp. fn. 2 for bibliography. A concise review of the history of the British excavations at Orthia is H. W. Catling, "The Works of the British School of Athens at Sparta and in Laconia," in *Sparta in Laconia: Proceedings of the 19th British Museum Classical Colloquium Held with the British School at Athens and King's and University Colleges, London, 6-8 December 1995*, ed. W. Cavanagh and S. Walker (London: British School at Athens, 1999), 22ff. For an attempt of linking the sanctuary of Orthia with Alcman's poetry, see J. A. Davison, "Alcman's Partheneion," *Hermes* 73 (1938): 453–57.

wealth that Sparta achieved in the eighth and seventh century BC and is hardly reconcilable with Sparta's traditional austerity.[31] In light of these findings, Dickins opposes the character of the early sixth-century Spartan civilization to the spirit of the later society: he considers that the former "is of the orientalising type common in the rest of the Greek world, and it displays no shadow of sumptuary laws or exclusions of strangers," while the latter, after Chilon's reforms, banished the arts and promoted militarization.[32] The persistence of certain Spartan art forms well into the fifth century BC,[33] however, has led other scholars to reject Dickins' theory. Förtsch, for instance, distinguishes a previous Spartan "aristocratic, luxury-loving tendency" from a "gradually pervading restrictive attitude to visual art,"[34] while Hodkinson urges a new view of the general notion that Laconian art production simply rose in the seventh century and declined in the late sixth century.[35] Furthermore, Spartan art does not seem opposed to the societal process of militarization, because art production shows a tendency towards the representation of military subjects, as the thousands of lead warrior figurines found in the Orthia sanctuary indicate. These figurines were likely used in male rites of passage (possibly parallel to the female ones) and, perhaps, reflected "a desire on the part of the Spartans to be represented in this manner."[36]

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[31] After the mid-sixth century BC, archaeological findings decline.

[32] G. Dickins, "The Growth of Spartan Policy," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 32 (November 1912): 1–42.

[33] See table 4.1 in R. Förtsch, "Spartan Art: Its Many Different Deaths," in *Sparta in Laconia: Proceedings of the 19th British Museum Classical Colloquium Held with the British School at Athens and King's and University Colleges, London, 6-8 December 1995*, ed. W. G. Cavanagh and S. Walker (London: British School at Athens, 1999), 52–53.

[34] Förtsch, 54.

[35] S. Hodkinson, "Lakonian Artistic Production and the Problem of Spartan Austerity," in *Archaic Greece: New Approaches and New Evidence*, ed. N. Fisher and H. Van Wees (London: Duckworth, 2002), 109: "the fact that several of these products came to an end during the seventh and early sixth centuries ... shows that the demise of particular art-forms, even those intended primarily for local consumption, does not carry any necessary implications for a growth in domestic austerity."

[36] N. M. Kennell, *The Gymnasium of Virtue: Education and Culture in Ancient Sparta.* (Univ of North Carolina Pr, 1995), 136. Cf. A. J. Wace, "Lead Figurines: Pls. CLXXIX¬–CC," in *The Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia at Sparta: Excavated and Described by Members of the British School at Athens, 1906-1910.*, ed. R. M Dawkins (London: Macmillan and Co., 1929), 283 and plates CLXXXIII. Whether there was a sudden demise of Laconian art around

One may ask whether the Spartans' interest in artistic production after the Messenian Wars was politically motivated, as well as whether the arts were intimately connected to the progressive militarization of society. Hence: could the poetry of Alcman play a role within a new Spartan ideology? I suggest that his verses should be primarily understood as functional to the ideology of the new Spartan state in the seventh century BC, rather than the heritage of a hierarchical aristocratic society doomed to be overcome by the reform of the *homoioi*.[37]

In the Archaic period, Sparta grew into a major military power. The development of Sparta's hegemony over the whole Peloponnese after the conquest of Messenia was accompanied by an evolution of the Spartan political structures.[38] Scholars maintain that these structures reached their maturity only in the fifth century, although Finley's work recognizes the fundamental importance of a sixth-century reform, which was the result of a long historical process that had begun as early as the eighth century BC.[39] The process came to define new Spartan political institutions alongside the diarchy: citizenship, assembly, *gerousia*, ephorate, and the "classical" distinction between

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550 or not, the questions that remain are how, when, and why this transformation occurred, leading to the fourth-century philistine Sparta presented by Xenophon, Plato, and Aristotle. See Cartledge, *Sparta and Lakonia*, 134. Cf. recently A. Scott, "Laconian Black-Figure Pottery and Spartan Elite Consumption," in *Sparta The Body Politic*, ed. A. Powell and S. Hodkinson (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2010), 177: "the enigma of the emergence of 'austere Sparta' persists."

[37] Defining Alcman's political importance is far from easy, especially considering that ancient sources never mention Alcman in relation to the politics of early Sparta, as observed by Janni, *La Cultura Di Sparta Arcaica*, 86.

[38] Primary sources (Paus. 4.5.1–23.4, 24.5–25.10; Diod. 15.66.2–5; Thuc. 1.101.2) provide details of three separate Messenian wars. The first two wars constitute the Spartan victory over Messenia in the Archaic period: the first one is dated by Pausanias to 743–724 BC (but now re-dated to ca. 735–710), the second one is dated by Pausanias to 685–668 BC (but it is generally thought to have occurred a generation later, on the basis of the fragments of the poet Tyrtaios, such as fr. 2 and 4 Prato). On the issue of dating the Messenian wars, see M. Nafissi, "Sparta," in *A Companion to Archaic Greece*, ed. K. A. Raaflaub and H. Van Wees (Chichester, U.K.; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 120–21. It is worth noting that the mythical aspect of these wars — especially the legendary figure of the Messenian Aristomenes, who would have led the Messenian revolt in the Second Messenian War — seems the product of an ethnic memory created a posteriori after Epaminondas' liberation of Messenia in 371.

[39] Finley's essay "Sparta" (1975) seminally identified a Spartan 'sixth-century revolution' — a complex and gradual transformation of the Spartan social system that moved towards militarization without abolishing the growing disparities within the citizen-body.

citizens, *helots*, and *perioikoi*.[40] These changes leading to the formation of the new Spartan state were later associated with the legendary figure of Lycurgus.[41] The origins of a new ideology are traceable in Tyrtaeus' *Eunomia* and its identification of the *ethnogenesis* of Sparta with the traditional myth of the return of the Heraclids.[42] The aristocratic groups that became promoters of this "reform" supported a stronger sense of collectivity, the creation of new political institutions, and the softening of traditional forms of aristocratic control. But, as Nafissi asks, did aristocratic leaders act for the common interest or try to pursue their own agenda?[43] These reforms — such as the transformation into a hoplite society and the division of land — should not be understood simply as a democratizing process, because scholars have recognized the persistence of significantly entrenched inequalities.[44]

Traditionally, Sparta is considered the most resounding example of the impact of the mid-seventh–century hoplite revolution, which saw the class of farmers and merchants becoming

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[40] See Nafissi, "Sparta," 124. The Spartiates, full Spartan citizens, called themselves *homoioi*, and traditionally shared the same political rights of participation in the citizen assembly, eligibility to hold office, a common way of life (public upbringing, hoplite army, and a common mess called *syssition*), and seemingly owned landholdings of equal size (cf. Plut. *Lyc.* 8.2).

[41] Lycurgus embodies the development of the archaic city towards its classical model (Lupi, "Le Origini Di Sparta e Il Peloponneso Arcaico," 367). Ancient sources constructed Spartan exceptionalism around Lycurgus. Both Spartan royal dynasties claimed Lycurgus as their own: he was Eurypontid according to Simonides (fr. 541 PMG) and Agiad according to Herodotus (65.4). Plutarch (*Lyc.* 29.4) mentions the unchanging nature of Spartan laws after Lycurgus' departure from the city. Herodotus attributes to him both the creation of military institutions and the introduction of the ephors (1.65.5), while Thucydides, on the other hand, does not mention Lycurgus, though he says that the Spartans did not change laws for 400 years (1.18.1). Xenophon claims that Sparta was the most powerful Greek *polis* because of the Lycurgan laws (*Const. Lac.* 1.1–2) and, by making Lycurgus contemporary with the Heraclids (10.8), he suggests that there had never been *stasis* in Sparta since its Dorian foundation.

[42] Tyrtaeus' *Eunomia*: fr. 1a (= Strabo 8.4.10) and 1b (= Plut. *Lyc.* 6.4) Prato. See commentary in C. Prato, *Tyrtaeus: Fragmenta* (Roma: Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1968), 61ff., who mentions the possibility that also fr. 2, 3, and 4 belong to the poem named *Eunomia*.

[43] M. Nafissi, *La nascita del kosmos: Studi sulla storia e la società di Sparta* (Napoli: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1991), 26–27.

[44] See review and bibliography in Hodkinson, "Transforming Sparta: New Approaches to the Study of Spartan Society," 21ff. Aristotle (*Pol.* 5.1306a18–19), for example, says that the mode of election of the Spartan *gerousia* was dynastic (τὴν δ᾽ αἵρεσιν δυναστευτικὴν), namely favorable to the interest of a few very wealthy families.

integrated into the military structure and the political power.[45] The poetry of Tyrtaeus, for example, is associated with hoplite warfare technique.[46] The poet's description of soldiers fighting only with light arms (see fr. 8.35 Prato), however, seems to prove the presence of socio-economic disparities, with Xenophon's suggestion that Sparta still retained an elite cavalry corps providing further evidence.[47] Similarly, the traditional Lycurgan assignation of equal *clēroi* seems to be a construction of later periods, and any distribution of land occurring at that time was probably very different from the wholesale equal redistribution that Plutarch describes.[48] As Calame notes, "les répartitions de *clēroi* ne respectaient que très partiellement les aspirations … et il est d'ailleurs probable que le fameux égalitarisme spartiate ne fut jamais qu'un idéal."[49]

A wealthy class, whose preeminence depended on inheritance and bravery in war, was most likely powerful in seventh-century Sparta.[50] Alcman fr. 17 Page (= 9 Calame) distinguishes between luxury goods and people's common food:

> οὔτι γὰρ ἀδὺ τετυγμένον ἔσθει,
> ἀλλὰ τὰ κοινὰ γάρ, ὥπερ ὁ δᾶμος, ζατεύει.[51]
>
> For he [Alcman] eats no (sweet confections?)
> but he looks for the common fare, like the people.

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[45] A. M. Snodgrass, "The Hoplite Reform and History," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 85 (1965): 110–22.

[46] Frr. 19 and 22 Prato. Calame, *Les Choeurs de jeunes filles II*, 26–27, points out that this technique may not be fully developed already at this time.

[47] Xen. *Horse*. 2.1; *Const. Lac*. 4.5.

[48] A. J. Toynbee, *Some Problems of Greek History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), 301 fn.1. According to Plutarch (*Lyc*. 8.1–2, 16), Lycurgus's redistribution of land allowed each Spartiate to own an equal plot of land (*clēros*). Cf. Paus. 3.3.2. In the late third century BC, the revolutionary reforms of Kings Agis IV and Cleomenes III claimed to be restoring the original Lycurgan equality. See the study of S. Hodkinson, "The Ownership and Inheritance of Land - Revisited," in *Property and Wealth in Classical Sparta* (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2009), 113–87.

[49] Calame, *Les Chœurs de jeunes filles II*, 28.

[50] Cf. Tyrtaeus fr. 9 Prato.

[51] Note the ambiguity of the word *damos*, as explained in D.L. Page, *Sappho and Alcaeus: An Introduction to the Study of Ancient Lesbian Poetry* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), 177, and A. Andrewes, *The Greek Tyrants* (London: Hutchinson University library, 1958), 35, who claims that the word indicates the mass of people in contrast to a privileged class. Alcman uses the word *damos* also in fr. 119 Page (= 176 Calame).

Socio-economic disparities explain the presence of socio-political tensions. For example, the foundation of Taras in 706,[52] traditionally attributed to a group called *Partheniai* (the maidens' offspring), could represent an outcome of civil strife.[53] Aristotle (Tyrtaeus T 7 Prato = Arist. Pol. 5.1306b36–1307a2) provides an analysis of social unrest within Sparta:

> ἔτι ὅταν οἱ μὲν ἀπορῶσι λίαν, οἱ δὲ εὐπορῶσι, γίνονται αἱ στάσεις. καὶ μάλιστα ἐν τοῖς πολέμοις τοῦτο γίνεται· συνέβη δὲ καὶ τοῦτο ἐν Λακεδαίμονι, ὑπὸ τὸν Μεσσηνιακὸν πόλεμον· δῆλον δὲ [καὶ τοῦτο] ἐκ τῆς Τυρταίου ποιήσεως τῆς καλουμένης Εὐνομίας· θλιβόμενοι γάρ τινες διὰ τὸν πόλεμον ἠξίουν ἀνάδαστον ποιεῖν τὴν χώραν.

> Furthermore, whenever some [aristocrats] are indeed extremely poor, and some others are well off, factions arise. And this occurs especially during wars; and this happened in Sparta too, in the period of the Messenian War, and [this is] clear from the poem of Tyrtaeus called Eunomia. For some, being distressed because of the war, demanded a redistribution of the land.

In this context, one can understand the necessity for the Spartan elite to encourage good order and harmony in the city. Poets played a crucial role in this sense. Ephorus (*FGrHist* 149 = Strabo 10.4.16) credits Thales with creating Spartan native songs and, most importantly, institutions, and pseudo-Plutarch claims the following about Terpander:

> Τέρπανδρον δ' ἄν τις παραλάβοι τὸν τὴν γενομένην ποτὲ παρὰ Λακεδαιμονίοις στάσιν καταλύσαντα· καὶ Θαλήταν τὸν Κρῆτα, ὅν φασι κατά τι πυθόχρηστον Λακεδαιμονίους παραγενόμενον διὰ μουσικῆς ἰάσασθαι ἀπαλλάξαι τε τοῦ κατασχόντος λοιμοῦ τὴν Σπάρτην.[54]

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[52] Eusebius. *Chron*. 91b Helm.

[53] Two versions of the story survive: Antiochus of Syracuse (*FGrHist* 555 fr. 13 = Strabo 6.2.3) claims that the *Partheniai* were the children of those who did not take part in the expedition of the Messenian War and so were excluded from citizenship, while Ephorus (*FGrHist* 70 fr. 216 = Strabo 6.3.3) says that they were the offspring of irregular unions between unmarried Spartan girls and men who had been sent back from the war to prevent a shortage of warriors in the city. Cartledge observes that "a war of long duration is almost bound to exacerbate, if not create, internal social tensions, and the origins of the colony certainly lie in social discontent, whose focus may have been a group enigmatically known as the Partheniai," in *Sparta and Lakonia*, 188.

[54] ps.-Plut. *De Mus*. 42.1146b.

But one might take Terpander, the one who once appeased sedition among the Lacedaemonians. And Thaletas the Cretan, who they say, having been sent by some advice of the oracle to the Lacedaemonians, cured Sparta by means of poetry and freed it from a raging pestilence.

Tyrtaeus' poetry emphasizes the importance of the obedience to the law, the community's solidarity, and the sacrifice of the individual for the benefit of the state.[55] In a moment of crisis, Tyrtaeus' poems of *Eunomia* exhorted the Spartans to be obedient to their leaders in order to secure power and military strength.[56]

Various fragments of Alcman can be interpreted from a similar perspective. For example, Alcman speaks of *Eunomia* in fr. 64 Page (= 105 Calame), where *Eunomia* is described as sister of Fortune and Persuasion as well as daughter of Foresight. Other fragments, including the παρθενεία (fr. 1 and 3 Page), may contain a political message in addition to love and beauty themes. Could Alcman's poetry support the nature of the new Spartan state in parallel with Tyrtaeus' verses? Could Alcman's poetry be inspired by a political scheme? I suggest that Alcman's verses and the performance of the female chorus should be understood as part of a far-

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[55] A. Mele, "Costituzioni Arcaiche Ed 'Eunomia,'" *Poleis e Politeiai: Esperienze Politiche Traditioni Letterarie e Progetti Costituzionali. Atti Del Convegno Internazionale Di Storia Greca, Torino*, 2004, 66, observes that, although one cannot consider Tyrtaeus a proper legislator, his mention of the political setup of seventh-century Sparta bears similarities with the memorization of the poems of Solon (cf. Plat. *Tim*. 21b) or the singing of Charondas' laws (cf. Strabo 12.2.9).

[56] In this context, it is worth mentioning the notorious controversy revolving around Tyrtaeus' *Eunomia* and Plutarch's description of the Great Rhetra (*Lyc*. 6.2). H. Van Wees, "Tyrtaeus' Eunomia: Nothing to Do with the Great Rhetra," in *Sparta: New Perspectives*, ed. S. Hodkinson and P. Cartledge (London: Duckworth The Classical Press of Wales, 2010), 1–41, argues there is no connection between Plutarch's Great Rhetra and Tyrtaeus' *Eunomia*: while in the latter the political power was essentially in the hands of the two kings whose power was sanctioned by their traditional ancestry from Heracles, in the former the *gerontes* and the assembly hold the political power. Lupi, "Testo e Contesti. La Grande Rhetra e Le Procedure Spartane Di Ammissione Alla Cittadinanza", has recently warned against an interpretation of the Great Rhetra based on conflict and compromise between elite and *damos*, by arguing that the text is not about assigning a political role to the kings, the elders, and the people, but about defining the procedures and criteria of admission to citizenship. Note Cartledge's reflection about the society of the Great Rhetra: in a community that has achieved a certain level of political institutionalization, "the non-aristocratic damos was granted political recognition, indeed formal sovereignty, but its power of initiative was effectively bridled," in *Sparta and Lakonia*, 2002, 204.

reaching ideological project aimed at controlling the political evolution in Sparta. The next chapter

will explore Alcman's most relevant poems, with the purpose of connecting them to the socio-

political changes that occurred in Spartan society in the seventh and sixth centuries BC.

Chapter Two

Alcman's lyric production was collected in six books by Alexandrian scholars. The poet represents the oldest example of choral lyric poetry. In this field, Alcman primarily (though not exclusively) composed maiden songs (παρθενεία), a type of composition that had important religious and educational functions in the Spartan civic festivals. In addition, Alcman composed hymns, ὑμέναιοι, παιᾶνες, and songs for symposia.[57] Of his vast literary production, only little survived and today his fragments total one hundred and eighty, most of them consisting only of a few words. This present chapter analyzes Alcman's most relevant poems, considering whether this poetry may construct or reinforce a specific civic ideal.

As a preliminary observation, it's worth remembering that most of Alcman's obscurity "is not due to difficulties of language and syntax (in this respect we are a long way from Pindar) but to the very occasional nature of the performance and ritual that the song accompanied. Deixis abounds, and the names and references that so confound the modern reader would have been self–evident to the intended audience."[58]

Alcman's most important fragment, known as the *Louvre Partheneion* (1 Page = 3 Calame), is a text broadly studied by scholars and it has achieved fame as one of the most perplexing examples of early Greek poetry.[59] Among the various interpretations that have been proposed, not

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[57] For a complete summary of Alcman's production, see Neri, *Lirici greci*, 93.

[58] A. Dale, "Topics in Alcman's Partheneion," *Zeitschrift Für Papyrologie Und Epigraphik* 176 (2011): 24. In linguistics, deixis indicates the use of expressions that cannot be fully understood without additional contextual information.

[59] See Y. L. Too, "Alcman's 'Partheneion': The Maidens Dance the City," *Quaderni Urbinati Di Cultura Classica* 56 (1997): 8.

a few of them attempt to connect the poem to its socio–political context. [60] To begin with, I will report Page's edition of the text (1951) followed by Campbell's translation (1988). The *Partheneion* was probably one hundred and forty lines long,[61] but only a part of it survived. The present text comes from the papyrus *Louvre* E 3320 which contains four columns: the first one (lines 1–34) is badly mutilated, while the second and third ones (lines 35–101) have been confidently restored. The fourth column (lines 102–140) is lost, although a κορωνίς is readable at the end of it.

] Πωλυδεύκης·	
οὐκ ἐγὼ]ν Λύκαισον ἐν καμοῦσιν ἀλέγω	
Ἐνα]ρσφόρον τε καὶ Σέβρον ποδώκη	
]ν τε τὸν βιατὰν	
]. τε τὸν κορυστὰν	5
Εὐτείχη] τε ϝάνακτά τ᾽ Ἀρήιον	
καὶ]ν τὸν ἀγρέταν	
] μέγαν Εὔρυτόν τε	
Ἄρεος ἂν] πώρω κλόνον	10
Ἄλκωνά] τε τὼς ἀρίστως	
οὐδ᾽ ἁμῶς] παρήσομες·	
κράτησε γ]ὰρ Αἶσα παντῶν	
καὶ Πόρος] γεραιτάτοι,	
λύθη δ᾽ ἀπ]έδιλος ἀλκά.	15
μή τις ἀνθ]ρώπων ἐς ὠρανὸν ποτήσθω	
μηδὲ πη]ρήτω γαμῆν τὰν Ἀφροδίταν	
Κυπρίαν ϝ]άν[α]σσαν ἤ τιν᾽	
] ἢ παίδα Πόρκω	
εἰναλίω· Χά]ριτες δὲ Διὸς δόμον	20
ἀμφιέπου]σιν ἐρογλεφάροι·	
]τάτοι	
]τα δαίμων	

[60] For a bibliographical article with a summary of the studies, see M. Vetta, "Studi Recenti Sul Primo 'Partenio' Di Alcmane," *Quaderni Urbinati Di Cultura Classica* 10 (1982): 127–36; and most recently, see the study of C. O. Pavese, *Il grande Partenio di Alcmane* (Amsterdam: Hakkert Editore, 2015), with bibliography on pp. 72–75.

[61] For reference to the calculation of the length of the poem made by Diels, Wilamowitz and Davidson, see Dale, "Topics in Alcman's Partheneion," fn. 2.

]ι φίλοις
ἔδ]ωκε δῶρα   25
]γαρέον
]ώλεσ᾽ ἤβα
]ρονον
μ]αταίας
]έβα· τῶν δ᾽ ἄλλος ἰῶι   30
]μαρμάρωι μυλάκρωι
]. εν Ἀΐδας
]αυτοι
]´πον· ἄλαστα δὲ
Ϝέργα πάσον κακὰ μησαμένοι.   35
ἔστι τις σιῶν τίσις·
ὁ δ᾽ ὄλβιος, ὅστις εὔφρων
ἀμέραν [δι]απλέκει
ἄκλαυτος· ἐγὼν δ᾽ ἀείδω
Ἀγιδῶς τὸ φῶς· ὁρῶ   40
Ϝ᾽ ὥτ᾽ ἄλιον, ὅνπερ ἇμιν
Ἀγιδὼ μαρτύρεται
φαίνην· ἐμὲ δ᾽ οὔτ᾽ ἐπαινῆν
οὔτε μωμήσθαι νιν ἀ κλεννὰ χοραγὸς
οὐδ᾽ ἀμῶς ἐῆι· δοκεῖ γὰρ ἥμεν αὔτα   45
ἐκπρεπὴς τὼς ὥπερ αἴτις
ἐν βοτοῖς στάσειεν ἵππον
παγὸν ἀεθλοφόρον καναχάποδα
τῶν ὑποπετριδίων ὀνείρων.
ἦ οὐχ ὁρῆις; ὁ μὲν κέλης   50
Ἐνητικός· ἀ δὲ χαίτα
τᾶς ἐμᾶς ἀνεψιᾶς
Ἀγησιχόρας ἐπανθεῖ
χρυσὸς [ὠ]ς ἀκήρατος·
τό τ᾽ ἀργύριον πρόσωπον,   55
διαφάδαν τί τοι λέγω;
Ἀγησιχόρα μὲν αὔτα·
ἀ δὲ δευτέρα πεδ᾽ Ἀγιδὼ τὸ Ϝεῖδος
ἵππος Ἰβηνῶι Κολαξαῖος δραμήται·
ταὶ Πεληάδες γὰρ ἇμιν   60
Ὀρθρίαι φᾶρος φεροίσαις
νύκτα δι᾽ ἀμβροσίαν ἅτε σήριον
ἄστρον ἀυηρομέναι μάχονται.

οὔτε γάρ τι πορφύρας
τόσσος κόρος ὥστ᾿ ἀμύναι,   65
οὔτε ποικίλος δράκων
παγχρύσιος, οὐδὲ μίτρα
Λυδία, νεανίδων
ἰανογ [λ] εφάρων ἄγαλμα,
οὐδὲ ταὶ Ναννῶς κόμαι,   70
ἀλλ᾿ οὐ[δ᾿] Ἀρέτα σιειδής,
οὐδὲ Σύλακίς τε καὶ Κλεησισήρα,
οὐδ᾿ ἐς Αἰνησιμβρ[ό]τας ἐνθοῖσα φασεῖς·
Ἀσταφίς [τ]έ μοι γένοιτο
καὶ ποτιγλέποι Φίλυλλα   75
Δαμαρ[έ]τα τ᾿ ἐρατά τε Ϝιανθεμίς·
ἀλλ᾿ Ἀγησιχόρα με τηρεῖ.
οὐ γὰρ ἀ κ[α]λλίσφυρος
Ἀγησιχ[ό]ρ[α] πάρ᾿ αὐτεῖ,
Ἀγιδοῖ [δ᾿ ἴκτ]αρ μένει   80
θωστήρ[ιά τ᾿] ἄμ᾿ ἐπαινεῖ;
ἀλλὰ τᾶν [εὐχάς], σιοί,
δέξασθε· [σι]ῶν γὰρ ἄνα
καὶ τέλος· [χο]ροστάτις,
Ϝείποιμί κ᾿, [ἐ]γὼν μὲν αὐτὰ   85
παρσένος μάταν ἀπὸ θράνω λέλακα
γλαύξ· ἐγὼ[ν] δὲ τᾶι μὲν Ἀώτι μάλιστα
Ϝανδάνην ἐρῶ· πόνων γὰρ
ἇμιν ἰάτωρ ἔγεντο·
ἐξ Ἀγησιχόρ[ας] δὲ νεάνιδες   90
ἰρ]ήνας ἐρατ[ᾶ]ς ἐπέβαν.
τῶ]ι τε γὰρ σηραφόρωι
αὐ]τῶς εδ[
τ[ῶι] κυβερνάται δὲ χρὴ
κ[ἠ]ν νᾶϊ μάλιστ᾿ ἀκούην·   95
ἁ δὲ τᾶν Σηρην[ί]δων
ἀοιδοτέρα μ[ὲν οὐχί,
σιαὶ γάρ, ἀντ[ὶ δ᾿ ἔνδεκα
παίδων δεκ[ὰς ἅδ᾿ ἀείδ]ει·
φθέγγεται δ᾿ [ἄρ᾿] ὥ[τ᾿ ἐπὶ] Ξάνθω ῥοαῖσι   100
κύκνος· ἁ δ᾿ ἐπιμέρωι ξανθᾶι κομίσκαι.

…Polydeuces: I do not reckon Lycaethus among the dead but Enarsphorus and
swift-footed Sebrus and… the violent and… the helmeted and Euteiches and lord

Areius and… outstanding among demigods; and great…, gatherer (of the army), and Eurytus in the hurly-burly (of blind Ares?) and Alcon, finest warriors, we shall by no means pass over: Fate and Poros, those ancient ones, conquered them all, and their valour which was without foundation collapsed. Let no man fly to heaven or attempt to marry Aphrodite, the (Cyprian) queen, nor some… nor a daughter of Porcus (of the sea) …; it is the Graces with love in their eyes who (frequent?) the house of Zeus; …god ... to friends… gave gifts… youth lost… throne… vain… went; one of them (died) by an arrow, (another) by a marble millstone… Hades…; and unforgettably they suffered, since they plotted evil. There is such a thing as the vengeance of the gods: that man is blessed who devoutly weaves to the end the web of his day unweeping. And so I sing of the brightness of Agido: I see her like the sun, which Agido summons to shine on us as our witness; but our illustrious choir-leader by no means allows me either to praise or to fault her; for she herself seems pre-eminent, just as if one were to put a horse among grazing herds, a sturdy, thunderous-hoofed prize-winner, one of those seen in rock-sheltered dreams. Why, don't you see? The race-horse is Venetic; but the hair of my cousin Hagesichora has the bloom of undefiled gold, and her silver face —why do I tell you openly? This is Hagesichora here; and the second in beauty after Agido will run like a Colaxaean horse against an Ibenian; for the Pleiads, as we carry a plough to Orthria, rise through the ambrosial night like the star Sirius and fight against us. For abundance of purple is not sufficient for protection, nor intricate snake of solid gold, no, nor Lydian headband, pride of dark-eyed girls, nor the hair of Nanno, nor again godlike Areta nor Thylacis and Cleësithera; nor will you go to Aenesimbrota's and say, 'If only Astaphis were mine, if only Philylla were to look my way and Damareta and lovely Ianthemis'; no, Hagesichora guards me. For is not fair-ankled Hagesichora present here? Does she not remain (near) Agido and commend our festival? Come, you gods, accept their (prayers): to the gods belong fulfilment and accomplishment. Choir leader, —if I may speak— I am myself only a girl screeching pointlessly, an owl from a rafter; but even so I long to please Aotis most of all, for she proved the healer of our sufferings; but it was thanks to Hagesichora that girls trod the path of lovely peace. For (like) the trace-horse…, and in a ship too one must obey the helmsman most of all; and she is of course (not) more melodious than the Sirens, for they are goddesses; but this our choir of ten sings as well as eleven girls: why, its song is like that of a swan on the waters of the Xanthus; and she her lovely yellow hair…[62]

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[62] All the translations of Alcman, Tyrtaeus, and Sappho in the present chapter are from D. E. Gerber, *Greek Elegiac Poetry: From the Seventh to the Fifth Centuries BC*, Loeb Classical Library 258 (Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press, 1999), and Campbell, *Greek Lyric, Volume II*.

For the purpose of this work, I will not discuss the whole poem, but will instead focus on certain lines that may allude to a specific ideology that goes beyond what might be the primary ritual function.[63] The *Partheneion* was most likely composed for the Spartan θίασοι, female organizations parallel to those in Lesbos.[64] The main purpose of the composition was to be sung in the Spartan civic festivals during the performance of specific rituals.[65] In the first column the myth of the Hippocontids was likely narrated,[66] followed by a gnomic statement at the end (v.36):[67]

ἔστι τις σιῶν τίσις

There is a vengeance of the gods for those who (like the sons of Hippocoon) seize power by force and aspire to that which exceeds their own station. In this version of the myth, the usurpers audaciously attempted to marry Aphrodite (line 17),[68] and therefore were inevitably cast down.

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[63] The summary of the *Partheneion*, according to Calame, is: 1) Hagesichora is the chorus leader of a group of young girls; she is close to Agido, another young girl; Agido is going to leave the choir soon, and her female education has terminated; 2) Hagesichora has a pedagogical educational function; 3) the young girls express their sentiments towards the beauty of the chorus leader; they would love to occupy Agido's spot next to Hagesichora; 4) the chorus members are not going to fight against a rival chorus; 5) Agido and Hagesichora perform together a rite , perhaps a race, while the chorus sings; 6) the deity is addressed through the expressions Ὀρθρίαι and Ἀώτι; 7) the ritual is performed during the morning; probably a tribal initiation rite; 8) the links between the members of the chorus have an institutional meaning: the goal is the integration of the girls within the political structures of the city; this function of initiation explains the presence of the myth of the Hippocontids and the gnome. See Calame, *Alcman*, 312–13.

[64] See Calame, 51, 337.

[65] According to Bruno Gentili, "Il 'Partenio' Di Alcmane e l'amore Omoerotico Femminile Nei Tiasi Spartani," *Quaderni Urbinati Di Cultura Classica*, no. 22 (1976): 59–67, the Partheneion is an epithalamic song that involves the celebration of a ritual marriage between Hagesichora and Agido.

[66] For Alcman's version of the myth of the Hippocontids cf. Strab. 10.2.24, Ps.-Apoll. 3.123–125. Alcman presents the sons of Tindareus as rivals to the Hippocontids and fighting alongside Heracles. (Cf. Calame II, 52 ff., Calame 313). The first verse of the Partheneion, Πωλυδεύκης, may indicate the presence of the Dioscuri alongside Herakles in the fight. For the relation between the Dioscuri and Spartan choral lyric, see Plato, Laws 796b 5. Other versions of the myth are in Apoll. 2.7.3 and Paus.3.15.3 ff.

[67] On ἔστι τις see M. L. West, *Works & Days* (Clarendon Press, 1978), 162. The concept of ἔστι τίσις is well analyzed in C. Calame, *Les Choeurs de jeunes filles en Grèce archaïque II: Alcman* (Roma: Ed. dell'Ateneo, 1977), 65 fn.38. Cf. Hom. *Od*. 1.40, 2.76; Hes. *Th*. 210; Sol. 13.25W; Thgn. 345.

[68] For a similar attempt involving this kind of boldness, see *Od*. 15.329, where the suitors are said "τῶν ὕβρις τε βίη τε σιδήρεον οὐρανὸν ἵκει."

Alcman is reminding his audience of the consequences of unmeasured ambition.[69] The poet strengthens this statement of traditional wisdom with a μακαρισμός in the next two verses: ὁ δ᾽ ὄλβιος, ὅστις εὔφρων / ἀμέραν [δι]απλέκει / ἄκλαυτος.[70]

After the mythological part, the composition then turns to its ritual section. By juxtaposing the myth of the Hippocontids to the praise of the maidens by means of a gnomic statement,[71] Alcman may be indicating that the chorus of the *Partheneion* embodies, at the present time, the σωφροσύνη that the Hippocontids' generation lacks.[72] To highlight the comparison between the two groups, Alcman puts eleven maidens in the chorus,[73] exactly equating the number of the Hippocontids in the mythological narrative. The maidens succeed in achieving their ritual marriage (a ceremony typical of the maidens' education in the archaic θίασοι), while the Hippocontids' hubristic attempt to marry the deity naturally failed.[74] Y. L. Too notes that the marriage "after the Odyssey in turn implicitly connotes order within society and such order is achieved when mortals acknowledge the authority of those superior to them."[75]

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[69] The words ἀπ]έδιλος ἀλκά in line 15 can be variously interpreted: on the one hand, Calame and Campbell read it as "valour without foundation", while, on the other hand, Giovanni Tarditi, "Sul Significato Originario Dell'aggettivo Ἀπέδιλος," *RFIC* 104 (1976): 21–25, reads it as "senza impedimento alcuno", namely, the will of the Hippocontids is utterly unrestrained.

[70] On the expression "ὁ δ᾽ ὄλβιος" see Calame, *Alcman*, 322–23.

[71] For another example of a gnomic statement separating the two halves of a lyric composition, see Pind. *Ol.* 1.52–5. Too, "Alcman's 'Partheneion,'" 8: "these expressions of moral wisdom announce the continuity between the poem's mythical and non–mythical part."

[72] Dale, "Topics in Alcman's Partheneion," 27: "the Hippocontidae met their fate through striving against their superiors. The chorus, recognizing their inferiority, instead sing the praise of Agido and Hagesichora. The myth has served its function, and the ritual can now proceed."

[73] For the debate over the precise number of the maidens in the chorus, see Pavese, *Il grande Partenio di Alcmane*, 69, and Robbins, "Alcman's Partheneion: Legend and Choral Ceremony," 10.

[74] The structure of the *Partheneion* can be read as a ring–composition, see Calame, *Alcman*, 317.

[75] Too, "Alcman's 'Partheneion,'" 12–13.

In any case, regardless of whether this ritual marriage does in fact portray a political order, it is still the case that the maidens of the *Partheneion* differ in terms of their social roles. Although all of them are members of the upper class, two of them – Agido and Hagesichora[76] – are identified as leaders[77] and distinguished from all the others.[78] Recent scholarship maintains that this preeminence is better understood as one of "*primae inter pares.*"[79] The chorus, indeed, calls one of the two leaders – Hagesichora – ἀνεψιᾶς, "cousin," proving no difference in terms of social status within the whole community. A parallel between the society of the maidens and the male ἑταιρεία may be surmised in this case. Calame, for instance, notes that "l'emploi de ce terme trouvent probablement leur fondement dans la structure de l'association choral davantage que dans une parenté réelle.[80]

Alcman compares the chorus–leaders to horses[81] – stallions, not fillies[82] – and then to doves (or stars), marking their superiority and thus confirming their difference from the other maidens. The simile involving the Πεληάδες (line 60) is indeed much debated among scholars,[83] whether

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[76] Both names show the root ἄγω (to lead). Hagesichora has a special meaning chorus-leader.

[77] For a different opinion, see Robbins, "Alcman's Partheneion: Legend and Choral Ceremony," 11–12, who sees Hagesichora "overcoming" the chorus, rather than leading it.

[78] For the identity of the other maidens, see the names listed in lines 70–6.

[79] See, for example, Dale, "Topics in Alcman's Partheneion," 26.

[80] Calame, *Alcman*, 328; on how the structure of the chorus reflects the Spartan societal division, see Calame, *Les Chœurs de Jeunes Filles I*, 376 ff.

[81] Lines 57–8.

[82] See Robbins, "Alcman's Partheneion: Legend and Choral Ceremony," 11.

[83] For a summary of the different interpretations, see Pavese, *Il grande Partenio di Alcmane*, 54 ff.

Alcman refers to doves[84] or to the actual constellation of the Pleiades.[85] For the purpose of this study, I will not enter into such a debate, because in either case the point still holds that Alcman is singing of a solidarity between the chorus and its leaders, and this image is communicated employing martial vocabulary (μάχονται, line 63).[86]

These suggested bonds of solidarity are further strengthened in lines 43–80 wherein the maidens' two leaders compete in a beauty contest and no clear victor emerges from these verses. Some have argued for Hagesichora's superiority (thus Van Groningen and Page), others for Agido's (thus Davidson).[87] As West lucidly observes: "each [of the two maidens' leaders] is pre–eminent and without a rival for as long as we look at her: we never look at both together. Alcman tactfully preserves the balance between the two."[88] A minority of scholars still defend Page's idea of rival half–choirs,[89] while the majority points at Alcman's refined "tactic" for balancing the leaders' power, avoiding an internal conflict,[90] and thereby preserving the community's cohesiveness and solidity.

That being said, the leaders still possess exclusive privileges which are not shared amongst the other maidens. For instance, although the chorus shows a "craving" religious devotion (ἐγὼ[ν]

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[84] For this opinion, see, for example, Bruno Gentili, "Il 'Partenio' Di Alcmane e l'amore Omoerotico Femminile Nei Tiasi Spartani," *Quaderni Urbinati Di Cultura Classica*, no. 22 (1976): 63, who reminds us of Athenaeus 9.394d, who clarifies that the Dorians used to name πελειάδες those kinds of doves which were commonly known as περιστεραί.

[85] For this opinion, see M. L. West, "Alcmanica," *The Classical Quarterly* 15, no. 2 (1965): 197 ff., who indicates the expression "σήριον ἄστρον" as a token to understand the correct meaning of the πελειάδες. Sirius is used in a simile with a leader, for example, in *Il.*11.62–66, where Hector is compared to the bright star.

[86] For another example of use of martial vocabulary in a ritual context, see Sappho 1.28.

[87] For a summary of these scholars' interpretations, see Too, "Alcman's 'Partheneion,'" 22.

[88] West, quoted in Dale, "Topics in Alcman's Partheneion," fn. 21.

[89] For example, J. Peron, "Demi-Chœurs Chez Alcman, Parth. 1, v. 39–59," *GP* 14 (1987): 35–53.

[90] For example, L. Nicastri, "Riflessioni Critiche Sul Partenio I Di Alcmane," *AFLN* 10 (March 1962): 7–17: "il nostro Partenio sembra concepito come elemento di un ufficio religioso in atto: dunque la gara è fuor di luogo."

δὲ τᾶι μὲν Ἀώτι μάλιστα / ϝανδάνην ἐρῶ, "but even so I long to please Aotis most of all"),[91] only the leaders can fulfill the religious duties (ἐξ Ἀγησιχόρ[ας] δὲ νεάνιδες / ἰρ]ήνας ἐρατ[ᾶ]ς ἐπέβαν, "but it was thanks to Hagesichora that girls trod the path of lovely peace"). The use of the verb ἐρῶ (line 88) may both recall one of the Hippocontids' impious attempt at divine marriage and, at the same time, indicate the "proper" attitude towards the divine; the chorus should not just wish to appease the gods, but should ardently desire it.[92] A trace of fanaticism could be surmised in this line. Again, as in the case of line 36, Alcman reinforces his point in the next verses: the poet first compares Hagesichora to a trace–horse (92–93), and then (94–95) he makes use of the well–known metaphor of the ship, a *topos* of the political discourse in ancient Greece.[93] Moving from the divine world to a more pragmatic level, the chorus is required to ἀκούην (line 94) "obey" their κυβερνᾶται (a "helmsman," Hagesichora).[94] The discipline described in these verses reminds one of the teachings of Tyrtaeus' poems, for example line 11 of fr. 19 W reads:

....]ατερμ..ιηι πεισόμεθ' ἡγεμ[ό

will obey the … of our leader(s)

To conclude my discussion of the *Louvre Partheneion*, it is important to note that a relationship between Agido and the family of the Agiads has been suggested.[95] From such a hypothesis, it is possible to see in the maidens' society of the *Partheneion* the themes of equality within the community of the "cousins," the preeminence of the two leaders – Agido and

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[91] For the identity of Ἀώτι various interpretations have been suggested. The goddess in line 89 should correspond to Ὀρθρίαι. The metrical scheme in line 61 prevents one from accepting the suggestion of Sch.A.13.1, that Ὀρθρίαι would be Ὀρθία, a dative indicating Arthemis Orthia. Cf. Calame, *Alcman*, 333.

[92] For the connection between politics and the erotic dimension, see Too, "Alcman's 'Partheneion,'" 11.

[93] On this topic, see B. Gentili, "Pragmatica dell'allegoria della nave," in *Poesia e Pubblico nella Grecia Antica: da Omero al V Secolo* (Milano: Feltrinelli Editore, 2006), 292–316.

[94] For this specific meaning of ἀκούην cf. *Il*.19.256 and *Od*. 7.11.

[95] See Calame, *Les Chœurs de jeunes filles II*, 140 ff.

Hagesichora – with respect to religious and political duties, as well as the leadership of their respective groups in the beauty contest (which includes martial vocabulary).

The celebration of the Spartan royal families by Alcman is otherwise documented by P.Oxy. 2390, fr. 2 (5 Page), lines 12–33.

> νῦν δ᾽ ἴομες τῶ δαίμονος ἔω(ς) τοῦ παι[δῶν] ἀρίσταν·
> Λεωτυχίδας [Λ]ακεδαι[μονί]ῳν βασιλεύς. ἄδηλον δὲ [τίνος
> ἐστὶ θ]υγάτηρ ἡ Τιμασιμβρότα [καὶ τίς ὁ υἰὸς] .αὶ τινος.
> φυὰν δ᾽ ἔοικεν [Εὐρυκρατέος π]αιδὶ ξανθῶι Πολυδώ[ρ]ω[ι·
> Ἱπποκρατίδας] Λεωτυχίδα υἱός ἐστι τοῦ [Λακεδαιμονίων]
> βασιλέ[ω]ς· [το]ῦ δ᾽ Εὐρυκ[ρ]ά [τους υἶος Πολύδ]ωρος καὶ
> Τιμ[ασιμ]βρότα θυγά[τηρ.

> But now let us go (trusting in the power?) of the god as far as best of (his)
> children: Leotychidas is king of Sparta, but it is unclear (whose) daughter
> Timasimbrota (is and who is the son) and whose (son he is).
> In build (she) is like the yellow-haired Polydorus, child (of Eurycrates):
> (Hippocratidas) is the son of Leotychidas, king (of Sparta), but Eurycrates' (son)
> is Polydorus, and Timasimbrota is his daughter.

The restoration of this text depends to some extent on a reconstruction of Spartan royal genealogies. Scholars have drawn various alternative proposals regarding the identity of the figures mentioned in this fragment as well as Alcman's relationship to them.[96] In addition, fragment 120a Page suggests a connection between Alcman and the Eurypontids:[97]

> Εὐρυπῶν· Ἀλκμ(άν)·
> οἷσι δ᾽ Εὐρυπῶν…

> Eurypon: Alcman,
> and those to whom Eurypon…

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[96] For a discussion of this fragment, see F. D. Harvey, "Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 2390 and Early Spartan History," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 87 (1967): 62–73 and M. L. West, "Alcman and the Spartan Royalty," *Zeitschrift Für Papyrologie Und Epigraphik* 91 (1992): 1–7. J. Schneider, "La Chronologie d'Alcman," *Revue Des Études Grecques*, no. 98 (1985): 1–64, concludes that Leotychidas reigned in Sparta c. 625–600 BC and assigns both Alcman's and Tyrtaeus' literary production to this period.

[97] Cf. S. Nannini, "Alcmane e Gli Euripontidi," *Quaderni Urbinati Di Cultura Classica* 22 (1976): 69.

Overall, these lines seem to confirm Alcman's closeness to the Spartan kings and one cannot exclude the possibility of his employment as a spokesman hired by the Spartans' most prominent men with the purpose of conveying specific ideological messages by means of his artistic production.

Alcman's second most important fragment (3 Page = 26 Calame) is also a παρθένειον,[98] of which only a few lines of the first two columns are readable. The fragment presents a similar structure to that of the *Louvre* Partheneion.[99] Scholars hypothesize that the actual choral performance begins with a mythical narration (now missing for the most part).[100]

col. I

Μώσαι Ὀλ]υμπιάδες, περί με φρένας	1
ἱμέρωι νέα]ς ἀοιδᾶς	
πίμπλατ᾿· ἰθύ]ω δ᾿ ἀκούσαι	
παρσενηΐ]ας ὀπός	
πρὸς αἰ]θέρα καλὸν ὑμνιοισᾶν μέλος	5
].οι	
ὕπνον ἀ]πὸ γλεφάρων σκεδ[α]σεῖ γλυκύν	
]ς δέ μ᾿ ἄγει πεδ᾿ ἀγων᾿ ἴμεν	
ᾶχι τά]χιστα κόμ[αν ξ]ανθὰν τινάξω.	
]. σχ[ἀπ]αλοὶ πόδες	10

col. II

λυσιμελεῖ τε πόσωι, τακερώτερα	61
δ᾿ ὕπνω καὶ σανάτω ποτιδέρκεται·	
οὐδέ τι μαψιδίως γλυκ[ῆα κ]ήνα·	
Ἀ[σ]τυμέλοισα δέ μ᾿ οὐδὲν ἀμείβεται,	
ἀλλὰ τὸ]ν πυλεῶν᾿ ἔχοισα	65
[ὥ] τις αἰγλά[ε]ντος ἀστήρ	

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[98] Its attribution to Alcman is due only to the analysis of the poem itself: the dialect, the metre, and the content. See C. Calame, *Alcman* (Roma: Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1983), 393–94; a complete study of the fragment is in Calame, *Les Chœurs de jeunes filles II*.

[99] As Calame, *Alcman* (Roma: Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1983), 394, notices, "l'intérêt de ce poème réside notamment dans le fait qu'il complète, dans le cadre d'une analyse de sa structure sémantique, les parties manquantes du fr. 3."

[100] Calame, 402.

ὠρανῶ διαιπετής
ἢ χρύσιον ἔρνος ἢ ἁπαλὸ[ν ψίλ]ον
.˰.]ν
]. διέβα ταναοῖς πο[σί·   70
καλλίκ]ομος νοτία Κινύρα χ[άρ]ις
ἐπὶ π]αρσενικᾶς χαίταισιν ἴσδει·
ἦ μὰν Ἀ]στυμέλοισα κατὰ στρατόν
ἔρχεται] μέλημα δάμωι
]μαν ἑλοῖσα   75
]λέγω·
]εναβαλ᾽ α[ἰ] γὰρ ἄργυριν
] . [.]ία
]α ἴδοιμ᾽ αἴ πως με… ον φιλοῖ
ᾶσ] σον [ἰο].˯σ᾽ ἁπαλᾶς χηρὸς λάβοι,   80
αἶψά κ᾽[ἐγὼν ἱ]κέτις κήνας γενοίμαν·
νῦν δ᾽ [ ]δα παίδα βα[θ]ύφρονα
παιδι.[ ]μ᾽ ἔχοισαν
].˙ε [ ]. ν ἁ παίς
]χάριν·   85

col. I

Olympian (Muses, fill) my heart (with longing for a new) song: I (am eager) to
hear the (maiden) voice of girls singing a beautiful melody (to the heavens) …:
(it?) will scatter sweet (sleep) from my eyes and leads me to go to the assembly
(of Antheia?), (where) I shall (rapidly) shake my yellow hair … soft feet …

col. II

…and with limb-loosening desire, and she looks (at me?) more meltingly than
sleep or death, and not in vain is she sweet. But Astymeloisa makes no answer to
me; no, holding the garland, like a bright star of the shining heavens or a golden
branch or soft down … she passed through with her long feet; … giving beauty
to her tresses, the moist charm of Cinyras sits on the maiden's hair. (Truly)
Astymeloisa (goes) through the crowd the darling of the people… taking... I
say; ... if only… a silver cup… I were to see whether perchance she were to
love me. If only she came nearer and took my soft hand, immediately I would
become her suppliant. As it is, … a wise girl … girl … me having … the girl...
grace…[101]

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[101] Campbell's translation, 1987.

This composition shares some features with the *Louvre* Partheneion (most importantly, the use of a martial language) and adds a new component: in line 73 the maiden Astymeloisa "walks through the crowd / the darling of the people", establishing a relationship between the maiden, a "crowd", and the δᾶμος.

To indicate the crowd (presumably the worshippers of the festival), Alcman uses the expression κατὰ στρατόν, a word which undoubtedly carries a military meaning (army, army camp, army base), and it is employed, for example, by Homer to describe the camp of the Achaeans.[102] But if the chorus–leader is walking before the στρατόν, is Alcman describing the actual procession of the maidens in front of the gathered body of Spartan citizen–soldiers? For the meaning of the expression κατὰ στρατόν in this case,[103] Calame observes that it simply indicates "l'endroit où se déroulait le rite dans lequel chorège et choreutes sont engagés," and it is thus void of any military connotation. This social interpretation στρατόν is suggested by the next verse (74), where the expression μέλημα δάμωι (darling of the people) recalls the etymology of the maiden's name Astymeloisa, that is most likely a speaking name, meaning "care of the city."[104] In line 8, the poet does use the word ἄγων, which in this case means "assembly."[105] Again, Alcman's vocabulary seems often to imply a "struggling" meaning (ἄγων = battle, conflict, contest), even though the poet primarily praises the beauty of the maidens in their peaceful celebration. In this

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[102] Pierre Chantraine, *Dictionnaire Étymologique de La Langue Grecque: Histoire Des Mots* (Klincksieck, 1968), 1061, s.v. στρατός.

[103] Cf. also Pind. *O*.9.95, Aesch. *Eum*. 683, 782.

[104] Cf. Calame, *Alcman*, 414.

[105] For further examples of this meaning of ἄγων, see i.e. *Il*. 23.258, *Od*. 8.200, Aesch. *Ag*. 845, Pind. *Pyth*. 10.30. Ellsworth notes that "there is nothing in the context of ἀγῶνες which suggests that an archaic 'assemblies' is preferable to the current 'games, contest(s)'; rather, the latter meaning makes better sense in several respects" in J. D. Ellsworth, "Agamemnon's Intentions, Ἀγών, and the Growth of an Error," *Glotta* 54, no. 3/4 (1976): 230.

composition, Alcman connects the words στρατός, ἄστυ, and δᾶμος, expanding the range of semantic references of the contents of his songs.

My analysis turns now to Alcman's fragments other than παρθένεια. Most of these fragments consist only of a few words, from which it is hard to draw a close connection to the Spartan socio–political development of the seventh century BC. Such scant evidence reveals an Alcman who sings almost exclusively about love and beauty. The fragmentary status of his poetry (already in antiquity) cannot help us to thoroughly understand the poetic message of his literary production.[106] Let us consider the fragment 59 Page (148–9 Calame):

> Athenaeus 13.600f
>
> Ἀρχύτας δ' ὁ ἁρμονικός, ὥς φησι Χαμαιλέων, Ἀλκμᾶνα
> γεγονέναι τῶν ἐρωτικῶν μελῶν ἡγεμόνα καὶ ἐκδοῦναι πρῶτον μέλος
> ἀκόλαστον † ὄντα καὶ περὶ τὰς γυναῖκας καὶ τὴν τοιαύτην Μοῦσαν εἰς τὰς
> διατριβάς †· διὸ καὶ λέγειν ἔν τινι τῶν μελῶν·
>
> (a) Ἔρως με δηὖτε Κύπριδος ϝέκατι
> γλυκὺς κατείβων καρδίαν ἰαίνει.
>
> According to Chamaeleon, Archytas, the expert on harmonics, says that Alcman led the way in erotic songs and was the first to make public a licentious song (since in his way of life he was undisciplined in the matter of women and of such poetry?); and that that was why he said in one of his songs,
>
> (a) At the command of the Cyprian, Eros once again pours sweetly down and warms my heart.

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[106] Griffiths points out that there must not have been any proem in Alcman's *Partheneion*, thus suggesting an inherent difficulty in understanding the subject matter even for the ancient reader. See A. Griffiths, "Alcman's Partheneion: The Morning after the Night Before," *Quaderni Urbinati Di Cultura Classica* 14 (1972): 7–30.

In this fragment Athenaeus reports that Archytas[107] credits Alcman with composing erotic and licentious songs. It is prudent to consider that Archytas could not know the context in which Alcman's compositions were sung. Also, Archytas' opinion on Alcman could be based on late biographers.[108] Archytas assumes that the first person singular in the song (Ἔρως με δηὖτε... ἰαίνει) corresponds to Alcman himself. As Calame points out, the expression Ἔρως με δηὖτε is one typical of love sentiments in archaic lyric poetry as we read, for example, in Sappho's fr. 130:[109]

> Ἔρος δηὖτέ μ᾽ ὁ λυσιμέλης δόνει,
> γλυκύπικρον ἀμάχανον ὄρπετον.
>
> Once again limb-loosening Love makes me tremble,
> the bitter-sweet, irresistible creature.

Fragment 59 Page (148–9 Calame) may well belong to a longer text (i.e. a παρθένειον) and the first singular person may simply refer to a character (i.e. a maiden) in the ritual performance rather than indicate the poet himself. [110] Archytas, in positing his sharp judgment on Alcman, could have missed the broader context in which those verses were included.

As has been said, Alcman likely composed not only for the Spartan θίασοι, but also for other occasions of Spartan life of the seventh century BC. In particular, scholars maintain that fragment 17 Page (= 9 Calame) may show the poet's involvement in a sympotic context.[111]

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[107] Probably Archytas of Mytilene (date uncertain) and not the philosopher Archytas of Tarentum. Both figures are described in Diogenes Laertius (8.82); on this issue in this fragment, see C. Huffman, *Archytas of Tarentum: Pythagorean, Philosopher and Mathematician King* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 26–27.

[108] For late biographies of Alcman, see Chapter One, p.2, fn. 7.

[109] Cf. also Ibyc. 287 P, Anacreon frr. 358 and 413 P. See F. M. Pontani, "Note Alcmanee," *Maia* 3 (1950): 33–53. About the archaic way of understanding love, see Calame, *Les Chœurs de jeunes filles II*, 9, fn. 83.

[110] According to Calame, "le je lyrique ... ne correspond en général pas au je de poète, mais à celui du choeur, probablement composé de jeunes filles, qui était chargé de chanter ces vers," in Calame, *Alcman*, 561. See also B. Marzullo, "Alcman Fr. 59 P," *Helikon* 4 (1964): 299. A contrary opinion is found in D. A. Campbell, *Greek Lyric Poetry: A Selection of Early Greek Lyric, Elegiac and Iambic Poetry,* (London: Macmillan, 1967), 220.

[111] For a symbolic interpretation of the meals: M. Pizzocaro, "Alcmane e La Gastronomia Poetica," *A.I.O.N. Annali Dell'Istituto Universitario Orientale Di Napoli* 12 (1990): 285–308,: "I pasti cui si riferisce Alcmane sono in realtà

καὶ Ἀλκμὰν δ᾽ ὁ ποιητὴς ἑαυτὸν ἀδηφάγον εἶναι παραδίδωσιν
ἐν τῷ τρίτῳ διὰ τούτων·

καί ποκά τοι δώσω τρίποδος κύτος   1
ᾧ κ᾽ ἐνὶ < > λέ᾽ ἀγείρῃς.
ἀλλ᾽ ἔτι νῦν γ᾽ ἄπυρος, τάχα δὲ πλέος
ἔτνεος, οἷον ὁ παμφάγος Ἀλκμὰν
ἠράσθη λιαρὸν πεδὰ τὰς τροπάς·   5
οὔτι γὰρ ἁδὺ τετυγμένον ἔσθει,
ἀλλὰ τὰ κοινὰ γάρ, ὥπερ ὁ δᾶμος,
ζατεύει.

Even the poet Alcman puts his gluttony on record in
these lines from book three:

and some day I shall give you a great tripod bowl,
in which you may collect (provisions packed together?).
It has still not been over a fire, but soon it will be full of pea-soup,
the kind that Alcman, who eats everything, loves hot after the
solstice: he eats no (sweet confections?) but
looks for common fare like the people.

The σφραγίς[112] in line 4 (ὁ παμφάγος Ἀλκμὰν) proves the authorship of this fragment. The

poet describes the preparation of a meal for a communal event, and even adopts a rather ironic

tone about himself. The δᾶμος is mentioned again, like in fragment 3 Page (= 26 Calame). In this

case, Alcman himself declares his (frugal?) food preferences, which correspond to those of the

δᾶμος. The tone of the composition seems far from the shining excellence of the maidens of the

Louvre Partheneion, although the song could have equally been employed in a religious ritual

(θεοξενια).[113] Whether or not a god was involved in this celebration,[114] this innovative type of

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simbolici, metafore di poemi che egli compone per i cori e che i cori offrono, cantandoli e danzando, alla comunità
ascoltatrice, spettatrice."

[112] The "seal" that an author includes to authenticate his work.

[113] Cf., for example, Pind. *Ol.* 3 (banquet with the Dioscuri) and Ath. 9.372a (banquet with Apollo).

[114] Nannini argues that Heracles could have been the recipient of the tripod in S. Nannini, *Simboli e metafore nella
poesia simposiale greca* (Roma: Ed. dell'Ateneo, 1988), 17–35. The invitation resembles that one to the Dioscuri in
Bacch. fr. 21.

meal should be primarily understood for its socio–political meaning. As Hodkinson observed, this fragment of Alcman provides one of the earliest examples of a Spartan symposium.[115] This meal still likely differs from the later Classical Spartan συσσίτιον, that represents a dramatic innovation with respect to the Homeric banquets: "one must nevertheless emphasize the radical nature of the transformation involved in the extension of the messes to the entire citizen ... a reflection of the extension of state control over the sphere of male commensality."[116] The communality and the simplicity highlighted in this fragment became a mark of Classical Sparta, and the classical συσσίτιον may well represent a further evolution of the shared meal sung by Alcman.[117] The vocabulary used in fragment 17 Page, above all the expression τὰ κοινὰ,[118] implies the socio–political sphere. As Vernant observed in his classic study *Myth and Thought*: "the Greek of the seventh century BCE came to rethink his social life in an attempt to remodel it in keeping with certain egalitarian aspirations ... For the very first time in human history, social life became the

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[115] Also fr. 95b Page (=92 Calame) and fr. 98 Page (= 129 Calame) provide further evidence.

[116] S. Hodkinson, "The Development of Spartan Society and Institutions in the Archaic Period," in *The Development of the Polis in Archaic Greece*, ed. L. Mitchell and P. J. Rhodes (Routledge, 2003), 91; cf. Nafissi, "Sparta," 128. These meals represented an essential institution of the political and military life of Sparta, for which one can see N. R. Fisher, "Drink, Hybris and the Promotion of Harmony in Sparta," in *Classical Sparta (Routledge Revivals): Techniques Behind Her Success*, ed. A. Powell (New York: Routledge, 1989), 26–50. A hint to the the "innovative" aspect of the shared meal may be found in the description of the tripod bowl, (τρίποδος κύτος), which is ἀλλ᾽ ἔτι νῦν γ᾽ ἄπυρος, "still has not been on fire," that is to say, it is still new.

[117] For this interpretation, see Janni, *La Cultura Di Sparta Arcaica*, 87. Janni emphasizes the religious aspect of the fragment and suggests comparing it with Bacchylides fr. 21 SM (= fr. 21 Athen. 11. 500ab), where we read μνημονεύει δὲ τῶν Βοιωτικῶν σκύφων Βακχυλίδης ἐν τούτοις / ποιούμενος τὸν λόγον πρὸς τοὺς Διοσκούρους, καλῶν αὐτοὺς ἐπὶ ξένια, "Bacchylides mentions the Boeotian σκῦφοι (large cups) in the following lines, where he is addressing the Dioscuri and inviting them to a feast." Bacchylides' fragment addresses the Dioscuri and thus suggests a ritual event; could the same be suggested for Alcman's fragment? Calame, *Alcman*, 363, proposes that the fragment could in fact be a *Theoxenia*, "a kind of Greek sacrifice in which worshippers presented both meat and other food to gods or heroes, who supposedly attended the meal as guests, or xenoi" (Naiden, "Theoxenia," The Encyclopedia of Ancient History, 2012). Calame observes the use of the verb ἀγείρῃς (v. 2) is used in *Od*. 19.196ff. to describe the preparation of a ritual by Odysseus' hosts.

[118] Pierre Chantraine, *Dictionnaire Étymologique de La Langue Grecque: Histoire Des Mots* (Klincksieck, 1968), 552, s.v. κοινός : "commun, ordinaire, impartial, public, l'intêret commun, l'état." It is important to stress that in this moment, the seventh century BC, this word has not yet achieved the meaning of "vulgar".

object of conscious, deliberate research and reflection ... The expression used to refer to the political domain, τὰ κοινὰ, means "that which is common to all," in other words, public affairs."[119] This concept is reinforced in the same line by the word δᾶμος, which indicates the whole community. The δᾶμος included the nobles (the traditional leaders of public affairs) and the new social category of citizen–soldiers, who constituted the mass of the hoplite army.[120] Calame compares this fragment with Tyrtaeus fr. 12.15 W, where we read that military virtue is a ξυνὸν δ᾽ ἐσθλὸν, "common benefit" for the δᾶμος:

> ξυνὸν δ᾽ ἐσθλὸν τοῦτο πόληί τε παντί τε δήμῳ,
> ὅστις ἀνὴρ διαβὰς ἐν προμάχοισι μένῃ
> νωλεμέως, αἰσχρῆς δὲ φυγῆς ἐπὶ πάγχυ λάθηται,
> ψυχὴν καὶ θυμὸν τλήμονα παρθέμενος,
> θαρσύνῃ δ᾽ ἔπεσιν τὸν πλησίον ἄνδρα παρεστώς·

> This is a common benefit for the state and all
> the people, whenever a man with firm stance among
> the front ranks never ceases to hold his ground, is
> utterly unmindful of shameful flight, risking his life
> and displaying a steadfast spirit, and standing by the
> man next to him speaks encouragingly.

The themes of Tyrtaeus' poetry are likely present in further fragments of Alcman's literary production, such as fragments 98 Page (= 129 Calame) and 64 Page (= 105 Calame). In fr. 98 Page Alcman mentions the παιᾶνες in a context of communal meals.

> τὰ δὲ συσσίτια ἀνδρεῖα παρὰ μὲν τοῖς Κρησὶν καὶ νῦν ἔτι καλεῖσθαι,
> παρὰ δὲ τοῖς Σπαρτιάταις μὴ διαμεῖναι
> καλούμενα ὁμοίως <ὡς> πρότερον· παρ᾽ Ἀλκμᾶνι γοῦν οὕτω κεῖσθαι·

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[119] J. P. Vernant, *Myth and Thought among the Greeks*, trans. J. Lloyd and J. Fort (New York: Zone Books, 2006), 203.

[120] The newly constituted δᾶμος was far from being a socially homogenous group; see chap. 1, pp. 9–10. pp. Calame, *Alcman*, 364. states that "du point the vue historique, ce fr. n'en reste pas moins significatif des contrasts qui existaient dans la Sparta archaïque entre les différents couches sociales constitutives du démos."

θοίναις δὲ καὶ ἐν θιάσοισιν

ἀνδρείων παρὰ δαιτυμόνεσσι πρέπει παιᾶνα κατάρχην.

Ephorus says that in Crete the public messes are still called andreia
('men's halls') but that in Sparta they did not keep the old name attested
by Alcman in the lines,

And at the meals and banquets of the messes it is right to strike up the
paean in the presence of the feasters.

This fragment presupposes a sympotic context similar to the one in fr. 17 Page. Alcman calls the

"feasters" δαιτυμόνεσσι, a term that implies the sharing of each one's portion to the common

banquet.[121] According to Calame, "ce terme convient donc parfaitement au contexte des syssities

où chaque participant est tenu de verser une part de son revenu pour l'organisation de ces banquets

communautaires."[122] Tyrtaeus is related to the παιᾶνες too, for example in T10 West:

Φιλόχορος δέ φησιν κρατήσαντας Λακεδαιμονίους Μεσσηνίων
διὰ τὴν Τυρταίου στρατηγίαν ἐν ταῖς στρατείαις ἔθος ποιήσασθαι,
ἂν δειπνοποιήσωνται καὶ παιωνίσωσιν, ἄιδειν καθ᾽ ἕνα <τὰ> Τυρταίου

Philochoros says that the Lakedaimonians, after overpowering the
Messenians through the generalship of Tyrtaios, created a custom in their
campaigns: Whenever they take their dinner and perform the paian, to sing
one by one <the works> of Tyrtaios.

In this fragment the Spartan soldiers sing their παιᾶνες in the communal meals, in the same fashion

that Alcman describes in fr. 98 Page above.

In fr. 64 Page Alcman discusses Good Order (*Eunomia*), clearly overlapping the political

discourse for the seventh century Sparta that is traditionally attributed to Tyrtaeus.[123]

οὐ μὲν γὰρ ἀπειθής (sc. ἡ Τύχη), κατὰ Πίνδαρον, οὐδὲ δίδυμον
στρέφουσα πηδάλιον, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον
Εὐνομίας <τε> καὶ Πειθῶς ἀδελφὰ

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[121] Cf. *Od*. 4.620ff.

[122] Calame, *Alcman*, 532. Cf. Plut. *Lyc*. 12.3 f. Ath. 4,143b.

[123] See Tyrtaeus' *Eunomia* in chap. 1, p. 12, especially fn. 56.

καὶ Προμαθήας θυγάτηρ,
ὡς γενεαλογεῖ Ἀλκμάν.

For indeed Fortune is not inflexible, as Pindar has it, nor steering
a double paddle; but rather she is
both sister of Eunomia and Persuasion
and daughter of Foresight,
as Alcman traces out her lineage.

Eunomia is described as sister of Fortune and Persuasion and daughter of Foresight. Calame maintains that this fragment does not have an actual genealogical value, but rather "la filiation est un moyen pour Alcman d'associer et d'organiser des concepts abstraits". Alcman's literary production, in addition to the songs for the Spartan public festivals and communal meals, extends to political thought. Although it is not possible to give Alcman's *Eunomia* the same meaning as in Tyrtaeus' poem, Calame concludes "cela ne signifie pas pour autant qu'Alcman ne pense pas ici au respect des lois établies par la constitution de Lycurgue."[124]

This chapter has aimed at showing that the fragmentary poetry of Alcman substantially deals with themes other than the more known "beauty and love" themes of the maiden songs. By means of his simple and neat style, the poet alludes to the language of the political sphere in many instances. The next chapter will further investigate this idea, exploring the relationship between Alcman, political ideology, and the construction of the Spartan civic identity in the seventh century BC.

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[124] Calame, *Alcman*, 501.

Chapter Three

The presence of political vocabulary in Alcman's songs was introduced in Chapter Two. The present chapter aims at further investigating this feature of Alcman's literary production, examining its connection with the coeval reform of the Spartan society (seventh century BC). Could Alcman's poetry have been instrumental to the setup of the new political order in Sparta?

The last fragment discussed in Chapter Two (fr. 64 Page = 105 Calame) presents *Eunomia* as sister of Fortune and Persuasion and daughter of Foresight.[125] In these lines Alcman is speaking of a central concept in Greek political literature. The meaning of the term *Eunomia*, however, changed over time, from Homer to Aristotle,[126] and it is important to understand what precise meaning Alcman attributes to it, in order to see whether or not the poet is actually referring to the political transformations of his own time, and how Alcman's *Eunomia* relates to the *Eunomia* of Tyrtaeus. In Homer, *Eunomia* is mentioned only one time (*Od*. 17.487), when Odysseus is admonishing Antinous for having attacked a beggar (i.e. Odysseus himself):

> καί τε θεοὶ ξείνοισιν ἐοικότες ἀλλοδαποῖσι,
> παντοῖοι τελέθοντες, ἐπιστρωφῶσι πόληας,
> ἀνθρώπων ὕβριν τε καὶ εὐνομίην ἐφορῶντες.

> And the gods, resembling to foreign guests,
> taking all sorts of appearance, go around the cities,
> overseeing both *eunomia* and the arrogance of men.[127]

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[125] Interestingly, Prometheia is known only through Alcman and the Sch. Pind. P 5.28, where she is the sister of Prometheus (cf. the use of the term in Pind. I. 1.40; N. 11.46).

[126] See the use of the word in Herodotus, 1.65, 1.97, 2.66, 2.124; in Thucydides 1.18; in Plato, *Rep*.380b; in Aristotle *Pol*. 1294a 3ff., where the term *Eunomia*, in the sense of "good government," becomes a synonym for the rule of aristocracy, in opposition to *Isonomia*, "equality of political rights," that is, democracy.

[127] The translations in this chapter are my own unless otherwise indicated.

In this context *Eunomia* is a divine law, in opposition to ὕβρις, and protected by the gods. Men are required to adhere to an established set of rules (i.e. avoiding ὕβρις). Hesiod mentions *Eunomia* in the *Theogony* providing more information: she is daughter of Zeus and Themis, sister of *Eirene* and *Dike*, and opposed to *Dysnomia*, *Eris'* daughter.[128] As in the *Odyssey*, she is subordinated to the divine law.

In Alcman, *Eunomia* is sister of Tycha (Fortune) and Peitho (Persuasion), and daughter of Promatheia (Foresight). This new genealogy is crucial: *Eunomia* is connected to (Good) Fortune,[129] Persuasion (a feature of effective leaders),[130] and it originates from Foresight. This latter point is especially important: Promatheia is the ability to προμανθάνειν (learn beforehand), a characteristic of wise planners, and it hardly reminds one of a divine law (Themis, *Eunomia*'s mother in Hesiod's genealogy). Moreover, as Mele observes,[131] *Eunomia*'s sisters (Tycha and Peitho) in Alcman are Hesiod's Oceanides (i.e. daughters of Oceanus and Thetis).[132] Therefore, while Alcman alters the Hesiodic genealogy of *Eunomia*, at the same time he maintains a reference to Hesiod's genealogy through *Eunomia*'s sisters (Tycha and Peitho). Hesiod's Oceanides are κουραί devoted to pedagogical functions: together with Apollo and the Rivers, they ἄνδρας

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[128] See *Theog.* 901–904. Note that ἔρις (strife) notably an important idea in Hesiod (cf. *Theog.* 226 or *Op.* 11 and 804) is found in Alcman fr. 146 Page (= 106 Calame), where it is described as χθόνιον τέρας, "infernal monster." On the association of ἔρις with the idea of τέρας, cf. L. Gernet, *The Anthropology of Ancient Greece* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 102.

[129] For the meaning of Tycha in Alcman, see A. Mele, "Costituzioni Arcaiche Ed 'Eunomia,'" *Poleis e Politeiai: Esperienze Politiche Traditioni Letterarie e Progetti Costituzionali. Atti Del Convegno Internazionale Di Storia Greca, Torino*, 2004, 60, who indicates the name of the king Leo–tychidas ("Fortune of the people") as further evidence of the positive meaning of Tycha at this time in Sparta.

[130] Peitho is to be understood primarily in its political meaning in this case, not in its erotic meaning.

[131] Mele, "Costituzioni Arcaiche Ed 'Eunomia,'" 62.

[132] Cf. *Theog.* 349 and 360.

κουρίζουσι (bring up men to adulthood),[133] Likewise, their male counterparts,[134] the κουρῆτες, fulfill the function of the κουροτρόφοι (child–nurturers). Mele concludes that Alcman's *Eunomia*, in contrast to Hesiod's, has become autonomous from divine law, and it is intimately connected to the Spartan *paideia* as part of the state's legislation.[135] If this proves true, Alcman's *Eunomia* would expand the features of Tyrtaeus' *Eunomia*, which is essentially an exposition of the Spartan *politeia* and its need for obedience (see Chapter Two). Alcman's *Eunomia* would have a pedagogical component; two centuries later, Plato would theorize this model in the *Republic*.

One can interpret other fragments of Alcman in a similar way. Fragment 95b Page (= 92 Calame) has been variously understood because of the strangeness of the verb ἁρμόζω (employed, in this case, for a meal):

<div align="center">

αἶκλον Ἀλκμάων ἁρμόξατο

Alcman harmonized the dinner

</div>

This fragment might be primarily read in light of the concept of *Harmony* and its meaning in the context of archaic Sparta.[136] By Alcman's time, the concept of *Harmony* had evolved from Homeric and Hesiodic conceptualizations. In Homer the term *harmoniai* – which is used only in the plural form – refers to fastenings or clamps, and, by extension, to the covenants between men and gods.[137] In Hesiod the figure of Harmony is the offspring of two opposed and complementary

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[133] *Theog.* 346–7.

[134] Fr. 123 M.-W.

[135] Mele, "Costituzioni Arcaiche Ed 'Eunomia,'" 63. For a different opinion, cf. P. Janni, *La cultura di Sparta arcaica* (Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1965), 64, who argues that Alcman's interest in the genealogy of deities proves that the poet adheres to the same theological tradition of Hesiod. As an example of further similarities, he compares Alcman's fr. 1 Page, v. 36 (see Chapter Two), with Hes. *Theog.* 210: ἔπειτα τίσιν μετόπισθεν ἔσεσθαι, "vengeance will come afterwards."

[136] See C. Cuscunà, "Nel Segno Di Harmonia: Miti e Forme Di Coesione Poleica," in *Salvare Le Poleis Costruire La Concordia Progettare La Pace*, ed. S. Cataldi, E. Bianco, and G. Cuniberti, Fonti e Studi Di Storia Antica 16 (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2012).

[137] See Cuscunà, 398.

forces, Ares and Aphrodite.[138] According to the myth, Harmony descended on earth to marry the legendary founder Cadmus after he defeated the dragon. Harmony can therefore be understood as both the solution of a former conflictual condition and the foundational element of the *polis*, representing in this way the new "harmonious" order of the state.[139] Alcman's use of this verb in fr. 95b Page is peculiar, and it is worth comparing it with coeval references to the concept of "harmony", where an αἶκλον is not mentioned.

Diodorus asserts that the poet Terpander "harmonized" the Spartan society (cf. Chapter One), ending the civil strife in a rather legendary way:[140]

> Κιθαρῳδὸς ὁ Τέρπανδρος τῷ γένει Μηθυμναῖος.
> στασιασάντων δέ ποτε τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων,
> χρησμὸς αὐτοῖς ἐξέπεσε πάλιν φιλιωθῆναι,
> ἂν ἐκ Μηθύμνης Τέρπανδρος ἐκείνοις κιθαρίσῃ.
> καὶ δή τι μέλος Τέρπανδρος ἐντέχνως κιθαρίσας
> αὐτοὺς πάλιν συνήρμοσε, Διόδωρος ὡς γράφει,
> τῆς ἁρμονίας τῇ ᾠδῇ. καὶ γὰρ μετατραπέντες
> ἀλλήλους περιέβαλλον, ἠσπάζοντο δακρύοις

> Terpander, who sang to the cithara, was a native of Methymna. And once, when the Lacedaemonians were embroiled in civil strife, an oracle came to them, that they would again be reconciled among themselves if Terpander of Methymna should sing to them to the accompaniment of the cithara. And Terpander did in fact so sing a song to them with an artist's skill, and by his harmonious lay, as Diodorus writes, brought harmony again into their midst. In fact, they were entirely changed and fell to embracing and tearfully kissing one another.[141]

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[138] See *Theog*. 933–937.

[139] Cuscunà, "Nel Segno Di Harmonia: Miti e Forme Di Coesione Poleica," 399. In particular, Cuscunà argues that the harmonic principle, in general, should be understood as working on different levels: at a cosmic level (i.e. the Homeric *harmoniai* between gods and men), at a polis level (as an allegory of the "reconciliation of warring and civilized elements into a single body politic"), and at familial level (ἁρμόζω as the technical verb for engagement and also marriage).

[140] Diod. 8.28, T15.

[141] C. H. Oldfather's translation, 1939.

Solon uses both the verb αρμόζω and συναρμόζω in fr. 36 West:

> ... ταῦτα μὲν κράτει　　　　　　　　15
> ὁμοῦ βίην τε καὶ δίκην ξυναρμόσας
> ἔρεξα, καὶ διῆλθον ὡς ὑπεσχόμην·
> θεσμοὺς δ᾽ ὁμοίως τῷ κακῷ τε κἀγαθῷ
> εὐθεῖαν εἰς ἕκαστον ἁρμόσας δίκην
> ἔγραψα.　　　　　　　　　　　　20

> I did these things through my power, having harmonized force and justice, and I
> completed as I (first) promised. I wrote laws for the base and the noble
> alike, having set up a straight justice for each one.

Likewise, Plutarch uses the verb συναρμόζω to describe Lycurgus' and Solon's deeds,[142] alluding to the political meaning of this verb in the Greek Archaic period. Plutarch (*Lyc*. 5.4) says that Lycurgus, after visiting the oracle, tried to convince the best of the Spartans to join his planned coup:

> ἐπαρθεὶς δὲ τούτοις προσήγετο τοὺς ἀρίστους καὶ συνεφάπτεσθαι παρεκάλει
> And, encouraged by this [the Delphic oracle], he brought over to his side the best
> men and asked them to join [his attempt].

Although Plutarch's *Parallel Lives* have a biographical (centered on the ethos of the character) rather than a historiographical purpose, Cuscunà speculates that the author is describing Lycurgus' search for consensus as an attempt to form a heterogeneous group (i.e. composed of conflicting ἑταιρεῖαι) that supported his coup.[143] In her interpretation, the reformers of the Spartan state have first "harmonized" the elite under the same flag, and only later they changed the constitution.[144] Accordingly, Alcman's fr. 95b Page (αἶκλον Ἀλκμάων ἁρμόξατο) may be read as a sympotic

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[142] *Lyc*. 7.3, and *Sol*. 15.1.

[143] As a matter of fact, in Archaic Greece poetry was instrumental in publicly communicating political ideals (i.e. Solon).

[144] Cuscunà, "Nel Segno Di Harmonia: Miti e Forme Di Coesione Poleica," 410.

"harmonization" of discordant prominent *aristoi*, at the time when Lycurgus (i.e. the Spartan reformers) was seeking consensus by means of political alliances.

Moreover, Pausanias' description of the Ἀμυκλαῖον[145] seemingly connects Harmony with the Spartan civic institutions. The traveler lists the scenes carved on the façade of the Laconian monument: the mythical marriage of Harmonia with Cadmus, the rites of initiation of young men in the Phaeacian chorus – alluding to the Spartan rites of passage, – and the traditional themes of the noble *aristeia* (the celebration of the best exploits of a single warrior).[146] The juxtaposition of Harmonia with the Phaeacian ἔφηβοι could indeed represent the relationship between the harmonic principle and the Spartan ἀγωγή. Cuscunà argues that the various artistic instances (both in literature and sculpture) referring to Harmony in the context of seventh century Sparta all belong to the same ideological scheme, namely the reform of the Spartan state.[147] Therefore, Alcman's strange use of this verb is understandable in light of the political language of his own time.

Eunomia and *Harmonia* are political topics discussed by Classical writers.[148] Authors frequently present the *Good Order* through a choral/musical language: Aristotle compares Sparta to an ideal chorus;[149] Xenophon uses the choir's obedience to their teacher as a metaphor for the

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[145] A throne dedicated to Apollo in Amyclae (Laconia).

[146] Paus. 3.18.11.

[147] Cuscunà, "Nel Segno Di Harmonia: Miti e Forme Di Coesione Poleica," 410. The scholar also conjectures a Delphic "mandate" or inspiration promoting this ideology.

[148] From the fifth century, the term Ἁρμονία is gradually replaced by Ὁμονοία, though for our purposes the two terms are essentially synonyms. In the Athenian context of the fifth century BC, Ὁμονοία indicates the solution of a socio–political crisis (στάσις), while Ἁρμονία had gradually found its application almost exclusively in the music field. Because the two terms indicate the same socio–political process, we understand that the Archaic Ἁρμονία had been replaced by the Classical Ὁμονοία. For a reference to the authors using these two terms, see Cuscunà, 404.

[149] *Pol.*1288b 37, 1298a 5.

citizens' obedience to their leader,[150] and Plato equates χορεία and παίδευσις,[151] introducing a pedagogical layer and maintaining "the role of the choral participation in establishing the character and identity of a citizen."[152] As Nagy observes, it is by no accident that the same word κορυφαῖος indicates both the leader of the state (Her. 3.82.3) and of the chorus (*Pol.* 1277a 11).[153] Is the semantics of this "choral" vocabulary a simple metaphor or is it the inheritance of the political meaning of archaic choral lyric? As a matter of fact, evidence shows the close relationship between lawgivers and archaic Greek poetry: Solon's poems[154] were publicly recited,[155] the Cretan boys were required to memorize the laws put into songs,[156] and Charondas' laws were even chanted.[157] In the case of Solon, Figueira argues that "the roles of nomothetes 'lawgiver' and poetic inculcator of values were fused," and he also refers to the example of Tyrtaeus.[158]

Following this interpretation, it is possible to understand Alcman's literary production as, at least in part, politically motivated. In particular, Alcman's most relevant choral lyric, the παρθενεία, could have been used for a subtle manipulation of the audience, which Calame proposes

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[150] *Mem.* 3.5.17–19.

[151] *Laws* 672e 5–6.

[152] Too, "Alcman's 'Partheneion,'" 14 and fn.26.

[153] G. Nagy, *Pindar's Homer: The Lyric Possession of an Epic Past* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 367ff. Notice that χορός is the name of the Spartan civic space in Pausanias 3.11.9 (Nagy, 345).

[154] The Athenian lawgiver encapsulates part of his legislation in his poetry; for example, in fr. 4 West, "*Eunomia*."

[155] Pl. *Tim.* 21b.

[156] Ael. *VH* 2.39.

[157] Strabo 12.2.9.

[158] T. J. Figueira, "The Theognidea and Megarian Society," in *Theognis of Megara: Poetry and the Polis*, ed. G. Nagy and T.J. Figueira (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 121–22. In the same volume, Nagy observes that Theognis and Hesiod are simultaneously poets and exponents of dike, while Solon represents an evolution, because he was credited with a law code distinct from his poetic production. In the case of Sparta, Thales is emblematic: according to Plutarch (*Lyc.* 4.2-3) Thales' poetry resembled the prescriptions of lawgivers. Nagy sees in Thales a significant predecessor of Lycurgus. See G. Nagy, "A Poet Vision of His City," in *Theognis of Megara: Poetry and the Polis*, ed. G. Nagy and T.J. Figueira (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 41–42.

to understand as a cathartic "ritualization of passions" and a "discipline of emotions."[159] By applying Aristotle's mention of emotional κάθαρσις[160] to the archaic *melos*, Calame asks "dans quelle mesure la procédure de la *kàtharsis* est pertinente pour une poésie mélique qui, pour être rituelle et traditionnelle, n'est pas moins passionnelle; une poésie mélique qui est sans doute expression de l'émotion, mais une émotion portée par une voix chorale et rituelle."[161] In discussing ethical melodies, Aristotle concludes that music serves the purpose of education, purgation (κάθαρσις), and amusement:[162]

> καὶ γὰρ παιδείας ἕνεκεν καὶ καθάρσεως — τί δὲ λέγομεν τὴν κάθαρσιν, νῦν μὲν ἁπλῶς, πάλιν δ᾽ ἐν τοῖς περὶ ποιητικῆς ἐροῦμεν σαφέστερον — τρίτον δὲ πρὸς διαγωγὴν πρὸς ἄνεσίν τε καὶ πρὸς τὴν τῆς συντονίας ἀνάπαυσιν.

> for it serves the purpose both of education and of purgation—the term purgation we use for the present without explanation, but we will return to discuss the meaning that we give to it more explicitly in our treatise on poetry — and thirdly it serves for amusement, serving to relax our tension and to give rest from it.[163]

Based on Lanza's interpretation of Aristotle's κάθαρσις,[164] Calame argues that the maidens in the *Louvre Partheneion* "sont affranchies des fatigues physiques ainsi que des effet émotionnels

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[159] C. Calame, "Sujets Passionels Dans La Poésie Graecque: Voix Chorales et 'Discipline Des Émotions,'" in *Diego Lanza, Lecteur Des Œuvres de l'Antiquité: Poésie, Philosophie, Histoire de La Philologie*, ed. P. Rousseau and R. S. Cottone (Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2014), 225–44.

[160] Aristotle's mention of κάθαρσις is found in his definition of tragedy (*Poet.* 1449b 24-36). Tragedy causes "τὴν τῶν τοιούτων παθημάτων κάθαρσιν". On the various interpretations of this passage, see D. W. Lucas, *Aristotle, Poetics* (Clarendon P., 1968), 275–78.

[161] Calame, "Sujets Passionels Dans La Poésie Graecque: Voix Chorales et 'Discipline Des Émotions,'" 229.

[162] *Pol.* 8.1341b.

[163] H. Rackham's translation, 1944.

[164] Lanza: "un moto di eccitazione psichica dello spettatore (pietà e paura) cui subentra un rasserenamento liberatorio, un ritorno all'equilibrio," in D. Lanza, *Aristotele, Poetica. Introduzione, Traduzione e Note* (Milano: Rizzoli, 1987), 66. In his book, *La disciplina dell'emozione: un'introduzione alla tragedia greca* (Il saggiatore, 1997), Lanza argues that the tragic choir is a "prezioso strumento nelle mani del poeta per disciplinare l'attenzione degli spettatori, accompagnarne lo stupore, la commozione, l'ansia, la paura, offrire il necessario sfogo alla tensione accumulata," and he indicates how "la rappresentazione tragica ... si costruisce su un doppio movimento: un progressivo disagio cui segue un sollievo" (184).

entraînés par leur éducation chorale et musicale dans la performance poétique".[165] By means of their relationship with the chorus–leader Hagesichora, the maidens achieve a state of "tranquility."

vv. 90–1 (fr. 1 Page = 3 Calame)
ἐξ Ἀγησιχόρ[ας] δὲ νεάνιδες
ἰρ]ήνας ἐρατ[ᾶ]ς ἐπέβαν

thanks to Hagesichora the maidens
set their feet upon the path of lovely peace.

In this way, the ritual frees the maidens from their psychic fatigues:[166] a κάθαρσις that not only involves the audience (as one could interpret Aristotle's definition of tragic κάθαρσις), but also alters the emotive state of the maidens themselves, becoming a collective ritual experience which disciplines performers and audience alike. In such a hypothesis, the poet could constructively deliver his messages to the people, fulfilling both the ritual and psychagogical goals at once.[167]

A further comparison between Alcman and Aristotle's *Poetics* provides additional evidence about the poet's function in society. Let us look at fragments 39 Page (= 91 Calame) and 40 Page (= 140 Calame):

39 καλοῦνται δ᾽ οἱ πέρδικες ὑπ᾽ ἐνίων κακκάβαι, ὡς καὶ ὑπ᾽ Ἀλκμᾶνος λέγοντος οὕτως·
ϝέπη τάδε καὶ μέλος Ἀλκμὰν
εὗρε γεγλωσσαμέναν
κακκαβίδων ὄπα συνθέμενος,
σαφῶς ἐμφανίζων ὅτι παρὰ τῶν περδίκων ᾄδειν ἐμάνθανε. διὸ καὶ Χαμαιλέων ὁ Ποντικὸς ἔφη τὴν εὕρεσιν τῆς μουσικῆς τοῖς ἀρχαίοις ἐπινοηθῆναι ἀπὸ τῶν ἐν ταῖς ἐρημίαις ᾀδόντων ὀρνίθων.

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[165] Calame, "Sujets Passionels Dans La Poésie Graecque: Voix Chorales et 'Discipline Des Émotions,'" 239. On the relationship between the girls and the chorus leader in fr. 1 PMG (= 3 Calame), see the previous analysis of Calame, *Les Chœurs de jeunes filles II*, 116–28.

[166] In vv. 88–89, the maidens invoke Aotis πόνων γὰρ ἇμιν ἰάτωρ, "cure of our pains."

[167] According to Too, "Alcman's 'Partheneion,'" 13: "Alcman's stories convey an understanding of how the world fits or does not fit together, and how the beings who inhabit it should behave towards each other."

39 Some writers call partridges caccábae, as does Alcman when he says,
These words and melody Alcman invented by observing the tongued cry of
partridges (caccabides). He makes it clear that he learned to sing from the
partridges. That is why Chamaeleon of Pontus said that the invention of music
was devised by the ancients from the birds singing in lonely places.[168]

40 οἱ δὲ Δωριεῖς λέγοντες ὄρνιξ τὴν γενικὴν διὰ τοῦ χ λέγουσιν ὄρνιχος. Ἀλκμὰν δὲ
διὰ τοῦ ς τὴν εὐθεῖαν ἐκφέρει καὶ τὴν γενικήν
ϝοῖδα δ᾽ ὀρνίχων νόμως
παντῶν.

40 The Doric form of the word ὄρνις, 'bird', is ὄρνιξ, genitive ὄρνιχος, But Alcman
shows the nominative ὄρνις and the genitive plural ὀρνίχων:
I know the tunes of all birds.[169]

In fr. 39 Page Alcman claims to have observed and learned from the birds, and in fr. 40 Page the

poet even boasts to know the νόμοι of the birds. These statements remind one of Aristotle's

definition of poetry as μίμησις of nature;[170] the poet can hear the secret voices of nature[171] and is

thus able to make them understandable to men by means of the poetic language.[172]

In addition, because it belongs to the Archaic period, Alcman's poetry may be understood

in close relationship with the sacred–religious sphere, and its allusive nature fits Detienne's

definition of a "performative truth, never challenged or demonstrated, but fundamentally different

from our own traditional concept of truth."[173] Understanding Alcman as a *Master of Truth* suggests

his close relationship with the Spartan political power structure. One may envision an analogy

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[168] Campbell's translation, 1987.

[169] Campbell's translation, 1987.

[170] *Poet*. 4.1448b 4–19.

[171] In antiquity, the birds represent the singers *par excellence*.

[172] For an analysis of fragments 39 and 40 Page in relation to the concept of μίμησις, see B. Gentili, "I Frr. 39 e 40 P. Di Alcmane e La Poetica Della Mimesi Nella Cultura Greca Arcaica," in *Studio Filologici e Storici in Onore Di Vittorio De Falco* (Napoli, 1971), 57–67.

[173] M. Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece* (New York: Zone Books [1st ed. Librarie Francois Maspero, 1967], 1996), 52.

between the νόμοι of nature described in fr. 40 Page and the more well-known Lycourgan νόμοι, by which the reformers changed the Spartan constitution in the seventh century BC.

The relationship between Alcman and archaic Greek religion is not secondary, because of the mention of multiple deities in his παρθενεία, and one may wonder about Alcman's poetry and its possible connection with the main religious center at the time, the Delphic oracle, which famously "inspired," among others, the Archaic lawgiver Lycurgus.[174] In particular, Janni notes that line 16 of the *Louvre Partheneion* (μή τις ἀνθ]ρώπων ἐς ὠρανὸν ποτήσθω, let no man fly to heaven) most likely rephrases the Delphic maxim μηδὲν ἄγαν, and he points to the crucial role of the Delphic center in contributing to the well-known Spartan frugality. Evidence for a "self-restrained Alcman" is found in fr. 17 Page (= 9 Calame), discussed in Chapter Two. Understanding Alcman as a "genuine spokesman of the Delphic message", Janni concludes that the Spartan choral lyric promoted "la rinuncia a un'ostentazione della propria ricchezza e autorità, pericolosamente vicina alla hybris." The doctrines spread from Delphi would have aimed to achieve the "egemonia sugli spiriti, ben presto unita a un determinante peso politico."[175] According to this interpretation, Alcman's poetry is instrumental to the political ideologies of his time, with the purpose of obtaining a "hegemony over the souls."[176]

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[174] Hdt. 1.65; 2-66.1; Plut. *Lyc*. 6. For the relationship between Solon and Delphic oracles, see Plut. *Sol*. 14.6 and *Mor*. 152c; also cf. Plut. *Sol*. 25.2. and *Paus*. 10.24. In modern studies, the discussion of Delphi as a center of political-religious power, with its own political agenda, was first introduced by J. Defradas, *Les themes de la propagande delphique* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1954) , who located the beginning of this widespread "influence" not earlier than the seventh century BC. For dating it to the eighth century BC, see Janni, *La Cultura Di Sparta Arcaica*, 81f.

[175] Janni, *La Cultura Di Sparta Arcaica*, 90.

[176] Janni, 91.

To conclude this thesis, I will summarize the various themes that have been brought up in reading the fragmentary poetry of Alcman, drawing a coherent scheme which connects this poetry to the reforms of the Spartan state in the seventh century BC.

As shown in Chapter Two, Alcman's poetry contains several moral and political references, some of which seemingly appear "out of context" in a poetic *corpus* mostly devoted to "maiden songs." As has been discussed, the παρθενεία, besides their primary function in rituals (or rites of passage), indeed include references or allusions to (mythological) rulers, gnomic statements, and allusion to socio–political principles (such as the preeminence of the two leaders, the society of equals – in the *Louvre Partheneion*, the "cousins"– the devotion due to the leaders, religious duties and piety) as well as a somewhat puzzling use of martial vocabulary. In choral lyric, the poetic message was delivered to an audience particularly open to being educated or instructed, as Calame summarizes with the idea of "discipline of emotions," thus achieving an overall psychagogical effect.

In Classical authors (such as Herodotus, Xenophon, Plato, and Aristotle), the "choral vocabulary" is in some instances used with a pure political meaning and, in my thesis, I ask whether this use is not just an inheritance of older ages, when choral lyric and politics could have been intertwined.

Alcman composed poems other than παρθενεία, either for a sympotic audience or, more likely, for communal meals, a social event that might have been introduced by the reformers of the Spartan state in the seventh century BC. The poet's declaration of preference for τὰ κοινὰ and δᾶμος shows at least an extended range of recipients for Alcman's poems or, alternatively, it suggests a wide-ranging poet, conveying specific messages (i.e. the ideals of obedience, cooperation, and frugality) to various layers of the Spartan population.

Evidence of Alcman composing specifically about political themes is otherwise found in fr. 64 Page (= 105 Calame), where the poet directly speaks of *Eunomia*, presenting a very interesting new "genealogy" of it, and thus marking a new intermediate step in the evolution of this concept from Homer to Aristotle. Alcman's mention of the Good Order may suggest his relationship with the Spartan reformers of the seventh century BC. His strange use of the verb συναρμόζω may find a parallel in Solon's poems, as well as being related to an "ideology of Harmony," which is otherwise suggested by various evidence in seventh century Laconia. The ideal of harmony, as well as the gnomic statements included in the *Louvre Partheneion*, could connect Alcman with the Delphic maxim of μηδὲν ἄγαν. The political influence – if any – of the major religious center of the Archaic Greek world over the Greek poleis is today still rather obscure.

Although it is not possible to reconstruct any certain fact regarding a historical Alcman, his poetry could certainly fit a cultural operation coeval to the reform of the Spartan State. As a rule, choral lyric is associated with the creation and endorsement of civic identity, but in the case of Alcman his poetry seems rather permeated by a political aspect, and words of political language are scattered throughout his compositions. In the context of the Lycourgan reform of the state, it is worth recalling that the lawgiver prohibited the new laws to ever be written down, choosing in this way an opposite direction from Solon's. The Lycourgan laws had to remain oral, and, by means of poetry and music, be instilled into the citizens' souls. In this context, Alcman's poetry may well show an example of this "political education," aimed at inculcating specific values and νομοί to the Spartans, while avoiding any form of coercion. This training of the Spartan citizens had the ultimate goal of legitimizing the Lycourgan reforms of the Spartan state.

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