

Cultic Space and Dithyrambic Performance in Pindar's Fragment 75

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One of the most debated topics concerning Greek lyric poetry is the relationship of cultic lyric (considered both in its textual and performative dimension) with the *hic et nunc* provided by the occasion and the ritual which the cultic songs fit into. In recent decades, the debate has been largely renewed by new approaches.

First, the lyric poets' deictic strategies have been demonstrated to be quite complex and subtly nuanced. *Deixis* can be distinguished at least into *deixis ad oculos* (i.e. references to things visible to the audience) and *Deixis am Phantasma* (i.e. references which do not reflect *sic et simpliciter* the performance setting, but rather point at something which is imagined). In most cases, there is no mere *deixis ad oculos* or mere *Deixis am Phantasma*; on the contrary, they are easily blurred. What is more, the deictic *origo* (i.e. the reference point for deictic devices) can shift in the course of a poem. Further, deictic features are intended to define the meaning of a poem and its relationship with patrons and audiences, rather than to simply depict the context.¹

1 A fundamental theoretical text on *deixis* is Bühler (1984). On lyric *deixis*, see especially Ferrari (1990a); Felson (1999); Bonifazi (2001) 35–49 and *passim*; the studies collected in Felson (2004b); D'Alessio (2007), (2018) and (2020); Ferrari (2012). See also Rösler (1983) and Danielewicz (1990), who, however, as far as archaic and classical lyric is concerned, are mostly focused on *deixis ad oculos*. On deictic *origo*, see Green (1992) 122; Bonifazi (2001) 30–31; Felson (2004a) 256; on the possibility of a shift in the *origo* in the course of a poem, both locally and temporally, see Green (1992) 128; D'Alessio (2004) 277–278. On temporal *deixis*, see Martin (2004) and D'Alessio (2004). For an innovative explanation of the subtlety of lyric *deixis* in the light of recent cognitive-linguistic methods, see Van Emde Boas (2022) 170–174.

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Secondly, another theoretical innovation is represented by new approaches to ritual and ritualization as strategies aimed at redefining social relationships and cultural values. Rituals are not simple representations of given socio-cultural meanings; rather, they contribute to redefine them and express relationships of socio-political powers. As a consequence, rituals are not fixed, but change over time, together with the socio-cultural meanings they convey. As far as cultic lyric is concerned, this implies that verbal signs and non-verbal signs interact in the definition of a ritual event: that is to say, a cultic song does not simply express a pre-existent, extra-textual ritual, but **both** song and action, text and performance are part of the ritual and cooperate to express its social meaning.² This is strictly related to a further new approach about relationship of lyric poetry with space, proposed in a recent book by Leslie Kurke and Richard Neer:³ lyric poetry is not to be imagined as simply inserted into a pre-existent space; rather, it contributes to the organization of space by its very spatial dimension, represented by choral dance, and the interaction of dance, music and word with the surrounding environment.

All these changes in approaching Greek lyric poetry have significantly enriched our understanding of Greek cultic song and contributed to overcome text-centred readings. As a matter of fact, an interpretation based exclusively on the text cannot give us every answer we need, not only because texts are only a part of the performance (and are sometimes transmitted in a precarious condition) but also because, as we saw, texts not only **reflect**, but **interact with** non-textual features. That is to say, performance, ritual, and text, as events located in time and space, have to be considered globally.

However, we should beware of pushing the pendulum to the other side—that is to say, of considering ritual and space as dominant features, a kind of Procrustean bed which the text has to fit into. Such an approach would be just as reductive as text-centred readings, since it makes the text not interact with, but merely reflect extra-textual features. What is worse, it depicts extra-textual features as more or less fixed, not as constantly reshaped by every single performative and ritual event. Rather, the text itself contributes to such a reshaping in

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- 2 Stavrianopoulou (2006) 7–22. For such new approaches in ritual studies, see Bell (2009); Kurke (2005) 81–84 and *passim*; the studies collected in Stavrianopoulou (2006).
- 3 Neer and Kurke (2019). For the victory song as a ‘tridimensional’ phenomenon (a good approach for cultic lyric as well), see also Bonifazi (2001) 15–16.

a number of ways (by selecting the extra-textual features it points at, by positing specific relationships among them etc.).

In reading Pindaric poems, it is particularly difficult to find a balance in interpretation and to avoid reductive readings. Pindar is usually subtle in referring to the performative context: his strategies are not always easy to detect and the global reconstruction of a Pindaric poem as a performative, ritual, and spatial event is always a delicate task. One of the most controversial cases is represented by fr. 75, where Pindar merges divine and human dimensions and involves the gods into the performance by invoking them and by pointing at spatial landmarks in the human city, i.e. at the urban shrines in which they are worshipped. Some scholars have posited a strict correlation between such spatial references and the performance of the ode, concluding that the gods' involvement mirrors some particular performative patterns. But, as usual in Pindaric studies, there is no agreement about the reconstruction of this poetic and ritual event. More than one interpretation is compatible with the text we can reconstruct and with the archaeological and antiquarian data we can collect. However, I hope to be able to demonstrate that the following interpretation reaches a good balance among the many problems involved.

1 Gods in the *agora*

Pindar wrote a number of important dithyrambs for Athens. One of the largest fragments is transmitted by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*De compositione verborum* 22.11). Dionysius himself informs us that the fragment coincides with the opening of a dithyramb (ἀρχέτω δὲ Πίνδαρος, καὶ τούτου διθύραμβός τις οὐ ἔστιν ἀρχή· δεῦτ' ἐν χορόν κτλ.). I quote here the whole text with a translation:

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | Δεῦτ' ἐν χορόν, Ὀλύμπιοι,
ἐπὶ τε κλυτὰν πέμπετε χάριν, θεοί,
πολύβατον οἷ τ' ἄστεος ὀμφαλὸν θυόεντα
ἐν ταῖς ἱεραῖς Ἀθάναις |
| 5 | οἰχνεῖτε πανδαίδαλόν τ' εὐκλέ' ἀγοράν·
ἰοδέτων λάχετε στεφάνων τὰν τ' ἐαριδρόπων αἰοιδάν,
Διόθεν τέ με σὺν ἀγλαΐᾳ
ἴδετε πορευθέντ' αἰοιδὰν δεύτερον
ἐπὶ τὸν κισσοδαῆ θεόν, |
| 10 | τὸν Βρόμιον, τὸν Ἐριβόαν τε βροτοὶ καλέομεν.
γόνον ὑπάτων μὲν πατέρων μελπόμεν(ος)
γυναικῶν τε Καδμειῖαν ἔμολον, |

- ἐναργέα τ' ἔμ' ὥτε μάντιν οὐ λανθάνει,
 φοινικοεάνων ὀπότη' οἰχθέντος Ὠρᾶν θαλάμου
 15 εὖοδμον ἐπάγοισιν ἔαρ φυτὰ νεκτάρεα.
 τότε βάλλεται, τότε ἐπ' ἀμβρόταν χθόν' ἐραταί
 ἴων φόβαι, ῥόδα τε κόμαισι μείγνυται,
 ἀχρεῖ τ' ὄμφαι μελέων σὺν αὐλοῖς,
 οἴχνηι τε Σεμέλαν ἐλικάμπυκα χοροί.

3 θυόνετ' Snell et Maehler 10 post καλέομεν interpunxit Lavecchia 11 μελπόμεν(ος) D'Alessio: μέλπει P: μέλπομεν FMVE: μελπέμεν Boeckh, prob. Lavecchia: μελπόμεν(οι) Hermann, probb. Snell et Maehler 12 ἔμολον P, probb. D'Alessio, Lavecchia: Σεμέλην FMVE: Σεμέλην del. Snell et Maehler, qui etiam ἔμολον del. Snell et Maehler

Come here and join the dance, Olympians, and send over it glorious grace, you gods, who come to the city's crowded, incense-rich navel in holy Athens and to the glorious, richly adorned *agora*! Receive wreaths of plaited violets and of the songs plucked in springtime, and look upon me as I proceed from Zeus with splendour of songs secondly to the ivy-flamed god, whom we mortals call Bromios ('resounding') and Eriboas ('loud-shouting'). I arrived singing the offspring of the highest fathers and Cadmeian women and, like a seer, I do not fail to notice clear signs, when, as the chamber of the purple-robed Horae is opened, the nectar-bearing plants bring in the sweet-smelling spring. Then, then the lovely tresses of violets are cast upon the immortal earth and roses are fitted to hair and voices of songs echo to the accompaniment of pipes and choruses come to Semele of the circling headband.⁴

4 I mostly follow the text and layout of Maehler (1989). For divergences, see the apparatus (mainly based on Lavecchia's edition) and n. 89; I mostly follow the textual improvements suggested in D'Alessio (1991) 105. The translation is a revision of Race (1997) 2.311–313, adapted to the Greek text printed here and to the interpretation argued for in the following pages. Prodi (2021) 206–208 has argued that the poem could have opened the books of *Dithyrambs* in Alexandrian edition: he observes that in this section of Dionysius' treatise (chapters 22–26) examples are usually selected among the beginnings of books (Thuc. 1.1.1–2.1; Sapph. fr. 1; Isocrates *Areopagiticus* 1–5 etc.): an exception is Sim. fr. 543 (26.15), which does not seem to come from the beginning of a poem and, consequently, from the beginning of a book either (Prodi [2021] 206–207 n. 53). Prodi's point is well taken; but I am not sure that, if quoting from the first poem in the first book of *Dithyrambs*, Dionysius would have mentioned it as 'one dithyramb' with indefinite τις. Prodi *ibid.* also connects this argument with the hypothesis that our poem could have featured a narrative on the birth of Dionysus and the origins of the dithyramb as a genre (cf. Prodi [2017] 548–549): see below n. 37.

The whole fragment evokes the performative setting of the song in a subtle way. That the first lines refer to the performance is made clear by the exhortation to the gods to join the chorus, by means of a deictic adverb. Deictic strategies and references are certainly linked with the performance, but *how* they are linked with it is not clear. In particular, the relative clause has usually been interpreted as locating the performance in a hotspot of Athenian topography, the *agora*, since Pindar says that the gods go to the *agora*. Wilamowitz's identification of the *omphalos* with the Altar of the Twelve Gods strengthened this hypothesis. The identification is plausible, since the term *omphalos* can be explained by the use of the Altar as the reference point for measuring distance in Athens.⁵

Therefore, most scholars thought that the dithyramb was performed by a *kyklios choros* around the Altar, despite some disagreement about the festival which the song was composed for.⁶ In a careful survey of the archaeological data, Neer and Kurke revised this hypothesis and argued that in Pindar's time the Altar was not yet in the classical *agora*, north of the Acropolis, but in the archaic *agora*, perhaps east of the Acropolis.⁷ The attribute *πανδαίδαλον* would actually refer to buildings and monuments built in the archaic *agora* by the Peisistratids and Cimon.⁸ This interpretation is part of an overall reconstruction of

5 *IG* 11² 2640; cf. Hdt. 2.7.1–2. See Wilamowitz (1921) 310, (1922) 274; Wycherley (1957) 119; Lavecchia (2000) 258; Neer and Kurke (2014) 536–537 = (2019) 132; cf. Furley and Bremer (2001) 2.209. See also Neer and Kurke's comparison with the Delphic *omphalos* and the fact that the other Pindaric occurrences of the term refer to the very navel stone of Delphi (Neer and Kurke [2014] 534–535 and n. 11 = [2019] 130–131 and n. 31). Hamilton (1990) 221–222 does not exclude this interpretation, but is cautious about it and proposes a further identification of the 'navel' with the Acropolis, which is accepted by Furley and Bremer (2001) 2.210 *ad* 3. *θυόεις* is a good epithet for an altar (Farnell [1932] 416; Lavecchia [2000] 258 *ad loc.*).

6 Farnell (1930) 322, (1932) 415; Puech (1923) 153, n. 1; Pickard-Cambridge (1962) 21, 37–38 (Anthesteria); Privitera (1972) 137–138 (Anthesteria); Lavecchia (2000) 258–259 (City Dionysia); Neer and Kurke (2014) 530–536 = (2019) 129–132 (City Dionysia). A performance in the *agora* had been already supposed by Boeckh (1821) 577 and Christ (1896) 393. Some notable exceptions are Hamilton (1990) 221–223 and Van der Weiden (1991) 197, who think that the song was performed not around the Altar, but in the Sanctuary of Dionysus during the City Dionysia (see below); cf. Furley and Bremer (2001) 1.257, 2.210 *ad* 3.

7 Neer and Kurke (2014) 537–561 = (2019) 132–146, mainly based on Gadbery (1992), for the moving of the Altar, and Papadopoulos (1996) and (2003) 280–297, for the location of the *agora*. For a reference to the *archaia agora* (but with an identification of the navel with the altar of Zeus Agoraios) see also Schnurr (1995) 134–135. However, the relevance attributed in these studies to the archaic *agora* (attested, among the literary sources, only in Apollodorus of Athens *FGrH* 244 F 113), is problematic: the *agora* in the Kerameikos dates back to the end of the sixth century, and by Cimon's age it was probably established as *the agora* of Athens (see Longo [2014] 866–875, with further bibliography).

8 Neer and Kurke (2014) 560–563 = (2019) 145–147. On *πανδαίδαλον*, see also Van der Weiden (1991) 187.

the function of the poem (it would be part of the redefinition of the civic Athenian space in the early classical period) as well as of its context: by a comparison with a passage from Xenophon's *Hipparchichos* (to which we will return), Neer and Kurke think that the dithyramb is not part of the City Dionysia choral competition among tribes, but was performed during the *pompe* opening the same City Dionysia.

However, Pindar's wording suggests a different link between the *agora* and choral performance. The relative clause has been interpreted by Van der Weiden as hinting at a permanent, or somehow customary, fact. Van der Weiden's reading is based on the combination of the relative pronoun with the particle τε. One could also think that τε in line 3 is simply coordinated with the second τε in line 5, but its position, just after the relative, allows us to consider it a case of τε *epicum*, confirming Van der Weiden's interpretation. Compare *Pythian* 12.1–3, where Pindar refers to Acragas as home to Persephone through the same pattern.⁹

Therefore, Pindar is not saying that the gods are **now** going to the *agora*; the coming of the gods to the *agora* is rather mentioned as an attribute of the gods themselves. Listing attributes through relative clauses, especially places of worship distinct from the place of performance, is a typical feature of the hymnic style.¹⁰ The mention of the *agora* as a usual destination for the gods is marked not only by the τε *epicum*, but also through the verb οἶχνέω. In the fragment, as observed by Furley and Bremer, this verb seems to have a frequentative meaning,¹¹ to mark recurrent rituals: compare line 19, concerning the recurrent celebration of the mother of Dionysus in springtime (οἶχνεῖ τε Σεμέλαν ἐλικάμπυκα χοροί).

The *agora* and the *omphalos* as usual dwellings of the gods are linked with the reference to the performance that opens the fragment, but not as Neer and Kurke (and others) interpret it. Pindar asks the gods to join the dance by means of two imperative clauses, coordinated by τε (1–2). In the first one the imperative is omitted, but could be inferred from δεῦτε (ε) ('come hither!').¹² The

9 Van der Weiden (1991) 193 *ad* 3; see also Ruijgh (1971) 984–986; Furley and Bremer (2001) 2.209. More general on τε *epicum* with relative pronouns, Ruijgh (1971) 2–5 and *passim*; Denniston (1954) 521–528. On τε in Pindar (both *epicum* and copulative) as marking traditional knowledge as shared with the public, see De Kreijl in Bonifazi, Drummen, and De Kreijl (2021) 11.4.5.

10 Norden (1913) 168–176.

11 Furley and Bremer (2001) 2.209–210 *ad* 3–5. For οἶχνέω referring to recurrent rituals, cf. also *Pyth.* 5.86.

12 Cf. e.g. Hom. *Il.* 13.481; *Od.* 8.132; Eur. *Med.* 894. In the first passage, δεῦτε is coordinated with the following verb by καί, as in our fragment δεῦτε (ε) is coordinated with ἐπί ... πέμ-

mention of the *agora* is aimed at making this imperative more effective: Pindar is telling the gods: ‘since you usually go to Athens to the *agora*, come now hither, to this chorus which is dancing in Athens’. The passage is not very different from the prayers in which the speaker asks the god to listen to her/him by referring to previous help (*da quia dedisti*). Compare Sappho’s fr. 1 ἄλλ’ ἀντιδ’ ἔλθ’ ἢ, αἶ ποτα ... ἦλθες, concluding ἔλθε μοι καὶ νῦν.¹³

One might also compare a lyric sample from Attic tragedy, namely the *parodos* of Sophocles’ *Oedipus the King* (an ode imbued with ritual patterns). In the first antistrophe, together with Athena and Apollo, the chorus invoke Artemis, ‘who sits on her circular glorious throne of the *agora*’ (ἃ κυκλόεντ’ ἀγορᾶς θρόνον εὐκλέα θάσσει, 161). The Theban *agora* is mentioned through a relative clause as home to the cult of Artemis Eukleia.¹⁴ The fact that Artemis dwells in Thebes (cf. 160 γαῖόχον), especially in one of its focal points, does not imply that the song is imagined as performed in front of her sanctuary in the Theban *agora* (in the same passage Artemis is summoned together with other divinities, namely Apollo and Athena; and lines 19–20, from the prologue, seem to exclude that Oedipus’ palace, represented by the *skene*, is located in any *agora*). Rather, it makes the chorus confident that the goddess will help them. It is to be noted the *da quia dedisti* motif is clearly employed in the concluding lines of the strophic pair (164–165).

Obviously the Altar was not the only place where the Olympians were worshipped in Athens, but it was the only one where they were worshipped **all**

πετε by τε. Van der Weiden (1991) 190 and Lavecchia (2000) 256 ad loc. provide full lists of parallels for the opening δεῦτε in hymns and prayers and for invitations to the gods to join the dance; see also Furley and Bremer (2001) 2.208–209 ad loc. To such lists, one could add *PMG* 935.1–2 (inscribed Epidaurian hymn to the Mother of the Gods, fourth-third century): some goddesses, almost certainly the Muses (who obviously are depicted as poetic assistants much more frequently than the Olympians), are summoned to leave the sky and join the lyric ‘I’ in singing a specific deity, the Mother of the Gods (*PMG* 935.1–4]ς θεαί, / δεῦρ’ ἔλθετ’ ἀπ’ ὠρανῶ / καὶ μοι συναείσατε / τὰν Ματέρα τῶν θεῶν: see Maas [1933] 138 ad 1–3 and Wagman [1995] 135, with significant parallels, among which the most similar are Sapph. fr. 127 and Hor. *Carm.* 3.4.1–2). Finally, in the *Paean Erythraeus* (Käppel [1992] *Pai.* 37[E].19–20) Apollo is invited to visit the speaker’s city (this example is adduced by Marinis [2024] 171 n. 137).

13 Lines 5, 8, 25. This is another recurrent hymnic feature: in the Pindaric corpus, see *Isthm.* 6.42–49. I thank Glenn Most for his suggestions on this point. On the function of the ‘regular visiting’ of the gods in fr. 75, cf. most recently Marinis (2024) 144–145.

14 Finglass (2018) 216 ad 160–161 (text and translation are taken from this edition). Compare εὐκλέ’ ἀγορᾶν in fr. 75.5. In the same *parodos*, Artemis is featured again as a divine helper at ll. 206–209; see also the gods ‘guarding the *agora*’ invoked by Eteocles in Aesch. *Sept.* 272.

together. It is a collective home, urban counterpart of Mount Olympus: Athens is praised as a place inhabited by the gods, a city of the gods on earth.¹⁵

So δεῦτ(ε) should not necessarily be identified with the *agora*. I find it more promising to link it with the reference that the speaker makes to himself as ‘going’ to Dionysus (7–10), by means of a first personal pronoun (another deictic feature, while the relative clause does not have deictic nuances). The adverbs δεῦτε and δεῦρο indeed point at the speaker’s position: they are examples of *Ich-Deixis*, just like the pronoun ὃδε.¹⁶ Unlike the τε-clauses, δεῦτ(ε) does not hint at a usual destination, but at the present destination required by the performance, the place where the chorus is dancing, qualified as the deictic *origo*.¹⁷

2 Zeus and Dionysus

According to some scholars, the movement towards Dionysus reflects some particular performative patterns, such as a procession.¹⁸ But processions to a shrine of Dionysus including also the performance of such complex dithyrambic are not documented with certainty in Athens. Neer and Kurke opt for another reconstruction: the song is performed during the civic parade (*pompe*) opening the City Dionysia, and every divinity mentioned in the fragment (even the Horae) would hint at a shrine, so that we have the temple of Zeus Olympios, the Sanctuary of Dionysus and the (still to be placed) Sanctuary of the Horae. By revolving around the *agora*, the *choreutai* would have pointed at all these sanctuaries in the surrounding city.¹⁹ Neer and Kurke posit a mere adequation of text to space by detecting a *deixis* exclusively *ad oculos*.²⁰ Or, to put it bet-

15 The reference to the *agora* ‘reflects the degree to which, in Athens, Dionysiac dance and song is an event that brings all together at the centre of the populous and prosperous city’ (Wilson [2003] 169–170, even if Wilson thinks that the song was performed in the *agora* itself). On the civic relevance of dithyrambic poetry and contests, see Ieranò (1997) 264–265; Kowalzig (2004); Fearn (2013a) 135–137.

16 However, ὃδε is even more flexible, since it can also have an anaphoric or cataphoric function by pointing at a part of the text itself. On ὃδε in lyric poetry, see Danielewicz (1990) 9–16; Bonifazi (2004) 397–398; Calame (2004) 422–434; D’Alessio (2007) 99–100; Van Emde Boas (2022) 163–164.

17 On first and second personal pronouns as deictic features, see Bonifazi (2001) 36–38; Calame (2004) 415; Felson (1999) 4–5, (2004a) 256–257.

18 The dithyramb is thought to be processional by Privitera (1972) 140, followed by Sourvinou-Inwood (2003) 96.

19 Neer and Kurke (2014) 566–575 = (2019) 149–154 (see their map at [2014] 568 = [2019] 150).

20 In the Pindaric corpus, as we have it, a tendency to draw the audience’s attention to the

ter, their interpretation implies that Pindar is resorting exclusively to one of the types of *Deixis am Phantasma* individuated by Bühler, namely the type by which one 'is able to indicate with his finger the direction in which the absent thing is seen with the mind's eye, more or less as our wanderer through the city indicates the direction to the train station'.²¹

However, the Horae are not a destination of the moving act pointed at by πορευθέντ(α): only Dionysus is. The passage Διόθεν ... πορευθέντ' ... δεύτερον ἐπὶ τὸν κισσοδαή θεόν describes a linear movement, not a clockwise one (whether this movement reflects a procession or not). Indeed, the deictic features of our fragment do not provide any grounds to argue for such a performative scenario.

Besides this, Neer and Kurke follow the hypothesis of Farnell that the *pompe* included some choral performances in the *agora* and that these performances touched several altars and shrines in the *agora* itself, including the Altar of the Twelve Gods. This statement is based on a passage from Xenophon's *Hipparchicos*.²² I quote it in full:

Τῶνδ' ἔγε μὴν αὐτῷ ἤδη μέλειν δεῖ τῷ ἱπάρχω· πρῶτον μὲν ὅπως καλλιεργήσει τοῖς θεοῖς ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἱππικοῦ, ἔπειτα ὅπως τὰς πομπὰς ἐν ταῖς ἐορταῖς ἀξιοθεάτους ποιήσει, ἔτι δὲ καὶ τὰλλα ὅσα ἐπιδεικνύναι δεῖ τῇ πόλει ὅπως ἡ δυνατόν κάλλιστα ἐπιδείξει, τὰ τε ἐν Ἀκαδημείᾳ καὶ τὰ ἐν Λυκείῳ καὶ τὰ Φαληροῖ καὶ τὰ ἐν τῷ ἱπποδρόμῳ. καὶ ταῦτα μὲν ἄλλα ὑπομνήματα· ὥς δὲ τούτων ἕκαστα κάλλιστ' ἂν πράττειτο, νῦν αὐτὰ ταῦτα λέξω.

Τὰς μὲν οὖν πομπὰς οἶμαι ἂν καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς κεχαρισμενωτάτας καὶ τοῖς θεαταῖς εἶναι εἰ, ὅσων ἱερὰ καὶ ἀγάλματα ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ ἔστι, ταῦτα ἀρξάμενοι ἀπὸ τῶν Ἑρμῶν κύκλῳ [περὶ τὴν ἀγορὰν καὶ τὰ ἱερὰ] περιελάνουιν τιμῶντες τοὺς θεοὺς. καὶ ἐν τοῖς Διονυσίοις δὲ οἱ χοροὶ προσεπιχαρίζονται ἄλλοις τε θεοῖς καὶ τοῖς δώδεκα χορεύοντες.

Now we come to duties that the cavalry commander must perform himself. First, he must sacrifice to propitiate the gods on behalf of the cavalry; secondly, he must take the processions during the festivals worth seeing;

immediate context in such a prominent way as presupposed by Neer and Kurke for fr. 75 is not usual: on this fact and its possible explanations (and comparisons with tragic and comic texts), see D'Alessio (2007) 99–105.

21 Bühler (1984) 152.

22 The passage is cited with reference to fr. 75 by Farnell (1932) 415 and Lavecchia (2000) 259. A relationship of this passage with the *pompe* at the City Dionysia is reiterated in Pickard-Cambridge (1968) 62 and n. 6; Parke (1977) 127 and n. 156; Csapo and Slater (1994) 106; Wilson (2000) 98; cf. Caroli (2014) 1072. Even Csapo (2020) 586 speaks of a 'Dionysian parade' during the Panathenaic festivals by referring to this passage.

further, he must conduct all the other obligatory displays before the people with as much splendour as possible, that is to say, the reviews in the Academy, in the Lyceum, at Phalerum, and in the Hippodrome. These again are only brief notes; and I will now explain exactly how the details of these various functions may be carried out with most splendour.

As for the processions, I think that they would be most acceptable both to the gods and to the spectators if the cavalry honoured all the gods who have shrines and statues in the *agora* by riding round these [*scil.* shrines and statues], starting from the Herms, in a circular parade. At the Great Dionysia too the dance of the choruses forms part of the homage offered to the Twelve besides the other gods.²³

According to Xenophon, the riders, during the *pompai*, should pay homage to all the gods worshipped in the *agora* by riding in a circle and touching all the ἱερά and ἀγάλματα. He observes that (more literally) ‘during the Dionysia too the choruses gratify the Twelve Gods among other gods by dancing’. The City Dionysia is mentioned in order to take from it the example of the *choroi* as a model for the riders; but it is the circular movement of dithyrambic dance (*kyklios choros*) in its celebration of all the gods (in addition to Dionysus) during the dithyrambic performances that Xenophon is comparing with the riding all around the *agora* (κύκλῳ περιελάυνοιεν), **not** the fact that the choruses would be dancing all around the *agora* sanctuaries as well.²⁴ Further, Neer and Kurke, following Farnell and others,²⁵ think that Xenophon is specifically describing the riders’ parade during the *pompe* of the City Dionysia; but this hypothesis is unfounded, since Xenophon is here speaking generally about the *pompai* celebrated during several festivals (*Hipparchicos* 3.1 τὰς πομπὰς ἐν ταῖς ἑορταῖς). That is to say, Xenophon is not thinking exclusively about the City Dionysia parade. This reinforces the hypothesis that, in this passage, the City Dionysia is relevant not as an occasion for specific *pompai*, but as an occasion for a performance compared with the *pompai*, namely the circular dances of the Dionysiac choruses. As a consequence, the *Hipparchicos* cannot be used as evidence for

23 Xen. *Eq. mag.* 3.1–2. Text: Marchant (1920). Translation (modified): Marchant (1968) 251–253. The syntax is difficult: I take ὅσων as governed by τοὺς θεοὺς. It would be easier to take it as governed by ταῦτα, but this would give no acceptable meaning.

24 Pace Neer and Kurke (2014) 531–532 = (2019) 129; cf. Delebecque (1973) 42 n. 2. See also the apparent redundancy of χορεύοντες, which points at the choral performance itself as the point of comparison for the parade.

25 See above, n. 22.

dithyrambic performances in the *agora* during the City Dionysia. Besides this, as Lucia Athanassaki pointed out to me, ritual changes over time (as emphasised by recent approaches in ritual studies)²⁶ and it is not safe to adhere so closely to the ritual described by Xenophon a century and a half later (whether it may be referring to a Dionysian parade or not).

Rather than a sheer *deixis ad oculos* (or *am Phantasma*), one can allow a mixture of *deixis ad oculos* and more imaginative references. *Deixis ad oculos* can be detected in the interrelation between δεῦρ(ε) and the reference to Dionysus as a destination: Dionysus is deictic *origo* because the song is dedicated to him and, most of all, because the song is probably performed in his sanctuary in a circular dance.²⁷

One can compare the proem of *Pythian* 11, where Cadmus' daughters are summoned to move towards Melia (πάρ Μελίαν), that is to say, to the Sanctuary of Apollo Ismenios (4–6).²⁸ Some scholars assumed that the movement of the Theban heroines reflected a particular performative pattern (just as other scholars did for fr. 75), the Theban procession of *daphnephoria*. However, recent studies have refuted this hypothesis: the heroines' song prefigures the victory ode itself without hinting at a procession or at a *daphnephorikon* performed besides *Pythian* 11 (the poem does not feature elements exclusively connected with the ritual of *daphnephoria*).²⁹ *Pythian* 11 is also a good point of comparison as a song which involves other deities and shrines besides the one where

26 See above, n. 2.

27 Maybe around the *thymele*, which was not a sacrificial altar but 'a marking stone prominent enough to define the sacredness of the centre but not large enough to interfere with the dramatic action' (Wiles [1997] 72). However, the evidence for a permanent *thymele* is not completely clear. On the question, see Gow (1912); Arnott (1962) 43–45; Rehm (1988) 264–271; Wiles (1997) 70–72.

28 The usage of παρά and other prepositions governing the name of a divinity to point at a shrine is well attested in epigraphic evidence (Robert [1970] 299 and n. 2; Charneux [1987]); see also Eur. *El.* 173–174 (Calame [1977] 1.218–219). In a Delian inscription (*IG* XI.2 219A.20) there is mentioned a route ἐπὶ Διόνυσον: it may refer to an altar of the god, but this is not certain (Bruneau [1970] 317–318; Charneux [1987] 219–220). It is highly probable that *Pythian* 11 was performed at the Ismenion or in its surroundings (D'Alessio [2010] 284–285, who confutes the scepticism of Finglass [2007] 31–32). Melia is a daughter of Oceanus who gave two sons to Apollo, Ismenos and Teneros, linked with the Sanctuary (Paus. 9.10.6, Pind. fr. 29.1, *Pae.* 9 [fr. 52k = A1 Rutherford], 41–43 etc.).

29 The most influential version of the "daphnephoric" interpretation of *Pythian* 11 is Bernardini (1989) (see also Burton [1962] 62–63; Vivante [1972] 50; Pavese [1975] 246–247): it has been developed in Sevieri (1997) 91–92 and (1999) 108–109. For arguments against it, see Ferrari (2008) 10–13 and (2012) 169–172; Finglass (2007) 29–31.

the song is performed. Semele and Ino are connected with the *agora* in the Kadmeia, while Alcmena is linked with the Sanctuary of Heracles, just outside the Elektrai gates, near the Ismenion itself.³⁰ In our fragment, ἐπὶ τὸν κισσοδαῆ θεόν corresponds to πὰρ Μελίαν as a spatial reference to the specific divinity who inhabits the place of performance.

Even if the choral dance is to be imagined as a circular one,³¹ it is described as a voyage of the lyric 'I' to Dionysus. A linear representation is superimposed on a circular performance, not to suggest a procession, but to define the authority of the speaker and make the Dionysian ritual interact with the whole pantheon. In this strategy, a crucial word is Διόθεν. More than to a physical place, Διόθεν refers to Zeus as source of authority for the lyric 'I'. As a matter of fact, Διόθεν as a spatial reference is so imbued with metaphoric nuances that we are by no means obliged to think that it refers to a physical shrine. The most 'spatial' meaning which is attested for Διόθεν is 'from the sky'.³² Usually, people or gods come Διόθεν when they are actually coming from Zeus to fulfil his wish;³³ more generally, Διόθεν refers to Zeus as source of authority and master of men's fate.³⁴ Therefore, even if it is actually a spatial syntagm and has to be translated as 'from Zeus' (consider its correlation with ἐπὶ τὸν κισσοδαῆ θεόν), it implies also that the lyric 'I' is coming 'by the will of Zeus'.³⁵ In addition to this, there are

30 Pausanias connected some ruins in the Kadmeia with Semele: his interpretation probably arose from a connection of the site with Cadmus, rooted in the archaic and classical age (Paus. 9.12.3–4: see Moggi and Osanna [2010] XXVII–XXVIII, 282–283). For Alcmena and the Herakleion, see Paus. 9.11.1. On the position of the Herakleion outside the Elektrai gates, see Pind. *Isthm.* 4.61, Schachter (1992) 27; Whitley (2004) 47–48; Aravantinos (2014).

31 On this point, see below, next chapter.

32 Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 2.993, governed by ἐξ; Aratus, *Phaen.* 886; *Anth. Pal.* 7.390.4.

33 Cf. e.g. Hom. *Il.* 24.194, 561, [Eur.] *Rhes.* 455, with Fantuzzi (2020) 397 ad loc.

34 Thgn. 1.197, [Hes.] *Sc.* 22, Aesch. *Ag.* 43, Pind. *Nem.* 4.61. Sometimes Διόθεν can be translated as 'by the will of Zeus': see Aesch. *Cho.* 307–308, Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 2.461. See also Privitera (1972) 140.

35 It would be possible also to interpret πορευθέντ(α) as passive and Διόθεν as agent ('sent/carried by Zeus'), as Privitera (1972) 139–140, n. 15 and Lavecchia (2000) 263 ad 7–8 do. This hypothesis is interesting, since there are good parallels for Διόθεν as agent with aorist passive participles (Hom. *Il.* 15.488–489; Eur. fr. 916 Kn. 6–7). In Pindar, an occurrence of Διόθεν as agent is to be found in *Nem.* 4.61 τὸ μόρσιμον Διόθεν πεπρωμένον 'the destiny which is assigned by Zeus', with a perfect passive participle (see the translations proposed by Köhnken [1971] 204, Henry [2005] 41, and Cannatà Fera [2020] 369). However, there is poor evidence for πορεύομαι as passive: even in the two passages quoted by Lavecchia *ibid.* and LSJ s.v. πορεύω 11.1 (Soph. *Aj.* 1253–1254, *OC* 845), only the occurrence from *Oedipus Coloneus* could be interpreted as a passive, without excluding the possibility of interpreting it as a middle voice (in both passages, the verb is in the present tense, not in the aorist). A better argument is advanced by Privitera *ibid.*, who observes that Pindar employs the

some parallels for the performer as coming to fulfil his task under the aura or the protection of Zeus and his *paredroi* divinities. In the opening of *Olympian* 4, the lyric 'I' addresses Zeus and describes himself as sent by Zeus' Horae as witness of the games (lines 1–3). In the opening of *Paean* 6, the speaker asks Delphi to receive him 'by Olympian Zeus' (fr. 52f = D6 Rutherford, 1–11). This is not to say that Zeus inspires the poet just as the Muses do,³⁶ but that the coming of the speaker (not an actual 'coming', but an image of the performance itself) is subject to the will of the supreme god. While ἐπὶ τὸν κισσοδαῖ θεόν actually refers to the Sanctuary of Dionysus, Διόθεν is not 'physical'; however, Pindar removes such a difference and employs both ἐπὶ τὸν κισσοδαῖ θεόν and Διόθεν as spatial references, as if the lyric 'I' were actually coming like a messenger of Zeus to the Sanctuary of Dionysus.

In *Olympian* 4, Zeus is relevant obviously because of his role as patron of the Olympic Games. In our dithyramb, the reference to Zeus as an ideal point of origin and source of authority for the speaker is related to the address to the Olympian gods as both audience and performers of the ritual held in honour of Dionysus: Pindar involves the whole pantheon in the celebration of the god. Furthermore, by stressing the relationship of Zeus as starting point with Dionysus as destination, Pindar celebrates Dionysus as the son of Zeus and Semele. The fragment will mention Semele as well, in a passage aiming at defining the prestige of the lyric 'I' as the one able to choose the right moment to celebrate Dionysus.³⁷

active πορεύω with the meaning of 'making go' (*Ol.* 1.77, *Pyth.* 11.21, *Nem.* 7.29). Nonetheless, the translation of Διόθεν ... πορευθέντ(α) as 'sent by Zeus' is problematic as far as δεύτερον is concerned (see below).

36 As Lavecchia (2000) 262 *ad* 7–8 tries to argue for; but see the objections advanced by Neer and Kurke (2014) 564 = (2019) 148.

37 See below, penultimate chapter. Semele is sometimes linked with Dionysus in sacrifices: see Larson (1995) 30, 31, 34. In the tales concerning the introduction of Dionysiac cult, Dionysus' identity as the son of Zeus is often contested, and the confirmation of his divine origin is a crucial point in sanctioning his final victory: see e.g. some well-known passages from Euripides' *Bacchae*, as ll. 1–3, 26–31, 41–42, 88–98, 242–245, 466–468, 521–529, 1340–1343. Dionysus' birth seems to be a recurrent theme in dithyrambs: see Pind. fr. 70b.30–31, Bacchyl. 19.49–51, Timoth. fr. 792 (most plausibly referring to a dithyramb: Hordern [2002] 10, 249), Pl. *Leg.* 700 b4–5. It is featured in Philodamus' *Paean to Dionysus* as well (Käppel [1992] *Pai.* 39.6–23; see Clay [1996] 89). The origins of the dithyramb itself were sometimes related to the births of Dionysus (both to the first one from Semele and the second one from Zeus' thigh), as attested by Pindar himself (fr. 85; cf. again *Bacch.* 521–529; for other evidence, see Ieranò [1997] nos. 1–23 and commentary at 155–167; Lavecchia [2000] 288–289). On Dionysus' birth and Semele as recurrent topics in dithyrambs, see Mendelsohn (1992) 114–117; Furley and Bremer (2001) 1.258; Lavecchia (2013) 59–63; Prodi (2021) 198–200. Prodi (2021) 207–208 and n. 57 hypothetically attributes to our dithyramb also frs. 71

The correlation between Zeus and Dionysus is strengthened by δεύτερον. This occurrence of δεύτερον is quite difficult to interpret, but the most probable option, as shown by Neer and Kurke, is to consider it as a predicative adjective referring to Dionysus (hence the translation 'I come from Zeus to the ivy-flamed god as second' or 'from Zeus I come secondly to the ivy-flamed god').³⁸ Of course, if we accept this, we are almost obliged to interpret Διόθεν as 'from Zeus', since, if Zeus is not a starting point, Dionysus is second to nothing.³⁹

Another possible interpretation of δεύτερον is to take it as an adverb meaning 'for the second time'; therefore, Pindar would be referring to his second participation in the dithyrambic *agones* (hence, this dithyramb would be the second one proposed by the poet at the City Dionysia).⁴⁰ Neer and Kurke objected that such a reference by the poet to himself would be irrelevant. This point is well taken, since such a reference would be odd in a choral *agon* where the tribe that provided the chorus and the *choregos* who financed it were in fact considered the true winners.⁴¹ On the other hand, we must observe that dithyrambic poets were aware of their role, and there were some ways to celebrate them. The official *Fasti* (IG 11² 2318) listed only the tribe and the *choregos*, but the case is different for the choregic inscriptions found on the bases of the tripods assigned to winning *choregoi*: they often recorded the poet as well. The typical formula is '(name of the tribe) ἐνίκα, (name of the *choregos*) ἐχορήγει, (name of the poet) ἐδίδασκε'.⁴² One may also compare the proem of Bacchylides'

and 85, which concern the birth of the god and the origins of the genre; in this regard, he does not rule out that the proceeding 'from Zeus to Dionysus' may prefigure a subsequent narrative on these topics. These are very interesting suggestions, but the quasi-formulaic occurrence of Dionysus' origins in dithyrambs implies that frs. 71 and 85 are not necessarily traceable to our poem.

38 Neer and Kurke (2014) 565–567 = (2019) 148–150 (cf. already Boeckh [1821] 578, but with an obsolete text); see also Puech (1923) 153 n. 3. This interpretation seems to be presupposed by Wilson (2003) 169–170, as well as in the translation of Race (1997).

39 This excludes the interpretation of Διόθεν as agent, on which see n. 35; unless we admit that Dionysus is 'second' to the Olympian gods summoned in the first line, but it would be quite at odds with the fact that the Olympian gods are the interlocutors of the lyric 'I' in ll. 7–9 too.

40 Hamilton (1990) 214, n. 20; Van der Weiden (1991) 197; Zimmermann (1992) 52 n. 4; Lavecchia 2000, 255; Furley and Bremer (2001) 1.257; Sourvinou-Inwood (2003) 132, n. 149.

41 Neer and Kurke (2014) 564–565 = (2019) 148. For the *choregos* and the tribe as winners, see Pickard-Cambridge (1962) 36; Zimmermann (1992) 35–37; Ieranò (2013) 368.

42 For the identification of the διδάσκαλος with the poet in choregic inscriptions, see Wilson (2000) 214–216; Wilson (2007) 161. The choregic inscriptions are collected in Ieranò (1997) 331–361. On διδάσκαλος referring both to dramatic and lyric poets, see Herington (1985) 24–27, 39–40, 183–185; D'Alessio (2007) 97. Consider the use of διδάσκω and ἀντιδιδάσκω

Dithyramb 5 (*Ode* 19), which consists in a celebration of the poet's skill. This ode was composed for Athens, as revealed both by lines 9–10 and the title preserved on the papyrus. It looks like a song actually dedicated to Dionysus (the second half of the poem culminates in the birth of the god) and was plausibly performed during the City Dionysia.⁴³ The lyric 'I' invites Bacchylides himself, referred to with an elaborate circumlocution (Κηῖα μέριμνα 'Kean care'), to dedicate a new song to Athens (8–11). This passage is quite ambiguous: we could interpret it as if the chorus were talking to the poet, but we could also think that the poet is inviting himself to sing, a common device in choral lyric poetry.⁴⁴ Bacchylides composed his proem in a way suitable for both scenarios: 'the audience must have understood this as an address to the poet by the chorus, who pay him a nice compliment ... Ultimately it is, of course, a self-address by the poet, the "nightingale of Keos"'.⁴⁵ Another (though not uncontroversial) parallel could be the proem of Pindar's *Paean* 6 (fr. 52f = D6 Rutherford, 1–18), where the lyric 'I' addresses Delphi. The distinction that the speaker is making between himself and some ἔται ('friends') of Delphi he is aiding (10–11) could be explained by identifying the speaker with the poet and the ἔται with the patrons who commissioned the song (the citizens of Delphi).⁴⁶

in connection with dithyrambic poets in Ar. *Vesp.* 1410–1411; *Av.* 1403–1404. On the prestige of dithyrambic poets in the City Dionysia *agon*, see Ieranò (2013). On the exclusion of poets from the official *Fasti*, see Pickard-Cambridge (1962) 36 and (1968) 75–76; Melena (1983) 209–210. On the *Fasti*, see also Ieranò (1997) 255–256, with further bibliography.

43 The ode is thought to have been performed during the City Dionysia by García Romero (1994) 114 (the other context hypothesised by him, the Anthesteria, is not probable: see below, n. 61) and Maehler (1997) 241.

44 On the lyric 'I' speaking to himself in choral poetry, see Carey (1989); more specifically on Bacchyl. 19, Carey (2017) 48–49. For a general assessment of the interaction between chorus and poetic persona, see Athanassaki (2022a). I am grateful to Lucia Athanassaki and Ewen Bowie for their suggestions about translation and interpretation of Bacchyl. 19.11.

45 Maehler (2004) 212 *ad* Bacchyl. 19.11 (cf. Maehler [1997] 252 *ad loc.*). A distinction in fr. 75 between the proem, performed by a soloist, and the rest of the song, performed by a chorus (Melena [1983] 211–213; cf. García Romero [1994] 115–116 on Bacchyl. 19) is not plausible: it has been built on a doubtful reconstruction of the "original" performance of dithyrambs as attested in Archil. fr. 120 (Melena [1983] 192–193; on Archilochus' fragment, see Privitera [1957] 95–101; Pickard-Cambridge [1962] 9–10; D'Angour [2013] 200–201; Swift [2019] 304–306).

46 See Rutherford (2001) 308–309: '... if the χορός performing the song were Delphians (compare the title [*scil.* ΔΕΛΦΟΙΣ ΕΙΣ ΠΥΘΩΝ]), then lines 10–11 rule out the possibility that the speaking subject could be a member of the χορός'. The performative setting of *Paean* 6 is debated (see D'Alessio [1997] 27, Rutherford [1997] 13–19 and [2001] 329–338 on the alternative title of the third triad and the possible performative scenarios it opens). How-

However, what is at stake here is not the **possibility** of a reference to the poet but, as Neer and Kurke point out, its **relevance** in the poetic strategy chosen by Pindar (even if I interpret this strategy in a way different from them). Of course, the lyric 'I' here is identifiable with the *choreutai*, but Pindar does not make the *choreutai* speak as performers opposed to the poet, nor as the poet speaking via the performers as his mouthpieces. Rather, he makes the *choreutai* an authoritative speaking (and dancing) persona summoning the Olympians themselves, coming from Zeus (and so blessed by the will of the supreme god) and able to choose the right moment to sing of Dionysus;⁴⁷ this is not the same strategy adopted by Pindar elsewhere, in *Paeon* 6, or by Bacchylides in *Dithyramb* 5. This, and not the etiquette of dithyrambic *agones*, is the main reason why a reference to Pindar's potential 'second coming' is irrelevant here.⁴⁸

Such an interpretation would stand even if we followed Wilamowitz in ascribing fr. 83 to our poem (ἦν ὅτε σύας Βοιωτίων ἔθνος ἔνεπον 'there was a time when they called Boeotian people pigs'): this too comes from the books of *Dithyrambs*, as attested by one of its sources (*Sch.*[BEQ] *Ol.* 6.152).⁴⁹ Wilamowitz's hypothesis was accepted in the Teubner edition and has recently been revived by Prodi, who argued that fr. 83 may be part of a passage praising Pindar himself as a Theban poet by confuting the proverbial insult 'Boeotian pig', just as happens in *Ol.* 6.89–90.⁵⁰ I totally agree with the interpretation of fr. 83 *per*

ever, the hypothesis of a double patronage, a Delphian and an Aeginetan one, looks quite plausible, and is compatible with a bardic persona (Kurke [2005] 89; Carey [2017] 51–52; cf. Athanassaki [2018] 110–113).

47 See below, penultimate paragraph. On the lyric 'I' as the construction of an authoritative speaking persona, see especially D'Alessio (1994), who overcame Lefkowitz's distinction between a poetic persona in victory songs and a choral persona in ritual songs (Lefkowitz [1991]); cf. Felson (1999) 9–12. I will not deal here with the whole debate on the identity of the Pindaric (and lyric) 'I' (for more recent assessments, see Currie [2013]; Maslov [2015] 105–116; D'Alessio [2020]). Recently, an identification of the lyric 'I' with the performer in most lyric poems has been stated in Stehle (2017), followed by Athanassaki (2018) 82–83 (cf. Lattmann [2016]); but this is too rigid (see Carey [2017]; D'Alessio [2020] 13–21). Furlley and Bremer (2001) 2.211 *ad* 8, in accordance with their interpretation of δεύτερον (see n. 40), identify the speaker with the poet, but observe that 'it remains somewhat strange, of course, that in this dithyramb—undoubtedly a choral song—the poet refers to himself as a professional poet'.

48 Even more difficult is the hypothesis according to which the chorus would be referring to his position in the contest ('look at me moving as the second chorus'), *pace* Privitera (1972) 139; Zimmermann (1992) 52, n. 4; Schnurr (1995) 134, n. 34. For objections on this point, see Van der Weiden (1991) 197 *ad* 8.

49 Wilamowitz (1921) 311, (1922) 274. Other sources: Str. 7.7.1; Gal. *Protr.* 7.

50 Prodi (2021) 207–208. On the passage from *Olympian* 6, see Adorjányi (2014) 275–276 *ad Ol.* 6.87–91, 281–283 *ad* 89–90.

se as an allusion to Pindar's poetic skill; on the other hand, its application to our poem is less convincing. Wilamowitz's argument is based on metrical grounds, but a metrical affiliation of fr. 83 with fr. 75 is difficult to prove, not only because it does not respond to any of the lines in the major piece (of course, one could think that it comes from an epode). If we assume *correptio Attica* in ἔθνος (a scansion with parallels in similar lines, but in different positions), we will have ————, namely two iambic *metra* (first one ———, second one ———) plus a resolved cretic (———).⁵¹ The metre of fr. 75 is indeed iambic-cretic, the least attested metre in the Pindaric corpus (among the epinicians, it is to be found only in *Olympian* 2).⁵² But the continuous run of six short syllables is alien to fr. 75, where we find at most four consecutive shorts (lines 2, 8, 10, 17): this restriction seems to be a tendency in iambic-cretics of choral lyric.⁵³ Rather, such a sequence of short syllables would affiliate fr. 83 with the so-called 'aeolic metre', a much more common metrical genre in the Pindaric corpus, which features abundant iambic and cretic patterns interspersed with aeolic ones.⁵⁴

51 Cf. Wilamowitz (1921) 311 n. 5 (who describes this as 'three iambs', according to his "pan-iambic" approach). Both forms of the iambic metre are to be found in fr. 75 (ll. 1, 5, 14, 15, 19); as for the cretic, same form at ll. 6, 10, 16, 19. Parallels for this *correptio*: *Ol.* 1.66 (final cretic with scheme ———); *Ol.* 10.97, where it concerns a final *colon* ———, spondee + cretic according to Snell and Maehler (1987), but it may be a dochmiac (for dochmiacs in choral lyric, see Pretagostini [1979]; West [1980] 149–150, [1982] 62; Martinelli [1997] 266–267). In fr. 83, if accepting *correptio*, one should posit period end or consonant after ἐνεπὶον (or even lengthening of the final -ον: on this prosodic feature, see Maehler [1989] 188): seven consecutive short syllables are extremely rare in Pindar (Itsumi [2009] 436 signals only *Ol.* 1 str. 8, *Pyth.* 7 str. 1).

52 The other main samples in choral lyric are Pind. fr. 108; Bacchyl. 17, fr. 14 + 57; Sim. frs. 541, 579. For a first orientation on this metre and further bibliography, see Gentili (1974); West (1980) and (1982) 60–61; Pretagostini (1980); Martinelli (1997) 194–195. I cannot provide here a full metrical discussion for fr. 75: different proposals in Wilamowitz (1921) 312–313; West (1980) 145–146; Van der Weiden (1991) 187–189; Zimmermann (1992) 55–59; Lavecchia (2000) 79, 254. I follow Pretagostini and Zimmermann's remarks in not reducing every pattern to iambic *metra* variously modified, as is the approach of Wilamowitz and West.

53 Maas (1966) 42; Gentili (1974) 88, 89 n. 14; West (1980) 141–142, (1982) 68–69.

54 On this metre, Snell (1982) 54–57; West (1982) 61–68; Martinelli (1997) 244–245; cf. Itsumi (2009) 88–92; on sequences featuring more than four consecutive shorts, Itsumi (2009) 434–436. Parallels for the scanning of ἔθνος with *correptio* come from 'aeolic' odes. Itsumi has proposed a split of this metrical class into two further classes ('aeolics' and 'freer dactylo-epitrites'): his proposal still needs to be properly addressed in Pindaric scholarship, but does not significantly affect my argument. He also ascribes *Olympian* 2 and Bacchylides' *Ode* 17 to 'freer dactylo-epitrites' (154–169), but this is not convincing (cf. Henry [2011] 175).

This affiliation would become even more plausible if we rejected *correp-tio*, so as to have ———— (before consonant or period end, or with lengthening of the final -ον) or ———— (before vowel and no period end): this is not the place to provide a complete list of possible metrical interpretations for such a difficult scheme, as they vary widely depending on how far one is inclined to regard it as an autonomous period and to accept it as transmitted with no textual adjustments (although the text is overall sound). With the first option, which is easier to interpret, we would have a central aeolic *colon* (———, ‘reversed *dodrans*’) preceded and followed by resolved cretics: admixture of aeolic *cola* with iambic and cretic metre is common in aeolic odes.⁵⁵ It is true that fr. 75 has more aeolics than any other sample of iambic-cretics; however, it seems to employ aeolic *cola* more narrowly than aeolic odes, i.e. as clausulae or as self-contained sequences, just as other iambic-cretic poems do (but it is difficult to be certain due to the lack of responding passages).⁵⁶

In any case, the metrical grounds for Wilamowitz’s hypothesis are shaky, and I see no other cogent reason to ascribe fr. 83 to the same dithyramb from which fr. 75 was excerpted. Even accepting his view, the distance between the two fragments inside the song would have been considerable: we have seen that fr. 83 would come from an epode, and Prodi would probably be right in placing it in the coda as a sort of concluding *sphragis* (just as is the case with Bacchyl. 3.96–98).⁵⁷ Even in this reconstruction, a reference to the poet would not

55 See bibliography in previous footnote. On ‘reversed *dodrans*’ (××——, variously named), West (1982) 61; Martinelli (1997) 236; Lourenço (2011) 111. Itsumi (2009) 24–25 describes it as ———, a too rigid scheme (see the following examples). I found no exact parallels for this line, but there are some parallels for cretic suffix attached to reversed *dodrans* (with base —; — only in *Nem.* 7): *Pyth.* 2 ep. 6; *Pyth.* 5 ep. 5 (with resolved cretic —); *Pyth.* 10 str. 2; *Nem.* 7 ep. 2. Whatever it may be, I would exclude ——— + ——— + ——— (iamb + ionic + iamb), temptatively proposed by Van der Weiden (1991) 224: there is no safe attestation of the shape ——— for ionic metre before the Hellenistic age (Gentili [1949], [1950] 69–85), despite some recent re-evaluations (cf. e.g. Gentili e Lomiento [2003] 165–174).

56 Cf. ll. 4 (hagesichorean), 9 (glyconic with base —), end of 3 (reizianum, without eliding θυόεντα: see Lavecchia [2000] 79). Lines 6 and 18 feature more difficult patterns, which nonetheless look like aeolic *cola* with ‘pendant close’ (—— or ——×), a typical clausular movement (6 ————, 18 ————: on pendant close, see Stinton [1977] 39–40). On aeolic clausulae in lyric iambs, see Gentili (1974) 89; West (1982) 100–101; Martinelli (1997) 196.

57 The strophe seems to be at least nineteen lines long, as there is no respension inside fr. 75; but one should take into account Snell’s proposal to invert word order in line 19 (χοροί || ἐλικάμπυκα), so as to make it respond to 1–2 (by scanning line 2 ἐπὶ τε κλυτὰν as ——: the ‘anapaestic’ solution of the iambic metre is to be found at ll. 7, 16 as well: cf. West [1980] 145 n. 18; Zimmermann [1992] 58 n. 12; Lavecchia [2000] 254). The pattern of line 18 would fit a clausular movement quite well (see the previous footnote). Whatever it may be, the poem

be so relevant in the rhetorical strategy of the proem, which does not feature anything unequivocally traceable to a 'bardic' persona;⁵⁸ and one would not exclude that the concluding *sphragis* may have been uttered by a choral persona praising the poet, as is perhaps the case with the beginning of Bacchylides' *Ode* 19.

As a final note to this chapter, I would add that, despite the bond between Ὀλύμπιοι and Διόθεν, an interpretation of lines 8–9 as 'having begun from Zeus, now I turn to Dionysus' (proposed by Van der Weiden) is not plausible. This 'beginning' from Zeus would be identified with the very allocution to the Olympian gods in the first lines. But this is quite difficult to argue for: in the first lines of the fragment, the lyric 'I' invokes all the Olympian gods without singling Zeus out, and Διόθεν does not seem to refer to the same Ὀλύμπιοι whom the speaker is still addressing. In *Nemean* 1.1–5 and *Paeon* 2 (fr. 52b = D2 Rutherford), ll. 1–5, quoted by Van der Weiden as parallels, the -θεν form which marked the passage from the addressee as a starting point is a second-person pronoun (σέθεν: in *Paeon* 2, it is integrated through the papyrus scholia). More precisely, in *Paeon* 2 we have exactly what Van der Weiden wants for fr. 75 (the song turns from the hero addressed in the first line to the main divinities to whom the song is dedicated). But in fr. 75 this would only be possible if we had a second person pronoun referred to the Ὀλύμπιοι instead of Διόθεν.⁵⁹

3 A Performance during the City Dionysia?

We do not know the context of the fragment, but the best candidate has always been the City Dionysia, which hosted the most important dithyrambic perfor-

was probably not astrophic, as astrophic songs are not attested with certainty in Pindar (a different view in Lomiento [1998] 113–114): Hor. *Carm.* 4.2.10–12 is no proof in this regard (Lavecchia [2000] 15–18; further bibliography in Fedeli and Ciccarelli [2008] 138–140 *ad* 9–12; Thomas [2011] 108–109 *ad loc.*).

- 58 Of course, the singular μελπόμενος / ... ἔμολον (n. 89) is of little significance in this respect (on choral first-person singular, see Lardinois [1996] 160–161); on the meaning of δεύτερον, see above. A coda on the Boeotian identity of the poet would not correspond with the rhetoric of the lyric 'I' in the proem; rather, it would complement the initial emphasis on the Athenian setting. Again, compare Bacchylides' *Ode* 3, ending on Ceos and opening with an invocation to Demeter and Kore as patron goddesses of Sicily (1–3).
- 59 Van der Weiden (1991) 194–195 *ad* 7; same explanation in Slater (1969b) s.v. Διόθεν; Schnurr (1995) 134; Race (1997) 311 n. 2 (doubtfully); Furley and Bremer (2001) 2.211 *ad* 7; cf. Christ (1896) 393 *ad loc.* For objections to this interpretation, see also Lavecchia (2000) 262; Neer and Kurke (2014) 564 = (2019) 148.

mances in Athens.⁶⁰ There were other Athenian festivals with choral competitions and the City Dionysia were not the only occasion for *kyklioi choroi*. But the *agones* of the City Dionysia were the only ones in which the identification of *kyklioi choroi* with songs to Dionysus is documented for the fifth century.⁶¹

However, a performance during the City Dionysia re-opens the question addressed above, since it has been employed as an argument in favour of a performance in the *agora*: apparently, there are some grounds for a link between the *agora* and the festival, namely some evidence concerning early dramatic performances at the City Dionysia not set in the Theatre of Dionysus.⁶²

According to this evidence, the first dramatic contests at the City Dionysia were held not in the Theatre, but somewhere else, where spectators were seated on 'benches' (ἱκρία). These benches eventually collapsed, and ancient scholars linked the event with the building of the Theatre in the Sanctuary of Dionysus. The chronology of this disaster is quite confused: according to *Suda* s.v. Πρατίνας (π 2230 Adler), the *ikria* collapsed during the performance of a drama by Pratinas. The *Suda*'s report is often thought to date the disaster back to the 70th Olympiad (500–497 BCE); what the lexicon actually says is that in the 70th Olympiad Pratinas competed in the dramatic *agon* against Aeschylus and Choerilus. A connection of this contest with the collapsing of the *ikria* is not clear.⁶³

60 Schol. Aeschin. *In Tim.* 10. On the City Dionysia and the choral contests, Pickard-Cambridge (1962) 3–4, 32–38; Pickard-Cambridge (1968) 75–79; Parke (1977) 125–135; Csapo and Slater (1994) 103–121; Sourvinou-Inwood (2003) 67–100.

61 *Kyklioi choroi* is by no means a synonym for 'dithyrambs' as asserted by Pickard-Cambridge (1962) 32: rather, it is an umbrella term for several types of choral celebrations (other songs as well could be performed by 'circular choruses', such as the ones in honour of Apollo during the Thargelia: see Wilson [2007b]; cf. Parker [1996] 95, who however speaks of 'dithyrambic choruses'). On this point, see Ieranò (1997) 234–238; Käppel (2000) 24–26; Fearn (2007) 165–181; Wilson (2007b) 167–169; Fearn (2013a) 135; Ceccarelli (2013); Ieranò (2013), 368 and n. 1. On the City Dionysia contests as the only dithyrambic ones in the fifth century, see Ieranò (1997) 274–277; Fearn (2007) 165–167; D'Alessio (2013) 116 and *passim*. For other festivals with choral competitions, see *IG* 11² 1138; [Xen.] *Ath. pol.* 3.4. The Anthesteria must be ruled out, since it probably did not host relevant dithyrambic contests (Hamilton [1990] 222–223; Ieranò [1997] 274–277; Furley and Bremer [2001] 1.257 and n. 25; Neer and Kurke [2014] 530 n. 3 = [2019] 129 n. 23, with further bibliography).

62 Lavecchia (2000) 259.

63 As observed by Pickard-Cambridge (1946) 12. The text reads as follows: ἀντηγωνίζετο δὲ Αἰσχύλῳ τε καὶ Χοιρίλῳ ἐπὶ τῆς ο' Ὀλυμπιάδος, καὶ πρῶτος ἔγραψε Σατύρους. ἐπιδεικνυμένου δὲ τούτου συνέβη τὰ ἱκρία, ἐφ' ὧν ἐστήκεσαν οἱ θεαταί, πεσεῖν, καὶ ἐκ τούτου θέατρον ὠκοδομήθη Ἀθηναίοις. ('He competed with Aeschylus and Choerilus during the 70th Olympiad and was the first to write a satyr play. While he was performing [*scil.* a drama of his], the benches on which the audience were sitting happened to collapse: because of that the Athenians built the theatre.')

In another entry, the lexicon s.v. Αἰσχύλος (αι 357 Adler) connects a collapsing of the *ikria* with Aeschylus' leaving for Sicily. The *Life of Aeschylus* provides several explanations for the trips to Sicily: it was probably an episode open to unsafe speculation.⁶⁴ The link with Pratinas seems to be more probable. The safest conclusion is that the disaster happened in the very first years of the fifth century (which is quite consistent with the archaeological evidence about the first Theatre).⁶⁵

But where were the *ikria* exactly located? The best candidate has always been the *agora* itself: two passages, the one from Photius's *Lexicon*, the other from Eustathius' *Commentary on the Odyssey*, attest that the *ikria* stood in the *agora* 'before the building of the Theatre in the Sanctuary of Dionysus'.⁶⁶ Further, there are two relevant clusters of passages from lexicographers. The first cluster locates an ὀρχήστρα in the *agora* (without mentioning the *ikria*).⁶⁷ The second one speaks about a poplar placed near the back row of former *ikria*, hence the idiom αἰγείου θέα or παρ' αἰγείρον θέα to mean cheap seats far from the scene.⁶⁸ The sources of the second cluster do not locate the poplar in the *agora* itself: a poplar in the *agora* is attested by Hesychius, but with another function (to hang some *pinakia*, maybe lists of indictments),⁶⁹ and it is by no means certain that it was the same poplar.

By starting from this poplar, Csapo has significantly reassessed the question and proposed a revision and integration of what Wilamowitz and Scullion previously said about it. The most ancient testimony we can find for these facts is Eratosthenes, quoted as a source by Hesychius (π 513 Latte s.v. παρ' αἰγείρον

It is possible that τούτου is corrupt and that we should read τούτους. In this case, the translation would be: 'while he was performing this [*scil.* a satyr play]' etc. This would imply that the *ikria* collapsed during the performance of a satyr play.

64 *TrGF* III 33.27–34.32.

65 Di Benedetto and Medda (1997) 7, n. 6. In favour of a link with Pratinas, see Pickard-Cambridge (1946) 13–14; Hammond (1972) 404–405. On the date of the first Theatre, see Scullion (1994) 9–10; Moretti (2000) 290–298, with further bibliography; Csapo (2020) 584. Maybe the archaic temple of Dionysus Eleuthereus is to be dated back to the same period: see Despinis (1996–1997).

66 Phot. *Lex.* ι Theodoridis (πρὶν ἢ κατασκευασθῆναι τὸ ἐν Διονύσου θέατρον), Eust. on *Od.* 3.350 (πρὶν ἢσκευασθῆναι τὸ ἐν Διονύσου θέατρον).

67 On these passages, see below.

68 Hsch. π 513 Latte s.v. παρ' αἰγείρον θέα, α 1695 Latte s.v. αἰγείου θέα: both passages refer again to the use of *ikria* before the building of the stone Theatre. The first entry cites Eratosthenes as source, probably the twelve books *On Ancient Comedy* (see Hammond [1972] 390–392; Csapo [2020] 576): on Eratosthenes, see below. Photius mentions Cratinus as an authority (*Lex.* α 505 Theodoridis s.v. αἰγείου θέα καὶ ἡ παρ' αἰγείρον θέα = Cratin. fr. 372 K–A). See also Hsch. θ 166 Latte; Phot. *Lex.* θ 47 Theodoridis; *Suda* α 2952 Adler.

69 Hsch. α 5716 Latte.

θέα), a passage from the poplar cluster. According to Hesychius, 'Eratosthenes says that near a poplar—poplar is a kind of tree—there was a place to watch close to the stands of seats. The stand of seats used to extend and be edified as far as this tree' (Ἐρατοσθένης φησί, ὅτι πλησίον αἰγείρου τινὸς θέα—αἰγείρος δέ ἐστι φυτοῦ εἶδος—ἐγγὺς τῶν ἰκρίων. ἕως οὖν τούτου τοῦ φυτοῦ ἐξετείνετο καὶ κατασκευάζετο τὰ ἰκρία). Then, the source describes the *ikria* as rows of benches 'upon which they [i.e. the audience] used to sit, before the theatre was built' (ἐφ' αἷς ἐκαθέζοντο, πρὸ τοῦ κατασκευασθῆναι τὸ θέατρον).⁷⁰ There is no mention of the *agora*. Other sources mention a poplar 'above the *theatron*' by which people without a seat used to see the plays.⁷¹ As observed by Csapo, such evidence implies that these benches which existed 'before the theatre was built' (and the poplar *above* them) were on 'steeply sloping ground to permit one placed behind the stands of seats to see over the seating into the theatre orchestra'; that is to say, they could not be on the flat ground of the *agora*.⁷² So, the *ikria* were most probably the Theatre of Dionysus itself, in its first form (the wooden one), located on the southern slopes of the Acropolis: this is where the audience used to have seats before the stone theatre was built in the same place. This is what Eratosthenes (succinctly, due to Hesychius' epitomising) meant by saying that these benches were employed πρὸ τοῦ κατασκευασθῆναι τὸ θέατρον, as Csapo convincingly argues.⁷³ However, most lexicographers did not know Eratosthenes directly and tried to interpret him (together with some passages and excerpts from comic poets) by assuming the existence of *two* theatres, the first in the *agora*, the second on the southern slopes of the Acropolis, and con-

70 Text and translation of both passages (with minor changes) are taken from Csapo (2020) 574 (see there for textual issues).

71 *Suda* α 2952 Adler: αἰγείρος γὰρ ἐπάνω ἦν τοῦ θεάτρου, ἀφ' ἧς οἱ μὴ ἔχοντες τόπον ἐθεώρουν 'above the theatre there was a poplar from which the ones who did not have a seat watched'.

72 Csapo (2020) 576; see Scullion (1994) 60.

73 Csapo (2020) 578–584, developing Wilamowitz (1886) and Scullion (1994); see also Caroli (2014) 1073–1074 and Papastamati-von Moock (2015) 41–45; cf. Pickard-Cambridge (1946) 13. We know from other sources that the Theatre of Dionysus, in the first part of the classical age, was a wooden and a temporary one, provided with *ikria* (Cratinus fr. 360K–A; Ar. *Thesm.* 395–396; Moretti [2000] 287; Csapo [2007]; Caroli [2014] 1073–1074; Csapo [2020] 576–578), so there is slight difference between the *ikria* allegedly located in the *agora* and the other *ikria*. Some scholars try to solve this problem by observing that the former *ikria* provided an artificial incline, while the Theatre turned to the safer incline provided by the slopes of the Acropolis (Hammond [1972] 399 and 405, n. 33; Polacco [1990] 26–29); but, as observed by Caroli, the wooden *ikria* in the Theatre were probably quite precarious nonetheless. The building of the stone theatre is traditionally attributed to Lycurgus, but this is highly debated: see Papastamati-von Moock (2015), with further bibliography.

necting the transfer of the Theatre with some accident that happened in the first years of the fifth century.⁷⁴ There were *ikria* in the *agora* as well, which, however, were designed for the public not of the dramatic performances, but of the Panathenaic parade.⁷⁵ As a consequence, the *ikria* in the *agora* cannot be safely connected with the history of the dramatic contests.

This refutes the existence of a theatre for the City Dionysia outside the Sanctuary of Dionysus, but not the possibility of choral performances in the *agora*: we said that another cluster of ancient sources attests an *orchestra* in the *agora*, i.e. an open space intended for choral performances.⁷⁶ However, there is no safe link between this *orchestra* and the dithyrambic contests held at the City Dionysia. In addition, I would not postulate two different locations for dithyrambic and dramatic contests: they were both attended by a large public and were connected with the same festival.⁷⁷ Therefore, if we cannot connect the *ikria*, the *orchestra* or any other structure in the *agora* with the dramatic performances, probably we cannot connect them with the dithyrambic contests either.⁷⁸

Another more complex hypothesis about a performance of the dithyramb in the *agora* during the City Dionysia has been formulated by Sourvinou-Inwood. In her opinion, between the sixth and fifth centuries BCE, one of the preliminary rituals of the festival, the so-called εἰσαγωγὴ ἀπὸ τῆς ἐσχάρας, was performed there, and the dithyramb is to be linked with it: the *eschara* itself would be the Altar of the Twelve Gods. However, ancient sources give a different picture. Before the festival, the statue of the god was transferred from the Sanctuary not to the *agora*, but to a temple in the Academy; then, with the *eisagoge*, it was carried again to the Sanctuary, to represent its arrival in Athens from its original location (Eleutherai).⁷⁹ It is true that these sources

74 This would be mainly due to the merging of the aforementioned poplar with the *pinakia* poplar attested in Hsch. α 5716 Latte, as Csapo (2020) 585–592 argues. For the passages from comic poets, see previous footnote.

75 Csapo (2020) 586.

76 Timaeus the Sophist *Platonic Lexicon* 998a s.v. ὀρχήστρα; Phot. *Lexicon* s.v. ὀρχήστρα (ο 544 Theodoridis); one could add the controversial Pl. *Ap.* 26 e1. On the *orchestra* in the *agora*, see Hammond (1972) 401; Kolb (1981) 15–19; Caroli (2014) 1072 (who connects it with fr. 75 by interpreting the dithyramb as performed in the *agora*); Csapo (2020) 587 n. 44.

77 Pace Melena (1983) 201.

78 It is to be noted that Csapo's argumentation concerns exclusively the setting of the dramatic performances. Incidentally, he thinks that the *ikria* in the *agora* were put up 'for the Dionysian parade, that Xenophon (*Hipp.* 3.2) tells us included short stationary choral performances (not drama) in various part of the Agora'. But, as we saw above, Xenophon is not specifically speaking about a 'Dionysian parade'.

79 Paus. 1.29.2; Philostr. *VS* p. 549; *IG* 11² 1006, 12–14 (122/121 BCE); *IG* 11² 1011, 11–12 (106/105 BCE).

are quite late and that we cannot exclude that the ritual changed over time; but we have no evidence for other reconstructions and there is no reason to separate the *eschara* from the Academy. All in all, the safest grounds on which Sourvinou-Inwood built her hypothesis is the passage from Xenophon's *Hipparchikos* quoted above, a controversial basis itself, and not so easily linkable with the City Dionysia.⁸⁰

Therefore, I tend not to accept Sourvinou-Inwood's interpretation of Pindar's fr. 75 as celebrating the *xenismos* of Dionysus in Athens, or the hypothesis that the involvement of the Olympian gods in the performance reflects some theoxenic ritual connected with Dionysus' *xenismos*. The only example of such a practice is to be found outside Athens (and in later times), in a decree from Magnesia on the Maeander (*I. Magnesia* 98), dating back to 196 BCE and attesting a theoxenic ritual, held during the festival of Zeus Sosipolis. It is an interesting ritual indeed, since it involved, besides Zeus, Artemis and Apollo (but not Dionysus), as well as the very Altar of the Twelve Gods in the *agora*; but it would be unsafe to project such a Hellenistic ritual practice from another *polis* onto the Athenian City Dionysia three centuries earlier.⁸¹

Even so, it is not impossible to connect choral performances with the *pompe*. Pickard-Cambridge observed that, during the *pompe*, a chorus hailed Demetrius of Phalerum (while he was leading the procession as an archon) by singing poems written by Kastorion of Solis.⁸² Wilson quotes a decree dating back to 186/5 BCE: the *boule* and the Assembly awarded an ivy crown to 'the free boys and their *didaskalos*'. According to Wilson, the prize is due to a performance during the *pompe* instead of the *agones* (the rest of the decree concerns other honours related to the *pompe*).⁸³ Therefore, we cannot totally exclude that fr. 75 could be related to the *pompe*; but in this case, the 'coming' of the speaker 'towards the ivy-flamed god' would point at the arrival of the chorus to the Sanctuary of Dionysus, not at a passage through the *agora* (of course, we cannot

80 The distinction between the *eisagoge apo tes escharas* and the *pompe* can be inferred from *IG* II² 1006, 12–13. On hypotheses about the route of the *pompe*, see Csapo and Slater (1994) 105–106; Wilson (2000) 97. Other arguments advanced by Sourvinou-Inwood are weaker by far, such as an alleged inadequacy of the Academy in representing Eleutherai (Sourvinou-Inwood [2003] 89–93).

81 On this document, see Jameson (2014) 154–155; Petridou (2015) 292–293 (and 302–305 about Dionysus' *xenismoi*).

82 *SH* 312; Pickard-Cambridge (1968) 63 and n. 2: the source is Ath. 12.542e (transmitted is Σείρωνος τοῦ Σολέως, emended to Καστορίωνος by Leopardi, probably right, accepted in *PMG*, *SH* and Campbell [1993] 226–227, not accepted in Olson [2019]; cf. Ath. 10.454f). On this poet, see *SH* 310–312.

83 Wilson (2000) 346 n. 221 (*IG* II² 896.57–63).

know if the choral performances mentioned by Pickard-Cambridge and Wilson were held in the *agora*).⁸⁴

However, the presence of Pindar during the City Dionysia is more easily linkable with the dithyrambic contests, which lured other great Panhellenic poets as well (such as Simonides).⁸⁵ In every case, the hypothesis that the dithyramb was performed in the Theatre inside the Sanctuary of Dionysus Eleuthereus is reinforced.⁸⁶

The summoning of the Olympians, then, more than reflecting a *xenismos*, is a case of divine performance imagined alongside the human performance and overlapping with it, which is not an unparalleled pattern in Pindaric poetry. The other major fragment from Pindar's dithyrambs, fr. 70b (a Theban song), features a description of the gods singing, dancing, and celebrating Dionysus (6–22), even if on Mount Olympus, not in a human setting. One might also compare the almost imperceptible passage from human performance to divine scenario in the description of the power of the lyre in *Pythian* 1.1–12, or the already quoted proem of *Pythian* 11, which involves the Theban heroines in the performance.⁸⁷

84 One could then re-evaluate the identification of Διόθεν with an actual shrine (the temple of Zeus Olympios, according to Neer and Kurke), even if we know of no involvement of a sanctuary of Zeus in the City Dionysia *pompe*. Furthermore, the symbolic nuances implied by Διόθεν (see above) and by the arrival motif (see below) do not oblige us to interpret Διόθεν and the 'coming' of the chorus as physical.

85 On the provenance of the dithyrambic poets and the implications this had for their position in the festival, see Pickard-Cambridge (1962) 31–32 and (1968) 105; Ieranò (2013) 368–369. Observe the contrast with the dramatic contests, which hosted mainly local poets. Interestingly enough, during the Hellenistic age it is the other way round: the dithyrambic contests became more and more an epichoric occasion, while the dramatic contests featured professional 'wandering' poets (Wilson [2003] 166). See also the catalogue of dithyrambic poets in Ieranò (1997) 363–376 and Sutton (1989). On Pindar and the City Dionysia *agones*, see the following footnote.

86 The date of the Theatre (see n. 65) is compatible with our dithyramb, even if we consider that Pindar made his debut in the City Dionysia at a very young age. He won at the *agon* of the City Dionysia in 497/6 BCE (*POxy.* 2438, col. 2.6–12: see Lewis [1962] and Gallo [1969], who correct Lobel [1961] 5; more recently De Kreij [2019] ad loc.): it is almost certain that this victory was his first one (Pindar was born between 522 and 518 BCE; the first epinician to be dated, *Pythian* 10, dates back to 498 BCE). We cannot say if Pindar gained this victory with our dithyramb; we can only say that fr. 75 is to be dated back to 497/496 BCE or later (even after many years, as far as we know). On this *terminus post quem* for fr. 75, see also Furlley and Bremer (2001) 1.257; cf. Neer and Kurke (2014) 529–530 n. 22 = (2019) 129 n. 22.

87 For the involvement of gods in poetic performances as *synchoreutai*, see, in a broader perspective, Athanassaki (2018) and (2022a) 13–17; on fr. 75, (2018) 106–108 and (2022a) 15–17 (with a reconstruction of the context which follows Sourvinou-Inwood).

This ‘coming’ is repeated in lines 11–12, where the speaker says, ‘I came singing Dionysus as son of Zeus and Semele.’⁸⁸ Through the participle governed by the verb of movement (μελπόμενος / ... ἔμολον), the act of singing extends beyond the present moment and includes also what immediately precedes it. The coming of the chorus to the shrine is completely imbued with the act of singing. Journeys and movements preceding the performance and implied by it are often incorporated into the performance itself, especially in victory songs.⁸⁹ A close parallel is provided by *Olympian* 14, more particularly by the following passage: ‘I came by singing Asopichus in the Lydian mood and with great care’ (Λυδῶ γὰρ Ἀσώπικον ἐν τρόπῳ / ἐν μελέταις τ’ αἰείδων ἔμολον, 17–18). As in our dithyramb, the aorist ἔμολον governs a present participle denoting the act of singing. This victory ode is structured in a way similar to fr. 75: the self-referential statement quoted above follows an elaborate address to the Graces of Orchomenos to listen to and observe the present performance, just as our dithyramb opens by summoning the Olympian gods to look upon the dance and join it. But in *Olympian* 14 the Graces are addressed only as spectators of the human performance; they are described as actresses only as far as divine performances on Mount Olympus are concerned.⁹⁰ In fr. 75, on the contrary, the gods are involved as performers on earth, summoned to leave the Olympus and join the dance.

4 Time and Space

Line 13 says: ‘like a prophet, I do not miss what is evident’.⁹¹ Scholars compare this passage with other well-known passages where choral poets speak of them-

88 After Καδμείαν, the verb ἔμολον is expunged in Maehler (1989) together with Σεμέλην; but while Σεμέλην is a mere gloss, ἔμολον is to be retained (consider the similarity with *Ol.* 14.18, discussed below). See Wilamowitz (1921) 310 n. 1; West (1980) 145 n. 18; D’Alessio (1991) 105; Lavecchia (2000) 166.

89 On the overlapping of several ‘journeys’ in victory songs, see Felson (1999) on *Pythian* 4, Martin (2004) on *Pythian* 8. Another possible text for line 11 would be the infinitive μελπέμεν (‘I came to sing’), printed by Boeckh and defended by Christ (1896) 393, Farnell (1932) 417 *ad* 11–12, Puech (1923) 153, and Lavecchia (2000) 266 *ad loc.*; but the parallels quoted by D’Alessio (1991) 105 for μελπόμενος are closer to our fragment. Against μελπόμεν(οι), proposed by Hermann, printed by Maehler (1989) and accepted by Furley and Bremer (2001) 2.212 *ad* 11, see Lavecchia *ibid.* On Pindar’s employment of the aorist tense in verbs of movement, see Danielewicz (1990) 15 and n. 23.

90 Athanassaki (2003) 7–8 (differently Calame [2004b] 433), who compares by contrast *Nem.* 10.1–2 (Δαναοῦ πόλιν ... Χάριτες / ... ὑμνεῖτε); see also Athanassaki (2009a) 103–107.

91 The text has been restored by Van Groningen (1955).

selves as προφᾶται, 'prophets' or, more precisely, 'mouthpieces' of the Muses.⁹² But the case of our fragment is subtly different. The mantic imagery here does not refer to the relationship with the Muses and the inspiration of the poet. Rather, it refers to the speaker's ability to associate some natural signs with dithyrambic occasions and performances. Thanks to this ability, he chose the right time to come to Athens and celebrate the god. That is why here the μάντις is the lyric 'I' itself, as has been already observed by Furley and Bremer:⁹³ in other poems, the μάντις is the Muse, while the speaker, as stated above, is her mouthpiece.⁹⁴

In this way, the lyric 'I' focuses again on his poetic authority, depicting a common ability (i.e. to know what season it is) as exceptional.⁹⁵ Furthermore, this passage opens a section of the fragment where the occasion is defined even more precisely. After placing the performance in space, the poem places it in time. Dithyrambic performances are described as recurrent events, framed in the cycle of the seasons. Many details confer a general nuance on these verses: the plurals ὄμφαι and χοροί; the use of τότε instead of νῦν; the image of the Horae's θάλαμος, which is not a designated shrine, but the divine dwelling of the Horae as divinities presiding over the seasons. Their mention in the passage about flowers and plants is even more explicable if we remember that in Athens two Horae were worshipped, with two names clearly linked with vegetation, Thallo and Karpo (Paus. 9.35.2).⁹⁶ At the same time, these lines describe

92 See Van der Weiden (1991) 79 *ad fr.* 70b.24 and 201 *ad loc.*; Lavecchia (2000) 267–268 *ad* 13, 170–171 *ad fr.* 70b.23–24; Ford (2013) 326–331; Pavlou (2011) 74 (but we should remember that this is typical of other choral genres as well: see Calame [2013b] 336–337; Athanassaki [2018] 102–108, more particularly 107–108 on this song).

93 Furley and Bremer (2001) 2.212–213 *ad* 13.

94 As in Pind. fr. 150 μαντεύσο Μοῖσα, προφατεύσω δ' ἐγώ. Maslov (2015) 200–201 states that *prophatas* 'is not a case of appropriation of religious authority, but an improvised metapoetic term that marks the professionalization of poetic discourse'; but in fr. 150 at least the correlation μαντεύσο/προφατεύσω implies a religious nuance. The distinction between μάντις and προφήτης is stressed in Pl. *Tim.* 72a6–b5, but such a stress actually reacts to the frequent interchangeability between the two terms: see Kadletz (1978) 95–96. On religious nuances in lines 13–19, see Pavlou (2011) 69 and n. 38. City Dionysia were actually celebrated in spring, during the month of Elaphebolion (between March and April). For the emphasis on the recurrent moment of the festival, see *Pae.* 3 (fr. 52c = D3 Rutherford) 14; *Pae.* 6 (fr. 52f = D6 Rutherford) 5. On springtime as a context for Dionysiac ritual, see also Philodamos' *Paean to Dionysus* (Käppel [1992] *Pai.* 39.3–4, with Clay [1996] 88), as well as Ar. *Nub.* 311–313, a description of the choral and dramatic competitions of the City Dionysia similar to the Pindaric passage (cf. Dover [1968] 142 *ad loc.*).

95 Such statements are not self-limiting, as Maslov (2015) 197–200 thinks.

96 Even if the passage is quite debated, Pausanias seems to be reliable here (see Habicht [1982] 87–89; Moggi and Osanna [2010] 415–417). On the Horae and the cyclical renewal

the present occasion as well, since the dithyramb is one of those songs ‘plucked in spring’ (6). The song is referring both to the cycle of seasonal festivals and to the present occurrence of the Dionysia.

5 Conclusions

Fr. 75 places the performance in space and time and makes several places and temporal levels converge into the present occasion. First, Pindar involves the gods in the performance by referring to their frequent coming to Athens; in this way, he can evoke a hotspot in the city of Athens besides the Sanctuary of Dionysus, namely the *agora* with the Altar of the Twelve Gods. Secondly, the ode itself is part of a recurrent festival celebrating Dionysus every year and is inscribed in the cycle of the seasons. Several journeys are embedded in this performance: of the gods to the *agora* of Athens; of the choruses to Semele; of this specific chorus to Dionysus. They all make the present performance meaningful and blessed by the gods. At the heart of this scenario, the lyric ‘I’ as a singing and dancing persona stands as the one coming from Zeus to Dionysus (8–10).

We have here a blurring of *deixis ad oculos* and imaginative representation: the very core of the fragment is the coexistence of a human and a divine level: two worlds—the natural and the supernatural—are colliding. The ritual, as interpreted and reshaped by Pindar, is not exclusively concerned with the reshaping of the civic space, but with both evoking hotspots in Athens and linking them with divine hotspots (Mount Olympus, from whence the gods are coming; Zeus himself as an ideal starting point for the speaker). This is made possible by superimposing a linear movement (from Zeus to Dionysus) onto the circular dance the chorus is performing and is compatible not only with Pindar’s text and with antiquarian and archaeological data, but also with Pindar’s nuanced approach to ritual contexts as we know it from other poems.

in another song (*Paean* 1 [fr. 52a = D1 Rutherford]), see Pavlou (2011) 66–67. Neer and Kurke (2014) 570–573 = (2019) 151–152, individuate here a reference to the Sanctuary of the Horae, but this is unnecessary: the Horae were frequently linked with Dionysus (*Anth. Pal.* 13.28, a literary reworking of a choregic inscription; Archil. test. 4 Tarditi, col. 2.10–11; see Privitera [1966] 18; Ieranò [1997] 260–261; Furley and Bremer [2001] 2.213 *ad* 14–15). As Alessandro Giardini points out to me, *θάλαμος* can metaphorically refer to the earth (Aesch. *Pers.* 624, Eur. *HF* 807). It is also used of other natural places as dwellings of the gods (Soph. *OT* 195, Eur. *Bacch.* 560–561).