

Approaching Choralities: Literary Representations of the Chorus in Archaic Greek Poetry

By

Amy N. Hendricks

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

(Classics)

at the

University of Wisconsin–Madison

2020

Date of final oral examination: May 6, 2020

The dissertation is approved by the following members of the Final Oral Committee:

Laura McClure, Professor of Classics

Nandini Pandey, Associate Professor of Classics

William Brockliss, Associate Professor of Classics

Emily Fletcher, Associate Professor of Philosophy

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	ii
Abstract	iii
Introduction	1
Chapter 1. The Epic Chorus	14
1.1 Introduction	14
1.2 Chorality in the <i>Iliad</i>	19
1.3 Chorality in the <i>Odyssey</i>	40
Chapter 2. The Chorus and the Bard.....	65
2.1 Introduction	65
2.2 The Chorus of the Muses	70
2.3 Choral Incorporation in the <i>Hymn to Apollo</i>	81
2.4 Apollo and the Muses: A Chorus in the <i>Hymn to Hermes</i>	104
2.5 Conclusion	107
Chapter 3. The Artemis Chorus	111
3.1 Introduction	111
3.2 Choral Paradigms: Artemis and Nausicaa	114
3.3 A Maiden Chorus in the <i>Hymn to Demeter</i>	124
3.4 Aphrodite's Choral Guise	140
3.5 Conclusion	147
Chapter 4. The Lyric Chorus	151
4.1 Introduction	151
4.2 Parthenaic Projection in Alcman	159
4.3 Sappho's Chorus	186
4.4 Conclusion	203
Conclusion	205
Bibliography	210

Acknowledgments

I would like to extend my earnest and sincere thanks to the numerous advisors, teachers, friends, family, and institutions that have supported me through many years of school and especially as I completed this dissertation. First and foremost, to my advisor, Laura McClure, for her sharp eye, near-encyclopedic knowledge of Greek literature, and patient encouragement as my ideas slowly coalesced out of the chaos of early days. My committee members, Nandini Pandey, Will Brockliss, and Emily Fletcher, offered important perspectives and feedback at many stages of the process, and I am especially grateful for their flexibility during the unusual circumstances of my Zoom defense. I look forward to incorporating their ideas and suggestions, and I am proud to think of them now as colleagues. A special thank you to Nandini, who on more than one occasion helped stem the rising tides of uncertainty and doubt. I am grateful for your kindness and willingness to listen. I am deeply thankful also to Patricia Rosenmeyer, who has always encouraged my readings and who has graciously offered her time, guidance, and mentorship, even from afar. I look forward to continuing our chai-fueled conversations someday soon.

I wish to thank the entire faculty and staff of the Classical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies department at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, who have helped shape me as a teacher and a scholar. In addition, the CANES department provided the financial support and resources that allowed me to complete this work. A special thank you to Toni Landis for keeping her door open and keeping me on track. My previous institutions, Rhodes College and Chatham Hall, have also played a key role in my intellectual and personal development, and I am thankful to have had the privilege and opportunity to attend them. I would be remiss if I did not express a deep gratitude to my grandparents, Jeanne and Howard Hendricks, for making it financially possible to do so. I am thankful also to my community at the History of Cartography Project, especially Beth Freundlich, Jude Leimer, and Lindsey Buscher, for their support and for inviting me to be a part of a truly extraordinary undertaking. I am, not for the first time, struck by my good fortune to have had so many wise, kind, and strong women as my mentors, both in academia and throughout my life; to those named here, and to the countless others, thank you.

I could not have hoped for a better place to live than Madison, nor a better community of friends, to whom I owe my wholehearted thanks. To my comrade in arms, Rebecca Moorman, whose example I continue to follow *non passibus aequis*. I would not be the woman, scholar, or friend that I am without you in my life. To the third triumvir, Ximing Lu, who continues to surprise me with his ability to change my mind and expand my perspective. To Amie Goblirsch, worthy of her name. I am proud of you, I admire you, and I am constantly grateful for our friendship. And to Kate Melberg and Marina Grochocki, two of my favorite people in the world. Thank you all for making this fun.

My family has been unwaveringly supportive. Thank you to my parents, especially my father, who would have made a formidable classicist had he chosen differently and who was the first one to suggest this as a field of study. I am inspired by my sisters, who have pursued their own paths with resilience and grace. My cats, Max and Stella, are two of my dearest companions, loved and needed more than they know. And finally, to Eric, who needed no τεκμήρια to believe I would do it. Thank you for your enduring support, confidence, patience, and love.

Abstract

This dissertation discusses the ways in which archaic Greek literature represents the chorus and invokes its imagery as part of a broader and complex cultural system of meaning. Although literary and visual evidence supports the notion that choral activity was an important part of daily life dating back as far as the Minoan and Mycenaean cultures, scholarly attention has largely focused on extant literature that is itself choral, rather than examining representations of choral performance in other types of poetry. However, non-choral texts like epic or hymnic poetry offer important early views of chorality, broadly defined as collectively performed actions of singing and/or dancing, while the ability of choral literature to represent its own performers itself sheds light on how choral performers viewed and utilized their role in the community. While this project discusses groups described using the word “chorus,” it also expands this narrow category to consider other groups that can be identified as choruses or as engaging with chorality, with particular attention to the representation of choral bodies (especially the female body) in literature. Drawing on the tendency of poets and performers to represent the visual aspects of choral performance, I approach the chorus through its audiences and interpreters: those who see it and those who describe it.

Within the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, which are treated together in the first chapter, the chorus is notably connected to communal institutions that help indicate broader poetic themes. In Chapter Two, which examines Hesiod’s *Theogony* and the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo*, I demonstrate that the relationship between the chorus leader and the chorus expresses varying levels of competitiveness between performers that reflect larger poetic themes and external social anxieties. The third chapter focuses on depictions of the maiden chorus, specifically those associated with Artemis or other goddess figures; frequently, in these contexts, the chorus becomes the setting for a girl’s transition into adulthood through marriage. The fourth and final chapter looks at the chorus in Alcman and Sappho, examining how the literary chorus develops when the poetry describes its own performance and its community of collective speakers.

Introduction

In the second book of Plato's *Laws*, the Athenian stranger poses a question to his interlocutor, Clinias, regarding the difference between an uneducated man and an educated one:

Οὐκοῦν ὁ μὲν ἀπαιδευτος ἀχόρευτος ἡμῖν ἔσται, τὸν δὲ πεπαιδευμένον ἱκανῶς κεχορευκότα θετέον;

Therefore, should we assume that he who is unlearned is untrained in the chorus, but he who is sufficiently educated has participated in the chorus?¹ (654α–654β)

It is perhaps surprising to find the chorus at the heart of this Athenian's understanding of *paideia*. It is clear from this exchange and the conversation that follows, however, that the chorus was a central experience of the citizen's upbringing, imparting an understanding of the self and society that extended well beyond childhood participation in ritual occasions. Plato's suggestion hints at the exceptionally broad reach of the chorus in the ancient world, which scholars have shown ranges from an institution integral to the education and social training of young citizens, to a key component of sacred ritual activities, to a means of communicating the value of bodies, objects, and communities, to a defining feature of artistic entertainment in a variety of contexts.² The sheer number of scholarly approaches testifies to the flexibility of the chorus as a concept in the ancient world, and its transformation over time provided unending opportunities for it to exist as a performance medium, as a cultural referent, and as a means of communication. In terms of its mutability, the chorus is far larger than any specific genre, although many approaches have chosen to focus on categories like the tragic chorus or the *partheneion*. While certain choruses

¹ The text is from Bury (1926). All translations are my own.

² On education and social formation: see especially Calame (1977, revised and translated 1997), Stehle (1997); on ritual, Kowalzig (2007); on value and the chorus as community poetry, see Kurke (2012), Herington (1985), and Nagy (1990); on the chorus in performance, see Kowalzig and Wilson (eds., 2013), Swift (2010), Foley (2003), Bacon (1994–95), Henrichs (1994–95), Davidson (1986). These divisions are somewhat arbitrary, as all of these contributions address multiple aspects of the chorus. In recent years, a number of extremely useful volumes exemplify the increasing diversity of approaches to the chorus, including those by Gagné and Hopman (eds. 2013), Cazzato and Lardino (eds. 2016), Athanassaki and Bowie (eds. 2011), and Billings, Budelmann, and Macintosh (eds. 2013), among others.

outside these areas have received more attention than others (like the Delian maidens of the *Hymn to Apollo* or the final chorus on the Shield of Achilles), there are still choruses that have yet to be fully considered as part of this vast symbolic network, as well as opportunities to more comprehensively address how poetry, especially non-choral poetry, interacts with the chorus.

Building the groundbreaking work of Calame (1977, trans. and rev. 1997), scholars like Herington (1985) and Stehle (1997) have provided extensive evaluations of the social function of archaic choruses, especially those involving young women. These scholars, however, and those following in their paths, have tended to focus on those choruses for which we have an extant song that they would have performed, despite Kowalzig's reminder that "extant pieces of cult song are tantalizingly few compared to the extent of choral activity that must actually have taken place" (2007, 6). More recently, however, it become clear that the archaic chorus is able to negotiate a complex status between being, on the one hand, a sort of blank-canvas, symbolic entity onto which meaning can be projected, and, on the other, an active body capable of generating meaning on its own terms. While the archaic chorus's prevalence as an aspect of religious and social activity is evident, its legacy as a literary device is equally prominent, if less frequently discussed.

Understanding of the chorus has only been further complicated by the difficulty in defining what the chorus actually is. In its most essential form, I consider a chorus to be any group of people that sings and/or dances *as a group*—that is, with some kind of indication that they perform a singing or dancing action in sync, in sequence, as a collective entity, or in time with one another. This definition is looser than what others have adopted, and importantly it does not rely on the presence of the word *χορός* or any other specific vocabulary, which has in large part been the strategy of scholars in the past. Instead, I operate under the understanding that a

Greek audience would have been able to readily identify something that looked like a chorus without any need for specific verbal signifiers, even when hearing a brief description in another poetic context. Just as a choral group can be identified in early vase painting through its physical appearance, a described group can be recognized by virtue of its other features—particularly the elements of song and dance, but also the general group make-up and/or the purpose or occasion for which the group has assembled. I suggest that a chorus can be readily identified by an audience familiar with the hallmarks of this kind of performance and the contexts in which it appears; this process of recognition then allows that audience to bring their full knowledge and understanding of the chorus as a social institution to bear on their interpretation of the scene and greater context. While this project will discuss groups specifically designated as “χορός,” it will also expand upon this somewhat narrow category to consider how other groups that can be identified as choral or semi-choral influence and shape our understanding of the ancient chorus, with particular attention to the representation of these bodies in literature.

Thus, I will deviate from the approaches of Calame and others in maintaining a focus not on the actual performance of choral poetry but rather on the way this performance is imagined in literature and how aspects of performance can be subtly applied to prompt associations in the reader or listener. Particularly by including a broader consideration of the ways that solo hexameter poetry approaches the chorus and its functions, this project will differ from those of previous scholars.³ By focusing on choruses described in literature and by increasing the number of groups described in the literary sources that can be understood to be choral, I hope to expand the current understanding of the concept of chorality—a more fluid term that indicates the influence of the chorus. Considering the relationship between choral performance in epic and its

³ An exception is Richardson (2011), which essentially catalogues most of the choruses in the Homeric epics and some of the *Homeric Hymns*.

representation in Geometric art, Carruesco defines chorality as

a symbolic construction which found various expressions in actual performances with different combinations of dance, music and song, eventually crystallizing into specific genres or subgenres of choral lyric. Beyond choral performance, however, chorality also functions as a cultural paradigm which informed different fields of the community's experience, such as agonistic or juridical procedures or, in the present case, other artistic discourses such as epic poetry or pictorial art. (2016, 69)

Building on Carruesco, this project will expand the concept of the chorus as a formal, specific, performative event to consider more fully the broader Greek understanding of the chorus as a regular and meaningful feature of Greek culture and thought in the archaic period. Although broadening the definition of chorus may at first seem unproductive, the observation of choral aspects in groups or performances not specifically designated as choral can help build our understanding of this cultural practice and its existence in the literary imagination. From the rich diversity of choral groups in the *Iliad* it seems unlikely that the Greek understanding of the chorus only included those groups officially designated as such or led by a formalized χορηγός, and there is little compelling reason to similarly limit our own identification of the chorus or choral elements in the already limited source material. So, although the Nereids presented in *Iliad* 18 are not explicitly identified as χορευταί, they do evoke the image of the chorus in their performance and their relationship with their leader, Thetis; thus, we can reasonably include such a group in a broader understanding of choral depiction and the choral form.⁴ The groups that participate in the ever-growing and ever-changing concept of chorality during the archaic period contribute to a rich meaning-system that operates in a number of diverse arenas, including various poetic genres, local events and celebrations, and Panhellenic competitions spread throughout the Greek world. By analyzing how the chorus both draws meaning from and

⁴ See Csapo (2003, 77–78) for evidence that the Nereids are (in literature) almost always associated with dance. He includes *Il.* 18.39–49 in his justification for interpreting these as round dances, possibly based on the word ἀμφαγέροντο (*Il.* 18.37).

generates its own sense of meaning in a new set of contexts, I hope to demonstrate that the chorus is not confined only to the context of strict and formal performance, or to a literary rendering of such a performance, or to a ritual activity; rather, the chorus is a constant and familiar component of the archaic Greek consciousness that brings a rich system of meaning to bear on its surroundings whenever it arises. Whether these indications of chorality are overt, as in the case of Hesiod's Muses, or more subtle, as with the *Hymn to Demeter's* Oceanids, it is possible to discuss how these choruses contributed to the larger framework of the archaic chorus in the Greek imagination.

Throughout this project, I will therefore introduce a number of groups that are not explicitly defined as choral but participate in the larger meaning-system of the chorus either through their group singing and/or dancing, or occasionally through their group mentality. Scholars have begun to address this wider notion of chorality, with disparate ideas as to how to contain the slippery aspects of this concept within any particular boundaries. For some, the Greek word χορεία (*choreia*, choral activity) offers another way of broadening the scope of the chorus. Kurke observes that “the internal evidence of our texts suggests that the most common form of *choreia* was that of a group of chorus members singing and dancing in unison, but on occasion we are presented with a division of labor whereby one group dances while another group or individual sings in accompaniment.”⁵ Kurke's push to include both types of activity under the heading of *choreia* participates in the same inclusivity that I am seeking in the term “chorality”; however, my project, which focuses on literary representations rather than the sociopolitical effects generated by the chorus, will take this notion further by identifying certain groups that lend themselves naturally to chorality even in the absence of song or dance and

⁵ (2012, 219). Other approaches that focus on *choreia* include Peponi (2009), Budelmann and Power (2015), and Ladianou (2016).

considering how and when a particular group transforms into a chorus. Importantly, these dual components were considered equally important in the Greek imagination, too: Plato's Athenian stranger explicitly observes that “*choreia* as a whole is comprised of both dancing and song” (Χορεία γε μὴν ὄρχησις τε καὶ ᾠδὴ τὸ ξύνολόν ἐστιν, *Laws* 654b). Although many scholars have focused on choruses that sing or perform both actions, I feel that the action of dance is equally important, if not more so, as it receives more attention in the earliest sources and can be an indication of a choral group all on its own.

Because I am prioritizing literary representations of the chorus, the first three chapters of this project will focus on the way that literary choruses project the sociological role of the chorus, rather than the ways in which the actual performance helps shape its performers' social roles. Both because they have received less attention and in order to more clearly separate the performance and the chorus described, I have chosen to focus on choruses described in narrative poetry. Identifying the social goals and projections of a given chorus will be most possible and fruitful for choruses and choral scenes that also present an audience, like the women watching from their doorposts at *Iliad* 18.495–96 or the community members watching the mixed chorus at *Iliad* 18.603. Even when an audience is not specified, however, it is possible to draw conclusions about how the literary presentation of these choral groups projects or suggests a sociological function, without needing to assume or argue for a counterpart in reality. Following approaches like Swift (2016) and Peponi (2009), I will also argue that many of these choruses prioritize their visual communication, focusing on the performers' bodies in description and suggesting a specific interpretation by the audience. The fourth chapter, unlike the first three, considers non-narrative poetry, focusing on how a choral attitude is projected in performance, even when sung by a soloist.

Certain groups have a closer affiliation with chorality than others: for example, although the Nereids are not exclusively or explicitly choral, they do appear *only* as a group in the *Iliad* (with the exception of Thetis) and their group identity both helps to define them and also lends them a greater amount of choral potential.⁶ Furthermore, not every group is choral, and not every choral group is choral all the time; thus, the Achaians in general cannot be evaluated on the spectrum of chorality, but in their moment of lament for Patroclus, they can be judged in this way.⁷ The Delian maidens of the *Hymn to Apollo*, on the other hand, appear exclusively in their choral guise and are never lacking in this aspect; even outside references to the Deliades identify them as a choral group.⁸ It will become particularly apparent that many of the choral groups, and especially those with greater “choral potential,” are female-only choruses. Within a society that consistently denies the opportunity of individuality and subjectivity to most women, especially within literary representation, there exists a plethora of female groups already bound together and able to assume the more distinct role of a chorus, and most girls in Greek literature are depicted in a group.⁹ As a result, the representation of gender within the chorus and the social opportunities afforded to women in the archaic period through participation in a formal chorus will provide the primary opportunity to consider the coincidence of literary depictions and social practice. It is also worth noting that between the choruses mentioned in the Homeric epics and

⁶ By “choral potential” I mean the degree of ease with which a group can become a chorus. Calame calls this the “collective character” of a group (1997, 30–33). This is especially true of other daughter-groups, like the Danaids or the Oceanids, whom I consider in Chapter Three. For a fascinating identification of the daughters of Cadmus as representatives of choral experience in Euripides’ *Bacchae*, see Murnaghan (2006). Many of these “daughter-groups” appear as dramatic choruses.

⁷ The size of the group appears to be a flexible element. For example, it is difficult to construe the dual Sirens as a chorus given the lack of physical description of their bodies, but because of their united voice it is not impossible, especially if there are actually more of them. The population of Troy is only choral in their lament for Hector, but in general they are not. Thus, while size is often a consideration in identifying a more formal chorus, it has less of an impact on a group’s chorality.

⁸ E.g., Eur. *Heracles* 687–90.

⁹ Regarding the term χορῳτιδες, which he attributes to Callimachus (1997, 32), Calame observes that one of its primary attributes is “the character of ‘belonging to a group’” (33).

the choruses of Pindar and Bacchylides (both those performing and some of those depicted), there are no clear male choruses from the archaic period; because of this, I consider whether the choral form is somehow inherently also female, or whether this quality becomes more prominent or cemented along the way for a particular reason. The issue of why certain choruses are comprised of male, female, or mixed members will help lead to a deeper understanding of how various types of choruses are used for particular literary effect and how they, in turn, influence their literary contexts.

In addition, this project will work to better understand the unique relationship between the poets, solo performers, and choruses represented. The authority granted to certain choruses, like the Muses, raises a series of questions: what can choral poetry accomplish on behalf of the community that the individual poet/singer cannot? How does the singular performer utilize the image of the chorus to sidestep this barrier, or tap into a communal ideal that he otherwise could not access by himself? This issue often intersects with the question of gender, especially since when a soloist and chorus are portrayed together, the soloist is always male, while the chorus is usually female and rarely mixed. I suggest that there are both positive and negative implications to this triangulation (of male author, male performer, and female chorus): while the chorus is one opportunity for female characters to express their identities through song and dance, they are frequently denied the position of authority within the performance. Furthermore, the performances of a female chorus are described in explicitly visual terms, focusing on their bodies in a way that is not true of male solo performers. The imagined performance as expressed within the poetry will be of interest, especially when the choral depictions include some indication of the audience. By considering who is watching these choral events (even if the events only occur in poetry), we can better understand and discuss the imagined purpose of the chorus and how it relates to the

context in which it is presented.

This project is organized in a way that highlights different poetic strategies of engaging with the chorus. For the first three chapters, I focus on the descriptions of choral activity in dactylic hexameter, long agreed to be a meter used for solo performance. Within the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, which are treated together in the first chapter, the chorus is notably connected to communal institutions that help indicate broader poetic themes. The *Iliad*'s choruses appear at occasions of both community celebration (on the Shield of Achilles) and lament (scenes of mourning for Patroclus and Hector), indicating its importance to the community as well as its ability to cross “genres” of expression. In the *Odyssey*, I note that references to the chorus are concentrated in the books that occur on Phaeacia (6–12), leading me to suggest that it is an important symbol of that successfully functioning community. In addition, the choruses in the *Odyssey* help solidify the theme of marriage within the poem; this is especially prominent in the choral character of Nausicaa, who poses a somewhat threatening alternative to Odysseus' journey home. I argue that through the image of the chorus, the poet of Homeric epic articulates the need for balance between the genre's strong individuals and the community that is affected by their actions, presence, and absence.

Chapter Two focuses on the *Theogony* and the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, which feature extensive descriptions of choral performance: Hesiod's hymn to the Muses (*Th.* 1–23), the Delian maidens (*HhA* 156–78), and the Olympians (*HhA* 182–206). Each of these, however, is presented in a context that also showcases the narrative abilities of a solo singer. Within these two texts, the question of choral authority is pushed further, given that the Muses and the Delian maidens can be seen as voices of nearly equal authority to the voices of Hesiod and the blind

bard (Homer), respectively.¹⁰ The varying degrees of rivalry established between the individual, male soloist and the collective, female voices of the chorus also raise the question of choral authority, as well as its relation to gender. The growing emphasis on the solo singer alongside the chorus leads me to draw a distinction between what I identify as two types of chorus leaders. The first is the “external *choregos*,” who leads the chorus but does not share their social characteristics (i.e., is not part of their age-group and is not the same gender). While Hesiod’s characterization of the Muses leads to his complete subordination of their song, the blind bard and chorus of the Delian maidens perform in harmony, as do Apollo and the Muses in the *Hymn to Hermes*. The second type, which will be more prominent in the following chapter, is the “internal *choregos*,” who is part of the chorus but is somehow distinguished (usually in terms of beauty) from the other members; she (for it is always a female figure) also provides a model for the other members in terms of choral activity as well as social progression.¹¹ The *Hymn to Apollo*’s Olympian performance offers a unique example of a chorus featuring both types of *choregos*, as Apollo and Artemis simultaneously demonstrate their archetypal contributions to the chorus in an expression of choral perfection, a feature noticed by Lonsdale (1993, 1994–95). By examining these passages, I demonstrate that the relationship between the external *choregos* and the chorus is flexible and able to adapt to express varying levels of competitiveness between performers, based on the overall performance outcome the poet hopes to convey and the relevant themes in the poem.

The third chapter focuses on depictions of the maiden chorus, specifically those

¹⁰ On the importance of identifying this bard as Homer see Spelman (2018).

¹¹ The designation of internal/external is my own. Calame identifies three different functions of the *choregos* (1997, 49), but I think there is a need for further differentiation, especially because Calame ultimately views these *choregoi* as achieving a similar educational function for all types of choruses (228–31). Choruses that feature an internal *choregos* are exceptionally different in motivation and purpose from those that feature an external *choregos*.

associated with Artemis or other goddess figures. I examine the Oceanids at the opening of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, the chorus that Aphrodite invents during her seduction of Anchises in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, and the choruses of Artemis herself in the *Homeric Hymn to Artemis*. Taking Artemis' own chorus and the chorus of Nausicaa and her companions from the *Odyssey* (6.157) as paradigmatic, I evaluate these choruses in the context of Artemis' association with the liminal stage of young women before marriage and her own status as the archetypal internal *choregos* figure in performance. While the solo bard has his own relationship with the chorus, the choral leadership of Artemis (literal or reproduced through an equivalent figure, like Nausicaa) alters the configuration of such a group to create important social implications for its members, as well as the text in which they are described. In examining these kinds of choruses, I argue that the internal *choregos*-figure is one of the most prevalent choral tropes in literary sources and that the significance and meaning of this figure is unquestionably shaped by her choral context. The presence of a chorus changes the characterization of such a figure, often specifically indicating her readiness for marriage; frequently, in these contexts, the chorus becomes a literal backdrop for the girl's transition out of adolescence.

The fourth and final chapter looks at the chorus in non-hexameter poetry, evaluating the effect of choral projection in Alcman's first *partheneion* before considering how the poetry of Sappho articulates the relationship between chorus members and *choregos*.¹² Building on the first three chapters' discussions of the chorus as a literary object, this chapter examines how that concept develops when the poetry itself becomes choral and follows an actual choral script. In the case of Alcman 1, the choral performance continually draws attention within the poetry to its

¹² This idea was first posed by Calame (1997), but I will disagree with his identification of Sappho as the *choregos*-figure, which has contributed to problematic and unreliable conjectures about her relationship with adolescent girls.

choral status and utilization of the choral form, suggesting that this is not only an integral part of the performance but also an attempt to prompt the audience to interpret not only the performing chorus that they see and hear in front of them but also the choral identities projected by the descriptions of the maidens. Like many of the choruses in hexameter poetry, this chorus focuses intensely on visual description, and here I follow the arguments of Swift (2016) that the performers do so in a way to manage the audience's gaze and direct it as they choose. Turning to Sappho, I argue that there is an intersection between her addresses to her companions and the poetry being performed that resembles the interaction between the performance and the self-referential poetry of Alcman's *partheneia*.¹³ As Calame has already noticed, the "I" of Alcman's *partheneia*, which expresses the sentiments of the group, rather than one individual, might bear a resemblance to the "I" of Sappho's poetry in that it has the ability to "communicate collectively" (1997, 256). While Calame's interpretation relies on the aspect of hierarchy between the chorus members and the chorus leader, I argue that these relationships and their resemblance to the chorus point away from a strictly biographical interpretation of Sappho and her companions and instead towards a metaphorical reproduction of choral bonds between chorus and *choregos*, visible in Alcman 1. Both Alcman and Sappho create a sort of *mise en abyme* by generating a described chorus in the context of an already choral song, inviting evaluation of not only one but in fact multiple choruses as the performance creates different versions of itself through performance and description.¹⁴

This wide range of texts and contexts allows me to approach the chorus and chorality from a variety of angles—especially as a flexible and unique literary device, but also as aspects

¹³ My decision to consider the chorality of Sappho's poetry has been greatly influenced and aided by Lardinois (1994 and 1996), who argues that much of Sappho's poetry was in fact intended for choral performance.

¹⁴ This is not unlike an idea proposed by Carruesco (2016) regarding the Delian Maidens of the *Hymn to Apollo*.

of the social and communal fabric of the archaic period—with an eye towards building on the existing scholarly view of the archaic chorus more generally. Although there are numerous treatments of choral poetics from each of these angles, a full-length treatment of the archaic chorus's literary legacy is lacking. While such a broad and fluid construct will never be able to be comprehensively understood, this project offers a new perspective on one aspect of its ability to generate meaning in a number of diverse contexts. Just as the performative chorus developed throughout the archaic period and on into the classical period by means of its role in epinician and tragic poetics, the literary chorus grew and changed as it became incorporated and used in different genres of poetry. From its role in early epic hexameter to its place within a hymnic context to its self-referential posing in *partheneia* and lyric poetry, the literary chorus enjoyed a dynamic and important position in the minds of its audience that shaped the broader understanding of the chorus and the myriad ways in which chorality connected to and reflected various aspects of life.

Chapter One: The Epic Chorus

I. Introduction

As Achilles lapses into despair over the death of his beloved Patroclus, the smith-god Hephaestus labors away at the arms that will come to define the hero's *aristeia* and provide a physical complement to his display on the battlefield. Deep within the ekphrasis of the shield of Achilles in book 18 of the *Iliad*, the poet presents a complex portrait of two cities, one at war and one at peace (18.490–608). Within the thoroughly interwoven descriptions of these two cities, there are three views of the city at peace that feature groups participating in a celebration, including a group of young men whirling in a bridal procession; a group of young people at a celebration of the harvest; and a scene of richly-costumed young men and women on a dancing floor, surrounded by a great crowd of onlookers. Although they show different occasions, figures, and details, all three passages present a choral experience, and all of them participate in and contribute to the rich image- and meaning-system of the archaic chorus.

Among the innumerable works of scholarship discussing the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, there are comparatively few that have examined the role of the chorus in these two poems.¹⁵ While some of the poems' choral groups are more frequently discussed than others, like Nausicaa playing catch with her companions or the lament of the Nereids for Patroclus, scholars have yet to fully consider how the chorus as an institution is represented and utilized in the poems. One significant reason behind this relative quiet seems to be, on the one hand, the simple fact that the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are not choral themselves, and on the other, that the actual performance of choral poetry, rather than its depiction, has drawn the most attention. In the context of poems like

¹⁵ There are a number of exceptions to this statement, though few of them are of considerable length. Carruesco (2016) is particularly relevant to the *Iliad*, and within the edited volume by Athanassaki and Bowie (2011), Richardson (2011) provides an especially useful overview.

the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, which rely on the chorus as a literary device full of symbolic and cultural meaning, this conversation is only just beginning.

Although the earliest choral poetry is most often dated to the late 7th and 6th centuries BCE, the image of the chorus can be found earlier, peppered throughout the verses of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.¹⁶ The fluency and frequency with which the chorus is used as a developed metaphor and as a passing symbolic reference indicates a clear familiarity with the choral form and its potential as a literary device as early as the 8th century.¹⁷ Within the *Iliad*, the chorus is used as both a brief point of reference (e.g., 3.395), more extensively as an image of a prosperous society (18.590–606), and in the context of funerary laments for Patroclus (18.35–69 and 18.316–24) and Hector (24.718–24, 746–48, and 760–61). The image of the chorus appears frequently throughout the *Odyssey*, at certain places in order to indicate a character's main role and motivations (e.g., 6.157) and elsewhere to develop a social context against which to evaluate the greater drama of the poem (8.260, 264). Wherever the poet includes a chorus or choral referent, he invites the audience to simultaneously multiple levels of interpretation: on the one hand, the description of the chorus being presented or the relative chorality of the scene or characters, and on the other, the cultural and symbolic meaning that the chorus or even simply its mention brings to bear on the situation.

Throughout this chapter I will examine the occasions of chorality in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, noting each time the word *χορός* is used either to describe a group or to draw a

¹⁶ Janko (1982) and Morris (1989) have made especially compelling cases for dating the Homeric poems to the 8th century, based on both linguistic and archaeological evidence; cf. Burgess (2001), who argues that there was less distinction between the 8th, 7th, and 6th centuries than Janko's arguments imply. Crowhurst (1963, 1) shows that Geometric vases of the late eighth century provide the earliest depictions of choral groups on Greek painted pottery. Unless otherwise specified, all dates given are BCE.

¹⁷ Alcman is considered to be the earliest extant choral poet by Calame (1997) and others. While the dating of the Homeric epics remains the subject of much debate, there is general consensus that some versions of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, whether fixed or continuing to develop, were in existence during the 8th century.

comparison to the chorus but also considering groups that lack this label but nevertheless participate in the kind of group singing or dancing that constitutes a chorus. It will become apparent that in spite of their different subjects and settings, both poems feature a relatively equal number of references to the chorus, although there are clear clusters of mentions that help indicate the broader function of the chorus in each poem. Beginning with the *Iliad*, I examine the three choral groups on the Shield of Achilles. Although only one is explicitly called a chorus, each of these groups contributes to the vision of a happy city that celebrates its community and looks forward to its future through the performances of choruses. Furthermore, the juxtaposition of these choral scenes with scenes of violence suggests a thematic contrast between the chorus and war, a contrast that is upheld throughout the rest of the poem.

Building on my analysis of these three scenes, I examine the places in the *Iliad* where the poet introduces the chorus as a simple point of reference, usually as part of a comment about a character's appearance. Coming from different speakers and used for different purposes, these moments indicate the broad appeal of the chorus as a symbol and suggest its fluid range of meaning, as it allows various individuals to engage with its wide conceptual scope. In my analysis of these choral comparisons, I will demonstrate that, like the choruses of the Shield, these statements underscore the contrast between the chorus and the battlefield.

Finally, I examine the funerary laments of the *Iliad*, first arguing that these should indeed be considered as a kind of choral performance and then drawing attention to their participation in the motif created by both the choral comparisons and the choruses on the shield. As the choruses of lamenters mourn the loss of specific individuals, they voice a more general lament for the future of the community. It is also important to note that in the *Iliad* and beyond, lament is a distinctly female form of song; although Achilles leads the lament for Patroclus, his is the sole

example of an explicitly male lament chorus throughout archaic literature, and it is therefore unusual in its following of female mourning practices. Through the emphasis on the genre of lament in the *Iliad* as feminine, particularly in the extended lament for Hector in book 24, the poet draws attention to the absence of males caused by the violence of war. In this final version of the chorus, the poet extends the contrastive relationship between war and the chorus to suggest what choruses look like in the continuation of war. Throughout all of these choral moments, the poem puts forth a consistent view of the chorus as a foil for martial activity, suggesting an oppositional relationship despite numerous shared features and the possibility of overlap. In the first half of this chapter, I will demonstrate that *Iliad* thus provides a unique and early example of the chorus's ability to function as both a literary motif and as a culturally significant concept that possesses and creates its own meaning both in performance and when mentioned in passing.

In the second half of this chapter, I focus on the *Odyssey*, moving chronologically through the poem and observing primarily that in contrast to the *Iliad*, the chorus is used throughout the *Odyssey* exclusively as a point of reference. As a result, there are no instances of a chorus being described without the specific designation of χορός, and this term largely anchors my discussion—with the singular exception of Nausicaa dancing with her companions. This is also the *Odyssey*'s only example of a chorus described in performance, although unlike the choruses on the Shield of Achilles, Nausicaa and her companions can hardly be described as a formal chorus, as their activity is clearly spontaneous and impromptu. In other mentions of the chorus, I argue that the poet introduces this institution in order to suggest something about a particular character, especially in the cases of Nausicaa and Penelope. Their association with the chorus is, in both examples, specifically connected with marriage, and the connection with the chorus sets them up as clear bride figures.

In addition, mentions of the chorus are for the most part notably clustered around the books that take place on Scheria, suggesting that there is something about the Phaeacians that enables the regular practice of choral activity. By examining these moments in the poem, I suggest that the Phaeacians' focus on the chorus, and the associations of the chorus with marriage, indicate their dedication to the social practices that celebrate and replicate the community as a whole. In contrast to Ithaca, which is clearly a non-functioning community and has no choral activity, Scheria's regular choruses serve as evidence of their prosperity and future. Nausicaa as a specifically choral figure thus poses a significant threat to Odysseus' nostos, and the community offers a dangerously pleasant alternative to Ithaca. More generally, on Scheria and elsewhere the literary motif of the chorus emphasizes the importance of marriage as a central theme of the poem. Finally, several mentions of divine choruses further suggest that the chorus is a defining characteristic of a happy, well-functioning society. Even more than the examples on Scheria, these references to χορός mark this activity as something that is enjoyed under the best of circumstances and something that draws attention to the peaceful surroundings in which it is practiced. When produced by this idealized community, the chorus in the *Odyssey* is an overwhelmingly positive image, drawing a stark contrast to the experiences of dysfunctional communities, in particular that of Ithaca.

In general, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* both seem to observe a tension between the individual and the collective, and the chorus functions in both poems as a means of contrasting these two ideas. The *Iliad* most poignantly draws attention to this contrast in its scenes of funeral lament, which mourn the loss of an individual as part of the process of the community's decline as a whole. The *Odyssey*, on the other hand, suggests that in the aftermath of the individual experience (especially war or the return journey), successful reintegration is imperative. Through

the chorus, the Homeric poet offers an alternative to the stark individualism of characters like Achilles or Odysseus and suggests a locus of connection and community.

II. Chorality in the *Iliad*

To turn to the *Iliad*, I will begin with the choral groups on the Shield in book 18, which in many ways provide an early model of the choruses that are familiar in the *Odyssey* as well as in later literary accounts. These choruses all appear to be related to specific events of a celebratory nature and feature younger participants. The groups on the shield are particularly intriguing given their appearance within the descriptions of the cities of peace and war wrought by Hephaestus. All three choruses on the shield contribute to the impression of a functioning, happy city, participating in the positive interaction of the young and emphasizing the celebratory nature of events like the wine harvest and the wedding; as the crowd looks on in the final choral scene, they are described as “τερπόμενοι,” delighting in the celebration before them (18.604). Through the idealized portraits of the city and their firm connection with choral dancing, the poet of the *Iliad* creates an association between this group activity and its ability to model and recreate the community in the performance itself. These celebratory moments provide great contrast with the other city, whose walls are ringed with opposing forces and whose citizens ride unknowingly into the ambush awaiting them (18.509–40). As the poet emphasizes the brutality and chaos of war, the peaceful and productive events of the other city are celebrated by the choruses, suggesting an oppositional relationship between war and the chorus.

The first chorus on the shield presents a series of weddings taking place throughout the city, celebrated by dancing in the streets:

ἐν τῇ μὲν ῥα γάμοι τ' ἔσαν εἰλαπῖναι τε,
 νύμφας δ' ἐκ θαλάμων δαΐδων ὑπο λαμπομενάων

ἡγίνεον ἀνὰ ἄστῳ, πολὺς δ' ὑμέναιος ὀρώρει·
 κοῦροι δ' ὀρχηστῆρες ἐδίνεον, ἐν δ' ἄρα τοῖσιν
 αὐλοὶ φόρμιγγές τε βοῆν ἔχον· αἱ δὲ γυναῖκες
 ἰστάμεναι θαύμαζον ἐπὶ προθύροισιν ἑκάστη.

In the one [city], there were weddings and banquets,
 And they were leading brides out of their bedrooms
 By the light of bright torches throughout the city, and a great bridal song rose up:
 And the dancing youths whirled around, and among these
 Flute and lyre players were offering up their sounds: and the women
 In the audience were amazed, each standing at her doors. (18.491–96)

As noted above, the word χορός is not used to describe this group, but we can nevertheless identify this as a choral performance with confidence. Within this scene, there is a clear separation between performers (κοῦροι δ' ὀρχηστῆρες) and audience members (αἱ δὲ γυναῖκες), and the youths are clearly dancing (ὀρχηστῆρες) and singing (πολὺς δ' ὑμέναιος ὀρώρει). Their movements appear to be coordinated and they seem to move as a group, celebrating the various weddings taking place in one massive expression of community joy. Although the weddings themselves are relatively personal or individual events, the excitement felt by the community as a whole reflects the importance of the wedding for the entire society. Through the activity of the chorus, the wedding ceremony becomes bigger than an event between two individuals, extending instead to the entire community as if ensuring its successful future. Immediately following this description of community festivity, localized in the choral celebration of the wedding, the poet describes the strife that has arisen as a result of a murder trial (18.497–508). Although a civic event, the trial and the man slain suggest an attenuated version of war, offering a contrasting portrait of civic life, expressed along the lines of chorality.

This chorus celebrating the wedding is clearly male (κοῦροι), unlike other performers featured on the Shield (e.g., ἡῖθεοι καὶ παρθένοι, “young men and maidens,” 18.593). This set of dancers, made up of youths dancing in the streets while other men lead their brides through the

city, seems to be enhancing the main event with their performance. Uniquely, their audience is primarily made up of women (αἱ δὲ γυναῖκες / ἰστάμεναι θαύμαζον), and they are not connected explicitly to any sort of ritual activity beyond the wedding itself. There is no indication that their dancing is rehearsed, but their motion surely draws power and justification from its collective occurrence: one man dancing in the street would be out of place, even concerning, but a whole chorus of youths is a pleasurable sight at which to marvel (θαύμαζον). The collectivity of their action therefore lends it authority, while also allowing them to act in a celebratory and raucous, yet socially-sanctioned, manner. Because these dancers are specifically youths (κοῦροι), we might imagine that they take place in anticipation of their own future roles as the grooms, when they will lead their own brides and other, younger men will celebrate the event with their own dancing.

It is interesting that the emphasis of this wedding scene is not on the brides, and this may help explain the male nature of the chorus; while the bride's friends traditionally accompany her in their own sort of chorus within the context of the wedding ritual, singing the *epithalamia*, here the focus is on the male dancing and the male activity of leading (ἡγίνεον, 493). The female audience, however, reminds us that the women of the city grant their tacit approval and encouragement of these activities, confirming the positive social ramifications of this scene. In reading this choral scene as a microcosmic portrait of the larger community, we might see this as suggestive of the relationship between the city's marriageable men and the younger generation, who pave the way for their older counterparts in expectation of their own futures. Additionally, this scene, with its male choruses and its male grooms leading the brides, emphasizes that the prosperous, happy city has not one but two distinct populations of men alive and well within its walls. In stark contrast with the city at war—and of course, the communities in the background

of the *Iliad* itself—there are more than enough young men to participate in the continuation of the city, and the male chorus helps draw our attention to this positive aspect of society. Within the larger context of the shield, this scene and its choral features incorporate the productive and reproductive elements of the wedding while also designating this as a communal and celebratory event. Furthermore, given the opposition between the chorus and war discussed above, this scene suggests that while the chorus and the events that it celebrates help maintain and replicate society, war does the opposite in removing the most eligible adult males in the community.

The second chorus on the shield once again occurs within the happy city, celebrating the wine harvest:

παρθενικαὶ δὲ καὶ ἠΐθεοι ἀταλά φρονέοντες
 πλεκτοῖς ἐν τάλαιροις φέρον μελιηδέα καρπὸν.
 τοῖσιν δ' ἐν μέσσοισι πάϊς φόρμιγγι λιγείῃ
 ἱμερόεν κιθάριζε, λίνον δ' ὑπὸ καλὸν ἄειδε
 λεπταλέῃ φωνῇ· τοὶ δὲ ῥήσσοντες ἀμαρτῆ
 μολπῆ τ' ἰγμῶ τε ποσὶ σκαίροντες ἔποντο.

Maidens and youths, tender in spirit,
 Were carrying the honey-sweet fruit in woven baskets.
 And in their midst a child with a shrill lyre
 Was playing a lovely song, and he sang with a delicate voice
 The song of Linos: and stamping in unison they were following him
 With dance and shriek, beating the ground with their feet. (18.567–72)

Like the previous example, the poet does not use the word *χορός* to designate this event as a formal chorus, but there are several indications of chorality that help contribute to the overall impression of this choral scene. Here, there is clear musical accompaniment from the boy singing with his lyre, and even a specified song.¹⁸ In addition, the poet specifically indicates the participants (*παρθενικαὶ δὲ καὶ ἠΐθεοι*), and they make specific motions (*ῥήσσοντες, σκαίροντες*)

¹⁸ Edwards notes that “the song is always referred to as a dirge, and it seems odd to sing it here on what is obviously a cheerful occasion,” but he also suggests that it might be a seasonally-appropriate tune (1991, 225). Even a “dirge” does not rule out the possibility of choral connotations.

as a group (ἀμαρτῆ). The youths and maidens are unlikely to be the actual harvesters, or at least the primary harvesters, suggesting that they are present primarily for the celebration itself; thus, although this chorus is not the same as the more formal, designated χορός, it bears the markers of a more general choral event. In addition, it is specifically contrasted with the scene taking place in the other city, in which a pair of lions are devouring a bull (18.573–86). Although not itself a scene of war, this image is one familiar from a series of similes that occur throughout the battle scenes of the *Iliad*, rendering, through these two moments, an implicit opposition between war and the chorus.¹⁹

The final choral scene on the Shield is the only example that utilizes the word χορός, once to designate the dancing floor itself and once to describe the performance as a whole:

ἐν δὲ χορὸν ποίκιλλε περικλυτὸς ἀμφιγυήεις,
 τῷ ἴκελον οἶόν ποτ' ἐνὶ Κνωσῶ εὐρείῃ
 Δαίδαλος ἤσκησεν καλλιπλοκάμῳ Ἀριάδνῃ.
 ἔνθα μὲν ἠῖθεοι καὶ παρθένοι ἀλφεισίβοιοι
 ὀρχεῦντ' ἀλλήλων ἐπὶ καρπῶ χειρὰς ἔχοντες.
 τῶν δ' αἰ μὲν λεπτὰς ὀθόνας ἔχον, οἱ δὲ χιτῶνας
 εἶατ' ἐϋννήτους, ἦκα στίλβοντας ἐλαίῳ·
 καὶ ῥ' αἰ μὲν καλὰς στεφάνας ἔχον, οἱ δὲ μαχαίρας
 εἶχον χρυσείας ἐξ ἀργυρέων τελαμώνων.
 οἱ δ' ὅτε μὲν θρέξασκον ἐπισταμένοισι πόδεςσι
 ῥεῖα μάλ', ὡς ὅτε τις τροχὸν ἄρμενον ἐν παλάμῃσιν
 ἐζόμενος κεραμεὺς πειρήσεται, αἶ κε θέησιν·
 ἄλλοτε δ' αὖ θρέξασκον ἐπὶ στίχας ἀλλήλοισι.
 πολλὸς δ' ἱμερόεντα χορὸν περίσταθ' ὄμιλος
 τερπόμενοι: μετὰ δέ σφιν ἐμέλπετο θεῖος ἀοιδὸς
 φορμίζων· δοιῶ δὲ κυβιστητῆρε κατ' αὐτοὺς
 μολπῆς ἐξάρχοντες ἐδίνεον κατὰ μέσσους.

And on it the very famous lame god made a dancing-floor,
 Similar to the one that Daedalus once fashioned
 On broad Knossos for lovely-haired Ariadne.
 And there young men and maidens, worth many oxen,
 Were dancing, holding each other by the wrist.

¹⁹ See, for example, *Il.* 15.271–80 or 12.41–49. Scott observes that lion similes “describe warriors almost exclusively” and that presumably “lion and boar similes are so numerous because they fit the extensive war narrative so well” (1974, 58).

Of these, the women were wearing fine, delicate linen, and the men
 Were wearing well-spun tunics, slightly glistening with oil:
 And the women were holding lovely garlands, while the men
 Had golden daggers hanging from silvery belts.
 They were running along with skillful feet,
 Very quickly, just as when a potter, sitting down,
 Tries a wheel, fitted in his hands, to see if it runs;
 But from time to time they would run at one another in rows.
 The great crowd standing around was delighting in the
 Lovely chorus; and among them an excellent bard was
 Playing the lyre; but two tumblers leading the dance among them
 Were whirling in their midst. (18.590–606)

By far the most extensive description of a choral performance in the *Iliad*, this passage employs two distinct uses of χορός while enhancing the overall scene during which such a performance might take place.²⁰ Although there is nothing in the surrounding context to suggest that this choral event is connected with marriage, there are several hints throughout the description that it does indeed have a nuptial connotation. The description adds a mythic dimension to the idea of chorality, naming Ariadne’s dancing-place as a point of comparison. The lack of additional description connected to this reference suggests the audience’s familiarity with the concept, indicating a general awareness of this mythical choral place. In addition, however, Ariadne is known primarily as a bride-figure; her naming as a choral participant, therefore, suggests that these qualities are linked in the mythic imagination and in the more general understanding of chorality held by the audience. The adjective ἀλφεισίβοιαι also has a nuptial connotation, pointing not simply to the young women’s appearances but more importantly to their ability to fetch a high bride-price, likely from the very men with whom they are dancing. There is clear physical contact between the dancers, and the phrase “ἐπὶ καρπῷ χειρας ἔχοντες” recalls the

²⁰ Edwards, following other commentators, observes that here χορόν ought to be understood as a “place for dancing” rather than the dance itself, due to the comparison with the “one wrought by Daedalus in wide Knossos” (1991, 591–92). This is another good reason to identify dancing as the more prominent feature among early choruses, as based on this notion of “dancing-floor,” choruses were formed in specific places for physical movement, rather than singing.

ritual grasping of a bride's wrist by her new husband during the wedding ceremony, enhancing the nuptial context of this event.

Although its makeup and occasion are different, this mixed chorus promotes an ideal similar to that expressed by the Shield's first choral event. Here the community involvement is even more prominent, as the scene includes both youths and maidens, as well as a specified audience of onlookers (18.603); the wide range of community members draws attention to the purpose of the event and its connections to social replication and modeling, particularly when considered alongside the chorus's nuptial connotations. The attention given to the event and the care taken in preparing for it is clear from the rich costumes of the dancers (18.595–98), showing the special nature of the occasion and suggesting its celebratory nature. The mingling of young male and female community members helps make this an event oriented towards sustaining the community through children, emphasizing the creation and figuring of the future community in the choral dance itself. In the context of the *Iliad*, a poem heavily involved in the issues of marital fidelity and the damage done to the family and community through the experience of war, the successful union articulated in the chorus on the shield provides a pointed alternative to the external realities of Achaians and Trojans alike.

In this final choral scene on the Shield, the poet includes an intriguing detail that is absent from the earlier two scenes of choral dancing. The chorus is accompanied by a bard playing the lyre (18.604–5), along with two tumblers.²¹ The bard's role in the celebration is unclear, but the participle φορμίζων (605) does suggest that he is performing, too. Perhaps this performance

²¹ These lines are excluded by a number of editors on the basis of their formulaic nature and the absence of them in certain manuscripts. Nevertheless, Edwards (1991, 231) acknowledges that the bard's absence in this third scene would be striking, given the presence of musical accompaniment in the first two choral scenes. His presence or absence does not greatly affect my reading of the scene, but if these lines can be included, the figure of the bard may signal an interesting version of the choral pattern discussed in the following chapter.

mirrors the one that the external audience is experiencing, in much the same way that bardic performances in the *Odyssey* seem to reflect the external performance realities. It is even possible that the audience of the *Iliad* has just enjoyed the performance of a chorus similar to the one described as a sort of companion piece to the bard's singing. While little detail is provided regarding this singer, his presence suggests that the chorus alone is not complete or sufficient entertainment for the occasion, and his mention in this scene does promisingly support the idea that choruses and solo performances often took place alongside each other at the same event. Although the relationship between the two performers and performances is obscure, their cooperative relationship may indicate a less strict divide between genres and performance types, and it also offers an early example of a choral pattern that becomes more prominent in Hesiod and the *Homeric Hymns*. This bard alongside the dancing chorus is not unlike the image of the bard that accompanies the chorus of Delian maidens in the *Hymn to Apollo*, or Hesiod singing alongside the Muses, which I will discuss at length in the second chapter. As in these examples, the Shield's bard and chorus seem to work together to accomplish different aspects of the ideal celebration, possibly because the chorus's primary feature is dance, not song. While the physical movements of the chorus are the most salient aspects of their description, there is no indication that they sing. Instead, the bard appears to provide the music and the song, while the chorus dances alongside him. Although the examples in Chapter Two will not maintain this distribution of roles, this scene on the Shield might offer one piece of evidence for the possibility that early choruses did not do their own singing but were instead accompanied by a single singer as they danced together; possibly the harmony between his performance and that of the chorus even offers a model of the ideal balance between the individual and the community. Due to the general lack of description of the bard, it is impossible to comment with certainty on his

performative role or his more precise function at this gathering, but his presence alone is enough to infer a certain duality to the celebration and the expectations of the occasion and audience. Whether he is accompanying the dancers or providing his own, separate form of entertainment, the chorus and the bard together provide a complete image of the types of performance that make up a full evening of community festivity.

While the choruses on the Shield offer portraits of an idealized community and suggest a contrast between the dancing floor and the battlefield, they are also recognizable examples of occasions (marriages, the harvest) that may have been celebrated with choruses by members of the audience, and thus a culturally specific means of engaging with the audience's experience. Elsewhere in the *Iliad*, references to the chorus by and about specific characters provide examples of a different way that the poet uses the chorus. On two occasions, characters in the poem mention the chorus to draw attention to specific aspects of a character's attitude or appearance, while a third reference to the chorus provides details about his background. In all cases, these references use the image of the chorus to draw a specific contrast between the war raging in the background of the poem. In these examples, the chorus is both emblematic of peacetime and also an activity that enables sexual union and productivity; it is thus generative in nature, unlike the destructive battlefield.

After Aphrodite whisks Paris from the battlefield and commands Helen to go back to their bedroom, she tries to entice the young woman:

οὐδέ κε φαίης
 ἄνδρῖ μαχεσσάμενον τόν γ' ἔλθεῖν, ἀλλὰ χορὸν δὲ
 ἔρχεσθ', ἠὲ χοροῖο νέον λήγοντα καθίζειν.

“You would not say
 that he had gone fighting against a man, but that he had gone to the chorus,
 or that he had sat down, having just paused from the dance.” (3.392–94)

By drawing a stark contrast between Paris' leisurely appearance and that of a man on the battlefield, Aphrodite emphasizes his gentility and lack of brutality; Helen should be pleased, she suggests, because she will find a man that is clean and civilized waiting for her, rather than a warrior covered in dirt and grime. Although this description draws attention to the fact that Paris is not well suited for battle, it is not a negative characterization of choral activity. Rather, it simply highlights that there is a clear, visible distinction in the appearance (and perhaps the demeanor) of a man ready for a chorus and that of a man ready for battle. Both are easily understood by the audience (and Helen, the internal audience), and the image communicates in an instant the meaning attached to the concept of the chorus.

Similarly, the poet utilizes the image of the chorus as an alternative to the experience of war when Ajax exhorts his men in book 15:

ἢ οὐκ ὀτρύνοντος ἀκούετε λαὸν ἅπαντα
Ἴκτορος, ὃς δὴ νῆας ἐνιπρήσαι μενεαίνει;
οὐ μὰν ἔς γε χορὸν κέλετ' ἐλθέμεν, ἀλλὰ μάχεσθαι.

“Or do you not hear Hector rousing up his whole people,
That man who rages to burn up the ships?
Indeed, he does not call them to go to the dance, but to fight.” (15.506–8)

Almost mockingly, Ajax draws on the familiar peacetime experience of the chorus to chide his troops, reminding them that they are in the thick of war. Like Aphrodite's description of Paris, the contrast between war and the chorus here is not necessarily pejorative—it simply conveys the intended meaning by using a concept that is immediately understood by the characters in the poem as well as the audience of the performance.

The third example of this strategy occurs in the extended description of Eudorus, one of Achilles' Myrmidons. In establishing Eudorus' lineage, the poet tells how his mother, Polymele, was taken from a chorus by Hermes:

τῆς δ' ἑτέρης Εὐδωρος ἀρήιος ἡγεμόνευε
 παρθένιος, τὸν ἔτικτε χορῶ καλῇ Πολυμήλῃ
 Φύλαντος θυγάτηρ· τῆς δὲ κρατὺς Ἀργειφόντης
 ἠράσατ', ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἰδὼν μετὰ μελπομένησιν
 ἐν χορῶ Ἀρτέμιδος χρυσηλακάτου κελαδεινῆς.
 αὐτίκα δ' εἰς ὑπερῶ' ἀναβὰς παρελέξατο λάθρη
 Ἑρμείας ἀκάκητα· πόρεν δέ οἱ ἀγλαὸν υἱὸν
 Εὐδωρον, περὶ μὲν θείειν ταχὺν ἠδὲ μαχητὴν.

Of the next group, strong Eudorus was the leader,
 A young man, whom Polymele, beautiful in the dance, bore,
 The daughter of Phylas; for powerful Argeiphontes
 Seized her, seeing her with his eyes among the dancers
 In a chorus of Artemis, golden-arrowed and loud-sounding.
 Straightaway he took her, going up in secret into the upper chamber,
 Guileless Hermes, and she brought forth his glorious son,
 Eudorus, swift in running and in battle. (16.179–86)

Here, there is a clear association of the chorus with marriage and childbirth, creating an opposition to Eudorus' current existence as a warrior. Additionally, this example explicitly shows that the chorus literally enables the production of able-bodied men for the community. Although the contrast with wartime is not as overt as the other examples I have discussed, the extensive description of his parentage (16.179–86) does provide an interesting point of departure from the particularly violent simile that comes just a few lines above, comparing the Myrmidons to a ravenous pack of wolves (16.155–63). Furthermore, this story is the first extant example of a choral motif in which a girl is taken from a chorus associated with Artemis and made into a bridal figure.²² Its presence here indicates an early resonance with audiences that relies on their understanding of this trope, even before it is well documented in literature. The choruses of Artemis will form the subject of Chapter Three, but for now it is sufficient to note that here the chorus functions on multiple levels, as a literal place for men and women to interact and as a symbolic place that serves to contrast the battlefield.

²² See especially Murnaghan (2006, 103–4), who observes that the process of emerging from the chorus is frequently associated with a transition, especially one that is marital and/or sexual.

The choruses on the Shield and the passing references to the chorus by different characters demonstrate the various ways that the poet of the *Iliad*, engages with the audience's experience of the chorus as a social and cultural phenomenon. Throughout the poem, the poet employs the image of the chorus as a peacetime ideal, set in sharp opposition to the grim chaos of battle. The examples show that the chorus is a place where the young people of the city can come together, dressed finely, to participate in a civilized interaction in celebration of the community and its productive continuation. Its markers (dress, dancing) are familiar enough to be used as a casual point of reference, as Aphrodite does with Helen and Ajax does with his troops, or as a clear and recognizable symbol of peace and prosperity, as on the Shield. In as early a context as that of Homeric epic, then, the chorus already has a clearly defined function and status in the minds of its characters and readers.

The final type of chorus in the *Iliad* complicates the idea of the chorus as a purely celebratory body. While the poem does promote a fairly unified vision of the chorus as a feature of a peaceful society, it also offers a view of how the chorus transforms when the community performing does not resemble the happy city on the Shield. In books 18 and 24 of the *Iliad*, the poet includes descriptions of three funerary choruses, offering a portrait of the kind of choral activity the community plagued by war and destruction must undertake. Notably, the funerary laments of the *Iliad* have not been consistently treated as choral pieces, despite being performed by a group. Although none of them is explicitly termed a χορός, each features a group of singers led by a specific individual, creating an early example of a group of chorus members led by a *choregos*-figure. All three scenes of funerary lament take this format: Thetis leads the Nereids in a lament for Patroclus and the future death of Achilles (18.35–69); the Achaians mourn Patroclus, led by Achilles (18.316–24); and Andromache, Hecuba, and Helen lead the Trojans in

a lament for Hector upon the return of his body (24.718–24, 746–48, and 760–61). The lament of the Nereids provides a sort of paradigm for choral lament in archaic poetry, as it features a typical choral make-up (one female leader surrounded by a clearly-defined group of other females), utilizes standard formulae and ritual activities, and participates in a genre of song that is defined by its call-and-response format, as discussed by Margaret Alexiou (2002). The presence of a female chorus leader is itself a noteworthy feature, and, with the exception of Achilles, will remain the governing pattern in all choruses described across the entirety of archaic poetry. Although they do not exhibit a strong dance element, these choruses nevertheless utilize specific gestures of mourning that take the place of the more active dance feature visible in other choruses. In addition, these scenes help demonstrate that choral performance can be celebratory, as on the shield, or funerary, as in the mourning of Hector; in all cases, however, the chorus in the *Iliad* is a highly community-oriented event.

Although extant choral literature is typically not funerary, the use of a specific formula and its repeated occurrence during a choral experience in the *Iliad* suggests that the ritualized funerary lament did in fact draw on familiar choral models; it is possible that actual funerary lament may have even taken a more choral form in practice than is generally understood.²³ Each of these examples uses the phrase ἦρχε γόοιο or ἐξῆρχε γόοιο to designate the leader of the group, which Webster takes as indicative of the choral relationship: “The standard formula: ‘X began the groaning’ or ‘X lamented’ followed by ‘the women groaned thereto’ implies a considerable solo followed by short response by the chorus” (1970, 50). As Alexiou suggests, this call and response lament, though heavily featuring a solo performer, indicates the choral elements that might have been more prominent within a lyric setting. Arguing for the antiphonal

²³ For further discussion of lament practices, especially as performed by women, see Shapiro (1991), Holst-Warhaft (1992), Garland (1985, esp. ch. 3).

lament as the formal expression of a ritual exchange, she proposes that “the predominance of the solo laments with refrain and the choral laments in the earlier period could be explained by the tendency of epic to develop the narrative element at the expense of antiphony and refrain, and of lyric to concentrate on the choral and musical elements” (2002, 132). Thus, although the “call and response” element is somewhat obscured by the singular narrative voice of the *Iliad*, the formula and the two distinct categories of performers (leader and respondents) do indicate that there is an antiphonal structure in place. Even if we lack examples of choral poetry that is explicitly funerary in nature, the communal wailing of women in a funerary context does evoke a kind of singing or performance as a group, indicating a higher degree of chorality in what is frequently thought of as a monodic genre of poetry.

It is also noteworthy that unlike the choral groups on the shield, two of these lament choruses feature a female leader or leaders, and one of them is entirely comprised of female members. Although the chorus of Nereids takes a format (female leader, female chorus) that will become recognizable in later choral lyric and even more so in the tragic chorus, the other two are unusual: the chorus lamenting Hector seems to be composed of both male and female townspeople, although women rarely lead men in any choral setting, while the entirely male lament for Patroclus is also a curious sight for the reader familiar with the typically female practice of lament. In his discussion of the threnody, Calame does not treat the lament of Achilles and the Achaians at any length. He observes: “In the Homeric poems, the funeral song is sung by a soloist of either sex with a rhythmic accompaniment of exclamations by a chorus of women” (1997, 82). While he does state in a footnote that “the lamenting can also come from a men’s chorus,” he makes no comment on how unusual this is. However, nowhere else in Greek literature is there a comparable example of a lament performed by a male soloist and chorus, and

this scene is highly unique.²⁴

Likely due to the importance of the soloist(s) in each of these choruses, their choral nature does not tend to be a focus of scholarly conversations. Especially in the Nereids' chorus, however, there are strong clues that there is choral activity taking place—that is, they sing and dance as a group. When she hears her son's distress, Thetis cries out (κώκυσεν) below the sea, prompting her sisters to gather around her and take up the lament in response: θεαὶ δέ μιν ἀμφογάροντο (18.37). The poet provides a catalogue of her sisters, and although only 32 of the traditional 50 are named, it is clear that they are all present (πᾶσαι ὅσαι κατὰ βένθος ἀλὸς Νηρηΐδες ἦσαν, 18.38), forming a distinctive group that participates in sync. In addition to the gathering movement suggested by ἀμφογάροντο, they all also participate in the same physical action of beating their breasts: αἰ δ' ἅμα πᾶσαι / στήθεα πεπλήγοντο (18.50–51). Tsagalis argues that this action “refers to two distinct levels of lamentation; that of the female with the self-destructive beating of the mourner's breast and that of the male whose putting his own hands on the breast of the deceased stands both for his sharing the pain and for taking an oath of avenging one death (that of Patroclus) with another (that of Hector)” (2004, 13). This ritual act of breast-beating, however, serves as more than a signifier of specifically *female* lament: it also stands in for the dance action that more traditionally indicates the chorality of a given group. By performing the same actions at the same time (gathering, beating), the Nereids complete a distinctly ritual act that, given their group song, helps clearly identify them as a chorus in performance.

Commentators have noticed a sort of ekphrastic quality in this chorus, although it is of course not quite the same as the performances on the shield.²⁵ Edwards remarks that it

²⁴ On the “femininity” of Achilles' lament see van Wees (1998).

²⁵ Ekphrasis is, by definition, the literary description of visual art (like the Shield itself), and is therefore the

is a kind of musical interlude, splendidly euphonious... acting not perhaps as a relief from the scene of sorrow...but, like similes in the descriptions of battle, allowing the situation to be frozen into stillness to allow the time necessary for its proper appreciation. (1991, 147–48)

This sense of stillness is particularly interesting, given the proximity of this choral scene (and the chorus of Achaians that follows) to the choruses on the shield. This feeling of pause is achieved most concretely through the catalogue of Nereid names, which directly impedes the narrative progress, but also in a less literal sense through the narrative pivot away from the action at Troy and the poet's lingering attention to dedicated, ritualized lamentation.²⁶ Through the process of mourning, which uses its rituals to delineate the beginning and end of acceptable social removal, the Nereids put their lives on hold temporarily to commemorate the life of Patroclus and lament the impending death of Achilles. By connecting this choral interlude with the catalogue of Nereids, the poet forces the audience to break out of the narrative trajectory of epic and visualize this more lyric moment. With this intense focus on one particular performance, the Nereid chorus grows into a moving art experience for the reader, whose attention is gradually drawn from one feature and performer to the next.

The choruses on the Shield are part of an extended ekphrasis, and as a result they are naturally dependent on physical description. This emphasis on what the choruses look like, rather than what they sound like, is somewhat at odds with the lament choruses' focus on the substance of their songs, the lament itself. In all three choruses, at least some of what the performers sing is reported by the poet, suggesting that in these instances, the feature of song is primary. The songs

wrong term to describe a chorus, which is not strictly visual art. Because these choral scenes do not mirror the performance of the *Iliad* itself, *mise en abyme* is also not quite right. The more general idea of ekphrasis, as a literary description of an artistic piece, comes close enough to the phenomenon that I observe here, in which a piece of art provides an extended description of another kind of art, one which is, in this case, performative.

²⁶ The temporary pausing of the narrative is a consistent feature of Homeric catalogues, according to Sammons (2010).

of the mourners, however, do not fully overshadow the importance of physical description in these scenes, and it is possible to see a sort of ekphrastic quality in these choruses as well. In Achilles' lament with the Achaians for Patroclus, the poet does not include a catalogue of the mourners, but he does include a different type of "narrative pause" that helps enhance the visual depth of the scene for the listener. As Achilles lays his hands on Patroclus, in what Tsagalis identifies as a specifically male gesture of mourning (2004, 13), he is compared to a lion grieving for its stolen/hunted cubs (18.316–23). While this is an unusual feature to see in connection to a choral performance, at least in the *Iliad*, it clearly heightens the visual aspects of Achilles' emotion and physical gestures, almost as though he is performing them with this image in mind. As Achilles mourns, the poet subs in the image of the lion, drawing his (listening) audience's attention to the visual components of the scene and reminding them of the physicality of this choral scene. This passage, like the lament of Thetis and the Nereids, utilizes the formula to indicate Achilles' leadership of the singers (τοῖσι δὲ Πηλεΐδης ἄδινού ἐξῆρχε γόοιο, 18.316), suggesting the choral nature of this performance and its antiphonal format. Although there is no clear audience, because all the people present are active participants, the lack of an audience does not detract from the scene's chorality; rather, the call and response structure allows the chorus members to become Achilles' audience, while he becomes their audience in turn. In both this and the previous scene of lament, the audience of the poem is ultimately able to take the place of the choral song's audience.

The final lament scene in the *Iliad* involves a number of the elements visible in the first two, including a description of the larger group's movement and emotional state (κλαίων δ' ἀμφίσταθ' ὄμιλος, 24.12). As the three chorus leaders—Andromache, Hecuba, and Helen—distinguish themselves by offering personal statements of lament, the poet utilizes once again the

formula to indicate a sort of stepping-out from the group to participate in a call and response style of performance (ἤρχε γόοιο, 24.723; ἐξῆρχε γόοιο, 24.747, 761). There are, however, certain differences that are important to explore. Most significantly, while the Nereids are female and the anonymous Achaian/Myrmidon mourners of Patroclus are most likely to have been male, this ὄμιλος is most likely to be a mixed group of mourners. Later referred to as a δῆμος (24.776), this crowd is not comprised of only men or only women; the phrase that opens the description, “no one, man or woman, was left there in the city” (οὐδέ τις αὐτόθ’ ἐνὶ πτόλει λίπετ’ ἀνήρ / οὐδὲ γυνή, 24.707–8), makes this explicit. It does seem to be the case that the responses to the leaders’ laments are generated by female mourners (ἐπὶ δὲ στενάχοντο γυναῖκες, 24.722, 746), and thus the chorus proper can perhaps be considered a female chorus, but the close presence of men that are not clearly distinct from the choral participants gives a new dimension to the group as a whole. Because this is a lament, which is most often depicted as a female performance genre and ritual activity, the prominence of the three women most central to Hector’s life (mother, wife, sister) is less remarkable. Each woman also follows a typical pattern of lament, expressing both sorrow and anger at Hector for dying too young and leaving them behind, with the result that their individual speeches do not strike the audience as incongruous or particularly outstanding.²⁷ In many ways, therefore, this scene is not unusual and in fact provides a fairly standard scene of mourning, which allows the audience to more easily identify its format and function. The mixed nature of this group, even if it is only the women who are in the chorus itself, might lead us to understand that within the realm of lamentation and perhaps also choral performance more generally, women are able to wield a considerable degree of authority, even leading a chorus of women integrated closely with men.

²⁷ For discussion of the typical features of funerary laments, see Alexiou (2002) and Kurtz and Boardman (1973).

The other most noteworthy feature of this scene is the massive group of choral participants: the poet does not specifically identify the mourners, and they seem to be comprised of the entire citizenry of the city. At the opening of this mourning scene, the poet observes that “No one, man or woman, was left there in the city: for ungovernable grief had come upon them all; and near the gates they met the one bringing home the body” (ὥς ἔφατ’, οὐδέ τις αὐτόθ’ ἐνὶ πτόλει λίπετ’ ἀνὴρ / οὐδὲ γυνή: πάντας γὰρ ἀάσχετον ἴκετο πένθος: / ἀγχοῦ δὲ ζύμβληντο πύλων νεκρὸν ἄγοντι, 24.707–9). Although it is for the most part the women that respond to the soloists’ extended laments, it is the entire crowd that groans in response when Helen finishes her lament (ἐπὶ δ’ ἔστεινε δῆμος ἀπείρων, 24.776). In addition to supporting the female leaders’ choral authority, the entire crowd here appears to participate in the choral form. While there is no formal limit on the group that can make up a chorus, the townspeople of Troy are a substantially larger body than any of the other choral groups in the *Iliad*. On the one hand, the large nature of the group does complicate the chorality attached to this performance, in that there is a less defined set of mourners and a lack of formalized gesture; on the other hand, though, this final scene turns the whole city into a kind of chorus, as we see the people engaging with the choral form as a way to access a particular method of expression and emotion. The emotional response is paralleled by the increase in choral participation: for the first two individual speeches from Andromache and Hecuba, it is specifically the women, but after Helen’s lament, the entire demos takes up the antiphonal cry. As the people tap into a communal performative mode in order to more fully express their grief over Hector (and by extension, all the other Trojan losses), the poet draws on the earlier scenes of choral lament to prompt the audience to build associations between choruses and evaluate this performance along the models of the Nereids and the Achaians.

These lament choruses do not promote exactly the same image as the choruses on the shield of Achilles, but they do support similar cultural ideals. Although the lament choruses mourn the loss of key communal figures, rather than celebrate the continuation and future of the community, both choruses attach particular importance to the life of the young, marriageable generation, especially the men. While the choruses on the Shield anticipate their community's successful future by reproducing it on a smaller scale, the choruses of the Nereids, Achaians, and Trojans express their grief over the loss of life in war and the future absence in the populations of reproductive families and male elders in the community. While the lament choruses have a somewhat different relationship with war than the chorus as a contrasting alternative presented elsewhere in the *Iliad*, they even more directly emphasize the negative effects of war for the community and thereby affirm the importance of the community's stability and perpetuation. The lament choruses are distinct in that they seem to afford more authority and a stronger role to women in performance (both as chorus leaders and as respondents), and they additionally seem able to accommodate a larger group of participants, perhaps depending on the community involvement of the deceased. Although Achilles' Achaian chorus is clearly a male event, his role as leader is only possible because of his own withdrawal from war; in the absence of mothers, wives, and sisters to properly mourn the dead Patroclus, the chorus is able to be led by a (temporarily) less masculine member of the Achaian forces. The strong female presence and role is significant especially given its occurrence in choruses that are heavily vocal, rather than the Shield choruses that are solely visually oriented. While female choruses are, as I will discuss in the following chapters, more frequently described in visual terms, there are some that are able to take up a more authoritative narrative role through the communication of what they sing, and the choruses of lament are no exception.

The choral groups in the *Iliad*, as I hope to have shown from this brief discussion, work together to promote a broad range of styles and circumstances that suggests, for the most part, an ideologically consistent portrait of choral performance in Homeric society. The choruses imagined on the Shield, along with the references made to the chorus by Aphrodite and Ajax and in the story of Eudorus' birth, imagine the choral form as a type of performative social event that replicates and models the ideal community, especially the community that its members hope to create in the future through marriage and the birth of children. By focusing on the choral moments that celebrate marriage or bring together young men and women in a ritual dance that mirrors marriage, the poet emphasizes the importance of the community and attaches the advancement of the community to the notion of chorality. In their utilization of young, marriageable men, the choral groups on the Shield also draw attention to the void created by war and continue to support the oppositional relationship between war and the chorus. Through their employment of female mourners and chorus leaders, the lament choruses emphasize the absence of the men that they mourn, as if the preponderance of women in the performance was a pointed response to the removal of key male community members in war. This register of meaning is only intensified by the clustering of choral imagery around book 18, which presents the two lament choruses of the Nereids and the Achaians only to juxtapose them with the much more positive and community-oriented choruses on the shield. While the choral mentions and the final lament group occur elsewhere in the *Iliad*, the rich tapestry of choral imagery throughout book 18 is enhanced by the choruses' proximity to one another, and examination of them side by side offers a fuller picture of the poem's engagement.

Not every example of choral representation in archaic poetry will utilize the idea of the chorus in the same way, and I am not suggesting that in every case the chorus acts as an

opposition to or response to war and its effects. Rather, I hope to have demonstrated one pattern through which the image of the chorus can take on a variety of guises and convey a unified system of meaning aside from its most literal communicative and performative function. Even when a chorus is not explicitly labeled as such, it can participate in the basic elements of chorality through the features of group singing or dancing, particularly when these actions are undertaken by a clearly delineated group. The choruses of the *Iliad* suggest that choral groups are a unique opportunity for female expression and offer a unique insight into community relationships and the way that these are conveyed in literature. By examining these groups closely throughout other poems and other categories of poetry, I hope to expand the current understanding of how this system of meaning developed and operated throughout the archaic period and leading into the classical period.

III. Chorality in the *Odyssey*

Let us turn to the *Odyssey* for a different example of how hexameter epic conveys and interacts with the notion of chorality. While the performances described by the *Iliad* are almost entirely choral, the *Odyssey* goes much further than the *Iliad* in developing the literary concept of the solo performer through the characters of Phemius, Demodocus, and Odysseus himself; Demodocus in particular is allotted three separate songs and has a considerable emotional effect on the listening Odysseus.²⁸ As a result, one might imagine that solo performance is held as the ideal in the world view of the *Odyssey*, but it becomes clear through examination that the chorus

²⁸ Scholars have seen Demodocus in particular as a sort of stand-in for Homer himself. Nagy (1979) argues that the first song of Demodocus allows the poem to comment on the unity of the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* as well as provide evidence of another Homeric tradition in which the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon forms the basis for heroic evaluation. See also Scodel (1998) on distinctions between bardic and other narrative performance, De Jong (2006), and Ford (1992).

is just as central to the poem's expression of community happiness. Several scholars have also shown how the poem relies on various groups (the companions, the suitors) to provide structure to the overall plot (Bakker 2013, Louden 1999), and it is reasonable to observe that the choral groups in the poem balance the heavy emphasis on the individual visible in the *Odyssey's* performances. Adding to this sense of balance between the collective and the individual, the image of the chorus appears throughout the poem to create a fuller picture of the social makeup and, in particular, the dynamic between men and women. Within the poem, the term *χορός* appears eight times: by Nausicaa, about her unmarried brothers (6.65); by Odysseus, about Nausicaa and her companions (6.157); by Alcinous, about the Phaeacians (8.248); twice by the narrator, describing the literal dancing-floor that is set up at the festivities for Odysseus (8.260, 264); twice by Odysseus (as narrator), describing the home of Dawn (12.4) and the home of the nymphs on Thrinakia, the island of Helios (12.318); and once by the narrator in describing Penelope, just prior to her appearance before the suitors (18.194). In a departure from the *Iliad*, which features real time descriptions of the choruses on the Shield and the funerary choruses, none of these occasions describes an actual choral performance taking place within the poem. However, they all use the chorus as a point of reference for either the internal audience or the external one, demonstrating that the concept of *χορός* can convey a particular meaning for both those who use it and those who hear it. As in the *Iliad*, not all of these occurrences carry meaning in the same way, but together they build a portrait of the concept of the chorus within the poetic framework of the *Odyssey* and, more broadly, within the framework of archaic hexameter poetry.

Before considering each example in more detail, I will make a few observations about these occurrences as a whole. There are far more actual choruses mentioned or described in the *Odyssey* than in the *Iliad*, and while both poems utilize the idea of the chorus to comment on the

makeup of society, the *Odyssey* is better equipped to do so. Whereas the *Iliad* takes place at a considerable remove from “normal,” everyday society, and features a relative lack of free women (at least among the Achaians), the *Odyssey* focuses heavily on the composition of a community and an *oikos*. It features a number of successfully functioning communities, especially Pylos, Sparta, and Scheria, as foils for the situation on Ithaca, as well as a slightly more developed cast of aristocratic female characters. Although the poem suggests that the return and presence of the husband and head of the family is the most critical component of a successful *oikos*, it also indicates that a successful home depends almost equally on the faithful and honorable wife. Concentrated in the story of Odysseus and Penelope, this pattern is replicated clearly a number of times throughout the poem, most extensively on Scheria, where Alcinous and Arete provide a model of what such a marriage might look like. This positive community offers rich opportunities for choral activity, as the chorus provides an important setting for male and female interaction as a stepping-stone for marriage. Because of the *Odyssey*'s emphasis on community organization and replication, the chorus is a reasonably frequent image, suggesting its centrality not only to the characters in the poem but also to the audience of the performance.

Most of the references to the chorus are made during the time when Odysseus is on Scheria (seven out of eight), and the majority of these (five out of eight) actually refer to the choruses or dancing-floor of the Phaeacians.²⁹ Based on the available evidence, it is possible to observe a clear relationship between the performance of choruses and Scheria itself, giving the overall impression that the Phaeacians are a people actively involved in the celebration of

²⁹ This count only includes the examples where the word *χορός* is used; thus, it does not include Nausicaa's dancing, although that scene also takes place in the same location and contributes to the Phaeacians' overall chorality.

choruses. As I move through the χορός examples, it will be important to consider what the role of Scheria is in the larger narrative, with attention to how its choruses factor into its identity. Vidal-Naquet (1996) argues that Phaeacia is representative of the Golden Age, providing a much-needed transition for Odysseus between the non-human world of myth and that of reality; however, it is at the same time an impossible utopia that Odysseus will never be able to recreate.³⁰ Much like the city at peace on the Shield of Achilles, the Phaeacians are consistently depicted as acutely familiar with and skilled in choral activity, which is not only repeatedly remarked upon by the characters in the poem but also enacted for Odysseus' observation. In looking at the chorus in the *Odyssey*, it will additionally become clear that on Scheria, the choruses play a prominent role in reproducing the community and preparing its young members for their future roles as married adults, much like the choruses on the Shield in the *Iliad*. Particularly through its celebration of positive courtship and marriage preparations, Scheria provides a powerful counterpoint to Odysseus' own homeland, and much of this celebration coincides with a reference to choral activity. Combined with Vidal-Naquet's reading of Phaeacia as a Golden Age utopia, the heightened presence of choruses suggests that the chorus is an important component of positive society, intimately involved in the continuation of the community and offering an opportunity for society to model itself and reproduce itself at the same time.

The remaining three occurrences of χορός—those that do not refer to the Phaeacians themselves—specifically refer to either the homes or appearances of goddesses: Dawn, the nymphs on the island of Helios, and Aphrodite on her way to the choruses of the Graces. These examples all associate the chorus with the gods as well as with female participation. Taken

³⁰ Regarding the exceptional nature of Scheria as a quasi-fantastic sort of midpoint for Odysseus, see also Purves (2010), Segal (1962), and Dougherty (2001), esp. ch. 5–7.

together, these examples suggest that choral activity can be something primarily practiced by women, while also indicating that there is something about the chorus that makes it a worthy and regular pursuit not only for mortals but even for immortals. The first two of these three examples do move away from the chorus as an activity related to marriage, reminding us that the chorus is not a simple concept or one that carries a single, universal meaning. More likely, in the case of the choruses of Dawn and the nymphs, the presence of a chorus helps indicate Odysseus' gradual return to normal human society. Interestingly, several of the choruses mentioned in regard to Scheria emphasize male participation, in contrast to the three examples that describe the choruses of the goddesses. Within the *Odyssey's* more general framework of the chorus, therefore, it is possible to identify instances of male choruses, female choruses, and mixed choruses, supporting the notion that the chorus is a democratic body and suggesting that the chorus takes different forms according to its different functions.

Finally, the *Odyssey* does not dwell as explicitly on the contrast between war and peace as the *Iliad* does, and in line with this reading I suggest that choruses do not articulate this opposition in the same way. Instead, the *Odyssey* is much more interested in what a positive, functioning community looks like, especially as it is reflected in the microcosm of the husband-wife relationship. As we shall see, the two main conceptions of the chorus—the type that involves mortals and seems to focus on community integration and reproduction, and the type that involves goddesses at a remove from any kind of mortal society—interact with one another to characterize various characters' marital and social potential and to offer a commentary on the importance of social integration.

The *Odyssey's* first mention of the *χορός* occurs when Nausicaa, having been inspired by Athena to go wash her clothing, asks for her parents' permission to go to the river. As a proper

young woman, Nausicaa is too embarrassed to name her hope for marriage as the reason and instead points to her brothers' clothing as the basis for the trip:

πέντε δέ τοι φίλοι υἱεὺς ἐνὶ μεγάροις γεγάασιν,
οἱ δὺ' ὀπυῖοντες, τρεῖς δ' ἠίθεοι θαλέθοντες·
οἱ δ' αἰεὶ ἐθέλουσι νεόπλυτα εἴματ' ἔχοντες
ἐς χορὸν ἔρχεσθαι· τὰ δ' ἐμῆ φρενὶ πάντα μέμηλεν.

And there are five sons of yours living in these halls,
Two of whom are married, but three of whom are strong, unmarried men;
And they always want to have freshly-washed garments,
For when they go to the dance: all of these things have occurred to me. (6.62–65)

Nausicaa names the chorus (here clearly a formal social event, not a spontaneous gathering of age-mates or friends) as the primary reason that her brothers need clean clothing. Just as on the Shield of Achilles, here it is clear that special clothing is part of the formalized chorus and acts as a marker of those participating. Nausicaa's words also suggest that this is a frequent or at least regular occurrence, since the word αἰεὶ implies that her brothers are constantly running out of clean clothes to wear. Paired with the present-tense ἐθέλουσι, the sense that this action is ongoing and takes place often becomes even clearer. Finally, and most importantly, Nausicaa's words make it clear that the formal chorus is primarily an activity for unmarried individuals in the community, especially young men. Although it is likely that young women are in attendance as well, at least in the role of an audience, Nausicaa does not mention her own participation, perhaps suggesting that male participation is the most important component of these choruses for the community. Based on Nausicaa's statements, the formal chorus on Scheria appears to be an opportunity for young people, especially men, to showcase their physical bodies as well as their social and performance skills.

Shortly after, the narrator describes the one group in the *Odyssey* that exhibits some degree of chorality without being explicitly labeled as a chorus:

αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ σίτου τάρφθεν δμοφαί τε καὶ αὐτή,
 σφαίρη ται δ' ἄρ' ἔπαιζον, ἀπὸ κρήδεμνα βαλοῦσαι:
 τῆσι δὲ Ναυσικάα λευκώλενος ἤρχετο μολπῆς.
 οἴη δ' Ἄρτεμις εἴσι κατ' οὔρεα ἰοχέαιρα,
 ἢ κατὰ Τηϋγέτον περιμήκετον ἢ Ἐρύμανθον,
 τερπομένη κάπροισι καὶ ὠκείης ἐλάφοισι·
 τῇ δέ θ' ἅμα νύμφαι, κοῦραι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο,
 ἀγρονόμοι παίζουσι, γέγηθε δέ τε φρένα Λητώ:
 πασάων δ' ὑπὲρ ἢ γε κάρη ἔχει ἠδὲ μέτωπα,
 ρεῖά τ' ἀριγνώτη πέλεται, καλαὶ δέ τε πᾶσαι·
 ὧς ἢ γ' ἀμφιπόλοισι μετέπρεπε παρθένος ἀδμῆς.

But when she and the slave girls had enjoyed their food,
 They began to play with a ball, throwing off their veils;
 And white-armed Nausicaa was the leader of the dance.
 Just as Artemis, arrow-shooter, goes throughout the mountains,
 Along either tall Taygetus or Erymanthus,
 Delighting in boars and swift deer;
 And the nymphs that haunt the countryside, daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus,
 They play with her, and Leto is happy in her heart:
 For Artemis holds her head and brow above them all,
 And she is easily known, but they are all lovely;
 Just so the unwedded girl shines among her handmaids. (6.99–109)

In this scene, Nausicaa and her handmaidens clearly dance together (probably singing as well in order to provide the music), and they are a group of young, unmarried women with a very obvious leader that stands out from the group. The poet even utilizes a formula (ἤρχετο μολπῆς, 6.101) that is similar to the *Iliad*'s ἤρχε γόοιο as they begin their activity, adding to the overall chorality of the scene. This passage accomplishes two important steps. First, this description explicitly sets Nausicaa up as a bridal figure, more specifically as the bride in a marriage chorus. Second, it provides the first example of a description of a chorus that follows the pattern of Artemis and her companions, a pattern that will form the basis of Chapter Three's discussion. Nausicaa and her handmaidens indicate the way Artemis' role can be emulated by a mortal girl that takes on her guise even as she begins to transition to adulthood in a way that Artemis herself never does; while Artemis' virginity is unimpeachable, Nausicaa's is only temporary, as the

presentation of her as a desirable chorus leader helps indicate. In addition to what is a clear choral status, Nausicaa and her companions are the only example of a chorus in the *Odyssey* that is actually described in the moment of performance.³¹

The extended comparison to Artemis helps solidify the choral nature of this group, both by inviting the audience to identify their similarity to a group often associated with choral activity as well as by organizing the individual members into a collective group. In addition, this comparison provides an important characterization of the chorus and its most important figure. Artemis is almost always imagined in the company of her nymphs and often specifically in a choral context, as for example at the opening of her own brief *Homeric Hymn* (ἐξάρχουσα χορούς, *HhAr* 18).³² While also providing companionship, the nymphs at least nominally help preserve her virgin status in much the same way that Nausicaa's handmaidens look out for her virginity; for Nausicaa, however, the permanence of this status is in question, as the chorus helps communicate. Although Nausicaa follows the pattern of Artemis to a point, there is a strong emphasis placed on her future marriage by Athena, Nausicaa herself, and even her knowing parents, and the chorality of the group also foreshadows the choral elements of the marriage ceremony itself. This comparison is only strengthened by Odysseus' later statement that Nausicaa is, if a goddess, most likely to be Artemis herself, which he follows by pointing out Nausicaa's own choral potential and how her participation must please her parents. Through the combination of these points of reference, the *Odyssey* strongly indicates Nausicaa's chorality (as

³¹ Murnaghan (2013, 157) calls this "a scenario that is not literally a chorus, but that is closely similar to, and explicitly modeled on, a choral performance." I see little reason to draw such a distinction, given that the scene is full of signals for the audience to interpret it as they might a chorus in a more formal performance setting.

³² Murnaghan notes this passage within an identification of Artemis as the "divine prototype of the outstanding dancer," noting that as the female divinity that presides over the female transition into marriage, Artemis is intimately connected with many of the choruses that accompany a young girl's transformation into a bride (2006, 103). Although her focus is dedications, especially textiles, Cole includes dancing as a key part of the "full complement of life cycle rituals for Artemis" (2004, 225).

well as Artemis'), and seems to do so in order to emphasize her high degree of marriageability as well as her current beauty and maiden status.

The choral elements of the scene with Nausicaa and her companions set up Nausicaa as a serious contender for Odysseus by placing the emphasis on marriage front and center in the audience's mind before they actually meet. Additionally, this group provides a contrast to the several male choruses mentioned within the narrative throughout the episode on Scheria. Although her own hopes for marriage are at the core of her trip to the river, Nausicaa's activity is at least partially connected to the masculine choral participation seen elsewhere in the poem: as discussed above, when asking permission to go, she specifically mentions her need to wash her unmarried brothers' clothes for when they go to the chorus (ἐς χορὸν ἔρχεσθαι, 6.65). Nausicaa is, at least in the *Odyssey*, uniquely eligible for this choral association because she is not only anticipating her impending marriage but also because she is special enough to merit a comparison with Artemis. More importantly, this scene occurs just before Odysseus' reintroduction to normal society; the choral setting serves as one means of reintegrating him as a man and potentially as a husband. In addition, these choruses probably provide an opportunity for the young members of both sexes to meet and interact, although the precise functions are not made explicit within the poem. The choral imagery relating to mortal characters in the poem, therefore, is heavily intertwined with the idea of marriage for both young men and women. These two nods to the chorus, although they take different forms, contribute to a strong association between Nausicaa and the chorus.

Rounding out this tight cluster of choral moments (three within a hundred lines), Odysseus himself makes a reference to the chorus when he meets Nausicaa:

εἰ μὲν τις θεός ἐσσι, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν,
Ἀρτέμιδι σε ἐγὼ γε, Διὸς κούρη μέγαλοιο,

εἶδός τε μέγεθός τε φύην τ' ἄγχιστα εἴσκω:
 εἰ δέ τις ἐσσι βροτῶν, τοὶ ἐπὶ χθονὶ ναιετάουσιν,
 τρὶς μάκαρες μὲν σοὶ γε πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ,
 τρὶς μάκαρες δὲ κασίγνητοι· μάλα πού σφισι θυμὸς
 αἰὲν εὐφροσύνησιν ἰαίνεται εἵνεκα σεῖο,
 λευσσόντων τοιόνδε θάλος χορὸν εἰσοιχνεῦσαν.

If you are a god, one of those who holds the broad heaven,
 I think you are most likely to be Artemis, the daughter of great Zeus,
 In both form and stature and nature:
 But if you are a mortal, one of those who dwells upon the earth,
 Thrice blessed are you father and your queenly mother,
 Thrice blessed are your brothers: I'm sure their hearts
 Are warmed with joy because of you,
 Whenever they watch their child entering the dance. (6.150–57)

Whether Odysseus' words are a carefully crafted aim to please or a genuine assessment of Nausicaa's appearance, his description of his first encounter with her by the river continues to develop Nausicaa's choral identity and her role in the story. It is especially significant that Odysseus, who has been absent from a normal social setting since the start of the Trojan War, chooses the chorus as a point of reference to communicate his impression of this young girl. Within his first moments of rejoining human society, Odysseus selects an institution that is both immediately recognizable and broadly familiar across communities, which supports our reading of the chorus as a universally discernible phenomenon. Although his remarks do not take the form of a direct comparison, Odysseus clearly sees Nausicaa, likens her to Artemis (a choral figure in her own right), and then imagines her participation in her community's choral dances. In recognizing the chorality of Nausicaa in this moment, Odysseus demonstrates the reach of the chorus and its complex meaning system even outside the context of a literal performance. His emphasis on the chorus also enhances the sexual dynamic between the two characters, since he suggests that the parents' pleasure in their daughter's choral activity likely stems not only from her good looks but also from their success in raising a daughter with a visibly high suitability for

marriage, which is itself demonstrated by her choral dancing. Nausicaa's chorality, as imagined by Odysseus, helps build the audience's picture of her as a beautiful young woman on the very cusp of marriage. At the same time, the fact that this identification comes from Odysseus increases his own status as a potential suitor.³³

While the first three points of contact with the chorus in the *Odyssey* develop Nausicaa's role as a choral figure and a potential bride for Odysseus, the three examples that follow help demonstrate the Phaeacians' relationship with chorality and by extension, their status as a well-functioning society. The poem's next mention of the χορός occurs two books later, when Odysseus is demonstrating his athletic prowess against the Phaeacian youths. After he has bested them in the discus and challenged them to a display of strength, Alcinous modestly admits that Odysseus probably rivals his own men in athletic ability but proudly lists pursuits in which his countrymen do excel:

οὐ γὰρ πυγμάχοι εἰμὲν ἀμύμονες οὐδὲ παλαισταί,
ἀλλὰ ποσὶ κραιπνῶς θέομεν καὶ νηυσὶν ἄριστοι,
αἰεὶ δ' ἡμῖν δαῖς τε φίλη κιθαρὶς τε χοροὶ τε
εἵματα τ' ἐξημοιβὰ λοετρά τε θερμὰ καὶ εὐναί.

For we are not blameless in fighting or wrestling,
But we run swiftly on our feet and we are the best with ships,
And always dear to us are the feast, the lyre, the choruses,
A variety of garments, and warm baths and beds. (8.246–49)

As part of the list, the χοροί are not given much detail, but Alcinous' inclusion of this social institution is telling. While Odysseus' athletic abilities align him more with a military context, many of the things Alcinous describes as characteristic of his society are those undertaken in leisure and peacetime. Most of all, his naming of the chorus as one activity in which his people excel indicates its importance to the Phaeacians and its central role in the community. Just as this

³³ As noted by Crane (1987, 16).

community excels with respect to kitharodic performance, as has just been demonstrated by Demodocus, their choruses are prominent and skillful enough to be mentioned as one of the hallmarks of their society. Although athletically capable, Phaeacia does not engage in warfare, instead devoting its attention to more artistic pursuits; in addition, the narrator presents it as heavily aristocratic. All of these considerations, and especially the high degree of chorality surrounding this society, suggest that there is a broader connection between the institution of the chorus, a concentration of wealth, and a lack of war in the Greek imagination.

This list as a whole also serves as another reminder of Odysseus' outsider status and a marker of his time away from a normal social setting. Although the hero does demonstrate his athletic abilities, he is politely reminded by Alcinous that within a peaceful community, athletics are only one component of society; even the Phaeacians' naval excellence is not simply for war or sport but plays a role in the economic livelihood of its people. Odysseus' focus on physical strength above all helps demonstrate just how long he has missed out on the experiences so beloved by the Phaeacians and help identify him as a non-member of their community. Although Odysseus can clearly remember these elements, they are the hallmarks of a peaceful, normal society, and Alcinous' remarks help the audience fully realize just how much social integration he still requires after his experiences of war and wandering.

Shortly after, the narrator uses the word χορός twice to describe an actual dancing area being set up as part of this feast and celebration:

αἰσυνῆται δὲ κριτοὶ ἐννέα πάντες ἀνέσταν
 δήμιοι, οἱ κατ' ἀγῶνας ἐὺ πρήσσεσκον ἕκαστα,
 λείψαν δὲ χορόν, καλὸν δ' εὐρυναν ἀγῶνα.
 κῆρυξ δ' ἐγγύθεν ἦλθε φέρων φόρμιγγα λίγειαν
 Δημοδόκῳ· ὁ δ' ἔπειτα κί' ἐς μέσον· ἀμφὶ δὲ κοῦροι
 πρωθῆβαι ἴσταντο, δαήμονες ὀρχηθμοῖο,
 πέπληγον δὲ χορὸν θεῖον ποσίν. αὐτὰρ Ὀδυσσεὺς
 μαρμαρυγὰς θηεῖτο ποδῶν, θαύμαζε δὲ θυμῷ.

Then all nine chosen judges stood up,
 Men of the community, who in the gatherings always arranged everything well,
 And they smoothed the floor for dancing, and they cleared a good area for the group.
 Then a herald brought the shrill lyre to Demodocus,
 Carrying it from nearby: and then that man came into the middle; but the young men,
 In the prime of youth, were standing around him, skilled in the dance,
 And they struck the sacred dancing-place with their feet. But Odysseus
 Watched the flashing of their feet and marveled in his heart. (8.258–65)

To confirm the point Alcinous has just made, the Phaeacians set about to demonstrate that their most successful pursuits are not necessarily athletic or competitive, but rather those activities that occur as part of a happy celebration or occasion. The word ἀγών can indicate a competitive event, and later it often specifically refers to choral competitions, but even so these dances do not seem to be a competitive undertaking; rather, the youths of the city dance together without rivalry. The frequentative πρήσσεσκον suggests a regularity to this undertaking, such that even the men who set up the dancing-floor have a set role in the event and are used to this responsibility (οἱ κατ' ἀγῶνας ἐδὲ πρήσσεσκον ἕκαστα, 259). It is obvious from the description that they have had practice, and they perform their task well. Paired with the appearance of Demodocus, the chorus is unmistakably performative; in addition to showcasing their own youth and skill, the young Phaeacian men emphasize the skill of their community as a whole and offer this activity as a particular aspect in which the people of Scheria shine. All of these elements, considered together, indicate the prominence of chorality in the public life of the Phaeacians and its role in the habitual festivity and feasting that takes place within this happy community. From the example of the Phaeacians, we can confirm the role of the chorus in creating and reflecting a positive community. Just like the happy city on the Shield, Scheria is depicted as a city participating in regular choral activity, and by doing so, it is able to demonstrate the excellence of its young members.

Odysseus, who is of course unused to this kind of festivity and peaceful communal activity, marvels at the performance (θαύμαζε δὲ θυμῷ, 265). His reaction indicates not only a disconnect between what he sees and his own experiences, but also a recognition of the Phaeacians' excellence in dancing. As Odysseus, the outsider and individual, looks on, he is clearly struck by this display of community engagement taking place, within the safety and limits of society. Unlike his earlier attempt to demonstrate his athletic ability against the Phaeacians, Odysseus makes no move to participate in the chorus or show his own skill in dancing, and there are a number of factors that help explain why. Most importantly, he is not a true member of the community, and this is clearly a community event. Although there is no indication that he is unwelcome, the participants are all men from within a specific social group, suggested by the word δῆμιοι; although it technically describes the judges, and not the dancers, it is reasonable to extend the term's community focus to apply to the performance itself. Odysseus' age and marital status are also worth considering with respect to his lack of choral participation. As the earlier uses of χορός suggest, choral performance in Homer is mostly undertaken by young, unmarried people, which Odysseus clearly is not. He can neither enjoy the interaction with his age-mates as the other dancers do, nor interact with members of the opposite sex with the goal of marriage in mind. Although the dancers on this occasion seem to be only men, there may be women in the audience, and this is clearly an occasion for self-display and the performance of excellence. Additionally, this dance is immediately followed by Demodocus' tale of Aphrodite and Ares, a story that clearly has much to do with the relationships between men and women and the general concept of marriage. The close proximity of that story and the chorus suggests that even during an all-male performance, the thought of marriage is never far off. Odysseus' abstention from this performance confirms his choice to remain an outsider from this social group and remain faithful

to his ultimate goals of *nostos* and a continued marriage with Penelope. As Murnaghan (1987) notes, marriage is the Phaeacians' primary means of incorporating outsiders into the community, and Odysseus' lack of participation in the chorus confirms his unwillingness to be fully incorporated through the institution of marriage.³⁴

These uses of the word *χορός*, clustered in the books of the *Odyssey* that relate Odysseus' interactions with the Phaeacians, provide a fairly cohesive portrait of the ways that choruses operate in positive communities within the mortal world. It is clear that the chorus plays a role in the reproduction of society through the institution of marriage, in that the formal, public choruses are largely comprised of young, unmarried men and women, for whom this is a special opportunity to interact. The choruses are performative, both in that they allow the young members of society to display their bodies and in that they allow the dancers to show off their parents' success in raising them. With an outsider present, the chorus becomes a special opportunity to showcase the talents and abilities of the Phaeacian society as a whole—skills that Odysseus confirms through his marveling. As a literary concept, the chorus operates as a symbol of a happy community that, like the happy city on the *Shield*, treasures its young members and looks to their future as its leaders, allowing them to model the institution of marriage and take steps towards it through the performance itself.

The next two allusions to the *χορός*, however, provide a somewhat different picture of this event than what the poet has thus far suggested. Unlike the other examples, these choruses are located, according to the narrative voice of Odysseus, away from the mortal world and away from the kind of community that is modeled by Scheria. In presenting his travels to the

³⁴ Cf. Foley (1987), who maintains that Phaeacia is a categorically endogamous society. This too, however, fits well with the seemingly perpetual choruses of Phaeacian men: if the young people of Phaeacia are to marry members of their own society, the opportunity to view and interact with one another through the chorus is vital.

Phaeacians, Odysseus twice describes a place as the kind of place where choruses occur. The first is the home of Dawn, which Odysseus mentions as he concludes his description of the Underworld:

αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ ποταμοῖο λίπεν ῥόον Ὠκεανοῖο
 νηῦς, ἀπὸ δ' ἴκετο κῦμα θαλάσσης εὐρυπόροιο
 νῆσόν τ' Αἰαίην, ὅθι τ' Ἡοῦς ἠριγενείης
 οἰκία καὶ χοροὶ εἰσι καὶ ἀντολαὶ Ἥελίοιο,
 νῆα μὲν ἔνθ' ἐλθόντες ἐκέλσαμεν ἐν ψαμάθοισιν,
 ἐκ δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ βῆμεν ἐπὶ ῥηγμῖνι θαλάσσης·
 ἔνθα δ' ἀποβρίζαντες ἐμείναμεν Ἡῶ δῖαν.

But when the ship had left the stream of the river Ocean
 And had come back to the wave of the sea with its broad paths,
 Back to the island of Aiaia, where the home of early-born Dawn is,
 And the choruses, and the risings of Helios,
 Having come there we drove the ship onto the sands,
 And we ourselves went out onto the shore of the sea:
 There, having fallen asleep, we awaited heavenly Dawn. (12.1–7)

Odysseus presents Circe's land as the home of Dawn, a new association that does not arise during his first description of her home (10.133–39). Although the rising of Dawn is a frequent occurrence throughout the *Odyssey* and helps break the segments of Odysseus' journey into regular and sensible narrative intervals, Dawn herself receives little attention within the narrative. Here, however, Odysseus makes special mention of specific elements of her home, noting her choruses and suggesting that this is the place where Helios begins his daily journey across the sky. As Circe is the child of Helios (10.138), this connection makes sense, but the added detail of Dawn making her home in the same location is unique, as is the mention of her χοροί.

Shortly after, Odysseus includes a similar description of a particular group of nymphs that frequent Thrinakia:

ἦμος δ' ἠριγένεια φάνη ῥοδοδάκτυλος Ἡώς,
 νῆα μὲν ὠρμίσαμεν κοῖλον σπέος εἰσερύσαντες.

ἔνθα δ' ἔσαν νυμφέων καλοὶ χοροὶ ἠδὲ θόωκοι·

But when early-born rosy-fingered Dawn appeared,
We anchored our hollow ship, drawing it into a cave.
There are the lovely dancing-floors and seats of the nymphs. (12.316–18)

Like the island of Aiaia, this location provides Odysseus and his crew with a safe spot to rest and recuperate before their journey continues. As in the previous example, the cave on Thrinakia is specifically associated with non-mortal figures, and Odysseus' observation that choruses take place here is essentially the only descriptive detail included. There is no indication that Odysseus and his crew even see any of these nymphs, and thus the description is a fairly abstract one, but nevertheless the assumed chorality of the nymphs is unsurprising; we can easily envision these goddess-figures taking part in the dance, perhaps even as their primary pastime, especially as nymphs are typical companions of Artemis in her chorus. The connection between Dawn and chorality is much more obscure, and neither Dawn herself nor Circe (the island's other primary inhabitant) seems to have much of a link to choral activity.³⁵ Although Circe is not completely alone, since she has slaves to assist her (e.g., 12.18), there is no indication that they dance together, and it is hard to imagine a figure like Circe taking part in such an activity. Just as in the case of the nymphs, there is no evidence that Odysseus observes any choruses during his time on Aiaia, or that his mention of the χοροί in either setting is based on firsthand experience.

There is no obvious reason, then, why Odysseus, the narrator of this passage, includes or perhaps even invents this detail in each description. Leaving aside the formulaic phrase (which is not the same in both examples, and χοροί does not occupy the same position in each), it is

³⁵ The Dawn-goddess figure comes to play a role in later choral performances like Alcman's *Louvre Partheneion* (=PMG 1), when she is beseeched by the dancers to appear, but she herself does not seem to be a particularly choral figure in the *Odyssey*. However, Sappho 58b tells the story of Tithonus and Eos (see Chapter Four). The possible connections between this poem and the chorus, taken together with her presence in Alcman 1, may indicate that Dawn has more to do with the chorus than previously thought.

possible to suggest that the idea of choruses is somehow relevant to whatever Odysseus hopes to convey in describing each place. The description of Aiaia takes place after Odysseus' trip to the Underworld, and this is his first destination after returning to the world inhabited by the living. I read this description, therefore, as a means of symbolizing the living world, rather than the world of the dead. Like Dawn and the rising sun, choruses have the ability to stand for new beginnings, in that they can accompany events like marriage that lead to new life for the community and the couple. In this case, these elements seem to come together in indication of a new chapter of Odysseus' wanderings and journey home. Within this second half of his journey, Odysseus will encounter the Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis, and the cattle of Helios, eventually washing up on Calypso's island before making his way to Scheria and finally towards home. During this period, Odysseus will lose all of his men and possessions, barely escaping with his life. When he arrives on Ithaca (as on Ogygia and Scheria), he will be wholly alone and without resource.

One explanation for Odysseus' mention of choruses at this stage in the narrative is that it indicates Odysseus' gradual reentry into normal, human society, the kind of place where choruses typically occur. At this point, Odysseus has successfully experienced his *Nekuia* and reemerged into the world of the living. As he comes back into this realm, the home of Dawn and its choruses or inherent chorality help signal to Odysseus that he is back among the living and ready to continue making strides toward home. As exemplified by the heavy cluster of choral mentions at Phaeacia and picking up on the imagery from the Shield of Achilles, the *χορός* is an activity that is symbolic of a well-functioning society and the ideal community, and the mentions of the chorus during Odysseus' gradual return to humanity reminds the audience that he has at last rounded the turning point and begun his journey back to a community and, more specifically, to Ithaca. This chorus does not have any nuptial associations, but it nevertheless serves as a

marker of Odysseus' return to some kind of communal experience. By invoking the chorus, with its heavy connections to rituals of initiation and community (re)integration, the poet indicates that Odysseus has successfully completed the trials that have constituted his absence from society and is now ready to reenter and once again participate in all aspects of society as a full member.

This reading can also account for the choral detail during Odysseus' description of the Nymph cave on the island of Helios. Just as Circe's island is the last stop before embarking on the most difficult part of his journey, this cave seems to be the final place of safety and respite before the final destruction of Odysseus' crew and ship; although that event is overwhelmingly negative, it remains possible to see the chorus as a place that is inherently transitional. As in the other example, the chorality of the place is described with no reference to a choral event actually taken place. Instead, the place is generally distinguished in Odysseus' memory for its own choral potential. It is only after leaving this choral place, which has the power to bring together community members for a ritual, integrative purpose, that Odysseus can leave behind his crew, the community representative of his experience in war, and reenter the normal realm of human society. Both of these mentions of the chorus suggest that there are specific places that choruses can take place and that these places are a part of the positive society that Odysseus longs to rejoin. By definition, a choral place invites community, since more than one person will inhabit the space for the choral performance. Notably, both of these examples describe locations away from human society and are clearly associated with divine female figures (Dawn and the nymphs). Even as his community grows smaller and smaller, they provide a significant contrast from the Underworld, the ultimate locus of separation and removal from one's community, by reminding Odysseus as he sails along that he is headed in the right direction.

The final mention of the chorus in the poem ties together several of the choral threads in a way that confirms and complicates the theme of marriage in the poem. Like the two occurrences of χορός that take place at the margins of society, the final example refers to the chorus of the gods, which in all three examples seems likely to have been a female performance. Here, the poet likens Penelope preparing to appear before the suitors to Aphrodite readying herself for the chorus of the Graces:

τέως δ' ἄρα δῖα θεάων
 ἄμβροτα δῶρα δίδου, ἵνα μιν θησαΐατ' Ἀχαιοί.
 κάλλει μὲν οἱ πρῶτα προσώπατα καλὰ κάθηρεν
 ἄμβροσίῳ, οἷω περ εὐστέφανος Κυθήρεια
 χρίεται, εὖτ' ἂν ἦ Χαρίτων χορὸν ἱμερόεντα·
 καὶ μιν μακροτέρην καὶ πάσσονα θῆκεν ιδέσθαι,
 λευκοτέρην δ' ἄρα μιν θῆκε πριστοῦ ἐλέφαντος.

Meanwhile, glorious among goddesses,
 Athena was giving [Penelope] divine gifts, so that the Achaians might wonder at her.
 First she made her lovely face beautiful with oil,
 In just the same way that well-crowned Cytherea
 Anoints herself, whenever she goes to the lovely dance of the Graces:
 And she made her look taller and stronger,
 And she made her whiter than hewn ivory. (18.190–96)

The specific detail of the choral occasion helps draw attention to the specialness of Penelope's enhanced appearance by suggesting the care and attention with which attendees might prepare for the chorus. In addition, this example provides further evidence of the choruses of the goddesses, at which it seems likely that only female divinities are included. At first it seems unlikely that this chorus is related to marriage; after all, these goddesses are not dancing with the express purpose of interacting with the opposite sex before their future marriages. Aphrodite, at least in the *Odyssey*, is already married, and Dawn is a faithful partner to Tithonus (e.g., 5.1). As discussed in the previous examples, the choruses of the gods seem like bookends on the most fantastic of Odysseus' adventures, signaling his proximity to the human realm and guiding his

journey back to society. The choruses of various goddesses, referred to by both the frame narrative and that of Odysseus himself, therefore seem to have an entirely different role in the meaning system of *χορός*, even within the same poem.

On this occasion, however, Penelope is specifically going to appear before a group of men, all of whom have the desire to marry her. Penelope's appearance is enhanced by Athena for the exact purpose of entrancing and attracting the suitors, and the detail that she appears as though ready for a chorus suggests that this is indeed one occasion on which that type of social union could be encouraged. Although Athena knows perfectly well that none of these men will in fact marry Penelope, she encourages the drama of the situation by increasing her beauty, and the choral comparison allows the poem's audience to envision the scene even more clearly. Penelope herself is not in on the game; she does not seem to know what Athena has done to her while she slept, and the idea that she purposefully encourages the suitors is tenuous and difficult to sustain throughout the entirety of the poem.³⁶ Prior to Athena's enchantment, Penelope insists that she is no longer beautiful and expresses no desire to beautify herself before appearing (18.178–81). When she wakes up, she in fact prays to Artemis to kill her (18.202–5).³⁷ Although later on in book 18 Penelope does compel the suitors to give her gifts, she seems to do so for the purpose of building the wealth of the house back up after the suitors' consumption of its resources (18.272–80), rather than because she truly intends to marry any of them—at least, this is how Odysseus interprets her request. Nevertheless, even without Penelope's express cooperation, her appearance among the suitors, coupled with the description linking her to a choral Aphrodite (18.182–84), does lend the scene an air of a young would-be bride attending a social chorus with

³⁶ Penelope's knowledge and intentions are the subject of much scholarly debate, including Murnaghan (1987), Katz (1991), Felson-Rubin (1994), and Levaniouk (2011), among others.

³⁷ This prayer to Artemis may suggest that Penelope views herself as having transitioned back into that goddess' domain.

the goal of marriage in mind.³⁸

In this description of Penelope, therefore, it is possible to see a blending of the two types of choruses imagined in the *Odyssey*: the socially driven, marriage- and community-oriented chorus and the choruses of the goddesses that seem to indicate proximity to normal society, even though Ithaca is still in clear social disarray. Although Penelope herself is actually participating in neither type of event, the connection to Aphrodite, paired with the actual circumstances of her social position, unites the poem's choral images in a unique way. Even unwittingly, Penelope's entrance into a situation made choral by the narrator's description places her in the position of an unmarried woman participating in the type of choral event that brings men and women together for the purpose of marriage. The presence of Odysseus, although unknown to Penelope, adds to the significance of the choral imagery by suggesting that by participating in this choral scene, Penelope will indeed find herself a husband, though perhaps not the one she (or the suitors) expected. I suggest that, although the simile initially helps the audience understand Penelope's enhanced appearance, it more importantly introduces a key distinction by embracing the broader system of meaning surrounding the chorus. Without Odysseus' presence, Penelope could indeed embrace an identity like that of a goddess attending a divine chorus, with no possibility of encountering a potential husband at that event. Instead, however, she is presented as though headed to the kind of chorus that takes place among the Phaeacians—the kind of chorus that allows young men and women to interact in preparation for marriage. Through this description, which taps into the larger conception of the χορός in the *Odyssey*, the narrator presents the two alternatives open to Penelope. It is only because a suitable husband figure is present that

³⁸ The role of marriageable virgin in a chorus is precisely how Aphrodite characterizes herself in her *Homeric Hymn* when she attempts to seduce Anchises, suggesting that the part of chorus member is a specific trope familiar to audience members. See discussion in Chapter Three on *HhAph* 117–21.

Penelope can leave the choruses of the divine and reintegrate into the community on Ithaca by once more participating in the institution of marriage.

It is especially intriguing that the poet describes Penelope as Aphrodite as she prepares for the chorus, while Nausicaa is likened to Artemis in her choral dance. These two characters are therefore connected not only by their role as potential partner for Odysseus but also by their interaction with chorality. Although neither participates in a formal chorus within the scope of the poem, the poet describes each woman according to the framework of choral activity, providing yet another opportunity to renew this poem's intense focus on marriage and its social importance. While both comparisons are favorable, they are also indicative of each woman's sexual status and suggest that Nausicaa is, for the time being, still located firmly within the sphere of adolescence and innocence. Unlike Penelope, however, whose choral connection actually helps indicate her marital availability (prompted by Odysseus' presence), Nausicaa's comparison to Artemis indicates that her search for a husband will, at least in this case, be unsuccessful. Odysseus cannot be a marriage partner for Nausicaa, and thus her choral participation does not result in a social union.

While the *Iliad* seems to utilize the chorus as a more inclusive social activity with respect to age and status, particularly in its capacity for lament, the *Odyssey* seems to primarily envision the chorus as a place for either unmarried people or goddesses in various roles, likely stemming from the significant difference in social organization between the two poems. This distinction, though unlikely to reflect any social realities of the audience, invites further reflection on the relationships and characterizations to be found within the poem. Within this complex association of social reproduction, marriage, and the chorus, it is perhaps surprising that Odysseus himself is nowhere associated with choral activity. Although the choruses of the young men on Scheria are

convened for his entertainment in book 8, there is no indication that he takes part. Indeed, it would be inappropriate if he were to participate, as the overarching purpose of these Phaeacian choruses seems to be promoting the marriage of the young community members. Odysseus' abstinence furthers this conclusion; he must, of course, return to Penelope, but at the same time he has passed the age for this sort of social interaction and, instead of integrating himself into the community by joining in, he observes from the sidelines.

The institution of the chorus creates a complicated system of meaning throughout the *Odyssey*, frequently offering a method for positive courtship and social interaction between men and women as a precursor to the institution of marriage, while other times functioning as more of a literary construct to indicate character or motivation for the figures in the poem. When enacted by mortals and participated in by both men and women, the chorus displays to the community what the future will look like as their young members come together and show off their bodies and social skills. The choruses of the divine, at the edges of the map, offer an alternative picture of choral performance without the governing paradigm of marriage. Rather than providing a specific example of what marriage or male-female interaction can look like, these more loosely defined choruses indicate Odysseus' gradual return to an experience of community, symbolized by the social model of the chorus. Through the interaction of these two brands of choral imagery, the *Odyssey* contributes in a considerable way to the larger meaning system of the chorus within archaic literature. Like the choruses on the Shield of Achilles in the *Iliad*, the choruses in the *Odyssey* are able to model and recreate the community. In addition, the choruses of the *Odyssey* fall into distinct types, like those of the *Iliad*, and in both cases, the distinction draws attention to what can happen without full participation in the happy, community-oriented chorus. Although the imagined scenes are vastly different, the choruses in the *Odyssey* offer a clearer model of the

city at peace, which is able to bring its young people together through the institution of the chorus in order to maintain the future success of the society at hand.

Chapter Two: The Chorus and the Bard

I. Introduction

The first chapter examined the role of the chorus in Homeric epic, focusing on the tension between war and the community in the *Iliad* and the relationship of the chorus to marriage and social generation in the *Odyssey*. This chapter will consider how the *Theogony* and the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* depict choral and solo performers and how they characterize the relationship between them. While I will discuss how the chorus serves a thematic function in the *Hymn to Apollo*, this chapter's major emphasis will be on the development of the chorus leader. The funerary choruses of the *Iliad* and Nausicaa's chorus in the *Odyssey* offer examples of choruses in which the leader and the chorus are united by gender and, for the most part, age. These choruses are largely homogeneous with respect to life stage, and the chorus and chorus leaders primarily differ based on their roles within the chorus, rather than their social roles outside of the performance. In both the *Theogony* and the *Hymn to Apollo*, we find choruses that have a chorus leader with a different gender and different social characteristics, and these examples provide models of the construction I will refer to as the "external *choregos*-figure."³⁹ I largely agree with Calame's reading of the functions of the *choregos* ("to organize,' 'to begin,' and 'to conduct,'" (1997, 51)), but I here wish to emphasize that the relationship with the group is one of the most important aspects of the choral event: it helps define the nature of the chorus, which in turn reflects the nature of the event. As a result, I have added the terms "external" and "internal" in order to emphasize the features (especially gender) that the leader either shares or does not share with the other chorus members, which defines his/her membership in the group.⁴⁰ This chapter

³⁹ I have followed Calame in using the term *choregos*, since, as he notes, "Of the rich terminology used to designate the leader of the chorus, the word χορηγός seems the most ancient" (1997, 44; see discussion on terms from 44–48).

⁴⁰ The use of the binary his/her is intentional. Although I do not mean to be exclusive with this term,

will focus on the chorus leaders that do not share socially defining features with their choruses, especially Hesiod and Apollo. As their songs overlap, Hesiod becomes a separate but still linked extension of the Muses, while the *Hymn to Apollo*'s bard seems to perform in sequence with the Deliades. The role of the *choregos* as an accompanying musician is, in addition, further developed in the chorus of the gods later on in the *Hymn to Apollo*, and the parallels between the *Hymn*'s two choruses support reading the bard as having this relationship with the chorus of Deliades. Especially because the soloist/external *choregos* is nearly always male, consideration of this role will be particularly relevant in the context of the other ways in which the two poems make distinctions based on gender.

I begin with Hesiod's *Theogony*, noting that there is, with one major exception, a lack of actual choral performances in the poem, which instead expresses most of its choruses as groups that have some chorality even outside of performance. Unlike the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*, the *Theogony* does not promote a unified theme within its choral descriptions, and the chorus in the *Theogony* does not appear to be attached to a specific social occasion or community function. Instead, Hesiod largely uses the chorus as a way of commenting on performance more generally, and it provides a point of contrast for his autobiographical narrator. The primary difference between choral and solo performance for Hesiod is not one of content, based on the shared characteristics of the Muses' theogony and Hesiod's own *Theogony*. Instead, the most significant difference between performance types seems to be the manner in which they communicate with the audience: through a visually-oriented performance, or exclusively through oral poetics.

While many of the choruses seen in Homeric poetry are female, their femininity is typically not a

particularly to my readers but even with respect to those that took up the role of *choregos*, the very limited source material suggests that the chorus depended on "masculine" and "feminine" as guidelines that determined the nature of the chorus, its relationship to its occasion, and its membership.

major aspect of their characterization. Hesiod, however, presents the Muses with an equal emphasis on the content and power of their song and the visual quality of their performance, drawing the audience's attention to their physical bodies and playing up the choral feature of dance. In doing so, he connects the act of dance with the process of being looked at, and by focusing on the Muses in doing so he associates these activities with the feminine. The opening of the poem casts the Muses as a potential and powerful threat to Hesiod's own poetic authority, but through his focus on their dancing and not on their song, Hesiod ultimately presents himself as the singular authorial voice in the poem.

Next, I discuss the *Hymn to Apollo*, which does use the chorus in the expression of a particular theme, namely the tension between the individual and the community (not unlike Homeric epic). This poem, which features both explicitly choral and semi-choral groups that all contribute to the same thematic idea, proposes that extreme individuality and a refusal to distinguish oneself are equally damaging. In response, using the mechanism of the chorus, the poet indicates a balanced path that ultimately advantages both the individual and the community. At the end of the chapter, I briefly consider the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, which echoes the *Hymn to Apollo* in its expression of community achievement through the combination of individual excellence and group participation. I also consider the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes'* representation of Apollo as *choregos*-figure, which echoes and amplifies aspects of the "external" *choregos* visible in Hesiod and Apollo.

Before turning to new poetic contexts, however, I wish to remain with the Homeric material a little longer in order to show that the external *choregos* is a notion already present in hexameter poetry. Most of the choruses in Homeric epic have little interaction with the production of poetry or its performance, and they do not pose a significant challenge to any other

performers, like Demodocus or Phemius. In general, the Homeric epics promote the idea that the most ideal poetic form is that created by a soloist—that is, precisely the kind of performance that generates the poems themselves. Nevertheless, there is one poetic voice that competes with the poet’s own performance: that of the Muse, which governs the performance and inspires the poet. The Muses of Homeric epic are granted their own special tribute in both poems, but it is not presented in a consistently choral manner. The opening address of the *Iliad* to the (singular) Muse of the *Iliad* simply refers to her as “goddess” (θεά, *Il.* 1.1). The opening of the *Odyssey* is more specific, calling its (singular) addressee “Muse” (μοῦσα, *Od.* 1.1) and “daughter of Zeus” (θύγατερ Διός, *Od.* 1.10). More interesting for our purposes is the *Iliad*’s second address to the Muses, in which they do appear as a group and begin to display a more significant personality:

ἔσπετε νῦν μοι Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δώματ’ ἔχουσαι·
 ὑμεῖς γὰρ θεαί ἐστε πάρεστε τε ἴστε τε πάντα,
 ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέος οἶον ἀκούομεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν·
 οἳ τινες ἡγεμόνες Δαναῶν καὶ κοίρανοι ἦσαν·
 πληθὺν δ’ οὐκ ἂν ἐγὼ μυθήσομαι οὐδ’ ὀνομήνω,
 οὐδ’ εἴ μοι δέκα μὲν γλῶσσαι, δέκα δὲ στόματ’ εἶεν,
 φωνὴ δ’ ἄρρηκτος, χάλκεον δέ μοι ἦτορ ἐνείη,
 εἰ μὴ Ὀλυμπιάδες Μοῦσαι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο
 θυγατέρες μνησαίαθ’ ὅσοι ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθον·
 ἀρχοὺς αὖ νηῶν ἐρέω νῆάς τε προπάσας.

Tell me now, Muses holding Olympian homes—
 For you are goddesses, and you are present and know all things,
 But we hear only a rumor and do not know anything—
 Who were the leaders and commanders of the Danaans?
 For I could not recount or name the crowd,
 Not if I had ten tongues, and ten mouths,
 And an unbroken voice, and my heart were bronze;
 Unless the Olympians, the Muses, daughters of aegis-bearing
 Zeus, might remind me who came beneath Ilion:
 Now I will say the leaders of the ships and all the ships. (*Il.* 2.484–93)

While much has been said about this passage as a whole, there are a few aspects of this

description that are especially relevant here.⁴¹ It is worth briefly mentioning that the poet clearly conceives of them as a group, using the plural in both address and description; if the name “Muses” (Μοῦσαι, 484 and 491) were not enough to indicate this, the name “Olympiades” (Ὀλυμπιάδες, 491) draws attention to their group dynamic as well as their local orientation. Like the Nereids, who form their own chorus in the *Iliad* as well as in later poetry, the title “Olympiades” subtly suggests their choral make-up.⁴²

More important is the strong contrast between the Muses and the poet himself, indicated forcefully by the ὕμεις γὰρ...ἡμεῖς δέ (485–86). The poet’s justification for this difference—that the Muses are goddesses, and he is, by implication, a mere mortal—actually helps heighten his own success and draws attention to the power of his performance. Although, as he says, he needs their help, in reality his is the performance that is heard, as the Muses take up only a secondary role of inspiration. Parallel versions of this relationship become even more prominent in two especially important examples of the literary chorus in later poetry: the chorus of the Muses in the *Theogony* (*Th.* 1–23, 60–67) and the chorus of the Delian Maidens in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* (*HhA* 156–78). In all of these cases, but especially that of Hesiod’s Muses, a certain tension arises between, on the one hand, the female chorus, who primarily provides inspiration (and perhaps, content), and on the other, the solo, male bard. While the relationship between Muses and bard is not a primary concern of the Homeric poems, the *Theogony* and the *Hymn to Apollo* make this interaction an object of focus at certain points in their narratives.

⁴¹ For discussion of this passage and its role in Homeric poetics, see Ford (1992, esp. Ch. 2), Minchin (1995 and 2001), and Sammons (2010).

⁴² The Nereids were the chorus in a lost play by Aeschylus. Regarding the chorality of name groups, see Calame (1997, 30–33) and Murnaghan (2006).

II. The Chorus of the Muses

Like the Homeric epics, Hesiod's *Theogony* demonstrates a clear familiarity with the choral form, even as it describes it in the meter and monodic style of epic. However, Hesiodic poetry provides a somewhat different view of the chorus than the one offered by Homeric poetry. While Homeric choruses are, for the most part, associated with community activity, especially lament or marriage, Hesiod's choruses do not participate in either of these spheres, or any other community aspect. Within the *Theogony*, the group that exhibits the highest degree of chorality is unquestionably the Muses, and both times they appear Hesiod explicitly presents them as choral performers. The *Theogony* most likely lacks additional choral activity due to its focus on the immortals. Although the gods do participate in choruses, as is clear from the *Odyssey* and the *Hymn to Apollo*, Hesiod rarely focuses on any specific occasion or the kind of event that might involve a choral performance (like a feast or a marriage). The chorus of the Muses is a significant exception, since the occasion of their performances is also the occasion of Hesiod's inspiration, and theirs is the chorus that will be my focus here. While there are not a large number of choral groups in this poem, the performance of the Muses is given an extensive description that sets the stage for Hesiod's own performance, and they contribute meaningfully to the overall conception of the poem.⁴³

Before diving into discussion of the Muses, it is worth noting briefly that choral groups are almost completely absent from the *Works and Days*. This absence is somewhat puzzling, particularly because a poem that focuses on human affairs might be a logical place to find the kinds of performances that accompanied most human rituals—especially those that promote

⁴³ As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, there are also Muses in the Homeric epics. They are never physically described, however, and hardly presented as a group, making it nearly impossible to assess their contribution to chorality.

human (and agricultural) fertility, a recurring theme in the poem. The reasons for this are impossible to identify with confidence, but one hypothesis is that the poem is largely preoccupied with the condition of working, which distinguishes humanity from the gods and from earlier generations. Choruses are, at least within the Homeric evidence, a leisurely and often celebratory activity—not something likely to be found in a poem about human labor. Even in passages that celebrate the harvest and the bounty of the earth, the brief respite from working seems to be a solitary activity, rather than a communal one (*WD* 571ff.). Just as in the *Odyssey* the lack of choruses on Ithaca indicates a stark contrast to the chorality of a golden-age society like Phaeacia, the lack of choruses in the *Works and Days* indicates the harshness of the agricultural existence and its laborious lifestyle. A second and potentially more interesting possibility is the didactic nature of the poem. Although the Muses, the main chorus of the *Theogony*, are not specifically attached to any one kind of song, they seem to be mostly connected to epic and hymn; while the *Works and Days* utilizes the epic hexameter, it is obviously and intentionally a very different type of song and we can ask whether or not this plays a role in the lack of chorality. There is no indication that the Muses have knowledge of or interest in Hesiod's agricultural content, and although they do teach (διδάσκω) in two locations (*Th.* 22, *WD* 662), in both cases they are instructors of poetic performance, not the agricultural skills that take up the bulk of the *Works and Days*.

Choral representation is comparatively prominent in the *Theogony*, and Hesiod draws attention to its status as a true performance art—not only a ritual activity or something that happens to accompany another specific event, but as a creative event all on its own. The depiction of the Muses in the beginning raises numerous questions, especially about the visual orientation of choral performance and the differences between the poetics of a choral group

versus those of a solo performer. Through the chorus of the Muses and by drawing on the choral potential of other daughter-groups and framing them as quasi-choral or with some degree of choral potential, Hesiod meditates on the nature of choral performance and solo performance and expands on the relationship between chorus and soloist. Because the primary chorus of the *Theogony* is responsible for Hesiod's own inspiration and their songs are remarkably similar, the *Theogony* is able to comment more directly on the differences between types of poetic performance and those who participate in them. By incorporating only choruses that are made up of divine, female performers, Hesiod draws a clear distinction between the performance of a solo, human man and that of a female chorus of goddesses.

The opening description of the Muses' singing eventually leads to the story of Hesiod's poetic inspiration and transforms into the content of the *Theogony* itself. Because it sets up the audience's interpretation of the performance they are listening to in that very moment, the Muses' performance is a central component of the poem as a whole. Hesiod begins by focusing on this choral group:

μουσάων Ἑλικωνιάδων ἀρχώμεθ' αἰεῖδεν,
 αἴθ' Ἑλικῶνος ἔχουσιν ὄρος μέγα τε ζαθέον τε
 καὶ τε περὶ κρήνην ἰοειδέα πόσσ' ἀπαλοῖσιν
 ὄρχευνται καὶ βωμὸν ἐρισθενέος Κρονίωνος.
 καὶ τε λοεσσάμεναι τέρενα χροά Περμησσοῖο
 ἢ Ἴππου κρήνης ἢ Ὀλμειοῦ ζαθέοιο
 ἀκροτάτῳ Ἑλικῶνι χοροὺς ἐνεποιήσαντο
 καλοῦς, ἡμερόεντας· ἐπερρώσαντο δὲ ποσσίν.
 ἔνθεν ἀπορνύμεναι, κεκαλυμμέναι ἠέρι πολλῇ,
 ἐννύχαι στείχον περικαλλέα ὄσσαν ἰεῖσαι,
 ὑμνεῦσαι Δία τ' αἰγίοχον καὶ πότνιαν Ἥρην
 Ἀργεῖην, χρυσεοῖσι πεδίλοις ἐμβεβαυῖαν,
 κούρην τ' αἰγίοχοιο Διὸς γλαυκῶπιν Ἀθήνην
 Φοῖβόν τ' Ἀπόλλωνα καὶ Ἄρτεμιν ἰοχέαιραν
 ἠδὲ Ποσειδάωνα γειήοχον, ἐννοσίγαιον,
 καὶ Θέμιν αἰδοίην ἑλικοβλέφαρόν τ' Ἀφροδίτην
 Ἥβην τε χρυσοστέφανον καλήν τε Διώνην
 Λητώ τ' Ἴαπετόν τε ἰδὲ Κρόνον ἀγκυλομήτην

Ἦῶ τ' Ἡέλιόν τε μέγαν λαμπράν τε Σελήνην
 Γαῖάν τ' Ὠκεανόν τε μέγαν καὶ Νύκτα μέλαιναν
 ἄλλων τ' ἀθανάτων ἱερὸν γένος αἰὲν ἔόντων.
 αἶ νύ ποθ' Ἡσίοδον καλήν ἐδίδαξαν ἀοιδήν,
 ἄρνας ποιμαίνονθ' Ἐλικῶνος ὕπο ζαθέοιο.

Let us begin to sing of the Heliconian Muses,
 Who hold the great and holy mountain of Helicon,
 And who dance on gentle feet around the violet
 Spring, and the altar of the very strong son of Kronos.
 And washing their tender skin in the Permessos
 Or the spring of the Horse, or holy Olmeios,
 They make choruses at the Heliconian peak,
 Lovely, choruses that arouse desire: they move nimbly on their feet.
 Setting out from there, wrapped in much mist,
 They march through the night, sending out the loveliest voice,
 Hymning aegis-bearing Zeus and queenly Hera of Argos,
 Stepping with her golden sandals,
 And the daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus, grey-eyed Athena,
 And Phoebus Apollo and arrow-pouring Artemis,
 And Poseidon the earth-holder, earth-shaker,
 And modest Themis and glancing-eyed Aphrodite,
 And gold-crowned Hebe and beautiful Dione,
 Leto, Iapetus, and shrewd Kronos,
 Eos and great Helios, bright Selene,
 Gaia, great Ocean, and dark Night,
 And the holy race of all the other gods who always are.
 They once taught Hesiod the lovely song,
 When he was herding sheep beneath holy Helicon. (*Th.* 1–23)

There are a number of interesting features of this description, but I begin by analyzing this chorus not in terms of their performance, or as a performing group with social significance, but simply as a descriptive component of Hesiod's poetry. Notably the description is long, with at least twenty-one lines devoted exclusively to the Muses themselves and their song. While the final two lines of this passage allude to Hesiod's own poetic abilities, he places himself (as the object, rather than the subject) at the end of an extensive overview of their company, their singing, their dancing, and especially the actual song that they sing. This focus on the Muses takes up more lines than any single chorus in the *Odyssey* and all non-funerary choruses in the

Iliad, suggesting a slightly different attention to the physicality and visual aspects of this group. The Shield choruses, though obviously presented in visual terms as a part of an art piece, devote no more than two lines of pure physical description to any performers. Even the Nereids of *Iliad* 18, whom the poet describes at considerable length (35–69), are presented with far less attention to their appearance. Hesiod’s Muses, on the other hand, receive heightened attention to their physical actions and bodies: their feet are “gentle” (ἀπαλοῖσιν, 3), their skin is “tender” (τέρενα, 5), and their choruses are “beautiful” and able to “arouse desire” (καλούς, ἱμερόεντας, 8). As they go along singing they “move nimbly” (ἐπερρώσαντο, 8) and they are wrapped up in mist (κεκαλυμμένοι ἤερι πολλῷ, 9). Their voices are particularly beautiful (περικαλλέα, 10), in addition to being very skilled; in fact, the entire description borders on the erotic.⁴⁴ Although the focus eventually shifts to their actual performance, the description of how they look while performing or preparing to perform takes up the first ten lines of the poem.

This kind of description—almost verging on ekphrasis—is somewhat unique within the *Theogony*, which typically focuses not on appearances but simply on genealogy and attributes.⁴⁵ The description of the Muses is rivaled only by a selection of passages presenting other figures in the *Theogony*, including the Cyclopes and Hundred-Handers (*Th.* 139–56), the Echidna (*Th.* 296–303), the Chimaera (319–24), Pandora (*Th.* 570–90), and Typhoeus (*Th.* 823–35), out of the hundreds of other named individuals in the poem. When we focus on the characters that receive

⁴⁴ Regarding the eroticism of this description, see Marquardt (1982). She also argues that this is a choral event, going so far as to say that “the poet’s description reveals that the Muses of Helicon are dancing a kind of ring-dance, one of the most ancient dances closely associated with springs, trees and altars” (6), presumably based on *περί* (line 3). I do not agree with Marquardt’s conclusion that this dance is “related to their early role as deities of nature” (7), but I think she is right that the Hesiod emphasizes the “wildness” of the Muses through his focus on their appearance.

⁴⁵ This is not ekphrasis proper, as it does not consider a non-performative piece of art. Still, the dance of the Muses is described with enough detail that it could be a painted scene. Hesiod focalizes this using visual, not aural, terms. Thus, I have used the term “ekphrasis” to indicate scene’s preoccupation with how it looks, rather than how it sounds.

extended physical description, the list is enlightening: although not presented necessarily as evil or wicked, all of these figures are somehow monstrous. The Cyclopes and Hundred-Handers are the most positively described, and interestingly they are both collective groups, like the Muses; it is tempting to see a link between their collective status and the notion of their choral potential. However, the extended physical description seems to focus primarily on their unusual appearances. Along with the remaining figures, all of these characters are not only “monsters” physically but also in terms of power and the threat they pose to others. Notably, the Echidna, the Chimaera, and Pandora are both distinctly female; though male, Typhoeus is one of the most dangerous characters in the *Theogony*, posing real threats to the most authoritative male individual (Zeus). None of these described figures correspond precisely to the Muses, but the visual focus unites them, and the feature most consistent among them at first appears to be a unique level of power, coupled with a degree of threat. I argue, however, that the threat posed is *not* their most salient feature, but rather that such physical description is in all cases indicative of their eventual defeat or overpowering by a stronger figure, which is particularly clear in the case of the Cyclopes, the Hundred-Handers, the Chimaera, Typhoeus, and even the Muses.

The Muses share other attributes with some of these figures, to different degrees: collectivity, femininity, and power. At the same time, they seem to be largely humanoid, even beautiful, and not dangerous like Typhoeus or Pandora. It seems that for some of these figures, the visual focus highlights various aspects of their characterization; thus, Pandora is described physically because she is very beautiful but most importantly because she is the ultimate object created for man. Nevertheless, she poses a unique threat to society and human men that relies precisely on her appearance to hide the trick. Both the beauty and the latent treachery are key aspects of Pandora’s character, and, more broadly speaking, of women in general within the

context of the poem. In a similar vein, I argue that the visual emphasis on the Muses communicates two very different aspects of their nature to the audience: beauty/status as an object and danger/threat. The physical description of the Muses reminds the audience that they are, like any chorus, there to be looked at just as much as they are to be heard; on the other hand, the emphasis on their appearance may actually identify them explicitly as a chorus for Hesiod's audience. By orienting the description visually, Hesiod recreates a choral performance in the minds' eyes of the audience, drawing on their experience of other early choral performances as first visual, and only secondarily auditory, media. By beginning the description of the Muses with their physical attributes before moving on to the content of their song, Hesiod reinforces the status of the Muses' chorus as a physical object, able to be seen and possibly even objectified. While there is not an exclusive link between femininity and object status in the poem, Hesiod does seem to create a connection between the Muses' feminine identity, their role as the object of the audience's gaze, and their chorality.

The presence of two distinct performers (Hesiod and the chorus of Muses) also raises the question of poetic authority in the poem. The Muses' song as presented at the opening of the poem (lines 11–21) is the *Theogony* in miniature, providing an overview of precisely what Hesiod is about to describe. While their version seems to be the primary one, Hesiod takes over that song as soon as the narrative shifts away from the performance of the Muses (around line 22). His version is significantly expanded and more exciting, and although he credits the Muses with teaching him, it is clear that his is the *Theogony* that the audience is expected to remember. The question of the visuality of the scene is not irrelevant to the issue of poetic authority. Because the solo performer relies heavily on the audiences' auditory perception, and very little on their visual engagement, he does not become a visual object in the same way that a chorus

does. By setting his own song alongside that of the Muses, Hesiod presents his performance as something to listen to, rather than something to see; its value is primarily based on his words, not on the spectacle of the performance itself. I do not mean to suggest that Hesiod completely elides the singing abilities of the Muses, but I simply observe that Hesiod's description of the Muses in performance achieves a very different vision of performance than his own self presentation in the same poem. According to the *Theogony*, choral and solo performance do not differ based on the content of their songs, as seen by the two theogonies being performed here, but rather in the way they engage with the audience and in the emphasis on that content. The physical aspects of the Muses' performance are what set them apart from Hesiod, even more so than their collectivity or their actual identity as Muses. The Muses, as one might expect, do have the ability to pose a poetic challenge to Hesiod, their pupil and their own celebrant. Because of their goddess status, Hesiod's best hope to ensure that his success is clear is to emphasize their performance as a kind of choral paradigm—that is, to suggest that since this is not the same kind of performance, there is no competition at all. By describing them, Hesiod neatly mirrors the literary chorus and the actual chorus in performance: because a real-life chorus is always something being looked at, the literary presentation of them as a visual object enacts one of the qualities most inherent in the kinds of choruses with which the audience would have been familiar. Beyond the competition between Hesiod and the Muses, this opening may also provide a model for one of the poem's most important themes, the power of united groups (or generations) to overthrow the established order, which ultimately resolves in a delicate balance between the individual (Zeus) and the Olympians.⁴⁶

Hesiod's second reference to the Muses relies less on physical description but adds to the

⁴⁶ On this theme, see especially Clay (2003). While the Olympians and Zeus work together (like Hesiod and the Muses), it remains the case that Zeus is constantly on the lookout for threats to his solo rule.

portrait that Hesiod is building. By locating them firmly among the gods and by disassociating them from the performance of a poem similar to the *Theogony*, Hesiod confirms that the competition is resolved (and that he has emerged the sole authorial presence in the poem):

ἦ δ' ἔτεκ' ἑννέα κούρας ὁμόφρονας, ἧσιν ἀοιδὴ
 μέμβλεται ἐν στήθεσσι, ἀκηδέα θυμὸν ἐχούσαις,
 τυτθὸν ἀπ' ἀκροτάτης κορυφῆς νιφόεντος Ὀλύμπου.
 ἔνθα σφιν λιπαροὶ τε χοροὶ καὶ δώματα καλά.
 παρ δ' αὐτῆς Χάριτες τε καὶ Ἴμερος οἰκί' ἔχουσιν
 ἐν θαλίῃς· ἐρατὴν δὲ διὰ στόμα ὄσσαν ἰεῖσαι
 μέλπονται πάντων τε νόμους καὶ ἦθεα κεδνὰ
 ἀθανάτων κλείουσιν, ἐπήρατον ὄσσαν ἰεῖσαι.

And she bore nine likeminded daughters, in whose hearts
 Song is a care, and who hold spirits free from concerns,
 A little below the highest peak of snowy Olympus.
 And their shining choruses and lovely homes are there.
 Alongside them the Graces and Desire hold their homes
 Among the festivities: and casting a lovely voice from their mouths
 They dance, and they celebrate the laws and careful customs
 Of all the immortals, casting out the loveliest voice. (60–67)

While the Muses still celebrate the immortals and they are still praised for their singing abilities, there is less indication that their song is the same as Hesiod's. He describes how they celebrate the νόμους καὶ ἦθεα of the gods, which is not too far from the project of the *Theogony*, but the description is compressed enough that its effect is diminished. It becomes clear from their appearance here that, rather than generating the kind of song project that Hesiod himself is singing, the Muses are contained within the catalogue of immortals and here only mentioned in their proper genealogical frame. There is no interaction between the chorus and the solo poet, and their performance is somewhat formulaic: the Graces are frequent hosts of choruses (e.g., *Od.* 18.190–96), the ὄσσαν ἰεῖσαι of lines 65 and 67 recycles line 10, and the choral performances of the Muses are clearly a smaller component of more general scenes of feasting and celebration (ἐν θαλίῃς, 65). By including them in the lists of other gods and goddesses,

Hesiod removes the poetic challenge of the Muses and relocates them firmly within his own poem.

The Muses of Hesiodic poetry are not particularly distinct as a choral group, other than the fact that they are somewhat prototypical: they are the goddesses that inspire song and thus, in a sense, patron deities of all poetry, both choral and monodic. In the *Theogony*, the Muses participate in a number of types of performance, at least as indicated by the words Hesiod uses to portray their song. As noted above, they teach (διδάσκω, *Th.* 22), but they also hymn (ὕμνεῦσαι, *Th.* 11), celebrate or make famous (κλείουσιν, *Th.* 67), and sing (ᾄειδον, *Th.* 75). They also dance, of course (ὀρχεῦνται, *Th.* 4; μέλπονται, *Th.* 66), and three times they send forth a voice (ὄσσαν ἰεῖσαι, *Th.* 10, 65, and 67). Most interesting are the words used to describe the specific types of song: ὑμνέω, κλέω, ἀείδω. It is noteworthy that Hesiod also describes himself as doing all three of these activities: the Muses give him a voice so that he might celebrate (κλείοιμι, *Th.* 32), bid him to hymn the immortals (ὕμνεῖν, *Th.* 33), and instruct him to sing of them first (ἀείδειν, *Th.* 34). Although I hesitate to give too much weight to specific words, it is worth noting that Hesiod seems to present no clear difference in the activities that he and the Muses are undertaking, or in the genre or content that they seem to be singing.⁴⁷ It is possible, at least in the Homeric tradition, to associate κλέω and ἀείδω with the performance of epic poetry (e.g., *Od.* 1.338; *Il.* 1.1, 9.189, *Od.* 1.325), and in fact the Muses themselves are asked to inspire this very kind of song from the first line of the *Iliad*. As noted previously, the Muses can be identified as a choral (or at least semi-choral) group in the Homeric tradition, even when it is not a strong aspect of their characterization; there is, then, no strong reason to separate the specific genre or class of poetry sung by the choral Muses from that performed by a soloist. Interestingly, ὑμνέω does not

⁴⁷ Nagy, arguing against the idea that the *Homeric Hymns* belong to a clearly formed genre, notes that *hymnos* can refer to both choral and solo rhapsodic performance (2011, 333).

appear in Homeric epic, which seems to support the notion that, while applicable to both choral and solo performers, it is more appropriate for describing poetry that celebrates the gods, and not mortals. Although the gods factor heavily in both Homeric epics, neither contains a scene of divine worship during which such a word might be used.

Despite all the similarities between their performances, Hesiod and the Muses are not equal poetic creators in the *Theogony*. Hesiod builds on a notion that exists elsewhere in epic, specifically between the Homeric poet and his own Muses: the idea that a male soloist is superior to a female chorus, even one that consists of the goddesses of song. Despite praising their performance heavily, Hesiod's introduction steers the audience away from the Muses' performance and towards his own version. The difference is not exactly one of genre, and other than length there is little that sets their actual songs apart; instead, the difference is based on their reception of the audience's gaze and the role that their physical bodies play in articulating the performance as a whole. This relationship between them is heightened by the way Hesiod frames their physical performance; through the audience (Hesiod) and the emphasis on dance, their theogony is confined to a specific moment in time and can be condensed by another poet to a brief twenty lines. The audience of the *Theogony* is invited to imagine their movements and dancing, mirroring the spectatorship of Hesiod himself. While it is not an emphatic component of the opening, Hesiod focalizes the entire passage through his own view of the Muses, as though he has been a privileged spectator and can now reimagine that scene for his own audience. His own theogony, on the other hand, is the controlling narrative and lacks a firm location in time or space. Through the Muses' performance, Hesiod demonstrates his own poetic authority and sets his creation up as a timeless and omniscient account.

Even though Hesiod casts himself as the superior singer, there is a clear sense of

collaboration between the two performances, at least in the beginning. The Muses are, of course, the ones that teach Hesiod to sing, and presumably they have inspired or passed on the knowledge necessary for him to describe the gods in so much detail. In his own account, Hesiod is the unskilled member of the group before the chorus of the Muses teaches him how to sing. As Hesiod becomes the authoritative figure and distinguishes himself as a solo performer, however, he takes on elements of the *choregos*-figure: as Calame suggests, the person who leads, conducts, and begins the chorus (30). As their song blends into his own, their joint performance—soloist and group—comes to resemble the framework of the chorus led by an external *choregos*-figure, an individual that does not share the characteristics of the group but nevertheless participates in a combined performance event. Through his description of the Muses, Hesiod provides one image of this kind of chorus leader, firmly establishing his view of poetic authority and the respective roles of chorus and soloist.

III. Choral Incorporation in the *Hymn to Apollo*

The hierarchy that Hesiod seems keen to establish between solo performance and choral performance does not hold true for the *Hymn to Apollo*. In both instances of choral performance that take place within the poem, the solo performer is presented as linked to or performing alongside the chorus, but in both cases the chorus lacks the features that might suggest a lower status than the soloist: the Deliades are identified as a uniquely skilled chorus, while the other chorus is made up of goddesses like Artemis and Aphrodite. Although he is not actually present at their performance, the description of the blind bard is wholly contained within the chorus of Delian maidens (156–76), and Apollo appears as an individual lyre-player beside the chorus of goddesses imagined on Olympus (182–206). While both the Deliades and the divine chorus

possess a number of interesting features on their own, these scenes also engage in the dialogue, constructed by the opening of the *Theogony*, about how the solo singer relates to the choral group and provide early instantiations of the external *choregos*-figure, particularly in the role of directing or accompanying the chorus.

I begin by examining the theme of the community versus the individual, reading scenes that express this theme in terms that can be connected to the chorus. As Clay (1989) has observed, incorporation forms a major motif within the poem, and in general, the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* features a number of groups that comment on this theme, although they cannot be identified as traditional choruses in any way. In addition, two explicitly choral scenes join in showcasing the importance of being part of the group. At the same time, the need for singularity even from within the collective remains prominent in Apollo's story, and the choral scenes offer a parallel. Apollo is incorporated into the Olympian hierarchy, but he maintains his own individual attributes and power, just as the individual bard remains distinct although featured alongside and as part of a choral group.

Following this discussion, I consider the two major choral scenes in the poem: the performance of the Deliades and the performance of the gods on Olympus. These two scenes lend a sense of structure to the poem and, more importantly, offer a model of choruses that involve an external *choregos*-figure through the characters of Apollo and the blind bard. The *Hymn to Apollo* makes clear that the role of *choregos*-figure offers the solo performer a place alongside choral performance that is both part of and yet still separate from the chorus as a whole, sustaining and encouraging both performances at once. I first examine the chorus of the Deliades, focusing in particular on their claim to authority and their relationship with the blind bard, before discussing the chorus of the goddesses and the dual leaders that are present: Apollo

and Artemis. I argue that Apollo and his earthly counterpart (the bard), are, at least in literary sources, the prototypical external *choregos*: individuals that perform in conjunction with a chorus but are not fully members of the chorus.

Second, I consider the choral performance of the Olympians, which provides the foundation for the claim that in most literary instances of a chorus where a *choregos*-figure can be discerned, an internal *choregos* is of the same sex (typically female) as the other chorus members, while an external *choregos* is of a different sex than the other performers (typically male, with a female chorus). Apollo's role as *choregos* alongside his sister Artemis, who performs the role of an internal *choregos*-figure, also demonstrates the possibility of multiple leadership roles in the chorus: one figure from whom the music seems to take its cue, and one figure from whom the chorus members appear to take their lead in both dance and in self presentation. In this context, their sharing of responsibilities and authority helpfully reflects the hierarchy of their sibling relationship. I argue here that the two choral scenes, and their two examples of the external *choregos*-figure, offer one solution to the possible tension or even competition that can arise from the two performing entities, as seen in the *Theogony* between Hesiod and the Muses. The *Hymn*'s choral scenes do not depict such a struggle, indicating that the performance of the external *choregos* is complementary to the choral performance and that the two exhibit a symbiotic relationship.

From its opening, the *Hymn to Apollo* orients its subject within the larger community of the Olympians, drawing on a broader notion of the collective through the image of performance. Even in the simple construction of individual god vs. society of gods, echoes of chorality are visible, and the poet begins building up the *choregos*-figure as a way to comment on how Apollo clearly stands out from his divine associates. The opening lines, describing Apollo's arrival on

Olympus, present him as not only a singular member of the company but as a leader from whom the other gods can take their cues:

μνήσομαι οὐδὲ λάθωμαι Ἀπόλλωνος ἐκάτοιο,
 ὄντε θεοὶ κατὰ δῶμα Διὸς τρομέουσιν ἰόντα·
 καὶ ῥά τ' ἀναΐσσουσιν ἐπὶ σχεδὸν ἐρχομένοιο
 πάντες ἀφ' ἑδράων, ὅτε φαίδιμα τόξα τιταίνει.
 Λητὸ δ' οἷη μίμνε παραὶ Διὶ τερπικεραύνῳ,
 ἧ ῥα βίον τ' ἐχάλασσε καὶ ἐκλήισσε φαρέτρην,
 καὶ οἱ ἀπ' ἰφθίμων ὤμων χεῖρεςσιν ἔλοῦσα
 τόξα κατεκρέμασε πρὸς κίονα πατρὸς ἐοῖο
 πασσάλου ἐκ χρυσεύου· τὸν δ' ἐς θρόνον εἷσεν ἄγουσα.
 τῷ δ' ἄρα νέκταρ ἔδωκε πατὴρ δέπαϊ χρυσεῖῳ
 δεικνύμενος φίλον υἷον· ἔπειτα δὲ δαίμονες ἄλλοι
 ἔνθα καθίζουσιν· χαίρει δέ τε πότνια Λητώ,
 οὐνεκα τοξοφόρον καὶ καρτερόν υἷον ἔτικτε.

I will remember and not forget Apollo the far-shooter,
 At whose arrival the gods in the house of Zeus tremble:
 And they dart up at his approach,
 Everyone up from their seats, when he stretches his shining bow.
 But Leto alone remains alongside Zeus, who delights in the thunderbolt;
 For she unstrings the bow and puts away the quiver,
 And taking the bow from his strong shoulders with her hands
 She hangs it on a pillar in the house of his father,
 From a golden peg: and leading him she sets him at his seat.
 And his father gives him nectar in a golden cup,
 Setting it before his son: and then the other gods
 Sit there; and queenly Leto rejoices
 That she bore a strong, bow-bearing son. (*HhA* 1–13)

In both emotions and movement, the other gods directly respond to Apollo's actions. As Apollo approaches, the gods are at first nervous, then welcoming; their movements, which are presented almost like dance moves, mirror their emotional responses. They “dart up” (ἀναΐσσουσιν, 3), rising “all of them up from their seats” (πάντες ἀφ' ἑδράων, 4), moving in unison at the cue of one lead figure, just as a chorus does. The sense of darting suggests a rapidity combined with nimbleness, typical elements of dance, while their communal standing gives the sense of them moving in unison, as a group of choral dancers often moves. Furthermore, the use of the present

implies a habitual nature to these events, as though the gods follow a particular choreography every time Apollo arrives at the house of Zeus. Felson (2013, 278–80) argues that through the use of the deictic present participles, the poet actively inserts himself into this scene, as though he watches Apollo’s entrance like Hesiod watches the Muses (and providing another link to the performance of the Deliades). Even if the chorality of this scene is limited, it is obvious from the passage that the gods act as one party, together and with similar and linked actions, while Apollo is a distinct individual, set apart from the rest of the collective. This is emphatic in lines three and four, which presents first the gods’ reactions and then, separately, the actions of Apollo that cause such reactions. The end of the passage similarly indicates this relationship, even emphasizing the otherness of the Olympian company: Apollo receives the cup from his father (10–11) “and then the other gods / Sit there” (ἔπειτα δὲ δαίμονες ἄλλοι / ἔνθα καθίζουσιν, 11–12). While not a chorus proper, the construction of *choregos* and chorus is identifiable in this relationship, and it sets the tone for the rest of the play, particularly in the later scene that features, once again, Apollo’s entrance into the company of the gods.

This opening sets up the most important theme of the poem, that of the individual versus the community. The poem suggests that there are dangers in incorporation, hinted at in the trembling of the gods, but also in isolation and the possession of too much individual power. Both incorporation and isolation can have positive and negative affects on the community as well as the individual: the other gods fear Apollo because he is too powerful and unconfined, but ultimately his power adds to the group’s power and authority. Apollo’s incorporation is necessary for him because it provides him with a community; for Zeus, it preserves Zeus’ position at the top of the Olympian hierarchy. For the individual, incorporation can be limiting; Apollo is granted powers, but they are clearly circumscribed and delineated. Without a

community, however, the individual god does not have clear authority in any particular aspect of the world, and thus also lacks a clear avenue to worship by humanity. Gods pose threats (to humanity and to each other) when they act too much in their own interests, but at the same time, the loss of individualism within the community or too much incorporation lessens their distinctive characteristics and threatens to limit the positive effects of their powers for humans. Thus, the balance between group and individual is a complex negotiation that forms the most central theme of this poem, along with other *Homeric Hymns*. Much of this has been developed by Clay (1989), but I extend her contribution to consider how the chorus offers one model of this complex theme. As the opening scene shows, such a negotiation can utilize the image of the chorus, even just by hinting at it, to construct for the audience a recognizable stage on which to determine the right balance between individuality and incorporation. Much as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* draw on the image of the chorus to raise questions about the balance of individual excellence and community preservation for humanity, the *Homeric Hymns* meditate on the degree to which the gods must also find their place in the network of divinities.

Two additional scenes suggest the same tension and negotiation that takes place throughout the poem: Delos' choice to stand apart from the other islands, and Hera's refusal to attend the birth of Apollo. While these scenes are not choral, they pick up on features of other choral descriptions outside the poem that help align them with the thread of chorality running through the *Hymn*. I will briefly address the ways that Delos' exemplary individuality and Hera's dangerous refusal to participate provide examples of both ends of this complex spectrum.

Soon after the opening scene, which introduces the theme of the individual versus the community, the poet turns to the selection of a birthing-place by Leto. Although not choral in any direct sense, this scene utilizes the device of the catalogue, which frequently occurs in lists

of chorus members (like Hesiod’s Muses, *Th.* 75–79, or the dancers of Alcman’s first *partheneion*, *PMG* 1.70–77) or figures that are later (usually in tragedy) reimagined as a choral group, like the catalogue of Oceanids in the *Theogony* (346–61).⁴⁸ This is especially prominent in choruses of women, as it easily maps onto the relationship of bridal figure and companions/age-mates. Similarly, the naming of Delos follows a long list of place-names (29–44) that makes the singularity of the final list-member even more exceptional:

τόσσον ἔπ’ ὠδίνουσα Ἐκηβόλον ἵκετο Λητώ,
 εἴ τις οἱ γαιέων νιεῖ θέλοι οἰκία θέσθαι.
 αἱ δὲ μάλ’ ἐτρόμεον καὶ ἐδείδισαν, οὐδέ τις ἔτλη
 Φοῖβον δέξασθαι, καὶ πιστέρη περ ἑοῦσα·
 πρὶν γ’ ὅτε δῆ ρ’ ἐπὶ Δήλου ἐβήσατο πότνια Λητώ...

So many places did Leto approach while in labor with the Far-Shooter,
 To see if any of these lands might let her make a home for her son.
 But they trembled greatly and were afraid, and none of them dared
 To receive Phoebus, even the ones that were more fertile:
 Until, that is, queenly Leto came to Delos... (*HhA* 45–49)

Although the opening of the poem indicates that the relationship ought to move from individual versus collective to one incorporated whole, here it is flipped, so that the entire group of the islands ends up split into two parties. The poem begins with the group of islands, all of which refuse to serve as Apollo’s home, but then pivots suddenly to Delos—the only individual willing to offer her land to the god. Unlike the opening, which stresses collectivity, this passage promotes the importance of individualism within the group, much as a chorus often features a *choregos*-figure that, though part of the group, can nevertheless stand out in significant ways.

The juxtaposition of Delos with the other islands has several key parallels among descriptions of other choruses in literary sources. Most prominently, it adapts a tendency of

⁴⁸ Steiner argues that Homeric and Hesiodic catalogues may have derived from actual choral performances and that the presence of catalogues in both hexameter and choral poetry is an example of “generic contamination” (2019, 136–37).

choral catalogues to culminate in their *choregos*-figure, and the length of the catalogue emphasizes Delos' special role within this collective. In both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, choral groups often function as a way to highlight certain qualities of their most important member, whether through exhibiting her marital readiness (Nausicaa) or showcasing them as leaders in the lament (Thetis, Achilles, and Andromache/Hecuba/Helen). Delos' place in the list also resembles the catalogue of flowers at the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 6–8 and its companion catalogue at *HhD* 414–28. As with many choral catalogues, the description of Delos and the other islands hints at the selection of one maiden (Delos) from a group of age-mates (the group of islands). Although this passage is not choral in the same way as the dancers of the Louvre *partheneion*, or Nausicaa and her companions, the characterization of the islands as young women (emphasized in their fertility, *HhA* 48), combined with the catalogue and its culminating introduction of Delos, does prompt consideration of the islands as a group.

However, the chorus of young maidens or of adolescent males most often, as argued by Calame (1997) functions as a means of incorporating the young individuals into the broader community. For example, although they may be exemplary and individualized among their age-mates in the choral dance, the young *parthenos* or *kouros* becomes part of the whole society through a kind of initiation ritual and/or marriage. The choral group serves as a microcosm of society, providing a group to participate in in anticipation of lifelong participation in the community, especially through military service and/or marriage and child-rearing. While recognizing the absence of the actual chorus in the passage, I suggest that in either formulation of the collective/individual relationship—whether it progresses from a combined whole to a more distinct individual and others or vice versa—it is possible to trace a parallel in the choral practice and choral descriptions with which audience members would have been familiar. By

drawing on patterns of choral description, the poet is able to more vividly express his theme within this passage.

While Apollo's entrance into the company of the gods offers a positive model of incorporation, and Delos' individuality offers a constructive means of standing apart from the group, elsewhere in the hymn it is possible to identify a refusal to be incorporated into a collective as something that harms both the refusing individual and others. As soon as Leto is finished swearing an oath to honor Delos, she is overcome by labor pains. Despite the aid of several attendant goddesses, Leto is unable to give birth without Hera's consent to release Eileithuia:

θεαὶ δ' ἔσαν ἔνδοθι πᾶσαι,
 ὄσσαι ἄρισταί ἔασι, Διώνη τε Ῥεῖη τε
 Ἰχναίη τε Θέμις καὶ ἀγάστονος Ἀμφιτρίτη
 ἄλλαι τ' ἀθάναται νόσφιν λευκωλένου Ἥρης·
 ἦστο γὰρ ἐν μεγάροισι Διὸς νεφεληγερέταο·
 μούνη δ' οὐκ ἐπέπυστο μογοστόκος Εἰλείθυια·
 ἦστο γὰρ ἄκρω Ὀλύμπῳ ὑπὸ χρυσεόισι νέφεσσι,
 Ἥρης φραδμοσύνης λευκωλένου, ἣ μιν ἔρυκε
 ζηλοσύνη...

And the goddesses were all there,
 As many as are the best ones, Dione and Rhea,
 Ichnaea and Themis and much-groaning Amphitrite,
 And all the other goddesses—except for white-armed Hera:
 For she stayed in the halls of cloud-gathering Zeus;
 And only Eileithuia, bringer of the birth-pangs, was unaware;
 For she stayed beneath the golden clouds at the peak of Olympus,
 Because of shrewd, white-armed Hera, who held her back
 Out of jealousy... (*HhA* 92–100)

Although Eileithuia's absence is more detrimental, the poet chooses to portray both Eileithuia and Hera as significantly removed from the group. Hera's voluntary exclusion from the group brings pain to Leto, who is already part of the collective, and threatens to damage the forward progression of the community that takes place through the birth of Apollo. Eileithuia's

exemption is involuntary, but it nonetheless inadvertently causes harm to Leto and likewise threatens the community as a whole. Hera's rejection of the collective and the new community is in fact so strong that she remains unnamed for the rest of the Delian portion of the hymn. Furthermore, the next time she appears in the poem relates her motherhood of the monstrous Typhaon (*HhA* 305–55), an account which is certainly not flattering and which Felson reads as potentially “offensive” (2013, 270).⁴⁹ Eileithuia, however, does join the community as soon as she learns of Leto's plight, and it is with her incorporation into the group of goddesses that Apollo's birth takes place at last (115–19). Significantly, this description of incorporation and birth culminates in the phrase “and all the goddesses cried aloud” (θεαὶ δ' ὀλόλυξαν ἅπασαι, 119), indicating their unification as a collective whole. As in the listing of islands, this catalogue ends by naming the exceptional member (Hera) and drawing a clear contrast between the collective group and the outstanding individual. In this instance, the contrast is emphasized by a restatement of the goddesses' collective status (ἄλλαι τ' ἀθάναται, *HhA* 95) and the starkly contrastive νόσφι indicating Hera's separation. In addition to her physical separation, she is emotionally distant from this group as they attend the birth of Apollo, and the reason (her jealousy of Leto) is made particularly clear to the audience (100). Like the description of Delos and the islands, this passage is not itself choral, but the connection to femininity and the emphasis on reproduction suggest other women's activities that take place in a group, the most obvious being the chorus. The poet's account of this group of (unrelated) goddesses, described using the catalogue form, participating in the group movement to appear by Leto's side, and clearly associated with marriage and childbirth (and a woman's the final transition to adulthood as a *gynē*) does provoke some identification with the notion of the chorus more generally.

⁴⁹ Typhaon himself is the ultimate outsider, “resembling neither gods nor mortals” (οὔτε θεοῖς ἐναλίγκιον οὔτε βροτοῖσι, 351), as if an extension of Hera's own self-driven outsider status.

Hera's refusal to attend the birth or to release Eileithuia is presented as a significant obstacle to the progression of Apollo's story, as it literally prevents his birth from taking place. In addition to this problem, Hera's unwillingness to be incorporated is a theme of the poem more generally; Felson (2013) suggests that Hera's story is a means of subversively questioning Apollo's authority. She is notably absent from the opening scene of harmonious inclusion, and her most significant appearance in the poem is her decision to give birth without the aid of her husband and therefore outside the socially approved means of reproducing, through the institution of marriage. Because of the firm association of marriage and the chorus, Hera's choice to rebel against marriage and more typical childbearing practices also dislocates her from the possibility of choral activity, and her choice to stand apart from the goddesses at Apollo's birth further solidifies this split. Although marriage is the most recognizable step, the transition from *parthenos* to full woman and wife is not complete without the birth of children; even the early years of marriage seem to have held a kind of liminality for young women in Greece.⁵⁰ The process of social incorporation is not fully realized without the replication of society through children, and Hera's deviation from this practice, especially framed against Leto's clear participation in it, emphasizes her separation from the community in more ways than one.

Through these passages, the poem meditates on what exactly the balance between incorporation and individualism must be. Apollo's arrival threatens but ultimately benefits the community, Delos exemplifies the need for individualism and indicates the dangers of too

⁵⁰ Cole notes that a woman remained under the domain of Artemis until she had successfully birthed a child: "A girl could be called *parthenos* until marriage even if she had already borne a child, and the status of bride, defined by the Greek word *nymphs*, lasted until the birth of the first child. Physical and social status did not always coincide, but full adult status for a female, described by the word for woman, *gyne*, required childbirth and possibly even a living infant" (2004, 209–10). Hera's exemption from this chorus-like group is especially ironic given her association with the institution of marriage. Possibly her distance here stems from her rejection of Zeus's other sexual partners and offspring, but it also emphasizes the exceptional nature of her later birth of Typhaon.

cohesive a group, and Hera provides a cautionary example of a refusal to join in the community and the damage it causes. In the second two examples, there is a clear association with the development of the community and its replication through childbirth, and it is notable that both of these communities are exclusively made up of female members. While neither passage has any actual choral activity (there is no singing or dancing), the collective action of the group is decidedly prominent, and the all-female cast allows choral patterns to map on fairly easily to the theme introduced by the opening scene. Even without a truly choral scene, both of these passages can provide models for the relation between the chorus and *choregos* that the *Hymn* as a whole portrays.

While the theme of incorporation is a major theme in various types of scenes throughout the poem, the *Hymn to Apollo* does contain scenes that specifically utilize the chorus as a means of exploring this theme. The poem's most direct commentary on the chorus comes from the striking description of the Delian maidens. This chorus occurs at the juncture of the two sections of the *Hymn to Apollo*, providing a feeling of celebratory culmination in the image of festivity and the significance of their performance. Due to the placement of this choral scene, I must briefly address the issue of dating the poem. This question has been particularly contentious, due to the sense of closure and new beginning that arises during lines 177–81, along with differences in language in the two “sections.” West argues that the Pythian section is the earlier of the two, although he notes a correspondence of imitation between the two halves; he states that the Pythian section dates to about 600 BCE and thus, the Delian half dates to some time in the 6th century (1975, 165). Although he calls West's claim that the Pythian section is older “plausible” (1981, 17), Janko ultimately disagrees (1982, 109–15), placing the Delian section towards the first half of the seventh century, assigning it a date more or less contemporary with Hesiod

(1982, 106). Clay, however, denies the disunity of the poem and argues for a date in the late eighth century (1989, 87–92).⁵¹ Following Janko’s dates, I operate with the understanding that it is indeed possible to identify two distinct pieces of the poem, but that the text has been shaped into a unified whole, providing some evidence that the poem was performed or experienced as one piece; West’s argument that the Pythian section comes first seems likely. The issue of chorality helps support these readings: the choral section at the end of the Delian piece contributes to what is, in my mind, a clear sense of closure in that portion of the hymn.⁵² Inasmuch as the exchange between the Delian maidens and the bard acts as a sort of ending to the Delian section (followed by the salutation in lines 177–78), however, it also acts as a sort of prelude, in the way that longer solo performances of epic might have actually been preceded by choral performances.⁵³ At the same time, the image of the chorus is instrumental in bringing out and enriching the theme of individual versus society, which pervades the poem as a whole.

The *Hymn to Apollo* maintains the strong separation between choral poetry as female and solo poetry as male through the figures of the blind bard (Homer) and the Delian Maidens.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Faulkner notes that “Clay’s arguments convinced Janko to change his mind and adopt a unitarian position in his review of her book” (2011, 12). Cf. Chappell (2011).

⁵² Lonsdale (1994–95) also views these two scenes as linked. However, he suggests that the two passages form a “sequence, the first presenting the crisis of mortal exclusion from divine festivity, the second offering a solution to that crisis in choral performance” (25). But his discussion first treats the Olympian festival (*HhA* 182–206) and then the Delian festival (*HhA* 156–178) (and he consistently refers to the Olympian festival as the “earlier” or “first” of the two (e.g., 25, 29)). The element of “sequence,” then, seems backwards, given the order in which the passages actually occur in the *Hymn*, and this makes his arguments for problem/remedy somewhat difficult to follow. This interpretation is not impossible if the reader accepts West’s (1975) argument that the Pythian section is older, but Lonsdale does not point to that solution and in fact cites Janko (1982, 109–14), who argues against it.

⁵³ Internal evidence from the *Hymns* includes, e.g., *HhAph* 292–93 and *HhD* 495. See West regarding Terpander’s composition of citharodic prooimia, which he describes as being “parallel” to the example from the *Hymn to Aphrodite* (1971, 307). See also Parker (1991), Janko (1981) on the conventionality of this kind of statement, and Bergren (1981), who cautions against the hierarchy implied by thinking of the *Hymns* as a preface alone. Cf. Clay (1997), who argues for a number of possible functions, especially for the longer hymns.

⁵⁴ Spelman (2018) argues that this figure must be identified as Homer in order to fully understand the poem’s promotion of itself as a fixed entity. He also notes that although there is no name given in the poem, audiences did in fact widely interpret this individual as Homer.

Unlike Hesiod's Muses, the Deliades lack almost any physical description, and the poet chooses instead to emphasize the power of their song and raise the question of how much authority can be given to the (female) choral voice. By juxtaposing the chorus of Deliades with the bard, the poet offers two alternate visions of performance, ultimately asking one to support the other's position of superiority. Because of the importance of the Deliades themselves, as well as the interaction between them and the bard, I provide the passage in full:

πρὸς δὲ τόδε μέγα θαῦμα, ὅου κλέος οὔποτ' ὀλεῖται,
 κοῦραι Δηλιάδες, ἑκατηβελέταο θεράπναι·
 αἶ τ' ἐπεὶ ἄρ' πρῶτον μὲν Ἀπόλλων' ὑμνήσωσιν,
 αὗτις δ' αὖ Λητώ τε καὶ Ἄρτεμιν ἰοχέαιραν,
 μνησάμεναι ἀνδρῶν τε παλαιῶν ἠδὲ γυναικῶν
 ὕμνον ἀείδουσιν, θέλγουσι δὲ φύλ' ἀνθρώπων.
 πάντων δ' ἀνθρώπων φωνὰς καὶ κρεμβαλιαστὸν
 μιμεῖσθ' ἴσασιν· φαίη δὲ κεν αὐτὸς ἕκαστος
 φθέγγεσθ'· οὔτω σφιν καλὴ συνάρηρεν ἀοιδή.
 ἀλλ' ἄγεθ' ἰλήκοι μὲν Ἀπόλλων Ἀρτέμιδιζύν,
 χαίρετε δ' ὑμεῖς πᾶσαι· ἐμεῖο δὲ καὶ μετόπισθεν
 μνήσασθ', ὅπποτε κέν τις ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων
 ἐθάδ' ἀνείρηται ξεῖνος ταλαπεῖριος ἐλθὼν·
 ὦ κοῦραι, τίς δ' ὑμῖν ἀνὴρ ἠδιστος ἀοιδῶν
 ἐνθάδε πωλεῖται, καὶ τέφ' ἔρπεσθε μάλιστα;
 ὑμεῖς δ' εὖ μάλα πᾶσαι ὑποκρίνασθαι ἀφήμως·
 τυφλὸς ἀνὴρ, οἰκεῖ δὲ Χίῳ ἔνι παιπαλοέσση
 τοῦ μᾶσαι μετόπισθεν ἀριστεύουσιν ἀοιδαί.
 ἡμεῖς δ' ὑμέτερον κλέος οἴσομεν, ὅσσον ἐπ' αἴαν
 ἀνθρώπων στρεφόμεσθα πόλεις εὖ ναιεταώσας·
 οἷ δ' ἐπὶ δὴ πείσονται, ἐπεὶ καὶ ἐτήτυμόν ἐστιν.
 αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν οὐ λήξω ἐκηβόλον Ἀπόλλωνα
 ὑμνέων ἀργυρότοξον, ὃν ἠύκομος τέκε Λητώ.

And in addition, this great wonder, the fame of which will never be destroyed—
 The Delian maidens, servants of the far-shooter:
 Whenever they have first celebrated Apollo,
 And then Leto and arrow-pouring Artemis,
 Then, remembering men and women of old,
 They sing a hymn and enchant the tribes of people.
 They know how to imitate the voices and rattles
 Of all people—every man would say that he himself
 Was speaking—so well is the beautiful song fitted together by them.
 But come on, let Apollo and Artemis be favorable,

And hello to you all! But remember me in the future,
 Whenever someone of earth-dwelling men,
 A much-suffering stranger, should ask, coming here:
 “Oh, maidens, in your opinion, which man is the sweetest of
 The bards that come here—who delights you most of all?”
 But may you all answer him readily with one voice:
 “A blind man, and he lives in rugged Chios,
 And all of his songs are the best once he has sung them.”
 I will bring your fame, however far upon the earth
 I roam, among the well-inhabited cities:
 And they, too, will believe, since it is indeed true.
 But I will not leave off from praising far-shooting Apollo,
 Silver-bowed, whom lovely-haired Leto bore. (*HhA* 156–78)

Unlike the islands or the goddesses, the Deliades are literally choral, although interestingly the word χορός is not actually used to describe them. Nevertheless, they are a group of women that sing together, and scholars (e.g., Calame (1997), Lonsdale (1993; 1994–95), Nagy (2013), Peponi (2009)) have not resisted identifying them as a chorus, particularly since they are shown in an actual performance context.⁵⁵ Supporting this choral identification is the term Δηλιάδες (157), which unites them with each other and resembles the patronymic collective names of groups that often indicate choruses in archaic poetry (like the Nereids in *Iliad* 18) and/or easily translate into choruses in tragedy, like the Danaids or Oceanids.⁵⁶ Their unified voice confirms the chorality of their performance (ὕμεῖς δ’ εὔ μάλα πᾶσαι ὑποκρίνασθαι ἀφήμως, 171), although there is no indication that any movements accompany their song. The Delian maidens possess significant singing abilities, including the skills to imitate voices (or perhaps dialects, κρεμβαλιαστῶν, 162) and “enchant” their audiences (θέλγουσι, 161)—a word used to describe the Sirens in the *Odyssey* (12.40 and 12.44).⁵⁷ Unlike the Sirens, the Deliades pose no apparent

⁵⁵ They are described as “beautiful, whirling choruses” at Euripides’ *Heracles* 690, suggesting a more general knowledge of their status as a choral body. On this passage see Weiss (2019).

⁵⁶ See Calame (1997, 30–33).

⁵⁷ κρεμβαλιαστῶν is the reading favored by Peponi (2009) and Nagy (1990), among others (but cf. West (2003), although it is difficult to understand and seems to indicate the sounds made by musical instruments used for accompaniment in performance. It is unlikely to indicate the musical instruments used by the Delian

threat, but the poet's respect for their abilities is clear from the numerous elements of their song that he reveals.

There are similarities between this passage and the description of the Muses at the beginning of the *Theogony*, especially in the triangular arrangement of Hesiod (the poet)/Hesiod (the character)/the Muses and the Homeric poet/the blind bard from Chios/the Delian maidens.⁵⁸ Most importantly, both poets seem to present versions of themselves alongside other choral performers, a technique that is not seen in Homeric epic.⁵⁹ There are, however, key differences between the two scenes that have a significant impact on the interpretation of the Delian maidens. Unlike the relationship between Hesiod and the Muses, the Deliades do not seem to compete with the poet's own performance, which might be due to the evident difference in the song content: the bulk of what is reported here is not the Deliades' *Hymn to Apollo*—that, we are told, ends in line 159. Here, they are not replicating the poet's praise of Apollo, but rather creating their own narrative that is clearly different than his. The passage indicates their hymnic activity (ὕμνησασιν, *HhA* 158), a term that is consistent with other examples of choral singers (e.g., the Muses, *Theogony* 11 and *HhA* 190; the Graces, *Pi. Nem.* 10.2), but the content of their song resembles Homeric epic, rather than theogonic poetry, based on its focus not on gods but on “men and women of ages past” (ἀνδρῶν τε παλαιῶν ἠδὲ γυναικῶν, 160).

maidens themselves; if so, they would not need to imitate the sound but could just make it in real time. If we accept the idea that this recalls other performances, the inclusion of κρεμβαλιαστῶν points to an imitation not simply of speaking voices (φωνᾶς) but more specifically the ability to mimic the performances of others, including perhaps performers of other genders, numbers, and especially genres. With regards to the question of mimesis, Nagy (2013) argues that this should not be read as “imitation” but rather as a ritual “reenactment” of other genres and performances, and specifically as an early version of the mimetic abilities of choruses in classical drama.

⁵⁸ The resemblance between Hesiod/Muses and *aoidos*/Delian Maidens has also been noted by Nagy (2013, 236–38).

⁵⁹ There are, of course, notable solo performances in Homeric epic, especially in the *Odyssey*. The descriptions of Phemius, Demodocus, and Odysseus himself offer important portrayals of bardic poetry. None of these is explicitly connected with a chorus, however. Even the songs of Demodocus, although part of the same larger event as choral dancing, are not performed alongside or in conjunction with the dancers.

Most importantly, the Delian maidens lack the visual focus found in Hesiod's presentation of the Muses. In addition to the lack of any dancing or movement, the passage does not contain a single visual descriptor of the Deliades. Even a fairly generic physical term, like lovely or fair-haired, might be reasonably expected, but the poet focuses so closely on the auditory components of their performance that it is difficult to comment on any other aspect of this chorus. Lonsdale argues that "the Olympian and Delian descriptions focus on the visual act of watching the spectacle by introducing into the text various internal observers: Zeus and Leto in the Olympian passage, Apollo and a hypothetical witness in the Delian passage" (1994–95, 30). I disagree, however, on the grounds that Apollo and the "hypothetical witness" experience the chorus as a primarily auditory performance—particularly the witness, who asks his question with the expectation of a spoken (or sung) response. While Hesiod's main strategy for delineating his own performance from that of the Muses seems to reside in his characterizing them as a thing to be looked at and himself as a person to be listened to, the poet of the *Hymn* suggests a different strategy for presenting the bard as superior. By placing the praise of the bard in the mouths of the Deliades themselves, the poet shows the symbiosis of the two types of performance: they are not competitive, but rather complementary. Hesiod and the poet of the *Hymn* both appear to introduce other performance groups as a means of emphasizing their own poetic prowess, but rather than simply present one performance as superior to the other, the *Hymn*'s poet reveals that the two are not only able to coexist, but actually help and celebrate each other.

As a result, the Delian maidens' poetic authority remains considerable and unquestioned in the poem, especially as their song is the only place where the bard even exists. They are asked for their opinion regarding another performer and their endorsement of his skills is accepted by

the listener, the audience, and the poet himself as true. Given Apollo's clear association with poetic performance and his frequent identification as the Muses' *choregos*, it is easy to understand why his cult at Delos might be specifically linked with a chorus that recalls the Muses (especially in their maiden status and their hymnic abilities). Still, the Deliades appear to have fulfilled their more typical choral function when their hymn to Apollo (and their celebrations of Artemis and Leto) concludes (159), and the description that follows acts as a sort of bridge between typical choral performance and solo performance, introduced through the figure of the bard at line 172. The bard in the *Hymn* is not specifically said to be singing any one kind of song, just as the narrator of the *Theogony* does not align himself with a type of song that is clearly distinct from the Muses' own. If not a difference of genre, the pictures presented in the *Theogony* and the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* raises the question of what exactly the difference between bardic performance and choral performance is.

This passage provides one of the poem's best models for the question of the individual versus the group. While the choral group only imagines the bard as participating in their performance, the poet controlling the narrative incorporates both visions of performance into one combined event. The chorus and bard are interwoven (the chorus resides wholly within the poet's narrative, while the bard resides wholly within the chorus's narrative), and the chorus's endorsement of the bard's abilities acts as a means of incorporation that takes the place of a more literal blended performance. By locating the bard's existence entirely within the framework of choral performance, the poet maintains the separation of their identities but merges them into a unified whole of performance activity. The chorus, in fact, creates the bard; while the poet's own echoing of their praise (174–76) seems to confirm the bard's existence and talent, he is entirely part of the choral performance. This complex articulation of the special individual within the

context of the larger group parallels Apollo's incorporation into the Olympians, a process through which he becomes part of society but retains his own individual abilities and significance. Like Delos, the bard and Apollo both demonstrate the importance of remaining an individual; unlike Hera, they both recognize the importance of the collective and do not completely resist assimilation. Significantly, this assists in the poet's self-identification with the poem's main subject; as Bergren observes, "*Hymn to Apollo* presents a vision of poetic and prophetic practice that stimulates the *Homeric Hymnodist's* achievement to the power claimed in the hymn by Apollo himself" (1982, 84). By creating a resemblance between himself, the bard, and Apollo, the poet cements his own fame while praising his subject and providing a model of harmonic incorporation.⁶⁰ Through the image of the chorus presented here and by weaving small hints of chorality into other passages, the poet presents the chorus as one familiar and recognizable model through which the audience might evaluate the tension between individuality and collectivity.

The poem's final significant commentary on this question comes in the poem's other choral passage, which describes a scene of choral festivity among the gods and occurs immediately after the beginning of the Pythian section:

εἴσι δὲ φορμίζων Λητοῦς ἐρικυδέος υἱὸς
 φόρμιγγι γλαφυρῇ πρὸς Πυθῶ πετρήεσσαν,
 ἄμβροτα εἶματ' ἔχων τεθυωμένα· τοῖο δὲ φόρμιγγξ
 χρυσέου ὑπὸ πλήκτρου καναχὴν ἔχει ἱμερόεσσαν.
 ἔνθεν δὲ πρὸς Ὀλυμπον ἀπὸ χθονός, ὥστε νόημα,
 εἴσι Διὸς πρὸς δῶμα θεῶν μεθ' ὀμήγουριν ἄλλων.
 αὐτίκα δ' ἀθανάτοισι μέλει κίθαρις καὶ ἀοιδή·
 Μοῦσαι μὲν θ' ἅμα πᾶσαι ἀμειβόμεναι ὅπι καλῇ
 ὑμνεῦσίν ῥα θεῶν δῶρ' ἄμβροτα ἠδ' ἀνθρώπων
 τλημοσύνας, ὅσ' ἔχοντες ὑπ' ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι
 ζώουσ' ἀφραδέες καὶ ἀμήχανοι, οὐδὲ δύνανται
 εὐρέμεναι θανάτιό τ' ἄκος καὶ γήραος ἄλκαρ·
 αὐτὰρ εὐπλόκαμοι Χάριτες καὶ εὐφρονες Ὠραι

⁶⁰ On the fame of the bard (Homer) and the poet himself, see especially Spelman (2018).

Ἄρμονίη θ' Ἥβη τε Διὸς θυγάτηρ τ' Ἀφροδίτη
 ὄρχευντ' ἀλλήλων ἐπὶ καρπῶ χειράς ἔχουσαι·
 τῆσι μὲν οὔτ' αἰσχρὴ μεταμέλπεται οὔτ' ἐλάχεια,
 ἀλλὰ μάλα μεγάλη τε ἰδεῖν καὶ εἶδος ἀγητή,
 Ἄρτεμις ἰοχέαιρα ὁμότροφος Ἀπόλλωνι.
 ἐν δ' αὖ τῆσιν Ἄρης καὶ εὐσκοπος Ἀργειφόντης
 παίζουσ'· αὐτὰρ ὁ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων ἐγκιθαρίζει
 καλὰ καὶ ὕψι βιβάς· αἴγλη δέ μιν ἀμφιφαίνει
 μαρμαρυγαί τε ποδῶν καὶ εὐκλώστοιο χιτῶνος.
 οἱ δ' ἐπιτέρπονται θυμὸν μέγαν εἰσορόωντες
 Λητώ τε χρυσοπλόκαμος καὶ μητίετα Ζεὺς
 υἴα φίλον παίζοντα μετ' ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι.

The glorious son of Leto goes, strumming
 On his hollow lyre, to rocky Pytho,
 Wearing his ambrosial, fragrant garments: and his lyre
 Holds a lovely ringing beneath the golden pick.
 From there, to Olympus from the earth, like a thought,
 He goes to the home of Zeus with the company of other gods.
 Straightaway the kithara and the song are a care to the gods:
 And all the Muses in unison, answering with a lovely voice,
 Hymn the ambrosial gifts of the gods and the sufferings of
 Humanity, as many as they have from the deathless gods,
 And how they live recklessly and without resource, nor are they able
 To find the remedy for death or the defense against old age:
 But Harmonia and Hebe and Aphrodite the daughter of Zeus
 Dance, holding their hands on one another's wrists:
 And one dances among them, neither ugly nor small in stature,
 But especially tall and wonderful in form to look at,
 Artemis, arrow-pouring, twin to Apollo.
 And among them, Ares and sharp-sighted Argeiphontes
 Dance: but Phoebus Apollo plays his lyre beautifully
 And steps high: and the light of the sun shines around him,
 Gleaming from his feet and his well-spun tunic.
 They delight in their great hearts,
 Golden-haired Leto and wise Zeus,
 Seeing him, their beloved son, dancing with the other gods. (*HhA* 182–206)

Apollo's special qualities in the midst of the other gods are the clear focus of this passage, which begins with a lavish description of his playing, his garments, and his overall glory. The passage's other main theme, however, celebrates the chorality of the gods as a symbol of their community, festivity, and overall happiness. Particularly when set against the "sufferings of humanity" (190–

91) and the suggestion that the hardships of life for humans come from the gods, the celebratory dancing and singing of the Olympians serves to distinguish this as a peaceful and leisure-oriented community. The passage does not offer any specific reason for this chorus, indicating that it is a typical state occupied by the gods and that they do not need any special reason to hold a chorus.⁶¹ The juxtaposition of the gods' choral activity (which does not actually seem to be productive, in the sense that the choruses of the Phaeacians were in the *Odyssey*) against the wretchedness of humanity might indicate that any choral activity brings humans closer to experiencing the measures of divinity, or that it is a source of relief from their toil (which supports my earlier hypothesis for the lack of choruses in the *Works and Days*).⁶²

Lonsdale (1994–95) views this scene and the description of the Delian maidens as complementary and suggests that they provide a paradigm of choral performance. While I hesitate to view these passages as wholly paradigmatic, given their relationship with choral scenes in other poems (including those in Homeric epic and the opening of the *Theogony*), the two scenes are clearly linked. Furthermore, as Lonsdale himself notes, the connection between the scenes supports reading the poem as a united whole, rather than two disparate halves. The choral activity of the gods suggests a new celebration (likely a sort of opening scene for the poem's original second half), and once again raises the question Apollo's place among the Olympians. More so than the opening scene in the poem, this description also pays more attention to the role of Apollo's twin sister Artemis, and in doing so the passage provides a vision of a different kind of *choregos*-figure. The poet's allusion to Artemis in this passage is

⁶¹ This fits with Calame's assertion that "the wedding ceremony and the banquet are the only motives, if motives are indeed needed, for a dance by a divine chorus" (1997, 90).

⁶² In fact, this description (190–93) sounds remarkably like the *Works and Days*. Especially set alongside the fact that the Muses' "hymn the ambrosial gifts of the gods" (190), one wonders if this could perhaps be a brief reference to the two Hesiodic poems.

interesting, given the lack of attention she receives throughout the rest of the poem. Although she is obviously relevant to Apollo, she does not generally receive much focus throughout the *Hymn* and is largely elided from some of its most important scenes (like Apollo's birth). Within this choral setting, however, she becomes the most central figure of the female group within the larger chorus, made up of Harmonia, Hebe, and Aphrodite. These three goddesses introduce the choral dancing, but quickly take a secondary role as the poet shifts his attention to Artemis. She is slowly revealed, first introduced with descriptions that deny any unattractiveness (197), then with adjectives that positively identify her appearance (198), and only finally by her name, epithet, and relationship to the poem's main subject (199). The poet seems to pan over the scene, slowly zeroing in on the chorus's most significant member, and she evolves through the description. While Apollo appears to be taking on the role of accompanying, and perhaps even directing, the chorus, Artemis is its clear internal leader. In their cooperative relationship with this chorus, Apollo and Artemis present different possibilities for what the *choregos* can and must do.⁶³ These roles are more clearly delineated when a chorus participates in more gendered activities, such as pre-marital rituals or mourning, but even here the poet suggests a way for multiple leaders to emerge in a chorus and comments on what sort of individual is best suited for those various roles.

I argue that Artemis' presence allows the poet to explore the chorus in several of its forms simultaneously. Artemis provides an example of the chorus's internal *choregos*, acting as the figure that is both within the chorus and yet individualized within it. Apollo cannot fully participate in the female section of the chorus, made up as it is of three goddesses, while a mixed chorus generally seems to have no leaders (compare the choruses on the Shield or even those on

⁶³ Lonsdale (1994–95, 30–31) seems to read Apollo's chorus and Artemis' chorus as separate entities, but I do not think this is clear in the text.

Phaeacia; the final funerary chorus in the *Iliad* is exceptional, but its leaders are female).

Artemis' presence in this scene extends the goddesses' circle into a version of the maiden chorus, advocating for its significance as a major choral form. While the scene as a whole might not be fully paradigmatic, Artemis as *choregos* does provide a paradigm for, if not the actual *choregos* in a female chorus, at least the description of such a figure within a literary presentation of choral activity. She somehow fills a role that Apollo cannot; otherwise, such an introduction to her would be unnecessary. The primary (indeed, really the only) difference between the two is, of course, one of gender. They are no different in terms of power or in age (Apollo is always presented as a young man, often in the guise of an ephebe, while Artemis is a perpetual *parthenos*), suggesting that the role of *choregos* shifts according to the sex of the person performing it. In addition, Artemis' presence and importance here indicates that while the external *choregos*-figure brings its own significance to the performance and provides key musical accompaniment, the internal *choregos* is more closely connected with the social structure of the group and provides its members with a model of, if not actual dance steps, the ideal chorus member for that particular chorus's purpose. Through the presence of the two archetypal chorus leaders, Apollo and Artemis, the poet signifies the relationship of the *Hymn*'s subject to the chorus more generally and achieves a united performance of more than one choral type.

The passage as a whole offers extended descriptions of two special individuals, one that takes a less involved role as the accompaniment to the chorus, standing outside but still clearly associated with it, and one that exists within the choral group, leading them not only in the choral dancing itself but also in embodying the epitome of what that particular chorus seeks to perform. At the same time, it provides yet another model by which the individual members can find their

place not only within the choral group but within the social group more generally. By naming each of the gods that participate, and especially by including some epithet or distinguishing characteristic for most of them, the poet adds each god's individualism to the group, demonstrating the most productive manner by which integration should occur. While maintaining the things that make them unique and powerful, each of these gods has formed a composite whole, made stronger and better by the addition of new individuals, like Apollo. The balance between Apollo as soloist and Apollo as Olympian is made emphatic by the last line of the passage, which describes Leto and Zeus looking at "their beloved son, dancing with the other gods" (ὄϊα φίλον παίζοντα μετ' ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι, 206). Here, he is both on his own and included among the others, clearly a member of the group but still retaining the qualities that set him apart, just as the *choregos* fills a role that is part of the chorus but still distinctive. Through these choral scenes, the poet articulates this tension in a way that the audience can recognize in their own choral experience; furthermore, the application of social themes to choral performance is familiar across various times and regions, and thus can provide an enduring symbol on occasions of reperformance.

IV. Apollo and the Muses: A Chorus in the *Hymn to Hermes*

The use of the chorus in the *Hymn to Apollo* offers commentary not only on the negotiation of social relationships, but also on the structure of the chorus and its significance alongside other types of performance. I turn now to two brief passages from the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* that carry on this dialogue between individual and community through the image of the chorus and offer further insight as to the role of the chorus alongside solo performers. The *Hymn to Hermes* strengthens the associations between the Muses and the chorus, between the

Muses and Apollo, and between Apollo and several types of singing and dancing, including the chorus.⁶⁴ When Apollo raises the question of the lyre's origin, he justifies his interest by recounting his existing relationship with other types of song:

τίς τέχνη, τίς μοῦσα ἀμηχανέων μελεδῶνων,
 τίς τρίβος; ἀτρεκέως γὰρ ἅμα τρία πάντα πάρεστιν,
 εὐφροσύνην καὶ ἔρωτα καὶ ἥδυμον ὕπνον ἐλέσθαι.
 καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ Μούσησιν Ὀλυμπιάδεσσιν ὀπηδός,
 τῆσι χοροὶ τε μέλουσι καὶ ἀγλαὸς οἶμος ἀοιδῆς
 καὶ μολπὴ τεθαλυῖα καὶ ἱμερόεις βρόμος αὐλῶν·
 ἀλλ' οὐ πω τί μοι ὦδε μετὰ φρεσὶν ἄλλο μέλησεν,
 οἷα νέων θαλίης ἐνδέξια ἔργα πέλονται.

What skill, what song of unmanageable cares,
 What path? For all at once all three are precisely here
 For the taking, good sense and desire and sweet sleep.
 For I myself am the attendant to the Olympian Muses,
 For whom choruses and the glorious path of song
 And the full dance and the lovely trilling of flutes are a care:
 But until now no other thing has been such a care to me in my mind,
 Even those skillful works of the youths in abundance. (*Hymn to Hermes* 447–54)

In Apollo's own words, the chorus is a primary interest, set here against the lyre that Hermes has created and brought to please Apollo; this is held up by his own *Hymn*'s careful inclusion of the chorus throughout. He indicates that the “full dance” (μολπὴ τεθαλυῖα, 452) is connected to the χορός, along with both the “trilling of flutes” (ἱμερόεις βρόμος αὐλῶν, 452) and the “glorious path of song” (ἀγλαὸς οἶμος ἀοιδῆς, 451), noting all possible components of the choral performance at once: dance, song, and musical accompaniment. Apollo's description of these choruses, which display the full range of available performative elements, stand in clear contrast to solo performance with the lyre, imagined in the lines that follow as just one individual (Hermes), who plays and sings at one time without further accompaniment. Despite his care for the Muses, who cannot play the lyre themselves and who, he suggests, cannot sing without him,

⁶⁴ Along with the *Hymn to Apollo*, Bergren calls this “the other major hymn that concerns poetry and prophecy” (1982, 84).

his interest becomes taken over by the solo instrument.

While the introduction of the lyre in the *Hymn to Hermes* does lead to an explicit distinction between solo and choral performance, its presence does not initiate a full separation of the two types of performance. Following Apollo's piqued interest in the lyre, Hermes slyly offers to share it with him. When he instructs Apollo to "sing, play the lyre, and take heed of beauty" (μέλπεο καὶ κιθάριζε καὶ ἀγλαίας ἀλέγννε, 476), Hermes also invites him to simultaneously continue his attention to the chorus:

εὐκηλος μὲν ἔπειτα φέρειν ἐς δαῖτα θάλειαν
καὶ χορὸν ἱμερόεντα καὶ ἐς φιλοκυδέα κῶμον
εὐφροσύνην νυκτός τε καὶ ἡματος...

And now bring it without care to the flourishing feast,
To the lovely chorus and the glorious procession,
Merriment by day and by night... (*HhH* 480–82)

Hermes encourages Apollo specifically to merge the two styles of performance by bringing the lyre along with him to the chorus, which here must indicate not only the choral performance itself but also the occasion at which they feature. Although he makes a clear distinction between the actual performative bodies, the incorporation of both types at one event or occasion provides insight not only into the realities of performance context but also into the relationship between the two. Apollo, as the self-proclaimed "attendant" (ὄπηδός, 450) of the Muses, plays a supporting role in their choral performances, while also enjoying a role as lyre-player. The full performative occasion is only realized through the presence of both kinds of performance, although they are not opposed or even competitive. It might be possible to see the chorus as primary and the soloist as secondary, but both styles enjoy their own place on the stage before the community.

This configuration, here associated with or imagined between Apollo and the Muses,

echoes the relationship between the Deliades and the blind bard from Chios in the *Hymn to Apollo*, as well as the relationship between Hesiod and the Muses at the opening of the *Theogony*. Hermes' trick does not enable Apollo to "invent" choral poetry here, but he does introduce a new element (the lyre as accompaniment) into their performance and enhance his own contribution. As in the *Hymn to Apollo*, the soloist and chorus here are not competitive, and neither lessens the poetic authority or performative impact of the other. Instead, we see a kind of symbiosis between the performers, in that each allows the other to shine: the accompanying lyre-player provides the music to which the chorus can dance, while the chorus in turn provides an opportunity for the soloist to play. The performances, rather than assuming any sort of hierarchy, grow through one another and enable the success of their counterparts. Even the Muses and Hesiod can be seen to have this sort of relationship, although Hesiod seems less confident than Apollo in his ability to stand alone: in creating the chorus at the opening of his poem, Hesiod provides himself with material that expands a simple invocation into a full tableau of choral performance. Without the description of the chorus, Hesiod's Muses are simply symbolic, lacking the full embodiment of poetic skill and authority that Hesiod can then assume for himself. The *Hymn to Hermes*' brief commentary on the chorus supports and further develops the model of chorus and external *choregos*. By defining the process through which Apollo becomes a fully-fledged paradigm of the accompanying *choregos*-figure, the *Hymn* solidifies this choral construction and offers additional insight into the relationship between chorus and solo performer.

V. Conclusion

Each of these three contexts—Hesiod's *Theogony*, the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, and the

Homeric Hymn to Hermes—contributes to a growing focus in hexameter poetry on the relationship between the chorus and the soloist, the hierarchy of the two, and whether there are any particular features that specifically distinguish their performances or the content that they can perform. Although they eventually present different readings of this issue, the poets of these texts ultimately have similar strategies: to describe, alongside the chorus, a soloist that brings his own poetic authority to the text and whose engagement with the chorus sets the tone for the themes that govern the text as a whole. Hesiod's Muses receive a surprising amount of visual attention, which lends them a vaguely dangerous tone; at the same time, it reduces them to a visual object, somewhat lessening the vocal aspect of their performance and offering Hesiod a path through which to supersede them. While the emphasis on looking at the Muses does allow Hesiod to approach them differently, it also preserves an important element of choral performance: that it is heavily reliant not only on the audience's aural engagement but also their visual engagement. Despite the increased emphasis on what a chorus says (or sings), their dancing remains a key component of their performance as a whole. Although in the *Hymn to Apollo* this feature is lessened (indeed, entirely absent from the *Deliades*), dance was still a primary way through which the chorus could communicate, and it is a strong component of Artemis' choral group in the Olympian celebration. In comparison to the solo bard, dance is the performance element that seems to truly set them apart, even more so than the types of songs they sing or even the number of performers.

These texts offer various levels of engagement between soloist and performer, leading to various levels of harmony in their performances. While Hesiod ultimately takes over the Muses' song, Apollo and other members of the Olympian chorus (especially Artemis) seem to share choral leadership in a surprisingly democratic way. The Delian maidens are probably the chorus

that comes closest to overlapping with their proximate soloist; while certain features of their performance are unique (mimesis, the ability to “charm” or “bewitch”), they lack features that define their chorus beyond being a group of women that sing together. Although it increases their authority, the lack of physical focus in the poet’s description of them actually decreases their relative chorality. Extending this idea, I suggest that communication through the visual is one of, if not the, most important qualities of the literary chorus in the archaic period. A chorus was, in real, live performance, something to be looked at; there is a need for presence and proximity, and through the feature of dance, a true element of spectatorship, that characterizes the chorus in performance. Unlike the soloist, whose songs are not accompanied by dance or movements of any kind, the chorus cannot only be heard; even in most literary examples, they are also clearly seen—in fact, on these occasions, many of them are not even heard (or do not sing) at all. As the choruses in these texts engage more and more closely with singing and communicating their own poetry, the poets must create a new balance between how much a chorus sings and dances, ultimately considering how that affects their performance as a whole. As these choruses indicate, the element of visual communication can be a weakness or a strength, depending on how it is treated by the poet; in addition, dance seems to encourage the participants in the chorus to engage more closely with each other, while song mostly reaches outward to the audience. It may be the case that choruses featuring a strong internal *choregos*-figure are more likely to participate in dance (like the chorus of the goddesses in the *Hymn to Apollo*, 182–206).⁶⁵

The implications of this emphasis on visual communication are significant, and too extensive to receive thorough attention here. Particularly intriguing in light of this idea is the fact

⁶⁵ There are obvious exceptions to this, but the choruses of Artemis are strongly associated with dance, as I will show in the following chapter.

that so many of the choruses found in archaic poetry are made up of female members.⁶⁶ Is it the case that the association between the female body as an object to be looked at and the chorus as a thing to be looked at draws a connection between them and leads to a greater prominence of female choruses, at least in literature? If so, does that association thereby feminize male choruses, or the male members of mixed choruses? How does this change the way the audience “reads” the chorus, either in their experience of literary choruses or in their experience of performance? While this series of questions is impossible to answer fully, based on the available evidence, the following chapter will primarily consider female choruses and their relationship with Artemis, as well as the degree to which they are presented as visual objects or authoritative voices in their literary contexts.

The texts I have examined in this chapter demonstrate that the relationship between *choregos* and chorus is flexible and able to adapt itself to various levels of competition or collaboration. In addition, it is able to provide commentary on a theme that is prevalent not only in the *Theogony* or in the *Hymn to Apollo*, but in a far wider selection of texts from the archaic period. As Calame has shown, the chorus is one means through which individuals in the Greek world could negotiate and establish their place within the community. Within this chapter, I hope to have provided a few examples of how the literary chorus also functions as an arena in which its authors, participants, and audiences can engage with questions about relationship between self and others.

⁶⁶ Calame confirms, based on plastic images and evidence from myth, that a “chorus group is a form more frequently feminine than masculine,” but he does not fully account for why that is the case (1997, 25).

Chapter Three: The Artemis Chorus

I. Introduction

This chapter examines maiden choruses in dactylic hexameter poetry that model themselves on the paradigm of Artemis and her companions, the most archetypal version of the maiden chorus to be found in either myth or literature. I focus here on choruses that consist of female, adolescent members, excluding choruses made up of clearly adult women or choruses that are mixed in terms of age or gender. In addition, I discuss the role of the “internal” *choregos*-figure, who leads the chorus as a full participant and shares defining characteristics (especially gender and age) with the other members. In this chapter, I will consider the following groups: the chorus of Nausicaa in the *Odyssey*, the chorus of Artemis herself as described in the *Homeric Hymn to Artemis*, the Oceanids and Persephone at the opening of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, and the chorus that Aphrodite invents during her seduction of Anchises in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*. While not all of these choruses are explicitly referred to as a *χορός*, and the chorus of Aphrodite only occurs within her false backstory, each receives significant enough description in its context to identify it as a maiden chorus with specific connections to the transitional period between childhood and adulthood and Artemis’ role in connection with that process. The male *choregos*-figure has his own relationship with the chorus (as discussed in Chapter Two), but the choral leadership of Artemis, whether literal or reproduced by an equivalent figure, alters the configuration of such a group to emphasize or manufacture important social implications for its members.

Examination of these choruses, which more often than not can be identified as sites of abduction, reveals the larger literary role that a maiden chorus can play, reshaping a poetic context to emphasize marriage and the processes of social integration that the chorus helps

facilitate.⁶⁷ Furthermore, these choruses provide opportunities to identify a thoroughly developed female *choregos*-figure independent from either a funerary context or the appearance of such a figure in the *partheneia* of Alcman, often considered the best example of that individual role. In turn, the discussion of what exactly the female *choregos* does and is will provide important background for discussion of *PMG* 1 in the following chapter. I argue in this chapter that the presence of the internal *choregos* changes the dynamic of the chorus into one that is clearly associated with marriage and the period of transition between childhood and adulthood, typically indicating the *choregos*'s readiness for marriage and thereby redefining the role of a key character in a broader poetic context.⁶⁸ In every case that I will examine, the presence of such a chorus (that is, a marriage chorus) shapes the entire poem and provides a thematic thread according to which the poem orients itself. Despite the relatively minor role adolescent girls seem to have played in archaic Greek society, their choruses are frequently of paramount importance for reading their larger poetic contexts.

Within the choral paradigm of Artemis and her companions, which orients itself as specifically related to marriage and the transition into adulthood, the most important figure is the girl that assumes the role of the bride. Although the bridal figure has been a focus of scholarly approaches, her complementary role as a *choregos*-figure has not fully been developed. Calame does suggest “a new characteristic that can be attributed to the *choregos*, namely, that this young girl with the feature ‘beauty’ stands apart from the rest of the chorus and is at the point of being integrated into adult society through marriage” (199). What is lacking from his shrewd mapping

⁶⁷ Cohen (2007) shows that artistic representations of abduction often portray boys being taken as children but girls being taken as adolescents, often from a group of companions.

⁶⁸ Nausicaa, although a young girl, is indeed a key figure in the *Odyssey*; Gross notes that “the princess has considerable ability to affect both his prospects in Scheria and his eventual renewal of marriage” (1976, 312). On the importance of the theme of marriage in the poem see Foley (1978), Murnaghan (1987), Katz (1991), and Felson-Rubin (1994), among others.

of these features and choruses, however, is a more comprehensive examination of their relationship with one another, as well as a discussion of the significance that they contain for their literary contexts. Within this specific selection of texts, beginning with the *Odyssey* and continuing with the *Homeric Hymns*, it is possible to trace the solidification of a distinct and potent literary archetype, which certainly serves some basis for the figures of Alcman's *partheneia* and may even help provide a sort of framework for Sappho's poetic treatments of her circle of companions (see Chapter Four). Like Calame, Lonsdale has discussed the chorus as a locus of female abduction, observing that "the victim is a liminal figure, poised on the boundary between adolescence and married life" (1993, 223). Building on this assessment, which itself includes discussion of Nausicaa, Aphrodite, and Persephone, and extending Lonsdale and Calame's emphasis on the maiden chorus's transitional aspects, I focus more closely on how the chorus, as a backdrop for abduction and transition in marriage, serves as a literary signal to the audience and provides a unique setting in which female characters can also transition from relatively minor roles to more significant figures in their contexts. This increased attention to the chorus as a literary device, rather than only as a reflection of social practice, allows the reader to notice connections between them that build a more complete choral pattern. This broader view, in turn, may reflect actual practice or real elements of such maiden choruses, but in these occurrences, it most directly shapes the literary contexts in which such groups can be found. The figures in the choruses I will examine (especially Persephone and Aphrodite) are not simply "girls for whom marriage is imminent" (Calame 199); they are young women whose marriage (or the sexual equivalent) provides the thematic structure for their respective poetic contexts and shapes the entire course of their stories. The overlapping of these qualities and characters, which contributes as a whole to the notion of the female *choregos*-figure, serves as an important step in

the development of that role in archaic melic poetry and even in a tragic context.⁶⁹

As a point of clarification, I will proceed assuming that the term *parthenos* does not strictly indicate a “virgin” (even if this is often how it is translated). Following Cole (2004, 209–10) and McClure (2019), I maintain that choruses of adolescent young women rely more heavily on the identifier of “unmarried” than on that of “virgin,” which strictly suggests girls that have never had sexual contact. Even in practicing choruses, the availability of young women to participate in choruses or the distribution of ages/statuses even within a certain age-group or category like “adolescent” might have meant that not all participants in adolescent choruses were even unmarried. Girls that took part in these rites could reasonably have been in their first years of marriage, before the experience of pregnancy, without overstepping religious boundaries; Artemis was, after all, a patron goddess not only of girls before marriage but also of girls and women in pregnancy and childbirth, suggesting that her influence is strong even after a girl’s first sexual experience.⁷⁰ In literary choruses of Artemis, there is no reason to suspect that all members were unmarried or had never had sexual contact, and in fact there are figures that appear in these choruses that seem to be just the opposite.⁷¹ The only figure that is by necessity unmarried is the chorus’s lead member, the internal *choregos*-figure that stands out not only for her appearance but also for her occupation of the liminal stage between adolescence and marriage and her strong degree of marital potential. This emphasis further accounts for the association between the chorus of Artemis and the scene of abduction—exactly the kind of place

⁶⁹ For example, Murnaghan (2018) reads the relationship between Penelope and her serving women as one example of the way the chorus as described in epic prefigures the tragic chorus.

⁷⁰ Cole (2004): 209.

⁷¹ For example, Persephone’s chorus of Oceanids includes, among others, Kalypso and Kallirhoe, neither of whom are prominently identified as virgins elsewhere (*HhD* 418–23). Aphrodite claims to have danced with a chorus of Nymphs in the *Hymn to Aphrodite*, likely the same Nymphs that later will raise her son—Nymphs with whom “Seilenoι and the far-seeing slayer of Argus mingle in love, in the inner part of lovely caves” (τῆσι δὲ Σειληνοὶ καὶ εὐσκοπὸς Ἀργειφόντης / μίσγοντ’ ἐν φιλότῃτι μυχῷ σπείων ἐροέντων, 262–63).

Artemis might reasonably be assumed to protect her members from the loss of their virginity, instead of allowing the chorus to form a backdrop for its occurrence. If the scene of choral performance points out a girl's nuptial availability, it sets up a scene of abduction that follows ritual patterns associated with marriage (and with Artemis). The central figure is the only member whose unmarried status matters in the literary chorus of Artemis, which takes as its model the chorus of Artemis herself and amplifies the special qualities of its central member through the supporting cast of chorus members in the background.⁷²

II. Choral Paradigms: Artemis and Nausicaa

Taking Artemis as a paradigmatic representative of the internal *choregos*-figure, this chapter will consider various figures that occupy this role, as well as choruses of maidens more generally. Artemis provides the best example of the chorus-leader that is both a part of the chorus and, at the same time, somehow distinct from her chorus-mates, and this model is most identifiable in the context of the maiden chorus, especially those with particular relationships to marriage.⁷³ Interestingly, the choruses that involve a young woman (or goddess) taking the place of Artemis as a *choregos*-figure typically bear associations with marriage that indicate the

⁷² The implications of this type of *choregos*-figure may be of considerable significance when approaching tragic heroines (like Antigone, Electra, and Alcestis) that, even without "virgin" status or the support of a true maiden chorus, assume certain aspects of the *choregos*-figure in their relationships with the chorus and/or the importance of marriage to their characterization. Conversely, the lack of a true *choregos*-figure (for example, among the Danaids of Aeschylus' *Suppliants*) may be in dialogue with this choral pattern, which typically results in the successful transition of its *choregos*-figure (who serves as a model for the others in the chorus). On this see especially Swift (2010)

⁷³ A compatible argument has been made by Larson, who notes that while the association between Artemis and her nymphs is surprisingly infrequent in archaic poetry, these nymphs, "like Artemis herself, are mythopoetic representatives of the Greek maiden at adolescence... Nymphs in their relations with Artemis are not themselves objects of cult...but they are representative of the social rituals by which females come of age and take their place in society" (1997, 255). While Larson is right to point out that other nymphs are more frequently attached to Dionysus, Pan, or Hermes, my focus here is not on instances of Artemis and her nymphs dancing but rather on choruses that follow those patterns. Other than the examples from Chapter Two, there are few strong examples of choral groups that could be seen to be following a pattern of male leader and female adolescents, and certainly none that have a sexual dynamic, like the nymphs with Pan or Hermes (255).

marital readiness of the *choregos*.⁷⁴ Despite Artemis' perpetual virginity, it seems to be the case that when a girl takes on her choral role, she advertises her own readiness to transition out of her role as a *parthenos* and into her role as a wife and woman—even when she herself is not willing or intending to make this transition.

Before considering in more detail two maiden choruses in the *Hymns*, I want to reexamine a chorus discussed in an earlier chapter in light of its relationship with the Artemis chorus. The chorus of Nausicaa and her companions that occurs in book 6 of the *Odyssey* is a perfect example of the way that this kind of chorus can reshape not only its participants but the larger literary context. As discussed in Chapter One, Nausicaa acts as a powerful potential source of delay to Odysseus' return journey. Although she is not inherently dangerous, the prospect of marriage with Nausicaa provides a unique alternative to Odysseus' eventual reunion with Penelope, and the promise of Phaeacia as a more successful version of Ithaca (exemplified by its commitment to sacrifices and its frequent display of choral activity) cements this parallel, centered on the idea of Nausicaa as a young bride. Nausicaa's marriage occupies her own mind (*Od.* 6.66–67) and even motivates her trip to the water where she meets Odysseus. As a result, there is an undercurrent of marital potential running throughout the entire interaction between Nausicaa and Odysseus as well as through the Phaeacian books as a whole. Central to this theme is the description of Nausicaa's activity with her companions, which takes a clearly choral form and showcases not just her beauty but specifically her readiness for marriage:

αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ σίτου τάρφθεν δμφαί τε καὶ αὐτή,
σφαίρη ται δ' ἄρ' ἐπαιζον, ἀπὸ κρήδεμνα βαλοῦσαι·
τῆσι δὲ Ναυσικάα λευκώλενος ἤρχετο μολπῆς.
οἴη δ' Ἄρτεμις εἴσι κατ' οὔρεα ἰοχέαιρα,
ἢ κατὰ Τηϋγετον περιμήκετον ἢ Ἐρύμανθον,
τερπομένη κάπροισι καὶ ὠκείης ἐλάφοισι·
τῆ δέ θ' ἅμα νύμφαι, κοῦραι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο,

⁷⁴ Burkert observes that Artemis' virginity is “peculiarly erotic” (1985, 150).

ἀγρονόμοι παίζουσι, γέγηθε δέ τε φρένα Λητώ:
 πασάων δ' ὑπὲρ ἢ γε κάρη ἔχει ἡδὲ μέτωπα,
 ῥεῖά τ' ἀριγνώτη πέλεται, καλαὶ δέ τε πᾶσαι·
 ὧς ἢ γ' ἀμφιπόλοισι μετέπρεπε παρθένος ἀδμῆς.

But when she and the slave girls had enjoyed their food,
 They began to play with a ball, throwing off their veils;
 And white-armed Nausicaa was the leader of the dance.
 Just as Artemis, arrow-shooter, goes throughout the mountains,
 Along either tall Taygetus or Erymanthus,
 Delighting in boars and swift deer;
 And the nymphs that haunt the countryside, daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus,
 They play with her, and Leto is happy in her heart:
 For Artemis holds her head and brow above them all,
 And she is easily known, but they are all lovely;
 Just so the unwedded girl shines among her handmaids. (6.99–109)

Nausicaa's resemblance to Artemis is the unambiguous focus of this passage, and it seems to hinge especially on their shared role as "leader of the dance" (ἤρχετο μολπῆς, 101). Both are the internal *choregos*-figures of their respective choruses and are in fact so unique among their companions that they are the only members actually named: Nausicaa plays with girls that seem to be owned or employed by her family (δμωαί, 99; ἀμφιπόλοισι, 109), while Artemis frolics with her nymphs (νύμφαι, 105), only further described as the "daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus" (κοῦραι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο, 105). The choruses provide the context for viewing their leaders, almost like scenery around Nausicaa and Artemis. Especially through the simile, the construction of individual and chorus becomes nearly formulaic, suggesting that the best way to indicate a young girl's beauty is to place her in a group of slightly less beautiful companions, which always has choral connotations.⁷⁵ Furthermore, extended descriptions of an adolescent girl on her own are unusual in Greek poetry; the chorus around her thus contextualizes her, establishes her

⁷⁵ Murnaghan, commenting on a choral occasion in the *Iliad*, observes "the function of the chorus as the site where a character, and in particular a female character, enters into narrative (2013, 156). She further notes that "in the Greek world in general, the most likely and most socially sanctioned setting for this event [a man catching sight of a beautiful woman] is a choral performance by a group of young women, in which one in particular is the leading, or outstanding member" (156).

singularity, and justifies the extended visual focus on her physical features and body.

The motif of the standout individual among the group is not unique to a choral setting, but the chorus is one natural literary topos in which to engage with such an idea, especially as it can draw on the audience's experience of actual choral performances that reproduced such a model.⁷⁶ Given the fully female cast and the clear emphasis on marriage surrounding Nausicaa and her chorus, it also seems that the poet is utilizing another level of this choral formula: not just the special member of the group, but more specifically the bridal figure among other female age-mates. Artemis does not ever fully assume the guise of "bride," but as one goddess to whom brides dedicated offerings and made prayers before marriage and as the ultimate example of a *parthenos*—both modest and desirable—she nevertheless provides a model for young brides before their transition to married women. Especially given her consistent role as a *choregos*-figure, Artemis helps define the choral dynamic between *choregos* and others in a chorus of adolescent female figures. Both separately elsewhere and together in this scene, Artemis and Nausicaa offer a paradigm of the internal *choregos* within this specific type of chorus.

Nausicaa's example is important, because she actually has bridal potential (unlike Artemis), which both motivates and defines the chorus in which she participates. In turn, Nausicaa's chorus and especially her role as internal *choregos*/potential bride give structure to the larger poetic context. Through this chorus, the audience of the *Odyssey* can view Nausicaa as possessing the qualities of a bridal figure; like Circe and Kalypso, she thus provides another source of delay and even danger for Odysseus and his *nostos*. Because it is possible to read Phaeacia as a foil for Ithaca, Nausicaa's "threat" becomes more real and seems more potent than Odysseus' previous

⁷⁶ Cyrino notes that the audience of the *Hymn to Aphrodite* would most likely have consisted of men and women (2004, 381). As observed by Cyrino (381 n17), Rutherford (2000) goes so far as to suggest that certain genres were aimed towards a female audience specifically.

delayers. As discussed in Chapter One, the significance of the Phaeacian episode and in particular the theme of marriage that runs through it are not to be underestimated in the context of the *Odyssey*, given that the poem as a whole fixates on marriage as one of the most important social connections, and a governing framework for society more generally. This choral passage, then, which promotes Nausicaa's bridal potential, helps set in motion the major theme of the books that center around Phaeacia, and its choral elements encourage the audience's interpretation of this scene as clearly related to the institution of marriage.

In her choral scene, Nausicaa resembles Artemis in a guise that is hinted at but not explicitly depicted before the *Homeric Hymn to Artemis*. As the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* makes clear, the prototypical external *choregos*-figure (Apollo) consistently interacts with choruses in literature but never seems to participate as a full member of a chorus, either mixed or all male. His sister, however, is regularly depicted as part of the chorus, and in fact takes on the role of the internal *choregos* in most choruses that she participates in, even if Apollo is the accompanist (e.g., *HhA* 195–99). The description from her own brief *Hymn* provides the clearest expression of Artemis' role as a *choregos*-figure, as well as the paradigm for the leaders of maiden choruses that follow in this tradition:

αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν τερφθῆ ἠεροσκόπος ἰοχέαιρα,
 εὐφρήνη δὲ νόον, χαλάσασ' εὐκαμπέα τόξα
 ἔρχεται ἐς μέγα δῶμα κασιγνήτιο φίλοιο,
 Φοίβου Ἀπόλλωνος, Δελφῶν ἐς πίονα δῆμον,
 Μουσῶν καὶ Χαρίτων καλὸν χορὸν ἀρτυνέουσα.
 ἔνθα κατακρεμάσασα παλίντονα τόξα καὶ ἰοὺς
 ἠγεῖται χαρίεντα περὶ χροῖ κόσμον ἔχουσα,
 ἐξάρχουσα χορούς· αἱ δ' ἀμβροσίην ὄπ' ἰεῖσαι
 ὑμνεῦσιν Λητῶ καλλίσφυρον, ὡς τέκε παῖδας
 ἀθανάτων βουλῆ τε καὶ ἔργμασιν ἔξοχ' ἀρίστους.
 χαίρετε, τέκνα Διὸς καὶ Λητοῦς ἠυκόμοιο·
 αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν ὑμέων τε καὶ ἄλλης μνήσομ' ἀοιδῆς.

But when the watcher of beasts and pourer of arrows is satisfied,

And delighted in her mind, then unstringing her well-curved bow
 She goes to the great home of her dear brother,
 Phoebus Apollo, in the fertile land of Delphi,
 To set up the beautiful chorus of Muses and Graces.
 And there having hung up her curved bow and arrows
 She leads them, with grace and order in her appearance,
 Leading the choruses: but they send out their ambrosial voices
 And hymn lovely-ankled Leto, how she bore children,
 Outstanding and best among the immortals in will and deeds.
 Farewell, daughter of Zeus and lovely-haired Leto:
 But I will remember you and also another song. (*HhAr* 11–22)

Even in this poem, Apollo's influence remains visible, but it is clearly Artemis that leads the choral group. This description usefully illuminates the features that contribute to Artemis' role as *choregos* and allows us to identify elements of the description that are formulaic, rather than descriptive, in order to delineate how Artemis' chorus is an archetype for this type of chorus elsewhere in literature. The poem makes her role explicit in several ways: she sets it up (ἀπρονέουσα, 15), commands it (ἡγεῖται, 17), and acts as the leader (ἐξάρχουσα, 18). While the nuances between these words in a choral setting are unclear, forms of (ἐξ-)άρχω are frequently used in formulas involving either lament or the dance (*Il.* 18.51; *Il.* 18.606, *Od.* 6.101; see discussion in Chapter One). This passage strongly resembles the chorus of goddesses that takes place in the *Hymn to Apollo* (182–206), discussed towards the end of the previous chapter, while the *Hymn to Artemis*' description of the choruses celebrating Leto and her children recalls the *Hymn to Apollo* as a whole and especially the Delian Maidens' own songs. Although Artemis' chorus sings here, the description focuses on how the scene appears, which will remain true for choruses that follow this pattern. As I will show, somewhat counterintuitively, the choral context is what determines the individuality of its *choregos*-figure. Artemis is already the focus of this *Hymn*, but through the chorus of the Graces and the Muses she becomes more marked as an individual. With the chorus behind and around the central figure, it becomes easier to see just her

exceptional nature.

Artemis' association with the chorus is well attested throughout Greek literature, beginning with Homer as discussed above, and especially in the tragedies of Euripides.⁷⁷ Due to the nature of the choruses that I will discuss in this chapter, my analysis relies heavily on the work of Calame (1997), who has convincingly shown the role of the chorus in integrating young women into the community. Beyond the divisions he observes based on age, his assessment of choral groups is largely organized according to the divinity with whom they are associated, and his evaluation of Artemis choruses reveals important patterns in the ritual worship of Artemis throughout Greece. As Calame notes, chorality was so central to the character of Artemis that the philosophical question was posed by Aesop as to whether or not Artemis was *ever* not participating in a chorus (1997, 91; Aes. *Prov.* 9). Susan Cole (2004) has discussed the relationship of Artemis to borderlands and the spaces in between cities or other well-established locales in the ancient world. The transitional aspects of Artemis' cult and tradition have been well documented, particularly with regard to her rites at Brauron, as has her relationship with the chorus, but again, the two concepts have yet to be considered fully alongside one another.⁷⁸ Calame broadly discusses the importance of the chorus as part of the initiatory process for young women (and men) in archaic Greece and observes that "Artemisian reversal has to do with adolescent rites of passage" (1997, 155) and, more specifically, that the dancing and choruses that appear in the rites of Artemis "are not just any rites of passage: they belong to the sub-class

⁷⁷ See Calame (1997, 91 n5).

⁷⁸ Although see Swift on *partheneia* and the relationship of Artemis to this choral form in *Iphigeneia among the Taurians*, (2010, 173–18). Swift also discusses Helen's role as a *parthenos* in the *Helen* (2010, 218–40) and reads the play as "an extended metaphor for *partheneia* cult" (222). On Artemis' rites at Brauron see Walbank (1981), Cole (1985), Sourvinou-Inwood (1988), and Perlman (1989). Frontisi-Ducroux (1981) discusses Artemis' role as the overseer of transition, especially with regards to the transition between wilderness and civilization and her relationship with bucolic poetry.

of adolescent rites, rites of tribal initiation” (174).

However, Calame’s thorough analysis of the specific cults of Artemis does not fully consider those choruses that are purely literary—like the chorus in the *Homeric Hymn to Artemis* or the choral passage describing Nausicaa in which she is compared to the goddess—in light of the role of Artemis or the relationship of these choruses to transitional activities. Noting the resemblance between the chorus of Artemis and that of Nausicaa in a discussion of the rites of Artemis Limnatis, Calame observes that “all the objects dedicated by Timareta are thus associated with adolescence. Their dedication to Artemis signifies for the young girl the end of the period that they symbolize, and at the same time probably the transition to adulthood through marriage” (145). The same observation can be applied more broadly, not only to the actual rituals associated with Artemis in her various guises, but also to the literary choruses that relate to her or even follow the very simple structure of an adolescent, female chorus led by a particularly noticeable individual. Clay notes, in discussing the *Hymn to Aphrodite*, that “the dance in honor of Artemis by girls approaching the age of marriage performed the function of a debut or showcase for the display of marriageable maidens, who were generally kept in seclusion” (1989, 176). Although I believe the relative seclusion of girls in the archaic period merits a more complicated response, it does seem to be the case that in the chorus of Artemis, at least when performed in a civic/public setting and not in the wilderness (Artemis’ other domain), marriageability is an intrinsic element of the performance.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ The *Hymn to Aphrodite* locates Artemis in both the wilderness and the city (18–20), as Clay herself observes (1989, 160), but I believe it is the very occurrence of choral scenes in the style of or worship of Artemis that support a lack of relative seclusion for young women. Scenes like the chorus of Nausicaa or even the abduction of Persephone might warn against the external activity of young women, but these, along with the choruses mentioned in the *Odyssey* that take place among the Phaeacians, all provide evidence for habitual activity outside the home for young women. On the relative lack of evidence for the strict seclusion of young women, see McClure (2019).

In order to form a more comprehensive picture of this type of chorus in literature, I will first examine the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, arguing that the opening scene of Persephone and the daughters of Ocean can be read as a chorus and that this is vital to fully interpreting the poem as a whole. Following this, I discuss the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, arguing that Aphrodite undermines her own desire to remain outside a traditional social role through her use of the choral identity to present herself as an appealing young maiden to Anchises. Both of these *Hymns* draw on the established pattern of the maiden chorus—and specifically the maiden chorus as a bridal chorus—in order to fully construct their major poetic themes. Although neither Persephone nor Aphrodite intentionally participates in a bridal chorus in order to find a husband, this pattern is so strong that its effects take hold anyway. Against the backdrop of chorality, both goddesses unwittingly set themselves up as available, bridal figures primed for the transition into more traditional roles of wife and/or mother.

In doing so, these figures participate in the larger theme of the *Hymns*, the process of incorporation, a notion developed by Clay (1989) and discussed in the context of the *Hymn to Apollo* in Chapter Two. Persephone's chorus presents her as a bridal figure, which forms a significant background to her seizure by Hades and her transition to the status of wife; through this process, she becomes fully incorporated into the Olympian hierarchy and takes her place as a full goddess with a specific domain and persona. Aphrodite initially resists incorporation, utilizing her significant powers beyond what is appropriate and flouting the established social order, especially through her decision to remain unwedded and childless. As she seduces Anchises, however, she presents herself as a young maiden seized from a chorus, portraying herself as ready to experience precisely the kind of transition she had previously avoided. Both of these choral constructions draw on the choral archetype of Nausicaa's chorus in establishing a

chorus of maidens as potently connected to the process of marriage; in addition, both follow the pattern of Nausicaa's and Artemis' choruses in setting one particular member apart as both internal *choregos* and bridal figure. When viewed together, each of these bridal figures—Nausicaa, Persephone, and Aphrodite—offer examples of different attitudes towards marriage and social incorporation, perhaps even providing models for actual young women in Greece with varying levels of willingness or resistance to their futures as wives and mothers. At the same time, these choruses have a substantial impact on their literary contexts, generating themes and providing a sense of structure to their respective poems through their emphasis on marriage, transition, and incorporation.

III. A Maiden Chorus in the *Hymn to Demeter*

The *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* has traditionally been left out of scholarship that discusses the chorus, largely because it never uses the specific word *χορός*, and because its only scene with choral potential lasts for just a few short lines. One important exception is Calame, who admits, regarding the *Hymn*, “If it is not explicitly said that a chorus of Oceanides was performing a ritual in honor of Artemis, the young goddess [Persephone], accompanied by Athena, nevertheless took part in an adolescent group with choral connotations” (92). While Calame briefly notes the scene of Persephone's abduction in his discussion of the choruses of Artemis, he does not fully consider it as a choral scene in and of itself. Expanding on his assessment of the Artemis choruses, I argue that the opening of the hymn is a typical example of a choral scene that not only sets the stage for the rest of the hymn but also introduces one of its most important themes. By presenting Persephone and the daughters of Ocean as a chorus, the poet positions Persephone as ready for marriage; he indicates this through the presence of an

accompanying maiden chorus, furthering the importance of the marriage ritual that underpins the early portion of this hymn. In what follows, I first examine the passage for the numerous “choral connotations” hinted at by Calame, developing these beyond simply choral hints into full indicators of a specific choral type. Then I discuss the importance of this passage in its larger context, building on the work of Clay (1989) to show that the chorus enables key themes within the poem that contribute to its greater purpose. Finally, I consider the second description of this scene, provided by Persephone herself in her narration of the events, arguing that this version contains certain differences in perspective, signaling the rehabilitation of Persephone’s subjectivity and providing her the opportunity to frame her own story as a controlling agent, rather than simply a passive object.

The *Hymn to Demeter* opens with a depiction of Persephone surrounded by a company of other young girls, playing innocently in a meadow:

Δήμητρ’ ἠύκομον, σεμνήν θεόν, ἄρχομ’ ἀείδειν,
αὐτήν ἠδὲ θύγατρα τανύσφυρον, ἦν Αἰδωνεὺς
ἦρπαξεν, δῶκεν δὲ βαρύκτυπος εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς,
νόσφιν Δήμητρος χρυσαόρου, ἀγλαοκάρπου,
παίζουσιν κούρησι σὺν Ὠκεανοῦ βαθυκόλοις

We begin to sing of Demeter, lovely-haired, holy goddess,
Her and her slim-ankled daughter, whom Hades
Snatched, but whom deep-thundering wide-seeing Zeus gave,
When, far apart from Demeter of the golden sword and glorious fruit,
She was playing with the daughters of Ocean, with deep-folded garments... (*HhD* 1–5)

Alongside her female age-mates, specified as the daughters of Ocean, Persephone is a member of a collective, seemingly safe from the dangers that await a young woman alone in a public place.

The feeling of safety provided by her companions is itself another distraction from this chorus’s other purpose: to display her physical and sexual maturity and initiate her into the world of adulthood and marriage. In this section I argue that, although the textual designation of χορός is

absent, this group assumes the role of a maiden chorus to indicate Persephone's marital readiness and help facilitate her transition into adulthood. Particularly through their similarities to other choral groups in early hexameter poetry, as well as the use of *παίζω* as an indicator of both the group's choral aspects and its members' sexual availability, the group of Oceanids provides the social context against which to read the beginning of Persephone's evolution from *parthenos* to *gyne*.⁸⁰

My interpretation is enabled by certain choral indicators in the group of Oceanids at the opening of the *Hymn*. It is likely that for some audience members, simply the presence of a group of young women outside the home was enough to call the chorus to mind; after all, free, elite young women in Greece are traditionally thought to have experienced a relatively secluded life with a limited public presence, leading Calame to note simply that "choral activity was characteristic of young women" (30). However, there are other elements of this opening scene that specifically invite the audience to interpret it as choral, with Persephone as the central figure. First, the daughters of Ocean seem to be Persephone's age-mates, suggested by their shared designation of *κούρησι* and her own identification as *κούρη* in line 8, situating them securely in the category of adolescents. *Κούρη* is the primary signifier for both parties, emphasizing their girlhood at this early stage in the poem, and in fact it is the main way of identifying Persephone, who is not named until line 55 of the poem.⁸¹

Second, the way that this group is named in the poem implies a choral identity. Although

⁸⁰ Persephone never fully reaches the full completion of this transition, of course, since she never bears any children. The transition from girl to woman in Greece does not consist of merely one step or event but rather is a series of steps (from child to adolescent to bride to wife/woman, each stage of which has a number of transitional components).

⁸¹ She is otherwise identified as *θύγατρα τανύσφουρον* (2), but this does not provide much information about her actual identity to the audience. "Korē" is a primary identifier for Persephone/the daughter of Demeter in other traditions, and the rites at Eleusis referred to her in this way (rather than by name).

the patronymic form of their name is not used, this group of young women is already bound by their collective identity as the “daughters of Ocean” (κούρησι Ὠκεανοῦ, 5). Like the Muses of the *Theogony* and the Nereids of *Iliad* 18, the Oceanids regularly exhibit a collective identity in epic poetry; but they also later form the chorus of Aeschylus’ *Prometheus Bound*.⁸² Even in the *Theogony*, where the Oceanids are presented in a catalogue (lines 346–61), they assume some degree of chorality, especially if the way the list culminates in Styx identifies her as the *choregos*-figure. From the earliest sources, they are almost always grouped together and treated as a unit because of their shared parentage, and the tendency to envision them *as a group* deepens their choral potential.

Third, the participle παίζουσιν (line 5) characterizes their activity, and although this word is often translated as “playing,” it frequently indicates dancing, playing a musical instrument, or even a combination of dancing and singing. At the close of the *Thesmophoriazousae*, Aristophanes uses this word of the chorus to specifically indicate “choral activities”: “ἀλλὰ πέπαισται μετρίως ἡμῖν,” says the chorus leader, “but we have played the chorus long enough” (Ar. *Th.* 1227). The participial form applied to Persephone, combined with the proximity of her action and the Oceanids (παίζουσιν κούρησι σὺν) suggests that they are all doing the same activity together. Their collective participation in the same activity contributes to the chorality of the scene, since it evokes the unified singing and dancing done by a chorus during performance.

Finally, παίζουσιν suggests an important resemblance to other groups of young women, particularly that of Nausicaa and her companions (*Odyssey* 6.99–109). As discussed above, Nausicaa and her handmaidens dance together at the Phaeacian shore, and they are a group of

⁸² See Calame (1997, 30–33). For a closer examination of these “daughter-groups” in tragedy, see Murnaghan (2006).

young, unmarried women with a very obvious *choregos*-figure that stands out from the group. Calame has likewise observed the similarities between the two groups, noting that Nausicaa acts as the *choregos*, and that *παίζω*, used twice in this scene in the *Odyssey*, is “intimately connected with the activity of singing and dancing” (87). Making a similar connection, Foley (1994) observes that “girls in myth are traditionally carried off, often from a chorus of maidens, while gathering flowers in a meadow (or by water)” and that Nausicaa herself faces an equally dangerous threat when Odysseus on the shore (33). Nausicaa and her companions are similar to Persephone and the Oceanids in that they occupy the same age group and are clearly marked as ready for marriage, and this association between them in turn supports the choral interpretation of Persephone and the Oceanids.

Although the description of the Oceanids is brief, there are clear indications that they are playing a choral role, an identity that an audience intimately familiar with choral activity would have recognized. The combination of their collective identity, their shared age range and the significance of this life stage for women in ancient Greece, as well as the characterization of their group activity, suggests that the chorality of the daughters of Ocean was readily observable and meaningful within its context. Even when the specific term *χορός* is absent, the group can indeed be read *as a chorus*, and it seems likely that the audience would have been in a position to interpret this accordingly. Furthermore, later sources envisioned this very scene as explicitly choral: as noted by Calame (1997, 92), Euripides’ *Helen* describes Persephone as being abducted *κυκλίων / χορῶν ἔξω παρθενίων*, “from a circular chorus of maidens” (1312–13). While the vocabulary used to describe the scene differs between this play and the *Hymn*, its message remains the same: the group is clearly thought of as a chorus.

Once we accept the intrinsic chorality of this group, the larger question of its significance

remains. Key to fully realizing the importance of the choral nature of this passage is understanding precisely what kind of chorus this is. I argue that this is not simply a chorus but, more precisely, a marriage chorus, which showcases Persephone's marital availability and provides the backdrop for this part of her transition into adulthood. Certain elements of this chorus, especially its eroticized description, its setting, and its adherence to descriptive patterns of literary choruses (both human and divine), support this reading. A choral interpretation of this scene enables a new understanding of the poem as a whole, which relies on the theme of incorporation through social transition and uses marriage as a means of situating Persephone in the new Olympian hierarchy.

There are a host of elements that emphasize the erotic and nuptial significance of this choral scene. Rosenmeyer (2004) notes that the verb *παίζω* appears in a number of other erotically charged spaces, including Anacreon's Thracian filly poem (*PMG* 417.10) and the *Hymn to Aphrodite* (line 120), but also, as noted above, in the *Odyssey's* description of Nausicaa and her companions. In all of these cases, the verb suggests the occupation of a sexually liminal stage by the young women whose activity it describes; the verb itself, and thus the action it conveys, is "always both innocent and suggestive" (Rosenmeyer 2004:177). Thus, while contributing to the overall chorality of the scene, the description of the group as *παίζουσάν* also deepens its erotic nature and heightens the sexual availability of the women in the scene. In a discussion of Anacreon 358 (*PMG*), Pfeijffer (2000) also notes the eroticism of *συμπαίξεν*, which in that instance helps support the punch line of the girl's attraction not to the lyric "I" but instead to one of her companions in the game (168–69).

In addition, the setting is itself highly erotic and specifically connected to the process of marriage. To an audience familiar with the tropes of archaic poetry and mythology the meadow

hints of sexual danger (or readiness) even as it entrances Persephone with its blooms. Among many scholars that comment on the significance of the meadow, Foley states that “the motif of abduction from a meadow and a group of maidens suggests the girl’s readiness for marriage” (1994, 34) while Deacy considers it “a place of sexual allure, whose sensual pleasures emanate from the visual appeal of the flowers combined with the heady scent generated by their profusion” (2013, 398). The lush descriptions of the flowers in this passage demonstrate precisely this sort of sensory overload, especially the narcissus, to which Persephone is specifically drawn (lines 8–16); Foley notes that it “was thought to be an aphrodisiac” (1994, 34). Brockliss suggests that this is no ordinary flower, but whereas Persephone fails to understand the special qualities of this particular narcissus, “listeners would have understood that its attractive qualities far exceed those of narcissi in the real world” (2019, 46). Its own growth seems to mirror the sexual maturation of Persephone herself, evidenced by the curious detail that Gaia grew it to bring “pleasure to the One Who Receives Many, according to the will of Zeus”:

ἄνθεά τ’ αἰνυμένην, ῥόδα καὶ κρόκον ἠδ’ ἴα καλὰ
 λειμῶν’ ἄμ μαλακὸν καὶ ἀγαλλίδας ἠδ’ ὑάκινθον
 νάρκισσόν θ’, ὃν φῦσε δόλον καλυκώπιδι κούρη
 Γαῖα Διὸς βουλῆσι χαριζομένη Πολυδέκτη,
 θαυμαστὸν γανόωντα· σέβας τό γε πᾶσιν ιδέσθαι
 ἀθανάτοις τε θεοῖς ἠδὲ θνητοῖς ἀνθρώποις·
 τοῦ καὶ ἀπὸ ρίζης ἑκατὸν κάρα ἐξεπεφύκει·
 κῶζ’ ἦδιστ’ ὀδμή, πᾶς τ’ οὐρανὸς εὐρύς ὑπερθεῖν
 γαῖά τε πᾶσ’ ἐγέλασσε καὶ ἄλμυρὸν οἶδμα θαλάσσης.
 ἦ δ’ ἄρα θαμβήσασ’ ὠρέξατο χερσὶν ἄμ’ ἄμφω
 καλὸν ἄθυρμα λαβεῖν· χάνε δὲ χθῶν εὐρυάγνια
 Νύσιον ἄμ πεδίον, τῆ ὄρουσεν ἄναξ Πολυδέγμων
 ἵπποις ἀθανάτοισι, Κρόνου πολυώνυμος υἱός.

...and picking flowers, roses and crocuses and lovely violets
 Throughout the soft meadow, and irises and the hyacinth
 And the narcissus, which Gaia grew as a trick for the blushing girl—
 Bringing pleasure to the One Who Receives Many, according to the will of Zeus
 —A marvelous, bright thing: wonderful for all to see,
 Both immortal gods and mortal men:

From its root a hundred heads sprouted;
 It sent out the sweetest smell, and the whole broad heaven from above
 And the whole earth laughed, and the salty swell of the sea.
 But she, marveling, stretched out with both hands together
 To take the beautiful toy; and the earth with broad paths yawned
 Along the Nysian plain and there the lord who receives many sprang
 Up with his immortal horses, the many-named son of Kronos. (*HhD* 6–18)

It is the very act of attempting to pluck this flower that leads to the opening of the earth and the arrival of Hades himself.⁸³ Swift observes that “the meadow is presented as a liminal zone, where sexuality is present in the lush growth, but has not yet been channelled into the social institution of marriage and legitimized procreation” (2006, 128). As Persephone’s bridal potential is made more and more apparent by the description of the scene, her companions’ choral nature takes on a more specific role in the pseudo-marriage that follows.

In addition to increasing the erotic nature of the scene, the list of flowers has a secondary function: to indicate Persephone’s own central role in the choral group. All the flowers (roses, crocuses, violets, irises, hyacinths) are beautiful and seem to be in full bloom, but the narcissus clearly stands apart, and the poet devotes a full eight and a half lines to its appearance and role in the scene. Similarly, Persephone’s companions are (as noted above) all of a similar age, and they are further characterized as βαθυκόλποις (5): either dressed in billowing garments with deep folds, or possibly deep-breasted (creating the folds). The word appears to have a sexual connotation, or at least indicate a pronounced femininity, suggesting that the companions are, like Persephone, if not sexually available, at least able to be sexualized by the viewer. The Oceanids and Persephone are therefore paralleled by the list of flowers and the narcissus; the specialness of this final bloom thus indicates Persephone’s relationship as the “leader” of the group, and her clear attraction to this flower only strengthens this association. In plucking the

⁸³ Lincoln notes that the act of gathering flowers is “still a ritual prelude to marriage in the Greek countryside” (1979, 224).

narcissus, Persephone mirrors (and in fact even prompts) her own seizure by her husband-to-be.

In conjunction with the numerous features that increase the eroticism of the scene, there are a number of other elements within the description that help identify them specifically as a chorus with *nuptial* significance. This is especially important if we follow Calame's argument that the chorus "always exists for a specific occasion, most frequently a cult" (1997, 89). In his classification of the lyric songs written for female choruses, Calame devotes his attention to "the paeon, the dithyramb, the kitharodia, the threnody, and the nuptial song, to which can probably be added the hymn" (74). These categories are, unfortunately for our purposes, reliant on the rich description of the song being performed, which limits its application for choruses that primarily dance or groups that are not explicitly said to sing; our chorus is particularly lacking in these qualities. However, the category of "nuptial songs" is performed "exclusively" by choruses of young girls, and he notes that "these singers are generally the contemporaries and friends of the young bride" (84). Calame further notes that the Oceanids sing a nuptial song at the marriage of Prometheus in Aeschylus' version, and that in at least one example "only the feature 'dance' is realized" (84). Of the existing lyric "genres" that Calame identifies, the nuptial song seems most easily adapted for this chorus of Oceanids.

All of these categories, however, are specific to choruses of *human* women. Calame later acknowledges that "among the gods, a lyric and choral performance need not be motivated by a cult" (90), since the gods do not participate in ritual. He goes on to concede that "since [the gods] eat and marry in the same way as men, it is not surprising that the wedding ceremony and the banquet are the only motives, if motives are indeed needed, for a dance by a divine chorus" (90). Since the simple inclusion of these choral details suggests that it has some greater purpose, we are left with the following options: either we should assess the Oceanids according to the

parameters that existed for human ritual, in which case they should be read as a nuptial chorus; or we must adjudicate them as a divine chorus motivated by either a banquet or a wedding—and clearly no banquet is taking place. Perhaps even this distinction is unnecessary; according to Clay's (1989) reading of the major *Homeric Hymns*, each hymn addresses the question of the relationship between the divine and human realms, and thus the chorus may in fact serve as one point of intersection in this hymn, in that it relates to a social process (marriage) that takes largely the same form for gods and humans. Whatever parameters are used to interpret this chorus, they lead the audience back to the notion that the chorus is primarily nuptial, with Persephone as the bride.

In this case, I read the chorus as engaging with both human and divine paradigms for choral performance. The nuptial associations draw out one of the hymn's most important themes (marriage), which in turn complements the themes of fertility and the harvest, which seem to have been key aspects of the Eleusinian rituals central to the hymn. Without connecting agricultural fertility to fertility within the context of marriage, the hymn's themes lose much of their relevance to the human audience. At the same time, the prominence of the marriage ritual also links the human and divine realms by pointing out a shared institution, and this, too, forges a connection between the audience and the story that they are hearing. By interweaving human and divine aspects of the marriage ritual, the poet invites the audience to appreciate the thematic significance of this group on a number of levels, setting the stage for the rest of the poem and providing the context from which to read Persephone's abduction.

The choral features that help activate the nuptial elements of this scene are confirmed by the broader initiatory role that choruses seem to have played in the archaic period. Although social initiation is not often a prominent feature of divine choruses, here it is vital; as Persephone

is integrated through the process of marriage and made sexually subordinate to her husband, she is also incorporated into the wider community of the gods and finds her place within the Olympian hierarchy, as Clay has argued. Central to this process of incorporation but previously under-recognized is the role of the chorus. It is precisely the social activity of the chorus, frequently connected to the process of social initiation and in particular to the institution and ritual of marriage, that sets in motion Persephone's final transition from *κούρη* to *γυνή* and her emergence as a goddess in her own right.

The importance of the marriage that initiates the action should not be underestimated. Although the poet's attention soon shifts away from Persephone herself, the opening scene of abrupt transition between life stages underpins the entire hymn and ultimately leads to the new social order that is established at the close of the poem. Through the inclusion of key details, the poet invites the audience to envision the daughters of Ocean at the beginning of the poem as a maiden chorus, accompanying Persephone in her role as bride within a decidedly nuptial context. Despite the absence of the word *χορός* to formally define their role, this choral group brings specific meaning to bear on their poetic context and, in turn, expands our understanding of the ways chorality can function in archaic poetry. In this case, the chorus and its role as a signpost for Persephone's social and sexual maturation provide the basis for interpretation of the poem as a whole and help to signal the importance of marriage and incorporation throughout the poem.

I now turn to my final point: the recapitulation of the opening scene at the close of the poem and its commentary on the issue of Persephone's subjectivity as part of this larger question. At the close of the hymn, Persephone presents her own version of the story to Demeter, this time with more detail about her choral companions at the opening. Persephone's account is, notably, the earliest first-person description of choral participation, but it comes as a bit of a

surprise that it lacks many of the choral aspects present in the opening of the hymn. Persephone does not identify her companions as “the daughters of Ocean,” and she does not give any indication of her special role as *choregos*. Instead, she mentions the other young women by name (418–24), preserving only the verb *παίζομεν* (415) in her account:

ὥς δέ μ' ἀναρπάξας Κρονίδεω πυκινὴν διὰ μῆτιν
 ὄχγετο πατρὸς ἐμοῖο, φέρων ὑπὸ κεύθεα γαίης,
 ἐξερέω, καὶ πάντα διίξομαι, ὡς ἐρεεῖνεις.
 ἡμεῖς μὲν μάλα πᾶσαι ἀν' ἱμερτὸν λειμῶνα,
 Λευκίππη Φαινὼ τε καὶ Ἥλέκτρη καὶ Ἴανθη
 καὶ Μελίτη Ἰάχη τε Ῥόδειά τε Καλλιρόη τε
 Μηλόβοσις τε Τύχη τε καὶ Ὠκυρόη καλυκῶπις
 Χρυσήϊς τ' Ἴάνειρά τ' Ἀκάστη τ' Ἀδμήτη τε
 καὶ Ῥοδόπη Πλουτώ τε καὶ ἱμερόεσσα Καλυψὼ
 καὶ Στύξ Οὐρανίη τε Γαλαξάυρη τ' ἐρατεινὴ
 Παλλάς τ' ἐγρεμάχη καὶ Ἄρτεμις ἰοχέαιρα,
 παίζομεν ἠδ' ἄνθεα δρέπομεν χεῖρεσσ' ἐρόεντα,
 μίγδα κρόκον τ' ἀγανὸν καὶ ἀγαλλίδας ἠδ' ὑάκινθον
 καὶ Ῥοδέας κάλυκας καὶ λείρια, θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι,
 νάρκισσόν θ', ὃν ἔφυσ' ὡς περ κρόκον εὐρεῖα χθῶν.

And how he came, seizing me by the shrewd counsel of my father,
 The son of Kronos, and carried me off below the paths of the earth,
 I will explain, and I will go through everything as you ask.
 We were all there, in the lovely meadow:
 Leukippe, Phaeno, Elektra, and Ianthe,
 And Melite and Iache, Rhodeia and Kallirhoe,
 And Melobosis and Tyche, blushing Okyrhoe,
 Chryseis and Ianeira and Akaste and Admete,
 Rhodope, Plouto, and lovely Kalypso,
 Styx, Ourania, and beautiful Galaxaura,
 And Pallas, rousing the fight, and arrow-pouring Artemis;
 And we were playing and picking the lovely flowers with our hands,
 Soft crocuses and irises and hyacinths all mixed together,
 And rosebuds and lilies, wonderful to see,
 And the narcissus, which the broad earth grew like a crocus. (*HhD* 414–28)

In Persephone’s own narrative, she includes the name of each of her companions, as well as several of the flowers mentioned in the beginning (the violets are absent from the second list, while the lilies are a new addition). Foley notes that “the naming of the companions makes

Persephone's version of the experience appear subjective: for her the companions are individuals and the narcissus becomes just one of many flowers (she does not seem aware of its pivotal role in her downfall)" (1994, 60). The subjectivity that Foley identifies here is key: Persephone does not appear to conceptualize her companions as a chorus, particularly not a maiden chorus, largely because her experience takes place from within the choral setting. Insofar as the chorus, particularly *this* chorus as it is presented in the opening, is an object to be looked at, the subjective experience is absent, while the audience's experience of viewing (and thereby objectifying) the group takes precedence. In the description provided by Persephone at the end, the chorus's collective identity fades alongside the individualization that arises with the naming of each member. Similarly, as Deacy observes "Whereas the narcissus is singled out for a detailed description by the narrator, the focus in Persephone's version is the variety of flowers in the meadow. It is the combination of flowers rather than any single flower that makes up its *thauma* (427)" (2013, 407). Although I am not fully convinced by Deacy's suggestion that Persephone's attention to the crocus signals the feminine subjectivity of her description, it nevertheless remains significant that Persephone devotes relatively equal attention to all the flowers, just as she gives relatively equal attention to all her companions in cataloguing them.⁸⁴ Much as Persephone fails to identify the deeper significance of the narcissus, which stands out from the other flowers in the opening description (as if it were the *choregos* of the flower chorus), she fails to identify her own role as *choregos*/bride in the maiden chorus of her companions.⁸⁵ By presenting two perspectives on the same choral group, the poem preserves

⁸⁴ Cf. Brockliss (2019, 45–46), who notes that Persephone's special attraction to this flower is expressed by the phrase *περὶ χάριματι*, line 429).

⁸⁵ Brockliss similarly notes the failure of Persephone's subjectivity, arguing that "Korē sees a reflection of her own beauty in the narcissus; but she misses its special, divine qualities, which are designed to lead her astray." She and Paris "are fooled into performing actions that prove detrimental to their own interests: it is not merely that their subjectivity is called into question but that their agency is circumscribed" (2019, 22).

both the experience of female subjectivity and the experience of collective objectification enacted via the choral performance.

One key difference between the two scenes, as presented by the narrator and Persephone herself, is the varied focalization that envisions the events. While the narrator, imagining the scene as a whole, can conceptualize the collective group as a choral group, Persephone sees only from her own perspective. Because she is not looking at herself (or her companions) as objects, her own description lacks the process of objectification and instead prioritizes her own experience as subject. Indeed, her description of the scene lacks several choral elements that are prominent in the opening, which helps support the idea of the chorus as a viewed object in general. The narrator describes the group in a way that enables the audience to visualize the chorus, while Persephone describes her experience in a way that enables her audience (her mother) to understand what she has been through. The distinctions between Persephone's version and the narrator's description help demonstrate that, while a chorus does not always need to have a direct audience (and is therefore not an objectifying experience for its participants), a literary chorus always becomes something visualized, even by the mind's eye of the poet's audience. Because this group happens to be made up of young women at the right age for marriage and takes the form of a nuptial chorus (a familiar sight to many of those hearing the description), its objectification and translation into a visual object is even more easily accomplished.

The duality conveyed by these two presentations of the same scene demonstrates another important aspect of the chorus: while it can serve as an opportunity to showcase a particular member, especially in the case of choruses of young women, she is always contextualized by the group. The *choregos*-figure always exhibits both an individual identity as well as a collective identity; there can be no *choregos* without the context of the chorus, and any one girl cannot

stand out from the group without the group. The chorus is a necessary backdrop to the individual display of excellence, even when the individual in question fails to understand either the significance of the group or her own role within it. Nausicaa stands out against the backdrop of her unnamed companions, just as Artemis stands out among her nymphs; without the group, there is no one to whom they are superior, suggesting that, somewhat counterintuitively, a chorus is the primary means by which a character can be singled out or marked as special. Even though Persephone, from her vantage point within the chorus, appears to see herself as no different from her companions, she nevertheless stands apart from them through her appearance and is then separated from them by her marital experience in the underworld. The parallel scenes in the *Hymn to Demeter* express this dichotomy in another way: in the opening scene, the narcissus is clearly the most singular bloom, grown for the express purpose of entrancing the girl; in spite of this, in her own retelling, Persephone does not see the narcissus as particularly distinct from the surrounding flowers, simply including it as one of many in her list. The experience of acting as the *choregos* in a chorus does not necessitate full awareness of this role, but the uniqueness of the *choregos*-figure is prominent for observers of the group, even more than a description of an individual on her own might be.

Without the group to provide a background, it becomes more difficult to evaluate Persephone's marital readiness or her exemplary qualities, and from a literary perspective, more difficult to build a narrative about her. Through the inclusion of her companions, the narrator automatically indicates her singularity, without the need for extensive description or comparison. In addition, Persephone's own characterization of the group and the event further reminds the audience that for the girl transitioning from adolescent to bride to wife, the experience, though unsettling, does not necessarily change her view of her age-mates, even though from an external

perspective she has entered an entirely new period of life and role in society. While the final scene provides a new means of focalizing the event and opens the scene up for consideration of Persephone's subjectivity versus the objectivity of the group, it also showcases the ability of the chorus to paradoxically exhibit one member in particular through the presence of relative peers.

Although not traditionally thought of as a primarily choral piece, I have argued here that the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* provides a unique and important example of the literary chorus. This chorus follows in the tradition of the chorus of Artemis, or its more direct descendant, the chorus of Nausicaa in the *Odyssey*, and adds further definition to the broader concept of the maiden chorus with a particularly special individual member. Persephone assumes the role of the *choregos*, even without realizing it, which not only indicates her marital readiness but actually helps facilitate it by setting the scene for her abduction and ensuing marriage. Even as she fails to read the choral context as significant, the poet signals to the audience that this marriage chorus is promoting its bridal figure's transition to womanhood and, in this case, a more permanent role as part of the Olympian hierarchy. By uniting the ideas of divine incorporation and social incorporation through marriage, the poet is able to sustain this theme throughout the poem. In Persephone's retelling of the abduction, the poet allows her to maintain her position as subject, while still providing a contrasting view of the scene as seen or imagined by an audience familiar with choral performance and its patterns of meaning. These scenes showcase both the visual aspects of choral performance more generally, as well as the significance of the *choregos*-figure, drawing on and contributing to a specific pattern of choral performance in hexameter poetry. Through its adherence to larger techniques of choral description, it becomes possible to identify a scene of choral performance even without the designation of *χορός* as a vital component of its broader poetic context.

IV. Aphrodite's Choral Guise

If the *Hymn to Demeter* provides an example of actual participation in a maiden chorus, without the knowledge of the *choregos*/bride-figure, the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* essentially provides the opposite. The *Hymn to Aphrodite* describes no actual choral performances, instead utilizing the concept of the chorus to communicate specific ideas and social roles to the audience. While Aphrodite is never a true participant in a maiden chorus, at least in her *Hymn*, her claiming of that identity, even falsely, is enough to achieve basically the same end result: firm location within a clear social order and hierarchy, and in this case, reproduction of male leaders for the community. Persephone and Aphrodite occupy opposite ends of the spectrum of female sexuality: Persephone is a maiden reluctant to leave her adolescence for the transition into womanhood, while Aphrodite is sexually experienced but resists the roles prescribed for her sex, marriage and motherhood.⁸⁶ Both figures, although their relationships with sex differ, oppose the traditional expectations of their age and gender; however, both goddesses are brought in line with those expectations through the mechanism of choral activity, whether real or imagined. Aphrodite's fictionalized choral identity is so effective that it achieves its goal (seduction of Anchises) and then some, resulting ultimately in Aphrodite's pregnancy and the reestablishment of Zeus' overall control. Like the *Hymn to Demeter*, the *Hymn to Aphrodite* engages with questions of incorporation and the maintenance of social order, and it utilizes the chorus in order to enact and emphasize these processes of transition and incorporation.

⁸⁶ "Marriage" (as a legal, formal, social bond between two individuals) is not common among the gods, with the exception of Hera, the patron of marriage. Zeus's "wives" are simply goddesses that are the mothers of his children, like Demeter or Metis. Among the gods, the available roles for goddesses seem to include either virgins or mothers, which largely elides the category of wives. Indeed, this is basically reflective of human society, except that among mortals the possibility exists that a legal marriage might not result in a child (whereas the gods do not have trouble conceiving). Sexual union among the gods almost always leads to a child; for human women, the category of "nymphē" accounts for the period during which a pregnancy might go undetected, the chance that a sexual interaction might be unproductive, and the possibility that a pregnancy might not result in a healthy child.

As a whole, the *Hymn to Aphrodite* uses the image of the chorus to draw a contrast between Aphrodite and others: both mortal women (like those in the chorus that she imagines) and other goddesses, especially those that are perpetual *parthenoi*. These goddesses, as further evidence of the difference between them and Aphrodite, are also the only goddesses over whom she has no power. The poet includes Athena, Artemis, and Hestia in this category, and it can be noted that these three goddesses in a way constitute their own sort of maiden chorus under whose protection they operate freely, removed from the threat of Aphrodite's schemes. While the poet emphasizes each goddess's sphere of power to provide more information about her, the things included in each description provide further contrast between Aphrodite and the others: Athena, for example, "does not delight in the works of very golden Aphrodite, but rather (*ἀλλ' ἄρα*) it delights her to care about the wars and the work of Ares—fighting, battles, and the glorious works" (οὐ γὰρ οἱ εὐαδεν ἔργα πολυχρύσου Ἀφροδίτης, / *ἀλλ' ἄρα* οἱ πόλεμοί τε ἄδον καὶ ἔργον Ἄρηος / ὑσμῖναι τε μάχαι τε καὶ ἀγλαὰ ἔργ' ἀλεγύνειν, *HhAph* 9–11). In addition to making it very clear that Aphrodite has no power over Athena, he draws the audience's attention to what things interest her in place of love and sex, using a strong *ἀλλ' ἄρα* to indicate the contrast. The description of Artemis at the opening of the *Hymn* provides a particularly interesting view of Aphrodite, as it specifically points to choruses as a prime activity to illustrate the difference between them:

οὐδέ ποτ' Ἀρτέμιδα χρυσηλάκατον, κελαδεινὴν
 δάμναται ἐν φιλότῃ φιλομμειδῆς Ἀφροδίτῃ.
 καὶ γὰρ τῇ ἄδε τόξα καὶ οὖρεσι θήρας ἐναίρειν,
 φόρμιγγές τε χοροὶ τε διαπρύσιοί τ' ὀλολυγαὶ
 ἄλσεά τε σκιάοντα δικαίων τε πτόλις ἀνδρῶν.

Nor does she ever overpower resounding Artemis of the golden
 Distaff in love, smile-loving Aphrodite.
 For the bow and the slaying of beasts in the mountains delight her,
 And lyres, choruses, and piercing cries,

The shady groves and the cities of just men. (*HhAph* 16–20)

As Strolonga (2012) observes, this contrast indicates the areas in which Aphrodite is deficient as a goddess; because she is only interested in eros and desire, she makes no meaningful contribution to humanity and even presents a danger to them as well as many of the gods. By the end of the poem, Strolonga argues, Aphrodite's sphere more closely aligns with positive human *erga*, associating her with male reproduction and rituals connected to marriage and childbirth. While this does seem to be a prominent aspect of the contrast drawn between the goddesses in the opening, previously unnoticed seems to be the role of the chorus in this transition.⁸⁷ The inclusion of choruses in the list of things that delight Artemis not only indicates Artemis' own special relationship with the chorus (both formal and informal, as the two settings, "shady groves and cities," might suggest), but also suggests Aphrodite's significant distance from them. Because they are close to Artemis, they are separated from Aphrodite, perhaps drawing on the frequent association of *parthenoi* with choral performance. Aphrodite's ideological distance from choral performance might point also to the increased role of the individual in marriage for both sexes: once a young girl and man become married, they, too, become separated from their age-mates and companions in favor of their union with each other, just as Aphrodite herself stands apart from this quasi-chorus of virgin goddesses. Aphrodite's initial disavowal of choruses, set in contrast to Artemis' delight in them, ultimately transforms by means of the chorus that Aphrodite invents for her seduction of Anchises; though she does not actually take part in the chorus, it nevertheless propels her into the very same end state (motherhood) that is facilitated for adolescent girls through choral activity.⁸⁸ The presence of the chorus as a motif

⁸⁷ In discussing the dichotomy of the two goddesses (2004, 379–90), Cyrino notes that Aphrodite steals the virginal aspect of Artemis' character (along with her use of hunting imagery) in order to craft a more convincing and appealing backstory for her character (381).

⁸⁸ Motherhood is also, as Cole suggests, the end of a young woman's association with Artemis (2004, 209–12).

and its indication of/promotion of this transformation becomes even more important when considering the actual presence of choruses at rituals surrounding marriage and possibly even childbirth. Moreover, Artemis' love of both the chorus and the "cities of just men" (δικαίων τε πόλις ἀνδρῶν, 20) signals a close alignment with civic values and the chorus, suggesting that the chorus is an integral part of society, specifically well-governed, lawful populations. Through its ability to take girls through the series of transitions that eventually creates the next generation of the society, the chorus serves as a symbol for the proper reproduction of a community, with which Aphrodite can only become positively associated through her own brush with chorality.

The clear dissociation between Aphrodite and choral activity in the opening description becomes all the more interesting when she herself adopts this as a kind of backstory for her human persona in seducing Anchises. By casting herself as a member of a chorus, specifically one led by Artemis, Aphrodite presents herself as a maiden on the cusp of marriage and the transition into adulthood:

νῦν δέ μ' ἀνήρπαξε χρυσόρραπις Ἀργειφόντης
 ἐκ χοροῦ Ἀρτέμιδος χρυσηλακάτου, κελαδεινῆς.
 πολλαὶ δὲ νύμφαι καὶ παρθένοι ἀλφεισίβοιαι
 παίζομεν, ἀμφὶ δ' ὄμιλος ἀπείριτος ἔστεφάνωτο.
 ἔνθεν μ' ἦρπαξε χρυσόρραπις Ἀργειφόντης·

But then Argeiphontes with his golden wand snatched me up
 From a chorus of resounding Artemis, of the golden distaff.
 We were playing, many nymphs and much-courted maidens,
 And a boundless crowd encircled us.
 From there Argeiphontes with his golden wand seized me. (*HhAph* 117–21)

Aphrodite presents herself as a Persephone figure in her story of seizure from a group of maidens, even using similar language (παίζομεν, 120) to characterize their activity. She specifies that she was taken from a group of nymphs and maidens that are much-courted or worth a high bride-price (ἀλφεισίβοιαι, 119), emphasizing the association of choral dancing with marriage and

the transitional period between girlhood and wifehood. Aphrodite's inclusion of "nymphs and maidens" (νύμφαι καὶ παρθένοι, 119) opens up another possibility: since νύμφαι can also be translated as "brides," this chorus might be comprised not only of premarital girls but also of girls within their first years of marriage, before pregnancy and the full transition to γυνή status.⁸⁹ Especially because this *Hymn*'s emphasis is not on marriage but rather on motherhood (Aphrodite's pregnancy, not a formal or lasting union with Anchises, is the end result), there are hints of rituals (possibly even choral ones) for young women beyond simply those connected with marriage in the background of this story.

There is no clear statement of the chorus's purpose or occasion, but the few details that Aphrodite fabricates are enough to infer that this chorus is in fact a maiden chorus, one specifically related to women's rituals surrounding the transitions from adolescent to woman. In addition to the νύμφαι καὶ παρθένοι, Aphrodite notes that this is a chorus of Artemis, whose own chorus provides the paradigm for the maiden chorus, especially the kind we see in Nausicaa's chorus.⁹⁰ While it is unclear whether Artemis is herself present or whether this chorus is simply part of her worship, its association with the goddess signals to Aphrodite's audience (Anchises) that she is the kind of girl that could be part of a maiden chorus, even one with the goddess physically present. Furthermore, the use of παίζομεν hints at an erotic element in the chorus and narrative, just as it does in the descriptions of Persephone's chorus (*HhD* 5) and Nausicaa's

⁸⁹ While the question of translating νύμφαι is certainly nuanced and perhaps overly particular, a mixed chorus of both goddesses and human women would be unusual, and in fact thus far unseen in archaic poetry. As discussed above, the practicality of having "maiden choruses" consist only of girls who are truly virgins is difficult to support, particularly in smaller communities. I suggest that a chorus with not only unmarried girls but also newly married girls is more likely, and, conveniently made possible by the various meanings of νύμφαι.

⁹⁰ The parallels between these scenes can be observed not only in terms of Nausicaa and Aphrodite but also with regard to Odysseus and Anchises; Peter Smith notes that they take on the "same diplomatic attitude" in their addresses to the respective maidens (1980, 47).

chorus (*Od.* 6.100).⁹¹ By aligning herself with a chorus, specifically one associated with Artemis, marriage, and female transition, Aphrodite presents herself as a *parthenos*, as ready for marriage and sex, and as a respectable girl with the protection and close companionship of Artemis herself.

Given Aphrodite's end goal (sex with Anchises, but no formal marriage arrangement), her choice to present herself as a premarital adolescent is especially interesting. Although she is not interested in marriage, it is clear she identifies a certain kind of choral activity as a precursor to marriage, which creates an opportunity for sexual union. While that choral activity does not lead to marriage in this case, it does have the same end result that marriage does, perhaps reinforcing the notion that the chorus is itself an erotic setting. Her chastity (even feigned) also does not deter Anchises in any way, but in fact has quite the reverse effect; once she finishes her story he instantly desires her. His quick reaction and eagerness for sex (145–54), helped along by her own immortal powers (143–44), actually suggest that the story is the opposite of a deterrent: it is her precisely maidenly virtues, symbolized by her participation in a specific kind of chorus, that attract him to her sexually and designate her as a maiden ready for the transition to womanhood. Even unintentionally, this interaction with chorality does serve the purpose of confirming a more traditional social order as well as creating the next generation of male leadership in the community.

Notably, Aphrodite's choral proximity is temporary. After she conceives, she tells Anchises that she will not be the one responsible for raising their child. Instead, she will give her child to a chorus of Nymphs (256–61, here probably the divine figures) while she herself abstains from the process of motherhood and interaction with her son.⁹² Aphrodite's lengthy

⁹¹ See Rosenmeyer (2004).

⁹² The Nymphs frequently act as surrogate mothers and caretakers for infants: they are also the ones that raise

description of the Nymphs and their role as nurturers reestablishes the contrast between the goddess and traditional roles: as soon as possible, Aphrodite steps away from the experience of motherhood, while the Nymphs embrace the full experience of “womanhood,” acting not only as caretakers but also as freely sexual beings. At the same time, however, Aphrodite’s relationship with choral activity does mirror that of most adult/married women in Greece, at least based on literary evidence; with the exception of the funerary choruses in the *Iliad*, there are not strong examples of choruses made up of adult women in archaic Greek poetry, and only within drama do adult female choruses begin to become more prevalent. In fact, it is possible to see Aphrodite’s entire “choral experience” as aligning with that of a typical girl: a heavy concentration of choral activity surrounding the transitional period, ending with a decreased choral presence during the period of marriage and motherhood. Strolonga argues that “the *Hymn* reveals another aspect of Aphrodite’s power that relates to male succession and implies her role in wedding rituals” and observes that through this narrative, Aphrodite’s connection to sexuality becomes “a beneficial contribution to the household and the city” (2012, 17). While this is one major aspect of the *Hymn*, I suggest that if we read Aphrodite’s shifting connection to sexuality as mirrored by her participation in the chorus, we can see more clearly that it is not simply Aphrodite’s connection to sex but female sexuality more specifically that is brought in line with community and social goals. Through the period of female transition from adolescence to adulthood, marked by participation in choral rituals, especially those associated with Artemis, girls are brought into contact with sexuality in a way that specifically promotes the continuation of society and maintains firm control over their sexual experience.

Dionysus in his own short *Hymn* (3–5), and then join in his entourage as a sort of choral group when he becomes an adult (26.9–10).

V. Conclusion

Several prominent examples of the maiden chorus can be found in the *Odyssey* and the *Hymns*, and each of these both draws on and contributes to a particular choral archetype through its interaction with the themes of marriage, female sexuality, and the transitions experienced by girls between adolescence and adulthood. These choral scenes—featuring Nausicaa, Persephone, and Aphrodite—all participate in a larger choral pattern, that of the Artemis chorus. While the actual description of Artemis' chorus in the *Homeric Hymn to Artemis* is not the earliest of these scenes, it is clear from the *Odyssey* that the association of Artemis with the chorus was well established in literary settings from an early point. Furthermore, the *Odyssey*'s use of this pattern for Nausicaa supports the notion that choruses associated with Artemis in literature are inherently concerned with the impending marriages and transitions of their members. The combination of Nausicaa's clear interest in marriage, the comparison of her to Artemis in a specifically choral setting, and the preoccupation of the poem as a whole with the question of marriage, all indicate that this complex theme works in a way that draws on audience understanding of choruses in general, more specifically this particular choral pattern and its operation as a literary tool.

Through the model of Artemis' chorus, it also becomes possible to identify the internal *choregos* as early as the *Odyssey*. Although her chorus is small, Nausicaa is set apart from her companions not only because of her beauty but also because of her readiness for marriage. She forms the clear leader of this chorus, designated in this case by a particular formula (ἤρχετο μολπής), which further supports the establishment of this position and its familiarity at an early point in time. As in the case of Nausicaa, choruses that participate in this choral type often also present their *choregos* as a bridal figure. Unlike the external *choregos*, the female, internal

choregos does not provide musical accompaniment or performance instruction; instead, her role in the chorus mirrors her role in reality as she prepares to leave the company of her female companions and become an individual set apart from the group through the process of marriage.

Based on the examples that I have discussed, it is possible to draw broader conclusions about the maiden chorus and its more general role in archaic Greek literature. As I noted at the start of this chapter, there are very few examples of female choruses in literature that do not participate to some extent in the paradigm of the Artemis chorus. Those exceptions include the funerary choruses of the *Iliad*, certain choruses of goddesses (the chorus of the Graces, *Od.* 18.190–96 and the Muses of the *Theogony*), and the Delian maidens of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* (156–78).⁹³ What I find noteworthy about these exceptions is that they are as a rule not made up of young women. Funerary choruses tend to be led by the mother and/or wife of the deceased, while the goddesses are not typically represented as adolescents. As noted in the previous chapter, there is no indication of the Deliades' ages, nor is there any kind of physical description; this chorus has a clear and specific purpose and has nothing to do with marriage. Within archaic Greek hexameter poetry, then, every chorus of female adolescents participates in a specifically marriage-oriented chorus, typically following the paradigm of Artemis in a chorus. While female choruses of all ages become more prevalent in Athenian drama, it is striking that the most frequently and thoroughly described choruses of archaic literature are all adolescent marriage choruses. Furthermore, with the exception of the Muses at the opening of the *Theogony*, it is possible to argue that nearly all female choruses featuring extended physical description are also comprised of adolescent girls, begging the question of whether this choral

⁹³ The Olympian chorus of the *Hymn to Apollo* (182–206) are not a marriage chorus. Artemis' presence as internal *choregos*, however, seems good enough reason to exclude it from this list of exceptions. Furthermore, it is actually a mixed chorus, not a true female chorus.

form was intentionally eroticized, both in literature and in reality. It might be the case that choral performance by young women was openly erotic, despite a relatively high cultural sensitivity towards the protection of girls and the preservation of their maiden status. Aphrodite's decision to present herself as a member of exactly this kind of maiden chorus in order to seduce an adult man supports this notion, as it is precisely her guise as a chorus member that he finds alluring.

Somewhat ironically, these erotically charged choruses do rely on the model of Artemis, but it is not because she is a virgin goddess. Rather, Artemis is concerned with the nature of transition and those liminal spaces between statuses—in this case, between child and woman. Furthermore, the choruses of young women relate to a goddess that is herself frequently eroticized. As a result, they embody the transition between adolescence and marriage, encapsulated in the difference between simply being a member of the chorus and becoming the *choregos*, following the choral model of Artemis herself. As each girl in turn takes on the role of the *choregos* (and thus the role of the bride), she comes as close to Artemis—still a maiden but filled with erotic potential—as she can before inevitably completing the transition through marriage and motherhood. While still in the chorus, she is a stand-in for the goddess; once she leaves the group, whether willingly or otherwise, she leaves her Artemis-like role behind.

The examples of Nausicaa, Persephone, and Aphrodite provide varying levels of readiness and willingness to participate in the traditional roles and expectations set for young women. Equally resistant to their roles as wives or mothers, Persephone and Aphrodite face an inevitability of conformation, and their participation in the chorus helps facilitate the transition, however unwelcome. Regardless of the realities of adolescent, female choruses in the archaic period, their literary parallels indicate a prominent focus on the process of marriage and childbearing as part of the transition to adulthood. Through the image of the chorus, each poem

indicates the marital readiness of the *choregos*-figure and uses this to construct broader themes in the poem as a whole. Within these pieces, the Artemis chorus serves a dual function: on the one hand, the introduction of this specific type of chorus serves as a hint or trigger to the audience to consider the importance of marriage in the poem, while on the other, it provides key motivation for, in some cases, the poem as a whole, framing the interactions and choices of the characters in a new light and lending structure to the narrative more broadly.

Chapter Four: The Lyric Chorus

I. Introduction

Unlike the choruses that can be found in early hexameter poetry, chorality in the context of the melic poetry of the 7th and 6th centuries has been a topic of much scholarly debate. Alcman in particular has received much of this attention, as he is considered to be “the earliest choral poet of whose work a few fragments have come down to us” (Krummen 2009, 190). Often discussed in conjunction with Ibycus and Stesichorus because of their dialect and the occasional nature of their poetry, Alcman’s *partheneia* are considered unique among extant lyric poems in that they are songs composed specifically for performance by young women.⁹⁴ Fragment 1 (*PMG* 1, often called the Louvre *partheneion*) is the most complete example of Alcman’s poems for young women, and it has not only provided considerable information about the performances of young women in archaic Sparta but also puzzled readers with its often cryptic and densely figurative descriptions. Calame (1997) has led the discussion on this poem and *PMG* 3, arguing for their status as part of a religious ritual that young girls performed as part of an initiation process. While most scholars basically accept this explanation, some, like Stehle (1997), prefer to downplay the initiatory nature of this ritual and view it instead as a community event, likely in conjunction with the harvest.⁹⁵ Although a number of elements in the poem remain uncertain, scholars have long agreed that the poem is indeed choral, and its content reveals the performers to be female adolescents. This fragment is the earliest extant poetry performed by the kind of choruses that formed the subject of the previous chapter: choruses of female adolescents,

⁹⁴ Calame argues the term “*partheneion*” must be defined as “a poem sung by a chorus of adolescent girls for adolescent girls” (1997, 3). Calame uses the term “*partheneion*” only as an exception, as he considers it an anachronism. He also notes that the term seems to have originated with the Alexandrians, who created it in the process of dividing lyric poetry of the archaic period into books (3). I do not necessarily agree that these songs were performed *for* adolescent girls, given the probability of larger audiences.

⁹⁵ For a similar view, see Hutchinson (2001).

frequently connected to the worship or patronage of Artemis, and featuring a special, internal *choregos*-figure that acts as leader in the dance and social model for the other participants. In *PMG* 1, Hagesichora (whose very name—or title—indicates her status as chorus-leader) takes on the role of *choregos*, although a second girl, Agido, may share this position or hold another unique role. This fragment offers one of the most extensive examples of a literary chorus, and it will be helpful to compare its characterization of the chorus to the patterns discussed in previous chapters.

The work of Sappho has been less frequently associated with the chorus, although Calame and Lardinois (1996) are notable exceptions. Calame envisions the “circle” of Sappho as something chorus-like, with the members singing or performing Sappho’s poems, while Lardinois advances the possibility that many of Sappho’s songs were in fact choral themselves, drawing on the frequent use of “we” and the inclusion of imagery common in choral poetry. The approach of Lardinois relocates many of Sappho’s songs within the public sphere, challenging scholars like Stehle, who prefers to interpret them as private communications (even, perhaps, written communications) between individuals. As choral poems, however, they are likely to have been not only publicly performed but also reperformed, which can affect the interpretation of a set of poems often seen as highly personal and intimate. Lardinois points to the important fact that no sound explanation has emerged for the social circumstances of Sappho’s circle, finding a more concrete analogue in the choruses that performed Alcman’s maiden songs. Although monodic performance remains the view of the scholarly majority, more and more individuals are beginning to consider how the chorus relates to Sappho’s poetry.⁹⁶

Because I will argue that the choral constructions devised by Alcman and Sappho draw

⁹⁶ E.g., Bierl (2016), Ladianou (2016); to some extent, Klinck (2008).

on features of the maiden chorus as described in hexameter narrative, it is important to examine how the chorus changes as it shifts from hexameter narrative to lyric poetry. One of the most prominent new elements that appears in lyric choruses is the possibility of erotic attraction between the members of the chorus, or at least between the *choregos*-figure and one or two members of the chorus. Although I believe the chorus frequently acted as a medium in which to display the female body, and therefore may have been a somewhat erotic experience for the audience (a quality that is preserved in many descriptions), I have chosen not to read any of the choruses examined in the previous chapter (or elsewhere in the other chapters of this project) as demonstrating erotic attraction between members.⁹⁷ Their members are not granted the interiority to express any kind of emotion towards one another (we never experience the chorus from their point of view), and the *choregos*-figures of the maiden chorus are permitted to express limited emotions on three occasions: Persephone expresses fear upon leaving her choral companions; Aphrodite does experience sexual attraction towards Anchises, although she is not really a member of a chorus to begin with; and Nausicaa arguably holds some kind of erotic interest in Odysseus, although even this is largely conjecture.⁹⁸ These choruses are eroticized for their audiences, both within their poetic contexts and for the poem's audience, but they lack the opportunity to demonstrate any feeling towards other members. The choruses presented in hexameter narrative do not communicate their own emotions and experiences, with the exception of the lament choruses. Persephone's description of her companions is by far the closest we get to this experience in archaic poetry, and I suspect this has provided the impetus for scholars like

⁹⁷ Swift notices this erotic element but maintains that it does not reflect private emotions (2016, 256 n4).

⁹⁸ Deacy (2013) interprets Persephone's description of the flowers and her companions as erotic and as a possible signal of their homoerotic relationship. Although I do not deny the eroticism of the meadow, I hesitate to place too much weight on the vocabulary that Deacy points to in Persephone's description and see little else in the poem to provide any real indication of the girls' relationship. Nausicaa expresses a hope that her husband might be a man *like* Odysseus (6.244–45), but to call this clear erotic desire is a stretch.

Deacy (2013) to view her description as eroticized. Because Persephone is provided with a limited opportunity to describe her experience, and because the setting and the choral nature of the group already give the scene an erotic tone, it is not unreasonable to suppose that her gaze could be erotic. But Persephone's assessment is not part of a performative setting, and it is made in the moment of the experience; her narration occurs after everything else in the *Hymn* has already taken place, and she does not shape the audience's own experience of the original scene.

The speakers in Alcman and Sappho, however, control the narrative in the actual moment of performance, and their self-reflexive descriptions influence the audience's actual engagement with the performance. Scholars have observed an erotic tone both in Alcman's *partheneia* and in Sappho's poetry, especially in those fragments that address specific people by name (e.g., 16, 94, 95, 96, 131).⁹⁹ At times, this feature has dominated the interpretation of these poems: for example, Thomas Hubbard notes, "verses 74–76 [of *PMG* 1] even suggest homoerotic bonds among the girls of the chorus, and some have seen the ceremony as a kind of lesbian betrothal in mimetic anticipation of the girls' imminent marriages" (2010, 356) While I think this is going too far, it is not possible or productive to ignore a definite tone of eroticism in either context, and it may in fact shed further light on the nature of the chorus in this poetic setting. The chorus seems to use an erotic tone in the way that it describes Hagesichora, and possibly also Agido. For example, they describe how Hagesichora "wears them down" (τείρει, 77), using a word with a distinctive sexual connotation.¹⁰⁰ Hutchinson's overview of Spartan society leaves room for a

⁹⁹ On this issue in Alcman, see Calame (1997), Parker (1993), Cyrino (2004), Dale (2011); cf. Clay (1991, 57 and 63). For both Cyrino and Dale, the eroticism of *PMG* 1 is largely outward-facing (expressed towards and for the benefit of the audience), but Parker (following Calame) maintains that the eroticism is expressed "by women for women" (1993, 326).

¹⁰⁰ Clay (1991) argues that this *τείρει* is not erotic, either in a physical or an emotional sense, but rather that the girls in the chorus are tired from their *pannychis*, the all-night performance in anticipation of the dawn, and Hagesichora keeps urging them to continue dancing.

more nuanced interpretation; regarding the chorus in general, he notes that “the institution seems to encourage the girls, at least in the fiction of the poetry or the convention of the society, to nurse an amorous devotion to their leader” (2001, 73). If the reader can accept that there is a degree of eroticism between the chorus-members and at least one of the *choregos*-figures, it becomes possible to identify a different and new element to the relationship between chorus member and chorus leader.

The relationship of *choregos* and chorus member is more complicated in Sappho’s poetry, especially due to her characterization as an educator or the leader of some sort of school. Drawing on the notion of Sappho as the leader of such a group, it is tempting to align her automatically with the *choregos*-figure as *didaskalos*; this is how Calame envisions her, surrounded by her circle. In response to Calame, however, I find the transformation of the *choregos*-figure present in descriptions of the archaic chorus—that is, the shift from the marriageable girl that knowingly or unknowingly serves as a model for her companions, to the older teacher and lover of several young girls entrusted to her for educational purposes—to be problematic, and rather unlikely. As an already married example of a bridal figure (if we are to take the biographical tradition at its word), Sappho might indeed serve as *choregos* for her circle in the aspect of providing a social model, but there is no parallel for an erotic relationship between the “external” *choregos*-figure and the chorus members to be found in the choruses of adolescent girls described in archaic poetry.

Furthermore, there is no clear evidence that Sappho is older, a point made by Parker (1993); in fact, he argues that Sappho seems instead to be surrounded by a company of age-mates, which better aligns her with the *choregos*-figures that can be identified in the choruses from Chapter Three. One solution might attempt to read Sappho as the internal *choregos*-figure,

a singular individual who models the future (marriage) and expresses her desire for the girls that are undertaking the same process of transition. A difficulty in that interpretation arises from the possibility that a number of these songs are choral and, even more likely, that some are wedding songs; most often, the *choregos* of the maiden chorus is the bride herself, as seen in Chapter Three, and if Sappho is a model of marriage, she cannot fulfill this role. But Parker, citing Winkler (1990, 165), rightly points out that “the ‘girls’ of the *epithalamia* and the ‘companions’ of the lyric poems are simply not at all the same person” (1993, 325). More likely, then, is a construction in which Sappho is not the *choregos* at all, but rather representative of the choral voice. Although this interpretation has the consequence of compressing the individual voice of Sappho into the voice of a collective “we,” it offers a scenario in which the speaker’s expressions of longing and sorrow at the departure of the individual member find a natural parallel in the departure of the *choregos* from the chorus in the process of marriage.

I argue that as Alcman and Sappho’s choruses increasingly begin to describe themselves in the first person, instead of being described by others, they demonstrate an increased eroticism. The opportunity for the choral performers to create their own narrative (even if it follows a ritualized pattern) provides an equal opportunity to express their own interiority and supply a new perspective on the chorus and its other members. Furthermore, it seems to be the case that an erotic relationship between *choregos* and *choreutai* is possible when they share defining characteristics and participate in the chorus together. In the case of Sappho, her expressions of desire come not from a perspective outside the chorus, but from within its bonds; she is not the external *choregos*, like the Alcman-figure, but rather a member of the chorus, expressing her admiration (and possibly desire) for other members of her own circle.

Alcman and Sappho’s poems confirm the figures of external and internal *choregos* that I

have presented in the previous two chapters. Chapter Two's external *choregoi* share the characteristics of being male, alongside a female chorus, and not participating in the chorus but providing a solo narrative in conjunction with the choral performance. Alcman 1 presents a similar construction in the figure of Alcman himself (which could be replicated by a different man on occasions of reperformance). He stands as a solo figure alongside a maiden chorus, neither dancing or singing along with the *choreutai*, but (possibly) providing musical accompaniment and maybe even having taught the song and dance to the girls in the chorus ahead of time.¹⁰¹ As the director of a chorus comprised of younger members of the opposite sex, the external *choregos* does not participate in the spectacle of the chorus or in their ritual behavior. Within the same poem, however, there is at least one clear example of the internal *choregos*-figure, who leads from within the chorus itself and takes Artemis and Nausicaa as her paradigms. The question of the *choregos*-figure becomes most complicated in regard to the relationship between Hagesichora and Agido, both of whom are named in the poem and can be interpreted as standout figures, somehow separate from the rest of the choral participants but clearly still a part of the performance (Hagesichora is actually referred to as the *χοραγός*, line 44). Although some have identified Agido as the leader of a rival chorus, others have suggested that she is simply another leader in this chorus, an interpretation that I find compelling given the chorus's feelings of affection for Agido.¹⁰² Both can therefore be seen as *choregoi* in this chorus, and possibly both provide a sort of model for their fellow chorus-members as part of a ritual that is designed to showcase young women that are eligible for marriage and thereby help

¹⁰¹ Calame, following Hesychius, notes three functions of the *choregos*: one teaches the chorus, one funds the chorus, and one leads the chorus from within (1997, 43–44), although he disregards the second. Alcman is called the *didaskalos*, indicating his educational role (*PMG* 10.32, 10.37).

¹⁰² Clay identifies her as a torchbearer, although he offers no clear answer regarding her relationship with Hagesichora or the performers (1991, 49 n7). Calame (1997) similarly does not give a clear explanation of their relationship.

achieve the continuity of society. The relationship between them is unclear, but both set a new standard of beauty in the eyes of their *choreutai* and both are distinct enough to stand apart from the group while still participating in the dance. Sappho's chorus also utilizes the role of the internal *choregos* through its named individuals, who are almost always depicted as departing the group. Given the possibility that some of Sappho's songs are *epithalamia*, this interpretation is even more likely.

There is a distinction to make between the chorus in *PMG* 1 and the chorus imagined by Sappho, although on the surface they seem to share a number of characteristics: female, probably adolescent, and connected with the rituals surrounding marriage and the transition to adulthood. If we accept the possibility of reperformance for Alcman and read these poems not as expressions between specific individuals but more as ritualized roles in a transferrable set-piece of poetry, they provide less of a glimpse into the inner relationships of the chorus. Although still unique in that they apparently provide transcripts of choral performances, these poems still do not offer a true perspective from within the chorus. In Sappho's poetry, the choral perspective is framed from the point of view of its members, in which category Sappho seems to include herself; thus, the poems are a little closer to the realities of the chorus members' experience. If we accept Winkler's (1990) characterization of Sappho's poetry as expressions of mutual desire, it seems at least somewhat likely that her version is not misrepresentative of the relationship but presents a reasonably full picture. Although Winkler's discussion largely centers around the division between public and private poetry, and the chorus is not exactly a private setting, it is still possible to read this as private, if we construe the inner thoughts and expressions of the chorus private in comparison to their public performance. If some of these poems were indeed designed for public performance, this becomes more difficult, but, again drawing on Winkler, I

will argue that the poetry is able to communicate outwardly with its public, male or mixed audience while also speaking to women that have participated in choral groups and may have shared experiences from within the chorus that Sappho expresses in her poetry more subtly.

II. Parthenaic Projection in Alcman 1

I begin with Alcman's *partheneia*, focusing on *PMG* 1 (= 3 Calame) and considering the way the chorus presents itself as a chorus, thereby shaping its own identity in the eyes of the audience and defining the identities of Hagesichora and Agido. I suggest that this chorus utilizes aspects of the literary choruses I have discussed in previous chapters, indicating the communicative potential of this motif through its reenactment by an actual performing chorus. Following most scholars, my reading will assume that Hagesichora and Agido can both be identified as some kind of chorus leader, likely from the same chorus, but with slight distinctions between their characters.¹⁰³ Hagesichora must ultimately be regarded as the true *choregos*-figure, and Agido is more likely the second-in-command, or the next potential bride to be showcased by this chorus. More importantly, I maintain that these are not individuals, *per se*, but ritual roles to be performed and reperformed by other women on other festive occasions.¹⁰⁴ As Hutchinson observes, this poem involves "the creation of a vivid but generalized character for a chorus," much like the choruses of Pindar's *partheneia* and even those of Athenian drama (2001, 77). However, regarding Fragments 1 and 3, Klinck observes the following:

In these two *partheneia*, the personality of the male author is completely submerged in the female voice, I think because for Alcman the genre is still close to the anonymous oral tradition that created it, a tradition in which a poem would be perceived as the property of the performer. (2001, 267)

¹⁰³ See, e.g., Hutchinson (2001), Budelmann (2018), Nagy (1990), and Page (1951).

¹⁰⁴ Nagy (1990, 345–49).

As I consider *PMG* 1, I will look for how the chorus draws on a larger tradition of the more generalized choral character that Hutchinson proposes. Combined with Klinck's observation that the audience likely would have perceived the chorus members as producing the poetry in the moment of performance, it seems plausible that the chorus could draw on familiar patterns of choral representation in order to solidify their choral character, create an identity for their *choregos*-figure(s), and project a particular social attitude consistent with the choral paradigms that they followed.

Alcman's *partheneia* provide glimpses into the actual choral performance of young women in Sparta and have been considered the oldest examples of choral literature that we possess today, originally dating from the late 7th century and probably reperformed seasonally at public festivals.¹⁰⁵ Most scholars have agreed that the poems provide choral scripts from religious occasions on which a group of adolescent girls would perform for the community; in the case of *PMG* 1, this rite was likely connected with either a celebration of the harvest (Stehle) or an initiatory ritual (Calame). Beyond that, however, little is certain about these poems, largely due to their dense use of symbolism, textual problems, and a lack of understanding about Spartan culture, including the original performance context. From the figures of Agido and Hagesichora and their relationship to the chorus to the identification of the Dawn goddess to the proper reading and identification of the Πεληάδες (line 60) and the object that they carry, *PMG* 1 is full of questions and uncertainties. Even the title *partheneion* has been called into question; Calame notes that this is an Alexandrian designation and does not appear to have been used in earlier

¹⁰⁵ In support of Page (1951), Luginbill (2009) suggests that *PMG* 1 was a companion piece to the ritual test of endurance that young men underwent at the altar of Artemis Orthia. Clay assumes performance at a less specific nighttime festival but also considers reenactment likely (1991, 64 n44). West considers the suggestion that the performance occurred at night "absurd" (1965, 195 n2). On the issue of reperformance see Herington (1985, 25–26, 48–50) and Nagy (1990, 344ff.).

times, and for him the term only indicates “a poem sung by a chorus of adolescent girls for adolescent girls” (3). Following Calame, I will refer to Alcman’s maiden songs as *partheneia* out of convenience and convention, but it should be noted that they were not necessarily conceived of as an independent, fixed genre by those who saw them or those who performed them. Because most scholars have agreed that the poem corresponds to a ritual occasion, scholarly efforts have largely focused on reading it in that context and constructing the relationship between text and rites, considering everything that is in the poem itself as conforming to the actions that were carried out in the dance or other elements of the physical performance taking place. Although my interpretation will follow much the same pattern, I am less interested in the ritual aspects of these poems and will focus instead on the way that they construct and express their chorality by references to their appearances, movements, and song, and their characterization of the group as a whole.

Fortunately, the maiden songs of Alcman have a strong tendency to call attention to the actual performance that they are in the process of enacting, a feature that Lonsdale (1993) and Swift (2016, 257–60) have discussed. Lonsdale notes that “the self-referential practice amounts to a ritual repetition: they act, and as they act they solemnize their action in words” (1993, 196). While I am hesitant to follow his interpretation of every gesture as ritually oriented, it does seem to be the case that they formalize the performance by describing parts of the dance as they enact them. Rather, I am compelled by Swift’s conclusion that “poetry performed by *parthenoi* therefore shows a systematic focus on visual beauty and physical activity: we are constantly reminded what the performers look like, how they are dressed, and what they are doing” (2016, 263).¹⁰⁶ The visual focus is a feature present in many of the maiden choruses that I have

¹⁰⁶ Peponi (2004) offers a similar analysis of this poem’s emphasis on sight through her examination of its use of deixis.

examined in previous chapters, but this poem offers the first example of a chorus's own words and thus, the first example in which the visual language becomes self-referential.¹⁰⁷ As Henrichs (1994–95) has shown, self-referentiality will in general become a prominent feature of classical choruses: in particular, the epinician chorus, whose members describe a myth but also describe their own praise of the victor in that moment, as well as the dramatic chorus, whose members seem especially keen to call attention to what they are doing at the time.¹⁰⁸ In *PMG* 1, however, I think Swift is right that the chorus provides a unique opportunity for women to be on display; their descriptions of their appearances thus serve as a means of strategically influencing the audience's gaze.

Alcman's chorus in the Louvre *partheneion* contributes to this process of choral communication, in which the performers call attention to their status as a chorus and project a choral attitude toward the audience beyond just existing as a chorus in the performance. The chorus in *PMG* 1 focuses on their collective nature as their single defining feature, drawing on this to emphasize the uniqueness and individuality of the *choregos*-figure, Hagesichora. Not only are Alcman's *partheneia* important for understanding the ways choral performance is characterized, since I will argue that their descriptions adhere to conventional descriptions of the maiden chorus, but they also provide one of the first examples of self-referentiality in choral poetry. By self-referentiality I mean the process whereby the song itself calls attention to its actual performance. This can happen when a song draws attention to the context of its performance, but here I focus on the way the song talks about its performance without tying it to

¹⁰⁷ Choruses in hexameter whose songs are reported by the narrator include the funeral choruses of the *Iliad* and the Delian maidens of the *Hymn to Apollo*. These do not engage in the same focus on beauty or dance, but they are not strictly maiden choruses.

¹⁰⁸ On tragic choruses and their self-referentiality see also Winkler (1985) and Davidson (1986). Regarding the conventions of the epinician chorus, see especially Kurke (1991) and Eckerman (2011); cf. Lefkowitz (1988, 1991), the most consistent supporter of the notion that the epinician is not a choral form at all.

a specific moment in time or site of occurrence. Gloria Ferrari (2008) has noted this feature of the Louvre *partheneion*, observing that

for five of the eight partially preserved stanzas, representing half the estimated maximum length of the poem, the chorus gives what amounts to an ephrasis of its own performance that repeatedly appeals to the sense of sight. Not only do the singers describe their own appearances and actions, but they emphatically point to what they see and turn to the audience with direct questions eliciting ocular responses. (2)

Drawing on Ferrari's emphasis on the performance as spectacle, I discuss the various ways in which the girls in Alcman's *partheneia* call attention to their dress, their ritual "roles," and their relationships as a way to help the audience buy into the fiction of the performance.¹⁰⁹ Each new instance of the performance must develop the scenario for a new audience, and the naming of the characters helps achieve this: when the chorus says, "She is Hagesichora" (line 57), it creates and confirms her identity for the audience, and from then on her role becomes stable within the scope of that particular performance. While the figure of Hagesichora is sure to have been enhanced by the physical features of the girl assuming that part, her persona is in part created by the chorus's description of her and interaction with her, which takes place through the performance itself.

As Swift and Stehle have observed, the self-referentiality of *PMG* 1 is specifically attached to the performers. In general, my analysis builds on the following observation by Stehle:

performers can stage their gender identity through performance: they present themselves visually while speaking about their sense of themselves. In effect they publicly demonstrate their internalization of their gender roles, while reinforcing the construction of those roles for the audience. (1997, 72)

While I accept Stehle's assertion that the performance confirms their social role for the audience, I do not agree that this is the most important component of their performance; nor do I read their voice as consistently inadequate or confirming its own inadequacy. Rather, I argue that their constructed "deficiency" relies on their relationship with the chorus leader(s) and the status of

¹⁰⁹ See especially Nagy (1990, 346–49) for Agido and Hagesichora as characters.

the chorus members not as brides but as potential future brides; there is an immediacy of transition that is attached to the figure of the *choregos*, while the other members of the chorus can only hope to assume this role someday in the future. Through their collective nature, set against Hagesichora's singularity, the chorus emphasizes that she is ready for marriage and the transition to adulthood, while they are approaching that stage but not quite ready. Finally, I argue that their confirmation of gender identity relies in particular on their ability to assume the role of chorus members, especially drawing on the representational patterns discussed in the previous chapter, and therefore does not rely as heavily on the assumption of modest deficiency that Stehle has advocated.

I turn now to the poem itself in order to better explain my interpretation of the choral interactions taking place. I focus on *PMG* 1, as it is the longer of the two most complete fragments and has received the most scholarly attention. As I move throughout this poem, I will address the ways in which the chorus articulates its own status as a chorus and constructs its identity in the moment of performance. Hutchinson notes, "In the extant portion the chorus are not hymning [the Lady of the Dawn]; they are commenting on their own actions in performing the dance, and in particular they are commenting on the actions, and praising the persons, of the two women" (2001, 77). Throughout the poem, I will identify occasions in which the chorus's self-referentiality specifically contributes to their status as a chorus. While the Louvre *partheneion* in its entirety is over a hundred lines, the first thirty-four are too fragmentary to offer much insight into the chorus. I begin with line thirty-five:

...φέργα πάσον κακὰ μῆσαμένοι·
 ἔστι τις σιῶν τίσις·
 ὁ δ' ὄλβιος, ὅστις εὐφρων
 ἀμέραν [δι]απλέκει
 ἄκλαυτος·

...Having contrived wicked deeds.
 There is a sort of retribution of the gods:
 He is blessed, whoever cheerfully
 Weaves throughout the day
 Unweeping; (35–39)

This puzzling statement draws on the opening section, which seems to have presented a myth about the Hippocoöntides, locating the festival firmly within Spartan mytho-history and introducing the line of Tyndareus (especially important if this Spartan poem has any relationship with Helen (either as a goddess or as a literary figure)).¹¹⁰ While this passage makes no overt reference to the chorus, it nevertheless establishes them as wise and able to make judgments on behalf of the community, an argument made by Stehle.¹¹¹ Like the choruses of Pindar, the chorus of Alcman is able to make gnomic statements (signaled by ὁ δ' ὄλβιος, line 37) and engage with broad ideas about the human condition. The gnomic statement facilitates the compression of the multitude of voices in the chorus into one controlling “I,” increasing the cohesion of the choral voice even before they begin to speak about themselves in the conventional first person. Hutchinson notes that in line 36 “the abstract noun as subject, the emphatic ἔστι (there exists), and the dry τις (there exists *some*), give the formulation telling detachment and wisdom” (84). Beginning with myth (generally accepted as true, as well as a source of engaging narrative material) allows the chorus to establish themselves as authority figures as well as potent narrators, which sets the tone for the rest of their performance.¹¹² In addition, this statement that connects the myth, set in the past, to the ritual, in the here-and-now, contains a sense of timelessness that both translates to every instance of this song’s performance and also imbues the

¹¹⁰ Ferrari (2008, 1–2; Ch. 1) provides an overview of what must have been the mythical narratives that introduced the poem. She argues that the poem must have begun with Phaethon before turning to the story of the Hippocoöntids.

¹¹¹ See also Kurke (1991) for discussion of the gnomic statements made by epinician choruses.

¹¹² Cf. Stehle (1997, 93), who argues that the chorus tempers their own authority so as not to overstep their social role.

choral voice with a knowledge that extends well beyond their own adolescent experience.

The next statement by the chorus locates the song firmly in the specific occasion occurring in their own time (in real time) and introduces Agido, one of the two figures that is clearly distinct among the chorus members:

...ἐγὼν δ' αἰίδω
 Ἀγιδῶς τὸ φῶς· ὄρω
 Ἔ' ὅτ' ἄλιον, ὄνπερ ἄμιν
 Ἀγιδῶ μαρτύρεται
 φαίνην·

...but I sing of
 Agido, the light; I see
 her like the sun, whose
 shine Agido witnesses
 to us; (39–43)

The chorus brings the song into the present and unifies their voice in the first-person singular αἰίδω; while Hutchinson notes that “sometimes the first person singular will emphasize the feeling of each member as an individual” (85), I see this instance as firmly characterizing the group as a choral entity, while the distinct naming and description of Agido (and later Hagesichora) confirm their special roles. The chorus, though comprised of individual members, draws its authority and its persona from its choral status, and the first-person verb helps define this group as a unified whole.¹¹³ As they identify this new person as Agido, they also demonstrate their authoritative knowledge of the performance, supplying information to the audience that is automatically accepted as true. Hutchinson notes that μαρτύρεται is likely connected to ritual (especially the one taking place, p. 86), but it also functions as confirmation of their poetic authority. Especially if the ritual in the background of this song is taking place at

¹¹³ The use of the first person is a convention of dramatic choruses, on which see Kaimio (1970). Although probably the same is true of lyric choruses, the use of the first person in Pindar has been the subject of much scholarly debate; see especially Currie (2013) for an up-to-date overview of the question.

night, Agido's presents serves as a substitute for the sun that the audience currently cannot see; nevertheless, they can be assured of its existence through Agido's appearance, as the chorus suggests.

This description of Agido picks up on ἀμέραν (38) and confirms the thematic imagery of day, night, and light that runs throughout the poem.¹¹⁴ In addition, the imagery they use is immediately accessible to the audience, although cleverly distanced by the temporal dimension of the poem (that is, it escapes being too basic a comparison because the sun probably is not out during the performance). As Hutchinson notes, the verb (ὀρῶ, 40) “stresses the present moment and spectacle” (86); as the chorus sees Agido (probably literally, as she enters the dance/performance), so does the audience, and the statement at her entrance not only draws attention to her beauty but in fact has the power to create it. Through this verb, the chorus models the visual response that the audience should emulate. As the authoritative voice of the chorus recognizes and names her, the audience accepts their statement as fact; she is radiant to the audience because she is radiant to the chorus, and her entrance sets her apart both physical and in terms of status. Simply based on the fact that she is not included in the choral voice, it is possible to suggest a spatial distinction too, as it would be awkward if they recognized as separate someone standing already standing among their group. The abrupt departure from the preceding statement through the first line of this section (ἐγὼν δ' αἰίδω) calls attention to the new temporal dimension of the performance, while Agido's entrance provides new spatial contextualization even for those observing the performance taking place.

Although they begin from a place of praising Agido, the chorus quickly tempers their praise with a reference to another member of the performance:

ἐμὲ δ' οὔτ' ἐπαινῆν

¹¹⁴ For Ferrari, this is a “striking reference to sunrise” (2008, 47).

οὔτε μωμήσθαι νιν ἄ κλεννὰ χοραγὸς
οὐδ' ἀμῶς ἐῆι· δοκεῖ γὰρ ἤμεν αὐτα
ἐκπρεπῆς τῶς ὄπερ αἴτις
ἐν βοτοῖς στάσειεν ἵππον
παγὸν ἀεθλοφόρον καναχάποδα
τῶν ὑποπετριδίων ὀνείρων·

But neither to praise
nor to blame her does our renowned *choregos*
permit me; for she seems to me
outstanding, as when someone
sets a horse among the herds,
a sturdy, prize-winning, thunder-hooved one,
from one of those “under-the-rock” dreams. (43–48)

As Hutchinson notes, this is the first extant use of the term χοραγός (87), although as I have shown, the *choregos*-figure is present from an early point. The chorus does not actually name her at this first introduction but instead focuses on her exceptional nature before revealing her identity. While the αὐτα (45) most likely refers to Hagesichora, rather than Agido, the absence of names in this statement confuses the two figures and ultimately seems to suggest that they are both outstanding (although Hagesichora more so). It is unclear whether the audience has a view of the *choregos* at this point in the performance, or whether she is “off-stage” or hidden within the chorus at this moment. Hutchinson suggests that ἐν βοτοῖς might indicate the other members of the chorus; if so, perhaps the staging involves the *choregos* physically surrounded by the chorus but somehow shown to be “outstanding.” I hesitate to take this metaphor too literally, however, since it likens the other girls to beasts; they are, after all, girls with similar aspirations to those of the *choregos*, and the performance call attention to everyone’s beauty, not just Hagesichora’s.

This introduction of Hagesichora at first appears to establish a somewhat strained relationship between her and Agido, since she does not allow the chorus members to praise or blame her. Because of the chorus’s limited ability to comment on her (based on what they have

already said), it is unclear how she fits into the greater picture. I accept Hutchinson's suggestion that "in this instance, the poem, so intensely hierarchical, refuses to rank. That itself is not an unhierarchical feature, just as mortal should decline to rank gods" (87). Although Agido and Hagesichora's relationship to one another remains a mystery at this point in the poem, the chorus's introduction of these figures does suggest that both individuals are superior to the chorus in some way. Possibly the directive to neither praise nor blame is neutral in the sense that any kind of interaction with Agido is forbidden, perhaps because it might interfere with the ritual acts Agido is performing. Whatever the case may be, it is clear that Hagesichora is, although distinct, truly part of the chorus, a relationship likely mirrored by the choreography of the performance, while Agido seems to have been spatially separate and not fully connected to the choral group.

Having pointed out Hagesichora's uniqueness to the audience through the horse simile, the chorus pivots back to the here-and-now by relying on the chorus as a visual experience for the audience:

ἤ οὐχ ὀρῆις; ὁ μὲν κέλης
 Ἐνετικός· ἀ δὲ χαίτα
 τᾶς ἐμᾶς ἀνεψιᾶς
 Ἀγησιχόρας ἐπανθεῖ
 χρυσὸς [ὡ]ς ἀκήρατος·
 τό τ' ἀργύριον πρόσωπον,
 διαφάδαν τί τοι λέγω;
 Ἀγησιχόρα μὲν αὐτα·

Or do you not see? That racehorse is
 from Paphlagonia; but the mane of this one,
 my cousin,
 Hagesichora, blossoms
 like unmixed gold;
 Her face is silver,
 But why should I say this plainly?
 This is Hagesichora. (50–57)

At last, Hagesichora's identity is revealed, and with it, confirmation of her role as the *choregos*: if this was previously unclear, her name literally means "to lead the chorus," removing any doubt in the audience's mind. Building up to her name, the chorus preserves the horse imagery, and now Agido is a horse, too. While the comparison, and the special use of κέλης, a racehorse, implies that the two are competing, the inclusion of Agido in this equine metaphor indicates that she is at least on a level close to Hagesichora, rather than included in the rest of the beasts mentioned above. While the chorus goes on to indicate Hagesichora's superiority, Agido does not escape their subtle praise in this likening of the two girls. Once again, the chorus demonstrates their poetic authority in this juxtaposition by praising Agido without drawing attention to her; through a single word, they locate her within the same framework as Hagesichora, without fully disobeying their instructions to leave her alone.

At the same time, Hagesichora is the clear focus of the chorus's attention, and their description picks up on the earlier imagery of the sun, thereby connecting her with Agido in turn. Perhaps Agido is the sun, but Hagesichora mirrors her radiance through her hair, which resembles unadulterated gold: though perhaps not as majestic as the sun, gold is a far costlier and more valuable item of comparison. Through an interesting bridging of metaphors, the chorus identifies Hagesichora's hair with a word that picks up on the horsey language (χαίτα, 51) and then describes it as blossoming or blooming (ἐπανθεῖ, 53), using floral language that may indicate Hagesichora's youth and/or an erotic dimension to their (and, by extension, the audience's) gaze.¹¹⁵ Quickly however, they move from the floral metaphor to a likening of her hair to gold, specifically gold that has not been mixed with any other substance (ἀκήρατος, 54). The metallurgical metaphor is preserved as they describe her face as silvery (ἀργύριον, 55),

¹¹⁵ χαίτα frequently describes human hair but is a regular Homeric word for mane (e.g., *Il.* 19.405).

while these last two images also pick up on their earlier mentions of the sun, light, and radiance—previously linked to Agido but here refocused on Hagesichora in a way that indicates her superiority through more complicated and even more vivid metaphors.

The chorus furthermore draws attention to Hagesichora by pointing out the audience's ability to see her for themselves, authoritatively directing their gaze once again. Clay is right when he remarks that “on the most fundamental level, the language of Alcman's chorus is deictic; to describe the beauty of Agido and Hagesichora the chorus only need to point to them” (1991, 51). While *διαφάδαν* seems to mean “openly” or “plainly,” it also ironically suggests that there is no reason for the chorus to describe her when she is right there for the audience to view; this is confirmed when, in the following line, *Ἀγησιχώρα μὲν αὐτὰ* (57), the chorus presents or reveals her for their own assessment. The chorus's use of Hagesichora's character name, occurring after almost ten lines that describe her more obliquely, suggests to me that this is the point at which Hagesichora's identity is actually made clear to the audience. If Hutchinson is correct that the phrase *ἐν βοτοῖς* (46) is meant to indicate the other members of the chorus, that is the more logical place for the choreography to reveal her, but I argue that this is when Hagesichora can be distinguished from the other members and perhaps even when she arrives on stage. If so, this also parallels what I have read as the formal introduction of Agido that occurs in line 40 and probably indicates her own entrance into the performance. At the announcement of their names (their “characters,” really), each girl appears before the audience to confirm the chorus's narration of the scene.

While many readers have focused on the ritual aspects of the poem and the festival or rites that must lie behind the lyrics, it is also possible to read this as a fairly theatrical

performance, as a number of scholars have realized.¹¹⁶ Like the dramatic chorus, this chorus introduces each new character as she arrives on stage; they speak in highly metaphorical language that introduces and connects broad themes of the poem as a whole; and they provide a quasi-narration of the staging taking place in front of the audience.¹¹⁷ Scholars are right to note that the ritual occasion is its primary context, but it is also worth observing that the ritual background is another feature that this *partheneion* shares with the dramatic chorus, although the religious aspects of drama (especially tragedy) have been somewhat obscured when these texts are encountered at such a far remove from their original performance context.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, as Ferrari has noted, the performers are largely assumed to be playing a role at no remove from their own identity—that is, Spartan girls “play” Spartan girls within the performance.¹¹⁹ Because of the deep relationship between performance and mimesis, as well as evidence for mimetic performances by lyric choruses, Ferrari questions the notion that the chorus in the poem and in performance should be read as fully corresponding to the actors portraying them.

Given the age of the performers and the mimetic nature of the performance, it is nearly impossible to draw conclusions about the actual girls that performed this from the poetry itself; rather, we must evaluate the attitudes projected by the performers and their instructions to the audience for how to view and interpret them. As they describe themselves and their actions in the

¹¹⁶ See especially Herington (1985, 22–25) and Peponi (2004, 295–316). Hutchinson calls it “meta-ritual” (2001, 77), while Clay speaks of self-dramatization as a strategy to win the god’s attention (1991, 63–67).

¹¹⁷ As Kowalzig (2007) has observed, the relationship between choral and dramatic poetry remains in question, but see Herington (1985) for a general discussion. For broad approaches to the dramatic chorus, especially as it relates to the lyric chorus, see Bacon (1994–95), Foley (2003), and Mastronarde (2010, especially chapter 4). For the mimetic nature of other choral groups, see especially Nagy (2013) and Peponi (2009) on the Deliades in the *Hymn to Apollo* and their relationship with the dramatic chorus.

¹¹⁸ Unlike Alcman’s *partheneia*, tragic choruses do not refer to their ritual context (the City Dionysia). References to ritual instead link them with archaic choruses, especially archetypal choruses like the Muses and the Nereids. On the relationship between tragedy and its ritual context, see especially Winkler and Zeitlin (1990).

¹¹⁹ This is generally accepted to be true, but cf. R. Parker, cited in Carter (1988: 98).

performance, the chorus contributes a strong physical quality that recalls literary examples of choral description, which are also dependent on visual description and neatly balance the nuances of each specific chorus with the audience’s culturally engrained ability to “read” a chorus. Although the statement’s validity has been questioned since it was first made, the notion that the chorus is the “ideal spectator” seems to be realized here though the chorus’s act of looking at itself and interpreting for the audience’s benefit.¹²⁰ In this poem, the audience must balance what they see with what they hear; as the chorus describes themselves to the audience’s imagination, the visual elements of the performance must enhance and support that verbal picture in order to leave a full and potent impression of the chorus in the audience’s mind.

As the performance continues, the chorus continues to draw attention to the spectacle of the performance, focusing on its two main figures and creating their own version of what the audience sees to enhance and define the chorus. Following their introduction of both figures, the chorus shifts their attention back to the drama behind the performance, suggesting that the chorus is in the middle of a battle of sorts:

ἄ δὲ δευτέρα πεδ’ Ἀγιδῶ τὸ φεῖδος
ἵππος Ἰβηνῶι Κολαξαῖος δραμήται·
ταὶ Πεληάδες γὰρ ἄμιν
ὀρθρία φᾶρος φεροίσαις
νύκτα δι’ ἀμβροσίαν ἄτε σήριον
ἄστρον ἀνηρομέναι μάχονται·

But she who is second after Agido in appearance,
she will run as a Kolaxian horse against an Ibenian one;
for the Peliades,
rising like the dog-star,
fight against us as we bring the cloak
through the ambrosial night. (58–63)

From the identity of the Πεληάδες, which many scholars have read as the Pleiades, to the

¹²⁰ Schlegel (1846, 76–77; trans. 1973, 69–70).

question of whether they carry a plow or a piece of woven cloth in line 61, the details of this passage are considerably obscured. These lines do, however, communicate a more complex dynamic between Hagesichora and Agido. In line 58, the chorus returns to their equine metaphor, suggesting that anyone even coming close to Agido in beauty is exceptional and thereby implying Agido's own appearance is remarkable.¹²¹ The shift back to Agido is striking after the lines that precede this passage ("This is Hagesichora"), which heavily assert Hagesichora's status among the chorus and her role as leader. Furthermore, these lines are surprising because they invite comparison between Agido and another, unspecified figure, rather than further comparison between Hagesichora and Agido. The way these lines begin initially gives the impression that Agido is the one that is second (ἄ δὲ δευτέρα), which would be a natural way to link these descriptions of Hagesichora and Agido; the realization that another, third person is the one that is "second" comes only as the line develops further (πεδ' Ἀγιδῶ). Although we might expect further comparison between the two main characters, rather than an abstract contrast with a third, unspecified person, the chorus's strategy effectively praises Agido without damaging Hagesichora's own reputation; instead of pitting the two girls against one another, here the chorus actually elevates them both, separately.¹²²

The chorus then pivots away from the two individuals to introduce two new components of their performance: the cloak (or plow) that appears to be their ritual offering, and the Πεληάδες, possibly the star cluster Pleiades or perhaps a rival chorus—maybe both. Some have

¹²¹ Ferrari translates lines 58–59 as "Next will run Agido, her appearance / that of a Colaxian horse following an Ibenian" (2008, 73, esp. fn.1). This is certainly possible, and I agree that the passage does not construe Agido superior to Hagesichora. I have understood the sentiment here to be grouping the two together as superior to anyone else.

¹²² Dale (2011, 26) follows West (1965) in observing that "the comparisons between them...are meant to signal not the inferiority of one to the other, but the superiority of both to anyone else, rank and file of the chorus included."

suggested that the Πεληάδες are actually Hagesichora and Agido, but as Hutchinson observes, the number of the group does not fit the two leaders, and the notion that they are “fighting” with their own chorus is odd (2001, 91). If this word indicates the Pleiades, it lends support to the idea that this performance is taking place in the night, and the chorus is fighting against time and the coming of dawn, and this is the view that Clay (1991, 61) promotes. If a rival chorus, the competition is more literal, and our chorus is fighting to be the best. The story of the Pleiades, involving Pleione and her daughters being pursued by Orion, maps onto a choral group fairly easily, and it seems easy enough to identify a rival chorus as this sort of group. The two explanations are compatible, and actually may reinforce each other, as labelling another chorus as the Pleiades becomes much stronger if the star cluster is actually visible. The agonistic tone is especially prominent in the final word in the statement, μάχονται (60), and the juxtaposition between the two groups in line 60 (ταὶ Πεληάδες γὰρ ἄμιν). Dale (2011) argues against the presence of a rival chorus, instead taking the Pleiades as an archetypal chorus and the only rivals to the chorus led by Hagesichora and Agido.¹²³ Because of its seamless integration of the Pleiades, the competitive element, and the identification of the Pleiades’ own chorality, I also accept this interpretation.

The chorus then returns the focus to their own group, listing their members’ names and complimenting them in turn. Based on the interpretation of τείρει (77), it is unclear whether these girls are inferior to Hagesichora or actually preferable:

οὔτε γὰρ τι πορφύρας
 τόσσοι κόροι ὥστ’ ἀμύναι,
 οὔτε ποικίλος δράκων
 παγχρύσιος, οὐδὲ μίτρα
 Λυδία, νεανίδων
 ἱανογ[λ]εφάρων ἄγαλμα,
 οὐδὲ ταὶ Ναννώως κόμαι,

¹²³ Henrichs (1994–95, 83) imagines no other chorus but reads Agido an Hagesichora as competitors.

ἄλλ' οὐ[δ'] Ἀρέτα σιειδής,
 οὐδὲ Σύλακίς τε καὶ Κλησισηήρα,
 οὐδ' ἔς Αἰνησιμβρ[ό]τας ἐνθοῖσα φασεῖς·
 Ἀσταφίς [τ]έ μοι γένοιτο
 καὶ ποτιγέποι Φίλυλλα
 Δαμαρ[έ]τα τ' ἐρατά τε Φιανθεμῖς·
 ἄλλ' Ἀγησιγόρα με τείρει.

For there is not such a satiety
 Of purple to ward them off:
 Not this decorated snake,
 All golden, nor the Lydian
 Headband, glory of
 Dark-eyed youths;
 Not even the hair of Nanno,
 Or Arete, seeming like a goddess,
 Or Sylakis and Kleesisera:
 And going to the house of Ainesimbrotia, you wouldn't say this:
 If only Astaphis might be mine,
 And Philylla would look at me,
 And lovely Damareta and Wianthemis;
 But Hagesichora is the one that wears on me. (64–77)

The chorus begins by implying that the accoutrements of their performance (their hair, their jewelry, their outfits) are not good enough (οὔτε...τόσσοι κόροι ὥστ' ἀμύναι). Although apparently insufficient markers of beauty, the items listed are overly luxurious. Regarding this list, Hutchinson notes that “the chorus would also be drawing attention to, and so revivifying, the visual impact of their appearance...the glamour and finery are also a vital part both of impressing the spectators and of pleasing the goddess” (94). Following this interpretation, the spectacle of the performance is key to both the ritual taking place and also the efficacy of the performance itself; although the divine audience is a major part of the activity, the human audience is the one that is actually present, and the girls here perform as much for them as for any goddess. Swift observes that “the implication is that the chorus are drawing the audience’s attention to what they can already see, and encouraging them to focus their gaze on these details” (2016, 259). While they claim that their appearance is insufficient, the trick lies in the fact that

the audience must have been dazzled, if not by their costumes and appearances, then by the entire performance as a whole. Through their own seeming modesty, they actually prove their success.

This passage is also significant in the way that it introduces individual members (characters) from the chorus, setting up a list that functions similarly to both a catalogue and a priamel. By introducing individuals who possess their own beautiful or desirable qualities, and then concluding with a strong statement of contrast that points to a clearly superior figure (ἀλλ' Ἀγησιχώρα με τείρει, 77), the chorus establishes Hagesichora's role as the chorus leader once again.¹²⁴ In this way, the listing of names strongly resembles other choral groups that we have encountered, including Hesiod's Muses:

ταῦτ' ἄρα Μοῦσαι ἄειδον, Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι,
 ἐννέα θυγατέρες μεγάλου Διὸς ἐκγεγαυῖαι,
 Κλειώ τ' Εὐτέρπη τε Θάλεια τε Μελπομένη τε
 Τερψιχόρη τ' Ἐρατώ τε Πολύμνιά τ' Οὐρανίη τε
 Καλλιόπη θ' ἥ δὲ προφερεστάτη ἐστὶν ἀπασέων.

Thus the Muses sang these things, they who hold Olympian homes,
 The nine daughters born from great Zeus,
 Cleo and Euterpe and Thalia and Melpomene
 And Terpsichore and Erato and Polymnia and Ouranie
 And Calliope: and she is the most outstanding of them all. (*Theogony* 75–79)

While the role of Calliope as *choregos*-figure is understated in the poem, this passage suggests that she may be well equipped to take on the position of leader (likely due to her association with epic poetry, Hesiod's own medium). This kind of list is also not unlike Persephone's version of what happened in the meadow (*HhD* 417–424), where she names each of her companions as though setting up precisely this kind of catalogue/priamel construction. Although the fact that Persephone's list does not culminate in her own name makes it an imperfect parallel, the similar

¹²⁴ The relationship of the catalogue and choral lyric has recently been discussed by Steiner (2019).

naming strategies in these three passages suggest that the list of individual names actually solidifies their choral nature (even as their individual names are expressed, the catalogue format blends them together) and has the potential to identify the *choregos*-figure as part of, but somehow different from, the rest of the group. Dale has suggested that Ainesimbrotia is a poet, and that the passage is meant to say, “when you need a chorus, you would not go to the house of Ainesimbrotia to ask for Astaphis or Damareta but instead you would seek out Hagesichora (and maybe she is not affiliated with Ainesimbrotia at all)” (33–35). Whatever the precise meaning of these lines, it is clear that even against a rather long list of other (presumably beautiful and eligible) girls, Hagesichora remains the chorus’s choice. The physical performance is likely to have reflected this: as each girl is named, the chorus refocuses the audience’s gaze, until at the end Hagesichora is visibly separated and distinguished from the other group of girls.

There are, as discussed at the beginning of this chapter, elements that come out in this passage that are able to be construed as erotic. As I argued above, the suggestion that these mirror real, specific relationships is unlikely, given the probability that this song was performed by different choruses and could not have reflected each new chorus’s private relationships; in addition, the idea that the poet would have known about these kinds of personal feelings and intimacies is equally unlikely. It is possible that there is a level of intimacy in this description in order to reflect what the poet (and probably the audience) feels is a normal type of interaction between adolescent girls, who are starting to become familiar with the concept of sexuality and have limited interactions with males in their community. Furthermore, the combination of the emphasis on the girls’ appearances and the erotic tone suggest, as Swift has observed, that the girls are actually using this strategy to direct the audience’s gaze. Whether or not these imagined relationships reflect any degree of reality, any degree of eroticism in the chorus’s relationship

with Hagesichora would most likely be an important indication that she is (and they are) ready, or becoming ready, for actual marriage. The feelings of the chorus as described here model the proper response to Hagesichora, demonstrating why she is eligible for marriage and how desire for her should look.

The following lines continue the idea begun in line 73, that at Ainesimbrotá's house one might find a number of pleasing and beautiful girls. However, the one that is desired by the chorus, Hagesichora, is not one of them, since she is here performing with Agido and ensuring that the ritual goes smoothly:

οὐ γὰρ ἄ κ[α]λλίσφυρος
 Ἄγησιχ[ό]ρ[α] πάρ' αὐτεῖ,
 Ἄγιδοῖ ... αρμένει
 θωστήρ[ιά τ'] ἄμ' ἐπαινεῖ.
 ἀλλὰ τᾶν [...]... σοι
 δέξασθε· [σι]ῶν γὰρ ἄνα
 καὶ τέλος· [χο]ροστάτις,
 φείποιμί δ', [ἐ]γὼν μὲν αὐτὰ
 παρσένος μάταν ἀπὸ θράνω λέλακα
 γλαύξ· ἐγὼ[v] δὲ ταῖ μὲν Ἄωτι μάλιστα
 φανδάνην ἐρῶ· πόνων γὰρ
 ἄμιν ἰάτωρ ἔγεντο·

For the one with the beautiful ankles,
 Hagesichora, is not there but
 With Agido...who makes our
 festivity pleasing, and she approves it.
 But gods, may you
 receive this: for from the gods,
 there is also an end; I should say,
 I am the chorus leader, and on the one hand,
 a maiden that cries aloud in vain from the beam,
 like an owl; but on the other, I desire most of all to
 please the dawn goddess; for she
 became a healer of toils for us. (78–89)

The chorus's statements in this passage suggest a separation between themselves and Hagesichora, who is "not there but / with Agido" (79–80). This supports my suggestion that

Agido is physically removed from the audience, and given the sentiment of lines 81–82, probably they are participating in an action connected to the ritual. Once again, the chorus draws attention to their activity, encouraging the audience to look at them as they pray or otherwise participate in significant actions. Hutchinson suggests that [χο]ροστάτις stands in for the vocative, which would make sense (97); it seems unlikely that Hagesichora would characterize her own performance with such self-deprecation, and a change of speaker is difficult to support. Even from the chorus, the statement of modesty is difficult to take seriously; Hutchinson helpfully notes that the chorus's ongoing performance must be proof of the statement's falseness and must therefore be a humorous nod to their abilities (98).

These lines seem to suggest, even if it is just for show, that without Hagesichora's help the chorus is inadequate. As they continue, they remind the audience that it is through the presence of Hagesichora that they can be successful:

ἐξ Ἀγησιχόρ[ας] δὲ νεάνιδες
 —ἰρ]ήνας ἐρατ[ᾶ]ς ἐπέβαν·
 τῶ]ι τε γὰρ σηραφόρῳι
 ..]τῶς ἐδ.....
 τ[ῶι] κυβερνάται δὲ χρῆ
 κ[ῆ]ν νᾶϊ μάλιστ' ἀκούην·
 ἃ δὲ τᾶν Σηρηνη[ί]δων
 ἀοιδοτέρα μ[ὲν] οὐχί,
 σιαι γάρ, ἀντ[ὶ] δ' ἔνδεκα
 παίδων δεκ[ὰς] ἄδ' ἀείδει·
 φθέγγεται δ' [ἄρ'] ὅ[τ'] ἐπὶ Ξάνθῳ ῥοαῖσι
 κύκνος· ἃ δ' ἐπιμέρῳι ξανθᾶ κομίσκαι

But because of Hagesichora, the youths
 Have come upon lovely peace;
 For to the tracehorse

...
 Or like how it is necessary to listen
 To the helmsman on a ship most of all;
 And she is not more bardlike than the Sirens,
 For they are goddesses, but instead of eleven
 children, the ten sing this song;

They sound it like a swan along the streams of
The Xanthus; but her lovely golden hairs... (90–101)

Most relevant here is the way the chorus describes their number and their age-group, and the comparison to the Sirens. The numbers in lines 98–99 seem to suggest that the chorus (ten members) is absent one (most likely Hagesichora). While this explanation does not account for Agido, it seems possible that because her role was entirely separate and she did not sing along at any point, even perhaps entering the performance separately, she was not ever included in the choral group. Hagesichora, who can be the only logical individual that is separated from the group, is once again made clearly distinct among the other chorus members; probably she departed the company of the chorus in order to join Agido in lines 79–80. Meanwhile, the others, named in lines 70–77, have remain a unified entity that thinks and acts as one, here singing together and calling themselves “the ten.” Although the text is fragmentary and the metaphors are loosely developed, it is possible to conjecture that they also have identified themselves as the horses that follow the racehorse (92–93) and the sailors that obey the helmsman (94–95). Both of these images would suggest that they are the group that falls under the individual’s command and that it is only through the cooperation of leader and chorus that the group as a whole is able to properly complete their function.

Regardless of what the audience is actually seeing during these lines, their acknowledgment of the ritual and action taking place cement this as a crucial aspect of the performance. However, it is likely that the choreography and staging of the performance helped reflect this, and the notion of a chorus performing for the audience already distinguishes them as stepping out of the larger community and turning to face those watching them. There are three distinct zones of identity in the chorus’s framework, including the two named figures, the chorus, and the audience, and these are communicated through the chorus’s emphasis on who or

what to look at during different parts of the performance. The chorus counts Hagesichora and Agido as increasingly separate from them, but from the audience's perspective they are nevertheless part of the performance as a whole and clearly connected in some way to the chorus. The chorus is similarly distinguished from the audience by virtue of their specific number, which, though inclusive of the ten girls, is simultaneously exclusive of everyone watching them. The chorus is a cohesive unit; although they may speak for and represent the community, membership in the chorus cannot be seen as extending beyond the boundaries of this group.

Within this passage, the chorus uses a number of age-specific terms they use to describe themselves; Clay suggests that they “are calling attention to themselves...to capture the attention of their audience, both human and divine” (1991, 60). Here they refer to themselves using both νεάνιδες (90) and παίδων (99). In the passage above, they also use the term παρσένος (86); whether this applies directly to them or Hagesichora, they all seem to be included. All of these terms are roughly interchangeable for a group of unmarried women, but it is also possible that the term *parthenos* singles out Hagesichora as the *most* eligible for marriage and adulthood, while the chorus's self-identification increases her uniqueness and singularity. Even if these terms or the way Hagesichora is presented are nuanced, the age-specific identifiers serve the purpose of uniting the chorus with a common trait. Although the ages in the chorus probably varied, they project specific labels in order to project their collective nature, as well as their age and social status, to the audience. By repeatedly calling attention to their membership in a certain age group, the chorus reminds the audience what their purpose as a chorus is. Through the focus on their status as adolescent girls, the chorus encourages their audience to interpret them as the type of chorus (most often, a wedding or transitional chorus) most often associated with this age

range.

Finally, the chorus makes a cryptic comparison to the Sirens. As Hutchinson notes, it is difficult to tell exactly who is or is not a better singer than the Sirens (100); I have taken the $\acute{\alpha}$ in line 96 as referring to Hagesichora, which would make these lines mean something like “she is not quite as skilled as these goddesses, but we are singing well, and she is beautiful.” Given the plurality of the Sirens (at least in the *Odyssey*, they are always either plural or dual), the comparison really seems to be connecting the chorus and the Sirens, although in my reading it is Hagesichora that is the immediate tenor. Stehle takes this as evidence for the overall pattern of conformity that the choruses reinforce:

Hagesichora cannot sing like them. Instead she can sing as well as ten children (?) or a swan. Hagesichota is implicitly denied adult human social status and her voice is lauded as beautiful by means of a simile that confines it to aesthetic power. (1997, 78)

But I suggest that this interpretation places too much power in the negative that ends the line.

Although the simile is ultimately unfavorable to Hagesichora, her being less than the Sirens does not result in the denial of adulthood for Hagesichora, as the Sirens are neither human nor associated with any specific age category. While the comparison seems to indicate the inferiority of Hagesichora and the chorus, it nevertheless suggests that they are at least coming close enough for the comparison to be made; even if this chorus is not equal to a group of goddesses, they are still clearly skilled. In fact, the Sirens’ divine status appears to be the only reason they are superior: the chorus explains that “they are goddesses” ($\sigma\iota\alpha\iota\ \gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$, 98), indicating that this is at the root of the hierarchy they have identified.

Throughout the poem, the chorus projects a consistent identity to the audience in a number of specific ways. Most central to their performance is the triangle of relationships between Hagesichora, Agido, and the chorus (alternatively, between the chorus, the two

individual girls, and the audience). From the moment Agido enters (lines 39–43), she seems to be separated from the choral group, a notion visible in their lines but likely reinforced by the choreography of this performance. Nevertheless, I do not read the chorus's attitude towards her as hostile or competitive; rather, she appears to be performing an important ritual action that prevents her from fully taking part in the chorus. Hagesichora, on the other hand, is introduced by means of her commands to the chorus not to bother Agido (43–45), suggesting that her power comes not only from her beauty but also her direct authority over the chorus. In naming and following her instructions, the chorus solidifies her role as the *choregos*, and their more formal introduction of her (Ἀγησιγόρα μὲν αὐτα, 57) has an almost deictic quality, as though she emerges from within the chorus itself.¹²⁵ Through the chorus's descriptions, then, it is possible to see Hagesichora as the clear *choregos*-figure, who is firmly part of the chorus but nevertheless remains unique among the group, while Agido is never fully incorporated into the chorus and remains outside of it throughout the entire song. Hagesichora seems to have the ability to connect the two entities, as suggested by lines 79–80 (Ἀγησιχ[ό]ρ[α] πάρ' αὐτεῖ, / Ἀγιδοῖ), but Agido never joins the chorus and therefore cannot be considered a *choregos*-figure in her own right. As Hagesichora joins Agido, the chorus seems to regretfully accept her absence, suggesting that they are less capable without her but acknowledging the importance of her actions.

While the chorus's commentary on these two individuals makes their relationship to the chorus and to each other somewhat clearer, it also sheds light on the most salient feature of the choral group: their collectivity. Although a collective nature may seem like an obvious trait for a chorus to embody, they make a point to project this togetherness to the audience throughout the poem. The chorus articulates their singular attitude even as they name individuals that may have

¹²⁵ Peponi sees this as another way in which the chorus confirms their accuracy as eyewitnesses (2004, 302).

been part of the group, voicing a catalogue of girls' names that ends with the chorus as a unified group and the individual clearly separated: ἄλλ' Ἀγησιχόρα με τείρει (77). Through the comparisons they draw with other choral groups, like the Pleiades and the Sirens, the chorus strengthens their collectivity even further, since none of the Sirens or the Pleiades ever seem to have existed as individuals outside their group identity. Like the Sirens and the Pleiades, this chorus cannot be separated into its constituent members; it only exists as a group within the scope of this performance. Whether they are commenting on Agido's actions, praising Hagesichora, or carrying out the ritual purpose of the song, which seems to be praising the goddess of dawn, the chorus does so as a group and their song is designed to reflect this group mentality outward toward the audience. Although the audience's perception of them as a group would have been initiated and solidified by the visual aspect of their performance, especially if I am correct about Agido's physical separation from the rest of the chorus, they seem to be the ones controlling the audience's visual interpretation. As they perform this *partheneion*, which was probably related to transitional rites of passage, they blend together in a way that temporarily defers the immediate possibility of marriage for themselves, but not for Hagesichora. As she is distinguished by the chorus, her readiness for marriage becomes an obvious feature of the performance, and it is through her role as the *choregos*-figure that the chorus confirms this for the audience. Just as the chorus of Oceanids or the companions of Nausicaa help to frame their central figures in a way that suggests her proximity to adulthood, the chorus here frames Hagesichora in a way that suggests that she is the most singular, and therefore the most eligible, among them.

III. Sappho's Chorus

I now turn to examine how Sappho's poetry presents her circle as a chorus, focusing on three aspects of the chorus that can be identified in her lyrics: the relationship of the chorus to specific occasions, especially the wedding and the funeral; the role of the *choregos* and the ability of that figure to shape the chorus; and the chorus as a means of presenting its members as desirable objects, which Sappho uniquely utilizes not from the point of view of the external audience but from within the chorus itself. I will consider poems 16 and 58b, with a brief comment on poem 34. By looking at poem 16, I argue first that Sappho's poetry positions her and her companions as a chorus, specifically as a maiden chorus with a close connection to marriage. Although the choruses that name specific companions are not typically understood to be *epithalamia*, the process of separation from the chorus most naturally mirrors the leaving of one girl (usually the *choregos*) to be married.¹²⁶ Thus, these provide an emotional element that earlier choral descriptions are unable to include: the feeling of absence generated among the other choral members by the departure of their companion. In Sappho's case, this feeling of longing and loss takes on a distinctly erotic tone, but I do not think this needs to be associated with the chorus in any larger sense; that is, the chorus is not responsible for or contributing to the erotic nature of the relationship between its members, but is rather a unique scene where multiple female voices are heard and thus a unique opportunity to identify such expressions of mutual desire. Poem 58b provides another view of the chorus, this time from a different perspective:

¹²⁶ I am interpreting these choruses as drawing on traditional aspects of both *partheneia* and *epithalamia*. Parker (1993: 332), citing Calame (1977, I, 167), implores scholars to distinguish between the two genres, especially based on the civic, public role of *partheneia* and the private occasions for *epithalamia*. Formalized by Alexandrian commentators, *partheneia* and *epithalamia* were indeed distinct, and I accept Parker's point that Sappho's poetry should not be interpreted as civic or public in the way that Alcman's is. As we have seen, however, maiden choruses, including those performing songs that might be called *partheneia*, nevertheless have a strong relationship with marriage and deep-rooted connections with the idea of bride capture, especially as a literary trope. The cast of chorus members is largely the same, as the companions of the bridal figure in both cases make up the chorus around the central figure.

Sappho speaks from the point of view of an older woman whose time in the chorus has shifted from the marriage-centered choruses of her youth to the funeral choruses of her adulthood.

While chorality is a broadly accepted aspect of Alcman's poetry, it has only recently been embraced by some scholars of Sappho.¹²⁷ Assumed to be primarily monodic in nature, scholars have interpreted the "I" of Sappho as communicating an individual persona and point of view; indeed, this has been central to important work concerning the multiple ways of speaking that Sappho performs and the poetic portrayal of female subjectivity.¹²⁸ Thanks to the contributions of Calame, Lardinois (1994, 1996, and 2001), and most recently Bierl (2016), a long-held focus on monody has begun to shift toward consideration of how chorality might frame the poems.¹²⁹ As I have discussed in earlier chapters, the actual performance mode of a poem does not negate the possibility that the poem participates in the broader notion of chorality; in particular, the Homeric epics and hymns provide clear examples that a poem intended for solo performance can indeed utilize the image of the chorus to communicate key themes (especially marriage and the role of the individual in the community) that hold significance for the poem as a whole. Although I support the possible choral performance of certain poems, it is also possible and important to consider how Sappho utilizes the theme and motif of the chorus, even if the poems were performed by a single singer. The poetry of Sappho is, like the Homeric poems, another avenue in which the idea of chorality may be at play, and I will suggest in the following discussion that regardless of its performance context, the concept of the chorus is central to

¹²⁷ See especially Power regarding the discussion of chorality and Sappho in recent years (2019, 82–84).

¹²⁸ See especially Winkler (1991), Greene (ed. 1996), and others.

¹²⁹ Calame has been singular in his suggestions that the poetry of Sappho creates a kind of choral "circle," although Stehle has to some degree followed in this line of thinking, though she views it as a community connected by written communication. Lardinois has taken a different approach, suggesting that Sappho's poems are not categorically monodic and that some ought to be read as choral themselves. To a lesser extent, see also Parker, who notes that although she is primarily a solo lyric poet, she also "writes choral works for private marriage ceremonies, singing often to individual women, with whom she is in love" (1993, 326).

Sappho's characterization of her companions.

Following the conclusions of Lardinois regarding the performance of Sappho's poetry, I think it is most likely the case that some of Sappho's songs were indeed performed by choruses, but in this chapter, I will focus on how the notion of chorality is communicated by the poems and how they describe choral performance. More specifically, I suggest that the chorus provides an important framework for understanding certain of Sappho's poems, especially the relationships and transitions depicted in them. In this way, my approach is similar to that of Calame, who argues that the descriptions in Sappho's work indicate "structures in the Lesbos circle analogous to those characteristic of the female lyric chorus: young girls, bound to the one who leads them by ties expressed in the term *ἑταίρα*, perform dances and songs together" (1997, 212).¹³⁰ More recently, Ladianou (2016) has argued that the fusion of the senses and the unique visual qualities of Sappho's poetry help contribute to a choral sense.¹³¹ As the idea of chorality becomes better established, it becomes increasingly possible to identify aspects of the chorus as a broad, symbolic concept that influenced many aspects of the Greek world, including the literary tradition.

Although the identification of Sappho's group has been a longstanding scholarly question, I resist any too-definitive recognition of Sappho's circle as any specific cultural institution, whether it be a *thiasos*, a *Kreis*, or even the chorus as a clearly defined performance form. The tradition of envisioning Sappho as an older, already married educator of young girls, instructing them in comportment and poetry, has deep scholarly roots that have made the question of desire in Sappho all the more difficult.¹³² As stated above, I find the conclusions of

¹³⁰ A slightly different version of this essay is printed in Greene (ed. 1996, 113–24).

¹³¹ See also Swift (2016), who argues that parthenaic song draws attention to the way its performers look and communicate by appealing to the audience's gaze.

¹³² For a thorough summary, see Parker (1993, 313–15).

Lardiniis (that many of these songs were probably performed by a chorus), to be the most compelling, especially given a lack of evidence for any other sort of institution that enabled such close intimacy between girls and women, which may account for some of the choral language. Regardless of the performance realities, I also argue that Sappho's circle comes to resemble a chorus through the interactions of its members (especially *choregos* and *choreutai*), with the chorus providing a literary backdrop for the interactions taking place in the poetry.

One source of difficulty in connecting Sappho's poetry with the chorus is the singularity of Sappho's "I." Although the chorus's use of the first person is conventional in drama (see Kaimio 1970), and based on Alcman's *partheneia* seems to have been conventional in archaic choral lyric, scholars have largely been reluctant to see Sappho's "I" as reflecting anything other than the interiority of a specific individual, especially one that in terms of gender can be aligned with the poet herself. Sappho's first person is indeed decidedly individual on some occasions, especially poem 1, which imagines a conversation between Sappho and Aphrodite and considers the fluctuating affections between individuals.¹³³ Especially because she is the only female poet from the ancient world whose corpus survives in any significant capacity, most readers have held onto the possibility that Sappho's work communicates a female perspective otherwise inaccessible. Furthermore, scholars like Bowie (2016) have recently made compelling arguments for monody by suggesting the possibility that Sappho's songs were designed for performance in a male sympotic space from the beginning. Even monodic performance, however, does not negate the influence of the chorus, which was a hugely important aspect of many types of poetry and poetic performances, as we have seen. In addition, the assumption that Sappho's "I" only communicates one perspective is unnecessarily limiting, especially given the implications of

¹³³ See, for example, Rawles, who firmly maintains that "it cannot be, as in Alcman, that the ἐγώ of the poem represents the collective voice of a chorus" (2011, 143).

reperformance, whether by a chorus or by a soloist. I maintain that the possibility of multiple perspectives in Sappho's "I" is uniquely reflected by the idea of the chorus, which enables the unity and performance of a single sentiment from a range of participants. In this way my approach resembles that of Power (2019), who offers the idea of "parachorality" as a means of understanding Sappho's strategy of engaging with multiple poetic formats at the same time.

In addition, I observe how the *choregos*-figure is further refined in Sappho's poetry. I suggest that, especially when she is named, the departing (or sometimes, departed) companion should be seen as the (internal) *choregos*, the figure who participates as a member of the chorus but is singled out as uniquely beautiful and ready for marriage. In addition to being named, these figures are typically identified as especially beautiful or somehow more attractive than the others, and they are often assumed to have departed for another lover and/or marriage, suggesting their role as social models for the other members of the chorus. In Sappho's poetry, companions like Anactoria, Gongyla, and Atthis stand out from the group at various moments, and they take on aspects of the *choregos* that help shed light on what the experience is from within the chorus. Furthermore, the chorality of Sappho's descriptions aligns with two occasions during which the female chorus was central to the ritual activity: the wedding and the funeral. The interactions between Sappho and the companion take on aspects of the call and response format, recalling the lament choruses in the *Iliad*, while the departure of the companion mirrors the departure of the *choregos* for marriage. Sappho suggests a similarity between these occasions through the mingling of their choral imagery but also provides a unique perspective on the experience of a chorus member at different stages of her life.

A final aspect of chorality present in Sappho's lyrics is the view of the beloved as a desired object. Observing that "the speaker's point of view dominates more clearly in poems

where both the poet's person and a female companion of the poet are present" (2019, 36), Brockliss argues that Sappho's technique of incorporating floral imagery is similar to that of male poets like Ibycus and Anacreon in that it establishes the beloved as the object of the lover's gaze. While Sappho's poems (like those of Ibycus and Anacreon) frequently construct this relationship as between individuals, we can also observe traces of the chorus as viewed object in these scenarios. The chorus provides an opportunity for its members to be looked at, usually by an external audience. In Sappho's poetry, however, the viewing comes from within the chorus, and its members look not outwards at the audience but at each other. In this way, Sappho's depiction of the beloved (especially in its utilization of flower motifs), draws on the visually oriented depictions of the chorus familiar from other contexts and uses the desired girl's membership in the chorus as an opportunity to look at her. Sappho's poems continue to rely on the gaze as an erotic experience, and the choral group around her remains a visual object; however, because the point of view originates from within the chorus, it is possible to see Sappho's gaze as an indication of reciprocal feeling that draws on the shared performance, rather than as a one-directional assessment of the chorus or chorus member as an object.

As Lardinois has observed, the addressees of Sappho's poems seem most likely to have been young women or girls, figures "who in our sources, including Sappho's poetry, are referred to as *κόραι*, *παρθένοι* and sometimes *παῖδες*" (1994, 57 n4).¹³⁴ While this has had deep influence on generations of scholars that have chosen to view Sappho as the leader of some kind of "school," it also locates the addressees of Sappho's poetry within the age range most typically associated with choral performance in literary sources (from Nausicaa to the *parthenoi* of *PMG* 1). There is no firm evidence for Sappho's age or, more importantly, the age that the persona

¹³⁴ Cf. Parker (1993), who denies that Sappho's addressees were adolescents and argues that her songs focus on her love for other adult women.

claims; thus, there is no strong reason to believe that the speaker and the companions are of different age groups. The fact that Sappho's poems largely deal with adolescent girls is itself a clue that the chorus is relevant, as the chorus is the context with which a group of adolescent girls is most often associated in Greek literature of the archaic period.

In arguing that the chorus, at least as a symbolic, culturally relevant and literarily useful entity, does in fact have something to do with Sappho, I will examine two of her poems as test cases for this possibility: 16 and 58b. Noting "certain parallels" between the two poems and distinguishing between the primary and secondary intention and reception of Sappho's poetry, Anton Bierl writes the following:

The girls are being prepared for their wedding, and in the chorus they are made conscious of the importance of an all-encompassing beauty. This instruction occurs not only through the didactic word but also by means of performance, which presupposes the engagement of their entire bodies and mediates a total experience through visual, acoustic, tactile, olfactory, and kinaesthetic signals. Sappho thus assumes a living choral culture for the reception of her poetry, even when the songs are performed by an individual singer. (2016, 311)

Following Bierl's lead, I examine these poems because, in addition to this imagined choral culture, they relate to the wedding ceremony, one of the most fruitful social occasions for consideration of the chorus (as we have already seen). Regarding poem 58, Bierl goes on to state that "its entire meaning is acted out against the visual foil of a living culture of chorality, where the education of young women in social roles and gender values takes place" (312). Building on this notion of a "living culture of chorality," I argue that both poem 58 and poem 16 draw on the idea of the collective group (the chorus) versus the singular individual (the *choregos*-figure) and in particular the withdrawal and separation from the group of that figure through the processes of aging and marriage. In addition, I have chosen 16 from the assortment of poems in which she addresses someone directly (16, 94, 95, 96, 114, 140a, and 131), which seem to me to offer a

possible representation of the relationship between chorus members and *choregos*-figure most directly visible in Alcman but hinted at, to a lesser extent, in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* and the *Iliad*'s scenes of funerary lament.¹³⁵ Although the chorus members in Alcman's *partheneion* are not actually communicating their own sentiments, the poem indicates their feelings of affection for and possibly their attraction to Hagesichora (and perhaps Agido). Hagesichora's status as *choregos* helps define her as a sort of role model for her companions, as she steps into the Artemis role and the other chorus members glimpse how this leadership status positions Hagesichora for an imminent transition to adulthood. Sappho's imagined chorus, I suggest, picks up on this quasi-dialogue between *choregos*-figure and chorus members, casting Sappho's "I" as the chorus and the addressee as the *choregos*—an arrangement contrary to what might be expected, given the temptation to align the "I" with the very individual nature of Sappho herself. I interpret the companion who departs or is removed as the *choregos*-figure, which places her in a bridal role and offers marriage as the probable cause for this sense of departure, one which many scholars have identified even without associating Sappho's poetry with the chorus.

Following Bierl and others, I argue that poems 16 and 58b likewise participate in the broad framework of chorality, drawing on not only the audience's familiarity with the choral form but also with the frequent association between choruses and young women, especially in a bridal context. Poem 16 most directly engages with the idea of the bride through the figures of Helen and, more immediately, Anactoria.¹³⁶ Drawing on the pattern of the maiden chorus that is

¹³⁵ Herington posits a more literal dialogue for poems 114 and 140a (1985, 56–57). Based on this possibility, I see these poems, which are probably wedding songs, as reminiscent of the call and response format seen in lament contexts.

¹³⁶ Anactoria's disappearance is a matter of some debate. Among the many commentators on this aspect, Most suggests that her absence may actually only be temporary, and that she "should have stayed" with her companions (1981, 12), both conclusions that do not support marriage as the reason. Dodson-Robinson (2010) and Lardinois (2001, 2003), however, have identified marriage ritual as central to the poem's overall conceit and the character of Anactoria in particular. Lardinois especially has advocated for the probable performance of this song at a wedding, perhaps even the actual wedding of Anactoria herself, although he is certainly in the

evident in figures like Nausicaa, Aphrodite, and Helen herself, the departure of Anactoria as the bridal figure is described by a choral voice as it witnesses her transition to adulthood through marriage. Although the chorus that has been left behind is not the focus of the poem, Sappho's "I" communicates its mixed feelings of longing, friendship, and loss as their *choregos*-figure leaves their number.¹³⁷ Relying on the role of the chorus in the marriage ritual, the association of the bridal figure with a choral group, and the special relationship that Helen has with the notions of bride and *choregos*-figure, the poem offers the unique perspective of the group after the chorus leader's abduction/marriage.

If poem 16 offers a view of the attitude of the chorus members that have not experienced marriage and the transition to adulthood, poem 58b may offer the post-marriage perspective of the *choregos*-figure that is well beyond her own experience of this transition. The "old age" poem, as scholars have taken to calling it, has been interpreted as Sappho's address to a chorus of young girls (Rawles 2006; Bierl 2016), reminding them of the importance of their choral abilities even as they too grow old. Rawles suggests, "the message need not only be 'gather ye rosebuds', as the dancing imagery suggests, but also that at least some of the *κάλα δῶρα* of the Muses can remain while sprightliness and beauty do not" (2006, 4). While the choral imagery here seems to emphasize not marriage but youth more generally, this poem contains a subtle reminder that participation in the chorus changes throughout a woman's life: while the choruses associated with youth are focused on celebration and marriage, those formed by older women are more often funerary choruses, a context suggested by the word *στεναχίδω* in the poem's seventh line. Although the setting is dramatically different, the poem may offer a condolence in the fact

minority.

¹³⁷ This is not unlike my reading of the chorus's feelings for Hagesichora as she joins Agido and separates from their number at the end of *PMG* 1.

that the communal experience of female singing nevertheless remains constant through the various occasions.

I turn first to poem 16, which begins with focuses on the figure of Helen in offering a definition of τὸ κάλλιστον:

οἱ] μὲν ἰππήων στρότον οἱ δὲ πέσδων·
οἱ δὲ νάων φαῖς' ἐπ[ι] γᾶν μέλαι[ν]αν
ἔ]μμεναι κάλλιστον, ἐγὼ δὲ κῆν' ὄτ-
τω τις ἔραται·
πά]γχυ δ' εὖμαρες σύνετον πόησαι
π]άντι τ[ο]ῦτ', ἃ γὰρ πόλυ περσκέθοισα
κάλλος [ἀνθ]ρώπων Ἑλένα [τὸ]ν ἄνδρα
τὸν []· στον
καλλ[ί]ποι]σ' ἔβα 'ς Τροίαν πλέοι]σα
κωὺδ[ὲ πα]ῖδος οὐδὲ φίλων το[κ]ήων
πά[μ]παν] ἐμνάσθη, ἀλλὰ παράγαγ' αὐταν
—]σαν
]αμπτον γὰρ []οη[.]ν
] ...κούφως τ []οη[.]ν
]με νῦν Ἀνακτορί[ας ὀ]νέμναι-
σ' οὐ] παρεοίσας,
τᾶ]ς {κ}ε βολλοίμαν ἔρατόν τε βᾶμα
κάμάρυγμα λάμπρον ἴδην προσώπω
ἦ τὰ Λύδων ἄρματα †κάνόπλοισι
 μ]άχεντας...

Some say a host of cavalry, some say a host of infantry,
and some say a fleet of ships is the most beautiful thing
upon the black earth, but I say it is that thing, whatever it is,
that someone loves.

And it is entirely easy to make this
clear to everyone; for she who was surpassing people
by far with respect to her beauty—Helen—
Leaving an excellent husband

behind, she went sailing to Troy,
entirely without thinking of either her child
or her beloved parents, but Aphrodite
led her aside, not unwilling;

For always it is a womanly thing if someone
Thinks lightly...

And now this has reminded me of Anactoria,
Who is not here.

I would rather see her lovely walk
and the shining gleam of her face
than the Lydian chariots and the armed
soldiers.¹³⁸ (16.1–20)

Sappho's assessment of what is beautiful begins with an infamous priamel, but it is worth noting the correspondence between the three opening military images (soldiers on horseback, on foot, and on the sea) and the chorus. Particularly in the *Iliad*, there is a strong relationship between martial activity and choral activity, as discussed in the first chapter, and as I have suggested, this contrast is made even clearer in the *Odyssey*, where the chorus is indicative of a prosperous and well-functioning society. At the same time, however, there seems to be a correspondence that is not solely contrastive: it seems quite possible that military formations and the paeans voiced by soldiers on the march have had a choral origin or at least drew on choral traditions.¹³⁹ Sappho's opening remarks here serve as one more example of this relationship, and her framework could suggest two options: like the Homeric tradition, the chorus is an alternative to the battlefield, and functions as a symbol of a happy city in pursuit of community building and continuation through marriage; or, perhaps more interesting, Sappho offers the (marriage) chorus as a specifically female alternative to the traditionally masculine zones of cavalry, infantry, and navy. Typically located within that marriage chorus, of course, is the object of desire—but here, Sappho flips the image on its head by focusing on the perspective not of the audience but of the *choregos*-figure

¹³⁸ The text is from Lobel and Page (1955, 14).

¹³⁹ Lucian's *De Saltatione* 10–13 offers one promising source for the Spartan tradition of singing and dancing while entering the battlefield. Importantly, he also mentions the choruses on the Shield and the Phaeacians. The relationship between military singing and movement and the chorus is worthy of far more attention than it is possible to devote here. Winkler (1985) raises the issue of the dual role of the ephebe in Athenian tragic choruses and military contingents, but further work on the correspondence between military “performance” and the chorus is needed.

herself. Furthermore, there is a clear contrast between the three options that others have promoted and Sappho's: while the types of military forces are all clearly groups, comprised of dozens of members, Sappho's κῆν' (3) seems singular. In addition to emphasizing Sappho's unique perspective, then, this contrast is also suggestive of the *choregos* and the chorus around her.

Following its opening priamel, poem 16 takes up the figure of Helen as a way to illustrate the idea of desire in a way that focuses on her agency, rather than her objectification. This use of Helen is unusual in its attention to her point of view, but it also relies on Helen's potential as a bridal *choregos*-figure in order to communicate the choral aspect of the figures in this poem. In the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, Helen is already married, and thus cannot appear in the same kind of adolescent/marriage chorus as figures like Nausicaa or Persephone. Nevertheless, the numerous sources detailing Helen's life prior to the Trojan cycle contain a number of features that are easily translatable to the kind of choral setting familiar from the *Odyssey* and several of the *Homeric Hymns*. Although in general Helen is *not* identified as a virginal figure, she is frequently envisioned as a bridal figure (consider her several significant male attachments and the infamous competition for her hand in marriage). Calame notes that Plutarch identifies the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia as the site of Helen's abduction by Theseus and specifically describes her as dancing there (1997, 159–60). In fact, Plutarch's Helen is not simply dancing, but actually χορεύουσάν with other girls (Plut. *Thes.* 31.2). Plutarch further notes that Helen was οὐ καθ' ὄραν, “not in season,” that is, not old enough to actually be eligible for marriage.¹⁴⁰ Because of this, we cannot properly identify Helen's chorus as designed to ready its members for marriage, but its occurrence in the temple of Artemis, especially in the context of a story of

¹⁴⁰ Later on he describes her as τὴν παρθένον οὐπω γάμων ὄραν ἔχουσαν, “the maiden not yet occupying the season of marriage” (Plut. *Thes.* 31.3).

sexually-charged abduction, suggests that even as a child, Helen occupies the role of the bridal figure. Including this version by Plutarch, a wide range of accounts supports the idea that Helen can be associated with both Artemis and Aphrodite: she is Aphrodite's clear favorite in the *Iliad*, while in the *Odyssey*, she is compared to Artemis as she appears before Telemachus, Peisistratus, and the wedding guests (*Od.* 4.121–22), almost as though she is the bride, instead of her daughter.¹⁴¹ Although other aspects of her character become more pronounced in various traditions, Helen is consistently depicted as the most beautiful and, specifically, the most marriageable, of her community or age-mates; she is consistently associated with two of the goddesses that are connected to marriage and the transitional period of female sexuality; and, in stories of her capture, she is sometimes depicted as taken from a group. Even in Homeric poetry, where she is not often joined by a group, she is described as part of a more abstract group with the epithet “glorious among women,” (δῖα γυναικῶν, *Il.* 3.171, 3.228, 3.423).

There is, furthermore, evidence that Helen's connection with the chorus was traditional in the classical period, a point made by Murnaghan (2013). In addition to the *Helen*, which Murnaghan argues uses “the choral experience in the construction of tragic scenarios” (161), the ending of the *Lysistrata* presents Helen as a *choregos*-figure, leading young girls (κόραι, 1310) in celebration of Sparta (*Lys.* 1303–20). Swift (2010) observes, importantly, that like Persephone, Helen was in fact recipient of parthenaic cult (193). Perhaps the most compelling evidence comes from art: Cohen observes that “in images Theseus usually abducts Helen with the aid of a horse-drawn chariot, and she expresses her vehement objection through eloquent poses of distress, while her female companions watch and gesture helplessly” (2007, 263). Helen's composite character, especially her post-adolescent role as a wife (of multiple men),

¹⁴¹ Propertius' Helen “was said to have carried weapons with breasts bared” (*Helene nudis capere arma papillis / fertur*, III.14.19–20), a description that further suggests her resemblance to Artemis the hunter.

largely overshadows her abduction as a young girl, but this is nevertheless an important aspect of her persona. It establishes her as uniquely desirable among her age-mates and as a bridal figure even before she becomes a bride sought by all the men of the Greece, the wife of Menelaus, and then the bride/wife of Paris.

Lardinois argues that Sappho 16 was performed by a chorus, and its likely occasion (the wedding) indicates that it was probably performed by the bride's female friends (2001, 83–84). Part of Lardinois's reading depends on the traces of lament he identifies in the poem, a genre closely connected with weddings both in the ancient and modern Greek worlds.¹⁴² Although most scholars disagree with Lardinois's conclusion of choral performance, there are key elements that do recall the chorus as a concept. Helen's appearance confirms the wedding as the occasion, and here she functions as both a bridal figure and, closely related, as someone characterized by the act of leaving, which is of course an essential trait of the bride. As the bride and the *choregos*-figure of the maiden chorus are themselves closely related, it is possible to see the act of leaving as an essential characterization of the internal *choregos*-figure as well, and this is externally evidenced by figures like Persephone in the *Hymn to Demeter* and Aphrodite in her own *Homeric Hymn*. As someone that leaves, Helen's background positions her well as the parallel to the bridal *choregos*-figure of Anactoria whose absence Sappho mourns here. Even if this song was not, as Lardinois suggests, performed by the chorus of young female friends of the bride, it nevertheless depends on the image of the *choregos*-figure as the one that leaves the group to become distinguished as an individual in the role of bride. The poem thus provides a unique example of the *choregos*-figure's perspective by focalizing the concept of desire through Helen's point of view. As Lardinois goes on to suggest, the chorality of the poem also accounts

¹⁴² See discussion in Lardinois (2001, 80–83).

for its erotic language: like Alcman's first *partheneion*, Sappho 16 utilizes this erotic language as a form of public praise towards the bride, rather than as, or perhaps in addition to, a true expression of homosexual desire between speaker and subject.

The "Tithonus poem" presents a different vision of the chorus. Here, the poem is voiced not from the perspective of one of its members but from the outside, taking the point of view of someone that no longer participates in maiden choruses:

Ἵμμεσ πεδὰ Μοΐαν ἰοκ[ό]λπων κάλα δῶρα, παῖδες,
 σπουδάσδετε καὶ τὰ]γ φιλάοιδον λιγύραν χελύνναν·
 ἔμοι δ' ἄπαλον πρίν] ποτ' [ἔ]οντα χροῖα γῆρας ἤδη
 ἐπέλλαβε, λεῦκαι δ' ἐγ]ένοντο τρίχες ἐκ μελαίναν·
 βάρυς δέ μ' ὁ [θ]ῦμος πεπόηται, γόνα δ' [ο]ὐ φέροισι,
 τὰ δὴ ποτα λαΐψηρ' ἔον ὄρχησθ' ἴσα νεβρίοισι.
 τὰ (μὲν) στεναχίδω θαμέως· ἀλλὰ τί κεν ποεῖην;
 ἀγήραον ἄνθρωπον ἔοντ' οὐ δύνατον γένεσθαι.
 καὶ γάρ π[ο]τα Τίθωνον ἔφαντο βροδόπαχυν Αὔων
 ἔρωι φ. αθρεια βάμεν' εἰς ἔσχατα γᾶς φέροισα]ν,
 ἔοντα [κ]άλον καὶ νέον, ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ὕμωσ ἔμαρψε
 χρόνῳ πόλιον γῆρας, ἔχ[ο]ντ' ἀθανάταν ἄκοιτιν.

Girls, you be serious about the lovely gifts of the Muses,
 With their violet folds, and the shrill, song-loving lyre;
 But my skin, once tender, has already taken up
 Old age, and white are the hairs that were once dark.
 My heart has become heavy, and my knees do not carry me,
 Though once they were nimble at dancing like fawns.
 I mourn them often; But what should I do?
 It is not possible for a person to be unaging.
 For once, they say, rosy-armed Dawn carried Tithonus
 In love to the ends of the earth,
 When he was beautiful and young, but nevertheless, in time,
 Grey old age took hold of him, though he had a deathless wife.¹⁴³

Sappho begins with an address to a group of children, and despite the gender-neutral nature of *παῖδες*, I have followed West (2005) and Bierl (2016) in taking this to mean specifically female children.¹⁴⁴ Based on what I read as a choral framework for this poem, the choice of girls as

¹⁴³ The text is that of West (2005, 5).

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Janko (2005, 2017) and Obbink (2009), who uses Janko's translation (although it is misattributed to

addressees fits better with the transition from adolescence and membership in the maiden chorus to adulthood and an (at-least-ideological) removal from such choral participation. While there is no way to firmly identify these children as female, it does not make as much sense for an adult woman to address male children, or even a mixed group; thus, if the speaker is to be thought of as female, the children ought to be. Although Janko argues that there is no way to identify the gender of the speaker, Sappho's authorship and the lack of any comparable poem (written by a female poet for male performance) suggests that Sappho's "I" can more naturally be aligned with a female perspective.¹⁴⁵ When the notion of chorality is taken into consideration, the various life events associated with choral participation (especially weddings and funeral processions) also indicate a female point of view. Although male participation in the archaic chorus (almost exclusively in mixed choruses) is clear from sources like the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, it is largely overshadowed in lyric poetry by the concept of the symposium, a male opportunity to display both individual excellence and a connection to community, centered on vocal performance. The emphasis here on dance, and the plural addressee, point to the chorus specifically, which in archaic lyric and melic poetry is almost exclusively connected with the female sphere.

The poem seems to cluster around two primary images, youth and old age, complemented by two secondary images, the dance and Tithonus, and as Janko has argued, the poem splits neatly into two halves (although it is traditionally divided into couplets; see Janko 2017, 273–74). The first six lines focus on physical contrast between life stages, passing from the chorus of the Muses and their bodies (ἰ]οκ[ό]λ]πων), sexually charged in appearance and associated with

West). Janko argues that the poem is deliberately free of gender markers, while Obbink focuses more on the text itself than on its interpretation.

¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, Janko's suggestion is not compelling for the simple fact that this song, even if written down, was clearly performed; thus, even if it is not indicated strongly by the language in the poem, the simple reality of the speaker(s) would have imparted a gendered interpretation during the performance itself.

singing and dancing, to the aging skin and weakened knees of the individual speaker. The second six lines shift to consider the larger problem of aging, maintaining the physical aspect through the focus on Tithonus' transition to old age and reinforcing the theme of marriage that the dancing young girls help introduce. The second half also introduces the notion of death, particularly through its use of *στεναχίδω* (line 7) and the contrast between the aging Tithonus and his deathless (*ἀθανάταν*, 12) wife. Through these snapshots (the dance, the physical body, old age, and the lament), Sappho combines images that also have a strong connection with chorality: particularly the choruses of women, which cluster around marriage and the funeral.

Elsewhere, Sappho's poetry engages with other imagery that easily maps onto the idea of chorality, even if it is not explicitly stated. I will briefly examine one final fragment in order to illustrate the way in which the chorus provides an interesting lens through which to read these poems. Poem 34 L.-P. introduces a picture of the moon and the stars that, in addition to suggesting a choral arrangement, draws on the same celestial imagery so prevalent in Alcman's first *partheneion*:

ἄστερες μὲν ἀμφὶ κάλαν σελάνναν
 ἄψ ἀπυκρύπτοισι φάεννον εἶδος,
 ὅπποτα πλήθοισα μάλιστα λάμπη
 γᾶν

And the stars around the lovely moon
 Quickly conceal their shining forms,
 Whenever she fills the earth
 With her light...

There several ways in which this fragment, although presumably not describing an actual chorus, nevertheless projects the idea of chorality. First, the stars are literally surrounding the moon, which follows in a traditional use of prepositional language to indicate the spatial relationship between chorus members and *choregos*-figure: for example, Nausicaa's companions play with

her just as Artemis' nymphs play with her (τῆ δέ θ' ἄμα νύμφαι, *Od.* 6.105), while Thetis' sisters gather around her in their mourning chorus (θεαὶ δέ μιν ἀμφαγέροντο, *Il.* 18.37). Considered against these two examples, the relationship between moon and stars is clear: all are members of a celestial chorus, but the moon is obviously superior and brighter, while the stars are not distinct entities but all relatively indistinguishable supporting figures.¹⁴⁶ In addition, the already collective nature of the stars (and in a sense, the moon) helps align them with other choruses; although not sisters, the stars are an exemplum of a unified group, rarely encountered individually and almost always introduced as either the group of *all* of the stars or as the stars in a particular cluster or constellation. Their collective nature, especially when combined with their rotational movement and the singularity of the moon, makes them ideal candidates for choral imagery, and it seems perfectly possible that the notion of chorality is at play in this fragment. Even if the image of the stars and the moon is far removed from the actual performance of choruses, the listener familiar with the literary patterns of chorality may have been able to hold both ideas in their mind to form a more complete overall picture.

IV. Conclusion

Through this brief examination of Alcman's first *partheneion* and poems 16 and 58b by Sappho I hope to have gestured at the ways in which these pieces engage with chorality. Alcman's chorus orients itself around its two central figures, Hagesichora and Agido, to communicate their own identities as well as the identities of their leaders. By positioning themselves as members of a traditional maiden chorus, the chorus of the *partheneion* signals

¹⁴⁶ This echoes the correspondence of light with female beauty present in *PMG* 1: Agido is like the sun, and Hagesichora is like unmixed gold. Throughout the poem, the girls' beauty is consistently communicated in terms of radiance.

their readiness for marriage, following the lead of their *choregos*-figure and infusing their performance with erotic language as they offer the audience a model for gazing at the marriageable Hagesichora. Although they seem to focus on two individuals, the chorus suggests that their most important feature is their collectivity, and it is through this attribute that they are able to emphasize the singularity of Hagesichora.

A closer look at certain poems by Sappho provides two unique perspectives on the chorus, one that takes the pose of speaking from the members that are left behind when the bride departs, and one from the standpoint of an older woman whose choral experience has shifted from the marriage chorus to the funeral lament. These poems display different approaches to the chorus, but both provide the kind of interiority not available in other choral descriptions through their emphasis on the imagined viewpoints of choral participants. In addition, these poems introduce a theme visible in other choral descriptions (especially the *Hymn to Demeter* and the *Iliad*): the connection, through choral activity, between marriage and death. By reading Sappho against the backdrop of chorality, it becomes possible to understand each poem better: in poem 16, we can reevaluate the relationships between the speaker and the named figure, while in poem 58b, we can consider the way that a woman's aging process is mirrored by her shifting role in the chorus, as her choral participation moves from the marriage chorus to the funeral chorus.

By considering these three pieces, I hope to have shown that the chorus as a poetic construct and as a socially understood phenomenon is imperative for full understanding of these poems, regardless of their performance context. By playing with the audience's understanding of what the chorus is, what it means, and how it communicates, poets like Sappho and Alcman were able to reach beyond any one performance of their poetry and make a larger point that resonated across different audiences and with different meaning for various audience members.

Conclusion

This project has offered a deeper look at some of the ways the chorus can function as a literary device across a selection of poems from the archaic period. I suggested in my introduction that the chorus is unique in its adaptability and flexibility, and the fact that it is possible to approach the chorus in the *Iliad* and the chorus of the Louvre *Partheneion* within the same conversation about representational poetics supports that statement. Overall, this project promotes the idea that there is no one definition, portrayal, or ideology of the chorus. Instead, it is a malleable, versatile concept that introduces a whole host of associations into every new context in which it appears.

Within this project, I have covered a broad range of poetic texts and argued that each utilizes the chorus in a significant way. Beginning with the Homeric epics, I showed that the *Iliad* offers images of celebratory choruses and lament choruses, while also offering evidence that brief references to the chorus nevertheless communicate significant meaning. The *Odyssey* focuses on the chorus as a signal of community prosperity through its ability to encourage marriage, which the poem holds up as the key building block of society. In addition, the *Odyssey* offers a paradigmatic example of the marriage chorus in Nausicaa, which becomes increasingly prevalent in the *Hymns* and lyric poetry. Next, I considered the *Theogony*, the *Hymn to Apollo*, and the *Hymn to Hermes*, which led to a stronger definition of the external *choregos*, a soloist that remains distinct from the chorus but parallels them in performance. In each of these texts, the soloist and the chorus have varying levels of poetic authority, suggesting that the relationship is fluid and able to be adapted depending on the poem's thematic needs.

The third chapter offered portraits of the internal *choregos*, who is modeled on Artemis, a choral leader that shares the defining characteristics of the chorus but is distinguished by her

beauty and uniqueness. Evaluation of Nausicaa, Persephone, and Aphrodite suggests that this type of chorus is always connected to the process of marriage and makes the *choregos* into a bridal figure, whether she is ready and willing or not. In the final chapter, I moved away from hexameter poetry to assess two ways the chorus translates into a lyric context. In Alcman's *partheneion*, the choral performers play with the ability to project a choral identity that augments their appearances and performance, emphasizing their status as a chorus and directing the audience's gaze through a focus on visual communication. Sappho uniquely provides the perspective of a chorus member, in one poem evoking aspects of the Artemis chorus at her companion's transition to adulthood and departure from the circle, and in another showing how the choral point of view shifts through the experience of aging.

What I have observed is that the chorus is especially useful for communicating two key themes that appear across genres and plots: the relationship between the individual and the community, and the transition from adolescent girl to married woman. These two themes are obviously densely interrelated, but the types of choruses that communicate them are often distinct. The choruses featuring an external *choregos*-figure frequently help support the theme of how the individual relates to the community, with varying degrees of cooperation (like the Delian maidens or Apollo and the Olympians) or hostility (like Hesiod and the Muses). The maiden chorus offers numerous instantiations of the transition to adulthood experienced by young girls, and the presence of this kind of chorus not only comments on the theme (as with Nausicaa) but can actually act as the catalyst for this kind of transition within the poem (as with Persephone and the Oceanids). There are also occasions where choruses relating to these themes take a different format, like the funeral choruses of the *Iliad*; while the *choregos* plays a different role, these choruses nevertheless mourn the death of the individual and consider its impact on

their new, altered community. Alcman's *partheneion* offers a different vision of the maiden chorus, in which the girls seem to claim a greater authority in projecting their identity as *parthenoi* and renegotiating the relationship they have with their *choregos*-figure.

Examining the chorus in different poetic contexts also supports a growing scholarly trend to reconsider generic interplay in the ancient world. Particularly in the archaic period, where texts were not yet texts and performance was a defining feature of their "genres," appeals to the chorus may have wielded a greater influence in audience interpretations. Conversations about the chorality of Sappho point to a much greater possibility of fluidity in performance: whether her songs were originally monodic or choral, it seems likely that they were flexible enough to have been relevant in a variety of performance contexts over time, and her utilization of the chorus makes it possible to convey meaning across multiple frequencies at once.

Despite a wealth of scholarship on the chorus, there are further avenues of research relating to the questions that I have raised. Although I gestured at some of the ways in which the chorus intersects with gender expectations, it remains unclear to what extent the chorus is gendered female. The prevalence of female choruses is in itself evidence that this might be the case, and the ease with which certain daughter-groups or location-based groups are translated into choruses is promising, as Calame (1997) and Murnaghan (2006) have observed. Swift's (2016) attention to the visual communication achieved by parthenaic choruses and her observation of similar visual patterns in other maiden choruses points to one of the chorus's defining features: the physical observation of bodies on display. Further consideration of how the process of looking at the dancing or singing body overlaps with the question of gender is certainly necessary. In addition, the relationship of the chorus to military activity has yet to be fully explored, and certain examples, like the *Iliad*'s use of the chorus as a point of reference of

Sappho 16, suggest that there is a deeper correspondence between the chorus and the battlefield.

A promising area for researching this question and others is in artistic representations of the chorus. I began this project with an assumption, that a Greek audience would have been able to readily identify something that looked like a chorus without any need for specific verbal signifiers, just as it is possible to identify a choral group on a vase or in another plastic medium. Inclusion of material sources in this project would certainly have helped support this point, but independent examination of the chorus in material contexts is itself an important avenue.¹⁴⁷ Within this project, I have also been fairly selective with regards to genre, and it is likely that mining other kinds of poetry, including elegy, iambic, and other lyric, would lead to even more versions of the chorus. In addition, my project has focused exclusively on the archaic period, but there are a number of implications for choruses and choral representation in the classical and Hellenistic periods. The final chapter is the first step in a much larger conversation of how different performance settings alter the relationship of the performers, poets, and poems with the chorus. In particular, epinician poetry is an extremely promising place to examine how the choral theme of individual versus community become realized and adapted in a new context. In addition to the fact that the poetry of Pindar and Bacchylides was probably choral, it also features numerous groups that can be identified as choral. Especially interesting is the presence of many female choral groups, which may be an opportunity for the performing (male) chorus to project a choral identity that is far from their own (unlike the performance of *partheneia* by *parthenoi*). Similarly, numerous dramatic choruses draw on the literary choruses I have identified, and although this relationship has not gone unnoticed, there is still room to think further about how the dramatic chorus engages with lyric and hexameter choruses. A chorus like the Danaids of

¹⁴⁷ I eagerly await the forthcoming volume by Deborah Steiner, which promises to address representations of the chorus in Greek art.

Aeschylus' *Suppliants*, for example, certainly draws on earlier representations of the maiden chorus, and their role as the protagonists of the play may speak to questions of choral authority that arise in earlier choral scenes. Scholars have, in addition, begun to extend the conversation regarding the chorus into genres beyond epinician and drama: Kowalzig and Wilson (eds. 2013) have considered dithyrambic performance, while Nishimura-Jensen (2009) uses the chorus to anchor her discussion of the *Argonautica*. Approaches like these point to further avenues for considering chorality and its representation in different types of poetry.

The chorus was one of the most prevalent features of the Greek world. It appeared at special occasions, both private and public, secular and religious, and was unquestionably familiar to anyone who lived in the Greek world, regardless of their citizen status or their place of residence. Because of its near omnipresence, its appearance in literature was accessible to a broad audience, regardless of sex, age, or class. In this way, the chorus was one of the most democratic institutions of the ancient world: even when someone was not a participant but was watching from the audience, or was not watching but listening to a chorus being described, they were immediately included in the chorus through their own knowledge of the experience. The Greek chorus—which was simply a group of people singing or dancing together—created its own microcommunity each time it was reformed or even reimagined, offering individuals a means of coming together and reflecting on their positions in society.

Bibliography

- Alexiou, Margaret. 2002. *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition*. 2nd ed. rev. D. Yatromanolakis and P. Roilos. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Athanassaki, Lucia, and Ewen Bowie, eds. 2011. *Archaic and Classical Choral Song: Performance, Politics and Dissemination*. Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter, Inc.
- Bacon, Helen H. 1994–95. "The Chorus in Greek Life and Drama." *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics* 3.1: 6–24.
- Bakker, Egbert J. 2013. *The Meaning of Meat and the Structure of the Odyssey*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Bennett, Curtis. 1994. "Concerning 'Sappho Schoolmistress.'" *Transactions of the American Philological Association* (1974-) 124: 345–47.
- Bergren, Ann L. T. 1982. "Sacred apostrophe: Re-presentation and imitation in the Homeric Hymns." *Arethusa* 15, no. 1/2: 83–108.
- Bierl, Anton. 2016. "Visualizing the Cologne Sappho: Mental Imagery through Chorality, the Sun, and Orpheus." In *The Look of Lyric: Greek Song and the Visual: Studies in Archaic and Classical Greek Song, Vol. 1*, edited by Vanessa Cazzato and André Lardinois, 307–42. Leiden; Boston: Brill.
- Billings, Joshua, Felix Budelmann, and Fiona Macintosh, eds. 2013. *Choruses, Ancient and Modern*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bowie, Ewen. 2016. "How Did Sappho's Songs Get into the Male Symptotic Repertoire." In *The Newest Sappho: P. Sapph. Obbink and P. GC Inv. 105, Frs. 1-4: Studies in Archaic and Classical Greek Song, Vol. 2*, edited by Anton Bierl and André Lardinois, 148–64. Leiden; Boston: Brill.
- Brockliss, William. 2019. *Homeric Imagery and the Natural Environment*. Hellenic Studies Series, 82. Washington, DC: Center for Hellenic Studies, Trustees for Harvard University.
- Budelmann, Felix, ed. 2018. *Greek Lyric: A Selection*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Budelmann, Felix, and Timothy Power. 2015. "Another Look at Female Choruses in Classical Athens." *Classical Antiquity* 34, no. 2: 252–95.
- Budelmann, Felix, and Tom Phillips, eds. 2018. *Textual Events: Performance & the Lyric in Early Greece*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

- Burgess, Jonathan S. 2001. *The Tradition of the Trojan War in Homer and the Epic Cycle*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Burkert, Walter. 1985. *Greek Religion*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Calame, Claude. 1997. *Choruses of Young Women in Ancient Greece. Their Morphology, Religious Role, and Social Functions*. Trans. D. Collins and J. Orion. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Carruesco, Jesús. 2016. "Choral Performance and Geometric Patterns in Epic Poetry and Iconographic Representations." In *The Look of Lyric: Greek Song and the Visual*, edited by Vanessa Cazzato and André Lardinois, 69–107. Leiden; Boston: Brill.
- Carter, Jane B. 1988. "Masks and Poetry in Early Sparta." In *Early Greek Cult Practice: Proceedings of the Fifth International Symposium at the Swedish Institute at Athens, 26-29 June, 1986*, ed. R. Hägg, N. Marinatos, and G. C. Nordquist, 89–98. Stockholm.
- Cazzato, Vanessa, and André Lardinois, eds. 2016. *The Look of Lyric: Greek Song and the Visual: Studies in Archaic and Classical Greek Song, Vol. 1*. Leiden; Boston: Brill.
- Chappell, Mike 2011. "The Homeric Hymn to Apollo. The question of Unity." In *The Homeric Hymns: Interpretive Essays*, edited by Andrew Faulkner, 59–81. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Clay, Diskin 1991. "Alcman's 'Partheneion.'" *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica* 39.3: 47–67.
- Clay, Jenny Strauss. 2003. *Hesiod's Cosmos*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1997. "The Homeric Hymns." In *A New Companion to Homer*, edited by Ian Morris and Barry B. Powell, 489–507. Leiden: Brill, 1997.
- . 1989. *The Politics of Olympus: Form and Meaning in the Major Homeric Hymns*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Cohen, Ada. 2007. "Gendering the Age Gap: Boys, Girls, and Abduction in Ancient Greek Art." *Hesperia Supplements* 41: 257–78.
- Cole, Susan Guettel. 2004. *Landscapes, Gender, and Ritual Space: the Ancient Greek Experience*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- . 1984. "The Social Function of Rituals of Maturation: The Koureion and the Arkteia." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 55: 233–44.
- Crane, Gregory. 1987. "The "Odyssey" and Conventions of the Heroic Quest." *Classical Antiquity* 6.1: 11–37.

- Crowhurst, Roger. 1963. "Representations of Performance of Choral Lyric on the Greek Monuments, 800–350 B. C." PhD diss., University of London.
- Csapo, Eric. 2003. "The Dolphins of Dionysus." In *Poetry, Theory Praxis: The Social Life of Myth, Word and Image in Ancient Greece. Essays in Honor of William J. Slater*, edited by Eric Csapo and Margaret C. Miller, 69–98. Oxford: Oxbow Books.
- Cyrino, Monica S. 2013. "Bows and Eros: Hunt as Seduction in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*." *Arethusa* 46, no. 3: 375–93.
- Dale, Alexander. 2011. "Topics in Alcman's 'Partheneion.'" *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 176: 24–38.
- Davidson, J. F. 1986. "The Circle and the Tragic Chorus." *Greece & Rome* 33, no. 1: 38–46.
- De Jong, Irene J. F. 2006. "The Homeric Narrator and His Own Kleos." *Mnemosyne*, Fourth Series, 59, no. 2: 188–207.
- Deacy, Susan. 2013. "From 'Flowery Tales' to 'Heroic Rapes': Virginal Subjectivity in the Mythological Meadow." *Arethusa* 46, no. 3: 395–413.
- Dodson-Robinson, Eric. 2010. "Helen's 'Judgment of Paris' and Greek Marriage Ritual in Sappho 16." *Arethusa* 43, no. 1: 1–20.
- Dougherty, Carol. 2001. *The Raft of Odysseus: The Ethnographic Imagination of Homer's Odyssey*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Eckerman, Christopher. 2011. "Pindar's 'Olympian' 1.17 and Solo vs. Choral Epinician Performance." *Mnemosyne* 64, no. 1: 83–85.
- Edwards, Mark W. 1991. *The Iliad: A Commentary. Volume V: books 17-20*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Faulkner, Andrew, ed. 2011. *The Homeric Hymns: Interpretative Essays*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Felson, Nancy. 2013. "Victory and Virility in the Homeric Hymn to Apollo: at whose Expense?" In *Hymnes de la Grèce antique: approches littéraires et historiques. Actes du colloque international de Lyon, 19-21 juin 2008*, edited by R. Bouchon, P. Brillet-Dubois, and N. Le Meur-Weissman, 269–280. Lyon: Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée Jean Pouilloux.
- Felson-Rubin, Nancy. 1994. *Regarding Penelope. From Character to Poetics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Ferrari, Gloria. 2008. *Alcman and the Cosmos of Sparta*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Foley, Helene. 2003. "Choral Identity in Greek Tragedy." *Classical Philology* 98: 1–30.
- , ed. 1994. *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter: Translation, Commentary, and Interpretive Essays*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- . 1978. "'Reverse Similes' and Sex Roles In The Odyssey." *Arethusa* 11, no. 1/2: 7–26.
- Ford, Andrew. 1992. *Homer: The Poetry of the Past*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Foster, Margaret, Leslie Kurke, and Naomi Weiss, eds. 2019. *Genre in Archaic and Classical Greek Poetry: Theories and Models. Studies in Archaic and Classical Greek Song, Vol. 4*. Leiden; Boston: Brill.
- Frontisi-Ducroux, Françoise. 1981. "Artémis Bucolique." *Revue De L'histoire Des Religions* 198, no. 1: 29–56.
- Gagné, Renaud, and Marianne Govers Hopman, eds. 2013. *Choral Mediations in Greek Tragedy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Greene, Ellen, ed. 1996. *Reading Sappho: Contemporary Approaches*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Gross, Nicholas P. and N. P. Gross. 1976. "Nausicaa: A Feminine Threat." *The Classical World* 69, no. 5: 311–17.
- Henrichs, Albert. 1994. "'Why Should I Dance?': Choral Self-Referentiality in Greek Tragedy." *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics* 3, no. 1: 56–111.
- Herington, John. 1985. *Poetry into Drama: Early Tragedy and the Greek Poetic Tradition*. Sather Classical Lectures, vol. 49. Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press.
- Hubbard, Thomas K. 2010. "Choral Lyric." In *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Greece and Rome, Volume 5*, edited by M. Gagarin and E. Fantham, 354–58. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hutchinson, Gregory O. 2001. *Greek Lyric Poetry*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Janko, Richard. 2017. "Tithonus, Eos and the cicada in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* and Sappho fr.58." In *The Winnowing Oar: New Perspectives in Homeric Studies. Studies in honor of Antonios Rengakos*, edited by Christos Tsagalis and Andreas Markantonatos, 267–92. Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter.

- . 2005. “Sappho Revisited.” *Times Literary Supplement*, 23 December: 19–20.
- . 1982. *Homer, Hesiod, and the Homeric Hymns*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1981. “The Structure of the Homeric Hymns: A Study in Genre.” *Hermes* 109.1: 9–24.
- Kaimio, Maarit. 1970. *The Chorus of Greek Drama within the Light of the Person and Number Used*. Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum 46. Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica.
- Katz, Marilyn A. 1991. *Penelope's Renown: Meaning and Indeterminacy in the Odyssey*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Klinck, Anne L. 2008. “Sappho's Company of Friends.” *Hermes* 136, no. 1: 15–29.
- Kowalzig, Barbara. 2007. *Singing for the Gods: Performances of Myth and Ritual in Archaic and Classical Greece*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kowalzig, Barbara, and Peter Wilson, eds. 2013. *Dithyramb in Context*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Krummen, Eveline. 2009. “Alcman, Stesichorus and Ibycus.” In *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Lyric*, edited by Felix Budelmann, 189–203. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kurke, Leslie. 2012. “The Value of Chorality in Ancient Greece.” In *The Construction of Value in the Ancient World, Cotsen advanced seminar series, 5*, edited by J. K. Papadopoulos and G. Urton, 218–35. Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press.
- . 1991. *The Traffic in Praise: Pindar and the Poetics of Social Economy*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Kurtz, Donna C., and John Boardman. 1971. *Greek Burial Customs*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Ladianou, Katerina. 2016. “Female Choruses and Gardens of Nymphs: Visualizing Chorality in Sappho.” In *The Look of Lyric: Greek Song and the Visual: Studies in Archaic and Classical Greek Song, Vol. 1*, edited by Vanessa Cazzato and André Lardinois, 343–69. Leiden; Boston: Brill.
- Lardinois, André. 2003. “Drie gedaantes van Helena: Moderne interpretaties van Sappho Fr. 16.” *Lampas* 36.4: 261–83.
- . 2001. “Keening Sappho: Female Speech Genres in Sappho's Poetry.” In *Making Silence Speak: Women's Voices in Greek Literature and Society*, edited by André Lardinois and Laura McClure, 75–92. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- . 1996. “Who Sang Sappho’s Songs?” In *Reading Sappho: Contemporary Approaches*, edited by Ellen Greene, 150–72. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- . 1994. “Subject and Circumstance in Sappho’s Poetry.” *Transactions of the American Philological Association (1974-)* 124: 57–84.
- Larson, Jennifer. 1997. “Handmaidens of Artemis?” *The Classical Journal* 92, no. 3: 249–57.
- Lefkowitz, Mary R. 1991. *First-Person Fictions*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- . 1988. “Who Sang Pindar's Victory Odes?” *The American Journal of Philology* 109, no. 1: 1–11.
- Levaniouk, Olga. 2011. *Eye of the Festival: Making Myth in Odyssey 19*. Hellenic Studies, 46. Washington, DC: Center for Hellenic Studies, Trustees for Harvard University.
- Lincoln, Bruce. 1979. “The Rape of Persephone: A Greek Scenario of Women's Initiation.” *The Harvard Theological Review* 72, no. 3/4: 223–35.
- Lobel, Edgar, and Denys Page, eds. 1955. *Poetarum Lesbiorum Fragmenta*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Lonsdale, Stephen H. 1994–95. “‘Homeric Hymn to Apollo’: Prototype and Paradigm of Choral Performance.” *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics* 3.1: 25–40.
- . 1993. *Dance and Ritual Play in Greek Religion*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Louden, Bruce. 1999. *The Odyssey: Structure, Narration and Meaning*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.
- Luginbill, Robert D. 2009. “The Occasion and Purpose of Alcman’s *Partheneion* (1 PMGF).” *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica, New Series*, 92, no. 2: 27–54.
- Marquardt, Patricia Ann. 1982. “The Two Faces of Hesiod’s Muse.” *Illinois Classical Studies* 7, no. 1: 1–12.
- Mastrorarde, Donald. 2010. *The Art of Euripides: Dramatic Technique and Social Context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McClure, Laura. 2019. *Women in Classical Antiquity: From Birth to Death*. Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Minchin, Elizabeth. 2001. *Homer and the Resources of Memory: Some Applications of Cognitive Theory to the Iliad and the Odyssey*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- . 1995. “The Poet Appeals to His Muse: Homeric Invocations in the Context of Epic Performance.” *The Classical Journal* 91, no. 1: 25–33.
- Morris, Ian. 1986. “The Use and Abuse of Homer.” *Classical Antiquity* 5, no. 1: 81–138.
- Most, Glenn W. 1981. “Sappho Fr. 16. 6-7L-P.” *The Classical Quarterly* 31, no. 1: 11–17.
- Murnaghan, Sheila. 2018. “Penelope as a Tragic Heroine: Choral Dynamics in Homeric Epic.” In *Yearbook of Ancient Greek Epic, Volume 2*, edited by Jonathan Ready and Christos Tsagalis, 165–89. Leiden: Brill.
- . 2013. “The choral plot of Euripides’ *Helen*.” In *Choral Mediations in Greek Tragedy*, edited by Renaud Gagné and Marianne Govers Hopman, 155–77. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2006. “The Daughters of Cadmus: Chorus and Characters in Euripides’ *Bacchae* and *Ion*.” *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies. Supplement*. 87: 99–112.
- . 1987. *Disguise and Recognition in the Odyssey*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Nagy, Gregory. 2013. “The Delian Maidens and their relevance to choral mimesis in classical drama.” In *Choral Mediations in Greek Tragedy*, edited by Renaud Gagné and Marianne Govers Hopman 2013: 227–56. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2011. “The Earliest Phases in the Reception of the Homeric Hymns.” In *The Homeric Hymns: Interpretive Essays*, edited by Andrew Faulkner, 280–333. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.
- . 1994–95. “Transformations of Choral Lyric Traditions in the Context of Athenian State Theater.” *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics* 3.1: 41–55.
- . 1990. *Pindar’s Homer*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- . 1979. *The Best of the Achaeans: Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Nishimura-Jensen, Julie. 2009. “The Chorus of Argonauts in Apollonius of Rhodes’ *Argonautica*.” *Phoenix* 63, no. 1/2: 1–23.
- Obbink, Dirk. 2009. “Sappho Fragments 58–59: Text, Apparatus Criticus and Translation.” In *The New Sappho on Old Age*, edited by Ellen Greene and Marilyn Skinner, 7–16. Washington, D. C.: Center for Hellenic Studies.
- Page, Denys L., ed. 1962. *Poet Melici Graeci*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- . 1951. *Alcman: The Partheneion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Parker, Holt N. 1993. "Sappho Schoolmistress." *Transactions of the American Philological Association (1974-)* 123: 309–51.
- Parker, Robert. 1991. "The 'Hymn to Demeter' and the 'Homeric Hymns.'" *Greece & Rome* 38.1: 1–17.
- Peponi, Anastasia-Erasmia. 2009. "Choreia and Aesthetics in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*: the Performance of the Delian Maidens (Lines 156-64)." *Classical Antiquity* 28.1: 39–70.
- . 2004. "Initiating the Viewer: Deixis and Visual Perception in Alcman's Lyric Drama." *Arethusa* 37, no. 3: 295–316.
- Perlman, Paula. 1989. "Acting the She-bear for Artemis." *Arethusa* 22, no. 2: 111–33.
- Pfeijffer, Ilja Leonard. 2000. "Playing Ball with Homer. An Interpretation of Anacreon 358 *PMG*." *Mnemosyne*, Fourth Series, 53, no. 2: 164–84.
- Plato. 1926. *Laws, Volume I: Books 1-6*. Translated by R. G. Bury. Loeb Classical Library 187. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Power, Timothy. 2019. "Sappho's Parachoral Monody" In *Genre in Archaic and Classical Greek Poetry: Theories and Models. Studies in Archaic and Classical Greek Song, Vol. 4.*, edited by Margaret Foster, Leslie Kurke, and Naomi Weiss, 82–108. Leiden; Boston: Brill.
- Purves, Alex C. 2010. *Space and Time in Ancient Greek Narrative*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Rawles, Richard. 2011. "Eros and praise in early Greek lyric." In *Archaic and Classical Choral Song: Performance, Politics and Dissemination*, edited by Lucia Athanassaki and Ewen Bowie, 139–60. Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter, Inc.
- . 2006. "Notes on the Interpretation of the 'New Sappho.'" *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 157: 1–7.
- Richardson, Nicholas. 2011. "Reflections of Choral Song in Early Hexameter Poetry." In *Archaic and Classical Choral Song: Performance, Politics and Dissemination*, edited by Athanassaki and Bowie, 15–32. Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter, Inc.
- Rosenmeyer, Patricia A. 2004. "Girls at Play in Early Greek Poetry." *The American Journal of Philology* 125, no. 2: 163–78.
- Rutherford, Ian. 2000. "Formulas, Voice, and Death in *Ehoie*-Poetry, the Hesiodic *Gunaikôn Katalogos*, and the Odysseian *Nekuia*," in *Matrices of Genre: Authors, Canons, and Society*, edited by Mary Depew and Dirk Obbink, 81–96. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- Sammons, Benjamin. 2010. *The Art and Rhetoric of the Homeric Catalogue*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Schlegel, A. W. 1846. *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Literatur I*. Vol. 5 of *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. E. Böcking. Leipzig. Trans. John Black under the title *Course of Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature* (London, 1846; reprint, New York, 1973).
- Scodel, Ruth. 1998. "Bardic Performance and Oral Tradition in Homer." *The American Journal of Philology* 119, no. 2: 171–94.
- Scott, William C. 1974. *The Oral Nature of the Homeric Simile*. Leiden: Brill.
- Segal, Charles Paul. 1962. "The Phaeacians and the Symbolism of Odysseus' Return." *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics* 1, no. 4: 17–64.
- Shapiro, H. Alan. 1991. "The Iconography of Mourning in Athenian Art." *American Journal of Archaeology* 95, no. 4: 629–56.
- Smith, Peter M. 1981. *Nursling of Mortality: A Study of the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*. Frankfurt am Main, Bern, Cirencester, U.K.: Lang.
- Sourvinou-Inwood, Christiane. 1988. *Studies in Girls' Transitions: Aspects of the Arkteia and Age Representation in Attic Iconography*. Athens: Kardamitsa.
- Spelman, Henry. 2018. "The Homeric Hymn to Apollo, Archaic Lyric, and Early Greek Literary History." In *Textual Events: Performance & the Lyric in Early Greece*, edited by Felix Budelmann and Tom Phillips, 151–71. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Stehle, Eva. 1997. *Performance and Gender in Ancient Greece: Nondramatic Poetry in its Setting*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Steiner, Deborah. 2019. "Chorus Lines: Catalogues and Choruses in Archaic and Early Classical Hexameter Poetry and Choral Lyric." In *Genre in Archaic and Classical Greek Poetry: Theories and Models. Studies in Archaic and Classical Greek Song, Vol. 4.*, edited by Margaret Foster, Leslie Kurke, and Naomi Weiss, 135–66. Leiden; Boston: Brill.
- Strolonga, Polyxeni. 2012. "Aphrodite against Athena, Artemis, and Hestia: A Contest of *erga*." *Illinois Classical Studies*, no. 37: 1–20.
- Swift, Laura A. 2016. "Visual Imagery in Parthenaic Song." In *The Look of Lyric: Greek Song and the Visual: Studies in Archaic and Classical Greek Song, Vol. 1*, edited by Vanessa Cazzato and André Lardinois, 255–87. Leiden; Boston: Brill.
- . 2010. *The Hidden Chorus: Echoes of Genre in Tragic Lyric*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- . 2006. “Mixed Choruses and Marriage Songs: A New Interpretation of the Third Stasimon of the ‘*Hippolytos*.’” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 126: 125–40.
- Tsagalidis, Christos. 2004. “The Poetics of Sorrow: Thetis’ Lament in “*Iliad*” 18, 52–64.” *Quaderni Urbinate Di Cultura Classica* 76, no. 1: 9–32.
- Vidal-Naquet, Pierre. 1996. “Land and Sacrifice in the *Odyssey*: A Study of Religious and Mythical Meanings.” Trans. A. Szegedy-Maszak, in *Reading the Odyssey: Selected Interpretive Essays*, edited by Seth L. Schein, 33–53. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Walbank, Michael B. 1981. “Artemis Bear-Leader.” *The Classical Quarterly* 31, no. 2: 276–81.
- Wees, Hans van. 1998. “A Brief History of Tears: Gender Differentiation in Archaic Greece.” In *When Men Were Men: Masculinity, Power and Identity in Classical Antiquity*, edited by L. Foxhall and J. Salmon, 10–53. London: Routledge.
- Weiss, Naomi. 2019. “Generic Hybridity in Athenian Tragedy.” In *Genre in Archaic and Classical Greek Poetry: Theories and Models: Studies in Archaic and Classical Greek Song, Vol. 4*, edited by Margaret Foster, Leslie Kurke, and Naomi Weiss, 167–90. Leiden; Boston: Brill.
- West, Martin L. 2005. “The New Sappho.” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 151: 1–9.
- . 1975. “Cynaethus’ Hymn to Apollo.” *The Classical Quarterly* 25, no. 2: 161–70.
- , ed. and transl. 2003. *Homeric Hymns, Apocrypha, Lives*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- . 1971. “Stesichorus.” *The Classical Quarterly* 21, no. 2: 302–14.
- . 1965. “Alcmanica.” *The Classical Quarterly* 15, no. 2: 188–202.
- Winkler, John J. 1990. “Double Consciousness in Sappho’s Lyrics.” In *The Constraints of Desire*, 162–87. London: Routledge.
- . 1985. “The Ephebes’ Song: Tragôidia and Polis.” *Representations* 11: 26–62.
- Winkler, John J., and Froma Zeitlin, eds. 1990. *Nothing to Do with Dionysos? Athenian Drama in Its Social Context*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.