Space in archaic Greek lyric: city, countryside and sea
Heirman, J.G.M.

Citation for published version (APA):

General rights
It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations
If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: http://uba.uva.nl/en/contact, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.
EPILOGUE: THE SYMBOLISM OF SPACE AND THE SYMPOSIUM

My necessarily tentative attempt to answer the question why space primarily has a symbolic role in archaic Greek lyric takes its cue from the performance context of archaic Greek lyric. In this way, I eventually connect the ‘spatial turn’ in literary studies with the ‘performative turn’ in archaic lyric scholarship. During the last few decades scholars have stressed the importance of the performance of archaic Greek lyric, especially the impact on the texts themselves of being performed orally for a variety of audiences. Even though the contexts in which lyric poems were performed are still subject to much debate due to the meagre evidence about them, a kind of agreement among the majority of scholars seems to become apparent; on this agreement I base the following summary. A detailed argumentation or discussion of the evidence falls outside the scope of this thesis, but this summary refers to the poets and poems in question.

Generally speaking, scholars distinguish between (semi-)public and private performance contexts. The first type encompasses semi-public performances at large-scale banquets at the courts of tyrants and kings or the houses of wealthy families as well as public performances for the entire civic community at open-air festivals. The semi-public performances probably apply to encomia such as Ibycus’ Ode to Polycrates (fragment 282), performed at a banquet at the court of the tyrant Polycrates of Samos. The public performances are likely to be the case for historical and mythological elegies like the ‘new Archilochus’, performed in competitions at public festivals, and for the paean (or dithyramb)

of Bacchylides 17, performed during the cultic Apollonia/Delia festival in Delos.\textsuperscript{475} The performance contexts of the \textit{Epinician Odes} of Bacchylides and Pindar would have varied from semi-public at large-scale banquets at the houses of aristocratic families or the courts of victorious tyrants and kings (Pindar \textit{Pythian} 4, performed at the court of King Arkesilas IV of Cyrene) to public performances at the sites of the athletic festivals or at a sanctuary in the victor’s hometown during a cultic festival (Bacchylides 13).\textsuperscript{476}

The second type concerns private performances for small audiences at symposia in private houses. This is most likely the case for iambic and short elegiac lyric (Archilochus, Semonides, Solon, \textit{Theognidea}),\textsuperscript{477} as well as for the political, drinking, erotic and other poetry by Alcaeus, Anacreon, Ibycus (except for his \textit{encomia}) and Simonides (except for his \textit{encomia} and long elegies).\textsuperscript{478} Apart from her \textit{epithalamia}, which were most likely publicly performed for large audiences during wedding ceremonies, Sappho’s poetry was probably performed within her private circle in a female variant of the symposium.\textsuperscript{479}


\textsuperscript{476} See Neumann-Hartmann 2007 and 2009 for the most recent and detailed study of the performance contexts of \textit{epinicia}, with references to earlier literature on the topic. For the performance of \textit{Pythian} 4 at the court of Arkesilas see, e.g., Giannini 1979, 35 and 38; Neumann-Hartman 2007, 71-73; Burnett 2008, 104. For Bacchylides 13 performed at a sanctuary of the victor’s hometown (cf. lines 67-75) see Gelzer 1985, 97; Fearn 2007, 115-120; Neumann-Hartmann 2007, 100; McDevitt 2009, 84-85; Cairns 2010, 37 and 135-136; Nagy 2011, 201.

\textsuperscript{477} For the sympotic performance of iambus and short elegy see the seminal article by Bowie 1986 (refuting the suggestions of other, public performance contexts suggested in West 1974, 10-13 and 32-37, of which we have no evidence), followed, among others, by Aloni-Ianucci 2007, 69-74.

\textsuperscript{478} For Ibycus’ poetry see especially Stehle 1997, 250-251, Cingano 2003, 40 and Gentili-Catenacci 2007, 261. For Alcaeus’ poetry see Rösler 1980. For Anacreon see recently Kantzios 2005b and Budelmann 2009b.

\textsuperscript{479} See especially Stigers 1981; Burnett 1983, 209; Parker 1993, 341-346; Stehle 1997, 262-278 (on the basis of frequent references to banquets and female companions in Sappho’s poetry). Based on supposed analogies with Alcman’s \textit{partheneia}, Calame
The distinction between (semi-)public and private performance contexts of lyric poems corresponds to a difference in the roles of space in these poems: in poems which were probably (semi-)publicly performed, the dominant role of space is that of setting or frame (Pindar Pythian 4, Bacchylides 13 and 17, the ‘new Archilochus’, Ibycus 282), whereas it has a symbolic role in poems which were most likely privately performed in symposia (the other poems discussed). I wish to explore further the latter connection, as this epilogue addresses the question why space is predominantly symbolic in archaic Greek lyric. In my chapter on the city, I suggested that some of the erotic city metaphors could be linked with the popular symptic play of guessing (εἰκάζειν). In what follows I wish to demonstrate that the erotic symbolism of the countryside and the symbolism of danger of the sea can also be connected to performance in the context of the symposium.480

As regards the erotic symbolism of the countryside, I first need to stress two basic features of the symposium.481 Firstly, the symposium was an erotic space, where erotic games, such as the kottabos were played, i.e. the flinging of wine lees at targets while calling the name of the beloved and receiving a kiss of the beloved one if met with success, and where symposiasts were involved in all sorts of erotic activities. Secondly, the symposium constituted a micro-universe with its own norms of entertainment and its own rituals and drinking codes that were meant to reinforce the

---

1977, 114-117, Lardinois 1994 and 1996 and Ferrari 2003 and 2010 (2007), Preface and passim) have suggested that Sappho’s poetry was performed for a larger audience than that of her circle, but this suggestion has been refuted by Parker 1993, 325-331 and Stehle 1997, 270, n36, who haved pointed out the differences between Alcman and Sparta on the one hand and Sappho and Lesbos on the other. 480 See also (in Dutch) Heirman 2012.

481 The symposium in archaic Greece has been amply discussed: among the most important contributions are Fehr 1971; Dentzer 1982; papers collected in Vetta 1983; Lissarrague 1987; papers in Murray 1990; Ford 2002, 25-90; Hobden forthcoming; Wecowski forthcoming. Besides vase paintings, sources of archaic Greek symposia are lyric poems, such as Crit. 1 and 6, Dion. Chalc. 3, Ion eleg. 27, Sol. 38, Thgn. 467-496 and, above all, Xenoph. 1.
cohesion of the social group.\textsuperscript{482} If we combine these two features, we can say that the symposium had its own erotic \textit{mores} which revealed a high degree of sexual permissiveness. This might explain why, as Eva Stehle\textsuperscript{483} has observed (in connection with Anacreon 417 and Ibycus 286), lyric poetry performed in symposia often depicts erotic activities other than those related to marriage or the begetting of children, i.e. beyond communal interests of the \textit{polis}. If we relate this to my observation that these erotic activities are envisaged in the countryside, we may say that erotic activities beyond communal interests are projected on a space outside the \textit{polis}, i.e. on fields, meadows and gardens.

As for the symbolism of danger of the sea, it is noteworthy that in ancient Greek literature, including archaic Greek lyric, an image of a ship at sea was sometimes metaphorical for the sympotic group (see, e.g., Pindar fr. 124a and Dionysius Chalcus fr. 5). As Sean Corner argues,\textsuperscript{484} the metaphor served to reinforce the internal cohesion of the group, whose gathering and drinking together is represented as a collective ‘sea journey’. Sometimes the metaphor is playful, namely when the drunkenness of the sympotic group is represented as a shipwreck (see Choerilus fr. 9 and the story of Timaeus 566F149, told in Athenaeus 2.37b-d). This also applies to archaic Greek vase paintings that connect sympotic drinking with sailing at sea: for instance, the sixth century Exekias-vase (München 2044) depicts Dionysus reclining on board ship as if on a couch at the symposium, with dolphins beneath him and grape-vines around the ship’s mast above him, and a sixth-century Attic black-figure \textit{olpe} (Boston 03.783) shows the \textit{kottabos} game being played on a ship with a Silen, a woman holding a \textit{phiale} and a young boy standing as an \textit{oinochoos} on board, and with dolphins


\textsuperscript{483} Stehle 1997, 250-257.

\textsuperscript{484} See Corner 2010. Slater 1976 and Davies 1978, especially 76-77, on the other hand, interpret the image in terms of an escape of the sympotic group from everyday life.
In other cases the metaphor of the sympotic group as a ship at sea is politically charged, as is clear from its use in sympotic lyric poems of Alcaeus and Theognis: here the image of a ship in a storm at sea stands for the internal cohesion of the aristocratic, sympotic group being threatened by socio-political upheavals such as the rise of tyrants. The metaphor may shed light on the frequent attestation of sea poems with an emphasis on danger in sympotic lyric poems: by imagining itself as a group of sailors at sea, facing danger on their journey, the sympotic group attempts to strengthen its internal cohesion in opposition to external forces that threaten it.

With my cautious and necessarily tentative attempts to connect the symbolism of space in archaic Greek lyric with the performance context of the symposium I hope to have demonstrated that modern literary studies and concepts like space may shed new light on ancient literature, but that these need to be embedded in the particular cultural-historical context of the corpus studied. While literary theory tends to become more and more aware of the importance of cultural-historical contexts in the wake

485 On the vase paintings see, e.g., Davies 1978, 74 and 80, Lissarrague 1987, 104-118. Cp. also the use of wine-cups in the symposium which had the shape and name of small boats: e.g. ἄκατος (Antipho fr. 4; Theopomp. Com. 3); κάνθαρος (Phryn. Com. 15, Amips. 2, Axionic. 7); ναῦς (Nicostr. fr. 10); ὅλκας (Pherercr. fr. 143); τριήρης (Antipho fr. 224.4).

486 See my discussion of Alcaeus 6 and 208 and Theognis 667-682 in 4.4.1.

487 My suggestion goes counter to the hypothesis of Lesky 1947, 188-214 that the danger of the sea reflects the fear of poets, of whom many were islanders (e.g., Archilochus of Paros, Semonides of Amorgos, Alcaeus of Lesbos), that they or their relatives would suffer misfortune at sea. The problem with this hypothesis is that lyric poems do not necessarily or directly render the poet’s own emotions or thoughts (cf., e.g., Tsagarakis 1977, Schneider 1993, Gerber 1997, 6-8, Budelmann 2009, 16-17; see also the papers in Slings 1993). Moreover, it is weakened by the acknowledgment that archaic Greece witnessed a remarkable progress in technological innovations in shipping, as faster and safer ships were produced, which enabled Greeks to sail over the Mediterranean Sea and build up commercial contacts with east and west (see further Morris 2000, 259 and Dougherty 2001, 5).
of the contextual turn, there is a growing danger that literary studies of archaic Greek lyric will become undervalued as a result of the current focus on performance. This can be derived from a poignant comment in David Fearn’s introduction to one of the most recent books on archaic lyric poetry: ‘rather ironically contextualization can often lead to under-engagement with the poetry itself [with the example of Hornblower-Morgan 2007 in a footnote]. Accordingly, we need somehow to preserve a delicate balance between appreciations of literature as literature, and appreciations of the place of that literature in broader debates…’.

---

488 See especially Shen 2006 and Nünning 2009, with further references (on narratology).

489 Fearn 2011, 9.