

**Anastasia-Erasmia PEPONI**

**Sparta's "Prima Ballerina": the Language of *Choreia* in Alcman's Second *Partheneion***

Compared to the well-known Louvre *Partheneion*, the second *Partheneion* by Alcman (PMG 3) has not received much scholarly attention. In this paper I intend to show that, despite its fragmentary condition, the part of the poem that survived offers a significant case for the study of Greek *choreia*. If the moment represented in this part of the poem is that when *Astymeloisa*, the woman probably embodying the role of the *choregos*, is ready to step from adolescence to adulthood, her departure from the chorus--and consequently her integration into the *asty* through marriage--arouses the chorus' response on two interrelated levels: on the level of pure emotion and on the level of choral activity. Whereas the former has already been noticed, the latter, which contributes to our understanding of the actual song and dance performance, has not yet been appreciated.

In order to illustrate the link between emotion and performative action, I will examine three instances in this fragment: 1) the semantics of the verb *ameibesthai* in the context of musical performances (v.60); 2) the choreographic implications of v. 80, where *Astymeloisa* is most probably asked by the chorus to come closer and hold their hand; and 3) the musical and, more generally, aesthetic engagement implied by the very name of the solo protagonist, at this point, *Astymeloisa*. As a conclusion, I will suggest that, in this early example of Greek song and dance performance, emotions are deeply imbued in the codes of *choreia* itself. This may be what Plato had in mind, some centuries later, when referring to the education of emotions through the act of *choreia* (*Laws* 652-655).