

## THE ABOLITION OF THE LITURGICAL *CHORĒGIA* AND THE CREATION OF THE *AGŌNOTHESIA* IN ATHENS: NEW CONSIDERATIONS ON A DEBATED ISSUE

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**Abstract:** No ancient source indicates when the *agōnothesia*, attested for the first time in 307/6 BC, was introduced in Athens. Scholars have long attributed its creation, along with the abolition of the liturgical *chorēgia*, to the government of Demetrius of Phalerum (317–307 BC), motivated by oligarchic ideology and a desire to preserve the wealth of rich citizens. This traditional thesis has recently been challenged, with some scholars attributing the creation of the *agōnothesia* to the restored democratic government of 307 BC and others to the government of Phocion (322–318 BC). A new look at epigraphical and literary documents hitherto neglected or imperfectly understood (especially from the Attic demes) allows the authors to establish that the liturgical *chorēgia* disappeared at the beginning of the government of Demetrius of Phalerum, around 316 BC. The institution of the *agōnothesia* had a precedent (hitherto overlooked) in Lycurgan Athens with the new festival of the Amphiarraia of 331 BC. Both measures were in fact consensual and must not be interpreted as strictly oligarchic in inspiration. The creation of the *agōnothesia* was above all a pragmatic response on Athens' part to the major changes that occurred in the agonistic world in the late fourth century.

**Keywords:** *agōnothesia*, *chorēgia*, Demetrius of Phalerum, Hellenistic Athens, Attic demes, Amphiarraia

For many years in Athens and its demes dramatic and lyric contests were largely financed by *chorēgoi*, rich citizens (sometimes metics) chosen at each festival to fund the choruses. The *chorēgia* was one of the liturgies, compulsory services undertaken by the rich for the common good.

Near the end of the fourth century BC the liturgical *chorēgia* was abolished. On agonothetic monuments, the '*chorēgia* of the *dēmos*' superseded that previously assumed by wealthy individuals. From this period the city financed the costs of the dramatic and lyric contests, organized by an annually elected magistrate called the *agōnothetēs*. This change is verified by inscriptions of the city, in which *chorēgoi* are last mentioned in 320/19<sup>1</sup> and the *agōnothetēs* appears as early as 307/6.<sup>2</sup> Who was responsible for this important reform?

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<sup>1</sup> See *IG II*<sup>3</sup> 4.467 and 468 for the choregic monuments of Nikias and Thrasyllus respectively.

<sup>2</sup> According to the date of *IG II*<sup>3</sup> 4.518, the first known agonothetic inscription. Lambert (2000–2003) believes that the name of the *agōnothetēs* to be restored is Androkles and not his brother Xenokles, although he does not exclude the possibility that the two brothers performed the *agōnothesia* during the same year (if *IG II*<sup>3</sup> 4.519 also dates to 307/6).

At first, and for many years, Demetrius of Phalerum was identified as the reformer. He served as governor of Athens under Cassander, the regent of the Macedonian kingdom, from 317 to 307. Scholars believed that Demetrius was motivated by his oligarchic ideology and the aim of preserving the wealth of rich citizens, an argument that has recently been subjected to critical reassessment. A new argument claims that the *agōnothesia* was introduced by the restored democratic government of 307, after the fall of Demetrius,<sup>3</sup> and that this magistracy had its origins in the period shaped by the influence of Phocion (322–318).<sup>4</sup> These claims require further examination.

### I. Date of the abolition of the liturgical *chorēgia*

Those who support a date of 307/6 for the choregic reform must prove that the liturgical *chorēgia* still existed under Demetrius. In this debate, deme inscriptions play a crucial role, especially a decree of Aixone that honours two *chorēgoi* for victories in a local comic competition (decree A):<sup>5</sup>

- Θεοί.  
 [Γ]λαυκίδης Σωσίππου εἶπεν· ἐπειδὴ οἱ χορηγοὶ Αὐτ[έα]-  
 ς Αὐτοκλέους καὶ Φιλοξενίδης Φιλίππου καλῶς [κα]-  
 [ἰ] φιλοτίμως ἐχορήγησαν· δεδόχθαι τοῖς δημότ[α]-  
 5 [ἰ]ς, στεφανῶσαι αὐτοὺς χρυσῶι στεφάνωι ἐκάτε-  
 [ρ]ον ἀπὸ ἑκατὸν δραχμῶν ἐν τῶι θεάτρωι τοῖς κω-  
 μοιδοῖς τοῖς μετὰ Θεόφραστον ἄρχοντα, ὅπως ἂν  
 [φ]ιλοτιμῶνται καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι χορηγοὶ οἱ μέλλοντες  
 [χ]ορηγεῖν· δοῦναι δὲ αὐτοῖς καὶ εἰς θυσίαν δέκα δ-  
 10 ραχμᾶς τὸν δήμαρχον Ἡγησίλεων καὶ τοὺς ταμί-  
 ας· ἀναγράψαι δὲ καὶ τὸ ψήφισμα τότε τοὺς ταμί-  
 ας ἐν στήλῃι λιθίνῃ καὶ στήσαι ἐν τῶι θεάτρωι, ὅπως  
 ἂν Αἰξωνεῖς ἀεὶ ὡς κάλλιστα (τὰ) Διονύσια ποιῶσιν.

*corona*

*corona*

Gods. Glaukides son of Sosippos proposed. Since the *chorēgoi* Auteas son of Autokles and Philoxenides son of Philippos performed the *chorēgia* well and generously, let the demesmen resolve to crown each of them with a golden crown worth a hundred drachmas in the theatre during the comedy contests, those after the archonship of Theophrastos, in order that the other *chorēgoi* about to perform the *chorēgia* also display love of honour; and the demarch Hegesileos and the treasurers are also to give them ten drachmas for a sacrifice; and the treasurers are to inscribe this decree on a stone stele and erect it in the theatre, in order that the Aixoneans might always celebrate the Dionysia as finely as possible.

This inscription is contemporary with another decree from the same deme that honours two *dēmotai* for unknown reasons (decree B):<sup>6</sup>

#### Stoichedon 38

Ἐπὶ Θεοφφράστου ἄρχοντος ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ τῇ κυρ-  
 ραῖ· ἔδοξεν Αἰξωνεῦσιν, Γλαυκίδης Σωσίππου Αἰ-  
 ξωνεύς εἶπεν· ἐψηφίσθαι Αἰξωνεῦσιν· ἐπειδὴ εἰ-  
 σὶν ἄνδρες ἀγαθοὶ καὶ φιλότιμοι περὶ τὸν δήμο-

<sup>3</sup> O'Sullivan (2009) 168–85; Csapo and Wilson (2010) (a version that the authors claim is 'plus complète, plus claire et mieux argumentée' than Csapo and Wilson (2009)); a virtually identical English version of their paper of 2010 appeared two years later: Csapo and Wilson (2012).

<sup>4</sup> Csapo and Wilson (2009); (2010); (2012). Many

scholars, including Hanink (2014) 225–27, follow O'Sullivan, Csapo and Wilson.

<sup>5</sup> *SEG* 36.186, recently republished with full commentary in Ackermann (2018) 119–26 no. 4. For discussion of several points developed in this paper, see Ackermann (2018) 134–43.

<sup>6</sup> *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1202. See Ackermann (2018) 126–43 no. 5.

- 5 ν τὸν Αἰζωνέων Καλλικράτης Γλαύκωνος Αἰζωνε-  
 ύς καὶ Ἀριστοκράτης Ἀ[ρριστοφάνους Αἰζωνεύς, ἐπαινέσαι]  
 αὐτοὺς ἀρετῆς ἕνεκα καὶ δικαιοσύνης τῆς εἰς τ-  
 ὸν δῆμον τὸν Αἰζωνέων καὶ στεφανῶσαι αὐτοὺς χ-  
 ρυσῶι στεφάνωι ἀπὸ πεντακοσίων δραχμῶν ἐκάτ-  
 10 ερον, τὸ δὲ ἀργύριον εἶναι τὸ εἰς τοὺς στεφάνου-  
 ς ἐκ τῆς διοικήσεως ἐκ τῶν περιόντων χρημάτων  
 τῶν ἐπὶ Θεοφράστου ἄρχοντος, δοῦναι δὲ αὐτοῖς  
 τὸ ἀργύριον τὸ εἰς τοὺς στεφάνους Ἡγησίλεω τὸ-  
 ν δήμαρχον καὶ τοὺς ταμίαις· ἀνειπεῖν δὲ καὶ Διο-  
 15 νυσίων τοῖς κωμικοῖς τοῖς Αἰζωνῆσιν ἐν τῷ θε-  
 εάτρῳ, ὅτι στεφανοῖ αὐτοὺς ὁ δῆμος ὁ Αἰζωνέων  
 ἀρετῆς ἕνεκα καὶ δικαιοσύνης τῆς εἰς τὸν δῆμο-  
 ν τὸν Αἰζωνέων καὶ τὰ κοινὰ τὰ Αἰζωνέων· ἀναγρά-  
 ψαι δὲ τότε τὸ ψήφισμα εἰς στήλην λιθίνην τὸν δ-  
 20 ἡμαρχον Ἡγησίλεω καὶ τοὺς ταμίαις καὶ στήσαι ἐ-  
 ν τῷ θεάτρῳ Αἰζωνῆσιν.

corona

corona

In the archonship of Theophrastos, during the main assembly; the Aixonenans decided, Glaukides son of Sosippos, of Aixone, proposed. It is resolved by the Aixoneans. Since Kallikrates son of Glaukon, of Aixone, and Aristokrates son of Aristophanes, of Aixone, are good and public-spirited men with respect to the deme of the Aixoneans, praise them for their excellence and justice towards the deme of the Aixoneans and crown each of them with a golden crown worth five hundred drachmas; the money for the crowns shall be taken from the remainder of the budget of the archonship of Theophrastos; and the demarch Hegesileos and the treasurers are to give them the money for the crowns; and it shall be announced during the comedy contests of the Dionysia at Aixone in the theatre that the deme of the Aixoneans crowns them for their excellence and justice towards the deme of the Aixoneans and the common affairs of the Aixoneans; and the demarch Hegesileos and the treasurers are to inscribe this decree on a stone stele and erect it in the theatre at Aixone.

These two inscriptions are dated by their references to the eponymous archon, Theophrastos. This identification, however, is problematic since two different archons have this name, one dating to 340/39 and the other to 313/12. Nearly all scholars have opted for the later date, without analysing their choice,<sup>7</sup> and have used the first decree (A) to show either (a) that the liturgical *chorēgia* still existed under Demetrius and was abolished after his fall in 307/6<sup>8</sup> or (b) that Demetrius was responsible for the end of the *chorēgia* but not before his archonship in 309/8<sup>9</sup> or (c) that his choregic reform did not affect the demes in general<sup>10</sup> or Aixone in particular.<sup>11</sup> (c) is

<sup>7</sup> A minority of scholars support the date 340/39: Miller (1865); Lolling (1879) 195; Webster in various studies (e.g. (1953–1954) 193, with A. Rumpf; (1967) 33–34 no. AS 7; (1978) 118 no. AS 2); followed by Ghiron-Bistagne (1976) 88–90; Tracy (1995) 99–100; M.J. Osborne and S.G. Byrne in *LGPN* 2; Traill (1994–2016) s.v. the Aixoneans Aristokrates s. Aristophanes, Auteas s. Autokles, Glaukides s. Sosippos, Kallikrates s. Glaukon, Sosippos s. Glaukides and Philoxenides s. Philippos.

<sup>8</sup> O’Sullivan (2009) 168–85 with Csapo and Wilson (2009); (2010); (2012). The statement of Summa (2003) 524–25 is unclear: ‘Nel 307/6 a.C., sotto il regime di Demetrio Falereo [*sic*] ... tutte queste coregie vennero rimpiazzate da un agnoteta.’

<sup>9</sup> Köhler (1878) 240–41; Ferguson (1911); Pickard-

Cambridge (1968) 49 (at 92, however, he claims that Demetrius abolished the *chorēgia* ‘while *nomothetēs* in 316–315 BC’); Williams (1985) 191–94; (1987); (1997); Latini (2003); Banfi (2010) 177–80.

<sup>10</sup> Thus most recently Csapo and Slater (1994) 122, 143, 156–57; Wilson (2000) 307–08; Kellogg (2013) 82–84, 185–86; Arnaoutoglou (2014) 334–38.

<sup>11</sup> Steinhauer (1992), who attempts to explain this ‘Aixonean exception’ by supposing that the proposer of the two Aixonean decrees and the honorands are members of a regional group of oligarchic friends of Demetrius, who use the *chorēgia* for personal publicity and partisan propaganda. He incorrectly believes that the two Aixoneans honoured in the second decree are victorious *chorēgoi* at the City Dionysia; cf. Ackermann (2018) 129.

easily dismissed. First, it is unlikely that the demes – and even less just one of them – could ignore or not be affected by a *nomos* enacted by Demetrius. Moreover, the conclusions drawn from the documents allegedly proving the survival of the liturgical *chorēgia* in the demes after the removal of this institution at city level are based on erroneous or very doubtful restorations and/or datings.<sup>12</sup> *IG II<sup>3</sup> 4.300*, a very fragmentary inscription from the second half of the third century BC written on a bench found in the deme of Rhamnous, reads [- - -]γήσα[- - -]. The first editor, Vasiliou Petrakos, originally restored [- - - χορη]γήσα[ς - - -] (*PAAH* (1986) [1990] 16–18 no 6) but later rejected it in his corpus of the deme inscriptions, where he proposes [- - - στρατη]γήσα[ς - - -] (*IRham.* 141). Given the small number of preserved letters, there are other possible solutions, like the personal name [Ἡ]γήσα[νδρος], well attested in Athens, who could have dedicated the bench to a divinity,<sup>13</sup> or [- - - Ἡ]γησά[νδρου], which could be the patronymic of the dedicant. In any case, this scanty piece is too doubtful to be taken into account in our discussion.

The decree *Agora* 16.136, which is too fragmentary to be translated and in which the editors restore the mention of a *chorēgos* (line 3), does not involve demes but a tribe:

-----  
 [-----]για τὰ μ[-----]  
 [-----]ρωθει τὰ Λυκούργ[-----]  
 [-----] χορηγός καταστα]θεις ἐπὶ δύο ἔτη τ[ῆι -----]  
 [-----] ἐνί]κησεν ὑπὲρ τῆς φυ[λῆς, ἐψηφίσθαι]  
 5 [τοῖς φυλέταις ἐπαινέσαι ----- καὶ στεφαν]ῶσαι χρυσῶι στεφ[άνωι ἀπὸ Π]  
 [δραχμῶν ἀρετῆς ἕνεκα καὶ φιλοτιμίας τῆς εἰς τὴν ----- φυ]λῆν· τὸ δὲ ψήφισμα τ[ὸδε ἀναγρά]-  
 [ψαι ἐν στήλῃ λιθίνῃ καὶ στήσαι ἐν τῶι ἱερῶι τοῦ ----- τοῦς] ἐπ[ι]μ[ε]λητὰς τοῦς [ἐπι -----]  
 [-----] ἄρχοντος -----  
 -----

Moreover, as neither the date (between the end of the fourth and the third century, according to palaeographic criteria) nor the text (the mention of χορηγός at line 3 is entirely restored) are certain, this inscription too offers no secure evidence.

*IG II<sup>2</sup> 3109*, a dedication from Rhamnous made by a man who was gymnasiarch and *chorēgos*, long attributed to the beginning of the third century, has been redated to the second half of the fourth century in the most recent corpora:<sup>14</sup>

Μεγακλῆς Μεγακ[λέου]ς [Ῥα]μνούσ[ι]ος ἀνέθηκεν Θέμιδι στεφανωθεις ὑπὸ τῶν δημοτῶν δικαιοσύνης ἕνεκα ἐ[πι] ἱερείας Καλλιστοῦς καὶ νικῆσας παισὶ καὶ ἀνδράσι γυμνασιαρχῶν καὶ καὶ Φειδοστράτης Νεμέσει ἱερείας κωμωιδῶις χορηγῶν.

*vacat* 0.04

Χαιρέστρατος Χαιρεδήμου

Ῥαμν<ο>ύσι<ο>ς ἐπ<ό>ησε.

Megakles son of Megakles, of Rhamnous, dedicated [the statue of Themis] to Themis, having been crowned by the demesmen, on account of his righteousness, when Kallisto was priestess, and also having been victorious as gymnasiarch for the boys and the grown men, [added on] and when Pheidostrate was priestess of Nemesis, [having been victorious] as *chorēgos* of comedies. Chairestratos son of Chairedemos, of Rhamnous, made [this]. (tr. Ma (2013) 19)

<sup>12</sup> These inscriptions are used by Lara O'Sullivan ((2009) 171) to prove that the Rural Dionysia maintained their *chorēgoi* until well into the third century BC. This argument allows her to reject the testimony of the Aixonean decrees ('best assigned to 313/2') as irrelevant for the dating of the removal of the liturgical choregic

system in Athens.

<sup>13</sup> There is a parallel case in Rhamnous, where another bench was dedicated to Aphrodite (*IRham.* 118).

<sup>14</sup> *IRham.* 120 (second half of the fourth century) and *IG II<sup>3</sup> 4.513* (ca. 325–300): 'Litt. formae saec. IV<sup>2</sup> a. favent'. On this inscription, see below.

We turn now to the two Aixonean decrees (A and B), which, if dated to 313/12, would be conclusive proof of the existence of the *chorēgia* under Demetrius. In fact, the arguments for this late date, though widely accepted, are extremely weak, and can be turned around in favour of the earlier date. First, there are two prosopographical arguments proposed by Ulrich Köhler, followed by Johannes Kirchner.<sup>15</sup> One of the two Aixoneans honoured in the second decree (B), Aristokrates son of Aristophanes, is clearly the proposer of the Aixonean decree in honour of Demetrius of Phalerum, enacted around 316/15.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, Glaukides son of Sosippos, the proposer of the two decrees (A and B), could be the brother of Smikuthos son of Sosippos, an Aixonean horseman listed *ca.* 320 in a catalogue found in Salamis.<sup>17</sup> The first argument is not very strong: Aristokrates could have been honoured by the Aixoneans in 340/39 and have proposed a decree at the deme assembly 20 years later. As for the second argument, a *dēmotēs* perhaps proposed decrees in 340/39 while his brother, possibly younger than him, still served in the cavalry in 320. Furthermore, the link between Glaukides and Smikuthos is uncertain, as Sosippos was a fairly common name in Attica.<sup>18</sup>

Two additional prosopographical links are also inconclusive. One of the *chorēgoi* in the first Aixonean decree (A), Auteas son of Autokles, appears also in a lease of 345 as lessee, together with his father, of an estate leased by the deme.<sup>19</sup> Another *chorēgos*, Glaukon son of Kallikrates, honoured in another Aixonean decree in 317/16,<sup>20</sup> is a member of the same family as Kallikrates son of Glaukon honoured in the second Aixonean decree (B), who could be his father according to the earlier date or his son according to the later date.<sup>21</sup>

Scholars have offered another type of argument in favour of the later date for the Aixonean decrees, especially the first (A). This decree is adorned with a relief that represents a satyr bringing wine to Dionysus and, above it, a range of five comic masks (fig. 1). On stylistic and iconographic criteria, some argue that the relief dates to the very end of the fourth century and assign the masks to New Comedy. These arguments are not compelling, since stylistic and iconographic parallels for both the relief and the masks exist already by the middle of the fourth century and even earlier.<sup>22</sup> Thus, the relief could date to *ca.* 340, with the masks assigned to Middle Comedy.

In any case, the prosopographic and stylistic arguments offered for the date of 313/12 regarding the two Aixonean decrees (A and B) are not decisive within such a narrow timeframe (barely a generation) and could just as easily support the earlier date. Should we conclude that we cannot choose between the two dates? Other considerations, however, point to the date of 340/39. First, Stephen Tracy, an epigraphist who specializes in identifying the hands of letter-cutters of Attic decrees, dates the activity of this cutter between 340/39 and *ca.* 320, and favours the earlier date.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Köhler: *IG* II.585; Kirchner: *PA* nos 1909 (Aristokrates s. Aristophanes), 2973 (Glaukides f. Sosippos), 12784 (Smikuthos s. Sosippos), *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1202.

<sup>16</sup> *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1201, with the text improved by Dow and Travis (1943). See now Ackermann (2018) 143–56 no. 6.

<sup>17</sup> *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1955.II, line 18.

<sup>18</sup> Witness *LGNP* 2, which contains 29 instances of the name Sosippos.

<sup>19</sup> *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 2492. See now Ackermann (2018) 186–216 no. 7.

<sup>20</sup> *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1200. See now Ackermann (2018) 117–19 no. 3.

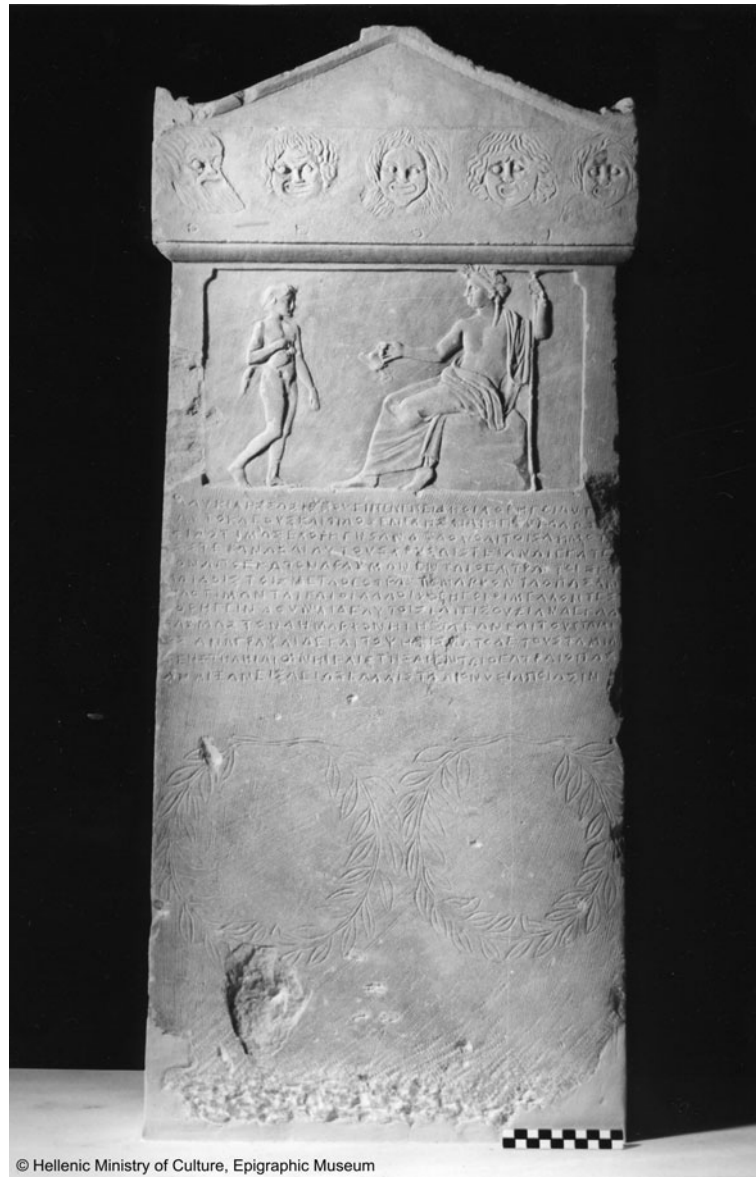
<sup>21</sup> In favour of the father, and thus of the earlier date for the Aixonean decrees: Lolling (1879) 195; Osborne and Byrne in *LGNP* 2, s.v. In favour of the son, and thus of the later date for the Aixonean decrees: Whitehead (1986) 418 no. 81. Traill (1994–2016) mentions both

possibilities (276960, 276955, 556595, 556605). T.B.L. Webster ((1951) 222 n.7; (1953–1954) 193), a supporter of the earlier date, argues that 23 years is a better interval than four between the *chorēgia* of the father and that of his son; furthermore, he feels that Auteas more likely was *chorēgos* at the age of 20 or over than at the age of 50 or over, because ‘we have some evidence for the youth of *chorēgoi*’. This last assertion is questionable. On the prosopographical link between Kallikrates son of Glaukon and the proposer of a city decree honouring the epebes of the Cecropian tribe enrolled in 334/3, see Ackermann (2018) 454 s.v. (with reservations).

<sup>22</sup> See Ackermann (2018) 122–26 for a complete analysis.

<sup>23</sup> Tracy (1995) 99–100 and 73 n.7: ‘the known dates for this cutter point toward the earlier date’.





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Fig. 1. Deme decree of Aixone honouring two *chorēgoi*, 340/39 or 313/12 BC (the rights to the depicted monument belong to the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports (Law 3028/2002); the stele, EM 13262, belongs to and is the responsibility of the Epigraphic Museum; Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports/Archaeological Resources Fund).

As the leading authority, whose opinion is widely accepted by specialists in Attic inscriptions, his expert opinion is crucial in any discussion on this topic. Second, if we accept the date of 313/12, these two Aixonean decrees (A and B) would be our only evidence for decrees with carved reliefs during the administration of Demetrius. Yet, early in his period of rule, he established a sumptuary law that forbade the inclusion of carved decoration on funerary stelae even in the demes. As a consequence, reliefs virtually disappeared from every type of monument, private and public (decrees, votive monuments, funerary stelae). Apparently, many sculptors left Athens to find work

elsewhere.<sup>24</sup> Under the impetus of Demetrius, the city itself reduced drastically the number of decrees carved on stone,<sup>25</sup> and they were no longer decorated.<sup>26</sup> It would be surprising therefore if a deme produced two such reliefs at this period.

Admittedly, there are no conclusive arguments in favour of either date, but there are good arguments that the two Aixonean decrees (A and B) may date to 340/39, well before the abolition of the *chorēgia*. They should consequently be withdrawn from the debate.

Recently, other documents have been cited by Eric Csapo and Peter Wilson<sup>27</sup> to prove the continued existence of the liturgical *chorēgia* during the rule of Demetrius of Phalerum, although close analysis undermines them as reliable evidence. In Menander's *Samia*, Moschion says that he recently assumed the *chorēgia*.<sup>28</sup> According to Csapo and Wilson, the first production of this play occurred during Demetrius' regime, somewhere between 315 and 309, implying that the institution still existed at that date. However, the exact date of the play is still unknown, with experts dating it variously between 320 and 310. In a well-argued analysis (although the *chorēgia* surprisingly is not mentioned), Jean-Marie Jacques cautiously concludes that the play is slightly earlier than the *Duskolos*, first produced at the beginning of 316.<sup>29</sup> Even if we accept that the play dates to the administration of Demetrius, the liturgical *chorēgia* could have been recently abolished, since Moschion speaks of his action in the past tense.

Csapo and Wilson then draw our attention to three supposed choregic monuments. The first from the deme of Rhamnous, already discussed, according to them dates to the end of the fourth century; however, as we note above, in the most recent corpora this inscription has been dated more broadly to the second half of the fourth century or *ca.* 325–300.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, nothing prevents a date before the administration of Demetrius.

Second, Csapo and Wilson consider an anepigraphic votive relief depicting, among others, a group of young men, who could be members of a chorus, and two bearded men, whom they interpret as *chorēgoi* (fig. 2). This monument, however, is broadly dated on stylistic criteria to between 320 and 300. In addition, the interpretation of the two bearded men is problematic; scholars have variously identified these men as *chorodidaskalos* and *chorēgos*, *chorodidaskalos* and *agōnothetēs* or the eponymous heroes of the two Attic tribes that won the contest.<sup>31</sup> Here again, this piece of evidence is inconclusive.

Third, Csapo and Wilson explore a relief from the Athenian Eleusinion that depicts a comic chorus. Initially dated to Demetrius' period of rule, this monument actually dates to the third quarter of the fourth century, as Csapo himself recently admitted.<sup>32</sup> This relief therefore is not relevant to our discussion.

<sup>24</sup> Williams (1997) 336, n.27.

<sup>25</sup> O'Sullivan (2009) 117–18; Lambert (2018) 6–7.

<sup>26</sup> Meyer (1989) 258–62; Tracy (1995) 36–51, especially 39–40; Lawton (1995) 22: 'the sumptuary law of Demetrius, which had by this time halted the production of Attic grave reliefs, must have affected the workshops that produced document reliefs [i.e. on decrees]' (the only two possible exceptions for the period 317–307 noted in Lawton's corpus are precisely the two Aixonean decrees *SEG* 36.186 (no. 154 in Lawton's corpus) and *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1202 (no. 155), both dated by the archon Theophrastus, who may well be the eponymous archon of 340/39; see our discussion). On the funerary legislation of Demetrius, see below.

<sup>27</sup> Csapo and Wilson (2010); (2012).

<sup>28</sup> 13–14: τῷ χορηγεῖν διέφερον [καὶ τῆ] φιλοτιμία; 'I shone with my payments for choruses [and] public service' (tr. Arnott (2000)).

<sup>29</sup> Cf. his introduction to the CUF edition of the *Samia* (Jacques (1989) xlviii–lxv). The *Samia* argument is also used by A. Latini (2003), who dates the play to 310–309. For other recent opinions on the date of the *Samia*, see Sommerstein (2013) 44–46 (not after 314); Arnott (2000) 7–12 (in or close to 314). W.G. Arnott believes that the *chorēgia* was abolished in 315 and that the mention of it by Moschion 'could have touched a nostalgic chord in the audience' ((2000) 17 n.6 and 12, respectively).

<sup>30</sup> On *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 3109, see above.

<sup>31</sup> Louvre, Ma 756. See the discussions in Voutiras (1991–1992); Agelidis (2009) 68–69, cat. no. 172; Csapo (2010b) 84.

<sup>32</sup> Agora Museum, S 2098. See Agelidis (2009) 51, cat. no. 95; Csapo (2016) 264: 'The sculpture is dated by style to the third quarter of the fourth century and most likely to 350–340 BC.'



Fig. 2. Attic votive relief, ca. 320–300 BC (Paris, Louvre, Ma 756; photo M.-L. Nguyen; [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Votive\\_relief\\_sacrifice\\_Louvre\\_Ma756.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Votive_relief_sacrifice_Louvre_Ma756.jpg)).

Finally, the two scholars make an argument based on Panathenaic amphorae, which cease to be dated by the name of the eponymous archon after 312/11. For them, this represents a *terminus post quem* for the introduction of the *agōnothesia*, since they see the name of the archon on the amphorae as evidence that the *athlothetai* were still responsible for the Panathenaic competitions, and not the *agōnothetēs*. However, while this argument assumes that the Panathenaic competitions were under the responsibility of an *agōnothetēs* from the beginning, this cannot be the case before the second century BC. While the name of the archon was recorded on Panathenaic amphorae for the last time in 312/11, it was then replaced by the name of the treasurer of the Panathenaia, a magistracy revealed by a fragmentary inscription recently published.<sup>33</sup> Only much later, in the second century BC, did the name of the *agōnothetēs* of the Panathenaia appear on the amphorae,<sup>34</sup> a magistracy created only ca. 170–160. Until that date, the *athlothetai* remained responsible for the organization of the festival, as is confirmed by some epigraphic evidence that has escaped Csapo and Wilson’s notice.<sup>35</sup>

Another scholar, Lara O’Sullivan, also maintains that the choregic reform was enacted not by Demetrius but by the democratic government restored in 307. Her arguments are developed in her book on Demetrius published in 2009, the same year as the first article by Csapo and Wilson.<sup>36</sup> She first discusses a famous remark about the *chorēgia* attributed to Demetrius by Plutarch,<sup>37</sup> in

<sup>33</sup> The inscribed fragments bearing the name of a treasurer are published by Dow (1936) 55–57; Edwards (1957) nos 27, 41; more recently, Barringer (2003) 246–48, 251–55. They all conclude this was the treasurer of the stratiotic fund, but see now Osborne (2015). For the new inscription, see the editions given in Kritzas (2015); *IG II<sup>3</sup>* 1.1023, line 39; see also Osborne (2016) 91.

<sup>34</sup> See the discussions of Humphreys (2007) 71; Osborne (2015); Sarrazanas (forthcoming) chapters 3, 4 (where the dating ca. 170–160 is demonstrated for the first time).

<sup>35</sup> The decree *IG II<sup>3</sup>* 1.1022, dated 239/8 BC, honours the board of the *athlothetai* for their good management of the various contests.

<sup>36</sup> O’Sullivan (2009) 168–85. Her hypothesis is favourably received in Knoepfler (2011) 554–55.

<sup>37</sup> Plut. *De glor. Ath.* 6 (*Mor.* 349 b): καὶ τούτων τοῖς μὲν ἡττηθεῖσι περιῆν προσυβρίσθαι καὶ γεγονέναι καταγελάστους· τοῖς δὲ νικήσασιν ὁ τρίπους ὑπῆρχεν, οὐκ ἀνάθημα τῆς νίκης, ὡς Δημήτριός φησιν, ἀλλ’ ἐπίσπεια τῶν ἐκκεχυμένων βίων καὶ τῶν ἐκλελοιπότην κενοτάφιον οἶκον; ‘For those of them [the



which Demetrius criticizes the excesses of this liturgy, an opinion already expressed by several authors before him.<sup>38</sup> He denounces the abuses generated by the *chorēgia* in his time, namely expensive commemorative monuments which devour the fortune of the wealthiest Athenians.<sup>39</sup> Yet, like other legislators before him, in the course of his legislative activity, he took several measures to reduce excessive private expenditure: he enacted a sumptuary law restricting funerary markers to a few modest monuments and established the *gunaikonomoi* notably in order to prevent disproportionate expenditure on family banquets.<sup>40</sup> The removal of the liturgical *chorēgia* would have a similar objective: to prevent the rich from squandering their fortune for their own glory but uselessly for the city. O'Sullivan believes that, in Plutarch's quotation, Demetrius does not criticize the *chorēgia* per se but rather the expensive choregic monuments; as his sumptuary law would have prevented such monuments, the rich gradually shifted away from a liturgy that no longer brought them social prestige. The democratic government restored in 307 would have delivered the final blow to this institution by removing the liturgical *chorēgia* and creating the *agōnothesia*. It is difficult to believe, however, that citizens would have refused to undertake the *chorēgia* simply because they could no longer erect luxurious monuments: the liturgy was a compulsory service, unless an Athenian could claim an exemption or demonstrate that another citizen was wealthier.<sup>41</sup>

Furthermore, O'Sullivan supposes an Antigonid impetus behind the choregic reform: Antigonus Monopthalmus and Demetrius Poliorcetes, the heroes of the democratic restoration in Athens, would have appointed their supporter Xenokles as the first *agōnothetēs*, an agent of their propaganda, since he was responsible for the new festival created by the Athenians in their honour. Nevertheless, Xenokles was above all a former associate of Lycurgus, and no document proves a link between the *agōnothetēs* and the festival established for the Antigonids. The reasoning of O'Sullivan becomes problematic when she argues that the choregic monuments of the second half of the fourth century, like the funerary monuments, were influenced by Macedonian artistic styles (still unproven) and that Demetrius of Phalerum would have claimed, 'in a symbolic fashion, the independence of his city from Macedonian tendencies' by removing them.<sup>42</sup> This action would be quite odd for a man who owed his leading position to Cassander.

Finally, for O'Sullivan, because the choregic reform is essentially democratic, it could not have been enacted by an oligarch like Demetrius. As she rightly stresses, this reform is consistent with the policy of Lycurgus, a model for the democrats of 307 (they voted posthumous honours for him).<sup>43</sup> Moreover, she believes that the *agōnothesia* would have been the sole magistracy created by Demetrius to be maintained after his fall. As for this last assumption, the *nomophulakes*, if truly created by Demetrius, and the *gunaikonomoi* were certainly abolished after the liberation of Athens, but the sumptuary law forbidding luxurious funerary monuments was maintained under the restored democracy and endured for centuries.<sup>44</sup> As for her first assumption, we will demonstrate in the second part of this article that the choregic reform should not be characterized specifically as democratic or oligarchic.

*chorēgoi*] who were beaten, there was nothing left but to be the object of scorn and ridicule; but for those who won, there was the tripod, this being, as Demetrius says, not a votive offering to celebrate their victory, but a last libation of their spilt livelihood and an empty memorial of their bankrupt estates' (tr. Fortenbaugh and Schütrumpf (2000) no. 115). See below. Köhler (1898) already used this passage in support of the hypothesis that Demetrius abolished the liturgical *chorēgia*.

<sup>38</sup> See below.

<sup>39</sup> For examples, see Goette (2007).

<sup>40</sup> Solon and Lycurgus legislated in a similar manner

regarding ostentatious luxury: cf. Engels (1998) 141, 145–46. On the ancient laws of Athens or of other cities as major sources of inspiration for Demetrius' reforms, see Gehrke (1978); followed by O'Sullivan (2009) 197–240 (who more readily admits philosophical influences on Demetrius' legislative work).

<sup>41</sup> On *skepsis* and *antidosis*, see Wilson (2000) 57–61.

<sup>42</sup> O'Sullivan (2009) 180.

<sup>43</sup> Mikalson (1998) 55–56 already links the choregic reform to the measures taken by Lycurgus to reorganize the financing of civic cults.

<sup>44</sup> On this law, see Ackermann (2018) 74.

To conclude, no compelling evidence suggests that the liturgical *chorēgia* was abolished not under Demetrius of Phalerum, but after his fall in 307/6.

What then of Csapo and Wilson's other theory, namely that the beginnings of the choregic reform were associated with the oligarchic government of 322–318? Evidence of this assertion, they argue, is found in the establishment of the office of the *epimelētēs* of the Dionysia, a sole administrator of the festival, who would have worked with the *chorēgoi*. Their argument is based primarily on a city decree honouring a stranger (likely a metic), Nikostratos. Although the text is poorly preserved and dating the inscription is difficult, the two scholars argue for 318/17, under the restored democracy that followed the oligarchy of Phocion (although an earlier date is just as possible).<sup>45</sup> They suspect that Nikostratos was rewarded that year for having assumed the office of *epimelētēs* of the Dionysia, allegedly a new magistracy created under Phocion. Several objections invalidate this argument. First, it is unlikely that an (obscure) stranger could hold a civic magistracy in Athens at that time. Furthermore, it is highly unlikely that the democratic government of 318/17 would have honoured a magistrate established by the former oligarchic government. Most importantly, this magistracy does not exist: it is the result of a misinterpretation of the text:

## Stoichedon 29

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 [...] Νικόστρατ[. . . . .<sup>17</sup>. . . . .]  
 [. . .], δεδόχθαι τῶι δήμ[ωι· ἐπειδὴ Νικόσ]-  
 [τρ]ατος διατελεῖ περ[ὶ τὸν ἀγῶνα τὸν]  
 [Δι]ονυσίων φιλοτιμο[ύμενος καὶ περ]-  
 5 [ὶ τ]ὴν αὐτοῦ ἐπιμέλεια[ν καὶ τοῖς χορη]-  
 [γο]ῖς τοῖς αἰεὶ χορηγο[ῦσιν προθύμως]  
 [ύ]πηρετῶν τὰ περὶ τοῦ[ς . . .<sup>6</sup> . . . , ἐπαινέ]-  
 [σ]αι Νικόστρατον Κη[. . . . .<sup>13</sup>. . . . .]  
 [.]την καὶ στεφανῶ[σαι αὐτὸν . . .<sup>6</sup> . . . σ]-  
 10 [τ]εφάνωι· εἶναι [δὲ . . . . .<sup>15</sup>. . . . .]  
 [κα]ὶ ἐγγόνοι[ς καὶ γῆς καὶ οἰκίας ἔγκ]-  
 [τ]ησιν κατ[ὰ τὸν νόμον· ἀναγράψαι δὲ τ]-  
 [όδε] τὸ ψ[ή]φισμα ἐν στήλῃ λιθίνῃ τὸ-  
 [ν κα]τὰ [πρυτανείαν γραμματέα ---]  
 -----

... Nikostratos ... the People shall decide: since Nikostratos continues to display love of honour concerning the competition at the Dionysia and concerning his care for it, and to serve enthusiastically the theatrical sponsors in office at any time concerning the [choruses?], to praise Nikostratos son of Ke... [ethnic or profession] and crown him with a ... crown; and he and his descendants shall have [equality of taxation?] and right of ownership of land and a house, according to the law; and the prytany secretary shall inscribe this decree on a stone stele ...<sup>46</sup>

The *epimeleia* here (line 5) clearly does not refer to an official role of supervisor of the Dionysia, but rather to the care that Nikostratos showed for the Dionysiac contest, according to a well-documented expression.<sup>47</sup> As Csapo and Wilson note, this man acted simultaneously with the

<sup>45</sup> The mention of the secretary of the prytany at line 14, if correct (it is completely restored), excludes the oligarchic period of 322–318. In *IG II<sup>3</sup> 1.473*, the restoration is accepted by S.D. Lambert, who proposes the date of '329–322?'. On this point, as for other flaws in Csapo and Wilson (2010), see the substantial criticisms made by C. Feyel in *BÉ* (2011) 240; Knoepfler (2012) 438–40.

<sup>46</sup> *IG II<sup>3</sup> 1.473*; tr. Lambert (<https://www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/IGII31/473#note-1>; accessed April 2020), except for line 5, where we prefer 'his care for it' instead of 'his responsibilities at it'.

<sup>47</sup> For example *IG II<sup>2</sup> 1184*, lines 5–6 (deme decree of 334/3 from Cholargos, where the priestess receives food-stuffs and money for the 'festival and the *epimeleia* of the

*chorēgoi*, who appear in the text.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, if Nikostratos really acted as an official and chief supervisor (*epimelētēs*) of the Dionysia, he could not be said to ‘serve’ ([ὕ]πηρετῶν, line 7) the *chorēgoi*: this would be completely reversing the usual and logical hierarchy. Thus, Nikostratos was not a foreigner who became a magistrate in Athens under the oligarchic government of Phocion. Even if the decree is fragmentary, the text provides no secure clue that Nikostratos was a magistrate, such as election by the *dēmos* or reference to his *euthunai*. Nikostratos most likely was simply a rich man or an artist, who contributed regularly to the splendour of the Dionysia with his financial support or artistic talent. This inscription is best understood if considered as one of the numerous decrees honouring foreigners connected with the theatre in the years after the Battle of Chaeronea, when Athens desired to exploit her reputation as the leading city of Greek drama.<sup>49</sup>

Csapo and Wilson argue that further evidence of an alleged ‘*epimelētēs* of the Dionysia’ is supplied by Plutarch. The biographer recounts that a Macedonian named Nikanor was invited to be *agōnothētēs* by Phocion soon after the death of Antipater in 319.<sup>50</sup> Plutarch’s use of the term *agōnothētēs* here is probably anachronistic, as this word was commonly used in his own day to refer to any organizer of contests.<sup>51</sup> Csapo and Wilson argue that Plutarch’s source actually used the word *epimelētēs*, which Plutarch, unfamiliar with the term, anachronistically likened to the *agōnothētēs*. No actual evidence suggests, however, that Nikanor bore the title of *epimelētēs* of the Dionysia, a term that Plutarch would have fully understood since he was himself *epimelētēs* of the Delphic Amphictyony.

Finally, Csapo and Wilson draw our attention to an honorific decree that mentions the career of Xenokles of Sphettos the Elder:<sup>52</sup>

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 [...<sup>6</sup>...]ς καὶ τριη[ραρχ-----]  
 [.. ἀνή]λωσεν ὡς ἀκολ[ούθως-----]  
 [...<sup>5</sup>...] χορηγῶν ἐνί[κα-----]  
 [...<sup>4</sup>...]ρειαν τάλαντ[α-----]

Thesmophoria’); *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1198, lines 11–12 (deme decree of 326/5 from Aixone for the *chorēgoi* and their *epimeleia* towards the *dēmotai*; cf. Ackermann (2018) 112–17 no. 2); *IEleusis* 84, lines 5–6, 9 (decree of 333/2 for the ephebes of the tribe Hippothontis for their *epimeleia* in all tasks imposed on them at Eleusis); *IG* II<sup>3</sup> 1.920, line 16 (decree of 266/5 in which an eponymous archon is rewarded for, among other things, the *epimeleia* that he showed in the fulfilment of all responsibilities of his office); *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1043, line 32 (decree of 38/7 in which a *kosmētēs* is rewarded for his general *epimeleia* in all tasks entrusted to him); *IG* II<sup>3</sup> 1.324, line 44 and *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 483, line 24 (decrees of 322/1 and 304/3 respectively in which doctors are rewarded for their *epimeleia*). Cf. Whitehead (1993) 68–69.

<sup>48</sup> Csapo and Wilson (2010) are surprised by the expression at line 6 τοῖς αἰεὶ χορηγοῦσιν for the *chorēgoi*. They attempt at length to explain this supposed exception and conclude that the *chorēgoi* are here assimilated with the *agōnothētai* and the prytanes. In fact, this expression is also used for *chorēgoi* in a deme decree from Aixone (*IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1198, lines 23–24; cf. Ackermann (2018) 112–17 no. 2).

<sup>49</sup> For example the decrees voted at the same meeting of the Assembly held in the theatre in 332/1 after

the City Dionysia: *IG* II<sup>3</sup> 1.347 (for the comic poet Amphis of Andros) and 344 (for a metic, perhaps an actor) or the decree for a Theban piper *IG* II<sup>3</sup> 1.929.II (before 319). Cf. Lambert (2011a) 175–90; Hanink (2014) 92–125.

<sup>50</sup> Plut. *Phoc.* 31: ὁ δὲ τούτων μὲν οὐκ ἐφρόντιζεν, ἐντυγχάνων δὲ τῷ Νικάνορι καὶ διαλεγόμενος εἰς τε τὰλλα τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις πρᾶον αὐτὸν καὶ κεχαρισμένον παρεῖχε, καὶ φιλοτιμίας τινὰς ἔπεισε καὶ δαπάνας ὑποστῆναι γενόμενον ἀγωνοθέτην; ‘Phocion, however, paid no heed to these charges, but by interviews and discussions with Nicanor rendered him in general mild and gracious to the Athenians, and, in particular, persuaded him to undertake sundry expensive exhibitions as director of games’ (tr. Perrin (1919)).

<sup>51</sup> Pickard-Cambridge (1968) 92, n.1; the anachronism hypothesis was formulated already by Capps (1900) 85 n.1.

<sup>52</sup> *IG* II<sup>3</sup> 1.1035 (ca. 245); tr. Lambert (<https://www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/IGII3/1035>; accessed April 2020). As Habicht (1988) shows, the decree honours Xenokles the Younger, beginning with a reminder of the career of his grandfather.

5 [χειρ]οτονηθεις ἀγ[ωνοθέτης —————]  
 [τάλα]ντα ὕ καὶ Μυστ[ηρίων ἐπιμελητή]ς ————  
 ΟΑ πρὸς Ι//[————— ἐ]-  
 πέδωκεν δε[—————]-  
 εν ὕ τὴν δα[πάνην ————— ἐ]-  
 10 κ τῶν ιδίω[ν —————]  
 ταῖς ἄλλα[ις —————]  
 Λ.ΙΜ[—————]  
 —————

... and as trierarch ... he spent .. in the manner of ... as theatrical sponsor he won ... [a gift of -?] talents ... elected competition director ... talents, and as manager of the Mysteries ... to ... he donated [ten?] ... the expense ... from his own resources ... the other [liturgies?] ...

According to them, in this career, as documented in the inscription, one expects to find a logical progression of offices from the *chorēgia* to the *agōnothesia*, including the *epimeleia*; however, the apparent *epimeleia* which should be on line 4 between the *chorēgia* and the *agōnothesia* is a misreading of the text, since the first preserved letter is a rho and thus cannot support the restoration of the word *epimeleia*. This error (printed in *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 749) was corrected in the third edition of *IG*. We also note that the offices enumerated in this decree are not listed in chronological order: Xenokles the Elder is said to have assumed the trierarchy, the *chorēgia*, the *agōnothesia* and the *epimeleia* of the Mysteries, yet he was *agōnothētēs* in 307/6 and *epimelētēs* of the Mysteries in 321/20 or 318/17.<sup>53</sup> As we have seen, the evidence does not support the scenario hypothesized by Csapo and Wilson, and the office of *epimelētēs* of the Dionysia under Phocion most probably never existed.

No compelling argument thus remains against the view that Demetrius of Phalerum was responsible for the abolition of the liturgical *chorēgia* and the creation of the *agōnothesia*. Nevertheless, Demetrius was not acting in a wholly innovative manner; the second part of this article will detail similar reforms enacted in other Greek cities and even in Lycurgan Athens.

Can we propose a more precise date for the choregic reform, given the chronological range provided by the city inscriptions (320/19–307/6)? Here again, deme inscriptions may help, if we accept that the reform also applied to the demes.<sup>54</sup> The latest evidence for *chorēgoi* in Athens appears in a decree of Aixone, securely dated to 317/16.<sup>55</sup> This evidence allows us to down-date the traditional *terminus post quem* based on city decrees and agrees to a certain extent with O’Sullivan, Csapo and Wilson: the liturgical *chorēgia* still existed under Demetrius ... but only very briefly.

Two decrees of the deme of Acharnai engraved on the same stele may indicate that the liturgical *chorēgia* had already been abolished by *ca.* 315.<sup>56</sup> Decree A rewards a treasurer for his *philotimia* and *dikaio sunē* in disclosing his financial records, organizing the local Dionysia and performing the requested sacrifices. Decree B (earlier than A) reveals that he organized the Dionysia along with the demarch and the *epimelētēs*:

<sup>53</sup> We cannot reconstruct the chronology and the entire career of an individual on the basis of the account of it given in an honorific decree of this kind. See the comments of Gauthier (1979) 385–87, regarding the decree for Phaidros of Sphettos (*IG* II<sup>3</sup> 1.985), emphasizing that the description of the honorand’s career was

constructed by the redactor of the proposition.

<sup>54</sup> See above.

<sup>55</sup> *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1200; *cf.* Ackermann (2018) 117–19 no. 3.

<sup>56</sup> *SEG* 43.26, published for the first time by Steinhauer (1992). We include the restorations made by Takeuchi (2010–2013) 85–88 (*SEG* 63.101).



## Stoichedon 33

## (A)

- Διογένης Ναυκύδου εἶπεν· ἐπειδὴ Φανόμα-  
 χος ὁ ταμίας ὁ ἐπὶ Πραξιβούλου ἄρχοντος  
 4 τὰς τε θυσίας τέθυκεν τοῖς θεοῖς καὶ τοῖ-  
 ς ἥρωσιν ὑπὲρ τῶν δημοτῶν ἀπάσας [ἐ]ν τ[ῶ]ι ἐ-  
 [ν]αυτῶι καὶ τῶν Διονυσίων ἐπεμελήθη κα-  
 λῶς [καὶ φιλοτίμως] μετὰ τοῦ δημάρχου Οἰν-  
 8 ο[φ]ι[λ]ου καὶ [φ]ιάλην πεπόηται μ[ν]ᾶν ἄγουσα-  
 ἦνοχεν ἀπάντων ὧν δι[ώ]ικησεν πρὸς τε τὴν  
 πόλιν καὶ πρὸς τοὺς δημότας ἐ[ν] τοῖς χρόν-  
 12 οῖς τοῖς ἐκ τῶν [νόμων] τῶν τῆς πόλεως καὶ τ-  
 ῶν δημοτῶν καὶ τὸ περιὸν ἀργύριον παρ' ἐα-  
 υτῶι ἐκ τῆς διοικήσεως καταβέβληκεν Ἀχα-  
 ρνεῦσιν : ΗΗΗΔΔΓΠΠ : καὶ τὰς εὐθύνας  
 δέδωκεν δ[ό]ξας δικαίως τεταμιευκέναι κ-  
 16 αὶ τῶν [ἄλλων] ἀπάντων [ᾧ]ν αὐτῶι προσέταξα-  
 ν [Α]χαρν[εῖς ἐπιμεμέλη]ται καλῶς καὶ φιλο-  
 τ[ί]μως· [ἐ]ψ[η]φ[ί]σθαι Ἀχαρνεῦσιν ἐπαινέσαι  
 Φανόμαχον Νικοδήμου Ἀχαρνέα καὶ στεφα-  
 20 νῶσαι αὐτὸν θαλλοῦ στεφάνωι φιλοτιμία-  
 ς ἔνεκ[α καὶ δι]καιοσύνης τῆς εἰς τοὺς δημο-  
 ὅτας· ἀναγράψαι δὲ τόδε τὸ ψήφισμα ἐ στήληι  
 λιθίνει τὸν γραμματέα τῶν δημοτῶν κα-  
 24 ἰ στήσαι ἐν τῶι ἱερῶι τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς τῆς Ἰπί-  
 ας, εἰς δὲ τὴν ἀναγραφὴν τῆς στήλης δοῦνα-  
 ἰ τὸν ταμίαν [: ΔΔ :] δραχμὰς καὶ λογίσασθ[α]-  
 ἰ τοῖς δημόται[ς].

## (B)

- Διογένης Ναυκύδου εἶπεν· ἐπειδὴ ὁ δήμαρ-  
 χος Οἰνόφιλος καὶ ὁ ταμίας Φανόμαχος κα-  
 4 ἰ ὁ [ἐπι]μελ[η]τῆς τῶν Διονυσίων καλῶ[ς] καὶ φ-  
 ιλοτίμως [ἐπι]μ[ε]λέ[λ]ηται τῆς τε θυσίας τ-  
 ῶι Διονύσῳ [καὶ τῆς] πομπῆς καὶ τοῦ ἀγῶνος  
 8 καὶ τὰ [ἄ]λλ[α] διοικοῦσιν ὑπὲρ τῶν δημοτ-  
 ῶν κατὰ τοὺς νόμους· ἐψηφίσθαι Ἀχαρνεῦσ-  
 ἰν ἐπαινέσαι τὸν δήμαρχον Οἰνόφιλον Οἰ-  
 νοφίλου καὶ τὸν ταμίαν Φανόμαχον Νικοδ-  
 ῆμου καὶ τὸν ἐπιμελητὴν Λέοντα Δίονος κ-  
 12 αὶ στεφ[α]νῶ[σα]ι ἕκαστον αὐτῶν κιττοῦ στε-  
 φάνωι καὶ ἀνειπεῖν τὸν δήμαρχον τούσδε  
 τοὺς στεφάνους Διονυσίων τῶν Ἀχαρνῆσιν τ-  
 ῶι ἀγῶνι· ἀναγράψαι δὲ τόδε τὸ ψήφισμα εἰ-  
 16 στήλην λιθίνην τὸν δήμαρχον Οἰνόφιλον  
 καὶ στ[η]σα[ι] ἐ[ν] τῶι ἱερῶι τῆς Ἀθη[ν]ᾶς τῆς Ἰπ-  
 πίας [εἰς δὲ τὴν ἀναγραφὴν τῆς στήλης] δ[οῦ]-  
 ναι τὸ[ν] τ[α]μίαν Φανόμαχον : ΔΔ [:] δραχμὰς κα-  
 ἰ λογ[ί]σασθαι τοῖς δημόταις· εἶ[ν]αι δὲ αὐτ-  
 20 οῖς καὶ π[ρ]οεδ[ρί]α[ν] α[ὐ]τοῖς [καὶ] ἐγγ[ό]νοις  
 εἰς τὸν αἰὶ [χρό]νον Διονυσ[ί]ων τῶν Ἀχαρν[ῆ]-  
 σιν τ[ῶ]ι [ἀ]γῶ[ν]ι ἐ[πι] τοῦ πρώτου βάρου.

A: Diogenes son of Naukydes proposed. Since Phanomachos, the treasurer during the archonship of Praxiboulos, did all the sacrifices to the gods and the heroes on behalf of the demesmen in his year, and tended to the Dionysia well and honourably with the demarch Oinophilos, and has made a *phialē* weighing one mina of silver according to the law, and has made account of everything which he administered to the city and to the demesmen within the time of the laws of the city and of the demesmen, and has surrendered to the Acharnians the money remaining in his care from the housekeeping fund to the amount of 329 drachmas, and has rendered account and seemed to have performed his office of treasurer justly, and has administered well and honourably the other things which the Acharnians assigned to him; it is resolved by the Acharnians to praise Phanomachos son of Nikodemos, of Acharnai, and to crown him with a foliage crown on account of his love of honour and his justice towards the demesmen; and the secretary of the demesmen shall engrave this decree on a stone stele and erect it in the sanctuary of Athena Hippiā; and the treasurer shall pay out twenty drachmas for the engraving of the stele and render account to the demesmen.

B: Diogenes son of Naukydes proposed. Since the demarch Oinophilos and the treasurer Phanomachos and the *epimelētēs* of the Dionysia have taken care of the sacrifice to Dionysos well and honourably, and also of the procession and the contest, and administer everything else on behalf of the demesmen according to the laws; it is resolved by the Acharnians to praise the demarch Oinophilos son of Oinophilos and the treasurer Phanomachos son of Nikodemos and the *epimelētēs* Leon son of Dion; and to crown each of them with a crown of ivy; and the demarch shall announce these crowns at the contest of the Dionysia of the Acharnians; and the demarch Oinophilos shall engrave this decree on a stone stele and erect it in the sanctuary of Athena Hippiā; and the treasurer Phanomachos shall give twenty drachmas for the engraving of the stele and render account to the demesmen; and these men and their descendants shall be given the right of *proedria* in the first bench for all time at the contest of the Dionysia of the Acharnians. (tr. Kellogg (2013) 209, modified)

In decree B, contrary to expectation, it is not the *chorēgoi* who are honoured for the celebration of the Rural Dionysia, but the demarch, the treasurer of the deme and the ‘*epimelētēs* (of the Dionysia)’, a new magistracy.<sup>57</sup> As noted by the first editor of this inscription, Georgios Steinhauer, these three magistrates seem to share the role that the *agōnothetēs* played at the city level. In any event, something has certainly changed, a transformation confirmed by decree A, which shows the close control of the city over the financial administration of the deme. The treasurer of the deme, having been honoured by the Acharnians, among other things, for his service in the local Dionysia, was required to disclose financial records to both the deme and city (lines 8–12).<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, he was charged with making a silver *phialē* weighing 100 dr. [κ]ατὰ [τὸν νόμον] (lines 7–8), which confirms this impression.<sup>59</sup> Finally, the weight of the *phialē* suggests that the treasurer was responsible for a large budget that included money from the deme and, perhaps, also from the city.<sup>60</sup> In this case, we may presume that the financial contribution of the city was intended to compensate for the lack of *chorēgoi*. This unprecedented interference of the city in the financial

<sup>57</sup> We would expect any *chorēgoi* to be mentioned in decree B, voted on at the end of the Dionysia; cf. *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1178 (first half of the fourth century), where the *dēmotai* of Ikarion honour the demarch and the *chorēgoi* for their administration of the festival and the competition of the Dionysia.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Fröhlich (2004) 353–55. The interpretation of Wilson (2010) 78–82 (followed by Kellogg (2013) 82–84, 185–86) should be rejected. On its flaws, see C. Feyel in *BE* (2011) 222; Knoepfler (2012) 438–40.

<sup>59</sup> Humphreys (2004) 193 claims that the deme treasurer was subject to the supposed law of Lycurgus that compelled the liturgists to dedicate a *phialē* during their

year of activity (cf. *IG* II<sup>3</sup> 1.550 from 333/2 or 332/1? with the commentaries of Lewis (1968) 374–80 no. 51; Lambert (2001) 52–59 no. 4). Nevertheless, the equation of the office of treasurer with a liturgy would be odd, and the inscription *IG* II<sup>3</sup> 1.550 only mentions *phialae* of around 50 dr. According to Steinhauer (1992) this law would have extended to the magistrates of the demes, although no evidence supports this hypothesis.

<sup>60</sup> Steinhauer (1992) concludes that the treasurer of Acharnai handled civic money, *contra* Kellogg (2013) 91–92, who maintains that the deme budget was probably sufficient.

affairs of a deme perhaps resulted from a reform of Demetrius that compelled the deme treasurers to disclose financial records to the city and not solely at local level. It is well known that Demetrius, as a new Lycurgus, prioritized the increase of public finances and the limitation of wasteful expenditure, with the consequent strict control exercised over private spending and, as the decree of Acharnai suggests, over that of the demes.

To conclude, these deme documents allow us to date the choregic reform to *ca.* 316/15. Since we know that Demetrius established most of his laws during the first year of his office, when he earned the title of lawgiver (*nomothetēs*), 316 seems the most likely date of this reform.<sup>61</sup>

## II. The context of the abolition of the liturgical *chorēgia* and creation of the *agōnothesia* in Athens

Since we have established that the abolition of the liturgical *chorēgia* and creation of the *agōnothesia* dates to the rule of Demetrius of Phalerum (most likely to 316), we will now address another fundamental yet very controversial issue: why and how did these changes occur?

While scholars have analysed this important question from different historical perspectives (especially political history and history of the theatre), they have rarely addressed it from the point of view of institutional history. We must examine the content of the reforms and their legal modalities to better understand the post-316 changes.

### (a) *The traditional view: an 'oligarchic' reform to protect the fortunes of wealthy citizens*

During the Classical period, the number of *chorēgoi* required in the various contests instituted by Athens was quite substantial: at the City Dionysia alone, no less than 28 *chorēgoi* were required annually.<sup>62</sup> These *chorēgoi*, chosen from among the wealthiest citizens through the well-known system of the liturgy, were required to spend their own money to train and equip the *choreutai* who would perform during the contests. This expenditure was generally rather lavish: Wilson estimates that by the end of the fifth century a comic chorus would have cost *ca.* 1,400 drachmas and a tragic chorus *ca.* 3,000, although the most expensive *chorēgia* was the dithyrambic chorus, with an estimated cost of between 4,000 and 5,000 drachmas.<sup>63</sup>

Already in the fifth century BC and throughout the Classical period, the *chorēgia* was criticized by rich Athenian citizens who bore the burden of these large expenses and complained especially about the repetition of these liturgies, which could ruin them financially.<sup>64</sup> In the fourth century, Aristotle went so far as to recommend preventing wealthy citizens from being *chorēgoi* 'even if they volunteered for it', in order to preserve their wealth.<sup>65</sup> Demetrius of Phalerum himself, in a famous fragment, targeted the cost of the tripods that victorious *chorēgoi* in the dithyramb were obliged to erect, once again from their own coffers, while only shame and scorn remained for those defeated.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>61</sup> On the *nomothesia* of Demetrius, see Ackermann (2018) 152–55. Kellogg (2013) 82–84, 185–86 attempts to reconcile the Acharnian decrees with the date of 313/12 that she retains for the first Aixonean decree (A) by arguing that the removal of the liturgical *chorēgia* in Acharnai lasted only one year and that the deme restored it as early as 313; this hypothesis is hard to accept.

<sup>62</sup> Three *chorēgoi* were required for the tragic contests, five for comic and 20 for dithyramb (ten per tribe, with two age categories of boys and men).

<sup>63</sup> Wilson (2008) 113–14.

<sup>64</sup> [Xen.] *Ath. pol.* 1.13; Xen. *Oec.* 2.6–7; Antiphanes *fr.* 202.5–6 Kassel-Austin (= *Ath. Deipnosophistae* 3.103e); Isoc. *Aeropag.* 54; Theophr. *Char.* 26.6.

<sup>65</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1309a17–19: Δεῖ δ' ἐν μὲν ταῖς

δημοκρατίας τῶν εὐπόρων φείδεσθαι, μὴ μόνον τῶι τὰς κτήσεις μὴ ποιεῖν ἐναδάστους, ἀλλὰ μηδὲ τοὺς καρπούς, ὃ ἐν ἐνίαις τῶν πολιτειῶν λανθάνει γιγνόμενον· βέλτιον δὲ καὶ βουλομένους κωλύειν λειτουργεῖν τὰς δαπανηρὰς μὲν μὴ χρησίμους δὲ λειτουργίας, οἷον χορηγίας καὶ λαμπαδαρχίας καὶ ὄσαι ἄλλαι τοιαῦται: 'In democracies it is necessary to be sparing of the wealthy not only by not causing properties to be divided up, but not incomes either – which under some constitutions takes place unnoticed – and it is better to prevent men from undertaking costly but useless public services like equipping choruses and torch-races and all other services, even if they wish to' (tr. Rackham (1932)).

<sup>66</sup> See above.

Because Demetrius was a pupil of Theophrastus and a member of the Aristotelian school, such criticisms seem perfectly in line with the thoughts of his master concerning the *chorēgia*. We stress here another passage (often overlooked by previous scholars)<sup>67</sup> in which Aristotle mentions a civic office (together with the *gunaikonomia* and *nomophulakia*, both magistracies created by Demetrius during his period of rule in Athens<sup>68</sup>) very similar to the *agōnothesia*, which he called the ‘*epimeleia* of the gymnastic and Dionysiac contests’:<sup>69</sup>

Ἴδια δὲ ταῖς σχολαστικωτέραις, καὶ μᾶλλον εὐημερούσαις πόλεσιν, ἔτι δὲ φρονιζούσαις εὐκοσμίας, γυναικονομία νομοφυλακία παιδονομία γυμνασιαρχία, πρὸς δὲ τούτοις περὶ ἀγῶνας ἐπιμέλεια γυμνικῶν καὶ Διονυσιακῶν, κἂν εἴ τινας ἐτέρας συμβαίνει τοιαύτας γίνεσθαι θεωρίας.

On the other hand, peculiar to the states that have more leisure and prosperity, and also pay attention to public decorum, are the offices of superintendent of women, guardian of the laws, superintendent of children, controller of physical training, and in addition to these the superintendence of athletic and Dionysiac contests and of any similar displays that happen to be held.

As Csapo and Wilson note, it seems at first sight that Demetrius has ‘extracted a page from Aristotle’s book about civic administration’.<sup>70</sup> Other studies also suggest possible motivations for Demetrius’ reform of the *chorēgia*, including economic,<sup>71</sup> financial,<sup>72</sup> political,<sup>73</sup> social<sup>74</sup> or philosophical.<sup>75</sup> These explanations, however, neither uniformly convincing nor mutually exclusive,<sup>76</sup> mostly do not question the attribution of the reform to Demetrius of Phalerum.

<sup>67</sup> Surprisingly, very few scholars have associated this Aristotelian passage with the Athenian *agōnothesia*. Csapo and Wilson (2010) 89–90 notably refer to it, but they comment on it very briefly and only in the framework of their hypothesis of an oligarchic *epimelētēs* (on which, see above). They do not connect this passage with the institution of the *agōnothesia*.

<sup>68</sup> See O’Sullivan (2009) 66–71 (*gunaikonomia*), 72–85 (*nomophulakia*); Faraguna (2016) 48–53 (*nomophulakia*), 53–57 (*gunaikonomia*).

<sup>69</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1322b38–23a3; tr. Rackham (1932).

<sup>70</sup> Csapo and Wilson (2010) 89.

<sup>71</sup> For example Latini (2003), who thinks that Demetrius wanted to preserve private capital and encourage the economy based on agrarian estates, as Phocion did (Plut. *Phoc.* 29.4–5). But this interpretation of the passage by Plutarch is not correct: see Gehrke (1976) 104.

<sup>72</sup> Since Köhler (1878) 235, the general idea has been that, because of the difficulties and crises of the mid-fourth century, the families of the Athenian elite were no longer able to sustain all the liturgical needs of the city and that the number of available liturgists was dramatically reduced; this opinion is held, among others, by Gehrke (1978) 172–73, Christ (1990) and Canevaro (2016) 53–54. But this idea seems contradicted by the extravagance of the last choregic monuments of Nicias and Thrasyllus dated to 319 BC, which might have been very costly. Moreover, Casson (1976) has proved that, at the end of the fourth century, Athens still had a rich elite who could pay for choruses and the staging of plays without difficulty. O’Sullivan (2009) 169–70 also rightly stresses the fact that the men who assumed the *agōnothesiai* during the third century came from precisely the same families that produced liturgical *chorēgoi* before

the reform, and that they were still perfectly able to spend significant sums (expressed in talents!) from their own coffers when acting as generous *agōnothetai*.

<sup>73</sup> According to Gehrke (1978) 173, Steinhauer (1992) and Gallo (1996) the abolition of the liturgical *chorēgia* would have been a way to deprive the most prominent citizens of an opportunity for public self-promotion, so that they could not challenge or threaten Demetrius’ authority. Such considerations seem to give too much weight and importance to *chorēgiai* in political life, and, above all, they do not address the crucial issue: if this was really the main motivation of Demetrius, why did the restored democracy of 307 BC not reinstate the previous system of individual liturgies?

<sup>74</sup> For example Wilson (2000) 271: ‘A desire not to exacerbate tensions between a conspicuously extravagant elite and the poor is also to be detected too.’ See also Banfi (2010) 174–80. If this was the main motive behind the abolition of the *chorēgia* and the creation of the *agōnothesia*, the efficiency of these reforms would not have endured beyond Demetrius’ dismissal, since as early as 307/6 the *agōnothetēs* erected an ‘extravagant’ monument to commemorate his tenure (*IG* II<sup>3</sup> 4.518; on this innovative monument, see Goette (2007) 141–43; Agelidis (2009) 277). And here again, this view does not explain why the democrats of 307 BC kept this institution and did not just revive the previous system.

<sup>75</sup> For example Mikalson (1998) 60–62, Thrans (2001) 88. But Gehrke (1978) and, more recently, Faraguna (2016) present a more nuanced position stating that Demetrius’ reforms were not strict applications of Peripatetic or Platonic precepts.

<sup>76</sup> See Ackermann (2018) 138–39. For a full discussion, see Sarrazanas (forthcoming) chapter 2.



For these reasons, most scholars have supported an idea still considered the *communis opinio* on this topic:<sup>77</sup> at the end of the fourth century, wealthy citizens did not want or could not support the cost of the *chorēgiai*. After Demetrius' reform, the costly burden of the expenditure for the Dionysiac contests no longer depended upon private fortunes but on public funds (according to the expression 'the *dēmos* was *chorēgos*' that appears on agonothetic monuments). Demetrius would have abolished the liturgical *chorēgia* and replaced it with the *agōnothesia* in order to preserve the private fortune of the wealthiest citizens, with these reforms first and foremost motivated by his 'oligarchic' ideology.<sup>78</sup>

(b) *A broader view: agōnothesia beyond Athens*

This traditional view of the abolition of the *chorēgia* and creation of the *agōnothesia* as reforms already thought through and suddenly introduced by Demetrius of Phalerum comes from the greater abundance and development, as is often the case, of sources for Athens than for other cities, and also from the fact that Athenian contests (especially theatrical) were the most prominent in the Greek world.

As far as we know, no one has attempted to identify other attestations of a civic *agōnothesia* outside Attica that may possibly have inspired, if not functioned as a model for, the Athenian *agōnothesia*.<sup>79</sup> This Athenocentrism of previous researchers has given the impression that the *agōnothesia* as a proper civic office was first created in Athens,<sup>80</sup> with other cities in the Greek world then merely following Athens' example. This idea must be rejected, as several epigraphical documents clearly show that a civic *agōnothesia* already existed in other Greek cities from at least the mid-fourth century BC.

The two earliest secure examples of the existence of a civic *agōnothetēs* both come from the Bosphorus region.<sup>81</sup> The first, found at the ancient site of Nymphaion, is a dedication to Dionysus made by Theopropides, during his term as *agōnothetēs*:<sup>82</sup>

Θεοπροπίδης Μεγακλέος τὴν εἴσοδον ἀνέθηκεν Διονύσῳ  
ἀγωνοθετέων, Λεόκωνος ἄρχοντος Βοσπόρου καὶ Θεοδοσίης  
καὶ τῆς Σινδικῆς πάσης καὶ Τορετέων καὶ Δανδαρίων καὶ Ψησῶν.

Theopropides, son of Megakles, dedicated this entrance to Dionysus while he was *agōnothetēs*, Leukon being archōn of Bosphorus and of Theodosia and of all Sindike, of the Toretai, the Dandarians and the Psessoï.

<sup>77</sup> With the exception of the previously discussed positions of Csapo and Wilson, and O'Sullivan.

<sup>78</sup> Ferguson (1911) 57–58; Pickard-Cambridge (1968) 92; Wilson (2000) 271; Summa (2003) 524–25; Habicht (2006) 75; Makres (2014) 88–89 (especially 89: 'both changes, with their relief of burdens for the wealthy class, are developments of an oligarchic character').

<sup>79</sup> None of the most important contributions (Latini (2003); Summa (2003); O'Sullivan (2009); Csapo and Wilson (2010)) shows any interest in this question. Wilson (2000) 272 briefly notes that 'the title of *agōnothetēs* was quite common as early as the fifth century for managers of various musical *agōnes*, so the term may have had a certain old-fashioned air', but offers no thorough scrutiny of the evidence and does not comment on the potential institutional precedents for the Athenian *agōnothesia*.

<sup>80</sup> See, for instance, Papakonstantinou (2016) 96.

<sup>81</sup> The mention of an [ἀγ]νοθέτη (in the dative case) is restored in a fragmentary ostrakon from Olbia Pontica (*SEG* 51.970, line 1) by Bravo (2001) followed by Ceccarelli (2013) 339, but this solution is not certain, since L. Dubois in his commentary to *IGDOP* 24 suggests two other possibilities, and even favours the restoration [ὑμ]νοθέτη. The dating of this difficult text is subject to debate, from ca. 550 to 400 BC. Even if the restoration of an *agōnothetēs* in this ostrakon is correct, the document gives no hint whatsoever about its potential institutional characteristics. Another inscription from the region of Taranto that mentions an *agōnothetēs* of Apollonian contests is dated to the fourth century BC and may even date prior to the Bosphoran texts (Buononato (1960) 428 = *SEG* 30.1218).

<sup>82</sup> Sokolova and Pavlichenko (2002) 101 (= *SEG* 52.741).

The type of monument on which the inscription was carved was a gate, probably a propylon (of a theatre?).<sup>83</sup> The dedication addressed to Dionysus shows that Theopropides was *agōnothetēs* of a Dionysiac contest, most probably theatrical or musical. This inscription has been securely assigned to the reign of Leukon I (389–349 BC), more precisely to the period *ca.* 360–349,<sup>84</sup> making it the first securely dated attestation of a civic *agōnothesia* in the Greek world.

A second, slightly later inscription from the city of Hermonassa mentions another *agōnothetēs*:<sup>85</sup>

Μήστωρ Ἴπποσθένης ὑπὲρ τοῦ πατρὸς  
ἀνέθηκε Ἀπόλλωνι ἀγωνοθετήσας,  
ἄρχοντος Παιρισάδεος Βοσπόρου  
καὶ Θεοδοσίης καὶ βασιλεύοντος Σίνδων  
καὶ Μαϊτῶν πάντων.

Mestor, son of Hipposthenes, in the name of his father, dedicated [this monument] to Apollo after having been *agōnothetēs*, Pairisades being *archōn* of Bosphorus and Theodosia and king of the Sindoi and of all the Maites.

The inscription, carved on a marble base, is dated by the mention of king Pairisades I, who reigned from 349 to 310 BC. Mestor, otherwise unknown, dedicated the monument to the god Apollo after his tenure as an *agōnothetēs*, most probably of an Apollonian contest.

The first inscription certainly (and the second probably) precedes Demetrius of Phalerum's period of rule in Athens. The nature of these two texts does not give precise hints about the institutional characteristics of these Bosphoran *agōnothesiai*, but they were very probably civic offices. The use of the aorist participle ἀγωνοθετήσας (line 2) indicates that the term of Mestor as *agōnothetēs* had ended by the time he dedicated a monument to Apollo.<sup>86</sup> This fact shows that, in Hermonassa, the tenure of this office was limited in time and that another man had probably become *agōnothetēs* after him. Even if we do not know either how *agōnothetai* were chosen in fourth-century Hermonassa (election, lot, etc.) or the length of tenure, this feature corresponds quite well to the model of a civic office (as would be the case for the Athenian *agōnothesia* after 316, where it was an annual office).

The close relations between Athens and the Bosphoran kingdom throughout the fourth century and until the beginning of the third century are well known.<sup>87</sup> Of course, it would be very risky to interpret these Bosphoran precedents as a direct model for, or even possible influence on, the later Athenian *agōnothesia*, but we can reasonably assume that Demetrius of Phalerum at least knew of their existence and their characteristics when he created a civic office bearing the same name in his own city in 316 BC. These two texts demonstrate, in any case, that the *agōnothesia* was not an Athenian innovation.

If we look for additional early examples of *agōnothesiai* in Greek cities, we find other testimonies from the Aegean very close to 316 BC. We provide here a short selection of the earliest known attestations.

The inscription *IErythrai* 21, a decree of the Ionian city of Erythrai, honours a certain Phanes for various deeds. Lines 10–16 detail the rewards he is to receive:

<sup>83</sup> The problems of identification for this monument are discussed in Sokolova and Pavlichenko (2002) (in Russian) and Tokhtas'ev (2006) 22–23.

<sup>84</sup> Muller (2010) 360–61.

<sup>85</sup> *CIRB* 1039.

<sup>86</sup> On the use of the aorist with this meaning, see Robert (1938) 64.

<sup>87</sup> On this topic, see the excellent synthesis by Muller (2010) 233–47; on the bonds between Athens and the Spartocid kingdom and their influence on cultural practices, see Csapo and Wilson (2015) 370–79.

- 10 δεδόχθαι τῆι [βο]υλῆι, στε[φ]-  
 [α]νῶσαι Φανῆν Μνησιθέου χρυσοῖ  
 [σ]τεφάνωι στατήρων Φιλιππίων  
 [π]εντήκοντα, καὶ ἀναγγεῖλαι τοῖ-  
 14 [ς] Διονυσίοις· ὅπως δὲ ἀναγγεληθή-  
 σεται, ἐπιμεληθῆναι Ζηνόδοτον  
 τὸν ἀγωνοθέτην· [...]

... The council shall resolve: to crown Phanes, son of Mnesitheos with a gold crown of 50 Philippian staters, and that a proclamation shall be made at the Dionysia; that Zenodotos the *agōnothetēs* shall take care that the proclamation will be made ...

Lines 15–16 mention a civic *agōnothetēs* named Zenodotos, responsible for (at least) the local Dionysia of the Ionian city of Erythrai. This text, long dated to the period 334–332 BC mainly because it mentions ‘Philippian staters’,<sup>88</sup> has been redated to *ca.* 319 BC by specialists in numismatics,<sup>89</sup> a date slightly prior to the creation of the *agōnothesia* by Demetrius in Athens (or at least roughly contemporaneous).

In the city of Rhodes an agonistic inscription recording two choregic victories at an unknown festival twice mentions an *agōnothetēs* as eponymous official<sup>90</sup> (with a priest):

ἐπ’ ἱερέως Νικομν[άστου]  
 καὶ ἀγωνοθέτα Ἀν[αξιπ]όλι[ος] τοῦ Τιμ[αράτου]  
 Ἀριδείκης Τιμαράτ[ου ἐ]χοράγησ[ε],  
 Λινδία παίδω[ν ἐ]νίκη·  
 Ἀριδείκης Τιμαράτου ἐχοράγει[τι].  
 Δεξιλαος Θ[άλλ]ιος αὔλει.  
*vacat*  
 Ἀριστωνίδας Μν[ασιτί]μου Ῥόδ[ιος ἐποίησε].

ἐπ’ ἱερέως Δαμα[—————]  
 καὶ ἀγωνοθέτα [—————]  
 Λινδία π[αίδων ἐ]νίκη·  
 Φιλήρατ[ος ———] ἐχοράγει[τι].  
 Δεξιλα[ος Θάλλιος αὔλει].

In the priesthood of Nikomnastos and the *agōnothesia* of Anaxipolis son of Timaratos, Arideikes son of Timaratos was *chorēgos*.

(The tribe) Lindia was victorious in the boys’ competition, Arideikes son of Timaratos was *chorēgos*, Dexilaos son of Thallis was pipe-player.

Aristonidas son of Mnasitimos of Rhodes made (the monument).

In the priesthood of Dama... and the *agōnothesia* of ...

(The tribe) Lindia was victorious in the boys’ competition, Phileratos ... was *chorēgos*, Dexilaos son of Thallis was pipe-player.

<sup>88</sup> See the commentary of H. Engelmann in *IErythrai* 21.

<sup>89</sup> Varinglioglu et al. (1990) 77–78, who show that the adjective ‘Philippian’ refers here not to Philip II but to Philip III Arrhidaeus, who was king between 323 and

317 BC. This contribution is apparently overlooked by Csapo and Wilson (2015) 370, who still attribute this text to the 330s.

<sup>90</sup> *Lindos* II.696.

This inscription was dated to *ca.* 330 by Christian Blinkenberg and Giovanni Pugliese Caratelli on prosopographical grounds, but a recent study by Nathan Badoud has downdated the construction of this monument to *ca.* 310.<sup>91</sup> Even if slightly later, this date is close to 316.

From Chios, a decree honouring Nikomedes of Kos,<sup>92</sup> an officer in the service of Antigonus Monophthalmus, should be dated between *ca.* 318 and *ca.* 301. Here again, an *agōnothetēs* is mentioned simply as the official responsible for the proclamation of the honours bestowed upon Nikomedes during a local civic festival (most probably the Dionysia, although the name is restored).

In several cities of Arcadia, dedications made by *agōnothetai* or former *agōnothetai* have been dated to the fourth century BC on the basis of the letter-forms of the inscriptions. This dating is insecure and/or controversial, and the inscriptions may well date rather to the early third century.<sup>93</sup> In one case, archaeological data help establish a more precise date. In Megalopolis a certain Antiochos, during his tenure of an *agōnothesia*, dedicated the *proedria* seats and other equipment in the theatre of the city. Dates of *ca.* 360 or *ca.* 330 have been suggested for this inscription,<sup>94</sup> based on palaeographical and prosopographical arguments, but a more recent archaeological study demonstrates that the construction of the stone theatre of Megalopolis should be dated to the end of the fourth century BC.<sup>95</sup>

Leaving aside the earliest examples from the Bosphorus region, we may draw several conclusions concerning these texts from various cities of Aegean Greece. First, every inscription dates close to 316 BC. Even when slightly later, we must remember that the aforementioned inscriptions give us only the first attestation of the *agōnothesia* in these cities, not the date of its creation. If we consider the broader picture, the *agōnothesia* appears as an institutional innovation that appeared in various Greek cities in the Aegean area roughly at the same time from *ca.* 330 to *ca.* 310 BC. Thus the argument that the *agōnothesia* was originally created by Athens and then imitated by other Greek cities should be rejected.

Second, even if the texts from other cities do not give much information about the duties of the *agōnothetēs*, several differences from Athens are apparent. In the cases of Erythrai and Chios, the *agōnothetēs* was responsible for the proclamation of the civic crowns and rewards during the festival of the Dionysia. This alone is very significant for our point: in the hundreds of Attic decrees produced during the entire Hellenistic period the Athenian *agōnothetēs* is never responsible for the proclamation of civic honours during the contests of which he was in charge.<sup>96</sup> In Athens this duty was usually conferred on other civic magistrates such as the *stratēgoi*, the treasurer of the stratiotic fund<sup>97</sup> or magistrates in charge of financial administration (ἐπι τῆι διοικήσει).<sup>98</sup> On the other hand, only in Athens is the ‘*chorēgia* of the *dēmos*’ ever attested with reference to the *agōnothesia*. Indeed, the choregic monument from Rhodes dated to *ca.* 330 or *ca.* 310 proves that there the *agōnothesia* coexisted with the individual *chorēgia*. This situation differs significantly from Athens, where the individual, liturgical *chorēgia* had been abolished. In this specific case, Athenian practices of the time clearly were not a model for the Rhodian *agōnothesia*, or *vice versa*.

Finally, the variety in these examples shows that the *agōnothesia* was not in essence an oligarchic institution. Because the political context in each city had its own particularities, it is highly unlikely that Erythrai, Chios or Rhodes had a political regime similar to the rule of Demetrius of Phalerum at roughly the same period. The adoption by many cities of the *agōnothesia* around the same time

<sup>91</sup> See Blinkenberg in *Lindos* II.696 and Pugliese Caratelli in *SER* 7; cf. Badoud (2015) 189.

<sup>92</sup> *SEG* 18.333, line 8. For discussion of the date of this text, see Errington (2006) 138–39.

<sup>93</sup> For example, *SEG* 11.1070 (Tegea, *ca.* 330?; see Bressan (2009) 245) and *SEG* 11.1104 (Orchomenos, fourth or third century?; see Arias (1934) 83; Moretti (2014) 109).

<sup>94</sup> See F. Hiller von Gaertringen’s commentary in *IG* V.2.450a; Fiechter (1931) 20–23.

<sup>95</sup> See the detailed commentary of Lauter and Lauter-Bufe (2004) especially 147–50.

<sup>96</sup> The term ἀγωνοθέτην was fully restored in *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 677, line 16 (with a question mark), but removed (and rightfully so) in the re-edition of this decree in *IG* II<sup>3</sup> 1.1034, line 16 (see commentary).

<sup>97</sup> As, for instance, in *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1006, lines 42–44.

<sup>98</sup> See, for example, among many others, *IG* II<sup>3</sup> 1.870, lines 36–40.



across the Greek world most probably indicates that the creation of this civic institution did not stem from one specific political ideology. As we will see below, the notable blooming of *agōnothesia* at the end of the fourth century most probably arose in response to pragmatic problems concerning the organization of dramatic and choral contests in the Greek world in general.

However, the often-repeated idea that the Athenian *agōnothesia* as an institution carried in itself an ideological programme specifically labelled as ‘oligarchic’ has led several scholars to some odd judgements. According to them, the fact that the abolition of the liturgical *chorēgia* and the institution of the *agōnothesia* were maintained after 307 BC was a ‘fundamental flaw’ or a ‘failure’ of the revived democratic regime.<sup>99</sup> Considering the longevity of these reforms in Athens throughout the entire Hellenistic period and the sustained success of the festivals organized by the city, this idea seems quite difficult to maintain.<sup>100</sup>

*(c) Criticism of the liturgical chorēgia in fourth-century Athens: a position shared by oligarchs and democrats*

With these arguments established, let us return to Athens. At this point, a clear distinction must be made. The target of criticism by Athenian oligarchs of the Classical period was less the *chorēgia* itself than the institution of the liturgies in general. The main point of their complaint was the obligation of the wealthiest citizens to provide services to all, financed by private funds, without any advantage or benefit in return. In Theophrastus’ *Characters*, the oligarchic man complains about ‘liturgies and trierarchies’ with no specific reference to the *chorēgia*.<sup>101</sup> In fact, when the *chorēgia* is singled out in criticism by authors conventionally considered to be of an oligarchic stamp (as in the famous fragment of Demetrius regarding the cost of tripods), it is usually because it was considered as one of – if not the – most costly and burdensome liturgies (along with trierarchies).

A crucial point has escaped the notice of many scholars: the *chorēgia* was also criticized by Athenian pro-democratic leaders, especially during the fourth century BC.<sup>102</sup> We must differentiate this criticism of the *chorēgia* from that expressed by oligarchic leaders: it is not based on the financial burden placed on individuals and does not concern the liturgical system as a whole. The usual reproach from democrats is that the *chorēgia* was, in fact, *useless* to the city and the *dēmos*, especially compared to other liturgies that financed military expenses.

Already in 355 BC, in his speech *Against Leptines*, Demosthenes established the essential differences between the two types of liturgies:<sup>103</sup>

... παρὰ μὲν γὰρ τὰς ἐπὶ τῶν χορηγιῶν δαπάνας ἡμέρας μέρος μικρὸν ἢ χάρις τοῖς θεωμένοις ἡμῶν, παρὰ δὲ τὰς τῶν εἰς τὸν πόλεμον [παρασκευῶν] ἀφθονίας πάντα τὸν χρόνον ἢ σωτηρία πάσῃ τῇ πόλει.

... for although the pleasure that those of us who attend the spectacles enjoy from the money spent on *chorēgiai* lasts for a small part of a day, the security that the entire city gains from an abundant supply of military equipment lasts for all time.

<sup>99</sup> See, for example, Latini (2003) 324; Bayliss (2011) 105.

<sup>100</sup> It is also worth recalling that Demetrius of Phalerum himself claimed in his memoirs that he ‘not only not destroyed the democracy, but even set it right’ (οὐ μόνον οὐ κατέλυσε τὴν δημοκρατίαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπὶνῶρθωσε, Strabo 9.1.20 = Fortenbaugh and Schütrumpf (2000) no. 19; tr. Lambert <https://www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/AIUK2/1>, n.1; accessed April 2020). On the meaning of this, see Lambert (2018) 6–8. See also Erskine (2018) 241: ‘in practice the concepts [i.e. ‘democracy’ and ‘oligarchy’] may have been rather hazier than some modern observers like to think. Nor should we

assume that so-called oligarchs actually considered themselves to be oligarchs, even if that is how their political enemies thought of them. They might represent themselves as aristocrats or even as defenders of democracy, the latter evidence of varying conceptions of democracy.’

<sup>101</sup> Theophr. *Char.* 26.6: Πότε παυσόμεθα ὑπὸ τῶν λειτουργιῶν καὶ τῶν τριηραρχιῶν ἀπολλύμενοι; ‘When will we cease to be ruined by the liturgies and the trierarchies?’.

<sup>102</sup> This fact is briefly noted by Mikalson (1998) 56 and commented on by Faraguna (2011) 82–85; Canevaro (2016) 53–54.

<sup>103</sup> Dem. *Lept.* 26.

This passage is clearly built on an antithesis between *chorēgiai* and military liturgies (the author most likely has trierarchies in mind, although not exclusively). Gratification (χάρις) is opposed to safety (σωτηρία), the brief moment of a day (ἡμέρας μέρος μικρὸν) to all time (πάντα τὸν χρόνον), and a limited audience (τοῖς θεωμένοις ἡμῶν) to the whole city (πάσῃ τῇ πόλει).<sup>104</sup> Here Demosthenes does not formally request the abolition of the liturgical *chorēgia*, but his point is nevertheless very clear: the money spent on the various *chorēgiai* would be much better used to finance war supplies. The *chorēgia* brings only gratification (*charis*), which confirms its purpose as mere entertainment, whereas assuring the security of the city should be the priority. Demosthenes adds another element: the *chorēgia* brings merely useless pleasure with benefits only to a few (namely to those physically present in the Theatre of Dionysus during the contests) and not to all citizens of Athens. This criticism of Demosthenes clearly does not apply to the liturgical system itself, but to the *chorēgia* specifically.

Around 25 years after this speech, the politician and democratic leader Lycurgus made the same distinction between the two types of liturgies in his speech *Against Leocrates*; again, the *chorēgia* is portrayed as useless. The Athenian citizen Leocrates, on trial for having fled the city before the Battle of Chaeronea, could be expected to recall his past lavish *chorēgiai* so as to prove his devotion and fidelity to the city of Athens. Lycurgus dismisses in advance the value of such an argument:<sup>105</sup>

Οὐ γὰρ εἴ τις ἵπποτρόφηκεν ἢ κεχορήγηκε λαμπρῶς ἢ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν τοιούτων τι δεδαπάνηκεν, ἄξιός ἐστιν παρ' ὑμῶν τοιαύτης χάριτος (ἐπὶ τούτοις γὰρ αὐτὸς μόνος στεφανοῦται, τοὺς ἄλλους οὐδὲν ὠφελῶν), ἀλλ' εἴ τις τετριηράρχηκε λαμπρῶς ἢ τείχη τῇ πατρίδι περιέβαλεν ἢ πρὸς τὴν κοινὴν σωτηρίαν ἐκ [140] τῶν ἰδίων συνευπόρησε· ταῦτα γὰρ ἐστὶ κοινῶς ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἀπάντων, καὶ ἐν μὲν τούτοις ἐστὶν ἰδεῖν τὴν ἀρετὴν τῶν ἐπιδεδωκότων, ἐν ἐκείνοις δὲ τὴν εὐπορίαν μόνον τῶν δεδαπανηκότων.

Horsebreeding, a handsome payment for a chorus, and other expensive gestures do not entitle a man to any such recognition from you, since for these acts he alone is crowned, conferring no benefit on others. To earn your gratitude he must, instead, have been distinguished as a trierarch, or built walls to protect his city, or subscribed generously from his own property for the public safety. These are services to the state: they affect the welfare of you all and prove the loyalty of the donors, while the others are evidence of nothing but the wealth of those who have spent the money.

Here again, the opposition between festive but useless liturgies and military liturgies useful to all is very clear. Lycurgus' criticism is even more radical than Demosthenes': the individual *chorēgia* is an aberration in the democratic *politeia* for two main reasons. First, it is 'of no use' (οὐδὲν ὠφελῶν) to the *dēmos*: a very straightforward and plain judgement, very close indeed to Aristotle's words<sup>106</sup> but much stronger from the mouth of a democratic leader.<sup>107</sup> Second, the glory given by a victory as *chorēgos* (symbolized here by the wreath) benefits only one wealthy citizen. To distinguish an individual merely because he is rich is against democratic principles. This point in Lycurgus' criticism of liturgical *chorēgia* was probably most significant, as he was champion of the unity and cohesion of the Athenian people, especially in this very speech.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>104</sup> The same points are made by Canevaro (2016) 236.

<sup>105</sup> Lycurg. *Leoc.* 139–40.; tr. Burt (1954).

<sup>106</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1309a19: τὰς δαπανηρὰς μὲν μὴ χρησίμους δὲ λειτουργίας, οἷον χορηγίας καὶ λαμπαδαρχίας καὶ ὅσαι ἄλλαι τοιαῦται. Aristotle's focus here is on the general liturgical system, and he does not expand on the uselessness of the liturgical *chorēgia*.

<sup>107</sup> We share the opinion of Wilson (2000) 269 and Faraguna (2011) 83–84, who consider that Lycurgus' criticism is sincere, *contra* Ober (1989) 231 n.57, who writes that 'Lycurgus is deliberately extreme in his rejection of all non-military liturgies', but does not provide support for this assertion.

<sup>108</sup> See Faraguna (2011) 82–85.

These two passages show that, at least from the mid-fourth century BC, even Athenian leaders undisputedly considered as pro-democratic were not strong supporters of the *chorēgia* and even disliked it.<sup>109</sup> This generally overlooked point is one factor that explains why the leaders of the restored democratic regime of 307 BC did not revive the liturgical *chorēgia* abolished by Demetrius of Phalerum a decade before, although they could quite easily have done so, if they wished. Moreover, the aforementioned Rhodian inscription proves that already at the very beginning of the Hellenistic period, the existence of an *agōnothetēs* was not necessarily inconsistent with the presence of individual *chorēgoi* in the same contest.<sup>110</sup> If necessary, the democratic leaders of 307 could even have revived the liturgical *chorēgia* while keeping the *agōnothesia*.<sup>111</sup>

Apparently, even after the dismissal of Demetrius' regime, no one wanted the liturgical *chorēgia* back, and Athenian democrats were probably satisfied with the '*chorēgia* of the *dēmos*' and the institution of the *agōnothesia*. In fact, these changes, even though introduced by Demetrius of Phalerum, might have appeared rather consensual at the end of the fourth century BC.<sup>112</sup>

*(d) A forgotten Lycurgan precedent: the epimeleia of the Great Amphiaraia in 329/8*

A document generally forgotten or overlooked in the discussion about changes in the organization of the Athenian contests proves this assertion, namely the decree concerning the first celebration of the Great Amphiaraia at Oropos in 329/8 BC. The institutional regulations for the organization of this festival, which were introduced during the period of influence of the prominent democratic leader Lycurgus, prefigure in many ways features of the future Athenian *agōnothesia*.

The Great Amphiaraia was a festival in honour of the hero Amphiaraos, whose foundation in ca. 335 celebrated the annexation of Oropia by Athens after the destruction of Thebes by Alexander the Great.<sup>113</sup> The initiative for the creation of this penteteric festival apparently came from Phanodemus of Thymaitadai, with the obvious support of his friend Lycurgus, who was then the most prominent leader in Athens.<sup>114</sup> Its programme, consisting of gymnastic and hippic contests, together with musical competitions,<sup>115</sup> might have been inspired by the Great Panathenaia. This wholly new festival allowed its creators to introduce very innovative characteristics into its institutional organization, strikingly similar to those of the later *agōnothesia*.

The decree of 329/8 praises the organizers of the very first celebration of this festival. The text clearly indicates that the contests and the *pompē* of the Great Amphiaraia were organized and overseen by a board of ten men 'elected by the *dēmos*' especially for these tasks. The text reads as follows:<sup>116</sup>

θεοί.  
ἐπὶ Κηφισοφῶντος ἄρχοντος, ἐπὶ τ-  
ῆς Ἰπποθωντίδος τρίτης πρυτανε-  
4 ἱας, ἧ Σωστρατίδης Ἐχφάντου Εὐπ-  
υρίδης ἐγραμμάτευεν· Πυανοψιδῶνος

<sup>109</sup> See also Wilson (2000) 184–87; Scullion (2012) 231–38.

<sup>110</sup> Rhodes is not an isolated case. During the third and second centuries, an *agōnothetēs* could coexist with individual *chorēgoi*, as in the Dionysia of Amorgos (*IG* XII.7.387), Iasos (*Iasos* 199) or Samos (*IG* XII.6.1 176), as well as the Apollonia on Delos (*IG* XI.2.114 with Vial (1984) 41–43).

<sup>111</sup> This would be the case in Imperial Athens, when individual *chorēgoi* reappear in the inscriptions, but an *agōnothetēs* of the Dionysia is still at the head of the contests. See, for example, *IG* II<sup>3</sup> 4.559, lines 3, 6–7; and the general remarks of Wilson (2000) 276–78.

<sup>112</sup> Considering the longevity of these reforms, it is hard to see in the abolition of the liturgical *chorēgia* and the creation of the *agōnothesia* 'fundamental flaws' or 'failures' of the revived democratic regime, as is still often stated: see, for example, Latini (2003) 324; Bayliss (2011) 105.

<sup>113</sup> Knoepfler (2001) 369–89.

<sup>114</sup> Habicht (2006) 44.

<sup>115</sup> The musical contests of the Amphiaraia are attested in a catalogue of victors (*Epigr. Oropou* 50; with the commentary of Knoepfler (1993) 296–300).

<sup>116</sup> *IG* II<sup>3</sup> 1.355; tr. Lambert (<https://www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/IGII31/355>; accessed April 2020), with slight modifications (lines 19–20).

- ἔκτει ἐπὶ δέκα, τρίτει καὶ τριακο-  
 στεῖ τῆς πρυτανείας, ἐκκλησία· τῶ-  
 8 μ προέδρων ἐπεψήφισεν Δημοχάρ-  
 ης Φλυεύς· ἔδοξεν τῶι δήμωι· Δημοσ-  
 θένης Δημοκλέους Λαμπρεὺς εἶπ-  
 εν· ἐπειδὴ οἱ χειροτονηθέντες ὑπ-  
 12 ὁ τοῦ δήμου ἐπὶ τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν το-  
 ῦ ἀγῶνος καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν περὶ τῆ-  
 ν ἑορτὴν τοῦ Ἀμφιαράου καλῶς καὶ  
 φιλοτίμως ἐπεμελήθησαν τῆς τε π-  
 16 ομπῆς τῶι Ἀμφιαράωι καὶ τοῦ ἀγῶν-  
 ος τοῦ γυμνικοῦ καὶ ἵππικοῦ καὶ τ-  
 ῆς ἀποβάσεως καὶ τῶν ἄλλων πάντω-  
 ν τῶν περὶ τὴν πανήγυριν, ὧν αὐτοῖ-  
 20 ς προσέταξεν ὁ δῆμος, δεδόχθαι τῶ-  
 ι δήμωι· ἐπαινέσαι τοὺς αἰρεθέντ-  
 ας Φανόδημον Διύλλου Θυμαϊτάδη-  
 ν [:] Λυκοῦργον Λυκόφρονος Βουτάδη-  
 24 ν : Δημάδην Δημέου Παιανία : Σώφιλ-  
 ον Ἀριστοτέλους Φυλάσιον : Θρασυ-  
 λέοντα Θεοφῶντος Ἀχαρνέα : Ἐπιτέ-  
 λην Σωινόμου Περγασῆθεν : Νικήρα-  
 28 τον Νικίου Κυδαντίδην : Ἐπιχάρην  
 Ἀγωνοχάρους Παιανία : Θυμοχάρη-  
 ν Φαίδρου Σφήττιον : Κηφισοφῶντα  
 Λυσιφῶντος Χολαργέ(α) : δικαιοσύνη-  
 32 ς ἔνεκα καὶ φιλοτιμίας τῆς πρὸς τ-  
 ὄν θεὸν καὶ τὸν δῆμον τῶν Ἀθηναίω-  
 ν καὶ στεφανῶσαι αὐτοὺς χρυσῶι σ-  
 τεφάνωι ἀπὸ : X : δραχμῶν, δοῦναι δὲ α-  
 36 ὑτοῖς καὶ εἰς θυσίαν καὶ ἀνάθημα  
 Η : δραχμᾶς, τὸ δὲ ἀργύριον τ[ὸ] εἰς τῆ-  
 ν θυσίαν προδανεῖσαι τὸν ταμίαν  
 τοῦ δήμου, ἐν δὲ τοῖς πρώτοις νομο-  
 40 θέταις προσνομοθετῆσαι τῶι ταμι-  
 [ί]αι, δοῦναι δὲ καὶ τὰς τριάκοντα δ-  
 [ρ]αχμᾶς τὸν ταμίαν τοῦ δήμου τοῖς  
 [α]ίρεθεῖσιν ἐπὶ τὸν ἀγῶνα, ἃς εἶρη-  
 44 ται διδόναι ἐν τῶι νόμωι τῶι αἰρε-  
 θέντι ἐπὶ τὴν εὐταξίαν· ἀναγράψα-  
 ι δὲ τόδε τὸ ψήφισμα τὸν γραμματέ-  
 α τῆς βουλῆς καὶ στήσαι ἐν τῶι ἱερ-  
 48 ῶι τοῦ Ἀμφιαράου, εἰς δὲ τὴν ἀναγρ-  
 αφὴν τῆς στήλης δοῦναι τὸν ταμία-  
 ν τοῦ δήμου : ΔΔΔ : δραχμᾶς ἐκ τῶν κατ-  
 ἄ ψηφίσματα μεριζομένων τῶι δήμ-  
 52 ωι.

Gods. In the archonship of Kephisophon, in the third prytany, of Hippothontis, for which Sostratides son of Ekphantos of Eupyridai was secretary. On the sixteenth, the thirty-third of the prytany. Assembly. Of the presiding committee Demochares of Phlya was putting to the vote. The People decided. Demosthenes son of Demokles of Lamprai proposed: since those elected by the People for the management of the competition and the other matters relating to the festival of Amphiaraios managed well and with love of honour both the procession for Amphiaraios and the gymnastic and equestrian competition and the horse-



leaping and all the other matters relating to the festal Assembly, tasks that the People had assigned to them, the People shall decide: to praise those who were elected, Phanodemos son of Diyllos of Thymaitadai, Lycurgus son of Lykophon of Boutadai, Demades son of Demeas of Paiania, Sophilos son of Aristoteles of Phyle, Thrasyleon son of Theophon of Acharnai, Epiteles son of Soinomos of Pergase, Nikeratos son of Nikias of Kydantidai, Epichares son of Agonochares of Paiania, Thymochares son of Phaidros of Sphettos, Kephisophon son of Lysiphon of Cholargos, for their justice and love of honour towards the god and the Athenian People, and to crown them with a gold crown of 1,000 drachmas; and to give them also 100 drachmas for a sacrifice and dedication; and the treasurer of the People shall advance the money for the sacrifice; and in the next session of the lawmakers an amendment to the law shall be proposed for the treasurer; and the treasurer of the People shall give to those elected to manage the competition the thirty drachmas which are specified in the law to be given to the man elected to be in charge of good order; and the secretary of the Council shall inscribe this decree and stand it in the sanctuary of Amphiaraos; and for inscribing the stele the treasurer of the People shall give 30 drachmas from the fund allocated to the People for expenditure on decrees.

Several remarks are necessary here. Even if the specific words *agōnothesia* or *agōnothetēs* do not appear in the text, the expression used in lines 12–13 to describe the task of the ten men, ‘the management (*epimeleia*) of the competition’ (τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν τοῦ ἀγῶνος) is strikingly close to the words of Aristotle when he recommends to create in richer cities an official position of general manager (*epimeleia*) of the competitions (περὶ ἀγῶνας ἐπιμέλεια,<sup>117</sup> an expression in the philosopher’s text that applies to both athletic and theatrical contests).<sup>118</sup> Here again we see the convergence between the practice of democratic leaders and the theories of a thinker usually considered as a moderate oligarch, a conjunction indicating that the matter probably had little to do with politics or that it was rather consensual.

The most striking fact in this text that seems to have gone unnoticed so far is that the ten organizers of the Amphiaraiian contest were ‘elected by the *dēmos*’ (χειροτονηθέντες ὑπὸ τοῦ δήμου, lines 11–12). The procedure of *cheirotonia* is well known: it took place in the *ekklēsia*, with the Athenian citizens voting by raising their hands for their preferred candidates (as when electing important magistrates, including the *stratēgoi*). After the reform of Demetrius, *cheirotonia* was also the prescribed method for choosing the *agōnothetēs* of the Dionysiac contests, as often stated in the decrees.<sup>119</sup>

In 329, however, this feature was wholly innovative. At that time all other organizers of civic contests, such as the *athlothetai* of the Great Panathenaia, the archon (in charge of the Great Dionysia and Thargelia), the archon *basileus* (in charge of the Lenaia) and the annual *hieropoioi* were appointed by lot,<sup>120</sup> according to the *Constitution of the Athenians* (a text whose composition is generally assigned to ca. 325 BC). The Amphiaraiia thus provides the very first example of a festival of the Athenian polis run by officials deliberately chosen and elected by the *dēmos*, as would become the norm under Demetrius’ rule and during the Hellenistic period.

This election by the *dēmos* is particularly significant, since it means that the organizers of the Amphiaraiia were placed under the control and the authority of the polis itself. This hierarchic link is explicitly mentioned in the decree in the phrase ὧν αὐτοῖς προσέταξεν ὁ δῆμος (‘tasks that the

<sup>117</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1323a1.

<sup>118</sup> Here, as in the decrees honouring Athenian *agōnothetai* (see, for example, *IG* II<sup>3</sup> 1.995, lines 20–21), the word *epimeleia* has a specific institutional meaning. It refers to a civic office, close but inferior in status to an *archē*, but nevertheless subject to precise and defined legal regulations (generally election, accountability before the city, etc.). It does not have here the broad and general meaning of ‘good care’, as can be the case in other

contexts (see above). On the institutional definition of the *epimeleia*, see Sarrazanas (forthcoming) chapter 3.

<sup>119</sup> For example, *IG* II<sup>3</sup> 1.877, lines 38–39 and 985, line 53 (both from the third century).

<sup>120</sup> The religious officials (*hieropoioi*) in charge of an unknown agonistic festival (the Hephaistieia?) were also appointed by lot by the *Boulē* in an Attic inscription dated to 421/0 BC (see *IG* I<sup>3</sup> 82, line 22).

People had assigned to them’, lines 19–20), which confirms that the ten elected men acted within the legal framework of the commission assigned to them by the *dēmos*. In the case of the *chorēgoi*, on the other hand, we must remember that, once they had been designated, their various activities and duties largely escaped the control of the polis, and they were not obliged to give any formal account of their activities.<sup>121</sup> Lycurgus himself, in the passage quoted above, already stresses the fact that, in his time, the *chorēgoi* were acting for their own glory only, not for the benefit of the *dēmos*.

One last remarkable feature of this new festival of the Amphiaraia is its funding neither on a liturgical nor on an euergetic basis, as the funds necessary for its organization came from public and/or sacred treasuries. The proof appears in another decree honouring Phanodemos of Thymaitadai, dated to 332/1 by lines 10–17. The relevant passage reads as follows:<sup>122</sup>

10 ... ἐπειδὴ Φανόδημος Θυμαϊτάδης κα-  
λῶς καὶ φιλοτίμως νενομοθέτηκεν πε-  
ρὶ τὸ ἱερὸν τοῦ Ἀμφιαράου, ὅπως ἂν ἢ τε  
πεντετηρὶς ὡς καλλίστη γίγνηται κα-  
14 ἰ αἰ ἄλλαι θυσίαι τοῖς θεοῖς τοῖς ἐν τ-  
ῶι ἱερῶι τοῦ Ἀμφιαράου, καὶ πόρους πε-  
πόρικεν εἰς ταῦτα καὶ εἰς τὴν κατασκ-  
εὴν τοῦ ἱεροῦ ...

... Since Phanodemos of Thymaitadai has legislated well and with love of honour about the sanctuary of Amphiaraos, so that the *pentetēris* and the other sacrifices to the gods in the sanctuary of Amphiaraos may be as fine as possible, and he has secured sources of funding for these things and for the fitting out of the sanctuary ...

This Phanodemos is the same prominent man who comes first in the list of the organizers of the celebration of 329/8. In this decree he is honoured specifically for having submitted to the *nomothetai* a law regulating the cult of Amphiaraos,<sup>123</sup> especially the *pentetēris* (i.e. the quadrennial festival including the contests). The expression πόρους πεπόρικεν εἰς ταῦτα (‘he has secured sources of funding for these things’) is of particular interest: it does not mean that Phanodemos himself gave money from his private coffers,<sup>124</sup> but that he had found a way to secure sources producing revenues (πόρους)<sup>125</sup> that would ensure the long-term sustainability of the festival.<sup>126</sup> The money regularly produced by these *poroi* was then given to the ten organizers of the Amphiaraia to accomplish their missions in this office.

Here again we note the similarity to the post-Demetrian *agōnothesia*. Regarding the latter, the expression ‘the *dēmos* was *chorēgos*’ indicates that the money necessary for the organization of the Dionysia came from the polis’ budget, as confirmed by decrees stating that the *agōnothetēs* had formally given account of the expenses made during his term in office (*euthunai* and *logoi*)<sup>127</sup> before the financial officials of the city.<sup>128</sup> This procedure alone shows that the *agōnothetēs* managed public funds.

<sup>121</sup> Wilson (2000) 170, commenting on Arist. *Pol.* 1299a15–20.

<sup>122</sup> *IG II<sup>3</sup>* 1.348, lines 10–17.

<sup>123</sup> On Phanodemos’ career, see Brun (2013).

<sup>124</sup> *Contra* Lambert (2011b) 85, n.66, who interprets this phrase as a ‘personal contribution’ from Phanodemos. The translation by Mikalson (1998) 33, ‘providing funds for the festival’, is rather ambiguous.

<sup>125</sup> For the exact meaning of the term πόροι, see the clear discussion of Gauthier (1976) 7–19.

<sup>126</sup> These πόροι came from the leasing of the sacred

land of Amphiaraos in Oropia, as discussed in Papazarkadas (2011) 44–51. The allocation of specific revenues to specific expenses is typical of the financial administration under Lycurgus: see Migeotte (2014) 444–47; for expenses specifically related to the theatre, see the recent survey in Csapo and Wilson (2015) 409–12, with earlier bibliography.

<sup>127</sup> See *IG II<sup>3</sup>* 1.991, lines 21–22, and 995, lines 20–21.

<sup>128</sup> On the control procedures on the Athenian *agōnothetai*, see Fröhlich (2004) 336–37.

To conclude, if we focus our analysis on an institutional point of view, the organization of the Amphiaraia clearly displays innovative characteristics that did not exist all together in other Athenian contests at that time: specific official(s) designated to arrange the *agōnes*; election by the *dēmos*; managing of public funds; accountability of their magistracy before the *dēmos*. These new experiments did not last long: after two celebrations of the Great Amphiaraia in 329/8 and 325/4, Athens lost control of Oropia in 322 in the aftermath of its defeat in the Lamian War, and the festival thus came to an end. Nevertheless, these short-lived competitions certainly offered the Athenian leaders of Lycurgus' time an occasion to experiment with a new formula that was probably considered to be rather satisfactory.

Since the Athenian Amphiaraia did not include theatrical contests like those of the Dionysia, the decrees quoted above have never been considered in the discussion concerning the creation of the *agōnothesia*. Yet the institutional characteristics common to the Amphiaraia and the post-316 Dionysiac festivals are too numerous and obvious to be coincidental. Although such similarities do not allow us to state that Demetrius of Phalerum merely copied the Lycurgan model of the Amphiaraia when he created the *agōnothesia* in Athens, they at least show that these changes in the organization of agonistic events were already in play from the 330s and were probably the subject of consensus among the different Athenian political leaders, if not the citizens, regardless of their political affiliation. In this respect, Demetrius' reforms in agonistic matters mark rather a continuity with Lycurgus' period than a rupture.<sup>129</sup> the same phenomenon has been observed in several other policy areas in recent studies.<sup>130</sup>

One may object that the Amphiaraia were ruled by a board of ten citizens, while only one *agōnothētēs* was at the head of the post-316 Dionysiac competitions, and that the latter feature may be somewhat oligarchical.<sup>131</sup> This difference, however, does not seem fundamental, compared to the aforementioned and much more crucial common institutional characteristics. Moreover, we must remember that, during the entire Classical period before the reforms of Demetrius, that is to say under an undisputedly democratic regime, the dramatic festivals of Athens were *already* organized and supervised by one official only, namely the (eponymous) archon at the Great Dionysia or the archon *basileus* at the Lenaia.<sup>132</sup> Replacing the archon with another individual official (the *agōnothētēs*) was not a substantial change in this respect.

(e) *The agōnothesia as a way to relieve the archons from the burden of their agonistic duties*

We stress one last very important fact that has generally escaped notice. From the point of view of institutional history, saying or writing that the *agōnothesia* replaced or was a *substitute* for the *chorēgia* of the Classical period is incorrect.<sup>133</sup> Epigraphic documents are clear: the phrase 'the *dēmos* was *chorēgos*' clearly indicates that the city now assumed the expense of training and equipping the various *choroi*.

<sup>129</sup> O'Sullivan (2009) 174–75; Faraguna (2016), 60–61.

<sup>130</sup> These continuities have been demonstrated especially by O'Sullivan (2009) 99–101, 165–66, 228–29, 296–99; see also Faraguna (2011) 76–77 (legislation on women); (2016) 60–61; Marchiandi (2011) 156 (funerary monuments).

<sup>131</sup> Theophr. *Char.* 26.2: in relation to the appointment of the *epimelētai* who regulated the Dionysian procession, the preference of the 'oligarchic man' is for a single citizen rather than a college of ten, provided that he is 'a real man'. This specific example chosen by Theophrastus for his ironic caricature typically illustrates the excesses of this 'oligarchic' ideology, when pushed too far and applied to every aspect of the civic life (as already noted by Navarre (1914) 409). It is worth noting

that this caricature comes from Theophrastus who, being a pupil of Aristotle and one of the masters of Demetrius of Phalerum, is generally labelled himself by modern scholarship a (moderate?) 'oligarchic' thinker.

<sup>132</sup> We stress once again the fact that it is clear in the sources that the organizer of the contests was *not* the *chorēgoi*, who were just contenders, but the archon alone (Arist. *Ath.* 56.5: [the archon] διοικεῖ δὲ καὶ τὸν ἀγῶνα τῶν Διονυσίων οὗτος καὶ τῶν Θαργηλίων and 57.1: τὸν δὲ ἀγῶνα [i.e. the Lenaia] διατίθησιν ὁ βασιλεύς). Many scholars have failed to grasp this fundamental distinction in their discussion of the abolition of the liturgical *chorēgia*, which has led them to confusion and incorrect statements (see below).

<sup>133</sup> Pace, most recently, Bayliss (2011) 105; Makres (2014) 88; Maehle (2019) 17.

According to the Aristotelian *Constitution of the Athenians*, written around 325 BC, the official magistrate in charge of the general supervision of the Great Dionysia and Thargelia was the eponymous archon; of the Lenaia, it was the archon *basileus*. This extended responsibility encompassed many duties, including the completion of the sacrifice and the conduct of the procession. In addition, the same text indicates that the archon specifically oversaw the organization of and presidency over the musical and dramatic contests (*agōnes*) that took place during these festivals.<sup>134</sup> In the case of the Great Dionysia this included, for instance, recruiting and paying the poets, actors and musicians who were to perform during the contests (while the *chorēgoi* paid only the *chorodidaskaloi*).<sup>135</sup> The archon himself had to select the artists, which meant auditioning dozens of poets and musicians, since the needs of Athens each year were ‘enormous’.<sup>136</sup>

These agonistic duties were apparently time-consuming for the archons (especially in addition to their other responsibilities, for example in judiciary and legal matters), since the evolution of the institution shows that they were relieved of some of these duties already during the Classical period. According to the *Constitution of the Athenians*, while the archon himself previously (*proteron*) selected the five *chorēgoi* for the comic contest of the Great Dionysia, a change occurred at some point before 325 BC: in the author’s time the tribes were in charge of choosing and presenting the five *chorēgoi* for the comedies.<sup>137</sup>

The creation of the *agōnothesia*, a civic office whose main duty was specifically to prepare and set up the contests, was thus another change in the same direction, only much larger. This new magistracy should be interpreted as a change that relieved the archons from a considerable part of their previous tasks. Of course, with the liturgical *chorēgia* abolished, the archons now had nothing to do with the *chorēgoi*. After 316 the archons were no longer in charge of the agonistic part of the Dionysiac festivals, because the *agōnothetēs* had taken over the general supervision of these contests. The archons now retained only their ancestral and properly religious duties: for instance, the organization of the procession in honour of Dionysus during the Dionysia was still the prerogative of the archon even after the creation of the *agōnothesia*,<sup>138</sup> as had been the case since at least the Archaic period. In third-century Athens, the *agōnothetēs* in office during the Great Dionysia was never in charge of the organization of the procession,<sup>139</sup> as often occurred in festivals celebrated in other Greek cities.<sup>140</sup>

This distinction tends to confirm that the creation of the *agōnothesia* had first and foremost practical and institutional motivations, directed specifically at ameliorating the organization and supervision of the contests. The fact that only the agonistic aspect of the previous duties of the archons was transferred to the *agōnothetēs* most probably shows that is where the thrust of these major changes lay and that this was a response to the ever increasing administrative burden on the archons.

One reason for this phenomenon is the challenge, by the mid-fourth century, to the Athenian festivals’ supremacy by artistic contests set up in other parts of the Greek world. In particular, the theatre- and spectacle-loving Argead kings of Macedon could offer the best artists significant

<sup>134</sup> Arist. *Ath.* 56.5 (eponymous archon) and 57.1 (archon *basileus*).

<sup>135</sup> Wilson (2000) 61–62, 85. Before 316 BC, another of the archon’s duties prior to the festival was to deal with claims for exemptions and *antidosis* procedures from the men designated to be *chorēgoi* (Arist. *Ath.* 56.3).

<sup>136</sup> Wilson (2000) 64.

<sup>137</sup> Arist. *Ath.* 56.3. On this change, see the commentary of Csapo and Wilson (2014) 405–07, who stress that ‘tribal affinities also doubtless greatly increased audience support and enthusiasm in the theatre’. MacDowell

(1985) 67 assumes that the selection of comic *chorēgoi* for the Lenaia was also transferred from the archon *basileus* to the tribes around the same date; but see the remarks of Wilson (2000) 331 n.4.

<sup>138</sup> For example, *IG* II<sup>3</sup> 1.920, lines 13–15 (266 BC) and II<sup>3</sup> 1.1284, lines 36–37 (186/5 BC).

<sup>139</sup> No decree from this period, even the most detailed texts (e.g. *IG* II<sup>3</sup> 1.995), ever mentions the organization of the procession of the Athenian Dionysia by an *agōnothetēs*.

<sup>140</sup> For example at the Itonia in Amorgos: see *IG* XII Supplement 330, lines 9–10.



amounts of money for performances in their own theatrical events.<sup>141</sup> Plutarch and Athenaeus record that very famous artists deliberately chose to skip the Athenian Dionysia to perform at events organized by Alexander,<sup>142</sup> obviously attracted by the higher payment offered by the monarch.<sup>143</sup> Even after Alexander's death, many Greek cities, both old and newly founded ones, created or upgraded local theatrical contests (some of them apparently encouraged by the Diadochoi),<sup>144</sup> as is shown by the many stone theatres that had been built by the end of the fourth century.<sup>145</sup> These new competitions required, of course, the presence of numerous artists.<sup>146</sup> The dates of these new artistic events could also interfere with those of the Athenian festivals and therefore deprive the latter of valuable performers.<sup>147</sup>

This situation was a major challenge to Athens' cultural prestige.<sup>148</sup> During the Classical period, the initiative for participation in the contests stemmed from the artists. If they wished to take part in the Dionysia, poets (and most probably actors and musicians) had to apply officially and to present themselves before the archon on a fixed date.<sup>149</sup> The archon then chose from among the declared candidates those who would finally compete during the festival, which necessarily meant that some (most?) were rejected. This system was satisfactory when Athens was the undisputed centre of the dramatic and musical *agōnes*, and when most poets were themselves Athenians. The aforementioned examples from Philip's and Alexander's times, however, demonstrate that the system had reached a limit, as Athens now could be deprived of the best available poets and performers if another city or king could offer artists other opportunities and higher remuneration. Since the poets, actors and musicians (among whom were many non-Athenians) were professionals, they naturally followed the law of supply and demand.

In this new situation, the old logic might have been reversed. The city could not now passively expect the artists to apply for the Athenian contests, because of the risk of their hire elsewhere. A natural solution to avoid this was for the city to contact artists more actively and secure their presence further in advance by negotiating and establishing contracts with them.<sup>150</sup> The archon (still chosen by lot at the time), already laden with many other duties, perhaps was not the most fitting

<sup>141</sup> See the recent survey of Moloney (2014). On the organization of artistic events by Philip, see Mikalson (1998) 119–20; Le Guen (1995) 60–61; Lamari (2017) 82–88. In addition, it should be noted that Philip II of Macedon set up an important musical contest during his siege of Methone in 354 BC, where many famous artists of the time performed (see Didymos, ed. Pearson and Stephens (1983) 45–46, col. 2, H.56–62). On Alexander and the theatre, see Le Guen (2014); Vahtikari (2014) 99–115.

<sup>142</sup> This is notably the case of the very famous actors Thettalos and Athenodoros who skipped the Great Dionysia of 331 in order to take part in the contests set up by Alexander in Tyre the same year (Plut. *Alex.* 29.5). Seven years later, dozens of renowned artists of all specialities performed at the Susa weddings that took place in March or April 324 (Ath. *Deipnosophistae* 12.538B–39A), which mean they most probably skipped the Athenian Dionysia that were scheduled at the same time of that year. In any case, Le Guen (2014) 264–66 shows that several artists permanently resided at Alexander's court during his conquest in the East; obviously, they were not available to perform in other cities like Athens.

<sup>143</sup> The king's generosity towards artists is well documented: see Le Guen (2014) 272.

<sup>144</sup> During the period of the Diadochoi, Samos

created a new festival called Antigoneia-Demetriaia (honouring Antigonos Monophthalmos and Demetrios Poliorcetes), which is first attested *ca.* 306 BC (*SEG* 1.362). On theatrical contests during the Hellenistic period, see Le Guen (1995); (2010).

<sup>145</sup> Csapo et al. (2014) 4: 'Most spectacular of all is the spread of drama which certainly began in the fifth but was so rapid in the fourth century that by its end there was a theatre and dramatic festival in every self-respecting city and town, not only in Greece, but throughout the hellenised East.' See also Le Guen (1995) 60–61; Moretti (2014) 108–11; and the recent surveys by Csapo and Wilson (2015); Stewart (2017) 179–94.

<sup>146</sup> Csapo et al. (2014) 11: 'The demand for theatre, in the years following Alexander, increased possibly a hundredfold by the end of the [fourth] century.'

<sup>147</sup> Csapo (2010a) 86: '[at the end of the fourth century] the demand for good actors grew with such rapidity that it clearly outstripped the supply.'

<sup>148</sup> Csapo (2010a) 86: 'Athens needed to actively promote its theater by the second half of the fourth century because of competition from Greek cities that were acquiring theaters at an even accelerated rate.' See also Le Guen (2014) 269–70.

<sup>149</sup> Wilson (2000) 61–65.

<sup>150</sup> See Le Guen (2004) especially 91–99.



magistrate to deal with this issue. In this regard, creating a specific official, namely the *agōnothetēs*, to be in charge of the negotiations with the professional performers was probably a response by the city of Athens aimed at securing the presence of the best artists at their home festivals.<sup>151</sup> Even if undertaken by Demetrius of Phalerum, this innovation appears once again perfectly in line with the important efforts previously made by Lycurgus to make Athens ‘the cultural capital-city of Greece’.<sup>152</sup> As demonstrated above, public funding was naturally a companion measure to assure better control of the polis over its cultural policy.

### III. Conclusion

Several scholars have recently suggested that the birth of the Athenian *agōnothesia* as a proper civic institution was not a sudden phenomenon.<sup>153</sup> We certainly agree with this argument, but for different reasons from previous authors. The idea that the *agōnothesia* bore the seal of oligarchic ideology, repeated so often in previous studies, should clearly be rejected. If the democratic regime revived in 307 maintained the institution of the *agōnothesia*, although created by Demetrius of Phalerum, it most probably did so because this new institution: (1) was already in the air in Athens with a possible precedent in the Lycurgan Amphiaraia; (2) probably carried no intrinsic political or ideological significance and was compatible with any type of political regime; and (3) was considered a satisfactory and efficient way for Athens to organize its contests.

In our opinion, the most convincing scenario is the following. At least by the end of the fourth century BC the individual and liturgical *chorēgia* manifestly faced criticism, both from oligarchic and from democratic politicians in Athens, even if for different reasons. After 338, the measures taken by Lycurgus and his friends prove that the polis had a much greater hand in the organization and funding of religious and cultural matters than during the Classical period.<sup>154</sup> The creation of the Great Amphiaraia ca. 332/1 BC offered the opportunity to experiment with a new institutional way of organizing civic competitions, by charging ten men with the *epimeleia* of the contests. For the first time, agonistic officials were elected directly by the people, with the money given to them to fulfill their duties from public or sacred treasuries. Thus, the *dēmos* could have better control over the entire process of contest organization.

Even though the festival of the Amphiaraia disappeared after 322, this innovation had been tested and probably approved. A few years later, during his period of rule, Demetrius of Phalerum introduced a very similar formula in the organization of the Great Dionysia and other ‘Dionysiac’ competitions. The individual liturgical *chorēgia* was replaced by the ‘*chorēgia* of the *dēmos*’, with the contests now funded by public funds and no longer by personal fortunes.<sup>155</sup> This reform was

<sup>151</sup> Arist. *Rh.* 1405a23–24 most probably attests the existence of groups of professional performers who called themselves *technitai*, already ca. 330 BC: see Csapo and Slater (1994) 239. The creation of the *agōnothesia* in Athens thus may have been a reaction to this new organization of professional artists. Some scholars, including Bélis (1999) 211, have defended the idea that formally organized companies of professional artists (called ‘*sunodoi* of Dionysiac *technitai*’) existed prior to the reign of Alexander. Nevertheless, the first attestation of such a *sunodos* dates only to ca. 280, and the date of creation of the first *sunodoi* is controversial (see Le Guen (2001) 1.49, especially n.174).

<sup>152</sup> On the cultural policy of Lycurgus, see Perrin-Saminadayar (2007) 172–73; Csapo and Wilson (2014); on Athens as a ‘cultural capital-city’, see Perrin (1997); Perrin-Saminadayar (2007) 174–95, 603–32; Hanink (2014) 230.

<sup>153</sup> Csapo and Wilson (2010) 101: ‘le glissement de la chorégie à l’agonothésie fut un processus complexe, long et mouvementé’; Faraguna (2011) 81: ‘Demetrius of Phaleron’s later replacement of *choregia* with *agonothesia* may have been less innovating than is generally supposed.’

<sup>154</sup> Mikalson (1998) 55–56; Csapo and Wilson (2014) 424.

<sup>155</sup> Most previous scholars have considered that the funding of the civic contests now relied to a large extent on the private fortune of the *agōnothetēs* himself, who was expected to cover most if not all of the expenses from his own private coffers because the polis was not able to afford them. But this traditional view has been reassessed, and recent studies show that the bulk of the money necessary to set up the contests came in fact from public or sacred treasuries (Migeotte (1997); (2010) 143; (2014) 532, 551; Papakonstantinou (2016) 106–08).

most probably consensual: both oligarchs, who complained about the burden the *chorēgia* entailed for wealthy citizens, and the democrats, who considered this liturgy ‘useless’ and of benefit only to the richest Athenians, had good reasons not to regret the disappearance of the liturgical *chorēgia*.

At the same time, the archons’ previous responsibilities in agonistic matters were transferred to a newly created civic official, the *agōnothetēs*. One reason for this change was probably to secure better the participation of the most renowned artists at the city contests in the context of growing competition between Athens, other cities and powerful kings. Just like the ten officials in charge of the Amphiaraiia competitions, the *agōnothetēs* was elected directly by the *dēmos*, managed public money and accounted for his activity before the controllers of the city (*euthunoi*) at the end of his term. Formally, the *agōnothetēs* was simply a civic delegate of the *dēmos*’ sovereignty, always under the control of the polis and not an individual citizen competing above all for his own glory, as the *chorēgoi* had. One important fact that should be borne in mind is that, from a strictly institutional point of view, conceiving of the *agōnothesia* as a direct substitute for the liturgical *chorēgia* is incorrect.<sup>156</sup>

As demonstrated above, the relevant evidence allows us to date all of these changes to the year 316/15 BC, at the beginning of Demetrius’ rule over the city. Although officially created under an oligarchic regime, both the ‘*chorēgia* of the *dēmos*’ and the *agōnothesia* perhaps were satisfactory to everyone, since, in contrast to other measures by Demetrius of Phalerum, they were maintained well after 307/6, throughout the Hellenistic period until at least 175 BC.<sup>157</sup>

As a civic institution, the *agōnothesia* had no intrinsic ideological value but was, above all, a practical and pragmatic solution to the new conditions of the organization of competitions in late fourth-century Athens, as well as a response to its new social and economic situation in the aftermath of the Battle of Chaeronea.

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Euergetic benefactions, by definition, depended on the goodwill of the citizens acting as *agōnothetai* and it would have been very risky for the Athenian polis to count exclusively on their generosity to sustain the festivals. In fact, such benefactions, though always welcome, were just a bonus. For a thorough discussion of this matter, see Sarrazanas (forthcoming) chapter 6.

<sup>156</sup> There was nevertheless a form of continuity between the *practices of chorēgoi* and *agōnothetai*, for

example in public displays of self-promotion through the erection of monumental tripod-bases (see Wilson (2000) 270–76; Sarrazanas (forthcoming) chapter 7).

<sup>157</sup> *IG II<sup>3</sup>* 4.539 is the last datable agonothetic monument linked to the Great Dionysia, as the Athenian *agōnothesia* was reformed again at some point between 175 and ca. 160 BC (see Sarrazanas (forthcoming) chapter 4).

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