SHOWING PRAISE IN
GREEK CHORAL LYRIC AND BEYOND

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For Gregory Nagy on his seventieth birthday

Abstract. In this article I examine several passages in Greek choral lyric where the verb δεικνυμι is construed with a direct object meaning “song” or “hymn” and show that this usage finds an exact parallel in the Rigveda, where the cognate root diś- is likewise employed with “song (of praise)” as its object. Greek δεικνυη, μελος, etc., “to show forth song (of praise),” is thus argued to be an archaism of the melic poetry that goes back to the Indo-European poetic language. The use of Latin dicō of reciting verse (dicere carmen) or singing praise (dicere laudēs) in Augustan poets may continue the same inherited phraseology. Finally, based on these results I argue that the long problematic epithet ἁρδικνυτος contains the root of δεικνυμι (and not of δικοαι) and should be interpreted as “famous, well worth singing of, well worth praising (in song).”

1. The purpose of this article is to offer an interpretation for several poorly understood passages in Greek choral lyric by examining them in the comparative context of Indo-European poetics. This is rarely done for lyric poetry (as opposed to archaic epic), simply because these texts are not as old, but this method is a priori worthwhile: according to a widely held belief, the traditions of Greek lyric preserve metrical structures of higher antiquity than the epic hexameter1 and one would therefore expect to find comparable poetic archaisms in these traditions. In fact, as this article will seek to show, there are still cases in the study of Greek literature where Karl Lehms’ sixth commandment for classical philologists, “thou shalt not grab around for Sanskrit roots,” can be violated with profit.2

The crux in question is a peculiar use of the verb δεικνυμι “to show,” found in the following passages.

1 See, e.g., Nagy 1974; Berg 1978.
2 Lehms 1902: “Du solist nicht Sanskritwurzeln klauben.”
1.1. Alcman 59 (b) 3 Davies (= 149 Calame):

τούτο μακαρα παρετένων
ά ξανθά Μεγαλοστράτα

The yellow haired Megalostrata,
blessed among girls,
édexε (Campbell: displayed) this gift of the sweet Muses

Megalostrata, only known from this fragment, was in all likelihood the chorēgos in a partheneion from which these verses are quoted by Athenaeus (13.601a). Since the expression δώρων Μουσάων is a usual kenning for “music,” “song,” or “poetry,” we have to ask ourselves what exactly édexε Μουσάων δώρων means in the present context. One possibility would be to interpret these lines as reflecting the pedagogical function of the lyric chorus: Megalostrata could be both leading the procession and instructing the younger members of the chorus, such that she could “show” or “reveal” to the choreuts the gift of the Muses. Another way to understand the fragment would be to assume that the verb δείκνυαμι was chosen in order to emphasize Megalostrata’s role as a performer or presenter, different from that of the poet. But Archytas, the source of
Athenaeus for this passage, explicitly says that Megalostrata was a poet (and apparently an excellent conversationalist, namely, a master of the spoken word) (13.600f):

Λέγει δὲ καὶ ὃς Ἡερατικής οὐ μετρίως ἐρασθείς ποιήσας μὲν οὐς, δυναμένης δὲ καὶ διὰ τὴν ὀμίλιαν τοὺς ἔραστάς προσελκύσασθαι

He also says that he (= Alcman) fell in passionate love with Megalostrata who was a poetess capable of attracting lovers by her conversation.

It is not immediately clear how much trust we should vest in this testimony. On the one hand, the idea of Alcman’s fatal attraction to Megalostrata is almost certainly either Archytas’ or Chamaeleon’s own invention based on a misinterpretation of Alcm. 59 (a) Davies (= 148 Calame) as a statement of personal involvement on the part of the poet himself. But on the other hand, it is far from clear why in the first place Archytas would need to fabricate a story that Megalostrata, one of Alcman’s many lovers according to his presentation, was a poet.

The possibility thus remains open that Megalostrata was described by Alcman as a fellow poet who performed together with the chorus (Sappho comes to mind). But even if ἐδείξει Μωσάμδην δόρον should refer to her performance (and not composition) of poetry and music, this would still be a highly peculiar use of the verb δέκιςμι; and yet, there are parallels, including in Alcman himself.

1.2. Alcman 4 fr. 1.4–8 Davies (= 57 Calame):

σαυμαστὰ δ’ ἀνθ[...

10 Fr. 25 Wehrli: Athenaeus quotes (or paraphrases) Archytas from Chamaeleon’s biography of Alcman (ὁς φαίν Χαμαλέων). The peripatetic Chamaeleon seems to have had a keen interest in anecdotes about the poets’ private lives, and there are reasons to believe that in his writings he invented some of the biographical details based on his analysis of the poets’ own work; see Podlecki 1969, 120–24; Momigliano 1971, 80.

11 Ἐρεμε με δηύτε Κύπρηκος έκαθεν / γλυκές κατεβαίν καρδιάν ιαίνει (“at the command of the Cyprian, Eros once again pours sweetly down and warms my heart,” Janni 1965, 107–10).

12 For arguments against Calame’s emendation, see Davies 1986 and Maehler 1997, 317, n. 1.
and wonderful soft utterances
they δείξαν (Campbell: revealed) new to men
... delight ... intricate

Lobel’s tentative reading θαυμάστα ἀνθρώποις in l. 4 looks extremely compelling and together with ποικία (l. 8) makes it virtually certain that γάρματα μαλακάκα means here not “soft sounds,” but rather “soft songs.”¹³ Parallels for the use of μαλ(θ)ακός cited by Calame (1983, 423–24) lend additional support to this interpretation; compare especially Pl. N. 9.48–49:

νεοθαλῆς δ’ αὖξεται
μαλθακά νικαφορία σύν ἀοιδὴ
to the accompaniment of gentle song

It seems certain that Alcman’s passage contained some discussion of poetic production; once again, the verb δείξαω refers to what a poet (or poets) do with songs.¹⁴

¹³ LSJ cites Aesch. Eum. 569 as the prima facie evidence for the meaning “sound,” but γάρμα might here just as well be translated “song (of the trumpet)”: (Τυρρηνική | οάλησθι ... υπέρτονον γάρμα ψαλμόω στρατη | (“Let the Tyrrhenian trumpet send forth its loud song to the crowd!”). Likewise, in Eur. fr. 627 Kannicht, “(oracular) verses” is the most likely meaning (εἰς νότον γὰρ ἐπὶ διφθαρμα μελαγχοφεῖς | πολλὰν γάρμους Λοξόου γαρμάκων).

¹⁴ It has been argued that the missing subject of ἐδείξαν are Alcman’s predecessors, certain πρῶτοι εὐρήται, and the verb means “revealed” (in the sense of δείδομαι, see above, n. 7); see Davies 1986; Segal 1985, 185; Bagordo 2000, 194. This idea is based on a restoration of Terpander’s name in line 6 (τερπ), first proposed by Lobel 1957, 23, in the editio prima and later approved by Treu 1964, 120; indeed, Terpander was credited with the invention of the barbitos, the citharoedic nomos and with many other musical innovations. The plural δείξαν would seem to require a mention of at least one other famous citharode likewise qualifiable as a πρῶτοι εὐρήται and there is no shortage of possible candidates, for instance, Thaletas or Xenodamus (the first to compose paeans and hyporchemata, [Plut.] De mus. 1134b–c), Clonas or Polynestos (the inventors of the aulodic nomos, [Plut.] De mus. 1132c–d), or Xenocritus (the inventor of the “Locrian” mode, sch. Pl. Ol. 10 Drachmann). Yet, two reasons render Lobel’s restoration (and with it Davies’ ingenious argument) unlikely: first, assuming the meter of the verse is iambic (νεοθαλ/Uni1F7A δ’ α/Uni1F74ξεται | μαλθακ/Uni1FB7 νικαφορία σύν α/Uni1F6Bιδὴ | (“Let the Tyrrhenian trumpet send forth its loud song to the crowd!”). Likewise, in Eur. fr. 627 Kannicht, “(oracular) verses” is the most likely meaning (εἰς νότον γὰρ ἐπὶ διφθαρμα μελαγχοφεῖς | πολλὰν γάρμους Λοξόου γαρμάκων).

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1.3. This peculiar use of the verb recurs in Pindar (Pi. I. 8.47, Snell-Maehler):

καὶ νεαρὰν ἐδείξαν σοφῶν
στόματ’ ἀπείρουσιν ἄρετὰν Ἀχλέος

And the voices of the wise
ἐδείξαν (Race: made known, Farnell: revealed)
the youthful excellence of Achilles
to those who had been unaware of it

One tradition of interpreting this passage has been to assume a reference to a prophecy made by certain sages soon after Achilles’ birth about his future excellence and concerning the fact that Troy could not be taken without him.15 (The use of δείκνυμι in this case would not be surprising.) But this interpretation is unlikely; describing someone who expects to receive a prophecy as ignorant (ἀπειροῦ) about the content of the forthcoming message would be strange, to say the least.16 Rather, as was seen already by Dissen, we find here the familiar topos of Achilles’ κλέος preserved through the medium of song.17 Pindar’s σοφοὶ are poets of earlier times (as elsewhere in Pindar),18 and ἀπειροῦ refers to their audience. The question is what activity exactly is described by ἐδείξαν. Did the poets merely “demonstrate” Achilles’ valor or did they praise it in song?19 One way of interpreting the passage would be to assume that

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16 This problem was noticed by Radt 1972, 198: “bezieht Thummer σοφῶν στόματ’ auf “prophetisches Lob an der Wiege,” was schon durch ἀπειροῦσιν ausgeschlossen ist.”
17 Dissen 1821, 547; Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1922, 199–200; Carey 1981, 200.
18 Cl. P. 3.113 (σοφοὶ ἐπέσων τέκτονες; “wise craftsmen of verses”), I. 5.28 (where the poet is called σοφοῦτας) or the much discussed O. 2.86–88, where the poet is praised as a wise man who understands many things intuitively (σοφός ὁ πολλὰ εἰδὼς φύς) and contrasted with those who have merely “learned” (μαθόντες). See Untersteiner 1956, 113–14, for ample parallels (a prop of Xen. 1.12).
The second Pindaric passage we will examine comes from the poem formerly known as “Hymn to Zeus,” which opened Pindar’s Alexandrian edition (fr. 29–35 Snell–Maehler). The current orthodoxy is that this hymn contained one (or several) embedded theocosmogonical songs, delivered by Apollo and the Muses at the wedding of Cadmus and Harmonia. Our primary interest here is fragment 32 that may have preceded the song-within-the-song; the primary source for the fragment is Aelius Aristides (Aristid. Or. 3.620 Lenz–Behr).22

καν τοις ήμενοι διεξιων περι των εν άπαντι τω χρόνω συμβαινόντων παθημάτων τοις άνθρώπον καθ της μεταβολής τόν Κάδμον φησί φιλόν άκούσαι τού Άπολλώνος "μουνιαίν ορθάν επίδεικνυμένου"

but even in the Hymns when Pindar narrates the sufferings and change befalling men throughout time, he says that Cadmus heard Apollo “επίδεικνυμαι correct music”

We know from other fragments assigned to the hymn on the grounds of content and meter that Apollo and the Muses sang about Themis and her union with Zeus (fr. 30), Leto and the birth of Apollo (fr. 33 cd), birth of Athena (fr. 34), and the release of the Titans (fr. 35). This rich program would hardly leave the god any time to instruct Cadmus in the art of music, which is the reason why Mommsen’s translation of επίδεικνυμαι here as “lehren” lacks conviction.23 Unlikely, too, is Fontenrose’s suggestion that the fragment contains a reference to the oracle Cadmus received at Delphi.24 Even supposing that in this hymn Pindar told a portion of the

20 As elsewhere in Pindar, e.g., O. 7.89; 8.6; N. 10.2, even though ἀρετά in these passages refers to athletic achievements.
21 Snell’s classic account of the fragments (1946 [1953]) is now superseded by D’Alessio 2005 and 2009, who has convincingly argued that the hymn was addressed to Apollo rather than Zeus.
22 Aristides’ testimony is backed up by Plutarch who quotes the Pindaric fragment twice: once in a discussion of harmony (Mor. 1030A) and another time in order to compare the Sibyl’s passionless utterances to the purity of Apollo’s “right music” (Mor. 397A).
23 Mommsen 1846, 192. Mommsen’s translation is based on Boeckh’s edition in which our fragment had already been joined with fr. 29 S.–M. where the mention is made of Cadmus’ wedding; Boeckh 1821, 563, translates “Deum audivit Cadmus musicam rectam proponentem.”
Cadmean saga and that our fragment belongs to this part of the poem, the choice of the word μοσωκή would remain wholly unclear. As to more neutral translations such as “Cadmus heard Apollo giving a display of correct music” (Hardie 2000), “making a display of” (Slater 1969), or “giving a specimen of” (LSJ), their chief drawback, in my opinion, is that they focalize ὀρθοθε as if Apollo was using the occasion of the wedding to promulgate the correctness of his art, while the real focus of the fragment is on μοσωκή; Cadmus was listening to Apollo (and the Muses) singing the theogony.  

The argument just offered is tainted by the fact that we are dealing with a text almost exclusively transmitted in quotations, and much depends on the correctness of the attribution of our fragment to this text and the details of its placement in the poem. Time will show if the reconstruction of Pindar’s first hymn by Boeckh, Snell, D’Alessio, and others is correct, but if it is, we get another example of (-)δείκνυ meaning “to perform, to sing poetry.”

1.5. The next passage illustrating the use of δείκνυ that we are interested in comes from Bacchylides (Bacch. fr. 15 Maehler):

Οὐχ ἔδρας ἔργον οὐδ’ ἄμβολας,
ἀλλὰ χρυσαίγδος Ἰτωνίας
χρῆ παρ’ ἑβδαιδαλον ναὸν ἔλ-
θόντος ἄβρον τι δεῖξα ὑ –
4 μέλος suppl. Blass

This is no time for sitting still or tarrying,
but we must go to the richly-built temple
of Itonia of the golden aegis
and δεῖξα (Campbell: display; Jebb: show forth)
a delicate (song / dance)

The critical final iambus is missing from the passage as quoted by Dion. Hal. Comp. 25. Even though ἄβρον τι alone would not be totally

25 ἐπιδείκνυα in Aristides’ text was translated as “perform” by Behr 1986, 266. As to ὀρθοθε, Hardie 2000, 30, may well be right in comparing Apolline μοσωκήν ὀρθῶν with ὀρθοθε pillars that rose from the earth to support Delos and provide stable ground for the birth of Apollo (fr. 33d.5); according to Hardie, ὀρθοθε here conveys the idea of stability and harmony that overcomes chaos.

26 A grammarian quotes the first line of the fragment to illustrate what he calls a “cretic meter” (Analecta Gramm. Keil 7.21); the second and third line scan as – ὐ – – ὐ ὐ ὐ – (with a resolved cretic in the second foot: “first paeon”) and – ὐ – – ὐ – – ὐ –, respectively.
awkward as the object of the verb, the supplement will still likely have to be governed by the verb, and Blass’ conjecture \( \textit{μέλος} \) is very attractive. We know from other sources that cite the beginning of this poem that it was a hyporchema,\(^{27}\) i.e., a dance-song (\( \tau\delta\ \text{μετ’ ὁρχήσεως \textit{άδόμενον \textit{μέλος}} \) in Proclus’ definition; see Procl. \textit{Chr}. 320b33). This is the reason why Jebb’s (1905, 459) and Borthwick’s (1970, 324–27) concerns about the use of \( \textit{άφρος} \) to describe the movement of male dancers are unfounded: the adjective applies here not only to dance, but also to song and music, where it is entirely appropriate (cf. \( \textit{άφρος \varphiάλλω} \) Anaer. 28.2; \( \textit{όμνειν \textit{άφρος}} \) Stesich. 35.2).

The theme of the poem appears to be a ritual performance at Athena’s altar, possibly accompanying a sacrifice. Despite the lacuna at the end, this passage constitutes perhaps the most important piece of evidence for a very special use of \( \textit{δείκνυμι} \) in choral lyric where the agent of the verb is a singer (or, rather, a group of performers) and the object is a song.

1.6. The final text to which we now turn is the paean to Dionysus composed by Philodamus of Scarpea and recorded on an inscription found at Delphi on the sixth temple of Apollo; the inscription is dated to 340/339 B.C.E. by a subscription naming Etymondas as archon.\(^{29}\) This text has an interesting purpose: it legitimizes a religious innovation, namely, the introduction of year-round Dionysiac worship in Delphi, within an Apolline context and in Apolline terms. Lines 110–14 form a part of Apollo’s command to the Amphictyones:\(^{30}\)

\begin{verbatim}
(Θεός κελέυει . . )

d[\(\textit{δὲξαι}\)] \(\varepsilon\) ἔγξει οὶ ἔτει-


οις θεὸν ἱερῷ γένει συναύμῳ
τὸνδ’ \(\textit{ἐμονοί}, \) θυσίαν δὲ φαί-


νεῖν[γ] σὺν Ἑλλάδος ἄλβιας


The god commands to \( \textit{δὲξαί} \) (Furley–Bremer: present)
this hymn for his brother
to the family of gods,
\end{verbatim}

\(^{27}\) Blass 1899, 166, n. 15.
\(^{28}\) Athen. 14.30 (3.393.8 Kaibel); \textit{Analecta Gramm}, as above.
\(^{31}\) The supplement is due to Weil 1895, the first editor of the poem.
on the occasion of the annual feast of hospitality
and to make a public sacrifice
on the occasion of the panhellenic supplications of blessed Hellas

Weil (1895, 407) suggested that the phrase δείξαι . . . τόνδε ὑμνον meant “saluer le dieu par une hymne” (~ δείκνυσθαι ὑμνῳ). This solution is not very satisfactory, both for reasons of syntax and sense. A straightforward translation, “sing this hymn” or “perform this hymn,” appears much more appealing, especially in view of the passages discussed above.32 It is important to emphasize that while adapting a new poetic form for praising Dionysus (paean instead of a dithyramb), Philodamus is using traditional formulaic elements firmly embedded in the former genre. We can therefore safely assume that δείξαι ὑμνον goes back to the traditional stock of melic vocabulary and is quite possibly just as old as δείξα γάρῳ in Alcman.

1.7. We can now take stock: in six passages from Alcman, Pindar, Bacchylides, and Philodamus, we find an unexpected use of the verb δείκνυμι construed with a direct object meaning “song, music, song of praise” (ὑμνον, γάρῳμι, μέλος, ἄρητα (= ἄρητά κλέος), δύρων Μοσαν, μουσικά).33 To my knowledge, despite sharing this common property, these
The use of “choral lyric” as a cover term for all pieces discussed in the present article is hardly objectionable: while Alcman 4 fr. 1 γαρ/uni1F7B/uni03BCατα /uni1F14δειξαν is ambiguous in respect to the action indicated by the verb, a choral performance is very likely in the case of Alcman 59(b)3, Bacch. fr. 15 (where we have a plural participle /uni1F10λθ/uni1F79ντα/uni03C2) and Philodamus. Pindar’s στ/uni1F79/uni03BCατα σοφ/uni1FF6ν /uni1F14δειξαν /uni1F00ρετ/uni1F71ν /uni1F08χιλ/uni1F73ο/uni03C2 can obviously refer to different genres, most likely to epic, but at the same time there is no problem in assuming that the poet, whose own epinicians and paeans were in all likelihood performed by small companies of singers (see, e.g., Carey 1991), used a terminus technicus of the choral lyric to describe the proclamation of Achilles’ valor.

For instance, it could be argued that this use of δε/uni1F77κνυ/uni03BCι can be seen as a performative effect, a gesture of “enactment into discourse” (Calame 2004, 415), not unexpected in choral lyric poetry which often seeks to connect the poem with the hic et nunc of its performance by a group of dancers; but, at least in my opinion, there is a huge difference between using pronouns and adverbs in order to refer to the location in space and time as well as the participants in a verbal act (well studied in recent work on deixis in choral lyric) and a lexically encoded notion of “showing” that—hypothetically—is supposed to merge the text of the poem with its reenactment in performance.

3. While this hypothesis may initially seem to defy belief, it appears to be strongly supported by comparative data: in Vedic Sankrit the cognate verbal root diś- (which normally means “show, point out”) is likewise found construed with nouns meaning “song of praise,” as can be illustrated by the following three stanzas:

RV 5.43.9:

prá távyaso námaiktúṁ turáṣya ahám púṣṇá utá vāyór adíksi
yá rádhasá cōdiára mañúmaḥ yā vāsya draviṇadá utá tmám //
I diś-ed (aor.; Geldner: “habe bestimmt”; Renou: “j’ai ordonné”)
this homage to mightiest, victorious Puṣan and to Vāyu,
who by their generosity inspire hymns / thoughts,
and of themselves are givers of reward

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RV 10.92.9:

stóman vo adyá rudráya śikvase kṣayádvirāya nāmasā didiṣṭana
yēbhīḥ śīvāḥ svāvāṁ ēvayāvabhir divāḥ siṣakti svāyāṁ nīkāmbhiḥ

Today you should dis- (imper.; Geldner: “zeiget”; Renou: “assignez”) with reverence your song of praise to skillful Rudra, the ruler of men, and to those eager ones together with whom the auspicious one, self-bright, providing protection, comes down from the sky, to them, the devoted ones

RV 8.102.13 (= KS 40.14.149.20):

ūpā tvā jāmāyo gīro dēdiṣṭātīr havīskṭṛaḥ
vāyōr ānike asthiran //

The sisters, who constantly dis- the hymns of him who prepares the oblation in front of Vayu, have come to you

On the strength of these examples we may conclude that in the Rigveda dis- is one of the roots referring to the “symbiotic relationship” (West 2007, 30) between laudandus and laudator; it encoded the offering of praise (in form of a song) by a poet to a god on behalf of his patron.

36 Literally: “to Rudra together with those eager ones.”

37 The last passage, featuring a participle made from the intensive stem dēdiś-, is particularly difficult, and the translation given above differs from the standard one by Geldner (“die immer wieder auf dich hinwiesen”). A few notes on the proposed translation will be in order. First, upā tvā asthiran (“have come unto thee”) is unproblematic, cf. RV upā tvā imasi, upā tvā yantu. As an alternative, upā tvā can be construed either with gīro dēdiśatī ("showing hymns forth to you") or both with the verb and the participle apo koinou: “the sisters, who constantly show hymns forth to you, have come to you”). Second, the presence of Vayu, god of wind, in the passage from a hymn, the main addressee of which is Agni, is not surprising: Vayu is the first god to taste any oblation as its smoke rises up in the air. Third, jāmāyah ("those of kin, sisters”), just as in RV 1.23.6, refers to the waters which appear in the next verse. Last, the reader should be warned that havīskṛtyaḥ (“oblation-bearer”) is problematic under any interpretation: in the translation above the form is analyzed as gen. sg. construed with gīrah ("hymns"), but it could also be a genitive construed with the jāmāyah ("sisters"), a nominative plural agreeing with jāmāyah or an accusative plural agreeing with gīrah. I would like to thank Stephanie Jamison for a very helpful discussion of this passage.

38 It is interesting to note that in Indo-Iranian poetic language, the root “dājē- is also used in the meaning “to offer reward / remuneration (to a poet).” For the Rigveda, cf. the following stanzas praising the generosity of the poet’s patron (dānastūtis): RV 5.36.6ab, yō rohiṇau vājīnau vājīnvān . . . ādiṣṭa (“[ Śrutāratha] who, rich in gifts, granted me two victorious red horses”); RV 10.93.15, [maghavatsu] ādhīn nā atra sapatītīm ca saptā ca sadyō didiṣṭa tānvahś i sadyō didiṣṭa pārthīvahś sadyō didiṣṭa māyavah (“[generous patrons:] seven
This usage of the verb *diś-* in the Rigveda, possibly shared by Avestan,\textsuperscript{39} has not been noticed before, as far as I can tell.\textsuperscript{40}

Vedic *diś-* construed with a noun meaning “song of praise” (*stóman* / námaiktīm / *girah\textsuperscript{31}* ) \textsuperscript{31}corresponds rather neatly to Greek δέικαί μέλος / ὕμνος, and it appears very likely that these two poetic figures share a common origin. The notion of praise is less evident in the Greek passages discussed above, but the difference in genre does not preclude the idi-

and seventy horses Tanva granted on the same day, Parthya granted on the same day and Mayava granted on the same day\textsuperscript{32}). In fact, out of thirteen occurrences of uncompounded *diś-* in the Rigveda, eleven can or must be translated either as “to sing (a hymn),” as in the examples above in the main text, or as “to grant (reward for a hymn).” For Avestan, cf. Vd. 9.44 (= A. 3.7–12): *disiīa ahnuī nāre awat mičdām* (“the following reward shall be allotted to this man”); see Hintze 2000, 325. This meaning of Indo-Iranian *daīj-* is probably a result of independent semantic development which can be envisaged in different ways: e.g., Renou 1967, 99, derives the meaning “donner” from “assigner à q’un une chose favourable,” while according to Hintze 2000, 238, this meaning originated in the vocabulary of chariot racing (the prize was displayed before the competition). But regardless of the exact details of semantic development in this case, the fact remains that in Indo-Iranian poetics, the root *daīj-* apparently came to denote both aspects of the reciprocal gift-exchange-based relationship between the poet-sacrificer and his patron, on which see Watkins 1995, 68–84; Hintze 2004.

Avestan *daēsaiia*-: pass. *disiia-* normally means to “point out, show, appoint,” but in the Bahram Yašt (arguably one of the most ancient parts of the Younger Avesta), the form *fradaēsaiioš* (2sg. opt. pres.) is constructed with *māđram* (“poetic formula, formulated meditation”); the reference is to the magical formula to be used as a weapon against demons, the ritual for which finds a close parallel in the Vedic manual on magic (Kauśika Śūtra 2.5–7; see Sadovsky 2009) (Yt. 14.46): zaradūṣṭra / ātom māđram mā fradaēsaiioš (Yt. 4.9: fradāxšāio, see Insler 1962) / ainiat / piīre və pałrūi / braštē və haďō.žāūi / əhrauhamī və əhrauhanī/*aēmale tē vācō / yōi / uṣra ěs dorzra ěs / uṣra ěs viūxaine ěs / uṣra ěs vorshayne ěs / uyra ěs baštīuāi ěs / . . . uzgōtāmtiīc snātām apa.x apa.xuanauāinti // (O Zarathustra, do not *dis-* this mantra other than to father (for transmission) to son, or to brother (for transmission) to sibling, or to priest (for transmission) to əhrauham-. And these words of yours, which were strong and solid, were strong and eloquent, were strong and obstruction-smashing, were strong and healing, they drive off even a raised weapon.) The standard translation of *fradaēsaiioš* here is “teach,” and it is certainly not unthinkable for the passage. However, one cannot fail to notice that the verbs usually construed with *māđram-* are verbs of speaking: *vac-,* “speak” (Y. 31.6+); *framru-,* “speak forth” (Yt. 4.4+); *drojita-,* “recite” (Yt. 4.4+); *povra-,* “ask, recite” (Vd. 9.2). It is therefore not out of the question that the juncture *māđram fradaēsaiia*- originally meant something like “pronounce a formula.” Still, this interpretation must necessarily remain conjectural.

It is not discussed by Schmitt 1967, Matasović 1996, or West 2007; *diś-* is missing from Schlerath’s (1985) list of verbs that belong to the semantic group “singen, preisen, rufen, verkünden.”

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For *gēr-eh-* (→ *gēr-*) as an inherited term denoting “song of praise”: cf. the formula *gēr₁h₁-* “deḥ₁-ō-* ("to make praise") in Vedic *gēr₁h₁ dhā-, Avestan *gar₁ō dā-, but also Proto-Celtic *bardo-, Middle Irish *bard*; see Campanile 1970–73.
lication in a diachronic perspective. The only assumption that needs to be made is that the precursor of the root δεικ-, used in Indo-European (and hence Vedic) hymnic poetry with the meaning “to show forth praise (for the gods),” became employable in Greek with a somewhat wider array of terms (not necessarily related to praise) and spread to such choral genres as partheneia and hyporchemata.42

A clinching argument in favor of viewing the correspondence between Vedic δिः- (स्तोम, etc.) and Greek δεικταί (ἵμνοι, etc.), as based on common inheritance and not on a typological coincidence or independent development, is the unusual meaning of the verb in both traditions. Such synchronically inexplicable meaning is the hallmark of inherited phraseology. The Vedic and Greek passages discussed above may appear striking if these texts are studied in isolation, but things start to make sense once the connection is made between the two traditions, and the problematic junctures are analyzed not as products of the poets’ own creative thought, but as fossilized expressions going back to an ancient poetic tradition to which both Vedic ṛṣis and Greek aoidoi were heirs. We have thus reconstructed an element of Indo-European poetic diction.43

3. Having established a peculiar poetic use of the root *deĵ- in Indo-European on the basis of Greek and Indo-Iranian material, we can now take a look at Roman poetry. This part of the agenda may appear surprising, since Italic is notoriously known as the wrong branch to explore in the search of vestiges of Indo-European poetry; the influence of Greek literature on Latin poetry was ubiquitous, and even South Picene epigraphic poems have been denied continuity with the Indo-European poetic tradition.44

However, in this particular case the situation is different: dicō and most other continuants of the root *dejk̂- in Latin and other Italic languages have the meaning “to speak, to talk, to sing”; therefore, if we are

42 On the diachronic continuity between the inherited hymnic tradition and different genres of Greek choral poetry, see recently Trümpy 2004; Bremer 2008. I would like to thank the anonymous referee for raising this matter.

43 That an archaism of poetic language should be preserved in the choral lyric but be absent from epic poetry should not surprise us; cf. West 2007, 37, on Pindar and Bachylides: “these two fifth-century exponents of the Dorian tradition of choral song were heirs to a repertory of Indo-European or at least Graeco-Aryan imagery that is hardly visible in the Ionian epic and Lesbian lyric traditions.” On Indo-European echoes in Pindar, see further Benveniste 1945, 5–12; Watkins 1995, 81–84, 537–39; 2002; on Aleman, see Barnes 2011.

to find Latin *dic- / dic- used with “song” or “hymn” as a direct object and we want to regard the expression as a calque from Greek, it will have to be based on a Hellenic model featuring a verb of speaking / singing, but there is nothing like φιγον, λέγεο- μέλος, ειπεό- γάρμα uel sim. in Greek. At the same time, as we have seen, there are reasons to believe that the root *deiκ was already employed in Indo-European poetic language with such direct objects as “song” or “hymn,” and therefore such use of *dic- in Latin, still hypothetical at this point, would have to be viewed as a lexical archaism directly continuing the same inherited poetic figure *(d)eyκ) Song that is reflected in Vedic Sanskrit (*daksitómam) and Greek (δεικνυν).

3.1. To begin with the most obvious cognate of Greek δεικνυμι in Latin, we should note that the verb *dicō is not quite synonymous with loquor (“to speak, to talk”), while *dicō can also be used in a neutral sense and replace loquor, the converse never happens, and the speakers were aware of the difference, as the following passage from Cicero makes clear (Cic. Orat. 32):

quamquam alius videtur oratio esse alius disputatio, nec idem loqui esse quod dicere, ac tamen utrunque in disserendo est: disputandi ratio et loquendi dialecticorum sit, oratorum autem dicendi et ornandi.

Although a speech is one thing and a debate another, and disputing is not the same as speaking, and yet both are concerned with discourse—debate and dispute are the function of the logicians; the orator’s function is to speak ornately.

Rather, *dicō belongs to the solemn language of poetry and oratory where it becomes closely allied with canō; for instance, these two verbs are both used by Catullus of a wedding song in one and the same poem (Catul. 62.4–5, 9–10):

iam veniet virgo, iam dicitur hymenaeus.
   Hymen o Hymenae, Hymen aedes o Hymenae! 
   non temere exsiluere: canent quod vincere par est.
   Hymen o Hymenae, Hymen aedes o Hymenae!

now will come the bride, now will be sung the Hymenaeus.
   Hymen O Hymenaeus, Hymen come O Hymenaeus!
   nor without intent have they leapt forth;
   what they will sing, it is our task to surpass.
   Hymen O Hymenaeus, Hymen come O Hymenaeus!
This aspect of the semantics of *dicere* has been noticed before, but not its implications.\(^45\) It becomes particularly important for the line of reasoning pursued in the present chapter, as we find that *dicô* is in fact found in the meaning “celebrate in song or poetry” (*OLD* 7b). Consider the following selection of passages:

**Virg. G. 2.95–96:**

> purpurae preciaque, et quo te carmine dicam  
> Rhaetica? nec cellis ideo contende Falernis

The purple and the precian’ and you, Rhaetic—how shall I sing you? yet even so, vie not with Falernian vaults!

**Hor. Carm. 4.9.19–21:**

> non pugnavit ingens  
> Idomeneus Sthenelusve solus  
> dicenda Musis proelia

Great Idomeneus and Sthenelus  
were not the only men to fight battles  
that the Muses should extol\(^46\)

**Prop. 1.7.1–2:**

> Dum tibi Cadmeae dicuntur, Pontice, Thebae  
> armaque fraternae tristia militiae

Ponticus, while you sing of Cadmean Thebes,  
and the bitter warfare of fraternal strife

**Ov. Ars am. 1.208–10:**

> O desint animis ne mea verba tuis!  
> Tergaque Parthorum Romanaque pectora dicam telaque, ab averso quae iacit hostis equo.

Grant that my song be not unworthy of the prowess that it  
celebrates!  
I will sing of the Parthian turning to flee,  
and of the Roman facing the arrows aimed at him by the flying foe.

\(^{45}\) It was noted by Ernout–Meillet 1959 (s.v. *dicô*); see also Newman 1965, 86–89; Habinet 2005, 75–83.  
\(^{46}\) Horace’s use of *dicô* has been studied by Jahn 1867, 419–20, who cites several additional passages.
Even more significant is the fact that *dicere* is also often used of reciting or performing verse, as in the example from Catullus cited above (62.4: *dicetur hymnæus*):

**Virg. Ecl. 6.4-5:**

*pastorem, Tityre, pinguis*

*pascere oportet ovis, deductum dicere carmen*

Tityrus, a shepherd should pasture fat sheep, but sing a slender song

**Virg. Ecl. 10.2-3:**

*pauca meo Gallo, sed quae legat ipsa Lycoris, carmina sunt dicenda: neget quis carmina Gallo?*

A few verses I must sing for my Gallus, yet such as Lycoris herself may read! Who would refuse verses to Gallus?

**Hor. Carm. saec. 5-8:**

*quo Sibyllini monuere versus*

*virginis lectas puerosque castos*

*dis, quibus septem placuere colles, dicere carmen*

when the words of the Sybil have commanded a choir of chosen virgins and chaste young boys to chant a hymn to the gods who are gladdened by the seven hills

**Hor. Carm. 4.12.9-10:**

*dicunt in tenero gramine pinguiam*

*custodes ovium carmina fistula*

they are singing as they lie on the yielding grass keeping their fattening sheep and playing their pipes

The expression *dicere carmen* in the examples above, strikingly reminiscent of the Greek and Vedic versions of the inherited formula Show (*deijk-*) Song, can be complemented by *dicere laudēs*, found in religious, hymnic contexts:
SHOWING PRAISE IN GREEK CHORAL LYRIC

Tib. 1.3.31–32:

\textit{bisque die resoluta comas tibi dicere laudes}
\textit{insignis turba debeat in Pharia}

and chant your praises twice a day, with loosened hair,
pre-eminent among the Pharian throng

Virg. Ecl. 6.6–7:

\textit{namque super tibi erunt qui dicere laudes,}
\textit{Vare, tuas cupiant et tristia condere bella}

since there are more than enough who desire to sing
your praises, Varus, and write about grim war

Hor. Carm. Saec. 74–76:

\textit{spem bonam certamque domum reporto,}
\textit{doctus et Phoebi chorus et Dianae}
\textit{dicere laudes}

such is the good and certain hope I carry home
as chorus trained to sing the praises
of Phoebus and Diana

In view of the Greek and Sanskrit parallels in sections 1 and 2 above it
becomes entirely plausible to suppose that these uses of \textit{dícere} actually
continue something very old, and I think they do. However, proving that
this is indeed the case will be a daunting task, since a meaning such as
“to celebrate in song” would be easily deducible from the meaning “to
speak,” which has to be postulated for Proto-Italic in any event. In order
to become truly compelling, any such argument based on Latin will in
addition have to appeal to material that is more or less isolated, thus
with a chance of preserving something old.

3.2. With this in mind, we may turn our attention to the verb (-)\textit{dícáre}
which, of course, goes back to the same root as \textit{dícere}. The verb normally
means “to dedicate,” but in early Latin it still has the meaning “to praise”
(Lucil. 1080 (Marx)):

\textit{sicubi ad auris}
\textit{fama tuam pugnam <prae>claram adlata dicasset}
\textit{(claram cdd. : praeclaram Marx : clarans Warmington)}

wheresoever rumor that was brought to my ears
praised your splendid fight
The stem formation of the verb *dīcāre* is hard to explain unless one assumes that the verb was secondarily extracted from compounds such as *praedicāre* and indeed, the latter verb has the right meaning “to praise, to extol” (Ter. Eun. 565–66):

> *Quid ego eiusmod faciem praedicem aut laudem Antipho,*
> *Cum ipsum me noris quam elegans formaram spectar siem?*

Why now should I extol or commend her beauty to you, Antipho, since you yourself know how nice a judge of beauty I am?

An interesting feature of *praedicāre* is that it is the only Latin verb of speaking compounded with *prae-* where the prefix has a locative and not a temporal meaning (viz. “recite in front of someone,” not “precede someone in reciting a poem, etc.”). Francis (1973, 38, n. 84) rightly observes that this feature (that separates *praedicāre* from *praefārī* or *praeloqui*) is likely to be old. We will thus do well by looking closer at *praedicāre* in search of other signs of antiquity, including an inherited usage.

The verb *praedicāre* in all probability belongs together with the so-called “à-intensives” of the type *occupāre* (=*capere*), *consternāre* (=*sternere*) and, just as these verbs, is ultimately based on a prepositional compound *praedīc-* (*prāj-dik-*). This nominal stem, in fact, lives on in the word *praecō-, -onis* “crier, herald, auctioneer.” This time the relevant usage is not attested until Classical Latin, but the word itself must be quite old; *praeco* goes back to *praj-dik-ôn-* with a syncope of the medial short vowel that guarantees a certain antiquity of this compound. Since Italic *praj-* and Sanskrit *pra* go back to the same etymon, the reconstructed

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47 On the profession, see Schneider 1953; Hinard 1976; Rauh 1989. Cf. Rauh 1989, 452: “they summoned the Roman senate and assemblies to meetings; they called for silence at the beginning of these meetings; they read aloud legislation to be voted upon at assemblies; they called the order of centuries and tribes to vote; they announced the results and brought these meetings to a close. In a more dreaded aspect, they might also expel foreigners from the city, or summon defendants to appear before magisterial tribunals and keep order at the same . . . praecones appear to have performed other tasks for a fee: they silenced the audience at the beginning of performances in the theater and expelled slaves from the same, they called out in the streets for lost persons or property, they announced the demise of prominent citizens.”

48 The verb *praedicō* shows the effect of recomposition, while in the case of the noun *praeco* the Romans were less concerned about maintaining synchronic links to the base verb *dīcere*.

49 Indo-European (directional) *pro* and (locatival) *preh, i*, respectively; on Latin *praes* and Sanskrit *pra*, see García Ramón 1997.
nominal *pra- dik-* becomes comparable to Vedic Sanskrit prá-diś- “sing (praise)” in section 2 above.

The duties of praecones have been well studied and we know that this was essentially a job of low social esteem. Moreover, thanks to such aspects of their job as selling debtors’ property or officiating at funerals, praecones in the Roman world enjoyed a somewhat nefarious reputation. It is therefore surprising to see Cicero applying this word to Homer, as he relates the words spoken by Alexander at Achilles’ tomb in Sigeum: O fortunato adulescens, qui tuae virtutis Homerum praeconom inveneris (“Fortunate youth, to have found Homer as a herald of your valor,” Arch. 24; no source is known for the quotation). The Ciceronian use of praecō has apparently caught on: in Augustan poets, the derivative praeônium (that otherwise usually means “auctioneer’s cry”) is often used with reference to the publicity and fame provided by poetry.

Now præcō virtūtis in Cicero is in all likelihood directly dependent on a Greek source, namely an epigram by Antipater of Sidon praising Homer as Ἡρώων κάρυκ’ ἀρεταί (9.1 Gow–Page = Anth. Pal. 7.6.1). This text may have been widely known in Rome; Cicero read Antipater and spoke highly of him (Orat. 3.194; Fat. 2), and since Cicero was generally taken to Greek models, the possibility of a calque is very high. Nonetheless, we should not forget that Latin praecō was not an equivalent of Greek κήρυξ for all intents and purposes. For instance, while reworking a passage from Polybius where, after the battle of Cynocephalae, the herald declares the freedom of Greek states that once were under Macedonian domination
(Polyb. 33.32.4), Livy uses *praeco* to render κηρυξ but feels the need to explain for his Roman audience the Greek practice of commencing the games with a traditional formula pronounced by the herald (κηρυξ) from the center of the arena. The question, therefore, remains: what made Cicero, with his extremely sensitive ear for language, identify the *praeconis vox garrula* (Apul. Fl. 9) with a vehicle of praise? A simple answer would be his creative genius. But given that in the first century B.C.E. the word was not synchronically analyzable as a derivative of dicere / dicâre, and given that the meaning “song of praise” does not seem to be compatible with the profession of *praeco* “crier” as it was known in Cicero’s times, the possibility has to be considered seriously that the reason Cicero felt comfortable using the word *praeco* in such a high-poetic context is that he was in fact familiar with an archaic tradition in which the word was used in such a way.

To sum up the results gained in this section: (1) in view of the Greek-Indo-Iranian deployment of the reflexes of *dei-k/-, the striking use of Latin *dico* in the meaning “celebrate in song,” as well as such puzzling constructions as *dicere laudēs* and *dicere carmen*, have now become easily explainable as inherited archaisms; (2) the usage of *praedicāre* (with its archaic meaning of *praeco*), decompositional *dicāre*, and the noun *praecō* (< *praį-dik-ōn*) allows reconstructing a pre-Latin juncture *praį-dik- + Praise (laudem, etc.), more or less directly comparable to Vedic *pra-dis-nāmaiktim*, etc.).

4. The reconstruction of a poetic figure Show (*dei-k*) + Song (of praise) is now supported by evidence coming from three traditions: Greek, Indo-Iranian, and Italic. This result does not invalidate the common wisdom concerning the meaning of the root *dei-k*: the poetic figure in question must have belonged to the poetic register of the protolanguage

34 *praeco cum tubicine, ut mos est, in medium aream, unde sollemni carmine ludicrum indici solet, processit* (Liv. 18.46.4). The Romans may have expected a term like *circi nuntius* (AE (1971) 44).

35 This formulation does not necessarily imply a written tradition. My own understanding of the processes involved in the survival of inherited lore of this kind comes very close to the following formulation by Bakhtin: “Cultural and literary traditions (including the most ancient) are preserved and continue to live not in the individual subjective memory of a single individual and not in some form of collective “psychc,” but rather in the objective forms that culture itself assumes (including the forms of language and spoken speech), and in this sense they are inter-subjective and inter-individual (and consequently social); from here they enter literary works, sometimes almost completely bypassing the subjective individual memory of their creators” (1981 [1975], 249, n. 17).
How did this poetic phraseology originate? At the end of the day it is impossible to tell, and we can only engage in speculation. One way of deriving the “poetic” meaning of *dei- from the colloquial “to show, to point out” would be along the lines of “directing” or “assigning” a song of praise to a deity, perhaps as a part of a reciprocal relationship between poet-sacrificer and his patron or a deity (do ut des). But there is another potentially promising approach: *dei- -gθθ,h,m “to show forth (viz., sing, perform) a song of praise” could have originally meant something like “to reveal a song of praise.” A parallel to this scenario can be seen in the Indo-European root *bʰeh₂- that meant “to shine” (Vedic bhāti, Greek φ᾽ αντα- λαμποντα Hsch.) but also “to be visible, to appear” with a common semantic shift. Its present stem with a nasal infix *bʰ-n-h₂- would be expected to take on a transitive meaning “make visible, reveal” which is indeed found in Armenian banam “open.” The same stem *bʰ-n-h₂- is continued by Greek φανω act. “bring to light,” mid. “to appear” (*bʰn₁-h₁-e/o-); importantly, φαίνε is used of singing (“revealing”) a song, as the following examples make clear:

Od. 8.499:

ώς φαθ', ὦ δ' ὀρμηθείς θεοῦ ἠρχετο, φαίνε δ' ἀοιδήν

So he said, and, inspired by the god, Demodocus began and sang the song

Emped. B 131.3–4 DK:

εὐχομένων νῦν αὐτὲ παρίστασο, Καλλίσεια, ἀμφὶ θεῶν μακάρων ἀγαθὸν λόγον ἐμφαίνοντι
Stand by me, Calliope, in my prayer,
as I reveal a worthy account of the blessed gods

The idea of performance as revelation, encoded by φανέω and its derivatives, is not limited to Archaic Greece: the Vedic counterpart of the Greek verb is bhānati (*bh₂-n(e)-h₂-) which in the oldest texts similarly means “to sing a song [of praise],” (RV 6.11.3):

dhānyā cid dhi tvé dhīṣāṇā vāṣṭi prā devān jāma granāṭe yājadhyai / vēpiṣṭho ñigirasāṃ yād dha vípro mádhu chándō bhānati rebhā iṣṭaū //

For even the enriching Dhiṣāṇa wishes to sacrifice in thee
to the kin of gods for the singer,
when the most inspired sage of Angirases, the poet,
sings a sweet song searching [for the gods]

This correspondence between the two traditions shows that the verbal stem *bh₂-n(e)-h₂- (“to reveal”) could be used in Indo-European poetic language with objects such as “song,” just as *dejā- in the examples studied above. The parallel between *bh₂eh₂- and *dejā- adds plausibility to the proposed semantic interpretation of the formula *dejā- *gʷrh₂m as grounded in the notion of revelation.

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64 Cf. further Pi. O. 13.97–98, ἔσομεν τὰ τ’ ἐν Νεμέου πάρῃ ἔπαι / θήσω φανέρ’ ἀθρό’ (“as for their victories at the Isthmos and Nemea, in a brief word I shall reveal their sum”); Bacch. 13.222–24, ὥμοιν κύρτονον φανόω (but Maehler’s supplement is not beyond doubt); Aesch. Eum. 569, ὑπέρτονον γῇσμα φανέτω σπαρκ. Vollgraff 1925, 126, n. 2, has already compared Bacchylides’ use of φανόω to δεικύναι, so perhaps the same sense (“δεικύναι, anche, se prend peut être dans le même sens”).

65 In other passages, bhānati means “(solemnly) speak, declare” (e.g., RV 4.18.7ab asmai nivīdo bhananta . . . ápah, “the waters speak eulogies to him”), and this is the meaning of the verb in the later language.

66 The comparison between *dejā- and *bh₂eh₂- appears particularly intriguing in the light of the Germanic reflexes of the latter root: Old English bannan “to summon,” Old High German bannan “to order.” If Germanic *banna- developed a meaning “to speak solemnly” from “to reveal,” “to make visible” (< *bh₂h₂-np-), it is not unreasonable to assume that the root *dejā- could similarly develop a meaning “to speak” based on an earlier meaning “to reveal” (perhaps limited to the poetic register). This would explain nicely the semantics not only of Latin dicere and its Italic cognates, but also of Germanic *teihan (“to accuse”), Phrygian ταϊκονος (“cursed”), and Hittite tekrî- (“slander”), as I am planning to argue elsewhere.

67 Some uncertainties about the root *bh₂eh₂- remain, including the unexpected root present *bh₂eh₂- (“to speak”; Greek φημι, Armenian bəm, Latin fāri, and Sanskrit bhāṣ-), but space limitations prevent a discussion of these problems here.
5. After this detour in Sanskrit, Latin, and Indo-European, we can now return to Greek and revisit a longstanding problem in the epic language, namely, the epithet ἀριδείκετος. Here are the attestations:

Il. 11.248:
Τὸν δ’ ὁς οὖν ἑνόησε Κόιων ἀριδείκετος ἄνδρῶν
When Koön, ἀριδείκετος among men, saw this

Il. 14.320:
ἡ τέκτη Περσήρα πάντων ἀριδείκετον ἄνδρῶν·
who bore Perseus, ἀριδείκετος among all heroes

Od. 8.382+ (6x):
Ἀλκίνοος κρέισσον, πάντων ἀριδείκετε λαῶν,
King Alcinoos, ἀριδείκετος among hosts of men

Od. 11.540:
γηθοσύνη, ὅ οἱ υἱῶν ἔφην ἀριδείκετον εἶναι
exulting over what I had said about his son (i.e. Neoptolemus)
being ἀριδείκετος

Hes. Th. 385:
καὶ Κράτος ἢ δὲ βίην ἀριδείκετα γείνατο τέκνα
and she gave birth to Kratos and Bia, ἀριδείκεται children

Hes. Th. 532:
tαὐτ’ ἄρα ἄξομενος τίμα ἀριδείκετον υἱῶν
in this way, he respectfully honored his ἀριδείκετος son (i.e. Heracles)

Hes. Th. 543:
ἀπετηνόθη, πάντων ἀριδείκετ’ ἀνάκτων
Son of Iapetus, ἀριδείκετος among all rulers!

Hes. fr. 196 MW ( = 154 Most):
[ ]ς πάντων ἀριδείκετος ἄνδρῶν
... ἀριδείκετος among all heroes
The metrical distribution alone suggests that we are likely dealing with an archaic element of the epic diction: the word is mostly located after the hephthemimeral caesura and the verse-final sequence πάντων ἄρδεικετε / -oν λαόν / ἀνδρῶν matches the general profile of frequent Homeric formulae πάντων—SUPERLATIVE—GEN.PL.#68

Both the formal similarity to the root of δείκνυμι and the meaning “very renowned, very famous”68 have been clear to scholars ever since the beginning of Homeric studies; the problem has been the apparent incompatibility of this meaning with the usual set of meanings assumed for δείκνυμι.70 Therefore, Schulze’s suggestion to view ἄρδεικετος as a metrically lengthened form of *ἄρδεικετος (“sehr gegrüsst”): to δέκωμαι, “receive kindly”; Latin decus, “dignity”) has won wide acceptance.71 (It does not seem to have been noticed that the Doric proper name Ἄρδεικης, found in epichoric prose inscriptions (12x), effectively speaks against an explanation based on metrical lengthening.)

Now, the observations on the poetic use of the verbal root *deiκ- made in this article allow for a simple solution for this old conundrum: (ἄρι)δεικετος (“famous”) goes back to *deiκ-eto- which had the meaning “well worth singing of,” “well worth praising (in song).”72

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69 On the intensifying prefix ἄρι-, see Willi 1999.
70 See the discussion and references in Vine 1998, 20–21 (I would like to thank Brent Vine for a very useful discussion of this word).
71 See Schulze 1892, 242. To my knowledge only four scholars in the modern era have opted for a comparison with *deiκ-: (1) Sittl 1880, 52, argued that the epithet ἄρδεικετος (“much-shown”) originally referred to people pointing at a “celebrity” with their fingers; (2) somewhat similarly, Thieme 1938, 162, interpreted ἄρδεικετος as “wer verdient dass man ihn dem Fremden zeigt”; he notoriously argued for translating ἄρι- not as an intensifying prefix, but as “stranger” (connecting the word to Vedic arí-), a point of view that has been widely and deservedly criticized; (3) Tichy 1979, 175, likewise assigned to ἄρδεικετος a meaning “sehr zeigenswert,” which fails to persuade: why would an illustrious hero (or a deity) be qualified as someone worthy of being put on display—and what sort of “display” is intended? (4) finally, Forssman 1978, 20, argued that beside the well-known meaning “to show,” the root *deiκ- also had a meaning “to greet” (δεικνύμενος, δεικανώμαι, etc.), which according to him is found in ἄρδεικετος (“sehr gegrüsst”). This solution is not particularly compelling from the semantic point of view, but more importantly, it is not assured that the Greek verbal forms with the meaning “greet” belong to the root *deiκ- at all: the prevailing opinion on δεικνύμενος, δεικανώμαι, etc. connects these forms to the root *deκ- (“receive, accept”), whence “receive [a guest]” and “greet.”
72 Such a meaning would be entirely expectable in an *-eto- derivative; compare Vine’s 1998 remarks on the meaning of (ἀγα)λτός: “celebrated” (“well worth hearing about”); (πολυ)εθησότου: “much wished-for” (“well worth being asked for”); Vedic darsatā-: “good to look at” (“worthy of being seen”).
6. In conclusion I would like to emphasize that the proposed comparison between δεικτον in Greek choral lyric, *dicere carmen* in Latin, and adiksštómam in Vedic Sanskrit is not an exercise in mechanically pushing back to the level of the protolanguage anything that looks similar in Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit, certainly not purposive on its own. Rather, this article aspires to offer a more modest and at the same time more focused result, namely a novel way of understanding the Greek texts at hand. It is hoped that the comparative data elucidate the Greek passages in section 1 regardless of whether the further arguments concerning the root *dejč*—offered in section 4—hold water. To return to where this article began, there are still cases in the study of archaic Greek poetry where a violation of Karl Lehr’s sixth commandment for classical philologists is worth one’s while.\(^{73}\)

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Abbreviations of journals from L’année philologique, plus MSS = München Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft


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