PINDAR THE PROFESSIONAL
AND THE RHETORIC OF THE ΚΩΜΟΣ

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RECENT SCHOLARSHIP ON Pindar has expended much energy on questions of performance. Was Pindaric epinician performed by a chorus singing in unison or by a single singer, whether the poet or his delegate?[1] At stake is the nature of Pindar's poetic voice and the way he locates himself and his genre within the victory celebration. The choral hypothesis, at least in its latest incarnations, understands epinician as a kind of mediation between the individual victor and his fellow citizens, who may choose either to join the poet in praise, or to envy.[2] The solo hypothesis emphasizes that epinician poetry is but one element in a more extensive celebration of the victor's friends that included dancing, whether formal or informal, and other songs of celebration.[3] This festive context is, of course, the κῶμος. On the choral hypothesis, allusions in the odes to songs performed by young men refer to the chorus performing the epinician itself. On the solo hypothesis, these references look to other elements of the komastic celebration. That both these hypotheses can be maintained with vigor is a reflection of a fundamental ambiguity in Pindar's language and tone; while the first-person voice seems (on most occasions, at least) to be that of the poet, there are frequent references to plural singers. How are we to explain a singular and specific voice proceeding from multiple mouths?

The champions of the respective sides in this debate all have a similar methodology. They focus on problematic passages, that is, on suggestive references to solo or choral performance, and read them as stage directions.

1. For the solo hypothesis, see M. Heath, "Receiving the κῶμος: The Context and Performance of Epinician," *AJP* 109 (1988): 180–95; M. Lefkowitz, "Who Sang Pindar's Victory Odes?," *AJP* 109 (1988): 1–11 (this article will be cited by the revised and reprinted version in M. Lefkowitz, *First Person Fictions: Pindar's Poetic 'I'* [Oxford, 1991], pp. 191–201). For reactions on behalf of the choral hypothesis: A. P. Burnett, "Performing Pindar's Odes," *CP* 84 (1989): 283–93; C. Carey, "The Performance of the Victory Ode," *AJP* 110 (1989): 545–65. Further salvoes: M. Heath and M. Lefkowitz, "Epinician Performance: A Response to Burnett and Carey," *CP* 86 (1991): 173–91, and C. Carey, "The Victory Ode in Performance: The Case for the Chorus," *CP* 86 (1991): 192–200.

2. So, for example, A. P. Burnett, *The Art of Bacchylides* (Cambridge, Mass., 1985), pp. 5–6. S. Goldhill, *The Poet's Voice: Essays on Poetics and Greek Literature* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 135–36, comments on how the language of the κῶμος develops the drama of social reintegration. Most recently, L. Kurke, *The Traffic in Praise: Pindar and the Poetics of Social Economy* (Ithaca, 1991), p. 258, suggests that "the poet negotiates with the community on behalf of the returning victor." Kurke's work on the "economy" of praise does not explicitly depend on the choral hypothesis, but is most meaningful when choral performance is assumed.

3. Heath and Lefkowitz, "Epinician Performance," p. 191.

Thus, for example, M. Lefkowitz cites *Olympian* 1.17–18 (Δωρίαν ἀπὸ
φόρμιγγα πασσάλου λάμβαν') as evidence for solo performance, and dis-
misses *Nemean* 3.1–12, where Pindar says that he will share his song with
the voices of young men in a κῶμος, as evidence for the choral hypothesis.
These lines are rather references to a separate song by the κῶμος.[4]

In this article I would like to look at the problem from a slightly differ-
ent point of view. Instead of understanding references to solo or multiple
voices as literal indications of performance conditions, I will examine
them as examples of a rhetoric of performance, indications of how the
poet locates himself in the celebration, and as expressions of Pindar's to-
talizing claim for his poetic discourse.

I suggest that one of Pindar's major concerns is to mark off his poetry as
the work of a skilled professional. This is, of course, uncontroversial, but it
involves several interesting questions. What elements of the celebration
does Pindar appropriate? With what elements does he contrast himself?
Why are the appropriated and contrasted elements sometimes identical?
How does Pindar see his voice surviving in reperformance? My concern in
studying these questions is fundamentally one of poetic authority and po-
etic voice, but I hope that considering Pindaric epinician from such an angle
may help to throw some light on the controversy over choral or monodic
performance, as well. Since neither hypothesis can be proved correct, it
seems logical to prefer the one that results in a more satisfying picture of
Pindar as a poet. Although I shall incorporate some of the insights that have
arisen from the development of the solo hypothesis, I shall conclude that it
is rhetorically more desirable to suppose that references to multiple voices
do not look to a performance external to the epinician ode. Rather, they ex-
press a more complicated dynamic wherein the poet's voice is imposed
upon a chorus of multiple voices that in turn draws the κῶμος into its orbit.[5]

I

I will start by looking at the openings of *Olympian* 1 and 9, where Pindar
draws a distinction between his own poem and more informal singing.
Olympian 1 begins with the famous priamel that establishes the preemi-
nence of an Olympic victory and then moves on to the praise of Hieron.
Hieron is praised in terms of his administration of justice (12) and more
generally in terms of all the virtues (13). The focus then narrows to the
realm of music. Not only does he excel in his public functions but he
stands out in the world of the symposium as the object of glory (14). This
presumably means that he is the subject of sympotic poetry, but may also
imply that he participates in symposiastic song, takes delight in it:

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4. Lefkowitz, *First Person Fictions,* pp. 194, 199.

5. For a different attempt to give a positive valuation to the interplay of solo and multiple voices, see
Goldhill, *Poet's Voice,* pp. 144–45. He rejects Lefkowitz's theory of a dominant first-person voice that
represents the poet alone, and argues that a multiplicity of voices creates a multiplicity of sources of
praise; a wide circle of friends join in the duties and performance of praise.

ἀγλαΐζεται here admits of both meanings.[6] The poet marks symposiastic song out as essentially non-professional, οἷα παίζομεν φίλαν ἄνδρες ἀμφὶ θαμὰ τράπεζαν, "the kind of songs we men frequently play around the table of friendship" (16–17). The contrast between this kind of song, which we may label "amateur," and professional song is brought out by the antithesis at line 17 (ἀλλά).[7] Although Pindar does see himself as participating at the symposium, as shown by the use of the first person παίζομεν, that song is marked off as "play" and as a communal activity;[8] thus Pindar does not attend the symposium in his professional capacity.[9] If however, Pherenicus and his victory at Pisa are a meaningful source of joy, then Hieron needs Pindar and his Dorian lyre (17–19). A contrast is also implicit between the unique nature of Pindar's poem and the frequency of songs in a symposiastic setting. If Hieron gains glory from symposiastic poetry, how much more he will win from one of Pindar's odes!

There is another element in the opening of the ode that reinforces this contrast between Pindaric and lesser song. The transition from Olympia to Sicily is effected by mentioning the much spoken-of hymn (πολύφατος ὕμνος) that has its origin in Olympia and inspires the wise to sing of Zeus after arriving at the hearth of Hieron (8–11). W. J. Slater has suggested that this hymn is identical with the Archilochus-song that acts as the foil to Pindaric epinician in *Olympian* 9.[10] This is an attractive hypothesis, but even if the meaning of πολύφατος ὕμνος is less restricted and conjures only the generalized concept of an "Olympic hymn," the presence of any non-Pindaric song serves to mark off and heighten Pindar's performance. The beginning of the ode thus contains not just a formal priamel (1–7), but an implicit ladder of poetic performance: Olympia is the greatest contest. It engenders song and leads the wise to Hieron, who, being a patron of the arts, appreciates such things. There is much symposiastic song at Hieron's court, but Pindaric epinician is the only form of art that can truly do justice to the victory.

This contrast between Pindar's professional song and other less formal types also plays a large role at the beginning of *Olympian* 9. The καλλίνικος-hymn of Archilochus (frag. 324 W.) was sufficient for the κῶμος at Olympia, but now it is time for Pindar to shoot fiery poetic arrows at Zeus, Elis, and Pytho. A song that has Epharmostus as its theme will surely be successful (1–14).[11] Komastic singing here acts as foil for the formal epinician

6. D. Gerber, *Pindar's Olympian One: A Commentary* (Toronto, 1982), p. 36, discusses the possibility that the ambiguity between middle and passive is intentional, but concludes that the passive meaning should be preferred. In his commentary on 16 παίζομεν (p. 39), he speculates that the plural verb may be meant to include Hieron. If so, this increases the possibility of a middle connotation to ἀγλαΐζεται.

7. Gerber, *Olympian One*, p. 41, notes the common use of ἀλλά with imperatives in the sense of "come," but in this context the adversative seems more pointed.

8. For the connection of the verb παίζω with symposiastic song, see Gerber, *Olympian One*, p. 38.

9. Contrast Kurke, *Traffic in Praise*, p. 137.

10. Cited in Gerber, *Olympian One*, p. 25. Gerber, however, doubts that such a restricted meaning is intended.

11. On the καλλίνικος-song, see Σ *Ol.* 9.1 (Drachmann 1:266–68) and L. Kurke, "The Poet's Pentathlon: Genre in Pindar's First *Isthmian*," *GRBS* 29 (1988): 103–6, and especially her remark "the fault of the

ode.[12] This juxtaposition of a preexisting song that is at hand to be sung on any occasion with Pindar's carefully crafted commemoration of the event is particularly important in an ode where the concept of φυά plays so important a thematic role.[13] Pindar's song is best because it is an outpouring of innate talent in response to a specific occasion, because it is original, while the κῶμος song was unspecific, therefore unoriginal and inferior (whatever its immediate advantages during an on-the-spot revel). By implication poetry created for a specific occasion is in a particularly good position to reflect superior (innate) poetic talent: since a particular victory requires a particular treatment it will demand originality from the poet. The song sung at Epharmostus' κῶμος corresponds to the sympotic poetry at Hieron's court in *Olympian* 1: while both give pleasure both are insufficient when it comes to a permanent memorialization of achievement.

Song and revelry then, as E. L. Bundy has remarked, are the two elements of the victory celebration, but song, as the more lordly, rules. As an example he points to the beginning of *Nemean* 9, where the invitation to the Muses to proceed in a κῶμος from Sicyon on Aetna is set off against the epinician hymn of line 3, and later in the same poem, against lines 48–55, where the symposium (48) is a foil for song (49).[14] L. Kurke has suggested a similar contrast in *Nemean* 4.1–8, where the ephemeral songs that foster communal festivity (1–5) are set against the gift of a song that will permanently memorialize the victor (6–8).[15] We might add another instance of the κῶμος as a foil for Pindaric song from *Isthmian* 8, where the ode begins with the poet's command that someone go to the house of the victor to rouse the κῶμος as a recompense for his victory. Pindar then tells us that he too (v. 5 τῷ καὶ ἐγώ), although grieved at heart, has been requested to summon the Muse: Pindar is alienated, however briefly, from the revel.

We have seen that on several occasions κῶμος and symposium act as a foil for Pindaric song. The picture is more complicated than the evidence I have so far presented would suggest, however, for in numerous places in the epinicians, Pindaric song is identified with that of the κῶμος. The evidence for an association between epinician and the κῶμος has recently been collected and reexamined by M. Heath in his article, "Receiving the κῶμος: The Context and Performance of Epinician."[16] The celebration of an athletic victory is often described in terms of a κῶμος: Hagesias at *Olympian* 6.18 is described as the master of the κῶμος, and at *Nemean* 2.24 the

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kallinikos song . . . is its generic quality. . . . In contrast, Pindar emphasizes the making of his own song" (p. 106); cf. Heath, "Receiving the κῶμος," p. 188.

12. For the κῶμος as foil for the poet's song, see E. L. Bundy, *Studia Pindarica* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1986), p. 22.

13. On the φύσις (φυά)/τέχνη polarity in the ode, see T. K. Hubbard, *The Pindaric Mind: A Study of Logical Structures in Early Greek Poetry* (Leiden, 1985), pp. 118–23.

14. Bundy, *Studia Pindarica*, p. 22.

15. Kurke, *Traffic in Praise*, pp. 144–45. The contrast between the victory ode and other forms of celebration and performance is, of course, fundamental to the arguments of Heath and Lefkowitz in "Epinician Performance."

16. Above, n. 1.

fellow citizens of Timodemus are told to celebrate him in a κῶμος. The victory song is specifically called an ἐγκώμιον μέλος (e.g., *Ol.* 2.47 and *Nem.* 1.7), or an ἐπικώμιος ὕμνος (*Nem.* 8.50). Sources outside of Pindar also refer to ἐγκώμια in celebration of victory, and Pindar himself will sometimes refer to "this κῶμος" (*Ol.* 4.9).[17]

Pindar thus seems to want to have it both ways: sometimes the κῶμος is a foil for his poetry, sometimes it is an aspect of it. By using it as a foil, the poet can emphasize his own song's particularity and all the virtues that go with his professional persona, such as discipline in the choice of subject matter and stringent adherence to the rules of the genre: he must never be distracted from the task of praise. What does he gain from appropriating the κῶμος? A sense of its spontaneity and festivity: the poet is part of the celebration and moved by the occasion. Participation in the κῶμος gives him access to all the good qualities that are associated with φυά, nature.

Pindar's relationship with the κῶμος can therefore most profitably be understood as enacted on the plane of rhetoric. Pindar chooses whether or not to include himself in the revel in accordance with poetic criteria: sometimes, in order to increase the majesty of his song and himself, he will draw himself apart, and sometimes he will choose to indicate his solidarity with the lesser forms of the victory celebration. Praise, after all, is a communal effort, and in order to be successful Pindar must represent the community as well as rise above it. The hypothesis of choral performance further illuminates the dynamic that obtains between Pindar and the κῶμος. The epinician chorus acts as a physical transitional element between the voice of the poet and the society into which the victor is returning; its many voices speak as one, but its visible plurality (together with verbal assimilation to the κῶμος) points toward the larger world of the revel and the city.[18]

The references to Pindar and the κῶμος are, however, susceptible to another interpretation. As stated above, the champions of the solo hypothesis use the references to the κῶμος to raise the question of whether the odes were performed by a solo singer. Heath concludes that the connection between epinician and κῶμος can illumine the context and manner of performance of Pindar's epinician. The assumption that the connection between epinician and κῶμος implies that epinician was part of a κῶμος is crucial to his argumentation. Once this equation is made, he can claim that the early sources do not associate the epinician κῶμος with rehearsed dance and that although the κῶμος can be associated with dance, the one does not imply the other. Formal prepared dance was thus not a part of epinician performance. He goes on to remark that since Pindar's poems provide evidence both for unison singing and solo performance, one can construct a scenario where the κῶμος sings some sort of informal song en route to its

destination (such as the Archilochus-song of *Olympian* 9—which we should note was sung at Olympia and was not therefore envisaged as part of the present celebration) and then stops for a more complex solo rendition when it arrives.[19] Lefkowitz, on the other hand, concentrates on the question of choral performance, examining the passages that have been adduced as evidence for it and arguing that references to group performance can be dismissed as referring to performances outside the poem. Heath and Lefkowitz thus take the conflicting indications of Pindar's relationship with the κῶμος (which I interpret rhetorically) and use them literally. For Heath, the movement of the first-person speaker alternately into and away from the realm of the κῶμος is a reflection of two different chronological stages in the progression of the celebration, one involving unison and one involving solo singing. For Lefkowitz, the first-person speaker, although embedded in the komastic context, remains isolated within it.

Heath and Lefkowitz see problematic passages as serving "to integrate the ode with the festivities to which it is a contribution."[20] That is, κῶμος-terminology situates the ode in its celebratory context by referring to some of the different activities that are taking place. This mode of integration is, however, problematic. Thus A. P. Burnett can assert that their theory entails the "separation of the Pindaric κῶμος from the Pindaric ode."[21] Although this remark may be somewhat overstated, it points up one of the areas of difficulty in the solo hypothesis.[22] This difficulty is poetic, and may best be described as a diffusion of focus. If passages in Pindar that mention unison singing are uniformly referred to contexts external to the epinician ode, the result is a poetic that frequently looks beyond itself, that sees itself as incomplete. As will become apparent, I believe that such a view of Pindar's poetic is mistaken. This is not to say that such references are absent; indeed, references to κῶμος and symposium as foil to Pindar's poetry, and likewise, the appropriation of these festive contexts, are of great significance.[23]

Both Heath and Lefkowitz are, I believe, correct to emphasize the strong preeminence of the first-person singular voice, the voice of the poet. Indeed, as early as 1963 Lefkowitz had remarked that the epinicia bear more resemblance to monodic elegy than to communal choral song.[24] In many ways this is entirely justified, but we may wonder whether this phenomenon is not a peculiarity of Pindar rather than an indication of the

19. Heath, "Receiving the κῶμος," pp. 186–88.

20. Heath and Lefkowitz, "Epinician Performance," p. 176.

21. Burnett, "Performing Pindar's Odes," p. 287.

22. Heath and Lefkowitz, "Epinician Performance," p. 176 and n. 8, take issue with Burnett's contention, emphasizing that while the solo hypothesis "does, in a sense, separate the ode from the komasts," it does not separate the ode from the celebration. Yet Burnett does seem correct to assert that the solo hypothesis does separate the ode from a specifically Pindaric κῶμος.

23. Bremer, "Pindar's Paradoxical ἐγώ," p. 55, remarks that the "'choralists' have not yet given a satisfactory explanation for Pindar's persistent use of κῶμος instead of χορός." His solution is that χορός has connotations of sacredness and therefore cannot be applied to secular songs of praise. Clearly, I find the answer in the realm of rhetoric rather than religion.

24. M. Lefkowitz, "ΤΩ ΚΑΙ ΕΓΩ: The First Person in Pindar," *HSCP* 67 (1963): 210. This article has been reprinted and revised in *First Person Fictions*, pp. 1–71.

mode of performance. The current scholarly war has evolved because the Pindaric evidence genuinely points in two directions, both to solo and to unison singing, but we may be able to find the solution to the problem in Pindar's poetic rather than in the external conditions of performance. As is widely acknowledged, Pindar engages in an extraordinary amount of self-reference and is at pains to parade his own methodology.[25] As I have shown elsewhere, this is a function of his desire to (as it were) reissue the genre of epinician under his own authority and exalt himself to a poetic dominance that is unassailable precisely because he himself defines the process by which dominance is achieved.[26] If, then, we take the strength of the first-person speaker in Pindar and his distancing of his own song from other forms of victory revel and other kinds of poetry as Pindaric constructs, we may be able to use them to shed light on the question of what kind of professional Pindar thinks he is.

II

I would like to consider the problem of professionalism, the κῶμος, and the first-person voice under the rubric of appropriation. By this I mean that Pindar's concern is to establish himself as the ultimate professional, not in the sense that he is paid (although he does admit this as an inescapable and not entirely negative aspect of the modern poetic scene in *Isthmian* 2), but in the other modern sense of the word: the responsible and expert practitioner of a particular skill. His profession, his poetry, is "ultimate," I argue, because it appropriates all other forms of the victory celebration. Not only that, but it can be argued that he attempts to appropriate all other forms of poetry, especially Homer's.[27] Pindar fairly routinely draws the komastic celebration into the sphere of his poetry, but association, even appropriation, is not identity. Let us examine the nature of this appropriation a little more closely.

I have already mentioned *Olympian* 9, where the komastic Archilochus-song of celebration is rejected in favor of Pindaric epinician. The previous poet's καλλίνικος-hymn is considered, included in the ode by being mentioned (and possibly through the Heraclean subject matter of the ode's myth: the Archilochus-song may also have recounted the exploits of Heracles),[28] and then passed by. There are other places in the Olympian odes where a conventional form of epinician song is appropriated into Pindar's ode. In *Olympian* 10, where Pindar recounts the tale of the first Olympic games, we hear that "the whole precinct rang with song and pleasant festivities in the mode of praise" (or more literally, "the komastic mode": τὸν

25. See, for example, H. Maehler, *Die Auffassung des Dichterberufs im frühen Griechentum bis zur Zeit Pindars* (Göttingen, 1962); Burnett, *Art of Bacchylides*, p. 56; C. Segal, *Pindar's Mythmaking: The Fourth Pythian Ode* (Princeton, 1986), p. 128; Lefkowitz, *First Person Fictions*, p. 42.

26. K. Morgan, "Myth and Method: Studies in the Manipulation of Myth from Parmenides to Plato," (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Berkeley, 1991), pp. 63–66.

27. On Pindar's debt to Homer, see F. J. Nisetich, *Pindar and Homer* (Baltimore, 1989), esp. 22–23.

28. Kurke, "Poet's Pentathlon," pp. 104–6; M. Simpson, "Pindar's *Ninth Olympian*," *GRBS* 10 (1969): 113–24.

ἐγκώμιον . . . τρόπον, 76–77). Now also, says the poet, following the former beginnings, we shall sing the grace of noble victory, named after it, the thunder and the fiery thunderbolt of Zeus. The first games were thus the occasion for a komastic song of Olympic victory that had Zeus as its theme. It is in this tradition that Pindar sets his own song; he is following previous beginnings, the original Olympic hymn, which he has taken over and made his own. This hymn appears again in the passage at *Olympian* 1.8–10 dealt with above: from Olympia, the much-spoken hymn is cast over the minds of the wise, to come to the house of Hieron and sing of Zeus. Hieron's glories evoke regular sympotic celebration and his Olympic victory incites all to sing an Olympic hymn. It seems likely that this hymn is not identical with the Archilochus-song, if, as has been suggested, the latter dealt primarily with Heracles. In any case, the generic hymn of Olympic victory has been transformed into Pindaric epinician.[29]

We can see the same dynamic of appropriating and then surpassing at work in other, more clearly komastic contexts. At *Isthmian* 8.1–8, Pindar isolates himself from the κῶμος in order to display his own professionalism: although he is grieved at the recent march of history, he can still be relied upon to summon the appropriate Muse.[30] He stands briefly in relief against the background of the carefree κῶμος until his poetic instincts take over and reintegrate him. Similarly at the opening of *Nemean* 3, Pindar begins by standing apart from the κῶμος that desires his song. This passage has caused much controversy. Before the emergence of the solo hypothesis, the statement that young men, the carpenters of sweet-speaking κῶμοι, are waiting for Pindar's song was interpreted straightforwardly as a reference to the desire of the chorus to sing the epinician ode. Heath, however, suggested that the young men have already been singing and are now waiting for the poet to add a solo song to the celebration. It would be complicated and unnecessary to suppose that "the κῶμος is waiting for the song *and* singing the song *and* singing that they are waiting for the song that they are singing."[31] Lefkowitz, too, sees two songs involved, the κῶμος-song and the song of the poet; C. Carey, however, maintains that the most obvious explanation for the desire of the κῶμος for Pindar's song is that they wish to sing it.[32] On my reading, the young men are described as carpenters of sweet-speaking κῶμοι not because they are about to sing, or have already sung, a komastic song, but because young men are generically creators of κῶμοι.[33] They are, in fact, about to be absorbed into the machine of Pindaric poetry, as lines 11–12 show: "I shall share it [his

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29. There may be another reference to this Olympic hymn at *Nem.* 3.55–56: Lefkowitz, *First Person Fictions,* p. 199, comments that the aorist ἔβαλεν implies that the hymn mentioned "was sung by a *komos* on some past occasion, perhaps at the site of the victory." Cf. Carey, "Performance," p. 556, and Heath and Lefkowitz, "Epinician Performance," p. 188.

30. Lefkowitz, *First Person Fictions,* p. 45. Contrast C. Carey, *A Commentary on Five Odes of Pindar* (New York, 1981), pp. 184–86.

31. Heath, "Receiving the κῶμος," pp. 187–88.

32. Lefkowitz, *First Person Fictions,* p. 199 (maintained in the face of opposition in Heath and Lefkowitz, "Epinician Performance," pp. 186–88); Carey, "Performance," p. 553 and "Case for the Chorus," pp. 196–97.

33. As Heath and Lefkowitz, "Epinician Performance," p. 188, admit.

hymn] with their voices [that is, the voices of the young men] and the lyre." It is tempting to attribute thematic importance to the use of κοινά-σομαι here; Pindar is causing his song to be the common property of the entire celebration. By this time the young men have been transformed from an informal κῶμος into what we would call the "chorus," and this transformation is Pindar's monument to his own poetic power.

If this dynamic is at work in places where Pindar sets himself apart from the chorus, it is surely easy to read it into the passages where Pindar refers straightforwardly to "this κῶμος." In these cases, Pindar is not out to make a point about the unique and all-inclusive nature of his song, rather, he assimilates the two personalities, komastic and poetic, winning the spontaneity and undoubted sincerity of the former and the professionalism of the latter. In *Olympian* 14.13–18 the Graces are told to listen to the poet's prayer, looking upon "this κῶμος," for the poet has come singing in a Lydian mode. Heath comments that "the *komos* is seen, but what is heard is the singing, which is what 'I' do, not what 'this *komos*' does."[34] Yet the most natural interpretation of this passage is that the causal γάρ (17) connects the Lydian singing with the action of the moving κῶμος. The sequence of thought is clear: hear my prayer, looking on this κῶμος, for I am singing. The word γάρ is more meaningful if the κῶμος is intimately connected with the singing. Carey, indeed, has pointed out that Heath takes γάρ to refer only to the imperative "hear my prayer" and not the participle "seeing."[35] To this it is replied that the singer is indeed part of the κῶμος but is differentiated.[36] True enough, but, from what I have said above, this is to be expected; I differ from Heath in the precise specification of how the singer is associated with the κῶμος. Heath subsumes Pindar into the revel whereas I would subsume the revel into Pindar. Each interpretation depends upon the view taken of the relationship of Pindar and the κῶμος as a whole. We can see the same dynamic at work in *Pythian* 10.4–6, where Pindar is commanded to bring "the famous voice of men in a κῶμος." Once more, Pindar is the operator who has assimilated the κῶμος to his song.

To summarize my conclusions so far: Heath and Lefkowitz consider that κῶμος-terminology provides crucial evidence for the context of performance. The performance of the Pindaric ode is seen as one of many komastic events, and references to the κῶμος integrate the ode into its festive context. I would prefer to read these references as examples of Pindar's appropriation of the κῶμος into the epinician poetic context, and would claim that evocations of the κῶμος should not be read as stage directions.[37]

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34. Heath, "Receiving the κῶμος," p. 187.
35. Carey, "Performance," p. 560.
36. Heath and Lefkowitz, "Epinician Performance," p. 183.
37. Compare W. Mullen's suggestive treatment of the problem of the κῶμος in *Choreia: Pindar and Dance* (Princeton, 1982), pp. 24–27. Mullen notes that Pindar's song collapses the whole temporal sequence of the victory celebration: "the ode calls itself a *komos* here and now, but it also uses language that makes it seem a reenactment of the original burst of handy abandon that greeted the annunciation of the athlete's victory." Moreover, he states, the ode is only a prelude to the real κῶμος which has yet to take place.

What is the point of this appropriation? On one level this question has already been answered: Pindar aims to establish the scope of his poetry by contrasting it with other forms of victory celebration and by absorbing them. He wants to be all-inclusive, though not indiscriminately so. We might observe how closely related this process of generic appropriation is to Pindar's treatment of myths. One of the most fascinating aspects of Pindar's method is the rhetorical flourish through which he manages both to have his mythological cake and eat it too, that is, how he will make a great point of refusing to tell a story—or at least parts of it—and will sometimes replace the dismissed version with his own. But of course, by rejecting one version he calls it into life (sometimes in great detail) so that he both tells and refuses to tell the story.[38] The result is that he can parade his own poetic principles, show his method, and set himself up as the arbiter of what is poetically appropriate. His strategy is to include variant or unwanted versions within his poems in order to establish a universalizing claim ("the world of myth is under my complete control"), but to take care to set himself apart from them. This is precisely analogous to the practice that we can see in the treatment of the κῶμος: it is included but distinguished. We might say that, on a poetic level, Pindar is in charge of a κῶμος of myths—a happy rout that must nevertheless be carefully watched. The danger, of course, is lack of discipline on the part of the komastic rout (both real and metaphorical!), and it is precisely the quality of discipline that the professional poet provides. Pindar is fond of declaiming the importance of καιρός, and it is in this light that we may want to read the frequent references to poetic discipline under the rubric of καιρός.[39] Pindar wants φυά, that is, spontaneity, natural talent, exciting myths, and wants his poetry to be all-inclusive, all-appropriating, but he is aware that inclusion threatens stability. He must include varied material in order to differentiate himself, but by the same token this calls for (or is perhaps the pretext for) his own enlarged presence in his song.

We may go a step further and consider the phenomenon of Pindar's intrusive presence and his practice of appropriation in terms of the place he wants to claim in what we would call his poetic tradition. It is self-evident that Pindar wants his poetry to be reperformed. His own fame and the fame of the victor he celebrates depend upon reperformance, for unless his song is repeated he cannot fulfil his promise of immortality through poetry.[40] Now, the multitude of references to the κῶμος makes it clear that Pindar considers his genre of victory poetry to have arisen from komastic victory celebrations and to be very ancient, as is evident from the end of Nemean 8, where Pindar states that the ἐπικώμιος ὕμνος (50) existed even before the strife of Adrastus and the Cadmeans (that is, before the episode of the Seven against Thebes). The genre has called forth many forms of praise, ranging from spontaneous outbursts to hymns of

38. Ol. 1 is, of course, the most famous example.
39. On καιρός, see e.g., Lefkowitz, First Person Fictions, pp. 38–41; G. Walsh, The Varieties of Enchantment: Early Greek Views of the Nature and Function of Poetry (Chapel Hill, 1984), pp. 43–49.
40. B. Gentili, Poetry and its Public in Ancient Greece, trans. T. Cole (Baltimore, 1988), p. 163 and n. 47.

Olympic victory honoring Zeus, to Archilochus' victory song, infinitely repeatable. Archilochus' song may have started out as an occasional performance but has been absorbed into the genre and is now undifferentiated. At some point, the victory celebration must have become more formalized; instead of unrehearsed dancing and singing on the part of the κῶμος, a professional poet was hired to create the song and a chorus was hired and rehearsed to dance and sing it.[41] On this reconstruction, Pindar's references to the κῶμος are indications of the history of the genre, which he carries with him. The victory song has left its humble origins behind and is now a formal communal celebration that encompasses many aspects of the victor's relationship with his family and city, marking his reintegration.[42] Choral lyric is a thing of the polis.[43]

Pindaric epinician is a professional composition designed for—what kind of performance? Professional or unprofessional? On the solo hypothesis, the performance is an island of formalism in a joyful rout. Yet even the assumption of choral performance does not answer all the questions that might be raised about the status of the performers. It has been suggested that while monody allows for non-professional as well as professional composition, choral lyric allows only professional composition, although it restricts performance to non-professionals.[44] While it is true that the chorus is not "professional" in the same sense that the poet is, and its members are not necessarily engaged for their performative skills, one might want to modify somewhat this description of the lyric chorus as non-professional. It must certainly have taken a fair amount of training to ensure polished unison singing and coordinated dancing; the chorus must attempt to achieve a standard of performance that matches the quality of the poetic product. We might better say that non-professionals are drawn into the professional sphere (another case of appropriation). All seems to be under professional control. But what will happen once the Pindaric song has left the nest of occasionality? What happens to the professional voice when the poem is reperformed?

There is evidence that epinician lyric was chiefly reperformed at symposia, sung by a solo singer who accompanied himself on the lyre. Aristophanes *Nubes* 1355–56 tells of a young man being requested to take up the lyre and sing the song of Simonides about the ram. We learn from the scholiast that this song was one of Simonides' epinician odes.[45] In the odes of Pindar, too, there is reference to the subsequent performance by which a poem gains immortality.[46] The clearest example is at *Nemean* 4.13–16: if Timocritus (the father of the victor) were still alive, he would frequently have sung this victory hymn, plucking the cithara. Timocritus

41. Cf. Lefkowitz, *First Person Fictions*, p. 70.
42. Above, n. 2.
43. G. Nagy, *Pindar's Homer: The Lyric Possession of an Epic Past* (Baltimore, 1990), p. 339. Cf. Lefkowitz, *First Person Fictions*, pp. 201, 205.
44. Nagy, *Pindar's Homer*, pp. 340–42.
45. D. L. Page, "Simonidea," *JHS* 71 (1951): 140–42.
46. Cf. Lefkowitz, *First Person Fictions*, p. 195; Heath and Lefkowitz, "Epinician Performance," p. 186.

is pictured as, literally, "leaning upon this song" (v. 15 τῷδε μέλει κλιθείς), and the image is surely that of reclining at a symposium. Reperformance, then, occurs in an informal context (although, as G. Nagy points out, substantial education was needed to enable somebody to accompany himself on the cithara while singing, and to this extent, the reperformer, like the original chorus, assimilates himself to the realm of the professional).[47] Not only that, it occurs in a context that is closely associated with the κῶμος, the symposium, with all its threat of undiscipline and rout. This is the negative side, but there is also a positive one: such a context will closely re-create the original victory celebration with its κῶμος and drinking parties. It is remarkable—and suggestive—that the present scholarly debate over monodic and choral performance (and thus over single and multiple voices) echoes this dual aspect of epinician's ancient performance. A song that (on the choral hypothesis I am adopting) was originally designed to be performed by many will depend for its survival on reperformance by solo singers. Perhaps there is here a further explanation for the imprecision of Pindar's language of performance: it must accommodate both types of performance.

In such surroundings there is a danger that Pindar's song may sink into the undifferentiated mass of sympotic and informal poetry. That is, once it has lost its original occasion it may lose its specificity and uniqueness. I would like to suggest that this danger is another reason for Pindar's strong personal presence. Each reperformance must contain his σφραγίς, so to speak; his song must appropriate the future occasion into its own present (the symposium, the revel), thus re-creating the context of the original victory. So Pindar not only commands the past of his genre, but attempts to dictate the course of the future. The komastic and sympotic associations of Pindar's epinician poetry mean that the κῶμος that follows a late fifth-century symposium where Pindar's songs are sung will be a κῶμος for the original victor. We can see this merging at work in Nemean 9.48–50:

> ἡσυχία δὲ φιλεῖ μὲν συμπόσιον· νεοθαλὴς δ' αὔξεται
> μαλθακᾷ νικαφορία σὺν ἀοιδᾷ· θαρσαλέα δὲ παρὰ κρατῆρα φωνὰ γίνεται.
> ἐγκιρνάτω τίς νιν, γλυκὺν κώμου προφάταν, . . .

I have already mentioned how the symposium is set off here against Pindaric song: peace, on the one hand, loves the symposium, but, on the other hand, victory increases when accompanied by song.[48] Pindar then continues: one's voice grows bold beside the mixing bowl. Let someone stir it up, it is the sweet declarer (or "interpreter") of the κῶμος. In these later statements, symposium and victory song are integrated. The voice of the symposium looks to that of the κῶμος, and its peace gives way to boldness under the influence of victory and wine and moves toward a more energetic revel. The κῶμος is one of the regular culminations of the drinking

47. Nagy, Pindar's Homer, p. 406.
48. Cf. Kurke, Traffic in Praise, pp. 137–38, for the "scripted spontaneity" of this passage, and also of Ol. 1.16–19.

party, and this is the generalized sense in which the mixing bowl declares
the κῶμος to come.[49] On this particular occasion, victory is the motivator
of the celebration, and the poet's song, accompanied by wine, will arouse
the κῶμος. Thus the words of Pindar's song have a double application;
they are not merely an invitation to present celebration, but to a future re-
creation of the victory revel. Whenever the poem is reperformed, the ath-
letic victor will live again.

Komastic language thus brings the future into the orbit of the present.
Yet it will be as important in the future as it ever was that Pindar make him-
self stand apart from the revel. If it is only the κῶμος that is re-created, the
song is again in danger of losing its specificity and thus its value. It is Pin-
dar's personal presence that guarantees the victor's, and he must continue
to be master of the revel. Just as he sets himself apart in the present victory
celebration, he will keep his poetry differentiated in any future one.

Pindar needs to stress his controlling presence for another reason, the
circumstances under which many of the victory odes will have been per-
formed. It is unlikely that Pindar journeyed to every location in which
one of his odes was to be performed.[50] The precise mechanics of the
sending of the song are uncertain, but the important thing is that Pindar
will not always have been physically present at the performance (in con-
trast, presumably, to the good old days when the poet was on the spot to
lead the chorus). It therefore becomes all the more important for Pindar to
stress his spiritual presence by constant emphasis on the mechanics of his
poetry and on the unique place of his voice in the general celebration.
One aspect of being a successful professional is that one does not need to
be present at the celebration in order to control it.

The boast of professionalism is, of course, a double-edged sword, as
Pindar realized. It can lead to accusations of being mercenary and produc-
ing uninvolved and uninspired song. I have tried to show how Pindar
counters the latter accusation by appropriating the vitality of the sympo-
sium and the komastic rout. As for the former, the *locus classicus* for dis-
cussion is the opening of *Isthmian* 2.[51] Poets of old swiftly shot like
arrows their hymns in praise of boys who possessed the bloom of youth
that recalled Aphrodite. The Muse at that point was not yet a lover of
profit, nor a worker, nor yet were songs sold with silvered-over faces.
Nowadays money makes the man (1–11). There is no doubt that the picture
Pindar paints there of the mercenary Muse is not a particularly attractive

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49. Heath, "Receiving the κῶμος," p. 180.

50. Evidence for Pindar's absence at *Ol.* 6.87–92 and *Isthm.* 2.47–48 (but on the former, see Lefko-
witz, *First Person Fictions,* pp. 195–97).

51. For a treatment of Pindar that sees the poet as a professional artisan of speech, a merchant of
σοφία, see J. Svenbro, *La parole et le marbre* (Lund, 1976), pp. 173–212, especially p. 181 (on the venal
Muse and *Isthm.* 2) and p. 185, where Svenbro draws the interesting distinction between *l'auteur contrac-
tuel,* who alludes to payment and attempts to assure himself of future commissions, and *l'auteur fictif,*
who protests his sincerity and veracity. This dichotomy corresponds to the dynamic relationship I have
sketched between an isolationist rhetoric of professionalism achieved by distance from the celebration,
and a rhetoric of appropriation achieved by absorbing the spontaneous energy of the revel. I do not, how-
ever, agree that Pindar's purpose in mentioning the materiality of his discourse is to request remuneration
or beg for future commissions, but rather to emphasize its unique memorializing qualities.

one, but as various studies have shown, the body of the ode moves towards
a more balanced appreciation of the place of money in society: when used
properly in pursuit of poetic glory, money is not necessarily to be despised.[52]
Consequently, the poet who works for money cannot be harshly criticized.
If earlier poets had the privilege of spontaneous poetry (and we recall that
they shot their poetic shafts straightaway at whoever caught their fancy),
Pindar's skill is all the greater in that, living in a time unsuited to it, when
he may not even be looking the victor in the face at the time the song is
sung to him, he can incorporate the virtues of spontaneity into his own
work. It has become a poetic technique.

Once again, Pindar appropriates other types of poetic expression, only
on this occasion it is not the κῶμος he takes over, but the tradition of mo-
nodic erotic lyric. Moreover, we can infer that he thinks he has surpassed
it, if we note that the erotic poetry of the good old days was fairly indis-
criminate in its choice of laudandus. They praised (and did so lightly, or
swiftly: ῥίμφα) whoever was beautiful, but Pindar praises not the merely
beautiful, the merely rich and influential, but those who have taken these
gifts and made good use of them.[53] Structurally, the poetry referred to at
the beginning of the ode is a foil for Pindar's poetry in the same way as
the Archilochus-song of the κῶμος was in Olympian 9, and the hymn of
Olympic victory along with Hieron's symposium was in Olympian 1. In
all three cases the poetry referred to in the foil is spontaneous and unpaid
for, and as such it is of great value, but the memorialization of athletic
achievement requires Pindar the professional, whose independence (and
thus sincerity) is guaranteed by his freedom to accept or refuse a commis-
sion.[54] The point about professional praise is that it can be (at least in
Pindar's case) discriminating, and here once again the importance of
καιρός is evident. In these complicated times it takes a professional to
know what the proper object of praise is.

In conclusion, I would like to return to the question of monodic versus
choral performance. It seems clear that this problem cannot ultimately be
resolved by arguing away the evidence that each side brings to bear; there
are indications of both solo and choral voices and performance. The pro-
ponents of the solo hypothesis acknowledge this and create an interpreta-
tion that locates choral performance outside the epinician itself but within
the festive context. This interpretation is logical in itself, but, I have sug-
gested, entails an impoverishment of Pindar's poetic voice and authority
by implying that the victory ode looks outside itself for the completion of
its performative context.[55] By contrast, the model of choral performance I
have elaborated here attributes to Pindar a self-sufficient and totalizing

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52. L. Woodbury, "Pindar and the Mercenary Muse: Isthm. 2. 1–13," TAPA 99 (1968): 527–42; and
most recently Kurke, Traffic in Praise, pp. 240–56.

53. So Kurke, Traffic in Praise, p. 248, who aptly titles her treatment of this ode "The Recuperation
of Megaloprepeia."

54. Cf. Svenbro, Parole, pp. 176–77.

55. So, for example, with the interpretation of Ol. 6.87–92. Lefkowitz, First Person Fictions, p. 197,
concludes that the song to Hera Parthenios is to be sung by the κῶμος, since the victory ode does not

poetic discourse that throws the excellence of his song into relief by subsuming all aspects of the present revel, the poetry of the past, and the performative context of the future. Pindar has set himself the task of creating a universalizing poetic system that will absorb all other forms of victory celebration and song. He has done so by painting a picture of himself as a professional poet, an expert and universalizing singer. This reconstruction explains both the preeminence of the solo voice and the references to the κῶμος; moreover, the superposition of the poet's voice on the multiple voices of the chorus is emblematic of an appropriative poetic dynamic. Just as Pindar absorbs the revel into his poetry, he submerges the choral into a virtually monodic personality.[56]

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mention the goddess again, and that the question of whether Pindar has escaped the ancient gibe "Boeotian sow" is to be referred to this same κῶμος. While this is not impossible, I prefer the alternate reading whereby the question is equivalent to a statement of the truth of Pindar's praise (Carey, "Performance," p. 557), because Pindar's authority is enhanced by such a statement and he does not look to the κῶμος for approval.