# RECEIVING THE κῶμος: THE CONTEXT AND PERFORMANCE OF EPINICIAN

## *I*

A fragment of Eubulus (94K = 93KA) remarks that sensible people go home from a symposium when the third mixing bowl has been emptied; those who stay on drain bowls for insult and shouting before reaching the sixth, which is for κῶμος. The κῶμος is a well attested feature of Greek conviviality.[1] When suitably inebriated the revellers at a party would set out, wearing their garlands, singing songs to the accompaniment of αὐλοί, and lighting their way with torches; and they would make their way to the house of some friend, there to seek admission. In the circumstances it is not surprising that κῶμοι acquired a reputation for disorderly and even violent behaviour. The next two bowls in Eubulus are for black eyes and summonses—and that leaves two bowls still to be emptied.[2]

The arrival of such an unruly mob at one's door might well prove troublesome, and would not necessarily be welcome. The question whether the κῶμος would be given a cordial reception was accordingly crucial; and for this δέχεσθαι becomes almost a technical term in komastic literature. In Plato's *Symposium,* for example, we twice see the arrival of a κῶμος from the point of view of its recipients. Agathon's self-consciously (176a–e) well behaved party is threatened by disruption when a rowdy κῶμος hammers at his door, and Agathon is at first inclined to have them turned away (212cd). In fact it is Alcibiades who has come to pay his respects to the victorious poet, and there is no question of turning him away (213a); but his admission does put an end to the party's restraint (213e–4a). Later a second

[1] Copious references in W. H. Headlam, *Herodas* (Cambridge 1922) 82–4; see further F. Jacobs, *Philostratorum Imagines* (Leipzig 1825) 202–13, H. Lamers, *RE* 11.2, 1286–1304.

[2] Philocleon's riotous return home in the latter part of *Wasps* is not, strictly speaking, a κῶμος, but it does reflect the kind of misbehaviour associated with one. Cf. Pratinas *PMG* 708 = *TGF* 4 F 3.8, E. *Cyc.* 534 (on the komastic element in this play see L. E. Rossi, *Maia* 23[1971]10–38), Aeschines 1.65, [D.]47.19, Aristotle frag. 510 (= Athenaeus 348c), Herodas 2.34–7 (with Headlam ad loc., n. 1 above).

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κῶμος, finding the outer door open, simply bursts in, and its arrival reduces the party to chaos (223b). Alcibiades, by contrast, though drunk and disorderly (212d4), scrupulously observes komastic etiquette. He stops in the doorway and asks whether Agathon will *receive* him (μεθύοντα ἄνδρα. . .δέξεσθε συμπότην 212e3–4); if not—and Agathon has already said that he would not admit just anyone—he and his companions will go away.

Alcibiades' request was spoken; but his κῶμος did have in train the usual αὐλητρίς (212c8,d6) and is likely to have been singing appropriate songs *en route*. So it is not surprising to find that the request for admission could itself be cast in the form of a song. A κῶμος in Theognis expresses its confidence that the friends being visited will receive them gladly, even if sound asleep (1045–6)[3]:

> ναὶ μὰ Δί', εἴ τις τῶνδε καὶ ἐγκεκαλυμμένος εὕδει
> ἡμέτερον κῶμον δέξεται ἁρπαλέως.

One might suspect irony here—may not the expressed confidence in fact conceal a malicious delight in disturbing those at rest? Compare another couplet (1041–2):

> δεῦρο σὺν αὐλητῆρι—παρὰ κλαίοντι γελῶντες
> πίνωμεν, κείνου κήδεσι τερπόμενοι.

The komastic connection, though not made explicit, provides a plausible context. Von Groningen complains "on comprend difficilement cette dureté," contrasting other passages in Theognis which take a more humane attitude to suffering (655f., 1133f., 1217f.); but a mob of inebriated revellers might well find such a prank amusing. Plutarch refers to drunken ἐπίκωμοι bursting into a house in mourning (*Mor.* 128d); and one might think also of the servant's misapprehension in Euripides' *Alcestis*.[4]

[3] On the symposium and κῶμος as the context for the performance of early elegy see most recently E. L. Bowie, *JHS* 106(1986)13–35. Von Groningen ad loc. supposes that this κῶμος is relying on a "sacred obligation" of hospitality—hardly to the point.

[4] Admetus, in mourning, bars κῶμοι and other forms of merriment from his palace (343–7); the servant is offended by Heracles' convival behaviour—νῦν δὲ πράσσομεν οὐχ οἷα κώμου καὶ γέλωτος ἄξια (804–5, cf. 815, 831). There is a neat inversion of the *topos* of the inopportune κῶμος in Plu. *Mor.* 148b: the Egyptians have a skeleton at symposia as a *memento mori*—a salutary lesson, but ἄχαρις καὶ ἄωρος ἐπίκωμος ἥκων. The relevance of this *topos* will become clearer in the final part of the paper.

Returning to sung requests for admission, a fragment of Alcaeus (374 L-P) asks for a favourable reception in iambic tetrameters:

δέξαι με κωμάσδοντα, δέξαι, λίσσομαί σε, λίσσομαι.

It is often assumed that Alcaeus' request is part of an amatory serenade; in view of the preceding examples that can hardly be taken for granted. But the house at which a κῶμος requests admission might well be that of a lover. In Theocritus Simaetha quotes what the unfaithful Delphis had told her (2.118–124):

ἦνθον γάρ κεν ἐγώ, ναὶ τὸν γλυκὺν ἦνθον Ἔρωτα,
ἢ τρίτος ἢὲ τέταρτος ἐὼν φίλος αὐτίκα νυκτός . . .
καί κ' εἰ μέν μ' ἐδέχεσθε, τάδ' ἦς φίλα . . .

But if not? Delphis would not have observed the etiquette of the request for reception so carefully as Alcibiades in Plato; to exaggerate his passion he says that he would not have put up with being turned away, but would have broken or burnt the door down (2.127–8; for such behaviour compare, e.g., Athenaeus 585a). The rich poetic tradition in which a lover seeks admission to or laments exclusion from his girlfriend's house is a development of this aspect of komastic behaviour.[5]

## *II*

It is not only the revelry after a symposium that could be described as a κῶμος—any mobile celebration will do. We hear also of religious κῶμοι (E. *Hipp.* 55–6, Ar. *Th.* 104, 988, *Ra.* 218, D.S. 3.5.1), of wedding κῶμοι (E. *Alc.* 915–21), and of epinician κῶμοι. It is this last kind that I wish to consider more carefully.

The association of epinician poetry with the κῶμος can be

[5] For the "paraclausithyron" as the song sung by a κῶμος on its arrival see F. O. Copley, *TAPA* 73(1942)96–107, *Exclusus Amator* (APA Monographs 12, 1956) 1–27.

illustrated in several ways.[6] First, the celebration of victory itself is frequently described in terms of a κῶμος—for example, at *I.* 8.4 the κῶμος is νίκας ἄποινα; at *P.* 4.2 we find the victor κωμάζων, at *O.* 9.4 κωμάζων σὺν ἑταίροις. Many other passages could be cited.[7] Callimachus' epinician elegy on the victory of Sosibius likewise refers to the κῶμος celebrating a victory (frag. 384.38).[8] Callimachus' κῶμος and that of *O.* 9.4 both sing a victory song—the Archilochean τήνελλα καλλίνικε (frag. 324 W); and there are various other references to komastic singing in Pindar: at *I.* 7.20 Pindar exclaims κώμαζ' ἔπειτεν ἀδυμελεῖ σὺν ὕμνῳ; compare *P.* 8.70 κώμῳ. . .ἀδυμελεῖ, *N.* 3.4–5 μελιγαρύων. . .κώμων. And the victory song which the κῶμος sings is specifically called an ἐγκώμιον μέλος—not, of course, in the later rhetorical sense of *encomium,*[9] but in the sense of a κῶμος-song; thus *O.* 2.47, *P.* 10.53, *N.* 1.7 (cf. *O.* 10.77, 13.29; ἐπικώμιος ὕμνος at *N.* 8.50, cf. *P.* 10.6, *N.* 6.32; note also *O.* 3.5–6 φωνὰν. . .ἀγλαόκωμον). Other sources use the same terminology. At *Clouds* 1204ff. Strepsiades envisages the singing of an ἐγκώμιον to congratulate him on his victory (νικᾷς, 1211); the snatch of song that he suggests begins with a *makarismos* (μάκαρ ὦ Στρεψίαδες), with which one could compare, for example, *P.* 5.20, Timotheus *PMG* 802.1.[10] A fragment of Aristophanes' *Tagenistae* (491K = 505KA) proposes the singing of an ἐγκώμιον, 'to master', presumably to celebrate some success, and Plato also refers to singing ἐγκώμια in celebration of a victory (*Ly.*

[6] This is emphasised by J. K. & F. S. Newman, *Pindar's Art* (Berlin 1984). They value too highly J. W. Kuithan, *Versuch eines Beweisses, dass wir in Pindars Siegeshymnen Urkomödien übrig haben* (Leipzig 1808); Kuithan saw and stressed the connection of Pindar's epinicians with symposium and κῶμος, but he misunderstood the latter as the drinking session after the meal (p. 47), and with the notion of "Urkomödie" his study takes off into pure fantasy. But he does have a number of useful references and observations.

[7] *O.* 6.18, *P.* 3.73, 5.100, 8.70, 9.89, *N.* 2.24, 3.4–5, 9.1, 10.35, 11.28, *I.* 2.31, 3.8, 4.72, 6.58; cf. Simonides *PMG* 519 frag. 1.2; B. 9.103, 11.12, 12.37, 13.74.

[8] Cf. also ἐπίκωμος in v.49. Pfeiffer interprets this as equivalent to ἐπίδημος, *cum in vico adessem;* a feeble sense, for how else could Callimachus have seen the dedication? In an epinician context there can be no doubt that the reference is to the victor, and means ἐπικωμάζων; Sosibius made the dedication as part of his victory celebration.

[9] See A. E. Harvey, *CQ* 5(1955)157–175, esp. 163–4; R. L. Fowler, *The Nature of Early Greek Lyric* (*Phoenix* Supplement 21, 1987) 92–3, 100–1.

[10] See further C. W. Macleod, *Collected Papers* (Oxford 1983) 49–51; Rossi (n.2 above) 19–21.

205de).[11] Finally, we may observe that the poet in epinician refers on several occasions to 'this κῶμος' (*O.* 4.9, 8.10, 14.16, *P.* 5.22); we shall return to these passages in due course.

Does the connection between epinician and κῶμος throw any light on the context and manner of performance of Pindar's epinician poetry? It has generally been assumed since Hellenistic times that the epinicians were performed chorally—that is, that they were sung in unison by a χορός which simultaneously performed a dance that had been taught by the poet or his representative. But there are problems with this view.[12]

First, did the epinician κῶμος dance? In Callimachus the κῶμος is a χορός (frag. 384.38), and the Pindaric scholia habitually take this equation for granted; for example, on *P.* 8.70 (II 215.23 Drachmann), where κώμῳ μὲν ἀδυμελεῖ Δίκα παρέστακε is explained by τῷ μὲν χορῷ ἡμῶν δικαιοσύνη παρέστηκε.[13] But we must be cautious here. There was no continuous tradition of epinician performance linking the Hellenistic scholars to the fifth century; and this Hellenistic usage differs strikingly from that of Pindar and Bacchylides, who *never* use χορός of the epinician κῶμος and its performance.[14] This silence seems significant, since these two poets do use χορός of other lyric genres (Pi. *Parth.*II [frag.94b] 39 ἤλυθεν ἐς χορόν; B. 17.130, a di-

[11] But the rhetorical use (= ἔπαινος) is striking at *Smp.*177be, and is frequent elsewhere in Plato; see Harvey (n.9 above) 163.

[12] J. Herington, *Poetry into Drama* (Berkeley 1985) 27–31, 181–3, gathers evidence for the performance of epinician lyric, and rightly observes that "the evidence is extraordinarily scanty—far more scanty than is perhaps generally realised" (p. 27); but I fear that the conclusions which he draws from this scanty evidence may be too conservative.

[13] The alternative paraphrase offered, δικαίως κωμάζεται, is more precise. For the Hellenistic view note also Ulpian *ap.* Athenaeus 362e, Lucian *de salt.*11 = *PMG* 864. The assimilation of κῶμος to χορός can be found in more recent scholarship; for example, W. Mullen, *Choreia: Pindar and the Dance* (Princeton 1982) 24: "As for the dance element itself, the word Pindar uses most often to draw attention to it is *kômos*"; and he persistently mistranslates κωμάζειν as 'dance the *kômos*'. Yet on the very same page he distinguishes between "the formal song and dance of the ode" and the "real *kômos* to come" (cf. p. 27, "the formal ode. . .will be followed by the real *kômos* in which choreography will yield gracefully to tipsiness")—prompting one to wonder why Pindar should have used κῶμος to draw attention to the dance, if the dance was not really komastic. For further discussion of Mullen's book, see A. Burnett's review, *CP* 79(1984)154–60.

[14] Cf. Herington (n. 12) 30. Herington also stresses that Hellenistic scholars had no access to reliable evidence for the performance of archaic lyric (p. 231, n.68).

thyramb). Moreover, although they frequently refer in epinician poems to the circumstances of performance, the reference is typically to song and its musical accompaniment. The failure to mention dance at *O.* 3.8–9 (φόρμιγγά τε ποικιλόγαρυν καὶ βοὰν αὐλῶν ἐπέων τε θέσιν. . .συμμεῖξαι) is especially noteworthy.[15]

Two Pindaric passages might be adduced in favour of dance. One is the famous invocation of the lyre at the beginning of *P.* 1, where leading the χορός is clearly among the functions of the lyre. But this passage is a *generalisation* about the lyre (indeed, about the divine lyre of Apollo and the Muses), and there is no good reason to assume that the reference to the χορός is meant to apply *specifically* to epinician performances. More interesting is the beginning of *I.* 1. Reflecting on the conflict between his obligation to compose a paean for the Ceans and an epinician for the Isthmian victory of Herodotus of Thebes Pindar concludes that he can fulfil both commissions, χορεύων both Apollo and the Isthmus. This is clear evidence for dance in an epinician context, but it does not give unambiguous support to choral performance in the conventional sense; χορεύειν has a wide range of applications, and can be applied to spontaneous and informal as well as to rehearsed choral dance (Ar. *Pax* 325, *Pl.* 288, 761). Admittedly, there is nothing in *I.* 1 to suggest informality; the parallel with the paean in fact must count against it. But if we broaden our horizons, this suggestion may seem less arbitrary.

There is a tendency in other early literature to associate κῶμος and χορός; this is natural, since both are festive activities, and the association does not amount to identification—indeed, there are passages which imply a distinction: in *hHerm.* 480–1, feast, χορός and κῶμος are clearly different contexts for using the newly invented lyre (cf. E. *Ph.* 784–91, frag. 453N). This distinction is apparent also in [Hes.] *Shield* 280–2; note here that the young komasts are amusing themselves in dance (ὀρχηθμῷ) and song, and this is, surely, to be conceived as informal dance and song. A passage of Euripides' *Electra* (864–5) is more directly relevant: the chorus tells Electra to sing a καλλίνικον ᾠδάν in accompaniment to their χορός;[16] such a victory song is (as we have seen) an ἐγκώμιον μέλος; and although the dance in reality is the rehearsed and formal of a tragic χορός, within the

[15] Some take πεδίλῳ in v.5 as a reference to dance; this is far from certain, and I find 'rhythm' (cf. πούς) more likely.

[16] Or 'in addition to' (ἐπάειδε: see Denniston ad loc.; but Diggle reads ὑπάειδε).

fiction of the play it is an impromptu celebration of the news of Aegisthus' death–a success which they describe as superior to an Olympic victory. There is, therefore, some evidence for informal komastic dancing; and there is even evidence for komastic dance performed by soloists. In X. *Smp.* 2.1 the Syracusan, coming ἐπίκωμος, brings an ὀρχηστρίς as well as an αὐλητρίς, and in Anacreontea 43.3–7 (a charming poem) a dancing-girl is included in the personnel of a κῶμος (the verb used for her activity is χορεύειν).

We have seen that there is a tendency to distinguish κῶμος from χορός; unequivocal identifications of κῶμος and χορός are hard to find in the literature of fifth and earlier centuries. Aeschylus' famous χορός of Erinyes that becomes a κῶμος a few lines later (A. *Ag.* 1186–9) is not an exception, for there is a shift in the imagery; note the strong stop and progressive καὶ μήν in 1188. The mention of the χορός suggests a new line of imagery to explore; this implies no more than the association we have already observed. (I shall return to this passage in the final part of the paper.) The best that can be done to connect χορός with ἐγκώμια μέλη is the fragment of Aristophanes' *Tagenistae* already cited; for the speaker proposes to act ὥσπερ οἱ χοροί. But it is not clear how extensive the comparison with χοροί is meant to be; does it include the singing of an ἐγκώμιον, or is it simply wearing Isthmian garlands? The implications of this passage cannot be established with any certainty.[17]

To sum up the first part of the argument: the Hellenistic evidence for choral performance of epinician poetry is compromised both by cultural discontinuity and by the striking difference in linguistic usage from Pindar and Bacchylides. In the fifth century and earlier, evidence to support the choral assumption is sparse, and of doubtful interpretation. Passages such as *I.* 1.7 fall short of proving choral performance—certainly a long way short of proving that formal dance was an invariable or even the normal accompaniment for epinician. The evidence is consistent with the supposition that epinician κῶμοι would normally indulge not in rehearsed choral, but in impromptu and informal dancing as an accompaniment to the song. If one wishes nevertheless to maintain the choral assumption, a serious objection must be confronted; why, if formal, prepared

[17] There are two references to the dancing of religious κῶμοι in Aristophanes: Ar. *Th.* 101–4 (χορεύσασθε), 988 (κώμοις. . .φιλοχόροισι); here too the implications are unclear.

dance was a regular and integral part of epinician performance, did Pindar not take more notice of it than he does?

We must now tackle a second aspect of the problem: who sang the epinician song? A number of passages confirm that the epinician κῶμος did, like any other κῶμος, sing as a group: *P.* 5.102 ἐν ἀοιδᾷ νέων, *P.* 10.6 ἐπικωμίαν ἀνδρῶν. . .ὅπα, *N.* 3.4–5 μελιγαρύων τέκτονες κώμων νεανίαι, *N.* 10.34–5 'Αθηναίων νιν ὀμφαὶ κώμασαν, B. 11.9–14 ὑμνεῦσι, B. 13.190 μέλπετ' ὦ νέοι. But there are also passages which seem to imply solo performance.[18] First, *O.* 14.13–18 (to the Graces): 'hear now, seeing this κῶμος, for I have come singing'. The κῶμος is seen, but what is heard is the singing, which is what 'I' do, not what 'this κῶμος' does;[19] this implies that the poet is singing solo, and acts as spokesman for the κῶμος. Secondly, *N.* 3.3–5, 11–12 (to the Muse): 'come to Aegina: for the young men of the κῶμος are waiting. . .longing for an utterance from you'; are they longing for the Muse to prompt their own utterance (implying unison performance by the κῶμος), or longing for the Muse to utter (consistent with solo performance by the poet)? Pindar goes on to ask for 'abundance of song through my skill': skill as composer or performer of songs? 'So begin a hymn to Zeus and I will join it to the young men's voices and lyre-playing': joining the hymn to their voices is usually interpreted as getting them to sing it, but the point could as well be that the young men have already been singing, and that the poet is now to add a solo song as his own contribution to the festive proceedings. There is perhaps one reason for preferring this interpretation of

[18] Of course epinician could, like any other lyric poetry, be performed solo on subsequent occasions: see Ar. *Clouds* 1355–6 for one of Simonides' epinicians as after-dinner entertainment; and it is presumably repeated performance by the proud father that is envisaged in *N.* 4.13–16 (note θαμά). I suspect that it is subsequent re-performance by fellow-citizens that is envisaged in *P.* 10.55–9; this is the way in which Pindar expects his song to preserve and disseminate the victor's fame—a recurrent concern in epinician.

[19] If the κῶμος could speak of itself as 'I' = 'this κῶμος' there would of course be no distinction, but the epinician 'I' is not choral; see M. R. Lefkowitz, *HSCP* 67(1963)177–253. Note her conclusion on p. 236: "In the light of the evidence, it is difficult to explain why *epinikia* were usually performed by choruses, in spite of the subject-matter, and in spite of the fact that the poet speaks in his own person throughout. . .Simonides, Bacchylides and Pindar all treat the *epinikion* as a virtually monodic form." More recently Lefkowitz has called the idea of choral performance into question: *EH* 31(1985)47–9, and "Who Sang Pindar's Victory Odes?," *AJP* 109(1988)1–11; the present paper merely follows her lead.

the passage. On the assumption of unison performance, we have 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, all at the same time; this is unnecessarily convoluted. It is more straightforward to suppose that the soloist is invoking the Muses' inspiration for the song that he is singing because he has an expectant audience of young men.

There is evidence, therefore, both for unison singing and for solo performance; clearly, the evidence for unison performance is stronger—but there is no need for a trial of strength, for the apparent conflict can easily be resolved. Consider *O.* 9.1–5: 'at Olympia the Archilochus song sufficed for Epharmostus κωμάζων with his companions; but now. . .'. 'Sufficed' (ἄρκεσε) and the strong adversative which introduces Pindar's song (ἀλλὰ νῦν) imply a marked qualitative difference. The simple and familiar Archilochus song would be suitable for unrehearsed unison performance—compare the impromptu celebration at the end of Aristophanes' *Acharnians;*[20] but if an epinician of greater sophistication and metrical complexity has been commissioned then solo performance would be at least equally appropriate. There need therefore be no inconsistency between the evidence for singing by the κῶμος as a group and that for the solo performance of Pindar's songs; one might imagine (provisionally—and the conjectural nature of all that is said here should be stressed) a κῶμος that would sing the Archilochus song or something of that order *en route* and then stop for a solo rendition of the more complex prepared song when it arrives.

That the formal epinician song was performed on arrival is suggested by *N.* 1.19: ἔσταν ἐπ' αὐλείαις θύραις; here, too, we may see an indication of solo performance, with the poet acting as spokesman for the κῶμος that has reached its goal—compare Alcibiades' role in Plato's *Symposium.* And it is surely significant that the reception motif which was identified as a *topos* of komastic literature in the first part of this paper occurs also in Pindar's ἐγκώμια.[21] In the passages cited

[20] Ar. *Ach.* 1227ff., cf. *Eq.* 1253–4, *Av.* 1764; and see Wilamowitz on E. *Heracl.* 180. Note that what the κῶμος sings in Philostratus *Im.* 1.2.5 is ᾠδὴ (v.l. βοὴ) ἄτακτος.

[21] Newman and Newman speak of a "threshold motif" ([n.6 above] 58–66), which seems less precise, and they develop the idea rather incoherently; Kuithan saw the connection with the reception motif in *Symposium* ([n.6 above] 64). Note also E. L. Bundy, *Studia Pindarica* (Berkeley 1962) 22–8 on the "arrival motif"; but his comments on the "δέξαι motif" (p. 74, cf. W. Schadewaldt, *Der Aufbau des Pindarischen Epinikions* [Halle 1928], 269, 274) are misleading, as I shall argue below (n. 27).

earlier in which the poet refers to 'this κῶμος' he is speaking on its behalf and requests a favourable reception: *O.* 4.9 δέξαι. . .τόνδε κῶμον, *O.* 8.10 τόνδε κῶμον. . .δέξαι, *P.* 5.22 δέδεξαι τόνδε κῶμον. Without the deictic the motif appears at *O.* 6.98 δέξαιτο κῶμον, *O.* 13.29 δέξαι. . .ἐγκώμιον τεθμόν, *N.* 4.11 δέξαιτο (sc. ὕμνου προκώμιον). More complex is *P.* 8.18–20: ὃς εὐμενεῖ νόῳ Ξενάρκειον ἔδεκτο. . .ἐστεφανωμένον υἱὸν ποιᾷ Παρνασσίδι Δωριεῖ τε κώμῳ; compare B. 11.15–17 ἱλέῳ νιν. . .δέκτο βλεφάρῳ, *O.* 14.16 ἰδοῖσα τόνδε κῶμον ἐπ' εὐμενεῖ τύχᾳ, *P.* 8.67–8 ἔκοντι. . .νόῳ κατά τιν' ἁρμονίαν βλέπειν.

The reception motif is common in Pindar, and implies a connection between his epinicians and the arrival of the κῶμος at its destination. If we look more closely at the addressees of the request for reception, it may be possible to specify more precisely the destination at which the κῶμος has arrived, and therefore the context of the epinician song's performance.[22] There are two main categories.[23] Most often the address is to a god, or to a temple or a location associated with a temple: thus *O.* 8.9–10, addressed to 'Pisa's grove' (compare *O.* 9.3–4 Κρόνιον παρ' ὄχθον. . .κωμάζοντι); *O.* 13.29, addressed to Zeus (but the song is performed at Corinth rather than at Olympia: τὸν ἄγει πεδίων ἐκ Πίσας 29); *O.* 14.16, addressed to the Graces (who had a cult at Orchomenus);[24] *N.* 11.1–4, addressed to Hestia (on behalf of Aristagoras and his ἑταῖροι, i.e., the κῶμος); this poem is not an epinician, but celebrates Aristagoras' taking office as prytanis; Hestia's association with the prytaneum is well attested.[25]

*O.* 4.6–10 is a reception motif addressed to Zeus. This poem makes an interesting pair with *O.* 5.1–4, addressed to Camarina (the goddess rather than the place—the cult is attested);[26] both are for Psaumis, and if they are for the same victory (which is of course

[22] To attempt to reconstruct the context of any particular ode from internal evidence is obviously risky, since the poet had an imagination. But we can at least observe the kinds of context that he tended to imagine; and the conclusions drawn from this about the context of epinician poetry in general will be less precarious.

[23] In *P.* 12.1–5 and *N.* 4.11–13 the reception motif is addressed generally to a city; this throws no light on the question.

[24] L. R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States*, vol. 5 (Oxford 1896–1909) 427–30.

[25] Farnell, vol. 5 (n. 24) 348–51. Even though the poem is not, strictly speaking, a victory-song, it is generically indistinguishable from the victory-songs; it is an ἐγκώμιον μέλος. This should remind us that our generic classifications are Hellenistic; see n. 9 above.

[26] For the cult of Camarina see *RE* 10.2, 1806. The question whether Pindar composed *O.* 5 is of no consequence here.

uncertain) then we have one composed for the celebration on the spot (*O.* 4, to Zeus), and one composed for the return home (*O.* 5, addressing Camarina). The opening invocation of the latter uses the verb δέχεσθαι, but is not an instance of the komastic reception motif: the phrase is δέκευ. . .δῶρα, implying a dedication; compare, e.g., *P.* 5.39–42, Call. frag. 384.47–9 (with n. 8 above). Bundy, following Schadewaldt, identified what he called the "δέξαι motif" in epinician, but interpreted it as purely hymnal.[27] δέξαι is of course common in hymns and prayers (e.g., *Pae.* 5.45, 6.5); but in the other passages that we have considered, where the god is both prayed to and the destination of the κῶμος, the hymnal and komastic conventions intersect.

*P.* 8.18–20 reports Apollo's reception of a past κῶμος, so that the present song is presumably performed on the victor's return to Aegina;[28] B. 11.15–17 also reports a past reception by Apollo. Note also *P.* 6.3–4, where the κῶμος is described as approaching the temple of Apollo at Delphi; compare Call. frag. 384.38, approaching the temple of Athene after a victory at Athens. In these cases, then, the κῶμος makes its way to a temple to offer a sacrifice in thanksgiving for the victory, either on the spot to the god who is patron of the festival, or at the victor's hometown to deities of local importance.[29]

The other category of reception motif is addressed either to the victor himself (*P.* 5.20–23, to Arcesilas) or to a patron (*O.* 6.98–9, to Hiero on behalf of Hagesias). The implied context is the arrival of the κῶμος at the house where the victory feast is to be given; we may refer once again to *N.* 1.19–22, where the poet stands at the doors of Chromius' house ἔνθα μοι ἁρμόδιον δεῖπνον κεκόσμηται; compare *I.* 8.2 παρὰ πρόθυρον, B. 6.14–15 προδόμοις ἀοιδαῖς. Chromius' house is also the destination of the κῶμος in *N.* 9.1–3; the progress envisaged, from Sicyon (where the victory was won) to Etna (the victor's home) is not possible for a real κῶμος, and I think we must understand here an imaginary κῶμος of Muses (κωμάσομεν. . .Μοῖσαι).[30]

[27] See n.21 above.

[28] Note a more abstract variant of the reception motif in 1–5: receiving the victor's τιμά; the address is to Hesychia, which seems to be imaginative, for there is no evidence of a cult.

[29] I will not consider here the problems arising from the possible association of *O.* 3, *P.* 5, and *P.* 11 with specific religious festivals.

[30] Cf. Bundy (n.21) 22.

Of these passages *O.* 6.98–9 will reward closer scrutiny. The reception motif here takes the form of a wish; Hiero is to welcome to the banquet Hagesias' κῶμος as it comes οἴκοθεν οἴκαδε from Stymphalus.[31] The point of this is that Hagesias has two hometowns, Stymphalus and Etna; the present song is being sung at Stymphalus, and the return to Etna lies in the future (the prayer to Poseidon for a safe voyage in 103–4 is therefore likely to be meant literally). The context of this song's performance may be recoverable from 86–91. In these obscure lines 'I' am weaving a song, and 'I' exhort Aeneas to encourage his companions; these companions are presumably the κῶμος (cf. *N.* 11.1–4 above), but who is Aeneas? On the choral assumption he will be the chorus leader or χοροδιδάσκαλος; and this is the interpretation of the scholia. But he is described as a messenger, a message-stick and a bowl of songs; there is nothing here to suggest a chorus. Perhaps, then, he is Pindar's proxy, in the sense of being a soloist sent to Stymphalus for the performance.[32] The companions are to sing a hymn to Hera (whose cult was important at Stymphalus);[33] Hera is not mentioned elsewhere in this poem, and while the reference may be self-fulfilling (which would imply a unison performance of this song by the κῶμος), it could equally well be to a separate hymn that the κῶμος will sing together when it arrives at the temple. After the ceremony is over (ἔπειτα) Aeneas is to enquire from his companions whether 'we' (Pindar, and—if he is a compatriot—Aeneas) in truth escape the customary slur against Boeotians; that is, Aeneas is to solicit their praise of the song and (perhaps) its solo performance.

We seem, then, to have identified two contexts for the performance of the complex, commissioned epinician (as distinct from the simple victory songs that the κῶμος would sing together): arrival at a temple, whether at the site of the victory or at the victor's return home, for sacrifice, and arrival at the victor's (or a patron's) house

[31] For a victory feast given by a patron cf. X. *Smp.* 1.2–4 (though this is for a victor in the boys' class). H. Friis Johansen, "Agesias, Hieron and Pindar's Sixth Olympian Ode," *Classica et Mediaevelia F. Blatt in Honorem*, eds. O. Due et al. (*C&M* Diss. 9, Copenhagen 1973) 1–9, argues that νιν in *O.* 6.96 refers to Ortygia rather than Hiero; this is certainly possible (and if correct would place this passage with those cited in n. 23), but Johansen's arguments against the reference to Hiero are not compelling.

[32] Nicasippus, mentioned at the end of *I.* 2, presumably had the same role.

[33] Farnell, vol. 1 (n. 24) 190–2.

for the celebratory feast. But should we insist on the arrival? The reception motif could, after all, be used in anticipation (as in *O.* 6.98–9); and there is no obvious reason for denying that the complex commissioned epinician was ever sung while the κῶμος was *en route.* It has in fact been suggested that the monostrophic odes are processional; internal evidence does not give us grounds to suppose that this is correct as a generalisation, but there are signs of locomotion in some of the monostrophic poems: *O.* 14.16–17 τόνδε κῶμον. . .κοῦφα βιβῶντα, *P.* 6.4 προσοιχόμενοι. *N.* 2 is also interesting since, as has often been noted, its circular structure (ending with ἀδυμελεῖ δ' ἐξάρχετε φωνᾷ) seems suited to repetitive performance;[34] in which case it should be noted that the plural imperative implies unison performance. This is by no means certain; the line could be an invitation to further songs, rather than to a repetition of the same song. But if it was performed in unison, it may be relevant that *N.* 2 and *P.* 6 are the only Pindaric epinicians with no first person forms; this may be more than coincidence. Obviously we are on very shaky ground here; but the evidence, such as it is, suggests that some epinician poems *may* have been processional and that some of these *may* have been performed by the κῶμος as a whole rather than by a soloist. There is at any rate no reason to insist on a single context and a uniform mode of performance.

It is therefore reasonable to ask, finally, whether the celebratory feast itself provided another context for the complex commissioned epinician song; an anecdote about Simonides (*PMG* 510 = Cic. *de Orat.* 2.86, *Quint.* 11.2.11) does envisage the poet performing his ode solo at the feast—but that can hardly be counted as good evidence. Some passages do suggest symposiastic victory songs: note *O.* 10.76–7 (ἀείδετο δὲ πᾶν τέμενος τερπναῖσι θαλίαις τὸν ἐγκώμιον ἀμφὶ τρόπον); and if *N.* 9.48–53 is read as anticipating the symposium with which the imminent feast will conclude then μαλθακᾷ. . .σὺν ἀοιδᾷ and παρὰ κρατῆρα provide additional support (note that this passage also anticipates a κῶμος following the symposium). But the singing in question might be purely informal. *O.* 1.9–11, in which the poets come to Hiero's hearth and (14–19) table, may also be relevant here. Again we are on shaky ground; but the conjecture is not intrinsically implausible.

[34] H. Fränkel, *Early Greek Poetry and Philosophy* (Oxford 1975) 429, n.6.

Let us sum up—I will not bother to qualify every statement in this paragraph with "possibly" and "perhaps," but the evidence with which we are forced to deal is such that those qualifications are generally appropriate. The celebrations of victory involved sacrifice and feasting; in each case the victor and his friends made their way to the venue in a festive procession, a κῶμος. There is little to suggest that the formal rehearsed dance of a χορός was a regular part of the proceedings, although informal, impromptu dancing was probably common. But song certainly was the norm. Songs were sung *en route,* on arrival, and at the symposium after the feast. These songs were of two kinds: simple, familiar victory songs, like that attributed to Archilochus, which could easily have been performed impromptu by the κῶμος as a whole; but also more complex commissioned odes such as those of Pindar and Bacchylides, which would need rehearsal if sung in unison and were probably most often performed solo by the poet or his proxy. At most victory celebrations, presumably, there was no commissioned ode; and traditional songs could have been found for each of the three contexts—familiar symposiastic and komastic songs as well as victory songs. Commissioned processionals may have been sung on occasion, sometimes solo, and sometimes perhaps by the κῶμος as a whole; and perhaps commissioned symposiastic epinicians were possible. But most of the commissioned odes that we possess were probably written to be performed solo on arrival; this connection between the epinician corpus and the arrival of the κῶμος is reflected in the adoption and adaptation of the reception *topos* familiar from other komastic literature.

## *III*

It may be worth looking briefly in conclusion at some uses of κῶμος imagery and the associated reception motif in fifth-century poetry.

At E. *Supp.* 390 Theseus, sending his ultimatum to Thebes, gives warning that if Creon will not surrender the corpses of the Seven freely he will have to 'receive my κῶμος under arms' (κῶμον δέχεσθαι τὸν ἐμὸν ἀσπιδηφόρον). Collard ad loc. explains the verb as 'receive an enemy's attack', comparing 848 and 1150; this is of course correct, but it should be recognised that the term also bears a sense

apt to the komastic metaphor. The use of komastic imagery in the context of war is particularly pointed, because the κῶμος is regularly cited as one of the blessings of peace: B. frag. 4.61–72, E. frag.453N (*Cresphontes* = 71 Austin), Theognis 885–6.[35] Compare E. *Ph.*791: Ares, bringing the Argive army against Thebes, κῶμον ἀναυλότατον προχορεύεις. A κῶμος without αὐλοί is in itself paradoxical, and the paradox is heightened by the context of war. But this paradox is not arbitrary: we mentioned in the first part of the paper the violence associated with κῶμοι, and the *topos* of the inoportune κῶμος; the war-κῶμος takes this to an extreme.[36] This paradox and the reception motif are also exploited by Aristophanes at *Ach.* 977–87: 'I will never receive (ὑποδέξομαι) War into my house, nor will he ever sing the Harmodius-song reclining next to me; for he gets drunk, and is the kind of komast (ἐπικωμάσας) who breaks in on a well-ordered party and breaks things and starts fights'. The Harmodius-song is of course a famous *skolion,* so that the sense is: the next time War turns up at the head of a κῶμος I will not receive him as συμπότης, since I received his κῶμος once before and came to regret it.

Another kind of "inverted" κῶμος is the demonic: an example can be found to be found at E. *Ph.* 352, τὸ δαιμόνιον κατεκώμασε δώμασιν Οἰδιπόδα. An unattributed tragic fragment connects this idea with the reception motif, using the phrase χθονίας θ' Ἑκάτης κῶμον ἐδέξω to describe possession (*TGF* adesp. 375).[37] But the most powerful use of the idea of the demonic κῶμος is in Aeschylus, the χορός of Erinyes in *Ag.* 1186, which becomes a κῶμος when the image begins to be developed (1189–92). Like an unruly human κῶμος it is emboldened by drink–but its drink is human blood; it sings–but it sings of ruin and destruction (ἄτη), not victory. There is no reception motif here, but that is part of the inversion; like the second κῶμος of Plato's *Symposium,* these revellers simply burst in, and the house that they decide to visit is not given the option of turning it away (δύσπεμπτος ἔξω).[38]

Perhaps the finest of all uses of this imagery is to be found in Euripides' *Bacchae;* in describing Agave's "successful" hunt on Ci-

[35] For more general versions of this *topos* see W. J. Slater, *ICS* 6(1981)206–14.

[36] προχορεύεις is further evidence for komastic dance; but the larger context confirms the distinction between κῶμος and χορός.

[37] For Hecate here cf. E. *Hipp.* 142 with Barrett ad loc.

[38] See further Fraenkel ad loc. and Rossi (n.2 above) 35.

thaeron repeated use is made of discordant epinician and komastic terms. Epinician is first evoked at the end of the Messenger's speech (1146–7): we hear that Agave called on Bacchus as fellow-huntsman and as καλλίνικος—although, as the Messenger says, her prize is grief (δάκρυα νικηφορεῖ). The Chorus takes up this idea in the celebratory song that follows: the Theban Bacchants have won a famous victory—one that will end in lamentation (τὸν καλλίνικον κλεινὸν ἐξεπράξετε ἐς γόον, ἐς δάκρυα 1161–2). Agave arrives at once; the coryphaeus announces her entry and calls on the Chorus to receive (δέχεσθε) the god's κῶμος (1167); she then welcomes Agave in the same terms: ὁρῶ καί σε δέξομαι σύγκωμον (1172). The *makarismos* follows at 1180: μάκαιρ' Ἀγάυη; at 1184 Agave issues an invitation to the celebratory feast; she receives their praise, and looks forward to the praise of the Thebans and—on the Chorus' gruesome prompt—Pentheus himself (1193–5); at 1200–1 the Chorus invites her to display her prize (νικηφόρον. . .ἄγραν); and when Cadmus arrives she repeats and widens her invitation to the feast and declares that he too—the victor's father—is μακάριος (1241–3). This is tragic poetry at its most disturbing.

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