

Pindar's Symptotic Songs for the Emmenidai and their Akragantine Audience

This paper reassesses the performance scenarios of Pindar's odes for his Emmenid patrons to challenge the longstanding consensus regarding the public nature of epinician poetry (Currie 2004; Carey 2007). In examining the performative discourse inscribed in *Pythian* 6 and fr. 124., I argue that their sociopolitical context, hitherto neglected, is vitally integral to the ongoing scholarly discussion of Pindaric audiences. While Clay's work on the symptotic epinicia has collapsed the generalized distinction between private and public celebrations, the encomia for the Emmenids—and the circumstances of their production—strongly suggest that the audience was comprised exclusively of the honorands' aristocratic *homoioi* (Clay 1999; Budelmann 2012; Clear 2013).

The earliest of these songs, *P.* 6, composed for Xenocrates' quadriga victory in 490/89, was commissioned before Theron assumed the tyranny at Akragas in 488/7. Since their *genos* would therefore still have been counted among private citizenry, it is unreasonable to suppose that the public would have participated in Xenocrates' embassy to Delphi. Moreover, the ode's thoroughly scrutinized focalization on Delphic and symptotic space could only have been fully appreciated by those who shared in the occasion, i.e. the members of Thrasyboulos' retinue (Shapiro 1988; Neer 2001; Athanassaki 2012).

This issue of spectatorship also bears on the thorny question of re-performance. Recent scholarship has persuasively demonstrated that *P.* 6 premiered not at Delphi but at a symposium in the victor's home city of Akragas (Morrison 2007; Eckerman 2011). I submit, however, that *P.* 6 is the most likely of all Pindar's odes to have been re-performed at a Panhellenic sanctuary (Currie 2011; Eckerman 2011). The effectiveness of the highly allusive and dialogic mimesis with which *P.* 6 engages the east frieze of the Siphnian treasury and the topography of the

Delphic sanctuary pivots specifically on the audience's autoptic experience of the setting and imagery that are evoked. In this way, the sustained metaphor of the treasury of hymns (v.1-18) and the iconography of the frieze which informs the mythological exemplum (v. 19-42) lend themselves to the case for an on-site sympotic re-performance, as do the elaborately crafted specifics of the latter, which are only adequately realized after a re-viewing of the space described.

The second sympotic ode addressed to Thrasyboulos (fr. 124), with its imagery of equestrian activities and wealth, as well as its overt language relating to class distinction (ὅς μὲν ἀχρήμων, ἀφνεὸς τότε, τοὶ δ' αὖ πλουτέοντες), also suggests an exclusive performance setting at Akragas. If, as some scholars believe, the song belongs to an early date and precedes Thrasyboulos' inheritance of the mantle of the Emmenid legacy observed in *I. 2*, we may reasonably expect that it was geared specifically toward his fellow drinking companions (Currie 2004; Morrison 2007). These sympotika for Xenocrates and his son Thrasyboulos thus stand in sharp contrast to the other Emmenid epinicians, namely *O.2*, 3 and *I.2*, in terms of their target audiences. Whereas the epinicians for the head of state (*O.2*) and the guarantor of the Emmenid clan (*I.2*) were composed for a public celebration before the people of Akragas, *P. 6* and fr. 124 remain firmly embedded in the aristocratic culture of the symposium.

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