

POETRY, PERFORMANCE, AND SOCIETY IN EARLY GREEK LITERATURE

George Gissing's *New Grub Street* (1891) is a good candidate for the most depressing account of literary production in Western letters. Edwin Reardon, a young novelist, married, with an infant son, spends day after day in the solitary study of his London flat, desperately searching for the four or five thousand words per day that will enable him to fill the requisite three volumes of a salable novel and thereby pay the rent. Having enjoyed a modest success with an earlier book, he hopes to earn seventy-five pounds per novel and thus at the rate of a novel every two or three months eke out a livelihood as a professional writer¹. He fails miserably, as does every other writer of integrity in the novel, proving that devotion to creative writing (as opposed to hackwork for popular consumption) and a decent, honest living are completely incompatible.

All of us who write, whether creatively or not, have probably experienced at some time or other the anguish of staring at a blank sheet of paper or a vacant computer screen when words won't come. The ancient poet perhaps knew analogous moments, for his poetry is a mysterious gift from the Muses which, when it comes, bestows a flow of words as sweet and rich as honey. Only later, when song has become literary production, secularized and commonplace, do poets warn against too abundant a flow — a torrent of indiscriminate stuff that rushes along like the Danube or the Rhine, making a lot of noise but also carrying a lot of trash². The poet of early Greece is primarily a singer, not a writer. His aim is to produce songs performed at more or less public occasions, ranging from a large panhellenic festival, such as those at Delos or Mycale, to an affair of state such as Hieron's inauguration of his newly founded city of Aetnaea with Pindar's *First Pythian Ode*, to local family gatherings, feasts, and symposia in the houses of the rich. Centuries later the Hellenistic Callimachus may excogitate verses and think of Apollo, but he holds his tablet on his knees and doubtless a pen (or stylus) in his hand (*Call. Aet.* 1.21f).

Our first detailed account of song in Western literature, on the other hand, depicts a scene in the open air: girls and boys dance together, a lad plays a clear-sounding lyre in their midst, and the dancers sing as they follow the tune and "skip with their feet" (Σ 567-72). There is also dancing accompanied by flute and lyre at a wedding feast, doubtless also outside as women are watching from the forecourts ($\text{Ιστάμεναι θωύμαζον ἐπὶ προθύροισιν ἐκάστη}$, Σ 496). Later, at a dance "like that at broad Knossus", there is a "large crowd" of spectators (Σ 603), and two whirling acrobats "lead off the singing" (Σ 604f.). The *Odyssey* shows us a similar scene of dancing and singing combined, though this time indoors. After the Phaeacian bard Demodocus has given a solo recitation of the story of quarrel bet-

ween Odysseus and Achilles (θ 75), he plays his lyre to accompany the dancing of the Phaeacian youths, and after the dancing sings the song of Ares and Aphrodite.

As such passages indicate, poetry is envisaged as part of a performance, as the living voice of song (what Herington calls «the song culture»)³. Whether secular or ritual, whether public or private, poetry belongs to a social occasion and is almost unthinkable outside of that context. In the scenes on the Shield of Achilles mentioned above, the spectators who “stand about” admiring or enjoying are an inconspicuous but essential element of the scene (Σ 496, 603). (This does not mean, of course, that people did not sing or make music in private: the two shepherds on the Shield, ignorant of the ambush that dooms them, innocently “take joy in their pipes”, τερπόμενοι σύριγξι Σ 525 ff. — remote ancestors of Theocritus’ Daphnis and Milton’s Lycidas). The forms of early choral poetry are determined by the ritual occasion: wedding song, funeral dirge, paean, dithyramb, hymn, and so on. Only later, as ritual function becomes less important, do the distinctions between the separate forms blur; and (aside from specific matters of cult or address to the god) the differences between paean, hymn, or dithyramb in Pindar and Bacchylides seem less striking than the similarities.

Monodic lyric, such as the poetry of Sappho, Alcaeus, Ibycus, or Anacreon, was sung at symposia or in gatherings of companions or kinsmen, sometimes in contexts that suggest ritual associations, like Sappho’s invocations to Aphrodite (*frr. 1 and 2 L-P*). Monumental epic poetry, as we see it in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, may have been developed from shorter, more episodic works specifically for the great panhellenic festivals like the Panionion at Mycale or Apollo’s festival on Delos⁴. Song at such occasions enhanced the prestige, festivity, and abundance of the occasions as we find them represented on seventh-century Delos in the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo*: the festival is thronged with crowds of handsome, well dressed people and is celebrated with singing, dancing, boxing, castanets, and even mimicry of different voices (146-64).

Having a bard on call signifies an especially high standard of living. Inherited wealth and position both require and support the conspicuous consumption worthy of nobility. As the princes of the Italian Renaissance collected sculptures or paintings to display their culture, affluence and power and adorned their palaces with memorials of great men of the past in the form of busts, frescoes, and statues, so the nobles of the Greek Renaissance adorned their houses with poets who could monumentalize in song the great deeds of the past and thereby provide models of heroic excellence and grandeur⁵. From a somewhat later phase of early Greek society Ibycus’ ode to Polycrates is a good example of the work of a professional bard commissioned to enhance the glory of a noble patron (*fr. 282 P*). At his period

material culture in Greece is still relatively modest; and a resident bard, for long or short term, probably represents an inexpensive investment.

A remark in the *Odyssey* lets us glimpse something of this attitude toward poetry at an early point in the tradition. Odysseus has finished his long tale in the palace of Alcinous, and a charmed silence descends over the hall. The king who has already congratulated the speaker on his grace as a raconteur (λ 367f.), urges his guests to add more gifts (v 7-9): “To each one of you I speak enjoining this, you who always drink the aged bright wine in my halls and hear the bard” (*αἴθοπα οἶνον / αἰεὶ πίνετ’ ἔμοῖσιν, ἀκουάζεσθε δ’ ἀουδοῦ*). The implication is that the bard is a prized accoutrement of a rich and generous house. Hearing him, like drinking the good wine of his patron, is a privilege that puts the guests under an obligation.

The luxuries of the time are social and (fortunately for posterity) artistic. Thus King Alcinous lists “the lyre and dances,” *κιθαρίς τε χοροί τε*, among the pleasure-loving Phaeacians’ chief delights (he places feasting just before and “changes of clothing, warm baths, and bed” just after, θ 249-51). After this programmatic statement the young men “beat a divine dance with their feet”, to the predictable and socially necessary admiration of the stranger, Odysseus. Demodocus then sings the most frivolous and risqué song in the poem, the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite, who are caught in bed by the cunning net of Hephaestus. On the one hand, this song offers the delight or *terpsis* that is ideally suited to the rather brittle hedonism of the Phaeacians. On the other, it marks a gap between the Phaeacian world and the harsher, more demanding life to which Odysseus must return. Hephaestus’ patience, cunning, and craft in defeating superior physical force in order to defend his marriage foreshadow, in a lighter key, the test that awaits Odysseus on Ithaca⁶. This singing, then, in a rather complex way exemplifies the multiple functions of the poet in his society: pure entertainment at one level, concern with the central values and conflicts in the world of the poem at another.

Not every audience, of course, sat in the rapt silence of the Phaeacian nobles around Alcinous (cf. λ 333f.: “All sat in silence and were held fast by the spell”). Menelaus, whose tastes incline slightly toward the grosser side, has acrobats to entertain his guests (δ 17). In the festivity for Ariadne in Cnossos described on the Shield of Achilles, the acrobats whirl among the dancing guests and in fact are the ones to “lead off the singing” (Σ 604f.).

The *Odyssey* is much concerned with defining the range and diversity of situations of performance and audience response. At the lower end of the scale are the suitors, who compel Odysseus’ bard to sing but otherwise are never shown as reacting to or caring about the quality or the material of the song. For this reason, perhaps, the constricted Phemius has as his first song the tale of the Return of the Greeks, for if this song saddens Penelope its subject is not perhaps what the suitors would most want to hear.

The Phaeacians, who compliment the poet on his skill (λ 367), are an excellent audience, in fact, too much so, for in their pleasure at Odysseus' tale they urge him to delay his return and thus present him with a delicate problem out of which he tactfully maneuvers (λ 348-61). In contrast to the rowdy suitors on Ithaca are the eager, attentive listeners among Odysseus' true friends, especially Eumaeus and Penelope. Eumaeus would gladly while away the long night with the tales of his guest, listening to the woes that he has endured (ξ 191-98).

For Eumaeus the telling of tales — and, by implication, the singing of songs — is a sharing of the woes of life that bind together all men as *deiloisi brotoisi*, “miserable mortals”. Hence the two men exchange their experiences of *kēdea*, griefs, with sympathy on both sides (cf. ξ 185). Eumaeus' comment is characteristic (ξ 361f.): “Wretched among strangers, much did you stir my heart telling each of these things that you suffered and all your wanderings”. Odysseus replies to Eumaeus' tale in the next book in the same vein: “Alas, how, small as you were, swineherd Eumaeus, were you tossed far from your native land and your parents” (σ 381f.). With that encouragement, Eumaeus launches into a full account of his early life; but he prefacing his story by a generalization on tales at banquets as a sharing of the sufferings common to all (σ 398-401): “Drinking and feasting in the hut, let us take joy in the woeful ills (*kēdea leugalea*) of one another, remembering; for a man who suffers much and wanders much also takes joy in his sufferings afterwards”. Odysseus in turns answers with sympathy; and the reciprocity of feeling is underlined by his echo of Eumaeus' sympathy for his own tale in Book 14 (ξ 361f.). Here in Book 15 he says, “Eumaeus, much have you stirred feeling in my breast, telling each of these things that you suffered in your heart. But alongside the evil Zeus gave you something good, since you came to the house of a gentle lord, though you toiled much, a lord who provides you always with food and drink, and you have a good livelihood. But as for me, I have come here after much wandering over the cities of men” (σ 486-92). By contrast, the suitors merely listen “in silence” to Phemius' account of the painful “Return of the Achaeans” in the first book (α 325f.); and the Phaeacians enjoy as entertainment the similar Trojan songs at which Odysseus weeps bitterly and revealingly⁷.

The best audience that we see in the poem is probably the longed-for wife to whom Odysseus tells the tale of his wandering in book 23 (248-341). Among the Phaeacians, for all their attention and courtesy, Odysseus cannot wait for the night to fall (v 28-35), whereas the night of his bard-like recital to Penelope is all too short, and Athena's aid prolongs it miraculously (ψ 241-46). Even more than the Phaeacians' response, Penelope's fascinated and involved hearing provides a clue to what might be the bard's ideal audience: there is a quiet, attentive, personally engaged, and patient listening, with “joy in the hearing” and with no tiredness or sleepiness “until he had

related everything" (ψ 306-09). Here, as in the meeting of (disguised) husband and wife in Book 19, we may also catch a glimpse of the privileged circumstances in which a bard might try out new songs or improve old ones: a quiet setting; a single, well disposed auditor; all the time he needs; and the opportunity to sing of something he loves. If Homer did in fact at some point dictate the "monumental composition" he finally achieved, might he have done it in an atmosphere of friendly calm like that between Odysseus and Eumeus or Odysseus and Penelope? We may recall too the scene of Achilles' singing heroic tales in his tent, alone save for his dear companion, Patroclus (I 186-91). In Achilles' case there is perhaps the special circumstance that this hero sings of glorious deeds with a lyre that is itself the result of one of his own acts of prowess: "They found him giving joy to his heart (playing on) an elaborately crafted lyre, and on it was a bridge of silver — a lyre that he took from the spoils when he sacked Eetion's city. With this he gave joy to his heart, and he sang of the glories of heroes". Presenting the hero as bard to his own deeds obviously adds dignity to the poet's status. In the *Iliad* this association appears only in embryonic form, but it is far more fully developed in the *Odyssey*.

A good bard enhances a good feast. The notion is in fact crystallized into the formulaic phrase, $\delta\alpha\theta\mu\alpha\tau\alpha\ \delta\alpha\iota\tau\varsigma$, song as "the accompaniment of the feasting". With intentional irony, the formula's first occurrence in the *Odyssey* is for an occasion when that "accompaniment" is reluctant, the forced singing of Phemius to Telemachus' unwelcome guests who arrogantly appropriate the good things of the palace, bard included (see α 154). The irony cuts the other way in the closing movement of the poem when the returned king, still a stranger and beggar in his own house, initiates the slaughter of the suitors with a command for "singing and the lyre, accompaniments of the feasting", thereby both asserting and implementing the restoration of his authority in his halls (ϕ 430). When the slaughter is complete, Odysseus gives orders for another song in the palace, this time a wedding song (ψ 133-51). A quarrel about a bard's song is the first occasion for showing the tensions in the house from which the king/father is absent (α 328-61); the king's authority over the bard brings the resolution of those tensions (ψ 289-99). The erstwhile beggar now holds the double honor of being king and bridegroom (or a sort of bridegroom), and the singing masks the bloodshed with which he has restored his authority.

If this wedding song and Odysseus' narrative enact the social circumstances of telling and hearing on Ithaca toward which the poem has been moving, the Phaeacian palace is the ideal setting in which to generalize about the complementarity of feasting and song's delight. Such a generalization forms the preface to Odysseus' own bard-like tale at the beginning of book 9 (I 1-11):

Making answer, Odysseus of the many wiles spoke as follows: «Lordly

Alcinous, conspicuous all your people, it is a lovely thing to hear a bard such as (Demodocus), who is like the gods in his voice. For I think there is no more graceful fulfilment than when festal delight prevails over the whole people, and the banqueters in the halls hear the bard, seated all next to one another, and the tables beside them are full of bread and meats, and the wine-bearer drawing it sweet from the mixing bowl carries it about and pours it forth. For me in my heart this seems the loveliest thing».

The practice of songs at dinner continues, of course, among the wealthy of Athens too, even democratic Athens. In the parode of Euripides' *Medea* (431 B. C.) the chorus deliberately echoes Odysseus' words from the beginning of book 9, but gives a characteristically Euripidean twist to the traditional sentiment that song accompanies good food and wine. The chorus questions the addition of pleasure to an already happy occasion. We need such comfort in time of sorrow, not as a superfluous joy amid other festivities (190-203):

You would not be mistaken in calling foolish and in no way clever those men of previous time who invented songs as pleasurable hearing at celebrations and feasts and banquets. But no one has invented a way, by music and many-stringed songs, to put an end to the hateful sufferings of mortals, from which deaths and terrible misfortunes overturn houses. Yet it would be a gain for mortals to heal these things by song. But for banquets to have their happy feasting, why do they stretch their voice in vain? The present fulness of the feast, from its own self, holds pleasure for mortals⁸.

Euripides certainly knows the tradition, going back to Hesiod and indirectly also to Homer, wherein song does provide a “healing”, or at least a distraction, for sufferings of this kind⁹. The quality of the banquet, and the significance of the poet's presence, as Euripides' text implies, is not just physical or sensual, but also moral. For both Homer and Euripides the well ordered feast and the well ordered song are productive of health, both physical and mental, whereas the disorderly feast, like the disorderly song, produces dangerous imbalances in the spirit and in the body — analogies, as often, systematized and conceptualized by Plato, notably in the *Gorgias* and *Republic*. The lesson is writ large, even if not explicitly formulated in ethical terms, in the *Odyssey*, in the contrast between the Phaeacians and the suitors on Ithaca.

'Not just the song itself, but the circumstances of the singing and treatment of the singer manifest the moral quality of the banquet. The well behaved Phaeacians sit in attentive silence during Demodocus' songs and then during Odysseus' tale, whereas Penelope's suitors compel Phemius to sing “by necessity”. Odysseus, as both guest and teller of tales, receives threats and has things thrown at his head. Aegisthus' house sets the worst example: he exiles to a desert island the bard whom Agamemnon had appointed to watch over Clytaemnestra (an interesting example of moral authority in-

vested in the bard).

The sharpest contrast to the orderly and respectful Phaeacian feast is the seer Theoclymenus' vision of the suitors' feasting in Book 20. In the crescendo of their outrageous behavior, this scene leads to and justifies the massacre soon to come (book 22). Ctesippus objects to the disguised beggar receiving an "equal portion" (v 280f.) and as his "guest gift" throws an ox hoof at his head, which Odysseus successfully ducks (v 291-302). In his harshest confrontation so far, Telemachus threatens that he would have run Ctesippus through had he in fact hit his guest (v 306ff.). The "laughter unquenchable" that soon arises among them shows the joy of the banquet all askew, for they eat "bloodied meats", upon which Theoclymenus pronounces (v 351-57):

Poor wretches! What evil is this that you suffer? Your heads and faces and knees beneath are enwrapped in night; groaning blazes out, and your cheeks are full of tears; the walls and lovely beams are spattered with blood. Full is the forecourt of ghostly images, and full the hall, phantoms rushing to the shades below. Perished is the sun from the sky, and over everything has come a baleful mist with a rush.

The scene anticipates Aeschylus' Thyestean feasts in the house of Atreus and draws on the same correspondence between the ritual order of the entertainment and the social and moral order in the palace and in the land.

The prophecy is delivered by a *mantis*, who is also a guest. As *mantis*, he resembles the poet: he has a marginal relation to the society, is dependent on the good will of others for support and food, is an itinerant craftsman or *dēmiourgos* (p 383-85), and stands in a privileged relation to the gods, from whom he has a skill and a knowledge of things hidden from other mortals. Prophet and poet (along with healer and shipbuilder) are in fact grouped together among the "strangers" who are "called in" or "invited" (*kletōi*, p 386) to a wealthy house. The small, self-sufficient, agrarian community does not generate the special skills which these "strangers" possess and offer.

The poet obviously had a practical interest in suggesting that their presence at banquets sets a seal of approval on the host's good behavior and upright character. Perhaps for that reason Euripides, who composes for non-sympotic and non-banqueting occasions can reflect more objectively on the tradition. Be this as it may, the moral implications of song at festal banquets are strongly asserted by poets after Homer, and perhaps most programmatically by Pindar.

In a victory ode for Chromios of Aetnaea, a lieutenant of Hieron, Pindar sings,

I stood at the palace doors of a man of hospitality, singing my lovely songs, where an appropriate feast has been set out in good order; (Ἐνθα μοι ἀρμόδιον / δεῖπνον κεκόσμηται); and this house is not without experience of guests

from every land. (*Nem.* 1.19-23).

The words ἀρμόδιον and κεκόσμηται ("appropriate," "set out in good order") combine the ideas of the attractiveness and appropriateness in the physical arrangements of the banqueting with the moral order of the house and the kingdom, and these find their proper vehicle in the kind of poet and the kind of song that the victor has chosen for the occasion.

Pindar's *First Pythian Ode* is his richest elaboration of the way in which the situation of the performance itself becomes a symbolic statement of the larger moral intent of the poet's whole work and a condensation of how he views his relation to the social order. Through the "Golden Lyre, joint possession of Apollo and the violet-tressed Muses", the power of the joyfully resounding instrument at the festive performance has been lifted from earth to the heavens, where it embodies the affinity between the order of song and the moral order of the gods working among men. Pindar here draws on a long tradition. In the proem of the *Theogony*, describing the august appearance of the king entering such an assembly, Hesiod implies an analogy between the honeyed speech with which the king holds the awe of the crowd and his own gift from the Muses (*Th.* 91-93). Both king and singer are recipients of "the holy gifts of the Muses to men" (93) and are "beloved by the Muses" (96f.). Although "kings are from Zeus," they, like the poet, depend on the Muses for the all-important power of words (94-97):

For from the Muses and from far-darting Apollo men are singers on earth
and players of the lyre; but from Zeus are kings; but blessed is he whomever
the Muses love, and from his mouth flows sweet speech¹⁰.

But what for Hesiod is implicit and expressed through the paratactic juxtaposition of king and poet becomes explicit in Pindar and is expressed through a hierarchy of metaphors in a symbolic system. Hesiod sets forth the ideal of kingship in a narrative account of the king entering the assembly. Similarly, the *Odyssey*, drawing on the same tradition and using the same formulas, develops this ideal in a situation of face-to-face encounter, in this case an encounter of a memorably dramatic and aggressive nature in which Odysseus puts the young Phaeacian noble Euryalus in his place (θ 171-73 = *Th.* 90-92). Both passages present their ideal of kingship in a form characteristic of oral epic, namely the predilection for specific, concrete, narrative, and highly personal contexts for the formulation of what we would consider ethical generalization or abstraction¹¹. In the case of the Homeric passage, the expression of such general ethical values in no way involves a break or discontinuity with the narrative fabric of the poem. Viewed in the context of the whole poem, the exchange with Euryalus suggests that Odysseus is the sort of man who knows what true kingship is, and it forms part of series of moral pronouncements that gradually suggest an aura of

just kingship around him (e.g. σ 130ff., τ 106ff.).

Pindar's technique in conveying the association between poetry and moral values, song and kingship, is quite different. He personifies the Golden Lyre as a unifying emblem of power and energy. Its moral force extends from the sovereignty of Zeus to the rule and new foundation of Hieron and includes the poet's own mastery and mimetic renewal of the world-order through song. He thus generalizes the situation of the performance from its specific moment in Sicily to the timeless act into which is distilled the eternal conflict between order and chaos. The entire scene of the performance is transposed from earth to Olympus, and the mortal performers and audience are suddenly put in touch with the essence of music itself. Thus the "hearing" in the second line of the ode (*ἀκούει*, which is also the poem's first verb) is done not by mortals or by a personal subject at all, but by the "dance-step" (*basis*).

The significance of this "stepping" that "listens to" the Lyre appears in its modifier, immediately following, "beginning of radiance", *ἀγλαῖας ἀρχά* (2). Literally the phrase refers to the festive celebration at Aetnaea that begins with dancing, which in turn takes its cue and its rhythms from the lyre-playing¹². Pindar's language, however, is generalizing, almost abstract, with a dense accumulation of nouns in line 2: *σύνδικον Μοισῶν κτέανον, βάσις ἀγλαῖας ἀρχά*). He thus gives a metaphorical cast to the whole scene, subordinating the "singers" in the present performance (*aoidoi*, 3) to the symbolic music of the Lyre on Olympus. This effect, in turn, makes the scene of the performances an archetypal enactment of the beginning of song itself.

These primordial beginnings of song are then interwoven with the cosmic founding act of Zeus's defeat of discordant monstrosity. This primordial beginning, in turn, is forever repeated and renewed each time that mortal singers on earth recreate music (1-6):

Golden Lyre, jointly shared possession of Apollo and the violet-tressed Muses: this the dance-step, beginning of radiance, hears; and the singers obey the signals whenever you, quivering in song, fashion the preludes of hymns that lead the choruses. And you quench the spear-pointed lightning of (Zeus's) ever-flowing fire.

The singers play to the dance-steps, as Demodocus plays to the Phaeacian youths in *Odyssey* 8 (a passage Pindar may just possibly have had in mind)¹³. But these "singers" make only the briefest appearance amid the personifications and the divinities. Three words are enough for them: *πειθονται δ' ᾁδοι σάμασιν* (3: "the singers obey the signals"). The scene quickly returns us to the Lyre, as subject and second-person addressee (4f.): the personified Lyre does the "whirling", the "fashioning" of preludes (the usual task of poets), and the "quenching" of Zeus's fire. The visible performance blends with its invisible archetype on Olympus. Thus the *sēmata*,

“signs” or “commands” that the mortal bards obey, are both the movements of the dancers’ feet and the “signals” from the eternal source of song itself. This presentation of song is very different from the human specificity and foregrounding of singing and dancing in Homer (e.g. the dancing that accompanies Demodocus’ song in *Odyssey* 8, or the scenes on the Shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18, including the Minoan-like dance in Σ 590-606). In Homer there is no division of attention between an immediate and a symbolical realm.

With the mention of Zeus’s lightning in line 5 the scene of *Pythian* 1 shifts entirely to Olympus and to cosmic conflict. It does not return to mortals again until the end of the next strophe, where men, by implication, are the spectators and auditors of another performance of sorts and of another manifestation of divine order in both visual and acoustic terms: the volcanic fire that attests to the monstrous Typho’s subterranean imprisonment (25ff.). These streams of fire from the heart of the volcano are “a prodigy wondrous to behold, and a wonder to hear of from whose who are present” (θαῦμα δὲ καὶ παρεόντων ἀκοῦσαι, 26b). “Hearing” (*akousai*) harks back to *akouei* in line 2 (also at the end of the verse). Yet even the human auditors implied in “those who are present” do not yet emerge into full reality. The preceding fifteen lines are dominated by Zeus, his monstrous enemy, and the quasi-personified places which form the scene and indeed the weapons of the vast struggle. Even the fiery “streams” that the spectators wonder at are, literally, “streams of Hephaestus” sent up by “that serpent”, Typho (κεῖνο δ' Ἀφαίστοιο κρουνοὺς ἐρπετὸν / δεινοτάτους ἀναπέμει, “That serpent sends forth most terrible streams of Hephaestus”, 25f.). The opening of the antistrophe keeps us in the mountain-scaled world of Zeus’s battle to suppress the monster, out of sight; and only after seven more verses do we finally come to the “city” in which the celebration is being held and the present ode sung (31).

Pindar’s relation to the poetic-social order of Hesiod is analogous to his relation to the Homeric dance and banquet. For Pindar the symbolic association between cosmic and poetic order binds together the king and the poet; and the sweet, harmonious sound of song opposes and combats the discord of Zeus’s chaotic adversaries. The violent sounds of subduing the monster in *Pyth.* 1.25f. probably draw on Hesiod’s account of the horrible voice of Typho in *Th.* 829-35¹⁴. Pindar is no less rooted than Hesiod in the concrete situation of the performance, but he volatilizes it, as it were, transforming it into a metaphor for primordial origins¹⁵. What for Hesiod belongs to a metonymic succession wherein god, king, and singer follow one another in a well demarcated series of separate stages, becomes in Pindar a metaphoric order, which it is the poet’s special task and privilege, as a “spokesman for the Muses” (*fr.* 137 Bowra = 150 Snell), to make visible. Pindaric song becomes a quasi-mythical *archa aglaias* which opens for

every bard who takes up his lyre, not of gold but of wood or horn, and “fashions preludes to this hymns of opening”. Pindar mythicizes the performative situation not necessarily because the performance is less real for him but because as heir to a long tradition of choral song he can reflect self-consciously on that tradition.

Unlike the Homeric descriptions of Demodocus or Phemius in the *Odyssey*, Pindar is interested less in recreating a plausible context of song-performance than he is distilling the essence of the creative, ordering power of poetry. He sets this Olympian phorminx beyond the individual performance(s) of the ode on earth and thus places song in a privileged position, above dance. In Homer, by contrast, even the narrative singing of epic tales by the *aoidos* has, qua performance, no particular superiority to the dance: Demodocus in *Odyssey* 8 moves easily from epic recital to accompanying the splendid Phaeacian dancers. In the other passages cited above also, song, dance, acrobatics, ritual lamentation stand on a more or less equal plane. In the marriage feasts and rustic harvest songs on the Shield the singing in fact seems more important as an accompaniment to the dance than as an end in itself (Σ 491-96, 551-72). Lines 569-72 are particularly vivid in the prominence they give to the dance:

In their midst a lad with clear-sounding lyre played gracefully and at the same time sang the lovely linus-song with delicate voice; and they, stamping all together, with song, shout, and feet followed, skipping.

Here, as in the Phaeacian banquet of *Odyssey* 8, vocal and instrumental performance, either together or in alternation, make up the entertainment. As the example of Demodocus seems to suggest, the versatility of the *aoidos* as composer, singer, and instrumentalist seems to be taken for granted.

To return to *Pythian* 1, the second antistrophe has now brought us to the city whose founding is celebrated in the ode. Having led us down from Olympus to earth and from Zeus's battles against cosmic disorder to Hieron as a founder of political order, Pindar resumes the scene of festive song¹⁶. The reference to Hieron's athletic victory in the epode concludes with the lasting glory that will remain “of famous name with sweet-sounding festivities” ($\sigmaὺν εὐφώναις θαλίαις δύνμαστάν$, 38). The invocation of Apollo and the Castalian spring in the next lines maintains the allusion to song¹⁷.

Near the end of the ode Pindar juxtaposes the songs of noble deeds that adorn the feasts of Croesus and the terrible sound of the brazen bull made by the human victims roasted inside at the court of the cruel and evil tyrant, Phalaris. Here again the quality of the song is expressive of the political and moral order. Phalaris is not received by “any lyre beneath the roof in the soft companionship of boys' voices” (93ff.). The function of song as the voice (literally) of moral order and as its symbolic analogue has now become stabilized in a pair of actual performances in human time and

place: the good songs that celebrate Croesus and the refusal of such songs to the evil Phalaris. In the here and now of the ode's performance the songs of good repute are realized in the harmonious voices at Hieron's festivities, closely associated with Apollo and Castalia, in 38ff.

This programmatic alignment of Hieron with Croesus is also this poet's way of instructing the ruler in the proper exercise of power (contrast the direct gnomic injunctions of Homer and Hesiod on princely behavior, above). The Golden Lyre has a message to teach in Sicily as well as on Olympus; and that lesson has now, quite literally, been brought down to earth. Now the single Golden Lyre of Apollo and the Muses in line 1 appears in its multiple human occurrences in "the lyres under the roofs" of men's houses. Here the "fellowship" (*κοινωνία*, 97) is not the shared *dike* of the god and his immortal band of songful goddesses (*σύνδικον*), but the fellowship of the members of the chorus whose "gentle" gift of vocal celebration is denied to Phalaris (97f.).

Song holds the balance between order and disorder, gentleness and violence. In Zeus's peaceful realm it can soothe Ares and his "harsh spear" (*τραχεῖαν... ἀκμάν*, 10f.); it can also show its harsh, martial sound to enemies of order, like Typho. Phalaris receives not the "soft" (*μαλθακάν*) aspect of song but only the "hostile fame" that his deeds provoke (*ἐχθρὰ φάτις*, 96), and we can easily extrapolate back to the emblematic Olympian Lyre in the ode's first strophic system.

Pindar's contemporary and rival, Bacchylides, also believes in the moral and social value of song but presents them in less abstract and less elaborated terms. Listing the blessing of peace in a paean, for example, he sings how peace, *eirene*, "gives birth to lordly wealth for mortals and the flowers of honey-tongued song and on richly adorned altars the burning of the thighs of woolly sheep with tawny fire, and young men's concern for gymnasia and flutes and revels" (*Pae. 4.61-68 Snell-Maehler*). Spider webs cover the shields, he continues, no trumpet shatters sleep at dawn, "and the ways are full of lovely symposia, and the songs of boys blaze forth" (79f.). Bacchylides conceives of song much after the manner criticized by the Euripidean chorus of the *Medea*: it is an accompaniment to the pleasures of festivity. A century and half earlier Stesichorus, like Bacchylides, associates song and peace. At the beginning of his *Oresteia* he calls on the Muse to join him in "expelling wars" (*πολέμους ἀπωσαμένα μετ' ἐμοῦ*) as she sings of the "marriages of the gods and the banquets of men and festivities of the blessed ones" (*fr. 12 D = 210 P*). For Solon too "the works of the Muses" stand beside those of Aphrodite and Dionysus as the source of festive joyfulness, *euphrosynai*, for men (*fr. 20 D = 26 W*; cf. also Soph. *Ai. 1199-1207*).

Because the Greeks, at least to the end of the fifth century B. C., envisage poetry as part of a performance and as the living voice of song¹⁸, they pay special attention to its vocal dimension. Its physical qualities recur

again and again in metaphors of sweetness, flowing, abundance, or strength. Invoking the Muse in the proem to the Catalogue of Ships, Homer speaks enviously of a “voice unbroken” and “a heart of bronze” — reminders of the physical effort that sustained recitation demands of the oral poet¹⁹.

A voice that “flows tirelessly sweet from the mouth” is the magical possession of Hesiod’s Muses as they sing to Zeus on Olympus. Their “lily-smooth voice spreads forth” over the halls, and “the top of snowy Olympus and the immortals’ houses resound with it” as the goddesses “send forth their voice immortal” (*Th.* 39-44). In the space of five lines Hesiod uses three different words for the poet’s “voice”, each time with a different epithet: ἀκάματος αὐδή, δπλ λειριοέσση, δμβροτον δσσαν. Each time too the voice participates in an active, energetic movement: it “flows”, “spreads forth”, or “is sent forth”. The tragic poets too, especially Euripides, call attention to the tearful or songful quality of the voice, particularly in laments. In thinking of the performance of this poetry, then, we need to keep in mind not just its quality of orality but, with Zumthor, its vocality²⁰.

Even poets at the end of the fifth century are still conscious of this vocal dimension of their work. In Aristophanes, for example, Euripides will attack the poetry of Aeschylus as “the heavy toil of the lungs”, (πνευμόνων πολὺν πόνον, *Ran.* 829; cf. 844, 1016). The more traditional and communal poet, capable of instilling a martial, patriotic spirit in his audience, produces his verse from deep within the chest or guts, from the *phrenes* or *splanchna*. The verse of Euripides, clever intellectual, man of books, exile and loner, comes tripping off the tongue, *glossa*, more a product of the subtle mind than of the viscera (cf. 891-93, 956-58). To be less traditional is also to be less physically vocal. The “earthiness” of the older poet is reflected in the bodily substance surrounding his voice. Euripides’ iconoclastic intellectualism and sophistic theorizing (as Aristophanes deliciously plays with it in comedy after comedy) take the form of airy suspension and insubstantial lightness: Socrates aloft in his philosophical basket in the *Clouds*, the sky-machine of Euripides-Perseus, in the *Thesmophoriazusae*, and the metaphors of ethereality used of both Agathon and Euripides at the beginning of the latter play. “The smoke of many letters” is Euripides’ own phrase for bookish unworldliness, put into Theseus’ mouth as an ironic taunt of Hippolytus (*Hipp.* 953f.).

When Homer’s Demodocus sings in Alcinous’ palace, Homer is attentive not only to the physical setting of the lyre itself but also to other colorful things around it. The poetic process is surrounded by qualities of tangibility and visibility. The poet fills his scene with concrete things, much as the painter of contemporary geometric vases fills his surface with ornaments, animals, or designs. The moment of the song’s beginning is adorned with rich objects that hold good cheer, comfort, and beauty (*θ* 65-70):

In the midst of the feasters Pontonoos placed for him (Demodocus) a silver

studded seat, and set it against a tall pillar. And the herald took down from its peg the clear-singing lyre above his head, and was careful to carry it in his hands. And beside him he set a basket of food and a lovely table and a cup of wine to drink, as his heart bade him.

Once more where Homer is literal Pindar metaphorizes. Demodocus gets real wine; Pindar, in the radiant proem of *Olympian* 7, for Diagoras of Rhodes, makes the wine that foams in its golden cup into a symbol of the gift of the song which he is offering to the victor.

Another scene of the *Odyssey* may contain an authentic kernel of detail about the performance, in this case the performer's attachment to his instrument as an especially precious possession. In Book 22, after Odysseus has despatched the suitors, the bard Phemius makes his appearance. He crawls out of his hiding place and takes refuge at the altar of Zeus in order to ask for mercy (χ 330ff.). He enters the narrative here in a characteristically bardic pose, "holding in his hands the clear-singing lyre" (χ 332). When he decides to approach Odysseus and clasp his knees in supplication, he "first places the smooth lyre on the ground, in between the mixing bowl and the silver-studded stool" (χ 340f.). These details are gratuitous. Are they perhaps an indirect reflection of the singer's professionalism? The singer would protect his instrument as a modern violinist might his Stradivarius. Even in the *Iliad*, which says relatively little about the bard, the lyre receives special attention as a physical object. The lyre on which Achilles sings "the glorious fame of heroes" in Book 9 is a prized object, booty gained from the sack of Eetion's city (I 188), an exploit surrounded by an aura of quasi-chivalric splendor from Andromache's description in Book 6 (Ζ 416-20). In the Homeric Hymn to Pythian Apollo the god uses a golden plectrum (*h. Ap.* 185), as in the Delian Hymn he hangs his bow from a golden peg (*h. Ap.* 9; cf. θ 67 and 105). In the depiction of musical scenes on geometric vases of the eighth century the lyre or other instrument often has a prominent place. A lyre has also been found buried with its (probable) owner in the tomb of a Mycenean prince or noble at Menidi in Attica²¹. There may, then, be a genuine historical basis for the care with which Phemius treats his instrument in our passage.

Phemius' entreaty of Odysseus in a setting of bloody corpses and overturned tables gives us one of the poem's most incisive and most interesting accounts of poetic inspiration. You will feel grief if you kill a poet, Phemius tells Odysseus, — I, a poet who "sing for gods and men. I am *autodidaktos*, and a god breathed into my breast songs of every sort..."

αὐτῷ τοι μετόπισθ' ἄχος ἔσσεται, εἴ κεν ἀοιδόν
πέφνης, δις τε θεοῖσι καὶ ἀνθρώποισιν ἀείδω.
αὐτοδιδάκτος δ' εἰμί, θεὸς δέ μοι ἐν φρεσὶ οἵμας
παντοίας ἐνέψυσεν... (χ 345-48).

For all of the abject situation in which he finds himself, the bard manages to assert his privileged position. His songs are “for gods and men”, and his inspiration comes from a god. His word *autodidaktos* means “having learned the songs from himself”, not excluding divine aid, in contrast to repeating what he has acquired from a specific human teacher or model²². Whatever the exact connotation of the word, it is clear that the poet regards the sources of his inspiration as mysterious and therefore divine. In that contact with divinity lies his claim to a special value for himself. By choosing this unlikely occasion to reflect on the poet’s divine inspiration, Homer sets his special value into even higher relief.

Phemius’ language of inspiration closely resembles that of Hesiod in the proem of the *Theogony*: the Muses “breathed divine song into me” (ἐνέπνευσαν δέ μ' ἀοιδήν / θέσπιν, *Th.* 31f.). Describing his victory at Aulis with a “hymn” (which may in fact be the *Theogony*), Hesiod says more simply, “The Muses taught me how to sing the wondrous hymn” (Μοῦσαι γάρ μ' ἐδίδαξαν ἀθέσφατον δύμνον ἀείδειν, *Op.* 662). Although the process of becoming a poet implies supernatural intervention, the use of the verb “teach” both by Phemius and by Hesiod may also point to a process requiring native aptitude, effort, and conscious, sustained attention. Whoever is the “teacher”, being a bard means learning many, many lessons. The Muse may give the bard his native gift for singing, but he has elaborated those songs by himself, without the aid of any human teacher. The teaching, divine though it be, implies the long process by which the oral poet acquires his store of formulas, themes, mythical lore, and techniques of narration. The divine “breathing into the breast”, on the other hand, may refer to the poet’s natural gifts, his peculiar genius. For Phemius the invisible divine force that gives him his special talent also has a visible objective correlative in the tangibility of the lyre as a preciously guarded possession.

The juxtaposition of the poet’s own powers of learning with the inspiration of a god in Phemius’ speech points to an important social aspect of the poet’s conception of himself. The ancient poet views his art as coming to him in part from outside himself. This externalized, divine origin reflects not only the aura of supernatural power around his gift or the belief that putting words together in the crafted shape of artful song (the Homeric *kata kosmon*) is a magical power. It also points to the poet’s solidarity with a tradition of song that lies beyond his own individual talent and indeed beyond his individual life. As “singer” rather than “maker” (*aoidos* rather than *poietēs*), he is the voice of a supra-personal poetry and the vehicle of an ancient wisdom. Although later poets claim this divine inspiration as a matter of course, its meaning is far fresher and more potent in an oral culture, where more depends on the poet’s invisible power of memory and his ability in the situations of performance and where the technical, human skills are less tangible than they are in the case of writing.

The physical aspects of the song's performance are as important in the sixth and fifth centuries as in the eighth and seventh; but the poet, less bound to the immediate situation of performance than the Homeric *aoidos*, looks beyond that situation to more imaginative possibilities. As we have noted for the foaming wine of *Olympian* 7 and the Golden Lyre of *Pythian* 1, what is an actual physical accoutrement in Homer later becomes metaphorical or even self-consciously symbolical. Even further removed from the actual circumstances of the song is the chariot of *Olympian* 6 that will transport the poet through the opened "gates of hymns" to the place and distant time of his myth.

Hesiod's scepter in the proem to the *Theogony* stands in an intermediate position between the two attitudes. As a visible objectification of his music power, it parallels the physical "breath" of inspiration that these goddesses have "breathed into" him: "They gave me the staff, wondrous branch of blooming laurel, picking it, and they breathed into me a voice divine, so that I might sing of the things to come and the things that are, and they bade me hymn the race of the blessed gods who are always, and to sing of them themselves always, first and last" (*Th.* 30-34).

Unlike Pindar's Golden Lyre Hesiod's scepter is an existing concrete object, stripped from its tree and presented to the poet at a specific moment in his life. Unlike the lyre of Phemius in *Odyssey* 22, it is bestowed on the poet in a supernatural encounter that the poet describes in the first person. Phemius' far vaguer references to "singing for gods and men" and "a god" who breathes into him the knowledge of his songs (χ 346-48) is characteristic of the epic convention of keeping the personality of the singer himself in the background. Hesiod, however, conveys an air of biographical specificity by presenting the meeting as a direct encounter with the otherness of the divine. Thus he shows the scene at least in part through the eyes of the divine speakers. It is they who address him, not the other way around; and their speech is in fact the alienating insult, "Shepherds of the fields, base reproaches, bellies only" (26). Whereas he speaks of himself in the first person singular throughout the episode, they address "shepherds" in the plural, as if the individual shepherd-singer is somehow beneath their collective notice. Or perhaps as goddesses of all of poetry, they have a responsibility to the art as a whole rather than to the individual practitioner, even though they favor him with a personal interview. In any case they set themselves sharply apart from the mortal singer both in the content of their address and in their style. There is, for example, a strong contrast between the staccato rhythms of their insults of line 26 and the flowing rhythm of the preceding verse that describes their own Olympian identity: Μοῦσαι Ὀλυμπίαδες, κοῦραι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο (25).

This distancing otherness of the Muses parallels the nature of their gift. They do not give the lyre itself, unlike the exchange between Apollo and

Hermes in the Homeric *Hymn to Hermes*. Their gift has no necessary connection with poetry or song. It is, rather, a symbol of power in a more general sense, not identical with song, obviously, but signifying the poet's privileged contact with the divine realm of song to which the Muses belong. Hesiod thus detaches the empowering sign of poetic craft from the act of singing and from the immediate performative context. In this respect he is operating in a zone of greater speculative freedom about his art than did Homer.

By receiving the scepter instead of the lyre, Hesiod perhaps also indicates that his song is more directly engaged socially than the Homeric poet's art. The scepter stands in a closer relation to the social function of discourse than the lyre, for the kings in the Homeric assemblies hold the scepter to command speech (e.g. A 234ff.). A little later in the proem Hesiod dwells on the reverence for the king in the assembly (*Th.* 91f.), with the parallels to the poet noted above. For this reason, perhaps, Hesiod allows his Muses to say that they know falsehood as well as truth (27f.). His is not a poetry only of *terpsis*, the pure entertainment-value of epic narrative, nor does it contain only the "lies" (or, in other terms, the inventive freedom) that produces such *terpsis*.

Hesiod puts that more direct relation with the immediate realities of the society into practice when he makes a direct, critical address to the *basileis* in the *Works and Days* (248; cf. 38f.). This social concern is implicit for the Homeric bard too, but it is more indirect and it operates through the age-old medium of exemplary stories. Whereas Hesiod speaks to the greedy kings in his own voice, Homer sets up a fictional attack in a remote period (Achilles and Agamemnon in *Iliad* 1). The *terpsis* of epic has a somewhat different kind of social effect, for (as Havelock suggests) it aids the memorization and the internalization of the norms and values imbedded in the tales.

A century or so later, Sappho is able to experiment with the performative setting in a still freer, more imaginative, and private vein. In fragment 2 she uses the ritual setting of the invocation to her goddess to create a mood approaching a sensuous reverie in which the natural world is made to participate²³. The more personal performative conventions of monodic lyric doubtless contribute to this imaginative revisioning of herself in contact with her major divinity. Though different in content and expression, the scene may be compared with Hesiod's contact with his divinities, at least for the personal terms in which such a meeting is framed: it appears as a unique, mysterious, and private experience rather than as one that is normative, familiar, and public. The latter qualities predominate in the Homeric scenes, where we are made to feel that we are present at procedures that have been often repeated and hence can be enjoyed in the beloved detail of the well known and often experienced. Such, for instance, is the account of the preparations for Demodocus' song among the Phaeacians, cited above:

we are told how meat and drink are set before the bard, how the lyre is taken down from its peg, and how it is conveyed to his hands (θ 62ff.; cf 256f.).

In the early fifth century the detachment from the concreteness of the performative setting in the description of song has proceeded far beyond the range of Hesiod's scepter. (There is much continuity with the past too, of course, but I want to emphasize the changes and developments). Pindar and Bacchylides describe their art in a varied language of metaphors and symbols that have no necessary relation with singing or music. The ode is a statue, a garland, an embroidered tapestry, a temple, a rich libation of wine, a fresh spring of water, flowers, fire, wings²⁴. The poet himself may be an eagle soaring in the open sky, an archer or javelin-thrower shooting a missile of song, a traveler on a broad highway, or a voyager on a ship cleaving the seas²⁵. The metaphors are far removed from the actual scene of the performance, and indeed are perhaps chosen (in part) to contrast with that scene. Where Homer and Hesiod pay special attention to the quality of the voice when they mention song, the metaphors for song in Pindar and Bacchylides are predominantly visual rather than oral/aural.

These stylistic changes are symptomatic of major changes in the poet's view of himself and his mode of production. More detached from the scene of the performance, he is important less as a performer than as a composer. He may still view his work in the light of the orality of the performance (as Pindar and Bacchylides frequently do): but the vocality has become more figurative than literal. Probably too he is self-conscious of producing a text in writing, to be sent to the patron, as Pindar shows in his half-playful comparison of an ode to Phoenician merchandise shipped overseas²⁶.

This detachment from the scene of performance accompanies the poet's higher social status and also his more self-consciously elevated moral status. The Homeric bard (whatever other moral, educational, or preservative functions his songs may perform), views himself primarily as an entertainer. His single most overtly and emphatically designated task is "to give pleasure", *terpein*. The patronymic of Odysseus' bard on Ithaca is Terpiades, "Son of Pleaser". As a transmitter and guardian of heroic values, he may be assigned to watch over a queen, as is Agamemnon's bard in Mycenae (χ 270ff.), but the "divine singer" may also have to share the (figurative) spotlight with acrobats (δ 17f.) or with talkative travelers or wandering beggars. He is a *demiourgos*, a craftsman or hired worker with a specialized skill, like a doctor, shipwright, or prophet (ρ 383-85). Phemius, the bard of Odysseus' palace, has to sing "by constraint" and "against his will" (χ 331; cf. 351 f.). He may receive respect and attention, as Demodocus does in the more orderly Phaeacian palace; but, if we may extrapolate from the experiences of the bard-like Odysseus in his disguise of a wandering beggar in his own palace, he is also dependent on his audience for his supper and his bed. In the worst of circumstances he may have to contend with rowdy

and drunken guests.

The poet of the sixth and fifth centuries is probably more independent. At least the famous ones — Anacreon, Simonides, Pindar, Bacchylides — can count on a variety of patrons and perhaps are able to choose their commissions. With this independence comes the right to speak with moral authority on their own account. Homer and even Hesiod, though inspired by Muses, do not call themselves their “prophet” or “spokesman”, as Pindar does. Nor do they call attention to their own moral version of the tales they tell as Pindar does, for example, in *Olympian* 1 (52ff.). Neither Homer nor Hesiod ever sets himself apart from a large segment of his audience in the way that Pindar does when he labels “the crowd of men, in the largest part”, as “blind in heart” and “unable to see the truth” (*Nem.* 7.23f.) or when he declares that his arrows of song “have voice for those who understand” (*Ol.* 2.83-86)²⁷. The Homeric bard’s status as “divine singer”, *theios aoidos* rests only on skill in singing (at least that is all that the bard explicitly claims), not on a privileged moral sensibility or deeper insight. It may be that the bard’s blindness is a way of indicating such insight and that the bard’s function as the voice of ethical norms is so taken for granted that it does not need to be articulated or defended. These poets certainly do convey moral judgments and ethical insights (one need only think of the proem of the *Odyssey*); but they do not define themselves in terms of such tasks.

At the same time the *Odyssey* indicates that the profession of the bard and the special nature of his talent has become more interesting to the singer himself and presumably to his audience too. The far greater attention to the inspiration, performance, and skill of the bard may be a personal idiosyncrasy of the poet of the *Odyssey*, or it may result from the greater reflectiveness of old age, if, as “Longinus” says, he composed the poem as an old man (*De Sublim* 9.11ff.). But it is also possible, if the *Odyssey* is in fact later than the *Iliad*, that his hearers had become curious about the kind of talent that had produced the great epic of Troy.

From at least the time of Simonides the poet receives a fee for his work. Though he must still please his patron, his mobility far exceeds that of the Homeric bard, for he has a much wider range of tastes and attitudes to work with²⁸. In the world of Simonides and Pindar, and even of Ibycus and Anacreon, land is no longer the only source of wealth. As wealth from commerce and trading accumulates, money is also a source of status. A salaried poet is more independent of a single patron and not necessarily déclassé as an artisan is in a society of inherited aristocratic landed property and privilege²⁹. Simultaneously the centuries after Homer bring an increasingly critical reflection on the moral and social content of the myths. A sixth-century poet like Xenophanes or Simonides is aware that his work stands at the center of important controversies about values and behavior, and he stakes out a definite place for himself in such debates. By defending the

moral and didactic seriousness of his art, as Pindar does in the first half of the fifth century, the poet is also defending his own value to society and (from a crasser point of view) maintains his worth on the marketplace. Correspondingly, he can no longer take for granted, as Homer can, that his songs encode into narrative terms and heroic manners the moral consciousness and normative ideals of his society. Simonides and Pindar both adopt a critical stance toward traditional material. The logic development of this critical spirit is the dialogic presentation of myth and the conflictual situations dramatized in tragedy. However much tragedy owes to epic and lyric song, it also represents a radical break with the archaic view of the poet. But that subject lies far beyond the scope the present paper³⁰.

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¹⁾ *New Grub Street*, Harmondsworth (U.K.) 1968, chaps. 4 and 9.

²⁾ See Longin. *De sublim.* 35.4, echoing Call. *Ap.* 108-12.

³⁾ See B. Gentili, *Poesia e pubblico nella Grecia antica*, Roma-Bari 1984, 9ff., 18ff.; also C. J. Herington, *Poetry into Drama*, Sather Classical Lectures 49, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1985, part I.

⁴⁾ See H. T. Wade-Gery, *The Poet of the Iliad*, Cambridge 1952.

⁵⁾ The parallel with the Renaissance was a favorite one early in this century: see A. Hauser, *The Social History of Art*, trans. S. Godman, New York 1951, 1.75.

⁶⁾ The relevance of the Ares-Aphrodite song to the central plot of the *Odyssey* has been much discussed. For a recent interpretation and bibliography see N. Austin, *Archery at the Dark of the Moon*, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1975, 159-62.

⁷⁾ On the contrasting modes of responding to songs see G. Walsh, *The Varieties of Enchantment*, Chapel Hill, (N.C.) 1983, chap. 1, especially pp. 3-6 and 15ff.

⁸⁾ On this passage see Gentili, 54f.

⁹⁾ Hes. *Th.* 52ff.; cf. 8 594-98. See P. Pucci, *Hesiod and the Language of Poetry*, Baltimore 1977, 22 ff.; also A. Bergren, *Helen's Good Drug: Odyssey IV 1-305*, in S. Kresic, ed., *Contemporary Literary Hermeneutics and Interpretation of Classical Texts*, Ottawa 1981, 201-14, especially p. 210. Cf. also Steich. fr. 232 (*PMG*), where "playfulness" and song belong to Apollo, grief and lament to Hades (*paigmotynai, molpai; kēdeia, stonachai*).

¹⁰⁾ On this passage see R. P. Martin, *Hesiod, Odysseus, and the Instruction of Princes*, *TAPhA* 114, 1984, 29-48.

¹¹⁾ On this tendency in oral poetry see E. A. Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, Cambridge, (Mass.) 1963, chap. 3. Also B. Simon and J. Russo, *Homeric Psychology and the Oral Epic Tradition*, *JHI* 29, 1968, 483-98.

- ¹²⁾ See Herington, 29, who suggest that the "signals", *samasin*, in the next verse refer to the signs between poet and dancers. But the meaning, given the context, should probably not be limited to the (mortal) performance alone. For the circumstances of such performances see now M. Lefkowitz, AJPh 109, 1988, 1-11, and M. Heath, *ibid.*, 180-95.
- ¹³⁾ Θ 261-65.
- ¹⁴⁾ See. A. von Mess, *Der Typhonmythus bei Pindar und Aeschylus*, RhM 56, 1901, 167-74.
- ¹⁵⁾ On such myths of first beginnings in Pindar see my essay, *Naming, Truth, and Creation in the Poetics of Pindar*, "Diacritics" 16, 1986, 65-83.
- ¹⁶⁾ The analogies between Hieron and Zeus as conquerors of disorder are further developed in Hiero's victorious containment of the "Phoenician and Carthaginian battle cry", parallel also to the mainland victories over the Persians in 72-80.
- ¹⁷⁾ For the association of Apollo and the Castalian spring with poetry cf. *Poe.* 6.7ff.; also *Pyth.* 4.294, 299.
- ¹⁸⁾ See the works of Herington and Gentili, above, note 3.
- ¹⁹⁾ Compare also the brazen voice of Achilles, like the sound of trumpet, in Σ 222f., and the voice of Athena in Soph. *Ai.* 16f.
- ²⁰⁾ P. Zumthor, *La poésie et la voix dans la civilisation médiévale*, Paris 1984, 9-36, especially p. 11f.
- ²¹⁾ See J. M. Hurwit, *The Art and Culture of Early Greece*, Ithaca, (N. Y.) 1985, 49. There is perhaps further corroboration for the historicity of Phemius' concern with his lyre in the fact that the lyre or other instrument sometimes appears in scenes on geometric vases. Earlier, there is the marble statuette of the "harpist" of the Cycladic period. Cf. also Herington, 17-19, with plate II (citharodist and his lyre by the Berlin Painter in the Metropolitan Museum, New York), for the importance of the lyre later in the archaic period.
- ²²⁾ The most recent discussion I have seen is that of W.G. Thalmann, *Conventions of Form and Thought in Early Greek Poetry*, Baltimore 1984, 126f., who suggests that the word implies «an innate ability exercised spontaneously» and compares *h.* *Merc.* 474 and 489. Cf. also Soph., *Ai.* 700, where the similar αὐτοδοξία is used of the songs of Pan that come unbidden from the god.
- ²³⁾ For recent discussion of this poem see A. Burnett, *Three Archaic Poets*, Cambridge, (Mass.) 1983, 259ff., especially p. 263f.
- ²⁴⁾ For example, statue: B. 5.4, 10.11ff.; cf. Pind *Nem.* 5.1ff.; garland: Pind. *Nem.* 7.74; weaving: B. 5.9; tapestry: Pind *Nem.* 7.74.; libation of wine, *Ol.* 7.1ff.; cf. *Isth.* 6.62f.; springs of water: *Pyth.* 4.29 and *Poe.* 6.7ff.9; flowers and leaves: *Ol.* 12.15; and B. *Poe.* 4.63; streams: Pind, *Nem.* 7. 12ff.; temple: Pind., *Pyth.* 6.6ff., *Pyth.* 7.1ff., *Ol.* 6.1ff., *Ol.* 6.1ff.; fire: Pind. *Ol.* 9.22 and B. *Poe.* 4.80; wings: B. *Jr.* 20B.4, and cf. Pind *Ol.* 14.24.
- ²⁵⁾ Cf. respectively B. 5.16ff., and cf. Pind. *Nem.* 5.21; Pind. *Pyth.* 1.42ff. and *Nem.* 7.71ff.; Pind. *Isth.* 4.1, B. 5.31-35 and 9.47f.; Pind. *Isth.* 6.23f.
- ²⁶⁾ *Pyth.* 2.57f.; cf. *Nem.* 5.2f. On the awareness of the textuality of the ode in Pindar see my *Pindar's Mythmaking: The Fourth Pythian Ode*, Princeton 1986, 153ff.
- ²⁷⁾ For the problems of this much discussed passage see most recently G. W. Most, *Pindar, O. 2.83-90*, CQ 36, 1986, 304-16, with a review of previous scholarship.

- 28) The blindness of the Homeric bard would, of course, increase dependence and lessen mobility. Although not all the singers in Homer are blind (e.g. the Ithacan Phemius), one wonders whether the profession attracted the blind, as it did, for example, in Japanese culture. The association of blindness and the singer persists not only for Demodocus and the poet of the Homeric *Hymn to (Delian) Apollo* (171ff.), but also in the myth of Thamyris and in the story of Stesichorus' palinode.
- 29) Cf. Pindar's defense against charges of venality in *Isthmian 2*, which reflects a point where the poet is still somewhat uncomfortable with his "professional" role. The aristocratic ties of friendship and clanship are still the ideal motivation behind such poetry.
- 30) For some suggestion in this direction see my essay, *Greek Tragedy: Truth, Writing, and the Representation of the Self*, in *Mnemai: Classical Studies in Memory of Karl K. Hulley*, ed. Harold J. Evjen, Chico (CA) 1984, 41-67, now in my *Interpreting Greek Tragedy: Myth, Poetry, Text*, Ithaca, (N. Y.) 1986, especially p. 80ff. I gratefully acknowledge a Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities in 1985-86, during which this study was written.