CORINNA AND MYTHOLOGICAL INNOVATION

For the better part of a century scholars have been legitimately, if somewhat exclusively, preoccupied with establishing a date for Corinna.[1] Dialect and linguistic evidence, as argued especially by Page[2] and West,[3] would seem to support a late date for her, somewhere toward the end of the third century B.C.E. Yet the tradition of her contest with, and defeat of, Pindar,[4] along with her reproach of Myrtis for competing with Pindar (*PMG* 664a), as well as other ancient testimonia and iconographical evidence,[5] suggest a fifth-century date.[6] Given the meagre state of the evidence, however, scholarly opinion is guaranteed to remain divided on this issue for the indefinite future. Since the dialect of Corinna is a literary construction, conforming at no time to a single Boeotian vernacular, the possibility of metagrammatism cannot be entirely rejected, even by experts who favour the later date.[7] The hypothesis of metagrammatism explains why some of the Boeotian forms in the Berlin papyrus (for example, the substitution of υ for οι, except in the case of datives singular of *o*-stems) conform with orthographic practices characteristic of the late third, rather than those of her presumably contemporary fifth, century.[8] Such a fifth-century Corinna would not have been famous outside of Boeotia, since she is not mentioned in any of our sources before the second half of the first century B.C.E., but her works could

[1] E. Lobel, 'Corinna', *Hermes* 65 (1930), 356–65.

[2] D. L. Page, *Corinna* (London, 1953), 65–84, who nevertheless (84) remains sceptical that a definitive date can be given. Recently W. J. Henderson, 'Corinna of Tanagra on poetry', *Acta Classica* 38 (1995), 29–41, at 35–6, for somewhat different reasons, also arrived at a sceptical middle ground between an earlier and later date.

[3] M. L. West, 'Corinna', *CQ* 20 (1970), 277–87, and 'Dating Corinna', *CQ* 40 (1990), 553–57. Other scholars who view her as Hellenistic include P. Guillon, 'Corinne et les Oracles Béotiens: La Consultation d'Asopos', *BCH* 82 (1958), 47–60, and 'A Propos de Corinne', *Annales de la Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines d'Aix* 33 (1959), 155–68, D. Clayman, 'Corinna and Pindar', in R. Rosen and J. Farrell (edd.), *Nomodeiktes: Greek Studies in Honor of Martin Ostwald* (Ann Arbor, 1993), 633–42, and C. Segal, 'Pebbles in golden urns: the date and style of Corinna', in id., *Aglaia: The Poetry of Alcman, Sappho, Pindar, Bacchylides, and Corinna* (Lanham, MD, 1998), 315–26 (reprint with addenda to the original article which appeared in *Eranos* 73 [1975], 1–8).

[4] Paus. 9.22.3, Ael. *VH* 13.25.1–2.

[5] J. Larson, 'Corinna and the daughters of Asopus', *Syllecta Classica* 13 (2002), 47–62, at 47–8 reviews the controversy over Tatian's (*Oratio ad Graecos* 33–4) mention of Silanion's (4th century B.C.E.) statue of Corinna. Propertius, at 2.3.21 writes: *et sua cum antiquae committit scripta Corinnae*, on which K. Latte, 'Die Lebenszeit der Korinna', *Eranos* 54 (1956), 57–67, at 66 remarks that this would make no sense if Corinna lived in the third century.

[6] The earlier date is supported by C. M. Bowra, 'The date of Corinna', *CR* 45 (1931), 4–5; Latte (n. 5); J. A. Davison, *From Archilochus to Pindar: Papers on Greek Literature of the Archaic Period* (London, 1968), 104 n. 2 and *passim*; D. Gerber, *Euterpe: An Anthology of Early Greek Lyric, Elegiac, and Iambic Poetry* (Amsterdam, 1970); A. Allen and J. Frel, 'A date for Corinna', *CJ* 68 (1972), 26–30. M. Davies, 'Corinna's date revisited', *SIFC* 81 (1988), 186–94, resists arguments for the later date, while remaining content to leave Corinna's date *in ambiguo* (p. 194).

[7] Such as West (n. 3, 1970), 277–78, who follows Page's (n. 2), 75, argument that the difference between fifth-century Boeotian spelling and later periods is very great in comparison with the small differences between fourth, third, or second-century orthography. The argument for metagrammatism, then, makes more sense if Corinna belongs to the fifth century.

[8] Page (n. 2), 65–7.

have been discovered and copied later, perhaps in the Alexandrian era.[9] In the following presentation, this is the position that will be adopted, although I recognize that it is not invulnerable. Latte's[10] reminder that what survives of Corinna's poetry both in papyrus and in citations is surely only a small portion of her *oeuvre* remains as relevant a caution today as it was fifty years ago.

Where attention has been paid to Corinna's presumed audience(s) and the content of her poetry,[11] irrespective of her date, the results here too, owing to the dearth of evidence, have been mixed. On the one hand it has been argued that, unlike Sappho, Corinna does not present 'women's poetry'.[12] Conversely, others have concluded that she does indeed present 'women-identified' poetry.[13] Again I do not expect that much headway will be made on this issue either, depending as it does on whether one interprets, for instance, Corinna's focus on heroes (such as Cephisus and Orion, *PMG* 655.12–16) or on the abducted daughters of Asopus (*PMG* 654, col. iii.12–25) as reflecting 'patriarchal' values.[14] The evidence is too exiguous to draw such broad conclusions. With equal plausibility, one could argue that the absurd and obviously humorous singing contest between Cithaeron and Helicon (*PMG* 654, col. i),[15] two male mountains, serves as a critique of male bravura, over which no less than the Muses themselves preside. If Corinna is 'patriarchal' in some of her myths, she is decidedly not in others.

Similarly Corinna's reproach to Myrtis for competing with Pindar has also drawn divided opinions (*PMG* 664a):

> μέμφομη δὲ κὴ λιγουρὰν
> Μουρτίδ᾽ ἰώνγ᾽ ὅτι βανὰ φοῦ-
> σ᾽ ἔβα Πινδάροι πὸτ ἔριν.

> I also blame clear-voiced
> Myrtis because, although[16] she is a woman,
> she entered into competition with Pindar.

This passage is usually taken by scholars to mean that she is either reinforcing the division between men and women's poetic competition,[17] or that she is, once again,[18]

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[9] In scholia to Apollonius of Rhodes 1.551 = *PMG* 670, we are told that Alexander Polyhistor wrote a commentary on her work. See further Page (n. 2), 69.

[10] Latte (n. 5), 65, 'Man sollte doch nicht vergessen, dass die noch nicht 100 Verse, die uns Aegypten geschenkt hat, zwar gegenüber den bescheidenen Resten, die wir hatten, ihr Bild für uns in erfreulicher Weise praecisieren, aber immer noch einen verschwindenden Bruchteil ihrer Gedichte darstellen.'

[11] E. Stehle, *Performance and Gender in Ancient Greece: Nondramatic Poetry in its Setting* (Princeton, 1997), 100–104, and J. Snyder, 'Korinna's "Glorious Songs of Heroes"', *Eranos* 82 (1984), 125–34.

[12] M. Skinner, 'Corinna of Tanagra and her audience', *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 2 (1983), 9–20, especially at 10.

[13] D. Rayor, 'Korinna: gender and the narrative tradition', *Arethusa* 26 (1993), 219–31.

[14] Thus Skinner (n. 12), 13–15.

[15] Whether or not we accept the proposal of Helicon's suicide argued for by J. Ebert, 'Zu Korinnas Gedicht vom Wettstreit zwischen Helikon und Kithairon', *ZPE* 30 (1978), 5–12.

[16] φοῦσα is almost always taken concessively, as translated here, although it could be causal. Without knowing the exact meaning of βανά (whether a point of local pride or disdain) we cannot specify Corinna's meaning.

[17] For example, Henderson (n. 2), 32. Such a view conflicts, however, with the local Tanagraean tradition that has Corinna, a student of Myrtis (*Suda* κ 2087 Adler, on which see further Clayman [n. 3], 633), herself defeat Pindar.

[18] In the wake of what we are told at Plut. *De glor. Ath.* 357F–348A, in conjunction with Pindar, fr. 29 SM.

criticizing λιγουρά 'clear-voiced' Myrtis for imitating the convoluted style of Pindar.[19] Even so, it is worth recalling that the reproach of one's predecessors and contemporary rivals is standard fare in lyric and elegy: we have the examples of Stesichorus' reproach of Homer and Hesiod,[20] Pindar's of Archilochus,[21] and Solon's of Mimnermus,[22] to name only a few. In this respect, Corinna's critique may be no more than a topos by which lyric and elegiac poets situate themselves within a tradition.

There are different senses in which Corinna's reproach of Myrtis and Pindar could sting, however. As others have noted, her use of the Boeotian term βανά (as of Boeotian dialect in general) may convey a certain local patriotism, yet why would this be important to emphasize in a critique of Myrtis or Pindar? As I see it, the argument branches in two directions here, one focusing on Myrtis and the other on Pindar. Both branches depend on whether the Boeotian term βανά is a point of local pride or, as is also possible, of disdain. With regard to Myrtis, if she is the main target of the attack in *PMG* 664a,[23] instead of competition between men and women or the matter of poetic style, Corinna could be saying that Myrtis is a 'provincial' βανά unworthy to compete with the cosmopolitan and socially élite Pindar. To this we may compare Sappho's bitter vituperation against the unlettered woman for whom there would be no μναμοσύνα because she did not have a share of the Pierian roses (fr. 55 LP). Accordingly, Myrtis was socially outclassed by Pindar and should not have competed with him on those grounds.

If βανά is a point of local pride, however, Corinna's criticism shifts to Pindar and elevates Myrtis, relatively speaking, at his expense. Pindar had notoriously flexible loyalties to his homeland of Thebes. While he could be laudatory (*Ol.* 6.87–90),[24] the controversy ignited by his praise of Athens, which he styled 'the bulwark of Hellas' Ἑλλάδος ἔρεισμα (fr. 76 SM), shows that he could at times be more mindful of his patrons than of his homeland. Politics rather than style may also underlie Corinna's attack on Pindar for using Atticisms in his poetry.[25] Moreover, whatever lies behind the story of the ancient reproach 'Boeotian sow' Βοιωτίαν ὗν, which Pindar mentions in *Olympian* 6.90 and, according to the scholiast on this line, also in his dithyrambs (fr. 83 SM), it is Pindar himself who brings this abusive reference to a compatriot to public attention. Thus Pindar is not worthy to compete with a loyal Boeotian βανά like Myrtis, whom Corinna nevertheless chastises for deigning to compete with him. On this view, cosmopolitanism and patriotism were mutually exclusive for Corinna.

In what follows I offer another approach to Corinna's poetry. It is informed by the fact that, apart from Corinna's attention to dialect and neologism, the most distinctive feature of her poetry is her mythological innovation. Her version of the dispute between Helicon and Cithaeron (*PMG* 654, col. i), for example, is transformed into a singing contest that is unparalleled elsewhere, her genealogical narrative about the daughters of Asopus and their whereabouts (*PMG* 654, col. iii) departs significantly from the more common tradition, as does the fight between Hermes and Ares (*PMG* 666) and the story of Oedipus and the Teumessian fox (*PMG* 672). Regarding these tales, Page once remarked that 'Corinna must be treated as a law unto herself',[26] yet

[19] Clayman (n. 3), 641, and Skinner (n. 12), 12.
[20] Stesichorus fr. 193.1–7 Davies.
[21] *Pythian* 2.54–6.
[22] Solon fr. 20 West, with Mimnermus fr. 6 West = Diog. Laert. 1.60.
[23] A point suggested by Henderson (n. 2), 32.
[24] Local Boeotian games are mentioned by Pindar at *Ol.* 7.84–5.
[25] *PMG* 688 = schol. Ar. *Ach.* 720 = Pindar, fr. 94d SM.
[26] Page (n. 2), 39.

on balance he seemed to be disappointed that she, unlike Sappho, never moved beyond 'parochial stories'.[27] But this judgement misses the larger question of *how* Corinna's tales achieved their effect: in other words, what we would like to know is the extent to which her versions depended on background knowledge of more common or, shall we say, Panhellenic traditions. I use the term 'Panhellenic' in the sense in which Herodotus tells us that Homer and Hesiod described the gods, their talents, and their outward forms for the Greeks (2.53). Panhellenism in this sense is a construct, a basically agreed-upon reference point, often but not exclusively tied to mythical versions known to Homer and Hesiod. When Corinna's myths are interpreted against this kind of Panhellenic background, they can be seen not only to extend beyond mere parochial interest—because they engage with that wider mythological tradition[28]— but to show a high degree of innovation as well. Although her stories never achieved the fame of those of Pindar or Bacchylides, their degree of clever refashioning seems comparable even to these lyric masters. Corinna's poetry gives us a glimpse of what took place at a local performance venue like Tanagra, but it also shows us how such localized traditions might have depended on wider-spread, Panhellenic versions for their appeal.

Before we consider some specific examples, let us return for a moment to *PMG* 655 to consider how Corinna situates herself within her own narrative tradition. Corinna came to the attention of the Alexandrian critics and Roman poets for a reason, which is best captured by Statius' characterization of the *tenuisque arcana Corinnae* (*Silv.* 5.158). In my view her *arcana* may be a reference to allegory,[29] or to her Boeotian dialect, as is usually assumed.[30] But I think Corinna herself gives a definition of what these *arcana* are in the poem which some have taken to be programmatic, *PMG* 655, although we need not assume that it stood first in a written collection.[31] After the invocation to Terpsichore, and her announcement that Tanagra rejoices in her clear-coaxing voice for the Tanagraean girls, Corinna writes (*PMG* 655.9–11):

> λόγια δ’ ἐπ[32] πατέρω[ν
> κοσμείσασα Ϝιδιο[
> παρθ[έ]νυσι κατά[ρχομη[33]

> *having adorned the oracles* in the time of the fathers . . . my own (?)
> . . . I begin them for the girls

This is a highly peculiar statement. In Greek lyric the verb κοσμέω is usual enough and often means to adorn with poetry,[34] however, it can also mean to embellish poetry, in the sense of improvisation and invention in live performance, especially by rhapsodes.[35] On the other hand λόγιον in poetry and prose never means more than an oracle or oracular statement, especially one preserved from an earlier time.[36] The two are nowhere else in Greek literature paired together, although the figure of the lyric

[27] Page (n. 2), 45, followed by Gerber (n. 6), 395.
[28] On this point I follow Snyder (n. 11), 132–33.
[29] Clayman (n. 3), 640.
[30] Thus P. Maas, 'Korinna', *RE* 21 (1921), 1393–97, at 1397.
[31] West (n. 3, 1970), 283, following Maas (n. 30), 1394. Reprised in West (n. 3, 1990), 553.
[32] εν sscr. π.
[33] Suppl. Lobel.
[34] Pind. *Nem.* 6.46, Bacchyl. 12.7.
[35] For example, Plato, *Ion* 530D6, on which see now D. Collins, *Master of the Game: Competition and Performance in Greek Poetry* (Cambridge, MA, 2004), 219–21.
[36] *LSJ* s.v.

poet stylized as a seer is attested in Pindar,[37] and the expounder of oracles can be represented as singing.[38] A common translation of λόγια here is 'stories',[39] but this may be because Corinna herself uses the same verb κοσμεῖν two verses later (*PMG* 655.13) with λόγυς (pl. dat.), where the latter does mean the 'stories, tales' with which she intends to adorn Cephisus. But I do not think that λόγιον and λόγος are the same for Corinna, nor is either of these exactly equivalent to the peculiarly Boeotian term Ϝεροῖα[40] 'narratives' announced in line 2 of the same poem. Elsewhere, of course, Corinna evinces a strong interest in prophecy and oracles, as attested in the story of the Asopids whose whereabouts are revealed by the prophet Acraephen from his oracular tripod (*PMG* 654, col. iii.25–6, 31, 43), by her interest in the story of Oedipus' destruction of the Sphinx (*PMG* 672)—the solution to whose famous riddle had been urged on the Thebans by an oracle[41]—as well as by sporadic notices whose context is indeterminate.[42] From all of this it appears that Corinna, like Pindar, is constructing herself as a poet whose task is to elaborate prophetic statements made about her world in the time of her ancestors. Where Corinna differs rather strikingly from Pindar is that she chooses to elaborate past oracles from her Boeotian ancestors (ἐπ πατέρω[ν]), whereas Pindar takes the Panhellenic path of establishing the Muse, as a geographically free entity, for his oracle. While Pindar can say, μαντεύεο, Μοῖσα, προφατεύσω δ᾽ ἐγώ 'Prophesy, Muse, and I will be your interpreter' (fr. 150 SM), Corinna makes her oracular inspiration more exclusively local (note 'Thespia loved by the Muses' Θέσπια . . . μωσοφίλειτε, *PMG* 674).[43] Given that the Muses' abode is Boeotian Helicon, Corinna appeals to her ancestors and to traditions that speak first to Tanagraeans, then to Boeotians more generally, and which she will make relevant to new generations.

A good example of how Corinna elaborates past oracles, and of how she can shade genuine Boeotian lore into the fabric of Panhellenic tradition, can be found in her interest in Orion. Orion is a standard figure in cosmological Panhellenic myth, as attested for example in Homer (*Il.* 18.486, 488, cf. 22.29), known for his hunting prowess (in the underworld Odysseus sees Orion in a meadow of asphodel corralling the wild animals that he had killed while living: *Od.* 11.572–75), and his constellation is a regular feature of the Boeotian agricultural calendar, as attested in Hesiod (*Op.* 598, 615, 619). But Orion is also a prominent local culture hero, whose tomb Pausanias observed in Tanagra (9.20.3), and who, according to tradition, was a giant[44] known for his ability to tame wild places and to purify the land of dangerous beasts.[45] Corinna features his exploits as well as those of his daughters[46] in several of

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[37] In *Partheneion* 1.5, perhaps the most relevant to *PMG* 655, Pindar (or the poetic 'I') is a μάντις. Cf. Pindar, fr. 150 SM.

[38] Cf. the χρησμῶν ἀοιδοί 'singers/chanters of oracles' (e.g. Eur. *Heracl.* 403), or the χρησμολόγοι who sing (e.g. at Thucydides 2.8.2, with which cf. Corinna, *PMG* 654, col. iii, 43). Corinna has found a novel way of expressing this traditional combination of song and prophecy. I have elaborated on this theme as it applies to Hesiod in D. Collins, 'Hesiod and the divine voice of the Muses', *Arethusa* 32 (1999), 241–62.

[39] The only exception to this trend that I have found is Snyder (n. 11), 132, who does translate λόγια as 'oracles'.

[40] I follow Clayman (n. 3) on this term.   [41] Apollodorus 3.5.8.

[42] For example, *PMG* 654, col. iv.52, where μαντ[is legible.

[43] Henderson (n. 2), 29–30.

[44] At Homer, *Od.* 11.572 he is πελώριος. Apollodorus 1.4.3 calls his body ὑπερμεγέθη.

[45] On Orion and his hunted doves as themes in Greek poetry, see D. Collins, 'Reading the birds: *oionomanteia* in early epic', *Colby Quarterly* 38 (2002), 17–41, at 30 with n. 53.

[46] *PMG* 656 (= Antoninus Liberalis 25) records that Corinna treated two of Orion's daughters, Metioche and Menippe, in the first book of her Ϝεροῖα.

her poems and, at one point, characterizes him as 'most pious' εὐσεβέστατος (*PMG* 673). In the fragment of her *Kataplous*, Orion is said to have regained his own land and then given his name to it (*PMG* 662), although the details of exactly why it was lost or whence he sailed remain obscure.[47] Yet what emerges from this brief overview of Corinna's treatment of Orion is that her interest in him is squarely set in the time *before* he was killed by the sting of a scorpion and immortalized as a constellation.[48] Hesiod[49] also narrated Orion's catasterism as well as others of his exploits, including the disaster at Chios where he raped Merope, the daughter of Oenopeus,[50] and was blinded by him. This precedent makes it probable that Corinna, who as we shall see was no stranger to Hesiod, drew directly upon his accounts. Rather than view her focus as relying on local Boeotian stories that have no connection with broader Panhellenic myth—a point repeatedly (and wrongly) argued by Page[51]—Corinna's stories actually engage with Panhellenic tradition, at least in part, for their full effect.

Corinna also drew upon the Panhellenic background of Orion to offer a genealogical connection for him to the central Boeotian institution of the Ptoian oracle (*PMG* 654, col. iii).[52] In her account of the daughters of Asopus, the eponymous god of the Boeotian river, the local Ptoian prophet Acraephen divulges the whereabouts of Asopus' nine daughters.[53] What is of special interest for our purposes is the genealogy given by Acraephen, which establishes his own credibility as an oracular source. He states (*PMG* 654, col. iii.32–41):

πράτοι [μὲν] γὰ[ρ Λατ]οΐδας
δῶκ' Εὐωνούμοι τριπόδων
ἐσς ἰὼν [χρε]ισμὼς ἐνέπειν.
τὸν δ' ἐς γᾶς βαλὼν Οὐριεὺς
τιμὰ[ν] δεύτερος ἴσχεν.
πῆς [Ποτ]ιδάωνος· ἐπι-
τ' Ὠα[ρί]ων ἁμὸς γενέτωρ
γῆα[ν ϝ]ὰν ἀππασάμενος·
χὠ μὲν ὠραν[ὸ]ν ἀμφέπι
τιμὰν δ[. . . . .]ν οὖταν.

First the son of Leto gave it to
Euonymus to utter oracles from his own tripods,[54]
but Hyrieus expelled him from the land
and held the honour second,
a son of Poseidon;
Then Orion, my father,
having regained his own land.
Now he dwells in the sky
and this honour [is mine?].

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[47] Page (n. 2), 35–6.

[48] Various accounts of his death are given by Apollodorus 1.4.3–5. Aratus, *Phaen.* 634–46 records that Orion attempted to rape Artemis, who then killed him with a scorpion, hence his constellation is followed by that of the Scorpion.

[49] Hesiod fr. 148, 149 West. Cf. also Hesiod fr. 345 West.

[50] Pindar fr. 72 SM might also have known this version, but the identification of the fragment is not clear.

[51] Page (n. 2), 28, 40, and 45.

[52] Essential background on this oracle in the context of Corinna in Guillon (n. 3, 1958). The earliest literary mentions of the oracle are in Pindar, fr. 51b and *Paean* 7f.

[53] For more on Corinna's engagement with genealogical myth in Hesiod's *Catalogue of Women*, see Larson (n. 5).

[54] For the metaphor of speaking through tripods, see Guillon (n. 3, 1958), 55–6.

Attention has been drawn to this passage because of the way in which it accommodates the past to the present, which in turn will prefigure the future as Acraephen promises to prophesy accurately in urging Asopus to give way before the immortals (*PMG* 654, col. iii.42–6).[55] The details of Acraephen's genealogy, however, have a larger significance because of the version they give of his father Orion's parentage. About Euonymus, little is known except that he is a son of the Boeotian river Cephisus and that Corinna, in her *Euonymiai* (*PMG* 660), apparently wrote about his daughters.[56] After his expulsion comes Hyrieus, a son of Alcyone and Poseidon,[57] whom Corinna makes the father of Orion. Now according to Hesiodic tradition, Hyrieus had propitiated the gods in Thebes to give him a son. After Hyrieus sacrificed a bull and removed its hide, Zeus, Hermes, and Poseidon urinated in it and then, by command of Hermes, Hyrieus buried it. From this, Hyrieus' son was born, whom the gods called Orion (Hesiod fr. 148b West).[58] Pindar also seems to have told a version of Orion's birth in his dithyrambs, according to Strabo, who mentions Hyria, the eponymous city named after Hyrieus, as the birthplace of Orion, although the genealogical details are not clear.[59] In later authors, for example Euphorion,[60] Orion is still the son of Hyrieus, except that now the same gods are said to have ejaculated into the bull hide, while a more explicit pun is drawn between their action (οὐρέω 'urinate, ejaculate') and Orion's name ('Ωρίων, which Euphorion calls a euphemism for Οὐρίων). Yet Hesiod also knew the version in which Orion was instead the son of Poseidon and Euryale (Hesiod fr. 148a West). So if the story of Orion's birth from a bull hide in Hesiod is reliable, it suggests that Corinna did not invent the genealogy of Orion as the son of Hyrieus but rather drew it from Hesiod.

The more significant point to be made, however, is that Orion, like his grandfather Euonymus and his father Hyrieus before him, and his son Acraephen after, also possessed the oracular seat of Ptoia.[61] At this juncture, the Panhellenic myth of Orion (by way of Hesiod) and the oracular past of Boeotia merge into Corinna's performative present. Corinna offers us no evidence for what Orion prophesied while he held the oracular seat, but Acraephen's description of the succession of Ptoian prophets, including his now present prophecy to Asopus to give way before the immortals, seems compatible with the λόγια δ' ἐπ πατέρω[ν (*PMG* 655.9), which Corinna claims to have adorned in her presentation to the younger generation of Tanagraean girls.[62] Thus local and Panhellenic myth can converge in Corinna, and a good deal of her artistry is lost unless we acknowledge that she is not a mythological 'law unto herself'.

[55] Snyder (n. 11), 131. Such an accommodation is also a standard feature of divination, on which see Collins (n. 45), 22–6.

[56] Page (n. 2), 33.

[57] As in Apollodorus 3.10.1. Corinna (*PMG* 654, col. iii.37, above) too notes that Hyrieus is the son of Poseidon.

[58] About this version, R. Merkelbach and M. L. West, *Fragmenta Hesiodea* (Oxford, 1967) *ad* 148b, for reasons not given, write 'haec Hesiodo tribui vix possunt'.

[59] Strabo 9.2.12 = Pindar fr. 73 SM.

[60] Scholia *Il.* 18.386 (Erbse) = fr. 101 Pow. A truncated form of the scholion reappears in Palaephatus 51. I have the used the full scholion as printed in A. Meineke, *Analecta Alexandrina* (Berlin, 1843), 133 (no. 108).

[61] As far as I know, outside of this myth Orion is not elsewhere associated with oracles. Again according to Hesiod, Orion was said to have established a sacred district for Poseidon in Peloris in northeastern Sicily, while he himself was honoured there by the local population, but this does not rise to the level of possessing an oracle (fr. 149 = Diod. Sic. 4.85.4–5).

[62] We might also compare Acraephen's explicit designation of Orion as ἁμὸς γενέτωρ at *PMG* 654, col. iii.38.

At least in this example, she brings the richness of Panhellenic traditions into line with local Boeotian ones, for each to inform the other. The hero Orion who gave his name to the entire land (*PMG* 662) eventually settled into the role of male oracular priest before he was translated to the heavens. His Panhellenic destiny is thus made to accord with his localized Boeotian role, and his future reward of becoming a constellation is specifically connected by Corinna in *PMG* 654 to his reconquest of his land and the assumption of its central oracular seat.

Further indications of Corinna's mythological designs can be found in the tradition of her dispute with Pindar, which although transmitted by later authors is worth considering in this context. As Plutarch[63] records the issues in dispute, Corinna had reproached Pindar for paying rather too much attention to obsolete and catachretic expressions, metaphrases, lyrics and rhythms, instead of giving more undivided attention to the μῦθοι, the proper subject matter of poetry. Pindar's reply was the jumbled series of lyrics (fr. 29 SM), on which Corinna is famously said to have commented that one should sow with the hand, not the entire sack.[64] Now it is not at all fair to say that Pindar does not pay attention to myth, but it must be remembered that this dispute is said to have taken place while he was young, so perhaps he learned his lesson. That Corinna should single out the emphasis on μῦθοι, however, as the proper subject matter of poetry accords with the distinctive mythological innovation that characterizes her poetry. As we shall see presently, Corinna actually treats μῦθοι similarly to Pindar, who is at pains to emphasize aetiological myths relevant to his patrons (compare the Aeginetan odes) or to make mythological changes that suit the context of the local victor (as in *Ol.* 1).[65] Corinna is equally capable of fashioning new mythical variants, but ones that depend for their effect on knowing the Panhellenic versions, which can bear in complex ways on the local hero whom she is celebrating. At times, her engagement with Panhellenic traditions can take place both at the level of theme and of diction.

The Panhellenic influence of Hesiod (and Homer) in Corinna is perhaps nowhere better attested than in her version of the singing contest between Cithaeron and Helicon (*PMG* 654, col. i = *PBerol.* 284).[66] By stylizing these famous Boeotian mountains as singers, once again Corinna seems to be interested in elaborating their lives before their transformation into mountains,[67] which is how they appear in Hesiod and the Homeric Hymns. The influence of Hesiod and Homer, as Page[68] long ago noted, is detectable in Corinna's diction. If we compare the final words of Cithaeron's[69] song (*PMG* 654, col. i.12–18):

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[63] Plut. *De glor. Ath.* 347F–348A.

[64] Plut. *De glor. Ath.* 348A.

[65] On which see A. Köhnken, 'Pindar as innovator: Poseidon Hippios and the relevance of the Pelops story in Olympian 1', *CQ* 24 (1974), 199–206 and id., *Die Funktion des Mythos bei Pindar: Interpretationen zu sechs Pindargedichten* (Berlin, 1971).

[66] See I. Weiler, *Der Agon im Mythos* (Darmstadt, 1974), 80–9 for a survey of Corinna's treatment of this contest and of earlier traditions. According to Demetrius of Phalerum, the story of the strife (ἔρις) between Cithaeron and Helicon was first told in epic form by one (fictitious?) Automedes of Mycenae (*FGrH* 228 F 32a).

[67] So Ebert (n. 15), 12.

[68] Page (n. 2), 20, at n. 5.

[69] That Cithaeron is the singer is confirmed by Weiler (n. 66), 82, n. 189, who concludes, based on a wide-ranging survey of singing contest traditions, 'daß der Sieger bei musischen Agonen in der Regel als zweiter auftritt'.

[. . .]Κώρει-
τες ἔκρου]ψαν δάθιο[ν θι]ᾶς
βρέφο]ς ἄντροι, λαθρά[δα]ν ἀγ-
κο]υλομείταο Κρόνω, τα-
νίκά νιν κλέψε μάκηρα ῾Ρεία
μεγ]άλαν τ᾽ [ἀ]θανάτων ἔσ-
ς] ἔλε τιμάν· τάδ᾽ ἔμελψεμ·

    . . . The Curetes
hid the *sacred* infant of the goddess
in a cave, secretly from
Cronus of the crooked counsel, then
blessed Rhea stole[70] him
and received great honour from the immortals.
Thus he sang.

with the Hesiodic rendering in the *Theogony* (482–3 West):

κρύψεν δέ ἑ χερσὶ λαβοῦσα
ἄντρῳ ἐν ἠλιβάτῳ, ζαθέης ὑπὸ κεύθεσι γαίης

And taking him in her hand she *hid* him
in a deep *cave,* in the depths of the *sacred* earth

we can observe several correspondences in diction. Corinna also adopts the Homeric and Hesiodic epithet for Cronus, ἀγκυλομήτης (*Theog.* 168, 473, 495, etc.), suggesting that she at least has epic diction in mind here. A major revision can now be made in the case of Corinna's δάθιο[ν (line 13, above). Martin West's[71] recent re-examination of the Berlin papyrus now shows that a second hand has written ζα over δα, rather than what Denys Page[72] and he[73] had earlier taken to be an acute accent,[74] and has written ε over ι. On these grounds δαθίοι, a dative singular in agreement with ἄντροι now becomes possible,[75] and suggests a consistency with archaic Greek usage and a closer correspondence with Hesiod's ζαθέης . . . γαίης (*Theogony* 483).

On the other hand both of these passages have been compared with the cult hymn to Dionysus sung by the new initiates of the god in Euripides' *Bacchae*, especially lines from the second antistrophe (120–30 Diggle): [76]

ὦ θαλάμευμα Κουρή-
των ζάθεοί τε Κρήτας
Διογενέτορες ἔναυλοι.
ἔνθα τρικόρυθες ἄντροις
βυρσότονον κύκλωμα τόδε
μοι Κορύβαντες ηὗρον·
βακχείαι δ᾽ ἅμα συντόνωι
κέρασαν ἡδυβόαι Φρυγίων

[70] This meaning of κλέπτω, rather than 'deceived', seems assured: see Gerber (n. 6), 396, *ad* 16.
[71] M. L. West, 'The Berlin Corinna', *ZPE* 113 (1996), 22–3, at 22.
[72] Page (n. 2), 18.
[73] West (n. 3, 1970), 284.
[74] Since ζάθεος in archaic usage is only used of things, not persons, West (n. 3, 1970), 284 had used this point to date Corinna to the Hellenistic period.
[75] Already G. M. Bolling, 'Notes on Corinna', *AJP* 77 (1956), 283–87, at 283, despite the apparent earlier reading, had argued for this.
[76] Page (n. 2), 20, at n. 5, reports that E. R. Dodds informed him of the similarities.

αὐλῶν πνεύματι ματρός τε ῾_Ρέας_ ἐς
χέρα _θῆκαν_. κτύπον εὐάσμασι βακχᾶν.

O, chamber of the *Curetes*
and *sacred* hollows of Crete that gave birth to Zeus,
where the triple-plumed Corybantes in the *caves* invented
for me this hide-covered drum;
together with bacchic revelry
they mixed it with the sweet-voiced breath of
Phrygian reeds and *put it in the hand* of mother *Rhea*,
and they resounded with the shouts of the bacchantes.

The first three underscored correspondences have attracted the most attention. That Corinna mentions the Curetes, and uses ζάθεος and ἄντρον caused Page, at least, to speculate that it was easier to imagine that a Hellenistic Corinna had Euripides in mind than that Euripides had in mind 'a parochial versifier who had already been forgotten by everybody else for the greater part of a century'.[77] But this seems rather shortsighted to me. What has not been noticed is that Euripides' ῾_Ρέας_ ἐς | χέρα θῆκαν also seems reminiscent of Hesiod's ἐ χερσὶ λαβοῦσα [Rhea], at least to the extent that Rhea's hand is singled out. It is more probable that Euripides has Hesiod directly in mind than that Corinna is his intermediary.

Except for the Curetes, who are not mentioned in Hesiod's description of Rhea's secreting of Zeus on Crete, it is preferable to suggest that Corinna, too, has Hesiod's account in mind, while we have already seen that she certainly has epic diction in mind. Now, scholars have used Corinna's mention of the Curetes to argue that Corinna cannot pre-date the end of the fifth century, when the role of the Curetes in the stratagem of Zeus' upbringing on Crete seems to become popular.[78] The Curetes, however, are known to Hesiod, who characterizes them as 'playful dancers' (φιλοπαίγμονες ὀρχηστῆρες, Hesiod fr. 123 West).[79] Moreover, there were other theogonies available besides Hesiod's in the late seventh or sixth century, such as that of Epimenides of Cnossus, who had strong ties to Athens and is said, among other notable accomplishments, to have composed epic poems on the *Birth of the Curetes and Corybantes* and a *Theogony*, some 5,000 lines in all.[80] Epimenides had no little fancy for the legend of Zeus' upbringing in Crete: not only did he claim to have had an incubatory sleep in the cave of Dictaean Zeus,[81] the Cretans actually called him one of the Curetes.[82] From Epimenides, Hesiod, or perhaps other sources, then, Corinna could have derived her account; while Euripides had access to strands of the tradition of Zeus' (and Dionysus') birth independent of Corinna.

A rather more pressing question is why Rhea, in Cithaeron's song, is made to steal the baby Zeus from the Curetes, who are otherwise known as his protectors and guardians.[83] Of course, one answer may be that this is a deliberate perversion of the tradition as known to Corinna and is meant to be humorous. But we do have one

[77] Page (n. 2), 20–1, at n. 5.
[78] West (n. 3, 1970), 283. See also M. L. West, *The Orphic Poems* (Oxford, 1983), 50 with his n. 47, citing Euripides fr. 79 Austin, *Hypsipyle* 1.iii.20–1, and the *Bacchae* passage above.
[79] In this fragment Hesiod also mentions the Satyrs who accompany the Curetes, as does Euripides at *Bacchae* 130, which makes Euripides' connection with Hesiod even closer.
[80] Diog. Laert. 1.111–12. See further West (n. 78), 45–53.
[81] *FGrH* 457 T 4. The confusion of Dicte with Mount Ida is discussed by West (n. 78), 132.
[82] Diog. Laert. 1.115.
[83] The earliest accounts are from Euripides (above n. 78). Later accounts are discussed by West (n. 78), 131–3.

report from the historian Istros the Callimachean that the Curetes might not always have been so playful. According to Porphyry, in Istros' *Collection of Cretan Sacrifices* he records that 'the Curetes formerly used to sacrifice children to Cronos'.[84] We do not have to believe in the truth or falsehood of this particular account, which in any case is beside the point, to accept that there might have been other mythological traditions available to Corinna that depicted the Curetes in a less favourable light. Such a tradition, although there is admittedly no way to prove the point, would certainly have motivated Rhea's need for theft. At the same time, Rhea is the mother of the Curetes in some traditions,[85] which would seem potentially to complicate further the matter of her theft as it is presented in Cithaeron's song.[86] But what seems clear is that, by having Cithaeron present a version of Zeus' Cretan birth which is Panhellenic, like his contest narrative, Corinna is once again thematically situating a story that involves perhaps the most significant mountain in theogonic myth (after Mecone) into a Boeotian context. It is very clever indeed to have Cithaeron win the contest on the basis of a tale that involves Cretan Ida (personified?), which, because the Curetes hid Zeus there, causes Rhea to steal him and ultimately to gain honour from the other immortals. Despite Helicon's self-mutilation or suicide, Cithaeron's victory (presided over by the Muses) means that Boeotia is nevertheless highlighted at the expense of Crete.

A final example of Corinna's engagement with Panhellenic tradition can be seen in her title involving the story of Oedipus and the Teumessian fox (*PMG* 672 = schol. Eur. *Phoen.* 26).[87] This is reported in the same scholion that mentions Corinna's version of Oedipus's killing of the Sphinx, which accords with her wider interest in Theban myth, as is indicated by other titles such as her *Seven Against Thebes* (*PMG* 659), *Iolaus* (*PMG* 661), her *Orestes* fragment (in which Thebes is mentioned as ἑπτάπουλον, *PMG* 690.12), and so forth.[88] The story of the Teumessian fox is told in several late versions,[89] which naturally do not accord with one another in all respects, but which are consistent in certain details. Rather than treat these, however, I prefer to begin with the earliest surviving version, which is attributed to the Epic Cycle poems that treat the *Epigoni*. In the text given by Bernabé,[90] which is a collocation of summaries from Photius, the Suda, and the Greek paroemiographers, we read that a fox had been sent to the Cadmeans by the gods to prevent the descendants of Cadmus from assuming the throne. For help with the fox, which was ravaging the land, the Cadmeans called Cephalus, son of Deioneus, who was an Athenian and in possession

[84] *FGrH* 334 F 48 = Porphyry, *De abst.* 2.56, with Jacoby's note.

[85] Scholia Ar. *Lys.* 558.

[86] Thus while I agree with Rayor (n. 13), 226 that Rhea's deeds are highlighted in Corinna, I do not think we have enough evidence to conclude from this passage that Corinna's poetry is 'women-identified'.

[87] Page's (n. 2), 38–9 treatment is essential, though it must be noted that the 'common story' that he retells is Apollodorus' version. The care that must be taken with mythographic sources in reconstructing myths has been well emphasized by A. Henrichs, 'Three approaches to Greek mythography' in J. Bremmer (ed.), *Interpretations of Greek Mythology* (London, 1987), 242–77, esp. 254–67.

[88] Cf. *PMG* 671 on Corinna's genealogy of Thebes by way of Ogygos, son of Boeotos.

[89] For example, Antoninus Liberalis 41, Apollodorus 2.4.6–7, Heraclitus the Paradoxographer 30, and Pausanias 9.19.1.

[90] A. Bernabé (ed.), *Poetarum Epicorum Graecorum: Testimonia et Fragmenta* (Leipzig, 1987), pars. I, *Epigoni* fr. 5 = Photius, *Lexicon* II.209, Suda s.v. Τευμησία, *Paroem. Gr.* II.669.9. Bernabé doubts the attribution of this story to the Theban cycle by T. W. Allen (ed.) *Homeri Opera* (Oxford, 1912), vol. 5, *Epigoni* fr. 2.

of a dog that could overtake all of its prey. The dog had come from his wife Procris, whom Cephalus had accidentally killed. Next we are told that both the fox and the dog were turned to stones, which could still be found lying in the vicinity of Teumessos. This tale is then explicitly attributed to the Epic Cycle. The later versions add more detail, such as that Amphitryon in neighbouring Mycenae had sought the aid of the Cadmeans in an expedition planned against the Teleboans.[91] The Cadmeans agreed to help, provided that Amphitryon would first kill the Teumessian fox, for which Amphitryon is said to have sought Cephalus' help. The fox is also now said to be incapable of being caught, offering a more coherent reason for Zeus to turn both the fox and the dog into stone to resolve the impasse.[92]

Where Corinna achieves a major innovation is in substituting Oedipus for Cephalus in the story of the Teumessian fox. But contrary to the view of Page,[93] who at this point gives a strenuous warning to treat Corinna's myths on their own terms, it seems to me that she has chosen to celebrate this prominent Theban hero in a manner that specifically detracts from Athens. In this respect, it is worth mentioning the contemporary fifth-century Boeotian hostility to Athens, especially given the Athenian domination of Boeotia between the battle of Tanagra (458 B.C.E.) and their expulsion after the battle of Coronea in 447 B.C.E.[94] Such a political context, furthermore, gives added point to Corinna's disdain for Pindar and his sympathetic treatment of Athens, which we have already noted. With regard to the myth of the Teumessian fox, Cephalus, we recall, was Athenian, and so by substituting Oedipus Corinna resists the Panhellenic version told in the Epic Cycle. According to Photius and the *Suda*, we are told that those who wrote τὰ Θηβαικά narrated the story of the Teumessian fox. So it can hardly be doubted that Corinna, with her strong interest in Theban myths, would have been aware of this particular version, or of a later contemporary version that nevertheless highlighted the role of Athenian Cephalus. For Corinna, it was actually a Theban hero who helped restore the Cadmeans to the Theban throne, obviating any reference to Athens in what must surely count as a superb example of revisionist mythical history. Although we cannot speculate further on the actual content of her version, what seems clear is that the substitution of Oedipus reflects a political awareness on Corinna's part that becomes more focused when set in the context both of its Panhellenic predecessor and of fifth century city-state politics.

This kind of resistance to, or contentious engagement with, Panhellenic versions of myths is common in archaic lyric. While there is no way objectively to measure the degree of Corinna's innovation, it may profitably be compared to Stesichorus' rendition of the *Helen* story (fr. 193 Davies) and with Bacchylides' staged encounter between Meleager and Heracles in Hades (*Epinician* 5). Stesichorus' claim that not Helen, but her εἴδωλον went to Troy, while Helen remained in Egypt with Proteus (fr. 193.13–16 Davies), offers a significant departure from the Homeric version, which, scholars have argued, represents a localized alternative (and perhaps ongoing resistance) to a greater Panhellenic trend.[95] This localized alternative might have

[91] The battle of Amphitryon against the Teleboans is also attributed to an epic by the same Automedes of Mycenae who first told of the strife between Cithaeron and Helicon (*FGrH* 228 F 32a). This battle is a separate myth connected to that of the Cadmeans and the Teumessian fox.
[92] Apollodorus 2.4.6–7.   [93] Page (n. 2), 39.
[94] See R. J. Buck, *A History of Boeotia* (Alberta, 1979), 144–53.
[95] G. Nagy, *Pindar's Homer: The Lyric Possession of an Epic Past* (Baltimore, 1990), 419–21. On the tension between Homeric poetry performed by rhapsodes and lyric poetry performed by Stesichorus, see W. Burkert, 'The making of Homer in the sixth century B.C.: Rhapsodes vs. Stesichorus', in *Papers on the Amasis Painter and His World* (Malibu, CA, 1987), 43–62.

originated with Hesiod (fr. 358 West), from which we may conclude that Stesichorus chose to oppose a Panhellenic version, not with one of his own making, but with one that descended from a separate strand of what may be called the *Helen* tradition.[96] Similarly Bacchylides' fifth epinician for Hieron of Syracuse interweaves the unrelated death of Meleager with Heracles' visit to the underworld to achieve almost a dramatic synthesis.[97] Through his dialogue with Meleager, Heracles will eventually learn that his future wife, Deianeira, is waiting for him in the halls of Oeneus—her and Meleager's mortal father (5.172–75). When Calliope is commanded to stop the narrative (5.176–78), the ironic effect is achieved because the well known version of Heracles' death at the hands of Deianeira can be filled in by the audience. Bacchylides did not invent this version of the encounter, if the scholiast on *Iliad* 21.194 is to be believed when he reports that Pindar was the first to produce it (= fr. 249a SM), which once again shows how selective engagement with traditions becomes meaningful only if the wider mythological background is also known. In the cases of Stesichorus, Pindar, and Bacchylides, their mythmaking is better understood as the product of a creative counterpoint between Panhellenic and alternative versions, which does not entirely exclude invention, though the depths of alternative traditions are often hard to discern. Corinna's poetry similarly engages in this kind of counterpoint, except that her intention seems more focused on illuminating the Boeotian background to Panhellenic versions of myth.

In this respect, there is the greatest contrast to be drawn between Corinna's manipulation of myth and what we find among the historians, geographers, and mythographers.[98] The kind of mythographic 'rationalizations' and aetiologizing that we find, for example, in Conon,[99] Heraclitus,[100] or Palaephatus[101] could not be more alien to Corinna. Rather, Corinna treats myth in a manner that resembles Stesichorus, Pindar, and Bacchylides, who consciously adapt or oppose Panhellenic and other versions to suit the context of their performance or the attributes of their victorious patrons. In the case of Oedipus and the Teumessian fox, or that of Cithaeron's tale involving Mount Ida, Corinna's poetry reflects a Boeotian patriotism that is further sharpened when set in the context of Athens' military adventures against Boeotia in the mid-fifth century. Among other archaic and classical women poets, Corinna recalls not only Sappho, Myrtis, or Charixena, but especially the deeply politically engaged Telesilla of Argos[102] or Praxilla of Sicyon.[103] All of these women (except perhaps for the supposedly witless Charixena) emerged to notoriety, like their male

[96] Background in Davison (n. 6), 196–225. Doubts about the attribution of the εἴδωλον story to Hesiod are expressed by N. Austin, *Helen of Troy and Her Shameless Phantom* (Ithaca, 1994), 104–5.

[97] See A. P. Burnett, *The Art of Bacchylides* (Cambridge, MA, 1985), 129–49.

[98] The comparison is not unwarranted: we know, for example, that Pindar was well aware of the versions of heroic tales to be found among the λόγιοι (*Pyth.* 1.94).

[99] On whom, see Henrichs (n. 87), 244–47.

[100] See now J. Stern, 'Heraclitus the paradoxographer: Περὶ Ἀπίστων, On Unbelievable Tales', *TAPA* 133 (2003), 51–97.

[101] See J. Stern, 'Rationalizing myth: methods and motives in Palaephatus', in R. Buxton (ed.), *From Myth to Reason: Studies in the Development of Greek Thought* (Oxford, 1999), 215–22 and *Palaephatus, Peri Apiston: On Unbelievable Tales. Translation, Introduction, and Commentary* (Illinois, 1996).

[102] Telesilla led the resistance against Cleomenes' attack on Sparta in 494 B.C.E. (Plutarch, *Mul. Virt.* 4.245C–F).

[103] Praxilla composed dithyrambs (*PMG* 748) and patriotic *skolia* to be sung by men at Greek symposia (*PMG* 749–50).

counterparts, against the backdrop of local lyric competitions[104] in which the poetry performed, as far as we can tell, virtually always engaged with Panhellenic tradition even when it diverged from it. It is in such a competitive context that I imagine we are to situate Corinna, as well as once and for all to overturn the stereotype of her merely parochial concerns.[105]

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[104] See S. Gzella, 'Self-publicity and polemics in Greek choral lyrics', *Eos* 58 (1969/1970), 171–79 and id., 'Problem of the fee in Greek choral lyric', *Eos* 59 (1971), 189–202, which I use with caution. Yet Gzella is correct to stress the competitive nature of choral lyric and the marketplace that supported it.

[105] An earlier version of this paper was read at the 2004 APA Annual Meeting in San Francisco, CA. Suggestions from the audience at my session, as well as from the anonymous reviewer at *CQ*, have greatly improved this final version.