Corinna of Tanagra on Poetry

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Introduction

The main subject-matter of the surviving verse-fragments of Corinna, lyric poetess of Tanagra, is heroic myth. She herself advertises her interest in such material in a two-line fragment, 664(b) PMG (I follow Page's text):

\[ \text{όνομα δι' ειρώνων ἀρετὰς} \]
\[ \chiρῳδόνων \]

but I come of heroes' and heroines' brave deeds [to sing].

This mythical material is almost exclusively Boeotian,\(^1\) survives in most cases only as titles or names, or offers details unknown to us from other sources.\(^2\) There is, however, another theme that runs through the testimonia on Corinna and is reflected in the remaining fragments: her activities as a poet and her views on poetry. We may be critical of the testimonia as evidence for her biography,\(^3\) yet these remains of ancient criticism do serve to remind us of this thread in the fabric of her poetry. The central concern of this article is to bring together what we can deduce about this theme from the fragments of her poetry. The problem of the dating of Corinna, which has attracted the most scholarly attention, is treated only incidentally, although, of course, the question as to whether the attitudes to and practice of poetry reflect those of the 5th century or later inevitably comes to the fore.\(^4\)

The Muses

At its most expected and evident the theme entails recognition of the Muses. This is echoed in two fragments.\(^5\) In the one, fr. 676(a) PMG: \(\varepsilon \zeta \text{ Μουσῶν, 'from the Muses,' the Muses are apparently acknowledged as the source of poetry, but the phrase is quoted only to illustrate the Boeotian use of } \varepsilon \zeta \text{ for } \varepsilon \chi; \text{ the absence of any context prevents us from knowing whose words or thoughts these are.}

In the second fragment the Boeotian town of Thespia, at the foot of Mount Helicon, seat of the Muses, is described as \(\chiλλυγένεθεν \phiιλόξενε \\muωσοφιλητε, \text{ 'bringer forth of fair offspring, friend of the stranger, beloved of} \)
of the Muses’ (fr. 674 PMG). The line clearly celebrates the town’s noble progeny, hospitality and association with the cult of the Muses. The sanctuary and quadrennial games in honour of the Muses were of some local importance and much frequented, and Corinna may be simply echoing common-place sentiments. For West, Corinna’s words evoke Thespia as a ‘self-conscious tourist-centre, trading on its association with Hesiod, and able to refer to genealogical poetry in which its eponym was assigned her place in a worthy family line,’ a situation that seems to him more suited to the 4th than the 5th century. However, we are surely justified in linking the text of the poem with the reality of the cult ceremonies in honour of the Muses. Corinna could have composed songs for such occasions in much the same way as Alcman did. If that is so, Corinna’s invocation would be a real one, meant to work, and not simply a conventional one. Snyder is to my mind correct in speaking of Corinna’s ‘function as a public poet.’ This kind of role in the cult ceremonies of public occasions is more in keeping with earlier than Hellenistic Greek culture.

Moreover, we need to focus on what Corinna might have wished to achieve with these words. For us this entails some account of what effect the words have. The three long compounds attract attention. Corinna surely wanted her audience to notice the clever, eloquent and unusual compounds and the beautiful sound of the line. Also, the asyndetic tricolon of vocatives suggests hymnic chant, as others have observed. West has aptly noted the density of meaning and the hymn-like invocation to a town. This hymnic element may be due to the performance of the original poem at an official occasion during the cult celebrations. Although there is no external evidence for this view, it is not intrinsically impossible, and internal indications make it probable. We can, however, be sure of the effect produced by the hymnic invocation: it enhanced the depiction of Thespia. Corinna is enhancing her city as a centre for the Muses while at the same time demonstrating her art under the influence of the Muses.

The opening lines (1–5) of fragment 655 PMG, the main body of which treats some unidentifiable myth, reveal a poet fully aware of and confident in her own creative powers and place in her community.

ёти με Τερψιχόρα | καλλί 
καλά βεροί αίσουέναν 
Ταναγρίδεσσα λεύχοπετλυς 
μέγα δ’ ἐμής γέγενε πόλυς 
λυγοφοξωτιθλυς ἔναπτής.

ον με Терпсихора [calls to sing beautiful tales of heroes for Tanagra’s white-robed daughters;
and the city rejoices greatly
in my clear and babbling voice.

The poetess claims inspiration from the Muse Terpsichora: the poem’s
dramatic setting pretends the Muse is actually still calling upon the poetess
to sing. Terpsichora is the only Muse named for certain in the surviving
fragments of Corinna’s work. Terpsichora’s name associated her with
the choral dance, and it is tempting to interpret her name here as an
allusion to the performance of Corinna’s poetry, or at least this poem, by
a chorus. This impression could be supported by the references in line 3
to Ταναγρίδησσα λαυκοστέμπης, and in line 11 to παρ’ένυσι (‘for girls’).
It seems highly unlikely that the girls referred to here comprise Corinna’s
audience, a θίασος similar to Sappho’s. For one thing, there is no evidence
at all for such a female θίασος in connection with Corinna. For another:
the masculine themes of her poetry in general and this poem in particular
would be more suitable for a general, predominantly male audience than
a group of teenage girls. For yet another: the apparel of the girls (if the
reading is correct) suggests some formal group such as a chorus. We may
hazard the conclusion that Corinna is referring to a choral performance
of this poem, and even of her other songs.

The precise reference of ἔρωτις in line 2 is not clear, but the qualifying
καλά indicates the poetess’ pride in her works, be they ‘tales of long ago’,
or ‘songs of heroes’, or ‘narratives.’ This sense of pride is present also in
μέγα ... γῆ (26θ (4), and even in εὔρος ... ἔνοψ (4θ.).

The word λιγοφωςτριαυτής occurs only here, and precise translation
into an English equivalent is difficult. Fortunately we know the two com­
ponents of the compound, λιγοφως/λιγύς and κωτύλλω/κωτύλος. LSJ offers
‘clear and plaintive.’ Page finds the plaintiveness ‘out of place here.’ He
points instead to LSJ’s entries on κωτύλω, ‘prattle, chatter, usually with
collateral notion of coaxing,’ and κωτύλος, ‘chattering, babbling.’ Davi­
son translates the word as ‘shrilly-babbling’, Segal as ‘coaxing in high
tones.’ West emphasised the verbal force in the second member: λιγοφως
κωτύλλων rather than simply λιγοφως καὶ κωτύλος, and the complimentary
sense of κωτύλος. The adjective would therefore suggest clear-ringing,
sweet-sounding song, with an admixture of appealing chatter. Was this
intended by the poet to capture the sound of the chorus of girls? There
would be a touch of pride and humour in such a depiction of the chorus.
But this interpretation depends on whether the audience would have un­
derstood με (1) and ἔμα ... ἔνοψ (5θ.) as referring to the chorus rather
than the poet.

An alternative interpretation reads the personal pronouns at face value:
Corinna is speaking of her own voice, that is, her poetry. In this case
the adjective is more likely to be self-deprecatory: her song is shrill and
babbling. The question then arises: is she serious or ironical? Given the context of these lines and the nature of the poem that follows, the term must be taken as ironical. Such ironical self-deprecation together with a sense of poetic pride is found in Pindar fr. 140b, also involving a compound word. A decisive choice of either alternative is impossible on present evidence.

The Lyric Tradition

Corinna was aware of and showed some interest in the broader traditions of lyric poetry. She speaks of Hyria in her native Boeotia as a land of beautiful dances (καλλιγράφω χθωνός, fr. 669 PMG), and supposedly related how Apollo was taught flute-playing by Athena (fr. 668 PMG = Plut., De musica 14). There is, however, only one fragment in which she refers to other poets. She criticises the poetess Myrtis and, by implication, praises Pindar in fr. 664 PMG.

μέμφομαι δέ κη λιγωρᾶν
Μουρτίδ’ ἱώγγ’ ὑπὶ βανᾶ φοῦ-
σ’ ἔμε Πινδάροι πότε ἔριν.

but I indeed censure even clear-voiced
Myrtis, for, though born a woman,
she went to compete against Pindar.

We notice again the use of λιγωρᾶς to describe clear, sweet song. This praise is in contrast to the criticism levelled at Myrtis in μέμφομαι: the two words frame the line. Then there is the emphasis on Myrtis (κη = κατ) and on the poetic ἱ’ (ἱωγγ’ = ἵγωγγα), drawing attention to some difference between them. This is resolved when it becomes clear that Corinna considered Myrtis, as a woman, arrogant to compete against Pindar, even with her poetic talent. It is immaterial for our present purpose whether this occurred in an actual, contemporary rivalry (informally or in an official ἔρις μουσικός), or in a rivalry imagined long after Pindar’s death. What is certain is that ἐπικεῖται is elsewhere used of rivalry in poetry, the only meaning it could have here.

But what is the point of Corinna’s censure? Is she against female poets per se vying with male poets? Does she consider poetesses as a group to be inferior? Is she reflecting Boeotian attitudes, and if so, of the 5th or 3rd century? Or are her reservations restricted to Myrtis? We simply do not have sufficient information or remains of this poem to answer these questions satisfactorily. All we can safely say is that Corinna considered Pindar superior to Myrtis, who, as a woman, should not have ventured to compete with him, least of all in the field of (epinician?) choral lyric.
The musical contest

The mutilated fr. 654 PMG, preserved in a Berlin papyrus (P. Berol. 284), contains an account of a singing-contest between Cithaeron and Helicon, the mythological heroes after whom two mountains were named.31 In the legible section (12ff.), one of the singers, usually presumed to be Cithaeron,32 ends his song about how Rhea hid the child Zeus from his father Cronus. Then the fragment continues:

Thus he (Cithaeron?) sang.
And immediately the Muses bade
the gods place a secret
ballot-stone in the gold-shining
urns. And they all rose together

and Cithaeron gained the majority.
Forthwith Hermes proclaimed him
aloud, that he had won a desired

victory, and with wreaths
the gods adorned him
And his heart rejoiced.

The rest of the fragment relates how the vanquished Helicon ripped out a boulder and hurled it down, smashing it into ten thousand pieces.33

The myth had already been told by Hesiod (Theogony 453ff.), and there are indications that Corinna has drawn from but also elaborated it.34 Important for us is the fact that this is a singing-contest based on those familiar to ancient Greeks, but transposed to the divine or mythical level.35 This in itself is not unusual. There are many analogies in Greek poetry (and other forms of artistic expression) for organised activities on a divine or mythological plane being constructed on the basis of the ordinary, everyday human plane: buildings, furniture, utensils, chariots, battles, councils, symposia and weddings, to name a few.36 Corinna used her knowledge of actual ἔγνως to visualise and represent the mythical contest in these lines.
We should study closely how she describes the events. Her account of the ἀγών is brief and clear, and the details correspond with what we learn elsewhere. The proceedings were presided over by an ἀγώνιστη. The epithet ἀγώνιστη also designated the president, who could even be a god. 

The panel of judges could also be human or divine. President and judges seem interchangeable. There is nothing strange in the Muses and gods officiating in Corinna's conception of the mythical contest.

The arresting detail for us (and for Corinna's audience?) is the nature of the gods' voting-procedure. Page has suggested that the supra-human singing-contest is presented in terms of a court-case: the Muses preside, the gods act as judges and Hermes as herald, the voting is secret, conducted by placing pebbles in urns, and the decision is carried by a simple majority. Certainly, the use of pebbles in a secret ballot (ψῆφον ... χρηστίζειν, 20f.) is judicial. Pindar uses the same words (χρηστίζει ... ἐν ψῆφως. Nem. 8.26) to describe the Greeks' verdict in favour of Odysseus and against Ajax, and ψῆφος itself was used in earlier times for accurate counting as opposed to counting on fingers, still in a judicial sphere.

The word εἰσε (23, 26) is found in the sense of 'convict', of 'elect' (by vote), and 'win' (especially in the games). However, the legal sense of conviction does not apply in our passage. Then, the announcement of the victor and the bestowal of a wreath are easily paralleled: the same use of ἐναράσαω occurs in Pindar, and wreaths of various kinds are often mentioned. There were, however, no such crowns in court-cases. Finally, the words εἰσε νίκη (26) have both legal and agonal applications. It seems as if Corinna has conflated two judging-processes, one from the law-courts, the other from the ἀγών υἱοσικός.

The next question is to try to fathom the reason for and desired effect of this way of representing the judging-procedure. Two responses suggest themselves. Firstly, it may have been the actual judging-process in a musical contest, in which case it is no more than a literal item, a realistic description, in this text, transposed to the divine or mythical plane for realistic effect. However, we know too little to be sure of this possibility. Secondly, it is transferred from judicial procedure to an 'agonal' context to enhance the text, in which case it is an analogue or metaphor. In both cases the effect would be to give credibility and reality to the gods' actions as they decide on the issue between Cithaeron and Helicon. Also, the transposition of the secret pebble-ballot from human, judicial voting-procedure to divine decision-making in a singing-contest between gigantic personified mountains seems to us incongruous (after all, the result would presumably not be secret for gods), and may have been intended as humorous. The overall effect is dramatic and lively.

What do we learn about the result of the mythical ἀγών? The state of the text prevents us from analysing the relative worth of the two contestants.
Page notes that the presiding Muses do not favour Helicon with whom they were so closely associated. One interpretation is that the judging is objective, and that the myth embodies this fairness. Another possibility is that irony and humour are intended, although the point thereof escapes us. Helicon is indeed a bad loser, but why should he be treated with irony and humour? Certainly the result is surprising; Corinna seems to be going against traditional attitudes which favoured Helicon. Cithaeron’s crueler nature, evidenced in his patricide and fratricide, contrasts with Helicon’s softer nature, apparent in his care of his parents and his association with the Muses. No moral or behavioural criterion is discernible.

**Conclusion**

From our analysis of the meagre remains of Corinna’s poetry some observations can be made concerning her views on poetry. In the first place, as one would expect, there is due recognition of the Muses for their inspiration. This may be purely conventional, but the connection with the sanctuary at Thespia brings with it a dimension of reality, a bond with actual ceremonial occasion, and a real enough relation with the Muses. Some of Corinna’s poems may even have been included in official performances during the celebrations.

It is precisely such performance of her poetry before a larger public rather than in private circles that emerges from the fragments. Male themes (heroes) and attitudes (female poets were not to compete with male poets like Pindar) in her lines evoke the aristocratic symposium, but no examples exist of females performing their own poetry at the male-dominated banquet. All we can suggest as an alternative is some kind of official performance before a wider public.

Corinna’s awareness of the lyric tradition is indicated by her criticism of Myrtis and admiration for Pindar, but this aspect of her work is seen most clearly in her account of the musical contest between Cithaeron and Helicon. Selective details from human procedures of judgement are used to conjure up the divine, mythical, gigantic battle. Irony and humour can be detected, though it is too faint for us to interpret for sure as tones of her own poetic voice.

Does this analysis assist us in dating Corinna? The persuasive linguistic analyses by Page and West point to a late date, around 300. Some cultural aspects (Boeotian religious life, art-works, voting-procedures) have been adduced to support this, with less convincing effect. In fact, the non-linguistic material seems to be more indicative of an earlier period. The present analysis, working from the reconstruction of an *ars poetica*, also tends to suggest an earlier dating. But it is by no means decisive. Corinna’s critical attitude to Myrtis, her intellectual play with words (rare
literary compounds, humour, burlesque) and her detailed description of an ἔρως, perhaps unnecessary in earlier times when singers and audience were actually present at the agonal performance, point to a later, more literate audience, though not necessarily Alexandrian. Yet, on the other hand, her apparently close connection with real cultic practice and ceremony, with the live performance of cultic song by a choir of girls, would be more expected in an earlier society.

The surviving fragments of Corinna’s poetry offer little that is exciting or profound. What we can, however, extract from the fragments concerning her views on poetry adds a few more pieces to the complex and incomplete puzzle of Greek lyric poetry.*

NOTES

2. For details, cf. Page (above, n.1) 21–45.
5. Two other references to the Muses are too uncertain to be useful: fr. 692 fr. 36 PMG: Μοῦσαι; and fr. 654(a).ii.13 PMG: Μοῦσας.
6. Cf. *IG* 7.1785 (≈ *SIG*3 1117), 4240b, c; Paus. 9.27.5. Although the cult is earlier, the archaeological evidence indicates a reorganisation of the Mouseion on a larger scale in the middle of the 3rd century B.C. Cf. G. Roux, ‘Le val des Muses, et les Musées chez les auteurs anciens’, *BCH* 78 (1954) 22–48; K. Fiehn, *RE* 6A.45f.
7. West (1990 above, n.4) 556–557. He also finds (555) that the self-conscious regionalism and the assertion of the Boeotian dialect in Corinna’s poetry better fit later Boeotia.

9. A search of the CD ROM TLG reveals that φιλοξενεῖται occurs four times in Homer, three times in Pindar, once in Bacchylides and twice in Aeschylus; καλλιγένεται appears first here, and then four times in Herodian and Ps.-Herodian, and twice in Proclus Philosophus; and μουσικός occurs nowhere else until the Palatine Anthology and Herodian. There is no doubt that this diction is at least highly unusual, if not late. West (1990 above, n.4) 557 regards καλλιγένεται as learned allusion: Korinna expected her audience to know antiquarian lore about Thespia's origins. Page (above, n.1) 76 n.3 refers to Korinna's use of compound adjectives here and elsewhere.


11. West (1990 above, n.4) 566.


13. Orion is legible in line 14, but the identity of the fifty children (15–16) cannot be ascertained; cf. Page (above, n.1) 40.

14. West (1970 above, n.4) 283–284 and (1990 above, n.4) 553–554 considers this an introductory poem and further evidence for a late dating.

15. Snyder (above, n.4) 50 translates: 'Terpsichore [summoned me] to sing'; D.A. Campbell, Greek Lyric, vol. 4: Bacchylides, Corinna, and Others, Cambridge, Mass. 1992, 37 has 'Terpsichore summons me to sing.'

16. Fr. 692. fr. 20.1.4 PMG may be restored as Καλλιγένεια.

17. Bowra (above, n.3) 290 speaks of a 'circle of women'; G.M. Kirkwood, Early Greek Monody (Cornell Studies in Classical Philology 37), Ithaca & London 1975, 192 and 280 n.16 is cautious, but tends towards the view that Korinna's verse was monodic. There are two other references to a chorus of girls: at fr. 690.12 PMG, from a song composed, perhaps, for performance by a girls' chorus at Thebes during the Spring festival of the Daphnaphoria in honour of Apollo (cf. Campbell [above, n.15] 59 n.2); and at fr. 692 fr. 2.1–4 PMG, where a girls' chorus is clearly mentioned as singing beautifully. Cf. Page (above, n.1) 28; West (1970 above, n.4) 280, who also notes that Terpsichora is 'not chosen at random'. Cf. also Snyder (above, n.4) 50–51.

18. West (1970 above, n.4) 280; Kirkwood (above, n.17) 192.

19. Cf. West (1970 above, n.4) 283–284 and Snyder (above, n.8) 125–134; (above, n.4) 50: 'tales of old'. D.L. Clayman, 'The Meaning of Korinna's ἕποιξα', CQ 28 (1978) 390–397 and West (1990 above n.4) 554 interpret the word as 'narratives' (from εἶπα). West adds that these narratives were a group of songs, rather than just one, and not strophic, not intended to be danced. C.M. Bowra, Heroic Poetry, Oxford 1902, 549 characterised these poems as 'stories in verse-forms which are the nearest Greek equivalents to ballads'. The reading ἕποιξα, which Korinna also used as a title (Antoninus Liberalis 25 = fr. 3), would mean 'tales of old time' (LSJ). Page (above, n.1) 30 found ἕποιξα 'still more inscrutable' than ἕρωις, rendered by Franyö & Snell (above, n.4) 3.133 as 'hohe Lieder von Helden'.

20. Cf. Page (above, n.1) 30. West (1990 above, n.4) 553 believes that ἕρωις does not indicate a presumptuous claim about the effect of this poem, but is a statement about her established standing and the success of her songs generally. Cf. Alcman, fr. 1.86–87.
21. Page (above, n.1) 30. West (1970 above, n.4) 285 considers λυγοροχωταβος 'an overweight adjective that smacks of the dithyramb'; and again (1990 above, n.4) 556, arguing for a late date for Corinna, maintains that one would rather have expected λυγοροχαιτος in a contemporary of Pindar. Allen (above, n.4) 27 n.2 refers to λυγοροχωταβος (602 fr. 36); and states that λυγοροχωταβος has been 'coined for special effect'.

22. Davison (above, n.3) 302.

23. Segal (above, n.4) 5 and (above, n.3) 241.

24. West (1970 above, n.4) 285. He adds the further association in the use of ἀνιματις as a nickname for a swallow in Boeotia; cf. Anacr. fr. 453 PMG.


26. Page (above, n.1) 31 n.1.

27. West (1990 above, n.4) 554 notes that there is no necessary reference to an actual encounter: the rivalry could be envisaged at any time after Pindar. According to him, one poet blaming another for daring to compete with a third who is considered a classic, smacks of Hellenistic, not 5th century criticism. Guillon (above, n.8) 53-54 considers the motif as a provincial echo of the great Alexandrian quarrel between the adherents of long poems and those of short poems; and relates the lines to a quarrel among Corinna's contemporaries in different poetry schools about imitating Pindar: 'le genre et le ton de la grande lyrique pindarique ne conviennent pas à une femme ... '. He bases much of his argument on the graceful Tanagrean terracotta female figurines that reflect an artistic impulse quite foreign to Pindar's. In contrast, Latte (above, n.4) 66-67 argues sensibly that the notion of women not competing with men belongs to an earlier time; in the 3rd century many poetesses and learned women were already competing with men. Corinna would thus be out of step with the general attitude of her own time if she were dated to the 3rd century. He does not accept that the style of Corinna in fr. 654 PMG reflects the refinement of the Hellenistic Tanagrean terracottas: Corinna's composition shows a lack of rational and logical order, and a naïve humanisation of gods and grotesque tone more in keeping with late black-figure vase-painting.

28. Eur. Ἀθ. 923; Hdt. 6.129. On the greater likelihood that Corinna used Euripides rather than vice versa, cf. Page (above, n.1) 20-21 n.5. Snyder (above, n.4) 53 considers ἔπος not necessarily of musical competition, but rather perhaps 'disapproval of some literary or personal quarrel or perhaps criticising Myrtis for attempting to rival Pindar in approach or subject matter that Corinna considered inappropriate for a woman writer'. She detects a conservative impression in Corinna's surviving fragments, an indication that the poetess was transmitting the received tradition.


30. Kirkwood (above, n.17) 178 suggests that Corinna herself and other poetesses 'adhered to local stories and a local dialect', while Myrtis used the themes and style of Greek choral poets. However, the idea that Pindar's grand lyric was unsuited to women is in conflict with Corinna's own claim in fr. 664b PMG.

32. According to G.M. Bolling, ‘Notes on Corinna’, *AJPh* 77 (1956) 283 no. 1, the winning contestant generally sings second in a musical ἀγών; cf. I. Weiler, *Der Agon im Mythis. Zur Einstellung der Griechen zum Wettkampf*, Darmstadt 1974, 82 no. 189, who adds that the leading singer chooses ‘gottgefährligere’ themes to influence the jury. Snyder (above, n.8) 128 finds it appropriate that Cithaeron sings of Zeus’ birth in view of the presence of a cult of Zeus on Mt Cithaeron (cf. Paus. 9.3.1-2). But cf. Page (above, n.1) 20 n.3.

33. J. Ebert, ‘Zu Corina’s Gedicht vom Wetttstreit zwischen Helikon und Kithairon’, *ZPE* 30 (1978) 5-12 gives a different reconstruction of the text in which, at the end, Helicon hurl himself to his death from the mountain which then received his name.

34. Cf. Page (above, n.1) 20-21 n.5.

35. Weiler (above, n.32) 84 justifiably stresses the importance of Corinna’s fragment for our understanding of the musical ἀγών.

36. We need look only at Homer for epic, and Sappho for lyric poetry: *Hom. Il.* 21.385ff. (thetanachy); *Od.* 1.26-79, 5.1-227 (assembly); Sappho, fr. 1.1 L-P (throne), 7-9 (buildings, chariot); fr. 2.13-16 L-P (cups); fr. 44 L-P (wedding of Hector and Andromache); fr. 141 L-P (symposium and wedding-feast)—on the latter two of which see H. Eisenberger, *Der Mythos in der aolischen Lyrik*, Diss. Frankfurt/Main 1956, 98-103, 111. Also now on Sappho, fr. 44, D. Meyerhoff, *Traditioneller Stoff und Individualische Gestaltung* (Hildesheim 1984) 135-136. Examples on vases are numerous. Cf. also Weiler (above, n.32) 9, 57-58.

37. Soph. *Ag.* 572 (deciding over Ajax’ arms in martial games). In Boeotia, where ἀγών retained its Homeric meaning of ‘assembly,’ the word signified ‘magistrate’ (*IG* 7.1817, Thespiae). ἀγώνισμα is also a legal term (*Antiph. 5.7*).

38. Plato, *Leg.* 783A (Muses and gods of the games); for a presiding god, cf. Pind. *Isthm.* 1.60 and *IG* 5(1).658 (Hermes); Soph. *Tr.* 26 (Zeus, arbiter of war); Aesch. *Ag.* 513 (protecting gods of the city); *Suppl.* 189, 242 (assembled gods).


40. The Muses appear as adjudicators in the contest between Apollo and Marsyas; cf. Weiler (above, n.32) 47-48, 84.

41. Page (above, n.1) 20; Weiler (above, n.32) 87. Voting by pebbles was not, of course, restricted to the Athenian popular courts: it figured also in the popular assembly for registering votes on other issues. Cf. J. Vaahetera, ‘Pebbles, Points, or Ballots: The Emergence of the Individual Vote in Rome’, *Arctos* 24 (1999) 168 (with further literature); J.A.O. Larsen, ‘The Origin and Significance of the Counting of Votes’, *CPH* 44 (1949) 164-181.

42. Page (above, n.1) 76f. discusses the secret balloting and democratic procedure found in Athens in the middle of the 5th century as possible evidence for the dating of Corinna, and concludes that it is inconclusive, since the political structure and procedures of Opuntian Locri and the colonisation of Naupactus by West Locri provide closer analogies for Boeotia than are provided by Athenian procedures. Weiler (above, n.32) 85-86 also argues against the procedure as proof of a late date for Corinna, citing the decree (*Tod* 24.31ff., esp. 45) relating to the colonisation

The concentration on voting procedures in texts around 460 suggests that secret balloting was topical then rather than later. Corinna could have been following a contemporary interest in such a procedure. The argument of Athenian democratic voting-procedure is advanced by Segal (above, n.4) 1--8; (above, n.3) 240; West (1970 above, n.4) 277-297; (1990 above, n.4) 553-557; and P. Guillon, *Corinne et les oracles bétōnies: la consultation d'Asopos*, *BCH* 82 (1958) 47-60.

43. Larsen (above, n.41) 173 points out that voting by show of hands was used more extensively than the secret ballot, at least outside of law courts, where the secret vote was the rule.

44. Cf. Larsen (above, n.41) 170. Segal (above, n.4) 6 detects a difference in tone in the two uses: bitter tragedy in Pindar, and light burlesque in Corinna.

45. Aesch. *Ag.* 520; Hdt. 2.26. Cf. Boegehold (above, n.42) 369-370, who stresses the point that the use of pebbles 'denoted a counter that was used in an open balloting'; E.S. Staveley, *Greek and Roman Voting and Elections*, London 1972, 84-85 (the voting was not necessarily secret), 96-98 (the use of dice); and Ursula Hall, 'Greeks and Romans and the Secret Ballot', in E.M. Craik (ed.), *Owls to Athens*: *Essays on Classical Subjects presented to Sir Kenneth Dover*, Oxford 1990, 192.


47. Pind. *Pyth.* 3.73.


50. Cf. Weiler (above, n.32) 87-88, who prefers to view the voting-procedure as corresponding to that of the *þawaμης* in the *þawan χωνακός*.

51. Critics have found no metaphors in Corinna: Page (above, n.1) 75-76: 'Simile and anything worthy of the name of metaphor are wholly absent'; cf. Maas (above, n.10) 1396; Lesky (above, n.4) 179; Segal (above, n.4) 2, 5 and (above, n.3) 7; Snyder (above, n.8) 128.

52. Page (above, n.1) 76 describes this as Corinna's one 'flight of fancy'. Segal (above, n.4) 2, 5 and (above, n.3) 241 has detected humour in the elaborate voting-procedures on Olympus and noted the 'grotesque anthropomorphization' of Mount Helicon (who, it must be remembered, gives expression to his frustration and anger by tearing out and shattering a piece of himself). Cf. also Lathe (above, n.4) 67; D.A. Campbell, *Greek Lyric Poetry. A Selection of Early Greek Lyric, Elegiac and Iambic Poetry*, Bristol 1982, 411; Snyder (above, n.8) 127-128 and (above, n.4) 47-48, who detects the literary sophistication of a self-conscious poet.

53. Page (above, n.1) 21.

54. On fairness in the judging, cf. A. Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens*, Oxford 1968, 95-98: at the end of a contest, each judge wrote his order of merit on a tablet; all tablets were then placed in an urn; the archon drew out five
...for the final result; and the winner was proclaimed by a herald and applauded by the crowd.

55. Snyder (above, n.4) 47–48.

56. Lesky (above, n.4) 178.

57. Bowra's view (above, n.3, 290) that the victory of Cithaeron seems to symbolise the superiority of Corinna's kind of poetry over that of the region around Mount Helicon, cannot be supported from the text as it stands or from the available evidence.

58. Roscher (above, n.31) 1,2,1986; Weiler (above, n.32) 83. However, I cannot agree that Corinna portrays Helicon as evil in lines 20–34. The only secure adverb οὐκε̃πες (32) and the emended λο̃πης και(θ)ε̃κτος/χαι̃πηβη̃ν (29f.) rather suggest sympathy for the tragic, if grotesque, figure and behaviour of Helicon.

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