

Xenia and the Unity of Time in Pindar's Victory Odes

By Asya C. Sigelman

B.A., Boston University, 2004

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the Department of Classics at Brown University

Providence, Rhode Island

May 2010

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This dissertation by Asya C. Sigelman is accepted in its present form
by the Department of Classics as satisfying the
dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Date_____

David Konstan, Advisor

Recommended to the Graduate Council

Date_____

Pura Nieto, Reader

Date_____

Deborah Boedeker, Reader

Approved by the Graduate Council

Date_____

Sheila Bonde, Dean of the Graduate School

VITA

Asya Sigelman (née Chernyak) was born in Moscow, Russia, on August 8, 1982. Her family immigrated to the USA in 1985. She was brought up bilingual and bicultural, and it is perhaps this aspect of her education that is most responsible for her devotion to Classical Antiquity—a dialogue of two worlds, Greek and Roman. Asya earned her BA in Classics from Boston University, graduating *summa cum laude* in 2004. Her senior thesis, written under the auspices of the Classics Department and the German Program at the Department of Modern Languages, is titled “Goethe’s *Ewig Weibliche*: a transfiguration of the Plotinian *endon eidos*.” She began the PhD program in Classics at Brown University in the fall of 2004, and, in the course of her years at Brown, was privileged to work as teaching assistant as well as teach Greek and Latin courses of her own. In the spring of 2010 she worked as visiting lecturer at Tufts University, teaching an advanced Latin course on Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses*. Upon the completion of her PhD in May 2010, she will be taking up the position of assistant professor of Ancient Greek at Bryn Mawr College.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply grateful to many of my teachers for the successful completion of this endeavor. My thanks are due firstly to the demanding critique, scrupulous feedback, and ceaseless encouragement of my two advisors, Charles Fornara and David Konstan. Their thoughtful suggestions have guarded me from many a dead end, always steering my work towards new and exciting paths. It is a pleasure to acknowledge likewise my obligation to my readers, Pura Nieto and Deborah Boedeker, for their thorough and invaluable comments and critique. The support and encouragement I have received from my dissertation committee over the last two years are a fitting culmination of my studies at the Brown University Classics Department, whose faculty so eagerly and ably fostered a neophyte's exploration of Classical Antiquity. I look forward to repaying my debt of gratitude to all my mentors in the Department by emulating them, in the years to come, as a teacher and a scholar.

An unrepayable debt—a veritable Pindaric χρέος which will always “run at my feet”—this dissertation owes to its two principle guiding forces: my father, my foremost teacher, and my husband, my source of inspiration. Each in his own way, they have striven to impress on me that the completion of this project is only the beginning of a lifelong task—understanding Pindar.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Pindar's Bridle of Bellerophon: myth-introducing relative pronouns and break-off formulae	1
Introduction to Chapters 2 and 3	74
Chapter 2: Fundamentals of the Pindaric Chronotope: song-as-journey and <i>xenia</i>	81
Chapter 3: Pindar's Song-Journey in the Future and in the Past: poet as athlete and poet as mythical hero	180
Conclusion	235
Bibliography	242

CHAPTER 1
PINDAR'S BRIDLE OF BELLEROPHON:
MYTH-INTRODUCING RELATIVE PRONOUNS AND BREAK-OFF
FORMULAE

When the son of Marc Anthony, Iullus Antonius, suggested that Horace honor Augustus in a Pindaric hymn, the poet replied with Ode 4.2 in the opening of which he warns against imitating the great Theban and dooms bold imitators to the fate of Icarus who, aiming for the skies, plunged deep beneath the sea-waves.

For all its lofty themes and images, Ode 4.2 abounds in illusion in the original sense of the word—playful deception.¹ The meticulously crafted verses masquerade as a spontaneous, unstudied response to Iullus' question: the address "Iule" in the first lines and the second person singular in subsequent ones (vv. 33, 41, 53) convey the impromptu air of a conversation which could have unfolded between the poet and his addressee at a banquet, in the Forum, or in the waiting room of a mutual patron.² Furthermore, although the poem begins by declining to praise Augustus on the pretext of inadequacy of talent and thus pretends to be a *recusatio*, the latter half of the ode is in fact devoted to the most extravagant praise of the *princeps* (vs. 33-52). But—and here yet another illusion is involved—warning as he does against imitating Pindar, Horace gives us to understand that such an arrogant attempt is not altogether without merit: not only is his Icarus endowed with a degree of glory, bound, as he is, to impart his name to a sea,³ but the ode

¹ On Horatian irony, see Campbell 1924: 229-232.

² For a discussion of the effect of immediacy and rapport with his audience which Horace frequently creates in his lyrics with the use of second person, see Johnson 1982:3 ff. and 127.

³ Cf. Fitzgerald 1987:81 ff: "The story of Daedalus and Icarus exemplifies both laudable daring and foolhardy presumption. Horace suppresses the name of Icarus beneath that of his father, proverbial for

consistently emulates Pindaric verse in its swift and abrupt transitions between seemingly disparate themes and images as it hurries from discourse on poetic style and genres (v.5-27) to courtly complements (v.33-34) to extravagant praise of the *princeps* and the ecstatic vision of a military triumph (v.33-52), to its quiescence in the vision of the poet's simple but self-sufficient lifestyle (v.53-60).⁴ Three illusions are thus involved in Ode 4.2. (1) That of *addressee*: Horace appears to be offering an impromptu response to Iullus' question, whereas in reality the complex poem goes well beyond the occasion, far outgrowing the bounds of a polite refusal to honor the courtier's request. (2) That of *subject addressed*: Horace says that his poetry is inadequate to honor Augustus properly, yet he does so anyways. (3) That of the *form of address*: Horace warns against imitating Pindar's style but casts the warning itself as a Pindaric ode. These three illusions are, however, only the components of the broader illusory design of the ode.

The first half of the poem is devoted to a juxtaposition of Horace's own humble poetic endeavor with Pindar's torrential grandeur and power of innovation. This section concludes with Horace's famous comparison of himself to a bee:

ego apis Matinae
more modoque
grata carpentis thyma per laborem
plurimum circa nemus uuidique
Tiburis ripas operosa paruus
carmina fingo. (27-32)

Then follow the last seven stanzas, devoted to praise of Augustus. The poet closes them with lines which, though they seem to bow to both Iullus and the *princeps* (to the latter,

human resourcefulness, and the fall of Icarus is represented in the most positive light, for by his fall he gives his name to a sea."

⁴ Cf. Highbarger 1935: "Resorting to the rhetorical device of *praeteritio*, Horace frequently proceeds to do precisely that which he had originally disclaimed. In this connection the second poem of the fourth book of the Odes has special significance."

because the poet is sacrificing in his honor, to the former, because his sacrifice cannot vie with the courtier's), in fact assert Horace's own special status of poet-as-stoic-sage leading a life of simple self-sufficiency and thus being, by implication, happier and more complete than the two magnates he is addressing.⁵ These concluding lines echo the verses on the bee which immediately precede the praise of Augustus: the image of the poet's humble sacrifice of a single calf recalls his self-description as *parvus* in v. 31, and even the fact that the calf "matures among bountiful grasses" harkens back to the scenery of vv. 27-32, where Horace-the-bee plies his trade among the dewy grasses of the Tiburine banks. Furthermore, the final strophe's lovingly detailed description of the designated calf (graceful crescent-shaped horns, tawny hide, snow-white spot on the forehead) is an immediate illustration of the Hellenistic poetic credo alluded to in the bee-metaphor—these last verses exemplify precisely that *operosa carmina* which labors over the beautification of minute details and claims to disdain epic scope.⁶ Here, Horace ingeniously fuses the theme of a poetic focus on objects of small material value but great beauty with the theme of a stoic lifestyle, humble but replete with meaning.

Ode 4.2 thus reduces the affairs of state to second rank and elevates the affairs of the Muse to the first as it situates the praise of Augustus within the broader framework of the juxtaposition of two seemingly disparate modes of poetry: the Pindaric one and the Horatian one, the latter further illustrated by the wise *modus vivendi* of the melliferous poet. The illusion veiling the "real" subject of the ode is, in effect, a double one: the poet

⁵ While this passage does not develop this motif, it alludes to all the various passages in the *carmina* where it is stated outright that one leading a simple life is happier, safer, and in general more fortunate than the potentates of this world. Cf., for example, Ode 3.1.36ff.

⁶ Cf. Fitzgerald (1987:82) who writes a propos this portrayal of the calf: "These Alexandrian touches are good examples of the style that Horace claims for himself in the middle of the poem where he makes the famous comparison between the swan (Pindar) and the Matine bee."

refused to compose on the subject of Augustus' triumphs, yet that is precisely what he does; and then again it turns out that courtly praise is only a detail within the context of a poem devoted to discourse on poets and poetry. This discourse itself, however, is not unambiguous; at its core lies a deception both playful and profound. In juxtaposing himself with Pindar, Horace seems to contrast his own poetic credo with that of the Theban, yet as I shall attempt to show he simultaneously establishes the unity of the two.

On the surface, one sees two opposing poetic essences. Twice Horace asserts his own inability to vie with Pindar: (1) Pindar is a raging mountain torrent whom the rains have swollen beyond its "wonted banks." "Seething and rushing forth with deep utterances" he "rolls down" new words as a flood would roll great boulders and is "borne along by his meters free of any rule and law." If Horace were to emulate him, he would be as clumsy, presumptuous, and foredoomed as Icarus who relied on Daedalus' artificial wings. (2) Pindar is a soaring swan; Horace is but a lowly bee.

The image of mountain torrent or freely-soaring swan seems to be in good accord with Pindar's self-perception: Pindar fashions an endless variety of metaphors for himself and his poetic creations, almost all of them from the realm of swift motion or flight, be it arrows or javelins, merchantmen or boats, chariots or eagles. Yet one may note a peculiarity which distinguishes the two Horatian images of Ode 4.2 from Pindar's self-descriptions: the power of both the *amnis* and the *cycnus* is a pointedly passive one. The torrent rages because *rains* have swollen it to the point of overflowing. The swan can soar high because it is being raised aloft by mighty *winds*. Most accurately the swan and the torrent can be described by the ambiguous Latin term *impotens*: "wild, headstrong, ungovernable (indeed, *lege solutus*) as a result of having no control over oneself." And

hence the violent willfulness veers towards its opposite—“powerless, impotent, feeble,” the usage that has dominated in modern languages.

The swan and the torrent, images of poetic power achieved through a *surrendering to* and *fusing with* the will of the elements contrast sharply with the two images of an alternative poetic flight, the Daedalean craft of Icarus’ wings and the industrious bee. As William Fitzgerald points out, the bee and Daedalus stand in close affinity to one another:

The bee was traditionally regarded as an artificer comparable to Daedalus; Vergil, for instance, had described its labyrinthine hives as *Daedala tecta* (G.4.179). From the bees comes the wax by which Daedalus’s wings were attached (*ceratis...pennis*, 2-3) and to confirm this connection Horace describes his poems as *operosa* (31), recalling the words *ope Daedalea* in the first stanza..⁷

Developing this observation, we may note that Daedalus and the bee are artificers in the full sense of the word: the minute labor of both strives to subject the elements to their own skillful, *artificial* design. Both consciously focus on imparting form and order to the natural world. Hence the bee-poet’s occupation with *molding, shaping* his songs (*carmina fingo*); hence the glory of Icarus even in his fall, destined as he is to impart his name to a sea—that is, to impart an *identity*, an ordering principle, to the hitherto faceless, chaotic element. Paradoxically, Icarus fluttering and failing with his artificial wings and the humble bee busying itself in the thyme are more powerful in the face of the wild elements—*potentiores*—than the mighty yet *impotentes* torrent and swan.

Yet right alongside the developed contrast between Pindaric and Horatian poetry runs the equally significant development of their affinity—indeed, of their practical

⁷ Fitzgerald 1987:83.

identity. Alexandrian vignettes notwithstanding, the “torrential” succession of seemingly disparate images in Ode 4.2 essentially emulates, as we have mentioned, the dynamic inconcinnities of a Pindaric ode. On a first and even on a second reading, one is overwhelmed with this pouring forth of mythical sagas, athletic victory songs, swans, bees, captive Sygambri, the golden age, prayers to *princeps*-the-sun-god, and bullocks fattened on dewy herbs. Furthermore, it is precisely this swift and bold, freedom-loving and hence literally ungraspable, *incomprehensible* change of theme (and, though the regular Alcaic stanzas of Ode 4.2 do not attempt to imitate this, likewise of meter) that is intimately related, for Horace, to Pindar’s innovative spirit: the words which Pindar-the-torrent rolls down are *nova verba*, and the dithyrambs which comprise these new words are *audaces* ones. This is logical: the *leges* which the Horatian Pindar disdains are analogous to a river’s *notas ripas*, its pre-established, customary confines. In its display of power the river bursts through these traditional boundaries. As we know from Book III of the Odes, the Roman poet readily identifies himself with this proud spirit of innovation. In Ode 3.1 he professes his disdain for the profane crowd and announces: “carmina **non prius audita** / **virginibus puerisque** canto.” This assertion of the novelty of his song is a double one: not only is the song a hitherto-unheard one, but it also addresses exclusively the new generations. In the last poem of the book the poet again reminds us of his innovative genius, referring to himself as “ex humili potens / **princeps** Aeolium carmen ad Italos / deduxisse modos...”⁸ And similarly in the last ode of Book II:

⁸ To be sure, Horace’s assertion of the novelty of his songs takes place outside of Ode 4.2. Nevertheless, I believe it is safe to draw the parallel between Pindar’s innovation in 4.2 and Horace’s own innovation in

Non usitata nec tenui ferar
 penna biformis per liquidum aethera
 uates...(2.20.1-3)

This ode is of particular interest for us: it allies Horace with Pindar not only through the mention of Horace's originality (*non usitata*), but also, more obviously, through the metamorphosis of the poet into a swan which here far outgrows the bounds of an illustrative metaphor and becomes the poem's primary subject. This is Horace's most explicit emulation of the swan of Dirke, and it casts a new light not only on the *recusatio* at the opening of 4.2 ("whoever labors to emulate Pindar is an Icarus..."),⁹ but also on the swan-bee opposition later in 4.2: Horace's poetic craft is wholly different from that of Pindar—and yet somehow it is not; somehow the *apis Matina* is, at the same time, a white bird soaring out of the reach of death and envy.

But the crossing of the identities of the two poets goes yet further: not only is Horace-the-bee likewise a swan, but also Pindar-the-swan is, as Horace well knew, likewise a bee.¹⁰ Bees, just as poets, belong to the realm of Apollo and prophecy, and,

3.1 and 3.30, since it is widely agreed that the Horatian *carmina* were meant to be read as one, artfully organized collection, with echoes and parallels between the various poems.

Contrast Horace's fine feeling for the Pindaric spirit of innovation with the coarse one of Voltaire who, seventeen hundred years later, while acknowledging the might of Pindaric verse, failed to perceive its innovative spirit and ascribed to it a musty grandeur which "everyone admires and no one understands" (Ode XVII, "Galimatias Pindarique sur un Carrousel donné par l'Imperatrice de Russie," 1766).

⁹ As Fitzgerald points out, Ode 2.20 likewise contains a reference to the "Daedalean Icarus": "Iam Daedaleo notior Icaro" (v.13) (Fitzgerald 1987:218, note 16). These echoes seem to imply that Horace meant his readers to compare and contrast 2.20 and 4.2.

¹⁰ Cf. Fitzgerald (1987:83): "The point of Horace's comparison of himself to the bee is not to separate him from Pindar but to specify what aspect of Pindar he replicates." But as I attempt to show, Horace's bee and swan imagery involves both a deeper cleft and a deeper overlap between the two poets than simply Horace's association of himself with a particular *aspect* of his predecessor.

indeed, in P. 4.60 Pindar refers to the Pythia as the *melissa*.¹¹ Pindar likes to compare his poetry to honey (N.3.77, N.7.53, I.5.54) and at one point speaks of his own poesy as “flitting from one logos to another in the fashion of a bee”: “ἐγκωμίων γὰρ ἄωτος ὕμνων / ἐπ’ ἄλλοι’ ἄλλον ὥτε μέλισσα θύνει λόγον” (P.10.53-54). The verses are rich in ambiguity. We may note, for example, that the seemingly straightforward simile in fact turns familiar images topsy-turvy, as it ascribes bee-like flitting to the ἄωτος of songs: is it the bee or the flower that is darting about?¹² The lines are likewise ambiguous in their perception of the poet’s own craft. It has been argued that the image of a bee-like darting hither and thither, following as it does on the heels of an abrupt break in the mythological narrative,¹³ is Pindar’s explicit acknowledgement of the rule of disorder—of the rains and

¹¹ Cf. Duchemin 1955: 250-252. As René Nünlist suggests (1998: 280), it is likely that the ancients were attuned to an “etymological” connection between honey (μέλι) and song (μέλος). For thorough evidence on the relation between bees and priestesses of Apollo in Pindar, the scholia, and other ancient scholars, see Norwood 1945:250, note 23. For further discussion of the symbolic meaning of bees and honey in Classical Antiquity, see Robert-Tornow. I discuss Pindar as prophet in greater detail in Chapter 2.

¹² Although Silk (1974: 239-240) points out that *aotos* never actually meant “flower,” one may note that Pindar uses the word consistently in the metaphorical sense of “flower” or “bloom”: for him, the word means “the choicest (of one’s kind),” and the poet perceives it “vertically,” as the pinnacle of the object in question, much as a flower is literally the “pinnacle” of a plant. Thus in I.7.18 he speaks of attaining “(poetic) wisdom’s choice pinnacle” (σοφίας ἄωτον ἄκρον). Moreover, Pindar can speak of *culling*, or *reaping* this pinnacle (using the verb *drepein*)—that is, of selecting and plucking the bloom of the object in question, be it the highest prize in the Isthmian games (I.2.9) or the “sacred *aotos* of joyous living” (P.4.131). The application of *drepein* to *aotos* strengthens the vegetal metaphor, as Pindar consistently uses *drepein* of reaping fruit (fr.6b f.; fr.209; fr.122.8) and flowers (Paeon 12.5) or objects metaphorically analogous to them—eg., youth (P.6.48); the pinnacles of excellence (O.1.13). All this seems to justify *LSJ*’s translation of the *aotos* as “the flower of its kind.” So too Fränkel (1975:495): “Instead of calling things simply by their names, Pindar likes to speak of their ‘flower,’ ‘peak,’ ‘bloom’ (*ἄωτος*, *ἀκμά*, *ἄνθος*), or however else we choose to render laudatory expressions.” But see Farnell (1932:219) who argues a propos this passage that though “Pindar has again been blamed, in this case for confusion of metaphors, as though he had made ‘a blossom flit like a bee’,” we do not necessarily have to think of *aotos* as blossom in this context, translating it instead as “quintessence,” “fine spirit,” “pride,” etc. I would say, however, that precisely because Pindar uses the word *aotos*, loaded as it is with floral connotations, in the metaphor of a flitting bee, he does indeed choose to evoke a topsy-turvy image of a blossom.

¹³ A so-called *Abbruchsformel*, a term coined by Wolfgang Schadewaldt in his *Aufbau des Pindarischen Epinikion*. I discuss the role and structure of Pindaric *Abbruchsformeln* in detail in the latter part of Chapter 1.

the winds, as Horace would say—within his poetry.¹⁴ Yet the associations of his own song with bee-like *crafting, fashioning*, and hence with imposing shape, *order* upon hitherto raw, disordered material, are as actual for Pindar as for Horace. As Fitzgerald points out, Pindar likes to use the verb δαιδάλλειν for his poetic creativity, a word derived from the name of Daedalus and meaning “to work cunningly.”¹⁵ Of particular interest is the passage in Nemean 11, where Pindar bids to celebrate in song the victor Aristagoras who is “wrought skillfully (=embellished) with honey-resounding hymns” (μελιγδούποισι δαιδαλθέντα μελίζεν ᾠοδαῖς, v. 18). Songs as honey and songs as skillful craft merge here into one. Returning then to P.10.53-54, one can say that Pindar’s vision of his song flitting bee-like from logos to logos has not only the implications of disorganization and lack of authorial control but also the directly opposite ones of poetry-making as the establishing of shape and order.¹⁶

I have attempted to show that on the surface Ode 4.2 presents Pindar and Horace as belonging to two fundamentally opposite poetic credos—that of the swan and that of the bee—and yet when we stand back and read Ode 4.2 within the broader context of

¹⁴ Van Groningen 1960:331; Fränkel 1975:496. For alternative interpretation of these lines, see Lefkowitz (1963:197-198): “No theme should be sung *para kairon*: the bee takes only what it needs from each flower and then passes on...He [Pindar] indicates that he has control over his subject matter through the images of steersmanship and the bee...”

¹⁵ “In Greek the verb derived from Daedalus’ name, *daidallein*, means “to work cunningly,” approximately equivalent to Horace’s *tingo*” (Fitzgerald 1987:83). For appearances of *daidallein* in Pindar see O.1.105, O.6.21, N. 11.18. Cf. Hurst 1985:167 and Hurst 1979 for the double nature of the Pindaric bee, as the symbol of “simultanément ordre et liberté.”

¹⁶ Ernest Highbarger (1935) has pointed out that “the gulf dividing Horace from Pindar, as described by the former [in Ode 4.2], was not so great as at first it might seem to be,” because Pindar does, indeed, frequently envision himself as a bee and his songs as honey. Highbarger does not, however, discuss the fact that Horace is likewise a swan. He concludes his analysis of Ode 4.2 as follows: “We are allowed to conclude, then, I think, that this poem does not proclaim Horace’s renunciation of Pindaric style. It merely portrays the incomparable quality of Pindar’s work. For if Horace could speak of a certain obscure Titius as destined to become famous through his imitation of the Pindaric lyric, he could scarcely feel that he himself was unequal to the task.”

Horatian and Pindaric poetry we notice an undercurrent running beneath the poem's illusory texture which suggests an overlap, indeed, an interweaving of the two apparent opposites. Each of the two poets is both a swan and a bee at once. Having walked, as through an enfilade of closed doors, through the multiple illusions of Ode 4.2, we thus arrive at the final secret concealed behind them: Horace and Pindar are, in fact, one poetic spirit composed of two opposite aspects. Ode 4.2 is not so much concerned with contrasting two different poetic talents as with investigating the tension of two opposing forces within poetry as such. Horace does not attempt to resolve this opposition, just as he does attempt not resolve a similar opposition between the first and the last stanzas in Ode 3.1, where from a haughty prophet chanting New Song to throngs of Roman youth he metamorphoses into a stoic sage leading a humble private lifestyle in the secluded Sabine valley. The co-existence of two opposing spirits within the poet remains an unsolved enigma in Ode 4.2 just as in 3.1. It is an enigma that, far from being a hindrance, is the source of inspiration wherefrom develops Ode 4.2 with all its multiple layers of illusion.¹⁷

* * *

I have lingered in such detail over Horace's double vision of Pindar because I believe it to be paradigmatic for our present-day perception of the poet. The academic approach to Pindar of the subsequent ages, just as Horace's poetic approach, leaves the contradiction between the swan and the bee unresolved. But whereas Horace envisioned these opposing essences as paradoxically coexisting within one poet, the scholarship of

¹⁷ Cf. Horace's famous Cleopatra Ode (1.37) which is structured around the same juxtaposition of *demens*, *impotens*, and disgrace on the one hand and a stoic, clear, ordered sense of purpose and honor on the other. These two aspects bewilderingly and unexplainably join into one in the heroine of the ode, Cleopatra.

Modernity fails to grasp them as two halves of one whole, setting them up instead in an “either-or” relation. Hence the centuries-long debate over whether the Pindaric ode contains or lacks an ordering compositional principle, a clearly thematized architectonic of the song—in other words, whether Pindar is a bee or a swan. From the late seventeenth century and onwards¹⁸ Pindar is perceived as *either* “lege solutus”¹⁹ or as a poet scrupulously following metrical and compositional laws, focused on constructing each ode as a monument of order and harmony. Thus William Congreve critiques contemporary “rambling” imitations of Pindar as displaying “disproportion’d, uncertain and perplex’d Verses and Rhimes” and asserts that authentic Pindaric digressions and transitions display coherency and regularity,²⁰ and, several decades later, Gilbert West supplies his 1749 translation of Pindar’s Odes with notes and commentary focused on elucidating their coherent structure. Yet at the same time the entry under *Pindarique* in

¹⁸ As Malcolm Heath discusses in his thorough 1986 study, “Origins of Modern Pindaric Criticism,” the Middle Ages and the Renaissance did not concern themselves with the question of a unifying compositional principle in Pindar’s odes. The primary concern of early European Pindaric scholars, similar to that of the ancient scholiasts, was to demonstrate the presence of *rhetorical* principles in Pindar’s verses. Such an approach satisfied itself with labeling different sections of an ode with different pieces of oratorical terminology: see, for example, the elaborate dissection into rhetorical sections of Pythian 2 in Erasmus Schmid’s 1616 commentary on Pindar (pp. 62-63). The result of such a “descriptive,” rather than “analytical,” approach was that scholars were content with recording Pindaric peculiarities without an attempt to interpret their intended purpose within the broader theme-complex of a given poem. For example, Sudorius writes in his 1582 edition of Pindar that lyric and dithyrambic poets employ digressions “partim ut hoc genere scribendi lectorum fastidium vitarent, partim ut diversarum rerum, sententiarum, historiarum, fabularum coacervatione, furoris et cuiusdam divini afflatus opinionem sibi in vulgus artificiose quarerent” (Sudorius 1582:2). This passage, in addition to displaying a belief widely spread among old commentators and still common today that an athletic victory is an inherently boring subject, makes no attempt to *analyze* the nature of Pindaric digressions. Instead, Sudorius *describes* poetic digression as a purely rhetorical phenomenon.

¹⁹ Critics who speak of Pindar’s wild style and lack of compositional structure are themselves divided into two parties, some extolling this absence of control (as Boileau in his description of Pindar’s “beau désordre”) and some deprecating it (as Perrault in his critique of Pindar’s “galimatias impénétrable”). Cf. Fitzgerald 1987:204, note 4.

²⁰ Congreve 1964, Volume 4, 82. And further: “There is nothing more regular than the Odes of *Pindar*, both as to the exact observation of the Measures and Numbers of his Stanzas and Verses, and the perpetual Coherence of his Thoughts. For tho’ his Digressions are frequent, and his Transitions sudden, yet is there ever some secret connexion, which tho’ not always appearing to the Eye, never fails to communicate itself to the Understanding of the Reader” (ibid., p. 83).

Diderot's *Encyclopédie* reads: "Le nom de Pindare n'est guere plus le nom d'un poëte que celui de l'enthousiasme même. Il porte avec lui l'idée de transports, d'écarts, de désordre, de digressions lyriques"²¹ and eighteenth century English critics speak of Pindar, as of Shakespeare, as an "untutored" genius.²² Then again on the border of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Herder²³ and then Schlegel²⁴ argue that Pindar's verses are governed by logic and order, and in 1821 Boeckh and Dissen publish a joint commentary on Pindar which opens a new epoch in Pindaric studies—the treasure hunt for the principle of unity in the Pindaric ode which continues down to the present day.²⁵

In the twentieth century debate over the unity or absence thereof in the Pindaric ode often becomes related to the investigation of archaic vs. classical traits in Pindar's poetics. If, as we have seen, Horace perceives Pindar's seeming lack of law and order—of compositional structure, in effect—as synonymous with the abandonment of tradition, twentieth century scholars tend to interpret the lack of structure in the Pindaric ode as the hallmark not of rebellious innovation but, quite on the contrary, of faithfulness to the

²¹ Yet the *Encyclopédie* likewise notes that "mais quoiqu'il [Pindare] paroisse quelquefois quitter son sujet, il ne le finit jamais sans y revenir," and ends with a Horace-like admonition to those who wish to imitate Pindar: "Dans la composition d'une ode pindarique le poëte doit d'abord tracer le plan général de la piece, marquer les endroits où les saillies élégantes & les efforts d'imagination produisent un plus bel effet, & enfin voir par quelle route il pourra revenir à son sujet." Cf. Fitzgerald 1987:204, note 6.

²² Monk 1960:102.

²³ Herder 1886, Vol.24, 337.

²⁴ Schlegel 1961: 32.

²⁵ For detailed history of the search for unity in Pindar beginning with Boeckh and Dissen and ending with the scholars of the 1950's, see Young 1964 (1970). For criticism of Young's methods see Heath 1986. The demand that a work or belles lettres posses a unifying, subordinating compositional principle existed already in the early eighteenth century. Thus de La Motte, in his 1707 essay "Discours sur la poésie en general, et sur l'ode en particulier," argues as follows: "Pour moi je crois indépendamment des exemples, qu'il faut de la méthode dans toutes sortes d'ouvrages; et l'art doit régler le désordre même de l'ode, de manière que les pensées ne tendent toutes qu'à une même fin" (La Motte 1859: 90-91).

traditional artistic canons of the archaic period.²⁶ Thus Dornseiff, complaining of the discrepancy between the grand openings and the generally tame endings of Pindar's odes, writes: "Europäisches vorbereitendes Hinarbeiten auf einen grossen poetischen Höhepunkt, d.h. jede Steigerung fehlt. Meist ist der Anfang pompös und das Ende trocken. Das ist archaische Kompositionskunst, vor der attischen zentrierten Weise."²⁷ Similarly, Bruno Snell argues that Pindar's highly ornamental creations follow the same artistic principle as black-figured vase-painting of the archaic period. In both the ode and the vase-design, all the parts are meticulously elaborated but fail to find a subordinating, unifying principle, fail to come together into an "organic whole":

Wenn schwarzfigurige Vasenbilder den Raum lückenlos zu füllen und die Figuren gleichsam der ganzen Fläche einzuweben suchen, ist das Streben, sie wappenmäßig, ornamental zu ordnen, starker als der Wille zum Aufbau einer organisch gegliederten, der Fläche gegenüber autonomen Gruppe. Auch beim nackten menschlichen Körper ist jedes Organ für sich vollkommen, schönen Konturen abgesetzt gegen seinen Nachbar. Jedes dieser tatenfrohen Glieder strahlt eine intensive Lebendigkeit aus, aber sie sind nicht einbezogen in ein ponderiertes Gesamtspiel des Körpers; es wirkt weder Druck und Zug der anderen Körperteile noch Last und Widerstand von außen.²⁸

²⁶ Though to be sure many prominent Pindaric scholars of the twentieth century (such as Gilbert Norwood, Charles Segal, and David Young, to name a few) work outside of the question of Pindar's archaisms and innovations. All three of these scholars strive, in very different ways, towards a definition of Pindaric unity. Thus while Norwood adheres to the old-fashioned approach of seeking one magic key that would open our eyes to the unity of *all* of Pindar's odes, Segal and Young labor on discovering a unique approach to the central theme of each individual ode. Cf. Young 1968 (for analysis of P. 11, P.3, and O.7) and 1971 (for analysis of I.7). For Segal's controversial treatment of Pythian 4, see his 1986 work, *Pindar's Mythmaking*.

²⁷ Dornseiff 1921:133. For critique of Dornseiff's method, see Young 1964: 605-606.

²⁸ Snell 1975:90. But see Finley 1955:44 for alternative view: "One way of grasping the classic in Sophocles is to see it as the triumph of the organic. Oedipus and Antigone have a concentration and centrality and imply an elimination of detail without earlier parallel. The term late archaic as applied to Aeschylus and Pindar signifies a stage just prior to this full grasp of organism. They simultaneously feel the uniting force of a great central idea, yet are drawn aside from it by a competing love of detail almost suggestive of Homer's."

For further investigation of the parallels between Pindar's poetics and the peculiarities of Archaic Greek sculpture and vase-painting, see Fowler 1983. Fowler makes some fascinating original observations (e.g.,

For Hermann Fränkel, Pindar is a “pious and respectful adherent of tradition” who “felt himself the chosen voice of the Greek race when he bore witness to the beliefs and purposes of the age that was to die with him.”²⁹ And, as such, Pindar is wont to express these beliefs and purposes in the traditional archaic style: speaking of what he considers the “erratic flights with which Pindar’s poetry darts from theme to theme,”³⁰ Fränkel asserts that “[t]he basic principle of these choral songs is not the classical one of architectonic strength and visible construction, but the archaic one of fluid movement [a close echo, we may note, of the Horatian image of a stream!] and development of numerous figures, following after and out of one another.”³¹ In the same vein, Van Groningen argues that while one can, indeed, demonstrate the coherent unity of some of the odes (he investigates in detail eight of them), “rien n’indique qu’il se soit réellement soucié de l’unité, ni qu’il ait consciemment aspiré à la réaliser parce qu’il en comprenait l’importance.”³² The rules of the epinician genre, believes Van Groningen, demanded above all “la variété”: in accordance with the archaic canon, Pindar strives to join fundamentally disparate themes and images via simple paratactic links, “sans que l’auteur se souciât d’établir un rapport essentiel entre eux.”³³ The scholar concludes vaguely: “L’unité des odes solidement construites est donc plutôt le résultat du hasard, disons: de

on the affinity of the smile of Pindar’s centaur Chiron in Pythian 6 and the smile traditionally displayed by statues of the Archaic period); in her final judgment of Pindar’s poetics, however, she closely follows Snell and Fränkel (for summary of the latter’s views, see below): Pindar is faithful to the Archaic principle of paratactic sentence structure and *poikilia*.

²⁹ Ibid. p. 506.

³⁰ Fränkel 1975:496.

³¹ Ibid. p. 505.

³² Van Groningen 386.

³³ Ibid. 326.

l'état d'âme du poète, que d'une intention consciente et volontaire de sa part."³⁴ Mary Lefkowitz concurs: enumerating several Pindaric peculiarities as the "hallmark of archaic style," she describes the odes as composed of sentences which "seem like short trees with many elaborate twigs." The narrative conveyed by these sentences "proceeds by agglutination."³⁵ Finally, I quote Carne-Ross, who compares the absence of a structural principle in Pindar to the "dispersed nature" of Welsh poetry: "the concept of a centered design...is absent in Pindar, too. It is a *classical* concept, informing a classical masterpiece like the *Oedipus Rex*. Pindar's art, however, is not in this sense classical; it belongs to an earlier world which we have rather recently come to call *archaic*."³⁶

For Dornseiff, Snell, Fränkel, Van Groningen, Lefkowitz, and Carne-Ross, Pindar's lack of an ordering and hence unifying principle is a result of his faithfulness to archaic composition as exemplified already some two hundred years before him by Hesiod in a genre wholly different from the epinikia.³⁷ Yet the opposition of freedom and restraint within Pindar is more complex than this scholarly position has tended to acknowledge. Inconsistencies in the references which Snell and Fränkel make to Pindaric freedom vs. Pindaric submission to laws testify to this complexity, as both scholars prove incapable of fitting Pindar within the framework which they themselves establish as characteristic of him.

³⁴ Ibid. 386. For extensive discussion of the history of the question of Pindaric unity and for Van Groningen's own investigations on the subject, see pp. 324-386.

³⁵ Lefkowitz 1976:11-12.

³⁶ Carne-Ross 1985: 34-35.

³⁷ Cf. Albin Lesky's qualification of the Hesiodic *Works and Days* as a piece that "can only be called a didactic poem if we make allowance for all the archaic qualities of profusion and variety [...] One can see the connection between one step and the next, but any firm main lines of composition are lacking. The poem darts hither and thither; yet certain ideas do recur with some frequency and emphasis" (Lesky 1996:100).

Fränkel, without an attempt to reconcile the statement with “the erratic flights with which Pindar’s poetry darts from theme to theme,”³⁸ refers to the “sharp rigour of his [Pindar’s] laws.”³⁹ One may wonder how something can be both *erratically* darting and subject to rigorous laws. Fränkel then cites, as an ally to his own thought, an 1803 work of Herder: the plan of the Pindaric odes is “so profoundly and architecturally laid out, his images are so skillfully chosen, the arrows of his poetry have such a sure aim, that to emulate such a Daedalus is, as Horace found from his own experience, a most dangerous exploit.”⁴⁰ Herder’s reading of the Horatian Ode 4.2 is disputable—as I have attempted to show above, Horace’s warning against Pindaric imitation is but a playful pretense, and the Roman poet does indeed imitate Pindar with truly Daedalean skill. More pertinently, however, it is unclear how Fränkel himself reconciles Herder’s words about the sure aim of Pindar’s poetic arrows and the architectural layout of each ode (which words he quotes with unequivocal approval) with his own vision of the poet as “erratically darting” and lacking “architectonic strength.” Fränkel’s conclusion on the subject of Pindaric unity exhibits the same lack of consistency—ending his discussion of Pindar’s narrative and compositional technique with an assertion that the poet has a penchant for vagueness and generalities (cf. note 34), Fränkel gives a brief characteristic of Pindar’s view of human achievement and concludes:

...Pindar sees all essential reality as being quite coherent. The general connections, in his view, come about through an immense number of

³⁸ Fränkel 1975:496 (see above).

³⁹ Ibid. p. 428. It is noteworthy, that Fränkel, who surprisingly, and, I believe, wholly unfairly accuses Pindar of a penchant for „generalities“ and of a „deliberate vagueness“ in the use of „a great many terms“ and symbols (1975:494-495), does not clarify for his own readers which rigorous „laws“ he is referring to in this passage: are the laws metrical, narratological, theological, etc?

⁴⁰ Fränkel 1975:428-429.

individual connections of all kinds and all directions; and to demonstrate such relationships is a major concern of his art, which helps us to understand many of its peculiarities. [...] The erratic flight with which Pindar's poetry darts from theme to theme illustrates by its example how, within the world of values, even those things remotest from each other possess a true connection. [...] This then is the complete answer to our question concerning the inner bond of unity of Pindar's poetry [...]

Yet to say that Pindar strives to demonstrate that everything is connected to everything is precisely to imply that there is no such thing as compositional coherence, or unity, within his ode. We are back to the Horatian torrent and swan, to a Pindar who dissolves in the natural elements becoming one with the chaotic *interconnectedness* underlying the harmonious life of the cosmos.⁴¹

Snell seems to exhibit a similar inconsistency in his discussions of Pindar. On the one hand, as we have seen, the scholar perceives Pindar as a conservative representative of the archaic—indeed, a representative so faithful that he persisted in the archaic style well into the middle of the fifth century.⁴² Like Hesiod, like the painters of black-figured vases, Pindar is not concerned with the creation of an “organisch gegliederten”—and hence unified, *ordered*—form. Yet at the same time Snell believes that Pindar is the representative of an age wherein poets achieve a new status of power and novel realization of their own importance, unheard-of in the early archaic. For Snell, “[t]he greatest of these poets is Pindar, who brings forth the new ideas in the most

⁴¹ To the chaotic elementary foundations of the harmonious cosmos Pindar himself was well attuned. Precisely these foundations and their relation with the order and beauty of the world which they underlie are his subject in the famous first Pythian. Here praise of Apollinian musical harmony is followed by an intensely vivid image of the monster Typhon, stretched out in everlasting torture just beneath the face of the earth, his immense body spanning Kyme and Sicily, with Mt. Aetna, “the pillar of heaven,” pinning him down as he belches forth streams of burning lava.

⁴² Vide infra; also cf. Snell 1975:90: “Pindar ist dieser archaischen Art treu geblieben bis in die Mitte des 5. Jahrhunderts hinein” and *ibid.* p.93: “In den mehr als hundert Jahren, die Pindar von Sappho trennen, ist diese eigentümliche Frömmigkeit der archaischen Zeit, die das Strahlende der Welt als göttlich aufnahm, im übrigen Griechenland müde geworden, und Pindar steht mit seinem alten Glauben recht einsam in einer veränderten Welt.”

original matter.” Thus in the realm of metre, “Pindar breaks down [...] old traditional forms of [of metrics] and introduces a free personal movement into the rhythms. This is an especially clear symptom of his deliberate effort to change the tradition.”⁴³

This characteristic is at odds not only with the portrait of Pindar as a conservative adherent of archaic stylistic, but also with Snell’s characteristic of archaic style as an unrestrained interweaving of themes and images, akin to the fluid interplay of various currents as they dive and re-emerge from the sea-depths:⁴⁴ we may ask, is such fluidity in composition symptomatic of archaic art or of the art of the “new age”? Or must we perhaps differentiate between any given epoch’s approach to narrative and metrical technique? Snell does not clarify this. Furthermore, while ascribing to Pindar’s metrics a “free personal movement,” Snell elsewhere characterizes Pindar’s rhythms as fully conforming to archaic canons in that they are governed by the strictest laws: “Wohl nie wieder in der Welt hat eine Dichtung so sehr wie diese weitausschweifende Variationen streng durch Maß und Zahl geregelt, und so hohe Anforderungen an die poetische Meßkunst, die Metrik, gestellt.”⁴⁵

Is Pindar conservative or innovative? Does his art flow freely for the lack of an ordering, subordinating and unifying principle, or is it subject to strict laws, whether metrical, narratological, or both? And what, if any, is the correlation between these two

⁴³ Snell 1961:58.

⁴⁴ Snell 1975:89-90. Cf. Fränkel’s characteristic of Pindar as freely flowing cited above. It is noteworthy that Snell, like Fränkel, resorts to the symbol of the chaotic flow of water, already applied to Pindar by Horace.

⁴⁵ Snell 1975:90. Snell seems to be aware of the inconsistency in his characterization of Pindar, but he does not focus on resolving it. All he has to say on the subject is that “Pindar, in spite of his “new” poetry, is principally conservative” (Snell 1961:70).

sets of oppositions? Fränkel and Snell differ from most other Pindaric scholars in that instead of perceiving the poet as *either* “lege solutum” or subject to ordering laws, they investigate both aspects. Yet as the inconsistencies within their analyses seem to show, neither scholar raises the question of a synthesis of these two opposing aspects. Both Snell and Fränkel seem oblivious of the fact that on one page they treat Pindar as the paragon of order while on another he is as chaotic and unpolished as the Hesiodic *Erga*.

* * *

I will attempt to address this inconsistency by appealing to the Horatian image of a poet as a winged being, be it the swan borne onwards by the chaotic element or scrupulous Daedalus-the-bee. Horace, as we have seen, leaves open the question of the synthesis of these two contradictory and yet coinciding symbols. But among Pindar’s victory odes themselves we come across an image which suggests a synthesis of the Horatian swan and bee and is, I believe, a most appropriate emblem for Pindar’s poetic flight—the Bellerophon of Olympian 13. This hero is never explicitly styled as a symbol for poesy; he is of the same cohort as the Tantalus of O.1, the Ixion of P.2, and the Coronis of P.3, all four mythological examples of the danger which excess and hubris possess for mortals. Yet Bellerophon stands out among these sinners both in that his achievement consisted specifically of *flight* and in that it was an indisputably heroic feat prior to its eventual disintegration into excess. Even his transgression, of which Pindar sings in Isthmian 7, differs markedly from that of an Ixion or a Coronis, these motivated by an unholy lust, Bellerophon—by the daring to fly still higher (I.7.45-46), an impulse echoing Pindar’s ubiquitous symbolic images of poetic craft as swift movement and

flight.⁴⁶ To this mythical hero, yearning as he did to fly (O.13.63-64)⁴⁷—that is, to overcome the bounds set for earth-bound mortals, the *notas ripas* of mankind—Athena granted a wondrous bridle to subordinate Pegasus.⁴⁸ Only when armed with the restraint of the goddess of wisdom was the hero able to mount on the winged steed high into the “chilly bosom of the void aether” and dare great deeds of valor (O. 13.65-90).⁴⁹ This image of the mythological Bellerophon as freedom achieved through restraint is born from that particular sense of poetic flight so integral for Pindar’s victory odes: song sets forth in free poetic flight *only in so far as* the poet exercises firm control. The aim of the present chapter is to investigate Pindar’s technique of releasing and re-bridling his song,

⁴⁶ Cf. Gildersleeve, p.xxxvi: “Bellerophon shooting his arrows from the lone bosom of the chill ether (O.13, 87) is a prefigurement of his [Pindar’s] poetic exaltation, his power, his directness, and so he never wearies of calling his songs arrows or darts (O.1, 112; 2, 91.99; 9, 5.12; 13, 93; P.1, 12.44; 6, 37).”

⁴⁷ ὃς τᾷς ὀφιώδεος υἱ-
ὄν ποτε Γοργόνης ἦ πόλλ’ ἀμφὶ κρουνοῖς
Πάγασον ζεῦξαι **ποθέων ἔπαθεν**...

Curiously, although Bellerophon becomes an unbeatable warrior with Pegasus’ help, Pindar does not present Pegasus as a *means* towards deeds of valor. Rather, emphasis is here laid on the steed as the ultimate object of the hero’s desires.

⁴⁸ Cf. Hubbard 1986, who discusses the bridle of Pegasus in Olympian 13 within the ode’s broader context of Corinth as the city of human craft. The bridle, like Medea’s pharmacological craft, are products of art that “can be used to tame, control, and assuage the raw and painful forces of brute nature.” The three inventions which Pindar ascribes in this ode to the Corinthians, are the dithyramb, the bridle, and the double pediment, and they all symbolize a “quest for a balance between achievement and restraint [...] Pindar’s particular rendition of this [i.e., the Pegasus] myth tends to emphasize the necessary coincidence of mortal ambition and divine sanction.”

⁴⁹ Ten years later, in 454 BC (though see Young (1971: 9, and *ibid.*, note 26) for alternative date) Pindar composes Isthmian 7 where he relates how Pegasus hurled Bellerophon down because the hero could not curb his ambition and tried to ascend Olympus (vv. 44-47). A few lines above Pindar says: “If a man peers at distant things, he is too little to reach the gods’ bronze-paved dwelling.” This is the familiar Pindaric *ne plus ultra* motif, often accompanied by the image of the Pillars of Heracles as the geographical symbol of the final bourn of mortal ambitions. Here however the poet seems to invite us to reach *beyond* mortal limits, to reach for the Virgilian table of the god and couch of the goddess, as it were (though see Young (1971:28-29, note 94) who, precisely because there are no parallels to such an exhortation elsewhere in Pindar, is wary of ascribing the verses about the “bronze-paved dwelling” to the persona of the speaker-poet). It is not accidental that this exhortation precedes the mention of Bellerophon and his downfall. The hero bridling the winged steed seems to have the same symbolic implications in both O. 13 and I. 7: before he succumbed to hubris, Bellerophon achieved precisely that which Isthmian 7 exhorts a hero to achieve—he attained the immortal heights by not “looking too far,” by disciplining his yearning for flight.

as well as the implications this technique has for the role of song and for the role of the poet within the song.

As we have seen above, Horace's likening of Pindaric song to a torrent overflowing its own banks articulates a crucial aspect of this poetry: although on the one hand the *amnis* metaphor conveys a reverent admiration of Pindar, yet on the other this image of aimless might cannot but imply that it is a poetry disdainful of its own author's restraint and discipline—of the ordering, *unifying* compositional principle which the author seeks to lay upon it. If we further articulate the implications of a Horatian reading of Pindar, we can say that such a song, abandoning the control of the poet, assumes an independent “life” of its own, becomes, as it were, its own author. It is no longer *he who sings the song* (the poet) that leads the song onwards, but rather *that of what he sings* (the subject of the song, its personages) that assumes the role of the song's leadership: strong and willful the song threatens to veer off onto paths which the poet may not wish to tread. As the torrent of poetry rushes headlong onwards, authorial power appears to become “estranged” from the poet's “I”; poetic authority *conceals* itself—albeit, as we shall see in Part II, the concealment is a temporary one.

It is not only the song's unity understood as formal compositional principles that is endangered in *amnis*-like poetry. Such principles are but a framework upon which the “inner,” thematic unity of a text can rest. As I shall contend in the first half of my dissertation (a topic which I elaborate further in Part 2), inner unity of a Pindaric ode is the unity of the three temporal dimensions: the legendary past, the present, and the future. This chronological unity is altogether alien to our modern conception of time as the impersonal succession of identically faceless, inanimate “nows” ticked off by our

watches. The past, present, and future of Pindar's world are of an organic—indeed, *vegetal*—character. It is hardly metaphoric to define them, in accordance with one of our poet's most favorite images, as, correspondingly, the nourishing activity of the roots, the burgeoning of the trunk, and the lushness of the flowers of a vital, blossoming tree. This “vegetal” time of the Pindaric cosmos is likewise the time of the microcosm which serves as stage for the victory ode—it is the time of the Greek polis. As Carne-Ross notes, “[Pindar] has a strange and beautiful way of seeing the city as a living, growing thing...The Pindaric city is (like?) a tree. Its roots are the ancestral heroes and their foundational acts, the visible tree is the city's continuing life, its leaves and flowers the city's sons and their achievements. The poet's song waters the roots of the city-tree and ensures that it will continue to bear its heroic blossom.”⁵⁰ The activity of the poet, however, more complex and profound than simply that of a water-carrier, calls for further analysis. It is his song that unites the three temporal levels of a polis' life as the three levels of the life-time of a blooming tree. That a polis is “alive” means that its roots, full of vigor, supply it with vital energy and that its branches continually burst into bloom and bear fruit. And it is the duty of Pindar's song to maintain a living connection of the polis with its roots and its blossoms. It is herein that lies the wonder and the paradox of Pindar's art: the polis is an immortal living being, be it the nymph Cyrene, or Theba, or Aigina, or any other Greek city: it—she—is destined to grow and flower eternally. Yet it is the poet who endows this (already) immortal being with immortality by reuniting it with its roots and by allowing it to burst into bloom within his song.

⁵⁰ Carne-Ross 1985: 36.

Furthermore, as I shall argue below, in uniting the three life-dimensions of the polis-tree, the poet, Pygmalion-like, empowers each of these three moments of time with its own poetic voice—in a sense, Pindar delegates his authorship to his song. But it is precisely this delegation that poses a threat not only to the compositional structure but likewise to the inner unity of the song. Each of the three time levels, endowed with its own authorial voice, can attempt to cease its involvement in ongoing, living dialogue with the other two time levels. It is this willfulness of his own verse that the poet must be ever on the watch to bridle: even as he endows each of the three time levels with its own life and voice, he keeps vigil as the guardian and guarantor of the *living unity of time*.

In the present chapter I focus on one particular method which Pindar employs to animate specifically the *past*; namely, on the conjunction of two compositional techniques long known and well studied but never, as far as I know, considered in tandem by Pindaric scholars: (1) the technique of either transitioning to a new section of an ode or of bringing the ode to completion through an abrupt explicit announcement in the first person that the current topic must be abandoned (the so-called *Abbruchsformeln*),⁵¹ and (2) the technique of segueing into the mythical narrative section of an ode via a relative pronoun (the so-called *Relativstil*).⁵² I shall argue that it is by entering the fabric of the

⁵¹ Cf. note 13. For a list of *Abbruchsformeln* in the Pindaric corpus see Mackie 2003: 9, note 1.

⁵² Both of these techniques are discussed at length by André Hurst in his essay “Aspects du Temps chez Pindare.” Hurst’s aim however is to differentiate between temporal transitions (or “leaps,” as he calls them) which Pindar makes purposely conspicuous in order to proclaim his poetic powers and temporal transitions which Pindar purposely conceals in order to amalgamate different time-layers. Break-off formulas naturally belong to the former sort of transition, whereas myths introduced through relative pronouns Hurst classes among the “surreptitious” transitions. While he discusses odes which include both kinds of transition, Hurst does not examine myth-introducing relative pronouns and *Abbruchsformeln* as working in tandem. For him, Pindar relies sometimes on one kind of transition and sometimes on another simply based on the demands of extraneous circumstances. As I attempt to show, it is inaccurate to view the main purpose of myth-introducing relative clause transitions as surreptitiousness: on the contrary, they

song through a relative pronoun that the mythical past, the roots of the polis, acquires its own poetic voice and at the same time, subject to the temptation of exploiting this newly acquired power, threatens to “estrangle” itself both from the authority of the poet and from its interconnection with the city’s present and future. It is here, on the verge of the “usurpation” of his authorship and of the rupture of the unity of time, that Pindar frequently has recourse to *Abbruchsformeln* – a technique whose aim is to bridle the headlong, “estranged” flight of one of the three voices of time. As we shall see in subsequent chapters, the *Abbruchsformeln* have a wider application than myth introducing relative pronouns: that the present and future live on in the past, that the past and the future live on in the present, that the future contain within itself the living past and the living present—such is the living unity of time(s) on guard of which stand the *Abbruchsformeln*. In the first chapter I focus specifically only on those instances where myth-introducing relative pronouns and *Abbruchsformeln* work in tandem as the freeing and the bridling of the mythological *past*.

A. Myth-Introducing Relative Pronouns

It has frequently been noted how “animated” Pindar’s verses are. Thus for Gilbert Norwood one of the primary characteristics of Pindar’s style is “an invariable employment of the sensuous word—the noun, the verb, even the preposition which forces us to visualize what we read.”⁵³ Norwood compares reading Pindar to “passing one’s hand over a surface tingling with electricity. All is alive: at times one could swear that

produce the effect of an awe-inspiring chronological vortex which suddenly gapes open in the texture of the song.

⁵³ Norwood 1945:96-97. For example, Norwood contrasts Keats’ “Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness” with Pindar’s *oporos mater* (“mother of fruits”), pointing out that the English poet favors the abstract noun “fruitfulness” whereas Pindar opts for the specific and personal “mother.”

the verse is full of eyes as well as music...Much of this vivid, electrical effect is secured by shifts in the meaning or application of words: the sentence must be a living creature (surely!), for its members heave and quiver.”⁵⁴

In his inspired description, Norwood mentions, but does not elaborate upon, Pindaric nouns, verbs, and prepositions. Gildersleeve had come closer to the *source* of the peculiar animation of Pindar’s verse when he focused on the poet’s treatment of adjectives: through Pindar’s compound adjectives such as ἀναξιφόρμιγγες (O.2, 1) and τρισολυμπιονίκας (O.13, 1), “the whole world of things, animate and inanimate, is endued with life, or quickened to a higher vitality.”⁵⁵ But this is only one of the various ways in which Pindar achieves “the effect of living splendor,” for “[e]ven the most familiar words are roused to new life by the revival of the pristine meaning. It is a canon of Pindaric interpretation that the sharp, local sense of the preposition is everywhere to be preferred, and every substantive may be made to carry its full measure of concreteness. This is distinctly not survival but revival...we are not to suppose that κρατήρ (O.6, 91) was felt by the Greek of Pindar’s time as a male agent...Whatever personification lay in the word was dead to the Greek of that time. Pindar revived the original meaning and the γλυκὺς κρατήρ is a living creature.”⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Norwood 1945:97.

⁵⁵ Gildersleeve 188: xl.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. xli. Cf. Carne-Ross (1985:42), who writes a propos Pindar’s application of the verb θάλλω (to blossom or flourish) to the noun “symposium” in the opening of Isthmian 6: “Pindar’s is a vegetal world, a world of thrusting energies where things we think of as inanimate or abstract can take on a startling life.” For thorough annotated catalogue of Pindar’s simple and compound adjectives with comparisons to Homer, see Bräuning 1881.

Let us pick up where Gildersleeve leaves off and try to articulate exactly what happens in Pindar's line "ἔσσι γὰρ... γλυκὺς κρατὴρ ἀγαφθέγκτων ἀοιδῶν"(O.6.90-91)—in what sense is γλυκὺς κρατὴρ a "male agent" and a "living creature"? "For you...are a sweet chalice of loud-resounding songs," the poet tells someone named Aineas—someone, we know from the ode, of crucial import and skill in the performance of song(s).⁵⁷ The plural genitive noun (ἀγαφθέγκτων ἀοιδῶν) functions here as an expansion of the attributive adjective γλυκὺς which modifies κρατὴρ: a natural semantic association suggests that the chalice is sweet *because it is full of a sweet drink*. In this particular case, the "sweet drink" is the "loudly resounding hymns." Thus in the context of this verse, γλυκὺς = "[full] of loudly-resounding songs." We see here one of Pindar's favorite techniques: a metaphor wherein tenor and vehicle merge inextricably and endow each other reciprocally with shades of meaning. "Sweet" is an adjective applicable to a chalice; "of loudly-resounding songs" is an attribute appropriate for a bard, singer, chorus-leader, or whichever other such role the historical Aineas performed. Here, however, the noun κρατὴρ absorbs into itself (or should we say "himself"?) via the adjective γλυκὺς the chorus-leader's energetically active attribute, "ἀγαφθέγκτων ἀοιδῶν," and becomes truly, in Gildersleeve's words, a "male agent"—he who I full of loud hymns.

The words "γλυκὺς κρατὴρ" are part of the predicate in Pindar's assertion "ἔσσι γὰρ... γλυκὺς κρατὴρ ἀγαφθέγκτων ἀοιδῶν." Phrased as an address to Aineas, this sentence leaves no room for doubt as to which of the two personages involved—Aineas ("you") or the chalice—is the author of the sentence: neither. Of course it is the poet,

⁵⁷ Perhaps, as the scholiast conjectures, Aineas was the chorus-leader performing this particular ode. However, on the uncertainties of whether Pindar's odes were actually performed by a chorus, see Lefkowitz 1963 and 1988.

Pindar himself, who addresses Aineas. But within the predicate (“ἔσσι... γλυκὺς κρατήρ”) γλυκὺς functions attributively, and *semantically* such attributive use of the adjective differs widely from a predicative use of the same word, as in the phrase “ὁ κρατήρ [ἔστι] γλυκύς.” The aim of the present expression, “ἔσσι... γλυκὺς κρατήρ,” is not to communicate to us that the chalice is or was sweet (X is Y), but rather to assert that *you, Aineas, are* a sweet goblet (Z is XY). To be sure, whether a sentence is structured as “X is Y” or as “Z is XY,” the authorship of the juxtaposition belongs exclusively to the poet, and the “γλυκὺς κρατήρ” would not exist had Pindar not conjured it. The difference between these two sentence schemes is that in the case “Z is XY” the sentence does not aim at constructing XY; rather, as if having found XY as a readily available construction block, it focuses on using this block for the synthesis “Z is XY.” In other words, the noun-cum-attribute (e.g., “sweet chalice”) functions as a single-unit element of the sentence which *semantically* precedes the assertion “you, Aineas, are a sweet chalice.”

In this sense, to the extent that it is an element which cannot be considered an *effect* of the synthesis “Z is XY” but rather is implied to be a *given* within the synthesis, the XY element (“γλυκὺς κρατήρ”) in the predicate of the assertion emerges as independent of the assertion. The sweetness of the chalice is a *given*. Following Gildersleeve we can say that the noun κρατήρ becomes a “male agent” and reveals itself in its full “living splendor” through the attributive use of the adjective “γλυκύς,” and, more specifically, through Pindar’s masterful infusion of the attributive use of the adjective with rich, novel meanings (γλυκύς = ἀγαφθέγκτων αἰοιδᾶν). Through the attributive use of the adjective, κρατήρ acquires a poetic voice of its own.

Pindar achieves a still more powerful focalization of the attributive use of adjectives in his compound formations such as *τρισολυμπιονίκας* or *ἀγάφθεγκτος*. These comprise not only nouns (*Ολύμπια*) and adverbs (*τρίς*, *ἀγά*) but also, most importantly, verbs—*νικάω*, *φθέγγομαι*. Thus each such compound adjective is, in effect, a full-fledged sentence replete with vivid images and dynamic movement, all in the attributive position of a noun-modifying adjective. By comparison with these saturated, literally *song-ful* words, the self-expressivity of a “*γλυκὺς κρατήρ*” is a relatively modest one. As we have seen, the noun *κρατήρ* discloses through its attributive adjective *γλυκὺς* the identity which it has acquired via this same adjective: the chalice is sweet because to be sweet means to be full of loud-resounding songs. Once the *κρατήρ* discloses this to us, we comprehend that it has absorbed the anthropomorphic powers of a “male agent” Aineas—an authority over loud-resounding songs. In it by itself, however, neither phonetically nor morphologically does the word *γλυκὺς* suggest to our ear “a man full of *ἀγαφθέγκτων ᾠοιδᾶν*.” Its identity of a “male agent” is the *result of the poet’s assertion*: “You are...etc.” By contrast, a noun (e.g., *οἶκος*) whose attributive adjective is *τρισολυμπιονίκας*, *morphologically* accumulates within itself the semantics of a full-fledged sentence.⁵⁸ It attains, as it were, a higher level of poetic authority and semantic “independence.” Compound adjectives thus present particularly vivid instances of Pindar’s focalization of the role of the attributive: attributing to a noun an entire sentence

⁵⁸ Cf. James Joyce’s wonted conjuring of compound nouns, participles, and adjectives. The very fact that such formations, inherent to Ancient Greek or German, are so foreign to the English tongue, underscores Joyce’s *à la* Pindar focalization of the semantic role of attributives. Among countless other instances in the *Ulysses*, cf. such compound adjectives as “shameclosing” (of a cat’s eyes) (*Ulysses* 1934:54) and “bronzelidded” (of a dead woman’s eyes) (*ibid.*, 187). Frequently, one encounters entire sentences composed of a string of compound adjectives, each saturated with movement and images, e.g., “The whitemaned seahorses, champing, brightwindbridled, the steeds of Mananaan” (*ibid.* 38) and “The figure seated on a broad boulder at the foot of a round tower was that of a broadshouldered deepchested stronglimbed frankeyed redhaired freely freckled shaggybearded widemouthed largenosed longheaded deepvoiced barekneed brawnyhanded hairylegged ruddyfaced, sinewyarmed hero” (*ibid.* 290).

ensconced in one sonorous word, a Pindaric compound adjective underscores the self-expressivity and self-representation of the noun, its independent, “sovereign” role as that “given” which semantically precedes that poetic line within which it appears: it is as if the attributively modified noun begins to speak *within* the verse *before* the verse. The poetic line becomes realized because it discovers within itself the self-disclosing noun or nouns and weaves them into the message which it is its aim to convey. Pindaric play with adjectives brings to mind Heidegger’s famous words: “We not only *speak* language, we speak *from out of* it. We are capable of doing so only because in each case we have already listened to language. What do we hear there? We hear language speaking.”⁵⁹

I will suggest that myth-introducing relative pronouns possess the same life-giving energy as the compound adjectives and the innovatively applied simple adjectives discussed by Gildersleeve. Rather than presenting myth as a *narrative* (that is, as a story transmitted through an agency external to the story), a relative pronoun gives a large section of a mythic story the form of a grammatical attribute. It turns the mythical section into an over-grown adjective, as it were, which attributively modifies the pronoun’s antecedent. In this “adjective,” the antecedent discloses its identity thereby assuming, as it were, a poetic authority. One could say that in these over-grown attributes we hear not only the poet relating the story but also the story-telling relating itself: it is as if it the poet has delegated his authority of the creator to the song itself.

⁵⁹ M. Heidegger. *Basic Writings*, p. 411. „Der Weg zur Sprache,“ in *Unterwegs zur Sprache*. Pfullingen 1959. Cf. O. Mandelstam’s poetic declaration in his “Octave VII”:

Aye, could it be that whisper before lips
Was born; and in a treelessness the leaves
Had spun upon the breeze? Thus do we dedicate
Experience to those, who long before
Our experience their features formed.
(my transl.)

In her article on relative clauses introducing myth, Anna Bonifazi writes: “The function of relative pronouns in RCMs [relative clauses introducing myth] is to retrieve the mental representation of somebody previously named, in order to tell new pieces of information about him/her not differently than for demonstrative or third-person pronouns.”⁶⁰ I would argue, however, that the effect achieved by Pindar’s myth-introducing relative pronouns is diametrically opposite to the purely functional one which Bonifazi discerns. In allowing his song to unfold through myth-introducing relative pronouns Pindar pointedly eschews *telling* us *information*. The ultimate aim of this grammatical construction is to create the impression of the song’s own independent poetic authority—the impression that it draws us into itself of its own volition, unfolding its depths layer-by-layer. This effect of the song’s “independence” comes to the fore most vividly when compared and contrasted with similar syntax in the prologues of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

In the opening seven lines of the *Iliad*, Homer addresses the Muse, assigning to her the theme of the epic:

Μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος
οὐλομένην, ἣ μυρὶ Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε’ ἔθηκε,
πολλὰς δ’ ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν
ἡρώων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἐλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν
οἰωνοῖσί τε πᾶσι, Διὸς δ’ ἐτελείετο βουλή,
ἐξ οὗ δὴ τὰ πρῶτα διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε
Ἀτρεΐδης τε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς.
Τίς τάρ σφωε θεῶν ἔριδι ξυνέηκε μάχεσθαι;
Λητοῦς καὶ Διὸς υἱός· ὃ γὰρ βασιλῆϊ χολωθεὶς
νοῦσον ἀνὰ στρατὸν ὄρσε κακὴν, ὀλέκοντο δὲ λαοί...

⁶⁰ Bonifazi 2004. Cf. Hurst (1985: 160) who writes a propos of myth-introducing relative pronouns: “Le saut vers le temps légendaire est en quelque sorte masqué; il devient l’appendice d’une espèce de scholie attachée au nom de la ville du vainqueur.”

Through a relative clause the poet *points out* to the goddess and hence, indirectly, to his audience, the precise object of his song—the Muse ought to sing of *that very wrath* which caused innumerable woes to the Achaeans, sent valorous souls down to Hades, left their bodies as prey for beasts, etc. This is not yet narrative but only the entrance thereto: the narrative proper (presumably now led by the Muse-inspired-poet, so that we hear a mingling of their two voices throughout the epic) commences in line 9 with a response to the direct question in line 8—which deity was it that caused strife between Achilles and Agamemnon that had led to the assigned subject of the epic, the hero’s μῆνις?.

The role of the relative clause introduced by “ἣ” in the second line of the proem is closely reminiscent of the semantic role of attributive adjectives as in the XY = Z scheme outlined above, with the sole difference that here we have not an assertion (“something is something”) but a command (“Muse, sing X!”). The relative clause which modifies μῆνις can be thought of as an elaborate compound adjective, e.g., *gruesomelydestroying*. Just like an attributive adjective, it is semantically a “given” which precedes the statement wherein it functions: the import of the sentence consists not of conveying that the wrath was destructive, but of bidding the Muse to sing of the wrath. Furthermore, this proem presents a particularly striking instance of the “independent,” or “given,” nature of an attributive because here XY is a “given” likewise on the *contextual* level: the relative clause constitutes an *assignment* of the epic’s theme—while the poet asks the Muse to sing, he knows exactly what her song will contain even before she begins.⁶¹ In reality however, the relative clause amounts not to one compound adjective

⁶¹ An aspect of the proem which becomes particularly evident when contrasted with the proem to the Catalogue of Ships where the poet openly avows that he does not know the song without the Muse’s help (*Iliad* 2.484-493):

Ἔσπετε νῦν μοι Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δώματ’ ἔχουσαι·

but to at least three (myriad-woes-bringing; heroes-Hadeswards-hurling; beasts-with-carcasses-satiating). The sheer amplitude of components contained herein further accentuates the “given” nature of this μῆνις: he who wishes to hear the song already has a rather comprehensive knowledge of its themes. It is as if the subject of song, unfolding itself in the proem, invites the addressee (Muse)—and us, the audience, along with her—to engage in detailed mimesis, in a reminiscence of itself: the Muse ought to song of *that very wrath* of which we (i.e., Homer, the Muse, the audience) know exactly what multiple sorts of specific misfortunes it had inflicted upon the Achaeans.

In the proem to the *Odyssey* the function of the myth-introducing relative pronoun as assigning the theme of the epic is even more pronounced:

Ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα, πολύτροπον, ὃς μάλα πολλὰ
 πλάγχθη, ἐπεὶ Τροίης ἱερὸν πτολίεθρον ἔπερσε·
 πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα καὶ νόον ἔγνω,
 πολλὰ δ' ὃ γ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμόν,
 ἀρνύμενος ἥν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἐταίρων.
 ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὧς ἐτάρους ἐρρύσατο, ἰέμενός περ·
 αὐτῶν γὰρ σφετέρησιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὄλοντο,
 νήπιοι, οἳ κατὰ βοῦς Ὑπερίονος Ἡελίοιο
 ἦσθιον· αὐτὰρ ὁ τοῖσιν ἀφείλετο νόστιμον ἦμαρ.
 τῶν ἀμόθεν γε, θεά, θύγατερ Διός, εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν.
 ἔνθ' ἄλλοι μὲν πάντες, ὅσοι φύγον αἰπὺν ὄλεθρον,
 οἴκοι ἔσαν...

ὑμεῖς γὰρ θεαὶ ἐστε πάρεστέ τε ἴστέ τε πάντα,
 ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέος οἶον ἀκούομεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν·
 οἳ τινες ἡγεμόνες Δαναῶν καὶ κοίρανοι ἦσαν·
 πληθὺν δ' οὐκ ἂν ἐγὼ μυθήσομαι οὐδ' ὀνομήνω,
 οὐδ' εἴ μοι δέκα μὲν γλῶσσαι, δέκα δὲ στόματ' εἶεν,
 φωνὴ δ' ἄρρηκτος, χάλκεον δέ μοι ἦτορ ἐνείη,
 εἰ μὴ Ὀλυμπιάδες Μοῦσαι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο
 θυγατέρες μνησαίαθ' ὅσοι ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθον·
 ἀρχοὺς αὖ νηῶν ἐρέω νῆάς τε προπάσας.

Compare the opening of the *Iliad* likewise with its most illustrious imitation, the proem of Virgil's *Aeneid* (“Arma virumque cano Troiae qui primus ab orbis...”). The effect of setting an “assignment” for the epic narrative and then proceeding to the narrative itself is the same in the *Aeneid* as in the *Iliad*, albeit lessened because Virgil does not address the Muse. The “assignment” thus takes the form not of a command but of a proclamation (“I sing...”), and one does not wonder, as one does in the case of Homer, how it is that he who asks for the song knows its contents before it has been sung.

Bidding the Muse to sing of “the man”, the poet specifies exactly which man it is by summarizing the adventures which the goddess shall recount. But he goes further yet. In the *Iliad*, the proem transitions into narrative inconspicuously via the question in line 8 (Τίς τάρ σφωε θεῶν ἔριδι ξυνέηκε μάχεσθαι;)—one can hardly say at which point the invocation of the Muse ends and the story-telling begins. In the *Odyssey*, on the other hand, the poet inserts a clear road-sign of transition from address to narrative when he concludes the preview of his hero’s adventures with “τῶν ἀμόθεν γε, θεά, θύγατερ Διός, εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν” (v.10). This reiteration of his original command to the Muse reminds us that the nine lines-long account of Odysseus’ *pathemata* is not yet the story-telling proper but rather the identification of the theme of the subsequent story-telling—a theme which, as the “ἀμόθεν” underscores, exists prior to and independently of Homer’s bidding and of the Muse’s narrative. The distinction between assignment of topic and narrative is sharply demarcated.

The *Odyssey*, it has frequently been pointed out, is a self-reflexive epic, where creation and performance of poetry are a theme in their own right. Already Pindar perceived the story-teller Odysseus as the avatar of Homer himself,⁶² and the prominent appearances within the plotline of two epic bards⁶³—Phemius singing to the suitors and Demodocus to the Phaeacians—are two further examples of this epic’s interest not only in

⁶² As Frank Nisetich points out, Pindar closely identifies the poet Homer with his hero Odysseus in particular in Nemean 7.20-24, where the lyricist pointedly obfuscates the distinction between Homer’s “sweet verse” and Odysseus’ “misleading tales” (Nisetich 1989: 15-16 and 19). This identification of Homer and Odysseus persists throughout Antiquity and is still a subject for Lucian in his *Vera Historia* in the second century A.D. Cf. Pucci (1987:231) who, writing of Odysseus as poet, insists that the text of the *Odyssey* time and again: “stages scenes in which Odysseus openly invents his own fiction (e.g., 14.462 ff., 18.138 ff).”

⁶³ *Outside* of plotline, the *Iliad*, too, has mention of a singer—the unlucky Thamyris whom the Muses maimed and deprived of the art of singing and playing (2.594-600).

the singing of events, but also in the singing of the singing of events.⁶⁴ Given its self-reflexive nature and the recurrence of song-performance within the plot, it is not surprising that, in addition to the main proem which preludes Homer's (or Muse's) song, we can discern within the *Odyssey* likewise "sub-proems" which prelude the poetic narrations embedded within the epic. In Book 8 Demodocus sings of the Trojan Horse. Demodocus' performance is in compliance with the specific request of Odysseus, and this request, very similar in form to the opening lines of Book 1 where Homer requests a song from the Muse, thus serves as a proem to Demodocus' miniature epic:

Δημόδοκ', ἔξοχα δὴ σε βροτῶν αἰνίζομ' ἀπάντων·
 ἢ σέ γε Μοῦσ' ἐδίδαξε, Διὸς πάϊς, ἢ σέ γ' Ἀπόλλων·
 λίην γὰρ κατὰ κόσμον Ἀχαιῶν οἶτον αἰεῖδεις,
 ὅσσ' ἔρξαν τ' ἔπαθόν τε καὶ ὅσσ' ἐμόγησαν Ἀχαιοί,
 ὥς τέ που ἦ αὐτὸς παρεὼν ἦ ἄλλου ἀκούσας.
 ἀλλ' ἄγε δὴ μετάβηθι καὶ ἵππου κόσμον ἄεισον
 δουρατέου, τὸν Ἑπειὸς ἐποίησεν σὺν Ἀθήνῃ,
 ὃν ποτ' ἐς ἀκρόπολιν δόλον ἤγαγε δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς
 ἀνδρῶν ἐμπλήσας, οἳ Ἴλιον ἐξαλάπαξαν.
 αἶ κεν δὴ μοι ταῦτα κατὰ μοῖραν καταλέξης,
 αὐτίκα καὶ πᾶσιν μυθήσομαι ἀνθρώποισιν,
 ὥς ἄρα τοι πρόφρων θεὸς ὥπασε θέσπιν ἀοιδήν.
 ὥς φάθ', ὁ δ' ὀρμηθεὶς θεοῦ ἤρχετο, φαῖνε δ' ἀοιδήν,
 ἔνθεν ἐλὼν, ὥς οἱ μὲν εὖσσέλμων ἐπὶ νηῶν
 βάντες ἀπέπλειον, πῦρ ἐν κλισίῃσι βαλόντες,
 Ἀργεῖοι... (8.487-502)

⁶⁴ As W. Marg notes, the first and the third of Demodocus' three lays mark the beginning and the end of the war—they embrace the Trojan War in its *entirety* (Marg 1956). One could say that Demodocus is not just a singer, but *the* epic singer *per se*. On the self-reflexivity of the *Odyssey* see likewise Goldhill 1991:36-68, esp. 49: focusing on Odysseus' second narration of his adventures to Penelope in Book 3, Goldhill points out that, by contrast with the hero's first narration, at the Phaeacian court, this condensed re-telling proceeds in strictly chronological order. Such "reordering of events into a linear pattern of chronological order...[stresses] the *Odyssey's* manipulation of the narrative order as well as its narrative techniques of expansion, repetition and choice of material. The narrative within the narrative, then, marks the text of the *Odyssey* as a composed, a constructed artifice...The (self-)awareness of a narrative as composed, as ordered in a particular way, as using particular material stands against Auerbach's famous description of Homeric narrative as presenting the surface of the world without the depth provided by silences and gaps, as it stands against the assumption of a simple, paratactic linearity of narrative, which seems to be supposed by certain exponents of oral theory. Rather, the different modes and structures of narration in the *Odyssey* demonstrate that far from an unmediated presentation of material there is always already in story-telling the manipulation of representation." Cf. Segal (1994:127): "...the *Odyssey* has a language of overt poetic reflexivity that the *Iliad* lacks. It even takes a playful delight in making a display of its own inventiveness." For Homer's identification of his own "I" with Phemius and Demodocus, see Richardson 1990:86.

The transition from the assignment of topic to the narrative itself is even more pronounced in this case than in the opening of the *Odyssey*. Here, just as there, he who commissions the song includes a detailed description of the theme within his request. In Odysseus' address to Demodocus, however, two details further accentuate the special role of the relative clause. Firstly, whereas in the original proem the voices of Homer and Muse merge indistinguishably at the commencement of the narrative proper, here the commissioner (Odysseus) and his addressee (Demodocus) are unmistakably two separate personages—a literal embodiment of the difference between theme assignment and theme narration.⁶⁵ Secondly, the relative clause-ensconced summary of Odysseus' adventures in the original proem only *implies* that the commissioner (Homer) already has knowledge of the events which he wishes the Muse to relate; in Odysseus' address to Demodocus, on the other hand, the commissioner's (Odysseus') foreknowledge is made explicit—it is as though Odysseus were winking at us when he bids the bard to sing of the great ruse of “glorious Odysseus” (v.494).⁶⁶

The technique of introducing narrative via a relative clause appears in nascent form in the *Iliad* proem, becomes somewhat more explicated in the proem to the *Odyssey*,

⁶⁵ Note however the significant “ὥς τέ που ἢ αὐτὸς παρεὼν ἢ ἄλλου ἀκούσας”: Odysseus seems to imply that blind Demodocus has the same knowledge of the events of the Trojan War as Odysseus himself. Odysseus and Demodocus are, of course, two distinct characters, but, as often in the *Odyssey*, the theme of *Doppelgänger* is likewise implicitly present. For further development of this theme, see Chapters 2 and 3.

⁶⁶ The “sub-proem” at the opening of Book 9 of the *Odyssey* displays similar features, albeit in weakened form. At the conclusion of Book 8, King Alcinoüs notices Odysseus' tearful reaction to Demodocus' performance, and asks that Odysseus disclose his identity. Book 9 begins with the hero's response, which will unfold into a detailed first-person narrative of his magical adventures, spanning Books 9-12. Odysseus thus takes over from Demodocus (and from Homer himself) the role of an epic singer (cf. note 16 above). He preludes his narrative with a brief synopsis of his identity—and, significantly, this “assignment” of the theme of the subsequent narrative opens with a relative pronoun (9.19). The difference between this proem and the others (both from the *Iliad* and from the *Odyssey*) which we have seen, is that King Alcinoüs who requests the narrative does not already know its theme in advance. Therefore, his request does not coincide with the relative pronoun construction which summarizes the subsequent story-telling.

and finds its full expression in Odysseus' address to Demodocus. As we move from the first instance to the second to the third, the relative-clause-based proem becomes both progressively more distinct from the narrative and progressively more explicit about assigning a theme known well in advance—and thus “independent”—of the narrative.⁶⁷ This same scheme of establishing (assigning) the topic of song through a relative pronoun and then moving on to the narrative itself can be frequently seen in Pindar. One of the more conspicuous examples of such a structure is in Olympian 6. In the introduction to the myth, Pindar bids the charioteer Phintias to yoke the prizewinning mules so that he, the poet, can ride them into the mythological past, to the roots of the victor's lineage (vv. 22-31):

O Phintias, come yoke at once
 the strong mules for me,
 as quickly as possible, so that we may drive our chariot
 on a clear path and I may come to his [the victor's] family's
 very lineage, because those mules beyond all other
 know how to lead the way
 on that road, for they won crowns
 At Olympia. Therefore we must throw open
 for them the gates of song,
 for today it is necessary to go to Pitana
 by the course of the Eurotas in good time;
 [to Pitana] *who*, mingling [in love] with Poseidon,
 the son of Kronos, is said
 to have given birth to Evadne of violet tresses.⁶⁸
 But she [Pitana] hid her maidenly birth pain in the folds of her
 robe...

⁶⁷ Of course, we do not know for certain in what order these three passages were composed, and therefore the progression which I have constructed cannot be considered as corresponding to an evolution of “Homer's” poetic technique over time. But looking at the two Homeric epics synoptically, one can, I believe, say with certainty that the introduction of narrative via a relative pronoun often plays an important role and that in some passages this role is more pronounced than in others.

⁶⁸ In the last two lines I deviate slightly from Race's translation. Complying with English syntax, Race does not convey here the relative clause construction, rendering the passage as “for today it is necessary to go to Pitana / by the course of the Eurotas in good time; / she, they say, / lay with Kronos' son Poseidon...etc.”

Here, just as in the opening of the *Iliad*, the poet preludes mythical narrative with a proem wherein he announces the subject of the narrative: I must ride on the road of song to that very Pitana upon whom Poseidon once fathered violet-tressed Evadne. The “ἄ...λέγεται” (“who is said...”) in v.29 is a particularly strong, *explicit* avowal of a fact which the proem to the *Iliad* only *implies*: that the theme which the “proem” assigns to the song is known well in advance of the beginning of the song. Thence commences the mimetic narrative proper (v. 31).

Yet as similar as the roles of myth-introducing relative pronouns seem to be in Homer and Pindar, an important difference is at once observable. The θεά whom Homer addresses remains an intangible abstraction,⁶⁹ and the text tells us literally nothing of the poet just as it tells us nothing of the place and time of the composition or performance of his song. As Hermann Fränkel puts it, in the Homeric epics we hear “the Muse speaking through the lips of a nameless man who narrates his subject objectively from a suitable distance.”⁷⁰ I would qualify Fränkel’s statement by noting that even “from a distance” is hardly an accurate description for the Homeric narrator: the nameless Homeric narrator speaks “from *nowhere*.” Similarly the audience, or addressees, of this nameless nowhere-to-be-found narrator make no appearance in the text of the song. Even in the scene between Odysseus and Demodocus, where the Phaeacians *as an audience* provide

⁶⁹ Contrast Homer’s abstract Muse with the impetuously taunting and demanding Muses in the opening of Hesiod’s *Theogony*.

⁷⁰ Fränkel 1975:112-113.

an important setting for the epic performance,⁷¹ there is no mention of this (or any other) audience *within* the song of Demodocus.

By contrast, a victory ode is commissioned by a specific family to a specific poet for a specific athlete and is intended to laud and possibly be performed at the victor's specific polis community to which he has brought glory. As I argue below, the specific circumstances of the ode's composition—the poet's address to the athlete and his clan and the place and time wherein this address unfolds constitute the very foundations (or “χρυσέαι κίοναι,” as Pindar would say (O.6.1-2)) in which the poetic world of a victory ode is grounded. Hence the prominence within an ode both of the *time* and *place* of its performance. The former is typically (though not always) the day of victory celebration;⁷² the latter is usually the victor's polis, though the site of the athletic games is likewise crucial.⁷³

Let us return to the section of Olympian 6 quoted above. This prelude to a mythical narrative is, in effect, an address of a specific “I” to a specific “you”, unfolding within a particular spatio-temporal matrix—or, to use M. M. Bakhtin's term, *chronotope*.⁷⁴ Throughout this section Pindar lays emphasis on his own poetic “I”: *I* am the one for

⁷¹ Cf. Segal (1994:113-114 and 131): the Homeric epics repeatedly portray audience listening to song. For Segal, Penelope listening attentively and sympathetically to Odysseus' adventures at the end of the epic is the narrator-hero's “ideal audience.” By contrast, the Phaeacians are a utopic people inhabiting a blissful, sheltered world, and for them the woes of war in Demodocus' song are but an abstraction, which, albeit entertaining, does not echo in their hearts. They listen to epic songs with aloof amusement.

⁷² For a discussion of the precise timing and setting of the *performance* of the odes, see D'Alessio 2004.

⁷³ Cf. Crotty (1982:104-138) for a discussion of the athlete's return (*nostos*) from the place of victory to his hometown as the backdrop of the victory ode. Given the importance of this progress from the games back to one's polis community, at least two *topoi* (and sometimes more, as in the case of O. 6 where the victor has a double motherland) are fundamental within the context of the ode.

⁷⁴ In his *Forms of Chronotope and Time in the Novel* Bakhtin defines chronotope as the “intrinsic interconnection of the elements of time and space, poetically developed in literature” (Bakhtin 2000: 9, my translation). Emerson and Holquist translate the definition as “the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature” (Bakhtin 1981: 84).

whom the mules shall be yoked, *I* will drive on the clear path, *I* will come to the roots of the lineage, *I* will throw open the gates of song. Throughout the ode this self-proclaiming authorial “*I*” is engaged in addressing the audience of its song, whether the victor Hagesias (v.12) or the chorus leader Aineas (v.87). In this particular section the poet’s specific addressee is the charioteer of the victor, Phintis (v.22). The importance of the poet’s relationship with his addressees is underscored in the closing lines of the ode:

θεός τῶνδε κείνων τε κλυτὰν αἴσαν παρέχοι φιλέων.
 δέσποτα ποντόμεδοῖ, εὐθὺν δὲ πλόον καμάτων
 ἐκτὸς ἔόντα δίδοι, χρυσαλακάτοιο πόσις
 Ἀμφιτρίτας, ἐμῶν δ’ ὕμνων ἄεξ’ εὐτερπὲς ἄνθος.

In one breath Pindar entrusts his own poetic success and the well-being of the victor’s two polis communities (Syracuse and Stymphalos) together to Poseidon.⁷⁵ This address of the poet to the victor takes place, the song emphasizes, on a particular day—“πρὸς Πιτάναν δὲ παρ’ Εὐρώτα πόρον δεῖ **σήμερον** ἐλθεῖν ἐν ὥρᾳ” (v.28). Moreover, Pindar envisions the song as unfolding shortly before Hagesias and his *komos* (revel band) proceed on a triumphant journey from Stymphalos to Syracuse (vv. 98-100 and 103-104):

...with acts of loving friendship
 may he [Hieron, tyrant of Syracuse] welcome Hagesias’ revel band
 as it proceeds from one home to another,
 leaving the walls of Stymphalos,
 the mother city of rich Arcadia [...]
 Lordly ruler of the sea, vouchsafe a direct voyage
 That is free from hardship...

The address itself thus unfolds, it seems, in Stymphalos, but both of the victor’s *patria*e are fundamental components of the chronotope of the ode.

Summing up, we can say that the relative clause which serves as the proem into myth is firmly established within the four-element framework of addressor, addressee,

⁷⁵ In the second half of my dissertation I discuss the theme of *xenia* within the odes in more detail.

time, and place. And it is precisely on account of this framework that our entrance into myth through the proem amounts to a descent deep down into the recesses of the past: *today* one must go to Pitana by the banks of the Eurotas river. From the “here and now” of the day of celebration, the song recedes to the ancient-most origins of the victor’s clan (the union of Pitana and Poseidon) and from there slowly begins its ascent back to the present, through Evadne, Iamos, and his descendants.⁷⁶ The myth-introducing relative pronoun (“Pitana, *who* is said to have...”) endows the song with a downwards-upwards movement quite lacking in Homer’s proem.

Whereas the entrance into the myth of Pitana suggests a use of relative pronouns wholly different from Homer’s, it presents but a modest instance of Pindar’s innovation in the introduction of myth. In Pythian 9 we see a yet bolder and more elaborate structure, where narrative as such is practically absent—the intricate and vivid mythical section in the first triad of the ode is one relative clause embedded within another. In this particular instance Pindar achieves a powerful effect by conjoining myth-introducing relative pronouns with ring-composition. This latter technique, in wide use among Greek poets since Homer,⁷⁷ acquires altogether novel implications in Pindar’s odes when it begins to work in tandem with the song’s entrance into myth via relative clauses.

Scholars have frequently pointed out Pindar’s predilection for ring-composition, particularly in the mythical sections of the victory odes: having followed the myth through, we realize that it concludes with the same character, image, or theme with which

⁷⁶ Cf. Segal 1986 for an analysis of Pindar’s similar use of the word *sameron* (“today”) to establish the time-framework of Pythian 4.

⁷⁷ For bibliography and specific examples see Van Groningen 1960:51-56.

it had begun.⁷⁸ Explanations of this phenomenon in Pindar seldom go beyond tautologies: “in typically archaic fashion the ring of composition has bent back on itself, as a token that the tale of Cyrene is at an end,” we read in Fränkel’s analysis of Pythian 9.⁷⁹ Similarly, Carne-Ross dismisses the phenomenon as a road-sign of sorts, but does not consider analyzing towards *what* such a road-sign might point: “This way of telling a story [ring-composition] used to be taken as a mark of the poet’s muddleheadedness; today it is well understood and perhaps too much discussed, for ring-composition is a simple enough attention-catching device. A modern journalist will structure his story in something of the same way.”⁸⁰ As I shall argue, however, Pindar’s use of ring-composition does not amount simply to a paying of homage to archaic canons, nor can it be dismissed tautologically as a device that draws our attention to the fact that an episode has concluded—a “function” which both scholars seem to ascribe to it. To understand Pindar’s novel use of an extant poetic technique I once again turn to comparison with Homer.

Van Groningen sums up traditional Homeric ring-composition as “une structure annulaire...qui place une cheville prospective au début et une cheville rétrospective à la fin du passage intermédiaire.”⁸¹ Let us take a look at the passage from *Iliad* XIX (vv.85-136), which Van Groningen mentions briefly as an example of such *structure annulaire*: Agamemnon blames his unfair treatment of Achilles on destructive Ate. It is because Ate

⁷⁸ For pioneering study, see L. Illig, *Zur Form der Pindarischen Erzählung* (Berlin 1932) 55-67.

⁷⁹ Fränkel 1973: 447.

⁸⁰ Carne-Ross 1985: 44. It is noteworthy that in drawing the seemingly innocent analogy with a journalist even a scholar so finely attuned to poetry as Carne-Ross strikes a note reminiscent of Bonifazi’s functional, counter-poetic approach: a journalist’s primary goal is to report—that is, to supply his readers with information, whereas Pindar’s (as any poet’s) most definitely is not.

⁸¹ Van Groningen 1960: 52. See *ibid.*, pp.51 ff. for examples from *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

had blinded me that I erroneously claimed Briseis from Achilles, begins the king. He then characterizes Ate: soft-stepped, she blinds mortal and immortal alike—even Zeus. As an illustration Agamemnon recounts in detail the story of Herakles' birth and Hera's guile, and at last concludes, coming full circle: just as Zeus suffered on account of Ate, so too I have been blinded by her. The goal of such a form is not hard to discern—it is a purely rhetorical one: the speaker has made an assertion (Ate blinded me); he then supports this assertion with a story (even Zeus was blinded by Ate); and concludes with a repetition of his now-reinforced assertion (so too I have been blinded—the implication being that I am all the less to blame since I am but a mortal).

Not so in Pindar. Here ring composition, when joined with myth-introducing relative pronouns, becomes the foundation of a chronological *vortex* which both draws the present “down” into the mythical past, towards its roots, and, simultaneously, draws the mythological past “up” towards the present, thereby imparting to it fresh life. When Agamemnon evokes the myth of Herakles, it is in order to *utilize* it as support of an argument which he presents to the Achaean assembly. Pindar too occasionally narrates myth as an illustration of a given point. But in the instances which the present chapter examines, myth is neither narrated nor utilized: the vortex structure results precisely from the fact that myth draws us into its depths *as though by its own volition*. By contrast with the “flat” *structure annulaire* of Homer, in Pindar's mythological vortex the song's movement in time (past and future) becomes indistinguishable from movement in space (up and down).

of Apollo's love, clearly follows ring format: the three triads begin and end with praise of Telesicrates in conjunction with praise of Cyrene-the-city whom Telesicrates' deeds have glorified. Yet this circular composition is but an aspect of a more fundamental structure. Underlying the first three triads of Pythian 9, I shall argue, is the compositional principle not of a ring but rather of a vortex, a succession of chronological rounds which actively draw us, from our vantage point of the victory celebration, deeper and deeper into the mythological past. And, even as we are being drawn downwards, we realize that it is only thus, by following the myth to its nethermost foundations, that we can mount back upwards to the light of this same day of victory and celebration and grasp the integral interconnection between the athletic victory and the myth. Myth, the vortex reveals to us, acquires life and meaning only through Telesicrates' victory, and the young man's victory, in turn, is momentous only when connected, in Pindar's song, to the furthest depths of myth.

We enter round one of the vortex through the first myth-introducing relative pronoun in v. 5: I wish, says the poet, in announcing the victor Telesicrates, to proclaim a crown of song for chariot-driving Cyrene, "*whom* the long-haired son of Leto once seized from the wind-echoing folds of Pelion..." In the very first words of this relative clause the "chariot-driving" city begins to disclose its true identity: the polis is the nymph Cyrene. The revelation does not end here—we further hear that this is the very nymph whom Apollo seized, established as ruler in bountiful Africa, and married, with Aphrodite ministering at the wedding (vv. 5-13). But here, at the point when the antecedent Cyrene "tells" us of her wedding to Apollo—that is, at the point charged, as is any wedding, with implications of the *future*—we are drawn down into the second round

of the vortex, further back into the *past*, through yet another relative pronoun: Aphrodite joined in marriage “the god and the daughter of mighty Hypseus, *who...*” And here the myth of Cyrene begins anew, literally *ab ovo*, with the genealogy of the bride: as swiftly as ever, Pindar traces her roots all the way back to the most ancient of deities, Gaia the Earth.

This is a wholly new and more profound level of revelation than the one which the first relative pronoun had granted us. One is reminded of the famous encounter of Glaucus and Diomedes in *Iliad* VI, where, in response to Diomedes’ “τίς δὲ σὺ ἐσσι φέριστε καταθνητῶν ἀνθρώπων;” (v.123), Glaucus, going far beyond his own name and curriculum vitae, gives full account of his lineage (vv. 150ff.).⁸³ So too in Pythian 9 the real key to a personage’s identity is his genealogy. When in round one the polis Cyrene discloses her name and the definitive episode of her life (I am nymph Cyrene, taken as a wife by Apollo from Thessaly to Africa), we do not yet *truly* realize who she is. It is only in round two, where peering down to the furthest roots of Cyrene endows us with a deeper level of knowledge, that we discern the full meaning of episodes which, a moment ago, we could comprehend only superficially.

The first round reveals the identity of the polis—the city is the nymph Cyrene. This identity in itself is a genealogical one, but it is genealogy *as the disclosure of the past in the present*: the origins of the Libyan city Cyrene reach back to the wedding of Apollo and the διωξίππος (v. 4) nymph, whom the god had carried off to Africa and established as ἀρχέπολις (v.54). These two epithets further augment the merging of the past and

⁸³ Cf. Pelias’ questioning of Jason in Pindar’s Pythian 4. When Jason enters Iolcus for the first time and Pelias sees him, he first and foremost asks the young man about his lineage (vv.97-100).

present of Cyrene: διωξίππος (“chariot-driving”) seems to be an adjective suitable for a city, referring to the distinction of its citizens in horsemanship and thus consistent with what we hear of Cyrene in v.70: that she is “famous for prizes in the games.” Yet as we shall see below, “chariot-driving” can likewise be read as alluding to the athletic inclinations of the tom-boy nymph herself. Similarly, although *LSJ* translates the hapax word “ἀρχέπολις” as “city-ruling,” and thus as referring to Cyrene the *nymph*, the same word rings as “the august city,” thus referring to Cyrene the *polis*. Right now in the present, at the very moment when Pindar is speaking, the city Cyrene is the living nymph of the same name. The polis lives and prospers because its past flourishes within its present.

The second vortex makes the polis still more alive, in that it animates with still greater intensity the nymph herself by descending into the depths of her genealogy, i.e., of the past preceding the origins of the polis. If the first vortex revealed the past of the present, the second vortex reveals the past of the past. Now the story of Apollo’s love and the wedding begins anew, but we see it with different eyes—as though ourselves present at the scene, we grasp its minutest details in startlingly vivid colors: the nymph’s proud strong-mindedness, her vigilant nights, her lonely fight with the lion; the enchantment of the god, his struggle between passion and hesitancy, his questioning, both coy and reverent, of old Chiron; and all this resolved in the centaur’s “grassy smile,” his geniality and his wisdom.

In the second chapter I shall return to a close analysis of the dialogue between the god and the centaur which constitutes the kernel of this mythical narrative and to the further rounds of the mythological vortex which it entails. For the time being, however,

let us pass over the dialogue and trace our emergence from the myth in vv. 68-72: “They [Apollo and Cyrene] joined together in love / in the gold-rich chamber of Libya, where she rules her city / one most beautiful and famous for prizes in the games. / And now in holy Pytho the son of Karneidas [i.e., Telesicrates] / has joined her to flourishing good fortune...” Here we begin to *e-merge* from the myth even as the nymph *merges* once again with her eponymous city. In his study of this ode Fränkel points to this passage as to the completion of two rings, once inside another, which enclose the mythical narrative: the outer ring begins and ends with praise of Telesicrates (v.1-3 and v.71-75) while the inner ring begins and ends with an account of the wedding of Apollo and Cyrene (v. 5-14 and v. 68-69). At the center of this concentric structure lies the detailed myth of Apollo’s encounter with Cyrene and his dialogue with Chiron.⁸⁴ I would say, however, that Fränkel’s interpretation of this passage as the closing of two narratological rings, one after another, allows us but a surface view of the vortex structure involved here. It is not simply that Pindar has ended a “story” at the same point at which he has begun it. As we have seen, it is Cyrene herself rather than the agency of the poet that unfolds her myth: by structuring the lengthy myth as an over-grown adjective which modifies the antecedent “Cyrene,” Pindar thus “endues Cyrene with life,” as Gildersleeve would put it, and grants the polis-nymph poetic authority. In *disclosing* her myth, Cyrene draws us further and further into its depths, but at the point when we at last emerge from the myth in line 75 (exactly *how* we emerge I discuss in Part 2) we realize that two *vertical* rings have been

⁸⁴ “This [the second account of the wedding of Apollo and Cyrene in vv. 68-69] brings us back to the same point where we were in the middle of the first antistrophe [i.e., to the “preview” of the wedding]; in typically archaic fashion the ring of composition has bent back on itself, as a token that the tale of Cyrene is at an end. Another ring is closed immediately afterwards, when the Pythian victory of Telesicrates is mentioned again as it was at the beginning.” (Fränkel 1973: 447). Cf. Köhnken 1985, who likewise sees here two rings one inside another, but his delineation of these rings varies from Fränkel’s because Köhnken includes Aristaeus (Apollo and Cyrene’s son) in the circular structure. Thus for Köhnken Cyrene’s shepherding is echoed by Aristaeus’ shepherding.

completed: the bottommost depth and the uppermost height of the vertex, *the past of the past* (i.e., the genealogy, the past of the nymph, whose marriage with Apollo is the past of the city) and *the future of the future* (i.e., the future of the youth Telesicrates who himself is the personified future of the polis) meet and join as the beginning and the end of a circle.

In the very first line the poet says that *he*, Pindar, wishes to announce Telesicrates victor by proclaiming a στεφάνωμα for chariot-driving Cyrene.⁸⁵ For this word Slater's Pindaric lexicon gives the single definition "a crown," and Race translates it as metonymy for "crowning song." Yet although the etymology of the verb and noun "crown" comes from the Greek κορώνη—"anything hooked or curved,"⁸⁶ that is, anything ring- or semi-ring-like—modern English is practically oblivious of the origin of the word which now conveys primarily the *vertical* image of success or glory: it is the *pinnacle* of an achievement. In the Greek stem στεφ-, on the other hand, there echoes vividly the sense of "encircling." Thus in Homer the primary meaning of the verb στεφανόω is "to set round something so as to envelop it."⁸⁷

To translate στεφάνωμα as "a crown" with the connotation of "pinnacle" in the opening of the present ode—and thereby to allude to the actual head-wreath won by Pythian athletes—yields a magical merging of Cyrene with the victorious athlete, which

⁸⁵ Cf. Nemean 7.77, where Pindar explicitly envisions his song as a tri-partite precious crown which the Muse weaves of gold, ivory, and coral. In the present passage, "στεφάνωμα" can likewise be taken in apposition to Telesicrates, but see Gildersleeve and Farnell for refutation of this possibility.

⁸⁶ I rely on the *LSJ*. According to the *LSJ* κορώνη, just like words of the στεφ- root, seems to be used both in the sense of "pinnacle" and in the sense of "circle": in Stesichorus (29) the word means "wreath" or "garland," whereas in Posidippus (ap. Ath. 10. 414d) it is interpreted as "culmination"

⁸⁷ I rely on Cunliffe's Homeric lexicon. Contrast this with Slater's all-too-narrow translation of the verb στεφανόω as exclusively "to crown."

Race captures well in his translation: “I wish...to proclaim...a crowning song for chariot-driving Cyrene.” “Chariot-driving” conjures the image of Cyrene herself as a vigorous sportswoman competing in the races, and Pindar’s song is the crown (in the sense of *pinnacle* of glory) which her athletic prowess shall win. This image goes well with what we are about to hear of the nymph—her love of swordsmanship and javelin-throwing (vv. 20 ff.). I believe, however, that side-by-side with the sense of “pinnacle” στεφάνωμα bears likewise the sense of an “encircling.” In calling his song for Cyrene a στεφάνωμα, Pindar prefigures the circular, vortex-like structure which the ode is about to assume for the next seventy lines. Indeed, the conclusion of the myth seems to suggest that Pindar thought of “στεφάνωμα” as both “encircling” and “pinnacle”:

And now in holy Pytho the son of Karneiadadas [Telesicrates]
has joined [συνέμειξε] her [Cyrene] to flowering good fortune,
for by his victory there he made Cyrene glorious,
and she will welcome him gladly
to his country of beautiful women,
having brought delightful fame from Delphi. (vv. 71-75)⁸⁸

Just as the chariot-driving athlete-Cyrene in v. 4, Telesicrates has achieved the crown (pinnacle) of glory in the athletic contest. In doing so, he has joined Cyrene “with *flowering* [εὐθαλής] good fortune” at Pytho. The traditional translation of εὐθαλής into English as “flourishing” has lost its original vegetal connotations. But if we render the adjective as “flowering,” a *vertical* ring structure—a merging of the top and bottom of the vertex—becomes apparent. Telesicrates, as the successful representative of the new generation, is the future of his polis. His victory is, in fact, the flowering of the city, just

⁸⁸ Race’s translation with some minor alterations.

as a flower is the embodiment of a plant's future.⁸⁹ But even as his athletic success establishes Cyrene's future, Telesicrates at the same time re-establishes Cyrene's ancient unity with Apollo: we are reminded that it is specifically at Pytho, in Apollo's holy precinct, that the young man "mingles" his hometown with flowering fortune. The image becomes particularly poignant if we consider that the verb *συμμείγνυμι* ("to mingle together") bears strong erotic connotations and that its stem verb, *μείγνυμι*, has appeared precisely in the erotic sense just two lines above where Apollo "mingles" with Cyrene in the "gold-rich chamber of Libya" (v. 68).⁹⁰ Telesicrates' victory revives the passion of the god and the nymph which she herself, as the antecedent of the first myth-introducing relative pronoun, had disclosed to us in the mythological vortex.

Thus through Telesicrates' victory both the future and the past of Cyrene are simultaneously (re)established. But the same is true of the victor himself. "And she [Cyrene] will welcome him gladly / to his country of beautiful women": Telesicrates is returning from the Pythian games to his fatherland—to his own roots.⁹¹ Now, this fatherland is *καλλιγύναιξ*: it abounds in potential for the future as symbolized by marriage.⁹² "We hear briefly of the deeds of the founders of the Dorian tribes in the days

⁸⁹ Cf. Carne-Ross (1985:36): "[Pindar] has a strange and beautiful way of seeing the city as a living, growing thing...The Pindaric city is (like?) a tree. Its roots are the ancestral heroes and their foundational acts, the visible tree is the city's continuing life, its leaves and flowers the city's sons and their achievements. The poet's song waters the roots of the city-tree and ensures that it will continue to bear its heroic blossom." For similar interpretation of Pindar's vision of the polis, see Segal 1998:234.

⁹⁰ On the Pindaric image of a victor's erotic relation with Victory, see Carne-Ross 1985:25 ff. On the prominence of the verb *μείγνυμι* and its compounds in its erotic sense specifically in Pythian 9, see Köhnken 1985:72 ff, esp. p.73, note 6.

⁹¹ For the importance of the theme of *nostos* in Pindar, see Crotty 1982:104-138; Segal 1986: 89-93; Kurke 1991:15-61.

⁹² Indeed, the wedding theme is so pervasive in Pythian 9, that scholars from the early nineteenth century and down to the most recent times have insisted that Telesicrates' victory coincided with his wedding and

when ‘the fame of their spears burst into blossom,’” writes Carne-Ross of Pythian 1, “In typically archaic fashion Pindar conceives that the way to create something new is to return to the origins.”⁹³ So too here at the conclusion of the myth Telesicrates’ victory endows not only him personally but also his polis with a future by moving back into the past. At the conclusion of the first three triads we thus arrive at two realizations.

Firstly: when we reach the end of this tri-triad structure at line 75 and look back at line 1 where Pindar had asserted, “I wish to sing a στεφάνωμα for Cyrene,” we realize that Pindar has delegated his poetic powers to Cyrene, empowering her to perform the vortex-like mythical song herself. It is as though the poet emphasizes his intention to sing only in order to accentuate that he does not, as a matter of fact, end up singing *of* Cyrene—that she sings her στεφάνωμα herself.

Secondly: through Telesicrates’ victory, past and future coincide not only for the athlete but also for the city-nymph. Moreover, these two coincidences correlate chiastically. In being endowed with the token of her *future* (a victorious youth, Telesicrates), the polis-nymph Cyrene is re-established in her ancient union with Apollo, which union formed the *root* of the city; and, in returning to the soil of his fathers, to his *roots*, Telesicrates is endowed with a token of his own *future*—a worthy continuation of his blood-line through noble marriage. When beginning and end, past and future, coincide, a circle is formed: both Cyrene and Telesicrates complete a circle, a στεφάνωμα. The attainment of the pinnacle of glory thus turns out to be synonymous

that therefore Pindar gave this epinician the trappings of an epithalamion. For list of scholars who have favored this interpretation, see Köhnken 1985:73-74.

⁹³ Carne-Ross 1985:106.

with the completion of a cycle, and the rounds of the vortex which have drawn us downwards into the depths of myth have, we realize, simultaneously pulled the myth upwards to the present-day victory. Moreover, as we emerge from the myth we realize that the vortex has taken us beyond the past and beyond the future into the “past of the past” and the “future of the future”: Apollo’s falling in love with and marrying Cyrene is the past of the polis, but the bottommost round of the vortex goes to events long preceding this, as deep down as the origin of Cyrene’s lineage from Gaia, the primordial mother-earth. Similarly, Telesicrates is the future personified of his polis Cyrene, but by endowing the polis with the adjective *καλλιγύναιξ*, Pindar alludes to the young man’s potential marriage and thus extends the vortex into the *future* of Telesicrates himself.

The myth’s unfolding of itself through relative pronouns in a series of chronological rounds erases the distinction between travel in time and travel in space. An excursus, such as the one we have just traced in Pythian 9, deep into the past and then back into the future is expressed “three-dimensionally”: the texture of the poem suddenly acquires voluminous high relief as it draws us simultaneously *downwards* and *upwards*. It is noteworthy that in this particular myth, in being drawn by Cyrene’s lineage all the way back to Gaia, we make a literal descent into the Earth’s primordial womb. It is not till the conclusion of the first three triads, in line 76, that we are back on level ground, surveying with awe the abyss which had drawn us in and cast us back out.

This merging of space and time in a simultaneously descending and ascending vortex is a fundamental theme for Pindar which finds its expression on multiple levels within the odes. The “three-dimensional” effect it creates of a profound fissure in the “level” texture of the poem is captured, most emblematically, in the haunting myth of the

prophet-warrior Amphiaraos. Amphiaraos, one of the Seven against Thebes, was engaged in battle when Zeus cleft the ground beneath his feet with a thunderbolt, and the prophet was swallowed alive by the gaping chasm.⁹⁴ As we know from the famous eighth Pythian, even below earth Amphiaraos possessed prophetic power and thus could perceive the future march against Thebes of the Epigonoi—among them his son, and likewise a seer, Alcman. In Part Two, I analyze closely Pindar’s treatment of prophetic mythological heroes; for now, suffice it to note that the βαθύστερνος earth gaping at Amphiaraos’ feet (N.9.25), his descent, along with horse and chariot, into its depths, and his clairvoyant gaze therefrom (θαέομαι σαφές, P.8.45)—these three moments comprise a mythical equivalent of the vortex structure which we have just traced. Here too downward-upward movement in space and past-future movement in time are equated: Amphiaraos descends *below* ground, and, significantly, it is a divine thunderbolt that sends him to the nether regions.⁹⁵ As René Nünlist has argued, the lightning bolt has ambiguous connotations: it is a symbol both of destruction and of immortalization, it both incinerates and endows with prophetic, poetic inspiration.⁹⁶ In Pindar’s version of Amphiaraos’ demise both aspects of the thunderbolt are present: descending below ground, Amphiaraos becomes a hero of the *past*, of the previous march against Thebes, which the Epigonoi—the *Afterborn*—can look back to. But the buried-alive Amphiaraos

⁹⁴ Amphiaraos appears in Olympian 6.13, Pythian 8.53, Nemean 9.13 and 24, and, very briefly, in Isthmian 7.33

⁹⁵ The detail of the Zeus-hurled thunderbolt appears in Nemean 9.24-25.

⁹⁶ Nünlist (1998:171) quotes Archilochus 120 where wine acts as thunderbolt that inspires the poet’s mind: “Dieser ‘Wein-Blitz’ des Dionysos ‘erleuchtet’ ihn in ähnlicher Weise wie Pindar das Licht der Chariten. Das Blitz-Bild ist allerdings mehrsichtig, weil Archilochos damit auch auf die Zeugung des Dionysos anspielt, bei der Semele im Blitz des Zeus verbrannte. Sie verlor dadurch zwar ihr Leben, wurde in einem zweiten Schritt aber ebenso unsterblich wie andere, die von Zeus’ Blitz getroffen wurden. Der Blitz ist somit das Mittel der Mediation zwischen göttlicher und menschlicher Sphäre.” For general relation between voluntary death by fire (on a pyre), sacrifice, and immortality, see Currie 2005: 344-405.

does not become an “ever-receding” past: from that mysterious deep-bosomed abyss the warrior-prophet, the *eye* of his army (O.6.16),⁹⁷ his mantic power intensified by the incinerating-irradiating thunderbolt, gazes *upwards*, into the *future*, and sees both his own “personal” future (his son Alcman) and also the victory and the subsequent return home of the other Epigonoι. Amphiaraos is an ὀφθαλμὸς whose illuminating rays⁹⁸ are ever turned upward, toward the future: he is thus a past-living-on-in-the-present, a past that casts upon the present what Carne-Ross has called the “sacred light of the origins.”⁹⁹

⁹⁷ So Adrastus calls him in his “eulogy”: “Ποθέω στρατιᾶς ὀφθαλμὸν ἐμᾶς / ἀμφότερον μάντιν τ’ ἀγαθὸν καὶ / δοῦρὶ μάρνασθαι.” Surprisingly, commentators hesitate to take the “ὀφθαλμὸν” literally as referring to Amphiaraos’ mantic powers, in conjunction with Pythian 8 where Amphiaraos literally peers upwards from beneath the ground. Thus Duchemin (1955:233-234), insisting that for Pindar “eye” is a metaphor for “un bien précieux entre tous,” for something “irremplaçable,” denies that the “eye” in Adrastus’ eulogy can be “une allusion à la clairvoyance du devin.” Farnell accepts this latter possibility only grudgingly: “Here [in Adrastus’ eulogy] we can interpret the metaphor to mean that Amphiaraos was the shining light of the army (‘the light of the body is the eye’); but there may also be an allusion to his inspired vision as a prophet.”

⁹⁸ Cf. Fränkel (1975: 480, note 22): “From the standpoint of ancient ideas there was a closer relation between sunlight and the human eyes than we might suppose on the basis of our more advanced science. The gaze directed by the eyes was thought to illuminate, casting an active ray, which like a beam from a light-source, went from the human eye, impinged on the object, and then returning brought an image of it to the mind that was ready to receive it. Conversely, it was thought that the sun did not merely illuminate the world with its rays and render it visible to us, but saw everything by the medium of those rays, just as men saw things with their ‘eye-beams.’ Helios was reckoned as the god ‘who sees all things.’ This notion underlies Parmenides’ image of the illuminating thoughts as ‘daughters of the sun [...]’. Properly the ‘daughters of the sun’ are the sunbeams (cf. Pindar, *Olymp.* 7.70); but in Parmenides’ image they are the rays of the ‘light of the world’ and of true perception, acting as vehicles of clear understanding in both directions—to the object towards which they direct the thinker, and back again to the mind of the thinker, which they illuminate as they unveil themselves.”

⁹⁹ Carne-Ross 1985: 46. The “Amphiaraos motif” of the prophetic eye looking upwards from the depths of the past is so integral to Pindar on the multiple levels of style, theme, and imagery, that he even casts it in inverted form in Olympian 7. Here the all-seeing eye of the *sun* looks (v. 62) from *above* into the *depths* of the sea and discerns the rose-Rhodos that shall rise from these depths in the *future*. Cf. Snell’s beautiful commentary on the image of Delos in Pindar’s fragmentary hymn to Zeus (Snell 1975:89): by saying that the gods call Delos, lying as it does within the dark-blue sea, the “Star-island” (“der blauen Erde weitleuchtend Gestirn” in Snell’s translation), Pindar in effect turns the spatial structure of the world upside-down—the gods looking down from heaven perceive our sea as their sky. Cf. Young (1968:88, note 3): “Note the peculiar aptness of everything in the narrative [of Olympian 7]; only Helios πανόπτης, ὁ πάντα ὁρῶν, would have noticed anything growing beneath the sea unknown to the rest of gods and men.”

B. Abbruchsformeln

When the poet delegates his poetic powers to Pitana in Olympian 6 or Cyrene in Pythian 9, the subject of the song (a nymph, in each case), gaining creative autonomy, draws us into the chronological vortex, leading the song into the past and, from the past, back into the future, to the present day of celebration. In the preceding section I have focused on tracing the downward rounds of the vortex. And, in our investigation of Pythian 9, we have glimpsed the ultimate goal of such a vortex-myth, when beginning and end coincide for both polis and victor, when victor and polis achieve a double, chiasmatically interlocking, στεφάνωμα. In chapter 2 I investigate the intricacies involved in the process of ascent from the vortex of the mythological past back to the day of victory, but even at a glance the future- (and hence also upwards-) directed impetus of the myth of Cyrene and the myth of Pitana is clear. Pythian 9 focuses specifically on the *marriage* of Cyrene to Apollo and on their offspring: it is a genealogical vector directed from the mythical past into the future, all the way to the present-day Cyreneans. Likewise Pitana is, as the myth tells us, the mother of Evadne, who is the mother of Iamos, who is the head of the Iamidai clan, of which Hagesias is the present-day representative. But what of the mythological past which, when endowed with the poet's authority to unfold itself, succumbs to the temptation of "estranging" itself from the present and the future and thereby threatens the unity of the song (i.e., the unity of time)? What of the past that, instead of shining forth from the depths of time and illuminating the future, like Amphiaraos-the-eye, turns away from the future and becomes an "ever-receding" past? It is here that the poet, as the guardian of the unity of time, has recourse to *Abbruchsformeln*.

In the endless debate over the unity of the odes, two opposite roles have been ascribed to Pindar's break-off technique. Scholars have interpreted them both as evidence of Pindaric "disorder" and as proof that the poet controls the composition of his song. Yet neither side, I believe, done justice to the poetic ingenuity of the technique.

One group of scholars spanning from Antiquity to the present day believes that the poet admits a weakness in the composition of an ode when he interrupts a mythical narrative or the enumeration of the athlete's victories with some such exclamation as "Hold the oar!" or "I stand aside!" or "My friends, did I go astray at the crossroads?" Such break-offs, just as the poet's comparison of his song to a flitting bee,¹⁰⁰ seem to be nothing but Pindar's acknowledgement of his own lack of discipline. Thus the scholiast interprets the *Abbruchsformel* following the "Little Oresteia" myth in Pythian 11 as the poet's heartfelt apology for inserting an irrelevant mythological digression into the epinikion: "ὥσπερ ἐπιπλήττει ἐαυτῷ ὁ Πίνδαρος ἀκαίρῳ παρεκβάσει χρησάμενος" (Schol. P.11.58b). Two millennia later the similarly exasperated Farnell reacts to the *Abbruchsformeln* by calling Pindar "wayward" and "capricious"¹⁰¹—*impotens*, we may translate. Commenting on the break-off in Pythian 11, 38-40, Farnell writes: "Here Pindar freely confesses the wildness of his irrelevance...This frank admission ought to relieve us of any temptation to find a cryptic meaning in the episode." Hayden Pelliccia levels a much graver charge at our poet, though along similar lines: Pindar has a "tendency to present himself as a fairly impulsive and wayward sort of character. The purpose would seem to be to create an impression of uncomplicated sincerity, arising

¹⁰⁰ Vide infra, note 14

¹⁰¹ Farnell 1930, Vol.1, p. 188.

wholly from his instinctive impulses. Most often, he presents himself as impulsively eager to praise; this is unsurprising in an encomiast...In many passages the business sense, the need to get on with the rest of the “epinician program,” prevails. Thus Pindar’s rational self can chastise and correct his impulsive side...Either way...the poet winds credit: for generosity of spirit, sincerity, etc., if he yields to his impulses, or for self-control, responsibility, dutifulness, etc., if he suppresses them.”¹⁰² In this view, not only do *Abbruchsformeln* convey the poet’s lack of control and introduce a strong element of chaos into the song (again, let us recall the passive might of the Horatian *amnis*), but the technique, it turns out, serves the ultimate purpose of rhetoric unctio of the poet’s patrons.

The second group of scholars interprets passages such as the *Abbruchsformel* of Pythian 11 as testifying, on the contrary, to the poet’s skill in the structuring and controlling of his material. According to Lefkowitz, the abrupt break-offs imply that the poet “steers the course of his poem and has ultimate control over its subject matter.”¹⁰³ So too Race, who speaks of the poet’s taking “responsibility for his narrative,” and guiding the song, “like a ship or chariot, back in the right direction,” and so too Instone, for whom “these reminders about sticking to targets, saying enough and no more, derive from the importance Pindar attached to preserving a balance between the different parts

¹⁰² Pelliccia 1995:305-306. Cf. the much earlier interpretation of *Abbruchsformeln* by Fraccaroli (*Odi* 136-137) who considered the *Abbruchsformeln* a poetic imitation of colloquial, spontaneous (and hence, again, not subject to rules and laws) speech.

¹⁰³ Lefkowitz 1963: 207 and 198.

and themes of his odes. They are not heartfelt apologies for irrelevance, but a rhetorical means of passing from one relevant subject to another.”¹⁰⁴

These more recent scholars thus read the break-offs in the epinicia as the poet’s explicit application of the bridle of Athena to his poetic flight, so to speak. Yet one is bound to ask what principle guided Pindar in his bridling. Scholars who perceive the *Abbruchsformeln* as a structuring, rather than a chaotic, element of Pindar’s poetry can be divided into two groups. The first of these seems to derive its perception of Pindar from Boeckh who, in good Romanticist fashion, saw in Pindar’s victory odes the poet’s struggle to synthesize his free, “subjective” interests and inspirations with the shackles imposed by the “objective” requirements of the epinician genre in general and of a given athlete’s family in particular.¹⁰⁵ Thus Lefkowitz, who (correctly, as I believe and shall argue further below) connects the *Abbruchsformeln* to the poet’s ceaseless striving to compose in accordance with *kairos*, writes, “His [Pindar’s] *kairos* is thus to use his poetic imagination within the limits imposed by morality and the traditional restrictions of epinician subject matter.”¹⁰⁶ Similarly, Instone believes that the *Abbruchsformeln* help Pindar “resolve a difficulty he was faced with: to reach a compromise between on the one hand praising the winner who was buying the poem, and on the other hand retaining the freedom to mention other subjects he wanted to include in his poems which were not about the winner.” For both scholars, Pindar’s poetic “imagination” exists separately

¹⁰⁴ Race 1980; Instone 1986. For similar interpretations of the *Abbruchsformeln* as the poet’s avowal of his control, rather than abandonment, of the structure of the song, see Kyriakou 1996 and Mackie 2003.

¹⁰⁵ For summary of Boeckh’s argument see Young 1964.

¹⁰⁶ Lefkowitz 1963: 209.

from and, indeed, in conflict with, the topic of his song.¹⁰⁷ The second group of scholars seems to be influenced by the Pindaric studies of Elroy Bundy who argued that, on the contrary, the epinicia are void of any “subjective,” or “personal” elements, as even the most minute of its details are directly related to the genre’s official duty—praise of the victor. In accordance with Bundy, this latter approach to *Abbruchsformeln* reads Pindar’s mythological digressions as fully relevant to the victory and void of any “personal” significance for the poet. These digressions must not, however, become excessively long, lest they acquire independent significance of their own—hence the need for *Abbruchsformeln*. Summing up her interpretation of the double break-off in Nemean 4 Poulcheria Kyriakou writes: “The implication [of this *Abbruchsformel*] is that the audience should not suspect an excessively long digression in the manner of poetasters. Pindar knows exactly what he is doing and what he should do in order to discharge his obligation.” This Bundyist reading of Pindar’s victory odes as wholly focused on the “discharge” of the poet’s “obligation” is developed further in Hilary Mackie’s recent book, *Graceful Errors*. Mackie reduces all of Pindar’s poetry to the goal of “pleasing” or even “appeasing” his diverse audience and accordingly interprets the *Abbruchsformeln* as catering to “the poet’s need simultaneously to please a variety of difficult and differently minded groups.”¹⁰⁸ Quite in dissonance with Pindar’s repeated emphasis on the pride and loftiness of his poetic flight, Mackie writes: “Break-off is an interesting feature because

¹⁰⁷ Such a Boeckhian reading of Pindar often creeps surreptitiously into commentators’ analyses even when their thoughts seem far from arguing this point of view. Thus one of the most poetically sensitive Pindaric scholars, Carne-Ross, in his analysis of the opening of Isthmian 6 remarks casually, “The poet is obviously enjoying himself, but not at the cost of his epinician duties” (Carne-Ross 1985:41).

¹⁰⁸ Mackie 2003:3.

of the way it represents an oral performer's anxiety about how his audience will react, from moment to moment, to what he is saying."¹⁰⁹

Thus the first, the "Boeckhian" group of scholars condole, as it were, with the poet's free spirit that of necessity must conform to the genre's prosaic demands, while the latter, "Bundyist," group tends to reduce the victory odes almost exclusively to apprehensive adulation, void of any independent poetic intent. Yet as different as these two perceptions of the victory odes might be, both seem to imply that the *raison d'être* of the bridle which Pindar casts on his poetic flight in the *Abbruchsformeln* exists outside of the song itself. Whether we believe with Lefkowitz and Instone that Pindar's poetic "imagination" struggled to find a balance between itself and the epinician "Programm," or whether, as Kyriakou and Mackie (and Pelliccia), we believe that all the powers of his imagination Pindar directed towards one and only one goal, the appeasement and adulation of his patrons, and hence that only the bare "Programm" itself matters—in either case it is not, ultimately, the *poet* who subjects the song to rules and laws, but rather circumstances extraneous to poetry *qua* poetry.¹¹⁰

As any artwork, Pindar's odes were doubtless subject to the tyranny of extraneous circumstances. Yet to interpret the conspicuously recurrent *Abbruchsformeln* as Pindar's explicit acknowledgement of this sad fact is incongruous with the proud and independent

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 12.

¹¹⁰ This tends to be the general attitude of Pindaric scholars towards *Abbruchsformeln* regardless of whether or not they discuss them in light of the question of the unity of the ode. André Hurst, for example, writes with regard to the famous break-off in the Argonaut myth of Pythian 4 (vv. 247-248): "Pindare retourne en symptôme de liberté et de maîtrise ce qui constitue en fait une obligation à laquelle il doit satisfaire, et cette obéissance aux contraintes du genre prend ainsi le masque de la liberté poétique" (Hurst 1985:168). Thus in Hurst's view, Pindar's proud freedom turns out to be but a pretence, a mask, behind which hides obedience to his patrons. Such an interpretation, just as the similar approaches of Pelliccia, Mackie, and even Lefkowitz, ignores the simple fact that the occasion of an athletic victory was not a restraint but rather a source of inspiration for an epinician poet.

spirit of a poet who extols the sun, proud in its loneliness as it shines through the empty ether (O.1.6-7), and admires Bellerophon, the hero who attains these same empty recesses (O.13.88).¹¹¹ I will suggest that *Abbruchsformeln* not only are not inconsistent with, but, indeed, give worthy cause to the poet's pride in his freedom since they are motivated not by extraneous circumstances but by the inner logic of the song itself—that is, by the laws of which the poet is the sole legislator. As I have contended above, an integral element of this inner logic of the song is the poet's delegation of poetic autonomy to the song itself. The poet literally *releases* his authorship—hence the ever-recurrent image of songs as rushing forth, whether sailing in ships, leaping as eagles, or shooting out as a volley of arrows. And hand in hand with these dynamic incarnations of song goes the sense of the vastness of the open space whither the songful ships, eagles, arrows are rushing: over the dark land, beyond the salty main, into the bosom of the deserted aether, past the sources of the Nile.¹¹² In bestowing poetic autonomy upon his song and sending it forth into the expanses of the earth, sea, and sky, the poet grants each of the three temporal strands which the song comprises (past, present, future) its own voice and hence a potential independence from the other two strands. In the instances when the poetic autonomy of one of these strands threatens to degenerate into an “usurpation” of the poet's authorship and hence into a dissolution of the unity of song—in these instances the

¹¹¹ On Pindar's aristocratically proud attitude, see Gildersleeve xxxix: Pindar “loves the ‘lone bosom of the cold ether,’ and the fruits that grow on the topmost branches of the tree of virtue, nearest the sun, and the lofty paths along which the victors of Olympia walk.” And *ibid.*, p. xliii: “Pindar himself has made φωνάεντα συνετοῖσιν (O.2,93) a common saying; Pindar himself speaks of his art as ἀκοῦα σοφοῖς (P.9, 84); his call across the centuries is to the lovers of art as art. There is an aristocratic disdain in his nature that yields only to kindred spirits or to faithful service.”

¹¹² Contrast this with the Homeric perception of his own epos: albeit Homer (or Achilles, or Demodocus, or Phemius) glorifies the *kleos patron* in the form of song, this song is effortlessly transformed into a pointedly stationary medium, such as the tapestry with scenes of the Trojan War which Helen weaves or the shield of Achilles.

poet frequently has recourse to *Abbruchsformeln* as a means of re-establishing his estranged authority and the unity of the world of the song.

Nemean 5 offers a conspicuous example of the poet's "release" of his song; of the subsequent "estrangement" of one of its strands—that of the mythical past—from the interconnection with the present and future within the song; and of the poet's application of an *Abbruchsformel* in order to re-establish the unity of time (and hence the unity of the ode). The ode opens with Pindar's assertion of the dynamic nature of his songs:

Οὐκ ἀνδριαντοποιός εἰμ', ὥστ' ἐλινύσοντα ἐργά-
 ζεσθαι ἀγάλματ' ἐπ' αὐτᾶς βαθμίδος
 ἐστᾶότ'· ἀλλ' ἐπὶ πάσας
 ὀλκάδος ἔν τ' ἀκάτω, γλυκεῖ' ἀοιδά,
 στεῖχ' ἀπ' Αἰγίνας διαγγέλλοις, ὅτι
 Λάμπωνος υἱὸς Πυθέας εὐρυσθενῆς
 νίκη Νεμείῳς παγκρατίου στέφανον...¹¹³

As so often with Pindar's densely concentrated, elliptical language, there is something disquieting about the wording of this passage. The seemingly straightforward opposition of statue vs. song, aimed, at first glance, simply at expressing the song's swift pace and widespread fame, upon a re-reading reveals itself asymmetrical in more than one way.

"My songs," the poet would have begun were he striving for symmetry, "are not immobile statues, but rather swift ships that will spread Pytheas' fame far and wide." Instead Pindar begins with an assertion not of what his songs happen not to be, but rather of what *he himself* is not: "Οὐκ ἀνδριαντοποιός εἰμ', ὥστ'..." As commentators have noted, Pindar is fond of opening an ode with some wonderfully mouth-filling,

¹¹³ "I am not a sculptor so as to fashion stationary / statues that are **resting** on their same bases. / Rather, on board every ship / and in every boat, sweet song, / go forth from Aigina and spread the news that / Lampon's mighty son Pytheas / has won the crown for the pancratium in Nemea's games..." Contrast with Race's translation of this passage as "statues that **stand** on their same bases": it is important, I believe, to convey Pindar's original "rest," since it underscores the fact that even stationary sculpture is perceived as alive in the all-animated Pindaric world.

sesquipedalian word that sets the elevated and euphonious tone for the poem as a whole.¹¹⁴ This particular six-syllable noun (ἀνδριαντοποιός), whose grandeur of sound and prominence of position are not conveyable with the two humble syllables of “sculptor,” arrests our attention and makes us wonder—if the speaker is *not* an ἀνδριαντοποιός, who is he? The first line thus contains a rhetorical ruse. By opening with the statement “I am not a sculptor,” it immediately puts in the forefront the question of the identity of the speaker’s “I.” And, even though the poet is saying that he is *not* an ἀνδριαντοποιός, the magnificently-sounding word endows this mysterious “I” with all the more grandeur since the speaker implies his supremacy over it. Even as he contemns what an ἀνδριαντοποιός *is*, Pindar exploits the beautiful *sound* of the word in order to focus us on the question of his own poetic “I” and to heighten the significance of this “I”.

We never do hear explicitly who the poet is, because the second half of the opposition is structured differently: contrary to our expectation, Pindar does not go on to say, “I am not a sculptor *but a poet* who...” The proud answer is all the more impressive for being implied rather than boasted out loud. To understand its full import, we must first detect the second asymmetry involved in the passage. One would expect that the direct opposition to immobile sculpture would be mobile ships: if he were striving for symmetry, Pindar could have easily imagined his song as a ship or boat. Instead, he *addresses* his songs here as living creatures, capable of *setting sail* on a ship and *heralding* Pytheas’ victory. To be sure, a poet could well employ the conceit of addressing himself to his own verses without actually perceiving his song as an animate addressee—the vocative would be readily understood as a common metaphorical

¹¹⁴ Gildersleeve xl. Cf. likewise Fränkel 1975: 471, footnote 1.

flourish. Here, however, Pindar not only addresses his song, but also orders it to action, and, lest we persist in erroneously reading all this as mere metaphor, he contrasts the song with statues who rest on their pedestals and who neither listen to him, nor set sail, nor herald victory.

We can now return to the question which the first asymmetry has prompted: if Pindar is not an ἀνδριαντοποιός, who is he? The long word itself offers a hint. He is the creator not of the still replications of restless beings (ἀνδριάντα),¹¹⁵ but rather of “sweet songs,” spirited, autonomous creatures, who, making immediate use of their autonomy, swiftly set sail and draw us into myth via a relative pronoun (v. 9). As the contrast with ἀνδριάντα implies, the poet’s activity is here akin to that of Goethe’s Prometheus who occupies himself with fashioning living human beings (ἄνδρας): “Hier sitz ich, forme Menschen / Nach meinem Bilde / Ein Geschlecht, das mir gleich sei...”

The asymmetries of the opening thus serve to draw our attention to two implications. First of all, it is not a trite contrast between motionless and kinetic artifacts (statue vs. ship) that Pindar has set up here. Rather, the focus of this passage is on elucidating the different roles which the artist’s authorial presence plays *within* the two kinds of art, the sculptural and the poetic. In a statue, the artist’s activity is transformed not just into a bronze artifact, but into the harmonious repose (ἐλινύσσοντα) of a life absorbed deep within itself. Pindar, on the other hand, (as we have seen him do via the myth-introducing relative clause construction) delegates his poetic activity to a creation which, at once both obedient and disobedient to its author, is involved in a ceaseless

¹¹⁵ Compare with Pindar’s description of statues in Olympian 7 as “ἔργα...ζωοῖσιν ἐρπόντεσσι...ὁμοῖα” (v. 52): statues are only *similar* (ὁμοῖα) to living moving beings.

game of cycle-completion (στεφάνωμα) with its own self: it freely flies forth from the poet in that it returns into its own depths and it returns into its own self in that it flies forth. Secondly, the Pindar who releases his now-autonomous creation to roam the sea in ships and boats is the very opposite of a bewildered poet whose songs, gone out of his control, have become hopelessly obscure. The poet's all-but-haughty contrast of himself with an ἀνδριαντοποιός alludes to a fact that shall become obvious in the subsequent course of the poem: paradoxically, albeit he delegates his authority to the animated song, the poet lives on within this song as an active personage—more than that, as its central governing force.

Let us trace this relationship of the poet with his creation in the remainder of the ode. The basic structure of the first strophe and antistrophe is as follows: “Sail forth from Aigina, my song, announcing that Pytheas was victorious at Nemea and that (by virtue of this) he has glorified the Aiakidai and his mother city Aigina, whom...” and here we segue into the myth of Peleus, Telamon, and their half-brother Phokos (vv.7-13):

ἐκ δὲ Κρόνου καὶ Ζηνὸς ἥρωας αἰχματὰς φυτευθέν-
 τας καὶ ἀπὸ χρυσεῶν Νηρηϊδῶν
 Αἰακίδας ἐγέραιρεν [Pytheas is the subject]
 ματρώπολιν τε, φίλαν ξένων ἄρουραν·
τάν ποτ' εὐανδρόν τε καὶ ναυσικλυτάν
 θέσσαντο, παρ βωμόν πατέρος Ἑλλανίου
 στάντες, πίτναν τ' ἐς αἰθέρα χεῖρας ἀμᾶ
 Ἐνδαΐδος ἀριγνῶτες υἱοί
 καὶ βία Φώκου κρέοντος,
 ὁ τᾶς θεοῦ, ὃν Ψαμάθεια τίκτ' ἐπὶ ῥηγμῖνι πόντου.

The myth unfolds itself in line 9 from the antecedent “ματρώπολις,” that is, from Aigina—precisely whence Pindar had bidden his song to set sail (“στεῖχ' ἀπ' Αἰγίνας,” v.

3).¹¹⁶ First, the myth reveals to us the joint prayer of Peleus, Telamon, and Phokos that Aigina might become, at some point in the future, “εὐανδρόν τε καὶ ναυσικλυτάν.” The “vector” of this prayer, directed from the depths of the *past* towards the *future* of the island, is echoed in the *upward*-raised arms of the three suppliants (πίτναν τ’ ἐς αἰθέρα χεῖρας): once again, the past-future temporal axis merges with the down-up spatial one. But as this particular sailing-voyage of the song proceeds, it arrives at the great awe-inspiring mystery of the murder of Phokos and here loses contact with the future-directed axis.

Perhaps the very reason that this murder inspires such awe and enjoins silence is that its effect is directly opposite to the one of the joint prayer we have just heard: while the prayer signified the laying of the foundations of present-day Aigina, the murder of Phokos amounts to a *rupture* within the Aiginitan ancestry— like his half-brothers Peleus and Telamon, Phokos was destined to be one of the founders of the island-polis (hence their joint prayer at the beginning of the myth), but murder has severed the line of descent that was to run from Phokos to the present-day Aiginitans. The fratricide thus becomes an element of the city’s genealogy that is, at the same time, directed *against* this genealogy, against the tie of kinship between the three founders.

As the song approaches this dreadful perversion of genealogy, the poet re-claims his authority (vv.14-18):

αἰδέομαι μέγα εἰπεῖν
ἐν δίκῃ τε μὴ κεκινδυνευμένον,

¹¹⁶ It has been noted that line 15, where the heroes, exiled for homicide, set sail from Aigina, echoes line 3, where the song is bidden to set sail from the same island (cf. Stern 1971 and Segal 1998:170). I am not aware, however, of a commentary that would point out the unfolding of the myth from the relative pronoun’s antecedent Aigina.

πῶς δὴ λίπον εὐκλέα νᾶσον,
 καὶ τίς ἄνδρας ἀλκίμους
 δαίμων ἀπ' Οἰνῶνας ἔλασεν.
 στάσομαι· οὐ τοι ἅπασα κερδίων
 φαίνοισα πρόσωπον ἀλάθει' ἀτρεκές·
 καὶ τὸ σιγᾶν πολλάκις ἐστὶ σοφώ-
 τατον ἀνθρώπῳ νοῆσαι.

Sacral awe (“αἰδέομαι”) forbids the poet to sail towards this dark truth, and so he stops the song short (“στάσομαι”), an explicit echo of the opening image of the statues “ἐπ’ αὐτᾶς βαθυμίδος ἐσταότ’.” Charles Segal, translating αἰδέομαι as “hesitate,” interprets this echo as setting up a contrast between the effortless bronze immobility of statues and the hard moral choices which the poet, the victor, and the mythological heroes must face as men of “flesh and blood.”¹¹⁷ It is true that αἰδέομαι can sometimes mean “I hesitate,” but, given Pindar’s proud assertion of his poetic powers which opens the ode, I believe that here it is more accurate to translate αἰδέομαι as “I am filled with sacral awe.” Awe forbids the poet to follow the myth into the darkness of its depths: “οὐ τοι ἅπασα κερδίων / φαίνοισα πρόσωπον ἀλάθει' ἀτρεκές” (vv.16-17). Crucial here is the word “φαίνοισα” with bears the implications of the original meaning of φαίνομαι as “to shine”: not every Truth is intended to turn its face towards us and shine forth from the dark depths of the past towards the present day.¹¹⁸ To the extent that the ἀλάθεια of a myth turns the light of its face towards us, the present, it turns away from the unfathomable abyss of the ever-receding past: like Amphiaraios-the-eye, it irradiates the present and acquires the status of the *origin*, of the *roots* of the “now”—it becomes an ever-present, ever-living past. But the myth of Phokos, unfolding itself through the relative pronoun,

¹¹⁷ Segal 1998: 170.

¹¹⁸ Contrast with Race’s translation of the participle as simply “to show.”

willfully leads us precisely to the verge of that awe-inspiring abyss where the past severs its ties with the present.¹¹⁹ By contrast with a chronological vortex which draws us actively down into the past only in order to propel us back upwards into the light of the present day, there is no return from this gaping darkness. This image of the past sinking deeper and deeper into its own depths, out of the reach and sight of the present, recalls the other passages in Pindar where oblivion of a Truth is associated with its *hiding* in the darkness of the earth, with its refusal (or inability) to shine forth from these recesses; for example in the ninth Nemean (vv. 6-7) we find a warning *against* such concealment: “ἔστι δέ τις λόγος ἀνθρώπων, τετελεσμένον ἐσλόν / μὴ χαμαὶ σιγᾷ καλύψαι.”¹²⁰ In the present passage of Nemean 5, it is at the point when the past is on the verge of averting the light of its gaze from us that the poet reclaims his authority and announces his right to re-direct the sailing voyage of the song. This break-off is not, therefore, an expression of hesitancy; rather, if in the opening of the ode Pindar had *asserted* his Pygmalionic authority over his songs, now in the *Abbruchsformel* we witness him actually *exercising* this authority as he engages, in effect, in a “dialogue” with his own “estranged” authorship.

Allowing Phokos’ death to remain, unperturbed, within the bottomless depths of the ever-receding past, the poet seeks an alternative aspect of the Aiakid lore, which, instead of facing the past (as does the myth of Phokos) would look out towards the future and thus be the root of the present-day flowering of victory. And so through the

¹¹⁹ Cf. Stern 1971. Analyzing the structure of Nemean 5, Stern writes that here Pindar’s poetry “is at first shrouded in darkness and grows to fulfillment by the very act of persevering through that darkness. Initially the poet had almost seemed not to control his own work; apparently without his volition the poem descends into the disastrous story of Phocus and must be abruptly called back.”

¹²⁰ Cf. also Pythian 9.93-94; Olympia 8. 77-80; and Isthmian 6.62.

Abbruchsformel Pindar forces his song to return to the point whence it had originally set off into the past, to Aigina and the Aiakidai (vv. 19-23):

εἰ δ' ὄλβον ἢ χειρῶν βίαν ἢ σιδαρίταν ἐπαινῇ-
 σαι πόλεμον δεδόκηται, μακρά μοι
 αὐτόθεν ἄλμαθ' ὑποσκά-
 πτοι τις· ἔχω γονάτων ὀρμὰν ἐλαφράν·
 καὶ πέραν πόντοιο πάλλοντ' αἰετοί.
 πρόφρων δὲ καὶ **κείνοις** ᾄειδ' ἐν Παλίῳ
 Μοισᾶν ὁ κάλλιστος χορός...

The demonstrative pronoun *κείνοις* in line 22, referring as it does to the Aiakidai (“Gladly did that fairest chorus of Muses / sing **for those men** on Pelion...” renders Race these lines),¹²¹ serves here the function of a myth-introducing relative pronoun. In effect, it makes us retrace the course of the song back to line 8, to the point preceding its willful voyage on the path leading to Phokos’ murder. Pindar now unrolls a new path from the same starting place. If we omit the *nefas* myth of Phokos which we had just heard and skip from line 8 to line 22, the new path of song unfolds as follows: (v.8) “and he [Pytheas] has glorified the Aiakidai, (v. 22) *for whom* that fairest chorus of Muses did sing on Pelion...”

Once we note that Pindar bids, in effect, the song to retrace its voyage back to Aigina to begin anew, we read with new eyes the poet’s original command: “ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ πάσας ὀλκάδος ἐν τ’ ἀκάτῳ, γλυκεῖ’ ἀοιδά, / στεῖχ’ ἀπ’ Αἰγίνας...” On a first reading, the multiple vessels in which the song will sail from the island are a simple metaphor for the ode’s widespread fame among Pytheas’ contemporaries throughout the Greek world. But now, when Pindar sets the song on an alternative path, leaping eagle-like across the sea (vv. 19-21), the multiple sailings forth on “every ship and boat” from Aigina in line 3

¹²¹ For the argument that “κείνοις” must refer to the Aiakidai, see likewise Farnell.

can be read as the multiple paths which the Aiakid line offers for song, a recurrent motif in Pindar's Aiginetan odes.¹²² Pindar seeks a path that would take him to a myth which "faces" the future—i.e., the present of Aigina.

The second unraveling of song via the "Aiakidai" pronoun leads us into the myth of Peleus' wedding to Thetis. The contrast with the myth of Phokos is clear: there the sacral mystery of the murder forbade the poet to unravel the myth down to the present day. Here, on the contrary, the very subject of a wedding is, just as in the myth of Apollo and Cyrene, symbolic of a vector directed into the future. But the voyage of the song into the *past* does not stop at the scene of the wedding. As part of the celebration, the Muses and Apollo are singing of Peleus' preceding history, of the crafty Hippolyta's attempts to seduce him and of his steadfast virtue. Just as in Pythian 9 the myth had lead us deeper down into the vortex of time in order to turn, eventually, back into the future, to the present-day flourishing of Cyrene-the-polis, so too here, the myth regresses in ring fashion back in time in order to progress, so that at last we arrive at the point just preceding the wedding, when Zeus persuades Poseidon to grant Peleus the Nereid Thetis (v. 37, the opening of the third triad), and from here the song effortlessly arrives at Pytheas' present-day victory. And just as in Pythian 9 the myth, regressing autonomously through relative pronouns, appears to be free from the poet's authority, so too here, since the regressing narrative belongs to Apollo and the Muses rather than Pindar, the poet's power seems to be usurped.

¹²² One could object that leaping over the sea is different than setting sail in a ship and boat, but Pindar does not hesitate to mix metaphors; in a passage from Nemean 6 he evokes the images of traveling down a road; flying over land and sea; and leaping to foreign lands (same verb *πάλλω* as applied to eagles in Nemean 5.21), as synonymous for the multiple paths of the Aiakid myths (N. 6. 45-50). For similar image of the multiple roads of Aiakidai lore, see likewise Isthmian 6.22ff. and Nemean 4. 69-72.

Jacob Stern notes that the *στάσσομαι* in line 16 “leads directly to his [Pindar’s] transference of poetical authority to Apollo and the Muses.” However, continues Stern, very soon the song of the Muses and Apollo merges with the song of Pindar himself, so that at the point when we emerge from the myth we cannot say if it is the poet’s or Apollo’s voice that has been leading us.¹²³ Developing Stern’s observation, I would say that here lies the definitive answer to the question implied in the opening lines—if Pindar is not an *ἀνδριαντοποιός*, who is he? As we emerge from the vortex of time and return to the present-day victory, we suddenly realize that the poet’s voice is indistinguishable from that of the supreme deity of poets and prophets, Apollo. As the protégé of the god of prophecy, Pindar simultaneously knows all that was, is, and will be: Peleus’ *past* harsh trials, the *present* joyful wedding on mount Pelion, and the *future* glory of the race of Aeginitans that will descend from the Aiakids with Pytheas as its latest pride¹²⁴—the divine and the prophetic gaze grasp these three layers of time as one harmonious whole, one inseverable circle.¹²⁵ This “οὐκ ἀνδριαντοποιός” is he through whose prophetic vision time achieves its unity. As De Romilly writes of Aeschylus’ Cassandra: “we have

¹²³ Stern 1971. For Stern this merging ties into what he sees as the overall design of the poem: the poet, just as the homicide hero Peleus, descends to his nadir, but through contact with divinity both the poet and the hero eventually “succeed in rescuing themselves from that depth” and are revitalized. Thus the “lesson” of Nemean 5 is that poetry “shows the same need for a maturing development which was found in the case of Peleus: neither is fixed and immobile like a statue.” For all his valuable analysis of the ode’s structure, Stern does not quite justify Pindar’s descent to his “nadir,” since the poet’s spirit remains proud and triumphant throughout the ode, *especially* following the apparent faux pas with the myth of Phokos.

¹²⁴ Cf. Carne-Ross (1985:43): “...the blood of the ancestors flows in the veins of every trueborn Aeginitan and it is their bravery in the old days that makes triumphs like the present one possible.”

¹²⁵ Cf. Roberts’ analysis of the concept of oracle/seer in Ancient Greek writers (1984:21): “What is the knowledge that oracles convey? From the first mention of the seer in Greek literature, he is one who knows “ὅς ἤδη τὰ τ’ ἐόντα τὰ τ’ ἐσσόμενα πρό τ’ ἐόντα” (*Iliad* 1.70). The seer has access to the events of present and past as well as future.” For Pindar’s prophetic ability to grasp simultaneously past, present, and future, see likewise Hurst 1985: 195-197. Hurst briefly touches on the idea that, as a prophet, Pindar achieves a unity of time: “Pour Pindare aussi [as for the Homeric Calchas], les couches du temps sont solidaires” (p.196).

here a prophet with visions, who actually sees, all at the same time, all together, in one single perception, the whole time fused into one.”¹²⁶

* * *

We have traced the structure of Pindar’s chronological vortex which, as soon as the poet grants his song autonomy, begins to draw us actively deeper and deeper into the mythical past in a series of descending rounds. Only having made us privy not only to the “past-of-the-present” but also to the “past-of-the-past,” does the vortex bear us back upwards to the light of the present day. But this autonomous, spiraling song—or, more specifically, each of its three temporal strands, past, present, and future—can tend towards an exploitation of its poet-granted autonomy by rupturing its interconnection with the other two strands. In Nemean 5 it is the mythical past that, burdened with a dreadful secret, does not—*ought not*—turn its face towards the future. Myth ceases here to be “the past-of-the-present” and descent into myth becomes a free fall into an abyss whence there is no return. At this point, when the integrity of the song is endangered, the poet re-claims his authority: through an *Abbruchsformel* he re-unifies the three planes of time. The re-directed course of song now does what a chronological vortex ought to do: it leads us down into the past in order to draw us back upwards towards the future. While the present chapter has dwelled on only three instances of the vortex structure (O. 6, P. 9, and N. 5) and only on one break-off (N. 5), Pindar’s use of the vortex and of

¹²⁶ De Romilly 1968:79. Cf. Johnson 1982:59: “...Pindar recovered what was always surely the original function and meaning of lyric poethood (*vates*—“seer,” “bard,” “shaman,” “prophet”), and so successful was his rethinking and reformulating of the vanished ideal that it is fair to say that in a sense Pindar invented the vatic personality.”

Abbruchsformeln in other odes will form the basis of my investigation in Chapters 2 and 3.

What remains to be explored is the *source* of the poet's time-unifying power: what is his ultimate goal in granting his song autonomy, and how he achieves ascent from the vortex back to the light of the present day. The key to the unity of time and to the poet's power over it lies, I will suggest, in the phenomenon which we have glimpsed in Nemean 5—in the poet's inscribing of his own poetic self into the world of the ode. The present chapter has discussed myth-introducing relative pronouns and *Abbruchsformeln* as two complementary poetic techniques which Pindar employs to “release” and “recapture” his own poetic authority. We have seen that, when “released,” the Pindaric song rushes into the depths of the past, and often an *Abbruchsformel* is required to return it to the “here and now” of the victory celebration. Thus, release and reclaim of poetic authority coincides with descent into the past and ascent therefrom. Chapters 2 and 3 focus on the poet's inscription of his poetic self into the world of the ode as yet another “method” which Pindar applies—often in tandem with myth-introducing relative pronouns and *Abbruchsformeln*—to descend and then ascend the chronological vortex. It is this inscription that establishes the poet's prophetic “I” as the integral—indeed, central—personage of his own song wherefrom unfold both the past- and the future-bound spirals of the ode's chronological vortex.

INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTERS 2 AND 3

We have seen in Chapter 1 how Pindar's song, "usurping" the poet's authorship, descends into the past via myth-introducing relative pronouns and how subsequently the poet, "reclaiming" his authority, bids the song ascend back into the present via *Abbruchsformeln*. These descents and ascents are, however, only one particular aspect of that poetic "mechanism" which is responsible for the unity of the ode's poetic world. In Chapters 2 and 3, I analyze the movements of the song back and forth in time within the broader context of the role which the poet plays as the main protagonist in his own song vis-à-vis the song's second important personage—its addressees. As I endeavor to show, this context is defined by the image of the song as a journey, which the poet consistently evokes within the song itself.

Pindar's song understands its ultimate achievement as the imparting of immortality to its subject, the victorious athlete and his polis community: "ταῖ μεγάλαι γὰρ ἀλκαί / σκότον πολλὸν ὕμνων ἔχοντι δεόμεναι" (great deed of valor / remain in deep darkness when they lack hymns) (N.7.12-13). Perhaps the most accurate symbol of Pindar's perception of immortality—often alluded to by our poet—is the image of the polis as a flourishing tree whose roots are the living past and whose fruits are the living future.¹²⁷ Pindaric past does not *pass away*: it lives on within the present as the ever-present token of a glorious future, and the glorious future is always visibly ripening within the Pindaric present. The past and future of the odes are not abstract notions of, correspondingly, that which is *no longer* present and that which is *not yet* present; they

¹²⁷ For the Pindaric image of the polis or clan as a tree, see Carne-Ross 1985:36; Segal 1998:234.

are vivid realities extant within the “here and now.” Precisely in this way Pindar’s song immortalizes the lauded polis: by capturing live its past (mythological ancestors) and its future (victorious youth) within its present (the day of victory and celebration). Thus, the present is preserved from fading and withering—is *immortalized*—because, within the song, it is perpetually nourished by its roots and bears its fruit.

But how does the song achieve such immortalization? On the surface, the answer is simple: perception of a polis community as a tree whose roots are ancestors and whose fruits are descendents is a traditional mythic one; the polis-tree lives on as immortal within the oral and textual tradition which is created and preserved by its bards and poets. Thus we could simply say that Pindar preserves the life of the polis by singing of its glorious past. But if this were the case, Pindar would be little different from an epic poet. The concern of Chapters 2 and 3 is to investigate that unique mechanism whereby Pindar’s song thematically retains all three levels of time in a living unity.

The secret of this mechanism—and thus likewise the secret of immortality—lies, I argue, in the poet’s identification of his song-address with a *journey* towards his addressee. Frequently, Pindar envisions his ode as an actual journey by land or sea, embarked upon either by the poet himself or by his song. And, on several occasions, Pindar gives us to understand that his song-journey is unfolding in a specific spatial setting, between his own native Thebes and the polis of his addressee-victor. Within the song, the “now” of the polis is the layer of time within which unfolds the poet’s address to his audience: it is within this “now” that the song lauds the polis and her athlete. But when Pindar evokes the image of song as journey, a paradox results: on the one hand, the present layer of time corresponds to a polis-bound journey upon whose completion

performance of the song will take place; but it is also the “now” when the journey towards the polis has been completed and the performance of the song is taking place. Thus, in what to our modern sensibilities may seem like a surrealistic manipulation of time, Pindar equates his *encounter* with his addressees with his *progress towards* the encounter. It is this paradox, I shall contend, that offers an approach to Pindar’s secret of immortality.

To reiterate: the journey towards the lauded polis turns out to be *that very* performance of *that very* song which is performed *only once the journey has been completed*. Performance of the song upon completion of the journey is responsible for creating the present layer of time of the lauded polis—its poetic “now.” And, as we have seen, it creates this “now” by retaining within the “now” its past and its future. On the other hand, the paradoxical structure of Pindar’s song-journey is such that the performance of the song upon completion of the journey *is* the journey that led to the performance. Thus, the poet’s progression from Thebes to, say, Syracuse, is realized within the “now” of Syracuse —within the performance of the song which takes place once Syracuse has been reached. In other words, the song’s progression from Thebes to Syracuse unfolds within one particular temporal plane—the “now” of the polis which the song lauds. The journey “in space” from one polis to another turns out to be a journey “in time” within the present temporal plane, within the “now,” of the city. And, within this “now,” the song-journey is occupied with retaining the past and future of the “now.” To the extent that the song is a journey “in time,” within the present temporal plane of the city, it can only retain the past and future of this “now” by journeying within them. Even

as the song progresses from Thebes to Syracuse, it likewise peregrinates from the present into the past and into the future of Syracuse.

Chapter 2 focuses on the structure of the song-journey within the present temporal plane, as a journey in space. Chapter 3, picking up from Chapter 1 and developing the theme of time-travel, investigates the journeys of the poet and his song into the past and into the future.

If it is the song-journey that unifies the three layers of time, the key to the character and structure of the unity of Pindaric time ought to be sought in the character and structure of the song's peregrinations. These character and structure, I argue, are determined by a cyclic pattern of *xenia* (guest-friendship) and *nostos* (homecoming), appealed to implicitly or explicitly in many of the odes. The interconnection of *xenia* and journeying is natural: already in Homer *xenia*, as a relationship established between a traveler and a welcoming host in foreign lands, appears as a poetic theme. And likewise, already in Homer, *xenia* functions as the precondition of a successful *nostos*. Together, these two concepts account for the cyclicity of a traveler's trajectory: he heads into foreign lands, and there, succored by a friendly host, is enabled to return home. Commentators have frequently interpreted Pindar's appeals to the images of guest-friendship and homecoming as reflecting the circumstances of his routine professional travels as a wandering poet. By contrast, I analyze *xenia* and *nostos* as metaphysical concepts integral to the structure of the poetic world which Pindar creates within his song.

The centrality of *xenia* and *nostos* to the world of the ode is, perhaps, most apparent in those several instances (most notably, Olympian 1 and Pythian 11) where the

poet contemplates their perversion—what I call anti-*xenia*. The “anti-*xenia*” of a Tantalus or a Clytemnestra emerges as a force which threatens to shatter the continuity of time (symbolized by the succession of generations), as well as the spatial hierarchy of heavens and earth. *Xenia*, however, does not figure as an abstract force dominating the world of the song; rather, it is the *xenia-nostos*-based pattern of the *poet’s song-journey*, I argue, that determines the structure of life itself within the world of the song. In Chapter 2, in my analysis of Pythian 11, I argue that a careful examination of the father-son succession of Agamemnon and Orestes suggests a universal mytho-poetic cycle of life and death. But a second glance at this succession shows that the life-paths of the two heroes involved in this cycle follow the same cyclic *xenia-nostos* trajectory from home to foreign realms and back home again as the song-journey of Pindar himself. Such similarity between the journeys of the poet and mythic heroes is not merely a curious vignette within the ode. As we shall see, an Orestes traveling within the *xenia-nostos* cycle is, in effect, a “pseudonym” of the poet himself, who, journeying into the past, takes on the guises of the mythic heroes populating this past: the pattern of life and death revealed within the myth turns out to be a reflection of the song-journey. In the world of Pindar’s song, the cyclicity of life originates in and styles itself after the cyclicity of the poet’s song as journey.

In the final chapter, I examine the poet’s song-journey as it unfolds within the future and the past. Chapter 1 had analyzed two stylistic features of Pindar’s verse—myth-introducing relative pronouns and *Abbruchsformeln*. Pindar employs them, I argued, in order to create the effect that the song “usurps” the poet’s authority in order to descend into the past, only to re-submit to the author’s will when he calls it back into the

present via a break-off formula. The aim of Chapter 3 is to analyze those instances where such peregrinations of the song between layers of time “materialize,” as it were, into characters who, in one way or another, unite the present with the future, the present with the past, or the past with the future. As I shall argue, these literally liminal, *transitional* figures are essentially the poet’s “I”, traveling from the present into the past and into the future. The poet assumes these guises as he enters the world of his own song as its protagonist. In effect, this is the same pattern of *xenia* and *nostos* which I trace in Chapter 2: the poet departs from his own “I,” loses temporarily his own identity, in order to return and reclaim it in the present layer of time, within the “here and now,” as he does in the *Abbruchsformeln*. In thus moving back and forth between times, the poet “stitches together” their unity *from the inside*: as I endeavor to show, Pindar creates a past that is “drawn into” the present by the future, and a future which is the past “sprouting” within the present.

The ultimate symbol of this interconnectedness of all times is, once again, determined by the *xenia-nostos* pattern of the song-journey. As we shall see in Chapter 3, Pindar frequently appeals to reciprocity inherent to the concept of *xenia*: traditionally, a friendly host offering hospitality to a traveler could expect to be warmly entertained in his turn when traveling in the domain of his quondam guest. Pindar takes this traditional reciprocity to a higher degree by making it *instantaneous*: even as he is being entertained as guest in the polis of his addressee, he has already completed his *nostos* and is entertaining his addressees as guests within his own “home”—the world of his ode. As we, the poet’s addressees, walk into the poet’s *oikos*, we enter the realm of eternity where

all times coexist within one another, where the “now” always retains its living past and future.

CHAPTER 2 FUNDAMENTALS OF THE PINDARIC CHRONOTOPE: SONG AS JOURNEY AND *XENIA*

This chapter focuses on the transformation which the external circumstances of the composition of a Pindaric ode undergo within the inner poetic world of the ode. Pindar composed an epinician on the occasion of a particular victory to celebrate a particular athlete championing a particular polis community. This “extra-poetic” factual framework becomes integral to the ode’s thematic content when Pindar structures his song as the poet’s address to the victor (and/or his polis) which unfolds in a clearly defined time (day of victory celebration) and place (typically, the victor’s polis). Thus, in the odes where such an “inversion” occurs, the spatio-temporal setting of the internal world of the song (its chronotope) is the spatio-temporal setting of the song’s composition or performance.¹²⁸

It is the address-form of the song, I argue, that leads in some odes to the development of one of Pindar’s favorite images—the image of song as a journey towards the poet’s addressees-*xenoi* (guest-friends). Once again, the “extra-poetic” realities of the poet’s professional career (i.e., sea and land travels from client to client which the historic Pindar likely undertook) are “inverted” into the world of the song and endowed with an intra-poetic role. The composition of the song as the journeying of the song (and/or the poet) towards its addressees becomes a crucial poetic theme within the ode itself. Thus the image of the song (and/or the poet) and the images created by the song

¹²⁸ Once again, I refer to M. M. Bakhtin’s concept of “chronotope” which he defines as the “intrinsic interconnection of the elements of time and space, poetically developed in literature” (Bakhtin 2000: 9, my translation). Emerson and Holquist translate this same definition as “the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature” (Bakhtin 1981: 84).

coexist side-by-side as personages within the Pindaric epinician, and the Pindaric ode thematically perceives itself as that authorial force which crafts the poetic world with its heavens and earth, its past and its future.

The “actual” journey of the historic Pindar towards his addressees was, apparently, a cyclic one: in heading towards the polis of his addressee, Pindar departs into the realm of “friendly foreignness”—*xenia*, and even as he progresses, the implication is that he will then return to his native Thebes, accomplishing a successful *nostos*, or “homecoming.” But, just like the default circumstances of a victory celebration or the fact that Pindar had to travel for a living, *xenia* and *nostos* are endowed with an intra-poetic significance: as we shall see, they comprise the very foundations of the spatio-temporal cosmic structure within the world of the ode.

This is readily apparent in the perversion which they undergo at the hands of such mythical “criminals” as Tantalus (O.1) and Clytemnestra (P.11): a crime against *xenia* threatens to shatter the continuity of times and the cosmic hierarchy of heavens and earth. On the other hand, as P.11 suggests, genuine *xenia* and a successful *nostos*, such as those experienced by the mythic Orestes, guarantee the succession of generations and the unity of times.

Upon closer examination, however, the cyclic life-path of Orestes, governed by *xenia* and *nostos*, turns out to be a projection of the cyclic path of the poet himself, who, we realize, journeys not only in space to his addressee’s polis, but likewise in time—from the present into the past and into the future. I discuss the implications of the poet’s time-

travel and the role which *xenia* and *nostos* play in structuring this time-travel in Chapter 3.

§1 Self-differentiation of “I” and “you” as prerequisite for dialogue: comparison of Pindaric chronotope with the encounter of Glaucus and Diomedes in *Iliad* 6.

In Chapter 1 I have contended that although both Homer and Pindar employ myth-introducing relative pronouns, the same syntactical construction creates two widely different effects in the epic and the lyric verses. The difference in effect arises, I have suggested, from the two poets’ contrasting perceptions of the role which the time and place of the composition of the song play within the song itself. The spatio-temporal matrix of the world of epic (its chronotope) has no relation to the time and place of the composition (and/or performance) of the epic: the time and place of its composition make no appearance within Homer’s song. On the other hand, since a victory ode is, by definition, composed and/or performed in praise of a specific time and of a specific place, the Pindaric chronotope *is* that spatio-temporal setting within which the poet encounters and addresses his audience (typically, the athletic victor and his polis-community). Thus, in a Pindaric ode, the song’s framework—i.e., the encounter of the poet’s “I” with his audience’s “you”—is an integral part of the song itself.

The specifics of the Pindaric chronotope come to the fore when compared to a famous scene in Book 6 of the *Iliad*—the encounter of Achaean Diomedes and Lycian Glaucus on the battlefield. In it of itself this episode has no direct relation to the Pindaric chronotope: it is a conversation unfolding between two personages rather than between the poet’s “I” and his audience’s “you.” Therefore, unlike in Pindar’s odes, any time and space dimensions involved in this scene exist strictly *within* the narrative and do not intersect with the spatial and temporal circumstances of the narrative itself. In other

words, for Homer, the address of one hero to another is simply an episode within his song. For Pindar, on the other hand, the authorship of the poet which creates the song by addressing its audience becomes one of the song's dominant themes.

Nevertheless, the clear progression of Glaucus and Diomedes from foreignness to self-differentiation to friendship make this particular encounter well-suited for the explication of the relationship between the "I" and the "you" in Pindar's victory odes and stands in strong contrast to Homer's relation with the addressee(s) of his epic.

When Diomedes asks Glaucus of his identity, "τίς δὲ σύ ἐσσι φέριστε καταθητῶν ἀνθρώπων;" (*Iliad* 6.123), the latter anchors his identity both in space and time by recounting his furthest genealogical and geographical origins (vv.152 ff.):

ἔστι πόλις Ἐφύρη μυχῶ Ἄργεος ἱποβότοιο
 ἔνθα δὲ Σίσυφος ἔσκεν, ὃ κέρδιστος γένετ' ἀνδρῶν,
 Σίσυφος Αἰολίδης· ὃ δ' ἄρα Γλαῦκον τέκεθ' υἱόν,
 αὐτὰρ Γλαῦκος τίκτεν ἀμύμονα Βελλεροφόντην...etc.

There is a city Ephyre in the heart of Argos, pasture-land of horses,
 and there dwelt Sisyphus that was craftiest of men,
 Sisyphus, son of Aeolus; and he begat a son Glaucus;
 and Glaucus begat peerless Bellerophon...¹²⁹

Glaucus' self-identification is a *self-differentiation*—he is not just any representative of the "καταθητῶν ἀνθρώπων," nor is he just any warrior fighting on the Trojan side. Rather, he is the particular scion of one particular illustrious clan which traces its origins all the way back to Sisyphus and Bellerophon. To underscore his particular identity, Glaucus pauses briefly over the fates of his father's siblings (vv.196-205); he thereby differentiates himself from those branches of his family tree of which he is *not* a part and then proceeds to speak of his own "branch," his father Hippolochus (v.206): "Ἰππόλοχος

¹²⁹ Translations from the *Iliad* are based on Homer. *The Iliad with an English Translation* by A.T. Murray, Ph.D. in two volumes. Cambridge, MA., Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann, Ltd. 1924.

δέ μ' ἔτικτε, καὶ ἐκ τοῦ φημι γενέσθαι” (“But Hippolochus begat me and of him do I declare that I am sprung”). Glaucus’ self-identification thus occurs in three progressively tightening circles: firstly among “καταθητῶν ἀνθρώπων,” then among warriors on the Trojan side, and finally among other branches of his family. Yet the final result of this differentiation is a re-unification: Diomedes recognizes Glaucus as his hereditary guest-friend (ξεῖνος) and, casting aside thoughts of battle, the two shake hands and exchange gifts (vv. 212-236):

... γήθησεν δὲ βοὴν ἀγαθὸς Διομήδης·
 ἔγχος μὲν κατέπηξεν ἐπὶ χθονὶ πουλυβοτείρῃ,
 αὐτὰρ ὃ μείλιχίοισι προσηύδα ποιμένα λαῶν·
 ἦ ῥά νύ μοι ξεῖνος πατρώϊός ἐσσι παλαιός...etc.

...and Diomedes, good at the war cry, waxed glad.
 He planted his spear in the bounteous earth,
 and with gentle words spake to the shepherd of the host:
 “Verily now art thou a friend of my father's house from of old...”

Glaucus has de-*fin*ed himself—he has laid his spatial and temporal *fin*es, or boundaries. In response, Diomedes lays down his own spatio-chronological *fin*es—he is the descendant of Oinaeus and Tydeus, the *xeinoi* of Glaucus’ ancestor Bellerophon (vv.216-226). Now the two de-*fin*ed interlocutors can join together in the relationship of guest-friendship.

The *Iliad* and especially the *Odyssey* abound in encounter episodes where a newcomer’s or stranger’s address consists of identifying himself via his place of origin and/or lineage (e.g., Athena-Mentes to Telemachus; Telemachus to Nestor and Menelaus; Theoclymenos to Telemachus; Odysseus to the Phaeacians; Odysseus in disguise to Eumaeus, etc.). Among such scenes, the Glaucus-Diomedes episode is unique in its lucid illustration of a “differentiation” leading to unification. Unlike other encounters in

Homer, this one takes place specifically between two men belonging to two opposing sides and eager to fight each other on the battlefield (“συνίτην μεμαῶτε μάχεσθαι,” v.120). When Athena identifies herself to Telemachus as Odysseus’ *xenos*, *Mentes*, and the young man cordially welcomes her, the episode likewise conveys a sense of identification (=differentiation) resulting in a unification. However, the result is not as explicitly paradoxical here as in the Glaucus-Diomedes episode, where the “self-differentiation” which the two warriors achieve by identifying themselves nullifies sneering hostility and preparations for a duel. Indeed, Diomedes’ initial beckoning when he menacingly invites Glaucus to “come closer, that you might reach the bourne of death all the sooner” (“ἄσσον ἴθ’ ὥς κεν θᾶσσον ὀλέθρου πείραθ’ ἔκηαι” (v.143)) stands in direct contrast with the very different sort of coming together at the conclusion of the episode, when the two former enemies rush towards each other, shake hands, and promise never to oppose one another in the press of battle.

It is this transparency of transition from self-differentiation to reunion in the Glaucus-Diomedes episode that elucidates the contrast between the “poet-addressee” relationship in Pindar and in Homer. As I have maintained, both the poet and his audience remain hidden in the Homeric epics.¹³⁰ The only instances where the poet speaks to an addressee who belongs to the song’s “frame”—rather than to its “plot”¹³¹—

¹³⁰ In the words of Irene De Jong (1997:311), “like the primary narrator, the primary narratees [of a Homeric epic] are largely invisible in the text.” However, as the scholarship which De Jong here summarizes has demonstrated, the Homeric text drops many hints as to the thoughts, feelings, and expectations of both the poet and his audience: “The *implicit* presence of the narratees, however, is felt in almost every line” (ibid). For example, the narrator frequently explains, through a γάρ-clause, something that his audience may have found puzzling, or makes it clear that a particular passage of his text has thwarted their expectations.

¹³¹ The so-called apostrophes: e.g., in *Iliad* 4.127, 146; 7.104; 13.603; 17.679, 702; and 23.600 Homer addresses Menelaus. In *Iliad* 16.20, 584, 692 f., 744, 754, 787, 812, 843 he addresses Patroclus, in *Iliad*

is in the proems: both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* open with the poet's address to the Muse. Yet precisely these two proems are a case in point. At first glance, both epic proems introduce the reader to two distinct personages—the “I” of the poet who is the addressor and the “you” of the Muse, who is the addressee. The scenario seems to be no different from Pindar, where the poet's “I” is likewise a distinct addressor accosting various distinct addressees. Yet the semblance of similarity between the Homeric and Pindaric “addressor-addressee” pairs does not last beyond the first ten lines or so in either epic. While it is clear in the two epic proems that the poet is addressing the Muse, the identity of the speaker becomes a moot point as soon as the proem is over. Is it the poet or his Muse who sings “ἐνθ’ ἄλλοι μὲν πάντες, ὅσοι φύγον αἰπὺν ὄλεθρον, / οἴκοι ἔσαν” in line 11 of the *Odyssey*? The answer itself would prove the futility of such a distinction: it is the Muse-inspired poet; it is through-the-lips-of-the-poet-singing Muse.¹³² In the encounter of Glaucus and Diomedes, the two participants in the dialogue having first identified, *differentiated* themselves, then engage in an on-going relationship of *xenia*. Homer, on the other hand, has no intent of making his poetic “I” distinct from his addressee, the Muse, and the initial form of address simply tapers off: as the addressor

15.582 he addresses Melanippos, and in *Iliad* 20.2, Achilles. In the *Odyssey* he addresses only Eumaios at 14.55, 165, 360, 442, 507; 15.325; 16.60, 135, 464; 17.272, 311, 380, 512, 579; 22.194). The significance which these apostrophes may have for our interpretation of the character of the Homeric narrator as subjective or objective is debated (cf. Block 1982 and De Jong 1997). In all of these instances, however, the poet addresses an *internal* character rather than a member of the “real” audience of his epic.

¹³² For a discussion of the relationship between the Homeric “I” and the Muse, see De Jong 1987: 45-53 and Finkelberg 1990. Both scholars perceive the relationship in terms of “double determination”, a common Homeric technique whereby a particular action (e.g., a heroic feat on a battlefield) is viewed and described by the poet as the simultaneous confluence of a mortal and a divine will.

and his addressee, the inspired and she who inspires, merge into one, their relationship ceases to be.¹³³

In contrast to Homer, the epinikia, by virtue of their very genre, are structured as the poet's address to those whom his song praises, and this address is contextualized within a specific time and space matrix, or chronotope. We can now qualify this notion by likening a Pindaric victory ode to the encounter of Glaucus and Diomedes: in order to establish the "I-you" relationship of address between himself and his audience, the epinikian poet must *de-fine* in space and time both himself and the "you" he addresses. Furthermore, unlike Glaucus and Diomedes who, as personages within the song, are incapable of perceiving the song from "aside," the "I" and the "you" de-fined in an epinikian are the author and the audience of the song. Therefore, their de-finition inside the ode amounts to the inclusion of the spatio-temporal framework of the ode (the "here and now" wherein his address is taking place) within the ode itself. Such inclusion has various implications for the structure and contents of the ode. The first implication, as I discuss in the next section, is that although the ostensible object of an epinikian ode is to praise the victorious athlete, the poet, as the sole initiator of the address, becomes essentially the central hero of his own song.

¹³³ In a manner almost uncanny, this same merging of the identities of addressor and addressee occurs in the "sub-proem" in *Odyssey* VIII which we have looked at in Chapter 1. As Pietro Pucci points out, in Book IX of the *Odyssey* "Odysseus takes over [from Demodocus] and, like a poet (*Od.* 11.363-68), narrates the story of his survival and return." But the merging goes further yet. Odysseus not only begins his song as soon as Demodocus is done with his, but the plot of Odysseus' narrative in Book IX picks up from the point in time where Demodocus' narrative leaves off: Demodocus sings of the ruin of Troy, and it is with his sailing from ruined Troy to the first stop along his journey, Ismaros, that Odysseus begins his narrative. Odysseus' epic song is thus the direct extension of Demodocus' lay (Pucci 1987:226). Furthermore, in praising Demodocus Odysseus says that he sings so well of the war as if he witnessed it himself (somewhat ironic because Demodocus is blind!), or has heard of it from another (i.e., from an eyewitness): "ὥς τέ που ἢ αὐτὸς παρεὼν ἢ ἄλλου ἀκούσας" (8.491). Ascribing the greatness of Demodocus' song to a "first-hand" experience of the events sung about, Odysseus in effect foreshadows Books 9-12 where the poet (i.e., Odysseus) is the main hero of the events he relates. Thus not only do Odysseus and Demodocus merge, but, furthermore, we wonder whether Odysseus might be aware of this merging.

§2 Poet as the central hero of his own song: merging identities of poet and victorious athlete

Commentators have repeatedly pointed out Pindar's occasional identification of himself with his primary addressee, the victorious athlete. Leaving aside any possible social, economic, or psychological considerations which may have motivated such identification, I focus on its role as a *poetic* device. The direct and ostensible central hero of an epinikian ode is the victorious athlete. At the same time however, inasmuch as the ode thematizes its chronotope as the address of the poet's "I" to his audience's "you," the role of the poet's "I" within the ode is that of the central agent responsible for constructing the inner world of the song. It is this construction that endows the victorious athlete with immortality, i.e., with truly heroic status. An athletic feat perpetuates the glory of the victor's polis and ancestors; in other words, in proving himself a worthy scion of his fathers and forefathers, a victor revivifies the past by immortalizing the achievements of previous generations. But this revivification in itself can only be preserved through celebratory song. The true power of immortalization thus belongs not to the sportsman but to the poet who takes over and brings to completion the sportsman's task. Olympian 10 offers what is perhaps the most eloquent expression of the interrelation between poet and athlete:

ἀλλ' ὅτε παῖς ἐξ ἀλόχου πατρί
ποθρινὸς ἵκοντι νεότατος τὸ πάλιν ἦδη,
μάλα δέ οἱ θερμαίνει φιλότατι νόον·
ἐπεὶ πλοῦτος ὁ λαχὼν ποιμένα
ἐπακτὸν ἀλλότριον
θνάσκοντι στυγερώτατος·

καὶ ὅταν καλὰ {μὲν} ἔρξαις ἀοιδᾶς ἄτερ,
Ἀγησίδαμ', εἰς Αἴδα σταθμόν
ἀνὴρ ἵκηται, κενεὰ πνεύσαις ἔπορε μόχθῳ
βραχὺ τι τερπνόν. τὴν δ' ἀδυεπὴς τε λύρα

γλυκὺς τ' αὐλὸς ἀναπάσσει χάριν·
τρέφοντι δ' εὐρὺ κλέος
κόραι Πιερίδες Διός.

But as a son, born from his wife, is longed for
by a father already come to the opposite of youth
and warms his mind with great love
(since wealth that falls to the care
of a stranger from elsewhere
is most hateful to a dying man),

so, when a man who has performed noble deeds,
Hagesidamos, goes without song to Hades'
dwelling, in vain has he striven and gained his toil
but brief delight. Upon you, however, the sweetly
speaking lyre and melodious pipe are shedding glory,
and the Pierian daughters of Zeus
are fostering your widespread fame.

(O.10.86-97)

Pindar envisions celebratory song as a child who “warms” an ageing father’s heart in the face of Hades’ everlasting darkness. The fact that it is a son born late, against all odds, when the father is already approaching the bourn of death, accentuates the child’s role as the redeemer of the life of the older generation from the finality of death: the father’s achievements shall be reborn and live on in his child. Typically, it is the victorious athlete whom Pindar perceives as the child responsible for redeeming his ancestry from wilting and oblivion. Thus in Pythian 11 the victor Thrasydaïos “made famous the hearth / of his fathers when he cast a third wreath upon it / as a victor...” (...Θρασυδᾶος ἔμνασεν ἑστίαν / τρίτον ἔπι στέφανον πατρώαν βαλὼν /...νικῶν...) (vv.13-14). While Race translates the aorist “ἔμνασεν” as “made famous,” the verb *μυμήσκω* actually means “to remind, to recall to memory”¹³⁴: Thrasydaïos’ victory revivifies his ancestry by living up to and thereby keeping alive his fathers’ glorious deeds—a father-son continuity whose importance is emphasized again at the end of the same ode (vv.55-58):

¹³⁴ LSJ.

ἀλλ' εἴ τις ἄκρον ἐλὼν
 ἤσυχᾷ τε νεμόμενος αἰνὰν ὕβριν
 ἀπέφυγεν, μέλανος δ' ἂν ἐσχατίαν
 καλλίονα θανάτου στείχοι γλυκυτάτα γενεᾷ
 εὐώνυμον κτεάνων κρατίστην χάριν πορών·

But if a man has won the peak
 and dwelling there in peace has avoided dire
 insolence, he would go to a more noble bourne
 of black death, having given his sweetest offspring
 the best of possessions, the grace of a good name.

And the only way for the next generation to take up and preserve this “grace of a good name” is by being worthy of the fathers’ deeds—e.g., through the performance of athletic feats. If we now reread the lines quoted above from Olympian 10, we will see that Pindar perceives the role of his song as not merely *similar* to that of the athlete, but rather as taking the athlete’s role to the next degree, so to speak. A victor recalls to memory ancestral glory, thereby immortalizing the past and keeping fresh the unity of past and present. But his efforts are null and void if his revivifying athletic achievement is not, in turn, immortalized within Pindar’s song. Athletic achievement thus becomes secondary to the poetic one: the poet emerges as his own song’s central hero, upon whose art the greatness of the athlete is predicated. Pindar’s reflection upon his role as the “real” epinikian hero expresses itself in his repeated association and even identification of his poetic feat with the athletic feat of the victor. In Chapter 3, where I explore the poet’s deliberate merging of his identity both with the mythic hero and with the athletic victor, I take a close look at particular examples of such identification.

§3 Pindar’s song as a journey and the resulting paradox

Another result of the inclusion of the spatio-temporal framework of the composition of the ode within the ode itself, is the development of the image of the song

as the poet's journey towards his audience. Pindar, we shall see, frequently envisions this coming quite literally, as the poet's (or his song's) journeying from the polis of the poet to the polis of his audience.

The interrelation of the motif of journeying and the self-identification of two interlocutors is not unique to Pindar; it is readily apparent already in the various episodes of encounter between Homeric heroes. Thus, in the *Odyssey* both Odysseus and Telemachus journey far and wide; both meet various new characters in foreign lands and try to engage in dialogues with them. While some of these characters remain hostile (i.e., strange, foreign) and refuse to communicate (Laistrygonians, Cyclops, Circe), others respond readily as they hospitably welcome the traveler into their households (Nestor, Menelaus, Phaeacians, Eumaeus). In each such encounter with a well-disposed stranger, the same pattern is repeated: two foreign personages from two different spatial domains and ancestral lineages come together, "differentiate" themselves by mutually disclosing their identities (I am Odysseus from Ithaca; I am King Alcinous, descendant of Nausithous, from Phaeacia), and build a friendly relationship on the basis of this "differentiation."¹³⁵ Returning to the encounter of Glaucus and Diomedes, we may note that the interrelation of journeying and self-identification is as prominent here as in the *Odyssey* episodes; indeed, the *Iliad* episode offers an intensification of this theme. Here, *both* interlocutors have accomplished a journey—one from Lycia, the other from Argos.

¹³⁵ While this pattern may seem so evident as to be hardly worth analyzing, it is, in fact, by no means a given. When, almost a millennium after Homer, Apuleius composed his *Metamorphoses*, he explicitly modeled significant aspects of Lucius the ass' experience on the wonderings of Odysseus (*Met.* IX.13). Nevertheless, the "encounter → self-differentiation → friendship" pattern is conspicuously and purposefully absent from the *Metamorphoses*. Like Odysseus, Lucius is led by his travels to repeated encounters with various new personages. But, unlike his Homeric predecessor, Apuleius' hero is forcefully disguised as a beast and therefore reduced to the status of a passive observer of the personages who come his way: for all his willingness, he is not able to engage them in dialogue, whereas they, in turn, have no interest in communicating with a brute.

Both are in a foreign land, and the foreignness is further accentuated by the fact that this land is in the midst of a war—in other words, it is a pointedly hostile, *strange* setting. Furthermore, here we have not a traveler encountering a stranger who turns out to be friendly and becomes his host (as in the cases of Alcinous, Eumaeus, Nestor, Menelaus), but rather two *enemies*—i.e., two men maximally strange to each other—who, upon engaging in dialogue and sharing the backgrounds (motherland and lineage) from which they have come to Troy, turn out to be ancestral friends. The strangeness of the setting, just as the initial strangeness (hostility) of the two interlocutors towards each other stands in all the stronger contrast to the mutual affinity which Glaucus and Diomedes discover by disclosing their identity.¹³⁶

Pindar takes the interrelation between the encounter of two personages and the theme of a journey to a new level. In the victory odes, the two personages involved in the “I”-“you” encounter are the author of the song and the audience of the song. The result, I shall argue, is that the time and place of the composition (and/or performance) of the ode—the “here and now” of the song, its present moment of time—become extended into the vector of the poet’s journey towards his audience. In the odes where the image of the song-journey is thoroughly developed, a paradox results: the performance of the song which is the aim of the poet’s coming to his audience becomes equated with the coming itself.

¹³⁶ Cf. Becker (1937: 68-69), who argues that “der ‘Weg’ ist irgendwie Bild für das Wesen der Rede überhaupt” from Homer onwards. The connection which ancient poets drew between the images of song and journey seems to be related to the similarity of the words *οἶμη* (song) and *οἶμος* (road, path). Becker’s interpretation of the specifically Pindaric song-as-journey motif is that the poet uses the image in order to underscore his own scrupulous covering, one-by-one, of all the parts of an epinician *Programm* (ibid., p.70).

Leslie Kurke notes that “...on occasion Pindar incorporates the scene of celebration into the ode itself, setting an entire poem within the context of hospitality at the victor’s house.” Thus for example in Olympian 1 the scene is set at “the rich and blessed hearth of Hieron.”¹³⁷ I would qualify Kurke’s observation: while it is true that frequently Pindar gives indication of the ode’s setting, this indication is hardly ever a description of stationary scenery against which the song will unfold. Rather, explicitly or implicitly, Pindar conveys his own or his song’s *movement* in space which consequently involves movement in time. The poet rarely *is* at the polis of his addressee; typically, he *has come*, or *is coming*, or *will come* there. Therefore in almost every ode, the Pindaric “here”—the locus of his encounter with his addressee and thus the locus of his singing—has more semblance to the yet-to-be reached “whither” of the poet’s journey than to a static theatrical backdrop. And, by the same token, the Pindaric “now” is the duration of the song’s journeying from the *thence* of the poet’s “I” to the *hither* of the audience’s “you.” As we shall see, such a reading of the “coming” motif necessarily involves a paradox. The journeying of the epinikian-bearing poet to his audience by definition constitutes the frame of the song: once the poet comes, the promised performance can commence. Yet if one reads the whole ode as the poet’s continuous *coming*, or journeying, then the journeying towards the performance of the song becomes equivalent to the performance itself.

While some of Pindar’s odes only hint that the song as a whole is the poet’s coming to his addressee, others explicitly convey the sense of a journey. In several of the odes, the equation “song = coming” receives elaborate development. In the odes

¹³⁷ Kurke 1991:137.

examined in this section, the motif of the poet's coming ranges from poignant hint to fully developed dominant theme.

The “coming” motif is only alluded to in Pythian 6, but even these passing references create the effect of the continuous progress of the poet's “I”. At the opening of the ode we read:

Ἀκούσατ'· ἧ γὰρ ἐλικώπιδος Ἀφροδίτας
ἄρουραν ἢ Χαρίτων
ἀναπολίζομεν, ὀμφαλὸν ἐριβρόμου
χθονὸς ἐς νᾶϊον προσοιχόμενοι·

Listen! For indeed we are plowing once again
the field of bright-eyed Aphrodite
or of the Graces, as we proceed to the enshrined
navel of the loudly rumbling earth.

Preceded by the poet's command “listen!” the phrase “*for indeed* we are plowing the field of bright-eyed Aphrodite or of the Graces” must refer to the singing of the present song. But this singing is immediately qualified: we are plowing *as we proceed* towards the “enshrined navel of the loudly rumbling earth.” In this case, the “whither” is not the mother city of the victor (though she too is important in the ode) but the place of victory—Delphi. With the one participle “προσοιχόμενοι” Pindar sets up the whole song—the whole “plowing”—as progress towards Delphi, the “navel” of the earth, and we witness the magical merging of three seemingly disparate activities of plowing, singing, and journeying.¹³⁸

¹³⁸ For another example of the “coming” motif, see Nemean 8, composed for an Aiginetan youth: “ἰκέτας Αἰακοῦ / σεμνῶν γονάτων πόλιός θ' ὑπὲρ φύλας / ἀστῶν θ' ὑπὲρ τῶνδ' ἄπτομαι φέρων / Λυδίαν μίτρην καναχηδὰ πεποικιλμένην” (vv.13-15). While this passage does not employ the verb “to come,” its import is that the poet is coming to the *topos oikeios* of his addressee—Aigina: the poet clasps the knees of the Aiginetans' primary ancestor and hero, Aiakos, and, in praying for the island, Pindar carries “a Lydian fillet embellished with ringing notes”—an elaborate image for his song.

Olympians 13 and 14 present somewhat more developed instances of the ode as the continuous coming of the poet towards his addressees. In O.13, composed for a Corinthian athlete, Pindar states in the opening, “Τρισολυμπιονίκαν / ἐπαινέων οἶκον... / **γνώσομαι** / τὰν ὀλβίαν Κόρινθον” (“In praising a house with three Olympic victories, / I will learn to know / prosperous Corinth...”) (vv.1-4). As Gildersleeve notes, “‘I will learn to know Corinth,’ means ‘I will visit Corinth’... This is the language of one who had never seen Corinth and is to make acquaintance of the city on this happy errand of praise.”¹³⁹ Elaborating on Gildersleeve’s comment, one may note that the poet once again amalgamates the coming with the singing: he will “learn to know” (i.e., come to) the city *in praising*—ἐπαινέων—the victor’s clan. Towards the end of the ode, at the completion of the main mythological section, the poet’s coming to the clan of the victor, the Oligaithidai, has already taken place: “Μοίσαις γὰρ ἀγλαοθρόνοις ἐκὼν / Ὀλγαιθίδαισιν τ’ **ἔβαν** ἐπίκουρος” (“For I have come as a willing helper for the Muses / on their splendid thrones, and for the Oligaithidai”) (vv.96-97). It is as though the future tense at the beginning of the verses and the aorist at their conclusion mark the poet’s progress in space and time towards Corinth: the opening of the song is equivalent to the beginning of his journey towards Corinth, and it is not till the end of the song that this journey is accomplished.

Sometimes, there is more than one movement in space and time involved, as the poet engages more than one group of audiences in his address. In Olympian 14, in his

¹³⁹ Gildersleeve 1881:229. “Of course this is figurative...” adds Gildersleeve. Whether or not Pindar actually made the Corinthian pilgrimage in “real life” is of no interest to our present investigation. My present aim is to articulate why the theme not just of *being* at his addressee’s home but of *coming* there is crucial to Pindar’s poetics. For a slightly different interpretation of “γνώσομαι...Κόρινθον,” see Wilamowitz 1966:372. Wilamowitz agrees with Gildersleeve but omits the motif of coming: “das heißt ‘ich werde kennen lernen’, und dann muß man den Dichter beim Worte nehmen: er hat für Korinth noch niemals gedichtet, keine Beziehungen dahin gehabt.”

address to one of the Graces, Pindar envisions himself as having come to the victor's city

Orchomenos (vv.17-20):

Λυδῷ γὰρ Ἀσώπιχον ἐν τρόπῳ
ἐν μελέταις τ' αἰείδων ἔμολον,
οὔνεκ' Ὀλυμπιονίκος ἡ Μινύεια
σεῦ ἔκατι.

For I have come
singing of Asophichos in Lydian mode as I practice my art,
since the land of the Minyai is victorious at Olympia
because of you.

And straightaway in the very next line, accentuating the swift shift by a “νῦν,” the poet sends Echo with news of the victory down into Hades to the athlete's father (vv.20-24):

μελαντειχέα νῦν δόμον
Φερσεφόνας ἔλθ', Ἀ-
χοῖ, πατρὶ κλυτὰν φέροισ' ἀγγελίαν,
Κλεόδαμον ὄφρ' ἰδοῖς', υἱὸν εἵπης ὅτι οἱ νέαν
κόλποις παρ' εὐδόξοις Πίσας
ἔστεφάνωσε κυδῖμων ἀέθλων πτεροῖσι χαίταν.

To the black-walled house
of Persephone go now,
Echo, carrying the glorious news to his father,
so that when you see Kleodamos you can say that his son
has crowned his youthful hair in the famous valley of Pisa
with winged wreaths from the games that bring renown.

The role of Echo in this passage is elucidated by identical phrasing in the opening of Pythian 2. Here, in O.14, the poet endows Echo with the duty of harbingering victory when he calls her the “φέροισ' ἀγγελίαν” one; in P. 2 he himself fulfills the same exact duty, “φέρων...ἀγγελίαν” *propria persona*. The similarity of phrasing suggests that just as the journeying of Pindar and the journeying of his song are often interchangeable, so too Echo in O.14 is yet another hypostasis of the poet and his creation. One can say that in Olympian 14 Pindar establishes an “I-you” relationship with two sets of audiences—he comes to the living community of Orchomenos and he comes to the Underworld community of the victor's ancestors. And, since the ode ends with the poet's bidding

Echo to go to Hades, the sense is created that the coming, and therefore the song, continue even beyond the last verse of the epinikion.

One of the finest elaborations on the theme of the poet's coming to the *topos oikeios* of his addressee is contained in Pythian 2, composed for Hieron, tyrant of Syracuse. Here, even more explicitly than in Olympian 13, the ode as a whole is the poet's progress to Syracuse. Particularly poignant is the detail in the very first lines where the poet announces not only *whither* but also *whence* he is progressing: from Thebes. Thus whereas other odes often only imply the *topos oikeios* of the poet's "I," P. 2 states it explicitly:

Μεγαλόπολις ὦ Συράκοσαι, βαθυπολέμου
τέμενος Ἄρεος, ἀνδρῶν ἵππων τε σιδαροχαρ-
μᾶν δαιμόνιαι τροφοί,
ὑμῖν τόδε **τᾶν λιπαρᾶν ἀπὸ Θηβᾶν φέρων**
μέλος ἔρχομαι ἀγγελίαν τετραορίας ἐλελίχθονος...

O great city of Syracuse, sanctuary of
Ares mighty in war, divine nourisher of men
and horses delighting in steel,
to you I come from shining Thebes bearing this song
and its news of the four-horse chariot that shakes the earth...

The *whence* and the *whither* are worthy of one another: if Syracuse is "great-citied," Thebes is "resplendent."¹⁴⁰ The poet structures the opening as an address to the city, the vocative energizing the polis into a living creature; he furthermore conjoins this vocative with a string of exquisite compound adjectives, themselves, as we have seen in Chapter 1, a vivifying force. We perceive this living being of a city from the vantage point of an approaching pilgrim: "ὑμῖν τόδε...φέρων μέλος ἔρχομαι ἀγγελίαν." She looms before the approaching poet as wondrous Syracuse, great-citied, the holy precinct of Ares who

¹⁴⁰ As I discuss in the next section, such mirror-like balance between the "I" and "you" is characteristic of Pindar's odes and is rooted in the reciprocal relationship between the "outside" world and the world of song.

haunts the press of battle, the nurse of men and horses who delight in steel. If in Homer's description of Ephyre we glimpse the polis from the singer's detached position in the realm of no place and no time, here, by contrast, we behold Syracuse as we advance and hail her together with the poet.

The ode picks up the image of Pindar's pilgrimage some sixty lines later, following the main mythological section which deals with Ixion. Here the song shifts towards praise of Hieron, into the middle of which the poet inserts (vv.62-63): "εὐανθέα δ' ἀναβάσομαι στόλον ἄμφ' ἀρετῇ / κελαδέων": "I shall embark upon a garlanded ship to celebrate your excellence," renders Race. The image is the same as at the opening of the ode: Pindar envisions his song's coming to Hieron as the poet's own voyage to Syracuse, which would presumably involve sea-travel.¹⁴¹ If the beginning presented a generic "ἔρχομαι" without clarifying by what means the "coming" is taking place, the image now becomes more specific: the poet—or his song (the two, as so often in Pindar,

¹⁴¹ Cf. the conclusion of Olympian 6. The victor Hagesias belongs to two poleis—Syracuse and Stymphalos—and in the end of the ode the poet envisions Hagesias' festive *komos* setting off from one polis to the other. Though Pindar does not explicitly portray the *komos* as boarding a ship, he ends the poem with a nautical simile (vv.100-101) and a prayer to Poseidon: "vouchsafe a direct voyage that is free from hardship..." (vv. 103-104). Thus the real-life fact that to get from mainland Greece to Syracuse one would undergo a sea-voyage, and voyage by ship as one of Pindar's favorite metaphors here merge into one. Cf. Nisetich (1980:46), who interprets Pindar's allusions to his travels and the *xenia* of his addressees as references to the real circumstances of the composition of the odes: "Pindar was a travelling poet...A journey from Olympia to Syracuse was not a matter of a day or two, but of weeks. It was dangerous and expensive. And when Pindar arrived on the scene, he would not finish his task in a day." We may never know whether Pindar really travelled everywhere where he says he travels, especially since, as Gildersleeve points out, the odes often confound the journeying of the poet with that of his song: "...although we must not suppose that Pindar went whithersoever his song went, he was not a home-keeping man. His long sojourn in Sicily is beyond a doubt. Aigina must have been to him a second home. Journeys to Olympia, to Delphi, to Nemea, are certain" (p. xii), and yet "...we are often unable to tell whether it is the singer or the song that is voyaging, and the minute local knowledge may be due in part to the persons for whom Pindar held his commission" (p. lxi). For the purposes of the present study, it is of little importance whether or not the poet's travels took place in "real life." Rather, my goal is to understand for what *poetic* purpose Pindar weaves his journey towards the victor as a prevalent theme into his song.

are interchangeable)¹⁴²—is sailing to Syracuse by sea. The shift in tense from present (ἔρχομαι) to future (ἀναβάσομαι) corresponds to the increased concretization: whereas “I am coming” could refer to any stage of the voyage, the future emphasizes that the pilgrimage is still in progress, indeed, in its beginning stages. The theme of “coming” is picked up again in vv.67-68, where Pindar compares his song to a merchantman: “τόδε μὲν κατὰ Φοίνισσαν ἐμπολάν / μέλος ὑπὲρ πολιάς ἀλὸς πέμπεται” (“This song is being sent like Phoenician / merchandise over the gray sea”). In the previous resurfacing of this image the singing (κελαδέων) poet was about to board the ship; he now envisions his song as being sent across the waves *as* a ship. The shift from a “garlanded ship” to a “Phoenician merchantman” is in accord with Pindar’s fondness for ever-metamorphosing imagery and mixed metaphors and does not obscure the essential fact that the image of the poet’s (song’s) voyage to Hieron remains consistent throughout the ode. In this third and final invocation of the sea-journey image, Pindar notably switches from the future to the present (πέμπεται): he is no longer *about* to embark—rather, the song is already sailing. By virtue firstly of its explicit mention of the poet’s starting point (Thebes) and secondly of its triple invocation of the poet’s journeying to Syracuse, Pythian 2 merges the actuality of the poet’s progressive coming to Hieron with the movement of the ode itself.

But it is in the famous Olympian 1, likewise addressed to Hieron of Syracuse, that Pindar presents the most elaborate development of the ode-as-coming motif. Olympian 1

¹⁴² Cf. Becker (1937:83-84): “Ob nun das Lied als Bote ausgeht, oder Pindar die Ἀχώ anruft, daß sie die Botschaft bringe...oder ob er sie unpersönlich zu schicken verspricht...oder ob er schließlich selbst geht, wie wir es früher beobachtet hatten, als Bote: all das sind nur Abwandlungen desselben Motivs, im letzten Fall verschmolzen mit dem des Dichterweges—da hat Pindar zwei getrennte Aspekte vom Wesen der Rede zu *einem* volleren Bild vereinigt.” For the presence within Pindar of the images of both the journeying song and the journeying poet, see likewise Nünlist 1998:229 and 279.

creates the impression that, having thought through the equation of song with coming, the poet takes a particular joy in explicating the tantalizing contradiction latent in it. It is not simply that Olympian 1 is *a* coming, but the entire ode is constructed as a continuous series of the poet's past, present, and future *comings*—whether real or metaphorical—to Hieron. Pindar's end goal of the present coming, just as that of the past and future ones, is to praise the tyrant in song: several times throughout the ode, the poet either promises to sing or orders the singing to begin. But precisely because the song wherein these commands and promises are made (i.e., Olympian 1) is itself a *continual* coming, it never attains the end goal of the coming, and the promised song never materializes. In the opening strophe we read (vv.7-17):

μηδ' Ὀλυμπίας ἀγῶνα φέρτερον **αὐδᾶσομεν**·
 ὅθεν ὁ πολύφατος ὕμνος ἀμφιβάλλεται
 σοφῶν μητίεσσι, κελαδεῖν
 Κρόνου παῖδ' ἐς ἀφνεᾶν **ἱκομένους**
 μάκαιραν Ἱέρωνος ἐστίαν [...]
 ἀγλαΐζεται δὲ καί
 μουσικᾶς ἐν ἁώτῳ,
 οἷα παίζομεν φίλαν
 ἄνδρες ἀμφὶ **θαμὰ** τράπεζαν.

Nor let us proclaim a contest greater than Olympia.
 From there comes the famous hymn that encompasses
 the thoughts of wise men, who have come
 in celebration of Kronos' son to the rich
 and blessed hearth of Hieron [...]
 And [...] he is also glorified
 in the finest songs,
 such as those we men often perform in play
 about the friendly table.

Just as Pythian 2 stated explicitly, “I have come to you from Thebes to Syracuse as harbinger of victory,” so too the opening of O. 1 focuses not on the poet's *being* at the court of Hieron, but on his *coming* thither: “ἐς ἀφνεᾶν **ἱκομένους** / μάκαιραν Ἱέρωνος ἐστίαν.” That Hieron's palace is the “whither” rather than the “where” of the poem is

further accentuated by the one word “θαμά” in line 17: Hieron’s welcoming table (φίλα τράπεζα) is the setting where Pindar and his comrades *often* (i.e., in the past, present, and future) perform the “finest of songs” (μουσικᾶς ἁώτον). If the “ἰκομένους” in line 10 has just conveyed that Pindar and the other poets do not reside at Hieron’s court but rather must travel thither, the “θαμά” suggests that the present song is only one of the itinerant poet’s many journeys to Syracuse. Similarly, the future tense of “αὐδάσομεν” in line 7 suggests that the singing of praise for the present occasion is only *about to* take place.¹⁴³ This succession of past and present comings is continued at the conclusion of the ode, where the poet alludes to the poet’s *future* voyages to the court of Hieron. Wishing the tyrant a future victory in the Olympic chariot races,¹⁴⁴ Pindar once again invokes his own song as the vector of a journey (vv.109-111):

ἔτι γλυκυτέραν κεν [μερίμναν] ἔλπομαι
 σὺν ἄρματι θοῶ κλεῖ-
 ξειν **ἐπίκουρον εἰρῶν ὁδὸν λόγων**
 παρ’ εὐδείελον ἐλθὼν Κρόνιον...

I hope to celebrate an even sweeter success
 with a speeding chariot, having found
 a helpful road of words
 when coming to Kronos’ sunny hill...

The poet envisions himself as coming to the hill of Kronos (metonymy for Olympia) and there finding *a helpful road of words*, or, as Gildersleeve paraphrases, a “path of song, which will help forward the glory of Hieron.” The poet’s premonition of his future coming to Hieron in this passage echoes the opening of the ode. Here, in the concluding lines, the precinct of Olympia inspires the poet upon a road of Hieron’s praise; there, in

¹⁴³ However, see Gildersleeve, who interprets the tense of αὐδάσομεν as “the so-called short subjunctive.”

¹⁴⁴ This passage is famous for its historic irony: as Race notes, “Hieron won the chariot race two Olympiads later (468), but Bacchylides (in Ode 3), not Pindar, celebrated it.”

the opening, the inspiring song flies from Olympia and envelops, as a cloud of arrows, the heart of Pindar and his fellow-poets,¹⁴⁵ urging them to embark on a song-road towards Syracuse (vv. 8-10, cited above).

At first glance, all these past, present, and future comings to Syracuse seem to be but a frame within which unfolds the actual song, that μουσικῶς ἄωτον which is the ultimate goal of the poet's journey(s) to Hieron (vv.14-17). One assumes that at some point in the ode, Pindar completes his present journey and sings the promised song—presumably, this song corresponds to the long and comprehensive account of the myth of Pelops, spanning from the hero's birth to his death and apotheosis. Indeed, immediately preceding the myth are lines 17-19 where the poet seems to be finally present at (rather than *coming to*) Hieron's palace, as he bids himself (or perhaps a fellow-poet) to take the lyre hanging upon the wall and to begin the song:

ἀλλὰ Δω-
ρίαν ἀπὸ φόρμιγγα πασσάλου
λάβαν'...

Come, take
the Dorian lyre from its peg...

As Kurke says, “the verb παίζομεν [in line 16] and the injunction to ‘take the Dorian lyre from its peg’ offer examples of scripted spontaneity...the two verbs simulate the effect of a spontaneous outpouring of praise inspired by the *charis* of the occasion.”¹⁴⁶ The vivid detail of musical instruments hanging on wall-pegs intensifies the sense that Pindar, and we along with him, have for the nonce achieved our journey and are finally seated at Hieron's φίλα τράπεζα. Yet neither the actual removing of the lyre from peg nor the

¹⁴⁵ As Gildersleeve notes, “Pindar's usage (see O. 2, 98; 9, 5; 13, 93 al.) indicates a shower of poetic βέλη or κῆλα whirring about the minds of the bards.” Gildersleeve compares this usage with a passage in Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* (v. 481) where the μαντεῖα...ἀεὶ ζῶντα περιποτᾶται.

¹⁴⁶ Kurke 1991:137.

singing—the object of the poets’ journey to Syracuse—ever happens. Just like the “αὐδάσομεν” in line 7, the command to take up the lyre and sing does not materialize in the present. One reasonably expects that the αὐδάσομεν and the imperative “φόρμιγγα... λάμβανε” function as preludes to the song, much as Homer’s address to the Muse preludes the epic narrative proper. Instead, however, the imperative segues into a conditional statement and from there, via a relative clause, into the myth of Pelops (vv.18-26):

εἴ τί τοι Πίσας τε καὶ Φερενίκου χάρις
 νόον ὑπὸ γλυκυτάταις ἔθηκε φροντίσιν
 ὅτε παρ’ Ἀλφεῶ σὺτο δέμας
 ἀκέντητον ἐν δρόμοισι παρέχων,
 κράτει δὲ προσέμειξε δεσπότην,
 Συρακόσιον ἵπποχάρ-
 μαν βασιλῆα· λάμπει δέ οἱ κλέος
 ἐν εὐάνορι Λυδοῦ Πέλοπος ἀποικία·
 τοῦ μεγασθενὲς ἐράσσατο Γαῖάοχος
 Ποσειδάν...
 if the splendor of Pisa and of Pherenikos has indeed
 enthralled your mind with sweetest considerations,
 when he sped beside the Alpheos,
 giving his limbs ungoaded in the race,
 and joined to victorious power his master,
 Syracuse’s horse-loving king. Fame shines for him
 in the colony of brave men founded by Lydian Pelops,
 with whom mighty Earthholder Poseidon
 fell in love...

In Chapter 1, I have suggested that myth-introducing relative clauses endow the song with a poetic liberty of its own. Olympian 1 is a good example of this technique: the poet begins by saying that he will sing for Hieron, but since the myth is introduced via a relative pronoun (“τοῦ μεγασθενὲς ἐράσσατο Γαῖάοχος...”) one gets the sense that the song has taken on a life of its own and is unfolding itself independently of the poet’s volition. The transition from the injunction, “take the lyre!” to the myth-introducing relative pronoun is made swift and seamless by the common coordinating conjunctions

“εἴ” (if) and “δέ” (and) in lines 18 and 23: “Come take the lyre, *if* the feat of Hieron’s horse Pherenikos has inspired you when that steed won victory for his master, *and* fame shines for him (Hieron) in the colony founded by Pelops, *whom* Poseidon loved...”¹⁴⁷

Within the context of Olympian 1, the “appropriation” of authorial power by the song via a relative pronoun is endowed with an additional significance that is absent from the Pythian 9 passage. In O. 1, the song’s assumption of authorial powers contributes to the effect of the whole ode as a continual series of the poet’s comings to Hieron. Had the injunction to take the lyre and sing been followed by any syntactical equivalent of a colon plus the Pelops myth, Pindar would have created the impression that his journeying towards Hieron had reached its culmination (the promised μουσικᾶς ἁώτον). In other words, that Pindar had come to Syracuse, is seated finally at Hieron’s hospitable table, and is singing the song.¹⁴⁸ Instead, the μουσικᾶς ἁώτον remains in the future throughout the ode. We are doubly reminded of this at the conclusion of the myth (vv.100-105):

ἐμὲ δὲ στεφανῶσαι
κεῖνον ἱππῖω νόμῳ
Αἰοληΐδι μολπᾷ
χρή· πέποιθα δὲ ξένον

¹⁴⁷ The force of the “δέ” becomes especially noticeable when contrasted with Race’s translation which omits it. The omission of the coordinating conjunction breaks up the continuous flow of the long sentence into two separate sentences and obscures the impression achieved in the original Greek of the song’s smooth glide away from Hieron’s court into the realm of myth.

¹⁴⁸ To be sure, unlike in Pythian 9 where the poet’s authority remains “usurped” throughout the myth of Cyrene, here in Olympian 1 Pindar’s poetic “I” makes an explicit re-appearance in the myth of Pelops (cf. especially lines 36 and 52). A close reading reveals, however, that when this “I” speaks, its words are, in essence, but a corroboration of the myth that has just unfolded itself. Pindar’s myth of Pelops is complex because it appeals to two different versions of the story: either (a) Pelops disappeared because his lover Poseidon took him to Olympus, or (b) he disappeared because Tantalus had him cooked and eaten. In the Ode, the myth unfolds twice. First, it unfolds itself via the relative pronoun. This first unfolding is clearly in accord with version (a): it speaks of Poseidon as falling in love with the boy Pelops (v.25). The second unfolding (vv.28-till the very end of the mythical section in v. 99) is Pindar’s explanation, as it were, of why version (a) is the authentic one. As he retells the story of Poseidon’s love a second time, now in greater detail, Pindar goes on to Pelops’ adulthood in order to show that it was the god’s love (i.e., an element present in the myth only according to version (a)) that won for the young hero a bride and sacrificial honors. Thus the interjection of the poet’s “I” into the Pelops myth does not obscure the fact that the song is here endowed with authorial powers of its own.

μή τιν' ἀμφοτέρω καλῶν τε ἴδριν ἄ-
μα καὶ δύνανται κυριώτερον
τῶν γε νῦν κλυταῖσι δαιδαλωσέμεν ὕμνων πτυχαῖς.

My duty is to crown
that man with an equestrian tune
in Aeolic song.
For I am confident that there is no other host
both more expert in noble pursuits and more lordly in power
alive today to embellish in famous folds of hymns.

The infinitive στεφανῶσαι in conjunction with the verb χρή, as well as the future infinitive δαιδαλωσέμεν, all suggest that the poet perceives the song intended for the present occasion as, paradoxically, still to be sung: “My duty is to crown [in the future] that man [Hieron] with an equestrian tune in Aeolic song, for I am confident that there is no other host more worthy [for me] to embellish [in the future] in famous folds of hymns.”¹⁴⁹ Pindar’s coming to Hieron is still in progress.¹⁵⁰

By structuring his ode as a continual coming of the addressor to the addressee—or as a continuous *series* of comings, as in O.1—and in thus creating the paradoxical image of the song-journey as both progression towards an ultimate goal and the ultimate goal itself, Pindar inscribes the composition of his song into the song as an important poetic theme. In other words, he establishes the chronotope of his song as the spatio-temporal setting of the song’s composition. And, as we shall see in Chapter 3, it is this same

¹⁴⁹ I have relied on Race’s translation but simplified both his and Pindar’s text in order to focus on the basic syntax. Cf. Gildersleeve’s commentary on v. 17. Gildersleeve unequivocally associates the “Dorian lyre” of v. 17 with the Aeolic song here in v. 102. Just as Hieron was promised song at the beginning of the ode, so he is promised it again towards the conclusion. But where is the song itself?

¹⁵⁰ Cf. Crotty (1982:81) who, via a wholly different scholarly method, comes close to discussing the Pindaric epinikion as all “body” without any “frame”: “In all these cases [in erotic, symposiastic, and epinikian poetry], the song not only is performed for members of the *koinonia* but is itself an expression of the ties that bind together the members of the community...The symposiastic poem is not ‘about’ the symposium; rather, it is a part of the celebration. No more is erotic poetry ‘about’ love; it is itself a part of the lovers’ relationship, a move in the lover’s strategy to win the beloved. Similarly, the epinikian is not a disinterested account of victory, nor is it a narrative concerning the victorious athlete; the poem—addressed to the victor—is itself the recognition and acknowledgement that is vital to the completion of the victory.”

paradoxical nature of the song-journey that underlies the travels of Pindar's poetic "I" between layers of time—into the past and into the future of the victor's polis community.

The inscription of the song's composition into the world of the song is often accentuated still further, when Pindar, developing the image of the song-journey, envisions his relationship with his addressees as that of *xenia*, or guest-friendship.

§4 *Xenia* as the essence of the journey motif

(a) Survey of traditional scholarly approaches to Pindaric *xenia* specifically and the ancient Greek concept of *xenia* in general: the paradoxical nature of *xenia*.

Pindar's frequent references to *xenia* have given rise to much debate as to the precise role which guest-friendship plays in the odes. Taking Pindar's references to his travels quite literally, Frank Nisetich points out what a crucial component of Pindar's life the *xenia* of those who hired him must have been: "without hospitality and generosity there could be no victory celebration."¹⁵¹ But already Hermann Fränkel has suggested that most likely Pindar's references to the hospitality of his addressees are meant to be read metaphorically. Here, according to Fränkel, lies the key to the poet's seemingly tasteless mentions of the pay he received for his songs: "The exchange or poem against fee did not belong to the world of commerce, but to the whole philosophy of 'guest-friend.' Generosity and hospitality ranked among the highest virtues in the circles in which Pindar worked, and the poet, like any other honoured visitor, received the appropriate guest-gift...And just as great nobles, even without visiting each other, could set up a guest-friendship simply by interchange of gifts (cf. *Iliad* 11.23 and *Odyssey*

¹⁵¹ Nisetich 1980:46.

21.34-38), so the poet sent his poem when he could not come in person, and the recipient sent a gift in return to his ‘guest-friend’.”¹⁵² Focusing on Pindaric *xenia* as a communal rather than a personal bond, Hermann Gundert suggests that just as a victory revives (or *awakens*, in Pindar’s parlance) the excellence of the victor’s clan and polis, so the victory song revives old bonds of *xenia* between the polis community of the poet and of his addressee.¹⁵³ William Slater approaches the subject from yet a different viewpoint: according to him, assertion of *xenia* between poet and victor is crucial for Pindar because it refutes the possibility of envy and thereby validates as sincere the words of praise which the poet addresses to the lucky athlete.¹⁵⁴ More recently, Leslie Kurke has elaborated on Fränkel’s and Slater’s points to suggest that the role of the Pindaric *xenia* is twofold—it coerces Pindar’s aristocratic audience to abandon any ill feelings towards the victor and to join in the poet’s praise; and it also serves to “explain or motivate” Pindar’s song as a costly gift, or *agalma*, typically exchanged for hospitality by equal members of the aristocracy: “...the poet conceptualizes the *xenia* relationship as entailing his poem, his praise of the victor, within a reciprocal exchange of goods and services.”¹⁵⁵

Fränkel, Gundert, Slater, Nisetich, and Kurke offer varying approaches to Pindaric *xenia*, yet their methods are similar inasmuch as these scholars focus on the role of *xenia* in the “real world,” in the *extra*-poetic relationship of Pindar to his addressees.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵² Fränkel 1975:432-433.

¹⁵³ Gundert 1978 (reprint of the 1935 edition).

¹⁵⁴ Slater 1979a: 80.

¹⁵⁵ Kurke 1991:139-140.

¹⁵⁶ For yet another approach to Pindaric *xenia*, see Crotty (1982:78-79). Crotty believes that friendship between poet and victor manifests itself in three ways in Pindar’s odes, and that these three ways correspond to the three levels of *philia* as outlined by Aristotle in the *Nichomachean Ethics* (8.1156a6-

Their suggestions illuminate only half of the concept of Pindaric *xenia*. The other half consists of the role which *xenia* plays *within* the world of the song as a *poetic* (rather than a social or economic) phenomenon.

I will suggest that the intra-poetic role of *xenia* within Pindar's odes is rooted in the paradoxical nature of the concept of *xenos* as it existed from Homer to the late fifth-century BC. On the intra- (rather than extra-) poetic level, Pindar evokes the inherently paradoxical connotations of guest-friendship as the most precise way of articulating the relationship between himself and his addressee within the time and space of the ode. Furthermore, as we shall see at the conclusion of the present chapter, *xenia* serves within the Pindaric ode as foundation for a curious reciprocal relation between the extra- and intra-poetic worlds.

The origins of the Greek term *xenia* are suggestive of the paradox inherent to the concept and unfortunately wholly lost in the English translation of the term as "guest-friendship." In the prevalent scholarly view, *xenos* originally meant "stranger" or "foreigner" and its meaning was thus directly opposite to that of the typical term for a friend, *philos*.¹⁵⁷ However, already in Homer the word *xenos* undergoes what Hélène

b32). These are (a) friendship of good men who "esteem the goodness of one another," (b) friendship based on pleasure, and (c) friendship based on utility. According to Crotty, Pindaric *xenia* seems to include all of these: the poet (a) repeatedly asserts himself as an *agathos* on par with the victor; (b) the poet sometimes speaks of his friendship to the victor in erotic terms—i.e., terms of mutual pleasure; and, (c) the friendship is of use to the poet, because he gets paid for his songs.

¹⁵⁷ Kakridis 1963:86. Indeed, Kakridis even suggests a possible relation between the Greek *xenos* and the Latin *hostis*—stranger, enemy: "En effet, ξένος est fait sur un radical qui peut être apparenté pour le sens et dans une certaine mesure pour la forme au latin *hostis* (étranger, ennemi), au gothique *gasts*, allem. *gast* (étranger, hôte), au vieux slave *gosti* (hôte), mais l'étymologie n'en est pas démontrable" (ibid.). David Belmont likewise writes of the difficulty of finding a precise etymology for *xenos*. Belmont quotes Boisacq's *Dictionnaire étymologique de la Langue grecque*, 677-8: as a potential ancestor of *xenos* Boisacq adduces the form **ghs-enuo*, which is possibly related to the Latin *cēna*. Alternatively, *xenos* might derive from *ex* + **enyos*, which would mean "one who is from another land"; this latter possibility, one may note, would support Kakridis' allegation that "stranger" is the original meaning of *xenos*. However, as Belmont notes, none of these etymologies are more than conjectures, and ultimately linguistics "cannot really

Kakridis terms a semantic evolution, so that within the epics it sometimes means stranger/foreigner and sometimes *a friend from a foreign country*.¹⁵⁸ The “évolution sémantique” thus results in a “*confusion sémantique*.”¹⁵⁹ David Konstan offers a different explanation of the process whereby “*xenos*” came to mean “guest-friend.” While agreeing with Kakridis that originally *xenos* meant simply “stranger,”¹⁶⁰ Konstan believes that the same word came to mean guest-friend only when it was modified by the adjective *philos* or when such a modification was *implied* by the context. Nevertheless, for Konstan, just as for Kakridis, the Homeric use of the word *xenos* to designate a friend is an oxymoronic one: “A stranger [...] is someone unknown, and it is paradoxical that a *xenos* in Homer should be called *philos*, or ‘dear.’”¹⁶¹ Writing of the phenomenon of *xenia* in the later epoch of the flourishing of the polis, Gabriel Herman dwells on the same inherent paradox of the concept, which he calls the “insider-outsider dichotomy.” Herman contrasts *xenos* with various other terms signifying friendship, reciprocity, and loyalty between two people or entities such as *philos*, *oikeios*, or *euergetes*: among these

provide a thoroughly satisfactory etymology” of *xenos* (Belmont 1962:69 and *ibid.*, note 34). Moreover, as Kakridis herself points out (*ibid.*, p.87), Homer’s use of the term *xenos* to designate a stranger rather than a guest-friend is confined exclusively to the *Odyssey*: in the *Iliad* *xenos* always denotes a guest-friend. Given that the *Iliad*, at least according to the majority of scholars, was composed at an earlier period than the *Odyssey*, one may doubt whether we have substantial proof that “stranger/foreigner” is, indeed, the oldest meaning of *xenos*.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. the gloss of *xenos* in the sense of guest-friend which, in the 5th century AD, Hesychius offers in his lexicon: he explains the word to have meant literally “a friend [*philos*] from a foreign land [*xenē* (sc. *gē*)]” (as quoted in Konstan 1997:34).

¹⁵⁹ Kakridis 1963:86.

¹⁶⁰ However, it is noteworthy that Konstan insists on a distinction between the concepts of “stranger” (one unknown) and “foreigner.” While Kakridis and other scholars use these two terms interchangeably, Konstan believes that the original Homeric meaning of *xenos*, when not modified with the adjective *philos*, was strictly “stranger.” In late Archaic and in Classical times, unmodified *xenos* came to mean “foreigner” (Konstan 1997:34). Such a distinction further accentuates the paradoxical nature of the Homeric term *xenos philos* to designate a guest friend: according to Konstan, the term literally means “dear unknown” or “unknown friend.”

¹⁶¹ Konstan 1997:33-34.

terms, *xenos* is unique in that it can mean both “stranger” and “guest-friend” and thus connotes simultaneous distance and proximity:

...only *xenos* and its rare derivatives, *idioxenos* and *doryxenos*, refer invariably to individuals originating from different social units. This fact is highlighted by the curious propensity of ancient writers to indicate the provenance of the actors. It is as if they considered their provenance inseparable from their personalities. Thus, it appears that a *xenos*, whether he came from a city, tribe, *ethnos*, or some other social unit, always had a group identity distinct from that of his partner. In other words, each individual in a *xenos*-dyad was an outsider with respect to his partner’s group. In the extant sources, no two people with the same group identity are ever referred to as *xenoi*...To call an insider a *xenos* seems to have amounted to a contradiction in terms.¹⁶²

While the semantic evolution whereby *xenos* came to mean both “stranger” and “friend” may be traceable, it does not lessen the self-contradiction inherent to the use of *xenos* to designate a guest-friend. Both Kakridis and Konstan analyze episodes from the *Odyssey* where, at the beginning, Odysseus is addressed as *xenos* in the sense of stranger, but towards the end, as amicable feelings between him and his addressees develop, he is addressed as *xenos* clearly in the sense of guest-friend.¹⁶³ For Kakridis, such episodes serve as explanation of the oxymoronic use of the term “*xenos*” to designate a friend: they permit one to see “comment un rapport humain, qui implique à l’origine tant de suspicion, a pu évoluer petit à petit jusqu’à l’amitié [...] ces deux amis dont l’amitié a eu comme point de départ l’hospitalité gardent le nom de ξένους.”¹⁶⁴ But while such episodes do indeed permit one to trace the evolution of a relationship from strangeness and even hostility to friendship, they can hardly free the term *xenos* from its paradoxical implications. In citing these episodes, Kakridis essentially suggests that *first* two men are

¹⁶² Herman 1987:10-12.

¹⁶³ Kakridis 1963:97-100 and Konstan 1997:35-35.

¹⁶⁴ Kakridis 1963:100-101.

strangers, and *then* they become friends. Yet the fact remains that the word *xenos* in the sense of guest-friend encompasses the two opposite aspects of distance and proximity *simultaneously*: it is a *friend from a strange land*. Someone from abroad, from the realm of “the other,” while remaining a foreigner, is, at the same time, literally a *bosom friend*—an individual privy to the inner realm of his host’s *oikos*. “How and why a special vocabulary for friendships between strangers emerged,” concludes Konstan, “is obscure.”¹⁶⁵

The exact parameters of Homeric and Classical *xenia* remain a topic of debate among scholars. The prevalent view has been that *xenia* in Archaic as well as in Classical times was a “vraie institution,”¹⁶⁶ a relationship of a purely formal, objective nature, established via official rituals and ceremonies and independent of the “inclinations of those who are involved in them.”¹⁶⁷ As Moses Finley puts it, “guest-friend and guest-friendship were far more than sentimental terms of human affection. In the world of Odysseus they were technical names for very concrete relationships, as formal and as evocative of rights and duties as marriage.”¹⁶⁸ It is logical that scholars adhering to this view believe *xenia* to have been passed on as an inheritance from fathers to sons regardless of the latter’s personal feelings: “L’amitié ainsi née,” writes Kakridis, “est sacrée et se transmet aux fils.”¹⁶⁹ Likewise, perception of *xenia* as an officially instituted treaty has led some scholars to perceive it as significant protective force. Thus

¹⁶⁵ Konstan 1997:37.

¹⁶⁶ Kakridis 1963:103, note 11.

¹⁶⁷ Adkins 1972: 18.

¹⁶⁸ Finley 1954:100.

¹⁶⁹ Kakridis 1963:103-4; for the same view see Herman 1987:69; Adkins 1972:18; and Belmont 1962:50.

Finley sees *xenia* from an essentially Darwinian point of view as an effective survival tactic employed by warriors and travelers in the “permanently hostile environment” of the Homeric world.¹⁷⁰

More recently, Konstan has offered a different interpretation of Homeric and Classical guest-friendship by arguing that throughout Antiquity *xenia* remained an essentially “voluntary and affective” relationship based on mutual admiration and respect.¹⁷¹ Konstan argues that such interpretation of *xenia* is supported by the fact that we have no concrete evidence either of rituals and ceremonies officially establishing two men as *xenoi*. Konstan likewise points out that while the *xenia* of fathers seems to have *predisposed* sons towards engaging in the same relationship, it was by no means a given that the sons would be each other’s guest-friends—the relationship had to be voluntarily re-established anew in each generation, and it is therefore erroneous to consider *xenia* hereditary.¹⁷² In a similar vein, insisting on the private and unofficial nature of *xenia*, Konstan believes that “while [*xenia*] may occasionally have facilitated travel in a rough world innocent of international law, the Homeric epics give no evidence that such a function was primary: no one selects a destination on the grounds that he has a *xenos* there.”¹⁷³

Perhaps the greatest disagreement with regard to *xenia* occurs between scholars on the question of whether or not Homeric guest-friendship underwent any significant changes in Classical times (this latter term is used broadly to include the phenomenon of

¹⁷⁰ Finley 1954:98. So too Belmont 1962:33 and Kakridis 1963:86 and 104.

¹⁷¹ Konstan 1997:36 and 85.

¹⁷² Konstan 1997:36-37 and 86.

¹⁷³ Konstan 1997:37.

xenia in Pindar). For the most part, scholars are inclined to see a shift from the private to the political sphere. The ideal of *xenia*, writes David Belmont, “seems to have thrived in an inverse relation to that of the *polis*, the unified city-state; as the *polis* ideal grew stronger, the practice of guest-friendship naturally and inevitably waned.”¹⁷⁴ In a similar vein, Gabriel Herman has argued that in the Classical period the private relationship of *xenia* became subordinate to every citizen’s loyalty to his own polis.¹⁷⁵ Finley sees the evolution of *xenia* from Homeric to Classical times somewhat differently: in Homer *xenia* can exist only between two individuals, never between two communities, but in Classical times the opposite pattern prevails. Finley cites Herodotus 1.69 where Croesus sends an embassy with gifts to the Spartans; in response the latter make an alliance and create bonds of *xenia* with the Lydians.¹⁷⁶ Contrary to this position, Konstan re-examines the historical episode appealed to by Herman, in Xenophon’s *Hellenica* 4.1, where the Spartan general Agesilaus and the Persian satrap Pharnabazus begin with argument but end with the establishing of guest-friendship. For Konstan, this historical anecdote proves the opposite of what Herman believes it to prove: retaining most of the Homeric traits, *xenia* of the Classical period was still essentially a personal pact between two individuals. Far from becoming subordinate to polis mentality, argues Konstan, *xenia* was cultivated by the aristocracy in Classical times “as a way of maintaining its identity in the context of new forms promoted by the democratic cities.”¹⁷⁷ Xenophon further relates that after Agesilaus pronounces himself Pharnabazus’ *xenos*, the satrap’s young

¹⁷⁴ Belmont 1962:32.

¹⁷⁵ Herman 1987:2.

¹⁷⁶ Finley 1954:100.

¹⁷⁷ Konstan 1997:86.

son approaches the Spartan and “adopts” him as his own *xenos*—a proposition which Agesilaus willingly accepts. For Konstan this is evidence that in Classical, as in Archaic times, guest-friendship was *not* hereditary, otherwise Pharnabazus’ son would not have felt the need to replicate the relationship between the Spartan and his father.¹⁷⁸

All in all, polemics over the exact parameters and the evolution or the absence thereof of *xenia* do not alter the fact—agreed upon by scholars of guest-friendship—that a “stranger-friend” is inherently a self-contradictory concept. In what follows, I analyze the poetic role with which Pindar endows the “distance-proximity” dichotomy of *xenia*. Perhaps the clearest illustration of this dichotomy is, once again, the Homeric encounter of Glaucus and Diomedes: the two must differentiate—*separate*—themselves from one another, in order to discover and re-establish their bond.¹⁷⁹ So too Pindar, in thematically structuring his song as his address to his audience, must differentiate the “I” and the “you”—*I* am a Theban, while *you* are an Aeginetan. But he must do so only in order to begin his *coming* from Thebes to Aegina.¹⁸⁰ He is a *xenos* because he is not an Aeginetan, and in this sense he is a stranger, but he is also a *xenos* because he is the one

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Herman: “Indeed, the idea of strangeness combined with friendship is built into the assumptions of the actors. Diomedes’ glee when he says “I am your *xenos philos* in the heart of Argos; you (i.e., Glaucus) are mine in Lykia...”...[is] typical of the whole situation” (1987:12). I would note, however, that in the Homeric scene the heroes not so much *assume* a “strangeness combined with friendship,” but rather *establish* it through their own efforts, by first *differentiating* themselves from each other and then *joining* in a reciprocal relationship. Cf. Marilyn Katz’ comment on the *homilia* scene, i.e., Penelope’s and Odysseus’ meeting and conversation in Bk.19 of the *Odyssey*: “*Xenia* functions as the unifying principle of the *homilia* by virtue of its capacity as a ritual both to incorporate Odysseus into his household and simultaneously to continue his estrangement from it” (1991:134).

¹⁸⁰ Herman notes that “[r]itualised friends belong to different worlds, and one of the major problems facing ancient writers was explaining how their paths came to cross. Explanations range from fortuitous conjunctions of circumstances through premeditation and design to supernatural guidance.” A good example is *Odyssey* 21.14-23, when Odysseus and Iphitos meet in the house of a mutual friend because Odysseus was claiming an old debt from the people and Iphitos was looking for lost animals (ibid., p.41). I would note that no such random chance rules Pindar’s relationships with his addressees: he is their *xenos* because he himself sets out towards them, thereby forging with his own will, word-by-word and line-by-line, his address-journey which leads him from his own *topos oikeios* to theirs.

coming to Aegina, and in this sense he is a guest-friend. Latent within the concept of *xenia* is the same dichotomy implied in the equation of song with a continual coming: geographical distance as both separating and uniting.¹⁸¹

(b) The poet as guest in the domain of his song's addressee.

It is not in every ode that Pindar invokes *xenia* between himself and his addressee. As Gundert notes, even in those cases where such a relationship most probably existed, Pindar sometimes refrains from stating it explicitly in the ode.¹⁸² In other instances, the poet inserts arresting, vivid images of his relationship of *xenia* with the addressee. Thus in Nemean 1, addressed to Hieron's general, Chromios of Aetna, Pindar exclaims: "I have embarked on an occasion for many topics without casting any falsehood. / And I have taken my stand at the courtyard gates / of a generous host as I sing of noble deeds, / where a fitting feast has been arranged for me, for this home / is not unfamiliar with frequent visitors / from abroad..." (vv.18-24). These six lines contain all the wealth of the interrelated imagery of journeying, coming, and hospitality discussed above: Pindar envisions his song as a voyage by ship (ἐπέβαν) towards his addressee, and he further

¹⁸¹ Cf. Crotty (1982:85): "There is a certain necessary distance between individuals, and hence a constant need to maintain equity and due proportion in their dealings with each other. Pindar's use of erotic motifs...is important for all aspects of victory, but, more particularly, illuminates the combination of intimacy and distance that characterizes the *philotes* of poet and athlete. By referring his relationship with the victor to the basic conditions of the mortal race, Pindar shows the aspects of his *philotes* that are characteristic of all human *koinonai*." Although Crotty goes on to a very interesting discussion of Pindar's use of the themes of symposium and of *philotes*, he does not, unfortunately, develop any further his statement on the "combination of intimacy and distance that characterizes the *philotes* of poet and athlete." Instead, he focuses on demonstrating how both *eros* (involved in *philotes*) and food (involved in a symposium) demarcate mortals from the immortals.

¹⁸² Gundert (1978: 35): "In vielen von diesen Fällen, bei denen eine *Xenia* wahrscheinlich oder sicher ist, redet er nicht ausdrücklich davon." In note 152, Gundert lists examples of odes which do not contain mention of *xenia*—O.12, O.14, P.7, P.9. He also notes that in several cases where Pindar composed more than one ode for the same clan or athlete, he evokes *xenia* in one ode but not in another (e.g., in I.6 but not in N.5; in O.10 but not in O.11).

underscores the far-near relationship between himself and Chromios by envisioning himself as a *xenos* at the Syracusan's hospitable table.

To be sure, Nemean 1 does not, unlike Olympian 1, develop the theme of coming to the full. There is no *continual* coming involved here, for Pindar has already arrived: “ἔσταν δ’ ἐπ’ αὐλείαις θύραις” (v.19). But another ode likewise addressed to Chromios—Nemean 9—offers a good example of the interrelation between the theme of song as coming and *xenia*. At the opening of the ode, Pindar, along with other celebrants of the victory, is about to travel from Sikyon where the games took place to Chromios' home in Aitna: “Let us go in revelry from Apollo at Sikyon, Muses, / to the newly founded Aitna, where the wide-opened gates are overwhelmed by guests, / to Chromios' blessed home...” (vv.1-3). In the conclusion, Pindar envisions himself as a guest at a symposium at Chromios' table: “Let someone mix that sweet prompter of the revel, / and let him serve the powerful child of the vine in the / silver bowls which his horses once won for Chromios and brought to him along with the duly woven / crown of Leto's son from holy Sikyon” (vv.50-53). In other words, the journey of poet and revel band has been achieved *while the song was being sung*.¹⁸³ Thus, through a technique quite different from the one we have investigated in Olympian 1, Pindar conveys the same sense of song as the poet's continual coming towards his addressee. And, just as in Olympian 1, the poet expresses the interrelation of distance and proximity which his coming implies as *xenia*.

¹⁸³ Cf. Crotty (1982:85): “The ode [Nemean 9] presents the return voyage to Aetna of the victor and his retinue.” I would contend, however, that though Pindar is here travelling together with other celebrants of Chromios, emphasis should be laid on the fact that this song is *his* voyage, his poetic coming to his addressee. Chromios' retinue is of little importance here.

We have seen that on some occasions Pindar refrains altogether from the mention of *xenia*, while on others, as in the case of the two Hieron poems, evocation of hospitality between the coming poet and his addressee plays a prominent role in the ode. There are yet other instances where Pindar not only invokes *xenia*, but, indeed, permits it to trespass the bounds of a simple statement of fact (“I am your *xenos*”) and to become a theme permeating the ode as a whole. Furthermore, as commentators have pointed out, it is common for Pindar to perceive not only himself as a *xenos* coming to the house of his addressee, but also his addressee (the victor) as a *xenos* entertained at the site of the athletic contest by the local deity or by the officials presiding over the contest. Sometimes, Pindar seems to merge these two aspects within the scope of one poem. For example, as Leslie Kurke has pointed out, within the catalogue of the victor Xenokrates’ victories in Isthmian 2.13-29, “always the geographic marker stands in an emphatic position, conjuring up the image of Xenokrates (or his charioteer) progressing from one glorious ‘host’ to another.”¹⁸⁴ Indeed, in the case of each of the four victories mentioned (Isthmian, Pythian, Panathenaic, and Olympic),¹⁸⁵ Pindar envisions Xenokrates (or his charioteer Nikomachos) as welcomed and honored by a presiding deity or mortal official. That these welcomes bear the connotations of *xenia* becomes explicit in v.24, where the Olympic heralds are said to recognize Nikomachos’ victory “παθόντες πού τι φιλόξενον ἔργον” (“undoubtedly having experienced some act of hospitality”). But at the conclusion of the ode Xenokrates is praised no longer as guest but rather as host, when

¹⁸⁴ Kurke 1991:152-153. It is noteworthy that the continual progression outlined by Kurke is similar to the one we have seen in O.1, except that there the poet continually progressed towards victor (Hieron), whereas here the victor (Xenokrates) progresses from host to host.

¹⁸⁵ Although in actuality, it seems that Xenokrates had never won at Olympia—his brother Theron did. Cf. Fennell’s commentary on line 28: “A purposely vague statement, as only Theron won at Olympia”.

Pindar envisions Xenokrates' guest-entertaining table as a ship with sails: "οὐδέ ποτε ξενίαν / οὐρος ἐμπνεύσαις ὑπέστειλ' ἱστίον ἀμφὶ τράπεζαν" ("and never did an oncoming wind / cause him to furl the sails at his hospitable table") (vv.39-40). In the next line, where Pindar suggests that Xenokrates' hospitable generosity knew no bounds and flourished under any conditions, the bold nautical metaphor is taken yet a step further: "ἀλλ' ἐπέρα ποτὶ μὲν Φᾶσιν θερείαις, / ἐν δὲ χειμῶνι πλέων Νείλου πρὸς Ἀκτάν" ("but he would travel to Phasis in summer seasons, / while in winter he would sail to the shore of the Nile"). Here the merging of Xenokrates-guest with Xenokrates-host is complete: the hospitable table at which Xenokrates is accustomed to welcome his guests has metamorphosed into a ship and set sail to far-off lands.¹⁸⁶ The metaphor is Janus-faced because Xenokrates is not only entertaining the *xenoi* who travel to his city but is also simultaneously setting sail himself as a traveler to the domains of others. But from this image of victor as guest-*xenos* Pindar immediately reverts to the theme of himself, the poet (or his song) coming as a guest to the victor's hometown. In the last epode he concludes:

μή νυν, ὅτι φθονεραὶ
 θνατῶν φρένας ἀμφικρέμανται ἐλπίδες,
 μήτ' ἀρετὰν ποτε σιγάτω πατρώαν,
 μηδὲ τοῦσδ' ὕμνους· ἐπεὶ τοι
 οὐκ ἐλινύσοντας αὐτοὺς ἐργασάμαν.
 ταῦτα, Νικάσιππ', ἀπόνειμον, ὅταν
 ξεῖνον ἐμὸν ἡθαῖον ἔλθῃς.

Therefore, since envious hopes
 hang about the minds of mortals,

¹⁸⁶ Cf. Verdenius' note on line 42: "The image emphasizes both the extension and the continuity of Xenokrates' hospitality." Cf. likewise Verdenius' critique of Péron's interpretation of the reference to Nile and Phasis (ibid., footnote 80): "Péron (86-7) argues that the mention of Phasis and Nile serves to emphasize the qualitative rather than the quantitative aspect of Xenokrates' hospitality: visiting the former in summer and the latter in winter is the most comfortable way of travelling; similarly Xenokrates tries to make his guests feel as comfortable as possible. This is an anachronistic interpretation, for it transforms Xenokrates into a kind of tour-operator."

let the son never keep silent his father's excellence
 nor these hymns, for I truly
 did not fashion them to remain stationary.
 Impart these words to him, Nikasippos,
 when you visit my honorable host.

By the time Pindar composed Isthmian 2, Xenokrates was presumably no longer alive—all references to him within the ode are in the past tense and Pindar's main addressee is the victor's son, Thrasyboulos.¹⁸⁷ In these last lines, the poet seems to send the ode to Thrasyboulos via an otherwise unknown messenger, Nikasippos. At a second glance, however, it appears that the ode is not an object to be passively carried but rather is travelling towards Thrasyboulos on its own: "I have not," says the poet, "fashioned my hymns to remain stationary."¹⁸⁸ It is thus ambiguous whether the verses are borne by Nikasippos or are travelling on their own; but be that as it may, Pindar envisions the ode-bearer Nikasippos as arriving to the house of Thrasyboulos whom the poet refers to as "ξῆϊνον ἐμὸν ἡθαῖον," "my honorable host." At the conclusion of the ode it is Pindar and his song who are guests in the house of the victor, now represented by Xenokrates' son and heir. The elaboration of the "poet as victor's *xenos*" motif is appropriate in an ode dedicated to the memory of a man whose name, Xenokrates, means "*xenos*-strength." One could say that Pindar plays with the ambiguity inherent to the victor's name when he praises Xenokrates as excelling in the capacity of both guest and host.¹⁸⁹ As we shall see

¹⁸⁷ Verdenius 1982.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. Nemean 5, composed about 15 years earlier around 485, which opens with a similar image: "I am not a sculptor, so as to fashion stationary statues that stand on their same base. / Rather, on board every ship and in every boat, sweet song, / go forth from Aigina and spread the news that / Lampon's mighty son Pytheas / has won..."

¹⁸⁹ It is common for Pindar to play with the etymologies of names: for his word-play with the name of Xenokrates as well as with that of his charioteer Nikomachos and with other names containing the root "nika/o-," see Verdenius' note on Isthmian 2.26 and 39. Barkhuizen, 56-58 and 84-85.

in Chapter 3, the reciprocity of the relationship of *xenia*, reflected in the fact that “*xenos*” can mean either “guest” or “host,” becomes a crucial poetic theme in the odes.

(c) The “backwards” reflection of *xenia* in myth: Tantalus (O.1) and Agamemnon (P.11) as anti-*xenoi*

In several of the odes, the chronotope as the present layer of time, the “here and now,” finds its basis and ultimate meaning in a paradigm of *xenia* as revealed within the mythical section of the ode. Olympian 1 and Pythian 11 offer particularly interesting developments of this interconnection of past and present: in both odes, the chronotope as expressed in present-day *xenia* is founded not only in mythological analogy but also in the mythological paradigm of anti-*xenia*. In the mythological past, the song discovers the diametrical opposite of *xenia* and on this founds its conception of what the guest-host relationship *ought to be*.

Olympian 1 begins with references to Hieron’s “friendly table” at which the tyrant is wont to entertain itinerant poets, and, in the conclusion of the ode, Pindar explicitly lauds Hieron as the poet’s *xenos* (v.103). These two references to feasting and *xenia* are echoed in the interplay of the same motifs in the myth of Pelops which unfolds in the middle of the ode.¹⁹⁰ Pindar sings two versions of the myth of Pelops: the traditional one which he discards, and his own version which he offers as the more pious one. According to the old form of the myth, Tantalus, grown hubristic with the friendship of

¹⁹⁰ Cf. Kurke (1991:146): “...the *xenia* relationship seems inevitably to expand beyond the narrow limits of a direct connection between poet and victor. Bonds of *xenia* proliferate to subsume the whole process of athletic competition, victory, and celebration. The poet represents all these phenomena as a chain of *charis* relations, in which the *xenia* or *philia* of poet and patron often participates as the last link...the games themselves can be assimilated to *xenia*...Thus, on occasion, the poet invokes a long-standing bond of *xenia* between the victor’s family and a god.” Below, I aim to demonstrate precisely such a “proliferation” of *xenia* within Olympian 1 from the poet-patron relationship into myth. However, I believe it is crucial to trace the logical principle behind such a proliferation, rather than to explain it simply as a “chain of *charis* relations”—especially since, as we shall see, the myth of Pelops presents a negative version of *xenia*.

the gods, invited the Olympians to a feast at which he attempted to feed them the cooked body of his own son Pelops. One of the deities—Demeter—ate absentmindedly the boy’s shoulder, but immediately thereupon Zeus detected the ruse, restored Pelops (minus one shoulder), and cast Tantalus into Hades. This version does not suit Pindar, because, says he, “ἐμοὶ δ’ ἄπορα γαστρίμαργον μακάρων τιν’ εἶπεῖν· ἀφίσταμαι” (v.52). The poet then offers his own version, according to which Tantalus quite innocently invited the gods to a feast in return for feasts at which they had entertained him (vv.36-39). When the immortals arrived, Poseidon fell in love with the host’s son, Pelops, and kidnapped him to Olympus. It was then that the jealous neighbors came up with the calumny that the boy had been cooked and eaten.

Now, while Pindar does not hesitate to re-write an ancient myth, he does not, at the same time, deny that Tantalus was indeed punished by the gods, joining, along with Ixion, Tityus, and Sisyphus, the famous cohort of perpetual sufferers in the Underworld. Wherein, then, lay Tantalus’ crime, if the anthropophagic version of the myth is to be refuted? Pindar explains: Tantalus, a mortal honored by the Olympians, could not digest his good fortune; after the gods initiated him into immortality with nectar and ambrosia, he stole this divine food from them and fed it to his mortal friends at a symposium (v.55-64).¹⁹¹ Pindar thus tells two stories of Tantalus’ sin, the two presenting mirror images of anti-*xenia*. In the old version of the myth, Tantalus perverts *xenia* by attempting to “pull”

¹⁹¹ Cf. Crotty 1982: 89-90. Crotty discusses the theme of *xenia* in the new version of the myth, but not in the old: “[Tantalus] attempted to do away with the barriers separating gods and men, which Zeus had imposed. Tantalus’ crime was to merge the fellowship of the symposium (61) with the fellowship of the gods’ table. Once again, the symposium and the common celebration around the table are distinguished from joy and prerogatives not permitted to mortals; the symposium suggests the limits of mortal life, which cannot be fused with the life enjoyed by the immortals.” Unfortunately, Crotty does not justify or explain his perception of a symposium as the symbol of mortal limitation. Below, I disagree with his viewpoint, as I attempt to show that it is precisely in a symposiastic setting that Pindar and his heroes frequently achieve their *prophetic* (and hence god-like) powers.

the immortal gods down to earth by feeding them the mortal—indeed, *dead*—flesh of Pelops. In the new version, Tantalus perverts *xenia* by attempting to “pull” earth-treading mortals up towards heaven by feeding them the immortalizing food of the gods. It is fitting that in response to this latter offense, the gods send his son Pelops back to the realm of mortality, “μετὰ τὸ ταχύποτμον αἴτις ἀνέρων ἔθνος” (v. 66) where he had originally belonged. Thus Tantalus’ literal trans-*gression* gives the gods cause to regret a “transgression” of boundaries which they have allowed themselves by taking a mortal soul up to Olympus.¹⁹²

On the surface Pindar invokes the traditional story of Pelops only to refute it. Yet the old version of the myth serves not only the negative purpose of a push-off point, but also a positive, contributing goal. Indeed, as scholars have frequently noted, Pindar, even as he vehemently refutes the old version of the Pelops myth, inserts an allusion to it into his own, new account: the Pindaric Pelops, albeit supposedly never cooked by his father, is nevertheless “*drawn out of a cauldron, furnished with a gleaming ivory shoulder*” (vv.26-27). As Charles Segal, summing up earlier commentaries, writes, “The ivory shoulder perhaps itself symbolizes this insouciant flash and brilliance of youth, the firmness and radiance of young skin and flesh [...] Yet this same ivory shoulder is also an ambivalent symbol, for not only does it attract the *eros* of the gods but behind all its brightness (*phaidimon*, 27) lurks the myth of its origin which Pindar seeks to refute, the accidental eating of the shoulder by Demeter, the goddess who herself gives to men for

¹⁹² For an alternative, moralistic, interpretation of O.1, cf. Bowra 1936: “in Olympian 1 the real importance of the myth of Pelops is that it is a lesson on the bad and the good king, on Tantalus who abused the gods’ kindness and was punished and on Pelops who trusted in them and was rewarded. As such the myth is relevant to Hieron, who has it in his power to become either a bad king like Tantalus or a good king like Pelops.” While the two interpretations are not mutually exclusive, it is noteworthy that O.1 never focuses on Tantalus and Pelops *as rulers*, but only as hosts and protégés of gods and/or mortals.

their nourishment the substance of their mortal lives in a cycle of fertility and barrenness, death and rebirth.”¹⁹³ Only on the surface does Pindar refute the old and uphold the new version of the myth: a closer reading reveals that the two are interconnected. What is the poet’s aim in playing here with the merging of truth and falsehood? I would argue that it is only by actively engaging the “false” version of the Pelops-Tantalus myth in his song that Pindar is able to give a full portrait of Tantalus: in both accounts, Tantalus attempts to transcend, and thereby to confound, cosmic boundaries. Even as he refutes the first version, the poet at the same time suggests that Tantalus’ attempt at transgression was not just *a* crime against the gods, but rather that he is *the* transgressor—the violator of *both* nether and upper boundaries.¹⁹⁴

The interrelation of the *xenia* enjoyed by the mythical heroes and the *xenia* enjoyed by the poet’s “I” and the audience’s “you” is still more elaborate in Pythian 11, traditionally considered one of the most obscure of Pindaric odes. Below I offer a brief synopsis of the ode; an outline of the problems in its composition typically pointed out by scholars; and a critique of the traditional scholarly approaches to these problems. I then offer my own analysis of Pythian 11 based on the role which *xenia* and the image of song as journey play within the overall design of the ode.

¹⁹³ Segal 1964. Summing up earlier commentaries, Segal writes: “J. T. Kakridis, “Die Pelopssage bei Pindar,” *Philologus* 85 (1929-30) 475ff rightly sees the “pure caldron” as referring to the older, sinister myth, which Pindar replaces, but does not completely let slip from the audience’s memory: “Dann will er diese Liebe des Gottes begründen, wobei er aber Ziige aus der alten Sage bewahrt...” (477). He also construes the *epei* of 26 causally so that Poseidon does not fall in love with a new-born babe.” Cf. likewise Mezger 1880: 90.

¹⁹⁴ C. Segal 1964: “Pindar is not explicit as to whether the purpose of Tantalus’ theft was actually to make his mortal companions immortal; but if this was so, as later tradition suggests (e.g., Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius* 3.25.2), then his deed would be another, still more serious violation of *charis*, setting at naught the limits of mortal nature and the order of the universe. The gods do not take back their gift, but convert it into an immortality of suffering...Tantalus enjoys neither the gods’ eternal happiness nor man’s final respite from pain in death.”

(d) Pythian 11: overview of difficulties in the text of the ode.

The poet begins by calling upon three Theban goddesses to come to the Ismenion, a temple of Apollo in Thebes, in order to celebrate the victory of Thrasydaïos at Pytho. The song then seamlessly segues into myth via a relative pronoun: "...Thrasydaïos made famous the hearth / of his fathers when he cast a third wreath upon it / as a victor in the rich fields of Pylades, / the host of Laconian Orestes, / who, indeed, at the slaughter of his father was rescued by his nurse Arsinoë..." (vv.13-17). This transition has been aptly termed by David Young as an instance of an unusually random "geographical subterfuge": made on the pretext of the geographical topos where the victory was achieved, the transition to Orestes and the gruesome story of Agamemnon's murder that follows seem to have nothing in common either with the joyous occasion of a Pythian victory or with the personal circumstances of the athlete.¹⁹⁵ Having begun with Arsinoë's rescue of baby Orestes from his cruel mother Clytemnestra, the myth goes back in time and leads us first to Clytemnestra's slaughter of Agamemnon and Cassandra and then further yet to the origins of the queen's decision to commit the murder. Then, turning back to events more recent, the myth reiterates details of Agamemnon's death and finally comes back in a circle to the rescue of Orestes. The myth ends with the latter's eventual return home from exile and his retaliation at Clytemnestra and Aegisthus. And here, having completed his miniature Oresteia, Pindar abruptly exclaims, "Can it be, my friends, that I have strayed off the straight road, that I have been blown off the right course!" The poet promptly returns to praise of Thrasydaïos and concludes the ode with

¹⁹⁵ Young 1968:3, borrowing the term from Meautis 1962:264. Young lists the following additional instances of "geographical subterfuge" in Pindar: O. 9.45; P. 4.4; N.9.9; O.7.77-80; N.5.37-42; P.10.30. Cf. Wilamowitz (1922: 260): "ganz ausserlich ist die Verbindung mit dem Mythos."

some moralizing on the reprehensibility of tyrannies and the wholesomeness of the middle estate, followed by brief praise of the mythical Iolaos and the Dioscuri.

Pythian 11 thus contains several enigmas puzzled over by commentators from ancient times to the present day: the unfounded transition into myth; the seeming inappropriateness of the dark, tragic myth to the joyous occasion; the abrupt, almost mocking exit out of the myth;¹⁹⁶ and, finally, the obscure opposition of tyranny and the middle estate.¹⁹⁷ Compounding these difficulties is the uncertainty in the date of the ode's composition. The scholia, basing themselves on then-extant records of Pythian victors, maintain that Thrasydaos was victorious twice: in 474 and in 454 BC. As the dates are twenty years apart, it remains unclear whether the same athlete could have participated and won in both events, as well as which of these two events is commemorated in the ode.¹⁹⁸ Since this difficulty has traditionally inspired commentators to seek evidence for the correct date within the wording and imagery of Pythian 11 itself, the question of the date has significantly affected perception of the ode's meaning.

(e) Historical survey of Pindaric interpretation in general and of P.11 in particular: historicizing and moralizing approaches vs. the interpretation of poetry *qua* poetry.

¹⁹⁶ The scholia's judgment of Pythian 11's treatment of myth is severe: "ἄριστα ὁ Πίνδαρος τὸ ἐγκώμιον εἰργάσατο· ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἐξῆς σφόδρα ἀκαίρῳ παρεκβάσει ἐχρήσατο."

¹⁹⁷ This particular enigma is further exacerbated by what Young calls a "monstrous textual crux" in vv.54-57. Young believes that "this complex crux is undoubtedly beyond repair" and criticizes extant attempts to emend it (Young 1968:2, and *ibid.*, note 4).

¹⁹⁸ For a comprehensive overview of the scholia and of all the evidence available for P11's date, see Farnell; Bowra 1964:402-405; Young 1968.

Twentieth-century interpretations of Pythian 11 generally fall into two categories, the historicizing and the moralizing one, both of which can be traced back to the theories developed in the first half of the nineteenth century by August Boeckh and Ludolph Dissen. In their 1821 joint edition-cum-commentary of Pindar each of the two scholars expounded his own approach to the unity of an epinician ode. For Boeckh, the key to Pindar lies in reading each ode as an allegory of a particular event from the victorious athlete's lifetime.¹⁹⁹ Dissen's approach is less biographical and more moralizing: each ode conceals a *Grundgedanke*, one underlying, uniting thought, which can often be summed up in the form of a gnome or moral.²⁰⁰ As David Young persuasively shows in his "Pindaric Criticism," most interpretations of Pindaric odes that have appeared since the middle of the nineteenth century follow—consciously or unconsciously, explicitly or in camouflaged form—either Dissen's or Boeckh's method.²⁰¹ In the case of Pythian 11 the distinction between the two modes of interpretation is especially apparent: the unusual complexity of this ode has inspired an abundant variety of readings; yet while each new reading strives for originality, essentially all of them either focus on the

¹⁹⁹ As we shall see below, commentators influenced by Boeckh's biographic theory do not, necessarily, adhere to his principle of reconstructing an event from the *victor's* life. Instead, it can be an event within the biography of the poet himself and/or a historic event unfolding in the Greek world at the time of the ode's composition. Boeckh's biographic approach thus easily evolves into the *autobiographic*/historical one. For an attempt to distinguish the historic from the (auto)-biographic approach, cf. Köhnken 1971:19-24 (Köhnken analyses Nemean 8).

²⁰⁰ Far from perceiving their two approaches as incompatible, Boeckh and Dissen borrowed freely from each other's ideas, frequently merging analysis of biographic and historical circumstances with the search for the song's *Grundgedanke*. Below, we shall see that while some twentieth century scholars favor one approach to the disadvantage of the other, others prefer to combine the moralistic reading with the biographic/historical one. Subsequently, in 1830, Dissen published his own independent commentary to the odes where he further expounded the theory of the *Grundgedanke*. For a thorough review of Boeckh's and Dissen's theories, as well as for their *Nachleben*, see Young 1970.

²⁰¹ After expounding this point at length, Young sums it up as follows: "The major part of Pindaric criticism has consisted of the development, modification, and combination of *Weltanschauung*-studies, genre-studies, and a distinction between Pindaric 'prose' and 'poetry' (Hermann); and of the notion that unity of the epinician poems is due to a single *vinculum*—namely, either the *Grundgedanke* (Dissen) or the historical event that was allegorized by the poet (Boeckh)" (Young 1970:17).

question of the composition date and thus offer a Boeckhian historical/biographical interpretation, or, declaring the date non-essential, side with the Dissenesque search for a (typically moralizing) *Grundgedanke*.

Wilamowitz' reading of Pythian 11 is prototypical for all subsequent historicizing readings of the ode.²⁰² His interpretation seeks to make a connection between two difficult passages, the myth and the poet's censure of tyrannies in vv.50-54:

θεόθεν ἐραίμαν καλῶν,
 δυνατὰ μαϊόμενος ἐν ἀλικίᾳ.
 τῶν γὰρ ἀνὰ πόλιν εὐρίσκων τὰ μέσα μακροτέρῳ
 σὺν ὄλβῳ τεθαλότα, μέφομ' αἶσαν τυραννίδων·
 ξυναῖσι δ' ἄμφ' ἀρεταῖς τέταμαι· φθονεροὶ δ' ἀμύνονται.

May I desire blessings from the gods,
 as I seek what is possible at my age, for within a city I find
 the middle estate flourishing with more enduring
 prosperity, and I censure the condition of tyrannies.
 I strive for achievements others share in; for envious men are warded off.

Wilamowitz employs the hypothetical connection between the two passages to establish the composition date. He concludes that the ode must be dated to the earlier of the two years mentioned by the scholiast—474 BC—when Pindar returned from his sojourn in Sicily to his native Thebes. The Thebans greeted their wide-traveling fellow townsman with hostility and suspicion, as one who had betrayed his own polis to serve Sicilian tyrants, Hieron and Theron. That is why, when he was commissioned shortly upon his return to compose an ode for a Theban youth and thus presumably for a Theban audience, Pindar took the opportunity to disprove these suspicions by inserting a myth on the plight of tyrants (Agamemnon and Clytemnestra) and then further strengthened the sentiment

²⁰² Although, as Young points out (1968:6, note 1), attempts to establish a historic connection between the myth of P11 and Pindar's service to Hieron go all the way back to R. Rauchenstein's 1847 article ("Ueber die Tendenz und Zeit der 11. Pythischen Ode"). Wilamowitz made several slight changes to Rauchenstein's theory and, to use Young's expression, "made it popular."

with the gnomic statements in vv.50-54. With variations, Wilamowitz' historical method of the ode's exegesis has been adopted by multiple Pindaric experts,²⁰³ who disagreed only as to whether Wilamowitz was right in dating it to 474, rather than 454 BC, and, correspondingly, as to what historic personages and events the heroes of Pindar's Oresteia symbolize.²⁰⁴

The Wilamowitz-based historicizing approach thus seeks to explain the prominence of the (anti-) tyranny theme in the myth and in vv.50-54 by re-constructing the historic background of Pindar's biography and accordingly deciding on the date of the ode as either 474 or 454 BC. By contrast, the Disenesque approach foregoes the question of the date and the historical background as irrelevant but persists in attempts to establish a connection between the myth and the anti-tyranny sentiments in vv.50-54. The conclusions which this approach draws from such a connection tend to have a decidedly moralistic flavor.²⁰⁵ Thus Gildersleeve, given that the "historical side-

²⁰³ Farnell, Gundert (pp.83-86), Duchemin (p.252, note 1), Bowra (1936), and Meautis (p.263) can all be classified as the "historicizers" of Pythian 11. Cf. Young 1968:7, note 1.

²⁰⁴ For example, according to Farnell it is fruitless to try to connect the Agamemnon myth to Pindar's anti-tyrannies sentiments because such a connection would imply that "when Pindar mentions the κακολόγοι πολῖται who speak evilly of Klutaimnestra he is thinking of the Thebans who are calumniating himself; if so, Pindar has chosen a most unfortunate parallel, Klutaimnestra the murderess." Concluding that the myth must remain obscure for us, Farnell focuses his analysis of the ode on the question of the date in light of vv.50-54. While not wholly dismissive of 474, he inclines towards 454 BC. Thus Farnell's overall interpretation of Pythian 11, while less daring and elaborate than that of Wilamowitz, is, essentially, likewise a historic one. Duchemin finds a bizarre solution to the difficulty of equating Pindar with Clytaemnestra: she accepts Wilamowitz' dating but suggests that the poet identified himself with Cassandra rather than with the murderous queen. Via the myth Pindar intended to demonstrate to his Theban slanderers "que l'on peut bien assassiner l'interprète des dieux, mais que ceux-ci le vengeront tôt ou tard." Bowra borrows the historical interpretation of the myth from Wilamowitz but, disturbed, like Farnell and Duchemin, by the equation of Pindar with Clytaemnestra, moves the date to 454 and substitutes the Sicilian tyrants with the aggressive Athenian empire.

²⁰⁵ To be sure, the search for an ode's unity in the form of a Disenesque *Grundgedanke* does not always of necessity take on a moralistic flavor. While Pindar's own inclination towards gnomes and moralizing typically prompts *Grundgedanke* hunters into the same direction, other adaptations of Disen's theory are possible, though not more convincing. Gilbert Norwood's symbol theory is a prime example. In his notorious symbolist interpretation of Pythian 11, Norwood argues that the uniting symbol of the ode is the

lights...here seem to confuse rather than to help” asserts that “the meaning of the myth of Orestes is given by the poet in the line ἵσχει τε γὰρ ὄλβος οὐ μείονα φθόνον (v.29). This is true of all the figures in the piece—Agamemnon, Klytaimnestra, Aigisthos, Orestes.” Pindar’s transition from myth back to praise of the victor and to the gnomic statements is “a reinforcement of the moral Pindar has just been preaching—the moral that lies in the myth.”

Just as Boeckh and Dissen, the original proponents of historical allegory and the *Grundgedanke*, did not perceive these two approaches to Pindar as mutually exclusive, so too subsequent scholars have often tried to combine the two, as is evident in several twentieth-century interpretations of Pythian 11. In his 1936 article on the ode, Bowra, rather than declare the “historical side-lights” a source of confusion, adopts the Wilamowitz approach and delves into the question of the date.²⁰⁶ Bowra then merges his historical/biographical theories with a thoroughly moralistic reading of the ode: “He [Pindar] decorates the story, and much of his poetical success lies in this, but the relevance of the myth to his main theme lies in the important truth which it enshrines ... [i]n Pythian XI the myth of Orestes exemplifies in a particular form a general point of morality, and what this is can be seen from Pindar's own words [in the gnomic statements of vv. 50-54].” Likewise, Van Groningen freely joins the moralistic reading with the historical. He first suggests that “si l’on voulait tirer de ce récit, qui condense en quelques vers une abondance d’horreurs, une conclusion adequate, ce serait probablement

bee and proceeds to point out all of its references to bees—real and metaphorical—as well as to buzzing and humming (Norwood 1945:250 ff). Albeit interesting, such an analysis serves rather to obscure than to elucidate the ode’s poetic intent—for what, one might ask, was Pindar’s purpose in encoding arcane imagery within an epinikion?

²⁰⁶ For Bowra’s take on the question of the date, see my note 46.

celle-ci: le sort des rois est beaucoup moins enviable qu'il ne paraît." Subsequently, however, he argues that although this moral can, indeed, be extracted from the myth, the story's emphasis lies elsewhere—namely, in the Wilamowitz-proposed historical allegory.²⁰⁷

The temptation to interpret the obscurities of Pindar's myth as historical or moralistic allegory is so strong that even David Young, who pointedly protests against both forms of allegory, ironically falls into the same trap. Vehemently—and persuasively so—anti-*Grundgedanke*, Young nevertheless comes up with an explanation of Pythian 11 which essentially reduces the Agamemnon myth to an illustration of the anti-tyrannies gnome in vv.50-54.²⁰⁸ Young then takes the further step of interpreting the myth and the gnome as a foil to the victor Thrasydaos: tyrants—e.g., Clytemnestra and Agamemnon—are doomed to envy, hubris, and failure, whereas athletic success is the ideal way to achieve greatness while adhering to the golden mean. In relating the myth not only to vv. 50-54 but also to the theme of Thrasydaos' victory, Young believes that he has achieved a holistic reading of the ode while eschewing the unfounded historical speculations à la Wilamowitz or Bowra. And yet this unity is, I believe, a fallacious one: Young does not seem to notice that by virtue of envisioning myth as "illustrating" something, he instantly reduces the myth, if not the whole ode, to one moralistic *Grundgedanke*. Moreover, as Young takes great care to demonstrate, the anti-tyranny moral which he discerns behind the Agamemnon myth is a recurrent *topos* among Greek poets, both before and after

²⁰⁷ Van Groningen 1960:359 ff. and 364 ff. For yet another scholar who combines the historical with the moralistic approach in his reading of Pythian 11, see Burton 1962.

²⁰⁸ "Specific examples from the mythical past **illustrate** ideas of general application, and thus clarify real human situations" [emphasis added] (Young 1968: 23). Young says this a propos of Homer, but in such a way as to apply it likewise to Pindar.

Pindar.²⁰⁹ The natural question then arises: if Pythian 11 is an *illustration* of a gnome, how is it different from the “illustration” of the same gnome provided, for example, by Archilochus’ “μεγάλης δ’ οὐκ ἐρέω τυραννίδος” fragment (22 Diehl)? Young’s answer is vague—he *asserts* that Pindar’s “illustration” of the gnome is original, but does not explain *what* is original about it: “...although perhaps everything in *Pythian* 11, from the myth to individual phrases, bears a tangible relationship to something traditional, the ode itself is highly original. It avails itself of various traditions to suit, through emphasis or modification, its own poetic aims.”²¹⁰ This failure to explain *wherein* lies the alleged originality of Pindar’s version of the Agamemnon myth is rooted, I believe, in the inherent flaw of the moralistic approach as formulated by Young himself: “...if Pindar had intended to write a poem with a ‘thought’ of only one sentence, I have no doubt but that he would have written poems of one sentence...”²¹¹ Having reduced the myth of Pythian 11 to an illustration of the traditional Greek moral of the golden mean, Young is now at a loss to explain why this illustration should be different from any other.

Underlying these shortcomings of a moralizing interpretation of Pindar is, I believe, a more fundamental problem—a problem not unique to the moralizing approach but rather one that equally affects the Dissenesque and the Boeckhian theories. Both

²⁰⁹ Young cites Archilochus, Anacreon, Simonides, and Euripides.

²¹⁰ Young 1968:26.

²¹¹ Young 1970:6. Cf. likewise Young’s critique of Dissen’s *Grundgedanke* theory: “Dissen’s misconception of unity caused him to believe that he had found unity when he extracted a single, consistent thought from the poem” (ibid.). Given the persistent and persuasive anti-*Grundgedanke* campaign which Young wages in his “Pindaric Criticism,” it is, indeed, strange that he essentially adopts this very approach when interpreting Pythian 11. Indeed, he even lauds the approach in other scholars who address this ode, as when he approvingly quotes Van Groningen (“si l’on voulait tirer de ce récit...une conclusion adéquate, ce serait probablement celle-ci...etc.” (for full quote, see above))—but in fact, Van Groningen is here exactly following Dissen’s *Grundgedanke* recipe of extracting one (moralistic) thought from the ode and pronouncing it the ode’s “theme.” Perhaps Young himself felt the inadequacy of his own approach to Pythian 11, because he ends his analysis by accusing the ode of mediocrity.

theories attempt to interpret a piece of poetry by exploring a connection which this poetry has (or might have) with an *extra-poetic* factor. Thus, both theories exclude from their focus the very essence of the material in question—they do not interpret poetry *qua* poetry.

The critique commonly directed against the historical/biographical approach—namely, that reconstructions of the specifics within the victor's or Pindar's life lack definite proof and must remain purely hypothetical—does not, I believe, go to the heart of the matter, for it neither acknowledges the benefits of the historic approach nor pinpoints its fundamental flaw. As the debate over the dating of Pythian 11 has shown, in the hands of an able scholar the historic approach can yield a fascinating tentative reconstruction of the living context wherein Pindar's works were born. The debate calls back to life the various personal and historic stages of Pindar's long career and the corresponding wide range of circumstances under which this particular ode could have been created—whether in the wake of the Persian Wars in 474, as Wilamowitz would have it, or in the threatening atmosphere of the Athenian Arché in 454, as Farnell and Bowra insist. So long as one keeps in mind that such reconstructions are *speculative*, he will find the debate intriguing and thought-stimulating.²¹² On the other hand, I would posit that the historical approach contains a flaw that is much deeper than the lack of historic evidence. For, even if Wilamowitz' historical hypotheses on Pythian 11 were to receive definite corroboration from newly-discovered documents or archaeological materials, his interpretation would remain *extrinsic* to the poetic essence of the ode.

²¹² To be sure, traditional criticism of a Wilamowitz-like approach is not unfounded, for it does not fail to point out that adherents of such an approach—e.g., Wilamowitz himself—tend to forget that their theories are speculative and rather dogmatically present them as the historic truth (cf. Young's "Pindaric Criticism").

For the sake of comparison, let us briefly return to the first chapter's analysis of Pindar's phrase, "ἔσσι γὰρ... γλυκὺς κρατὴρ ἀγαφθέγκτων ἀοιδῶν" (O.6.90-91). We have seen how the poet skillfully supplants a traditional simile formula (the choragus Aeneas is *like* a chalice) with a merging of the two images (the choragus *is* a chalice). One may suppose that a commentator adhering to the interpretation methods of Wilamowitz would be thrilled to discover concrete, indisputable evidence that the unusual turn of phrase is based on an episode from the poet's life: e.g., at a victory feast, tipsy Pindar mistook a choragus for a chalice. In what sense does the establishing of such a link with the poet's biography aid our interpretation of the verse? Albeit interesting in its own right, it can in no wise further our understanding of the poetic structure of the image evoked in the verse. The biographical connection does not explain how the choragus-chalice image functions *within* the ode; it merely indicates that *outside* the poem there had existed for Pindar an association between the given image and a particular event in his life. In other words, the historical/biographical interpretation excises the image from its poetic context and thereby of necessity deprives it of the poetic meaning with which its creator purposefully endowed it. The same critique is, I believe, applicable to the biographical theories developed around Pythian 11. Even if we were to learn for certain that Pindar wrote the ode while under attack by suspicious fellow-Thebans, or that a treacherous murder had occurred in the family of the victor Thrasydaïos, neither discovery would further our understanding of the *poetic* role with which Pindar endows the Agamemnon myth. Indeed, adherents of Wilamowitz' historical theory seem to forget that Wilamowitz himself would, most probably, agree to such an assessment of his method while not necessarily perceiving it as critique: he was

outspoken in his dislike of Pindar's poetic style and avowedly studied the odes not for their poetic value but for the historical details that might be gleaned from them.²¹³ It would be safe to say that he had never intended for his historical/biographical interpretation of Pythian 11 to be employed as an approach to the poetic meaning of the ode.

Historicizing commentaries are extrinsic almost by definition, since they seek an explanation for the poem in the external circumstances of the poem's composition. By contrast, those who explicate the Agamemnon myth in particular and all of Pythian 11 in general moralistically, draw on the gnomic statements offered by Pindar himself *within* the ode, in vv.50-54. Yet this apparent difference notwithstanding, the moralistic approach, no less than the historical/biographical one, focuses on the extrinsic, or extra-poetic, meaning of the ode. We have seen above that adherents of the moralistic approach interpret the Agamemnon myth as a concrete illustration of the sentiments expressed in vv. 50-54. The drawing of such a connection between these gnomic lines and the mythical section is an important step in our comprehension of Pythian 11 as a whole—a positive progress over ancient and modern commentators who find the Agamemnon myth “wholly irrelevant” to the ode.²¹⁴ However, I believe that, having detected a connection between the myth and the explicit moralizing, the moralistic approach then *reverses* the true nature of this relationship when it declares the myth to be an illustration of the gnome. As I hope to show in my analysis of Pythian 11, the

²¹³ E.g., “Ich mache mir keine illusionen über Pindars dichtergrösse” (Wilamowitz 1886:173). Cf. likewise Wilamowitz 1922:166 and 428. Such avowals make it all the more puzzling why a commentator such as Van Groningen or Duchemin, clearly interested in Pindar as a *poet*, would adhere to Wilamowitz on this point.

²¹⁴ Cf. Farnell 225.

opposite is true: it is the myth that endows the moral of vv.50-54 with substance and elevates it from a hackneyed maxim to reflection on man's role in the world.

Gildersleeve, Bowra, Van Groningen, and Young would all agree that the significance of the myth does not become apparent until lines 50-54, wherein the reader encounters censure of tyranny and praise of the middle estate, and, reflecting back upon the myth, realizes it to be an illustration of these sentiments.²¹⁵ In other words, myth, for these scholars, is a fable: it simultaneously both camouflages and illustrates a moral lesson, which is then extracted and explicated by the author in direct, unadorned form. Having read the moral, "it is easy to despise what you cannot get," we obtain the deeper meaning of the story of fox and grapes which initially masqueraded as mere entertainment. But is Pindar's myth-making really no different from the fables of Aesop? When we say that the meaning of the myth is in the moral, we essentially consider "meaning" to be something that is distinguishable from the images evoked by the language of the myth. And, indeed, if we strip the story of Agamemnon of its poetic imagery, we are left with the bare Aesopian conclusion as summed up by Van Groningen—"le sort des rois est beaucoup moins enviable qu'il ne paraît"—or as summed up by Pindar himself in lines 50-54. However, while a poet may be inclined towards moralizing (as Pindar certainly is), it does not mean that his poetry is reducible to

²¹⁵ As Bowra (1936) puts it, "The real meaning of the myth is kept till the end of the poem with its solemn words on the high duties of kingship. So in considering Pythian XI we need not expect the way in which the myth is introduced to throw any light on its essential relevance, nor need we assume that the lighthearted association of names which starts it necessarily shows that Pindar had not something very serious on his mind. We should rather try to see what connection, if any, Orestes has with the festival at which the ode was sung, and what lesson Pindar intends by telling this story of murder and revenge."

moral: as anyone who ever accepted the challenge of translating verse knows, the poetic “meaning” is inseparable from the poetic word.

This error of the moralistic approach is readily apparent in David Young’s analysis of Pythian 11—perhaps more so than in other scholarly analyses of the same ode because his is one of the most comprehensive ones. In his abovementioned valuable investigation of the “golden mean” *topos* in various Greek poets, Young demonstrates that Pindar’s anti-tyranny sentiments in vv.50-54 and in the Agamemnon myth do not spring from a peculiarity of his own biography (pace Wilamowitz et al.) but are, rather, a reiteration of a pan-Hellenic moral ideal. We have seen that what Young’s investigation does *not* do, is explain how Pindar’s treatment of this ideal is different from that of an Anacreon or a Euripides. To explain this, one would have to focus not on *extracting* a message (moral or otherwise) from the poetic texts, but on analyzing how this message *lives within*—i.e., structures and is structured by—the different word-images of each one of these texts. It is absurd to explain the grim power of the lines—“πόρεν’ Ἀχέροντος ἄκταν παρ’ εὖσκιον / νηλῆς γυνά” (vv.19-22)—with the maxim that one ought to curb his ambitions, just as the maxim “crime doesn’t pay” comes nowhere near to conveying the dread of Shakespeare’s words—“Glamis hath murdered sleep, and therefore Cawdor / Shall sleep no more. Macbeth shall sleep no more” (*Macbeth* 2.2.55-56). The Pindaric words, just as the Shakesperean ones, convey not a moral lesson but rather the profound horror of a world-shattering, unspeakable (in the Latin religious sense of *nefas*) deed: a man slaughtered at his own hearth by a kindred hand.²¹⁶ The superficiality inherent to the

²¹⁶ Even Wilamowitz, generally not interested in Pindar’s poetics, goes out of his way to analyze briefly the *poetic* effect of these powerful lines: “Die grause Tat wird mit starken Worten gekennzeichnet, und die

moralistic approach is, ironically, best summed up in the words of Gildersleeve, himself an adherent of the moralistic interpretation of Pythian 11: “Doubtless this is not all that the poem means—but shall we ever know more?”

The moralizing—just as the historicizing—commentators insist on reading Pindar’s myth as *conveying a piece of information*, be it historical/biographical evidence or a moral maxim. Yet this insistence on perceiving myth as a means, a *vehicle* for something more important than the myth itself, is anachronistic and does violence to the Pindaric Weltanschauung wherein mytho-poetic images are the ultimate reality: the Libyan city *is* the nymph Cyrene not allegorically but in the most real and immediate sense of the word. An attempt to perceive the meaning of a Pindaric myth as separable and thus independent from the poetic texture of the verses wherein the myth finds its expression thus results in an exegetical approach that is as extrinsic to the nature of the ode as the historical/biographical one. By contrast, I would posit that to qualify as *intrinsic*, an approach to Pythian 11 ought to be sought *within the poetic infrastructure of the epinician genre*. In the first half of the present chapter, I have proposed one possible way of describing this infrastructure: as the poet’s and his audience’s relationship of *xenia*; it is this same inherently epinician infrastructure, I believe, that offers a key to Pythian 11.

(f) *Xenia* as the key to an analysis of P.11 *qua* poetry

The inherent structure of the epinician ode consists, I have argued, of the address of the poet’s specific “I” to the audience’s specific “you.” Furthermore, the genre

Täterin heißt νηλῆς γυνά, was eindrucksvoll am Schluß des Satzes und zugleich am Anfang der Antistrophe steht” (Wilamowitz 1922:260).

demands that this address unfold in a specified time and place, or *chronotope* (time: the day of the victory or of its celebration; place: the hometown of the victor or the polis wherein he was victorious). Frequently, Pindar envisions this *chronotope* *dynamically*: his address to his audience—i.e., the flight of his song towards his addressees—becomes equated with the poet's own travel towards these addressees, as a Theban guest journeying to the hometown of the victor. In some of the extant odes, this perception of song as journey finds its ultimate expression in the poet's evocation of the ties of *xenia* between himself and his audience. As we shall see, in Pythian 11 the theme of *xenia* is developed yet further when Pindar joins it with the complimentary theme of homecoming, or *nostos*: one who has gone forth to travel and sojourn at the *oikos* of his guest-friend will eventually return home to his own *oikos*. *Xenia* and *nostos* have been traditional themes in Greek poetry and philosophy²¹⁷ from Homer onwards. In Pindar, however, *nostos* is not simply a theme which the poet, like the author of the *Odyssey*, develops *within* his song as one of his objects; rather, it is through the interrelated processes of *xenia* and *nostos* that Pindar inscribes himself into the world of his song as its central personage—and, in doing so, creates and maintains this world. While they may have originally been inspired by social, cultural, economic, or biographical circumstances—i.e., circumstances *extrinsic* to the poetic world—Pindar adapts the concepts of *xenia* and *nostos* to be constitutive of the *poetic* structure of the epinician ode, and thus thoroughly *intrinsic* to the world of the song. The double Agamemnon-Orestes myth of Pythian 11 offers a particularly striking instance of the role which *xenia* and *nostos* play in constructing the poetic world.

²¹⁷ For a discussion of the themes of Odyssean journey and *nostos* in Parmenides, see Mourelatos 1970:32 and 46.

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As far as I am aware, the importance of *xenia* within Pythian 11 has been pointed out only once. In his 1979 article, “Pindar’s Myths: Two Pragmatic Explanations,” William Slater traces firstly the ring composition of the Agamemnon-Orestes myth and, secondly, this ring’s narrative and verbal focus on the concept of *xenia*. As Slater shows, the myth develops in a temporal circle: it begins with Orestes’ arrival at Delphi as the *xenos* of Pylades, and, upon its conclusion, it brings us back to Orestes. The theme of *xenia* between Orestes and Pylades along with the latter’s father Strophios is enforced verbally both at the start and the finish of the ring (vv.15-16: “ἐν ἀφνεαῖς ἀρούραισι Πυλάδα / νικῶν **ξένου** Λάκωνος Ὀρέστα,” and vv.34-35: “ὁ [i.e., Orestes] δ’ ἄρα γέροντα **ξένον** / Στροφίον ἐξίκετο”).

Beyond these two observations, Slater’s interpretation of Pythian 11 is basically an amalgamation of the moralistic and the biographical approaches. It differs from that of Gildersleeve, Bowra, or Young only in that rather than focus on the “lesson” of hubristic tyrannies, Slater focuses on the “lesson” of good vs. bad *xenia*. Slater argues that within the ring of myth both positive and negative exempla of *xenia* are played out: the saving of Orestes and the murder of Agamemnon and Cassandra. The positive exemplum, wherein Orestes finds *xenia* at Pytho, is meant as a mythic parallel to the victor Thrasydaïos who is entertained as “guest” by the same city.²¹⁸ Here Slater transitions to the historical/biographical component of his argument, when he adduces historical evidence that a victorious athlete would be considered the *xenos* of the city

²¹⁸ Indeed, Slater insists that the ode contains a *Grundgedanke*, and, in note 13, specifically says that his aim is to redeem this concept.

wherein he competed—e.g., according to Pausanias, he would be treated to a banquet at the prytaneum.²¹⁹ The ode thus celebrates Thrasydaos by illustrating with a myth the actual honors he had won. For Slater, as for any moralizing or historicizing commentator, myth is to be understood as an illustration of something that had happened in the “real world”; it therefore remains extrinsic to the ode *qua* ode.²²⁰

In my own reading of the ode, I build upon Slater’s observations with regard to the ring-structure of the ode and the recurrence of the word *xenos* within this ring. However, for Slater, the poet’s appeal to *xenia* within the myth is intended primarily to illustrate and glorify the supposedly *xenia*-based honors attained by Thrasydaos in the “real world”—as Slater himself says, his analysis of the ode “result[s] initially from asking the question: what did an athlete actually do when he went to the games and won?” By contrast, I seek to explain the role of *xenia* within Pythian 11 by investigating it as a *poetic* concept.

One of the issues not addressed by Slater is *why* Pythian 11 accords *xenia* the role of framing the myth. As Slater himself points out, we see similar emphases on other concepts in other odes: for example, κλέος in O. 1 and θαῦμα in P.10 are likewise accentuated as important themes via ring-composition. We have seen that Pindar appeals to *xenia* in multiple odes where he envisions himself as a guest-friend journeying to his addressee’s hospitable abode. In Pythian 11, however, no such travel between poet and victor seems to exist, and yet *xenia* receives an important role as the frame of the ring-

²¹⁹ Cf. my earlier analysis of Isthmian 2 where Pindar praises the victor Xenokrates as both host-*xenos* and guest-*xenos*.

²²⁰ Cf. Slater’s closing remarks on Pythian 11: “The myth of P. 11 is therefore an example of how proper ξενία operates...Thrasydaos like Orestes has been feted by the Delphians when he came to Delphi. The victor was presumably young like Orestes, and would have been flattered by the comparison.”

shaped myth. I would suggest that the key to the role of *xenia* in Pythian 11 lies in the identity of its laudandus: Thrasydaos is a *Theban* athlete—a fellow townsman of the poet.

As I have contended above, an epinikion is, by definition, an address of the poet's "I" to the "you" of his audience. Unlike the poet's "I" and the audience's "you" within the Homeric epic, between whom no distinction and hence no relationship is ever established, an epinikion involves both a differentiation and a joining of addressor and addressee. Hence the equivalency "song = *journeying from Thebes towards the native polis of the addressee*" as the overcoming of distance for the purpose of establishing intimacy. As we have seen, this motif of coming frequently finds its expression in the relationship of *xenia* between the "I" and the "you." But what happens to the poet's coming and the relationship of *xenia* in a case when the "you" of the audience consists of Pindar's fellow Thebans? Sometimes, nothing. For example, in Isthmian 7 composed for the Theban Strepsiades, themes of coming and *xenia* are appropriately absent: the ode opens with a catalogue of Theban mythical glories and thereby unambiguously establishes its location while omitting any references to spatial movement. By contrast, in Isthmian 1 composed for Herodotos of Thebes, themes of journeying and *xenia* are indeed present but play a somewhat unusual role.²²¹ I here offer a brief excursus on the motif of the poet's coming in Isthmian 1, for, as I shall argue below, this ode exemplifies in elemental form the same "Theban poet-Theban addressee" relationship which receives further elaboration in Pythian 11.

²²¹ Five Theban odes total have come down to us: Pythian 11 and Isthmians 1, 3, 4, and 7. In Isthmians 3 and 4 *xenia* likewise plays an interesting role, albeit not as elaborately developed as in P.11 and I.1.

Pindar begins Isthmian 1 by assuring his mother-city: “Μᾶτερ ἐμά, τὸ τεόν, χρύσασπι Θήβα, / πρᾶγμα καὶ ἀσχολίας ὑπέρτερον / θήσομαι” (“Mother of mine, Thebe of the golden shield, / I shall put your concern above even my / pressing obligations”). These obligations, we discover in the next line, consist of the composition of a paean in honor of Delian Apollo which had been commissioned by the Keans. To atone for his temporary neglect of both the subject matter (Delos) and the commissioner (Keos), Pindar must indirectly beg forgiveness from both islands: “μή μοι κραναὰ νεμεσᾶσαι / Δᾶλος, ἐν ᾧ κέχρμαι...” (“Let not rocky Delos / be angry with me, on whose behalf I have been toiling”). Once again, it is of little importance whether these lines reflect actual circumstances of the ode’s composition: whether or not such social, economical, religious, or political circumstances existed, I am concerned with understanding why Pindar chose to integrate them *poetically* into the very opening of his song—particularly since, as we know, it is always the opening that our poet strives to invest with the greatest significance.²²² Isthmian 7 offers an enlightening contrast: here the poet opens with a direct address to Thebes: “Τίνι τῶν πάρος, ᾧ μάκαιρα Θήβα, / καλῶν ἐπιχωρίων μάλιστα θυμὸν τεόν / εὖφρανας;” (“In which of your land’s former glories, / O blessed Thebe, did your heart / take most delight?”). As noted above, Isthmian 7 lacks any hint of the image of song as journey; in Isthmian 7, Thebes is not a destination, a “whither” of Pindar’s poetic address, but rather the stationary locale wherein his song unfolds. Not so in the opening of Isthmian 1. If Pindar’s song is habitually equated with the journeying of the poet, then here, where the poet turns his song away from Delos (and Keos) back towards his mother Thebes, we essentially witness the poet’s return from foreign lands back

²²² On the importance of the Pindaric preamble, see Fränkel 1975: 471, footnote 1.

home. By virtue of opening with an apology to the Keans for a temporary postponement of their assignment, Pindar's song becomes indistinguishable from his own *nostos*. Isthmian 1 thus preserves, the Theban identity of the laudandus notwithstanding, the typical epinician dynamic of overcoming the distance between addressor and addressee for the purpose of establishing a relation between the two. The only logical difference is that here, rather than traveling from Thebes to the native polis of the victor, Pindar travels from abroad (the realm of the "other") back to Thebes, his and the victor's mother.

In Pythian 11, just as in Isthmian 1, the poet chooses to exploit the possibilities latent in the unusual scenario of singing for a Theban victor: it is as though he sets for himself the challenge to develop the themes of journeying and *xenia* in a case when the circumstances of the victory (i.e., the athlete's Theban identity) would seem to preclude any movement in space. The method he employs is, however, different from the one Isthmian 1: in Pythian 11 Pindar turns his usual coming-as-*xenos* imagery topsy-turvy, and, instead of the poet travelling to the hometown of the victor, here the victor, the poet, and their mutual mother-city, Thebes, journey as guests to the realm of Apollo, the god in whose province Thrasydaïos' victory has been achieved.

The ode opens with Pindar's address to three Theban heroines—Semele, Ino, and Alcmene—whom he bids to go (ἵτε) to the Ismenion, a temple of Apollo in Thebes, in celebration of Thrasydaïos' victory. Pythian 11 thus begins, as many of Pindar's odes, with a journey; here, however, it is not the poet who comes as a pilgrim guest to the city of the victor, but rather the foundational deities of Thebes that are bidden to make a pilgrimage. To be sure, the Ismenion is situated in Thebes, and therefore technically the goddesses make no egress from their own territory; however, as vv. 4-6 accentuate, this

temple is a particularly important—indeed, *intimate*—province of Apollo: it is described as “the treasury of golden tripods, / the sanctuary which Loxias [the cult name for Apollo in his mantic capacity] especially honored / and named the Ismenion, the true seat of seers.”²²³ Without actually leaving their own realm, these divine envoys of Thebes are, at the same time, travelling to the realm of Apollo. And the reason that the divine ladies are to visit this thoroughly Apollinian domain is because Thrasydaïos has won in the Apollinian games at Pytho (vv. 9-13). The poet thus bids the spirits of his motherland to gather in the realm of Apollo in celebration of the fact that a son of Thebes has competed and won at Delphi, i.e., in the realm of the same god. The goddesses’ pilgrimage follows in replication, as it were, of Thrasydaïos’ earlier journey to the Pythian Games.

The goddesses’ coming to the domain of Apollo is underscored twice, first in v. 3 by the verb “ἰέναι,” and then in v.8 by its compound συνιέναι. Indeed, the entire first triad of the ode consists of one long elaborate injunction to the goddesses in the course of which the poet’s direct bidding to come to the Ismenion (ἵτε) is revealed to be a reiteration of the bidding issued by Apollo himself (καλεῖ συνίμεν).²²⁴ Involved here is a “trompe-l’oeil” technique reminiscent of the one which we have traced in O. 1. There, the poet was always *just about* to take the lyre off the peg and begin his song, but, remaining as he did in a continual state of coming, he never actually began the promised singing. Here, in Pythian 11, the construction is similarly deceptive. The first of the ode’s four triads consists of the command addressed to the goddesses: “come to Apollo!”

²²³ Cf. Egan 1983, who writes a propos the opening of Pythian 11: “Since it is to a prophetic shrine of Ismenian Apollo that the heroines are summoned, there is a strong connection with Delphi and Apollo established in lines 6-10.”

²²⁴ In Chapter 3, I develop at length the theme of such merging of Pindar’s voice with that of Apollo and of other prophetic figures.

As the ode proceeds to the mythical section and becomes engrossed in the tale of Agamemnon and Orestes, we are likely to forget this injunction as merely a passing metaphor. It is not until the conclusion of the myth at vv.38-40 that the image of the journey resurfaces, and with it the realization that the coming has, indeed, been taking place throughout the first 37 lines of the ode. Before analyzing vv. 38-40, however, let us take a look at the myth itself, re-examining Slater's interpretation of the role of *xenia*.

Thrasydaïos is victorious in the rich fields of the mythical hero Pylades, the *xenos* of Orestes whom his nurse had rescued from Clytemnestra's rage (vv.13-18). David Young, as we have seen, terms this transition into myth a geographical subterfuge, because Pindar segues into myth on the pretext of the locale (Delphi = "fields of Pylades") where the victory has been achieved. On a first reading, the terming of this subterfuge as "geographical" is appropriate; yet the real pivot into myth is not so much the locale of Delphi as the theme of *xenia*. At the point when we enter the myth of Orestes and Agamemnon, all we know is that baby Orestes was saved by his nurse from sharing his father's fate. Only once we have been lead through the whole myth and return, in a circle, to the starting point, do we discover the sequel to the nurse's efforts: little Orestes, having gone to live with Pylades and his father Strophios, with time returned home and avenged his father (vv.34-37). At the conclusion of the myth we finally learn the inestimable value of Pylades' *xenia*: it not only preserved Orestes, but, indeed, helped restore and redeem the entire dynasty of the Atridae.

The house of Atreus was thus saved through its *xenia*-bonds with that very land which is now entertaining as guests the Theban victor Thrasydaïos and, vicariously, the foundational deities of Thebes. This in itself is motivation for the inclusion of this

particular myth within this particular ode. But in fact, as Slater notes, Pylades' rescue of Orestes is only the outside layer of the myth. The inner layer consists of the dark story of Agamemnon's murder. Its grimness, which has made some commentators wonder at its inclusion in a joyous celebration ode, serves as a clarifying, defining foil to the *true* guest-friendship exhibited by Strophios and Pylades towards Orestes, much as in Olympian 1 the two mirror stories of Tantalus' transgressing and confounding *xenia* form a defining contrast to the ordering and constructive *xenia* of the poet and Hieron. Up to this point, my reading of the story of Agamemnon's murder agrees with that of Slater.²²⁵ However, I believe that the contrast between the two *xeniai* involved in the intertwined stories of Orestes and Agamemnon is stronger than Slater would have it.

For Slater, the tragic *xenia* of Agamemnon and Cassandra acts as a foil to the exemplary guest-friendship of Pylades and Orestes: "We have a clear positive and negative example of strangers coming to seek the rights of hospitality: Cassandra is murdered, Orestes is succoured." Yet it seems unconvincing to interpret the master-slave relationship between a conqueror and his war-won concubine as the lofty relation of complete equality enjoyed by two guest-friends. Indeed, as I shall discuss in Chapter 3, it is precisely because his relationship with his addressees is articulated as that of *xenia*, that Pindar speaks as compeer to such powerful men as Thorax, leader of the Thessalian

²²⁵ Note that Slater does *not* cite the myth of Tantalus in O.1 or any other instances in Pindar that function, similarly to Agamemnon's murder in P.11, as a *negative* exemplum. This similarity has, however, been picked up by Hubbard (1985:158), who views P. 11 and O.1 as fully parallel: just as the myth in P.11 offers both a contrast and a parallel to the ideal of *xenia*, so too does the myth of Olympian 1, where Tantalus is the bad and Pelops the good host. See my note 33 for objections to Hubbard interpretation of Pelops. Cf. likewise Egan 1983, who comments on a similarity between Pythian 11 and Olympian 1: "The myth of the Eleventh Pythian, in presenting both laudable and reprehensible members of successive generations of the same family, is in a way analogous to the myth of the First Olympian, which features both Tantalus and Pelops. In that poem the victor is praised by association with the righteous favorite of the gods, Pelops, in contrast to the impious Tantalus, while here in the Eleventh Pythian the victor is honored by association with the righteous Orestes in contrast to Agamemnon, Clytemnestra, and Aegisthus, all of whom are described in pejorative terms by Pindar."

Aleuadai (P.10), or the Sicilian tyrants Theron and Hieron. Not so Cassandra, whose pathos lies precisely in the fact that she, the “prophetic maiden,” the proud daughter of “Dardanian Priam,” is destined to become a slave in an enemy’s home: she, a born equal of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, falls irrevocably far below her original royal status.²²⁶ Furthermore, Slater’s reading of the myth as juxtaposing the fates of Cassandra and Orestes not only distorts a slave-girl’s status but also overlooks a fundamental parallel between Orestes and Agamemnon: both father and son are involved in a *nostos*, or homecoming—something that in no wise is applicable to Cassandra. Taking a closer look at the concept of *nostos*, I shall argue that contrasted with the genuine *xenia* of Pylades and Orestes is not an “anti-*xenia*” received by Cassandra, but rather the “anti-*xenia*” received by Agamemnon himself. Once we distinguish Agamemnon’s (rather than Cassandra’s) fate as truly antipodal to that of Orestes, we can acquire a better understanding of the role of ring structure in the Agamemnon-Orestes myth as well as an understanding of the role of *xenia* and anti-*xenia* in the overall context of the ode.

(g) The interrelation of *xenia* and *nostos*: double cycle of life and death

In Pythian 11 we encounter the ultimate expression of *xenia* as offering refuge from peril to a stranger under a foreign roof—just as Strophios and Pylades do for Orestes and just as the Phaeacian king Alcinous does for that archetypal *xenos*,

²²⁶ Slater’s argument for his perception of the Pindaric Cassandra as Agamemnon’s *xene* is strangely unsubstantiated: “She [Cassandra] could not have been raped by Ajax in Pindar’s version, and her status is not that of a slave; Pindar does not say she is entitled to the rights of hospitality but takes it for granted” (note 11). Unfortunately, each one of the three points which Slater makes here remains a mere assertion with no support from the text of the ode.

Odysseus.²²⁷ And, in logical contrast with ultimate *xenia*, the ode presents likewise an example of the ultimate *opposite* of hospitality. Just as the opposite of love is not the absence of love—carelessness—but hatred, so too poor hospitality is not the opposite of hospitality but merely the absence thereof. We have already seen one possible incarnation of anti-*xenia* in Olympian 1, where Tantalus is an anti-*xenos* not because his entertainment of guests is merely *bad*, but rather because, in confounding the boundaries of heaven and earth, he perverts the very essence of hospitality. Pythian 11 offers yet another image of anti-*xenia*. What is diametrically opposite to finding refuge from peril in a foreign home? The story of Agamemnon holds the answer in store: a murderous plot against one *returning to his own home*. Anti-*xenia* thus appears in Pythian 11 as the hero's terrible "anti-*nostos*." A true *nostos*—a return home, to one's own origins—is the completion of an old cycle wherefrom springs the inspiration and energy for the beginning of a new one. Perhaps the most paradigmatic instance of such a *nostos* is the journey of the Homeric Odysseus. Odysseus must descend below ground, into the Underworld, thereby essentially "dying" and bringing the cycle of his life to a completion, in order to receive Tiresias' prophecy as a guide and inspiration for his further travels, for new cycles upon which he must embark.²²⁸ Indeed, as Teiresias

²²⁷ Following J. P. Gould, Marilyn Katz (1991:135) draws a slight distinction between the stranger and the suppliant: "The stranger and the suppliant are the paradigmatic outsiders of Greek culture, and Gould has argued that the distinction between them 'is one of circumstance only'" (Gould 1973:92). I would argue, however, that, based on the example of the Homeric Odysseus as well as on Pindar's use of the concept here in P.11, it is more accurate to view the suppliant as the "ultimate" expression of the need for *xenia* rather than a slight variation on the theme.

²²⁸ Cf. Pucci 1987:140-141 for a contrast between the *Iliad*'s negative and the *Odyssey*'s positive attitude towards *nostos*. In the former epic Achilles makes a sarcastically oxymoronic reference to "life-giving" earth as the tomb which even the strong cannot escape: "The *Iliad* crudely rebukes the notion that life-giving earth may ever grant life to a dead man." For Odysseus' multiple returns from death ("*polytropy*"), both spatial and psychological, see *ibid.*, 148-154. According to Pucci, throughout the epic Odysseus repeatedly "dies" (loses his identity) and then returns to himself (regains his identity), i.e., is reborn

reveals, even the ostensible final goal of Odysseus' toils, his return to Ithaca, is only a token of the hero's further travels: after coming home he will have to embark on a new voyage and, correspondingly, a new *nostos* (λ , 119).²²⁹ Odysseus' completion of each cycle, whether at the blood-filled pit in Hades or at his re-conquered hearth, always holds in store the beginning of the next round. Furthermore, Odysseus' return to Ithaca entails the beginning of a new cycle on a whole different level, too. As Marilyn Katz has demonstrated, Odysseus, in returning and re-establishing his kingly authority, likewise secures the authority of his son Telemachus as heir to the throne of Ithaca—something that the suitors have disputed and attempted to undercut.²³⁰ Odysseus' *nostos* thus re-invigorates and secures the next *generational* cycle, the reign of Telemachus.²³¹

But the theme of a successful *nostos* as the token of further cyclic journeys is not unique to the figure of Odysseus. In Pythian 4, Pindar—building, of course, on the traditional elements of the Argonaut legend—applies the same theme to another famous mythical figure, Jason. The greater part of the ode's mythological section is dedicated to Jason's quest for the Golden Fleece—a quest which he accomplishes and successfully returns back to Iolcus, i.e., achieves a *nostos*. Yet this *nostos* is, the ode reminds us, the direct outcome of the hero's earlier triumphal *nostos*, when he returns as a grown young

²²⁹ Cf. Peradotto 1986.

²³⁰ Katz 1991:72-74.

²³¹ On the level of agricultural intuition, a seed returns to the ground that new life may spring from it. Cf. the recurrence of this theme in the New Testament: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24).

man of god-like appearance (vv.87-92), an ἀνὴρ ἑκπαγλός (v.79), to Iolcus after spending the first twenty years of his life in the wild under centaur Cheiron's tutelage.²³²

By contrast with the homecomings of a Jason or an Odysseus, Agamemnon's homecoming is an anti-*nostos* wherein the future is annulled.²³³ In striving to obliterate Agamemnon's dynasty and establish an alternative one, Aegisthos and Clytemnestra not only deprive the king of life and a future, but also sever the link between the old and new generations: baby Orestes must undergo expulsion from the kingdom which is his by birth, and the natural succession of rule from Agamemnon to his heir is undercut. Furthermore, the ode seems to suggest that the king's anti-*nostos* knocks "out of joint" not only the ties of the present with the future, but the ties of the present with the past as well. Here a brief excursus on the feature of compression in Pindar's style is due.

In his commentary on Pythian 11, Van Groningen had aptly called the Agamemnon-Orestes myth a "récit, qui condense en quelques vers une abondance d'horreurs."²³⁴ Indeed, whether Pindar is composing the two hundred-fifty lines of the Argonaut myth in Pythian 4 or the twenty lines of the Agamemnon-Orestes myth here in Pythian 11, one of the hallmarks of his style is extreme compression. Typically, the traditional elements of a myth are pared down to a few select tableaux, and within these

²³² As commentators have frequently pointed out, *nostos* in general seems to be one of the dominant themes in Pythian 4. Cf. Burton (1962:168): the theme of *nostos* "runs through the whole poem and emerges at significant points in the narrative. It appears at the beginning, where Pindar speaks of the bringing home (*ankomisai*, v.9) of Medea's prophecy on Thera. Then we hear of the return of the clod of Libyan earth to its native Africa, of the recovery of the soul of Phrixus and of the Golden Fleece from a distant land, and of the final home-coming of the Argonauts themselves in fulfillment of Jason's prayer at the outset of his voyage." Cf. likewise Robbins 1975 and Segal 1986:89.

²³³ Agamemnon's unhappy (anti-) *nostos* is, of course, a recurring theme in the *Odyssey*, serving as a constant contrast to the travels, expectations, and ultimate success of Odysseus. Thus the *Odyssey* can be interpreted as setting up an opposition between *nostos* (*xenia*) vs. anti-*nostos* (anti-*xenia*). As I shall endeavor to show, Pindar sets up a similar opposition in Pythian 11, but here it is Agamemnon's own son, Orestes, rather than Odysseus, who serves as the paradigm of successful *nostos* and *xenia*.

²³⁴ Van Groningen 1960:359.

tableaux every detail is loaded with significance both for the plot and for the overall poetic effect. One of Pindar's favorite compression techniques is the one discussed in Chapter 1: condensing the import of an entire sentence—noun, verb, adverb, and/or adjective—into the scope of one sonorous compound adjective. But often even a simple verb or adjective can create the striking effect of an entire narrative compressed into one word or short phrase.²³⁵

Here, in Pythian 11, the conciseness of the Agamemnon-Orestes myth must not be mistaken for shorthand referencing of an all-too-well known story. Rather, the very brevity of the account accentuates the richness and originality of implications with which the poet endows individual words and phrases. When Pindar muses on the motivation for Clytemnestra's murderous scheme, he offers two possibilities (vv.22-25): "Was it then the sacrificial slaying / of Iphigeneia at Euripos far from her homeland that provoked her to rouse up her heavy-handed anger? / Or did nighttime lovemaking lead her astray / by enthralling her to another's bed?" At a first glance, these lines can be taken as simply a brief allusion to the two traditionally adduced causes of Clytemnestra's infidelity and revenge—causes well known to us from Homer and Athenian drama. Yet the careful word-choice and parallel phrasing of the two possible causes suggest that these lines are offering a novel reflection on the ancient myth. Each of the two clauses contains a passive feminine participle modified by a two-word adverbial phrase: "σφαχθεῖσα τῇλε

²³⁵ Cf. Burton's commentary on the style of Pythian 4: Pindar "has moulded it [the subject-matter of the Argonaut myth] into lyric form ... [and] treats it with the clarity and speed of a lyric poet. In spite of the length of the story he has to tell, there is no hint of any change in technique, any slackening of the impetus, any concession to the quieter pace of epic narrative. The story is told in a series of vivid scenes, with 'time-cuts' and omissions of link passages, and moves urgently to its climax, the Golden Fleece" (Burton 1962:153). Extreme compression to the point that the meaning of a whole sentence must be extrapolated from an individual word is not unique to Pindar's lyric style. Cf. Simon Goldhill's analysis of the dense compressed texture of one sentence in Aeschylus' *Oresteia* (Goldhill 1992:74-78).

πάτρας” and “ἐτέρῳ λέχει δαμαζομένην.” An analysis of this parallel wording suggests that not only was Agamemnon treated as an enemy upon his return to his own home (the direct opposite of a stranger being treated as a friend in the scenario of *xenia*), but that, in fact, his home had ceased to be a home long before he returned.

Each of the two possible reasons for Clytemnestra’s treachery conjures an image of the *inner* world of Agamemnon’s household as rent asunder by terrible incursions of the hostile *outer* world. His daughter, the pride of the palace’s inner sanctums, is slaughtered “τῆλε πάτρας,” far from home. Similarly, the mistress of the house, the heart of its hearth, is “mastered” within *another man’s* bed (“ἐτέρῳ λέχει”). While Clytemnestra’s adultery, unlike Iphigeneia’s sacrifice, was the path not of martyrdom but of pleasure, the language of the poem establishes a continuity between the two episodes by describing the queen as “δαμαζομένην” in the bed of her lover. This verb, typically applied in an erotic or conjugal context to a maiden (something which Clytemnestra certainly is not), is especially conspicuous against the overall background of the poem where the queen consistently emerges as a harsh, powerful, pitiless woman of “strong” or “heavy” hands (vv.18 and 23). Clytemnestra’s passivity expressed in the participle “δαμαζομένην” parallels that of Iphigeneia who is “σφαχθεῖσα.” This puzzling sudden change in Clytemnestra’s portrayal can be explained by a temporary shift of emphasis from her strong but evil will to her (pre-assigned but spurned) role as the cornerstone of her household. In evoking these two reasons for Clytemnestra’s crime, both of them traditional components of the Atridae saga, the poet makes specific emphasis on the hostile element of foreignness that rushes into and destroys the inner world of

Agamemnon's *oikos* as symbolized by its womenfolk.²³⁶ Had Clytemnestra not brought her wrath to its final murderous culmination, then the sacrifice of Iphigeneia, the queen's wrath, and her consequent infidelity would have, presumably, remained as half-hidden rifts within the *oikos* of the Atridae. But the king's homecoming causes these past wrongs to bear their ultimate fruit, to erupt and destroy the household. Retrospectively, we see that Agamemnon's homecoming is an anti-*nostos* not only because it leads to his death, but likewise because, the integrity of his *oikos* having been long corrugated by incursive outside forces, there actually *is no home* for Agamemnon to return to. Yet, miraculously, though all-but-annulled by Clytemnestra's vile anti-*xenia*, the future of the Atridae is revived through the genuine guest-friendship of Strophios and Pylades. In Strophios' domain, *in der Fremde*, far from the home that is no longer a home but a seething enemy camp, true *xenia* preserves Orestes and permits him, in turn, to achieve a true *nostos*, to resurrect the abruptly broken cycle of generations.

The interrelation of *nostos* and *xenia* here is not accidental. By definition, *xenia* preserves a wanderer in a foreign land not that he might assimilate and cease to be a stranger, but that he would remain a friend-stranger and eventually return to his own home. One can almost say that by virtue of preserving the status of a wanderer as a friend-stranger *xenia* is a crucial "phase" in a successful *nostos*: (a) a wayfarer heads forth from his own hearth into alien realms; (b) there, chancing upon a generous host, he acquires a kinship *in der Fremde*—a kinship that, paradoxically, does not absorb him into

²³⁶ Cf. Vernant 1969 for the argument that the Greeks perceived *xenia* as an intended counter-force to the characteristic self-centeredness of the Greek *oikos*; it is the hearth of a household—its central circular space—that has "the property of opening the domestic circle to those who are not members of the family, of enrolling them in the family community."

his host's *oikos* but allows him to remain a friend-stranger; (c) succored by his host, the wayfarer is enabled to return back home to his own *oikos*, his own self.

This theme of *xenia* as the token of a successful *nostos* is perhaps most clearly seen in the story of the prototypical *xenos*, the Homeric Odysseus. Throughout the epic, Odysseus' νόστιμον ἧμαρ is in the hands of his various hosts: some of these hosts are reluctant or ambiguous *xenoi* (Circe, Aeolus); some are openly averse to the concept of *xenia* (Laistrygonians, Cyclops); and some pervert hospitality by taking it to the extreme and essentially attempting to assimilate Odysseus, to retain him in their land not as a friend-stranger but as a permanent denizen (Lotophagoi, Calypso). It is only on his last stop, in Phaeacia, that Odysseus at last encounters true *xenoi*: courteous, generous, and sympathetic, they both entertain the wanderer and escort him home without making the mistake of a Calypso who wished to retain him forever.²³⁷ The orthodoxy of the Phaeacians' *xenia* is further underscored by several references to the fact that Odysseus is viewed as a desirable husband for the Phaeacian princess Nausikaa both by the girl herself and by her father, king Alcinous; it is thus made clear that the Phaeacians would indeed have wished for Odysseus to settle among them, to cease being a *xenos* and become not only a fellow-denizen of Scheria but, indeed, a kinsman and thus an integral member of the royal *oikos*. Nevertheless, their interests notwithstanding, they willingly send gift-laden Odysseus on his way and even go as far as providing him with a ship passage to Ithaca. This last detail is of particular significance: conceivably, Homer could have had Odysseus reach his native shores in some way similar to the one in which he reached

²³⁷ It is noteworthy that Homer introduces the Phaeacians in Book 6 by recounting that they originally lived in the vicinity of the Cyclopes and subsequently were forced to move away from the unpleasant neighbors: a contrast is thus indicated between the anti-hospitable Cyclopes and the Phaeacians who prove to be the epitome of *xenia*.

Scheria—storm-borne, clinging to a piece of ship-wreck; instead, he is directly deposited on Ithaca by his Phaeacian *xenoi*. *Xenia* thus not only sustains Odysseus at some point along his route, but is also directly responsible for his νόστιμον ἦμαρ, the wanderer's final attainment of his own *oikos*.²³⁸

Thus in Homer *nostos* and *xenia* seem to be intrinsically bound together—the latter is a crucial precondition of the former. I believe that this same interrelation lies at the heart of Pythian 11 and provides the key to Pindar's use of ring-composition in recounting the Agamemnon-Orestes myth. As Slater points out, the myth is structured in two rings: into the circular tale of Orestes is inserted the likewise circular tale of

²³⁸ For overall interconnection of *nostos* and *xenia* in the *Odyssey*, see Katz 1991:72-76. At least from the times of Parmenides in the early fifth century BC and down to the epoch of the Second Sophistic, there was a well-established tradition of the symbolic reading of Odysseus' *nostos* as the journey of and towards knowledge. Cf. Mourelatos (1970:46), who believes that already Parmenides saw homeward-bound Odysseus as the prototype for his own *kouros* journeying towards knowledge. For Odysseus as a "model hero in the philosophical tradition of the Stoa and the Academy" as well as for the Greek writers of the Second Sophistic, see Harrison (2000: 171-2); for Odysseus' symbolic role in Latin authors see Stanford (1963:121-127). In his *Metamorphoses*, Apuleius explicitly equates knowledge-seeking Lucius with the Homeric hero (*Met.* IX.13). Similarly, in the *de deo Socratis* XXIV he writes: "Nec aliud te in eodem Vlixē Homerus docet, qui semper ei comitem voluit esse prudentiam, quam poetico ritu Minervam nuncupavit. Igitur hac eadem comite omnia horrenda subiit, omnia adversa superavit. Quippe ea adiutrice Cyclopis specus introiit, sed egressus est; Solis boves vidit, sed abstinuit; ad inferos demeavit et ascendit; eadem sapientia comite Scyllam praeternavigavit nec ereptus est; Charybdi consaeptus est nec retentus est; Circae poculum bibit nec mutatus est; ad Lotophagos accessit nec remansit; Sirenas audiit nec accessit." Odysseus was famously wise (was the *comites* of Minerva) throughout his adventurous career—as the recruiter of Achilles, the deviser of the Trojan Horse, the deceiver of Philoctetes, etc. Apuleius, however, explicitly compares one *striving* towards wisdom not simply to Odysseus, but rather specifically to Odysseus homeward-bound, to Odysseus *returning to himself*. And his homeward journey, Apuleius reminds us, lies through the dismal and chaotic world of monsters—Odysseus, just like Psyche and Lucius in the *Metamorphoses*, "descends into the realm of death and rises therefrom."

For Apuleius, as, apparently, for Parmenides six hundred years earlier, Odysseus' *nostos* is symbolic of man's metaphysical existence and the activity of the Intellect. In such a metaphysical reading of the *nostos* motif, *xenia* as existence-away-from-oneself can be equated to the "reflexive" phase of life and thought: it is the phase wherein man is able to see himself from aside as *others* see him. Entertained as *xenos* at the Phaeacian feast, Homer's lachrymose Odysseus listens incognito to tales of his own past exploits as sung by the bard Demodocus. In other words, Odysseus sees himself from aside through the eyes of the singer and of the friendly Phaeacian strangers who react to the song with interest and sympathy. When, with the help of these strangers, he eventually reaches Ithacan shores and his own *oikos*, he reveals himself in both cunning and combat as worthy of the hero Odysseus whose tale he has heard from the Demodocus in the realm of *xenia*. For the etymological and thematic interconnection of Odysseus' *nous* (intellect) and *nostos*, see Frame 1978.

Agamemnon.²³⁹ Typically for Pindar, the outer ring which focuses on the son draws us further back into the past, to the inner ring which relates the story of the father. This is, essentially, the same self-unfolding vortex structure which we have traced in Chapter 1. We have seen how in Pythian 9, for example, recession into myth occurs through the relative pronoun, “Cyrene, *whom* Apollo married...”, and how from this ring we are drawn further back into time, to Cyrene’s ancestors, likewise via relative pronouns—“Cyrene, daughter of Hypseus *who* was king of Lapithai, *whom* Kreousa bore—the daughter of Gaia.” Such entrance into the rings of the mythical vortex creates, I have argued, the impression of the song’s willful escape from the authority of the poet. At first glance the freedom of the song does not seem as pronounced in the case of Pythian 11 as in Pythian 9. Here, in Pythian 11, only the first round of myth is entered via a relative pronoun: “Orestes *whom* his nurse Arsinoia rescued...” (v.17). The second round which pulls us further back in time to Orestes’ father Agamemnon does *not* open with a relative pronoun. Instead, the story of Agamemnon is introduced in a purely narrative (i.e., predicative rather than attributive) fashion (vv. 19 ff.):

ὁπότε Δαρδανίδα κόραν Πριάμου
 Κασσάνδραν πολὺ χαλκῷ σὺν Ἀγαμεμνονία
 ψυχᾷ πόρευ’ Ἀχέρωντος ἄκταν παρ’ εὖσκιον
 νηλῆς γυνά...

when with the grey bronze she dispatched Cassandra,
 Dardanian Priam’s daughter, along with Agamemnon’s
 soul, to the shadowy shore of Acheron—
 that pitiless woman.

I will endeavor to show, however, that Pindar endows the Agamemnon-Orestes myth with an even greater degree of freedom than the myth of Cyrene. Initiated by the first

²³⁹ Cf. Slater 1979:66 for a clear diagram of the two rings and a lucid treatment of the intermediary gnomic material as a transition from backwards to forwards movement in time.

relative pronoun, the effect of the myth's self-unfolding in Pythian 11 is subsequently augmented not via a *repetition* of the same technique but rather via a unique development of the traditional mythological relation of *nostos* and *xenia*.

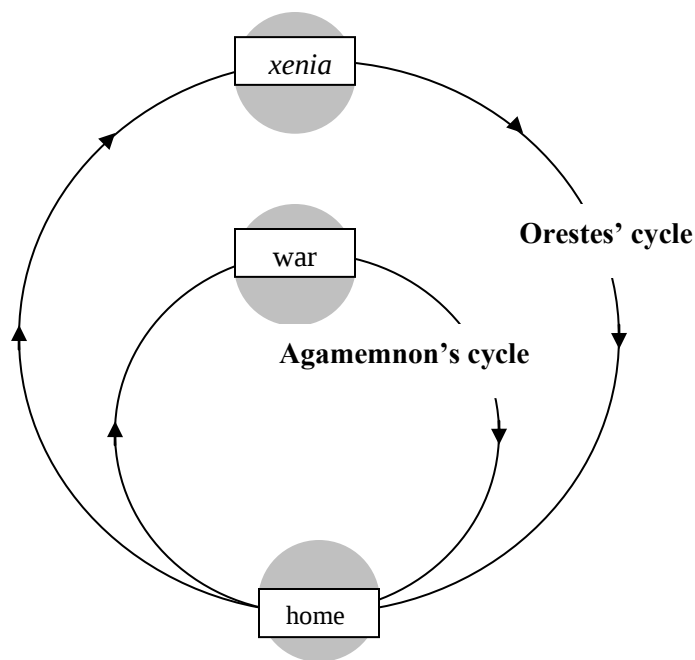
Pindar, as we have seen, often suggests that his song is a circular journey which first leads the poet to the domain of his *xenos* (the victor), and then—explicitly or implicitly—back to his own domain, Thebes. In Pythian 11, since the victor is a fellow Theban, this scenario is turned on its head: as we shall see, the poet journeys, along with the victor, to the domain of Apollo (Delphi) under whose auspices the victory has taken place. In doing so, Pindar preserves the theme inherent to the image of song as journey: the theme of the poet's departing from his *topos oikeios*, from the polis that defines his identity—essentially, the poet's departing *from himself*. In thus “departing from himself,” the poet travels not only spatially to Delphi, but also temporally, into the mythological past. I shall contend that in the case of Pythian 11, as he enters the past, the poet's song-journey coincides and becomes identified with the trajectories of the two central mythological personages, Agamemnon and Orestes. As we shall see, this coincidence is predetermined by the fact that Pindar's song-journey and the Agamemnon-Orestes myth share the same cyclic departure-return pattern, founded upon the pivotal concepts of *xenia* and *nostos*. While *xenia* and *nostos* are important in many of Pindar's odes, their role in Pythian 11 is of an especial significance. I will argue that within this particular song and its myth, guest-friendship and homecoming emerge as two fundamental principles of the traditional mythical perception of life as death and death as life.

* * *

As Slater had observed, the inner ring of Agamemnon's story ends, as it began, with the king's and Cassandra's murder (vv.31-34). Agamemnon's story is thus structured, in Slater's terms, as a "simple lyric narrative": the ring ends at the same point in time at which it began. Immediately thereupon, we read the conclusion of the outer ring which deals with Orestes (vv.34-37). This outer ring is thus structured as a "*complex* lyric narrative": the ring begins with Orestes being saved through the *xenia* of Pylades (v.17), and at its end (v.34) the ring returns to this theme but subsequently progresses further still into the future, *beyond* its original starting point, all the way up to the time when Orestes, a grown young man, returns home and avenges his father. For Slater, the myth is thus constructed as two concentric "*narrative rings*" in both of which the poet weaves the story in such a way that he brings it back to the point whence he began it. Naturally, such a narrative structure requires that movement *backwards* in time, into the past, eventually switch to movement *forwards* in time, into the future. According to Slater, Pindar achieves this change of gear somewhat surreptitiously via a conglomeration of gnomic statements (vv. 25-30) none of which has direct relevance to the ode and to its leitmotif of *xenia*. The poet thereby leads the story further and further back, from the saving of Orestes, to the murder of Agamemnon, to the slaughter of Iphigeneia. He then distracts our attention with some gnomic teachings, and when we emerge from the moralizing we are already moving in the opposite direction, forwards in time to the death of Agamemnon, the saving of Orestes, and the latter's maturation and vengeance. For Slater the thematic interrelation of the two mythical rings does not go beyond the opposition of Pylades-Orestes (good *xenia*) vs. Agamemnon-Cassandra (bad *xenia*).

And, correspondingly, the structural interrelation of the two rings appears to him as purely artificial, wholly dependant on the art—one can even say, guile—of the narrator.

I believe, however, that we witness here something more profound than simply an author's skillful bending of the plot-line in a double circle. Let us begin by noting that, contrary to Slater, the two mythical rings are not really “concentric.” More accurately, the story of Agamemnon functions *within* the outer Orestes ring as an inner *loop* which, taking us deep into the realm of the past, then leads us out and proceeds to launch us seamlessly back upon the orbit of the outer Orestes myth:



As the diagram suggests, the myth is composed not of two artificially welded stories but rather of one story, endowed with one meaning—“the dream of Pharaoh is one.” The double cycle of the Agamemnon-Orestes story is fundamentally different from a narrative structure such as the one underlying the myth of Cyrene in Pythian 9. There, the story organized itself into two rounds of the mythological vortex when, via a succession of

relative pronouns, it regressed into the depths of time (Cyrene, daughter of Hypseus, son of Kreousa, daughter of Gaia). Yet in its essence, the story itself remained strictly linear. Plot-wise, its genealogical regression into the past was a *linear addition* to the (likewise) plot-wise linear segment of the story wherein Apollo's love and marriage to Cyrene are narrated. The unity of the former and the latter segments thus consists of nothing but a *chronological sequence*. At first glance, the scenario seems very similar to the one in Pythian 11. Just as Hypseus' background was an excursus into the ancestry of Cyrene, so too Agamemnon's story can be perceived as a genealogical appendage to the myth of Orestes. Yet the unity of the father's and the son's stories is developed far beyond a linear progression of generations. To begin with, the myths of Agamemnon and Orestes share a fundamental structural feature: both relate a hero's return home from foreign lands. Secondly, as we shall see, this repetition of the *nostos* motif signifies not a mere *similarity* of the two stories but rather their mirror symmetry where right is opposed by left, positive by negative, *xenia* by war, life by death. Thirdly, Pindar's narrative is organized in such a way that the significance of each of the two cycles, as well as the significance of each of the three constitutive moments within each of the two cycles (Agamemnon: (a) departure → (b) war → (c) homecoming; Orestes: (a) departure → (b) *xenia* → (c) homecoming) is revealed only in conjunction with the other cycle and its three constitutive moments. The result, as we shall see, is that the double Agamemnon-Orestes cycle comprises one story whose unity is quite different from a simple alignment of two chronologically arranged narratives as in Pythian 9. Indeed, the Agamemnon cycle can be perceived as *contemporaneous* with that of Orestes, because, in Pindar's interpretation, not only is Orestes' story meaningless without that of Agamemnon, but

likewise the latter's story acquires meaning only in conjunction with that of the former. I would say that precisely this "simultaneity" of the father's and son's stories precludes a need for introducing the myth of Agamemnon via a self-unfolding relative pronoun. After all, a sequence of relative pronouns is a device for capturing the unity of a story as a temporal *sequence* (e.g., the myth of Cyrene in P.9), not as the *simultaneity* of its narrative components.

It is at the conclusion of the myth, in lines 31-37, that the song reveals the intrinsic interrelation between the homecomings of Orestes and Agamemnon.

θάνεν μὲν αὐτὸς ἥρως Ἀτρεΐδης
 ἴκων χρόνῳ κλυταῖς ἐν Ἀμύκλαις,
 μάντιν τ' ὄλεσσε κόραν, ἐπεὶ ἄμφ' Ἑλένα πυρωθέντας
 Τρώων ἔλυσσε δόμους
 ἀβρότατος. ὁ δ' ἄρα γέροντα ξένον
 Στροφίον ἐξίκετο, νέα κεφαλά,
 Παρνασσοῦ πόδα ναίοντ'· ἀλλὰ χρονίῳ σὺν Ἄρει
 πέφνεν τε ματέρα θῆκε τ' Αἰγισθὸν ἐν φοναῖς.

Atreus' heroic son himself died
 when with time he came to famous Amyklai,
 and he brought death on the prophetic maiden, after he
 despoiled of their luxury the homes of the Trojans, who
 were visited by fire for the sake of Helen. The young
 boy, though, went to his aged friend Strophios, who lived
 at the foot of Parnassos. But with the help of timely Ares,
 he slew his mother and laid Aigisthos in gore.

As implied by the "μὲν...δέ" structure which underlies these verses (cf. vv.31 and 34), Agamemnon and Orestes, father and son, are being contrasted here. But what specifically does the contrast focus upon? A close reading reveals that these lines contain not one but two sets of contrasted elements. The first pair of contrasts occurs in vv. 34-36, at the point where the story of Orestes' *xenia* comes full circle to where it began back in vv.17-18. Then, as we progress beyond the outer ring's original starting point, towards

Orestes' homecoming and vengeance (it is this progression that makes the outer mythical ring a "*complex lyric narrative*"), we encounter the second instance of the father-son contrast.

The first contrast is contained in vv. 31-36: on the one hand (μέν), Atreides dies by virtue of *coming* (ἵκων) home to Amyclae, while on the other hand (δέ) Orestes lives by virtue of *coming* (ἐξίκετο) to the foot of Mt. Parnassus, the domain of his *xenoi*. The myth thus contrasts Agamemnon's murder at home with Orestes' deliverance *in der Fremde* and elucidates the paradox inherent to the father's death as well as to the son's life. In the case of Agamemnon as in the case of Orestes, one would expect the outcome of the story to be the opposite of what actually takes place. As I have argued above, a *nostos* is a return from alien—and hence hostile—realms to the welcoming environment of one's own *oikos*; as a return to one's own self, a homecoming *ought* to bring deliverance from dangers and death. Instead, it brings about for Agamemnon his own destruction and the destruction of his dynasty, of his future. By contrast, Orestes finds salvation and life in the alien, hostile realm of the outside world, far from home. We have already seen that *xenia*, as the relationship of strangers-kinsmen, is inherently paradoxical. In the case of Orestes the paradoxical nature of his *xenia*-wrought salvation is further accentuated by the circumstances under which he leaves—or, rather, is forcefully ejected from—his own home: a mere babe, Orestes is passively snatched by the compassionate hands of his nurse from the "strong hands" of his bloodthirsty mother and carried out from his *oikos* because the murder of the king-father has made his life at home an impossibility and, consequently, has annulled his status as the future of the

Atridae. Orestes' exit from his *oikos* into the "outer world" is thus equated with his loss of both an identity and a future—in effect, with his death.

That Orestes' sojourn in the realm of *xenia* has the overtones of a symbolic death is supported by close parallelism between Pindar's versions of the Orestes myth here in Pythian 11 and of the Jason myth in Pythian 4. The babe Jason is sent out of his home under circumstances almost identical to those of infant Orestes. Jason's own full account of the episode is as follows:

πεύθομαι γάρ νιν Πελίαν ἄθεμιν λευ-
καῖς πιθήσαντα φρασίν
ἀμετέρων ἀποσυλᾶσαι βιαίως ἀρχεδικᾶν τοκέων·
τοί μ', ἐπεὶ πάμπρωτον εἶδον φέγγος, ὑπερφιάλου
ἀγεμόνος δείσαντες ὕβριν, κᾶδος ὥς-
εἴτε φθιμένου δνοφερὸν
ἐν δώμασι θηκάμενοι μίγα κωκυτῷ γυναικῶν,
κρύβδα πέμπον σπαργάνοις ἐν πορφυρέοις,
νυκτὶ κοινάσαντες ὁδόν, Κρονίδα
δὲ τράφεν Χίρωνι δῶκαν.

For I am told that lawless Pelias
gave in to his white wits
and usurped it
by force from my justly ruling parents,
who, as soon as I saw the light,
fearing the violence of the overbearing ruler ,
made a dark funeral
in the house and added women's wailing as if I had died,
but secretly sent me away in my purple swaddling clothes,
and, entrusting the journey to the night, gave me
to Cheiron, son of Kronos, to raise.

(109-115)

Both Orestes and Jason are infants of royal blood; the houses of both succumb to a coup d'état directed by an evil kinsman (Clytemnestra and Aegisthus, Pelias) against the infant's father (Agamemnon, Aison), whereby not only the reigning king but also his one son and heir is deprived of his rightful royal status; to avoid the menace of the evil kinsman now in power, both infants are sent out of the house secretly and attain manhood

in der Fremde; and, finally, both young heroes at last return to re-claim their royal identity and to punish the usurpers.²⁴⁰ I have argued that baby Orestes' salvation in a foreign land amounts to a symbolic death: he loses his current identity as a prince, loses—at least so it seems—his future as a reigning king; his ties with the forces that gave him life, his father and mother, are severed, as is severed his connection with the protective closed microcosm of his home.²⁴¹ But whereas symbolic death is implicit in Orestes' story, in the case of Jason it is quite explicit: to safeguard the baby from Pelias and to steal him out of the house, his parents stage a mock-funeral, complete with the trappings of ritual female wailers, “ὡσεῖτε φθιμένου.”²⁴² And, within the realms of their

²⁴⁰ Cf. Segal 1986:170. Segal notes in passing the similarity between Orestes' and Jason's infanhoods (although his main focus is not this similarity or the theme of symbolic death but rather the role of the masculine and feminine, particularly with regard to *dolos* and *metis*, in Pythian 4): “[Arsinoia] is a kind of female counterpart to Cheiron. She preserves the patriarchal line and the future instrument of patriarchal vengeance [...] in such a figure, as also in gratuitous narrative details like Cheiron's daughters rearing Jason (*Pyth.* 4. 103), we can see how Pindar softens the sharp sexual antinomies portrayed in the contemporary tragedies.”

²⁴¹ For loss of identity as equivalent to a symbolic death, see Pucci 1987: 148-154. Pucci argues that throughout the Homeric epic Odysseus repeatedly “dies” by losing or disguising his identity and then returns to himself by regaining his identity—i.e., is reborn.

²⁴² Above I have noted that Jason, like Odysseus, accomplishes a homecoming only to embark on another journey which is likewise eventually crowned with a *nostos*. In the case of Jason, the repetition of the cyclic departure-*nostos* pattern is underscored by the fact that *both* of his departures from home, as related by Pindar in P.4, amount to a symbolic death. This symbolism, as I have discussed, is explicit when he is sent away from home as a babe and only somewhat more camouflaged when Pelias sends him on the quest for the Fleece. As commentators have frequently pointed out, his object is to bring back the ghost of Phrixus, thereby “removing the anger of those in the underworld” (vv.158-159). “This motif,” writes Segal, “gives Jason's voyage the familiar mythical component of a journey to the Other World, like that of Odysseus in the *Nekyia*, Gilgamesh, and Heracles” (1986:90). So too Mackie 2001: “The journey to Colchis is consciously evoked, not least by Pindar (*Pyth.* 4.158 ff.), as akin to a journey to the Underworld. In this poem Pelias tells Jason that he (Jason) is ‘able to take away the anger of those in the Underworld’ (158-9). For Phrixus, he says, ‘commands us to bring back his soul’ (159) by recovering the fleece. Jason's special role as leader of the quest has a critical otherworldly aspect to it, in that he will ‘heal’ the anger (*menis*) of Phrixus by bringing home his soul (i.e., to inhabit his cenotaph). Jason's task is to restore harmony to the upper and lower worlds. His quest therefore (which has much in common with Priam's mission to get Hector's body back in Iliad 24) restores the peaceful co-existence of the living with the dead. His mission to Colchis to get the fleece is a ‘descent,’ much as if he were going to the Underworld itself to calm the soul of Phrixus.” Cf. also Duchemin 1955: 271 and 303 ff., esp. 307 -308. Likewise, it has been shown that according to the more ancient versions of the Argonaut myth (popular, oddly enough, as a subject for vase painting but not present in extant literary accounts of the Argonauts), Jason was actually swallowed and then regurgitated by the dragon who guarded the Golden Fleece (Pinsent 1969:79; Robbins

quasi-death, both Orestes and Jason find protection and nourishment as the token of the successful attainment of manhood and a return to “life”—Orestes through Strophios’ kindly *xenia*, Jason through Cheiron’s wise tutelage.

Returning to the Agamemnon-Orestes opposition, we can thus summarize the first contrast between father and son as “*oikos* vs. *xenia*.” Within this opposition, we see a “perversion” of the respective roles traditionally played by one’s household as the sphere of life and the outer world as the sphere of death. The *second* Agamemnon-Orestes contrast evoked within the coda of the Orestes myth focuses on the opposition of father’s anti-*nostos* vs. son’s true *nostos*. Agamemnon’s homecoming is, as we have seen, an anti-*nostos*. By contrast, the *nostos* of Orestes, reinvigorated by his deathlike sojourn in the realm of *xenia* is a homecoming in the full sense of the word as a regaining of his own identity and a redemption of that future which his father’s murder seemed to have annulled irrevocably. It is only now, when Orestes has accomplished his *nostos* and thereby completed the coda of the outer mythical ring, that the parallelism-contrast between the cycle of Agamemnon and the cycle of Orestes emerges with full force. Within the ring of Agamemnon, the point farthest away from home, the turning-point of the king’s voyage—or, to use Pindaric imagery, Agamemnon’s “Straits of Gibraltar”—is the Trojan War. More specifically, it is at the *taking* of Troy, succinctly but picturesquely portrayed in vv. 33-34, that the ultimate aim of his travels is accomplished: having wreaked havoc on his enemies, the king can begin to return homeward. Yet in

1975; Mackie 2001). While Pindar only indirectly hints at the remnants of this tradition, this version of the myth establishes the folkloric Jason still more firmly as undergoing, Odysseus-like, a symbolic death and resurrection in the course of the Argonauts’ voyage. As Mackie sums up, “The ‘major’ quest of Jason (to Colchis and back to get the fleece), and his ‘minor’ quest (into and out of the dragon’s belly at Colchis) are different manifestations of the same basic mythic pattern of descent and return.” Cf. Meuli (1935: 172ff.) for the relation of the image of song as a road to the road into the realm of death. For the motif of *nostos* as return from the dead in Homer’s *Odyssey*, see Frame 1978 (passim).

reaching home, he suffers an anti-*nostos*. Within the ring of Orestes, a diametrically opposite scenario unfolds: on the circuit of the prince's voyage the point farthest away from home, and thus its turning-point, is the realm not of strife and war but of peaceful friendship and mentorship, of a cheerful father-son-like relationship between the “νέα κεφαλά” Orestes and Pylades' aged father (“γέροντα ξένον Στροφίον”). It is here, in *xenia*, that life miraculously springs forth anew out of the absolute impossibility of life—the realm of guest-friendship, we may conclude, is that paradoxical point of a journey which, situated at a maximum distance from home (from the realm of life) contains within itself the potential of revitalization, of the attainment of a successful *nostos* and thus, essentially, of future cycles.

In his 1914 lecture titled “Hamlet and Orestes,” Gilbert Murray, a representative of the Cambridge Ritualists, examined the figure of Orestes in the plays of Euripides and concluded that this dramatic hero is essentially an *eniautos daimon*—a repeatedly dying and resurrected year-god, as defined and analyzed by Murray's friend and fellow ritualist Jane Harrison in her 1912 work *Themis*.²⁴³ More specifically, Euripidean Orestes is a

²⁴³ As Harrison herself writes in the *Themis*, she formed the term *eniautos daimon* on the model of James Frazer's concept of the Corn-Spirit or Vegetation-Spirit—a concept which, in its turn, goes back to the 1870's works of Wilhelm Mannhardt who collected and categorized the rites of farmers and woodsmen. While Harrison's concept of the cyclic year god borrows much from Frazer's *Golden Bough* with its extensive discussion of Attis, Adonis, Osiris, and Dionysus, she takes Frazer's theories a step further by arguing that the *eniautos daimon* is an incarnation not only of vegetation (as is the Corn-/Vegetation-Spirit), but likewise of “the whole world-process of decay, death, and renewal” (Harrison 1912: xvi). Cf. Fontenrose's critique: “[Harrison's] *Eniautos Daimōn* is an imaginative figment: the phrase is never found in ancient Greek literature or inscriptions; and, in fact, the combination is impossible, since *eniautos* is not an adjective (an ἐνιαύσιος δαίμων or ὁ δαίμων Ἐνιαυτός is possible, but unattested; the rarely personified *Eniautos* is the nearest that can be found)” (Fontenrose 1966:34). Nevertheless Fontenrose points out that, these inaccuracies notwithstanding, Harrison's application of the concept to the origins of Greek drama is much more cautious than that of her friend Murray. According to Harrison, it is only the *form* of Greek drama that derives from the rituals of the *eniautos daimon*, while the *content* derives from Homer and other such mythical lore. By contrast, Murray radicalizes Harrison's theories, such that for him “each hero's passion, as portrayed in tragedy, is cut to the pattern of ‘the Eniautos myth’ and is a sequence of *agōn*, *pathos*, *angelos*, *thrēnos*, *anagnorisis*, *theophaneia*—the hero, then, is just a developed, personalized, and historicized Year Spirit” (Fontenrose 1966:27). For additional detailed critique of Murray's theories of the

surrogate for the god Dionysus—a local Greek version, according to Murray, of the *eniautos daimon* and closely akin to the cyclic vegetal gods of other ancient cultures such as Attis, Adonis, and Osiris. In the wake of Frazer, Murray, along with other confederate ritualists, perceived the life-death-rebirth cycle (or “tragic rhythm”²⁴⁴) of the vegetal year to be embodied in the mythologies of agricultural deities and spirits: the death of a Dionysus, Attis, Adonis, or Osiris is equivalent to the god’s reunion with the dark energies of earth’s life-giving depths. Reinitiating itself into the mystery of the chthonic *Lebensquelle*, the divine power springs forth anew, and every yearly death is the beginning of a new life. Like these agricultural deities, Orestes at first undergoes a (fictive/symbolic) death and is mourned but subsequently returns (= comes back to life) and triumphs over his enemies.²⁴⁵ Murray thus neatly fits Orestes into his overall conception of Greek Drama as an art form evolved from seasonal religious rituals (*dromena*) celebrating the re-birth and/or death of the cyclic year-spirit Dionysus.²⁴⁶

It is beyond the scope of the present study to evaluate the controversial theories of Frazer, Harrison, and Murray. Nevertheless, without getting involved in the primary concerns of the Cambridge Ritualists (interrelation of myth and ritual; opposition of philology and anthropology; role of initiation rites in the cult of the *eniautos daimon*; origins of Greek drama, etc.), we may note that not only in the plays of Euripides but in

origins of Greek drama, see Pickard-Cambridge (1927), who’s object is to demonstrate that most—if not all—Greek tragedies do not at all conform to Murray’s “*agōn*, *pathos*, *angelos*, *thrēnos*, *anagnorisis*, *theophaneia*” pattern. For an overall exposition and evaluation of Frazer, Harrison, Murray, and other representatives of the Cambridge “Myth and Ritual School,” see Ackerman 1991.

²⁴⁴ “Tragic rhythm” is Robert Ackerman’s phrase (Ackerman 1991:62).

²⁴⁵ Murray 1914. In his analysis of Orestes, Murray partly relies on the earlier work of Hermann Usener (1904) who argued that Orestes was originally a spirit of the winter season and a double (*Doppelgänger*) of Dionysus, just as the hero Neoptolemus was originally, for Usener, a double of Apollo.

²⁴⁶ Murray 1912.

Greek mythology in general the figure of Orestes is characterized by a cyclic birth → death (exile + symbolic or fictive death) → re-birth (*nostos* and regaining of identity) pattern similar to the one discerned by Murray.²⁴⁷ Pindar, I believe, adds something new and crucial to this traditional pattern of the Oresteia. In discussing Pindar's innovation of the myth it is useful to adopt Murray's vegetal image, not, indeed, as acceptance of the ritualists' belief that Orestes is a year-spirit in camouflage, but rather as a metaphor which is legitimate in the context of the odes given that within Pindar's *Weltanschauung* "all is alive,"²⁴⁸ and that this universal animation tends to have distinctly vegetal overtones. Thus, as Carne-Ross had noted, a polis for Pindar is "a living, growing thing...The Pindaric city is (like?) a tree. Its roots are the ancestral heroes and their foundational acts, the visible tree is the city's continuing life, its leaves and flowers the city's sons and their achievements. The poet's song waters the roots of the city-tree and ensures that it will continue to bear its heroic blossom."²⁴⁹ Similarly, in Olympian 7 the island Rhodes rises, like its namesake flower the rose, out of the sea's briny darkness towards the sun.²⁵⁰ And in Pythian 4 Pindar juxtaposes the "flourishing" (θάλλει) of the present-day king of Cyrene Arkesilaus (v.65) with the original "planting" (φύτευθεν) of

²⁴⁷ And, of course, Orestes is not unique in this: many a mythological hero undergoes symbolic death and resurrection when he returns home after having been exiled and stripped of his identity and/or descends live into Hades and rises therefrom. As discussed above, Odysseus and Jason each undergo both forms of "death" and "rebirth." In other heroes symbolic death and resurrection are manifest in only one of these two forms (Heracles, Theseus, Orpheus, Oedipus).

²⁴⁸ Norwood 1945:97. Cf. Gildersleeve (1885: xl): "The whole world of things, animate and inanimate, is endued with life, or quickened to a higher vitality."

²⁴⁹ Carne-Ross 1985: 36. Cf. Segal (1998:234): "The images of flower or plant life metonymically describe the victor in his relation to his kin ties."

²⁵⁰ On the "vegetal" growth of Rhodes from salty darkness towards the rays of the sun, see Norwood 1945:141; Young 1968:88 ff.; and Rubin.

divinely sent honors for his ancestors, the Argonauts (v. 69): the mythical lore of Cyrene is thus perceived as the seeds of future greatness buried within the ground, and this greatness manifests itself in full many generations later in Arkesilaus' reign.²⁵¹ Given that the plant metaphor—whether of tree, flower, or seed—seems innate to Pindar's poetic vision, it does not seem illegitimate to discuss the structure of Pythian 11's Agamemnon-Orestes myth in like terms of plant and seed without necessarily burdening the discussion with myth-ritualist assumptions.

The New Testament gives one of the most succinct expressions of the vegetal metaphor of life: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24). Yet whether it is Odysseus descending into Hades that he might rise therefrom and complete his *nostos*; or the Frazerian Corn-Spirit being buried in the ground that he might bring forth new life; or the biblical corn of wheat dying that it might generate new crop—none of these scenarios, ancient or new, distinguishes the life of the plant from the life of its seed: falling into the soil, the plant and its seed, *perceived as a unity*, simultaneously dies and is reborn. The Pindaric myth, on the other hand, differentiates between the "plant" (Agamemnon) and the "seed" (Orestes) in revealing their two lifecycles to be diametrically opposite yet intimately interconnected. The moment of the seed's falling into the soil is the moment of death for the paternal plant, the ultimate conclusion of its cycle of life. Yet this very same moment is the beginning of re-birth for the seed, which, after a sojourn in the chthonic darkness, will eventually emerge towards a new life in the

²⁵¹ Cf. Pythian 9, where Cyrene is said to "inhabit the lovely and flourishing root of the third continent [Africa]" (v.8). Later, Apollo wonders, "from what stock has she been severed?" (v.33). For families as trees and fields in Pindar, see Young 1968:96. Cf. Gildersleeve's commentary on P.9.9, where Cyrene is said to inhabit the "lovely root of the third continent": "The earth is conceived as a plant with three roots, Libya being one, Europe and Asia being the other two."

light of the sun. Agamemnon's return home is equivalent to the death of a fully developed plant; the return home of his seed Orestes is a rebirth. And, correspondingly, Pindar's story of Agamemnon progresses from life to death while that of Orestes moves in the opposite direction from death to life.

It is logical that Agamemnon's return voyage as the transition from life to death begins at the height of his glory, at the moment when the king's life has burgeoned to maximal fullness and can subsequently proceed only towards decay. The "ἥρως" Agamemnon returns home "ἐπεὶ ἄμφ' Ἑλένῃ πυρωθέντας / Τρώων ἔλυσε δόμους ἀβρότατος" (vv. 33-34). These lines, just as the lines musing on the origins of Clytemnestra's treachery which I addressed above, are a powerful example of Pindar's compression technique; succinctly but vividly they convey the extent of Agamemnon's grandeur at the moment of his victory over Troy, and a theme that may have required a whole scene within an epic is here condensed into a few words richly laden with implications. The two main components of this victory—winning back Helen (ἄμφ' Ἑλένῃ) and wreaking havoc on enemies (πυρωθέντας...δόμους)—merge into one image of Agamemnon's triumph over the city whose luxurious delicacy the conqueror had "loosened," ἔλυσε ἀβρότατος.²⁵² Wilamowitz found the expression mediocre: "...und das Hauptverbum ἔλυσε ist vielleicht am anstößigsten, weil es neben dem in Brand setzen seltsam schwach ist."²⁵³ F. S. Newman came, I believe, closer to grasping the import of the verse when he noted that "ἀβρότης, the delicate charm of youth (cf. ἀβρόν...σῶμα,

²⁵² Alternative interpretations of the syntax of the verse seem improbable. Cf. Gildersleeve: "ἀβρότατος: Depends on ἔλυσε. "Reft of luxury." Such a combination as δόμους ἀβρότατος = δόμους ἀβρούς, πλουσίους, is very unlikely."

²⁵³ Wilamowitz 1922:261, footnote 1.

Ol. 6.55-56 and ἀβρά...Ἰππολύτα, *Ne.* 5.26), must not be reduced to the flaccid ‘prosperity.’²⁵⁴ And just as ἀβρότης in a poetic context can bear erotic connotations, so too can λύω: Newman refers to Hesiod’s Ἔρος...λυσιμελής (*Theog.* 120-21) and to Pindar’s Isthmian 8.44-45, where Themis advises that “during the evening of a full moon” Thetis ought to “loosen the lovely bridle of her virginity in submission to that hero” (ἐρατόν λύοι κεν χαλινὸν ὑφ’ ἥρωϊ παρθενίας) (Race’s translation).²⁵⁵ Returning to our verse, we can say that Pindar envisions Agamemnon’s taking of the city as a sensuous “ungirdling” of Maiden Troy. Once again, the fact that Pindar’s account is brief in no way implies that it is a mere summary of hackneyed mythical material (e.g., Agamemnon captured and burned Troy to avenge the rape of Helen). Rather, the poet augments the sense of the king’s triumph, the sense that this is the climactic moment of Agamemnon’s life, by suffusing the military image with erotic symbolism: the taking of Troy is portrayed as a riot of the conqueror’s life-energies which stands in sharp contrast with his immediately following, literally cata-strophic, plunge towards an ignominious death. As the turning-point towards his homecoming, this moment of triumph is also the

²⁵⁴ For a discussion of *habrosune* in Pindar, see Bowra 1970:116, Knox 1984:13, Nagy 1990:290-91. See likewise Kurke 1992, who offers a detailed study of the historic development of the concept of *habrosune*, and attempts to distinguish its political connotations from erotic and other ones.

²⁵⁵ “The sexual sense of λύω (cf. Scholefield’s ‘stripped’ cited by F. Mezger, *Pindars Siegeslieder*, Leipzig 1880, p.279) is well marked (e.g., *Is.* 8.45 and Ἔρος...λυσιμελής, Hesiod *Theog.* 120-21 with M. L. West’s remarks on 121), and cannot be ignored in a clause where Helen, on whose morality Stesichorus had already scathingly commented...is so prominent” (Newman 1979). That Agamemnon’s victory over Troy should bear erotic overtones is in accord with the traditional symbolic equivalency of the integrity of a city’s walls to maidenhood. An echo of the same equivalency rings over two millennia later in the soldiers’ song of Goethe’s *Faust*: “Burgen mit hohen / Mauern und Zinnen / Mädchen mit stolzen / Höhnenden Sinnen / Möcht’ ich gewinnen! Kühn ist das Mühen, Herrlich der Lohn! [...] Das ist ein Stürmen! / Das ist ein Leben! / Mädchen und Burgen / Müssen sich geben...etc.” (Teil I, “Vor dem Tor”). Compare the metaphoric equivalency “military victory = sexual victory” with the related metaphor, frequent in Pindar, of an *athletic* victory as “a sexual union or marriage,” where erotic overtones are often accentuated by the verb *meignumi* (Rose 1974). For a refutation of Rose, see Verdenius 1982. For overall analysis of the verb *meignumi* in Pindar, see Hoey 1965, who argues that Pindar’s use of this verb creates the effect of surprise because it makes the active agent a passive figure: e.g., an athlete does not “achieve victory” but rather is “mingled with victory.”

point on the hero's trajectory at which he is the *farthest removed* from his hearth and home, from the familiar microcosm of his own *oikos*, the source of protection, strength, and life. At this turning point, the moment of military victory, Agamemnon overcomes and assimilates the *foreign as the hostile*. And it is at this point that Agamemnon's process of dying begins, destined to culminate at the point of the hero's slaughter upon his arrival in the "safety" of his home.

The Orestes cycle transitions, contrary to that of Agamemnon, in the opposite direction from death to life: as we have seen, this cycle begins with the "quasi-death" of Orestes when he is forced to give up his royal identity and the protection of the inner world of his paternal home and must seek succor in the foreign realm of *xenia*. If the turning-point of the father's orbit (the taking of Troy) corresponds to the triumphant burgeoning of Agamemnon's life, the turning-point of the son's orbit corresponds to the forceful severing of ties with his home as the source of life: a helpless babe, Orestes has no sooner entered life than he is forced out of it by the collapse of its foundation, his father's *oikos*. In this sense the entirety of Orestes' existence up to the point of his return home is the sojourn of a seed in the dark depths of life-giving earth. Furthermore, the turning-points of the two orbits—Priam's Troy and Strophios' land at the foot of the Parnassus—correspond to two diametrically opposite relationships between the traveler and the inherent foreignness of the outside world wherein he sojourns. It is not, like his father, through war, in the realm of tempestuous assertion of *one's own* life through the destruction and subdual of *foreign* life, that Orestes attains the turning-point of his journey. Rather, Orestes' journey is turned back home through *xenia*, that paradoxical realm of *friendly foreignness*, of death which nurtures and preserves life. Orestes' return

home from the sojourn in this magical “jenseits des Lebens” is, in effect, the rebirth of the lineage of the Atridae which had seemed to be irrevocably severed by Agamemnon’s death.

(h) Confluent cyclic trajectories of Orestes’, Thrasydaios’, and Pindar’s journeys

Agamemnon and Orestes are not the only ones achieving a *nostos* in Pythian 11. The poet, too, is returning home. Let us recall that the ode opens with a double command to the female spirits of Thebes: “go to Apollo’s domain, for the god himself calls upon you to come!” Subsequently, we are never told that the goddesses went anywhere, and the injunction is therefore traditionally interpreted as simply a poetic flourish. I have maintained, however, that, far from being merely decorative, the command “Go!” announced by Pindar as an allegation of Apollo’s desire is a variation on Pindar’s traditional theme of his song as coming. Since the victor Thrasydaios is the poet’s own kith and kin, Pindar cannot envision the addressor-addressee relation between himself and Thrasydaios in the usual terms of *xenia* and journeying. The poet, however, not only does not forego the theme of guest-friendship but exploits the unusual scenario to intensify and explore on a new level the thematic implications of *xenia*. He begins by sending the female spirits of Thebes to the domain of Apollo—the same god in whose domain Thrasydaios has achieved his victory.²⁵⁶ But the *Abbruchsformel* which follows

²⁵⁶ Indeed, as commentators have pointed out, it could be interpolated that as a victorious athlete Thrasydaios is being entertained as a welcome guest-friend in Delphi. Citing other Pindaric odes as well as Pausanias, Slater argues that Pindar envisions Thrasydaios in P. 11 as a *xenos* in Delphi, and that Orestes, who had likewise found hospitality at Delphi, serves as Thrasydaios’ mythical analogue (Slater 1979:67). Cf. Kurke 1991:152-153. Compare with the above discussion of Isthmian 2, where I have argued that the victor Xenokrates is praised not only as a hospitable host-*xenos* within his own household but also simultaneously as an honored guest-*xenos* welcomed by the deities and presiding officials of the locales where he had achieved athletic victories. If we agree with Slater in seeing the same theme in Pythian 11—

the myth brings on the sudden realization that not only Thrasydaïos and then the female spirits of Thebes have journeyed to the realm of Apollo but that likewise Pindar himself has been journeying, first along a straight road, then in the whirl of a circle (vv.38-40):

ἦρ', ὦ φίλοι, κατ' ἀμευσίπορον τρίοδον ἐδινάθην,
ὀρθὰν κέλευθον ἰὼν
τὸ πρίν· ἦ μέ τις ἄνεμος ἔξω πλόου
ἔβαλεν, ὥς ὅτ' ἄκατον ἐνναλίαν;

Can it be, O my friends, that I got whirled where the way forked,
When before I was going on the straight road?
Or did some wind throw me
Off course, like a small boat at sea?

Incidentally, the verb Pindar uses of himself, ἰὼν, is the same which above he has used twice of the journeying of the Theban goddesses towards Apollo: ἵτε; καλεῖ συνίμεν. All along, from the first lines of the ode, Pindar has been travelling: his song had at first been a straight path but has at some point been “thrown off course.” The overall trajectory of this song-journey is the same as the one which the poet proposed to the goddesses and the same which Thrasydaïos, having come to the Pythian Games, had *already* traced: just as Thrasydaïos progresses from Thebes to Apollo and back to Thebes, so too the poet’s song-journey progresses towards the realm of Apollo, tracing the vicissitudes that had led the house of Atreus to seek succor at hospitable Delphi. Thus all three—the athlete (Thrasydaïos), the mythological hero (Orestes), and the poet (Pindar)—travel to Pytho. And just as Orestes at long last turns back home to Amyclae, so too in the *Abbruchsformel* at the end of the myth the poet must make *his* return in space as well as in time: from praise of the hospitable Delphi he must return to his mother Thebes; and from the mythological past he must return to the “here and now,” the victory of

the victor Thrasydaïos as guest-*xenos* in the place of his victory—then we can say that Pindar is bidding the Theban goddesses to make the same journey which Thrasydaïos, the son of Thebes, had already made—to Delphi—so that they, like him, would become Apollo’s guests.

Thrasydaïos. Accordingly, he bids his Muse to turn to praise of Thrasydaïos and his father (v. 42), to make a swift leap from the depths of the past to the immediate present: “Μοῖσα, τὸ δὲ τεόν [...] / ἄλλοτ’ ἄλλα ταρασμένον / ἢ πατρὶ Πυθονίκῳ / τό γέ νυν ἢ Θρασυδάῳ” (vv.41-44).

Pindar’s Pytho-bound journey and his return therefrom thus coincide with those of both Orestes and Thrasydaïos. It is herein that lies, I believe, the key to the puzzling verb ἐδινάθην which Pindar employs in v. 38. Traditionally, “ἐδινάθην” in the context of this *Abbruchsformel* has been understood as “I got confused,”²⁵⁷ which has led to the typical interpretation of this phrase as a “confession” on the part of the poet that the Agamemnon-Orestes myth is irrelevant to Thrasydaïos’ victory. Some commentators have taken the confession at face value;²⁵⁸ others read it as a tongue-in-cheek statement.²⁵⁹ It seems to me, however, that the “confession” points not to the *irrelevancy* of the mythical subject but rather to the *poetic authority* of the myth which has held in its sway its two primary personages (Agamemnon, Orestes) as well as Pindar himself,

²⁵⁷ Race. Farnell renders ἐδινάθην as “[I have gone] staggering down...a wrong track.” Nisetich offers “Truly, friends, I have been **whirled along** ever since the road divided.” While Nisetich’s suggestion is closer to the “direct” meaning of “ἐδινάθην,” the English “whirled along” does not necessarily conjure the image of a circular motion and reads as hardly different from “swept along.” Becker’s German comes closest: “habe ich mich gedreht” (Becker 1937:72).

²⁵⁸ Cf. Farnell.

²⁵⁹ Cf. Egan 1983: “While it is true that Pindar ‘abruptly’ ends his story, it is obvious from the careful ring-composition of the myth-section, which he begins and ends with a reference to Orestes’ sojourn in Phocis, that he has completed saying something that he deliberately intended to say.” Egan’s explanation of this *Abbruch* is, however, dubious: establishing, via comparison with Sophocles, that Orestes was widely honored as a Pythian athlete, Egan suggests that the audience was expecting precisely such a portrait of him, and the *Abbruch* is the poet’s acknowledgement that he has taken an alternative path, speaking instead of Orestes’ unhappy family. However, this second aspect of Orestes is likewise crucial to the ode, because “as the slayer of Aegisthus and Clytemnestra and the protege of Delphic Apollo he [Orestes] exemplifies Delphic justice.” For further theories on the composition of the myth in Pythian 11, see Newman 1979. Although writing in the wake and under the influence of David Young’s careful analysis of the ode, Newman mostly focuses on detailed lists of pairs of “corresponding” word and phrases within the ode.

setting all three on the rounds of their respective *nostoi*. The rendering of “ἐδινάθην” as “I got confused” dims the precise meaning of the verb, which, I believe, aims specifically at reinforcing the circular, *nostos*-oriented path of the myth he had just sung.²⁶⁰ Literally “ἐδινάθην” means “I got whirled about in a circular motion”—and that is precisely what the double vortex of the myth has achieved, whirling the poet not only backwards and forwards through generational cycles (from Orestes to Agamemnon and back to Orestes), but also through the circular homeward-bound travels of both father and son (back to Amyclae, away from Amyclae, and back to Amyclae again). “ἐδινάθην” thus conveys the circular trajectory of Pindar’s song-path; and, by virtue of being cast in the passive voice, it likewise conveys the passivity of its subject: escaping the poet’s authority, the song has forcefully spun its creator in a circle. If Pindar adopts a quasi-astonished tone in the *Abbruchsformel*, it is not the irrelevance but the *willfulness* of his song that he is underscoring: he is drawing our attention to the wonderful freedom which he had granted his verse, enabling it to unfold itself as the two interconnected cycles of death as rebirth and rebirth as death.

Not only do the journeys of Orestes, Thrasydaos, and Pindar coincide in timing and destination (Delphi), but also their homecomings amount to the same ultimate result. Orestes, as we have seen, achieves a seemingly impossible redemption and revival of that past which had been irrevocably destroyed and annulled within the first cycle of myth—his father’s dynasty, his own royal status. Orestes’ *nostos* magically overcomes the finality of death. Thrasydaos’ athletic victory achieves a similar, albeit less dramatically expressed, goal. As I had noted earlier, Pindar uses a very specific verb to describe

²⁶⁰ Cf. Gildersleeve’s injunction: “it is hardly possible to go wrong in pressing Pindar’s vocabulary until the blood comes” (p. xli). Cf. Carne-Ross 1985:26.

Thrasydaïos' achievement: this athlete's victory had "**recalled to memory** (ἐμνάσεν) the hearth of his fathers" (vv.13-14). In other words, the athlete, just as the mythical hero, revives his father's name by preserving it from oblivion, from becoming an ever-receding, ever-dimmer past. And the circular path of Pindar's song achieves the same—and ultimate—redemption of the past. Without the poet's song, the mythical hero's and the athletic victor's redemptions of the past would be null and void. The Pindaric song, as the present chapter has argued, is the poet's address to his audience, typically envisioned as the coming of a poet-*xenos* to his audience's hospitable native polis. The poet's address-as-coming (often, as we have seen, a progress which lasts throughout the song) corresponds to *the present of the poem*. But, within his address, Pindar permits the past to acquire its own poetic freedom and to unravel the rounds of the mythological vortex. His song-as-journey thus revives and preserves the past—the mythical past of the Atridae, the immediate past of Thrasydaïos' victory. Saving the past of the present from oblivion, the song-journey ensures likewise the *future of the present*: only thus, through Pindar's epinikion, can Thrasydaïos' victory live on in the ages, only thus can great deeds become roots of the future rather than a past that is gone and will never return. In other words, only *through* song and *within* song does Thrasydaïos attain the true status of the future—he becomes the future of his clan and of his polis. We can say that the song-journey—and, more precisely, its creator, the poet-traveler—comprises within itself the unity of the three layers of time—past, present, and future.²⁶¹

²⁶¹ Previous scholars have likewise pointed out that Pindar's song-journey not only coincides with that of the athlete and/or mythical hero, but also that the journeys of both poet and athlete are circular, predicated upon a *nostos*. However, these earlier studies have insisted on a wholly different rationale for the coincidence of the two circular paths. Leslie Kurke writes: "...this same economic model [as the one she has analyzed in Simonides] explains the poet's spatial mimesis of the victor, for the reason that the road of song traces the same circuit as the road of achievement and the road of the ancestors is that all three serve

and express the economic means of the house” (1991:60-62). For a similar point of view, see Mackie 2003:56.

CHAPTER 3
PINDAR'S SONG-JOURNEY IN THE FUTURE AND IN THE PAST:
POET AS ATHLETE AND POET AS MYTHICAL HERO

This chapter continues the investigation of Pindar's image of song as journey. The aim of the song-journey, I have maintained, is to immortalize the victor's polis by retaining within the present of the polis its past and its future in a living unity—as, respectively, the nourishing roots and the flourishing fruits of the polis-tree. But if it is *as a journey* that the song retains the past and the future within the present, it is not surprising that the poet's journey through space comprises likewise journeys through time.

In Chapter 2 we have already seen one such instance where the journey of the poetic "I" towards a polis is revealed to contain within itself likewise a journey *through time*, into the mythic past and into the future. We saw that ἐδινάθην in P. 11.38 refers not only to the poet's circular progression from Thebes to Pytho and back to Thebes, but also to his circular progression from the present (the day of Thrasydaios' victory celebration) to the mythic past (story of Agamemnon and Orestes), and back to the day of victory celebration. Moreover, as I have aimed to show, Pindar's circular progression in P.11 coincides, spatially and temporally, with the circular progressions of both the mythic hero (Orestes) and of the athletic victor (Thrasydaios). Not only do both hero and victor depart from home and then return, but also, in doing so, they preserve the achievements of their ancestors and thereby maintain the unity of times. But an Orestes' or a Thrasydaios' preservation of the past in the present would be valueless if the poet, in his

turn, did not immortalize their achievements in song. Thus the *xenia-nostos*-defined pattern of the hero's and the athlete's journeys turns out to be but a projection of the *xenia-nostos*-defined pattern of the poet's song-journey. In a sense, then, the poet here journeys within the past not only because he recounts a tale of the past (Agamemnon's murder and his son's revenge), but also because he projects his poetic time-unifying powers onto the figure of the mythic hero Orestes. We can say that, in Pythian 11, Pindar journeys within the past *as Orestes*. And, similarly, in projecting his poetic time-unifying powers onto the figure of the victorious athlete Thrasydaios—the “fruit,” or future, of his polis—Pindar journeys likewise within the future.

Furthermore, our analysis of Pythian 11 suggests that in projecting himself into the past as Orestes and into the future as Thrasydaios—and in thus effectually “journeying” into the past and the future—the poet once again structures his journey on the principles of *xenia* and *nostos*. Departing into the past or the future, he disguises his poetic “I” in the figures of, respectively, the mythic hero or the athlete. In other words, just as an Orestes in the realm of *xenia*, the poet loses his identity. But, having done so, he returns back to the present, to the “here and now” of the victory celebration, and re-asserts himself as the poetic “I.” Thus, for the poetic “I,” past and future are *xenia*-like realms of “friendly foreignness.”

Such a reading of Pythian 11, significantly predicated upon my interpretation of the verb ἐδινάθην, receives additional support from a much more explicit instance of a poet-athlete-hero merging which occurs in Nemean 3:

εἰ δ' ἐὼν καλὸς ἔρδων τ' εἰκότα μορφῇ
 ἀνορέαις ὑπερτάταις ἐπέβα
 παῖς Ἀριστοφάνεος, οὐκέτι πρόσω
 ἀβάταν ἄλλα κίωνων ὕπερ Ἡρακλέος περᾶν εὐμαρές,

ἥρωος θεὸς ἃς ἔθηκε ναυτιλίας ἐσχάτας
 μάρτυρας κλυτάς· δάμασε δὲ θῆρας ἐν πελάγει
 ὑπερόχους, ἰδίᾳ τ' ἐρεῦνασε τεναγέων
 ῥοάς, ὅπῃ πόμπιμον κατέβαινε νόστου τέλος,
 καὶ γὰρ φράδασε. θυμέ, τίνα πρὸς ἄλλοδαπὰν
 ἄκραν ἐμὸν πλόον παραμείβει;
 Αἰακῷ σε φαμί γένει τε Μοῖσαν φέρειν.
 (19-28)

If, being fair and performing deeds to match his form,
 the son of Aristophanes has embarked on utmost
 deeds of manhood, it is no easy task to go yet further
 across the untracked sea beyond the pillars of Heracles,

which that hero-god established as famed witnesses
 of his furthestmost voyage. He subdued monstrous beasts
 in the sea, and on his own explored the streams of the shallows,
 where he reached the limit that sent him back home,
 and he made known the land. My heart, to what alien
 headland are you turning aside my ship's course?
 To Aiakos and his race I bid you bring the Muse.

The victor Aristokleidas (the “son of Aristophanes”) has embarked upon the utmost deeds of manhood. The nautical language (“embarked,” ἐπέβα) smoothly leads the poet into metaphorically envisioning these “utmost deeds” as the pillars of Heracles with the untracked sea lying beyond them, and this metaphor, in turn, leads via a relative pronoun into a brief account of Heracles’ marine travels to the straits of Gibraltar. The image of the athlete thus merges with that of the mythical hero. But as soon as Heracles turns back home from the pillars, so too does the poet: he must reverse the direction of his song-voyage, his “πλόον.” Pindar’s song-crafting; the athletic exploits of Aristokleidas; and the mythical feats of Heracles are thus all collapsed into one circular sea-voyage to the farthest human-known bourne and back. The poet’s “I” crafts his song-journey in the “here and now”; the athlete promotes the future of his polis; and Heracles has accomplished great feats in the mythical past. When the deeds of the three personages merge, it is, in effect, a merging of the three levels of time—past, present, and

future. And, just as he had done in Pythian 11, here in Nemean 3 Pindar achieves the identification of poet, hero, and athlete with one another via a merging of their three respective routes into one circular journey.

Chapter 3 investigates further instances where, by identifying himself with a mythical hero (the past) and/or an athletic victor (the future), the poet transforms his song-journey in space towards his addressee into a journey through time. In the examples discussed below, the merging of the poet with mythic hero and/or with the victorious athlete is more developed than in either P.11 or N.3. As we shall see, in these instances the poet ascribes to himself the same exact *sphere of activity* as the athlete or the mythical hero: in identifying himself with an athlete, the poet envisions his song-craft as *sportsmanship*; and, in identifying himself with a mythic personage, he merges his own vatic voice with the voice of a *prophesying* mythical hero.

It is by embarking upon journeys into the past and into the future *within* his spatial song-journey in the present, I argue, that the poet unites the polis-tree with its living roots and living fruit. He achieves, in other words, the unity of times. In several instances, this unity of time acquires within the ode an image of its own as the *oikos* of the poet-host wherein he welcomes his addressees-guests. The poet's "*oikos*," as we shall see, is a magic domain where all times coincide—it is the realm of eternity.

§1 Peregrinations of Pindar's song-journey within the future: poet's identification of himself with the victorious athlete

Not infrequently, Pindar envisions his song as an athletic feat. He thus identifies himself—with varying degrees of explicitness—with the victor whom his song celebrates. As the token of his city's future glory, a victor is the future-within-the-present—the “flowering,” in effect, of his polis community. Pindar's identification of himself with the valorous athlete thus amounts to the poet's asserting himself as the main hero within the future temporal plane of the world of his song: I, Pindar, am the token of this community's fruitful continuity in the years to come.

When Pindar has recourse to such identification, he typically envisions his song as an athletic enterprise of the same sort as the one achieved by his addressee. Olympian 6 composed for Hagesias of Syracuse offers what is perhaps the most lucid and elaborate instance of this technique; here, the poet rides into the land of myth—i.e., into song—on the very same mules and driven by the very same charioteer who have just secured Hagesias' victory. “For,” explains the poet, “those mules beyond all other know how to lead the way / on that road, for they won crowns / at Olympia” (vv.25-27). The “ὁδὸν...ταύταν” which the mules know and which two lines earlier was called a “clear path” (κελεύθῳ...καθαρᾷ) is the magic road which leads to the gates of song and the realm of myth in v.27. Not only does Pindar explicitly equate here athletic prowess with poetic skill, but he in effect “usurps” the victor's fame by installing himself in Hagesias' seat of glory. Moreover, this passage is concerned not only with the poet's identification with the athlete, but also with the transformation of spatial travel between two *topoi* into travel through the depths of time. Above, I have argued that in projecting himself into the figure of the athlete, the poet “journeys,” in effect, into the future. In this particular instance, however, the interrelation of the merging of identities with time-travel is even

more developed: in identifying himself with the victor—a representative of the *future*—, the poet heads back into the *past*, towards the victor’s ancestry. All temporal planes are interlaid.

The motif of poet as athlete finds a similar, albeit less elaborate, expression at the opening of Nemean 1 for Chromios of Aetna. At the opening of the poem, Pindar envisions his hymn in praise of Chromios’ “storm-footed” horses as issuing forth from Ortygia, the island at the mouth of the Syracusan harbor. He then goes on (v. 7):

ἄρμα δ’ ὀτρύνει Χρομίου Νεμέα
τ’ ἔργμασιν νικαφόροις ἐγκώμιον ζεῦξαι μέλος.

and the chariot of Chromios and Nemea urge me to yoke
a song of celebration for victorious deeds.

Just as in Olympian 6, Pindar’s song emerges here as the equal and perhaps even the rival of the athlete’s achievement: the yoking of the victorious athletic chariot inspires that of the poetic one.²⁶²

The image of a chariot is not the only one which Pindar borrows from the sphere of athletic contests and transfers into his own sphere of poetic feat. In Nemean 7, sung in praise of the boy Sogenes of Aegina, Pindar adapts the image of himself as athlete to the specifics of Sogenes’ contest. The youth had won in a pentathlon, a competition comprised of a footrace, javelin throw, long jump, discus throw, and, finally, wrestling. The winner in wrestling was proclaimed victor of the pentathlon, but to qualify for

²⁶² Cf. Rose 1974: “The parallelism of poet and victor is anticipated metaphorically in the opening lines of the poem by the mutual impulse of the ὕμνος which “starts off” (ὀρμᾶται) the poet to praise horses, and on the other hand, of the victor’s chariot which speeds the poet on his way to “yoke” (ζεῦξαι) a song of praise (5-7).”

wrestling he had to be successful in at least one of the first four contests. Pindar speaks of himself (vv.70-73):

Εὐξενίδα πάτραθε Σώγερες, ἀπομύνω
μὴ τέρμα προβαίς ἄκονθ' ὅτε χαλκοπάραον ὄρσαι
θοὰν γλῶσσαν, ὃς ἐξέπεμψεν παλαισμάτων
αὐχένα καὶ σθένος ἀδίαν-
τον, αἶθωνι πρὶν ἀλίῳ γυῖον ἐμπεσεῖν.

Sogenes from the clan of Euxenidae, I swear
that I have not stepped up to the line and sent my tongue
speeding like a bronze-cheeked javelin, which releases
the strong neck from wrestling without sweat, before the body falls under the blazing sun.

The poet denies having thrown his “javelin” (the song) unsuccessfully and thus asserts his own eligibility to sing Sogenes’ praise to the end.²⁶³ Thus the progression of the song is equated with the progression of the five stages of the pentathlon, the contest in which Sogenes has achieved his glory.

When envisioning himself as a sportsman, Pindar does not always equate his poetic achievement to the same sort of athletic competition in which his patron has found glory. For example, in Isthmian 2, the poet pointedly draws attention to the specific kind of contest within which his patron Xenokrates had won—it was a chariot race victory. Pindar calls Xenokrates a “man of fine chariots” (εὐάρματον ἄνδρα, v.17) and, in praising the victor’s driver Nikomachos, speaks of the “chariot-preserving hand of the horse-striking man” (ῥυσίδιφρον χεῖρα πλαξίπποιο φωτός, v.21). These references to the nature of the victory achieved find a prelude in the opening of the ode, where Pindar

²⁶³ Cf. Segal 1968; Lee 1976. According to an alternative reading, Pindar denies that he has made a *successful* throw of the javelin, because—according to this interpretation—this would grant him victory while exempting him from the final requirement of wrestling. The point of the statement is thus that the poet does not seek short cuts when it comes to the praise of Sogenes (Floyd 1965; and so too Race in a footnote to his Loeb translation of this text). For arguments against Floyd’s position, see Lee, footnote 1. Whichever of the two readings one follows, it does not change the fact that the poet is here imagining his poem as a pentathlon.

reminiscences on the poets of old who “used to mount / the chariot of the golden-wreathed Muses, / taking with them the glorious lyre” (χρυσαμπύκων / ἐς δίφρον Μοισᾶν ἔβαινον κλυτᾷ φόρμιγγι συναντόμενοι, vv.1-2): once again, song is envisioned as chariot-driving. But in vv.35-35 Pindar’s own song metamorphoses into both a discus and a javelin throw—two sorts of athletic competition in which Xenokrates (as far as we know from the ode) had *not* been involved: “May I make a long throw with the discus and cast the javelin as far as / Xenokrates surpassed all men with his sweet disposition” (μακρὰ δισκήσαις ἀκοντίσσαιμι τοσοῦθ’, ὅσον ὀργάν / Ξεινοκράτης ὑπὲρ ἀνθρώπων γλυκεῖαν / ἔσχευ). This “sweet disposition,” we learn in the next couple of lines, consisted of four commendable traits: respect to fellow townspeople; the practice of horse-breeding; devotion to god-honoring festivals; and warm hospitality. The “rivalry” between the poet-as-athlete and his patron-athlete receives here a curious new dimension. On the one hand, the lines sound as the solicitous poet’s assertion that his song will succeed in conveying the full grandeur of Xenokrates’ achievements. This impression is affirmed by the preceding words (vv.33-34): “οὐ γὰρ πάγος οὐδὲ προσάντης ἅ κέλευθος γίνεται, / εἴ τις εὐδόξων ἐς ἀνδρῶν ἄγοι τιμὰς Ἑλικωνιάδων” (For there is no hill, nor is the road steep / when one brings the honors of the Helikonian maidens to the homes of famous men”). On the other hand, by envisioning his song as a javelin or discus throw—an act of athletic *competition*—the poet suggests a spirit of rivalry between himself and Xenokrates: Pindar’s skill at hurling the metaphoric discus and javelin is not to be worsted by the athletic prowess of his patron. Moreover, it is not only in athletic feats

that the poet rivals Xenokrates, but likewise in the latter's overall lifetime achievements—piety, hospitality, the spirit of good citizenship, etc.²⁶⁴

§2 Peregrinations of Pindar's song-journey within the past: poet's identification of himself with a *prophetic* mythical hero

I have argued above that when Pindar identifies himself with the victorious athlete he in effect contends with the athlete's achievement and fame. The athlete's victory promises a glorious future for his polis, but it is only when his deed is sung by Pindar that the athlete and his polis are truly immortalized. That is why, I have maintained, Pindar can ride into the gates of song on the athlete's victorious mules (O.6) or vie with the victor Xenokrates in javelin and discus throwing (I.2). In causing an athletic victory to live on forever, Pindar establishes a bond between *present* and *future*. On several notable occasions he establishes a similar bond between *present* and *past* by identifying himself

²⁶⁴ Cf. Crotty (1982:74): "Pindar is allied with the athlete not only because he accords him praise, but also because he is a fellow contender." Crotty does not, however, develop the implications of his point further to demonstrate that the "alliance" between poet and athlete, for all of Pindar's obvious admiration of his subject, is, essentially, a rivalry between two sportsmen.

For another example of an ode where the athletic feat of the victor is different from the metaphorical "athletic feat" of the poet, see Pythian 1. The ode celebrates Hieron's chariot race victory—an achievement that not only brings glory to Hieron but is likewise a favorable omen for the future horse-breeding reputation of the newly-founded city of Aetna (v.36-37). But having dwelled on the specific nature of his patron's victory, Pindar goes on to envision his song as participation in an athletic contest of a different sort (vv. 42-45):

ἄνδρα δ' ἐγὼ κεῖνον
αἰνῆσαι μενοινῶν ἔλπομαι
μὴ χαλκοπάραον ἄκονθ' ὥσεϊτ' ἀγῶ-
νος βαλεῖν ἔξω παλάμῃ δονέων,
μακρὰ δὲ ρίψαις ἀμεύσασθ' ἀντίους.

In my eagerness to praise
that man [Hieron], I hope
I may not, as it were, throw outside the lists
the bronze-cheeked javelin I brandish in my hand,
but cast it far and surpass my competitors.

not just with *any* mythological hero (as in the two examples from N. 3 and P. 11 above), but specifically with a mythological hero endowed with the gift of prophetic speech.

Pindar's perception of himself as prophet has frequently been pointed out; when commentators do so, they typically cite the same three fragmentary passages which are not from the victory odes but from the Paeans and the Parthenia: "Tuneful prophet of the Muses" (Paeon 6.6); "Give the oracle, I shall proclaim it as prophet" (Frag. 150); "Like a prophet-priest I shall accomplish it" (Parthenia 1.5). Commenting on the "prominence and frequency of prophetic figures in Pindar's myths," Thomas Hubbard concludes with the assertion that "above all, one is conscious of the prophetic powers of the poet himself" and supports his statement with a citation of these three fragmentary passages.²⁶⁵ Apparently, for Hubbard these explicit assertions are more revealing of the role of prophecy in Pindar's poetry than the appearances of mantic figures in his myths. I would contend, however, that the opposite is true. Such explicit statements do little to shed light on what "prophecy" means for Pindar. By contrast, mantic characters and the poet's relation to them allow one to see *how* prophecy works within Pindar's poetry. The poet frequently identifies his own voice with the prophetic utterances of his heroes. Just as in identifying himself with the athlete the poet establishes himself as the unifier of present with future, so too in identifying himself with a mantic figure from the realm of myth he establishes himself as the unifier of the past with the present, with the "here and now" of the song: the poet's "I" stands at the juncture of times.

As we shall see, Pindar's identification of himself with a mythical prophet is a poetic technique reminiscent of the chronological vortexes created by myth-introducing

²⁶⁵ Hubbard 1986, note 19. Cf. likewise Segal 1998:161 and Snell 1961:61 who, in their discussion of Pindar's prophetic powers, cite the same passages.

relative pronouns and *Abbruchsformeln*. I have argued in Chapter 1 that the poet employs myth-introducing relative pronouns to create the impression of his song's willful descent into the past, and *Abbruchsformeln* in order to reclaim his poetic authority and bid his song to ascend back into the present, to the day of victory celebration. We see a similar effect brought about by the poet-hero identification technique. When Pindar's poetic "I" merges with the figure of a mythic hero, Pindar, in effect, recedes into the mythical past and there disguises his poetic authority. Then, when the mythical hero begins to prophesy and his voice merges with the poet's own, Pindar's poetic authority is recovered and his song is turned from mythic depths back towards the present. There is, however, an important distinction between the chronological vortexes and the merging of poet and mythic prophets. As we can conclude from our analysis of the song-journey in Chapter 2, images which populate the world of a Pindaric song coexist side-by-side with the image of the song itself. In this chapter I discuss how, descending into the past, Pindar's song evokes the image of a mythic hero-prophet which turns out to be the poet himself in disguise. But the song itself has its own image, too. Unlike the image of a mythic prophet, the chronological vortexes which myth-introducing relative pronouns create do not *tell us about* the journeying of the poet (or his song) between levels of time: within a chronological vortex one cannot distinguish between the communicated message and the means of communicating this message. Drawing in and whirling away the song's audience into the depths of time, chronological vortexes are not poetic images *about* which the song sings, but rather images of the song-journey itself. It is therefore not surprising that chronological vortexes occur sometimes independently of and sometimes in conjunction with the merging of poet and mythic prophet.

Commentators have pointed to several instances in the odes when the poet's voice coincides with and, indeed, becomes indistinguishable from, the utterance of a prophetic figure. David Young, for example, notes that in *Olympian 7* it is impossible to tell where the address of the oracle of Apollo to Tlepolemus ceases and where Pindar's narrative account resumes.²⁶⁶ Similarly, it has been noted that the prophetic speech of Teiresias in *Nemean 1* is indistinguishable from the authorial voice of Pindar himself. As W. Fitzgerald pointed out, both Pindar and Teiresias are in the position of on-lookers, of those "standing-on-the-threshold" and observing from aside—Pindar is observing the victory celebration and Teiresias the scene of baby Heracles' first feat.²⁶⁷ I would suggest that the confluence of Pindar's poetic voice with the prophetic one of Tiresias goes further yet. It is apparent if one examines the introduction to the mythical section of this ode:

ἐγὼ δ' Ἡ-
 ρακλέος ἀντέχομαι προφρόνως
 ἐν κορυφαῖς ἀρετῶν μεγάλαις,
 ἀρχαῖον ὀτρύνων λόγον,
 ὥς...
 For my part, I gladly
 embrace Herakles
 when my theme is achievements' great heights,
 and rouse up the old tale,
 how...

These lines amount, essentially, to the assertion that the poet associates the figure of Heracles with the "great heights" of human achievements. And, presumably, the "old tale" which Pindar is about to "rouse up" will be about these great achievements. But instead of relating some of Heracles' feats, Pindar segues, through the "ὥς" clause, into the famous episode from Heracles' infancy, when, as a mere babe, he warded off the

²⁶⁶ Young 1968:84.

²⁶⁷ Fitzgerald 1987:110-112; cf. likewise Segal 1998:162.

attack of Hera's serpents. This episode in itself does not testify to "achievements' great heights," because it is concerned with the very beginning, rather than with the pinnacle of Heracles' heroic exploits. Only when the babe's stupefied father summons "the foremost prophet of highest Zeus, the straight-speaking seer Teiresias," do we hear that which the poet has promised to relate: Teiresias foretells Heracles' multiple feats—slaying beasts on land and sea; bringing doom to "many a man who traveled in crooked excess"; and battling the Giants on behalf of the Olympians. Teiresias' vision culminates with the ultimate "great height" of Heracles' achievements: the hero's posthumous marriage to the goddess of youth, Hebe. Teiresias thus accomplishes the task which the poet himself had set out to perform—to relate the height of Heracles' achievements.

This merging of the poet with the prophet is reinforced by the unusual end of the ode. Typically, Pindar would allow his own poetic "I" to resurface after the mythical section—e.g., "Now I must sing of Chromios' achievements...etc." And, in many instances, such a return from the past back to the day of the victory celebration is accomplished via an *Abbruchsformel*: a sign, as I maintained in Chapter 1, that the poet is reclaiming his poetic authority and bidding the song to ascend the chronological vortex which it had willfully gone down. Here in Nemean 1, however, Pindar appears to forego the opportunity to turn his song back from the past: the ode ends when Teiresias finishes speaking. This loitering of the song in the realm of the past is only a seeming one, because although no further references to the athletic victor are made, Nemean 1 ends with a prophecy—with a movement into the future. Thus, in identifying himself with Teiresias, Pindar achieves a *simultaneous* descent and ascent in time: the authority of his poetic "I" "hides" itself in the past, in the guise of the mythic character, but, by virtue of

this character being a *prophetic* one, the poet no sooner “disguises” himself in the past, than his voice ascends back into the future. And, in avoiding an explicit reappearance of his poetic “I” at the conclusion of the myth, Pindar underscores the confluence of his voice with that of Teiresias.

While scholars have pointed out various instances such as the speech of Teiresias in N.1 or the oracle of Apollo in O.7 where the prophetic voice merges with Pindar’s own,²⁶⁸ they have not, as far as I know, discussed a similar merging in Isthmian 6—perhaps the most developed instance of the confluence of the poet with a mythical mantic figure. Not only does Pindar imply here an identification of himself with the prophesying Heracles, but this merging of identities forms the foundation of the ode’s movement between past, present, and future and thereby accounts for the unity of time within the ode.

The myth of Isthmian 6 centers primarily on Heracles’ libation and his prophecy of the birth of Aias. After the opening image of the symposium and praise for the victor’s father, Pindar moves on to praise of Aegina’s mythic heroes, the Aiakidae:

ὑμμε τ', ὦ χρυσάρματοι Αἰακίδαι,
 τέθμιόν μοι φαμί σαφέστατον ἔμμεν
 τάνδ' ἐπιστείχοντα νᾶσον ραινέμεν εὐλογίαις.
 μυρία δ' ἔργων καλῶν τέ-
 τμανθ' ἐκατόμπεδοι ἐν σχερῶ κέλευθοι
 καὶ πέραν Νεῖλοιο παγᾶν καὶ δι' Ὑπερβορέους.
 οὐδ' ἔστιν οὕτω βάρβαρος
 οὔτε παλίγλωστος πόλις,
 ἄτις οὐ Πηλέος ἄϊει κλέος ἥ-
 ρωος, εὐδαίμονος γαμβροῦ θεῶν,

²⁶⁸ Teiresias and the oracle of Apollo are not the only instances of poet-prophet association which commentators have discussed. Cf. Finley (1955:172) a propos Pythian 8: “The prophet Amphiaraus watching Alcmaeon is in effect Pindar watching the young victor.” Likewise, cf. Hubbard 1986 with regard to Olympian 13: “Polyidus’ interpretation and validation of the *teras* (73) thus serves a mediating function between Bellerophon and the gods in much the same way that Pindar’s own agency as a mythological re-interpreter serves to mediate among Bellerophon, Athena, and Poseidon.”

οὐδ' ἄτις Αἴαντος Τελαμωνιάδα
καὶ πατρός·

And as for you, O Aiakidai with your golden chariots,
I declare that I have the clearest mandate,
When coming to this island, to shower you with praises.
Countless roads, one after another, one hundred feet
wide, have been cut for their noble deeds
beyond the springs of the Nile and through the
Hyperboreans.
and there is no city so alien
or of such backward speech
that it does not hear tell of the fame of the hero Peleus,
the blessed son-in-law of the gods,

or of Telamonian Aias
or of his father...

(vv.19-27)

Once again, we see here the image of song as coming: Pindar *comes* (ἐπιστείχοντα) to Aegina and his ode is like a shower of praises which falls upon the Aiakidai. But the very next line makes it clear that the poet's coming takes place not only in space—from Thebes to Aegina—but also in time. The “countless roads” in line 22 which go beyond the limits of human knowledge (beyond the Hyperboreans, beyond the springs of the Nile) and pass through all human cities on their way are the roads of Aiakid fame. Their origin is the distant mythical past, and it is due to these roads of fame—or song, which is one and the same for Pindar—that the glory of the Aiakidae lives on in the present day. Pindar's song-journey therefore leads the poet not only from Thebes to Aegina but also from the present day into the depths of the past, to the noble deeds of the Aiakidai.²⁶⁹ The sense that the song-journey is moving along a present→past vector is further enhanced in these lines by the poet's progression from son to father, from Aias to

²⁶⁹ See Olympian 6.22 ff. for a similar image of song as a road not in space but in time, from the present into the past. Cf. Hurst 1985:158.

Telamon, rather than vice versa: all earthly cities, Pindar asserts, are familiar with the fame of “... of Telamonian Aias / or of his father.”

This transition into the mythical world of the Aiakiadai is nothing but a chronological vortex, similar to, albeit not as elaborate, as the one we have traced in the myth of Cyrene within Pythian 9. Here *two* relative clauses facilitate the song’s transition into myth. The first is the “ἄτις... ἄτις” construction in vv.25-26 which introduces the three Aiakidai—Peleus, Aias, and his father Telamon. The mention of Telamon triggers the second relative clause which takes us deep into myth, into Telamon’s military exploits with his friend Heracles:

οὐδ’ ἄτις Αἴαντος Τελαμωνιάδα
καὶ πατρός· **τὸν** χαλκοχάρμαν ἐς πόλεμον
ἄγε σὺν Τυρινθίοισιν πρόφρονά σύμμαχον ἐς
Τροίαν, ἥρωσι μόχθον,
Λαομεδοντιᾶν ὑπὲρ ἀμπλακιᾶν
ἐν ναυσὶν Ἀλκμήνας τέκος.

[nor is there a city that has not heard of]
Telamonian Aias
or of his father, **whom** Alkmene’s son led
as an eager ally into bronze-loving war, when he went
with his men from Tiryns in ships to Troy,
That labor for the heroes...
(vv.26-30)

This vortex, just like the one which leads into the myth of Cyrene in Pythian 9 or the myth of Orestes in Pythian 11, regresses in time from newer to older generations. Isthmian 6 differs from other odes in the very particular way in which Pindar leads the song *back out* of the vortex—by inscribing, as I shall argue, himself into the realm of the past in the guise of a mythical prophetic figure. With my analysis of Isthmian 6, I hope to elucidate a similar, albeit less explicit, structure in Pythian 9, whose analysis I had begun in Chapter 1. In an earlier study of Pythian 9 in Chapter 1, I traced only the song’s *descent* into the vortex, but not its ascent back to the day of Telesicrates’ victory. In the

conclusion of the present chapter, following an analysis of Isthmian 6, I return to the myth of Cyrene in Pythian 9 and examine the song's emergence out of myth.

In Isthmian 6, having mentioned Telamon, Pindar begins to sing of this hero's friendship with Heracles and, in particular, recounts how Heracles called on his friend and found Telamon feasting. If Pindar's road *to* the Aiakidai follows a present→past vector, the direction of this vector is reversed back into the future when Heracles begins to speak "like a seer" and foretells Aias' birth, name, and achievements. In other words, whereas Pindar's song follows the downward-*descending* spiral of a chronological vortex, Heracles' prophetic speech leads the song upwards along an *ascending* spiral:

δεῖα δ' ἔνδον νιν ἔκνιξεν χάρις,
εἶπέν τε φωνήσας ὅτε μάντις ἀνὴρ
"Ἔσσεταί τοι παῖς, ὃν αἰτεῖς, ὦ Τελαμών·
καὶ νιν ὄρνιχος φανέντος κέκλευ ἐπώνυμον εὐ-
ρυβίαν Αἴαντα, λαῶν
ἐν πόνοις ἑκπαγλὸν Ἐνυαλίου."
ὥς ἦρα εἰπὼν αὐτίκα
ἔζετ'.

Sweet joy thrilled him within,
and he spoke out like a seer and said,
"You shall have the son you request, O Telamon,
and call him, as namesake of the bird that appeared,
mighty Aias, awesome among the host
in the toils of Enyalios."
After speaking thus, he immediately
sat down.
(vv.50-56)

Particularly noteworthy is the emphatic gesture with which Heracles marks the conclusion of his toast-prophecy: "After speaking thus, he immediately / sat down." At a first glance this seems like a rather strange detail to include in the mythical narrative: why does Pindar underscore that Heracles cuts himself off as soon as the import of his

speech had been delivered? The answer, I believe, lies in the immediately following lines:

ἐμοὶ δὲ μακρὸν πάσας ἀναγῆσασθ' ἀρετάς·
 Φυλακίδα γὰρ ἦλθον, ὦ Μοῖσα, ταμίας
 Πυθέα τε κώμων Εὐθυμέ-
 νει τε· τὸν Ἀργείων τρόπον
 εἰρήσεται που κὰν βραχίστοις.
 ἄραντο γὰρ νίκας ἀπὸ παγκρατίου
 τρεῖς ἀπ' Ἴσθμοῦ...etc.

But it would take me too long to recount all
 their deeds,
 since I have come, O Muse, as steward
 of the revel songs for Phylakidas, Pytheas,
 and Euthymenes. In the Argive manner
 it will be stated, I think, in the briefest terms:
 these splendid boys and their uncle took away three
 victories in the pancratium from the Isthmos...etc.
 (vv.56-61)

These lines are, essentially, an *Abbruchsformel*. What Heracles signifies with a gesture, by sitting down abruptly, Pindar signifies verbally—he cuts himself short. And, in cutting himself short, he switches from events of the past back to the present-day athletic accomplishments of Phylakidas and his relatives. Pindar's poetic "I" thus doubly coincides with the figure of Heracles: his verbal *Abbruchsformel* overlaps and merges with the physical "*Abbruchsformel*" of Heracles, and, furthermore, Pindar continues the future-bound vector which Heracles had initiated with his prophecy. Heracles' look into the future had taken us as far as Aias. Pindar picks up his prophecy, as it were, and takes it all the way to the athletic glory of the modern descendants of the Aiakids. It is as if Pindar had headed off on a road which led him deep into myth, and there, in the depths of

the past, he reversed his path by taking on the guise of Heracles and directing his prophetic-poetic voice—his song-journey—back towards the future.²⁷⁰

The poet's movement between past, present, and future does not end here. In switching, via the *Abbruchsformel*, from myth to praise of the victor and his relatives, Pindar transitions effectually into the realms of the present and the future. He is not only focusing on the “here and now” of the current victory but also on the effect that the excellence of Phylakidas and his brothers will have on the *future* of their clan: “τὰν Ψαλυχιαδᾶν δὲ πάτρην Χαρίτων / ἄρδοντι καλλίστῃ δρόσῳ” (“They refresh the clan of the Psalychiadai / with the finest dew of the Graces”) (vv.63-64). The image is, as so often in Pindar, a vegetal one: the excellence of the victorious youths is a life-giving dew which will “hydrate” and thus perpetuate the good name established by their ancestors in the distant past. But Pindar does not permit the vector of his song to head irretrievably into the future, to break its ties with the mythic past. In the concluding lines of the ode he promises to give Phylakidas and his brothers a draught of Dirke's sacred water “which the deep-bosomed daughters / of golden-robed Mnemosyne made to surge / by the well-walled gates of Kadmos.” These lines are significant in the present context for two reasons.

Firstly, the draught of Dirke echoes not only the symposium toast at the opening of the ode, but also Heracles' prophetic toast in Telamon's house. In a later section of Chapter 3, I discuss in detail the significance of the waters of Dirke. But even at a glance, the primary significance of this draught is apparent: Heracles' libation binds the past (Telamon) with the future (Aias), while Pindar's draught of Dirke binds the future

²⁷⁰ For detailed comparison of the Heracles in I.6 with Pindar's self-perception as poet and prophet, see Nieto Hernández 1993.

(Phylakidas and his brothers) with the past (hence the appeal to Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory). Thus, at the conclusion of the ode, Pindar re-associates himself with Heracles, as both poet and mythical hero raise a magic draught which contains a synoptic vision of times. Secondly, not only does the poet reintegrate himself into the realm of the past by reminding us of his association with Heracles, but he also integrates into this past his addressees—Phylakidas and his brothers. These young men who are the tokens of the future of their clan and of their polis are here made privy to the spring of memory, to that force which keeps the past alive within the present.

The image of the spring of Dirke thus merges into one the “past→future” and the “future→past” vectors between which the ode had been oscillating. In *remembering*, we go back in time just as Pindar’s ode recalls the past by *going back* to the glorious days of the Aiakidai; and, simultaneously, the image of a surging spring suggests the opposite direction, of the past welling up towards the light of the present day from its dark chthonic depths. This significance of the draught of Dirke does not, however, become evident unless one makes the association between it and the prophetic (i.e., future-bound) toast of Heracles. The merging of Pindar’s and Heracles’ identities lies at the heart of the ode’s multiple transitions between the layers of time. It is through identifying himself with the prophesying mythical hero that the poet “reclaims” the authorship of his song which had “escaped” from him, unfolding itself willfully in a chronological vortex. But there, in the depths of the mythical past, the author acquires a poetic-prophetic voice through the figure of Heracles and reverses the direction of the song back towards the present day of victory celebration.

In Pythian 9, the “heroization” of the poet within the mythical past (i.e., his identification of his poetic “I” with one of the mythical figures) is not as fully developed as in Isthmian 6. Nevertheless, Pythian 9 offers some unique insights into the role of the poet, the role of prophecy, and the poet-prophet’s relationship with the god of prophecy, Apollo. Chapter 1 of the present work discussed the chronological vortex which leads us into the myth of Cyrene in Pythian 9. It remained to be seen, however, how the song *ascends* from this vortex back to the “here and now” of the day of Telesicrates’ victory. The answer, I shall argue, lies in the prophetic voice of the centaur Cheiron: just as Heracles’ prophecy in Isthmian 6 leads the song back into the present plane of time, so too does Cheiron’s. And, in doing so, Cheiron’s prophecy weaves together into one cyclic whole the three levels of time—past, present, and future.

When Apollo sees the nymph Cyrene wrestling one-on-one with a lion, he falls in love with the heroic girl and asks the centaur Cheiron for advice. As we shall see, the god’s question and the centaur’s response trace two complementary circles. It is Apollo’s aim to progress into the future—to marry the nymph and thereby to establish the beginnings of a great city. Yet to arrive at this future, he asks a question about the girl’s *origins*:

αὐτίκα δ’ ἐκ μεγάρων Χίρωνα προσήνεπε φωνᾷ·
 “σεμνὸν ἄντρον, Φιλλυρίδα προλιπὼν
 θυμὸν γυναικὸς καὶ μέγαν δύνασιν
 θαύμασον, οἷον ἀταρβεῖ νεῖκος ἄγει κεφαλᾷ,
 μόχθου καθύπερθε νεᾶνις
 ἦτορ ἔχοισα· φόβῳ δ’ οὐ κεχείμανται φρένες.
 τίς νιν ἀνθρώπων τέκεν; ποί-
 ας δ’ ἀποσπασθεῖσα φύτλας
 ὀρέων κευθμῶνας ἔχει σκιοέντων,
 γεύεται δ’ ἀλκᾶς ἀπειράντου;
 ὅσια κλυτὰν χέρα οἱ προσενεγκεῖν
 ἦρα καὶ ἐκ λεχέων κείραι μελιαδέα ποίαν;

At once he [Apollo] called Cheiron from his halls and said,
 “Come forth from your sacred cave, son of Philyra,
 and marvel at this woman’s courage and great power
 and at what a fight she is waging with unflinching head,
 a girl whose heart is superior to toil
 and whose mind remains unshaken by storms of fear.
 What mortal bore her? From what stock
 has she been severed
 that she lives in the glens of the shadowy mountains
 and puts to the test her unbounded valor?
 Is it right to lay my famous hand upon her
 and indeed to reap the honey-sweet flower from the bed of love?”
 (30-37)

Once again, Pindar has recourse to his favorite vegetal imagery: the god wants to know “from what stock has she been severed.” Apollo thus delves into the nymph’s past in order to arrive at her future. This joining into one of beginning and end amounts, in effect, to motion in a circle where beginnings and ends always coincide. Cheiron’s reply traces the same exact circle but in the opposite direction (I abridge for the sake of conciseness):

ταῦτα πόσις ἴκεο βᾶσσαν
 τάνδε, καὶ μέλλεις ὑπὲρ πόντου
 Διὸς ἔξοχον ποτὶ κᾶπον ἐνεῖκαι·
 ἔνθα νιν ἀρχέπολιν θήσεις, ἐπὶ λαὸν ἀγείραις
 νασιώταν ὄχθον ἐς ἀμφίπεδον·
 νῦν δ’ εὐρυλείμων πότνιά σοι Λιβύα
 δέξεται εὐκλέα νύμφαν δώμασιν ἐν χρυσέοις
 πρόφρων·
 [...]
 τόθι παῖδα τέξεται, ὃν κλυτὸς Ἑρμᾶς
 εὐθρόνοις Ὠραῖσι καὶ Γαίᾳ
 ἀνελὼν φύλας ὑπὸ ματέρος οἴσει.
 [...]
 ὥς ἄρ’ εἰπὼν ἔντυεν τερ-
 πνὰν γάμου κραίνειν τελευτάν.

... You have come to this glen to be her
 husband, and you are about to take her over the sea
 to the finest garden of Zeus,
 where you will make her ruler of a city, after gathering
 an island people to the hill on the plain.
 But as for now, Libya, mistress of broad meadows,

will welcome your famous bride in her golden palace
with gladness.

[...]

There she will give birth to a son, whom famous Hermes
will take from under his mother and bear
to the fair-throned Horai and to Gaia.

(51-60)

The centaur's prophecy takes us far into the future—to Cyrene's marriage and to her confluence with the great Libyan city of Cyrene whose eponymous nymph she is destined to become.²⁷¹ Then, following these two predictions, Cheiron foretells that as the wife of Apollo she will give birth to a son, the immortal Aristaios. If a wedding is the *token* of the future, of the continuity of generations, then the offspring of a marriage is future *actualized*; Cheiron's vision thus takes us to the ultimate realization of Cyrene's future. This son, the centaur tells us, will be taken by Hermes from his mother to be reared by the Horai and Gaia, the great mother of all beings and, more specifically, the *Ur*-ancestress of the nymph Cyrene—that very ancestress to which the mythological vortex had traced Cyrene's genealogy at the outset of the myth (v.17). The flight of the centaur's prophecy far into the future brings us back to the primordial beginnings of the story: Cyrene's descendants are joined with her ancestors. Cheiron thus comes back in a circle to Apollo's original question about the nymph's origins. Moreover, the centaur's reply hearkens back to the vegetal imagery to which the god had recourse in his question: Apollo, as we have noted, wants to know from what *stock* Cyrene had been *severed*. On a first reading one might pass this over as a mere turn of phrase; but Cheiron's reply reminds us that vegetal images are not simply decorative in Pindar—the girl has literally grown up plant-like *from the earth*, from her ancestress Gaia.

²⁷¹ Cf. Chapter 1, page 43, for my analysis of the hapax legomenon “ἀρχέπολις” (Adjective? Noun?) which the centaur uses to refer to the nymph. In my reading, this word especially enhances the sense that city and nymph are indistinguishable.

The centaur thus achieves exactly what he had set out to do. In responding to the god, he began by expressing his surprise that Apollo, the all-knowing god of prophecy, should ask his advice. “However,” says Cheiron, “if I must match wits with one who is wise, / I will speak” (εἰ δὲ χρὴ καὶ παρ σοφὸν ἀντιφερίζαι, / ἐρέω (vv.50-51)). Thus, Cheiron had asserted that the aim of his response is to match wits—or, literally, to *measure himself with the god*.²⁷² It is fitting, therefore, that his response is fully commensurate to Apollo’s question: it proceeds in a direction opposite to that of the question and arrives at the same point at which the question began—at Cyrene’s origins. The question and the response move in opposite directions within the same circle where beginnings are ends and ends are beginnings. But the centaur’s answer achieves more than simply virtuosity in a verbal contest: Pindar tells us that Cheiron’s response *encouraged* (ἔντυεν) Apollo “to consummate the sweet fulfillment of marriage” (τερπνὰν γάμου κραίνειν τελευτὰν (v.66)). It seems that Cheiron does not only *foresee* the future but that, by foreseeing it, he influences its achievement. As the omniscient god who knows “the appointed end of all things” (κύριον...πάντων τέλος (v.45)), Apollo knew that he is destined to marry Cyrene and sire Aristaios—but Pindar seems to imply that Cheiron’s prophecy was responsible for *bringing about*, or crafting, these future events, the τερπνὰν γάμου τελευτὰν. In particular, this implication is brought to the fore by the echoing of “τέλος” in v.45 by “τελευτὰν” in v.66. Indeed, it seems as though the traditional roles of prophet as foreseer and god as achiever are reversed here: the god *knows* the ends of all things, but the prophet *brings about* such ends. How does Cheiron bring them about? For the centaur, his vision of the future is inseparable from the living

²⁷² Cf. *LSJ*.

relationship which this future has with its own origins: Cheiron “crafts” the future by binding it firmly to its roots—Aristaios to his ancestress Gaia. Thus the aim of Cheiron’s response to the god’s question is not so much to *explain* anything to the all-knowing Apollo as to match the god’s skill in oracularly “weaving” together into one all levels of time: Apollo weaves the origins of the nymph with her future, while Cheiron weaves her future with her origins. In its heart, the most distant future contains its own primordial origins, and the ancient-most origins contain within themselves their own eventual fruits. As prophetic beings, the god and the centaur share a synoptic vision of the past, present, and future coexisting within one another as a unity.²⁷³

We have seen how in Isthmian 6 the poet’s transitions in and out of the mythical past are implicitly connected with the poet’s identification of the prophesying Heracles with himself, his own poetic “I.” A similar merging of identities, albeit a subtler one, takes place in Pythian 9—this time between the poet and the prophesying Cheiron.

That Cheiron’s voice is, implicitly, the voice of Pindar’s poetic “I” is suggested, first of all, by the uniquely intimate relationship between the centaur and Apollo: as the preceding analysis has aimed to show, the words which the two exchange seem to be mirror images of one another. This relationship of friendship and mirror-like complementarity enjoyed by the prophet and the deity of prophecy is reminiscent of Pindar’s own relationship to Apollo. As scholars have pointed out, Pindar seems to feel himself bound by a particularly strong personal tie to this god. Apollo, writes Fränkel, is

²⁷³ Cf. D. H. Roberts who writes that a seer in Greek literature from Homer onwards “is one who knows “ὅς ἤδη τὰ τ’ ἐόντα τὰ τ’ ἐσσόμενα πρό τ’ ἐόντα” (*Iliad* 1.70). The seer has access to the events of present and past as well as future” (Roberts 1984:21). I would make an emphasis, however, not just on the ability to know the past, present, and future, but specifically on the ability to see them as *coexisting* within one another, as in Cheiron’s vision. Cf. Chapter 1, note 124.

the only god “of whom Pindar speaks with personal warmth, as of a respected friend [...] His particular feeling for Apollo becomes obvious if we observe his treatment of this god in the Pythian odes, where he presided over the games, and compare it with that of Poseidon in the Isthmians.”²⁷⁴ Similarly, for Farnell, Apollo is Pindar’s “personal” deity.²⁷⁵ And this is not surprising in a poet who perceives his songs as “swift arrows...that speak to those who understand” (ὠκέα βέλη / ἔνδον ἐντὶ φαρέτρας / φωνάεντα συνετοῖσιν (vv.83-84))—an image that unites into one the traditionally Apollinian qualities of winged, unerring archery and oracular mysteriousness.²⁷⁶

Likewise pointing towards the implicit identity of the poet with Cheiron is what I would call the *serendipity* of the centaur’s presence at the scene of action. The centaur seems to enter the mythical stage literally out of the blue: we are simply told that the god saw the nymph and “at once called Cheiron from his halls and said...” (v.29)—the presence of this cave had not been mentioned before as part of the setting, nor does the poet attempt to “attune” for this abruptness with some ad hoc explanation, such as, “Cheiron’s cave *happened* to be nearby.” The overall impression made by the centaur’s sudden entry on the scene of action is that he looks at the action, as it were, from aside, and does not belong to the cast of characters traditionally involved in this particular myth (such as Cyrene, Apollo, Hypseus, Aristaeus, Libya, the Horai, etc.).

²⁷⁴ Fränkel 1962:478, note 15.

²⁷⁵ Farnell 1932, Vol. 3, pp. 462-463: “Excursus on Pindar’s Religion.”

²⁷⁶ The centaur Cheiron appears in several Pindaric odes, and I by no means wish to insist that Pindar felt a personal connection to this mythical character *in general* and that this feeling finds expression in every ode where the centaur appears. The role of Cheiron in the odes of Pindar—if, indeed, any such general role can be discerned—is the topic of a wholly different research.

This seeming arbitrariness of the centaur's appearance is reminiscent of the entrance which the prophet Teiresias makes on the scene of action in Nemean 1. Amphitryon, we are told, stunned to see that his infant son had strangled two monstrous serpents, summons "his neighbor, the foremost prophet of highest Zeus, / the straight-speaking seer Teiresias, who declared to him and to all the people what fortunes he [Heracles] would encounter" (vv.60-61). Striking here is the noun γείτονα, "neighbor." It is true that legend traditionally considered both Amphitryon and Teiresias to be Thebans; nevertheless, the fact that the prophet happened to be at hand exactly at the occurrence of the miraculous event smacks of pure serendipity. Similarly, in Isthmian 6, the entrance of the prophesying Heracles upon the scene is, albeit somewhat less surprising, nevertheless accidental: he *happened* to stop by in order to summon Telamon to Troy and *happened* upon his friend feasting (κύρησεν δαινυμένων). Presumably, had Telamon not been feasting at the moment, Heracles' prophetic toast would not have taken place. Such coincidences within the plot structure are particularly striking if we consider how perpetually preoccupied Pindar is with discovering the *causes* or *origins* of all things.

The Cheiron of P.9 and Teiresias of N.1 (and, to a lesser degree, the Heracles of I.6) are thus liminal figures who are both present and not present within the mythological plot: while clearly making an entrance onto the mythological stage, they remain detached as they view the unfolding action from aside. And, in this liminal position, they are endowed with a role crucial to the overall unity of the ode—they join the past with the future, re-directing the song from the descending to the ascending path within the chronological vortex. This liminal role of one who both directs the song and sees it from

aside is, in effect, the role of the poet's authorial "I". As Charles Segal puts it with regard to the affinity of Pindar and Heracles in Nemean 1, "both poet and prophet...by virtue of their breadth of view and their command of truth which extends beyond what the participants themselves can discern, behold the present deed, whether Heracles' or Chromius', as resplendent with the future fulfillment."²⁷⁷

Pythian 9 goes a step beyond Nemean 1 in equating the mythical prophet with the poet himself. As we have seen, Cheiron's prophecy not only foretells, but actually *crafts* the future by inspiring Apollo to bring about his marriage to Cyrene. The prophetic voice, Pindar seems to suggest, is not one that merely describes, but one endowed with the power of creation—it is, in other words, a poetic voice. It creates by joining into one integrated whole the past, present, and future, thereby keeping alive, as it were, the polis-tree, which would otherwise be bereft of its roots (living past) and branches (living future). This is precisely what Cheiron does when he "weaves together" the levels of time by joining ancestors and descendants, and this is precisely what Pindar himself does when he bases his praise of Telesicrates, the token of Cyrene's future glory, upon the song's descent all the way back to Gaia (v.17).

Once the centaur finishes speaking, events are brought about rapidly:

ὥκεῖα δ' ἐπειγομένων ἤδη θεῶν
 πρᾶξις ὁδοί τε βραχεῖαι. κείνο κείν' ἄ-
 μαρ διαίτασεν· θαλάμῳ δὲ μίγεν
 ἐν πολυχρύσῳ Λιβύας· ἵνα καλλίσταν πόλιν
 ἀμφέπει κλεινάν τ' ἀέθλοισι.
 καί νυν ἐν Πυθῶνι νιν ἀγαθέα Καρνειάδα
 υἱὸς εὐθαλεῖ συνέμειξε τύχα.

Swift is the accomplishment once gods are in haste,

²⁷⁷ Segal 1998:162.

and short are the ways. That very day
settled the matter. They joined together in love
in the gold-rich chamber of Libya, where she rules her
city,
one most beautiful and famous for prizes in the games.
And now in holy Pytho the son of Karneidas
has joined her to flourishing good fortune...
(67-72)

As André Hurst has pointed out, these “short ways” of the immortals are reminiscent of the special “short ways” which, Pindar asserts, are known to poets.²⁷⁸ We hear about the “short paths” of the poets in the famous *Abbruchsformel* of Pythian 4 when, suddenly pausing his leisurely narrative of the Argonaut myth, Pindar exclaims:

μακρά μοι νεῖσθαι κατ’ ἀμαξιτόν· ὥρα
γὰρ συνάπτει καί τινα
οἶμον ἴσαμι βραχύν· πολ-
λοῖσι δ’ ἄγηναι σοφίας ἐτέροις.

But it is too far for me to travel on the highway,
because the hour is pressing and I know
a short path—and I lead the way
in wise skill for many others.
(247-248)

“Le pouvoir d’accélérer les événements n’est rien moins qu’un pouvoir divin,” writes Hurst, “Le poète y participe dans le cadre de sa mission divine.”²⁷⁹ Hurst does not explain *why* poets share with the immortals knowledge of such magic shortcuts through time. I believe, however, that the preceding analysis has equipped us with an explanation that confirms Hurst’s assertion: like a Teiresias or a Cheiron, the poet sees all levels of time present within one another: the future contains within itself its own origins, and vice versa. It is this synoptic vision of past, present, and future that allows the poet to take shortcuts through time, just as Cheiron seamlessly passes from Cyrene’s offspring to her

²⁷⁸ Hurst 1984

²⁷⁹ Ibid., p.184.

roots. Indeed, in the finale of this myth, we actually see the time-shortcut of Apollo coincide with the time-shortcut of Pindar himself: verses 67-72 are, at a first glance, Pindar's description of how swiftly Apollo achieved his goal. But a closer look shows that not only Apollo but likewise Pindar is leaping through time here. We have already heard all about Cyrene's future from the centaur, and therefore Pindar could have simply said, "...that very day settled the matter and *everything came about as Cheiron predicted.*" Instead, however, Pindar runs through Cyrene's future all over again. This new account of her future is divided into three statements:

- a) Apollo and Cyrene "joined together in love in the gold-rich chamber of Libya."
- b) "Where she rules her city" that is "famous for prizes in the games."
- c) "And now (καί νυν) in holy Pytho" Telesicrates "has joined her to flourishing good fortune."

Thus, in three swift bounds, Pindar progresses in time from the mythical wedding-chamber to the present day of victory celebration. We can legitimately re-phrase verses 67-68 to read "swift is the accomplishment once *poets* are in haste."

§3 The roots of *xenia* as the past "sprouting" within the present

Unlike the greater part of Chapter 3, the following section is not concerned with tracing the peregrinations of Pindar's song-journey within the past and the future. However, as we have seen above, it is the journeying of the song through and between temporal planes that accounts for the interconnectedness of all times within the world of a Pindaric ode: not only does the present reach back towards its roots and forwards towards its fruits, but also the roots and the fruits reveal themselves in the present. As discussed above, the future-within-the-present manifests itself as the main subject of the song—the

victorious athlete. It is the victorious youths who perpetuate their ancestral glory that are the future—or the ripening “fruit”—of their polis. Past-within-the-present manifests itself in a variety of ways. One such way, discussed above, is the complete identification of the polis with its eponymous nymph. The love of Apollo for nymph Cyrene, for example, is not a legend of the past; rather, the nymph quite literally lives on as the Libyan polis Cyrene, and Apollo’s love for her is continually revived by the athletic excellence of her young citizens.²⁸⁰ Another effect of this interlaid time-structure, to which this section is dedicated, is the grounding of the poet’s *xenia* relationship with his addressee in history. Sometimes the poet even goes as far as assert a bond of kinship between himself and his audience.

The Pindaric present layer of time is the song-journey which follows the cyclic pattern of *xenia* and *nostos*. The poet is the *xenos*-guest of his song’s addressee, while, simultaneously, the song’s addressee is a *xenos*-guest within the poetic *oikos* of the poet-host. Several of the odes, however, reveal these relationships of *xenia* to have an additional dimension: the *xenia*-based structure of the present turns out to be a “sprouting,” as it were, of relationships established within the past. *Xenia* between poet and addressee is revealed to have a genealogy, or *roots*.

The simplest examples are afforded by some of the Aeginetan odes where the relationship of guest-friendship between Pindar and the victor is paralleled within the realm of myth by the *xenic* relationship of their heroic ancestors, the Theban Heracles and the Aeginetan Aiakidae. Thus, in Isthmian 6, the myth tells of Heracles’ visit to his

²⁸⁰ Cf. my analysis of Pythian 9. 68-72 (“They [Apollo and Cyrene] joined together in love / in the gold-rich chamber of Libya, where she rules her city / one most beautiful and famous for prizes in the games. / And now in holy Pytho the son of Karneidas [i.e., Telesicrates] / has joined her to flourishing good fortune...”) in Chapter 1, p.47.

friend Telamon. Heracles joins his friend in feasting and, receiving from Telamon a libation-bowl, prophesies the birth of Telamon's son Aias who will be his (Heracles') "destined guest-friend" (ξεῖνον ἄμὸν μοιρίδιον, v.46). This theme of libation in honor of guest-friends mirrors the relationship of Pindar and the athletic victor both at the beginning and the end of the ode. The opening quasi-simile suggests that the victor Phylakidas is an honorary guest at a celebration dinner: the present ode which Pindar is offering to the victor is "a second bowl of the Muses' songs" which he, the poet, is mixing "as when a symposium is thriving." This simile is as deceptive as the one comparing Aineas to a chalice or the one comparing a song's proem to a golden-columned vestibule. We have seen how in the latter case it is not actually a singing poet being compared to a hammering mason; rather, the poet-mason is singing-hammering. So too here, the composing poet is not being compared to a man mixing a bowl of wine, but rather the poet is mixing a song that is a drink. At this point, however, it is not yet clear that the poet is the host of Phylakidas—only that he is singing-drinking to his victory. But in the final lines of the ode the setting of the drinking party metamorphoses into the vicinity of the Gates of Kadmus in Thebes, and the libation bowl of song into the songful waters of Dirke. The conclusion of the ode thus reveals that Phylakidas and his brothers (likewise athletes) are, in fact, Pindar's guests, for, as discussed above, Thebes and Dirke are undeniably Pindar's domain, both as a fact of his biography and as a symbol of the realm of poetry. *Xenia* between Pindar and Phylakidas thus acquires dimension not only in space (Phylakidas comes to Thebes) but also in time: the cordial guest-friendship established in times immemorial between the foundational heroes of

Thebes (Heracles) and Aegina (Aias) lives on in the *xenia* of the Theban poet and the Aeginetan victor.

Occasionally Pindar develops the rootedness of his relationship with his audience in the past to a still greater degree by asserting *kinship* between himself and them.²⁸¹ Kinship is a genealogical, and therefore a temporal, bond. In this sense, one can say that when the poet underscores the establishing of kinship he underscores, in effect, the unity of times as defined by its fountainhead, the past: genealogy is the “whence” of present and future. Kinship between Pindar and his addressees can take the form of either marriage- or blood-ties. Olympian 7 composed for Diagoras of Rhodes offers a particularly conspicuous example of side-by-side development of the spatial and the temporal aspects of *xenia* via an appeal to such a family relationship. In vv.13-14 Pindar envisions himself as having accompanied the victor on his journey from Olympia back to Rhodes; the poet disembarks at his addressee’s island home to the accompaniment of lyre and pipes:

καί νυν ὑπ’ ἀμφοτέρων σὺν
 Διαγόρᾳ κατέβαν, τὰν ποντίαν
 ὕμνέων, παῖδ’ Ἀφροδίτας
 Ἀελίοιο τε νύμφαν, Ῥόδον
 And now, with the music of flute and lyre alike I have come to land with Diagoras,
 singing the sea-child of Aphrodite and bride of Helios, Rhodes...

These lines are a straightforward example of the theme of song as the poet’s coming to his addressee’s domain, where the spatial component of *xenia* is readily apparent. Now let us turn to the opening of the ode:

²⁸¹ Cf. Herman (1987:16-29) for a discussion of similarities between *xenia* and kinship: “The most important feature *xenia* shared with kinship was the assumption of perpetuity.” Ibid., p.29-30: “Intimacy was established not through a lengthy interaction, but abruptly, as in marriage, through a ritual act. On the interrelation of guest-friendship and kinship, see likewise Gundert 1978:34 and Kurke 1991:147-149. Kurke joins *xenia* and blood-ties under the one umbrella of the “concatenation of *charis* relations.”

Φιάλαν ὥς εἴ τις ἀφνειᾷ ἀπὸ χειρὸς ἐλὼν
 ἔνδον ἀμπέλου καχλάζοισαν δρόσῳ
 δωρήσεται
 νεανίᾳ γαμβρῷ προπίνων
 οἴκοθεν οἴκαδε, πάγχρυσον, κορυφὰν κτεάνων,
 συμποσίου τε χάριν κᾶ-
 δός τε τιμάσαις νέον, ἐν δὲ φίλων
 παρεόντων θῆκε νιν ζαλωτὸν ὁμόφρονος εὐνᾶς·
 καὶ ἐγὼ νέκταρ χυτὸν, Μοισᾶν δόσιν, ἀεθλοφόροις
 ἀνδράσιν πέμπων, γλυκὺν καρπὸν φρενός,
 ἰλάσκομαι,
 Ὀλυμπίᾳ Πυθοῖ τε νικῶν-
 τεσσιν·

As when someone takes a goblet, all golden, the most prized of his possessions, foaming with the dew of the vine from a generous hand, and makes a gift of it to his young son-in-law, welcoming him with a toast from one home to another, honoring the grace of the symposium and the new marriage-bond, and thereby, in the presence of his friends, makes him enviable for his harmonious marriage-bed; I too, sending to victorious men poured nectar, the gift of the Muses, the sweet fruit of my mind, I try to win the gods' favor for those men who were victors at Olympia and at Pytho.

Here Pindar envisions his song not as the poet's journey to the victor's domain, but rather as the poet's welcoming the victor into his own (the poet's) home as a son-in-law. Not only is the poet the host here, but his relationship with his addressee is intensified to the point of kinship by marriage²⁸² and thereby acquires a temporal dimension: Diagoras is imagined as the poet-host's new son-in-law being toasted at his wedding-feast—i.e., someone who is about to enter and become a part of the sequence of generations, the genealogy, of which his “father-in-law's” *oikos* is comprised.

²⁸² Cf. Katz (1991:134-137) for some general remarks on the interconnection of *xenia* and *gamos* (marriage) in Greek culture in general—hence Nausicaa's and Alcinous' desire to secure Odysseus, the paradigmatic *xenos*, also as a husband and *gambros*. See esp. p.135: “The stranger and the suppliant are the paradigmatic outsiders of Greek culture, and Gould has argued that the distinction between them “is one of circumstance only” (Gould 1973). The *xeinos* and the suppliant are incorporated through rituals that endow them with kinship, and thus, as Alcinous remarks to Odysseus, “the stranger and the suppliant come to be equivalent to a man's brother” (8.546-47)...(It is relevant also that, in the case of Odysseus, when Alcinous accepts him as a suppliant, he displaces his favorite son Laodamas and installs Odysseus in his seat [7.170-71]—a gesture that is the source of later friction between the two men [8.132 ff.]).”

It is noteworthy that the actual ritual through which the addressee becomes “initiated” into the mysteries of the poet’s *oikos* (the world of the song) is the same here in Olympian 7 as in Isthmian 6: there Pindar gave the victors to drink from the waters of Dirke, here (in O.7) he gives the victor to drink from the wondrous libation bowl (*phiale*) “foaming inside with dew of the vine.” The relation of the waters of Dirke in I. 6 to the wedding libation-bowl in O. 7 goes beyond the mere fact that both poetic passages involve the act of imbibing—the former from a spring, the latter from a wine bowl. One may recall that within Isthmian 6 the draught of Dirke is closely related to the two libations mentioned in that ode—the poetic libation performed by Pindar at the symposium in the proem and the prophetic libation performed by Heracles at Telamon’s table. Pouring a libation (cum toast) and offering a draught from the spring of Dirke thus seem to be two closely related images for Pindar: in both cases, the liquid drunk is a hallowed one, whether by virtue of the prophesy-prayer uttered over it, or by virtue of Mnemosyne’s daughters, the Muses, presiding over its origins.

Just as Heracles welcomes Aias into his *oikos*, so Pindar welcomes Phylakidas. The import of Heracles’ toast is to establish the yet unborn Aias as his *xenos*—in other words, even before he is born, Telamon’s son is already awaited by Heracles’ household as an ever-welcome, predestined guest-friend. The yet unborn but already foreseen Aias is, so to speak, the future-within-the-past. Similarly, the athlete Phylakidas is the future-within-the-present. Whether Pindar is proffering his song to Phylakidas in the form of a libation or a draught of Dirke, the drinking signifies the poet’s reception of his addressee as a welcome guest into his poetic domain (*oikos*), into the world of his song, where the poet-host labors to weave together the mythical past and the future glories of the victor’s

polis into one whole which is integrated within its present. That is why, I would say, the *Urquell* of this song-draught is Mnemosyne (Memory), and that is why the drink is endowed with the power of a future-oriented prayer or even prophecy: Pindar's song-draught unites within the present the three layers of time—past, present, and future. But within this unity the future and the past do not lose their sovereignty: the past exists within the present not as “merely” one of its aspects, but as its ever-alive and ever-animating fountainhead.

We have seen how in the proem to Olympian 7 Pindar assimilates his addressee into his family (and hence his *oikos*) through an elaborate wedding simile. Occasionally, he goes a step still further in establishing the temporal aspect of *xenia* when he crafts not marriage- but blood-ties between himself and his *xenos*. Moreover, he does so not in a quasi-simile but in the form of an explicit assertion. Thus, in Isthmian 7, the poet asserts that, “as one raised in seven-gated Thebes,” he “must offer the choicest gifts to the Graces of Aegina,” because Aegina and Thebes are twins, the daughters of Asopos:

πατρὸς οὐνεκα δίδυ-
 μαι γέγοντο θύγατρες Ἀσωπίδων {θ’}
 ὀπλόταται, Ζηνί τε ἄδον βασιλεῖ.
 ὃ τὰν μὲν παρὰ καλλιρόῳ
 Δίρκῃ φιλαρμάτου πόλι-
 ος ὄκισσεν ἀγεμόνα·
 σὲ δ’ ἐξ νᾶσον Οἰνοπίαν
 ἐνεγκὼν κοιμᾶτο, δῖον ἔνθα τέκες
 Αἰακὸν...

...because these [Aegina and Thebes] were twins, the youngest daughters
 of their father Asopos,
 and they found favor with king Zeus,
 who established one beside the beautiful stream
 of Dirke to dwell as mistress
 of a chariot-loving city;
 but you [nymph Aegina] he brought to the island of Oinopia
 and slept with you, and there you bore divine

Aiakos...

(17-22)

From the birth of Aiakos, Pindar proceeds to his “god-like sons [Peleus and Telamon] / and their war-loving sons [Achilles and Aias]” (vv.24-25). He recounts in detail the wedding of Peleus to Thetis and the feats of their son, Achilles, whom, upon his death, “the immortals...thought it best / to entrust...even though dead, to the hymns of the goddesses [the Muses]” (vv.59-60). This dirge of the Muses for Achilles allows Pindar to transition in the immediately following line to the athletic feats of the victor and his clan, commemorating specifically the victor’s deceased cousin Nikokles:

τὸ καὶ νῦν φέρει λόγον, ἔσ-
 συταί τε Μοισαῖον ἄρμα Νικοκλέος
 μνᾶμα πυγμάχου κελαδῆσαι.

That principle [that a brave man must be immortalized in hymn upon his death] holds
 true now as well,
 and the Muses’ chariot is speeding forward
 to sing a memorial to the boxer Nikokles.

Summing up, we can say that Pindar roots the present-day glory of the victor Kleandros and his relatives in the multiple generations of Aeginetans, beginning with the nymph Aegina herself, proceeding to her son Aiakos, and then onwards to his son, grandson, and all their heroic descendants. But he who sings these praises is no casual observer or accidental hireling: his blood-kinship with Kelandros and his clan lies at the very primordial roots of the ancient family tree which his song had just reconstructed.

In Olympian 6.84-87 the poet’s assertion of blood-ties between himself and the victor is even more striking. Pindar not only fashions here a common mythological genealogy for himself and his addressee-*xenos*, but also elevates this genealogy to the level of the “living geography” of Hellas. And here in Olympian 6, just as in Isthmian 6

and Olympian 7, the establishing of the ties of *xenia* and/or kinship is closely related to the image of the songful draught. Earlier I have suggested that when Pindar constructs the proem to Olympian 6 as a golden-columned vestibule he is, in effect, building his own *oikos* whither he, as a host, is inviting his addressees (the victor Hagesias and his retinue). Similarly, I have argued that when the conclusion of this ode alludes to a parallelism between the poet's own fortunes and those of Hagesias, it is a reflection of the reciprocity always inherent to the relationship of two *xenoi*. But vv.84-87 of the same ode reveal a whole other level of relationship between the poet and Hagesias beyond that of a guest-host one. Having praised Hagesias' Stymphalian heritage, Pindar suddenly asserts, "My grandmother was Stymphalian, blooming Metope, / who bore horse-driving Thebe, whose lovely water / I shall drink, as I weave for spearmen / my varied hymn." The poet thus draws upon local mythological lore to establish blood-ties between Hagesias and himself: Metope is the lake-nymph near Stymphalos, who, taken as wife by the Boeotian river Asopos, bore the polis-nymph Thebe. This passage offers what is perhaps the most elaborate development of the temporal dimension of Pindar's relationship with his addressee. In Olympian 7, Diagoras, as the poet's "son-in-law," entered Pindar's poetic domain by joining himself to the current of blood running through the generations of his "father-in-law's" *oikos*. By contrast, here in Olympian 6 the poet-victor kinship is one not by marriage but by blood: in other words it is rooted far back in time, in the primordial beginnings of Hagesias' and Pindar's lineages. But these verses do more than establish a common genealogy between poet and victor. The poet envisions the kindred blood that flows in his and Hagesias' veins as the system of actual lakes and rivers which nourish the lands of Arcadia and Boeotia. As we have seen above, the

Theban waters of Dirke are, for Pindar, not only a topographic landmark of his native polis but also the symbol of the very source of poetry. We can therefore rephrase these verses as follows: in composing his song for Hagesias—i.e., in partaking from the waters of Dirke—the poet joins himself to the mighty current of blood that is water that is poesy which pulses throughout the soil of Hellas, from polis to polis, and lives on in the veins of her sons.

§4 The reciprocity of *xenia* and Pindar's golden-columned *oikos*

(a) Poet as host; multiple entrances into Pindar's poetic *oikos*.

In the preceding analysis of Pindar's song as the poet's journey towards his addressee-*xenos*, it was my object to outline the structure of the “now” (the present layer of time) within the world of the Pindaric ode. However, analysis of the Pindaric “now” remains incomplete so long as guest-friendship is perceived as a one-way relationship between the journeying guest-poet and the entertaining host-addressee: one must take into account the reciprocity inherent to the Greek concept of *xenia*.

Reciprocity is inherent to *xenia* already in Homer. When Athena in the guise of Mentis appears to the Homeric Telemachus, the latter, among other things, asks her (α 174-177):

καί μοι τοῦτ' ἀγόρευσον ἐτήτυμον, ὄφρ' ἐὺ εἰδῶ,
ἤ ἐ νέον μεθέπεις, ἧ καὶ πατρώϊός ἐσσι
ξεῖνος, ἐπεὶ πολλοὶ ἴσαν ἄνδρες ἡμέτερον δῶ
ἄλλοι, ἐπεὶ καὶ κεῖνος ἐπίστροφος ἦν ἀνθρώπων.

Tell me also this truly, that I may know well,
are you a stranger to this house, or have you been my father's guest-friend?
In the old days we had many visitors
for my father went about much himself among men.

Telemachus wishes to know whether Mentès is coming to the *oikos* of the king of Ithaca for the first time, or if he is a long-standing *xenos* of Odysseus. Because, he explains, many men came as guests to our house before Odysseus left for Troy, in the days when Odysseus himself traveled much among men. Entertained as guest by hospitable hosts *in der Fremde*, Odysseus as a matter of course kept the doors of his own house wide open for these same men when they, in turn, would be travelling far from home in strange lands. The roles of two guest-friends are equal and interchangeable; whereas English of necessity must alternate between two complementary terms, “host” and “guest,” Greek captures the reciprocity inherent to guest-friendship by denoting both host and guest with the one term “*xenos*.”²⁸³ As Thomas Hubbard puts it, “*Xenia* is essentially a two-way, reciprocal relationship. Indeed, the word ξένος itself is ambiguous, designating both ‘host’ and ‘guest’; the benefactee may in turn have the opportunity to become a benefactor, and vice versa.”²⁸⁴

The reciprocal nature of *xenia* as exhibited in Homer logically implies an equality of status between the two guest-friends, as the two must match each other in entertainment and guest-gifts. As David Belmont puts it, “guest-friendship in the heroic code was possible only *inter pares*.”²⁸⁵ It is this same reciprocity of *xenia* and the implied equality of the two *xenoi* that accounts for the seemingly self-centered or even

²⁸³ Although occasionally the two can be distinguished as *xenos* (guest) and *xenodokos* (host). Cf. Hesiod’s *Works and Days* 182-184:

οὐδὲ πατὴρ παίδεσσιν ὁμοίος οὐδέ τι παῖδες
οὐδὲ ξείνος ξεινοδόκῳ καὶ ἐταῖρος ἐταίρῳ,
οὐδὲ κασίγνητος φίλος ἔσσεται, ὥς τὸ πάρος περ.

²⁸⁴ Hubbard 1985:157. Cf. Belmont 1962:37 ff.

²⁸⁵ Belmont 1962:44. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 38-44, where Belmont analyzes Eumaeus the Swineherd’s entertainment of Odysseus and concludes that “...*xenia* between Eumaeus and his master *qua* master or between Odysseus and a beggar would have been impossible...A feeling of equality, of class consciousness here, as elsewhere in the poems, is necessary.”

hubristic passages in Pindar, where he shifts focus from praising and praying for his addressee to praising and praying for himself. Such is the conclusion of Olympian 1:

εἴη σέ τε τοῦτον ὑψοῦ χρόνον πατεῖν,
ἐμέ τε τοσσάδε νικαφόροις
ὀμιλεῖν πρόφαντον σοφίᾳ καθ' Ἑλ-
λανας ἐόντα παντῶ.

May it be yours to walk on high throughout your life, and mine to associate with victors as long as I live, distinguished for my skill among Greeks everywhere.

With what seems like audacity, the poet prays for his own fate on a par with the fate of the great potentate, Hieron of Syracuse. Wherefrom such pride? Leslie Kurke approaches the puzzling passage by observing that the seeming boldness of these lines is, actually, an appropriate expression of Pindar's equalizing relationship of *xenia* with Hieron; this relationship, Kurke observes, Pindar has established at the beginning of the ode when he envisioned himself among other traveling poets entertained as guests at Hieron's wealthy table: "Pindar returns to the hospitable scene that opens the poem but narrows the focus to victor and poet alone... The parallelism of language and syntax here is iconic for the reciprocal relationship of poet and patron."²⁸⁶

Olympian 6 concludes similarly, in that it too establishes an explicit parallelism between the poet and his addressees. In one breath, the poet entrusts the safety of the victor's joint communities (Stymphalos and Syracuse) and the fate of his own poetry to Poseidon—significantly, the deity of the sea and of journeys:²⁸⁷

²⁸⁶ Kurke 1991:140. As the title of her chapter ("Guest-Friends and Guest-Gifts") betrays, the exchange of equal gifts is, for Kurke, a fundamental feature of Pindaric *xenia*: "...the poet conceptualizes the *xenia* relationship as entailing his poem, his praise of the victor, within a reciprocal exchange of goods and services."

²⁸⁷ Indeed, the poet explicitly prays for Poseidon to grant a "εὐθὺν πλόον." The passage, however, is ambiguous as to *who* exactly is travelling and whether the travelling is "real" or metaphorical: in v.98 the poet sings of Hagesias' (the victor's) revel band (*komos*) proceeding from Hagesias' Stymphalian

θεός τῶνδε κείνων τε κλυτὰν αἶσαν παρέχοι φιλέων.
 δέσποτα ποντόμεδον, εὐθὺν δὲ πλόον καμάτων
 ἐκτὸς ἐόντα δίδοι, χρυσαλακάτοιο πόσις
 Ἀμφιτρίτας, ἐμῶν δ' ὕμνων ἄεξ' εὐτερπὲς ἄνθος.

May a god lovingly bestow a glorious lot on the men of both cities. Master, ruler of the sea, husband of Amphitrite of the golden distaff, grant straight sailing free from troubles, and give new growth to the delightful flower of my songs.

Here, just as in the above-cited conclusion of Olympian 1, Pindar envisions his own glory as a poet on a par with the glory of his addressees as rulers, as athletes, as a noble community: the “pleasing flower” of Pindar’s hymns (ἐμῶν ὕμνων εὐτερπὲς ἄνθος) is worthy of the same prayer as the “glorious destiny” (κλυτὰν αἶσαν) of Stymphalos and Syracuse. And here, just as in O.1, this assertion of equality between the poet and his addressees is grounded in the poet’s establishing of a reciprocal relationship between himself and his addressees: as we shall see below, here in Olympian 6 Pindar takes *xenia* to a “higher level” as it were: going beyond the ties of guest-friendship he establishes kinship between himself and the victor Hagesias.

But it is in Pindar’s earliest ode, Pythian 10, that we see the clearest and most eloquent articulation of the equality and reciprocity of poet and addressee (vv.64-66):

πέποιθα ξενία προσανέϊ Θώρα-
 κος, ὅσπερ ἐμὰν ποιπνύων χάριν
 τόδ' ἔζευξεν ἄρμα Πιερίδων τετράορον,
 φιλέων φιλέοντ', ἄγων ἄγοντα προφρόνως.

I trust in the gentle friendship of Thorax; he made busy efforts for my sake, and yoked this four-horse chariot of the Pierian Muses, a friend for a friend, going gladly arm in arm.

motherland in mainland Greece to the young man’s other motherland, Syracuse. This would, presumably, involve a real journey by sea. By v.100, however, the sea-journey becomes a metaphor: Hagesias’ two motherlands are like two anchors protecting his ship on a stormy night. And by v.102, the sea-journey evolves, apparently, into a metaphor for the general well-being and future prosperity of both communities, the Syracusans and the Stymphalians (“τῶνδε κείνων τε κλυτὰν αἶσαν παρέχοι φιλέων”).

Pindar “puts trust in the hospitality” of his addressee Thorax, the powerful Thessalian magnate, who “in his zeal to favor me / yoked this four-horse chariot of the Pierians, / as friend to friend and willing guide to guide.” Commenting on the final line, Gildersleeve writes: “We should say, in like manner, ‘lip to lip, and arm in arm,’ so that it should not appear which loves, which leads.” We can add that a phrase such as “φιλέων φιλέοντα” or “ἄγων ἄγοντα” (literally, “loving the loving one” and “guiding the guiding one”) expresses exactly the same inherent interchangeability of “subject” and “object” as the one implied by the Greek use of the one term “*xenos*” to denote both host (“subject”) and guest (“object”).²⁸⁸

Passages such as these suggest that the poet’s coming as guest to the *oikos* of his addressee is only one of the two components of the Pindaric song-journey. The fact that his addressees welcome the poet as guest implies that likewise the poet can stand in the position of host towards *them*. Isthmian 6, discussed above in the context of the poet’s identification of himself with the mythic hero, offers a particularly straightforward example of the simultaneous sojourn of the poet in the domain of his addressees and of his addressees in the domain of the poet. Twice, Pindar emphasizes that he is coming to Aegina, home of Phylakidas and his brothers, for whom the ode is composed (vv.19-21):

ὑμμε τ', ὃ χρυσάρματοι Αἰακίδαι,
τέθμιόν μοι φαμί σαφέστατον ἔμμεν
τάνδ' ἐπιστείχοντα νᾶσον ῥαινέμεν εὐλογίαις.

²⁸⁸ Cf. Crotty (1982:59) who writes of the reciprocity of *xenia* between poet and victor Timasarkhos in Nemean 4: “Because Pindar is not kin to the athlete, he points to other ties that bind him to Timasarkhos. If Pindar asks hospitality for his song, he can also remind Timasarkhos of the hospitality that he—the victor—has enjoyed among Pindar’s townspeople, the Thebans... Timasarkhos is a “friend coming to friends” (22). The poet and athlete, therefore, are bound by double ties; each one is guest and host alike for the other. The reciprocity is then projected onto the heroic plane (25-32) where Theban and Aeginetan appear as Heracles and Telamon, who fought together at Troy.”

And as for you, sons of Aeacus with your golden chariots, I say that it is my clearest law to sprinkle you with praises whenever I set foot on this island.

And then again (v.57): Φυλακίδα γὰρ ἦλθον, ὦ Μοῖσα, ταμίας... (“For I came, Muse, a steward of victory-songs to Phylacidas and Pytheas and Euthymenes”). But at the end of the ode it is Pindar who welcomes his addressees in his own Thebes and offers them to partake of the sacred fount of the polis (vv.74-75):

πίσω σφε Δίρκας ἀγνὸν ὕ-
δωρ, τὸ βαθύζωνοι κόραι
χρυσοπέπλου Μναμοσύνας ἀνέτει-
λαν παρ’ εὐτειχέσιν Κάδμου πύλαις

I shall give him to drink the pure water of Dirce, which the deep-waisted daughters of golden-robed Mnemosyne brought forth beside the fine-walled gates of Cadmus.²⁸⁹

The waters of his native Dirke are a persistent image in Pindar’s odes. Elsewhere, it is the poet himself who drinks them (O. 6. 84-87):

ματρομάτων ἐμὰ Στυμ-
φαλὶς, εὐανθῆς Μετώπα,
πλάξιππον ἃ Θήβαν ἔτι-
κτεν, τᾷς ἐρατεινὸν ὕδωρ
πίομαι, ἀνδράσιν αἰχματαῖσι πλέκων
ποικίλον ὕμνον.

My mother's mother was the nymph of Stymphalus, blossoming Metopa, who bore horse-driving Thebe, whose delicious water I drink, while I weave my embroidered song for heroic spearmen.

This passage suggests that the significance of the fountain of Dirke goes beyond the poet’s nostalgic association of its waters with his hometown. Pindar will drink its lovely waters *as he weaves his hymn*. In other words, it is here, in Dirke’s stream, that he seeks and finds inspiration for his poetry. And so too in O.10 it is by the waters of Dirke that

²⁸⁹ For a discussion of other passages where the poet is host and his addressees are guests, see Kurke 1991:143. Kurke does not, however, discuss the concluding lines of I.6 among these passages. Cf. likewise Gundert 1978:34.

Pindar's belated song appears at last (χλιδῶσα δὲ μολπὰ πρὸς κάλαμον ἀντιάξει μελέων, / τὰ παρ' εὐκλείῃ Δίρκῃ χρόνῳ μὲν φάνεν) (vv. 84-85). This corresponds well to the passage from I. 6: Pindar will give Phylakidas and his brothers a drink of Dirke's waters, "which the deep-bosomed daughters / of golden-robed Mnemosyne made to surge..." The Pindaric Dirke is the province of the Muses and their mother, Memory. It is the fount of poesy.²⁹⁰ We can say that when Pindar offers his addressees the waters of Dirke in Isthmian 6, he intentionally blends together two domains within both of which he is host and the addressees are his guests. Dirke is both a topographic entity unambiguously situated by the "gates of Kadmos" and also the symbol of poetry. And, correspondingly, Phylakidas and his brothers not only come as guests to Pindar's polis, Thebes, but are likewise "initiated" into the mystery of the waters of Dirke and are thereby enabled to enter as guests into the other, non-topographic, realm where Pindar is sole master—into the world of the song.²⁹¹

²⁹⁰ The waters of Dirke are not the only symbolically crucial waters in Pindar. Cf. Segal (1985: 204): "They [the Charites] are worshipped here [in O.14] as as divinities of the fecundating, nurturing, and life-giving power of water. These *Kaphisia hudata*, like the waters of Castalia, Dirce, or Tilphussa elsewhere in Pindar, are associated with birth and the immortalizing power of poetry." Cf. likewise Duchemin 1955:72-80 and esp.73f.; Norwood 1945:100; and Gundert (1935:30) who describes the waters of Caphisus as "die nährende und spendenden 'Lebenskräfte des Bodens'." For the general significance of bodies of water in Pindar, see Becker (1937:30): "Wenn Pindar in den Olympien den Alpheios nennt, um damit den Ort der Spiele, Olympia, zu bezeichnen, so tut er dies nach einer nicht nur pindarischen Sitte der hohen Sprache, Länder und Örtlichkeiten durch Nennung der entsprechended Flüsse zu umschreiben. (Beispiele bietet z.B. die tragische Sprache genug)." For the chthonic and nourishing connotations of water in Pindar in general, see Nieto Hernández 1993:95: "...water is a primordial symbol of origins, that marks in general beginnings and acts of birth and creation."

²⁹¹ Cf. Nisetich (1980:46): "How warmly he [Pindar] was received, how generously he was put up, might have no small influence on the creativity he could muster on his host's behalf...*Xenia* is the foundation on which Pindar's odes are built. Without hospitality and generosity there could be no victory celebration, and though it needs poetry if it is to be complete, poetry is still only a part of it." Thus, for Nisetich, Pindar's song is only a component of the real-life hospitality offered to the poet by his generous employers. But that, I would say, is only true in the "real world": within the world of song, the host-guest relationship turns upside down, and it is Pindar who is entertaining his addressee as a guest in his home, the cosmic palace-temple.

Our brief excursus on I. 6 where Pindar appears as the host of his addressees in offering them the waters of Dirke, sheds new light on the aforementioned passage from Pythian 10 which Pindar addresses to the Thessalian magnate Thorax. The relationship of *xenia* permits Pindar to speak of himself on a par with the high and mighty, because “the benefactee may in turn have the opportunity to become a benefactor, and vice versa.”²⁹² “Opportunity,” however, implies *possibility*; yet the words which Pindar addresses to Thorax suggest that the reciprocity between poet and potentate is not a possibility—rather, the poet *is* entertaining the potentate even as he is being entertained by him. The realm of song wherein Pindar hospitably entertains his addressees is, I have argued, always a journey. In the course of this journey, the poet creates that world wherein unfold his and his addressees’ travels. Establishing the equal and reciprocal relation of *xenia* between himself and Thorax, the poet says that for the sake of his guest-friend Pindar, Thorax had “yoked this four-horse chariot of the Pierians, / as friend to friend and willing guide to guide.” In typical Pindaric fashion, the terse but vibrant phrase is laden with implications: explicitly, the verse mentions only one action—yoking a chariot. But a chariot, as always, is the vehicle of a race or a voyage, and it is, moreover, qualified as Pierian, i.e., belonging to the province of the Muses. The poet’s song is thus once again perceived as a voyage, but Pindar is not embarking on it alone: Thorax, says he, has yoked this Pierian chariot “as willing guide to guide.” To the extent that Pindar is a *xenos* in Thessaly, Thorax has “guided” him, generously summoning, sponsoring, and entertaining the poet (and thereby metaphorically “yoking” the Pierian chariot); but in the realm of song wherein they sojourn together, guidance belongs to

²⁹² See citation from Hubbard above.

Pindar. The implications of the term “*xenos*” are thus developed to their full potential here, as the guest is the host and the host is the guest *simultaneously*.

(b) The golden columns of Pindar’s poetic *oikos*: poet as host in a temple.

As our reading of Isthmian 6 and Pythian 10 suggests, a great many roads of all different sorts lead into the world of song wherein Pindar is host—into his *oikos*, as it were. In the latter ode, the poet’s guests, Phylakidas and his brothers, enter Pindar’s domain by partaking of the songful waters of Mnemosyne and the Muses; in the former, Thorax enters this same domain in the Pierian chariot. But it is only once in the extant odes, in the famous opening of Olympian 6, that Pindar conjures a tangible image not of the road *towards* his poetic *oikos*, but of this *oikos* itself. This passage, I shall argue, offers an important clue concerning the nature of Pindar’s poetic *oikos* as well as concerning the role of the poet as host within this *oikos*.

Χρυσέας ὑποστάσαντες εὐ-
 τειχεῖ προθύρῳ θαλάμου
 κίονας ὥς ὅτε θαῖτὸν μέγαρον
 πᾶξομεν· ἀρχομένου δ’ ἔργου πρόσωπον
 χρὴ θέμεν τηλαυγές.

“Setting up golden columns to support the strong-walled vestibule of our abode, we will construct, as it were, a splendid palace.” And Pindar explains: “when one embarks upon an endeavor, he must labor for the countenance (i.e., the beginning) of his work to be far-shining” (vv.3-4).²⁹³ The “strong-walled vestibule” upon golden pillars is thus the entrance into Pindar’s newly begun endeavor, the present ode—it is the song’s far-

²⁹³ Both verses are rendered in my own translation.

shining countenance.²⁹⁴ And, correspondingly, the main body of the song will resemble something like a splendid palace.

Reginald Burton offers the following interpretation of Pindar's phrasing: "These verses consist of a highly compressed simile which can be expanded as follows: 'even as in building a splendid hall we make the pillars of the forecourt golden, even so in beginning any work, we must make the façade far-gleaming.' The transition from the façade of a building to the prelude of a poem is helped by the neutral word ἔργον, and πρόσωπον itself is equally neutral in the sense of the front of a building which must catch the eye and the prelude of a poem which must grip the attention: both must be made to shine afar."²⁹⁵ Contrary to Burton, I would argue, however, that this passage is yet another instance of Pindar's quasi-simile technique which we have seen in the merging of sweet chalice and choragus Aineas in the same Olympian 6. The effect of this technique, as of so many other Pindaric peculiarities, becomes particularly apparent when compared and contrasted with an analogous technique in Homer. Segueing briefly from our analysis of the poet as host, let us compare the pattern typical for Homeric similes with the one typical for Pindaric ones.

²⁹⁴ Cf. Fitzgerald (1987:175): "'The face (*prosopon*) of a work as it begins / Must be made to shine from afar (*telauges*)': The *prosopon* is the appearance as it is observed from outside, but *telauges* in the next line makes this face a radiant *origin* of light." For the preponderance of the opening lines within the structure of a typical Pindaric ode, see Fränkel (1975: 471, footnote 1): Pindar's openings are "often characterized by particular force and originality: the vigorous impetus of the opening phrases makes itself felt, and the poet has complete liberty in form, since the metre and melody are not yet hard and fast. In addition it is desirable that the first verses should be impressive, as Pindar himself says at the opening of the sixth Olympian..." Cf. likewise Van Groningen 1960:329-330.

²⁹⁵ Burton 1962:18-19.

As commentators have noted, the typical Iliadic²⁹⁶ simile reflects, as it were, its creator's "bifocal" vision. Homer envisions simultaneously two very different worlds: one inhabited by great-souled heroes and darkened by the inevitable gloom of the Trojan War, and another of the everyday pursuits of men and beasts whose simple actions unfold against a calm rustic landscape.²⁹⁷ A typical simile juxtaposes a scene from the former with a scene from the latter world. For example, in the famous passage from *Iliad* XXII, Achilles chasing Hector around the walls of Troy is compared to a mountain falcon chasing a shuddering dove (vv.139-144):

ἥ ὅτε κίρκος ὄρεσφιν ἐλαφρότατος πετεηνῶν
 ῥηϊδίως οἶμησε μετὰ τρήρωνα πέλειαν,
 ἥ δέ θ' ὕπαιθα φοβεῖται, ὃ δ' ἐγγύθεν ὀξὺ λεληκῶς
 ταρφέ' ἐπαῖσσει, ἐλέειν τέ ἐ θυμὸς ἀνώγει·
 ὥς ἄρ' ὃ γ' ἐμμεμῶς ἰθὺς πέτετο, τρέσε δ' Ἔκτωρ
 τεῖχος ὑπο Τρώων, λαιψηρὰ δὲ γούνατ' ἐνώμα.

As a falcon in the mountains, swiftest of winged things, swoopeth lightly after a trembling dove: she fleeth before him, and he hard at hand darteth ever at her with shrill cries, and his heart biddeth him seize her; even so Achilles in his fury sped straight on, and Hector fled beneath the wall of the Trojans, and plied his limbs swiftly.

The poet thus juxtaposes a unique moment of tragedy, the culmination of the sinister events which had been unfolding in the course of the Trojan War, with an everyday, ever-recurring scene of nature. An effect of great pathos is achieved by a simple equation: Achilles chased as impetuously and swiftly as a falcon; Hector fled as tremulously and futilely as a dove.

²⁹⁶ I do not involve the similes of the *Odyssey* in the present discussion, as they merit a specialized investigation of their own. As Homeric scholarship has shown, similes in the *Odyssey* are much less frequent and seem to be endowed with a different role than in the *Iliad* (Moulton 1977; Lee 1964).

²⁹⁷ "The setting [of the similes]", writes M.W. Edwards, "is the universal one of hills, sea, stars, rivers, storms, fires, and wild animals, and against it the lives of shepherds, plowmen, woodcutters, craftsmen, harvesters, donkeys, oxen, housewives, mothers, and children go on as they always have" (Edwards 1987:103).

Not so the typical Pindaric simile. Let us re-examine briefly the sixth Olympian's "comparison" of the choragus Aenias with a wine-goblet, discussed above in Chapter 1. Pindar does not say, as Homer would have, "You, Aenias, are as full of loudly resounding songs as a chalice is full of sweet wine." Instead, the line reads: "You, Aenias, are a sweet chalice of loudly resounding songs." It is not the poet's aim to direct our attention to two distinct spheres of phenomena existing independently of the author's poetic efforts and to trace an analogy between them. Instead, the epinikian poet strives to create one "synthetic"²⁹⁸ phenomenon: a choragus who *is* a sweet chalice of loudly resounding songs. Homeric "bifocality" is here replaced with a first-person poetic vision which literally molds and fashions its *one* unique world.²⁹⁹ The same poetic synthesizing of one novel image takes place in the opening of Olympian 6. Homer would have said: "I shall *sing* the proem to my song just as a mason *builds* a gold-columned vestibule for his wondrous palace"—the meaning which Burton wishes to discern within the Pindaric lines. But that is not what Pindar says. His text reads: "setting up golden columns we shall build (almost, "we shall *hammer together*") a wondrous palace." Pindar does not evoke here a woodworker constructing as *an analogy* to a poet's singing. Instead, Pindar's "synthetic" vision evokes a poet-woodworker who sings-constructs a song-building.

²⁹⁸ Or even "syncretic," if we use the word in its etymological sense of "grown together."

²⁹⁹ The creative, fashioning power of poetic *vision* is not merely an ornamental turn of phrase. Pindar is very much attuned to the theme of eyesight—and especially poetic or prophetic eyesight—as sending forth illuminating, *creative* rays. Thus, for example, in Olympian 7 the all-seeing sun-god Helios perceives-foresees Rhodes with his eyes-rays, while she is still hiding beneath the sea waves. Flower-like, she is rising forth from the sea-floor towards the sun-light, and thus Helios' rays not only foresee here, but likewise literally call her to life—his eyes *fashion* her. In this sense, Pindar's Helios is a proto-Pygmalion of sorts. On the Greek perception of eyes as light-emitting, see Young 1968:88, note 3; Fränkel 1975: 480, note 22; and Snell 1975:13-29.

The vivid immediacy of this singing-building is further enhanced by the fact that lines 1-4 not only *speak of* raising the golden-columned vestibule but likewise *are* this vestibule in the sense that they constitute the proem to the ode. On a first reading one might think that vv. 1-4 are only an *assertion* of the song's need for a glorious opening, and that the actual proem will follow in lines 5 and onwards. Yet vv. 5 ff. offer nothing that might resemble a proem. The first strophe and most of the antistrophe devolve into a medley of typical Pindaric praise and moral gnomes; these lines qualify neither as the song's "far-shining countenance" nor as a golden-columned entrance. By the time we reach the myth of Amphiaraios in vv. 12-17, it is clear that, having long ago left the "vestibule" of the ode far behind, we have wandered deep into the recesses of the song-palace. The opening lines thus both *announce* the poet's intentions to build a splendid proem-vestibule and, at the same time, *are* this proem-vestibule. Right here and now, even as we read these opening lines, the golden pillars are rising before our eyes. In its vivid boldness, this quasi-simile goes a step further than Aineas' merging with the sweet chalice. There we witnessed the disappearance of demarcation between chalice and choragus. Here not only is the song a splendid building (rather than *like* a splendid building), but we also look on while the poet-woodworker raises its columns, vestibule, and inner sanctums.

The simile-denoting formula "ὥς ὅτε" is not, however, to be dismissed. We have established that these verses are not *like* a golden-pillared vestibule but rather *are* the vestibule. Yet the "ὥς ὅτε" unambiguously indicates that a comparison is, indeed, taking place. What is being compared to what? "ὥς ὅτε θαητὸν μέγαρον / πάζομεν": we will construct something that resembles a splendid palace. The construction, just as the

erection of the gold pillars, is not metaphoric—it *will* take place and actually *does* take place as soon as the proem, or vestibule, is complete, and the actual song begins in v.5. The “ὥς ὅτε” thus refers not to the *construction* (the “hammering together”) of the song-building, but only to the character of that which is being constructed: *what sort* of a song-building is emerging from the toil of the poet-woodworker. We will construct *something that is like* (ὥς ὅτε) a palace: Pindar thus tells us what the final product of his poetic woodworking comes closest to *resembling*, but does not say explicitly what this final product *is*. One can say that Pindar has equipped these lines only with the vehicle of the simile while leaving us to guess at what the tenor must be. Yet even as he tantalizes us with the riddle implicit in these lines, Pindar offers a clue for its deciphering: the entrance into his poetic *oikos* is golden-columned.

Even a cursory reading of the odes conveys Pindar’s very particular perception of gold, which goes far beyond usual associations of the precious metal with economic value or luxury. “The glint of gold,” as John Finley writes, “characteristically marks for Pindar those moments when the divine transcendence touches this world.”³⁰⁰ Jacqueline Duchemin comes closer still to discerning the significance not only of gold in general, but specifically of the golden pillars in the Olympian 6 proem:

Le texte grec est d’un éclat merveilleux, avec l’adjectif exactement placé en tête du poème, comme un réel portique d’or dressé pour le triomphe du vainqueur. Sur quoi ce portique ouvre-t-il? Nous pouvons le soupçonner en songeant à tout l’or des attributs divins, en nous remémorant le geste d’Athéna offrant à Bellérophon, pour dompter Pégase, un mors d’or (XII *Olympique*), ou celui de Poséidon (I *Olympique*) donnant à Pélops le char d’or grâce auquel il sera vainqueur: l’un et l’autre geste, assurément,

³⁰⁰ Cf. Finley 1955:53. Cf. likewise pp. 52-56 passim and *ibid.*, pp.7-8: “His [Pindar’s] object is to lay hold on the repose of this ideal realm, since he feels that self-transcendence, the flash of the gods in this world, is the only thing that gives it value. Cf. Carne-Ross (1985:57): in Olympian 3, direct divine gold-flashing is too much to bear for mortals, hence Heracles must plant trees on the race course.

transcende la simple apparence; il doit être interprété comme le don faisant participer un mortel à la force, peut-être à l'immortalité divine.³⁰¹

The χρυσέαι κίοναι at the entrance to the world of the Pindaric ode are a symbol not just of opulence but of the sacral nature of this domain: a transcendental realm awaits within the walls of the song-building. As the “ὥς ὅτε” reminds us, the poet’s *oikos* is only *like* a palace; the “true” nature of this wondrous building is, as the golden pillars connote, that of a temple—the locus of intersection of heavens and earth.³⁰² We can say that he who constructs and inhabits this golden-columned *oikos*—the poet-host—is, in effect, a priest, responsible for establishing and maintaining this interconnection of men with gods.³⁰³

Above I have maintained that Pindar perceives the role of the poet as the nexus of times: within his song the poet synthesizes the present as his own (or his song’s) journey towards the poet’s addressee-*xenos*; and it is this same journey which turns out to be likewise the poet’s journey into the past and into the future. I have also maintained that this “dynamic” image of time as a song-journey simultaneously into the past, present, and future corresponds to a “corporeal” image of time as the polis-tree which integrates within itself both its own living past (its “roots”) and its own living future (its “fruit”).

³⁰¹ Duchemin 1955:201-202.

³⁰² Cf. Carne-Ross 1985:38. Quoting Ezra Pound’s Pindaresque vision of a tree-like city (“The roots go down to the river’s edge / and the hidden city moves upward / white ivory under the bark,” Canto 83), Carne-Ross writes: “The tree, earliest form of the column; the column that sustains the temple; the temple that stands at the center of the city.” One may recall a wide-spread mythological association of the temple-column with the world-tree which bonds heavens and earth (*axis mundi*); cf., for example, Eliade 2004, *passim*.

³⁰³ Cf. Snell’s commentary on the image of Delos in the fragmentary hymn to Zeus (Snell 1975:89): in saying that the gods call Delos lying within the dark-blue sea, the “Star-island” (“der blauen Erde weitleuchtend Gestirn” in Snell’s translation), Pindar in effect turns the spatial structure of the world upside-down: the gods looking down from heaven perceive our sea as their sky. Snell uses this example to argue that for Pindar, the role of a *sophos*, a poet, is to reveal in its full beauty the symmetries, connections and echoes of the universe (“und ein Teil der Aufgabe des Weisen ist offenbar, zu zeigen, daß sich erst in den reichen Beziehungen, den Korrespondenzen und Gegensätzlichkeiten, die Schönheit der Welt aufbaut, ja, daß ihr Wesen in dieser Bezogenheit ihrer Teile besteht”) (*ibid.*, p.89).

This corporeal image of time as a tree is the embodiment not only of a temporal but likewise of a spatial unity: in joining within itself the past with the future, the polis-tree literally *embodies* the unity of heaven and earth—the unity of dark chthonic depths where its roots sprawl and the abode of the gods whither its branches stretch. The golden-columned *oikos* of the poet is yet another embodiment of this same “corporeal” time within which are joined the realms of mortals and immortals. The golden-columned building is, in essence, a temple, and the role of the poet is service within this temple—a service which consists, as the proem to Olympian 6 tells us, of constructing this same temple, of joining together heaven and earth. In the words of Pindar himself, he is a μάντις ιεραπόλος, a prophet-priest.³⁰⁴

Elsewhere, Pindar alludes to his role as the nexus of heaven and earth more explicitly. We have seen how in Olympian 14 the poet comes simultaneously to two sets of audiences: praising the victor Asopichos, he has come both to the present-day, flourishing, living community of Orchomenos and, at the same time, via his messenger Echo, he has come to the ancestors of the athlete down in the “black-walled house of Persephone.” In this sense Pindar is the diametrical opposite of Tantalus in Olympian 1. As I maintained above, Tantalus’ perversion of *xenia* is sinful because it amounts to an attempt at confounding pre-established cosmic bounds and hierarchies: he dares to feed mortals with ambrosia and immortals with dead flesh.³⁰⁵ In Olympian 14, Pindar seems

³⁰⁴ Partheneia 1.5 (frag. 94a).

³⁰⁵ Cf. Hubbard (1985:158), who notes that Pindar’s opening and concluding references to the *xenia* of Hieron frame the myth of Tantalus, who, in both versions of the myth, is “a negative paradigm of hospitality—‘hospitality’ which is carried to excess and reckless of the gods.” Interestingly, Hubbard concludes that “Tantalus’ perversion of *xenia* is a foil to the maintenance of hospitality and festivity by Pelops, in his role as cupbearer to the gods. And, of course, Pelops is a paradigm for Hieron.” I find the association of a generous host with a boy cup-bearer and lover—the Olympic equivalent, as it were, of the

to be engaged in precisely the same sort of trans-gression as Tantalus: he moves freely between realms, both between the temporal ones of past, present, and future, and between the spatial ones of Hades, earth, and heaven. But, unlike Tantalus, he does so in order to guard and preserve the cosmic temporal-spatial hierarchy, not to deride and topple it as Tantalus meant to do. Pindar's literal trans-gressions from one realm to another vivify the poleis he visits by keeping alive their founding myths and, by the same token, he keeps alive the ancestors and the mythical heroes of a polis by actively engaging them in the present-day triumphs of the city's community.³⁰⁶

handsome boy-slaves serving at a symposium—unconvincing. And the shakiness of Pelops' identity with a host makes the Hieron-Pelops parallel likewise dubious.

³⁰⁶ Cf. Segal's note with regard to the same Olympian 14: Pindar's odes both "lead forth into the light" the dead ancestors and also bring Aglaia into the halls of Persephone. Song, writes Segal, has the power "to cross between human and divine, death and immortal life, past and present, local events and panhellenic concerns (I.4.30f.)...the poet lifts great deeds up toward the eternity of the gods, but his task is also a downward communication between the world of the living and the realm of the dead" (Segal 1998:243-244).

CONCLUSION

From the days of Homer it is a commonplace that song, whether it lauds or censures, confers immortality on its subject. Thus Homer's Helen says that Zeus has "brought an evil doom" on her and Paris, such that "even in days to come **we may be a song for men that are yet to be**" (ὥς καὶ ὀπίσσω / ἀνθρώποισι πελώμεθ' αἰοίδιμοι ἐσσομένοις).³⁰⁷ This immortalizing power of song is a recurrent theme in Pindar's odes by virtue of their very nature as epinicians—i.e., poetry composed to laud a particular occasion, to capture a fleeting moment within an enduring work of art. One frequently comes across assertions in Pindar such as, "...when men are dead and gone, songs and words preserve for them their noble deeds..." (παροιχομένων γὰρ ἀνέρων, / αἰοιδᾶι καὶ λόγοι τὰ καλὰ σφιν ἔργ' ἐκόμισαν) (N.6.29-30).³⁰⁸ How is such preservation achieved? The answer may seem obvious: long after an athlete is dead, men continue to sing the song which records his deeds, just as we moderns can preserve a photograph years after the death of its subject. But if the achievement of a victory ode is that of a chronographer—i.e., the faithful recording of an event—then Pindar seems to fall woefully short of his own goal. This apparent failure is precisely one that commentators have so often imputed to Pindar when they complained that, while undertaking to sing praise of an athletic victory, the poet strays from his subject at each and every opportunity and never, with the rarest exceptions, gives details of the actual contest. Therefore, we must either

³⁰⁷ *Iliad* 6.355-358, Samuel Butler translation. Cf. *Odyssey* 8.579-580.

³⁰⁸ Cf. likewise O.10.91-93 and N.7.11-16.

condemn Pindar as a bad poet who does not fulfill his own agenda, or agree that Pindar's song immortalizes in some way other than a chronographer who would accurately record the athletic event. It has been the aim of the present work to analyze the immortality-imparting "mechanism" of the Pindaric ode.

Pindar's songs, just as the poetic works of many of his contemporaries, were responsible for forging and maintaining the narrative tradition—the collective historic memory—of the polis communities involved in these songs. It is the thread of textual and oral lore spun from generation to generation that accounts for the cohesiveness of a traditional community by unifying its past (both "mythical" and "historic") with its present and with its anticipated future. On a very basic level, we can say that Pindar "joined" the past with the present by "reminding," say, the Aeginetans of their famous historical ancestors, the Aiakidae, or the Thebans of their national hero, Heracles. Thus, Pindar preserves and saves from oblivion the splendid "here and now" of the day of victory celebration by infusing this present moment with its mythic past and glorious future. Hence the traditional components of a Pindaric ode: narratives of a polis' mythic past and praise of her athletic victors, the tokens of her future. And, to the extent that the present moment of "now" in the life of a polis contains within itself its own past and future, it is a *cyclic* life: it is only within a circle that every point is simultaneously the beginning and the end of motion—its own past and its own future. This accords with Pindar's perception of a city as a tree—a living being which reproduces itself in continual cycles by perpetually beginning itself anew at its roots and perpetually heading off into its future as it bears new fruit upon its branches.

The cyclic nature of the life of a polis-tree which retains all three levels of time within its present (i.e., the city's victorious youth are her future which is the flowering of her past within her present) is an image fundamental for the *plot* of a Pindaric ode. But these fundamental components of the epinician plot—well documented in the past by Pindaric scholars—do not in themselves explain that poetic “mechanism” whose efforts unify all three levels of time within the present and thereby impart immortality. Without the secret of this “mechanism,” the image of the polis-tree amounts to a platitude: into his praise of a contemporary city, Pindar liked to include praise of its ancestors as well as some form of forecast about the future.

Pindar, I have contended, perpetuates the traditional lore of a victor's polis not by the simple narration of glorious ancestral deeds as, say, an epic poet would do. Rather, the key to the immortality-imparting “mechanism” of the Pindaric ode lies in the fact that evoked *within* the song is the image of the song (or of the singing poet) journeying between the city's past, present, and future, and thereby weaving these temporal planes into one unified whole. In those odes in which it is thoroughly developed, the image of the song-journey creates a paradox: on the one hand, the poet sings once he has arrived at his final destination (usually, his addressee's polis), and thus the poet's encounter with his audience (i.e. the singing which he does when his journey is over) is the *final goal* of his journey. We can say that the poet's song is the “now” (or the present temporal plane) of the addressee's polis, which has been preceded by the itinerant poet's journey towards this polis. But, on the other hand, the song *is* the poet's journey towards his final destination where he will encounter his audience. It is this paradoxical, double image of the song as the journey and the goal of the journey that allows for the unity of times and

thus for immortality in Pindar's odes. The historical Pindar's "spatial" journey (e.g., from Thebes to Syracuse), having been transformed within the song into the image of the song-as-journey, unfolds *within* the "now" of the polis—in other words, it is a journey through time; and, as such, it comprises likewise the poet's (and/or his song's) journeys into the past and into the future.

Thus, Pindar immortalizes the "now" of the victor and of his polis by capturing the living unity of the three layers of time. And, to capture this living unity, he transforms the journeying of his song towards the polis of his addressee into the journeying of his song between layers of time. Therefore, to comprehend the character and structure of this unity, one must comprehend the structure of the Pindaric song-journey. It has been my aim to show that the structure of the Pindaric song-journey both in its *spatial* and in its *temporal* aspects is defined by the concepts of *xenia* and *nostos*.

In its peregrinations through both space and time, the Pindaric song-journey thematically structures itself as a journey towards the literal or figurative realm of *xenia*, and back. In the Pindaric, as in the Homeric world, *xenia* is a paradoxical relationship of friendship-strangeness; I have endeavored to show in Chapter 2 that *xenia*, when successfully established by a traveler *in der Fremde*, definitionally anticipates the traveler's homecoming, or *nostos*, because, rather than encouraging him to assimilate and remain far from his original home and hearth, it preserves him in a foreign realm *as a foreigner*. The Pindaric ode frequently intimates that all three of its main personages—the mythical hero, the victorious athlete, and the poet's song-journey—are involved in the *xenia-nostos* cycle. Likely originating in the realities of Pindar's life and times (e.g., as a traveling poet, he may have been routinely entertained as guest by the affluent

households which commissioned his songs), the complementary concepts of *xenia* and *nostos* are sometimes endowed with a metaphysical significance, as concepts essential for the mytho-poetic images of life and death appealed to in several of the odes. Thus, the double circuit of the Agamemnon-Orestes myth in Pythian 11 suggests that underlying the *xenia-nostos* cycle is the Odyssean cleverness of life which cyclically establishes itself anew over and over again by descending into the realm of death and returning therefrom.

This same pattern of departing from oneself in order to come back to oneself (or, metaphysically speaking, the pattern of revitalization through symbolic death) determines not only the song's journeying "in space" (e.g., from Thebes to Syracuse) within the present temporal plane (in the "now"), but also the song's journeying "in time," into the past or future. As I have aimed to demonstrate in Chapters 1 and 3, the journeys of Pindar's song into the future and past are in essence the journeys of his poetic "I" (i.e., of the poem's authorship) into realms of "friendly foreignness"—*xenia*. Now and then the poet's authorship "loses," or "hides," its identity behind the mask of a mythical hero as the poet steps back into the past, or of the athletic victor as he advances into the future: in each such case, Pindar's poetic "I," just as an exiled Orestes or Jason, becomes bereft of its identity—in effect, disappears, or dies. But in these flights into the future, precisely the loss ("death") of Pindar's poetic "I" turns out to be the precondition on which the future ripens and comes to fruition within the "here and now" of the song. The poet, that power which maintains the present-day glory of the polis, merges his identity with the identity of the athletic victor, the future (or "fruits") of the polis: the future merges with and lives on within the present. Similarly, the receding past can be retrieved and

revitalized in the present “now” only when the poet “hides” his poetic “I.” He accomplishes this in two steps: firstly by allowing his song to descend freely within the chronological vortex, and secondly by inducing it to ascend therefrom. This ascent is often achieved via an *Abbruchsformel*. Occasionally, as we have seen in the analysis of Isthmian 6, Nemean 1, and Pythian 9, the song’s descent into the past and ascent back into the present practically coincide when the poet assumes the guise of a mythical prophet. By implicitly identifying himself with a Heracles, a Teiresias, or a Cheiron, the poet “hides” his poetic “I” in the past. But, at the same time, the prophetic vision of these mythical heroes leads the song from the depths of the past back to the “here and now”: the past is joined with and lives on within the present. It is the cyclic nature of the song-journey which pulsates between *xenia* and *nostos* on all three levels of time that guarantees that the past is always retained and the future always ripening within the Pindaric present—that the present is never displaced by its future and never recedes into its past.

In all these descents, ascents, disguises, releases and reclaimings, the poet—or, more precisely, his poetic authority—turns out to be the nexus of times. He is that force which, privy to the “short paths” of the immortals, enables the “now” to retain within itself its past and to nourish within itself its future. It is through the poetic efforts of Pindar-the-poet, Pindar-the-athlete, and Pindar-the-mythic-hero—in other words, through the cyclic journeys of the poet’s “I” into the realms of *xenia* and back home—that the polis attains immortality. The polis-tree embodies both the spatial unity of heavens and earth as well as the temporal unity of past, present, and future. In traveling towards his addressees-*xenoi* and thereby maintaining the living unity of the polis-tree’s roots (the

past) with its fruits (the future), Pindar in effect assumes the task of forging and maintaining the spatial and temporal unity of the cosmos. We see the flipside of this cosmos-building role of the poet's *xenos*-bound journey in those myths which are concerned with a crime against *xenia*. As we saw in Chapter 2, Pindar perceives anti-*xenia* as either a breach in *spatial* cosmic hierarchy (cf. Tantalus in Olympian 1) or as a rupture of the continuity of *time*, of the succession of generational cycles (cf. Clytemnestra in Pythian 11).

Pindar finds a particularly striking expression for this cosmic role of the poet when he elaborates the theme of the reciprocity of *xenia*. The Greeks traditionally understood *xenia* as a reciprocal relationship: a host entertaining a traveler could always expect to receive hospitality in turn when subsequently traveling in the domain of his quondam guest. In Pindar, however, reciprocity is not an *expectation*. Rather, the poet is *simultaneously* both the guest and the host of his addressee. Even as his song-journey is heading towards the domain of his addressee, Pindar is welcoming his addressee at the entrance of his poetic *oikos*—the world which the poet-host structures within his ode. Pindar's addressees are invited into the golden-columned temple-like *oikos* which is perpetually alive because the priest-poet labors at maintaining the unity of its past and future, its heavens and earth—labors, in effect, at the conversion of time into eternity.

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