Only Mostly Dead: Immortality and Related States in Pindar's Victory Odes

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Abstract

Pindar’s victory odes have long been the subject of frustration, admiration, and bafflement - often all at the same time. Their perceived obscurity, however, derives largely from a lack of the contexts that surrounded fifth century audiences. In this study I argue that an important element of that context lies in the complex religious landscapes inhabited by Pindar and his contemporaries.

The communities of fifth century Greece were shaped by their experiences - communal and individual - of the divine. Interaction with the gods was as much a part of life as interaction with one’s neighbors or the state. Despite the integration of what we, as modern scholars, would call ‘religious’ experience into every aspect of fifth century life, the importance of the divine in Pindar’s victory songs has been insufficiently appreciated.

Epinician representations of the divine draw on the stories and hymns that the audience already knew, the festivals they attended, the traditions of their cities and families. These contexts are now fragmentary, but by looking to the many types of evidence we have - from visual representations to cult inscriptions to mythical narratives - I have tried to glimpse the interwoven frameworks that expressed contemporary conceptions of the divine.

When Pindar sings about gods and heroes he is neither simply repeating tired scripture nor telling empty stories for entertainment. Instead, representations of these beings in the odes
articulate the order of the world and (re)constitute the appropriate relationships between humans and the gods. As part of the project of asserting order Pindar introduces into the odes figures who exist in a borderland between mortality and immortality. The elements of ambiguity inherent to these beings constitute a challenge to which the surrounding material of the ode responds, reaffirming the validity of the human/divine distinction. Four of these figures - Amphiaraos, Herakles, and the Dioskouroi - are examined here within the contexts of their individual odes and with reference to the broader epinician project.
Dedication

To my parents, for their unwavering belief and support

and

to Mark: βραχύ μοι στόμα πάντ’ ἀναγήσασθαι.
Acknowledgments

In the winter of 2009 I took Sarah Iles Johnston's seminar on the performative contexts of myth. For the seeds planted by that seminar, and for the conversation, criticism, and many varieties of support since then much appreciation is owed. Many thanks are due as well to Carolina López-Ruiz who is unstinting with her time and enthusiasm, and to Tom Hawkins and Fritz Graf whose broad perspectives have enriched my own.

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To my families on the West Coast and in Minnesota, who have learned that graduate school stress often comes home for the holidays; to Isabel, a faithful mascot if ever there was one; to Claire for encouragement and distraction in equal measure; and to Mark, for everything - more thanks than I can say.
Vita

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Fields of Study

Major Field: Greek and Latin
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"It is hazardous, in dealing with the tangle of ancient polytheism, to pronounce with absolute dogmatism about any not insane hypothesis..." - Farnell, Cults of the Greek States

Chapter 1

More Things in Heaven and Earth: an Introduction

Accounting for the Gods

The Greek gods were real: to begin with. This must be distinctly understood, or nothing wonderful can come of the argument I am going to relate.¹ But real is a dangerous word, and in this case an impossible one. It may be that scholars have been a little chauvinistic in rejecting out of hand the existence of the Greek pantheon while continuing to worship their own deities in their own ways, but that question is beyond the scope of scholarly investigation.² What I mean by the slippery word 'real' is something else: that, as perceived by the individuals and communities of the ancient Greek world, the divine was a present and powerful force. Engagement with such a subjective reality challenges the boundaries of academic responsibility, and so this facet of the ancient world is often largely left aside or limited to discussions fully

¹ With apologies and credit to Charles Dickens (and Jacob Marley), A Christmas Carol.
² Or at least to be left to the theologians, whose efforts might be extrapolated.
dedicated to the study of 'ancient religion' or 'the history of religion'. My dissatisfaction with
this state of affairs provided the impetus for the present study.

In thinking about the experience of ancient Greece we have to contend with
contemporary realities that included the presence of divinity. The term 'belief' is not much used
in work on the ancient world, in part because it connotes attitudes held by individuals which,
thousands of years later, we have no real way of evaluating. Moreover, in modern usage
dependant on the range of attitudes inherent to a pluralistic society, 'belief' often stands as an
alternative to 'doubt'. That definition, however misses its proper significance with reference to
a world in which worldviews excluding the presence of the divine were exceptional. When we
encounter depictions of the divine created by the ancient Greeks it is worthwhile to ask what
realities were brought to bear in the creation of those narratives and images and to recognize

3 On this issue v. Henrichs 2010, "What is a Greek God," esp. the comments at p.28-29 on the personal
monotheism that dominates among scholars and the firmly etic perspective thus established toward the
polytheism of the Greeks.

4 Giordano-Zecharya 2005, esp. p. 343-347, rejects the use of the term 'belief' with reference to non-
monotheistic cultures, warning : "We cannot easily escape the cognitive condition in which the uncritical
use of cultural keywords results in the projection of an implicit model upon the reality studied." While
cautions are certainly needed, I have not encountered a better term for articulating the perceived existence
of the gods: those suggested by Giordano-Zecharya (conviction, opinion, understanding) (p. 347) are not
without pitfalls.

5 For an overview of ancient atheism v. Bremmer 2007 who, tellingly, begins his survey with the Classical
period. In his article on early Greek theology (as reflected in early Greek philosophy) Trépanier 2010
shows that thinkers like Xenophanes, Herakleitos, Parmenides, Empedokles, and even the atomists
radically rethought the role and nature of the divine without rejecting its existence.
that no sharp line can be drawn between representations of the sacred and creative artistic expression.⁶

In my work on Pindar's victory odes I adduce this perspective as a relevant framework for understanding representations of immortality and their function in the epinician corpus. Pindar's emphasis on human mortality, often in contrast to the nature of the divine, is well known.⁷ Gnomic statements pepper the odes, stories are recounted of mythical individuals who forgot their limits, and allusions are made to recently- or long-dead relatives of the victor.⁸

Three main interpretative approaches have emerged in response to these reminders of limitation in the midst of the celebration of victory. One view effectively disregards such expressions, viewing them as 'traditional' or 'pious' in a toothless way that exerts little influence over the rest of the ode.⁹ A second, what I will call the 'literary' view, understands the evocation of the victor's personal mortality as a foil for the poetic immortality that his victory achieves by

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⁶ Platt 2011, focusing on the relationship between divine epiphany and representation, provides a model for analysis between the fields of 'art,' 'literature,' and 'history of religions'. Interestingly, her approach to the problem of the gods is to take their perceived existence as given; to provide just one example, with reference to encounters on votive reliefs (p. 43): "While they may anticipate the epiphanic viewing of a cult statue, they simultaneously raise the possibility of an encounter with deity itself, of the god's existence and visible manifestation independently of the material form of its representation."


⁸ On which see Lardinois, and most recently Boeke (esp. p.54-72).

⁹ In some cases this includes a perception of these themes as expressions of the poet's personal religiosity: cf. Bowra 1964, p.42-98 passim, as, e.g., when he speaks of Pindar's theology (p. 61) or the possibility of his conversion (p. 93). Norwood 1945, p. 44-71, sees Pindar's views on religion and ethics as muddled, inconsistent, and already outmoded as he composed them: "So much then, for Pindar's views, or prejudices, about God and man. His maxims deserve serious attention only when considered each for the moment in its special context... But even if we appraise them in isolation, we must not attribute to them remarkable potency." (69)
virtue of Pindar’s poetic efforts.\textsuperscript{10} A third approach develops a 'social' perspective: the victor's potentially dangerous exaltation has to be defused by reminding him of his ultimate likeness to his human community.\textsuperscript{11} In this dissertation I offer a reconsideration of the first approach with the result, I hope, of strengthening and complicating the literary and social readings. Rather than disregarding allusions to the gods, or to religious/moral stances, as two dimensional embellishments, I propose that we read them as the reflections of contemporary experience and belief. This 'religious' reading extends the same credence to representations of immortal/divine existence that has always been granted to Pindar’s representations of humanity and seeks to reclaim some sense of the expectations that framed reception of Pindar's compositions by his contemporaries.

In order to examine Pindar's representations of mortality and immortality, I look to figures within the odes who challenge the validity of those categories. Pindar introduces several such figures including humans who have become gods (Herakles, Ino, Semele, Asklepios), semi-divine/heroized figures whose relationship to mortality is complicated (the Dioskouroi, Amphiaraos, possibly Helen, Iolaos briefly), and even an immortal who gives up his immortality (Cheiron). The study presented here is devoted to four of these figures: Herakles, Amphiaraos, and the Dioskouroi.\textsuperscript{12} Each of these appears repeatedly in the epinician corpus in odes

\textsuperscript{10} See Currie 2005, p. 74-75 for a summary of this position (with which Currie vehemently disagrees) and n. 14-16 for bibliography including Cannatà Fera 1990, p.31, Robbins 1997, p. 258. Cf. Segal 1985 for the power of the poet’s song to overcome the boundary of death and communicate with and about the dead.


\textsuperscript{12} The others are not less interesting and they will find their place in the projected monograph. For now though we remember with Pindar that koros is hateful to men and inimical to defense dates.
composed for varying communities, commemorating diverse victors and contests, and of widely varying dates. Their recurring presence suggests that Pindar was using these figures to express something more than local pride or even athletic prowess - though these valences should not be excluded. Each one occupies a position distinct from both the divine and human worlds and thus limns a middle space that articulates the distance between the two. Pindar manipulates their ambiguous positions between the worlds of gods and men by (i) emphasizing their extraordinary status and (ii) developing the surrounding material of the ode to respond to the anomaly in a way which reasserts the validity or the mortal/immortal binary. These figures assert both a disjunction between divine and human experience and the beneficial relationships that can obtain between humans and gods because of their distinct natures.

**Contexts for Song, Contexts for Humanity**

The victory odes as they are preserved for us are only lyrics\textsuperscript{13}: they cannot communicate the rhythm of the musical accompaniment, the movements of the chorus, the mood of the gathered community or the reason for their presence.\textsuperscript{14} Nor can they articulate the

\textsuperscript{13} Not to be confused with 'lyric', which they also are. The modern usage may actually say something rather important about the technical term.

\textsuperscript{14} An illustration: Simon and Garfunkel's "Sound of Silence" has been anthologized in poetry collections where it holds its own. But think of how those words on the page pale in comparison to the same lines sung in 1981 into the mid-September, New York City night in Central park for 500,000 fans. The comparison is not perfect, of course - the Central Park Concert was an occasion for the reperformance of familiar songs that had not mostly been composed for specific occasions as Pindar's were. Nevertheless, the sense of New York and its culture and a certain moment in time shaped the evening; the songs were heard by that audience on that night in a context that rendered them something other than they were before or after.
contemporary concerns and experiences that framed their consumption. Composed to resonate within the experiences of a certain place and time, Pindar's victory songs have become disoriented.\footnote{A recent trend in Pindaric studies has drawn attention to the role of reperformance in Pindar's compositional goals: e.g. Currie 2004; Carey 2007, p. 209-210. The odes were prestige goods designed to last and reperformance is likely - this fact does not change the validity of thinking about the first performance when Pindar would have been aware of the intended context, political mood, etc.} An awareness of this dislocation has characterized a strand of Pindaric scholarship stretching back to Wilamowitz and has spurred efforts to reconstruct historical/political as well as cultural and social contexts.\footnote{Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1922. The counterweight to these contextualizing efforts is the approach that sees the odes as vehicles only of praise and explains all their constituent elements as more or less formulaic components in support of that end: Schadewaldt 1928; Bundy 1962; Thummer 1968.} More recent developments in scholarship take account of the political dynamics of rituals, festivals, and cult and express a growing awareness that epinician could function simultaneously as cult song and praise poetry. \footnote{Krummen 1990; Kowalzig 2007; Currie 2005.} Such investigations, however, have primarily confined themselves to the sphere of human experience; even those that contemplate the cultic role of the odes emphasize them as a platform for the self-expression of poet, victor, or worshipping community and deemphasize the element of communication with and about the divine.

One reason that scholarship has undervalued the gods in the epinician corpus is that the victory odes have been seen as praise poetry, rather than religious poetry (represented by other genres of choral lyric). The Hellenistic scholars who set themselves to the task of systematizing Pindar's corpus classified the victory odes as songs 'for men' rather than 'for gods'.\footnote{cf. Lowe 2007.} This

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...
judgment shows the dangers of branching classification systems: a choice is forced where two clear alternatives do not exist. The distinction between songs composed for humans and songs composed for gods articulates a stark separation between 'religious' and 'secular' experience that does not map well onto the experiences of the communities for whom the odes were composed. Though these early scholars may not have intended to so emphatically diminish the importance of the divine for the odes, the legacy of their mania for classification proved highly influential. Their library-based efforts were further colored by the fact that they were operating at something of the same disadvantage that has plagued Pindaric scholarship ever since: the odes were already becoming texts trapped lifeless in the amber of ink. Along with the memory of the human audiences and contexts, the gods who had once listened faded too.

By adducing the presence of a world surrounding and superseding mundane human experience as a definitive context for Pindar's compositions, I hope to add another dimension to our thinking about one of the functions of the genre: the reorientation of the victor and the reconstitution of his community. Kevin Crotty and Leslie Kurke were among the first to highlight this effect with reference to the social fabric of the victor's community and the threat of disruption that a victor's new status could entail. Their discussions, like most subsequent work on the topic, confined themselves primarily to what I will call the 'horizontal' axis: interactions

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19 The worldviews of the fifth century societies who formed Pindar's audiences correspond better to the heuristic category of 'interconnected cosmology' developed by Oudemans and Lardinois 1987, v. esp. p. 92-96.

20 Carey 2007, p. 206, asserts that "some experience of secular choral poetry" was available in many states. His use of 'secular' gets at the division that divides 'songs for men' from 'songs for gods,,' a division out of place in the fifth century.

among humans on a human scale. I submit that problems of orientation and self-conception can also be explored with reference to a ‘vertical’ axis: interactions between human and divine.\(^{22}\)

This perspective simultaneously expands the scope of the world that we can perceive in Pindar’s compositions and reveals a consistent epinician interest in the ordering of human/divine relationships. Myth, praise of the victor and his family, prayer, gnomic statement - all of these combine to establish the victor and his community in the correct orientation to the gods, as well as to each other.

Does orientation on a vertical axis - in contrast to the power of the gods - detract from the victor's glory? Bundy's famous assertion that every single bit of a victory ode functions exclusively as praise has been pretty well superseded, but it is still worth remembering that people - wealthy people - were commissioning these songs as ways to represent themselves to their community and perhaps to other aristocratic audiences.\(^{23}\) The themes of mortality and mortal limitation, however, endure across the epinician corpus and do not seem to have dampened Pindar's long career.\(^{24}\) One explanation for the acceptability of these themes is Pindar's status as, to use Duchemin's title phrase, as 'poet and prophet': inspired utterances expressive of universal truth are part of generic expectations for the odes.\(^{25}\) The 'literary

\(^{22}\) cf. Segal 1985, p. 205, with reference to Ol. 14: "The communicative power of song operates on a vertical (and temporal) axis that runs between Olympos, Orchomenos, and Hades and between past and present... It also operates on a horizontal (and spatial) axis between Orchomenos and Olympia."

\(^{23}\) Bundy 1962, p.35.

\(^{24}\) Admittedly it is impossible to know who chose not to commission him or why, but the prestige of his reputation remained undimmed through the literary traditions of antiquity.

\(^{25}\) Duchemin 1956; D’Alessio 1994; Mackie 2003, p. 78-87.
immortality' argument comes into play, too: the songs contain their own breath of immortality which they impart to the victor's success; to be effective they need to highlight the transience of uncommemorated achievement. To these interpretations I add the possibility that representations of human dissimilarity to the divine contribute directly to the purpose of praise rather than merely providing a foil for the real message. Instead, the encounter between mortal and immortal natures evokes a tension that powers the epinician project. When he juxtaposes humans to gods Pindar is not simply contrasting weakness with strength; he is highlighting the unique qualities of human existence in order to glorify the victor's innate humanity as well as his temporary exaltation.

Points of Contact

My purpose in this study is to read a selection of Pindar's odes back into the religious landscapes that informed their composition and framed their performance. In part this depends on an awareness of the institutions that moderated the relationships between gods and humans and shaped contemporary experience. In some instances, as Krummen has demonstrated, these are reflected in the language of the ode itself and tell us something about the physical performance context (as, for instance, in Isthmian 4, where the poet highlights the importance of a Theban festival in honour of Herakles). In the majority of cases, though, the textual allusions

26 cf. Ol. 11.1-6, Nem. 3.6-8, Nem. 7.11-16.

27 cf. Crotty 1982, p. 56: "Anyone who seeks some form of immortality must have recourse to his fellows. Only within the community can one enjoy an undying kleos. The person's name can live so long as there are people to hear it. Kleos is the immortality which community makes possible."
are brief or absent. Moreover, the contexts of physical performance, beyond the fact that they are often impossible to reconstruct, are not the only point of reference that the audience brought to a choral performance.

The athletic contests provide an obvious point of reference shared by poet, victor, and community. The crown games (Olympian, Pythian, Nemean, and Isthmian) occurred in conjunction with festivals in honour of Zeus, Apollo, Zeus (again), and Poseidon, respectively; references to the power of these gods in celebrations of victories won at their precincts is neither incidental nor merely traditional. Participation in athletic contests, in addition to being a way to assert and increase one's social standing, was a mode of worship. The divine patron, in turn, was felt to extend favour to the victorious athletes. Pindar's odes reflect and extend this reciprocal interaction: the odes glorify the victor by emphasizing the favour of the gods and the ode itself, commissioned by the victor or a family member, becomes a sort of votive set up as a thank you to the god.

In this sense - as Pindar himself notes, and scholars have further

28 Burkert 1985, p. 105-107: "...the sporting event is no profane festival." (106) Sansone 1988, p.110: "We sometimes lose sight of the fact that the athletic competitions in ancient Greece that were organized on a regular basis were in fact part of a religious festival. Brelch 1958, p. 89 n. 81, is aggravated by the insufficient attention granted to the religious import of the games even by historians of religion - and the associated unwillingness to take heroization of athletes seriously. Cf. Nagy 1990, p. 137-145, for a different ritual ideology that sees the athletic contests as compensation for the death of a cult hero and the epinician as compensation for the athletic ordeal.

29 Sansone 1988 constructs a model for all athletic activity (using Greek athletics as a case study) according to which the athlete enacts a sacrifice of his own human energy. There are problems with this ethology-based model but the recognition of athletic activity as a mode of ritual is important.

30 On the inherently hymnal aspect of epinician v. Bremer 2008, who argues that divine favour contributes to and cooperates with human excellence, "they are two ways of indicating the same reality, like the wave and particle in modern quantum mechanics." (p. 16) Cf. Crotty 1982, p. 1-40, on divine and human effort
articulated - an epinician composition is like the victor statues that were set up in the divine precincts: expressions simultaneously of human glory and divine power.\(^{31}\)

Local religious framework(s) add another context, in conjunction with that of the Panhellenic festivals, for the consumption and comprehension of the odes. They were sometimes commissioned for performance at another festival in the victor’s hometown, and even those that were for private consumption (at a symposium for intimates, for example) reflect the influence of epichoric pantheons.\(^{32}\) The landscapes of a polis were punctuated and defined by the presence of structures expressing the existence of the gods, from monumental temples to simple shrines. These sacred spaces must have marked the daily physical experience of the city in the same way that the cycle of holidays (holy days) marked the experience of time. In contrast to the single contexts of the crown games shared by a geographically diverse crowd of competitors, these local contexts varied widely and constructed distinct points of reference for, say, a victor from Opuntian Lokris as opposed to one from Epizephyrian Lokri. (The related question of how a victor from either Lokri or Lokris would balance his conception of Zeus at Olympia in conjunction with the Zeus he knew from home is a fascinating one, but not of primary importance for the point at issue here.)

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\(^{32}\) Carey 2007, in his discussion of performance contexts, indicates that "all civic locations need not have been exclusively religious" (p. 202) - his use of ‘exclusively’ gets at the overlapping spheres of experience that integrated religious experience into diverse areas of endeavour.
In addition to the synchronic frameworks of local and inter-polis religious practices, the diachronic traditions of aristocratic families - and sometimes communities as a whole - constructed further parameters for thinking about and responding to the gods. The traditions of divine and heroic descent could express political history and the relationships between communities, but these valences should not mask the potential significance of a perceived closeness between the divine or heroic ancestor and the present day population. Pindar often employs these mythical genealogies to evoke continuity between the mythical past and the present: the presence of an Aiakos or Bellerophon in an ode has to be (at least partially) understood as an expression of local or familial traditions.

Pindar’s victory odes were composed with reference to these complex and interconnected frameworks and consumed within them. The people (mythical and contemporary alike) and events depicted in the ode burst the boundaries of the poetic creation and bind the ode into the layered experiences and expectations of the audience.

**Narrative Encounters**

To this point I have been referring to 'gods' and 'semi-divine' figures with emphasis on their existence in the world of contemporary experience rather than their roles in myth. Yet Herakles, Amphiaraos, and the Dioskouroi - along with the other gods and heroes who populate the epinician corpus- are indisputably figures of myth. The uncritical use of the terms 'myth' and 'mythical,' however, especially with reference to the odes, imports an overly neat division to

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33 For heroic traditions as sites for the articulation of political and historical realities v., e.g., Hall 1997, Shapiro 2012.
both song and contemporary reality by way of the very distinction I have just employed for my
own explanatory purposes: a figure in a narrative becomes sharply distinguished from a figure in
the world.34

The problem of 'myth,' its meaning and function, is one that has exercised scholars of
ancient religion from the infancy of that field.35 The early poles of that debate were myth and
ritual - the former being a way of talking about distant/ancient/superhuman events, the latter a
mode of acting that recalled/reenacted/reaffirmed them.36 The two terms still, to some extent,
frame our way of accessing the religious life of the ancient world.37 Through myths we have
access to the stories people told about the gods and their interactions with the human world;
through recorded accounts or narrative evidence of ritual we can glimpse the ways that humans
interacted with the gods.38 Tellingly, though, a discrepancy persists in the way we interpret
these two sorts of evidence: ritual is seen as reflecting real action undertaken by human actors
and is more often taken seriously as a mode of interacting with an extra-human world; myth, on
the other hand, is frequently read or interpreted as stories told primarily for human

34 For one way of thinking about these distinctions v. Hübner 1986, a self-described 'philosophische
Betrachtung' that, however, too closely associates the gods with nature-phenomena.

35 And scholars of other fields long before that. For an overview of approaches to Greek myth as a pre-
 rational step on the way to logic (and this model's discontents) v. Most 1999.

36 For a selected history of the debate surrounding myth and ritual - does myth narrate ritual, does ritual

with reference to the myth of the Proitids.

38 The profound challenge of understanding such material evidence is reflected in the not-infrequent use
of 'ritual' as an adjective applied to objects that no one can perceive a practical use for.
consumption and not with the primary intent of representing 'true things' about the gods or heroes.  

It would be indisputably silly to argue that any preserved material from the ancient world - whether it falls in the category of myth or ritual - had as its primary goal the communication of dispassionate, disembodied "facts" about the events depicted. Representations - verbal or visual - of the divine/heroic/monstrous world were always framed in a context that motivated certain emphases and guided the selection of events and people depicted. Moreover, in (a) religious system(s) untrammeled by a single scripture or hieratic authority, no single representation or version could even be considered the 'standard' one against which deviations could be measured.  

Myths, in the broad sense of narratives about the activities of gods and ancient humans, should be taken as seriously as ritual when we attempt to think about the extra-mundane experiences of the ancient world.  

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39 Cf. Scullion 1994 p. 117-118: "The vision of the Greek pantheon offered in Homer, the Hymns, and the Handbooks is not privileged and does not set a standard or, more accurately, does so only in literary terms; it should not be allowed to distort our perception of the world of actual cult and cultic legend, which, in religious terms, is a larger and more complex and serious world." (The italics are mine.) Henrichs 2010 argues that the interest in ritual has privileged thinking about human action as a way to understanding Greek religious experience over and above thinking about the gods: "For modern ritualists and indeed for most students of Greek religion in the late nineteenth and throughout the twentieth century, rituals are social agendas that are in conception and origin prior to the gods, who are regarded as mere human constructs that have nor reality outside the religious belief system that created them." (24-26)

40 Certain representations, e.g. the Herakles metopes at Olympia, could be so influential that they contributed to a 'canonization' of myth, but this was still part of a cooperative process dependent on the reception and integration of such depictions.

41 cf. Parker 2011, p. 65-70, on the potential individualities and collectivities of the gods and when these aspects are expressed.
categories cannot always be kept neatly distinct, and neither quite addresses something like a
cult statue which is not defined exclusively by either a single narrative or a single ritual
occasion.

Rather than trying to attribute final authority to one mode of communicating about
(and often with) the divine, all of these symptoms of sacred experience should be viewed as
expressing something worthwhile about ancient perceptions of the gods. This perspective
guides my approach to reading Pindar's odes back into the contexts of contemporary religious
thought. I begin from the premise that every allusion to an extra-mundane figure in an
individual's prior experience contributed to a sum of associations clustered to articulate a
conception of that figure's nature. The corollary of this premise is that every single member of
Pindar's audience would have had a distinct conception of Zeus, Hermes, Herakles, etc.
predicated on their unique concatenation of experiences. There is no recovering this sort of
granular perspective, so I focus on the conceptions of the victor/his family and the audience as a
whole.

Pindar was a poet of the Greek world as a whole, steeped in the great epic traditions,
conversant with local conceptions, and sensitive to the productive interplay between the two. I
like to think that he would have approved of Gertude Stein's rather gnomic perspective: And

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42 Johnston (forthcoming) addresses how this effect occurred in the ancient world, building on the work of
narratologist Shane Denson.

43 Sometimes these are basically a single perspective, sometimes - as for the tyrants, but also possibly for
holders of local religious offices - the victor holds a unique status that orients him differently to the ode's
constructions.
then there is using everything.\textsuperscript{44} I, too, have tried to use everything - the full spectrum of external representations of figures and events within the odes - to reconstruct the contexts that framed Pindar's compositional choices and the reception of the odes by their original audiences.

Points of reference for conceptualizing the divine appeared in a multiplicity of contexts and circumstances. Representations could have local or regional resonance: small objects, e.g. coins with the images of deities or nymphs, might come suddenly into focus as they were used, very large ones like the metopes on a monumental temple were a constant presence that would, nonetheless, have been more or less noticed from day to day. They could be images intended for Panhellenic consumption: statues large and small erected in a Panhellenic sanctuary like Olympia or Delphi, but also potentially images on vases produced, e.g., at Athens but widely disseminated. And of course they could be words rather than objects - words originally articulated in a dramatic performance at Athens or a Rhodian festival which then became stories that were disseminated beyond that original setting; or the verses of epics whose popularity carried them beyond the possession of any single population.\textsuperscript{45} And we cannot forget words that were also objects - votive inscriptions intended to communicate simultaneously with human and divine viewers.\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{44} Stein 1926.

\textsuperscript{45} The dissemination of stories from person to person, in social and family contexts, is perhaps the least recoverable facet of ancient myth, but not the least important: cf. Bremmer's perspective in his \textit{OCD} entry (s.v. 'mythology'), Fowler 2000 (vol. 2), p. xi-xii.

\textsuperscript{46} On inscriptions as sources for thinking about the gods v. Graf 2010 who notes (p. 58-59): "Inscriptions document mainly cult, the interactions humans had with their gods, and thus point to the role the gods played in a community."
I view sources originally created for public consumption - whether enduring or occasional - as communicating salient facets of the figures represented. This is not to say that Euripides' *Bacchae*, for instance, should be taken as an uncontested representation of Dionysos; rather that, for an Athenian audience at least, the Euripidean representation became part of the discourse surrounding the god. A distinct type of witness is provided by sources which self-consciously gather and collate information for a more general audience: historians, mythographers, lexicographers - and, of course, Pausanias, the indispensable Periegete. These sources are invaluable repositories for discussions of the gods, descriptions of ways of thinking about the gods, and depictions of ritual -- as long as they are handled carefully as the products of their own methodological processes.

With as much care taken as possible for problems of dissemination (in space and time) and an awareness of the inescapable truth that the majority of our sources distinctly postdate Pindar, I have attempted to draw on the many contexts (and types of contexts) that contributed to thinking about the divine. The rich variety of representations, their potential integration

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47 On the genre of mythography v. the introduction of Fowler 2000, vol. 2, p.xi-xxi, esp. p. xii: "The emphasis was entirely on discovery and criticism. There was, moreover, no Muse to inspire the flow, no pretence that the message passed through the receptive poet from heaven to earth: there was only the native with of the author."


into the currents of daily life as well as moments of sacred encounter, influenced the
composition and shaped the consumption of the odes.

**Myths Recounted, Myths Remade**

Pindar draws on existing representations of gods and heroes but he does not merely
reflect them back to his audience unchanged: after all, he, too, is a mythmaker. Pindar's
Herakles (for example) is not simply dictated by local conceptions, such that at Thebes he can
only be the Theban hero or at Syracuse the model Dorian ruler. Rather, these local conceptions
are accounted for and included in the ode, but sometimes that inclusion consists of challenge or
reworking rather than simple reflection.

Pindar's myths are woven into the material of the odes, concurrently shaping and
shaped by the surrounding material. Under the category of myth fall not only the extended
narratives which have most often been seen as deserving of that heading, but also brief
allusions to narratives latently available in the expectations of victor and audience as well as
addresses to gods and heroes by the poetic or choral voice. These are all bearers of myth in
the sense that they all refer to the existence of powers and structures that shape human
experience while lying beyond the bounds of mundane existence. And they are all chosen,
(re)shaped and polished by Pindar as inextricable components of each ode.

Through the first two thirds of the twentieth century multiple strands of scholarship -
even strands that opposed each other - tended to see myths as self-enclosed narrative passages
50 Attempts have sometimes been made to starkly distinguish these categories. e.g. Fehr 1936; Hamilton 1974.
inserted into the space carved out for them within the ode. For some interpreters, the myths were related to the rest of the ode by a shared central symbol or message: as stories they communicated something loosely related to the way the victor was represented or the perspectives offered by the gnomic statements.\textsuperscript{51} Another approach interpreted the myths as relevant to the historical and/or biographical circumstances of the victor (or poet), taking little account of the poetic context which - on this view - didn't even aspire to unity of composition beyond the structure imposed by the meter. A third, objecting to the disregard for poetic unity argued that the poems were highly structured poetic entities within which myths were one largely formulaic element.\textsuperscript{52} Bundy emerged on the scene as the inheritor of this last approach but with a greater emphasis on the 'epinician grammar' of which all myth was a part and the praise to which all content was subsumed.\textsuperscript{53} While these approaches have things to say about other aspects of epinician, they render the myth static and undervalue the complex realities

\textsuperscript{51} To this group of approaches belongs the early idea of the Grundgedanke - a sort of motto to which the ode can be condensed. Bowra 1964's take in his ch. 7: 'the Treatment of Myth' (p. 278-316) is partially illustrated by the following: "...his myths embody what he sees on each occasion beyond the immediate celebration and what he thinks most worthy of notice in it and most likely to illuminate his starting theme." (p. 310); "Since a myth is part of a larger design, it has to be kept in its place and, when it has done its task, it may be dismissed summarily." (312).

\textsuperscript{52} Schadewaldt 1928. Illig 1932 saw a need to further articulate the role of myth within this structure. He takes Pindar's own statements about his 'Mythenkunst' as evidence that in his epinician corpus the myths express a 'model past' and are even adjusted ('Mythenkorrektur') to serve that purpose, resulting in an equation of myth with ethical demonstration ('Ethisierung des Mythos'), p. 9-10; he takes account of both the external requirements (of the occasion) and the internal ones (technical poetic forms) as salient for the myths, p. 12-19.

\textsuperscript{53} Bundy 1962. His work was adopted and adapted by Thummer 1968 and Young 1968.
evoked by the representations of gods and heroes as narrative subjects and interlocutors within the odes.

Pindar's myths function as multifaceted, highly pregnant, utterances framed by nested contexts within and beyond the boundaries of their own odes. Kankan's inquiry into the 'function of myth' in Pindar's odes took the critical step of interpreting the variations in the mythic representations as Pindar's artistic choices that created a myth cut to the needs of each poem. Bernardini further emphasized the complexity of mythical relevance by highlighting the importance of the audience as consumers of the ode and thus moving the conversation about the significance of myth beyond the binary relationship between victor/patron and poet. For her, the poet's task is not only to praise the victor, but also to rhetorically draw the audience into sympathy with that praise. On Bernardini's reading, mythical heroes - and it is heroes she focuses on, rather than gods - are exempla, positive or negative, that speak not only to the victor but to the whole assembly; their enduring status ensures that the poet does not have to argue for their validity as models as he would for a human patron - and that he can highlight or suppress aspects of familiar stories to achieve the desired effect.

54 As a reaction to historicizing/biographical readings, though, he deemphasized too much the usefulness of looking to Pindar's sources and influences as a way of understanding his mythical production.

55 She credits Bruno Gentili with beginning the conversation that would reorient discussion of choral poetry toward considerations of performance and audience.

56 Bernardini 1983, p.40: "Quella dell'epinicio è invece una struttura in cui, come vedremo meglio in seguito, ogni elemento - 'attualità', racconto mítico, affermazioni gnomiche, interventi in prima persona, formule d'interruzione - si inserisce in una composizione architettonica saldamente costruita che affonda le radici in una realtà in cui sono avvertite tutte le esigenze della parola parlata, nel senso che la parola del poeta è volta sì ad elogiare, ma attraverso il consenso e il coinvolgimento del committente e dell'uditorio."
Pindaric scholarship of the last decades has continued to emphasize the contemporary contexts of the odes (broadly and narrowly defined) as necessary frameworks for interpretation. This 'performative turn' has led to a deemphasis of 'myth' as something separate from the surrounding material. For Krummen, who focuses on odes for which she thinks she can identify a specific ritual setting, references to gods and heroes interact symbiotically with the performative context and the poetic representation of the victor and his family. Beyond the specific performative context - often impossible to identify - the political and social needs of a community have become a primary point of reference for interpreting Pindar's poetic purposes; and myths, as part of the shared conceptions of the community, are integrated into this attempt. More recently an emphasis has fallen on the realities expressed and instantiated by myth: Kowalzig, among others, has highlighted the usefulness of myth and cult in allowing a polis to assert its status or define its relationships with its neighbors. Currie has argued that the experiences of mythical heroes allude to the heroic status to which (certain of) Pindar's patrons personally aspire.

57 E.g. She takes Ol. 1 as reflecting/responding to an initiatory aspects of cult and interprets the myth of Pelops as a projection of this experience. Without the dependence on the physical performance context, Carne-Ross 1985, p. 18: "The general purpose of myth in Pindar's odes as in almost all high Greek poetry and in the archaic poetry of other times and places, is to set the particular, nonrecurrrent event - here a victory in the games - in relation to an event in the permanent, paradigmatic world of the gods and heroes which makes it understandable."

58 V., to name only a few: Hall 1995, p. 591: "It is well known that one of the many functions of myth is to explain topographic distribution in the present by inscribing it in the legendary past..."; Calame 2003; Kowalzig 2007, and a variety of applications in Fearn 2011. The political potency of myths was clear already to ancient political leaders (e.g. purifying Delos, kicking out Adrastos, Athenian heroes). Also with reference to mediating the structures and tensions within a community: Cole 1992; Kurke 1991; Stehle 1997 (on gendered identities) and Calame 1997 (the religious and social contexts for female choruses).
My work, like everyone else's, is a product of the swinging pendulum. Without taking Pindaric scholarship back to a time when myth expressed a potted morality or the personal religiosity of the poet, my analysis reasserts the more-than-symbolic aspects of myth within the ode. That is, building on the century of work that has generally reached a consensus concerning a) the inextricability of mythical narrative from the individual odes and b) the multiple contexts that frame each ode, I emphasize that Pindar's myths - in addition to and in cooperation with their countless other functions - both articulate the nature of the divine and model relationships between the divine and human worlds. These interactions constitute a salient reality for the consumption of the odes in the fifth century and for our interpretative efforts in the twenty-first.

**Whose Binary?**

The fundamental distinction that obtains between gods and humans, a division that has its basis in their distinct relationships to death, is a recurring theme in the victory odes. Death is foreign to the gods, inevitable for humans: the boundary between mortality and immortality is neither negotiable nor surmountable. This perspective is enunciated repeatedly in the gnomic statements, here is just one as a taste.59

if a portion of this excellence reaches you.
Mortal thoughts are fit for mortal men.

Relationships between the worlds of gods and mortals are articulated in terms of proximate division: contact exists, but the divine and human spheres cannot merge and human aspiration must always accept the constraints placed upon it by the limitations of a single lifetime.

The figures at the heart of this study disrupt the stark division between mortality and immortality by passing from states of human existence to states that are somehow other: they are not dead, but neither are they simply divine. They do not, however, overturn the validity of the distinction. Instead, Pindar works them into the odes in ways that highlight their extraordinary natures, distinguishing them from the representations of the heroes who lived and died in the mythical past and the victors who (usually) are living at the time of performance but someday will not be. Rather than blurring the divisions between gods and humans, between mortal and immortal natures, Pindar’s employment of these figures articulates an impossible middle space that hovers between the two modes of existence.

Was Pindar’s binary distinction between men and gods a reflection of contemporary thought or the imposition of strict categories onto a spectrum of existential modes? The question pulls us back to the nature of Pindar’s poetic authority and the function(s) fulfilled by the odes. When Pindar told a story about, e.g., Pelops (to whom I return below) his representation became part of the traditions constituting Pelops in contemporary thought. The non-dogmatic, un-scriptured nature of Greek religious thought meant that the 'corpus' was always open and always changing. Pindar’s representations of gods, heroes, and monsters entered into a conversation with existing conceptions of these figures and thus altered the parameters of that conversation. This is by way of saying that the choice between reflection and
imposition of categories poses something of a false dichotomy. Pindar’s binary drew on contemporary ways of thinking about modes of existing in the world and affirmed a particular distinction (immortal gods/mortal humans) which not only framed his epinician odes but also persisted as an additional way to conceptualize the world beyond them.

The binary that opposes gods to men is hardly unfamiliar in early Greek thought. In literary depictions Zeus is often ‘the father of gods and men’ and epic formulae evoke the dualities of ‘blessed gods and mortal men’. But we also hear of beings whose existence is not fully coterminous with either the immortal nature of the gods or the mortal nature of men. Many of these claim origins that are fully non-human: monsters, giants, nymphs, rivers, other natural forces, and what we might call abstractions (e.g. Hesychia, Tuche). And then there are the heroes. The term seems to have been employed with great flexibility by the Greeks themselves, resulting in frustrated attempts by modern scholars to define a) what a hero is and b) how and when that concept became established in Greek religious thought.

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61 These figures very often have anthropomorphic aspects (a river can be represented as a man, nymphs are usually young women - and closely associated with nuptial concerns), but they offer ways of thinking about aspects of human nature by projecting them onto the non-human.

62 A selection of material on heroes and hero cult: Farnell 1921; with emphasis on archaeological access to cult: Hägg 1999; for a range of approaches to myth and cult: Pirenne-Delforge and Suárez de la Torre 2000; for a detailed survey of cult practice v. Ekroth 2002, The sacrificial rituals of Greek hero cults in the Archaic to the early Hellenistic periods, and cf. her contribution, "Heroes and Hero-Cults," in the Blackwell Companion to Greek Religion.

63 Ekroth 2010: "A characteristic of heroes and hero-cults is their heterogeneity, both in relation to the nature of the heroes themselves and the appearance of their cult places, and, to a lesser extent, the cult
seeking a definition broad enough to incorporate the diverse crowd of Greek cult heroes, settled on a single (short!) sentence: "Heroes are biographically dead mortals, functionally minor gods." On this reading - and this is where the definition becomes critical for my argument - a mortal existence ending in death was a prerequisite for heroic status. The salience of this facet of heroic identity was surely variable, but if it was consistently present then it was susceptible to greater or lesser emphasis in any given rearticulation of the composition of the world.

Hypotheses about the rise of the hero in Greek cult tend to associate these figures in some way with the dead: one model identifies cult sites for heroes with Mycenaean tombs (or structures interpreted as tombs) - this perspective relates to the argument that cult honours accrued to figures like Diomedes and Aias in response to the dissemination of the Homeric epics and their depiction of the famous warriors of the mythical past. Another understands hero cult as an outgrowth of ancestor cult in which said ancestor receives enduring honour from the practices. Their importance in the Greek religious system is, on the other hand, indisputable, not the least from the fact that they were worshipped all over the Greek territory from the late eighth century BC to the end of antiquity" (100).

Parker addresses the potential objection that there are heroes who do not even have names, much less biographies, by arguing that Greek thinkers accept this lack of information but offer explanations linking such figures to possible myth-historical figures. (He gives the example of Pausanias’ theses concerning the underlying identity of Taraxippos, the horse-spooking hero at Olympia.) cf. Henrichs 2010: "Whereas gods are immortal, heroes are not. In fact, having died and being a corpse is the most basic prerequisite for obtaining the status of a cult hero" (p.31).

Farnell 1921, p. 208-342, attributes one of his several categories of hero to the diffusion of the epics; Coldstream 1976 looks to a reaction between the diffusion of the epics and encounters with Mycenaean tombs, v p. 9-10 for his archaeological predecessors. The epics use the term ἥρως to refer to living, human men - apparently highlighting their nobility or aristocratic status. This is one point of confusion for those aspiring to trace the development of the term: were the two uses perceived as completely distinct or did the shared term link the (apparently) mundane Homeric usage with the cultic status?
whole community. Both of these models associate the existence of the hero with perceived human origins and a perceived human end. Literary depictions describe men of the past as ἡμιθεοι, a term that, in view of later classifications, could look temptingly like a middle ground between men and gods, but may instead, like the related ἀντιθέοισιν, express something about men that is only like the gods - which would point once more to an orientation of early heroes to the human world. Recent archaeological work has shown that material evidence offers little justification for perceiving a neat division between cult offered to gods and cult offered to heroes, but as Parker has argued, this may suggest that heroes could exercise powers like those exercised by the gods without becoming indistinguishable from them.

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66 Rohde 1925, p. 116-125; Nagy 1990, p. 144, partially following Rohde, sees the archaic concept of ancestors branching into "two distinct categories: on the one hand there are the heroes, stylized remote ancestors, who are defined both by their cult in any given individual polis and by their being recognized as heroes by citizens of any other given polis, and on the other hand there are the immediate ancestors, who can be kept within the confines of the polis in the restricted context of families and extended families." Cf. also Nagy 1979, p. 114-115. Antonaccio 1994, resists the identification of tomb cult (the reuse of Mycenaean tombs) and hero cult and argues that these practices represent two different modes of engaging with the past: "Tomb cult is a type of ancestor cult which, however, in returning to Bronze Age tombs, creates ancestors by the adoption of ancient dead unrelated by linear descent and unacknowledged for centuries" (p. 400).

67 Bremmer 2006 (p. 24), following Verdenius, suggests that ἡμιθεοι could be translated 'almost divine' and that its use by Hesiod (and once in the Iliad) to designate the men of the mythical past does not necessarily indicate literal descent from a god or an intermediate status between gods and humans; in fact, Bremmer rejects the existence of hero cult 'strictu sensu' before the sixth century. (For a survey of uses v. Bremmer 2006, p. 24-25.)

68 This work is in response to a long-standing perception of a stark division between the ritual directed to the heroes (and 'chthonic' deities and dead) and the ritual directed to the Olympian gods: v. Rohde 1925, p. 116, for an overview of this opposition. The validity of this distinction was already being questioned seventy years ago by Nock 1944, and has since been developed and demonstrated in detail by Antonaccio 1995, Ekroth 2002.
I have laid out some of the problems and approaches associated with hero cult not to argue for any one of them, but to show that long before the fifth century, the Greek landscape was inhabited by powerful entities with histories rooted in the human world. These were individuals whose influence was felt in a certain community and whose power was localized. If we consider the evidence of cultic practice, we find a spectrum of ritual activity and no clear distinction between the rites offered to such mythical humans and those offered to gods. This is not the same thing, however, as saying that distinctions were not drawn in thinking about the entities being honoured. That is, not everyone who received a holocaust sacrifice (the complete burning of an offering, often cited in opposition to the method of dividing the victim between gods and humans) was someone with a 'human biography' - but some of them were. Within the group of 'ex-humans' there was, again, a range of experiences: the figures that I have included in this study (and those slated for inclusion in the monograph) are not the only human-origin heroes who are sometimes represented as having attained divine existence or divine honours.69 For instance, Achilles was sometimes represented as a divinity with a Black Sea cult.70 In Nemean 4, though, Achilles' existence in the Black Sea is assimilated to the cult status of other Aiakids and distinguished from Herakles' divine status, while Diomedes' potential for divine status is highlighted in Nemean 10. Pindar is not inventing new valences for these figures, but he is highlighting those aspects of their existence that evoke the distinctions salient to his poetic purpose.

69 Two things which should probably not be simply assimilated.

In the epinician corpus Amphiaraoς, Ηερακλῆς, and the Διοσκούροι are framed in a way that highlights their distance from human and divine experience. In this sense they stand apart from other glimpses we get of hero cult in Pindar, e.g. Νεοπτολήμας at Nemean 7 or Βάττος in Pythian 5, where heroes are still defined in terms of their associations with the human world even though their status is distinct from that of their (also long-dead) peers.\textsuperscript{71} This is the space that Pindar constructs and employs in order to articulate the binary of mortality and immortality which frames the odes.

The status that Pindar constructs for his boundary-blurring figures comes close to prefiguring the conceptions that would emerge in the fourth century of heroes as a separate sort of being intervening between men and gods. This is not, I think, incidental, but rather responds to a nexus of developments in the religious experience of the sixth and fifth centuries focused on the possibility of privileged status in the afterlife.\textsuperscript{72} The rise of mysteries and eschatological beliefs of various stripes (Bacchic, Pythagorean, Eleusinian, etc.) opened up the possibility that death did not have to equate to an eternal anonymity. What we know of a range of rites seem to express hope that one’s identity and status could endure into the unknowable experience after death. We also have evidence for the establishment of heroic honours for

\textsuperscript{71} Earlier scholars have sometimes lumped all ex-humans together, as Bowra 1964 p. 48-49.

\textsuperscript{72} Cf. the comparison of Homeric lament to Pindar’s threnoi in Derderian 2001, p. 121-125: “...while the Homeric γόος and katabasis accounts remain distinct and few themes of the afterlife appear in the earliest funerary epigrams, the threnos displays a new concern with underworld existence during the lament for the dead” (122).
contemporaries after their deaths, particularly for figures whose achievements affected the experience of a whole community; the two most prominent categories are oikists and athletes.\textsuperscript{73}

With reference to contemporary heroization, especially, one can ask whether Pindar's contemporaries saw the experience as an escape route from mortality. That is, was the act of heroization by one's community, understood to effect real change in one's nature? And if so, does this constitute a departure from mortality? The same question can be posed with reference to some of the eschatological beliefs associated with mystery initiation, including those often perceived in Pindar's second \textit{Olympian}. These are questions worth asking, but they are difficult to answer at all, and they fall outside the problem at hand: what were Pindar's models of mortality and immortality?

Bruno Currie has argued that Pindar's odes reflect the awareness of select patrons that heroization could be within their reach and that the odes employ imagery that encourages that perception on the part of the audience.\textsuperscript{74} In his analysis he argues that Pindar is holding out hope of 'literal immortality' and not only the 'poetic immortality' that earlier interpreters have long recognized.\textsuperscript{75} While I agree that these themes are in play in the odes, I do not see them as limited to the superstar athletes or powerful tyrants who could reasonably aspire to cultic status after their deaths. More important, I do not agree that 'literal immortality' is at stake - at least

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{73} Athletes: Fontenrose 1968, Bentz and Mann 2001. The heroization of fifth century war dead is especially hotly debated with disagreements centering on the degree of figurative or literal significance in the language used in their memorials: cf. Boedeker 2001 (on images of heroization in the "new Simonides").

\textsuperscript{74} Currie 2005.

\textsuperscript{75} See, esp. his objection about the divergent readings of \textit{Pyth. 3} and \textit{Ol. 2}, p. 387-405.
\end{flushright}
not exactly. Instead, Pindar is drawing the increasingly diverse possibilities of mortal experience back together and highlighting their overarching similarity in opposition to the immortal and unchanging nature of the gods.

In the world constructed by Pindar's odes the knowledge of inevitable death and limited time is constitutive for the self-definition of the victorious athletes and their communities. Change and uncertainty, the inexorable passage of time, the struggle that precedes achievement: these are the necessary frameworks for the exaltation that victory brings. This argument does hearken back, in part, to perceptions of the 'literary immortality' that Pindar offers his patrons, but I push beyond that model by showing that Pindar does not hold up the immortality of the gods even as a human ideal. Instead he deploys mythical figures that orient human patrons back to the immortality of community and memory that characterize human experience and shows how these depend on relationships to the gods but not identity with them.

**Why Pelops isn't in this Dissertation: a Counterexample**

As a prelude to discussing the exceptional experiences of Herakles, Amphiaraos, and the Dioskouroi, I offer a brief excursion into the representation of a 'model hero'. The phrase belongs in quotes since, as indicated above, in the complex world of Greek religious experience there is most certainly no such thing as a 'model' anybody. In the constructed world of Pindar's odes, however, it is possible to identify mythical heroes who function as clear exempla for the victor or even effect a collapse of the victor's deeds into the hero's own achievements in the mythical past. Pelops as depicted by Pindar in the first Olympian is a sterling example: the
prominence of the victor (Hieron, tyrant of Syracuse, possessor of heroic honours after his own death) suggests that this modeling is not only for victors without special eschatological hopes; the prominence of the Olympian sanctuary and Pelops' cult within it allows us some context within which to evaluate Pindar’s poetic representations.

In terms of his biography, Pelops is the son of Tantalos who comes from Lydia, competes for the hand of Hippodameia, daughter of Oinomaos, King of Elis, and ultimately achieves the dual legacies of establishing a family line and giving his own name to the region still known as the Peloponnese. Gunnel Ekroth has recently published a brief but thorough overview of Pelops' presence at Olympia in which she shows that archaeological evidence does not support the existence of his cult at the precinct before c. 600 (negating the historicity of the claims that the games were founded to honour him or commemorate his own victory) but that once established it became an important element of the experience of the games and festival. She summarizes the significance of the cult in the sixth and fifth centuries as follows:

Initially, Pelops, buried in the centre of the sanctuary and honoured above all other heroes, has to be seen as the hero of the festival and the games, but also as the paragon of the victorious athlete and the eternal winner celebrating his victory.\textsuperscript{76}

\textit{Olympian} 1 provides the earliest literary evidence for Pelops' cult at Olympia and as such it necessarily contributes to this reconstruction.

\textit{νῦν δ’ ἐν αἰμακουρίαις ἄγλααίς μέμικται,}

\textsuperscript{76} Ekroth 2012, p.118.
Ἀλφεοῦ πόρῳ κλιθείς, 
tύμβον ἀμφίπολον ἔχων πολυξένωτατῳ παρὰ βωμῷ.

Ol. 1.90-94

And now he is mingled with splendid blood-libations as he reclines on the banks of the Alpheos, possessor of a much-visited tomb near the altar welcoming to many mortals.

While there is some danger of circularity in drawing information about cult from an ode, then asking how the ode employs that cult for poetic purposes, Ekroth's article demonstrates how the literary evidence can be carefully employed in conversation with the archaeological material to gain a fuller picture than either witness can offer alone. She highlights the presence of the somewhat enigmatic αἵμακουρίαις which she takes as blood libations, the posture of reclining that suggests theoxenia or participation in the feast, and the presence of blood and proximity of the altar suggesting that a thysia sacrifice also played a role. With the witness of the archaeological material (and other literary sources) we can see that Pindar is integrating contemporary cult practice into his Olympian ode. Specifically, he is establishing Pelops as a biographical mortal who has died and attained a special status in death.

Within the ode, Pindar’s narrative articulates Pelops' cultic status only after rejecting other models of mortal/immortal relations. Rather than recounting the tale of Tantalos' impious feast, Pindar describes an orderly meal attended by the gods; the divine guests include Poseidon who is so struck with desire for Pelops that he takes him up to Olympos to play the role that

77 All text is drawn from Snell-Maehler's edition; translations are my own.

78 Ekroth 2012, p. 104. V. ad. loc. for the material evidence that reflects these practices.
Ganymede would later play for Zeus. It seems that this Olympian existence would have been his forever, except for his father's error. Tantalos had been granted his own sort of immortality through the gift of ambrosia and nectar, but he brought down the anger of the gods by sharing these (and with them the taste of immortality?) with his human friends. In addition to Tantalos' personal punishment, Pelops' immortality was revoked and he was re-deposited in the human world, to become once more a member of his short-lived native race: \( \tau \sigma \nu \iota \kappa \alpha \{ \sigma \iota \iota \} \pi \rho \o\bar{o} \kappa \alpha \nu \iota \vartheta \alpha \nu \alpha \tau \alpha \tau \alpha \iota \iota \ < \sigma \iota > \pi \alpha \lambda \iota \nu \varphi \mu \varepsilon \tau \alpha \tau \lambda \sigma \iota \mu \nu \alpha \varsigma \tau \iota \varsigma \varsigma \varsigma \varepsilon \theta \nu \varsigma \).\footnote{Ol.1.65-66.}

Pelops' return to earth is framed as a consequence of Tantalos' infraction, but the results are far from negative. After his return, Pindar tells us, Pelops entered adolescence, grew his first beard, and began to think of marriage. In other words, he grew up and participated in the range of human experience that would have been denied him had he remained an immortal eromenos forever. After his successful race with Oinomaos - more on the source of that success shortly - he married Hippodameia and they had six sons, leaders of their people, eager for excellence. This is a précis of a successful human life: competitive achievement (in battle or athletics), marriage, children who reflect the values of their parents. Like all human lives, Pelops' ends in death; only with the realization of his mortality, potentiated by his expulsion from Olympos, can he take up his place within the Olympian precinct.\footnote{A necessary context for Pelops' status at Olympia are the crowds of living humans who come to his tomb to honour him.}

Rather than becoming a god himself, Pelops attains glory (and a wife) by calling on the help of his own patron god. Though his relationship to Poseidon is rather more personal than

\footnote{Ol.1.65-66.}
was the case (presumably) for Pindar's audience, his prayers for assistance, speed, and victory would not have been foreign to Pindar's contemporaries. In effect, Pelops instantiates a shift in the modes of interaction between humans and gods. His existence is now framed, as Gantz puts it, in "a world of heroes and darkness occasionally irradiated by divine light." Pelops' response to this alternation in circumstance is to embrace the possibility of transformative glory that is the corollary of human life:

> ὃ μέγας δὲ κίνδυνος ἀναλκιν ὡς φῶτα λαμβάνει. θανεῖν δ᾽ οἴσιν ἀνάγκα, τί κέ τις ἀνώνυμον γήρας ἐν σκότω καθήμενος ἐξοι μᾶταν, ἀπάντων καλῶν ἀμμορος; ἀλλ᾽ ἐμοὶ μὲν οὖτος ἀεθλος ὑποκείσεται...

*Ol. 1.81-85*

Great danger does not seize a powerless man. But - for those who must die - who would sit in the darkness seething his old age away in vain, without a share in any excellence? But for me - this contest stands before me.

The human condition expressed in Pelops' prayer models the experience of the victor who can look back on his recent daring and success, but it also offers a template for varieties of human experience beyond athletic competition and draws the audience together by allusion to their shared humanity. Hieron's victory, like Pelops', does not excuse him from age or death; instead, the inevitability of physical decline contributes to the glory of achievement.

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81 He asks that Poseidon restrain Oinomaos' spear and grant him (Pelops) a swift team and success. Poseidon's gift of winged horses and a golden chariot is, however, rather more than a fifth century Olympic competitor might expect.

82 Gantz, p. 533.
Parallels between Hieron and Pelops are evoked by the ode's structure. Hieron’s fame shines out in the settlement of Lydian Pelops (lines 23-4, just before the transition to the mythical past) and the fame of the Olympian contests is seen from afar emanating from the contests at Pelops’ race courses (lines 93-5, just after the depiction of Pelops’ cult/the end of the mythical narrative). The feasts hosted by Hieron (lines 14-17) look to the ritual feasting that surrounds Pelops’ tomb. If these structural parallels were too allusive, the direct address of poet to patron in the final triad drives the point home.

πέποιθα δὲ ξένον
μὴ τιν’, ἀμφότερα καλῶν τε ἱδρυν ἄμμα καὶ δύναμιν κυριώτερον
tὸν γε νῦν κλυταίσι δαιδαλωσόμεν ὑμνῶν πτυχαῖς.
θεὸς ἐπίτροπος ἐών τεσσάρες μὴ δεῖται
ἔχων τοῦτο κάδος, ἱέρων,
μερίμναισιν· εἰ δὲ μὴ ταχὺ λύπουι,
ἐτε γλυκυτέραν κεν ἔλπομαι...

O.1.104-109

I am convinced that no host
is more skilled in excellence and lordly with power—at least of those men living today -
to embellish with famous folds of song.
A favourable gods plans this, Hieron,
taking pains for your concerns,
and unless he suddenly departs
I will hope still to sing a sweeter song...

The lines are full of praise for present achievement and eagerness for future glory but the praise does not mask the attribution of success to the divine. In the final lines Pindar describes kingship as the peak of achievements- but then he adds a reminder and a final wish for his patron: μηκέτι πάπταινε πόρσιον./ εἴη σὲ τοῦτον ύψοφ χρόνον πατεῖν...⁸³ Hieron has

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⁸³ O.1.114.
achieved the peak of human existence - and should not look beyond its boundaries. Pindar's benediction (if the word is not too strong) that Hieron may 'walk on high for the time he has' carries with it an echo of Pelops' stance: let those of us who will someday die, first live.

This has been a rather hasty overview of (one of) Pindar's most interpreted ode(s) and it does not do justice to the many readings that fall outside my narrow focus.84 For my purposes the discussion will suffice if it has established a sort of control, an instance in which a figure existing in myth and cult is assimilated by Pindar's poetic constructions to the mortal camp and established - in no small part in terms of his relationship with the divine - as a model for Hieron and his community. Pindar's Pelops recognizes and embraces the limitations of his own mortality. His actions during his lifetime render him a figure worthy of enduring fame and commemoration and that potential is activated with his death. He does not occupy a space between mortality and immortality as do the figures in the following pages; instead his decisive mortality is the corollary of his achievement.

**A Note on Structure**

Every discussion of the victory odes has to find a balance between a synthetic approach that engages with issues across the corpus and a contextualizing one that takes each ode on its own terms. Since I am agitating here for a reading of the odes within the contexts of contemporary religious experience I have privileged a deep reading of individual odes over a

84 Or, for that matter, readings that do relate. Among these Segal 1964, esp. p. 212-228, Krummen 1990, p. 155-211.
more comprehensive survey taking account of every appearance of Herakles, Amphiaraos and the Dioskouroi across the corpus.

Each chapter is framed as the case study of a single figure (or pair of figures in the case of the Dioskouroi). A case study analyzes anywhere between two and four odes individually, demonstrating the similarities and divergences that characterize Pindar’s representations of the same figure within multiple contexts. The analysis of each ode looks to the others to create a conversation that supersedes the individual contexts without obscuring the internal coherence and individuality of each composition. The distinct developments of each figure, set against the continuities across the odes, underscore Pindar’s play in engaging with and rejecting traditions to evoke contrasts and resonances with the created world of the ode and the surrounding world, with its layered contexts, to which that ode responds.
Chapter 2

Holding in Place, Out of Time: Amphiaraos as Absent Presence

Fixity and Dislocation

Unlike Herakles and the Dioskouroi, Amphiaraos never achieved Panhellenic status in the sense of being adopted into the mythological tradition or cultic landscape of multiple communities as a reflection of their own claim to him. His biography remained firmly rooted in Argive soil through the traditions surrounding the expedition of the Seven against Thebes and his existence in the early fifth century cultic landscape took the form of a Boiotian oracle. He claimed no god as father, he claimed none of Pindar’s patrons as his descendants, and he has little association with the sites or traditions of the crown contests. Nonetheless, Pindar introduces Amphiaraos into a full five epinician odes, of which only two celebrate either an

1 The oracle at Thebes is not his only cult site, but others are geographically limited - mostly located in the Argolid - (Paus. 2.23.2: a ἱερόν near the home of Adrastos and the tomb of Eriphyle) or Boiotia (Paus. 9.8.3: a structure associated with his disappearance between Potniai and Thebes; Hdt. 8.134: oracle at Thebes; Paus. 1.34: sanctuary at Oropos (probably established mid-late fifth century; Strabo 9.404: oracle at Harma) and often closely tied to the Theban saga; at Sparta he has a ἱρόν which the Dioskouroi were said to have founded for him. (RE s.v. Amphiaraos p.1887).

2 With the possible exception of Nemea where one of the foundation legends is tied up with the expedition of the Seven: Hypothesis to Pindar’s Nemeans; Paus. 2.15.2, Ap. Bib. 3.6.4, Hyg. Fab.74.
Argive or Theban victor. In three of these odes Pindar recounts the same event: the moment when Zeus cleaves the earth with a lightning bolt, causing it to open and swallow Amphiaraos together with his chariot and horses.

Amphiaraos' dramatic transition from a participant to an observer of human experience generated questions about his existential status that had not resolved into a consensus by the early fifth century. Had he died, or had he been transported to a mode of enduring existence beneath the earth? If the latter, was he immortal? Was he, even, a god? The Romans took a firm (affirmative) stand on his divinity for tax purposes, but for Pindar some four centuries earlier the questions and uncertainties were available for adaptation.

The sources, early and late, show relatively consistent agreement about the circumstances that preceded Zeus' intervention. As Argos prepared for an expedition against Thebes in support of Polyneikes' claim to the Theban throne, Amphiaraos, mantis, warrior, and member of one of the royal families of Argos, was forced through his wife Eriphyle's treachery - she was bribed with the necklace of Harmonia - to join the expedition against Thebes despite his prophetic knowledge of its disastrous conclusion. Gantz argues that Amphiaraos' unwilling participation in the expedition must have constituted part of the epic Thebais as well as

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3 Argive: Nem. 10; Theban: Isth. 7.
4 In Pyth. 8, as I will argue in this chapter, this mythological background is activated though not explicit; in Isthm. 7, death in battle is present but Amphiaraos' fate is assimilated to Hektor’s and Meleager’s: a worthy puzzle for another time.
5 Tax purposes: SIG 3 747.
6 Ap. Bib. 3.6.2; Amphiaraos' knowledge of the expedition’s outcome seems to have figured in the lost Thebais as well as Stesichorus’ Eriphyle (thus Gantz, p.507); see also Od. 11.326-327 (Eriphyle’s treachery) and Od. 15.246-247 (Amphiaraos’ death at Thebes attributed to ‘a woman’s gifts’); Pind. Fr. 182 is explained by Aristides (Or. 34) as referring to Eriphyle. Nem. 9 is the first preserved account of the earth swallowing Amphiaraos, revisited by Pindar in Ol. 6, Nem. 10, and Pyth. 8 (cf. Ap. Bib. 3.6.8; Paus. 9.9.2).
Stesichorus’ *Eriphyle*, but these are now mostly lost; it is also alluded to in the *Nekyia*. The motif becomes important for Pindar’s representation in *Nemean* 9 where Amphiaraos’ privileged knowledge is contrasted with his powerlessness to act. Pindar is our first source for Zeus’ intervention and Amphiaraos’ disappearance into the earth but this is not necessarily an indication that the motif was his innovation. To the contrary, Pindar’s repeated depiction of the event suggests that he was capitalizing on an element of the tradition familiar to multiple and diverse audiences.⁸

While Amphiaraos occasionally takes part in other heroic-age endeavors, e.g. the hunt for the Kalydonian boar, his biography is defined by a ready-made sequence of narrative events that simultaneously established him as a staunchly Argive hero and propagated his story throughout Greece.⁹ The rooting of Amphiaraos’ experience in the events of the Theban cycle ensured that the basic outlines of the story were widely known and that Pindar could activate mythical frameworks familiar to his audiences without extensive narrative positioning. The epic cycle also firmly situated Amphiaraos in a familial structure: he is regularly identified as the son of Oikles and grandson of Melampous and the father of two sons, Alkmaion and Amphilochos. His sons claimed their own place in the epic cycle, their paths partially shaped by their father’s

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⁸ The earliest visual depictions of Amphiaraos’ descent date to the first quarter and middle of the fifth century (LIMC s.v. ’Amphiaraos' nos. 37 and 38). The first is an Eretrian black figure lekythos, the second a red figure volute krater from Spina.

⁹ Other appearances include a victory in the funeral games of Pelias (Stesich. fr. 179 (ii) PMGF), as a member of the Argonauts (Σ Ap. Rhod. Arg. 1.139; Ap. Bib. 1.9.16; Σ Pyth. 4.337) and the hunt for the Kalydonian boar (Paus. 8.45; Ap. Bib. 1.8.2; Hyg. Fab. 173).
experiences. This complex of narrative and familial affiliations does more than provide a ready context for Amphiaraos' appearances in the odes: it lends a solidity to the structures of his human existence and underscores the empty space that exists in the world after his disappearance into the earth. For Pindar 'Amphiaraos the oracle' is still entangled in the commitments of 'Amphiaraos the human.' Even though his new existence places him at a remove from the mortal world he is not so much altered by Zeus' intervention as dislocated.

The parameters of that dislocation and the ambiguity that it lent to Amphiaraos' existential status became more central in representations on the tragic stage where Amphiaraos proves a productive site for conceptualizing death and the paradoxical possibility of exemption. In contrast to the notices in the Odyssey, where Amphiaraos is quite simply dead, the extant tragedies articulate a range of interpretations of his nature. The messenger's speech in Aeschylus' Seven suggests that Amphiaraos foresaw his own death, but this is not equivalent to Aeschylus himself claiming that such a death occurred. If anything, the riddling passage in which Amphiaraos foretells that he will remain at Thebes, enriching foreign soil, embraces the ambiguity: is he describing his own mortal remains or himself, immortal, remaining? The chorus of Sophokles' Electra describes Amphiaraos as ruling all-powerful (πάμψυχος) beneath the earth, while Euripides' Suppliants has him snatched and buried living (ζόντ´) by the gods. Tragedy with its questions of knowledge and certainty thrives on these ambiguities and we should not depend upon the notices in these plays as confirmation of any accepted fifth century

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10 Gantz, p. 522-524 for Alkmaion and possibly Amphilochos among the Epigonoi, p. 508 for Alkmaion as matricide; p. 527-228 for Amphilochos as seer.
13 Eur. Suppl. 925 ff.
perception of Amphiaraos’ nature, but his repeat appearances and the interest shown in his fate may suggest that the tragedians and Pindar were both responding to an increased interest in his cult and, potentially, a reassessment of his relationship to the living and the dead.

The perceived associations between the disappearance of 'Amphiaraos the human' into the earth and the establishment of 'Amphiaraos the oracle' make the historical origins of Amphiaraos' oracular cult impossible to discern. In the fifth century, though, the oracle seems to have enjoyed wide acclaim. Herodotus is our best and earliest source for its prestigious status in the Greek world, indicated by the story that Croesus himself, when he undertook to test the oracles of Greece, included Amphiaraos’ oracle among other famous sites including Dodona, Delphi, and the oracle of Trophonios at Lebadeia and that Mardonius too includes Amphiaraos in a multiple-oracle consultation. Though Croesus was persuaded that Delphi was the ultimate authority, he found Amphiaraos’ response accurate as well. Whether or not these accounts are historical, they suggest that humans of the sixth and early fifth century understood consultation of Amphiaraos' oracle as a credible undertaking; Mardonios' consultation, moreover, explicitly locates the oracle at Thebes.

The geographical specification is important in view of the fact that sometime in the second half of the fifth century an Amphiaraion was established at Oropos and went on to become a thriving cult center providing comparatively plentiful archaeological and epigraphic (as well as literary) evidence for Amphiaraos’ nature there as a healing as well as oracular presence. His development as a healing deity, though its emergence in the historical record postdates Pindar’s life, may point back to changing ways of thinking about him in the first half of the fifth century. I suspect that Amphiaraos' new-found healing abilities point to his assimilation

14 Hdt. 1.46: Croesus also included Abai in Phocis and Branchidai in Miletos; Hdt. 8.133-134.
to other figures on the boundaries of mortality and immortality, especially Asklepios, but also Herakles, whose closeness to the human world may have characterized them as especially attuned to human suffering. Beyond tentatively projecting some of these developments back onto the cultic Amphiaraos of the early and mid fifth century, we must leave the wealth of Oropian evidence aside.

For information about the oracular Amphiaraos located somewhere in the (relative) vicinity of Thebes we must depend on literary sources as the site is neither identified nor excavated. While more strong evidence for the history of cult is always welcome, the physical reality of Amphiaraos' Boiotian oracle is less important for the purposes of my argument here than the idea of his Theban presence. The conceptual link between the climax of the myth and the location of the cult establishes Amphiaraos in Theban territory in the mental imaginary of Pindar's audiences and the contexts woven around Amphiaraos in the odes underscores this setting. The oracular presence articulates Amphiaraos' continuing existence in the world in a mode that is neither fully assimilated to the gods nor fully contiguous with the experience of mortal life. This representation harmonizes with the strong human networks woven around him by the epic traditions, emphasizing their melody but not a part of it.

Pindar's Amphiaraos is an embodiment of dislocation, inhabiting an unsought status that places him just beyond the limits of human experience and still far from the untroubled immortality of the gods. The body of the chapter is devoted to the analysis of two odes, Nemean

15 For Herakles in this role v. Ch. 3, p. 166-172.

16 Beyond the Herodotus passage situating the oracle at Thebes, other, mostly later, writers, identify Amphiaraos with other Boiotian sites, variously at Theban Knopais, Harma, “between Potniai and Thebes”, Thebes again, or simply somewhere in Boiotia. Bucknell’s ongoing excavations (2011-present) at the sanctuary of Apollo Ismenios (to where Hdt. 1.52 tells us Amphiaraos’ dedications from Croesus had been transferred) may offer some material insights.
9 and *Pythian* 8, while *Olympian* 6 will be introduced briefly as a counterpoint in the concluding observations.  

The two odes comprising the bulk of the chapter construct complementary Amphiaraoses in the sense that *Nemean* 9 concerns itself primarily with his human experience while *Pythian* 8 unfolds a story occurring a generation later in which, I argue, Amphiaraos’ presence should be construed as expressive of his post-human state, however that is understood. Both odes highlight the multiple modes of isolation that place Amphiaraos somehow beyond human experiences and, in doing so, make clear that his role in the myth is not that of heroic projection or model for the victor. He is not, moreover, an exemplum of any particular human action that can be emulated or avoided in the way that, for instance, Bellerophon or Ixion denote the danger inherent in certain hubristic behaviors. Instead, he marks a boundary; he exists in a place where the patterns that shape human existence have thinned and disappeared. Pindar introduces the specter of that vacuum into the odes in order to reassert the necessity of strength with weakness, knowledge with ignorance, living with dying, to the meaningful experience of human existence.

**The Humanity of Heroism: Amphiaraos in *Nemean* 9**

***Contexts and Communities***

Pindar’s ninth “Nemean” ode, composed to celebrate the chariot victory of Chromios of Aetna, close associate of Hieron, in the Pythian games at Sikyon, boasts a rather ornery mythical

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17 Amphiaraos’ role in *Nemean* 10 is addressed briefly in the discussion of the Dioskouroi: v. Ch. 4, p.276-278; *Isthm.* 7 awaits another occasion entirely.

18 Ixion: *Pyth.* 2.21 ff; Bellerophon: *Ol.* 13.84 ff.
narrative which has been subject to a series of interpretations from the historicizing to the aporetic.\textsuperscript{19} Amphiaraos plays a troubled role in the events depicted: Pindar frames him as a key player with little control, an unwilling participant in the undertaking that would guarantee his fame. Only with interpretive dexterity and quite a lot of squinting could the Amphiaraos of \textit{Nemean} 9 be accepted as the unproblematic projection of the victor onto the grander canvas of the mythical past - and yet the suggestion has been made. A willingness to read Amphiaraos as the heroic comparandum for the victor is conditioned by his function in \textit{Olympian} 6 where the laudandus, Hagesias of Syracuse, is said to reflect Amphiaraos' excellence in both military and mantic skill.\textsuperscript{20} I will argue in the conclusion to this chapter that Amphiaraos does constitute an exemplary figure there, because of the poetic framework that Pindar constructs around his presence. The frameworks of \textit{Nemean} 9, however, rather than establishing Amphiaraos within the parameters of idealized achievement, highlight his troubled orientation to the structures of heroism.

Whether the ode was actually performed at Sikyon or Aetna, the opening emphasizes the contextual importance of both locations: κωμάσομεν παρ’ Ἀπόλλωνος Σικυωνόθε, Μοῖσοι,/ τὰν νεοκτίσταν ἐς Αἴτναν...

\textsuperscript{21} This line suggests that the traditions surrounding the Sikyonian festival constituted a relevant context for the audience’s reception of Pindar’s account of the

\textsuperscript{19} Historicizing: e.g. Boeckh 1811-21, p. 457-9; aporetic: e.g. Farnell 1930-1932, p. 222-223, who sees the myth as simple entertainment. For an overview of the literature on this ode v. Braswell 1998 7-14.

\textsuperscript{20} There are interesting parallels to be drawn between \textit{Ol} 6 and \textit{Nem} 9, in part related to the fact that both laudandi were Hieron’s associates. Amphiaraos’ function in each ode, though, is quite distinct, so the non-Amphiaraian parallels will have to wait for another forum, while the Amphiaraos of \textit{Olympian} 6 appears in this chapter’s conclusion.

\textsuperscript{21} \textit{Nem} 9.1-2. Braswell 1998, p. 46, argues that the complexity of the ode excludes the possibility that it was composed on site for celebration at the festival; v. also Hubbard 1992, 80 ff, and see esp. n.7.
Argive expedition, particularly since the mythical narrative begins from Adrastos' foundation of the Sikyonian games. The probable relevance of Sikyonian tradition for an Aetnaian audience is strengthened if we can credit the tradition that the foundation of Aetna involved the blending of two populations: half of the new citizens were Syracusans while the other half came from throughout the Peloponnese. Aetna, founded in 476, was a very young community at the time of Chromios' victory in the late 470s and the Peloponnesian traditions may still have spoken of home to much of the population.

Amphiaraos' ambiguous status stands out within the positive web of associations that Pindar weaves around Chromios, his Aetnaian home, and the Sikyonian festival. The local Sikyonian history of Menaichmos seems to have represented Amphiaraos as an antagonistic figure set up in opposition to Adrastos. From the perspective of this local mythological context, Amphiaraos was an outsider in the Sikyonian imagination: he played a role in the city's mythological traditions but was designated as an opposing and external force who was not at home among the Sikyonian community. When Hektor appears in a brief cameo later in the ode, introduced explicitly as a glorious reflection of Chromios' achievements, his staunchly heroic status further highlights Amphiaraos' unsuitability as a model.

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22 Diod. Sic. 11.49.1; Strab. 6.2.3.

23 Strab. 6.2.3. My argument does not depend upon a more specific date than the usual range accepted by scholarship between 474 and 470. I partially follow the interpretation of Hubbard 1992 with regard to performance context, but diverge in emphasizing the potential for a single performance to unite both populations. His argument that double performance can explain “the poem's special interest in Sikyonian aetiology”...“and its quality as an advertisement for the “newly founded Aetna” (81) points to the same dynamics that I see within the Aetnaian population. (That said, I have no quarrel with the possibility of dual performance.)

24 Σ Nem. 9.30a; v. also Hubbard's extensive disentanglement of the two traditions of Adrastos' claim to the Sikyonian throne as well as the position of Amphiaraos' family in the royal line of Argos: Hubbard 1992 87-92.
The isolation surrounding Amphiaraos comes to dominate the mythical narrative. His permanent physical dislocation effected by Zeus' intervention on the battlefield is only the final step in a series of events that abstract him from the experiences of his contemporaries and from the parameters that guide human action and human excellence. Amphiaraos' burden in the myth of *Nemean* 9 is to be the human possessor of superhuman knowledge via his mantic skill. Just as his enduring oracular status sets him apart from both the gods and the common dead, his moments of divine foresight during his human life placed him in an uncomfortable middle ground between the clear-sighted certainty of a divine perspective and the ignorance of the future that attends mortal understanding.\(^{25}\)

Adrastos and Hektor, not Amphiaraos, model modes of excellence to which the victor and his community should aspire. Their presence highlights Amphiaraos' divergence from the playbook of human achievement. By reading these figures, particularly the death and ‘afterlife’ of each, in close conjunction with the story of Amphiaraos, we can observe a set of contrasts that highlights the unique circumstances of Amphiaraos' fate and articulates his dislocation from the network of relationships within which the logic of epinician functions. 

**Adrastos as Founding Hero**

The mythical narrative of *Nemean* 9 comprises two partially separable sections. The second section concerns itself with the expedition of the Seven and Amphiaraos' role in those events, dark myths that have challenged interpreters to understand their epinician relevance. In

\(^{25}\) In other contexts, especially tragedy, Amphiaraos' exceptionalism is often shaded positive in the sense that he is the most moderate or restrained among the warriors; for an overview of this material cf. Carey 1993, p. 101. These representations may also draw on Amphiaraos' access to privileged knowledge, but pose different questions about the application of that insight to the constraints of human experience.
the first section, which could hardly be more dissimilar to what follows, Adrastos takes center
stage as a local Sikyonian hero and founder of Sikyon's Pythian games. These roles fit the
pattern of epinician celebration: Adrastos' foundation endures as a point of connection between
the mythical past and the contemporary victory, while Adrastos himself has been integrated by
the community into a position of privileged memory.

But we rouse the thundering phorminx and the flute
to praise that peak of equine contests, for Phoibos
Adrastos founded them on the banks of the Asopos. Recalling these things
I exalt that hero with far-heard honours.
He ruled there once, with new festivals
and contests of men's strength and hollowed chariots
he glorified the city and made her shine.

As Carey has observed, the glorification of Sikyon achieved by Adrastos can be assimilated to
Chromios' glorification of Aetna by his recent Sikyonian victory and, if Nemean 1 is earlier than
Nemean 9, by his previous success at the Pythian games at Delphi. Like Adrastos, who founds
the games for Apollo, Chromios converts his victory - with Pindar's help - into an appropriate
mode of communication with the Pythian god and his family.²⁶

²⁶ Nem. 9.4-5.
The mythical framework which develops the pivot to the story of the Seven begins with an opposition between Amphiaraos and Adrastos that functions at the narrative level. Adrastos' glorious tenure in Sikyon is the result of internecine struggle between the three branches of the royal family at Argos: on Pindar's telling Adrastos flees "bold Amphiaraos and terrible stasis". The subsequent reconciliation between the two men is mediated by Eriphyle whose presence must have signaled the tradition of a second disagreement between Amphiaraos and Adrastos, this time concerning the expedition against Thebes.27 By highlighting the tensions between Amphiaraos and Adrastos at the narrative level, Pindar encourages the audience to compare their contemporary cultic statuses, an exercise that underscores the distance between Adrastos' celebrated mortality and Amphiaraos' disconcertingly undefined state.

For the Sikyonian audience28 Adrastos is a local hero, physically present within the city. His connection to the royal line of Sikyon, whether by blood or by marriage,29 establishes him within the model of a powerful ruler who continues to exert an influence over his community after his death.30 His own person is woven into the context of the history of Sikyon, even as it allows Sikyon to weave itself into the web of myth radiating out from Argos with the seven generals who led the expedition against Thebes standing at its center. Adrastos is a figure chronologically rooted within familial and mythic contexts: he takes his place as natural heir to the throne of Sikyon, he lives to see his son killed in the second expedition against Thebes, and then he dies, receiving heroic honours in a city which he can claim as his own.

27 V. p. 39-40 for the story and a summary of the sources.
28 V. supr. n. 23.
29 Σ Nem. 9.30a (blood); 9.30b (marriage).
For all that his position was exalted and gave him the power to motivate one of the most momentous undertakings in Greek mythological history, he is a man fundamentally established within time and within his own time, living in the era to which he was born, dying at the end of his natural life, and subsequently receiving heroic honours that broadly correspond to those of other figures seen as significant to and powerful within a certain community.

Pindar’s attribution to him of the foundation of the games at Sikyon is not an unmarked maneuver: the games had historically been (re-)founded by the tyrant Kleisthenes but Pindar elides his role. 31 The elision achieves a sense of continuity between the distant past and present, but it also asserts the validity of Adrastos’ claim to heroic status in Sikyon - a claim which Kleisthenes had famously rejected by evicting Adrastos and his cult. 32 These events were possibly recent enough to persist in the awareness of Pindar’s audience, but Pindar avoids even referring to the cultic disruption in order to evoke the continuity of Adrastos’ affiliations with his adopted home.

His presence within the ode, then, is highly contextualized, as is his cult within Sikyon. 33 His cultic honours, in Pindar’s ninth Nemean and in broader tradition, are justified by his achievements during his lifetime and to his status within his community. In contrast to Adrastos’ almost overdetermined cultic status, Amphiaraos’ is characterized by a fundamental ambiguity.

31 Σ Nem. 9.20 calls this poetic license (ποιητικὴν ἀδειαν).
32 Hdt. 5.67 tells the peculiar story of Cleisthenes’ attempt to oust this cult and its subsequent restoration (note again the involvement of Delphi).
33 This is not to suggest that his presence is limited to one city, indeed he also enjoyed cult with the rest of the Seven at Argos as well as in Megara (Paus. 1.43.1) and at Kolonos (Paus. 1.30.4).
While we can say of Adrastos that he dies as an old man and is then heroized within his community, of Amphiaraos cannot even say with certainty that he died.\textsuperscript{34}

**Habeas Corpus?**

When Amphiaraos is swallowed up by the earth he physically disappears entirely, removed from the world of humanity without undergoing the culturally prescribed changes that usually distinguish a living body from a dead one. His transition away from the human world is accomplished without the observance of custom or the presence of his community. The disappearance of his chariot with him can also be understood within this complex of disassociation: rather than being dedicated to a divinity as a token of thanks or pride\textsuperscript{35}, or bequeathed to descendants or peers as a possession representative of its owner’s prowess, it too vanishes and takes with it the physical manifestation of its owner’s deeds. Unlike Adrastos, whose enduring status at Sikyon occurred after his death and was maintained through human ritual, Amphiaraos’ new existence at Thebes is the result of the instantaneous and unilateral action of a god. No human community oversaw Amphiaraos’ transition to a new status and the Amphiaraion stands in land that the human Amphiaraos knew as enemy territory.

Amphiaraos’ unmediated transition to a subterranean existence does not negate the possibility that death is part of the transaction in some interpretations of the tradition. Pindar’s depiction of the descent, however, offers no explicit orientation to Amphiaraos’ status underneath the earth. The exclusion of this information, or of any representation of

\textsuperscript{34}Sineux 2007 ch. 2 passim, takes on this problem, though sometimes seeming to revert to the assumption of his death; Currie 2005, p. 215 assumes the death of Amphiaraos in reference to Isth. 7.

\textsuperscript{35} For one example, associated with Pythian Apollo at Delphi, v. Pyth. 5.34-49.
Amphiaraos’ contemporary nature, highlights the ambiguity of his enduring existence. Pindar’s depiction is brief - almost a sketch - but the elements highlighted and the vocabulary employed further underscore Amphiaraos’ existence on the borderlands.

ὁ δ’ Ἀμφιαραῖ σχίσσεν κεραυνῷ παμβίᾳ
Ζεύς τὰν βαθύστερνον χθόνα, κρύψεν δ’ ἀμ’ ἵπποις,
Nem. 9.24-5

But he, for Amphiaraos, split the deep-groaning earth with all-powerful lightning - Zeus did this - and engulfed him and his horses together.

The use of lightning as the means of Amphiaraos’ enclosure in the earth looks to strains of Greek religious thought which associate the subject of a lightning strike with a liminal or even transgressive status. It is the lightning which figures first in Pindar’s description, then its contact with the earth, and only then the effect of the strike on Amphiaraos himself. This depiction establishes Amphiaraos as an ambiguous figure even among ambiguous figures: is he to be included among the group of humans struck by lightning or not? If he can broadly be construed as part of this category, then he belongs in the ranks of humans like Asklepios and Semele, but also like Kapaneus: the first two eventually become immortal as a result of being struck while Kapaneus is not rendered immortal but his remains are treated as distinct from those of a man who had simply died in battle. Burkert sees the lightning strike as automatically transferring a human to another state of existence: “der vom Blitz Erschlagene ist nicht tot wie die anderen

36 Diod. Sic. 5.52.2 offers a remarkable account of Semele’s death, explaining that Zeus struck her with the lightning bolt so that Dionysus would be born from two gods rather than one god and one mortal. In the case of Asklepios, Pindar himself evokes what seems to be his death at Pyth. 3.54 ff. (though without being explicit about his fate).

37 Aisch. fr. 263a Mette 1959.
Toten... So bedeutet der Blitztod geradezu die Apotheose...”\textsuperscript{38} This perspective draws a starker line than the one I am trying to develop in this model, but it points to the way Pindar’s depiction of the lightning would have guided his audience’s perception: toward the transformative effect of a direct encounter with the divine and the frequent irreversibility of that experience.

The verb that Pindar deploys for Zeus’ action, \textit{κρύπτειν}, expresses valences that distinguish Amphiaraos’ experience from the usual processes of death and burial. The sense is one of hiding or concealing, not inherently of destroying.\textsuperscript{39} The \textit{Prometheus Bound} offers an interesting comparandum in Hermes’ warning to Prometheus:

\begin{quote}
πρῶτα μὲν γὰρ ὄριδα
φάραγγα βροντῆ καὶ κεραυνία φλογὶ
πατήρ σπαράξει τήνδε, καὶ κρύψει δέμας
τὸ σόν, πετραία δ᾽ ἀγκάλη σε βαστάσει.
Aesch., Prom. Vinct. 1018
\end{quote}

First my father will tear this jagged chasm with thunder and shining bolt, and he will hide your body, and the rocky hollow will embrace you.

Prometheus, being a titan, cannot die, and indeed it is his enduring existence, his inability to escape the eternity of torment that renders his punishment so fearful. In Hesiod’s account of the Promethean myth, Zeus is again depicted as hiding something: the fire which sustains men.

\textsuperscript{38} Burkert 1961, p.211.
\textsuperscript{39} In Homer (v. Autenrieth 1958 s.v. “κρύπτω”) the meaning is to cover or conceal (oneself), e.g. behind a shield; LSJ gives as a second major meaning “cover in the earth, bury”: an initial survey of these examples, though, suggests that some problematic relationship to death is often indicated: Soph. OC 621 (Oidipous imagines himself sleeping (\textit{εὕδων}) cold and buried, but yet able to drink the hot blood of his enemies, while ibid. 1546 speaks more simply of burial after death but then overturns this standard image of death by reporting Oidipous’ total disappearance; Hdt. 2.130 again discusses a peculiar instance of death/burial. It is a topic that deserves further study, but the few parallels gathered here suggest that the sense of ‘hide, conceal’ remains predominant and that this is not the unmarked word for human burial.
Neither Aischylean Prometheus nor the Hesiodic fire are represented as destroyed, no longer existing, or fundamentally altered. They have rather been relocated and, particularly in the case of the fire, rendered inaccessible for humans.\(^{40}\) This conclusion cannot be absolutely drawn from the text of \textit{Nemean} 9, but neither should we be too quick in assuming that Amphiaros’ death must be the corollary of his disappearance.

Earlier in the ode another verb of concealment occurs in a programmatic passage articulating the standard epinician premise that obscurity that befalls a man or an achievement not celebrated in song,\(^{41}\)

\[
\textit{ἔστι δὲ τις λόγος ἀνθρώπων, τετελεσμένον ἐσλόν μὴ χαμαί σιγῇ καλύψαι.}
\]

\textit{Nem.} 9.6-7

There is a certain saying among men, not to veil the nobility of achievement in silence on the ground.

With the conclusion of the Amphiaros story, can we expect that this utterance from twenty lines earlier would be reactivated? It is tempting to relate \textit{χαμαί σιγῇ καλύψαι} to the ground engulfing Amphiaros. The two verbs, \textit{κρύπτειν} and \textit{καλύπτειν} are not identical but both communicate a sense of hiding or concealing and both can be employed with reference to a) the burial of bodies and b) the removal of a body from its natural state or position. Zeus’ intervention saves Amphiaros from imminent death in battle, but denies his claim to a noble deed completed.

The gnomic utterance frames achievement in terms appropriate to mortals who will all someday return to the earth, leaving behind only accounts of their accomplishments to speak

\(^{40}\) Cf. Vernant’s seminal work on Prometheus in Hesiod (Vernant 1980), which probably laid the foundation for this line of thought without my conscious participation.

\(^{41}\) Obscurity without song: e.g. \textit{Ol.} 10.91-93.
for them. Amphiaraos challenges this category: while he is very emphatically covered over by the earth, he is not dependent on the report created for him by others but retains his own voice, though given over in his oracular condition to interpreting the concerns of others and not to negotiating his own environment. As presented in this ode, he becomes a figure whose reputation, from Pindar’s mouth, at least, contains an admixture of praise and criticism and is not established as an obvious model on which the laudandus or the rest of the audience might model their behavior.

Hesiod’s repeated use of καλύψειν in the myth of the races may have been familiar enough to resonate with Pindar’s imagery of disappearance beneath the earth. There the phrase αὐτὰρ ἔπει καὶ τοῦτο γένος κατὰ γαῖ ἐκάλυψεν is used repeatedly to characterize a series of transitions which do not quite seem to be death in the usual sense, and are apparently not all to be understood in a unified manner. 42 The men who live in the golden age, after they are ‘covered by the earth’, continue to exist within the world of living men as δαίμονες, the silver race enjoys a blessed existence in the underworld and receives τιμή, while the race of bronze go νώνυμοι into the house of Hades. 43 If Amphiaraos is partially drawn into these models, he takes up a position that is distinct from either the literal immortality of the gods or the desired immortal kleos that sustains the memory of a mortal life. His status is not one to which a contemporary mortal should aspire. Instead, like the earlier and vanished races, he inhabits a

42 Hes. Erga 121, 140, 156 (describing the fates of the races of gold, silver and bronze), but Hesiod also says that Zeus hid (ἐκρυψε) the race of silver because he was angry with them; the race of heroes does not repeat precisely the same fate: the fate of death θανάτου τέλος overtakes some of them (ἀμφικάλυψε) (166) while to others an existence is granted at the edge of the earth, far removed from men (167).

marginal place outside the structures that render an individual's achievement the subject of communal commemoration.

The Strange in the Familiar

Even before his abstraction from the human sphere, Amphiaraos, as represented in Nemean 9, exists within multiple states of dislocation, and it is these – not his contextualization – which characterize his extraordinary status. Within the narrative of the myth he is de-localized once by his opposition to the expedition against Thebes, and again by his actions on the field of battle when he attempts to run for his life, rather than conforming to the heroic ideal of death in battle. Earlier traditions already associate Amphiaraos’ opposition to the expedition with his privileged knowledge concerning its outcome and Pindar depicts his flight from battle as a further result of the same cause. He is unable to march to battle in the spirit of human determination because, via his divine perception, he already knows the inevitable outcome of the attack on Thebes. Pindar’s construction of the mythical narrative compels the audience, for a little while, to share Amphiaraos’ impossible situation and, released from his vision, to better appreciate the potential inherent in the uncertainty of human existence.

His epistemological status establishes Amphiaraos in a position which could positively be called mediating, or less positively, seen as a sort of limbo between the status of the divine and the human. His knowledge belongs to the realm of the divine, but its application is subject to the decisions of other men and based on their limited capacity for perception. He is placed in

44 Pindar makes no explicit reference to Amphiaraos’ initial refusal to participate in the expedition, but the inclusion of Eriphyle at lines 16-17 alludes to the well-known tradition that her intervention forced Amphiaraos' hand. Aischylos Seven, 580 ff., performed several years after Nem. 9, further develops the contradiction between Amphiaraos' knowledge and participation in the expedition.
the impossible position of possessing full knowledge, but little agency. *Nemean* 9 never explicitly presents Amphiaraos as *mantis*[^45], but instead alludes via the reference to Eriphyle, to the backstory of Amphiaraos’ participation in the expedition against Thebes. The reference is directly linked, though frustratingly obscured by a lacuna, to lines which emphasize the doomed nature of the expedition.

And at one time they led an army of men on a road without favourable omens, nor did the son of Kronos brandish his shining bolt and urge them in their rage to set out from home but to shun the journey.

Rather than establishing the audience in an objective position, Pindar includes them here within the unique perspective of the seer: the Argives set out on an inauspicious road, Zeus did not cast his thunderbolt.[^46] These modes of experiencing the action of the expedition through certain, esoteric signs envelop the audience in the same certainty of disaster experienced by Amphiaraos on the road to Thebes. Like Amphiaraos they stand apart, distinct from the crowd of Argives mad with eagerness to wreak Polyneikes’ revenge. The effect continues implacably in the next line with the Argives hastening toward a *φαινομέναν ἄταν*, a phrasing which challenges the audience to reconcile the contradictory elements of ἄτη— a term

[^45]: Though this aspect of Amphiaraos was already well-established, to the extent that Pindar made it central to the figure of Amphiaraos in *Ol.* 6.

[^46]: The text can read ‘Zeus, casting his thunderbolt, did not urge them to go,’ but Farnell 1930-1932 argues that it was the absence of a thunderbolt which augured badly for an army on the point of departure.
which usually denotes a degree of mystification or mental confusion\(^{47}\) - with an adjective meaning ‘clear’ or ‘manifest’. The near-paradox captures Amphiarao’s unbearable perspective which allows him to perceive \(\tilde{\alpha} \tau \eta\) clearly, but not to act against it.

My argument that these lines, with their sense of inevitable doom, would align the audience’s perspective with that of Amphiarao is bolstered by the frequent motif of the *Ausfahrt des Amphiarao* in vase painting of the second half of the sixth and early fifth century.\(^{48}\)

In the midst of a growing trend of “departure scenes,” the departure of Amphiarao remained the most frequently depicted over this period and consistently (within a set of variations) emphasizes the same critical aspect of the event: Amphiarao is constrained to go to Thebes by the decision of Eriphyle (who often stands by holding the necklace with which she was bribed), but his anger or distress are frequently evident. In these depictions, too, the moment of liminality is stressed; the vases depict a point at which a fatal decision has already been made, but its effects, though known to him, not yet felt nor perceived by others. He is, in a way, a “dead man riding”. These scenes predate the tragedians’ interest in Amphiarao, and it is possible that they, too, derive from the *Thebais*, which some scholars have wanted to reframe as a work centered around the role of Amphiarao in the expedition.\(^{49}\)

Whatever the correct reconstruction of the epic tradition might be, the remnants that we have of the mythic complex in the visual record suggest that this was one of two moments in Amphiarao’s story which

\(^{47}\) Esp. in Homer: e.g. *Il*. 16.80; 8.237.

\(^{48}\) LIMC: Krauskopf, s.v. “Amphiarao” nos. 7-27: these include Corinthian and Attic vases.

\(^{49}\) Welcker 1865 vol. 2 320-379 Whatever the answer to this question, we do possess fragments of another epic, the *Alkmaionis*, named for Amphiarao’s son and dealing with the expedition of the Epigonoi and Alkmaion’s subsequent fate, in many ways a continuation of the Amphiarao and Eriphyle story.
crystallized the significance of his experience. Pindar, too, concentrates on the moment when events are set in motion, though he moves the focus outward to encompass the experience of the entire expedition, even as he frames the events in a perspective that belongs to Amphiaraos alone.

Pindar further develops Amphiaraos’ isolation by the order and manner in which he presents the expedition as a whole, and especially the fate of its participants. He elides the entirety of the battle, moving directly from the gleam of the soldiers’ weapons as they march toward Thebes to the funeral pyres which consume their corpses.

φαινομέναν δ’ ἂρ’ ἐς ἄταν σπεῦδεν ὅμιλος ἱκέσθαι χαλκέοις ὅπλοισιν ὑπείοις τε σύν ἔντεσιν· Ἰσ-μηνοὺ δ’ ἐπ’ ὄχθαι σὺν ἔντεσιν·
νόστον ἐρεισάμενοι λευκανθέα σώμασι πίαναν καπνόν· ἑπτὰ γὰρ δαίσαντο πυραὶ νεογυίους φῶτας.

Nem. 9.21-24

But the company hastened toward a gleaming destruction clad in bronze armour and with the trappings of horses. On the banks of the Ismenos they fixed their sweet homecoming feeding the white smoke with their bodies, for the seven pyres were devouring their bodies, their young limbs.

Would these lines have stirred in the minds of Pindar’s audience the recently popular images of the departing Amphiaraos? He is depicted in a similarly resplendent fashion on the vases at the

50 The other being his disappearance: LIMC Krauskopf, s.v. “Amphiaraos” nos. 37-47 (though all but 37 and 38 are later than the 5th c.).
51 Nem. 9.21-24.
moment of his departure: he mounts, or is about to mount, his elaborate chariot, he wears his armor and sometimes wears a helmet or carries a shield.\footnote{V. supr. n. 48.} I do not mean to suggest that Pindar’s description of the soldiers is other than standard nor that any language internal to the ode requires that it be derived from the Amphiaraos images. If the departure scene was a popular motif though, then the existing image of Amphiaraos setting out in full knowledge of what was to come contrasts poignantly with Pindar’s representation of the expedition dressed, \textit{en masse}, for glory and victory.

Amphiaraos stands in stark contrast, too, to the undifferentiated mass of bodies: following directly upon the scene of the burning corpses which ended heavily on φῶτας is the introduction of his own fate, introduced with a strong adversative δε.

\begin{verbatim}
  ὁ δ’ Ἀμφιαραῖ σχίσσεν κεραυνῷ παμβία
  Ζεὺς τὰν βαθύστερνον χθόνα, κρύψεν δ’ ἄμ’ ὕποις,
  δουρὶ Περικλυμένου πρὶν νῦτα τυπέντα μαχατάν
  θυμὸν αἰσχυνθήμεν.

  Nem. 9.24-27
\end{verbatim}

But for Amphiaraos with powerful lightning
Zeus split the deep-groaning earth, and concealed him and his horses together, before he should be struck in the back by Periklymenos’ spear, and be shamed in his warrior’s heart.

The account is complex and involuted; Pindar’s phrasing distinguishes Amphiaraos from the rest of the expedition, but also further emphasizes the ambiguity of his position and focuses the attention of the audience on the question of Zeus’ motivation and the effect of his actions. The order in which the events are presented within the ode underscore the unprecedented nature of Amphiaraos’ sudden and profound separation from the mass of his fellow soldiers and its
ambiguous outcome. At first the action is chaotic: someone is acting, Amphiaraos is somehow involved, something is struck by lightning; the final line of the strophe provides some orientation: Zeus is the one who strikes, the ground is struck, Amphiaraos is concealed together with his horses. Pindar only explains after the event that Zeus’ motivation was to prevent Amphiaraos, warrior that he is, from the shame of taking a spear in the back in flight.

Amphiaraos’ intellectual isolation – the cause of his flight in the first place - is translated suddenly to an enduring physical isolation which establishes him in the place where the members of the odes’ audience could still find him in their own day.\(^53\) His unique fate and enduring individual existence contrast with the final anonymity of the Argive soldiers. Pindar completely elides the deeds of the soldiers, Argive and Theban alike, and all the activity of battle. This in stark contrast to the battle scenes in the Iliad (and perhaps in the Thebais as well) in which the actions and deaths of each hero were lovingly elaborated, contrasting as well with Aeschylus’ approach of describing each of the Seven individually and at length.\(^54\) In Pindar’s telling the mass of Argives, apparently leaders and ranks alike, are reduced to an undifferentiated collective and in death retain only the agency inherent to the physical world: the power of their bodies to create rich, white smoke upon the pyres. Even this limited capacity is reduced to passivity after the pause at the end of line 23: the fires become the living actors, eating up the youthful limbs (νεογυίους) of those who had recently been men. The nature of these pyres has been much discussed and remains unclear,\(^55\) but in Pindar’s ode, at least, the

\(^53\) On the location of/evidence for the Boiotian oracle v. the introduction to this chapter, p. 43 n. 16.

\(^54\) A sizeable portion of Aischylos’ Seven consists of the messenger relaying to Eteokles the disposition of each leader of the Argive army at the gates.

\(^55\) Hubbard 1992, p. 101-107, argues that the presence of the pyres serve Pindar’s purpose of staking a claim to the disputed tradition of what happened to the Argive dead. Athenian tradition (v., e.g., Eur.
Argive expedition dies at Thebes and their bodies are disposed of there, on the banks of the foreign Ismenos.

Amphiaraos retains his form and his individual identity, but this is accomplished only through Zeus’ action (Amphiaraos too has lost his agency). Zeus’ action, moreover, is undertaken not in order to glorify Amphiaraos but to preserve him from the shame of being struck in the back by Periklymenos’ spear. The myth concludes on this ambivalent note without any sort of pivot to the audience’s immediate present. Amphiaraos remains isolated from his army, from his home, from the mass of humans generally, and from the specific community gathered to celebrate Chromios’ victory.

Hektor as Epic Hero

I argued above that Adrastos provides a template for heroic achievement commemorated and integrated within one’s own community. Hektor’s presence in the ode embodies the complementary paradigm of narrative immortality: his kleos is encoded in the epic and disseminated wherever his story is told. Hektor's experiences, like Adrastos', underscore the peculiarities of Amphiaraos’ existence and offer the audience an alternate model for the interaction of the gods with men and the relationships between the two spheres.

_Supplices_, Paus. 1.39.2) had developed the claim that the Argive chieftains were buried at Eleusis after the Thebans refused them proper burial; he suggests (108-109) that it is partially in response to an expectation of Theban interest in his poetry that Pindar adheres to the Theban strand of the tradition. A related debate is whether the pyres belong to the seven chieftains (not inherently logical as neither Amphiaraos or Adrastos dies - at least in the normal fashion - in battle) or to the mass of soldiers: this ambiguity only heightens the effect I note above.
Hektor is explicitly introduced as a figure to whom Chromios can accurately be compared - a function, I emphasize again, never directly attributed to Amphiaraos. The point of comparison between Hektor and Chromios is the prowess of each man in battle.

παῦροι δὲ βουλεῦσαι φόνου
παρποδίου νεφέλαν
τρέψαι ποτὶ δυσμενέων ἀνδρῶν στίχας
χερσὶ καὶ ψυχῇ δυνατοὶ λέγεται μᾶν
'Εκτορὶ μὲν κλέος ἀνθῆσαι Σκαμάνδρου χεύμασιν
ἀγχοὶ, βαθυκ' ῥήμνοισι δ' ἀμφ' ἀκταίς Ἐλώρου,
ἐνθ' Ἀρείας πόρον ἀνθρωποι καλέοισι, δέδορκεν
παιδὶ τοῦθ' Ἀνησιδάμου φέγγος ἐν ἀλκίᾳ
πρώτα·

_Nem. 9.37-42_

Few men are able to weave councils to turn the cloud of present destruction toward the ranks of hostile men with the strength of hand and spirit. Indeed men say that glory bloomed for Hector by the streams of the Skamander, and along the steep ridges of the Heloros, the place men call the Ford of Ares, a light shone out for the son of Hagesidamos in his youth.

The combination of knowledge (implied by βουλεῦσαι) and force (implied by χερσὶ) might seem relevant to Amphiaraos as well, and it is a superficially similar combination of attributes for which Adrastos praises him in _Olympian_ 6. In that ode, however, Amphiaraos is praised specifically for his capabilities as both warrior and _mantis_ and the knowledge associated with the status of _mantis_ must be kept distinct from the human mental processes involved in βουλεῦσαι if we are to understand the stories of Amphiaraos and Hektor respectively.

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56 _Ol._ 6.17.
Amphiaraos is aware of the future and reacts accordingly; Hektor can operate only from the limited human perspective which seals his fate in *Iliad* 22. There is nothing in the ode that establishes this intertext as the exclusive context for interpretation, but Pindar’s imagery of *kleos* resonates with the concern for glory that leads Hektor to remain outside the walls and face Achilles. Pindar’s reference to the banks of the Skamander, too, while it can certainly serve as a poetic expression for Hektor’s prowess before Troy more generally, also draws attention to Hektor and Achilles’ deadly race circling four times past the sources of the river. The race itself communicates shadows of an athletic context with deadly serious stakes, a point that Homer makes explicit. I suggest that it is exactly this text to which Pindar’s vanishingly brief Trojan myth alludes, establishing Hektor’s encounter with fate as a counterpoint to Amphiaraos’ final experiences in the human world.

By reading this passage into the ode, a series of issues emerges which establish Hektor within the model of the epic hero and highlight the divergences between his death and dying and that of Amphiaraos. In both passages, the intervention of the gods is fundamental to the outcome of the narrative, but the nature of that intervention and the expectations of the human protagonists are starkly at odds. Unlike Amphiaraos whose perfect knowledge of the battle’s outcome inspires him to flee, Hektor’s misplaced confidence and unwillingness to appear less than heroic inspire him to stand his ground – to his doom. Having disregarded the advice of Polydamas who wishes to retreat into the city after the death of Patroklos, Hektor finds himself alone outside the walls, about to face the onslaught that is Achilles, and unwilling


58 The river also figures in the landscape of battle several times in the *Iliad*, but it might be unrealistic to expect that these scattered references would be so readily recalled by the audience: e.g. *Il*. 11.499; 14.434; 20.74.
to retreat because he does not want to be ‘I told you so-ed’ by Polydamas or mocked by the other Trojans. Finally losing his courage in the face of Achilles’ charge, he attempts to flee but cannot outstrip Achilles and they race around the walls of Troy, passing the two springs that form the headwaters of the Scamander. It is at this spot that Zeus intervenes to break the stalemate. He has expressed a desire to preserve Hektor whom he knows and cares for because of the relationship that Hektor has established with him through years of conscientious sacrifices, but Athena objects:

'O father, you who drive the lightning bolt in its dark clouds, what have you said? He is a mortal and his fate was set long ago do you wish now, just like that, to release him from harsh death? Do it: but we, all other gods, will not commend you.

Her objections revolve around the fact that Hektor is a mortal whose death is already established – it is unclear whether she means scheduled for a certain time or inevitable at some point – and she appears to think that Zeus is trying to alter Hektor’s mortal status (θανάτοιο δυσηχέος ἐξαναλύσαι). The passage plays with the same potentials for altered states that exist in the Amphiaraos myth, but Athena’s reminder to Zeus reinforces the established nature of Hektor’s mortality and causes Zeus to leave the decision to a fate that operates beyond the bounds of his will. In the famous scene, the two souls are weighed and Hektor’s is the heavier, indicating that he is doomed to die.59 To bring this about Athena intervenes in the guise of

59 *Il.* 22.208-213
Hektor’s brother Deiphobos and encourages Hektor to approach Achilles and fight; he does so, disregarding Achilles’ boast that Athena will kill him soon, blind to the fact that she has already sealed his fate. With newfound confidence Hektor swears that Achilles will never strike him in the back, whoever wins. His human blindness to the truth of the situation allows him courage which sustains him even when Athena vanishes at the critical point and he realizes that he has been tricked.

To more clearly outline the contrast: for Amphiaraos a) the certainty of death b) causes him to flee until c) Zeus plunges him into the earth to ensure that he avoids a shameful death while for Hektor a) hope motivates him to flee and save himself until b) Athena lures him into a fatal trap and, as she disappears, he finally perceives his doom but c) nonetheless stands to face Achilles, determined to die bravely. It is Hektor’s humanity and his human susceptibility to hope that motivate his flight and his human determination to die well that allows his final stand. His concerns throughout the scene are human, too: he attempts to obtain an agreement with Achilles that, whatever happens, the victor will return the body of his opponent to his community for proper burial. Achilles, of course, refuses and Hektor’s corpse suffers indignities until, in Book 24, it is recovered by Priam who carries it back to Troy for burial. The motif is so important that the poem concludes with a final line announcing the internment of the body.

Even in death, Hektor is defined by his family and his city, his existence confirmed by his contextualization within them. Even though the physical city and the possibility of generational continuity are destroyed, Hektor’s memory, including the memory of his proper burial, is disseminated among other families and other communities through Homer’s epic. Amphiaraos’ death and envelopment by the earth, though burial of a sort, has the opposite effect: brought about by Zeus, the internment permanently separates Amphiaraos from his home and
establishes him permanently within enemy territory as a being whose proximity to the divine has rendered him permanently exiled from his, and all, human existence.

**Affirmations of Humanity**

Chromios' integration into the patterns of human heroism expresses his fundamental dissimilarity to Amphiaraos' mythical and cultic dislocation. Amphiaraos' unmediated encounters with divine knowledge and divine power drew him beyond the shared parameters that define the human condition. Pindar's poetic constructions guide Chromios, and the fifth century audience, to look instead to Adrastos and Hektor as models for how to live - and die - in a way worthy of remembrance.

The material surrounding the mythical narratives is highly contextualized in space, time and occasion. The celebratory context of the komos at the opening of the ode is echoed in the symposiastic imagery of the final triads. Both opening and closing frame Chromios' victory as a mode of appropriate and mediated communication with the gods: the victory provides a song to Leto and her children; the horses bring Chromios (and Aetna) a crown from the sanctuary of Apollo. Through Pindar, Chromios' exceptional achievement as athlete is integrated into the praise of the patron god and his sanctuary as well as Chromios' own community. Unlike Amphiaraos' encounter with the divine and its spectacularly isolating conclusion, Pindar's elaboration of Chromios' achievement articulate a network of connections, among humans and between humans and gods.

At the conclusion of the myth, with Amphiaraos' disappearance still echoing, Pindar shifts the ode into the present with an address to Zeus, spoken in his own poetic persona. Rather than celebrating the glory of Aetna or offering thanks for Chromios' victory, Pindar draws
the audience’s attention to potential threats to that new city and to Syracuse, particularly to the consistent concerns about the possibility of Carthaginian aggression.

εἰ δυνατόν, Κρονίων, πείραν μὲν ἄγανορα Φοινικοστόλων ἑγχέων ταύταν θανάτου πέρι καὶ ζω- ἀς ἀναβάλλομαι ὡς πόρσιστα, μοίραν δ’ εὐνομον αἰτέω σε παισίν δαρὸν Αἰτναίων ὑπάξειν...

*Nem.* 9.28-30

If possible, son of Kronos, I would delay for as long as possible the trial of courage against the spear-bristling Phoenician convoys, a struggle for life and death. And grant fortune with good order - I ask it of you - to the children of the Aitnaians for a long time to come...

Pindar’s prayer to Zeus does not seek the sort of direct assistance that Amphiaraos received, but rather recognizes - and embraces - the uncertain condition of any human endeavor. He does not ask that the Aitnaians be permitted to conquer the Carthaginians, nor even that the Carthaginians might remain away permanently, but only that the attack be delayed as long as possible. These “time” words of delay and endurance lay claim to the human experience from which Amphiaraos was detached, while accepting the corresponding limits of human certainty and the inevitability of danger and even death. We could think of this as a reflection of the Adrastos model: the fate of each individual and even each generation is

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60 The victory of Gelon, tyrant of Syracuse, and Theron, tyrant of Akragas, at Himera in 480 (Hdt. 7.166) pushed the Carthaginians back for a time but did not seriously impact their dominance in their own sphere (including the Western tip of Sicily) – though note the alternate emphasis in *Pyth.*1.75 ff. where Pindar mentions Himera together with Salamis and Plataia as a guarantor of freedom for the Greece (v. also Dunbabin 1948, p. 421-423). The added background that discord among disaffected Himera aristocrats directly brought about Hamilcar’s attack (Diod. 11.48-68; Hdt. 7.165) may further bind this passage to the stasis at Argos and the brother-led attack on Thebes.
uncertain but the strength of the community enhances and preserves the memory of individual human lives and their achievements.

Through his poetic authority, Pindar extends another mode of enduring glory to Chromios, this time on the ‘Hektor-model’ of widely disseminated fame. Once more, the limitations of human existence occupy the same breath as the celebration of individual glory.

Many other deeds on other days
on the dry land
and on the neighboring sea - I will proclaim them.
And from toils, coming into being with youth and justice,
a life grows gentle near its end.
Let him know this as he obtains marvelous fortune from the gods.
For if glorious fame is joined with many possessions,
it is not possible for a mortal to place his foot
on yet another peak.

Chromios, through his achievements in the contests and in battle, has attained a personal fame that will endure in Pindar’s words after the end of his life. The language of land and sea recalls Pindar’s depiction of disseminated fame in Isthmian 4 where it makes its way across the wide expanses of the world.\(^{61}\) By including the possibility of a gentle old age Pindar highlights the inevitability of death and also its place in the patterns of human life. Within the sphere of

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\(^{61}\) *Isthm.* 4.40-42.
human experience, Hektor's death in battle is profoundly distinct from the hope of a peaceful end that Pindar extends to Chromios; both, however, express the finality and the clarity that Amphiaraos' experience lacks.

**Human Exemplarity: Amphiaraos as Father in *Pythian 8***

**Myth as Model?**

In *Nemean 9* Amphiaraos was introduced as a human hero unwillingly committed to the ill-fated expedition against Thebes; his story in that ode ended when the earth opened and engulfed him, abstracting him from mundane human experience. In contrast when he appears in *Pythian 8*, composed. c. 450 for the wrestling victory of the Aiginetan Aristomenes, his status is ambiguous, even underdetermined. Pindar has returned in this ode to the events of the Theban cycle, this time depicting the arrival of the Epigonoi - the next generation of Argive heroes, come to avenge their fallen fathers - at the gates of Thebes. The choice of this myth and its theme of generational succession is not an unlikely one in an ode apparently commissioned by a father for a teenage son, but the use of Amphiaraos as narrator is less intuitive. Exactly when he speaks or how he observes the events as they unfold remains unclear, at least if we depend only on the information included within the ode; the reconstruction and contextualization of the chronologically confounding utterance becomes the work of the audience. For a fifth century Aiginetan audience, I will argue, the narrative structure evokes a tension between Amphiaraos' erstwhile familial status as son and father and the isolated cultic status - occasioned by his precipitous descent - that he continued to occupy in contemporary thought.
The theme of generational continuity is one with enduring significance across the whole corpus of Pindar’s odes, but it seems to exert a special fascination at Aigina. As Fearn has shown, Pindar’s Aiginetan odes are far more likely than those written for victors from other cities to praise previous familial victories as well as the recent accomplishment of the victor himself.62 The mythological traditions of Aigina draw on a constellation of closely related heroes: Aiakos and his descendants. The direct filiation of Zeus to Aiakos to Peleus and Telamon to Achilles and Ajax establishes a strong claim to the consistency of inherited excellence in the Aiginetan community of Pindar’s day which seems to have figured itself broadly as the descendants of these Aiakids.63

Of the eleven odes which Pindar composed for Aiginetan victors, Pythian 8 is the only one in which the mythical component does not center on the exploits of one or another of the Aiakids.64 Their absence is particularly pronounced in an ode which characterizes the victor as an individual who maintains, unbroken, the glorious athletic traditions of his family. Why call in

62 Fearn 2011, p.176: “Statistics garnered from the entire corpus of epinician poetry will reveal that the naming of family victories is radically more frequent in Aiginetan commissions than non-Aiginetan ones.” See also his charts (176-178) presenting a) patrai in the Aiginetan odes, b) Aiginetan victors and their victories, c) Aiginetan family victories; v. also Morgan 2007, p. 226, who notes the attention paid in the Aiginetan odes to the victor’s career and family

63 This is a case in which distinct families, and probably even distinct population groups, seem to share a claim to notional descent from this mythical family.

64 Some recent discussions of the Aiakids: Burnett 2005 traces the constructed history of the Aiakids at Aigina and argues that they allow the Classical Aiginetan aristocracy to understand themselves as “spiritual heirs” to Homer’s most notorious heroes” and to receive from the Aiakids the “grant of courage” they have been given by Zeus; Kowalzig 2007, p. 181-223 for a discussion of Pindar’s Paean 6 and its depiction of Aiakids as the mythical ancestors of the Aiginetans (185) as well as important Panhellenic figures; Nagy 2011 passim, esp. 49-60, on the role of geographies associated with the Aiakids myths (e.g., Peleus and Achilles based in Thessaly, Telamon and Ajax at Salamis) and the role of “contractual mythology” – the process by which different strands of myth accommodate each other (e.g. for Peleus to be the son of Aiginetan Aiakos, Thessaly must accept that Aiakos is indeed an autochthonous Aiginetan) (59-60).
a distant hero to make this point when the famous generations of Aiakids were locally available? I suggest that Pindar elaborates Amphiaraos’ relation to his own son, Alkmaion, in this ode in ways which simultaneously highlight and are critically distinct from the mythical structures and contemporary self-conceptions of Aigina in the middle of the fifth century. Amphiaraos’ extraordinary status beyond the categories of death and outside the bounds of a community distorts his relationship to his son and challenges the very model of inherited excellence that his words evoke. The structures of the ode subtly correct the exceptional (problematic) model of father-son relationships embodied by Amphiaraos and Alkmaion by reorienting them within the framework of epinician praise. Pindar undertakes to do for Alkmaion what Xenarkes, his contemporary Aiginetan patron, has commissioned him to do for his own son. Pindar’s patrons, as a contemporary human family, become the model that is projected onto, and corrects, the mythical events. By assimilating Amphiaraos to an epinician patron and Alkmaion to a victorious athlete, Pindar draws them back together and back into a sphere of human experience characterized by inevitable changes in fortune and marked by moments of glory.

Speech in Context

Pindar frames Aristomenes’ success as the continuation of familial achievement rather than exclusively individual excellence. Aristomenes has the natural prowess in wrestling, displayed at the Pythian games, that his uncles before him had evidenced at Olympia and Isthmia respectively. The elaboration of familial inheritance motivates Amphiaraos’ appearance

65 Carey 1981, p. 160-161, thinks that only a personal connection between the victor and the Theban heroes could motivate this departure. Farnell 1930-1932 vol. 2 192 links the lack of reference to the Alakidai (or Aigina’ naval prowess) with Aigina’s diminishment by Athens (v. infr. p. 95-96).
in the ode - but in a capacity that challenges the boundaries of the narrative frame and alludes to the eccentricity of his perspective.

In the wrestling ring you follow in the footsteps of your uncles, your mother’s brothers. You did not give the lie to Theognos’ Olympian performance, nor to the strong-limbed victory of Kleimachos at Isthmia; magnifying your Meidulid clan you are the standard bearer for the saying which once the son of Oikles spoke- seeing among the seven Theban gates the sons standing fast, arrayed with spears - spoke it darkly, when they came from Argos, the Epigonoi, on a road taken once before. This is what he said as the battle raged: "By nature the temper inherited from the fathers is conspicuous in the sons. I see clearly the fine-wrought serpent on the shining shield that Alkmaion wields, first among the ranks at the gates of Kadmos..."

The grammatical mechanism that introduces Amphiaros is a standard one: the use of a relative pronoun to pivot from the present time and the praise of the current victor to an event within the heroic past. In this case, though, the pivot stands out because it does not draw on some familiar element within Aigina’s landscape nor some heroic deed that demonstrates clear

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66 Bundy 1983 8, n.27: the use of the relative pronoun in transitions develops from hymnal uses where it “introduces descriptions of the god’s powers.”
parallels to Aristomenes’ wrestling victory. Instead, the relative pronoun (τὸν) has as its antecedent λόγον – no event or place, but an utterance or, more broadly, a premise. As though citing a philosopher whose work expressed a salient point, Pindar introduces Amphiaraos as a fellow speaker, almost a collaborator whose position can substantiate his own. The relevant observation in the context of the preceding lines is the persistence of the fathers’ natures in their sons (φυᾷ τὸ γενναῖον ἐπιπρέπει/ ἐκ πατέρων παισὶ λῆμα). Amphiaraos, however, in contrast to the academic distance of an earlier poetic authority, is personally implicated in the context that substantiates his generalizing statement. Within the ode he exists in two capacities that do not quite comfortably coexist: as a cooperative poetic voice and, simultaneously, as a character playing a role in the myth he narrates. But what role? The answer to this question clarifies the dual status within the boundaries of the poem and highlights Amphiaraos’ unique paternal perspective within the mythical landscape at the time of the second expedition against Thebes.

Amphiaraos recounts the unfolding events in a speech that confounds personal paternal pride and prophetic utterance. The narrative ambiguity is echoed in the temporal complexity of his situation which continues to exercise modern critics as it did the scholiasts. When does Amphiaraos speak? This is the crux of the problem and the answer depends on knowledge of a world beyond the boundaries of the ode, namely contemporary conceptions concerning

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67 Martin 2004, p. 351: “The theme of inherited ability prompts Pindar to quote the riddling utterance” of Amphiaraos; Nisetich 1980, p. 200, quite baldly: “The myth of the ode, taken from the tradition of Thebes, illustrates the theme of inherited greatness.” Burton 1962 181 “the point of the myth is the force of heredity”; and so on.

68 Σ Pyth. 8.82a, 83 a and b.
Amphiaraos' cultic status. The poignancy that I see developed in this passage depends on his speaking at the moment of the arrival of the Epigonoi at the gates of Thebes.

Some scholars have argued that Amphiaraos cannot possibly be speaking as he watches the Epigonoi approach as this would require him to be somehow cogent, observing and speaking, after his death during the first expedition against Thebes. The problems with these objections are twofold. The first problem is the assumption of his death, which, by these scholars at least, seems to have been exaggerated; the second, relatedly, is a failure to appreciate the relevance of Amphiaraos’ oracular status for the ode's contemporary audience. For Amphiaraos to communicate through the sort of prophetic utterance that the poem depicts is not only broadly possible, it is fundamental to the conception of Amphiaraos in the late Archaic and Classical world.

The location of his oracle, as stated in the introduction to this chapter, is not fully established. Competing claims existed in various Boiotian locales and no good archaeological evidence clearly supports any one of them. It has even been argued, wrongly I think, that the Amphiaraion at Oropos was the original establishment and the Boiotian sites are literary representations. Since this ode was composed for Aiginetan consumption and performed far from any of the potential sites - as opposed to being a production for a Theban or Athenian audience.

69 Σ Pyth. 8.57b asks: When did Amphiaraos say these things? And answers: unless he was swallowed alive [by the earth], he is communicating with the Epigonoi via some divine thought (or design?) (τινα θείαν ἐπίνοιαν). Modern scholars have offered a range of interpretations: Hubbard 1993, p. 191 feels strongly that the reference is to Amphiaraos' oracular presence: “Given this focus on the well-known shrine of the Amphiaraion and its mythological history for the last seventeen verses, it is difficult to see why anyone in the original Greek audience would think that the heroon alluded to in vv. 58-60 was anything other than the one just exhibited in the myth.”; Pfeijffer 1999, p. 351 argues less forcefully that Amphiaraos appears as a “ghost” and that Pindar has not “commit[ed] himself to a precise description of the situation.”; Burton 1962, p. 181, understands Amphiaraos as having a “vision” of the future events.

victor - I am not sure that the physical location of contemporary cult(s) is of primary importance. Instead, the representations of Amphiaraos' disappearance in the vicinity of Thebes, in conjunction with his widespread oracular reputation, allows Pindar to depict him beneath the Theban earth within view of the approaching army. This interpretation establishes the framework that explains the Argive Amphiaraos' relevance to Aiginetan praise. Amphiaraos, like Xenarkes, or any father, exhibits paternal pride as he observes his son’s triumphs; unlike other fathers, he is abstracted from the sequence of generations that Pindar establishes as the framework for praise.

**Generational Cosmology**

Throughout the ode Pindar subtly develops the concept and significance of generation, constructing a miniature cosmology that defines human generational continuity against the personal immortality of the gods. The ode incorporates a series of generational relationships, which are individually understated but cooperatively track a developing meditation on the nature of inheritance, broadly understood. By inheritance here I do not mean primarily the possession by a later generation of physical possessions which belonged to an earlier one, but a broader conception embracing the transitions in role and status that occur as children grow to maturity, have children of their own, and see their parents die.71

The universality of this model threatens to drive this discussion toward banality, but its elaboration in Greek literature, present already as a fundamental theme in Homer and Hesiod, directs us to a more specific set of concerns within the broad outlines of the cycle of parents and

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71 Martin 2004, p. 351-352: “the traditions behind both victor and hero [Aristomenes and Alkmaion] have thus far been represented for us as a reification of tradition – a literal touching and handing over the contact that generations make with one another.” (emphasis mine)
children. The successful sequence of generations will maintain (or increase) a family's status and each individual will reassert the family's ancestral excellence. Homer's Trojan heroes are plagued by the first concern: Priam appeals to Achilles by comparing himself to Achilles' own father, Peleus, whom he describes as too old to stop the neighbors slowly encroaching on his lands with no son present to reinforce his claim; Andromakhe worries that once Hektor is dead her son will have no guarantee of security. Hesiod's Race of Iron exemplifies the second; it is characterized by degenerate men (note the English adjective we use) who no longer honour their parents, who indeed are no longer even like them.72

The yearning for continuity is represented as a human characteristic; equally human is the potential for fractures in the generational lines. Continued inheritance, in the broad sense, is an aspiration, not a certainty. Pythian 8 develops the parent-child relationships that obtain among divinities in contrast to the generational relationships inhabited by Aristomenes and his mortal community. For individuals who do not die and are not subject to the alterations of time, the nature of inheritance is not absent, but it must be conceptualized as something distinct from the mortal experience of generations. Amphiaraoos stands between these models: while he is personally abstracted from the temporality of human experience, his continued awareness of and concern for his family makes the model of sequential generations relevant to him even as he exists beyond it.

The theme of generational inheritance is introduced at the opening of the ode with Pindar's depiction of Hesychia as the daughter of Dike. By establishing Hesychia not only as an anthropomorphized figure, but as the daughter of a like-minded mother, Pindar activates within the ode a paradigm for an idealized relationship between parent and child. The abstract nature

72 Hes. Erga 182 ff.
of the two figures vitiates the necessity of change or alteration: each figure remains always the essence of what she is. The relationship does not play an emphatic role in the ode; the reference to Dike as Hesychia’s mother seems almost incidental, tuck ed as it is into an aretology of Hesychia herself. The genealogy sounds as though it could be drawing on Hesiod’s *Theogony*, and were this the case the inclusion might be less remarkable. In fact, though, Pindar seems to be innovating here, even as he alludes to the *Theogony* passage in which Dike is herself the daughter of Zeus and Themis, and has Eunomia and Eirene as her sisters. This is a family into which Hesychia fits neatly as another embodiment of the effects of piety and good governance. If we can understand a reference to this passage, then Pindar seems to be engaged in a type of mythological grafting; he does not highlight the novelty of this family model, but presents Hesychia’s presence as a natural continuation of Hesiod’s constellation. Order, Lawfulness, Peace, and Justice, now joined by Tranquility. The sister virtues embody the continuity of familial traits.

From these anthropomorphized abstractions with their unchanging and complementary statuses Pindar’s schema moves to the divine but highly anthropomorphized father-son pair of Apollo and Zeus. As with Hesychia, Apollo, the younger member of the pair, receives the emphasis and it his presence (rather than Zeus’) which is expected within the context of a Pythian ode. Also like Hesychia, his dual capacity for mildness and harshness is emphasized. He first appears in the ode as the avenger of Hubris, demonstrated by his destruction of Porphyrrion.

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73 Hes. *Theog.* 901-903: the Horae and the Moirae are also listed as her sisters. Farnell 1930-1932 vol. 2: Pindar is the first Greek author to personify Hesychia.

74 Pfeijffer 1999 p. 497, notes that the tradition shows no trace of Porphyrrion being killed by Apollo (or being king of the giants, for that matter) but suggests that a) Pindar is drawing on a strand of tradition.
In time lofty power is tripped up.
Typhaos the Cilician with his hundred heads did not escape this, nor indeed did the king of the Giants [Porphyrian]. They were tamed by lightning and by the arrows of Apollo.

This passage is noticeable because not one giant but two have been introduced as figures who embody hubristic action and the two, Porphyrian and Typhaos, are assimilated in their destruction. The action is part of a unified pattern by which the agents of order destroy the enemies of that order and Apollo’s action is barely separable from that of his father. The two giants overreached themselves and were killed, one by a thunderbolt - following tradition this must be Typhaos - and one by the arrows of Apollo. Their closely related experiences indicate the role of ‘dispenser of justice’ that Apollo shares with Zeus. This emphasis is supported by Pindar’s use of language. There is no μὲν/δὲ construction or anything similar separating the wielding of the thunderbolt and the arrows and there is only one verb of destruction (δμάθεν).

As gods they both exist in an indeterminate relationship to the passing of time: Apollo will not supersede Zeus upon his death and is not responsible for ensuring the continuation of

now lost or b) weaving his innovations into existing tradition in such a way that the audience would be primed to accept them.

75 Pyth.8.15-18.

76 Pfeijffer 1999, p. 497, remarks that “Apollo often acts as an executive agent of Zeus, as in Iliad 15.”

77 Zeus’ victory over Typhaos figures in Pyth. 1.15-24, but not explicitly via thunderbolt.
the family line. Zeus with his lightning bolt, Apollo with his arrows – each with the attribute that is fundamentally and unchangingly his – act in concert with each other, participating in the same enduring dynamic. Though each maintains his distinct identity, father and son coexist forever outside the cyclical movement of human lives and their near-identification within this passage of the ode underscores the crystallized, unchanging relationship between divine father and equally divine son.

Humans, more specifically Aiginetans, fill in the final rung of Pindar’s cosmology, with Aristomenes taking center stage. His place within a generational structure is more strongly marked than that of Apollo or of Hesychia: his first appearance in the ode is as Ξενάρκειον υἱὸν, the son of Xenarkes. The adjective appears at the beginning of one line and is not met by its noun until the beginning of the next. This foregrounding of the father’s name may partly mirror the sound of the herald’s announcement at the games themselves, but it also emphasizes the extent to which Aristomenes is defined by his relationship to his father. Aristomenes’ athletic successes are then contextualized, as cited above, in terms of his uncles’ earlier victories. When Pindar says that he does not give the lie to his uncles’ achievements, the logical, nearly scientific, connotation of κατελέγχεις highlights the extent to which athletic success can be portrayed as the proof of a family’s excellence.

Pindar praises Aristomenes for amplifying his clan, the Meidulidai. The Greek term for this Aiginetan family division is πάτρα, a word which looks etymologically to the concern with

78Pyth. 8.19.

79Pfeijffer 1999, p. 521: “A victor confirms the quality of his family by means of his victory. ... By giving proof of his own quality he also gives proof of the quality of his ancestors, and therefore contributes to their fame, and subsequently honors them.” Cf. Ol. 8.19 in which a victor’s prowess does not belie his own outward appearance, v. Hes. Erga 14 for a similar usage.

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paternity and biological continuity. Within this ode the recurring theme of his position within his family - his role as a representative of the next generation - marks Aristomenes as human in contrast to the models of divine parents and children. Unlike Hesychia or Apollo, Aristomenes is responsible not only for maintaining the tradition of familial excellence, but also for maintaining the line of the family itself. The alterations and deaths that are inevitable for a human family motivate the greater emphasis on father and uncles because they chart out the path that Aristomenes follows now, and that - it is hoped - his sons will follow in their turn.

Amphiaraos' complicated relationship to Alkmaion at once belies and emphasizes the significance of the ongoing, hereditary cycle of fathers and sons. At first, his appearance in the ode plays on the familiar, expected themes of heredity.

τὸν ὄνπερ ποτ’ Ὀϊκλέος παῖς ἐν ἑπταπύλοις ἱδὼν
ὑόιος Θῆβαις αἰνίζατο παρμένοντας αἰχμᾶ,
ὁπότ’ ἀπ’ Ἀργεος ἠλυθον
δευτέραν ὁδὸν Ἐπίγονοι.  
Pyth. 8.39-42

(the speech) which once the son of Oikles spoke - seeing among the seven Theban gates the sons standing fast, arrayed with spears - spoke it darkly, when they came from Argos, the Epigonoi, on a road taken once before.

Pindar initially introduces him only as Ὀϊκλέος παῖς, defining him completely by his paternity. The proper name ‘Amphiaraos’ does not occur until the end of the mythological passage. He is sufficiently identified for Pindar’s Aiginetan audience first by the name of his father, then –


81 Pyth.8.39-42.
though not until seven lines later – by the name of his son: Alkmaion. To this extent Amphiaraos participates in the shared human experience of family: his own existence is defined by his parentage and progeny. These themes are amplified and reiterated in the broader mythic tradition of the dual attacks on Thebes: the sons persist and succeed where their fathers have failed and in so doing magnify their fathers’ deeds, extending and glorifying their story.

These themes are inherent to the tradition of the Epigonoi, but Pindar’s verses again draw them out and focus attention on the secondary nature of the expedition. At seven-gated Thebes he looks upon ιούς, sons, who are not further named. The action of the individual is deemphasized in deference to the importance of the relationship of these individuals (sons) to those who came before (fathers); indeed, except for Alkman, none of them are named within the ode. Instead the secondary, almost derivative nature of their efforts are repeatedly emphasized: they came from Argos on a δευτέραν ὁδόν, they are the Ἑπίγονοι, the ones born afterward. Up to this point Amphiaraos is simply one of seven fathers who fought at Thebes and whose son has come to finish the work he began. He stands apart from the rest, though, because he is not ultimately defined by either his status as father or the deeds of his son. His story is not circumscribed with the conclusion of the first Theban expedition, but continues in perpetuity via his enduring oracular status. In the midst of a paradigm of human existence, Amphiaraos stands nearby but apart, abstracted from the patterns which the ode has woven.

In Amphiaraos, then, the two alternate modes of existence - the personal and unchanging eternity of the gods and the generational continuity of humans - merge uncomfortably. His relationship to his son is not that unchanging likeness which the ode depicts between Dike /Hesychia and Apollo/Zeus, nor the sequential ‘following-upon’ of generations

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82 The name is more commonly Alkmaion outside of Pindar, and it is this spelling which I will use.
which Pindar enacts between Aristomenes and his father/uncles. It is instead a combination and complication of the two: Amphiaraos has entered a realm closer to that of the gods in its permanence while watching his son still ensnared in the troubles and vicissitudes of men, just as he will observe all men down to and beyond Pindar’s present day. He is caught as well between the private concerns of his personal, human existence, and the capabilities of his more-than-human knowledge which he employed in the service of the Argive army during his human life and which becomes the property of the whole Greek world (and beyond) afterward. The prophecy Amphiaraos utters in Pythian 8 situates a universally human concern for his own son within his enduring oracular status; he is simultaneously localized within and separated from the concerns appropriate to Pindar’s human audience.

**Epinician Roles as Corrective**

Amphiaraos’ dislocation extends beyond the mythical setting, echoing also in the narrative structures and poetic personae of the ode. What Amphiaraos says of his son fits neatly into the context of a victory ode; his words, as Hubbard has noticed,\(^3\) establish him in the role of the laudator and Alkmaion in that of the laudandus. On this reading Amphiaraos' words of praise and their exemplification in his son parallel the dynamic between Pindar as poet and Aristomenes as contemporary victor. If we limit ourselves to the information communicated by Amphiaraos himself, this model renders Alkmaion a glorious model for Aristomenes: he rides proudly in the forefront before the gates of Thebes, shield gleaming with an insignia that recalls his ancestry (and perhaps their prophetic gifts). And yet Amphiaraos lacks the unique and necessary status that the epinician poet enjoys - or at least constructs for himself - as i) an

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\(^3\) Hubbard 1993.
intimate friend of the family or community he honours but not a member of it\textsuperscript{84} and ii) an individual who speaks for humanity but has a special mandate to communicate to and about the gods. The characteristics which authorize and orient the compositions of an (epinician) poet are nearly inverted in Amphiaraos. His status as father places him too close to the laudandus and his status as immortal/oracular being places him too far from humanity. After setting up Amphiaraos as a flawed poetic voice, Pindar asserts the orienting power of his own poetic authority by assimilating the disembodied voice to the correctly contextualized role of \textit{pater laudandi} and epinician patron.

When Amphiaraos praises Alkmaion, the moment recalls, but also reverses, the motif of the deceased victor’s father or grandfather listening to the strains of Pindar’s praise which have trickled down into the underworld.\textsuperscript{85} Amphiaraos has become something like the general mass of the dead, but he maintains a sort of agency and a very particular proximity to the affairs of men which allows him to praise his son prematurely and in isolation. Rather than passively receiving news of his son’s activities as they are glorified for posterity, Amphiaraos foretells his son’s exploits; he has collapsed the epinician process by which the deeds of the son, celebrated by the community, are reported to the father and instead internalized the process into a singular, lonely knowledge. How are we to imagine the moment of speaking? The Aiginetan audience hears Amphiaraos’ speech through Pindar’s poetic efforts but an attempt to envision the effect of the original speech remains challenging: if no one has posed a question to an oracle, who listens for its unprovoked ‘answer’?

\textsuperscript{84} Biographically, of course, he is a Theban poet, but his poetic persona in the Theban odes actually emphasizes his Theban status LESS than he does in, e.g., Aiginetan odes where he highlights the friendship between the two poleis.

\textsuperscript{85} e.g. \textit{Ol.8.75-78}; \textit{Pyth. 5.98-102}; cf. Segal 1985.
Pindar’s choice of the speaking verb ἄφιξατο to set off Amphiaraos’ utterance hints at the complicated nature of his speech. The notion of ‘riddling’ already concerned the scholiasts, who flattened out its significance by arguing that it served as just a synonym for ἀπεφθέγξατο. A survey of other uses of the verb suggests that its use indicates a type of speech which is somehow obscured or not readily comprehended. This neatly characterizes Amphiaraos’ utterance in which the very identity of potential audience is enigmatic. The riddling nature is exaggerated by the fact that, despite his status as oracle, Amphiaraos foretells a dark outcome for Adrastos and his son, but says nothing of Alkmaion’s own future troubles. Is he, despite his oracular nature, unaware of his son’s subsequent fate, or is he suppressing the knowledge of a darker future for the sake of celebrating present success? The suppression of dark or troubling knowledge has a role to play in epinician praise, but it is usually counterweighted by general reminders of the vicissitudes of human experience and by the poet's frequent assertion that no mortal can see the future clearly. Amphiaraos' partial prophecy again challenges his fitness for epinician utterance: he knows too much about the future and remembers too little about the endless changeability of human experience.

The glorious model provided by Alkmaion is seemingly offset by the neat foil of Adrastos and his son, the only Argive leader to fall in the expedition. Amphiaraos foretells that Adrastos, though suffering in the first expedition against Thebes (προτέρα λόγα), will this time lead his army safely home according to a better omen (ἀρείον ὄρνιχος). Was the audience familiar

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86 Σ Pyth.8.57a  
87 LSJ s.v. 'αίνισσομαι'.  
with the fate of Adrastos’ son?\textsuperscript{89} If so, the phrase must have been perplexing, even perverse, since Adrastos’ son was the only Argive leader to fall in the otherwise successful expedition. This can be seen as a sort of cosmic balance, especially from the perspective of an unwilling participant who died in the first expedition while Adrastos returned home safely.

But, from a more distanced perspective - the sort of generalizing, pattern-producing perspective that epinician creates - a death in battle yields remembrance as well as grief.\textsuperscript{90} From this perspective, Adrastos and his son - identified as Aigialeus by Hellanikos - though starkly contrasted within the narrative of the expedition, are ultimately similar figures: mythical warriors who receive cult and commemoration from living fifth century communities.\textsuperscript{91} Alkmaion inherits aspects of his father’s story as well, but those elements do not belong to the model of glory celebrated by Amphiaraos’ own account. What the ode’s audience does not learn from the ode itself, but surely knew from the repeated engagement with the subject matter in the course of the sixth and fifth centuries,\textsuperscript{92} is that Amphiaraos had ordered Alkmaion to kill his mother, Eriphyle, as retribution for forcing Amphiaraos to participate in the doomed expedition. Like the expedition of the Epigonoi, matricide is a mode of revenging his father, but one that is

\textsuperscript{89} As Gantz. p. 522 says “one should like to think that this ironic arrangement...was an early part of the story.” Unfortunately the sources are simply not extant.

\textsuperscript{90} Aigialeus is the name of Adrastos’ son as attested in Hellanikos \textit{FG} 4F100.

\textsuperscript{91} I anchor the 5\textsuperscript{th} century cults in the premise that Pindar refers to Aigialeus who received hero cult at Megara (Paus. 1.44.4).

\textsuperscript{92} This story seems to have played a (central?) role in Stesichorus’ \textit{Eriphyle}; Apollodoros (Ap. \textit{Bib}. 1.8) indicates that he is drawing (some of) his material from a now-lost epic \textit{Alkmaionis}. The theme is then picked up repeatedly in Attic tragedy (as may have been expected, with tragedy’s interest in purification and matricide - (cf. the story of Orestes), though many of these postdate \textit{Pythian} 8: Euripides: two Alkmaion plays, lost; Sophokles: \textit{Alkmaion at Psophis} (438) and \textit{Alkmaion at Corinth} (produced posthumously).
cloaked in pollution and antithetical to the military prowess celebrated in the ode. Alkmaion has indeed demonstrated the λῆμα of Amphiaraos, and if we follow only the image presented in Amphiaraos’ words this is an unmixed good. If, however, we – like Pindar’s audience – know the rest of the story we perceive a greater complexity in the juxtaposed models of Adrastos/Aigialeus and Amphiaraos/Alkmaion.

Amphiaraos’ speech, as an amalgam of personal pride and impersonal prophecy, highlights the ambiguous nature of his presence (quasi-presence?) on the field of battle. The end of the speech and the reemergence of Pindar’s poetic voice 'corrects' Amphiaraos status, drawing him back into the network of human relations that shape epinician composition.

τοιαῦτα μὲν
ἐφθέγξατ᾽ Ἀμφιάρηος, χαίρων δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς
Ἀλκμάνα στεφάνοις βάλλω, ῥαίνω δὲ καὶ ὑμνῳ,
γείτων δὲ μοι καὶ κτεάνων φύλαξ ἐμῶν
ὑπάντασεν ἱόνι γάς ὀμφαλὸν παρ’ ἀοίδιμον,
μαντευμάτων τ᾽ ἐφάψατο συγγόνοις τέχναις.

Nem. 9.55-60

Such things Amphiaraos spoke. And I myself rejoice and crown Alkman with wreaths and sprinkle him with song, because my neighbor and the guardian of my possessions came to me as I made my way to the navel of the earth, well-sung, and he touched on his inherited prophetic powers.

The text of these lines is not in question but their significance is hotly disputed. In the absence of a name, whom are we to understand Pindar meeting in the road? There are three interrelated disagreements: i) is it Alkmaion or Amphiaraos who encounters the speaker; ii) does the speaking voice belong to the poet, the chorus, or the victor; and iii) in conjunction with the first uncertainty, does the meeting occur at Aigina or Thebes? If we look for a continuity of

93 A selection of earlier interpretations: Burton 1962, p. 182 Farnell 1930-1932 vol. 2, p. 196, Bowra 1964: Pindar addresses Alkmaion who has a shrine at Thebes, Slater 1969, s.v. μάντευμα, also understands an
speakers from the metapoetic language before the mythological narrative, the poet seems to be the more natural speaker and, by extension, Thebes the more natural place of speaking. We have no evidence for the worship of either Alkmaion or Amphiaraos at Aigina and, in terms of mythological contexts, this absence is not surprising. I follow Hubbard in interpreting Amphiaraos as the subject of the encounter; as he argues, Amphiaraos' oracular identity as well as his association with Thebes has been rendered sufficiently clear by the preceding myth - and the audience's external awareness of the traditions surrounding Amphiaraos at Thebes - and did not need to be rendered explicit.\footnote{Hubbard 1993. On this line of argument the lack of grammatical clarity is made up for by the logic of the cultic and geographical relationships invoked.} The encounter confirms Amphiaraos' claim to his own familial network by alluding to his prophetic capacities as 'inborn skills,' the isolated oracle regains his ancestry. Moreover, by framing Amphiaraos as his neighbor, Pindar evokes a personal relationship that integrates Amphiaraos - even if he is no longer quite a part of the human world - into the networks of \textit{xenia}.\footnote{V. again Hubbard 1993, who pushes the argument further in claiming that Amphiaraos’ a) unsolicited appearance to a b) Theban (v. Hdt. 8.134 for the ban on Thebans from the cult) shows Pindar laying claim to a certain intimacy with Amphiaraos.}

By crowning Alkmaion with wreaths and sprinkling him with songs, Pindar (re)casts Alkmaion more firmly within the model of the athletic victor and lends poetic authority to the encounter with Alkmaion as does Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1922, p. 141, though he cannot accept that the matricide Alkmaion would have had a shrine at Thebes. Lefkowitz 1991, p.82, completely rejects the possibility of the grammatical shift from Alkmaion to Amphiaraos, and see p. 81-88 for her full discussion about this passage and way the scholiastic tradition has influenced modern interpretations. Carey 1981, p. 160-161, thinks the whole scene must have been motivated by the \textit{victor's} encounter with Alkmaion on his way to the sanctuary to compete, a view earlier expressed by Floyd 1965. My favourite response to this passage is Slater 1969 whose entry on Alkmaion deals with these lines with a brusque ‘unexplained’.
celebration of his success, rendering the dislocated\textsuperscript{96} words of an oracle true through his poetic intervention. Alkmaion, through Pindar’s offices, has attained a measure of poetic immortality, while Amphiaraos has been assimilated back into the human role of a father who shares in the reflected glory of his son and makes provisions for its commemoration. This poetic intervention moves Alkmaion into the realm of epinician celebration in way that Amphiaraos’ utterance alone could not achieve. By establishing Alkmaion in the role of laudandus, paralleled to Aristomenes, Amphiaraos becomes a patron, the mythological parallel to Xenarkes.

The construction of these parallels enacts an inversion of the frequent mode of praising a victor by casting his achievements in terms of the great deeds of the mythical past. In this Aiginetan ode it is the human patrons who are held up as models for the figures of myth. Xenarkes has raised a victorious son and ensured that his achievement will endure in song. Pindar is explicit about celebrating Aristomenes' Pythian victory as the most recent achievement (νεώτατον καλῶν) in a long line of Aiginetan successes. Such praise is appropriate to the model of human experience that the ode develops: an individual cannot endure, but the accretion of remembered glory sustains a family through the generations. The mythological narratives surrounding Amphiaraos' human family tell a tale of fracture rather than continuity; Amphiaraos' cultic status establishes him beyond the frameworks of human experience. In this ode, though, Pindar’s poetic authority reintegrates Amphiaraos into human experience as a proud father to his son. This maneuver concurrently provides the highest praise to Aristomenes and his family: not only are they glorious in their current victory but, perhaps more important, they are models for the project of human existence.

\textsuperscript{96} Dislocated in the sense that their audience is not clear: there is pathos in praise and prophecy to which no one attends -- until the utterance is reframed in Pindar’s emphatically public ode.
Pindar's movement toward Delphi after the mythical narrative asserts the ordered relationships between humans and gods and the poetic voice is established as the appropriate moderator between the two spheres. The fourth triad opens with an address to Apollo, the patron god of the games, and concludes with an address to Aristomenes, the recipient of the god's favour. The middle of the triad is devoted to the active work of ordering the divine/human relationship and the poet's role therein.

ὦ ναξ, ἑ κόντι δ' εὔχομαι νόω
κατά τιν' ἁρμονίαν βλέπειν
άμφ' ἐκαστον, ὅσα νέομαι.
κώμω μὲν ἀδύμελεῖ
Δίκα παρέστακε· θεῶν δ' ὁπιν
ἀφθόνον αἰτέω, Ξέναρκες, ὑμετέραις τύχαις,
ei γάρ τις ἔσλα πέπαται μὴ σύν μακρῷ πόνῳ,
πολλοῖς σοφὸς δοκεῖ πεδ' ἀφρόνων
βίοι κοροσσέμεν ὀρθοβούλοιοι μαχαναῖς·
tά δ' οὐκ ἐπ' ἀνδράς κεῖται· δαίμων δὲ παρίσχει·
ἀλλοτ' ἄλλον ὑπερθε βάλλων, ἄλλον δ' ὑπὸ χειρῶν,
μέτρῳ καταβαίνει·

Pyth. 8.67-78

Lord, I ask that you look with favourable mind
in a certain harmony with each endeavor, however many I attempt.97 Justice stands near
the komos with its sweet songs. And I seek the unjealous favour of the gods, Xenarkes, for your experiences.
For if someone heaps up noble possessions without long labour,
to many he seems wise among the foolish
to gird his life with straight-thinking plans:
but these things are not the purview of men, the divine provides.
Now raising one man high, now tossing another down under his hands,
he proceeds by measure.

While the triad opens with reference to the Pythian victory just granted by Apollo and an earlier pentathlon victory won by Aristomenes in Apollo’s Aiginetan games98 and closes with a list of

97 There is disagreement about the intended subject of this prayer: Hubbard 1983 argues that Pindar is asking that he himself, not Apollo, achieve harmony in his undertakings.
victories in other festivals, the passage cited here expands its focus beyond athletic achievement. Apollo is asked to guide Pindar's poetic efforts. Justice stands by the celebratory gathering enacted in the ode and probably mirrored in its performative setting and Xenarkes' fortune is shown to be subject to the regard of the gods in general. The language of line 76 emphatically opposes the role of gods and humans by rejecting the possibility that mortals have control over their own fortunes at the opening of the line and attributing that same power to the gods at its conclusion. The marginal status embodied by Amphiaraos is elided, replaced by a stark distinction between the always changing fortunes of mortals and the enduring power of the gods

A Shadow's Dream

Amphiaraos does not appear again explicitly in Pythian 8, but he may hover as a sort of echo in the ode's most famous image: the shadow's dream. The phrase, occurring in the epistrophe of the final triad, was criticized by the scholiasts as too elegiac, more appropriate for a dirge than a victory ode. Taken in context, though, the striking representation of ephemerality anchors the motifs of transience and continuity in play throughout the ode. If Amphiaraos can be partially identified with the dreaming shadow, the lines also revisit the effect of poetry in moderating between experience and memory.

ἐν δ’ ὀλίγῳ βροτῶν
τὸ τερπνὸν αὔξεταί· οὕτω δὲ καὶ πίνει χαμαί,
ἀποτρόπῳ γνώμα σεσεισμένον.
ἐπάμεροι· τί δέ τις; τί δ’ οὔ τις; σκιᾶς ὄναρ
ἀνθρώπος. ἀλλ’ ὅταν αἵλα διόσδοτος ἔλθη,

98 Pyth. 8.64-66.
λαμπρὸν φέγγος ἔπεστιν ἀνδρῶν καὶ μείλιχος αἰών.

Pyth. 8.92-97

In a little while the delight of mortals grows; thus also it falls to the ground shaken by contrary thought.
Existing for a day - what is someone? what is no one? A shadow's dream:
a human life. But when that god-given gleam comes,
a shining light is upon men, and a sweet lifetime.

The Greek σκιά can mean shadow - the traditional translation in this passage - but it also encompasses the English 'shade,' in the sense of the incorporeal dead. Both meanings capture the insubstantial nature at the heart of Pindar's image. Simply to characterize human existence as a dream (ὄναρ) shifts reality into the realm of interpretation and subjective vision; to encompass that dream in the consciousness of an equally insubstantial being, whether shadow or shade, is to challenge its very reality. Or, perhaps more important, to challenge the possibility that such an entity - the insubstantial vision of an insubstantial being - can aspire to any permanence or any effect in a world beyond its own existence.

While the language of the passage is universalizing and should not, I think, be understood exclusively as an allusion back to the mythical narrative, the image does resonate with Pindar's representation of Amphiaraos. As a being who once occupied a human form and

99 Cf. the fascinating discussion of the overlap of reflections and shades in Etruscan mirror decoration in De Grummond 1991.

100 Dreams could be communications from the gods, or from the restless dead; the frequent formulation 'a dream stood upon me,' highlights the quasi-independent existence of such a vision.

101 Nagy 1990, p. 195 takes the phrase literally as the dream of the dead Amphiaraos (no uncertainty on his part) and from there characterizes victory as "that singular moment" in the midst of normal life "when the dark insubstantiality of an ancestor's shade is transferred, through its dreams, into the shining life force of the victor". Lefkowitz 1977, p. 216, sees the lines as evoking insubstantiality but also the appearances/visions that presage victory (referring it back to both Amphiaraos' vision and to, as she reads it, Pindar meeting Alkmaion on the road to Delphi).
now exists in a mode isolated but not fully absent from the human world, Amphiarao could lay claim to the status of either shade or shadow. His oracular capabilities render the future events of the human world an ὀνάρ to him, encompassed in his own abstracted perspective. His praise of Alkmaion is a shadow’s dream. The events are not imagined, but praise uttered by Amphiarao, with no one to hear it and no community to preserve it, is as insubstantial as its speaker. The enduring commemoration of Alkmaion’s glory depends on the poetic voice to bring it into the world and fix it at the moment of exalted success.

If Amphiarao cannot fulfill the role of the poet, by virtue of his isolation, no more can he, by virtue of his unchanging and immortal nature, participate in the currents that shape human experience. The counterpoint to the inevitable brevity of a human life, and the darkness that all lives contain, are the moments of sudden brilliance, flashes of divinity made sweeter by the toil that bred them. Though Pindar does not tell the story in this ode, Amphiarao encountered a flash of divine brilliance in the form of Zeus’ lightning bolt as it opened the earth for his chariot. For him, though, the moment of divine brilliance became an unchanging and isolated eternity beyond the metrics of human achievement. The divine gleam, Pindar says, brings - in addition to a shining ray of light - a gentle lifetime (αἰών). By definition an aion is a period defined by the experience of time, its boundaries give meaning to the sequence of days that construct human experience. Aristomenes follows his father and his uncles through the experiences that shape a life; the victory endures in Pindar’s poetry while the victor continues on into the unknown currents of the future.
Pindar concludes the ode with a wish for stability and continuity, but at the level of the community rather than the individual.

Aίγινα φίλα ματέρ, ἐλευθέρῳ στόλῳ
πόλιν τάνδε κόμιζε Δί καὶ κρέοντι σύν Αἰακῷ
Πηλεῖ τε κάγαθῳ Τελαμώνι σύν τ’ Ἀχιλλεῖ.

Pyth. 8.98-100

Aigina, dear mother, in an expedition of freedom
guide this city with Zeus and powerful Aiakos
noble Peleus, Telamon and Achilles.

Aigina is the mother of the community as a whole, of each successive generation beginning with Aiakos - the child of Zeus - and continuing down to the human families of Pindar’ s day. This continuity appears earlier in the ode as well, when Pindar effects a partial collapse between the achievements of the mythical heroes and contemporary men:

τελέαν δ’ ἔχει
δόξαν ἀπ’ ἄρχαι, πολλοῖς μὲν γὰρ ἀείδεται
 νικαφόροις ἐν ἀέθ’ λοις θρέψαια καὶ θωάις
 ὑπερτάτους ἡρωικοὶ ἐν μάχαις;
tὰ δὲ καὶ ἀνδράσιν ἐμπρέπει.

Pyth. 8. 24-28

She had a perfected reputation from the beginning
For she is much-sung, having raised heroes
superlative in the contests that bear victory
and in swift battle:
and she is conspicuous also with the same achievements of men.

This is the perspective that renders human achievement meaningful: Aristomenes’ athletic achievements reflect the excellence that characterizes his family and his community all the way back to its origins. Pindar’s ode praises the victory as a unique and personal achievement that is
simultaneously 'the most recent' evidence of excellence in a long catalogue extending into the distant past and, it is to be hoped, into the distant future.

For the Aigina of 446\(^{102}\) such a future must have seemed precarious in light of recent military and political upheaval. The claim to generational continuity among the aristocratic families had been threatened in 491 by the forced removal of leading male aristocrats. The account comes from Herodotus who explains that, because the Aiginetans had offered earth and bread to the Persian heralds, Kleomenes was urged by the Athenians to demand hostages from them. After sustained objections, hostages were taken by the Spartans and handed into the keeping of the Athenians whose relations with Aigina were hostile at that time, as they were again throughout the 450s.\(^{103}\) Herodotus describes these hostages as the most powerful men in the land, which suggests that their absence must have disrupted the governance of the island as well as the continuity of the aristocratic families.

The temple of Aphaia, one of Aigina's great monumental buildings, reflected the idealization of generational inheritance in its pedimental sculptures. The east pediment depicts the first expedition against Troy with Telamon and Peleus in place of pride flanking the central figure of the sculpture while the west pediment shows, by means of a similar array of figures, the second expedition against Troy (the Trojan War) with two figures tentatively identified as Ajax and Achilles again flanking the center. The temple construction, as Burnett indicates, is roughly contemporary, within a matter of twenty years, with Sparta's demand for Aiginetan hostages and she argues that the sculptures stake a claim to a “more aggressive mythic identity

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\(^{102}\) The date given by the scholiast; tentatively accepted by Race 1997, p.336.

\(^{103}\) Hdt. 6.50; 6.61-73.
for the lords of Aigina” within the context of Panhellenic myth. In addition to showcasing participation in the Panhellenic expeditions against Troy, the pedimental sculptures also highlight the continuities between fathers (Peleus and Telamon) and sons (Aias and Achilles) as the latter undertake and complete the work begun a generation earlier. The two sets of sculptures which parallel each other both in theme and in composition highlight the continuity of heroism between the two generations and potentially look ahead to the role of Neoptolemos, Achilles’ son, in completing the task.

The temple was of a sufficiently impressive scale and recent date that it is reasonable to posit its presence among the latent images available in the minds of Pindar’s Aiginetan audience. Perhaps these marble images conditioned Pindar’s Aiginetan praise as they stood in silent witness to Aigina’s enduring strength and the changing fortunes of the generations. These Aiginetan heroes stand as a nearly implicit model for contemporary Aiginetan victors; Amphiaraos and Alkmaion present a contrast, a flawed generational relationship that concurrently highlights and is corrected by the Aiginetan model of mortality.

Envois

In both odes under discussion in this chapter Pindar highlights Amphiaraos’ dislocation from the human world and the structures of human experience. In Pindar’s representations, Amphiaraos’ human history is shadowed by his ambiguous enduring status while his oracular nature is defined by his human experiences. The pivot between the two modes of existence falls beyond the parameters of both human and divine experience. Amphiaraos disappears into

the earth as a living human and acquires an enduring oracular status. The moment of transition stands at the heart of Pindar's representations of Amphiaraos as a figure who is still in the world, but no longer of it.

Pindar's elaboration of this tradition, implicitly and explicitly, challenges his audience to draw a sharp distinction between Amphiaraos as a mythic human and Amphiaraos as a numinous oracular presence. In *Nemean* 9 Pindar explicitly represents Amphiaraos only as a mythic human, but by concluding with the moment of his disappearance he points to his continuing oracular status in the audience's own experience. In *Pythian* 8 the narrative time of the myth is a generation after the first expedition against Thebes and Amphiaraos speaks not as a human participant in the second expedition but as an observer. The mythical context ensures that Amphiaraos is no longer alive in the usual sense, but his pride in his son illustrates his continuing engagement with his family and the events of the human world. Unlike Herakles, whose existence Pindar divides at the apotheosis into a stark human before and divine after, Amphiaraos is established in a permanent state that denies him full assimilation to either mode of existence.

His ambiguous status in the world is mirrored and emphasized in poetic constructions that isolate his presence from the surrounding contexts of the ode. In *Nemean* 9 he is introduced to the mythical narrative as an enemy of the hometown hero Adrastos. Adrastos' presence in the myth is anchored in the cultic context of the Sikyonian games where Chromios obtained his victory; Amphiaraos' presence is contextualized only by his relationship to Adrastos. When the myth ends abruptly with his disappearance into the earth, Amphiaraos is cut off from the modes of human commemoration that bind Hektor and Adrastos into the ode's fabric. In *Pythian* 8 his role as quasi-narrator of myth expresses a similar isolation: he stands outside the networks of human communication and speaks from an ambiguous state to an
undefined audience. Quotation in the ode brings Amphiarao's utterance back to human ears, but highlights the isolation that requires Pindar's intervention.

In closing this chapter I look briefly to a passage in *Olympian 6* where Amphiarao is explicitly presented as a model for the victor. The ode celebrates the victory of Hagesias, a powerful Syracusan and another close associate of Hieron's. In the first triad, following lavish praise for Hagesias spoken in the voice of the poet, Pindar adduces Adrastos' praise of Amphiarao as appropriate to Hagesias as well.

Many men take their place in memory if they achieve a noble deed through toil. For you, Hagesias, is ready the praise which once, justly, Adrastos to his seer, the son of Oikles, to Amphiarao he spoke it from his tongue when the earth had swallowed him and his shining horses. When the corpses of the seven pyres had been consumed the son of Talaos spoke such a speech in the Theban land:

I long for the flower of my army, excellent in seercraft and in raging with a spear.'

The passage is programatically framed in terms of memory, and it is memory of human achievement in the human world that is expressed in Adrastos' speech.
The poetic narrator sketches the context of the utterance: the seven pyres burn on the Theban plain and Amphiaraos has just been swallowed by the earth. The elements of Amphiaraos' dislocation are potentially present once again in the contrast between his total vanishing and the slow consumption of the corpses of the other Argives. And yet, in these lines, Pindar elicits a different emphasis: by placing Amphiaraos' praise on Adrastos' lips he activates the dissemination of fame that will keep the memory of Amphiaraos' human achievements alive in the minds of living men.

Adrastos' language of longing (ποθέω) focuses on a once-living individual who exists no longer. Rather than focusing on Amphiaraos' extraordinary departure and its implications, Adrastos looks to the pain occasioned by his absence, effectively reacting to his disappearance as to a death. His words are eulogistic, recalling the idealized skills of the man who was and establishing them as his legacy. Here there is no need for the sort of corrective poetic activity that followed the citation of Amphiaraos in Pythian 8. Instead, having cited Adrastos, Pindar simply confirms the fitness of his words also as an adornment for Hagesias' victory komos: τὸ καί/ ἄνδρι κώμου δεσπότᾳ πάρεστι Συρακοσίῳ. Amphiaraos is established as a model for contemporary human achievement not through the efforts of the poetic voice, but by the admiration of his own contemporary and leader. Adrastos' praise integrates Amphiaraos into the systems of human commemoration and affirms his claim to a place in communal memory that assimilates him to other fallen heroes.

Adrastos' words in Olympian 6 free the memory of Amphiaraos the human from the limitations and ambiguities imposed by identification with Amphiaraos the oracle, avoiding the dislocations that characterize him in Nemean 9 and Pythian 8. The contrast highlights the

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105 A projection of the relationship between Hieron and Hagesias?
epinician potential of Amphiaraos' borderland existence. Set apart from humans and gods alike, Amphiaraos can warn mortals back from the marginal space he inhabits or, through the reordering effects of poetry, he can himself be drawn home.
Chapter 3

Looking Back at the World:
Heraklean Perspectives from the Borders of Humanity and Beyond

Setting Boundaries:

It is (almost) an act of hubris to devote a mere chapter of a dissertation to Herakles in Pindar. Herakles appears more often than any other figure in the corpus of the epinicians,
sometimes as the central actor of an extended mythological passage, sometimes as the
touchpoint of a brief allusion in the midst of other material. He appears as founder of cities,
games and families, as culture hero, as powerful child and Olympian god, even, memorably, as a stubby but powerful fighter. The wealth of Herakles’ personae and functions within the odes reflects the complexity of Herakles' existence in mytho-historical traditions and cultic practices across the Greek world. His status as a figure of Panhellenic significance is undoubtedly of use to Pindar, who can be certain that the prestige associated with Herakles’ name and exploits will resonate with every Greek audience. At the same time, each audience knows its own Herakles from local cult and local myth: he is a Theban, a Dorian, an Argive, the ancestor even of Ionian populations. Herakles is, to be flip, the Swiss army knife of mythological exempla, boasting a

\[1\] Ols. 3,6,7,9,10; Pyths. 9,10,11; Nems. 1,3,4,7,10,11; Isthms. 1,4,5,6,7. Nieto Hernandez 1993, p.76: “of all his heroes, Heracles is, beyond a doubt, his favorite figure”.

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facet for every occasion. Even the scope appropriate to this chapter – how Pindar represents and deploys Herakles’ unique existential status within the epinician corpus – threatens to involve a greater number of odes than can be dealt with responsibly (that is, without simply stringing together the Herakles-on-Olympos references without considering their individual contexts). In response to this wealth of material, I have elected to focus this chapter even further by centering it on a motif that defines Herakles not primarily by his apotheosis (though this, I will argue, is implicated, often explicitly) but by his relationship to the human world: the Pillars of Herakles.

The Pillars have long been recognized as a symbol of the *ne plus ultra* theme which recurs in this and other forms in the odes as a reminder to the victor to be aware of his own human limitations. Often, though, the significance of Herakles’ association with the Pillars is unremarked, or limited to the ‘historical’ fact that he was their founder and namesake. Rather than reading the Pillars as a fossilized metaphor in which the name of Herakles is purely

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2 cf. Bernardini 1983, p. 44: “Non vi è nessun altro eroe...così poliedrico e fungibile come modello sotto profili diversi. La sua esemplarità viene ogni volta ricreata, nel senso che è concepita non solo in rapporto e in funzione di diversi contesti poetici, ma anche in funzione di quanto il poeta vuole comunicare a un determinato committente e a un determinato uditorio in merito ad una situazione specifica.” (Note, though, that despite her recognition of his many facets, Bernardini sees him always as a model.)

3 The appearance of the phrase *ne plus ultra* in criticism on the Pillars in Pindar is basically *de rigueur*. Gianotti 1975, p. 43-44, emphasizes the dual nature of the image, expressing at once achievement and limitation. Hubbard 1985, p. 11-27, develops the theme in his discussion of the ‘near/far’ polarity where he argues that the sense of limitation is a positively-connoted ‘near’ in distinction to the unattainable/undesirable ‘far’. Boeke 2007, p. 62, expresses something similar: “The Pillars of Herakles, situated as they are at the edge of the known world, represent a much more ambiguous space than heaven, as a point of contact between the human and the divine spheres. On the one hand they are a desirable destination symbolic of the highest achievement, but on the other hand they constitute an absolute boundary beyond which lies transgression.” Cf. Oudemans and Lardinois 1987, p. 49, on the conception of boundaries: “boundaries may be regarded as relative, i.e. as dividing two areas which might become confused or brought into conflict, but which should both be taken into consideration.” This points to the relationship I want to examine in this chapter between the human and divine.
traditional and thus inert,\(^4\) I will trace what the figure of Herakles himself, as founder of the Pillars and crosser-over into uncharted territories, communicates to the victor and his community about their own natures and the aspirations appropriate to them.\(^5\) The Pillars themselves are one element within a broader complex of Herakles’ journeys to places beyond the realm of mundane human experience including geographically distant travels (to the Hesperides in the far West, to Atlas, to the Hyperboreans) as well as those that challenge the very meaning of geography (his extraction of Kerberos from Hades, and of course his apotheosis). The Pillars participate in the concepts of both geographical and what might be called ultra-geographical distance: they were associated with Herakles’ expedition to Spain to deprive Geryon of his cattle, but they also occupy a non-physical, metaphorical space in the (relatively) well-mapped world of the fifth century when Spain was a rich site for Greek trade and the Phoenicians ran lucrative trading routes along the Atlantic coast.\(^6\) Pindar himself is among the first literary references we have to the Pillars, but the fact that they appear in the odes with little context or none at all suggests that they were familiar to his audiences.

\(^4\) Cf. Verdenius 1987, p. 37, on Ol. 3.44 responding to Bernardini’s argument that Herakles as establisher of boundaries is an integral part of the ode: “…such a connection is unlikely to be intended, the Pillars of Heracles being a common symbol for the limits of the human world…” (This is the extreme position – many scholars do keep the context of the metaphor alive.)

\(^5\) Péron 1974, p. 67, notes that the Pillars are not particularly interesting in and of themselves (particularly not in a historical/colonization context) but are useful as a way of talking about a set of values.

\(^6\) On the status of the Pillars in the fifth century cf. Romm 1992, p.17-19, who nods to the historical Phoenician blockade from the sixth to third centuries BCE (Eratosth. ap. Strab. 17.1.19. v. also Hdt. 4.43) but adds this important perspective: “We must be cautious, however, in using historical evidence of this kind to explain the largely mythic images which the Greeks attached to the Pillars…whatever recollection of the original Punic blockade may be contained within the Pillars myth, this landmark soon took on an independent life in the Greek imagination…”; Nieto Hernandez 1993, p. 86: the Pillars are “not simply the world’s geographic end…Pindar also exploits them as boundaries of time” (separated from the timeless existence of the gods). V. also Gómez Espelosín 2009, esp. p. 286 ff. on the Pillars and the mythical/epic geography of the West.
What context would an audience have supplied? Despite what a Diodorus Siculus or Apollodoros might wish, there is no way to reconstruct a single order for Herakles’ exploits, especially the so-called *parerga* which cluster around his journey(s) through Africa, Sicily and Italy.\(^7\) Some myths do, however, have well-attested connections. This is the case for the Pillars, the establishment of which is usually connected with the Geryon-labour. Herakles’ task was to steal the cattle belonging to Geryon, a task, on the face of it, not as frightening as confronting an un-woundable lion or the many heads of the hydra. But the sources of the task’s difficulties were twofold. First, Geryon was a somehow monstrous creature – three-headed or –bodied in some depictions – who would put up a fight demanding all of Herakles’ strength.\(^8\) Second, Herakles had to reach Geryon before he could steal his cattle, and Geryon lived somewhere in the ocean far away to the West.\(^9\) The general location of his island varied with the era and the teller, sometimes just off of Epeiros, more usually off the coast of Spain near the site of modern Cádiz. The traditional name of his island, Erytheia, means ‘reddish’ and may reflect the Western

\(^7\) So-called *parerga* because our modern canon of Herakles’ twelve labors (the *dodekathlos*) did not cohere until sometime in the 5\(^{th}\) c. at the earliest, possibly motivated by the highly visible and influential metopes of the temple of Zeus at Olympia: Stafford 2012, p. 24-30. For the earlier poets under discussion though, and indeed for Pindar himself, there is no reason to see Herakles’ encounter with Antaios, for example, as just a side project.

\(^8\) Hes. *Theog.* 287-94, 981-83; Stes. *Geryon.* S17 (=185) PGMF (with a certain sympathy for Herakles’ opponent); Pherekydes (FGrH 3F18a). Early visual representations include a Protocorinthian pyxis (seventh century) (London A487); a bronze relief from Samos c. 600 BC (Archaeological Museum of Samos B 25 I8), and sixth century shield band reliefs from Olympia (B 1975) and Delphi (4479). For details on these pieces and further discussion v. Stafford 2012, p.42-45; Gantz p. 402-403. Brize (LIMC “Herakles: Herakles and Geryon” suggests that part of the story’s significance is due to “the affinity of Geryon with Hades, who also owned a vast herd and a multi-headed hound” (81); on this valence v. also Croon 1952 on a group of figures he calls ‘herdsman of the dead’.

\(^9\) Macr. *Sat.* 5.21.19 reports that Panyassis and Pherekydes (FGrH 3F18a) recount Herakles’ journey to Erytheia (which Macrobius refers to as ‘a Spanish island’); cf. Strab. 3.5.3, Phil. *Vit. Ap.* 5.4-5 (who makes Geryon almost secondary and says that Herakles traversed the earth for the sake of wisdom – a good example of a Herakles myth fitted to the purpose at hand).
nature of the site, tinged with the colour of the setting sun.\textsuperscript{10} It is on this journey to the west that Herakles establishes the Pillars as an enduring memorial of his distant travels and, as Pindar has it, as an enduring limit for those who came after.

This journey took Herakles to a place beyond human experience which even he could not reach without divine assistance.\textsuperscript{11} His destination is not Olympos – not yet – but a distant part of the world with its own associations with death, the afterlife and immortality, situated beyond the edge of Ocean. The distant nature of these lands can be seen in Herakles’ use of a special vessel to cross Ocean: only by riding in the cup of Helios was Herakles able to cross the unfamiliar expanse to reach Geryon’s otherworldly island. It is not only the destination, then, that lies outside the range of human experience, but also the nature of the journey itself. There is disagreement as to how Herakles obtains the cup: sometimes he asks nicely, sometimes he demands and fights for it, in some cases he claims it from a third party (Nereos or Okeanos himself).\textsuperscript{12} The constant element is that the cup belongs to Helios, the divinity who knew these waters best since he descended into/beyond them each day in the course of his journey across

\textsuperscript{10} As noted by Nakassis 2004, p. 226, and elaborated into a central theme by Carson 1998 in her Autobiography of Red.

\textsuperscript{11} Romm 1992 (18 n. 27): “Even Herakles himself, moreover, crossed through this space only with the special permission of the gods.”

\textsuperscript{12} Athen. 11.469c: Peisander (fr. 5 PEG) says that the cup belonged to Helios and Panyassis (fr. 9 PEG) agrees, but has Herakles obtain it from Nereos. Stesich. S17 (=185) PMGF, Aisch. Herakl. (fr. 74 Snell 1985), Pherekyd. FGrH 3 F 18a, and Ap. Bib. 2.5.10 all associate the journey in the bowl with the quest for Geryon’s cattle; as Brize (LIMC sv. “Herakles: Herakles and Geryon”) points out, a secondary tradition (Pherekyd. FGrH 3 F 16.17; Ap. Bib. 2.5.11) associates it instead with the journey to the Hesperides. The engagement of Herakles and Helios and Herakles’ journey in the bowl are shown on eight extant vases, dating to the fairly focused range of c. 510-475, all Attic vases, but found in South Italy and Rhodes as well as Attica, (LIMC, ibid.) suggesting a heightened interest contemporary with or just before Pindar’s compositions.
the sky.\textsuperscript{13} The use of the sun’s cup to reach the edges of the world heightens the association of the western ocean with the sunset and the dying of the day.\textsuperscript{14} Perhaps because it is here that the sun disappears, a range of cultures locate sites associated with the unknown, and often with afterlife beliefs, from the Irish Tír na nÓg to the Kunlun Mountains in Taoist traditions,\textsuperscript{15} in the West.

Elements in Greek mythology represent the world of the Western ocean as less then firmly situated within the human world. Homer provides the most famous association of the West with afterlife motifs when he establishes the site of Odysseus’ descent(?) to the underworld at the borders of Ocean.\textsuperscript{16} Like Herakles setting course for Geryon, Odysseus too requires assistance from a deity, in his case the goddess Circe who is able to tell him what no human knows: the road to the land of the dead. Like Geryon’s island, that of the Hesperides lies

\textsuperscript{13} Mimn. Fr. 12 IEG locates the beginning of Helios’ nocturnal journey at the Hesperides.

\textsuperscript{14} It is also tempting to follow (aptly named) M. L. West in linking this isolated element from Greek mythology with the well-established Egyptian motif of the bark of the sun which makes its way across the heavens each day and then descends into the world of the dead during the hours of the night: West 1997, p. 541-2. Parallels can be drawn, too, to the moment in the Babylonian Gilgamesh epic when Gilgamesh desires to cross the ocean to the dwelling place of Utnapishtim in search of immortality: he, as a mortal, cannot cross the waters without the assistance of the divine ferryman, Ur-Shanabi. It is not evident that Greek literature ever directly adopts these models, and I would not argue that Greek audiences picturing Herakles on his journey would consciously refer to these other traditions. At the same time, it is highly plausible that outlines of and motifs from these stories were circulating orally and informally in a world as integrated as the Mediterranean had become in the centuries before the Persian wars.

\textsuperscript{15} The Chinese example suggests that it is the sunset that is salient whether or not a sea forms the western boundary of a landscape.

\textsuperscript{16} Hom. Od. 10.508-12; 11.13-22 Sourvinou-Inwood 1995, p. 59-66, has argued that this location of a communication-point with the underworld in the West seems to be at least partially innovation, reorienting the entrance to the land of the dead away from points on the mainland. Cf. Austin 1975, p. 97: “...in contrast to the region of eos, zophos “lies behind and below; it is murky, damp, mist-enshrouded, the region of settings and endings.”
in the West; their name guarantees that this location is not incidental or unimportant. On or near the island where Geryon grazes his cattle are to be found two other flocks: the cattle of Helios and the cattle of Hades.

Pindar’s employment of Herakles’ Pillars, then, draws on rich mythological traditions which locate the Pillars in a place beyond human knowledge, too distant for human approach, and potentially associated with the universal human boundary of death. When Pindar declares that his laudandus has grasped the Pillars he is assimilating the athletic victory to a heroic journey to the edge of human experience. If the image communicates praise it also implies a warning: Herakles himself set these limits: do not go beyond.

Why was this image so effective in communicating the potentially opposed messages of exaltation and limitation? The answer, I think, lies in another strand of the Herakles tradition: his apotheosis. This tradition was well-established by Pindar’s time, though it seems to have been a relatively recent innovation, first traceable at the end of the seventh century. Our scattered


\[20\] Our earliest literary evidence is Herakles’ appearance as an eidolon in the Nekyia (for, the poem explains, he was really on Olympos). It seems probable, though, that these elements might belong to a late stage of the poem’s development, perhaps reflecting Athenian influence. V. Sourvinou-Inwood 1995, p. 87-88; for this issue within an overview of the dating of the apotheosis v. Stafford 2012, p. 172-175. If correct, this Odyssean adjustment confirms the wide acceptance gained by the new apotheosis motif. Stafford points to a few early visual indications of the apotheosis including a Corinthian aryballos (c. 600 BCE) found at Vulci in Etruria depicting Herakles in a chariot with Hebe surrounded by other gods as well a similar scene on a roughly contemporary Samian krater and a Parian amphora.
sources, some as late as Pausanias, indicate that Herakles could receive cult as both god and hero – and in a few places both.\(^{21}\) How the development of the apotheosis motif spread and influenced communities across the Greek world is a fascinating question, but not one that I can engage with here.\(^{22}\) For my argument it is sufficient to note that frequent treatments of the apotheosis motif in fifth century literature and art indicate that the idea of ‘Herakles the God’ had a contemporary resonance.\(^{23}\)

The two fifth century literary genres in which Herakles’ immortality is best represented are tragedy and epinician. Tragedy interrogates the order of the world, flirting with chaos, while epinician (re)constructs and (re)confirms it. When Sophokles deals with Herakles’ death, or Euripides with his madness, their embellishments are hung on the frame of existing religious

\(^{21}\) E.g. at Samothrace and Sikyon. Cf. Hdt. 2.44 who says that proper practice is to offer cult to Herakles as both hero and god (though he rationalizes this by distinguishing a Tyrian Herakles from a son of Amphitryon). Diod. Sic. 4.39.1 names the Marathonians as the first to worship Herakles as a god. While it is important to our understanding of Herakles that this distinction is commented on in the sources, showing a duality perceived in his nature, it should not endorse an over-broad generalization of the dichotomy sometimes attributed to cult practice.

\(^{22}\) V. Shapiro 1983; Nilsson 1923, p. 144-145, on Herakles’ death on the pyre as an aetiology for fire festivals on Mt. Oiôta. Boardman (LIMC “Herakles’ Death and Apotheosis”, p. 122) suggests that early traditions of apotheosis may have existed without the element of the pyre. Sixth century vases show Herakles being welcomed among the gathering of the gods (LIMC, ibid. nos. 2847-2858) or carried in a chariot (LIMC, ibid. nos. 2877-2908).

\(^{23}\) Literature: Soph. Phil. 726-729; Eur. Herakl. 912-916; the theme is flirted with but resolved differently in Eur. HF. 1331-1333 (H. dies in due time and goes to Hades). Aisch. Herakl. fr. 73 b Snell 1985 seems to refer to the pyre, as does Soph. Trach. 1193-1202 (on the possible play in these lines between audience knowledge of the apotheosis and the limited knowledge of the characters v Finkelberg 1996). Pindar himself refers to the apotheosis in three of the four odes dealt with here (not explicitly in Nemean 4) as well as Nem. 1.69-72 and Nem. 10.17-18; Bacchylides alludes to Herakles’ involvement with Deianeira (and consequently his death, possibly his apotheosis) in his 5\(^{\text{th}}\) epinician and 16\(^{\text{th}}\) dithyramb. Art: Herakles’ introduction to Olympos and reception by the gods occurs frequently in Attic red figure (LIMC, ibid. nos. 2867-2875. Representations of the pyre appear on an Attic bell krater (c. 460-450) and a contemporary Attic psykter (LIMC “Herakles” nos. 2909-2910); images explicitly associating the pyre and the chariot-departure for Olympos begin to occur around the end of the fifth century (LIMC, ibid. nos. 2916-2920).
structures and pose real questions about the nature of the world. So too for epinician. Both
Pindar and Bacchylides allude to the apotheosis, developing the theme differently for the
purposes of different odes. In *Nemean* 1 the event is prophesied by Teiresias, in *Olympian* 3 it is
quietly woven into the fabric of the ode. Pindar’s Heraklean narratives glorify the victor and
entertain the community gathered to see the ode performed. In addition, though, we must not
be too quick to discount the serious acceptance of the central claim that these mythical
narratives make: Herakles, once a mortal of a sort, became a god. He could be – and has been –
read as a model, literal or metaphorical, for the immortality that the *laudandus* can claim
through his victory. This reading, however, smooths away the challenge that Herakles’ duality
poses to the order of the world. It is exactly this duality and its potential to blossom into
paradox, that Pindar uses as a lever to reassert a space between mortal and immortal
experience.

In the four odes that I treat here I argue that the two motifs, the Pillars of Herakles and
his apotheosis, frame Herakles in order to emphasize the impossible duality inherent in his
nature: human and divine. For Pindar, though, the two do not coexist: the Pillars come to mark
the extent of Herakles’ human life while the apotheosis is his departure from it. Combined, the
two elements weave a web of achievement and limitation around the human victor, highlighting
his mortal status: the ode comes to praise him and to bury him. This dichotomy is employed to
a distinct effect in each of the odes I treat here: engaging with local myth (especially *Nemean* 3
and 4), local cult (especially *Isthmian* 4) and the unique status of the *laudandus* (*Olympian* 3). In
all cases the myth of Herakles is more than praise or entertainment. It is a simultaneous
celebration and reminder of the status of humanity: their nearness to and distance from the
gods.
You Can’t Go Home Again: the families of Herakles in Isthmian 4

There is Nothing Here That is not Herakles

Pindar’s fourth Isthmian celebrates the pankration victory of Melissos, a Theban: in such a context we might be more surprised if Herakles were not called upon to glorify his own city. Moreover, based on intra-textual evidence, the ode was performed at a Theban festival in honour of Herakles and/or members of his family.\(^\text{24}\) In multiple senses, then, Herakles was already present to the citizens of Thebes at their festival celebration before the chorus ever began to sing. Could he even have been considered a sort of co-audience? The ode, like all epinicians, celebrates a human victor and mortal victory. This ode, however, does so in the context of a festival which – by the athletic events, as well as by sacrifices, hymns, and other ritual\(^\text{25}\) – does honour to Herakles himself. There is a sort of continuing reflective effect that Pindar introduces in this ode then: Melissos’ Isthmian victory is rendered glorious through comparison to Herakles; honour is offered to Herakles (or his sons) by Melissos’ participation (and victory) in the local Theban contests; Melissos and his family obtain enduring κλέος

\(^{24}\) Σ Isth. 4.114a,b. This significance of this context was developed in the seminal work of Krummen 1990, p. 33-94. I return to her arguments in detail throughout. Ferrari 2000, p. 230, sees the references as allusions to previous festivals.

\(^{25}\) We cannot know how many of the epinicians were originally intended for performance at festivals (even aside from the possibility of reperformance in such settings), but some, including Pyth. 5, Pyth. 11, and Ol. 3 offer good intratextual evidence. Krummen 1990, p. 155-211, adduces Ol. 1 as well, seeing an initiatory context in the Pelops story - this is, I think, a little strained. Ferrari 2012 takes up the theme of cult in epinician (and in the process objects to the frequent contextualization of Pythian 5 at the Karneia).
through the prestigious commemoration that Pindar creates for them; the celebration of the
dode in turn enhances the celebration of the Herakleia. In this Herakles-saturated environment,
we might ask not what Herakles is doing in this ode, but which aspects of Herakles - local or
Panhellenic, mortal or immortal - Pindar deploys for his Theban audience.

Pindar frames this Herakles as a figure who has experienced both humanity and divinity.
The division between these two spheres of experience is represented as absolute: at the
moment of apotheosis Herakles departs one mode of existence to enter another. This sharply
binary representation depends on the traditions surrounding the Theban Herakles and the
night-time festival at his precinct as interlocutor. The context of the festival acts as a fabric into
which the ode is woven, but Pindar’s poetic representations of Herakles are not of a piece with
the cultic background. Instead, the cultic traditions supply elements of Herakles’ story to which
the ode only alludes and provide a foundation upon which Pindar can build, but against which
he can also react. Within this system of tensions and contrasts, the divine Herakles of the ode
stands apart from the human community and emphasizes its strength and coherence by his
abstraction from the patterns of human experience woven around him.26

Several of the thematic strands I will take up in my argument have already been woven
into a different pattern by Charles Segal.27 He, in a politely contra-Bundy display, argues that
the diverse elements of the ode become meaningful when freed from a reading oriented
narrowly toward praise. His demonstration draws on the themes of humanity and divinity;
mortality and immortality:

26 By abstraction I do not mean absence. Instead I am arguing that by rendering Herakles as a god Pindar
establishes him in a particular relationship to the human, Theban community: he (like, for example, Apollo
at Delphi) can be physically present while remaining outside the closed circle of human interdependency.

27 Segal 1981.
If the eternal brilliance of the divine illuminates mortal life, it does so only because we are mortal. Our triumphs and achievements become fully meaningful only in and through death. The immortality of Pindar’s gods is important precisely because it always implies its negative, the emptiness of death which the poet would fill with the monuments of song.28

In the course of his argument, Segal draws on the ritual of the *Herakleia* and the contrast between Herakles the immortal father and his mortal sons as extensions of the themes of vicissitude, of triumph and failure, introduced earlier in the ode. My approach reverses the process, so to speak, by considering the other elements of the ode through a Heraklean lens: a sharp bifocal view of mortality and immortality that draws stark lines onto the less defined ritual experience of the Theban community.

**You Can Take the God out of Thebes...**

In order to appreciate how emphatically immortal Pindar’s poetic Herakles is, it is useful to consider his nature within the Theban landscapes of myth and cult, particularly within the cultic complex south-east of the city outside the Elektran gate. By the time of Pausanias the components of Herakles’ temenos included, inter alia, the tomb of Amphitryon, the house of Alkmene, and the tomb of the children of Herakles and Megara.29 The reference to the tombs of Herakles’ children in our ode, and to that of Amphitryon elsewhere in Pindar’s corpus, probably attests that at least part of the complex existed already in the (early) fifth century and that Herakles was conceived of within this network of relationships. Our ability to access this nature

28 Segal 1981, 82.

29 Paus. 9.11.2.
is, unfortunately, severely curtailed by the state of the sources and the lack of excavation at the site.

In 1981 Schachter felt secure in his view that Herakles was always a hero at Thebes.\textsuperscript{30} His basis for this conclusion, however, lies largely in the very passages in which I am attempting to access the ‘joints’ between cultic reality and poetic choice.\textsuperscript{31} He points to the description of the festival (lines 61-68) to support this claim, seeing the nighttime sacrifices as consistent with ‘heroic/chthonic cult’. Completely aside from the problems inherent in the old Olympian/Chthonic dichotomy,\textsuperscript{32} Schachter takes Pindar’s representation as that of an uninterested witness rather than the poetic production that it is. Moreover, as Olivieri has indicated, the Pindaric passage is not at all clear about the recipient(s) of the sacrifices – the line transitioning to the feasts and sacrifices begins with a dative relative pronoun referring to Herakles, but the altars are assimilated to the pyres of his sons and it is for them (via another relative pronoun) that the festival fires burn through the night.\textsuperscript{33} I will argue below that the grammatical confusion is intentional, but for now it suffices to say that the ode alone cannot allow us to accept Schachter’s characterization.

\textsuperscript{30} Schachter 1981, vol.2, 20: “However, it is clear that, although Herakles may have become a god, his cult at Thebes remained that of a hero.”

\textsuperscript{31} By ‘cultic reality’ I, of course, do not imply that cultic practice is inherently inflexible and literary production endlessly malleable – that said, I think we can perceive the cult as embodying a degree of shared conception of its elements of which Pindar would have been aware.

\textsuperscript{32} V. Nock 1944 for an early critique of this dichotomy, Ekroth 2002, p. 310-325 for a more recent state of the question, and Parker 2011, p. 80-84.

\textsuperscript{33} Olivieri 2011, p. 115.
More convincing is Schachter’s use of the mythical traditions surrounding Herakles at Thebes to argue that Herakles’ nature is that of the warrior-hero.\textsuperscript{34} Olivieri expresses something similar when she observes that at Thebes Herakles is a figure embedded in the networks of family and political structures while he is elsewhere an isolated wanderer, civilizing but himself not quite civilized.\textsuperscript{35} At Thebes he is a hyper-masculine young warrior who conquers a lion, restores his city to independence, and impregnates a surprising number of women in a surprisingly short time before marrying into the royal family.\textsuperscript{36} His epithet here, though only attested later, is Promachos, and this too fits the model of the civic leader who goes out to battle at the head of an army.\textsuperscript{37}

Insofar as the cult complex beyond the Elektran gates corresponds to the mythological traditions we can reconstruct, the Theban Herakles is something closer to a hero: he spent his early life at Thebes, has his roots in the community, and continues to exert his influence over that same community after his death. Even at Thebes, though, there is no known tradition of a tomb of Herakles or any local account of his death. Some late accounts depict the Thebans sacrificing ‘as to a hero’ while Isokrates already in the fourth century says that Thebans honour

\textsuperscript{34} Schachter 1981, vol. 2, p. 16-21; like Olivieri, he draws on Herakles’ mythical biography. He more generally sees ‘Herakles’ as a name applied to a variety of local heroes in Boiotia and suggests that none other than Iolaos was Herakles’ ‘predecessor’ at Thebes. This historical reconstruction is speculative, but the focus on Herakles at Thebes as ‘an ideal of courageous young manhood’ points us in the right direction.

\textsuperscript{35} Olivieri 2011, p. 89-98, 118.

\textsuperscript{36} Ap. Bib. 2.4.9-10; Paus. 9.27.6-7; Diod. Sic. 4.29.3.

\textsuperscript{37} Paus. 9.11.3 describes a statue of Herakles with the cult title Promachos (its creators Xenokritos and Eubios are hard to date). The myth that arose or was created at the Battle of Leuktra draws on this characterization: the report spreads that all the weapons vanished from Herakles’ temple and that Herakles himself marched out to battle with the Theban armies: Xen. Hell. 6.4.7; Diod. Sic. 15.53.4 (who frames the myth as Epaminondas’ propaganda).
Herakles “above all other gods” (but it must be borne in mind that he is addressing Philip, who has a personal stake in Herakles’ standing). Even the games celebrated at Thebes offer layers of ambivalence: they are sometimes called the Herakleia, sometimes the Iolaeia. This intriguing alternation suggests that Herakles could be perceived as something close to the status of his nephew.

It is neither possible nor critical to my purpose to establish whether the Thebans of Pindar’s day understood Herakles as a hero or a god, though I suspect that the local traditions could exist comfortably side by side with the apotheosis. Though not (apparently) starkly articulated in cult, the dichotomy is emphasized throughout the ode. For Pindar, despite his Theban audience and his own Theban origins, Herakles is no longer – in the moment of the ode’s performance - a Theban citizen. Instead he has joined the community of the Olympians. The Thebans can claim the refracted glory of that ascent as a point of pride for their city, but they can no longer claim him as a countryman – and he cannot claim them.

Geographies Within and Beyond

Images of space and movement are woven throughout Isthmian 4 in a pattern that intersects with Herakles’ appearances in order to highlight his dual nature and his resulting double relationship to the human world. That world is presented in two ways: realistically and schematically. The realistic world consists of specific places inhabited by specific people, mostly

38 Hero: Diod. Sic. 4.39.1; god: Isok. Phil. 532.
39 Deubner 1956, p. 446-447; v. also Roesch 1975 for an overview of the inscriptional evidence, though this distinctly postdated the fifth century.
40 West 2009 discusses the roles of Herakles and Iolaos in Pindar and other early poetry.
real and contemporary ones. The schematic world does away with descriptions of distinct cities, countries or populations in favour of representing the earth in timeless physical terms, composed of land and water and wind. This schematic world is the one that Herakles has a role in shaping, before he leaves it for the homes of the gods. It exists internally in the metaphors that shape the human imagination as much as it does in physical space. Herakles appears against both backgrounds, realistic and schematic, in such a way that the shift in framework highlights the moment of his transition from mortal to immortal within the ode. By extending the same frameworks to the victor and his family (and by extension the Theban audience) Pindar creates a mythical scope for human achievement even as he reaffirms the limitations inherent to human mortality.

Looming at the edge of the schematic, imaginative world are Herakles’ eponymous Pillars. They occur in this ode juxtaposed with another locational idea which exists in both the schematic and realistic worlds and binds the two together: οἰκός, or the idea of home. This passage — Herakles’ first appearance in the ode — occurs near the opening and introduces a

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41 Cole 2004, p. 7-8, articulates three types of landscapes: i) natural: "the landscape of the physical environment," ii) human: "shaped by the needs of agriculture and political organization," and iii) imagined: "joined to the known world but acknowledged to exist beyond the range of normal human experience and impossible for ordinary mortals to reach," including a) the world of mythological creatures and b) the world of the dead. My schematic world is close to Cole’s 'natural' landscape, but with the 'imagined' landscapes at the edges - inaccessible but present.

42 Cf. the description of Herakles in Eur. HF. (851-2) - spoken by Madness in his defense! - as the one who gentled the impassable land and the feral sea (ἄβατον δὲ χώραν καὶ θάλασσαν ἀγρίαν/ ἐξημέρώσας).

43 Particularly if, as I do, one reads Isth. 4 as independent of Isth. 3. There is no compelling reason to read them as a unity, but doing so does no harm to the interpretations I offer for Isth. 4 alone. Lidov 1975 argues from the meter for two separate poems intended for performance together, agreeing that each can stand alone; at p. 176-180 he offers an overview of earlier views. Among those backing a unified reading are Thummer 1969 and more recently Segal 1981, p. 69-70; Race 1997 prints them as two separate odes.
compressed image which is expanded and elaborated in the subsequent triads. The lines come
in the midst of praise for the Kleonymidai, bringing the account of their achievements to a
stirring height and a sudden halt in the same moment.

ἀνορέαις δ᾽ ἐσχάταισιν
οἶκοθεν στάλαισιν ἄπτονθ᾽ Ἴρακλείαις·
καὶ μηκέτι μακροτέραν σπεῦδειν ἄρετάν.
Isth. 4.11-13

By virtue of extreme prowess
they lay hold of the Heraklean Pillars from their homes
– but do not seek further excellence.

Here Herakles is present only as a descriptor, a memory which attaches to and defines the
Pillars. The objects so defined remain in the human world and the human imagination where
they mark the farthest journey of Herakles the man. The Kleonymidai have attained this peak of
human achievement: Pindar underscores the extremity of their feat with the adjective
ἐσχάταισιν which concludes line 11 and anticipates Ἴρακλείαις in the same position in the
following line. In the midst of the parallels, though, appears that other word, οἶκοθεν, which
fundamentally differentiates the Kleonymid achievements from Herakles’. Some interpreters
have attempted to undo the paradox at the heart of this image by suggesting that οἶκοθεν
modifies ἀνορέαις rather than ἄπτονθ’: the Kleonymidai, by virtue of their highest native
excellence, grasp the Pillars of Herakles. This reading, however, robs the Heraklean image of its
significance within the poem by reducing it to a self-contained stock trope. Instead, the Pillars
here serve a very specific function: to juxtapose the achievements of the earthly Herakles with

44 Hubbard 1985, p. 14-15, takes on the problems with this interpretation in his discussion of Ol. 3, arguing
that the ‘native excellence’ reading (already present in Σ Isth. 4.18b and Σ Ol. 3.79a) is otiose for both
odes.
those of the Kleonymidai. This contrast demonstrates that the two sets of achievements are comparable in degree (they share the quality of being highest/farthest/best) but totally distinct in nature and scope.

Herakles’ foundation of the Pillars commemorated a journey that took him beyond the communities of men on a series of exploits accomplished alone or with the help of a single comrade.\(^\text{45}\) The praise that Pindar offers Melissos’ clan before he comes to a climax with the image of the Pillars has nothing to do with such distant journeys or exotic feats. The excellence of the Kleonymidai blooms in a different context: within their own Theban community.

\[\text{το} ι\ μέν \ \text{ω}ν \ Θήβαιοι \ \text{τιμά} \ εν \ \text{τα} λε ν \ \text{άρχα} \ θεν \ \text{λέ} \ \gamma \ \text{νται}
\text{πρόξε} νοί τ’ \ \text{άμφι} \ \text{κ} \ \text{τι} \ \text{ό} \ \text{ώ} \ \text{ν} \ \text{κ} \ \text{ελα} \ \text{δε} \ \text{νά} \ \text{ς} \ τ’ \ \text{ό} \ \text{ρ} \ \text{φ} \ \text{α} \ \text{ν} \ \text{ο} \\
\text{ύβριος}˙ \ \text{δ} \ \text{σ} \ \text{σ} \ \text{α} \ \text{δ} \ \text{’} \ \text{έ} \ \text{π} \ \text{’} \ \text{άν} \ \text{θ} \ \text{ρ} \ \text{ώ} \ \text{π} \ \text{ους} \ \text{ά} \ \text{τ} \ \text{αι}
\text{μα} \ \text{ρ} \ \text{τ} \ \text{ύ} \ \text{ρ} \ \text{ι} \ \text{α} \ \text{φι} \ \text{μ} \ \text{έ} \ \text{ν} \ \text{ώ} \ \text{ν} \ \text{τ} \ \text{ε} \ \text{φω} \ \text{τ} \ \text{ώ} \ \\
\text{ά} \ \text{π} \ \text{λ} \ \text{έ} \ \text{τ} \ \text{ου} \ \text{δ} \ \text{ό} \ \text{ξ} \ \text{α} \ \text{ς}, \ \text{ἐπέ} \ \text{ψ} \ \text{α} \\
\text{σ} \ \text{α} \ \text{n} \ \text{κα} \ \text{τ} \ \text{ά} \ \text{π} \ \text{ά} \ \text{ν} \ \text{τ} \ \text{έ} \ \text{λ} \ \text{ο} \ \text{ς};
\]

*Isth. 4.7-11*

For, endowed with ancient honour among the citizens of Thebes, they are recognized as *proxenoi* of the amphiktyons, known as men free from blaring hubris. Accounts are carried on the wind to men, witnesses to the unending fame of those still living and those who have gone – the Kleonymidai have grasped each of these in its fullness.

Their glory comes from the esteem of their countrymen and is reflected in the status as *proxenoi* that marks them as holding a special place within the political/religious structures of the city.\(^\text{46}\)

\(^{45}\) Iolaos, particularly helpful with the Hydra: e.g. Hellanikos (FGrH 4F103) and Herodorus (FGrH 31F23) and v. Gantz, p. 384-385, for early visual representations including a Boiotian bow fibula c. 700 BCE.

\(^{46}\) Currie 2005, p. 341, emphasizes that this is a hereditary privilege and points toward a ritual status; Σ* Isth. 4.11a-b, as well as Slater (s.v. πρόξενος) paraphrase Pindar’s Greek: this is a family characterized by its good relations (with neighboring communities). Kowalzig 2007, p. 385-386, sees this formulation as
To praise their lack of *hubris* is to assert that they fit into the order that governs relationships among humans and between humans and gods. If Herakles’ achievements reflect a compulsion toward the beyond, those of the Kleonymidai are oriented inwards, towards their own community. This focus is reflected in the fact that Pindar offers extended praise for the Kleonymidai as a family rather than for individual outstanding members (until we come to Melissos himself). Their achievements are highly contextualized in human terms, terms of family and community centered in contemporary Thebes. In short, they excel at being human – something rarely said of Herakles himself.

Pindar’s focus in the previous lines is on the real Theban landscape, the one experienced by the audience engaged in the performance of the ode as well as the characters within it. From this tight focus the camera zooms out, so to speak, to follow the winds that carry news of human fame across the world. Humans die, but what survive are μαρτύρια, witnesses – the same word that appears in *Nem.* 3 where it indicates the Pillars themselves. There Herakles established them as a testimony to his own physical journey; here they mark the limit of all human achievement. This is a leap into the schematic geography: the glory of the Kleonymids, the glory that they earned by excelling in their own city, is carried to the far limits of the schematic world along with the glories of other men. It is received (ἐπ’ ἀνθρώπους) wherever there are mortals to hear it. This is a scope of fame appropriate to the heroes of myth (we might think of the wonder of Aeneas and his men when they see the Trojan War already

supra-civic praise establishing the *laudandus* in good standing in a pan-Boiotian context, an expansion which only emphasizes the (comparatively) local importance of the designation.

portrayed in far off Carthage). The fame of the Kleonymidai traverses a timeless, mythologized landscape that Herakles himself defined; the individual Kleonymidai remain within the circle of their community and their own lifetimes. It is this distinction which illuminates the insistent presence of οἴκοςεν in the image of the Pillars: the fame engendered by a family’s achievements follows Herakles’ paths to the edges of the earth. But that fame, if I may take liberties with a rather self-satisfied old saw, begins at home.

The image of Herakles’ Pillars served as a reminder that the scope of human fame is commensurate with the expanses of the imaginable human world: kleos travels beyond the limitations that time and space impose on an individual and attains the far reaches of the inhabited world. Herakles’ second appearance in the ode plays on the same premise, but this time in an extended mythological passage rather than by inset allusion. In the first Heraklean reference, the Pillars evoked a set of shared traditions and a shared reference to Herakles’ farthest earthly journey – the details of the intervening spaces were unimportant. In the extended mythological passage, by contrast, Pindar chooses a familiar exploit from Herakles’ extended CV, but then frames it carefully within and beyond the structures of the ‘real’ and ‘schematic’ worlds in order to emphasize the aspect of Herakles that interests him here: his transition from one nature to another.

The only identifiable mythical feat in this passage is Herakles’ encounter with Antaios. This is a logical choice in an ode that praises a pankration victory and the athletic connection is the ostensible reason for its inclusion, paralleling Melissos’ all-out bout to Herakles’ mythic

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struggle.\textsuperscript{49} That struggle, however, is absent. The main event turns out to be primarily an excuse for the imagery that surrounds it.

And indeed long ago a man travelled to the home of Antaios from Kadmeian Thebes, a man small in stature but unbent in spirit; to wrestle with Antaios he came to wheat-bearing Libya, to stop him from roofing the temple of Poseidon with the skulls of worshippers: the son of Alkmene did this. He went on to Olympia, after he had searched out all the lands and the deep bending hollow of the grey sea, after he had gentled the waters for sailors. And now at the hand of Zeus the Aegis-bearer he dwells enjoying the most noble fortune: honoured by the immortals as one of their own he is spouse to Hebe, lord of golden homes and son-in-law of Hera.

Rather than the struggle with Antaios, it is Herakles’ approach to Olympos that stands at the center of this passage. This might have come as a surprise to the audience, since the Herakles/Antaios encounter seems to have been a popular subject, at least if we can judge by the frequent appearance of the theme in contemporary vase paintings in which the two are

\textsuperscript{49} Pind. Isth. 4.46-51.
often displayed in the midst of a complicated wrestling move. This would not have been the only surprise. Herakles’ Libyan adventure was traditionally included as one stop in the course of his wanderings in the west, the very journey that concluded with the foundation of the Pillars. Here, in stark contrast, Herakles makes a beeline from Thebes to Libya with the express purpose of engaging Antaios.

This itinerary serves to embed Herakles in a realistic, human geography. As a man (ἀνήρ) he makes a journey that any of Pindar’s Theban contemporaries could make, that Pindar himself probably made in the course of his association with the Battiads. The specific locations that bracket his journey are further framed in terms that highlight their identities as sites inhabited by human communities. Thebes is ‘Kadmeian’, a term that situates the city in a cultural context and recalls its founder and his descendants. Herakles’ destination is the home (δόμους) of Antaios: the noun insists upon a civilized, domestic setting, as does the presence of the temple of Poseidon. Things have gone badly awry in the way the temple is being treated, but the ideas of home and cult place belong to the familiar setting of a human community. Even the characterization of Libya itself points to the needs of humans: Libya is wheat-bearing (πυροφόρον), a source of the substance that not only nourishes men but also – in Greek

50 V., for instance, Poliakoff 1987, Fig. 45, and Fig. 55 where some illegitimate eye-gouging is depicted.

51 Diod. Sic. 4.27.1-3 for a late account; Peisander (ap. Σ Pyth. 9.185a) refers to Antaios’ daughter and Huxley 1969, p. 102-103, contextualizes the story as part of the return from Atlas and the Hesperides (but here he draws only on the fact that Peisander dealt with the labours and not a single, more localized event). Ap. Bib. 2.5.11 places the Antaios episode before the completion of the Hesperides labour.

52 Pind. Pyth. 4, 5, 9 – Longley-Cook 1989, p. 202-204, cites the argument of Duchemin 1967 that Pythian 5 was composed in Cyrene and – correctly – critiques it for lack of external support. While there is no authoritative source to support Pindar’s Libyan travels, much less to pinpoint their dates, the event is well within the bounds of possibility.

53 Ancient inhabitants of Thebes as Kadmeians: Il.4.388, Hes. Th.326, Hdt.5.57.
literature – defines them. All of this may help to explain the ‘small but sturdy’ Herakles who has so aggravated interpreters. The point is not that Herakles is midgety compared to a standard-issue human but that he is small compared to the super-sized Antaios. He is a Theban hero, setting out on a real-world journey to engage in a competition in which his human spirit counts for more than his physical limitations. He is not identified at all until line 73, though his identity was surely clear to the audience with the first mention of Antaios. When he does receive an explicit identity he is the son of Alkmene, a designation that emphasizes his mortal heritage.

54 Od. 9.191: men are characterized as σιτοφάγος in contrast to the unsocialized Polyphemos; Od. 8.222: αὐτόν ἔδοντες modifies the men on the earth (ἐπὶ χόοι), that is, Odysseus’ contemporaries (in contrast to Herakles and Eurytos, heroes of an earlier age); Hes. Erg. 146-7: the race of bronze, in their savagery did not eat wheat (οὐδὲ τι αὐτὸν /ἡσθιον).

55 Sarah Iles Johnston remind me that we should not be too quick to do away with the ready explanation: by framing Herakles in this physical mold Pindar seeks to flatter the victor. Some interpreters have argued that this Herakles is actually tiny: Krummen 1990, p. 57, and, tracing possible Egyptian connections to Bes, p. 95-96; others that the size reference are only framed against larger competitors: Gerber 1991, 296. V. Schachter 1981, vol.2, p. 6, for the possible blending of a diminutive local deity named Charops with a cultic Herakles (Paus. 9.38.6 for the small statue). Cf. du P Boeke 2004 for a reading that sees the play with size as a central poetic conceit for the ode.

56 Vase paintings of this motif – a frequent one in the late sixth and early fifth century - sometimes depict Antaios as considerably larger than Herakles (e.g. LIMC “Antaios 1” nos. 1,3), some as roughly the same stature (e.g. ibid. nos. 2,5, 6,8). Whatever the size, the images emphasize the complicated wrestling holds involved in the struggle. Antaios seems to have been also mortal, though of unusual size (he too was the son of a god) and nasty proclivities. Pindar, of course, had options in how he chose to represent such figures, and here I think he is rendering Herakles as the human warrior par excellence set against the overgrown and undercivilized Antaios. See also Magrath 1977 on Pindar’s uses of the Antaios myth.

57 To this point he is, as has often been observed, a parallel to the victor Melissos (e.g. Olivieri 2011, p. 96; Köhnken 1971, p. 116) - but that parallelism is cut off with the introduction of the apotheosis motif.

58 Krummen 1990, p. 37-38, has suggested that the Antaios episode was highlighted by the metopes of the Herakleion, disregarding Pausanias’ attribution of this work to Praxiteles. If the attribution is correct, it suggests that the sculptures significantly postdated (and may even have been influenced by) the ode.
The conclusion to the Antaios episode is followed by the ubiquitous relative pronoun which might have been expected to return the action to the festival setting. Instead, it is Herakles himself who experiences the pivot. The short relative clause depicts his departure for Olympos – the moment that marks the beginning of his life beyond the bounds of human experience. The relative clause was preceded by the real-world geography in which Herakles as Theban hero traveled; it is followed by a wide-frame view of the schematic world that Herakles, in his transition from mortal to immortal, is leaving behind him. Here, again, appears the zoom-out effect: the world as a whole appears as though it were literally (as it is metaphorically) in Herakles’ rearview mirror. Suddenly it is not specifically Thebes or Libya that the audience encounters, but all the lands (γαίας πάσας) and the entire expanse of the sea (βαθύκρεμνον πολιῶς ἁλὸς θέναρ).

These are the spaces that Herakles traveled before his apotheosis, when travelling still had meaning for him as it does not now that he has become a god. This imagined world represents the possible scope not for a single individual’s travels (that would be a Heraklean task) but for the expansion of the human fame that is generated within a community and then radiates out to the far reaches of the world.

The significance that I have suggested for the geographical imagery is actually made explicit earlier in the ode in a nearly-gnomic statement that concludes the only non-Heraklean

59 Relatives as pivots from mythological to contemporary time: cf. ch. 2 n. 66.

60 Θέναρ (the palm/hollow of the hand) is a rare word in early literature: it occurs once in Homer (Il. 5.339) and once in the fragmentary Meropis (fr. 3.3) and refers in both cases to the hand of a goddess. The two appearances of the word in Pindar are metaphorical: here the hollow of the sea, and at Pyth. 4.206 as the hollow of an altar. I wonder if the use here emphasizes on one hand the contained-ness of the human sphere (in the hollow of a hand), and on the other Herakles’ transition to immortality.

61 The infinite mobility of gods is not emphasized in the ode, but I think as a commonplace of depictions of the gods, it stands as mute comparandum.
mythological passage of the ode. The passage deals with Aias, who will get his due below, but first a brief consideration of the _gnome_ will serve as coda to this geographical discussion.

For this spoken word creeps on, immortal,
if someone speaks it well: across both the full-fruit[ed earth
and through the sea
the gleam of noble deeds has travelled, unquenchable forever.

I call this utterance nearly gnomic because, via the deictic _τοῦτο_ and the non-aorist tenses, its primary reference is to the fame of Aias which has come down (_βέβακεν_) to contemporary Thebes and the moment of the ode’s performance. Once more the schematic world is described by its fundamental components: land and sea. It is not Aias himself who occupies this timeless space; it is the memory of his achievements. If his story is spoken well (_φωναεν_) it is immortal (_ἀθάνατον_) and the light cast by its glory fills the whole, imaginable earth.\(^{62}\) This is what it means for the Kleonymidai to have touched the Pillars of Herakles: with Pindar’s help their glory too will light up lands and seas. Herakles’ unique relationship to the world has underscored the

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\(^{62}\) There may also be a Heraklean echo in these lines: in _Theog._ 530-531: Zeus, rather than being angry with Herakles for freeing Prometheus, has set up the whole situation to spread the Theban Herakles’ (_Ἡρακλῆς Θηβαγενέος_) fame even farther than before over the greatly nourishing land (_ἐπὶ χόνα πολυβότειραν_) – a phrase that resonates with _πάγκαρπον χόνα_ in our passage.
human condition by contrast: while inhabiting the earth he shaped it, assuming divinity he left it behind.  

I have said that humans in this ode inhabit a chronologically and geographically determined world, while human glory, maintained by speech and song in human memory, can exceed those definitions to achieve the edges of the imaginable world. Herakles’ departure for Olympos highlights these geographical distinctions and the limitation of humans within the boundaries of their own spheres. Herakles’ departure and change of nature does not, however, only emphasize human limitations. By juxtaposing Herakles’ divinity with the mortal Theban community Pindar shows that human limitations and human strengths are the mutually dependent faces of a single coin. Without individual mortal fragility, the unique strengths of human community become meaningless.

**Sleeping and Waking, Winter and Spring**

By establishing Herakles in his Olympian seat, Pindar distinguishes his fate and nature fundamentally from that of his mortal (and now dead) sons. The immortal Herakles within the ode is reoriented toward his Olympian family, leaving the remembrance of his mortal sons as the responsibility of the living Theban community. The community offers a cultic and poetic

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63 Segal 1981, p. 77, comes to a similar conclusion from another direction: “Heracles, receiving honor in person from the immortal gods, does not need the intermediary of the poetic song to confer immortality.”

64 Here I disagree with Krummen 1990, p. 57, who argues that the Theban feasts offered to Herakles in this ode resonate with the Olympian feasts he enjoys in Nem. 1.72 and thus bind the Olympic and earthly settings together, weakening the divisions between the two feasting communities. Nem. 1, composed for an Aitnaian victor, should not be privileged as an especially relevant comparandum.
immortality – it is this strength of the living (and dying) that Pindar’s Herakles, by contrast and mythical memory, elicits.\(^{65}\)

The transition Pindar effects between the mythological passage and the Theban festival depends on a subtly drawn network of loyalties and commitments between Herakles, his sons by Megara and the Theban community.\(^{66}\) I reproduce the passage here, including the last lines of the myth in which Herakles has assumed his Olympian status.

\[\text{νῦν δὲ παρ’ Αἰγιόχῳ κάλλιστον ὀλβον ἀμφέπων ναει, τετήμα-}
\text{ται τε πρὸς ἀθανάτων φιλος, Ἡβαν τ’ ὄπυιει, χρυσαέων οίκων ἄνας καὶ γαμβρός Ἡρας,}
\text{τῷ μὲν Ἀλεκτράν ὑπερθεν δαίτα πορσύνοντες ἄστοι καὶ νεόδματα στεφάνωματα βωμῶν ἀνατελλον}
\text{ἕμπυρα χαλκοσαφὰ ὀκτὼ θανόντως, τοὺς Μεγάρα τέκε οἱ Κρεόοντίς υἱοὺς:}
\text{τοῖσιν ἐν δυθμαῖσιν αὐγάν ἀφλός ἀνατελλομένα συνεχὲς πανυχίζει}
\text{αἰθέρα κνισάεντι λακτίζοισα καπνῷ, καὶ δεύτερον ἅμα ἔτειν τέρμ’ ἀέθλων}
\text{γίνεται, ἱσχύος ἐργον.}
\text{Isth. 4.58-68}

And now at the hand of Zeus the Aegis-bearer he dwells enjoying the most noble fortune:
honoured by the immortals as one of their own he is spouse to Hebe, lord of golden homes and son-in-law of Hera.
For him beneath the Elektran Gate, offering feasts and new-built crowns of altars,
we increase the burnt sacrifices
of his eight, bronze-fitted dead sons,
whom Megara, daughter to Kreon, bore him:

\(^{65}\) V. Segal 1981 for a reading of the ode focused on these themes.

\(^{66}\) Segal 1981, p. 74-75, refers to this passage as a third myth (here: “an exemplary description with a narrative core”) after (i) Aias’ suicide and (ii) Herakles’ journey and apotheosis. For him the point is double: to set the “eight dead sons” against the immortal father and to depict the cult they receive as a foil to their death, making them an appropriate point of transition back to the victor and his relatives.
for them with the setting of the sun  
a rising torch burns on through the night  
kicking at the heavens with its provoking smoke.  
And on the second day comes the conclusion of these yearly contests,  
the work of strength.

This passage begins with the exalted, unchanging status of Herakles and moves to the  
temporary exaltation of the human community through the festival celebration. The most  
curious element of the connection between these two settings is the relative pronoun in the  
dative that effects the movement from one setting to the other. The antecedent of the pronoun  
must be Herakles, but by the end of the clause the action has come to focus on the ritual  
celebration of his sons.  

The sacred landscape assures that the Theban audience knew who  
Pindar meant when he referred to the eight deceased bronze-clad men without needing to wait  
for the following line to identify them as Herakles’ children by Megara. The identification is not  
there primarily to clarify the facts of the situation but instead, by using the sons as marker, to  
indicate Herakles’ dislocation from the Theban community. The sons are dead – the presence of  
θανόντων is blunt and unapologetic – while their father has been removed from death; they are  
defined by their Theban mother and grandfather while Herakles has been recontextualized in  
another family: husband of Hebe, son-in-law of Hera.

67 Krummen 1990, p. 43: “Im Satzbau spiegelt sich folglich die sublime Wendung von einem Partner in  
Opfer (Herakles-θεός 76-78) zum andern (υἱοί - θανόντες) wider.” v. also Thummer 1968, on the effect of  
this grammatical chain (under his category “Pronominale und adverbiale Schwenkung”).

68 Cf. Segal 1981, p. 80. An Apulian red figure vase shows a family scene with Hera, Hebe, Herakles and  
Eros (LIMC “Herakles: Herakles and Hebe”, no. 3343). Ibid., nos. 3330-3336, show Herakles and Hebe  
approaching the gods either in a chariot (nos. 3330-3334) or on foot (nos. 3335-3336): the earliest of these  
is a Samian krater of the seventh century, the latest a fourth century Attic red figure pyxis. The continuing  
interest in this subject indicates a widely-shared mode of envisioning Herakles’ integration into the  
community of the gods and his own divine family.
His sons, too, are carefully contextualized. As Krummen has argued, Pindar’s representation suggests that they are grown warriors. She goes on to show how this identity assimilates their destruction to the death in battle of four men of the Kleonymidai clan.\textsuperscript{69} This move integrates the imagery of war and athletic contest, rendering Melissos a warrior and encompassing his fallen relatives in the glory of the athletic victory.\textsuperscript{70} She argues that the representation of the sons of Herakles as bronze-fitted fighters reflects the local traditions that represented those children as an adult band of warriors.\textsuperscript{71} Pindar’s emphasis then serves to integrate Melissos’ family valour into the community festival and the communal heroes that it celebrates, magnifying the importance of each element by its inclusion in a greater whole.

While it could be sufficient to argue that Herakles’ sons were represented as grown warriors in local cult and that Theban tradition simply did not hold Herakles responsible for their deaths, I think Pindar may be playing a more intricate game. The darker tradition that has Herakles murder his own sons while they are still children is already attributed to Stesichorus and flourishes in the course of the fifth century.\textsuperscript{72} I suggest that Pindar’s phrasing alludes to this

\textsuperscript{69} Krummen 1990, p. 52-53, notes the parallelism between the Kleonymidai loved by χαλκέω Ἀρεί and the χαλκοαράν sons of Herakles; Herakles himself appears in Philoktetes as ‘the man with the bronze shield’ (Soph. Phil. 727) – this description is spoken by the chorus in the context of Herakles’ brilliance in the light of the pyre and speaks to a) the visual effect of bronze in the Pindaric ode and b) a possible association of the bronze armour with the mortal Herakles before his ascent.

\textsuperscript{70} Krummen 1990, p. 50-54: for her the main purpose of this metaphorical effect is encomiastic. And p. 56: “Sieger und Heroen, hinter denen die gefallenen Krieger der Siegerfamilie stehen, alle erscheinen sie [to the Theban community] gleichermassen “in Licht getaucht”.

\textsuperscript{71} Krummen 1990, p. 57 ff.: she emphasizes Menekrates’ reference to the sons as Alkaiden (Σ Isth. 4.104g) and to Herakles as ‘Alkaide’, a name which she argues is closely connected with the Theban cult site.

\textsuperscript{72} The method of murder could vary: fire (Pherek. FGrH 3 F14, Σ Isth. 4.104g; arrow (Eur. HF 969-1000); Krummen 1990, p. 64 and Olivieri 2011, p. 114, concur that all these variations would have been familiar at Thebes in Pindar’s time: Paus. 9.11.2 reports that the Thebans say the same things about the death of the children of Herakles as do Stesichorus 230 PMGF and Panyassis fr. 1 PEG. The number of sons in these
version of events which was also known to his audience even as the ode reorients the emphasis
away from the shades of tragedy and toward the honour that the sons of Herakles receive from
the Theban community. On this reading, the tragedy which enveloped both Herakles and his
sons is ultimately resolved by the integration of each into a distinct community. Herakles finds
peace in literal immortality and youth on Olympos where he is honoured by the gods as one of
their own; his sons obtain the cultic immortality of the heroized dead whose identity is still fixed
in a human community.

Through these divisions and affiliations Pindar integrates the fate of the sons of Herakles
with the fate of the Theban community, drawing particular parallels, as described, between the
fallen cult heroes and the fallen Kleonymidai. The death of four Kleonymids in war follows hard
upon Pindar’s praise of the family which peaked with the image of the Pillars.

ἀνορέας δ’ ἐσχάταιν
οἶκοθεν στάλαισιν ἄπτονθ’ Ἡρακλείαις·
καὶ μηκέτι μακροτέραν σπεύδειν ἄρετάν.
ιπποτρόφοι τ’ ἐγένοντο,
χαλκέω τ’ Ἀρει ᾱδον.
ἂλλ’ ἀμέρα γὰρ ἐν μιᾶ
τραχεία νυφάς πολέμῳ τεσσάρων
ἀνδρῶν ἐρήμωσεν μάκαιραν ἐστίαν.
Isth. 4.11-18

By virtue of extreme prowess
they lay hold of the Heraklean Pillars from their homes
– but do not seek further excellence.

traditions varies: two in Eur. HF 977-1000, five in Pherekydes, a later fourth century kalyx krater from
South Italy shows Herakles threatening a single child (LIMC “Herakleidai: Die Söhne des Herakles und
Megara”). As an interesting aside: in an intriguing collection of Italian vases (fourth century) Megara
appears with two sons (often visibly wounded) in an Orpheus-oriented underworld.

129, interprets Pindar as ‘softening’ the madness/murder tradition.
They were breeders of horses
and pleasing to bronze Ares.
But then in one day
the harsh blizzard of war
deprived their blessed hearth of four men -

Their fate is figured in the language of the natural world: war becomes a powerful snowstorm\(^\text{74}\) whose force carries off men from their places among the living. The image communicates the fearful force of war, but also integrates the human experience of death into the patterns of the natural world.\(^\text{75}\) If war is a winter storm, then the powerful Kleonymid men are leaves: fated to fall in this storm or another, or on a quiet day.\(^\text{76}\)

This imagery could express human powerlessness, and to a point it does, but the following lines express the corresponding strength inherent in the cyclical survivals of years and generations.

\[
\begin{align*}
δ´ αὖ μετὰ χειμέριον ποικίλων μηνῶν ζόφον\\
χθόν ώτε φοινικέοισιν άνθησεν ρόδοις\\
δαμόνων βουλαίς.
\end{align*}
\]

\textit{Isth. 4.18a-19}

But now again after the thick, wintery darkness of many months
it blooms like the earth with scarlet-purple blossoms
by the will of the divine.


\(^{75}\) For the imagery of natural cycles, year to year and day to night v. Segal 1981, p. 72-73; cf. Thummer 1969 ad. l.36 ff.: “Der Wechsel des Menschenschicksals wird N. XI 37-43 mit der wechselnden Fruchtbarkeit des Ackerbodens und der Bäume verglichen...”

\(^{76}\) V. Boeke 2007, p. 48-50, 58, on storm imagery representing human struggles and the “gentler side” of nature in plant imagery; v. also Bowra 1964, p. 249-251.
These lines allude to Melissos’ athletic success which has brought new life into his family. This is not represented as beginning ab nihilo, though, but as the natural return of green life to the earth after the appropriate darkness and quietude of winter. The Kleonymidai family, like the earth itself, has its seasons, and each new generation brings another spring. The life of the family survives the death of its members as new ones are born and mature to take their place. This is the point evoked again when Melissos is referred to as ‘the shoot of the son of Telesios’ (ἔρνεῖ Τελεσιάδα). This is a generational immortality that is as foreign to the gods as the literal immortality of the Olympians is distant from men. It is this generational immortality, not only of the Kleonymidai but of all the Theban families, that ensures the continued worship – which is to say, the continued existence – of Herakles’ sons. The festival will come each year, even as the faces of the celebrants change.

The festival setting and the honour done to the sons of Herakles also points to the other, complimentary, immortality accessible to humans: the gleam of fame that supersedes time and distance to shine for each new generation. Melissos’ Isthmian victory is not only new life for is family; it is a wake-up call to their longstanding repute which is not dead, but only sleeping.


Cf. also Nagy 1990, p. 151: “As we have seen, the ideology of the games is fundamentally a religious one: each athletic festival, held on a seasonally recurring basis into perpetuity, is predicated on the death of a hero, on an eternally important proto-ordeal for which the seasonally recurring ordeals of athletes, in principle ongoing to eternity, serve as eternal compensation.” Here the complexity of transferring the glory of an Isthmian victory back to a Theban festival only compounds the effect.
He who moves the earth, who dwells at Onchestos and at the sea bridge before the walls of Corinth, stretched out this wondrous hymn to the Kleonymid family and roused the ancient account of noble deeds from its bed – for it had fallen into sleep. But awakening its skin shines marvelously like the Dawnbearer among the other stars.

The imagery of sleeping and waking introduces, in addition to the cycle of the generations, the daily cycle of darkness to light. The glory earned by men can fall asleep and enter a period of darkness, but reawoken, it shines again. For the Kleonymidai, that reawakening is occasioned by Poseidon (the patron of the Isthmian games) who provides the victory that occasion’s Pindar’s ode (θαυμαστόν ὑμνον). The achievement and its commemoration wake the Kleonymid fame and burnish it until it shines like the brightest star before the dawn.79

Song becomes synonymous with light: both have the power to carry the notice of deeds beyond the lifetimes of the men who achieved them, as long as there are other men to hear.80

As a model for a power of song that is not only enduring but even rehabilitating, Pindar adduces Homer’s role in ensuring the fame of Telamonian Aias despite Aias’ despairing suicide.81 He explicitly parallels his own efforts on behalf of the Kleonymids to Homer’s for Aias:

79 Venus is an interesting choice: a dazzling object in the twilight or dawn skies, it pales beside the rising sun.

80 For other examples of fame as light v. Hutchinson 2012, p. 279-280.

81 Isth. 4.37-42.
προφρόνων Μοισάν τύχομεν,
κείνον ἄφιε πυρασόν ὕμνων
καὶ Μελίσσω, παγκρατίου στεφάνωμ’ ἐπάξιον,
ἐρνεὶ Τέλεσίδα.

(Isth. 4.43-45)

May I meet with Muses favourably minded
to obtain that torch of songs
also for Melissos, a thick-built crown for the Pankration
for the offshoot of Telesio.

Aias has been introduced explicitly as a model for the vagaries of human experience and the
misfortune that can trip up even the best of men. Pindar does not name the motivation for
Aias’ suicide, but the insult he received when Achilles’ arms were awarded to Odysseus was well
known. As a parallel to the temporary darkening of the Kleonymid fame this seems an extreme
element. Melissos’ relatives died in battle: they did not deprive themselves of life and glory as
Aias did, uniquely among Greek heroes. On one level this extremity effects a testimonial to the
power of poetry: even Aias’ glory could be retrieved through Homer’s inspired skill.

I wonder, though, if the Aias story is not also framed to reflect upon another act of
violence against a sort of self: the suppressed story of Herakles’ murder of his children. It is not
the language itself that suggests this parallel as much as the cult setting which frames the ode. A
curious detail that Pindar provides about Aias’ suicide is that he commits it ὀψίᾳ ἐν νυκτὶ. The
exact significance of this phrase occasioned debate among the scholiasts. One suggestion, I

82 Krummen 1990, p. 83, also sees wrestling imagery in the gnome that introduces the Aias myth: καὶ
κρέσσον’ ἀνδρῶν χειρόνων / ἐσφαλε τέχνα καταμάρψαι’ (Isth.4.34-45).

83 Prokl. Chrest. 172 (on the Aithiopis); Od. 11.543-564. Scholiastic traditions have Aias protecting Achilles’
body while Odysseus fought off all comers: Σ Π. P 719; Eust. In Od. p. 1542,9; Ap. Ep. 5.4.
think the most trenchant, is that it indicates the dark hours just before dawn.\textsuperscript{84} This representation looks back to the representation of natural cycles of darkness and light, suggesting perhaps that Aias failed to understand that better fortune would follow despair.\textsuperscript{85} It also looks ahead to Homer’s ability to restore Aias’ glory, establishing for him the same unquenchable gleam (ἄκτις ἄσβεστος αἰεί) that Pindar seeks to light for Melissos and his family.\textsuperscript{86} Finally, to return to the sons of Herakles, the imagery of night and darkness also looks ahead to the night-time ritual, to the torches and sacrifices that will light the night for them.\textsuperscript{87}

Pindar frames the nocturnal festival in terms which transfer the eternal brilliance of fame memorialized in song to a temporary brilliance that achieves a temporary exaltation of human experience. On the night of the festival darkness is not allowed to enter. In response to the setting of the sun torches are raised to burn through the night in honour of Herakles’ sons.\textsuperscript{88}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[84] Σ Isth. 4.58b: the three interpretations of the phrase are: i) just after evening, ii) in the middle of the night, iii) just before dawn. The scholiast adds that the author of the Aithiopis (fr. 5 PEG) places the suicide just before dawn.
\item[85] Pindar does not explicitly allude to madness here, but this was the cause of Aias’ rampage among the flocks and his suicide in the Ilias Parva according to Prokl. Chrest. 206 and the theme is adopted in Soph. Aias; this undertone offers a parallel to Herakles’ own madness, already represented in the Kypria according to Prokl. Chrest. 80 (in the digression of Nestor) and reflected in Pausanias’ report drawing on Stesichorus and Panyassis (v. above n. 72); the Pindaric scholia (Isth. 4.104g) attribute this explanation to Herodoros. The fourth century kalyx krater described in the same note above shows Mania looking on. For parallels between the episodes of madness in Euripides’ Herakles and Sophokles’ Aias v. Bond 1981, p. 310-311.
\item[86] In contrast to Köhnken 1971, p. 116, who sees the Homer/Aias interaction as a paradigm for the rehabilitation of Melissos’ family while Herakles serves as mythical model for Melissos alone. (”Der Herakles-Mythos für Melissos aber ist eine deutliche Steigerung gegenüber dem Aias-Homer-Paradeigma, das seinen Vorfahren galt.”)
\item[87] On a purely speculative note, this imagery might have been particularly effective if sung at twilight in anticipation of the night to come.
\item[88] Cf. Segal 1981, p. 78, for celestial imagery.
\end{footnotes}
The smoke from the torches rises to heaven, harassing the sky: for a brief time the shared experiences and strengths of a human community come together to create light in the midst of darkness; a light which, without darkness, would have less meaning. Melissos' victory, Pindar's song and the Theban festival come together not only to affirm the glory of the Kleonymidai, but also to ensure that Herakles' sons, the legacy of his mortal existence, are glorified as well.  

Imposing Order

The description I have just offered is not intended – by me, nor, I think, by Pindar – as a factual statement. The messages created and received within any festival, the multiple understandings of its aetia and the experiences of individual worshipers, were surely almost infinite. What I think Pindar has done is to impose the binary of mortality/immortality on that productive tangle of stories and interpretations. This binary, as I suggested in the introduction to this section, was perhaps not critical to local Theban traditions, and was thus placed in high relief by Pindar's imposition of it onto the local festival. The binary unfolded at two levels: 1) in the division within Herakles himself as he passed from a mortal existence on earth to an immortal one on Olympia and 2) in a contemporary distinction between the now-immortal Herakles and his still-mortal sons. Through these oppositions with Herakles at their center Pindar crafted an ode which celebrates the victor not despite his humanity but because of it.

89 This is a somewhat different conclusion than that reached by Segal 1981, p. 79, who sees “fire in darkness” as a “paradox” and “the perfect expression for mortals’ ambiguous participation in the immortality of the gods”.

Idealized Earth: Herakles at Akragas in *Olympian* 3

**A Phrase Reworked**

In Pindar’s *Olympian* 3, composed for Theron of Akragas to celebrate his victory in the chariot race, the Pillars appear again, framed in language almost identical to that of *Isthmian* 4.

*Olympian* 3.43-44:

νῦν δὲ πρὸς ἐσχατὰν
Θήρων ἀρεταῖσιν ἰκάνων ἀπτεταὶ
οἴκοθεν Ἡρακλέος σταλὰν.

And now, arriving at the farthest point, Theron by virtue of his excellence touches from home the Pillars of Herakles.

*Isthmian* 4.11-12:

ἀνορέαις δ᾽ ἐσχάταις
οίκοθεν στάλαισιν ἀπτονθ᾽ Ἡρακλείαις:

By virtue of extreme prowess they lay hold of the Heraklean Pillars from their homes.

In isolation these lines are basically interchangeable but the similar metaphorical language – by placement and context – achieves a fundamentally different effect in each of the two odes. We have already seen how the significance of the Pillars for *Isthmian* 4 is activated by contextualization within the other strands of the ode, establishing the Kleonymidai within a network of human strengths and weaknesses that stood in opposition to the nature of Herakles.

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91 Aside perhaps, from the contrast between the individual Theron and the whole Kleonymidai family as the recipients of praise and the added clause included in Theron’s version.

92 Cf. Péron 1974, p.76.
who had taken his place among the immortals. In *Isthmian* 4 the image of the Pillars appeared near the beginning of the ode, anchoring the developing theme of Herakles’ duality and the distance his divinity interposed between him and the human world, including his native Thebes. In *Olympian* 3, the Pillars are the final image. Instead of casting their implicit caution over the full extent of the ode they function as a coda that responds gently to the representations constructed in the preceding lines. Herakles’ apotheosis comes near the end of the ode as well, gentled and deemphasized within the flow of a long and complicated mythological narrative with an earth-dwelling Herakles at its heart.

**Communicating Friendships**

Τυνδαρίδαις is the emphatic first word of the third Olympian ode, composed to celebrate Theron of Akragas’ victory in the chariot race of 476. The scholiasts were perturbed by this fact, or at least felt that their readers might be, and hastened to explain why the Dioskouroi receive the place of honour (rather than Zeus as the deity to whom the games are dedicated or Herakles as their founder). Their explanations focus on the fact that the ode was destined for performance at the Theoxenia, a festival which expressed the close relations between the Dioskouroi and Theron’s Emmenidai clan. I will return to this festival and the status of the Dioskouroi at Akragas in the following chapter. For my purposes here, the festival context as a poetic frame is significant in that it enacts an encounter between human and divine

93 The same chariot race is commemorated in *Ol*. 2.

94 Σ *Ol*. 3.1a-1d and scholiastic headings.
at Akragas. The Theoxenic setting does not allow Theron to go beyond the limits of human experience as Herakles does in his mythic travels, but it establishes him in a privileged position (as φίλος) to the Dioskouroi who in turn are φίλοι to Herakles. The Theoxenia depicts an idealized Akragas, a place loved by the Dioskouroi as the Hyperboreans are loved by Apollo.

The myth of Olympian 3 is simple, though complex in the chronology of its narration. Pindar seems to have created it for the occasion despite the range of material readily available in existing Heraklean traditions. The new myth engages with Herakles’ well-established role as

95 As distinct from its identification as the historical performative context: on this issue v. Ch.4. p. 219-217. It is difficult to adduce good extratextual/extra-scholiastic evidence for this context, though many scholars have accepted it: among them Verdenius 1987, p. 6, who accepts that there was a Theoxenia but that the ode was performed before the festival; Robbins 1984, p. 218-220; Currie 2005, p.47 (though he recognizes the lack of external support (17)); Shelmerdine 1987, p. 67, 80, recognizes the presence of a Theoxenia at Akragas but does not think it constitutes the performance setting for the ode. I will address this question in depth when I turn my focus to the Dioskouroi. For my purposes in arguing for Herakles’ function in the ode it is sufficient that Pindar elaborated the Theoxenia as an internal framework to represent the close relationship between Emmenidai and Dioskouroi.

96 This is not an unprecedented claim: cf. Pind. Nem.10.49-51 and, beyond Pindar, Hdt. 6.127 where the close relationship with the Dioskouroi is included as an incidental description of one of the competitors for Agariste’s hand.

97 Pavlou 2010 argues that Pindar’s inclusion of the Pillars, via the ‘Atlas’ figures on the massive Olympieion at Akragas, makes Akragas itself a Hyperborean land at the ‘Akra-Gas’. I would not want to push her architectural arguments too far, but I agree that the parallels to the distant land are important – as long as we do not read a simple collapsing of the two. It is interesting to note that one of the largest temples at Akragas (c. late 6th c.) is usually attributed to Herakles, but Herakles’ associations with Theron and Akragas are mediated in the ode through the Dioskouroi.

98 Köhnken 1983, p. 54: “Therefore we may safely conclude that Pindar for the purpose of O.3 invented the Hyperborean ancestry of the victory garland, extended Herakles’ chase for the hind of Artemis to include the Hyperborean region, and finally added a second visit of Herakles to the Hyperboreans to fetch the olive trees for Olympia.” He sees in this mythmaking (combining the independent traditions of the Hyperboreans and the pursuit of the hind) a similar pattern to that in Ol. 1 where the myths of Pelops and Ganymede are brought into conjunction in a way relevant to the victor and laudandus.
founder of the games but sidelines the act of foundation proper in order to concentrate Herakles’ journey to the land of the Hyperboreans in pursuit of the olive trees that he wished to plant at the Olympian stadion. 

Herakles’ movements between Olympia, the land of the Hyperboreans, and Akragas blur the boundaries between the worlds of mortals and immortals in order to create a series of overarching relationships that set human experience into a continuum with the divine. These relationships are articulated in both the mythical narrative and the contemporary framework of the ode, forming two distinct arcs that come together in the person of Herakles and the occasion of the Olympic games. The first arc belongs to the extended myth that takes Herakles from Olympia to the land of the Hyperboreans, a place beyond the boundaries of the mundane world. Here Herakles is not yet a god (the apotheosis features later in the ode) but he already enjoys unusual access to the divine. The second arc belongs in the contemporary world and links the mortal Theron with the divine Herakles through the Olympian victory that Pindar celebrates. Through Herakles and his Olympian associations these two arcs come together to establish Theron in an exalted position, but one still appropriate to human aspirations. 

Herakles’ role as founder is important for the Olympic odes (besides this ode and Ol. 10 v. Ol. 2.2-4; Ol. 6.66-71). We lack sources earlier than Pindar, but his frequent employment of the theme (and the prominence of Herakles on the early-mid fifth century temple of Zeus at Olympia) suggests that this was a longer-standing tradition – on this cf. Stafford 2012, p.160. Later authors frame him as founder as well: Lysias Speech 33.1-2; Polybios 12.23 (citing Timotheos); Ap. Bib. 2.7.2; Diod. Sic. 4.13-14. Paus. 5.7.6-10 associates the founding of the games with an ‘Idaean’ Herakles associated with the tradition of the Daktyls. 

Pavlou 2010, p. 323, is the first to point to Diod. Sic. 13.81.4 and his representation of the rich olive groves of Akragas as potential motivation for the development of this myth. 

From Diod. Sic. 11.53.2 we learn that Theron (like Hieron) was heroized after his death. Currie 2005, p. 347-8, suggests that the imagery in Ol. 3, as well as Ol. 2, Ol. 1, and Pyth. 3 gestures to an immortality beyond that offered by song.
The inset myth and the cultic frame work together first to parallel Theron’s achievements at Akragas to Herakles’ on behalf of Olympia, then to reorient Theron (as human) in a privileged relationship to Herakles (the god). Herakles still encompasses the binary mortal/divine, but unlike in Isthmian 4, the stark contrast is softened: the mortal Herakles enjoys ready access to the ultra-mundane world; the immortal Herakles engages with the human community. The mortal Herakles through his distant travels establishes a parallel to Theron’s real world accomplishments; the immortal Herakles confirms the exalted (but mortal) status of Theron and his family by his presence at feasts in an established cultic setting.  

Travelling to the Edge

*Olympian* 3 takes Herakles to the source of the river Istros in the lands of the Hyperboreans, a place that Pindar carefully fails to define or characterize too closely. The multivalence of the land of the Hyperboreans on the Istros is already evident in the scholia from a few centuries later. The Iстрос is identified as the Danube, a real-world river known to the Greek world from the era of Black Sea colonization: it flows through much of Europe, one scholiast says, but its source is in the land of the Hyperboreans. The scholia variously identify Herakles’ destination as Skythia, a real place with real people, but one with a valence of

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102 Although the Emmenidai are not claiming an unmediated or utterly unique association with the Dioskouroi or Herakles; Pindar boasts that of all the humans who engage in this known and shared cultic practice, the Dioskouroi love them best: *Ol*. 3.39-40. On the Theoxenia v. Ekroth 2002, p.136-140; 280-286.

103 Σ. *Ol*. 3.25a.
otherness for the fifth century Greek world, and Thessaly. Another notice agrees that the Skythians live there, but so do the Amazons, and it is here that we see the borderland nature of the place, a site on the edge of the Greek world encountered and the Greek world imagined. As to the Hyperboreans themselves, Pherenikos is cited as saying that they are titanic beings who live in a grove of Apollo in a land free of war. This is an idealized location somewhere near or beyond the distant northern edges of the known world. Its inhabitants are idealized as well, especially in their interaction with the divine: Apollo is said to spend his winters among them.

Pindar subtly draws on a range of these traditions in his representation of the Hyperboreans themselves, but the introduction of Herakles into their community appears to be an innovation belonging to him alone.

Before I dive in to an analysis of the myth, I want to offer a brief orientation to the chronological development of the mythical narrative. In contrast to the structure of the other odes discussed in this chapter, Olympian 3 does not duck in and out between contemporary and mythical time. Instead, almost exactly half of the ode is devoted to Herakles and the olive trees, starting with the fact of their acquisition and then expanding and cycling back to previous

104 Skythia: Σ. Ol. 3.45 a,c,e; Thessaly: Σ. Ol. 3.28a (Philostephanos); Cf. Hdt. 4.23 for a Scythian community characterized by sanctity, 4.8-9, 82 for Herakles’ presence among the Skythians (with the cattle of Geryon).

105 Σ. Ol. 3.28a (dwelling in groves of Apollo).

106 Blessed existence: Aisch. Choeph. 372-374. Apollo among the Hyperboreans: Clem Protrept. 2.29.4 (attributed to Kallimachos), Ap. Rhod. Arg. 2.674ff, at 4.594 ff. Apollo’s time among the Hyperboreans is represented as a sort of exile from Olympos – this Hyperborean country is, then, the same sort of intermediary space that Herakles encounters. Apollo wintering among them: Alk. fr. 307 Voigt; another association with the worship of Apollo: Pind. Paean 8.63.
events. Lest this disorient I have arranged the events of the myth in chronological order, with the numbers in parentheses indicating their narrative arrangement.¹⁰⁷

Herakles pursues the hind (a female deer) to the lands of the Hyperboreans where he sees the olive trees. (5)

Herakles establishes the Olympian precinct and games. (3)

The games are held. (2)

Herakles remembers the olive trees and wants them for the precinct. (4)

Herakles returns to the Hyperboreans and obtains the trees. (1)

According to the logic of the ode’s mythical narrative, Herakles first arrives among the Hyperboreans in pursuit of the hind. His experience of their idyllic landscape and its olive groves sets up the motivation for his return. This would be a neat way of grafting the new myth (olive trees transported to Olympia) onto an existing tradition (pursuit of the hind to the lands of the Hyperboreans) if such a tradition had already existed. There is, however, no evidence for such a tradition; other accounts locate the pursuit of the hind in a very real Arkadia, not so far from the games themselves.¹⁰⁸ So why does Pindar innovate? One reason it that importing trees from a neighboring region is something anyone could do while trees from the land of the Hyperboreans make a better story and impart a greater glory to the modern Olympian precinct. More salient

¹⁰⁷ Some scholars reject the idea of two separate journeys: Segal 1964, n. 97, fuses the two into one (and provides a good overview of earlier bibliography; Robbins 1982, p. 297; Nisetich 1980, p. 92-93; Köhnken 1983 passim and p. 54, and Verdenius 1987, p. 26, are among those who actively support the two-journey structure. As I will argue below, Herakles’ ability to return to the Hyperboreans constitutes an important element of the mythic narrative.

for my argument here is the characterization of Herakles that Pindar achieves by sending him to the mysterious lands beyond the north wind.

There are two major components of this characterization. The first is Pindar’s representation of the Hyperboreans themselves as an idealized and pious community. The second is the ease with which Herakles is able to reach the land of the Hyperboreans. Together these elements position the Hyperboreans in a privileged relationship to the gods and Herakles in a privileged relationship to the Hyperboreans.

The Hyperboreans themselves are only represented briefly but they are framed as a unified community (a δᾶμον). The one further piece of information that Pindar offers about them is that they are the caretakers (θεραπόντα) of Apollo. This description emphasizes the special relationship the community enjoys with the divine by pointing to the older tradition that Apollo sometimes dwells among them. The same note is struck again when Artemis receives Herakles into their country. The land of the Hyperboreans as sketched by Pindar (but only in suggestive outline) is a place frequented by and beloved of Leto’s children. This intimacy with the divine is heightened by the suggestion that the land of the Hyperboreans lies far from the reach of human settlement, though whether within or beyond the borders of the mundane world is never really clear. Beyond establishing the Hyperboreans at the source of the Istros, Pindar is not concerned to specify their geographical location. The only other hint he gives is that their land lies beyond the blasts of cold Boreas (πνοιαίς ὀπιθεν Βορέα ψυχροῦ): a setting that places

109 Hyperboreans as priests of Apollo: Diod. Sic. 2.47.1-6; Hdt. 4.32-36: the association of the Hyperboreans with Apollo’s sanctuary at Delos; Pindar Paean 8, though fragmentary, associates the land of the Hyperboreans with temples of Apollo at Delphi (cf. Race 1997, p. 266-267).

110 Pind. Ol. 3.26-27
them rather beyond the reach of human activity.\textsuperscript{111} The idealization of their society and the distant landscape they inhabit, whether just within or just beyond the edges of the human world, suggest a community not easily visited by anyone other than the gods.

This is where the depiction of Herakles’ travels becomes important. He not only manages to reach the land of the Hyperboreans, he does so twice: the first time incidentally and the second almost on a whim. In the first instance it seems that he pursued the hind through and beyond the boundaries of Arkadia, in the second he was seized by a desire to retrieve the trees and simply acted on it.

\begin{quote}
δὴ τότ’ ἐς γαῖαν πορεύειν θυμός ὃρμα
Ἰστριάν νυν· ἐνθὰ Λατοὺς ἱπποσόα θυγάτηρ
dέξατ’ ἐλθόντ’ Ἀρκαδίας ἀπὸ δειρὰν
καὶ πολυγνάμπτων μυχῶν,
eὔτε νυν ἀγγελίας
Εὐρυσθέος ἔντυ’ ἄνάγκα πατρόθεν
χρυσόκερων ἔλαφων
θῆλειαν ἄξονθ’, ἀν ποτὲ Ταὐγέτα
ἀντιεῖσ’ Ὠρθωσίᾳ ἔγραφεν ἱεράν.
tὰν μεθέπτων ἰδε καὶ κεῖναν χθόνα
πνοιας ὑπεθεῖν Βορέα
ψυχρὺ· τόθι δένδρεα ἑκαβαινε σταθείς,
tῶν νυν γλυκῶς ἱμερος ἔσχεν
dωδεκάγναμπτον περί τέρμα δρόμου
ἵππων φυτεύσατι.
\textit{Ol.} 3.25-34
\end{quote}

Indeed at that time
[when he saw that the Olympian precinct was burning under the sun]
his heart urged him to bear himself toward the Istrian land, where the horse-driving daughter of Leto received him once when he came there from the ridges and curving hollows of Arkadia – when the necessity from his father urged him on

\textsuperscript{111} Pind. \textit{Ol.} 3.31-32.
by the orders of Eurystheus
to pursue the gold-horned hind, which in earlier times Taygeta
had inscribed as a holy votive to Artemis Orthosia.
Pursuing the hind he beheld that land
beyond the blasts of the cold North wind
– and now a sweet desire for these seizes him,
to plant them around the twelve-turn limit of the course.

This ease of access marks the exceptional place Herakles occupies in the world, even during his
mortal life. The land of the Hyperboreans appears elsewhere in the epinician corpus, but in
other odes it indicates a destination beyond human aspiration. This is most marked in Pythian
10 where Perseus’ expedition to that country is hemmed in by warnings about the
insurmountable boundaries between humans and the gods and where his own journey is
rendered possibly only by Athena’s active intervention. In that ode the myth is prefaced by a
warning to the victor’s father, even at the moment of his family’s victory:

ὁ χάλκεος οὐρανὸς οὐ ποτ’ ἀμβατός αὐτῷ.
ὅσαις δὲ βροτόν ἔθνος ἀγλαίας ἀ-
πτόμεσθα, περαινεὶ πρὸς ἔσχατον
πλόον. ναυσὶ δ’ οὔτε πεζὸς ἰὼν <κεν> εὔροις
ἐς Ὑπερβορέων ἄγωνα θαυματάν ὀδόν.

Pyth. 10.27-30

The bronze heavens will never be open to him;
however many glories lie within the grasp of mortals,
he reaches the endpoint
of that journey. But whether you traveled by ship or on foot,
you could not find
the wondrous road to the assemblies of the Hyperboreans.

112 Pind. Isth. 6.22 (as destination of song); Pyth. 10.27-30 (discussed here); v. also Paean 8 (fragmentary
but associated with the movement of the winds); cf. Bacch. 3.57 ff. where Croesus’ relationship with
Apollo vouchsafes him and his daughters a place in the land of the Hyperboreans (instead of death on the
pyre).
Herakles is not only able to find the road; he stumbles onto it once without intent and returns without difficulty. By sending Herakles repeatedly to the Hyperboreans Pindar highlights his ability to move between spheres usually closed to each other as an indication of his super-mortal status.

**Cooperation across Borders**

Herakles’ access to the Hyperboreans bespeaks a more than human status, but his reaction when he first sees the landscape on the banks of the Istros is quintessentially, charmingly human. When he first comes to the land of the Hyperboreans and sees the groves Herakles is struck with wonder (θάμβαω) (a Heraklean emotion perhaps unique to this passage); then the memory of that experience returns to him and he is seized with longing (γλυκὺς ἱμερος) to bring the beauty that he experienced into the confines of the precinct (and the human world). Such emotions emphasize the unique feat to which the olive trees bear witness. Herakles was not forced by Eurystheus or anyone else to retrieve them nor did he do so to eliminate a threat or display his own power. He was driven only by his own wonder and desire: the wonder aroused by an experience of an idyllic landscape, the desire oriented towards bringing an element of that landscape into a sacred place in the human world.

Herakles, while yet a part of the human world, physically transcends its limits to effect a physical change upon its landscape. He does not do so in a Promethean way that arouses the ire of the gods or disturbs the proper order of things; he does not even require the assistance of the gods. Rather he moves within a series of appropriate relationships between himself, the Olympian landscape and the divine in order to establish an echo of that land beyond the north.

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113 Cf. the journey to the Pillars and Geryon’s island in the introduction to this chapter.
wind with its idyllic piety in the Olympian sanctuary where humans enter a monumental space oriented to the divine. The motif of peaceful encounters recurs throughout the myth and throughout the ode. Nowhere in *Olympian* 3 does reference to violence or tumult appear; nor even the standard reminders about the vicissitudes of human fortune and the necessary trouble in every life.

The lack of conflict or disturbance is perhaps especially noteworthy in 476, the year of Theron's victory and a time of increased political tension for Theron and Akragas. War with Hieron’s powerful Syracuse had nearly erupted and in Himera Theron had recently taken harsh action against the Greek population. Such external tensions are entirely suppressed in the idealized Akragas of the ode and tensions are banned from the mythic narrative as well.

Herakles’ desire to plant the olives is remarkably constructive: this is perhaps the only myth in which Herakles improves the world through the establishment of a living thing rather than its destruction. Herakles’ improvements of the Olympian sanctuary implicitly gesture to Theron’s building projects at Akragas and the sacred orientation of Herakles’ efforts is projected onto Theron’s motivations as well.

Herakles’ actions in this ode in contrast to his usual expertise, depend on cooperative efforts, even in reference to stories told elsewhere with rather different emphases. These

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115 Cf. Segal 1964, p. 229: “The violence, bloodshed, and persistent overcoming of obstacles and hostilities usually associated with the mythical Heracles, therefore, are subdued in favor of a gentleness which plants trees and promotes rather than destroys life.” But I would not go as far as Segal does in pushing this characterization toward an ancient fertility aspect of Herakles (230).

116 Shelmerdine 1987, p.72 ff., notes that reciprocal relationships, "'give-and take’ between gods and men,” constitute a central theme of the ode.
efforts establish the still-human Herakles as an intermediary between the mundane world and the places beyond usual human experience. At the center of these efforts stand the Olympian olive wreath and the grove of Hyperborean olive trees transplanted by Herakles to the Olympian precinct. The trees stand at Olympia welcoming and shading those who come to the sanctuary; the olive leaf crowns are carried by the victors to their homes throughout the Greek world disseminating the glory of the sanctuary and its contests.

In none of these activities is Herakles represented as violent or combative, nowhere is his superlative strength emphasized. Instead he is extraordinary by virtue of his access to world beyond the reach of most men. His use of this access is not for his own benefit, but in the service of gods and men: he brings back a portion of the world beyond and makes it accessible to everyone. His method of acquiring the olive trees from the Hyperboreans is almost that of a priest or ambassador; he is only the steward of objects that will be set up at the Olympian precinct for the honour of Zeus and the glory of men:

\[ \text{δάμων ᾿Ηπερβορέων πείσαις Ἀπόλλωνος} \]
\[ \text{θεράποντα λόγῳ.} \]
\[ \text{πιστὰ φρονέων Δῖος αἰτει πανδόκῳ} \]
\[ \text{άλσει σκιαρόν τε φύτευμα} \]
\[ \text{ξυνὸν ἀνθρώποις στέφανον τ’ ἀρετάν.} \]

Ol. 3.16-18

With words he persuaded the Hyperborean host, the attendants of Apollo; he sought – his purpose was true – a shady planting for the grove of Zeus that welcomes all, common for all men, and as a crown of excellence.

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117 Cf. Shelmerdine 1987, p. 74: “In short everything Herakles does, in both myths, is connected with the idea of paying respect to the gods.”
The diplomatic tone is not incidental to the passage: Pindar emphasizes it by his repetition of terms evoking the relationship that Herakles establishes with the Hyperboreans. He uses persuasion (πείσας λόγῳ), depending upon what can be expressed in speech rather than insisted on with force. Pindar even assures us of the piety of his intentions as well as his words. He is πιστὰ φρονέων, that is, his spoken request (αἴτει)118 reflects his true motivations for acquiring the trees. He wants to bring them to the Olympian precinct where they will enhance the sanctuary as a place for the worship of Zeus as expressed in the competitions of men. The endeavor is framed to showcase a peaceful undertaking accomplished by Herakles between one sphere and another to the benefit of both humans and gods.

At the time of his successful olive expedition Herakles had already founded the Olympic sanctuary and the games. In contrast to the olive expedition, the foundation story was longstanding and included variations that were extremely bloody. None more so, perhaps, than that recounted by Pindar himself in the tenth Olympian, a poem that was also composed for a Western Greek (a Lokrian this time) victorious in the Olympic games of 476. All the elements are present in that ode that are ostentatiously absent from Olympian 3: the gnomic warnings of human subjectivity to fate and the struggles that make victory worthwhile. The Olympic foundation myth of Olympian 10 tells of Augeas’ refusal to pay Herakles for the clearing out of his stables and the gory retribution that followed, ending with a rout of the Epeians by Herakles’

118 LSJ admits of the meaning for the active as either ‘ask for’ or ‘demand’; the context here points us toward asking, and something more supplicating is not excluded: cf. II.5.358 (Aphrodite begs Ares for the use of his horses so she can escape the battlefield) and Od. 17.365 (Odysseus in disguise prepares to beg the suitors for food). Cf. Gildersleeve 1885, p. 158: “Herakles does not often stoop to plead.”
army on the plains of Pisa.\textsuperscript{119} There is no hint of any of this in \textit{Olympian 3}; we hear only that Herakles founded (\θήκε) the holy judgment of great contests (\μεγάλων ἀέθλων άγνάν κρίσιν) and the every-fourth-year festival (πενταετηρίδ') on the sacred banks (ξιθέοις κρημνοῖς) of the Alpheos.\textsuperscript{120} This Herakles, like the Herakles of \textit{Olympian 6},\textsuperscript{121} is improving a landscape already sacred, thereby facilitating the approach of men to the worship of the gods.

The same images of amicable and even cooperative interaction are present once again, and again unexpectedly, in Herakles’ pursuit of the hind. This was one of the labours that would be memorialized on the temple of Zeus at Olympia where the representation (now highly fragmentary) seems to show him overpowering the animal and pulling its head back into a gesture of submission. Earlier and contemporary vase paintings add another element to the conflicts inherent in the story: Athena (as often) stand near Herakles, offering support while Artemis (and sometimes Apollo as well) stand against him, apparently opposing his efforts to take the hind.\textsuperscript{122} These potential conflicts are reworked here into another model of cooperation and even hospitality. Herakles’ compulsion to pursue the hind is explained by the ‘necessity of

\textsuperscript{119} Pind. \textit{Ol.} 10.24-51 (an extended passage with jarring transitions between the sacred space of the sanctuary and its gory founding); cf. Segal 1964. p.229. The Epeians are Pindar’s designation for Augeas’ subjects, denizens at that time of Elis.

\textsuperscript{120} Pind. \textit{Ol.} 3.21-22

\textsuperscript{121} Pind. \textit{Ol.} 6.67-70.

\textsuperscript{122} V. Devereux 1966, p. 291-293, for a sometimes overwrought but useful overview of the early artistic representations of hostility between Herakles and Artemis/Apollo. Gantz, p.388, points to a black figure plate (c. 560 BCE; Oxford 1934.333) which shows Herakles and Apollo facing off with their bows with the hind between them (Gantz: “The presence of Apollo guarantees Artemis’ interest in and protection of the Hind as an early element in the tale…’). These artistic sources are earlier than the extant literary ones (though Σ \textit{Ol.}3.50a says that Peisander, Pherekydes and the \textit{Theseis} agree that the hind is female and golden-horned). Ap. \textit{Bib.} 2.5.3 reflects the status of the hind as sacred to Artemis to the extent that Herakles avoids killing her and instead purses her at length until he catches her by wounding her with an arrow – at this point Artemis and Apollo intervene, as the vases seem to reflect.
Zeus’, a term vague enough to give the expedition divine sanction even as it points to a complicated back-story of its own. His pursuit of the hind is pictured, but not its capture. Instead, we only see a friendly Artemis welcoming (δέξατ’) Herakles to the land of the Hyperboreans. The hind, too, contributes to the sacral atmosphere: it is the living votive that the nymph Taygeta dedicated to Artemis in thanks for her assistance, rendering its body sacred by her action (ἔγραψεν ἱεράν).

Just as the deer is a dedication to Artemis; so too are the olive trees, in a sense, a dedication to Zeus. Herakles’ achievements are contextualized, on one level, as an act of devotion and this framing establishes a partial parallel to Theron’s efforts at Akragas.

**Nested Trajectories**

The mythical narrative establishes an arc rooted in the olive grove at Olympia. Gods with their homes on Olympos (Artemis and Apollo) are present among the Hyperboreans, an idealized community at the conceptual edges of human existence. Herakles, as a being that is something more than mortal, is able to visit the Hyperboreans to bring back an element of their idealized landscape to the Olympic sanctuary. The games themselves, then, especially the

123 A possible reference to the story told by Agamemnon at Il.19.95-125 in which Hera tricks Zeus into giving Eurystheus power over Herakles by delaying the latter’s birth. If this is in the background of ‘the necessity of Zeus’ then Pindar’s presentation hints that even the necessity of Herakles’ servitude has redounded to the benefit of humans and gods. Cf. Segal 1964, p. 233-34, who, however, sees in the allusion a reminder of hostility (in contrast to welcoming Artemis).

124 Cf. Devereux 1966 who sees a potential for a hostile or amicable reading in the verb.

125 Pindar’s description in Pyth. 10.3-44 (similar to what the scholiast attributes to Pherenikos) paints the Hyperboreans as enjoying some of the same characteristics as men of Hesiod’s Golden Age: forever at song and festival, free of work, war, sickness and age. In contrast to the Golden Age-ers, the Hyperboreans are separated from the fifth century human world by geographical rather than chronological distance.
moment when the human victor is crowned with leaves from the sacred grove, tie the human
athletes into the same continuum. This is a message that could apply to all victors, but for most
of his patrons Pindar emphasizes this structure differently, encouraging them to recognize the
distance and the fundamental boundary that exists between them and immortal existence.

For Theron, Pindar creates another arc that connects to the arc of Herakles’ mythic
expedition. Theron – in Pindar’s idealizing construction – stands at the apex of an Akragantine
community which he brings into closer contact with the gods. Beyond the temples which he
constructs for the Olympians, Theron and his Emmenid family are the particular hosts of the
Dioskouroi, and with them comes the divine Herakles whose own home is now Olympos.

Herakles and Olympia provide the point of contact between the two arcs, connecting Theron to
a chain of relationships that extends to the land of the Hyperboreans and to the Olympians
themselves. 126

The theoxenic context highlights the parallels by casting the celebration at Akragas in
the same glow of hospitality and generosity that inheres to Herakles’ mythical effort.

Simultaneously, the festival framework reveals an inverted relationship between Herakles’ and
Theron’s efforts. When Theron lays out a feast he does so in his own city, inviting the Dioskouroi
(and Herakles) to his mortal table127 while Herakles travels to the far reaches of the earth and
back in order to bring a gift to Zeus’ sanctuary. This opposition praises Theron by demonstrating

127 Pind. Ol. 3.39-40

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the relationship that his family enjoys with the Dioskouroi but it also emphasizes that this relationship exists within the established order of human-divine interaction.\textsuperscript{128}

Herakles is not, then, paralleled to Theron in the sense of offering a model. Instead the mortal Herakles of the mythical narrative fulfills a function in the world parallel to the one Theron fulfills in Akragas, while the divine Herakles establishes a contemporary connection between Theron’s Akragas and Olympos.

\textbf{Untangling the Strands}

It is only in conclusion, and still enveloped in the context of praise, that Pindar introduces Herakles’ apotheosis, thereby disrupting the parallels established between Herakles and Theron.

\begin{quote}
καὶ νῦν ἐς ταῦταν ἔορταν ἔορταν ἱλαος ἀντιθεοισιν νίσεται σών βαθυζώνου διδύμωις παισι Λήδας. τοῖς γὰρ ἐπέτραπεν Ὀυλυμπόνδ’ ὡς θαητὸν ἀγώνα νέμειν ἀνδρῶν τ’ ἀρετάς πέρι καὶ ῥυμφαρμάτου διφρηλασίας.
\textit{Ol. 3.34-38}
\end{quote}

And now he comes gentle-minded to this festival with the godlike twins of deep-girdled Leda. To them, when he went to Olympos, he turned over the responsibility for managing the contests in men’s excellence and the driving of swift chariots.

\textsuperscript{128} I include the Dioskouroi within the category of divinities here simply to indicate that they are something other than human. What that something is will be teased out in the following chapter.
This is framed in the most integrative way possible. First Pindar shows the now-divine Herakles coming with the Dioskouroi to Akragas to participate in the theoxenic atmosphere.\textsuperscript{129} His presence is then contextualized, looping back to his apotheosis which ties back once more to the Olympian victory at the heart of the celebration: it was the Dioskouroi whom Herakles left in charge of the Olympic contests when it was time for him to go away to Olympos. This passage fills in Theron’s arc, creating a thick network of affiliations that stretches back from Akragas to the Olympic precinct and the mythical events that left it to the care of the Dioskouroi. This affiliation establishes Theron and Akragas in an intimate relationship to the gods that is nonetheless within the limits appropriate to mortals (the theoxenic festival and the rites alluded to): Theron is the Olympic victor and powerful tyrant, who, via a mutual association with the Dioskouroi, plays host to the now-divine Herakles.

These connections are a source of praise and pride for Theron, but they do not elevate him beyond his own mortality. This is the gentle reminder folded into the final praise that Pindar offers by representing Theron’s approach to the Pillars of Herakles.

\begin{quote}
 εἰ δ᾽ ἀριστεύει μὲν ὕδωρ, κτεάνων δὲ χρυσὸς αἰδοιόστατος,
 νῦν δὲ πρὸς ἔσχαταν Θήρων ἀρεταῖοι ἰκάνων ἀπτεται
 οἰκοθεν Ἡρακλέος σταλάν. τὸ πόρσω δ᾽ ἔστι σοφοῖς ἅβατον κάσοφοις.
 \textit{Ol.} 3.41-44

If water is best and gold is the most glorious of possessions, arriving at the farthest point,
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{129} V. Ch. 4, n. 83, for the debate surrounding the interpretation of ταύταν ἑορτὰν as either the festival at Olympia or the Theoxenia at Akragas.
Theron by virtue of his excellence
touches from home the Pillars of Herakles.
Farther than this neither the wise can go
nor the unwise.

Theron has reached the peak (ἐσχατιάν), a height of human achievement. He is right to consider himself great among men, but even for him the limits that bind all mortals are fixed.\textsuperscript{130} Pindar walks this delicate line carefully. He invokes the same images of praise that he brought to bear for Hieron’s victory in the same year: water is best, and gold is the best of possessions.\textsuperscript{131} These images suggest a final entry in the list: Theron is best among men.\textsuperscript{132} The imagery of the Pillars at once confirms and curtails this praise. Beyond the Pillars, Pindar hastens to add, no one may go – neither the wise nor foolish. And then his final note:

\begin{quote}
οὐ νῦν διώξω: κεινὸς εἶην.
\textit{Ol.} 3.45
\end{quote}

I will not pursue it; it would be in vain.

The νῦν has no specific antecedent and thus achieves a multipurpose flexibility. The image of pursuit recalls Herakles racing after the hind, allowed by his unique status to stumble across the blurred edges of the human world. At the same time, the object is the praise that Pindar has

\textsuperscript{130} Hubbard 1985, p. 15, understands ἐσχατιάν as “mediat[ing] the near and far on the ideational level; it is far inasmuch as it is the ultimate limit of human achievement (identifiable with the Pillars of Heracles), but it is also near, precisely because it is a limit.”

\textsuperscript{131} \textit{Ol.} 1.1.

\textsuperscript{132} It is an interesting question for another time how the repetition of these superlative images in celebration of both Theron and Hieron was received. (It’s tempting to wonder if Theron asked for them specifically, after hearing them employed in praise of his rival.) Cf. Strauss Clay 2011 for an experimental reading of \textit{Ols.} 1, 2, and 3 as a sort of symphony.
been pursuing through the ode: like Theron’s excellence, this too finds its boundary at the Pillars, for to praise in more-than-human terms would bring the victor to a point beyond his own nature or relevance. Rather than chasing the impossible, Pindar implicitly turns Theron back to his own, mortal home, blessed as it is – in this victorious moment – by the presence of Herakles himself.

*Olympian* 3, then, presents a Herakles who not only crosses borders but also establishes communications across them. He still embodies the transition inherent in the idea of apotheosis, but the commitments and loyalties of the human Herakles persist once he has claimed his divine nature. Instead of crossing a fundamental divide, this Herakles passes from an existence as something more than a man to that of a new Olympian who maintains ties with the human world. Characterized in this way, the mortal Herakles becomes an appropriate model for Theron, the powerful tyrant of Akragas. The apotheosis and the image of the Pillars still serve as the break-off point for the parallels established between the mythological hero and the mortal tyrant: the order of the world presented in the other odes persists. For a powerful Sicilian tyrant, though, a man whose status in the world was already that of *primus* (and not among *pares*), the limits of mortality are stretched and blurred to emphasize the elevated status of the laudandus. The ode does not encourage Theron to seek divinity, but it does establish him within a chain of associations that marks him as a man with an exceptional relationship to the divine.

**Pointing the Way Home in the Third and Fourth *Nemean*:**

**Herakles the God in Aigina**

*Prologue: The History of a Friendship (A Peek at *Nemean* 7)*
Sogenes, the victor celebrated in the 7th Nemean, has a house surrounded by sanctuaries of Herakles. This is one of the few testimonia we have for the presence of Herakleia at Aigina (though his absence would have been more surprising) and does not offer us much in terms of fixing a specific location within the city. What this passage does offer is a surprisingly explicit articulation of the relationship between one Aiginetan citizen (Sogenes himself) and the contemporary figure of Herakles, not the distant Herakles of myth, but the present, powerful, divine entity to whom the sanctuaries were dedicated. This is exactly the sort of cultic presence which filled in the structures of meaning generated by the epinicians, but is often left implicit, an external reality like the music or the dancing which is hinted at but not fully present in the text of the odes as we receive them. I pause to consider this passage as a prelude to my discussion of the third and fourth Nemean odes in order to consider a) how Herakles is described as a cult figure, b) how this description is or is not motivated by the mythological traditions surrounding him, and c) what is asked of him. First, a methodological note: I have been, and remain, averse to selecting a bit of one ode here and another there in order to create a unified picture across the varied times, geographies, and families of the epinician corpus. I include a discussion of this passage largely divorced from the rest of its own ode here with the caveat that much more could be said about its function within Nemean 7 and that project has been undertaken by others to whom I leave the task (for now). 133 For my purposes, with full recognition that it is addressed to a specific family and performed at a specific time (though we do not know for sure when that was), I take this passage as worthy of consideration in its own right and as representative of one interaction with Herakles which was sufficiently within the bounds of the audience’s experiences/expectations to seem a viable mode of praising the victor.

133 Most 1985.
Even more important, the passage includes gnomic and mythological utterances with reference to the contemporary (cultic!) reality of the victor. As such it offers a striking model for the less explicit interactions among the same set of elements that I am tracking through other odes.

Herakles in this passage is not the powerful hero of myth, once again engaged with a monstrous opponent. Here Herakles exists in the victor’s contemporary world to the extent that he actually lives right next door. Elements of the passage read like a cult hymn, though one adapted to the epinician habits of compressed time and circling narration. What might be called the pars epica is interwoven into the patterns of the larger ode, but the effect, beginning with the second person address to Herakles (86), is of communication with a real and present entity. Not much description of this Herakles is given, as we would expect if these cults were familiar elements of the Aiginetan landscape. He is identified as θεός (89) and set in marked contrast to men and it this characterization which ties him to the gnomic statement at lines 86-99:

εἰ δὲ γεύεται
ἀνδρὸς ἄνηρ τι, φαίμεν κε γείτον ἐμμεναι
νώς φιλήσαντ' ἀτενεί γείτονι χάρμα πάντων
ἐπάξιον·

_Nem._ 7.85-89

If a man ever benefitted from another man, I would say that it was in being a neighbor affectionate with unchanging mind, an unshaken joy (χάρμα) in all things for his neighbor.

The relationship articulated here is one between equals and follows naturally from the relationship, described in the lines immediately previous, between Herakles and Aiakos. As is

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134 Xen. _Hell_ 5.1.10 is the only other reference I can find to a cult of Herakles on Aigina. His passage does give it as a landmark, suggesting that it was well-known.
appropriate in an Aiginetan ode, the focus is initially on Aiakos, his descent from Zeus and subsequent rule over Aigina. In addition to being πολίαρχον (85) to Aigina, he is also framed in terms of his relationship to the mythical Herakles, a description addressed to Herakles in the audience’s present.

λέγοντι γάρ Αιακόν
νιν ύπο ματροδόκοις γοναῖς φυτεύσαι,
ἐμὰ μὲν πολίαρχον εὐώνύμω πάτρα,
Ἡράκλες, σέο δὲ προπράον’
ἐμεν ξεϊνον ἄδελφεον τ’.
Nem. 7. 84-86

For they say that he (Zeus) planted Aiakos under the limbs of his mother both as ruler over the cities of my fatherland and to be for you, Herakles, a caring friend and brother.

Time folds in on itself as the divine, immortal Herakles is reminded of the relationship he enjoyed with Zeus’ other son, Aiakos, when both lived as men on the earth. This reminder leads naturally into the thought which follows the gnomic statement, resulting in a progression that looks like this: 1) Aiakos and Herakles were friends when both were men (but now Herakles is a god), 2) the friendship of neighbors (i.e. an enduring mutual commitment – more so in a time when the sale of land and mobility were considerably more limited than they are now) is one of the great goods that humans can enjoy (true now as it was in the distant days of Aiakos), 3) if a god can enter into such a relationship, then Herakles should act as neighbor to Sogenes.

It could be argued that this rather intimate relationship is uniquely applicable to Sogenes because of the situation of his house, but it is more likely that Pindar is pointing out Sogenes’
special/heightened claim to a relationship that many members of the community enjoy with Herakles via his cults.\textsuperscript{135}

\begin{verbatim}
dύνασαι δὲ βροτόισιν ἀλκάν
ἀμαχανίν δυσβάτων θαμ διδόμεν.
Nem. 7.96-97
\end{verbatim}

You are often able to grant humans a defense against unmanageable difficulties.

This is a continuation of Herakles’ assistance with the physical threats presented by literal monsters like the marauding bull or poisonous Hydra, but extended to a broader, less literal field. Herakles has become a helper in a wider variety of situations in which humans find themselves helpless. The adjective ‘δυσβάτων’, ‘impassable’, recalls the image of the Pillars, markers of the sphere beyond which humans should not venture. Herakles is asked, then, to provide assistance in situations when humans find themselves without recourse and in need of a higher order of assistance. Should we understand from this that those who engage in his cult hope to acquire some aspect of his power or divine nature for themselves? The conclusion of this passage suggests otherwise.

The state that Sogenes will enjoy as a benefit of Herakles’ friendship is not some measure of personal immortality or extended youth. Instead, Herakles is represented as having the ability to assure Sogenes’ steady progress through the normal course of his human life.

\textsuperscript{135} This effect is strengthened if Pindar presents the whole Aiginetan community as descendants of Aiakos – as we see elsewhere – rather than highlighting the Theandridai as a clan with special claims to that lineage. Among those who read a special relationship between Herakles and the Theandridai: Currie 2005, p. 58. cf. Most 1985, p. 200-203.
For if only you would prepare for him a life unwavering in strength, weaving together youth with shining age, a fortunate life, then the children of his children would have always that prize which is excellent now and in later times.

The life thus described is not like Herakles’ at all; if anything it is almost an inversion of Herakles’ troubled human existence. The lines insist upon this dissimilarity by emphasizing the likenesses between this request and Herakles’ own experience, then underlining the distinctions that break the comparison. ἐμπεδοσθέα is, on its own, a word potentially appropriate to the hero whose successes depended above all on his physical strength but, once construed with βίοτον, the meaning changes and emphasis falls on the steadfastness or even stability that is desired in a man’s life.

This is a quality that has no place in Herakles’ human experiences, characterized as they were by upheaval, pain and enslavement. The addition of βίοτον, moreover, introduces the notion of life as a certain state of existence with all the exigencies suggested by the secondary meaning of the word: means of living. This too marks a separation from the eternal existence untroubled by physical needs that Herakles now enjoys. The following line initially reintroduces a parallel to Herakles with the appearance of his Olympian consort, Hebe. If one pauses immediately after hebai, which opens the line, it is not immediately clear what function the dative serves, nor whether this is Hebe, youth personified, or simply the more mundane stage of human life. The two meanings begin to converge in the logic of asking Herakles, who spends an

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136 LSJ s.v. βιοτός (epic form of βιος).
eternity with Youth for his wife (his marriage keeps him young), to grant youth – and the
strength and possibilities it brings – to those who worship him.

All this is confounded though, or at least complicated by the rest of the line in which it
becomes clear that Herakles is requested to weave together this human life with youth, yes, but
also with shining age, combining the desirable epinician quality of brightness and gleam with the
less-celebrated status of old age. The immediate references to Sogenes’ children, and his
children’s children incorporate Sogenes into the collective immortality enjoyed by families as
each generation succeeds the one before. The best life that Herakles can grant to his friend and
worshiper is the peaceful, full life that he himself lacked, not the unique and separate status
that he achieved.

This passage does not belong to the two odes on which the remainder of this section
will focus, but it belongs to the same community and offers a unique insight into what one
Aiginetan might have asked of Herakles, how he might have framed his own aspirations within
or against those of the god. This is not to say that Pindar’s words can be taken as a
straightforward reflection of Herakles cult on Aigina, but what they do offer is a way that an
existing cult\(^{137}\) could be woven into an ode in a way that tied the cultic relationship into the
framework of the ode. In Nemean 3 and Nemean 4, Herakles can be seen, again, establishing a
path for men and asking them to follow to a certain point, but no farther.

Grown from the Same Soil

\(^{137}\) The scholiasts (Σ Nem. 7.137a,b) do not offer more information about the cult of Herakles, but accept
the presence of his sanctuaries.
I have included *Nemeans* 3 and 4 in this chapter because both employ the Heraklean Pillars as a motif. The image is deployed relatively briefly in Nemean 3, very briefly in Nemean 4, and Herakles himself is largely absent from the rest of the action. This could make a consideration of these two odes a strange choice for this project. I suggest, however, that Herakles’ near-absence in these odes, marked by the presence of his Pillars, is itself meaningful. *Nemean* 7 shows that Herakles had a cultic presence at Aigina; his presence in *Isthmian* 6 plays on his mythological friendship and cooperation with Aigina’s Aiakids—a theme that is at work in *Nemean* 3 and 4 as well. Moreover, Herakles’ role in the foundation of the Nemean games made him a probable candidate for an appearance in odes celebrating a Nemean victor. If Herakles is largely absent from the odes he is not necessarily absent from the expectations and imaginations of the audience. In my analysis of these two odes I highlight words and concepts rich—for a fifth century audience—in Heraklean overtones. Such hints throughout the odes create a Heraklean context which evokes a contrast with the nature of the human victor and the native Aiakid heroes.

I am treating these two odes together because they share a range of characteristics that render them subject to the same broad contextualization. Both are odes composed for Aiginetan victors, though (probably) from different families.  

*Nemean* 3 celebrates the pankration victory of Aristokleides while Nemean 4 honours Timasarchos’ success in wrestling: both contests (along with boxing) belong to the category of combat sports in which the athlete’s own physical powers are tested, as opposed to the equestrian contests in which the laudandus

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138 *Nemean* 3 does not actually name a family (a very unusual occurrence for an Aiginetan ode) so it is possible that Aristokleides, like Timasarchos, was a member of the Theandridai but there is no reason to think so. In fact, we might have expected the two men to appear in each other’s odes if there were a familial connection (v. Ch. 2, n. 62).
has usually not personally competed. Both odes celebrate Nemean victories. Neither ode can be dated with any certainty, though this is not so much a reason to read them together as the lack of a barrier to doing so. The two odes tread much of the same mythological territory and exhibit considerable overlap in their uses of certain words and themes. For my purposes they are sufficiently rooted in the same soil to consider them together and they make a sufficiently similar use of Herakles and his Pillars to be integrated here into a single argument.

Both odes integrate the image of the Pillars in a way that represents humans as fundamentally limited, but also rendered unique and even glorious by those limitations. In Nemean 3, the Pillars mark the farthest reach of Herakles’ mortal journey and set a limit to Pindar’s poetic motion; in Nemean 4 they parallel Peleus’ moment of greatest exaltation to this Heraklean experience. As in Olympian 3 and Isthmian 4, the Pillars draw the audience’s attention to Herakles’ mortal existence as well as his subsequent divinity. Nemean 3 and 4 use

139 These were the ‘heavy events’, “the domain of the large and strong”: Poliakoff 1987, p. 8. Cf. Nicholson 2003 on the aristocratic efforts to elide the presence of the jockey in the equestrian events on the grounds that a jockey might be seen as labour bought for pay rather than good aristocratic charis- and xenia-based interactions. V. also the unusual emphasis in Pyth. 5, lines 45-51, on the rider – who, significantly, in this case is the cousin of the laudandus.

140 The edition of Snell and Maehler tentatively dates them to 475 and 473 respectively, but without any real support (the scholiasts provide no help). One line of support that has been adduced for this dating is that the themes at play in these odes are reminiscent of those of Olympian 3, securely dated to 476 and that therefore they were probably written around the same time. Pohlsander 1963, however, convincingly demolishes the possibility of dating Nemean 3 (or, by extension, other odes) on thematic grounds; cf. also Erbse 1969, p. 272-273.

141 This is true here and for my purposes and has been noted by others as well; cf. Willcock 1995, p. 93, who notes similarities between the odes and how this has led some scholars to date them near each other. This is not to deny that there are important distinctions in theme and tone between the odes (for instance, the emphasis in Nemean 3 on individual achievement; the greater emphasis in Nemean 4 on the integration of family members).

142 In contrast to Carne-Ross 1985, p. 7-78, who sees the Pillars not as restrictive but as “providing a grace of containment”.

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Herakles’ life itself a sort of mythical geography within which an insurmountable boundary exists, mirroring the role of the Pillars in the geography of the external world. Up to one side of this boundary the victor can aspire to be like Herakles, beyond it he must instead view Herakles as a being totally unlike himself. The break comes at the end of Herakles’ mortal existence with his departure for Olympos. It is here that Pindar’s poetry intervenes by substituting his own song as both i) a reward appropriate to the highest human achievement and ii) the enduring voice that converts the victors’ exaltation to both memorial and worship. The odes turn the victors away from Herakles and toward their own Aiakid inheritance, establishing their achievements in the context of the mortal world.\footnote{V. Carey 1980 on the function of the myths in both odes as substitute for direct praise.}

**Suffering and Balm**

Both odes contain images of pain and healing using terms drawn from the world of physical experience. The physical suffering and bodily need for relief point to the victor’s recent contest, but also, though never explicitly, to the proverbial *ponoi* of Herakles, frequent mythological exempla for athletic effort.\footnote{Cf. Poliakoff 1987, p. 13, on frequent statues of Herakles in the palaestra and gymnasium for this reason; cf. also the description of wrestling imagery in Albersmeier 2009, p. 285: it is sometimes difficult to distinguish ordinary athletes from Herakles/Antaios.} The subtle allusions to Herakles in these passages associate Herakles the hero with the victor in terms of human achievement and suffering. This parallel then gives way to Pindar’s project of disassociating the human victor from Herakles the god.

The passage which opens Nemean 4 assimilates the ability of songs to heal temporary pains to their power to assuage the harsh awareness of mortality.
Festivity most excellent physician of decided labours; and songs, the wise daughters of the Muses, will charm cares away when they touch upon them. Not even heated waters can soften limbs as effectively as a song of praise, that companion of the lyre. And the word lives longer than the deed, whichever word, by virtue of the Graces the tongue draws up from the depths of the mind.

The word doctor (ιατρός) appears almost jarringly, opening the second line but ending the clause. The noun subtly alters the import of the first line which, standing alone, might have seemed to demand a noun more like ‘reward’ or ‘recompense’ to complement the adjective ἄριστος in order to set up the frequent epinician model which understands the experience of victory as the counterbalance to the expense and difficulty of competition.145 Why should the athletic victor need a doctor, then, even as he is the focus of Pindar’s song and his community’s celebration? The answer may lie partially in the references later in the ode to the death of the victor’s father (5-6) and uncle (79-81).146 It is not clear if these sources of grief are recent or long

145 Cf. Bowra 1964, p. 172-3, on the “indispensability of toil”; reward for expense: e.g. Pyth. 5.105-107, Isth. 1.41-45.
146 Carey 1980, p. 146.
ago, but they may add a depth to the idea of ponon, extending it beyond the physical exertions experienced in competition.

Pindar’s claim that his song is more effective than hot water draws upon a long tradition of warm baths waiting for heroes upon their return from battle or long travels. One of the most poignant examples in early Greek literature is the Iliadic moment when the audience has just endured Hector’s defeat, but Andromache, not yet aware, orders a bath to be prepared for her husband. Poor foolish woman, says Homer, for she did not yet understand that her husband was beyond all bathing, destroyed by Athena at the hands of Achilles. There is something important in this equation of being ‘beyond bathing’ and being dead: the bath is one of those quintessentially transient pleasures that can, despite their transience, bring great relief and pleasure to the human mind and body.

The mortal Herakles also found relief in a bath after long toil, but for him everything is on a larger scale. Rather than simply seeking a nice tripod over a fire, the story goes, Herakles bathed in hot springs, custom created for his use. One fragment of Peisander has Athena creating the hot springs at Thermopylae for him after one of his labours; Panyassis (preserved in a scholion to Homer) tells how a river sent up hot springs for him when he was sick with toil. Later authors pick up on these stories and retell them, always focusing on Herakles’ need for relief from the hardships he has undergone. He is not simply dirty. Instead he is weary or sick, in

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147 I. 22.445-446.

148 Peisander Fr. 7 PEG; Panyassus Fr. 20 PEG; cf. Larson 2007, p. 187: “As elsewhere, he was particularly associated with hot springs, which were known as “Herakleian baths.” Croon 1952, p.6-11 for an overview and n. 10 for the citations in the lexicographers.
need a rest from his labours or even a cure. In these myths Herakles participates in universal human experiences – pain, exhaustion - and receives relief on a monumental and enduring scale. The waters of Herakles’ Thermopylae ‘bath’ exist still in the fifth century at a site of profound (and recent) importance for the Greek world, as well as other hot springs associated with his cults.

While the memorials of Herakles’ baths remain in the human world, Herakles himself does not. His pains, temporarily relieved by warm waters, are ended with his apotheosis – a removal from the mortal condition. For the Aiginetan victor, too, Pindar offers relief that is stronger and more enduring than warm water: song. The song that he offers, Pindar says, would be sung again and again by the victor’s father if he still lived. The father’s memory is revived in song, the memory of the victory will endure in the same way. This is not apotheosis for the victor, but it is a transformation of transient deed to enduring song.

_Nemean_ 3, too, draws on the language of medicine in order, I argue, to once again draw attention to the suffering of men, and the sources of relief. There are no hot springs here, but other aspects of the language draw Herakles into the discussion as both a model and an ally.

χαρίεντα δ᾽ ἔξει πόνον
χώρας ἄγαλμα, Μυρμιδόνες ἵνα πρότεροι

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149 The Peisander fragment comes from Σ Αριστ. _Nub_.1051a,b which explain that Athena made the baths to please (χαριώσαοθα) Herakles and/or because he was weary (μογήσαντι). Tzetzes on the same passage: For Herakles, who was weary with having purified the land and sea, Athena (χαριζομένη) established warm baths for him at Thermopylae, as Peisandros says; Zenob. _Paroem. Gr._ I.174.21: For Athena set up often for Herakles warm baths as a respite (ἀνάπαυλαν) from labours (πόνων) as Peisandros says. Cf. LIMC “Herakles” no. 1322 for a black figure amphora depicting Herakles bathing in water flowing from a lion-headed spout.

The song will have that toil
which brings joy as the adornment of the land
where the Myrmidons lived in time before;
Aristokleidas by your fate did not defile their agora,
where men spoke well in ancient times,
with censure by being cowed in the powerful march of the pankration.
But as a healing cure for exhausting blows
he obtains the kallinikos song at deep-girded Nemea.

As in the Nemean 4 passage, these lines once again hold up a celebratory song as the antidote to pain, specifically the pain that is a necessary corollary to achievement. The presence of song and poetic inspiration is strong in this ode, one of only a few which begin with an address to the Muse. The first ten lines are dedicated to an elaborate characterization of song as the appropriate companion to victory. The promised ‘adornment’ in the first line of our passage is the ode itself, figured as the appropriate recompense for the paradoxical joyful labour of the contest.

This is a fairly standard epinician relationship (the one that failed to materialize in Nemean 4) and might occasion little comment if it were not followed by the decidedly darker lines full of miasma, blame, weariness and finally the promise of a cure. Some scholars have even been determined to read these lines as evidence that the victor, Aristokleidas, was seriously wounded in the fight and would not be able to compete again – this is also adduced as

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151 Carne-Ross 1985, p. 70, takes the song as subject; thus Pfeiffer 1999, p. 200: ‘a pleasant labour on the part of the poet’. As we see elsewhere, the experience of the poet interweaves with the experience of the victor.
explanation for the presence of the Pillars of Herakles motif, to which we shall return.\textsuperscript{152} There is no doubt that the pankration was a nasty fight in which people were regularly injured and occasionally killed, but this literal interpretation is not the only one and the recurrence of these themes in \textit{Nemean} 4 suggest that they may have had a more universal poetic import than we can understand if we limit their relevance to the injury of a single victor.\textsuperscript{153}

Here song, that is poetic creation, once more offers relief for physical suffering and introduces moments from Herakles’ life which assimilate him to the victor on one level while simultaneously establishing him in the position of present helper. Herakles’ fight with the Nemean lion is one of the foundation stories of the Nemean games and may be brought to mind by the description of the wearying blows experienced at deep-girded Nemea. The struggle with the lion is often figured specifically as a pankration.\textsuperscript{154} In competition the victor is like Herakles, taking the punishing blows of his opponent. In victory he hears the καλλίνικον, the song attributed to Archilochos which was sung on the site of the games at the time of the victory.\textsuperscript{155}

The καλλίνικον effects a chronological doubling in the victor’s relationship to Herakles: it recalls the first performance of the song at the victory of Herakles himself (furthering the victor/Herakles assimilation) but it also points to the cultic figure of Herakles Καλλίνικος who

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{152} Pfeijffer 1999, p. 226, who bases his argument partly on the fact that it would be unusual for the victor to reach his peak with his first success in the crown games, and partly on the medical terminology.

\textsuperscript{153} Neither can the possibility be ruled out, but even if a career-ending injury encouraged Pindar to include these themes, that should not serve as the endpoint of our analysis.

\textsuperscript{154} Miller 2004, p. 57-58 and fig. 99 (whose caption runs: “Herakles wrestling the Nemean lion, the mythological prototype of the pankration. Poor lion!”). For the battle with the Nemean Lion as the first pankration as well as the assimilation of Herakles with the victor in Bacch. 13 v. Nagy 2011, p. 178.

\textsuperscript{155} Arch. fr. 342 IEG; cf. \textit{Ol}.9.1-4. Pfeijffer 1999, p. 202, “the association with \textit{kallinikos} helps prepare for the transition to Herakles which is to come” and, p. 280, points to the reappearance of the word in \textit{Nem}. 4.16 and \textit{Pyth}.5.106.
\end{footnotesize}
continued to exist as a contemporary non-human being (whom the victor was utterly unlike).

The cultic sense of *kallinikos* developed beyond the reference to athletic victory and at some point took on an apotropaic sense, not unlike the more literal *alexikakos*. Herakles *kallinikos* as a protector of humans in adversity – very nearly the Herakles observed in *Nemean 7* – neatly draws together the athletic resonances of these lines and the darker undertones through which the innate human potential for suffering and failure is encoded within the ode.

The litotes emphasize that Aristokleides has *not* brought shame to his community even as they remind the audience that a) failure is a possibility and b) other athletes went home from this contest in disgrace. Pindar’s equation of *καλλίνικον* with a healing cure can refer at once to the victory song, the joy of which removes the pain of the contest, and to Herakles Kallinikos whose aid can help in the face of future struggles; in its polyvalence the term situates the victor within his own celebrating community and within a relationship to the divine. The two facets mediate between current triumphs – when the athlete, however briefly, feels like the victorious hero – and the inevitability of future human troubles in which he will turn to the gods for help, especially to Herakles who had known what it was to suffer.

156 Σ Ar. *Ran.*.501 (sanctuary of Herakles Alexikakos at Melite; Ael. Arist. 40.14-15: only Herakles is Kallinikos and he was first of the gods to be called Alexikakos. Salowey 2002 deals with the development of Herakles *Alexikakos* as a healing deity in the Peloponnese; v. also Preller 1854, p. 81, 84.

157 For an image of the defeated opponents *Pyth.*. 8.86-87.

158 I am tempted to read a further Heraklean subtext into line 16: whereas Aristokleidas did not defile anything because it was his destiny not to do so and he was not weakened in the contest of strength, I suggest that with all the negatives removed we have a reference to Herakles’ madness and the massacre of his children. At that time he was fated to bring miasma on himself being overpowered (by madness) in a situation of great strength. If this undertone is present it may serve as a reminder that Herakles’ sufferings, like his triumphs, were superhuman and that the victor should be content with the more moderate measures of his own human life.

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It is at this point in *Nemean* 3 that the Pillars of Herakles appear. As elsewhere, they serve to praise the victor by paralleling his attainment of the highest human achievement to Herakles’ most distant journey. Here (and here alone) though, rather than pivoting away from the Heraklean image, Pindar takes up the subject and transitions to mythical time when the Pillars were established:

If he is noble and achieves great things fitting to his form, the son of Aristophanes has approached the highest excellence; it is not easy to cross farther over the impassable sea beyond the Pillars of Herakles. The hero god set these up as the famed witnesses of his farthest voyage: he tamed the monstrous beasts of the sea, of his own accord he discovered the streams of the shallows, where he reached the guiding end of his journey and revealed the land. Heart – why do you lead my journey astray toward a foreign cape?

The Pillars represent the limit of his progress and his conscious decision to limit the extent of his journey, and to mark that limit for those who would come after. The ‘farthest expeditions’ have established a limit for the aspirations of men, but do not mark the most distant removal of Herakles himself. Instead, rather than pursuing any element of Herakles’ story, Pindar claims that his ode has gone off course. If he wants to praise the glory of
Aristokleides, he need not look to Herakles but to the island’s native Aiakid heroes. The break-off formula suggests that Pindar’s song, as the victor himself may be wont to do, has sought the wrong parameters to frame the victory: he should look to the stories of the native heroes, not the god.  

But, of course, Pindar’s inclusion serves a purpose: first it praises Aristokleides by hinting that he has reached the peak of success; secondly it sets Herakles in contrast to the Aiakids, a theme that will become pregnant in the mythological narratives that follow. The fundamental distinction is already present though, in the designation of Herakles as ἥρως θεός, the hero-god. The order of these nouns mimics the implications of Herakles’ journey and the effect of the Pillars: to a point Herakles offers a model for human excellence (as a hero), beyond that point (as a god) he is too distant for human aspiration.

*Nemean* 7 presented a singularly transparent statement of the close personal friendship between Herakles and Aiakos. Another Aiginetan ode, Isthmian 6, has Herakles as a guest at Telamon’s (wedding?) feast where he foretells the birth of Telamon’s son, Aias, and wishes that... 

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159 Carne-Ross 1985, p. 71-72, oversimplifies the imagery by reading it as simple praise: “The sense, as usual in Pindar, is Look how far he has gone! – rather than Let him go no further!...”. He follows this observation by characterizing the Heraklean myth as “only heroic ornamentation enlivening the ne plus ultra topos,” Cf. his interpretation of the Pillars: n. 142 above. Bowra 1964, p. 46, cites this as an instance when Pindar’s fascination with Herakles leads to his introduction into a song “when his presence is unnecessary or even in appropriate.”

160 Instone 1993, p. 19-20, conveys the point of this expression well: “Or could it be that he breaks off because he deliberately does not want to press the analogy between Herakles and the victor too far? It is worth noting the unusual terms in which Herakles is introduced: emphatically at the beginning of the second triad he is described as a ἥρως θεός (22) ‘the hero who became a god’. Herakles was an excellent analogue to a victorious athlete inasmuch as his labours were rewarded; but inasmuch as he was to become an immortal god he was not analogous. The victorious athlete, in Pindar’s view, could have many affinities with epic heroes, and his achievements could be compared with theirs, but one thing he could not become was a god.” And “It is to the Aiakidai that the victor is more properly comparable, ostensibly because they come from his homeland (30-1), but also because they, too, are mortals...”
Aias will be imbued with the invulnerability of Herakles’ own lion skin. In Nemeans 3 and 4 the well-known friendships between Herakles and Aiakids are deemphasized (though certainly present in the minds of the audience). The emphasis in the odes falls instead on bringing out some basic existential differences between Herakles and the Aiakid family, differences that emerge in accounts of their interactions with the divine during their lifetimes, and in their experiences of death and what came after. Each of these odes contains a whole parade of Aiakids and this is explicitly part of the poetic intention: there are so many Aiakid stories that Pindar cannot tell them all. This is by way of saying that this rich mythological inheritance belongs to the present day Aiginetans and Pindar does not need to look for inspiration from farther afield to do them justice. (Specifically, he does not need to look to Herakles.) The Aiakid parades in both odes represent the richness of the available tradition, but each ode dilates on one or more facets of that tradition and it is in these passages that the comparisons to and contrasts with Herakles become perceptible.

At the beginning of the Aiakid parade in Nemean 3 Peleus and Telamon appear, each with a short inset description of one of their exploits: the sack of Iolkos in Peleus’ case, and the first sack of Troy and the expedition against the Amazons for Telamon. Pindar’s myths diverge from popular strands of the same traditions: Peleus cuts his own spear and snatches his own wife, instead of receiving Cheiron’s help, while Telamon takes on Laomedon and the Amazons as the companion of Iolaos, leaving Herakles unmentioned even though the majority of traditions -

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including *Nemean* 4 - consider these his exploits.\textsuperscript{163} One reason for the excision of Herakles from Telamon’s exploits in *Nemean* 3 could be that only nine lines before Pindar had asserted that he had gone astray in speaking of Herakles when the Aiakids were available; his reappearence might muddy that message. This is only half of the answer, though, since reference to Laomedon and Amazons alone would have activated the audience’s expectation to get Herakles as well, and explicitly adding Iolaos (Herakles’ nephew, friend and helper) only compounds that message.\textsuperscript{164} By rendering Herakles so strikingly absent within the Telamon myth, Pindar is pointing the community in the direction of the Aiakids as models appropriate to them.

\begin{verbatim}
συγγενεῖ δὲ τὶς εὐδοξία μέγα βρίθει.
δὸς δὲ διδάκτ’ ἔχει, ψεφεννὸς ἀνήρ
ἀλλοι ἀλλα πνέων οὐ ποτ’ ἀτρεκεῖ
κατέβα ποδί, μυριάν δ’ ἄρεταν ἀτελεῖ νόῳ γεύεται.

*Nem.* 3.40-42
\end{verbatim}

A man with inborn excellence is a real heavyweight. The one who is only taught remains obscure and exerts himself now at this now at that, never stepping with a sure foot, but only tasting a thousand excellences with no thought of finishing any.

\textsuperscript{163} This effect would be particularly marked if *Nemean* 4 predates *Nemean* 3. Herakles and Telamon’s joint Trojan expedition: Peisander fr. 11 PEG, and Gantz, p. 224-225, elaborates a tradition (Xen. *Kyn.* 1.9, Ov. *Met.* 11.211-17, Ap. *Bib.* 2.6.4) that has Herakles giving Telamon the daughter of conquered Laomedon (Hesione) as a war prize. The Aiginetan Aphaia temple too depicts Herakles and Telamon on the first Trojan expedition: v. Burnett 2005, p. 29-44. Amazons: Gantz, p. 225, notes a number of early sixth century black figure vases that show (and name) Telamon fighting alongside Herakles. For the traditions surrounding Peleus, from which Cheiron has been removed, v. Erbse 1969, p. 278 and n.2.

\textsuperscript{164} There is general agreement that this passage necessitates recognition of Herakles’ absence, but disagreement about why. Pfeijffer 1999, p. 209, and Hubbard 1985, p. 40 n. 86, argue that the passage effectively evokes Herakles (for Hubbard mentioning Iolaos is basically the same thing); Erbse 1969, however, p. 278-279, argues that Pindar replaces Herakles with Iolaos (a less significant relative) to represent Telamon’s Aiginetan deeds more gloriously.
These are the myths tailored to an Aiginetan victor because he has the inborn excellence inherited from the Aiakids. The point is not that Herakles was not a part of these myths and certainly not that he was unworthy of praise. Rather, Herakles does the ideal man endowed with native talent one better. He is inherently good at a wide swath of athletic and martial activities, and not only tastes but swallows down a thousand kinds of excellence. This impossible breadth of his abilities during his human life, like the fact of his de-humanizing apotheosis make him inimitable, and Pindar emphasizes this facet of his nature.

The emphasis in these episodes turns attention to the inborn or native capabilities celebrated in the lines that conclude them and introduce the Bildungsroman of Achilles.\textsuperscript{165} In contrast to Telamon, Achilles does not traditionally cross paths with Herakles, so we would not necessarily expect Herakles to appear here.\textsuperscript{166} He does, though, as a pregnant silence that highlights Achilles’ human excellence and human nature. In this triad Achilles’ early exploits are rendered in ways that turn the audience’s attention once more to Herakles’ deeds. In doing so, Achilles is rendered first like Herakles, and then unlike, when the mythological section ends with the dark foreboding of the destruction that will come to Troy and Achilles alike.

Even as a child young enough to remain in his own home, Achilles played at great deeds (παῖς ἐὼν ἄθυρε μεγάλα ἔργα)\textsuperscript{167}. The image of a child undertaking deeds suited to a man

\textsuperscript{165} Thus Burnett 2005, p. 136-152: she calls her chapter ‘The Education of Achilles’, an emphasis particularly appropriate to her reading since she insists that this ode celebrates a young victor. She presses this context to explain (unsatisfactorily, I think) the Iolaos issue above: she describes Iolaos and Telamon as ‘brash lads’ and suggests that Pindar turns the siege of Troy into an ‘adolescent prank’ by making them the protagonists (145).

\textsuperscript{166} Unlike his father and grandfather, Achilles was born a generation too late to encounter Herakles and has few direct mythological connections to him.

\textsuperscript{167} Nem. 3.44.
recalls the infant Herakles strangling the serpents sent by Hera to kill him in his cradle.\(^{168}\) The addition of the next word in the line (χερσὶ) heightens this effect by recalling the unusual manual strength that the infant Herakles brought to bear on the unsuspecting snakes. In our ode, though, Achilles is applying his small hands to the task of brandishing an iron spear. The action maneuvers him away from the Heraklean exploit and back to the model of his father, as well as ahead to the time when he will wield his father’s spear in battle.\(^{169}\)

From hefting weapons, Achilles next turns to employing his deadly skills, doing battle with lions and despoiling boars.\(^ {170}\) Now, boar hunting is one of the classic activities par excellence of Greek mythological heroes, but hunting lions was a much less standard activity.\(^ {171}\) In fact, the primary lion-fight in the Greek imagination was that between Herakles and the Nemean lion. If Achilles’ lion fights generate this association, then the boars in the next line resonate with Herakles’ Erymanthian opponent. This furthers the project of simultaneous association and dissociation: Achilles takes on opponents reminiscent of Herakles’, but his are not the singular and matchless monsters of myth. Instead Achilles takes on a whole series of

\(^{168}\) This myth was clearly known to Pindar and had been deployed as the main inset myth in Nem. 1 (as well as playing a role in the fragmentary Paeon 20). If we knew the dating of Nemean 3 we might be better able to say if this recent composition was something the audience might have been aware of. Even without Pindaric parallels, the scene was well-known. The infant Herakles begins to appear on Boiotian staters around the middle of the fifth century (LIMC “Herakles” nos. 1619-1620 (mid-fifth century) and nos. 1630-1632 (early fourth century) – the choice of this motive in the self-definition of a renascent polis suggests that it was of longstanding local importance. Attic red figure vases depict the scene from the first quarter of the fifth century (nos. 1650-1653).

\(^{169}\) For the explicit passage of the spear between generations v. ll. 16.141-144 (repeated at ibid. 19.388-391).

\(^{170}\) Nem. 3.46-7: the unusual verb sets up the animals as models for his future human opponents.

standard model lions and boars – and kills them all. Herakles was a being as singular as his opponents – both existed outside, and sometime as a threat to, the order of human experience; Achilles trains his human strength on normal animals, but the animals are not his final goal. As Pfeijffer has demonstrated, the verbs here are verbs of war and the animals are practice for the human opponents of Achilles’ future.  

If the combination of lion and boar are insufficient, the account of Achilles’ prowess against the deer offers a myth more closely patterned on a Heraklean labour, but again with differences which underscore the dissimilarities in the fates and natures of the two heroes.

τὸν ἑθάμβεον Ἀρτεμίς τε καὶ θρασεῖ Ἀθάνα, κτείνοντ’ ἐλάφους ἄνευ κυνῶν δόλιων θ’ ἐρκέων·
ποσὶ γὰρ κράτεσκε.

_Nem._ 3.50-52

Artemis and bold Athena marveled at him as he killed deer without the aid of hounds or tricky nets, powerful enough with feet alone.

If the vanquished boar and lions represent Achilles’ innate warlike nature, the deer point to his quintessential Iliadic characteristic: speed. But why are Artemis and Athena watching? Others have suggested that Artemis’ presence is natural enough since she is the goddess of the hunt, while Athena would personally engage with Achilles again in the future. These explanations alone do not really account for the rather sudden appearance here of the two goddesses together. Within the iconography of Herakles, though, there is a set of images that brings

172 Pfeijffer 1999, p. 211.

173 Pfeijffer 1999, p. 212-213, where he provides a list of Athena’s associations with Achilles: ll.1.207 ff, 18.203-221, 19.352-4, 20.94, 438-40, 22.214-305. (This itself actually provides a further parallel with the human Herakles.)
together the hero and these two goddesses: these images represent Herakles’ pursuit of Artemis’ golden hind.\textsuperscript{174} Athena accompanies Herakles as his helper while Artemis (and sometimes Apollo as well) stands opposite, apparently opposing Herakles’ attempt to claim the deer. Herakles’ purpose is not to kill the deer, but only to capture it and show Eurystheus that he has accomplished the task. For this reason he too does not use dogs and is not shown with a net; in many representations he is weaponless and either chases the deer or has just caught it in and restrains it by kneeling on it or grasping its horns.\textsuperscript{175}

If Pindar is drawing on this Heraklean imagery in his depiction of the young Achilles, what is his purpose in doing so? The youthful Achilles is, for this moment, nearly mapped on to a Heraklean trajectory, the two heroes are temporarily overlapped. But the word that distinguishes them is already present in the ode: Achilles is \textit{killing} the deer, for him this is speed training which will ultimately serve him on the battlefield. His increasing prowess is carrying him toward his death. Achilles’ deer hunt prefigures Troy, while Herakles’ pursuit of the unique creature sacred to Artemis points ahead to his immortal destiny. Whether the chase takes him to the land of the Hyperboreans or only throughout Arkadia, the scale of the undertaking, the nature of the quarry and the engagement with Artemis set Herakles’ labour apart. No sooner is a comparison between the two figures established than it comes undone; the young Achilles is already training for his own, mortal destiny.

Pindar in this ode leaves Achilles as a youth, training under Cheiron for the glory that will be his as an adult. Achilles’ story precisely fills one triad of the ode: the strophe contains his

\textsuperscript{174} See more on the background to this myth at p. 143-144, 151-152.

\textsuperscript{175} LIMC “Herakles”: nos. 2174-2180 (6\textsuperscript{th} and 5\textsuperscript{th} c. black figure: Herakles and Apollo fight over deer, often with Artemis and Athena nearby); nos. 2181-2185 (same time frame, mostly Attic: Herakles running after and catching the deer); nos. 2188-2191 (pursuing the deer without weapons).
childhood exploits which overflow into the first line of the antistrophe. The balance of the antistrophe then expands its focus from Achilles to his guardian Cheiron and, briefly to the other heroes who have come to him for training: Jason and Asklepios, then back to the wedding of Achilles mother, his own birth, and Cheiron’s undertaking to rear him. Then, though Achilles remains a child within the narrative, the epode catapults the audience forward in an extended purpose clause which functions almost like a prophecy and binds Achilles’ training intimately to his fearsome future presence in battle. The development of the epode plays upon the themes of boundary and limitation, looking back to Herakles’ establishment of the Pillars and tacitly contrasting the end of his fated trials with Achilles’ fate in battle.

άτίταλλεν <έν> ἀρμένοις πᾶσι θυμόν αὐξών,
ὁφρα θαλασσίας ἀνέμων ῥυταισὶ πεμφθεῖς
ὑπὸ Τρωίαν δορίκτυπον ἀλαλάν Λυκίων
τε προσμένοι καὶ Φρυγῶν
Δαρδάνων τε, καὶ ἐγχεσφόροις ἐπιμείξαις
Αἰθιόπαισι χεῖρας, ἐν φρασὶ πά-
ζαιθ’, ὡς σφίσι μὴ κοίρας ὑπὼ γνήσιω
πάλιν οἰκαδ’ ἀνεψίως ζαμενῆς Ἐλένου Μέμνων μόλοι.
Nem. 3.58-63

Cheiron reared him, magnifying his spirit with every preparation so that, sent upon the salt-sea blasts of the wind he would stand fast against the onslaught of Lykians, Phrygians and Dardanians before the walls of Troy and to fight the Ethiopians with fierce determination that their leader, Memnon, the powerful cousin of Helenos, would never return home.

176 According to a single source, Σ Theoc. 13.7-9, Herakles too was educated by Cheiron. If this reflects an older tradition it adds another strand to the initial similarities that underscore the distinct fates of the two figures.
The passage highlights Achilles’ battle prowess, of course, but in a very particular way. Achilles’ journey to Troy is passive; he is sent (πεμφθείς) by the winds themselves. The two main verbs are active but static: Achilles will stand firm (προσμενοί) against the Eastern armies and fix the determination in his mind (ἐν φρασί πάξαιθ) that Memnon should not come home again. The epode ends on this image of Memnon’s non-return, breaking off without reference to Achilles’ own fate – yet surely that fate was prominent in the audience’s awareness.  

Achilles’ sea journey looks back to Herakles’ travels in the second triad but while Herakles finds the end of his journey (νόστου τέλος) and returns home for his date with immortality, for Achilles the τέλος is death. If Herakles’ Pillars stand fixed as witnesses to the limits of human experience, then Achilles’ fixedness is testimony to the highest achievement that a human can achieve within those limits and offers a model for human excellence in the face of, or even inspired by, the knowledge of mortality. This is a theme that we will see again developed in the final triad of the ode.

In Nemean 3 the Aiakids are brought into the ode as a local, more appropriate alternative to Herakles who is not mentioned with them, but whose presence established the basis of the comparisons discussed above. In Nemean 4 also the juxtaposition of Herakles and


\[\text{\footnotesize 178 The reference to Memnon may play a role in highlighting Achilles’ mortality – or the immortality that some traditions granted to him, as to Memnon, after his death. According to one strand of tradition, Memnon, the son of immortal Eos, was granted immortality at his mother’s request after he was bested by Achilles in single combat (e.g. Proklos’ summary of the Aithiopis; possibly also the subject of a lost trilogy of Aischylos including Memnon, Psychostasia). A frequent vase motif shows Achilles and Memnon balanced on scales, reminiscent of the decision that led to Hektor’s death in Iliad 22: cf. the Ricci Hydria. On the popularity and influence of the encounter between Achilles and Memnon v. Clark 1978. Cf. Burnett 2005, p. 146-147 on the possible implications of this tradition for Nem. 3. (Following up on the implications of Memnon’s immortality more broadly – whether it enters into cult and why it does not receive the literary attention that Herakles’ does – must wait for another project.)}\]
Aiakids establishes a model for human aspirations, but in this ode the emphasis falls on the ultimate fate of the heroes in question as much as on the significance of their deeds. Only Peleus and Telamon are remembered for individual achievements and these short mythological segments, bracketing the list of other Aiakid heroes, begin and end respectively with reference to Herakles, references which hint at his ultimate immortality. The victor, Timasarchos, has won not only this Nemean victory, but also achieved success at Thebes and Athens. Pindar describes his warm welcome in Thebes as a friend among friends (φίλοισι γὰρ φίλος ἑλθὼν) and how he sees the blessed hall (ὁλβίαν αὐλάν) of Herakles. From the contemporary, human victor perceiving the temple of the immortal Herakles, the ode transitions, via the ubiquitous relative pronoun, to the human Herakles and his adventures with Telamon.

...in seven-gated Thebes
near the resplendent tomb of Amphitryon
where the Kadmeians willingly crowned him with flowers
on behalf of Aigina. He, entering the city as a friend among friends,
saw the friendly citadel

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179 Slater identifies this αὐλάν as “probably” the temple of Herakles at the Elektran gate, an interesting contrast to the tomb (τύμβον) of Amphitryon. I argued above that local traditions at Thebes could perceive Herakles as a hero while Pindar could react to those traditions by emphasizing Herakles’ apotheosis. This line is a reference to the same cult complex, but here again Herakles is immortal: he occupies an ὀλβίαν αὐλάν (the adjective is used in Isth. 4 to refer to his Olympian seat), a monument that stands in contrast to his (human) father’s tomb (ἄγλαον τύμβον).
near the blessed Hall of Herakles
with whom powerful Telamon razed Troy and the Meropes
and struck down that great mass of evil Alkyon...

The ode transitions smoothly from Timasarchos’ *relationship* to the divine Herakles in his temple at Thebes to the close relationship between his mythical ancestor, Telamon, and the human Herakles. The effect is at once to explain/illustrate the closeness between Thebes and Aigina and to retain that friendship while distinguishing the nature of Herakles and Telamon (and by extension Herakles and the human victor). Telamon does not die in these adventures, but others do - twelve heroes, clubbed from their chariots with a rock - and Pindar is firm in stating that no one should be surprised by this carnage.

A man would seem to have no experience in war if he does not understand me, since it is likely that a man taking action will suffer its effects.

The lines begin by allying Telamon with Herakles, but end with the scene of carnage that is sometimes the price of human glory. This reminder of mortality, even for men of the heroic age who fought alongside Herakles, is the final note in Telamon’s exploits and Pindar returns the audience to the present by responding to their potential alarm at the sudden intrusion of mortality into the celebratory myth of their ancestor. When the ode returns to the Aiakids it

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180 Köhnken 1971, p. 196-197: the priority of Telamon as the comparandum for Timasarchos emphasizes the Aiginetan connection; in n. 30 (p. 197) he points out that a scholiast (ΣΝ 4.50b) misses this distinction - arguing instead that the athlete is paralleled to Herakles - and lists modern scholars who have followed.
does not do so by transitioning back to the mythical past, but by integrating the Aiakid heroes into the landscape of the contemporary world.

\[\text{ἐξύφαινε, γλυκεῖα, καὶ τὸδ' αὐτίκα, φόρμιγξ, Λυδία σὺν ἄρμονίᾳ μέλος πεφιλημένον Οἰνώνα τε καὶ Κύπρῳ, ἐνθα Τεὐκρος ἀπάρχει ὁ Τελαμωνιάδας- ἀτάρ Αἴας Σαλαμῖν ἤχει πατρίμαν- ἐν δ' Εὐξείνῳ πελάγει φαεννάν Ἀχιλεὺς νάσον· Θέτις δὲ κρατεῖ Φθία· Νεοπτόλεμος δ' Ἀπείρῳ διαπρυσία, βουβόται τόθι πρῶνες ξοχοι κατάκεινται Δωδώναθεν ἄρχομενοι πρὸς Ἰόνιον πόρον. \textit{Nem.4.44-53}}

Strike up, straightaway, sweet phorminx, with the Lydian harmony the song dear to Oinona$^{181}$ and to Cyprus where Teukros the son of Telamon lives abroad; but Aias holds Salamis as his paternal inheritance, and in the Welcoming Sea Achilles has his shining island, Thetis rules in Phthia, and Neoptolemos in the extended mainland where the cattle-grazing peaks lie continuously, from Dodona all the way to the Ionian strait.

Through this passage the Aiakid tradition is represented not by means of past achievement, but through an enduring presence in the world of men as powerful beings who are still something less than gods.$^{182}$ They are contrasted to Herakles on two levels: first, precisely that they are not gods, but something that fits within the broad and contested category of hero and second (not unrelatdly) that they are geographically defined in contrast

$^{181}$ An archaic name for Aigina.

$^{182}$ Pindar is in no way explicit about this cultic significance. Instead, the poetic conceit is that he is singing a song for Aigina which she especially loves, and which Cyprus loves too (perhaps because of the Lydian harmony?) and then, having mentioned Cyprus, the poet remembers that Teukros dwells there. Having mentioned Teukros he goes on to name the lands associated with other famous members of the family. Burnett 2005, p. 128-129, in passing refers to them as “still holding their ghostly geographical power” (and places them in a slightly problematic contrast to Peleus).
to Herakles’ ubiquity.\textsuperscript{183} The present tense verbs express the Aiakid heroes’ enduring claim to these lands. This claim extends into the audience’s present and is felt to remain in force, binding the Aiginetan past into the contemporary landscape. The Aiakid heroes are personally present in these places as recipients of cult.\textsuperscript{184}

This is a tricky distinction to draw, but it lies at the heart of why the Aiakids are ultimately more like their Aiginetan descendants than they are like Herakles.\textsuperscript{185} The traditions surrounding their deaths are an important aspect of this categorization: Achilles died in battle, Aias (almost uniquely in the epic traditions) committed suicide, Neoptolemos died at Delphi. Of Teukros we know less and to Thetis, most complicated of all, we shall return. For the first three

\textsuperscript{183} It is well-established that Achilles did enjoy cult on Leuke (Paus. 3.19.11-13 (who has other heroes there with him)) as did Aias at Salamis (Paus. 1.35.3; C.I.A. 2.467: Aienteia in Salamis). Teukros has mythological links to Cyprus as founder of a cult to Apollo there, which may point to his own worship as a hero, though we lack archaeological evidence. Neoptolemos famously – thanks in no small part to Pindar’s \textit{Paean} 6 and \textit{Nemean} 7 – receives cult at Delphi, and Farnell 1921, p. 314-317, may be right in suggesting that this tradition ultimately won out over other local cults. Neoptolemos did travel to Epeiros after his success at Troy, though, and was important for the self-identification of the Molossians, to the extent that his image was still appearing on Hellenistic coins: v. Funke 2000. It is not inherently unlikely, then, that he received 5\textsuperscript{th}c. cult at Epeiros. Thetis received cult (at Sepia) in Thessaly; \textit{Σ Nem.} 4.81a,c know of a Thetideion that she inhabits, or one that was named for her (Pherekydes – FGrH I 72 M, I 59 J); cf. also Aston 2009, p. 85-86.

\textsuperscript{184} To read a cultic significance into this passage in no way rejects its contemporary political relevance. At least some of these are lands where Aiakid descendants continue to identify their ancestral lineages; this was certainly the case for Epeiros where the Molossians saw Neoptolemos as their ancestor: cf. Fearn 2011, p. 200. The two spheres might usefully overlap if we see these hero cults existing along the same continuum as ancestor cult. It is intriguing that Aiakos is absent, since he is the only Aiakid known to have received cult on Aigina itself. It could be that this is precisely the reason for his absence here, and an explanation for the inclusion of the others – to tie them into a wider geographical landscape.

\textsuperscript{185} Shapiro 1983, p. 9, expresses this distinction well: “It is not impossible, or even unusual, for a hero to attain immortality of a sort, by being transported to the Isles of the Blest after death, as is promised to Menelaus in the fourth book of the \textit{Odyssey} (561-569). The very fact that numerous hero cults sprang up in the Homeric period of the later eighth century suggests a widespread belief in the power of the hero to intercede from the grave, implying a form of immortality. But that is a very different matter from going to dwell on Olympus among the gods...”
it is clear that they did die, and there is no tradition to suggest that Teukros did not. Their hero cults were then something effected by others, either within the myth, as when Thetis transported Achilles’ body to the Black Sea island, or later by the community itself, as seems to be the case for Aias on Salamis.\textsuperscript{186}

This is distinct from the tradition developed around Herakles’ apotheosis which never deals with the presence of a corpse or the placement of that corpse as the basis of a cult site.\textsuperscript{187} The Aiakid heroes may receive cult in multiple locations, but their power is bound to that location and community and it this fixity which Pindar emphasizes. It is perhaps relevant that these heroes, all actors in the Trojan War which brought together the best of the Greeks, have now been distributed across the Greek world, but not beyond its boundaries. Instead they seem to point to the extent of Greek power and colonization, marking points throughout the \textit{oikoumene} rather than being removed to distant islands beyond the reach of men.\textsuperscript{188} They have stopped short of the boundaries that no human can cross and remain in the world, powerful because they are remembered and honoured. (Their status is not fundamentally distinct from that of heroized founders or athletes, or even from the way that less famous individuals are honoured by their families; they represent rather the extreme end of a continuum arising from the basic human fact of death.)

\textsuperscript{186} On the cult of Achilles in the Euxine v. Hedreen 1991; for his death and the divergent traditions that place him alternately in Hades or the Shining Island v. Edwards 1985.

\textsuperscript{187} cf. Ekroth 2010, p. 101: "He [Herakles] was worshipped all over Greek territory but there was no tradition of him having a tomb."

\textsuperscript{188} This geographical fixity is far from inevitable; cf. the eternally puzzling \textit{Olympian} 2 in which Peleus, Kadmos and Achilles are all removed to something that sounds like an ‘Isles of the Blessed’.
Thetis alone does not neatly fit this spectrum since, as a Nereid, she is immortal from birth. I wonder if her presence here speaks to her integration into the human experiences of Peleus and Achilles, whether in terms of emotional engagement or simply her subsequent and enduring association with their Thessalian homeland. The historical cults of these figures were surely highly varied and understood variously by the communities who participated in them. These lines refer to a series of real, individual cults, perhaps familiar anecdotally or personally to Pindar’s Aiginetan audience. The effect of these lines is to draw them together into a poetic unity which contrasts one generalized type of immortality with another.

The Peleus myth begins rather suddenly and trickily after this myth of Aiakid geographies. It begins with reference to Mt. Pelion which might have suggested, logically enough, that another Aiakid realm in the contemporary world was up next. Instead the action unfolding ‘at the foot of Pelion’ takes place once more, without transition, in the mythical past of Peleus’ youth and ends suddenly as well, still in the mythical past, by establishing a firm barrier between Peleus and the gods. Pindar alludes to the story of Akastos’ attempted ambush of Peleus and Cheiron’s intervention, then zooms ahead to Peleus’ true fate.\textsuperscript{189}

\begin{verse}
άλαλκε δὲ Χίρων,
καὶ τὸ μόραιμον Διόθεν πεπρωμένον ἐκφερεν·
πῦρ δὲ παγκρατές θρασυμαχάνων τε λεόντων
ὀξυτάτους ἄκμαν
καὶ δεινοτάτων σχάσαις ὀδόντων
ἃ δεινοτάτων·
τὸ γὰρ τρίῳ πολλῷ ὀικεῖον ἄνω
τὸν ωφίδιον ἄριστον ἐκεῖνον
δώρα καὶ κράτῳ ἐξέθρηκεν ἐγγενεῖς αὐτῷ.
\textit{Nem.4.60-68}
\end{verse}

\textsuperscript{189} The narrative chronology is comparable to that of the Achilles myth in \textit{Nem. 3}.
But Cheiron fended him off
and carried out the fate guaranteed by Zeus.
And when he had subdued the all-powerful fire
and the sharpest-edged claws
and the pointed teeth of terrible lions
he married one of the Nereids, come down from her lofty throne.
And he saw the circled seats
and the kings of heaven and ocean seated in them
as they revealed to him gifts and inborn power.

This quick rush into the future has a narrative effect not unlike the purpose clause in
Nemean 3 which looks forward to Achilles’ fate. Here we no sooner hear of Peleus’ destiny (τὸ
μόρσιμον Διόθεν πεπρομένον) than it is fulfilled – and then curtailed – within the next lines of
the ode. With the reference to fire and lions, Pindar is drawing on the tradition that Thetis
resisted Peleus’ advances by turning herself into a series of monstrous forms which he had to
wrestle into submission. This facet of Peleus’ mythology is appropriate in an ode for a wrestling
victor and this resonance was surely appreciated by the audience.190

Pindar’s representation of the story also sets up parallels to experiences of Herakles: the
contests with the Kithairon and Nemean lions (as discussed above in relation to Achilles) and,
even more interesting here, the fiery pyre which ended his mortal life.191 For Herakles these are
two career-bracketing events: the encounters with the lions occur early in his career and shape
his image. The Nemean lion’s skin becomes both trophy and armor at once and aids him in the
completion of his later tasks. The pyre is not a labour or triumph but a final act of desperation in
the face of power too great for him to fight: the pain caused by Deianera’s tragic gift. The

190 Carey 1980, p. 150, emphasizing danger and difficulty before victory.

She points out that there is no fixed iconography for Thetis changing forms: this implies that Pindar was
free to establish the parallels he needed in the selections he makes (as also in his representations of the
young Achilles in Nem. 3).
consuming fire is the end of Herakles’ heroic career but also a sort of pivot which moves him beyond the human world and into the society of Olympos.

For Peleus the trials of lions and fire are not separate from his ultimate fate and reward but intimately connected with it: Thetis is both his trial and his prize, his personal link to the divine and constant reminder of his own mortality.\(^{192}\) Through his marriage to an immortal, Peleus has the opportunity to look upon the gathering of the gods, but only long enough to receive their gifts. Then the correlations established between Peleus and Herakles diverge with Peleus returning to the human world, immortal bride in tow, while Herakles weds Hebe and is fully integrated into the society of the gods.

Peleus’ experience, especially as opposed to Herakles’, maps onto the experience of a human victor. The athlete enjoys, for a moment, the experience of great personal achievement, even a sense of exaltation. Like Peleus, though - and unlike Herakles who has actually left behind the world of mortal experience – the victor must return to the ramifications of his human life including eventually growing older and watching the mantle of athletic victory pass to another generation. The comparison to Herakles is introduced not by the reemergence of Herakles himself, but instead by an allusion to the boundaries that he left behind as limits on the human world.

Γαδείρων τὸ πρὸς ζῷον οὐ περατόν· ἀπότρεπε αὐτὶς Εὐρώπαν ποτὶ χέρσον ἐνεα ναὸς

\(\text{Nem. 4.69-70}\)

Beyond the darkness of Gadeira one cannot pass – turn back the ship’s tackle now toward Europe and dry land.

\(^{192}\) Cf. \textit{Il.} 1.393ff, 24.59ff.
The introduction of the Pillars also has direct implications for the conclusion of Peleus’ myth within the poem. At the moment of glory, even as he looks upon the gods with his own eyes, he is first recalled to the boundaries of the human world (limned by the Western waters beyond Gadeira, the site of the Pillars) and then urged back toward Europe. Of course, the injunction is not addressed specifically to Peleus, or anyone else for that matter, but the effect is to cut short all forward motion in the ode: Peleus’ approach toward the gods – which is merged with the victor’s moment in the light of god-given glory – and the poet’s. The nautical terminology has at first glance little to do with Peleus, but the admonishment to return to Europe may look back (in the ode) and ahead (in time) to the motif of Aiakid hero cult.\(^{193}\)

Peleus is being reintegrated into a human world defined by a Herakles who no longer dwells there; if the Epeirote overtones stand, the contrast between Gadeira and Epeiros may reinforce Peleus’ ultimately mortal nature. The victor is thereby reminded that even one who was honoured by the gods, who received a goddess to wife, did not ultimately become one of them and that he, too, should not take his current place in their favour as signaling a profound change in his nature.

Each to His Own Generation

The (re)orientation of the victor to his human nature does not remain implicit within the mythological models. Both odes are explicit and emphatic in their representation of the restricted nature of the human condition. At the same time, neither ode represents this

\(^{193}\)This may help to clarify why Neoptolemos is placed in Western Greece and the landscape described at such length: his cult exists at the edge of the solid Greek mainland, indeed the region is named for it: Epeiros in this ode is sometimes alternately translated without the capitalization simply as the mainland or the continent. Moreover, this region, with its Acheron river and Nekyomanteia, may have been associated with access to the underworld in some strands of (early) Greek afterlife belief.
condition as hopeless or worthless. Instead human achievement is rendered wondrous by the possibility of failure and the constant knowledge that time and opportunity are limited and fleeting. Fame and glory are critical for men exactly because they outlive the deeds that engendered them. *Nemean* 3 takes up these themes in the final triad, framed within the praise of Aristarchos.

ἐν δὲ πείρᾳ τέλος
diaφαίνεται, ὃν τις ἔξοχότερος γένηται,
ἐν παισί νέοισι παῖς, ἐν {δ'} ἀνδράσιν ἀνήρ, τρίτον
ἐν παλαιτέροισι, μέρος ἐκαστὸν ὁ ὁ ἐχομεν
βρότον ἔθνος. ἔλα δὲ καὶ τέσσαρας ἀρετὰς
<ὁ> θνατὸς αἰών, φρονεῖν δ' ἐνέπει τὸ παρκείμενον.
*Nem.* 3.70-75

In the contest the result
shines out in which way one becomes superior:
a youth among youths, a man among men,
at a third time among the older ones –
all of us who claim kinship with the race of mortal men
have such a portion. But a mortal life draws four modes of excellence
and it is fitting to take thought for what is at hand.

The audience is reminded that success can be found only in the attempt, as indeed Aristarchos has found it, but τέλος also looks ahead to the end of every human life. Success is contextualized in the different stages that make up human life – childhood, maturity and old age – with the dual reminder that a) the human victor who is young and strong today will one day be old and that b) only one end exists for that journey. The message is compounded by two phrases

194 This ode probably predates the temple of Zeus at Olympia, but the metopes there may contribute to a developing understanding of Herakles which could be echoed in this passage. In those sculptures Herakles begins his labour as a young man and ages as he proceeds through his tasks until, in the Kerberos metope, he is a fully mature and wearied man. For him the ultimate conclusion will be an enduring association with Youth; for the athletes and worshippers who observe the temple youth will come only once.
characterizing human mortality: βρότεον ἔθνος (74) and θνάτος αἰών (75). These parameters of human life recall Achilles who excelled as a child and as a man but reached his own τέλος before he could achieve old age.

_Nemean_ 4 also engages with the passing of time in lines that communicate the ambiguity of human subordination to destiny:

ēμοὶ δ’ ὅποιαν ἀρετάν  
ἐδωκε πότιμος ἀναξ,  
eὐ οἶδ’ ὅτι χρόνος ἔρτων πεπρωμέναι τελέσει.  
_Nem._ 4.41-43

But whichever excellence Lord Fate grants to me,  
I know well that time as it creeps on will bring it fulfilled to a conclusion.

The impersonal (cosmic) powers of fate and time are granted agency, specifically over the activity of the poetic voice, but by extension over the success of the athlete – and all human endeavor – as well. The sentiment includes both confidence and resignation, echoing the dual effect of achievement and limitation inherent in the Pillars. The sense of time is abstracted from the usual human frame of reference and extended to a grand scale. τελέσει captures the ambiguity: the progress of time will bring each achievement to fruition and to an end.195

In the final triad another generalizing statement occurs that prescribes an appropriate human response to the vast expanse of time that comes before and after every individual life:

ἀλλοιοι δ’ ἀλικεῖς ἀλλοι· τὰ δ’ αὐτὸς ἀντιτύχη,  
ἐλπιτεί τις ἔκαστος ἐξοχώτατα φάσθαι.  
_Nem._ 4.91-92

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195 The phrase applies directly to Pindar’s song, but is extended to the experience of the victor. Carey 1980, p. 149-150, sees this as a proverbial reference and unmitigatedly positive perspective.
Each generation has its contemporaries\textsuperscript{196}, whatever he himself experiences – that is what each man expects to speak best.

The smallness of a single man against the vastness of the world is mitigated by the sufficiency of excelling at one’s own specialty and in one’s own time; this brings us back to τὸ παρκείμενον.

Each generation of Aiakids gained fame for their role in the events of their own time. This, and not Herakles’ timeless existence, is the model that Pindar offers his laudandi.

The temporal limitations of the victor and his success are offset in both odes by the memorial that is Pindar’s song. This is, perhaps, the most fundamental epinician theme, but in closing this section I would like to suggest that here the immortality of song composed for victory is framed to evoke the memorials of the dead.

\textit{Nemean} 4 repeatedly invokes Pindar' song as a wistful communication between living and dead members of the victor’s family. If the victor’s father were still alive, he would often strum the kithara and give voice to his son’s victory.\textsuperscript{197} At the victor’s bidding Pindar will also sing praise for his uncle that he (the uncle) will be able to hear even from his place on the banks of the Acheron. Timasarchos’ imagined request is expressed in the metaphor of a physical memorial; the limitations of that memorial are then broken by the greater power of song:

\begin{verbatim}
eί δέ τοι
μάτρῳ μ’ ἔτι Καλλικλεῖ κελεύεις
στάλαν θέμεν Παρίου λίθου λευκοτέραν·
ὁ χρυσὸς ἐψόμενος
αὐγάς ἐδειξεν ἀπάσας, ὃμνος δὲ τῶν ἀγαθῶν
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{196} This phrase is the elegant translation of Nisetich 1980, p. 249.

\textsuperscript{197} \textit{Nem.} 4.13-16.
But if you bid me still to set up for your uncle Kallikles
a stele whiter than Parian marble,
burnished gold shows forth all its rays and a song
recounting a man’s noble deeds makes him fortunate as a king.

The song radiates outward and carries Kallikles’ deeds beyond his own existence but this
emphasis depends on the first part of the metaphor for its effect. The song that Timasarchos has
requested is in the form of a grave marker, a shining reminder of a mortal life come to its
completion.  

In Nemean 3 it is the draught of song that Pindar establishes as the final metaphor.

Rejoice, friend – I send this to you –
mixed with honey and white milk,
attended by foaming dew –
a beverage of songs in the breath of the Aeolian pipes...

It has been well observed that this image responds to the opening language of the ode in which
each deed ‘thirsts’ for its own ‘drink’ and athletic victory desires song. Why, though, this

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198 On the stele as a funerary image v. Duchemin 1956, p. 280-281 (but with a care for her tendency to too
readily find funerary imagery in the odes).

199 Nem. 3.6-7.
unusual combination of honey and milk crowned with foam? Honey-tongued song, etc., is well-attested, but the addition of milk is less usual. The most famous combination of these substances is probably the *melikraton* of the *Odyssey*’s Nekyia. This is the first libation that Odysseus offers to the dead (followed by wine, water and barley). The combination appears again in the *Orestes* when Hermione brings a libation of milk, honey and frothed wine to Clytemnestra’s grave. If these literary representations reflect libations regularly offered to the dead then the ‘drink of song’ functions like the ‘stele’ in *Nem.* Both images tie the immortalizing power of song into other modes by which still-living humans memorialize the dead.

These concluding images look back to the opening themes of the odes: the power of song as a balm for hurt and toil. I suggested that Herakles was introduced as a figure who shared in the experiences of pain and struggle but whose relief came not in the form of immortal song but as immortality itself. In contrast to Herakles’ removal from the limitations of mortality, the Aiakids exist within the framework of human experience: each individual dies; the fame of the family is passed on through the generations and down to the Aiginetans of Pindar’s day. In these

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200 As Carne-Ross 1985, p. 74, reports, this is sometimes alternately read as a mixture of honey, milk and water: “Milk and honey, however, do not produce foam, as Gilbert Norwood discovered when he once tried mixing them...” (Included mostly for the delight of imagining Norwood at his chemistry experiment.)

201 *Od.* 10.18-20, 11.26-8.


203 There are cases of melikraton offered as libations to the gods as well, though two of these are later: IG II² 1367 (late Athenian inscription); SEG30.1084 (Amorgos, Aigiale, 2nd c. BC); the *lex sacra* from Selinous uses it as well, perhaps in a theoxenic context.

204 Others have noticed the libation theme, but see it within a symposiastic context: e.g. Carne-Ross 1985, p. 74, who goes on to note that it is “less an actual drink than a poetic emblem.”
odes the human Herakles is a possible model for the victor, but only to a point. This is the function of the Pillars, hinting at or explicitly describing the apotheosis: once immortal he is no longer a model for the laudandus. He is, instead, a numinous reality in the world the victor inhabits, a source of assistance for the span of the victor’s own, mortal life.

Envois

The motif of Herakles’ apotheosis within the epinician corpus has sometimes been interpreted as a mythical model for the victor’s reward after the toil of his athletic labours. I have attempted to complicate this equivalence, and other interpretations that read accounts of Herakles as proxy praise for the victor, by suggesting that even though Herakles’ exploits clearly provided a model for physical prowess and athletic daring, Pindar’s representations of his apotheosis demand that the victor recognize his own enduring mortality. No victor is ever compared to Zeus or Athena: the comparison would be meaningless since gods can do effortlessly what mortals cannot even dream, untrammeled by encroaching age or creeping time. A victor could meaningfully be compared to Herakles because Herakles’ deeds were achieved during his human life while he suffered and risked failure, while his fate depended on the whim of the gods. With his ascent to Olympos the comparison breaks down: the attributes that make him an effective model for human experience give way to a mode of existence impossibly distant from human understanding.

I have pursued this argument through four odes that employ a specific image from the biography of Herakles: the Pillars which he was said to have established at the most distant point of his journeys. In some of these odes (Isth. 4 and Ol. 3) the Pillars appeared quite separately from the mythological narratives, in others they consisted of the briefest allusion in
the midst of another myth entirely (Nem. 4) or a short Heraklean excursus before the poet changed course (Nem. 3). In all cases I argued that they communicated something more than a metaphorical expression of human achievement, and even more than the poignant but abstract pairing of human excellence and limitation. Within the context of their Heraklean associations, the Pillars alluded not only to the distant places achieved by Herakles the man but also to the fundamentally inaccessible world inhabited by Herakles the god. I approached the Pillars not as an isolated symbolic element, but as a mytheme which engaged with other Heraklean elements within and beyond the mythological narratives in the odes. This approach reveals Pindar’s mutually reinforcing use of the two elements, Pillars and apotheosis, to establish the immortal Herakles as a counterpoint to human aspirations.

To appreciate the effect of the immortal Herakles in the odes, one premise must be taken seriously: that Herakles continued to exist and to engage with each community. Who exactly this Herakles was varied for each community (and, indeed, probably for each person – though this level of nuance is irrecoverable). Pindar crafted his Heraklean representations so that they would engage the conceptions of each community, highlighting or challenging certain aspects of local perceptions in order to evoke the distinction between his human past and his divine present.

This emphasis was not an inevitable one. While the tradition of Herakles’ apotheosis was widespread by the beginning of the fifth century, local cult practice and artistic production felt no need to conform to this development. Euripides, for instance, in his Herakles, was more interested in the tragic possibilities of a human Herakles brought low at the moment of his triumphant homecoming. The apotheosis must be included in the interpretative tools that we bring to the play, but Euripides was free to suppress it in order to highlight Herakles’ human suffering. By the same token, Pindar’s representation of the apotheosis in the odes discussed
here is the result of an active choice to highlight this element from among all the possible elements of the Heraklean biography. Like the Pillars, the apotheosis is deployed in careful conversation with the ode’s other elements in an important epinician response to success: a reminder to the victor that his exaltation is always conditioned by his mortality.
Chapter 4

Dislocation as Orientation: the Productive Ambiguity of the Dioskouroi

Golden Halls and/or Earthen Caves?

Many mythical heroes were the sons of Zeus but few of them bore his name. Of them all, only Kastor and Polydeukes are the Dioskouroi, an epithet that emphasizes their Olympian affiliations. The twin brothers were also known as the Tyndaridai: sons of Tyndareos, the mortal husband of their mortal mother, Leda. These titles point to a debate that wove its way in and out of representations of the two brothers: how did they share, or divide, their inheritances of mortality and immortality? There was no a priori reason, even if both brothers were the offspring of Zeus and Leda, that they should have expected a portion of immortality. The vast majority of Zeus’ human children, Sarpedon and Perseus, Aiakos and Minos among them, enjoyed exceptional strength or power during their lives, then died and (often) received heroic honours in recognition of their status and achievements. Not so the Dioskouroi. Instead, the brothers inhabited a compromise, spending their lives in an enduring state that was neither simply death nor simply immortality.
In his work on immortality and Greek hero cult, Farnell complained that the Dioskouroi are among the least manageable figures in Greek myth.¹ His complaint arose from his goal, more fashionable in 1922 than now, of ascertaining the true origins of the brothers.² In the logic of the time they were historically either gods who had been demoted or heroes who had attained a special status. While this question is no longer one of great interest, his difficulty in attempting to answer it is intriguing. The mixed testimony of the sources suggests that the existential status of the brothers was also unclear in the ancient world and served as a source of productive ambiguity for those who worshipped them and told their stories.³

Work on myth in the epinician corpus has rarely focused on the Dioskouroi.⁴ In part this can be attributed to the scattered and allusive nature of their appearances. Only in Nemean 10 do the Dioskouroi appear as the protagonists of an extended mythical passage; elsewhere they are mentioned only briefly, in conjunction with someone else’s story or as apparently isolated models of athletic achievement. Their association with the athletic sphere is the other part of the reason for their slight presence in scholarship. With Herakles and Hermes they are

¹ Farnell 1921, p. 175: "The study of these twin-personalities of cult presents more perplexing problems than perhaps any other chapter of Greek religion."

² Farnell 1921, p.175-228. Cf. the extension of the term 'Dioskouroi' to a type of generalized divine twins: e.g. Krappe 1923, Ward 1970.

³ Similar debates surround the other figures under investigation in this dissertation, as well as others to be included in a future monograph: Asklepios, Ino, and Semele.

⁴ Young 1993 and Stern 1969 both focus on the myth of the Dioskouroi in the context of Nemean 10, but I know of no work which engages with their presence across the corpus of the odes. Fehr 1936, p. 134-147, provides a striking example: in his four pages addressing the Dioskouroi he relegates all odes but Nem. 10 to a footnote (n. 199) and dismisses them as offering no difficulties and differing little from their function in that ode.
frequently recognized as patrons of the palaestra and the gymnasium and these competencies have been considered sufficient explanation for their presence in the odes.\(^5\)

In this chapter I do not reject the salience of their athletic achievements but I do suggest that these cannot fully explain Pindar’s repeated inclusion of the twins in his victory songs. Just as the Dioskouroi are not particularly unusual in being the sons of a god, they are not unique in their athletic prowess. As Brelich indicates, agonistic engagement is such a fundamental aspect of the ancient hero that this facet of a mythical figure in the sources can actually confuse our modern understanding of that figure’s development. Was the hero good at a particular contest because he was a hero, or had he been designated a hero because of his skill in a particular contest?\(^6\) The question is relevant for the Dioskouroi themselves: Kastor’s prowess in riding and Polydeukes’ in boxing is already embraced by Pindar and in other early literary sources but is not consistently reflected in cult.\(^7\) These characteristics are important aspects of Pindar’s representations of the brothers, but they are not sufficient to explain his frequent choice of them as exempla. Moreover, if Pindar had been primarily interested in name-checking heroic athletes we might expect that he would have chosen figures with specifically local resonances,

\(^5\) Fehr 1936, p. 135, with reference to a line associating the Dioskouroi with athletic success in Nem. 10: "V. 37 wohl fast eine chorlyrische Formel war, die ebensogut bei Simonides oder Bacchylides vorkommen könnte, denn die Dioskuren gelten als die Schutzheiligen der Wettkämpfe." (Whereupon he sends his reader to Bethe’s ‘Dioskuren’ entry in RE.)

\(^6\) Brelich 1958, p. 90: "Se gli eroi sono celebrati con agoni, essi "devono" esser stati grandi agonisti durante la loro esistenza terrena."; p. 86-93 on the associations between heroes and contests more generally.

\(^7\) Il. 3.27; Kastor is a horsemen at Isth. 1.15-17 and possibly Pyth. 5.9-10. In early Greek visual representations - votive dedications as well as vase decorations - the association with horses is relevant to both brothers while Polydeukes’ status as boxer is not highlighted. The division in skill sets becomes more prominent in Roman practice where Kastor (who seems to be preferred) is honoured for his physical/warlike tendencies while Polydeukes represents a more philosophical figure. For Kastor and his equestrian status v. Guzzo 1994, p. 29, and Sihvali 1989.
the better to glorify the home city of each victor. The lack of an epinician for a Spartan victor is a point of continuing interest; for our purposes the absence makes the employment of the Spartan Dioskouroi even more interesting. One could argue for a simple explanation: the Dioskouroi had attained Panhellenic status and were, accordingly, symbols of status across the Greek world. This is clearly the case, but the observation only broadens our original question: what was special about the Dioskouroi that a) ensured their popularity in a variety of communities and b) was of use to Pindar in his epinician undertaking?

I suggest that the answer to both facets of this question lies in the unique and enduring balance that the Dioskouroi maintained between spheres of experience that are fundamentally distinct and usually allow, at most, a single irreversible passage between them. The spheres in play form a sort of quadrant composed of two binary oppositions: mortal/immortal and death/life. From an early period, allusions to the unique experience of the Dioskouroi appear in the literary accounts, but different authors orient the twins differently within the quadrant. Some, Pindar among them, place them alternately on Olympos and under the earth; others emphasize instead their recurring experiences of death and life without recognizing a place for them among the gods.

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8 As is often the case: cf. Ol. 7.22-31,77-81 (Tlepolemos); Isth. 6.21-59 (Aias and Telamon).

9 Alternation: Olympos and Therapnai: Pind. Pyth. 11.61-64; Nem. 10.86-88; Olympos and mortals: Ap. Bib. 3.11.2; Olympos and Hades: Luc. Dial. Deor. 25. Alternation between death and life: Od. 11.298-304 (with complications); Prokl. Chrest. 80.21ff (in the Kypria) (locations of alternation are unclear); alternations of some sort: Hyg. Fab. 80. There are also traditions that seem to place one brother (usually Kastor) or both in an enduring existence under the earth at Therapnai - this is immortality without alternation: Il. 3.243-244 (both brothers); Alkm. Fr. 2 PMGF (both); Pind. Isthm. 1.31 (Kastor); Isthm. 5.33 (both, possibly).
A passage from the *Nekyia* encapsulates in the space of a few lines some of the intractable questions implicit in the scheme of alternation. Odysseus recalls his encounter with Leda in the underworld in this way:

καὶ Λήδην εἶδον, τὴν Τυνδαρέου παράκοιτιν,
ἡ ῥ’ ὑπὸ Τυνδαρέως κρατερόφρονε γείνατο παῖδε,
Κάστορά θ’ ἱππόδαμον καὶ πῦς ἀγαθόν Πολυδεύκεα,
τοὺς ἄμφω ζωοὺς κατέχει φυσίζοος αἴα:
οἱ καὶ νέρθεν γῆς τιμήν πρὸς Ζηνός ἔχοντες
ἀλλὸτε μὲν ζῶος ἐτερήμεροι, ἄλλοτε δ’ αὐτὴ
tεθνάσιν: τιμήν δὲ λελόγχασιν ἵσα θεοῖσι.
Hom. Od. 298 ff.

And I saw Leda, wife of Tyndareos,
who bore two sons, strong-minded youths, to Tyndareos,
Kastor the tamer of horses, and Polydeukes, clever with his fists,
both of these the life-giving earth holds, alive forever.
And they hold honour from Zeus, even under the earth,
alternating they live one day and on the next they die;
and they have honour equal to the gods.

He touches on the athletic achievements of each brother, as well as their shared strong-thinking (κρατερόφρονε) nature, but he emphasizes their current status. Genesis-like, he gives two variations of the same story, clearly related but not quite equivalent. First he says that the

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10 This passage, like the description of Herakles in the underworld, may be an interpolation, adjusting the world of the epic to accommodate subsequent religious developments: cf. Cook 1925, p. 247, Tsagarakis 2000 (on the catalogue of heroines) p. 71-89; Price 1973, p. 135, notes the problem in passing; Calvo Martínez 2000 argues that the whole of Book 11 is an integral part of the poem. If the passage does belong to the early stages of the work it provides an important indication that the alternating nature of the brothers also had a place in their worship as protectors at sea on the Ionian coast and the islands.

11 However this passage made its way into the epic, its creator made an interesting choice in attributing knowledge of their condition to Odysseus rather than to an omniscient narrator (as in *Il*.3.243-244) or to one of the shades (e.g. Agamemnon, who recounts the disaster attendant on his own return at *Od*. 11.405-434). This may suggest a sense that this knowledge was widespread, either within the world of Homer’s epic or, perhaps more likely, within the world of the poet and his audience.
earth holds both brothers, but that they are still alive. This formulation evokes some combination of Hesiod’s gold and silver races and, more closely, the fate of Amphiaraos. The next lines complicate this description. Now, in the Homeric text, the brothers are actually not ‘always alive’ but, instead, alternate between death and life. These mysterious claims are not clarified by the assertion that the brothers enjoy honours equal to the gods: the capacity for the dual experiences of life and death place them firmly among mortals; their ability to die more than once abstracts them from all easy categorization. This Homeric passage should not be taken as authoritative for any tradition beyond the world of the epic, but it points to some of the contradictory traditions surrounding the brothers.

At the core of most of the traditions, diverse as they might be in their details, is the capacity of the Dioskouroi for movement. The abstraction of coming and going – that is, presence and absence – creates a framework which accommodates multiple elaborations of the alternation scheme. Humans living in the world can call on these beings and expect that they will come; their epiphanies are recounted in the contexts of polis crisis (on the eve of war) and comparatively personal crisis (especially to sailors in trouble on the sea). Votive dedications and vase paintings often depict the twins mounted or dismounting: on their way or just arrived.

12 There is an element of distorted katabasis: the (epic) credential of having braved the underworld and returned – exactly the claim Odysseus is making here - characterizes the heroic ability to exceed human limitation, but only for a time. The Dioskouroi achieve the return to life every other day, but through a compressed process of death and rebirth, or an alternation from life to death without the trauma of passage.

13 Battle: (Sagra) Diod. Sic. 8.32 (not quite an epiphany), Just. 20.3.9; (Regillus) Cic. de. Nat. Deor. 2.2, Livy 2.20.13 (an apparent allusion to the tradition). Sailors: Alk. fr. 34 Voigt; Homeric Hymn 33 (to the Dioskouroi, where they are designated as σωτήρας born of Leda - that is, their 'salvific' nature is represented as an inherent element of their nature); an early inscription from Thera, IG XII,3 359 (Διόσκοροι) may indicate nautical associations. Theok. Id., 22.6-10, almost certainly in conversation with the Homeric Hymn, calls the brothers saviours (σωτήρας, again) of men in crisis, both in the crush of war and in trouble on the sea.
Such visual evidence suggests that this *epikletic* quality – the willingness to become present – is a defining feature of conceptions of the Dioskouroi across centuries of worship.

The visual evidence is also intriguing in terms of motifs that are *not* depicted. During their (original) lifetimes the Dioskouroi participated in a variety of high profile undertakings, among them the hunt for the Kalydonian boar, the voyage of the Argo, the first Olympics, and the funeral games of Pelias. They also appear as the protagonists of a limited number of mythical episodes: reclaiming the young Helen after her abduction by Theseus, stealing cattle with and/or from their cousins the Apharetidai, snatching the Leukippides from the Apharetidai who were their intended husbands, fighting the Apharetidai, fighting the Hippokoontidai, and fighting the giant Amykos.¹⁴ Most of these activities are infrequently reflected in visual representations - the abduction of the Leukippides is a partial exception - suggesting that mythical narratives were not a definitive framework for personal/cultic conceptions of the Twins.¹⁵

This is not to say that the myths are unimportant. To the contrary, they tell us something important about the status of the Dioskouroi for the communities that produced these stories. In the first group of myths the twins appear as participants in events of Panhellenic scope, but are not integral to the action. It is likely that they have been included because of their wide (cultic) popularity: of course heroes so beloved would have been invited.

¹⁴ For an overview of these activities v. Gantz, p. 324-327; Hermary, LIMC (s.v. Dioscuri).

¹⁵ For images of the abduction in ceramics in the sixth and fifth century as well as cultic objects (the Amyklai Throne: Paus. 3.18.11; the Bronze House of Athena: Paus. 3.17.2; painted on the walls of the Anakeion: Paus. 1.18.1) v. Gantz, p. 325-326, who also refers to a 'joint cattle venture' with the Apharetidai on a metope of the Sikyonian monopteros (Delphi Museum inv. n. 1322) and an image on an Apulian vase of the fight with the Apharetidai –possibly inspired by Pindar? (Richmond 80.162). For a related metope on the same structure, apparently representing the Dioskouroi and the Argo v. Szeliga 1986, but with some care for his historical reconstructions.
Even in the second group, when the twins are the protagonists and the instigators of action, the stories are oddly isolated from larger mythical cycles and almost flat. The brothers are either fighting or snatching women (and/or cattle), the two most fundamental schemes for (Greek) mythical action. Only the Theseus story highlights any specific location (Aphidna in Attica), and it has been suggested that this story was propagated by Athens exactly in order to establish the Twins within the Attic landscape. These stories, too, may have developed around the twins because they are the sort of things that heroes do, rather than because they recall something unique about these figures.

If it was indeed the cultic popularity of the twins that encouraged the development of this array of myths, what story or event motivated their popularity? This question looks dangerously like the entrance to a rabbit hole, and it is not one that I am proposing to answer here in terms of the history of cult. Instead, I raise the question to emphasize what is missing from their myths: the story of their deaths. For epic accounts, as for cultic practice, the mode of death and site of burial are constituent elements of heroic traditions (in narrative and in cultic topography), but no extant source tells us either how the brothers died or the mode by which

16 And maybe for human experience writ large: consider the recurring narrative components developed by Propp 1968 and the association of these with biologically predicated ‘programs of action’ by Burkert 1979 p. 14-18.

17 The motif of divine or semi-divine twins is influential elsewhere within and beyond Greek mythology: Kastor and Polydeukes have often been seen as parallel developments of the Vedic Aśvin (cf. Harris 1906, Ward 1968 and Ward 1970. Burkert 1985, p. 212, still accepts this connection while Farnell 1921, p. 175-180, noted the parallels but was cautious and stuck with the Greek evidence: "...discord in the interpretation provokes a sadly humorous feeling, and illustrates how unauthoritative is that branch of comparative mythology which concerns itself with the study of origins." Krappe 1923 sees Herakles as the unatrophied half of original divine twins and points to others in Greek tradition.
they transitioned to their enduring, extra-mundane status.\textsuperscript{18} We know that they are not among the masses who fell at Thebes or Troy – and this is itself interesting, that they are absent from the two greatest expeditions – but no one can say exactly what has happened to them, though the question is raised by their sister Helen in multiple genres, behind the walls of Troy and on the Egyptian shore.\textsuperscript{19} Instead, we encounter a general agreement (with variations) about their enduring status: they are neither simply dead nor simply divine, though consensus does not extend beyond that generalizing statement.

The twins’ capacity for presence that lies at the heart of the brother’s nature in the popular imagination finds expression as well in Pindar’s odes. And, in a corpus where light is always marked by shadow, their potential presence speaks also to their corollary dislocation from the worlds of both gods and men. In this chapter I will focus on two odes: \textit{Nemean} 10 and \textit{Olympian} 3. In the former the twins are primarily present in mythical narrative - a full two-fifths of the ode are dedicated to an aetiology of their extraordinary existence - while in the latter their relevance is felt through briefer allusions to contemporary cultic practice with reference to their status at Akragas. In both odes they engage with the worlds of humans and gods, but without ultimately claiming full participation in either.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Nemean} 10 offers an aetiology of their alternating state, but does not explain how the transformation is effected. This information is also not included in Pindar’s depictions of Herakles’ apotheosis, but for Herakles the tradition of the pyre was already well established, while for Amphiarao Pindar emphasizes the lightning bolt.


\textsuperscript{20} A future expanded study will include a chapter devoted to Iolaos. There I will return to some of the briefer allusions to the Dioskouroi in order to argue that the same concerns underlie these appearances as well.
Pindar’s use for the Twins derives from the extraordinary ambiguity of their status in the world. At once elevated and isolated they enjoy an eternal existence that binds them into a community of two. They occupy a conceptual space between the polarities of mortal and immortal existence and an enduring mode of being that encompasses elements of both human and divine natures. Their exaltation, like that of Pindar’s laudandi, renders them timeless and apart; for the laudandus, though, this state is transitory. The glow of victory will give way to the inescapably human status of the victor - even for the wealthiest and most powerful patrons. In contrast, the Dioskouroi exist forever in an almost suspended state, powerful in their own right but excluded from the systems of power that characterize either humans or gods.

In cultic practice, it seems, this status rendered the Twins, like Herakles, figures with great concern - even empathy - for human struggles. The potential paradox at the core of their nature belonged to the many enigmas of the world and did not figure centrally in their worship. Pindar, however, activates the paradox and deploys their impossibly intermediary status to articulate relationships between the divine and human worlds. The two odes depict the flexibility that the paradox of semi-mortal immortals (or semi-immortal mortals?) afforded the poet: in Olympian 3 the Twins enact the connectedness of the mortal and immortal spheres, in Nemean 10 the experience of the Dioskouroi reveals the gulf between the worlds. Together, the two poems show the vastly divergent effects that Pindar can elicit by developing the same figures in distinct poetic and social contexts. Yet the function of the Dioskouroi in the two odes is basically similar: to help the victor understand how far his victory exalts him and, simultaneously, to recognize the limit of his human experience.

Friends of Friends: Olympian 3 and the refracted glory of the gods
The Setting, not the Gem

We have already journeyed with Herakles through the distant landscapes of Pindar’s third Olympian ode. Here I revisit that ode, shifting my focus from the extended mythological passages and Herakles' star turn to the role of the Dioskouroi. In terms of the text itself the twins are given far less 'screen time' than Herakles. Their appearances are brief and allusive: even the golden hind, as the object of Herakles' pursuit, is given more backstory. Nonetheless, the presence of the Dioskouroi is critical to Pindar's double purpose of glorifying the victory and humanizing the victor.

The function of the Dioskouroi in *Olympian* 3 is to create a series of frameworks that integrate the layered worlds of the ode and the external world of contemporary Akragas. At first it appears that the brevity of their appearances creates a hurdle for the would-be interpreter - how is a modern reader to imagine these Twins? - but it also offers an important point of orientation to the mythical narratives and overarching structures of the ode. Unlike the Herakles of *Olympian* 3, for whom Pindar has woven a new and surprising tale fitted to the requirements of the occasion, the Dioskouroi are exactly who Theron and the audience expect them to be. By this I mean that Pindar sketches a space for them within the boundaries of his song but largely leaves this space as an empty outline to be filled by the acquired expectations and present perceptions of each person experiencing the ode.21

The few lines actually inhabited by the Dioskouroi are the verbal manifestation of their implied presence throughout the ode. Their multifaceted natures bind the world of the song

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21 I intentionally use the broad word 'experiencing' to allow for the same phenomenon occurring in situations of reperformance and for much later audiences - even us - coming to the written or printed text. Having alluded to those possibilities, my discussion will address the contexts relevant to Theron and Akragas.
into the fabric of daily life, blurring the distinction between the glory of this Olympic victory and the generalized good fortune that blankets Akragas. I have argued that Theron’s successes are projected onto the mythical achievements of Herakles but that the parallels break down in the last triad with the reminders of Herakles’ ultimate apotheosis. By contrast, Theron is never compared to the Dioskouroi. Instead, he enjoys an ongoing relationship with them that highlights the complementarity of their natures: the cyclical absence/presence of the Dioskouroi, in Akragas and in the world as a whole, evokes a harmony with the linear trajectories of human life. The lack of comparison points to a lack of aspirational equivalence: Pindar’s ode pushes its audience away from desiring immortality for themselves by promising them the uniquely human exaltation that blooms in the presence of the divine.

The presence of the Dioskouroi creates multiple frames, establishing border territories which communicate and mediate between different levels of experience within the ode, even as they divide them. As recipients of the song, along with their sister Helen, they mark the moment of transition from not-song to song, from expectation to presence. At the conclusion of the mythical narrative they ground the pivot from time narrated to time experienced and from distance to presence. Their last explicit appearance navigates between the momentary glory achieved by Theron’s Olympic victory and the enduring exaltation that their friendship brings to the Emmenidai and those they rule. The mediating functions enacted by the Dioskouroi within the ode draw on their intermediary status in contemporary (fifth century) conceptions. Integrated into the structure of the ode, the Twins collapse the distance between far-flung places and distant times and link Theron to the glory of Olympia - and Olympos.

Filling in the Silences
Who were the Dioskouroi in Akragas? The need to supply context is hardly an unfamiliar challenge for the interpreter of Pindar, but the effect is heightened in this ode; it is almost as though we have only Pindar's part of a duet - the Herakles myth - with the response - the Dioskouroi material - once sung by a now-absent voice. If Pindar depended on his audience to integrate their own conceptions of the Dioskouroi into the poetic material of the Third Olympian, we need a way of answering this question before we can appreciate the effect of their presence.

In the face of such inquiry Akragas keeps its silence. The Dioskouroi surely existed in the mental and material landscapes of the city but non-Pindaric evidence for their presence is almost entirely lacking. When modern scholarship cites Akragas as a city with great reverence for the Dioskouroi it provides unwitting testimony to the efficacy of Pindar's representations. From a religious-historical perspective Olympian 3 does provide good evidence for the presence and importance of the Dioskouroi in the city. It is not viable, however, to use the ode and its metatexts to interrogate the expectations which shaped Pindar's composition: we would be

22 Pace the strain of scholarship that identifies Temple I as "the Temple of the Dioskouroi," still reflected in Rizzo (see citation and sources in following note). As Waele 1971, p. 199, 204, indicates, there is no good evidence for the attribution of this structure to any particular divinity.

23 Rizzo, p. 83 offers a convenient example - but not an unusual one - in her work on Sicilian cult: "Un'altra città che venerava i due gemelli laconi era Agrigento, dove si ergeva un tempio in loro onore nell'area sacra del santuario Ctonie ed erano onorati in occasione delle Teossenie, feste che culminavano con un banchetto, al quale si credeva prendessero parte come ospiti tutte le divinità." For the evidence concerning the temple of the Dioskouroi at Akragas Rizzo points to the work of Pace 1945 and the guidebook of Coarelli and Torelli 1988 (p.146-148); for the rest she cites only Olympian 3, its scholia, and two modern discussions of these texts: Ciaceri 1911, p. 296-297; and Krummen 1990, p. 217-235. By drawing attention to Rizzo's text I do not mean to suggest that her approach is especially careless or unusual. To the contrary, works not explicitly focused on interpretation of this ode frequently use its text and scholia as sober evidence. (Though on Rizzo's methodology v. Pedrucci 2013's Bryn Mawr review.)
rigging a hermeneutical noose. The alternative is to deal in contexts, playing out deductions rooted in Akragas' history and cultural affiliations. The two most relevant frameworks are Akragas' ethnic identity and its location, each of which integrates Akragas into a particular fabric of Dioskouric tradition.

As a Dorian city Akragas looked to the mythological patrimony of Sparta and the Peloponnese as a source for its own identity. Earlier scholars have traced the cult of the Dioskouroi at Akragas to Rhodian cult carried by the colonists who founded Gela. The Twins did receive cult at Rhodes, but we have little trace of its nuances and it is likely that here, too, the traditions of the Peloponnese dominated. Though Pausanias will report, much later, the existence of a local grave of Kastor, the early (and admittedly sparse) local sources seem to treat the brothers as equals in kingship and equal in their enduring status in the world. A fragment of Alkman is our most explicit early source for the nature of this existence:

24 Thus Krummen 1990, p. 223-225.
25 The presence of Dorian elements in Pindar’s compositions for the Deinomenids as well as Akragas suggest that Sicilian tyrants traded on these associations; cf. Thatcher 2012 on fifth century Syracusan identity and Caccamo Caltabiano 2005, p. 13-24, for the Dioskouroi as horsemen on Deinomenid coinage.
26 Adornato 2011, chs. 1-4 passim, has recently challenged this as yet another influential fiction, but Pindar’s use of the tradition shows that it was influential and Geloan dedications at Rhodes indicate Geloan worship oriented toward the older cities. On the Rhodian connection (and the relevance at the Akragantine court) v. Robbins 1982, p. 304-305.
27 The festival of Apollo Karneios might provide a useful comparison: it is attested for several Dorian colonies (Thera, Cyrene, Kos, Knidos) and a the month name Karneios is even more widely attested (OCD, s.v. "Dorian Festivals"). Pindar employs it in Pyth. 5 as a point of connection down through the history of geographical expansion: cf. Puech 1961, p. 89, for one such notice.
28 Paus. 3.13.1: a mnema of Kastor, along with a sanctuary. Pausanias adds the odd additional notice that it was not until forty years after the fight with the Apharesidai that Kastor and Polydeukes were recognized as gods.
most worthy of reverence they dwell
in a god-built home, Kastor - tamers of swift foals,
wise in the ways of horses - and glorious Polydeukes

These few words express the unique situation of the brothers: an existence that retains
some resonances with human life but which is also fundamentally removed from the mundane
contexts of human existence. We do not know - though knowing would be immensely helpful -
if a local aetiology had developed to explain this situation or whether the Twins' status was not
considered remarkable enough to require explanation, possibly because it was understood in
terms similar to other cults of local heroes. At Sparta the Twins are associated with local
history and local royalty as they are not elsewhere and this sense of belonging is reflected in the
wide range of sources, Pindar included, that name Therapnai as their terrestrial base of
operations.

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29 We know almost nothing about the context of this line, but as a lyric fragment, probably for a local
audience, this depiction of the brothers would have been composed to resonate with its audience. The
fact that later sources, despite their diverse representations of the brothers' existential status, frequently
persist in identifying a place for them at Therapnai, increases the probable cultic basis for Alkman's
description. Alkm. 7 (with a scholiast's notes) PMGF, Pind. Pyth. 11.63 (and the scholia ad loc.), Paus.
3.20.1-2; Σ Eur. Τro. 210 and Harpokr. s.v. Θεράπνα (p. 151) allude to Alkman as a source for their
information on Therapnai (and, for the Euripidean scholiast, its association with the Twins).

30 Hermary (in LIMC, s.v. "Dioskouroi") argues that the 'Dioskouroi' were an Ionian celestial pair that
eventually merged with the Spartan 'Tyndaridai' leading to some embarrassment on the part of later
writers. The ancient commentator to Alkman fr. 7 has Menelaos honoured at Therapnai together with the
sons of Zeus: this seems to emphasize the nature of the Twins as sons of Zeus - a nod to the broader
Greek context - while recognizing their enduring association with Sparta and its more simply human
heroes. (Not that Menelaos' status is without its own interest: cf. Od. 4.560-569.)
By selecting elements from the myths surrounding the Twins at Sparta, Pindar could orient his audience to those elements of their tradition that Dorian affiliation had already planted in the Akragantine soil. The unity of the brothers is a key element of the ode that resonates with this tradition. In Olympian 3 they are identified three times: twice as the Tyndaridai and once as the twin sons of Leda.\(^\text{31}\) Their combination with Helen in the opening lines and with Leda later may serve as subtle allusions to their affiliation with Zeus or point back to the cultic context at Sparta.\(^\text{32}\) Far from indicating a fundamental distinction between the two brothers, though, Pindar here avoids even referring to them by their own separate names.\(^\text{33}\) This is not incidental.\(^\text{34}\) The Twins in this ode function as a unified entity that, together, express a point of contact between human and divine experience; between the Heraklean trajectory toward immortality and the victor's inevitable trajectory toward death.\(^\text{35}\)

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\(^{31}\) Tyndaridai: \(\text{Ol.}\ 3.1, 39;\) Sons of Leta: \(\text{Ol.}\ 3.35.\) The term 'Dioskouroi' does not appear, though the scholiasts refer to them more frequently as the Dioskouroi (with the exception of \(\Sigma\ \text{Nem.}\ 3.57\) (possibly because the scholiast is citing Pherekydes) and \(\Sigma\ \text{Pyth.}\ 5.10a\) (with reference to Sparta).

\(^{32}\) On the iconography of the Dioskouroi with Helen v. Chapouthier 1935 p. 227-251. The close association of Helen with the Twins at Sparta may exist at Rhodes as well; Waele 1971, p. 204, argues that Akragantine Helen should be understood as Dendritis - a Rhodian vegetation goddess - and that the Tyndaridai are also Rhodian importations to Akragas, but he does not emphasize the connection between them.

\(^{33}\) In other odes their names are emphasized though they appear together: \(\text{Pyth.}\ 11.61-62,\ \text{Nem.}\ 10.49-50, 59, 68, 90, \text{Isthm.}\ 5.33.\) In a few cases Kastor appears alone: \(\text{Pyth.}\ 2.69, 5.9, \text{Isth.}\ 1.16.\)

\(^{34}\) Krummen 1990, p. 224-5, also notes the lack of variation in naming; she attributes the consistency to local cult titles - a point that holds true as far as it goes.

\(^{35}\) It is important to remember that the victors were not always young men in their prime bursting with energy and promise (an image we get from the Aiginetan odes especially). Theron would actually die only four years after the composition of this ode; it is not unlikely that his victory already communicated to him more a sense of a pinnacle achieved rather than a guarantee of endless ascension.
The visual iconography associated with the Dioskouroi at Sparta is full of motifs that are suggestive of associations with borders and transitions. Most impenetrable, perhaps, are the _dokana_, structures composed of two uprights and a crossbar that have been variously identified with houses, gateways, and tombs. It would be difficult to prove any of these significances, but I am also not sure that we need to. The range of explanations in later sources may also have occurred to those who encountered these images casually: even Alkman's brief fragment evokes both dwelling and tomb. Two marble stelae from the archaic period show these structures surrounding the Twins; in one of them an egg appears above the structure and a serpent on either side. Ritual practice, in ancient Greece as elsewhere, employed both snake and egg as symbols evocative of transformation and transition, including the passages of birth and death. These images could suggest that the mysterious cycle of dying and living was already part of the Dioskouric tradition at Sparta, or at least that their eternal terrestrial existence established them

36 It is not clear how closely these motifs map on to the literary description of the Twins as ἑτερήμεροι. Pindar's casual employment of this model suggests that it was well known by the early fifth century, but it may not have had roots in the traditions drawn from Sparta (though Szeliga 1981, p. 170, seems to take this feature as probably associated with their existence in their home territory because of its centrality).

37 We have a few ancient interpretations: Plut. _de Frat. Am._ p. 478a takes them as an expression of brotherly love; the _Etym. Magn._ (s.v. δόκανα) describes them as certain Lakonian tombs, named from receiving (δέξεσθαι) the Dioskouroi. Early (and excessively comparative) readings understood the Dioskouroi themselves as the two pillars: Cook 1925, p. 422-432; Waites 1919. As points of communication with the underworld v. Guarducci 1984, esp. p. 141 ff. De Grummond 1991, p. 22ff., thinks this significance has been imported into Etruscan iconography as well.

38 LIMC s.v. 'Dioskouroi’ nos. 58-59. Related representations continue to be manufactured on marble stelae for centuries, suggesting that these motifs communicated something fundamental to the conception of the Dioskouroi at Sparta.

39 Snake: v. Burkert 1985, p. 195 (death); Burkert 1987, p. 94, 97, 106 - associations with cults of Persephone, Isis and Sabazius - death and sexuality); in archaic burial goods (Kurtz 1971, p. 78). Eggs: on the Lakonian Chrysapha relief and a Totenmahl relief from the Peiraios as offerings to the heroized dead, depicted on lekythoi as offerings at a tomb (Garland 1985 p. 10, 70, 113); symbolism in 'Totenkult' discussed by Nilsson 1908.
in a sort of un-ending transition. Familiarity with such associations would have primed an audience to appreciate the work the Twins do in mediating between the performed and imagined worlds of the ode.

These themes appear, reworked and reimagined, in Magna Graecia where the twins are characterized in part by their mobility: they travel from place to place in the mundane world and between the worlds of human and divine experience. Dedications from Tarentum show scenes probably intended as Theoxenia: the Twins, mounted on horses suspended in mid-air, approach couches and tables laid with food. They are also reported to have led Lokrian troops into battle and appear on the Lokrian pinakes and, more than a century later, on Apulian vases, as visitors to the underworld. Tarentum, of course, has intimate ties to Sparta but the emphasis on their approach/epiphany may be of greater importance in the mentality of the Western Greeks, for whom the Twins would cross oceans. In contrast to Spartan traditions, the cities of Magna

40 v. Guarducci 1984, p. 134-35, for the associations of the Dioskouroi in Lakonia with the 'mondo infero'.

41 Tarentine plaques: LIMC s.v. Dioskouroi nos. 116-117 (4th/3rdc.), 118 (1st. c.). Guzzo 1994 looks to Lokri and Tarentum as points where Spartan contact brought the Twins to Magna Graecia; he interprets Tarentine votive material as evidence for the development of a private/soteriological element of the cult in the fourth century (p. 28). It is useful to highlight this aspect of cult, but there is little reason to think that it became relevant only at this date.

42 The Dioskouroi were said to have assisted the Lokrians (and their Rhegian allies) at the Battle of Sagra against Kroton: Diod. Sic. 8.32; Strab. 6.1.10. Diodoros' account highlights, in a literal way, the Twins' movement from their home in Sparta to those awaiting them at Lokri: at the bidding of the Spartans the Lokrian ambassadors prepared a couch on their ship so that the Dioskouroi could accompany them home.


44 Szelliga 1981 has argued for the interpretation of Magna Graecian akroteria in the shape of mounted riders as the Dioskouroi, basing his argument in their epiphanic importance in the West. His argument is tempting, but as Marconi 2007, p. 45-48, objects, the available archaeological evidence is far from constructing a foolproof case for the identity of the equestrian figures.
Graecia seem to have worshipped the Dioskouroi not as local neighbors whose presence was accustomed but as welcome guests whose presence conferred prestige.

In the course of the ode, Pindar will draw on the mobility of the Twins to conflate the diverse times and places of his song. He will look to their Panhellenic presence at Olympia in order to connect Akragas and the sanctuary at Elis, but this is only one of their framing functions. The friendship of the Dioskouroi imparts glory to Theron and his community by binding them into a network of affiliation between humans and gods and between places civil and sacred, fulfilling a role like that of the song itself.

**Whose Guests?**

Many scholars, beginning with the scholiasts, have argued that a Theoxenia at Akragas was the performative setting for this ode.\(^{45}\) This argument claims that the song was commissioned by Theron to be performed for the delight of the Twins while they were already present in Akragas and thus renders the Twins' recurring presence significantly less mysterious.

A cultic reality probably does lie behind Pindar's representations of the close relationship that Theron's family enjoys with the Twins.\(^{46}\) In the course of their comings and

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\(^{45}\) Σ Ολ. 3.1a-d and headings (αὐτῷ ἄρματι θεοξένια; τῷ αὐτῷ εἰς θεοξένια). Modern scholars who take the Theoxenia as the performative setting: Böckhius 1811-21 (who sees 'aliqaud veri' in the scholiasts' views, p. 135-136), Race 1997, p. 72; Robbins 1984; Krummen 1990 (but recognizes enduring uncertainty). Objecting: Heyne 1807, p. 36-37; Fränkel 1961, p. 394-397, Köhnken 1983. Shelmerdine 1987, p. 65-67 sees nothing in the ode to indicate that the Theoxenia had to be the performative context.

\(^{46}\) While we do not have independent evidence for this festival at Akragas, the Twins are elsewhere represented arriving at or participating in settings that look Theoxenic: on a late sixth century Athenian pelike and olpe (LIMC s.v. Dioskouroi nos. 111-112); cf. Jameson 1994, p. 47.
goings across the world, we are told, the Dioskouroi choose to come often to Theron’s table.\(^47\)

In Pindar’s great Dioskouric ode, *Nemean* 10, a guest-host relationship between an Argive ancestor and the Dioskouroi is cited as a facet of the family’s prestige. As in this ode little explanation is given; a reference to commensality is sufficient to allude to this relationship and translate it to praise integrated into the ode. The unsurprising nature of the claim is shown by a story from the fourth century historian, Theopompos, in which the Theoxenia is the least weird part of the whole account: While a certain Phormio was engaged in the rites of the Theoxenia the Dioskouroi summoned him to Battos in Kyrene and he arose there holding a stalk of sylphium.\(^48\) The use of a singular participle suggests that this rite could be undertaken by an individual or single family, providing a parallel for the role of host that Pindar attributes to the Emmenidai.\(^49\) It is reasonable, then, to see an allusion in *Olympian* 3 to a real and customary practice of Theron’s family and to their preexisting claim to special friendship with the Twins. Awareness of this affiliation would have contributed to the expectations and conceptions that

\(^47\) *Ol*. 3.39-40 cf. Robbins 1984, p. 222-224, where he goes even farther by suggesting that a close relationship between Theron and his own brother, Xenokrates, who appears at *Isth*. 2.35-40 is alluded to through the theoxenic imagery (*ξενίαν...τράπεζαν*).

\(^48\) Theopomp. fr. 392 (*Suid.* s.v. Φορμίων). It is worth noting that this Phormio is identified in the previous sentence as a Krotoniate who fought at the Battle of Sagra and was then sent by an oracle to Sparta for help with a hard-to-heal wound. The Dorian links persist with his arrival in Cyrene. The Dioskouroi in this account belong to the cultural sphere under discussion here.

\(^49\) This is not to suggest that Theoxenia could not also occur in polis cult or extra-polis cult, as it did, for instance, at Delphi. Jameson 1994, in fact, suggests that these rites, with their less expensive outlay, may have been a regular part of festival offerings or occurred in sanctuaries in between the festival gatherings. Moreover, the Dioskouroi were far from the only heroes/divinities to be invited to such a meal. None of that, however, need distract us from the effect that Pindar (who never actually uses the term) is constructing.
oriented the audience to the ode and, as such, should play a role in a modern interpretive apparatus.\textsuperscript{50}

All of this does not mean, however, that the Theoxenia should necessarily be seen as the performative context of the ode. With Susan Shelmerdine I suggest that, while the Theoxenia could have been the occasion of the ode's performance, we should not see Pindar's choices as guided exclusively by that frame.\textsuperscript{51} Shelmerdine emphasizes that Pindar's poetic elaboration of xenia, especially between men and gods, binds the elements of the ode together and contributes to Theron's praise by portraying him not only as an athletic victor but also as a pious ruler. That is, the theoxenic elements are motivated by Pindar's poetic program rather than the other way around. I agree that the theoxenic motif serves Pindar's poetic purposes, but if the argument is pushed further it reveals that the Dioskouroi evoke an effect beyond praise. Their existence within the ode is not easily extricated from their existence in the world of Akragantine experience and this blurring brings Akragas into the landscapes of the ode and the ode's distant destinations into the landscape of Akragas. Whatever the original performance context - and I will offer an alternative suggestion below - my investigation highlights a complex network of associations evoked by a highly intentional deployment of the Twins at points of transition in the ode.\textsuperscript{52}

\textsuperscript{50} cf. Shelmerdine 1987, p. 67, who observes that the ode's opening wish to please the Dioskouroi would make little sense if they did not have some preexisting relationship with Akragas.

\textsuperscript{51} Shelmerdine 1987. Her argument emphasizes the representation of xenia as a mode of praise, responding to scholarship which designated Olympian 3 as a hymn and not an epinician at all (on this line of thinking Olympian 2 was the epinician that celebrated Theron's chariot victory of 476).

\textsuperscript{52} These effects, as I trace them here, are not negated if we take the Theoxenia as the performative setting, though it lessens the effect of Pindar's poetic choreography that brings the Twins to Akragas.
Exaltation in Song

The Dioskouroi do not only bind together the layered worlds evoked within Pindar’s composition; they also bridge the chasm between anticipation and song, guiding the chorus and audience into the heightened experience of the ode. Whether at a Theoxenia or in another public context, the festive setting for the ode's performance surely centered around the celebration of Theron's victory and the integration of that victory into the accumulated successes of the city. The expectation of a new Pindaric ode, a prestige good and possibly the high point of the gathering, must have generated excitement and speculation. The anticipation was broken by the enunciation of one word: Tyndaridais. The Dioskouroi function at the opening of the ode as a hinge between the mundane and the exalted, between the absence and presence of song. They are not introduced as characters within the song but as a framing device that transports the audience into the realm of glorious achievement and divine encounters.

Pindar opens other odes with vocative addresses to divinities but the dative construction of Olympian 3 is unique in his epinician corpus. Before it becomes enmeshed in a grammatical construction, the introductory dative Tyndaridais evokes the existence of a relationship with the Twins, implicating them in the systems of communication and exchange that nest within the ode. But what is their role and who is claiming a relationship to them? The

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53 On performance settings v. Carey 2007, esp. p. 203-205. The goal of bringing the victory back to the city might not have been explicitly articulated by Theron or the other Akragantines who made up the ode’s audience, but it is one standard element of epinician compositions: cf. Crotty 1982, p. 108-122; Kurke 1991.

54 Isthms. 7 and 8 are the only other odes to open with any sort of datives. These, too, evoke relationships and both of these openings are questions that guide either the content or performance of the poem: Isthm. 7 asks which of her famous denizens Thebes rejoiced in most; Isthm. 8 asks which of Kleandros' agemates will lead his komos. In both cases the first line encapsulates the actor and the interested party in the dative - in Ol. 3 the actor is unexpressed until the end of the second line - and even there the first person encompasses a variety of personae.
opening lines of the ode do not, precisely, answer this question. Instead, they evoke a generalized glow of reciprocity. The Twins are drawn into the celebration of the city while the audience is transported beyond the realm of mundane experience by the appearance of the Twins.

Τυνδαρίδαις τε φιλοξείνοις ἀδείν
καλλυπολόμω θ´ Ἑλένα
κλεινάν Ακράγαντα γεραίρων εὐχομαι,
Θήρωνος Ὀλυμπιονίκαν
ὑμόν ορθώσας, ἀκαμαντοπόδων
ὕπων ἀωτόν.

_Ol._ 3.1-4

For the Tyndaridai who welcome hospitality, to please them, and Helen whose hair is beauty, I boast praising famed Akragas; I have raised Theron's Olympic victory song, the flower of untiring horses.

Two actions catalyze the momentum of the ode. One of these is Theron's Olympic victory which belongs to the experience of the real world external to Pindar's composition. The other is the performed act\(^\text{55}\) of praising Akragas in order to please the Dioskouroi and their sister. The structure of the opening lines collapses the two actions, uniting the efforts of athlete and poet into a single and self-reinforcing expression of reverence. The multivalence of εὐχομαι highlights the integration of praise and worship at the heart of the composition: the speaker boasts of his ability to praise the city and please the Tyndaridai and their sister, but we could

\(^{55}\text{On performed or enacted contexts v. Morgan 1993 as well as Agócs 2012, p. 193-198, who draws on a distinction developed by Yatromanolakis 2004, esp. p. 65-66, between 'performative context' (historical context in which the words were uttered) and 'descriptive context' ('the setting in which the poem, as a text, enacts itself').}
just as well translate that he *prays* to please them by his praise.\(^{56}\) Boasting and praying have become almost opposite actions in modern English usage\(^{57}\), but for a Greek listener there need have been no contradiction. Just as Theron's pursuit of athletic glory contributed to the worship of Olympian Zeus, so also the virtuosic praise communicates a reverence for the divine. The double identity of the first person speaking voice underscores this effect: it belongs to the poet whose poetic work is directly linked to the Olympian victory but also to the chorus who speak to the Twins as powers they have encountered in the course of their own lives.\(^{58}\)

With the enunciation of *Τυνδαρίδαις* the presence of the Twins is conjured. They appear on the boundary of the poem, existing partly in the individual experiences of the listeners and partly in the shared poetic vision that Pindar is constructing. The landscape of the city and the landscape of the song are brought into a continuum and the efforts of patron, poet, and divine Twins merge into a single expression of idealized reciprocity. Linear trajectories are eschewed in favour of cyclical interactions that communicate glory while affirming the appropriate place of each participant: Theron's victory glorifies the city; the city's glory and Pindar's song, commissioned by Theron, are a source of pleasure for the Dioskouroi; the presence

\(^{56}\) *LSJ* s.v. εὔχομαι: I: to pray, utter in prayer; II: to vow or promise to do; III: to profess loudly, boast, vaunt, "mostly, not of empty boasting, but of something of which one has a right to be proud".

\(^{57}\) A touchstone for this perception may be the parable that contrasts the self-satisfied prayer of the Pharisee with the self-abasing prayer of the tax collector: (Luke 18:9-14).

\(^{58}\) The cultural contexts I outline above strongly suggest that the Twins were known at Akragas and worshipped on a personal level if not in the form of civic cult. (And the possibility of civic cult is not inherently unlikely; only unprovable from current evidence.)
of the Dioskouroi glorifies Theron and Akragas. The effect is not one of finite exchanges but of
an ongoing system perpetuated by beneficence. 

In the first triad the Dioskouroi are not characters appearing at a predetermined point in
a familiar mythical narrative; they are a presence summoned at the moment of the ode's
opening. They are not named again until the conclusion of the Heraklean myth but they are
present in the metapoetic language of composition which Pindar uses to equate the presence of
the Twins to the presence of his song. The ode celebrating Theron's chariot victory is called the
'flower of horses whose feet never tire'. The phrase is explicable with reference to the real
horses who drew the chariot to victory, but the adjective points to a lack of effort at odds with
the physical challenge of the contests. The effortless ability inherent in the adjective could
refer, instead or additionally, to the movement of the Dioskouroi whose horses' hooves need
not even touch the earth. On this reading, the ode is recast as the instantiation of the Twins'
goodwill. While the adjective subtly contrasts the human physicality of Theron's chariot with the
easy-as-thought movement of the divine Twins, it also emphasizes their investment in his
success. Their favour functions in parallel with the ode itself to communicate Theron's
exceptional status among men.

59 Krummen 1990, p. 227-228 interprets the theme of reciprocity as a simpler exchange: pleased by the
Theoxenia, the Twins granted victory; in thanks Theron offers Theoxenia.

60 For a contemporary example cf. the victory of Hieron's horse Polyneikes who hurls his body (σύτο
δέμας) down the track. Elsewhere exertion and toil on the part of competitors is the explicit prerequisite
for kleos (cf. the assurance at Nem. 10.30 that Theaios' spirit is not (to quote Race's translation) 'unused
to labour' (ἀμόχθως). A counterexample is OL. 5.3 where the mule cart is ἀκμαμνόποδός. Elsewhere in
Pindar, though, the prefix actually characterizes the Dioskouroi (and Herakles): Pyth. 4.171-173,
ἀκαμαντομάχαι.

61 Again, see the Taras stelae, and cf. the description in HH 33.11-12 where they appear suddenly, darting
through the air on tawny wings (οἱ δὴ ἔξαπτινς ἑφάνησαν/ξουθήσας πετρύγεσι δ' ἀιθέρος ἀξίζαντες).
The conjunction of equestrian imagery and victory appears again a few lines later where the language once more looks beyond the world of Theron’s stables. The victory crown makes its first appearance here in a metapoetic context that performs the creation of song. After an appeal to the Muse for her assistance, Pindar explains why he is spurred to compose:

ἐπεὶ χαίταισι μέν
ζευχθέντες ἐπι στέφανοι
πράσσοντι με τούτο θεόδματον χρέος,
Ol. 3.6-7

Since the crowns yoked on long manes construct for me a debt undersigned by the gods (lit. god-built).

At one level the line reenacts the celebration of victory at the precinct and the granting of the olive crown. This image will be introduced more explicitly six lines later when the olive wreath becomes the pivot that thrusts the action of the ode back into the past. In this passage, in contrast, the language seems intentionally inexact, poised to project a montage of images with flashes of men, horses and gods integrated into a précis of Theron’s victory. χαίταισι often refers to the manes of horses and the verb, ζευχθέντες, looks inevitably to the imagery of riding. But χαίταισι is also used of the hair of young men and it is more properly the victor’s head which receives the victory wreath and the choral dancers may have worn wreaths as well. In addition to depicting horse and idealized rider this imagery reflects the iconography of

62 The crowning of the horses is probably mostly metaphorical, though v. the silver Syracusan decadrachm (c. 460) which shows Nike hovering over a quadriga and holding a wreath - possibly conceptually intended for the horses as much as for the charioteer? (CM BMC Syracuse 63.)

63 LSJ s.v. χαίτη: 2: of a horse’s mane.
the Dioskouroi themselves: young riders, sometimes crowned.\textsuperscript{65} For the Dioskouroi the crowns speak to their own status as athletic victors, but also, perhaps, to their semi-divine status.\textsuperscript{66}

The imagery of horses and wreaths could simply be a virtuosic way of designating Theron's victory as the cause of Pindar's song and the chorus's performance. If, however, the imagery nods again to the Dioskouroi, the causation is once again doubled as it was in the opening lines. The victory is the proximate cause of the ode, but what was the cause of the victory? These lines suggest that the support of the Dioskouroi has brought success to Theron; this suggestion glorifies the victory by making it one point of contact in an ongoing association of the Twins with Akragas.

An argument for the Twins' presence is strengthened by the adjective, \textit{θεόδματον}, that describes the debt the ode fulfills. The allusion to the gods, in any case, points to the role of the divine in human success, but this particular adjective may point more directly to the Dioskouroi, particularly if we can imagine that Pindar (very likely) and the educated members of the Akragantine audience (possibly?) were familiar with Alkman's lyric. In the now fragmentary poem discussed above, the home of the Twins beneath the earth is \textit{σιόδματον}, the Dorian

\textsuperscript{64} Σ Ol. 3.10b: some say it was the chorus, not the horses, who were crowned. (This is probably a case of the scholiasts reading literally rather than solid evidence for horses being garlanded.) Carey 2007, p. 199, cites this passage with Isth. 7.30 and 8.6a as evidence for choral crowns (and Ol. 8.10 and 13.29 as ambiguous indicators).

\textsuperscript{65} They appear young and long-haired on Spartan votive reliefs (e.g. Sparta Museo Archeologico inv. n. 5380, 575); long-haired and crowned on a sixth century olpe of the Amasis painter (Berlin, Staatliche Museen inv. n. F1731) and on the amphora of Exekias (LIMC s.v. Dioskouroi n. 181) depicting a family scene (cf. Hermary 1978 who sees this and related scenes as expressions of the apotheosis of the Dioskouroi). Riding, long-haired and crowned: a late fifth/early fourth century volute krater attributed to the Talos painter (Ruvo Museo, Collezione Jatta inv. n. 1501).

\textsuperscript{66} On the Boston amphora the Dioskouroi appear with a youth proffering a crown; Hermary 1978, p. 64, interprets the crown as symbolizing the glory of their destiny (i.e. apotheosis).
Beyond simply pointing to the Twins, the transfer of the adjective highlights the quality shared by their dwelling beneath Therapnai, Theron's victory, and Pindar's song. Each exists outside the usual order of the world, articulating a penetration of the ideal into the real. The Dioskouroi are unique in that they exist forever in this balance - the incarnation of a state which cannot usually endure. In this they are like the song itself which freezes the moment of victory and keeps it forever in the world. Theron, in contrast, is like the victory rather than the song: a momentary phenomenon which endures only in memory after its physical disappearance from the world.

The scattered resonances cohere in the description of song that concludes the performative language of the strophe and antistrophe and prepares for the pivot of the epode. The twins, having been summoned with the first utterance of the ode and integrated into the victory celebration in the metapoetic passage that follows are ultimately almost assimilated to song itself:

\[
\text{ὁ τε Πίσα με γεγωνεῖν: τὰς ἄποθεόμοροι νόισον' ἐπ' ἄνθρώπους ἀοιδαί,}
\]

\[O l. 3.9-10\]

Pisa too assigns this to me to sing, Pisa whence - apportioned by the gods - songs come to men.

The adjective (θεόμοροι) and the noun (ἀοιδαί) bracket the line, leaving a gap for the listener to supply a different noun: Τυνδαρίδαε. The song enacts the welcome of Theron's victory and its prestige into the city (it is a φωνὰν ἀγλαόκωμον\(^{68}\)) but it also summons and

\[^{67}\text{Alk. 2 PMGF; Alk. 12.8 PMGF (P. Oxy. 2393): apparent lexicographical commentary on fr. 2. (The adjective does occur repeatedly elsewhere in Pindar's epinicians (Ol. 6.59, Pyth. 1.61, Pyth. 9.10, Isthm. 6.11).}\]

\[^{68}\text{Ol. 3.5-6.}\]
enacts the presence of the divine Twins. Like θεόδματον, θεόμοροι introduces a field of significance which is applicable to both the Twins and the song and this field includes an element of ambiguity. Is the sense of the adjective active or passive; that is, if something is θεόμορον is it apportioned by the gods or is a portion of divinity inherent to it?\textsuperscript{69} The ambiguity is effective here because both the Dioskouroi and the victory song can be understood in both senses. The Dioskouroi enjoy elements of divinity (active) and their semi divine status was granted to them by Zeus.\textsuperscript{70} If moderated immortality is the defining feature of the Twins' divine portion, the same might be said for the victory ode. The ode lays claim to a poetic divinity through its potential for endurance beyond the lifetimes of poet and victor; this immortality is apportioned by the cooperation of the divine Muse and - as we saw above - catalyzed by the divine support that first secured Theron's victory. The presence of the Dioskouroi is paralleled to the song itself. Both phenomena situate Theron and the audience within an atmosphere marked by the numinous - for as long as the song lasts and the Dioskouroi remain.

Harmonizing Glory

The radiation of exaltation and victory from Olympia to Akragas is a key element of the third Olympian's idealizing program. In the first two stanzas the Dioskouroi, like the song itself, drew the audience into the exaltation of the victory celebration. With the transition to the

\textsuperscript{69} LSJ s.v. θεόμορος comes down on one side of the question: I) destined/imparted by the gods (with reference to our passage), II) blessed by the gods. The use of the word at Isth. 8.38 where Themis advises that marriage to Thetis be given to Peleus as a γέρας θεόμορον, however, suggests that the aspect of inherent divinity can also be salient.

\textsuperscript{70} We do not need to look to Pindar's aetiology from Nemean 10 - and I am not at all sure that such an aetiology would be fully relevant here - to trace the Twins' unusual status to the intervention of Zeus in some form.
mythical past the Dioskouroi will bridge the space between poem and experience once more, conflating Herakles' outward journey from Olympia to the land of the Hyperboreans with Theron's triumphant return from Olympia to Akragas.\(^{71}\)

The motifs of olive tree and olive crown wind through the ode as physical symbols of the permutation of distance, whether temporal or geographical, into immediate presence. The trees that Herakles imports from the country of the Hyperboreans are the expression of that ideal place in the midst of the human world. They elevate the sanctuary, highlighting Olympia as a place where men can come close to gods. The victor's olive crown perpetuates the chain of influence by projecting a physical element of the sanctuary onto the victor's home and community. The olive leaves conflate mythical past and victorious present because they are a stable, enduring element between the two. Herakles' journeys lie far in the past and Herakles himself has departed for the halls of the gods. The victor knows that his victory too is already past, though celebration and honour lie before him; yet the wreath attests to his encounter, via the ancient trees, with times and places beyond the reach of men. Herakles' prowess brings the trees to Olympia; Theron's victory achieves the crown for Akragas.

The achievements of Herakles and Theron demonstrate a pattern of achievement compensated by a reward which endures beyond the tenure of its founder.\(^{72}\) Theron's victory motivates the epinician composition while Herakles' drives the narrative center of the ode. The actions of the Dioskouroi do not conform to this model; indeed, the Dioskouroi within the ode

\(^{71}\) Did Theron actually go to Olympia? For the poetic representation it doesn't really matter, just as the victory is his despite the fact that he certainly didn't drive the chariot.

\(^{72}\) cf. Thomas 2007, esp. p. 160: "The set of values voiced by the epigrams and monuments as well as by Pindar include the desire for fame, glory, and memory against the certainty of death." And cf. the epigram she cites (p. 159/ CEG 393) in which the athlete claims to have given Himera "an imperishable memory of his excellence" (Thomas' translation).
are largely passive; even their poetic representations are passive in the sense that they pervade
the narrative implicitly with only occasional emergence into verbal articulation. This poetic
choice should not be attributed to the lack of good stories about the Dioskouroi or their
comparative irrelevance for the Olympic contests. Instead, Pindar has highlighted the continuity
of the Twins; their enduring presence in the human landscape makes them more like the olive
trees than they are like either contemporary victor or mythological hero. Their presence enables
personal contact with the divine and potentiates the experience of glory.

This effect depends on Pindar's interweaving of two complementary traditions: the
association of the Dioskouroi with the sanctuary at Olympia and their friendship with the
Emmenidai of Akragas. Both traditions, I think, preexisted the composition of the ode but are
reshaped and reemphasized to bring them into communication with each other in a way which
comments on the Heraklean myth. As I argued above, it is reasonable to interpret the allusion
to a special relationship between the Twins and the Emmenidai as reflecting a cultic reality
promulgated by the Emmenidai themselves. This Dioskouric complex belongs to Akragas,
influenced by the cultural and ethnic atmosphere of that city.

At Olympia the presence of the Twins probably reflects their status as superlative
athletes as well as their association with the early days of the sanctuary. Pausanias recounts a
series of early Olympian games and cites Kastor and Polydeukes as victors in the contests held
by Herakles, in foot race and boxing respectively. Allusions to the "Kastor song" of Archilochos,

73 In fact, this grafting of traditions is repeated in the Heraklean myth: Pindar invents points of contact
between extant traditions (Herakles' pursuit of the hind, his foundation of the sanctuary) in order to
create a bespoke setting for the celebration of this unique victory.

74 Paus. 5.8.3-4. This account is complicated by Pausanias' idiosyncratic distinction between 'Herakles the
Idaean Daktyl' and 'Herakles son of Amphitryon'. The former Herakles is credited with the initial founding
of the games at which the gods themselves competed (Paus. 5.7.9-10) while the latter Herakles seems to

the short traditional song sung at the moment of victory, indicate the enduring memory of Kastor at the sanctuary and highlight his passage from individual victor to generalized model for victory. This is, perhaps, indicative of the development of Dioskouroi cult at Olympia. Pausanias also describes an altar of the Twins that stands by the pillar of the chariot race course in his own day.\(^75\) We cannot know the date of the altar but its presence suggests a complementary mythical/cultic role for the Twins at the sanctuary: their success renders them patrons of the men who come to attempt the same feats. The conception of their athletic prowess is certainly early: we hear repeatedly of their achievements in Pelias’ funeral games; Polydeukes’ success is recorded on the chest of Kypselos.\(^76\) Their apparent early prominence in Lakonia and the Argolid suggests that their cultic presence at the sanctuary could have been well established by the first quarter of the fifth century.\(^77\) Additionally, their position as sons of Zeus might underscore their connection to their father’s temenos and its contests. In a hymn which probably dates to the sixth century\(^78\) they are addressed specifically as the sons of Zeus Olympios. This designation may reflect their association with the cult of Zeus at Olympia or it may be a less geographically be framed as a human hero who competes with his peers, taking the pankration and wrestling contests. This late description articulates an almost teleological development with the sanctuary passed down from the Olympian gods to the men of Pausanias’ own day. Pindar also plays with the development of the sanctuary from distant/mythic history to contemporary time.

\(^75\) Paus. 5.15.5

\(^76\) Dioskouroi in Pelias’ funeral games: Ion of Chios Ag. (fr. 1 Snell 1971): Kastor wins in the footrace; Paus. 5.17.9: chest of Kypselos, Polydeukes as victor in chariot racing; Amphiaraoi krater (Berlin: Lost F1655): Kastor in the chariot race; Hygin. Fab. 273: Kastor wins in the stadion, Polydeukes in boxing.

\(^77\) For early Argive and Lakonian participation at Olympia v. Morgan 1990, p. 61-65.

\(^78\) West 2003, p. 19, thinks that Homeric Hymns 17 and 33 or related hexameter hymns are reflected in Alk. fr. 34 Voigt (which provides a terminus ante quem).
specific connection which could, nonetheless, establish an association for later poetic development.

This network of possible associations may not have cohered into a single role for the Twins at Olympia, but I suggest that it provided a variety of existing threads which Pindar could weave together with those of the Akragantine tradition. The references that do and do not appear in Theron’s ode highlight the enduring presence of the Twins in the world from the time of heroes until the age of men. Pindar knots the strands together into a pattern apparently of his own design\(^79\): the direct transfer of control over the games to the Dioskouroi from Herakles.

This image concludes the mythical narrative, at least to the extent that we can talk about conclusion in this ode. It might be more accurate to say that it completes the circle of the Heraklean narrative, bringing it back to the generalized description of the Hellanodikes crowning the victor.\(^80\) I include the two passages, placing the narratively second one first to highlight the cyclical effect the juxtaposition establishes.

\[\text{Ol. 3.36-38}\]

\begin{verbatim}
\begin{verbatim}
  τοῖς γὰρ ἐπέτραπεν Οὐλυμπόνδ’ ἵων
  βασιλέαν ἀγώνα νέμειν
  ἄνδρῶν τ’ ἄρετας πέρι καὶ ῥυμμαρμάτων
  διψήλασις

  For he (Herakles) as he departed for Olympos
  transferred to them (the Dioskouroi)
  oversight of the marvelous contests
  where men compete in excellence
\end{verbatim}
\end{verbatim}

\(^79\) Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1922, p. 283. Robbins 1984, p. 222-223: Pindar is establishing a closer connection between the Dioskouroi and the Olympic games (as opposed to general athletics).

\(^80\) Cf. Krummen 1990, p. 233: "Der hyperboreische Siegeskranz wird also gleichsam aus mythischer Zeit von Herakles über die ganze Reihe der Hellanodiken durchgereicht, bis er schliesslich auf Therons Kopf gesetzt wird."
and the onward rush of the double-horsed chariot.

\[\omega\] τινι, κραίνων ἐφετμάς Ὑρακλέους προτέρας,  
ἀτρεκῆς Ἑλλανδικῶς γλεφάρων Ἁι-  
tωλός ἀνὴρ ψιθθεν  
ἀμφὶ κόμαισι βάλη  
γλαυκόχροα κόσμον ἐλαιας  
Ol. 3.11-13

For this man (the victor), fulfilling the longstanding precepts of Herakles,  
the unerring judge for all Greeks, an Aitolian man,  
circles high up on his hair,  
above the brow,  
the adornment of the grey-skinned olive.

In both passages Herakles is depicted as founder who is now, or is about to be, absent.  
The representation of human participants, meanwhile, does not celebrate any single victor.  
Instead, the victor's place is established, to be filled by a different person with each new contest  
(marked by the indefinite \[\omega\] τινι in the second passage). While Herakles departs for Olympos  
with the participle of εἴμι stressing his movement, the chariots continue to rush onwards. In the  
midst of all this - the rush to victory by the charioteers, the flight to the community of the gods  
by Herakles\(^{81}\) - the Dioskouroi remain. By illustrating the moment when Herakles hands the  
games over to the Twins, Pindar highlights not only Herakles' incipient absence but also, if more  
subtly, the Twins' enduring presence. No aetiology is given and the Twins are not exclusively  
linked to any single geographic setting that could provide a pole for the movement of the ode.\(^{82}\)

\(^{81}\) This departure frequently on a chariot in sixth and fifth century representations - often with Athena  

herself as charioteer. For a far from complete selection v. LIMC s.v. Herakles nos. 2877-2908.

\(^{82}\) Therapnai was almost certainly present in the audience’s expectations, but the ode draws on that  

expectation as a latent background rather than emphasizing it or rejecting it in favour of an alternate  
model.
What is emphasized is their pertinence to the human world as a whole, in contrast to the places beyond the approach of mortal men.

The transfer of Olympic oversight from Herakles to the Dioskouroi does not effect an ending of the narrative and a neat pivot to the present celebration. Rather, this event at the end of Herakles' human existence looks back in the ode to the opening of the mythical narrative, a generalized present in which the Hellanodikes maintains the system established by Herakles. This official is the human overseers of Herakles' foundation; the Dioskouroi are the divine caretakers. The narrative frame of the mythical narrative in the third Olympian begins to conflate the two levels of experience, instantiating the encounter with the divine in the experience of victory.

Time is at play in this ode, but so is space, and the Twins effect a blurring in both dimensions. They draw the glory that Herakles has established at Olympia - a glory expressed by the presence of the Hyperborean olives - into the landscape of Akragas. The passage that achieves this transport has occasioned vast debate, precisely because of its relationship to the nature of place. Three thoughts follow, one upon another, in a dizzying interweaving of moments and locations that renders any neat extrication of mythical memory from present experience impossible.

(i) τῶν νυν γλυκός ἵμερος ἔσχεν
dwdekágnampton peri térma drómou
ū̄pōn φυτεύσαι. (ii) καὶ νυν ἐς ταύταν ἐορ-
tān ἱλας ἀντιθέοισιν νίσεται
sūn bαθυζώνου διδύμοις πασί Λήδας.
(iii) τοῖς γάρ ἐπέτραπεν Οὐλυμπόνδι᾽ ἰὼν
θαητόν ἄγωνα νέμειν
ἀνδρῖν τ᾽ ἀρετάς πέρι καὶ ῥυμφαρμάτου
diphrelasiaς

Ol. 3.33-38
(i) — and now a sweet desire for these seized him, to plant them around the twelve-turn limit of the course. (ii) And now he comes gentle-minded to this festival with the godlike twins of deep-girdled Leda. (iii) To them, when he went to Olympos, he turned over the responsibility for managing the contests in men’s excellence and the driving of swift chariots.

It is the second element that has generated so much interpretative disagreement, all centering around the phrase ταύταν ἑορτάν. The crux of the question is whether Pindar is referring to the festival of Zeus at Olympia or the Theoxenia at Akragas. Earlier interpreters have championed both sides of the question, privileging either the Olympian context of the mythical narrative or the performative context of Akragas in their argumentation.83 The exegetical urge has limited scholarly appreciation of the possibilities of poetic fluidity and the meaning achieved through the ambiguous designation. The three elements I have cited move the attention of the audience back toward the Twins after the extended action of Herakles, but they do so by a process of integration of times and places, an effect antithetical to the work of differentiation that seeks a single referent for 'this festival'.

The land of the Hyperboreans, Olympia, and Akragas are simultaneously present in the conceptions of the audience. Herakles' wandering journey concludes poetically in its middle: he stands in the distant Hyperborean landscape, imagining its superhuman beauty established in the sacred but familiar landscape of the Olympian precinct. The audience then hears that Herakles is coming now (νῦν) to "this" festival with the Tyndaridai. The immediacy of the time

marker as well as the deictic and the present tense verb - possibly supplemented by the physical movements of the chorus? - are poised to bring the audience back to their own festival reality, especially if those familiar with epinician conventions were waiting for the pivot out of myth and back into the context of performance at Akragas and the contemporary world. But then the possibility of neat distinction is challenged by the third element which looks again to the Olympian precinct, and also back to an earlier time. Rather than effecting a linear movement from the land of the Hyperboreans to Olympia and on to Akragas, these lines conflate the locations: each element communicates the glorification of a place or person expressed in movement between the divine and human world: the trees of an idealized land now grace Olympia; the presence of Herakles - now a god - graces a celebration in the contemporary world; Herakles himself is glorified by his removal to the homes of the gods. All of these dislocations exist together and are collapsed into a continuity by Pindar's song. The Dioskouroi who watch over Olympia are also present in Akragas; they are like the olive trees which express the penetration of the divine into the world of human experience. Their arrival with Herakles into the 'now' of the audience's experience brings them into the Akragantine festival setting and simultaneously transports the listeners to the timeless Olympian precinct, itself a partial recreation of the idealized Hyperborean landscape.

If, as I suggested above and will elaborate below, Olympian 3 was performed in the context of a festival other than the Theoxenia, then the approach of the Dioskouroi (expressed in the disputed line) is motivated by Pindar's song and Theron's victory. The climactic arrival of Herakles with the Dioskouroi to ταύταν ἑορτὰν enacts a Theoxenia through the power of the ode as a complement to the actual performance setting. A staggered relationship would in this way be established between the mythical narrative and present celebration, a partial overlap which resolves into a single continuum: just as Herakles journeyed to the land of the
Hyperboreans and brought the olive trees back to glorify Olympia, Theron (if only metaphorically) travelled to Olympia and, through his victory song, welcomes the divine Twins whose presence glorifies his human city. When the chorus sings that the Twins - even now! - are coming to this festival, the words are effective. The Twins become participants in Theron's victory celebration, and Herakles comes with them. These divine guests elevate the Akragantine celebration as the gathered crowds feel themselves in the presence of the gods. By their presence Theron is glorified, but his glory is enacted in his friendship with the gods, by his status as a privileged human who communicates that privilege to his community; the enactment of Theoxenia emphasizes rather than elides the distinction between men and gods.  

Taking a quick jag into the realm of the speculative I would like to propose a context for the ode's performance: the Olympieion at Akragas. This massive temple, as Maria Pavlou has demonstrated, should certainly be accounted for when we reconstruct the contemporary context that framed the ode. Construction began sometime in the first half of the fifth century and was almost certainly underway at the time of the performance. The building was massive in scale, innovative in style, and is thought to reflect Akragas' recent victory at Himera. It is unlikely that such a structure, a powerful showcase for the city's wealth and Theron's just rule,

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84 Krummen 1990, p. 227-236, primarily argues for the Theoxenia as performance context, but she alludes to the possibility of an effect more like the one I am suggesting here (p.231): "Zumindest sollte man zugestehen, dass das Siegessymposion der Verse 4-9 durch den Leidbeginn (1-3, dazu auch 40 f.) eine auffallend, 'theoxenienhafte Einfärbung' erhält."

85 Pavlou 2010.

86 Diod. Sic. 11.25.2-3. v. Pavlou 2010, p. 320, for an overview of arguments for dates ranging from the last quarter of the sixth century down to the decade after the Battle of Himera.
would not have been made the centerpiece for polis gatherings. We lack evidence for an Olympia festival at Akragas, but our ignorance of cult is no sure argument for its non-existence. As a near-contemporary comparandum we might look to the Olympieion in contemporary Athens, a structure sometimes attributed to Peisistratos, and the Athenian Olympia, a festival of which we also know little except that it included an equestrian procession. At Dion Philip - over a hundred years later, but perhaps following long-standing practice? - held sacrifices and a *panegyris* and subsequently awarded crowns to the victors. An inscription from fifth century Selinous preserves a cult song to Zeus in thanks for a military victory; it is not even clear if the Selinountine Zeus was worshipped as Zeus Olympios, but this is the type of festival I am suggesting: one in which the choral celebration of Theron's victory could be integrated into the fabric of polis cult.

Pindar's locational play would have resonated against the backdrop of this structure, the temple serving as the pivot between here/ there and now/then that we do not find in the ode itself. This context would also extend the chain of human/divine xenia. A polis festival for Zeus

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87 Cf. the apparent importance of the Olympieion at Syracuse which should probably be dated to the 6th century and may also reflect older cult. We hear that Hippokrates, the tyrant of Gela, stayed at the temple on his triumphant return from the Battle of Heloros (Diod. Sic. 10.28.1), a historical snippet that might indicate that the cult was important to the Geloan tyrants and that this importance was felt in Akragas as a Geloan daughter city as well. Thucydides 6.64.1 and Diod. Sic. 13.7.5 both use the temple as a point of orientation. (Ziegerl, *RE* s.v. Olympieion).

88 Olympieia at Athens: *Σ Nem.* 2.23 (and cf. Thuc. 1.126.5), Hesychios s.v. 'Olympia', *IG II* 1496 A a 82 ff. In general v. Ziehen in *RE* s.v. 'Olympieia at Athens'.


91 By polis cult I mean a religious occasion felt to be an expression of the city as a whole, in contrast to the family-based Theoxenia that Pindar and the scholiasts depict in this ode.
Olympios posits communication between the population of Akragas and the god of the festival. The relationships expressed in the ode interpolate a more intimate chain of relationships between those two points: Theron enjoys a special friendship with the Dioskouroi, the Dioskouroi are close to Herakles, Herakles comes to Akragas from the halls of Zeus himself. The presence of Herakles and the Twins together at the sanctuary of Olympian Zeus also flattens the distance between the Olympian precinct at Elis and the Olympieion at Akragas: within this context Pindar's myth, in telling of the glorification of Olympia, also speaks to the glorification of Akragas: ταύταν ἑορτάν becomes both Olympian festivals, drawn together temporarily through the structures of the song.92

Whether Theron's ode was performed at an Akragantine Olympia, at some other festival, or, indeed, at the Theoxenia of the Emmenidai, it is the Dioskouroi whose presence expresses the fellowship between human and divine. The Twins are the point of contact that bring the divine Herakles into the human company of festive Akragas. This intermediary capacity is reflected in the role Herakles assigns to them at Olympia: to remain representatives of the divine in the mortal world.

**Exaltation Diffused**

As exponents of the divine, outliers in the human sphere, the Twins orient Theron toward his own humanity and away from the society of the gods. The opening lines of *Olympian* 3 elaborated the mutually reinforcing relationships between poet (and song), victor (and city)

92 Krummen 1990, p. 234-236, makes a different argument for the relevance of the Olympieion. She sees 'ταύταν ἑορτάν' functioning together with 'ξεινίαις τραπέξαις' (40) to articulate a smooth transition: Herakles (founder of Olympia) accompanies the Dioskouroi to that sanctuary, the Dioskouroi accompany Theron (the builder of the Olympieion at Akragas) to his city.
and the Twins. The concluding lines return to this set of relationships, but now the articulation of this network has altered slightly, expanding its scope beyond the present performance and the recent victory. The focus has shifted away from divine action and toward human agency by portraying the cultic activities of Theron and his family that establish a context for regular contact with the Twins. These lines move away from Theron's singular elevation through his victory and reestablish the recurring privilege enjoyed by the Emmenidai of welcoming the divine Twins to their tables.

Then, in some way, my spirit drives me to show that glory comes to the Emmenidai and to Theron through the offices of the Tyndaridai, skilled on their horses, because (this family) approaches (the Twins) with the most welcoming tables of all those offered by men, keeping watch with pious minds over the rites of the blessed ones.  

The inclusion of the limiting genitive βροτῶν is critical here. It might seem otiose - who else would be setting up tables for the gods besides mortal worshippers? - but it provides a strong affirmation that Theron and his Emmenid clan belong to the sphere of human life. They enjoy great power, the most prestigious victories, the closest affiliation with the gods; for all that they are marked by their humanity.

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93 This is where we can pretty clearly speak of Theoxenia and there is little reason to doubt that this was a rite regularly performed by the family. V. supr. n. 46 and 49.
Pavlou has argued that *Olympian* 3 recasts Akragas as an idealized community, like the land of the Hyperboreans, at the edges of the earth. The gnomic conclusion of the ode would then be resolved.

\[
\text{νῦν δὲ πρὸς ἐσχατὰν}
\]
\[
\text{Θήρων ἀρεταῖον ἵκανων ἀπτεται}
\]
\[
\text{οἰκοθεν Ἡρακλέος}
\]
\[
\text{σταλάν.}
\]

*Ol.* 3.43-44

And now, arriving at the farthest point, Theron by virtue of his excellence touches from home the Pillars of Herakles.

On Pavlou’s argument Theron can reach the pillars of Herakles from his home because his own city is assimilated to the idealized ultra-human polis. Recognizing the points of contact between Akragas and the country of the Hyperboreans orient us to the layering/collapsing effect that Pindar created in his mythical narrative between these two locations (and Olympia itself). By representing the recurring celebration of the Theoxenia, however, Pindar establishes a critical difference between Akragas and the land of the Hyperboreans. It is this differentiation which renders the *gnome* meaningful.

The distinction lies in the representation of movement between the divine and human world. The marvelous aspect of Herakles’ encounter with the olive trees is his penetration into a landscape which even heroes can usually achieve only with the help of the gods. Herakles, more human than not at that point in his life, is the remarkable element in the society of the

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94 Pavlou 2010, p. 310-320, argues that a spatial association is evoked between the Atlas figures on the Olympieion and Pindar’s poetic pillars: both Atlas and Pillars existed in the distant West. "...Pindar’s reference to the Pillars of Heracles could - and probably would - incite the audience to perceive it as a playful allusion to the Olympieum and its most distinctive feature, the Atlantes."
Hyperboreans: an element of the human world in a land closer to the divine. The community at Akragas, like the Hyperboreans, are marked by piety - but they are fully in the human world. It is the Dioskouroi who come to share in Theron's mortal hospitality at Akragas. They are a counterpart to Herakles in the myth of his Hyperborean journey: he was human but bound for apotheosis, the Twins are something like divinities but their place is in the mortal world. These quasi-divinities, then, reverse the Heraklean motif: their divine presence is the exceptional element in the mortal landscape of Theron's Akragas.

We might say, then, that Akragas is rendered a temporary Hyperborean country, but the experience of sublimity is rendered meaningful by its transience. Unlike that idealized place beyond the north wind, Akragas remained subject to the changing currents of the human world: in 472 Theron would die and his unpopular son would lose Akragas to Hieron's control. In the world beyond the ode such upheaval was never far off. By representing in song the enduring friendship that Theron and his family share with the Tyndaridai, Pindar is casting the glory of the divine associations evoked within the ode over Akragas as it exists beyond this occasion, this festival. The singular glory of the victory (έλθεῖν κυδος) gives way to the ongoing (ἐποίχονται) association that the Emmenidai seek with the Twins. This expression introduces one more play with movement: the Emmenidai are the active party and are said to 'approach' the gods -- but here the idea of movement becomes entirely metaphorical. The most Theron can do is to lay a table and express welcome: the physical movement still belongs to the (semi)-divine Twins. Only

95 cf. Köhnken 1983, p. 57-58 and Robbins 1984, p. 225-7: "Since Theron wears the crown of an Olympic victor, his garland is, thus, an import from this happy land and a clear sign that he is, though otherwise unable to travel past the Pillars of Heracles to the lands of the Ocean Stream (Ol. 3.44), touched by their light and so elevated to the company of the Blessed." He goes on to distinguish Herakles' Olympian dwelling "of unalloyed brightness" from the alternating light and darkness of the Dioskouroi.
the perspective is shifted, and with that shift the limitations and possibilities of human existence are enunciated.

The additional descriptive phrase - 'keeping watch over the rites of the blessed' - further articulates the orientation of Theron and his family within the multi-dimensional worlds of human and divine. For the gathered community, the right and responsibility of keeping watch over the holy rites places the Emmenidai at the apex of their human community. Would τελετὰς have been taken as a synonym for the Theoxenia, or did Theron's family also preside over another more public cult? Without new information about the cultic landscape of early fifth century Akragas, the question remains unanswered for the time being. In either case, the special status that the Emmenidai enjoy in their relationship with the gods is framed in a binary that firmly resists the potential claim that Theron and his family are like the gods themselves.

The limiting βροτῶν which insisted upon the pertinence of Theron and his family to the mortal world is echoed in the next genitive plural, μακάρων, which designates the worship of the gods. The Emmenidai approach the gods as human worshippers; their pieté (ἔυσεβεία γνώμα) is a human attitude aroused in response to the divine. By dilating on this cultic activity Pindar anticipates the final images of the ode. Theron enjoys the friendship and patronage of the gods, enacted in the ode by the xenia he shares with the Dioskouroi at Akragas and their patronage of him and his family. The Dioskouroi, with their special status, are unusually capable of bringing the divine to Theron's Akragas - but they do not transport Theron into the ranks of the divine.

For those who knew how to listen, however, this same phrase might have communicated a different mode of thinking about one's place in the organization of the world.

96 Currie 2005, p. 347-348, points to the association between the Deinomenids and the cult of Demeter and Kore as a possible parallel (though his main point is to associate the potentially parallel cultic statuses of Theron and Hieron with reference to their eschatological hopes).
The language that could be understood in the context of a polis cult could also refer to a private mystery rite open only to initiates and initiands.\textsuperscript{97} By the earlier fifth century τελετάς indisputably \textit{could} refer to mystery rites and its presence here in conjunction with φυλάσσοντες is especially suggestive.\textsuperscript{98} To those in the know the act of watching over the rites is also a matter of guarding them and protecting their secrets. In this complex μακάρων may take on another valence as well: some hundred years later in the corpus known as the gold leaves, the term referred to the fortunate dead who had attained a special status in the underworld.\textsuperscript{99}

This ode was commissioned to celebrate the same victory as \textit{Olympian 2}, a work that continues to tantalize Pindar scholars (and everyone else with any sense) but which is generally

\textsuperscript{97} This sentence lands on several pressure points in the debates on ancient religion: on mysteries generally see, to start with, the essays gathered in Cosmopoulos 2003; for mystery cult in Sicily and Southern Italy v. the collection edited by Casadio 2009; for a very brief treatment of private and polis cult and the problems with these terms (which I am using here pragmatically rather than dogmatically) v. Parker 2011, p. 246-255.

\textsuperscript{98} A scholiast (Σ Ol.3.74b) explicitly objects to this interpretation, but this might actually suggest that the idea had some currency at the time. In his study of the terms 'telete' and 'orgia' Schuddeboom 2009, p.8, cites our passage as his first example of τελετή in context and understands it to refer simply to the Theoxenia. "So these belong to the teletai," he says, citing the scholiast. However, his survey of further instances in Pindar (pp.8-10) leads him to conclude that in the epinicians τελετή has a general meaning of "religious rite or ceremony of any nature" while in the dithyrambs and threnoi it is used of "mysteries and Dionysiac rites." The presence of the second definition in the Pindaric corpus suggests that this valence could have been relevant to Ol. 3 as well, pace Schuddeboom himself. Lloyd-Jones 1985, p. 279, sees Theron as an initiate. Cf. Hellanikos (FGrH 4 73) who associates the terms with rites oriented toward initiation into a privileged existence established by Zalmoxis (on whom v. Ustinova 2002, p.78-81).

\textsuperscript{99} Cf. \textit{Od.} 11.483 ff. where Odysseus says no man is so blessed (μακάρτερος) as Achilles who was honoured like the gods while he lived and is now powerful among the dead (though Achilles isn't buying it); Hesiod's silver race are ύποχόθνοι μάκαρες (Hes. Erg. 141) after they are covered by the earth and part of the race of heroes dwell on the Islands of the Blessed (μάκαρων νήσοιοι) (ibid. 171); cf. Hes. fr. 211 (Merkelbach and West 1999) where Peleus is thrice 'μάκαρ', apparently with reference to his marriage. Cf. also Burkert 1987, p. 93: "Quite common and in fact one of the main characteristics of mysteries is the makarismos, the praise of the blessed status of those who have "seen" the mysteries."
understood to refer to an eschatologically oriented mystery religion and/or philosophy.\textsuperscript{100} Waele, describing the remains of the sanctuary of the chthonic divinities at Akragas, suggests that walled structures there might have been well-suited to the private celebration of mystery rites away from the eyes of the uninitiated.\textsuperscript{101} Sicily and Southern Italy were, broadly speaking, lousy with the mystery traditions associated variously with Dionysos, Demeter, and Persephone. Moreover, the Dioskouroi appear in attendance upon the gods of the underworld in pinakes from Lokri and in later (fourth century) vases from Apulia.\textsuperscript{102} Elsewhere the Dioskouroi as well as Herakles are established as early (or original) Eleusinian initiates.\textsuperscript{103} This Dioskouric association then functions on both levels of significance: they are the divine visitors who bring glory to mortal Akragas and the divine guides who point the way to a glorious destiny for Theron and his fellow initiates.

Critically, reinterpretation of these lines in the context of an initiatory community does not alter their intent to guide Theron away from divine aspiration and toward a community of those whose nature is like his own. In \textit{Olympian 2} we hear of the Islands of the Blessed where mortals - those who were just and honoured by the gods - spend an eternity. In this place are heroes like Peleos and Achilles, men marked by glory but also by death. By referring to the special standing that Theron hopes for in the afterlife, Pindar is establishing him once more as a

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{100} This is not the place for a full discussion of the interpretative possibilities but a few major directions taken are Pythagoreanism/metempsychosis and a branch of so-called Orphic practice (which may or may not be connected with the former). Cf. Lloyd-Jones 1985.
\textsuperscript{101} Waele 1971, p. 199.
\textsuperscript{103} Mid-fourth century Attic vases show their arrival at Eleusis in the presence of Demeter, Kore, Triptolemos, and Herakles (LIMC s.v. Dioskouroi 169-170); cf. Xen. \textit{Hell.} 6.3.6.
\end{flushleft}
privileged - but privileged in the context of mortal experience. Here again he is paralleled to Herakles in a way that emphasizes his mortality: Herakles departs to live among the gods in Olympos, Theron will depart to dwell among the privileged men - heroes, but still men - in an immortal mortality. Meanwhile the Dioskouroi will not pass beyond the pillars with Herakles nor into the world of the dead with Theron - at least not permanently. They endure in the world and, by their nearness, express the potential for the encounters with the divine and the moments of glory that mark the lives of the most fortunate mortals.

For select listeners the Dioskouroi may serve as guides and allude to an enduring existence beyond the inevitable experience of death. For the audience as a whole, Pindar establishes the Dioskouroi as a counterpart to Heraklean absence. They evoke the possibility of divine presence, bringing a glow, like that of victory, into the life of the city without taking its citizens into the danger zones beyond the reach of human aspiration. In both cases the Dioskouroi appear as guides and guests - not as models to emulate, but as conduits of the more-than-human glory that can sometimes light the human world.

**How much half is more than whole: the human turn in *Nemean 10***

**The Gem, not the Setting**

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104 Robbins 1984, p. 226-7, also reads *Ol*. 3 as relevant to the eschatology of *Ol*. 2, but argues that in our ode we have a "realized eschatology," that is, Theron's ultimate destiny is achieved in the present rather than in a 'next world'. Currie 2005, p. 347, takes Theron's mystery associations in conjunction with the material of *Ol*. 2 to indicate Theron's expectation of literal immortality.
While representations of the Dioskouroi are not unexpected in Pindar’s epinician corpus, only one ode takes them as the main subject of an extended mythological narrative.\textsuperscript{105} It is that ode, \textit{Nemean} 10, which will occupy the second half of this chapter. Pindar’s representations of the Twins in this ode demonstrate a near inversion to his approach in \textit{Olympian} 3 and the juxtaposition highlights the divergent trajectories that Pindar can trace starting from the contemporary perception of the Twins’ extraordinary status.

\textit{Olympian} 3 depended almost entirely on the audience’s preexisting conceptions of the Twins and used these - through brief references - to frame an innovative Heraklean myth. In \textit{Nemean} 10 the Twins themselves are the subject of an aetiology which almost certainly challenged the expectations of the audience. In my examination of the Nemean ode I will argue that rather than depending on existing perceptions of the Dioskouroi, Pindar produces an aetiological myth which disorients the audience by asking them to reestablish the Twins in a slightly different attitude between the worlds of men and gods. Pindar’s new myth may propose a partial reinterpretation of the brothers’ eschatological status but the more significant novelty is the inclusion of choice. This myth is the sole depiction in the Pindaric corpus of an individual making an active choice between mortality and immortality.\textsuperscript{106} The possibility of such a decision at first seems antithetical to the many gnomic reminders throughout the corpus that

\textsuperscript{105} At two full triads this myth is a whopper and stands in stark contrast to one- or two-line allusions elsewhere. Other odes with brief references to the Dioskouroi are slated for consideration in the post-dissertation stage in conjunction with the figure of Iolaos.

\textsuperscript{106} I have not yet satisfied myself that it is unique in the mythological corpus but I have not encountered to this point a parallel in human experience. The closest parallel - though non-human - may be Cheiron who was able to reject his immortality in order to escape from physical pain: Ap. \textit{Bib.} 2.83-87 (a fascinating parallel, since here Herakles’ immortality is that which Cheiron rejects) and Ov. \textit{Met.} 2.649ff where Ovid highlights the paradoxical situation at the heart of the tradition: 

\begin{verse}
tequexaeternopatientemnuminamortis/efficient (263-4).
\end{verse}
insist not only upon the distinctions between god and men, but also on the inability of humans to chart their own destiny. The paradox on which Pindar plays, though, is that Polydeukes' choice, which seems capable of redrawing the boundaries between the world of human and divine, actually reinforces the existing divisions.

The shifting locations and looping chronologies of *Olympian* 3 effected a series of relationships and networks that made an inextricable unity of the ode and brought human experience into contact with the divine: the enduring presence of the Dioskouroi effected a framework for this contact. In *Nemean* 10 the myth of the Dioskouroi achieves, in stark contrast, an isolating effect. The Dioskouroi have become the subject of an account that largely stands apart from the preceding material and is not self-evidently tied to the praise of Argos that opens the ode. The myth seems to end far from where the ode began, far also from the experience of the victor and his family. Part of the widely varying effect can be attributed to our disparate modern knowledge of the contexts of the two odes. For *Olympian* 3 we can identify the victory and its date as well as - comparatively - a great deal about the laudandus, thanks to his prominent status. For *Nemean* 10, except for the name of the laudandus, none of this information can be taken for granted. Beyond the lack of contextual information, though, I will argue that we can see in *Nemean* 10 an intentional delocalization which reframes the relationship between the contemporary Argive landscape and the mythical Argive past. Pindar's myth of the Dioskouroi challenges the continuities between present and past by proposing an aetiology that not only emphasizes the gap between human and divine experience but ultimately glorifies human society.

*Groping the Elephant*
We can say with relative certainty that *Nemean* 10 was composed for Theaios, an Argive victor, probably for his success in wrestling. Other pieces of contextual information, especially the date of composition/performance and the context of either victory or performance are considerably slipperier. These uncertainties are compounded by its considerable length and the diversity of its component parts. As a result, scholars making an approach to *Nemean* 10 find themselves in a situation reminiscent of the blind men meeting an elephant: one can grab hold of the panoply of Argive myths that opens the ode, another lays hands on the uplifting conclusion of the final triad. All the parts together make an improbable beast. It is not my purpose here to make a simple unity of the ode or to eradicate the many mysteries attendant upon it. Instead I will tease out what the ode has to say about the relationships between men and gods, and how the myth of the Dioskouroi dominates and redirects this discourse.

Earlier scholarship on this ode mirrors the shifting currents of centuries of thinking about Pindar’s epinicians, especially concerning the function of the myths and the presence of the divine. In the good old days of the *Grundgedanke* attention focused on the gnomic statement ‘the race of the gods is sure’ as the guiding principle. The idea of a universalizing theological precept expounded by the poet from his own religious feeling frames Bowra’s approach and Marauch self-consciously champions this possibility in a brief Festschrift.

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107 *Nem.* 10.24,37 (Theaios); 1-2, 19-20 (Argos); 22 (wrestling).

108 Date: Bowra 1964, p. 411, dates the ode to the 460s on stylistic grounds and in the context of aristocratic resurgence at Argos limned by Forrest 1960 who, himself (p. 228 ff.) uses the ode as evidence for an aristocratic milieu. Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1922, p. 426, argues for the 440s on biographical grounds (Pindar was said to have died at Argos: *Vit. Ambr.* p. 3.11-14) and a historical context depending on relations between Argos and Tiryns.

109 *Nem.* 10.54: μὰν θεῶν πιστὸν γένος; “What most critics have taken to be the *Grundgedanke* of this ode...” as Stern 1969 p. 128, puts it without fully endorsing this view. V. his n. 13 for earlier bibliography.
contribution pugnaciously titled "Pindars Religiosität in Nem. 10".\(^{110}\) These scholars see the myth of the Dioskouroi as the confirmation of the characterization of the gods and their beneficence.\(^{111}\)

A more recent wave that emphasizes the deployment of myth as the stuff of Realpolitik has interpreted the myths of the first triad as a sort of new charter for a resurgent Argos of the mid-fifth century. On these readings the first triad of the ode claims for Argos a series of heroes associated primarily with other cities and regions of the Argolid and thus effects a mythical synoecism to validate the (forced) synoecism that brought those same cities under Argive control.\(^{112}\) These arguments are convincing and provide good reason to date the ode to the period of Argive expansion and reassertion after the ignominies of the early fifth century.\(^{113}\) They do not, however, provide a ready explanation for the dedication of two fifths of the composition to the Dioskouroi whose Spartan origin Pindar highlights earlier in the ode. The concluding myth is difficult to work into the cultic or historical landscape of the Argolid. This fact

\(^{110}\) Marauch 1971 focuses on Pindar's suppressed request to Zeus that Theaios achieve an Olympic victory, arguing that this interaction should be taken seriously and not merely as artistic embellishment.

\(^{111}\) Fehr 1936, p. 135-137, interprets the myth as ethically motivated, glorifying the 'brüderlichen Treue' displayed by Polydeukes.


\(^{113}\) Longstanding conflict with Sparta ended in catastrophe for Argos at the Battle of Sepeia (Hdt. 6.77-81), usually dated to 494. Herodotus (7.148) has the Argives referring to their stark losses as the reason for their neutrality in the Persian wars - a stance that tarnished their image in the years after the conflict. (For competing representations of this neutrality v. Vannicelli 2004.) Argos' allegiance with the Tegeans against Sparta (inferred from Hdt. 9.35.2) and its expanding power over the Argolid - including defeats of Tiryns (Hdt. 6.83.1-2) and Mycenae (in 468/7 according to Diod. Sic. 11.65) - indicate a period of empowerment and growth. Building projects at Argos in the second quarter of the fifth century fill out the sense of a city rehabilitating its image and remaking itself as a regional force: v. Des Courtils 1992 and Amandry 1952, p. 270-274, who looks to the (slightly later) period of peace between 450 and 420 for the Heraion renovations.
does not discredit political readings of myth, but it does encourage consideration of other
dimensions of myth at play in the ode, especially on the complementary axis of religious
resonance.

The prominence of human/divine encounters in the myths of Nemean 10 has not
escaped earlier scholars, but the motif has often been integrated into systems that attribute an
a priori positive valence to the nature of the gods. For Jacob Stern the ode articulates the
desirability of communication between gods and humans, a communication to which humans
aspire but whose attainment is not a straightforward matter:

The gods show faith to those who are by virtue of act or birth physically near to them.
The necessity, stated simply, is to avoid desertion, to be among those who receive
divine visitations or are permitted to travel the path which will bring them into contact
with the gods.\textsuperscript{114}

Such encounters are the source of glory in the world, though Stern emphasizes that
expression of \textit{pistis} by the gods is an effortless act while the same expression by men involves
toil and suffering.\textsuperscript{115} This distinction is critical and can be pushed further to reveal tensions
produced by Pindar’s rendering and placement of the Dioskouroi myth. Stern’s desire to trace
continuities between the opening and closing myths leads him to construct a world in which
glory derives from the divine and can only be partially reflected in the duller stuff of human
experience. This reading does not do sufficient justice to the paradoxes of the myth of the
Dioskouroi and the choice that is granted precisely between human and divine experience.

\textsuperscript{114} Stern 1969, p. 128-129.

\textsuperscript{115} Stern 1969, p. 132. He speaks of \textit{pistis} offered to men by the gods (effortlessly) and \textit{pistis}
demonstrated by men (at great cost) but it is not clear whether he is positing a truly reciprocal
relationship.
David Young also highlights the play of mortality and immortality as the *raison d'être* of the myth of the Dioskouroi in *Nemean* 10. Excising the myth from the surrounding material of the ode, he looks to the framework of epinician convention to illuminate the relevance of the Twins' experience. He looks to Pindaric and extra-Pindaric passages that express the immortality that fame - especially fame assured through the efforts of a poetic voice - can impart to a mortal life without altering the certainty of mortality. When Polydeukes returns sight and speech to his brother, Young argues, he is reversing the covering of the eyes and binding of the mouth that were central elements of funerary ritual: the hero's ability to return his brother to partial life is a model for Pindar's ability to ensure partial immortality to his patron.

There is value - and beauty - in Young's reading and he is right to recognize overarching epinician conventions as a salient framework, but he does Pindar's myth a disservice by jettisoning its immediate context. The stark contrasts of the myth, echoed - as I will argue - in the structure of the ode, challenge the construction of easy parallels between poetic immortality, the cyclical immortality of the Dioskouroi, and the unquestioning immortality of the gods. Instead, the potential parallels are confounded and it is the experience of Polydeuces, not Kastor, that reorients the audience to itself.

A reading that either removes the myth of the Dioskouroi from the ode entirely or encloses it in the ode as in a sealed microcosm loses the contextual markers which elicit

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116 Young 1993 p. 125: "But the notion of posthumous fame as a successful counter to death occasionally did, in fact, bring out this very theme (elements of mortality and immortality in contemporary figures) as a kind of oxymoron and metaphor." He cites Tyrt. 1 IEG and the epigram attributed to Simonides (Anth. Pal. 7.251 = IX Campbell, vol. iii).

117 Young 1993, p. 131-132.
meaning from this myth told at this time. Like a stone thrown into water, the unexpected myth evokes ripples in the surrounding surface, altering the surface itself and the images it reflects.

An ordering principle: Division

In most Pindaric odes mythical passages intertwine with elements of explicit praise and song to a degree that renders exegesis difficult; any single thread is hard to extricate from the networks of associations and resonances it evokes elsewhere in the ode. Nemean 10, composed of five free-standing triads of which the myth occupies the fourth and fifth, is of a fundamentally different construction. The strict structure of the ode has garnered plenty of critical attention, often admiring, but no one has, to my knowledge, previously observed that the strict divisions of the ode echo the import of its closing myth.\textsuperscript{118} The structure of the ode is as follows:

Triad 1: Argive past/Argive excellences
Triad 2: song's present/Theaios' excellence (and hopes)
Triad 3: familial past - associations with the divinized Twins
Triad 4: myth (i): the Dioskouroi as humans
Triad 5: myth (ii): the Dioskouroi at the krisis

\textsuperscript{118} Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1922, p. 246, noted the stark divisions (and took them as a sign that this was the composition of an older Pindar): "...die Triaden sind ganz scharf gesondert, die erste handelt von Argos, die zweite von Theaios, die dritte von den Tirynthiern, die beiden letzten, zwischen denen auch eine starke Pause ist, von den Dioskuren."; Carne-Ross 1985, undertaking to 'trace in imagination the genesis of an ode' (p. 79) - apparently channeling Pindar himself - "This is going to be a big work, built out of massive blocks with end-stopped triads, not a single overrun. Strong rather than complex - plotting, language, meter, and dance movements (more thought still needed here) all clear and brilliant. The victories need more thought. Take a walk round the town, just look. Leave it to the daimon." (p. 84). [To be fair to Carne-Ross, this is in a series (the Hermes series) meant to make Classical authors accessible to non-specialists...but one still has to marvel at his style.]
With its strict delineations of content this structure reinforces the divisions that frame human experience rather than blurring them as did the structure and myths of *Olympian* 3. The concluding myth does not appear out of nowhere - the Twins appear as divine patrons in the third triad - but neither does it effect an integration of the mythical past into the cultic, personal, or political dimensions of the present celebration. This apparent disjunction so disturbed Merkelbach that he developed a victory for Theaios at the Spartan Dioskouria, a contest that would justify the inclusion of the aetion.¹¹⁹ Such imaginative contortions are unnecessary if we accept the decontextualizing effect of the myth as an intentional aim of Pindar’s composition.

The Dioskouroi myth is not without relevance for the preceding material of the ode - far from it - but the stark blocking of the ode into five distinct sections forces the process of articulating that relevance onto the audience. The myth begins somewhat abruptly and its conclusion coincides with the conclusion of the ode, with no return to the festival setting or the victor’s praise. The connections between myth and present, between the Dioskouroi of Pindar’s account and the Dioskouroi worshipped at Argos had to be supplied by those experiencing the ode.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ He asserts that in Pindar a myth told at such length expresses either a model for the victor’s deeds or the explanation for the origin of a festival and that the latter is the case here. Merkelbach 1978, p.98. Problematically, these games are only attested, as Merkelbach himself notes, on a single imperial inscription (IG. V 1,602) and are not readily linked with the contests of lines 51-53 (though the Dioskouroi are present in an athletic complex described by Paus. 3.14.6-7).

¹²⁰ The Dioskouroi enjoyed prominent cult at Argos, as they did in so many parts of the Greek world. Didymos (*Σ Ol.* 3.1d) notes their cults at Argos as well as the Peloponnese; cf. Aravantinos 1994, p. 14-15 (who, however, overemphasizes their role as ‘fondatores’). Two archaic marble kouroi at Delphi, Argive dedications, have been identified as the Dioskouroi, but on contentious epigraphic evidence: cf. Vatin 1982, Faure 1985.
I provide here the two triads of the myth in their entirety:

μεταμειβόμενοι δ’ ἑναλλάξ ἅμεραν τάν μὲν παρὰ πατρὶ φίλῳ
Δι νέμονται, τάν δ’ ύπό κεύθει χαῖας ἐν γυάλεις Θεράπνεας,
πότμον ἀμπιτλάντες ὀμοῖον· ἕπει τοῦτον, ἡ πάμπιν θεὸς ἐμμεναι οἰκεῖν τ’ σύρανϑη,
εἰλετ’ αἰώνα φθιμένου Πολυδεύκης
Κάστορος ἐν πολέμω.
τόν γὰρ Ἰδὰς ἄμφι βουσίν πως χολω-
θεὶς ἔτρωσαν χαλκέας λόγχας ἀκμᾶ.
ἀπὸ Ταὐγέτου πεδαυγά-
ζων Ἰδανίκης ὀσὺς ἐν στελέχει ἡμένους.
κείνου γὰρ ἔπιθεν χολωθεὶς ἐν πολέμῳ.
τὸν γὰρ Ἴδας ἄμφι διὰ τίτων γένετ’ ὀξύτατον ὀμμα.
λαψηρὸς δὲ πόδεσσι ἄφαρς ἔτρωσεν χαλκέας λόγχας ἀκμᾶ.
ἀπὸ Ταῦγέτου πεδαυγά-
ζων Ἰδανίκης ὀσὺς ἐν στελέχει ἡμένους.
κείνου γὰρ ἔπιθεν χολωθεὶς ἐν πολέμῳ.
τὸν γὰρ Ἴδας ἄμφι διὰ τίτων γένετ’ ὀξύτατον ὀμμα.
λαψηρὸς δὲ πόδεσσι ἄφαρς ἔτρωσεν χαλκέας λόγχας ἀκμᾶ.

ταχέως δ’ ἐπ’ ἀδελφεσθ’ ἤπαν πάλιν χωρήσεται ὁ Τυνδαρίδας,
και νῦν οὔπω τεθ’ ἀσθματι δὲ φρία-
σοντα πνευσάς ἀκίθῃς. καὶ τόδ’ ἔπος· Ἰδα ἀντίος ἠλυθέ οἱ,
καὶ τόδ’ ἔξαυδασ’ ἐπός· Ἑσω μοι υἱός-
τόνδε δ’ ἐπείτα πόσις

θερμὰ τέγγων δάκρυα στοναχίς ὀρθ’ ἐκίθεν·
θανατόν περίκειται μεταλαμβάνειν.’ ὡς
ἡσθε· Ζεὺς δ’ ἀντίος ἠλυθε ὅι,
καὶ τόδ’ ἔξαυδασ’ ἐπός· Ἑσω μοι υἱός-
τόνδε δ’ ἐπείτα πόσις

σπέρμα θνατὸν ματρὶ τεξάρασας
στάξεν ἦμως, ἀλλ’ ἂν τῶνδε τοι ἐμματὰ κρεοῦν

παρδίδωμ’· εἰ μὲν θάνατον περὶ φυγών καὶ
Changing in turn
the one day they spend with their father Zeus
the next beneath the folds of the earth
in the hollows of Therapnai,
fulfilling the same destiny. Because,
rather than being entirely a god and dwelling in heaven,
he chose this life as he lay dying -
- Polydeukes’ choice, Kastor’s wound - a casualty of war.¹²¹
For Idas growing angry with him over some cattle
gored him with the point of his bronze spear.
From Taygetos, far-seeing,
Lynkeus spied in the hollow of a tree
the brothers sitting; for his - of all the men on earth - his eyes were
the sharpest. And on swift feet straightaway
they arrived, and a heavy deed they wrought swiftly,
the Apharetidai, and a terrible thing they suffered
at the hands of Zeus. For immediately
he came, the son of Leda, in pursuit; and they opposite him
took their stand near the tomb of their forefather
and there, snatching the ornament of Hades, polished stone,
they hurled it at Polydeukes’ chest. But they did not crush him
nor did he give way, but rushing with swift spear
he hurled the bronze into Lynkeus’ ribs.
And Zeus at Idas drove his shining bolt.
Together they burned in isolation. It is harsh strife for men
to keep company with their betters.

Swiftly toward his brother’s strength
ran back again the son of Tyndareos.
And not yet dead, but already shuddering with the
roughness of his breath, he reached him.

¹²¹ I am taking liberties in the translation here to try to capture the intertwined syntax of the Greek.
Weeping warm tears and groaning
straight out he spoke: 'Father, son of Kronos, what release
will there be from grief? To me also grant death,
lord, together with him.
Honour departs from a man deprived of friends
and few mortals are trustworthy to share
in the suffering of toil.' Thus he spoke.
Zeus came opposite him
and spoke this speech: "You are my son:
but that one, when your mother was approached by her husband,
was planted as that hero's mortal seed - but come, even so, to you
I grant a choice between these things:
if you wish to escape death and hateful old age
and to (dwell with me?) on Olympos
and with Athena and war-crashing Ares
a share of these things belongs to you. But if you strive
for your brother and think to divide equally all things,
half you would breathe in your position beneath the earth,
and half in the golden halls of heaven."
When he had spoken these things, no two-willed wish did he set in his mind,
but he released the eye and then the voice of bronze-clad Kastor.

The myth is not only puzzling in terms of its significance for the surrounding material of
the ode and the Argive context. Even the account of how the brothers of myth became the
semi-divine Twins of cult contains disorienting novelties developed around a familiar core. If I
may do temporary violence to the intricacies of Pindar's language, the basic outline of his myth
of the Dioskouroi is as follows, disregarding for now the (highly significant) order in which these
elements appear in the ode. There are two sets of brothers: Kastor and Polydeukes (the
Tyndaridai) and Lynkeus and Idas (the Apharetidai). A dispute over cattle has put Idas and Kastor
on bad terms such that when Lynkeus catches sight of the Tyndaridai he and his brother rush at
Kastor and gravely wound him. Polydeukes pursues them in turn and personally kills Lynkeus
while Zeus steps in to take out Idas. The Apharetidai disposed of, Polydeukes looks to his
brother; seeing that he is fatally wounded he prays to Zeus to join him in death. Zeus points out
that, actually, because of their divergent parentage, Polydeukes has a claim on immortality which, if he wants, he can split with his brother.

The narrative lever of this story is the dissimilarity between the natures of Kastor and Polydeukes; the distinction empowers Polydeukes to make the unprecedented choice at the heart of the myth.Earlier sources already express disagreement about the parentage of the two brothers; a Homeric Hymn makes them both sons of Zeus, while Odysseus, encountering Leda's shade, describes them both as the sons of Tyndareos. If we can trace the development of the idea of different fathers to a single source, it is probably the author of the Kypria who tells us that Kastor was mortal and fated for death while Polydeukes was immortal and the 'branch of Ares'. In his summary, Proklos tells us that the Kypria, like our ode, makes the fight with the Apharetidai the context for the "semi-apotheosis" of the Twins. At least in Proklos' retelling, though, Kastor is out-and-out killed, Polydeukes slays both of his opponents, and Zeus grants 'hetereremoi' immortality to them both. We could wish that Proklos had told us more about Zeus' motivations, but it is reasonable to expect that if the choice had belonged to Polydeukes Proklos would have mentioned it as a critical plot point. Apollodoros' account of the fight and its

122 Staehlin 1902, p. 188: "Der Angelpunkt der pindarischen Darstellung ist die scharfe Scheidung zwischen dem sterblichen Kastor und dem unsterblichen Polydeukes."

123 Sons of Zeus: Hes. fr. 24 (Merkelbach and West 1999) (ap. Σ Nem. 10.150a), HH 17and 33 both identify them as sons of Zeus (but also refer to them as Tyndarids), Pyth. 4.171-173; sons of Tyndaris: Hom. Od. 11.299.

124 Kypr. fr. 8 PEG; Σ Nem. 10.150a says that Pindar follows others in giving the brothers distinct paternities.

125 Staehlin 1902 takes the Kypria (we have the beginning of the fight in fr. 9 PEG and Proklos' summary at Chrest. 80.21ff.) as Pindar's primary source - he fills in some of the details from the scholia to Lykophron, but this runs the risk of circularity as these may well reflect Pindar's innovations. (NB: "semi-apotheosis" is my shorthand and not a fascinating neologism from either Proklos or the Kypria.)
aftermath is the closest to Pindar’s, but the issue of parentage is not addressed\(^1\) and it ends a little differently, with Polydeukes removed to Olympos by Zeus but refusing to accept immortality if his brother could not have it also, whence the alternation of their time between mortals and immortals.\(^2\)

In terms of parentage, then, Pindar brings new emphasis to the double paternity motif, but does not create it from whole cloth. Something similar can be said of his representation of the brothers’ extraordinary fate. As I outlined in the introduction, the conception of an unusual status for the brothers is universally fundamental to their significance, but this centrality yields little agreement as to exactly what that status is. Pindar is clearly adopting the theme of every-other-day alternation from earlier traditions, but he is the first extant source to establish residence on Olympos as an element of that alternation.\(^3\) This, too, may have been a novelty for the Argive audience, but like the issue of parentage these assertions were probably within a range of narrative likelihood such that it was their emphasis rather than their presence that caught the attention of those listening. It would be helpful to know if epichoric Argive cult had

\(^{1}\)At least not directly: Apollodoros does say that the title of ‘Dioskouroi’ was due to their manliness (διὰ τὴν ἀνδρείαν) perhaps indicating that he discounts Zeus’ literal parentage for either brother. (Ap. Bib. 3.11.2)

\(^{2}\)Ap. Bib. 3.11.2: μὴ δεχομένου δὲ Πολυδεύκου καὶ τὴν ἀθανασίαν ὑπὸ τοῦ Κάστορος, Ζεὺς άμφοτέρους παρ᾿ ἡμέραν καὶ ἐν θεοῖς εἶναι καὶ ἐν θηρίοις ἐδωκε. Apollodoros rounds off this account by saying that with the absence of the Tyndaridai, Zeus handed the kingship of Sparta over to Menelaos. This may indicate that he, too, is looking to the Kypria since, according to Proklos, the myth of the Dioskouroi was bracketed by the story of Helen, Paris, and Menelaos (Prokl. Chrest. 80.12-26).

\(^{3}\)This assertion appears briefly at Pyth. 11.61-64 as well. Both odes pose serious difficulties to accurate dating and it is not clear which was composed first; on the dating of Pyth. 11 v. Farnell 1930-1932, 221-223.
developed its own version of the brothers’ existence, but the evidence is mostly lacking.\textsuperscript{129} While the encounter with the Apharetidai and the ultimate attainment of an 'heteremeroi' status were fairly standard elements of Dioskouroi traditions, Pindar employed these elements as a framework for the two-fold novelty at the heart of his myth: a) Polydeukes’ agency in his own fate and b) a self-perception that caused him to privilege human over divine experience.

The deployment of the mythical material, particularly the distribution of the myth within the two triads, draws attention to the binary distinctions at the heart of Pindar's narrative. A single narrative unites the two triads, but the quality and force of the action narrated in each differs fundamentally. The first triad could almost stand alone as a witness to the relationship between Zeus and the Dioskouroi and the strength that such a relationship grants to those who enjoy it. The binary drawn here is between two sets of human antagonists, only one of which has the gods - which is to say justice - on their side. On this reading the effect of the gnome ending the strophe - it is harsh strife for men to keep company with their betters - is to emphasize the foolishness of the Apharetidai in challenging those dear to the gods.\textsuperscript{130} In the second triad, though, the tone of triumph gives way to Polydeukes’ grief; the external action

\textsuperscript{129} And what we have is delightfully contradictory. We do know that at Argos the brothers were the Anak(t)es, a title which suggests that, as at Sparta, their unity was a more salient cult feature than their alterities: Paus. 2.36.6 has a hieron of the Dioskouron Anakton at Lerna, cf. IGA 43a and CIG 1124; At the same time, Plutarch (Quaest. Gr.23) tells us that the Argives believe the Polydeukes is among the Olympians while Kastor is buried in their own territory (though the designation of Kastor as the μιξαρχαγέτας suggests that we have strayed into some highly alternative traditions). Paus. 2.22.5 refers to a shrine of both brothers with their children by Hilaeira and Phoibe, usually understood as the Leukippides.

\textsuperscript{130} For other uses of κρέσσων cf. Ol. 10.39 (concerning the conflict between Herakles and Augeas): νείκος δὲ κρεσσόνων/ ἀποθεσθ’ ἄπορον and also its ambiguous force at Nem.9.15 with reference to family strife.
ceases and the conflict turns inward as Polydeukes is required to orient himself either toward his divine father or his human brother.

It is the conflict of the second triad, not the first, that is the true aetion for the unique status of the Twins as they appear in the prelude to the mythical narrative:

μεταμειβόμενοι δ’ ἐναλλάξ ἀμέραν τάν μὲν παρὰ πατρί φίλω 
Δι νέμονται, τάν δ’ ὑπὸ κεύθεσι γαίας ἐν γυάλοις Θεράπτας, πότμον ἀμπυπλάντες ὀμοίων.

Nem. 10.55-57

This précis of the Twins’ enduring and unusual status alludes to existing traditions and highlights the equality that the brothers enjoy in perpetuity. On alternate days they spend their time with ‘their own (φίλω) father Zeus’, a phrasing that implies adherence to the strands of tradition that do not accept Kastor’s alternate paternity. When Pindar refers to their fulfillment of the same destiny (πότμον ὀμοίων) the phrase suggests a certain inevitability attendant upon their alternative existence. A πότμος is not something usually subject to human intention. The dangling ἔπει clause, one might have predicted, would confirm Zeus’ ultimate responsibility for their fate.

This reasonable framework of expectations is shattered, however, with the bombshell of the following lines.

ἔπει τοῦτον, ἢ πάμπαν θεὸς ἐμμεναί οἰκεῖν τ’ ὑρανῷ, ἐλετ’ αἰῶνα φθιμένου Πολυδεύκης 
Κάστορος ἐν πολέμῳ.

Nem. 10.58-59
The insouciant conjunction introduces a provocative statement whose implications alter the import of the preceding lines and reroute the myth that follows. Before the audience is actually apprised of the element of choice, the counterweighted alternative is given. Moreover, it is an alternative that should never exist for men: to be entirely a god and to dwell in heaven. Pindar explicitly warns his patrons against such hope elsewhere in the epinician corpus.\footnote{\textit{e.g.} \textit{Ol.} 5.24: \textit{μὴ ματεύσῃ θεὸς γενέσθαι}; \textit{Isthm.} 5.14: \textit{μὴ μάτευε Ζεὺς γενέσθαι.}} This is no safe mortal aspiration and it poses the dual question: why should the brothers have been offered such a situation, and why should they have refused it? The singular εἰλετ' at once introduces the element of choice and places the option of divinity within the grasp of one brother, not both. The snarled syntax employs αἰῶνα in a potentially doubled sense: it is the complement of τοῦτον (chose this life) but it can also be read as an accusative of reference with φθιμένου (wasting away his life).\footnote{Slater, s.v. \textit{αἰὼν}, construes 'αἰῶνα' as the object of the main verb, thus also Race 1997; for the construction of \textit{φθίω} with an accusative cf. Hom. \textit{Il.} 18.446.} Only with the names of the brothers do we learn that Polydeuces has received the agency of choice while Kastor dies in the background. The explanatory γὰρ in the next line promises to answer the many questions posed by this extraordinary claim, but the battle narrative fails to deliver. The real crisis comes when the violence is over and its drama is all in the gap between divine and human perspectives on the world.\footnote{This is a variation on what Hamilton 1974, p. 57, calls the 'kephalaion ring' (drawing on Illig 1932's (p. 57,60) term for the opening sentence that indicates a myth's contents. Teasingly, though, the myth stops just short of completing the link back to the original state of immortality described at the opening.}

The two speeches occupying the majority of the final triad express a moment of unmediated communication between human and divine. Yet, ultimately, the interaction only

\footnote{\textit{131} e.g. \textit{Ol.} 5.24: \textit{μὴ ματεύσῃ θεὸς γενέσθαι}; \textit{Isthm.} 5.14: \textit{μὴ μάτευε Ζεὺς γενέσθαι.} \textit{132} Slater, s.v. \textit{αἰὼν}, construes 'αἰῶνα' as the object of the main verb, thus also Race 1997; for the construction of \textit{φθίω} with an accusative cf. Hom. \textit{Il.} 18.446. \textit{133} This is a variation on what Hamilton 1974, p. 57, calls the 'kephalaion ring' (drawing on Illig 1932's (p. 57,60) term for the opening sentence that indicates a myth's contents. Teasingly, though, the myth stops just short of completing the link back to the original state of immortality described at the opening.}
depicts the impossibility of true understanding between these parties. The triad opens with Polydeukes who, in his moment of triumph, can think only of his dying brother. He reverses course and returns to him (πάλιν χώρησεν), literally turning his back on his victory.

Overwhelmed by sorrow, Polydeukes instantly, even instinctively, appeals to Zeus (ὄρθιον φώνασε) and Zeus responds, not only in speech but also through his presence (ἀντίος ἠλυθὲ ὦι). The encounter reveals two different ways of thinking about Polydeukes’ orientation to the worlds of men and gods. Polydeukes sees himself as a mortal and addresses himself to Zeus in prayer. He calls him father (πάτερ) but also lord (ἀναξ). Zeus, however, treats him as someone who is, or could be, like himself.\(^\text{134}\) The critical point for him, the first words he speaks, establish Polydeuces’ true nature, defined by his descent from Zeus (école μοι υἱός) and thus opposed to that of his brother, the mortal seed (σπέρμα θνατὸν) of the mortal Tyndareos. It is unclear from Pindar’s narration whether Polydeuces has formerly been aware of this distinction between himself and his brother, but, critically, the information does not change the frame of reference he has established for himself.

At the crux of these disparate frameworks are two value systems that cannot accommodate each other. In the face of the same crisis - Kastor’s imminent death - Polydeuces yearns to stop the pain by moving toward his brother (joining him in death) while Zeus offers a permanent move away (a departure from the very possibility of death).

For Polydeuces the loss of his brother is expressible in terms that generalize human experience:

\(^{134}\) The Dioskouroi were known as anakes at Argos (and Athens) (v. supr. n. 129) and this may have been a moment of dramatic irony: the audience knew that Polydeuces would become an anax while Polydeuces still considers himself a man like any other.
'Πάτερ Κρονίων, τίς δή λύσις ἔσσεται πενθέων; καὶ ἐμοὶ θάνατον σὺν τῷ ἐπίτειλον, ἂναξ. οἴχεται τιμᾶ φίλων τατμεμένως φωτὶ παῦροι δἐ ἐν πόνῳ πιστοὶ βροτῶν καμάτου μεταλαμβάνειν.'

_Nem._ 10.75-79

In his model the self-worth of a man derives and is inseparable from his people; when he is deprived of them (passively, by a force beyond his control) his honour departs as well. His language also evokes a sense of life as series of buffetings which must be endured but can be somewhat softened by the shared efforts of the people one trusts. His words evoke resonances with the praise of Theaios and his family: the departure of honour (οἴχεται τιμᾶ) looks back to honour's frequent presence among Theaios' ancestors in the context of their familial traditions and the embrace of adversity echoes Pindar's assurance that Theaios has won in a worthy manner, not with a heart free from toil (ἀμόχθῳ καρδίᾳ).  

Polydeukes assimilates his own loss to the universal human experience and seeks death as the only release (λύσις) that men can hope for. By echoing elements of victory in this scene of suffering, Pindar evokes the inextricability of the two in the context of human life.

Zeus responds as though Polydeukes were confused and would have asked for something better had he only understood the options uniquely available to him. He frames the choice he can offer Polydeukes in the tone of someone reasoning with a younger and more foolish charge, highlighting what he perceives as the benefits of one choice in stark contrast to the pitfalls of the other:

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135 _Nem._ 10.37 ff. The honour of contests comes in the company of the Tyndaridai and the Graces, but it finds its expression in terms of the human constructs of familial inheritance and societal belonging.
Death and old age are foreign to the experience of the gods, even inimical to them.\textsuperscript{136} Zeus' language privileges this framework by representing the first alternative as a sort of refuge: Polydeukes is given the opportunity to escape (φυγών) from death and the advanced age that Zeus can only perceive as hateful and repulsive (ἀπεχθόμενον). Turning his back on the world, he will find a home on Olympos with the gods as his neighbors.\textsuperscript{137} This is an offer that invites Polydeukes to embrace his personal abstraction from the world of human experience: if you yourself (αὐτός) wish for this existence, Zeus says, a portion of it belongs to you (ἐστι σοι). Implied: only you.

The alternative possibility, as articulated by Zeus, dwells on the inherent losses rather than the gains. Instead of ease this option is framed in terms of struggle and diminishment: if

\textsuperscript{136} Cf. patron gods forced to withdraw from their protégés when death draws too near: Hom. \textit{Il.} 22: λίπεν δὲ Ἐφιόμενος Ἀπόλλων, abandoning Hektor when Zeus' scale falls in Achilles' favour; Eur. \textit{Hipp.} 1437 ff. The same necessity of distance is expressed in their purification rites that could bar even those in mourning from temple worship and keep the physical remains of the dead far from the holy places of the city; on the impurity of death (and birth) v. Parker 1983, Ch. 2.

\textsuperscript{137} Why Athena and Ares in particular? I have a suspicion that they are part of an intertext with \textit{Iliad} 5 (the Aristeia of Diomedes) that threads through Pindar's myth. The implications of this intertext would, I think, bolster the reading presented here, but that investigation goes a little far afield of the focus on the Dioskouroi. That line of musing is slated for a separate article.
Polydeukes wishes to fight (μάρνασαι) for his brother and divide (ἀποδάσασθαι) an equal part of everything with him he will end up with only half of the whole he could have had. The word itself, ἰμίσου, pounds open two successive lines and underscores the divided existence that the choice entails. The brothers will experience a mortality that is not mortality (though beneath the earth, they will yet breathe) and an immortality that is not complete (despite their sometimes residence in the homes of the gods, their ties to the world persist). What is 'divided' for Zeus, though, is 'shared' for Polydeukes. The choice, which he makes without hesitation, empowers him to take on part of Polydeukes' burden (μεταλαμβάνειν καμάτου). The decision asserts his elective orientation to human rather than divine experience as he turns away from Zeus and his golden dwellings to restore life to his brother clad in earthly bronze.

When a speeding car brakes to a dead stop, momentum continues to carry its passengers forward. Something poetically similar takes place with the abrupt and simultaneous conclusion of myth and ode at the end of the fifth triad. The tensions generated by Pindar's reworked myth build to the climax of Polydeukes' choice - and then everything stops. Instead of effecting an orderly decrescendo by threading the events of the myth back into the earlier material of the ode, Pindar allows the accumulated momentum to propel the audience straight

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138 The scholiasts use the words derived from 'meros' repeatedly in their paraphrases, emphasizing the importance of the theme of allotment and distribution of shares: you have a μερίς of these things (Σ Nem. 10.153.8); ἀπομερίσασθαι (Σ Nem. 10.153.10); κατεμερίσθη (Σ Nem. 10.166.14); μερίσασθαι (Σ Nem. 10.166.16).

139 cf. Stern 1969, p. 132: "There may be brightness in the earth as the result of the motion of the gods, but, as Bury has stressed, the brightness is brazen rather than golden. For the single mention of gold in the poem we must turn back to Olympos..."
out of the poem with these tensions unresolved. This inelegant ejection requires each listener to develop their own interpretation of the myth and its place in the context of the earlier elements of the ode, a process requiring reevaluation of the whole.

Without questioning the glory or grandeur of the divine, Polydeukes' choice has laid bare a chasm that a) divides the concerns of men from the concerns of the gods and b) prevents either side from understanding the perceptions of the other. It is a commonplace that humans cannot discern the purposes of the gods, but Pindar has added the disconcerting corollary that the codes of human interaction can also be opaque to the gods. The suggestion is not that Zeus is malicious or intentionally cruel, but that he views mortal life at a remove such that finding a shared framework is impossible. The obstacles to mutual understanding render encounters with the divine a tricky business: divine favour can be the source of great glory or great destruction and the two are not always readily distinguished. Rather than articulating a point of connection between humans and gods- as he did in Olympian 3 - Pindar develops an aetiology that sets the Twins up as the extraordinary denizens of a condition that belongs to them and defines the worlds that bracket it. None of this is made explicit, but the tête-à-tête between Zeus and Polydeukes - and the tension it creates - forces a reexamination of the other prominent divine/human interactions in the ode as a step in the interpretative process.141

140 Bowra 1964, p. 310-311, sees the sudden stop as an example of the ring composition that Pindar uses in his myths when he wants to highlight a specific point and not the narrative as a whole, in this case Polydeukes' choice and the status of the Twins; Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1922, p.429, takes the ending as an implicit reaffirmation of the earlier assertion: θεόν πιστὸν γένος. This is one of those places where knowledge of the music and choreography, and how they mirrored or counteracted the language of the ode, would be invaluable.

141 I am phrasing this all in appropriate scholarly language, but the academic constructions make this interpretative process sound overly analytical and dry. What I am trying to conjure, instead, is that moment after the reveal at the end of, say, The Sixth Sense, when everyone starts talking at once: "So, at
The encounter most recently recounted, the battle of the Apharetidai and Dioskouroi, is fertile ground for this reevaluation. It is generally recognized that Pindar intentionally suppresses the backstory of the fight between the two pairs of brothers, and it is widely but not universally agreed that he does so in order to diminish the culpability of the Dioskouroi.\textsuperscript{142} Earlier versions of the myth situate the encounter within an ongoing conflict between the paired antagonists with reprehensible actions on both sides.\textsuperscript{143} Pindar's more 'tactful' version of the myth would place the Twins firmly on the side of right and frame Zeus' participation as his support of the just. Norwood, however, rejects this reading and sees the divine intervention as 'shameless injustice' driven by nothing more than the personal feelings of the god.\textsuperscript{144} Norwood has spied a fault line that comes alive with the force of the ode's conclusion, but "injustice" does not quite get at the heart of the matter. Instead the encounter shows that a single code of justice does not apply to humans and gods alike; humans who find themselves caught up in the affairs of the divine have entered a foreign land where the accepted rules of play no longer apply.

the restaurant she was really.... "That's why he never..." \textit{Nemean} 10 ends with something that could be called a plot twist and provokes similar reevaluation.

\textsuperscript{142} Staehlin 1902 develops a reconstruction of this (admittedly problematic) section of the poem such that only Kastor is attacked - because only he was responsible for the issue with the cows - while Polydeukes happens to come along at the right time to help his brother who is caught in an unjust two-against-one brawl. It is this injustice which rankles Zeus, who responds accordingly. Norwood 1945, p.56-57, reasonably identifies this as a somewhat tortured reconstruction - "Staehlin juggles with Pindar's narrative in order to justify Zeus."

\textsuperscript{143} These accounts seem generally to follow the view that the Leukippides were engaged to the Apharetidai. Scholia to the Iliad and to Pindar (\textit{Σ Il.} 3.243, \textit{Σ Nem.} 10.112a) have the Dioskouroi snatching the women away from their own wedding banquet; as per Gantz's overview, preserved literary representations of the abduction are late: Theok. 22.137-66 lets Lynkeus object to the bride-stealing; Lykophron, intriguingly, blames Zeus for rousing the quarrel (512-49).

\textsuperscript{144} Norwood 1945, p. 56, sees "Zeus throw[ing] omnipotence onto the scale."
Pindar summarizes the destruction of the Apharetidai in terms that oppose human effort to the power of the divine, but the vocabulary could express either approval or condemnation and the syntax seems intentionally ambiguous.

καὶ μέγα ἔργον ἐμήσαντ' ώκεως
καὶ πάθον δεινὸν παλάμαις Ἀφαρητὶ-
δαί Διός·

_Nem._ 10.64-65

The paratactic construction denies a clear causality between the two components: the sons of Aphareus both aspired to a mighty deed and suffered at the hands of Zeus. The intensity of the two adjectives, μέγα and δεινὸν, hint at a correspondence between the two events but do not explain why the brothers' efforts should arouse Zeus' wrath. Fighting over cattle was a standard motif and fit within familiar codes of behaviour. If this reciprocal feuding is not inherently _nefas_ - and there is no reason it should be - then another explanation must be found for Zeus' intervention. In light of the special relationship he claims to

145 Cf. Goodyear March 17, 2014, p.26, reviewing Lydia Davis' short stories: "The question of what constitutes a story is troublesome. E. M. Forster wrote, "The king died and then the queen died.' is a story. 'The king died, and then the queen died of grief' is a plot." To riff on this distinction, Pindar is here offering a story but denying a plot.

146 The account of Herakles and Geryon is an interesting example of the cow thief achieving a lauded victory, but Zeus does not actively involve himself in this contest.

147 Some interpreters have pointed to the weaponization of a gravestone (the gravestone of a relative, no less) as the sacrilegious act that brought down divine wrath. The image is a jarring one, but I wonder if it does not rather develop the same binary that emerges clearly in the next triad: the human fighters wield a physical symbol of mortality while Zeus directs his divine thunderbolt. A fragmentary passage from Alkman's _Partheneion_ recounts the fate of (two?) people who seem to have done something with an arrow and a millstone and suffered terrible things because of their evil deeds:

έβα· τῶν δ' ἄλλος ἰῶι
μαρμάρωι μυλάκρωι

269
Polydeukes in the following triad, it starts to seem that the sons of Aphareus have offended a
divine sensibility rather than a general human precept. Their great mistake was to take on Zeus' favoured son. Their mutual destruction paints a horrible picture as they burn together (ἁμα) in isolation (ἐρημοὶ). But isolated from whom? Their decisions have made an enemy of a god, but their putative isolation from each other is only the shared (if singularly grisly) experience of death - effectively the fate that Polydeukes sought so that he would not be deprived of his own brother.¹⁴⁸

The myth of the Dioskouroi is the story of a family - the two pairs of brothers were cousins¹⁴⁹ - marked by their encounter with the divine. Both themes - family and divine

[ἐν Ἀΐδας]
[ιοι]
[πον ἀλαστα δὲ]

Fέργα πάσον κακὰ μησαμένοι

Alk. fr. 1.30-35

One of them with an arrow
with a marble millstone
(to) Hades
they
and unforgettable
things they suffered because of their terrible deeds.

That poem opens with another pair opposed to Tyndareos (and his sons) - the Hippokoontidai (Alk. fr. 1.1 ff. PMGF - cf. Diod. Sic. 4.33.5-6, Ap. Bib. 2.7.3, Paus. 2.18.7) and it is tempting (though far from universally accepted) to see this later passage as the fight between the Dioskouroi and the Apharetidai. If this were the case, or even if it were not, but Pindar had thought of the passage in crafting his own, a possibility evoked by the parallels between them, then the gravestone would be a highly intentional symbol.

¹⁴⁸ Things actually get quite tricky here. As Stern, p. 126-128, points out, the use of Zeus' thunderbolt is itself fantastically ambiguous and can be used to punish (as here) or to honour (as in the case of Amphiaraos, on which more below). Had immortality not - for whatever reason - been on offer, then Polydeukes might even have been seeking a precise parallel to the fates of the Apharetidai: one brother killed by a human hand, the other by the will of the divine.

¹⁴⁹ The family relationship figures prominently in their quarrel over the Leukippides who are also cousins to both sets of brothers: v. Gantz, p. 324.
intervention - resonate with the Argive aristeia which opened the ode and suggest a guiding principle for Pindar’s selection and representations of the myths presented there. On its surface, the series of myths is unsurprising: it lays claim to the greatest heroes of the Argolid and, in several cases, asserts the closeness of those heroes (or heroines) to the gods. In the line-up are Danaos and Hypermestra, Perseus (and Medusa), Epaphos, Hypermestra again, Diomedes, Amphiarao, Alkmene and Danae, Talaos, Lynkeus (the husband of Hypermestra, not the brother of Idas), then Amphitryon and Herakles again. These accounts are explicitly assembled to display the splendour of Argos (φλέγεται δ’ ἀρεταῖς / μυρίαις ἔργων θρασέων ἕνεκεν) and - as he did for the Dioskouroi - Pindar suppresses the darker aspects of the myths. Suppression in the text of the ode, though, is not the same as negation, and to name one central element of these myths was surely to summon their contexts.

Every figure who appears in the first triad can be said to belong to a single family, many-branched and complex as that family is. The matriarch of this Argive line - though her name is Unsurprising in terms of Argolid myth, that is. On the argument of the myth-as-politics readings, this list is remarkable for Argos because it draws myths not usually associated with city into its ambit. Perseus is the hero par excellence of Mykenai (cf. Paus. 2.16.3) while Herakles' birthplace is Tiris; the Proitids - the descendants of Proitos who populate the tradition of the Seven against Thebes - shaped the landscape of Argos much more than the Perseids (the family including both Herakles and Perseus) who belonged primarily to the eastern Argolid. By explicitly drawing the Perseids into the circle of Argive traditions, Pindar is confirming the recent synoecism by echoing it within an integrated mythological landscape: on this argument v. Hall 1995, esp. 612-613; Kowalzig 2007, 161-178.

This effect is quite distinct from the mythological re-writing in, most famously, Ol. 1, in which Pindar actively rejects an earlier mythical variant as false or even impious.

As Hall 1997, p. 77-107, argues, the complexity of the family tree reflects independent mythical traditions that had to be integrated as political changes shaped and reshaped the Greek landscape. These historical changes, though fascinating for the study of mythography and history alike, are probably not the right framework for thinking about Pindar’s audience’s response to the myths alluded to here. Instead, each variation on a myth became authoritative or effective in its telling and what we really need to know to deal with Pindar’s allusions is which contemporary representations were most activated at the time of performance.
never mentioned - is Io; the patriarch is Zeus. Would Io's absence have been felt as a presence, so to speak, by the audience? The indisputable importance of Hera in the ode - Argos is designated as her home in the first lines (Ἥρας δόμα θεοπρεπὲς) - suggests that the ode was composed either for performance at the Argive Heraia or in a context at Argos proper which celebrated the Argive Hera and/or a victory at her festival.\(^\text{153}\) If this is the case, then Io's absence from the catalogue of Argive heroes would have been conspicuous. Not only might one have expected her presence in her double status as archetypal priestess and familial matriarch, but Zeus' interest in her would potentially fit neatly into the praise of Argive women.\(^\text{154}\)

Io's unnarrated - but indisputably familiar - experience has multiple points of contact with Pindar's account of the Dioskouroi.\(^\text{155}\) In her position as priestess Io belonged to a system that established an appropriate mode of communication between humans and gods. Zeus' seduction drew her into unmediated contact with the divine (very unmediated) and brought down Hera's wrath. Io's bovine metamorphosis removes her from the human world and her own community, though for her the transformation is not permanent (as for the Dioskouroi) nor does it lead to her destruction (as for the Apharetidai). Instead, her encounter with the divine is the point of origin for a family marked by great glories and great tragedy - usually two faces of the same event, and often effected by subsequent interventions by Zeus himself.

\(^{153}\) At *Nem.* 10.69 the Argives are the 'people of Hera' (Ἥρας τόν εύάνορα λαόν).

\(^{154}\) Aisch. *Suppl.* 291-2; Akus. fr. 26 (ad. Ap. *Bib.* 2.1.3). Older interpreters go so far as to see Io as a form of Hera: Farnell 1896. p. 182; Böckhius 1811-21, p. 463, thinks it reasonable to think of a temple of Hera as the setting, if not necessarily the extraurban Heraia - but 'certa non habemus'.

\(^{155}\) If this ode is correctly dated to the late 460s or 450s it postdates Aeschylus' *Suppliants* (463, according to Hall 2010, p. 208; in the 470s or 460s on Scullion 2002's evaluation). This period was also one of cooperation between Argos and Athens (a possible motivation for the play's motifs) and was thus more likely to have been a relevant datum for Pindar's Argive audience.
Pindar’s Argive aristeia emphasizes the glory, but in alluding to the stories of Io’s descendants he summons the tragedy as well. The glory may have stood out more sharply during the ode’s performance, but the ambiguities evoked in the concluding myth highlight the complementary darkness. Pindar proclaims that Argos achieved excellence through bold deeds (ἔργων θρασέων) but his catalogue dwells more often on inherent nature and passive experience than on individual bravery or action. In the interstices of human activity the gods appear. At the opening of the catalogue their involvement is implicit, but as the triad progresses the focus shifts emphatically to the intervention of the divine in human experience. Is this emphasis intended as praise of Argos and the frequent enrichment of its human stock with transfusions of divinity? This element is present, but the stories that stand behind the representations look to ruptures in human communities. These disturbances can result from the penetration of the divine into the world of human activity or provoke such an irruption. In either case these myths pose a subtle question that becomes much more visible after one has heard the concluding myth of the Dioskouroi: what price is implied in intimacy with the gods?  

Three of the Argive heroes in Pindar’s catalogue are sons of Zeus: Epaphos (by Io), Perseus (by Danae), and Herakles (by Amphitryon). This information lies in the background, but is not emphasized as an ordering principle of the catalogue. Instead, the fact of Zeus’ parentage is treated in three distinct ways: for Epaphos it is implicit, for Perseus mentioned briefly, while the full epode of the first triad is devoted to Herakles’ divine parentage and inheritance. These distinct treatments reflect the varying effects of divine parentage on the life of each son.  

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156 Bowra 1964, p. 301, sees the positive valences exclusively “...this care of gods for some men is also the main point in the several myths touched upon at the start of the poem...”  

157 Since I am suggesting that these effects are evoked by the myth at the conclusion of the ode, I do not want to press too hard on the importance of individual phrasings which might or might not have lodged in
Epaphos is credited with the foundation of cities in Egypt; that this achievement is predicated on Io's long wanderings and exile is left unspoken. Perseus' claim to fame is the somewhat oddly expressed 'things concern the gorgon, Medusa' (τὰ Περσέος ἀμφὶ Μεδοίσας Γοργόνος). This periphrasis includes Athena's favour and the assistance and tools she offers for the quest. At the same time, the story looks to Perseus' motivation for hunting the Gorgon and the family troubles that frame the story. His grandfather, Akrisios, had learned from an oracle that his grandson would one day kill him so he locked his daughter, Danae, away from the world, only to find her pregnant after a visit from Zeus. Like Io, Danae was sent away to death or exile and fell into the power of a king across the sea who required Perseus to slay the gorgon in exchange for his mother's freedom. In both myths, intimacy with Zeus results in the expulsion of the mother from her community. In the case of Epaphos these events lead to the subsequent slaughter some generations later of the Aegyptids by the Danaids while Perseus fulfils the oracle by killing - all unaware - his own grandfather. The insertion of a divine genos into a human family disrupts the established structures of generations and community.

the minds of the audience. I do wonder, though, whether there might be verbal parallels in these lines that would be recalled by language in the myth. Perseus' deeds are extensive (μακρὰ) and many (πολλὰ) are the cities founded by Epaphos' hands (ταῖς Ἐπαφοῦς παλάμας) in Egypt. Would these resonant opening lines have been recalled by the great (μέγα) deed and terrible (δεινὸν) suffering that the Apharetidai experienced at the hands of Zeus (παλάμας Ἀφαρητίδαι Διὸς)?

158 Pyth. 12.12-16 associates Perseus' quest with his desire to free/avenge his mother. Medusa's status may have lent an added frisson to the play on movements between mortality and immortality: though she was one of three sisters, one strand of tradition held that she alone was mortal (cf. Hes. Theog. 276-278).

159 In thinking about other uses of mythology, these points of schism can be understood as ways of thinking about historical change and the reassessments that occurred when, for instance, two populations blended (again, v. Hall 1997) At the same time, these figures were conceived of as individuals whose experiences were more than merely allegorical: the death of a grandfather by a grandson would, I think, have evoked an emotional response (cf., in another genre and culture, the heartbreaking encounter of Sohrab and Rostam: father and son who fight without recognizing each other: line 860 ff. (p. 149-163 in the rendering of Clinton 1996).
What of Herakles? In contrast to Epaphos and Perseus, Pindar tells us nothing at all about his human existence. Instead, the emphasis falls entirely on the divine associations that bracket his existence: conception by Zeus and eventual inclusion in the society of the Olympians as Hebe's husband and Hera's son-in-law.\(^{160}\)

He nourished the spear of Amphitryon:
and he, superlatively blessed, came into his race
while, clad in bronze armour, he was fighting the Teleboans.
Making himself identical to Amphitryon, late at night
the king of the immortals came to the palace,
bearing the adamantine seed of Herakles - Herakles whose wife
- Hebe, most beautiful of the gods - walks beside her mother,
Hera of the marriage.

Like Epaphos and Perseus, Herakles is the son of Zeus - Danae and Alkmene are mentioned together only two lines before this passage - but his apotheosis is unique. Coming at the end of the catalogue as it does, Herakles' place among the Olympians can be read as the crowning glory of Argive myth. But, like the other myths of the first triad, the effect alters in the aftermath of the myth of the Dioskouroi. Herakles' life on Olympos is the existence rejected by Polydeukes; Herakles, too, had a brother, Iphikles, a 'mortal seed' like Kastor, but he - like Io,

\(^{160}\) Pausanias (2.17.5-6) describes images of Hebe and Herakles within the Heraion, but as Cannatà Fera 2004, p. 99-100, has argued, these objects probably postdate the ode. While the presence of similar earlier images could have framed Pindar's representations, the inclusion of Herakles' apotheosis is important for the poetic purposes of the ode as well.
like Akrisios - is elided from Pindar’s praise and left to stand as the silent cost of having engaged with the gods. Herakles’ experience is perhaps the most positive outcome of divine filiation presented here, but the corollary of his individual divinity is abstraction from the systems of human life. Polydeukes - given the choice - rejects this abstraction. The parallels between his family situation and Herakles’ cast the shadows of Polydeukes’ decision more sharply over Herakles’ Olympian destiny. Pindar uses this effect to pose a question that resonates for the audience after the ode is finished: can it be that Herakles would have chosen otherwise had a choice been granted him?

The myths I have discussed so far are complex and it might seem that I have placed too much emphasis on the facets dealing with human engagement with the divine. After all, plenty of heroes were the sons of gods. In the midst of his Argive myths, however, Pindar includes two figures from other strands of Argive legend: Amphiaraos, who marched against Thebes as one of the Seven, and Diomedes who avenged that generation’s defeat as a member of the Epigonoi and then proved himself one of the greatest Greek heroes at Troy.161 Neither of these is the son, or even direct descendant, of a god, but their myth-snippets articulate moments of personal attention from the divine that reorient each man in his relationship to the human world.

In Pindar’s telling, Amphiaraos was received by the earth in Thebes after Zeus struck it with his lightning bolt while Diomedes was made a god through Athena’s efforts (ἔθηκε θεόν). Of all the deeds that he could have included, Pindar chooses two that allude not to the unity of Argive effort at Thebes or Troy, but to the dislocation of these two individuals from their human communities. As was the case for Herakles, these developments result in the isolation of these figures in both cultic and geographic terms. While both men appeared in the mythic geography

161 On this tradition and Amphiaraos’ place in it, v. Ch. 2, p. 39-41.
of Argos, their cultic status placed them elsewhere: Amphiaraos, we know, was honoured at Thebes and, probably somewhat later, at Oropos, while Diomedes received cult in the Adriatic. Amphiaraos' status in the world - was he dead? immortal? - was always enigmatic, and Pindar leaves the question open in this passage. For Diomedes, though, he uses two emphatic terms, ambroton and theon, to emphasize the fundamental shift effected by Athena's action. What, in the light of the myth of the Dioskouroi, was an audience to make of these two non-deaths?

Stern interprets Amphiaraos' descent as an indication of the god's affection (he never questions the positive valence of Diomedes' transformation), but this reading accepts too readily that non-death is an unequivocal good. In taking this tack, Stern embraces the perspective that Pindar attributes to Zeus in the myth of the Dioskouroi, privileging the nature of the divine over the human. This is the value system which Polydeukes' decision challenges by recalling the non-individual strength that inheres in human families and communities.

The juxtaposition of Amphiaraos' experience with that of Diomedes evokes, once more, comparison with the ode's concluding myth. Zeus' lightning strike, though meant to benefit Amphiaraos, recalls the bolt which ended Idas' life and led the Apharetidai to burn 'separately together': Amphiaraos is not destroyed, but he too becomes eremos, without access to divine or human society. Pindar does not explain the mechanism by which Athena rendered Diomedes divine, but the following tradition concerning her gift was likely to have been familiar to the

The gift of immortality was originally meant for Tydeus, but his comportment in battle made him unfit for immortal status (Athena found him chewing on Melanippos' detached head). Realizing what he had done, Tydeus requested that the gift intended for him pass to his son instead. The "inheritance" of immortality between father and son does not map directly onto the experience of the Dioskouroi, but it reintroduces a partial element of choice that is absent from Amphiaraos' experience. That choice - on the part of Tydeus - orients the gift toward his son, a sharing that resonates with Polydeukes' division with his brother. The extraordinary possibility of divine existence is integrated into more familiar human frameworks of family and inheritance. For Diomedes, as for Kastor, divine status is granted only through dual divine and human effort.

In a catalogue encompassing so many figures associated with the divine, Hypermestra stands out as a mortal who was born, lived, and died in the usual human way. From Pindar we learn that she was not led astray when she alone 'voted' not to draw her sword.\textsuperscript{164} These lines allude to the tradition that the daughters of Danaos, unwilling to marry their cousins the Aegyptids, plotted to kill their new husbands at a sensitive moment on their wedding nights. Hypermestra alone spared her husband and, with this decision, founded the Argive royal line from which Perseids and Heraklids were descended.\textsuperscript{165} Pindar's modern audiences have wondered why the murderous Danaids are featured so prominently; Hypermestra's act of

\textsuperscript{163} Tydeus' attack on Melanippos' head is shown on the pediment of the Etruscan Temple A at Pyrgi (c. 460); the story is recounted in Σ Nem. 10.12b.

\textsuperscript{164} Nem. 10.6.

\textsuperscript{165} Aisch. Prom. Vinct. 865 ff., cf. Bacch. 11.64-76, Ap. Bib. 2.2.1, Paus. 2.16.2. These are also the ancestors of the Dioskouroi, according to the tradition recounted by Pausanias (3.1.4) of the Dioskouroi themselves: a descendant of Lakedaemon marries Gorgophone, daughter of Perseus, and engenders Tyndareos.
choosing may be the answer.\textsuperscript{166} In refusing to murder her husband - an act that would have fallen beyond the bounds of social order, like Tydeus' battle rage - she confirmed the strength of human society, specifically of Argos. Like Polydeukes, she was confronted by a choice between two codes; he found himself torn between the self-value of the gods and the other-value of the human world while Hypermestra chose between the same other-value and the self-value of barbarity. If his choice brought partial immortality to his brother, hers achieved another kind of immortality for her Argive successors, stretching down to Pindar's day.

The first triad recounts the glories of the accumulated Argive past and weaves these stories into a panoply that glorifies Theaios' song. But the effect of praise is complicated at the ode's conclusion when the myth of the Dioskouroi evokes darker tones from Pindar's reconstruction of the Argive past. The myths are not simple exempla, either positive or negative; instead, they express the breaks in collective human experience occasioned by unmediated encounters with the gods.

\textbf{Mythography of the Mundane?}

In this divided ode, the praise of the victor and his family is concentrated in the middle triads, the poetic real estate where a myth might have been expected.\textsuperscript{167} Instead, Pindar breaks off his opening myths with an assertion that severs continuity with the past:

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{166} The Danaids were also central to ways of thinking about family, territory and history in the Argive plain (cf. Auffarth 1999), but their emphatic presence in the first line of the ode should encourage more ode-specific interpretation.

\textsuperscript{167} Pindar's structures are, of course, highly variable, but a longer central myth following the aristeia is one common structure. Thummer 1968, p. 64, argues that praise of the homeland in the middle of the ode tends to occur in the form of a myth, while a catalogue will come at the beginning; but Hamilton 1974, p. 7, notes in objection the central role for catalogues in several Aiginetan odes.
\end{quote}
My mouth is too limited to speak of all these things, 
the portion of as many glories as the Argive sanctuary holds; 
and the over-satiety of men is a heavy thing to encounter. 
But come now, strike up the well-strung lyre 
and seize on thoughts of wrestling; 
the contest of bronze drives the people toward Hera’s sacrifice 
and the judgment of contests.

From a concern for births, deaths, and personal encounters with the gods, Pindar veers back to the contemporary context and cultic celebration. Neither he, as creator, nor the audience, as consumers, can encompass the full complexities of the Argive past and so the past is limited to its proper place: set up like an offering in a city which Pindar recasts as a sacred precinct. The lines are programmatic; they orient the audience, including the victor, to an interaction with the gods that is undertaken by the community - not on an individual basis - and articulated by shared sacred spaces and communal history.

After praise for Theaios’ own accomplishments the ode moves to praise of his family whose achievements are expressed as the context and basis for his success. The Dioskouroi make their entrance here in a way that integrates their presence into the prestige of the family; a counterpoint to the divine engagement that drew individual humans outside of their familial and societal commitments in the opening myths.
ἐπέβα δὲ, Θεαῖ, ματρώων πολύγνωτον γένος ὑμετέρων
eὐάγων τιμὰ ἀριστεσσὶ τε καὶ σύν
Τυνδαρίδαις θαμάκις.
ἀξιωθείην κεν, ἐὼν Θρασύκλου
Ἀντία τε ἐξύγγονος, Ἀργεῖ μὴ κρύπτειν φάος ὠμμάτων.

Nem. 10.37-41

Honour in contests, Theaios, approached the famous race of your mother’s brothers, with the Graces and often with the Tyndaridai. I would consider myself worthy, if I were a relation of Thrasyklos and Antias, not to hide the light of my eyes at Argos.

Paired with the Graces, the Dioskouroi are assimilated to something closer to an abstraction. If the Graces, like the Muses, support the production of human song for human audiences, the Dioskouroi - here at least - support human athletic victory in the context of a ritualized contest. I do not mean to suggest that either the Dioskouroi or Graces are merely symbolic but, instead, that their engagement with the human world is moderated, even controlled, by its orientation within human experience. Introduced without explanation - and with reference to Tyndareos, not Zeus - the Twins seem to be a semi-regular presence (θαμάκις) in the human world.

In fact, in the epode of the same triad, the friendship of the Dioskouroi, and the associated good fortune in contests, is framed as a sort of inheritance.

Κάστορος δ’ ἐλθόντος ἐπὶ ξενίαν πάρ Παμφά
καὶ κασιγνήτου Πολυδεύκεος, οὐ θαῦμα σφίσιν
ἐγγενές ἦμεν ἀεθληταῖς ἀγαθοίσιν

168 Paus. 3.14.6 knows a sanctuary of the Dioskouroi and the Graces at Sparta.

281
Since Kastor came as a guest of Pamphaes, and his brother Polydeukes too, small wonder that they (Theaios and relatives) are innately excellent in contests.

Pamphaes is clearly an ancestor of Theaios' maternal family and was probably a familiar name in local tradition. External evidence is mostly lacking, but it seems that he belongs to the distant past, possibly to the period of the Twins' mortal life.\(^{169}\) His association with the Twins establishes a relationship that passes down the generations but does not alter the beginnings and endings of human lives. Just as his uncles were victors in their turn, Theaios too enjoys the exaltation of victory and song while both endure. His great hope, expressed obliquely, is an Olympian victory; his battles (he encounters the Ἕλλανα στρατὸν at the Pythian games) are the (usually) de-fanged struggles for athletic victory. Pindar looks to Zeus for the fulfillment of the former and attributes the latter to the patronage of the Dioskouroi - but the influences of the gods are not sought as a source of unmediated intervention: ultimately, success derives from the physical strength of hands and feet (σὺν ποδῶν χειρῶν τε νικῶντι σθένει).\(^{170}\)

Athletic contests and their sanctuaries become sites for mediated encounter between the divine and human worlds, and also sites that moderate between present and past. The Nemean games are the sacred feasts (σεμνοῖς δαπέδοις) in the Adrasteian pastures (Ἄδραστείῳ

\(^{169}\)Bury 1890, p. 190. If this reconstruction is correct, the relationship is reminiscent of that between Herakles and the Aiginetan family celebrated in Nem. 7: personal friendship between Herakles and the mortal Aiakos transformed into the care of the divinized Herakles for Aiakos' Aiginetan descendants.

\(^{170}\)Nem. 10.48.
Olympia (Pisa) maintains the highest custom of Herakles (τεθμὸν Ἡρακλέος). These games, both in honour of Zeus, were established by men of the distant past and persist into the present as ritualized encounters, opportunities for humans to worship and for gods to favour or disdain. These interactions are, for lack of a better word, regulated: they potentiate communication between human and divine within an established setting that encompasses (and distinguishes) the needs of each. The games themselves, like the victories attained, become a communal good, passed down from generation to generation and constitutive of human society with reference to the traditions of families and communities. The catalogue of victories also orients Theaios and the Argive audience synchronically within the contemporary cultic landscape. In addition to Theaios' victories at the Heraia, Isthmia, Nemea, and the Panathenaia, his uncles add their own successes at Isthmia and Nemea, Sikyon and Pellana, Kleitor, Tegea, the Achaean cities and Lykaon. Argive achievement is inscribed across the cities of the Greek world within familiar geographies. In the triads of explicit praise there are no allusions to Herakles' Pillars or the boundaries of the Nile. The excellence of Theaios and his relatives belongs to the world of human experience. Their encounters with the gods are framed in the "horizontal" travels from contest to contest, not the "vertical" alternations of the Dioskouroi. The twin fulfill the role of patrons, not models.

Just as physical movement in the victor's contemporary experience occurs within the mundane world and by human agency, so too are physical transformations temporary and

171 Or should we read νόμος as law? The combination of the definitions, impossible in a single English translation, gets at the interwoven weight of territory and tradition that the phrase expresses.


173 Pillars: see Ch. 3; Nile: cf. Isth. 6.23.
effected by human - not divine - efforts. The victors are silvered (ἀργυρωθέντες) with the phialae they win at Sikyon and wrapped (ἐπιεσσάμενοι) in bright (yellow) cloaks from Pellana. The poetic language depicts visual alteration of the victor as the effects of victory, but the changes are superficial and temporary. The prestige of each victory contributes to the victor’s standing as a man, but does not extend the glory or the cost of exaltation beyond his own nature. The same thinking may inform the remarkably ornate descriptions of the prize amphorae from Athens\(^{174}\): they are earth burned with fire, the ornately-worked enclosures of vessels. The image transfers the transformative encounters with fire from men (Amphiaraos, Idas) to objects that have no life themselves but endure as evidence of human glory. The domestic fire bequeathed to human hands effects the transformation, not Zeus’ blazing lightning bolt.\(^{175}\)

The passages of praise conclude with the phrase that has long shaped interpretation of the ode: μᾶν θεῶν πιστὸν γένος - indeed, the race of the gods is just. Excised from its context, the sentiment seems reasonable enough, but here it follows on a particular sequence of divine and semi-divine figures: the Dioskouroi, Herakles, and Hermes. These three are named as the overseers of contests, a role which they fulfill in many parts of the Greek world.\(^{176}\)

\(^{174}\) Described with such apparent excess that Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1922, p.427, was moved to object.

\(^{175}\) cf. Stern 1969: the lines "epitomize the illumination of earthly things in the odes" (131).

\(^{176}\) The Dioskouroi here are explicitly the ταμίαι at Sparta. It is less clear whether the genitive ἄγώνων should be construed with ταμίαι or μοῖραι. The first construction would refer specifically to their cultic status at Sparta, the latter to the more widespread conceptions that associated these three with athletic contests. In either case, the traditions did exist across the Greek world and could not have been entirely absent in contemporary interpretations of Pindar’s lines. (Though Preller 1854, vol. 3, p. 70, cites only Ol. 3 and Nem. 10 as evidence for the athletic grouping of Herakles, Hermes and the Dioskouroi at Sparta and Olympia.)
Since, as guardians of Sparta crossed by wide roads, with Hermes and Herakles they manage the blooming portion of contests, and expend great care for just men. Indeed the race of the gods is sure.

None of these are fully of the race of the gods: Hermes in the Homeric Hymn has to fight for his place on Olympos; Herakles and the Dioskouroi have fully mortal mothers and complicated paternities. Each of the three fulfills functions that moderate between the spheres of mortal and immortal existence. Hermes, as psychopomp, effects the transitions of mortality usually hateful to the gods; Herakles, like the Dioskouroi, remains a source of help in times of crisis. If these athletic patrons can be characterized by their closeness to the human world, the care of the Dioskouroi for just men should not necessarily be taken as a universal characteristic of the gods in general. Instead, there is a rich - but still latent - juxtaposition between the justice enacted by men and the loyalty/surety of the gods.

The myth of the Dioskouroi in the final triads reworks the effect of the gnomic statement as it reworks the effect of the opening myths and activates the complexity of these lines. Before Pindar’s novel aetiology unfolds, the presence of the Twins among men might be seen as evidence for Zeus’ dual “pistosity”: i) he allows the brothers to exist together and ii) he establishes them as a source of assistance for men. Had Pindar told a different myth about the Dioskouroi, the frameworks of human justice and divine loyalty might have been rendered complementary. This possibility remains open at the conclusion of the third triad, before Pindar
abandons the contemporary world of Theaios and his family as suddenly as he took it up. The story that is actually presented, though, confounds the expectations that the slippery motto establishes and renders it a riddle rather than an anthem.

The conversation between Polydeukes and Zeus, even as they speak directly, articulates the chasm that stretches between the temporary (and therefore communally-oriented) experience of human life and the eternal (and therefore individually-oriented) experience of the divine. The Dioskouroi care for human justice in a way that the gods cannot, because their special status allows them to comprehend that system in a way that eludes the divine.

Carne Ross imagines that Pindar worked the Dioskouroi into this ode at the request of his patrons. It is very likely that the friendship of the Dioskouroi was important to the family's sense of itself, but Pindar's deployment of the Twins goes far beyond a simple nod to the family history. Pindar took up the prized tradition of the Twins' patronage and used that safe and contextualized relationship as a starting point for examining more dangerous modes of interaction with the divine. The contrast he elicits is not meant as a disavowal of the gods. Far from it: like other victory odes and the victory itself, *Nemean* 10 is a human creation meant, in part, to glorify the gods in the context or memories of their festivals. Pindar achieves that glorification in this ode by framing the power of the gods as something awesome, in the sense that it elicits fear and wonder. Praise for the gods coexists but does not interweave with praise

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177 This is prescriptive, not descriptive: Pindar is modeling the collective identity through which a family or community achieves the only continuity available to mortals.

178 Carne-Ross 1985, p. 81-83.

179 In this case the glory seems to be directed to Hera, especially, and I wonder whether this orientation contributes to Pindar's message: the Homeric Hera has always preferred that Zeus not pursue his flings. The warning inherent in the ode is one that Hera-as-wife might appreciate.
of men; the modes of existence are too distinct for the same assessments to apply. The
Dioskouroi, impossibly partaking in both natures, are not a bridge between the worlds in this
ode, but an incarnate expression of the gulf between them.

**Envois**

In *Olympian* 3 and *Nemean* 10 the Dioskouroi fulfill starkly different poetic functions but
their presence expresses the same fundamental truth about the world: the glory of men is not
the glory of the gods. Put baldly, the sentiment is so banal as to seem meaningless, but this is
why Pindar does not render the idea explicit in either ode. Instead, he uses the two brothers to
articulate the distances that exist between humans and gods. In *Olympian* 3 the Dioskouroi
effect a communication across this gap and potentiate an uninterrupted expression of Olympic
glory that stretches from Akragas to the world of the gods, eliding the divisions of time and
place. In *Nemean* 10 their representation in Pindar’s mythical narrative underscores the gap
between modes of human and divine understanding and condones the maintenance of that
division, even as the Twins themselves come to occupy an intermediary space.

The status of the Twins can be described as belonging to multiple modes of being (both
mortal and immortal) or not quite belonging to any (neither mortal nor immortal but something
*sui generis*). Pindar does not attempt to classify the Dioskouroi in either of these odes or
elsewhere in the corpus. It is the ambivalence that he wants, the impossible balance that places
the two brothers in an attitude that cannot be readily situated within the epinician binary of
human and divine.

This rich uncertainty allows for poetic play that renders each ode appropriate to its
patron and his community. For Theron the Dioskouroi are personal visitors who demonstrate
the privileged position that he and his family occupy in Akragas; their presence focuses the more
generalized sense of piety that suffuses the city and proves that Theron's rule glorifies his
community by pleasing the gods. In Theaios' ode, Pindar deploys the Dioskouroi in a way that
sets human society apart from the gods and privileges human achievement and the context of
contemporary human experience; the effect is to integrate Theaios' victory into the communal
pride of Argos rather than to establish him in a position of permanent privilege.

Though these distinct emphases reflect the relative political and social statuses of the
two victors, and possibly even divergent eschatological hopes, the presence of the Dioskouroi
nonetheless establishes the same boundary in both odes: the limits of mortality. By drawing on
the existentially indeterminate status that the Twins occupy in the contemporary world of his
patrons, Pindar challenges his audience to redraw the boundaries of their own humanity and to
embrace - even celebrate - the individual limits and communal strengths that are the corollaries
of human existence.
"Mostly dead...is slightly alive."

- Miracle Max

Chapter 5

Drawing to a Close

The title of this study, in true Pindaric fashion, is multiply interpretable. The phrase 'only mostly dead' partially looks to the exceptional relationships that Amphiaraos, Herakles, and the Dioskouroi have to the constraints of mortality. Each of them left behind the human world into which they were born and entered a state - different in each case - simultaneously exalted above and abstracted from human experience. 'Mostly dead' might, however, be putting things a little strongly: Herakles gains an Olympian home and Olympian family, the Dioskouroi perform an eternal balancing act between their immortal and mortal natures, and Amphiaraos, though subterranean, is not verifiably expired. I hope I have shown that these figures inhabit such extraordinary spaces within the modes of existence that they are neither 'mostly dead' nor 'mostly alive'; their varied existences explode these modes of conceptualization and cannot be readily assimilated to the camp of those who can die nor the camp of those who cannot.

Rather than the exceptional figures who serve to frame the debate, Pindar’s mortal patrons are the ones who remain 'slightly alive' through the poetic effects of the odes. Though they are inevitably defined and encompassed by their mortality, their names and memories persist - stunningly, when one stops to think about it - some two and half millennia later.

Imagine if a twentieth century athlete - even one of the greats - Babe Ruth, Mohammed Ali -
were to still be known by name and achievement c. 4500 CE. The mind really ought to boggle.

In effect, as the result of this investigation into immortality in the ode, I am endorsing/reasserting the model of literary immortality - the attainment of a measure of enduring exaltation in the world mediated by poetic representation. This is, perhaps, the oldest interpretation of the intended effect of Pindar's epinicians, expressed repeatedly by the poet himself within the odes. So why spend time and energy reiterating the long-since articulated? The arguments for literary immortality have often confined themselves to the sphere of the figurative and metaphorical, reading the possibility of κλεός ἀφθιτον as a poetic trope that expressed the alternatives of commemoration or oblivion. These readings approach the odes as texts in isolation, expressive of the kind of binary communication that Horace evinces in his dedication to Maecenas.¹ This sort of orderly and bounded communicative situation diminishes the significance of the victor's claim to undying commemoration.

Here we come to a third potential significance of the title phrase. The loss of the contemporary contexts that framed the composition and consumption of the odes has come to be recognized and lamented, but also shown to be incomplete. Pindar's world is still - through the labours of all scholars of the ancient experience - slightly alive. Pindaric scholarship has increasingly brought historical trends, political developments, social organization, and religious practice to bear on our interpretation of the odes. I am fully in agreement with those who see contemporary contexts as a critical framework for comprehension of the odes, and I have endeavoured to emphasize an aspect of that framework that is often undervalued: the existence

¹ Horace Ode 1.1, a poem with clear debts to the first Olympian. (I do not mean to suggest that the communicative situation is a simple binary here, only that Horace frames the full composition as an address to his patron.)
of immortal gods whose presence in the world established a counterpoint to human existence and a critical context for human self-conceptions.

When gnomic statements underscore the gap that obtains between humans and gods they also allude to the productive relationships that bind the two unlike populations. Jenny Strauss Clay describes the inextricability of the themes of mortality and immortality and their centrality to the concerns of Pindar’s epinicians in her reading of the first three Olympian odes:

Finally, if one had the temerity to characterise the central motifs of the three odes that open the book of Olympians, one might say that the first explores and rings the changes on possible relations between gods and men - divine favour and disfavour, apotheosis and punishment for *hybris*, heroic accomplishment and hero cult. The second ode in passing picks up the themes of apotheosis and divine punishment, the former with its reference to the immortalisation of Semele and Ino; the latter, by mentioning post-mortem punishments. But *Olympian* 2 finds its centre of gravity in human mortality and its vicissitudes, its subjection to time and, possibly, an ultimate liberation from time. Finally, if *Olympian* 3 brings together Heraclean heroism and its mortal reflection in the moment of Olympic victory, as the hero brings from the Hyperboreans - a people exempt from time, perhaps like those who have been transported to the Isles of the Blessed in O.2 - the olive, the very emblem of Olympian victory, which, as Pindar insists, is the highest accomplishment we mortals can achieve. *Taken together, the three odes offer a compendium, or perhaps I should say, a symphony, of the central themes of Pindaric epinician.*

In Pindar’s odes human achievement is always partly attributable to the intervention of the gods; to succeed is not to become divine or quasi-divine, but to feel for a moment the presence and favour of the gods. The ode aspires to its own form of immortality, transmuting the momentary exaltation of the victor into an enduring commemoration. In so doing it addresses not only the *laudandus* and his community, nor even only the broader Greek world; rather, the

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2 Strauss Clay 2011, p. 343-344.
odes are also framed as communications with and about the gods, reasserting and rearticulating the appropriate relationships between human communities and the divine.

The corollary of this vertical contextualization - as opposed to the horizontal contextualization of an individual within his own human society - is that death becomes relevant and marked. Charles Segal was hardly the first to note this, but in his frequent engagements with Pindar he said it repeatedly and well. The following is just one example:

Pindar’s celebration of the victory is not simply a memento mori for the jubilant athlete in his prime, but a statement of the inseparable constellation of death and eternity as the proper perspective for victory, for all great deeds...3

If we read the gods back into the world inhabited by Pindar and his contemporaries, the significance of κλέος ἀφθιτον is deepened and becomes a matter of ontological positioning rather than a mere truism about the commemorative effects of poetry. Human life, on this reading, is not the exclusive metric for thinking about the possibilities of existence. By framing the inevitability of death as one mode of existence - the human one, but not the only one - Pindar renders the victor's limited human lifetime something wonderful and strange even as he emphasizes that limitation is the common fate of every mortal. Within the odes the brevity of human life is highlighted and it is also celebrated, framed as the indispensable condition for human glory.

The transitory nature of an individual life and the possibility of memory that endures beyond death are made meaningful by the social and familial structures that frame human existence. The moment of quasi-divine exaltation is transient; the status attained by a victor lasts a lifetime and the record of achievement endures in perpetuity as the inheritance of a family and/or a political group. An enduring theme in the epinician corpus is the genetic nature

3 Segal 1981, p. 82.
of excellence: no individual can live forever. The generational endurance of families is reflected in the ongoing activities of the community/polis and its substructures and peristructures as well: the cycle of festivals, the return to the sanctuaries year after year, effects a continuity on a trans-individual scale. The odes address the victor’s personal qualities, but those descriptions are frequently framed as complimentary commentary on the victor’s family or in terms of how his personal excellence draws from, benefits, and reflects back onto his community. In part these emphases derive from the pragmatics of the poetic occasion: the odes were performed poetry and sought a) a favourable reception from the present audience and b) dissemination beyond that original audience. The structures of family and community, though, are not merely a way to reflect the audience to itself; they are assertions of the modes of communal immortality that are uniquely available to humanity just as individual immortality is uniquely available to the gods.

One might have expected Pindar, in the service of maintaining the distinction between gods and humans, to exclude from the odes any mythico-religious figures that exuded a whiff of ambiguity. This, as I have endeavoured to show through the examples of Herakles, Amphiarao, and the Dioskouroi, is emphatically not the case. I have argued that, far from avoiding them, Pindar intentionally employs figures whose modes of existence challenge the stark distinction between mortality and immortality. Each of the figures in this study experienced a human life, integrated into a human family and community, before being abstracted into a mode of existence that does not fit fully comfortably within the bounds of either human or divine experience. Herakles becomes a god, but that divinity is conditioned by the human experiences

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4 The relative weight given to these related emphases depends on the status of the victor: a Hieron will be represented as the exceptional man whose wisdom and power benefits his community; Diagoras is emphatically the worthy descendant of his ancestors.
that preceded it; Amphiaraos' departure from the world resulted in an enduring power matched by an enduring isolation; the Dioskouroi exist as the well-loved helpers of humanity but find a permanent home neither in the communities of mortals or immortals. The corollary of their (diverse) exalted statuses, as Pindar shows, is their removal from the contexts that - as represented within the experience of the odes - endow athletic success, like other modes of human achievement, with enduring significance.

Michael Silk, specifically with reference to tragedy, described Herakles as "an ideal to dream of and a horror story to shrink from." 5 With greater or lesser emphasis on the 'ideal' and the 'horror story' - depending on the figure and the ode - this is the productive paradox that Pindar brings into play when the boundaries between modes of existence are challenged. Each of the ambiguous figures enjoyed special skills or powers: these are the elements that potentially constitute the ideal. An athlete in the heavy competition could be cast as a latter day Herakles; Pindar calls Hagesias, the warrior prophet, reminiscent of Amphiaraos; the Dioskouroi are visually represented as idealized youthful riders. The horror story derives - almost paradoxically - from their extraordinary closeness to the gods and the uncontrollable developments that result from the unmediated interest of the divine. The extraordinary exaltation of these figures manifests in the attainment of a form - often a strange form - of literal, rather than literary, immortality and a simultaneous departure from the structures of human experience. As represented in the odes, these figure are neither positive nor negative, per se; what they are is other. Mary Douglas used the term 'interstitial' to describe someone who exists in a place within society that does not belong to any of multiple culturally prescribed

5 Silk 1985, p. 6: "He is neither man nor god, so neither man nor god is ever entirely at peace with him. He is an ideal to dream of and a horror story to shrink from."
categories. Pindar elicits and emphasizes something similar about the cosmic status of these figures who claim some experience of mortality and immortality but full participation in neither.

A critical implication of the acquired immortality of such figures is their enduring existence in the world and in the experience of contemporary humans. A fifth century human could speak to the Dioskouroi as present sources of power and assistance and expect to be heard, could travel to the Amphiaraion and experience the power of the oracle. When Pindar alludes to Herakles he summons the mythical narratives that depict the experiences of Herakles the human as well as the relationships that his listeners enjoy with Herakles the immortal. This duality is constitutive for Pindar’s employment of these figures. He highlights the attributes expressed in their human experiences - bravery, athleticism, determination, etc. - as qualities worthy of emulation while simultaneously demonstrating how those qualities are only meaningful in the context of human achievement: what would it mean for a god to be brave or an oracle wise? With the transition to their eternal modes of existence, the figures have lost their standing as suitable models but gained a status as present helpers, powers from whom living men can seek assistance and guidance.

One long-standing interpretation of all mythical heroes in the odes is that they represent the achievement of the victor projected onto the grander stage of the mythical past. Some stories ending badly, like that of Bellerophon in Olympian 13, are still projections, but negative ones, warning of the dangers that await the exalted if they do not accept the transience of their glory. Many mythical heroes are developed in the odes either as prescriptive models (guiding the behaviour of the victor) or descriptive reflections (framing the victor’s achievement in terms of the heroic past) or even as projections of the past onto the present (the

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hero's former actions and the athlete's present ones fall together into a single continuum of achievement). Common to all these effects is the assimilation of victor to hero; an implicit assertion that the two are basically similar and that the hero's trajectory is appropriate to the contemporary athlete. This trajectory, I have argued, is not one shared by the ambiguous figure at issue here. The majority of mythical heroes lead extraordinary lives and then die nonetheless; many of these - understood as a special category of powerful dead - historically received hero cult. While the categories of hero and god, mortal and immortal, were far from well established in the broad chronological and geographical sweep of Greek religious practice - or possibly even as active distinctions in the conception of any given worshipping individual - Pindar develops a set of distinctions as an ordering principle of his epinician project. He identifies and exploits the (sometimes latent) ambiguity in figures who challenge the conceptual categories of mortality and immortality, developing them in tension with other mythical and contemporary figures, within and beyond the boundaries of the odes, to reassert the essential distinctions between humans and gods.

I framed each chapter as a collection of close readings of individual odes in order to interpret each ode, to the extent possible, as i) a unified whole constructing its own poetic contexts and ii) dependent on and responding to contemporary conceptions and concerns. That is, while each ode expects - demands - that its listeners will draw on their preexisting beliefs and knowledge to fill in the brief references and suggestive images of Pindar's 'lyrics' it also builds up a system of significance within itself, such that the meanings of each element depend on other poem-internal factors. If we disregard the first consideration we lose sight of the relevance of the frameworks of practice and belief surrounding the performance of a song about, and often to, the gods. By disregarding the second we run the risk of treating in isolation, and even as formulaic, elements that speak to each other and to the more explicit passages of
contemporary praise: references to divine presence in the contemporary performance context, accounts of mythical events in the past, assertions of gnomic wisdom.

Inherent to my reading is the agency of Pindar, the historical author of these texts, who framed his representations to articulate and promote a certain way of thinking about the order of the world and the place of humanity in it. I do not discount the political and economic ramifications of his relationships with his patrons, but I suggest also that his self-presentation as a communicator to and about the gods - drawing on a long archaic tradition that had developed around the figure of the poet - was more than stagecraft. I do not want to resurrect the old idea that Pindar-the-person was promoting, effectively proselytizing, his own personal theology. Instead I suggest that Pindar-the-poet was framing compositions that intentionally reflected and articulated a world encompassing divine and human inhabitants, and that this intervention and orientation was not out of place because epinician, like other choral lyric, addressed both constituencies and reestablished the relationships between them.

In framing this investigation I have tried to highlight the inextricability of (what we would think of as) literary and religious concerns in Pindar's poetry. I hope that I have raised questions extending beyond the scope of this project about the modes of discourse that meet in Pindar's epinicians, especially regarding how we, as a twenty-first century audience, can approach the representations of the divine in the context of human victory. While I have focused on the figures in the interstices between gods and humans, future work might examine modes of communication with the full-fledged deities of the Panhellenic and local sanctuaries, including the issue of how prayer addressed in the much-disputed first person is to be understood and how and when the laudandus is depicted in personal communication with the divine. A reconsideration of the function and presence of the divine might also suggest the utility of a re-reading of the fragments and a potential reevaluation of their distribution by genre.
in light of the greater closeness I am arguing (as others have argued) of epinician to the hymnal genres, and perhaps especially to the threnoi.\(^7\)

I hope that I have also pointed to a productive discussion that could develop around a reading of changing fifth century attitudes to death as reflected in literary concerns and representations. This is hardly virgin territory, but a closer and more intentional reading of changing thinking about initiatory status and afterlife options might illuminate not only the mysteries of *Olympian* 2, but also tragedy’s great interest in death and modes of dying as well as representations of the dead in rhetorical prose.\(^8\) Such studies would look to the material evidence of funerary practice more closely than has been relevant here, especially grave epigram and the visual depiction of the dead. The same framework of questions might prove productive in readings of Pindar’s successors, especially, perhaps, Callimachus and Horace, and their adaptation of Pindar’s themes to altered social and religious realities, including, in both cases, the increasing possibility of assimilating powerful political figures to divine entities.

Finally, the figures at the center of this study, and others like them, might reward diachronic study. Fascination with beings on the margins of mortality and immortality endured with the passing centuries. Dionysios of Halikarnassos reports that statues of semi-divine figures, those whose souls have left their mortal bodies and taken up residence on Olympos, are carried in procession along with the generations of the gods. He names Herakles and the Dioskouroi, along with Semele, Pan, Asklepios - and many others.\(^9\) Cicero, noting the odd things people believe, including the Syrian tendency to worship fish, marvels that the Greeks consider

\(^7\) Cf. Currie 2005, p. 22.


many gods to have human origins, 'like new citizens recently entered into the rolls of heaven.'
Among his examples he includes Hercules, Asclepios, the Tyndarids, and Romulus - and alludes to many more.\(^{10}\) Ailios Aristides, in his praise of the Asklepiadae and their exceptional status within the world, compares them favorably to Amphiaraos, Trophonios, and Amphilochos, heroes who cannot move around the world but possess oracular power. Their statuses continued to occasion comment and provide points of reference for ordering the different modes of being that existed in the world. They are conceptualized differently in various times and places, but the tensions and allegiances expressed by their place on the boundaries remains a salient feature available for adaptation to the purposes of writers, artists, and thinkers.

Such adaptation and the cooperation it necessitates between diverse fields, modes of understanding, and frames of reference have motivated this study. If I have brought the power and presence of the divine down from the stony forms that loomed on temples and out of the ink that breathes discoloured songs, I have achieved a portion of my goal. If I have further successfully demonstrated that - while far from the only lens - the religious experiences of the ancient world provide a critical framework for understanding its many other achievements and fields of activity, then my javelin has flown true. I shall stop now, for a long work carries with it the danger of surfeit.

\(^{10}\) Cic. *de Nat. Deor.* 3.39: iam vero in Graecia multos habent ex hominibus deos, Alabandum Alabandis, Tenedi Tenen, Leucotheam quae fuit Ino et eius Palaemonem filium cuncta Graecia—Herculem Aesculapium Tyndaridas Romulum nostrum aliosque compluris, quos quasi novos et adscriptios cives in caelum receptos putant.
### Abbreviations and Frequent References

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<td>LIMC</td>
<td><em>Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae</em>. Ackermann, Christoph and Jean-Robert Gisler, eds. Zurich: Artemis, 1981-.</td>
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Appendix: Odes in Translation

Olympian 3

(1-15)
For the Tyndaridai who welcome hospitality, to please them,
and Helen whose hair is beauty,
I boast praising famed Akragas;
I have raised Theron’s Olympic victory song,
the flower of untiring horses. With this in view the Muse,
I think, stands near me as I find a shining-new way
to fit to the Dorian sandal a voice
of glorious revelry. Since the crowns
yoked on long manes
construct for me a debt undersigned by the gods (lit. god-built),
to combine
The phorminx with its intricate voice
and the shout of the auloi and the arrangement of words
fittingly for the son of Aenesidamos.
Pisa too assigns this to me to sing, Pisa whence
- apportioned by the gods - songs come to men.
For this man (the victor), fulfilling the longstanding precepts of Herakles,
the unerring judge for all Greeks, an Aitolian man,
circles high up on his hair,
above the brow,
the adornment of the grey-skinned olive, which once
the son of Amphitryon brought from the shady springs of the Istrs
the most noble memorial of the contests at Olympia.

(16-30)
With words he persuaded the Hyperborean host,
the attendants of Apollo;
he sought – his purpose was true –

Translations are my own, created with reference to the translations of Diane Arnson Svarlien (esp. Nem. 9), William Race, and the many others that have influenced my thinking over the years.
a shady planting for the grove of Zeus that welcomes all, 
common for all men, and as a crown of excellence.

For already to him, when he had founded the altars for his father, 
the midmonth moon in her golden chariot shone brightly, 
the full eye of evening, 
and the holy judgment of great contests 
and the four-year festival 
he established on the holy banks of the Alpheos.

But the land of Pelops was not flourishing 
with lovely trees in the ridges of Kronos, 
the plot seemed naked to him without them, 
subject to the harsh rays of the son.

Indeed at that time his heart urged him 
to bear himself toward the Istrian land, 
where the horse-driving daughter of Leto 
received him once when he came there from the ridges 
and curving hollows of Arkadia – 
when the necessity from his father urged him on 
by the orders of Eurystheus 
to pursue the gold-horned hind, which in earlier times Taygeta 
had inscribed as a holy votive to Artemis Orthosia.

(31-45)
Pursuing the hind he beheld that land 
beyond the blasts of the cold North wind 
– and now a sweet desire for these seizes him, 
to plant them around the twelve-turn limit of the course.

And now he comes gentle-minded to this festival 
with the godlike twins of deep-girdled Leda. 
To them, when he went to Olympos, 
he turned over the responsibility for managing 
the contests in men’s excellence and the driving 
of swift chariots.

Then, in some way, 
my spirit drives me to show that glory 
comes to the Emmenidai and to Theron 
through the offices of the Tyndaridai, skilled on their horses, 
because (this family) approaches (the Twins) 
with the most welcoming tables of all those offered by men, 
keeping watch with pious minds over the rites of the blessed ones.

If water is best and gold 
is the most glorious of possessions, 
arriving at the farthest point, 
Theron by virtue of his excellence 
touches from home the Pillars of Herakles. 
Farther than this neither the wise can go 
or the unwise.
I will not pursue it; it would be in vain.

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Pythian 8

(1-20)
Kindly Hesychia, daughter of Justice,
you who make cities great,
you who hold the highest keys
of councils and wars,
receive this honour in Pythian victory for Aristomenes.
For you know how to do a thing softly
and to experience it in this way too, with a perfect sense of timing.
But whenever someone drags up
harsh anger in his heart,
you are rough in confronting the power of hostile men
and you place hubris in the bilge. Porphyrion did not understand your nature
rousing your anger beyond due portion. But profit is most precious,
if someone carries it out of a willing person's home.
In time lofty power is tripped up.
Typhaos the Cilician with his hundred heads did not escape this,
nor indeed did the king of the Giants [Porphyrion]. They were tamed by lightning
and by the arrows of Apollo - who, with gracious mind,
received the son of Xenarkes crowned
with Parnassian leaves and a Dorian revel.

(21-40)
She fell not far from the Graces
this island of just cities,
touching upon the famous achievements of the Aiakids.
She had a perfected reputation from the beginning
For she is much-sung, having raised heroes
superlative in the contests that bear victory
and in swift battle:
and she is conspicuous also with the same achievements of men.
I lack the leisure to set up
the entirety of this long speech
for lyre and soft voice,
lest satiety creep up and kick. But let that debt to you
running along at my feet, the most recent one of noble deeds,
let it take wing through my skill.
In the wrestling ring you follow in the footsteps of your uncles,
your mother's brothers.
You did not give the lie to Theognotos' Olympian performance,
nor to the strong-limbed victory of Kleitomachos at Isthmia;
magnifying your Meidulid clan you are the standard bearer for the saying
which once the son of Oikles spoke- seeing among the seven Theban gates
the sons standing fast, arrayed with spears - spoke it darkly,

(41-61)
when they came from Argos,
the Epigonoi, on a road taken once before.
This is what he said as the battle raged:
"By nature the temper inherited from the fathers
is conspicuous in the sons. I see clearly
the fine-wrought serpent on the shining shield
that Alkmaion wields, first among the ranks at the gates of Kadmos
But the one who was wearied by his earlier experience
now obtains a message
of better omen,
the hero Adrastos - but from home
he will experience the opposite. For he alone of the army of Danaans
will gather up the bones of his dead son, by the will of the gods
he will arrive with his people unharmed
to the wide streets of Abas."
Such things Amphiaraos spoke. And I myself rejoice
and crown Alkman with wreaths and sprinkle him with song,
because my neighbor and the guardian of my possessions
came to me as I made my way to the navel of the earth, well-sung,
and he touched on his inherited prophetic powers.

(61-80)
And you, Far-shooter, you who guide
the famous temple, welcoming to all,
in the hollows of Pytho,
there you granted this greatest joy
and at home earlier you escorted in the coveted gift
of the pentathlon in the festivals for you and your sister.
Lord, I ask that you look with favourable mind
in a certain harmony with each endeavor, however many I attempt.\(^{12}\)
Justice stands near
the komos with its sweet songs. And I seek the unjealous favour
of the gods, Xenarkes, for your experiences.
For if someone heaps up noble possessions without long labour,
to many he seems wise among the foolish
to gird his life with straight-thinking plans:
but these things are not the purview of men, the divine provides.
Now raising one man high, now tossing another down under his hands,

\(^{12}\) There is disagreement about the intended subject of this prayer: Hubbard 1983 argues that Pindar is
asking that he himself, not Apollo, achieve harmony in his undertakings.
he proceeds by measure. In Megara you hold the prize and in the glens of Marathon, and the local contest of Hera, Aristomenes, you tamed three times by your labour.

(81-100)
Falling from up high onto four bodies, thinking evil thoughts, for them no homecoming as warming as yours was decided at the Pythian festival, going home to their mothers sweet laughter did not rouse joy, but along back alleys they creep keeping clear of their enemies, bitten by misfortune. But the one who obtains this new achievement in great splendour flutters with hope held aloft by his courageous deeds, and has concerns superior to wealth. In a little while the delight of mortals grows; thus also it falls to the ground shaken by contrary thought. Existing for a day - what is someone? what is no one? A shadow's dream: a human life. But when that god-given gleam comes, a shining light is upon men, and a sweet lifetime. Aegina, dear mother, in an expedition of freedom guide this city with Zeus and powerful Aiakos noble Peleus, Telamon and Achilles.

***

_Nemean_ 3

(1-21)
O Lady Muse, our mother, I beg of you, come in the holy Nemean month to Dorian Aegina, welcoming to her friends, for near the Asopian water youths are waiting, the builders of the sweet sounding revels, yearning for your voice. Different deeds thirst for different things, but victory in contests loves song best of all, the most fitting companion of achievement's crowns. Grant an abundance of that song from my ingenuity, and strike up for the ruler of the dark-clouded heaven, daughter, an acceptable song and I will join it with their voices
and the lyre. The song\textsuperscript{13} will have that toil which brings joy as the adornment of the land where the Myrmidons lived in time before; Aristokleidas by your fate did not defile their agora, where men spoke well in ancient times, with censure by being cowed in the powerful march of the pankration. But as a healing cure for exhausting blows he obtains the kallinikos song at deep-girded Nemea. If he is noble and achieves great things fitting to his form, the son of Aristophanes has approached the highest excellence; it is not easy to cross farther over the impassable sea beyond the Pillars of Herakles.

(22-42)
The hero god set these up as the famed witnesses of his farthest voyage: he tamed the monstrous beasts of the sea, of his own accord he discovered the streams of the shallows, where he reached the guiding end of his journey and revealed the land. Heart – why do you lead my journey astray toward a foreign cape? To Aiakos and his race I say you should bring the Muse. The bloom of justice follows upon this saying: 'Praise the noble.' And longings for the deeds and lives of others are not better for a man to bear seek at home. A suitable adornment you have obtained here, sweet to speak of. For in ancient achievements lord Peleus rejoiced, cutting the surpassingly powerful spear he took Iolkos alone, without an army, and seized lady Thetis as his wife. And Telamon, whose strength was broad, sacked Laomedon, with Iolaos standing by. And once, surrounded by the bronze-clad strength of the Amazons, he followed him, and man-taming fear never grazed the edge of his thoughts. A man with inborn excellence is a real heavyweight. The one who is only taught remains obscure and exerts himself now at this now at that, never stepping with a sure foot, but only tasting a thousand excellences with no thought of finishing any.

(43-63)

\textsuperscript{13} Carne-Ross 1985, pg. 70, takes the song as subject; thus Pfeijffer 1999, 200: ‘a pleasant labour on the part of the poet’. As we see elsewhere, the experience of the poet interweaves with the experience of the victor.
And golden-haired Achilles, while he remained in the home of Philyra, played at great deeds, though he was a boy. Often with his hands he would drive the thick iron spear so it rushed with the winds, in battle he wrought murder on fierce lions and despoiled boars. Their struggling bodies he brought to the centaur, Kronos' son - all this first at six years of age, and thereafter always. Artemis and bold Athena marveled at him as he killed deer without the aid of hounds or tricky nets, powerful enough with feet alone. This story I tell was spoken by earlier poets: deep-thinking Cheiron raised Jason in a stony home, and then Asklepios, whom he taught the practice of medicine - for those gentle with their hands - and at another time he gave deep-girded Thetis, daughter of Nereos, away in marriage, and he raised her famous son, magnifying his spirit with every preparation so that, sent upon the salt-sea blasts of the wind he would stand fast against the onslaught of Lykians, Phrygians and Dardanians before the walls of Troy and to fight the Ethiopians with fierce determination that their leader, Memnon, the powerful cousin of Helenos, would never return home.

(64-84)
The far-see light of the Aiakids is fixed here.
Zeus, yours is the blood, yours the contest, which this song strikes with the voice of youths, hymning the joy belonging to this land. This shout is fitting for Aristokleides, the bearer of victory, who set up this island in famous praise and the holy Thearion of Pytheos in glorious cares. In the contest the result shines out in which way one becomes superior: a youth among youths, a man among men, at a third time among the older ones – all of us who claim kinship with the race of mortal men have such a portion. But a mortal life draws four modes of excellence and it is fitting to take thought for what is at hand. You are not at a remove from these things: Rejoice, friend – I send this to you – mixed with honey and white milk, attended by foaming dew – a beverage of songs in the breath of the Aeolian pipes, though it is late. The eagle is swift among birds, he suddenly seizes, desiring them from far off, the bloodied quarry in his claws while the cawing jackdaws fly below. For you at least, with the favour of Kleo on her lovely throne,
because of your athletic purpose,
from Nemea and Epidauros and from Megara
a light shines forth.

***

Nemean 4

(1-8)
Festivity is the most excellent physician of decided labours;
and songs, the wise daughters of the Muses,
will charm cares away when they touch upon them.
Not even heated waters can soften limbs as effectively
as a song of praise, that companion of the lyre.
And the word lives longer than the deed,
whichever word, by virtue of the Graces
the tongue draws up from the depths of the mind.

(9-16)
May I establish for Kronos' son Zeus and Nemea
and for Timasarchos' wrestling,
the prelude to a song; may the lofty seat of the Aiakids,
that beam of light radiating justice and protection to strangers,
welcome it. But if somehow your father Timokritos
were still warmed by the sun's might, often, strumming his kithara,
leaning into this song,
he would proclaim his son and his glorious victories,

(17-24)
for sending a wreath of crowns from the contest at Kleonai
and from famed and gleaming Athens
and because in seven-gated Thebes,
near the resplendent tomb of Amphitryon,
the Kadmeians willingly crowned him with flowers
on behalf of Aegina. He, entering the city as a friend among friends,
saw the friendly citadel
near the blessed Hall of Herakles

(25-32)
with whom powerful Telamon razed Troy and the Meropes
and struck down that great mass of evil Alkyon -
but not before he dashed a boulder at twelve chariots
and killed the heroes mounted on them -
twice so many. A man would seem to have no experience in war
if he does not understand me,
since it is likely that a man taking action will suffer its effects.
Custom and the passing hours restrain me from speaking at too much length. My heart is drawn by a charm to touch on the new-moon festival. Straight on then, even if the salty depths of sea hold you about the middle, struggle against intrigues. we shall seem to step up into the light, far stronger than our enemies. Another men, with an eye only for envy, rolls along a vain thought in darkness

fluttering on the ground. But whichever excellence Lord Fate grants to me, I know well that time as it creeps on will bring it fulfilled to a conclusion. Strike up, straightaway, sweet phorminx, with the Lydian harmony the song dear to Oinona\(^1\) and to Cyprus where Teukros the son of Telamon lives abroad; but Aias holds Salamis as his paternal inheritance,

and in the Welcoming Sea Achilles has his shining island, Thetis rules in Phthia, and Neoptolemos in the extended mainland where the cattle-grazing peaks lie continuously, from Dodona all the way to the Ionian strait. And near the foot of Pelion, turning a warlike hand on Iolkos, Peleus handed it over enslaved to the Haimones.

after he had experienced the slippery treachery of Akastos' wife, Hippolyta. By means of Daidalos' sword the son of Pelias had planted death for him - in ambush. But Cheiron fended him off and carried out the fate guaranteed by Zeus. And when he had subdued the all-powerful fire and the sharpest-edged claws and the pointed teeth of terrible lions

he married one of the Nereids, come down from her lofty throne. And he saw the circled seats and the kings of heaven and ocean seated in them as they revealed to him gifts and inborn power. Beyond the darkness of Gadeira one cannot pass – turn back

\(^1\) An archaic name for Aigina.
the ship’s tackle now toward Europe and dry land.
For the whole story of the sons of Aiakos
is impossible for me to go through.

(73-80)
But for the Theandridae I came
as the ready herald of contests calling for strong limbs
at Olympia and Isthmia and Nemea I undertake this task,
There, when they compete, they do not return without a famed harvest
of crowns home again, where we hear - Timasarchos -
that your clan is known to tend to victory songs.
But if you bid me still to set up for your uncle Kallikles

(81-98)
a stele whiter than Parian marble,
burnished gold shows forth all its rays and a song
recounting a man’s noble deeds makes him fortunate as a king.
Let that man, dwelling near the Acheron,
discover my ringing tongue, where
in the contests of the one who brandishes the trident, the heavy striker,
he flourished with Korinthian celery.

(99-96)
Of him your aged grandfather Euphanes will sing,
child, willingly.
Each generation has its contemporaries; whatever he himself experiences
– that is what each man expects to speak best.
One who praises Melesias would twist away from trouble,
weaving his words, an unbeatable wrestling opponent to throw in speech,
thinking soft thoughts for noble men,
but a rough next contender against harsh adversaries.

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Nemean 9

(1-6)
Let us go in the komos procession from Apollo and Sikyon, Muses,
to newly-founded Aetna, where the open door
are overwhelmed by friends,
to Chromios’ fortunate home.
But make a sweet song of verses!
For, mounting his chariot with its powerful horses

15 This phrase is the elegant translation of Nisetich 1980, pg. 249.
he reveals a speech for the mother and her twin children
who share the oversight of lofty Pytho.

(6-10)
There is a certain saying among men: a noble deed accomplished
should not be veiled in silence on the ground; divine song
is fitted to words of praise.
Come, strike up the thundering phorminx
and the pipe toward the very peak of equine contests, which Adrastos
founded them on the banks of the Asopos. Thinking of these things
I exalt that hero with far-heard honours.

(11-15)
He ruled there once, with new festivals
and contests of men's strength and hollowed chariots
he glorified the city and made her shine.
    For he fled at one time
    Amphiarao and terrible stasis
    from the home of his fathers and from Argos; no longer
were the sons of Talaos rulers, overcome by force.
But the stronger man put an end to the former dispute.

(16-20)
Eriphyle, destroyer of men, as a faithful oath,
they gave as wife to the son of Oikles, of the bright-haired Danaans
they were the greatest...
and at one time they led an army of men on a road
without favourable omens, nor did the son of Kronos
brandish his shining bolt and urge them raging to set out from home
but to shun the journey.

(21-25)
But the company hastened toward a gleaming destruction
clad in bronze armour and with the trappings of horses.
On the banks of the Ismenos they fixed
their sweet homecoming
feeding the white smoke with their bodies,
for the seven pyres were devouring their bodies,
their young limbs. But for Amphiarao with powerful lightning
Zeus split the deep-groaning earth, and concealed him and his horses together,

(26-30)
before he should be struck in the back by Periklymenos' spear,
and be shamed in his warrior's heart. For even the sons of gods
flee god-sent fears.
If possible, son of Kronos, I would delay for as long as possible
the trial of courage against the spear-bristling Phoenician convoys,
a struggle for life and death, and grant fortune with good order -
I ask it of you - to the children of the Aitnaians for a long time to come,

(31-35)
father Zeus, and to join the people with splendid celebrations in their city.
There the men love horses and have hearts
superior to their possessions. My words are hard to believe;
for reverence, which brings glorious reputation,
is stolen in secret by profit.
If you had served as Chromios' shield-bearer among foot-soldiers and horses,
and in the battles of ships, you would have judged the danger of the sharp war cry,

(36-40)
that in war that goddess was urging on
his spearman's heart to ward off the bane of Enyalios.
Few men are able to weave councils to turn the cloud of present destruction
toward the ranks of hostile men
with the strength of hand and spirit.
Indeed men say that glory bloomed for Hector by the streams of the Skamander,
and along the steep ridges of the Heloros,

(41-45)
the place men call the Ford of Ares,
a light shone out for the son of Hagesidamos in his youth
Many other deeds on other days
on the dry land
and on the neighboring sea - I will proclaim them.
And from toils, coming into being with youth and justice,
a life grows gentle near its end.
Let him know this a he obtains marvelous fortune from the gods.

(46-50)
For if glorious fame is joined with many possessions,
it is not possible for a mortal to place his foot
on yet another peak.
Peace loves the symposium,
and victory in new bloom is increased
by soft song
a voice becomes bold beside the mixing-bowl.
Let someone mix the sweet minister of the komos

(51-55)
and let him dispense the powerful child of the grape in the silver vessels
which Chromios' horses won for him and sent
together with the duly woven crown's of Leto's son
from holy Sikyon. Father Zeus,
I pray that I may celebrate this achievement
with the Graces, and outdo many others in honoring victory with my verses, throwing my shaft nearest the target of the Muses.

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_Isthmian_ 4

(1-18)
Stretching out for me in every direction
by the will of the gods,
Melissos - for you revealed your inventive skill at the Isthmian games - are paths to pursue family's achievements
with which the Kleonymidai always flourish
reaching with a god's help
the mortal end of life. But different breezes blow at different times and gusting they drive all humans before them.
For, endowed with ancient honour among the citizens of Thebes, they are recognized as proxenoi of the amphiktyons, known as men free from blaring hubris.
Accounts are carried on the wind to men, witnesses to the unending fame of those still living and those who have gone – the Kleonymidai have grasped each of these in its fullness.
By virtue of extreme prowess they lay hold of the Heraklean Pillars from their homes – but do not seek further excellence.
They were breeders of horses and pleasing to bronze Ares.
But then in one day the harsh blizzard of war deprived their blessed hearth of four men -
But now again after the thick, wintery darkness of many months it blooms like the earth with scarlet-purple blossoms

(19-36)
by the will of the divine.
He who moves the earth, who dwells at Onchestos and at the sea bridge before the walls of Corinth, stretched out this wondrous hymn to the Kleonymid family and roused the ancient account of noble deeds from its bed – for it had fallen into sleep. But awakening its skin shines marvelously like the Dawnbearer among the other stars.
Formerly that fame announced a chariot victory on the heights of Athens and in the Adrasteian contests at Sikyon granted such leaves of songs from the men living at that time.
Nor did they hold back their curved chariot
from the great festivals, common to all,
but competed with all the Greeks and rejoiced in their racing expenditures.
To those without experience of these things belong unknowable silences
But fortune can become invisible
even for those who struggle for it
before they attain the peak of fulfillment,
for fortune gives now of this, now of that -
and the skill of lesser men
snatch at a better one and bring him to the ground. For you know
the blood-stained strength of Aias, which late
at night he slaughtered on his own sword and brought blame
on the children of the Greeks, all those who went to Troy.

(37-54)
But indeed, by Homer's craft, he has honour among men
who raised up his excellence again with his staff of
godlike words and made it manifest
to sport among future men.
For this spoken word creeps on, immortal,
if someone speaks it well: across both the full-fruit ed earth
and through the sea
the gleam of noble deeds has travelled, unquenchable forever.
May I meet with Muses favourably minded
to obtain that torch of songs
also for Melissos, a thick-built crown for the Pankration
for the offshoot of Telesios. For his spirit is like in daring
to that of lions, fierce-roaring beasts
in the midst of struggle, but his mind is the fox's,
which rolls over to check the eagle's swoop.
It is necessary to do everything to darken the enemy's fame.
For he did not have an Orionian physique,
but small in stature as he was,
he was heavy to fall in with in a fight.
And indeed long ago a man travelled to the home of Antaios
from Kadmeian Thebes, a man small in stature but unbent in spirit;
to wrestle with Antaios he came
to wheat-bearing Libya, to stop him from roofing the temple of Poseidon
with the skulls of worshippers:

(55-73)
the son of Alkmene did this. He went on to Olympia, after he had searched out all the lands
and the deep bending hollow of the grey sea,
after he had gentled the waters for sailors.
And now at the hand of Zeus the Aegis-bearer he dwells enjoying
the most noble fortune:
honoured by the immortals as one of their own he is spouse to Hebe,
lord of golden homes and son-in-law of Hera.
For him beneath the Elektran Gate, offering feasts and new-built crowns of altars,
we increase the burnt sacrifices
of his eight, bronze-fitted dead sons,
whom Megara, daughter to Kreon, bore him:
for them with the setting of the sun
a rising torch burns on through the night
kicking at the heavens with its provoking smoke.
And on the second day comes the conclusion of these yearly contests,
the work of strength.
There, his head whitened
with myrtle flowers, this man revealed
a double victory, and three among the youths
formerly, when he heeded his the thoughtful judgment
of his helmsman who guided the tiller. With Orseas I will
make him the object of our revel, sprinkling him with delightful grace.