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LYRIC IN THE SECOND DEGREE:  
ARCHAIC AND EARLY CLASSICAL POETRY IN HIMERIUS OF ATHENS

Abstract:

This article reconsiders afresh the methodological issues posed by the reception of archaic and classical poetry in imperial rhetorical texts. It argues that references to ancient poems and poets in the works of imperial sophists are always already the product of appropriation and rewriting, and that the study of sophists' engagement with poetry should go beyond *Quellenforschung* to explore how and why poetic models were transformed in light of their new rhetorical and imperial contexts. To illustrate this approach and its contribution to our understanding of both ancient reception phenomena and imperial rhetorical culture, the article focuses on Himerius of Athens, a fourth-century C.E. sophist and teacher of rhetoric whose fondness for lyric poetry has caused his *Orationes* to be used as a quarry for lyric fragments and testimonia. Himerius' treatment of carefully chosen lyric models is here discussed with attention to his self-presentation and rhetorical agenda, to show how the sophist appropriated the voices of diverse lyric icons to promote his school and negotiate his position in relation to the imperial administration. This analysis restores Himerius' intellectual significance within late-imperial culture and society, but it also demonstrates how a more in-depth study of the reception of ancient poetry in imperial sophistic literature has the potential to illuminate the strategies of cultural politics used by imperial authors to (re)construct Greek tradition.

Keywords:

Greek lyric poetry, ancient reception, imperial Greek literature, Late Antiquity, Himerius of Athens, Anacreon, Simonides, Pindar

This article examines anew the reception of archaic and early classical Greek poetry in prose writers of the imperial period, especially sophists and rhetoricians.<sup>1</sup> While in modern literary theory it is assumed that reception inevitably involves (some form of) recontextualization and reworking, and that a serious analysis of these phenomena presupposes treating the receiving authors in their own right, imperial rhetorical texts referring to ancient poetry have often resisted such an analysis, being mostly used instead as face-value sources on poems and poets.<sup>2</sup> Even when attention has been paid to the receiving authors and their agendas, discussion has concentrated on issues concerning the knowledge and circulation of archaic poetry in the imperial period, as well as on statistical data about the frequency and distribution of relevant

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<sup>1</sup> On the cultural continuity between high Empire and Late Antiquity, guaranteed by the continuous importance of sophistic *paideia* even amid considerable sociopolitical changes, see L. van Hoof, ‘Greek rhetoric and the later Roman Empire: the bubble of the “Third Sophistic”’, *AnTard* 18 (2010), 211–24. Much has been written on the term ‘sophistic’ as applied to imperial culture as a whole: for a general introduction, see T. Whitmarsh, *The Second Sophistic* (Oxford, 2005).

<sup>2</sup> For the productive impact of theories of intertextuality on the study of ancient reception, see S. Hinds, *Allusion and Intertext: Dynamics of Appropriation in Roman Poetry* (Cambridge, 1998); T.A. Schmitz, *Modern Literary Theory and Ancient Texts: An Introduction* (Malden, MA, 2002), 77–85.

quotations;<sup>3</sup> that is, on quantitative issues which, while being fundamental for the analysis of textual transmission and the assessment of readership, have upstaged crucial questions of

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<sup>3</sup> See E. Bowie, ‘Athenaeus’ citations of early Greek elegiac and iambic poetry’, in D. Braund and J. Wilkins (edd.), *Athenaeus and his World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire* (Exeter, 2000), 124–35; id., ‘Aristides and early Greek lyric, elegiac and iambic poetry’, in W.V. Harris and B. Holmes (edd.), *Aelius Aristides Between Greece, Rome, and the Gods* (Leiden, 2008), 9–29; id., ‘Quotations of earlier texts in ΤΑ ΕΣ ΤΟΝ ΤΥΑΝΕΑ ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝΙΟΝ’, in K. Demoen and D. Praet (edd.), *Theios Sophistes: Essays on Flavius Philostratus’ Vita Apollonii* (Leiden, 2009), 57–73; id., ‘Sappho in imperial Greek literature’, in P.J. Finglass and A. Kelly (edd.), *The Cambridge Companion to Sappho* (Cambridge, 2021), 303–19. While Bowie advances some hypotheses on the aims of quoting authors, his focus remains on repertoires and patterns of quotation. More recent exceptions to a ‘quotational’ approach include L. Kim, *Homer Between History and Fiction in Imperial Greek Literature* (Cambridge, 2010); T. Hawkins, *Iambic Poetics in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge, 2014); H. van Noorden, ‘Hesiod transformed, parodied and assaulted: Hesiod in the Second Sophistic and early Christian thought’, in A. Loney and S. Scully (edd.), *The Oxford Handbook of Hesiod* (Oxford, 2018), 395–410. For the imperial reception of lyric (i.e. specifically melic) poetry, see F. Modini, ‘Playing with Terpander & Co.: lyric, music, and politics in Aelius Aristides’ *To the Rhodians on Concord*’, in B. Currie and I. Rutherford (edd.), *The Reception of Greek Lyric Poetry in the Ancient World: Transmission, Canonization and Paratext* (Leiden, 2020), 417–38 and my forthcoming study *Lyric Empire: Aelius Aristides and the Poetics of Lyric in Imperial Greek Culture*.

authorial self-presentation and cultural politics posed by sophists' repackaging of ancient poetry in imperial contexts.<sup>4</sup>

It is to tackle such questions that I propose that the study of the reception of archaic and early classical poets in imperial rhetoric should go *decidedly* beyond *Quellenforschung* to concentrate on how and why these later writers engaged with specific poetic intertexts: that attention should be directed from mere 'quotation' to the 'transformation' undergone by a poem and/or poetic figure when they reappear 'in the second degree' within a rhetorical work.<sup>5</sup> To illustrate how this approach can contribute to our understanding of reception phenomena involving ancient poetry as well as of imperial rhetoric in context, I will concentrate on how a distinctive genre of archaic and early classical Greece, namely lyric poetry, was reused, and in the process rewritten, by the fourth-century C.E. orator and teacher of rhetoric Himerius of Athens, who has often been (mis-)treated as a mere quarry for lyric fragments. As I shall

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<sup>4</sup> For the centrality of self-fashioning and manipulation of Greek tradition to sophists' rhetorical strategies (but with no primary focus on their reception of poetry), see esp. S. Goldhill (ed.), *Being Greek Under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of the Empire* (Cambridge, 2001); T. Whitmarsh, *Greek Literature and the Roman Empire: The Politics of Imitation* (Oxford, 2001).

<sup>5</sup> Terminology borrowed from G. Genette (trans. C. Newman and C. Doubinsky), *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree* (London, 1997), 5–7. Note however that while Genettean idiolect comes in handy, my analysis will draw on a broader, Kristevan notion of intertext as the intersection of multiple utterances, not limited to literary texts but including anecdotal traditions, to be considered within their 'historical and social text': cf. J. Kristeva (trans. T. Gora, A. Jardine, L.S. Roudiez), *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (New York, 1980), 36–7.

demonstrate, Himerius' treatment of lyric models involved a striking manipulation of lyric texts and figures, which was dependent on his self-fashioning in different rhetorical situations and affected Himerius' positioning within imperial education and in relation to power. The idea that ancient poets (alongside other classical authorities) functioned as Himerius' alter egos is not entirely new in Himerian studies and has been recently mentioned by Robert J. Penella in his timely translation and commentary of the *Orations*.<sup>6</sup> But what is far less understood, and this article's focus, is what this poetic self-presentation meant for the orator, his audience and for the transformation of classical culture in the Late Empire. Despite the originality of his engagement with lyric, moreover, Himerius' work was steeped in the rhetorical education of imperial elite Greeks, assuring its relevance to my argument on the need to reconsider the afterlife and role of ancient poetry within imperial sophistic literature more generally.

## 1. LYRIC (IN) PROSE

Originally from Prusa in Bithynia, Himerius (c. 310–390 C.E.) moved to Athens as a student and later settled there, marrying into a learned family related to Plutarch and establishing a successful rhetorical school with pupils from all over the Mediterranean.<sup>7</sup> Even a brief overview of Himerius' *Orations* justifies their relevance to my argument: three-fifths of the corpus recall archaic and classical poets through references, quotations, paraphrases and

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<sup>6</sup> R. Penella (ed. and trans.), *Man and the Word: The Orations of Himerius* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 2007), 15, 233.

<sup>7</sup> Penella (n. 6), 1–16. Unless stated otherwise, translations of Himerius are based on Penella; Himerius' Greek text follows A. Colonna, *Himerii declamationes et orationes cum deperditarum fragmentis* (Rome, 1951).

anecdotes;<sup>8</sup> and some of the two-fifths which do not are fragmentary, leaving open the possibility that they too included similar material.<sup>9</sup> But it is lyric that dominates Himerius' poetic reception: all nine poets of the canon are named at least once in the *Orationes*, whereas apparent citations or summaries of poems by Alcaeus, Sappho, Anacreon, Simonides and Pindar are seamlessly embedded in Himerius' prose.<sup>10</sup>

Besides earning him the nickname of 'singing sophist' and his style the label of 'Poesie in scheinbarer Prosa', however, the fondness for lyric Himerius was so keen on parading has ended up damaging his fortune among historians and scholars of literature alike.<sup>11</sup> Even amid the recent expansion of late antique studies, and with the exception of the work of Penella and few others, Himerius' insistently poetic diction and the risk it runs of hindering understanding of facts and situations addressed in the speeches has caused other contemporary figures like Libanius, Themistius and Julian to be preferred as sources on late-imperial education and politics.<sup>12</sup> From a literary point of view, on the other hand, Himerius' text has so far seemed to

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<sup>8</sup> Thirty-six orations out of sixty feature poetic references: *Or.* 8–10, 12, 14, 16–17, 21, 24, 27–32, 34–36, 38–41, 43–44, 46–48, 54, 60, 62–66, 68–69.

<sup>9</sup> On the textual condition of the corpus see Penella (n. 6), 7–9.

<sup>10</sup> See *Orr.* 9–10, 12, 17, 27–29, 31, 35, 38–41, 43, 46–48, 60, 62, 64, 68–69.

<sup>11</sup> For the nickname, see R. Cribiore, *The School of Libanius in Late Antique Antioch* (Princeton and Oxford, 2007), 54. The description of Himerius' writing as 'poetry that only looks like prose' was proposed by E. Norden, *Antike Kunstprosa* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1915<sup>3</sup>), 1.429.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. e.g. E. Watts, *City and School in Late Antique Athens and Alexandria* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 2006); R. Cribiore, 'The value of a good education: Libanius and public authority', in P. Rousseau (ed.), *A Companion to Late Antiquity* (Chichester, 2012), 233–45.

The only attempt to date to offer a thorough contextualization of the *Orationes* as a whole corpus

be of little interest, except for its potential as a repository of lyric fragments and testimonia that may be extracted from Himerius' otherwise unexciting writing.<sup>13</sup> His name appears in all major lyric editions,<sup>14</sup> and despite the rhetorical nature and purpose of his production, Himerius'

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is M. Raimondi, *Imerio e il suo tempo* (Rome, 2012); for Raimondi (82–83) too, though, Himerius' engagement with poetry represents an interpretative obstacle. Recent studies on selected texts suggest a welcome though still isolated reappraisal: M. Andreassi and M. Lazzeri, *Quattro discorsi agli allievi. Imerio, Orazioni, 11, 30, 65, 69* (Lecce, 2012); M. Lazzeri, *Imerio, Orazioni 44 e 54 Colonna* (Lecce, 2019).

<sup>13</sup> According to R. Browning, *OCD*<sup>4</sup> s.v. 'Himerius', the *Orations* display 'a talent for saying nothing gracefully and at length'. When it does not manifest itself through open criticism, scholars' negative reception of Himerius is suggested by general indifference: except for Penella (n. 6), H. Völker, *Himerios, Reden und Fragmente: Einführung, Übersetzung und Kommentar* (Wiesbaden, 2003) is the only other modern language translation available. Despite numerous textual problems, no critical edition has appeared after Colonna's (n. 7).

<sup>14</sup> D.L. Page (ed.), *Poetae Melici Graeci* (Oxford, 1962), 168, 216–17, 228–9, 296–301; B. Snell and H. Maehler (edd.), *Bacchylides* (Leipzig, 1970<sup>10</sup>), 109; eid., *Pindari carmina cum fragmentis* (Leipzig, 1987–9), 21, 85, 177; E.-M. Voigt (ed.), *Sappho et Alcaeus: fragmenta* (Amsterdam, 1971), 118–20, 298–9; G. Liberman (ed. and trans.), *Alcée: Fragments* (Paris, 1999), 10, 130–2; O. Poltera (ed. and trans.), *Simonides lyricus: Testimonia und Fragmente* (Basel, 2008), 44, 55, 420–2; H. Bernsdorff (ed. and trans.), *Anacreon of Teos: Testimonia and Fragments* (Oxford, 2020), 95, 186–7, 236, 221, 239–40, 437, 549–50, 556–9, 789–91, 828–9; C. Neri (ed. and trans.), *Saffo, testimonianze e frammenti. Introduzione, testo critico, traduzione e commento* (Berlin, 2021), 463, 475, 477, 491, 776–8, 781–2, 868–9, 874, 887–8. Anecdotes: D.A. Campbell (ed. and trans.), *Greek Lyric* (Cambridge, MA, 1982–93), 1.42–3



reliability as a lyric source has never been seriously challenged or at least reconsidered.<sup>15</sup> Such reading in search of fragments from other texts has meant reading Himerius' own text 'fragmentarily', a process in which the relationship between his reception of lyric and his rhetorical agenda has gone completely overlooked.<sup>16</sup>

There is no need to doubt that Himerius *could* be directly acquainted with (at least some) lyric poetry. In addition to papyri of Pindar and Sappho, attested all the way down to the sixth and seventh century C.E., late antique *grammatici* specialized on Alcaeus and Anacreon;<sup>17</sup>

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(Sappho), 1.207 (Alcaeus), 2.29 (Anacreon), 2.414–5 (Alcman), 3.290–1 (Ibycus), 3.464–5, 470–1 (Simonides); M. Ercoles (ed. and trans.), *Stesicoro: le testimonianze antiche* (Bologna, 2013), 166, 319–21.

<sup>15</sup> According to G. Cuffari, *I riferimenti poetici di Imerio* (Palermo, 1983), 116, even though they are 'not very reliable' from a textual point of view ('di un livello testuale non molto affidabile'), Himerius' poetic references further enrich the indirect tradition of the authors he refers to.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Hinds (n. 2), 101–2: 'why, in a given case of allusive incorporation, do we tend to privilege only one of the texts involved with a systematic reading, while reading the other "fragmentarily"?'. While the first reason given by Hinds (the overlooked text 'is – quite literally – a fragment') does not apply here, since complete Himerian speeches have been upstaged by fragmentary lyric, the second reason he proposes seems appropriate: compared to the lyric texts privileged in the intertextual analysis, Himerius has always appeared 'less important, less "good", less canonical'.

<sup>17</sup> R.A. Kaster, *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, 1988), nn. 28, 63, 77, 91, 118, 253. On Pindar and Sappho in imperial and late antique papyri, see respectively G. Ucciardello, 'Ancient readers of Pindar's "Epinicians" in

while Sappho's *Epithalamia* were excerpted by a certain Sopater (fr. 233 Voigt), who might have been a member of Himerius' circle.<sup>18</sup> As I will argue, however, what is really at stake in Himerius' lyric reception is not direct transmission but creative appropriation; lyric references are always already Himerius' own construction: deployed, recontextualized and redrafted according to the orator's intellectual and socio-political aims. This appropriation of lyric rests on two key features of the genre: the centrality of performative frames and the display of diverse, recognizable poetic personae. Since Gentili's groundbreaking work on the performative nature of archaic poetry, lyric poems have been read as texts embedded in specific sociopolitical and ritual occasions.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, Himerius' poetical rhetoric was devised for precise classroom and public settings, and its significance should therefore be explored in light of these contexts. Since anecdotes featuring singing poets are a staple of Himerius' lyric mode, recovering the situatedness of Himerius' reception of lyric will reveal how his performances

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Egypt: evidence from papyri', in P. Agócs, C. Carey and R. Rawles (edd.), *Receiving the Komos: Ancient and Modern Receptions of the Victory Ode* (London, 2012), 105–40; and P.J. Finglass, 'Sappho on the papyri', in Finglass and Kelly (n. 3), 232–46.

<sup>18</sup> On the identification of the Sopater excerptor of Sappho with Sopater the sophist, educated in Athens and probably by Himerius, cf. Cribiore (n. 11), 50; A. Dale, 'Sapphica', *HSPH* 106 (2011), 47–74, at 62.

<sup>19</sup> B. Gentili, *Poesia e pubblico nella Grecia antica: da Omero al V secolo* (Rome and Bari, 1984<sup>1</sup>, 2006<sup>2</sup>); cf. B. Kowalzig, *Singing for the Gods: Performances of Myth and Ritual in Archaic and Classical Greece* (Oxford, 2007); D. Fearn (ed.), *Aegina: Contexts for Choral Lyric Poetry: Myth, History, and Identity in the Fifth Century BC* (Oxford, 2010). For a mediation between performative and textual approaches, see F. Budelmann and T. Phillips (edd.), *Textual Events: Performance and the Lyric in Early Greece* (Oxford, 2018).

interfered with his (re)construction of ancient lyric occasions. In turn, Himerius' lyric anecdotes point to his wider engagement with the variety of individual voices offered by the genre (e.g. encomiast, passionate lover, mournful singer), which, as we shall see, Himerius carefully picked and tailored to his own persona – a self-presentation strategy that compares with that identified in other, more famous and better studied authors.<sup>20</sup>

Combining the analysis of the contexts of Himerius' lyric prose with the exploration of his deployment of different lyric personae, the following discussion breaks with established treatments of Himerius' work as either interesting only *qua* 'supplier' of older poetry, or as too poetic to be of any use for historians. By exposing the origins and functions of the rhetorical strategies underpinning Himerius' reception of lyric, I will show how it is at times virtually impossible to carve neat poetic fragments and testimonia out of the *Orationes*. At the same time, reconsidering Himerius' use of lyric in view of his teaching and rhetorical agenda will allow us to reinstate him as a key figure in the culture, society and politics of fourth-century C.E. Athens.

## 2. (RE)PLAYING PINDAR

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<sup>20</sup> Cf. Horace's appropriation of anecdotes from the ancient lives of lyric poets, in turn part of his emulative relationship with the Greek lyric canon: B. Graziosi, 'Horace, Suetonius and the Lives of the Greek poets', in L. Houghton and M. Wyke (edd.), *Perceptions of Horace: A Roman Poet and his Readers* (Cambridge, 2009), 140–60; G. Hutchinson, 'Horace and archaic Greek poetry', in S. Harrison (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Horace* (Cambridge, 2007), 36–49.

Student recruitment was a pressing matter for late antique school heads. Given the number of teachers available, and the high reputation enjoyed by some of them, it was vital to get hold of prospective pupils and convince them to join one's school before competitors did. Teachers could go as far as having mature pupils kidnap newcomers and make them swear loyalty to their teaching, a forceful recruitment strategy which was effectively adopted by one of Himerius' rivals, the Christian Prohaeresius.<sup>21</sup>

This (violent) competition explains why Himerius tried to impress a group of Ionian 'guests' via three orations, of which two survive (*Orr.* 59–60).<sup>22</sup> Soon after their arrival, Himerius treated his guests to a virtual tour of the city (*Or.* 59.1: τὴν μητρόπολιν τῷ λόγῳ δεῖξωμεν) in which he capitalizes on the traditional ethnic kinship between Athens and Ionia to inspire in the prospective students a sense of belonging to the city and, ultimately, to his school.<sup>23</sup> This first address is also recalled at the beginning of the second speech for the Ionians, where Himerius explains his welcome plan in full: while yesterday he 'addressed Ionia with a pleasant little piece', now he will 'sing' for them once more, performing what he calls the *orthios nomos* (*Or.* 60.1: χθὲς ἀβρᾶ Μούσῃ τὴν Ἰωνίαν προσείπομεν ... νῦν δὲ αὐτοῖς πάλιν τὸν ὄρθιον νόμον προσάσωμεν). In the lyric domain from which it is borrowed, *orthios nomos* indicated a specific musical performance, a complex piece played on a concert box lyre

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<sup>21</sup> Eunap. *VS* 485: Watts (n. 12), 57, 67. For an autobiographical account of the system, see Lib. *Or.* 1.15–22.

<sup>22</sup> *Or.* 59.6 addresses the visitors as παῖδες, suggesting their young age: Penella (n. 6), 111.

<sup>23</sup> This genealogy was part of Himerius' stock-in-trade to attract new students from Asia Minor: cf. *Or.* 26.10, addressed to 'newcomers' from Ephesus and Mysia.

(κιθάρα) and characterized by sustained high pitch.<sup>24</sup> This lyric reference alludes to a substantial speech in honour of the Ionians: not the short *Or.* 60 which served as an informal introductory speech (*prolalia*), but a fully fledged, high-style oration that does not survive, most probably an extempore declamation showcasing Himerius' skills.<sup>25</sup> Himerius' choice of musical vocabulary bridges lyric and rhetoric, and harmonizes with actual citharodic practice: as main songs, *nomoi* were usually preceded by instrumental and sung preludes, just as Himerius' declamation was introduced by *Or.* 60.<sup>26</sup>

The *orthios nomos*, however, connects Himerius' performance with the world of lyric at a deeper level too. According to the 'story' (διήγημα) told in *Or.* 60.4, during the City Dionysia Pindar too welcomed to Athens a group of Ionians, who came moved by desire for the 'mystic fire and initiation at Eleusis':

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<sup>24</sup> T. Power, *The Culture of Kitharōidia* (Washington, DC, 2010), 121. *Orthioi nomoi* could be performed by auletes too (A. Barker, *Greek Musical Writings 1: The Musician and His Art* [Cambridge, 1984], 253), but from what follows in *Or.* 60 it is apparent that Himerius has a string performance in mind.

<sup>25</sup> Penella (n. 6), 111. For declamations as the *pièce de résistance* of epideictic rhetoric, see G.A. Kennedy, *The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World* (Princeton, 1972), 553; R. Webb, 'Schools and paideia', in W.A. Johnson and D.S. Richter (edd.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Second Sophistic* (Oxford, 2017), 139–54, at 146–7. In *Or.* 60.1 ὄρθιον also contrasts with the ἄβρα Μούση of Himerius' first oration for the Ionians. Considering the traditional association of the Greek East with softness and luxury (*habrosynê*), it seems that Himerius' attempt to attract the Ionians began strategically with a piece parading its Ionian aesthetics.

<sup>26</sup> Power (n. 24), 185–7.

καταλαμβάνουσι δὲ ἄρα τὸν Πίνδαρον ξυνωρίδα τινὰ νέων ἄρτι τελεῖν ἀπαρχόμενον. ὁ δὲ ἡσθεὶς ταῖς Μούσαις τότε μὲν ὡς εἶχεν, ἐπειδὴ τις αὐτῷ καὶ ἄρρωστίᾳ συνέπεσε, μικρῶ τινι μέλει τὴν παρουσίαν αὐτῶν ἡσπάσατο· εἰπὼν δὲ ἤκειν αὔριον εἰς θέατρον, εἰς ὄρθιον νόμον τὴν λύραν αὐτοῖς μεθήρμοσεν.

They found Pindar just beginning to initiate a pair of young men. He delighted in the Muses, but on that occasion, since he was not feeling well, he acknowledged the arrival of the Ionians as best as he could, with only a short melody. But he told them that he would appear before an audience on the next day, and he retuned his lyre for them in preparation for the *orthios nomos*.

It was not uncommon for orators to compare their work with lyric poetry, especially in the case of encomiastic performances.<sup>27</sup> Evident already in Isocrates' *Evagoras*, where the function of the encomium is set against the background of Pindar's epinician poetry,<sup>28</sup> in imperial rhetoric this kinship with poetry extended to diverse contexts and favoured a sense of competition between sophists and their lyric precedents.<sup>29</sup> But in *Or.* 60 the association between Himerius and Pindar takes this discourse to a further level: Pindar's performance is the exact analogue

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<sup>27</sup> Cf. L. Pernot, *La rhétorique de l'éloge dans le monde gréco-romain II: Les valeurs* (Paris, 1993), 635–57; D.A. Russell, 'The panegyrists and their teachers', in M. Whitby (ed.), *The Propaganda of Power: The Role of Panegyric in Late Antiquity* (Leiden, 1998), 17–50.

<sup>28</sup> W.H. Race, 'Pindaric encomium and Isocrates' *Evagoras*', *TAPhA* 117 (1987), 131–55.

<sup>29</sup> See *Men. Rhet.* I pp. 333.8–23, 340.12–6; II p. 393.5–14 Spengel: lyric poets as useful models for praisers of both human and divine subjects. For sophists (picturing themselves as) competing with lyric, cf. Aristid. *Or.* 45, with T. Whitmarsh, *Beyond the Second Sophistic: Adventures in Greek Postclassicism* (Berkeley, 2013), 200–5.

of Himerius' dealings with the Ionian students, even mirroring his postponing his showpiece for them – a decision which, as the anecdote suggests, may have been due to personal circumstances.<sup>30</sup> The story about Pindar in Athens fully assimilates orator and poet: Himerius does not merely look back at Pindar, but rather *is* and *does* what Pindar was and did.<sup>31</sup> How are we to interpret this reenactment? Recently, the anecdote has been used to argue for Himerius' knowledge of the original 'historical, biographical and performative context' of lyric.<sup>32</sup> Far from offering conclusive evidence on early classical poetry, however, the scene includes some striking inaccuracies which are better explained as adjustments relevant to

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. *Or.* 69.5, where Himerius refers to accidents involving Anacreon, Stesichorus and Ibycus as parallels of his recovery from a wound, possibly suffered during a clash with members of a rival school: Penella (n. 6), 69; Ercoles (n. 14), 319–21.

<sup>31</sup> This impersonation is reminiscent of the appropriation of Homer's poetic identity by the Homeridae, cf. B. Graziosi, *Inventing Homer: The Early Reception of Epic* (Cambridge, 2002), 202–15; in Himerius, however, the different genre of performance makes the identification more striking.

<sup>32</sup> O. Vox, 'Musica e poesia nella prosa di Imerio', in D. Castaldo, F.G. Giannachi, A. Manieri (edd.), *Poesia, musica e agoni nella Grecia antica* (Galatina, 2010), 357–68, at 364: 'Imerio conosce bene ... anche il contesto storico, biografico ed esecutivo, performativo, delle composizioni meliche alle quali fa riferimento'; similarly I. Rutherford, 'On the impossibility of centaurs: the reception of Pindar in the Roman empire' in P. Agócs, C. Carey, R. Rawles (edd.), *Receiving the Komos: Ancient and Modern Receptions of the Victory Ode* (London, 2012), 93–104, at 93 n. 3: the narrative of *Or.* 60 was 'perhaps derived from some lost biographical tradition'.

Himerius' own context and objectives, suggesting that the analogy between orator and poet results from Himerius' manipulation of Pindar's figure.

Pindar's Athenian links were anything but new in the Athenocentric milieu of imperial *paideia*, where he was most famously recalled for a dithyramb praising Athens as the 'bulwark of Hellas', 'shining and violet-crowned and celebrated in song'.<sup>33</sup> Given the centrality of dithyrambic performances at the Dionysia, moreover, the fact that in *Or.* 60 Pindar is found by the Ionians during the festival is similarly in line with lyric tradition and practice.<sup>34</sup> And yet Pindar's presence in Athens during the Dionysia is the only historically credible feature of the anecdote. As stressed above, through the reference to the *orthios nomos*, in Himerius Pindar's performance is not dithyrambic but citharodic, not choral but monodic; the model of choral lyric is turned into a solo singer. The impression of musical oddity is made even stronger by the fact that, to perform his *nomos*, Pindar 'retunes' a λύρα rather than a κιθάρα, so that the metamorphosis from lyric to citharodic poet, left unfinished, foregrounds both Pindar's traditional and new identity.<sup>35</sup> It is by subverting lyric tradition, however, that Himerius' Pindar

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<sup>33</sup> Fr. 76 Snell–Maehler, quoted by many an imperial author: see e.g. Aristid. *Or.* 1.9, 14, 401; Philostr. *Im.* 2.12.4; [Luc.] *Dem. enc.* 10; Lib. *Decl.* 1.79. Himerius knew it as well: he flatters Constantinople by observing that Pindar's well-known celebration of Athens (ὅπερ εἰς τὰς Ἀθήνας ἦσται Πινδάρῳ) would be little praise for Constantinople (*Or.* 62.2). Pindar's dithyrambic activity in Athens was also a prominent part of his ancient biography: cf. *P.Oxy.* 26.2438 line 9 (ἠγώνισται ἐν Ἀθήναι[ς διθυράμ]βῳ); *Vit. Ambr.* 1.11–5 Drachmann.

<sup>34</sup> D. Fearn, *Bacchylides: Politics, Performance, Poetic Tradition* (Oxford, 2007), 234–41.

<sup>35</sup> Himerius' use of musical terminology is not exempt from such inaccuracies: cf. *Or.* 39.8, where a κιθάρα is associated with Pindar and Anacreon. Again, in *Or.* 21.1, both κιθάρα and λύρα are used to describe the famous Homeric scene of Achilles singing by his tent. A more



becomes the perfect lyric alter ego for Himerius. As opposed to a choral performance, the image of a single *kithara*-player taking centre stage conveys the essence of the sophistic performances delivered by Himerius; while the detail about Pindar inviting the audience to his next (grander) musical display fits better an epideictic orator than a lyric poet. In addition, compared to other monodic genres, the choice of citharodia makes the Pindaric scene more relatable for Himerius and his audience. Throughout the imperial period, citharodia was all the rage, starting with the emperors Nero, who had grand citharodic ambitions, and Hadrian, who sponsored the citharode Mesomedes.<sup>36</sup> Given their popularity, citharodes also rivalled with sophists for audience's favour (see Dio Chrys. *Orr.* 19.1–2; 32.61–2), and it was most probably this rivalry that inspired orators to compare their rhetoric with citharodic music: comparisons with citharodia are found in speeches from the second to the early sixth century C.E. (cf. Aristid. *Or.* 24.1–3; Chor. Gaz. *Or.* 9.3). Chronologically in between, Himerius was no exception and used citharodic *comparanda* in particular concerning his teaching.<sup>37</sup> By turning Pindar into a

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precise use of terminology is found in *Or.* 38.9, where κιθάρα is mentioned with reference to Amphion and Orpheus, both 'proto-citharodic culture heroes' (Power [n. 24], 29). Although a clear instrumental terminology was developed in the fourth century B.C.E., 'literature commonly neglects these technicalities even after that date' (Barker [n. 24], 25 n. 19). Penella's translation (n. 6) tends to obscure rather than acknowledge these musical inaccuracies by using 'lyre' for diverse string instruments.

<sup>36</sup> Nero: Suet. *Nero* 20–1, 25; Dio Cass. 62.20.3–4; [Luc.] *Nero* 2.6–9. For Mesomedes, see Whitmarsh (n. 29), 154–75. Citharodia at imperial festivals: e.g. *IGUR* 1.261 (second–third century), 263 (imperial period); *SEG* 35.1040 (198–209 C.E.).

<sup>37</sup> In *Or.* 61.3, the idea that a teacher of rhetoric should always provide his students with 'examples' of his craft is supported by comparison with flute-playing and *kithara*-playing; in

citharode, Himerius was transferring the contemporary popularity of citharodia to his lyric counterpart and, through him, to the rhetorical skills he aimed to sell to the Ionians.

There is another conspicuous adjustment Pindar undergoes at Himerius' hands. According to the anecdote, when the Ionians arrived in Athens in search of the mysteries, they ran into Pindar while he was about to initiate a couple of young men (*Or.* 60.4: ξυνωρίδα τινὰ νέων ἄρτι τελεῖν ἀπαρχόμενον).<sup>38</sup> This detail feeds into the mystic theme introduced by the Ionians' interest in initiation, but it also transforms the poet into a hierophant; a role that, just like that of citharode, points to Himerius' persona and teaching rather than to Pindar. While in imperial imagination Pindar did live on as a semi-divine figure, it was in Delphi and Thebes, not in Athens or Eleusis, that he maintained cult associations.<sup>39</sup> On the other hand, in fourth-century C.E. Attica, Eleusis was at the height of its success as an international pilgrimage centre and represented, together with rhetorical schools, Athens' main cultural attraction.<sup>40</sup> At the same time as the sanctuary was enjoying this popularity, initiation language and imagery

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*Or.* 63.2, the image of a citharode practicing before singing in public is used to illustrate the need for preliminary exercise in rhetoric too.

<sup>38</sup> τελεῖν was proposed by Gottlieb Wernsdorff instead of the transmitted ἐλεῖν/ἐλεῖν and is printed in Colonna's edition. Penella (n. 6), 36 with n. 91 keeps the manuscripts' ἐλεῖν and translates it as 'win over'; but instead of reinforcing the mystical element already present in the passage, the form of αἰρέω would introduce an agonistic nuance irrelevant, and potentially detrimental, to Himerius' recruitment strategy.

<sup>39</sup> Delphi: Paus. 10.24.5, Plut. *De Sera* 557f; Thebes: Paus. 9.23.1–2.

<sup>40</sup> On Eleusis' importance in Late Antiquity see H.G. Saradi and D. Eliopoulos, 'Late paganism and Christianisation in Greece', in L. Lavan and M. Mulryan (edd.), *The Archaeology of Late Antique 'Paganism'* (Leiden, 2011), 261–309, at 281–5.

offered apt metaphors for literary and rhetorical education: capitalizing also on a personal link with Eleusis (his son Rufinus had been a hearth-initiate there, see *Or.* 8.8), Himerius often fashioned himself as a secular priest disclosing the mysteries of speech to new recruits and established students alike.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, and not less importantly, the mystic association empowered Himerius as representative of pagan culture in the face of the (cultural and political) expansion of Christianity – and, more practically, against Christian competitors like Prohaeresius.<sup>42</sup> It is to better mirror Himerius that Pindar becomes a hierophant in *Or.* 60; as if in a chronological short circuit, Himerius’ performance in the late antique future affects (his reconstruction of) the lyric past.

Besides demonstrating that we should be wary of taking for granted the accuracy of Himerius’ depiction of lyric, exploring the components of his Pindaric story illuminates the function such a scene was meant to play within Himerius’ welcome to the Ionians. By wilfully reshaping Pindar’s figure according to his own context and role, Himerius appropriates the glow of Pindar’s fame and status: in late antique Athens he exercises the same cultural authority

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<sup>41</sup> In *Or.* 69.7–8, Himerius addresses his class differentiating between ‘initiates’ and ‘those entering the highest degree of initiation’, before stressing that his address concerns especially some new students ‘initiated’ only recently (τοὺς ἀρτιτελεῖς τε καὶ νέον παρ’ ἡμᾶς ἦκοντας). For Himerius as hierophant, cf. also *Orr.* 23.1; 34.7; 35.1. On the overlaps between mysteries and school activity in Himerius’ Athens, see D. DeForest, ‘Between mysteries and factions: initiation rituals, student groups and violence in the schools of late antique Athens’, *JLA* 4 (2011), 315–42.

<sup>42</sup> On Himerius’ stance on Christianity, cf. *Or.* 41.8: Julian’s rule is welcomed as the end of ‘the darkness that was preventing us from lifting our hands up to the Sun’ (τὸν κωλύοντα ζόφον ἀνατείνειν χεῖρας εἰς Ἥλιον); see Penella (n. 6), 2.

as the *princeps lyricorum* of the classical period (Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.61; cf. [Longinus], *Subl.* 33.5); and as the city's intellectual point of reference he can offer the young newcomers what they are looking for. The encomiastic discourse traditionally attached to Pindar's poetry is repurposed by Himerius to honour, and thus entice, potential new students.

### 3. FAREWELL TO HIERO

Assuming that Himerius' lyric self-projection was confined within his school's walls, however, would be off the mark, for his rhetoric was deeply entangled with imperial politics. Like other major centres of the Empire, Athens maintained (and continuously negotiated) her links to Rome through the visits of imperial officials, provincial governors and, on special occasions, of the emperors themselves. These visits represented an opportunity for the city to attract support from the imperial administration, but they also offered local sophists a stage to display their eloquence while voicing community requests or concerns.<sup>43</sup> Cultivating good relations with officials was especially crucial for teachers of rhetoric: provincial governors were directly involved in the selection of public chairs and 'as a measure of effective regional government', it was the proconsul's duty to take a stance on disputes between competing teachers.<sup>44</sup> Given

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<sup>43</sup> J. Downie, 'The romance of imperial travel in Aelius Aristides' *Smyrna Orations*', in M. Niehoff (ed.), *Journeys in the Roman East: Imagined and Real* (Tübingen, 2017), 53–76.

<sup>44</sup> Watts (n. 12), 24–47, at 37; cf. similarly M. Di Branco, *La città dei filosofi. Storia di Atene da Marco Aurelio a Giustiniano* (Florence, 2006), 56–60. Cf. Eunap. *VS* 488: after being exiled for taking part in a brawl between schools, Prohaeresius could return to Athens also thanks to the support of the new proconsul.

Roman officials' function as regulators of school matters, their favour could make the difference in the overcrowded market of late-imperial education.

Influential addressees are found throughout the *Orations: comites* (e.g. *Orr.* 23–24), prefects like Julian's praetorian prefect (*Or.* 42) and proconsuls like Flavianus, who even studied with Himerius (*Or.* 12). From *Orr.* 38 and 46, we learn that the visits of the governors Cervonius and Basilius coincided with their support for Himerius amid conflicts with other sophists.<sup>45</sup> Imperial prosopography aside, nearly half of the extant Himerian speeches celebrating officials, and some of the most elaborate ones, contain lyric references (*Orr.* 12, 28, 31, 38, 39, 46–48). This is hardly surprising when we recall how politics fed into the lyric poetry of archaic and classical Greece, and that memory of certain poets' involvement with power was passed on through the Hellenistic period to imperial authors.<sup>46</sup> How then did Himerius deploy the politics of ancient lyric to shape his relationship with the imperial administration? As we shall see in both this section and the next, through his manipulation of poetry for self-presentation purposes, Himerius reconfigured very different lyric genres to create a sense of personal closeness and intimacy with the officials who could act as powerful supporters of his school.

Just like arrivals, the end of official visits provided orators with one more chance to address governors by sending them off with a *propemptikon*, a farewell speech. At the

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<sup>45</sup> Although no text remains, we know that Himerius addressed Julian after he summoned him to Constantinople: cf. *Or.* 52 and fr. 1.6; Penella (n. 6), 5–6. For officials in Himerius, see T.D. Barnes, 'Himerius and the Fourth Century', *CPh* 82 (1987), 206–25, at 212–20.

<sup>46</sup> According to *Men. Rhet.* II p. 393.13–5 Spengel, lyric poets 'always associated with kings and tyrants, giving them very good advice'. This echoes Pausanias' definition of Anacreon and Simonides as 'companions of kings' (1.2.2).

beginning of one such oration (*Or.* 31.2), marking the departure of the proconsul Ampelius, Himerius cites a precise lyric precedent for his goodbye:

ἐπεὶ καὶ Σιμωνίδης ὁ Κεῖος Ἰέρωνα πέμπων ἐκ Σικελίας ἐπ' ἄλλης γῆς ἤπτετο μὲν  
λύρας, ἤπτετο δὲ δάκρυα μείξας τοῖς κρούμασιν, Ἰάσονα δὲ τὸν Θετταλὸν μετὰ  
τὴν χρυσοῦν <δορὰν> ... Φιλάμμων ὁ παῖς Ἀπόλλωνος ἐπινίκιον μέλος <συνθεῖς>  
ἐν μέσοις προσῆσε τοῖς ἥρωσιν...

Since Simonides of Ceos, when sending Hiero off from Sicily to another land, took hold of the lyre, took hold of it and mixed tears with the sounds he made; and after the capture of the golden <fleece> ... Philammon, son of Apollo, <composed> a victory song and sang it to Jason of Thessaly in the midst of the heroes...

*Or.* 31 survives in excerpts, and this excerpt is very incomplete. Here too, however, the nature and function of the diptych indicate that Simonides' and Philammon's songs have been rewritten to mirror, and enhance the authority of, Himerius' performance for Ampelius. Simonides is not otherwise known for a propemptic ode to Hiero, nor does Philammon appear in any version of the Argonautic myth as praiser of Jason.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, each of the ancient

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<sup>47</sup> On Philammon and the Argonauts, see Pherec. fr. 26 Fowler, cf. fr. 120 for Philammon as choral poet. About the anecdote concerning Simonides (= fr. 580 *PMG*, T59 Poltera) Campbell (n. 14), 465 observes that 'presumably Simonides wrote a propemptic ode for him [Hiero]'. In absence of further evidence, though, the exact correspondence between Simonides' and Himerius' contexts makes the anecdote suspicious; cf. Poltera (n. 14), 55 n. 91: 'Spekulationen über einen möglichen προπεμπτικὸν ὕμνον ... führen ebenfalls zu keinen probaten Resultaten'.

singers embodies one of the two main components of the *propemptikon*. With his celebration of Jason's success, Philammon foreshadows Himerius' praise of Ampelius' administration (*Or.* 31.8–17), casting a heroic light on the proconsul. As for Simonides, his function is to (re)perform for Hiero a departure song analogous to Himerius' farewell.

Unlike the reference to Philammon, however, Himerius' comparison of *Or.* 31 with Simonides' performance carries political implications for Himerius' relationship with Ampelius. Stories about Simonides as a salaried poet at Hiero's court had been popular in the late classical period, but the pair continued to epitomize poetic patronage well down to the fifth century C.E.<sup>48</sup> While in ancient scholarship this characterization often dovetailed with the theme of Simonides' greediness, in turn derived from comedy (cf. Schol. Pind. *Isthm.* 2.9b = Call. fr. 222 Pfeiffer), the idea of a Simonides-Himerius moved by greed would hardly suit the encomiastic tone of the text. In this sense Himerius' Simonides rather invites comparison with Theocr. *Id.* 16, where Simonides' greediness is cunningly turned on its head by Theocritus to comment on his own patronage relation with another Hiero of Syracuse, Hiero II.<sup>49</sup> Simonides' precedent gave Theocritus the opportunity to build on Hiero II's propaganda linking his kingdom to the Deinomenid reign of two hundred years earlier; but it also allowed Theocritus to register (and lament) the change in circumstances affecting patronage in the transition from classical to Hellenistic times, when a patron's support was 'no longer culturally guaranteed'.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Synesius (*Ep.* 51) compares lyric poet and tyrant with the wandering poet Theotimus and the prefect Anthemius respectively; see A. Cameron, 'Wandering poets: a literary movement in Byzantine Egypt', *Historia* 14 (1965), 470–509, at 477.

<sup>49</sup> R. Hunter, *Theocritus and the Archaeology of Greek Poetry* (Cambridge, 1996), 100.

<sup>50</sup> For Hiero II's propaganda and Theocritus, see R. Rawles, *Simonides the Poet: Intertextuality and Reception* (Cambridge, 2018), 228–31; cf. Hunter (n. 49), 83. On the changes to poetic

While the Sicilian connection becomes irrelevant in Ampelius' case, what has been observed about Theocritus' appropriation and updating of the patronage discourse applies to *Or.* 31. By comparing his *propemptikon* to a Simonidean ode for Hiero, Himerius constructs his relation with the proconsul as with a powerful sponsor of his rhetoric. This move may or may not have matched the reality of their relationship, but reveals Himerius' objective. As a result, the encomiastic relation between poet and patron is recast to fit the political setting and rituals of the late Empire: now that his patron is on the move from one city to another, Himerius' rhetoric marks his comings and goings; now, Simonides leaves epinicians to Philammon (*Or.* 31.2: Φιλάμμων ... ἐπινίκιον μέλος <συνθεις>) and takes on the *propemptic* genre.

Simonides' *propemptic* metamorphosis is made vivid by the tears he sheds while sending Hiero off. As pointed out by Wilamowitz, who already suspected the anecdote as a fabrication by Himerius, Simonides' association with weeping was famous in Roman times (cf. Catull. 38.8 *maestius lacrimis Simonideis*; Hor. *Carm.* 2.1.38 *Ceae retractes munera neniae*) as a reflection of his production of *threnoi*.<sup>51</sup> Through Simonides' tears, then, Himerius underscores the sense of loss caused by Ampelius' departure, implying that the event compares with a mournful occasion.<sup>52</sup> Another passage of the *propemptikon*, however, suggests that there

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patronage in the Hellenistic period, see B. Acosta-Hughes, *Arion's Lyre: Archaic Lyric into Hellenistic Poetry* (Princeton, 2010), 179, from which the quote is taken; similarly S. Goldhill, *The Poet's Voice: Essays on Poetics and Greek Literature* (Cambridge, 1991), 281–2.

<sup>51</sup> U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Sappho und Simonides* (Berlin, 1913), 153 n. 2. On Simonides and dirges, cf. also Dion. Hal. *De imit.* fr. 31.2.6 Usener-Radermacher; Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.64; Aristid. *Or.* 31.2.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. *Or.* 38.9, where Athens deprived of Cervonius is described as 'shedding tears and lamenting' (δάκρυά τε ἀφείσα καὶ θρήνους).



may be more to Simonides' weeping. In *Or.* 31.18, the praise for Ampelius' achievements gives way to the image of the Athenians who, 'like a lover robbed of his beloved' (ὥσπερ ἐραστής τῆς ἐρωμένης κλεπτόμενος), turn into crying flowers and trees because of their desire for the departing proconsul.<sup>53</sup> Far from fitting only funeral lamentations, tears belonged to 'the standard inventory of Graeco-Roman literature for the description of the power of Eros', signalling painful separation from one's beloved.<sup>54</sup> In Simonides' farewell to Hiero, dirges and erotic longing thus intertwine, adding an erotic overtone to the relationship between the lyric poet and the tyrant, which in turn reflects on Himerius' relationship with Ampelius: unlike the description of the city's feelings, this erotic nuance concerns Himerius more personally, and stresses the ardent attitude he displays towards the governor. The political implications of this choice are easier to grasp when we recall Menander Rhetor's advice to use an erotic *êthos* when bidding farewell to individuals who are on *equal* terms with the speaker (II p. 395.14–7 Spengel; e.g. 'when a friend sees off a friend'), but to avoid love and desire in *propemptika* for governors unless, as in *Or.* 31.18, these feelings involve the city as a whole (p. 395.31–2). When he compares himself to a Simonides in tears for his patron, Himerius is depicting his relationship with Ampelius as a close, intimate one; the motif of erotic loss appended to the

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<sup>53</sup> The eroticization of the relationship between governor and city represented an effective strategy to promote good relations between the two parties: as demonstrated by Downie (n. 43), it is in similarly erotic terms that Aristides describes Smyrna's physical attraction on proconsuls and emperors. The fact that both city and governor could play the role of erotic object underscores the reciprocity and symbiosis of their relationship.

<sup>54</sup> T. Fögen, 'Tears in Propertius, Ovid and Greek epistolographers', in T. Fögen (ed.), *Tears in the Graeco-Roman World* (Berlin, 2009), 179–208, at 182. Cf. Sappho fr. 94.2 Voigt ἄ με ψισδομένα κατελίμπανεν.

encomiastic model provided by Simonides allows Himerius to approach the official as a dear friend – all the while pointing, through the idea of a lover’s longing, to Himerius’ reliance on Ampelius’ favour.

#### 4. ANACREONTIC POLITICS

If in *Or.* 31 the erotic discourse is predicated upon weeping but no explicit mention is made of the orator’s love for Ampelius, in another speech for a Roman official, *Or.* 48, marking the arrival of the proconsul Hermogenes, Himerius pushes the representation of his closeness to Hermogenes to the point of depicting a true (political) romance between himself and the governor. *Or.* 48 is the longest surviving oration and, like other speeches, it was performed in front of Himerius’ students (*Or.* 48.2), confirming the strong tie between imperial administration and Himerius’ professional interests.<sup>55</sup> This oration is also where Himerius’ lyric reception is at its most diverse. Apart from Simonides at Hiero’s court, mentioned this time as counterpart of Hermogenes’ own relation with the emperor (29), Himerius retraces the genesis of some Anacreontic lines (4), recalls Stesichorus’ palinode (8), and paraphrases a paean by Alcaeus (10–11; fr. 307c Voigt) which gives him the chance of comparing Hermogenes to Apollo due to the former’s role as both reason and patron of Himerius’ rhetoric. Yet, whereas the Alcaean paraphrase has monopolized scholars’ attention, either as lyric source or for its Apolline portrait of Hermogenes,<sup>56</sup> it is first of all the Anacreontic section of *Or.* 48,

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<sup>55</sup> For other examples, see Raimondi (n. 12), 88–90.

<sup>56</sup> Raimondi (n. 12), 153–4 has recognized that Himerius transfers to Alcaeus’ Apollo features relevant to Hermogenes, but out of place in an archaic context: e.g. according to Himerius, Alcaeus made Apollo reside among the Hyperboreans for a year, in contrast with the tradition

and the erotic discourse underpinning it, that set the tone for Himerius' self-positioning in relation to Hermogenes, complementing and somehow balancing the laudatory association of the governor with Apollo.

The Anacreontic section belongs to the opening of the speech, where Himerius voices disappointment at Hermogenes' decision to spend more time in Corinth, the proconsular seat, postponing his arrival in Athens. The desolation resulting from an official's absence is a recurrent theme in speeches to governors (cf. e.g. *Or.* 36.1). In the case of Hermogenes' delay, however, Himerius frames his complaint in strikingly erotic terms: avoiding a straightforward reproach to Hermogenes, Himerius blames the 'Attic Erotes' for the proconsul's preference for Corinth and the 'Corinthian Erotes' (*Or.* 48.2). Once he has introduced it, he then fully develops the erotic metaphor into one of his lyric anecdotes (*Or.* 48.4):

νῦν ἔδει μοι Τηϊῶν μελῶν, νῦν ἔδει μοι τῆς Ἀνακρέοντος λύρας, ἦν, ὅταν ὑπὸ παιδικῶν ἐκεῖνος ὑπεροφθῆ ποτε, καὶ κατ'αὐτῶν Ἐρώτων οἶδεν ἐργάσασθαι· εἶπον ἄν πρὸς αὐτοὺς τὰ ἐκεῖνου ῥήματα· ὕβρισται καὶ ἀτάσθαλοι, καὶ οὐκ εἰδότες ἐφ'οὔς τὰ βέλη κυκλώσεσθε.

What I would need now are songs of Teos, what I would need now is Anacreon's lyre.

Whenever he was scorned by a boy he loved, he knew how to use that lyre against the Erotes themselves. I would have used his very words against them (*Anacr.* fr. 445)

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of his return to Delphi in spring. W.D. Furley and J.M. Bremer, *Greek Hymns: Selected Cult Songs from the Archaic to the Hellenistic Period I* (Tübingen, 2001), 100–2 justify the anomaly as a reference to Alcaeus' exile; but as explained by Raimondi, this detail makes better sense as a reference to Hermogenes' longer stay away from Athens.

*PMG*): ‘You are insolent and wicked, and you don’t know whom you should shoot your arrows at!’.

Like Simonides, Anacreon could come in handy in an encomiastic setting given his traditional association with Polycrates’ court, where Himerius placed Anacreon as the tyrant’s tutor.<sup>57</sup> The political potential of Anacreon’s figure is used for example in *Or.* 28.2, a speech in praise of an official, probably the *comes* Athenaeus, which opens with Pindar and Anacreon celebrating Hiero and Polycrates respectively.<sup>58</sup> *Or.* 48, however, is different in this respect. Instead of recalling Anacreon’s court activity as a foil for his relationship with Hermogenes, Himerius goes for the erotic strain of Anacreontic tradition, which contributed to establish the portrait of the poet as a salacious old man devoted to the pleasures of love and wine (cf. *Ov. Ars am.* 3.330: *vinosus senex*; *Dem. Eloc.* 5: *Anacr. fr.* 396 *PMG* as displaying ‘plainly the rhythm of a drunk old man’).<sup>59</sup> While he omits any reference to inebriation, Himerius focuses on Anacreon the lover, even lingering on the unhappy affairs that would have provoked the poet’s animosity against the Eroles: on another occasion, Himerius continues, Anacreon’s unrequited love for a ‘beautiful young man’ (*Or.* 48.4: ἐρασθεῖς ἐφήβου καλοῦ) made him threaten to stop praising the Eroles; a threat that Himerius could borrow against his Attic Eroles.

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<sup>57</sup> *Or.* 29.22–31: Penella (n. 6), 68, Acosta-Hughes (n. 50), 141 and n. 1. *Or.* 29 addresses Privatus, the tutor of Ampelius’ son, whom Himerius may have aimed to replace as the boy’s teacher of rhetoric; the patronage discourse attached to Anacreon is thus appropriated to negotiate an intellectual’s (Privatus’ but also Himerius’) significance to the ruling class.

<sup>58</sup> On the addressee of *Or.* 28, see Penella (n. 6), 210.

<sup>59</sup> See further P.A. Rosenmeyer, *The Poetics of Imitation: Anacreon and the Anacreontic Tradition* (Cambridge, 1992), 15–21.

Even though they have been accepted in modern editions as Anacreon's, it is far from sure that the passage contains the poet's own words (τὰ ἐκείνου ῥήματα).<sup>60</sup> Rather than to Anacreon himself, the host of Loves, uncommon in archaic poetic imagery, points to the poetry composed in Anacreon's style from the Hellenistic era onwards.<sup>61</sup> The issue of the alleged quote should also be reconsidered taking into account Himerius' diction: the Homeric adjective ἀτάσθαλος qualifies ἔρωτες in *Or.* 12.33 too; while the phrase τὰ βέλη κυκλώω, absent in archaic or classical texts, is used again about Loves in *Or.* 41.16. If he was indeed quoting from a (broadly) Anacreontic poem, Himerius certainly manipulated it.

What *is* sure is that the Anacreontic intermezzo builds on Anacreon's self-presentation as an unsuccessful lover: the idea of Anacreon's antagonistic relationship with Love(s), in

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<sup>60</sup> Page (n. 14), 217 and Campbell (n. 14), 112 print Anacreon's alleged words from ὑβριστὰι το κυκλώσεσθε as a direct quote; Bernsdorff (n. 14), 221 limits the direct quotation to ὑβριστὰι καὶ ἀτάσθαλοι on metrical grounds. Cuffari (n. 15), 79–80 preferred to take the words as a Himerian paraphrase.

<sup>61</sup> Eroles appear in *Anacreontea* 4.18, 25.15, 44.1, but none of these occurrences is reminiscent of Himerius' text. In Gell. *NA* 19.9.5, a poem from the *Anacreontea* is quoted as Anacreon's, indicating that in imperial times the difference between the poet and his imitators was less clear-cut, and probably less important, than for modern scholars. For a 'plurality of Eroles' in Hellenistic poetry (e.g. *AP* 5.124.3, 139.3; *Ap. Rhod.* 3.452, 687, 765), see G.M. Hanfmann, J.R. Thornhill Pollard and K.W. Arafat, *OCD*<sup>4</sup> s.v. 'Eros'. According to Bernsdorff (n. 14), 790, the presence of the plural in the *Anacreontea*, as well as in *Pind. fr.* 122.4 Snell–Maehler and *Bacchyl.* 9.73, supports its occurrence in Anacreon himself; no literary evidence closer to Anacreon, however, has so far been found, and it is equally possible that the Eroles of the *Anacreontea* were influenced by Hellenistic (and later) imagery.

particular, is found in fr. 396 *PMG*, where Anacreon ‘boxes’ with Eros, and in fr. 378, where he flies to Olympus to confront Eros after being rejected by a beloved, a scene that parallels that of *Or.* 48.<sup>62</sup> By adopting such an Anacreontic persona, Himerius transfers the *erastês–eromenos* model to his relationship with Hermogenes, casting the proconsul in the role of erotic object, either as a younger boy (παιδικά) or as an adolescent (ἔφηβος). In so doing, Himerius’ lyric reenactment goes beyond mere literary pose, articulating the power dynamics underlying his relationship with the governor through a surprising political choreography: for all intents and purposes, *Or.* 48.4 suggests a reversal of power roles between orator (the mature erotic actor) and proconsul (the younger erotic object).<sup>63</sup> How could such a reversal suit an oration celebrating a Roman official? Dovetailing with Anacreon’s ancient characterization (cf. Hor. *Carm.* 4.9.9: *si quid olim lusit Anacreon*), the Anacreontic cameo certainly adds a playful note, which balances the hyperbolic comparison between Hermogenes and Apollo at the core of the speech. What seems more significant, however, is that impersonating Anacreon’s unrequited lover allows Himerius to foreground his dependence on the governor his beloved, who ends up having the upper hand in the erotic exchange and (momentarily) denies himself to Himerius. The erotic inversion of power roles between Himerius and Hermogenes ultimately stages the

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<sup>62</sup> In imperial times fr. 378 is recalled by Julian *Ep.* 193. To Anacreon’s popularity as a rejected lover contributed also the self-presentation of the old poet scorned by a Lesbian girl (fr. 358, cited in Athen. 13.599c) and by a ‘Thracian filly’ (fr. 417, recalled by Himerius in *Or.* 9.19).

<sup>63</sup> The effects are even more arresting if we recall Foucault’s (debated) argument that the role of the erotic object was associated with the idea of subordination to an active *erastês* in a way that tended to replicate, in the erotic field, existing social hierarchies: M. Foucault (trans. R. Hurley), *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality: 2* (New York, 1985), 215; id. (trans. R. Hurley), *The Care of the Self: The History of Sexuality: 3* (New York, 1986), 31–2.

latent conservative potential of Bakhtin's carnival: the carnivalesque exception confirms the everyday norm, and the order of late antique society is not disturbed but further affirmed.<sup>64</sup> The eroticization of Himerius' relationship with Hermogenes reinforces the idea of Himerius' reliance on the governor's presence and consideration, in line with the established hierarchy. Exactly when it seems to challenge it, the erotic imagery inspired by Anacreon is effectively courting power.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

My analysis has challenged previous approaches to Himerius' use of archaic and early classical poetry by replacing the image of Himerius as a mere source of fragments and poetical anecdotes with that of Himerius as a bold, interested manipulator of the ancient lyric tradition. As a privileged site for the expression of distinctive voices, lyric offered Himerius a variety of genres and *éthê* he could adopt and tailor according to his rhetorical needs. As we have seen, through deep redrafting Himerius appropriated the performative identity and political significance of figures such as Pindar, Simonides and Anacreon – a wide intrageneric repertoire spanning from encomiastic choral lyric to erotic monody. Such diverse reenactments of lyric allowed Himerius to stress (and indeed build) his intellectual role as teacher and to promote his school among potential new pupils; but they were also part of his strategy to construct closeness with and maintain the favour of the highest provincial officials who had a saying in the school

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<sup>64</sup> Bakhtin's formulation of carnival as politically subversive (M. Bakhtin [trans. H. Iswolsky], *Rabelais and His World* [Cambridge, MA, 1968] 10) has long been reconsidered in light of the ritual's potentially pro-establishment implications: see Goldhill (n. 50), 176–81, with further bibliography.

business. Functioning as Himerius' trademark, his 'palimpsestic' reception of lyric had a purchase in Himerius' cultural and sociopolitical self-positioning and as such throws new light on the sophist's significance not just for ancient poetry but for late-imperial culture and society.<sup>65</sup>

The study of Himerius' lyric reception, however, has implications that go further than Himerius' specific case and are relevant to our understanding of the presence of ancient poetry in literary texts originating in the sophistic milieu of the imperial and late-imperial period. Even though it would be easy to regard Himerius as an oddity given his insistence on lyric models and the extent to which he modelled them after himself, his manipulation was rooted in the transformative approach to classical tradition shared by Greek sophists and rhetoricians down to the sixth century C.E. In rhetorical schools like Himerius', the imaginative reuse of classical tradition was encouraged from the start through *progymnasmata*, preliminary exercises on the elements of a complete declamation such as fable (μῦθος), narrative (διήγημα), or impersonation (ἠθοποιία).<sup>66</sup> Even more than in the case of *progymnasmata*, such an inventive

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<sup>65</sup> While space does not allow me to expand on this here, it is significant that Himerius' heightened lyric self-presentation coincided with the 'resurgence of poetry' in Late Antiquity: A. Cameron, 'Poetry and literary culture in Late Antiquity', in S. Swain and M. Edwards (edd.), *Approaching Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 2004), 327–54, at 328; G. Agosti, 'Greek poetry', in S.F. Johnson (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 2012), 361–404.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. *Or.* 60.4 where the odd musical scene featuring Pindar as citharode is called διήγημα. As shown by G.A. Kennedy, *Greek Rhetoric Under Christian Emperors* (Princeton, 1983), 143–7, the first half of *Or.* 48 can also be read as a sequence of 'progymnasmatic forms'. R. Webb, 'The *progymnasmata* as practice', in Y.L. Too (ed.), *Education in Greek and Roman*



treatment of classical texts and figures was at the core of the declamations given by mature students and established orators.<sup>67</sup> From this perspective, Himerius' striking account of lyric performances and his poetic anecdotes appear less isolated.<sup>68</sup> As an essential component of rhetorical formation, this 'creative supplementation' of classical antiquity was the bread and butter of imperial sophists and, to different degrees and in combination with different personal rhetorical agendas, determined the way in which these authors drew on archaic and early classical poetry.<sup>69</sup> The 'effort to construct a cultural tradition and fit one's own work into it', to quote Goldhill, was central to the cultural politics of late-imperial writers at large, which

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*Antiquity* (Leiden, 2001), 289–316, at 314, stresses that the exercises invited students to engage with ancient texts as their 'cultural property ... and not as a static, untouchable monument'.

<sup>67</sup> S. Swain, *Hellenism and Empire: Language, Classicism, and Power in the Greek World. AD 50–250* (Oxford, 1996), 92–6; E. Greensmith, *The Resurrection of Homer in Imperial Greek Epic: Quintus Smyrnaeus' Posthomerica and the Poetics of Impersonation* (Cambridge, 2020), 56–67.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Lib. fr. 49 α'–γ' Foerster, where the same tradition of Pindar's Athenian connection exploited by Himerius in *Or.* 60 becomes the springboard for an exceptional account of Pindar's death: Pindar was stoned by his Theban fellow citizens because of his praise of Athens. For the story, which sharply contradicts the traditions about Pindar's death as a dignified event with divine implications (cf. *Vit. Ambr.* 2.19–21 Drachmann; Paus. 9.23.3–4), see F. Kimmel-Clauzet, *Morts, tombeaux et cultes des poètes grecs: Étude de la survie des grands poètes des époques archaïque et classique en Grèce ancienne* (Pessac, 2013), 69–72.

<sup>69</sup> The notion of 'creative supplementation' is borrowed from I. Peirano, *The Rhetoric of the Roman Fake: Latin Pseudepigrapha in Context* (Cambridge, 2012): 13, where it is similarly related to imperial rhetorical practice; cf. also Greensmith (n. 67), 23, 56.

were further complicated by the growing influence of Christianity – here surfacing through Himerius’ rivalry with Prohaeresius.<sup>70</sup> The overarching contribution of my analysis is then to help develop a more integrated paradigm for the study of the reception of ancient poetry in imperial and late-imperial texts: one that does not isolate ancient poetic material from the receiving texts as precious though scattered fragments, but that explores how ancient poetry was rebooted to suit new rhetorical, cultural and political functions. As demonstrated by Himerius’ case, this approach has the potential to lead to a more accurate understanding of the afterlife and significance of poetic texts and figures, while shedding new light on the original strategies devised by imperial authors to (re)construct and reenact Greek tradition.

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<sup>70</sup> S. Goldhill, *Preposterous Poetics: The Politics and Aesthetics of Form in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, 2020), xxi.