

*Speaking Personae in Pindar's Epinikia**

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Summary

The traditional reconstructions of the poet's life and of epinikian performance based on Pindar's first-person statements misread the texts by overlooking the critical rhetorical component of such professions. Narratology affords a more sober perspective on the problem, insofar as it distinguishes between several narrative functions implicit in the idea of speaker.

FIRST-PERSON STATEMENTS IN PINDAR: A HISTORY OF THE PROBLEM

The precise nature of first-person statements in the epinikia has long been the subject of scholarly debate. In the last thirty years, critical approaches have oscillated between two antithetic positions: a historicist methodology, which pretends to reconstruct aspects of the poet's life using the odes as evidence, and the radical formalism of Bundy and his followers, which denies any personal content to these poems beyond their encomiastic purpose¹. The discussion among Anglo-American scholars began with Lefkowitz's detailed and systematic analysis of Pindar's first-person statements². Under the impact of Bundy's work, she later revised and corrected her conclusions; but her historicist approach set the tone for the discussion even if her individual

* This article, based on a doctoral thesis defended at Stanford University in 1996, is the kernel of a broader project on poetry and persuasion in Pindar which I hope to publish shortly.

¹ For a detailed account of Pindaric scholarship in the 20th century through the 1960s, cf. Young (1970).

² Lefkowitz (1963).

claims did not always earn universal approval. To this day, Lefkowitz's extensive work on Pindar's poetic "I" has become a necessary reference, not only for its influence but because it illustrates, in its various fluctuations in the course of time, the evolution undergone by Pindaric scholarship in the last three decades.

In her study of Pindar's first-person statements, Lefkowitz catalogued and interpreted a collection of passages from both epinikian and non-epinikian poems. Independently of the conclusions of her monograph, perhaps its most momentous consequence lay in the tacit assumption that the person whose viewpoint is expressed in the odes must be the same person who performs them. At the end of her study, Lefkowitz explained the difference between choral songs and epinikia by reference to their respective speakers:

«The occasion of the song thus determines who will sing it: the chorus speaks only in songs intended for a specific communal purpose, the poet on occasions of international significance. There is no intermixture of the two types: in choral songs the chorus speaks throughout, and in the epinikian odes which we have considered, Pindar is the only speaker»³.

Lefkowitz concentrated on establishing neat typological distinctions in Pindar's "I" statements and argued for the existence of a personal, a bardic, and a choral "I". However, immediately after the publication of her monograph, a complete transformation began to take place in the field under the influence of Bundy's work. Scholars, alerted to the existence of a 'grammar of choral lyric', busied themselves in tracing the rhetorical components of Pindar's style, and this naturally involved uncovering the fictional ingredients of his self-representation as well. Young, in his *Three Odes of Pindar*, convincingly exposed the rhetorical nature of certain first-person passages previously interpreted as the poet's confession of his own personal preferences. In Young's words, they were instances of the «*first person indefinite*, i.e., the poet, by stating what he will do or hopes to do, suggests what intelligent people, often the laudandus in particular, do or ought to do»⁴. Slater followed suit in an article in which he catalogued various tropes by

³ Lefkowitz (1963) 225.

⁴ Young (1969) 58-59. The figure is common in Greek lyric: cf. Winkler (1987) for what he called a «sharable point of view» in Sappho's poetry.

which Pindar addresses himself and defined the poet's "I" as «a vague combination of Pindar, chorus, and chorus-leader»⁵. The idea that Greek lyric was a field for the progressive expression of the poet's "I" was gradually discredited⁶, and so were the attending suppositions that the epinikia showed traces of Pindar's biography or gave voice to his innermost emotions⁷.

When Lefkowitz later re-examined first-person statements, she disclaimed her previous interpretation and considered these passages to represent «autobiographical fictions»⁸. Bundy's methodology, which by then had won over most scholars in the field, had produced incontrovertible evidence of a strong rhetorical component in Pindar's style and thus made her previous historicist position untenable. But her recantation only summarily explored the fictional dimension of Pindar's "I", as its main purpose was to readjust

⁵ Slater (1969) 89. Cf. also his footnote *ad loc.*: «It must not be forgotten that *εγώ* may include even the victor, so H. Fränkel, *D & P*, p. 543, and, more exactly, Bundy, *Studia Pindarica*, 2, 69».

⁶ Nevertheless, some scholars continued to work within the older paradigm, derived ultimately from the *Geistesgeschichte* tradition: cf. Tsagarakis (1977). Rejection of this model figures prominently in recent studies: cf. Slings (1990) 28: «The Greek lyric poets tried desperately to become the equals of their epic colleagues, and they were successful. But the ingenuousness and spontaneity of lyric song got lost in the process. As they took over the epic poet's claims to truthfulness and wisdom, as their songs became more and more public, destined for the community as a whole, of which they set themselves up as a new class of teachers, the personal "I" faded away. When all is said and done, the history of the "I" in Greek lyric is a process of depersonalization».

⁷ Wilamowitz's *Pindaros* (1922) and Bowra's *Pindar* (1964) are egregious exponents of this historicist-biographical trend. Lloyd-Jones (1972) struck a moderate note in his evaluation of Bundy's influence: «He emphatically warned (his readers) against taking it for granted that all or most difficulties of interpretation are to be explained by supposing the existence of a personal or historical allusion» (*o. c.*, 16), and further: «We should indeed guard against assuming that the poetic personality that appears in Pindar's writings corresponds at all points with the poet's character (...) but we should not forget that Pindar was a human being writing for other human beings in a particular and individual historical and social environment» (*o. c.*, 17).

⁸ This reassessment, in line with the Bundyist rhetorical approach, resulted in a fundamentally different understanding of the first person in the epinikia: cf. Lefkowitz (1980) 48: «Perhaps, more than anything else, it is the prominence of the "I" that keeps us interested in Pindar's poetry. But if, as I have argued, the "I" is not historical, what can we learn from it? I would suggest that Pindar found in the abstract, impersonal nature of the poet's first-person statement an opportunity to describe for his audience the general meaning of a victor's achievement».

and salvage her original claims from the charge of biographism. Thereafter, her preference for positive facts over rhetoric caused her interests to evolve from the issue of poetic self-representation to the more tangible problem of epinikian performance. Thus, after a brief Bundyist interlude, Lefkowitz's work reverted to historicist criteria; only now the subject of her inquiry changed from Pindar's persona to the manner in which his poems were performed. Resuming the thread of her original argument, she claimed that Pindar's "I" represented a single speaker; furthermore, she argued that if Pindar is the only speaker of the odes, then he must also be their sole performer. This contention, which lies at the heart of her argument in favor of solo epinikian performance, is already implicit in the terms of her first study⁹. As late as 1991, and despite the weighty arguments in favor of understanding the first person in the odes as a multifaceted fiction, Lefkowitz insisted that the intent of her work on the topic had always been to disprove the fallacy that shifts in speaker are possible in the epinikia¹⁰.

Scholars have lately struck a more balanced note that tempers the reconstructive zeal of the historicists by consciously stressing the rhetorical complexities of Pindar's poetry. Among them, Bremer has recently analyzed Pindar's first-person statements anew and classified them in five categories. In his opinion, most such statements refer to Pindar's official poetic persona, which of course is quite different from his biographical self. However, he also has found reasons to attribute several disputed passages to a variety of other sources: the first person indefinite, the chorus, the victor himself, and,

⁹ Lefkowitz (1963) 236: «In the light of this evidence, it is difficult to explain why *epinikia* (italics in the original) were usually performed by choruses, in spite of their subject matter, and in spite of the fact that the poet speaks in his own person throughout». Nowhere does Lefkowitz explain what exactly she understands by 'speaker', a term that becomes equivocal in the context of oral poetry.

¹⁰ Lefkowitz (1991) v-ix, echoing her first monograph: «Therefore to allow the chorus to speak in odes like *I 7* or *P 5* would violate what we have observed to be an otherwise consistent principle, that there is no change of speaker within an *epinikion* or a pure choral song» (Lefkowitz [1963] 235). From her words, it is difficult to ascertain to what a degree she believes she has accomplished this objective. Moreover, besides being flawed by terminological imprecision, her approach is not at all conclusive: recent attempts to identify the speaker of the "I" statements, in line with her single speaker theory, have nevertheless argued on the contrary that the first person in the epinikia regularly refers to the chorus not the poet; cf. Anzai (1994). For reviews of Lefkowitz (1991), which collects her articles on Pindar with some revisions, cf. Morgan (1992) and Robbins (1993).

rarely, «the individual Pindar from Thebes»¹¹. Most recently, D' Alessio has further supported this understanding with a detailed account of the impossibilities that result if we insist that the individual Pindar is the only speaker in the odes¹². Both these studies seek to overcome the strict dichotomy of old between poet and chorus and to restore to Pindar's "I" its polyvalent rhetorical dimension. Despite Bremer's frank recognition of the paradoxical outcome of his study, his approach is fruitful insofar as it eschews the positivistic insistence on a single answer and recovers Pindar's poetics as the ultimate criterion in the first-person debate. In his analysis, two contradictions account for the poet's 'paradoxical ego':

«1. Pindar applies a poetical form which had traditionally been used to express collective religious thoughts and emotions of the polis, to convey the concepts, conceits and feelings addressed by himself as an individual poet to his individual patron.

2. Pindar uses the first person singular throughout his epinicia, but there is hardly anything in all these first person statements which throws light upon the human being Pindar»¹³.

Thus it seems that, despite Lefkowitz's efforts, scholarship has gradually returned to the position articulated by Slater in 1969. Both her biographical interpretation of Pindar's first-person statements and her single-speaker theory have been duly challenged and refuted; nevertheless, her assimilation of the odes' author to their performer still underlies much of the present discussion. Even sober critics like D' Alessio, who has rightly indicated that «the chorus/poet theory oversimplifies the problem»¹⁴, unwittingly perpetuate the confusion through equivocal language¹⁵. Much of the ambiguity derives from the very word 'speaker', a term which has been employed rather loosely in the recent performance debate, and which encompasses at least three different concepts: the author of the odes, the person whose viewpoint is expressed, and the performer. Fostered by terminological impre-

¹¹ Bremer (1990) 45.

¹² D' Alessio (1994) 122-23 on Pythian 5; Fränkel (1975) 427, n. 2; *contra*, Lefkowitz (1963) 230-32.

¹³ Bremer (1990) 50.

¹⁴ D' Alessio (1994), 126.

¹⁵ In connection with Isthm. 2, 45-46, he states that the injunction to Nikasippos «clearly implies that the speaker is not present at the performance» (*o. c.*, 121).

cision, the continuous misinterpretation of the speaker as a person instead of a rhetorical construct accounts for much of the confusion created by critics in attempting to explain Pindar's first-person statements. It was precisely this uncritical approach that allowed Lefkowitz to progress from the conclusions of her original biographical historicism to the solo hypothesis of her later work: if the odes only have one author, and only express his single perspective, they might as well be performed solo by the poet himself¹⁶.

In the performance controversy, Lefkowitz's critics have opposed her claims without denouncing the terminological ambivalence on which they rest. Independently of its individual conclusions, the effect of the polemic was to accept her terms and sanction a positivistic turn in the first-person debate. In a sense, the focus on the speaker was justified in view of the spoken nature of epinikian poetry, but the attempt to explain Pindar's "I" by reference to performance only confused the issue instead of clarifying it. The distinction between speaker as author and speaker as expressed viewpoint relates to the composition of the odes and therefore precedes their performance. Considering whether it was Pindar or the *choregos* or the chorus who actually uttered the first-person statements merely adds a further complication to the problem: it calls for irretrievable evidence and raises questions that we can hardly answer and that, moreover, would make little sense to the audience who witnessed the epinikian. In the final analysis, the definition of Pindar's poetic "I" by recourse to performance attempts to explain *obscura per obscuriora*.

It is essential, therefore, to take full account of Pindar's authorial fictions before attempting to read stage directions into the poems. Multiple ingredients, traditional as well as possibly personal, converge in the poet's self-representation, and these must be exposed and rightly assessed before employing them to reconstruct a hypothetical performance. Few genres of poetry were as socially determined as the epinikian, and few had such a clear program to fulfill¹⁷. By extension, if the poem was to serve at all as effective

¹⁶ Although her disregard for preliminary definitions muddles her discussion of epinikian performance and vitiates the conclusions of the solo hypothesis, it is nonetheless true that Lefkowitz's work has made an important contribution to Pindaric studies in exposing unwarranted assumptions regarding the performance of choral lyric: cf. Davics (1988).

¹⁷ Besides reporting details of the athletic victory and its celebration, the odes undertook to accord their patrons undying reputation: cf. Bremer (1990) 56: «The performance of the epinikian ode was certainly considered to be the climax of the festivities that followed an athletic victory at the Games, in itself such a transient experience.

propaganda, the *laudator* should devote less attention to the particular circumstances of the victory than to its general implications. As a crossbreed of ancient sports chronicle and hero-cult hymn, the victory ode strikes us as an odd creation with a penchant for fusing fact and fiction; and it is precisely this rhetorical texture of the odes, determined by the constraints of the epinikian program, that turns Pindar's self-representation into a literary conceit which becomes positively impossible in performance. Thus, it is small wonder that his poetic persona should baffle literal-minded critics, for it is only partially anchored in the circumstances of the epinikion's inaugural performance.

NARRATORS AND FOCALIZERS

As emerges from my previous discussion, the debate on the first-person in Pindar's odes has reached a virtual standstill due to the positivistic terms in which it has been conducted. Only recently have critics begun to realize that this indeterminacy may actually be a deliberate effect of the victory ode, designed as it was for reperformance in various different contexts¹⁸. In any case, their discussion has not exhausted the issue insofar as the rhetorical intent of this construct —Pindar's "I"— has scarcely been explored to date; in the following pages I will attempt to bring to light several specifically narrative maneuvers that have escaped scholars' perception of Pindar's poetic persona.

In recent years, new theoretical approaches have been applied to gauge the fictional dimension of Pindar's self-representation and thus restore the full richness and subtlety of a fundamental aspect of his poetics that were lost in the performance debate¹⁹. Along those same lines, this article intends to reexamine the first person in the epinikia in the light of narrative theory and concentrates on the figure of the speaker in the odes²⁰.

The song was meant to give resonance to the victory through space and time, and thus to provide immortal fame».

¹⁸ Morgan (1993) 12; Lefkowitz (1995) 139.

¹⁹ Felson-Rubin (1984) and (1987) apply semiotic theory to the epinikia; Morgan (1993) dwells on the specific context and potential of oral performance.

²⁰ I base my approach on narrative theory as expounded by Genette (1980), refined by Rimmon-Kenan (1983) and Bal (1985), and applied to the *Iliad* by de Jong (1987). The epinikia, it might be argued, are not primarily a narrative text. This objection, however, concerns their purpose rather than their content, and therefore does not preclude their formal analysis as narrative. Most odes do include a narrative section in

Perhaps the most useful application of narratology to the analysis of epinikian fictions involves its distinction between two functions latent in the concept of speaker. In much Pindaric scholarship, 'speaker' is loosely employed as meaning something like the source of the first-person statements: an undifferentiated term that encompasses the spheres of composition and performance alike. As we have seen, this kind of confusion between internal and external aspects of the text may eventually lead to questionable extrapolations from the poetry's fictions to its hypothetical setting. Narratology, on the other hand, is circumscribed to textual analysis: its concern is the presentation of the story, *i.e.*, narrative structure. In the idea of speaker, narratology distinguishes between two functions, the narrator and the focalizer; the distinction may seem a subtle one, but it is not without consequence. Both terms refer to functions of the narrative rather than persons: the narrator presents the story and the focalizer provides the point of view through which the story is told. As de Jong states:

«Every narrative must have a narrator and a focalizer, whether they become "perceptible" in the text or not. We, the hearer/reader, are always confronted with a filtered view, *i.e.* selection and evaluation, of the events and this filtering is due to a focalizer. For this vision to become accessible to us, it must be put into words by a narrator»²¹.

Narration and focalization do not always coincide as functions of the same character. Furthermore, these functions need not always remain constant in a text, as a narrative may be presented by any number of alternating narrators and focalizers. In the case of the epinikia, Pindar is their primary

the Myth (thirty-seven of the total forty-five odes). The Naming Complex and Victor Praise sections also frequently involve an account of the victor's exploits or a narrative exposition of the inspiring heritage of his family or homeland. Moreover, Pindar often incorporates in his verses explicit references to several aspects of the ode's genesis, ranging from its commissioning to its performance, as if he were reenacting the process through which his poetry comes to light. Besides these passages, which constitute a narrative about the poem within the poem itself (*i.e.*, a metanarrative), the Poet's Task part often includes Pindar's autobiographical fictions, many of which also involve detailed narrative. For working definitions of narrative, *cf.* Benveniste (1971) 208-209 and Greimas-Courtés (1979) 247-250; for the parts of epinikion, *cf.* Hamilton (1974) 14-17.

²¹ de Jong (1987) 32-33.

narrator and focalizer²². Occasionally, however, he steps aside from his narrative preeminence and allows the story to be presented in the words or through the eyes of some mythic character. Whenever the poet reports the perspective of a god or a hero he resorts to narrative embedding; the same occurs whenever gods and heroes speak using direct speech. Theoretically, there is no limit to embedding: the author might relay the words of a character, who in turn may report the words of a second character, and so on *ad infinitum*. This effect of *mise en abîme* only rarely occurs in the odes, yet simple narrative embedding is a pervasive feature of their style. Epinikian characters frequently speak in the first person and thus become subordinate narrators and focalizers submerged in Pindar's overarching narrative. Pindar's "I" permeates his poetry²³, and yet, at a very basic level, we can already affirm that not all "I" statements in the epinikia refer to Pindar the poet from Thebes.

The following taxonomy covers and explains the different narrative situations occurring in the epinikia. I illustrate my definitions with passages from Pythian 4, the longest and narratologically most complex ode in the extant Pindaric corpus, which comprises all the different types of narrative situations that also occur individually in other epinikia.

1. Text: an external NF presents the events and persons of the story. In the epinikia, this external narrator would be Pindar in his official poetic persona. Typical instances of this situation occur in the Naming Complex and Victor Praise parts: *παισὶ τούτοις ὄγδοον θάλλει μέρος Ἀρκεσίλας/ τῷ μὲν Ἀπόλλων ἄ τε Πυθῶ κῦδος ἐξ ἀμφικτιόωιν ἔπορειν/ ἵπποδρομίας* (Pyth. 4, 65-67).
2. Secondary focalization, or indirect speech: an external NF embeds in his text the perspective of one of the characters, who thus functions as an internal secondary focalizer. This narrative situation occurs whenever Pindar reports the words of a character in indirect speech or otherwise reproduces his/her viewpoint. A conspicuous example is the brief passage at the very end where Pindar describes his ode as it might be focalized by Damophilos: *καὶ κε μυθήσαιθ', ὅποιαν,*

²² For the sake of brevity, I henceforth abridge the combination of narrator and focalizer as NF.

²³ As D' Alessio (1994) 117 notes, only two of the total forty-five odes, Nemean 2 and Isthmian 3, do not have any first-person forms.

Ἄρκεσίλα,/ εὖρε παγὰν ἀμβροσίῳν ἐπέων, πρόσφατον Θῆβα
 ξευωθεῖς (Pyth. 4, 298-99). Secondary focalization is the most recur-
 rent type of narrative embedding in the odes; it occurs often, may
 extend for a considerable length, and even bring an entire ode to a
 close²⁴.

3. Speeches, or direct style: an external primary narrator-focalizer embeds in his text a speech by a character, who thus functions as an internal secondary NF. Such are the speeches by gods and heroes, usually framed in the text by the appropriate verbs and enclosed in quotation marks in modern editions. There are many examples in Pythian 4, a third of which is in fact in direct speech; the last instance occurs when king Aietas imposes a final labor on Jason: ἔειπεν δ' ὦδε· “Τοῦτ' ἔργον βασιλεύς,/ ὅστις ἄρχει ναός, ἐμοὶ τελέσαις ἄφθιτον στρωμνὰν ἀγέσθω,/ κῶας αἰγλάεν χρυσέῳ θυσάνῳ” (Pyth. 4, 229-31). Speeches are not exceedingly common in the odes, but they offer indisputable evidence to the effect that the performer(s) did not necessarily always sing *in propria persona* throughout the epinikia, but impersonated characters as well.
4. Tertiary focalization: an internal secondary NF embeds in his speech the focalization of another character, who thus functions as a tertiary focalizer. This situation occurs whenever a character reports in his speech the words of another character; it is the most complex type of narrative embedding found in the epinikia. An example of tertiary focalization occurs when king Pelias, in the middle of his speech to Jason, mentions an oracle he received from Apollo: “μυμάντευμαι δ' ἐπὶ Κασταλία,/ εἰ μετάλλατόν τι· καὶ ὡς τάχος ὀτρύνει με τεύχειν ναῖ πομπάν” (Pyth. 4, 163-64). In this case we have a triple

²⁴ A prominent instance of secondary focalization occurs at the end of Nemean 1, in the form of a prophecy by Teiresias to Amphitryon concerning the future exploits of his son Herakles. The entire passage takes up the last twelve lines of the ode: ὁ δέ οἱ φράζει καὶ παντὶ στρατῶ, ποίαις ὀμιλήσει τύχαις,/ ὅσσους μὲν ἐν χέρσῳ κταινῶν,/ ὅσσους δὲ πόντῳ θῆρας αἰδροδίκας,...κτλ. (Nem. 1, 61-72). In such cases, Pindar figuratively transports his audience into the mythic world without bringing them back to the epinikian world of their immediate surroundings; furthermore, instead of finishing with a strong authorial closure, he lets his song conclude by replicating the words of some mythic character.

frame of narrators and focalizers: Pindar is the external primary NF, whose ode reproduces the speech of Pelias (internal secondary NF), which in turn reports Apollo's oracular response (internal tertiary focalizer).

Pindar is, as the author of the odes, their primary external NF. However, because he often describes himself as an actor in the narrative, he becomes an *internal* NF of the poem as well. The duality of internal and external is, naturally, the essential feature of first-person literature. More importantly, the distance between outside and inside is the space where fictions become possible in self-representation. Positivistic readings of the *epinikia* postulate an exact correspondence between both realms: Pindar's poetic persona would thus be an accurate reflection of Pindar the historical author and performer. There are evident problems involved in such a proposal: we know nothing of Pindar apart from the information contained in the odes, and therefore all reconstructions are conjectural and cannot be adduced as evidence²⁵. On the other hand, instead of positing a strict identity of historical author and poetic persona, narratological analysis explores and illustrates how Pindar exploits the various possibilities opened by the distance between his external and internal narrative selves.

To sum up, besides Pindar's double function as external and internal NF, a variety of speaking characters, both mythic and historical, assume narrative functions in the victory odes: as many as five kinds of narrators and focalizers, representing three levels of narrative embedding, may alternate in presenting the story, although rarely do all of them appear in one single *epinikion*:

- 1) Pindar as author (external NF);
- 2) Pindar as performer (internal primary NF)²⁶;
- 3) metaphorical speakers drawn from the environment of the present celebration (internal secondary focalizers);

²⁵ As mentioned above, Wilamowitz's biography of Pindar has long been discredited on this basis: cf. Bremer (1990) 49: «He took too much of this biography, if not all, from the "I"-instances in Pindar's poems, without supporting external evidence, and then again used it, as if it were external evidence, to explain other passages».

²⁶ This persona exists independently of who actually performed the odes: it is a narrative function that occurs every time Pindar describes himself as undertaking an action in the poem, e.g., in the Poet's Task part.

- 4) poets quoted by Pindar. They function as internal secondary NFs when they are quoted *verbatim*, and as internal secondary focalizers when cited indirectly;
- 5) gods and heroes from the past (internal secondary NFs in direct speech; otherwise, internal secondary focalizers and, occasionally, tertiary focalizers).

In the light of this classification, it is easy to understand how reference to the performance of the odes becomes a complicating factor. By assuming that Pindar himself sang the epinikia²⁷, the distance between primary external and internal NF seems to disappear²⁸: the poet is both the author and the performer of the poem. If, on the contrary, we imagine that he entrusted performance to a chorus master²⁹, the primary internal NF becomes problematic, as the author is not the performer. Who, then, is the speaker, Pindar or the *chorodidaskalos*? The question is impossibly ambiguous. In order to resolve the quandary, certain scholars involved in the poet/chorus polemic factored in the ode's setting, thereby making the question relate to audience response³⁰. Inevitably, the literal interpretation of Pindar's first-person statements produces troublesome contradictions and raises questions that are both unanswerable and largely irrelevant for our understanding of his poetry. On the other hand, several features indicate that his self-portrayal owes as much to poetic license as it does to factual representation. To these we must now turn our attention.

EPINIKIAN POLYPHONY: METAPHOR, MYTH, TRADITION

Pythian 12, composed to celebrate a triumph in the *aulos* contest, narrates how Athena fashioned this musical art by interweaving the dire death chant of the three Gorgons: τάν ποτε/ Παλλᾶς ἐφεῦρε θρασειᾶν

²⁷ Lefkowitz (1988), Heath (1988), Heath and Lefkowitz (1991); *contra* Carey (1989), Burnett (1989), Carey (1991).

²⁸ Although, as explained above, this identity is never complete; *cf.* Selden (1992) 498: «The deconstruction of identity is a perennial gesture in first-person literature».

²⁹ Olympian 6, 87-92, and Isthmian 2, 47-48 contain explicit injunctions to what seem to be their respective *choregoi*.

³⁰ *i.e.*, whom did they understand to be represented by the "I" statements?

<Γ'οργόϊων> / οὔλοιοι θρηῆνον διαπλέξαισ' Ἀθήνα (Pyth. 12, 6-8). Based on its mythic origin, Pindar goes on to call Athena's invention «the full-voiced music of flutes»³¹, whereas, he claims, the goddess herself named it a «many-headed nome»³².

In a sense, the goddess' musical creation is emblematic of Pindar's own process of epinikian composition. Despite his frequently eloquent displays of authorial pride, the distribution of discourse in the odes hardly reflects an exclusive idea of its origin. Pindar is not the only source of speech; on the contrary, he presents his poetry as the result of incorporating and assimilating different strands of mythic and traditional tales in his own authoritative version. Just as he allows the anonymous voice of folklore to introduce an ode's myth, so at times he lets gods or heroes present the story through their own perspective. Traditional and mythic voices naturally have a subordinate narrative status, but this does not entail that their stories are less valid or truthful than Pindar's; otherwise, the poet freely exercises his editorial function and purges the noxious elements, much as Athena softened the grim chant of the Gorgons and transformed it into a thing of beauty³³. On account of the many strains he weaves into his songs, Pindar's poetry is in all respects as polyphonic as the goddess' many-headed music.

In the first place, several metaphors suggest that the proclamation of athletic achievement is not Pindar's sole privilege. On occasion, the victor is portrayed as the one who proclaims the glory of his clan and fatherland, although in reality such announcements were reserved to the judges of the Games: τὰ δὲ κοίλα λείοντος/ ἐν βαθυστέρνω νάπα κάρυξε Θήβαν/ ἵπποδρομῖα κρατέων (Isth. 3, 11-13). The trope may be a metaphor, but nonetheless it partially fulfills an essential task of the epinikion, which is to record the victor's personal data in the Naming Complex. According to this conceit, the poet's song follows the lead of previous utterances: it is a further instance, albeit the crowning one, in the circulation of speech set in motion by the victory. Alternatively, responsibility for originating the ode may be assigned not to the poet but to a god, such as Poseidon³⁴; likewise, in several ins-

³¹ αὐλῶν... πάμφωνον μέλος (Pyth. 12, 19).

³² ὠνύμασεν κεφαλᾶν πολλᾶν νόμον (Pyth. 12, 23).

³³ Pindar expressly alludes to editing myths in Ol. 1, 36-89, Ol. 9, 29-41, Nem. 5, 14-18; cf. p. 11, *infra*.

³⁴ ὁ κινήτηρ δὲ γᾶς Ὀγχιηστὸν οἰκέων/ καὶ γέφυραν ποντιάδα πρὸ Κορίνθου τειχέων./ τόνδε πορῶν γενεᾷ θαυμαστὸν ἕμνον/ ἐκ λεχέων ἀνάγει φάμαν παλαιᾶν / εὐκλέων ἔργων (Isth. 4, 19-23).

tances the Muses or the Graces are credited with collaborating to various degrees of involvement in the poet's song³⁵. While it is true that these references are all metaphorical, nevertheless they illustrate the poet's flexibility in adjusting his tone to the demands of the occasion, either stressing or glossing over his individual authorship according to the specific requirements of each ode.

Besides these metaphoric depictions of joint authorship, Pindar reveals his polyphonic aspiration by integrating in his epinikia voices from folklore and poetic tradition in the form of proverbs, popular tales, and quotes from earlier poetry³⁶. He has few quibbles in openly borrowing from other poets, but can also freely resort to secondary focalization without expressly mentioning names or sources. Usually, speeches and explicit focalizations appear at key moments in the narrative in order to foreshadow or confirm Pindar's own focalization. They also offer a prestigious pedigree for his version of myths in the public domain, which, as a result, appear not as the product of his gratuitous originality but rather as common knowledge endorsed by tradition.

Pythian 6 exemplifies the transmission of traditional wisdom from ancient times to Pindar's days. The ideological kernel of the poem, the fulfillment of filial duties, is introduced as Chiron's advice to the young Achilles: σύ τοι σχεθῶν ἰν ἐπὶ δεξιὰ χειρὸς, ὀρθὰν ἄγεις ἐφημοσύναν./ τά ποτ' ἐν οὐρεσι φαντὶ μεγαλοσθενεῖ/ Φιλύρας υἷὸν ὀρφανίζομένῳ/ Πηλεΐδα παραινεῖν· μάλιστα μὲν Κροῦίδα, / βαρύοπα στεροπᾶν κεραιῶν τε πρύταιν./ θεῶν σέβεσθαι· ταύτας δὲ μὴ ποτε τιμᾶς/ ἀμείρειν γονέων βίον πεπρωμένου (Pyth. 6, 19-27). As an illustration of this ideal filial piety, Pindar further adduces the example of Antilochos, who «bought his father's rescue at the price of his own death»³⁷. It has been argued that Chiron's presence indicates the direct influence of a traditional gen-

³⁵ Ol. 7, 7-10: καὶ ἐγὼ νέκταρ χυτὸν, Μοισᾶν δόσιν, ἀεθλοφόροις/ ἀνδράσιν πέμπων, γλυκὴν καρπὸν φρενός./ ἰλάσκομαι./ Ὀλυμπία Ἡθοῖ τε νικῶντεςσιν. Cf. also Isthm. 5, 21-22, 39-42, and 46-50 for a similarly diffuse representation of authorship.

³⁶ Pindar's fondness for intertextual references even leads to a playful self-quote in Olympian 3: εἰ δ' ἀριστεύει μὲν ὕδωρ, κτεάτων δὲ χρυσὸς αἰδοιέστατος, κτλ. (Ol. 3, 42, paraphrasing Olympian 1, 1-2: ἀριστον μὲν ὕδωρ, ὃ δὲ χρυσὸς αἰθόμενον πῦρ/ ἅτε διαπρέπει νυκτὶ μεγάνορος ἔξοχα πλούτου).

³⁷ πρίατο μὲν θανάτου κομιδὰν πατρός (Pyth. 6, 39).

re of advice poetry³⁸; thus, Pythian 6 would embody non-epinikian models resurfacing in epinikian garb: Pindar repeats the Centaur's precept and applies it to praise his patron Xenokrates, whereas the latter's son Thrasymboulos is commended not for his athletic accomplishments but for following, *mutatis mutandis*, an epic paradigm of virtue. The poet administers the wisdom of the ancients, as if dealing it out from the «storehouse of songs»³⁹ he professes to erect in homage to Xenokrates, and applies it as the supreme value and measure of contemporary excellence⁴⁰.

The authority of folk tales frequently supports Pindar's idiosyncratic rendering of myths and helps to explain some of the local traditions attached to them. Often a reference to these authorless tales, introduced by a simple λέγοντι or φαντί, turns the narrative in a new direction and initiates the Myth. Thus, in Olympian 7 it is the «old tales of men» that aver the myth of the birth of the island of Rhodes: φαντί δ' ἀνθρώπων παλαιαί/ ῥήσις, οὐπω, ὅτε χθόνα δατέοντο Ζεὺς τε καὶ ἀθάνατοι./ φανεράν ἐν πελάγει Ῥόδον ἔμμεν ποντίῳ/ ἀλμυροῖς δ' ἐν βένθεσιν κεκρύφθαι (Ol. 7, 54-57). As the story continues, its focalizer remains uncertain until line 76, when Pindar reverts to the present by mentioning the local celebrations in honor of Tlapolemos⁴¹. A similar stance is adopted in Nemean 3, where Pin-

³⁸ On the *Cheironos Hypothékai* and embedded genres in Greek poetry, cf. Martin (1984) and Kurke (1988) and (1990).

³⁹ ὕμνων θησαυρός (Pyth. 6, 7).

⁴⁰ In Pythian 9, Pindar likewise resorts to a proverbial saying, attributed to the Old Man of the Sea, to justify his praise of the victorious Telesikrates: εἰ φίλος ἀστων, εἴ τις ἀντάεις, τό γ' ἐν ξυνῷ πεποναμένον εὐ/ μὴ λόγον βλάπτων ἀλίω γέροντος κρυπτέτω/ κείνος αἰνεῖν καὶ τὸν ἐχθρόν/ παντὶ θυμῷ σὺν τε δίκῃ καλὰ ῥέζοντ' ἔνεπεν (Pyth. 9, 93-96). Invoking the authority of these prestigious masters of truth has the effect of endorsing Pindar's claims by presenting his poetry as the continuation of ancient wisdom: in this golden chain of wise men, he is the newest link. His poetry poses as a moral response to the best traditional values of his society from ancient times onward; if there is any justification at all to consider Pindar a traditional poet, it is less on account of his artistry than because of the moral genealogy he claims for his poetic office. That Pindar was conscious of the traditional incentive for poets to be inventive (cf. Theognis 769-772) is evident from Nemean 8: ἴσταμαι δὴ ποσσὶ κούφοις, ἀμπνέων πρὶν τι φάμεν./ πολλὰ γὰρ πολλὰ λέλεκται, νεαρά δ' ἔξευρόντα δόμεν βασάνω/ ἔς ἔλεγχον, ἅπας κίνδυνος (Nem. 8, 19-21). Cf. also Ol. 9, 47-49: ἔγχιρ' ἐπέων σφιν οἶμον λιγύν./ αἶνει δὲ παλαιὸν μὲν οἶνον, ἀνθεα δ' ὕμνων/ νεωτέρων.

⁴¹ Uncertain focalizations occur *ias* well n Isthm. 8, 46a-56 and Nem. 5, 25-39, which reproduce the songs of poets on the Trojan war and the song of Apollo and the Muses

dar pretends merely to be passing on a tradition concerning Achilles' education at the hands of Chiron: λεγόμενον δὲ τοῦτο προτέρων/ ἔπος ἔχω (Nem. 3, 52-53)⁴². By and large, Pindar generally relies on the authority of these ancient legends when it comes to relating myths in the epinikia⁴³, but his attitude towards them is far from univocal. His opposition to irreverent accounts comes through most clearly in Olympian 1, where the popular version of the Pelops story earns his harshest indictment. It is not by coincidence that Pindar expressly calls attention to his own authorship as he introduces his corrected version: οὐδὲ Ταντάλου, σὲ δ' ἀντία προτέρων φθέγγομαι (Ol. 1, 36)⁴⁴.

Pindar openly acknowledges the influence of earlier poets by citing their words in order to corroborate his advice to the *laudandus*. As implicit literary criticism, this confrontation ostensibly reveals not only his moral standards but his concept of poethood as well. In general, Pindar highly values Hesiod's poetry and commends its advice⁴⁵; on the other hand, his posi-

at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis. In neither case is it clear whether Pindar is narrating a new poem or merely paraphrasing the older version (which, again, would amount to a secondary focalization).

⁴² This passage may substantiate the idea that Pindar keeps the Homeric distinction between *epos* and *muthos*: Martin (1989) 12. Interestingly, the goal of that *paideia* is focalized through the Centaur's eyes (*cf.* Nem. 3, 58-63, with the succession of optatives: ὄφρα...προσμένοι...καί... πάσαιθ', ὅπως...μή...μόλοι). A variant trope occurs in Pythian 5, when Pindar presents his praise as mere repetition of the existing consensus among discriminating citizens: ἀνδρα κείνον ἐπαινέοντι συμετοί/ λεγόμενον ἐρέω (Pyth. 5, 107-108). *Cf.* also Nem. 1, 33 and Pyth. 9, 103-105, where he purports to stir up ancient tales concerning Herakles and Antaios.

⁴³ Other myths focalized through the authoritative perspective of traditional accounts concern: the fate of Ino among the Nereids, which rounds off the Myth of Cadmus' daughters (Ol. 2, 27-30); the eponymous nymph Pitana, mother of Evadna by Poseidon (Ol. 6, 29-30); the tale of a primeval deluge that precedes the founding of the Spartoi (Ol. 9, 49-54); Philoktetes' service to the Greek army before Troy (Pyth. 1, 52-55); the torment of Ixion (Pyth. 2, 21-24); the birth of Herakles (Nem. 7, 86); and the weddings of Peleus and Thetis and of Kadmos and Harmonia (Pyth. 3, 88-103).

⁴⁴ An equivalent denunciation occupies Ol. 9, 29-41; in Nem. 5, 14-18 Pindar expressly silences the darker aspects of the myth he has conjured, concerning the death of Phokos at the hands of Peleus and Telamon. It is largely his handling of myth that has earned Pindar the epithet of 'traditional', especially when compared to critics of the Homeric religion like Xenophanes.

⁴⁵ Isthm. 6, 66-68: Λάμπων δὲ μελέταν/ ἔργοις ὀπάζων Ἡσιόδου μάλα τιμᾶ τοῦτ' ἔπος, / οἰοίσι τε φράζων παρανεῖ, a reference to Hesiod. *Erga* 412: μελέτη δὲ τὸ ἔργον ὀπάζει.

tion with respect to Homer is more complicated. In certain poems Homer's authority is acknowledged⁴⁶, but elsewhere Pindar assesses the value of his poetry with varying criteria according to the context of each ode. Thus Nemean 7 openly accuses Homer of wrongly increasing the reputation of Odysseus to the point where it no longer corresponds to his exploits at Troy and Nemean 8 dwells on the fate of Aias, rejected in favor of the less worthy but wiliier Odysseus, and laments the misleading potential of words⁴⁷. Archilochus earns a worse fate in Pindar's hands, as he becomes the model of hateful speech in Pythian 2⁴⁸, and thus the antithesis of praise poetry. Likewise, if Pindar mentions the brief epinikian chant of the Parian poet in Olympian 9⁴⁹,

⁴⁶ As in Pythian 4, where Homer is adduced to enjoin Arkesilas to honor good messengers: τῶν δ' Ὀμήρου καὶ τόδε συνθέμενος/ ῥήμα πόρσυν· ἄγγελον ἔσθλόν ἔφα τιμὰν μεγίσταν πράγματι παντὶ φέρειν (Pyth. 4, 277-78). The Homeric reference is *Il.* 15, 207: ἔσθλόν καὶ τὸ τέτυκται, ὅτ' ἄγγελος αἴσιμα εἶδη. Earlier in the ode, another passage has been alleged to refer to an unknown proverb: γινῶθι νῦν τὰν Οἰδιπόδα σοφίαν (Pyth. 4, 263-69). Olympian 6 also contains a disguised Homeric quote, not by Pindar but by Adrastos in the Myth section: "Ποθέω στρατιᾶς ὀφθαλμὸν ἐμᾶς/ ἀμφότερον μάντιν τ' ἀγαθὸν καὶ δουρὶ μάριασθαι" (Ol. 6, 17-18, echoing *Il.* 3, 179: ἀμφότερον βασιλεὺς τ' ἀγαθὸς κρατερός τ' αἰχμητῆς). Other odes mention scenes from the Trojan war without making judgments on the value of the poetry: thus, for example, Hektor is adduced in Nemean 9 as an epic model for the exploits of Chromios of Aitna: λέγεται μὲν Ἑκτορι μὲν κλέος ἀνθῆσαι Σκαμάνδρου χεύμασιν/ ἀγχοῦ, βαθυκρήμοισι δ' ἀμφ' ἀκταῖς Ἐλώρου,/ εἶθ' Ἀρείας πόρον ἄνθρωποι καλέοισι, δέδορκεν/ παιδὶ τοῦθ' Ἀγησιδάμου φέγγος ἐν ἀλικία πρώτα (Nem. 9, 39-42). Neutral references occur in Nem. 2, 14: ἐν Τροίᾳ μὲν Ἑκτωρ Αἴαντος ἄκουσεν (*Il.* 7, 191-99: Aias boasts of his Salaminian origin as he prepares to meet Hektor in duel), and Ol. 13, 55-60. Pythian 3, 112-15 also refers to the epic poet in complimentary terms. The Antilochos scene, exploited for its exemplary value in Pythian 6, is not based on the *Iliad* but on some lost poem from the epic cycle.

⁴⁷ Nem. 7, 20-30; Nemean 8, 23-34. Both odes were composed for Aeginetan victors. On the other hand, Pindar's treatment of the Aias theme changes significantly in Isthmian 4, 55-60, which credits the epic poet with spreading his fame by means of his divine words; the ode's Theban audience would naturally be less critical of Homer's portrayal of the Aeginetan hero. It must be noted, however, that in none of these cases is Homer a secondary NF, but merely the object of Pindar's critique.

⁴⁸ Pyth. 2, 52-56. On the duality of praise and blame in Greek poetry, cf. Detienne (1967), Nagy (1979) 222-242.

⁴⁹ Ol. 9, 1-4; Archilochus' song is relayed by the Pindaric scholia as: τήνελλα καλλι-ικε./ χαῖρ' ἀναξ Ἡράκλεες, αὐτὸς τε καὶ Ἴόλαος, αἰχμητὰ δύο./ τήνελλα καλλι-ικε./ χαῖρ' ἀναξ Ἡράκλεες.

it is only to exalt his present composition as comparatively superior. Impelled by this fundamental antagonism, and contrary to his almost reverent attitude towards Hesiod, nowhere in the epinikia does Pindar openly adduce the words of Archilochus as either commentary or confirmation of his own judgment⁵⁰.

Thirdly, besides these voices from different traditions of archaic poetry, characters from the Myths of the odes act as secondary NFs too. Speeches uttered in the mythic world are clearly framed and set apart from the narrative, so that a clear distinction is maintained throughout the odes between Pindar and the various secondary NFs. But character speeches do, however, provide a further instance of the displacement of narrative functions, divorced momentarily from the physical identity of the speaking performers: regardless of who sang the odes, in these passages they impersonate characters who do not participate in the poem's performance. Altogether, no fewer than fifteen mythic characters utter direct speech in the extant odes⁵¹. In all these cases, the performers assume fictional identities, and even exchange personae within a short span whenever the odes reproduce a dialo-

⁵⁰ However, his praise of Corinth: ἐν δὲ Μοῖσ' ἀδύπνοος, / ἐν δ' Ἄρης ἀνθεὶ νέων οὐλίας αἰχμαῖσιν ἀνδρῶν (Ol. 13, 21-22), almost sounds like a paraphrase of Archilochus' fr. 1 W: εἰμὶ δ' ἐγὼ θεράπων μὲν Ἐνυαλίῳ ἄρακτος / καὶ Μουσέων ἐρατὸν δῶρον ἐπιστάμενος, although it may represent nothing more than his own rendition of a *locus communis*.

⁵¹ Zeus (Nem. 10, 80-88); Apollo (Ol. 6, 62-63; Ol. 8, 42-46; Pyth. 3, 40-42; Pyth. 9, 29-38); Athena (Ol. 13, 67-69); Themis (Isthm. 8, 35a-45); Pelops (Ol. 1, 75-85); Herakles (Isthm. 6, 42-48, 52-54); Amphiaraios (Pyth. 8, 44-55); Adrastos (Ol. 6, 15-17); Polydeukes (Nem. 10, 76-79); Medea (Pyth. 4, 12-57); Jason (Pyth. 4, 102-119, 137-156); Pelias (Pyth. 4, 97-100, 157-168); Aietas (Pyth. 4, 229-231); Erginos the Argonaut (Ol. 4, 23-27); Chiron (Pyth. 9, 39-65). In addition to these, Pythian 4, 87-93 contains a description of Jason in Iolkos as focalized by the local townsfolk. His unexpected appearance in the marketplace provokes a string of comments that make better sense when assigned to more than one speaker; Snell-Maehler, however, enclose the entire passage in quotation marks, as if spoken by a single observer. Edwards (1991) 102-103 points out Homeric parallels of description through an external observer. The trope is repeated in Pythian 9, when Pindar describes Telesikrates as focalized by the young women and mothers who long to have him as their husband or son (Pyth. 9, 97-103).

gue⁵²; yet, as far as we know, the existence of different speaking roles in the epinikia does not entail alternating performers, as it does in drama⁵³.

Direct speech by characters remains rare and is usually reserved for critical moments of the myth, when it signals a turning point in the direction of the narrative. It is not generally employed to characterize speakers individually (except perhaps in Pythian 4), but rather by kind, as only a select minority can utter authoritative speech acts. If the illocutionary force of character speeches is in any way intended to represent the power of Pindar's poetry, the predominance of commands, oaths and predictions over expressions of emotion is surely significant. Speeches by gods and heroes are frequently deployed to bring about the most significant events narrated in the Myth. A few words can effect a complete reversal in the face of impending doom; thus, a timely warning by Themis in Isthmian 8 averts the dire consequences of the rivalry of Zeus and Poseidon for the nymph Thetis⁵⁴. Likewise, Apollo's monologue in Pythian 3, which affords the audience a unique glimpse into the god's psyche, leads him to rescue Asklepios from the womb of his dead mother as the flames start to engulf her: ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ τείχει θέσαν ἐν ξυλίνῳ/ σύγγοι κούραν, σέλας δ' ἀμφέδραμεν/ λάβρον Ἀφαίστου, τότ' ἔειπεν Ἀπόλλων· "Οὐκέτι/ τλάσομαι ψυχῆ γένος ἁμὸν ὀλέσσαι/ οἰκτροτάτῳ θανάτῳ ματρὸς βαρεῖα σὺν πάθῃ" (Pyth. 3, 38-42)⁵⁵.

⁵² Pythian 4: 97-100 (Pelias) and 102-119 (Jason); 138-155 (Jason) and 156-167 (Pelias). Pythian 9: 30-37 (Apollo) and 38-65 (Chiron). Nemean 10: 76-79 (Polydeukes) and 80-88 (Zeus).

⁵³ To the best of my knowledge, this theory, now discredited, was last defended by Floyd (1965). *Contra*, cf. Mullen (1982) 19: «Tragedy is distinguished from choral lyric precisely by the fact that in it the unity of *choreia* has been split up into a dramatic alternation of choral and spoken passages».

⁵⁴ Isthm. 8, 35a-45a; according to an ancient oracle, the resulting union would have jeopardized the entire Olympian order.

⁵⁵ The spoken word produces equally momentous results in Nemean 10. Zeus appears before Polydeukes in his moment of greatest need, as his brother lies in the throes of death; the verbal exchange between hero and god leads to Kastor's return to life. In a similar vein, Apollo grants Iamos the privilege of prophecy in Olympian 6, whereas Olympian 13 credits Athena with revealing the secret of horse-taming to Bellerophon in his sleep. All three scenes are divine epiphanies that culminate in the granting of a gift, announced by the god's direct speech. A similar pattern informs Poseidon's response to the prayer of Pelops in Olympian 1, although in this instance direct speech belongs to the hero, whereas the god responds by producing the winning chariot and horse team.

The epinikia's character speeches also highlight the premonitory value of the spoken word. Thus, the prophecies of Amphiaraos, Medea, and Chiron are all reported in direct speech: within the Myth section, they introduce a prediction uttered in the past and that becomes fulfilled in the course of the ode itself⁵⁶. Events in the main myth are thus foreshadowed and presented as the realization of previous utterances. Direct speech is further linked to the mantic powers of divination in the words of Apollo in Olympian 8 and Herakles in Isthmian 6, who interpret omens for Aiakos and Telamon⁵⁷. Elsewhere, direct speech by a hero may also serve to corroborate the poet's words, as occurs in Olympian 4. Reflecting on the victor's predicament and how it relates to his own task, Pindar stoutly proclaims the supremacy of proof (διάπειρα): οὐ ψεύδει τέγξω/ λόγον· διάπειρά τοι βροτῶν ἔλεγχος (Ol. 4, 17-18). Then follows the Myth of the Argonaut Erginos, who first wins the race in bronze armor and then answers the mockful Lemnian women. Tested in competition and authorized by his victory, Erginos curtly voices his own epinikion: "οὗτος ἐγὼ ταχυτάτι· χεῖρες δὲ καὶ ἦτορ ἴσον. φύονται δὲ καὶ νέους/ ἐν ἀνδράσι πολιαί/ θαμάκι παρὰ τὸν ἀλικίας εἰκότα χρόνον" (Ol. 4, 24-27). It is a short ode, and Erginos' words are correspondingly brief; nonetheless, they include Victor Praise and even a kind of maxim. More importantly, both his actions and his words confirm the Gnome's assessment of the present circumstance. In Pindar's conceit, internal and external NF, hero and poet, proclaim the same sort of wisdom.

Moreover, even if direct speech occurs only sparsely in the odes, other passages further undermine the notion that Pindar always remains the only speaker in his poetry. As we have seen, characters may speak directly, acting as secondary NFs, or become secondary focalizers when the poet reports their words. Nevertheless, other voices also leave their imprint on the poems by contributing viewpoints that Pindar disguises as his own; the epinikia owe much of their depth and subtlety—and also many of their paradoxes—to these unacknowledged focalizations⁵⁸. Perhaps no other poem

⁵⁶ Amphiaraos: Pyth. 8, 44-55; Medea: Pyth. 4, 12-57; Chiron: Pyth. 9, 39-65.

⁵⁷ Apollo: Ol. 8, 42-46; Herakles, Isthm. 6, 52-54.

⁵⁸ Two first-person statements which may refer to the victor not the poet are Pyth. 8, 57-60 (defended by Carey (1981), *ad loc.*), and Pythian 9, where the thankful mention of Herakles and Iphikles: τοῖσι τέλειον ἐπ' εὐχᾶ κωμάσομαί τι παθῶν ἐσθλόν (89) makes better sense when related to Telesikrates' previous victory at the Iolaia, mentioned in lines 79-80: ἔγνω ποτὲ καὶ Ἰόλαιον/ οὐκ ἀτιμάσαντά νιν ἐπτάπυλον

illustrates Pindar's sophisticated use of secondary focalizers as well as Isthmian 2. The ode opens with a seemingly nostalgic reference to a golden age of poetry, followed by a puzzling denunciation of the commercial base of the epinikian genre⁵⁹. Scholars have long been mystified by the passage: why would Pindar denigrate his own craft so explicitly?⁶⁰ According to one compelling interpretation, the indictment of the commodification of poetry does not represent Pindar's own perspective, but rather the focalization of the sympotic poets mentioned earlier in the ode⁶¹. Hidden focalizers do not usually challenge or contradict the poet's focalization so blatantly, but rather give expression to the proposed fellowship of poet and patron. However, if Pindar deliberately reproduces their point of view in Isthmian 2, it is only to turn it around; in the end, it is precisely by disproving such accusations that he manages to justify the economic ingredient of epinikian poetry. The epinikian poet is in supreme command of the significance of the occasion: if he accepts other voices beside his own, it is only to subsume them in his superior song. In the imaginary polyphony of the odes, he is the hub around which all the other voices revolve.

THE POET'S "I": A REASSESSMENT

Pindar's self-representation in the odes responds in part to the opposing influences of his stance as a spokesman for the community and of his keen sense of his individual excellence as a poet, often clothed in rather belligerent tones. This tension between common and individual motivation infuses the epinikia and decisively shapes his poetic "I". In Pythian 3, he lends his

Θῆβαι. Cf. Bremer (1990) 48 and D' Alessio (1994) 131, with his further remarks on *Nem.* 7, 75f. and 84-86.

⁵⁹ ἄ Μοῖσα γὰρ οὐ φιλοκερδῆς πω τότ' ἦν οὐδ' ἐργάτις/ οὐδ' ἐπέριμαντο γλυκείαι μελιθόγγου ποτὶ Τερψιχόρας/ ἀργυρωθεῖσαι πρόσωπα μαλθακόφωνοι αἰοδαί./ νῦν δ' ἐφίητι τὸ τώργειου φυλάξαι/ ῥῆμα ἀλαθείας ἄγχιστα βαῖνον./ ἄχρηματα χρήματ' ἀνὴρ ὅς φᾶ κτεάνων θ' ἅμα λειφθεῖς καὶ φίλων (*Isth.* 2, 6-11).

⁶⁰ A useful summary of the discussion, if not the most persuasive answer, is Woodbury (1968).

⁶¹ Kurke (1991) 245: «It appears that Pindar's description of the modern Muse is drawn *from the point of view* of the older poets, as his echoes of their words make clear. It is this older generation of poets which distrusted money and disapproved of poetry for pay».

own voice to articulate the common wish for Hiero's health in his opening prayer: Ἦθελον Χίρωνά κε Φιλλυρίδαν,/ εἰ χρεῶν τοῦθ' ἀμετέρας ἀπὸ γλώσσας κοιρὸν εὐξασθαι ἔπος,/ ζῶειν τὸν ἀποιχόμενον,/ Οὐρανίδα γόνον εὐρυμέδοιτα Κρόνου, βάσσαισὶ τ' ἄρχειν Παλίου φῆρ' ἀγρότερον/ νόον ἔχοντ' ἀνδρῶν φίλον (Pyth. 3, 1-5). Although Chiron's return is rejected as impossible in the course of an elaborate *recusatio*, the aborted prayer serves to establish Pindar as a public mouthpiece; similarly, other odes refer to his public position and its attending obligations⁶². On the other hand, Olympian 1 concludes with an extended address to Hiero that combines the patron's encomium with lofty praise of the poet⁶³. Pindar's persona, elevated in Olympian 1 to a poetic status equivalent to the Sicilian tyrant's supremacy in the Greek world, rarely becomes so conspicuous elsewhere but nonetheless prevails in his odes to such a degree as to virtually overshadow the *laudandus*⁶⁴. Still, a fundamental paradox remains: if, as it seems, Pindar almost never talks about himself, even in his most explicit "I" statements, what does he achieve by speaking so frequently about himself?⁶⁵

⁶² παυσάμενοι δ' ἀπράκτων κακῶν/ γλυκὺ τι δαμωσόμεθα καὶ μετὰ πόνοιον (Isthm. 8, 7-8); ἐγὼ δὲ ἴδιος ἐν κοινῷ σταλαίς/ μῆτιν τε γαρύων παλαιγόνων/ πόλεμόν τ' ἐν ἠρώϊαις ἀρεταῖσιν/ οὐ ψεύσομ' ἀμφὶ Κορίνθῳ (Ol. 13, 49-52). Cf. also Isthmian 1: ἐπεὶ κοῦφα δόσις ἀνδρὶ σοφῷ/ ἀντὶ μόχθων παντοδαπῶν ἔπος εἰπόντ' ἀγαθὸν ξυνοὺν ὀρθῶσαι καλόν (Isthm. 1, 45-46).

⁶³ His panegyric in Ol. 1, 100-116 extols the superlative status of tyrant and poet in their respective fields: πέποιθα δὲ ξένον/ μὴ τιν' ἀμφοτέρα καλῶν τε ἴδριν ἅμα καὶ δύναμιν κυριώτερον/ τῶν γε νῦν κλυταῖσι δαιδαλωσέμεν ὕμνων πτυχαῖς (103-105), and: εἴη σέ τε τοῦτον ἕψου χρόνου πατεῖν,/ ἐμέ τε τοσσαῖς νικαφόροις/ ὁμιλεῖν πρόφαντον σοφία καθ' Ἑλλανας ἐόντα παντᾶ (115-116).

⁶⁴ According to Bremer (1990) 44, the average epinikion contains no fewer than five references to Pindar's "I". Fitzgerald (1987) 26 speaks of «a competitive tension between the praiser and the praised» and claims that «aggression against the object of praise is not uncommon in this mode of poetry, in which the secondary or dependent poet must claim the importance of his own contribution if the object of praise is to have any significance» (o. c., 28).

⁶⁵ W.R. Johnson's discussion of lyric as description and deliberation, not expression, suggests possible answers: «What is essential, then, to lyric is rhetoric, and essential to this lyrical rhetoric (...) is the pronominal form and lyric identity, the dynamic configuration of lyrical pronouns that defines and vitalizes the situation of lyrical discourse» (Johnson [1982] 23); «Greek lyric is never concerned with expression; it is, true to its rhetorical bent, always concerned with discourse, with describing the reality of the inner passions and with deliberating on their nature and meaning» (o. c., 30).

Recent scholarship has identified several kinds of "I" in the epinikia, but even these multiple categories must remain flexible to be of good use: whether we apply Bremer's five-fold model or only the chorus/poet dichotomy, Pindar's first-person statements obstinately resist a neat one-to-one identification on account their ambiguity⁶⁶. The single-speaker theory is rightly out of favor, but scholarly discussion has not fully elucidated all aspects of Pindar's self-representation. If there is something to be learned from it beyond more or less controversial speaker identifications, perhaps it would accord better with his poetics to ask whether or not different voices overlap in certain phrases, and if they do, to inquire how and why⁶⁷.

Isthmian 7 is a case in point. Scholars have long understood the lamentation for the death of Strepsiades in battle as the sincere expression of Pindar's personal emotion: ἔτλαν δὲ πείθος οὐ φατόν· ἀλλὰ νῦν μοι/Γαιάσοχος εὐδίαν ὄπασσεν/ ἐκ χειμῶνος, ἀείσομαι χαίταν στεφάνοισιν ἀρμόζων (Isth. 7, 37-39)⁶⁸. However, if we insist on a single speaker and interpret this passage as an intimate confession concerning the poet's private concerns, we will only be puzzled by the ode's closing prayer, which implies a sudden but undeniable shift of focalizer: ἄμμι δ', ὦ χρυσέα κόμα θάλλων, πόρε, Λοξία,/ τεαῖσιν ἀμίλλαισιν/ εὐαιθέα καὶ Πυθόι στέφανον (Isthm. 7, 50-51). The request for future crowns logically refers to the victor rather than the poet⁶⁹; in retrospect, it also questions the identity of the

⁶⁶ Opinions on Pindar's ambivalence illustrate the radical turn undertaken by Pindaric scholarship over the last fifty years, from Norwood's negative assessment to the understanding of ambiguity as a deliberate feature of his style: cf. Hoey (1965), Renchan (1969), and especially Gallet (1989).

⁶⁷ Regarding the obscurity of Pindar's language, Hummel (1993) 430 points to passages like Pyth. 2, 56: τὸ δὲ πλουτεῖν σὺν τύχῃ πότμον σοφίας ἄριστον, and Pyth. 2, 72: γένοι' οἷος ἐσσὶ μαθῶν. «où la polyvalence syntactique des différents constituants produit une polysémie déconcertante», which she considers to be partially intentional, based on brachylogical formulae and referential imprecision: «Le poète, en tant qu'interprète de la parole divine et dispensateur de la gloire immortelle, détient des pouvoirs démiurgiques dont témoigne l'originalité d'une langue qui refuse les sentiers linéaires de la simple dénotation et emprunte les voies détournées d'une connotation suggestive».

⁶⁸ Thus Lefkowitz (1963) 227 attributed personal overtones to the poet's grief, based on either «some historical fact unknown to us, for example, that Pindar was related to the victor's family», or more likely, as an expression of *xenia*.

⁶⁹ Bremer (1990) 49 considers this passage to be the clearest instance of assimilation of poet and victor: «The victor hopes for a Pythian victory (which has a higher ranking in the circuit), and the poet associates himself with the athlete in a friendly first

grieving voice above. If Pindar can assume the victor's focalization in his closing prayer, perhaps his lament for Strepsiades also expresses the victor's grief as well as his own. Thus Isthmian 7 apparently contains a highly personal utterance side by side with an example of overlapping voices. Within a short span, the same ode first provides specious evidence of the poet's emotions and then proceeds to undermine it; if it was ever adduced as proof of a biographical component in Pindar's poetry, it may just as well testify to the ambivalence of his first-person statements.

Nemean 1 further exemplifies the problematic contradictions that result from positing a single dimension in Pindar's "I" statements. After a condensed introduction that strings together in short succession the Prayer, Mythic Example, Victor Praise and Poet's Task parts, the poet expressly sets his song in the courtyard of the victor's house: ζσταν δ' ἐπ' αὐλείαις θύραις/ ἀνδρὸς φιλοξείνου καλὰ μελπόμενος,/ ἔνθα μοι ἀρμόδιον/ δεῖπνον κεκόσμηται (Nem. 1, 19-22). Rarely does Pindar describe the scene of his song so straightforwardly; however, in the same ode's Myth, Amphitryon duplicates the poet's gesture of standing at the threshold as he arrives, sword in hand, at the scene of Herakles' first prodigy: ἐν χερὶ δ' Ἀμφιτρώων κολεοῦ γυμνὸν πινάσσων <φάσγανον>/ ἵκετ', ὄξειαις ἀίαισι τυπέις. (...) ἔστα δὲ θάμβει δυσφόρῳ/ τερπνῶ τε μιχθεῖς (Nem. 1, 52-53 and 55-56). Although the verbal correspondence between both passages is not exact, the parallel imagery undermines the assumption that the self-description in lines 19-22 may depict the actual setting for the ode's performance. Instead, through such patterns of echoes and repetitions, Pindar represents himself and his actions as somehow resembling the conduct of prestigious mythic models. The real and mythic worlds illumine and reflect one another; just as the poet refashions his myths in order to increase their relevance to the present occasion, so he adjusts his description of surrounding circumstances to the profiles of his mythic tales. Both myth and reality are plastic, malleable materials in Pindar's hands; the present performance is the arena in which both meet, and in the fictions of his song they attain their fullest significance⁷⁰.

Moreover, besides the proposed parallel between poet and hero, Pindar also includes his patron as a third term in the comparison, commending

person plural ἄμμι». Fluctuations between singular and plural occur in first-person statements at Nem. 4, 37; Isthm. 8, 7-8; Ol. 2, 89; Ol. 6, 24. Cf. also Slater (1969) 89.

⁷⁰ Cf. Carne-Ross (1985) 53: «The performance of the ode establishes a relation between praise and myth as *fact*».

him for his foresight and strength: *πράσσει γὰρ ἔργῳ μὲν σθένης, / βου-
λαῖσι δὲ φρήν, ἑσσόμενον προιδεῖν / συγγενές οἷς ἔπται.* / *Ἀγησιδά-
μου παῖ, σέο δ' ἀμφὶ τρόπῳ / τῶν τε καὶ τῶν χρήσιες* (Nem. 1, 26-30). Besides their inherent value, the qualities praised in Chromios are precisely the same virtues evidenced by Herakles and Teiresias in the subsequent Myth⁷¹. As occurs in many odes, Pindar's handling of myth in Nemean 1 is determined by a pervasive tendency to stress the immanent likeness underlying the achievements of hero, poet and patron. The solidarity that binds him with Chromios also accounts for his ensuing definition of the ideal conduct: Pindar speaks in the first person, and seemingly defends his own behavior, but his claim seems better to apply to a wealthy patron than to a traveling poet: *οὐκ ἔραμαι πολλὸν ἐν μεγάρῳ πλουτὸν κατακρύψαις ἔχειν, / ἀλλ' ἑόρτων εὐ τε παθεῖν καὶ ἀκοῦσαι φίλοις ἑξαρκέων* (Nem. 1, 31-32). Using the first person indefinite, Pindar focalizes as if he were Chromios, and figuratively—and rather perversely too—contrives to make the victor's own words remind him of the duties of patronage. Through such shifts in focalization, first-person statements in the epinikia disclaim the semiotic correspondence between sender and message⁷²: they often represent not a single character's perspective, but rather a common viewpoint which embodies the joint focalization of patron and poet. Therefore it should come as no surprise if, owing to their intentional excess of meaning, they resist enclosure in the rigid template of the philologist⁷³.

Nemean 1 thus embodies a threefold system of mutual definition comprised by poet, patron, and mythic heroes. From our modern perspective, it is evident that characters in the Myth are fictitious; the contention that Pindar's self-portrayal responds in part to poetic license is evident from a number of passages in which he describes himself as acting in some kind of official ceremonial capacity⁷⁴. Independently of the veracity of the poet's

⁷¹ Nem. 1, 43-47 (Herakles) and 60-72 (Teiresias).

⁷² Cf. Calame (1983) and (1995).

⁷³ Other instances of the first-person indefinite are Pyth. 3, 107-109; Ol. 3, 45; Pyth. 2, 79-80 and 96; Pyth. 11, 50-52; Isthm. 7, 40-42.

⁷⁴ Thus, different occasions see him coming to Kamarina as a suppliant of Zeus (Ol. 5, 17-19), arriving at Aigina as a suppliant of Aiakos (Nem. 8, 13-15), as a herald for the Theandridai (Nem. 4, 73-74), or as an announcer for Alkimidas' victory (Nem. 6, 57-57b); he is also sent as a witness of contests (Ol. 4, 1-3), and claims to aid in restoring Ncoptolemos' reputation and to preside over the celebration as a witness for Aigina (Nem. 7, 33-34 and 48-50); elsewhere, his poetic calling leads him to travel as a hel-

journeys⁷⁵, his assumption of communal roles serves to extend his poetic province and impress the audience with the dignity and earnestness of his office. In terms of ritual, these impersonations are obviously devoid of consequence, because they amount to a unilateral claim to functions which only the community can bestow or take away. However, they effectively contribute to the victor's praise to the extent that the poet succeeds in presenting his relationship to the *laudandus*, which is based on private social and economic ties, as full of ritual significance and sanctioned by the entire *polis*.

But if Pindar assumes fictional roles in the epinikia, the portrayal of his patrons appears to be correspondingly stylized. Pythian 2 celebrates a triumphant Hiero who mounts his chariot and calls on Poseidon: ἐπὶ γὰρ ἰοχέαιρα παρθένος χερὶ διδύμα/ ὃ τ' ἐναγώμιος Ἑρμᾶς αἰγλάεντα τίθησι κόσμον, ξεστόν ὅταν δίφρον/ ἐν θ' ἄρματα πεισιχάλινα καταζευγύη/ σθένος ἵππιον, ὀρσοτρίαιναν εὐρυβίαν καλέων θεόν (Pyth. 2, 9-13). In appealing to the god, the tyrant resembles the epinikian poet, who frequently opens his performance with a brief invocation to the divine; nevertheless, Hiero's gesture hardly represents what actually took place at the games, since the owners of chariots and horses did not usually expose themselves to the dangers of the race but had professional charioteers and jockeys compete in their stead. Without specifically mentioning the contest, Pindar manages to implicate Hiero in his Delphic victory to a higher degree than warranted by the circumstances of the occasion. A similar formula extols Chromios of Aitna, who likewise mounts his chariot and invokes the gods in Nemean 9: τὸ κρατήσιππον γὰρ ἐς ἄρμ' ἀναβαίνων ματέρι καὶ διδύμοις παίδεσσιν αὐδὰν μανύει/ Πυθῶνος αἰπεινᾶς ὀμοκλάρους ἐπόπταις (Nem. 9, 4-5). Whereas Pindar never says that either one of them gained their victories, by including these vignettes in his epinikion he

per for Lampromachos (Ol. 9, 82-84), and as an ally to the Oligaitidai (Ol. 13, 96-97).

⁷⁵ Pythian 2 refers to the poet arriving at the place of celebration (3-4), embarking on a metaphorical voyage of praise (62-63), and on the other hand also to the song being sent unaccompanied (χαῖρε· τόδε μὲν κατὰ Φοίνισσαν ἐμπολάν/ μέλος ὑπὲρ πολιᾶς ἀλὸς πέμπεται [67-68]). Similarly, Pindar arrives at Aigina with his song in Isthmian 5: σὺν Χάρισι δ' ἔμολον Λάμπωνος υἱοῖς/ τάνδ' ἐς εὐνομον πόλιν (Isthm. 5, 21-22), but then wants the song sent to Pytheas, the victor's brother and trainer, who figures prominently in the ode but may or may not have been present at its performance: λάμβανέ οἱ στέφανον, φέρε δ' εὐμαλλον μίτραν,/ καὶ πτερόεντα νέον σύμπεμψον ἕμνον (Isthm. 5, 62-63). Cf. also Ol. 7, 7-8 and 13-14, and discussion of these passages in Tedeschi (1985).

suggests perhaps more personal involvement than should be attributed to either patron. On the other hand, he does stress the extraordinary merit of his fellow Theban Herodotos, who drove indeed his own chariot to victory at the Isthmus: ἀλλ' ἐγὼ Ἡροδότῳ τεύχων τὸ μὲν ἄρματι τεθρίππῳ γέρας,/ ἀνία τ' ἀλλοτρίαις οὐ χερσὶ νωμάσαντ' ἐθέλω/ ἢ Καστορείῳ ἢ Ἰολαίοι' ἐναρμόξαι νιν ὕμνῳ (Isthm. 1, 14-16). Herodotos' unique display of boldness was so rare as to deserve an emphatic honorary mention in the poem; we may assume, *ex silentio*, that in the cases of Hiero and Chromios the extent of their involvement afforded little room for such praise.

As it turns out, a similar idealizing thrust molds the figures of poet and patron in the epinikia. Pindar's poetic persona is tailored to the requirements of his function as public eulogizer, whereas his portraits of victorious athletes resemble ideal models rather than accurate depictions. But this epinikian "I" contributes to further link poet and patron beyond the merely economic aspect of their rapport. Pindar's performance conforms to the details of the victor's accomplishment, and consequently the profiles of individual athletes may affect the slant of his first-person statements: in this sense, the poet's persona is commensurate with the figure of the *laudandus*. Prayers often emphasize the common bond that unites the epinikian poet and his patron; occasionally, as in Nemean 8, his professed solidarity induces him to speak as a proxy for his client: εἴη μὴ ποτέ μοι τοιοῦτον ἦθος, Ζεῦ πάτερ, ἀλλὰ κελεύθους/ ἀπλόαις ζωᾶς ἐφαπτοίμαν, θανῶν ὡς παισὶ κλέος/ μὴ τὸ δύσφαμον προσάψω (Nem. 8, 35-37). Prayers and Gnomes of this type reflect the wisdom to be gained by properly understanding the mechanisms of human toil and achievement. As such, they embody a viewpoint that might equally correspond to either poet or patron; here, Pindar remains the narrator, but focalization shifts as he seems to impersonate Deinias for a moment. The poet's protean voice testifies to a constant impulse that inspires the epinikia: the search for some common ground in which the discrete viewpoints of poet and patron may be drawn together and briefly coincide⁷⁶. In the first person indefinite trope, when their focalizations agree, Pin-

⁷⁶ Fitzgerald (1987) 192 identifies other motivating factors for Pindar's genre which nevertheless have similar effects on his portrayal of authorship: «The poet's task begins as a resistance to the forms of closure and isolation that would prevent the proper reception of victor, victory, and divinity. The accommodation of divinity, or the Absolute, to a humanity that cannot contain it is what prompts the various forms of distributed presence, communal action, and dynamic order that are characteristic of this form of poetry».

dar becomes the spokesman of the idealized patron of his own devising. Once he has assimilated both perspectives, his apparently personal confessions assume a universal and paradigmatic value: χρυσὸν εὐχονται, πεδίοι δ' ἕτεροι/ ἀπέραντον, ἐγὼ δ' ἀστοῖς ἀδῶν καὶ χθοῖν γυῖα καλύψαι,/ αἰνέων αἰνητά, μομφὰν δ' ἐπισπείρων ἀλιτροῖς (Nem. 8, 37-39)⁷⁷. The remarks of this general first person are essentially prescriptive rather than descriptive of the poet's individuality.

Pindar often claims that epinikian performance bridges the gap between gods and mortals⁷⁸. This emanates not only from its immortalizing power but also from the poet's alleged faculty to make his voice heard in all realms, even that of the dead⁷⁹. In this vein, prayers may serve to express the common interests of patron and poet⁸⁰. Relying on his privileged status as epinikian poet and master of ceremonies, Pindar professes to intervene before the gods on behalf of his patron, articulating prayers and requests that the *laudandus* cannot adequately convey by himself⁸¹. Other related tropes further exemplify variant applications of Pindar's first person. In Nemean 10, he first perceives Theaios' focalization and expounds it to Zeus: Ζεῦ πάτερ, τῶν μὰν ἔραται φρενί, σιγὰ οἱ στόμα· πὰν δὲ τέλος/ ἐν τὴν ἔργων οὐδ' ἀμόχθω καρδίᾳ προσφέρων τόλμαν παραιτεῖται χάριν (Nem. 10, 29-30). The poet interprets his patron's desires and articulates them before the gods, but remains an independent NF. A few lines later, however, Pindar momentarily focalizes through Theaios' eyes to express the significance of his present situation. In essence, this trope relies on the poet's authority to instruct the athlete on how he should interpret his victory; nonetheless, it re-

⁷⁷ This same trope, called *priamel*, is not uncommon in Greek lyric; cf. Sappho fr. 16 Lobel-Page: οἱ μὲν ἱππῆων στρότον οἱ δὲ πέσδων/ οἱ δὲ νάων φαῖσ' ἐπι[ι] γὰν μέλαι[ν]αν/ ἔμμεναι κάλλιστον, ἔγω δὲ κῆν' ὄτ-/ τω τις ἔραται.

⁷⁸ Cf. *Olympian* 7, 7-10.

⁷⁹ *Pyth.* 5, 96-103, *Nem.* 4, 85-86.

⁸⁰ *Pyth.* 8, 67-72: ὦναξ, ἐκόντι δ' εὐχομαι νόω/ κατὰ τιν' ἀρμονίαν βλέπειν/ ἀφ' ἕκαστον, ὅσα νόομαι./ κώμω μὲν ἀδυμελεῖ/ Δίκα παρέστακε· θεῶν δ' ὄπιν/ ἀφθορον αἰτέω, Ξέναρκες, ἡμετέρας τύχαις.

⁸¹ This very idea that the poet is a spokesman for his *philoï* inspires Pindar to voice the desires of Sogenes in *Nemean* 7, and his direct appeal to Herakles underlines his exclusive access to the domains where gods and heroes dwell: εἰ δὲ γεύεται/ ἀνδρὸς ἀνὴρ τι, φαῖμέν κε γείτον' ἔμμεναι/ νόω φιλήσαντ' ἀτενέει γείτοιν χάσμα πάντων/ ἐπάξιον· εἰ δ' αὐτὸ καὶ θεὸς ἀνέχοι,/ ἐν τὴν κ' ἔθελαι, ἴγαντας ὅς ἐδάμασας, εὐτυχῶς/ ναίειν πατρὶ Σωγένης ἀταλὸν ἀμφέπων/ θυμὸν προγόνων ἐυκτῆμονα ζαθέαν ἄγυιαν (*Nem.* 7, 87-92).

presents another instance of displacement of Pindar's perspective: ἀξιοθείην κεν, ἑὼν Θρασύκλου/ Ἀιτία τε σύγγοις, Ἄργεϊ μὴ κρύπτειν φάος/ ὀμμάτων (Nem. 10, 39-41).

From the above examples, it is clear that Pindar manipulates his narrative preeminence in various manners to suggest the communion of patron and poet. Along these lines, Isthmian 6 shows a poet who, acting out of sympathy with his patron⁸², utters a maxim: εἰ γὰρ τις ἀνθρώπων δαπάνη τε χαρῆς/ καὶ πότῳ πράσσει θεοδμάτων ἀρετῆς/ σὺν τέ οἱ δαίμων φυτὺς δόξαν ἐπήρατον, ἐσχαταῖς ἤδη πρὸς ὄλβου/ βάλλετ' ἄγκυραν θεότιμος ἑὼν (Isthm. 6, 10-13), before revealing that it expresses the victor's perspective: τοῖαισιν ὀργαῖς εὐχεται/ ἀντιάσας Ἄϊδαν γηράς τε δέξασθαι πολίον/ ὁ Κλειοῦκου παῖς (Isthm. 6, 14-16). Whereas in Nemean 8 he molds his own voice to suit the focalization of Deinias, in Isthmian 6 he first impersonates his young patron, then acknowledges his maneuver, and finally sets himself up as the protector of Phylakidas' virtual prayer by interceding in his favor: ἐγὼ δ' ἑβίθρονον/ Κλωθῶ κασιγνήτας τε προσκινέπω ἐσπέσθαι κλυταῖς/ ἀνδρὸς φίλου Μοίρας ἐφετμαῖς (Isth. 6, 16-18). Here as elsewhere, Pindar's invocations intimate an imaginary hierarchy of speakers in which he reigns supreme inasmuch as the desires of his patrons stand a better chance of fulfillment through his mediation. Besides, just as the poet figuratively appropriates the athlete's voice to coin a Gnome on the ideal values of the aristocracy, he balances this appropriation at the end of the ode by transferring his own praise of Lampon, father of Phylakidas, to a generic speaker: γλώσσα δ' οὐκ ἔξω φρενῶν φαίης κέ νιν ἄνδρ' ἐν ἀεθληταῖσιν ἔμμεν/ Ναξίαν πέτρας ἐν ἄλλαις χαλκοδάμαντ' ἀκόναν (Isthm. 6, 72-73). In the light of such passages, Pindar emerges as one among many speakers in the odes; although he remains firmly ensconced as the primary narrator throughout the epinikia, his focalization occasionally incorporates the perspective of patrons and athletes in order to integrate their voices in his poetry and thus make it truly polyphonic.

Pindar's first-person statements, then, range from expressing the idiosyncrasy of his official encomiastic function to merging with his patron's perspective in the exemplary utterances of the first person indefinite. But an additional trope, operating at a preliminary level in the construction of his poetic persona, accounts for its problematic identity. In my previous discussion I mentioned that Pindar, besides being the external author of the epinikia,

⁸² ἀνδρὸς φίλου (Isthm. 6, 18).

inserts himself in the narrative and thus becomes internal to the text. How does this duplicity play out in the poetry itself?

It has often been noted that the appearance of the first person usually signals a turning point between sections of the ode⁸³. Thus, Pindar frequently dwells on his epinikian task before jumping into the Myth, and likewise brings the Myth to a close with an explicit admission of being carried off course. This structural function of the first person is intimately linked to a deliberate poetic fiction which he exploits to full effect. The poet's "I" not only intervenes in the poem by emphatically marking the transitions between parts, but also presents such transitions as the result of sudden changes of mind—a recurrent feature that accounts for the perceived abruptness of Pindar's style⁸⁴. Break-off formulae have two related implications: they portray the poem's performance as improvised and, correspondingly, convey the impression of a poet who responds to his environment as he composes. Aware of the constraints of the epinikian burden, Pindar steers the course of song through the vicissitudes of *kairos*, *koros*, and *phthonos*; against this background of potential obstacles he focuses on adequately replying to his patron's achievement⁸⁵. Epinikian performance pretends to be as demanding a trial for the poet as the athletic contest was for the victor. In that sense, Pindar can claim a marked affinity with his patrons by virtue of his song: like

⁸³ Already noticed by Schadewaldt (1928) 300, n. 6, who explicitly linked the first person with the *Abbruchsformel* (*o.c.*, 286); cf. also Des Places, *Le pronom chez Pindar* (1947) 10; Lefkowitz (1963) 181-82; Bremer (1990) 46. Cf. Carne-Ross (1985) 138: «Pindar, then, is doing here (Ol. 6, 22) what we see him doing several times in the odes, presenting a new development in the poem he is writing as an action undertaken by himself».

⁸⁴ Carey (1981) 5: «Although the creation of an epinician was a trying business, and although Pindar works with conscious artistry, he deliberately creates and sustains the impression of informal, extempore composition. The quasi-meditative inceptive and transitional devices (...) , especially the break-off, offer the poet an invaluable tool. This 'oral subterfuge', by easing openings, transitions, and finales, allows the poet to treat themes at greater or lesser length according to his aims, to touch on tales or events without the need to develop them beyond his requirements. Pindar's practice is in fact a common feature of poetry, an illusion created by the poet and shared by the audience, a subterfuge which deceives only the philologist. (...) The common element is that the poet treats the actual as potential by a kind of sleight of hand, and the audience accepts the dramatic illusion for the purposes of the poem».

⁸⁵ His reply might even aim at duplicating, in poetic terms, the most salient features of the athletic victory: cf. Kurke (1988).

the athlete, the poet undergoes the risk of a public test and his performance is eventually crowned with success⁸⁶.

As a matter of fact, only three circumstances affect Pindar's stance when composing his encomium: he is drawn by his more or less personal involvement with the commissioning patron, aware of the local myths he can use to illumine the occasion, and informed of the specific details of the athletic victory that demand at least a passing reference in the Naming Complex. Pindar often frames his praise in terms of his personal inclinations, especially in his odes for Aeginetan victors, where he professes an intense emotional attachment to their *polis* on account of its poetic and civic excellence⁸⁷. Regardless of their accuracy and apart from their encomiastic purpose, his claims to genealogical ties with the *laudandus*⁸⁸ and his manifestations of sympathy or *xenia*⁸⁹ represent personal conditions that exist before the ode is

⁸⁶ Cf. Nem. 8. 20-22: πολλὰ γὰρ πολλὰ λέλεκται, νεαρὰ δ' ἐξευρόντα δόμεν βα-
σάνω/ ἐς ἔλεγχον, ἅπας κίνδυνος ὄψον δὲ λόγοι φθονεροῖσιν./ ἄπτεται δ' ἐσ-
λῶν αἰεὶ, χειρότεσσι δ' οὐκ ἐρίζει. Pindar occasionally refers to his office as public
poet in a vehemently agonistic tone (Ol. 1. 100-115; Pyth. 3. 112-15; Nem. 3. 80-82).
Independently of whether passages like Olympian 2, 86-88 reflect his enmity with
Simonides and Bacchylides as claimed by the scholiasts, the possibility that the
commission for his odes involved the defeat of rival poets would naturally contribute
to exalt his status as a victorious competitor and thus further assimilate him to the
laudandus.

⁸⁷ Pindar expressly proclaims his loyalty to Aigina's mythical heroes: τὸ δ' ἐμόν./ οὐκ
ἄτερ Δίακιδῶν, κέαρ ἡμῶν γεύεται (Isth. 5. 19-20), and portrays his praise of
Aeginetan victors as a particularly rewarding task: χαίρω δὲ πρόσφορον./ ἐν μὲν
ἔργῳ κόμπων ἰεῖς (Nem. 8. 48-49); χαίρω δ' ὅτι/ ἐσλοῖσι μάρναται πέρι πάσα
πόλις (Nem. 5. 46-47).

⁸⁸ In Olympian 6: ματρομάτων ἐμὰ Στυμφαλῖς, εὐαρθῆς Μετόπα./ πλάξιππον ἄ
Θήβαν ἔτικτεν (Ol. 6. 84-85) and Pythian 5: τὸ δ' ἐμόν γάρυει/ ἀπὸ Σπάρτας
ἐπήρατον κλέος./ ὄθεν γεγενναμένοι/ ἴκοντο Θήραυδε φῶτες Διγείδαι, / ἐμοὶ
πατέρες (Pyth. 5. 72-76; cf. Isthm. 7. 12-15). D' Alessio (1994) 122-23, following
Fränkel (1975) 427, n. 2, and Lloyd-Jones (1972) 112, rejects the identification with
Pindar and assigns the passage to a chorus of Cyreneans; *contra*, Lefkowitz (1963).

⁸⁹ Both are combined in Pythian 10: Pindar prays for his patrons in lines 17-21 and
accounts for his friendship with Thorax on the basis of *xenia* in 64-68. D' Alessio
stresses the relevance of *xenia* in the epinikia: «The speaker's role as a composer of
authoritative praise is related to his standing as a person (...). As a *xenos*, (Pindar)
receives and lends prestige to his patron: he can praise, but is not hindered by envy
between fellow-citizens». (o. c., 127) and rightly points to Pindar's fr. 181: ὁ γὰρ ἐξ
οἴκου ποτὶ μῶμον ἔπαιρος κίναται. This would explain why Pindar keeps a low

delivered and therefore shape it more or less decisively. These are, in sum, Pindar's working elements for the crafting of an epinikion. But Olympian 3, like many other odes, purports to respond to additional influences as well. The song's beginning mentions the pleasure of mythic ancestors along with proper praise for the *laudandus* as the determining factors that inspire the poet's song: Τυνδαρίδαις τε φιλοξείνοις ἀδείν καλλιπλοκάμῳ θ' Ἑλένα/ κλεινὰν Ἀκράγαντα γεραίρων εὐχομαι, / Θήρωνος Ὀλυμπιοῖκαν ὕμνον ὀρθώσας ἀκαμαιοπόδων / ἵππων ἄωτον (Ol. 3, 1-4). Pindar's praise stems from his recognition of a universal value in Theron's victory; however, the realization of its import suddenly overcomes him like a spell during performance: ἐπεὶ χαίταισι μὲν ζευχθέντες ἐπι στέφανοι/ πρᾶσσοντί με τοῦτο θεόδατον χρέος, / φόρμιγγά τε ποικιλόγαρυν καὶ βοὰν αὐλῶν ἐπέων τε θέσιν/ Αἰνησιδάμου παιδί συμμείξει πρεπόντως, ἃ τε Πῖσα με γεγωνεῖν (Ol. 3, 6-9). More conspicuously, the subsequent transition from Myth to Victor Praise is also conducted following an immediate impulse: ἐμὲ δ' ὦν πα θυμὸς ὀτρύνει φάμεν Ἑμμείδαις/ Θήρωνί τ' ἔλθειν κῦδος εὐίππων διδόντων Τυνδαριδάν (Ol. 3, 38-39). To judge by these urgent expressions, it would seem that the epinikia are not self-contained poems after all, but rather reflect the poet's openness to inspiration and audience response.

Thus Pindar seems to construct his poetic persona along a temporal coordinate that comprises both occasion and duration. His first-person statements may serve contrasting purposes according to their specific position and function in the odes. On the one hand, his professions of loyalty and friendship to the patron's *oikos* correspond to the pre-performance poet; they reflect his emotional baggage as he composes, which in turn determines the nature of his song. On the other hand, first-person statements in break-off formulae correspond to the fiction of inspired improvisation during performance; they reinforce Pindar's status as a poet who is in supreme control of the present occasion, aware of its demands, and ready to meet them as they arise. If Pindar's "I" dwells on the customary rules of epinikian celebration or the duties of *xenia* in the Poet's Task parts, break-off formulae introduce the concerns of the moment by encouraging the poet to alter the direction of his song: ἀλλὰ νῦν ἐκαταβόλων Μοισᾶν ἀπὸ τόξων/ Δία τε φουρικοστερόπαν σεμνόν τ' ἐπίνειμαι/ ἀκρωτήριον Ἄλιδος/ τοιοῦδε βέλεσσιν (Ol. 9, 5-8). Such exhortations refer to the course of the present performance, and

profile on occasions when he is not a *xenos*, as in the odes for Theban victors (Pythian 11, Isthmian 7, Isthmian 1, and Isthmian 4).

are heeded in that very performance: the author speaks to himself, but his supposed inner monologue turns out to be an efficacious speech act, fulfilled the very instant it is uttered⁹⁰. In consequence, break-offs evidence Pindar's dual temporal framework: his narration is rooted in the present moment, but his focalization extends backwards in time to include different stages of the poem's coming to light. Thus the epinikia are predicated on a double time frame that corresponds to their author's split narrative perspective.

This dual focalization is most conspicuous when Pindar contemplates the various stages involved in the composition of epinikian poetry, ranging from the moment of victory to the homecoming celebration. Olympian 10 and Isthmian 1 start by reproducing details of their conception; each reenacts the poet's deliberations with himself as he excuses his delay or his preference for one particular commission over another. On the other hand, Isthmian 2 concludes with the poet's instructions to a certain Nikasippos on its delivery⁹¹. Furthermore, in Nemean 3 he begins his song by asking the Muse to deliver it to the chorus members, a trope that would amount in performance to singing and requesting the same song simultaneously⁹². Based on his analysis of this ode, Slater attempted to pinpoint a brief instant in which Pindar's unitary focalization could be salvaged: «Pindar formulates his song by convention roughly for a time, when his chorus is arriving at the place where they are to sing, but at a moment before the song is to be sung»⁹³. However, this scenario does not account for the underlying anomaly. The commissioning and composition of an epinikion are clearly not simultaneous with its delivery, yet Pindar often combines past and present focalization in what pretends to be an impromptu performance⁹⁴. Not only do these odes report actions that take

⁹⁰ Cf. Slater (1969) 89 on Ol. 6. 87-92: «The *Heralied* is a fiction: the praise of Hera, and the recognition of the falsity of the ancient taunt have been accomplished in the same moment as the desire for them was expressed, as, e.g., *P.* 3.78, *Bacch.* 5.179 f.».

⁹¹ Commissioning: Ol. 10, 1-12 & Isthm. 1, 1-10. Composition: Nem. 3, 1-12, Nem. 9, 1-12. Delivery: Isthm. 2, 47-48. Isthm. 5, 62-63 also asks its implicit addressee to convey the poem to the *laudandus*' brother Pytheas.

⁹² As Carne-Ross (1985) 69 says, in Nemean 3, «Pindar calls on the Muse to bring into existence the poem that has already begun and to grant him the words, a gift that the words we are listening to testify has already been granted. The effect is to fuse two discrete moments, the poem's genesis and its composition. And a third is added, its realization in performance».

⁹³ Slater (1969) 88.

⁹⁴ A variety of tropes reinforce the impression of improvisation by a poet who composes before his live audience, out of inspiration: δόξαν ἔχω τιν' ἐπὶ γλώσσα λιγυρᾶς

place before the ode's public performance; their focalization occurs before the poems exist as such and, in consequence, is external to them.

Pindar's self-representation in the odes reflects this duality. In several of the recurrent break-off formulae the poet addresses his own heart, his soul, or other seats of his emotions⁹⁵; an ode like Olympian 9 shows a poet who addresses himself more than the *laudandus*; no less than four times does he voice instructions on appropriate themes for his song⁹⁶. Such exhortations portray the epinikion as composed on the spot; more importantly, it is in such passages, where the narrator calls attention to his focalization by deliberating on the course of his song, that we can sense again the separation between his mental faculties as they exist prior to and independent of the performance and their special disposition during epinikian celebration. Break-off formulae usually call on the poet to alter his song in view of the demands of the present occasion; they shun the normal course in favor of a newer approach, determined by the particular atmosphere presiding over the poem's delivery. Taken literally, these bold interventions in which Pindar feigns to cast his script aside invite us to imagine the existence of an original poem composed for the occasion but rejected in the course of its performance. In such instances the epinikia that we know as written texts pose as if they were due to improvisation on a preexisting model in accordance with the specific circumstances of their presentation.

If, following Pindar's conceit, we are to assume the existence of a fictitious original song, then the real epinikion does not exist as a whole before its performance, but rather comes into being as it is sung⁹⁷. According to

ἀκόνας./ ἄ μ' ἐθέλοντα προσέρπει καλλιρόαισι πνοαῖς (Ol. 6, 82-83). Prayers too pretend that the epinikion is an improvised performance: εἶην εὐρησιεπῆς ἀναγεῖσθαι/ πρόσφορος ἐν Μοισᾶν δίφῳ τὸλμα δὲ καὶ ἀμφιλαφῆς δύναμις/ ἔσποιτο (Ol. 9, 80-82). Both examples occur not at the beginning but rather towards the end of the poems.

⁹⁵ Ol. 1, 3-20 takes the form of an extended address by the poet to his heart (φίλον ἦτορ); Ol. 2, 89-91 to his θυμός; Pyth. 3, 61-62 to his ψυχή.

⁹⁶ Ol. 9, 5-8: exhortation to sing an Olympian victory. 11-14: exhortation to sing of Epharmostos and Opous. 35-42: exhortation to refrain from blasphemous tales. 47-49: exhortation to sing of Deukalion and Pyrrha.

⁹⁷ This dynamic nature of Pindar's *prosopopoeia* produces a distinct effect; cf. Johnson (1982) 68-69: «Here, and I think only here in Western lyric, we almost become part of the poet's sensibility, of the poet's creative act itself —because he composes us into his search and into his poem. The form of Pindar's victory songs, then, imitates (refigures) his process of composition, and near the secret of Pindar's theory of poetry

the break-off fiction, the epinikion would be the result of a double focalization by the same narrator: one prior to the performance, which would produce an archetype poem, and a second one during performance, which would respond to its spiritual and physical environment and yield the poem as we have it. Break-off formulae dealing with the poet's inspiration, the spell of the moment, the laws of song, lack of time, or the potential dangers of causing surfeit or arousing envy all illustrate this duality. In consequence, self-addresses become an expression of Pindar as author-performer (primary internal NF) breaking away from the fixed model of his external pre-performance focalization in response to the newly perceived requirements of an ideal song. Epinikian celebration, then, is a space in which the poet realizes as he performs a certain wisdom of moral and artistic import which he emphatically imparts to himself -and, by extension, to his audience. In view of the distance between previous composition and present performance, self-addresses amount to a rupture between the primary external and internal narration/focalization, despite the fact that Pindar fulfills both functions. This is, in essence, the fundamental fiction of authorship in the epinikia: they spring from the prodigious bilocation of a poet who pretends to perceive and sing simultaneously in two separate places and at two different moments. In the final analysis, then, Pindar's "I" does not univocally represent the perspective of the individual Pindar from Thebes, inasmuch as it incorporates the distinct focalizations of other characters; furthermore, not even when it clearly refers to Pindar in his poetic function does it convey his unitary perception, but rather a fictional focalization that is impossible in performance and therefore can hardly substantiate hypothetical reconstructions of how the poems were delivered.

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is his willingness and his ability to share the excitement and the vitality of his creative moment with us: he allows us, he invites us, to become the dancers who become the dance. Most other lyric poems, even the greatest of them, leave us outside them looking into them. But in Pindar there is, again and again, a unique identity of matter and form, of poem and audience». Fitzgerald (1987) 12 fittingly relates this fiction to Pindar's self-representation: «Before we seek a notion of this "I" appropriate to the performance of the odes, we should remember that Pindar refers in his odes to the various stages of their being (composition, delivery, training of the choir, etc.) and that he does not refer to these from the perspective of the finished product, the performance».

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