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Pindar *Pythian I*

Abstract

This article concerns the ancient Greek lyric poet Pindar (approximately 518 to 438 B.C.), specifically his first Pythian Ode, and my primary purpose is to supply a new translation of the poem (together with résumé and running commentary for illumination and elaboration), thereby introducing Pindar, the nature of his composition and certain features of his style to the non-specialist. In my translation, which is based on the Greek text of Snell & Maehler (1984), I aim above all at accuracy, purity and clarity, and I try to convey to the reader a real idea of the feel and texture of the poem by means of a version which is faithful to the spirit and not just the letter of the Greek. In the essay I provide a résumé, explain the background to the piece, discuss its implications and focus, and treat its major poetic features, such as diction, metre, sound, imagery and structure.

Text

*Χρυσέα φόρμιγξ, Απόλλωνος και Ιοπ'λοκάμων
σύνδικον Μοισᾶν κτέανον· τᾶς ἀκούει
 μὲν βᾶσις ἀγ'λαίας ἀρχά,
 πείθονται δ' αἰδοὶ σάμασιν
 ἀγησιχόρων σπόταν προομιῶν
 ἀμβολὰς τεύχης ἐλελιζομένα.
5 και τὸν αἰχματᾶν κεραυνὸν σβεννύεις
 αἰσνάου πυρός. εὐδὲι δ' ἀνὰ σκά-
 πτῳ Διὸς αἰετός, ὠκει-
 αν πτέρῳγ' ἀμφοτέρωθεν χαλάξαις,*

- ἄρχος οἰωνῶν, κελαινῶπιν δ' ἐπὶ οἱ νεφέλαν
 ἀγκύλω κρατί, γ' λεφάρων ἀδὸ κλαί-
 θ' ῥον, κατέχευας· ὁ δὲ κ' ἴωσσαν
 ὑγ' ῥὸν νῶτον αἰωρεῖ, τεαῖς
 10 ῥιπαῖσι κατασχόμενος. καὶ γὰρ βια-
 τὰς Ἄρης, τραχεῖαν ἀνευθε λιπῶν
 ἐγγέων ἀκ' μάν, λαίνει καρδίαν
 κώματι, κῆλα δὲ καὶ δαυμόνων θέλ-
 γει φρένας ἀμφὶ τε Λατοί-
 — δα σοφία βαθυκόλπων τε Μοισῶν.
 — ὅσσα δὲ μὴ πεφίληκε Ζεὺς, ἀτύζονται βοῶν
 Πιερίδων ἄτονα, γᾶν τε καὶ πόν-
 τον κατ' ἀμυμάκετον,
 15 ὃς τ' ἐν αἰνῇ Ταρτάρῳ κείται, θεῶν πολέμιος,
 Τυφῶς ἑκατοντακάρανος· τὸν ποτε
 Κιλίκιον θρέψεν πολυώνυμον ἄντρον· νῦν γε μάν
 ταί θ' ὑπὲρ Κύμας ἀλιερκέες δχθαι
 Σικελία τ' αὐτοῦ πιέζει
 στέρα λαχ' νάεντα· κίων δ' οὐρανία σνέχει,
 20 νιφόεσσ' Αἴτνα, πάνετες χιόνος ὀξείας τιθήνα·

τᾶς ἐρεύγονται μὲν ἀπ' ἁλάτου πυρὸς ἀγ' νόταται
 ἐκ μυχῶν παγαί· ποταμοὶ δ' ἀμέραισιν
 μὲν προχέοντι ῥόον κατ' νοῦ
 αἰθῶν· ἀλλ' ἐν οὐρανίαισιν πέτρας
 φοίνισσα κυλινδομένα φλοῖ ἐς βαθεῖ-
 — αν φέρει πόντου πλάκα σὺν πατάγῳ.

- 25 κείνο δ' Ἀφαιστοιο κρονησοῦς ἐρπετόν
 δεινοτάτους ἀναπέμπει· τέρας μὲν
 θαυμάσιον προσιδέσθαι,
 θαῦμα δὲ καὶ παρεόντων ἀκοῦσαι,
 — οἷον Αἴτνας ἐν μελαμφύλλοις δέδεται κορυφαῖς
 καὶ πέδῳ, στρωμνὰ δὲ χαράσσοισ' ἄπαν νῶ-
 τον ποτικεκ' λυμένον κεντεῖ.
 εἶη, Ζεῦ, τιν εἶη ἀνδάνειν,
 30 ὃς τοῦτ' ἐφέπεις ὄρος, εὐκάρπιο γαί-
 ας μέτωπον, τοῦ μὲν ἐπωνυμίαν
 κλεινὸς οἰκιστὴρ ἐκύδανεν πόλιν
 γείτονα, Πυθιάδος δ' ἐν δρομῷ κἀ-
 ρυξ ἀνέειπέ νιν ἀγγέλ-
 — λων Ἰέρωνος ὑπὲρ καλλινίκου
 ἄρμασι. ναυσιφορήτοις δ' ἀνδράσι π' ῥώτα χάρις

- ἐς πλόον ἀρχομένοις πομπαῖον ἔλθεῖν
 οὔρον· εὐκίετα γάρ
 35 καὶ τελευτᾷ φερτέρου νόστου τυχεῖν. ὁ δὲ λόγος
 ταῦταις ἐπὶ συντηχίαις δόξαν φέρει
 λοιπὸν ἔσσεσθαι στεφάνοισι ν<ιν> Ἴπποις τε κ' ἑλκτάν
 καὶ σὺν εὐφάνοις θαλίαις ὄνυμαστάν.
 Λύκιε καὶ Δάλοϊ' ἀνάσσω
 Φοῖβε Παρνασσῷ τε κρᾶναν Κασταλίαν φιλέων,
 40 ἐθελήσαις ταῦτα νόφ τιθέμεν εὐανδρὸν τε χώραν.
 —
 ἐκ θεῶν γὰρ μαχαναὶ πᾶσαι βροτέαις ἀρεταῖς,
 καὶ σοφοὶ καὶ χερσὶ βιαταὶ περίγ' ἰωσ-
 σοὶ τ' ἔφην. ἄνδρα δ' ἐγὼ κείνον
 αἰνῆσαι μενοινῶν ἔλπομαι
 μὴ χαλκοπάραον ἄκονθ' ὥσειτ' ἀγῶ-
 νος βαλεῖν ἔξω παλάμῃ δονέων,
 45 μακ' ῥὰ δὲ ῥίψαις ἀμεύσασθ' ἀντίους.
 εἰ γὰρ ὁ πᾶς χρόνος ἄλβον μὲν οὔτω
 καὶ κτεάνων δόσιν εὐθύ-
 νοι, καμάτων δ' ἐπίλασιν παράσχοι·
 ἢ κεν ἀμνάσειεν, οἷαις ἐν πολέμοισι μάχαις
 τλάμονι ψυχᾷ παρέμειν', ἀνίχ' εὐρί-
 σκοντο θεῶν παλάμιας τιμᾶν
 οἷαν οὔτις Ἑλλάνων δρέπει
 50 πλούτου στεφάνωμ' ἀγέρωχον. νῦν γε μὰν
 τᾶν Φιλοκτῆταιο δίκαιαν ἐφέπων
 ἐστρατεύθη· σὺν δ' ἀνάγκῃ νιν φίλον
 καὶ τις ἐὼν μεγαλάνωρ ἔσανεν.
 φαντὶ δὲ Λαμνόθεν ἔλκει
 — τειρόμενον μεταβάσσοντας ἔλθεῖν
 ἤροας ἀντιθέους Πολίαντος υἱὸν τοξόταν·
 δς Πριάμοιο πόλιν πέρσεν, τελευτα-
 σὲν τε πόνους Δαναοῖς,
 55 ἀσθενεῖ μὲν χρωτὶ βαίνων, ἀλλὰ μοιριδίον ἦν.
 οὔτω δ' Ἴέρωνι θεὸς ὀρθωτῆρ πέλοι
 τὸν προσέρποντα χρόνον, ὧν ἔραται και-
 ρὸν διδοῦς.
 Μοῖσα, καὶ πάρ Δεινομένει κελαδῆσαι
 πίθεό μοι ποιανὰν τεθρίππων·
 χάρμα δ' οὐκ ἀλλότ' ῥιον νικαφορία πατέρος.
 60 ἄγ' ἔπειτ' Αἴτνας βασιλεῖ φίλιον ἐξεύρωμεν ὕμνον·

- τῷ πόλιν κείναν θεοδ'μάτῳ σὺν ἑλευθερίῳ
 Ὑλλίδος στάθ'μας Ἰέρων ἐν νόμοις ἐ-
 κτισσε· θέλοντι δὲ Παμφύλου
 καὶ μὰν Ἡρακλειδᾶν ἔκγονοι
 δρχθαις ὕπο Ταύγέτου ναίοντες αἰ-
 εὶ μένειν τεθμοῖσιν ἐν Αἰγυμοῦ
 65 Δωριεῖς. ἔσχον δ' Ἀμύκ'λας δλβιοι
 Πινδόθεν ὀρνύμενοι, λευκοπῶλων
 Τυνδαριδᾶν βαθύδοξοι
 γείτονες, ὧν κλέος ἀνθήσεν αἰχμᾶς.
 Ζεῦ τέλει', αἰεὶ δὲ τοιαύταν Ἀμένα παρ' ὕδωρ
 αἴσαν ἀστοῖς καὶ βασιλεῦσιν διακρί-
 νειν ἔτιμον λόγον ἀνθρώπων.
 σὺν τοι τὴν κεν ἀγητήρ ἀνῆρ,
 70 υἱῷ τ' ἐπιτελλόμενος, δᾶμον γεραί-
 ρων τράποι σύμφωνον ἐς ἡσυχίαν.
 λίσσομαι νεῦσον, Κρονίων, ἡμέρον
 ὄφ'ρα κατ' οἶκον ὁ Φοῖβιξ ὁ Τυρσα-
 νῶν τ' ἀλαλατὸς ἔχῃ, ναυ-
 σίστονον ὕβ'ριν ἰδῶν τὰν πρὸ Κύμας,
 οἷα Συρακοσίων ἀρχῶν δαμασθέντες πάθον,
 ἄκυπόρων ἀπὸ ναῶν ὁ σφιν ἐν πόν-
 τῳ βάλεθ' ἀλικίαν,
 75 Ἑλλάδ' ἐξέλικων βαρείας δουλίας. ἀρέομαι
 πὰρ μὲν Σαλαμῖνος Ἀθηναίων χάριν
 μισθόν, ἐν Σπάρτῃ δ' ἀπὸ τῶν πρὸ Κιθαιρῶ-
 νος μαχᾶν,
 ταῖσι Μῆδειοι κάμον ἀγκυλότοξοι,
 παρ' ἀ δὲ τὰν εὐνύ'ρον ἀκτᾶν
 Ἰμέρα παιδεσσιν ὕμνον Δεινομένεος τελέσας,
 80 τὸν ἐδέξαντ' ἀμφ' ἀρετῆ, πολεμίων ἀνδρῶν καμόντων.
)—
 καιρὸν εἰ φθέγξαιο, πολλῶν πείρατα συντανύσσαις
 ἐν βραχεῖ, μείων ἔπεται μῶμος ἀνθρώ-
 πων· ἀπὸ γὰρ κόρος ἀμβλύνει
 αἰανῆς ταχείας ἐλπιδας,
 ἀστῶν δ' ἀκοᾶ κρύφιον θυμὸν βαρύ-
 νει μάλιστ' ἔσλοῖσιν ἐπ' ἄλλοτρίοις.
 85 ἀλλ' ὅμως, κρέσσον γὰρ οἰκτιρμοῦ φθόνος,
 μὴ παρίει καλά. νόμα δικαίῳ
 πηδαλίῳ στρατὸν· ἀφεν-
 δεῖ δὲ πρὸς ἀκ'μονι χάλκευε γλῶσσαν.

- εἴ τι καὶ φλαῦρον παραιθύσσει, μέγα τοι φέρεται
 πὰρ σέθεν. πολλῶν ταμίας ἑσσί· πολλοὶ
 μύρτυρες ἀμφοτέροις πιστοί.
- 90 εὐανθεῖ δ' ἐν ὄργᾳ παρμένων,
 εἴπερ τι φιλεῖς ἀκοὰν ἀδεῖαν αἰ-
 εἰ κλύειν, μὴ κάμνε λίαν δαπάναις·
 ἐξίει δ' ὥσπερ κυβερνάτας ἀνήρ
- ἰστίον ἀνεμόεν (πετάσαις). μὴ δολωθῆς,
 ὦ φίλε, κέρδεσιν ἐντραπέ-
 λοις· δουθόμβροτον σῆχημα δόξας
 οἶον ἀποικομένων ἀνδρῶν δίαιταν μανύει
 καὶ λογίοις καὶ αἰοδοῖς. σὺ φθίνει Κροί-
 σου φιλόφρων ἀρετά.
- 95 ³ τὸν δὲ τὰρ ῥω χαλκῆφ καντήρα νηλέα νόον
 ἐχθρὰ Φάλαριν κατέχει παντῆ φάτις,
 οὐδέ νιν φόρμιγγες ὑπωρόφιαι κοινανίαν
 • μαλθακὰν παίδων ὄαροισι δέκονται.
 τὸ δὲ παθεῖν εὖ πρῶτον ἀέθλων·
 εὖ δ' ἀκοθεῖν δευτέρα μοῖρ'· ἀμφοτέροισι δ' ἀνήρ
- 100 ὃς ἂν ἐγκύρση καὶ ἔλῃ, στέφανον ἕμιστον δέδεκται.

Translation

- Golden lyre joint-owned possession of Apollo
 and the violet-haired Muses, the foot (source of splendour)
 hears you and
 the singers obey your directions
 when, quivering and giving them their lead, you strike up a
 choral prelude.
- 5 And you quench the spearer thunderbolt of
 everlasting fire. On Zeus' sceptre too, swift wings relaxed at
 both his sides, sleeps the eagle,
 the king of birds – on his curving head you poured a
 swartfaced cloud, a sweet closer of his lids; and as he
 slumbers he
 is overwhelmed by your gusts and his
 fluid back surges. So too mighty Ares leaves aside his rough,
 pointed
 weapons and his heart is warmed and entranced:
 your shafts enchant even divine minds through the skill of
 Leto's son and the deep-girdled Muses.
 But when the Pierides' ringing voices reach
 beings that Zeus loves not, they're distraught, on land and
 raging sea,

15 as is he who lies in terrible Tartarus,
hundred-headed Typhos, the foe of the gods.
The far-renowned Cilician cave once nurtured him, but
now Sicily and the sea-fenced heights above
Cyme crush his shaggy chest, and a skyey column holds him
fast, painfully –
20 niveous Etna, perennial nurse of cold, bright snow.

Purest spouts of unapproachable fire belch forth
from its depths; during the day-time its torrents pour out a
gleaming
stream of smoke, while in the dark with a
crashing the crimson, rolling flame carries rocks right down
to the deep, flat sea.

25 That serpent sends up most formidable
flaring fountains; it's an amazing marvel to see and it's
amazing to hear when present
what a creature is pinioned by Etna's leaf-black
peaks and plain, with all of its outstretched back gashed and
torn by its bed.

I pray, pray, that we please you, Zeus, who
30 frequent this mount (forehead of a fruitful land), whose
namesake city nearby
gained esteem through its famous founder when
proclaimed on the Pythian track by the herald announcing
Hieron's splendid chariot-
victory. For shipmen starting a voyage their
first blessing is the advent of a sending breeze; for then it's
35 likely that they'll have a better journey back at
the end. That thought, with this success, prompts belief
that the town will henceforth be famed for crowns and horses
and celebrated at songful banquets. Lord
of Delos, Lycian Phoebus, lover of Parnassus' Castalian
spring,
40 consent to keep that in mind and this state filled with fine
men.

For it's purely through the gods that humans excel,
are eloquent and skilful and mighty. In my eagerness to
praise that man I hope I will not, as
it were, hurl out of the lists the bronze-cheeked javelin
brandished in my hand
45 but fling it far, outranging opponents.
May the rest of time still guide straight his prosperity and gift
of wealth, granting oblivion of
suffering. Then he'd surely recall those wars' great

- battles where he stood fast, stout-hearted, when by the hand
 of god they
 won great honour such as no other
 50 Greek culls, a noble crown of riches. But when he fought of
 late he was like
 Philoctetes; through compulsion even a
 grand personage fawned for his friendship. They say godlike
 heroes went to fetch from Lemnos the son
 of Poias, the bowman stricken by his wound. He
 sacked Priam's city, putting the Danaans' toils to an end,
 55 his body weak as he went, but it was fated.
 May god in coming time still be Hieron's
 steersmate, giving him enough of the things he desires.
 Muse, kindly sing out at Deinomenes' side
 also the fourhorse team's tribute; his father's victory is his
 special joy.
 60 So, come, let's compose an ode that's friendly to Etna's
 prince.
 Hieron set up that city for him based on
 god-framed freedom and Hyllus' code. The Dorians who
 dwell beneath
 Taygetus' heights, descendants of
 Pamphylus and the Heraclids, wish to observe Aegimius'
 laws
 65 always. They set out from Pindus and took
 Amyclae (near the Tyndarids with their whitehorses), prosper-
 ing, deep-gloried; their spears' fame bloomed.
 Zeus the fulfiller, may men's words always assign
 with truth such luck to princes and citizens by Amenas'
 waters. With your help their chief (charging
 70 his son) would lead the people to harmonious peace, respect-
 ing them. I beg
 you, child of Cronus, make the Phoenicians'
 and Etruscans' war-cry stay home, tamed by seeing their
 brutal pride ship-mourning off Cyme for
 all they suffered when vanquished by Syracuse's
 king, who hurled their warriors from the swift-sailing ships
 into the
 75 sea, pulling Greece clear from slavery's weight. At Athens
 I'll get a reward – their thanks – through Salamis,
 in Sparta one from Cithaeron's battle, where the Medes
 of the curved bow met with defeat, but one by
 the well-watered banks of Himeras for paying the Deinome-
 nids the ode
 80 they earned through their valour when the foe's men met
 with defeat.

If you say just enough, joining many strands in
 a short, tight twine, as a result people find less fault; for
 tedious
 excess blunts fleeting hopes, and what they
 hear (especially of others' success) secretly weighs on citi-
 zens'
 85 spirits. But – envy before pity – don't
 stop your splendid deeds. Pilot your subjects with a just
 rudder; and smith your tongue on truth's anvil.
 Any poor spark is magnified, flying from you.
 You manage many men: you've many trusty witnesses to all
 your acts. Don't let your mood lose its bloom,
 90 and if you love always hearing sweet things said of you, don't
 tire of being
 lavish, but like a helmsman let out your
 sail to the wind. My friend, don't be ensnared by shameful
 thrift: when men are gone only a flaunting
 posthumous glory tells chroniclers and poets
 how they lived. Croesus' kind-hearted goodness does not
 die. But
 95 hostile, hate-filled words everywhere overwhelm that
 man-burner with the bronze-bull cauldron who knew
 no pity – Phalaris; lyres under roofs don't welcome
 him as a gentle component of boys' songs.
 The best of prizes is prosperity; celebrity is the next-best lot;
 100 he who finds and grasps both has been given the highest
 crown.

The epinikion, which celebrated a win in the Greek games, remarked on the victory and the victor (and often his family, home and other successes, if any), generally narrated at length and in a central position a legend relevant to the winner's exploit, circumstances or antecedents, and contained moralizing. Pindar's *Pythian I* is concerned with Hieron, tyrant of Syracuse (on Sicily) from 478 to 467 B.C. and his victory in the chariot-race at the Pythian Games (held at Delphi, in central Greece) in 470 B.C. There he had himself proclaimed as Hieron of Etna, to honour that city, which he had recently established near the volcano Etna and entrusted to his son, Deinomenes, to rule; and the town figures prominently in the ode, along with its founder's various accomplishments.

As this is a lengthy poem which contains much that will puzzle¹, an

1. For this reason in particular I have been rather free in my rendering of the poem, favouring clarity and intelligibility. Cowley's remark ("if a man should undertake to translate Pindar word for word, it would be thought that one madman had translated another") is especially apposite in the case of our poet's victory-songs. Note also that at times I have been forced to

explicatory résumé seems a necessary preliminary to detailed study. The piece falls into three main parts: lines 1–28 form an introduction; the central portion, largely taken up with praise of Hieron and good wishes, occupies lines 29–80; lines 81–100, consisting mainly of advice, act as a conclusion.

A (1–28): Pindar begins by addressing the golden (= divine) lyre owned by Apollo (son of Leto) and the Muses and describing a performance to the accompaniment of that instrument put on by these deities of music on mount Olympus. The feet of the dancers, ready to begin the splendid dance (= “splendour” in 2), and the singers take their cue from the lyre as with quivering strings it strikes up the opening notes of its accompaniment to them. But the lyre’s influence is greater than that: its music, compared to gusts of wind in 9 and arrows/spears in 12, is so soothing and enchanting that it affects even the instruments of Zeus’ power, temporarily quenching his fiery, spear-like (or warlike) weapon, the thunderbolt, and pouring a dark “cloud” of sleep over his sacred bird and servant, the eagle, and it even puts Ares, the god of war, into a deep, trance-like slumber. At 13ff. the author moves on to those beings throughout the world which are hated by Zeus, remarking that by way of contrast they are terrified when they hear the singing of the Muses (= Pierides). Among those beings is Typhos, a fire-emitting monster with a

resort to the technique of “compensation”, i.e. where I have been unable to capture an effect, such as alliteration or loftiness of diction, in my version of a particular word or phrase I have compensated by introducing that effect at another point in my translation. Naturally in the course of a hundred long lines there are very many problems of meaning and reference. The following are the more notable: in 9f. *ταῖς ὑπαῖσι* (= “by your gusts” in line 9 of my version) has been taken to denote instead the movement of water under wind (i.e. “by your ripples”) or the force with which something is thrown or shot (so that, as in 12, the idea would be that the lyre’s notes are like “shafts”), and *κατασχόμενος* (= my “he is overwhelmed”) could also mean that the eagle is held down, pinned down, restrained, spellbound or covered, as a sea is covered by winds (I give the same translation of the word in 95, but a similar variety of senses is possible there too); in 14 the precise force of *ἀμαιμακετον* (= my “raging”, which I favour because it adds to the violence of the section) is disputed, and “irresistible” and “vast” are also possibilities; in 25 *ἔρπετόν* means “creeping thing” but can refer to animals as well as reptiles; in 26 I have rendered *παρεόντων* “when present” but “from those present” is also acceptable; in 27 *μελαμφύλλοις* (“leaf-black”) could denote “dark with leaves” or “dark and leafy”, the blackness coming from the lava-streams rather than the leaves; the second half of 50 may mean that Hieron is actually on campaign at the time of performance (though this strikes me as unlikely) and be translated: “But he has just now gone on campaign like . . .”; in 57 “steersmate”, i.e. one who guides straight, is my version of *ὀρθωτήρ* (because this image picks up “guide” at the start of the section) but “one who sets/keeps upright” and “preserver” are also plausible; in 79 *τέλειαις* may have the sense “for performing for” rather than “for paying”, but the latter fits with the commercial notion of “reward” in 76; in 81f. the image may be of spinning or weaving instead of plaiting a rope; at 85f. a possible, but less flattering, alternative to my “don’t stop your splendid deeds” is “don’t neglect (the opportunity for doing) splendid deeds”; in 87 the metaphor is uncertain but reference to a spark would take up the forging and anvil of the previous line: cf. Gildersleeve (1890:251) and Burton (1962:109); at 92 *κέρδεσιν* is rendered as “thrift” but “gain”, “greed” and “tricks” are other possibilities, and for *ἐντραπέλοισι* (“shameful”) some manuscripts have *ἐντραπέλοισι* (“crafty”); finally, on the text and interpretation of 12, 68, 72 and 77 see Burton (1962:96f., 105, 106f.), Kirkwood (1982:137) and Farnell (1930–32:114).

hundred snaky heads, who was born and reared in a cave in Cilicia, a region in Asia Minor, and who attacked the gods; he was subdued by Zeus' thunderbolt and imprisoned in Tartarus (in the Underworld) directly under pillar-like, snow-capped mount Etna; being a giant, he stretched all the way from Sicily to Cyme, a coastal town in southern Italy, and his agonized convulsions down below were said to be the cause of Etna's eruptions, which the poet describes.

B (29–80): Moving from Etna to Zeus, who frequently visits that mountain which juts up from the land like a forehead, Pindar prays that the company (unlike Typhos) may please that deity and comes at last to Hieron's Pythian triumph. He suggests that, like a favourable breeze for sailors at the start of a voyage, it will be a good omen for the city of Etna and its participation in future games, and he now entreats support for the town from Apollo, who was born on the Greek island of Delos, had a favourite shrine in the country called Lycia (in Asia Minor) and also loved the stream Castalia on mount Parnassus at Delphi. At 41–45 our poet explains that he appeals to Apollo because heaven is responsible for all human achievements and goes on to say that he hopes his eulogy of Hieron, while fulsome, will be well-aimed and/or not go on too long, likening his words to a bronze-headed javelin thrown in a contest. Then at 46–57 between prayers for continued prosperity for the king the poet expresses the wish that Hieron may forget the pain caused by illness² and remember his courage in various battles when he, and his three brothers (hence "they" in 48), with the help of the gods won the greatest honour and immense booty (or perhaps "a noble crown of riches" in 50 means that the honour won then "crowned" their existing wealth). Pindar concentrates next on one particular campaign, a recent one (the reference is much disputed but may be to Hieron's defeat of the neighbouring tyrant Thrasydaeus at the battle of Acragas in Sicily in 472 or 470 B.C.³). He compares his patron to the hero Philoctetes (son of Poias), a famous archer who while on his way to Troy, which was ruled by Priam, to take part in the Trojan War with the other Greeks or "Danaans", was wounded and left behind on the island of Lemnos off the coast of Asia Minor close to Troy; he remained there until the tenth year of the war, when his compatriots sent Odysseus and a companion to persuade him to let himself be brought to Troy, because of an oracle that the city could never be taken without the arrows that the great hero Heracles had bequeathed to Philoctetes. At 58–66 the poet states that he wants his victory-song to be directed also at Hieron's son, Deinomenes, whose new town has been given a Dorian constitution on the same lines as that favoured by the most renowned Dorians, those who live by mount Taygetus in Laconia (the area in southern Greece in which Sparta was situated) and who originally came as invaders from the region around mount Pindus in north-west Greece and captured the Laconian town Amyclae, near

2. He suffered from gallstones, and died three years later.

3. See especially Burton (1962:102f.) and Kirkwood (1982:135).

to which lived the Tyndarids (sons of Tyndareus), i.e. the demi-gods Castor and Pollux, who rode white horses. (The Greek people called the Dorians consisted of three tribes, one descended from Hyllus, who was one of the “Heraclids” = sons of Heracles, and the other two descended from Pamphylus and Dymas, who were sons of Aegimius.) At 67ff. the author proceeds to pray to the son of Cronus, Zeus, who is the “fulfiller” because he has the power to bring prayers to pass: may the people and rulers of the city of Etna, through which the river Amenas ran, always enjoy prosperity and glory like that of the Dorians who settled in Laconia, and may Zeus help Hieron (the “chief” of 69 who will instruct his son) ensure peace for the citizens of Etna. This state is defined as being untroubled by the Phoenicians, i.e. the troops of the Phoenician colony Carthage, in north Africa, and the Etruscans, a people of Italy; and that leads into lines on the unsuccessful barbarian onslaught on the Greeks of Sicily and the mainland. Pindar there touches on four battles: at Cyme in 474 B.C. Hieron, “Syracuse’s king”, routed the arrogant and violent Etruscans, making them mourn their losses of ships and men; off Salamis, an island close to Athens, in 480 B.C. the mainland Greeks (largely thanks to Athens) defeated the fleet of the Persians (or Medes); and at Plataea, near mount Cithaeron in mid-Greece, in 479 B.C. they defeated the Persian army in what was mainly a Spartan triumph; and in 480 B.C. at Himera, a Sicilian city on the banks of the river Himeras, the Carthaginians were beaten by Hieron and his brothers (= “the Deinomenids”: their father, like Hieron’s son, was named Deinomenes).

C (81–100): Our poet ceases his eulogy of the Sicilian with the observation that due measure is desirable; his many themes must be drawn together in an ode that is tightly structured and of reasonable length, because of the danger of boring his audience (by going on for too long) and making them envious (by extolling Hieron’s successes); however, it is better to be envied (for being successful and celebrated) than pitied (for being neither), and so a king should not refrain from doing splendid deeds. At 86ff. Pindar lists various splendid deeds which are ways of attaining such an enviable state: be a just ruler, be truthful, watch what you say and do (any small, or indiscreet, word will be made much of, and/or will carry much weight, since it comes from you; and there are many to testify to your conduct), “don’t let your mood lose its bloom”, which I think means that the disposition should continue to be attractive and retain the various qualities of vigorous, blooming youth; always be liberal in your expenditure, avoiding frugality, since a fine reputation alone ensures one a place in historical accounts and poetry. To illustrate this last point the author cites the examples of Croesus, the virtuous ruler of Lydia (in Asia Minor) from 560 to 546 B.C., who is still celebrated, and Phalaris, an evil Sicilian tyrant who reigned about a hundred years before this poem was composed and used to roast his enemies alive in a bronze bull, who is reviled and is not a theme for song. The ode ends by underlining the desirability of prosperity and a good name, especially in conjunction.

Though an epinikion, *Pythian I* in several respects represents a bold and fresh

break from the conventions of the genre. Certainly the victor and his family receive adequate handling, and moralizing abounds, but the nearest thing to the customary narration of a myth at length is the (half factual) account of Typhos at 13ff.; that description comes at an unusually early stage rather than in the middle, and, strikingly and stressfully, the central part of the victory-song is occupied instead by praise of Hieron and good wishes; so too, although the win with the chariot is covered (and as it is not mentioned until surprisingly late in the ode, we expect its appearance more urgently), it is not described in much detail and is presented as just one of the tyrant's many achievements and one which is a good omen for the city of Etna rather than as something really remarkable in itself. In fact, there is much else here, taking the piece out of the sphere of athletics on to other and loftier matters, and making for an impressively wide scope and great diversity of contents – extensive and varied laudation of Hieron, glorification of Etna, prayers, advice, myth and history, past and present and future, heaven and earth and the underworld, gods and demigods and men, Greeks and barbarians, war and peace, melody and cacophony, fire and water, the sacking of one city and the founding of another, and so on. But all these disparate items are coherently brought together and hinge around one thing in particular – the new town of Etna – and that rather than the Pythian win is the real fulcrum of the whole epinikion: the myths, maxims, entreaties, personal references and various minor details are all related to Etna and the government of Etna, as an examination of the main purport or “message” will show.

Several passages make it clear that this recently established city is very much in the poet's thoughts and that his advice is relevant to the management of it (see 30ff., 37ff., 60ff., 67 ff.), so that obviously his injunctions are directed at the ruler(s) of Etna. Working by way of contrast and illustration, essentially Pindar is holding out in connection with the governing of the town a desirable course with its rewards and an undesirable course with its punishments. Baldly stated his message is that goodness and great, preferably peaceful, achievements should be aimed at (for they result in prosperity, praise and glory), and evil and the illegitimate use of force are to be avoided (since they lead to disaster, revilement and infamy). As examples of the latter type of conduct and its outcome he cites Typhos, the Etruscans, the Carthaginians (“Phoenicians”), the Persians and Phalaris; to exemplify the former he employs Croesus and Hieron (the Sicilian tyrant's exploits so far have been to a large extent martial ones, but our poet makes it clear that this was a legitimate, and indeed commendable, use of force at 47ff. and 71ff. and expresses the hope at 69ff. that henceforth it will not prove to be necessary).

The above is a plain and prosaic summary; in the poem, engagingly, the whole message only comes together gradually, with different strands of it appearing in succeeding sections. So, at 1–12 peace is shown in a favourable light, especially as something to be found among the gods themselves, while in 13–28 wickedness and violence are represented by the monstrous Typhos, who is hated by Zeus, and are thus shown to be unattractive; they also result

in calamity – Typhos’ defeat and painful imprisonment in Tartarus. (Note that in these sections even deities are capable of resorting to force, but righteously (to quell Typhos), so that there is divine justification for Hieron’s acts of war.) At 29–40, given what precedes, the opening prayer is, amongst other things, an implicit recommendation to reject all that Typhos stands for, since he certainly did not find favour with Zeus; also in those lines a great deed, the Pythian victory, is connected with esteem and is praised (by the poet), and Pindar wishes that Etna will manage similar feats and so win fame. Again, in 41–45 and 46–57, outstanding exploits such as Hieron’s are seen to deserve and gain eulogy (from Pindar) and to lead to honour (49); and prosperity is associated with Hieron, the achiever (compare the Dorians in 66), and is ascribed to god, who is presumably rewarding the king for his various merits. At 58–66 the virtues of freedom and lawfulness are clearly presented in a positive way, like the exploit of the Dorians in Laconia, which resulted in glory (66) and (together with the king’s success in the Pythian Games, 59) here receives honourable mention. In the next section (67–80) the poet wishes on Etna renown and prosperity similar to that of the Laconian Dorians and then immediately, and significantly, goes on to talk about justice and peace (70). In addition here the wrongful employment of force by the barbarians is punished by catastrophe and censure (by Pindar), whereas Hieron’s deeds are given an accolade by the poet, who actually has to pull himself up short (81ff.). In the final section numerous qualities are recommended and are said to get as their recompense approbation and fame (90–94), while Phalaris’ conduct earns only abuse and infamy, and at the very end the desirability of prosperity and celebrity is stressed.

There is a further noteworthy aspect of the message, one which obviously appealed to Pindar the poet and musician. He associates and equates peace with harmonious concord of sound and violence with unharmonious discord. Thus the melodious lyre encourages peace at 1ff., while these instruments reject the brutal Phalaris as a theme at 97f., and the pacific state is itself described as harmonious in 70; the (concordant) music of the Muses’ voices is repellent to the forces of violence such as Typhos (13ff.), and these forces at 21, 24 and 72 produce cacophonous noises, which are presumably signs of their discordant natures.

One final detail in this regard needs to be considered, and that is the question of the person or persons at whom the message in general and lines 85ff. in particular are aimed. This is a matter of some controversy, and the problem cannot be solved with certainty, largely because Pindar himself is not specific. He makes a point of introducing Deinomenes and stressing the poem’s connection with him at 58–60, and his advice is certainly relevant to a young new king. But this is an epinikion for Hieron and it would be strange if he were not in the author’s mind for most of the piece and was entirely forgotten at its end. In addition, the admonitions have relevance for any king, Hieron

included⁴, and he too is said to be involved in the ruling of Etna and in fact appears as the predominant partner at 69f. Of course, it might well have seemed somewhat impolitic to lecture Hieron, and that consideration could explain the poet's imprecision: this vagueness maybe a dexterous way of instructing the father as well as the son without giving offence. Pindar is also careful to cite his patron as someone who is already following the correct course, so that the implication would be merely that he should carry on, and with god's help no longer need to wage war.

As well as not upsetting Hieron, the author naturally tries also to please and interest and entertain him, by numerous means. The Sicilian's many achievements are celebrated and dignified by a long ode of great grandeur, and there are extensive good wishes too and glorification of Etna. Pindar also employs for the same ends his various poetic skills in an epinikion which has a broad sweep and an impressive control of overall structure, combines sublimity of subject-matter with solemnity and richness of diction, and is further distinguished by powerful imagery and vivid description. A detailed examination of the piece should highlight all these points.

Lines 1–12 are manifestly designed to seize the listener's attention from the outset. They are intriguing (their relevance to the victory-song is not immediately apparent) and they depict a scene of splendour and enchantment set on Olympus itself as the very deities of song put on a magical performance with the golden lyre (which contrasts with the violet hair of the Muses; there are also graphic touches in the quivering of the lyre's strings and the surging of the eagle's back). This passage also acts as an introduction to much of what follows. Various words and minor motifs here are taken up later (see below), and some of the more important elements also make their first appearance here – peace, war, harmonious concord, mythology and the gods. More subtly, Apollo foreshadows Hieron's win in the Pythian Games, which were held in honour of that deity; the activities of Apollo and the Muses parallel the celebration of the victory by Pindar and his chorus of dancers accompanied by the lyre; and Zeus with his might for the moment held in check⁵ corresponds to the earthly king. The personification and shifting mixture of metaphors in these lines also add to their impact, as the lyre in rapid succession quenches, pours a dark-faced cloud of sleep, sends out gusts of sound which make the eagle's back ripple like water overwhelmed by winds⁶, shoots shafts of music and bewitches.

4. Particularly if he was guilty of the faults ascribed to him by ancient authors: for these see Burton (1962:104).

5. Pindar's vignette may have been meant as an apt and gratifying allusion to a coin struck to commemorate the foundation of Etna showing Zeus, his thunderbolt and eagle: see Burton (1962:95f.).

6. If that is in fact the image here (see note 1 above). I opt for this interpretation because it provides a coherent and unified picture, but other senses for *ταρᾶς ὑπᾶτοι* (my "by your gusts") and *κατασχόμενος* (my "he is overwhelmed") may co-exist or even be the ones intended primarily by the author.

Pindar does not relax his grip on his audience in the next section (13–28); if anything, he tightens it. Initially one is just as puzzled over the reason for the inclusion of these lines in the ode; there is a startling switch of scene and mood here and there are many contrasts with 1–12, although the allusions to the Muses singing and to Zeus in 13f. do pick up the preceding verses; and there is also the sombre picture of Typhos enduring his terrible torment in Tartarus and the dramatic depiction of Etna erupting. As has already been pointed out, this passage represents the mythical narrative in the ode, and the myth here is doubly apposite: in connection with the overall message, Typhos is the first of the figures that represent wickedness and violence in the poem (and the mention of Sicily, Cyme and his birthplace in Asia Minor connects him with the barbarians at 71ff.); and the references to Sicily, Etna and Cyme (compare 72ff.) are also geographical links with Hieron and subtly lead up to his appearance at 31 (so too Zeus' subduing of Typhos is parallel to the Sicilian's defeat of brutal and evil enemies later). The epinikion's legendary portion has an enlivening factual core, and because of those lines on the mountain it would always be a visual symbol and reminder of the poet's precepts for the rulers of the nearby town. The eruption itself is awesome, as Pindar stresses, and his description of it is vivid: it is detailed, appeals to all the senses, rather strikingly, if aptly, applies to fire terms normally used of water (with a very different effect to that of the liquid imagery in the ode's opening), contains much antithesis which makes details stand out more sharply, and (in a section which is generally noteworthy for forceful sound-effects) has extensive onomatopoeia in the opinion of many scholars (the Greek of 21–24 is as follows: *tās erēūgontāi men aplātōū pyros hagnotatāi/ ek mychōn pāgāi; potamōi d'hāmerāisin men procheonti rhoon kapnōū/ āithōn'all'en orphnāisin petrās/ phōinissa kylindomenā phlox es bathēian pherēi pontōū plaka syn patagōi*).

At 29–40 the poet begins by breaking away from the mythical narrative, but in so doing glides from mount Etna and Typhos' punishment, imposed by Zeus, to Zeus, who frequently visits the mountain. In the course of this appeal to the god comes what the audience has been waiting for all along – Hieron's victory – and it and the tyrant are duly lauded. Then with a sudden switch to a nautical comparison the win in the chariot race is viewed as an omen for the future success and reputation of the city of Etna. The section closes, as it opened, with an emphatically expressed prayer for favour – this time to Apollo, who is carefully accorded an honorific address.

Next comes a short bridge-passage (41–45) which explains the reason for the previous appeal (the echo of “men” (40) in “man” (43) also facilitates transition) and leads into the encomium of Hieron in the next section, not only by announcing the author's intention to extol his patron but also by referring to might and a weapon. Appropriately enough in an epinikion, Pindar here introduces a metaphor taken from athletics. Unfortunately

interpretation of it is disputed⁷, but the gist is probably as follows: likening his celebration of the tyrant to a javelin, the poet says that he wants to fling it far, surpassing opponents (i.e. his praise is to be lengthy and superior to that of others), but in attempting this he hopes to avoid the danger of hurling the javelin out of the lists, of making an excessively long cast and/or propelling the weapon outside the lateral limits of the throwing-area (i.e. he does not want his words of approbation to go on too long and/or be wide of the mark). The image is enlivened by the detail in and audacious application of “bronze-cheeked” in 44: Homer had employed this compound adjective when speaking of helmets, but here our poet transfers it to a javelin, presumably thinking of the bronze head with its two sides.

Lines 46–57 duly progress to the promised panegyric, and smoothly “by the hand of god” (48) recalls “gods” in 41 and “hand” in 44 (similarly if Pindar did have in mind a straight throw in 44f. that would be resumed in “guide straight” in 46). In between extravagant wishes for the continuation of Hieron’s prosperity his military exploits are covered. The compliments there to him, and incidentally his brothers, climax in several lines comparing Hieron to Philoctetes, one of the great heroes (and epic language underlines his epic status), the one who was responsible for the fall of Troy itself (the marked alliteration in 54 seems to bring out the drama: *hos Priamōio polin persen, telēūtāsen te ponōūs Danaōīs*). Most obviously the Sicilian resembles Philoctetes in that both bravely fought when ill and overcame their pain. But the author also points to the importance of the hero’s role in bringing about the downfall of Troy and successfully ending the laborious campaign, and so there is probably a suggestion that Hieron’s role was of like importance. More problematical is the phrase “through compulsion even a grand personage fawned for his friendship”. Whether the word “his” denotes Hieron or Philoctetes, to whom Pindar’s patron is presumably likened in this respect too, it would appear that some person or persons fawned on the king – **perhaps** the defeated tyrant Thrasydaeus, if the allusion here is to the battle of Acragas, as was suggested in the résumé above⁸.

The ensuing lines (58–66) commence with another lively switch as the poet turns to Deinomenes. But the transition is not harsh: 58f. represents another appeal to heaven, like 56f., and Pindar moves from the father (56f.) to the son, almost immediately re-introducing the father, with another reference to the chariot race and then obvious approval for the constitution he has provided for Etna. The poem dwells for a while on the Dorians, emphasizing their renown and what they have achieved, with famous names from their history ringing out. The poet’s own pride comes through clearly here (Pindar

7. See in particular Ellsworth (1973:293ff.).

8. On the vexed question of who fawned on Hieron see Bowra (1964:132f.), Burton (1962:102), Farnell (1930–32:112) and Kirkwood (1982:135).

was himself a Dorian), but he is also enhancing Etna's status by setting it firmly within its Dorian traditions, and the lines are variously relevant to his overall message as well (see above).

The next section (67–80) follows on directly from 65 and 66: “men’s words” (67) and “such luck” (68) take up the prosperity, glory and fame in 66, and “always” is repeated (65 and 67). Pindar starts with yet another gratifying entreaty, the longest so far (which makes for a crescendo effect), and, like the first (at 29ff.), addressed to Zeus. That shades easily into still more celebration of Hieron; as in 48, his brothers are included (79), so that the whole dynasty is honoured, but again the real emphasis is on Hieron. The representatives of violence and immorality reappear (discordant noise, disaster and “foe” (80, compare 16) are further links with Typhos), as the author presents his patron as one of the saviours of Greece from barbarism and slavery and puts his doings, at sea and on land, in the West on a par with the two greatest battles, at sea and on land, fought by the Greeks of the mainland during the invasion of Xerxes, highlighting the similarity by verbal means – “met with defeat” in 78 and 80. So too at 70ff. there are two long sentences which both climax in Hieron’s military triumphs; of the four battles listed there his are deliberately placed at the beginning and end and are handled in more detail and at greater length; and there is a definite elevation of diction, with epic words and phrases employed to suggest epic feats.

Another bridge-passage occurs at 81–86 (“... deeds”) as Pindar suddenly, but with a logical explanation, stops extolling the king and glides to the precepts that begin in the second half of 86 (for the progression of thought see the résumé). Here, of course, there is a flattering implication that the poet could go on much longer in his commendation of his patron. The various images and the pithy “envy before pity” (*kresson gar ôiktirmôû phthonos*) are intended to add interest to this brief transitional section.

The ode’s conclusion (86–100) opens by adding injunctions to the one at 85f. The list of maxims is given impact by the brisk vigour of the short sentences and clauses with frequent asyndeton and by the mixture of (often memorable and intriguing) imagery. Then come two models of kingship. Croesus is well chosen and unobtrusively incorporated: he picks up the precepts as a good man who possesses qualities such as those recommended there, and also the glory mentioned at 92f.; with regard to the overall message he exemplifies the correct course of action and its rewards; and he is also apposite to the poem’s occasion- the triumph in the Pythian Games – because of his connections with Apollo and Delphi (see Bacchylides 3.17ff., 23ff., 58ff.). Phalaris was also a good choice: significantly he is a Sicilian example; he is shown to be really detestable, particularly in contrast to Croesus (note the harsh alliteration in line 95 of the Greek: *ton de tâûrôi chalkeôi kâûtêra nêlea noon*); and Pindar emphasizes and lingers on his well-deserved fate of being hated and rejected. Phalaris is the last of the evil and brutal characters in the piece, and he is

connected with the earlier ones by the elements of fire, hostility and unpleasant sound (95). The author neatly concludes his epinikion with two lines that aptly contain imagery taken from athletics, put in a stressful position and play up the attractiveness of the rewards to be gained from following his advice, and provide a sonorous close (in the Greek: *to de pathēin ēu prōton aēthlōn; ēu d'akōuēn deūterā moīr'*; *amphoterōisi d'anēr/ hos an enkyrsēi kāi helēi, stephanon hypsiston dedektāi*).

Something else that rounds off the ode elegantly is the ring-composition: the first and last sections have in common numerous words (“hear” in 90 and 2, “sweet” in 90 and 8, “overwhelm” in 95 and 9, “lyre” in 97 and 1, “both” in 100 and 6) and details (the rulers at 94ff. recall the king of birds in 7; the burning, bronze and bull in 96 take up the fire in 6, gold in 1 and eagle in 6; and the crown, i.e. garland, in 100 calls to mind the violet of 2). In fact, the structure deserves still more comment since the victory-song’s massive architecture is one of its outstanding features. The same kind of thematic and/or verbal rings are evident within all of the preceding sections except for the two bridges (41–45 and 81–86)⁹. The care with which transitions are effected has already been demonstrated. Furthermore the author brings together the huge mass of disparate material into one unified entity by various means – the fulcrum, i.e. the government of Etna, discussed above, the spacing of the different parts of the message, extensive praise of Hieron, frequent prayers and wishes, the symbol of the lyre (the instrument figures in the text at 1 and 97, and a lyre would have been actually used by Pindar to accompany his singing of the poem) and the repetition throughout the course of the whole ode of many words and lesser motifs¹⁰ (for instance, “man”, “god”, “crown”, “sea”, “ship”, “deep”, “hear”, “love”, “friend/friendly/friendship”, “fame/famed/famous”; and items such as weapons, fire, mountains, animals, kings, liquids and widely divergent sounds)¹¹.

It is interesting and instructive to compare and contrast Bacchylides Ode 3, for which see Murgatroyd (1986:1ff.)¹².

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9. It is largely because of the presence of these frames that I have divided up the poem as I have. Some critics have different views on the divisions at 58ff.
 10. Because of changes of meaning I have been unable to catch all the echoes of words in the Greek, but I have tried to compensate by allowing in the English minor repetitions not present in the original. For (at times over-enthusiastic) discussion of such verbal and thematic iteration and the accompanying contrasts and correspondences see Skulsky (1975:8ff.) and Lefkowitz (1976:105ff.).
 11. A word on the metre: the ode is made up of five triads (groups of three stanzas); each triad consists of a pair of 6-line stanzas which both have the same metrical scheme overall (A), followed by a third stanza (of 8 lines) which has a different metrical pattern (B), so that in the course of the 100 verses the sequence is AAB, AAB, AAB, AAB, AAB. I have reflected this in the syllabic verse of my translation.
 12. I also wish to place on record here a general debt to four important works on Pindar and to recommend them to readers. The works are: Bundy (1962), Schadewaldt (1928), Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1922) and Young (1968).

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