This immensely important topic touches at least three themes: one is Pindar’s place in literary history, the second is the real nature of Callimachus’ literary ambition, and the third is the literary tradition that reached the Romans from Alexandria.

I

Pindar’s Muse has often found herself in uncongenial company. The difficulties of his supposedly sublime language and of a dialect which scholars like to term “Doric,” the allusiveness, the apparently casual and inconsequential interjections, the datedness of the athletic ideal—all these features have secured his poems entry to a literary limbo which they have shared with dreary official manifestos or rhapsodic gush. Readers of Lebrun or Tennyson will understand the point.¹

A recent study has argued that a truer appreciation of Pindar’s art associates the odes with the spirit of Comus, carnival.² A victory was an occasion for family and civic rejoicing. Pindar’s patrons had done something public. Their reward was public recognition. In Greek society, this recognition took predetermined forms. It is on these forms that Pindar built. He spells this out quite clearly by his


continual use of the Zoµ- root. In particular, the programmatic declaration in Olympian 3 (vv. 4–9) unites both komic and verbal aspects of the poet’s art as the most immediately recoverable parts of the garland that constitutes his song.

Laughter may be uncomfortably close to tears. The art of our age has made us familiar with the melancholy clown (Picasso, Rouault). Franz Dornseiff speaks of Pindar, along with Job, and another “comic” author, Dante, as one of the “great outsiders” of civilization. 3 If this is true, it is apparent that it is simply another way of saying that Pindar felt the isolation imposed on any artist with particular sensitivity, and Dornseiff’s list is proof that, though prophets may lack honor, they do not lack influence. In Pindar’s case however there has been a tendency to associate what has been seen as his outsider status with a belief in his marginal relevance to the mainstream of Greek poetry, and this in turn implies that from the broad current of the European tradition he is hardly visible. 4

Such a view could be shown to be wrong by a simple enumeration of references to Pindar in later centuries. Callimachus tried to revive precisely the Pindaric epinician. Virgil and Horace imitated him. The Augustan elegists borrowed from his imagery. St. Gregory Nazianzen still remembers a tag. 5 But the essence of Pindaric influence does not lie in externals. Pindar is important because, with consummate genius, he exploited the personal art of the lyric at the beginning of a period when the person was becoming all-important. He has classical rank because he canonized a class.

This argument is contradicted by the widely held modern notion that Pindar, with Simonides and Bacchylides, represents a style of public, choral lyric in the fifth century which must be sharply distinguished from the older private and personal monody of poets like Sappho and Alcaeus. Horace perhaps lends color to some such distinction. His master is Alcaeus, while Pindar stands at the unattain-

3 Pindaros Stil (Berlin 1921), p. 73.


5 For Pindar and Gregory Nazianzen see Auth. Pal. VIII. 220. At Auth. Pal. IX. 175 Palladas sells both Pindar and Callimachus. The two are associated again by Tertullian, de Corona 7. When the first modern edition of Pindar appeared at Venice in 1513, the two poets were again bound together. Cf. Milton’s “Those magnifick Odes and Hymns, wherein Pindaros and Callimachus are in most things worthy . . .” (The Reason of Church Government urg’d against Prelaty, 1641).
able limit. But, even in Horace, the distinction is not to be pressed. Horace does in fact pindarize, and Alcaeus cannot be so private if he serves as a model for the Roman freedman’s son promoted to vatic dignity. In the context of more general literary history, if it is foolish to ignore the conventions that overlie the supposedly private feelings of Sappho, it is equally foolish to concentrate on the conventions found in Pindar to the exclusion of the private feelings which may be supposed in him also. A man looks at life differently from a woman, but that is hardly the basis for a demarcation between two types of lyric. All these poets took pre-literary forms and interpreted them in literature.

Pindar has been dismissed as no great thinker, even though his vocabulary at least shows traces of the revolution taking place in his day. Study shows that a number of themes constantly recur in the odes: god and man; achievement and idleness; individual, family, city; light and darkness; fame and obscurity; poet and posterity; time and eternity. This is no token of intellectual poverty. Some of the greatest writers have composed essentially the same work all their lives. But it is the token of polar thinking, and polar thinking is the hallmark of “pathetic” structure. Here lies the secret of Pindar’s classical supremacy. Because he was an observer at the feast, because he clung to a belief in the testing value of action rather than wordy debate, because his art was threatened with extinction by social and other changes, his poetry received an emotional impulse which drove it to the heights, and paradoxically made it the vehicle of the very individualism it sought to combat.

The tendency of the human heart to oscillate between contrasting extremes under emotional stress scarcely needs confirmation. At a

6 The “personal” beginning to every kind of poetry is always what F. Schleiermacher calls its Keimentschluss: Pindar’s Art (above, note 2), pp. 13 and 17. Obviously the distinction between monody and chorody, whatever its intrinsic worth, had no influence on the formation of the Alexandrian canon of “Pindarus novemque lyrici.” N. S. Greenbaum remarks in Yazyk drevnegrecheskoy khorovoy lyriki (Pindar) (Kishinev 1973), p. 92, that the language of Pindar’s epinicians in particular seems to make more use of Aeolic elements than his other poems, i.e. it latches onto the so-called personal tradition.

certain stage of oscillation, a phenomenon occurs which has been variously described as a *catharsis*, a *Durchbruch* or "breakthrough," a "leap into another dimension." The characteristic feature of the agitated and antithetical language in which all this finds expression is its desire to communicate feeling rather than the bald information that would satisfy cold curiosity. Such speech is in a hurry (*Semper ad eventum festinat* in Horace's phrase). What it says therefore will be selected as well as polarized; just enough will be expressed to lead up to the breakthrough, which will also be a break-off. The poet will leave his emotionally charged picture before our imagination as he draws out in *gnomai* its religious significance, as he perhaps begins to speak of his own role or that of his patrons. The explanation is that, once he has established the effect that he sought, he can confidently leave his audience to elaborate its details, indeed he must allow something for them to do in this way if they are to be involved with his poetry. A "bitty," staccato, impressionistic manner, far from being a defect, is absolutely basic to this type of writing.  

The leap into another dimension will not however be a simple matter of interrupting the flow of narrative. It is a term that applies to many levels of lyric art. At a very minor level it explains, for example, why Pindar personifies abstractions, or speaks of one sense in language appropriate to another. At a major level, it explains the poet's interest in both myth and music.

Myth is the shaky ladder by which the human climbs into eternity. Pindar's use of this device, shared with Plato, has often been appreciated but perhaps less often understood. Myth is for him not only decoration, and not only amusement. It is the evocation of a universally valid though only partially apprehended order, with which the temporal is briefly and incongruously united. This in itself makes the *Grundgedanke* of burning significance in those odes that contain a myth. Why *this* myth? And why, within the penumbra of incommensurability, *these* details?

Music is the means that raises the spoken word beyond itself into a dimension where emotion can enjoy untrammelled range. Under the pressure of emotion we repeat ourselves, since we are not primarily communicating what happened, but rather the intensity of our feelings about it. It is why repetition is music's most characteristic procedure, and why Pindar writes strophes.

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9 Cf. Theophrastus, quoted by Demetrius, *De Eloc.* 226; Callimachus fr. 57 Pl. (now attributed to the "Victoria Berenices").
An analysis which forgets that in Pindar the word constantly breaks through to more than spoken resonance, and doubly so where it may have been reinforced by some special effect in the music or the dance, can be no analysis at all.\(^{10}\) The poetry in fact consists basically of these two polarities: masses of words are deployed and articulated by an emotionally loaded traffic baton, the poet’s lyre or flute. These words occur in the order of pathetic discourse, and acquire a further pathos from being sung.\(^{11}\)

No list of similarities therefore between one ode and another, whether by the same poet or someone else, can really answer the problem posed by each unique poem. The structuralist effort to find an archetypal pattern in the epinicians is legitimate. But, like all this neo-Kantianism, it runs the risk of misunderstanding its founder’s doctrine. Kant believed in the epistemological function of the categories, but he also believed that, unfertilized by contact with the schemes, the categories must remain barren shells. In the tension between the universal and the particular is where the poetry lies.\(^{12}\)

If we had the kind of conductor’s score that Pindar prepared, it would have contained his text, plus musical annotation, plus marks of expression, dynamics and rhythm to be a guide to the presenters. Within a given ode, certain words would enjoy a particular prominence. Thematically interlaced, they would in themselves be a many-hued garland for their recipient. But they would by no means exhaust the significance of their poem. That rich context of symbol and music, image and echo, narrative and reflection, sobriety and laughter forever eludes the straining ear.

In the history of any art, tradition is an ambiguous word. Brahms is indebted to Beethoven and Bach. But who could deduce the work of any one of these masters from a study of the other two? Who could expect to find in later literature an exact replica of Pindar? But who would argue from that absence to complete absence?

Commentators both ancient and modern have been impressed by


\(^{11}\) The musical resonance of the poems, now lost (but not wholly), is especially attested by O. 3. 8 and P. 1. 2–4.

\(^{12}\) This is where “topos” criticism is particularly defective. What interests us can never be merely what Pindar shares with others, but rather what makes him a unique poet, and each ode a unique poem. See the article by Yu. Tynianov in *Théorie de la littérature*, ed. T. Todorov (Paris 1965), pp. 120–37, “De l’évolution littéraire.”
Pindar’s apparent kinship with the epideictic orator. A far more impressive case might be made out for his resemblance to Plato. His relevance to poetry after his time would be this: at the moment when blandly naive, “objective” narrative technique, whether on mythical or historical themes, was becoming impossible, he offered the pattern for an emotionally charged, pathetic structure, which could support all the weight and balance of the poet’s own personality. To a poetry that could no longer expect musical accompaniment, he showed how to find the lyrical overbalance into the transrational, and in particular he showed this extra dimension to the sophisticated epic.

This makes the study of Pindar’s myths crucial. They are not ragged specimens of inconsequential tale-telling by a poet whose chief interests lay elsewhere. They are not incidental to literary history. They exhibit on the contrary the classical form of what is so often supposed to be post- or even anti-classical.

This was already forgotten in antiquity. The eleventh Pythian, for example, addressed by Pindar to a Theban victor, is a peculiarly interesting case. What can the bloody tale of Agamemnon’s murder by his wife, who is in turn murdered by her own son, have to do with a victory in the boys’ footrace? “He has elaborated the encomium well enough,” remarks an ancient dominic drily, “but after that his digression is quite inappropriate to the occasion.”

This is a good example of the overlaying of the living response to Pindar’s real tradition by rhetorical catchwords, not least in its failure to understand how Pindar uses the word encomium himself. What indeed in the first Olympian has the sin of Tantalus to do with Hiero’s victory? What an unfortunate note to strike in a poem of celebration, and how much the poet appears conscious of his and our embarrassment! The way out of that “embarrassment,” which is of course simply a poetic feint, lies in understanding that Pindar’s art is essentially one of antithesis. Tantalus and Pelops are juxtaposed

because life is a matter of choices, and the Tantalus myth is altered, not because Pindar really cares to censor the current version (which he presupposes), but because the version he substitutes gives him the chance to point his moral more sharply. Is there a similar juxtaposition of opposites in the eleventh Pythian?

There is. The murder of Agamemnon and the priestess bride of Apollo whom he has forced to serve his lust is linked with the destruction of Troy by the very periphrasis used for Cassandra, Δωδεκάνοια κόραν Πριάμου (19). Both city and king are ultimately destroyed by sisters, Clytaemnestra and Helen. Private mischief has public consequences. It is a truth evident in the roughly contemporary second Pythian (30 ff.), and of which the civic body needs continual reminding.

But all individual action is not necessarily mischief. As in the first Olympian, there is a choice. Clytaemnestra and Helen, the wicked sisters, have brothers, Castor and Polydeuces, models of deferential self-sacrifice, as the ode emphasizes. Their mutual devotion leads them by turns to the shrine on earth where they receive the prayers of their community, and to Olympus. The blind self-seeking of Clytaemnestra led only to the shadowy shore of Acheron.

Once the essentially pathetic structure of Pindar’s version of the stronger Satz is grasped, this ode no longer assumes a place apart in the poet’s achievement. It can be predicted that he is going to use the excuse provided by the need for an exordium, whose actual contents may be quite elastic, to establish a series of motifs, in essence to deploy a number of words, some of which will be taken up again and developed as the poem proceeds. These motifs, recognized by their repetition, are what in essence the poem is about: they form its Grundgedanke.

They will depend for their effect on antithesis. At the opening of the eleventh Pythian, motifs are presented of daughters of Thebes, fair women rewarded by divine status; of Heracles; of Apollo and his prophets; of Harmony, Law and Justice; of a family proving its worth yet again by a noble deed performed for the general glory.

The myth then shatters all this with rude dissonance. A father’s hearth is no longer honored. Instead, a father is butchered (πατρόφαν, 14; πατρός, 17), and only a nurse keeps her upright mind. Daughters of Thebes sang in honor of the god; the daughter of Priam is slain (κόρα, 1; κόρα, 19). Family quarrels, family misdeeds were at the root of the trouble and, when great families go down in this way, the whole community loses an ideal of behavior. The heroines (7) of Thebes are in sharp contrast with the dying hero (31) Agamemnon.
The Theban shrine of Apollo and its prophetic priests are offset by the μάντις κόρα (33: cf. κόρα, 1; μάντις, 6) whose death is directly attributed to Agamemnon and associated with the rape of Troy, fired for Helen and so robbed of its delicacy. Orestes is rescued (we return to the beginning of the story) only to continue its bloody pattern.

Taking back the introduction in this way, negating its values, the mythical narrative (“paramyth”) cannot simply be concerned to tell a tale. Far from being ragged, it has an extremely formal structure (φονευομένου, 17; φοναίς, 37), which makes it all the more surprising that its central section should be occupied, not by narrative at all, but by two rhetorical questions and the poet’s reflection on them.17 What were Clytaemnestra’s motives for her denial of all wifely pity to her husband? Was it the slaughter of Iphigenia by the Euripus, far from her homeland, which stung her to rouse her heavy anger? The Euripus was famous in antiquity for flowing two ways, and this story too has a double application. Agamemnon’s Trojan foray began with the slaughter of his child. It ended with the slaughter of Priam’s child (made into his symbolic last act). Agamemnon’s dead daughter led to dead Priam, to dead Agamemnon and to Priam’s dead daughter. Iphigenia/Cassandra; Agamemnon/Priam; Helen/Clytaemnestra; Castor/Polydeuces; and, it may be added, Thebes/Troy/Amyclae: the carnival motif of pairs and doubles seems particularly visible in this ode, as indeed it will be in the whole later narrative tradition, and not least in the Aeneid.

The second question too has a double relevance. Was it Clytaemnestra’s nightly couchings that inspired her, asks the poet. But in this context Clytaemnestra was hardly the only wife to be led astray by an adulterer. Her sister Helen, who will be mentioned shortly, was just as bad, and in his reflections Pindar himself generalizes Clytaemnestra’s sin in a way which has puzzled commentators who have not understood either the essential ambiguity of the undifferentiated primitive, or the paradigmatic nature of his story.

What is interesting about both questions is that they provoke a social answer (πολίται, 28) from the poet. When greatness decays, he begins, envious meanness is noisy. The line that says this in the second epode (ὁ δὲ χαμηλὰ πνέων ἄφαντον βρέμει, 30)18 contrasts with τρίτον ἐπι στέφανον πατρίδαν βαλόν in the first (v. 14), with τὰ μὲν <ἐν>
Those who believe that Victorianism was discovered in the age of Victoria will be surprised to note how clearly Pindar links this kind of moral looseness with the decline of a civic ideal. The great chieftain's family troubles, his eye for a pretty girl, are matters which nowadays would call from an "official biographer" for a discreet reticence. Like Apollonius Rhodius, like Homer and Virgil, but not we may suppose like the authors of the cyclic, pseudo-Homeric propaganda epic favored by the Telchines, the poet Pindar boldly thrusts the problem of sex and heroism before the attention of his audience. He is not ill-bred or salacious enough to pry into the bedroom for scandal's sake. But he is concerned to point out that such offenses affect more than the offenders. In stripping the homes of the Trojans of their delicacy, Agamemnon particularizes his deadly act on Cassandra. This is the barest realism. But the Trojans themselves had been fired over Helen.\(^19\) The mutual interplay of personal and public sin, of Eros and Ares, prevents any convenient escape into historians' generalities. It is the lesson of the \textit{Aeneid}'s fourth book.

Once the universal relevance of the myth is understood in this way—it teaches that lust is the expense of spirit in a waste of shame—there is no need to look for those detailed allegorical applications which so intrigued older commentators. Immorality upsets public order. Horace will repeat the theme. Both Greek and Roman poet were addressing their own communities. In this sense, both are writing "personal" poetry.\(^20\)

Aware of the harsh home-truths he has been dispensing, the poet concludes his lesson when he has still almost half his poem to write. Putting into play a comic \textit{ego}, he pretends to have been led astray from the proper path. This is exactly that "Alexandrian," self-conscious aspect of his poetry which showed itself as early as the tenth \textit{Pythian} \(^21\) convention which gives notice of being convention, art which knows it is artifice. Has Pindar taken the wrong turning at a crossroads (v. 38)? He is the polar counterpart of Heracles (v. 3), who took the right one \(^22\) Has his skiff been blown off course (vv. 39–40)?

\(^{19}\) Retaining the transmitted πυρωθέντων at v. 33.

\(^{20}\) Pindar is ὅσος ἐν κοινῷ σταλεῖς, \textit{O.} 13. 49.

\(^{21}\) Vv. 51 ff.; \textit{Pindar's Art}, pp. 43–44, 81–82.

\(^{22}\) Modern scholarship on the ancient motif of the "two ways" is listed in Bibliographie zur Antiken Bildersprache, ed. V. Pöschl and others (Heidelberg 1964), p. 584. The idea of a morally dividing τρόπος was, for example, important to the Pythagoreans: E. R.
It is the polar counterpart of all those ships guided aright by Castor and Polydeuces (vv. 61–62). The very phrases in which the poet asserts his predicament cement the two halves of his poem firmly together. Like the Euripus, they flow both back and forth.

As in the first Olympian, though at greater length, the last part of the poem draws together and personalizes the themes presented more largely in his introduction and myth. The family of the victor Thrasydaeus is contrasted with the Atreidæ: its fire is one of glory (v. 45: cf. 33), its gossip (πολυφάτων, v. 47: cf. κακολόγου, 28) one of praise. But the admonitory note creeps back again as the poet, using the “preacher’s I” to identify himself with his young patron, prays for contentment with what is possible and devotion to the common weal. Here, he takes up the reflections of the myth on prosperity, jealousy and the city quite openly, and develops his thought with the help of an antithesis between the political concepts of ἤσυχία and ὀβρίς (v. 55). In the first Olympian, Pelops had to accept his mortality before he could find the only real immortality permissible for a man. In this ode, though both Agamemnon and the victor reach the same dark bound of death (ἀκτᾶν παρ᾽ εὐσκαίον, 21; μέλανα ἰ᾽ ἀν᾽ ἐσχιάν, 5624), one will surely find a fairer fame.

From this challenging reflection Pindar leaps back into the realm of myth, this time not to the cruel bloodiness of the Atreidæ, but to the world of gracious loveliness invoked as the ode began. A stronger note is sounded now, as heroes replace heroines, as the self-sacrificial Castor and Polydeuces replace their murderous and lustful sisters. The surly, muttered gossip of the jealous is drowned by the everlasting music of the poet’s song, bestowed upon those who have deserved it.

The nature of the “personal” element in Pindar’s epinicians is now more visible. The poet does not of course keep a diary in verse. What he says is conditioned by traditional forms of social etiquette and expectations. But how he deploys his material is determined by his personal attitudes and responses. We may guess that, in an ode

Dodds, Plato, Gorgias (Oxford 1959), p. 375. It may have become associated with Heracles in some early χαράβιανς of the type used by Virgil in Aeneid VI: cf. partes ubi se via fundit in ambas, 540. Pindar himself seems already to have developed this theme: Snell-Maehler, Pindarus, Pars II (1975), pp. 109–10 on Threnos VII. However, J. Alpers, Hercules in Bivio (diss. Göttingen 1912), argues that the motif was not known before Prodicus (p. 9).

23 The Dioscuri appear as saviors of mariners as early as Hym. Hom. XXXIII. 7 ff.: cf. Snell-Maehler, op. cit., p. 5 on Isth. fr. 6c.

24 A. Turyu’s text (repr. Oxford 1952) has been followed at v. 56.
addressed by a Theban to a Theban victor at a time of national crisis, these feelings were more than usually engaged. The demand for Solonian moderation in civic affairs is inherited by the poet, shared by him with other moderates in his city, and at the same time part of his personal outlook. The terms "subjective" and "objective" become, on this analysis, rather inapposite. What is important is the unique amalgam.

If the story that Pindar studied under Lasus of Hermione in late sixth-century Athens is true, he may have picked up his Solonian wisdom in the city of its origin. His teacher seems to have been interested in the kind of literary experiment critics label as "decadent." The early twelfth Pythian, the only surviving tribute to a nonathletic victor, paid homage to the civilizing influence of art (τέχνη, v. 6) with the aid of vocabulary (κέπτω, v. 25) and ideas (ἐνοεῖν, v. 22) which anticipate those of Alexandria, and in it Athens was prominent. Were in fact these two great centers of Greek culture closer than has been thought? Did the Alexandrians set Pindar at the head of their lyric canon not only because of the force of his genius, but because they saw in him the outline of a poetic which they were eager to make their own?

Roman Alexandrianizing poets were fond of claiming to be "first," of using what scholars call "primus-language." Pindar uses such language too, of Athene and Terpander, but also of himself. The fourth Pythian looks like a virtuoso effort to make lyric outdo epic. At the climax of its myth (vv. 241 ff.), the poet speaks of the difficulties of gaining the golden fleece even after Aeetes' challenge had been met:

And at once the wondrous child of the sun told of the shining fleece, and where the sword blows of Phrixus had stretched it out. He was hoping that this toil at least would baffle. For it lay in a thicket, and

26 At least according to Rehm in RE 12: 1, col. 888: "Der Hymnus auf Demeter schloss den Buchstaben σ aus, Athen. IX 467a, X 455c, XIV 624e. . . ." We may compare the asigmatic Odyssey of Tryphiodorus and other Byzantine Virtuosenstücke mentioned by A. Lesky, A History of Greek Literature (Eng. tr. J. Willis and C. de Heer, London 1966), pp. 815–16.
clung to the savage jaws of a serpent that in bulk and length outdid a fifty-oared ship finished by blows of iron tools.

The suspense is complete, and the double reference to sword blows and iron blows (vv. 242, 246) guides our imagination towards the expected contest, in which the personified fleece, clinging to the serpent’s jaws, seems itself destined to be an adversary.

This is exactly the critical moment chosen by Pindar to frustrate expectation. Instead of giving an account of the heroic struggle, he blandly digresses to talk about his art:

It is long for me to travel along the cart road, for time presses, and I know a\(^8\) short path: to many others I am a leader in the poet’s craft.

The Alexandrian terms of this remark (μαχαρά, ἡμαξιτόν,\(^{29}\) βοραχύν, πολλοῖοι, σοφίας) would, in Callimachus, provoke irritation. But what we must see is that the breakaway, which is also a breakthrough into another dimension, is itself exactly the short path of which the poet is speaking. While we are impatiently waiting to hear what happened between Jason and the serpent, we reconstruct the story for ourselves. We do the poet’s job for him, presumably to our own satisfaction, and so, when he resumes, he can be content with the baldest of remarks, can indeed displace the narrative emphasis from the struggle, which is dismissed in the single word κτείνε (v. 249), to its aftermath:

He slew the fierce-eyed, spangle-backed snake with arts, O Arcesilas, and stole Medea with herself, the murderess of Pelias, and they plunged into the waters of Ocean and the Red Sea, into the tribe of Lemnian women, murderers of men.

The climaxing apostrophe to Arcesilas follows the static description of the serpent. Only the emphatic verbs opening their clauses (κτείνε, κλέψεν) are provided to trigger our imaginations here. The rest is baffling. Slew it with arts? But whose? Stole Medea with herself? Murderess of Pelias? And how did they get away from Aeetes and his pursuing minions? The central deed of the entire Argonaut adventure is wrapped in obscurity and foreboding (φονών, 250; ἀνδροφόνων, 252). Is this Red Sea perhaps red with blood?

In a brilliant passage L. Dissen long ago set out the differences

\(^{28}\) The τῶν at v. 247 is presumably pregnant rather than diffusive, as in the examples noted in Pindar’s Art, p. 48.

\(^{29}\) Ν. 6, 53–54 (where Pindar follows the cart track) is only in apparent contradiction: ἔχων μελέταν is a crucial qualification, used by Pindar to escape from the trite story.
between the narrative technique of the fourth *Pythian* and that of conventional epic.\textsuperscript{30} Pindar's aim in the myth is to glorify Jason, not to trace the details of a familiar story:

\begin{quote}
Neque enim res et facta ipsorum causa narrat, sed propter id quod docere vult, et movet non multitudine rerum, sed gravitate.
\end{quote}

Dissen is also interested in Pindar's use of antithesis:

\begin{quote}
Mox in oratione publica Iasonis ne de dignitate admirabili dicam, affectus plenus est locus, ubi iuvenis narrat ut olim eum infantem timore tyranni in fascis extulerint quasi mortuum e domo paterna inter eiulatum feminarum. Et observa in fine orationis haec poni, ut aculeos reliquant in animis audientium; post qua discedit continuo ad hos ipsos tam diu non visos parentes. Iamque huic tristi praeteritarum rerum memoriae oppositum est inter eiulatum feminarum, ut par, sed lyricum in ea re ars est ingeniosior.
\end{quote}

*Oppositio*, what Dornseiff was later to call Pindar's *polare Ausdrucksweise*, is a basic feature of pathetic structure, as defined by Eisenstein.

The selectivity of this allusive style, which has its own interest in *aetia*, permits us to see Pindar as the master of an art already Alexandrian. He lends to Callimachus both images and attitude. It is Pindar who prides himself on his own originality, and who rejects the *schoenus*-length of his predecessors' song (*Dithyramb* II, p. 74, Snell–Maehler):

\begin{quote}
Ποίν μὲν ἔρπε σκούντενειά τ’ ἄοιδα
diathēmībōn
καὶ τὸ σᾶν κίβδηλον ἄνθρωποισιν ἀπὸ στομάτων, . . .
\end{quote}

This public literary argumentation has a long history,\textsuperscript{31} but in particular it anticipates the Preface to Callimachus' *Aetia* (vv. 17–18):\textsuperscript{32}

\begin{quote}
ἔλλετε Βασιλείνης ὁλον γένος, αὐθί δὲ τέχνη
χρίνετε, μὴ σχοίνῳ Περσίδι τὴν σοφίν.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{30} *Pindari Carmina* (Gothae et Erfordiae 1830), 1, pp. LIV ff. The quotations are from pp. LVII and LVII–LVIII.

\textsuperscript{31} It is part of the comic *agon*, developed, for example, in the contest between Aeschylus and Euripides in Aristophanes' *Frogs*. Pindar's older Theban contemporary Corinna wrote a poem about two contending mountains: Page, *PMG* 65+. Later it became the troubadours' *tenzone* and was even taken up by Dante into the *Purgatorio* (canto 24): cf. the *Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi*.

\textsuperscript{32} Pindar's rejection of length is also demonstrated by O. 13. 41–42 and 98; *P*. 4. 247 ff.; *P* 8. 29–30; *N*. 4. 33 and 71; *N*. 10. 19; *I*. 1. 60 ff.; fr. 140b.12.
This anticipation must condition our understanding of *Paean* VIIb, printed by Snell–Maehler as:

\[
xελασιμαθ' ὑμνον.
\]

\[
'Ομήρου [δὲ μὴ τοι]πτὸν κατ' ἀμαξίτον
λόντες, ἥλλα ὁλοτριής ἀν' ἵπποις,
\]

At line 12 here, the restoration ἥλλα' contradicts the sense. Pindar cannot urge the avoidance of Homer’s worn cart track, and then go on to recommend his chorus to travel on others’ horses, especially if at vv. 13–14 he told them they have their own chariot. The δὲ restored in v. 11 is quite superfluous, and the imperative in v. 10 is uncertain. If the syntax of the expression in verse 10 triggered the negative οὐ rather than μή, verses 11–12 may have read:

\[
'Ομήρου [μὲν οὐ τοι]πτὸν κατ' ἀμαξίτον
λόντες, ὁ[ῦδ'] ἥλλα ὁλοτριής ἀν' ἵπποις.
\]

With this, the supplement proposed in Snell–Maehler:

\[
ἐπεὶ ὀὔτωι ἐς π]πανόν ἄφια
Μουσαίοιν ἀνέβαλμεν.
\]

coherses very well, and reminds the reader not only of *Aetia*-preface 25 ff. but also of Propertius’ great programmatic elegy at the beginning of Book III, written under the auspices of Callimachus and Philetas, but under the patronage of Apollo and Bacchus.33

II

Callimachus concerned himself directly with the myth on which the fourth *Pythian* is based in his *Iamboi* (fr. 198 Pf.), where he related the victory of Polycles of Aegina in the Hydrophoria, founded in memory of the Argonauts who once landed on that island in search of water. In this instance, it seems plausible to say that he was giving an example of what Aristophanes calls “reduction,” in a play which shows how much “Alexandrian” vocabulary was current in Athens a century after Pindar had been there.34 In an age suspicious of bombast, in which poet and musician had parted company, Callima-

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33 Cf. O. 9, 80–81: εἰςν εὐθηνεῖπξ ἀναγείθεα / πρόσφορος ἐν Μουσίων δίφροι . . . At O. 6, 85–86 water and weaving images are combined: cf. Prop. III. 1, 5–6. Propertius restores the sense of public pomp and pride to imagery he ultimately inherits from Pindar (water drinking, chariot riding and so on), but significantly without abandoning his claim to be the Roman Callimachus.

34 Frogs 941. M. Puelma Piwonka, *Lucilus und Callimachos* (Frankfurt 1949), pp. 323 ff., gives a sympathetic appreciation of what may have been Callimachus’ purpose.
Callimachus still apparently thought that the epinician was relevant. He was perhaps aided by the reflection that the comic spirit of such poetry favored this lightening of its load.

But the epinician also made its appearance in the Aelia, perhaps at the start of the third book. The Nemean victory of Queen Berenice was celebrated in an elegy of suitably Pindaric abruptness, adorned with a myth narrating the foundation of the games. Since this myth contained a section called by modern scholars “Muscipula,” “The Mousetrap,” evidently a certain wit was manifest in its treatment. So too was a novelty reminiscent of the first Olympian.

There was also another elegiac epinician, honoring the victory at the Isthmus of Sosibius. Its date is uncertain, but if this Sosibius was already active in the early years of the third century, it could be that Callimachus actually began his poetic career by experimenting with this type of poetry, perhaps as a means of securing the attention of a powerful patron. He certainly shows awareness of the Pindaric manner (fr. 384. 37–39 Pf.):

\[ \text{άνδρας ὃς ὸν δείσαντες ἑδώκαμεν ἥδυ βοήσα
νηὸν ἐπὶ Γλαυκῆς κύουν ἀγοντι χορῷ}
\]
\[ '\text{Ἀρχιλόχου νικαίον ἐφύμισον'} . . . \]

The masterful use of alliteration and assonance, and the emphatic position of 'Ἀρχιλόχου, are proof of the poet’s genius.

Pindaric too is the emphasis on witness (loc. cit. 48–49):

\[ \text{κεῖνό γε μὴν ἱδον αὐτὸς, ὁ πάρο ποδὶ κάτθετο Νείλου}
\]
\[ \text{νειατῷ, Κασοῦν εἰς ἑπίκομος ἀλα'. . .} \]

Here the victor evidently proceeded in komic fashion as far as the mouth of the Nile to make an offering in the temple of Zeus Casius.

But, although we can see how carefully Callimachus studied the epinician style, both in its mannerisms and in its origins (e.g. its association with the dead, fr. 384. 30 Pf.), these imitations are too

35 The text given in Hugh Lloyd-Jones and Peter Parsons, edd., Supplementum Hellenisticum (Berlin–New York 1983), nos. 254–69, pp. 100 ff., is also discussed by Parsons in Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik 25 (1977), pp. 1 ff.; cf. especially p. 46. Parsons’ suggestion that this epinician elegy at the start of Book III stood in some sort of correlation with the Cona Berenices at the end of Book IV tallies with the sidereal language of N. 2. 11–12. After all, where was the Nemean lion to be seen?

36 See Lloyd-Jones and Parsons, op. cit., p. 134 ad v. 33 on p. 103, οὕχ ὧς ἐδέουσιν: “ex his conicias, Callimachum fabulam novam miram commemorare, immo novissi-mam.”

37 Cf. O. 9. 1, 'Ἀρχιλόχου, 4, κωμύζοντι.

38 Pindar’s Art, p. 6, note 11.

39 Cf. O. M. Freudenberg, Mif i Literatura Drevnosti (Moscow 1978), pp. 54 ff.
fragmentary to allow any very reliable conclusions about structure. If the poet chose to echo Pindar in his programmatic utterances however, we may perhaps look further in his poetry, following a hint already thrown out by Dornseiff. The first Hymn is particularly instructive. Pindar’s imagination was often triggered by a pun, and the second Olympian may be inspired by the proper name Rhea, “flowing.” But so may this Hymn. This might explain, for example, the extraordinary digression at vv. 18 ff., in which the poet’s imagination flashes back to some primeval Greek desert landscape, when the great rivers of later days were still hidden in the bowels of the earth. Rhea’s Moses-like gesture (vv. 30–31) in bringing forth water from the rock parallels her bringing forth of baby Zeus (τόξοιον, v. 16; τέξε, v. 29). In this celebration of the komic theme of parturition and birth, Zeus’ first nurse, Neda, is fittingly commemorated by a stream (vv. 37–41).

The hymn is eventually manipulated more obviously in favor of a laudandus. Ptolemy. The king has indeed already been hinted at in v. 3 (δυναστήρας: cf. vv. 82–83). The pre-eminence accorded to the god by his elders (60 ff.), as it were the Diadochoi of Cronus, mirrors that accorded to his earthly counterpart. It was not the chance of the lot, but merit, which determined the excellence of both.

But can Ptolemy only resemble Zeus when Zeus is no longer an infant? Can the myth of Zeus’ birth, the token of water and fertility that were to transform Azenis into pastoral Arcadia, be “irrelevant” to the encomium, to use the language of Pindar’s ancient critics? It is in fact Pindar’s art which teaches us to look further in Callimachus.

The importance of water in Egypt needs no emphasis. From time immemorial the Pharaohs, whose successors the Ptolemies were, had been lords of the Nile and displayed the symbols of that office. If Rhea’s gesture reminds the modern reader of Moses at Meribah, it must be remembered that, according to one tradition, Moses was “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.” The birth of baby Zeus

40 Pindar’s Stil, p. 85; cf. Die archaische Mythenerzählung (Berlin–Leipzig 1933), pp. 74 ff. and especially p. 77: “Seine (i.e. Callimachus’) Hymnen müssen neu behandelt werden auf ihre Beziehungen zur Chorlyrik.”
41 Pindar’s Art, pp. 166, 176.
43 NT Acts 7:22. Moses’ name is Egyptian. A modern commentary on the Bible tentatively suggests that it could have been Usir-mosis, “Osiris is born”: cf. Ra-moses.
signalled abundance of water for Arcadia. Could not the birth of Ptolemy signal the same for Egypt? Could not the divine child foreshadow the grown champion, exactly as in the first Nemean? Thus the first part of Callimachus’ Hymn would have a connection both with traditional motifs, and, in this particular instance, with the yearnings of the Greek Alexandrian community, locked in its flat and arid prison.

But, like Pindar before him, Callimachus is not content with even this degree of double-entendre. In the first Olympian, a fiction may be observed which calls into question its own status. Callimachus shares Pindar’s self-consciousness. He asks at the start of Hymn I: “Which of the two, father, have told lies?” (v. 7). “The Cretans are always liars!” (v. 8): a tag from Epimenides is enough to settle the question. But poetic lies become important again later in the poem. “Ancient bards were not at all truthful” (v. 60). The old story of the division of earth, sky and underworld by lot must be rejected as silly. “May I tell lies that are likely to persuade the ear of my listener!” (v. 65 ἔφεσαντο, v. 7). The poet is opening himself to the charge that persuasion rather than truth is his aim. Such sophisticated art does not mind. It is consistent with this legerdemain that, although it is Zeus’ deeds which give him superiority (v. 66), the poet refuses, in this hymn to Zeus, to sing of them (v. 92). Evidently they have been sufficiently replaced by what we have heard of the deeds of Ptolemy. Pindar, using δαιδάλλω in the first Olympian both of the false stories he ostensibly rejects and of his own art (vv. 29 and 105), had pointed the way to this ambivalence.

“Ra is born”: see La Sagrada Escritura, 1, Pentateuco, Director Juan Leal S. J. (Madrid 1967), p. 312. Osiris was eventually identified with the Nile god Hapi: H. Bonnet, Realexikon der ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte (Berlin 1952), p. 528. Moses’ striking of the rock to produce water (OT Exodus 17:2 ff., Numbers 20:2 ff.: for the gesture see E. R. Dodds on Euripides, Bacchae 704–05, and Apollonius Rhodius, Argon. IV. 1446) is on both occasions associated with the Israelites’ desire for Egyptian comforts. His response may have been to prove that, like Osiris (see Bonnet’s illustration), he too could pour out water from a rocky cave.

44 Pindar’s Art, p. 72.

45 The spirit of the Arcadian pastoral and its idealized landscape is already lurking in the background to all this. Ptolemy I’s invention of Sarapis (= Osiris / Apis), whose cult image looked like Zeus (H. Idris Bell, Cults and Creeds in Graeco-Roman Egypt, Liverpool 1953, p. 19), may also be an influence at work in Callimachus’ poem. Pindar had already hinted at the equation Zeus / king: Pindar’s Art, pp. 128 and 230. He had also described the huge god whose moving feet caused the flooding of the Nile (fr. 282), a passage that looks like a reminiscence of the Egyptian colossal statues of Rameses II at Abu Simbel.

46 Pindar’s Art, p. 160.

47 A debate still alive as late as Petrarch’s doctrine of poetic veritas: Africa ix. 90 ff.
The lyrical balance of the first Hymn may be seen from this table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>vv.</th>
<th>Prooimion: Zeus' immortality</th>
<th>9 lines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vv. 10-27</td>
<td>His birth. Rhea's search for water</td>
<td>18 lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vv. 28-36</td>
<td>Water found. Neda receives the child</td>
<td>9 lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vv. 37-54</td>
<td>Rhea's thanks. Zeus in Crete</td>
<td>18 lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vv. 55-59</td>
<td>Zeus' privileges</td>
<td>5 lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vv. 60-64</td>
<td>Poetic fictions</td>
<td>5 lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vv. 65-69</td>
<td>Zeus' attributes</td>
<td>5 lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vv. 70-75</td>
<td>His choice of kings</td>
<td>6 lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vv. 76-90</td>
<td>Privileges of kings, especially of Ptolemy</td>
<td>15 lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vv. 91-96</td>
<td>Coda</td>
<td>6 lines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Pindar, the exponent of the αὐστηρὰ ἀρμονία, the individual words counted. For Callimachus, in this first Hymn, it seems that syllables were important:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>vv.</th>
<th>143 scanned syllables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vv. 1-9</td>
<td>143 scanned syllables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vv. 10-27</td>
<td>285 scanned syllables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vv. 28-36</td>
<td>143 scanned syllables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vv. 37-54</td>
<td>285 scanned syllables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vv. 55-75</td>
<td>339 scanned syllables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vv. 76-96</td>
<td>337 scanned syllables</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is even possible that the poet, like Pindar, set important proper names at significant intervals. Between Ζεὖ (v. 7) and Ὄη (v. 10) 53 syllables may be counted, exactly the same number as between Ὄη (v. 10) and Ὄη (v. 13). This Ὄη is then separated by 118 syllables from Ὄη (v. 21), and this Ὄη is followed 116 syllables later by Ὄη (v. 28). Between μῦ (= Rhea, v. 35) and Ζεὖ (v. 43) stand 117 syllables. Between Ζεὖ (v. 46) and Κόνος (v. 53) stand another 117 syllables. 119 syllables divide this Κόνος from Κόνιονσι (v. 61).

We could perhaps already have guessed that in this art, with its word-play, its repetitions, its euphony, in short all the tricks of the Gorganic, but also carnival, repertoire, numerical balances, whether of line or longer verse paragraph, would make themselves felt to the inner ear, and that this felt response would evoke, for both Callimachus and his later admirers whether in Greece or Rome, the atmosphere of music. This constitutes one of the most vivid parts of the Pindaric legacy.

To understand the role of the carnival already in Pindar is to see that even Callimachus' sixth Hymn is in a similar tradition. Like Tantalus, Eryxichthon breaks the rules of social etiquette, and is
appropriately punished by becoming a castout from society, his appetite perpetually unsatisfied. The myth, with its roots in popular folktale, is linked with the main narrative by what at the time of mention looks like a picturesque detail (v. 6)—a typically Pindaric device.\textsuperscript{48} The worshippers paradoxically celebrate the feast of the goddess of earth and grain by fasting, as she herself fasted when in sorrowful search for her daughter. Callimachus ultimately refuses to tell this painful story (v. 17), after he has carefully reminded us of its details, exactly as Pindar refuses to tell the traditional story of Tantalus and Pelops after reminding us of its details (O. 1. 52–53). Erysichthon, who thought he could intrude on nature as appetite dictated, becomes the parody of his own lusts, forced to decline the very good cheer he fancied he was going to enjoy. Eventually, a king’s son, he sits begging at the crossroads. There is a religious truth underlying all the humor.

Distances between certain references to Demeter bear some relationship, provided we return to Pindar’s method of word count and omit μέν, δέ, τε, γε, καί. Whether this more Dorically flavored poem inspired a return to an older technique is uncertain:

\[
\Delta\mu\alpha\tau\varepsilon\hspace{1em} (v. 2) + 42 \text{ words gives } \Delta\mu\alpha\tau\varepsilon\alpha\ (v. 8) \\
\theta\varepsilon\acute{\alpha}\ (v. 29) + 42 \text{ words gives } \Delta\uio\mu\alpha\tau\varepsilon\sigma\zeta\ (v. 36).
\]

The contrast between piety and impiety is made by the Pindaric means of repeated language, in which distances between words also seem to play a part. The goddess did not eat (ἐδεξ, v. 12) and luckless Erysichthon ate more than he wished (ἐδοντι, v. 89). The same point is made with another repeated verb at vv. 16 and 108 (φάγες / ἔφαγεν). The following intervals between words of eating are notable:

\[
\text{ἐδεξ (v. 12) + 24 words gives } \text{φάγες (v. 16)} \\
\text{βόσκε (v. 104) + 24 words gives } \text{ἔφαγεν (v. 108)}.
\]

Compare:

\[
\text{εἰλαπίναν (v. 84) + 24 words gives } \text{ησθιε (v. 88).}
\]

In the poet’s pious prayer, βός (v. 136) echoes βῶν (v. 108; cf. βός, v. 20, βοῦβρωστις, v. 102). Erysichthon, by trespassing onto forbidden territory, is condemned to persist fruitlessly in his offense, like Ugolino in Dante’s Inferno, also part of an instructive comedy. His original sin of greed (δαίτας . . . αἰὲν . . . ὑμαφέας ἄξω, vv. 54–55) becomes his essence. The repetition of δαίς from v. 54 at vv. 63

\textsuperscript{48} Pindar’s Art, p. 157, note 22.
and 69 and at the very end of the myth (v. 115) hammers home the lesson.

Although the text of the poem is damaged, it is possible to discern at least an outline of symmetry as follows:

vv. 1–23 Introduction
vv. 1–6 Start of procession 6 lines
vv. 7–9 Hesperus 3 lines
vv. 10–12 Demeter’s hardships 3 lines
vv. 13–16 Her wanderings 4 lines
vv. 17–23 Her gifts to men 7 lines

vv. 24–115 Myth of Erysichthon
vv. 24–30 Demeter’s grove 7 lines
vv. 31–36 Erysichthon’s onset 6 lines
vv. 37–39 The poplar 3 lines
vv. 40–45 Demeter’s intervention 6 lines
vv. 46–49 Her speech 4 lines
vv. 50–55 Erysichthon’s reply 6 lines
vv. 56–58 Demeter’s reaction 3 lines
vv. 59–64 Her sentence 6 lines
vv. 65–67 Erysichthon’s sickness 3 lines
vv. 68–71 His symptoms 4 lines
vv. 72–75 His parents’ embarrassment 4 lines
vv. 76–82 His mother’s excuses 7 lines
vv. 83–86 Further excuses 4 lines
vv. 87–93 Plight of Erysichthon 7 lines
vv. 94–97 Family grief 4 lines
vv. 98–110 Prayer of Triopas 13 lines
vv. 111–115 Final fate of Erysichthon 5 lines

vv. 116–138 Conclusion
vv. 116–117 The poet’s prayer 2 lines
vv. 118–127 Instruction and assurance 10 lines
vv. 128–133 More instructions 6 lines
vv. 134–138 Final prayer 5 lines

In this scheme, verses 116–17 have been taken as marking the beginning of the conclusion, and not as the end of the myth (as in Pfeiffer). The analogy with Pindaric mannerisms in these lines, such as the use of the first person pronoun (ἐμίν. . . ἐμοι), the renewed invocation of the laudanda, and the prayer, shows that in reality we have a typically Pindaric “second praise.” This may prove that the

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epinician, as Hermann conjectured, originated in the hymn to the gods, and therefore that Pindar sometimes rather awkwardly adapted it to the praise of human victors. But it may also prove, in an age when the distinction between the human and the divine was becoming all too often blurred, that Callimachus took the tricks of the epinician and adapted them to the hymn, and this is where the novelty and piquancy of his achievement may lie.

III

What the Romans took from Greek Alexandria therefore requires far more careful definition than has been customary. They took in the first place an art that was komic, carnivalized, that dislocated experience and expectation in order to estrange perception. This explains the importance of Laevius’ multi-faceted Erotopaegnia, and earlier of the extraordinary medley presented by the satires of Lucilius. It also explains the continuing relevance of Pindar, to Virgil, to Horace, to Propertius, but even, in an earlier generation, to Catullus. Statius still advertises his Pindaric studies. Like the author of the eleventh Pythian, Ovid still sails a poetic skiff.50

But the most powerful impulse given by Pindar was paradoxically towards epic. In the fourth Pythian Pindar deployed an ambition consciously epic in its scope. But even the eleventh Pythian, its myth ringed, questioning, metamorphosing, could hold a lesson for Virgilian narrative technique. The Alexandrians, so often thought to have been interested only in Kleinkunst, in fact communicated a new epic impulse to their Roman disciples, setting it for reasons of their own under the patronage of the Boeotian poet, Hesiod. The Ascraean Georgics, which also pay homage to Pindar in precisely one of their most ambitious and yet most Alexandrian passages, the proem to Book III, were the essential preparation for the Aeneid. These matters of complex literary inheritance have been discussed more fully elsewhere.51

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50 Cf. Curtius, Europäische Literatur etc. (above, note 27), pp. 136 ff. The motif is eventually picked up by Dante.