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ADOPTION AND ALTERITY IN PINDAR

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Note on Transliterations

In this dissertation, I have by and large made use of Hellenized spellings of Greek names and words, except in cases where their Anglicized version has become so customary that the Hellenized spelling would obfuscate my meaning. For instance, I refer to Achilles and Pindar by their anglicized names rather than Akhilleus and Pindaros. In addition, I have tried to transliterate words to reflect Pindar's Doric dialect. Thus, I write *phua* rather than *phuē* and Alkmena rather than Alkmene. Yet, I keep Athena rather than using Athana.

Introduction: The Problem of Alterity

i. The Importance of Alterity to Pindar

> *"…that face facing me, in its expression—in its mortality—summons me, demands me, requires me: as if the invisible death faced by the face of the other—pure alterity, separate, somehow, from any whole—were 'my business.'"*
>
> —Emmanuel Levinas (1999)

> *"…to be (anything, anyone) is always to be following (something, someone), always to be in response to call from something, however nonhuman it may be."*
>
> —Jane Bennett (2010)

> *"To be conscious of oneself to the core is to perceive, at the depths of the self, an Other."*
>
> —Luigi Giussani (1997)

Pindar's "I" is unquestionably the most prominent character in the victory odes and fragments.[1] Occurring over 100 times in the *Odes* alone, it repeatedly stands out in contrast to other characters, clients, and poets of the past. "But I," ἀλλ᾽ἐμοὶ,[2] ἀλλ᾽ἐμὲ,[3] ἐγὼ δὲ,[4] he cries out over and over again. And yet, if the self plays such an important role in Pindar's poetics, the other, that elusive but necessary figure, must as well even if only as the shadow to the radiant brightness of the self. Indeed, the problem of alterity is one that pervades Pindar's poetry both implicitly and explicitly. Writing at the end of the archaic period and the beginning of the classical age, Pindar would have been witness to transformations within his world as powerful and traumatic as the regime shifts and ecological devastation of the 20th century,

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[1] I am not concerned with differentiating Pindar's poetic self from his historical self or of debating whether or not his "I" refers to the poet himself or the individual chorus members. For such debates, see Lefkowitz (1991). I take the "I" within his poetry as a reflection of Pindar as a human person; it strikes me as having a unique character and personality. Whether that person is an accurate representation of how other humans living in the fifth century might have perceived the historical Pindar is impossible for me to judge. I accept him as he presents himself to me.

[2] *O*.1.84.

[3] *O*.8.74.

[4] *N*.3.11.

events which spurred writers like those quoted above to explore what alterity is and how we should respond to it. During Pindar's lifetime, oligarchic coups and tyrannical takeovers punctuate the cities where his clients live.[5] The looming threat of Persian Invasion drives Greek xenophobia and ethnic self identification.[6] Against this backdrop of political upheaval, Pindar as poet stands in stark, self-aware contrast against the more agentive figures of his clients.[7] While they do, Pindar sings. Despite the prominence of his "I," he is also other.

Pindar's alterity emerges in contradistinction to the powerful selves of his aristocratic clients. *Olympian* I, Pindar's best known and most unabashedly elitist poem, ends plaintively:

> ἐν ἄλλοισι δ᾽ἄλλοι μεγάλοι˙ τὸ δ᾽ἔ-
>   σχατον κορυφοῦται
> βασιλεῦσι. Μηκέτι πάπταινε πόρσιον.
> εἴη σέ τε τοῦτον ὑψοῦ χρόνον πατεῖν,
> ἐμέ τε τοσσάδε νικαφόροις
> ὁμιλεῖν πρόφαντον σοφίᾳ καθ᾽Ἕλ-
>   λανας ἐόντα παντᾷ.

> some are great in some ways; others are great in other ways; of course,
>   the *eschaton* is crowned
> with kings. But don't look too high.
> May it be that you walk aloft for this time,
> and I converse with victors for a while
> and be foremost in skill among
>   Hellenes everywhere.[8]

After over a hundred lines of praising Hieron and various heroic counterparts, Pindar reminds the tyrant that while (obviously) kings are the best, there are ἄλλοι, others. And Hieron must

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[5] See Luraghi (1994) for the phenomenon of tyranny in Sicily. See Schachter (2016) for shifting religious, political, and cultural practices within Boiotian antiquity.

[6] See Hall (2002).

[7] Pindar constantly appears in his self presentation as a singer and often contrasts his role with the role of his active, athletic client. For example, in *Olympian* I, Pindar first introduces the poetic "I" as a singer: εἰ δ᾽ἄεθλα γαρύεν / ἔλδεαι, φίλον ἦτορ, / μηκέτ᾽ ἀελίου σκόπει "But if you wish to sing of athletic games, my heart, look no further than the sun." (*Ol.*9.3-5. Trans. William H. Race).

[8] *O.*1.113-116. All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

not look too high or he will miss them (and become hubristic, missing the alterity of the gods as well). The other stands at the end of *Olympian* I, that tour-de-force of aristocratic praise, insisting upon his position, Pindar's position as other, beside Olympic victors and the powerful, ruling elites who fueled the competition of the games. The poet's pride in his place only serves to emphasize his contingency, his dependency, his givenness: may it be that I, Pindar, continue to exist in the space I have carved out for myself, in the narrow space among violent men of action that can accommodate a poet.

In this dissertation, I explore what alterity means for Pindar, examining the ways in which he does and does not find at the core of the self an other. To this end, I appeal to the concern for alterity that the desolation of the twentieth century has elicited. I make use of two basic ways of viewing alterity, which I see more as perspectival shifts rather than genuine differences. The first looks at the other as a historical fact, thinking about alterity in terms of how the other is treated, othered, and used. The second looks at the other as the thing that is not me, the thing I act upon and which acts upon me. That is, the first way sees the other as victim; the second sees it as agent. Exemplary of the first way of thinking is Emmanuel Levinas, whose other is a solitary being, "pure alterity, separate somehow, from any whole."[9] In her isolation, she gazes out at us, begging for mercy with her face facing death and demands that we see her as our "business."[10] For Levinas, the survival of the other is an act of grace. Man with his "right to *free will*"[11] freely impinges upon the rights of the other "unless a pre-eminent excellence were granted to the other *out of goodness:* unless *good will were will….*"[12] In short, the

[9] Levinas (1999) 24.
[10] Levinas (1999) 24. Italics original.
[11] Levinas (1999) 146.
[12] Levinas (1999) 149. Italics original.

survival of the other depends upon the willingness of an actor to see a self within the other, to recognize that the "Rights of Man are originally the rights of the other man,"[13] granted as an act of grace to that separate, other figure who exists on the margins of social life. This other is seen mostly in terms of her victimization or potential victimization.

By contrast, in *Vibrant Matter*, Jane Bennett following Jacques Derrida explains that "to be (anything, anyone) is always to be following (something, someone), always to be in response to call from something, however nonhuman it may be."[14] In short, being is being in relationship with an other—whether that other is human, animal, or matter. It is dependence or interdependence, as Luigi Giussani would describe it, writing: "I do not give myself being, or the reality which I am. I am 'given.'"[15] That is, the self emerges out of relationship and exchange with an other. Given, dependent, following, the self is also other. Thus, Giussani concludes: "To be conscious of oneself to the core is to perceive, at the depths of the self, an Other."[16] Bennett likewise finds within the self an other. With the concept of "thing-power," Bennett explores the particular way in which matter, which we ordinarily perceive as "conglomerances of *human* designs and practices,"[17] can act upon us. By recognizing a thing's power, we in turn recognize that "we are also nonhuman and that things, too, are vital players in the world."[18] Again we find at the center of the self is the other. The other of the body with its economy of constantly exchanged and imported chemicals. The other of my body acted upon by the food I eat, by the earth's gravitational pull, by the opposite force of the ground

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[13] Levinas (1999) 149.
[14] Bennett (2010) xiii.
[15] Giussani (1997) 105.
[16] Giussani (1997) 106.
[17] Bennett (2010) 2. Italics original.
[18] Bennett (2010) 4.

holding me up. This way of viewing the other returns to her agency; instead of being othered, she gives definition, provides direction, answers. Pindar's *allos* is both simultaneously. In the aforementioned example from *Olympian* I, we saw how precisely the poet's activity as poet othered him and separated him from the self of Hieron. Pindar provides definition to the identity of Hieron *and* receives from Hieron the possibility of being poet. Lurking behind this exchange is the possibility of violence, the possibility of Hieron's failure to be open to Pindar's other, but also the hope that openness will win out over violence.

ii. Adoption and Alterity

The hope of openness to the other brings us to the question of adoption. Adoption offers a mechanism by which the other may be welcomed without being erased as other. Its presence as myth and metaphor within Pindar's poetry highlights the value that alterity and openness to alterity hold for Pindar. I focus in particular on three different odes—*Olympian* IX, *Pythian* XII, and *Nemean* I—and examine the role adoption plays as myth and metaphor within them. In addition to this, I incorporate fragments of other genres to ground my readings of the given odes in Pindar's broader corpus. In order to set the stage for my analysis of Pindar, I establish in Chapter One a groundwork of what adoption as a legal and social phenomenon might have meant for Pindar's audience. I examine legal inscriptions, forensic speeches, and observations by Aristotle and later writers about the peculiarities of Theban adoption law in order to establish the concepts and vocabulary associated with adoption in the Ancient Greek World.

Once I have laid a historical groundwork for adoption, the first step of my dissertation is to establish what adoption means in a positive sense for Pindar. To this end, in Chapter Two I examine *Olympian* IX which revolves around multiple different adoptive relationships and which frames these adoptions as outpourings of divine *kharis* for the preservation of human life.

I argue that Pindar is positing adoption and openness to alterity as a source of enrichment for human communities and families. The importance of adoption and non-biological relationships within the ode underscores the insufficiency of an individual person, family, or community's *phua* or natural excellence and asks what the nature of nature even is. Pindar's portrayal of regeneration through adoption avoids becoming human engineering or creepily eugenicist because it depends (like most things in Pindar's poetry) upon the benevolent activity of a deity. Humans cannot go about fixing themselves, but openness permits the alterity of the divine to rehabilitate broken human natures. The ode likewise underscores the way in which the other of Pindar offers the same possibility for regeneration and continued life through the adoptive space of the victory ode.

Next, I explore the phenomenon of adoption through a negative lens. In Chapter Three, the value of adoption emerges in sharp relief when we perceive how the failure to cultivate openness in a person, family, or community leads to the destruction of both the self and the other. In *Pythian* XII, Pindar follows through to its natural conclusion one such refusal to welcome the other, namely Polydektes tyrant of Seriphos' rejection of Perseus. The result is the tragic destruction of the unrepeatable individual as well as the loss of ecosystems and communities. Pindar blends his narrative of destruction with the origin story of the *aulos* (the ode is in praise of a musical victor). And, we see in the destroyed other of the Gorgon the figure of the artist, unique, unrepeatable and deeply vulnerable before the wanton violence of traditional heroes and the autocratic systems of power they come to represent. And yet, again music and poetry emerge from the ode as mechanisms by which the unique, othered individual, apparently lost and destroyed, finds an adoptive afterlife.

Finally, in Chapter Four, I turn to the figure of Herakles and his problematic relationship with both nature (*phua*) and *nomos*. I examine Pindar's narrative of baby Herakles in *Nemean* I to establish how adoption without a recognition of the other's separateness leads to rupture between the community and the other. I turn to dithyrambic fragments and the *Nomos Basileus* to think about the ways in which Herakles' misunderstood identity fuels his complicated relationship with other mortals and sends him into the homeless wandering for which he becomes known. I conclude by arguing that his reconciliation with his biological father Zeus is, in fact, framed as an adoption. So distant has he become from his identity as the child of Zeus that his rehabilitation must be ritualized and solemnized through the adoptive quality of the poetic imagination. His journey from semi-divine infant to destructive wanderer to divinity again highlights the mutability of nature through adoption while simultaneously insisting upon the centrality of individual identity. A paradox.

iii. Contribution to the Field

The study of adoption in Pindar does not so much reveal the poet's liberal openness to outsiders as his view of the fundamental incompleteness of the individual or homogenous group. As such, my study complicates the understanding of nature and identity that has emerged within Pindaric scholarship. Instead of an elitist system predicated upon the supremacy of certain hereditary natures, I suggest that Pindar is deeply aware of the deficiency of relying strictly upon one's own or one's family's *phua* for success and happiness.

Of *Olympian* VIII, an ode ostensibly addressed to the boy victor Alkimedon of Aigina, Basil Gildersleeve explains that "if the poet had returned to the victor after dispatching Aiakos to Aigina, the ode would be less difficult; but the introduction of the trainer jars us."[19]

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[19] Gildersleeve (1970) 193.

Gildersleeve's difficulty stems, not from the poem itself, but from his belief that Pindar is invested in the promotion of natural excellence independent of all external aid and development—an opposition commented upon by Gildersleeve in many of Pindar's poems. Likewise Elroy Bundy explains that "straightforwardness (δύναμις) is preferred to device (τέχνη). "[20] The inherent power of the individual stands supreme over the aid of art or a teacher. Leslie Kurke's economy of *kleos*, which re-centers the individualistic hero-athlete of Bundy in his family and community, develops upon the traditional view of *phua* in Pindar without really altering it. She explains that while "[u]sually the victor's hereditary quality and the example of his ancestors' triumphs instill in him the force needed to win[, in *Olympian* VIII], the victor's triumph infuses his grandfather with renewed strength."[21] For Kurke, *phua* is a kind of extra-temporal familial trait that is enhanced by being made manifest whether in the past or the present.

Adoption distances the concept of *phua* from the biological determinism implicit in Gildersleeve, Bundy, Kurke, and others' understanding of nature in Pindar. The sterility of the hero-king Lokros in *Olympian* IX[22] clearly indicates that even the *phua* of an excellent family or individual can be lacking in something (in this case, the capacity to generate life). Yet, Pindar's rejection of biological determinism or the supremacy of certain genes over others is a far cry from Barbie's existentialist slogan that "you can be whatever you want to be!" Rather, Pindar uses narratives of adoption to suggest that while *phua* is important for excellence and determines the kind of excellence a person can achieve, it does not necessarily descend in a clear way nor does a person's identity as a member of a particular group guarantee the possession of

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[20] Bundy (1986) 29.
[21] Kurke (1991) 58.
[22] See Chapter Two.

an excellent *phua*. Pindar is thus in between a natalist, determinist view of the person and a completely unlimited understanding of human potential.

The kinds of readings I pursue are impossible without the work of scholars like Tom Phillips and Asya Sigelman. Phillips' pursuit of a written and read Pindar[23] and Sigelman's development of a poetics of immortality (which requires rereading to be successful)[24] allow for a shift away from interpreting Pindar strictly within the context of original performance. If Pindar is addressing an audience which extends in time and space beyond the victor, his family, and community, Pindar's claims and myths cannot only be read within the narrow lights of his client's immediate political needs.[25] The shift away from aristocratic essentialism which I develop hinges upon the possibility of Pindar communicating thoughts and ideas which might upset some of his clients.[26] It also allows for new ways of reading Pindar politically. Heavily historicist interpretations like Anne Burnett's *Pindar's Songs for Young Athletes of Aigina* (2005), Bruno Currie's *Pindar and the Cult of Heroes* (2005), and Kathryn Morgan's *Pindar and the Construction of Syracusan Monarchy in the Fifth Century B.C.* (2015) have recently dominated how the poet is allowed to mean politically. Yet, Pindar's enigmatic claims have for millennia been disputed by political philosophers and theorists.[27] In *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Giorgio Agamben, following Hölderlin, Heidegger, and the Franco-German tradition of reading Pindar philosophically, uses Pindar's *Nomos Basileus* to lay the groundwork for his analysis of 20th century atrocities and the reduction of the human person to bare life. Evidently, the poet

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[23] See Phillips (2016).
[24] See Sigelman (2016).
[25] See also Payne (2006) for more on non-historicist readings of Pindar.
[26] See Hamilton (2004) for the history and reception of an esoteric and deliberately obscure Pindar.
[27] See Demos (1994) and Kingsley (2018) for the *Nomos Basileus* in Plato and Herodotus respectively.

still has much to teach us, and my work seeks to return a voice to the lost other inside Pindar's self.

I. Thesis & Poiēsis: An Overview of Adoption Law in Archaic Greece

i. Introduction

In order to ground my study of Pindar's adoptions, I would like to outline what the phenomenon of adoption might have meant for a Greek. Outside Lene Rubinstein's *Adoption in IV Century Athens*, no works have sought to give a thorough account of the phenomenon *per se*, and it is mostly treated as a minor topic within the realms of Greek Law and Family. As such, this chapter will attempt to synthesize the small but insightful scholarly discourse about adoption and related topics with evidence from inscriptions and classical authors. It will give a descriptive account of how adoption was practiced throughout the Archaic Greek World. From this description, it will argue that there was a generally shared conception of adoption as a transformative process by which a person could transition from one ordinarily impermeable group (such as a family, deme, *syssition,* or even *polis*) to another.

ii. Methodological Considerations

In Classical Greek, there is no discrete or universal term for adoption. And while the absence of discrete terms has not prevented scholars from discussing topics such as race and ethnicity in the ancient world, an attention to terminology helps differentiate a phenomenon as it occurs from how it is perceived by the people participating in it. This chapter is not simply concerned with the mechanisms of adoption but with how an Athenian or a Theban might view it, and to this end the nuances of linguistic difference are essential. In the New Testament and late authors such as Diogenes Laertius, the discourse around adoption solidifies around the term υίοθεσία, a composite of υίός and τίθημι. By contrast, in Classical and Archaic Greece, different words were used to indicate adoption throughout the Mediterranean world. This

chapter will argue that the differences in terminology are linked to differences in legal practice from city to city.

Yet, in spite of differences in vocabulary and practice, this chapter argues that shared motivations and intended results connect different adoptive phenomena and validate approaching them under the unified framework of adoption, as opposed to locally distinct and unrelated legal practices. Indeed, parallelism between adoptive structures was evident to the Greeks themselves, and ancient theorists such as Aristotle[1] translate between different, *polis*-specific vocabularies in their own discussions. As evinced by the prominence of adoption in the few legal codes that survive, its presence in Athenian forensic speeches, and the importance that Aristotle gives to it in the *Politics*, adoption as a regulated, legal process clearly existed and was a recognizable concept to Greek readers, even when it did not align with the specific legal practices of a given *polis*. Thus, in my analysis of Pindar, the term adoption will encompass non-biological, non-marital kinship ties based upon choice rather than heredity, even when they do not correspond explicitly to legal practice. Moreover, adoption *per se* will be distinguished from "legal adoption" which refers to the legally regulated transferal of a person from one kinship group into another,[2] which will be discussed at length below, and which is rarely distinguishable from adoption *per se* in myth.

Another concern is whether it is possible to speak of Greek legal adoption at all. Michael Gagarin succinctly summarizes the problems of "Greek Law"—namely whether it exists as a useful category.[3] As Moses Finley and subsequent Anglo-American scholars have argued, the

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[1] Aristotle, *Politics* 2.1274b. This will be discussed at length below.
[2] Such a definition excludes changes in kinship ties created through marriage, for in Greek Law, marriage did not represent a break from one's natal family.
[3] Gagarin (2005).

vast discrepancies between city states make the term pointless. There is no such thing as Greek Law, because there is no commonality between city states and any argument to the contrary will be used disingenuously, as has been the case in much scholarship where Athens is used as a model from which to supply missing information about lawcodes in other city states.[4]

Nevertheless, Gagarin insists on the meaningfulness of the term and argues that while laws differ substantively from *polis* to *polis* (much like state law in the United States), procedurally speaking there are commonalities unique to Greece and therefore definitive of "Greek Law."[5] Moreover, Gagarin sees the written character of Greek Law as distinct from written law in other pre-modern civilizations. It is my view that Gagarin's point about Greek Law generally holds true for Greek legal adoption. While the laws themselves differ from state to state, there are underlying structural similarities that can be said to define Greek legal adoption. These similarities, it will be argued, can be observed in the motivations for legislating adoption. Unlike contemporary legal adoption, which at least theoretically concerns itself with the well-being of children, legal adoption in Greece was concerned with regulating membership within particular groups and controlling how the property of a group could or could not be transferred.

However, the paucity of evidence on adoption challenges not only this claim but also the possibility of writing about adoption altogether. While the Great Code of Gortyn and other inscriptions found on that site and at nearby Phaistos treat adoption at length, it does not

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[4] While helpful in many ways, Germain (1969) on the topic of infant exposure is an example of this.

[5] See Gagarin (2008) Ch. 7 for a comparison of written law in Greece and other contemporaneous cultures. His thesis essentially argues that law was written in Greece to facilitate popular use and knowledge, while law was written in other cultures (such as Babylon) to be made use of by a highly-trained scribal or legal class or to assert aristocratic dominance and wisdom.

appear in other archaic legal inscriptions. Likewise, plentiful knowledge of how adoption functioned in Classical Athens can be gleaned from Athenian forensic speeches, but Archaic Athenian adoption may not have resembled its Classical cousin at all. Indeed, the nature and functioning of adoption likely shifted with the Citizenship Law of 451 BCE. Nevertheless, common threads can be discerned that hold together the fabric of Greek legal adoption. And while its tapestry is necessarily ragged and threadbare, it still affords a profitable background before which to consider the use of adoption in Pindar's myth-making and beyond.

iii. Adoption in Crete

Inevitably, the Great Code of Gortyn furnishes the larger part of our evidence for Cretan legal adoption. Yet, two other fragmentary inscriptions from Gortyn survive, as well as one from the city of Phaistos, about ten miles from Gortyn and located in southern Crete. The three other inscriptions are earlier than the Great Code and extremely fragmentary, which necessitates reading them in light of the Great Code in order to make sense of them. Thus, we will begin with the Great Code and move backwards in time.

In *The Law Code of Gortyn*, R.F. Willetts introduces the topic of adoption by explaining that "[a]doption is an old tribal custom, a special rite of initiation, in which a stranger dies as a stranger to be born again as a member of the clan."[6] He goes on to postulate that the development of the *oikos* fundamentally changes the nature of adoption, essentially turning it into a means of specifying who among one's next of kin will inherit one's home and possessions. Willetts' view is predicated upon an assumption that adoptees were chosen from a

[6] Willetts (1967) 30.

person's close relations, an assumption drawn from Athenian adoptive practices of the fourth century, as evinced by Demosthenes, and in no way implied by the Great Code itself.[7]

Indeed, the Code scarcely restricts adoption at all, guaranteeing that ἄνπανσιν ἔμεν ὄπο κά τιλ λεῖ "adoption may be made from whatever source anyone wishes."[8] A lacuna of about nine letters before the beginning of the adoption section may have offered a link between it and the previous section, which outlines limitations on inheritance and the buying of free persons. Written in remarkably clear boustrophedon, the Great Code of Gortyn often signals the beginning of a new section by breaking off and beginning a new line from the same side as the previous line. At the beginning of the adoption section, however, the boustrophedon carries on in its meandering fashion, picking up from the right side where the incomplete line would have ended. In addition, illegible marks in the lacuna indicate that it was originally carved but damaged or perhaps deliberately erased. Thus, the stone itself, remarked upon for its precise organization,[9] strongly implies that, to the stone's creators, adoption is inherently linked to questions of inheritance and transition from one social group to another.

According to the Code, anyone may be adopted, even a foreigner theoretically, so long as someone desires it: ὄπο κά τιλ λεῖ. As the Gortynian alphabet does not distinguish long and short vowels, κά (the Cretan form of ἄν) signals that λεῖ, whose ε is actually a long vowel, is subjunctive. Thus, in Attic, the phrase would read: ὁπόθεν ἂν τις ἐθέλῃ. The law is a general statement, predicated upon an underlying condition of will or intention. As the etymology of the English word implies, adoption begins in desire. In the Cretan dialect, ἄνπανσις and the verb ἀμπαίνεθαι, variations of ἀναφαίνεσθαι and its noun equivalent, are used to signify

[7] Willetts (1967) 30-31; Rubinstein (1993) 22-24.
[8] *GC* X.33-34.
[9] Gagarin (2008) 156.

adoption and adopting. The Cretan words disclose the nature of the Cretan institution. In addition to intention, adoption is revelation, reifying as it reveals and transforming the fabric of the family and city. The Code goes on to explain: ἀμπαίνεθαι δὲ κατ᾽ἀγορὰν καταϝελμένον τõμ πολιατᾶν ἀπὸ τõ λάο ὅ ἀπαγορεύοντι. "and the declaration of adoption shall be made in the *agora* when the citizens are gathered, from the stone from which proclamations are made."[10] The process of adoption does not merely transfer a person from one group to another; it makes known to the collective community, gathered together for precisely that purpose, that a person's status and kinship ties have changed.

A lacuna of about two letters divides the proclamation from the rest of the adoption section, which details fees and obligations necessary for a valid adoption. In addition to the proclamation before the gathered *polis*, an adopter must offer sacrifice in his own *hetaireia*, a Cretan institution of shared meals similar to the Spartan *syssitia*.[11] Moreover, the Code stipulates duties on the part of the adoptee. In the absence of the adopter having biological children, the adoptee must fulfill all the adopter's duties to gods and men ἅιπερ τοῖς γνεσίοις ἔγρατται "as is written [elsewhere in the code] for biological children" or else forfeit his inheritance.[12] The Code goes on to stipulate the adoptee's share of inheritance in the event of biological children surviving the adopter,[13] in which case the Code stipulates that the adoptees shall not receive a larger portion than female heirs ordinarily would.[14]

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[10] *GC* X.34-36.
[11] *GC* X.37-39.
[12] *GC* X.39-48.
[13] *GC* X.48-XI.5.
[14] *GC* XI.4-6.

The above stipulations imply that Gortynian adoption potentially meant a transformation on three different levels. The public revelation in the *agora* conveys the importance of the *polis* recognizing the adoption. Such a recognition is only necessary if a shift in citizen status could occur. By contrast, in Athens, there is no comparably public proclamation of adoption and there appears to be no adoption of non-citizen persons.[15] Moreover, the process of renunciation at Gortyn reinforces this interpretation of public interest in adoption. The Code explains:

> αἰ δ[έ κα
> λει] ὀ ἀνπανάμενος, ἀποϜειπ-
> άθθο κατ᾽ἀγορὰν ἀπὸ τõ λά[ο õ
> ἀπα]γορεύοντι καταϜελμέν-
> ον τõν πολιατᾶν. ἀνθέμε[ν δὲ
> δέκ]α [σ]τατερανς ἐδ δικαστ-
> έριον, ὀ δὲ μνάμον ὀ τõ κσεν-
> ίο ἀποδότο τõι ἀπορρεθέντι.

> And if the adopter wishes, he may renounce the adoptee in the agora when the citizens are gathered, from the stone from which proclamations are made; and he shall deposit ten staters with the court, and the *mnamon* who is concerned with strangers shall pay it to the person renounced.[16]

Like the process of adoption, renunciation was made publicly in the *agora*. And in addition to stating his intentions, the reneging adopter paid a fee mediated by the *mnamon kseniou*, an official ordinarily charged with remembering (or recording) and producing evidence in a suit concerned with foreigners. His presence in the ceremony has been taken to indicate that adopted sons were ordinarily selected from a person's illegitimate offspring.[17] Such a claim, while possible, exceeds the evidence at hand. No reference is made in Gortynian inscriptions to

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[15] Rubinstein (1993) 36.
[16] *GC* XI.10-17.
[17] Willetts (1967) 31.

adoption within the *anchisteia* or blood relations, and such arguments depend upon the assumption that Gortynian and Athenian adoption were similar. Instead, it is possible that the *mnamon kseniou* was involved because the renunciation of an adoptee could necessitate a transition from citizen to *ksenios*, just as adoption could effect a transition from *ksenios* to citizen when the adopted person was a non-citizen by birth.

Thus, adoption was likely a public matter because it could alter a person's citizenship status. Likewise, it was brought before the *hetaireia*, because it could alter a person's membership, necessitating the adoptee at times to abandon his biological father's *hetaireia* and join that of his adopted father. Moreover, the adoptee's religious and financial obligations to his new kinship group were grounds for invalidating an adoption in the event the adoptee failed to uphold his new commitments, demonstrating the threefold transformation that Gortynian adoption represented. The adoptee was reborn not only into a new family but into a new commensality, and on occasion into a new city.

In addition, the specification that adoption be announced and renounced publicly in the *agora* parallels the institution as seen in a fragmentary inscription from Phaistos. It reads:

> — — — ἀποϜ]εῖπαι | ἐν ἀγορ[ᾶι — — —
> — — — μα | αἰ λείοι σ[— — —
> — — — — — — —] τὰ δὲ ματρο]ῖα — — —
> — — — δια(?)]κάτιονς | σ[τατῆρανς (?) — —
> — — — — — —] α | μὴ διδο[— — —
> — — — — — —]ς | ἀναιρέ[— — — —
>
> …he denounces in the agora…
> … if he wishes…
> … concerning the maternal inheritance…
> …(?) a hundred s[taters (?)…

…that he not give…
… to receive (as inheritance)…[18]

Drawing from parallel examples in the Great Code of Gortyn, which have been discussed above, van Effenterre and Ruzé have observed that the inscription—too fragmentary to consider in depth—details a public denunciation of an adoptee or perhaps by an adoptee and was likely part of "une série analogue à celles de Gortyne et antérieure à la transcription du *Code*."[19] The vertical lines distinguishing words and phrases and the use of boustrophedon suggest that the purpose of the inscription was to make the law accessible to the greatest number of people possible and imply that the law was likely displayed in a public place and meant to be read.[20] In addition, the letters, written in a clear though meandering hand, measure 7 cm (nearly 3 inches) in height, and traces of sealant can be seen on the back and edges of the stone,[21] suggesting that the block was indeed carved to be displayed publicly.

The content of the law reinforces this interpretation of its physical presentation. As Gagarin argues, "public display… must be an indication of public interest,"[22] and conversely, public interest argues strongly for public display. In the case of the Phaistos inscription, the denunciation takes place ἐν ἀγορᾶι, just as at Gortyn. Inscribed in the 6th century BCE,[23] the Phaistos inscription not only implies the existence of an archaic agora in the city,[24] as has

[18] *Nomima* II.39. English translation my own, based upon the French by van Effenterre and Ruzé.
[19] van Effenterre and Ruzé (1994) 140. "an analogous series to the ones at Gortyn and predating the inscription of the *Code*."
[20] Gagarin (2008) 71; Perlman (2002) 188; on the opposing side, see Davies (1996) 54-6 arguing that the complexity of the laws implies a scribal class.
[21] van Effenterre and Ruzé (1994) 140.
[22] Gagarin (2008) 81.
[23] van Effenterre and Ruzé (1994) 140-141.
[24] "l'éditrice a bien montré l'intérêt du document: existence d'une *agora* archaïque à Phaistos [the editor has shown well why the document is of interest: namely, the existence of an archaic *agora* at Phaistos]." van Effenterre and Ruzé (1994) 140.

elsewhere been noted, but also provides the earliest attestation to the legal process of denunciation. The location of this process suggests that the status of adopted persons was of interest to the community as a whole. After all, why else would a publicly inscribed law insist upon a public denunciation? The Phaistos law, moreover, specifies that the denunciation take place in the agora, rather than in the presence of a particular official, sector of the community, or written statement of intent. This suggests that denunciation and its necessary precursor adoption were considered to be the province not of elite magistrates but of the community as a whole. If the method of denunciation is at all parallel to the method of adoption, as they are in Gortyn, this law also suggests that perhaps there were not legal limitations concerning adopted persons, and that for an adoption to be valid, the only requirement was that it be made known.

The reference to maternal inheritance or the things of the mother in line 3 suggests that in adoption the rights of the mother and her kin differed from those of the father. In Athens, adoption does not alter a person's connection to his biological mother and her family,[25] although it severs the connection to his biological father. It is likely that τὰ δὲ ματϱο]ῐα in line 3 suggests a similar phenomenon at Phaistos. Yet, the text is simply too fragmentary to make any certain claims.

The monetary stipulation in line 4 and the reference in line 6 to collecting an inheritance imply that financial compensation was necessary in the event of an unsuccessful adoption. Of course, the text is too fragmentary to say for certain, but a similar stipulation in the Great Code of Gortyn, as discussed above, supports this supposition.[26] In our limited sampling of case

[25] Rubinstein (1993) 45; Golden (1990) 98.
[26] *GC* XI.10-17.

studies, adoption occurred mostly between adults.[27] As such, some form of motivation must have existed to persuade a fully grown man to forsake his family and join another kinship group. The close connection of adoption and inheritance laws throughout the Greek world implies that access to land, rank, and wealth was a motivating factor. The Phaistos and Gortyn laws may even suggest that the expectation of benefit from adoption was so strong that in the event of denunciation, it was deemed just to compensate a person for the inconvenience of having been adopted and subsequently denounced—a kind of consolation prize for not getting the whole estate. Another interpretation of this clause is that it existed to dissuade people from frivolous adoption and denunciation. Paying a fine in the event of denunciation would act as a deterrent to people thoughtlessly redefining their kinship groups; one would theoretically not adopt unless one were certain the arrangement would be permanent. In addition, it might act as an encouragement to regard adopted persons not simply as stand-ins for biological heirs but as genuine members of a new kinship group.

In summary, the Phaistos law offers tantalizing hints about adoption practices in the archaic period. Despite its many obscurities, the inscription clearly demonstrates that adoption in archaic Phaistos was viewed not as a private decision to incorporate a new member into a family but as a public, community-altering activity. In this, we begin to see a defining feature of Greek legal adoption: adoption was legislated in Greece because it was perceived by communities as something that could alter communal identity—an identity often connected to land ownership and property distribution.

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[27] Rubinstein (1993) 22. Rubinstein's study is of 4th c. Athens, and it is of course possible that archaic Crete operated differently in this regard, though taking all the evidence together, it seems probable that Cretan adoption was also primarily between adults.

In addition to the Phaistos inscription, two other inscriptions pre-dating the Great Code come to us from Gortyn. The first of these to be discussed was found embedded in the eastern wall of a monument.[28] It is dated to about 550 BCE and is written in a mixture of retrograde and boustrophedon with bars to mark word and phrase breaks.[29]

— —]ν | μολ[— — —
— — ὄστις | μέζατ[ος] ἴοι | — —
— — τοῖ ἀνπαντοῖ μ᾽ἤμεν ἀνκεμο[λίαν — —
— — .ὀμοπάτηρ ἄ κ᾽ἦι καὶ ὀμομάτηρ, ἀ—
— — αἰ δέ κ᾽ὀ μ]ὲν πατροῖα μολῆι, ὀ δ᾽ἀλαῖ,
αἴ κ᾽ἀνποτέρος ἴοντι οἰ μαίτυρε[ς — —
— — δικά]ζε[ν] ἀ(Ϝ)τὸς ἐπαιρῆι | πέντε λέβ—
ητας | καταστᾶσαι. Αἰ δέ κα μο[λῆι] τ[— —

…to make a claim…
…whoever presents himself for judgement (?)…
…there is no familial intervention for the adoptee…
…if one has the same father or the same mother…
…if one claims that the goods are from the father, and the other claims the opposite and if witnesses come for both sides…
…he himself may choose to pass sentence, to set down five braziers. And if he makes a claim… [30]

The text appears to discuss the subtleties of inheritance disputes between adopted and natural heirs. The reference to "familial intervention for the adoptee" suggests either recognition on the part of his adopted family or, more likely, his being reclaimed by his natural family and thus removed from the inheritance debate. The reference to five braziers appears to be some kind of fee or perhaps buying someone out of an inheritance. This may be the inverse of what we saw in the Phaistos inscription and in the Great Code, namely that the natural family of an adoptee, rather than the adopter's family, seeks a way out of an adoption and is obliged to pay a fine to

[28] van Effenterre and Ruzé (1994) 136.
[29] van Effenterre and Ruzé (1994) 136-137.
[30] *Nomima* II.38.

remunerate the inconvenienced party. The text, however, is too uncertain to say, but the reference to πατροῖα and to having the same father or mother adheres to what we have seen in other fragmentary texts, namely that paternal and maternal inheritances are treated differently in the case of adoption. Additionally, this may hint at the law made explicit in the Great Code that women could not adopt, requiring maternal inheritance to pass only to natural heirs.

Paula Perlman interprets this opaque inscription as allowing an adoptee's biological family to lay claim to his inheritance (through adoption) in the event that the adoptee dies childless.[31] While such an interpretation would advance the idea that adoption (like marriage) forms a permanent link between two families, it is not corroborated by any other evidence of legal practice in the Greek world. Indeed, the Great Code of Gortyn directly contradicts this interpretation, declaring that "if the adopted son should die without leaving legitimate children, the property is to revert to the heirs of the adopter."[32] Of course, the Great Code may be reversing an earlier law, but as will be argued below, a great deal of cohesion exists throughout Cretan law (including references to previously inscribed laws), and a direct reversal seems not to fit with the evidence.

The second inscription, also dated to about 550 BCE, is incredibly fragmentary, and like the Phaistos inscription is written in boustrophedon with bars separating words and phrases:

— —]ρμον | κᾶπον αἰ δὲ [— — — *F*]ισ*F*ό—
μοιρ[ον — — —]ι | οἰ γνήσιοι | ὀτερο — —
— — ἔρσ]ενα | ἀναιρεσθ[αι — — — θ]ήλε—
ια | [— — —]α | καὶ τὰ ματροῖα | — —

…garden. And if … in equal parts
… the legitimate children, both of which…

[31] Perlman (2002) 191.
[32] GC. XI.6-10.

> … the males receive an inheritance… the females…
> … and the goods from the mother… [33]

The reference to γνήσιοι, biological children, suggests a provision for how adopted heirs are to be treated in the event of natural heirs being born and appears to differentiate how male heirs and female heirs are treated. We have already seen a similar, more complete stipulation in the Great Code, mandating that in the event of biological children co-existing with adopted ones, adopted sons were to receive the same amount as their natural-born sisters. This parallelism between the sixth century inscription and the Great Code suggests that there was some continuity in legal adoption in Gortyn in the 6th and 5th centuries. Likewise, the similarities between the Phaistos inscription and the inscriptions found at Gortyn indicate that the adoption law was fairly consistent throughout the island.

These data points imply that legal customs among Cretan cities were influenced by one another and that a recognizable Cretan legal culture may have existed. They also suggest that the practices detailed in the Code may have predated their inscription by at least a century and that the Great Code does indeed provide a reasonable reference point for filling in the fragmentary details of earlier inscriptions. Thus, the Phaistian mention of money in close proximity to renunciation very likely does refer to a fee being paid to the renounced adoptee. Notably the fee is ten times higher in the Phaistos inscription than in the Great Code, suggesting perhaps a slackening in intensity of feeling over time. While light-hearted adoption is still discouraged by the need of paying a fee to the renounced adoptee, a fine of ten staters is something that someone with a fortune worth debating could afford while one hundred staters would likely be cost-prohibitive for most.

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[33] *Nomima* II.37. English translation my own based on van Effenterre and Ruzé's.

The similarities between Gortyn and Phaistos suggest that their differences are likely linked more to time than to place. The shift from costly renunciation in sixth-century Phaistos to a relatively cheap equivalent in fifth-century Gortyn indicates that Cretan attitudes towards the institution shifted. Renunciation was still viewed as an abuse of the institution, but one so necessary and ordinary that it was hardly punished in the fifth century. Yet, Cretan legislation still lays far greater demands on both adopter and adoptee than Athenian practice did. By the arrival of the Classical period in Athens, adoption could scarcely be described as "a rite of initiation" or a "rebirth" at all. Indeed, the element of freedom and choice so crucial to Cretan adoption all but disappears, leaving essentially a loophole in Athenian testamentary legislation that permitted a childless person to choose his own heir.

iv. Adoption in Athens

Unfortunately, the Athenians left behind a much less robust collection of legal inscriptions than the Cretans did, and none of them deal with the topic of adoption. The rich rhetorical tradition of Athens, however, provides a powerful testimony in regards to legal practice and opinion. Of course, relying on speeches limits the kind of understanding available to us. An orator tells us what he thinks would win the jury to his viewpoint; he tells us his (potentially idiosyncratic) interpretation of laws; he tells us a great deal about popular understanding and opinion. But, he does not tell us how cases were decided in reality and what the actual laws governing them were.

Nevertheless, scholars have gleaned from forensic speeches a working understanding of Athenian legal adoption and have categorized it into three main types: adoption *inter vivos*, testamentary adoption, and posthumous adoption.[34] In all types, where the information is

[34] Rubinstein (1993) 21-28.

available, the adoptees were adults at the time of the transition.[35] Adoption *inter vivos* comes closest to a contemporary conception of adoption—the acceptance into one's home and family of a new person. Unfortunately, only five attested cases of it come down to us in the historical record,[36] so it is risky to make any generalizations about how people decided whom they adopted. Testamentary adoption referred to the process of specifying an adopted son or daughter as heir in one's will. And finally, posthumous adoption, perhaps the strangest to contemporary sensibilities, refers to the practice of having an adoptive heir chosen not by the testator himself but by ἐπιδικασία, the legal process of determining who among a person's ἀγχιστεία or extended family would inherit his possessions, and subsequently enrolling the recipient in the adopter's phratry or deme as his legal child.[37]

This final version indicates that the ideals regarding adoption developed in the section on Gortyn did not necessarily apply to Athens in the fourth century. If posthumous adoption were a possibility, clearly the element of desire and choice outlined in the Code was not necessary for a valid adoption. Rather, the role that the ἐπιδικασία played in posthumous adoption indicates that a person's pre-existing legal right to inheritance, in fact, trumped desire on the part of the adopter. Indeed, even in other types of adoption, "it was not unusual for a testator to choose a close relative as his beneficiary."[38] That is, even in cases of testamentary and *inter vivos* adoption, adopters regularly favored people who already had a legal claim to inheritance.[39] Indeed, the existence of these forensic speeches hints at why adopters would

[35] Rubinstein (1993) 22.
[36] Rubinstein (1993) 21.
[37] Rubinstein (1993) 44.
[38] Rubinstein (1993) 24.
[39] Of course, the paucity of cases within the historical record means that all statistics about ancient adoption have an extremely high margin of error.

make such a choice. Even in cases of adoption *inter vivos* and testamentary adoption, the deceased's extended family often disputed the distribution of inheritance (thereby providing us with a written record detailing how these relationships were defined and navigated), and so choosing an adoptee already entitled to inheritance might serve to validate more securely his position after the adopter's demise.

Although the reasons for adopting as described by historians appear mercenary and emotionless, it is hard to imagine that personal attachment did not play a part as well. In *Isaios* II, written for Menekles' adopted son, the speaker asks:

> καὶ μοι τὸν νόμον ἀνάγνωθι, ὃς κελεύει τὰ ἑαυτοῦ ἐξεῖναι διαθέσθαι ὅπως ἂν ἐθέλῃ, ἐὰν μὴ παῖδες ἄρρενες ὦσι—γνήσιοι. ὁ γὰρ νομοθέτης, ὦ ἄνδρες, διὰ τοῦτο τὸν νόμον ἔθηκεν οὕτως, ὁρῶν μόνην ταύτην καταφυγὴν οὖσαν τῆς ἐρημίας καὶ παραψυχὴν τοῦ βίου τοῖς ἄπαισι τῶν ἀνθρώπων, τὸ ἐξεῖναι ποιήσασθαι ὅν τινα ἂν βούλωνται.
>
> Now read the law which ordains that a person may dispose of his own things however he wishes, so long as he has no male children—legitimate heirs. For the lawgiver [Solon], gentlemen, established this law for the following reason: he saw that there was one escape from loneliness and consolation in life for childless men, namely the possibility of adopting whomever they wish.[40]

The speaker puts forward an interpretive cause for the law that coincides with what he believes will be most persuasive to his audience—namely an emotional appeal to the state of ἐρημία that awaits childless adults. His etiology suggests that in addition to specifying inheritance, "an adoption *inter vivos* should be a faithful imitation of a biological father-son relationship, even on an emotional level."[41]

In the *Philoktetes*, Sophocles likewise deploys the concept of ἐρημία in conjunction with childlessness and abandonment, suggesting that this connection had permeated to some degree

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[40] Isaios II.13

[41] Rubinstein (1993) 66.

into the public consciousness. When Philoktetes first encounters Neoptolemos, he addresses him warmly as ὦ φιλτάτου παῖ πάτρος, ὦ φίλης χθονός, / ὦ τοῦ γέροντος θρέμμα Λυκομήδους… "o child of a father who was a dear friend and of a dear earth, / o nursling of old Lykomedes…."[42] Neoptolemos is first identified by his relationship with his deceased father, then by the homeland that he and Philoktetes share, and lastly by his situation as a θρέμμα, a term more frequently used of nursing animals than of human beings.[43] Philoktetes' use of the term θρέμμα situates Neoptolemos in the role of vulnerable orphan, at risk of exposure in the wilderness.[44] This form of address places Neoptolemos and Philoktetes on the same footing; both are deprived of their family and land, nurslings as it were, at the mercy of other people (in this case, the conniving Odysseus).

By accentuating the vulnerability of Neoptolemos' position, Philoktetes initiates a pseudo-adoptive relationship between them. A few lines later, the wounded hero addresses his new acquaintance as if Philoktetes were Neoptolemos' long-lost father: ὦ τέκνον, οὐ γὰρ οἶσθά μ᾿ ὅντιν᾿ εἰσορᾷς; "O child, don't you know who you're looking at?"[45] As Seth Schein observes, Philoktetes "immediately calls [Neoptolemos] τέκνον, instinctively claiming and establishing a special relationship with him."[46] The question implies incredulity that Neoptolemos could not recognize in Philoktetes the fatherhood he assumes for himself by calling Neoptolemos τέκνον, a term which he continues to use (exchanging it sometimes with παῖς) for the rest of the play. Only after Neoptolemos reveals his (false) intention to depart,

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[42] Sophocles *Phil*. 242-243.
[43] "θρέμμα." *LSJ*.
[44] Cf. Aelian, *Varia Historia,* 2.7, which will be discussed at length below, where the term ἐρημία is used of an infant to be exposed, rather than a childless adult as it is used in Athenian oratory and drama.
[45] Sophocles *Phil*. 249.
[46] Schein (2013) 164.

thereby reneging on the semi-adoptive relationship that Philoktetes has attempted to form, does the abandoned soldier exclaim: …μὴ λίπῃς μ᾽οὕτω μόνον, / ἔρημον ἐν κακοῖσι τοῖσδ᾽οἵοις ὁρᾷς… "Do not leave me thus alone, / desolate in such horrors as you see."[47] Sophocles' enjambment draws the ear to the two adjectives, 'alone' and 'desolate,' whose meanings the onomatopoeic alliteration "oisitoisdoiois" eerily imitate. Philoktetes' isolation is complete. Neoptolemos' departure and accompanying refusal to accept the pseudo-adoptive relationship that Philoktetes attempts to create threaten to cut the hero off permanently from family, home, and hope of children, biological or otherwise.

Philoktetes' ἐρημία stands in opposition to adoption: complete isolation and eventual annihilation the fate of fatherless and childless alike. *Isaios* II likewise implies this result in the event that a person is not allowed to adopt. Menekles' son's depiction of why adoption was instituted implies not only the importance of adoption for γηροτροφία, as has been argued elsewhere,[48] but also the importance of adoption for maintaining a childless adult's connection to the city. As Lene Rubinstein argues:

> …descendants were seen as being in a perpetual debt of χάρις to their parents, and their obligations to them went beyond the point of death and burial. Sons owed their identity as Athenian citizens to their immediate ascendants, and it appears from *Ath. Pol.* 55.3 that parental tomb-cult formed an important part of Athenian civic identity….[49]

Without a son, the debt of χάρις would not necessarily be paid by a person's ἀγχιστεία, or extended family, leaving his grave unattended and his line defunct. Any connection a person may have had to the city fades with the weeds overtaking his tomb, and he is left truly ἐρῆμος.

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[47] Sophocles *Phil*. 470-471.
[48] Rubinstein (1993) 64; Lacey (1984) 117.
[49] Rubinstein (1993) 75.

As in Gortyn, adoption in Athens did not simply designate heirs but initiated a new person into the roles his adoptive father left behind. Rubinstein explains that:

> …many modern scholars have seen the procedure of adoption as consisting of two main phases: a private phase, which in Menekles' case consisted of his agreement with his ex-brother-in-law, and a public phase, consisting in the adopted son being enrolled as a member of the adopter's phratry and deme.[50]

Not only does the adopted son take over his father's role as κύριος of his own οἶκος but he assumes his adoptive father's political and religious roles as a member of a deme and phratry. This would potentially put him in an entirely new political context, marking his transition from family to family as something both private and political.

However, the political element of adoption is not made manifest on the most general level of society. In Athens, there was no comparably public declaration of adoption as the revelation in the *agora* of Gortyn or Phaistos. This fact sanctions the idea that the adoption of non-citizens was practically impossible. In *Isaios* VII, the speaker explains that:

> ἔστι δ᾽αὐτοῖς νόμος ὁ αὐτός, ἐάν τέ τινα φύσει γεγονότα εἰσάγῃ τις ἐάν τε ποιητόν, ἐπιτιθέναι πίστιν κατὰ τῶν ἱερῶν ἦ μὴν ἐξ ἀστῆς εἰσάγειν καὶ γενονότα ὀρθῶς…
>
> They [demes and phratries] have the same rule, that if someone introduces his son, whether begotten naturally or adopted, he must swear by the sacrifices that he's introducing someone begotten legitimately from a citizen woman…[51]

Male adoptees, much like biological children, had to be introduced into their adoptive father's deme or phratry in order to reap the benefits of their adoption—inheritance and civic identity—and given the qualifications necessary for enrollment (legitimate birth from a citizen mother), non-citizens were practically excluded.

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[50] Rubinstein (1993) 34.
[51] Isaios VII.16.

There were, in addition, female adoptees in Athens.[52] Women were of course not enrolled in demes or phratries or permitted to take part in much of Athenian political life, but there must have been some means of designating adoption of women comparable to enrollment within an adoptive father's deme or phratry. While women did not have access to the same means of expressing their citizenship as men did—voting, holding office, etc.—they were nonetheless active participants in Athenian civic life. As Josine Blok argues, the paradigm through which we conceptualize Athenian citizenship must be broadened from the traditional, Aristotelian definition of political involvement to one that includes women. Up until the 420s, the term *politai* appears only in the plural, often as a gender neutral term that includes both men and women, and in three instances it refers to women exclusively.[53] Moreover, with Perikles' citizenship law of 450/451, the emphasis on individual involvement increases not just for men, but for women as well, who assumed an even more prominent role in public religion, thereby performing and proving their Athenian identity.[54] In addition, citizen women were subject to highly specific inheritance laws that ensured that estates left to them were not alienated from the male descendants of the family.[55] As Blok observes, the "*oikos* was not men's private property, rather it was a household consisting of movable and real property belonging to the patrilinear family in its entirety, run by husband and wife according to traditional division of labour, and represented by men in the legal or political context of the community."[56] The adoption of a woman placed her within a new patrilinear context, requiring her to marry within

[52] Rubinstein (1993) 25, 49.
[53] Blok (2005) 10-11.
[54] Blok (2005) 20.
[55] Lacey (1984) covers the laws regarding *epikleroi* in great detail. The practice is somewhat horrifying, requiring women on occasion to divorce and remarry someone within their own ἀγχιστεία to ensure that their father's estate did not leave the family.
[56] Blok (2005) 18.

her new ἀγχιστεία in accordance with the laws concerning *epikleroi* and demanding proof of her Athenian identity to ensure she could produce legitimate heirs for her adoptive family.

Athenian legal adoption, therefore, appears to restrict the adoption of non-citizens. Transformation occurred on a strictly lateral level: a person went from one household, deme, and phratry to a new household, deme, and phratry of equivalent value. Of course, the strictures of *Isaios* VII are almost certainly a result of the citizenship law of 450/451, which restricted Athenian citizenship to a person born of two citizen parents. Limitations on adoption, however, are also evident in the fragments of Solon's legislation as well. Demosthenes explains that ὁ νομοθέτης ἀπεῖπεν τῷ ποιητῷ αὐτῳ ὄντι ποιητὸν υἱὸν μὴ ποιεῖσθαι "the lawgiver forbade someone who was adopted himself from adopting an adopted son."[57] In other words, an adoptee was obliged to produce biological heirs or see his inheritance revert to the biological family of his adopter. In addition, in Plutarch's life of Solon, the biographer observes:

> εὐδοκίμησε δὲ κἀν τῷ περὶ διαθηκῶν νόμῳ: πρότερον γὰρ οὐκ ἐξῆν, ἀλλ᾽ἐν τῷ γένει τοῦ τεθνηκότος ἔδει τὰ χρήματα καὶ τὸν οἶκον καταμένειν, ὁ δ᾽᾽ῷ βούλεταί τις ἐπιτρέψας, εἰ μὴ παῖδες εἶεν αὐτῷ, δοῦναι τὰ αὑτοῦ, φιλίαν τε συγγενείας ἐτίμησε μᾶλλον καὶ χάριν ἀνάγκης, καὶ τὰ χρήματα κτήματα τῶν ἐχόντων ἐποίησεν.
>
> And he was highly praised as well for his law about the disposition of property: formerly, it was not possible, but it was necessary that the money and *oikos* remain in the family of the deceased, but Solon, by letting a person give his own possessions to whomever he wished, unless there were children, honored friendship more than kinship and *kharis* more than necessity, and he made property the possessions of those who had it.[58]

Plutarch's view of Solon must be contrasted with the perspective of legal scholars who hold that "the law allowing a man without direct heirs to adopt a son was presumably intended to help

[57] Demosthenes 44.64 (Solon F 58b).
[58] Plutarch, *Sol.* 21 (Solon F 49a).

preserve the family and its property intact."[59] Yet, even from Plutarch, it is clear that limitations existed on who could adopt. Likewise, we learn from Demosthenes that:

> …Σόλων εἰσῄει τὴν ἀρχήν, τὰ ἑαυτοῦ διαθέσθαι, ὅπως ἂν ἐθέλῃ, ἂν μὴ παῖδες ὦσι γνήσιοι ἄρρενες
>
> …Solon thought up the principle of disposing of one's own things however one wishes, unless there were natural born male children[60]

Both Demosthenes and Plutarch are forced to acknowledge that adoption only existed when a person lacked a biological heir, despite their emphasis on the freedom of the adopter. As seen above, adoption was rendered invalid if the adoptee failed to produce biological children. Both authors, however, pass by these details and refer to τὰ ἑαυτοῦ/τὰ αὑτοῦ, thereby identifying the *oikos* as the private property of the individual rather than the inalienable possession of his family. They likewise emphasize the individual's freedom to behave ὅπως ἂν ἐθέλῃ "however he wishes" and to give his property ᾧ βούλεταί "to whomever he wants." We see in this the same emphasis on choice and freedom as developed in the Great Code of Gortyn. Indeed, as Michael Gagarin observes, these laws existed not so much to limit behavior within the family but to provide guidelines for "anyone who felt deprived of his legitimate share of the inheritance" for bringing his suit to court, a fact which the lawsuits of the fourth century corroborate.[61]

Another interesting observation is Plutarch's emphasis on *kharis* over necessity and friendship over kinship. The relationship of *kharis* to adoption places it in the realm of

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[59] Gagarin (1986) 140. This interpretation is corroborated by the evidence we have from Thebes, where adoption was legislated explicitly to prevent the conglomeration of estates in the hands of a few families and to preserve the lines of estate holders.
[60] Demosthenes 46.14 (Solon F 49b).
[61] Gagarin (1986) 69.

reciprocal, ritualized relationship. A debt of *kharis* represented the inception of *xenia*.[62] And, in like manner, Athenian adoption offered the possibility of creating a permanent and positive link between two families. In another fragment, we learn:

> ὅτι οἱ ποιητοὶ παῖδες ἐπανελθεῖν εἰς τὸν πατρῷον οἶκον οὐκ ἦσαν κύριοι, εἰ μὴ παῖδας γνησίους καταλίποιεν ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ τοῦ ποιησαμένου
>
> that adopted children were not able to return to their paternal *oikos* unless they left behind natural children in the *oikos* of their adopter[63]

In other words, adopted children were able to return to their biological families in the event they left behind biological heirs for their adopter. This possibility suggests that even though legally speaking and for purposes of inheritance the πατρῷος οἶκος and the οἶκος τοῦ ποιησαμένου remained distinct, the natal family of the adoptee preserved an interest in his fate, and the relationship once formed likely served to cement *kharis* between the two families. Perhaps, this is another reason for the Athenian aversion to adoption of non-citizens and Solon's stipulation that only persons without natural born heirs could adopt. Without these limitations, adoption might be used by the aristocratic class to further cement their *xenia* with foreign allies and create factions at home, thereby undermining their commitment and fidelity to the *demos*.[64]

In conclusion, the Athenian need to legislate adoption betrays the nature of the institution, a nature that Athens with its restricted liberty and privileged majority felt a need to suppress. At a fundamental level, adoption creates kinship based upon ποίησις, not φύσις, and as such, unrestricted adoption poses a threat to the very fabric of Athenian society, a society based on the myth of autochthony. This potentiality latent in adoption becomes blatant in

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[62] Herman (1987) 48.
[63] Solon F 58a.
[64] See Herman (1987) 156-161 for a discussion of the conflicts between the demands of *xenia* and the demands of the *polis*.

Athenian adoptive vocabulary. Isaios sets a child φύσει γεγονότα in opposition to one ποιητόν.[65] The difference between adopted and biological children falls neatly into the paradigm of nature and convention. However, in this instance, convention exists to amend the flaws in nature. When adoptions were made *inter vivos*, most adopters "had been married at some point before adopting,"[66] suggesting that they had ample evidence of their inability to beget children naturally. Moreover, the presence of biological children automatically invalidated testamentary adoption, though curiously an adoption *inter vivos* was not invalidated by the subsequent birth of children.[67] Thus, the existence of adoption within a society that predicates its identity upon a shared civic nature is inherently subversive. If that civic nature can be defective in the individual citizen, it can most assuredly be defective in the city as a whole. Perhaps, it is for this precise reason that Athens effectively limits adoption more than Cretan cities, where an immigrant past was part of civic identity and inter-*polis* exchange was necessary for survival.

v. Adoption in Thebes

When we turn to Thebes, the paper trail becomes even more flimsy than in Athens or Crete. While forensic speeches provide ample information about the way Athenians believed adoption should function, there is no equivalent source of information for Thebes and Boiotia. And, no inscribed laws survive. In the second book of his *Politics*, however, Aristotle comments in passing about the Theban lawgiver, Philolaos, and the peculiarity of Theban laws regarding adoption. His interest in these laws reveals frustratingly little apart from the fact that Thebes

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[65] *Isaios* VII.16.
[66] Rubinstein (1993) 21.
[67] Rubinstein (1993) 56. This fact parallels adoption in Crete.

was unique in this regard and that adoption seems to have been important to their political identity:

> Νομοθέτης δ᾽αὐτοῖς ἐγένετο Φιλόλαος περί τ᾽ἄλλων τινῶν καὶ περὶ τῆς παιδοποιίας, οὓς καλοῦσιν ἐκεῖνοι νόμους θετικούς: καὶ τοῦτ᾽ἐστὶν ἰδίως ὑπ᾽ἐκείνου νενομοθετημένον, ὅπως ὁ ἀριθμὸς σῴζηται τῶν κλήρων.
>
> But Philolaos became the lawgiver for them about some other things and about adoption, which they call '*thetikos* laws': and this in particular was legislated by him so that the number of estates might be preserved.[68]

Lost in translation is Aristotle's playfulness. Philolaos as lawgiver, νομοθέτης, legislated, νενομοθετημένον, laws about adoption, νόμους θετικούς. Sandwiched between the lawgiver and the lawgiving, the laws about adoption themselves sound eerily similar to the act of lawgiving and may function as a metaphor for the act. Both laws and children are θετοί, placed, adopted. By extension laws are the city's adopted children. This possibility is enhanced by the narrative frame Aristotle uses to introduce the laws of Thebes. Philolaos only becomes lawgiver, because he follows his lover Diokles from their hometown of Corinth διαμισήσας τὸν ἔρωτα τὸν τῆς μητρὸς Ἀλκυόνης "because he bitterly hated the desire of his mother Alkyone."[69] The excessive and disordered love of Diokles' mother drives Philolaos and his chosen, or perhaps adopted, lover from their mother city to an adopted city where Philolaos and his adopted family establish laws about adoption. Did Philolaos recognize the need for legal and perhaps even obligatory adoption because he understood how destructive an excess love of one's own kin could be? Perhaps.

Regardless, Aristotle gives the preservation of the ἀριθμὸς… τῶν κλήρων "number… of estates"[70] as the explicit reason for Philolaos' adoptive laws. This motivation aligns with

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[68] Aristotle, *Politics* 2.1274b.
[69] Aristotle, *Politics* 2.1247a.
[70] Aristotle, *Politics* 2.1274b.

inheritance practices in Athens where the ἐπιδικασία worked to prevent the conglomeration of estates into the hands of a few citizens and suggests a concern for the preservation of the Theban landed aristocracy as it was. While adoption might enable the entrance of an outsider into an in-group, it ironically also provides for the preservation of that same group. If all the κλῆροι of the landed aristocracy were to fall into the hands of a few families, the aristocratic equality that allowed Thebes to function as it did would quickly dissolve. In Thebes, the controlled introduction of new people is not so much a threat to identity as a means of preserving it.

Aristotle's comments on the νόμους θετικούς, however, offer frightfully little information about who was adopted and how adoptions were regulated. Was some official or group at Thebes actively shuffling around children and adults, assigning them to families in need? Or are the νόμους θετικούς just another variation on the laws about adoption observable elsewhere? Writing in the third century CE, Aelian adds another piece to the puzzle. He explains that οὐκ ἔξεστιν ἀνδρὶ Θηβαίῳ ἐκθεῖναι παιδίον οὐδὲ ἐς ἐρημίαν αὐτὸ ῥῖψαι θάνατον αὐτοῦ καταψηφισαμένῳ "it was not possible for a Theban to expose a child and to throw it out into the wilderness under pain of death."[71] Taken alone, Aelian's comment is, of course, questionable. So distant is he from archaic and classical Thebes in time that it seems impossible for him to reflect their customs accurately. And yet, Aelian's comment could shed light on what exactly Aristotle meant by "adoptive laws." If it was not legal to expose (ἐκθεῖναι) children in Thebes, a practice deemed by most scholars to be widespread in the ancient Mediterranean world, perhaps the city itself managed the redistribution of unwanted children to childless families.

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[71] Aelian, *Varia Historia* 2.7.

Writing towards the end of a long Greek literary tradition, Aelian's use of the term ἐρημία supports this interpretation. As argued above, Menekles' adopted son introduces the concept of ἐρημία as the fate of a childless man without the salvific influence of adoption. It also turns out to be the fate of the unwanted infant. And both kinds of ἐρημία result either in painful, lonely death or, as myth illustrates, trouble for society. The ἐρημία of Philoktetes leaves him bitter and resentful towards the Akhaian army and greatly delays their victory over Troy. Likewise, the ἐρημία of little Theban Oedipus leads to the monstrous murder of Laios and the marriage of Jocasta to her son. In a way, the childless adult and the parentless child are in the same position, creating a bond of reciprocal need and dependence.[72] Their emptiness makes them receptive to one another.

To this point, Aelian's word choice suggests a connection between adoption and exposure. While the Cretans describe adoption as ἄνπανσις and the Athenians as ποίησις , Thebans refer to adoption as θέσις. In *Olympian* IX, Zeus bestows his paramour upon King Lokros, making Zeus' semi-divine son into Lokros' θετὸν υἱόν "adopted son."[73] The description of Opous as a θετὸν υἱόν rings especially true given that he is physically transported and placed into a new family by an external, higher power. In this instance, adoption is not dependent upon revelation or the ποίησις of an adoptive father; rather, it is administered from without. It is tempting to see Pindar's use of adoption in *Olympian* IX as a mythical play on the Theban institution of adoption which may have involved the intervention of a magistrate for the redistribution of unwanted sons and daughters. After all, the act of placing children (τίθημι) is, in Greek, semantically opposed to the act of exposing them

[72] Exposed infant and childless father are both forms of Agamben's *homo sacer*.
[73] *O*.9.62.

(ἐκτίθημι)—a likely fate for the illegitimate offspring of a princess without divine intervention. In the myth as in Thebes, θέσις replaces ἔκθεσις.

Curiously, the use of θέσις and related words to describe adoption becomes hardened over time, outstripping the use of ἄνπανσις and ποίησις . As mentioned above, by the time of Paul and the composition of the New Testament, θέσις and its relatives had become so linked to the adoption of υἱοί that it becomes a new word: υἱοθεσία. In the *Laws*, however, Plato uses both θέσις and ποίησις and their related words. As the Athenian stranger plunges into a discussion of hereditary law, he explains:

> …τὰ δὲ ἄλλα παραδιδοὺς πάντα τῷ ποιηθέντι ἄμεμπτος ἵλεων ὑὸν αὐτὸν ποιείσθω σὺν νόμῳ.
>
> …and having left all his other possessions to his adopted son, let him willingly and blamelessly make him a son in law.[74]

In the context of inheritance law, the Athenian stranger uses the typical Athenian vocabulary for adoption (ποιηθέντι, ποιείσθω). However, when he introduces the topic of unwanted sons and their redistribution, he turns to the Theban vocabulary:

> …ἀποκηρυχθέντα δὲ ἄν τις δέκα ἐτῶν μὴ ἐπιθυμήσῃ θετὸν ὑὸν ποιήσασθαι, τοὺς τῶν ἐπιγόνων ἐπιμελητὰς τῶν εἰς τὴν ἀποικίαν ἐπιμελεῖσθαι καὶ τούτων, ὅπως ἂν μετάσχωσι τῆς αὐτῆς ἀποικίας ἐμμελῶς.
>
> …but if within ten years no one desires to make the renounced man his adopted son, the officials charged with the care of extra children for the colonies will take care of these people as well and see to it that they have a harmonious share in the same colony.[75]

The term θετὸν ὑὸν is used in the context of a person not simply adopted, but rather rejected from his natal family and subsequently redistributed by an official in charge of unwanted sons.

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[74] Plato, *Laws* 9.9

[75] Plato, *Laws* 9.929c-d.

In this particular case, he is redistributed to a colony where he can live his life without upsetting the distribution of κλῆροι in the imagined city state.

The differences in adoptive vocabulary denote differences in adoptive practice. When the Athenian stranger means adoption simply as the acquisition of a non-biological child, he uses relatives of ποιέω. Once the context shifts to redistribution necessitating the involvement of an official, the vocabulary shifts to derivatives of τίθημι. Likewise, Aristotle explains that the Thebans have peculiar laws περὶ τῆς παιδοποιίας "about adoption."[76] As an abstract concept, Aristotle refers to adoption as *παιδοποιία*, a compound of *παῖς* and *ποιέω*, but he makes it clear that this is his own vocabulary. The Thebans, by contrast, καλοῦσιν … νόμους θετικούς "call them laws about placing."[77] The uniquely Theban vocabulary combined with its appropriation by the Athenian stranger in the *Laws* suggest that the Theban phenomenon of adoption involved active redistribution of unwanted children.

Moreover, Aelian goes on to explain:

> ἀλλ᾽ἐὰν ᾖ πένης ἐς τὰ ἔσχατα ὁ τοῦ παιδὸς πατήρ, εἶτε ἄρρεν τοῦτο εἴτε θῆλυ ἐστιν, ἐπὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς κομίζειν ἐξ ὠδίνων τῶν μητρῴων σὺν τοῖς σπαργάνοις αὐτό: αἳ δὲ παραλαβοῦσαι ἀποδίδονται τὸ βρέφος τῷ τιμὴν ἐλαχίστην δόντι. ῥήτρα τε πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ ὁμολογία γίνεται ἦ μὴν τρέφειν τὸ βρέφος καὶ αὐξηθὲν ἔχειν δοῦλον ἢ δούλην, θρεπτήρια αὐτοῦ τὴν ὑπηρεσίαν λαμβόντα.
>
> But if the child's father is poor in the extreme, whether the child is male or female, he may take it to the authorities straight from its mother's womb still wrapped in swaddling clothes; and the women who accept the newborn sell it to the lowest bidder. And an agreement and contract is made that the buyer will raise it and keep it as a male or female slave once it's grown, since he's taken care of its rearing in exchange for service.[78]

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[76] Aristotle, *Politics* 2.1274b.
[77] Aristotle, *Politics* 2.1274b.
[78] Aelian, *Varia Historia* 2.7.

It is clear from Aelian's description that certain women existed whose role was the redistribution of unwanted infants. In the case of the extremely penurious (πένης ἐς τὰ ἔσχατα), the infants were sold to the lowest bidder, presumably to discourage profiteering and the sale of children when not utterly necessary.[79] To a contemporary reader, the plight of these children sounds alarming, yet this scheme for the redistribution of children also shows mercy to the poor. As Boswell demonstrates, infant abandonment commonly resulted in the rescue and subsequent enslavement of a child. Creating a space for the poor to sell their children without encouraging them to do so ensured, at the very least, that they received some compensation for their loss and provided a semblance of justice for the most vulnerable members of society.

Aelian's observations, however, provide no information on the fate of the unwanted children of the wealthy. The possibility of auctioning off infants, horrifying as it seems, existed to help raise the poor from their penury and thus was not a legal option for the wealthy. Are we then to assume that they kept all their children? Even with widespread access to contraception and childcare, in the United States in 2014 the abortion rate among women in the highest income group was still 6 abortions per 1000 women, as compared with the national average of 14.6 abortions per 1000 women.[80] As ancient contraceptives were fairly ineffectual and abortion incredibly risky, infant abandonment appears to be the safest method of disposing of unwanted children. Yet, both abortion and exposure demanded rather strenuous purification processes and appear, even when legal, to be a last resort.[81] Of course, the existence of prostitutes and the practice of homosexuality in Thebes likely decreased the number of unwanted, legitimate pregnancies. And given high infant mortality rates, women had to have multiple live births in

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[79] Boswell (1988) 67.
[80] Jones and Jerman (2017).
[81] Patterson (1985) 106; Dasen (2013) 26.

order to replenish the population. Yet, such considerations are rarely the concern of individual couples, and surely some couples had more children than they wished while others had fewer.

Indeed, Thebes could scarcely have been immune from such a pervasive problem in the human experience as unwanted children and childless adults. Moreover, Aristotle's comment that the νομοὶ θετικοί existed for the preservation of the number of κλῆροι suggest there was a desirable number of heirs for an aristocratic family to have and that excess heirs were somehow redistributed to families that lacked. All together, the evidence examined above points strongly to the possibility that Thebes' unique laws about adoption stipulated a group of people whose role was to oversee the redistribution of unwanted children, whether that meant placing (τίθημι) aristocratic children in aristocratic homes or auctioning off the children of the poor.

vi. Infant Abandonment and Adoption

As we have seen in Thebes, exposure and adoption were evidently related, with *thesis* replacing *ekthesis* as the fate of unwanted children. Likewise, in Athens, we see a similar parallelism between the exposure of an unwanted infant and the fate of a childless adult. The *eremia* of Menekles' adopted father or Philoktetes left to die on Lemnos is the same as the wilderness in which unwanted children were exposed. Thus, at least on a philological level, we see that the two concepts were connected. On a practical level, they were as well, for both institutions sought to tackle the problems of fertility and infertility, both of which lie naturally outside the laws of supply and demand. Moreover, both institutions disclose the reality that a person's identity is as much dependent upon convention as it is on birth.

Of Athens, Mark Golden explains that "[b]eing born, a biological event, was insufficient to make a child a member of an *oikos* or *oikia*, a household. Even those with two citizen parents

had no automatic right of entry; they had to be accepted by the *kyrios*, the household's head."[82] Judith Evans Grubbs elaborates that "[m]ost often, however it was the 'fatherless' babies who were exposed…. In fact, often the decision to expose was made by the mother sometimes even without consulting the father."[83] Her claim that fatherless children had worse odds seems perfectly reasonable and is corroborated by literary data on the topic.[84] And the likelihood of an illegitimate infant being exposed without the knowledge of the *kyrios* seems entirely plausible. Yet, Evans Grubbs' claims are largely predicated upon evidence from the Hellenistic and Roman periods. By contrast, Louis Germain claims that "*l'exposition des enfants ne semble pas avoir été très répandue aux époques archaïque et classique*."[85] From the archaic period, we rely solely upon a law attributed to Solon, another attributed to Lycurgus, and the Gortyn Code.[86] Such parsimonious evidence is insufficient to claim that infant exposure was a widespread phenomenon, but it is also insufficient to suggest that it was not. Given the fact that exposure would have happened in the wilderness (ἐρημία) as our literary and historical sources indicate, it is impossible to find archaeological evidence either of its existence or its absence in the archaic and classical periods.[87] Rather, we must depend upon the presence of explicit laws about exposure to tell us that it happened often enough to demand legislation on the topic.

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[82] Golden (1990) 23.
[83] Evans Grubbs (2013) 85.
[84] The exposure of heroes is a common theme in Greek myth as the exposure of ordinary children is a theme in New Comedy. Is this a reflection of cultural norms? Or is it merely a convenient plot device? For a thorough and thoughtful discussion of adoption and abandonment in Roman literature and its Greek predecessors, see Boswell (1988).
[85] "the exposure of children does not seem to have been very widespread in the archaic and classical periods." Germain (1969) 180.
[86] Germain (1969) 181-182.
[87] I am indebted to Eva Schons-Rodriguez for explaining the state of the archaeological evidence on this topic to me.

In spite of their differences in focus, Golden and Evans Grubbs concur that the biological fact of birth in no way guaranteed a person's position in society. Thus, in a sense, every child raised was an adopted child. As laws on marriage and limitations on female mobility suggest, the question of paternity touched a raw nerve for Greek men. While maternity is immanently evident through parturition, paternity is impossible to prove, thereby making it an active choice. And, the possibility of exposed infants being passed off in the place of still-borns or even in the place of a faked pregnancy surely exacerbated male anxiety. Yet, as scholarship in the last thirty years has emphasized, the fate of an infant was not necessarily a choice between life in his biological family and death. A third possibility awaited unwanted children—being raised by strangers. Most historical evidence—lawsuits and wet-nurse contracts—suggests that these babies were not in fact adopted children. In a collection of contracts from Roman Egypt, "[m]ost of the nurslings were slaves, and twelve of these were *anairetoi* (picked-up ones) acquired from the local dung heap."[88]

Unfortunately, most evidence for infant exposure comes from the Hellenistic and Roman periods. For the Archaic Greek World, we rely primarily upon the Gortyn Code, which posits that in the case of divorce, a mother is obliged to bring her infant to its father, and only after the father has decided he does not want the child, can she choose whether to rear it or not.[89] Interestingly enough, the Gortyn Code therefore does not leave the ultimate right of life and death in the *kyrios*' hands. At least in cases of spousal separation, a woman may choose to keep her child, even if her ex-husband denies his paternity. In cases where both partners remain together, however, the Great Code is silent. In contradistinction to Gortyn, Solon's law,

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[88] Evans Grubbs (2013) 93.
[89] *GC*.III.44–IV.17

preserved in Hermogenes of Tarsus' *On the Invention of Arguments* and Sextus Empiricus' *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* leaves absolute right of life and death in the father's hands. The similarity of this law to the Roman practice of *patria potestas* does cast doubt upon its authenticity, yet the omnipresence of the possibility of exposure in philosophical[90] and literary texts suggests that it was at least a realistic possibility to the Greek reader, and scholars have (perhaps for lack of better sources) unilaterally accepted it in their analyses.

In *The Kindness of Strangers*, Boswell argues:

> Abandonment would hardly have worked as a social mechanism if the parents believed that their actions were invariably observed or that some turn of fate would inevitably disclose the child's relationship to them. But, the fear—or hope—that this was the case may be one of the forces behind its regular occurrence in literary treatments of the subject.[91]

The sheer quantity of texts treating infant exposure suggests that it did indeed happen, and the anxiety implicit in these texts about the survival of such infants suggests that the decision to expose was an emotionally charged one. Cynthia Patterson argues that exposure was the predominant method of disposing of unwanted infants, citing Socrates' birth-exposure metaphor in the *Theaetetus* as literarily meaningless unless abandonment were within the ordinary person's experience. Yet, its prevalence, she argues, did not absolve it from moral or religious weight: "The relatively long period of purification for both acts [in Hellenistic Egypt], however, suggests that abortion and exposure were more serious sources of pollution in the eyes of the framers of sacred law and perhaps society in general."[92] As with birth, the death of an unwanted βρέφος or the exposure of an undesired neonate merited some period of religious purification, which underlines perhaps the most important aspect of Greek sentiments on these

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[90] Germain (1969) 184-187 discusses Plato and Aristotle's references at length.
[91] Boswell (1988) 9.
[92] Patterson (1985) 106.

topics for the purposes of my dissertation, namely that to the Greek mind, every life—even one abandoned in its infancy—warranted some kind of recognition.

vii. Conclusion

As with all institutions, the original significance becomes cheapened through use. Rebirth through adoption into a new city or family becomes a convenient means of specifying inheritance. And the genuine acceptance of an outsider into a new home becomes a stopgap for sterility. Fines lessen. The dissolution of something ordinarily permanent—a father's relationship to his child—is a fee away from freedom.

Yet, through all the variable practices and laws, a few details stand out that are of use in my study of Pindar. The first is that adoption, whether restricted or encouraged by legal practice, offers the possibility of fundamentally changing who a person is. Codified law on the topic focuses on the distribution of inheritance or on the protection of citizen privileges. Adoption is legislated because it undermines the concept of biologically determined identity and by extension systems of justice predicated upon that concept. Moreover, this possibility of assuming a new identity rests upon the inverse possibility of losing an old one. As such, whether explicitly legislated or not, adoption exists as an antithesis to the practice of exposure, as evinced by the fact that even an adult must sever legal ties with his natal family in order to be adopted: he is exposed in order to be adopted anew. Thus, adoption brings the liminal space of neonatal life into adulthood; it suggests that at a fundamental level, belonging is something granted by an other. Adoption casts doubt upon identity predicated upon inherited nature and questions the assumed superiority of birth over choice. It is wildly disruptive yet deeply regenerative. And as such, adoption must be monitored closely.

II. Thesis & Ekthesis: Adoption and Synthetic Family in *Olympian* IX

i. Introduction

Michael Simpson argues that *Olympian* IX revolves around the idea of replacement.[1] Old myths give way to new ones, old poets to new poets, old kings to new kings. In addition, it is Pindar's only extant poem to treat the topic of adoption explicitly. As mentioned in the preceding chapter, Pindar uses the uniquely Theban terminology of *placing* to describe the adoption of Opous by Lokros: εὐφράνθη τε ἰδὼν ἥρως θετὸν υἱόν "and the hero rejoiced to see his adopted [lit. *placed*] son"[2] and codes Lokros' adoption of Opous as an outpouring of divine *kharis* to make up for the hero's deficiencies, lest he become ὀρφανὸν γενεᾶς "bereaved of family."[3] The language of divine bestowal is carefully interwoven with the language of adoption, creating a garland of song that localizes its action within the ἐξαίρετον Χαρίτων… κᾶπον "the chosen garden of the graces"[4] and connects openness to the other to the presence of Eunomia within a community.

Given this frame, I argue that *Olympian* IX is not concerned with replacement simply but with the possibility of choosing one's own replacement (adoption) and forming synthetic relationships in order to supplement the deficiencies of the self. I contend that Pindar's two clear-cut mythological examples of adoption in the center of the poem provide a roadmap for understanding Pindar's coupling of the victor with his *proxenos* as well as the relationship of the poet with his client. Furthermore, I suggest that Epharmostos' ambiguously Greek status provides Pindar with a clear justification for speaking so directly about the limitations of

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[1] Simpson (1969) 114.
[2] *O.*9.62.
[3] *O.*9.61.
[4] *O.*9.26.

hereditary identity, correcting older myths about Opuntian origins (I will compare Hesiod's narrative of the Great Flood with Pindar's), and for advocating for openness to the other. Finally, I argue that the grammatical ambiguity of Pindar's claim in line 100 (τὸ δὲ φυᾷ κράτιστον ἅπαν)[5] challenges the hereditary understanding of the supremacy of nature. I suggest that under the aegis of divine *kharis,* the apparent duality of natural and synthetic bonds dissolves. What is strong in one nature is complemented by the strength of another.

ii. Poem Summary

Olympian IX is a fairly typical Pindaric *epinikion* in that it covers a great deal of material and appears to jump from thought to thought rapidly and somewhat disconnectedly. Strophe A begins with a narration of the original *komos* for Epharmostos in Olympia, tells briefly the story of Pelops' (broadly defined) courtship of Hippodameia, praises the city of Opous, and invokes the assistance of the Graces for Pindar's ode. Strophe B introduces and subsequently dismisses as inappropriate a conflict between Herakles and the Olympian gods Poseidon, Apollo, and Hades. It then pivots to the narrative of Pyrrha and Deukalion and the Great Flood, ending with the establishment of Opuntian kings from the stony people Pyrrha and Deukalion created. Strophe C brings us to the near demise of these kings, which is averted through Zeus' scheme to give his pregnant paramour to Lokros (the last of the Opuntian kings) as his wife. The king adopts her son, Opous, and gives over to his heir rule of the city. Pindar uses the figure of Opous to introduce the topic of *proxenia,* of which Opous was an avid participant. The poem then lists some of his *proxenoi* and their cities ending with Menoitios and his son Patroklos. The reader is then treated to a moving narrative about the closeness of Patroklos and Achilles which introduces us at last to the victor and his *proxenos* Lampromakhos. Strophe D enumerates the

[5] *O.*9.100. How this should be rendered into English will be discussed in depth below.

many victories of Epharmostos and Lampromakhos which culminate in a meditation on nature, skill, and divine assistance. The strophe then pivots abruptly to a celebration of the local Boiotian hero cult of Ajax, thereby bringing us from the original *komos* of Epharmostos in Olympia to what is assumed to be a celebration of his victory back home in Boiotia.

iii. Synthesis Through *Kharis*

The opening of *Olympian* IX, encompassing the first thirty or so lines, introduces the idea of adoption as a form of divine dispensation. Through the benevolent help of the Graces, Themis, and Eunomia, Pindar produces the ode which acts as an heir to Epharmostos, ousting Arkhilokhos as encomiast and by extension Herakles, the subject of his encomium. In so doing, it introduces the idea of redistribution, replacement, and reception and lays the groundwork for the possibility of expanding a person's identity beyond the bonds of biological heredity.

Olympian IX begins with a glance back to the past, remembering the original *komos* of Epharmostos at Olympia:

> Τὸ μὲν Ἀρχιλόχου μέλος
> φωνᾶεν Ὀλυμπίᾳ,
> 'καλλίνικος' ὁ τριπλόος κεχλαδώς,
> ἄρκεσε Κρόνιον παρ᾽ ὄχθον ἁγεμονεῦσαι
> κωμάζοντι φίλοις Ἐφαρμόστῳ σὺν ἑταίροις
>
> The song of Arkhilokhos,
> the one that sounds in Olympia,
> the "Kallinikos!" which rings out three times,
> sufficed for Epharmostos to lead the way beside the Hill of Kronos
> as he partied with his dear friends[6]

Pindar's use of the definite article τὸ followed by the further clarification 'καλλίνικος' ὁ τριπλόος κεχλαδώς makes it clear that Pindar is referring to a specific song, one that he seems

[6] *O*.9.1-4.

to expect his reader to be familiar with.[7] One of the scholiasts, glossing the appearance of *triploos* observes that the "Kallinikos" of Arkhilokhos, a poem originally written in celebration of Herakles, "was recited three times to the victors"[8] of the Olympic games. Other possible interpretations of *triploos* include the appearance of the word *kallinikos* within Arkhilokhos' poem three times or that Epharmostos won on three different occasions or events in the games. Pindar's precise meaning is lost, but at any event, the appearance of *triploos* in *Olympian* IX gives the impression of repetition. Arkhilokhos' hymn is neither new nor unusual. It has been heard sufficiently often that Pindar need only quote one word and his audience knows the reference.

Another one of the scholiasts quotes the poem in part, giving us some idea of the style and content:

> τήνελλα καλλίνικε χαῖρε ἄναξ Ἡράκλεις,
> αὐτός τε καὶ Ἰόλαος, αἰχμητὰ δύο.
> τήνελλα καλλίνικε χαῖρε ἄναξ Ἡράκλεις.
>
> Twang! Hail lord Herakles beautiful in victory!
> and Iolaos himself, the pair of spearmen!
> Twang! Hail lord Herakles beautiful in victory![9]

The poem is simple, straightforward, and repetitive; it ἄρκεσε "sufficed"[10] in the past tense for Epharmostos κωμάζοντι φίλοις "partying with his friends,"[11] and the immediate and

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[7] Pavlou (2008) discusses the possibility of intentional intertextuality in the archaic period at length.
[8] Sch.O.9.1d.
[9] Sch.O.9.1b.
[10] *O*.9.3.
[11] *O*.9.4.

impromptu *komos* following Epharmostos' victory.[12] "But now" ἀλλὰ νῦν,[13] the task of praising the victor must be redistributed to a different poet. The opening μέν of the poem anticipates the weak adversative of δέ, but Pindar disrupts his readers' expectations by substituting instead the strong adversative of ἀλλά, emphasizing further the difference by contrasting the aorist of ἄρκεσε with νῦν and its accompanying prayer—an activity that takes place in the eternal present. Arkhilokhos and his repetitive poem are thoroughly things of the past.[14]

The need for a new and person-specific ode[15] is predicated upon the fact that a victory ode functions like an heir which will inherit and preserve the transitory excellence which the athlete has achieved. While this function is implicit in *Olympian* IX, Pindar compares his poetry to a long-desired child in *Olympian* X. Towards the end of the poem, Pindar observes that winning in the games without an ode is like getting rich without an heir, for after all:

> …πλοῦτος ὁ λαχὼν ποιμένα
> ἐπακτὸν ἀλλότριον
> θνᾴσκοντι στυγερώτατος…
>
> …wealth left to another man's
> mercenary shepherd
> is the most hateful thing to dying men…[16]

The passage is an indictment of collateral heirs, the members of a person's family slated to inherit his possessions in the absence of a biological or adopted son, not of an *allotrios per se*. The meaning of the adjective is complicated by its appearance with *poimên*. The *allotrios* is

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[12] Miller (1993) 123. "Though the generic congratulatory effusion [of Arkhilokhos] 'sufficed' Epharmostos *then*, he *now* needs something both more pointed and more thorough, and this the speaker exhorts himself to supply."
[13] *O.*9.5.
[14] One need not even invoke Pindar's dismissal of Arkhilokhos in *Pythian* II.54-56 to argue that the author does not look favorably upon his forebear in *Olympian* IX.
[15] Miller (1993); see also Simpson (1969).
[16] *O.*10.88-90.

hateful inasmuch as he is an *allotrios poimên*, already managing someone else's flock. That is, the *allotrios* is not hateful for being other, but for dividing his attention and obligations between two different estates.

Moreover, the term *poimên* and the occupation of watching livestock carry a history of exploitation and guile. Already in the homeric *Hymn to Hermes*, the infant deity justifies his theft of Apollo's cattle by explaining that he is βουκολέων ἐμὲ καὶ σὲ "cowherding [himself] and [his mother]."[17] Through sleight of tongue, the trickster god turns theft to care by implying that the true object of concern in animal husbandry is neither the animal nor its owner, but whoever happens to be βουκολέων "herding" them. In short, for Hermes, an *allotrios poimên* is looking out for himself, not his master or his livestock. Likewise, as Thrasymachus argues in the *Republic*, τοὺς ποιμένας ἢ τοὺς βουκόλους "shepherds and cowherds"[18] are not genuinely looking out for the good of their animals but are planning to exploit them for their own aims. In addition, Kathryn Gutzwiller observes that as early as the fourth century, the verb βουκολέω is documented as meaning "cheat" or "deceive."[19] Pindar is thus situated well within a tradition of crafty and not altogether trustworthy herdsman.

As such, Pindar's *allotrios poimên* is guilty by association. Not only does he see his inheritance as something separate from himself, an income over and above his expected portion, he sees it as something fundamentally exploitable—to be used and discarded as needed. This reading rules out the possibility of the *allotrios poimên* being an adopted son, for as discussed in the previous chapter, adoption law throughout Greece demands the severance of the adoptee from his natural paternal family. Thus, Pindar is not calling any non-biological

[17] Hom. *Hymn to Hermes* 167; Gutzwiller (2006) 282.
[18] Plato, *Rep*.I.343b.
[19] Gutzwiller (2006) 387.

inheritor "most hateful." Rather, he is saying that seeing one's estate, so tenderly cared for in life, amalgamated into an outsider's possessions, stolen like the cattle of Apollo, and exploited for an outsider's aims is hateful. Lacking an heir terrifies because it means not only the death of the body, but the death of the self, a metaphorical exposure in the wasteland of old age.[20] The external trappings of individuality are assimilated into those of someone else.

Olympian X implies that like the childless adult, the ode-less athlete fades into long lists of champions, his individuality obscured by a multitude of names. However, a poem, like an heir, can preserve the self. The poet goes onto explain:

> καὶ ὅταν καλὰ ἔρξαις ἀοιδᾶς ἄτερ,
> Ἁγησίδαμ᾽, εἰς Ἀίδα σταθμὸν
> ἀνὴρ ἵκηται, κενεὰ πνεύσαις ἔπορε μόχθῳ βραχύ τι τερπνόν.
>
> And when a man who has done beautiful deeds,
> Hagesidamos, arrives at the finish line of Hades
> without a song, breathing empty breaths, he has made a short delight of his toil.[21]

Here, the poem is very literally what allows the dead person's life to have meaning after death; it provides a mechanism of outlasting mortality, much as leaving behind children to preserve one's family and grave cult would. Arriving at Hades without an original song to one's name is parallel to dying without a unique heir and leaving one's property to an *allotrios poimên*. Pindar frames his poem as an heir to the barren athleticism of the victor and the generic encomiastic hymns sung at Olympia. His poetry is a child—an adopted child.

With this in mind, we can return to the opening of *Olympian* X where Pindar offers his poem late but in earnest explaining that ὅμως δὲ λῦσαι δυνατὸς ὀξεῖαν ἐπιμομφὰν τόκος

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[20] As Lacey (1984) 37 observes, "succession of distant kinsmen to one's possessions was a serious misfortune to be avoided by all possible means, and a man's clan as a body with corporate aspirations and corporate religious bonds seems quite foreign."
[21] *O.*10.91-93.

θνατῶν "in the same way *tokos* can dissolve the fierce reproach of mortals."[22] Gildersleeve has observed that Pindar is employing the language of debt;[23] his poem, delivered after its due date, is not just payment but payment with interest, which supposedly makes up for its tardiness. The financial meaning of τόκος made obvious by the appearance of ὀφείλω a few lines earlier is, of course, a calcified metaphor from its literal meaning, which Pindar must also have in mind. Given the opportunity to pun, Pindar usually takes it.[24] And he surely means us to understand *tokos* both as interest and child, especially considering the imagery of poetic inheritance discussed above. Even more than payment with interest, the presence of a child or *tokos* dissolves the reproach of others. And taken together with Pindar's reference to an *allotrios poimên*, it seems clear that he is encouraging us to see his poem as a *tokos* in both senses.

The financial sense of *tokos*, however, carries interesting implications for adoption as well. The word is itself a metaphor. Interest is the offspring of the initial loan. However, unlike organic offspring, interest is paid over and above the original sum. It is not simply a replacement of the money which has been given; it is repayment and then some. Pindar figures his poem as a *tokos*, thereby implying that his poem does not simply preserve or replace the identity of the victor after death. Rather, his poem adds to it. Likewise, an adopted heir does not simply continue the family as it was; he is not simply a replacement for his adoptive father. Rather, the heir assumes the father's position and roles but brings something new and enriching with him. While the *allotrios poimên* sees the dead man's estate as an enrichment of himself at the expense of the deceased, the adopted son offers further enrichment to the adopter's family and possessions.

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[22] *O.*10.9.
[23] Gildersleeve (1970) 213.
[24] Cf. *N.*2.10-12; Kurke (1991) 37.

This possibility is further developed in *Olympian* IX. Pindar's ode to Epharmostos acts as an adopted heir replacing and adding onto the collateral heir represented by Arkhilokhos' hymn, an *allotrios poimên* shepherding all Olympic victors together. While a hackneyed old tune might suffice for a raucous and drunken night in the hills of Olympia, it does not offer longevity to the glory Epharmostos has won himself in wrestling. As Michael Simpson observes:

> …the song of Archilochos could fit anyone successful in the games since it lacked both the name of a victor and particulars of a contest. Pindar's ode, by contrast, is of greater value to Epharmostos because, composed specifically for him and devoted exclusively to him, it articulates the significance of the victory for his life, and so, like the achievements of Epharmostos which it celebrates, it is a source of honor and renown for him.[25]

In *The Traffic in Praise*, Leslie Kurke argues that athletic victories facilitate the sharing of honor between generations of a family, bestowing on a son the glory of his father and vice versa, collectively reinforcing with the help of Pindar's poetics the idea of a family's excellent *phua*.[26] As Simpson observes above, *Olympian* IX is something that both gives honor and renown to Epharmostos and receives from Epharmostos the material with which to create that honor (namely, the fact of his victory). Thus, the relationship between Epharmostos and the ode closely parallels the relationship Kurke develops between a victor and his family or community. But, while Kurke's argument rests upon the idea of a shared *phua* or nature, the capacity for the ode to bring honor to Epharmostos depends precisely on its alterity. An ode is an entirely different sort of thing from an athletic victor, and this difference in nature is essential for the relationship between the two things to function.

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[25] Simpson (1969) 115.
[26] Kurke (1991).

Pindar's replacement of Arkhilokhos implies the accompanying replacement of Herakles by an Opuntian.[27] Born to Amphitryon (a native of Tiryns) and Alkmene in Thebes,[28] Herakles is the quintessential Greek hero, as the *Kallinikos*'s applicability to any Olympic victor implies. But as a child of Opuntian Lokris, Epharmostos' identity as a "Greek hero" is fundamentally in doubt. Rather than relying on the customary encomium, the victor seeks one based προξενίᾳ δ᾽ἀρετᾷ τ᾽ "on *proxenia* and excellence."[29] Given his ambiguous position, he chooses the synthetic and "private networks"[30] that undergirded *proxenia* over a hereditary Hellenic identity. In *Hellenicity*, Jonathan Hall argues that "the Thessalians… endowed the terms 'Hellenes' and 'Hellas' with an ethnic significance in order to exclude the 'perioikic' populations of Central Greece and promote their own hegemonic claims within central Greece."[31] Such a move would exclude populations like the East Lokrians (in Opous), who could not trace their descent from Hellen and his sons in the Hesiodic genealogy,[32] the urtext of Greek ethnic identity (though regional variations occur).[33] Contributing to Epharmostos' insecurity is the fact that hellenicity was required to compete in the Olympic games.[34] A sore loser might protest Epharmostos' victory because he did not fit the requirements of Greekness. But by signaling that Epharmostos can replace the most Greek of heroes, Pindar's ode suggests that ἀρετά,[35] which may bloom anywhere, should be the true criterion of identity, and not heredity. The

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[27] Simpson (1969) 119.
[28] Cf. *N*.1.
[29] *O*.9.83-84.
[30] Mack (2015) 102.
[31] Hall (2002) 7.
[32] Hesiod, *Cat*. fr. 9-10.
[33] West (1985) 169-170; Hall (2002) 28-29.
[34] Herodotus, *Histories* 5.22.2.
[35] *O*.9.15.

chosen relationship of a foreign victor and his *proxenos*,[36] a term which "emphasized the foreign status of the community from which the recipients came,"[37] triumphs over ties of blood as represented by the Games' demand for Greekness.

Pindar offers precedent for the redistribution of Olympian honor to a foreigner by describing the location itself as τὸ δή ποτε Λυδὸς ἥρως Πέλοψ / ἐξάρατο κάλλιστον ἕδνον Ἱπποδαμείας "the very one which once a Lydian hero, Pelops, carried off for himself as the loveliest dowry of Hippodameia."[38] Pindar notably identifies Pelops not by his Greek ties to Mycenae and the Atreidai, but by his country of origin—Lydia.[39] Moreover, the verb ἐξαίρω in the middle voice implies a reward either for labor or some feat of prowess, such as an athletic competition.[40] And, Hippodameia's dowry calls to mind the first horse-race at Olympia, culminating in Pelops' victory, his wedding to the Greek Hippodameia, and his accession as king of Elean Pisa.[41] This Lydian is the original victor of Olympia, and Pindar's reference to him directly after Arkhilokhos' sufficient but unoriginal hymn to Herakles implies that the foreigner is a better archetype for subsequent victors than the ultra-Hellenic son of Zeus.

Pelops' accession as king of Pisa is paired with Pindar's own accession as Olympian poet which follows swiftly upon Pindar's invocation:

> ἀλλὰ νῦν ἑκατοβόλων Μοισᾶν ἀπὸ τόξων
> Δία τε φοινικοστερόπαν σεμνόν τ᾽ ἐπίνειμαι

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[36] *O*.9.83-84. προξενίᾳ δ᾽ ἀρετᾷ τ᾽ ἦλθον / τιμάορος… "I have come to give honor on account of *proxenia* and *areta*…" Pindar is clearly framed as Epharmostos' *proxenos*.
[37] Mack (2015) 209.
[38] *O*.9.9-10.
[39] Cf. *O*.1.24-25 where Pindar refers to Pelops again as Λυδός and additionally describes him as founding an ἀποικία "settlement."
[40] "ἐξαίρω." *LSJ.*
[41] Cf. Pausanias 5.7; *O*.1.70-71.

ἀκρωτήριον Ἄλιδος
τοιοῖσδε βέλεσσιν,
τὸ δή ποτε Λυδὸς
ἐξάρατο κάλλιστον ἕδνον Ἱπποδαμείας

but now, from the bows of the far-shooting Muses,
share Zeus the crimson-thunderer and the holy
hill of Elis
with arrows like these,
the hill of Elis which once a Lydian
carried off for himself as the loveliest dowry of Hippodameia[42]

Pindar's use of the verb ἐπινέμω is peculiar. In earlier texts, the verb does not appear in the middle voice as will be discussed below. And, the examples of it in the middle in later texts are predominantly (though not exclusively) metaphorical.[43] This has posed interpretive difficulties for scholars like Timothy Bryan Smith who seek to explain why the pious Pindar would take aim or trespass on Zeus.[44] An examination of the verb's use in the corpus, however, reveals that Pindar uses it with an animate subject (as implied by the command), which contravenes its metaphorical use in other authors, wherein fire or arrows or customs or some other inanimate entity spreads or encroaches upon some accusative direct object.[45] Here, however, the arrows are in an instrumental or complementary dative, and the subject is the bow's operator. Thus it does not grammatically coincide with the other metaphorical uses of the verb.

Moreover, it does not appear in the middle at all and is never used metaphorically before Pindar. Thus, Pindar may be innovating in his use of the verb, and the metaphorical usage may derive from Pindar's use in this ode. As such, any interpretation of *Olympian* IX must take into account the literal and pre-Pindaric meaning of the verb. In Homer, the verb

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[42] *O.9*.5-10.
[43] Its metaphorical usage means something along the lines of "spread" or "encroach." Cf. Herodotus 5.101, Thucydides 2.54, Appian 4.4.25. "ἐπινέμω." *LSJ.*
[44] Smith (2015) 818.
[45] See note 43 for reference passages.

appears exclusively in conjunction with its simple form, νέμω, and in every instance it is used to describe multiple people sharing the role of host by co-distributing food at a meal. For instance, in *Iliad* Book 9, we see that Πάτροκλος μὲν σῖτον ἑλὼν ἐπένειμε τραπέζῃ / καλοῖς ἐν κανέοισιν, ἀτὰρ κρέα νεῖμεν Ἀχιλλεύς "Patroklos, after taking food, shared it with the table in beautiful baskets, but Achilles doled out the meat."[46] Again, in Book 24, the exact formula recurs with the now dead Patroklos replaced by Automedon: Αὐτομέδων δ᾽ἄρα σῖτον ἑλὼν ἐπένειμε τραπέζῃ / καλοῖς ἐν κανέοισιν· ἀτὰρ κρέα νεῖμεν Ἀχιλλεύς "and then Automedon, after taking food, shared it with the table in beautiful baskets, but Achilles doled out the meat."[47] In the *Odyssey*, the poet again uses it in close proximity to its simple form, commenting: κύπελλα δὲ νεῖμε συβώτης. / σῖτον δέ σφ᾽ἐπένειμε Φιλοίτιος, ὄρχαμος ἀνδρῶν, / καλοῖς ἐν κανέοισιν, ἐῳνοχόει δὲ Μελανθεύς "and the swineherd doled out the drinking cups, and Philoitios, best of men, shared food with them in beautiful baskets, and Melantheus poured the wine."[48] Given these examples, the poet is most likely deploying ἐπινέμω for the sake of *variatio*, and in the Homeric poems at least, the two verbs appear to be roughly synonymous.

In Appian, however, writing in the second century AD, ἐπινέμω appears with the same literal implication of sharing, but in the middle voice and unaccompanied by its simple form. This usage disproves Smith's claim and the scholarly consensus that "[i]n the middle voice ἐπινέμω is used strictly metaphorically,"[49] although the discrepancy in time could account for the peculiarity of Appian's usage. Its similarity to Pindar's deployment of the verb, however,

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[46] *Il.* 9.216-217.
[47] *Il.* 24.625-626.
[48] *Od.* 20.253-255.
[49] Smith (2015) 818.

suggests that while the metaphorical use of ἐπινέμω may have been predominant in the Classical period, its literal use was still a valid possibility. Of Augustus' land reforms, Appian writes: καὶ αἵ πόλεις ἠξίουν τὴν Ἰταλίαν ἅπασαν ἐπινείμασθαι τὸ ἔργον ἢ ἐν ἀλλήλαις διαλαχεῖν "and the cities deemed all of Italy worthy to have a share in the burden or to divide it amongst themselves by lot."[50] Here, distributors are also receivers of the commodity (in this case, the burden of providing land for Octavius' veterans), and vice versa, whereas in Homer, distribution of the commodity (food) was reserved to a few and reception for all. Pindar's usage seems to parallel Appian's. In both cases, a sentient subject is acting upon the limited resource of land—Italy and the hill at Elis.

By asking the Muses to "share Zeus the crimson-thunderer and the holy hill of Elis" in the middle, he implies that they are participating in his creative act, not the sole authors of it. They do not bestow his topic upon him as Patroklos would offer food to guests. Pindar's relationship with the Muses is a reciprocal relationship of exchange, not a vertical relationship of gift.[51] Both Pindar and the Muses have a valid claim on the territory of Olympia, but they share it amongst each other as Achilles would share his role of host with his *xenos* Patroklos.[52] Thus, Pindar's request that the Muses ἐπίνειμαι Olympia with him seems not only an indication of mutual creativity but also of familial or near familial status. Pindar is a *xenos* or *proxenos* of the muses—relationships which, in human circles, closely paralleled adoption. A relief above an Athenian decree depicts a *proxenos* as the foster-child of the city.[53] Likewise, both

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[50] Appian, *The Civil Wars* 5.2.12.
[51] Cf. Steiner (1986) 41: "poem remains the joint creation of [the Muses] and the poet's nature."
[52] *O*.9.75.
[53] Herman (1987) 137.

literary and real *xenoi* took over the role of parent of their deceased friends' children.[54] As such, Pindar shares in both their territory and their weapons, ἀπὸ τόξων… τοιοῖσδε βέλεσσιν "from your bows… to arrows like mine."[55]

In keeping with the imagery of arrows, Pindar concludes the invocation with the double command:

> πτερόεντα δ᾽ἵει γλυκύν
> Πυθῶνδ᾽ὀιστόν˙ οὔτοι χαμαιπετέων λόγων ἐφάψεαι,
> ἀνδρὸς ἀμφὶ παλαίσμασιν φόρμιγγ᾽ἐλελίζων
> κλεινᾶς ἐξ Ὀπόεντος
>
> and send a sweet winged arrow
> to Pytho; do NOT hold onto words that fall down to the earth,
> while setting the harp aquiver about the wrestling wins
> of a man from famous Opous[56]

The commands would be rather presumptuous if directed to the Muses—as if they would ever cling to words that fall down—and seem to second the above interpretation that Pindar's creation is as much his own offering as it is an act of divine dispensation. Likewise, his commands are as much directives for himself as they are requests for help from the Muses. He is reminding himself, not the goddesses, to avoid unsuccessful words and comparisons. In addition, the words recall Pindar's spleen towards Arkhilokhos from the opening lines of the poem. The identity of the *laudandus* as a man ἐξ Ὀπόεντος "from Opous,"[57] a man of disputed Hellenic identity, specifically demands that his encomium in particular not fall down to the earth. The hackneyed, Hellenic, Heraklean anthem of Arkhilokhos is precisely what the poet must avoid when praising this son of Lokris. Thus, when Pindar later invokes Herakles as an

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[54] Herman (1987) 22. Interestingly, without formally adopting the child, thereby leaving him free to inherit from his deceased biological father.
[55] *O*.9.5,9.
[56] *O*.9.11-14.
[57] *O*.9.14.

exemplar of his point, he is obliged to scold himself: ἀπό μοι λόγον / τοῦτον, στόμα, ῥῖψον "spit this word out, mouth!"[58] In a self-directed command parallel to the one just discussed in line 12, Pindar makes his second and last mention of the term λόγος, thereby linking the two imperatives. He must avoid stories/words that fall down to the earth and this particular story. And immediately, Pindar excises not just Herakles but λόγος from the poem's vocabulary, thereby linking the rejection of Herakles and Arkhilokhos with the rejection of λόγοι that fall down to the earth.

Before his final dismissal of Herakles, Pindar returns to the theme of his relationship with the goddesses, commenting:

> ἀγγελίαν πέμψω ταύταν,
> εἰ σύν τινι μοιριδίῳ παλάμᾳ
> ἐξαίρετον Χαρίτων νέμομαι κᾶπον·
> κεῖναι γὰρ ὤπασαν τὰ τέρπν᾽· ἀγαθοὶ
> δὲ καὶ σοφοὶ κατὰ δαίμον᾽ ἄνδρες
>
> ἐγένοντ᾽.
>
> I will send this message
> if with an assigned hand
> I share with myself the chosen garden of the Graces,
> for they grant delights; and men
> become good and wise through a god.[59]

His ability to spread the news of Epharmostos' victory is dependent upon the dispensation (ὤπασαν) of the Graces just as his excellence and skill (ἀγαθοὶ / δὲ καὶ σοφοὶ) are dependent upon a god (κατὰ δαίμον᾽). Their dispensation bestows upon Pindar the "delights" which are enjoyed by those who share in the Graces' garden. And yet, Pindar's appearance within the garden is not simply framed as divine benefaction; rather, the poet makes himself the subject of

[58] *O.*9.35-36.
[59] *O.*9.25-29.

the condition's protasis, claiming to distribute to himself (νέμομαι) the garden of the Graces. Of course, νέμω in the middle carries its own metaphorical weight, suggesting not simply distribution but habitation and harvest as well—senses necessarily invoked by the connection with a garden (κᾶπον) and its delights.[60] Pindar is not simply a passerby in the Graces' Garden. It is a space that he can comfortably claim to inhabit and even tend σύν τινι μοιριδίῳ παλάμᾳ "with an assigned hand."[61] His participation in the Graces' Garden is assigned, dispensed, and accepted by him, making him not a passive recipient of godly favor but something closer to an adopted son, whose consent and participation is as necessary for the transformation as the goodwill of the adopter.

Moreover, the appearance of νέμω's compound from some twenty lines before also in reference to the poet's relationship to his divine patronesses begs for some semantic borrowing between the two lines. The fact that νέμω and ἐπινέμω are so closely linked in Homeric Greek further suggests their connection in *Olympian* IX as well. Thus, Pindar's relationship with the Graces is parallel to his relationship with the Muses. Both verbs appear in the middle, and both refer to Pindar's relationship with a space associated with divinity. So close is Pindar to the goddesses that he is allowed to take part in their divine dispensation, as evinced by making himself the subject of these middle verbs. From them, he receives the skill necessary to be a poet (σοφοί),[62] which he shares out to his clients and *proxenoi* through his poetic *kharis*.

But, as the middle verbs imply, the sharing is not so much a directional activity from the Graces to Pindar or vice versa but a virtue of the space they cohabit. As an *agathos*,[63] Pindar is

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60 "νέμω."*LSJ*.
61 *O*.9.25.
62 *O*.9.28.
63 *O*.9.28.

obliged to repay a gift of *kharis*.[64] Yet, the nature of poetic skill is such that the only way to repay the debt of *kharis* is to make use of one's god-given skill in praising the gods. Thus, Pindar depicts the goddesses as offering a kind of *kharis* whose repayment is reception and the delight of use. It is reciprocal, not because a fitting return-gift is given, but because the enjoyment of the gift is its recompense. The χάρις "Χαρίτων" the grace "of the Graces"[65] is properly figured by the image of indwelling. Pindar's habitation in the garden (ἐξαίρετον Χαρίτων νέμομαι κᾶπον "I dwell in the chosen garden of the Graces")[66] fundamentally changes his nature. Now, he is a resident of a divine realm and as such worthy to adjudicate the participation of others in that realm. Essentially, he has become an heir. Pindar thus finds a divine model in the Graces for the paradigm of adoption that he will present in the middle section of the ode, a paradigm in which the roles of giver and receiver are so entwined that it becomes impossible to say precisely who adopts whom, father or son. Like the garden of the Graces, adoption is a space that adopter and adoptee enter together.

In addition, both forms of νέμω appear beside a form of the verb ἐξαίρω, which acts as a descriptor of the direct object of νέμω. Distribution and the carrying off of a choice and merited gift are fundamentally entangled. In lines 6-10, the direct object of ἐπίνειμαι is the hill of Elis which Pelops ἐξάρατο "carried off for himself."[67] In like manner, the direct object of νέμομαι in line 27 is the garden of the Graces identified as ἐξαίρετον "chosen." In the first instance, ἐπίνειμαι precedes ἐξάρατο; in the latter, ἐξαίρετον precedes νέμομαι. The arrangement of these parallel moments creates a 22 line chiastic ring composition in the center of which is:

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[64] Scott (1984) 2.
[65] *O*.9.26.
[66] *O*.9.26.
[67] *O*.9.10.

ἂν Θέμις θυγάτηρ τέ οἱ σώτειρα λέλογχεν
μεγαλόδοξος Εὐνομία. θάλλει δ᾽ἀρεταῖσιν…

she whom Themis and her daughter the savior
famous Eunomia got by lot. And she blooms with excellences…[68]

The object of λέλογχεν refers back to the preceding line and is none other than the city Opous and her son, Epharmostos. By lot, yet another form of orderly dispensation, the goddesses Themis and Eunomia, one of the Horai, obtain as adopted children the city of Opous and by extension all her citizens.

Themis and Eunomia stand together at the center of this elaborate ring composition. They are overseers of an order mediated by choice (ἐξαίρω), sharing (νέμω), and the orderly dispensation outlined above rather than the claims of blood. It is no accident, then, that their very names imply the synthetic or artificial aspect of the system which they ordain. Themis of course is derived from τίθημι, the verb which in Chapter One we saw used in Pindar's Thebes to specify adoption. Her name likewise refers to "*that which is laid down*, or *established*."[69] Moreover, the presence of Eunomia evokes the *nomos-physis* debate which raged in the fifth and fourth centuries.[70] And yet, whether or not he is aware of the debate, Pindar deftly avoids taking a side. While describing an adoptive, non-biological relationship between gods and human beings—a relationship that could be classified under the category of *nomos* as opposed to *physis*—he reveals the very goddesses involved as participating in a biological kinship group. Eunomia is the daughter of Themis.

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[68] *O.*9.15-16.
[69] "θέμις." *LSJ.*
[70] Hobbs (1998).

Moreover, their governance θάλλει δ᾽ ἀρεταῖσιν "blossoms with excellences."[71] Pindar expresses the superiority of choice over heredity through a vegetal metaphor—the *ne plus ultra* of *physis* imagery. In *Olympian* IX, we learn that an order predicated upon choice and distribution, one which is synthetic, where a foreign body has been placed into a new environment is more conducive to human flourishing than one that assumes the inherited excellence of heredity. Pindar is transplanted into the garden of the Graces; the city of Opous is redistributed to Themis and Eunomia, going on to blossom into a garden of excellence. The persistence of vegetal imagery combined with the theme of introducing something new reminds one of the practice of grafting. The foreign body of a fruit-bearing branch is grafted onto a tree with a heartier trunk but less abundant fruit. Adoption, like grafting, creates a synthetic union wherein continued vitality flows reciprocally between adopter and adoptee. And, in Pindar's cosmos, this synthetic life is linked to the presence of law and order or their divinized forms of Themis and Eunomia. In addition, this mention of *areta* anticipates the only other instance of the word in the poem in line 83 which links *areta* specifically with the chosen relationship of *proxenia*.[72] Yet another form of synthetic relationship governed by convention (*nomos*), *proxenia* grafts a member of one *polis* onto another, while still maintaining his original identity.[73]

Adding to this contrast between chosen excellence and heredity is the position of Themis and Eunomia between the aforementioned references to Arkhilokhos and Herakles and words that fall to the ground. Unlike their orderly and flourishing domain, the world of Herakles and his poet, the natural heirs of Olympia, is characterized by violence between gods and humans:

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[71] *O.*9.16.
[72] *O.*9.83.
[73] "*Proxenia* was an honorific status bestowed by *poleis* on non-citizens who thereby became their *proxenoi*. The grant of *proxenia* expressed a formal relationship of friendship between *polis* and *proxenos*." Mack (2015) 1.

…πῶς ἂν τριόδοντος Ἡ-
ρακλέης σκύταλον τίναξε χερσίν,
ἀνίκ᾽ἀμφὶ Πύλον σταθεὶς ἤρειδε Ποσειδάν,
ἤρειδεν δέ νιν ἀργυρέῳ τόξῳ πολεμίζων
Φοῖβος, οὐδ᾽Ἀίδας ἀκινήταν ἔχε ῥάβδον,
βρότεα σώμαθ᾽ ᾇ κατάγει κοίλαν πρὸς ἄγυιαν
θνᾳσκόντων; ἀπό μοι λόγον
τοῦτον, στόμα, ῥῖψον·
ἐπεὶ τό γε λοιδορῆσαι θεούς
ἐχθρά σοφία, καὶ τὸ χαυχᾶσθαι παρὰ καιρόν
μανίαισιν ὑποκρέκει.
μὴ νῦν λαλάγει τὰ τοι-
αῦτ᾽. Ἔα πόλεμον μάχαν τε πᾶσαν
χωρὶς ἀθανατῶν.

…for how else could
Herakles have shaken the club in his hands
against the trident
when Poseidon took his stand at Pylos and attacked him,
and Phoibos waged war with the silver bow
and attacked him, and Hades did not hold motionless his staff
with which he leads mortal bodies down to the hollow paths
of the dead? Spit this word
out, mouth!
since it is a bad skill
to rebuke the gods, and to croak out at the wrong time
strums together with madness.
Now don't prattle on about such
things. Leave war and every battle
separate from the gods.[74]

The abortive narrative arises ostensibly as an explanation of Pindar's claim that ἀγαθοὶ δὲ καὶ σοφοὶ κατὰ δαίμον᾽ἄνδρες / ἐγένοντ᾽ "men became good and skillful according to a god."[75] Yet, the divine origin of Herakles' excellence, unlike that of Pindar, is exemplified by conflict between the human and Olympian realms. The only *daimones* explicitly mentioned in this narrative are described as σταθεὶς "taking a stand" and πολεμίζων "waging war." Whatever

[74] *O.*9.30-41.
[75] *O.*9.28-30.

the goodness and wisdom that Herakles exemplifies, it is of a different character than that described elsewhere in the poem. Yet, the question of how Herakles could shake his club against Poseidon, Apollo, and Hades κατὰ δαίμον' remains unanswered, for Pindar exclaims ἀπό μοι λόγον / τοῦτον, στόμα, ῥῖψον "spit this word out, mouth!"[76] Not only are Herakles' exploits malapropos of the ode, but as Pindar goes on to explain, λοιδορῆσαι θεούς / ἐχθρὰ σοφία, καὶ τὸ χαυχᾶσθαι παρὰ καιρόν / μανίαισιν ὑποκρέκει "it is a bad skill to rebuke the gods, and to croak out at the wrong time strums together with madness."[77] The appearance of σοφία after σοφοὶ in line 28 suggests that whatever skill Herakles displays by going to war with the gods is an ἐχθρὰ σοφία, and for Pindar to speak of it further would be to χαυχᾶσθαι παρὰ καιρόν "croak out at the wrong time" and λαλάγει τὰ τοιαῦτ' "prattle on about such things" that should not be prattled about.

Herakles' war on the Olympians has received a deal of attention in an attempt to find the source for Pindar's unusual and unfamiliar (to us) myth as well as to answer why Pindar would introduce a myth only to reject it a few lines later.[78] Molyneux links the meaning of Pindar's rejection to the origin of the myth itself which is unattested in other accounts, thereby creating a conundrum that we do not have the data to solve. By contrast, Simpson's reading of the passage localizes it within the broader context of the poem, seeing it as an extension of the theme of replacement: Pindar rejects Herakles to replace him with Opous.[79] Accordingly, Simpson views the myth's unsuitability as an aspect of its untimeliness.[80] I am inclined to agree with Simpson. Pindar does not declare the myth false; rather, he considers it an exercise of

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[76] *O.9*.35-36.
[77] *O.9*.37.
[78] See Molyneux (1972); Bowra (1964); Simpson (1962).
[79] Simpson (1969) 121.
[80] Simpson (1969) 115.

ἐχθρὰ σοφία "bad skill" and παρὰ καιρόν "at the wrong time."[81] Like Herakles' war against the Olympian gods, praising Herakles is a rare feat, one that likely demands divine guidance and skill, but in the context of *Olympian* IX it is hateful, untimely, and resonant with *mania*. Pindar's reasons for dismissing the myth encapsulate the unsuitability of Herakles himself. Although he possesses great skill, he makes that skill hateful to the world around him by applying it at an inappropriate time and in a manner suggesting madness (against the gods)—the ultimate fate of the demigod.

iv. Mythical Adoptions

The rejection of Herakles heralds the introduction of a new hero. Pindar launches into a catalogue of adoptions from the mythical world that undermines the concept of identity as predicated upon birth while simultaneously affirming the notion that men become good and skilled by the grace of a god. These myths develop the idea of a synthetic identity as introduced in the opening of the poem and further develop upon the involvement of divine *kharis* in the creation of that identity. The first mythological example of adoption is Pyrrha and Deukalion and their λίθινον γόνον "stony children."[82] Pindar introduces the myth by turning away from the traditional flood narrative that depicts conflict between humans and immortals, instead describing how:

> …αἰολοβρέντα Διὸς αἴσᾳ
> Πύρρα Δευκαλίων τε Παρνασσοῦ καταβάντε
> δόμον ἔθεντο πρῶτον, ἄτερ δ᾽ εὐνᾶς ὁμόδαμον
> κτισσάσθαν λίθινον γόνον·
>
> …by the dispensation of thundering Zeus
> Pyrrha and Deukalion going down together from Parnassus

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[81] *O*.9.37.
[82] *O*.9.45.

> placed their first home, and without a marriage bed
> together produced a *homodemos* stony family.[83]

We encounter the couple for the first time descending from Mount Parnassus after the mythical flood. Pindar's use of the dual (καταβάντε, κτισσάσθαν) emphasizes both their cooperation with one another and their utter loneliness. At no other moment is the dual quite so apropos or so poignant. For a brief period, there are only two humans in existence and they operate as one. Yet, despite their connection with one another, they are in a state of profound *eremia*, marooned on a mountaintop—the typical site of infant exposure—and deprived of family or city. As they descend from the mountain, they are able to refound a *demos*, creating without a bed (ἄτερ δ᾽ εὐνᾶς) a *homodemos* family.

Pindar accentuates the irony of a *gonos* created without intercourse by calling it *homodamos* as well; although there is no possibility of a biological connection between Pyrrha, Deukalion, and their stony children, they form a synthetic *demos* together which, like the realm of Themis and Eunomia and the garden of the Graces, is united not by kinship but a common purpose. Ironically, it is the very absence of biological ties that allows the *gonos* to become a *demos*. Rather than waiting for a quantity of biological children to be born and grow up, the couple is immediately surrounded by the children they share with the earth. Pindar specifies that Pyrrha and Deukalion ἔθεντο "placed" their first home. They established it, but in the idiom of Thebes, they also adopted it and (as the middle voice implies) are adopted by it. Their adoption is not simply of the stony children but of the earth from which they are made. Their adoption of the earth itself expedites the process of repopulating the world and provides a city and family to their loneliness.

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[83] *O.*9.42-45.

The couple's *eremia* and establishment of a new home are also framed as Διὸς αἴσᾳ "by the dispensation of Zeus."[84] GianBattista d'Alessio observes that the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* emphasizes Zeus as the cause of human suffering, while Pindar identifies him as its alleviation: Ζηνὸς τέχναις ἀνάπωτιν ἐξαίφνας / ἄντλον ἑλεῖν "by the arts of Zeus an ebb-tide suddenly drained the flood."[85] His dispensation and skills permit Pyrrha and Deukalion's survival and their adoption of a new family and *demos.* The utter loneliness of the de-peopled world forces them to reconnect with the earth itself. Of the stony race Pindar comments: λαοὶ δ᾽ὀνύμασθεν "they were called people,"[86] punning on the similarity of λᾶας meaning stone and λαός meaning people. Pindar accentuates how the adoption of the λίθινον γόνον "stony family" by Pyrrha and Deukalion not only raises up offspring and a city for the lonely and isolated pair, but also imbues the very earth with humanity and life, transforming *lithoi* into *laoi* and *eremia*—not as an abstract concept, but as a physical reality—into community.

Their attitude is one of radical receptivity. Finding themselves isolated in the wilderness of Lokris, with the entire human race except themselves extirpated, Pyrrha and Deukalion are in a position of total *eremia*, cut off from family, city, and offspring. However, instead of raging against the gods as does Herakles in the abortive myth mentioned above, they accept the αἶσα "dispensation" of Zeus. Their adoption of the stony family gives them not only children with whom to share their new home but, as argued above, a *demos* as well. Indeed, in line 41 Pindar

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[84] *O.*9.42.
[85] *O.*9.52-53; d'Alessio (2005) 220-221. D'Alessio points out how Zeus is framed as the end not beginning of the flood in Pindar's account and argues that Zeus cannot be framed as a wholly benevolent figure in the *Catalogue* given his ultimate plan for the destruction of the majority of the human race (with the exemption of the heroes).
[86] *O.*9.46.

refers to Protogeneia, suggesting his awareness of a tradition[87] in which Pyrrha and Deukalion go on to have their own biological children. In the Hesiodic *Catalogue*, we learn:

> κούρη δ᾿ ἐν μεγάροισιν ἀγαυοῦ Δευκαλίωνος
> Πανδώρη Διὶ πατρὶ θεῶν σημάντορι πάντων
> μιχθεῖσ᾿ ἐν φιλότητι τέκε Γραικὸν μενεχάρμην…
>
> and in his halls the daughter of noble Deukalion,
> Pandora, after making love with Zeus father of the gods and leader of all,
> gave birth to battle-delighting Graikos….[88]

According to the tradition, sterility does not oblige Pyrrha and Deukalion to adopt; rather, as Pindar draws out, the stony people are a part of Zeus' *αἶσα* and *τέχνας*,[89] an answer to the devastation of the great flood and an acknowledgement of the human need for companionship beyond the nuclear family. It is openness to divine will, not desperation, that fuels Pyrrha and Deukalion's acceptance of synthetic men into their family and city. Likewise, while the Hesiodic account excludes the Lokrians from Hellenic identity, Pindar's account writes them into Pyrrha and Deukalion's family tree to such an extent that they supersede even the prominence of Hellen (who does not appear in any of Pindar's *Odes*). Thus, especially in contradistinction to the Hesiodic *Catalogue,* Pindar's account highlights divine *kharis* rather than vengeance or indifference and replaces blood-ties with synthetic families and cities.

Pindar also emphasizes how this chosenness coincides with the gracious dispensation of Zeus:

> …λέγοντι μάν
> χθόνα μὲν κατακλύσαι μέλαιναν
> ὕδατος σθένος, ἀλλά

[87] West (1985) 52 argues for Protogeneia's presence in the *Catalogue of Women* as the daughter of Pyrrha and Deukalion.
[88] Sch.O.9.62b, d; Hesiod, *Cat.* fr. 5.
[89] *O.*9.52.

Ζηνὸς τέχναις ἀνάπωτιν ἐξαίφνας
ἄντλον ἑλεῖν. Κείνων δ᾽ ἔσαν
        χαλκάσπιδες ὑμέτεροι πρόγονοι
ἀρχᾶθεν, Ἰαπετιονίδος φύτλας
κοῦροι κορᾶν καὶ φερτάτων Κρονιδᾶν,
        ἐγχώριοι βασιλῆες αἰεί

…Truly they say
that the black earth was inundated
by the strength of water—but suddenly
by the skills of Zeus an ebb-tide
snatched away the flood. And from these came
        your bronze-shielded forebears
from of old, the sons of the daughters
of Iapetus' shoot and of the strongest sons of Kronos,
        autochthonous kings forever[90]

The couple's adoption of the stony race does not merely make men out of stones; it brings forth an autochthonous race, Ἰαπετιονίδος φύτλας / κοῦροι κορᾶν καὶ φερτάτων Κρονιδᾶν, ἐγχώριοι βασιλῆες αἰεί "sons of daughters of Iapetos' stock and of the strongest of the Kronidai, autochthonous kings forever."[91] These autochthonous kings can only be called the sons of the daughters of Iapetos' stock by adoption. Pyrrha and Deukalion are both the grandchildren of the Titan, and the crushing loneliness of *eremia* that leads them to make children out of stones is what allows for the citizens of the future city of Opous to be both autochthonous and titanic. In the context of this myth, the word ἐγχώριος begs for a literal translation. Not only are the descendants of these two native to Lokris; they are ἐξ χώρου, born from the ground itself, which I have translated above as "autochthonous."

Their connection to the Kronidai, however, is as yet unclear. Pindar ironically follows the adverb αἰεί with a πρίν clause, spilling across the strophe break:

[90] *O.*9.49-56.
[91] *O.*9.55-56.

πρὶν Ὀλύμπιος ἁγεμὼν
θύγατρ᾽ ἀπὸ γᾶς Ἐπει-
        ῶν Ὀπόεντος ἀναρπάσαις, ἕκαλος
μίχθη Μαιναλίαισιν ἐν δειραῖς, καὶ ἔνεικεν
Λοκρῷ, μὴ καθέλοι νιν αἰὼν πότμον ἐφάψαις
ὀρφανὸν γενεᾶς. ἔχεν δὲ σπέρμα μέγιστον
ἄλοχος, εὐφράνθη τε ἰδὼν ἥρως θετὸν υἱόν

until the Olympian leader,
after carrying off the daughter of Opous
        from the land of the Epeians,
made peaceful love to her in the Mainalian glens, and brought
her to Lokros, so that his life grasping its limit would not take him down
an orphan from family. But, his wife carried the greatest
seed, and when he saw it the hero rejoiced at his adopted son[92]

The Opuntians remain autochthonous kings forever until Zeus arrives with a pregnant teenager. The nature of the community is yet again transformed through adoption. To their chthonic and titanic identities is added an Olympian connection. Now at last, they really are sons of the daughters of Iapetos' stock and of the strongest of the Kronidai. The oxymoron of the αἰεί / πρὶν construction draws attention to the oxymoronic quality of adoption: it transforms while leaving its object unchanged. Lokros rejoices at his adopted son precisely because he recognizes that ἔχεν δὲ σπέρμα μέγιστον / ἄλοχος "his wife was carrying the greatest seed." The child remains the son of Zeus, but his adoption enables the failing line of Opuntian kings to be both changed and preserved.

As with Pyrrha and Deukalion's hapless ship, which is guided to its resting point by the *techna* of Zeus rather than a human helmsman, the Olympian becomes ἁγεμών again, now guiding the journey of the unnamed daughter of Opous from her home in the Peloponnese to her destiny in Lokris. As mentioned above, the scholiast's reading of the poem identifies this

[92] *O.*9.57-62.

woman as Protogeneia II, a descendent of Pyrrha and Deukalion through their daughter Protogeneia I. If the scholiast is correct, the identity of the Opuntians as Ἰαπετιονίδος φύτλας / κοῦροι κορᾶν "the sons of the daughters of Iapetus' shoot"[93] like their identity as children of the Kronidai[94] is not fully realized until the second adoption (namely the adoption of Opous by Lokros) has taken place. According to the scholiast's view, this second adoption makes biological the connection between the Opuntians and the children of Iapetus which their adoption by Pyrrha and Deukalion made only customary, but in so doing it makes customary their connection to the earth which their stony birth made biological (if such a term can be used).

In short, the royal family of Lokrian Opous is thoroughly synthetic and simultaneously deeply natural. The first generation of Opuntians are both born and harvested. Pindar's emphasis on the cooperation between Pyrrha and Deukalion as they κτισσάσθαν λίθινον γόνον "founded together a stony family"[95] suggests that the unconventional birth of the stony kings is not so much an aberration from natural human reproduction as an unexpectedly vivid experience of the generativity of reality of which human sexuality is one part. There is something intimate and human in the shared labor and co-creation of Pyrrha and Deukalion, something reminiscent of yet different from the intimate humanity of sexual reproduction. The creation of these people arises not out of a test tube or some human intervention into nature but out of the responsiveness of Pyrrha and Deukalion to one another, the gods, and the earth.

[93] *O*.9.55-56.
[94] *O*.9.56.
[95] *O*.9.45.

By contrast, in the *Catalogue of Women*, Hesiod with his typical misogyny excises Pyrrha from the narrative entirely:

> ἤτοι γὰρ Λοκρὸς Λελέγων ἡγήσατο λαῶν,
> τοὺς ῥά ποτε Κρονίδης Ζεὺς ἄφθιτα μήδεα εἰδὼς
> λεκτοὺς ἐκ Γαίης ΛΑΟΥΣ πόρε Δευκαλίωνι
>
> For indeed Lokros was the leader of the Leleges people,
> whom Zeus the Son of Kronos knowing immortal schemes
> once gave to Deukalion as ROCKS/PEOPLE picked from Gaia[96]

In Hesiod's telling there is no responsiveness between the actors involved; Deukalion passively receives the stones/people from Zeus who knowing ἄφθιτα μήδεα "immortal schemes" or perhaps "immortal loins" has extracted them from the Earth-Mother Gaia. Zeus' extractive behavior in the *Catalogue* fits with his generally autocratic, chaotic, and domineering activity in Hesiod's cosmology. In *Flowers of Time*, Mark Payne, in describing the cyclical destruction (and regeneration) of humanity in Hesiod's *Works and Days*, comments, "Human beings have always had to live with the enmity of the gods hanging over them. There was no consistent reason for the gods' previous annihilations of humankind, and human beings in the present are rightly understood as postapocalyptic survivors."[97] Hesiod's humans are at odds with the gods, hearty folk surviving because of their own ingenuity in spite of the arbitrariness and disharmony at work in the world around them.

Pindar's postapocalyptic human agency, however, is not framed as oppositional to nature. Nor is the destruction and subsequent regeneration of humanity an act of malicious

[96] Hes. *Cat*. fr. 234; Strabo vii. 7.2.
[97] Payne (2020) 11.

phthonos on the part of the gods as in Hesiod's account.[98] Rather, the creation of the stony people is cooperation on the part of human beings with the wild generativity of the newly watered and restored earth. Nevertheless, the unbridled fecundity of the earth that allowed stones to be become men wanes. These autochthonous kings presumably go on to reproduce in the manner of ordinary humans, and as the necessity of Opous' adoption by Lokros suggests, even ordinary human reproduction reaches its limit for this line of kings. Synthetic growth is necessary. But, just like the synthetic family of Pyrrha, Deukalion, and their stony children, this second wave of synthetic development is also deeply natural. As seen in the synthetic relationship of the victor and the ode, it is the nature of an individual's nature to be insufficient and to require an other. In like manner, it is the nature of nature, the nature of the natural to require periodic reboot, to need the infusion of an other. Monocropping destroys soil health. Runaway greenhouse gasses cause floods. An imbalance in predators and prey leads to infestations. Endogamy results in genetic ailments. These things are not, for Pindar, signs of cosmic hostility. They simply are. Remedies to these ills are given by the gods, those wholly other beings. And these remedies point humans towards the understanding that our limitations are not so much a threat as an invitation to be open to the goodness of the other.

Pindar highlights this goodness by illustrating how the introduction of the other and its accompanying recreation is overseen by the *kharis* of Zeus. Despite the fact that the mother of Opous is Zeus' paramour and her child Zeus' "seed,"[99] in Pindar's telling, the father of gods

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[98] Payne (2020) 12. In describing divine *phthonos* against humans, Payne comments: "It is possible to experience animosity toward the wretched precisely because they are wretched, and the persistent, but variously motivated, hostility of Hesiod's gods toward the various iterations of humankind reflects the range of affective positions that lie behind this term as a purposive behavior."

[99] *O.*9.61.

and men is not so much motivated by concern for his son as he is driven by concern for Lokros. Although Opous is conceived outside the city in the literal wilderness or *eremia* of the Μαιναλίαισιν… δειραῖς "Mainalian glens,"[100] it is Lokros who runs the risk of becoming ὀρφανὸν "an orphan"[101] and whose needs are met by the foundling and his mother. As in the case of Menekles mentioned in Chapter One, adoption offers Lokros an escape from *eremia*. Without an heir, his death would incur his severance from family, city, and soil; the line of autochthonous kings would be forever spent. Pindar explains the transportation of Opous and his mother with the negative purpose clause: μὴ καθέλοι νιν αἰὼν πότμον ἐφάψαις / ὀρφανὸν γενεᾶς "so that old age and its companion death not lay hold of him, an orphan of family."[102] While Opous, the child conceived in the literal *eremia* of Mainalia, is a clear candidate for exposure, his adoption by Lokros is framed as the salvation of Lokros, not Opous.

Lokros' delight does not appear to derive simply from the prospect of having a son. Rather, his joy is linked to the identity of that son. Pindar explains: ἔχεν δὲ σπέρμα μέγιστον / ἄλοχος, εὐφράνθη τε ἰδὼν ἥρως θετὸν υἱόν… "and his wife was carrying the greatest seed, and the hero rejoiced to see his adopted son…."[103] The placement of ἄλοχος between the preceding main clause ἔνεικεν / Λοκρῷ "he carried her to Lokros,"[104] of which Zeus is the subject, and the proceeding one throws the reader into confusion. Whose wife is she? Of course, the ambiguity is intentional. She is both Lokros' and Zeus' ἄλοχος, a term used of a

100 *O.*9.59.
101 *O.*9.61.
102 *O.*9.60-61.
103 *O.*9.61-62.
104 *O.*9.59-60.

lawful wife or a concubine,[105] and her son belongs equally to both of them. By welcoming the pregnant teenager and keeping her child, Lokros receives not only a new political alliance, as seen in his decision to name the baby μάτρωος… ἰσώνυμον "the same name as its mother's father,"[106] but he also establishes a hereditary link with the Kronidai. The new king may not literally be autochthonous anymore, but he is the son of the strongest of the Kronidai.[107]

To conclude the section on literal adoptions, Pindar comments:

> πόλιν δ᾽ ὤπασεν λαόν τε διαιτᾶν.
> ἀφίκοντο δέ οἱ ξένοι
> ἔκ τ᾽ Ἄργεος ἔκ τε Θη-
> βᾶν, οἱ δ᾽ Ἀρκάδες, οἱ δὲ καὶ Πισᾶται.
>
> and [Lokros] granted [to Opous] the right to govern the city and the people,
> and foreigners were received [by him]
> from Argos and from Thebes,
> Arcadians, and men from Pisa.[108]

Pindar connects the adoption of Opous with his own metaphorical adoption by the Graces who, as mentioned above, ὤπασαν τὰ τέρπν᾽ "have granted [Pindar] their delights."[109] As in the opening section, adoption and synthetic family are linked to the presence of Eunomia—lawfulness or good governance. Despite the extinction of the biological line of autochthonous kings, the city and its people persevere in *eunomia*. By accepting nature's periodic need for reboot, Lokros allows his line to end and be replaced peacefully. Instead of strife, there is harmony. Moreover, the initial openness of Lokros' adoption lays the groundwork for the city

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105 Beekes (2010) 852: from λέχεται "lies down in bed;" an ἄλοχος is one who shares a bed. Related words are λέχος (bed, lair) and λόχος (ambush, or a place of lying in wait). I wonder if Pindar is not punning on the nature of Zeus' relationship with the unnamed girl, given that they made their bed in the bushes and lairs—ideal places of ambush—on the Mainalian hillside.
106 *O.*9.63-64.
107 Cf. *O.*9.56.
108 *O.*9.66-68.
109 *O.*9.27.

to be further enriched by strangers and guest-friends. It becomes a city that celebrates the naturalness of the synthetic.

iv. Proxenia as Synthetic Family

In the final section of the poem, Pindar introduces the theme of *proxenia*—the prototypical expression of *kharis*—and runs off a star-studded list of *proxenoi,* culminating in the *laudandus,* Epharmostos himself. As Hanna Boeke has observed, Epharmostos is the only victor apart from Midas of Akragas "for whom no clan membership or family ties" or political distinctions are specified.[110] His *proxenos*, Lampromakhos, is mentioned instead. This unconventional identification of the victor provides a perfect cap to Pindar's encomium of synthetic family (and city) and suggests that we should interpret Pindar's gnomic claim in line 100 (τὸ δὲ φυᾷ κράτιστον ἅπαν) outside the traditional, familial frame, instead locating it in the divine wilderness of Zeus, the garden of the Graces, and the *eremia* that leaves humans open to *kharis*.

The catalogue of *proxenoi* is introduced, as mentioned in the preceding section, by Opous' open reception of strangers. Sharing with others what has been freely shared with him, υἱὸν δ᾽Ἄκτορος ἐξόχως τίμασεν ἐποίκων / Αἰγίνας τε Μενοίτιον "he honored exceptionally among his settlers the son of Aktor and Aigina, Menoitios."[111] Like the adoption of Opous by Lokros, which establishes a link between Elis and Opous, Opous' reception of Menoitios implies not only a bond between two heroic families but also between the city of Opous and the island of Aegina, as suggested by Menoitios' mother's name and by the phenomenon of *proxenia*

[110] Boeke (2007) 178. See also Miller (2015) 1 and Miller (1993) 113 n. 10 which catalogues a list of other odes in which the victor's father is not identified by name, but in most of these instances the victor is famous in his own right. For instance, *O.*1 makes no reference to Hieron's family, but identifies him as king in Sicily. See also Carey (1980).
[111] *O.*9.69-70.

itself.[112] The connection, however, seems to run deeper than *proxenia*. In Book 23 of the *Iliad*, we learn that Menoitios' son Patroklos was exiled from Opous,[113] suggesting that Menoitios became a permanent resident of the city. Moreover, one of the scholiasts explains that συγγενὴς γὰρ ὑπῆρχε τοῦ Λοκροῦ "for he [Menoitios] was a relative of Lokros."[114] As these are the only mentions of Menoitios' Opuntian identity, it is impossible to tell whether his relationship with the area pre-dated his *proxenia* with Opous or resulted from it. Of interest to us is the fact that Pindar frames it as *proxenia* become permanent, as implied by Menoitios' identity among the ἐποίκων "settlers"[115] of the city.

This near-familial relationship between Menoitios and Opous permits Pindar to lay claim to Menoitios' son as well. The catalogue of friendships continues:

> …τοῦ παῖς ἅμ᾽ Ἀτρείδαις
> Τεύθραντος πεδίον μολὼν ἔστα σὺν Ἀχιλλεῖ
> μόνος, ὅτ᾽ ἀλκάεντας Δαναοὺς τρέψαις ἁλίαισιν
> πρύμναις Τήλεφος ἔμβαλεν·
> ὥστ᾽ ἔμφρονι δεῖξαι
> μαθεῖν Πατρόκλου βιατὰν νόον·
> ἐξ οὗ Θέτιος γόνος οὐλίῳ νιν ἐν Ἄρει
> παραγορεῖτο μή ποτε
> σφετέρας ἄτερθε ταξιοῦσθαι
> δαμασιμβρότου αἰχμᾶς.
>
> [Menoitios'] son came with the Atreidai
> to the plain of Teuthras and took his stand with Achilles
> alone when Telephos turned back the valiant Danaans
> and boarded their salty prows;
> this happened so as to reveal
> the powerful mind of Patroklos to one able to learn,

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[112] In a poem so rife with eponymous characters, it seems unlikely that a nymph bearing the name of an island would not also suggest a connection to that island, even though the connection is not mentioned in any of the scholiasts or other extant sources.
[113] *Il.*23.85-90.
[114] Sch.O.9.104a.
[115] *O.*9.69.

after the son of Thetis warned him
not to station himself
away from their mortal-taming spear
in grim war.[116]

Even though Patroklos was exiled from Opus, the adoptive relationship of the city and its settler is strong enough to preserve the connection through generations. As such, Patroklos and his *proxenos* Achilles are more suitable exemplars of excellence for an Opuntian victor than Herakles would have been. And confident in the transitive power of *proxenia*, Pindar introduces both men as models for the *laudandus* and his *proxenos*.

The framing of Achilles and Patroklos, however, complicates Pindar's presentation of *proxenia*. Patroklos appears σὺν Ἀχιλλεῖ / μόνος "with Achilles / alone."[117] The adjective could be interpreted in a number of ways. In the first place, it could mean that only Patroklos, as opposed to the other Danaans, was able to stand beside Achilles. It could also mean that despite his proximity to the hero, Patroklos is nevertheless on his own.[118] Indeed, the circumstances in Pindar's usage might well suggest a division between the two heroes as well. Pindar's narrative of the Danaans turned back on their ships immediately reminds his audience of Patroklos' decision in *Iliad* 16 to go to battle in Achilles' stead, resulting in Patroklos standing alone without Achilles and ultimately dying.

Pindar, however, is not referring to this incident. Here it is Telephos,[119] not Hektor, who drives the Akhaians back to their ships. And, the incident occurs on Τεύθραντος πεδίον "the

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[116] *O.*9.70-79.
[117] *O.*9.71-72.
[118] Miller (1993) 117 seems to favor this reading in seeing a parallel between Epharmostos' youthful victory at Marathon and Patroklos' victory at Mysia, though he does not explicitly develop the idea of Patroklos standing alone.
[119] *O.*9.73.

plain of Teuthras"[120] or Mysia—not Troy—where Telephos, the son of our already dismissed anti-hero Herakles, is king. According to the *Cypria*, Telephos is mistakenly attacked by the Greek army on their way to Troy and is wounded by Achilles.[121] Pindar's enjambment encourages us to read ἔστα σὺν Ἀχιλλεῖ[122] as a complete phrase and to take μόνος as an oxymoronic enjambment similar to the ἀεί / πρίν clause discussed above. As such, Patroklos stands with Achilles. Alone. Pindar is suggesting that the two men can be alone together. This meaning parallels a Homeric usage of the adjective to describe Patroklos:

> Πάτροκλος δέ οἱ οἶος ἐναντίος ἧστο σιωπῇ,
> δέγμενος Αἰακίδην ὁπότε λήξειεν ἀείδων,
>
> And Patroklos was sitting in silence opposite him, alone,
> waiting for Aiakides when he would stop singing…[123]

Of this passage, Emily Austin comments that "Patroklos is singled out: he sits οἱ οἶος, as sole audience and companion to Achilles in his withdrawn musings."[124] Only Patroklos is allowed to be present when Achilles does his lonely Achilles things. Only Patroklos can be Patroklos while Achilles is Achilles alone and together. Their proximity does not blur their individuality, nor does the excellence of the one detract from that of the other. In Pindar's narrative, they stand alone together, with the Akhaians driven back to their ships. And here, Patroklos' violent will is revealed to anyone who would learn[125] even though he μή ποτε / σφετέρας ἄτερθε ταξιοῦσθαι / δαμασιμβρότου αἰχμᾶς "never stations himself apart from their mortal-taming spear."[126] Rather queerly, Pindar uses the third person plural of the possessive adjective to

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[120] *O.*9.71.
[121] *Cypria* argument 7.
[122] *O.*9.71.
[123] *Il.*9.190-191.
[124] Austin (2021) 39.
[125] *O.*9.74-75.
[126] *O.*9.77-79.

describe the spear, implying a unity so complete between the two warriors that the weapon's ownership is left in doubt. Achilles' request that Patroklos not be separated from him is also a request that he not be separated from Patroklos. Their spears belong together.[127]

This jointness of the weapon's ownership hearkens back to the arrows in line 8 which are both Pindar's and the Muses' and which symbolize the unity of the poet with his protectors. Omitting the tragic fate of Achilles and Patroklos, Pindar instead links his *proxenia* with the Muses to the *proxenia* of Achilles and Patroklos by ending the myth with the following petition:

> εἴην εὑρησιεπὴς ἀναγεῖσθαι
> πρόσφορος ἐν Μοισᾶν δίφρῳ
>
> May I be a wordsmith fit
> for driving on in the Muses' chariot.[128]

His own inseparability and differentiation from the goddesses flows from the image of Achilles and Patroklos just developed. In a battle not with real arrows but with words, he hopes to prove πρόσφορος "useful" to his divine protectors as they are to him. Taken together with the reference to the Muses' bow in line 5, Pindar constructs an image of himself and the Muses Iliadic in quality. Like the pairs of heroes we encounter in Homer, the poet and his guardians ride together into battle in a shared chariot. But, unlike the heroes of the *Iliad*, there is no clear division between their roles. Pindar prays to be able to ἀναγεῖσθαι, a verb meaning both to tell and to move forward. It is not clear if he is the rider or the driver in the Muses' chariot, only that they progress together, both poetically and martially. As in the bow and arrow metaphor

[127] Austin (2021) 39 brings up another moment of Achilles and Patroklos' intimacy when Achilles silently nods at Patroklos to bring a bed for Phoinix. She comments, "the quickness of Patroklos' response even to silent commands suggests a closeness between these two men that is born of many years of shared life. In a poem where speech is prominent, it is striking to see Achilles and Patroklos able to communicate silently." Their silent communication speaks to their separateness from others; they are alone together even when others are in the room.
[128] *O.*9.80-81.

from lines 5-12 and its accompanying middle voiced verb (ἐπίνειμαι), and the Garden of the Graces and its accompanying middle voiced verb (νέμομαι) in line 26, poetic creation is again framed as a collective endeavor shared between the poet and his patrons through a relationship parallel to *proxenia*.

Pindar elaborates upon his prayer, begging:

> τόλμα δὲ καὶ ἀμφιλαφὴς δύναμις
> ἕσποιτο. Προξενίᾳ δ᾽ἀρετᾷ τ᾽ἦλθον
> τιμάορος Ἰσθμίαισι Λαμπρομάχου
>   μίτραις, ὅτ᾽ἀμφότεροι κράτησαν
> μίαν ἔργον ἀν᾽ἁμέραν.
>
> And may boldness and abundant power
> follow after me. For *proxenia* and excellence I have come
> honoring the Isthmian wreaths of Lampromakhos
>   when they both conquered
> the games on the same day.[129]

His need for τόλμα and δύναμις emphasize the martial nature of his relationship with the Muses. And followed by this explicit reference to *proxenia*, Pindar clearly frames himself and his protectors as well as Lampromakhos and Epharmostos as parallel to Achilles and Patroklos. Although they competed in different matches, the *laudandus* and his friend are described as ἀμφότεροι, hearkening back to the σφετέρας of Achilles and Patroklos and the dual of Pyrrha and Deukalion.[130] The triumphant examples of human excellence in *Olympian* IX are never achieved singly. Pindar explains that he has come in honor of *proxenia* generally, not specifying whether it is his *proxenia* with Epharmostos or Epharmostos' *proxenia* with Lampromakhos or the general openness of the *laudandus*' city. By thus detaching *proxenia* from a specific person and connecting it with excellence[131]—the usual requirement for an encomium—Pindar suggests

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[129] *O*.9.82-85.
[130] *O*.9.78, 43-45.
[131] *O*.9.83.

that a freely chosen relationship based upon mutual respect is as much a cause for praise as excellence (the basis of that respect) itself. By setting up Lampromakhos and Epharmostos in parallel to Achilles and Patroklos, Pindar frames them as a pair of *proxenoi* equal in skill and prominence to the mythical pair and suggests that Opous' open reception of strangers has found its culmination in Epharmostos' reception of Lampromakhos. The regenerative cycle of adoptions begun by Pyrrha and Deukalion is carried into Pindar's time through Epharmostos' synthetic family.

After introducing Epharmostos and his *proxenos*, Pindar launches into a fifteen line catalogue of their victories ranging from Isthmia[132] to Marathon[133] to Pellana[134] to Eleusis[135] and spanning from childhood[136] to the prime of life. The catalogue proves incontestably the excellence of Epharmostos and Lampromakhos and gives profound evidence of the poem's thesis that chosen relationships, rather than undermining the integrity of the city, strengthen it. It proves that although Epharmostos lacks an aristocratic patronymic to identify him in his encomium, his personal excellence and his excellent choice of *proxenos* qualify him to be ranked among the other victorious aristocrats that Pindar praises. Moreover, by positioning Epharmostos and his victories at the end of this long catalogue of adoptive relationships, Pindar signals to any skeptics that regardless of the hereditary hellenicity of the Lokrian Opuntians, it is in the best interest of all Greeks to view these adopted sons of Deukalion, these half-brothers of Hellen, as Hellenes.

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[132] *O*.9.84
[133] *O*.9.89.
[134] *O*.9.98.
[135] *O*.9.99
[136] *O*.9.88.

iv. Conclusion

Pindar begins to wrap up his meditation on the nature of natures by introducing what Gildersleeve calls the "keynote"[137] of the poem: τὸ δὲ φυᾷ κράτιστον ἅπαν.[138] Decontextualized, this gnomic statement is ordinarily viewed as the perfect encapsulation of Pindar's aristocratic essentialism: "What comes by nature is altogether best."[139] Natural, biological inheritance trumps "learned excellence."[140] As Leslie Kurke observes, the "preponderance of relatives" found in the Pindaric corpus suggest that "Pindar corroborates his claims about *phyē,* about the hereditary nature of excellence, by enumerating a noble family's past successes,"[141] going on to link this interest in the family not so much to the victor as to his *oikos*.[142] In line with Kurke and the majority of scholars' views of Pindar, Peter Miller attempts to demonstrate how *Olympian* IX still functions as "praise of φυά and inherited excellence"[143] despite having no references to the victor's family, finding in the elaborate genealogical treatment of the city of Opous ample evidence for the view of Pindar as proponent of inherited excellence. However, such readings ignore the ode's themes as elaborated above and flatten the deliberate ambiguity of the gnomic claim.

Without a form of ἐστί to separate the equivalent neuter singular units of τὸ δὲ φυᾷ, κράτιστον, and ἅπαν, the sentence is all but incomprehensible. Each unit could theoretically be taken as subject, complement, or modifier. And the only assistance given is the definite article, which ordinarily signals the subject of a copula. Thus, we have two reasonable possibilities of

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[137] Gildersleeve (1970) 210.
[138] *O.*9.100.
[139] *O.*9.100, trans. William H. Race.
[140] *O.*9.100-101.
[141] Kurke (1991) 20. See also Thummer (1968) 38-54; Bowra (1964) 101; Rose (1974) 152.
[142] Kurke (1991) 21.
[143] Miller (2015) 3.

subject: τὸ δὲ φυᾷ (the traditional reading) and τὸ δὲ φυᾷ κράτιστον. The latter is preferable for a number of reasons. In no other place does Pindar use a dative (or for that matter, a noun standing alone in an oblique case) as the noun clause for the nominative neuter definite article. Instead, he regularly employs adverbs, neuter adjectives, infinitives, and participles to round out phrases introduced by τό. And, when he does use an inflected noun, it is always in explanation of some other word. For example, in *Olympian* X, Pindar explains τὸ δὲ κύκλῳ πέδον / ἔθηκε δόρπου λύσιν "he made the circular plain a resting place for dinner."[144] Again in *Isthmian* I, Pindar comments τὸ Δάματρος κλυτὸν ἄλσος "the famous grove of Demeter."[145] And as discussed at length in this chapter, in *Olympian* IX, we hear of τὸ μὲν Ἀρχιλόχου μέλος "the song of Arkhilokhos."[146] Likewise, in *Pythian* XI, he comments τὸ δὲ νέαις ἀλόχοις / ἔχθιστον ἀμπλάκιον καλύψαι τ᾽ἀμάχανον / ἀλλοτρίαισι γλώσσαις "and the thing most hateful in young wives is this sin [adultery] and it's impossible to hide from other tongues."[147] Thus, given Pindar's ordinary syntax, it would seem that the subject is τὸ δὲ φυᾷ κράτιστον "the thing strongest by nature."

Such a reading leaves ἅπαν as the predicate, meaning something like: The strongest by nature is everything. Or, each thing is the strongest by nature. The conventional translation takes ἅπαν as an adverb, which stretches it far beyond its ordinary use and ignores the existence of the actual adverb πάνυ which is ordinarily used to express what scholars take ἅπαν to mean here. My translation is preferable for its simplicity. Yet, when considered together, the two translations are similar. Both underscore the importance of *phua* and imply

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144 *O.*10.46-47.
145 *I.*1.57.
146 *O.*9.1.
147 *P.*11.25-27.

that, as Pindar says in the following line, men cannot achieve glory by διδακταῖς… ἀρεταῖς "taught excellence."[148] So why belabor the point? The traditional translation suggests that the Natural exists, that it has a nature. It suggests the possibility of an Unnatural. But, if we take the poem as a coherent whole, such an idea is ridiculous. As has been argued above, even the synthetic is a part of nature. Everything is natural. By emphasizing the universality of *phua*, Pindar chips away at the idea that any one set of people has a unique claim to *phua* and its accompanying excellence; he undermines the sophistic opposition of nature and convention.

While Pindar may be subverting the idea of the Natural as opposed to the Unnatural in a universal sense, he does not extend this to my nature and your nature. Rather, the particular natures of you and me are precious precisely because of their unique individuality. He goes on to explain:

> τὸ δὲ φυᾷ κράτιστον ἅπαν˙ πολλοὶ δὲ διδακταῖς
> ἀνθρώπων ἀρεταῖς κλέος
> ὤρουσαν ἀρέσθαι˙
> ἄνευ δὲ θεοῦ, σεσιγαμένον
> οὐ σκαιότερον χρῆμ᾽ἕκαστον˙ ἐντὶ γὰρ ἄλλαι
> ὁδῶν ὁδοὶ περαίτεραι,
> μία δ᾽οὐχ ἅπαντας ἄμμε θρέψει
> μελέτα˙σοφίαι μέν
> αἰπειναί….
>
> Each thing is the strongest by nature; and many strive
> to win the fame of men
> by taught excellence;
> but without a god, each thing
> is not more unlucky when kept secret,
> for some roads are longer than others,
> and one concern will not nourish us all;
> skill is steep….[149]

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[148] *O.*9.100-101.
[149] *O.*9.100-108.

Many people attempt to win fame at something that they do not have the nature to do well. This occurs because they do not understand that one preoccupation (μελέτα) will not satisfy all human beings. There is no universal natural activity for all people. While Epharmostos' *meleta* may be athletic prowess, Pindar's is poetry. Their unique and individuated personal natures come together synthetically to reveal more perfectly the nature of Nature as something that derives its strength from its capacity to contain ἅπαν "everything."

Pindar's emphasis on individual nature places a restraint on the rearrangement of groups that he has thus far been advocating. Far from suggesting a willy-nilly overhaul of human relationships, he outlines what has been implicit from the beginning of the poem, namely the necessity of divine involvement. Ἄνευ θεοῦ "without a god"[150] to mediate and assist, human affairs are bound to run amok. Thus it is that Pindar bids the tribeless Epharmostos to shout δαιμονίᾳ γεγάμεν / εὔχειρα, δεξιόγυιον, ὁρῶντ᾽ἀλκάν "that he was born by the will of a *daimon* to be quick-handed, nimble-limbed, and beaming valor."[151] Rather than boasting his aristocratic birth, the *laudandus* must remind any listeners that he, like Opous, was born δαιμονίᾳ and belongs to the *aristoi* not because of his family but by nature mediated by *kharis* and crowned with choice.

Rather than expelling claims of natural excellence, Pindar's adoptive myths reframe what they mean. Over and over in *Olympian* IX, we see the desolate embraced, the abandoned given homes, and the lowly triumphant. Humble stones become a race of kings. An unwed, pregnant girl restores a dying monarchy. Exiles become the confidants of princes. A victor from a minor town who cannot even boast a patronymic wins all the major athletic competitions in

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[150] *O.*9.103.
[151] *O.*9.110-111.

Greece. Disparate as their situations are, their commonality is highlighted by Pindar. Through choice and the dispensation of the gods, these characters are grafted onto new families, both giving and receiving vitality through the relationship. But, in addition to this, the possibility of the synthetic speaks to a fundamental indeterminacy of nature, even particular, individuated nature. If stones can become kings, what else can they become? If the vitality of adoption is a transformative process that alters the identity of both adopter and adoptee, what was that identity in the first place? It is precisely the limitation of the self, her particular, individual nature that pushes her to accept the other as other, to look at a different nature and recognize in it something necessary and good. But, in accepting the other, the self changes, expands. Her nature grows. Synthetically. Like the exuberant vitality of a new creation that receives stones and makes men.

III. Thesis & Prosthesis: Music and the Monstrous Other in *Pythian* XII

i. Introduction

While Chapter Two examined a positive case study for the value of adoption and openness to alterity in Pindar, Chapter Three investigates what happens when adoption or *thesis* is rejected as a possibility. When alterity is viewed as a threat to be extinguished or a resource to be exploited, human action leads to ecological and social devastation and the destruction of the human person as a unique individual with her "right to *free will*."[1] Yet, even as the other is coopted into the activity of her oppressor and thriving habitats are transformed into rocky wastes, *Pythian* XII suggests that the voice of the lost other continues to be heard even in her death and exploitation. No erasure is complete.

ii. Poem Summary

Pythian XII was written in honor of Midas of Akragas who won the double *aulos* competition at the Pythian games in 490 BCE. The poem opens with an invocation and encomium of Akragas, a city on the Southern coast of Sicily, moving briefly to the figure of Midas and finally to the origin story of the *aulos* which takes up the majority of the short 32-line ode. Pindar describes how Athena invented the *aulos* to imitate the cries of Medusa's sisters upon her death. He then shifts to the backstory of Medusa's death, explaining how with the help of Athena Perseus slew Medusa and took her head back to the island of Seriphos where the tyrant Polydektes forcefully held his mother, Danae, as wife/concubine. Pindar returns from the mythical portion of the ode into a meditation upon the nature of the *aulos* and the futility of human life.

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[1] Levinas (1999) 146.

iii. Pindar's *Aulos*, Mandelstam's Greek Flute

From Pindar's Gorgonic *aulos* to Link's Ocarina of Time, Mandelstam's Greek Flute to Mozart's magic one, wind instruments hold a special fascination for human beings. Perhaps it is the uncanniness of their ability to imitate and contend with the human voice, as depicted in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Or perhaps it is their amplification of the breath as practiced in *suizen*, a subcategory of Zen Buddhism. Wind instruments unify the *mechanos* with the man in an intimacy so profound that the division between the player and the played, the self and the other, becomes obscured. While the *kithara* and other stringed instruments allow a singer to accompany herself, maintaining the differentiation between human and instrumental sound, wind instruments obliterate this distinction.

It is precisely this union which makes the skill of Midas so arresting and the etiology of the *aulos* so disturbing. In an untitled 1937 poem, known by its first line "The Greek Flute's Theta and Iota," written in exile from Voronezh after his friend the flutist Schwab was apprehended by the NKVD,[2] Osip Mandelstam explores the implications of the violence in the etiology of the *aulos*. Connecting the mythical death of the etiology to the historical death of his friend, he concludes:

> И свои-то мне губы не любы—
> И убийство на том же корню—
> И невольно на убыль, на убыль
> Равноденствие флейты клоню...
>
> And my own lips are not dear to me,
> and murder's at the very root.
> And unwillingly, fading, fading,
> I bend the equinox of the flute.[3]

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[2] N. Mandelstam (1974) 188.

[3] O. Mandelstam (1993) 134-135. All translations from the Russian are mine.

The murder at the root of the flute's invention makes the artist complicit in that killing, and under that knowledge, the ecstatic experience of union with one's art becomes hateful. This is something Mandelstam viscerally understands, creating to his horror a work of beauty in response to the death of his own friend, capitalizing on tragedy to create art, much as we see Pindar's Athena doing. The musician's lips, now an object of hatred, squeeze forth breath into the hollow, speechless[4] pipe, and the murder from which the flute grew as if organically (корню "root") compels the unwilling performer to play on.

A student of Greek[5] and admirer of Pindar,[6] Mandelstam was responding to and by extension interpreting *Pythian* XII. Viktor Terras suggests that the double nature of the equinox in Mandelstam is a reference to the twin pipes of the *aulos*,[7] and the murder of Medusa at the root of the Greek flute provides a frame through which Mandelstam can understand the death of his friend at the hands of the NKVD. Mandelstam offers the perspective of a gifted poet navigating (unsuccessfully) the violent and autocratic dictatorship of Stalin. He gives us insight into a mind and situation not dissimilar to Pindar and his client, Midas. Like late 19th and early 20th century Russia, Akragas was under various tyrants and oligarchies in the 6th and 5th centuries whose regimes were known for their cruelty.[8] Nino Luraghi observes that the founding of Akragas and Phalaris' tyranny were so close in time that we ought to find in the

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[4] "And it's impossible to leave her / Not to keep her with clenched teeth, / With lips not loosen up her muscles / Or goad her with the tongue to speech." O. Mandelstam (1993) 134-135.
[5] Fragments of a poem M. wrote his Greek tutor survive. See Brown (1973) 47.
[6] Although Pindar does not appear in Nadezhda Mandelstam's limited recounting of her husband's library (N. Mandelstam 241-242), Mandelstam's ode "Нашедший подкову [Finding a horseshoe]" is subtitled "Пиндарический отрывок [A Pindaric fragment]."
[7] Terras (1966) 263.
[8] See Luraghi (1994) 36. The first tyrant of Akragas, Phaleris, was supposed to have invented a brazen bull in which he roasted his victims alive. Quicker than the gulag, slower than the gun, Phaleris' bull was at the very least creative, but it is best not to rank atrocities.

former event "*i presupposti storici*" of the latter.[9] Luraghi goes on to explain how "*la storia di Agrigento ci fornisce l'unico esempio di una città in cui la tirannide, dopo una prima comparsa, piuttosto precoce rispetto allo sviluppo storico delle città sicelote, si ripresenta, ancora come fenomeno endogeno, al principio del V secolo, nel momento topico della tirannide in Sicilia.*"[10] Given the tenuous position of non-tyrannical regimes in Akragas, Pindar must have been aware that he had to tread carefully in praising the unimportant Midas, who does not appear to be connected in any way to the ruling elite (much like Mandelstam's friend Schwab).[11]

While the city of Akragas itself was in between tyrants in the year 490, the supposed date of *Pythian* XII's composition (Theron came to power in 488), the age of Sicilian tyrants was in full swing with Hippocrates ruling as tyrant of neighboring Gela until Gelon came to power in 491 and Terillus ruling in Himera. Pindar's set-up for the poem suggests an awareness of and disapprobation for the political climate of Sicily: whoever the poem's "hero" is, Polydektes, an island tyrant, is very clearly a villain. The similarity between Pindar writing for a musician existing within an unstable and repressive environment and Mandelstam doing the same suggests that the Russian poet is creating a parallel between himself and the figure of Pindar, between Schwab and Midas. Given that Schwab was, in all likelihood, dead at the time of composition, Mandelstam is setting up another parallel between the German-Russian flutist (an

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[9] "the historical grounds." Luraghi (1994) 21.

[10] Luraghi (1994) 231: "The history of Akragas gives us the only example of a city in which tyranny, after a first appearance which occurred rather early compared to the historical development of Sicilian cities, reappears still as an endogenous phenomenon at the beginning of the fifth century, in the decisive moment for tyrannies in Sicily."

[11] Luraghi's comment about the endogenous nature of tyranny in Akragas reminds one also of the seemingly endogenous nature of repression in Russia. The tsarist secret police, the Okhrana, known for persecuting dissident writers and intellectuals (like the young Dostoevsky) gave way to the Cheka, the NKVD, the KGB (to name a few), and the current regime which regularly silences dissident voices such as Pussy Riot and Oleg Sentsov.

other both in his musical and ethnic identities) and the ancient murder at the root of the Greek flute, which we rely on Pindar to understand. Given the similarities of context and the possibility of intentional reception on the part of Mandelstam, reading him in light of Pindar in turn sheds light on Pindar. Mandelstam's poem provides a frame through which to reinterpret Medusa and her sisters as figures of the artist. Reading *Pythian* XII with Mandelstam as critic allows us to explore precisely what that figuration means.

At the end of "The Greek Flute's Theta and Iota," Mandelstam describes the speaker's lips as любы (*lyuby*), a choice which presents a curious double-entendre. On the one hand, the word means "dear" in the sense of a sweetheart,[12] a usage which has by now dropped out of ordinary, spoken Russian, and online corpus data offers citations only from Mandelstam himself,[13] thereby suggesting an idiosyncratic and perhaps deliberately archaizing use.[14] On the other hand, it refers to one person or thing out of a set of two.[15] This second, and most likely implied meaning, is of interest to the pursuant discussion. The speaker insists, even when he pipes unwillingly, even in the face of the terror and violence of the NKVD, that his own lips are not someone else's; they are not the other's. The flute may be transferable, but the flutist's mouth is his own. His breath is his own. Even if the instrument can be taken away, even if the

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[12] "люб." *slovari.ru.* 2020. http://slovari.ru/search.aspx?p=3068

[13] "люб." *slovari.ru.* 2020. http://slovari.ru/search.aspx?s=0&p=3068&di=vcitaty&wi=4384

[14] It is worth noting that the poem makes use of other deliberately archaic and idiosyncratic Russian words. The spelling of тэта is unique (the standard Russian spelling is тета). In addition, the opening line of the poem refers to the Greek flute's "theta and iota" whose Cyrillic descendants, *i desiaterichnoe* and *fita,* had been removed in the reforms of 1917-1918. I suspect that by referring specifically to these doubly obsolete letters, Mandelstam is at some level meditating on what occurs when a government takes control of a naturally fluid thing like a language.

[15] The implications for the concept of alterity that this double entendre carries are rich. Embedded in the Russian language is the unity of the other and the beloved.

instrument is a kind of torture to him, the tune that he plays upon it is fundamentally his tune, his breath, his thought.

The inalienability of one's creative apparatus is doubly emphasized by Mandelstam's use of свои-то мне (*svoi-to mnye*). The appearance of the generic possessive adjective (*svoi*), roughly equivalent to Latin's *suus*, together with the dative of the first person singular pronoun (*mnye*) stresses the identification of the speaker with his lips, while the particle -*to*, whose usage is similar to Greek's γε, emphasizes and limits the extent of the other words' claim. Mandelstam is telling us that even if everything else can be taken away his orality, though a source of pain, is at the very least his own.

By removing the Greek *aulos* from the laudatory context of epinikian poetry with its accompanying claims of aristocratic excellence and by placing it in the world of dictatorial domestic terror, Mandelstam asks whom we should view as the mythological parallel to *Pythian* XII's human *laudandus* and challenges us as readers of Pindar to re-evaluate our understanding of his relationship with his powerful clients. *Pythian* XII is one of two *epinikia* dedicated to non-athletes and is the only *epinikion* which Pindar wrote to a fellow artist. The parallel between Mandelstam the poet writing to Schwab the flutist and Pindar the poet writing to Midas the *aulete* is uncanny. It directs us to interpret the real-life subject through the intrapoetic victim. If Mandelstam's voice is heard in the poetic 'I', Schwab is figured in the murder at the root of the flute. Likewise, if Pindar is heard in *Pythian* XII's poetic 'I,' Midas is figured in the murdered Medusa.

Thus, I argue that the poem's *laudandus* is best represented by the monstrous, feminine, musical figures of the Gorgons, and not the heroic figure of Perseus typically associated with *epinikion*. Moreover, I argue, the invention of the flute by Athena in imitation of the Gorgons is

an appropriation by the conquering victor of the identity of the conquered. This appropriation springs from wanton and excessive violence which in turn is the natural consequence of Perseus' homelessness and the failure of Polydektes to be truly open to the other (Perseus). *Pythian* XII is thus a lesson in reading Pindar. He is warning us that if we are not open to the otherness of the poet, we are doomed to appropriate him, stripping him of his identity and transforming him into a clumsy weapon, as Perseus does with the once-beautiful head of Medusa. However, such poetic appropriation is not inevitable, and Pindar points us to a way of successfully relating to the creations of others without obliterating their otherness.

iv. Poetic Chimerism

The Chimera appears in only one Pindaric ode, *Olympian* XIII, which celebrates the brilliance of the εὑρόντος ἔργον "discoverer's deed"[16]—an act of ingenuity which creates delightful, new chimerae out of pre-existing materials or concepts. To explain this topic, Pindar points to how the dithyramb emerges σὺν βοηλάτᾳ χάριτες διθυράμβῳ from "grace together with the ox-driving dithyramb."[17] That is, the musical genre of dithyrambic poetry arises when the *kharis* of the poet's relationship with the Muses is added to the rhythmic work-song of the plowman. Likewise, the bridle emerges ἱππείοις ἐν ἔντεσσιν μέτρα "as meter in equestrian instruments,"[18] providing to the strong-willed stallion the same constraint that meter gives the musician. Moreover, the poet points to the double eagle placed upon temples as an act of discovery or invention.[19] Tacking things together appears to be the pinnacle of human achievement. Thus, when we meet Chimera in line 90 of the poem, we see her within a

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[16] *O.*13.17.
[17] *O.*13.19.
[18] *O.*13.20.
[19] *O.*13.21-22.

catalogue of other blended beings, which culminates in her nemesis—Bellerophon riding Pegasus. The natural chimera faces off against her synthetic match. Seen from below, the human torso of Bellerophon emerging from behind the wings and neck of Pegasus must look as monstrous and deviant as the lion-goat-headed monster herself.

The demigod, it turns out, has captured Medusa's winged horse-child with the help of Athena, who has furnished him with a magical bridle (a new and improved version of the invention Pindar mentions at the beginning of the ode):

> ἦτοι καὶ ὁ καρτερὸς ὁρ-
> μαίνων ἕλε Βελλεροφόντας,
> φάρμακον πραῢ τείνων ἀμφὶ γένυι,
> ἵππον πτερόεντ᾽· ἀναβαὶς δ᾽
> εὐθὺς ἐνόπλια χαλκωθεὶς ἔπαιζεν.
>
> indeed the mighty Bellerophon
> rushed forward and seized him;
> by stretching a gentle charm around his jaws
> he seized the winged horse; and straight away
> he mounted and all bronzed he played at war.[20]

The gentle charm of Athena's magical bridle allows the grown-up Bellerophon to play with his otherwise wild half-brother Pegasus. And having been made bronze (χαλκωθεὶς), as if the act of mounting (ἀναβαὶς) the horse were enough to transform Bellerophon the man into Bellerophon the cyborg, this weird unity of horse and rider produces an *enoplion*, a war tune. The bronze bit in Pegasus' mouth, like the bronze and reed of the *aulos*' mouthpiece, jingles as the connecting nerves and reins fuse the mind and mouth of the two brothers. And the synthetic chimera crushes its natural cousin.

The musical references and double-entendres in *Olympian* XIII (σὺν βοηλάτᾳ χάριτες διθυράμβῳ, ἱππείοις ἐν ἔντεσσιν μέτρα, ἐνόπλια χαλκωθεὶς ἔπαιζεν) suggest a similarity

[20] *O*.13.84-87.

between physical chimerism as seen in Bellerophon, Pegasus, and the Chimera and the chimerism of musical creation—a link which Pindar explores in *Pythian* XII. The ode itself is a generic chimera much as the aulete is a cyborg that integrates the machine of the *aulos* into his own respiratory system. The content of the poem's myth and its style of story-telling are more suitable for the dithyramb than for the *epinikion.* The poem is divided into roughly three parts: lines 1-5 constitute the invocation, lines 6-27 focus on the telling of the myth, and lines 28-32 offer up a closing reflection, or what Bundy would call the gnome. Thus, the beginning and end of the poem entail generic features of the *epinikion* while the middle portion showcases a typical motif of the dithyramb, namely the etiology of musical instruments.[21] Indeed, the very myth of Athena and the *aulos*, which is told in *Pythian* XII, appears also in a fragment of Telestes of Selinus, another dithyrambic poet.[22]

The eccentricity of Pindar's telling in *Pythian* XII becomes particularly apparent when we contrast it with *Pythian* X, which also relates the death of Medusa by Perseus. While *Pythian* XII shows a remarkable amount of focus for a Pindaric *epinikion*,[23] *Pythian* X narrates the myth in the compressed and off-the-cuff fashion typical of Pindar's *epinikia*, taking up only five lines out of seventy-two-line poem:

> θρασείᾳ δὲ πνέων καρδίᾳ
> μόλεν Δανάας ποτὲ παῖς, ἁγεῖτο δ᾽Ἀθάνα
> ἐς ἀνδρῶν μακάρων ὅμιλον· ἔπεφνέν
> τε Γοργόνα, καὶ ποικίλον κάρα
> δρακόντων φόβαισιν ἤλυθε νασιώταις

[21] van der Weiden (1991) 2.
[22] van der Weiden (1991) 18.
[23] In *Pythian* XII, Pindar tells only one myth rather than jumping from topic to topic and inserting his own narratorial voice. The only gnomic portion of the ode is at the end rather than peppered generously throughout. In comparison with other *epinikia*, whose transitions are notoriously hard to follow and which usually include references to multiple myths without going into depth about any of them, *Pythian* XII is remarkably clear, direct, and single-focused.

λίθινον θάνατον φέρων.

And breathing with his bold heart
once upon a time the child of Danae came, and Athena led him
into company of blessed men; and he slew
    the Gorgon, and came bringing the cunning head
with a mane of snakes to the island-dwellers
as stony death.[24]

With the myth finished, Pindar passes onto his own thoughts. ἐμοὶ δὲ "but to me,"[25] he continues and drops the topic of Medusa altogether. In this telling of the myth, Perseus is framed as acting θρασείᾳ… καρδίᾳ "with a bold heart" whereas in *Pythian* XII it is the Gorgons who are described as θρασειᾶν "bold,"[26] particularly in reference to their οὔλιον θρῆνον "deadly dirge."[27] The adjective is not repeated again in *Pythian* XII, and we are left to puzzle out what kind of courage Pindar is depicting.

The boldness of *Pythian* X's hero is to be found in his coming (μόλεν) and killing (ἔπεφνέν) of a monster. He is framed as an unambiguously and conventionally heroic male figure. Medusa is left nameless and stripped of all gender-signifiers. She is a neuter ποικίλον κάρα δρακόντων φόβαισιν "cunning head with a mane of snakes." The adjective ποικίλος is ordinarily used of animals or objects made by human skill, not of feminine beauty,[28] and its application to Medusa here suggests that she is either a beast or a human creation—a realistically painted blazon on a shield or the pediment of a temple—reminding us of the frequent, conventional, monstrous depictions of the Gorgon throughout the archaic and early

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[24] *P.*10.44-48.
[25] *P.*10.48.
[26] *P.*12.7.
[27] *P.*12.8.
[28] "ποικίλος." *LSJ.*

classical periods.[29] Pindar's description leaves her a lifeless thing, much like the people her head brings to a λίθινον θάνατον "stony death." Her death transforms her from a monster, not human enough to be gendered, into a tool by which Perseus is led into the company of heroes.

By contrast, in *Pythian* XII, Pindar identifies the Gorgons by their names and their position within a family. Medusa is named in line 16, Euryale in line 20, and their father in line 13. The only explicit reference to their monstrosity is in line 7: θρασειᾶν <Γοργόνων> "of the bold <Gorgons>",[30] which is a supplement from the *Scholia*, but other metrically appropriate non-monstrous supplements could be found as well, such as παρθένων or unmarried girls. Indeed, their identity as girls fits with the following lines wherein Pindar describes the song

> τὸν παρθενίοις ὑπό τ᾽ἀπλάτοις ὀφίων κεφαλαῖς
> ἄιε λειβόμενον δυσπενθέι σὺν καμάτῳ
>
> which she [Athena] heard slipping from their
> inapproachable girlish heads of snakes with grievous toil[31]

The song that Athena hears is, of course, the οὔλιον θρῆνον "deadly dirge" of line 8, and it is sung by a bizarre choir of snake-haired unmarried girls. While in *Pythian* X, the femininity of the Gorgons is erased, here it is emphasized. Medusa is called the τρίτον κασιγνητᾶν μέρος "third part of the sisters,"[32] as if to emphasize both her identity within a family unit and her role as a member of their girls' choir.

Pindar goes on to explain that Perseus' killing of Medusa ἤτοι τό τε θεσπέσιον Φόρκοι᾽ἀμαύρωσεν γένος "indeed dimmed the divinely sounding family of Phorkis."[33] The

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[29] See Woodward (1976) for a concise (if incomplete and at moments painfully of its time) overview of depictions of Perseus and by extension Medusa in Greek vase painting.
[30] *P.*12.7.
[31] *P.*12.9-10.
[32] *P.*12.11.
[33] *P.*12.13.

scholiast suggests that Pindar is actually referring to Perseus stealing the single eye which the Graiai, sisters of the Gorgons, shared between themselves.[34] However, such a reading implies a pointless digression from a moment otherwise poetically and mythically unified:

> τὸν παρθενίοις ὑπό τ᾽ἀπλάτοις ὀφίων κεφαλαῖς
> ἄιε λειβόμενον δυσπενθέι σὺν καμάτῳ,
> Περσεὺς ὁπότε τρίτον ἄυσεν κασιγνητᾶν μέρος
> ἐνναλίᾳ Σερίφῳ λαοῖσι τε μοῖραν ἄγων.
> ἤτοι τό τε θεσπέσιον Φόρκοι᾽ ἀμαύρωσεν γένος,
> λυγρόν τ᾽ἔρανον Πολυδέκτᾳ θῆκε ματρός τ᾽ἔμπεδον
> δουλοσύναν τὸ τ᾽ἀναγκαῖον λέχος.
>
> [the song] which she heard slipping from their
> girlish inapproachable heads of snakes with grievous toil,
> when Perseus shouted as he brought the third part of the sisters
> to Seriphos in the sea and doom its people.
> Yes indeed, he dimmed the divinely singing family of Phorkis,
> and made deadly Polydektes' picnic and his mother's fettered
> slavery and her compulsory bed.[35]

As the above quoted passage shows, Pindar is cataloguing the circumstances out of which arose the οὔλιος θρῆνος of the Gorgons, not the gamut of Perseus' heroic actions. Moreover, the ἤτοι in line 13 more likely "serves to bring home a truth of which the certainty is expressed by ἦ"[36] than to add another disconnected thought to a series. In addition, the τε… τ᾽ connecting ἀμαύρωσεν and θῆκε suggests a close, sequential link between the two actions. Thus, each line in the above quoted passage works to build the image of the effects of Medusa's death: doom is brought to Seriphos, the divine-sounding voice of the Gorgons is dimmed, and Polydektes' oppression of Danae is brought to a bitter end. The intrusion of the Graiai is unnecessary for a meaningful interpretation of the passage.

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[34] *Schol*.P.12.13d. Gildersleeve follows the scholiast.
[35] *P*.12.10-15.
[36] Denniston (1966) 553.

The identity of the Gorgons as *parthenoi* adds a note of poignancy to the death of Medusa. By taking away a third part of Phorkis' family, Perseus has dimmed the divine voice of the Gorgons, who are equally identified by their snaky locks as by their girlish age. For the mortals of Pindar's audience, a girl's maidenhood ended abruptly with marriage usually following swiftly upon the heels of sexual maturity. Thus, as Lesley Beaumont observes, the "state of *partheneia* or female adolescence, seems to have been short-lived"[37] and may have ended as early as thirteen. As the only mortal member of the Gorgons, Medusa's inclusion in the ranks of *parthenoi* implies her extreme youth. Thus, when her sisters sing a *thrênos* for her, one cannot help but feel they should be singing an *epithalamion* instead.

Pindar's identification of the Gorgons as *parthenoi*, coupled with his emphasis on their orality—their θρῆνος "dirge" and their θεσπέσιον γένος "divinely-singing family"—presents the sisters not as ferocious monsters but as a girls' choir, like the ones for whom Pindar composed and whom he possibly trained. As Deborah Steiner observes, the formal mourning exemplified by a θρῆνος, a specific genre of Greek poetry,[38] "almost inevitably involves antiphony between the individual(s) initiating the lament and a larger group that sings in response, typically picking up, repeating, and on occasion, elaborating on the phrases used by the solo voice."[39] We should imagine Medusa's sisters expressing their grief through articulate, heart-wrenching call-and-response, not the animalistic, disfiguring scream that the traditional depiction of the Gorgon's face brings to mind. Athena's invention of the *aulos* is not, as Charles Segal argues, transforming "Medusa's wail at death into the flute-song" in a "cultural act that domesticates the fearfulness and impurity of the woman in the act of birth," an image which

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[37] Beaumont (2012) 21.
[38] Pindar's own *thrênoi* survive in fragments.
[39] Steiner (2013) 177.

Segal finds implied by the open mouth of the *gorgoneion*.[40] Rather, Athena's invention of the *aulos* is the borrowing or appropriation of one woman's handiwork by another, as suggested by the feminine language of Athena's οὔλιον θρῆνον διαπλέξαισ᾽ "having woven together the deadly dirge."[41] Their lament is, to begin with, a sophisticated choral work coordinated between different voices, as the participle διαπλέξαισ᾽ implies.[42]

When Perseus returns to Seriphos εὐπαράου κρᾶτα συλάσαις Μεδοίσας "having carried off the head of sweet-cheeked Medusa,"[43] he has not only taken Medusa's power to transform people into stone, but her voice, her lips, her role as an artist and membership in a community of singers. Somewhat unimaginatively, Adolf Köhnken has observed that Medusa's head does not technically make up one third of the sisters,[44] a reading which prompts him to take τρίτον adverbially with ἄυσεν and leave the limp phrase κασιγνητᾶν μέρος "part of the sisters" as the direct object of ἄγων.[45] Köhnken's difficulty, however, resolves itself once we realize that Pindar is depicting the Gorgons as a choir.[46] With Medusa's head removed from her body and from the company of her singing sisters, a keen musical lack is felt; the three-part choir has become a two part choir. By identifying the sisters with their voices more than their

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[40] Segal (1998) 90.
[41] *P.*12.8.
[42] There has been ample discussion as to what exactly Athena is plaiting together—whether it is just the Gorgons' voices, Perseus' victory shout(s), or a combination of the two. Cf. Steiner (2013), Held (1998), Segal (1995), Clay (1992), Köhnken (1978). Grammatically, it is clearly the Gorgons' dirge (which is inarguably the only direct object of the participle), an interpretation which presents no semantic difficulties if we follow Steiner's line of argument and understand a *thrênos* to be antiphonal.
[43] *P.*12.16.
[44] Köhnken (1978) 92.
[45] In addition to the flattening of the phrase's meaning, taking τρίτον adverbially in the way Köhnken attempts does not work grammatically. The word τρίς is normally used to mean "three times" in Greek ("τρίς." *LSJ*.), and the adjective τρίτος when used adverbially is closer to "thirdly" than "three times."
[46] Or if we entertain the wild possibility that Pindar is using synecdoche.

bodies, Pindar's synecdoche equates Medusa' head, the source of her orality, with her person. It does not matter where her body is; her voice is the locus of her self.

Moreover, the depiction of Perseus carrying off Medusa's head frames her death as a kind of abduction or rape.[47] The Gorgons' identity as *parthenoi* offers depth to the descriptor ἀπλάτοις in line 10, an adjective derived from πελάζω, to approach, and the alpha privative. As members of a girls' chorus, an institution ordinarily organized for ritual purposes, the Gorgons act as pious members of a community. They are unapproachable not just because of their petrifying visage and snaky locks but because they are still under their father's care and legal guardianship, contributing in an appropriate, maidenly manner—that is by means of their voice—to their communal life. The monstrosity and maidenliness of the Gorgons are somehow inseparable; their ineligibility as sexual partners prolongs their *partheneia*. Medusa's removal from their domestic and ritual context represents her transition from innocence to maturity; we are reminded of the pathos with which Sappho describes her own loss of girlhood in a fragmentary call-and-response:

> παρθενία, παρθενία, ποῖ με λίποισ᾽ ἀποίχῃ;
> οὐκέτι ἥξω πρὸς σέ, οὐκέτι ἥξω.
>
> girlhood, girlhood, why have you gone away and left me?
> I won't ever come back to you; I won't ever come back.[48]

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[47] Rape, abduction, and seduction are related crimes in Greek law, and it is unclear whether or not they were treated differently within a court of law or by retributive families. In *Law, Sexuality, and Society*, David Cohen explains that both could likely be encompassed by the term *hybris* which was used in Athenian law to cover certain undefined (but likely sexual) prosecutable crimes. Elsewhere the term has a strong sexual connotation and includes such transgressions as violent rape, seduction, and the fate of female prisoners of war. Cohen (1991) 177-178. See also Topper (2007) on the topic of Medusa's death being figured as rape/abduction, which will be discussed in more detail below.
[48] Sappho fr. 114.

There is something clearly wonderful—magical, even—about the openness and lack of definition of a young girl existing outside the sharp binarism of traditional Greek sexual and spousal roles. Like the wild fecundity of the postdiluvian world in *Olympian* IX, this openness has the potency of becoming *anything*, but marriage or sexual assault forces it into definition. The violence of Medusa's removal from παρθενία, as figured by the verb συλάσαις with its overtones of plunder and spoil,[49] coupled with her appearance as εὐπάραος "sweet-cheeked" suggests that Medusa's shift from the alterity of *parthenia* into something clearly understood and defined is not the happy shift of a willing young wife or mother but the tragedy of discovering oneself reduced to an object through sexual violence.

Pindar's decision to frame Medusa in such sympathetic terms is not without parallels. Kathryn Topper shows that, by the classical period, the imagery of Medusa as a *parthenos* and the parallelism of her death with abduction scenes is omnipresent.[50] One of the most striking examples of this is a *pelike* attributed to Polygnotos and dated to roughly 450-440 BCE,[51] whereon Medusa is depicted not only in a short, knee-length chiton implying youth but without any outward manifestation of her monstrosity apart from her wings. There are no snakes, no grimace, no jaws—just a sleeping girl about to be murdered. Numerous other humanizing depictions of the Gorgons exist as well. In a sixth-century, black-figure amphora,[52] the Gorgons appear with pale white skin like Athena's, emphasizing their youth and femininity even though their faces remain monstrous. Moreover, an early fifth-century, red-figure hydria represents the

[49] "συλάω." *LSJ*.
[50] Topper (2007).
[51] See Milne (1946) 127. The vase itself is housed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and high quality images are available online: https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/254523
[52] British Museum, B248. See Woodward (1976) 53-54.

decapitated head of Medusa peeking out from Perseus' *kibisis* as thoroughly human, feminine, and tragic.[53]

In another article, Topper interprets the bizarre imagery of an equine gorgon as a symbol for the end of girlhood, explaining that "the Greeks commonly represented sexually innocent girls through the figure of a horse."[54] The centaur-Gorgon is depicted on a Cycladic pithos jar with wide, round eyes, a triangular nose, and a closed mouth, all of which match the style of Perseus' face. She, however, is depicted gazing directly at the viewer, while he turns away and is seen only in profile. She has a human torso and a long chiton covering the front of her horse's legs. Topper links this depiction to other depictions of maidens as horses such as Alcman's seventh-century *partheneion* and Anacreon's πῶλε Θρηικίη "Thracian filly."[55] Topper goes on to link Medusa's beheading, emphasized on the pithos by Perseus' sword hovering above her neck, to the sacrifice of Polyxena and Iphigenia,[56] concluding that "Medusa appears on the pithos as a rightful candidate for marriage, not death, and by highlighting both her equine and her maidenly characteristics the image presents the hero's actions as an outrage."[57]

The pithos, though Cycladic in origin, "was found at Thebes and probably had stood above a tomb."[58] Its presence in Boiotia implies that, while not necessarily the norm, sympathetic depictions of Medusa were present in Pindar's homeland around the time of *Pythian* XII's composition in 490 BCE. Taken together with the red- and black-figure examples from nearby Attica, this pithos belies the common assumption that Perseus is the unchallenged

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[53] British Museum, E181. See Woodward (1976) 63.
[54] Topper (2010) 112.
[55] *PMG* 417; Topper (2010) 112.
[56] Topper (2010) 114; Loraux (1987) 31-48.
[57] Topper (2010) 116. Topper's characterization of Medusa's death aligns with Cohen's understanding of *hybris* as a catch-all for sexual transgression. See footnote 47.
[58] Woodward (1976) 32.

hero of *Pythian* XII.[59] If sympathetic gorgons can exist in 7th c. Cycladic and 5th c. Attic red-figure vases, the concept must surely have been present in the Greek world by Pindar's time, even if only as a response to a more conventional perspective. Indeed, as mentioned above, Pindar characterizes Medusa's bodiless head as εὐπαράου "sweet-cheeked."[60] Even in death, her beauty is remarkable. If we grant, as argued above, that Medusa in *Pythian* XII is more maiden than monster,[61] we must also grant that Perseus' behavior loses some of its heroic grandeur.

This inversion of expected roles in *Pythian* XII invites the reader to view its myth as an embedded dithyramb. Perseus' chaotic and violent operation within the poem is more akin to the depiction of heroic figures in dithyramb than in *epinikion*, as a thorough study of the dithyrambic fragments suggests. Indeed, as M.L. West observes, the "dithyramb, although in principle dedicated to a god, Dionysus, has an altogether less holy feel to it, and in many cases it appears to have become virtually secularized."[62] While the victory odes sanitize, leaving out embarrassing moments for the mythical heroes,[63] the dithyrambs delight in calumny. For example, in fragment 72, Pindar writes that ἀλόχωι ποτὲ θωραχθεὶς ἔπεχ᾽ἀλλοτρίαι /

[59] For example, see Clay (1992) 522. Clay is so certain that Perseus is the obvious hero of the ode that she assumes Pindar's focus to rest on him, even though music and the *aulos* are clearly what link the myth to the *laudandus.* She writes: "The focal point of Pindar's telling of the Perseus' myth lies not, as Köhnken and others have supposed, in his fight with the Gorgons nor even with Medusa's decapitation (although that is, of course, presupposed), but in the hero's final achievement," that is the destruction of Seriphos.
[60] *P.*12.16.
[61] Her snake-heads, of course, remain. But, we know from *Pythian* X that Pindar could emphasize her inhumanity if he so wished, whereas here her humanity is emphasized.
[62] West (1992) 16.
[63] Cf. *O.*9.35-36 discussed in Chapter One. Pindar cries out ἀπό μοι λόγον / τοῦτον, στόμα, ῥῖψον "throw this word away from me, mouth" when he begins to say impious things about Herakles' relationship with the gods.

᾿Ωαρίων "once, being drunk, Orion attacked somebody else's wife."[64] The poem is known to be about Orion's misadventures on Chios with the family of Oenopion, a story that usually ends with the rape of Oenopion's daughter and Orion's subsequent blinding. However, by shifting Orion's victim from daughter to mother, Pindar removes all excuse, for as van der Weiden points out, Orion (horrifically to our sensibilities) could claim a right to Merope, since he did after all rid Chios of wild beasts for her father.[65] There is, however, no possible excuse for assaulting a reputable married woman. Pindar presents the hero in the worst possible light. Likewise in a dithyramb on Herakles quoted by Aelius Aristides, we get the shocking defense of Geryon: …σὲ δ᾿ἐγὼ παρά μιν / αἰνέω μέν, Γηρυόνα "in comparison to [Herakles], I praise you, Geryon."[66] The dithyramb is a place where the tide is turned. Under the influence of Dionysus, the hero becomes the villain, and the monster becomes the maiden.

By imitating dithyrambic irreverence in *epinikion*, Pindar creates a space of poetic chimerism, mirroring in form what he narrates in myth. The *epinikion* appropriates the dithyramb for itself as Perseus appropriates Medusa's head and, as we shall discuss at length below, Athena appropriates Stheno and Euryale's dirge. The poem becomes a kind of chimera like the *aulete*, blending two distinct objects—instrument and man, dithyramb and *epinikion*—into one monstrously beautiful form. On the one hand, the violence and tragedy of Medusa's death seem to be a warning about how the artist is treated. And yet, Pindar's decision to reenact in his creation the very act of appropriation he describes complicates and undermines the pathos he develops in the myth.

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[64] Pind.Fr.72.
[65] van der Weiden (1991) 177.
[66] Pind.fr.81.

v. Adoption and Appropriation

The apparent contradiction between poetic borrowing and our empathy with the Gorgons can be accounted for by distinguishing between different ways of treating the other. Pindar links this differentiation to the sphere of the family and makes use of the imagery of adoption to help us understand it. The etiological aspect of the Perseus-Medusa myth and the pathos of the Gorgons' lament are only a part of the story Pindar is telling. The other half revolves around another female figure, Perseus' mother Danae and her mistreatment at the hands of Polydektes.

Understanding this aspect of *Pythian* XII requires reconstructing the mythical background that Pindar is drawing upon. Of course, it is impossible to know exactly what version of the myth Pindar had in mind, but given his Panhellenic audience and the need to be comprehensible to them, it seems likely that he would draw on universal elements of the myth except when explicitly deviating from them. The most complete account of the Perseus-Danae myth comes from Pseudo-Apollodoros' *Bibliotheka* and postdates *Pythian* XII by about five centuries, making it a problematic source for understanding Pindar.[67] Another account comes from Aeschylus' fragmentary satyr-play the *Diktyoulkoi*, which most likely formed a part of the tetralogy which included Aeschylus' lost *Polydektes,* a play about the tyrant's petrification by Perseus.[68] Both accounts agree in certain details, namely that Danae and Perseus were set adrift in a chest by her father Akrisios, king of Argos. Likewise, both accounts tell us that Perseus and Danae were found on Seriphos by the fisherman Diktys. But, while the satyr play does not make direct reference to Polydektes, the *Bibliotheka* does, explaining that the king fell in love

[67] Pseudo-Apollodoros, *Bibliotheka* 2.4.1-2.
[68] Oakley (1982) 115; Charalabopoulos (2021).

with Danae after Perseus grew to manhood and was obliged to devise the quest for Medusa's head as a means of ridding himself of Danae's protective son.

If, as supposed, the *Diktyoulkoi* formed a part of the same sequence as the *Polydektes*, the absence of that king from the satyr-play implies little except that Polydektes in Aeschylus' account was not present at the finding of Danae and Perseus, an implication which accords with the more complete presentation of the myth in the *Bibliotheka* and suggests that Pseudo-Apollodoros' account may be an accurate representation of fifth century narratives. In addition, a scholiast on the *Argonautica* quotes the sixth century philosopher Pherecydes as saying that Polydektes demanded the Gorgon's head as a gift from Perseus for the feast he had prepared, threatening to "take his mother captive" if Perseus did not bring it.[69] Pherecydes' account of the myth frames Polydektes' request for the Gorgon's head as a grounds for justifying his appropriation and rape of Danae. Pherecydes' and Pseudo-Apollodoros' accounts share many important features. In both, the impetus to decapitate Medusa comes from the tyrant of Seriphos; in both, the request is framed as a friendly gesture but is actually an attempt to be rid of Perseus; and in both, the quest is used to facilitate the tyrant's domination of Danae. The apparent impossibility of the task is precisely what gives Polydektes confidence in his plan to seize the hero's mother. Even if the mechanics differ slightly, both Pherecydes and Psuedo-Apollodoros essentially agree that Polydektes' request for Medusa's head is intended as a suicide mission.

Pindar's version of the myth corresponds with features of both Pherecydes' and Pseudo-Apollodoros' myths. Like Pherecydes, Pindar mentions the feast (ἔρανον) Polydektes has prepared, suggesting that he is also operating from a version of the myth in which Polydektes

[69] *Frag. Hist. Graec.* I.75, fr. 26; Woodward (1976) 4-6.

requests the head as a host-gift.[70] Moreover, he refers to Danae's ἔμπεδον / δουλοσύναν τό τ᾽ἀναγκαῖον λέχος "fettered slavery and compulsory bed,"[71] thereby insinuating the same motivation from Polydektes for the quest as in both Pherecydes' and Pseudo-Apollodoros' versions. Curiously, Pindar's account suggests that Danae is already in Polydektes' possession. The spurious request for Medusa's head is more of an afterthought than a pretext. Polydektes is tying up the loose ends of his concubine's adult son by another man, whose presence would threaten the position of any other children born from Danae.

If we contrast the mythical background of *Pythian* XII with the myth presented in *Olympian* IX, a clear difference emerges. While Lokros welcomed the pregnant paramour of Zeus precisely because he recognized that ἔχεν δὲ σπέρμα μέγιστον "she was carrying the greatest seed,"[72] Polydektes sends away his (intended) bride's child, even though this boy also is the child of Zeus. The continuities between Pindar, Pherecydes, and Pseudo-Apollodorus detailed above suggest that the audience of *Pythian* XII would have interpreted the quest for the Gorgon's head as a suicide mission demanded by the tyrant. Polydektes rejects the gift that is Danae's son, sending him out into the wilderness and subjecting him to exposure a second time (the first being his exposure within the chest by Danae's father Akrisios) in order to receive the hubristic gift of Medusa's head.[73] The king of Seriphos prefers the possibility of biological children to the certainty of an adopted son. He operates within a violent world with over-

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[70] *P.*12.14.
[71] *P.*12.14-15.
[72] *O.*9.61.
[73] Woodward (1976) 60ff. details an early fifth-century, red-figure kalyx-krater in (then) Leningrad which depicts the impregnation of Danae by a self-pouring gold and the confinement of Danae together with little Perseus to the chest in which they were exposed. See also Oakley (1982) for a discussion of several different fifth-century, red figure paintings depicting the arrival of Danae and Perseus' in their chest on Seriphos.

determined and limited roles. To him, Danae cannot be Perseus' mother and Polydektes' wife; she can only have one male protector. In order to marry her, he needs to (attempt to) reinstate her status as *parthenos* by doing away with the offspring and evidence of her prior romantic liaison. He does not recognize that as a single woman separated from her *oikos* by exposure, Danae in fact maintains the openness and indefiniteness of *parthenia* while simultaneously inhabiting the role of mother. She could be Polydektes' wife *and* Perseus' mother if only he also exhibited the openness of her situation. But instead, he attempts to fit her within the categories he understands and in so doing he erases what she is, forcing her into a compulsory bed and fettered slavery.

As Danae is a woman without an *oikos*, Perseus is a child without a father. His potential adoptive father has rejected him and in rejecting him has chosen to abduct his mother rather than pursue a marriage to her through legal means (i.e. Perseus' permission). His grandfather (though Pindar makes no mention of this) has also rejected him. And, his own biological father prefers to keep himself veiled. The hero is υἱὸς Δανάας, τὸν ἀπὸ χρυσοῦ φαμὲν αὐτορύτου / ἔμμεναι "the son of Danae, the boy whom we say to be from self-pouring gold."[74] His identity is bound up with his mother's. Zeus' decision to impregnate Danae in the guise of gold falling from the sky (χρυσοῦ αὐτορύτου) leaves her son's paternity and by extension her status in jeopardy. By turning himself into something even less substantial than an object, a shower of gold, Zeus engenders a child who is only half-human, a kind of chimera to be rejected and othered. While the paternity of Opus in *Olympian* IX is obvious and straightforward, giving value to the exposed mother and child, the ambiguity of Perseus' parentage makes both him and Danae vulnerable.

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[74] *P.*12.17-18.

Indeed, Pindar's description of Perseus as being (ἔμμεναι) from self-pouring gold further deemphasizes the paternity of Zeus. The neutral linking verb "to be" makes no claim about biological connection, as a form of, say, γίγνομαι would, and the preposition ἀπό is not normally used to denote immediate descent.[75] A parallel use of ἀπό with a form of εἰμί appears in the *Odyssey* when Penelope sarcastically asks the disguised Odysseus to identify himself:

> ἀλλὰ καὶ ὥς μοι εἰπὲ τεὸν γένος, ὁππόθεν ἐσσί.
> οὐ γὰρ ἀπὸ δρυός ἐσσι παλαιφάτου οὐδ᾽ ἀπὸ πέτρης.
>
> Come on, tell me about your family, where you're from,
> for you're not from an ancient oak tree or a rock.[76]

The peculiar formulation of "tree and stone," which in addition to the *Odyssey* occurs in several other passages of Greek and Near-Eastern writing, is explored in depth by Carolina Lopez-Ruiz who links it to origin narratives of mankind and the oracular transmission of knowledge.[77] Moreover, she notes that "Eustathios and the *scholia* on the *Odyssey*" connect "the expression with the exposure of infants in the wild and the concomitant assumption that they were born from trees and stones."[78] Penelope's question relies upon either the patent absurdity of claiming to be ἀπό some material object, of having sprung up from a new creation myth of sewn rocks or dragon's teeth, or the unlikely possibility of surviving infant exposure to convince the reserved beggar (Odysseus in disguise) to divulge his past. As signifiers of exposure or the first generation of human beings, the phrases ἀπὸ δρυός (from an oak) or ἀπὸ πέτρης (from a rock) stand in direct opposition to having a γένος and serve to highlight the importance of identifying oneself within one's γένος.

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[75] "ἀπό." *LSJ*.
[76] *Od*.19.162-163.
[77] Lopez-Ruiz (2010) 64.
[78] Lopez-Ruiz (2010) 58.

Likewise, the claim that Perseus is ἀπὸ χρυσοῦ "from gold"[79] places him in direct opposition to the identity of the Gorgons as members of a γένος.[80] He is exposed, begotten by the material world, homeless. The Gorgons belong to a family. They are girlish (παρθενίοις)[81] sisters (κασιγνητᾶν),[82] he a metallic half-man. And yet like Perseus, they are also chimeric beings ὀφίων κεφαλαῖς "with heads of snakes" for hair.[83] In *The Animal that Therefore I Am*, Derrida comments: "Pegasus, archetypal horse, son of Poseidon and the Gorgon, is therefore the half-brother of Bellerophon, who, descending from the same god as Pegasus, ends up following and taming a sort of brother, an other self."[84] The half-brothers then cooperate to kill Chimera in an ironic twist that relies upon their inability to recognize in the unique chimeric nature of the other their own relative. While Perseus is not so closely related to Medusa as Pegasus and Bellerophon, in her murder, we find another domination of an "other self." If not for Polydektes' unjust rejection of Perseus, there is no reason the hero should find an enemy in these girls. Indeed, their status in the liminal space between mortals and immortals and their monstrous sharing in two natures make them fitter companions for the demigod than ordinary human beings. But, like Bellerophon, Pegasus, and Chimera, Perseus and Medusa are prevented from recognizing a self in the other.

Their failure to recognize a self in the other is further illustrated by yet another parallel —their shared orality—and Perseus' appropriation of Medusa's orality by the seizure of her

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[79] *P*.12.17.
[80] *P*.12.11.
[81] *P*.12.9.
[82] *P*.12.11.
[83] *P*.12.9.
[84] Derrida (2008) 42.

head. In Pindar's telling, the Gorgons and Perseus share orality as the defining feature of their heroic actions. Athena overhears the θρῆνος of the "bold"[85] Gorgons at the same moment as

> Περσεὺς ὁπότε τρίτον ἄυσεν κασιγνητᾶν μέρος
> ἐνναλίᾳ Σερίφῳ λαοῖσι τε μοῖραν ἄγων.
>
> when Perseus shouted as he brought the third part of the sisters
> to Seriphos in the sea and doom to its people.[86]

The actual killing of Medusa is glossed over in *Pythian* XII, and instead we are treated to a description of Perseus' shout which does not coincide with his killing of the gorgon. Rather, it coincides with his journey home to Seriphos, which, as Segal observes, Pindar emphasizes in his telling.[87] But, Perseus' return to Seriphos is a far cry from "the victor's *nostos* and celebration in his home city,"[88] as it results not in glory for the city but μοῖρα, which I have translated as "doom," and the petrification of Polydektes' picnic. If we interpret Perseus' shout as a victory cry, we understand that Perseus perceives his real victory not as a triumph over the Gorgons but as a triumph over Polydektes. Medusa's death is collateral damage that allows Perseus to return to Seriphos carrying her head and making Polydektes regret ματρός τ᾽ἔμπδεον / δουλοσύναν τό τ᾽ἀναγκαῖον λέχος "his mother's fettered slavery and her compulsory bed."[89] The demigod participates in the tyrant's bizarre request and skewed system of justice in order to thwart Polydektes' designs. But, this participation comes at the cost of Medusa's life, breath, and voice.

For Perseus, the theft of Medusa's voice, that shared humanness which links the hero and his victim, is just a necessary step to freeing his mother and punishing her oppressor. His

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[85] *P.*12.7.
[86] *P.*12.11-12.
[87] Segal (1995) 13.
[88] Segal (1995) 13; cf. Crotty (1982) 103-112.
[89] *P.*12.14-15.

inchoate shout both signals his similarity to her and replaces her voice in the Gorgons' choir. Yet, we find in Pindar's choice of the word μοῖραν,[90] both a person's doom and his fair share or inheritance,[91] a self-justification for Perseus' appropriation. In his eyes, he is not responsible for killing all the citizens of Seriphos or even the Gorgons for that matter; they have it coming to them; it is their doom, their μοῖραν. Perseus just brings back τρίτον… κασιγνητᾶν μέρος "a third part of the sisters."[92] The effects of Medusa's head are not his responsibility. There is a ready rationalization waiting for Perseus back on Seriphos:

> λυγρόν τ᾽ἔρανον Πολυδέκτᾳ θῆκε ματρός τ᾽ἔμπεδον
> δουλοσύναν τό τ᾽ἀναγκαῖον λέχος
>
> and he made deadly Polydektes' picnic and his mother's fettered
> slavery and her compulsory bed[93]

The treatment by Polydektes of Perseus' mother, the only familial relationship that he can with any certainty claim and the only clear source of identity that he has, offers him a justification for his aggression towards the Gorgons, the citizens of Seriphos, and Polydektes. As Perseus' return to Polydektes' picnic is a kind of inverted homecoming, his killing of Polydektes completes the inverted adoption begun by the king's rejection and exposure of the demigod. He θῆκε "placed"—the aorist of τίθημι, the Theban word for adopt—as deadly the actions of Polydektes. Strictly speaking, Perseus is not, in this telling, doing anything; rather, he is altering the way things which already have been done are viewed. Polydektes has thrown a picnic, enslaved Danae, and compelled her to share his bed. By appropriating the orality (and victimization) of Medusa and instrumentalizing the locus of her voice, Perseus merely reveals

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[90] *P.*12.12.
[91] "μοῖρα." *LSJ*.
[92] *P.*12.11.
[93] *P.*12.14-15.

these activities as deadly, just as he reveals the head of the Gorgon and brings doom Σερίφῳ λαοῖσι τε "to Seriphos and its people."[94] Yet, revelation is also an act, and the sleight of tongue which shifts responsibility away from Perseus is only partially successful. In Gortynian law, as argued in Chapter One, the act of revelation in public was the transubstantial moment in which an adoptee definitively left one family and entered another. Perseus' revelation of Medusa's head before the assembled island people acts as a public renunciation of Polydektes and the adoption he notably did not offer Perseus. It reveals in the striking finality of stone the fact of Perseus' homelessness and his choice of a severed head over the complexity of communal life with its injustice and suffering.

Ironically, Perseus has become the very thing he battles against. His carrying off (συλάσαις)[95] of Medusa appears beside the ἀναγκαῖον λέχος "compulsory bed"[96] of Danae. Both he and Polydektes lay claim to the bodies of their female victims, Perseus by taking Medusa's face and voice, Polydektes by forcing Danae to share his bed. Perseus' thoughtless reactivity to Polydektes causes the tyrant's crime to rebound upon the Gorgons, physically separate and morally unconnected as they are. To punish one injustice Perseus commits another greater injustice, avenging his mother's rape with the murder of Medusa (figured as rape), Polydektes, and the inhabitants of Seriphos. While Polydektes has failed to recognize the precious and unique alterity of Perseus with its potential for civic and domestic benefit (who wouldn't want a demigod for a son?), Perseus fails to recognize it in Medusa. Could she not be convinced to help him willingly? Is it too much to hope that she, other beyond all others, would recognize and have compassion for the alterity and victimization of Danae? And yet, because

94 *P*.12.12.
95 *P*.12.16.
96 *P*.12.15.

the self within Medusa's alterity is denied, this possibility never occurs to the actors within the myth. And instead the egregious slavery (ἔμπεδον / δουλοσύναν) that Polydektes has perpetrated against a free-born woman is paid for not only by Polydektes' death, but by the deaths of his entire free-born island. Perseus punishes a crime by an even greater crime.

In *The Animal Part*, Mark Payne develops a theory of destructivism which refers to "the pattern of human behavior that begins as a feeling of homelessness, then turns to wandering, resentment of the natural world expressed as inorganicism… and, finally, an urge to destroy what cannot be embraced as home."[97] In Perseus' return to Seriphos we see a clear example of the final stage of destructivism. His exposure by Polydektes (through the unreasonable demand for the Gorgon's head) impels him into homeless wandering which manifests itself in resentment and destruction of the natural, familial world of the Gorgons, and culminates in the destruction of his home on Seriphos. His inverted homecoming and repudiation of the island parodies the family that he could have had if Polydektes had adopted him. And the feast to which he returns, which in any ordinary *epinikion* would be a celebration in his honor, becomes a bloodbath. His alienation from a home or family leads to his destructive behavior, which also finds expression in his opposition to the organic world of the Gorgons in favor of his own inorganic, metallic, mechanized (in the Greek sense) identity.

Perseus' destruction of Seriphos and his brutal murder of Medusa suggests that he, coming from self-pouring gold, views himself as other, as outside the customs and *nomoi* of social behavior. Accepting his own radical otherness, his specialness and isolation, he fails to see the commonalities between himself and the Gorgons, regarding them not as the *parthenoi* that Pindar depicts but as inhuman monsters to be exploited and used. Perseus focuses on their

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[97] Payne (2010) 66.

animality and misses what they share with human beings. Centered on his own difference and dislocation, he fails to recognize the wondrous uniqueness of the other outside himself. Together with his guiding spirit, Athena, he privileges what is made over what comes into being organically, taking part in the creation of an unnatural, mechanical, many-headed *nomos*, replacing the customary affection of family bonds with constructed order. The adoption that could have grounded him within a family and city is transmuted into the violent appropriation and obliteration of the other.

vi. The Triumph of the *Mechanos*

The myth of *Pythian* XII is introduced, as most of Pindar's myths are, by a relative pronoun, a device known as lyric narrative.[98] In her book *Pindar's Poetics of Immortality*, Asya Sigelman argues that such a use of the relative clause turns the myth into "essentially, a giant attributive adjective."[99] She explains:

> if the defining characteristic of any narrative is its unfolding through the external agency of a narrator, then a story cast in the shape of an attributive adjective (i.e. as a relative clause) is not really a narrative. Semantically, such a story *unfolds itself*….[100]

As argued above, the mythical portion of the poem fits the profile of a dithyramb. Taken together with Sigelman's claim about attributive myths, we can see the middle section of the poem as a self-pouring, mechanized[101] deviation from the human, personal invocation of the poet, just as Perseus and his parent Zeus are self-pouring, mechanized (metallic) deviations from a personal, human identity.

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[98] Sigelman (2018) 24; Des Places (1949).
[99] Sigelman (2018) 25.
[100] Sigelman (2018) 27.
[101] In the sense that it is a composite, chimeric invention or tool (*mechanos*) like the tools discovered in *Olympian* XIII by combining different things. By tacking a dithyramb onto an *epinikion*, Pindar has created a new, synthetic genre.

Pythian XII opens with the only use of the first person in the entire poem and is couched in a remarkably lush, organic landscape in comparison to the rest of the poem:

> αἰτέω σε, φιλάγλαε, καλλίστα βροτεᾶν πολίων,
> Φερσεφόνας ἕδος, ἅ τ᾽ ὄχθαις ἔπι μηλοβότου
> ναίεις Ἀκράγαντος ἐΰδματον κολώναν, ὦ ἄνα,
> ἵλαος ἀθανάτων ἀνδρῶν τε σὺν εὐμενίᾳ
> δέξαι στεφάνωμα τόδ᾽ ἐκ Πυθῶνος ἐυδόξῳ Μίδᾳ
> αὐτόν τέ νιν Ἑλλάδα νικάσαντα τέχνᾳ, τάν ποτε
> Παλλὰς ἐφεῦρε θρασειᾶν <Γοργόνων>
> οὔλιον θρῆνον διαπλέξαισ᾽ Ἀθάνα·
>
> I beg you, splendor-lover, fairest of mortal cities,
> seat of Persephone, you who inhabit a firm cliff
> on the slopes of Akragas' sheep walk, my lady,
> gracious with the good will of immortals and men,
> receive this crown from Pytho at the hands of admired Midas
> and receive his self too who has conquered Greece by skill, which once
> upon a time Pallas Athena discovered, weaving together
> the deadly dirge of the brave <Gorgons>;[102]

The poem opens with the self and the other: αἰτέω σε "I beg you." By beginning with an entreaty, Pindar acknowledges the otherness and freedom of his addressee and politely requests her reception (δέξαι) of his gift and of the self of Midas, heavily emphasizing the personhood both of the goddess-city and of Midas, who despite his lack of patronymic or familial signifiers is called αὐτόν… νιν. If Pindar wished merely to designate Midas by an accusative pronoun, either αὐτόν or νιν would suffice. By combining them together, Pindar places the emphasis on Midas as a unique self Ἑλλάδα νικάσαντα τέχνᾳ "who has conquered Greece by skill."[103] His identity flows not from his relationship to a family or city but to a craft. Like Perseus, he is a technical marvel who supplements his homelessness with borrowed orality.[104]

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[102] *P.*12.1-9.
[103] *P.*12.6.
[104] Cf. Nooter (2019) for an examination of the prosthetic voice.

In contrast to Midas whose identity is linked to action, the city's identity exists in relationship. She is καλλίστα βροτεᾶν πολίων "fairest of mortal cities"[105] and Φερσεφόνας ἕδος "the seat of Persephone,"[106] connected both to the human and divine realms, ἵλαος ἀθανάτων ἀνδρῶν τε σὺν εὐμενίᾳ "gracious with the good will of immortals and men."[107] Pindar goes on to identify her as ἅ τ᾽ ὄχθαις ἔπι μηλοβότου / ναίεις Ἀκράγαντος ἐύδματον κολώναν "you who inhabit a firm cliff on the slopes of Akragas' sheep walk."[108] As in the opening line of the poem, we are confronted by the you of the city. Now, we see her not only in relation to divinities and mortal habitations but in relation to the earth and animals as well. Her self is blended with the geographical features of the region, features which nourish both the humans who have made her their city and the sheep who find the craggy herbs of Akragas a fit home.

From the succulent slopes of Sicily, we are transported as if by magic to the discovery of the instrument that Midas uses to conquer Greece. The harmonious image of humans, gods, and animals living peacefully together that Pindar presents in his invocation is replaced by a world of violence and pain where goddess is pitted against goddess and man against man. We are told that:

…ποτε
Παλλὰς ἐφεῦρε θρασειᾶν <Γοργόνων>
οὔλιον θρῆνον διαπλέξαισ᾽ Ἀθάνα·

τὸν παρθενίοις ὑπό τ᾽ ἀπλάτοις ὀφίων κεφαλαῖς
ἄιε λειβόμενον δυσπενθέι σὺν καμάτῳ

…once

[105] *P.*12.1.
[106] *P.*12.2.
[107] *P.*12.4.
[108] *P.*12.2-3.

upon a time Pallas Athena discovered [the *aulos*], weaving together
the deadly dirge of the brave Gorgons;

which she heard slipping from under the unapproachable
girlish heads of snakes with grievous toil[109]

The discovery of the *aulos,* like the chimeric inventions of *Olympian* XIII, is made by the combination of different kinds of toil (κάματος). The *thrênos* of the Gorgons slips (λειβόμενον) from under their myriad mouths, a verb implying its effortless production. Yet, Pindar specifies that it occurs σὺν καμάτῳ "with toil." What flows naturally from the sisters has, through grief, become something that must be labored for.[110] And it is the sisters' toil that Athena toils to make into an instrument of human use, weaving (διαπλέξαισ') it together into an artifact that, though physically dissimilar, is metaphorically linked to the archetype of feminine labor—the loom.

After reviewing Perseus' triumph over Polydektes and the citizens of Seriphos, Pindar returns again to the discovery of the flute, commenting:

ἀλλ᾽ἐπεὶ ἐκ τούτων φίλον ἄνδρα πόνων
ἐρρύσατο παρθένος αὐλῶν τεῦχε πάμφωνον μέλος
ὄφρα τὸν Εὐρυάλας ἐκ καρπαλιμᾶν γενύων
χριμφθέντα σὺν ἔντεσι μιμήσαιτ᾽ἐρικλάγκταν γόον.
εὗρεν θεός˙ ἀλλά νιν εὑροῖσ᾽ἀνδράσι θνατοῖς ἔχειν,
ὠνύμασεν κεφαλᾶν πολλᾶν νόμον

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109 *P.*12.7-9.

110 In *Grief and the Hero: The Futility of Longing in the* Iliad, Emily Austin captures perfectly "the *stickiness* and randomness of grief." Quoting Alice Oswald, Austin explains how "Grief is black it is made of earth / It gets into the cracks in the eyes / It lodges its lump in the throat." (Oswald 35). She goes on to explain (in her own words) how "Even though he has certain targets for his anger, vengeance, communal rituals, weeping, etc., the underlying reality is that Achilles is caught in an impossible *pothê,* in his experience of a permanent loss that tears the fabric of his life. As such his grief-driven behaviors, for all their variety, share qualities of relentlessness, unpredictability, and futility." Austin (2021) 50-51. For Achilles, grief makes the fabric of life unlivable; everything is labored and undesirable (so much so that Achilles cannot even feed himself). The Gorgons fit this model of grief; their singing *sticks* even as it flows and *labor improbus* characterizes their experience of what otherwise would be joyful artistry.

> But when the girl dragged her dear man
> out of these toils, she fashioned the all-voiced limb of the *aulos*
> so that she could imitate with tools the loud-wailing lament squeezed
> from the swift jaws of Euryale.
> The goddess found it, but finding it for mortal men to have,
> she named it the *nomos* of many heads[111]

The *parthenoi* of the Gorgons have been replaced by the *parthenos* Athena who fashions a μέλος, a word meaning both a limb of the body and a strain of music,[112] out of their grief. The double-entendre emphasizes the fact that Athena's musical mimesis replicates only a part of the original whole.[113] In *Grief and the Hero*, Emily Austin building on David Konstan explains that "losing a loved one is felt as a kind of 'amputation.'"[114] The literal amputation of Medusa's head severs her orality from the communal life of her sisters. Outside the antiphonal, choral setting of the Gorgons' sisterhood, their singing becomes an inert, severed limb which can be taken and used as a gory prosthesis. In *The Black Atlantic*, Paul Gilroy explains that:

> there is a democratic, communitarian moment enshrined in the practice of antiphony which symbolizes and anticipates (but does not guarantee) new, non-dominating social relationships. Lines between self and other are blurred…[115]

The antiphony of the Gorgons' *thrênos* suggests the communitarian and familial quality of their life. However, much like the White imitators of Black music that Gilroy goes on to address, Athena's fascination with the uniquely Gorgonic singing fails to understand the context from which it emerges. She recognizes only the πόνοι "toils"[116] from which she has rescued her man

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[111] *P*.12.18-23.
[112] "μέλος." *LSJ*.
[113] It also suggests a pun on μέρος, also used to describe a part of the sisters.
[114] Austin (2021) 15; Konstan (2013) 143-144.
[115] Gilroy (1993) 79.
[116] *P*.12.18.

and not the κάματος "toil"[117] that Perseus' act of terror has elicited from the sisters.[118] By extracting their music from its socio-musical setting within a call-and-response chorus, Athena fails to hear the Gorgons' singing as a *thrênos* and instead mistakes the antiphonal response of Euryale as her own private ἐρικλάγκταν γόον "loud-wailing lament"[119] which can be replicated upon the prosthetic limb of the *aulos*. The inherently responsive and social musical form of *thrênos*, a form which, as Gilroy observes, offers the possibility of non-dominating social relationships, is transmuted into κεφαλᾶν πολλᾶν νόμον "the *nomos* of many heads."[120] The egalitarian community of sisters is replaced by the teleological order of *nomos*.

Athena's creation of the *aulos* denatures and dehumanizes the Gorgons' lament. Athena does not replace the antiphony of the sisters with a solo melody playing both parts of the *thrênos*; rather she transforms the dialectical quality of the Gorgons' dirge into a speaking-over one another of two voices. In his work on Greek music, M.L. West argues that the double pipes of the *aulos* were likely used to create "a divergence of the two pipes."[121] That is, the double *aulos* was used to create counterpoint. Athena misinterprets the Gorgons' lament. She hears a cacophony of many voices and imagines them singing over one another, heedless of what the other voice is communicating, and she creates out of this perceived disorder a new order

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[117] *P*.12.10.
[118] Cf. Gilroy (1993) 73. Gilroy explains that the unique quality of Black musics in the Atlantic arises in part as a response to racial terror. Reading Medusa and Perseus through this lens is illuminating not only from the perspective of antiphonal music arising as a response to acts of terror against a perceived other but also because the perception of Medusa's otherness by early 20th century art historians and classicists has led to depictions of her being characterized as Black. See Woodward (1976) originally published in 1937. In the age of eugenics, Medusa's monstrosity is replaced by Blackness, her otherness translated from the terror of a Greek monster to the racial bias of figures like Margaret Sanger and Henry Goddard.
[119] *P*.12.21.
[120] *P*.12.3.
[121] West (1992) 104.

through harmony, an order aimed not at relationship but at coexistence. She has created a way in which two disparate voices may be heard simultaneously without either voice being lost. But, in creating such a coexistence she has lost the possibility of the voices responding directly to one another. They are ordered vertically towards the piece of music as a whole rather than horizontally at one another.[122] Her imitation is but a poor reflection of the Gorgons' egalitarian, non-dominating community.

In addition to losing the communal and communicative quality of antiphony, Athena's creation loses the individuality of the singer. The lament of Euryale is recognizably Euryale's[123] and no other's. However, by mechanizing the irreplaceable voice of the individual, Athena creates a πάμφωνον μέλος "all-voiced limb,"[124] a tool capable of imitating and appropriating human feeling while abstracting it from the human feeler. It is all-voiced, lacking the uniqueness of a particular voice. Moreover, Athena imitates σὺν ἔντεσι "with tools"[125] a female voice, expressly ἀνδράσι θνατοῖς "for mortal men"[126] to have. The repetition of ἀνήρ in the poem (ἄνδρων in line 4, ἄνδρα in line 18, and ἀνδράσι in line 22) emphasizes not simply the mortality, as contained in θνατοῖς, of Athena's protegés, but their masculinity. Athena's invention removes the Gorgonic *thrênos* from the context of a girls' choir and hands it over to

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[122] This is, I think, most vividly illustrated in moments of tension in opera where two or more singers are often depicted in musical harmony with one another but instead of developing an idea together, their parts simply repeat the same thought over and over without any reference or response to the content of what the other singer is communicating. They coexist but they do not encounter.
[123] *P*.12.20.
[124] *P*.12.19.
[125] *P*.12.21.
[126] *P*.12.22.

the male aulete and the world of elite male competition. The lament has become a set piece that anyone with skill can replicate;[127] it has lost the unique timbre of the individual woman's voice.

Finally, Athena denatures the Gorgons' *thrênos* by replacing its words with the wordlessness of the mechanized instrument. The communicative, communitarian quality of *thrênos* is replaced by mimesis (μιμήσαιτ᾽).[128] The *aulos* captures only the inflection and tone of the Gorgons' singing as an infant might reflect in inarticulate sound the inflection of her caretaker. Athena's appropriation of the Gorgons' *thrênos* is a violent act. She wrenches away the Gorgons' orality, grasping it Εὐρυάλας ἐκ καρπαλιμᾶν γενύων "from the swift/ravenous jaws of Euryale,"[129] as if she were snatching a bit of food from the mouth of an animal. The description of Euryale's mouth evokes the horrifying Gorgonic faces so familiar in archaic art. Gone is the sympathetic portrayal of sisterly emotion. For the goddess and her protégé the animality of the Gorgons trumps the humanity and divinity they share with Perseus and Athena. By stripping away the articulate, human quality of the sisters, Athena rewrites the narrative of Medusa's death, using the Gorgons' monstrosity as a justification for her and Perseus' violent appropriation. The resulting song is known for its imitation of the hissing snake-heads of the girls, not their eloquent threnody.[130] Athena's abduction of Euryale's voice, like Perseus' abduction of Medusa's head, results in the denaturing and literal instrumentalization of the individual. Euryale loses the ability to express herself and her own grief, ceding that right to her adversary who has, in fact, caused her grief. Athena takes Euryale's story and retells it from her own perspective.

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[127] West (1992) 214. The *nomos* of many heads is believed to be a specific musical composition for the *aulos.*
[128] *P.*12.21.
[129] *P.*12.20.
[130] West (1992) 214. This side of the *nomos* will be discussed in depth below.

vi. The Equinox of the Flute

Athena's attempt to control the narrative, however, is only partially successful. As Pindar retells the origin story of the *aulos* in *Pythian* XII, the monstrosity of the Gorgons fades. Although the words of their lament are lost and replaced by the inarticulate—though not emotionless—tune of the *aulos*, we experience, as argued above, the pathos of Medusa's death and her sisters' grief through the poet's narrative. The poem operates within a realm of many-headed meanings. It rejoices at Perseus' rescue of Danae while grieving his murder of Medusa. It points towards the Gorgons' erasure while ensuring the preservation of their perspective. It presents a vision of music both natural and invented. And finally, it points towards a way in which *nomos*—as opposed to *physis*—ironically reintroduces the non-dominating social networks of the naturalistic, familial social structure of the Gorgons.

The *nomos* of many heads arises out of Perseus' homelessness and violence. But, even as Pindar names the *aulos*-tune that emerges from Medusa's death, he introduces an alternative, organic etiology, explaining:

> ὠνύμασεν κεφαλᾶν πολλᾶν νόμον,
> εὐκλεᾶ λαοσσόων μναστῆρ᾽ ἀγώνων,
> λεπτοῦ διανισόμενον χαλκοῦ θαμὰ καὶ δονάκων,
> τοὶ παρὰ καλλίχορον ναίοισι πόλιν Χαρίτων
> Καφισίδος ἐν τεμένει, πιστοὶ χορευτᾶν μάρτυρες.
>
> she named it the *nomos* of many heads,
> the famous suitor of contests crowded with people,
> passing through the delicate bronze together with reeds,
> which dwell beside the city of the Graces beautiful with dancing
> in the district of Kaphisis, trusty witnesses of dancers.[131]

Pindar's introduction of the many-headed *nomos* leads us out of the mechanized, self-pouring myth with its dithyrambic chaos and heroic inversions and into the ode's conclusion. The poem

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[131] *P*.12.23-27.

returns again to the dynamic and interconnected natural world of the invocation. We are brought face to face with goddesses, cities, and the environment. Like the city whom Pindar addresses in the poem's first line, the reeds, from which the mouthpiece of the *aulos* are constructed, are described as dwelling (ναίοισι, cf. line 3) near a city. Now, however, the city belongs to the Graces as do the wild spaces within the district around Lake Kopais (Kaphisis) with its marshy reeds. We are in a space of harmonious cohabitation of human, plant, divine, and *aulos*—a chimeric combination of the three.

In their native setting in Boiotia, beside the Lake of Kaphisis, the reeds are characterized as πιστοὶ χορευτᾶν μάρτυρες "trusty witnesses of the dancers."[132] Before they have been carved into delicate mouthpieces, through which the vibrations of the player's breath is translated into the resonating pipe, they are reliably present (πιστοί) at the dances. The Doric genitive plural χορευτᾶν specifies the gender of these dancers as feminine and, combined with the reference to the Graces in the line above, seems to imply that the reeds are present as guests at a divine ritual which predates the human *agon* at which they will serve. In their natural environment, they accompany the Graces' dance with a music that springs up as naturally and peacefully as wind through marsh grasses. Although Athena claims to have discovered the *aulos* ἄνδρασι θνατοῖς ἔχειν "for mortal men to have,"[133] we see that the reeds themselves, much like the Gorgonic chorus whose tune has been imitated, are already participants in a feminine, non-dominating musical ritual before Athena's intervention.

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[132] *P.*12.27.
[133] *P.*12.22.

Athena's *aulos* is thus a discovery, not an invention. She transmutes objects already accessible to female deities into objects accessible to mortal men as well. Mandelstam describes the *aulos's* birth as follows:

> Флейты греческой тэта и йота—
> Словно ей не хватало молвы—
> Не изваянная, без отчета,
> Зрела, маялась, шла через рвы...
>
> The Greek flute's theta and iota,
> As if unsatisfied with fame,
> As yet un-carved and without answer,
> Grew up, toiled, through ditches came.[134]

The poet, exiled to Voronezh for having critiqued Stalin, is replying to and interpreting Pindar's ode. The breathy *thiiii* of theta and iota spun by the vibrating, carved reeds of the *aulos* creates itself Словно ей не хватало молвы, as if being talked about did not satisfy, as if молва (*molva*), that is the Russian equivalent of Latin's *fama* and Greek's φήμη, descending from the archaic verb молвить (*molvit'*) which means very simply "to say," did not suffice any more. The reeds themselves, recognizing the limitations of human speech to communicate, Зрела, маялась, шла через рвы "grew up, toiled, through ditches came." The flute's origin is one of growth, not invention. It is one of toil, as is the Gorgons' singing σὺν καμάτῳ "with toil."[135] And, it necessitates the crossing of what appear to be impermeable boundaries—the "ditches" of Mandelstam's poem are deep[136]—in order to transcend the limitations of speech.

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[134] O. Mandelstam (1993) 134-135.
[135] *P*.12.10.
[136] "ров." *slovari.ru.* 2020. http://slovari.ru/search.aspx?p=3068. "Длинное и узкое, с высокими откосами углубление в земле. [A long and narrow depression with high banks in the earth.]" Perhaps "trench" would be a better translation.

Before the *mechanos* of the flute has been carved (Не изваянная) by human hands, it exists as a part of the natural-divine world (Pindar's reeds). Once it exists as a *mechanos*, the flutist becomes bound to his instrument:

> И ее невозможно покинуть,
> Стиснув зубы ее не унять,
> И в слова языком не продвинуть,
> И губами ее не размять...
>
> And it's impossible to leave her,[137]
> Not to soothe her with clenched teeth,
> With lips not loosen up her muscles
> Or goad her with the tongue to speech.[138]

His teeth are clenched;[139] he cannot leave. And no matter what soothing (унять *unyat'*) and coaxing (продвинуть *prodvinut'*) and massaging (размять *razmyat'*) he performs with his mouth, the instrument will not be coerced into articulate sound. As a result, Mandelstam observes, флейтист не узнает покоя "a flutist will never know peace."[140] He exists in a kind of uncomfortable tension. The *aulos* itself is a chimeric unity of organic matter and metal *mechanos.* It arises both from the natural growth of the reeds, which organically participate in the music of the Graces, and the hard forged χαλκοῦ "bronze" of the resonating pipe.[141] Likewise, the flutist or aulete combines the animal instinct to breathe, the organic material of lips and teeth, with the *mechanos* of the *aulos*. *Aulos* and aulete are both natural and invented, both expressive and inarticulate, both mortal and divine. The doubleness of the music that Pindar and Mandelstam cite in their poems parallels the double identities of Medusa and Perseus. And it is precisely the

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[137] i.e. the flute, which is feminine in Russian.
[138] O. Mandelstam (1993) 134-135.
[139] West (1992) 213. "Tooth action" was apparently a technique for playing the *aulos* to simulate the sound of a dying snake.
[140] O. Mandelstam (1993) 134-135.
[141] *P.*12.25: λεπτοῦ διανισόμενον χαλκοῦ θαμὰ καὶ δονάκων "passing through the delicate bronze together with reeds."

double nature—the equinox—of the *aulos* that allows the reader of Pindar's poem to recognize and hold both the heroism of Perseus and the tragedy of Medusa in mind simultaneously. The flutist will not know peace or set aside his *aulos* precisely because he recognizes the apparently contradictory realities at play in the Perseus-Medusa myth. He understands the beauty of the art that he creates and the horror of the murder at it root.[142] And, the possibility for harmony that the *diaulos* with its twin pipes represents allows the two conflicting melodies to be heard simultaneously and beautifully.

Tradition understands the κεφαλᾶν πολλᾶν νόμον "*nomos* of many heads"[143] to refer to a specific musical composition that "involved imitation of hissing serpents, the ones that grew from the scalp of the Gorgon Euryale"[144] or her sister Medusa. Pindar, however, is meditating on other implications of this title, describing the *aulos* as εὐκλεᾶ λαοσσόων μναστῆρ᾽ ἀγώνων "the famous suitor of contests crowded with people."[145] Like Mandelstam's flutist, the *nomos* of the *aulos* woos its audience, coaxing the λαός to participate in contests of skill (ἀγώνων). It performs the opposite function of its namesake. While the Gorgon's head, with its killing face, doomed the sisters to remain in the safety of their family's *oikos*, where their petrifying countenances could do no harm, their rebirth as characters within a mimesis allows their

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[142] In *The Severed Head: Capital Visions*, Julia Kristeva suggests that "A secret genealogy between the power of the Gorgons and the aesthetic experience follows the course of the centuries. It makes us understand that if artists manage to avoid being Medusa's victims, it is because they reflect her, even while being transubstantiations of her blood." Kristeva (2012) 36. Kristeva's observations about artistic transubstantiations and reflections of Medusa certainly seem correct, yet one wonders if the terror that she sees in Medusa is not misplaced. Perhaps, artists avoid being her victims not because of their clever mirrors but because she, despite her petrifying gaze, seems to lack any interest in harming other life. We fall victim to Medusa when she is in the wrong hands.
[143] *P.*12.23.
[144] West (1992) 214; cf. Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1922) 144.
[145] *P.*12.24.

musicality to participate within the *agones* which they could not hope to join in life. The discovery of the *aulos* and its *nomos* of many heads reverses the function of the other μέλος taken from the Gorgons. While the *aulos* coaxes the λαός, Medusa's head kills it, ἐνναλίᾳ Σερίφῳ λαοῖσι τε μοῖραν ἄγων "bringing doom to Seriphos in the sea and its people."[146] The repetition of related vocabulary, with line 12's λαοῖσι echoed in line 24's λαοσσόων and line 12's ἄγων echoed in line 24's ἀγώνων suggests that Pindar intends us to hear these lines as connected. The same ritual is being enacted in both instances, but with radically divergent results.

A key difference is tied to who is enacting the ritual. Because Perseus cannot coax sound out of Medusa's lifeless head or look at her face to recognize the tragic visage of the other, he can only use her as a blunt instrument of indiscriminate destruction. By contrast, the aulete is fully capable of coaxing sound out of the lifeless *aulos*, infusing it with his own breath, giving back to the severed limb of the Gorgons some share in his own life. The aulete animates the prosthesis of the flute.[147] The interconnection of aulete and *aulos* works in both directions. While the aulete shares his life-force with the *aulos* through his breath, the *aulos* shares its identity with the aulete through the mimetic quality of its music. The many-headed song invites the aulete to enter into the emotional, if not verbal, realm of the Gorgons, its original composers. While Athena's act of appropriation may have begun as voyeuristic delight in the grief of the vanquished, it becomes a way of preserving their emotional experience, extracted from speech and its accompanying ability to construct heroizing or demonizing narratives. As

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[146] *P*.12.12.

[147] Nooter (2019) 283 observes that "In pushing the concept of instrument toward that of prosthesis, we begin to see what is at stake: an instrument can be picked up and put down; a prosthetic attachment becomes a part of the body and adjusts to its contours."

such, the very speechlessness of the flute, its inhuman, non-narrative orality, endows it with an objectivity impossible for the human voice. While Perseus' victory is marked by his own cry, the aulete's success re-echoes the voice of the other. It draws attention not to the person of the aulete but to the personhood of the dead Gorgon. While Perseus' abduction of Medusa is a kind of violent appropriation, the aulete's relationship to the *aulos* can be figured as an adoption of the sort we saw in *Olympian* IX, where the uniqueness and irreplaceability of the adoptee is cherished rather than erased. The use of the musical instrument is like a graft, where life is shared between scion and stock and precisely the different qualities of root and branch make their union profitable.

In his article "Against Narrativity," Galen Strawson critiques narrativity as form-finding, story-telling, and potentially revisionist.[148] By contrast, instrumental music, even when it imitates particular sounds, is by nature non-narrative; it cannot find forms, tell tales, or paraphrase the past. Mimetic music presents us with the sounds of a particular moment in time, unmediated by a narrative frame. By appropriating Euryale's grief and distilling the

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[148] Strawson (2004) 441-443. Strawson's article does not give a clear, concise definition of Narrative but rather introduces the reader to different descriptions of Narrativity from its supporters, dividing it into psychological and ethical narrativity. Psychological narrativity is the belief that humans simply create stories about themselves and that is how we understand the "I" of the self-perceiving mind. Ethical narrativity is the claim that it is a good and necessary thing for a well-lived life to create an identity through self-narratives. See Strawson (2004) 435-437. A non-Narrative way of relating to the self would therefore not necessarily lack memory or a self-perceiving I. Rather, it would not necessarily see past versions of the self in the present one (this is crudely put; I am not a philosopher). In the non-narrative view, the self-perceiving I is not necessarily continuous over time; it does not construct an idea of itself that understands the present I through stories about the past. It is worth noting that Strawson does not intend these terms for literary criticism, but his descriptions of Narrative and non-Narrative ways of being strike me as helpful for considering how an artist assembles the parts of their creation.

irreplaceable individual into something mechanical, Athena ironically restores the possibility of encountering Medusa. Of the other, Levinas remarks:

> that face facing me, in its expression—in its mortality—summons me, demands me, requires me: as if the invisible death faced by the face of the other—pure alterity, separate, somehow, from any whole—were 'my business.'[149]

Without the mediating effects of music, Medusa's face cannot be viewed. Without the *aulos* and its accompanying mythic narratives, there is no face demanding that we see her death as "our business." The *aulos* allows its audience members to judge for themselves regarding Perseus and Medusa. In this way, the reeds act as a different kind of μάρτυρες.[150] They are summoned as witnesses before the *agon* to tell the events of Medusa's death just as they happened. Under the clenched teeth of the aulete, the *aulos* provides a kind of reconciliation between unwilling victor and innocent vanquished. Mimesis through a hybrid of *mechanos* and man, *nomos* and *physis*, allows us to step past the devastating grief of either Euryale for Medusa or Perseus for himself and his mother. It allows us to recognize the otherness of Medusa *and* of Perseus. And in so doing, we perceive the profound tragedy and absurd loss of life that stems from Polydektes' closure against the other of his would-be stepson.

And yet, the reconciliation brought about through *nomos* cannot fully satisfy. The irreplaceable individual is lost permanently. And any attempt to restore her through *nomos*, whether understood as music or law with its accompanying retributive justice, can only bring us into contact with a ghost of the full person. Mandelstam's poem of murder and the birth of the Greek flute concludes with the speaker declaring:

> Вслед за ним мы его не повторим,

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[149] Levinas (1999) 24.

[150] *P*.12.27.

Комья глины в ладонях моря,
И когда я наполнился морем—
Мором стала мера моя...

И свои-то мне губы не любы—
И убийство на том же корню—
И невольно на убыль, на убыль
Равноденствие флейты клоню...

After him we don't repeat him,[151]
Like loam within the ocean's palms,
And when I'm filled up with the ocean,
my portion has become no balm.

And my own lips are no joy to me,
and murder's at the very root.
And unwillingly, waning, waning,
I bend the equinox of the flute.…[152]

Responding to the death of the flutist Schwab,[153] the speaker in Mandelstam's poem affirms the utter unrepeatability of the individual who dissolves like earth in water. Even as Mandelstam memorializes his friend through lyric poetry, he reminds us that мы его не повторим "we don't repeat him," either as audience or artist. Indeed, the very act of remembering the departed through art becomes Мором "no balm" or, more literally, an actual plague to the one whose мера "portion" or destiny it is to do so.[154] The embouchure of the aulete's lips around his instrument ceases to give pleasure (не любы) in remembering the murder at the root.

The equinoctial quality of the *aulos* is critical to Mandelstam's poem and to *Pythian* XII. As mentioned earlier, Viktor Terras has suggested that the equinox of the flute is a reference to

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[151] The only masculine noun Mandelstam could be referring to is the "flutist."
[152] O. Mandelstam (1993) pp. 134-135.
[153] N. Mandelstam (1974) 188.
[154] One wonders if Mandelstam is playing with the phonic similarities of мера and μοῖρα, Pindar's word for fate. It is unlikely that they are actually related, as мера likely arises from PIE root *meh$_1$- (https://www.wordsense.eu/%D0%BC%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%B0/) while μοῖρα likely comes from PIE root *(s)mer- (Beekes (2010) 922).

the Greek *aulos*' double pipes.[155] The doubleness of the *aulos* allows it to convey the pathos of both Perseus and Medusa. On a very literal level, the two pipes of the instrument in permitting the use of harmony allow both Perseus' shout and Euryale's *thrênos* to be imitated simultaneously. But, this doubleness arises невольно *nevol'no* "unwillingly." Unintentionally, the speaker fades and wanes into his craft. Accidentally, he extracts music from murder and bends the equinox of the flute, as the earth's atmosphere bends the last rays of sunlight and distorts the equality of the equinox. Whatever is happening on an astronomical level, on the equinox, day and night are not perceived by humans as equal; light lasts just a little longer.

This equinox is precisely what Pindar and Mandelstam are creating in their poetry. They present reality. But, it is a reality refracted so that light extends just a little deeper into the murky patches of experience, the liminal spaces where we fail to recognize the other as our business. As he concludes his ode, Pindar again reiterates its double quality, exclaiming:

> εἰ δέ τις ὄλβος ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν, ἄνευ καμάτου
> οὐ φαίνεται˙ ἐκ δὲ τελευτάσει νιν ἤτοι σάμερον
> δαίμων — τὸ δὲ μόρσιμον οὐ παρφυκτόν —, ἀλλ᾽ ἔσται χρόνος
> οὗτος, ὃ καί τιν᾽ ἀελπτίᾳ βαλὼν
> ἔμπαλιν γνώμας τὸ μὲν δώσει, τὸ δ᾽ οὔπω.
>
> But if there is some happiness among humans, without toil
> it doesn't appear; and even now a *daimon* will accomplish it
> today — what's fated can't be escaped —, but this time
> will come, which striking someone unexpectedly
> shall grant the one thing beyond sense, and the other not yet.[156]

The repetition of κάματος "labor" in line 22 links the Gorgons' labored grief (ln. 10) with the ὄλβος "happiness" of Midas' recent victory. We see Midas in the other of the Gorgons. The same process yields wildly different results for them not because Midas is somehow more

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[155] Terras (1966) 263.
[156] *P.*12.27-32.

meritorious than his tragic forebears but because the results of toil are the purview of a *daimon*: ἐκ δὲ τελευτάσει νιν ἤτοι σάμερον / δαίμων — τὸ δὲ μόρσιμον οὐ παρφυκτόν "and even now a *daimon* will accomplish [*olbos*] / today — what's fated can't be escaped."[157] The enjambment draws attention to the *daimon's* activity in transforming *kamatos* to *olbos*. Yet, this god's operation is not unqualified benevolence. The verb ἐκτελευτάω, which means both "bring to an end" and "accomplish,"[158] emphasizes this ambivalence: a *daimon* will both bring about and terminate *olbos*.

This duality is not so much a reference to the fates of different people but to the different fates of a single individual over time. The two meanings of ἐκτελευτάω strike the same person at two different moments:

> ἀλλ᾽ ἔσται χρόνος
> οὗτος, ὃ καὶ τιν᾽ ἀελπτίᾳ βαλὼν
> ἔμπαλιν γνώμας τὸ μὲν δώσει, τὸ δ᾽ οὔπω.
>
> but this time
> will come, which striking someone unexpectedly
> shall grant the one thing beyond sense, and the other not yet.[159]

The individual will at some point receive the one thing (presumably happiness) beyond reason, but later, she can expect that it will be brought to an end. In recognizing both the possibility for and impermanence of our own happiness, we recognize our alterity. Within the self is the suffering self (past or future) crying out for compassion. By acknowledging the existence of the suffering self, by seeing our self as victimized object rather than agentive subject, we gain the ability to acknowledge the self within the suffering other. It is precisely this recognition that Perseus and Polydektes lack. They cannot fathom the possibility of their own schemes failing.

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157 *P.*12.29-30.
158 "ἐκτελευτάω." *LSJ*.
159 *P.*12.30-32.

And thus instead of an irreplaceable and unique individual, Polydektes sees in Perseus an obstacle to be removed, and Perseus sees in Medusa a resource to be used.

In *Pythian* XII, Pindar shows us the wanton destruction that occurs when human beings are not open to the other. While the adoptions of *Olympian* IX renewed the mythical landscape of the ode, Polydektes' refusal to adopt Perseus and welcome Danae as an equal rather than a slave and Perseus' failure to empathize with the Gorgons lead to the drastic impoverishment of both human and environmental landscapes. The extinction of Medusa and annihilation of Seriphos devastate the world of the ode, leaving a vastly diminished population with no means of remedy. And yet, from this killing field, Pindar draws compassion. By affirming the uniqueness and importance of both Perseus and Medusa, by inviting us to recognize the things these two antagonists share, Pindar encourages his audience to reject a model of reality where helping the other means sacrificing the self, where my success means your annihilation, where the rays of daylight cannot blend with the night of the equinox. Instead, he reminds his audience of the transience of personal success. If we, like Pindar who glories in the achievements of his clients and permits them to draw glory from him, do not limit our understanding of happiness to what we personally can attain and instead open ourselves to share the joy and unique excellence of the other, perhaps our happiness will be more enduring. After all, if there is any happiness, it is ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν "among human beings," not as solitary, male, destructivist wanderers like Perseus but as non-gendered selves encountering others in community. We may not be able to repeat the dead or recreate with our lips the voice of an other, but through art the individual achieves an afterlife distinct from reproduction—either biological or visual. A *daimon* accomplishes this, as in *Olympian* IX a *daimon* oversaw the ode's

adoptions, and permits us through art to adopt the voice of the otherwise inaccessible individual and invite her into the community of the present.

IV. *Nomos* & *Thesis*: The Reclamation of Nature through Adoption in Herakles

i. Introduction

In Chapters Two and Three, we have explored how a potential adoptive parent's openness or lack thereof to the alterity of the child influences the expression of that child's *phua* and the fate of the adopter's group. These chapters are concerned with the fact of adoption—whether it happens or not and what results from it. Chapter Four, on the other hand, is concerned with the manner of adoption, the *nomos* and narrative that transform the fact of a synthetic relationship into something with lasting meaning and transformative power. It is concerned not simply with whether or not a person or community is open to an other but with how that alterity is perceived and allowed to exist within the group.

This dissertation has used adoption to explore Pindar's view of nature, arguing for the importance of alterity to Pindar's identity creation. *Olympian* IX highlights deficiencies that occur within heroic *phua* and points out nature's periodic need for reboot, offering adoption and synthetic relationships as a mechanism for peaceful renewal and the incorporation of the other into an in group.[1] By contrast, *Pythian* XII narrates the conflict between a person and the other that arises when adoption and synthesis between them is rejected. The texts treated in Chapter Four, *Nemean* I and the *Nomos Basileus* fragment, reveal that openness to alterity can only be transformative of nature when that openness acknowledges and permits the other to remain

[1] According to my argument, Pindar's views on the nature of the *agathoi* are in direct opposition to the aristocratic Theognis who likewise takes an interest in preserving natural excellence. While Theognis compares the marriage of humans to the breeding of "rams, donkeys, and horses" rebuking men who put more care into their livestock than into choosing a spouse for their daughters (Theognis 183-92W), Pindar suggests that the human urge to control is precisely how things get muddled up. Renewal, as argued in Chapter Two, must come from an outside, divine source; it is not something achieved through good breeding, but granted by the will of a god to human beings cognizant of their own limitations and open to aid from unexpected sources. It occurs in the chaos of expected orders gone awry.

other. Moreover, it reveals that even a truly excellent *phua* depends upon the other of the poet to find its fulfillment.

This chapter will address the apparent discrepancies of Herakles' character—his excessive violence and contradictory legacy as figurehead of divine justice. It will begin by locating the Heraklean myths within the broader context of *Nemean* I—the victor's identity and the complicated political and demographic shifts taking place in the victor's homeland of Sicily at the time of the ode's composition. The chapter will then argue that the lack of understanding of Herakles' identity within the home of Amphitryon and Alkmena force him into the destructivist wandering for which he is known throughout Greek poetry. Despite Herakles' birth within a family (unlike the other heroes discussed in this study), Herakles cannot be truly adopted and accepted by Amphitryon because he is not recognized as other to Amphitryon. This chapter will demonstrate that Herakles is finally released from his wandering by forming a successful synthetic bond with the other half of his family—his father Zeus and stepmother Hera who "adopts" him through his marriage to Hebe. Finally, this chapter will argue that the mechanism by which this adoption takes places is song. Herakles' *phua* is not enough to grant him happiness. His afterlife, both literal and literary, depends upon the poet.

ii. Poem Summary

Nemean I is composed of four strophes, and its content is divided almost evenly between the four. The first two strophes cover the victor and his home, while the second two are devoted to the myth (Baby Herakles and Hera's snakes). Strophe A begins with an invocation of Ortygia, followed by the naming of Khromios (the victor), the nature of his victory, some gnomic elements, and finally a request for the Muse to glorify Sicily more generally. Then unfolds a brief summary of Sicily's divine overseers and the nature of her people. Strophe B

picks up at Khromios' house with Pindar preparing to sing for him. Then follow some gnomic elements about *phua*, advice for the victor, and finally Pindar's rejection of wealth because all men meet the same end. Pindar concludes by offering Herakles as an example. Strophe C describes the demigod's birth, Hera sending serpents to kill him, his wondrous and terrifying defeat of the serpents, and the terrified reactions of the household. Strophe D picks up with Amphitryon's (Herakles' legal father) reaction to the child's remarkable strength and subsequent summoning of Teiresias to explain it. The last ten lines of the poem are composed of Teiresias' prophecy, referencing Herakles' labors, dwelling on his part in the Gigantomachy, and concluding with Herakles' marriage to Hebe.

iii. Synthetic Sicily

Nemean I opens as many Pindaric odes do with a mythical geography lesson. Pindar first invokes the island of Ortygia (off the coast of Sicily) and accompanying deities, moving on to Aitnaian Zeus and the island of Sicily as a whole. The invocation is rife with familial imagery, much of it synthetic. Yet, the imagery is not unambiguously positive, throwing the success of the created bonds into question. Pindar's invocation prepares us for the synthetic bond of Herakles with his non-biological father Amphitryon. But, like the relationship of Herakles to Amphitryon, the synthetic bonds of the invocation do not form a peaceful and sustainable identity.

The ode, composed some time between 485 and 469, is dedicated to Khromios of either Aitna or Syracuse. Herwig Maehler, editor of the Teubner, follows Schroeder to identify the victor as "Chromios of Syracuse rather than Chromios of Aetna,"[2] a decision which Virginia Lewis disputes pointing to the fact that:

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[2] Lewis (2019) 345.

> As a Syracusan, [Khromios] served as Hieron's general, and then when the tyrant founded Aitna in 476, Chromios was installed as the *epitropos*—the guardian and overseer—for Hieron's young son Deinomenes. When Hieron founded the colony, he did so by first displacing the citizens of the existing city of Katane and then recruiting 5,000 Peloponnesians and 5,000 Syracusans to settle the site as the citizens of Aitna.[3]

Through his para-familial relationship with Hieron, Khromios is linked both to Syracuse and Aitna, as Pindar's invocation suggests:

> Ἄμπνευμα σεμνὸν Ἀλφεοῦ,
> κλεινᾶν Συρακοσσᾶν θάλος Ὀρτυγία,
> δέμνιον Ἀρτέμιδος,
> Δάλου κασιγνήτα, σέθεν ἁδυεπής
> ὕμνος ὁρμᾶται θέμεν
> αἶνον ἀελλοπόδων
> μέγαν ἵππων, Ζηνὸς Αἰτναίου χάριν
>
> Holy respite of Alpheos,
> flower of renowned Syracuse, Ortygia,
> bedstead of Artemis,
> sister of Delos, from you a sweet-voiced
> hymn rushes off to adopt
> praise of the swift-footed,
> great praise of horses, the *kharis* of Aitnaian Zeus[4]

Ortygia is connected to Aitna through song. Or, more properly, Pindar's "sweet-voiced / hymn" rushes off from Ortygia to "adopt" a hymn about Khromios' chariot victory as a debt of *kharis* from Aitnaian Zeus, which "is pretty clearly [a reference] to Hieron's pet project, the founding of Aetna."[5] As in *Olympian* IX, the poet receives his ability to sing as a consequence of divine dispensation. But here, this occurs in response to the swift-footed horses of Khromios, establishing a link of *kharis* between the singer and Zeus, Ortygia and Aitna—a link that is immortalized in the adoption of Khromios' praise by Pindar's hymn. The invocation suggests a

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[3] Lewis (2019) 345. See also Rose (1974) 166.
[4] *N.*1.1-6.
[5] Rose (1974) 165.

synthetic bond between the two cities. They are linked through adoption, and they are linked through the *kharis* of Zeus.

Moreover, the invocation sets up other synthetic bonds as well. The opening line Ἄμπνευμα σεμνὸν Ἀλφεοῦ potentially refers to a myth in which the river Alpheos pursues Arethusa from the Peloponnese to the island of Ortygia, where he finds rest by mingling with her waters. According to the scholiast, an inscription may be found at Ortygia reading:

> ὦ Ὀρτυγία, ἐν ᾗ ἐστι τὸ τοῦ Ἀλφειοῦ ἀνάπνευμα. τίς; ἡ Ἀρέθουσα; ἀλλ οὐ τὴν Ἀρέθουσαν εἴρηκεν ἄμπνευμα, ἀλλὰ τὴν Ὀρτυγίαν, ἐν ᾗ ὁ Ἀλφειὸς ἀναπνεῖ, τῷ περιέχειν τὴν Ἀρέθουσαν.
>
> O Ortygia, in whom is the respite of the Alpheos. Who? The Arethusa? But the respite didn't mean Arethusa, but Ortygia, in which Alpheus rested by embracing Arethusa.[6]

However, as Virginia Lewis argues, the reference to Alpheos' resting place may in fact denote Artemis Potamia, "another name for Artemis Alpheioa, who received her cult epithet because Alpheos fell in love with her and pursued her until she reached Ortygia."[7] Corroborating this theory is the epithet of Ortygia as δέμνιον Ἀρτέμιδος "bedstead of Artemis."[8] The peculiar term is in apposition to the ἄμπνευμα σεμνὸν Ἀλφεοῦ "holy respite of Alpheos,"[9] thereby equating the two spaces and implying a union or attempted union between the river and the goddess. Worth noting is the parallel between the river's journey across the Mediterranean and the journey of the Peloponnesian settlers to Aitna. Moreover, "the cults associated with Alpheos and Artemis were practiced by Peloponnesians as well as by Syracusans."[10] By celebrating both in his invocation together with his reference to Aitnaian Zeus, Pindar may be celebrating the

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[6] Sch.N.1.1
[7] Lewis (2019) 351. Rose (1974) 164 also favors this reading.
[8] *N*.1.3.
[9] *N*.1.1.
[10] Lewis (2019) 353.

synthetic Syracusan and Peloponnesian identity of Hieron's new city of Aitna, just as he is celebrating the synthetic Syracusan and Aitnaian identity of the *laudandus*.

In yet another nod towards synthetic family, Pindar refers to Ortygia as Συρακοσσᾶν θάλος… Δάλου κασιγνήτα… "blossom of Syracuse… sister of Delos."[11] The island, sprouting from the same land mass as Sicily, is rightly called the blossom or shoot of Syracuse, for it grows as if organically from the mainland as a part of the city of Syracuse. It is, however, the sister of Delos only synthetically. In the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo*, the poet comments that Leto gave birth τὴν μὲν ἐν Ὀρτυγίῃ, τὸν δὲ κραναῇ ἐνὶ Δήλῳ "to her on Ortygia, to him on rocky Delos."[12] Ortygia and Delos are sisters because they welcomed the goddess Leto when giving birth to her twin children. In *Nemean* I, as in *Olympian* IX, openness to the divine, to strangers, and mothers in need creates a familial and harmonious relationship between disparate peoples and places.[13]

Indeed, it is precisely this openness to alterity, this proclivity for the para-familial, the synthetic that Pindar lauds in Khromios. At the beginning of the second strophe, the poet exclaims:

> ἔσταν δ᾽ἐπ᾽αὐλείαις θύραις
> ἀνδρὸς φιλοξείνου καλὰ μελπόμενος,
> ἔνθα μοι ἁρμόδιον
> δεῖπνον κεκόσμηται, θαμὰ δ᾽ἀλλοδαπῶν
> οὐκ ἀπείρατοι δόμοι
> ἐντί˙
>
> And I have stood at the palace doors
> of a man who loves strangers, singing sweetly;

[11] *N*.1.2-4.
[12] *Hom. Hymn to Apollo* 16.
[13] A theme that Callimachus will elaborate upon in his *Hymn to Delos*, emphasizing not merely the openness of Delos but also her utter desolation (*eremia*) and rootlessness before she opens herself up to Leto the stranger in need.

within, a harmonious
feast has been prepared for me, and often
the house is not inexperienced
in strangers;[14]

Khromios is a lover of strangers (φιλοξείνου), and he entertains them lavishly with a feast that is ἁρμόδιον, an adjectival form of ἁρμόζω meaning to fit together or join.[15] The victor entertains his guests with a composite feast, harmonious not only in flavor but in its guests—Pindar from Thebes, strangers from the Peloponnese, the despot of Syracuse. This openness of Khromios' home is clearly something Pindar finds praiseworthy about the victor. Indeed, it is one of two direct points of praise that the child of Hagesidamos receives in the ode.

The other occurs earlier, directly after the initial invocation. Pindar explains:

ἅρμα δ᾽ὀτρύνει Χρομίου Νεμέα
τ᾽ἔργμασιν νικαφόροις ἐγκώμιον ζεῦξαι μέλος.
ἀρχαὶ δὲ βέβληνται θεῶν
κείνου σὺν ἀνδρὸς δαιμονίαις ἀρεταῖς.

And Khromios' car and Nemea
urge me to yoke praise song to victory-bearing deeds.
And the gods took care of the beginning
together with this man's god-given excellence.[16]

Like the rest of the introduction, Khromios' encomium is also composite, created by yoking together into a chariot of song the ἐγκώμιον… μέλος and victory-bearing deeds. We are reminded of the μέλος of Medusa's sisters in *Pythian* XII, which is borrowed by the chimeric cyborg of the *aulos*-player. *Nemean* I is itself also a chimeric object, and like the chimeric family of Delos and Ortygia, it has its beginning in the gods κείνου σὺν ἀνδρὸς δαιμονίαις ἀρεταῖς "together with this man's god-given excellence." Pindar's use of the preposition *syn*

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[14] *N*.1.19-24.
[15] "ἁρμόζω." *LSJ*.
[16] *N*.1.7-9.

emphasizes the synthetic quality of his poem. The gods are not simply working through Khromios' god-given excellence; they are working alongside it.

iv. Bend Sinister

The previous section has outlined the different synthetic relationships of the invocation and their apparently positive connotations. And yet, a shadow hangs over the poem. The myth that ties Syracuse to the Peloponnese is not unambiguously positive. The identity of Ortygia as δέμνιον Ἀρτέμιδος "the bedstead of Artemis,"[17] the archetypal παρθένον ἰοχέαιραν "arrow-delighting *parthenos*,"[18] marks Alpheos' entrance not as mere pursuit, but as active transgression of a feminine, virginal, and domestic space. He is somewhere he does not belong and displays extreme audacity by making it his ἄμπνευμα "respite."[19] The epithet δέμνιον Ἀρτέμιδος is in apposition not just to ἄμπνευμα σεμνὸν Ἀλφεοῦ but also Δάλου κασιγνήτα, confirming what we learn from the Homeric Hymn to Apollo, namely that Ortygia can claim to be Artemis' bed because Artemis was born there. Ortygia is Artemis' cradle. Alpheos' intrusion into it is not a happy case of synthetic bonds but something more akin to Perseus' invasion of Medusa's home in *Pythian* XII.

Moreover, the synthetic bond between Ortygia and Delos foreshadows the main myth of the poem, with Δάλου κασιγνήτα anticipating Herakles ὠδῖνα φεύγων διδύμῳ σὺν κασιγνήτῳ "fleeing labor pains with his twin brother."[20] Both references to siblings place them solidly within the context of birth and the intimacy of women's quarters. Indeed, the birth of Herakles also features a bed, which is clearly identified as Ἀλκμήνας "Alkmena's"[21] and the

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[17] *N.*1.3.
[18] Hom. *Hymn to Artemis* 2.
[19] *N.*1.1.
[20] *N.*1.36.
[21] *N.*1.49-50.

very bed in which the infant hero was born. Both Artemis and Herakles are Zeus' illegitimate children and strongly disliked by Hera prompting her to send δράκοντας "snakes"[22] after Herakles. The snakes' intrusion into the feminine, domestic space of Alkmena's chamber sets up yet another parallel between the opening and the main myth. Seen in this light, Alpheos' intrusion into Ortygia does not force us to "see in δέμνιον Ἀρτέμιδος a hint of a γάμος,"[23] as Peter Rose argues, but rather a hint of a ἅρπαξ. Moreover, the fate that Hera's snakes receive (strangulation) suggests a double-entendre to ἄμπνευμα, whose verb form ἀναπνέω can mean both to "enjoy a respite" and "exhale."[24] Taking Artemis as foreshadowing of Herakles, should we perhaps read ἄμπνευμα σεμνὸν Ἀλφεοῦ as "holy respite of Alpheos" only in the sense of death by strangulation? Not *la petite mort*, as Rose thinks, but the *grande* one?[25] Alpheos' holy (and last) exhalation? Too hidden perhaps to be Pindar's primary meaning, the possibility is at least hauntingly present.

Thus, if the inclusion of Alpheos within the poem is indeed a nod to the Peloponnesian settlers, it is not altogether flattering of them. It makes them irreverent interlopers into Sicily, which Pindar describes as

> …τὰν Ὀλύμπου δεσπότας
> Ζεὺς ἔδωκεν Φερσεφόνᾳ, κατένευ-
> σέν τέ οἱ χαίταις, ἀριστεύοισαν ἐυκάρπου χθόνος
> Σικελίαν πίειραν ὀρθώ-
> σειν κορυφαῖς πολίων ἀφνεαῖς
> ὤπασε δὲ Κρονίων πολέμου
> μναστῆρά οἱ χαλκεντέος
> λαὸν ἵππαιχμον, θαμὰ δὴ καὶ Ὀλυμ-
> πιάδων φύλλοις ἐλαιᾶν χρυσέοις

[22] *N.*1.40.
[23] Rose (1974) 164.
[24] "ἀναπνέω." *LSJ.*
[25] Rose (1974) 164: "Thus the opening word ἄμπνευμα has a secondary suggestion of a more sexual relief."

μιχθέντα.

> …that which the despot of Olympus
> Zeus gave to Persephone and promised her
> by the hair of his head that fat Sicily best of the fruit-bearing
> earth would exult
> over the rich heads of cities;
> and the Son of Kronos apportioned to her
> suitors of brazen war,
> a horse-spear people he apportioned her, mingling often
> with the golden leaves of Olympia's
> olives.[26]

By the will of Zeus, the place belongs to Persephone, and by his will it is a fat land, so excelling every other place of the fruit-bearing earth (ἀριστεύοισαν ἐυκάρπου χθόνος) that it stands straight above the rich heads of cities (ὀρθώσειν κορυφαῖς πολίων ἀφνεαῖς). Pindar must mean that Sicily's natural abundance raises her above the wealth of cities that make their name through trade and its attendant wealth. And Pindar goes on. The despot of Olympus has apportioned (ὤπασε) to Persephone "suitors of brazen war, / a horse-spear people." The nature and inhabitants of the island are already determined by Zeus. Sicily's excellence comes not from wealth stored up in halls, which Pindar will go on to critique explicitly,[27] but in her nature and her people. And if the Olympian despot has so ordained it, no other despot should change it. Moreover, like the rest of the invocation, they are μιχθέντα "mixed," taking part equally in war-time excellence and the leisured pursuit of athletic achievement. Thus, while the invocation does celebrate the heterogeneity of Sicilian identity and its synthetic bonds with other places, it also implies that there is a risk involved in any attempt to reshape the island by force (as Hieron does). Nature may require periodic reboot and a family or group's *phua* may

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[26] *N*.1.13-18.

[27] *N*.1.31: οὐκ ἔραμαι πολὺν ἐν μεγάρῳ πλοῦτον κατακρύχαις ἔχειν "I do not love to have great wealth hidden away in my halls."

deteriorate over time necessitating the formation of synthetic bonds, but the way in which those bonds are formed seems to be as important as the bonds themselves. There is something troubling to Pindar and to us in Hieron's attempt at human engineering.

Another shadow cast over the invocation is the apparent insufficiency of *areta*, Pindar's usual criterion for judgment. Back in the first strophe, Pindar concludes his comment about Khromios' god-given excellence with an ambiguous claim:

> ἀρχαὶ δὲ βέβληνται θεῶν
> κείνου σὺν ἀνδρὸς δαιμονίαις ἀρεταῖς.
> ἔστι δ᾽ ἐν εὐτυχίᾳ
> πανδοξίας ἄκρον
>
> And the gods took care of the beginning
> together with this man's god-given excellence.
> But it is in good luck
> that we find the peak of glory[28]

Excellence, even when taken together with the care of the gods, proves insufficient. Pindar's use of the existential ἔστι placed at the beginning of the sentence, together with his enjambment (εὐτυχίᾳ /πανδοξίας), draws our attention to εὐτυχίᾳ in a pointed manner. This is a strong, declarative statement about the unpredictability of life. Even in its positive form here, εὐτυχία hints of τύχη, that aspect of human existence outside our control and a theme that will be picked up again in the main myth of the poem.[29] The emphasis on εὐτυχία and τύχη reminds us both that *areta* is insufficient for glory and that glory is not necessarily an indication of merit, but of luck.[30] Pindar's anxiety about excellence is connected to his anxiety about human

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[28] *N.*1.9-11.
[29] *N.*1.61.
[30] I cannot imagine Pindar not thinking this way when writing odes for victors who contributed none of their own *areta* towards the victory, as in the case of Khromios who would not have driven the chariot himself but simply have provided the horses, car, and charioteer. The victory belongs to him in the same way that Liverpool FC's 2019 Champions League triumph belongs to John Henry, principal owner of the Fenway Group.

engineering. Direct pursuit of a perfect *phua*, good breeding as it were, is not how the πανδοξίας ἄκρον "peak of glory" is actually achieved.

Filling out this image of the unpredictability and inherent threat in excellence and success is the other gnomic passage in the introduction of the poem, found in the second strophe and likewise connected to praise of Khromios. After describing himself at the gate of the victor's stranger-loving and elegant home, the poet comments:

> …λέλογχε δὲ μεμ-
>   φομένοις ἐσλοὺς ὕδωρ καπνῷ φέρειν
> ἀντίον. τέχναι δ᾽ἑτέρων ἕτεραι˙
>   χρὴ δ᾽ἐν εὐθείαις ὁδοῖς στείχοντα μάρνασθαι φυᾷ.
> πράσσει γὰρ ἔργῳ μὲν σθένος,
> βουλαῖσι δὲ φρήν, ἐσσόμενον προϊδεῖν
> συγγενὲς οἷς ἕπεται.
>
> …but it has fallen [to me]
>   to bring good men against haters, water against
> soot; different skills for different folks;
>   but someone walking in straight paths must fight with *phua*.
> For strength fulfills itself through acts,
> and the mind through counsel for those for whom
> foreseeing the future comes naturally.[31]

Exactly what Pindar means by bringing good men against haters, water against καπνῷ is the subject of much thought.[32] However, Paul Waring's suggestion that "κάπνος can equally well mean 'soot', smoke that has settled (cf. καπνίζω 'blacken with smoke', δύσκαπνος 'smoke-stained')"[33] offers a simple and elegant solution to the problem. The line clearly seems to explicate what Pindar's role is in Khromios' home, and the simplicity of the metaphor makes it obvious: he is washing away the soot of haters that naturally accumulates beside the blaze of excellence. This interpretation offers a natural connection to the next line: different skills for

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[31] *N*.1.24-28.
[32] See Waring (1982), Stoneman (1979), Rosenmeyer (1969), Radt (1966), et al.
[33] Waring (1982) 271.

different folks. Khromios may be able to acquire success and its accompanying resentment, but he needs Pindar to launder his reputation once he has. Thus, Pindar reintroduces the theme of the synthetic, the mixed, which we have seen throughout the first two strophes, and yokes it to the theme of ambiguous excellence. Excellence, even when accompanied by other people, is insufficient unless it has someone capable of creating a compelling narrative around it.

Khromios needs Pindar. Ironically, his obvious success runs the risk of bringing him ruin. Pindar adds: χρὴ δ᾽ἐν εὐθείαις ὁδοῖς στείχοντα μάρνασθαι φυᾷ "but someone walking in straight paths must fight with *phua*."[34] A person who wants to walk in straight paths must follow the φυά or nature that the gods have apportioned (ὀπάζω)[35] him or that he has received (λαγχάνω).[36] Different skills belong to different people, and it is best to stick to the ones one has. Anna Tatsi explains that the imagery of walking in straight paths is most likely derived from Orphic doctrine which also emphasizes the importance of following one's own nature.[37] Marcello Gigante likewise emphasizes the Orphic implications of the ode.[38] In addition to these connotations, the gnomic statement offers a blatant double-entendre. While μάρνασθαι certainly can take an instrumental dative, it can also take a dative complement. Thus, the statement can mean both that one ought to struggle *by means of phua* (instrumental dative) and that one ought to struggle *against phua* (dative complement).

The double-entendre further develops the theme of ambiguity. Pindar explains the aphorism with the following:

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[34] *N.*1.25.
[35] Cf. ln. 16.
[36] Cf. ln. 24.
[37] Tatsi (2008) 126.
[38] Gigante (1956) 62.

> πράσσει γὰρ ἔργῳ μὲν σθένος,
> βουλαῖσι δὲ φρήν, ἐσσόμενον προϊδεῖν
> συγγενὲς οἷς ἕπεται….
>
> For strength fulfills itself through acts,
> and the mind through counsel for those for whom
> foreseeing the future comes naturally….[39]

This also appears at surface level to be a corroboration of the Orphic interpretation. Two different talents, strength and intellect, succeed in two different arenas of life. But, as experience reveals, it would be a sorry life to rely on only one or the other of the two. This is what Pindar means by his double-entendre. The ambiguity of the gnomic statement reveals that one must both work with one's nature and against it—with it in one's areas of strength and against it in one's areas of weakness. The emphasis on synthetic bonds within the ode suggests that one way to work against one's *phua* is by surrounding oneself with others (like Pindar and Khromios' many *xenoi*) of differing abilities. Pindar's observation that the mind acts through counsel or plans for the person for whom seeing the future is συγγενές, inborn, reminds us of the fact that such a person (Teiresias) is about to figure prominently in the ode. It also reminds us of Pindar's own admonition that the peak of glory is in good luck.[40] Success unaccompanied by foresight is bound to be short-lived. And yet, as the anxiety around engineering excellence and the glory of chance suggest, while a wise man certainly would seek to surround himself with others who do not resemble him, even such a precaution is insufficient and dangerous. Something is lacking.

v. Herakles as Warning

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[39] *N.*1.26-27.
[40] *N.*1.10-11.

The relevance of Herakles to Khromios has perplexed readers of *Nemean* I, and the myth has often been "pronounced 'irrelevant' to the non-mythic portion of the ode."[41] Among supporters of poetic unity, a common thread is the idea that Herakles is a worthy exemplum because he like Khromios "victoriously confronts unjust and destructive forces with god-given excellence."[42] This section will argue that Herakles is not just an exemplum for Khromios, but a warning. It will argue that Herakles becomes an outcast from home and family because he cannot account for how he belongs. His otherness sets him apart from successful, ambitious men like Khromios. By comparing the Herakles of *Nemean* I with other iterations of the hero, this section will show that the demigod does not necessarily confront "unjust and destructive forces" at all but instead casts down the mighty from their thrones, whether they are deserving or not.

Pindar links the two different ways of being outlined above—strength and intellect—to the *laudandus* and his way of life. But then the poet rejects this way of being for himself and chooses Herakles' lifestyle instead:

> Ἁγησιδάμου παῖ, σέο δ᾽ ἀμφὶ τρόπῳ
> τῶν τε καὶ τῶν χρήσιες.
> οὐκ ἔραμαι πολὺν ἐν
> μεγάρῳ πλοῦτον κατακρύψαις ἔχειν,
> ἀλλ᾽ ἐόντων εὖ τε παθεῖν καὶ ἀκοῦ-
> σαι φίλοις ἐξαρκέων. κοιναὶ γὰρ ἔρχοντ᾽ ἐλπίδες
> πολυπόνων ἀνδρῶν. ἐγὼ δ᾽ Ἡ-
> ρακλέος ἀντέχομαι προφρόνως
> ἐν κορυφαῖς ἀρετᾶν μεγάλαις,
> ἀρχαῖον ὀτρύνων λόγον….
>
> But, son of Hagesidamos, in your way of life
> there are uses for the one and the other.
> I do not love to have much wealth

[41] Rose (1974) 156 offers a nuanced rebuttal to this view.
[42] Petrucione (1986) 35.

hidden away in my halls
but to enjoy what I have and to attend to
my friends out of my abundance. For the expectations
of much-toiling men are common to all. And I
eagerly hold onto Herakles among
the great heads of excellence, as I stir up an ancient story….[43]

Given the immediately preceding context, Pindar clearly means that both σθένος and φρήν are useful to Khromios, Hagesidamos' son, or anyone inhabiting his way of life (σέο δ᾽ἀμφὶ τρόπῳ). This τρόπος of Khromios must refer to one of success and wealth. The *laudandus* was evidently capable of financing a chariot and charioteer being sent to distant Nemea. And, such a life, vulnerable in its good fortune, would require both σθένος and φρήν to survive. However, instead of endorsing and praising the τρόπος described above, Pindar sets himself up as other to Khromios, commenting that he does not desire more than what is sufficient (ἐξαρκέων) for himself and his *philoi*, κοιναὶ γὰρ ἔρχοντ᾽ἐλπίδες / πολυπόνων ἀνδρῶν "for the expectations of much-toiling men come common to all."[44] As William Race observes in his notes to the Loeb, ἐλπίδες "may be negative and imply 'expectations' of trouble or death (cf. *Nem.*7.30-31) or positive and imply 'hopes' for fame after death."[45] Moreover, John Petrucione, by comparing the lines to parallel passages confirms that the lines' meaning of death is "beyond doubt."[46] Taken together with the doubt cast upon the unpredictability of success argued above, Pindar's observations here seem to suggest that an excellent but not materially (financially) successful life is, in fact, what one ought to desire—a peculiar claim to make to someone as materially successful as Khromios.

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43 *N.*1.29-34.
44 *N.*1.32-33
45 Race (1997) *LCL* 485, 9.
46 Petrucione (1986) 39.

The futility of material success and wealth is Pindar's launch point for introducing Herakles. The great heads of excellence among which the demigod looms[47] recall the "great heads of cities"[48] over which Sicily exults. Both Herakles and the island shine not because of their success and wealth but because of their natural excellence. Indeed, Herakles' life is one marked by uninterrupted toil. If anyone may be considered πολύπονος, it is the demigod who enters the world ὠδῖνα φεύγων διδύμῳ σὺν κασιγνήτῳ "fleeing labor pains with his twin brother."[49] His birth is figured as an active struggle. His flight from the womb and into the light[50] frames birth as a return from the underworld. But, the demigod cannot defeat death as figured by the ὠδῖνα "birth pangs" that Alkmena endures. Rather, he merely escapes, leaving the grim suffering of mortality as something that can be avoided but cannot be defeated.

Alkmena's labor pangs and Herakles' identity as παῖς Διός "child of Zeus"[51] emphasize the interstitial quality of his existence. While he may come out διδύμῳ / σὺν κασιγνήτῳ "with his twin brother,"[52] a person who should share Herakles' identity in everything, he οὐ λαθὼν χρυσόθρονον / Ἥραν κροκωτὸν σπάργανον ἐγκατέβα "did not escape the notice of golden-throned Hera as he went down into the saffron swaddling clothes."[53] The *LSJ* remarks that in tragedy and comedy, σπάργανα are "objects left with an exposed child, the marks by which a person's true birth and family are identified."[54] Of course, the texts in which σπάργανον come to mean this were written later than Pindar wrote. Yet curiously, Herakles' going down into

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[47] *N.*1.34.
[48] *N.*1.15.
[49] *N.*1.36.
[50] *N.*1.35.
[51] *N.*1.35.
[52] *N.*1.36.
[53] N.1.37-38.
[54] "σπάργανον." *LSJ.*

these objects signals to Hera who he really is. His katabasis (ἐγκατέβα) into human life reveals to the θεῶν βασιλέα "queen of gods"[55] precisely what sets him apart from his twin.

Herakles' infancy is marked by restless labor and a strength (σθένος) that can only find its fulfillment in action (ἔργῳ). Pindar continues his narration telling how Hera, enraged at the baby's birth,

> σπερχθεῖσα θυμῷ πέμπε δράκοντας ἄφαρ.
> τοὶ μὲν οἰχθεισᾶν πυλᾶν
> ἐς θαλάμου μυχὸν εὐ-
> ρὺν ἔβαν, τέκνοισιν ὠκείας γνάθους
> ἀμφελίξασθαι μεμαῶτες˙ ὁ δ᾽ὀρ
> -θὸν μὲν ἄντεινεν κάρα, πειρᾶτο δὲ πρῶτον μάχας,
> δισσαῖσι δοιοὺς ἀυχένων
> μάρψαις ἀφύκτοις χερσὶν ἑαῖς ὄφιας.
>
> stirred up in her heart, sent serpents at once.
> And they went straight through the gates
> that were opened into the bedroom's nook,
> eager to wrap their swift jaws
> around the children; but he
> lifted his head straight up and first attempted battle,
> catching the twins around their necks with the two,
> with his two inescapable hands catching the twin snakes.[56]

The snakes arrive οἰχθεισᾶν πυλᾶν "with the gates having been opened" and eagerly hurry into the heart of the bedroom. Pindar couples μυχός with θάλαμος to emphasize the deeply intimate and private quality of the space. Clearly, the snakes do not belong there, and the passive genitive absolute indicating the openness of the gates suggests divine intervention or intrusion into the human, domestic space. Moreover, the bedroom's proximity to the term κασίγνητος (in line 36) recalls the opening of the ode, and we are reminded of Alpheos' divine intrusion into Artemis' intimate space.[57] This is a poem of intrusions, and the repeated

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[55] *N*.1.39.
[56] N.1.40-43.
[57] N.1.1-4.

juxtaposition of intimate spaces with outsiders—Artemis' bed and the Peloponnesian Alpheos, the open doors of the μυχός and Argive Hera's snakes—draws attention to the presence of yet another outsider within a private, domestic space, namely Herakles. Like the snakes, the newborn does not belong in Amphitryon's house. His grammatically active self-birth is followed by him lifting his head straight up (a feat ordinary infants begin to achieve at about two months) and entering into his first battle, gripping with inescapable strength the two interloper snakes. Herakles' alterity stands in sharp relief against his twin presumably lying beside him in the crib. Indeed, Pindar's language emphasizes more his kinship with Hera's snakes than with his own brother. While there are actual twins present, the language of doubleness (δισσαῖσι δοιοὺς) is used of Herakles' hands and the snakes. The hero's twin hands belong to the world of the twin snakes, not the world of his own twin brother. His otherness is patent, and yet Hera is the only character in *Nemean* I who seems to grasp (and subsequently reject) who Herakles is.

Pindar further emphasizes Herakles' alterity by describing the reactions of Alkmena and the other women.

ἀγχομένοις δὲ χρόνος
ψυχὰς ἀπέπνευσεν μελέων ἀφάτων.
ἐκ ἄρ᾿ἄτλατον δέος
πλᾶξε γυναῖκας, ὅσαι
    τύχον Ἀλκμήνας ἀρήγοισαι λέχει˙
καὶ γὰρ αὐτὰ ποσσὶν ἄπεπλος ὀρου-
    σαισ᾿ἀπὸ στρωμνᾶς ὅμως ἄμυνεν ὕβριν κνωδάλων.

And with strangling hands time
breathed forth their lives from their unspeakable limbs.
And excruciating dread
struck the women who
    were helping Alkmena in bed;
for she, still undressed, jumped to her feet

from the mattress to ward off the *hybris* of the monsters.[58]

The women's alarm occurs (in Pindar's narrative) *after* the snakes have already died rather than in conjunction with their initial appearance. The particle ἄρα suggests immediate sequential action. Thus, the women's alarm is a response to Herakles' involvement, not the snakes themselves. Alkmena leaps from her bed in horror at her own child who behaves in a manner altogether uncharacteristic of a newborn. Despite having just given birth and wearing no clothes, she runs to the bed to ward off this beastly *hybris.* But, whose is it? Is her reaction a delayed response to the danger the snakes pose to her sons? Or is she terrified of what else the supernaturally strong infant might do? Does she worry for Iphikles lying beside his monstrous brother in the crib?

On a grammatical level, Pindar describes time, not Herakles, as the killer of the snakes, a fact that has posed interpretive difficulties to every reader of *Nemean* I. Douglas Gerber suggests that "Pindar is, therefore, saying in *Nem.*1.46 f. that a 'period of time' killed the serpents."[59] While this may be possible, it seems unnecessary for explaining the presence of χρόνος in the line. Instead, we should take this perplexing description in the broader context of *Nemean* I. The ἀπέπνευσεν[60] of the snakes' death recalls the ἄμπνευμα[61] of Alpheos as their μελέων[62] recall the μέλος[63] that Pindar yokes to Khromios' chariot. At the end of *Pythian* XII, we saw how time was the only differential between being granted happiness or its opposite. Now, with Herakles' hands as its instrument, inexorable time again reverses the success of

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[58] N.1.46-50.
[59] Gerber (1962) 33.
[60] *N*.1.47.
[61] *N*.1.1.
[62] *N*.1.47.
[63] *N*.1.7.

strength. It extinguishes the life of the snakes, leaving behind μέλεα ἄφατα limbs without voices, songs that cannot be sung, heroic deeds forgotten. Elsewhere in *Nemean* I, we have seen Pindar make reference to the common fate of mankind (death)[64] and the unpredictability of chance.[65] Taken together with these passages, we should read Herakles' defeat of the snakes not just as an example of human excellence but as an example of how even divine snakes are subject to the vicissitudes of time and fortune. In Pindar's telling, Herakles is simply an agent of reality, revealing the inescapable changeability of fortune and the inevitability of degradation. John Petrucione observes that "the poet's song can overcome the hostile powers [like time and death] which obscure and efface even the most excellent reputations."[66] To avoid becoming the μέλεα ἄφατα, the songs without voices that the snakes leave behind, Herakles (and Khromios) need Pindar.

The women's terror at Herakles' inexorable hands of time is ultimately fear of the other. Alterity, like time,[67] frightens because it brings into question the concept of a static self. If other ways of being human exist or if I recognize that my self can change over time, I am forced to confront the other at the core of my self. Herakles' patent discordance with the identities of the humans around him forces them to question what they know about themselves. Anna Tatsi argues that the substitution of subject discussed above is an identification of Herakles with Khronos "known in the Orphic theology and the Orphic cosmogonical myths."[68] In the killing of the snakes, Herakles reveals that while he is present in ordinary human circumstances, his

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[64] *N.*1.32.
[65] *N.*1.10.
[66] Petrucione (1986) 36.
[67] Cf. the end of Chapter Three.
[68] Tatsi (2008) 123.

strength and action operate on an entirely other level. It is precisely this revelation that strikes fear into Amphitryon's heart:

ταχὺ δὲ Καδμείων ἀγοὶ χαλ-
　　κέοις σὺν ὅπλοις ἔδραμον ἀθρόοι,
ἐν χερὶ δ᾽ Ἀμφιτρύων κολεοῦ
　　γυμνὸν τινάσσων <φάσγανον>
ἵκετ᾽, ὀξαίαις ἀνίαισι τυπείς.
　　τὸ γὰρ οἰκεῖον πιέζει πάνθ᾽ ὁμῶς
εὐθῦς δ᾽ ἀπήμων κραδία
　　κᾶδος ἀμφ᾽ ἀλλότριον.

ἔστα δὲ θάμβει δυσφόρῳ
τερπνῷ τε μιχθείς. εἶδε γὰρ ἐκνόμιον
λῆμά τε καὶ δύναμιν
υἱοῦ.

And swiftly the chiefs of the Kadmeians with their
　　bronze spears ran together,
and in his hand Amphitryon brandishing
　　a naked sword, naked of its scabbard
came, oppressed by bitter grief.
　　For matters of home weigh down everyone the same,
but right away the heart is unhurt
　　over another's care.

And he stood in heavy dread
mixed with delight. For the saw the lawless
mind and power
of his son.[69]

Alkmena's nakedness (ἄπεπλος) is mirrored in the nakedness (γυμνὸν) of what we presume to be Amphitryon's sword. As her nudity further emphasizes the discordance of the domestic scene, the impropriety of the snakes' appearance and Herakles' preternatural abilities, so does his. Within the μύχος of his wife's θάλαμος, we would expect Amphitryon himself to be naked, and not his weapon. But, Herakles' appearance within the Kadmeian palace is a disruption of both Amphitryon and Alkmena's domestic felicity. He does not belong, as

[69] *N.*1.51-58.

Pindar's aphorism in lines 53-54 suggests. By bringing up τὸ οἰκεῖον in contrast to τὸ ἀλλότριον, Pindar draws attention to the fact that Herakles is other to Amphitryon. And yet, the king reacts as if he were his own son. This attachment and its accompanying perplexity and wonder taint Amphitryon's perception of the infant. Only a father, concerned about the future of his οἶκος and his οἰκεῖα, who expects to see his own nature mirrored in the nature of his son would look upon Herakles' *phua* and wonder, as Amphitryon does, how it will fit.

The hero's first deed marks him out as separate, foreign, other, but in a way that does not allow for proper adoption or integration into his home. Pindar suggests that Amphitryon identifies wholly with his anxiety, failing to recognize his detachment from Zeus' illegitimate son by his wife. The king stands in a mixture of delight and terror, which Pindar accentuates by a strophe break (ll. 54-55). Amphitryon stands on the other side of the strophe from his son, perplexed, horrified, and uncertain. The enjambment of υἱοῦ (ln. 58) emphasizes Amphitryon's identification with Herakles. The king perceives him as *his* son and as a result is frightened and alarmed by the lawlessness (ἐκνόμιον) of Herakles' courage and ability. The reader, however, already knows that Herakles is the παῖς Διός "child of Zeus."[70] Pindar's audience is acutely aware that Amphitryon's bafflement stems from a case of mistaken identity. If Herakles' birth were known, the king would not be surprised at his ability. Rather, like Lokros, he would welcome him, rejoicing to see that his wife carried "the greatest seed,"[71] or reject him as Polydektes did. But because Amphitryon does not understand who Herakles is, he cannot understand Herakles' *phua* as the gift that it is and consequently (as we will see in other poems) Herakles's *phua* finds no place in Amphitryon's city but instead is forced to go after worthy

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[70] *N.*1.35.
[71] *O.*9.61.

targets abroad. In order to be welcomed into a community, Herakles' alterity must be recognized as alterity.

Amphitryon does what a man in his way of life ought to do when confronted with uncertainty. He calls upon someone who has the inborn ability to see the future:

> γείτονα δ᾽ ἐκκάλεσεν
> Διὸς ὑψίστου προφάταν ἔξοχον,
> ὀρθόμαντιν Τειρεσίαν· ὁ δέ οἱ
> φράζε καὶ παντὶ στρατῷ, ποίαις ὁμιλήσει τύχαις,
> ὅσσους μὲν ἐν χέρσῳ κτανών,
> ὅσσους δὲ πόντῳ θῆρας ἀιδροδίκας·
> καί τινα σὺν πλαγίῳ
> ἀνδρῶν κόρῳ στείχοντα τὸν ἐχθρότατον
> φᾶ ἑ δᾳώσειν μόρον.
> καὶ γὰρ ὅταν θεοὶ ἐν
> πεδίῳ Φλέγρας Γιγάντεσσιν μάχαν
> ἀντιάζωσιν, βελέων ὑπὸ ῥι-
> παῖσι κείνου φαιδίμαν γαίᾳ πεφύρσεσθαι κόμαν
> ἔνεπεν· αὐτὸν μὰν ἐν εἰρή-
> νᾳ τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον ἐν σχερῷ
> ἡσυχίαν καμάτων μεγάλων
> ποινὰν λαχόντ᾽ ἐξαίρετον
> ὀλβίοις ἐν δώμασι, δεξάμενον
> θαλερὰν Ἥβαν ἄκοιτιν καὶ γάμον
> δαίσαντα πὰρ Δὶ Κρονίδᾳ,
> σεμνὸν αἰνήσειν νόμον.
>
> and he called his neighbor,
> an illustrious prophet of highest Zeus,
> straight-soothing Teiresias; and he said
> to him and to the whole assembly what sorts of luck he'd face,
> how many on land he'd kill,
> how many by sea of the lawless beasts,
> and any man with crooked
> surfeit walking, the most hateful man,
> he said that he would teach him doom.
> For when the gods
> on the plain of Phlegra would do battle
> with the giants, under the flight of this man's
> arrows their gleaming hair would be mixed with earth,
> he said; and that he in peace
> for all time uninterrupted

after receiving rest from great labors
as his choice recompense
in the blessed halls, after receiving
blooming Hebe as bride and celebrating
his wedding beside Zeus son of Kronos,
holy *nomos* would praise him.[72]

The ode notably ends without a conclusion. We do not return to Pindar's narration but instead finish in indirect statement, in Teiresias' voice. The long string of infinitives (δᾳώσειν, πεφύρσεσθαι, αἰνήσειν) and their accompanying subordinate clauses remind us continually of the fact that the conclusion of *Nemean* I is hearsay. Adding to this effect are Pindar's main verbs (φράζε, φᾶ, ἔνεπεν) which reiterate the spoken quality of the conclusion. Pindar does not offer an interpretation of the myth but forces us to arrive at our own interpretation. Moreover, Teiresias' speech does not provide an answer to Amphitryon's bafflement. If anything, it increases it. Instead of explaining the ἐκνόμιον / λῆμα τε καὶ δύναμιν "the lawless mind and power"[73] of Herakles, Teiresias' words add to the puzzlement. Not only will there be an infancy of lawless power, but a whole life.

The positive frame of εὐτυχία is dropped, and instead Teiresias describes the τύχαι, both positive and negative, that await Herakles. We are told that Teiresias enumerates "how many on land he'd kill, / how many by sea of the lawless beasts,"[74] but we are not told the actual number. The adjective ἀιδροδίκας[75] "lawless" in reference to Herakles' victims reminds us of Amphitryon's assessment of his son as ἐκνόμιον "lawless."[76] Herakles' slaughter of the beasts likewise reminds us of his slaughter of the snakes and the ambiguous identification of

[72] *N.*1.60-72.
[73] *N.*1.55-56.
[74] *N.*1.62-63.
[75] *N.*1.63.
[76] *N.*1.56.

Herakles with the very monsters he attacks. Herakles' true identity is closer to that of the beings that he kills than the family he leaves behind in Thebes. The numberlessness of his victims intimates the sheer quantity of time necessary to achieve the results Teiresias describes, implying that Herakles is not exactly a reliable son. He remains a complete unknown to Amphitryon, unrecognizable, shiftless, a rolling stone, who can offer no firm foundation for the post mortem needs of a father.

Perhaps if Amphitryon and Alkmena understood the identity of their child and formally adopted and honored him as the son of Zeus, he could have become the sort of civic protector we see in Opous. Instead, he becomes a kind of rebel without a cause, angry that his excellence goes unrewarded while more mediocre men walk κόρῳ "in excess."[77] Already we have seen how in fr. 81 Pindar comments: σὲ δ᾽ἐγὼ παρά μιν / αἰνέω μέν, Γυρυόνα "but I praise you instead [of Herakles], Geryon"[78] for being a stable protector of his home. The image of Herakles as a home-invading usurper is also present in *Nemean* I, though slightly more complicated. We discussed above how Herakles' presence in Alkmena's birthing chamber figures as a kind of intrusion, parallel to the monstrous snakes. Again in Teiresias' prophecy, we see him playing the intruder, though now he is more an example of why one ought not be greedy than of wanton violence. Pindar connects Teiresias' prophecy to the theme of the mutability of fate through the term τύχαις, going on to explain that Herakles would teach μόρον "doom" to τινα σὺν πλαγίῳ / ἀνδρῶν κόρῳ στείχοντα "any man with crooked surfeit walking."[79] The theme of satiety and excess has already been introduced into the poem in lines 29-33 where Pindar, after lauding Khromios' wealth and hospitality, observes that he, Pindar, does not in fact wish to

[77] *N.*1.65.
[78] Pind. Fr. 81.1-2.
[79] *N.*1.64-65.

be wealthy himself. Pindar offers Herakles as an example of why he does not wish to be rich because Herakles is the type of man who pursues τινα "anyone,"[80] whether their wealth is accompanied by *hybris* or not, κόρῳ στείχοντα "walking in excess."[81] Wealth is πλαγίος[82] "crooked, treacherous."[83] It betrays by attracting the attention of men like Herakles who would teach the haughty that they too will meet their μόρον "doom."[84]

The verb στείχοντα, as has been observed by others,[85] brings the reader back to Pindar's gnomic claim: χρὴ δ᾽ἐν εὐθείαις ὁδοῖς στείχοντα μάρνασθαι φυᾷ "but someone walking in straight paths must fight with *phua*."[86] The parallel language establishes a dichotomy between walking in straight paths and walking in crooked excess. While the former requires fighting with *phua*, the latter precipitates conflict with a demigod.[87] Through this we observe that the myth in *Nemean* I is not setting up Herakles as a parallel to Khromios but as a warning for him. If Khromios does not learn, as Pindar has recommended, to work both with and against his *phua*, he may end up walking in crooked excess and attracting the kind of destructivist attention wealth demands. The synthetic quality of Amphitryon's family echoes the synthetic quality of Hieron and Khromios' project in Aitna. And, like the exiled Argive family in Thebes, the self-exiled Peloponnesians together with the self-selected Sicilians fail to provide a place for everyone. The native Katanians are displaced; Herakles is doomed to a life of ceaseless wandering and violence.

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[80] *N*.1.64.
[81] *N*.1.65.
[82] *N*.1.64.
[83] "πλαγίος." *LSJ*.
[84] *N*.1.66.
[85] Cf. Petrucione (1986), Presutti (2021), et al.
[86] *N*.1.25.
[87] Which is perhaps also an example of conflict with *phua*.

While Herakles' destructivist fate and its accompanying warning to the wealthy remain in *Nemean* I only a spoken future, a mere possibility, elsewhere it is a set piece of Greek poetry. Substantially before *Nemean* I was written in roughly 476 BCE, Herakles' destructivist tendencies were already apparent in Homer's narrative surrounding him, suggesting that this negative view of Herakles stems from ancient oral tradition and would have been known to Pindar's audience. In Book 21 of the *Odyssey*, while recounting how Odysseus came to possess the remarkable bow of Iphitos, the poet explains that:

> Ἴφιτος αὖθ᾽ ἵππους διζήμενος, αἵ οἱ ὄλοντο
> δώδεκα θήλειαι, ὑπὸ δ᾽ ἡμίονοι ταλαεργοί·
> αἳ δή οἱ καὶ ἔπειτα φόνος καὶ μοῖρα γένοντο,
> ἐπεὶ δὴ Διὸς υἱὸν ἀφίκετο καρτερόθυμον,
> φῶθ᾽ Ἡρακλῆα, μεγάλων ἐπιίστορα ἔργων,
> ὅς μιν ξεῖνον ἐόντα κατέκτανεν ᾧ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ,
> σχέτλιος, οὐδὲ θεῶν ὄπιν αἰδέσατ᾽ οὐδὲ τράπεζαν
> τὴν ἥν οἱ παρέθηκεν· ἔπειτα δὲ πέφνε καὶ αὐτόν,
> ἵππους δ᾽ αὐτὸς ἔχε κρατερώνυχας ἐν μεγάροισι.
>
> Then Iphitos seeking the horses that he had lost—
> twelve mares and from them hard-working mules;
> indeed they became for him his murder and doom,
> when he came to the stronghearted son of Zeus,
> the man Herakles, acquainted with great deeds,
> who killed Iphitos even though he was a *xenos* in his own house;
> cruel man, he honored neither the vengeance of the gods nor his own table
> which he'd set before Iphitos. But then he killed him,
> and he kept the strong-hoofed horses in his halls.[88]

Iphitos is Herakles' *xenos*, a relationship conventionally passed from generation to generation. As such, Herakles' violence against his *xenos* is not just violence against a stranger passing through; it is violence against his own and Iphitos' offspring as it deprives them of the possibility of future connection and benefit through the relationship. Herakles chooses the sterile ἡμίονοι "mules" and their dams over the possibility of prolonged and mutually

[88] *Od*.21.22-30.

beneficial friendship. His calculation suggests a kind of destrutivist homelessness even ᾧ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ "in his own house," as he has no thought for the longterm welfare of his family or home but makes choices in terms of what is immediately useful to himself. His choice expresses a preference for the short-term gains of selective breeding over the longterm sustainability and randomness of a robust and diverse ecosystem. These mules that Herakles prizes so highly they will incite him to murder are ταλαεργοί "drudging,"[89] Bred (like Herakles?) for the sole purpose of labor, mules require the existence of an outside system of livestock in order to continue to be useful after one generation[90]—a system which Herakles has cut himself off from by privileging immediate gains over x*enia* and the possibility of trade. In addition to this, Homer explicitly states that οὐδὲ θεῶν ὄπιν αἰδέσατ᾽οὐδὲ τράπεζαν "he honored neither the vengeance of the gods nor his own table."[91] In addition to his lack of concern for his own home, Herakles' *hybris* is so great that he disregards the vengeance of the gods as well. As his *xenos*, Iphitos ought to have received the affection due a kinsman.[92] But, instead Herakles kills him and steals his livestock.

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[89] "ταλαεργός." *LSJ.*
[90] In *English Pastoral*, James Rebanks discusses the reliance of industrialized agriculture upon small-scale, old-fashioned agriculture, explaining that "Giant industrial agricultural companies are crawling over these historic farmlands trying to identify, own and patent the riches in them. When the most productive varieties of grain or corn cannot cope with new strains of disease or changes to climate, agronomists will look for the solution in the diversity of heritage grains and corns in the few historic farming systems that survive." Rebanks 2020 (177). The efficiency of contemporary farming with its ability to produce multiple grain harvests per year, extending the growing season by months, relies upon the existence of diverse local food ecosystems from which it draws, selecting for the traits it deems useful. Much like Herakles' mules, it gives a great yield for a time but will inevitably run into some difficulty that the current selective breeding has not accounted for.
[91] *Od.*21.28.
[92] Herman (1987) 18.

Moreover, in the *Argonautica*, Jason and his companions come upon the Garden of the Hesperides recently despoiled by a certain problematic demigod. Apollonius describes the garden "where, until just the day before, Ladon, the serpent of the land, guarded the solid gold apples in the realm of Atlas, while round about bustled nymphs, the Hesperides, singing a lovely song."[93] By describing first the charms of what the garden used to be, Apollonius makes the subsequent carnage all the more disturbing:

> δὴ τότε γ᾽ἤδη κεῖνος ὑφ᾽Ἡρακλῆι δαϊχθεὶς
> μήλειον βέβλητο ποτὶ στύπος· οἰόθι δ᾽ἄκρη
> οὐρὴ ἔτι σκαίρεσκεν, ἀπὸ κρατὸς δὲ κελαινὴν
> ἄχρις ἐπ᾽ἄκνηστιν κεῖτ᾽ἄπνοος· ἐν δὲ λιπόντων
> ὕδρης Λερναίης χόλον αἵματι πικρὸν οἰστῶν
> μυῖαι πυθομένοισιν ἐφ᾽ἕλκεσι τερσαίνοντο.
> ἀγχοῦ δ᾽Ἑσπερίδες κεφαλαῖς ἔπι χεῖρας ἔχουσαι
> ἀργυφέας ξανθῇσι λίγ᾽ἔστενον.
>
> But right there already it was lying pierced by Herakles
> at the apple tree's stump; and only the very tip
> of its tail kept twitching still, and from its head
> as far as its black spine it lay without breath; and because
> the arrows left the bitter poison of the Lernaian Hydra in its blood
> flies wither on the festering wounds.
> And nearby the Hesperides holding their silver-white hands
> to their golden faces were groaning bitterly.[94]

The guardian snake's corpse lies at the foot of the apple tree, still twitching from its recent encounter with Herakles. So destructive is the demigod's intrusion into this once pristine wilderness that even the flies begin to wither and die from contact with the dead animal's now toxic blood. Herakles' violence and aggression spills over from its (arguably) justified target onto the environment itself, turning a garden into a fetid graveyard while gentle nymphs watch and groan. His behavior, far from being an example of the swift justice of Zeus, speaks to the

[93] Apollonius *Argonautica* IV.1394-1399. Trans. William Race.
[94] Apollonius *Argonautica* IV.1400-1407. Trans. William Race with some changes by me.

arbitrariness of fate, the inevitability of death, and the risk inherent in possessing lovely things. It also reminds us of Pindar's depiction of his birth as an intrusion into a feminine, domestic space. Not only has Herakles despoiled the pristine paradise of the Hesperides, he has robbed the nymphs of their protector, leaving them homeless, solitary *parthenoi* vulnerable and bereft.

vi. Herakles Rehabilitated

And yet, Herakles is more than a warning to the wealthy. The very excess of his violence and wantonness of his aggression make him the ideal model for the power of poetry to transform and proof of Pindar's admonition that strength is best accompanied by wit. Herakles' afterlife, the product in *Nemean* I of Teiresias' φρήν and ability to weave a narrative, is one of peace and tranquility. But, how does he transition from a life of homeless aggression to domestic bliss in Olympus? Herakles' homelessness is only prophesied in *Nemean* I, but it appears in full glory in fragment 169a, commonly known as the *Nomos Basileus* fragment. In this fragment and in other dithyrambic fragments discussed below, we see how Herakles' violence has a tendency to spill over onto innocent bystanders, much as Perseus' homelessness did in *Pythian* XII. As Perseus' violence gives rise to and is partially redeemed by the *nomos* of the *aulos*, Herakles' violence likewise appears to be justified by a kind of *nomos* as well.

Fragment 169a offers a perplexing narrative of gratuitous violence in support of its oft-quoted opening claim in praise of *nomos*. Its genre and metrical scheme are uncertain (though the discovery of the Oxyrhynchus Papyri confirms that it is strophic). But, given its irreverent character it may well be a dithyramb. The fragment's beginning is by far its most famous part, but its middle and end align with the image of excessive force thus far developed. By placing the narrative portion of the fragment beside other Heraklean narratives, I show how Herakles the homeless can fit with Herakles the defender of *nomos*.

From the inscrutable opening claim about *nomos* which justifies (punishes?) the greatest violence with the highest hand, Pindar immediately launches into a litany of Herakles' deeds, dwelling at length upon the theft of the mares of Diomedes:

> ἐπεὶ Γηρυόνα βόας
> Κυκλώπειον ἐπὶ πρόθυρον Εὐρυσθέος
> ἀνατεί τε] καὶ ἀπριάτας ἔλασεν,
> — ??] Διομήδεος ἵππους
> — ? μ]όναρχον Κ[ι]κόνων
> παρὰ] Βιστονίδι λίμνᾳ
> χαλκοθώρ]ακος Ἐννυαλίου
> ∪∪—] ἔκαγλον υἱόν
> ∪∪∪] . ιαντα μέγαν
> — οὐ κό]ρῳ ἀλλ᾽ ἀρετᾷ.
>
> when he drove Geryon's cattle
> to the Cyclopean porch of Eurystheus
> with impunity??] and unpaid for,
> ????] the horses of Diomedes,
> ??] the sovereign of the Kikones
> beside] the lake of the Bistones,
> of bronze-breasted] Enyalios
> ????] the awesome son
> ????] great
> not with ex]cess but with virtue.[95]

Not much can be said without reservation of these lines. That Herakles' taking of Geryon's cattle and Diomedes' horses is considered a theft is clear from the adjective ἀπριάτας "unpaid for." Pindar's assessment of the hero accords with itself from poem to poem. The Herakles of fragment 81 (*Dithyramb* 2) is the same Herakles as the one in fragment 169a, and the potential for excessive force present in both fragments fits with Alkmena's concern for her other son in *Nemean* I. Pindar does not change his opinions for his audience, even if he does shift his focus.

The sometimes savage king Diomedes is depicted as μόναρχον "sovereign," recalling the "sovereign" βασιλεύς of line 1. In Pindar's telling there is no mention of Diomedes'

[95] Pind. fr.169a.6-15.

penchant for feeding guests to his anthropophagist horses—a myth ordinarily used to justify Herakles' violence. Indeed, as Carlo Pavese observes, the *Nomos Basileus* is the earliest known reference to the man-eating mares of Diomedes, and thus any conjectures about the tyrant's character based upon later versions are out of place.[96] Pindar simply identifies him as the ἔκαγλον (or perhaps ἔκπαγλον?)[97] υἱόν "awesome son" of Ares. The adjective ἔκπαγλος is used in Homer to describe Achilles[98] and in Pindar to describe Jason,[99] Ajax,[100] and the victor Strepsiades.[101] By no means is it an inherently negative term.

The next few lines are so fragmentary it is difficult to assess even the tone, and interpretations differ wildly based upon how a reader chooses to reconstruct the lines. For instance, Lobel supplies ἔκλεψε in line 10 and δαμάσας in line 13, thus rendering the lines: "he stole the horses of Diomedes, the sovereign of the Kikones beside the lake of the Bistones, after he overcame the awesome son of bronze-breasted Enyalios." Whether the datives (κό]ρῳ and ἀρετᾷ) in line 15 refer to Herakles or Diomedes is unclear, but given the following text, it seems likely that they describe Diomedes:

> ∪ — γ]ὰρ ἁρπαζομένων τεθνάμεν
> × —]μάτων ἢ κακὸν ἔμμεναι.
>
> ∪ — f]or when [your possessions?] are being snatched
> it's better] to die than to be a beggar[102]

If this reconstruction is accurate, Pindar is explaining that Diomedes is acting not in satiety as the man that Herakles teaches doom in *Nemean* I but in excellence. Diomedes would thus be an

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[96] Pavese (1968) 66.
[97] from Lobel's text.
[98] *Iliad* 1.146, 18.170, 21.589.
[99] *P.*4.79.
[100] *I.*6.54.
[101] *I.*7.22.
[102] Pind. fr. 169a.16-17.

example of walking in straight paths, not surfeit, and his comeuppance would signify a horrible miscarriage of justice, an example of τύχη's unpredictability and the limitations of excellence.

Moreover, Aelius Aristides' explanation of fragment 81 (about Geryon) is practically a quotation of these lines: οὐ γὰρ εἰκός, φησίν, ἁρπαζομένων τῶν ὄντων καθῆσθαι παρ' ἑστίᾳ καὶ κακὸν εἶναι "for it is not seemly, they say, when your goods are being snatched, to sit beside the hearth and be a beggar."[103] His commentary is so rife with references to what we know of *Nomos Basileus* fragment that Aristides (unlike us) likely knew the poem in its entirety.[104] The lines here, especially when taken within the broader context of fr. 81 and Aristides' view of Pindar's Herakles, give an unequivocal indictment of Herakles and suggest that Aristides interpreted the statement "when [your possessions?] are being snatched / it's better] to die than to be a beggar" in reference to Herakles' antagonists. While Diomedes protects himself ἀρετᾷ by excellence, Herakles acts out of κόρῳ excess, as he does in Homer's narrative as well.

Herakles' destructivism takes an even more gruesome turn in the following lines, echoing the spill over evident in Homer and Apollonios. Entering Diomedes' home νυκτί "at night,"[105] he follows the βίας ὁδόν "path of violence"[106] and λαβὼν δ᾽ἕν[α] φῶ[τ]α πεδάσα[ις] / φά[τναις] ἐν λιθίναις βάλ[∪ — ∪ ∪ — "having taken one man and bound him, he threw him in the stone mangers…"[107] The vagueness of ἕνα φῶτα suggests that this victim is not Diomedes but rather one of his house servants or slaves (a reading corroborated by the

[103] Aristid. *Or*.2.229.
[104] Ostwald (1965) 100 blithely dismisses Aristides' knowledge of Pindar as coming "from the *Gorgias* and not from an independent source." I strongly disagree.
[105] Pind. fr. 169a.19.
[106] Pind. fr. 169a.19.
[107] Pind. fr. 169a.20-21.

appearance of Diomedes some lines later). The next two lines are rather inscrutable but are followed by the gruesome description:

> δ᾽ ἀράβη[σε] δια[λ]εύκων
> ὀστέ[ων] δοῦπος ἐ[ρ]<ε>ικομένων.
> ὁ δ᾽ ἄφ[αρ π]λεκτόν τε χαλκόν
> ὑπερη[…] . ε τραπεζαν
> προβάτων ἀλυσιωτόν
> δι᾽ ἑρκ[έ]ων, τεῖρε δὲ στερεῶ<ς>
> ἄλλαν [μ]ὲν σκέλος, ἄλλαν δὲ πᾶχ[υν,
> τὰν δὲ πρυμνὸν κεφαλᾶς
> ὀδ[α]ξ α[ὐ]χένα φέροισαν.
>
> [something?] and the clang of white
> bones being rent rang out.
> And he immediately the plaited
> and bronze links… the tables
> of the livestock…
> through the enclosures, and he drove them firmly,
> one carrying a back, another an arm,
> and a third the bottom of a head,
> a neck, in their teeth.[108]

The hapless man is now carried out of the stables piecemeal by the very horses that he presumably has cared for. Herakles' feeding of the servant to the horses inverts the order of things, an inversion which Pindar further emphasizes by referring to the τραπεζαν / προβάτων "tables of the livestock." The term πρόβατον is most commonly used to refer to sheep or cattle, though it may be used more generally of four-footed animals.[109] Nevertheless, it lumps the mares of Diomedes in with other domesticated animals whose purpose is to serve humans (sometimes as food), not to be served humans as dinner. While later tellings of the myth emphasize Diomedes as the inverter of cosmic order, the feeder of manflesh to horse, in Pindar's telling Herakles is the offender, while no mention of Diomedes' diabolical predilection

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[108] Pind. fr. 169a.24-32.
[109] "πρόβατον." *LSJ*.

is mentioned in the extant text. The infernal inversion that Herakles effects is further emphasized by the metaphorical use of *τράπεζα* for manger. Through a single word, Pindar paints the horses as human beings sitting at table, but their meal is consumed more in the style of the Cyclopes than civilization, complete with bone-cracking and each diner greedily snatching a body part to gnaw on.

The mares' monstrous meal awakens Diomedes to the presence of an intruder in his house:

> πικρο[τά]τον κλάγεν ἀγγε[λία]ν
> ζαμενε[ ]τυρανν[ ]
> ποι]κίλω[ν ἐ]κ λεχέω[ν ἀπέ]δ{ε}ιλ[ος
>
> he screamed the bitter, bitter announcement
> raged… the tyrant…
> from his intricate bed without shoes[110]

Who is screaming is unknown, but given Pindar's penchant for the macabre thus far, let us imagine it is the dismembered groom.[111] Diomedes wakes up, rages at the sound of his household and staff being torn apart, and leaps up from his bed without shoes (ἀπέδιλος). The partial nudity of Diomedes hearkens back to the other invaded domestic scene we have examined. Herakles' own mother leaps from her bed ἄπεπλος "undressed"[112] in alarm at the demigod's actions. As argued above, the *hybris* to which she responds may be that of her own son, whose *hybris* again disturbs the oddly domestic sphere of the tyrant.

Herakles is a home-wrecker, and indeed the remaining fragmentary lines of the *Nomos Basileus* corroborate this. After Diomedes is awakened, there is an unfortunate gap of uncertain

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[110] Pind. fr.169a.34-36.
[111] Perhaps, as in Seneca's *Thyestes*, we should imagine each separate piece to wriggle and scream forth the bitter announcement….
[112] *N*.1.50.

length, leaving us to imagine the interaction between the two demigods. Then, the papyrus picks up again with what appears to be background upon the incident:

> ἔμολε[.]αι παῖδα[∪ —
> Ἡρακλ[έ]ος εξα . [.] . [.]ν [ ]
> τεταγνένον τουτά . [....]εκατ . [
> Ἥρας ἐφετμαῖς˙ Σθενέλο[ι]ό μιν
> υἱὸς κέ[λ]ευσε<ν> μόνον
> Ἄνευ συ[μμ]αχίας ἴμεν.
> καὶ Ἰόλαο[ς ἐ]ν ἑπταπύλοισι μένω[ν τε
> Θήβαις] Ἀμφιτρύωνι τε σᾶμα χέω[ν…
>
> he came… the child…
> of Herakles…
> having been ordained…
> on the orders of Hera. The son of Sthenelos
> commanded him to go alone
> without allies.
> And Iolaos, remaining in seven-gated
> Thebes and erecting a tomb for Amphitryon.[113]

Although the passage is too fragmentary to speak of with certainty, it has been conjectured that these lines refer to Herakles' killing of his own children and subsequent exile.[114] Regardless of what the fragmentary reference to children really is, enough remains for the reader to discern a stark contrast between the roving Herakles and Iolaos μένων "remaining" in Thebes and χέων "pouring" libations at the tomb of Amphitryon. The demigod did not learn how to belong in the domestic sphere of Amphitryon and Alkmena because his identity was not understood. Instead of honoring Amphitryon as an adopted father, Herakles leaves the rites to a more distant family member.

As we saw of the infant hero, as is hinted at by the appearance of his children in the fragmentary lines above, Herakles' homelessness extends beyond the misunderstanding of his

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[113] Pind. fr.169a.41-48. Trans. William H. Race.
[114] Ostwald (1965) 116.

identity in childhood. Even more so as an adult, his appearance in the domestic sphere is an intrusion. He does not belong and is propelled outwards Ἥρας ἐφετμαῖς "by orders of Hera," goddess of marriage and the family. Alkmena and Amphitryon fail to acknowledge who Herakles is and to welcome him explicitly and formally into their home, despite the many attempts by Hera to draw attention to his identity. Thus, they do not sever Herakles' legal ties and obligations with his biological father Zeus, thereby rendering him a continual thorn in the side of Zeus' wife. The failure on the part of Alkmena and Amphitryon to recognize and legally adopt Herakles drives him into a continual state of homelessness. Like Perseus, Herakles' displacement renders him incapable of giving an account of his own nature. And therefore, he fails to recognize the alterity he shares with his victims. Unable to cope with it in any other way, Herakles, greatest son of the greatest father, inflicts his excellence on the world.

If Herakles is so deeply troubled, one is driven to wonder how he ends up, as Teiresias prophecies, δαίσαντα πὰρ Δὶ Κρονίδᾳ / σεμνὸν αἰνήσειν νόμον "celebrating beside Zeus son of Kronos, singing the holy *nomos*."[115] The answer parallels the conclusion of *Pythian* XII, where Perseus' destructivism is redeemed through the adoptive quality of *nomos*. Herakles' intrusion into Diomedes' domestic sphere is reminiscent of *Pythian* XII where we saw Perseus invade the Gorgons' home. Also similar is the emphasis on orality and sound. In *Pythian* XII, Pindar illustrates the action by describing the sounds of the conflict—Perseus' shout, the crying of the Gorgons—rather than the conflict itself. Again in the *Nomos Basileus* fragment, Pindar uses sound to describe action, the δοῦπος "din"[116] of the bones breaking, the πικροτάταν ἀγγελίαν

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[115] *N*.1.72.
[116] Pind. fr. 169a.25.

"bitter bitter announcement"[117] which awakens Diomedes (presumably by its noise). All this sound is brought as evidence of the claim that

> Νόμος ὁ πάντων βασιλεύς
> θνατῶν τε καὶ ἀθανάτων
> ἄγει δικαιῶν τὸ βιαιότατον
> ὑπερτάτᾳ χειρί. τεκμαίρομαι
> ἔργοισιν Ἡρακλέος
>
> *Nomos* the king of all things,
> of mortal and immortal
> leads by justifying the greatest violence
> with the highest hand. I call as witness
> the deeds of Herakles[118]

Exactly what Pindar means by *nomos* in this particular context has been a subject of intense debate. While commenting upon the *Nomos Basileus* fragment, Aelius Aristides introduces fragment 81 with the statement: τεκμαίρομαι ἔργοισιν Ἡρακλέος αὐτοῖς τούτοις, ὅτι καὶ ἑτέρωθι μεμνημένος περὶ αὐτῶν ἐν διθυράμβῳ τινί "I call to witness the very deeds of Herakles, because remembering them elsewhere in a dithyramb, he says…"[119] that Geryon was justified in defending his home. Aristides uses Pindar's own words to introduce more of Pindar's words as an explanation of Pindar's words and to call into question the dominant interpretation of the *Nomos Basileus*. Pindar's support of Geryon contradicts the view that Pindar is offering Herakles as an example of justice, an enforcer of divine *nomos*.

Aelius Aristides' discussion of the *Nomos Basileus* fragment offers an alternative interpretation of the poem to what many ancient and modern commentators give. Marcello Gigante in his tome on the fragment comments that "*Eracle è presente nella poesia di Pindare: eroe della forza e dell'ardire, libera la terra e il mare dai mostri, pone le colonne, i cui confini non è lecito*

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[117] Pind. fr. 169a.34.
[118] Pind. fr. 169a.1-5.
[119] Aristid. *Or.* 2.229.

varcare. Il suo agire è sostenuto da Zeus, di cui è venerato rampollo."[120] In Plato's *Gorgias*, Kallikles famously deploys the fragment to justify his own perspective that the powerful are naturally arbitrators of justice and that *nomos* properly understood (as opposed to custom and the petty views of the *hoi polloi*) is the justice of the powerful.[121] In contradistinction to Kallikles, Herodotus introduces the fragment as a justification of the view that *nomos*, in the sense of custom or convention, is supreme. There is no absolute law; rather, each individual group clings to their own individual *nomoi* with desperate fidelity.[122] The ambiguity of the term *nomos* makes the ambiguity of Pindar's aphorism even harder to decipher.

Martin Ostwald, by contrast, immediately disregards the strictly political and legal sense of the term as "ludicrous."[123] Ostwald likewise dismisses the sense of *nomos* as a universal norm, explaining that "it is inconceivable that Pindar either held 'justice through violence' as an article of faith, proposing it as a norm for all to follow, or that the extraordinary deeds of Heracles would provide an apt illustration of such a norm—or of any norm for that matter."[124] Ostwald's confidence that such a view is inconceivable is naive. Clearly, such a view was and continues to be conceivable, as Kallikles famously conceived it.[125] Having dismissed the majority of ancient and modern interpretations of *nomos* within the poem, Ostwald concludes that Pindar meant *nomos* as something close to traditionally held belief, using Euripides as a foil

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[120] Gigante (1956) 56. "Herakles is presented in the poetry of Pindar in the following way: a hero of violence and daring, he frees the earth and the sea from monsters, establishes colonies, whose borders it is not lawful to cross. His activity is sustained by Zeus, by whom he is revered as a son." Translation my own.
[121] See Demos (1994).
[122] See Kingsley (2018).
[123] Ostwald (1965) 120.
[124] Ostwald (1965) 122.
[125] To this objection, Ostwald (1965) 123 answers that Kallikles' interpretation is anachronistic as it relies upon the *nomos-physis* controversy "which did not flourish until several decades after Pindar's death."

to highlight how "Pindar remains faithful to the tradition despite its unpleasantness, while Euripides lets contradictions challenge and upset traditional views."[126]

Ostwald's reading of the poem assumes traditionalist values of aristocratic excellence and the straightforward relationship with heroic figures so often imputed to Pindar. However, within the archaic world, as evidenced by the passage from Homer above, this view of heroes was not necessarily traditional. Moreover, this "traditionalist" view of Pindar has been up for debate since ancient times. As mentioned above, Aelius Aristides offers an alternate perspective on the *Nomos Basileus* fragment:

> δοκεῖ δέ μοι καὶ Πίνδαρος, εἴ τι δεῖ περὶ τοῦ ᾄσματος εἰπεῖν, οὐκ εἰσηγούμενος οὐδὲ συμβουλεύων σπουδῇ ταῦτα λέγειν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, ἀλλ' ὡσπερεὶ σχετλιάζων.
>
> But it seems to me, if it's necessary to say something about the poem, that Pindar did not say these things to humans as a proposal or as earnest advice, but as if in indignation.[127]

Aristides explains that Pindar calls Herakles to witness for the sovereignty of *nomos* not as a serious (σπουδῇ) proposal, but as a counterexample at which the reader takes umbrage. Seeing the knave get away with literal murder, our sense of justice is awakened and we desire yet again to see *nomos* (which must mean some sort of divine law in Aristides' account) govern human activities

What prior commentators have missed is the ambiguity of the term *nomos* in Pindar. The poet sometimes uses it to mean law/custom and its associated meanings and sometimes uses it to refer to a musical composition that tells a story, such as the *nomos* of many heads in *Pythian* XII which mimetically recounts the narrative of Medusa's death. In his article on

[126] Ostwald (1965) 130.
[127] Aristid. *Or*. 2.229.

Nemean I, John Petrucione, following Bücheler, Boehmer, and Radt, suggests taking "νόμον as 'song' and [construing it] as the subj. accus. of αἰνήσειν which governs αὐτὸν in 69."[128] Thus the concluding line of *Nemean* I becomes: "[Teiresias said] that holy song would praise him forever in peace after he had celebrated his marriage feast in the court of Zeus, son of Chronos."[129] In *Nemean* I, *nomos* acts in concert with marriage, another form of synthetic bond, to settle Herakles into his forever home. The *nomos* told about him in Olympus, by Teiresias, and in Pindar's poetry finally acknowledges his nature and identity as a son of Zeus and gives meaning to the life of ceaseless wandering and wanton aggression that he led on earth. Instead of being adopted by his mother's spouse, Herakles is at last adopted by his father's spouse, Hera, the mother of Hebe. This adoption happens not so much through the normal, legal mechanisms but through the goddess of marriage Hera's willingness to give her daughter Hebe as his wife and through the mechanism of storytelling. In keeping with the poet's suggestion that someone in Khromios' way of life needs a Pindar, even Herakles needs a poet and a narrative that makes sense of his identity and offers the kinship ties that his *phua* took from him. The synthetic bond of marriage transforms him from a homeless wanderer into the guardian of a divine hearth, as his role in the Gigantomachy suggests. And, song offers an afterlife parallel to the biological children that he has famously taken from himself.

The connection between Herakles and *nomos* in *Nemean* I is, I believe, the same as the connection between Herakles and *nomos* in fragment 169a. As argued above, the many sounds of the *Nomos Basileus* fragment are brought as evidence of the sovereignty of *nomos*. If we take *nomos* as song as we do in *Nemean* I, this emphasis on sound begins to make sense. Song gives

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[128] Petrucione (1986) 45.
[129] Petrucione (1986) 45.

meaning to sound, orders it, unifies it into a coherent narrative that can justify the greatest violence with the highest hand. In Chapter Three, all the many sounds of *Pythian* XII were unified in the κεφαλᾶν πολλᾶν νόμον "*nomos* of many heads."[130] The gratuitous and wanton violence of Perseus and the death of the maiden Medusa find a kind of justification, or at the very least an artistic resurrection, in the creation of the song of the *aulos*. In like manner, the *nomos basileus*, the king song, leads (ἄγει) as a χορηγός would, gesturing with uplifted hand (ὑπερτάτᾳ χειρί) to its mortal and immortal audience, and gives a purpose or justification to the most violent story of all—the story of Herakles' homelessness. As the severed head of Medusa became the instrument of her immortality, a prosthesis worn by the musician, so the severed limbs of the groom gnawed and cracked by the prancing horses become the drum beats of this king of all songs.

vii. Conclusion

It is not the mere fact of non-biological connection that makes adoption and synthesis successful. It is the recognition and valuation of the uniqueness of the other. Herakles is, at a practical level, treated as the child of Amphitryon. But, this treatment does not take into account who Herakles is. Until a story is told that grounds him in Olympus and binds him in marriage to undying Youth, thereby neutralizing his role as the inexorable hands of time, he wanders recklessly through the world taking out his aggression on whomever he encounters. He is not a comfortable hero. While his post mortem redemption offers a kind of hope through mysticism and Orphic cult, he remains in his mortal life an example of the terror of alterity. In his frustrating generosity, Pindar forces us to encounter both halves of Herakles. The gruesome details he includes in the *Nomos Basileus* fragment and fragment 81, the shadows that hang over

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[130] *P*.12.23.

Nemean I, Amphitryon and Alkmena's terror, all these things belie the evident delight Pindar shows at Herakles' wondrous *phua* and leave us wondering what we are supposed to make of him. But, the poet remains silent. The poem trails off in indirect statement. We are left to write our own ending, inheritors of Pindar's verse, adoptive parents of his orphaned poems.

Conclusion

There is something both horrifying and wonderful about excellence for Pindar. It is both desirable and detestable. While it is appealing to look at Pindar's mythical adoptions and imagine a world where openness to alterity always leads to peace and felicity, where, given the right story, the other can always be harmonized with the self, such a reading would be tragically dishonest to the complexity of Pindar's imagination. Despite the poet's best efforts to harmonize the violence of Perseus and Herakles with the elegance of encomiastic verse, we are left feeling the gaping emptiness left by their victims' deaths. Repeatedly, the poet's "I" intrudes into his poems to remind us that some aspects of heroism are best left in silence. ἀπό μοι λόγον / τοῦτον, στόμα, ῥῖψον "Throw that story away from me, mouth!" exclaims the singer of *Olympian* IX.[1] And after Bellerophon has successfully tamed his half-brother and conquered the wild Chimera and Amazons, Pindar remarks διασωπάσομαι οἱ μόρον ἐγώ "I will remain silent about his fate."[2] In fragment 81, the speaker turns from praising Geryon to remark τὸ δὲ μὴ Διί / φίλτερον σιγῷμι πάμπαν "but what is not dear to Zeus I would be altogether silent about,"[3] thereby justifying his decision not to defame explicitly the demigod Herakles.

With the exception of Opous and Lokros, Pindar's heroes are the kinds of men Auden describes in "The Shield of Achilles:"

> That girls are raped, that two boys knife a third,
> Were axioms to him, who'd never heard
> Of any world where promises were kept,
> Or one could weep because another wept.

[1] *O*.9.35-36.
[2] *O*.13.91.
[3] fr. 81.15.

So caught up in their own displacement and homelessness, they forget the possibility of mimesis, forget that one can weep for the grief of another, experiencing the sorrow of the other in one's own body. As such, they are glorious failures, men of power and violence, who shape and destroy the natural world and its inhabitants through their excessive selves while simultaneously failing to participate in that most human of instincts—compassion. Instead of recognizing in their alterity and their unique excellence a reason to love and honor the alterity of the other, they follow the paths of violence, denying the precious contribution of the other, insisting on only one way of being—their own. By contrast, Pindar creates a chimeric poetics, one that can contain both admiration for the violence of his heroes and his clients while simultaneously rejoicing in other forms of life. Girls' choirs, pregnant teenagers, aging and childless kings, victims of sexual violence, ethnic minorities, poets—the nonviolent and vulnerable—are all crucial members of Pindar's poetic world. And in the desolation and *eremia* that Herakles and Bellerophon create, we come to prize the quiet homes and gardens of Geryon and the Gorgons. Pindar's poetics of alterity begs his powerful clients to diverge from the hubristic paths they follow; it entreats them to hold space for difference by implying that such diversity is ultimately a benefit to them. Adopting Opous does not make Lokros weaker; needing a poet does not detract from Herakles' excellence. Openness to alterity—by which I mean not the calculated attempt to integrate, change, and manipulate the other, but rather acceptance of otherness in its unpredictability and risk—is, in Pindar's mythology, a source of strength.

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