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Source: *Poetics Today*, Vol. 5, No. 2, The Construction of Reality in Fiction (1984), pp. 377-397

Published by: Duke University Press

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1771937>

Accessed: 30-07-2018 16:15 UTC

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THE EPINICIAN SPEAKER IN PINDAR'S
FIRST OLYMPIAN
Toward a Model for Analyzing Character
in Ancient Choral Lyric¹

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How does Pindar, fifth century B.C. composer of encomia for victors (epinicia), depict the actions of the figure of the poet in his odes? How do the depictions of this figure correspond to the actual activities of Pindar in the real world? What poetic argument is Pindar making by depicting the figure of the poet as he does?

These are some of the issues which I address in a longer treatment of the roles played and the rhetorical and linguistic devices used by what I call the Epinician (E-) speaker – the poet figure in the text, or poet-persona in the familiar phrase. In that work I distinguish social or external roles of the real poet, “Pindar,” from those inscribed in the text for the E-speaker; and I analyze the language used, the enunciation, of that speaker (Rubin: in progress).

This paper lays the groundwork for a portion of my study of the E-speaker in which I develop a model for describing the actions he performs, including his speech acts. In Part One I present my method for delineating the many roles that this figure assumes. Then, in Part Two, I apply this typology of roles to both the E-speaker and

1. I am grateful to the Center for Hellenic Studies, Trustees for Harvard University, for enabling me to work on Pindar at leisure using their splendid library, and to Bernard Knox, Director of the Center, for his encouragement on this project. For his thoughtful reading of this manuscript in its earliest stage and for invaluable and invigorating discussions about Pindar over the year at the Center (1981–1982), I would like to thank Andrew Miller. Mieke Bal of the Instituut voor Theoretische Literatuurwetenschap subjected my ideas to a careful and most valuable scrutiny. William Sale of Washington University gave me much critical and editorial advice in preparing the final draft.

The text I have used and to which the line numbers refer is by C. M. Bowra, ed. *Pindari Carmina* (Oxford 1947, 2nd ed.).

mythic figures within Olympian 1.² As a result of my study, extensive correlations between the mythic and non-mythic sections of the poet become clearly visible. These correlations, in turn, have an important bearing on the poetic argument: they allow Pindar to show a highly efficacious E-speaker attempting to alter reality for the victor he celebrates and commemorates and, in the process, for himself. He attempts this through his positive assumption of a diversity of speaker-roles. Of course, the way Pindar depicts the E-speaker in all his intensional roles has important implications for his own self-presentation in the real world; and in fact Pindar's composition of an ode is in itself a speech act having consequences in the extensional world.³

I. DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL: CONSTRUCTION OF SEVERAL INTENSIONAL SUBWORLDS

I begin by designating the traditional components of the epinikion: *encomium*, *myth* and *maxims*.⁴ In order to explore the relationship among these three components I first must constitute them from their dispersed manifestations in the text. From all the material

2. I have subjected several other odes, namely Isthmian 6, Olympian 6, Nemean 5, and Olympian 8, to a similar analysis of speaker roles, and have found that, even amidst material of great diversity, the model is applicable and leads to interesting findings. These will be reported in my book, which examines the epinician speaker as a dramatic personage (using my model as developed in this paper) and as the organizing enunciator and focaliser of the odes.

3. For a discussion of "narrative world" in literary studies see Doležel (1979a, Ch. III and 1982) and Pavel (1980); for the application of the terms "extensional" and "intensional" to literary texts see Doležel (1979b).

4. Earlier Pindarists grouped together all types of required praise — victor and victory, parents and ancestors, homeland and gods — under the heading *Programm*; Hamilton (1974: 4–8) offers a concise review of the scholarship on the traditional view of form in epinicia. Elroy Bundy, the major twentieth-century contributor to the study of the epinician genre (Bundy 1962 and 1972), tends to include everything in encomium (or *Programm*), and to see myth and other "digressive" material as foil for praise of victor. His writings do not reflect a concern with myths *per se*, which for him serve to provide paradigms for the laudator and laudandus — his two main types of epinician characters.

This view of myth as part of the poetic argument in favor of the victor is central to my thesis as well. Bundy formulates it in a radical manner (which has won him numerous attackers) when he writes, rather ingenuously, "there is no passage in Pindar and Bakulides that is not in its primary intent enkomastic — that is, designed to enhance the glory of a particular patron" (Bundy 1962:3). He states that his study of conventions points uniformly to this master principle. Thus he subordinates all other possible functions (such as writing excellent poetry or educating the public) to the function of glorifying the victor. His master principle would correspond roughly to four of my intensional functions combined: celebrating (a), commemorating (b), donating (i), and composing (l). There is no room in Bundy's laudator category for my speaker as competitor (h) or as manipulator of words (k) — except insofar as these functions contribute to the primary encomiastic intent.

that pertains directly to the victor and E-speaker I imagine a sub-world of the text EnW (for Encomium World). In Olympian 1 the inhabitants of this subworld are: the E-speaker, the victor Hieron, his horse Pherenikos, other poets around Hieron's table, and several divine figures (Zeus, the Muse, a guardian god). From the events of EnW I construct a skeletal narrative structure or plot line, having, in Ol. 1, the following elements: Hieron wins a chariot-race with his horse Pherenikos; the E-speaker feels obliged to garland him with a song; he wishes to sing of contests and bids himself do so; he composes this ode for Hieron; he prays for Hieron's continued victories; he states his wish to mingle with winners and excel in poetry throughout Greece.

It is obvious that EnW resembles the real world, RW, the historical world in which the poet named Pindar lived and celebrated the victories of actual contestants in the games. Though reconstructing the RW is not my primary focus here, my findings, as we shall see, do shed light on the role of Pindar in that RW. (We recall that "Pindar" designates the extensional or RW poet, while the poet figure of EnW is the E-speaker.)

From the mythic portions of an ode we can even more easily construct a subworld MW, radically different from EnW in some respects yet parallel in others. MW is even in some sense a part of EnW,⁵ and the differences and similarities contribute to the meaning MW has for the entire epinikion.

MW differs from EnW because it occurs in a different time and because its action is completed. For MW events, since they are located in the mythic past, verisimilitude is a weaker consideration than for EnW events, many of which the performance audience would have witnessed or heard about first-hand: EnW audiences would tend to reject any claims or descriptions which were too far-fetched. Moreover, since mythic agents have lived out their lives and attained (or not attained) their ultimate as well as proximate goals, cause and effect is more traceable in MW than in EnW. MW agents attain what can often only be anticipated or avoided by EnW agents. Parallelism between MW and EnW allows an audience to feel what outcome might eventuate if EnW operates on the same principles as MW, but such principles are not themselves as retrievable from EnW as they are from MW.

As far as similarities between the two subworlds, they occur in plot structures, character configurations and semantic domains. In all the odes the plot lines of MW offer partial parallels and counter-

5. Here I am indebted to Bundy (1962 and 1972), and also to Slater (1977), whose view of encomiastic poetry as "argumentation, structures of poetic argument for the end of glorifying the victor" (p. 195) is the clearest restatement to date of Bundy's "master principle."

parallels to the EnW plots.⁶ In numerous odes that I have examined the configuration of characters in MW reflects the configuration in EnW; and of course it is a primary goal of this paper to show that this is true for the mythic counterpart to the E-speaker. Moreover, semantically there is often an overlap between the two domains. For example, birth may occur as a motif in the plot of MW (Iamus' birth in Olympian 6, Athena's and the nesogony of Rhodes in Olympian 7, Ajax's birth in Isthmian 6), while the language of birth colors the figurative expressions of the EnW of those poems, or agonistic motifs and metaphors may suffuse both MW, usually in terms of heroic exploits seen as contests, and EnW.⁷ Correspondences between MW and EnW should not be forced: there is no reason to expect a one-to-one relationship, especially since the myth which gives rise to the epinician myth, and hence to the MW, predates the poem and can only be molded up to a point.⁸

Maxims, the third component of the epinikion, tend, among other functions, to enlarge the vision offered by EnW and MW. This function of maxims is the one which most concerns us here. Many of these universal statements pertain to the use of words and the winning of contests; hence the inhabitants of the Maxim Worlds (MaxWs) include, as in EnW, poets, victors, audiences, patrons, etc. Sometimes the reference is so general as to include epinician figures, but others as well; sometimes it is more restrictive. In either case, to apply the generalizations of MaxWs to EnW situations augments the meanings of those situations. Moreover, MaxWs, like EnW, have a mimetic relation to the RW. They pertain to the RW performance audience and to all subsequent audiences who may subscribe to the wisdom they offer. In addition, the E-speaker, who usually transmits these statements, tends to ground their wisdom in the past – in the tales of heroes. And so the principles of the maxims are compatible not only with those of EnW and RW but also of MW. All the maxims express the views of the E-speaker as he reflects on MW and EnW events. Consequently, once we construct MaxWs based on the maxims in a given ode we can also use the maxims in order to delineate roles taken up by the E-speaker in the EnW. Like MW,

6. Much of the scholarship on Pindar since the 1960's has dealt with verbal, semantic, metrical and dramatic features shared by MW and EnW; see especially Young (1968 and 1971) and Köhnken (1971 and 1974). Rubin (1978) is a study of plot correspondences between MW and EnW; there I introduce the notion of "felt absences" for empty slots in otherwise parallel EnW and MW narrative syntagms.

7. See Rubin (1978 and 1980). In my Columbia University dissertation (Walter 1972) I tried to address this issue of semantic coherence in the epinicia, focusing on Pythian 9.

8. Slater (1977 and 1983) criticizes Young and Köhnken for seeking "coherence" (based on cross-reference within a poem) without regard for the poetic argument. Greengard (1980) illustrates many formal repetitions which are not tied to theme, and emphasizes the multiple levels of cohesion in Pindaric odes.

MaxWs become incorporated in the poetic argument of the whole epinikion.

So far, I have described the three traditional components of an ode and constructed from them three types of subworlds: EnW, MW and MaxWs. If we now compare EnW of Olympian 1 with EnW of other odes, we find, as we might expect, many similarities. Such comparison enables us to expand the list of EnW inhabitants to include, for example, other competitors, the athletic trainer, audiences at the victory or at prior victories, the audience at the ode's performance, victor's family, the family member who commissioned the ode, etc. All these EnW inhabitants, including the E-speaker, engage in certain activities. From these activities we can abstract a list of roles played by inhabitants of the EnWs of a number of odes. If we consider only those activities engaged in by the E-speaker, we abstract the following speaker roles (those in quotes are metaphors):

- a. celebrator: includes "garlander," "master of ceremonies"
- b. commemorator
- c. intercessor
- d. interpreter
- e. preceptor
- f. advocate
- g. accuser
- h. competitor, "poet as athlete"
- i. donor, transmitter of a gift and of gratitude to the gods
- j. recipient of a gift and of favors from the gods
- k. manipulator of words, or "poet" in an aesthetic sense; user of rhetorical devices
- l. composer of this ode, "fabricator," "builder"
- m. performer(s) of this ode

Undoubtedly, the number of roles would expand if we considered the whole corpus of Pindaric odes, and included (under appropriate headings) all roles expressed metaphorically for the E-speaker. Most of the thirteen roles are unmarked as to value, though all tend to be positive for the E-speaker himself; nearly all can be correlated to one or more marked negative roles. A list of roles that have a negative value and are contrasted to those usually taken up by the E-speaker would include:

- neg. a. detractor, begrudger, withholder of praise
- neg. b. obliterator
- neg. c. improper intercessor or transgressor (of divine/human boundaries); misuser of divine connections
- neg. d. misguided interpreter, or distorter of a divine message
- neg. e. improper preceptor, corrupter
- neg. f. improper advocate or defender of someone undeserving
- neg. g. improper accuser or accuser of someone worthy
- neg. h. unsuccessful competitor, non-competitor

neg. i. improper donor, inadequate host, withholder of gifts; one who forgets or refuses to give thanks to the gods

neg. j. improper (e.g. undeserving) recipient of gifts; non-recipient of gifts

neg. k. improper manipulator, or misuser of words and rhetorical devices

neg. l. —

neg. m. —

The same procedure whereby I abstracted these sets of roles from a number of epinicia could be used to generate roles filled by the victor, members of his family, the various audiences, etc. In fact, some of the roles assumed by the E-speaker, notably preceptor, donor and competitor, are at times also played by other epinician figures. For example, the victor as well as the speaker consistently takes up the role of competitor and frequently that of donor — whenever the victory is explicitly seen as the victor's gift to the speaker. The patron is always donor because he gives the poet a fee. And the role of preceptor can be played by the trainer as well as by the E-speaker.

In most of his roles the E-speaker is the desiring subject (in the sense of the one aspiring toward a goal), while the victor is the object (the target of the action, the one celebrated or commemorated) or the recipient of the action (the one interceded for or interpreted to or given a gift). But the speaker too can be the object or beneficiary of his own actions. He can be the recipient of favors from others, such as the victor (his victory or hospitality), the family (their patronage), the gods (his talents, their favor). Thus we can see that the roles are on a higher level of generality than the specific characters who fill them, and that some roles are filled by more than one specific character.⁹

Most of the roles abstracted for the E-speaker are realistic in nature. That is, there are RW poetic functions to which these roles correspond, social functions of an epinician poet toward his patron and the victor and toward the divine and human audiences he is known to have addressed. In fact, of the thirteen positive roles enumerated, all but performer correspond to known RW functions of Pindar.

Thus we have observed two sets of correspondences — EnW from ode to ode, and EnW and RW for a given ode. At this point it is natural to wonder whether there are similar correspondences between EnW and MW, and especially between encomiastic and mythic figures. The logical way to organize any such correspondences is to ask if certain roles are shared by figures in these two discrete

9. Readers will recognize in my treatment of character the influence of Propp (1928) and Greimas (1973), though I find their systems too constraining for my purposes.

subworlds. My investigation of a number of odes has shown that there are indeed mythic figures who fill the same roles, or corresponding negative ones, as EnW figures. In particular, those roles enumerated for the epinician speaker are indeed evident in MW, as I will show in the following analysis of encomium and mythic figures in Olympian 1.

II. ANALYSIS OF OLYMPIAN 1

Pindar composed this ode for Hieron, prince of Syracuse, on the occasion of his victory in a chariot-race at the Olympian Games of 476 B.C.¹⁰ As we proceed through the ode, following its textual order, we shall notice that occasionally the E-speaker departs from the diegetic mode and directly addresses mythic figures, just as he habitually addresses epinician figures in numerous poems. When he does this for a mythic character, he is entering MW linguistically in one of his many capacities (that is, as celebrator, commemorator, etc.). I describe his activities during these departures from diegesis within my analysis of E-speaker roles in Olympian 1.

In his statements and his actions the E-speaker plays most of the roles enumerated above. After the opening priamel,¹¹ he admonishes his own heart [*philon êtor*] (4ff.): “if, dear heart, you wish to celebrate great games, look no further [. . .] for a contest mightier than Olympia.” The address culminates with a focus on the loftiness of the Olympian games and of the victor Hieron, who “plucks the peak from all virtues” (13). In all these lines the speaker occupies the role of celebrator (a).

The E-speaker has not yet begun his ode (Pindar has). He will do this in 18–19, “take down the lyre.” He moves meditatively from generalities [*ariston men hudôr*] to the present occasion. In doing so he is praising the victor, Hieron. He is thus occupying the role of celebrator (a). But since he is presumably meditating, not celebrating, he cannot call attention to his function, as he does in other odes where he speaks, for example, of pouring libations or serving as master of ceremonies at a banquet. As one who offers advice, he is also occupying the role of preceptor (e); we can say this even when, as here, he is advising himself.

The E-speaker’s formal opening of his ode, the words “take down the lyre,” are also self-admonishing and thus sustain the role of preceptor. They introduce two other roles as well, composer (1) and

10. I have made no attempt to discuss either textual problems or problems of interpretation currently under stormy debate with reference to this ode (see Gerber 1982, Köhnken 1983 and Slater 1983, with citations to the extensive scholarly literature on Olympian 1).

11. On Pindar’s use of the priamel, a focusing device whereby several possible topics are considered but only one chosen, see Bundy (1962:I.5ff.) and, more recently, Race (1981 and 1982). Race, using Bundy’s approach, succeeds in demystifying the opening of Olympian 1.

performer (m), here combined into one, as if the E-speaker were an oral-improvisatory poet (in ironic contrast to Pindar, whose previously written poetry is being performed by the Chorus). The E-speaker then refers obliquely to his social obligation (i), saying that the *charis* of Olympia and of his horse Pherenikos have “put his mind under the yoke of the sweetest thoughts.” When he adds that Hieron “takes delight in horses, and his glory shines forth,” he is celebrating and commemorating the victor by setting forth his *kleos* (a and b).

Next, in a maxim, the speaker observes that “tales embroidered with dappled lies deceive” [*dedaidelmenoi pseudesi poikilois exapatōnti muthoi*] and he claims that Grace [*Charis*] “fashions all things soothing [*meilicha*] to mortals, and, adding honor besides, devises that often even the unreliable [*apiston*] is relied upon [*piston*].” This pessimism about the power of stories (especially charming ones) to mislead and this acknowledgment of mortal susceptibility to misleading words brings the speaker to affirm the proper and the safest way to speak of the gods: “it is seemly [*eoikos*] for a man to say noble things [*kala*] about the gods, for the blame is less” [*meiōn gar aitia*]. This pair of maxims contains implicit self-instruction (e) and in fact the E-speaker proceeds to obey the principle he has just espoused, at the same time calling attention to his departure from earlier (improper and blasphemous) singers: “I shall sing you, son of Tantalos, differently from the earlier ones” [*se d’antia proterōn phthegxomai*]. He implies that he will celebrate and commemorate Pelops (a and b), not blame him; in fact, his use of direct address to the dead Pelops produces the fiction that he is the poet “commissioned” to celebrate and commemorate the hero. By distinguishing himself from earlier tellers and by undermining his rivals¹² the E-speaker appropriates the role of interpreter of this ancient tale (d), shaping and defining this role as he assumes it.

The prior version which he tells in order to repudiate it involved accusing the gods of cutting up, boiling, and devouring the human flesh of Pelops, in other words, of being gluttonous [*gastrimargon*]. The speaker, adhering to his own dictum to speak well of the gods, stands back [*aphistamai*] from this blameworthy account and explains Pelops’ disappearance during the banquet in another way (d). In his next maxim he warns (e) that profitlessness [*akerdeia*] often befalls slanderers [*kakagorous*] (neg. f) who misinterpret events (neg. d). Condemning Tantalos (g) for not digesting his great success [*megan olbon*] but instead seizing ruin [*atê*] with satiety [*koros*], the speaker argues (g) that Tantalos deserved his double

12. For a discussion of this “rival-motif” in epinicia see Bundy (1972:91). He cites a number of such comparisons with other eulogists either through the use of the rhetorical *tis*, “someone,” as here and as in 01.2.110, or through simple negative as in 01.13.44.

punishment – the torment of eternally longing to cast from his head the stone that hung over it, and his son’s deprivation of immortality. For Tantalos exemplifies “a man” [*anêr tis*] who hopes in his actions to escape divine notice and who miscalculates [*hamartanei*].

The statement which returns us from MW to EnW is characteristically self-preceptive (e). “I must crown that man [*stephanōsai keion . . . chrê*] to a horseman’s tune”¹³ shows the social obligation to the victor (i). The E-speaker celebrates Hieron (a) in terms reminiscent of the proem: “I believe that we shall never embroider in the shining folds of song a host more familiar with noble things and more lordly in power.”¹⁴ He then addresses the victor, as he had Pelops earlier:

A god as overseer, having this as his care, tends your concerns, Hieron; and if he does not desert you soon, I hope for an even sweeter victory that, finding a helping pathway of words, I shall celebrate with my swift chariot as I come beside the brightest hill of Cronus. For the Muse nourishes with valor the strongest missile.

This hope for an even sweeter future victory is virtually an intercession (c), while the chariot metaphor suggests competition (h). The speaker, like Hieron, is a recipient of divine favor (j) whose connection to the Muse suggests a role of interpreter of the divine (d). In the ensuing maxim he asserts that the “ultimate culminates for kings” (i.e., a king’s culmination is the farthest one can go toward blessedness) and follows this with the advice to “peer no further” (i.e., ask for no higher joy); he both asserts and advises as preceptor (e). “May you walk on high for this time” expresses further advice to Hieron (e) but perhaps also intercession (c). The wish to consort as a poet with prize-winning athletes [*nikaphorois . . . homilein*] emphasizes the social poet-victor bond, a bond of guest-friendship, of mutual giving and receiving (i and j). Finally, the poem closes with the speaker’s further wish that he may consort with victors “while being foremost in song [*prophanton sophiai*] everywhere throughout Greece,” and this brings forth his role as competitor in poetry (h).

Thus, as we see, the E-speaker fulfills all of the positive roles enumerated above. He also designates other EnW figures: “earlier ones” [*proteroi*] against whom he sings and, more specifically, “someone of the envious neighbors” whose account he refutes. The *proteroi* (who include the envious neighbor) misinterpret myths (neg. d) and also slander (neg. g). They blame the gods rather than

13. Köhnken (1974:203–206) argues that *hippios nomos* (“a horseman’s tune”) refers to the theme of Hieron’s chariot victory. He thinks that Pindar’s primary motive for his innovations in the traditional myth is to adjust the story of Pelops as a *hippios nomos* to the special needs of Hieron’s present victory at Olympia.

14. This statement of unqualified praise in universal terms is what Bundy (1962:55ff.) calls a “categorical vaunt.”

praising them, for which the E-speaker characterizes them as blasphemers (perhaps neg. i).

We now turn to MW figures in Olympian 1 to see whether any of them assumes speaker roles. According to the E-speaker's narration, Tantalos, father of Pelops, was a mortal most honored by the gods. He even hosted a banquet for the gods and dined with them. At that banquet Poseidon fell in love with Pelops and carried him off to Olympos to become his beloved. Later, Tantalos stole nectar and ambrosia and gave them to his drinking companions, probably intending to make them immortal. He was punished with a burdensome, helpless afterlife, in which he endlessly desired to cast a mighty stone from his head. As an additional penalty for his affront the gods returned his son Pelops to the "brief-fated race of men." Pelops, now grown to manhood, is contemplating marriage to Hippodameia, daughter of Oinomaos; but before entering a risky chariot-race for her hand, he prays, alone in the darkness, to his divine benefactor Poseidon:

If at all, Poseidon, the dear gifts [*philia dōra*] of Aphrodite count in my favor [*charis*], shackle [*pedason*] the bronze spear of Oinomaos, bring me [*poreuson*] on the swiftest chariot to Elis, and put me within the reach of power [*kratei* [. . .] *pelason*]; for he has slain thirteen suitors now, and so he delays his daughter's marriage. Great danger does not come upon the spineless man [*analkin* [. . .] *phōta*], and yet, for those who must die, why, sitting in darkness, should one pursue a nameless [*anonumon*] old age, with no share of nobility, for nothing? As for me, I will undertake this exploit [*aethlon*]. And you — give me my means [*praxin philan*] (75–78, following Nisetich [see appendix]).

Pelops grasps words that would not go unfulfilled [*oud 'akratois ephepsato epesi*]. As a means of victory Poseidon gives Pelops a golden chariot and winged, unwearying horses. With these gifts Pelops wins the race, defeating the violent father and taking Hippodameia as his wife. He achieves, in addition, undying glory, a heroic name, and a grave near a much-frequented altar. These ultimate attainments suggest his eventual status as an object of cult worship, a status realized by the time of this ode and recorded in it. His destiny is commensurate with the heroic values which we hear him espouse in his prayer to Poseidon — a just reward for his decision to enter the risky contest.

The sequence of Pelops' prayer, Poseidon's immediate and favorable response, and Pelops' ultimate blessedness and godlike stature is paralleled by events in EnW. A number of Pindarists have made interesting observations to this effect (notably Bundy 1962:II.91, n. 125 and Köhnken 1974 espec. 205–206).

In a recent commentary on Olympian 1 Gerber concisely and convincingly summarizes the analogies between Pelops and Hieron:

Poseidon gives Pelops a golden chariot and timeless horses because of his love for him (87) and a god acts as a guardian of Hieron because of his concern

for him (106–107). Pelops and Hieron have a mutual knowledge of *ta kala*, i.e., of what is honorable and noble, and a mutual awareness that this knowledge must be combined with appropriate deeds, if heroic stature is to be achieved (84 and 104). Pelops knows what is at hand (*hupokeisetai*, 84) is preferable to a distant and inglorious old age (82–83), and Pindar repeats this general outlook on life when he tells Hieron that the blessings which each day brings are best (99–100). Pelops realizes that darkness (83) attends a life lived without danger (81) and Hieron's fame shines forth (23) because of his boldness in the games (96). Pelops prays that Poseidon may grant him victory (78) and the language in which the prayer is cast reminds us of the victory which Hieron has just won (22) (Gerber 1982:xv).

All this parallelism suggests that, after his death, Hieron too will receive worship as a hero — an implied prophecy which was indeed fulfilled at Catana (Gerber 1982:xv).

Thus the parallels between Pelops and Hieron are extensive. Using the life-story of Pelops, the E-speaker praises and commemorates Hieron, implicitly mediating with the gods and pleading with men on Hieron's behalf. It has, however, gone unnoticed by Pindarists, with the single exception of Segal (1964), that Pelops is also an analogue of the E-speaker. Like Pelops, the speaker uses a swift race chariot to find his "helping pathway of words" (thus both are competitors, h). His means is a missile [*belos*] from the Muse, Pelops' is a chariot from Poseidon. Like Pelops, who himself resembles Ganymede, the speaker is a recipient of divine favor (j) and he is gracious in serving deity (i). Both hero and E-speaker pray, and in a modest fashion — modest, in that the speaker in his future prayer (epode 4) merely seeks to mingle with victors and be included in their hospitality, while Pelops prays to Poseidon in a private setting, so as not to demean the god, nor display their former intimacy. Thus both Pelops and the speaker respect their reciprocal bonds with deity and are intercessors (c, Pelops on his own behalf). Knowledge of what is noble [*ta kala*] characterizes both Pelops, who chides one who would remain "sitting in darkness, not sharing in all things noble" [*hapantōn kalōn ammoros*] and the speaker, who remarks that "a man had best say noble things [*kala*] about the gods" (36). Both are therefore preceptors (e).

Pelops and the E-speaker both use words to construct their own "anti-parallels" or foil, whom they accuse (g) of inadequacies. The speaker retells the Tantalos story, mistold by an envious neighbor (47). Other "earlier ones" [*proteroi*] who also mistold the Tantalos tale are comparable, in the myth itself, both to the losers whom Oinomaos has caused to perish and to those who, sitting in darkness, do not bother to compete (84–85) (neg. h). Pelops has distinguished himself from such inferior others, and so does the speaker — both assuming a competitor role (h). It is in his words [*epesi*] that Pelops is "not inefficacious, and the speaker too stands out from the others for his poetic and narrative skills. Both Pelops and the speaker

pinpoint the anonymity of their flawed competitors by referring to them with the indefinite pronoun *tis* (Pelops stresses this by using *anōnumon*, “nameless,” to describe their old age) and both associate their denigrated competitors with darkness (47: *kruphai* and 83: *en skotōi*).

Of all the parallels between Pelops in MW and the speaker in EnW, the most interesting and least noticed is their similar use of rhetorical devices to bring about certain desired effects. One such device is ring composition. Pelops frames his prayer to Poseidon with *philia dōra* (77) and *praxin philan didoi* (87). The speaker frames the myth with *lampei de hoi kleos* (23) and *to de kleos dedorke* (93–95)¹⁵ and frames the whole ode with an array of comparatives and superlatives (*ariston*, *thalpnoteron*, *pherteron* in the proem and *glukuteran*, *karterōtaton*, *to d’eschaton koruphoutai*, *prophanton sophiai* in the closing epode).¹⁶

Furthermore, in his argument on his own behalf Pelops uses two forms of persuasion characteristically used by the E-speaker: “history” (the fate of thirteen slain suitors; compare the speaker’s use of the mythic past) and “philosophy” or earthly wisdom (the “great risk” maxim; compare the speaker’s frequent use of maxims in all the epinicians).

Finally, in the sequence *pedason*, *poreuson*, *pelason* Pelops uses several rhetorical devices which mark his prayer as poetic: alliteration, homoteleuton, and grammatical anaphora. Although no speaker in the epinicia can avoid speaking in poetry, still the accumulation of poetic devices in Pelops’ prayer calls attention to his skill at manipulating words. Both Pelops and the E-speaker employ word-magic to attain certain ends, Pelops to intercede on his own behalf and the E-speaker to intercede for the victor and for himself.

The similarity between Pelops and the E-speaker become clearer when we contrast the two of them with Tantalos. Before his abuse of power, Tantalos was at the pinnacle of success, having connections with the gods and special favor (*charis*) from all of them (55–56: “If ever the watchers on Olympus honored any man, that man was Tantalos”) (j). Even so, Tantalos misinterpreted his own greatness

15. On Ring Composition as a structural technique in Pindar see Illig (1932:55ff.) and, more recently, Slater (1983), who reviews the extensive literature on this topic. On the chiasmus in 01.1.23 and 93–95 Köhnken (1974:200–201) remarks that the earlier passage (*lampei de hoi kleos*) describes Hieron’s glory which shines in Olympia, the city of Pelops, while the latter (*to de kleos dedorke*) describes the glory of Pelops which shines afar in the Olympian races. Young (1968:121–123) provides an elaborate diagram illustrating the poem’s symmetry.

16. Greengard (1980:86) notes that in 01.1 the “idea of the superlative, the utmost, binds the complex and contrived opening metaphors to the low-keyed and personal closing. The weight of the frame [. . .] rests on the syntax, in this case the plethora of comparative and superlative expressions.”

(neg. d), and never reflected upon the gods' munificence, never prayed to his benefactors (neg. c). He displayed no knowledge of what is honorable and noble [*ta kala*] and expressed no desire for heroic status.

In addition to all these general failings, Tantalos neglected to request permission from the gods to distribute nectar and ambrosia among his drinking companions, but simply took these immortalizing substances, hoping to escape divine notice (neg. c). This theft shows a misplaced desire to bring things beyond human grasp, lofty, ultimate goals, into mortal hands. Nor did Tantalos anticipate divine retaliation — a further misperception of divine principles (neg. d). Most important, he had the wrong sort of *philia* toward his *sympotai*; and, while there is no indication that he literally misled humans (neg. e), this is implicit in his improper gift to them (neg. i).¹⁷

Tantalos' crime is complex: it involves abusing his state of blessedness, his connection to the gods; giving mortals an inappropriate gift; and being gluttonous for the power to give this gift, the prerogative of the gods. Both his punishments suit this single crime. For his outrageous desires on behalf of himself, he is placed in a situation where there can be no desire and no future, no movement and no change. He is trapped in a static and burdensome afterlife. And for violating the boundary between humans and gods, he sees his son thrust out of Olympos. Part of a hero's ultimate attainment comes via his offspring, and Pelops' presence on Olympos indeed enhanced Tantalos' state of blessedness. Hence, deprivation of that immortality was as meaningful and as painful a punishment as the mighty stone.

Tantalos' career stands in three-fold contrast with the career of Pelops. They differ in their use of divine connections, in the appropriateness of their respective goals, and in the way the gods responded to their acts or requests (that is, in the quality of their respective afterlives). Both Pelops and Tantalos had power and access to the divine; Pelops felt more limited and hence prayed piously for aid, while Tantalos boldly stole, expecting to escape the gods' notice. Pelops sought proximate, modest goals, suitable to humans — victory in a chariot-race and marriage with Hippodameia. Tantalos, in contrast, sought to usurp divine power and to give mortals nectar and ambrosia. Pelops attained his goals (the victory leading to the marriage) and a generation of six sons excellent in their virtues (89), but also gained worship as a hero, a frequented tomb beside a much-visited altar. He is appropriately godlike after death, but not before. Tantalos, on the other hand, during his lifetime actively sought immoderate goals for himself (godlike power) and for his *sympotai*

17. Vernant (1977) discusses a comparable gift-by-deception in the Prometheus story. On Tantalos' misuse of divine gifts in 01.1 see also Segal (1964:215 & 217).

(the food of godlike existence); in contrast to Pelops he does not achieve his goals, but sees his son suffer loss of Olympos; and after death he is powerless and futile.

The E-speaker likewise has divine connections. But unlike Tantalos, he shows the proper *philia* in offering his gift of poetry, an appropriate form of immortalization, to the victor. And while Tantalos is ultimately reduced to helplessness, since he cannot cast off [*balein*] the mighty stone [*karteron lithon*] which Zeus suspends over his head after death, the E-speaker is given during his lifetime, the “mightiest missile” [*karterōtaton belos*], which assures an accurate cast and hence a measure of power and control in contrast to Tantalos’ helplessness.

The extensive contrasts between Tantalos and Pelops on the one hand, and Tantalos and the E-speaker on the other, accentuate the several points of similarity between Pelops and the E-speaker which we have already noted. Pelops and the E-speaker use their divine connections correctly through poetry and prayer. Their goals are appropriate to human beings. They want victory and glory, not stolen immortality. Their benefits are similar: the E-speaker is granted the missile of poetic power while Pelops is given the altartomb of the hero’s power to bless.

To summarize the parallels between Pelops and the E-speaker, we can now say that they both fill the following speaker roles: c, e, g, h, i, j and k. Tantalos fills the positive role of j (and this aligns him with them) and three negative roles: neg. c, neg. d and neg. i. Neg. c and neg. i contrast with both Pelops and the E-speaker (the improper donor, neg. i, offering a more striking contrast to the E-speaker), while neg. d contrasts only with the speaker, in his role as interpreter.

What can we infer from the extensiveness of these correspondences between EnW and MW figures? As stated already, some major differences distinguish the epinician and mythic subworlds. Most important, in MW action is completed, in EnW not. In MW, with verisimilitudinal constraints relaxed, miracles (such as Pelops’ transposition to Olympos) occur; EnW is, at least in its indicative statements, more realistic. Prayers in MW are regularly answered (Pelops’ prayer to Poseidon, for example); in EnW they are not. In MW rules of causality become clearly visible and give rise to the E-speaker’s assertions of universal principles; this is less true of EnW, where such assertions would, in any case, have less validity.

We have so far elucidated an elaborate metaphoric relation between two subworlds constructed (for analytic purposes) from the materials of the text. Now, having observed important differences between these two subworlds, we can examine their metonymic (that is, synecdochic) relation and ask: How do the analogies between MW and EnW, now made explicit, contribute to the poetic argument?

The E-speaker tells the myth digressively to an unspecified audience. He draws explicit inferences from it, such as expressed in the *anêr tis* maxim (“a man who hopes in his actions to escape divine notice miscalculates.”) His inferences draw support from the mythic exempla. He can use MW as a source of wisdom, for he claims a continuity between MW and EnW, a sharing of certain principles.

One such principle is the principle of fairness [*dikê*], implied in the maxim just quoted – the E-speaker’s explanation for Tantalos’ downfall. He did evil and therefore was punished. Pelops, on the other hand, did noble things and behaved piously, and Pelops received the ultimate in human rewards. For Pelops too the principle of *dikê* is in effect, at least in the E-speaker’s revised account. In the earlier account Pelops suffered undeservedly through the impiety of his father and the gluttony of a god; it is for that reason too, and not only because he wishes to speak well of the gods, that the E-speaker retells the tale as he does. He wants to illustrate the strength of the law of *dikê* in the mythic past.

The logic of the E-speaker’s thinking becomes quite clear. If the law of *dikê* was true in MW, as he has shown, then Hieron, if his guardian deity stands by him and if he does not “peer beyond,” will also attain ultimate rewards along with future victories. This is implied already by the many analogies between Hieron and Pelops (see the passage quoted above from Gerber 1982).

But what about the E-speaker himself – the focus of my study? He has manipulated how we view mythic figures and how we view the victor: we see them just as he presents them. He, on the other hand, is less direct and outspoken in telling us how he is presenting himself. We see him taking down the lyre, standing back from telling a worthless false account, competing for honors throughout Greece. He is somewhat cagey in his poses, and does not communicate to us how seriously we are to take him. When, however, we examine the roles he plays in light of roles taken up by mythic heroes, it becomes clear immediately that a voice outside the consciousness of the E-speaker is making parallels and contrasts *to some purpose*. That is the voice of Pindar, RW poet. Because it stands outside the E-speaker, he becomes objectified even while being designated “*egô*.” We (the audience) experience the E-speaker more as an object than as a subject. Pindar shapes him as he would any other epinician character, his identification with him notwithstanding.

Once we recognize that the E-speaker is objectified in the ode and is seen celebrating, commemorating, interpreting, instructing, competing, etc., then we can address an important question: For what purpose does Pindar objectify the *egô* in all its diverse roles? Naturally, it is in order to examine these roles, which mainly concern the use of words to effect changes in reality. One can examine each of these roles as a type of speech-act directed at a divine or human

addressee. What, Pindar is asking, are the chances that the E-speaker will be efficacious in each of his diverse roles?

By setting the speaker up as an analogue of Pelops and Tantalos Pindar suggests an answer to that question: the speaker, like Hieron, will achieve his desires. His prayers, which followed self-prescribed lines ("to speak well of the gods"), will, like the prayer of Pelops, be favorably answered. Why? because of the principle of *dikê*. The speaker is just and deserving in his manner of praising, his choice of subjects, his use of his god-given poetic skills; therefore he will receive his due reward. Moreover, unlike the envious neighbor and other earlier story-tellers, *he* is setting the mythic record straight. He is thereby contributing to *dikê*, since mythic heroes like epinician ones deserve the proper credit, whether it be praise or blame. And what would be the just rewards for the speaker's efforts? Surely, for the victor he celebrates to win proximate rewards, such as future victories, and ultimate rewards such as blessedness and eternal acclaim; and for himself to gain proximate rewards, such as the opportunity to mingle with victors and shine in poetry throughout Greece, and perhaps such ultimate rewards as Pelops attained. The speaker will attain his immediate goals if his poetry, like Pelops' prayer to Poseidon, is efficacious. If his verse persuades human audiences (contemporary or subsequent), they may bestow on the E-speaker, as well as on the victor, everlasting acclaim [*kleos*]. Moreover, ultimate rewards may be in store for him if the gods grant him his pleas.

CONCLUDING REMARKS, THEMATIC IMPLICATIONS FOR THE POETIC ARGUMENT

From this study of Olympian 1 it has become clear that frequently mythic personages partake of the same roles as the epinician speaker. When it is in efficacious or inefficacious use of words or of poetic actions that a mythic figure is engaged, this allows the speaker to augment his direct statements on the topic of poetic efficacy. Thus the way he characterizes and depicts mythic counterparts allows him to express feelings and beliefs and hopes about his own craft, his poetry, and its potential influence. These ideas would either not lend themselves to direct expression or, if expressed directly, would have less force than when presented via analogy. By using indirect expression, the speaker avoids hubris and a personal specificity which would reduce his statements as a desiring subject to the level of the trivial. The parallels with mythic counterparts enlarge the role of the E-speaker and allow an exploration of the whole theme of poetic efficacy.

To show that MW figures offer partial parallels to EnW ones and that this is true of mythic speakers as well as mythic victors is to argue that Pindar inscribes into epinician myth his own concerns

Turn 2 Grace, the very one who fashions every delight
 for mortal men, by lending her sheen
 to what is unbelievable, often makes it believed.
 But the days to come
 are the wisest witness.
 It is proper for a man
 to speak well of the gods—
 the blame will be less.
 Pelops, I will tell your story
 differently from the men of old.
 Your father Tantalos
 had invited the gods to banquet
 in his beloved Sipylos, providing
 a stately feast in return
 for the feast they had given him.
 It was then Poseidon seized you, (30–40)

Counterturn 2 overwhelmed in his mind with desire, and swept you
 on golden mares to Zeus' glorious palace
 on Olympus, where, at another time, Ganymede came also
 for the same passion in Zeus.
 But after you had disappeared
 and searchers
 again and again
 returned to your mother
 without you, then one of the neighbors,
 invidious, whispered
 that the gods had sliced you
 limb by limb into the fury
 of boiling water,
 and then they passed
 morsels of your flesh
 around the table, and ate them. (41–51)

Stand 2 No! I cannot call any of the blessed gods
 a savage: I stand apart.
 Disaster has often claimed the slanderer.
 If ever the watchlords of Olympus
 honored a man, this was Tantalos.
 But he could not digest
 his great bliss — in his fullness he earned the doom
 that the father poised above him, the looming
 boulder which, in eternal
 distraction, he strains to heave from his brow. (52–58)

Turn 3 Such is the misery upon him, a fourth affliction
 among three others, because he robbed
 the immortals — their nectar and ambrosia,
 which had made him deathless,
 he stole and gave
 to his drinking companions.
 But a man who hopes
 to hide his doings from the gods
 is deluded.

is the highest good a mortal knows.
 I must crown him now
 to the horseman's tune,
 in Aeolian rhythms,
 for I believe
 the shimmering folds of my song
 shall never embrace
 a host more lordly in power
 or perception of beauty.
 Hieron, a god is overseer
 to your ambitions, keeping watch,
 cherishing them as his own.
 If he does not abandon you soon,
 still sweeter the triumph I hope (99–109)

Stand 4 will fall to your speeding chariot,
 and may I be the one to praise it,
 riding up the sunny Hill of Kronos!
 The Muse is tempering her mightiest arrow for me.
 Men are great in various ways, but in kingship
 the ultimate crest is attained.
 Peer no farther into the beyond.
 For the time we have, may you continue to walk on high,
 and may I for as long consort with victors,
 conspicuous for my skill among Greeks everywhere. (110–116)

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