IMAGINING THE NORTH

THE HYPERBOREANS AND EXOTIC THAUMATA IN EPINIKIAN POETRY

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Pindar, *Pythian* 10 (28-30)

ὄσις δὲ βροτὸν ἔθνος ἀγλαίας ἀπτόμεσθα,
περαίνει πρὸς ἔσχατον πλόον·

ναυσὶ δ’ οὕτε πεζὸς ἴὼν <κεν> εὖροις
ἐξ Ὑπερβορέων ἄγωνα θαυμαστὰν ὀδὸν.

Pindar, *Pythian* 10 (28-30)
The Hyperboreans and exotic θαύματα in epinikia
Abstract

The thesis considers the Hyperborean imagery as an instance of the device of the exotic thauma (wonder-inducing scene or object), which is specific to the genre of the victory ode (epinikion). The study tests the hypothesis that exotic thaumata lend a special kind of freedom to the poet by postulating a geographical domain that, by being removed spatially and temporally, allows the poet a protected form of praise for problematic recipients, such as the laudandi reges (royal honorees), by using and modifying Apolline elements. This hypothesis is tested on three particular victory odes, considered in their historical context.

The focus of the discussion will be on the Hyperboreans, the mythical northern ethnos on the fringes of the world, whose presence in the victory odes offers an unusual resource of extravagant praise of dynastic figures. The thesis examines the innovative potential of the Hyperborean thauma: their ‘disruptive’ presence in the epinikia prompts alterations to the established mythical narratives. The thesis includes a presentation of early source material for the Hyperboreans, an analysis of Pindar’s Pythian 10 and Olympian 3, as well as a discussion of Bacchylides’ ode 3.
The Hyperboreans and exotic ὑματα in epinikia
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Introduction

This thesis came about from a fascination for the concept of remoteness in the epinikia, and how its peripheral insights were so far removed from us in time and space that they at first glance appear unattainable. Whether a Pindaric ode is archaic, as it appears to us, or contemporary, as it was to the awestruck Hellenes present at its performance, its potent peripheral imagery is never easy to unravel. And yet, its poetics of ποικιλία (variegation and movement), combined with our remoteness and estrangement from it, still awakens our curiosity and ignites the desire to understand the power behind these exoticisms that initially appear too strange or to alien to grasp. One of these poetic exoticisms is the Hyperboreans, and Pindar was my first guide into their peregrine north.

Leslie Kurke, remarking on the abundancy of Pindar’s spatial imagery, invites us to think about spaces as conceptual wholes, and to ask ourselves where his many paths lead, whether they are historical or metaphorical. Pindar’s tenth Pythian ode opens the θαυμαστός (wondrous) path to the Hyperborean realm, which, in his own words, is accessible ναοσὶ δ’ οὐτε πεζὸς ἰῶν, i.e., “neither by ship nor on foot” (P. 10.29). Pindar stresses this inaccessibility, but in the very next line he does the impossible and exposes the secluded world of the Hyperboreans. It is this epinikion, perhaps the earliest in his corpus, that represents the first vivid exploration of the Hyperborean utopia – a privileged existence belonging to an ἐθνος that is situated beyond the axis of normality, and whose members enjoy superhuman constancy in their euphoric revelry as well as the favour and presence of their god. Pindar’s surprising insight leads us to further questions, such as why the poet would take such great care to postulate the limitations of mortal men (P. 10.29-30), only to immediately disregard his own admonitions and allow us a peregrination into the inaccessible Hyperborea. And likewise, what kind of authority, contained in the peripheries of the world, did Pindar seek for his ode? In order to express the potency and connotative landscape of exotic thaumata, I quote Herbert Hoffman who explains the Greek associations attached to various orientalisms (or what I would call exotic thaumata) that often figure on ancient vases:

[…] like the heroes themselves, they are first and foremost inhabitants of that mythical "Other " time and space that signified the abode of the gods, the heroes, and the departed. They are there to establish the setting, so to speak. Like banqueting Centaurs and satyrs, banqueting barbarians belong to the topsyturvy and uniquely Greek world of phantasmagoric irreality created by the junction of backward-extended time (Golden Age) with outward-extended space (Hyperborea). This mythopoetic never-ever

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3 The tenth Pythian ode is the earliest dateable epinikion in Pindar’s collection, and was written for the occasion of Thessalian victory in the 22nd Pythian contest. Cf. Σ Pind. P. 10, inscr.
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land corresponded to the very opposite of the present Here and Now, and to the Greeks, as to most others before and since them, it defined the "Other" world.\(^4\)

I argue that one of the functions of exotic thaumata, among which I count the Hyperborean thauma, is to provide the poet with a scene that is far enough removed in space or time so as to allow a tailored expression of praise to a laudandus (honoree) that requires special circumspection, such as for the laudandi reges in dynastic odes. Indeed, the concept of extremes seem to be the natural concern of dynasts: τὸ δ’ epsilon κορυφώτατα βασιλεία. Μηκέτι πάπταινε πόρσιν. “The extreme is crowned by kings. Do not look any further” (*O.* 1.113-14). By incorporating such an exotic thauma into the epinikion, which often requires innovation and modification of established mythemes, the poet is more free to provide the laudandus with praise that would otherwise be considered as problematic by transferring it into radically alien time and space. The vessel that provides the pathway into this venue is the mythical hero, through whom Pindar is able to tie the experience to the laudandus.

Inasmuch as the mythological material is made individually pertinent to the dynast or his clan, the exotic thauma does not appear to be an exclusively generic feature. I believe that the praise of dynasts belongs to a category that requires especially meticulous praise, which would account for the conspicuous use of the Hyperboreans in dynastic epinikia. It is no simple task to exalt a mortal man and praise his excellence in the Panhellenic games; this is evident from Pindar’s careful portioning of praise and reminders of mortal limitations,\(^5\) but to do so for one who is already part of a prominent (and perhaps problematic) elite would be an even greater challenge. This is especially true in the early 5\(^{th}\) century Greece, which was a period filled with growing tension between flourishing egalitarian ideologies and deep-rooted elitist tendencies. Therefore, following the two introductory chapters, I will first focus on elucidating the dynastic factor in my analysis of the three epinikia that feature the Hyperboreans prominently (firstly Pindar’s Pythian 10 and Olympian 3, then Bacchylides’ ode 3). In particular, I will attempt to elucidate the different socio-political interests of the laudandi reges (such as connections between the Aleuadai and Pythian authorization in Pythian 10 and the ‘Apollonification’ of the Olympic games in Olympian 3) and how this connects them to the exotic thauma of the Hyperboreans.

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5 On flux and balance in the human condition, see *O.* 2.18-22, 33-4; *O.* 12.10-12a; *P.* 2.50-2; *P.* 3.105-6, *P.* 8.92-4.
1. Hyperborean fascination: early source material and depictions

1.1 Hyperboreans in the epinikian corpus

It is within the epinikian corpus that we get the first as well as the last substantial taste of the Hyperborean realm in poetry. Pindar refers to them explicitly thrice in his epinikia (O. 3, P. 10 and I. 6), in two of which they play a large part in the mythical narrative, and once more in a paean (pae. 8, which describes the succession of four consecutive temples of Delphi). The Hyperborean presence in the epinikian corpus, although considerably fragmented, is conspicuous in view of their rarity in other authors. This small Hyperborean collection of Pindaric epinikia is further supplemented by one crucial occurrence in Bacchylides’ ode 3 as part of a climax in the mythical narrative. This function comes across as characteristic of their role in the epinikia, namely that their presence elicits a decisive change in the mythical narrative, with alterations to chronology, transpositions of characters, and other forms of innovation that disturb the established mythic fabric. Although relatively few and confounding, these are the first significant appearances of the Hyperboreans in archaic and classical literature. In fact, their ostensible paucity in early Greek literature is surprising, if one takes into account the rich imagery provided by Pindar in P. 10 as well as the imaginative potential of their exoticized space.

Admittedly, in the fifth century we observe an increase of interest in the Hyperboreans as a θεύμα. Although they initially appear to be favoured in poetry (epinikians) and drama, they later became a controversial topic in ethnographical discourses, most significantly in Herodotus, due to differing opinions about their actual existence. In the classical period, one finds occurrences in a comedy by Cratinus (Deliades fr. 22) and two tragedies of Aeschylus (Libation Bearers 373; Prometheus Unbound fr. 179), as well as references to magical Hyperborean individuals in works of Plato and Aristotle. The earliest substantial treatments of Hyperborean material, however, appear to be overall lyrical and are found in the poetry of Alcaeus (307c), Pindar, and Bacchylides.

1.2 Early source material and the establishment of the mytheme

To acquire a better understanding of the Hyperboreans and of what mythical implications and poetical impact they carried, I begin by examining the earliest literary testimonia to uncover the development of this exotic thauma from its earliest sources to Pindar. The earliest literary

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6 The Hyperborean account in Pythian 10 is extensive and highly vivid, elsewhere their presence is more secondary. The Hyperboreans also figure in ethnographical excursions, cf. Hdt. 4.36, Paus. 5.7.6-9, 10.5.7-9; Strab. 15.1.57, Diod. Sic. 2.47.1-6, Ael. NA. 4.4, 11.1.


8 Simonides, an epinikian poet, was also said to have written poetry about the Hyperboreans. Cf. Simonides (570 PMG).
source for the Hyperboreans is an epic fragment. This pseudo-Hesiodic fragment (150 M.-W) dates back to the second half of the 6th c. BC and belongs to the highly fragmented work known as the Catalogue of Women. This work can be appreciated as a systematized genealogic map of the Greek tribes and their demigod ancestors, a structure strongly resembling the hierarchization of gods and personified phenomena in the Theogony. It is in our present context noteworthy that the fragment does not establish any Greek or divine ancestral ties to the Hyperborean ξόνος. This particular fragment, often labelled as a περίοδος γῆς, contains a treatment of the Inochide genealogy of Phineas in which the Hyperboreans figure as part of a geographical frame. This is similar to their function in Aeschylus’ Prometheus Unbound (fr. 197) where they are part of Prometheus’ travel descriptions to Hercules (reminiscent of the instructions to Io in Prometheus Bound 793-823). They constitute elements in an elaborate periegesis, a geographical tour over peripheral places that are hard to reach and thus imply a vast or strenuous journey. In this fragment, the periegesis reveals in detail how the brothers Zetes and Kalaïs, Argonauts and sons of Boreas, chase the Harpies to the limits of the world to help the tormented Phineas. There is no periegesis in the corresponding episode in Apollonius’ Argonautica (Apoll. Rhod. 2.262-300), which mentions only the Strophades by name, the islands where Iris, messenger to the Gods, persuaded the Boreads to relent their attack and accept the Harpies’ defeat.

By contrast, the pseudo-Hesiodic fragment is far more informative than its Argonautica-counterpart and mentions several exotic ξόνεα, including the Hyperboreans, that were visited during the chase. It records the pursuit from its beginnings in Thrace as it continued south- and eastward to the Subterraneans,11 the Pygmies,12 the Black Men, Aithiopians and Libyans, all located in the large expanse to the far south of the Greek oikoumene. The pursuit then continued to the Scythians in the north-east, before finally reaching the Hyperboreans and the river Eridanos in the north. The chase then changes direction towards the far west as it moves from the Eridanos to Atlas, then to Mt. Aitna and ending with the fantastic Odyssean topoi closer to the Mediterranean and the Greek centre: Otrygia, the Laestrygonians, Dulichium, the Kephallenians, and the domain of the Sirens (Cat.

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11 Hesychios explains the κτρουσόνιοι as ‘the dead’, while scholia to Antiphon (fr. 47 DK) states that his “ὑμοί γῆς οἰκονόμες” are the Trogloodytes of Scylax, which are according to Herodotus analogous to the Hesiodic Ktrosóuníos, i.e., “cave-dwelling Aithiopians” (cf. Hdt. 5.183).

12 The Pygmies are another exotic thauma, first mentioned in Homer. They were initially located in the far south at the streams of Okeanos and were believed to be the end-point of the migration route of the cranes (grus grus) with whom the Pygmies are in a very hostile relationship. Cf. Il.3.5-8.
fr.150.30-5). The chase is rendered as cyclic and follows the peripheries of the earth in a counter-clockwise direction along the streams of Okeanos. Curiously, all of these stations are referenced in early hexameter poetry, except the northernmost point, the Hyperboreans.13

Within this fragment, most of the exotic tribes are attributed an explicit, divine ancestry. Firstly, the fragment establishes that the southern tribes (the Subterraneans, the Black men, the Aithiopians and the Pygmies) are the products of the union between Poseidon (Cat. fr.150.19 Ἐρικτύπου ἔσι γενέθλιας) and monstrous Gaia (Cat. fr.150.11 Γαῖα πέλασπα). Even the Laestrygonians belong to his stock (Cat. fr.150.26-7). The north-eastern Scythians are the progeny of Zeus through a mystical ancestor whose name has sadly disappeared in the lacuna.14 The Hyperborean ἑθνος, however, otherwise qualified as εὐπάπται and πολυσπερεῖς (Cat.fr.150.21-2) and placed in the middle of the periiegetic list, does not have any explicit divine progenitor. The lack of divine ancestry is surprising, as one would expect some genealogical relation to Apollo due to their association with him and his sanctuaries in Delphi and Delos being an essential part of their (eventual) mytheme. Notably, their presence initiates a more ameliorated geography which contrasts with the subsequent Odyssean topos that have antagonistic connotations. They are nurtured by γαῖα πολύφορβος in marked opposition to the Γαῖα πέλασπα who produced the southern tribes. This corresponds to the semantics of their name, which at that point fully determines who they are and shows that their location is intrinsic to their identity: they are a people who live (in a bounteous land) in a temperate climate beyond the wintry blasts of Boreas.15 Their inclusion in the enumeration of tribes and landmarks, emphasizes the extent of the brothers’ pursuit after the Harpies due to their location’s remoteness and fantasticality.

Furthermore, the fragment offers a couple of inferences besides the geography of the Hyperboreans; they are described as εὐπάπται and πολυσπερεῖς. The latter adjective implies that they are human, rather than otherworldly, given the formulaic πολυσπερεῖς ἄνθρωποι (II.2.804 and Od.11.365), while the former, infrequent in archaic literature, appears to be a qualitative or perhaps even a geographic gloss. There are approximately 18 occurrences of the

13 Black men (Hes. Op. 527 κόσμοι ἔνθρος, whom Helios visits in the winter); Aithiopians (II. 1.423, 23.206; Od. 1.22-3, 4.84, 5.282, 287); Pygmies (ll. 3.6); Scythians (their attribute ἄπαθαι is used of a nomadic, northern peoples in ll. 13.1.5); the Eridanos (Hes. Theog. 388); Dulcius (Od. 14.335), Laestrygonians (Od. 10.119), Ortygia (Od. 5.123); Sirens (Od. 12.39, 42, 44)
14 Merkelbach provides Skythes as the son of Zeus (Merkelbach & West (1990), Hesiodi fragmenta Selecta, p. 160), although he is only attested later as the son of Heracles (Hdtr. Hist. 4.10-11). The later tradition names Targitius as the son of Zeus and king of the Scythians (Hdtr. Hist.4.5). Another possible fit both metrically and genealogically would be Heracles, who was also named as progenitor of the Scythians in Hdt. Hist. 4.11
15 The Hyperborean name is probably a combination of Ἰνθός (beyond) and Βορέας (the North wind). For an etymological discussion of their name, cf. Casson (1920), “The Hyperboreans”, pp. 1-3. For the negative characteristics of the North Wind, see Aeschylus’ Ag. 192ff. See also Pindar Parthen. 2.17-20 (fr. 94b); for the Hyperboreans’ temperate climate and subsequent leisure, see Diod. Sic. 2.47.1-6.
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The adjective εὖπτος before the 4th century, 4 of which belong to the Pindaric corpus. They are used to describe exotic thaumata (such as the Amazons in O.8.47 and the lapith Phlegyas in P.3.8) and the contemporary dynasts of the far west (Theon of Akragas in O.3.39 and Arkesilas of Cyrene in P.4.2).\textsuperscript{16} Equine devotion appears to be a common feature of peripheral ethnoi, predominately those in the north and to the east of Archaic Greece. It is associated largely with the Thessalians, Thracians, Amazons and Scythians, and perhaps presumes a flat geography (appropriate for rearing horses).\textsuperscript{17} To summarize, the fragment offers no further information on the Hyperboreans other than their favourable climate as is indicated by the γαῖα φορβοῦσα [...] πολύφορβος (Cat.fr.150.22) and the semantics of their name. There is, furthermore, no indication of any pain- or ageless existence or Apolline favour, as we will see in Pythian 10, or of their ‘Hyperborean happiness’ (as seen in Aes. \textit{Libation Bearers} 372ff).\textsuperscript{18}

It is exactly their inaccessible geography and privileged religious association with Apollo that has caught the attention of classical authors. In a paean by Alcaeus preserved in the testimonia of Himerus (Alc. fr. 307c), Apollo is commanded by Zeus to travel to Delphi and preach justice and right for the Greeks. Apollo disregards his father’s commands and flies in his golden chariot pulled by swans over to the Hyperboreans, to whom he divulges words of right and justice for a whole year. The Delphians, when they learn that they have been deprived of Apollonian presence, revel and perform the newly invented paean to entice Apollo to visit them instead – which he eventually does, arriving in midsummer to all nature’s delight. This initial, temporary preference of periphery over Greek centre, exemplified in Apollo’s journey from Delos to the extreme north and back again to the navel of the world, is not a widespread topos in Apolline poetry and would seem a poetic invention of Alcaeus. However, in Pindar’s tenth Pythian ode we find a similar motif: at a celebration following a Thessalian victory in the Pythian games, Pindar presents Apollo as apodemic (i.e., absent from his shrine) and delighting amidst Hyperborean revelry (P.10. 34-41). He seems to have chosen to be entertained elsewhere rather than attend the celebrations in Delphi or Thessaly in honour of the victor, Hippokles.

1.3 The periegetic function

The allusion to the Hyperboreans in the \textit{Catalogue of Women} may be said to have a periegetic

\textsuperscript{16} The adjective εὖπτος makes is first recorded in this pseudo-Hesiodic fragment as an attribute of the Hyperboreans. Other early appearances can be found in the Hymn to Apollo (HhA.210) as part of the prooimian priamel in a description of Ischys, a lapith and contender for Koronis’ affections.


\textsuperscript{18} The chorus praises Electra’s wish as greater than gold and the great Hyperborean fortune. “ταῦτα μὲν, ὦ παῖ, κρέασσον χρυσοῦ, / μεγάλης δὲ τύχης καὶ ὑπερβορέου / μέζονα φωνεῖ· δύνασαι γάρ. (Aes. \textit{Lib.} 372-5).
function because it creates an extensive geographical backdrop to indicate the extreme extent of effort. This function reappears in Pindar’s *I.* 6.20-5 in a geographical doublet of the Hyperboreans and the Nile: the binary construction allows Pindar to display the immensity of Aiakid achievement by postulating a limit at two cardinal extremes; the furthermore north and south. Because the scope is limited by the furthermore worldly boundaries, the extent of their success becomes so immense and unavoidable that no one in the world can escape their notice, no matter how barbarous or alien-tongued (*I.* 6.25). A similar doublet can be found in *I.* 2.41-2 with the Nile and the Phasis river as limits for the laudandus’ generosity, or in the Homeric Hymn to Dionysus, where the extent of a geographical uncertainty is illustrated by the opposition of two poles.¹⁹ The context is a deliberation by Dionysus’ nautical assailants about what might be the young god’s destination; the suggestions, Egypt, Cyprus or the Hyperborea indicate the unpredictability – the massive divergence signifies that the god could be travelling anywhere between heaven and earth. Likewise the inclusion of the Hyperboreans in the extreme periegesis in the *Catalogue of Women,* according to Martin L. West, seems to extend the mythic scope and emphasise the orientalising elements in a way that concludes the *Catalogue’s* Inochid genealogy, which is already highly international in its constituents, in a climactic fashion.²⁰

Other than representing an isolated, northern extreme, the Hyperboreans figure as a northern endpoint on a connective, linear alignment, i.e., the north-south axis. Interestingly, many of Apollo’s travels seem to follow this pattern. In a passage that is comparable to the Alcaeus-fragment, the Homeric hymn to Pythian Apollo explains how Apollo, shortly after his birth, travels south in search of a place to install his oracle (HhApollo 215ff). He sets out from Mt. Olympus (located in Thessaly, a northern region of Greece) and ultimately chooses Delphi.²¹ Here, as well as in Alcaeus, Apollo seems to journey northward directly after his birth, and then southward to install his oracle in the Delphic sanctuary. The Homeric hymn does not necessarily exhibit any prolonged preference for extreme periphery, such as would result in his periodical apodemia among the Hyperboreans.²² Although this movement from north to south is contained within the Greek oikoumene and is also of a much smaller scale than the peregrination in Alcaeus’ paean, the geographical implications remain similar: both

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¹⁹ The sailor guessed three peripheral locations “Egypt, Cyprus, the Hyperboreans or beyond”, cf. Homeric hymn to Dionysos ll. 28-31.
²¹ In the Homeric Hymn to Delian Apollo, the Ionians gather to worship the god in Delos. In doing so they appear deathless and ageless in their revelry which is reminiscent of the Hyperborean episode in Pythian 10. “φαίη κ’ αθανάτως κ’ αγήρως ἐμμεναι αἰεί, / ὃς τόθ᾽ ὑπαντάς, ὢ τ’ ἱάως δῆθην εἰκόν” (HhApollo 151-2).
²² Alcaeus, on the other hand, keeps Apollo in the Hyperborea for a whole year. Himerius explains that the poem of Alcaeus was composed for the occasion of the Delphic Theophania as a means of recalling Apollo from the Hyperboreans, cf. Himer. *Or.* 48.10-11.
Mt. Olympus and Hyperborea are located in the north and demanded a journey southward for Apollo to fulfil his oracular mission. What is more, they both appear to be exclusive spheres, inaccessible to humans and originally preferred by Apollo to worldly alternatives.

1.4 The Hyperborea as the place to be: Apolline apodemia

Epidemia and apodemia denote the periodical presence/absence of specific gods from their temples. 23 This concept is particularly characteristic of the god Apollo, who was known for his seasonal absence from his Delphic shrine during the winter months in which his presence was reserved for the Hyperboreans. 24 The Apolline apodemic opportunity provided by the Hyperboreans brings us back to pseudo-Hesiodic fr. 150MW with its periegesis and genealogical descriptions. The close Poseidonic relation to the southern tribes emerges as a helpful literary device in the Odyssey. Poseidon’s affinity for the Aithiopians, one of his southern progenies, eventually enables the other Olympians to aid Odysseus in escaping from Calypso’s island. Their plan is played out while Poseidon was distracted at a feast in the land of the Aithiopians (Od. 1.19-27; 5.281-7). A similar effect can be observed in the Iliad where Zeus’ deliberately turns away from the bloody battle scenes to look towards the peaceful peoples of the north (II. 13.1-7), or when the Argonauts encounter Apollo rushing on his way to Hyperborea from Lykia (Apoll. Rhod. 2.669ff).

Divine absence or distraction may enable certain actions to take place without interference from certain divinities. The latter example from the Argonautica makes use of Apollo’s departure to enable proper measures for the erotic capture of Medea from Colchis in the following book. This is made possible by removing Apollo and invoking the Muse Erato. Apollo is not absent due to any indifference on his part, but because his temporary withdrawal leaves room for another, action-appropriate agent, namely Erato. 25 The divine apodemia, or even the redirection of divine attention, allows the action to continue in a way that would have been disrupted by their presence. But surely the Hyperboreans are not just a literary invention that grants the poet a simple means for removing Apollo Mousagetes, the god of music and dance, from the epinicia where he features so significantly. The connection between this peregrine people and Apollo has, in all probability, another function that needs to be explored.

23 “[…] This notion should not be taken in terms of gods in the act of changing place, but in terms of perspectival shifts in the mind of the believer,” according to Versenel (2011), Coping with the gods, p. 93. For divine apodemia/epidemia, see ibid., pp. 88-142 (esp. 90-3). See also Petridou (2015), Divine Epiphany, pp. 274-9.
24 Apollo was believed to be absent from his shrine in Delphi during the winter months, which he spent among the Hyperboreans. Cf. Scott (2014), Delphi, p. 13. The concept of apodemia/epidemia was most often restricted to oracular divinities, perhaps to provide a reason for when the oracle was incorrect, according to scholiasts to Callimachus. Cf. Σ Call. 2.1 (vol. ii, p. 49 Ρτ.) λέγεται δὲ τῶν μυστεριῶν θεῶν ταὶ θεῖαι καὶ ἐπιδημίαι καὶ ἐπιδημίαιν καὶ ἐπιθυμίαιν, καὶ ἐτάν μὲν ἐπιθυμίαιν, τὰς μυστεριὰς διδασκῆει εἶναι ἵπτον δὲ ἐπιθυμίαιν, γεωδείας.
1.5 Herodotus and the Hyperborean ritual

The religious aspect of the Hyperborean myth, i.e., the Apollonian access to their periphery and their connection to his sanctuaries in Delphi and Delos, is also treated in non-poetic sources. The earliest and most extensive treatment of the Hyperboreans can be found in Herodotus. In his account, the Delians as well as Hesiod and Homer (or rather Homer’s lost *Epigoni*) are listed as sources of information (*Hist. 4.32*). In thus enumerating his literary sources, Herodotus carefully avoids mentioning other works by archaic poets, perhaps in an effort not to discredit the legitimacy of the Hyperboreans as a people by contamination from poetic fantasticality.26 Instead, he (ironically) refuses to relate the story about the magical Hyperborean Abaris, who travelled the world flying on an arrow while starving himself (*Hist. 4.36*).27 Neither does he treat the work of Aristeas, a dead man turned crow turned man again who travelled the north while possessed by Apollo, as a reliable source.

Herodotus’ important additions to our knowledge of the Hyperboreans are the (hypothesized) details of their location and the description of their religious practises as known to the Greeks. He claims to have gotten the information about their ritual relay from the Delians, the cult that ultimately benefits from this arrangement (*Hist. 4.33*). According to them, the Hyperboreans send straw-wrapped sacrifices through the Scythians until the Adriatic Sea, and the sacrifices are then passed on by combined Greek efforts through Dodona, the oldest Panhellenic oracle, and Euboea before finally reaching the island of Delos and the sanctuary of Apollo.28 Herodotus says that the initial trip was made by a Hyperborean delegation consisting of two Hyperborean maidens and five boys called the Perpherees.29 These never returned to their own people after reaching Delos, and the Hyperboreans opted for the relay-method for all remaining sacrifices. The memory of the Hyperborean visit is still celebrated, says Herodotus, by the cutting of hair at their Delian tombs. The death of the Hyperborean emissaries, and whether they met a violent end or chose to remain on Delos for the rest of their lives, is never explained. However, he mentions that a consequence of the Hyperborean presence in Delos is the invention of ritual songs in honour of the maidens Opis and Arge, the first emissaries from Hyperborea, that were sung while collecting gifts from pilgrims and religious observers. This invention of hieratic song connected with the travels to and from the Hyperborea is reminiscent of the paean described in Alcaeus fr. 307c, where it is

27 It appears that Pindar knew about Abaris, cf. Pind. Fr. 270 (Maehler): Ἀβαρίν παραγενέσθαι κατὰ Κροίον τὸν Λυδικὸ βασιλέα.
28 Pausanias has a different account, in which the Athenians are the ones to pass the sacrifice over to the Delians.
29 Lewis Farnell paraphrases Ahren’s hypothesis that οἱ Υπερβόρειοι were a transmutation of Υπερφόροι/Υπερφέρεται through the equation of β/φ in Northern Greek. He reads Herodotus’ Περφέρες as a variant of a class of religious grain-bringing officials and thereby disagrees with the notion that the Hyperboreans must be a fictive ethnos. Cf. Farnell (1907), *The Cults of the Greek states*, p. 102-3, 110-11.
the Delphians, not the Delians, who invent a song to bring Apollo back from the far north. We are left with the impression that hieratic song is a prerequisite for coaxing the God into epidemia at his sanctuaries, when he would rather be entertained elsewhere.

Herodotus names the Lykian poet Olen as inventor of the songs dedicated to the Hyperborean maidens. He is also recognized as the originator of other, various hymns and oracles that spread from Delos to the rest of the Greek world (Hist. 4.35). The Pythian priestess Boeo (Paus. 10.5.7-8) names him as the first oracle of Phoebus Apollo (and she implies a Hyperborean pedigree, not Lykian) and the inventor of epic metre. Boeo further connects the Hyperboreans and Delphi by claiming that the Delphic oracle was originally installed by Agueius and Pegasusus, children (descendants or possibly emissaries?) of the Hyperboreans. This association with the thaumastic Hyperboreans, fortunate devotees of Apollo, seems to legitimize the privileged religious centres of Delos and Delphi in their claims that their oracular authority is somehow affected or initiated by contact with Hyperboreans.

Disregarding the claims of the Delians and the aforementioned rituals, whose validity Herodotus himself confirms (Hist. 4.34.1), Herodotus remains cautious in his belief and expresses uncertainty about whether these people in reality exist or not. They do not figure as part of his oikoumene because they do not appear to communicate with the rest of the world in any reciprocal fashion: they do not engage in war with their neighbours (parallel to their depiction in P. 10.43-5) unlike the similarly thaumastic Arimaspeans and griffins who battle each other and are otherwise in conflict with their surroundings, an act that would be a natural proof of border-crossing interaction (Hist. 4.13). Instead, they seem to appear only when they are laid claim to by others as peripheral, utopian societies in poetry or religious catalysts (as purported by the Delians) or combined as thaumastic elements in Aristeas’ lost work the Arimaspea. Aside from Aristeas’ narrative, Herodotus was left with no eyewitness accounts on the Hyperboreans or the lands beyond them. Indeed, Herodotus is mindful to allow room for speculation (Hist. 4.32), and finishes his paragraph on the Hyperboreans with the statement “εἰ δὲ εἰσὶ υπερβόρεοι τινὲς ὄνθρωποι, εἰσὶ καὶ υπερνότιοι ὄλλοι” (“but if there exist any hyperborean men, there exist also others that are hypernotioi (i.e., those beyond the South-wind)” (Hist. 4.36.1). He follows this statement with a description of how the

31 Aristeas reports in his *Arimaspea* how he reached as far north as the Issedones while being possessed by Phoebus, and how the Issedones told him of the Arimaspeans, griffins, and Apollo’s apodemia in the Hyperborea. Pindar seems to have known of this work (fr. 284). Aristeas was later believed to have been able to project his soul and thus travel to the Hyperboreans (cf. Maximus of Tyre, 38.3-4 Hobein). For a discussion of the Arimaspea, cf. Bowra (1956), “A Fragment of the Arimaspea”, pp. 1-10.
southernmost continent, Libya, has been repeatedly explored by Egyptians and Persians alike, and how they have established the limits of the continent by sailing around it (Hist. 4.42.2-4), which indicates a definite doubt on his part regarding the existence of Hyperboreans or any correlate.

2. The mapping of exotic thaumata

The Hyperboreans become the embodiment of privilege that lies beyond human reach. In this sense, they come across as a consequence of Greek antipodal imagination, or a solution to the demand for a radically alien authority.

In order to place the Hyperboreans more firmly within the Greek geographical imaginary, I have attempted to create a morphology of exotic thaumata within the Pindaric corpus, those that are both peregrine (the most remote category, inaccessible or located beyond the oikoumene) and peripheral (outlying, distanced and not part of the Greek centre), in order to see if there exists an underlying shared characteristic between them in the epinikia. My focus will, to a certain degree, remain formalistic in surveying their function as poetical devices, keeping in mind the encomiastic objective of the genre. I do not claim that the diagram below is perfectly comprehensive, being aware of the pitfalls of clarifying the term exotic thauma.

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11
The Hyperboreans and exotic θαύματα in epinikia

To clarify my selection of which imagery to include or exclude as exotic thaumata in this table, I shall offer a (preliminary) definition of the exotic thauuma: The exotic thaumata I have located within the corpus are figures that represent a combination of something that is 1) *thaumastic*, i.e., extraordinary or supernatural, and which receives special attention from the poet or appears as an unexpected/strange inclusion in the ode, and 2) *exotic* as in non-Greek, i.e., extraordinary and removed from the Greek space (and time). This definition is intentionally open and includes both semi-historical ethnic groups such as the Amazons, Lykians and the Meropes, but also purely mythological entities such as the Gorgons, Isles of the Blessed, Centaurs and Giants. Although these thaumata are very diverse, I believe that their employment in the odes suggests a unifying effect - that these eccentric phenomena were used in order to accentuate the concept of transcending the boundaries of normality in a way that complements the occasion of the epinikion, i.e., the extreme achievement of the athlete who became a victor in Panhellenic contests.

3. The Hyperboreans: the northernmost exotic thauma in the epinikia

The Hyperboreans appear thrice in Pindar’s epinikia: in Olympian 3 which celebrates the victory of the dynast Theron of Akragas in the chariot-races of 476 BC; in Pythian 10 in celebration of the Thessalian nobleman Hippokles and his victory in the boys’ diaulos competition of 498 BC; and lastly in Isthmian 6 for Phylakidas of Aegina for his victory in the boys’ pankration sometime after 485. I suspect that there is an additional allusion to the Hyperboreans in Olympian 8 in connection with Apollonian retreat to the Ister (O. 8.46-47). The prominence of the Hyperboreans in the epinikian corpus allows for an in-depth analysis of the specific odes. The two Pindaric odes, O. 3 and P. 10, in which the Hyperboreans constitute an essential part of the mythical narrative, share the *dynastic factor*, which I believe plays a crucial part in the selection of mythical material. The third ode, Isthmian 6, employs the exotic thauuma in an abbreviated form with a periegetic function. I will concentrate on Pythian 10, which is conspicuous for its multiplicity of laudandi, its early dating and the earliest and most extensive description of Hyperborean existence.

* Asterisk signifies an uncertain location as presented in the epinikon.

| (periph.) Lemnian women: | O. 4 (+ Pythian 1, 4) |
| (periph.) Pegasos O.13; I.7 | Perseus and Medusa, see P. 10 and N. 10); I. 1 (Geryon) |

32 Perhaps 481/79. It was certainly written after N. 5 for his brother Pytheas (485/83) and before I. 5 celebrating Phylakidas’ second major victory (sometimes after 480 and the battle of Salamis).
3.1 Pythian 10

Pythian 10 stands out from the epinikian corpus by being the only one out of 46 surviving odes to commemorate a Thessalian victory, which in itself would be a sufficient motivation for a northern colouring of the ode. The number of surviving Thessalian epinikia is surprisingly low, given the region’s wealth, interests in Delphi and fondness of horses. Pythian 10 celebrates Hippokles from the Thessalian city Pelinna for his Pythian victory in the diaulos – the double-stade race of 476 BC. The ode was evidently commissioned by Thorax of Larissa, at that time perhaps the most prominent Thessalian city, and the head of the Aleuad clan (P. 10.64-6). Their relationship, with no apparent family relation between Thorax and Hippokles, adds to the singularity of the ode. It also raises the question of the motives behind Larissan patronage on behalf of a young member of the Pelinnan elite. Through the analysis of the ode, it appears that Pindar apportions the praise between the commissioners, Hippokles and (Larissan) Thessaly, which ultimately propagates support of dynastic power, i.e., its function becomes the affirmation of Aeugal regional supremacy. It was not uncommon practice to use epinikia not only to praise, but also to legitimize what would perhaps be considered problematic dynamics of power.

3.1.1 The dynastic factor

The promotion of this particular strain of Thessalian power is evident already in the opening lines: Ὄλβία Λακεδαίμων, / μάκαιρα Θεσσαλία. Πατρός δ’ ἀμφιτέραις ἔξ ἐνὸς ἀριστομάχου γένος Ἡρακλέους βασιλεύει “Fortunate is Lakedaimon, and blessed is Thessalia. In both rules the lineage of one father, Heracles, the greatest warrior” (1-3). This proomial (i.e., introductory) priamel is certainly peculiar. In fact, the ode’s many peculiarities (most notably the seemingly extraneous mythical narrative) was, in the early times of Pindaric scholarship, blamed on Pindar’s poetical immaturity at the time of composition. The priamel exalts Lacedaemon in the very first line and establishes a connection between this city-state and Thessaly, a connection that is seemingly irrelevant to the ode which demands a celebration of

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33 Thessaly, in addition to “otherness” granted by its peripheral position in the north of Greece, housed a solid amount of exotic thaumata, such as Lapiths, Phleghyans and Centaurs (e.g. Cheiron), Mt. Olympus, the Mymidons, et al.
34 Thessalians were renowned for Greece for their horses, and this was at one point confirmed by the Pythia, cf. Fontenrose (1978), *The Delphic Oracle*, p. 278 Q26. Bacchylides and Simonides also composed epinikia for Thessalian victors, of which only two Bacchylidean odes remain: ode 14 to Kleoptolemos and 14b to Aristoteles of Larissa. We see an affirmation of Thessalian (Larissan) equestrian prowess in Bacchylides’ ode 14b.8-10: κῆπιθη καὶ Ἀριστοτέλεις Κύριον πρὸς εὐθάλεα μαλαίν / ὤκει αἰχμαλείων Λαι/ρίσας άγαληθον γάρων. For further discussion of the rarity of Thessalian epinikia, see Morgan (2007), «Debating patronage », p. 224.
36 Another example of external commission is Pythian 4, which is believed to have been commissioned by the exiled nobleman Demophilos in order to regain favour with Arkesilas IV, dynast of Cyrene. Only the final parts of the ode are devoted to Demophilos’ plea, while the bulk is dedicated to laude Arkesilas’ achievement. Contrastingly, Pythian 10 appears saturated with Aleuad-specific passages throughout.
the victorious Hippokles. The priamel is then instantly dismissed by Pindar as inappropriate (παρὰ καρόν, 4). The construction, however, is deliberate and strategically placed: the first two lines are an expression of the power and ancestry of Thorax and his clan, the Aleuadae. This matter is pushed to the forefront of the ode as well as to the top of Pindar’s agenda.

The prooimion serves to assert the powerful connection between the Thessalian (more specifically, the Larissan) and Lacedaemonian ruling elite in their shared claim to descent from the Heraclidae.39 These powerful cities had ties from pre-historic times (the fateful prophetic conclusion of Akrisios’ and his grandson, Perseus, in Thessaly, the allotment of Thessalian land to Heracles by a Dorian king, inter alia), as well as various contemporary societal similarities, such as their oligarchical forms of government and distinctive serving classes (the Thessalian penestae were comparable to the Lacedaemonian helots).40 Furthermore, there are reasons to believe that at the time of Pindar’s Pythian 10 the Aleuadae and the Spartan king Kleomenes I had recently entered a political agreement.41 This, as well as their competition for influence over Pytho, shows an intricate agonistic relationship which Pindar was well aware of, and one can assume that he was expected to promote Aleuad-politics and Thessalian dominance in his epinikion.

This introductory statement also contains a periegetic nuance: it displays the reach and direction of early Apolline worship and how it expanded from northern Greece and the Thessalians and Dryopes southwards to the Dorian (‘Dryopic’) colonies in the Peloponnese.42 On the formal plane, the prominence of Aleuad-Thessaly is emphasized by its position as second in the priamel, which indicates a higher degree of importance in acting as the cap (climax) to the prepositioned Λακεδαίμον (foil).43 Even the choice of predicate adjectives seem to flatter both, yet subtly elevate Thessaly: Lacedaemon is ὀλβία «fortunate», which is especially connected to wealth and worldly goods (i.e., generally at the receiving end of blessings), while the μάκαρα of Thessaly is commonly epithetic of gods and heroes.44 Additionally, the μακαρ-lemma recalls the makarismos – the ritual designation of the victor as

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39 Scho, Dem. 1.151: Ἀλεοῖς, ἀπόγονός τις τοῦ Ἡρακλίδους, θετηλός, ἐπιφύλαττες θετηλῶν, ἔτη καὶ οἱ τοίου παίδες cf. Σ Pind. P. 10. Inscri.: ἡμόρφεα τὰ ἐθνῆ ὑπὸ τῶν Ἡρακλείδων ἐφαινότοντο. Heracles was probably the father of Thessalos, see Mili (2015), Religion and society in ancient Thessaly, p. 222.

40 According to Thucydides, most cities of the Thessalians were ruled by a dynastía, a form of aristocratic government, (Thuc. 4.78). The term dynastía was also used by Aristotle to describe a strict form of oligarchy. (Arist. Pol. 1292b 5–10; 1293a 30–2). See Mili (2015), Religion and society in ancient Thessaly, p.115.


42 Cf. Farnell (1907), The Cults of the Greek states, p. 111. For Lacedaemon occurring in a periegetic function, see Isthmian 7.12-14, where one of the glories of Thebes is the establishing of a Dorian colony through the Heraclidae.


44 For this type of priamel, see Race (1982), The Classical Priamel from Homer to Boethius, pp. 5-6 s.v. “relativierende priamel”.

45 See LSJ s.v. «ὁμηρός» and «μάκαρ».
μάκαρ at the point of victory, thus crowning Thessaly and the whole of its civic community in the prooimion.\textsuperscript{45}

The key-word that openly introduces the dynastic factor is the verb βασιλεύει (2) as referring to the γένος of the Aleuadae. The clan was indeed described as the βασιλείς of Thessaly (Diod. Sic. xv. 61, xvi. 14, and Hdt.7.6.2: οἱ δὲ Ἀλευάδαι οὗτοι ἦσαν Θεσσαλίς βασιλείς) and it was probably Thorax, the head of the clan (64-6), who held the office of ταγοῖς (tagus – the leader of Thessalians) at the time the ode was commissioned.\textsuperscript{46} The effect is that already from the beginning of the ode, the Aleuada-dynasty is presented as intrinsic to Thessalian greatness. The clan-specific vaunt, although rather covert, might appear overreaching and is therefore quickly discarded. The prooimion is perhaps too daring a choice for undisguised glorification of a particular dynasty. However, the intention has been made clear: Pindar will aim his praise at Thessalian glory, on one hand focusing on its essential constituent (the Aleuada-dynasty) and on the other on the recent affirmation of its greatness (the victory of Hippokles). There is no expression of Hippokles as benefactor of the city, and instead the Aleuadae appear to take on this role for the entire Thessalian region.\textsuperscript{47} For this reason I would label this ode dynastic as it is ultimately designed to praise the ruling elite in oligarchical Thessaly. I suspect that the dynastic element, here in combination with the northern (Thessalian) component, was the challenge that inspired the inclusion of the Hyperborean imagery. I believe that the choice of exotic thauma is not incidental, but part of a legitimization process that uses the ode as a platform to praise and affirm the dynastic rule of the Aleuadae, and that this praise is transferred into the realm of the exotic thauma to allow a new level of self-glorification to dynasts (and here also the victor).

Praise continues to be apportioned for both the athletic laudandus and the laudandus rex throughout the ode. Following the prooimion, there is an ‘invocation’ of the poet (4-6). This replaces the more conventional invocation of the Muse or patron deity to aid in poetical composition,\textsuperscript{48} for as we shall see, the presence of the Muses and Apollo is not guaranteed (34-8), so instead the poet must assume an active role. Pindar reveals that Pytho and Pelinna, together with the children of Aleuas (i.e., the Aleuadae) have summoned him, and by doing so he aligns the clan’s interests with the interest of ethnos together with the authority of the Apolline sanctuary: “it is their shared wish that I lead the people’s glorious processional song

\textsuperscript{46} Mili (2015), Religion and society in ancient Thessaly, pp. 69-70. The Tagus has been glossed as both βασιλείς (Hdt. 5.63 and ἄρχων (Dion. Hal. 5.74).
for Hippokles who has tried his hand at the contests” (5-7). Thus Pindar concretizes the occasion by pointing to Hippokles’ participation and subsequent victory in athletic competition, but he connects it to the elements that are integral to the achievement; the context of the victory (Pytho) and the benefactors (the Aleuadae).

It is also interesting to note that Pindar animates the Parnassian glen, and thus continues to put emphasis on the function of space in the epinikion.49 By animating both Pytho and the Parnassian μυχός (“glen”, but also “innermost part of the temple”), the poet sanctifies the space and associates it more closely with Apollo’s oracular seat.50 The allusions to religious space, together with the recurrent apotropaic odes (20-22, also a recurrent theme in paeans), fills the contextual section of the epinikion with Apolline (oracular) authority, perhaps in hope of legitimizing its sophisticated agenda.

Pindar then expands the sphere of achievement by claiming that the current victory resonates with the στρατῷ τ’ ἀμφικτιώνων, “the host of neighbours” (8). Here, the implication in amphiictyons operates on two levels: the first represents the general sense of a “neighbouring people” in a minimization of the common Greek society into a region specific group, mainly the Thessalian ethnos. Furthermore, the compression of the Greek states into the concept of a neighbourhood stresses the impression of ‘belonging’ and creates an inner, Greek (Thessalian) unified space. This serves as a fitting preparation for an upcoming contrast with the peregrine Hyperboreans, who are positioned beyond the domestic time and space. A second interpretation, closely tied to a regional historic context, would be a reference to the Amphiictyons, the members of the Delphic Amphictiony.51 The Delphic Amphictiony was an alliance comprised of 12 neighbouring Greek tribes, two of which were Thessaly and the Dorians of Sparta, whose task was to maintain the sanctuaries and to uphold religious customs within the region. Thessaly kept two agents (hieromnemones) at the Delphic sanctuary and was believed to be the dominant force in the amphictyonic council.52 The council was actively involved in the constitution of the Pythian games subsequent to becoming their overseers after the end of the First Sacred War in 586 BC. At this point they transformed the Pythian festival to be modelled on the Olympian: they doubled the frequency of the originally octennial festival so that the games were held every four years, and added the element of athletic

49 The prosopopoeia of Pytho invites Apollo to be a spectator A Pythian herald calls put the victory in P. 1.32. Pisa is animated in O. 3.9.
50 Maslov (2015), Pindar and the Emergence of Literature, p. 209.
51 This is the earliest attestation of the lemma ἀμφικτύονες/ἀμφικτίονες in literature. The term also occurs in P. 4.66, N. 6.39, I. 4.8, and Bacchylides’ ode 12.34 before appearing extensively in Herodotus’ Histories.
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competition. Hence by using ἄμφικτιόνες as witnesses to Thessalian athletic supremacy, Pindar was able to stress the element of Thessalian hegemony both in the religious administration of Pytho (as head of the Amphictyons) as well as in the organization of the games: the apparently simple contextualization underscores a sense of Thessalian eminence relative to its neighbouring states and Lacedaemon in religious and athletic matters.

A further hint at (dynastic?) self-promotion on a wider, regional level is apparent from Pindar’s hope for future performance by the Ephyraeans (55-6), who were inhabitants of Krannon (a prominent Thessalian city) and rivals for regional power. Even in the conclusion of the ode, the Aleuadae are shown to hold regional supremacy: Pindar praises Thorax’ brothers for their steadfast piloting of the Thessalian poleis (69-73) for they exalt the Thessalian νόμος (custom). The Aleuadae are the ἐσλοί κάγαθοι custodians of their patrimonial custom, and naturally the most fitting helmsmen for their inherited governance.

Thus the ode ends in ring composition promoting the Aleuadae, which has become an undisguised assertion at this point in the ode. Furthermore, Pindar claims to have a reciprocal xenia-relationship with Thorax and his clan and uses the same terminology when referring to both himself and his patron, φιλέων ψηλέωντ’, ἄγων ἄγοντα (66), in a typical expression of mutual aristocratic interest. Finally, I suspect an allusion to Aleuad-sovereignty in Pindar’s description of the act of commission. He relates how Thorax yoked a “four legged chariot of the Pierians” (65). Thessaly was very well known for its tetrad-division, which was implemented by the Aleuads’ eponymous progenitor, and the number-imagery used here is evocative of the Thessalian region as a whole. This, in combination with Pieria, enforces the theme of Aleuad dynasty in Thessalian space in addition to displaying the dynast’s effort towards Pindar in the xenia-relationship.

Pindar continues the appraisement of his Thessalian commissioner with a gnomic statement on the testing of gold and a right mind (67). The scholia to this particular passage ascribe the notion of ‘gold, tried and tested’ as a continuation of the xenia-friendship between the poet and the commissioners in a reference to a test of its good quality. In Nemean 8,

53 The earlier form of the games had been limited to contests in musical disciplines. Cf. Fontenrose (1980), Pytho, pp. 456-7.
54 Krannon was dominated by the Scopadae, a clan that claimed descent from Scopas, presumably a son of Aleuas, and rivals to the Aleuadae for political power. For the Ephyraeans as inhabitants of Krannon, cf. Σ Pind. I 10.85a-c. For the Scopadae, cf. Stamatopoulou (2007), “Thessalian Aristocracy and Society in the Age of Epinikian”, p. 311 n.18.
55 Lines 71-2 observe the common trope where ship-analogy is used when speaking of state and governance. In similar fashion another Thessalian aristocrat is presented as a proper steersman in Bacchylides’ ode 14.10-11 for Kleoptolemos of Thessaly, also in connection with having a ‘right mind’ and upholding a xenia-relationship between poet and patron(s).
56 According to Stephanus of Byzantium, Pieria (Kieron) had developed from the historical Arne, the Homeric city from which the Thessalians expelled the Boiotians, and thus making it a principal city in the establishment of Thessaly. Cf. Steph. Byz. s.v. Άρνη
57 Touchstone imagery also appears in Paean 14.37, Nemean 8.20, and in a skolion for Xenophon (fr. 122.16).
58 Σ Pind. I 10.105b and d.
however, the touchstone image (seemingly allegorical to the performance of the epinikion) obviously involves an element of risk and appears to be concerned with innovation and the dangers of exorbitance: νεκρὰ δ᾽ ἔξευρόντα δόμεν βασάνῳ ἐς ἔλεγχον, ἅπας κίνδυνος· ὁγον δὲ λόγοι φθονερόῖσιν “to invent new [stories] and to put them to the test at the touchstone, that is utterly hazardous, for words are a delicacy for the envious” (N. 8.20-4). It implies a test of the subject and its authenticity, which could, indeed, be an affirmation of their good xenia-relationship. However, I believe that the element of risk within the touchstone-motif does comment on the xenia-relationship between poet and commissioner, but also expresses the careful appraisal of the clan’s sovereignty, and allows the quick transition to the praise of the just and rightful rule of the Aleuadae.59

3.1.2 Thessaly, Delphi and the Hyperborea
I maintain that in Pythian 10, an attempt is made to legitimize the two levels of praise (to both laudandus and laudandus rex) by associating Thessaly with Delphi, and furthermore with the Hyperborea, which appears to have connections to both. Delphi had, since the early Archaic period, played an important role in the development and legitimization of Greek city states.60 It was thought to be the navel of the world and was considered the most prestigious oracular shrine in Greece. Second to the Delphic shrine was the oracle in Dodona – the oldest oracular shrine in all of Greece, located in the north-western province of Epirus and operating under Lacedaemonian control. Delphi quickly became a religious centre of immense political importance to all Greek poleis and, most importantly, a place of perceived neutrality where the poleis would send their theoroi to ask for oracular council about internal matters as well as guidance about inter-polis affairs. The Delphic oracle’s purported detachment (holding politically extrinsic position to the clashing Greek states) and its geographic centrality made it ideal for these purposes under all kinds of political duress.

Due to its singular nature and advantageous situation in the Greek world, the oracle at Delphi became a natural mediator for community problems. To consult the oracle was considered taking “a step outside the spatial context of daily life to the fringes of the social world in order to obtain sanction for action on unusual problems”.61 This element, I submit to you, is something Delphi shares with the Hyperborea. Authorization is more easily attained when supported from the outside or when one is removed from one’s own domain, and if Delphi acts as a representative of the fringes of the social world, then the Hyperborea offers

59 For such trial as a test of human qualities, see O. 4. 18: διάπειρά τοῦ βροτῶν ἔλεγχος; “truly trial is the test of mortals”
61 Morgan (1990), Athletes and Oracles, p. 183.
an even more intensified remoteness, both spatially (due to its most extreme geographical location) and temporally (belonging not to contemporary Greek time, but in the remote mythical past). It is probable that Thessaly, an important and wealthy region in the Archaic period, actively made use of Delphic arbitration, especially considering their geographical proximity and Thessalian ambitions for southward expansion during the 6th c. BC.

The wish to expand southward prompted the Thessalian engagement in the first Sacred War a hundred years before Hippokles’ victory, although publicly the motivation for the war and the mobilization of amphictyonic forces was the discontent with Krissan demand for tribute from states trying to access the Delphic sanctuary. Sensing that these tensions were an opportunity to expand their region southward in order to gain control of the Isthmus and the southern trade routes, the Thessalians spearheaded an attack on Krissa with support from Sicyon and Athens. The war was concluded in 685 BC with Krissan defeat and the transfer of Amphictyonic dominance from the Spartans (who had claims to the main oracular site before the inclusion of Delphi) to the Thessalians following the incorporation of the Delphic sanctuary into the Amphictyony. This political development may partly be the reason for the frequent inclusion of Thessalian elements in the founding myths of Delphic Pytho.

Access to and dominion over the cult centre was of great importance. Not only was this oracular seat important to the burgeoning democratic institutions, but it was also a place where dynastic forces sought legitimization. The oracle of Delphi was a source of direction to poleis, tyrants and foreign kings alike, who wanted guidance both for themselves in personal issues and regarding wider, political decisions on internal affairs or colonization. This opportunity was not restricted to the Greeks, for among the oracle’s clientele appeared also foreign people of high standing, such as Croesus, Alyattes and other kings of Asia Minor. Money played a large part in receiving audience with the Delphic oracle: the proper dedication and payment could earn you early access (the first audience with the oracle was reserved for the Delphians) and honoured attendance to cultic and athletic events, as is evident from the episode of Croesus’ generous donation to the Delphic people.

Although the influx of Thessalian dedications to Apollo’s Pythian shrine dwindled by the end of the archaic period, they nevertheless appear closely tied to the oracle from the moment of its foundation. Thessaly was together with the eastern Greek mainland crucial to

63 Ibid., p. 58.
64 Hdt. 1.54.
65 The very first dedication to Delphi (a small statue of Apollo) was offered by the Larissan Echecratides (Paus. 10.16.8).
the development of the Delphic sanctuary.\textsuperscript{66} Even the mythical founders of the first Delphic Oracle, as mentioned above, who were the supposedly Hyperborean Aguias and Pēgasos (Paus. 10.5.7), might be an indication of early Thessalian involvement in the sanctuary. The name Pēgasus appears to be related to the Thessalian city Pagasai, which could point to a Thessalian origin of foundation or that there was some perceived correspondence between Thessalians and Hyperboreans. But this remains a conjecture. A more solid nod to Thessalian involvement in the foundation of the oracle was their contribution to the construction of the temple. The first temple in the Pythian shrine was said to have been built with laurel from Tempe. This is perhaps an allusion to the involvement of a Thessalian architect, but nevertheless, the very first temple needed ‘foreign’ assistance for its fulfilment which began the reciprocal relationship that connected Thessaly and Delphi from very early on. A later temple was said to have been blown off to the Hyperboreans (Paus. 10.5.9). Such a connection between Thessaly/Delphi/Hyperborea, if already part of early Thessalian mythology, could have prompted Pindar’s use of Hyperborean imagery in a Pythian ode to a Thessalian. According to Mali, it could be argued that “Apollo Pythios’ cult served as a vehicle for promoting a sense of Thessalian identity not only because of the stories which connected him with the region, and the sending of an official theoria, but because it formed a network, through myth and ritual, with the various local Thessalian cults”.\textsuperscript{67}

On the mythological level, the connections between Thessaly and Pytho show a longstanding exchange of legitimization. One example of such reciprocity is the development of the lineage of the Aleuadae. Their clan claimed descent from Aleuas Pyrrhus, a semi-mythical king (or tagus) and the founding hero of Thessaly, and the son of Thessalos, son of Heracles.\textsuperscript{68} His kingship, according to Plutarch, was selected by lot and ratified by the Pythian oracle:\textsuperscript{69} when the Thessalians needed to elect a new king, they sought guidance from the Pythia and sent her lots with the names of possible kings-to-be. Aleuas’ uncle slipped in the boy’s name, although he had been away due to a troublesome relationship with his father, and his name was drawn. When contested, the oracle ratified its decision beyond doubt and Aleuas was chosen as king of Thessaly. The oracle in Delphi was also beseeched in the

\textsuperscript{66} Morgan (1990), \textit{Athletes and Oracles}, p. 193.
\textsuperscript{67} Mali (2015), \textit{Religion and society in ancient Thessaly}, p. 244.
\textsuperscript{68} Or perhaps «from Thessaly», depending on the interpretation of Ael. \textit{De nat.} 8.11: […] περὶ Ἀλευατοῦ Θετταλοῦ.
\textsuperscript{69} Plut. \textit{Mor.} 492; Fontenrose (1978), \textit{The Delphic Oracle}, p. 407 L162
earliest Thessalian migrations, and thus two of the earliest Thessalian foundation myths are connected with confirmation and oracular activity in Delphi.\(^70\)

The Delphic myths also exemplify a demand for external legitimation, which often appears to have been sought in the north (Thessaly). Apollo, having established a shrine at Pytho by killing the eponymous serpent, was exiled by Zeus and forced to purify himself in the waters of Tempe (a Thessalian stream) before being allowed to return to his oracle. In a similar northbound exile, Apollo was forced into prolonged subjection to Admetus, king of Thessalian Pherae, after killing Zeus’ cyclopes in a fit of rage over the loss of his son, Asclepios.\(^71\) In both myths Apollo was required to seek atonement in the Thessalian region before being able to return to normality and to consolidate his oracular authority in Pytho. This pattern of purification in the north is emulated in the Delphic Stepteria-festival, which was celebrated every eight years. Its ritual consisted of a boys’ procession, led by a theoros in the role of Apollo, from Delphi into Thessaly, where the daphnephoroi had to bring laurel from the base of Mt. Olympus back to Delphi to be used for victory wreathes in the Pythian games.\(^72\) The re-enactment of northbound purification and the reclaiming of Apolline normality (i.e., purification, the oracle, the replenishment of laurel) follows the pattern along a north-south axis as we have seen earlier in the Homeric hymns and Hyperborean apodemia in the paean of Alcaeus.\(^73\) Lewis Farnell seems to agree with this when he says,

> [...] we cannot suppose that it was the exigencies of the drama and the compelling influence of a myth that sent the boys to Tempe. [...] We may believe that the procession of the laurel-bearers along the Sacred Way was part of a great ceremony of public lustration, which associated Delphi with the ancient shrine of Apollo in the north.\(^74\)

Thus the early mythical connection, as well as contemporary religious connections (the Thessalian’ importance in the Delphic festivals such as the Theoxenia and Stepteria) show a long history of reciprocal affirmations of legitimacy: early Thessalian organization and dynasty through oracular confirmation, and the Delphic sanctuary’s legitimacy through visitations into the northern periphery. Considering the story of Aleuas, it is not improbable that even in the early 5th century BC a Thessalian dynast would seek legitimation from the Pythian sanctuary. Given the shrine’s Panhellenic importance, its closeness to the central

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\(^70\) Aleuas, according to Aristotle’s lost work on the Thessalian constitution, is accredited with the extensive re-organization of Thessaly by dividing the land into tetrads (Arist. fr. 498 Rose). For Delphic involvement in early Thessalian migrations, see Plut. De fra. 432 referring to the Thessalian eviction of Boeotians at Arne (Thuc. 1.12)

\(^71\) Eur. Alc. 1-10.


\(^73\) The Stepteria-festival seems to have been evocative of the Hyperborea even in Classical times, cf. Plut. Mau. 1136ab and Ael. VfI. 1.3.

\(^74\) Farnell (1907), The Cult of the Greek States, vol.4, p. 295.
divinity Apollo and their mantic specialization, these were all suitable channels to elevate and consolidate one’s position. This, in combination with Delphic predisposition to wealthy gifts and dedications, made the oracle a suitable place for dynasts and aristocratic elite to display their wealth or seek the advancement they desired, especially in case of inter-state rivalry.\textsuperscript{75} Thus wealthy aristocrats would invest and participate in economically demanding athletic competitions for the purpose of self-elevation and legitimization in a Panhellenic context.

The notion of seeking legitimacy through interaction with the periphery is frequent in the mythical narratives of the epinikia, such as that of the Argonauts in Pythian 4, where Jason returns twice from exotic and thaumastic locations (firstly from the cave of Cheiron to seek kingship, then from Colchis to finalize it) to achieve legitimacy as king, the rape of Cyrene from Thessaly as the legitimizing *aition* of the Cyrenean colony (*P. 9*) or how Perseus’s killing of the Medusa facilitates his eventual subjugation of Seriphos (*P. 10.31-48*).

An important element, lacking from the mythical narrative in Pythian 10, is Larissa’s involvement in Perseus’s instalment as rightful king. In two major sources of Perseus’s story, Thessaly and Larissa hold key roles in his return to power. The (involuntary) parricide committed by Perseus was foretold to Akrisios by the Pythian oracle, which in turn resulted in the expulsion of Akrisios’ daughter Danaë and his grandson Perseus. This exile prompted Perseus’s risky adventures and triumphs at various peripheral locations (i.e., Seriphus, Aithiopia, the cave of the Gorgons), which enabled him to return empowered, supported by the gods, and victorious. According to Pausanias, Akrisios, upon hearing of Perseus’s return, fled to Larissa to avoid death, where he was accidentally killed by Perseus during an athletic display.\textsuperscript{76} The *Bibliotheca* adds that this happened during funerary games in Larissa, which were organized by the Thessalian king Teutamides.\textsuperscript{77} Hence it was Thessaly that accommodated Perseus’s final return to his ancestral kingdom by concluding the path set forth by the Delphic oracle.

Another noteworthy element of the Perseus’s mytheme is his flight from the immortal Gorgons. After slaying the only mortal Gorgon, Medusa, Perseus was chased by the remaining Gorgons from their cave in the westernmost periphery of the world.\textsuperscript{78} He fled first to Atlas, then through Libya to Aithiopia and finally to the Greek regions of Seriphos, Argos and Thessaly.\textsuperscript{79} This chase involving two monstrous females resembles a reversal of the

\textsuperscript{75} Hornblower (2005), *Thucydides and Pindar*, pp. 175-6, 262-5, and Morgan (1990), *Athletes and Oracles*, pp. 191-234.

\textsuperscript{76} Paus. 2.16.2

\textsuperscript{77} Ps. Apoll. *Biblioth. 2.4.4

\textsuperscript{78} Ibid., 2.4.2 and Pherecydes fr. 26 ll. 76-80. (Hesiod *Th. 274-83 on the home of Gorgons/slaying of Medusa)

\textsuperscript{79} Perseus’s unsuccessful refuge with Atlas is described in Ov. *Met* iv. 655
pursuit of the Harpies in the Hesiodic fragment mentioned earlier: indeed, there it was Phineus, the namesake of Perseus’s rival for the hand of Aithiopian Andromeda, who suffered the Harpies’ punishment. Contrary to the periodic nature of chase by the Boreads, Perseus’s flight from the Gorgon sisters appears linear; in the direction from the extreme west (from the westernmost banks of Oceanus) straight through the African continent before ending in Greece, allowing him to fulfil his destiny. There is no mention of any stopover in Hyperborea apart from Pindar’s Pythian 10 within the established source-material. That Perseus’s visit to the Hyperborean ethos remains a singular treatment of the mytheme and is confined to Pindar’s Pythian 10, indicates that it was not a conventional part of Perseus’s myth. It would appear that the Hyperborean scene has replaced the Thessalian activities of Perseus, which Pindar omits from the ode and substitutes it for his most famous venture transposed into an Apolline north. Overall the Hyperborean elements in the epinikia, including Perseus’s Hyperborean visit, appear to convey daring deviations from accepted mythemes rather than constituting an isolated motif. We are left with the impression that the Hyperborean element requires some sort of poetical innovation. This Pindaric interference with the established mytheme is significant in odes that contain the Hyperborean thauma, as we shall see in O. 3 and Bacchylides’ ode 3 as well.

3.1.3 The mythical narrative in Pythian 10

The mythical episode in Pythian 10 stands out as the earliest exhaustive surviving depiction of the Hyperborean way of life, and it does so in a context that appears to be an entirely Pindaric invention. In order to appreciate its idiosyncrasy and to acquire a better understanding of why Pindar would invent and insert such a Hyperborean element into his mythical narrative, I will offer a quick overview of the ode as it leads up to the mythical episode. As discussed above, the ode to Hippokles begins with a priamel that establishes Thessalian sovereignty and its ties to the Heraclidae (1-3). The oddity of the vaunt is quickly acknowledged (“In what respect am I boasting inappropriately?”, 4) and requires a clarification, which Pindar supplies by offering the epinikion’s context. He concretises the occasion, i.e., a victory in the Pythian games, by locating it geographically in Pytho (4, 8 Parnassus, 15 Kirra). Pytho is joined by the victor’s hometown Pelinna and the ode’s commissioners, the Aleuadae (4-6), as formative aspects of the ode. Intent on mapping out an epinikian space, Pindar continues to include various geographical points in the epinikion. The athletic achievement itself and the victor are then briefly introduced (5, 9), before the extent of the festivity is revealed on the Parnassian

80 Cf. O. 8.23-5: ὅ τι γὰρ πολύ καὶ πολλὰ ἑρέσει, ὁ ὀρθῷ διακρίνειν φρενὶ μὴ παρὰ καιρὸν δισπαλέζ.
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glen (8) through its geopolitical implications addressed above. The strophe progresses with a
gnome addressed to Apollo, describing the divine arbitration of fate (10-11). The god’s
presence and the athletic implications thereof create a natural segue into the victory catalogue
of the familia laudandi (12-16), which in turn is capped by a wish for future successes. This
triad is introductory and serves to establish the focus and occasion of the ode.

The optimism of the first epode is carried over into the second triad, which opens with
a litotes expressing the fortune of man (20) and offers a cautionary wish that no envious turn
of fate should come from this success (19-21). Next Pindar inserts a gnomic description
of what makes a truly blessed man: he is a physically superior risk-taker with equally successful
descendants (22-6).81 Again, to avoid encouraging hubristic aspirations, this boastful
description (implicitly of Hippokles) is rounded off by a statement on the constraints of
mortal nature: οὐ ποτ’ ἀμβατὸς αὐτῷ - “the bronze heavens are never to be trodden by him” (27). The inaccessible heavens become a metaphor for the concept
of human limitations. The suggestion of a utopia beyond the reach of even the most fortunate
man gives Pindar the opportunity to express the extent of the laudandus’ achievement while
also planting him firmly among the mortals despite being one who reaches the limit of what is
humanly possible (28).

Such boundary-touching (as contained within human possibility) is a recurrent motif
in the Pindaric epinikia82 and is used for encomiastic purposes, while the attempt at crossing
natural boundaries is often portrayed as symptomatic of excessive ambition (e.g. the mythical
narrative in which Pegasus throws Bellerophon for attempting at “unrightful sweetness”, i.e.,
to enter the bronze heavens of Zeus, I. 7.40-48). By employing spatial metaphors (i.e., the
thaumastic heavens or the athletic achievement reimagined as a voyage by ship) with focus on
mortality (βροτὸν ἰδοὺς 28) and its innate limitation (e.g., the unattainability of
immortality/divine domain, l. 27), Pindar maps the extent of human achievement by emphatic
negations of human ability. Thus peregrine imagery, such as the Hyperborean space that is
physically accessible neither by ship nor on foot, and whose entry way is purely fantastical
(θαυμαστὰν ὅδὸν 30), become a potent expression of human limitations and the human
condition.

The antistrophe (25-30) continues the notion of human inability to transcend

81 Risk was a prerequisite of the Panhellenic athlete, see O. 5.15-16; O. 6.9-11; Π. 4.184-7.
82 A particularly well-articulated and representative example is 1.4.11-13: ἀνορέσας δ’ ἵππον ἐσχάτης ἐπιτετούθη Ἡρακλείας / καὶ μικρὸτερὸν ἐπισέβοντον ὑπερτάν ὑπετάν “By their extreme courage they grasp the Pillars of Heracles from home so as rush after no further achievement”.

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boundaries even as it introduces the mythical narrative of Perseus and his visit with the Hyperboreans. With this odd intrusion into the accepted mytheme, disregarding his own insistent admonitions in a way that is construed as an inelegant fallacy by the scholia, Pindar demonstrates that his poetry knows no such natural bounds. Like Heracles, Perseus, a hero whose task in life is to defeat malevolent monsters, seems a natural candidate for achieving the humanly impossible and gaining entrance into restricted domain.

The motif of inaccessible space is also common in fairy tales, similarly in a slightly encomiastic context: only the truly excellent may set foot therein, and then only with divine or magical aid. An example of this is the Norwegian folk tale “Østenfor sol, vestenfor måne” (“East of the sun, West of the moon”). Comparable to Pindar’s admonitory build-up to the Hyperborean narrative, the Norwegian fairy tale concentrates on the impassability of a desolate location, i.e., a castle to the east of the sun and to the west of the moon making it inaccessible to humans. The princess in this fairy tale, not unlike Perseus in Pythian 10 or Heracles in Olympian 3, reaches the remote place, is rewarded and must necessarily leave it (the princess is rewarded with marriage, Perseus with participation in the banquet, and Heracles with the olive wreath). It seems a common trait that these liminal spaces can only be attained for a limited period of time whereupon the ‘intruder’ must return to the normality of his or her own time and space.

Unlike in the fairy tale, where the liminal thauma constitutes the narrative climax, the transcendence into unreachable space is restricted to the mythical excursus (or, as in Isthmian 6, in the transition to a heroic catalogue) of the epinikion. Both Pindar and the hero must eventually leave the Hyperborea behind in order to conclude the mythical narrative, and return his present to consolidate the praise. Yet it is never the laudandus himself who reaches beyond, as he must remain within the reach of human ability. Instead, it is his heroic exemplum, be it Perseus or Heracles, who is allowed such superhuman feats. Even Pindar himself does not openly dare to venture beyond the limits that are set for the mortal race, despite allowing himself to offer the public a glimpse through his poetic medium.

83 Σ Pind. P. 10.46ab (my translation): “Here Pindar is minded with success: just as it is difficult to reach the Hyperborean ethnos, so too it is difficult to find success greater than this [i.e., the victory]. Up until this point, Pindar composes his epinikion well. But after this he falters by using an illogical digression.”

84 The fairy tale is a variation on the story of Amor and Psyche, collected by the folklorists Asbjørnsen and Moe. As in Pythian 10, the location is peregrine and access is granted by divine aid: A princess falls in love with a prince who disappears to far-away castle. The location is described as “somewhere you’ll never find” and “somewhere you’ll arrive late or never”. The princess asks for help along the way, and lesser winds bring her to the North wind, who is the only one who is said to have reached thus far. He helps her reach her prince, marry, and quickly leave the fairy tale castle behind.

85 See O 3.43-5: γὰρ δὲ χρόνος ἐγκαταστάσεως ἔργων ἄρετος ἀκούσαι / ὁκόθεν Ἡρακλῆς εὐτάτῳ. Τὸ γόργον δὲ ἀπειλήθη ἀπὸ βραχών κάμψισε. Οὐ δὲ τευχίζει κενὸς ἐπίθετο. Also, I. 4.11-13: “ἀνοφρίας δ’ ἐγκαταστάσας ὁκόθεν στάδισας ἐπιτονο’ Ἡρακλῆς· καὶ μήκετ μικροτέραν επιδέδειν ἄρετάν.”
As established, the concept of the inescapability of human limitation is pervasive throughout the epinikion. The question remains why Pindar would blatantly disregard his own gnomic statements on the human condition by actively transposing the heroic paradigm of the laudandus into impossible space and by doing so changing the established mytheme. Moreover, why are the Hyperboreans the most fitting thauma for this task? The mythical narrative constitutes almost one third of the epinikion. Both a spatial and temporal distance is quickly established and reaffirmed: the narrative is located in the mythical past, evident in the temporal marker ποτε (31, and resumptively in 45). Although the Hyperborean excursus is surrounded by Perseus’s agency in ring composition, beginning with his entrance into the Hyperborean abodes and ending with his return to Seriphos, the narrative remains focused on the Hyperborean way of life. Pindar envelops the episode in another, more extensive ring composition with thaumastic markers (the θαυμαστ ὁ δόν in 30 when introducing the narrative, and θαυμάσαι in 48 upon exiting it). The incredibility of divine action, as he puts it, causes him to abandon the narrative with a nautical break-off motif (“hold your oar and release the anchor to the ground from the prow, a safety from jagged rocks,” ll. 51-2) that signals the end of a dangerous venture into forbidden land. This transitional formula is expanded by a gnomic simile in which he compares his flitting focus to the rushing of the bee (54). He then turns back to the initial focus of the ode, the praise of Hippokles and the Aleuad-commissioners, and adds his personal agency in its disclosure.

In order to estimate what Pindar’s addition to the Hyperborean mythos might be, we ought to collate his epinikion with the material provided by the earliest available sources. We learn from ps. Hesiod (150 MW) that the Hyperboreans are a people who live in the farthest north in a nourishing environment and that they appear to have the same exoticism as peripheral Homeric ethna, and we learn from Alcaeus that Apollo initially preferred the Hyperboreans to the Greeks and that he spent a year with them before finally coming to Delphi in the spring to dispense dike. These features, i.e., the extremely peripheral yet fortunate geography (and the leisure it entails when the bounteous earth delivers crops freely twice a year) as well as having the special favour of Apollo, must have been current at the time when Pythian 10 was composed. These pre-existing traits of the Hyperboreans are

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86 This, as well as relative pronouns, are common markers of entry into a mythical narrative in the epinikia. Cf. Bundy (1962), *Studia Pindarica* (I), pp. 8-9 (esp. 8 n. 27)
87 An Abbruchsformel (break-off motif) often follows the thaumastic narrative. The thauma-marker (e.g., θαυμάσαι 48) is often either initiatory or final and climactic, and delineates a section. The demarcation then requires a transitional formula of some kind to allow the progression of the ode, cf. Bundy (1962), *Studia Pindarica* (I), pp. 2-3, 8-9. For the ship as a metaphor for Pindar’s epinikion, see P. 2.62-3.
88 For the etymologically connected temperate climate as well as the double harvest, see Hecataeus of Abdera *FGHist* 264.7. For the less common assumption that the Hyperborean climate belongs to the “frozen north” and thus provides a certain fantasticality or paradox upon it being used as the locus for the olive trees (i.e. in Pin. O. 3.), see Köhnken (1983), *Mythical Chronology and Thematic Coherence*, pp. 49-63.
elaborated on in Pindar’s account in an extended narrative where the Hyperborean ethnos is presented as being in a markedly exceptional state and their existence conspicuously pious, idiosyncratic and utopic. This notion draws closer to Herodotus’ reversed ethnocentric view of the thaumastic eschata, i.e., the "most outlying lands, as they enclose and wholly surround the rest of the world, are likely to have those things which we think the finest and the rarest" (3.116.3).  

Encased within the narrative of Perseus’s achievement, the Hyperboreans are first presented in somewhat familiar terms of festivity and felicity: Perseus enters their realm while they sacrifice hecatombs to their god Apollo (33-4), who is himself present and greatly delighted at the acts of devotion (35-6). They lead a joyous life from which the muse is never absent (37-8) and which is filled with music and dance choirs made up of young girls (38-9). In celebratory fashion, they don golden wreaths. Their habitual revelry is presented as similar to the merriments that follow an athletic victory (communal celebration with music and dance that takes place during the respective festivals with offerings to the gods, images of gold and wreaths of laurel akin to the laurel crown awarded in the Pythian games), but there are slight variations in these elements that differentiate this ethnos from the Greeks. The dissimilarities consist of the physical presence of divinities and the god’s emphatic emotional reaction to the devotees’ offerings, as well as the peculiar choice of sacrificial animal (the ass instead of the more common bulls, sheep and rams) and their wreaths being fashioned from the most precious metal instead of the traditional leaves of laurel.  

The chorus of maidens is also a somewhat peculiar feature if alluding to the musical celebrations post victory, as Pindar often resorts to a singing κόμος in this function in his epinikia (cf. P. 5. 22-3: “receive this komos of men, the delight of Apollo” and N. 3.5 “[…] young men of the komos desiring your voice”), while the much rarer χορός belongs to the divine sphere and occurs in connection with the Muses, Graces and Apollo, and is otherwise more frequently found in Pindar’s religious fragments. Such (dis)similarities together with
their exotic modifications offer a conspicuous analogy to the celebratory occasion shared by the laudandum and his community after the athletic achievement (an experience the laudandum shares with the hero Perseus who is acting as a mythical exemplum for the victor). However, Pindar curtails the analogy by introducing a distinction that creates an impassable distance between the celebrating Thessalians and the Hyperborean revellers, namely the superhuman quality of Hyperborean happiness.

The Hyperboreans, etymologically situated beyond the cardinal direction north, are positioned outside the axis of normality. Their description in Pythian 10 is indicative of this peregrine idiosyncrasy. The first two thirds of the narrative (ll. 33–40) describe the Hyperborean religious activity as well as their celebratory customs, and their activity is portrayed as an amplification of the Greek procedure in athletic context: they appear exceedingly more devout and convivial. The last third presents us with the essence of Hyperborean fortune, which appears to be their successful escape from the human condition (emblematized by Nemesis). Pindar closes the Hyperborean narrative by explaining that “the sacred race is tempered neither with illnesses nor destructive old age, and they live apart from toil and battle having escaped over-righteous Nemesis” (41–4). In essence, the Hyperboreans are ontologically different from the Greeks. Their felicitous existence has the precondition that they do not suffer the flux of human fortune represented by the ὑπέρδικος Νέμεσις (44). As a result, their blessings are unceasing and uninterrupted by vicissitude or human inflictions such as disease, strife or the deterioration that comes with old age. They thus live in a paradise similar to Hesiod’s Golden Age of man who seem to have escaped the brood of Night (Theog. 222–4).93

The question of Hyperborean felicity has been the focus of several discussions in which diverging views were upheld. Adolf Köhnken claims that their special felicity depends on having a share in divine immortality, a feature that would entail a major innovation on Pindar’s part as it is incongruent with other evidence.94 The scholia explain their privileged existence as a reward for righteousness and exceptional piety, while C. Brown, consistent with my own hypothesis, argues that their happiness lies in their exemption from the

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93 The brood of Nyx contains Nemesis among several other personified concepts that both the Hyperboreans and the Golden race have escaped/live without, with the exclusion of Death. Pindar’s Isles of the Blessed appear to share this utopianism. In O. 2, the Isles of the Blessed also become temporally related to the Golden Age by the presence of Kronos (O 2.70–77). For the utopian sponte surotopos in connection with divine presence, cf. Maslov (2015), Pindar and the Emergence of Literature, p. 203.
94 Cf. Köhnken (1971), Die Funktion des Mythos bei Pindar, pp. 220–1. Strabo claims that Pindar, Simonides and other mythmakers described the Hyperboreans as “living a thousand years” (Strab. 15.1.57 C711).
“dispensation that characterizes the world of ordinary men”. This dispensation is, among other things, expressed through the permanence of their beatitude. Hyperborean felicity is presented as lasting and continuous (ἐμπεδὸν 35), an advantage which up until this point has been expressly withheld from mortals in the Pindaric epinikia. In another epinikion, this sentiment occurs unveiled: “it is impossible for one man to achieve complete happiness: I cannot name anyone to whom Moira has granted this empédon perfection” (N. 7.55-8). This essential characteristic is further maintained in the verbal morphology.

Contrastingly, the second triad, just before the Hyperborean narrative is introduced, is filled with gnomes on human limitation and any aspirations beyond this are discouraged: success is never constant because it always involves a risk of reversal (expressed by two apotropaic prayers in the optative mode, ll. 21-22). Pindar underscores the elusiveness of perfect fortune when he presents the heavens as to be “forever untrodden” (27) even by the most fortunate man. Furthermore, the mythical account of Perseus employs only the aorist (ἐδαίσατο 31, μόλειν and ἀγεῖτο 45, ἐπερνέν 46 and finally the ἔλαυθε in 48) with each step being concluded: Perseus left home, completed a superhuman feat, and returned home again to solidify his success, which is parallel to the laudandus’s pursuit of athletic victory. The hero’s actions are sequential and transient, and Pindar abandons the narrative after Perseus’s final achievement without any mention of his final return to kingship. The description of the Hyperboreans and their immortal guests, on the other hand, consists solely of present forms (ἐμπεδὸν χαίρει and γελᾷ 35-6, οὐκ ἀποδαμεῖ 37, δονέονται 39, εἰλαπινάζουσιν 40, the present perfect κέκραται 41, οἰκέοσι 43), expressing the vividness of the thauma as well as indicating the lasting quality of their reality.

The vivid and comprehensive description with its consistent use of present forms offers a more detailed account than the actual plot of Perseus’s mythical narrative. His participation in their rites is not dwelled upon, but briefly passed over. The whole mythical narrative, i.e., Perseus’s slaying of the Medusa and his victorious return to Seriphos, is concluded within the short span of three lines. His presence in the myth, rather than simply acting as a direct paradigm of the laudandus, is employed as a vehicle to gain entrance to the exotic thauma. His character is convenient politically, due to his Thessalian allegiance and his

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95 The scholia (Σ Pind. P. 10.64a-65b) argue that the Hyperboreans escape μέρος and ἕβρας (personified by Nemesis) by acting ὀδοιπόν. For the exemption from balance, see C. Brown, “The Hyperboreans and Nemesis in Pindar’s Pythian 10”, pp. 95-107.
96 The adverb ἐποίησα occurs only once elsewhere (in addition to P10.34 and N. 7.57) in Pindar’s epinikia, again in connection with Perseus, where it appears in a negative context to indicate the painful duration of Danaë’s servitude to Polydeuces. (P. 12.14-15). P. 12 features certain similarities with P. 10 (Perseus’s mythical narrative, auxiliary divinities, mortal vicissitude, indiscernibility of the future, et cetera.)
The Hyperboreans and exotic θαύματα in epinikia

shared genealogy with the Aleuadae through Heracles.\(^{97}\) Yet it is necessary to question the choice of Perseus as the quintessential Thessalian hero. Simon Hornblower asks, and rightly so, why Achilles (or even Peleus or Jason) does not feature as the hero in Thessalian epinikia given his Thessalian pedigree (Phthiotis was a Thessalian city), and ascribes it to an Aeginetan claim on the hero.\(^{98}\) I suspect that it is Perseus’s extreme temporal remoteness and the geographical plasticity of his mytheme, together with his relation to Heracles, Thessalos and Aleuas, that makes him an ideal instrument for entering the Hyperborea on behalf of the Aleuadae: in using a clan-specific hero, one whose progeny is responsible for the organization of the Thessalian constitution, Pindar has found a way for elegantly praising both Thessaly, its sovereign dynasty, and the athletic exploit of the laudandus.

As mentioned, Perseus’s mytheme has a certain plasticity which is due to its enigmatic location. The first account of Perseus and the Medusa does not give a specific site for her decapitation other than that it occurred at the home of the Gorgons, whom Hesiod situates at the limits of the world beyond the shores of Okeanos, close to Night and the Hesperides.\(^{99}\) The peregrine (boundary-crossing) quality of the Gorgons’ home (\textit{Theog.} 274-5 “Γοργούς θ’, ἀνάυοισι πέρην κλυτοῦ ᾨκεανοῦ ἐσχατή”) easily lends itself to transposition into the peregrine space of the Hyperboreans.\(^{100}\) The original loci of Perseus’s mytheme, Aithiopia in connection to Andromeda and the extreme west of the Gorgons’ cave, are either replaced or removed from the narrative of Pythian 10. Only the end-point of his journey, Seriphos, remains intact. The extreme west of the Gorgons is substituted by the thaumastic north to allow Pindar to display the associations required for this specific epinikion.

Additionally, by placing Perseus’s exploit directly after his entrance into the Hyperborea (45-6, albeit a resumed reference), Pindar appears to suggest that the feat was performed there. This interpretation could be supported by the chain of successive aorists μόλεν - ἐπερφέν - ἔμωθε (he came, slayed, and left). If this interpretation is correct, Pindar will have innovated to a greater extent than previously believed by not only inserting Perseus briefly into a

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\(^{97}\) Akrissios, Perseus’s grandfather, was by some considered to be the founder of Larissa. Cf. Mili (2015), \textit{Religion and society in ancient Thessaly}, p. 186.

\(^{98}\) Hornblower (2005), \textit{Thucydides and Pindar}, pp. 170-1.

\(^{99}\) \textit{Theog.} 274-5; 280-3; night and evening point to a location in the extreme west, where the sun sets. The description of the Hyperborea as a “garden of Phoebeus” (see Strabo 7.3.1) add to the possibility of confusion of the Hyperborea and the Garden of the Hesperides. Furthermore, it is important note that Apollodorus actually located the Hesperides in the Hyperborea as part of Heracles 11th exploit. Cf. Apollod. 2.5.11. The Gorgons are later relocated to Sarpedon and in Libya, cf. \textit{Cypria} fr. 32, Paus. 2.21.5, Hdt. 2.91.6.

\(^{100}\) A similar transposition can be found in Aeschylus’ \textit{Prometheus Bound}, where the Gorgons and the Graiai have been positioned in the extreme east as opposed to Hesiod’s west (\textit{Prom. des.} 790-800). Interestingly, Io’s itinerary is envisioned to continue southward from the ‘Gorgonian plain of Cisthene’, yet mentions exotic stations (called ἰος ὀροὶ) that include the northern thaumata that are the griffins and the Arimaspeans, and then, following the boundaries of the earth, Aeschylus (or rather, Prometheus) continues to the Athiopians and ends the description in Egypt (\textit{Prom. des.} 803-15). Cf. White (2001), “Io’s World”, pp. 107-140.
Hyperborean landscape, but also by transposing Perseus’s most defining achievement into a new exotic mytheme.

There is, of course, opposition to a linear chronology. Ulrich Wilamowitz and A. Köhnken deduced that the slaying of Medusa and the petrification at Seriphos precede Perseus’s Hyperborean visit, which in turn becomes a reward modelled on Homeric hospitality scenes. Slater, on the other hand, argues that the chronology of Pythian 10 follows the principle of what he calls the complex lyric narrative, which is a fitting medium for paradigmatic narratives in the epinikia and places Perseus’s terminal exploits after his visit to the Hyperborea. Slater’s argument is based on the plurality of formal and thematic ring compositions (discussed above with the addition of a third ring composition with what he calls an *euphrosyne*-motif, 34 and 41), but stresses that the terminal exploits are seemingly without any analogical value. However, a linear chronology would be, as suggested by van den Berge, rhetorically effective in the context of acquiring talismanic power from a place of both *ponos* and celebration, i.e., the contest and festivity at Pythia, thus making the stony death brought by the Gorgon’s head analogous to the potential threat to any provincial *phthoneroi* who begrudge the laudandus his success.

### 3.1.4 Parallels to Pythian 10 and the imaginary of Hyperborean life

The discussion of sequence and chronology, albeit appropriate, does not necessarily hold any value beyond determining the degree of Pindaric innovation. Attention must be directed toward the motive behind such a modification, considering that Pindar had included the myth of Perseus and the Medusa in two other odes (*P*. 12.11-18 and *N*. 10.4) without particularly intrusive adjustments. Yet in Pythian 10, Pindar modifies the heroic narrative so that it becomes exceedingly distanced from the athletic occasion not only in time by anchoring the narrative in the heroic era, but also in space by situating the thaumatic experience at the farthest removed and least explored cardinal direction. This distance from what is both

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103 Ibid., 129-30.
105 There appears to be some innovation in *P*. 12 as well. In Pythian 12, also one of Pindar’s earliest odes (composed in 490BC for an aulos-victory in the 24th Pythiad, cf. Σ Πνδ. *P*. 12 insc.), Pindar accredits Athena with the invention of both the *diaulos* and the *nomos polykephalos*, a tune that mimics the wailing of Euryale (Medusa’s sister). This is certainly an innovation, as it transfers Apollonian achievements (the invention of flute-playing as well as the *nomos polykephalos*) onto Athena. Cf. Plut. *De Mus.* 1133e; 1136b. See also Farnell (1965), *Pindar*, pp. 233-4. It is interesting that Strabo (9.3.10) mentions that the musical contests of the Pythian games favoured a melody called the “Pythian *nomos*” which celebrated the contest between Apollo and the Pythian serpent, and that its *syrinx* mimicked the last hisses of the serpent.
familiar and contemporary, through its temporal and spatial remoteness, grants Pindar an arena for the furthering of any poetical programme at a safe distance.

Pindar continues to be concerned with the topic of boundary-crossing throughout his epinikia. Fittingly, the verb chosen for our εὐδοκίμων figure, παράνει (to fulfil/penetrate), is closely tied to the notion of reaching and/or crossing boundaries. Περανω, which occurs only here in the entire Pindaric corpus, is a verbal derivative from the noun πέρας (Ep. πείρας) meaning “end, boundary” or in the older sense, “rope” as was used to demarcate geographical boundaries and which originates from the PIE root *per (to pass through). Other derivatives from this root, such as πέραων in N. 7.75 appear in Pindar’s epinikia in connection with excess or rather referring to deviation from balance, similar to his genre specific κόρος (satiety), as well as in statements on spatial restriction. A notable instance of such a derivative appears in N. 4.69 (Γαδείρων τὸ πρός ζώ όν οὐ πέρατον ἀπότρεψα) after a crescendo of Peleus’s exploits that culminates in his display of power before the gods in Olympus. Here, as in Pythian 10, an impassable boundary is placed at the end of a cardinal direction, implying a restricted, divine space. Such inaccessible, exotic thaumata figure in both odes as part of a transition to the mythological narrative. This appears to be a common use for the thetaumata, i.e., as constituents of a transitional paragraph either introductory or concluding, because they ease the path in and out of mythical narratives by pointing out the wondrous qualities of interaction with the divine. In both cases the achievement of the agent (the victor in P. 10, and the mythical protagonist Peleus in N. 4) presents a climax of human potential beyond which one cannot expect a mortal man to reach.

Furthermore, Perseus was a fitting choice for Pindar’s boundary-crossing figure for various associative reasons. Perseus is the son of Danaë and Zeus, and possesses through this direct lineage a divine prerogative that is above the laudandus’. In short, by being the son of Zeus, he has the potential to transcend mortal limitations, but his human part still requires divine aid to achieve it. This aid is eventually granted to both him and Hippokles: Apollo guided Hippokles’ victory (10-11), while Pindar’s Perseus reached the Hyperborea with the help of his half-sister Athena (45). Considering the strict impassability of the Hyperborea to any mortal man, Perseus’s access might be explained by his partial divinity as well as the

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106 In the sense of ‘reach’. The verb is used once in I. 8.24 with the meaning “fulfil, settle” conveys how Aiakos “settled the disputes even for gods”. A highly fragmented text (fr. 52hA) contains “παράνεις” with no discernible context.
108 Also O. 8.63, 9.105; P. 3.76, P. 10.28, N. 3.21, 4.69, 5.22, 7.75, 8.38; I. 6.23,
110 This sentiment is aptly put forth by Menelaus; «φίλης πέρατ' ἐγὼν τα ἐν ἀθανάτοις θεοί» (II. 7.102)
tools he was given by the Neides or by Hermes: his winged sandals.\(^{111}\) This pair of divine attributes could be the solution to the problem of access, supposing that the Hyperborea was a semi-mythical reality shrouded by topographic hindrances and not purely a conceptual utopia. Thus Pindar avoids the problem of the futile, mortal means of travel, i.e., sea voyages or land bound journeys (29), by implying that Perseus had superhuman means at his disposal that allowed him to enter the Hyperborea perhaps by flying through the air.\(^{112}\)

Pindar’s Hyperborea displays many of the same characters as another peripheral utopia. Herodotus advised an antipodal construction, suggesting that there need to exist *hypernotioi* to verify the *hyperboreioi* (4.36), and the Hyperboreans do appear to have a southern counterpart that features recurrently in this discussion: the Aithiopians.\(^{113}\) This peripheral people (whose suitable epithet is ἕξαχατοι ἄνδρων “the remotest of men”, *Od*. 1.23) seem to be an appropriate antipodal *ethnos* to the Hyperboreans, who share with them an apodemic function for their respective benefactors, Poseidon and Apollo. In fact, the paragraph describing Apollo’s presence among the Hyperboreans in Pythian 10 appears to be modelled on Poseidon’s apodemia among the Aithiopians. Just as Poseidon travelled to the limits of the earth and was greeted with a hecatomb of rams and bulls and delighted as he participated in the δαίας (the ritual banquet, *Od*. 1.22-6), Apollo, too, was greeted with his own exotic hecatomb, comically comprised of asses, and delighted (χαίρει and γελά in place of Poseidon’s ἐτέρπετο) in the Hyperboreans’ θαλία (festivities) and εἴσφαμαί (worship). There occurs a δαύς also in the northern parallel in which Perseus dines with the Hyperboreans (ἔδαίσατο, 31).\(^{114}\) Various other features seem to have epic qualities (e.g. the Homeric εἵλαπναίοσι in 40) encouraging with the Homeric passage, but the language of the thaumastic narrative also displays lyric archaisms (λαγέτας, 31).\(^{115}\)

While the Aithiopians enjoy a close relationship with Poseidon and the other Olympians (cf. the Olympic apodemia in Il. 1.423-3; 23.205-7; *Od*. 5.281-7), just as the Hyperboreans do with their Apollo, there is a major difference in accessibility. The

\(^{111}\) Gantz (1993), *Early Greek myth*, pp. 304-5. Pindar does not mention in Pythian 10 that Perseus had obtained such sandals or his other magical instruments, yet he takes care to mention the agency of Athena, who had lead Perseus to the nymphs/Hermes and onwards.

\(^{112}\) Apollo is often depicted as flying through the air during his apodemia, most often in a chariot drawn by swans. Cf. Apoll. Rhod. 2.669ff and Alc. fr. 307c. For an in-depth analysis of the swan motif, see Ahl (1982), “Amber, Avallon, and Apollo's Singing Swan”, pp. 373-411.

\(^{113}\) Eratosthenes criticizes Herodotus’ antipodal construction and argues that the Aithiopians are proper “hypernotioi” (Strabo 1.3.22).

\(^{114}\) Similarly, a favoured (semi)mortal could enjoy a feast in the presence of gods. Such a scene appears the nekyia in *Od*.11.601-3, where Odysseus spots the phantom of Heracles dining with his new wife Hebe and the immortals post his demi-apotheosis.

\(^{115}\) The lemma (ἐξαιρήτων) also appears in a sympotic context in Theognis II. 237-54, where the poet promises immortal and ubiquitous glory for Cyrus that shall spread on wings throughout the whole world in a highly perigeic fashion. The noun λαγέτας appears thrice elsewhere in Pindar’s epinikia and features solely in dynastic odes (i.e., odes written for tyrants such as Hiero and Arkesilas of Cyrene: in O. 1.89 of Pelops’ sovereign sons, in P. 3.85 of the tyrant Hieron, in P. 4.107 of Aeolus in a discussion of rightful kingship), which adds a highly dynastic and aristocratic aspect to Perseus as a protagonist in dynastic praise. For the (probably) Mycenean origin of λαγέτας, cf. Trümpy (1986), *Vergleich des Mykenischen mit der Sprache der Chorlyrik*, pp. 26-9.
Aithiopians had frequent encounters with the Greeks - they are in fact part of the civilized oikoumene of Herodotus and participate actively in Greek military affairs (the Aithiopian king Memnon fought as an ally of Troy against the Greeks). The Hyperboreans, on the other hand, as described by both Herodotus and Pindar, do not wage wars, and their communication with the Greek world is generally indirect and strictly religious in their commitment to Apollo and his sanctuary in Delos. They were also at the receiving end of archaic transferrals of the Apolline (the relocation of Apollo’s second Delphic temple to the Hyperborea, as well as his periodical apodemia). The emphasis on religion and isolation was perhaps highly generative of fantasticality.\textsuperscript{116} However, they share another important trait with the Aithiopians, beside their extreme geographical remoteness, namely, their extraordinary longevity.\textsuperscript{117}

Longevity, together with the Hyperboreans’ otherwise undisturbed utopic existence, is comparable to the primordial prosperity enjoyed by the Golden race in Hesiod’s \textit{Works and Days}. While the Hyperboreans’ apodemic quality references Odyssean features, the rest of their utopian qualities mimic the Hesiodic: this \textit{genos}, like the Hyperboreans, is not exempt from death, but they do not have to suffer grievous old age (\textit{WD} 113-14) nor do they experience toil, woe or evils (\textit{WD} 113, 115). They are godlike and peaceful (\textit{WD} 112, 119) where the Hyperboreans are a sacred \textit{genos} that does not fight (42), and, most significantly, their limbs always rejoice in their \textit{θαλαμαί} (\textit{WD} 114-15), implying a continuous revelry similar to that of the Hyperboreans \textit{empedon} feasts.\textsuperscript{118}

Thus Pindar makes use of the furthermost, epic qualities of both southern and primordial \textit{genea}, combining the Aithiopians’ extreme geographical remoteness with the extreme temporal remoteness of the first race of humans to shape his own utopia suitable for an Apolline context and a Thessalian laudandus, a utopia containing that which becomes accessible only through Pindar’s poetic medium. Furthermore, the Hyperborean episode in Pythian 10 obeys the logic of a “utopian wish”, a rhetorical and poetical device in which an impossible utopia is posited only to be discarded in favour of a humanly accessible alternative, such as that good fortune may be obtained by an athletic victor.\textsuperscript{119} The

\textsuperscript{116} E.g. the magical figures with connections to the Hyperborea such as Aristeas (risen from the dead, possessed by Apollo) and Abaris, who flew around the world on an arrow and practiced an early form of asceticism, and even Pythagoras (sometimes known as Hyperborean Apollo). For a discussion on (and refutation of) these figures as representatives of northern shamanism, cf. Bremmer (2019), “Method and Madness in the study of Greek Shamanism”, pp. 94-109.

\textsuperscript{117} The Aithiopians are consistently referred to as ‘\textit{μομφόπουλαται}’ in Herodotus (esp. 3.114). For a brief discussion of the longevity of “\textit{natural men}” and an attempt at refuting any confusion with \textit{μομφόποτος} as “long-bowed”, cf. Halliday (1924), “Macrobius: Aithiopians and Others”, pp. 53-54.

\textsuperscript{118} Contrastingly, although their primordial festivities were continuous, the Golden Age itself was temporary and was eventually replaced by the Silver age during Kronos’ reign. Interestingly, their dissolution entailed a transformation into guardian spirits of men who dole out fortune and guard \textit{dike} as their kingly right. (Hes. \textit{WD} 109-26). Some recognize these human, yet utopian qualities with the Phaeacians as well, cf. Redondo (2018), “Elements of salvation in the Greek myths on the Hyperboreans”, pp. 481-91.

\textsuperscript{119} For an excursion on the “utopian wish” concentrating on Pindar’s third Pythian, see Slater (1988), “Pindar’s Pythian 3”, pp. 51-61.
Hyperborean utopia represents unbalanced and inviolable bliss, obtainable only in a reality far removed in time and space, yet made palpable to both audience and the laudandus. This uninterrupted beatitude, divine favour and everlasting celebration are lavished upon the laudandus and Thessaly through the mythical paradigm of Perseus, but only for a short while and within the confines of Pindar’s epinikion.

I believe that Pindar consciously connects the revelling communities (i.e., the Hyperboreans and the Thessalians) despite the absence of any direct comparison. The denomination of both Thessaly and the Hyperboreans as μάκαρ (2, 46) can be construed as supporting this view, together with the Hyperboreans’ sympotic euphrosyne as a reference to the post-victory komos of the Thessalians.120 The two peoples are both blessed and elevated from their surroundings due to a special privilege, and the Thessalians enjoy this privilege through the efforts of Hippokles and the Aleuad-sponsorship. There is, however, a difference in their privilege, and it lies is its magnitude: Hippokles’s fortune as a Panhellenic victor is a fleeting joy because it is the culmination of human possibility and so is naturally vulnerable to flux and reversal. Perhaps by displaying this reality in contrast to the unachievable as a ‘memento mori’ to the triumphant laudandus, Hippokles would “accept the uncertainty of his future as well as his own mortality”.121

In contrast, the Hyperborean beatitude, being either the motivation for or the product of Apollo’s presence, is alien and exotic due to its constancy and intensity. Their reality is exempted from the human plights that we know to be inescapable, such as illness, old age, toil and war (41-4). While within the Hyperborean ethnos we see the whole community crowned with golden wreaths and feasting to the accompaniment of music and dancing maidens (38-40), in the real world, the privilege belongs to the victor and his family, but was enjoyed vicariously and through analogy by his community as well. Indeed, Pindar wishes to elevate Hippokles (ὦπατος παῖδων 9) within his immediate community (55) and make him a wreathed thauma to both peers and elders (54-9),122 whose inclusion and age range emphasize the contrast with Hyperborean youthfulness, again underscoring the imperfection of the human

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120 Pindar often operates with conventional substitution, and εὔφροσυνή-lemmata usually represent the victory revel, cf. Bundy (1962), Studia Pindarica, p. 2. The μάκαρ-lemma appears 20 times in Pindar’s corpus. It is primarily used of divine figures (O 1.52, O 2.70, O 3.41, P 3.103, P 5.118, P 10.46, N 7.94, I 7.9.26a), but appears also as a characterization of Battos in P 4.59 of Battos and Arkesilas in P 5.20, 94. It is noteworthy that the feminine is thrice used to describe the ἱερά of the laudandus (O 1.11, P 5.11, I 4.17b) and twice for his geography (P 10.2 of Thessaly, I 7.1 for Thebes), thus conferring the divine blessing that assures an athletic victory and its impact on the οἰκος of the laudandus.


122 Σ Pind. P 10.85B: “ἐλάτζο [..] ἔτι καὶ πάλιν τὸν Ἱππόκλεον ἔνεκεν τῶν σταυρῶν [..] θαυμαστῶν καὶ ἐπιδίδον [..] θεῖαι, [..] ἀλλὰ κοινὸς θησάμεν.”
condition. The collective utopia of the Hyperboreans becomes an amplified version of the brief enjoyment that Hippokles receives for his athletic achievement.

The notion of the elevated collective returns in the conclusion of the ode, this time referring to the Aleuadae who are the deserving representatives of Thessalian community. The group of brothers are described as ἐσλοῖ and ἀγαθοί, corresponding to the καλοκαγαθία of the aristocrats, and they exalt Thessalian custom (αὖξηντες 69-72) in a verbal echo of how life grows sweet with Apolline ministration (αὖξεται 10). The Apolline presence in this verbal echo invites us to envision the Hyperboreans as a collective body of laudandi, a community where all bear golden victory wreaths and enjoy the music and the sweet life that Apollo’s presence provides them. Through analogy, the Thessalians become assimilated to the Hyperboreans in the moment of enjoying Panhellenic victory, a celebration that is provided to them not only by the laudandus and Apollo, but also by Aleuad initiative. The ode ends on a nautical trope pronouncing the Aleuadae to be helmsmen of a dear, inherited hegemony (72) in a way that maintains the aristocratic support throughout the ode.123

The Hyperborean amplification is likewise noticeable in regards to divine visitation. Apollo’s attendance with the Hyperboreans and his subsequent absence from the Greek centre does not remove divine sanction from Pindar’s epinikion, which is at that moment effective in both spaces through the analogical connection (Pindar does accost Apollo directly in the first triad). Apollo’s presence could, at times, be perceived as legitimizing, e. g., in matters of oracular activity (cf. P. 4.5, where it is Apollo, and not the Muse as in P. 10.37, who οὐκ ἀποδημεῖ, which validates Battus’s prophesized mission), but this is not widely recognized.124

In P. 10, Pindar offers an associative conflation of the Muse and Apollo with the litotes in 37-8. Suddenly it is the she, Pindar’s auxiliary, who is expressly epidemic in a Hyperborean setting, while Apollo obtains a lasting, ritual presence in the epinikion, which in turn establishes a certain kind of poetic authority that is not reliant on direct divine inspiration.125

As portrayed by Alcaeus (fr. 307c), the Hyperboreans were at one point preferred by Apollo over the Delphians, and Apollo in P. 10 shows the same appreciation for the Hyperborean parallel of the Thessalian north. The similarities between of the Delphians and the Hyperboreans must not be disregarded, however, as they remain comparable in several

123 P. 10.5, 64, 69-70.
124 According to Farnell, Apollo’s seasonal epidemia and apodemia were of no significance to the validity of Pythian divination, cf. Farnell (1907), The Cults of the Greek states, vol. 4, p. 186.
125 Maslov (2015), Pindar and the Emergence of Literature, pp. 201-212 (esp. 210-11) for the ‘incapacitation’ of Apollo Mousagetes and his embedding in the Hyperborean space as a way of transferring poetic authority to the poet.
respects, such as their portrayal as collective body of Apolline devotees, which recalls the presentation of the Hyperboreans as ἵππα γενέα (42). Their connection allows Pindar to allude to the concept of Apolline legitimization, which was essential for the maintaining and establishment of tyrannical power. 

The Hyperborean thauma does not only include the amplification of a victory revel (Thessaly) and Apolline favour (Delphians), but also norm reversal to underscore its exoticism. This is evident in the choice of sacrificial animal for Apollo’s hecatomb. These onoi (donkeys) could be considered as improper sacrifice in the human sphere and were associated with excessive sexual potency, yet the Hyperboreans, and rightly so, considering Apollo’s joyous reaction, offer donkeys to their god. This, in addition to advertising the exoticism of the narrative, is an instance of norm reversal that marks the space as especially sacred by the elevation of the profane to the sublime. It is worth noting that the apparently comical ἄβρος κνοοῦ ἄλον reappears in another epinikion as an appellation of the snakes that attacked Heracles in his crib (ν. 1.43-50). This first, initiatory subjugation of a beast, especially the hostile serpent, is a civilizing act and calls to mind Apollo’s killing of the Python for the sake of establishing his Delphic sanctuary.

The Hyperboreans’ continued revelry is another feature of norm reversal and it is dependant on the escape from Nemesis. Nemesis is described as ὑπέρδοικος, where dike should be understood as the natural balance (similar to the role of Moira in ν. 7) of good and bad fortune in life. The Hyperboreans’ isolated geography and implied temporal remoteness place them beyond the axis of normality and allows them a positive imbalance that is not achievable by man, except perhaps at the very moment of victory. Only in this sphere of otherness can the laudandus escape Nemesis and the nature of his human condition, and only for a moment, for Pindar makes sure to reminded him of flux and mortality. A clear example of dike as indicative of balance (opposed to excessive aspirations) can be found in I. 7, where Pindar narrates how Pegasus threw Bellerophon when he attempted to reach the

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126 Pindar presses a genealogical link between the Delphians and Apollo and names the whole citizen-body manteis (Pin. fr. 192, Pae. 6 and 8). See also Maslov (2015), Pindar and the Emergence of Literature, p. 202.
128 Of the equids as unfit sacrificial animals, see Griffith (2006), Horsepower and Donkeywork, p. 199 n. 59. Donkeys were, however, sacrificed to the phallic god Priapos and used in Dionysiac phallic processions, cf. Burkert (1986), Homo Necans, p. 69 (esp. n. 50). See also the story in Ant. Lib. Metamorphoses 20, where Klines, a Babylonia, attempted to sacrifice asses to Apollo after a visit to his Hyperborean temple, but the god refused the improper sacrifice.
131 In Olympian 8, Pindar utters an apotropaic prayer against the duality of fortune: εὔχομαι ἡμί θεάν / μοῖραν νέμεαι διέθαμοιλ μη θέλειν (ο. 8.80-88). Interestingly, a positive imbalance similar to the Hyperboreans’ is also enjoyed on the Isles of the Blessed (ο. 2.68-77).
The Hyperboreans and exotic θείματα in epinikia

heavens, because τὸ δὲ πᾶρ δίκαιον γλυκὸ πικροτάτα μένει τελευτάτα “an unjust sweetness awaits the most bitter end” (I. 7.44-8).\(^{132}\)

As with Bellerophon, the dangers of exceeding/aspiring to exceed the human potential are embedded in the dangers of passing a metaphorical or geographical border. Pindar claims that neither he himself, nor any other man, should dare venture beyond the established boundaries (O. 3.44-5). In N. 4.69-72, Gadeira (akin to the Pillars of Heracles in N. 3.22ff), representing the westernmost edge of the world is therefore both a physical and metaphorical limit of safe travel. While venturing beyond this point is prohibited, the touching of the boundary is reserved as a privilege of the athletes’ heroic paradigms. The Hyperborea belongs to this group of liminal spaces. And as with the Pillars, the laudandum cannot reach beyond that point of excellence which is his athletic achievement. Indeed, he must eventually leave the liminal space in the epinikia and return to his society in order to achieve and solidify the recognition for his feat. At the moment of their victory, the laudandi touch the boundary of human potential, but ambition is also a dangerous quality. Thus the exaltation of the laudandum to the heroic (i.e., semidivine) or even divine must remain within the safety of the epinikion and its mythic narrative - a precautious effort often buttressed by a break-off motif to reel in the poetic ambition, lest it will incur phthonos from gods and mortals alike.

It appears that liminal spaces are especially effective when praising problematic laudandi, such as the already powerful laudandi reges. The transferral of praise into a peregrine sphere removes it from the victor both spatially and temporally, which alleviates the threat and consequences of an enkomion that is at risk of being perceived as too excessive. The victor’s paradigmatic participation in such a utopia becomes, in a certain sense, cathartic, and his euphoric experience is brief and safely confined to the epinikion. Thus the imagery of boundaries and boundary-crossing, if one applies the structuralist approach of E. Leach, benefit the epinikia in as much as they are separating two zones of contemporary reality:\(^{133}\) the opening and concluding segments of the epinikion are concerned with the context of the victory and they interact with real time and space, while the interposed exotic narrative is “abnormal, timeless and ambiguous”.\(^{134}\) In short, the liminal imagery is a highly cautious device that offers a largely detached venue for expressions of praise.

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\(^{132}\) Brown (1992), “The Hyperboreans and Nemesis in Pindar’s Pythian 10”, p. 29: “This view is also supported by the similarities in cult shared by Nemesis, the Moirai, and the Erinyes; they all appear to be chthonic figures associated with the apportioning and enforcing of fate.” Another example of balance and constancy is N. 7.55-8; “it is impossible for one man to succeed in winning complete happiness: I cannot name to whom Moira has given such continuous perfection”.

\(^{133}\) Leach (1976), *Culture & Communication*, pp. 34-37 (esp. 34-5); 78; 82-3.

\(^{134}\) Ibid.
Thus the Aleuadae, the commissioners (and in truth, the laudandi reges) of Pythian 10, received an ode that elegantly deals with motifs that are motivated by the Thessaly-Pyro nexus mediated through the Hyperborean thauma. The spatial and connotative plasticity of this exotic thauma, as well as its idiosyncratic conceptual beatitude, seems to be integrated into the larger system of Pindaric thaumastic imagery (i.e., his representations of the extremes, such as spatial utopias or markers of ambition and ability). In the case of P 10, the extreme west of the Gorgons is substituted by the thaumastic north to allow Pindar to display the associations required for the specific dynastic laudandi of this epinikion. Thus the extreme nature of the laudandus’s achievement becomes externalized and presented as a shared joy with his society, yet it remains safely contained within the mythical narrative.

3.2 Olympian 3

3.2.1 Hyperborean olives in context: laudandus rex and the epinikian occasion

Olympian 3 was written for Theron, the tyrant of Akragas (modern day Agrigento), in celebration of his victory in the four-horse chariot race in 476 BC.¹³⁵ He was the head of the clan Emmenidae, the ruling dynasty of Akragas. Olympian 3 is the second Pindaric epinikion where the Hyperboreans figure somewhat prominently (as opposed to I. 6, where they possess the periegetic function), and similar to P. 10, the inclusion of the thauma seems to have produced modifications of the established mythical material. O. 3 and O. 2 were written for the same victory, yet differ greatly: O. 2 concerns itself with topics of economic generosity, recuperation and ancestral claims, and focuses on presenting the genealogical specifics of Theron and the Emmenidae.¹³⁶ The effort to (re)affirm the Emmenid sovereignty would have been highly relevant in 476 when the Sikelian population had experienced hard times under the inter-state politics of the Emmenidae, such as the conflicts between Hieron of Syracuse and Thrasydaios, son of Theron and tyrant of the recently subjugated Himera, as well the massacre of Himeran insurgents ordered by Theron the same year.¹³⁷

O. 3, on the other hand, is markedly more cultic and celebratory, and its mythical narrative focuses on the Heraclean aetiology of the Olympic festival. My tentative hypothesis is that the Hyperborean thauma appears in O. 3 as part of a program to appropriate Apolline elements while achieving an ameliorated endorsement of the laudandus rex in a period of

¹³⁵ Farnell (1965), Pindar, p. 24.
¹³⁶ The focus on genealogy and the Sicilian landscape may have been an effective way of asserting Emmenid supremacy both in Akragas and Himera, the city that had been subjugated only four years prior in the Battle of Himera. Himera fell under the control of Theron’s son, Thrasydaios, until his tyranny was overthrown and democracy was established in 466, cf. Hornblower (2011), pp. 48-51. A fragment from an enkomion for Theron focused seems to have fused the topics of O. 2 and 3 as it focuses on both on his Rhodian heritage and his clan’s theoxenic generosity, cf. Pin. fr. 119.
¹³⁷ Diod. Sic. 11.48.8. The severity of the actions of the Emmenidae would explain the emphasis on erring and hopes for better days in O. 2.
socio-political adversity. This ‘redemptive’ approach is supported by the emphasis on Dorian elements, such as the Dioscuri (1, 34-41), the visibly gentle Heracles as the heroic paradigm, as well as the proomimial ‘Doric strain’ (5), which is appropriate not only in the athletic context, but also politically, especially considering Theron’s import of Dorians into Himera to replenish the city after the massacre in 476. Throughout the epinikion, Pindar appears to allude to the agonistic cultic relationship of Heracles and Apollo, and innovates in order to present it in an ameliorated version and in Heracles’s favour.\(^{139}\)

The Olympian festival appears to undergo a curious ‘Apollonization’ through a Heraclean adaptation of Apolline space and ritual: Heracles visits the Hyperboreans, the ultimate worshippers of Apollo and a landscape that is restricted (except for Apollo during his apodemia), and Heracles ventures to the Hyperborea on a mission that is essentially an Olympian parallel to Apolline daphnephoria. Incidentally, the Delphic Stepteria-festival which features the daphnephoria ritual is strongly associated with Apolline epiphany and theoxenia, as it celebrates Apollo’s return to his Delphic sanctuary after his stay in the north.\(^{140}\) The narrative of O. 3 revolves around the aition for the traditional victory wreaths of olive, which are the last step in finalizing the Olympic festival. This retrieval of Panhellenic wreaths from the north presents a parallel to Apollo’s daphnephoria, which was essential for the Pythian games of which Apollo is the patron god. The olive wreaths are obtained by a Heraclean venture into the extremes of the earth (O. 3.19-34), for which the poet chooses the Hyperborean landscape.

### 3.2.2 Heracles to the Hyperborea: conflation and innovation

In O. 3 there is emphasis on the immensity of the occasion and how the victory benefits the Agrigentian community through pleasing the cult divinities, the Dioscuri. This ode was, according to the scholiasts, performed during the Theoxenia-festival that celebrated the epidemic of the Tyndaridae Caster and Pollux and their sister Helen.\(^{141}\) They, as well as the Agrigentian polis, are the ones Pindar aims to praise in his song, and Theron’s victory has given the poet the opportunity to do so (1-3).\(^{142}\) This presentation of the laudandum rex as the

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\(^{138}\) Hornblower (2005), *Thucydid and Pindar*, p. 195, Diod. Sic. 11.49.3. It is noteworthy that the Doric musical element appears also in O. 1.7 for Hieron, another Sicilian tyrant who repopulated his poleis with Dorians.

\(^{139}\) The combative myths of Heracles and Apollo point to an early rivalry between the two cults, see Fontenrose (1980), *Pytho*, pp. 404-5.

\(^{140}\) The *theoxenia* in Delphi celebrates Apollo’s birthday and his return from Hyperborean apodemia, which would fit the theoxenic aspect of the epinikion (i.e., Heracles returning from Hyperborea with wreaths that will eventually allow Theron to please the theoxenic Dioscuri), cf. Scott (2014), *Delphi*, p. 220.


benefactor of his community and its interests is a common topos in the dynastic epinikia which seek to assuage any communal dissatisfaction with their sovereign. This can be seen in the presentation of Theron as the patron of the Dioscuri, as his *theoxenic* hospitality is acknowledged by the divine twins by their gift of an Olympian victory, which again intensifies their joint celebration. The occasion of the *theoxenia*, together with the attempt at further aggrandizing the Olympian games, might have influenced the inclusion of Apolline element because of Apollo’s strong association with the festival and Panhellenic competition: the term *theoxenia* is attested only for two sacred festivals, the *theoxenia* of the Dioscuri and the Apolline *theoxenia* in Delphi. I believe that this association that could have inspired an underlying theme of Herculean (i.e., in this context, Emmenid/Olympic) and Apolline rivalry in this epinikion.

The prooimion indeed points to the cultic occasion, given that the ode opens with a wish to please the *philoxeno/i* Tyndaridae (O. 1-2), in which the adjective echoes the occasion of the Theoxenia-festival. The epinikion is introduced as aiming to please them, however in the end the roles are reversed and it is the Tyndaridae who reward Theron and his clan for their pious generosity (38-41), thus revealing a reciprocal relationship between the dynastic clan and the polis-cultic deities. The *theoxenia* aside, it is evident that the foundation of the Olympic games was a favoured topic in Pindar’s epinikia in 476, because it appears in three Olympian odes of that year, and all three offer a different variant: O. 1, written for Hiero of Syracuse, concerns itself with the myth of Pelops and describes how he founded the Olympian games by winning Hippodameia in a horse race. In O. 2, as well as in Olympian 3, we encounter Heracles in the role of the Olympic founder. He appears in the prooimion of O. 2 as a foil to Theron’s victory, and the myth is presented in the combative version, i.e., how Heracles founded the Olympian games with the spoils of war won from Elis (O. 2.3-4, also in

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143 Cf. Petridou (2015), *Divine Epiphany*, p. 290. Of the gods, Apollo and Dionysus were the most associated with *theoxenia*, cf. Bravo (2004), “*Heroic Epiphanies*”, p. 74. See also Pind. Pae. 6 for the Delphic *theoxenia*, esp. ll. 13-15 for the wreath-motif: κατέβαν στρέφοντα / καὶ θαλάν τροφόν ἢλεος / Ἀπόλλωνος (i.e., Delphi). The Delphic *theoxenia* and the Stepteria were important festivals in Delphi, cf. Farnell (1907), *The Cults of the Greek states*, vol. 4, p. 292.

144 Susan Shermeldine argues that the Hyperboreans figure in O. 3 because of their closeness with gods, and that they were “[…] chosen to reinforce Pindar’s initial picture of mortal attention to things divine and the subsequent goodwill of the gods. This condition of hospitality between men and gods is epitomized by the Hyperboreans who actually live with the gods, and by Herakles who will in the end join the ranks.” Shermeldine (1987), “Pindaric Praise and the Third Olympian”, pp. 75-6.


146 The choice of Pelops in the role of Olympic founder would be a source of great flattery for the tyrant Hieron who prided himself on his Dorian (Deinomenid) heritage. The cultivation of his Dorian aspect was extremely important for consolidating his sovereignty in Syracuse (a colony of Dorian Corinth). Cf. Thatcher (2012), “Syracusan Identity between Tyranny and Democracy”, pp. 73-90.
Pindar prepares for the mythical narrative through the prosopopoeia of both landscape, when he claims that it is Pisa who bids him speak (9), and the wreaths, who are portrayed as commissioners of the ode. In place of the laudandus rex, it is they who exact from Pindar the debt of the epinikion, which compels him to fit music and words together for Theron (6-9). By transferring the role of commissioner from Theron onto the wreaths, Pindar deftly removes a self-aggrandizing element of the dynastic ode, and transforms it so that it is the occasion itself that compels him to compose the epinikion. Thus it is not surprising that when the olive wreaths compel Pindar to speak, he presents them with the mythical narrative of their own aition as a parallel to the more common exploration of the heroic ancestry of the laudandus. Within this narrative, the plant, if we take Heracles to be the mythical paradigm of Theron, becomes analogous to the epinikion – the prize of kleos that can only be won away far away from home (πρὸς ἐσχιατῶν […] οἰκόθεν 43-4) and through an extreme achievement. Furthermore, Pindar takes care to present the prize/plant analogy not only as a privilege of the athlete, but also as a common good (ξυνὸν ἄνθρωπος, 18). It is the source of pleasant shade for the divine grove (to be understood as benefitting all, the contestants and the public alike) and an adornment for excellence (a privilege reserved for the laudandus). Moreover, the prosopopoeia of the wreaths and the Olympic landscape is indicative of divine involvement, and brings to mind the animation of Pytho and the Parnassian glen in the heavily Apolline ode for Hippokles (P. 10.4; 8-9).

The level of innovation in this myth is impressive. Firstly, Pindar seems to conflate the earliest foundation myth with one of the latest, if one follows the chronology of Pausanias, when he fuses the primordial originator of the Olympic games, Heracles the Dactyl, with Heracles the son of Amphitryon (14). This undertaking to bring olive trees to Greece is not mentioned in other source materials for the labours of Heracles, and is thus not part of his established mytheme. The second innovation seems to place the olive tree, one of the most important Greek symbols and arguably the most important plant in the athletic context, in the

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147 The choice of the military variant seems deliberate in the context of the current political unrest. The connection between spoils of war and athletic competition allows the triumph of the Emmenidae shine in both spheres of inter-state politics and Panhellenic competition. For the account of Heracles as Olympian founder after sacking Elis, cf. O. 10.24-59 and Paus. 5.8.3.

148 See Kurke (1991), TheTraffic in Praise, pp. 15-34 for the requirement to venture out and return in pursuit of kleos (e.g. οἰκόθεν 44).

149 O. 10.4.6-7 again details how Heracles modified the landscape to accommodate public enjoyment: τὸ δὲ κόκκαλον πέσαν ἄθροις δόρου λόσιν.

150 Paus. 5.7.6-7, 9; 5.8.3-4 and 8.2.2. Pausanias informs us that the abundance of olive trees was so great, that the Dactyls slept on piles of leaves while they were still green. Pausanias’ Dactyl is accredited with introducing the olive trees to Greece from the Hyperborea, but this appears to be a contamination from Pindar’s epinikion. Other sources, including later references in Pausanias, do not mention any Dactylean expedition into the Hyperborea. Cf. Diod. Sic. 5.64.3 and 6; Strab. 8.3.30
Hyperborea. Pindar locates the trees on the shady springs of the river Ister (the upper Danube, 13-14) and thus concretizes the location of the Hyperborea in an unprecedented way. In an echo of Hyperborean beatitude, the “shady sources of Ister” reveal that the Hyperboreans enjoy the pleasant shade that Heracles desires for his Olympia. It is also within this epinikion that we first hear of the Hyperboreans as located beyond the sources of Boreas (31-2) and as servants of Apollo (16). These details aside, the ode refrains from expounding the concept of Hyperborean happiness that was so predominant in P.10. Instead, the Hyperboreans’ main feature is their role as guardians of the desired treasure.

I propose that Pindar, perhaps in an effort to intensify the Olympian victory and to place it in an Agrigentian landscape, does this by presenting a narrative that references and competes with the ritualized daphnephoria of the Stepteria-festival, a festival which is an essential prerequisite for the proper execution of the Pythian games. In doing so, the poet reassigns Apolline potency to Akragas and its tyrant through the paradigm of Heracles while simultaneously emphasizing the Olympian context. He does so firstly by choosing Heracles, a Dorian founder of the Olympics, for Theron’s mythical paradigm, which is appropriate for the policies of the laudandus as well as the athletic occasion. The Heracles of O. 3 is then obliquely compared to another founder of Panhellenic games, and an ancient cultic rival of Heracles, Apollo. The games (and especially the chariot races) are also relevant to the εὔπτοι Dioscuri, who seem to have granted Theron his equestrian victory (39) in their role as overseers of the chariot contests (36-8), and who in turn receive a banquet and glory through the epinikion (1-4, 40). Heracles, then, establishes the foundation for both Theron’s athletic pre-eminence which in turn ensures the communal and cultic enjoyment that is occasioned and intensified by the Olympian victory.

In mimicking the journey in search for crown-leaves and by locating the trees in the north, the labour becomes a play on the procession and function of the Pythian Stepteria-ritual. The Stepteria, as mentioned previously, was a Delphic festival which occasioned the bringing of fresh laurel from the north so that victory wreaths might be made as prizes for the Pythian games. The returning procession was outwardly triumphant and it was accompanied

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151 E. Robbins cites Hdt. 4.34.2 on the olive-plant growing from the grave of the Hyperborean maidens, and argues that the olive as a gift from Hyperborea is not a Pindaric innovation, but rather a part of an ancient mytheme. Cf. Robbins (1982), “Heracles, the Hyperboreans, and the Hind”, pp. 299-300. I find the overall lack of evidence disproving of this view. It is curious to note that the plant is desirable because of its ability to give shade, which is a somewhat curious attribute considering that the epinikia are most often concerned with light as an allusion to glory. Timothy Bridgman suggests that the addition of shade into an overly bright place represents the necessary respite from overpowering glory (i.e., establishing the natural interchange of fortunes in the mortal life). Cf. Bridgman (2005), Hyperboreans, p. 28.  
152 Heracles is furthermore appropriate in the Tyndarid-context for his Doric ancestry, his voracious xenismos, and his apotheosis, cf. O. 3.36.
by music and revelry similar to the epinikian *komos*. The ritual itself mimicked the cathartic exile of Apollo in his 8-year sojourn in Thessalian Tempe (or, if viewed in connection with Admetus, in Pherae) for killing the Pytho, and was thusly performed every eight years. The killing of the serpent was also believed to be the victory that led Apollo to found the Pythian games. The similarities between the Pythian ritual (as well as its mythical basis) and Heracles’ venture are apparent: the protagonist initiates a major, foundational cultic project with athletic connotations (foundation of the Olympian festival/foundation of Delphic shrine) and is hindered from finalizing it - first, he must travel north. He eventually returns from the north and is able to complete the project, and his return grants the future laudandi their Panhellenic crown. It is important to note that the Apolline version entails a violent encounter with a guardian serpent, while Pindar emphasizes the peaceful approach of Heracles in his obtaining of the olives.

By pushing the venture as far as to the Hyperborea, Pindar amplifies the northern terminus of the Stepteria-festival (Thessaly) into a Panhellenic northern extreme that was nevertheless sufficiently associated with Apollo and his ritual absence. The difference is that Heracles retrieves the trees and plants them in the Olympic landscape, thus appropriating the victorious emblem for the future and limiting the exploit to a single, grand occasion. Furthermore, the Stepteria ritual would be a useful model in a *theoxenic* context as it was closely connected to divine epiphania/epidemia and to the Delphic *theoxenia*, which were both celebrated in the spring. As such, the aspect of divine epiphania/epidemia in the Stepteria also offers associations to the epinikion’s interest in the cultic presence of the Dioscuri. Thus the modification of the Heraclean mytheme (a Dorian and Olympic/athletic element), together with the spatial transposition, becomes an adaptation that flatters the athletic context as well as the occasion of Agrigentian *theoxenia* with the Dioscuri.

The allusions to the Heraclean/Apolline rivalry (as seen in the appropriation of the Apolline *dendrophoria*) are strengthened by the inclusion of motifs that are indicative of two major agonistic encounters between Heracles and Apollo; the Ceryntian hind and the Delphic tripod. These two represent a point of contention between the god and the hero which resulted in violent, physical altercations. Joseph Fontenrose, moreover, insists that the thefts of the

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153 Farnell (1907), *The Cults of the Greek states*, vol. 4, p. 293.
154 I.e., as funerary gained for the Python. The purification after his triumph forced Apollo out of Delphi for 8 years, and subsequently the ancient Pythian games were celebrated at the same interval until the Amphictyonic appropriation of the shrine in 582/6, when the Pythian games became modelled on the Olympian games in Elis, cf. Fontenrose (1980), *Pytho*, pp. 456-7.
155 The Dioscuri are themselves described as ἐπιδεμοῦντες, cf. Σ Pind. O. 3 s.v. Θεοξενία. Apollo and Artemis (who are absent) could be figuring as a losing parallel to the Dioscuri in the role of sacred epidemic δίδυμοι (twins).
tripod and hind are essentially the same story, and that they represent early, cultic rivalry between the two.\textsuperscript{156} In O. 3, Heracles recalls the Hyperborean olive trees from the time that he sought the Ceryntian hind, a feat which was forced on him by Eurystheus (26-31).\textsuperscript{157} This golden-horned hind was a sacred animal to Artemis, and in some versions, it was the goddess herself.\textsuperscript{158} According to the myth, Heracles fought Apollo for Artemis’s deer and broke its horn in the process.\textsuperscript{159} The mythical narrative in O. 3 does not make mention of this struggle: the exploit is presented without any trace of violence and Artemis is portrayed as welcoming Heracles (δέξατ’ 27).\textsuperscript{160} Apollo, perhaps in an attempt to reserve epidemia for the Dioscuri and to allow Heracles into the ultimate Apolline apodemic space, is not mentioned in the epinikion. This removal of violent elements, as we shall see further below, fits the program that furthers an ameliorated, ‘non-violent’ presentation of the hero. The inclusion of the Ceryntian hind, however, does recall the greatest altercation between Heracles and Apollo, i.e., the rape of the Apolline tripod.\textsuperscript{161}

According to the myth, Heracles attempted to procure the Delphic tripod for himself because he was angered at being refused oracular guidance after his gruesome crimes. This violent attempt at acquiring the essential Apolline element (the tripod, and perhaps with it, oracular powers) led to severe punishment by Zeus: penance in a year of servitude.\textsuperscript{162} Broken down, the myth contains the following elements: desire for something that belongs to Apollo due to the violence of his ways. This is reminiscent of the objective in O.3: the pursuit of olive trees (contained among Apolline worshippers), his entrance into the Hyperborea (restricted, Apolline space) and his gentle retrieval of the prize: we observe a peaceful and triumphant Heracles and a successful transfer of the Apolline to the Olympian context. The

\textsuperscript{156} Cf. Fontenrose (1980), \textit{Pytho}, 401-5 (esp. 403-4). The fight for Apollo’s tripod has also been understood as an allusion to the First Sacred War and the fight for dominion over the Delphic shrine, see Parke and Boardman (1957), “The Struggle for the Tripod and the First Sacred War”, pp. 276-282.


\textsuperscript{158} Fontenrose (1980), \textit{Pytho}, p. 404. Callimachus offers a variant in which the Ceryntian hind escaped Artemis, who was left with only 4 hinds to drive her chariot. This could, if it was a known variation, be evocative also of the nature of Therion’s victory (i.e., the tethrippon – four horse chariot race). Cf. Call. I.3.98-9. Another variant (Apollod. 5.2.3) claims that Heracles caught the hind while swimming across the river Ladon (incidentally the name of the river god who was Daphne’s (laurel) father, and also the name of the Hesperidean snake guarding the apples).


\textsuperscript{160} In later sources, (e.g. Diod. Sic. 4.12.13) it is presented as a peaceful exploit in which Heracles explains his necessity to Artemis so that she relents the deer to him. The struggle with Apollo is also absent from the later variants.


\textsuperscript{162} Similar to Zeus’ punishment of Apollo for slaying the Python. Cf. Apollo (Apollod. 2.6.2) and Fontenrose (1980), \textit{Pytho}, p. 402.
Hyperboreans could, in their capacity as “servants of Apollo” (16), be viewed as an amplification of the oracle or the Delphic space in its entirety in the myth of the tripod.163

The epinikion emphasises the element of volition: Heracles is driven by his own heart and desire (25, 33-4). This is of course indicative of Theron’s own athletic ambition, but there are other implications of this uncharacteristic autonomy. It has been suggested that the emphasis on Heracles’ autonomy together with the insistence that he performed this feat without violence (δάμον ὜περβορέων πείσας […] λόγῳ 16 and πιστα ὕπερβόρων […] αἴτε 17) indicate an ethizierung (i.e., an ameliorative correction) of a narrative which was previously known to have been violent. Some scholars propose a (hypothetical) narrative in which Heracles wrestles the plant from the Hyperboreans by force.164 There is no evidence for a violent encounter between Heracles and the Hyperboreans, but there is evidence for such altercations between Heracles and Apollo, the patron god of the Hyperboreans.

It is also important to note some similarities between the narrative in O. 3 and Heracles’s exploit in the Garden of the Hesperides. The plasticity of spatially extreme mythemes, as discussed above, seems to be highly applicable to a confusion of exotic thaumata, and in particular, as we have established in the discussion of the Gorgons, of the Hesperides and the Hyperboreans.165 In fact, Apollodorus writes that the apples were not located in Libya as was previously believed, but in the Hyperborea.166 It is also markedly one of Heracles’s least violent exploits, which would suit the ameliorative program of the epinikion. Heracles, following Prometheus’ advice, reached Atlas after an extensive periodos and persuaded him to bring back the apples from the Hesperides in exchange for carrying his burden. When Atlas returned, he refused to uphold their initial agreement and wanted to leave with the apples. Heracles then tricked him into taking back the heavy burden and regained the apples without resorting to violence.167 Interestingly, Apollodorus mentions that Heracles, when freeing Prometheus during the Hesperidean exploit, took fetters of his own and that he chose fetters of olive.168 Thus this non-violent Heraclean exploit could form an appropriate

163 Pindar names the whole citizen-body of Delphi as manteis (Pin. fr. 192, Pae. 6 and 8) who serve Apollo.
164 The scholiasts agree that the wording implies an avoidance of force, cf. Σ Pin. O. 3.30ab. For the hypothetical, ameliorated version of a violent Hyperborean encounter, see Robbins (1982), “Heracles, the Hyperboreans, and the Hind”, p. 300; Bowra (1964) Pindar, p. 302.
165 For the Aithiopians, Hesperides and Hyperboreans as peripheral utopias and their interchangeability, see Fontenrose (1980), Pytho, pp. 288, 345. There are significant similarities between Heracles and Perseus in this exploit: location in a utopian, exotic thauama (Hesperides and the Gorgons, the Hyperborea), the struggle with Nereus/Graiai, the scene with Atlas, etc. Most importantly both Perseus and Heracles become visitors to the Hyperborea within epinikia, from where they acquire the objects of power that they later turn over to Athena. Cf. ibid., pp. 332-47.
166 There is mention of Heracles performing this exploit after 8 years of inactivity, which is oddly similar to the eight-year interval of the Stepteria (as well as the early form of the Pythian games), cf. Apollod. 2.5.11.
167 Σ Αpoll. Rhod. 4.1396
168 Cf. Apollod. 2.5.11. This could indeed have been influenced by Pindar’s O. 3, but nevertheless shows the compatibility of the olive-venture and its Hyperborean thauama with the equally peregrine Hesperides. See also Hyg, De Astr. 2.15, where he explains that Prometheus’
model for the corrective narrative in O. 3, which focuses on a non-violent Heracles.169

In summary, Pindar seems to have composed an epinikion that exalts the Olympian contest as well as Theron’s victory by superimposing the Olympic ritual on the Pythian by playing on Apolline elements (such as the Hyperborean thauma). The narrative is modified so as to present the laudandus rex in an ameliorated way, especially in the wake of the harsh current policies, through a correction of Heracles’s otherwise violent history. The exploit, which is consistent with Heracles’s boundary-breaking character, is likewise representative of the extensive ambitions of the laudandus (as is underscored by the inclusion of another exotic thauma, the Pillars of Heracles in 43-5).170 The narrative adapts the Pythian daphnephoria and intensifies it to fit the Olympian grandeur and the dynastic epinikion by presenting Heracles as successful in obtaining Apolline elements from Apolline space: the ritual of the Stepteria is transposed into a larger Olympic scale by the relocation of the terminal space to the extreme Apolline north of the Hyperborean thauma. Thus Heracles has acquired the Panhellenic crown ‘once and for good’ by peaceful means and positioned it in the Olympian landscape that glorifies the laudandus and his Agrigentian society as well as pleases the cultic deities, the Dioscuri.171 The modifications have been facilitated by the plasticity of spatial extremes (whether it is the Delphic centre, the Hyperborea or the garden of the Hesperides).

3.3 Bacchylides’ ode 3 and the gilded pursuit of dispensation

Before concluding this thesis, it is necessary that I venture beyond the Pindaric corpus to examine the last (and latest) remaining example of Hyperborean thau mata in the epinikian genre - Bacchylides’ third ode. I have limited this section to observations that aid in placing this poem in relation to Pindar’s epinikia examined above, as I am forced to forgo an in-depth analysis due to spatial constraints.

Bacchylides’ third epinikion was written for Hieron, the tyrant of Syracuse, to commemorate his victory in the tethrippon of 468 BC.172 He and his brother Gelon belonged to the Deinomenid clan that was sovereign in the wealthy and prominent Sikelian cities of

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169 The labour of the Golden apples of the Hesperides did have an early, violent variant, in which Heracles kills the serpent that guards the apples. Cf. Fontenrose (1980), Pytho, p. 346.
170 Additionally, the final exotic thauma (the Pillars of Heracles) forms the climax in the closing priamel and introduces a periegetic effect by providing an extreme western counterpoint to the extreme northern venture and thus extending the laudandus’ achievement even further. See also N. 3.20-3, where Pindar presents the Pillars of Heracles as the demarcation of his furthermost journey, thus implying the ultima of the laudandus’ achievement.
171 The olive trees of the Olympian contests were emblematic of the landscape, cf. O. 4.11, 8.9, 11.13. This is in contrast to the laurel, which appears only once in the Pythian epinikia in P. 10.40. It is interesting to note that in the extreme west of the African coast there is temple of Heracles where the Garden of the Hesperides was believed to be, where shows only olives. Cf. Plin. Nat. 5. 3.
172 Bacchylides had also written ode 4 and 5 to Hieron, as well as an enkomion for his foundation of Aitna (Bacch. fr. 20c)
Gela and Syracuse. They were both famous for their extravagant dedications to the Delphic temple. Hieron died of an illness in 467, but during his ambitious political career, he founded the colony of Aetna, enforced a strong, Doric civic identity, and was well-known for attempting to establish a personal hero cult during his lifetime. This apparent concern with (posthumous) renown seems to have inspired the topic of the mythical narrative in Bacchylides’ ode 3, which was composed only one year before Hieron’s death: the epinikion presents a Hyperborean ‘apotheosis’ of Kroisos during the sacking of Lydia by Cyrus and his Persian army (24-62). It also features notes on ephemerality and Apolline advice to Admetus, who was representative for the successful escape from untimely death (76-84).

It is interesting to note that the mythical innovation, which is present in all 3 epinikia that feature the Hyperborean thauma, in this case does not concern a hero of the mythical past, but a historical figure. The Lydian king Kroisos figured prominently in two odes for Hieron (ode 3 and Pindar’s P. 1) and was apparently a desirable figure to emulate, perhaps especially in the context of Delphic generosity that was so prevalent in displays of wealth and position. Bacchylides deftly modifies the established narrative of Kroisos’ fate (Hdt.1.86-91) in favour of an impossible Hyperborean apotheosis. The ode retains the motif of the pyre, but makes it so that it is Kroisos himself who builds it and steps onto it because death was preferred to servitude (30-1).

The ode favours Apolline elements and elevates expenditure as a ritual act (“one should beautify the god, that is the greatest of prosperities,” 21-2), the same expenditure that Kroisos must have had in mind when appealing the gods for χάρις (38). Bacchylides asserts that Kroisos, the paradigm for Hieron, was protected by Apollo (28-9), who was responsible for saving Kroisos from the pyre. In the epinikion, perhaps in order to adhere to the Olympian context, it is Zeus who quenches the flames (55-6). This deed was attributed to Apollo in Herodotus’ account, but his role as saviour in the epinikion is in turn greatly amplified. Instead of simply extinguishing the flames, Apollo transfers Kroisos and his family into the Hyperborea. Both the motif (transposition into a utopia) as well as the verb, κατένασσε 60, is evocative of how Zeus relocated the race of heroes to the ends of the earth/Isles of the Blessed

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173 The golden tripods of Gelon and Hieron were conspicuous for their Nike figurine that rested on top and was emblematic of Deinomenid success, see Morgan, K. (2015), *Pindar and the Construction of Syracusan Monarchy*, p. 63.

174 For Hieron’s Dorian programme, see Thatcher (2012), *Syracusan Identity between Tyranny and Democracy*, pp. 73-90. For the hero cult, see Diod. Sic. 11.49.2. Hieron’s efforts appear to have been fruitful, for he did, although posthumously, indeed receive the honours of the κτίσης of Aetna, cf. Diod. Sic. 11.66.4.

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in the Theogony.\textsuperscript{176}

This Hyperborean ‘apotheosis’ could be an instance of the utopian wish, which features prominently in P.3.61-76. The purpose of this device would be to underscore the impossibility of that which is most desired and to force the laudandus to make due and reconcile with his human condition (as in Hieron’s case, his terminal illness).\textsuperscript{177} The Hyperboreans in ode 3 represent the unattainable utopia and display similar associations as that of the Hyperborean beatitude in P. 10, mainly that they partake in the otherwise impossible escape from human vicissitude. This privilege is granted to the laudandus, but only temporarily and through his shared experience with the heroic paradigm which is confined to the poet’s poetic medium. This is supported by the heavy focus on human vicissitude (73-6, the reminder to keep “twin thoughts”, i.e., know the ambivalence of fortune 78-82, 88-90).

As such, Kroisos, who experiences the severity of fate (i.e., losing his position as a wealthy king of Lydia and becoming a servant to Cyrus by his own misunderstanding of the Delphic oracle), is suddenly relieved from his human condition and removed from the sphere of vicissitude, and thus gains the privilege that is so characteristic of the Hyperborean thauma. The implied utopian wish (dispensation by transferral into the Hyperborea) is reserved for Kroisos. Hieron must, as does Admetus, foster twin thoughts because of his human condition (78-84): he should not presume perpetual prosperity. Kroisos, on the other hand, does exactly that. He does not anticipate the reversal of fate (ἄελπτον ἀμαρ 29) in spite of the oracles he was given. The reversal of the good fortune of Kroisos is finalized in his last outcry, “what used to be hated is now held dear: to die is the sweetest” (47). Hieron, however, through the programme of the ode, is given the opportunity to accept the uncertainty of fate and come to turns with the human condition, because this dispensation (the Hyperborean thauma) is not humanly attainable except for a fleeting moment in the epinikion.

Finally, it is interesting to note the placement of the Hyperborean thauma in between the explicit thauma motif (57-8, echoing P.10.49-50) and the return of the encomiastic material.\textsuperscript{178} Where we would expect a transitional formula, Bacchylides goes on to directly praise Hieron (58-66) without offering a proper conclusion of the mythical narrative. This curious placement is worth a more exhaustive treatment in further studies.

\textsuperscript{176} Theog. 167-8: τοῖς δὲ δή ἀνθρώπων βίοτον καὶ ἴδεσθ’ ὀπάσσας Ζεὺς Κρονίδης κατένασσε πατήρ ἐς πείρατα γαῖς.
\textsuperscript{178} “The topic appears also at Bacch. 3.57f to signal the end of a tale and the introduction of Hieron a few lines later,” says Bundy and overlooks the short and powerful Hyperborean narrative, Cf. Bundy (1962), \textit{Studia Pindarica}, pp. 2-3.
4. Conclusion

All three epinikia that have been examined in this thesis share the dynastic factor.\(^{179}\) The exotic thaumata, particularly frequent in dynastic odes, seem to supply the poet with the opportunity to innovate and to express the eminence of the laudandus rex in an elaborate, yet subtle fashion. The choice of the Hyperborean thauma seems to have been affected by specific interests in the Apolline; whether it is the aspect of superimposing one’s interests onto the Apolline model, such as aggrandizing one’s own achievement (Olympian 3), or the many intersections of Apolline history and rituals with the laudandus’ own dynastic ancestry (Pythian 10), or, perhaps, in the attempt to comfort the laudandus rex and leading him to enjoy his current good fortune by showing the impossibility of perpetual, Hyperborean beatitude during one’s life time.

As we have seen, P. 10 is a key text for understanding the most characteristic aspect of the Hyperborean thauma – the Hyperborean beatitude. This superhuman privilege is especially effective in epinikian poetry because it allows representations of extreme enjoyment that would otherwise be difficult to present in dynastic odes because of the already considerable potency of the honorees. Instead, the laudandi are allowed a brief vision of the utopian rewards for their Panhellenic achievements, but only within the confines of the epinikion. We also see that there is a later history of pondering the Hyperboreans’ happiness affected by how it is portrayed in epinikian poetry. Indeed, we find this thinking in Aeschylus and Pythagorean cult.\(^{180}\)

The Hyperborean thauma is a particularly appropriate vessel for this balancing-act of dynastic praise. The Hyperboreans enjoy the privilege of extreme beatitude not only through the favour of apodemic Apollo, but because of their temporal and spatial remoteness – they are situated beyond the normative scale (the human condition) that is dominated by vicissitude. This characteristic is contained both in their name and their peregrine (boundary-breaking) location (beyond the North/sources of Boreas, O. 3.31-2), and as such they embody the exceptional qualities that can be found in spatial extremes. Indeed, extremes may well be an essential device to express the achievement of the laudandi reges, as acknowledged by Pindar in Olympian 1, addressed to Hieron:

\[\text{Tò δ’ ἔσχατον κορωφοῦται βασιλεύσι.}\]

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\(^{179}\) Although the relationship between Hippokles (the athletic victor) and Thorax (the laudandus rex) is to a certain degree complicated, there is no doubt that Pythian 10 is a dynastic epinikion. Cf. Maslov (2015), *Pindar and the Emergence of Literature*, p. 107.

\(^{180}\) Aeschylus, *Libation Bearers* 373; Pythagoras as the Hyperborean Apollo (Ael. *VII*2.26; Diog. Laert. 8.1)
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The Hyperboreans and exotic ðaiýara in epinikia


The Hyperboreans and exotic ἰόματα in epinikia


Appendix: translations of the relevant epinikia

Pythian 10

A  Ὁλβία Λακεδαίμων, μάκαιρα Θεσσαλία. πατρὸς δ’ ἀμφοτέραις ἐξ ἑνὸς ἀριστομάχου γένος Ἡρακλέως βασιλεύει. τί κομπέω παρὰ καιρόν; ἀλλὰ με Πυθό τε καὶ τὸ Πελεννᾶιόν ἀπύει (5) Ἀλεύα τε παιδεῖς, Ἱπποκλέρα θέλοντες ἄγαγεν ἐπικομίαν ἀνδρῶν κλυτὰν ὕπα. γεύεται γὰρ ἀέθλουν στρατῷ τ’ ἀμφικτύνων ὁ Παρνάσσιος αὐτόν μυχὸς διαυλοδρόμαν ὑπατόν παιδὸν ἀνέκεισαι. (10) Ἀπόλλων, γλυκικ δ’ ἀνθρώποιν τέλος ἀρχά τε δαίμονος ὑρώντως αὔξεται. ὁ μὲν πον τεοὺς τε μήδεσι τούτ’ ἔπραξεν, τὸ δὲ συγγενῆς ἐμμέθυσκεν ἤγγεισιν πατρὸς Ὁλυμπιονίκα δὲ ἐν πολεμιαδόκοις Ἀρεος ὀπλοίς (15) ἔθηκε καὶ βαθυλεῖμοι ὑπὸ Κίρρας πηρτάν ἄγων κρατησίσαδα Φρικίαν. ἐποίητο μοῖρα καὶ ὑστεραισίν ἐν ἀμέραις ἀγάνορα πλούτων ἀνθείν σφίσιν

B  τῶν δ’ ἐν Ἑλλάδι τερπνῶν (20) λαχόντες οὐκ ὀλίγων ὄσιν, μὴ φθονεραῖς ἐκ θεῶν μετατροπίαις ἐπικύρσαεν, θεὸς ἐγ’ ἅπτειαν κέαρ: εὐδαιμόν δὲ καὶ ἱμηνητοῦ ὅπλος ἄνὴρ γίνεται σοφοῖς, δεὶς ἄν χερσίν ἢ ποδών ἀρετά κρατήσαις τά μέγιστ’ ἀέθλων ἔχῃ τόμας τε καὶ σθένει, (25) καὶ ζώον ἐπὶ νεαρὸν κατ’ αἰτῶν ὑπὸ ὑδὶ τυχόντα στεφάνων Πυθῶν. ὁ χάλκεος υἱόρανός οὐ ποτ’ ἀμβατός αὐτῷ· ὃς δὲ βροτὸν ἔθνος ἀγλαίας αἰ-πτόμεσθα, περαίνει πρὸς ἐχατόν πλώον· ναυσί δ’ ὤπτε πισός ἱὼν <κεν> εὑροίς (30) ἐς Ὕπερβορέων ἄγωνα θαυματὰν ὄσιν. παρ’ οἷς ποτε Περσιῶν ἐδαίσατο λαγέτας, δόματε ἐσπελθόν, κλείται ὄνων ἐκατόμβας ἐπιτόσσας θεῷ ἡξούντας· ἐν θαλαίας ἐμπέδον

Lakedaimon is prosperous, Thessaly is blessed: the family that sprung from one father, the warrior Heracles, rules them both. In what respect is my praise beside the point? No, Pytho and Pelima and the children of Aleuas compel me, wishing to parade for Hippokles the famed voice of revelling men.

For he enjoys the taste of prizes, and the Parnassian glen proclaimed him to the host of his neighbours as the best of the boys who ran the diaulos. Apollo, sweet grows the conclusion and commencement of men when spurred by divinity: he must have achieved this in accordance with your devices, and through his heritage he has followed in his father’s steps, the twice Olympian victor in Ares’ armaments, and the contest beneath the steep cliffs of Kirrha also established Phrikias as the swiftest of foot.

May fate continue to grow their impressive wealth even in days to come.

Having obtained not a small allotment of Grecian joys, let them not encounter from the gods any grudging turns of fate. May the god keep no hurt in his heart. Fortunate is he, and well extolled by the wise, the man who is victorious by the excellence of his hand or foot and grasps the greatest of prizes through strength and courage, and while still alive may see his young son happen upon Pythian crowns.

The bronze heavens are never for him to tread, yet as many glories we mortal race might obtain, he completes the farthest voyage. But neither by ship nor on foot will you find the wondrous path to the Hyperborean gathering.

It was with them that Perseus, leader of men, once dined upon entering their homes and happening upon them as they sacrificed famed hecatombs of asses to the god: and Apollo delights greatly in
(35) εὐφαμίας τε μᾶλιστ’ Ἀπόλλων
χαίρει, γελά θ’ ὁρῶν ὑβρίν ὅρθιαν κνοδάλων.

Γ Μοίσα δ’ οὐκ ἀποδαμεῖ
tρόποις ἐπὶ σφατέρουσι· παντὰ δὲ χοροὶ παρθένων
λυράν τε βοαί καναχαί τ’ αὐλῶν ὁδονῦνται·
(40) ἀδάφα τε χρυσά κόμας ἀναδήσασι-
tες εἰλαπτινοίσιν εὐφρόνως,
νόσαι δ’ οὕτε γῆρας οὐλόμενον κέκραται
ἰερὰ γενεά· πόνον δὲ καὶ μαχὰν ἄτερ
οὐκέσται φυγόντες
ὑπέρδικον Νέμεσιν. θρασεία δὲ πνεύμων καρδία
(45) μύλεν Δανάς ποτὲ παῖς, ἀγείτο δ’ Ἀθάνα, ἐς ἀνδρῶν μακάρων ὁμιλον· ἐπεφεν
τε Γοργόνα, καὶ ποικίλον κάρα
δρακόντων φόβατιν ἠλυθε νασιότας
λίθων θάνατον φέρον. ἐμοὶ δὲ θαυμάσας
θεῶν τελεσάντων οὐδέν ποτε φαίνεται
(50) ἐμὲν ἀπίστον.
κόταν σχάσων, ταχ’ δ’ ἄγκυρων ἔρεισσον χθόνι
πρόφαθε, χοιράδος ἄλκαρ πέτρας.
ἐγκωμίων γὰρ ἀτούς ὄμολον
ἐπ’ ἀλλ’ ἄλλον ὡτε μέλισσα θύνει λάγον.

Δ (55) Ἐλπισμα δ’ Ἐφυραίων
ὅπ’ ἀμφι Πηνείων γλυκείαν προχεόντων ἐμὰν
tὸν Ἰπποκλέαν ἐπὶ καὶ μᾶλλον σὺν ἀοιδάς
ἐκατα στεφάνων θαητὸν ἐν ἀλλ’
ἐξὶ θησαμέν ἐν καὶ παλαιτέροις,
νεάσιν τε παρθένοισι μέλημα. καὶ γὰρ
(60) ἐτέροισ ἐτέρων ἔρωτες ἐκνεύσαν φρένας
tῶν δ’ ἐκαστὸς ὀρόεις,
tυχῶν κεν ἀρπάλειν σχῆθοι φροντίδα τὰν πάρ ποδός·
tὰ δ’ εἰς ἔνατον ἀτέκμαρτον προνοίασι.
πέποθα ξενία προσανέγω Ἡθορα-
κος, ὡσπερ ἐμὰν ποιπών χάριν
(65) τὸδ’ ἔξευξαν ἁμών Περείδου τετράορον,
φιλέων φιλέων’, ἄγον ἄγοντας προφρόνως.
πειρόντες δὲ καὶ χρυσὸς ἐν βασάνῳ πρέπει
καὶ νόος ὁρθός.
ἀδηλφείων τ’ ἐπαινίσομεν ἐσλοίς, ὡτι
(70) ἰψοὺ φέροιτε νόμον Θεσσαλῶν
αὐξάνει· ἐν δ’ ἀγαθοῦσι κεῖται
πατρῴαι κεναὶ πολίων κυβερνάσις.
their continuous revelry, and smiles as he
regards the beasts’ erect hubs.

The Muse does not stay away because of
their ways: everywhere the choirs of
maidens reverberate
together with shouts from the lyres and
the ringing of flutes.
They revel merrily with tresses tied up in
wreaths of gold.
Neither illness nor destructive old age is
mixed into this holy race:
and they live without toils and battle
having escaped the exceedingly just
Nemesis.
But inspired and with courageous heart
the son of Danae once came, led by
Athena, to the throng of blessed men.
He slayed the Gorgon
and came bringing to the fearful islanders
a stony death in the form of a head
tangled with snakes.
To me nothing ever appears unbelievable
as I wonder at the deeds of the gods.
Hold the oar, and quickly place the anchor
in the earth at the prow to be our
safeguard from the jagged-backed stone.
The choicest of the praising songs, like
the bee, flits from one word to another.

As the Ephyreans pour forth my sweet
voice about the Peneios, I hope to make
Hippokles all the more a wonder on
account of his wreaths
to peers and seniors, through my songs,
and an interest to the young maidens.
For different desires tickle the minds of
different men.
But of all the things one strives for,
may he hold the desirable thought that is
at hand:
That which will be in a year is impossible
to predict.

I have faith in the gentle friendship
of Thorax, who has attentively yoked the
four-horse chariot for my sake, as a friend
to a friend, leading the leader with zeal.
Gold that is tried on the touchstone proves
proper, and so it is
with the upright mind.
Let me sing the praise of the good
brothers as well, because they exalt the
Thessalian tradition and carry it aloft.
The dear ancestral government of the
cities lies with the noble.
I pray that I may please the hospitable Tyndaridae and the beautifully haired Helena as I sing of famed Akragas, having raised an Olympian victory song for Theron, the choicest prize for horses of untiring feet. In some way the Muse stood by me as I found a new way of fitting exultant voice to the Dorian strain, because the wreaths that were fastened upon his hair exact from me the divinely founded debt to mix the many-voiced lyre, the call of the pipes, and the setting of words for the son of Ainesidamos in a fitting way; and Pisa too bids me sing, for it is from here that godgiven songs come to mankind, for anyone above whose eyes the stern Aetolian man, judge of the Hellenes, in accordance with Heracles's ancient mandates places the pale-grey olive ornament around his tresses, the one that the son of Amphitryon once brought from the shady springs of the Ister, the fairest commemoration of the Olympian games,

when he had persuaded the Hyperborean people, the servants of Apollo, with his speech: with a trustworthy mind he asked for a plant to be shared by men as a shade for the welcoming precinct of Zeus and as a wreath for their excellence. Already had the altars been dedicated to his father and the Moon in its golden chariot in the middle of the month had shone its full eye to him during the evening, and he had established the holy judgement of the great contests with their four-year festival on the sacred banks of the Alpheos: but there grew no beautiful trees on the hills of Kronos in the land of Pelops. To him the enclosure seemed bare and subject to the piercing rays of the sun. It was then his heart urged him to travel to the Istrian land. Here Leto's horse-driving daughter received him as he came from Arcadia's ridge and its twisting furrows, because necessity from his father and Eurystheus's commands required him to bring back the golden-horned hind, the one Taugeta had once inscribed as a sacred dedication to Orthosia.

The Hyperboreans and exotic θείματα in epinikia
As he followed it, he saw, among other places, the land that lies behind the blows of cold Boreas: here he stood and gazed at the trees. A sweet desire for them seized him, to plant them at the twelve-round turn of the horses’ racetrack. Even now he graciously visits the festival with the godlike twins, the sons of Leda. And to them he assigned the duty to watch over the spectacle of the games, concerning the excellence of men and the swift driving of chariots, as he went to Olympos. And so my heart urges me to say that glory has come to the Emmenidae and to Theron, and that was given by the well-horsed Tyndaridae, because they of all mortals approach them with the most frequent, friendly feasts as they guard the rites of the gods with their pious minds.

If water is best, and gold is the most esteemed of possessions, then indeed Theron has now reached the limit of excellence and touches the Pillars of Heracles from home. What is beyond is not to be tread by neither wise nor foolish men. I will not pursue it: I would be foolish.
Klio, giver of sweet gifts, sing of Demeter, the mistress of fruit laden Sicily, and of her violet-haired daughter and the swift, Olympian racehorses of Hieron; for they hastened together with eminent Victory and Splendour beside the broad-whirling Alpheos, where they made the prosperous progeny of Deinomnes meet with garlands.

The temple buries with bull-sacrificing feats, the streets teem with hospitality: the gold of the tripods standing richly wrought before the temple gleams and flashes, where the Delphians tend the greatest precinct of Phoebus by the streams of Kastalia.

The god, one must beatify the god, for that is the finest of prosperities. Once too was Kroisos, the leader of horse-taming Lydia, at the time Zeus brought to pass the fated decision and Sardis was captured by the Persian army, protected by Apollo of the golden sword.

As he approached that unforeseen day, he did not intend to remain in lachrymose servitude: he built a pyre before his bronze walled hall, and here, together with his dear wife and his daughters with beautiful tresses, who wailed insufferably, he walked up into it. He raised his hands up into the air and cried out, "Presumptuous deity, where is the gratitude of the gods? Where is the lord, son of Leto?"

The chambers of Alyattes are perishing, [of thousands] [ ]

[ ] the city, and the Paktolos with its eddies [of gold runs red with blood:] the women are brutally led out from the elegant halls. This much he said, and ordered the soft-
The Hyperboreans and exotic ἰχθύματα in epinikia

άπειν ἡμινὸν δόμον. ἡ[κλα]γον δὲ
(50) παρθένοι, φύλας τ’ ἀνὰ ματρὶ χεῖρας
ἐβαλλόν· ὅ γαρ προφανὴς θανατοστῖν ἐξήστος φόνον:
ἀλλ’ ἐπει δεῖνοι πυρὸς
λαμπρὸν διάζησεν μένους,
(55) Ζεὺς ἐπιστάσας [μελαγκε]θὲς νέφος
σβέννυεν ξανθάν φλόγα.

Ε άπιστον οὐδὲν, ὦ τι θεοὶ μὲ[ρ]μινα
tέχει: τότε Δαιογενή[ζ] ἀπόβ[λ]ων
φέρον ἐς Ὑπερβορε[δ]ος γ]ἐροντα
(60) σὺν τανισφύροις κατ[έν]ασσε κούραις
δὲ εἰσεβέβαιον, ὅτι μέγαστα] θνατον
ἐς ἀγαθέαν <ἀν> ἔπεμψε Π[υθ]όν.
όσοι <γε> μὲν Ἐλλάδ'] ἕχοσιν, [ο]ὐ[τ]ι[ς, ὦ
μεγανίτη] Τέρων, θελήσει
(65) φά[μ]εν σὖ πλείονα χρυσόν
Λοξί[α] σέμιμαι βροτον.
εὐ λέγειν πάρεστιν, δοσ̲̲
tις μὴ φθόνον παινείται,
...[λ]ή φιλιππόν ἅνδρ’ ἀρή[ι]ν
(70) ...[ίου σκάπτ[έ]ρον Δίος

Φ ἵππο[δ]ικον τε μέρος[ζ] ἔχοντ[α] Μουσάν·
...μαλέα ποτ[έ] ....[..]μιον
...[νος ἑ[ρ]μέρον [α...]
...[α] σκοπεῖς: βραχ[ί]ες ἐστιν αἰόν·
(75) πετρόσεσα δ’ ἐλπὶς ὑπολούει ν[όμ]α
ἐφαμ]ερίων· ὃ δ’ ἄναξ [Ἀπόλ]λων
...[ίος ἐπε Φέρη[τος ὦ
θνατόν εὐντα χρῆ διόμοις ἀέξειν
γνώμας, ὅτι τ’ αὐριν ὄψει
ti (80) μοῦνον ἀλίου φάνες,
χύτι πεντήκοντα ἔτεα
ζωὰν βαθύπλουτον τελειως,
[όσι ορ]ῶν εὑφραίνει θυμὸν· τοῦτο γὰρ
κερδεόν υπέρτατον.

Ζ (85) φρονεὸντι συνετὰ γαρω’ βαθὺς μὲν
ἀ[ίθ]ὶρ ἑμιαντός· ὤδαρ δὲ πόντου
οὐ σάπεται· εὑρος[ν]ὰ δ’ ὁ χρυσὸς·
ἀνδρ’ δ’ οὐ θέμε, πολῶν [π]έντε
γῆς, ἀξίζειν αὐτὶς ἀκομίσθη
t(90) ἤβαν ἀρετά[ξι] μὲν οὐ μινύθει
βροτον ἄμα σ[ο]ματοι φήγους, ἰλλα
Μοῦσα νῦν τρ[έφει]. Ἰέρων, σὺ δ’ ὀλβου
κόλλστ’ [έπο][εί]ζαι θανω[ῖς
ἀνθεν’ πράξαι[ντ] δ’ εὐ
(95) οὐ φέρει κόσμ[ο]ν σιγο-πα’ σύν δ’ ἀλθ[εῖα] καλῶν
cαὶ μεληγούσου τις ἤμνῃςει χάριν
Κή[ς] ἀπέδονος.

stepping attendant to light the wooden structure.
The girls cried out and threw their arms around their mother.

For death is most detested when it is plain
before eyes of the dying. But when the
shining might of the terrible fire shot out,
Zeus sent out a [dark] cloud and extinguished
the bright flame.

Nothing is unbelievable, whatever wonder is
devised by the gods.
Then Apollo, born on Delos, carried the old
man and settled him among the
Hyperboreans together with his slender-
 Ankled daughters on account of his piety,
because he of all mortals had dedicated the
most to holy Pytho.

As many as hold Greece to be their land, not
one, oh high-esteem Hieron, of the mortals
should want to claim to have sent more gold
to Loxias than you.
Whoever does not gorge himself on jealousy,
he is fit to speak your praise,
lover of horses, martial man, you who hold
the sceptre of Zeus
and a share in the violet-haired Muses.
j once
j examine: short [is our lifespan]
inged hope ruins
the mind of mortals:
Lord Apollo
j said to the son of Pheres,
“the mortal must keep twin thoughts in mind,
that tomorrow might be the only day you
shall see the light of the sun, and also that
you in fifty years might complete your life in
deep prosperity.
And upon doing pious deeds, rejoice
in your heart, for this is the greatest of
 boon.

What I sing is comprehensible to the one who reflects:
The deep air is unsullied, the water of the sea is not corrupted. Gold is a delight.
Yet it is not permitted for a man to circumvent grey, old age, nor to once more
regain his flowering youth.
The light of excellence does not dwindle
together with the mortal body, no,
the Muse nurtures it. Hieron, you of all
mortals have shown the most beautiful
flowers of wealth. Silence brings no
ornament to one who prospers, but in
remembrance of good deeds, a man will sing
the thanksgivings of the sweet-voiced, Keian
nightingale.