PINDARIC EPINICIAN SONG AND GREEK CULTURAL MEMORY. *OLYMPIAN* 1, *OLYMPIAN* 10, *ISTHMIAN* 4

By

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Abstract

What I aim to do in this thesis is draw conclusions concerning the function of epinician song in Greek cultural memory. Epinician song is discussed against the background of the Homeric and Hesiodic traditions. The latter constitute important parameters of the socio-cultural framework within which Pindar composes his songs. When studying Pindaric epinician song, I focus on the relationship between culture and memory. Therefore, my study involves disparate elements such as foundational myth and its normative and formative impact, the role of the poet as a vector of memory in reconstructing the past in the present, a *vis* memory which sets the mechanisms of cultural evolution in motion, collective identity as a socio-cultural construct. In order to make sense of these elements, I have employed Jan Assmann's theoretical model of cultural memory within which it finally becomes clear why these apparently disparate elements have been brought together by Pindar. In this thesis, three Pindaric epinician songs, *Olympian* 1, *Olympian* 10, and *Isthmian* 4 will be discussed as media of memory which fulfilled their various functions within a particular socio-cultural framework.

To Nektarios

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1. CULTURE, MEMORY, AND IDENTITY

Certain approaches to culture, memory, and identity, particularly Jan Assmann's theory of cultural memory, can provide useful insights for this study in which cultural continuity through Pindaric epinician song is discussed and in which literature is used as a tool to refer to collective memory and collective identity.

The 'founding father' of modern memory studies is Maurice Halbwachs. Halbwachs was originally influenced both by Henri Bergson and Emile Durkheim. It was in 1918 and in 'La doctrine d' Emile Durckheim' that Halbwachs indicated the idea of a 'collective consciousness'. Later, he differed from Durkheim and developed a phenomenological sociology with three main lines of thought: the social construction of individual memory, the development of collective memory in intermediary groups (family and social classes), and collective memory[1] at the level of entire societies and civilisations (Jean Christophe Marcel and Laurent Mucchielli 2008: 142). Halbwachs first placed collective knowledge within a socio-cultural context (les cadres sociaux de la mémoire), whereas in his work *La mémoire collective* (first published in French in 1950) he explains cultural continuity by saying that new memories replace old ones, so that individuals can situate themselves in their contemporary social environment. This idea of the reconstruction of the past in the present is an important contribution of Halbwachs to the study of the relationship between culture and memory since, before him, scholars who followed Darwin's 'evolutionary thinking' and 'biological determinism' attributed cultural continuity to a kind of 'generic', 'inheritable', or 'racial

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1 Halbwachs coined the term 'mémoire collective' in 1925 in his book *Les Cadres Sociaux de la Mémoire*.

memory' and not to socio-cultural practices which presuppose human activity. Halbwachs' 'social frameworks of memory' are worlds of collective meaning constituted from social, mental, and material phenomena of culture (Erll 2011: 13-14). The 'social frameworks of memory' determine the memory of individuals, so that collectively shared representations of the past are created. According to Halbwachs' sociological conceptualisation of memory, the individual remembers what he can locate in the frame of the collective memory which develops within the context of everyday communication and, equally important, forgets what has been excluded from it (Halbwachs 1992: 52-53).

Jan Assmann[2] takes over from Maurice Halbwachs the idea that socio-cultural contexts shape and impose conditions for collective remembering: the construction of past time is not a matter of internal storage or control. It entails human activity within the frame of reference of its particular present. According to Assmann, 'the past is not a natural growth but a cultural creation' (2011: 33). However, he objects to Halbwachs' attitude to history and tradition, according to which neither history nor tradition perform an identity function. Halbwachs opposed history to memory. For him, history was 'dead' and 'totalising', whereas memory was 'lived', 'meaningful' and 'specific to the group'. Jan and Aleida Assmann's concept of cultural memory transcends the concept of history or tradition, the latter of which brings only the actuality of memory culture into focus (Erll 2011: 37). According to the Assmanns, the 'total horizon' of memory culture comprises both the layer of actualised or functional elements as well as that of non-actualised or stored elements. Innovation and change on the level of culture become possible when the latter permeate the borders of functional memory and are configured

2 Assmann will mean Jan, unless otherwise indicated

to provide meaning in the present. Cultures which value the 'otherness' of the past (A. Assmann 2011:11) leave the borders between tradition and stored cultural memory permeable. To exemplify, in Greek cultural memory Stesichoros, in his *παλινωδία*, says that a simulacrum of Helen and not Menelaos' wife went to Troy. Euripides in the 5th century and in the context of the Peloponnesian War re-actualises this memory in his *Ἑλένη* to provide meaning in the present (Seferis will do the same in his poem *Ἑλένη*).

Assmann is interested in a cultural[3] sphere which combines tradition, awareness of history, myth in action, and self-definition, and which –a crucial point- is subject to a vast range of historically combined changes (2011: 10). This is a comprehensive area of memory which transcends the concept of tradition and which is called 'cultural or foundational memory'.[4] Assmann's cultural memory is a form of institutionalised collective memory which functions through sign systems such as myths, rituals, festivals, texts, images, monuments, landscapes, games such as the Greek Panhellenic Games which provided the framework for Pindaric epinician song and for the circulation of important community meaning. The contents and meanings of cultural memory are maintained and interpreted by specialists on the memory of the community such as poets in ancient Greek culture. Assmann adopts a quite dynamic approach to

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3 Culture is defined as a community's specific way of life led within its self-spun webs of meaning (Erll 2008: 3)

4 The term 'cultural memory' was coined by Jan Assmann in 1988 in his essay 'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity (published in English in 1995). In his definition 'the concept of cultural memory comprises the body of reusable texts, images, and rituals, specific to each society in each epoch, whose 'cultivation' serves to 'stabilise' and convey the society's self-image. Upon such collective knowledge for the most part (but not exclusively) of the past, each group bases its awareness of unity and peculiarity (1995: 132). Memory in Assmann's definition is used metaphorically to refer to the media, institutions, and practices by which societies 'remember' or otherwise create versions of the past according to their present knowledge and needs. The connection between memory and socio-cultural contexts is accentuated in Assmann's definition.

cultural memory which can be used as a framework for an understanding of Greek cultural memory. He is not satisfied with the terms 'historical sense' or 'historical consciousness', the sense or consciousness of history that both literate and illiterate societies are believed to have, because these terms lack the potential that the term 'cultural memory' has to cover a range of phenomena related to culture and memory. Assmann speaks of 'tranquilizers' and 'stimulants' of historical memory, of ' factors that may stop things or start them' (2011: 51). Based on this fact, he emphasises the need for scholars to ask what has made particular societies do something with their pasts as well as to study the different ways in which they have handled their past in successive presents.

Cultural memory is qualitatively distinguished from what Assmann calls 'communicative', 'biographical', or 'everyday memory'. This latter form of collective memory is based on everyday informal communications about the meaning of the past and is characterised by 'instability', 'disorganisation' and 'non-specialisation'. In the case of communicative memory, those who remember connect their memories and experiences with the 'near horizon' of their life world (Assmann 2011: 32). Because of the differences between communicative and cultural memory, Assmann talks about two *'modi memorandi'*, two 'possible horizons of reference to the past' (Erll 2011: 31) as well as two different uses of the past (Assmann 2011: 37). However, both communicative and cultural memory are phenomena of culture and they permeate each other in real historical culture (Assmann 2011: 37) as Pindar well demonstrates in *Olympian* 1 in which he says that a particular version of Pelops' story is a lie fabricated by an envious neighbour of Pelops (a product of the communicative

memory) and then passed on by the poet's predecessors (a product of the cultural memory within an institutionalised context of performance).

A key notion in Assmann's approach to cultural memory is that of a fixed point of reference in the past which binds memory to the ever-expanding past in the passing of time (Assmann 1995: 127). This 'figure of memory'[5], which is defined by Erll as the amalgamation of an image and a term or a narrative 2011: 30, is a past event in the near or distant past (the Persian defeat in Salamis or the Trojan War) which is remembered through texts, myths, rituals, paintings, or other fixed objectifications. The function of the 'figure of memory' is twofold. On the one hand, it secures the continuation of meaning (sometimes through re-shaping and re-interpretation) and, on the other, it contributes to the fixity of cultural memory. As Assmann writes, figures of memory are characterised by a concrete relationship to time and place, though not necessarily in an historical or geographical sense, a concrete relationship to a group, and an independent capacity for reconstruction (2011: 24). Any event which enters the temporal horizon of cultural memory is transformed into a foundational narrative characterised by the formative and normative power of myth. In this sense, formative and normative myth is a particular way of remembering the past in the present. Measurable time is not important in this case. An event may be considered foundational (because a particular community has decided to remember it as such) and as such part of the 'distant horizon' of cultural memory even if, in terms of historical time, it is part of the 'near horizon' of communicative memory. Erll pins down the difference between the time remembered in the communicative memory and the time

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5 Assmann writes that memory figures emerge out of the interplay between concepts and experiences (2011: 24-28).

remembered in the cultural memory to a distinct and culture-dependent 'consciousness of time'[6] which may defy the universally understood structure of time (2011: 32-33). The emphasis lies on the way a particular society chooses to remember its past, on the way a mnemonic community[7] brings its past into the present. To exemplify, ancient Greek communities chose to remember events which happened in a distant past, for example the Trojan War, as historical events. These events were important for the existence of the mnemonic community in historical time as well as for its future aspirations.

Assmann is also interested in the link between social memory (i.e. awareness of history) and identity. He writes that neither an individual nor a collective identity[8] grow naturally. They are both socio-cultural constructs. By choosing what to remember and, equally important, what to forget, a society creates a shared world of meaning[9] and a self-image. Assmann defines collective identity as 'the image that a group has of itself and with which its members associate themselves' (2011: 114). This image is based on narratives about a shared past. As Assmann puts it, 'an imagined national community is based on an imagined continuity that reaches back into the depths of time' (2011: 114). The members of the community become aware of sharing a

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6 A phenomenon of the mental dimension of culture. 'Consciousness of time' depends on the cultural and historical context.

7 Astrid Erll defines the term as 'a group of people who share norms, values, identity and a sense of place relations that extend beyond immediate genealogical ties ("Locating Family in Cultural Memory Studies" on JSTOR at https://www.jstor.org/stable/41604447

8 The attribute 'collective' is used metonymically to denote the socio-cultural context and its shaping impact on memory and identity.

9 Membership represents the internalisation of this meaning, so it is a symbolic reality. This symbolic reality is the metaphorical element in the terms 'collective memory' and 'collective identity'.

collective self-image through conscious reflection[10] into the forms that articulate it (language, ideas, norms, values). These shared forms symbolise the community and are transmitted from one generation to another. What is actually transmitted is meaning which is articulated through the memory of a shared past. This shared past becomes foundational when it takes on the form of myth with its normative and formative power. Normative and formative myth reinforces the group identity and provides orientation for the community.

Concerning the means by which identity-related meaning is circulated, Assmann refers to ceremony as 'the institutionalisation of circulation'. Although communicative memory is more a matter of natural growth, cultural memory reconstructs the past within an institutionalised framework (a culturally institutionalised performance context in Archaic and Classical Greece) and specialises its vectors (poets are among them). Cultural memory is thus cultivated by the community. Festivals and rituals as means of articulating the community ensure the survival of cultural knowledge and 'reproduce' the identity of the group. Assmann discusses two different functions of the festival, both of which are related to structuring time. On a less developed cultural level, the festival structured time by giving rhythm to everyday life. In its latter function and in more complex societies, like the Archaic and Classical Greek society, the festival 'endows life with a kind of dual time' -the everyday, which is fluid and ephemeral, and the ceremonial, which is fixed and of lasting importance for the remembering community (Assmann 2011: 43). Claude Calame also writes about the temporal function of

10 'A collective identity is a reflexive form of social belonging, whereas cultural identity correspondingly entails conscious participation in or recognition of a specific culture' (Assmann 2011: 115).

festivals and rituals. In discussing Emile Benveniste's 'calendar time', Calame says that the temporality of the calendar allows both a linear and a cyclical manner of moving in the past. Starting from a founding moment taken as 'axial point', which may be a mythicised past taken as a historical point of reference as in the case of the Trojan War or the case of genealogical and aitiological myth in Pindar, a community traces its past in a linear manner and understands 'the flight of cosmic time' while living 'collectively, intellectually, and symbolically in the present' (2009: 15). The cyclical dimension of calendar time takes on a symbolic and cultural collective meaning within the community through the rhythmical recurrence of rituals and festivals which, apart from their temporal function, organise a particular social space. It is within this particular social space that Greek performed literary genres such as epic poetry, epinician song, and tragedy reconstructed the past and (re)shaped the identity of Greek communities in the Archaic and Classical period.

The concept of the reconstruction of the past is a very important insight that Jan and Aleida Assmann take from Halbwachs**.** The past is continually re-organised and re-semioticised according to the frames of reference of successive presents.[11] By reconstructing the past, collective memory also organises the experience of the present and the future (Assmann 2011: 28). Aleida Assmann uses the term *vis* memory to refer to this reconstructive process which starts in the present. The concept of *vis*

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11 This tendency to reconstruct a foundational past, so that it could fit into a particular present context goes back to Homer. In *Iliad* 24. 599-620 a version of Niobe's story is told according to which Niobe ate despite the fact that Apollo and Artemis had bereaved her of her children. As Instone holds (1996: 11), 'What is said about Niobe is tailored to the circumstances surrounding Priam's plight; in particular, the central detail that she remembered to eat looks like an ad hoc invention to make her a suitable model for Priam to follow'.

memory emphasises the temporal dimension of memory: time transforms the contents of memory, whereas what is remembered may be distorted or reshaped in the present. Because of the dynamics of *vis* memory, remembering and forgetting are equally possible. What is remembered, however, continues to speak to the present situation and is therefore not unrelated to the identity of the community in the present (for example, Pindar's Herakles is the product of *vis* memory. The poet reshapes the myth of Herakles in his epinician song to make his favourite hero meaningful in his times and as such to pass him on through his epinician song). Memory as *ars* (a technique of impressing places and images on memory which goes back to Simonides and which emphasises the spatial dimension of memory) and *vis* (a dynamic process which highlights the reconstructive activity of memory and its processual nature) can be discussed on the level of culture and more particularly in relation to Ancient Greek literature and art. Greek literature (ever since Homer and Hesiod) and art provide the space for memory to be stored but also transmitted. The memory which keeps being transmitted may be thought of as the product of *vis* memory or of a 'process of remembering' what is understood to be invested with meaning and relevance to the identity of successive mnemonic communities. This transmitted memory prefigures new meaningful, socio-culturally framed configurations. Thus, culture evolves while retaining those elements which are essential to the memory and identity of the community. Myth is one of these elements in Archaic and Classical Greece as epinician song demonstrates. Jan Assmann writes (2011: 62) that myth fulfils two different and sometimes opposing functions which can be discussed against the background of *vis* memory. The first function is called foundational and the second contrapresent. In the

case of foundational mythomotor[12], the glorious past supports the existing situation, whereas, in the case of contrapresent mythomotor, the past is utopian and irrevocably lost, whereas the present is dystopian. Pindar privileges foundational myth. Myth supports the values of the victors in Panhellenic Games and of the various Greek communities into which they are re-integrated after their victory. However, since this is a very important function of myth, the poet in the present often has to interfere with aspects of what are thought of as traditional mythical narratives, so that they can function as foundational. For example, the myth of Pelops (*Olympian* 1) who was the founder of the most prestigious game in Olympia, the four-horse chariot race, is treated as foundational by Pindar but is simultaneously the product of *vis* memory in his song, since the poet intervenes to clear it of its cannibalistic elements: none of the gods ever ate any part of Pelops' body. Pelops was simply Poseidon's favourite and this caused the envy of a neighbour who fabricated a lie according to which the gods ate Pelops out of mere gluttony. Isocrates, on the other hand, who turns to the distant past both to highlight his own constructed identity as a citizen-rhetor and educator (Haskins 2004: 22) and to reconstruct the identity of his fellow citizens, adopts a contra-present mythomotor. He describes a utopian past which can be contrasted to a dystopian present. The present can become meaningful again only if it adopts the normative standards of the past.

Halbwachs' and Assmann's work is based on the idea of a 'collective memory' and a 'collective identity'. The two notions were first questioned by Marc Bloch and Charles Blondel. Bloch (1925: 73-83) questioned the possibility of a connection between acts

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12 The term was coined by the Spanish historian Ramon d' Abadal I de Vinyals in 1958. By 'mythomotor' Assmann refers to the directional impetus of myth which can be either 'foundational' or 'contrapresent' (Assmann 2011: 62).

of remembering and social structures. Individual memory and individual identity presuppose the existence of the individual, a tangible reality, whereas collective memory and collective identity presuppose the implication of socio-cultural factors. Kansteiner also questions the homogeneity, consistency, and predictability that are entailed in the term 'cultural memory'. He argues that facts of representation do not necessarily coincide with facts of reception and that media like literature do not reflect or determine cultural memory but are involved in its construction and evolution (2002: 195). As Erll writes (2008: 2), even today scholars think of the term 'cultural memory' as an ambiguous addition to the repertoire of concepts like 'myths', 'tradition', or 'individual memory'. However, cultural memory as an 'umbrella term' helps us see the relationship between cultural phenomena such as the re-interpretation of a mythical narrative and its transmission in a performance context by a 5th century BC poet like Pindar who specialised in the memory of the community but who also used his song to reshape this memory in the present and to keep the identity system of Greek communities going.

It may help to look at the issue of collective memory and collective identity from a rather different perspective, that of Pierre Nora, whose work on French *lieux de mémoire* has proved a valuable tool for students of literature since he first enunciated the concept in 1984 to highlight the disappearance of national memory. Nora takes up the polarity between history and memory (a legacy of 19th century historicism) from Halbwachs. Memory is 'lived', whereas history is consciously constructed. Nora argues that memory becomes a subject of study especially when great changes take place in society and rupture the existent flow of events. He exemplifies by referring to the replacement of peasant culture by industrialisation. This replacement led to the study

of peasant culture as the repository of collective memory. Nora maintains that a self-conscious quest for memory is the result of this very rupture with the past. In Nora's historical approach to memory, a distinction is made between *milieux* and *lieux de mémoire*. This distinction is based on the different manner societies conceive of temporality. The *milieux* are 'settings in which memory is a real part of everyday experience' (Nora 1996: 1). In these settings, tradition and rituals become the gatekeepers of memory and of collective identity. Living in a *milieu* means experiencing memory from within whereas living in a *lieu* means remembering through traces which only simulate the past. The *lieux* simply evoke memories. Based on Nora's distinction, we understand that the degree of integration entailed in the idea of the existence of a community is determined by the historical context. In this study, 5th century BC Greek society is discussed as what Pierre Nora would call a *milieu de mémoire*, a setting in which Assmann's 'objectified culture' acquires the status of memory. In this setting, literature can be used as a tool to refer to collective memory and collective identity. It is exactly because Greek communities in the 5th century BC lived in a *milieu* and experienced memory from within that the mythical past was kept alive in and through literature.

As far as reception of literary genres in ancient Greece is concerned, it mostly took place in the oral *milieu* of the city-state or in Panhellenic festivals to which various communities had access. The audience of specific texts may or may not be specified. The reactions of the audience to what is performed cannot be specified either. The Homeric narrator, for example, does not make clear for what kind of context the poems were composed nor does he specify to what extent memory codified in the epics was collective. However, Xenophanes in the 6th century BC provides an early testimony of

the wide social distribution of Homeric poetry by saying: ‘ἐξ ἀρχῆς καθ’ Ὅμηρον ἐπεὶ μεμαθήκασι πάντες’ (fr 10 D-K). Xenophanes’ testimony was reinforced by later sources and cultural practices. Lyric poetry reflects collective endeavours such as war, politics, or communal cultic practices. Pindaric epinician song exalts the athletic prowess of particular individuals as well as an elite’s handling of their wealth. Although it is representative of a particular class and its interests, it is also representative of a particular epoch and its social and cultural values. The community is involved in epinician poetry in certain ways. The many are reassured that those who are praised bring honour to the local community, represent its values, and contribute to its being given a place in the Greek κόσμος. Myth as a shared symbolic universe with formative power plays an important role for the latter to be achieved. In particular, genealogical myth provides individuals, cities, but also the Greek world with identities which are drawn from what is collectively remembered. Myth which is re-interpreted in genres (and thus re-invested with meaning), according to the needs of the present, the needs of particular songs in Pindar’s case, or the poet’s value system, reflects the interface between the individual, represented by the poet, and the collective as experienced but also (re)shaped by the poet. In the ancient Greek ‘milieu de mémoire’, mnemonic communities shared a stable sense of being in time and space, the time and space of the city-state. In this milieu, a meaningful past was reconstructed in the present in literary genres, but also in rhetoric and artifacts so as to shape the future. All these, to a considerable extent, both reflected collective memory and were very much involved in its construction and evolution. This is why they can be used as sources of information concerning shared communications about the meaning of the past.

Though Nora's concept of a milieu de mémoire is useful for this study, it is Assmann's theory of cultural memory which provides the conceptual framework within which the question why writers and artists choose to do something with their past as well as how they use their past in the present can be asked. The basic idea is that it is through the 'cultivation' of texts and artifacts that a society's self-image can be stabilised and conveyed. The idea of the reconstruction of the past (which is a 'cultural creation' and not a 'natural growth', Assmann 2011: 33), according to the needs of the present is of crucial importance. In the case of Pindaric epinician song, it is interesting to discuss how the poet, whose identity evolves with the passing of time but who continues to be a vector of the history of the community, often interferes with aspects of a past which may be considered foundational to derive normative meaning in the present and to provide orientation for the future.

1.1 Collective identity in 5th century BC Greece- 'integration' and 'distinction'.

According to Assmann, a society and a culture as basic structures generate a personal identity, whereas a collective self-image is created through conscious reflection into the forms that articulate it, into what he calls cultural formation.[13]

Assmann distinguishes between two forms of cultural formation which give rise to the factors of identity enhancement: 'integration' and 'distinction', or unity and peculiarity. Although unity and peculiarity are the two sides of identity, what is important is which form gives rise to the factors of enhancement in a particular historical context.

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13 Cultural formation comprises a complex of shared symbols which are established and passed on within the context of cultural memory.

The enhancement of the basic structure and its implications in terms of the kind of identity it generates can be illustrated by a historical example, the Persian Wars in the 5th century BC which constitute part of the historical context within which Pindar composed his epinician song (Pindar refers to these wars on three occasions in his extant work, in *Pythian* 1, *Isthmian* 5, *Isthmian* 8, as well as in fr. 76) . During these wars, the Greeks gained integration through having to maintain their distinctiveness from the Persians. In the face of a common enemy, the Greek city-states (those which did not 'medise') were confronted with an external foe and this made them reflect on what they shared as Hellenes (according to Assmann, a collective identity is a reflexive form of social belonging. Membership is also enhanced through a confrontation with different societies or a common foe, 2011:115), an identity which far exceeded the boundaries of the πόλις and the kind of identity it generated. In the case of local identity, there was a πόλις with its specific myths and institutions which functioned as a frame of reference, whereas, in the case of Panhellenic identity, there was only a 'transcendent *polis'*, an 'ultra *polis*' (Wickersham 1991: 5-6), a symbolic externalisation of all that subsequent generations of Hellenes had internalised as co-ordinates of the concept of 'Greekhood'. These co-ordinates were specified by the Athenians in an answer to Alexandros of Macedonia and in the presence of the Spartan envoys. Having decided not to 'medise' and enslave Hellas, the Athenians proclaimed their awareness of 'τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν ἐὸν ὅμαιμόν τε καὶ ὁμόγλωσσον καὶ θεῶν ἱδρύματά τε κοινὰ καὶ θυσίαι ἤθεά τε ὁμότροπα' (*Herodotus* 8.144).

This is an awareness of sameness, a Panhellenic awareness externalised at a particular historical stage. It stems from shared mythological and genealogical traditions also passed on through epic poetry (See Appendix 1 - Hellas in Homeric and

Hesiodic epic), lyric song, epinician song, tragedy, and the visual arts. It resonates in Aeschylus' *Persians,* in the Pindaric corpus, in Isocrates' speeches which draw heavily on Panhellenic themes but also in Classical art in which Hellenic identity was re-evaluated and its distinctiveness from and implicitly its superiority to Near eastern art was emphasised**.** More particularly, Pindar, with the normative and formative standards of his epinician song, created a community of heroicised citizens for the 'transcendent πόλις'. Moreover, through mythical genealogies, he managed to connect different Greek communities over space and over time (Rutherford 2014: 110) as well as to elevate the local to the symbolic Panhellenic community, thus promoting the idea of a shared Hellenic identity. In *Olympian* 1, he shows his interest in the Panhellenic resonance of his songs and implicitly of the myths he elaborates in them. He finishes this ode in which he 'corrects' the myth of Pelops on the basis of a religious principle by saying that he wishes that he may be foremost in wisdom among Hellenes everywhere: 'ἐμέ τε τοσσάδε νικαφόροις / ὁμιλεῖν πρόφαντον σοφίᾳ καθ' Ἕλ/λανας ἐόντα παντᾷ.' (115b-116). Although he is a Theban poet and Thebes was well-known for its enmity toward the Athenians, Pindar does not hesitate to underline the prominence of Athens in what he understands as the Hellenic world. In fr. 76, Athens is 'Ἑλλάδος ἔρεισμα', whereas in *Pythian* 7, Athens and the Alkmaionidai have the most illustrious reputation in Hellas (5/6-8).

The Athenians in their answer to Alexandros of Macedonia do not seem to ascribe political status to Greekness. They describe a cultural community which, when faced with the challenge of perpetuating the Hellenic nation as a collective identity, though not yet as a political entity, makes its shared cultural values the driving force for resistance. The attitude of the Athenians and its Panhellenic orientation can be used

as an example of what Assmann calls 'integratively enhanced basic structure' (2011: 125-131). Panhellenism, its integrative potential, the question whether it pre-dates or post-dates the Persian wars, its cultural and political dimensions, are discussed by different scholars. Gregory Nagy discusses the cultural aspect of the phenomenon (2009: 52-53). On the basis of archeological and historical evidence and with the polis as a frame of reference, Nagy follows A. M. Snodgrass and applies the concept of Panhellenism to 'the pattern of intensified intercommunication among the city-states of Hellas, starting in the eighth century BC, as evidenced in particular by the following institutions: Olympic Games, Delphic Oracle, and Homeric poetry. Three important cultural objectifications become media for expressing collective identity**.** In the case of the Olympic Games, they expressed the symbolic community of Greeks by excluding non-Greeks.[14] Nagy relativises the totalising ideology implicit in different aspects of Panhellenism which, as he says, 'cannot be described in absolute terms of universalization' (2009b: 275). He discusses Panhellenism as 'a tendency toward a notional absolute' (275).

In the case of a distinctively enhanced basic structure as defined by Assmann, the 'we' identity is intensified and contrasted to 'they'. Isocrates, for example, uses the past to mobilise the forces of a distinctively enhanced Hellenic identity, in order to integrate the Hellenes against the barbarian Persians. In a sense, the identity of the barbarian served Isocrates' vision of a future that would duplicate the stories and images of a

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14 We do not know when this exclusion was established. Herodotos writes about Alexander I of Macedon, who had to prove his Argive descent before taking part in the Games (5.22). However, we cannot be certain about the historicity of this incident. In his third *Olympian* ode, celebrating the victory of Theron of Akragas with the tethrippon in 476, Pindar refers to the judges of the Olympic Games 'ἀτρεκὴς Ἑλλανοδίκας Αἰτωλὸς ἀνὴρ' (*O*. 3. 11), so we have a possible date in in the early 5th century.

heroic past, so that it could have a powerful and predictable impact on collective memory. Before Isocrates, Pindar, in *Isthmian* 6 (24), uses the adjective 'βάρβαρος' to distinguish between Greek and non-Greek speech. He uses this adjective along with the adjective 'παλίγγλωσος'. Both adjectives have negative connotations. When praising Peleus, Aias, and Telamon, three members of his favourite clan, the Aiakidai, he writes: 'οὐδ' ἔστιν οὔτω βάρβαρος / οὔτε παλίγγλωσσος πόλις, / ἅτις οὐ Πηλέος ἀίει κλέος ἥ / ρως, εὐδαίμονος γαμβροῦ θεῶν, / οὐδ' ἅτις Αἴαντος Τελαμωνιάδα / καὶ πατρός'(*Isthmian* 6.24). The term 'barbarian', which, according to Erich Gruen, was rarely used before the 5th century BC (2006: 295), demarcates the Hellenic world from the non-Hellenic. It designates an inclusive and simultaneously an exclusive socio-culturally constructed collective identity which is not based on biologically determined criteria but on cultural narratives of superiority over the inferior 'Other' and which can be attributed to the Persian Wars.

Both aspects of identity are represented in Pindaric epinician song in certain ways. The praised athlete stands out from the rest of his community with his exceptional attributes but he also needs to be integrated in his community. Epinician song contributes to the latter by praising not only the athlete and his distinguished clan but also the πόλις to which the athlete and his clan belong. The πόλις deserves the praised athlete and the praised athlete deserves but also needs his πόλις which provides the framework for his activity. It is a necessary reciprocity, since the winner is a mortal man whose aspirations can be expressed and understood within the boundaries of a πόλις. The πόλις itself stands out by being praised in epinician song but it is also integrated into the Panhellenic community of πόλεις which share similar, worthy of praise values.

2. MYTH

In an effort to start with the meaning of the word μῦθος itself, Lowell Edmunds discusses the semantics of *λόγος* and *μῦθος* in Aristophanes, Plato, Pindar, and Hekataios and concludes that 'the semantics of *μῦθος* alone cannot tell us much about the existence or practice of *μῦθοι* in the sense of oral narratives' (1990: 4). What we know about these oral narratives is that they are not random stories told on a local level to account for cultic practices or for landscapes. They avoid being chaotic by possessing a systematic or conceptual form. Ken Dowden and Niall Livingstone emphasise the systematic character of the network of Greek myth (2014: 3). Because of its systematisation, Greek mythology establishes a matrix of relationships with manifold implications as its instantiations in epic poetry, lyric and choral poetry, tragedy, rhetoric, philosophy, even history demonstrate. Myth is embedded in almost every aspect of Greek life. It is the richness of myth that allows us to approach it from different perspectives.

In his theory of cultural memory, Assmann does not restrict his understanding of myth to the historical context of its genesis. He is interested in 'myth in action' (2011: 10) within a cultural sphere in which identity is shaped (Assmann writes that 'myth and identity are linked by the fact that they both answer questions about who we are, where we come from, and what our place in the cosmos is' 2011: 123). Assmann defines a foundational narrative (a story which recalls the age of 'becoming') as myth. With this definition, Assmann refers to a process which, far from denoting the work of a historian, is a function of group memory. Because of this process, the past (distant and near past) is transformed into a foundational event with normative standards, principles, values, and norms of conduct, and formative power which links this event to an

awareness of a shared identity which represents a shared past and which legitimises the aspirations of the community for the future. It is in this sense that myth is 'foundational history which is narrated in order to illuminate the present from the standpoint of its origins' (2011: 38).

The functional aspect of the term 'foundational history' is related to whether the events to which the term refers took place in an absolute past and, as Assmann says, may be brought to life through ritual re-enactment[15] (or in an institutionalised context of performance as in Ancient Greek culture) or occurred in historical time and are made present through memory. In this case, historical events are internalised as myth to underlie the image a society has of itself. The affinity of a mythical event as remembered in the cultural memory with factual history is of minor importance because the normative standards and the formative power (which provides life with meanings) take precedence over factual history. Mythical narratives in this sense become more real than reality itself, since they permeate the connective structure of a community, both on the social and on the temporal level, providing the framework for the 'we' identity. In Archaic and Classical Greece, the Trojan War was believed to have happened in historical time. In terms of memory culture and according to Hesiod, the Achaian heroes belonged to the generation preceding the Iron Age. Homer also gives the 'historical' coordinates of the Trojan War by making it post-date the expedition of the Seven against Thebes. As Carlo Brillante writes, 'the heroic world was the "age of myth", but it was not simply identifiable with the era of origins. It also constituted "the ancient history" of the various cities and races' (1990: 102).

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15 In the case of Hesiod's *Theogony*, the events described took place in an absolute past but they were not related to ritual.

On the other hand, cultural memory may transform actual into remembered history thus turning it into myth. What counts for cultural memory is not actual but remembered history (Assmann 2011: 38). Through memory, history becomes myth (38) and this transformation is a cultural phenomenon. Erll writes that 'cultural memory is the totality of the context within which such varied cultural phenomena originate' (2011: 7). To exemplify, the Persian Wars were immediately 'mythicised' by Aeschylus, taking on the character of a foundational event. According to Erll, such ad hoc transformations of events into foundational history happen because the specific events share basic characteristics with the memory of distant, mythical times (like the time of the Trojan War in this particular case) and fulfill the same functions (2011: 34). 'Historicisation' and 'mythicisation' are mnemonic processes related to the cultural impact of myth. In Greek cultural memory, it was an institutionalised context of performance which provided the temporal and spatial parameters for such processes as the case of epic poetry demonstrates. In the case of the Persian Wars, tragedy and lyric poetry played an important role in recording, preserving, but also in transforming the Greek victory against the Persians into a mythical event. In Pindaric epinician song, a contemporary victory is mythicised by being elevated to the world of myth, whereas the heroes of Pindar's mythical narratives are historicised by becoming paradeigmatic both for the victor and the mnemonic community into which the victor is re-integrated after his victory. This interplay between the mythical and the historical in Pindar takes place within the framework of his value system and against the background of the normative and formative aspects of myth. The poet in his songs creates a world (Erll refers to literature as a specific 'way of worldmaking' 2011: 144) in which what we would call 'fiction' and what we would call 'reality' are inextricably intertwined. By doing this, he

responds to a challenge faced by Greek memory culture: on the eve of the Classical period, athletic prowess was highly esteemed, so a genre was needed for this type of prowess to be exalted. Epinician song was also a specific way of 'memory making' (Erll 2011: 144) and, as such, it changed the quality of what was remembered by the community. Like epic poetry, lyric poetry, and tragedy, it played a significant role in determining the meaning that the past assumed in the present.

It was in the Archaic period that myth began to exist in literary formations as a primarily 'traditional narrative' (Rutherford 2014: 109-110), as a language of narrative forms with particular literary inflections (Segal 1998: 128) which were created by poets who specialised in the memory of the community. With their work, the then and there of mythicised historical and cosmic time became the here and now of performance, creating the impression of continuity within socio-culturally defined space and keeping a group's identity system working. This is how a system of mythology, in the sense of a particular body of collectively remembered myths, was established. This system remained open to a process of development as the handling of myth by poets like Pindar and by the tragedians, who reconstructed the mythical past in the present to verbalise the various and often conflicting aspects of the Athenian city-state, demonstrates.

In Archaic and Classical Greece, there was a practice of reading mythograhy and Homer gradually became a written text through education. However, myth was also orally transmitted within the context of communicative memory. In addition, it was re-interpreted in primarily performed literary genres within the context of cultural memory. As a result, a kind of 'intertextuality' (a poet responding to another poet as well as to what was considered traditional memory) was established. This was a process which

related past and present and which can be subsumed under the umbrella term 'cultural memory'. The process of the reconstruction of the past in the present was not free from the poet's subjective values or even the needs of a particular song as Pindaric song demonstrates. Of course, in Pindaric epinicians, the needs of a particular song are always in harmony with the poet's subjective values which had been shaped within a specific socio-cultural context.

The conclusion we draw when studying myth in epic song and other genres, such as epinician song or tragedy, is that myth is a cultural practice which cannot be understood if it is removed from its socio-cultural context. According to Calame (2014: 517), a mythic narrative in a poetic composition establishes relations with the world of reference. These relations can be defined as simultaneously semantic and figurative, syntagmatic and logical, pragmatic and functional, ritual and institutional (Calame 2014: 517). Calame attributes the link between a mythic narrative and the construction of religious and cultural identity, what he calls '*anthropopoiesis*' or the cultural fabrication of man (2014: 523), to these historically, politically, and culturally important relations.

2.1 The historicity of myth – Assmann's perspective.

The question arises concerning the historicity of myth. In the case of the *Iliad,* for example, certain scholars (Latacz, Korfmann) agree that there may be sufficient circumstantial evidence which proves the existence of a historical core in Homeric myth. Dieter Hertel (2014: 425-441) emphasises the importance of the Trojan War as a test case for the idea of the existence of such a historical core, because this war marks both the end of major mythic stories and the threshold of history as Herodotus

and Thucydides' attitude to it demonstrate (425). Hertel argues in favour of connecting the myth of Troy with the Aiolian colonisation.

Discussing the issue from the perspective of memory culture, the emphasis lies on what is remembered by the community about the Trojan War, on the circulation of this memory in a performance context, on the diachronic reconstruction of this memory by those who specialise in the memory of the community and in different genres, as well as on the reason why the past is remembered by a particular community or in a particular literary composition. Assmann discusses memory, tradition, and identity as functional frameworks within which certain factors become stimulants or tranquilisers of memory. Accordingly, he sees Homeric myth as 'an organisational form of cultural memory', as the reconstruction of the past that supports the self-image of a particular group (2011: 250). By codifying a past that has disappeared, 'the epics bring together the whole of a tradition in a completely new kind of work, which can go on existing independently of the memory bearing community, and can thus become the starting point of new memories' (250). For the latter to happen, this tradition has to be circulated. A culturally institutionalised context of performance became the framework for the dissemination of the Homeric tradition (Homer was also a written text for the education of children).

For Assmann, 'continuity' is the key word for the codification of memory in the Homeric epics -the bridging of the gap between an otherwise unrecoverable past represented by an aristocracy that participated in the real or imagined Panhellenic coalition against Ilion and Homer's times. Assmann sees the mobilisation of this past memory by Homer as 'a typical instance of continuity constructed across rupture' (2011: 249). He believes that in Homer's times, there was still an aristocracy which could

identify itself with the individualised and memorable heroes of the *Iliad*. The 8th century marks the transition from the 'loose' aristocratic society described in the epics with 'its need for freedom, initiative, independence and honor' (2011: 249-250) to the 'tight' society of the polis in which citizenship and communal acts of belonging are emphasised (communal values are not absent from the Homeric texts. In fact, the aristocratic individuals need to be integrated in their community of warriors to achieve their common goals). Homer sets the mechanisms of cultural memory in motion by capturing a disappearing past. In fact, the power of Homeric poetry depends on the perpetualised evanescence of this past. This evanescence must have been a real challenge for successive Greek communities which chose to remember, to internalise their past and to externalise it in art and literature. Pindar also enshrines the mythical past in his epinician song. We may suggest that he does so, in order to support the link between this 'remembered' foundational and normative past and the identity of the mostly aristocratic victors in the present as well as of the community into which they need to be re-integrated after their victory.

Assmann also discusses Homeric mythical narratives as media of memory and the attitude of subsequent generations to them, whether positive or critical, justifies this function. Astrid Erll writes that the most effective media of memory perform a storage, circulation, and cuing function (2011: 126). They store contents of memory and make them available across time (126) -the availability of Homeric myth across time can be primarily attributed to a rhapsodic tradition (along with the role of Homeric texts in education) within the context of Greek cultural memory. Media of memory also enable cultural communication across space (126) -the oral and written dissemination of Homeric myth performed this function. Finally, they cue or trigger collective

remembrance within the context of a particular culture, through linguistic, metrical, thematic, or narrative registers. In the case of Greek tragedy, we understand how this cuing function could establish connections but also create tension between what was collectively remembered about, for example, the Trojan War and its adaptation by Euripides in the historical context of the Peloponnesian War.

So, Greek mythology in this thesis is discussed as a systematic network of narratives some of which are experienced as foundational. Such foundational narratives have normative impact on successive mnemonic communities until Pindar's times. Myth as foundational narrative penetrates every aspect of life. It is through myth that Greek communities ever since Homer's times become aware of a common identity which represents a shared past. Because of its mnemonic impact, myth exists in literary formations such as epic poetry, epinician song, and tragedy, though it is not absent from history, rhetoric, or philosophy. As the person who traditionally specialises in the memory of the community, the poet is responsible for handling myth to reconstruct the past in a performance context. It is also in this performance context that the knowledge which establishes and preserves identity is promulgated.

3. MEMORY BEFORE PINDAR- HOMER AND HESIOD

3.1 Homer

Homeric memory set the mechanisms of Greek cultural memory in motion. It can be used as a framework for a discussion of the role of the divinely inspired poet in transmitting memory, the communication of meaning within a culture of oral performance, as well as of the impact of poetry on collective memory. What Homer makes explicit in his *Iliad* is that it is through his poetic memory and via divine help that the 'floating gap' between the war which was waged between the Greeks and the Trojans (the last battle of the heroic age) and his times is bridged. In Homer and for the first time in Greek cultural memory, the Muse signifies the cultural processes of both 'historicising' and 'mythicising' the memory of a distant past. What is remembered through the intervention of the Muse is the past of various Greek communities. However, this past is endowed with normative standards and formative power. In the *Iliad*, Homer's poetic memory concentrates on the king of Mycenae, who is 'ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν' and the individualised heroes with their aristocratic values on the one hand and on 'communal values and the ethos of good leadership' on the other (Raaflaub 2005: 62).[16] These values foreshadow the aristocratic values of the victor at the Panhellenic Games who excels but who is also re-integrated into his community after his victory. The issue of the consciously preserved identity of the hero comes up in the *Odyssey*. The hero becomes a paradeigma of endurance (Livingstone 2014: 125) by

16 Hertel contrasts Achilles' individualism with Hector's communal values which 'already foreshadow the polis ideology of the Classical Greek world' (2014: 430).

firmly refusing to negotiate his true identity, that of the noble king of Ithaca, as well as the values and aspirations related to it. In the course of his many adventures, Odysseus takes on various false identities, whereas he rejects immortality. Though he will continue to live in a state of flux, since the limits imposed by his immortality will not be transcended, because of the existence of song which will immortalise his adventures, the power of time will be challenged. This is a familiar cultural pattern in Pindaric epinician song as well.

In the *Iliad*, Homer focuses on a short period in the last year of the Trojan War. This period begins with the quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles and ends with Hector's burial. Between these two chronological points, we 'hear' the narrative voice but, as later in tragedy, we also 'see' the heroes -the Achaians, the Trojans, and the gods- interact with each other. The *Odyssey* relates the events after the hero's departure from the island of Calypso where he had spent seven years. However, the mnemonic potential of Homeric texts is not restricted to the events recounted in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. By way of alluding to myth (Létoublon 2014: 27) that does not constitute an organic part of his narration, Homer provides the mnemonic framework of which his mythical narratives are a part. This mnemonic framework is a cultural heritage that he shares with his audiences, so the poet creates important community meaning by putting the events and the individuals he wants to immortalise in the foreground against the backcloth of shared mythic knowledge (like the story of the Argonauts in *Odyssey* 12.69-70, or Helen's descent from Zeus in *Iliad* 3.418 and others). This dynamic interplay between what the poet chooses to put in the foreground in the present and the mythic knowledge he shares with his audience is also of particular importance in Pindaric epinician song. An interesting discussion of Homer's

narrative technique is that of Maureen Alden (2000) who considers secondary narratives in the *Iliad* the key to the interpretation of the main narrative. Alden calls such secondary narratives para-narratives. Para-narratives are paradigms (like the story of Niobe *Il.* 602-17) and digressions which are outside the main narrative, but also episodes inside the main narrative that repeat the pattern of an episode of the main narrative (e.g. the funeral games for Patroclos *Il. 23. 257-897*). Such stories do not advance the progress of the main narrative. They can be compared to 'correcting' lenses (2000: 16-17) which sharpen our focus on the main narrative. Based on her approach to Homer's narrative technique, Alden comes to the conclusion that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are 'higly integrated and carefully composed poems which can only be explained as the work of a brilliant and insightful poet carefully shaping and polishing his work over many years' (2000: 1-2). Although one can question the extent to which all para-narratives as defined by Alden can be considered the key to the interpretation of the main narrative (for example, do all the scenes on Achilles' shield have their equivalent in Achilles' behaviour?), Alden's approach provides proof of the remarkable richness and vitality of the Homeric compositions that tell stories from those very 'other' heroic times and that have a lasting impact on the memory of the community.

With his epics, Homer gave powerful expression to a performing tradition that reached back to pre-historic times and underpinned the cultural memory of Greeks and their distant ancestors. In the *Iliad*, Achilles, Homer's Bronze Age warrior, sings 'κλέα ἀνδρῶν' when he is not fighting (9.186-189). In the *Odyssey*, we find Demodokos at the Phaeacian court. His poetic authority is attributed to his divine inspiration by Odysseus. Because of his inspiration, Demodokos can sing the events of Troy even

without having experienced them. Odysseus comments on the exactness of his description. The inspired Demodokos can be as exact as a witness or as someone who had heard from another would be. There is no 'falsehood' in his song. The presence of Demodokos in Alkinoos' court points to a cultural practice. For Nilsson, this cultural practice goes back to the Mycenaean period when epic song may have been composed by gifted individuals who belonged to the entourage of kings (1965: 17) and who performed in the context of festivals centered on their palaces (Bennet 1997: 529). According to Richard Hunter and Ian Rutherford (2009: 10), Odysseus may also be thinking of epic song in a performance context when he refers to his κλέος (*Odyssey* 9.19-20). In the *Odyssey*, a different pattern related to Greek song and performance culture is described by Eumaios. To contradict Antinoos' arrogance, he gives a list of the 'δημιοεργοί' who are invited as 'ξένοι' 'ἐπ' ἀπείρονα γαῖαν'. He includes the 'μάντιν', the 'ἰητῆρα κακῶν', the 'τέκτονα δούρων' and the 'θέσπιν ἀοιδόν' (17.382-387). The latter alludes to a different cultural practice. Walter Burkert (1992) and Mary Bacharova (2009) in their work discuss the possibility of the transmission to Mycenean Greece of Near Eastern cultural practices related to itinerant poets via Anatolia. Such poets may have performed in various festivals, which may have attracted local or supra-local audiences. What we understand from such assumptions based on Homeric song is that the roots of Greek performance culture may be traced back in pre-historic times.

In respect of the dissemination of the Homeric poems in historical times, they were disseminated in a culturally institutionalised context of performance. In this context, the authoritative voice of the poet could transcend its ephemeral existence and hand down meaning. What the poet transmitted was not intended for a purely

literate audience, as is the case of what is stored and transmitted in writing, but for wider audiences. In particular in Athens, the dissemination of the Homeric poems is related to the highly controversial subject of the Peisistratean recension and the need for textual fixity in the case of literary compositions with a lasting impact on the memory of the community. The meaning of the statements of ancient authors like Cicero (*de. Or*. iii.137) who writes: *(Pisistratus) primus Homeri libros confusos antea sic disposuisse dicitur ut nunc habemus* is under constant challenge and different scholars provide their arguments for or against a recension commissioned by Peisistratos (Nagy 1996: 65-106, 2004: 10-11). Whatever the reliability of the sources (Allen catalogues the passages of ancient authors who bear on different aspects of the question of the Peisistratean recension 1924: 226-238), Greek culture did not become a book and reading culture in the sixth century.[17] Instead, it continued to show a strong impetus towards live interactions and collective reception until the 4th century BC**.**

The normative impact of Homeric texts is demonstrated by the fact that these texts had been the tool for education in the Archaic and Classical period and this practice continued in the Hellenistic period. In Classical Athens, Homer had become 'classic'. Knowledge of Homeric poetry was a prerequisite for a young man who wanted to take a place at the symposia (Marrou 1956: 42). The lasting impact of Homeric poetry is demonstrated by the fact that during the Hellenistic period this poetry was taught even

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17 In his Preface to Plato (1963), Eric Havelock considered Antiphon, Thucydides, Plato, and Isocrates as the first authors who composed for a reading audience. Greek cultural memory was not entrusted to a scribal elite that was responsible for codifying and preserving it. Greek foundational texts like Homeric and Hesiodic epics, the tragedies, or Plato's Dialogues, emerged naturally from an oral tradition. and equally naturally 'turned to physical, live voices and interactions' (Assmann 2011: 241).

in primary schools. Young pupils learnt the names of the Homeric heroes and their achievements. The Byzantines also preserved the Homeric texts. Homer himself refers to the ideal education of a young aristocrat setting an important precedent. Apart from Chiron and Phoenix who educated Achilles to be 'a speaker of speeches and a doer of deeds' (9.443), Homer presents Phoenix as using the story of Meleager as a paradeigma, a story with normative impact, to exhort Achilles to act accordingly. In the 6th century, Xenophanes of Colophon refers to the educational resonance of Homeric myth by saying 'ἐξ ἀρχῆς καθ' Ὅμηρον ἐπεὶ μεμαθήκασι πάντες' (fr. 10 D-K). In Xenophon's *Banquet* (III, 5), Nikēratos has learned to recite the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* by heart, because of the positive impact this recitation would have on his character. Plato also writes (*Hipparchus* 228e) that Hipparchos inscribed the 'teachings' of Homer, among other demonstrations of σοφία, on the Herms to educate the citizens of Athens. Homer's pervasive impact on Greek education diachronically may be attributed to the normative impact of heroic myth 'which developed around the identity of the individualistic hero and his imperishable glory' (Marrou 1956: 12-13). This glory of the Homeric hero foreshadowed the glory of the athlete in Pindar's times, whereas the normative character of heroic myth set a precedent for Pindar's treatment of myth in his epinician song.

3.2 Hesiod

The 'myth' of the *Certamen*, the poetic contest between Homer and Hesiod, which is often related to Hesiod's *Works and Days* (650-660)[18] and which demonstrates the impact of Homeric and Hesiodic poetry in Greek cultural memory, dates back to the 4th

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18 Hesiod does not mention Homer as his rival in these lines.

century BC and may have even been told before that time. (Lamberton 1988: 6). The *Certamen* is part of a larger 'historicisation' project, which, based on invented biographical information, made Homer and Hesiod, the two canonical Archaic poets, not only contemporaries but also relatives.[19] In spite of the fact that 'Parryist' scholars think of Homer and Hesiod as fictive poetic personae, as embodiments of a poetic tradition, within the context of cultural memory, they are remembered as two distinct individual poets to whom two distinct poetic traditions are ascribed. Homer and Hesiod each use a traditional epic diction and formulae in their hexameters, but the Homeric corpus has a different orientation from the Hesiodic one, mostly in terms of the kind of memory it presents. This is probably a key point in understanding the meaning of the mythic contest. It was the earliest recorded attempt to clarify the interaction between Homeric heroic myth and Hesiodic poetry (Lamberton 1988: 38) in Greek cultural memory.

Herodotos, in the 5th century, refers to the religious identity function performed by the Homeric and Hesiodic texts. According to Herodotos, Homer and Hesiod, whose time was not more than four hundred years before his own, 'taught the Greeks of the descent of the gods, and gave to all their several names and honours, and arts, and declared their outward forms (*Histories* 2.53). In Herodotos' work, this was recent memory compared to the long memory of Egypt as it is described in the anecdote about Hekataios' encounter with the priests in Egyptian Thebes (2.143). Compared to the

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19 Homer was Hesiod's contemporary but he was younger than him (45). Ephoros made Homer the younger cousin of Hesiod on the father's side and his nephew on the mother's side (FGrHist. 70 F 101). Xenophanes, like Plato, seems to give priority to Homer over Hesiod. The Alexandrian Eratosthenes, Aristarchos, and Apollodoros share his belief. Barbara Graziosi notes that the battle between Homer and Hesiod for antiquity was simultaneously a battle for authority (2002: 104).

deep antiquity of Egypt, Greek culture appears to be 'young' and perhaps, by implication, naïve. In this comparatively 'young' culture, the memory of a distant foundational past, ranging from cosmogonic and theogonic beginnings to the heroic age when gods and demigods still mingled with mortals, was not entrusted to an authoritative priesthood or to another central ruling authority but to the poetic voice and to visual artists. In this context, additions, changes, or contradictions even in matters of narratives about the divine were possible when the past was reconstructed according to referential frames in the present. Herodotos seems to homogenise the Homeric and the Hesiodic tradition of divine myth, but the two traditions are often contradictory. Homer's Aphrodite is the daughter of Zeus and Dione, whereas in the *Theogony*, she is foam-born (196). Homer's gods love feasting and quarrelling, they have their favourites among humans, and they can be extremely jealous. Hesiod's gods can quarrel or lie but, in general, his sense of the divine reflects a different tradition which is codified in a poetic mythography, a genre which was probably something new that Hesiod brought from the Near East (Dowden 2014: 54). In his mythography, Hesiod tells the mythology in a systematic way in contrast to Homer who simply 'composes a descant on it' (Dowden 2014: 48).[20] Hesiod's intention to tell his mythology in a systematic way becomes obvious in his proem which functions as a 'table of contents' and which 'historicises' what actually belongs to the absolute time of divine myth. Hesiod's 'table of contents' contains what the Muses always glorify in

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20 Ken Dowden uses a musical metaphor to refer to Homer's handling of the mythological material he must have had at his disposal. Homer sings myth like an independent voice which is removed from a group of voices to give his version of the past. This is an act of memory which, when discussed within the context of cultural memory, becomes the starting point for the creation of new memories by those other 'voices' which will hear and reconstruct Homeric memory.

their song to the immortals (40-43). By saying this, Hesiod who is 'Μουσάων θεράπων' (100) implicitly stresses the significance of his own task in turning this memory into poetry in the present. In line 115, the poet asks the Muses to start from the beginning and this is what they do in line 116 when they assert that ''Ητοι μὲν πρώτιστα Χάος γένετ'' (the emphasis is on memory which relates to the absolute past). There is a new list of what the song should include. Antonios Rengakos notes that even if Hesiod's technique in his proem is determined by the theogonic subject of the poem (the emphasis is on beginnings), its contrast with the Homeric tradition is striking (2009: 208). Rengakos attributes this contrast to the kind of memory the Hesiodic *Theogony* encodes. Because of the emphasis on beginnings as well as on the evolution of things on a cosmic level that cosmogonic and theogonic poetry entails, Hesiod has to respond to a new challenge faced by Greek memory culture. He uses a particular symbolic form, the epic genre scheme, in terms of epic language, epic metre, and formulae. This is how his poetry resonates with a wider tradition which is part of his audiences' cultural knowledge. However, in order to respond to the need of creating his distinct reality, Hesiod feels free both to use and transform existing literary patterns, thus pre-forming the meaning that will be given to the reality he will create.

Hesiod's transformation of existing literary patterns is obvious in the case of the invocation to the Muse. Both the narrator of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and the narrator of the *Theogony* seem to possess and transmit a meaningful past via divine help. Without the Muse, the poet of the *Iliad* is ignorant (*2*. 486). References to the Muse in the Homeric epics take the form of a typical epic invocation. In the *Theogony* however, the narrator distances himself from the Homeric tradition and claims that his poetic identity was delegated to him, a mere shepherd, by the Muses themselves, the sources

of the memory he was about to turn into poetry in an encounter that he had with them in the foothills of Mount Helicon. The contrast is striking: the human and the divine intersect at the junction of the limitations imposed on human memory on the one hand and of the divine's unlimited access to memory on the other. Because of this encounter and for the first time in Western literature, the Hesiodic narrator in the *Theogony* who is omnipresent, omniscient, external and covert for the most part, like the Homeric one (Rengakos 2009: 211), becomes a dramatised, internal narrator mostly in lines 22-34.[21] In these lines, apart from referring to his encounter, the narrator also introduces himself by name and status, thus providing a context within which his mythographic material is told.

The Muses address an insignificant shepherd using reproachful language. Yet, it is to this insignificant shepherd that the deities of memory,[22] who are now called 'Olympian' thus achieving Panhellenic status like the Hesiodic poetry they will inspire (Nagy 2009b: 278), admit for the first time in Greek literature that they know 'ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα' (27) and that they also know, only when they wish, 'ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι' (28). This is probably Hesiod's way of acknowledging the fact that there could be 'false' memories of a distant but foundational past, in other words that Greek cultural memory favoured variation and innovation from its very beginning. However, there could be only one true poetic memory whose meaning was binding and obligatory for Greek mnemonic communities. The poet's task was to select and

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21 As Rengakos notes, in the main part of the poem, the Hesiodic narrator is on occasion less or more prominent than his Homeric counterpart (2009: 212).

22 The Muses are unique to Greek culture. In the Eastern tradition, different deities can put the song in the poet's mind, so the link between a poet and the divine is maintained, but there are no Muses understood as deities who specialise in inspiring the poet to create (West 1997: 17).

transmit this memory, in order to create meaning in the present and to provide orientation towards the future. Hesiod is the poet who starts the discussion concerning the 'truth' of memory passed on through a poetic composition. Like the Muses in the *Theogony*, in the *Odyssey,* Odysseus "Ἴσκε ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγων ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα'(19. 203). Yet, the context is different. Odysseus is a mortal man who can lie or tell truths which relate to the real world (Tsagalis 2009: 133).[23] The Muses can lie and deceive mortals but their lies relate to the absolute past of divine myth as well as to the distant past of human history. However, they also have access to the truth. The Hesiodic tradition does not seem to question the existence of true memory but, by emphasising the unbridgeable gap between the divine nature of the goddesses of memory and the human condition, it questions the possibility of true knowledge and objectivity when the past is reconstructed in poetry.[24] In the *Theogony* however, the Muses give the narrator a sceptre (30), which is a symbol of regal power in Homer (*Il*. 1. 234), and they breath a divine voice into him (31-32) inspiring him to transcend the barrier of time which imposes limits on human memory and to glorify 'τά τ' ἐσσόμενα πρό τ' ἐόντα' (32). This is how the narrator who, as a poet, is responsible for telling divine myth can legitimise his claim to veracity.

In lines 52-54, the narrator refers to the genealogy of the Muses. They are the daughters of Μνημοσύνη and Zeus. Because of their parentage, their commemorative aspect as well as their authority are emphasised. However, Μνημοσύνη bore the Muses 'λησμοσύνην τε κακῶν ἄμπαυμά τε (55). The idea of the palliative effect of song

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23 Odysseus' lies are also part of the false identities he has to take in the epic until he takes his true identity, that of the king of Ithaca.

24 Pindar in his epinician odes will continue the discussion about truth and falsehood in poetry in *N*. 5. 16-18, *O*. 1. 27-32, *O*. 4. 17-18, *O*. 10. 4-5.

is reiterated in lines 98-103. When a poet, 'Μουσάων θεράπων', sings heroic or divine myth, those in anguish forget their sorrow at once, because the gifts of the goddesses have turned it aside. It is through the act of remembering the past in divinely inspired song and in a performance context that λησμοσύνη of the contingencies of human pain is achieved. A similar idea is expressed in Pindar's *Nemean* 4. 3 in which the poet refers to hard toils and the impact of songs on them: 'Μοισᾶν θύγατρες ἀοιδαὶ θέλξαν νιν ἀπτόμεναι'.

The Hesiodic narrator also mentions that Muse Calliope καὶ βασιλεῦσιν ἅμ' αἰδοίοισιν ὀπηδεῖ (80), so that they can decide disputes with straight judgments (85-86) and effect persuasion with mild words (90). Not only the importance of kings for community life but also the link between their position and the divine is stressed. Poets and kings are separated from the rest of the community as important categories of human beings but they are re-integrated, so that, through their enhanced authority, they can have a beneficial effect on the community. The emphasis on speech cannot be ignored. Whether he is a poet or a king, the man who is loved by the Muses is blessed, because 'γλυκερή οἱ ἀπὸ στόματος ῥέει αὐδή' (97). In the *Odyssey* too, king Alkinoos comments on Odysseus' ability to speak gracefully and with skill like a singer (11. 363-367). It is because of his ability to speak gracefully that the king does not think of Odysseus as a cheat. The emphasis is again on properly articulated speech. Such ideas reflect the dynamics of a culture of oral performance in which poetic genres interact with diverse audiences and are understood to have a lasting impact on them because, as cultural acts of remembrance, they establish a link between their mnemonic content and individual and collective identity.

Hesiod's *Theogony* merges a cosmogony with a theogony. In this poem the mythical history of the cosmos, of the gods, as well as of humans is told. The time is the absolute past of a primeval age. Hesiod can be inventive when reconstructing an 'absolute' past. He may have even invented the names of the Muses who are named differently by Eumelos (fr.17) and Epicharmos (fr. 41). The *Theogony* also gives a catalogue of Zeus' offspring and of the offspring of his siblings. The focus in this case is on a 'remembered' past which relates mortal men to immortal gods. The extant *Catalogue of Women* or *Ehoiai* is a fragmentarily preserved hexameter composition (about 1,300 lines survive), which is often ascribed to Hesiod. The events in the *Catalogue*, must have been systematically, organised 'region by region, descent group by descent group' (Dowden 2014: 50). The temporal threads in the *Catalogue* extend from an absolute past when mortal human beings shared feasts and councils with the immortal gods before Prometheus' deceptive craft in Mykone (Osborne 2005: 8) to the time when, in the fifth book of the *Catalogue*, Zeus planned the Trojan War to destroy the lives of the semi-gods. Discussing the social and political implications of such 'memories', Elizabeth Irwin notes that 'subsets of the ἀγαθοί claimed such unions to have been part of their pedigree' (2005: 39). The link with the mythical ancestors consolidated the identity of the aristocratic clan (which was distinguished from the rest of the community) and determined its expectations in the present as well as its aspirations for the future. Foundational stories treated by Pindar also feature in the *Catalogue*, a fact which demonstrates the mnemonic impact of the latter on epinician song, a medium which serves a number of functions related to both local and Panhellenic memory and identity.

The memory of a foundational past and fable[25] coexist in the *Works and Days*. The unity of the first part of this composition lies in the combination of the semantic lines of justice (Δίκη), productive work (under the auspices of the good Ἔρις) and the poetic word and its efficacy (Calame 2009: 60). The authority of the latter is ascertained by the fact that Zeus' administration of justice and poetic truth are brought together at the end of the προοίμιον (9-10). The authoritative poetic voice focuses on giving advice that can produce prosperity. In this context, a new mythological 'truth' is discovered (Livingstone 2014: 130). There is not one Strife (Ἔρις) as stated in the *Theogony* (225). Instead, there are two: A destructive one which urges men to engage in war and a beneficial one which encourages creative competition among men. The 'truth' told in the *Theogony* is reconstructed according to the referential frames of the *Works and Days*. With this poem, there is an obvious shift from heroic myth and its immortalising function among others and from theological poetry which describes an 'absolute' past to a purely normative poetry[26] which uses as its starting point a judicial conflict between the poet and his brother Perses. Perses is the poet's addressee, along with the kings who should administer the law with justice, and a general you who can profit from the

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25 Niall Livingstone refers to the similarities and differences between myth and fable. Fables can be exemplary and otherworldly like myth. Unlike myth, they can be freely invented but poets can also be inventive with particular myths to create their own versions. Fables can become traditional like myths. Although they have a definite moral, this moral can sometimes be only implicitly understood as in the case of Hesiod's fable. (2014: 139). In Greek cultural memory however, myth signifies a 'remembered' past with normative and formative standards, whereas a fable is an invented story with a moral which can be explicitly or implicitly understood and fable doesn't happen in a place at a time.

26 There are extensive parallels between the prescriptive sections of the *Works and Days* and Near Eastern (attested from the 2nd millennium BC) and Egyptian (attested from the 3rd millennium BC) didactic literature (Rutherford 2009: 17). Pindar draws upon this didactic tradition represented by Hesiod, Theognis, and Phokylides.

poet's know-how (Calame 2009: 60- 61). In this context, the poem gains additional semantic depth by turning to the foundational past. In this respect, we see a parallel between Hesiod's and Pindar's poetic voices.

There are three normative narratives in the *Works and Days*: The first narrative, the story of Pandora told in the *Theogony* with an emphasis on the issue of marriage, is reconstructed to serve as an explanation for the way things are for mortal men. Zeus was deceived by Prometheus who stole fire for men but he deceived Epimetheus through Pandora, so balance was re-established. The need for men to engage in productive work is among the consequences of this reciprocity. Pandora opens her Box and all the evils are released into the world. Only Ἐλπίς remains hidden in the box like the livelihood the gods hid from men. Ἐλπίς is our guide to uncovering, by agricultural toil, this hidden livelihood (Livingstone 2014: 130). With an address to Perses, who should put what will follow in his heart, the poetic voice is preparing to proceed with a second narrative. The story of the five ages or families, in the sense of generations of ancestors (Calame 2009: 60), starts with a πρώτιστα which establishes a temporality within the narrative. From the men of gold who lived without toil during the reign of Kronos and through the degenerating men of silver and bronze, we come to the identifiable age of the heroes which is also mentioned in the *Catalogue*. They are temporally defined as the 'preceding' generation (line 160) of demigods. In Hesiod, this is a transitional generation that is spatially defined in terms of two major wars, at Thebes and at Troy. The next age, the age of iron is characterised by disrespect to one's parents, lack of justice, physical violence, crooked discourses, false oaths and envy (lines 185-197). Using the future and based on his value system, the poet 'prophesies' the destruction of this age. As Calame points out, the future remains open

(2009: 85) allowing for the possibility of a different outcome if the poetic voice which propagates justice is heard.

The next address (202) is to the kings who are responsible for administering justice. In the ainos of the hawk and the nightingale however, the hawk may be identified with the kings who feel powerful enough to defy justice. The nightingale, which is grasped in the hawk's talons, may be identified with the poet who can not be heard. But if the poet is not heard, justice won't be heard either. The emphasis is on the poetic voice and its effectiveness[27] in Greek cultural memory.

3.3 Homer's and Hesiod's epics as cultural texts

For literature to be considered a medium of cultural memory, it is the reception phenomenon that is of importance. This reception phenomenon underlies the social aspect of literature as contrasted to its symbolic aspect discussed in theories of intertextuality. Jan and Aleida Assmann's interest in how a message can transcend its original spatial and temporal boundaries to reach a receiver who may be years or centuries apart constitutes the background of their coining of the term '*cultural text'*. The Assmanns do not restrict their understanding of the term 'text' to written media (Assmann 2006: 103). A ritual, an oral mythical narrative, or even a painting can be discussed as '*cultural texts'*. The decisive factor is 'the act of storage and transmission' (Assmann 2006: 103) of socially important information in an 'expanded context'.

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27 In his commentary on Hesiod's *Works and Days*, West thinks that Hesiod does not succeed in making effective rhetorical use of the genus fable which is used in addressing a particular person, as a means of commenting on his behaviour and situation. He writes that the implication in Hesiod's fable is that the laws which govern the behaviour of birds and beasts do not govern that of men. He concludes by saying that this is a negation of the parallelism of animal and man which is fundamental to this genre (1978: 205)

‘Cultural texts’ take on a symbolic meaning for a mnemonic community which identifies itself with the values and norms they present. Aleida Assmann attributes canonical status to these texts. To distinguish them from ‘literary texts’, she writes: ‘Once they enter into the core area of the Cultural Memory, literary texts are turned into normative and formative texts and thereby gain additional semantic and pragmatic dimensions: They now seem to embody -and are used to transmit- cultural, national or religious identity as well as shared values and norms’ (Erll 2011: 162). Cultural texts are a product of cultural memory.

Homeric and Hesiodic texts enshrine the memory of a disappearing past which, through them and through the processes of Greek memory culture, reaches successive Greek communities and becomes their ‘remembered’ history. They are cultural texts and as such, they embody normative and formative values. This is why they constitute an important source of identity-related memory for Greek mnemonic communities. It is against their backcloth that genres such as tragedy and epinician song were composed.

In his epinician song, Pindar evokes Homer three times (*I*. 4. 37-42, *N*. 7. 21, *P*. 4. 277) and the Homeridai once (*Ne*. 2.1). His cultural ideal of athletic prowess that is immortalised in song by being elevated to the world of myth brings him close to the aristocratic values of the Homeric world. The immortalising function of Homer’s poetry (*I*. 4. 37-42) is praised but Pindar also criticises Homer for having used his ‘ἀδυεπῆ λόγον’ (*N*. 7. 20-21) to give Odysseus more fame than he deserved. Pindar, ‘the implicit poet of the present’ does not hesitate to confront Homer ‘the idealized poet of the past’ (Nagy 1990: 202) by discussing aspects of his art that relate to the poetic word, which was still effective in Greek cultural memory, and its relationship to truth (within the

context of cultural memory, a true story is a story which is ‘remembered’ as true by the community. Such a story sets norms of conduct and has formative impact on the memory community).

4. PINDAR

We know very little about Pindar's life. Our sources are his poems, four brief accounts of his life, and the notice in the Suda. Since the accounts of the poet's life are often contradictory, we can not be sure that the information we draw from them is true. According to fr. 193 (Vita Ambrosiana), Pindar was born during a Pythian festival (Lefkowitz comments that Euripides was born on the day of the battle of Salamis 1981: 60), whereas the Suda places his birth during the 65th Olympiad (520-516 BC). Based on this information, we assume that the poet was born around 518 in Kynos Kephalai, a village on the outskirts of Thebes. According to Vita Metrica, Pindar died at the age of 80. 438 is considered a possible date for his death. According to tradition, Pindar was taught to play the pipe by Skopelinos who was said to be his uncle and to direct a chorus by Apollodoros or Agathokles in Athens, where he connected with the old aristocracy (the Alkmaionidai feature in *Pyth*. 7) whose values he shared. Lasos of Hermione who developed the dithyramb is also mentioned as one of Pindar's teachers in music. Certain anecdotal references to the poet's life and art demonstrate the impact of various aspects of his work on Greek cultural memory. They also provide proof of the fact that in the case of early biographical traditions it is difficult to separate the historical from the fictional. To emphasise his poetic eloquence, Chamaileon, a Hellinistic biographer, said that a bee built a honeycomb on young Pindar's mouth while he was sleeping on Helikon. Concerning his piety, it was said that the priest at Apollo's temple at Delphi called Pindar to dine with the god (Πίνδαρος τῷ θεῷ) when the oracle closed its doors for everyone else. In respect of the abundance of mythical topics in his song, Plutarch writes (*de glor. Ath.* 4.347F-348A) that it was the poet Korinna (who, according to West (1990: 553-557) may have actually lived much later than Pindar, in

the 3rd century BC) who criticised the young Theban poet for not relying on myth as much as he should. According to the anecdotal story, in response to her criticism, Pindar started including more mythical narratives in his songs than he should. This may be true for certain songs such as *Nemean* 10 or *Isthmian* 7 but, as we will see later in this chapter, Pindar generally uses myth to re-construct the past, in order to create important community meaning in the present.

With respect to the classification of Pindar's poems into meaningful groups, Hadjimichael writes that Callimachos may have had access to a number of different kinds of Pindar's poems which were later classified into seventeen 'books' (hymns to the gods, paeans, dithyrambs, prosodia, hyporchemata, partheneia, encomia, threnoi, epinicians) by Aristophanes of Byzantium. She adds that, according to what we can infer from the 'scholia', Zenodotos who flourished in the 3rd century BC was probably the first editor of the epinicians (2019: 233). Although the greatest proportion of Aristophanes' 'books' has not survived, the four books of epinicians have enjoyed a continuous manuscript tradition (which can also be attributed to their educational effect) and have earned the poet a well-deserved reputation.

Praise song flourished for a brief period of time (from the late 6th century until about the middle of the 5th century), when athletic prowess was highly esteemed by victors and audiences from the various Greek city-states. Pindar's epinicians demonstrate the Panhellenic resonance of this type of song since, in them, victors from Sicily and southern Italy, Kyrene in Lybia, mainland Greece, Aigina, Rhodes, and other places in Greece, are praised. Though we lack specific information concerning how a poet was hired to celebrate a victory, we understand that it was a common practice for the mostly aristocratic victors to ask a poet to compose a song in celebration of a particular victory.

Unfortunately, today we are readers of the epinicians and we are not in a position to understand their impact in a performance context in which Greek language, music, and dance combined to create a powerful effect on Greek audiences. The lack of conclusive evidence has even led some scholars to question the performance of the odes by a chorus. However, the formal features of the odes point in the direction of a choral performance which was extremely important for the expression of manifold aspects of Greek social and religious life. Concerning the location of performance, it cannot be always specified. Certain odes, like *Olympian* 11 or *Pythian* 7, were performed immediately after the victory they celebrated, whereas longer odes were performed at the victor's πόλις. Three poets feature as the main representatives of epinician song: Simonides, Pindar, and Bacchylides. From the scanty relics of Simonides' epinicians we understand that his songs were not as strict compositions as the Pindaric ones. Between epic song and tragedy, Pindaric epinician song creates a spiritual universe within which mortal men can achieve greatness and raise life from the mundane and the ephemeral, while simultaneously realising that there are limitations which need to be respected. As we will see when discussing Pindar's odes, the unique moment of human glory is put into perspective only when it becomes clear that the limits imposed by the victor's mortality cannot be transgressed.

4.1 The Panhellenic Games

Friedrich Nietzsche in his essay 'Homer's contest' (1872) saw in the ethos of competition, as expressed in the Homeric αἰὲν ἀριστεύειν καὶ ὑπέρτερον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων (*Il* 6. 208), an important driving force of Greek cultural and political life. To emphasise that contest (as represented by the good Ἔρις in Hesiod) was ingrained in Greek life and thought, Nietzsche wrote that 'every great Hellene passes on the torch of the

contest; every great virtue sets afire new greatness' (Acampora 1996: 4). The Greeks loved to turn athletic and artistic activity (song, dance, music, tragedy) into a contest. In the Homeric epics, the hero competes when fighting or when participating in athletic events. Contests are present in both Homeric and Hesiodic poetry: *Ἐπιτάφιοι ἀγῶνες* in honour of Patroklos[28] in *I.* 23, *ἀγῶνες* for the Epeian king Amarynceus which are remembered by Nestor in *I.* 23. 629-642*,* funeral poetic contests in *Works and Days* (650-660) in which the poet wishes to excel thus gaining recognition for his work. The agonistic spirit also characterises Tydeus who challenges the Cadmeians to compete with him (*I.* 4. 370-400), as well as king Alkinoos who urges the Phaeacians to prove that they excelled in athletic contests (*O*. 8. 97-255). Both war and contests comprise the context within which the individual can excel, standing out among the rest of his community while simultaneously representing it by symbolising the values and norms upon which its shared identity has been constructed. Pindar refers to the analogies beween war and contests in *P*. 8. 25-27 'πολλοῖσι μὲν γὰρ ἀείδεται / νικαφόροις ἐν ἀέθλοις θρέψαισα καὶ θοαῖς / ὑπερτάτους ἥρωας ἐν μάχαις', in *I*. 1. 50-51 'ὅς δ' ἀμφ' ἀέθλοις ἢ πολεμίζων ἄρηται κῦδος / ἀβρόν, / εὐαγορηθεὶς κέρδος ὕψιστον δέκεται, πολια / τᾶν καὶ ξένων γλώσσας ἄωτον' and elsewhere. Instone in his essay 'Origins of the Olympics' (2007) adopts a multifactorial approach both to the the origins of the Olympic Games themselves (he discusses religion, politics, war, as factors which influenced the development of the Olympic Games) and of individual events. As regards the analogies between war and games, he writes that although there is clearly

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28 As Davies writes (2007; 58), the funeral games for Patroklos must reflect a portfolio of games and conventions already established by Homer's times. However, we cannot link this portfolio with Olympia, since the Homeric texts are silent about Olympia, though they know (*I*. 11. 700-701) about the games of Augeias at Elis (2007: 58).

an interaction of ethos between athletics and the military, it is hard to be certain about what causal mechanism was at work (2007: 80). In terms of Greek cultural memory, the individual's 'ἀρετή' (at war or in athletic contests) creates meaning for the mnemonic community which can be diachronically re-interpreted. For Marrou (1956: 39), it was the change from a military to a civilian way of life that transformed the old ideal of heroism as expressed in Homeric epic and reduced it to the level of competitive sport.

As expected, in the world of Homeric epic which oscillates between human transience and divine permanence, the religious element is present in athletic contests as it is present in war. In the *Odyssey*, goddess Athena encourages Odysseus to compete *O*. 8. 195-198. In *Il*. 23. 382-400, Athena and Apollo interfere with the chariot race. Because of his resentment against Diomedes, Apollo strikes the shining whip from his hand, whereas Athena gives it back to him. In 546-547, Antilochos blames Eumelos for having neglected to pray to the immortals. Without divine help, Eumelos could not win the race. In 863-865, Teukros did not vow that he would sacrifice a hecatomb to Apollo, so the god made him miss the target, whereas Aias states that it is Zeus who will decide what the outcome of his wrestling contest with Odysseus will be (*Il*. 23. 724). Apart from physical prowess and the determination to compete and win, men depend on the gods for the final outcome of their efforts and the gods interfere with an immediacy which is a characteristic of epic poetry. This is a familiar pattern that Pindar passes on in Greek cultural memory. Since everything good comes from god (θεὸς ὁ πάντα τεύχων βροτοῖς fr. 141) and since man is restricted by his mortality, he needs to turn to the divine to achieve his goals and therefore to make the best of his inescapable mortality.

The four Panhellenic ἀγῶνες share the ethos of competition with the contests mentioned in Homeric and Hesiodic poetry. A common denominator between the former and the latter is that they can be both understood as symbols denoting community primarily on a local and in the course of time on a wider Panhellenic basis. We can think of possible developments which led from athletics practiced on a local level to Panhellenic Games: a community exists and has its own temporal and spatial frames of memory as well as its specific collective identity. The community experiences time collectively in festivals which are held in honour of a god.[29] Sports are part of such festivals (e.g. at the Oschophoria in Athens, ephebes raced from the temple of Dionysos to Phaleron, and the winner drank five times a cup of oil, wine, cheese and flour).[30] Those who excel at sports become distinguished members of the community and they are remembered as such. In the course of time, the organisers are motivated to put their festivals on a wider Panhellenic basis, a fact which enhances the prestige of the local community. These festivals become the venue for young aristocrats to compete and win glory. The existence of a deceased person's tomb (this person is important for the community) constitutes a kind of cultural backcloth against which the aristocratic competitors reproduce their identity in the present. In the Homeric and Hesiodic traditions, the occasional ἀγῶνες are organised in honour of a deceased person and this person is presented as being contemporary (Patroklos, king Amarynceus at Buprassium, or Amphidamas at Chalkis). In the case of the Panhellenic

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29 This was also true in the case of the Panhellenic venues. Olympia was a place of Zeus' cult prior to 776, whereas Isthmia was a ritual site too where ritual dining took place (Davies 2007: 54). Nemea was a sanctuary of Zeus. Delphi was a settlement and not a sanctuary in the Bronze Age. Despite the problems related to the historicity of the tradition concerning the establishment and development of the Pythian Games, the Games were celebrated in honour of the Delphian Apollo.

30 Instone 2007: 7

Games, the αἴτιον is put in the mythical past. The ἀγῶνες 'remember' something important about this past. As media of such important memory, they enter into the area of cultural memory and they embody and transmit cultural, national, and religious identity as well as shared values and norms, they become 'canonical'. Participation in the Games means being part of a large Hellenic mnemonic community. In successive presents, the Games can be discussed as responses to various social needs (Davies 2007: 50) but this is only one important aspect of their reality. Pindaric epinician song treats the Games both as symbolic structures and as historical realities. As such, they constitute the framework for a discussion of contemporary social, political, or ideological issues. In fact, the latter function of epinician song would not be possible without an understanding of the identity-giving, symbolic structure of the Games.

4.2 Pindaric epinician song [31]

In the 5th century BC, heroic values are part of Greek mnemonic communities' shared schemata and codes. They derive their impetus from the wide, Panhellenic diffusion of Homeric myth which focuses on the aristocratic warrior of the Bronze Age. This warrior had been irrevocably gone by the time Homer wrote his poetry but his κλέος continued to create meaning in Greek cultural memory. Pindaric song has links with the world of the gods, as well as with the world of heroes, Homeric or other. It has links with the world of a foundational past with normative standards and formative power. For Pindar,

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31 Nagy discusses the evolution of various kinds of song in ancient Greece into what we may call poetry. He contrasts a recitative format of performance, like the one which is attested for Homeric epos in the Classical period (Nagy writes that hexameter could be sung in the Archaic period but it evolved into poetry as distinct from song and that its fundamental form of rendition was recitation, 24), to a melodic one (2009: 20-24). Pindaric epinician odes suggest a melodic format of performance, since they are sung in the accompaniment of music and dance. In this sense, the term 'song' is adopted instead of the term 'poem'.

this foundational past provides the framework for an understanding of important aspects of contemporary life, such as the values upon which different πόλεις have been established or the limits which circumscribe human possibilities. Because of this constancy which is related to the normative aspects of the past, the message of Pindaric song for the mnemonic community in the present is clear. Moreover, by approximating the athlete of the present to the hero of a foundational past, Pindar preserves and passes on the renown of both the hero of the distant past and the athlete of the present. The athlete of the present is honoured by the fact that he inspires the poet to turn to a shared past, in order to celebrate his victory. Hero and athlete as *laudandi,* past prowess in war and athletic prowess in the present, the poet who diachronically both creates and transmits a legacy of memory, perpetuate the tradition of singing 'κλέα ἀνδρῶν', a tradition which constitutes the essence of Greek cultural memory. These 'κλέα ἀνδρῶν' allow men such immortality as they can achieve. They are an answer to the inevitability of death. In *Nemean* 6 Pindar says that, although success and failure alternate in human life and although the course of human destiny is unforeseeable, 'ἀλλά τι προσφέρομεν ἔμπαν / ἢ μέγαν νόον ἤτοι φύσιν ἀθανάτοις' (*N*. 6. 4-5). In Pindaric epinician song the praised athlete becomes the point of convergence between mortal men and the immortal gods. However, in *Pythian* 8. 95-97 Pindar encompasses the prevailing dark and the transient bright aspects of human life. The latter include a victory at the Panhellenic Games. The contrast is obvious as is the brevity of the moment of glory: 'σκιᾶς ὄναρ / ἄνθρωπος. ἀλλ' ὅταν αἴγλα διόσδοτος ἔλθῃ, / λαμπρὸν φέγγος ἔπεστιν ἀνδρῶν καὶ μείλιχος αἰών' *P*. 8. 95-97. At this moment of radiance, the individual has reached the summit of achievement, the pillars of Herakles, but he is warned that he should not try to transcend them because

no mortal man, wise or unwise, can transcend them (*O*. 3. 42-5)**.** In this respect, Pindaric epinician song conveys the effect of epic poetry (Glaukos tells Diomedes in *Il.* 6. 146: οἵη περ φύλλων γενεή, τοίη δὲ καὶ ἀνδρῶν when the latter asks him about his clan) as well as of tragedy.[32] In view of all the realities surrounding human life, the question arises concerning an evaluation of success by the traditionally wise poet. To answer this question, Pindar enlarges the dimensions of the here and now of praise to provide the parameters for success to find its place in human life, both in the life of those who can afford to achieve considerable success as athletes and in the life of the community. These parameters comprise parts of epinician song and the seams that stitch them together are often visible, but this can be understood as a characteristic feature of the identity of this type of song.

Pindaric epinician song purports to promulgate the knowledge which had first established and which continued to preserve the identity of the community to which the victor belonged. It deals with the interface between a socio-cultural identity which transcends the individual, his family, or his clan (See Appendix 2 – Clan identity in Pindar) and the identity of the individual, his family, or his clan which, as presented in this type of song, continues to define and reinforce the group identity by representing values and norms which are highly appreciated by the mnemonic community. It is at this interface between the collective and the individual that the poet both confers on the individual victor the prestige gained by collective memory and secures the

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32 Tragedy will take this issue further by dramatising man's tendency to transcend limits out of ignorance of the tragic consequences which, however, are unavoidable. In the case of tragedy, the message of myth may not be as clear as in epinician song. Tragedy presents a reading of myth which signifies a growing tension between the old and the new in the socio-cultural milieu of the polis.

continuation of important community meaning. The issue of re-integrating the individual into the collective is of importance in epinician song. Distinction is understood and thus praised against the background of integration.[33] The victor's enhanced identity is praised but the boundaries which are traditionally understood to circumscribe human life are not transcended. Re-integration of the praised, mostly aristocratic victor into the community to which he belongs means that the particular individual understands and respects the values of community life as well the limits imposed on him by his mortality. Re-integration also presupposes that the community has a place for the outstanding individual and his values and that it enjoys the Panhellenic prestige gained by him for the πόλις.[34] It is this reciprocity that epinician song both implicitly and explicitly supports.

With epinician song as his medium, Pindar makes an 'offer' to various Greek mnemonic communities at a time when athletic prowess was highly esteemed. This 'offer' is made within the framework of shared ideological, religious, historical, and cultural schemata which are understood to have had a formative impact on epinician song and which determined the response of Greek communities to this type of song .

The power of Homeric epic depends on the fact that, through this type of song, an otherwise irretrievable past becomes a 'remembered' past which sets the mechanisms

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33 The idea of re-integration is present in the *Iliad* too. Achilles' refusal to be re-integrated into the community of the Achaian warriors results in loss of life on the Greek side. Achilles is re-integrated after the death of Patroklos only to take revenge.

34 The theme of the renown added to the πόλις because of a victory at the games is also visible in epigrams and inscriptions dedicated by victors. Rosalind Thomas gives examples of such memorials (2007: 158-9). Characteristically, in the first half of the 5th century, a statue of Theognetos of Aegina proclaimed that 'he crowned the city of his excellent ancestors'.

of cultural memory (as we know it) in motion. The power of Pindaric epinician song, on the other hand, depends on the fact that a contemporary occasion for celebration, victory at one of the Panhellenic Games through which a Panhellenic identity was articulated and communicated, becomes the framework for the maintenance, reconstruction, and representation of versions of a shared distant past. By elevating the stipulated occasion to this past, the poet makes an individual vision of excellence, that of the mostly aristocratic victor who can participate in the prestigious Games and hire a poet to compose a song for his victory, a collective vision of excellence.

5. PINDARIC *OLYMPIAN* 1, *OLYMPIAN* 10, *ISTHMIAN* 4

5.1 *Olympian* 1

In *Olympian* 1, the *laudandus* is the tyrant Hieron of Syracuse whose horse, bearing the *nomen omen* Φερένικος or 'Victory-bringer', won the single-horse race. The date is 476 BC. Hieron was obviously interested in enhancing his identity and the prestige of his city by having men like Aeschylus, Simonides, Pindar, or Bacchylides spend time at his court. As a Greek tyrant in Syracuse, he was also interested in the superlative renown gained through participation in the Panhellenic Games which constituted part of, but which also circulated a common system of symbolic meaning for, Greek mnemonic communities.

In the first *strophē* of *Olympian* 1, Pindar seems to be highlighting the connection between Olympia, the song of praise, and the σοφοί. Olympia, as the most glorious venue where the Olympic Games take place, becomes the source from which the 'glorious' and simultaneously 'glorifying' (Verdenius 1988: 10) song ἀμφιβάλλεται (is cast (like a net) over the minds of the poets). Without the intervention of the Muse, as if of its own accord and with a directness which characterises poetic inspiration, 'ὁ πολύφατος ὕμνος ἀμφιβάλλεται / σοφῶν μητίεσσι, κελαδεῖν / Κρόνου παῖδ' ἐς ἀφνειὰν ἱκομένους / μάκαιραν Ἱέρωνος ἑστίαν' (*O.* 1. 8-11). In these lines, three different strands which refer to the here and now of performance are brought together: a causative -the glorious hymn from Olympia which emphasises the religious character of the games but also the religious identity of the poet and implicitly of the victor by focusing on Zeus (κελαδεῖν Κρόνου παῖδ'), a temporal -the present which is the moment of celebration, and a spatial -the blessed hearth of Hieron, the part of Hieron's house which was consecrated to goddess Hestia, Zeus' sister. The adjective σοφός

(9) refers to the poet. Though the basic relevant sense of σοφός is 'expert'[35] (in composing song in the case of a poet), the word can also be discussed in terms of Pindar's understanding of his poetic identity in Greek cultural memory. The glorious song from Olympia is cast over the poet's μῆτις, so that he can sing almighty Zeus. The words μῆτις and Zeus suggest that the poet is more than just an 'expert'. The word σοφός also means more than 'expert' in *Paean* 6 in which it refers to those men to whom the gods entrust knowledge that mortals have no way to find: 'καὶ πόθεν ἀθαν[άτων ἔρις ἅ[ρξατο· / ταῦτα θεοῖσι [μ]έν/πιθεῖν σοφοὺ[ς] δυνατόν, / βροτοῖσιν δ' ἀμάχανο[ν εὑ]ρέμεν·' (50-53). In *Olympian* 3. 44-45 Pindar contrasts the σοφοί, who understand that they cannot transcend the pillars of Herakles, to the ἄσοφοι and κεινοί who think that they can transcend boundaries which circumscribe human life. The poet is σοφός, and as such, he understands limits and brings this knowledge into his songs in the form of advice to the *laudandus* as in *O.* 1. 114, *O*. 5. 24, *I*. 5. 14.

Hieron and his μάκαιρα ἑστία come right after Zeus. Pindar first praises Hieron for wielding θεμιστεῖον σκᾶπτον (12). The word θεμιστεῖον does not appear elsewhere. Θεμιστεῖον σκᾶπτον is translated as 'the sceptre of righteous judgement'.[36] In Homeric poetry kings have a sceptre which symbolises their power. This power comes from the gods. In the *Iliad* (9. 99), Zeus 'ἐγγυάλιξε σκῆπτρόν τ' ἠδὲ θέμιστας' for Agamemnon,

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35 According to Verdenius, the word σοφοί mostly refers to Pindar's artistic competence (1987: 10 ad σοφῶν). He quotes among other odes *O.* 2. 86, *P*. 1. 12, *P*. 4. 248, P. 6. 49. Gerber argues that the word refers both to technical skill and to knowledge of the appropriate content and quotes *P.* 10. 22-24, *O.* 13. 16-17, Pae. 18.3, and *I.* 5. 28-29.

36 The word appears in *Works and Days* (9 and 221) to mean judgements, decisions given by the kings or judges as well as in the *Theogony* (85) with the same meaning. In Homeric epics, it means laws, ordinances (*Il* 1. 238*, Il* 5. 761*, Od* 9. 112). In the *Odyssey* 16. 403, the θέμιστες Διός are the oracles of Zeus. In Pindar 10. 24, the θέμιτες Διός are the decrees of Zeus.

so that he could advise his people. In the Pindaric universe, Zeus is 'ἀθανάτων βασιλεύς' (*N*. 5. 35) and 'Ὀλύμπου δεσπότας' (*N*. 1.13). On a human level, Hieron is praised for his political power in rich Sicily. His hearth has also been characterised as rich. Moreover, he breeds horses (23), a proof of his wealth (horsebreeding has also earned him a victory at the Olympic Games). Wealth is a blessing and one deserves to be praised for having it (Διὸς παῖς ὁ χρυσός' fr. 222: 1). In addition, Hieron, who in line 23 is 'βασιλεύς' (a word which adds glory to Hieron by associating him with the Homeric and Hesiodic kings), 'shines' (Verdenius) in the finest songs (14-5). As Verdenius writes (1988 ad 15 μουσικᾶς), artistic sensibility is a topos in the praise of cities and their rulers: cf *O*.10. 14, *O*. 11. 18, *O*. 13. 22 and others. He adds that Pindar emphasises this quality to flatter his clients and because he assumes a connection between musicality and political ἡσυχία, as in *P*. 1. 10-2, *P*. 4. 296, *P*. 5. 65-7. We may add that Pindar also eulogises his poetic activity by praising a ruler's love for song. In line 13, Hieron is praised for culling the summits of all achievements. It is because of his attributes, real or intended to be remembered as real, as well as because of his victory (18) that Hieron is justifiably praised by Pindar.

The lines: 'ἀλλὰ Δω / ρίαν ἀπὸ φόρμιγγα πασσάλου / λάμβαν' ' (16-18) also dramatise the world of reference in which reception will supposedly take place. The 'ἀλλὰ' marks a transition to a call of action (Verdenius 1988 ad 17 ἀλλά). Pindar is ready to take the Dorian 'φόρμιγγα' (a reference to the Dorian music which is said to be 'σεμνότατον' 'sch.' *O*. 1. 26g) to begin singing.[37] In *O.* 1 14-18 Pindar seems to

37 A lot has been written about whether the odes suggest a 'solo' or a 'choral' performance as well as about Pindar's 'I'. Lefkowitz (1991) discusses the identity of the poet in the odes and supports the 'solo' hypothesis in most cases.

suggest that the ode was performed during a gathering at Hieron's house.[38] In line 16, he says that men ('παίζομεν' suggests that Pindar is one of these men) regularly perform 'ἀμφὶ φίλαν τράπεζαν' Ἱέρωνος. Though the information cannot be taked literally, it contributes to the enhancement of the image of Hieron. Carey comments that the image of Hieron relaxing with his friends around the table 'is effective in context, where combined with the presentation of his political role as that of Homeric basileus it offers us an understated but appealing blend of stable authority, civic concern, and affable approachability' (2007: 203). The fact that Pindar often spends time with Hieron around his friendly table stresses that he shares bonds of friendship with him and that he is familiar with the attributes of the victor he praises in the ode. In lines 115-116, Pindar emphasises the permanence of his friendship with Hieron when he says that he hopes that he will celebrate Hieron's future victories (Crotty 1982: 79). An image of memorable excellence of both Hieron and the poet is conveyed. Hieron has reached the summit by being a king and an Olympic victor, while Pindar aspires to Panhellenic recognition as a 'σοφός' poet of epinician song. Epinician song is a point of reference for both Hieron and Pindar. Hieron is immortalised in epinician song, whereas Pindar gains Panhellenic recognition through this type of song.

Thanks to his victorious horse, Hieron won fame 'ἐν εὐάνορι Λυδοῦ Πέλοπος

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38 Morrison writes that Pindar is evoking a sympotic solo singing to the accompaniment of the lyre (2007: 16).

ἀποικίᾳ’ (24).[39] The word ‘ἀποικία’ draws a parallel between the mythical Pelops[40] who came from the East to found a colony which became the venue for the most glorious Panhellenic Games and Hieron, a victor at the Olympic Games, who was a descendant of the Corinthians who founded Syracuse in the West and a contemporary ruler of Syracuse. We get the impression of a Greek world in motion both on the political and the cultural level. The Olympic Games which are related to the name of the Lydian Pelops as well as epinician song which praises victors in these Games culturally unify this Greek world and point out certain factors which constitute its shared identity.

The circumlocution Πέλοπος ἀποικίᾳ marks the transition from the world of reference in the present to the distant historicised past. Pindar starts telling Pelops’ ‘true’ story from the moment he, as a baby, was pulled out of a purifying cauldron by Klotho in the presence of Poseidon (25-27). Poseidon’s falling in love with Pelops is mentioned first (25). The god fell in love with Pelops at a time subsequent to the incidence of his purification by Klotho (ἐπεί νιν καθαροῦ λέβη / τος ἔξελε Κλωθώ *O*.1.26). The temporal conjunction ‘ἐπεί’ (subsequent to, after) does not specify when Poseidon fell in love with Pelops. It is the temporal ‘τότε’ in line 40 which will provide

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39 I agree with Verdenius and Georgantzoglou who believe that the κλέος of Olympia, which is said to be εὐάνωρ (a synecdoche), refers to the victory of Pelops against Oinomaos (this victory is justified by Pindar, since Oinomaos had killed thirteen suitors to put off the marriage of his daughter 79-81. Moreover, Pelops won thanks to Poseidon’s horses and not with the help of Myrtilos ‘sch.’ *Il.* 2. 104). Hieron’s victory can be added to a long series of victories whose importance derives from the fact that they were won at Olympia and thus they recalled Pelops’ emblematic victory. The foundational past provides the context within which the present takes on its particular meaning.

40 Pelops was the eponymous hero of the Peloponnese, a fact which stresses the importance of the Pelopids in this southern part of Greece. Olympia is also ‘χῶρος Πέλοπος’ in *Olympian* 3. 23.

as a context for Poseidon's feelings the 'ἐυνομότατον ἔρανον' at Sipylos to which Tantalos had invited the gods.

When Klotho pulled baby Pelops out of the cauldron (a kind of birth ritual), he had an ivory shoulder. Taking this ivory shoulder as his point of reference, Pindar stops his narration to contrast two facts which are important for Greek cultural memory: on the one hand, Pindar expresses his belief in the miraculous[41] and on the other, he distinguishes between those facts of a story which are miraculous but true and the ones which constitute deceptive lies in men's φάτις because they are artistically very decorative in their deceptions (ἦ θαύματα πολλά, καὶ πού τι και βροτῶν / φάτις ὑπὲρ τὸν ἀλαθῆ λόγον / δεδαιδαλμένοι ψεύδεσι[42] ποικίλοις / ἐξαπατῶντι μῦθοι 28-29). Pindar's distinction is significant, since epinician song is a medium of transmission of a 'remembered' past and as such it includes the miraculous. When discussed within the context of Greek cultural memory, the 'ἀλαθὴς λόγος' (28b), the truth of a story from a distant past which is passed on through song, gains additional importance through its connection with collective identity. Social groups constitute a cultural memory, so that they can derive their identity from it. In lines 30-32, Pindar personifies on a divine level the power of song[43] (loveliness in song is a divine gift in fr 141 since 'θεὸς ὁ πάντα τεύχων βροτοῖς / καὶ χάριν ἀοιδᾷ φυτεύει)'. This power of song is

41 In *Pythian* 10 he expresses a similar belief when he says that 'ἐμοὶ δὲ θαυμάσαι θεῶν τελεσάντων οὐδέν ποτε φαίνεται / ἔμμεν ἄπιστον' (48-50).

42 As Verdenius observes, the word ψεύδεσι in line 29 does not necessarily imply intention (1988 ad 29 ψεύδεσι).

43 There are other personifications in Pindar, e.g. Ἀτρέκεια (*O*. 10.13), Ἡσυχία the daughter of Δίκη (*P*. 8. 1, fr. 109. 2), Πλοῦτος (*O*. 10. 88), Εἰρήνη (*O.* 13. 7), Αἰδώς (*N*. 9. 36) but they are not related to the power of song.

personified as Χάρις.[44] Because of her personification, her impact on poetry is clearer and her role in transmitting falsehood becomes prominent. In lines 31-2, Pindar explains how Χάρις works: For the most part, she confers honour on what is unbelievable and thus makes it believable (ἅπαντα τεύχει τὰ μείλιχα θνατοῖς, / ἐπιφέροισα τιμὰν καὶ ἄπιστον ἐμήσατο πιστόν / ἔμμεναι τὸ πολλάκις). However, Χάρις is also an indispensable element in poetry (Verdenius 1988 ad 30 Χάρις). In the context of performance, audiences are exposed both to the factual contents of song and to its aesthetic effect.[45]

The discussion concerning truth and falsehood in the transmission of a distant past through a literary composition and through Greek cultural memory begins in the Hesiodic *Theogony.* The Muses tell the poet (the poet knows) that they can tell the truth or lie to mortals (that there is truth and falsehood in literary compositions). They give a sceptre to Hesiod and this is how he claims that he will give the true version of a cosmogonic past. Pindar foreshadows the truthfulness of the factual contents of the story of Pelops he will tell by evoking time[46] 'ἀμέραι δ' ἐπίλοιποι / μάρτυρες σοφώτατοι'

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44 The Χάριτες are also present in Pindaric song. The poet cultivates 'ἐξαίρετον Χαρίτων κᾶπον· / κεῖναι γὰρ ὤπασαν τὰ τέρπν'' (*Olympian* 9. 27-28). It is with the aid of the 'βαθυζώνοισιν Χαρίτεσσι' (*Pythian* 9. 2-3) that the crowning song may confer glory on the victor. *Olympian* 14 is a hymn to the Charites. The Charites, who have their thrones beside *Pythian* Apollo, bring 'τά ‹τε› τερπνὰ / καί / τὰ γλυκέ'' (5-6) to mortals and even the gods do not arrange 'δαῖτας' (9) without them.

45 The importance of the aesthetic effect of poetry bears a Homeric imprint. In the *Odyssey*, Demodokos' song is 'καλόν' (8. 266) though not edifying since the bard sang of the love of Ares and Aphrodite, whereas Odysseus 'τέρπετ' ἐνὶ φρεσὶν' (8. 368) as he listened. So too were the Phaeacians. In *Iliad* 9. 186-189, the heralds found Achilles delighting his soul by singing the glorious deeds of warriors with a lyre.

46 Time is evoked again in *Olympian* 10. The context is the establishment of the Olympic Games by Herakles. Though there are hardly any traces of a cult of Herakles at Olympia (Verdenius 1988: 73 n.50), Pindar assigns the most important role for the foundation of the Games to the Theban hero. To reinforce his version,

(33-4) instead of the Muse.[47] Verdenius writes that time in Pindar is 'a 'competent' witness of every claim to truth' (1988 ad 34 σοφώτατοι). Pindar's attitude towards Greek cultural memory is similar to that of Hesiod: it can be the vessel of both truth and falsehood, since both the parameters of time and Χάρις shape it. If we think of Pindar's reference to 'ἀμέραι δ' ἐπίλοιποι μάρτυρες σοφώτατοι' in terms of Halbwachs' and Assmann's social frameworks of memory, we may suggest that what Pindar may be actually saying at a time when fault had been found with the inherited mythology (start of rationalism in Hecataeus, denunciation of anthropomorphic gods by Xenophanes, allegorical interpretation of myth), is that, as a poet, he too found fault with versions of past stories as well as with aspects of Greek cultural memory (loveliness in song which can fool listeners). However, he was not willing to denounce either the past and its importance for the identity of the community in the present or Greek cultural memory as the context within which this past came to life for Greek mnemonic communities. Instead, he was willing to use his system of values and beliefs which had been shaped within present frameworks of memory, in order to reconstruct

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he presents the Fates and Time as having been present at the founding ceremony. Time put to the test and revealed in its onward march (52-54) that Herakles was the founder of the Games.

47 The Muses are present in Pindaric song. They are related both to the aesthetic effect of song (*O.* 7, *P.* 1) and to the factual contents of song. In *Nemean* 1 we hear that the Muse 'μεγάλων δ΄ἀέθλων / Μοῖσα μεμνᾶσθαι φιλεῖ' (11-12). This is a justification for the existence of epinician song in Greek cultural memory. In *Olympian* 6, the Muses guarantee the poet's truthfulness when he swears an oath and bears clear witness for the attributes of the laudandus (20-21). In fr 150 Pindar is the expounder of the will of the Muses expressed in the form of an oracle. In *Paean* 6.6 the poet is the prophet of the Pierian Muses (6) who, as the daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne (also in *Isthmian* 6. 74-75), have the privilege to know all things. The poet is asking for divine knowledge which it is possible for the gods to trust to wise men but which mortals have no way to find (51-53).

the past and to continue to create and pass on meaning through Greek cultural memory.

In line 35, Pindar implies a new story of Pelops in accordance with his religious principles. He writes: 'ἔστι δ' ἀνδρὶ φάμεν ἐοικὸς ἀμφὶ δαι / μόνων καλὰ· μείων γὰρ αἰτία'.[48] His piety explicitly prevents him from accepting as 'true' a story which does not speak well of the gods. When heard in the context of performance, the new story will reshape the religious identity of his audiences and will also enhance the glory of the Olympic Games and, by implication, that of Hieron who is an Olympic victor.

In line 36, the poet explicitly states that he intends to speak 'ἀντία προτέρων'. In this dissertation, the word 'προτέρων' is read as a masculine noun (as a neuter noun it would refer to earlier versions of the myth of Pelops, Verdenius ad 36 προτέρων) to refer to the earlier bards (we are not in a position to know who they may have been) who were vectors and transmitters of the memory of a distant past which relates to Pelops. Pindar implicitly criticises his unnamed predecessors by highlighting his own religious principles (35) which, however, had not been shared by them. It is a matter of a poet reacting to previous poets and to the memory that has been transmitted by them, a kind of 'intertextuality' within Greek cultural memory.

The 'ἐπεί' in line 25, which refers to an indefinite future time when Poseidon fell in love with Pelops, finds as its context the 'εὐνομότατον ἔρανον' (37-38) at Sipylos to which Pelops' father Tantalos had invited the gods in return for similar invitations on the part of the gods (ὁπότ' ἐκάλεσε πατὴρ, 37…τότ' Ἀγλαοτρίαιναν ἁρπάσαι, 40). According to Pindar's version of the story, Pelops had actually been seized and carried

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48 In *Olympian* 9. 37: 'τό γε λοιδορῆσαι θεούς ἐχθρὰ σοφία'

to heaven by Poseidon who saw him at Tantalos' banquet. The implication of the phrase 'εὐνομότατον ἔρανον' is that nothing improper happened during this banquet. By drawing from tradition, the poet adds a parallel to the myth of Ganymedes thus increasing the credibility of his version of Pelop's story (Gerber 1982: ad 44 Γανυμήδης*).* Pelops wins honour by being followed by Ganymedes to heaven (4-45), since he is the one who sets a precedent for Ganymedes' transposition by Zeus (ποτὶ δῶμα Διὸς recalls δῶμα Διὸς in *Il*. 1. 570). In the Pindaric version, a qualitative criterion, that of Pelops' pre-eminence, is supported by a temporal criterion whose source is the epic tradition.[49] Tradition equipped Pindar with a version of Ganymedes' story which would not fit into a narrative according to which Ganymedes followed Pelops to heaven as well as with a version which would fit perfectly well into such a narrative. In Homer I. 5.265-6, 20. 231-2, as well as in HAph 207-8, Ganymedes is the son of Trōs two generations earlier than Laomedon. In the Ilias Parva (fr. 6 W), however, he is the son of Laomedon. As a brother of Priam, he is a contemporary of Pelops' sons.

From line 45 to line 51 Pindar tells what he presents as the traditional story of Pelops. This traditional story, a product of the communicative memory, was believed by previous poets and became 'μείλιχον' thanks to Χάρις in Greek cultural memory. According to the story, Pelops' disappearance, because of his transportation to heaven by Poseidon and his mother's fruitless search for him, motivated an envious neighbour (φθόνος as a powerful motive in Pindar in *P.* 7. 18-19, *P*. 11. 29, *O.* 8. 55) to say 'κρυφᾷ**'** (47) (which may be contrasted to the poetic voice which will disclose the truth in a performance context) and **'**αὐτίκα' (47) (which implies that time could not be a

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49 See also Adrian Kelly's chapter in Fantuzzi's and Tsagalis' *The Greek Epic Cycle and its Ancient Reception. A Companion* (2015: 318-343).

witness to the true facts as it is in Pindar's times and therefore the story could be believed) that Pelops had been served to the gods. The three plural verbs 'τάμον', 'διεδάσαντο', and 'φάγον' in lines 48-51 ('ὕδατος ὅτι τε πυρὶ ζέοισαν εἰς ἀκμάν / μαχαίρᾳ τάμον κατὰ μέλη, / τραπέζαισί τ' ἀμφί δεύτατα κρεῶν / σέθεν διεδάσαντο καὶ φάγον.') implicate both Tantalos and all the gods in the monstrous act of cutting up Pelops' limbs with a knife, of boiling them into water and, finally, of eating them at Tantalos' banquet in Sipylos, out of mere gluttony *O*. 1.52 ('γαστρίμαργον' is Pindar's word for the gods' cannibalistic action).

In lines 52-53 ('ἐμοὶ δ' ἄπορα γαστρίμαρ / γον μακάρων τιν' εἰπεῖν· ἀφίσταμαι· / ἀκέρδεια λέλογχεν θαμινὰ κακαγόρους'), Pindar interrupts his narration again to say in an asyndeton why he cannot accept as true what has been considered a traditional story. He does not try to reject the story on the grounds of logical thinking. If the gods had actually eaten Pelops willingly, how did he live on to become the hero whose name was related to the Olympic Games, the husband of Hippodameia, the father of the Pelopids or the ruler of Pisa? Pindar's audiences 'remembered' these facts about Pelops.[50] Instead, he is unable to call any god a glutton (Gerber writes that 'γαστρίμαργον μακάρων τιν' in line 52 may imply that Pindar was aware of versions in which only one deity ate 1982: ad 52). I agree with Verdenius (1988 ad 52 τινα) who writes that the word usually means 'any one' in negative sentences. Pindar 'dissociates himself' (Verdenius 1988 ad 52 ἄπορα) because slanderers θαμινά[51] incur loss. It is interesting to note that, at a time when traditional stories about the gods were criticised, Pindar presented not only Pelops but also all the gods as the targets of the slanderer's

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50 Gantz (1993: 534) writes that Pindar's exaggerated story could not constitute a tradition because it would not explain Pelops' survival.

51 Litotes for 'always' according to Gerber ad 53 and Georgantzoglou ad 53 ἀκέρδεια.

attack in an exaggerated version of the former's story and then acquits them all of the blame in his version (Verdenius writes that Pindar silently extends the envious calumniation of Pelops to a defamation of the gods, and thus creates the illusion as if the latter was inspired by similar hatred: 1988 ad 53 κακαγόρους).

In lines 54-64, Pindar continues his narration with the story of Tantalos. Tantalos' punishment is mentioned in the *Odyssey* (11. 582-592). He is described as an old man who was thirsty and hungry but who could not drink water or eat because food and water eluded his grasp. The reason for his punishment is not mentioned in the Homeric epos. Pindar refers to Tantalos' punishment but attributes it to the fact that, out of greed, he stole the nectar and ambrosia by which the gods had made him immortal and gave it to his drinking companions (*O*. 1. 54-64). Not only the reason for Tantalos' punishment but also the type of his punishment differs in Pindar. Zeus suspends above Tantalos a massive rock which the latter could not cast away (*O*. 1. 56-57). Tantalos in Pindar suffers a reversal of his exceptionally good fortune by violating the rules of the gods' hospitality and thus by showing disrespect and ingratitude to the gods.

Because of Tantalos' behaviour, the gods send Pelops back to 'ταχύποτμον ἀνέρων ἔθνος' (66) but Pelops knows what to do with his mortality. In lines 71-85, he becomes paradeigmatic in two ways. The normative impact of Pindar's version is stressed. On the one hand, Pelops expresses the cultural ideal of exerting oneself in order to gain lasting glory (he decides to make the best possible use of his restored mortality). He wishes to defeat mighty Oinomaos (a very dangerous task, since Oinomaos has already killed thirteen suitors) and win Hippodameia as his wife. Although he will have to take risks in order to achieve his goal, he is ready to do so because 'θανεῖν δ' οἷσιν ἀνάγκα, τά κέ τις ἀνώνυμον / γῆρας ἐν σκότῳ καθήμενος ἔψοι

μάταν, / ἀπάντων καλῶν ἄμμορος;' (*O*. 1. 82-83). Pelops adopts the 'philosophy' of the epic hero (and subsequently of the Panhellenic victor) who prefers lasting fame to a nameless old age. The *topos* of fame as light and oblivion as darkness is present in these lines. Implicitly, Hieron is praised too for his participation in the games which has brought him shining fame (*O.* 1. 23). As a mortal man, the heroic but not reckless (Verdenius 1988: ad 81) Pelops asks for Poseidon's help to accomplish the difficult task of beating Oinomaos in the chariot race. The importance of the god's intervention is demonstrated by the fact that Pindar dramatises the circumstances of Pelops' prayer to Poseidon. In this prayer, Pelops reminds Poseidon of 'φίλια δῶρα Κυπρίας' (*O*. 1. 75). Poseidon grants his help and gives Pelops 'δίφρον τε χρύσεον πτεροῖσίν τ' ἀκάμαντας ἵππους' (*O*. 1. 87). Pelops beats Oinomaos. The role that Myrtilos, Oinomaos' charioteer, played in this victory is completely disregarded in Pindar's version.[52] As Gerber says, 'Pindar says nothing about him, not because the winged horses made his contribution to victory in the race unnecessary (Pherekydes combined both elements), but presumably because he did not want to represent Pelops, Hieron's analogue, as having won through duplicity' (1982: ad 87). In this case, Pindar interferes with Pelops' story by silencing what might affect the normative impact of this story. He does the same with Pelops' offspring. He eulogises them by saying that Pelops 'ἔτεκε λαγέτας ἔξ ἀρεταῖσι μεμαότας υἱούς.' (*O*. 1. 89), whereas he suppresses any references to the dark sides of the lives of Atreus and Thyestes. The past is purified on the basis of the poet's principles, as well as the need of epinician song to confer

52 According to a perhaps older version ('sch.' *Il.* 2. 104, S. on Apollod. *Arg*. 1. 752), Myrtilos tampered with the wheel of Oinomaos' chariot, so Oinomaos was killed during the race.

praise in the present by elevating a contemporary victory to a foundational past (a foundational mythomotor in Assmannite terms).

The temporal 'νῦν' (*O.* 1. 90) marks the transition from the past to the historical present. It also marks the end of a poetic narrative in which Pelops' exemplary life justifies his heroisation in the historical present. Moreover, his status in the present can be said to guarantee the validity of the 'corrected' account given of the past. The ritual activity at Pelops' tomb justifies the values of the Pindaric version. In this version, Pelops' unblemished life becomes the model for the way the *laudandus* and a general 'we' should understand their mortality. Both as an object of myth and as an object of cult in the present, Pelops reaches the summit of human possibilities. Bruno Currie writes that it has plausibly been suggested[53] that Pelops' cult foreshadows the hero cult that Hieron would receive posthumously as founder of Aitna (2005: 75).[54] According to him, deceased contemporaries could be heroised from at least the early Archaic period (2005: 4). The social context allowed Pindar to imply that Hieron could receive posthumous honours like Pelops. Pelops is obviously presented as a model for Hieron. Moreover, Pindar refers to the possible heroisation of kings.[55] However, although Pelops has earned literal immortality as a dead hero, Hieron still lives in a state of flux because of his mortality. The poet focuses on Hieron's '*νῦν*', during which

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53 Gerber (1982: xv) writes that the 'heroic depiction of Pelops becomes in essence Pindar's depiction of Hieron, and it is no doubt implied that after his death Hieron too will receive similar worship as a hero, a prophecy which was in fact fulfilled at Catana ('sch.' 11.66.4 τιμῶν ἡρωικῶν ἔτυχεν)'. Verdenius (1988: 1-2) rightly finds such an implication improbable 'because Pindar's final blessing refers to Hieron's earthly life' (note on 115 τοῦτον).

54 Diodoros writes that Hieron wanted to be posthumously heroised as the founder of Aitna (11. 49. 2).

55 In fr 133.

the tyrant needs to be advised to remember that, as a king, he has reached the summit of human possibilities (*O*. 1. 113-114). He also needs to hope that the god who now acts as his guardian in the present will continue to offer his favour, so that his aspirations will be realised (*O*. 1. 106-110). With the 'εἰ δὲ μὴ ταχὺ λίποι' in line 108, Pindar wishes that the θεός-ἐπίτροπος will continue to take care of Hieron's aspirations. A chariot victory is among them and the poet hopes that he will celebrate it. The message of lines 97-100 has already put any victory at the Panhellenic Games into perspective: 'ὁ νικῶν δὲ λοιπὸν ἀμφὶ βίοτον/ἔχει μελιτόεσσαν εὐδίαν / ἀέθλων γ'ἕνεκεν· τὸ δ' αἰεὶ παράμερον ἐσλόν / ὕπατον ἔρχεται παντὶ βροτῶν.' These lines mark a transition from a victory elevated to the foundational past and its normative meaning to the βίος καθ' ἡμέραν philosophy[56], from distinction at the most prestigious Panhellenic Games to integration through acceptance of the harsh but unavoidable realities of human life. Victory at the Games (and implicitly its immortalisation in song) provides 'μελιτόεσσαν εὐδίαν' for the rest of the victor's life as far as regards ἄεθλα.[57] But mortal men should consider the 'ἐσλόν' that comes every day as 'ὕπατον'.

Before concluding, mention should be made of the existence of another myth of Pelops which is known to us from later sources (Ovid *Met.* 6. 403-11, Hyginus *fabulae* 83, Lykophron *Alex*. 152-6). Ovid writes that Pelops had an ivory replacement for his left shoulder. His father had cut him in pieces and the gods re-assembled him but they were unable to find his shoulder, so they replaced it with a piece of ivory. Hyginus writes that Demeter herself replaced the shoulder, whereas Lykophron relates that

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56 Pindar echoes Achilles in *Il* 24. 525-533. In Alcman F 1. 37-39, the χορός of girls sings: 'ὁ δ' ὄλβιος, ὅστις εὔφρων / ἀμέραν [δι]απλέκει / ἄκλαυτος'.

57 Either masculine: the contest or neutral: the prize of the contest (Georgantzoglou 2016 ad 99 ἀέθλων γ' ἕνεκεν).

Pelops ‘δὶς ἤβησε’, once before and once after Demeter’s consumption of his shoulder. According to the ‘scholia’ on Lykophron (152), Demeter ate because of her grief for Persephone (rationalisation). Pindar was probably aware of such versions and he may be alluding to them by using the ivory shoulder[58] or the cauldron in his story. However, he was not interested in a story in which a god consumed human flesh for any reason at all. He was not interested in rationalising such a story. He was interested in contrasting ‘falsehood’ (represented by an exaggerated story, according to which all the gods ate Pelops) to ‘truth’ (represented by his unblemished story) and by doing so to continue to support the normative impact of myth in the present and its link with the identity of the community.

To conclude, two versions of Pelops’ story are narrated and contrasted in *O.* I. One is presented as traditional but ‘untrue’ and the other as the ‘true’ story of Pelops. The former has been passed on in Greek cultural memory by previous bards, whereas the latter will be heard for the first time in a performance context. The ‘traditional’ story, which was fabricated by an envious neighbour (envy for Pelops who was seized by Poseidon), both distorted the truth about Pelops’ disappearance and implicated all the gods in the monstrous act of eating the young boy (Pindar uses euphemistic language and calls this act ‘gluttony’) at Tantalos’ banquet. Pindar’s story ‘corrects’ both the part which concerns Pelops (he was seized by Poseidon) and the part which is about the gods (Tantalos’ banquet was ‘εὐνομότατος’). The gods in Pindar’s narration are not only acquitted of gluttony. They are present in human life both to help (Poseidon helps

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58 Pausanias writes that Pelops’ bones were preserved in a chest near the sanctuary of Artemis Kordax, whereas his shoulder blade was kept separately for display (Paus. 6.22.1). He adds that the shoulder was not on display during his lifetime (5.13.4-6).

Pelops to beat Oinomaos in the 'true' version) and to punish (Tantalos is punished for having been disrespectful to his hosts, the gods). Opinions vary concerning the extent to which Pindar was indebted to tradition for the two versions in his song**.** In a later source, Euripides' *Iphigenia among the Taurians* (386-388), Iphigenia says : 'ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν / τὰ Ταντάλου θεοῖσιν ἑστιάματα / ἄπιστα κρίνω, παιδὸς ἡσθῆναι βορᾷ'. Iphigenia generalises and refuses to believe that the gods ate Pelops. Euripides may be echoing Pindar's rejected version but his handling of the myth is different from that of Pindar. Whereas Pindar clears the myth of its cannibalistic element and passes on his purified version in Greek cultural memory, Euripides puts the cannibalistic element in good use in his *Iphigenia.* In lines 380-4, Iphigenia refers to goddess Artemis and presents her as being inconsistent. On the one hand, she bars those who have stained their hands with blood, or touched a corpse, or even a woman giving birth from her altars and on the other, she takes pleasure in human sacrifices. However, 'οὐκ' ἔσθ' ὅπως ἔτικτεν ἡ Διὸς δάμαρ / Λητὼ τοσαύτην ἀμαθίαν' (385-6). Stinton (1990: 254-64) discusses some expressions of skepticism about myth in Euripides. When discussed in context, such stories may not demonstrate the poet's disbelief in received legend. Iphigenia here is not questioning the fact that Leto gave birth to Artemis. She is questioning the fact that the Artemis Leto gave birth to is the goddess who rejoices in human sacrifice in Tauris. Hall writes that Euripides here makes Iphigenia 'openly reject the Taurians' identification of their savage goddess with Artemis, her own Hellenic heavenly patroness' (1991: 184). Reference to the myth of Pelops with an emphasis on its cannibalistic element comes next (387-9). 'Τὰ Ταντάλου θεοῖσιν ἑστιάματα' are judged 'ἄπιστα' by Iphigenia who is a descendant of Pelops and who is prepared to sacrifice her own brother to Artemis. Iphigenia offers an explanation for human sacrifice at the

altar of Artemis in Tauris: the Taurians who are murderers impute their deeds to the goddess: τοὺς δ' ἐνθάδ' αὐτοὺς ὄντας ἀνθρωποκτόνους, / ἐς τὸν Θεὸν τὸ φαῦλον ἀναφέρειν δοκῶ (389-390). Implicitly, gods who consume human flesh in the myth of Pelops provide the pretext for the hideous deeds of men like the Taurians. Iphigenia concludes: οὐδένα γὰρ οἶμαι δαιμόνων εἶναι κακόν (391). But men who use the gods as an excuse for their actions can not understand what a god is. The tragedian does not provide an alternative version of the myth of Pelops. What he implies is that false stories about the gods will change only if men who have good reason to believe in such stories change too.

To return to Pindar's versions of Pelops' story in his song, Gerber (1982: ad ἐράσσατο 54) writes that the evidence of the Pelops-Oinomaos myth before Pindar is extremely scanty. Our sources (*Iliad* 2. 104 in which Pelops is 'πλήξιππος', and the 'sch.' on *Iliad* 1.38 in which Illos is mentioned as the charioteer of Pelops) are not enlightening. The question also arises concerning Poseidon's love for Pelops. In one scene of the chest of Kypselos in Olympia (Paus. 5. 17. 7), Oinomaos is chasing Pelops whose horses have wings. But, as Gerber writes (ad 25 ἐράσσατο), this is not proof of an amatory relationsdwhip. Bundy thinks that Pindar's story was simply a less widely known version of Pelops' story. Gantz (1970: 22-23) and Howie (1984: 278) disagree on the grounds of line 36 'υἱὲ Ταντάλου, σὲ δ' ἀντία προτέρων φθέγξομαι'. Though what we understand from this line is that a new version of Pelops' story will be heard in the context of performance, Gantz and Howie must be right. Pindar is using his poetic authority in order to change the disturbing facts of what he presents as a pre-existing version and to pass on a new version. But why is he doing this? Because he needs a story which will perfectly suit his principles. Why does he need such a

story? Because such an unblemished story could honour an Olympic victor when told in an epinician song which celebrated his victory in the single-horse race. It could also reconstruct the religious identity of Greek audiences at a time when stories about the gods were strongly questioned. In addition, it could serve as a paradeigma for Hieron and for a general 'we' in a number of ways: Pelops was willing to compete with Oinomaos to win Hippodameia (the agonistic spirit characterised him), he asked for divine help in order to achieve his goal (he was aware that Oinomaos was a dangerous opponent), he was a good ruler and he had six perfect sons. He became the object of cult because he reached the summit of human possibilities. Pindar's Pelops is also presented as that historical figure whose life and beliefs set a precedent for the ideals represented by the Olympic Games in the present. It is because of his life and beliefs that he became the founder of the most prestigious Olympic event, the four-horse chariot race.[59] Hieron wanted a chariot victory. By telling Pelops' story and even more by purifying it in the context of the performance of an ode in which Hieron was the *laudandus,* Pindar seems to foreshadow this victory that would bring Hieron and his city more glory. He also seems to imply that Hieron, who is praised for his positive attributes again in lines 103-105 (πέποιθα δὲ ξένον / μή τιν' ἀμφότερα καλῶν τε ἴδριν ἄ / μα καὶ δύναμιν κυριώτερον / τῶν γε νῦν κλυταῖσι δεδαλωσέμεν ὕμνων πτυχαῖς), deserves this victory as Pelops deserves the honour he receives in the present.

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59 Walter Burkert writes that the preeminent ἀγών at Olympia was the foot-race in the stadium which alone had a sacral function (1983: 96). According to Pausanias, the chariot-race was introduced in the twenty-fifth Olympiad that is in 680 BC. It was held on the first day of the Games. It was the costliest sport and it soon became the most prestigious one.

The question arises concerning what *Olympian* I tells us about Pindar's attitude towards Greek cultural memory. It is obvious that Pindar does not reject a distant foundational past with normative and formative impact on Greek mnemonic communities in the present. He knows that this past is instantiated in performed poetic compositions. In the context of performance, audiences are exposed both to the factual contents of song and to the aspect of performance which combines language, music, and dancing. Here is where Χάρις comes in. Because of the power of Χάρις, false and discreditable stories seem 'μείλιχα'. Audiences are deceived into believing what should be rejected as 'falsehood'. But how can the poet distinguish between a 'false' story and a 'true' one? In *Olympian* I, the poet says: 'ἀμέραι δ' ἐπίλοιποι μάρτυρες σοφώτατοι'. Pindar's 'ἀμέραι ἐπίλοιποι' can be discussed as frameworks of memory within which collectively shared representations of the past are created. Pindar's ideas and beliefs about what a god should be had been shaped within contemporary frameworks of memory in which past stories about the gods or mythical heroes were questioned. The poet believes that he can reshape the memory and consequently the identity of his audiences by presenting his particular code of ethics as belonging to the paradeigmatic time of foundational myth. This activity presupposes a certain framework (a memory medium such as epinician song, a context of performance, an institutionalised carrier of memory) which is provided by Greek cultural memory. Within Greek cultural memory a past story can become the product of a *vis* memory which may keep distorting what is passed on[60] but which can also restore the truth in the present and reconstruct an

60 As in 'ἦ θαύματα πολλά, και πού τι καὶ βροτῶν/φάτις ὑπὲρ τὸν ἀλαθῆ λόγον / δεδαιδαλμένοι ψεύδεσι ποικίλοις / ἐξαπατῶντι μῦθοι' (*O.* 1 28-29), in which λόγος represents the true facts of a past story, whereas φάτις and μῦθοι the deceptive ones.

identity-related past for the mnemonic community. Thus, Greek cultural memory becomes the context for a dynamic dialogue with the past in accordance with present schemata of thought. It does not remain stagnant but allows constant innovation. This activity demonstrates that foundational stories were the component and simultaneously the product of an evolving culture. Pindar's attitude to the capacity of Greek cultural memory to transmit the true memory of a foundational past is similar to that of Hesiod before him: it can transmit the true version of what happened in the foundational past provided that the poet is the favourite of the Muses (as in Hesiod's case), or the poet (as in Pindar's case) is a carrier of true memory in the present and, as such, he does not need the distorting power of Χάρις in order to embellish his truth in the famous folds of hymns (105). For him 'Μοῖσα καρτερώτατον βέλος ἀλκᾷ τρέφει' (In line 112, the Muse helps the poet who passes on the truth about Pelops in his song). In lines 115-116 'ἐμέ τε τοσσάδε νικαφόροις ὁμιλεῖν πρόφαντον σοφίᾳ καθ' Ἕλλανας ἐόντα παντᾷ', Pindar explicitly claims Panhellenic authority in the present. By implication, his song, which performs a memorial function but which is also imbued with patterns of ideology, deserves to have Panhellenic resonance too.

5.2 *Olympian* 10

Olympian 10 was written for Hagesidamos of Western (or Epizephyrian) Lokroi who won in the boys' boxing contest in 476 BC. In this ode, Pindar incorporates the foundation of the Olympic Games into the narrative about the Theban Herakles.

In the beginning of *Olympian* 10, the poet brings up the theme of remembering or forgetting to sing a victory. With an imperative which is 'used absolutely and has rhetorical force' (Verdenius 1988: ad 55 ἀνάγνωτε), Pindar asks to be informed about

where in his mind the victor's name is written (*O*. 10. 1-3).[61] The poet has been late in composing his song of praise and the belated ode is conceived as a 'χρέος' (8) to the victor.[62] The Muse and Ἀλάθεια, the daughter of Zeus[63], will guarantee the poet's truthfulness (Verdenius ad 4 Ἀλάθεια). Though Pindar's 'forgetting' (ἐπιλέλαθα *O*. 10. 3) refers specifically to his promise in *Olympian* 11, the (apparent) literal lateness in *Olympian* 10 is not unrelated to the ideology *trope* of 'belatedness' or temporal elasticity. The poet can be late in conferring praise on the victor but he does not have the right to be silent altogether. He is expected (by the victor and the community) to speak, and this expectation emphasises the importance of his function in Greek cultural memory. In *Olympian* 10, Pindar 'corrects' his lateness by composing an ode in which he shows his 'βαθὺ χρέος' (*Olympian* 10. 8) to the *laudandus* and implicitly to a tradition of singing athletic victories. He does so by bridging the gap between the present and a 'remembered' past. On the one hand, he confers glory on the Olympic victor and on the community of the Western Lokrians to which he belongs (13-25), and on the other, he starts from the present victory to discuss a glorious topic, the foundation of the Olympic Games by his favourite hero, Herakles.

In *Olympian* 10, the authority of the poet to mediate foundational memory is explicitly attributed to the will of Zeus.[64] When commenting on the composition of the

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61 'Τὸν Ὀλυμπιονίκαν ἀνάγνωτέ μοι / Ἀρχεστράτου παῖδα, πόθι φρενός / ἐμᾶς γέγραπται· γλυκὺ γὰρ αὐτῷ μέλος ὀφείλων / ἐπιλέλαθ·'.

62 As Verdenius comments when discussing *Olympian* 3, the conception of the victory ode as such a debt is a topos in Pindar (1987: ad 7 χρέος).

63 As Verdenius writes (1988 ad 4 Ἀλάθεια), the word is used in its original sense of 'non-concealment' and refers to the sincerity of Pindar's promise.

64 Pindar writes: 'ἀγῶνα δ' ἐξαίρετον ἀεῖσαι θέμιτες ὦρσαν / Διός, ὃν ἀρχαίῳ σάματι πὰρ Πέλοπος / βωμῶν ἐξάριθμον ἐκτίσσατο' (24-25).

ode and more particularly on the possibility of Pindar drawing a parallel between the first victors and his contemporary victor, thus considering the latter as the epigone of the former, Verdenius writes that, in fact, Pindar's 'only suggestion for continuity refers to the celebration of Zeus (78-83)[65], not to that of the victor' (1988: 54). However, the concept of an athletic victory which is celebrated in an epinician is enhanced through its implicit connection with what was considered to be a sacred symbol for ancient Greeks, namely Zeus' 'blazing lightning which is closely linked to every kind of victory' (Verdenius 1988: ad 82-3 ἐν… κράτει…ἀραρότα). *Olympian* 10 as well as *Pythian* 1, in which the warring thunderbolt is quenched by 'music after victory over the forces of darkness has been achieved in the macrocosm', bring us close to Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (174-5) in which, as Burkert writes, 'to identify with the victory of Zeus is to discover the sense of the world order' (1985: 128)**.** Such an order is also implied in *Isthmian* 5. 53 in which Pindar says that 'Zeus dispenses a variety of things, Zeus the lord of all' or in *Olympian* 2. 58 in which earth is 'Zeus' realm'. Pindar's Zeus is a victorious, just, and powerful god who has created a universal 'order' which provides the framework for divine and human life. Within this framework, victory on the human level is seen as reenactment of the victory of Zeus and reassertion of the right order of things (pers.comm. N. Livingstone), whereas piety presupposes acceptance of and participation in this universal 'order'. Such piety is duly rewarded as in 'men's prayers are fulfilled in return for piety' (*O*. 8. 8). Adversely, human activity (like the behaviour

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65 'ἀρχαῖς δὲ προτέραις ἑπόμενοι /καί νυν ἐπωνυμίαν χάριν / νίκας ἀγερώχου κελαδησόμεθα βροντάν / καὶ πυρπάλαμον βέλος / ὀρσικτύπου Διός, / ἐν ἅπαντι κράτει, / αἴθωνα κεραυνὸν ἀραρότα·'.

of the 'guest-cheating' Augeias in O. 10. 34) which challenges Zeus' 'hallowed rule' (*N*. 1. 72) is punished.

In this ode (as in *O*. 2. 3, *O*. 3. 11, *O*. 6. 68, *N*. 10. 33, and *N*. 11. 27), Pindar supports, for the first time in the extant literature, the attribution of the foundation of the Olympic Games as well as of the creation of the tradition of celebrating victorious athletes to the Theban mighty son of Zeus, Herakles. Gildersleeve (1885: 212) follows Lübbert (1881 3-19) who, based on the great antiquity of Idaian sites in the Peloponnese, believed that Pindar gives a detailed account of the institution of the Olympic Games by the Theban Herakles 'in distinct opposition to the traditions of the Eleian priests, who referred the establishment of the Games to the Idaian Herakles, and the Dactyls, his brothers'.[66] According to Gildersleeve, Lübbert's theory 'gives a more plausible explanation of the detail here presented than the gratuitous assumption that the poet went into all these particulars for the benefit of the Epizephyrian Lokrians, as if the Epizephyrians did not have traditions of their own' (212).

Gildersleeve and Lübbert are wrong. It is true that Pindar's poem is the first in our literature to attribute the Olympic Games to the Theban Herakles (the 'Theban' in the course of his labours). We don't know whether Pindar is innovating here or whether there was a circulating tradition which related the name of Herakles to the foundation

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66 According to Pausanias (5, 7, 6-7), who records what the Eleans transmitted in the 2nd century AD, it was the Idaian Herakles who matched his brothers in a running-race and who crowned the winner with a branch of wild olive. The Daktyl Herakles called the Games Olympic and established the custom of holding them every fifth year, because he and his brothers were five in number. The Games were therefore held for the first time in Crete, but Pausanias names Klymenos, the son of Kardys, as the descendant of the Idaian Herakles who brought the Games to Olympia fifty years after the flood of Deukalion. The Theban Herakles was among those who held the Games until the reign of Oxylos.

of the Games. An alternative version reported by Pausanias as told by the Eleans (in the 2nd century AD) has them founded by the Idaian Daktyl Herakles. This report was surprisingly taken seriously in the 19th century by Lübbert and following him Gildersleeve. The 'scholia' do not mention that version. In *Olympian* 10, Pindar praises an Epizephyrian Lokrian. However, we can plausibly suggest that the poet was conscious of the fact that by attributing (or supporting if this was a circulating tradition) the foundation of the Olympic Games to the Theban Herakles he was passing on a tradition of Panhellenic and not merely of Lokrian resonance. As to the details presented in the ode, it is logical to suggest that Pindar would make a detailed reference to a glorious topic such as the foundation of the Olympic Games, particularly in a song which, as he said, was 'interest on a debt' (9).[67] Pindar's version describes a Herakles who creates meaning in the present (in and through Greek cultural memory) not by being the lonely 'knight-errant' (Gildersleeve 1885: 213) whose actions are beyond the human but by being the 'leader of a host' (Gildersleeve 1885: 213) who is more human, though not less heroic. In fact, one of Herakles' well-known labours is reconstructed by the poet to fit perfectly well into an epinician song which tells how the Olympic Games were founded. As the founder of the Games and as their protector diachronically, Herakles becomes an emblematic figure in epinician song not only by continuing to inspire athletes to exert themselves to achieve victory but also by providing the circumstances for the creation of the very tradition of praising victors.

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67 Verdenius (1988: ad 9 τόκος) says that the word 'τόκος' (interest on a debt) 'does not refer to *O*. 11 ('sch.' Pu.), for a preceding poem can hardly be called 'interest', but to the extra beautiful quality of the present poem'.

Farnell says (1932: 82 ad 42-50) that Pindar's version became the 'authorized version and maintained itself as the prevalent tradition (cf. Apollod. 2.7, and Diod. Sic. 4.14)'. Herakles was well-known in the epic (*Iliad*. 8. 362-368, 5. 638-642, 8. 117-118) and mythological tradition. In Homer, he does not escape death (*I*. 117-118) but, after Homer, he was believed to have ascended to the gods and to have married Hebe. Pindar in *N*. 3. 22 expresses this belief by calling Herakles a hero-god (ἥρως- θεός[68]). Herakles' transformation from a mortal hero to a god (κλέος has immortalising power) signified that his power transcended the boundaries of a particular area and extended over the Greek world. This fact suited the Panhellenic character of the Olympic Games as well as Pindar's belief that the four-year festival was ordained by Herakles

The poet's narrative about the foundation of the Games describes what happened in a 'remembered' past and this is why it has 'the air of realistic history' (Farnell *OI*. 10 1965: ad 26-35). The foundation, which becomes a memory figure in Pindar, is connected with a particular exploit performed by Herakles, the cleaning of the stables of Augeias, as well as with a geographical point of reference, Elis in the Peloponnese. The foundation of the Games contributes to the 'historicisation' of Herakles' exploit and vice versa. Reference to Herakles' and the army of Tirynthians' encampment in the valleys of Elis, their defeat and the killing of the Moliones relate further Pindar's version to 'remembered' time and place. Within this 'remembered' as historical framework, Pindar emphasises the heroic values upon which the Olympic Games were founded through the contrast between a Herakles whose image becomes eloquent through its connection with the value system of epinician song and an Augeias who defies this

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68 As Pausanias writes (2, 10, 1), even in his days the Sikyonians offered Herakles sacrifice first as a hero and then as a god.

value system. Herakles justly demanded to be paid for his services to Augeias, the ‘ξεναπάτας’ (34) king of the Epeians. Since Pindar creates a form of memory which functions as the expression of the quintessential hero of an epinician song, he intentionally ignores the epic tradition which records a ‘ξεναπάτας’ Herakles. In *Odyssey* 21. 22-30, the story of the killing of Iphitos by Herakles is told. ‘Καρτερόθυμος’ Herakles killed Iphitos, although he shared with him bonds of guest friendship. His behaviour is treated as an act of sacrilege in the epic: ‘Herakles slew him, his guest though he was, in his own house, ruthlessly, and had regard neither for the wrath of the gods nor for the table which he had set before him’ (27-9). The Pindaric Augeias fought with a man who was more powerful than him and, because of lack of counsel which would have warned him against thoughts inappropriate to mortals, did not escape sheer death. The myth validates the maxim ‘νεῖκος δὲ κρεσσόνων / ἀποθέσθ’ ἄπορον’ (*Olympian* 10. 39-40). So does Herakles as he is ‘remembered’ in the *Odyssey* (8. 221-8). Odysseus says that only Philoktetes excelled him in archery in Troy, whereas he abstains from comparing himself to the men of former days, with Herakles or with Eurytos of Oichalia, who strove even with the immortals in archery. Such presumption could destroy a mortal man as it did Eurytos who was punished by Apollo. Against the backcloth of such a presumptuous Herakles in Homer, Pindar in his song renews meaning for the mnemonic community and thus makes new normative claims.

Regarding the killing of the ‘ὑπερφίαλοι’ (34) Moliones by Herakles, it finds its justification in the fact that they had destroyed Herakes’ army of Tirynthians when it was encamped in the valleys of Elis with a view to fighting for a just cause. We cannot be certain whether we see Pindar’s correcting hand in the Moliones myth. According

to a version reported by Pausanias (5. 2. 1), Herakles set an ambush for the two brothers at Kleonai and killed them when they were going to the Isthmian Games as the Epeians' envoys. In this myth, Herakles violates the institution of the inviolability of an envoy to the Panhellenic Games but Pindar either ignores this version or voluntarily silences it '*ad maiorem Herculis gloriam'* (Galinsky 1972: 32).

With the booty he justly took from the homeland of Augeias, Herakles founded the Olympic Games.[69] Pindar is very exact in relating the order of events which supposedly took place in the foundational past, but which can also justify contemporary practices. Herakles first 'fenced in the Altis' (46) to honour Zeus, a fact which explains the sacred character of the games diachronically. Then, he arranged for a resting place where the evening meal would be served and founded altars to honour the twelve gods who were still honoured in Pindar's days (also in *O*. 5. 5). Pindar connects the name of the previously nameless hill of Kronos in Olympia with Herakles' naming activity and this is how he explains a contemporary feature of the geography of Olympia but also a contemporary practice, namely the cult of Kronos on his hill in Olympia. Verdenius (1988 ad 49-50 *πάγον Κρόνου προσεφθέγξατο*) reads this naming activity as 'a compromise between the local tradition according to which there was an old cult of

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69 Pausanias (5, 7, 6-7) writes that by the time Iphitos, king of Elis, re-established the Games which had been held intermittently until his reign, the ancient tradition had been forgotten. It is to the gradual revival of the memory of this tradition that Pausanias attributes additions to the Games. Originally, and for thirteen Olympiads, there was only the foot-race, whereas, as Pausanias writes, it was at the fourteenth Olympiad that the double foot-race was added and at the eighteenth that they remembered the pentathlon and wrestling. In *Olympian* 10, Pindar does not describe an evolutionary process, during which contests were forgotten and re-added, but connects familiar patterns like the stadion, wrestling, boxing, the four-horse chariot race, the javelin, and the discus of stone with the foundational myth of the first Olympiad.

Kronos on the hill (cf. Paus. VI 20, 1) and Pindar's conception of Zeus as the central god in Olympia'. In Pindar's narration, however, the name of the previously nameless hill of Kronos is naturally presented as part of the order of things that Herakles ordained.

Before singing the first Olympiad and its victories, Pindar brings together three very old and powerful goddesses, the Fates, and a universal, active power (Verdenius 1988: ad 7 χρόνος), Time (52-55). The Fates and Time, 'ὅ τ' ἐξελέγχων μόνος / ἀλάθειαν ἐτήτυμον / Χρόνος.' (53-5), were present at the founding ceremony (ταύτᾳ δ'ἐν πρωτογόνῳ τελετᾷ). Verdenius (1988: ad Μοῖραι 52) refers to *Olympian* 6. 42 and *Nemean* 7. 1 in which Pindar presents the Fates in the company of Eileithyia, the giver of birth to children. He writes that the Fates were present as 'goddesses of birth, but also implying divine determination and continued existence'. Gildersleeve (1885: ad παρέσταν) also compares the presence of the Fates in *Olympian* 10 to that in *Olympian* 6, in which the Fates helped at the birth of Iamos. The presence of the Fates can also be discussed in the light of what Hesiod says in the *Theogony* (901-906). According to him, the Fates were the daughters of Zeus and Themis, also a goddess of 'order' in the world. The idea of unchallenged order through the apportionment of the area where the Olympic Games would be held to 'most mighty' (45) Zeus primarily, to the twelve ruling gods (49) to whom Herakles dedicated six double altars (also *O*. 5. 5), and to Kronos, as well as through the foundation of the quadrennial festival and the creation of a tradition of singing victories is implicit in the presence of the Fates as well as of time (*O.* 10. 52-5). Vivante (*Arethusa* 5 1972: 110) writes that with his lofty presentation of time Pindar 'is not giving us a reflection on the order of things. He is trying to convey

‘the impact of a solemn action’. However, this action is ‘solemn’ exactly because it participates in the divine order of things which has been created by Zeus.

A parallel to the presence of time in Pindar can be found in Xenophon *H.G*. 3.3.2. Xenophon also sees time as a true witness: **‘**And time also, which is said to be the truest witness, gave testimony that the god was right’. The idea of time which functions in a wise way is neither Pindar’s invention nor does Xenophon have Pindar as his sole source. Gerber (1982: ad 33 ἡμέραι) writes that ‘Diogenes Laertius attributes the apophthegm ‘σοφώτατον χρόνος· ἀνευρίσκει γὰρ πάντα’ to Thales and the same revelatory power of time appears in Solon fr.10: ‘δείξει δὴ μανίην μὲν ἐμὴν βαιὸς χρόνος ἀστοῖς, / δείξει ἀληθείης ἐς μέσον ἐρχομένης’. The same idea is present in Bacchylides 13. 204-7.

Traditionally, the Muses are the representatives of Greek cultural memory. They signify the need for diachronic mnemonic communities to know the truth about how things happened in a distant and thus inaccessible past through the voice of the poet. This truth however may be questioned, whereas the vector of memory needs to continue to reassure his audiences that what he says is true. This is how the belief in the power of time to reveal the truth (and not to turn the truth into falsehood) enters literature. It is this truth that the vector of memory tells and bequeaths to the revelatory power of time, thus reassuring his audiences that his truth will live on. The concept of Halbwachs’ social frameworks of memory which determine what is believed as ‘true’ and what is considered ‘falsehood’ explains the belief in the revelatory power of time. What time reveals is what creates meaning within contemporary frameworks of memory. In *Olympian* 10, Pindar is familiar with the truth that has been processed by time (that makes sense within contemporary frameworks of memory) and tells it, since

Zeus' decrees urged him to tell it (24). Pindar's time is actually a duration which appears to reproduce the aristocratic values of a mythical past in successive presents. But what is Pindar's attitude to the past in *Olympian* 10? In this ode as in *Olympian* I, the past most definitely shapes the present and the poet feels traditionally free to interfere with this past in a dynamic way so that he may continue to create meaning in the present, so that the world may continue to function.

Pindar completes his narration by referring to the first victors in those earlier Games as well as to the first victory celebration (60-77) which initiated a tradition of singing victories at the Games. The link between the first victors and the first victory celebration emphasises the fact that what happened in those foundational times was normative not only in terms of the values (victory and its immortalisation is one of these values) upon which the Olympic Games had been founded but also in terms of creating a tradition of singing these values which are reiterated in Pindaric song as part of the diachronic identity of the Panhellenic Games. By describing a tradition which has its origins in the heroic world, Pindar shows that there is continuity and not rupture from those ancient beginnings to his times.[70]

Pindar's list of victors includes names with a mythological pedigree as well as names which are not known from other sources. Oionos from Midea in Argolis, Likymnios' son, the winner of the stadion, was the nephew of Alkmene and therefore the cousin of Herakles (also in Pausanias 3.15.3). Echemos from Tegea, the wrestler, was the son of Aeropus who succeeded Lycurgos, the son of Aleus and thus a

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70 In *Nemean* 8. 50-51 the tradition of singing stretches back into mythical times. The hymn of victory arose even before the strife between Adrastos and the Kadmeians.

descendant of Arcas, to the throne of Arcadia (Pausanias 8.5.1-2).[71] Samos from Mantinea, the charioteer, was related to Poseidon, since his father, Halirothios, was the son of the god (Pausanias 1.21.4, 1.28. 5). Conversely, Doryklos from Tiryns who won the prize in boxing, Phrastor, the winner of the javelin contest, and Nikeus who won the stone competition are not mentioned elsewhere. The list is not characterised by the temporality of Hippias' or Eusebios' lists of victors. Time is measured in Olympiads and the records of those who won at each are part of that fabric of preservation of memory, time, and achievement. So, the sophist Hippias wrote a work called ΟΛΥΜΠΙΟΝΙΚΩΝ ΑΝΑΓΡΑΦΗ, whereas Eusebius included Olympic victors in his *Chronicle*. Pindar is not interested in defining the temporal distance between the foundation of the Games and the present. However, such a sequence is implied since participation and victory at the Games continued to be a recognisable pattern in Pindar's time.The poet's interest seems to focus on the normative aspects of the relationship between past and present which is represented both by the first victors' expectation to achieve a triumph at Olympia[72] and by the poet's faithfulness to the tradition of singing athletic victories (Verdenius 1988: ad 78 ἀρχαῖς).

Farnell believed that Pindar was given his list by some authoritative source and did not invent it, because if he had invented it, 'we should not have had so flat and dull a list of names; for he would probably have thrown into the list the names of some well-

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71 Echemos, a victor at the first Olympic Games, killed Herakles' son Hyllos in single combat, so that the Herakleidai would not return to the Peloponnese (Herodotos 9.26). Herakles is unaware of this fact at these Games, but Pindar's audiences probably weren't. Echemos' name on the list makes the future uncomfortably present for these audiences.The scholiast does not make any comment.

72 'τίς δὴ ποταίνιον / ἔλαχε στέφανον; / χείρεσσι ποσίν τε καὶ ἅρματι, / ἀγώνιον ἐν δόξᾳ θέμενος / εὖχος, ἔργῳ καθελών;' (60-63).

known heroes; and we should probably have found Herakles among the victors' (1932: ad 70). Verdenius plausibly writes that the style of the list is not 'flat and dull' (1988: ad 64ff.). By combining both mythological and non-mythological names in his list, Pindar turns the memory of the audiences to a period when both the descendants of gods and humans participated in the establishment of institutions upon which the now and today is based. It is true that Pindar could have invented a list which might include some more well-known names among which the name of Herakles. In the case of Herakles however, it is obvious that the poet focuses on his role as the founder of the Olympic Games as well as on the values upon which the Games had been founded by him and not on his undoubted ability to win a specific contest. Farnell may be right when he writes that Pindar was given his list by some authoritative source. The catalogue names may have been part of a circulating tradition with an emphasis on victors from Argolis and Arcadia in the Peloponnese. The poet's inventiveness however cannot be excluded altogether. Verdenius agrees with Viljoen who 'plausibly suggests that this catalogue compensates for the lack of former achievements in the victor's life and that of his family' (1988: ad 64). There are examples of Pindaric odes (*N*. 10. 19-20, 21-24, 29-36, 37-48, *N*. 5. 40-46, 50-54) in which the poet passes from the praised victory to other victories of the laudandus or his family as well to those of the city. Moreover, it is true that the list makes Hagesidamos a member of the glorified family of winners at the Games and in this sense the present 'proud'(*O*. 10. 79) victory compensates for the lack of inherited glory or former achievements. However, when discussed within the context of the foundational narrative in *Olympian* 10, the catalogue can be said to perform other important functions as well. It is with the catalogue that Pindar's narration is truly completed, so that his audiences can connect with foundational times all those

patterns which comprised the contemporary identity of the Games. Victory was one of these patterns. The Games had been founded by Herakles in honour of Zeus and the first contestants won the ποταίνιον ('brand-new') στέφανον (*O*. 10. 60-61) at them. The catalogue also adds plausibility to Pindar's version of the foundation of the Olympic Games. If the poet has access to such distant memory, he is expected to know the names of the earliest Olympic victors, particularly if these names were for the first time and continued to be immortalised in the poet's medium, epinician song. The recurrent theme of lasting memory and oblivion comes naturally to the fore and is related to epinician poetry as well as to the name of Hagesidamos. Pindar's contemporary victor's name will not sink into oblivion because the poet is faithful to ancient beginnings 'ἀρχαῖς δὲ προτέραις ἑπόμενοι / καί νυν ἐπωνυμίαν χάριν / νίκας ἀγερώχου κελαδησόμεθα' (*O*. 10. 78-79). Lines 91-96 justify the effect of epinician song diachronically: 'καὶ ὅταν καλὰ ἔρξαις ἀοιδᾶς ἄτερ, / Ἀγησίδαμ΄, εἰς Ἀίδα σταθμόν / ἀνὴρ ἵκηται, κενεὰ πνεύσαις ἔπορε μόχθῳ / βραχύ τι τερπνόν. τὶν δ' ἀδυεπής τε λύρα / γλυκύς τ' αὐλὸς ἀναπάσσει χάριν· τρέφοντι δ' εὐρὺ κλέος / κόραι Πιερίδες Διός.' Fame will either be conferred through song or it will not be conferred at all.

To conclude, epinician song articulates time, not only contemporary time in which victory at the Panhellenic Games has been achieved and is celebrated by the poet but also its relationship to a 'remembered' past (which may entail myth and history without any distinction between them, at least not until the time of Thucydides). The poet's narrative encourages his audiences to turn to this 'remembered' past within the context of a foundational mythomotor (Assmann 2011: 62ff), according to which the present becomes meaningful, important, necessary, and unchangeable through its connection with the past. This past, however, is re-interpreted by the traditionally wise poet and

according to his code of ethics or the needs of the epinician song. The re-interpretation of the past works in the direction of maintaining its relevance to a changing present. If the past continues to create meaning in the present, mnemonic communities can turn to foundational time in order to understand what motivates them to act in the here and now. This may be said to explain why myth (in the sense of foundational stories coming from a 'remembered' past) takes up so much space in the victory odes. Because of its ability to create a self-image for subsequent mnemonic communities and to provide orientation for the future, myth can be described as a timeless present. Its presence in the victory ode is important not only because analogies between the myth and the specific victor in the ode can sometimes be sought and discovered[73] as in the case of *Olympian* 10, in which the story of Herakles and Kyknos may allude to some set-back of Hagesidamos (Verdenius 1988: ad 63 τράπε)[74] but also because, with myth, the emphasis is on the connection between a system of meanings and values coming from the time of origins and the identity of a particular community or of Hellenic communities in general in the present. In his epinician song Pindar seems to focus on those defining principles which comprise the framework within which life in the present can and should continue to be understood.

In Pindar's narrative, the mythical and the historical coincide. This coincidence demonstrates how myth can be historicised and history can be mythicised (how the past can become a 'remembered' past) through their connection with identity-related values. In the case of the Olympic Games, there was a time when these Games were

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73 Pindar's audiences must have been much more able to relate a foundational story in an epinician to the here and now of performance than the present reader.

74 Hagesidamos also owes gratitude to Ilas for his final victory as his mythological analogue, Patroklos, did to Achilles (*O.* 10. 10-19).

founded and this time needed to continue to be remembered and commemorated in subsequent presents. The quadrennial festival and epinician song fulfilled this function (*Olympian* 10. 57-58 and 78-79). However, every iteration of the Games reaffirmed the values upon which they were supposed to have been founded by a re-interpreted Herakles in a foundational past.

5.3 *Isthmian* 4.

Isthmian 4 was written for Melissos of Thebes who won in the pancratium in 474. In this song, Pindar presents Herakles as Melissos' mythological analogue. The criterion is the hero's inner strength which matches that of the Isthmian victor. According to the poet, both the hero and the victor had to fight against stronger opponents. However, as Pindar's Herakles was 'μορφὰν βραχύς' (53) but of unbending spirit, so Melissos could beat his opponent, despite the fact that he himself was small.

In the first *strophē*, Pindar addresses Melissos and refers to the two parameters that make his victory song come to life. On the one hand, the poet has countless paths of song, thanks to the gods' favour (θεῶν ἓκατι*, Isth.* 4. 1). On the other, Melissos' victory, as well as the achievements of his clan, the Kleonymidai, revealed 'εὐμαχανίαν', making access to the countless paths of song feasible.

As regards the first parameter, no particular god is explicitly mentioned.[75] The emphasis is on the divine origins of praise song and implicitly on its importance for the community which will both enjoy its aesthetic effect and remember its factual contents. The triptych divinity of song, delight taken in song, and immortilisation of the contents

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75 The 'sch.' on line 1 mentions the Muses and Apollon: "Εστι μοι θεῶν ἕκατι μυρία: θεῶν, τῶν Μουσῶν καὶ τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος'.

of song is present in lines 37-45 of the ode: 'ἀλλ' Ὅμηρός τοι τετίμα / κεν δι' ἀνθρώπων, ὃς αὐτοῦ / πᾶσαν ὀρθώσας ἀρετὰν κατὰ ῥάβδον ἔφρασεν / θεσπεσίων ἐπέων λοιποῖς ἀθύρειν. / τοῦτο γὰρ ἀθάνατον φωνᾶεν ἕρπει, / εἴ τις εὖ εἴπῃ τι· καὶ πάγ / καρπον επὶ χθόνα καὶ διὰ πόντον βέβακεν / ἐργμάτων ἀκτὶς καλῶν ἄσβεστος αἰεί. / προφρόνων Μοισᾶν τύχοιμεν, / κεῖνον ἀψαι πυρσὸν ὕμνων / καὶ Μελίσσῳ, παγκρατίου στεφάνωμ' ἐπάξιον'. In these lines, Pindar speaks of the effectiveness of epic poetry and epinician song as memory media. As Erll writes (2011: 124), the sociohistorical context decides on the definition of a medium of memory. Within this context, the memory-making role is attributed to media by specific people, at a specific time and place. In lines 37-42, Pindar attributes the memory-making role to Homer, the quintessential poet of Greek cultural memory, and implicitly to epic poetry. He relates Homer's name to the need of receiving in the present an official version of the past. Pindar seems to transmit a diachronically collective image of epic poetry (in the sense that Homer's poetry was composed for and would be received by future men to enjoy *Isth. 4.* 39) whose contents are so beautifully and meaningfully sung (Homer's song created important community meaning by rehabilitating Aias' honour among mankind *Isth*. 4. 37) that they sound divine: 'κατὰ ῥάβδον ἔφρασεν / θεσπεσίων ἐπέων' (*Isth*. 4. 38-9). Homeric poetry sets straight an injustice and bestows praise deservedly (this is also a justification of Greek cultural memory, since it is within its framework that this activity takes place). Despite the fact that the sons of the Hellenes who went to Troy deserve to be reproached for Aias' suicide[76] (ἵστε μὰν / Αἴαντος ἀλκὰν φοίνιον, τὰν

76 Slater (1965: ad 36. μομφὰν ἔχει παίδεσσιν Ἑλλάνων) writes that the reproach to the Hellenes as contrasted with ἀλλ' Ὅμηρος (37) implies that 'the Hellenes were unjust to Aias and were responsible for his tragic end, but Homer rehabilitated his honour'.

ὀψίᾳ / ἐν νυκτὶ ταμὼν περὶ ᾧ φασγάνῳ μομφὰν ἔχει / παίδεσσιν Ἑλλάνων ὅσοι Τροίανδ' ἔβαν' 35-36b), thanks to Homer, praise was[77] and is still deservedly bestowed on him. Aias was a descendant of Pindar's favourite clan, the Aiakidai.[78] By justifying Homer's praise to Aias, the epinician poet also justifies his own praise of the hero and his clan.[79] In lines 40-2, Pindar discusses what are now considered as two indispensable parameters of memory media: they can store contents of memory and make them available across time and they can also enable cultural communication across space (Erll 2011: 126). In order to provide an explanation for the immortality of Homer's verses, Pindar generalises and says that beautifully and meaningfully created song can defy the parameters of space and time thus synchronising large mnemonic communities ('τοῦτο γὰρ ἀθάνατον φωνᾶεν ἕρπει, / εἴ τις εὖ εἴπῃ τι· καὶ πάγ / καρπον ἐπὶ χθόνα καὶ διὰ πόντον βέβακεν / ἐργμάτων ἀκτὶς καλῶν ἄσβεστος αἰεί' *Isth.* 4. 40-2).

It is the 'καὶ Μελίσσῳ' in line 44 that signifies the transmission from epic poetry to epinician song. The memory-making role now passes to Pindar. There is a victor, Melissos, a medium of memory, victory song, and a poet who will compose verses

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77 In *Iliad* (2. 768) and in *Odyssey* (11. 551), Aias was second only to Achilles among the Danaans.

78 Pindar praises the Aiakidai in many instances in his song. In *Isthmian* 5 he writes: 'τὸ δ'ἐμόν / οὐκ ἄτερ Αἰακιδᾶν κέαρ ὕμνων γεύεται' (19-20). In *Isthmian* 6 he declares that 'οὐδ' ἔστιν οὕτω βάρβαρος / οὔτε παλίγγλωσος πόλις / ἅτις οὐ Πηλέως ἀίει κλέος ἥ / ρως, εὐδαίμονος γαμβροῦ θεῶν, / οὐδ' ἅτις Αἴαντος Τελαμωνιάδα / καὶ πατρός·' (24-27).

79 Farnell writes (1965: ad 38. ἀλλ' Ὅμηρος) that 'Pindar's deep appreciation of Homer is in this context associated with a very noble utterance on the power of poetry in the world'. We may add that Pindar's attitude is not unrelated to his knowledge of what functions song fulfilled in Greek memory culture. Since it stored and circulated foundational memory, it shaped and reshaped the identity of successive Greek generations.

which will immortalise Melissos' name. Pindar as a poet feels his responsibility (this may also be discussed as a convention of the genre within its sociocultural context, or as a cultural pattern) and asks the favour of the Muses to light a beacon-fire of hymns for Melissos (προφρόνων Μοισᾶν τύχοιμεν, / κεῖνον ἄψαι πυρσῶν ὕμνων / καὶ Μελίσσῳ *Isth*. 43-4). By doing so, he shows that there is continuity and not rupture in the tradition of turning into song what deserves to be remembered. Because of Homer, what had been diachronically considered as worthy of praise in successive presents was the heroic activity of men from a distant past. Homer sings the fame of these men for later ages to receive into their memory. Pindar, on the other hand, praises contemporary athletes who have a heroic perspective on their fame to come as well as knowledge of earlier men who had been immortalised in song. So, the deeds of contemporary athletes need to be heroic, so that Pindar can create new memories through them. In Pindaric song, it is the athlete in the present who represents the heroic ideal with his achievements.

As regards the second parameter which makes the composition of a victory ode possible, the 'εὐμαχανία' revealed by the Panhellenic victor, it is an explicitly or implicitly recurrent theme in Pindaric song. It demonstrates that the countless paths of song granted to the poet through the gods' favour (1) become meaningful when the poet has something truly important and therefore memorable to say. In this particular song, it is Melissos' victory which deserves to be immortalised. This victory however contributes to the preservation of a pattern which keeps Pindar's world in motion. Melissos is not a random individual. He is a member and the representative in the present of an aristocratic clan and its values. Poetic 'εὐμαχανία' therefore rests on the celebration and thus on the immortalisation of a victory achieved in the present and on

the re-awakening of the 'φάμαν παλαιάν εὐκλέων ἔργων' of the victor's clan. The divine factor sets its seal on both these dimensions. Firstly, the present victory, through which the re-awakening of the memory of the clan is achieved, is presented as part of the gods' designs. Pindar uses climatic terms to describe the clan's transition from oblivion to memory: 'ἀλλ' ἀμέρᾳ γὰρ ἐν μιᾷ / τραχεῖα νιφὰς πολέμοιο τεσσάρων / ἀνδρῶν ἐρήμωσεν μάκαιραν ἑστίαν· / νῦν δ'αὖ μετὰ χειμέριον ποικίλα μηνῶν ζόφον / χθὼν ὥτε φοινικέοισιν ἄνθησεν ῥόδοις / δαιμόνων βουλαῖς' (*Isth*. 4. 16-19). Moreover, it is Poseidon who 'τόνδε πορὼν γενεᾷ θαυμαστὸν ὕμνον/ἐκ λεχέων ἀνάγει φάμαν παλαιάν / εὐκλέων ἔργων· / ἐν ὕπνῳ / γὰρ πέσεν·' (*Isth*. 4. 21-22). Similarly, in *N*. 1. 7-9, Pindar writes: 'ἅρμα δ' ὀτρύνει Χρομίου Νεμέα / τ' ἔργμασιν νικαφόροις ἐγκώμιον ζεῦξαι μέλος. / ἀρχαὶ δὲ βέβληνται θεῶν / κείνου σὺν ἀνδρὸς δαιμονίαις ἀρεταῖς'. The victor's abilities are divine, they are a gift from the gods put to good use by the athlete. These divine abilities are praised by a poet whose ability to compose is also attributed to the gods (θεῶν ἔκατι, *Isth*. 4. 1). This poet sets the names of the gods as his song's foundation because θεὸς ὁ πάντα τεύχων βροτοῖς (fr. 141). In the Pindaric universe of praise song, both poet and victor participate explicitly or implicitly in the divine order of things established by Zeus. This is how the poet brings events (like a victory and its celebration by him) taking place in linear time into the sphere of the divine or how he brings the gods into everyday human history. This is also how Pindar achieves to legitimise the presence of his song in a performance context, its normative impact, as well as his role as the 'prophet of the Muses' (fr. 150) in Greek cultural memory.

In his Commentary on *Isthmian* 4, Farnell (1932: ad 21) refers to the phrase 'θαυμαστὸν ὕμνον' and writes that 'we cannot avoid taking 'θαυμαστόν' as an epithet of praise of his own (Pindar's) poem, not of the achievement which it celebrates. Pindar

rarely boasts so naively'. Apart from the fact that ancients do not have to practise modern modesty, Pindar has reasons to praise his song because of its contents, its role in Greek cultural memory, and its artistic qualities. This song praises Melissos and the Kleonymidai. The Kleonymidai deserved to be remembered for their glorious deeds. Nevertheless, their fame had sunk into oblivious silence (23) until Melissos' victory at the Isthmian Games. Despite its importance, however, the victory will be forgotten if it is not immortalised in song ('θνᾴσκει δὲ σιγαθὲν καλὸν ἔργον' fr. 121.4) and 'τοῦτο γὰρ ἀθάνατον φωνᾶεν ἕρπει, / εἴ τις εὖ εἴπῃ τι· καὶ πάγ / καρπον ἐπὶ χθόνα καὶ διὰ πόντον βέβακεν / ἐργμάτων ἀκτὶς καλῶν ἄσβεστος αἰεί' (40-42). Similarly, the memory of the clan and, along with it its values, will not be re-awakened by the current victory unless the poet composes his song. In lines 23-24 the marvellous hymn serves the additional function of re-awakening the deserved fame of the clan, so that 'ἀνεγειρομένα χρῶτα λάμπει, / Ἀοσφόρος θαητὸς ὡς ἄστροις ἐν ἄλλοις'. By using the adjective 'θαυμαστὸν', Pindar does not 'boast naively'. He praises the poetic quality of a song whose theme is a Panhellenic victor and his clan, both of which deserve to be praised in a song which will amaze its audiences.[80] He also praises epinician song for its important mnemonic function in Greek cultural memory.

The abundant praise of the Kleonymidai whose fame continues to live on in Melissos starts in line 3 and continues until line 35. In spite of the fact that, as humans, the Kleonymidai have experienced both happiness and adversities -the loss of four members of the clan in battle on a single day is mentioned in lines 16-17b- 'σὺν θεῷ θνατὸν διέρχονται βιότου τέλος' (5). As Farnell writes, the only fifth-century battle to

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80 In lines 43-44, Pindar asks the favour of the Muses to compose a song which will be 'παγκρατίου στεφάνωμ' ἐπάξιον' for Melissos.

which Pindar's phrases apply is the battle of Plataea (1965: ad 16-18). Bowra (1964: 116) says that the Kleonymidai had been killed at Plataia, and in that case they were fighting on the Persian side when they were killed. Pindar says nothing about which side they were fighting on (Pindar was a Theban and Thebes medised but the poet did not hesitate to praise Athens about Artemisio in fr. 77: 'ὅθι παῖδες Ἀθηναίων ἐβάλοντο φαεννάν / κρηπῖδ' ἐλευθερίας') but simply praises their prowess in war ('χαλκέῳ τ' Ἄρει ἄδον' 15), before he mentions the loss of the four Kleonymidai in battle. He contrasts the unpredictability of human life with the predictability of a particular code of behaviour which respects heroic values. Apart from their participation in war, the Kleonymidai have adhered from the beginning (ἀρχᾶθεν, 8) to the kind of aristocratic values which epinician song promulgates in Greek cultural memory: They are hospitable 'πρόξενοί τ' ἀμφικτιόνων' (*8*), free of loud- voiced arrogance 'κελαδεννᾶς τ' ὀρφανοί ὕβριος' (*9*), and breeders of horses 'ἱπποτρόφοι' (*14*). Moreover, they have participated in chariot races at Athens and Sikyon and they have not abstained from Panhellenic Games (25-28). Through such kind of praise, epinician song provides the aristocratic society with a collective self-image and with normative orientation in time.

The idea of metaphorical movement is prevalent in the first strophē and is related to different aspects of human life: The many roads of song (Ἔστι μοι θεῶν ἕκατι μυρία παντᾷ κέλευθος *Isth.* 4. 1), the unavoidable journey to the mortal end of life (σὺν θεῷ θνατὸν διέρχονται βιότου τέλος *Isth*. 4. 5), and the many winds which drive mortals on (ἄλλοτε δ'ἀλλοῖος οὖροςπάντας ἀνθρώπους ἐπαΐσσων ἐλαύνει *Isth*.4. 5- 6). In the second strophē, actual and metaphorical movement is implied when Pindar refers to the 'pillars of Herakles' (12). The phrase signifies a geographical border set by Herakles during his many journeys. In *Nemean* 3.22-26, Pindar writes that the hero-

god established the pillars as 'ναυτιλίας ἐσχάτας / μάρτυρας κλυτάς· δάμασε δὲ θῆρας ἐν πελάγεϊ / ὑπερόχους, ἰδίᾳ τ'ἐρεύνασε τεναγέων / ῥοάς, ὁπᾷ πόμπιμον κατέβαινε νόστου τέλος, / καὶ γᾶν φράδασε'. No mention is made of Herakles' exploits, though his 'πάντολμον σθένος' (*Hymn* 1.4) is implied. Within contemporary frameworks of memory, it is certainly more important for the poet to re-interpret Herakles as a hero than to focus on his individual exploits. The idea of a 'border' is emphasised in lines 20-21 in which Pindar writes 'οὐκέτι πρόσω / ἀβάταν ἄλα κιόνων ὕπερ Ἡρακλέος περᾶν εὐμαρές'. This geographical border which marks the end of Herakles' mythical travels becomes in Pindaric song a symbol not only of the limits to which mortal men can attain as in 'καὶ μηκέτι μακροτέραν σπεύδειν ἀρετάν.' (*Isth.* 4. 13), but also of the glory that such an attainment entails.[81] In *Nemean* 3. 20, Aristokleidas has reached the symbolically important pillars of Herakles and is praised in epinician song for his achievement because 'ἀνορέαις ὑπερτάταις ἐπέβα' (also *Isthmian* 4. 11-12, *Olympian* 3. 13-4). Herakles sets his seal on a geographical border. The transformation of this geographical border into a symbol is related to the way Pindar re-interprets Herakles' heroic behaviour to create meaning in the present.

Pindar 'remembers' and passes on a 'Herakles' who can be used as an analogue for a winning athlete.The poet's Herakles (as re-interpreted within present frameworks of memory) is the result of the confluence of certain factors such as a circulating tradition, his own value system, the intellectual tendencies of his times, as well as the circumstances of the particular victory. It may help to put Pindar's use of Herakles in

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81 In *Isthmian* 5.14, Pindar emphasises the need for the victor to understand that he has reached the limits of the humanly feasible by advising him not to seek to become Zeus ('μὴ μάτευε Ζεὺς γενέσθαι'). Moderation is an important virtue in Pindaric song.

Isthmian 4 into perspective, if we look briefly at some other uses in Pindar, Homer, and Hesiod.

Pindar's Herakles is reconstructed against the backcloth of the Homeric and Hesiodic tradition. (See Appendix 3 – Heracles in Homer and Hesiod). In Pindar, Herakles is the founder of the Olympic Games, a fact which stresses his connection with praise song. The founder of the Games, however, cannot be the presumptuous Homeric Herakles or 'the uneasy amalgam that he had become in Hesiodic poetry -the shining folk hero with Homeric trappings' (Galinsky 1972: 22). Such a Herakles does not create meaning in epinician song. In *Olympian* 3, Herakles makes a second journey to the Hyperboreans to take the olive tree which he wanted to plant in his father's precinct at Olympia. However, he doesn't take the tree by force, which is condemned by the poet in *N.*7.66 ('βίαια πάντ' ἐκ ποδὸς ἐρύσαις), but by respecting the rules of decorum. Pindar writes: 'δᾶμον Ὑπερβορέων πείσαις Ἀπόλλωνος θεράποντα λόγῳ'(*O.* 3. 16). 'Πείσαις' suggests that Herakles had to try to win over the probably undecided Hyperboreans and he managed to do so by using words and not by force.[82] Noble manners is one of the aristocratic aspects of Herakles' character in Pindar. This tendency to interpret Herakles' character not only in terms of his excessive strength is also present in the iconography of the late Archaic and early Classical period and more particularly in the way Herakles calms Kerberos in order to take him out of Hades' palace. As Schefold writes (1992: 130), although there are pictures in which Herakles purely uses his strength to drag the dog away forcibly, there is also a large group of

82 Verdenius (1987 ad. 16 λόγῳ) writes that in the original story Herakles had probably taken possession of the olive by force.

Attic pictures (like the Amphora by the Andokides Painter, c.520. Paris, Louvre F 204) in which the hero tranquillises the beast, so as to collar it and lead it to Eurystheus.

In *Olympian* 10 for Hagesidamos of Western Lokroi, Herakles fights with Kyknos, Ares' son. According to the Pindaric scholia which preserve a narrative from Stesichoros' *Kyknos* fr. 166a, Kyknos, who lived near Thessaly, beheaded travellers, in order to use their skulls to build a temple to Apollo. The mythological tradition offers justification for Herakles' attack against the son of a god. Stesichoros puts Herakles to flight, whereas Athena caused him recover his valour (Stes. fr. 167 F). Finglass, apart from a considerable narrative elaboration, sees in this twist of the plot a greater level of characterisation. He writes: 'The audience sees Herakles' reactions to good and bad fortune, making him potentially a figure of greater depth.**'** (2015: 86). Pindar's account of the battle is extremely short and focuses on Herakles' retreat (*O*. 10 15-6). Kyknos in Pindar is presented as an equivalent of mighty Herakles, who was even turned back by him at some point during the battle. Herakles, on the other hand, does not hesitate to fight with such a strong opponent. The hero is not simply a man with unconquerable arms and strong limbs as is Herakles in the Shield (75-6). He is also a man of inner strength, 'a figure of greater depth' in Finglass' words.

In *Isthmian* 4, Herakles is used in a straightforward, exemplary way. The hero went to Antaios' home in Libya to fight with him. Antaios had been mentioned in Peisandros' epic. He was the giant son of Poseidon and Earth. He lived near Kyrene and was able to beat all comers at wrestling because contact with his mother, Earth, made him invincible. Antaios used the skulls of the men he beat to build a temple in honour of his father, a hideous action which justifies Herakles' fight with the giant. As Galinsky writes: 'Herakles fights against enemies who flout a general universal 'order' or 'law',

which has become the generally accepted norm or way of life for both men and gods' (1972: 35). Herakles, Antaios' opponent, is described by Pindar as 'μορφὰν βραχύς / ψυχὰν δ' ἄκαμπτος' (53-53β). According to the 'scholion' on line 87: 'τοῦτο γοῦν φησι· καὶ Ἡρακλῆς μικρὸς ὢν πρὸς σύγκρισιν τοῦ Ἀνταίου (i.e. in comparison with Antaios, who was a giant) ἦλθεν ἐπ' αὐτόν, ἀλλ' ὅμως οὐκ ἐνικήθη. βραχὺν δὲ εἶπεν αὐτὸν οὐ μάτην, ἀλλ' ἐπεί τινες σύμμετρον αὐτὸν εἶναί φασι τῷ σώματι. Ἡρόδωρος γοῦν ἐν Οἰδίποδί (FHG II 29 M., I 219 J.) φησι τῶν ἄλλων αὐτὸν περιττεύειν, ὥστε τὸ ὅλον σῶμα πηχῶν εἶναι τεσσάρων καὶ ποδός', Herakles was short in comparison with Antaios who was a giant. Farnell does not agree and writes that there is no 'relativity' in Pindar's statement. He adds that Pindar says absolutely what no one else had ever said to our knowledge, that Herakles was a little man (354: ad 53 μορφὰν βραχύς).

It is true that the poet does not seem to compare Herakles' height to that of Antaios. On the other hand, Pindaric epinician song quite often excludes certainties. It may be useful to turn to late archaic art in search of the characteristics with which this art endows Herakles. The fight with the giant Geryon was a central item in the repertoire. Herakles is not painted shorter than Geryon. In fact, on a Korinthian cup from Perachora, he even looks taller than the giant (Schefold 1992: 122). Concerning the battle with Antaios, as Schefold writes, it became popular only when enthusiasm for competitive athletics reached its height during the late sixth century (142). Nowhere is Herakles presented as being shorter than Antaios. On the contrary, he looks gigantic on a Leagros Group hydria in Munich. Schefold explains that to overcome a giant, Herakles must look gigantic himself (142). The artist who depicts Herakles in this way certainly owes a lot to a living tradition. Simultaneously, the artist's medium imposes limitations that need to be respected. A small Herakles against a huge Geryon or

Antaios would be unacceptable, not only because it would not be in harmony with a circulating tradition but also because it would not be plausible.

Pindar's medium, however, allows him to shed light on what lies behind Herakles' physique. In *Isthmian* 4, what is important is the antithesis between the hero's physique and his inner life, an antithesis which also characterises Melissos. The athlete resembles the boldness of loudly roaring wild lions in his heart (θυμόν) during the fight. His short stature is contrasted to that of the mythical Orion (49). He is short but he is heavy in strength to fall in with (51). Physical and inner strength overcome the disadvantage of small stature, Melissos beats his opponent, and is therefore immortalised in a song which is 'θαυμαστόν'. Alkmene's son, on the other hand, who explored all the lands, and the sea, and made safe the route for shipping (55-7), is deservedly honoured by the immortals, even by Hera as Pindar implies: 'νῦν δὲ παρ' Αἰγιόχῳ κάλλιστον ὄλβον / ἀμφέπων ναίει, τετίμα / ταί τε πρὸς ἀθανάτων φίλος,Ἥβαν τ' ὀπυίει, / χρυσέων οἴκων ἄναξ καὶ γαμβρὸς Ἥρας' (*I*. 4. 58-60) and by humans at Thebes along with his sons (Herakles at Thebes is also honoured with 'ἄεθλα'(62) which are 'ἰσχύος ἔργον' (68).

To conclude, the main question that can be asked concerns Pindar's attitude to heroic behaviour within contemporary frameworks of memory. What is heroic behaviour at a time when a hero such as Herakles does not have to bring order in the world by killing dangerous creatures? What is heroic behaviour at a time when the immortalising role passes from epic poetry to epinician song? What should a victor at the Games who is immortalised in an epinician against the backcloth of the κλέος of Homeric warriors consider as heroic behaviour? To answer these questions, Pindar's 'reconstructive imagination' explores those aspects of Herakles which bring him closer

to the ideal athlete and to humans in general. In *Isthmian* 4, the quintessential virtue of the hero as well as of the athlete in the present is his 'indomitable spirit', his determination to fight and his courage in the face of adversities. A hero is also the perfect representative of aristocratic values (he has noble manners, he fights for a just cause, he understands the importance of Games and he becomes the founder of the most prestigious ones in the case of Herakles). A small contemporary victor like Melissos who is determined to rise above his limitations (his small stature) inspires the poet to turn to the hero of foundational times because he shares the same normative standards with him. The hero and the victor deserve to be remembered as exceptional individuals and they will be, thanks to the immortalising function of epinician song in Greek cultural memory.

CONCLUSION

Myth in this work has been discussed, following Assmann, as a foundational story with formative and normative meaning for Greek mnemonic communities until Pindar's times. This story provides mnemonic communities with standards which derive their impetus from a past that they acknowledge as a point of reference in the present and which create for them a sense of their own value and identity. On the eve of the Classical period and during this period, myth in performed genres provides guidance through collectively understood and respected or even questioned (and thus re-shaped) values and norms. Homeric and Hesiodic poetry and Pindaric song have been discussed as media of memory. As such, they have been understood as mediating between a foundational past and the present by storing past knowledge and by transmitting what was thought important at the time of their creation. They have also been understood as mediating between the poetic voice and its audiences. It is to this poetic voice which keeps evolving from Homer onwards (as the study of Hesiod and Pindar demonstrates) that the memory of a foundational past is entrusted in Greek cultural memory. Epic poetry and epinician song transmitted memory and re-shaped the identity of Greek communities in the Archaic and Classical period. Homer captures a disappearing past (and its accumulated memory) and immortalises the hero with his aristocratic values. The epic hero is a distinguished individual who, however, needs to be integrated in his community in order to serve a common cause, that of destroying Troy in the case of the *Iliad*. Odysseus too needs to be re-integrated after his many wanderings. In a similar way, in a period when athletic prowess was highly esteemed, the laudandus in Pindar is re-integrated after his victory and its immortalisation in epinician song by representing through his life the values respected by his community.

The Homeric hero serves as a paradeigma of courage and endurance for successive mnemonic communities. The normative standards of heroic myth (we should also remember the normative narratives in the Hesiodic *Works and Days*) set a precedent for Pindar who often turns to shared mythic knowledge in search of a paradeigma for a winning athlete who, in his turn, becomes a paradeigma for the mnemonic community by what he has achieved.

But what is Pindar's attitude to shared foundational knowledge? By studying Hesiod's work we realise that an important virtue of Greek mythical tradition is flexibility. Due to this flexibility, genres like epinician song and tragedy can create and transmit meaning through the mechanisms of Greek cultural memory. The Homeric and Hesiodic traditions often contradict each other even in matters of divine myth. Hesiod in his Theogony actually attributes this diversity to the Muses. The Homeric narrator is totally dependent on the Muse. She is the unequivocal source of his knowledge. Hesiod, however, says that the Muses could both tell the truth and lie to their inferior humans. Pindar takes this further in *Olympian* 1 by saying that a story which comes from the distant past can even be the fabrication of an envious neighbour. He considers it his responsibility to tell the 'true' account of the story, in accordance with his own criteria concerning what can and what cannot be said about the gods. These criteria have been shaped in contemporary frameworks of memory but they are also presented as belonging to a 'remembered' past whose links with the identity of Greek mnemonic communities in the present have not been broken. In doing so, Pindar knows well that he is not restricted by a monolithic tradition which excludes innovation. He thus creates his own version which also takes into consideration new challenges in memory culture like the rationalising influences of the Ionian enlightenment, the 'ancient age of reason'.

The diachronic quest for what continues to create meaning in constantly new mnemonic contexts seems to have become the dynamic of literary creation ever since Homer. Traditional stories with normative standards play a key role in this quest. To focus on Pindar, he understands and explains human life against the background of foundational events which have been diachronically a source of identity for mnemonic communities. However, he does not always deliver the familiar. He uses his poetic authority to mediate between pre-existing memory on the one hand and new challenges in memory culture, his own value system, even the needs of a particular song on the other. It is through this mediation process that continuity is achieved and rupture with the past is avoided.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. - Hellas in Homeric and Hesiodic epic

In Homeric epic, Hellas is a particular area close to Phthia (Iliad 2.683; 9.478-49, Odyssey 11.496), and those who inhabited Hellas and Phthia were called 'Hellenes or Myrmidons or Akhaians' and were under Achilles' rule (*Iliad* 2.684-685). The name 'Panhellenes' appears in the *Iliad* (2. 530), where 'the Panhellenes and Akhaioi must designate the entire Greek army' (Graf 2014: 220). Graf also thinks that the formula 'whose glory spread wide over Hellas and Argos, its centre' (*Odyssey* 1.344; 4.726, 816) may comprise the entire territory inhabited by Greek-speakers (220). For Graf, the name Hellenes was used in a wider sense in Homer's time, whereas the tension between the local and the global meaning of the name reflected the contrast between the mythical information Homer transmitted about a particular region –situated on the northern mainland and related to Hellen, the firstborn son of Pyrrha and Deukalion according to the *Catalogue*, and the wider, though unexplained, use of the name in his times (220). The names 'Ἀχαιοί', 'Δαναοί', and 'Ἀργεῖοι' are used as collective names in Homer, but no specific reason is provided for this use. Hesiod also mentions that it was from Aulis that the Akhaioi sailed from holy Hellas to Troy (*W & D* 651-653), whereas he also uses the name 'Panhellenes'(*W & D* 524-528). In the *Catalogue* F 130 MW (F 78 Most), Hesiod refers to the Panhellenes, who wooed the daughters of Proitos. Alcman speaks of Hellas, nourisher of heroes (F 27 Page), and Xenophanes (F 8 West) uses Hellas as an adjective to refer to the Greek land 'Ἑλλάδα γῆν'.

Appendix 2. - Clan identity in Pindar

With his reference to the praised athlete's clan, Pindar expresses his belief in the existence of innate gifts. The members of the clan are innately 'Ἀγαθοί'. A clan identity lives on through every new member who, through his achievements, makes his own new contribution to the clan's code of ethics, at the centre of which lies the agonistic idea. Success provides a kind of justification of the importance of the clan identity for the community. A clan identity stands between the individual and the collective. On the one hand, it relates to the individual's consciousness of his self-image and on the other, to his recognition by the community through the qualities he has as a member of the clan. Attitudes towards clan identity changed diachronically. During the 6th century, the importance of a clan identity was questioned in Athens, whereas aristocratic families in states like Thebes or Aigina still adhered to claims related to their clan identity. Epinician song, with its adherence to aristocratic values, becomes important in this conflicting historical context.

Appendix 3. - Heracles in Homer and Hesiod

In the Homeric tradition, Herakles is a hero who can transgress the proper limit. In the *Iliad* (5.392-404) he functions as a mythological paradeigma not for heroic behaviour but for Diomedes' wild attack against goddess Aphrodite. Diomedes is aware of the fact that Aphrodite is not a goddess who likes war ('γινώσκων ὅ τ' ἄναλκις ἔην θεός, οὐδὲ θεάων / τάων αἵ τ'ἀνδρῶν πόλεμον κάτα κοιρανέουσιν, / οὔτ' ἄρ Ἀθηναίη οὔτε πτολίπορθος Ἐνυώ.' 5.331-333). Nevertheless, he wounds her with his sharp spear when she is trying to save her son Aeneas. Dione, Aphrodite's mother, strongly condemns Herakles for similar behaviour. The son of Amphitryon had struck Hera and Hades. Dione's words characterise Herakles as a violent man who even dares threaten the Olympian gods with his arrows ('σχέτλιος, ὀβριμοεργός, ὅς οὐκ ὄθετ' αἴσυλα ῥέζων, / ὃς τόξοισιν ἔκηδε θεούς, οἳ Ὄλυμπον ἔχουσι.' 5. 403-404). In the *Odyssey* (8.221-228), Odysseus is at the court of Alkinoos. Two Phaeacian youngsters anger him by accusing him of lack of athletic prowess. Odysseus replies that, apart from Philoktetes, he is the best in archery of all mortals who are on earth and eat bread in his times. However, he is not presumptuous enough to compare himself with 'ἀνδράσι προτέροισιν' (223) like Herakles or Eurytos of Oechalia, 'οἵ ῥα καὶ ἀθανάτοισιν ἐρίζεσκον περὶ τόξων' (225). Herakles and Eurytos had been granted excessive strength and they had even dared to use it against the gods. Their actions did not coincide with the cultural values and norms respected by Odysseus. As a result, Eurytos was killed by Apollo (8.226-228). Homer passes on a memory whose source is unknown. Galinsky (1972: 11) writes that 'we know nothing about a contest in archery between Herakles and a god, and perhaps we have here an allusion to the paradeigma of Herakles' onslaught on the gods in *Iliad* 5.'

The memory of Herakles is reshaped in Hesiod and in a different medium, the didactic epic. In this epic Herakles slays monsters dangerous for human life such as the hydra (313-318) or the lion of Nemea (326-332), thus transforming the world into a friendlier place for humans. He also kills the eagle sent by Zeus to torture Prometheus (527-534), in accordance with the will of Zeus who honours his son. Galinsky (1972: 16) writes: 'The *Theogony* is essentially about the glorification of Zeus, and Herakles' frequent mention is called for because he lives up to the Greek ideal that the father's deeds and fame should live on in his descendants'. This aristocratic ideal is not only present in Pindar (*O*. 2. 7, *O*. 6. 9, *O*. 7. 17, *I*. 6. 63-66 and others) but it is also extended to include the victor's city whose growing importance is demonstrated in Pindaric song. In *Olympian* 13, for example, the poet sings Xenophon's of Corinth victory in the stadion and the pentathlon. Xenophon's father, Thessalos, had won the stadion at Olympia. His fame lives on in his son. Moreover, the fame of his city lives on in him. Pindar characterises Corinth as 'ἀγλαόκουρον'.