Pindar's *Olympian* 2 and 'Orphism' (with an appendix on the colometry of Pindar's text)*

Carmine Catenacci

Introduction

In his commentary to *Olympian* 2, Malcom Willcock defines this ode as one of the "greatest products of Pindar's genius" (Willcock 1995, 133) that have come down to us; at the same time, however, it is one of the most complex and difficult Pindaric odes. The fundamental crux of the interpretation of *Olympian* 2 concerns the meaning and function of the eschatological passage (57-83) that, according to the most widespread interpretation, incorporates elements of so-called Orphic-Pythagorean beliefs. My paper consists of three parts: a brief general introduction to the ode; analysis of the eschatological section; brief conclusions on the general meaning of the poem. I adopt the text of *Olympian Odes* edited by Bruno Gentili, Pietro Giannini, Liana Lomiento and myself (Gentili *et al.* 2013), which tends to follow the colometry of medieval manuscripts. In the appendix I discuss some basic points about issues of colometry in the manuscripts and editions of Pindar.

Background and content

Olympian 2 was composed for Theron, winner of the chariot race at Olympia in 476 BC. In the twelve years since 488 BC Theron had been tyrant of Acragas. *Olympian* 2 was composed in the context of an important and lasting relationship of patronage that bound Pindar to the noble Emmenidai family. As early as 490 BC, Pindar had composed *Pythian* 6 for Xenocrates (chariot winner in Delphi), Theron's brother

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and father of the young Thrasyboulus. An encomium is dedicated to the same Thrasyboulus (fr. 124a.b Maehler). Another ode, *Isthmian* 2, probably dated to 474, is also addressed to Thrasyboulus to celebrate *in memoriam* his late father's victory in the chariot race at the Isthmian games.

In the midst of this remarkable sequence stands *Olympian* 2: it, *Olympian* 3 and an encomium (frr. 118.*119 Maehler) are all composed in honour of Theron. Both epinikia are dedicated to the same victory in the chariot race. The poems are two, because the song-occasions were two. *Olympian* 3 looks like an epinikion to be sung in a civic-religious festival in front of a broader audience; it has the typical epinikion structure and features, such as the Heracles myth, closely related to the Olympian Games, and a meter *kat' enoplion-epitrite* (or *dactylo-epitrite*), which is typical of eulogy. *Olympian* 2, however, as we shall see, displays more personal encomiastic tones. It is likely to have been sung in front of a more homogeneous audience, probably in the tyrant's palace and in the context of wide-ranging conviviality. It is difficult to determine if the performance was entrusted to a single voice or to a choir.[1] Moreover, it is difficult to determine which of the two odes is earlier: *Olympian* 2, with its more intimate character, seems indeed to presuppose the existence of another poem that celebrates the winner in the more typical and official manner of epinikion praise. If in 476 Pindar actually arrived in Sicily (as I consider probable),[2] he might have been present at the performance of the ode in the tyrant's palace.

By 476 BC Theron, now elderly, had been ruling Acragas, one of the richest cities in the Mediterranean, for more than ten years. His career at home and in international politics had been marked by numerous successes. The peak had been the great military victory at Himera against the Carthaginians in 480 BC. Using huge numbers of enslaved Carthaginians Theron promoted a grandiose plan of public works, including sacred buildings and a water supply, and of agricultural development. We can get an idea of the beauty of Acragas at Theron's time from the archaeological remains of present-day Agrigento and from the ancient sources. Thanks to his fair government he enjoyed the citizens' favour and after his death (472 BC) he received heroic honours.[3] The victory at

[1] For details on the interpretation of the ode I refer to CATENACCI 2013.

[2] The only explicit source about Pindar in Sicily is the *Ambrosian Life* (I 2, 2 f. Drachmann).

[3] Diod. Sic. 1, 53, 2; cf. 13, 86.

Olympia, in the most prestigious competition, was the precious seal of this extraordinary career.

Nonetheless, even the life of the *tyrannos* of Acragas could be full of painful and sad events. Putting together the ancient sources,[4] we know that precisely between the summer and autumn of 476 BC, Theron had to quash an attempted rising in the city of Himera. Theron had given the rule of Himera to his son Thrasydaeus, but Thrasydaeus was a bad ruler both on the human and on the political level. Repression was bloody. Theron slaughtered so many of his opponents that he had to repopulate Himera. The same events of 476 at Himera are also to be connected to the insubordination of Capys and Hippocrates, ungrateful and envious relatives of Theron, who rebelled but were defeated. Hieron of Syracuse, with whom Theron was involved in a complex nexus of alliances and rivalries both political and familial, had an ambiguous role in the Himera revolt. It is worth remembering that Damareta, daughter of Theron, had married Gelon, Hieron's older brother and predecessor. Then the same Damareta, widowed, married Polyzalus, another brother of Gelon and Hieron. But marriage links between the Deinomenidai of Syracuse and the Emmenidai of Acragas do not end here and are very complex (Gernet 1981).

The content of *Olympian* 2 can be summarized as following.

— 1 ff.: the ode begins with the powerful 'wing shot', as Puech (1922, 36) wrote, of the proemium: "My songs, lords of the lyre / Which of the gods, what hero, what mortal shall we celebrate?" (transl. Lattimore 1947).
— 5-15: praise of Theron and his ancestors.
— 15-30: *gnomai* on the changeability of human fortune and the mythical example of Cadmus' daughters.
— 31-46: new thoughts on the mutability of fortune; the Emmenidai's descend from the Labdakidai.
— 46-50: celebration of the victories of Theron and Xenocrates.
— 51-56: *gnomai* on virtue.
— 56-83: the eschatological section: after death, souls receive a reward or a punishment for their behaviour in life; by being reincarnated three times those who live justly achieve eternal happiness on the Isle of the Blessed.

[4] The main evidence comes from Diod. Sic. 1, 48 and *schol*. Pind. *Ol*. 2, 173fg (see also 8a); *Pyth*. 6, 5a; for the reconstruction of the events see Luraghi 1994, 248 ff.

— 83-88: an attack on two vulgar poetaster crows:[5] "There are many sharp shafts in the quiver / under the crook of my arm. / They speak to the understanding; most men need interpreters. / The wise man knows many things in his blood; the vulgar are taught. / They will say anything. They chatter vainly like crows / against the sacred bird of Zeus" (transl. Lattimore 1947).
— 89-99/100: a return to current celebrations and effusive praise of Theron. The ode had begun with a question, and with a rhetorical question it ends.

The eschatological section (56-83)

… εἰ δέ νιν ἔχων
τις οἶδεν τὸ μέλλον,
ὅτι θανόντων μὲν ἐν-
θάδ' αὐτίκ' ἀπάλαμνοι φρένες
ποινὰς ἔτεισαν, τὰ δ' ἐν τᾷδε Διὸς ἀρχᾷ
ἀλιτρὰ κατὰ γᾶς δικά-
ζει τις ἐχθρᾷ λόγον φράσαις ἀνάγκᾳ·[6] (56-61)

The poet introduces the idea that after death souls receive reward or punishment as a result of their behaviour on earth.

Though with some variation, the most common interpretation of the passage is that the ἀπάλαμνοι φρένες (57) are the same evil men whose misdeeds (τὰ ἀλιτρὰ) are punished beneath the earth (57-58; 67-68). In other terms, the two parts of the whole sentence would relate both to the same process of punishment and would be juxtaposed without any differentiation: the first part (ὅτι θανόντων … ποινὰς ἔτεισαν) describes the situation from the point of view of the deceased, the second (τὰ δ' ἐν τᾷδε Διὸς ἀρχᾷ … φράσαις ἀνάγκᾳ) from the underworld judge's point of view ("how, as we die here, the heart uncontrolled yields retribution; likewise for sins in this kingdom of God there is a judge under the earth", transl. Lattimore 1947).[7]

This interpretation, however, encounters serious linguistic difficulties. First, ἀπάλαμνοι does not mean 'evil', 'criminal'. The etymology (ἀ- + παλάμη 'palm of the hand', that is 'force', 'skill') clarifies the underlying meaning, that is 'without resources', both in the sense of 'unfit',

[5] In my opinion, Simonides and Bacchylides, as the ancient commentators say, but this would be the topic of another paper.
[6] For the colometry of the text, see Appendix.
[7] See Willcock 1995, 154 f.

'incapable', 'unprepared' and in the sense of 'against whom you cannot act' (cf. *Ol.* 1, 59). It is in this sense we find the word is first used (Lloyd-Jones 1985, 252 ff.). In Homer (*Il.* 5, 597) the word is used to describe a warrior in a state of impotence. In Hesiod (*Op.* 20) it defines an idle man. In Alcaeus (fr. 360, 2 Voigt) it indicates Aristodemus' not 'invalid' judgment; and so too in other occurrences of the archaic and classical period. The meaning 'evil', 'criminal' belongs, rather, to the opposite term without a negative prefix, παλαμναῖος.

Second, the two parts of the sentence are marked by an antithetical relationship. We know that in the sequence μέν (57) … δέ (58) δέ may have connective and not necessarily adversative function (Denniston 1954, 62 f.). But in our specific case the construction μέν… δέ… δέ…, in which the first δέ (58) is continuative and the second oppositional (61), induces even a supporter of this hypothesis paradoxically to reproach Pindar: "a slight blemish as regards the use of particles" (Farnell 1930-1932, I, 17) (as a modern school teacher, we correct Pindar with a blue and red pencil!). And, most importantly, the opposition is clearly reaffirmed by the subsequent ἐνθάδε (57) vs κατὰ γᾶς (59/60). The antithesis between the word 'here' of the earth ('the kingdom of Zeus') and the region 'down there' ('the underworld' of Hades), is as evident as traditional. It can claim numerous and indisputable *comparanda*.[8]

In short, we must take ἐνθάδε, αὐτίκα and ἔτεισαν together, with the sense that 'the ἀπάλαμνοι φρένες pay a penalty immediately here (on earth)', in contrast with κατὰ γᾶς 'in the underworld', where criminal actions (τὰ ἀλιτρά) are judged and punished. It is forced, to say the least, besides being pleonastic, to try to connect the adverb ἐνθάδε with θανόντων giving the sense 'the dead here on earth' (where else?). Similarly, it is forced and pleonastic to establish a connection between ἐνθάδε and ἀπάλαμνοι (as in the *schol.* 105a); nor can ἐνθάδε absolutely mean 'beyond', 'in the underworld'.

It follows therefore that, unless we do violence to the text, ll. 57-58 and ll. 58-59 describe two different conditions and two different types of penalty: one on Earth,[9] the other in Hades: "The inept minds of the

[8] Starting from the same Pindar, fr. 129, 1 f. Maehler = 58, 1 Cannatà Fera τοῖσι λάμπει μὲν μένος ἀελίου / τὰν ἐνθάδε νύκτα κάτω ("the sun shines for them over there, whereas here it's night"); then *e.g.* Soph. *O.R.* 967 f. ὃ δὲ θανὼν / κεύθει κάτω δὴ γῆς· ἐγὼ δὲ ὅδ' ἐνθάδε ("he dead there lies beneath the earth, and I'm here"); Aristoph. *Ran.* 82 ὁ δ' εὔκολος μὲν ἐνθάδ', εὔκολος δ' ἐκεῖ ("He was quiet here [on earth], and quiet is there [in Hades]").

[9] About penalty on earth cf. also Plat. *Leg.* 905a.

dead pay here their punishment at once, but someone beneath the earth judges the faults committed in this kingdom of Zeus". But, if the second punishment is clear (in the afterlife we will pay for the crimes committed on earth), what is the nature of the first punishment? Several solutions have been proposed for this line. It is significant, in my opinion, that ancient scholars had already, though with different explanations, interpreted the statement in the sense of a double punishment: on earth and in the underworld.

Aristarchus, to begin with, believed that the punishment on earth could serve to atone for sins committed during the stay in Hades. But this hypothesis raises serious difficulties: committing crimes in the afterlife? Also, after the introduction of ll. 55-56 on the future of souls in relation to their actions on earth (ἀστὴρ ἀρίζηλος … μέλλον), one would expect a description of what follows these actions after death, not an unexpected statement on penalties to be paid for the crimes committed in the afterlife by mortals once they have returned to earth. And what sense would αὐτίκα ('right now') have? It is no surprise that those who accept Aristarchus' interpretation have to resort to the correction αὖτις 'back', 'again' (Rauchenstein 1845, 14 f.).

More bizarre, perhaps, is the explanation proposed by Chrysippus: wicked souls are haunted on earth by the dead (θανόντων = ὑπὸ θανόντων), that is by ghosts, like for example the spirit of Agamemnon that haunts Clytemnestra (*schol.* 104b). Needless to say, Chrysippus' idea found no followers.

Other hypotheses have been put forward by modern scholars. Carlo Del Grande has distinguished two categories of sinners: the perpetrators of venial crimes (the ἀπάλαμνοι) and those of very serious crimes (τὰ ἀλιτρά). The worthless life led on earth by minor sinners (ἀπάλαμνοι) would be their own punishment. So, after death, – Del Grande (1956, 120) writes – "for a period of delay and simultaneously of test" they would stay motionless in the Elysian Fields, "to watch the blessed dwelling there, live their lives". The distinction between the two types of offenders is promising, but the rest of the reconstruction does not work and lacks any plausible *comparandum* either in Pindar's text or in other eschatological texts. Pindar speaks about *the dead* and about a sentence to be served *immediately*, after death, not before.

Hugh Lloyd-Jones' (1985) interpretation has the merit of refuting indisputably the equation of ἀπάλαμνοι with 'evil ones'. But then sees a parallel between ἀπάλαμνοι φρένες and the ἀμενηνὰ κάρηνα of Hom-

er's Hades (*Od*. 11, 49). The souls of the dead would be 'weak',[10] in the sense that when people die, their minds become weak and immediately pay a penalty resulting from death itself, which would be the penalty for men's original sin, that is their origins from the Titans who must be punished for killing Dionysus. The ingenious hypothesis seems to assume too many overtones when compared to what Pindar' verses say.

More recently, Franco Ferrari (1998, 94) has proposed another interpretation. The soul that is reincarnated would bring from the afterlife a penalty to be paid on earth. This is not, as claimed by Aristarchus, for crimes committed in the afterlife, but for sins committed in the previous earthly life, which its stay in the afterlife did not suffice to erase, so they await their atonement, a new transmigration into the world of the living. The souls would be 'inept', 'powerless', because their still operative burden of impurities does not allow them to escape the painful cycle of metempsychosis, which is in itself a painful constraint according to Orphic-Pythagorean conceptions. It is noteworthy, however, that if the guilt to be expiated on earth was a legacy of previous mortal life, then staying in Hades and paying for the actions committed in the previous life would have no meaning. δίκη, even after death, is equalizing and reciprocal. The move into the afterlife serves precisely to give justice (cf. δικάζει l. 59/60), i.e. to assign just rewards and penalties for good and bad deeds. Should this not happen in all cases? Why in relation to certain sins and not to others? What then is the stay in Hades for? And do we have any *comparanda* for this concept? However, apart from these serious reservations, the hypothesis captures an important point: the painful nature of reincarnation.

This review of critical positions taken is incomplete, but it gives an idea of the complexity and difficulty of the question. There are no simple or obvious solutions. However, despite the passage's persistent problems,[11] I would like to propose a new interpretation that is based on the results of the exegesis I have reviewed.

Two basic points need to be underlined: 1) the identification of the ἀπάλαμνοι φρένες not with evil minds, but with minds that are disabled, unprepared, that must be distinguished from those of the perpetrators of crimes (τὰ ἀλιτρά); 2) a penalty on earth and one in Hades. So, two punishments for two categories of offenders. When inept souls die, they

[10] Cf. "the helpless spirits" (Race 1997, 69).

[11] Note especially Willcock's estimate of ll. 57-60: "the most outrageously difficult sentence in all the epinician odes" (Willcock 1995).

immediately pay their penalty here on earth, because they were responsible neither for serious crimes nor for good actions, while wicked souls are judged severely and subjected to horrific punishment in Hades. As a whole, three possible types of conduct emerge: the inept, the bad and the good (cf. 61 ff.). This is a gradation of human behaviour and its respective remuneration which is confirmed in other ethical and eschatological representations, most prominently in two passages of Plato's *Phaedo* and a passage from Plutarch.[12] These three passages clearly distinguish the three categories of moral behaviour, exactly where they talk of rewards in the afterlife.

Moreover, this diversification is consistent with Pindaric ideology and with its system of supreme values: for Pindar, the ἀγαθός is noted for the excellence that distinguishes his from a common existence. An important confirmation both of the meaning of ἀπάλαμνος and of its role in a moral classification can be found in the *Enkomion to Scopas* by Simonides (542, 1 ff.; 33 ff. *PMG*). In a morally focused speech Simonides distinguishes men who are respectively ἀγαθοί, ἀπάλαμνοι and κακοί: once again a threefold distinction between 'talented', 'inept' and 'evil'. But, in his own way, and contrary to the aristocratic outlook of Pindar, Simonides insists on the impossibility of being ἀγαθός in an absolute sense. He accepts the condition of the common man, provided it is neither κακός nor, precisely, 'too inept' (ἄγαν ἀπάλαμνος).

But what is then the punishment that 'unprepared', 'inept minds' pay straight away on earth after death? If we consider that in Orphic-Pythagorean doctrines earthly life and metempsychosis, as mentioned, are a penalty, the penalty might be that immediate reincarnation itself. In the eschatology of Plato's *Phaedo* (114c; cf. 62b) our location on earth is 'a prison' from which pious souls come to free themselves after death. Even more explicit is a passage from *Cratylus* 400c: the body (σῶμα) is called tomb (σῆμα) by the Orphics because the soul pays for its sins in this receptacle which is similar to a prison. And Empedocles, younger contemporary of Pindar and active in Acragas itself, describes *metensomatosis* as a tormenting experience through which the soul must pass to atone for its sins and thus attain salvation.[13]

[12] Plat. *Phaed*. 113d οἱ καλῶς καὶ ὁσίως βιώσαντες … οἱ μὲν ἂν δόξωσι μέσως βεβιωκέναι … οἱ δ' ἂν δόξωσιν ἀνιάτως ἔχειν διὰ τὰ μεγέθη τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων …; 90a τοὺς μὲν χρηστοὺς καὶ πονηροὺς σφόδρα ὀλίγους … τοὺς δὲ μεταξὺ πλείστους; Plut. *Mor*. 1104a τὸ [γένος] τῶν ἀδίκων καὶ πονηρῶν, δεύτερον δὲ τὸ τῶν πολλῶν καὶ ἰδιωτῶν, τρίτον δὲ τῶν ἐπιεικῶν καὶ νοῦν ἐχόντων … .

[13] Emp. 31 B 115; 118; 124-6 DK.

So, with this in mind, the ἀπάλαμνοι φρένες could pay immediately for their sins – I think – in the sense that they are immediately re-introduced into the painful cycle of life and rebirth. They do not go to Hades to receive punishment or reward, as happens respectively to those who are guilty of serious crimes and those who behaved well. Among the good then, those who can go three times through the cycle of life-death-rebirth ('three times on both sides') honouring justice, forever escape the process of reincarnation and live forever on the Islands of the Blessed (68 ff.). In short, the penalty for the unprepared minds is the pain of immediate transmigration after death into a new body-prison or, in the words of Empedocles, into "an unknown cloak of meat" (31 B 126 DK) through the "painful paths of existence" (B 115, 8 DK).

After this attempt to solve this specific exegetical crux, the central question for the overall interpretation of the poem must be discussed. Is there a link between its contents, in particular the soteriological section, and the so-called Orphism? I write "so-called Orphism" because of the insecure and vague nature of our knowledge of this religious phenomenon. Under the rubric of Orphic doctrines ancient sources from very different periods and not always well informed transmit a multiform series of religious beliefs and mythical tales, elements of worship, practices and lifestyles. Despite the broadening of our knowledge thanks to the publication of Orphic gold tablets and other texts,[14] it is still hard to define the essence and origins of this religious movement and its relations with Dionysus, with the mysteries of Demeter, and with Pythagoreanism, although its close contacts with Pythagoreanism often lead scholars (and rightly so) to speak of Orphic-Pythagorean beliefs, especially for the early period.[15] Certainly, we cannot think of Orphics as having a theological system or being a religious body: no Orphic church or Orphic bible exists. But it would be equally wrong to deny (as some do) the existence of various religious experiences, not always consistent and yet (on the ground of a number of concepts and similar patterns of behaviour) forming a peculiar and distinct framework, independent and original in many ways, within the panorama of Greek religion.

[14] See Pugliese Carratelli 1993; Kouremenos, Parássoglou and Tsantsanoglou 2006 and for an introduction to the 'Orphism' Burkert 1985, 296 ff.; Edmonds 2010.

[15] The close relationship between Orpheus and Pythagoras, although with different order of priority, are attested in many sources beginning with Herodotus 2, 81, 2; Ion 36 B 2 DK = 116 Leurini; then Iamblichus, *VP* 145 ff.; 151 etc. (texts collected in Bernabé 2004, 84 ff.). About similarities between the two movements see West 1993, 19 ff.; 270; Pugliese Carratelli 1990, 415 ff.

Two of the most characteristic and unique beliefs of Orphic-Pythagorean doctrines are found in *Olympian* 2: metempsychosis and belief in a judgment in the afterlife that either rewards with everlasting happiness those who behaved piously on earth or punishes the wicked with horrible punishments. But are these elements really Orphic? According to some critics, the whole poem can be read without any special Orphic connotation. It would be comparable with the rest of Pindar's oeuvre and would find various analogues in the common mythical-religious tradition. The punishment that awaits great sinners in the afterlife is already found in the *Odyssey* (11, 568 ff.). Pindar himself describes the eternal torments of Tantalus (*Ol*. 1, 56 ff.) and Ixion (*Pyth*. 2, 21 ff.). Moreover, a land of the blessed, to which heroes like Menelaus or Achilles are taken, is also evoked by other authors of the Archaic period.[16]

Whatever the origin and purpose of the afterlife elements of *Olympian* 2, Pindar certainly recasts them in his own way and according to his poetic taste and competence. He is not composing a treatise on Orphic theology but a song of praise. The picture of afterlife is intertwined with traditional components of the encomiastic genre, such as myths. Mythical material familiar to the poet, such as the choice of heroes named in connection with the Isle of the Blessed (from Cadmus to Peleus up to Achilles and his victims: they recur in other epinicia), prove to be relevant at this structural point of the ode. This *excursus* on the fate of the souls occupies the compositional place and paradigmatic function usually reserved for a mythical tale.

Given that, one cannot fail to note two aspects of clear originality. The first is the eschatological perspective. It does not concern only the great heroes of myth, but it extends to all men. In the Pindaric passage under discussion, one of the first pieces of evidence available to us concerning eschatology, the magnitude of the crimes is accompanied by the moral dimension of human action as a discriminating factor for encountering happiness or condemnation in the afterlife. Respect for oaths and total abstention from injustice distinguish those mortals who will be blessed.

In addition, there is a second aspect of sensational originality: *metempsychosis*. The soul arrives at the Island of the Blessed, after having lived more than one life on earth. It is the first evidence of a belief in reincarnation, along with an ironic fragment in which Xenophanes (7

[16] Hom. *Od*. 4, 561 ff.; Hes. *Op*. 166 ff.; Ibyc. 291 *PMG*.

DK = 7, 7a West = 6 Gent.-Pr.) attributes to Pythagoras a belief in the transmigration of souls.[17]

So, two important and specific 'Orphic' novelties: reincarnation and the ethical nature of the judgment in the afterlife. Besides, there seem to be other possible points of contact between *Olympian* 2 and particular Orphic-Pythagorean beliefs. Suffice here to mention one: the frequency of the number three (and its multiples), whose importance in the Pythagorean and Orphic conceptions is notorious.[18] In *Olympian* 2, what actually impresses is the substantial number of triadic structures, to which the following are prominently included: god, hero and man in the proemium; Zeus, Cronus and Rhea (12); Pallas, Zeus and Dionysus (who honour Semele) (26 f.); three family paradigms (Cadmeioi, Labdacidai, Emmenidai); Olympian, Pythian and Isthmian games (48 ff.); three types of moral behavior: minor sinners, criminals and good ones (57 ff.); three crossings here and there (68 f.); Radamanthys, Cronus and Rhea (75 ff.); Peleus, Cadmus and Achilles (78 ff.); Hector, Cycnus and Memnon (81 ff.); two crows and the eagle (86 ff.); one hundred years, that is, three generations in the last lines.

The question that arises at this point is what religious sense and what poetic function these Orphic-Pythagorean elements might have in the economy of *Olympian* 2. It has been rightly observed that such beliefs do not match our other evidence for Pindaric religion, which normally has a Delphic-Apollonian matrix. We have no real parallels in the rest of Pindar's poetry, if an exception can be made for certain fragments of songs of mourning (θρῆνοι) that have similar topics, although their precise meaning remains obscure for us.[19] Normally, in Pindar, Hades is described as a bleak and hopeless place. It is lit only by the light that reflects the memory of the wonderful deeds on earth.[20] The only forms of survival acknowledged elsewhere by Pindar are not related to the immortality of the soul in the afterlife but are effected by the continuity of a family lineage and by the fame (κλέος) that immortalizing poetry knows best how to guarantee.

[17] According to the surviving content of the fragment, Xenophanes reported that once Pythagoras saw a man beating a dog and told him to stop because he had recognized in dog's yelps the voice of a dead friend (apparently reincarnated in the little beast).

[18] For Pythagoras see *e.g.* Aristot. *De cael.* 268a and for other soteriological beliefs Emp. 31 B 115, 6 DK; Hdt. 2, 123, 2 sg.; Plat. *Phaedr.* 249a; Orph. *Arg.* 895 ff.; 951 ff.; but also Pind. fr. 133 Maehler = 65, 2 Cannatà Fera.

[19] Frr. 129; 130; 133 Maehler = frr. 58a; 58b; 65 Cannatà Fera; see also Willcock 1995, 170 ff.

[20] E.g. *Ol.* 8, 70 ff.; 14, 20 f.; *Nem.* 4, 13 f.; 11, 15 f.; fr. 207 Maehler.

So it seems that it is in Acragas and at the Court of Theron that the eschatological ideas might be alive. Pindar probably came across them there and reworked them in such a way as to suit that audience, as well as to suit his own poetic competence and the eulogistic genre of his poetry. This is what Bruno Gentili (1988, 115 ff.) has called "the norm of the polyp", evoking Amphiaraus' well-known precept to his son (Pind. fr. 43 Maehler): as the octopus takes the colour of the rock which it clings to, so Pindar aristocratically adapts his poetry to the customer's horizon of expectation. Ancient documentation shows that Sicily and southern Italy, along with other outlying areas of Greek settlement, were the most fertile areas for the development of soteriological religious forms.[21] Between the sixth and fifth centuries BC the Pythagorean doctrine of reincarnation spread and became widely known, as shown by Xenophanes' ironic fragment mentioned above (Xenophanes, after all, was a poet travelling between southern Italy and Sicily). At a temporal distance of about a century, another distinguished successor of Pindar in Sicily, namely Plato, also happened to encounter mystery beliefs there. And it is certainly significant that metempsychosis, Pythagorean doctrine and Theron's city, all converge precisely in the figure of an illustrious man from Acragas, i.e. Empedocles, who lived in the fifth century BC.[22] Empedokcles was about twenty years old when *Olympian* 2 was composed and sung for the first time.

Concluding remarks

If we look again at the overall layout of *Olympian* 2, we see clearly that the *Leitmotiv* of the poem is the inevitable succession of ups and downs in human existence. This basic idea is strongly supported by the mythical comparisons, by the gnomic structure and by the confident statements of the poetic "I". The history of the Emmenidai has conformed to the fatal rhythm of evil and good in its extreme forms, from its mythical roots that date back to the Theban dynasty of the Labdacidai down to the events of the last generations in Sicily. However, the

[21] From Hipponion, for example, comes one of the oldest gold tablets (5th century BC) and from Entella another one similar (3rd century BC?); see Pugliese Carratelli 1993, 76 ff. Given the emulation between the tyrants of Syracuse and Acragas, it is not to be overlooked that the Deinomenidai held the hereditary priesthood of the Chthonic Goddesses (Hdt. 7, 153).

[22] Empedocles and Pythagoras are associated in many ways, see Emp. 31 B 129 DK (with Porph. *VP* 30); Alcidam. 14 A 5 DK; Diog. Laert. 8, 54 ff.; cf. Willcock 1995, 138 f.

relentless cycle of sorrows and joys, perhaps never sung in Greek poetry with such severity and intensity, is not a closed cycle. In the end it opens out into an eschatological perspective of immortality and bliss, worthy of the great trials that have been overcome and of the exceptional virtues culminating in the person of the tyrant of Acragas.

Going through *Olympian* 2, one is left with the feeling that the long and tiring family history of the Emmenidai is about to be fulfilled in the person of Theron, with a final and definitive landing on the Isle of the Blessed.

Appendix

The colometry of Pindar's text

It is worth mentioning at this point some considerations about the constitution of the text of *Olympian Odes* edited by Bruno Gentili, Pietro Giannini, Liana Lomiento and me, since it is obvious that the lay-out of our poetic text is different from other modern editions.

In our edition we have inclined to reproduce the colometry of medieval manuscripts (for the reader's convenience, however, we maintain also the numbering of the standard edition of Snell-Maehler). As is well-known, the term 'colometry' corresponds to the identification of text segments (*cola*) that have metrical-rhythmic value and to the organization of lyric verses into metrical sequences accordingly. In the form that came down to us, colometry seems to go back to the Alexandrian scholars, as the papyri of the Hellenistic and Imperial periods show:[23] the colometry found there coincides with the colometric arrangement of medieval manuscripts, except for some cases, a fact that I would say is normal and to be expected in the trasmission of texts. In addition to this evidence there are also metrical *scholia* that precede every epinikion of Pindar in the manuscripts. Normally, the description and interpretation of the *scholia* are mutually consistent and correspond to the colon graphically identified (according to the ancient system that we know chiefly from Hephaestion's handbook and the commentaries on it).

Until the eighteenth century, that is until Friedrich Gottlieb Heyne, the division into *cola* transmitted through the manuscript tradition was

[23] Obviously, "ancient colometric praxis … not exclude the circulation of copies of texts that were not edited according to the colometric criterion" (Gentili and Lomiento 2008, 31); see, for example, the papyrus of the *Persians* of Timotheus.

the basis for editions of Pindar. But, starting from Ahlwardt, Hermann and especially Boeckh, and continuing with Wilamowitz, Maas, Dale and Parker, things changed.[24] According to these scholars ancient colometry (of all poets, not only of Pindar) had no validity. Colometry was an invention of the Alexandrian grammarians, particularly Aristophanes of Byzantium. It was completely unrelated to the original poetic phenomenon and catered primarily to writing, grammatical, textual or rhetorical purposes (but we may note that the colon of rhetoric always ends at the end of a word, while the metrical colon sometimes ends in the middle of a word). The philologists of the Museum no longer had the ability to reconstruct an ode belonging to the archaic and classical period in its original sung form with attention to musical aspects and to metre and rhythm. The observation and classification of the scholars of Alexandria are then better replaced, according to Boeckh and his followers, by modern scholars' own direct observation and new classification. The conclusion that this critical orientation reaches is that the colometric tradition of Antiquity can be totally neglected and abandoned.

Until recently this has been the prevalent opinion. However, a new line of approach is becoming established of late. The so-called Urbino school is the main proponent of this direction of research and our edition of the *Olympian Odes* is an example of its conclusions. It should be recorded that throughout the twentieth century some prominent scholarly voices continued to regard ancient colometry with respect (Rudolph Pfeiffer, Günther Zuntz, and Bruno Snell, who rejected the ancient colometry for Pindar but accepted it for the papyri of Bacchylides). And we must also underline that today an increasing number of scholars from different countries show proper attention for and increased interest in the colometric tradition.[25] The matter is complex, but basic objections can be raised to the theory of those who reject ancient colometry; one can briefly mention the following:

1) The Alexandrian philologists had a superior knowledge of Greek, as well as a direct and living experience of ancient music and poetry, which were an essential part of the education and cultural background of the educated classes. We must not forget that the forms of music and singing that are transmitted orally are conservative.

[24] For the history of the question see Gentili and Lomiento 2008, 30 ff. and Lomiento 2013.

[25] See, among others, Kopff 1999; Fleming 2007. For a different point of view, see Prauscello 2006.

2) The Alexandrians had access to a much larger body of material than we do: several books of poetry, but also texts by musicologists such as Aristoxenus of Tarentum and many other ancient writers.[26]
3) The inscriptions of the Archaic and Classical period show that awareness and practice of colometry were already widespread and recorded. In fact, many epigraphic texts are written not according to mere constraints of material or space but also in accordance with specific metrical-rhythmic patterns.

The fundamental question is what there could have been available between Pindar and the Museum of Alexandria. If we had texts with musical and metrical-rhythmic annotations from the classical age, the problem would be solved. But there are no such texts. We have no positive evidence and no certainty. There is no doubt, therefore, that on this specific issue caution is necessary, together with persistence in developing our own hypotheses and ideas.

On the basis of all the afore-mentioned facts, my personal inclination would be to value the colometric παράδοσις. To my mind, it has a claim to be a witness like all other elements of the textual tradition. Ignoring it is an arbitrary and unhistorical procedure which weakens our understanding of a poetic text. Certainly, ancient colometry must be analyzed and evaluated, and then accepted or rejected, as happens with all data relating to a textual tradition. This stance constitutes a historical and philological necessity,[27] not only a scholarly and formal one; at the same time, it is an important step towards an even deeper and more faithful understanding of ancient poetry, because rhythm is the ancient ψυχή, the breath of life, of poetry.

Carmine Catenacci
Università degli Studi 'G. d'Annunzio' di Chieti - Pescara
c.catenacci@unich.it

[26] As for the question of the texts furnished with musical notations, "it is at any rate plausible that the Alexandrians had access to indications, at least, of the musical modes, if Apollonius the Eidographer, who was perhaps the predecessor of Aristophanes of Byzantium as head of the Alexandrian Library, was really able to provide a musical classification of lyric texts according to the different musical scales (Doric, Phrygian, Lydian, etc.)" (Gentili and Lomiento 2008, 31 f.).

[27] Moreover, it can be useful, for example, to reconstruct the relationships of *codices*.

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Ο Δεύτερος *Ολυμπιόνικος* του Πινδάρου και ο 'Ορφισμός'
(με σύντομο επίμετρο για την κωλομετρία του πινδαρικού κειμένου)

Carmine Catenacci

Περίληψη

Το ΑΡΘΡΟ εστιάζει στην ανάλυση του εσχατολογικού τμήματος του Δευτέρου *Ολυμπιονίκου* του Πινδάρου (στ. 56-83) και προτείνει μία νέα ερμηνεία των στίχων 56-59. Ο ποιητής φαίνεται να εισηγείται την ιδέα της μεταθανάτιας ανταμοιβής ή τιμωρίας των ψυχών συνεπείᾳ της συμπεριφοράς τους επί της γης. Σύμφωνα με τα ορφικο-πυθαγορικά δόγματα, η επίγεια ζωή και η μετεμψύχωση αποτελούν καθ' αυτές επώδυνες δεσμεύσεις και τιμωρίες. Οι ανόητες διάνοιες (φρένες) επανεντάσσονται αμέσως στον επώδυνο κύκλο της (ανα)γέννησης και της ζωής. Δεν μεταβαίνουν στον Άδη, για να λάβουν φρικτή τιμωρία ή θαυμαστή ανταμοιβή, όπως συμβαίνει αντιστοίχως σε αυτούς που είναι ένοχοι για σοβαρά αδικήματα ή σε αυτούς που είχαν σωστή συμπεριφορά. Άρα, όσοι καταφέρουν να διέλθουν τρεις φορές τον κύκλο ζωής – θανάτου – ζωής, σεβόμενοι τη δικαιοσύνη, ξεφεύγουν για πάντα από τον κύκλο της μετεμψύχωσης και ζουν αιωνίως στη Νήσο των Μακάρων.

Η ανάλυση βασίζεται στο κείμενο της έκδοσης των Bruno Gentili, Carmine Catenacci, Pietro Giannini και Liana Lomiento (*Pindaro, Le Olimpiche*. Milano: Fondazione Lorenzo Valla, 2013), στην οποία υπάρχει η τάση αναπαραγωγής της κωλομετρίας που εμφανίζεται στα αρχαία χειρόγραφα. Στο επίμετρο της παρούσας μελέτης θίγονται εν συντομία βασικά σημεία του ζητήματος αυτού.