

THE EAGLE BASKING IN THE LIGHT OF FAME: THE INDO-EUROPEAN POETIC BACKGROUND OF PINDAR, *NEMEAN* 3.80–4

ABSTRACT

This article contributes to a discussion raised more than forty years ago in this journal by Richard Stoneman on how to interpret the unexpected image of an eagle at Pind. Nem. 3.80. Without excluding the possibility of a reference to the poet himself, this article argues, mainly based on a survey on the traditional elements used in that passage, that the eagle also refers—at least partially—to the victorious athlete Aristocleides. This is demonstrated by an internal investigation of the structure of the ode and the use of signal words (–θεν, δέδορκεν, φάος). Moreover, the image of the eagle stands in a series of other ancient and traditional motifs, such as the ‘song of milk and honey’ (77–9) and ‘(far-)shining fame’ (64, 81–4), which can be also found in the Rigveda and therefore can be regarded as an inheritance of the Indo-European (= IE) poetic tradition. Parallels from the Rigveda can be found for the avian imagery too, in which the eagle is compared to someone striving for fame in an athletic contest; this suggests that the image of the eagle is another traditional motif from IE times in Pindar, who uses it as a device to transition from a poetological to a laudatory part of the epinician, perhaps deliberately playing with the ambiguity of the image.

Keywords: Pindar; *Nemean* 3; Indo-European poetry; *Rigveda*; eagle; (far-)shining fame

1. PRELIMINARIES

Pindar’s poetry is a work of art commissioned for specific occasions. In case of the victory odes, a winner in one of the four panhellenic festivals is ‘calling him to arms’, which means asking him to compose a poem, which will be performed either right away after the victory at the place of the festival or later on when the winner comes home and is welcomed solemnly by his community. Since these social contexts in which the victory odes are performed remain more or less the same, so do certain parts of Pindar’s poems. For example, in every song Pindar is supposed to praise the respective victor and to interact in one way or another with the audience.¹ Given that Pindar is not only composing poems once in a while, but has to do this nearly all the time, it seems quite natural that he reuses certain elements that previously proved effective, even consciously referring to some elements used before in other poems. Every time he uses these elements, which he draws from the rich fountain of tradition, he alters, reshapes and recomposes them, to gain the goodwill of the patron and to achieve the effect that the poem is supposed to make within the ritual context with every single victory ode. That is also why the tension between the old and the new is so prominent a topic in Pindar’s poems.

These recurring elements Pindar uses are not all of his own creation, but were mainly handed down to him by a line of poets reaching far back in time. Long before Pindar’s time, there was already a very similar type of poetry embedded in similar contexts and

¹ Cf. e.g. E. Bundy, *Studia Pindarica I and II. The Eleventh Olympian Ode and the First Isthmian Ode* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1962), 3, 35–6.

commissioned for similar occasions (cf. the Rigvedic *Dānastutis*). Today it is widely accepted that this tradition reaches as far back as to IE times. Therefore, Watkins calls Pindar ‘the most Indo-European of all Greek poets’.² In many respects Pindar’s poetry can be regarded as even more archaic than the Homeric epics, because Pindar has much in common especially with the Vedic poetic tradition in which the poet-priest is commissioned by his patron and is bound by a strong reciprocal relationship as well. On top of that, there are many terminological correspondences between Pindar and the *Rigveda*, as, for example, in the famous case of Ved. *vācam ... takṣ-*, Av. *vacastaṣti-* and Gr. ἐπέων ... τέκτονες discovered by Darmesteter³ and discussed in more detail by Schmitt.⁴ For a general account of the antiquity of Pindar’s tradition and its evolution in Greek, see Nagy⁵ and, with special regard to the poetic phraseology, Masetti⁶ and Meusel.⁷

2. PIND. *NEM.* 3.80–4: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS SO FAR PROPOSED

2.1 Problems

The text in question that has given rise to such an abundant dispute about the interpretation of the image of the eagle is located at the end of *Nem.* 3, a victory ode in honour of Aristocleides from Aegina for his victory in the pancratium:

ἔστι δ’ αἰετὸς ὠκύς ἐν ποτανοῖς,
ὃς ἔλαβεν αἶψα, **τηλόθε** μεταμαϊόμενος,
δαφροῖν ἄγρην ποσίν·
κραγέται δὲ κολοιοὶ ταπεινὰ νέμονται.
τίν γε μὲν, εὐθρόνου **Κλεοῦς** ἐθελοί-
σας, ἀεθλοφόρου λήματος ἔνεκεν
Νεμέας Ἐπιδαυρόθεν τ’ ἄπο καὶ Μεγάρων **δέδορκεν**
φάος. (Pind. *Nem.* 3.80–4)

Swift is the eagle among birds, which suddenly seizes, as it searches from afar, the bloodied prey in its talons, while the cawing jackdaws range down below. But for you, through the favour of fair-throned Cleo and because of your determination for victory, from Nemea, Epidaurus, and Megara has shone the light of glory.⁸

The passage marks the concluding stage of the poet’s address to the victor, which began at line 67. After an invocation of Zeus (65–6), Pindar praises Aristocleides for his

² C. Watkins, ‘ΕΠΕΩΝ ΘΕΣΙΣ. Poetic grammar: word order and metrical structure in the odes of Pindar’, in H. Hettrich (ed.), *Indogermanische Syntax. Fragen und Perspektiven* (Wiesbaden, 2002), 319–37, at 319 = id., *Selected Writings. Vol. III. Publications 1992–2008*, ed. L. Oliver (Innsbruck, 2008), 1005–23, at 1005.

³ J. Darmesteter, ‘Iranica’, *Mémoires de la société de linguistique de Paris* 3 (1878–9), 302–21, at 319–21.

⁴ R. Schmitt, *Dichtung und Dichtersprache in indogermanischer Zeit* (Wiesbaden, 1967), 14–15, 297–8.

⁵ G. Nagy, *Pindar’s Homer. The Lyric Possession of an Epic Past* (Baltimore and London, 1990).

⁶ L. Masetti, *Phraseologie und indogermanische Dichtersprache in der Sprache der griechischen Chorlyrik: Pindar und Bakchylides* (Washington, DC, 2019).

⁷ E. Meusel, *Pindarus Indogermanicus. Untersuchungen zum Erbe dichtersprachlicher Phraseologie bei Pindar* (Berlin and Boston, 2020).

⁸ Translations of Pindar are taken from W.H. Race, *Pindar*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA and London, 1997).

achievements for the island of Aegina, which he made famous (ὅς τάνδε νᾶσον εὐκλείη προσέθηκε λόγῳ, 68). Following a brief interruption by a gnomic digression on excellence and the different ages and virtues of men (70–5), Pindar finally turns back to the victor by means of *χαίρει* (76). He compares his poem to a drink of milk and honey and expresses regret that his ode is somewhat late (76–80). Immediately after that, he introduces the imagery of the eagle and the jackdaws (80–2)⁹ and closes the ode with another direct address to the victor (τίν γε μέν, 83) and the fame that he has won (82–3).

The main problem regarding *Nem.* 3.80–4 is the unexpected introduction of the eagle and the jackdaws, which finds no clear motivation within its immediate surroundings.¹⁰ It is unclear whether the eagle stands for the poet or whether it should represent the addressee of the victory ode, Aristocleides.

2.2 Solutions so far proposed

This circumstance led to different interpretations of the imagery of the eagle and the jackdaws at the passage in question. So far, there are basically three standpoints used to account for this difficulty.

2.2.1 The eagle as the poet

The first standpoint can be regarded as the vulgate reading. It is in accordance with the scholia, which state that the eagle should be identified with Pindar and the jackdaws with his poet rivals:

(a) ἔστι δ' αἰετὸς ὠκύς ἐν ποτανοῖς· ὡς μετὰ πολὺν χρόνον τῆς νίκης γεγραμμένου τοῦ ποιήματος· τῆς βραδυτῆτος οὖν ἔνεκεν ἱκανῶς καὶ τὴν εἰκόνα παρεῖληφεν. (b) ἢ οὕτως· εἰ καὶ ὄλως ὀψέ [φησί,] γέγραπται μοι τὸ ποιῆμα, ὅμως ὡς αἰετὸς πόρρωθεν ἐλθὼν ταχέως ἤγρευσε τι καὶ συνήρπασεν, οὕτως ἐγὼ τὰ πράγματα ταχέως συνήρπακα καὶ γέγραφα. (Σ Pind. *Nem.* 3.138 (III 61.19–page 62.3 Drachmann))

(a) Swift is the eagle among birds: because the poem was written a long time after the victory; because of the slowness he also chose the image adequately. (b) Or this way: although the poem was written by me pretty late, I too—just like the eagle coming from afar is hunting and seizing something quickly—seized my duty quickly and wrote it [that is, the poem].

κραγέται δὲ κολοιοὶ ταπεινὰ νέμονται· οἱ δὲ ἀντίτεχνοί μου κολοιοῖς εἰκόσσι, κραυγάζοντες μόνον καὶ ταπεινὰ νεμόμενοι, οὐ δύνανται δὲ διαίρεσθαι εἰς ὕψος· δοκεῖ δὲ ταῦτα τείνειν εἰς Βακχυλίδην· ἦν γὰρ ὑφόρασις αὐτοῖς πρὸς ἀλλήλους· παραβάλλει δὲ αὐτὸν μὲν αἰετῷ, κολοιῶ δὲ Βακχυλίδην. (Σ Pind. *Nem.* 3.143 (III 62.4–9 Drachmann))

The cawing jackdaws range down below: my rivals are like jackdaws, only croaking and ranging down below, and they are incapable of rising into the height. This seems to refer to Bacchylides. For there was some jealousy going on between the two of them. He compares himself to an eagle, Bacchylides to a jackdaw.

The idea is that just as the eagle flies high above the jackdaws, so does Pindar and his work stand out from the mediocre crowd of his contemporary poets. The brilliance of Pindar's work therefore makes up for the poem's tardiness, which he himself already

⁹ The fronted copula right before δέ is somewhat odd, but can be found a couple of times in Pindar in this position: I.L. Pfeijffer, *Three Aeginetan Odes of Pindar. A Commentary on Nemean V, Nemean III, & Pythian VIII* (Leiden / Boston / Cologne, 1999), 414.

¹⁰ Cf. Pfeijffer (n. 9), 221.

mentioned (cf. ὀψέ, 80).¹¹ Thus the temporal distance of the late arrival would be set in relation to the spatial one between the eagle and the jackdaws.¹² This connection is indicated by the correlation between ὀψέ and ὠκύς within line 80:

ὀψέ περ. ἔστι δ' αἰετὸς ὠκύς ἐν ποτανοῖς

late though it be. Swift is the eagle among birds

ὀψέ is separated from the sentence to which it belongs and is moved to the next verse, where it stands right in front of the words introducing the image of the eagle. This proximity in the verse suggests proximity in content, so that the reference to the poet would linger. According to this line of reasoning, the poetological reference from the preceding passage by means of the metaphorical (or metonymical) comparison of the song to a drink of milk and honey is upheld, and there is no need for a harsh transition within line 80 as suggested by Stoneman (see below). This view is also strengthened by some other passages in Pindar, such as *Ol.* 2.86–8 and *Nem.* 5.21, where the eagle is supposed to be more or less clearly identified with the poet.¹³ A passage in Bacchylides (5.16–36) seems to convey this as well.¹⁴ From a view strictly internal to the Pindaric poems, this interpretation seems the most natural, which is why many contemporary scholars maintain it.¹⁵

2.2.2 The eagle as the victorious athlete

A completely different approach was proposed by Richard Stoneman with the ironically entitled article ‘The “Theban eagle”’, published in this journal in 1976. Stoneman argues that it is not the poet who is referred to by the eagle but the victorious athlete. He takes an in-depth look into three different passages from choral lyric—namely Pind. *Ol.* 2.83–100, *Nem.* 3.76–84 and Bacchyl. 5.16–36—and compares their motifs and imagery with other passages from the same authors, as well as from Greek literature more widely. For him, the image of the eagle stands in line with other identifications of the victorious athlete with animals, such as the lion, the fox and the dolphin, all of which stand out, like the athlete, because of their swiftness and power. Stoneman points especially to *Pyth.* 5.107–15, where to him it is obvious that with the image of the eagle no one other than the victor himself could be addressed. Citing parallels for corroboration, he concludes that ‘the great tyrant must surely have seen in the eagle a reference to himself’.¹⁶ Depictions of eagles on coins of Acragas seem to strengthen

¹¹ H. Gundert, *Pindar und sein Dichterberuf* (Frankfurt, 1935), 98; L.R. Farnell, *Critical Commentary to the Works of Pindar* (Amsterdam, 1961), 262; C.M. Bowra, *Pindar* (Oxford, 1964), 18–19; P.A. Bernardini, ‘L’“aquila tebana” vola ancora’, *QUCC* 26 (1977), 121–6, at 124.

¹² M. Theunissen, *Pindar. Menschenlos und Wende der Zeit* (Munich, 2000), 415–16.

¹³ Given the transmission at *Ol.* 2.87 it is possible either to read a third-person dual (γαρούετον) or a plural imperative (γαρούετων). For the implications of the different readings with further literature, see I.L. Pfeijffer, ‘The image of the eagle in Pindar and Bacchylides’, *CPh* 89 (1994), 305–17, at 312.

¹⁴ Even Horace in his imitations of Pindar uses the image of birds representing the poet: *Carm.* 2.20, 4.2.25. The eagle in *Carm.* 4.4, however, stands not for the poet but for Drusus and for his victory over the Vindelici: R. Stoneman, ‘The “Theban eagle”’, *CQ* 26 (1976), 188, 197.

¹⁵ G. Norwood, *Pindar* (Berkeley, 1956²), 82; Bowra (n. 11), 9–10; Bernardini (n. 11), 124; G.W. Most, *The Measures of Praise. Structure and Function in Pindar’s Second Pythian and Seventh Nemean Odes* (Göttingen, 1985), 150–1; M.R. Lefkowitz, *First-Person Fictions. Pindar’s Poetic ‘I’* (Oxford, 1991), 163; Theunissen (n. 12), 415–16; B. Maslov, *Pindar and the Emergence of Literature* (Cambridge, 2015), 108.

¹⁶ E.g. Pind. *Ol.* 13.21, *Pyth.* 1.6–12; Aesch. *Ag.* 113, *Cho.* 247–8; Stoneman (n. 14), 193. However, Stoneman’s analysis of the term σοφός (191–2), which renders it as characteristic of the

this argument.¹⁷ Most importantly, Stoneman calls attention to the particle chain τίς γε μέν (83). If the poet were being identified with the eagle, this particle chain should have an adversative meaning. But Stoneman rightly observes that γε μέν carries such an adversative force only in very few circumstances.¹⁸ Usually it has a progressive or affirmative sense, linking a thought to the preceding one or confirming it. This should also be the case in *Nem.* 3.83, whence the passage preceding the τίς γε μέν should be linked to the τίς, which refers without a doubt to the addressee of the ode, the victor Aristocleides.¹⁹ As a consequence, to uphold his interpretation of identifying the eagle with the victor, Stoneman is forced to construe a logical break within line 80: whereas Pindar is still upholding the reference to himself by continuing the preceding sentence with the words ὀνέ περ in the first half, he abruptly turns to the victor in the second half (ἔστι δ' αἰετός...). Even though Stoneman's interpretation was—not without reason—criticized heavily, as in the direct response by Bernardini,²⁰ the present paper will show that his idea is not as far off as it would seem at first glance.

2.2.3 A polyvalent interpretation: the eagle as poet and victorious athlete

Between these two contrary positions a third, intermediate way has also emerged. Already Hubbard²¹ and Steiner²² brought the possibility into play that the eagle represents the poet as well as the victor all at once. A few years later, this position was reinforced and made more prominent by Pfeijffer.²³ He argues that one should consider the polyvalent reference of the eagle as some kind of refined, context-sensitive poetic trick. Whereas in his view the text is deliberately composed in such a manner that it at first conveys the impression that the eagle refers to the poet, that is, to Pindar himself, 'it is only in retrospect that the listener realizes the double relevance of the image'.²⁴ Therefore, 'the eagle represents both poet and victor too, but sequentially rather than simultaneously', he concludes.²⁵

3. A NEW APPROACH

In this paper I provide additional evidence coming from the IE poetic tradition, which shows that it is fully justifiable to regard the image of the eagle as an allusion to the victorious athlete Aristocleides. This is mainly because there are very close parallels

'initiate, he who understands the speaking of the arrows', can hardly withstand a closer examination, because σοφός is much too important a word in Pindar for it to refer exclusively to the victor.

¹⁷ M. Bock, 'Aischylos und Akragas', *Gymnasium* 65 (1958), 402–50, at 403–4; Stoneman (n. 14), 193.

¹⁸ That J.D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles* (Oxford, 1959²), 386–8 files the γε μέν of Pind. *Nem.* 3.83 under 'adversative' is only due to Bowra's advice, as he states himself (see also R. Stoneman [n. 14], 194); otherwise, it would have been found under the tag 'affirmative'.

¹⁹ A slightly different interpretation of the γε μέν, although with the same result, is given by Pfeijffer (n. 13), 314–15 with n. 41.

²⁰ Bernardini (n. 11).

²¹ T.K. Hubbard, *The Pindaric Mind. A Study of Logical Structure in Early Greek Poetry* (Leiden, 1985), 149–51.

²² D. Steiner, *The Crown of Song. Metaphor in Pindar* (Oxford and New York, 1986), 104–10.

²³ Pfeijffer (n. 9) and (n. 13). K.A. Morgan, *Pindar and the Construction of the Syracuse Monarchy in the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford, 2015), 123–32 follows Pfeijffer.

²⁴ Pfeijffer (n. 13), 315.

²⁵ Pfeijffer (n. 13), 317.

of the motif to be found in the *Rigveda*, where it is also the eagle that is striving for fame. This does not mean that I am denying that the eagle also stands for the poet; rather, I more or less adopt the intermediary or polyvalent approach. But, contrary to Pfeijffer, I do not think that the image of the eagle is so strongly dependent on its immediate context, and would not say that it is only ‘in retrospect’ that the audience recognized the double reference of the eagle. Owing to its traditional character, the listener (or, better, participant in the festivities) probably knew straight away about the peculiar and polyvalent use of the image at *Nem.* 3.80–2—or at least the poet did so. Thus it is scarcely the context alone which constitutes the meaning of the image; rather, it is the interplay between the traditional character of the image and the context that reveals a skilful handling and builds up the tension in that passage, since the traditional character comes with certain expectations, which then are frustrated or at least altered in an innovative and meaningful way by the context in which the image is embedded.²⁶

In what follows, I make clear why there is good reason to consider the imagery in *Nem.* 3.80–2 as traditional and referring not only to the poet but to the victorious athlete as well. Since the understanding of the eagle as a cypher for the poet is the vulgate reading (§2.1 above), I will concentrate on showing why the eagle can also be linked to the victor. But again, in doing so, I would not claim that it is the victor alone who can be recognized in the eagle.

3.1 Unity of lines 80–4 and the victor’s κλέος

Let us begin with structural observations. If it can be shown that the last five lines of the poem starting with line 80—for a citation of the entire passage, see §2.1 above—form some kind of unity on a structural level, it is not far-fetched to claim that there also should be unity in these lines regarding the topic of the passage. And since it is quite clear that the last two lines of the victory ode (83–4) are concerned with the victor’s κλέος, so should the preceding lines (80–2) be too. That means the image of the eagle should somehow be connected to the victor.

3.1.1 Structural observations within *Nem.* 3

A first hint at the unity of lines 80–4 can already be found in the passage itself. τῆλόθε in line 81 describes the eagle seizing its prey ‘from far away’. Later, in line 84, Ἐπιδαυρόθεν indicates the origin of the victor’s fame, namely Epidauros (alongside Nemea, Νεμέας, and Megara, ἄπο καὶ Μεγάρων, the places of his other victories). The link between both expressions is the origin marker –θε(v), which specifies where something comes from. If we assume that the eagle represents the victor and leave all reservations to that view aside, it is remarkable how well both indications of place would fit together. Aristocleides came—like the eagle—more or less from afar, that is, from Aegina,²⁷ to the Nemean games and proved himself to be victorious there, thereby ‘seizing’ his κλέος. After the games were finished, he went back home, but the κλέος he won for himself there (and for his community) is still valid and therefore

²⁶ Hence this is one great example for the interplay between the ‘old’ and the ‘new’, an important aspect of the IE poetic tradition; cf. the contrast between the ‘old’ and the ‘new’ song in IE poetry (cf. Meusel [n. 7], 486–94, 540–59).

²⁷ Aegina is not that far from Nemea, but nevertheless Aristocleides is no local and had to travel across the sea to participate.

shines forth from the place of his victory, even at the time of the current festivities, the ritual *hic et nunc* of the victory ode. Thus –θε(v) can be interpreted as preliminary, slight evidence for the unity of lines 80–4.²⁸

The picture becomes even clearer by a cautious look outside of the passage, but still within *Nem.* 3. Line 64 proves to be of special interest:

τηλαυγές ἄραρε φέγγος Αἰακιδᾶν αὐτόθεν·

The far-shining light of the Aeacidae is fixed from here.

This verse could be understood as programmatic, in so far as it describes the fame of the Aeacids, the mythological forefathers of Aristocleides, and by doing so lays the foundation for the later reference to the victor's fame in the present. This is a typical way of structuring a Pindaric ode: first, the fame of the victor's ancestors, then the fame of the current victor, to present him as the pinnacle of a long-standing, famous line of heroes. In, for example, *Ol.* 1, lines 23–4 (λάμπει δέ οἱ κλέος | ἐν εὐάνορι Λυδοῦ Πέλοπος ἀποικίᾳ) serve as an introduction or transition to the lengthy narrative of the life of Pelops. Not until line 93 does this myth come to an end, and there we encounter words similar to those which introduced the myth seventy lines earlier: τὸ δὲ κλέος τηλόθεν δέδορκε τᾶν Ὀλυμπιάδων ἐν δρόμοις Πέλοπος (93–5). Here they prepare not for the ancient, mythological fame of Pelops but for the recent fame of Hieron, obtained through his victory at the Olympic games and celebrated by Pindar in this ode. Thus lines 23–4 of *Ol.* 1 together with its subsequent mythological narration establish the background in front of which the actual goal of the epinician, namely Hieron's fame, is presented. But this latter part of the poem is introduced in the same way as the previous mythological part,²⁹ contributing to a tight connection between Pelops' and Hieron's fame.

If we apply the same analysis to *Nem.* 3, line 64 could be interpreted as the programmatic reference to the fame of the Aeacids. Lines 80–4 would then continue and transform this generic family fame, founded by the young Achilles, into the specific fame of Aristocleides, which is highly relevant to the present situation of the ongoing festivities, being the main reason the victory ode is being performed. This interpretation is corroborated by a more in-depth look into how both passages serve a specific function within the text. Line 64 concludes the listing of the mythological ancestors of the Aeacids and their achievements, especially Achilles'—his hunting skills in his youth (43–52) and his fight against Memnon at Troy (52–63). These achievements set the background for everything that is to follow. See, for example, the resultative meaning of the perfect ἄραρε: something has started happening in the past, but its achievement still has consequences for the present or rather even contributes significantly to structuring the present state of affairs. Achilles' deeds endowed not only himself with fame but also his descendants; therefore, ἄραρε is a perfect device for transitioning from the *illic et tunc* to the *hic et nunc*. Hence line 64 could be understood as some kind of closing frame for the mythological part of the victory ode. Later on, lines 80–4 do more or less the same. They conclude that part of the poem in which Pindar praises the current

²⁸ This is corroborated by the use of the affirmative particle chain τίς γε μὲν (§2.2.2), to which Stoneman (n. 14), 194 and Pfeijffer (n. 13), 314 point, and which also links lines 83–4 to the preceding ones.

²⁹ The motif which is used to establish such a structure is the same as in *Nem.* 3: (far-)shining fame.

athletic success of Aristocleides. But other than just to carry over to the next section, it ends the poem as such, which is no wonder because the ode already has reached its goal, the praise of the current victor and his fame. This framing function, similar to ἄραρε in line 64, is accomplished by the use of a perfect-tense form, namely δέδορκεν, the second-last word of *Nem.* 3. From now on, it is not only Achilles' but also Aristocleides' fame that shines for the Aeacids. Even regarding the content, there are similarities: in both passages it is swiftness that is being praised—in lines 43–52 it is Achilles' (ἴσα τ' ἀνέμοις, 45; ποσσί γὰρ κράτεσκε, 52), and in 80–2 the eagle's (ῶκύς, 80)—and in both Achilles as well as the eagle are depicted as hunters.³⁰

That lines 80–4 are a broader execution of the programme presented in line 64 also becomes apparent as soon as we pay attention to which elements Pindar chooses to use in both passages and how he skilfully arranges them. That is because Pindar 'copies' over much material from line 64 into lines 80–4, although in an altered surface form. It starts with the first element in line 64, τηλ- in τηλαυγές, which finds its correspondence in the key word of line 81, τηλόθε, right at the centre of the verse. It continues with ἄραρε in line 64, which is picked up by δέδορκεν in line 84. φέγγος in line 64 foreshadows φάος in line 84 (and probably even δέδορκεν if the combination of φέγγος and δέδορκεν at *Nem.* 9.41 is taken into account as well).³¹ αὐτόθεν at the end of line 64 even has a double reference: it looks to Ἐπιδαυρόθεν in line 84, but its last element, the origin marker -θεν, hints again at τηλόθε in line 81, underlining its prominence as an important landmark for the text.³² The following table summarizes the most important correspondences:

'original' from line 64	'copy' (transformation) in lines 80–4
τηλ[αυγές]	τηλ[όθε], 81
ἄραρε	δέδορκεν, 84
φέγγος	φάος, 84 (probably also δέδορκεν)
αὐτόθεν	Ἐπιδαυρόθεν, 84
	τηλόθε, 81

Yet another look into the placement of the corresponding elements in their respective lines yields interesting results. The two bracketing elements of line 64, τηλ- and -θεν, are in line 81 placed at the centre of the verse with τηλόθε, as if the whole program of line 64 was compressed into this one word. Moreover, the centre of line 64, φέγγος, is represented in line 84 by φάος not only at the end of the line but also at the end of the poem as a whole. Such a refined structure could hardly be due to coincidence, but rather demonstrates a skilful arrangement by the poet. As a consequence, it is difficult not to understand lines 80–4 as a unitary whole.³³

³⁰ Cf. Steiner (n. 22), 103–4. The excellence of both comes from their feet: cf. 52 ποσσί, 81 ποσίν.

³¹ The second compound member of τηλαυγές, -αυγές, also hints at φάος (84) or the optical dimension in general.

³² The correspondence of the origin marker -θε(v) is by no means trivial. Outside of αὐτόθεν and τηλόθε, it occurs only once more in *Nemean* 3 (not counting σέθεν in line 5), in οἴκοθεν (31, eleven times in Pindar).

³³ In the aforementioned example of *Ol.* 1 similar terminological doublings are to be found as well. λάμπει (23) is picked up by δέδορκε (94, just like in *Nem.* 3.84), κλέος (23) by the same word (93)

3.1.2 (Far-)Shining fame: a traditional element in choral lyric

If, as has been argued so far, lines 80–4 are a unity, it still remains unclear what they are about. Why not the poet and his craft? To answer this question, three key words in lines 80–4 are of great help: *τηλόθεν*, *δέδορκεν* and *φάος*. After a closer look at the way in which Pindar uses these words in his poetry, one conclusion is inevitable: they are all strongly associated with the concept of *κλέος*.

Three of the four Pindaric attestations of *τηλόθεν* are adverbial (*Ol.* 1.94; *Nem.* 3.81, 6.48) and one is a pre- or postposition with genitive (*Nem.* 2.12).³⁴ In all cases where *τηλόθεν* is used as a proper adverb, it is embedded in the same context: the *κλέος* of the victor or his family or his forefathers shines forth or flies from somewhere far away.³⁵ *Nem.* 3.81 aside, this can be seen from the following examples:

τὸ δὲ κλέος
τηλόθεν δέδορκε τᾶν Ὀλυμπιάδων ἐν δρόμοις
Πέλοπος, ἵνα ταχυτάς ποδῶν ἐρίζεται
ἀκμαί τ' ἰσχύος θρασύπονοι. (*Ol.* 1.93–6)

And far shines that fame of the Olympic festivals gained in the racecourses of Pelops, where competition is held for swiftness of feet and boldly laboring feats of strength.

πέταται δ' ἐπὶ τε χθόνα καὶ διὰ θαλάσσης **τηλόθεν**
ὄνουμ' αὐτῶν. (*Nem.* 6.48–9)

Their name flies far away over the land and through the sea.

The *κλέος* of *Ol.* 1.93–6 belongs to Pelops for defeating Oenomaus in the chariot race and winning Hippodamia as his wife. But simultaneously it is also Hieron's *κλέος* for his recent victory as a charioteer in the Olympic games. Pelops' and Hieron's *κλέος* shines from afar, which implies that it has such a strong force that it could easily be observed by anybody. *τηλόθεν* occurs in combination with *δέδορκε*, as in lines 81 and 84 from *Nem.* 3 (see below). In *Nem.* 6.48–9 it is the fame of the Aeacids (*ἐπεὶ σφιν Αἰακίδαί | ἔπορον ἔξοχον αἴσαν ἀρετᾶς ἀποδεικνύμενοι μεγάλας*, 46–7), which encompasses among other things the fame of Achilles for killing Memnon, as well as that of the victor Alcimidas, to whom *Nem.* 6 is dedicated, which traverses all land and water and so again reaches every corner of the world.³⁶ Even in the single case of *τηλόθεν* functioning as a postposition in *Nem.* 2.12, it is placed in a passage concerned with the praise of the victorious Timodemus' fame. Pindar compares the victor to Orion, who follows the Pleiades closely, implying further victories for Timodemus to come.³⁷

and ἐν εὐάνορι Λυδοῦ Πέλοπος ἀποικία (24) by τᾶν Ὀλυμπιάδων ἐν δρόμοις Πέλοπος (94–5), with the genitive Πέλοπος appearing each time.

³⁴ The interpretation of W.J. Slater, *Lexicon to Pindar* (Berlin, 1969), 499 seems faulty here; I do not see how in *Nem.* 6.48 one could understand *τηλόθεν* as a pre- or postposition.

³⁵ *τηλόθεν* is important for the ritual *hic et nunc* at the performance of a victory ode. By opening up the concept of a place far away, the poet simultaneously evokes the complete opposite, i.e. the here and now of the performance. And since all the here and now of a performance is about the victor and his *κλέος* (cf. Bundy [n. 1], 3, 35–6), it is no wonder that *τηλόθεν* is nearly exclusively found in passages where one can also find *κλέος*.

³⁶ The substitution of a term for 'fame' or 'glory' by means of a term for 'name' is common, and already a full-furnished feature of the IE poetic tradition: M.L. West, *Indo-European Poetry and Myth* (Oxford and New York, 2007), 398; Meusel (n. 7), 200–8.

³⁷ For the connection between Gr. *τῆλε* and the concept of fame, compare also the compounds *τηλεκλυτός* and *τηλεκλειτός* with Schmitt (n. 4), 72–3 with n. 442.

δέδορκεν in its intransitive (and typical) use, which relates to the look of someone or something perceived by others,³⁸ is attested three times in Pindar (*Ol.* 1.94; *Nem.* 3.84, 9.41).³⁹ Two of these examples have been cited already: whereas *Nem.* 3.84 is the text under investigation, the combination of τηλόθεν with δέδορκε can be seen in *Ol.* 1.94 as well, where both are closely connected to the fame of Pelops. Thus it is no great surprise that δέδορκεν behaves the same way at *Nem.* 9.41, the other attestation:

λέγεται μὲν
 Ἔκτορι μὲν κλέος ἀνθήσαι Σκαμάνδρου χεύμασιν
 ἀγχοῦ, βαθυκρήνοισι δ' ἄμφ' ἀκταῖς Ἐλώρου,
 ἔνθα Ἷρέας πόρον ἄνθρωποι καλέοισι, δέδορκεν
 παιδί τοῦθ' Ἀγησιδάμου φέγγος ἐν ἀλικίᾳ
 πρώτῃ. (*Nem.* 9.39–42)

Truly they say that Hector's fame blossomed close by Scamander's streams, but beside the steep and rugged banks of the Helorus, at the place men call Areia's Ford, such a beacon has shone forth for the son of Hagesidamus in his earliest youth.

Lines 41–2 praise the military success of Chromius, the son of Hagesidamus, in his earliest manhood near the steep cliffs of the Helorus river at the passage of Rhea. Because of this success, a light (φέγγος) shines forth on him—again, expressed by means of δέδορκεν. That this φέγγος is a representation of the κλέος is apparent from the comparison of Chromius' success with Hector's mentioned immediately before, which is also manifested in the syntax: Ἔκτορι μὲν κλέος ἀνθήσαι parallels δέδορκεν παιδί τοῦθ' Ἀγησιδάμου φέγγος.⁴⁰ So δέδορκεν, like τηλόθεν, is closely connected to the concept of fame.⁴¹

The same goes for φάος. Although Pindar uses φάος in the literal sense (as in *Ol.* 10.75 for the light of the moon), there are also numerous examples where it stands for κλέος, as, for example, in *Ol.* 4.9–10 τόνδε κῶμον, χρονωτάτον φάος εὐρυσθενέων ἀρετῶν or in *Ol.* 10.22–3 ἄπονον δ' ἔλαβον χάσμα παῦροί τινες, ἔργων πρὸ πάντων βιώτῳ φάος.⁴² This holds true not only for φάος itself but also for other words meaning 'light', as in cases like *Nem.* 3.64 or 9.42 with φέγγος.

³⁸ H.W. Nordheider, 'δέρκομαι', *LfrgE* 2 (1991), 251–2; cf. Hom. *Od.* 19.446, [Hes.] *Scut.* 145.

³⁹ Cf. Slater (n. 34), 127.

⁴⁰ B.K. Braswell, *A Commentary on Pindar Nemean Nine* (Berlin and New York, 1998), 123–4.

⁴¹ Bowra (n. 11), 255: 'It is also present in Pindar's use of δέδορκεν for the brilliance of fame, whether in general for the Olympian Games (*O.* 1. 94) or in particular for individual victors (*N.* 3. 84; 9. 41–42). In the last case the notion is helped by φέγγος, but what counts most is the eye that both gleams and is visible from afar.'

⁴² Slater (n. 34), 526–7. There could even be a deeper connection between κλέος and φάος than just on a metaphorical level. The word φάος stems from the PIE root *b^heh₂- (H. Frisk, *Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch. Band II: Κρ–Ω. Zweite, unveränderte Auflage* [Heidelberg, 1973], 991), which could mean either 'to speak, say' or 'to shine' (H. Rix et al., *Lexikon der indogermanischen Verben. Zweite, erweiterte und verbesserte Auflage* [Wiesbaden, 2001], 68–70), and which is reflected in the verb φαίω, which is often used to designate a poetological activity. Cf. D. Bremer, *Licht und Dunkel in der frühgriechischen Dichtung. Interpretationen zur Vorgeschichte der Lichtmetaphysik* (Bonn, 1976), 277: 'Der Dichter ist Seher und zugleich der, der die Kunde hört. Das dichterische Wort hat die Kraft des Erscheinenlassens (φαίνειν) und ist zugleich auf die Vermittlung durch das Hören angewiesen.' As a consequence, it is possible to interpret φάος not only as that which shines, but what the poet 'lets shine' or 'says'. This way, it would stand much closer to the concept of the κλέος, since that what people hear (i.e. κλέος, see below) is exactly what the poet is speaking about in his poem. See further Meusel (n. 7), 407–8 n. 1005, 476–7, 559–66.

All in all, it is not unusual for κλέος to shine forth in Pindar. For example:

λάμπει δέ οἱ κλέος
ἐν εὐάνορι Λυδοῦ Πέλοπος ἀποικία. (*Ol.* 1.23–4)

Fame shines for him in the colony of brave men founded by Lydian Pelops.

τῶν εὐφροσύνα τε καὶ δόξ' ἐπιφλέγει. (*Pyth.* 11.45)

For their [*sc.* Pythonicus' and Thrasydaeus'] celebration and glory are ablaze.⁴³

Given this clear picture and the close association of three central words used in *Nem.* 3.80–4 with the concept of κλέος, it is probably not too daring to claim that τηλόθεν, δέδορκεν and φάος signal that the whole passage is about fame. Furthermore, the multitude of attestations where fame is depicted as (far-)shining or even directly identified with light permit the inference of a well-established motif at work. Accordingly, the relevant passages from *Nem.* 3 should be considered a take on this motif.⁴⁴

If a motif is a topos, it is often traditional too (otherwise it would just be a prominent and frequently recurring invention by a single poet). The traditional character of an image or motif enables the poet to transform the traditional elements handed down to him; that is where he can excel most as a poet.⁴⁵ In the case of *Nem.* 3.80–4, this means that, if the motif of (far-)shining fame is rooted in the poetic tradition from which Pindar himself emerges, it could provide the necessary background for a poetic transformation (or reworking), which would ultimately yield the refined arrangement outlined above of the passage under discussion. There is no other way that the three signal words, for example, would 'work'.

That the motif of (far-)shining fame comes out of a much older tradition can be demonstrated by a few additional observations. The first and most obvious regards the informational character (or semantic markedness) of the motif. A motif or collocation is more informative when an adjoining element adds to the informational content of a certain (phraseological) base. For example, the phrase 'green grass' would not be very informative, because the information that the grass is green is already inherent in the term 'grass' itself. So the adjective 'green' adds little to none informational value. By contrast, the phrase 'blue rose' is highly informative because the adjective 'blue' conveys information not typical of a rose, and so the phrase can be described as semantically marked. It is a typical feature of traditional elements in texts that they often display a high degree of informativity. This occurs because motifs or collocations lose their original motivation over time, eventually becoming opaque to later generations.⁴⁶ By considering the motif of (far-)shining fame, its highly

⁴³ For the substitution of κλέος by δόξα, see Meusel (n. 7), 186–91, 428–30 and (for further examples) 398–403.

⁴⁴ It can probably be regarded as a kind of *Leitmotiv* for the entire victory ode: Peiffffer (n. 9), 370.

⁴⁵ The poet's need to renew the tradition by altering and changing traditional elements, but at the same to stick to it tightly, can best be observed in the contrast between the 'old song' and the 'new song': E. Thummer, *Pindar. Die Isthmischen Gedichte. Textkritisch herausgegeben, übersetzt und kommentiert, mit einer Analyse der pindarischen Epinikien. Band I: Analyse der pindarischen Epinikien. Text und Übersetzung der Isthmischen Gedichte* (Heidelberg, 1968), 151 and n. 26.

⁴⁶ A high degree of informativity could be characteristic of a highly innovative and novel collocation stemming from the mouth of one single poet as well. But it is, none the less, a good starting point for seeking out a potentially traditional origin. Cf. e.g. the compound 'wordsmith' as a term for a poet. It is of highly informational character, since words are not something that is usually crafted by a smith.

informative nature is obvious. Why should one's fame be 'shining'? This oddity is even further strengthened if its etymological background is taken into account as well. The central term for 'fame' in Greek, κλέος, is derived from the Proto-Indo-European (= PIE) root *kleu- 'to hear'. It is an *s*-stem with the meaning of a resultative action noun. In consequence, κλέος should mean something like 'that which is being heard'. As such, κλέος should be confined to the acoustic sphere. But how could something coming from the acoustic sphere suddenly start to shine? This odd behaviour, that is, the highly informative character of the motif, hints at its traditional nature.

This finding can be corroborated by another observation, which demonstrates that the origins of this motif extend beyond the tradition of Greek choral lyric or of the Greek language in general and into the tradition of IE poetry, namely that the same motif is found in Vedic literature. In the following examples from the *Rigveda*,⁴⁷ the noun *śrávas-* 'fame, glory' is qualified by the adjective *dyumánt-* 'shining':

yé me pañcāśātam dadūr
áśvānām sadhástuti
dyumád agne máhi śrávo
bṛhát kṛdhi maghónām
ṇivád amṛta ṇṇām (RV 5.18.5)

For those who have given me fifty horses for our joint praise, for the generous men, o Agni, make bright and great fame, lofty (fame) filled with men, o immortal one.⁴⁸

There is also a compound *citráśravas-* 'possessing bright (or shining) fame', consisting of the adjective *citrá-* 'shining, bright' and *śrávas-* 'fame, glory':

agnír hótā kavikratuḥ
satyás citráśravastamah
devó devébhír ā gamat (RV 1.1.5)

Agni, the Hotar with a poet's purpose, the real one possessing the brightest fame, will come as a god with the gods.

mitrásya carṣaṇīdhṛto
ávo devásya sánasi
dyumnām citráśravastamam (RV 3.59.6)

The help of the god Mitra, who maintains the separate territories, brings gain; his brilliance holds bright renown.

Two examples in particular come close to the situation in Greek, especially regarding the identification of κλέος with φάος. In RV 1.92.8 and 6.5.5 it is said that Uṣas and Agni, respectively, shine with fame. The verb by means of which this is expressed, *bhā-*, is derived from the same PIE root as Greek φάος or φαίνω:

Rather, they are spoken. Therefore, the highly informational character of the compound hints to a past time when producing words was metaphorically seen as some kind of craftsmanship.

⁴⁷ Even if there are only a few terminological correspondences between Vedic and Greek in this case, this is not bothersome, because the highly informative character of the motif—fame is not something that naturally shines—lets a reconstruction rest on relatively firm ground.

⁴⁸ All translations of the *Rigveda* are taken from S.W. Jamison and J.P. Brereton, *The Rigveda. The Earliest Religious Poetry of India* (Oxford, 2014).

*úśas tám aśyāṃ yaśasam suvīram
dāsāpravargaṃ rayim áśvabudhyam
sudámsasā śrávasā yā vibhāsi
vājaprasūtā subhage bhāntam* (RV 1.92.8)

O Dawn, might I attain this glorious wealth, rich in good heroes, founded on horses, with alien slaves as its forelock—o you of good portion, who with fame of wondrous power radiate forth, motivated by (desire for) the prize, to lofty (wealth).

*yás te yajñéna samídhā yá ukthair
arkébbhiḥ sūno sahaso dádaśat
śá mártiyeṣu amṛta prácetā
ráyā dyumnéna śrávasā vi bhāti* (RV 6.5.5)⁴⁹

Whoever with sacrifice and with kindling wood, who with solemn speeches and with chants will ritually serve you, o son of strength, he, provident among mortals, o immortal one, shines out with wealth, with brilliance, with fame.

The Vedic evidence suggests that this is a semantically marked motif from IE times depicting fame (Gr. κλέος, Ved. *śrávas-*) unexpectedly as ‘shining’.⁵⁰ This is the source Pindar is ultimately drawing from when he makes use of this imagery. Since the three signal words discussed above were already pointing to (the victor’s) fame as well, it is now easily discernible what the passage from line 80 onwards in Pindar’s *Nem.* 3 is about: (far-)shining κλέος.

3.1.3 Poetic trickery: bypassing κλέος

Now one could interject: the word κλέος is nowhere to be found in *Nem.* 3.80–4. But this circumstance actually supports the argumentation, because there is some poetic ‘trickery’ at work here, which again only works if the traditional character of the motif is acknowledged.

κλέος may not be directly present, but its presence is—even beyond the traditional and highly informative character of the motif of (far-)shining fame—evidenced by another fact. Consider line 83:

τίν γε μέν, εὐθρόνου Κλεοῦς ἐθελοί-
σας, ἀεθλοφόρου λήματος ἔνεκεν

But for you, through the favour of fair-throned Cleo and because of your determination for victory

There we find the proper name of one of the Muses, Κλεώ, in an absolute construction at the centre of the verse.⁵¹ Her name derives from the same root as the resultative action noun κλέος, namely the PIE root **kleu-* ‘to hear’, mentioned previously and reflected in Gr. κλέF-. If we additionally take into account the phonetic resemblance of the two words—κλέος and Κλεώ—it seems that there is some kind of pun at play here—

⁴⁹ For further examples of the motif in Vedic, see Meusel (n. 7), 406–10.

⁵⁰ Cf. from Latin the *fulgor nominis, famae* or *gloriae* in Livy 21.43.12, Ov. *Trist.* 5.12.39, Val. Max. 6.2.3 or *nomen fulget* in Val. Max. 6.9.5, Sen. *Contr.* 2.1.17.

⁵¹ Perhaps this absolute construction makes it even more probable that Pindar uses the Muse’s proper name just to refer to the κλέος. Otherwise, why would he have had the need to mention her? He possibly just inserted her name to make the reference to κλέος more obvious to those who were not able to grasp it up to that point. If the Muse would have been of essential importance to the content, her name would surely be better implemented in the syntax as well.

especially against the etymological background. This could lead to the impression that Pindar is deliberately avoiding the most common term for the most important concept in his victory odes, and hinting at it by different means.⁵² Similar cases are found quite often, for example, when he avoids the traditional and formulaic phrase κλέος ἄφθιτον.⁵³ Avoidances of this kind demonstrate Pindar's artistic skill—the obvious would be tedious for a man of his technique.⁵⁴

3.1.4 Interim Conclusion

By taking a closer look at the three elements –θε(v), δέδορκε(v) and φάος, we have seen that lines 80–4 in *Nem.* 3 pick up and continue line 64 and should be considered a unitary whole. From these three 'signal words', too, it became clear that the passage in question is mainly concerned with κλέος and specifically with the athlete's κλέος after his victory at the games, since all three are closely associated with the motif of (far-)shining fame. That this motif is neither arbitrary nor an invention of Pindar but deeply rooted in the tradition of IE poetry has been evidenced by a comparison with examples from other branches of the IE family. Taking all this into account, it is reasonable to infer that the eagle in lines 80–1 must also be connected with the victor's fame and should consequently act as a metaphor for the victor, Aristocleides. Nevertheless, up to this point, direct and undeniable evidence for such an interpretation of the avian imagery is still lacking.

3.2 The eagle as a fame-seeker: a traditional image from IE times

A second and closer look at the foregoing analysis reveals that there is actually evidence only for the unity of lines 81–4 so far; the αἰετός in line 80 has strictly speaking not yet been included in the present interpretation. If we do not want to simply resort to the relative clause introduced in line 81, by which the αἰετός from line 80 is linked to lines 81–4, we must furnish additional proof.

Pfeijffer notes that the introduction of the avian imagery at *Nem.* 3.80 is somewhat odd because Pindar suddenly 'makes statements about birds, which have, on a literal level, nothing to do with the context in which they are made'.⁵⁵ In terms of semantic markedness, the image of the eagle and the jackdaws is of highly informational character. As stated above, a high degree of informativity can be typical for traditional elements, which otherwise could often not be motivated and would make no sense in a given context. Pindar's poetry relies heavily on such traditional elements: that is one reason why he is often so hard to understand. Particularly for *Nem.* 3.80–4 and its immediate surroundings, many of those traditional elements can be detected, namely the motif of (far-)shining fame discussed above and the reference to the μεμιγμένον μέλι λευκῶ σὺν γόλακτι in lines 77–8.⁵⁶ In light of these circumstances, is it possible that the image of the eagle has such a traditional origin as well?

⁵² These means include the traditional motif of (far-)shining fame, the name-dropping of Κλεώ, but also the imagery of the eagle (§3.2).

⁵³ On this, see Meusel (n. 7), especially 431–3.

⁵⁴ There is some kind of imperative at work here, deeply grounded in the poetic tradition: see nn. 26, 45 above.

⁵⁵ Pfeijffer (n. 9), 221.

⁵⁶ On the latter, see n. 60 below.

The answer to this question, which to my knowledge has not been previously posed, is yes. Indeed, there are passages in the *Rigveda* in which an eagle (or some other bird of prey)⁵⁷ is associated with striving for fame. In two of the examples below, it even occurs within the context of an athletic contest. This makes it highly probable that the imagery of the eagle in Pindar and that in the *Rigveda* share the same origin and stem from the IE poetic tradition. This becomes clear from a closer look through the following passages from the *Rigveda*:

bhārad yādi vīr āto vēvijānaḥ
pathōrūṇā mānojāvā asarji
tūyam yayau mādhunā somiyēna
utā śrávo vivide śyenó ātra (RV 4.26.5)

When he brought it from there, quivering (in fear), the bird, swift as thought, was sent surging along the wide path. He traveled swiftly with the somian honey, and the eagle found fame here.

utā smainam vastramāthim ná tāyūm
ānu krośanti kṣitāyo bhāreṣu
nīcāyamānaḥ jāsuriḥ ná śyenám
śrávas ca āchā paśumác ca yūthám (RV 4.38.5)

And the settled peoples shriek after him at his raidings as if after a thief who steals clothes, as he makes his way downward like a famished eagle toward fame and a herd full of livestock.

yād indra sárge árvatas
codáyāse mahādhané
asamané ádhvani vjjiné pathi
śyenām̐ iva śravasyatāḥ (RV 6.46.13)

When, Indra, at the charge, you will spur on your steeds at the (contest for) great stakes, on an uncrowded (race)course, on its twisting path, like eagles hunting fame.

In all of these examples, it is a *śyená-* ‘bird of prey, eagle, falcon’ which is out for *śrávas-* ‘fame’.⁵⁸ RV 4.26.5 tells the well-known story of the eagle stealing Soma, the ritual drink of Vedic times, from heaven, where it was held captive by an archer named Kṛṣṇānu. There the *śyená-* is qualified by *mānojavas-* ‘possessing a swiftness like thought’ (or ‘in thought’) and he moves *tūyam* ‘swiftly’. Such swiftness is a quality that has already been encountered as a characteristic for the eagle in Pindar. In *Nem.* 3.80 he calls it ὄκρως.⁵⁹ By seizing the Soma, the eagle in RV 4.26.5 is simultaneously seizing (*vivide*, literally ‘finding’, 5c) *śrávas-* ‘fame’. Although not embedded in an athletic context, the eagle’s mythological deed is comparable to the athlete’s situation in Pindar. Just as the athletic contender in Pindar’s epinicians wins fame through his victory—a deed which often stands in line with the achievements of his mythological ancestors—so too does the eagle by fulfilling his mythological deed, a task imposed by

⁵⁷ Jamison and Brereton (n. 48) translate the term *śyená-* m. with ‘falcon’, but—as H. Graßmann, *Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda. 6., überarbeitete und ergänzte Auflage von Maria Kozińska* (Wiesbaden, 1996), 1417 states—every large bird of prey could be designated by the term. Geldner usually translates *śyená-* with ‘Adler’. Thus I replace ‘falcon’ in the otherwise untouched translation of Jamison–Brereton with ‘eagle’ to make the parallels between Pindar and the *Rigveda* more lucid. The etymological discussion of the term *śyená-* provides no relevant information for the imagery or the metaphor in Pindar. Cf. M. Mayrhofer, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindoarischen. II. Band* (Heidelberg, 1996), 662.

⁵⁸ Ved. *śrávas-* is the exact cognate to Gr. κλέος coming from the PIE *s-*stem **kléuos* (see above).

⁵⁹ On the eagle’s swiftness, see also Stoneman (n. 14), 189.

his master, the highest of all gods, Indra. Moreover, the eagle is seizing not just any Soma but the *mádhu somyám* ‘the Soma-like honey’, which can be compared to Pindar’s μεμιγμένον μέλι λευκῶ σὺν γόλακτι (77–8),⁶⁰ which is located immediately before and therefore stands in direct contact to the image of the eagle introduced in line 80.⁶¹

The second example comes much closer to the actual situation in Pindar. RV 4.38 is a celebratory hymn for the prize-winning racehorse Dadhikrā, which won many contests and thus provided its owner with many gifts. The context is nearly the same as in Pindar, namely one of athletic competition. In verse 2 the horse Dadhikrā is compared to a ‘straight-flying eagle’ (*ḡḡpyám śyenám*, 2c) and is said to be *āsú-* ‘swift’—the etymological cognate of Gr. ὠκύς, the adjective which Pindar uses to describe the αἰετός in *Nem.* 3.80. In verse 5 this comparison is repeated and embedded in an imagery reminiscent of *Nem.* 3.81, where the eagle suddenly seizes its prey with its feet. Again, Dadhikrā is compared to an eagle, this time to an eagle who is exhausted and hungry (*jásurim ná śyenám*, 5c). In such a state, it is hunting prey and as a result rushing down (*nīcāyamānam*, 5c). The prey it intends to seize are fame and a herd of cattle (*śrávas ca áchā paśumác ca yūthám*, 5d), representations of the two prototypical prizes to be won at the Vedic contests. The proximity to Pindar is remarkable.

The last remaining example occurs in a similar context. RV 6.46 requests from Indra that he be of assistance in the contests.⁶² In verse 13, the penultimate of the hymn, Indra himself is depicted as a charioteer taking part in a contest, where a big prize (*mahādhaná-*, 13b) awaits the winner as a compensation for his toils. At the end of the verse, Indra’s desire to win is compared to the image of eagles eager to win *śrávas-* ‘fame’ (*śyenāmiva śrávasyatás*, 13d).⁶³ This passage too shows how closely the image of the eagle is associated with the desire to gain fame, especially in athletic contests.

⁶⁰ This phrase, like the *Rigveda*’s ubiquitous *mádhu somyám*, could go back to an original IE ritual drink. This is suggested by terminological correspondences between the Pindaric phrase and Vedic (e.g. *kṣīraír ... āsīrtas*) and Avestan (e.g. *haoma yō gauua*). One has only to assume the unproblematic substitution of *κῑρῶμενον by μεμιγμένον in the Pindaric poem. Another hint to an original ritual provenance of Pindar’s μεμιγμένον μέλι λευκῶ σὺν γόλακτι is the poetological nature of this drink, which Pindar makes explicit in line 79 (πόμ’ οἰδίμων). In Vedic it is also very common that the *mádhu-* stands metaphorically for the song in a ritual performance. See E. Meusel, ‘Zum Verhältnis von ved. *āsīr-* f. “Milch(beimischung)”, *śrī-* f. “Vollkommenheit, Schönheit, Glanz” und der Verbalwurzel *śray-* “vollkommen, glänzen machen” aus phraseologischer Sicht’, *Historische Sprachforschung* 132 (2019 [2021]) and Meusel (n. 7), 630–53.

⁶¹ It may be quite a long shot, but perhaps Pindar is playing here with this exact image (or myth) of the eagle stealing or getting back the ‘honey’ from heaven, which is found in the *Rigveda* as well, when he places his μεμιγμένον μέλι λευκῶ σὺν γόλακτι right beside the image of the eagle in *Nem.* 3. In addition, such a juxtaposition would also contribute to an elegant transition between the poetological and the concluding praising part of the hymn, since both references, the one to the poet as well as the one to the athlete, would then be grounded in tradition. First, it would seem that Pindar as the eagle is bringing the poetological honey (cf. lines 77–9), i.e. poetry itself, ‘home’ to men. But afterwards, those acquainted with the poetic tradition would remember that the eagle is a bird of prey and as such is just like an athlete seeking fame. Given the shared ritual foundation of Pindar’s and Vedic poetry, perhaps such a play is another distant echo from the past in Pindar.

⁶² Note the opening verses of the hymn, which are close to the introductory lines of some of Pindar’s epinicians: *tuvām id dhī hávāmahe | sātā vājasya kārávah | tuvām vr̥tr̥esu indra sápatim náras | tuvām káṣṭhāsu árvatah* (‘Because it is just you that we bards call upon at the winning of the prize, you, Indra, as master of settlements that our men [*sc.* call upon] amid obstacles, you at the finish lines of our steed.’).

⁶³ For the defective syntax and the missing main clause in verses 13 and 14, see H. Oldenberg, *R̥gveda. Textkritische und exegetische Noten. Erstes bis sechstes Buch* (Berlin, 1909), 396; Jamison–Brereton (n. 48), 832; and in more detail the online commentary to Jamison–Brereton on

From these examples we may infer that this image was already part of the IE poetic tradition. If so, we can now with a greater certainty decide what line 80 from *Nem.* 3 is about, namely κλέος; and not any κλέος, but specifically the victor's or the athlete's κλέος, or, in the case of *Nem.* 3, the fame of Aristocleides. This is made clear by the Vedic parallels. There it is mostly the person who takes part in a contest who seeks fame and is identified with the eagle. Regarding its direct surroundings in *Nem.* 3, it would also be appropriate if the imagery of the eagle was traditional because the directly preceding μεμιγμένον μέλι λευκῶ σὺν γάλακτι is just as traditional as the immediately following motif of (far-)shining fame.

4. CONCLUSION

This survey has shown that the passage *Nem.* 3.80–4 should be considered a unitary whole. It is a longer elaboration on the programmatic verse 64 of the same poem, which serves as a closure for the narrative of the mythological deeds of the ancestors and their fame. This is indicated by the recurring use of the three elements –θε(ν), δέδορκε(ν) (for ἄραρε) and φάος (for φέγγος) over the course of lines 81–4. These three signal elements are also linked to an older, traditional motif, namely (far-)shining fame. This can be deduced not only from its frequent use in Pindar but also from its highly informative character. Furthermore, this topos is common not only in Pindar but also in the *Rigveda* (and probably in other IE poetic traditions too). In both Pindar and the *Rigveda*, the topos always refers to the fame an athlete or someone else is striving for. Given the unity of lines 80–4, in which the avian imagery and the motif of (far-)shining fame are interwoven, it would be consistent for the image of the eagle to be concerned with the same topic, namely the athlete's or the victor's κλέος. The eagle should then stand for the victor of the present victory ode, Aristocleides.

That this is indeed the case is revealed by yet another observation. The image of the eagle is embedded in the midst of other traditional elements. This starts with the preceding lines 77–80 and their μεμιγμένον μέλι λευκῶ σὺν γάλακτι, which has clear cognates in other IE traditions and can be traced back terminologically to the earliest period of IE poetry. The other traditional motif is the aforementioned (far-)shining fame. This circumstance makes it worth considering whether the image of the eagle may be another of these traditional elements.

Again a comparison with the *Rigveda* shows that the image or metaphor of an eagle is indeed traditional. Even if this image is not unambiguously related to the athlete or to the victor within Greek, the Vedic attestations make it clear that, none the less, it must be just as old as the motif of (far-)shining fame, coming from a very old part of the IE poetic tradition. This is even more remarkable because the Vedic attestations not only have the same imagery but are also similar to the specific situation in Pindar: most are found in the context of an athletic contest, where the athlete or, more precisely, his racehorse desires to win fame. Thus it is likely that Pindar's poetry here descends from the same sources as the *Rigveda*. Stoneman's observation about the connective value of τίς γε μὲν (see above) strengthens this line of reasoning.

However, as Pfeijffer and others have pointed out, the image must not relate exclusively to the victor. There are good reasons to believe that Pindar is describing

himself as the eagle as well. This is suggested by parallels that have often been cited (Pind. *Ol.* 2.86–8, *Nem.* 5.21; Bacchyl. 5.16–36), in which Pindar compares himself to an eagle. Hence the image of the eagle in *Nem.* 3.80 should be interpreted as polyvalent.

This double reference of the eagle is not insignificant. Within the poem it marks a transition from one section of the text to another, that is, from a poetological passage to the concluding part of the epinician aiming at the praise of the victor. After some gnomic and poetological digressions it brings the poem back to the immediate *hic et nunc*, to which the ode was already turning with the invocation of Zeus from line 65 onwards. Right at the place where the image of the eagle is introduced, a swift shift to the *hic et nunc* occurs. Everything that follows the image is then concerned solely with the victor Aristocleides. It is his, and only his, (far-)shining fame, and it is he who alone is responsible for the festivities taking place right now.

Such a double reference does not necessarily have to be confusing and, contrary to Pfeijffer's suggestion,⁶⁴ I would not say that the double meaning only becomes clear 'in retrospect' because of the context. In Pindar's time the image of the eagle carried that double reference *per se*. The reference to the poet was well known because of its frequent occurrence in contemporary choral lyric, while the reference to the victor cannot be accounted for from Greek literature alone, and is rather a motif from the IE poetic tradition.⁶⁵ None the less, the poet himself (and probably even certain parts of the audience acquainted with that tradition) should have been familiar with a traditional element of this kind, because he was part of or was even standing amidst that unbroken tradition, to which Pindar himself refers on different occasions.⁶⁶

Therefore, the image of the eagle proves to be a fitting and refined instrument for a transition such as in *Nem.* 3.80—connecting the poet to the victor and to the immediate *hic et nunc*.⁶⁷ It is not a harsh transition or even a break of thought after the *ὄνέ περ*, as Stoneman was forced to claim,⁶⁸ but an elegant modulation, once we acknowledge its poetic heritage. As soon as we delve into the poetic tradition from which Pindar comes, there is a chance that many hitherto obscure and controversial passages might become easier to understand. The image of the eagle looking out for fame in order to bask in it is just one example of this; no doubt there are many others out there.

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⁶⁴ See n. 24 above.

⁶⁵ Such a double reference to the poet as well as to the *laudandus* is also already observable in the poetic tradition of IE. For example, in Vedic the genitive found in combinations like *narām śāmsa-* 'praise of men' or the compound *nārāśāmsa-* '(possessing) praise of men' can be interpreted as both subjective and objective genitive (Schmitt [n. 4], 98–9), and the *κόμον ἀνέρον* from Pind. *Pyth.* 5.22 may be a direct cognate to that. On the term *κόμος* in Greek choral lyric and its connection to the IE ritual, see E. Meusel, 'Comic Relief – Erleichterung im Streit um die Etymologie von gr. *κόμος*', *Glotta* 97 (2021), 183–211.

⁶⁶ Cf. e.g. *Nem.* 6.53–4 *καὶ ταῦτα μὲν παλαιότεροι | ὁδὸν ἀμαξιτὸν εὖρον· ἔπομαι δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς ἔχων μελέτων* 'The older poets found in such deeds as those a highway of song, and I myself follow along, making it my concern.'

⁶⁷ This is executed by a somewhat chiasmic arrangement. Whereas the traditional reference of the image (i.e. the eagle as the athlete) points towards the *hic et nunc*, the more recent reference (i.e. the eagle as the poet) would stick to the poetological digression and therefore hinder the progression towards the performative presence.

⁶⁸ Stoneman (n. 14), 194.