OLIGARCHIC HESTIA: BACCHYLIDES 14B AND PINDAR, NEMEAN 11*

**Abstract:** This article uses recent findings about the diversity of political organization in Archaic and Classical Greece beyond Athens, and methodological considerations about the role of civic Hestia in oligarchic communities, to add sharpness to current work on the political contextualization of Classical enkomiastic poetry. The two works considered here remind us of the epichoric political significance of such poetry, because of their attunement to two divergent oligarchic contexts. They thus help to get us back to specific fifth-century political as well as cultural Realien.

Xenophanes of Kolophon famously challenged the right of successful athletes to receive lavish public honours. In fr. 2 W he complained that he was more worthy of receiving such rewards, being the man of true sophië.¹ A major objection was that such athletes were dined at public expense in the prytaneion.²

Xenophanes’ focus on athletics and civic honours provides useful background to two texts discussed in detail here, Bacchylides 14B and Pindar’s Nemean 11.³ In both cases the connection between athletic prowess and civic administration criticized by Xenophanes is very close indeed, since both poems celebrate former athletes as public officials in oligarchic conditions, invoking Hestia as goddess of the civic hearth as they do so.

I. GENRES AND TITLES

Pindar’s Nemean 11, with its title ‘For Aristagoras of Tenedos, Magistrate’ supplied by Boeckh, was positioned at the end of the Alexandrian book of Nemeans after Nemean 10,⁴ and considered as epinikian by some, but not by others.⁵ Aristophanes’ decision to locate the poem at the end of the book indicates that even he was not particularly happy with its epinikian status within the Pindaric edition. Despite its obvious athletic content, Aristagoras’ athletic achievements are in the past; the event which Pindar is commissioned to celebrate is an inauguration into civic office, not a current victory.

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¹ I would like to thank Daniela Colomo of the Oxyrhynchus Papyri project in Oxford for allowing me to view P.Oxy. 2363; images of the papyrus presented here are courtesy of the Imaging Papyri Project, University of Oxford, and The Egypt Exploration Society; many thanks to Dirk Obbink. A number of people have provided helpful comments on drafts and shared ideas with me, and I am most grateful: audiences in Cambridge, Manchester and Atlanta, and the referees for *JHS*. I would also like to thank in particular Peter Wilson, John Ma, Armand D’Angour and Andrew Morrison.


³ Lines 8–9. See Bowra (1938) 274–75; Campbell (1990) 338 ad loc. 8. For the practice of dining victors in the prytaneion, see further Miller (1978) 7 with IG I².77; Pl., Ap. 36d (with Sokrates alluding to Xenoph., fr. 2); Ath. 6.237f; Plut., *De soll. an.* 970b; Ael., *De nat. an.* 6.49; Agora XIV 47 with n. 132; also Kurke (1993) 159, n. 40. Compare also Ar., *Equiv.* 280–84, attacking Kleon for the potentially non-democratic flavour of his own lavish dining practices in the Athenian prytaneion after Sphakteria; Sommerstein (1981) 158 ad loc. 281.

⁴ The poems have not been widely discussed. There is no entry for Bacch. 14B in Gerber (1989); (1990). Neither poem receives detailed discussion in Kurke (1991); Mann (2001); Nicholson (2005). Bacch. 14B is mentioned only in passing by Stamatopoulou (2007) 332. With Nem. 11, Lefkowitz (1979) and Verdenius (1982) focus on literary issues; other treatments are limited by the unsupported assumption that Nem. 11 is a late work. The poems are discussed briefly by Hornblower (2004) 143, 172–73.

⁵ Aristophanes’ edition classified the poem as Nemean on the basis of the theme of victory in lines 13–29 (D’Alessio (1997) 54, n. 183) and because lines 22–29 only state that Aristagoras missed out on Olympian and Pythian victories (cf. Σ Pind., Nem. 11 inscr. a (ii.184–85 Dr); also Silk (2007) 180–81 on the classification of Pind., *Ol.* 12.). Although it seems that no rival edition was produced, others, including Dionysoi of Phaselis and Didymos, disagreed with Aristophanes’ classification, considering Nem. 11 a paroimia: see Σ Pind., Nem. 11 inscr. a (iii.185 Dr) *ad fin.*, with D’Alessio (1997) 54, n. 183; Σ Pind., Nem. 11 inscr. b (iii.185 Dr).
Similar issues surround Bacchylides 14B. Only the opening ten lines survive, and the fragmentary marginal title has been reconstructed in different ways.\(^6\) Edgar Lobel in his *editio princeps* of the papyrus initially supposed that the title celebrated a Delphic chariot-race victory.\(^7\) However, he noted that [Π]οθα cannot be reconstructed in the marginal title, and that the two Pythian victories referred to in lines 7–10 must be previous victories;\(^8\) he saw no means of further progress. Nor is another attempt by Bruno Snell to read a reference to Delphi in the title compelling.\(^9\)

A breakthrough was reached by Herwig Maehler, who reconstructed the title as [Ἀριστοτέλει Λ]ασ/ /[παχιμιτα] /[A[ριστοτέλει Λ]ασ/ /[παχιμιτα] , For Aristoteles of Larisa, Hipparthk: he took the suspended alpha as an abbreviation, indicating not Snell’s ‘Pythian Games’, but rather ‘Hipparkh’. Maehler therefore understood the poem as analogous to Pindar’s *Nemean* 11. He argued that the poem came from the end of the Bacchyleidean book of epinikia,\(^10\) suggesting that this position indicated a similar classificatory principle to that adopted for Pindar’s *Nemean* 11: Bacchylides 14B was placed at the end of the book because it was not straightforwardly epinikian.

Maehler’s original interpretation is briefly reasserted in the recent Cambridge commentary, without further argument.\(^11\) However, his account had already been challenged in a review of 1983 by Chris Carey, who offered the title [Ἀριστοτέλει Λ]ασ/ /[παχιμιτα] /[A[ριστοτέλει Λ]ασ/ /[παχιμιτα] , For Aristoteles of Larisa, wrestling, Pythian Games. Carey’s challenge has not yet been rebutted.\(^12\)

Carey’s principle objection was that Bacchylides’ epinikia show no clear principle of arrangement. This is not, however, the case. As Maehler and more recently Nick Lowe show, the odes are arranged by the significance of the victors, except that a pair of Keian poems open the book.\(^13\) If ode 14B celebrated a Pythian success, it should have taken structural precedence over the epichoric ode 14, even within its smaller Thessalian grouping of odes 14–14B; but it does not. Carey’s objection is structurally weak. On Maehler’s interpretation, the length of the book (approximately 1,300 lines) seems appropriate.\(^14\) Even if there were further poems after

\(^6\) Though the poem names Aristoteles of Larisa and Kirhira. Pind., *Pyth.* 10.15 (an ode for a runner dating to 498 BC) reveals the presence of athletic as well as equestrian contests at Kirhira in Pindar’s day.

\(^7\) Lobel (1956), reading Ἀριστοτέλει Ἐθσαλῶ (or more specifically Ἀριστοσαίω) τίττων Ἐθσα, on the basis of lines 7–10.

\(^8\) Cf. the catalogues of previous successes by the laudandus that are a feature of Aiginetan poems, esp. Pind., *Pyth.* 8.78–80; *Nom.* 3.83–84; *Nom.* 4.18–21.

\(^9\) Snell (1949) suggested in his apparatus that the extant letters of the second line, if interpreted as πα, might be an abbreviation for Π(α)σα. This is very unlikely. Lobel saw that πα should, in all likelihood, signify an abbreviation; yet he interpreted it as [πα]ς, not [Π]ας. Abbreviations by suprascript (much the most common form) generally use the suprascript letter as the last letter retained in the word; abbreviation by contraction is exceptional (McNamee (1981) xii, xiii) and the guiding principle is clarity (McNamee (1981) xiv). Our scribe, if he were referring to Delphi and needed an abbreviation, would surely therefore have written πυ instead, not πα. Scribal practice in the London Bacchyles papyrus is corroborative: in the title of Bacch. 6, σελαμυ inscribed for Οὐλομήτη(α). Cf. BM Pap. 1185 (a list of Olympic victors; *GMAW* no. 65), where ethnics and titles of events are abbreviated with final letter suspended to mark the start of the abbreviation: τεθρι for τεθριπεσαν, πας for παιδων, and so on.

\(^10\) Maehler I.1 36–37.


\(^12\) Carey (1983); cf. Lowe (2007) 170 n. 16.


\(^14\) It would have been shorter than Pindar’s *Olympians* or *Pythians*, but longer than the *Nemeans*. *P.Oxy.* 2363 adds at least two columns to the 35 of the London Bacchylides. Moreover, Carey does not take sufficient account of the poem’s opening invocation of Hestia, only paralleled in Pindar and Bacchylides in *Nom.* 11. Pindar and Bacchylides refer to ἑσπερια elsewhere: Bacch. 4.14 (possibly: corrupt, but not from an invocation); Pind., *Ol.* 1.11, 12.14; *Pyth.* 5.11, 11.13; *Isthm.* 4.17; *Paece.* 2.10, but all in Slater’s sense (a), ‘home, hearth’.
14B, such poems would have commemorated other non-stephanitic victors, or miscellaneous achievements that were not exclusively equestrian or athletic. Even within the constraints of a single book of Bacchylidean epinikia, the Alexandrians were sufficiently pragmatic and flexible to manage when a diverse body of material presented itself; the edition of Simonides’ epinikia shows this kind of sensitivity, and it reminds us of the rich output of the choral lyric poets, even in works eis anthrôpous.15

Maehler’s interpretation is also papyrologically superior to Carey’s. Below is an image (Fig. 1) of the relevant portion of P.Oxy. 2363, with an approximation of the spacing of Maehler’s reconstruction of the title. This provides an elegant and economical two-line solution. Also below, Carey’s reconstruction (Fig. 2).

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15 On Simonides, see Lobel (1959) 89; Obbink (2001) 75–77; cf. Lowe (2007) 175. D’Alessio (1997) 52 has convincingly argued that arrangement of his epinikian books by event would allow for a greater number of epichoric victories (see Obbink (2001) 75, n. 40 for a less convincing alternative). Lack of venues in the poems’ titles is easily solved by the supposition that individual books were divided up venue by venue, with each poem then specifying the precise event. That Σ Ar., Equ. 405 cites Simonides’ Four-Horse Chariot Races as a title would then indicate (contra Lobel (1959) 89; Obbink (2001) 76) a separate book – plausible enough given the preservation of far more Pindaric chariot-racing poems than other equestrian compositions. D’Alessio’s view grants proper credence to Alexandrian classificatory sensitivity (cf. Schröder (1999) 123); moreover, it takes seriously the likelihood that more material was transmitted than could be shoehorned into a small number of categories. The Simonidean edition was therefore in tune – however accidentally – with the diversity of the Archaic and Classical milieu. We do not know how many thematically miscellaneous poems Simonides composed, though the number may have been large; this may account for the Σύμμκτα (Sim. 540 PMG), though Obbink (2001) 78 supposes a metrical miscellany.
This is unsatisfactory for two papyrological reasons: first, it provides an oddly short second line; second, and more seriously, the amount of blank space in the margin to the lower left of the remaining letters forces Carey’s third and fourth lines to jut out rather untidily to the left. The title cannot have referred to a site of victory (reserved for the last word of the title elsewhere in Bacchylides’ epinikia), since no such supplement can successfully interpret the two remaining letters of the second line. Maehler’s interpretation alone meets the structural and papyrological requirements; Bacchylides 14B did not celebrate a Pythian, or indeed any other kind of, victory.

Epinikion is an artificial genre, invented by Alexandrian editors who recognized the problems of classification but were also able to respond to the material presented to them rather more creatively than is often assumed. We can continue to term Bacchylides 14B and Pindar’s Nemean 11 as epinikia so long as we accept some Alexandrian flexibility, understanding genre as an artificial compromise based on slippery criteria and centuries-old contexts and traditions.

We are entitled to ask what fifth-century audiences would have thought. Originally, such poems probably have been considered komastic songs (therefore overlapping terminologically with enkomia as well as aoidai and hymnoi). A suitably varied picture emerges from Pindaric self-reference. Though Pindar’s ἐπινικίσσαν ἀοιδαῖς (‘epinikian songs’, Nemean 4.78) has been of particular interest recently, Pythian 10.6 has ἐπικώματαν ἀνδρῶν κλατάν ὅπα (‘the noble voice of men in revelry’). Nemean 8.50 has ἐπικώμας ὑμνός (‘song of revelry’); and Nemean 6.32 has ἰδιὰ ... ἐπικώμια (‘their own songs of revelry’), with πολλὰ ὑμνοῦ (‘much singing’) in line 33. Audiences would have judged poems individually according to the contexts in which they were first received, and genre at this period should be thought of in terms of a negotiation between poetic authority and audience expectations, something which admits of a good deal of creativity and flexibility, especially with poetic patronage in a live performance culture.

Generic terminology is, then, useful only up to a point: we need to stretch beyond it and back, to gain insights into what enkomiastic poetry could do in discrete environments.

Though Carey’s interpretation of the title of Bacchylides 14B is not ultimately compelling, his intervention is useful because it invites us to think hard about how close Bacchylides 14B is to Nemean 11, and to investigate the ways in which enkomiastic poems can relate athletic success and civic office.

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16 Compare the neat marginal titles elsewhere in the London Bacchylides, where shorter lines appear centred beneath longer ones: for example, Bacch. 3 (col. 6), Bacch. 6 (col. 16), Bacch. 9 (col. 18), Bacch. 11 (col. 23) and Bacch. 14 (col. 35); also the title of Pind., Pae. 6 (D6 Rutherford) in P.Oxy. 841 col. 22, or the title of Pind., Dith. 2 in P.Oxy. 1604 col. 2. Personal inspection of P.Oxy. 2363 confirms that no surface is missing in the blank marginal space to the lower left.

17 The assumption of Hornblower (2004) 172 that the poem celebrates a Pythian victory neglects structural and papyrological issues, not recognizing that the victories in lines 7–10 must be previous victories.


19 Enkomia: Harvey (1955) 163–64; Cingano (1990) 223; (2003), critical of van Groningen (1960). The difference between epinikia and sympotic enkomia (for example, Bacch., fr. 20C) is rather small; see also Currie (2004); Carey (2007); Morrison (2007) for the symposium as an important context for the performance as well as reperformance of epinikia; cf. Sim. 512 PMG for sympotic self-reference in an epinikon celebrating a chariot-race victory; also Ibykos’ (probably sympotic) enkomia/epinikia, with Barron (1984).

20 Hornblower (2007) 292; Lowe (2007) 168, n. 5; also ἄρταν ... ἐπινικὼν, Pind., Ol. 8.75.

For Aristoteles of Larisa, Hipparkh
Golden-throned Hestia, you increase the great prosperity of the glorious Agathokleadai as men of wealth, as you sit mid-city by the fragrant Peneus in the vale of sheep-rearing Thessaly. From there Aristoteles too went to flourishing Kirrha and garlanded himself twice, to the joy of horse-ruling Larisa ...

Hestia is here invoked as the civic hearth, in the building — the prytaneion or bouleuterion, though it may have been differently termed23 — from where the governors of Larisa24 administered their polis. Two points are immediately striking. First, the poem initially invites us to think that Hestia is being invoked in reference to a private building or celebration, rather than to a centrally-public institution: the build-up of genitives in lines 1−3 referring to the gloriously wealthy Agathokleadai hang tendentiously between Hestia as the poem’s opening word, and ἐλβον (wealth; prosperity) in line 3: a familial claim to Hestia seems to be the implication. Though the poem moves on to reveal a broader view of Hestia, her civic ‘mid-city’ specification is delayed, thus preserving the force of the Agathoklead connection.25 Second, why does Hestia increase (ἐξειω) the olbos of the Agathokleadai? This stark claim seems to be unique, though connections between Hestia and economic prosperity are paralleled elsewhere.26 The answer must be that, through this family’s administration of Larisaean civic life through the public cult of Hestia, any

23 See Hansen and Fischer-Hansen (1994) esp. 31, 37 for their view of the Classical prytaneion as an unpretentious building with no fixed architectural form; cf. CPCInv. 140. Updating Miller (1978), they provide (31, n. 41, 32) evidence for a Larisaean prytaneion in the second century BC: SEG 26 677.69. That so few such buildings have been identified is attributed by Hansen and Fischer-Hansen to the likelihood that they were unprepossessing as well as formally diverse. This seems, first, rather Athenocentric; second, a main reason why so few urban administrative buildings — of whatever architectural kind, and however grand — have been discovered may be due to continuous reuse of the same sites over time; in the case of Larisa, the modern city is built on top of the ancient polis. In spite of a lack of archaeological evidence, the existence of a substantial prytaneion is recorded for the immensely rich island of Siphnos ca. 525 BC: Hdt. 3.57.3−4 (CPCInv. 773), as Hansen and Fischer-Hansen (1994) 36 admit.

24 Possibly tagoi, though precise terminology is unrecoverable. See further Sprawski (1999) 15−17; Stamatopoulou (2007) 316−17; Arist., Pol. VI.8 1322b27−28 gives arkhontes and basileis as well as prytaneis as terms for officials presiding over the public hearth, though this list is surely not exhaustive.

25 Cf. Lobel (1956) 30 ad loc. 7ff. for an interpretation of the grammatical structure of the opening sentence which alters the word-order to avoid the supposed ‘incongruity’ of prioritizing the goddess of a particular family.

26 Cf. the cult of Histia Tamia on Hellenistic Kos, with Parker (2005) 15 and LSCG 169 A 9; CPCInv. 753; the liturgical reading of this cult by Gernet (1968) 397−98 (cf. Vernant (1985a) 185−86) is, however, at odds with the presentation of Hestia here in Bacchylides; Hellenistic Kos is worth little as a parallel for fifth-century Larisa. For Hestia as bestower of olbos more generally, see H.H.Hest. 8; cf. H.Orph. 27.9−10; also Maehler I.2 305 ad loc. 3.
public wealth or benefits that accrue to it — including, for instance, the prestige and privileges pertaining to the development and maintenance of aristocratic networks — also fill their own coffers and maximize personal prestige, and are likely to have done so for some time.\textsuperscript{27} The tone of the opening, where Bacchylides sings of the connection between Hestia and the \textit{olbos} of the Agathokleidai, is, therefore, forcefully oligarchic.\textsuperscript{28}

Given Maehler’s interpretation of Aristoteles as a Larisaian hipparkh, we need to consider exactly how close a parallel Bacchylides’ poem is to Pindar’s \textit{Nemean} 11, which very clearly celebrates the inauguration of a \textit{pyrtanis} in its opening lines. Carey is right that the remains of Bacchylides’ poem do not specify a civic event. Celebration of Aristoteles’ inauguration as hipparkh at any point in the poem would have provided a sufficient basis for the Alexandrian provision of a title; yet Bacchylides’ other poems in this book — at least where openings are preserved — do not seem so backward in coming forward; and though some variation is permitted, in no case does mention of a previous victory or victories precede the principle achievement being commemorated.\textsuperscript{29} So commemoration of an actual inauguration should remain speculative, and other options should be considered, while the connection with civic Hestia should retain its significance. \textit{Nemean} 11 is not the only enkomiastic model for a link between success in the games and civic office.\textsuperscript{30}

Alternatively, the poem may be more generally than specifically enkomiastic: Bacchylides 14B would then praise Aristoteles for simply holding office, while taking the opportunity to catalogue former victories not previously commemorated. Analogous would be Bacchylides fr. 20C, a sympotic enkomion for Hieron of Syracuse in which the tyrant and his \textit{hippotrophia} are celebrated in general terms, along with references to previous victories (which, in that case, Bacchylides had celebrated).\textsuperscript{31} Another possible parallel is Pindar’s \textit{Nemea} 3 for Aristokleidas of Aigina, where the connections of the victor and his family to the Aiginetan Thearion (a cultic and political building near the Temple of Apollo in Aigina town) are celebrated on the back of athletic success — though that poem clearly celebrates a current victory, unlike our poem.\textsuperscript{32}

Whether or not Bacchylides 14B celebrated an actual inauguration, it is clear that Bacchylides’ priority was to locate Aristoteles as close to the seat of power as possible. The natural assumption is that Aristoteles was himself an Agathokleid, and that the poem authorizes and augments the prestige of both family and individual to the greater glory of this oligarchic regime in the centre of Larisa. Accordingly, Aristoteles’ two victories at Delphi would have been the latest in a line of victories there by Agathokleidai — the significance of ‘Aristoteles too’ (καὶ Ἀριστότελης) in line 7.\textsuperscript{33} Victories by Aristoteles and by other members of his clan would form the perfect oligarchic background of prestige for the present celebration of Aristoteles as


\textsuperscript{29} Bacch. 1.6 (Isthmian victory); Bacch. 2.5–7 (same); Bacch. 3.5–7 (Olympic chariot victory); Bacch. 4.5–6 (same); Bacch. 6.1–3 (Olympic victory); Bacch. 7.3 (Olympia); Bacch. 9.4 (Nemea); Bacch. 11.9–14 (Pythian victory); Bacch. 12.8 (Nemean victory). Only in two extant cases is the principle commemoration delayed: in Bacch. 5, until 37–40 (after the extended eagle comparison); in Bacch. 14, until 20–22 (after some extended moralizing).

\textsuperscript{30} It is possible that there once existed poems invoking Hestia which celebrated a victorious athlete’s civic \textit{sitēsis}. The difficulty of reconstructing a reference to any victory in the title of Bacch. 14B seems, however, to rule out the possibility here.

\textsuperscript{31} Bacch., fr. 20C.7–11; cf. Pind., fr. 105ab, a fragmentary hyporchema celebrating Hieron as \textit{ktisor} of Aitna.

\textsuperscript{32} Esp. in lines 67–70; cf. \textit{Nem.} 7.64–70; Currie (2005) 333–38.

\textsuperscript{33} καὶ here may be thought more generally to introduce these victories as an instance of the general \textit{olbos} of the Agathokleidai. However, in conjunction with κείθεν, καὶ surely specifies a particular kind of connection, so marked by the main verb \textit{στερανώσατο}. 
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Larisaian hippocrkh. Moreover, the rhetoric of the poem invites one to think that Hestia herself guarantees such success for the Agathokleidai, supported by the grammar of the first four words. In these terms, oligarchic wealth authorizes office, and office fosters success in the games, success which accrues beneficially — and self-fulfillingly — to the current oligarchic administration of Larisa. In fifth-century Thessaly, almost a by-word for wealth and hippocrophia, the office of hippocrkh would have been high-ranking and prestigious, with civic as well as military responsibilities. If, as seems most plausible, Aristoteles’ former Pythian victories were equestrian, the poem would affirm aristocratic hippocrophia, competition and political power almost in the same breath, with ἄρσενιτπποι (‘horse-ruling’, line 10) indeed signifying this overlap between political office and hippotrophic competitive prowess.

The bold and elaborate way in which the poem’s opening celebrates Hestia and the Agathokleidai suggests that the poem was performed at a civic function connected with the central administrative chamber in Larisa. This may or may not have been the occasion of Aristoteles’ inauguration as hippocrkh, though the link between Aristoteles and Hestia seems at least to suggest that hippocrkhia was conferred and controlled centrally. On these terms, Bacchylides’ poem affirmed the administrative interests of one ruling family in Larisa, along with their own aristocratic aesthetic based upon poetry, games, and celebration.

III. NEMEAN 11

Tenedos, the island home of the laudandus Aristagoras and his family, was an Aiolic polis off the Western coast of the Troad near the entrance to the Hellespont on the trading route from the Black Sea; it was a staunch ally of Athens throughout the fifth and fourth centuries, a tribute-paying member of the Delian league — even when neighbours were rebelling from Athens – and an early member of the Second Athenian Confederacy. The poem celebrates Aristagoras’ inauguration as a prytanis (lines 1–3), and incorporates the thematics and symbolism of athletic competition into a broader political context.

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34 Alternatively, though much less likely, Aristoteles may be from a different aristocratic family, with καὶ Ἀριστοτέλης marking an attempt by Aristoteles to appeal to the ruling Agathokleidai through continuity of aristocratic endeavour across family lines. A parallel might be the Thessalian Pythian 10, commemorating the Pythian victory of Hippokleas of Pelinna, though commissioned by the Aleuadai of Larisa (see further Stamatopoulou (2007) 309–13). However, unlike at Pyth. 10.4–5, connecting Pelinna, Hippokleas and the Larisaian Aleuadai, there are no markers in the opening lines of Bacch. 14B to highlight such an unusual situation, and no other Larisaian family is mentioned in what remains: we should have expected Bacchylides to have been much more explicit right away.


38 Hdt. 1.151.1–2; Thuc. 3.2.3 (hostility towards Lesbos); with Hornblower (1991) 383 ad loc; Strabo 13.1.46; ATL L420–21; cf. II.83; Tod (1948) 222 on no. 175 = Rhodes-Osborne no. 72 (340/339 BC: an honorific Athenian decree), esp. lines 5–12; with Rhodes-Osborne 360–61; CPCInv 1015–16; Hornblower (2004) 143. For archaeology on Tenedos see AR (1998) 142; the ancient polis lay on the site of the modern Turkish settlement of Bozcaada; a variety of different types of burial, including cist graves, have been found in an ancient cemetery. See Rutishauser (2001) for the strategic significance of the island in the fourth century. We do not need to suppose that Athens needed to support Tenedos constitutionally in order for it to function as an important regional ally; even if she had her support, this need not imply that democratic pressure was exerted, let alone that such pressure (or resistance to it) should be detectable in Nemean 11. The romanticized view of Carne-Ross (1985) 168 is most unwarranted.
Nemean 11 shows a concern for wealth, pedigree and athletics, which, when brought into close relation with civic administration, bears all the hallmarks of oligarchy. The poem is conventionally dated to 446.\(^39\) However, the arguments made in favour of this date are flimsy: they rest on false biography and perhaps also biased ancient scholarly emendation; the stylistic grounds are most uncertain.\(^40\) We are therefore left free, as with a number of other Nemean and Isthmian poems, to date Nemean 11 across the entire range of Pindar’s career, from 498 to 446 BC.\(^41\)

Much modern discussion of Nemean 11 has focused on its moralizing themes, given the poem’s lack of a myth and emphasis instead on reasons for Aristagoras’ failure to compete in panhellenic athletics at Delphi and Olympia.\(^42\) It has often been thought most odd that Pindar should spend so much time emphasizing that, despite being a good athlete, Aristagoras was prevented by the hesitancy of his parents from competing in the panhellenic contests where, we are told, if he had competed surely he would have won (lines 22–32).\(^43\)

First, we need to unpick the basic rhetoric (‘praise’ plus ‘foil’);\(^44\) we can then move ahead by considering the specific implications of its structure, not merely in formalist terms, but as contextually driven and politically effective. First ‘praise’. A total of sixteen epichoric victories (lines 19–21) is not of itself unimpressive. Furthermore, no single citizen of Tenedos in antiquity prior to the Hellenistic period is recorded as having been victorious at Olympia or Delphi, or indeed at Nemea or the Isthmus.\(^45\) Accordingly, the allusion to panhellenic athletics was designed to impress Tenedian audiences unaccustomed to the great heights of such success. In a context where entries into panhellenic competitions, let alone successes, were rare or even non-existent, a statement that Aristagoras could have won at Olympia and Delphi, had he been entered, should be taken as high praise. A poem like Bacchylides 9, for Automedes of Phleius, shows the extent to which epinikian success can be transformed into a civic and indeed quasi-mythical achievement when panhellenic victories by members of a given polis were rare.\(^46\) Second, ‘foil’. Pindar sets Aristagoras’ former competitive shortcomings against the present celebration, using a technique relatively common in epinikia.\(^47\) Lines 37–42 convey the idea that aristocratic excellence is contingent upon the vicissitudes of nature, as with the success of crops: ‘Ancient greatness produces in alternation for generations of men their strength. In succession dark fields do not produce crops, and trees are not wont in every cycle of the years to bear fragrant flowers in equal abundance: such things vary’.

\(^39\) For example, Bowra (1964) 413; ultimately, Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1922) 429–32.

\(^40\) See Verdenius (1982) 16; (1988) 96; Hubbard (2002) 256–57, n. 3; Henry (2005) 119, 124–25 \textit{ad loc.} 11. The connection between Aristagoras and Theoxenos, the supposed beloved of Pindar’s old age, is groundless, based on an unnecessary identification of Theoxenos’ father, Hagesilas, with Aristagoras’ father (Arkesilas or Hagesilas: the manuscripts in \textit{Nem.} 11.11 differ) first made by Gaspar (1900) 171, and on false biographical readings of the homoerotic topoi of sympotic enkomia. See also D’Alessio (1997) 54–55: \textit{pace} Henry (2005) 125, n. 58, the identification of the fathers may well go back to a conjecture made by Dionysios of Phaselis, who introduced the name Hagesilas into \textit{Nem.} 11 in order to make the poem fit his classificatory scheme, according to which \textit{Nem.} 11 and the Theoxenos poem (Pind., \textit{fr.} 123) could be grouped together as both sympotic \textit{paroimia}. \textit{Cf.} above with n. 5.

\(^41\) I cannot see how Henry (2005) 128 \textit{ad loc.} 24–29 supposes that those lines offer any insight into the date of this poem.


\(^44\) Following Maehler’s formal analysis of Bacch. 11.24–36 at Maehler I.2 214.

\(^45\) Nothing recorded for Tenedos in \textit{CPCInv.} 1350–51. See Moretti no. 596 for Damokrates of Tenedos, a victorious Olympic wrestler in 204 BC, with Paus. 6.17.1 (with Maddoli et al. (1999) 301 \textit{ad loc.}) and Ael., \textit{Var. Hist.} 4.15; Polykrates, a brother of Damokrates, won the boxing at the Panathenaea in 198 BC: \textit{IG II^2.} 2313 lines 48–49.

\(^46\) The only other Phliasian panhellenic victory recorded, by Timainetos, dates to 498, at the Pythian games: Paus. 10.7.7 (not a Nemean victory as reported by \textit{CPCInv.} 613; \textit{cf.} 1350); he may even be a relative of Automedes. See further Fearn (2003), esp. 348.

Recognition of this double rhetoric does not, however, tell us anything particularly specific about Nemean 11 or about Tenedos and its politics – except that Tenedos was not a great producer of ‘world-class’ athletes. We need therefore to consider the broader structure of Pindar’s enkomastic agenda. For what is of particular interest here is the way in which an enkomastic paradigm concerning athletics is applied, in context, to praise of a political inauguration: the success which is here made to stand out from the vicissitudes of an athletic background is very specific, right from the poem’s opening lines, with their direct praise of Hestia and the Tenedian pyrtaneion. We should also note how the first four stanzas go on to reveal the extent of overlap possible between political administration and aristocratic aesthetics. All the komastic trappings of athletic victory are here applied to political inauguration; the interests of Aristagoras, his family and his hetairoi coincide with those of the polis, and wider civic interests are subordinated to praise of Aristagoras. Lines 17–18, ‘in the words of his townsmen, kindly ones, he should be praised, and, glorified with honey-sounding songs, we should celebrate him’, serve as an introduction to the catalogue of these epichoric victories, but these lines are also socially and thematically equivalent to lines 1–9 on the atmosphere of intense festivity in the pyrtaneion. Aristagoras’ inauguration as civic magistrate is, in oligarchic conditions, the natural corollary of the celebration of his athletic prowess. The structural priority of politics over aristocratic athletics in this poem does not somehow indicate that athletics is now irrelevant for a civic Aristagoras; in fact, it is a fundamental part of Aristagoras’ civic identity, poetically, aesthetically and ideologically. In this poem the political inauguration takes the place of a recently-won victory, with standard epinikian rhetoric enforcing the ideological power of aristocratic political and cultural self-representation. The ideological and aesthetic investments of Aristagoras, his family and his hetairoi, coincide with and dominate civic interests.48

The connection between the pyrtaneion and hospitality allows us again to consider the use of public buildings and civic institutions for the maintenance of aristocratic networks.49 What is, however, particularly striking in the case of Nemean 11 is the way in which aristocratic xenia and hetaireia are themselves the principle element of praise as symbols of Aristagoras’ authority in office, rather than supplementary elements. Lines 33–37 give a clue to the kinds of international aristocratic ties that existed:

It was easy to conjecture the presence of the ancient blood of Peisandros from Sparta: from Amyklai he came with Orestes, bringing here by sea a bronze-armed force of Aiolians; blended, too, with that of his mother’s ancestor Melanippos from the streams of Ismenos.

These lines provide the present praise of Aristagoras with a suitably grand back-story; on his father’s side, his clan, perhaps in fact named Peisandridai, had its origin in Sparta; on his mother’s side, he is descended from the Theban Melanippos who fought against the Epigonoi. This brief mythological account fits Aristagoras’ family directly into the colonization of Tenedos from mainland Greece, as recorded in other sources.50 Such connections associate Aristagoras’

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48 I cannot agree with the apolitical view of Henry (2005) 119, following Gschnitzer, RE suppl. 13.740.
50 Cf. Σ Pind., Nem. 11.43a (iii.189 Dr); also Σ Nem. 11.43 b (on Peisandros), with Hellanikos, fr. 32 EGM I (from his Aiolika); Vell. Pat. 1.2 for the colonization of Lesbos and the surrounding area by sons of Orestes. For Thebes and Aiolian colonization, see Σ in Dionys. Perieg. 820 (Müller 454); Hall (1997) 43, 48–49 for the close relationship between Dorians and Aiolians in early Hellenic genealogy. See also the association between the Penthidai, a ruling house in Mytilene, and the family of Orestes: Alkaios, fr. 70.6 V, on Pittakos; McGlew (1993) 160. We also have the tantalizing information that the notorious Athenian oligarch Kritias used a version of the mythology of the island in his tragedy, Tennes (the eponymous hero of Tenedos), implying aetiological connections between the island and the Troad peraia, whereby the island is to be founded on
pedigree with the colonization of the whole of Aiolia, and may therefore have provided aetiological support for the existence and maintenance of aristocratic networks via heredity through the xenia offered by the Tenedian prytaneion. Indeed, the Theban connection may be what brought Pindar to celebrate Aristagoras’ inauguration.

Nemean 11 surely received its premiere at the Tenedian prytaneion, with the references to the music of the lyre, banqueting and hospitality in lines 7–9 performatively tying the poem into ongoing aristocratic traditions. The current administration of Tenedos is thus underpinned by affirmation of aristocratic aesthetics and culture, from the top down, as well as out from the centre.

IV. POLITICS

Hestia is the patron deity of the oligarchic regimes of both Larisa and Tenedos, according to her representation in the two poems under discussion. Although it may be unwarranted to draw a precise parallel between the two poems as supposed celebrations of political inauguration, they nevertheless share the concern with connecting personal aristocratic achievement to civic administration that is a signature of oligarchy. This is in perfect harmony with the relation between wealth, civic administration and oligarchy identified by Aristotle in the Politics (II.11 1273a26; III.8 1279b17–18). Athletic and civic success, commemorated in high-status lyric song, is perfectly in keeping with the oligarchic concern for the quality of achievements through wealth, also noted by Aristotle (Politics IV.12 1296b31–33). We now need to ask how different the two poems’ presentation of oligarchy is, given the diversity of political organizations that the term covered. Bacchylides 14B presents a view of oligarchy that is bold indeed, asserting Hestia’s natural ability to increase the wealth of the Larisaian Agathokleidai, and almost making civic Hestia into a personal cult of this one family. This is in tune with what we hear from other sources about the nature of Larisaian oligarchy. From Pindar’s Pythonian 10 it is clear that the Aleuadai, a rival Larisaian family, were keen to extend their claims over the whole of Thessaly, with Larisa as their power-base. According to Herodotos, the invitation of the Aleuadai to Xerxes to invade Greece was at odds with the views of other Thessalians; the Thucydidean picture tends to corroborate this view of Thessaly as a place characterized by aristocratic rivalry, thus promoting destabilization and leading to unrest. Bacchylides 14B, at least from its opening lines, represents oligarchy in a particularly aggressive and conservative manifestation. The Aleuadai maintained their position of prominence in the politics of Thessaly. By contrast, Bacchylides’ poem preserves the single extant Classical reference to the Larisaian Agathokleidai: their oligarchic prime is best thought of as short-lived.

Apolline terms with aulos-playing rejected: Wilson (2003) 188–89. As Peter Wilson suggests to me, the play may have portrayed Tenedos as politically congenial to Kritias.

Here and elsewhere I talk of ‘oligarchy’ and ‘aristocracy’ in the same breath, on the basis that, though in its ideal form aristocracy is rather different from oligarchy according to Aristotle’s definition (government according to merit as well as wealth, Pol. IV.7 1293b9–12, as opposed to government according to wealth alone, Pol. II.11 1273a26), Aristotle notes that the two forms are often confused (Pol. V.7 1306b24–26) and that oligarchy is properly understood as a corruption of aristocracy (where the men with wealth rule, assuming that they are ‘the best’): Pol. III.7 1279b5; cf. III.15 1286b4–16; IV.7 1293b20–22. Aristotle seems in fact to doubt whether ‘aristocracy’ properly ever exists except in oligarchic form: III.5 1278a15–25. Cf. Megabyzos’ view at Hdt. 3.81.3; Brock and Hodkinson (2002a) 18; also Thuc. 3.82.8; 8.64.3.

Also Pol. IV.4 1290a30–b3; IV.8 1294a10–12; III.8 1279b40–1280a3; III.7 1279b8; cf. VI.3 1318a19–20. In general, Ostwald (2000), esp. 69.

53 Brock and Hodkinson (2002a) 17.


55 Hdt. 7.6 with 7.130 and 7.172; Thuc. 4.78.3 (Brasidas exploiting Thessalian oligarchic dissunity); also Archibald (2002); Morgan (2003) 86–87; Stamatopoulou (2007) 338.

56 CPCInv. 696; cf. Arist., Pol. V.6 1306a26–30 for Simos the Aleuad ca. 360, with Dem. 18.48; the Aleuadai are named among the most prominent Thessalian patrons of lyric poetry at Theokr. 16.34–9.

57 LGPN III.B 2.
In the case of Nemean 11, though the structural force of the epinikian rhetoric celebrates oligarchic administrative power in place of a current victory, both athletic competitiveness and administrative ambition are toned down. The poem’s tracing of Aristagoras’ pedigree back to the colonization of Aiolia may suggest that this oligarchic regime was of the hereditary variety identified by Aristotle. Yet it is also eager to affirm that Aristagoras’ time in office will be short-lived as well as trouble-free: ‘but may he pass through his twelve-month term with distinction and with heart unscathed’ (lines 9–10). This latter wish is likely to be a warning against stasis, with Aristagoras as an exemplar for other aristocrats. The twelve-month term of office, along with the notion of distinguished public service, is expressive of oligarchic eunomia, limiting societal breakdown caused by aristocratic inter-familial strife (through philotimia and phthonos), conforming with Aristotle’s own view of how oligarchic regimes attempted to avoid tyranny. This does not mean, however, that the strategy of the poem is to bring back together aristocratic and demotic interests understood as already separate.

Oligarchic administrative restraint has its analogue in the way that lines 22–29 mention Olympic and Pythian competition only in order to inform their audience that Aristagoras did not compete at these two most prestigious festivals. Parental hesitancy (line 22) is a delicate way of suggesting that Olympic and Pythian athletics was a step too far for Tenedian hereditary oligarchs, one which carried with it the dangers of societal breakdown through overreaching. The extended moralizing of lines 37 and following, promoting the themes of change and transience, thus has a special political force in addition to its universal truths about mortal limitations. We should suppose that Aristagoras’ very commissioning of Pindar to sing his praises was designed to make a very strong impression on local audiences, in a context which may have been relatively unfamiliar with epinikian poetry (given the seeming non-existence of panhellenic athletic successes in the Classical period). One might also suppose that Pindaric kleos was enacted through reperformances of the ode within the family, ones which to some degree might have pulled against the force of the twelve-month restriction (see τέλος, line 10) of civic office which the poem commemorates. However, it is also important to recognize the force of the continual emphasis on restraint throughout Nemean 11, which marks out the poem itself as the furthest limit to which Tenedian aristocrats could aspire, one which preserves for all time Aristagoras’ deference to the political structures of his polis.

Though the two poems appear similar in important respects as oligarchic compositions invoking Hestia, the specific brand of oligarchy espoused in the respective poleis was, on this evidence, rather different. We now need to factor in these findings to modern formulations of the role of Hestia in the civic life of Greek poleis, and the socio-political contextualization of enkomiastic poetry. The evidence so far presented will suggest that certain positions are in need of modification and more detailed contextual nuancing.

Among anthropological studies of Hestia as a civic divinity, the work of Louis Gernet and Jean-Pierre Vernant looms large. According to the view of Vernant, who relies on Gernet’s theory of a socially-collectivist rearticulation of survivals from pre-polis institutions, Hestia in her civic manifestation retains the memory of the regal, familial hearth; at the centre of a civic community, she symbolizes the hearths of individual houses which together constitute that community, thus

58 Pol. IV.5 1292b4–7 and IV.6 1293a27–30; cf. Brock and Hodkinson (2002a) 17, n. 46.
59 Arist., Pol. V.8 1308a19–24. The natural supposition that the office of prytanis could be the source of tyranny is confirmed in the historical case of Miletos by Arist., Pol. V.5 1305a15–18.
60 Other earlier Aiolic sources provide evidence for demotic support of aristocratic stasis. See Alkaios on Pittakos, with comparison with how the Akhaians should have killed the hubristic Aias, at Alk., fr. 298 V, and the implication that inter-aristocratic conflict could be predicated on supposed demotic support; cf. too Alk., frs. 70.12–13, 129.20 V; also Arist., Pol. III.14 1285a35–b1 = Alk., fr. 348 V; Thomas (2007) 147–48.
transforming hierarchical modes of social differentiation into homogeneous égalité. It should be clear from the oligarchic evidence presented above, especially in the Larisaian case of Bacchylides 14B, that this developmental model of political community, according to which pre-political and familial aspects are remembered only through their absence in a new civic transformation, is insufficient. Rather, the poetic evidence reveals the slippage between private and public that makes Hestia an oligarchically powerful deity: Vernant’s vertically diachronic model now becomes a horizontally and geographically synchronic one admitting of much greater political diversity across Archaic and Classical Greece. Here, Gernet’s own formulation may be more useful (though perhaps only because of its rather idealistic non-specificity about ‘community’):

Dans ce symbole intentionnellement administré, la pensée qui s’attache au Foyer commun reste une pensée communautaire: ce qui s’exprime d’emblée, et du fait même qu’il y a un Foyer de la cité comme il y en a un de chaque famille, c’est cette solidarité concrète qui fait du bien de tous le bien de chacun, c’est ce caractère constitutif de la cité...

Gernet’s view of Hestia as somehow at the very heart of the notion of the polis, symbolizing the relation between familial and civic, does fit oligarchic conditions better, despite its abstract, rather Athenocentric, generality, and though its socialist model of community still seems forced. Nevertheless, such anthropological models were ground-breaking because of their attunement to fundamental questions about Greek socio-political structure; their influence is still felt, including in modern theories of enkomiastic poetry.

Of contemporary politicizing readings of enkomiastic poetry, much the most significant is that offered by Leslie Kurke: hugely influential because of its successful side-stepping of the Bundyst impasse and its fundamentally correct insistence on the need for a Pindar deeply embedded within the politics of his own time, rather than somehow ahistorical, or socially backward and out-of-touch. Kurke’s model of the quasi-liturgical epinikian virtue of megaloprepeia is openly indebted to Gernet’s anthropology. Kurke admits that this model is drawn exclusively from Athenian sources, yet proceeds to read it in to a wide range of contextually diverse poetry. Such Athenocentrism renders the methodology too rigid to deal with the diversity of socio-political contexts in which the patrons of Pindar, Bacchylides and Simonides, lived out their lives, especially given Athens’ highly unrepresentative political structure.
Established theoretical modelling for the role of Hestia in ancient Greek poleis is either too vague or too sociologically communitarian to account for cases where oligarchic texts exploit the relation between familial and civic Hestia for their own purposes. Communitarian interpretations of symbolic reciprocity between victors and communities – particularly with respect to victors’ civic honours – risk oversimplifying the relation between ‘aristocratic victor’ and ‘community’ since it is not at all clear that epinikian rhetoric must mediate between two distinct interests or entities. That enkomiastic rhetoric thrives on the self-confident assertiveness of oligarchic political self-representation is a factor which communitarian readings fail sufficiently to address. Taking oligarchic politics into consideration necessitates a renegotiation of the idea – itself too decontextualized or Athenocentric – that aristocracy was under threat in a new communitarian world of the Classical polis. Oligarchic self-representation could disregard others’ interests if it wished; elsewhere, a community would not necessarily have felt itself excluded by oligarchic administration. Fifth-century oligarchies and tyrannies, as well as democracies, came and went according to the pressures and aspirations of individual epichoric circumstances. The use of athletics for aristocratic interests is neither outdated, Western Greek or simply tyrannical, but a widespread feature of Greek oligarchy. Bacchylides 14B and Pindar’s Nemean 11 represent only a small fraction of the evidence, yet their focus on Hestia and thus civic administration highlights the issues of political methodology incisively.

V. CONCLUSION

The importance of enkomiastic poetry for oligarchic administration that these poems clearly reveal, in two different polis contexts, reminds us of the degree of contextual specificity of which enkomiastic poetry was capable. These texts reveal no strict division between ‘political’ or ‘public’ discourse on the one hand and ‘personal’ or ‘private’ on the other. On Tenedos, elite symptotic festivity in the administrative heart of a relatively well-ordered oligarchic polis need not be at odds with the community precisely because of aristocratic controlling interests; in Larisa, aristocratic festivity shuts out broader society. Writ large, the ‘house’ of which Hestia is the centrepiece and guardian in both these cases is the oligarchic polis.

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text in Perikles’ funeral oration at Thuc. 2.40.2, especially after Bacchylides’ prolonged discussion of men’s active interests in different fields in lines 35–45 which Perikles appropriates (itself a Solonian topos, for which fr. 13.43–58 W), would confirm the complexity of Athenian rhetoric. As an ideologically multifaceted amalgam of Athenian Solonian and epinikian impulses, Perikles’ rhetoric would render a straightforwardly democratic orientation oversimplistic.


71 Cf. Macleod (1996 [1979]) 58, n. 43 on the way in which the characteristic weakness of oligarchy as identified by Thucydides and others (private ambition) feeds stasis in a range of conditions and at a range of different times according in part to opportunity and the frailties of human nature: Thuc. 8.89.3; 2.65.7; 3.82.3; cf. Hdt. 3.82.3; Isok. 3.18; Xen., Mem. 2.6.20; Arist., Pol. V.6 1306a12–19; V.7 1306b22–27. For epinikian commemoration and the vicissitudes of stasis, see Pind., Ol. 12, with Barrett (1973); Hornblower (2004) 77, 158–59, 262; Berent (1998) for stasis in general. For constitutional instability as a feature of Classical Greece outside of Athens, see Brock and Hodkinson (2002a) 12.

72 The position outlined by Mann (2001) 48–49 is therefore insufficient. See also Hornblower (2004) 259–60 on the circumstances of Alkibiades’ equestrian victories in the later fifth century, not representing Thucydidean anachronism.

73 For similar views on the symposium, a plausible context for the premieres of both these poems, see esp. Levine (1985) on Theognis; cf. Pellizer (1990), esp. 177–78. The present argument enhances the position of Schmitt-Pantel (1990) 25. Cf. Stehle (1997) 25 on the use of choral performance by aristocratic families to stage ‘their centrality in the community and their right to speak for it, to identify its interest with their own’.
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