POLYSEMY AND IDEOLOGY IN PINDAR *PYTHIAN* 4.229–230

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In 462, FACING OPPOSITION TO HIS RULE OF CYRENE, Arcesilas IV sought to strengthen his position at home both by force and by emulating the achievements of the great Sicilian tyrants in the Panhellenic games.[1] He succeeded handsomely, winning the chariot race at the Pythian games, and two of Pindar's epinician odes celebrate this victory. One, *Pythian* 5, was commissioned by Arcesilas, while the other, *Pythian* 4, Pindar's longest epinician poem, may have been commissioned by Arcesilas or by an exile, Damophilus, seeking or celebrating reconciliation with the ruler.[2] As he had with the equestrian victories of the Sicilian tyrants, Pindar seeks in *Pythian* 4 to present Arcesilas' victory as symbolic of a wide range of qualities and achievements important for a ruler. One way in which he does this is to assimilate the victory to the foundation, or refoundation, of Cyrene itself, presenting Arcesilas as both a worthy descendant of the original founder and the guarantor of the continued success of his city.[3] The celebration of the victor becomes fused in *Pythian* 4 with the celebration of the founder. Moreover, as Claude Calame has shown, the narrative of the foundation of Cyrene is itself interwoven with a variety of other narratives, or isotopies in Calame's nomenclature: a narrative of the sowing and harvesting of crops, a narrative of marriage and the production of legitimate children, and a third narrative of terrestrial growth in which the land itself (as distinct from its cities or fields) is brought to birth and fixed in place.[4] The result is that *Pythian* 4 is constituted by a series of parallel narratives, which are imposed upon the narrative of the foundation of Cyrene, which is itself imposed upon the narrative of Arcesilas' Pythian victory.

This layering of narratives is key to the ideological work that the ode performs. The narratives of agricultural, human, and terrestrial growth, as Calame argues, associate the foundation of the city with prosperity and stability, and thus mark its value as positive.[5] By virtue of its implication in the foundation narrative, Arcesilas' victory is marked both as positive and as a foundation. For the most part, this layering effect is achieved through the juxtaposition of separate narratives

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[1] Chamoux 1953: 173–179.

[2] Chamoux 1953: 187–198; Carey 1980: 143–144; Braswell 1988: 5–6; and schol. *ad Pyth.* 4.467 suggest that Damophilus is the patron, while Bowra (1964: 137–138) suggests Carrhotus, Arcesilas' brother-in-law and charioteer.

[3] Dougherty (1993a: 83–156) discusses this process for *Ol.* 7 and *Pyth.* 1.5.9.

[4] Calame 1996: 78–109 (Calame 1996 includes an expanded version of Calame 1990, so reference will be made only to the later work); see also Dougherty 1993a: 61–119, 136–156; Segal 1986: 70–71. A fourth narrative that tracks the rising of the sun can be seen in ἀκτῖνος (or ἀκτῖνας) and τέλλετο in *Pyth.* 4.253–257; see below, 199.

[5] Calame 1996: 78–82.

(Arcesilas' victory, Euphemus' acceptance of the clod of earth, Battus' visit to the Delphic oracle, Jason's completion of the plowing and his subsequent abduction of Medea), but at times the narratives become more tightly fused through the use of metaphorical and polysemous language.[6] Through a detailed reading of *Pyth.* 4.229–230, this paper will examine one particularly striking example of such fusion, and consider the ideological advantages of this poetic device.

I

Pythian 4 is dominated by Pindar's narration of Jason's retrieval of the Golden Fleece. Most of his narration focuses on the interaction between Pelias and Jason (71–168) and then the gathering and departure of the Argonauts (169–202), while the story of Jason, Medea, and Aeetes is told in a compressed fashion (211–250). In this section there is only one direct speech, and it occurs when Aeetes challenges Jason to perform the same task that he has just completed, to yoke the fire-breathing bulls and plow a field (229–231):

> τοῦτ' ἔργον βασιλεύς,
> ὅστις ἄρχει ναός, ἐμοὶ τελέσαις ἄφθιτον στρωμνὰν ἀγέσθω,
> κῶας αἰγλᾶεν χρυσέῳ θυσάνῳ.

Let the King do this, the captain of the ship! Let him do this, I say, and have for his own the immortal coverlet, the Fleece, glowing with matted skeins of gold.[7]

στρωμνάν is the polysemous term here; its overt meaning is "coverlet," but it also suggests other meanings that bring together some of the narratives that structure *Pythian* 4.

The audience is made to focus on the word στρωμνάν for several reasons. First, the word is a rare one. στορρέννυμι, its cognate, is common in Homeric scenes of bed-making, but στρωμνή does not itself appear in Homer. In fact, in extant literature it appears prior to this occurrence in *Pythian* 4 in only three places, twice elsewhere in Pindar's odes (*Pyth.* 1.28; *Nem.* 1.50) and once in Sappho (94.21).[8] Second, στρωμνή is by far the most metaphorical term used to describe the fleece in this ode. Elsewhere the fleece is referred to by what it is made out of, rather than by its potential uses: νάκος κριοῦ, "fleece of a ram" (68); δέρμα κριοῦ βαθύμαλλον, "thick-fleeced hide of a ram" (161); κῶας, "fleece" (231); δέρμα, "hide" (241). It may be objected that στρωμνάν is followed in the next line by an exact specification of the fleece which ties down the reference of στρωμνάν: κῶας αἰγλᾶεν χρυσέῳ θυσάνῳ, "the shining fleece with the golden tassel." But this exactitude in fact serves to underline the inexactness of στρωμνάν, since the

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[6] That Pindar uses polysemy, particularly for ideological purposes, is being increasingly recognized: see Kurke 1991, and bibliography collected there.

[7] The text of Pindar's odes is taken from Turyn's edition (1952). The translation is Bowra's (1982: 200).

[8] As *Pythian* 4 is dated to 462, the occurrence at Aes. *Choeph.* 671 appeared four years after this.

two descriptions are separated by a brief break. στρωμνάν occurs at the end of one triad, while κῶας begins the next, and between two triads there was certainly the sense of a break, caused by the epode's metrical difference from the strophe and antistrophe, and probably also, as William Mullen (1982: 97) argues, by "a perceptible change in the location of the dancers and by dramatic shifts ... from stillness to motion."[9] Thus, the conceptual break between the triads makes στρωμνάν appear as the only designation of the fleece in an apparently complete sentence; and, even when κῶας is added to the sentence, its specificity only serves to underline how vague στρωμνάν is. Because of its rarity and its metrical position, στρωμνάν demands closer interrogation.

The basic meaning of στρωμνάν in *Pythian* 4.230 is something spread out on or for a bed, the bedclothes or the mat on which one might sleep.[10] The word thus fits its overt reference, the fleece, well. But the use of this word also allows the poet to import a second suggestion as to the meaning of the fleece, that it represents a foundation. The verb στόρνυμι or στορέννυμι can be properly used of laying pavements and foundations. Herodotus uses the verb of paving streets (2.138: ἐστρωμένη ὁδός), while Homer uses καταστορέννυμι of laying the great closely-set stones over Hector's barrow (*Il.* 24.798: πυκοῖσιν λάεσσι κατεστόρεσαν μεγάλοισι). Cognates of στορέννυμι are also commonly used in later Greek works for pavements or paving.[11] The antiquity of the use of the verb for laying pavements as well as making beds is guaranteed not only by its appearance in Homer, but also by the fact that its Latin relative, *sterno*, is used in both ways also.[12] στορέννυμι was thus especially associated with paving; but paving was particularly associated with newly founded cities, since paved streets were considered a symbolic feature of a new city. Although paving is not mentioned in the famous list of Nausithoos' acts as founder (*Od.* 6.7–10), Odysseus does admires the paving in his agora (6.267: ῥυτοῖσιν λάεσσι κατωρυχέεσσ' ἀραρυῖα, "fitted with stones that had been dragged in and sunk into the earth").[13] Furthermore, in Pindar's description of Battus'

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[9] Mullen (1982: 95–96), Segal (1986: 39–40), Braswell (1988: 318), and Burton (1962: 165) note that κῶας αἰγλᾶεν χρυσέῳ θυσάνῳ is especially emphasized by its position at the beginning of a triad. Mullen also notes (*loc. cit.*) that the three longest references to the fleece articulate a structure for the poem, coming at the end of the third and the seventh epodes, and then at the beginning of the eleventh strophe. According to this structure, the placement of κῶας αἰγλᾶεν χρυσέῳ θυσάνῳ is anomalous, and it is στρωμνάν that occurs in the expected place. This again temporarily marks στρωμνάν as a complete designation of the fleece.

[10] Braswell 1988: 317.

[11] στρῶμα (LSJ s.v.), στρῶσις (LSJ s.v.), and perhaps στρωτή (LSJ Appendix s.v.) are used of pavements or paving; στρῶμα (Polyaen. 8.23.9) is also used of foundations for bridges. References to LSJ are to the ninth edition (1996).

[12] For *sterno* used of spreading bedding, see, for example, Verg. *Aen.* 1.699–700, 7.86–88; Ovid *Fast.* 4.654; Stat. *Silv.* 4.2.50–51; and of laying paved roads, Verg. *Aen.* 1.442; Tib. 1.7.59–60; Livy 10.23.12; *CIL* I 593, line 26, I 808, line 7.

[13] In the *Aeneid*, Aeneas admires the paved streets of the rising Carthage (*strata viarum*, *Aen.* 1.442), as well as its gates, buildings, harbor, citadel, and theater.

founding of Cyrene, a paved road is one of only two features noted (*Pyth.* 5.89–93):

κτίσεν δ' ἄλσεα μείζονα θεῶν,
εὐθύτομόν τε κατέθηκεν Ἀπολλωνίαις
ἀλεξιμβρότοις πεδιάδα πομπαῖς
ἔμμεν ἱππόκροτον
σκυρωτὰν ὁδόν, ἔνθα πρυμνοῖς ἀγορᾶς ἔπι δίχα κεῖται θανών.

He founded larger groves of the gods, and established for Apollo's processions that protect the people, a straight-cut level way, a paved road to sound with the clatter of horses, where at the poop of the agora he lies apart in death.

σκυρωτάν is a very rare word, equivalent, as one scholion notes (124b), to λιθόστρωτος, "laid with stones," another cognate of στορέννυμι. Another scholion (124a) informs us why it is used here: this paved street, along which the festivals of Apollo were conducted in Cyrene, was known as the Σκυρωτή, The Paved Way.[14] To a Cyrenean, therefore, paved streets were strongly associated with the foundation of the city.

The suggestion of foundation in στρωμνάν fits with the association of Jason with foundation earlier in the narration. Jason is presented as a founder through his ability to speak well (he creates a "foundation" [κρηπῖδα, 138] of words) and through Pindar's description of him as having only one foundation (μονοκρήπιδα, 75) when he appears with only one shoe (95–96).[15] Further, as the Argonauts make their way to Colchis, they establish a precinct (ἔσσαντ' . . . τέμενος, 204) and a "newly founded" altar for Poseidon (νεόκτιστον λίθων βωμοῖο θέναρ, 206).

Both of Pindar's other uses of στρωμνά (*Pyth.* 1.28 and *Nem.* 1.50) appear in odes that celebrate the foundation of a city (in both cases, Hieron's Etna), and the use in *Pythian* 1 also seems to draw on the idea of foundation present in the word. Pindar uses στρωμνά there to describe the base of the mountain of Etna, which in his vision has become the "bed on which Typhos lies, irritating his whole back" (στρωμνὰ δὲ χαράσσοισ' ἅπαν νῶτον ποτικεκλιμένον, *Pyth.* 1.28), and this description then seems to provide a link with Pindar's subsequent praise of Hieron as the founder of the city of Etna, which was sited beside the mountain (30–32).

Foundation is not the only suggestion present in στρωμνάν; the word also suggests marriage. As stated above, the root meaning of στρωμνή is something spread out on or for a bed, the bedding or a bed-mat; but, like εὐνή, which primarily refers to bedding in contrast to δέμνιον and λέχος which primarily

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[14] σκυρωτὰν ὁδόν· οὕτω καλεῖται πλατεῖα Σκυρωτὴ ἐπὶ τῆς Κυρήνης.

[15] By analogy with μονομάχος, which means "one who fights alone," rather than "one who only has one fight," μονοκρήπιδα might be able to bear the meaning "the sole founder," thus implying that Jason, and not Pelias, is the rightful founder of Iolcus.

refer to the frame,[16] στρωμνή can also be used of the whole bed, including the bed frame, as it is in its other two occurrences in Pindar (*Pyth.* 1.28; *Nem.* 1.50).[17] In archaic Greek thought, the bed is considered the symbolic locus of a marriage, and so often stands for marriage itself; in Froma Zeitlin's words, "both object and idea, both artifact and symbol, the bed stands for itself and something larger than itself."[18] Thus, when in the *Iliad* Thetis complains that she endured the bed of a mortal (ἔτλην ἀνέρος εὐνήν, 18.433), her complaint is that she endured marriage with a mortal; or when in the *Odyssey*, Demodocus tells how Ares "shamed the bed and bedding" (λέχος δ' ᾔσχυνε καὶ εὐνήν, 8.269) of Hephaestus, it is the marriage of Hephaestus that has been disrespected.[19] Similarly in Pindar, beds are commonly used to denote marriage: a bridegroom is envied for his "harmonious bed" (ὁμόφρονος εὐνᾶς, *Ol.* 7.6);[20] Coronis pursues a "stranger's bed" (ξενίαν κοίταν, *Pyth.* 3.32) when she secretly marries Ischys; the gods refuse to "accomplish a bed" (τέλεσαν εὐνάν, *Isthm.* 8.30) for Poseidon or Zeus when they seek to marry Thetis, and so Thetis herself "obtains a mortal bed" instead (βροτέων δὲ λεχέων τυχοῖσα, *Isthm.* 8.35c).[21] Beds (and bedding) were thus symbols for marriage, and, given this, it is likely that στρωμνή, like εὐνή an archaic word for bedding and beds, could also be used to denote marriage. Although the rarity of στρωμνή in archaic poetry precludes certainty, it can be conjectured that Pindar's phrase in *Pythian* 4.229, στρωμνὰν ἀγέσθω, suggested, in addition to the overt meaning, "Let him have for his own the coverlet," the subtext, "Let him have for his own the marriage."

This subtext is already present in the audience's mind before it is tapped by στρωμνάν: it is part of the myth itself that Jason's heroic capture of the fleece be identified with his abduction of Medea; in Apollonius' account, the fleece is laid out upon the wedding couch (4.1128–46). There is also a further reason to accept this reading of στρωμνὰν ἀγέσθω: it advances the characterization of Aeetes as unable to manipulate words successfully. The contrast between successful and unsuccessful communication is a recurrent theme of the ode. When Medea reveals

[16] Cunliffe 1924: 167, 249. *Od.* 3.403, 23.179–180 make a separation between bedding and bed-frame, while *Od.* 11.188–189, 19.317–318 use εὐνή to refer to the whole bed. See also Zeitlin 1995: 124.

[17] Cf. Braswell 1988: 317. This should not be surprising; στρωμνά represents the object of στορέννυμι, and in Homeric usage one can "spread" the whole bed, including a bedstead, if one is being used; see *Il.* 24.648; *Od.* 7.340, 23.171, 177, 291 (λέχος), and *Od.* 4.301 (δέμνιον).

[18] Zeitlin 1995: 125.

[19] See also *Il.* 8.291, 18.85; *Od.* 4.333, 8.269, 16.75, 19.527; Zeitlin 1995, esp. 122–125; cf. Vernant 1980: 62–66.

[20] Bowra (1982: 164) translates εὐνᾶς as "wedding," while Lattimore (1967: 19) offers "bride," and Nisetich (1980: 112) "bridal bed."

[21] Cf. also *Pyth.* 2.27; *Nem.* 5.30 (εὐνά); *Pyth.* 3.99, 9.16, 12.15 (λέχος). Such uses of λέχος and εὐνή are also common in classical and later Greek; see LSJ λέχος 3 and εὐνή 4. For κοίτη, cf. Hesychius' definition: κλίνη, γάμος, μῖξις, συνουσία, γυνή, "bed, marriage, sexual intercourse, sexual intercourse, wife." Note also that in *Nem.* 1.3, δέμνιον is probably used to denote a holy marriage between Artemis and Alpheus, rather than a place where Artemis slept; see Rose 1974: 164.

the true meaning of the clod that the Argonauts have disregarded, they stand in silence (58); in response to Battus' stutter (δυσθρόου φωνᾶς, 63), the Delphic oracle speaks of its own accord (αὐτομάτῳ κελάδῳ, 60) and sets straight the defect (ὤρθωσεν, 60); and opposing the evil tongue, Damophilus robs it of its clear voice (ὀρφανίζει μὲν κακὰν γλῶσσαν φαεννᾶς ὀπός, 283).[22] Jason and Pelias are also marked as highly competent in the use and understanding of words, but Aeetes is portrayed as a poor speaker. In contrast to Jason and Pelias, Aeetes speaks only briefly, commanding Jason to attempt his task and telling him of the location of the fleece (241–242), and when Jason completes the task, Aeetes can only shriek in voiceless grief (ἴυξεν δ' ἀφωνήτῳ περ ἔμπας ἄχει, 237). On the reading proposed above, Aeetes' only direct speech reveals his failings further: his first effort to designate the fleece as the prize is only partly successful and needs to be qualified by the more detailed description that begins the eleventh strophe, "the fleece, glowing with matted skeins of gold" (κῶας αἰγλᾶεν χρυσέῳ θυσάνῳ, 231). Thus, while trying to lay down a challenge for the fleece, Aeetes, in fact, unwittingly, if momentarily, suggests his daughter as the prize for its completion.[23]

II

Pindar's use of the polysemous στρωμνάν to designate the fleece in Aeetes' speech thus serves to suggest two subtexts to Jason's victory in the contest which Aeetes sets before him. The winning of the fleece comes to represent both the winning of a bride and the foundation of a city.

The first subtext, that of marriage, is, as noted above, already present in the myth; it joins with the agricultural narrative introduced by the task itself (to yoke the wild bulls and use them to plow a field) to frame the winning of fleece as a positive action, something that promotes civilization. Both marriage and agriculture are symbolic of the proper functioning of a city; both represent the transformation of the wild and unproductive (woman, animal, land) into the domestic and productive (wife, beast of burden, fields).[24] The association of Jason's heroic action with these two narratives thus implicates it in the triumph of order, progress, and civilization that they represent.

The subtext of foundation that στρωμνάν suggests is the more daring. The idea that Jason is a founder is suggested on three previous occasions prior to this, in the metaphors μονοκρήπιδα (75) and κρηπῖδα (138) and in the detail included by Pindar that the Argonauts founded an altar for Poseidon at the mouth of the Black Sea (204–206),[25] but is not implicit in the myth itself. Rather, it is the

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[22] On this theme, see Segal 1986: 30–51, 153–164; cf. Carey 1980: 146 on the new model of heroism that Jason represents. Segal, however, sees Aeetes as a powerful orator.

[23] ἀγασθείς (238) echoes the final word of the previous epode, ἀγέσθω, and so joins Aeetes' challenge to his inarticulate shriek.

[24] See Calame 1996: 80, 106–109; Dougherty 1993a: 62–65; Segal 1986: 70.

[25] See above, 194, for a discussion of these passages.

result of Pindar's vision of the event; in Pindar's hands, Jason's heroic feat of winning the fleece becomes not only a symbol of prosperity and order, but also the foundation of a city.[26] This also reveals a careful balance to *Pythian* 4: the ode is structured around two objects of exchange, the golden fleece and the clod of earth which Eurypylus gives to Euphemus; both objects are referred to as immortal (ἄφθιτον, 42, 230), and both represent a foundation that brings civilization and prosperity.[27]

The complex framing of Jason's victory with narratives of foundation and marriage in turn undergirds Pindar's praise of Arcesilas. Like Jason, Arcesilas is victorious in a contest, the chariot race at Delphi, and, through the assimilation of Jason to Arcesilas, Arcesilas' equestrian victory becomes a symbol not only of prosperity and progress, but also of a foundation. It is one of Pindar's central encomiastic strategies in this ode to present Arcesilas as the founder (or a founder) of Cyrene. The founder of a Greek city held a special status, above that of its other rulers; he was felt to have a talismanic power, on which the city could draw, and without which it would cease to flourish.[28] In *Pythian* 4, Pindar attempts to present Cyrene's present ruler as its founder in order to surround him with the aura of the original founder. This may seem an odd tactic (after all, logically, a city can only be founded once), but it is a tactic that Pindar borrows from the Battiad monarchs themselves, as their burial practices show.[29] Although citizens were normally buried outside the city, it was usual for the founder to be buried within the city, usually in the center, and to be worshipped in cult. In Cyrene, however, not only was the founder Battus buried within the city, but so too, as Pindar notes in *Pythian* 5, were the Battiad monarchs that came after him.[30]

The assimilation of Jason to Arcesilas has not been universally accepted, but Pindar's declaration later in the ode that Arcesilas is also a "healer" (ἰατήρ, 270) by playing on Jason's name surely makes some level of connection (though not indeed every level) undeniable.[31] It can also be added here that the identification of the two figures is promoted by the way in which Aeetes refers to Jason in the

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[26] Foundation is itself strongly associated with order through the founder's traditional duties of demarcating various spaces within the city (the boundaries of the city itself, the streets within the city, and the precincts of the gods). On these duties, see Malkin 1987: 135–186; Graham 1964: 29–30; Dougherty 1993a: 52–57; and, in Pindar, *Ol.* 10.43–50, *Pyth.* 5.89–93.

[27] On the clod of earth as the foundation of Cyrene; Calame 1996: 94–95; cf. Segal 1986: 150.

[28] On the special status of the founder, see Malkin 1987: 189–203; Dougherty 1993a: 38–40, 111–112; cf. Dougherty 1993b.

[29] Pindar is exploiting here not only the Battiads' own propaganda, but also a certain Greek tendency to invest the victorious athlete with a talismanic power similar to that of the founder of a city. On the athlete's talismanic power, see Crotty 1982: 104–138; Kurke 1993.

[30] *Pyth.* 5.89–103; Malkin 1987: 204–216.

[31] Robbins (1975: 210–212), Burton (1962: 168, more cautiously), Finley (1955: 85), and Segal (1986: 19) argue for the identification. Carey (1980) argues for some identification. Calame (1996: 95–98) refers Jason to the exiled Damophilus, with whom he also shares some similarities, as Carey (1980) also argues; but Jason's return to his kingdom is equally relevant to the victor's return from

passage under consideration. The title "βασιλεύς, ὅστις ἄρχει ναός" assimilates
Jason to Arcesilas in two ways. First, βασιλεύς is used of Arcesilas in the ode's
opening lines (2), and, second, ἄρχει ναός, "rules the ship," looks like a play on
Arcesilas' name, Ἀρκεσί–λας, "the one who strengthens the people," since both
parts of the name are replaced by words that sound similar. Pindar often plays
with the names of his patrons;[32] and if this is one such instance, it is perhaps not
the first in this ode. In 152–153, Jason demands from Pelias the throne from
which his father had delivered "straight judgments to the people" (εὔθυνε λαοῖς
δίκας). εὔθυνε λαοῖς also looks like a play on Arcesilas' name, this time leaving
-λαός intact, but replacing ἄρκειν with εὐθύνειν, a word that sounds different,
but has a similar sense.

The title βασιλεύς also helps to affirm the association of both Jason and
Arcesilas with foundation. It looks back not only to Arcesilas, but also to Battus,
Arcesilas' ancestor and the real founder of Cyrene, who is "revealed as fated king
in Cyrene" (πεπρωμένον / βασιλέ᾽ ἄμφανεν Κυράνᾳ, 61–62) by the Delphic
oracle. βασιλεύς may also have been part of the official Cyrenean title of Battus;
Battus is referred to by this title in the Cyrenean "Oath of the Founders," as well
as in Herodotus,[33] and there is a special connection between the name Battus
and the title βασιλεύς, which Pindar alludes to in this earlier passage (62–65).
Although Battus means "stammerer" in Greek, in Libyan (so the story goes) it
means "king," or "βασιλεύς," and this is what Pindar refers to when he says that
the Delphic oracle "revealed him as fated king for Cyrene."[34]

Pindar's use of στρωμνάν thus helps to associate victory in an athletic contest,
whether in a chariot race or a contest of yoking bulls, with foundation; and this in
turn helps to promote his vision of Arcesilas as one of Cyrene's founders and the
root of its present success. This vision is, of course, profoundly ideological, both
in the connection it draws between victory in a contest and good government, and
in the positive glow with which it endows the victory through its association with
marriage. The association not only muffles the negative aspects of Jason's victory
(for example, his use of love and deceit), but also hides the darker side of Arcesilas'
government in Cyrene, such as the exiles and executions with which opposition
to his rule had been recently suppressed.[35] It is a measure of Pindar's success that
by the end of the ode, it does not seem so outrageous that an equestrian victory

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the place of competition to his hometown (see Crotty 1982: 104–138) as to an exile's return home.
Braswell (1988: 370–371) denies the presence of any significant connections.

[32] For other examples, see, for example, Pindar fr. 105a; Lloyd-Jones 1973: 129; Nagy 1990:
199–214. Note that the names of Jason and Medea are treated as significant in this ode; see Robbins
1975: 209–211, but against Robbins, see Braswell 1988: 370–371.

[33] *SEG* IX 3, lines 27–28; Hdt. 4.153.1; cf. Malkin 1987: 61–62; Braswell 1988: 146–147.

[34] Dougherty 1993a: 52; Calame 1996: 140–142.

[35] On which, see Chamoux 1953: 173–175; Segal 1986: 12–14; Braswell 1988: 1–6. Segal (1986:
123–192) and Farenga (1977) both argue convincingly that some voice remains in the ode beyond
and outside of Battiad ideology, but the oppositional voices that remain are few and quiet compared
to those that support Arcesilas' kingship.

won in a far-off land, in a contest where money dominates, serves as proof that Arcesilas' kingship is as central to the success of Cyrene as its foundation.

III

The ideological link that στρωμνάν creates between athletic victory, foundation, and marriage is also generated by other parts of *Pythian* 4, and it will be instructive to compare a different type of linkage. After describing the events in Colchis, Pindar moves on to the Argonauts' stay in Lemnos, where the Argonauts compete in athletic competitions (253), bed with the Lemnian women and produce children (254–257), whose descendants settle first in Sparta, then colonize (ἀπῴκησαν, 258) Thera, and then are given Cyrene and the territory of Libya (257–262).[36] Narratives of harvesting crops and the rising of the sun are introduced by the metaphorical language used to describe the conception of the children and the continuation of the race: a "seed of radiance" (σπέρμ' ... ἀκτῖνος, 255)[37] is sown in "foreign furrows" (ἐν ἀλλοδαπαῖς ... ἀρούραις, 254–255), and once "planted" (φυτευθέν, 256) continually "rises" (τέλλετο, 257). Thus, in just over a strophe, Pindar joins victory and foundation, and sets them against the background of three positive narratives (the harvest, the production of children, and the sunrise);[38] yet the link between victory and foundation is made purely through the juxtaposition of events performed by different, if related, groups: the Argonauts won the athletic victories, while their descendants founded the cities.

The link that στρωμνάν creates between victory and foundation is of a different order. While victory and foundation appear in rapid sequence in the passage studied above, they appear together in the single word στρωμνάν by virtue of its polysemy. The fact that the same word can be used to suggest both events suggests that a kind of necessary connection exists between them, that a victor is necessarily a founder, not simply someone suitable or likely to be one. The poet's role, as someone particularly skilled in words, is to expose this necessity, much as the Delphic oracle was able to "reveal" (ἄμφανεν, 62) the necessity in Battus the Greek stammerer becoming Battus the Libyan king.[39] The poet thus works with a very different conception of words to that of modern semiotics; in his conception, the connection between signifier and signified is not arbitrary, but reveals deep truths about the nature of the signified. Thus, in an ode for Timodemus of Acharnae, Pindar is able to state that "it makes sense that Orion come not far from the mountain Pleiades" (ἔστι δ' ἐοικὸς / ὀρειᾶν γε Πελειάδων

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[36] On the grant of the land of Libya, rather than just the city of Cyrene, to the colonists, see Malkin 1994: 169–174; Farenga 1977: 30. For the meaning of ἀποικεῖν, see Calame 1996: 77.

[37] Hermann's ἀκτῖνος, accepted by Snell and Maehler 1971, makes for smoother phrasing than the manuscripts' ἀκτῖνας (which is accepted by Turyn [1952], and would be taken in apposition to σπέρμ'), but the metaphor remains intact on either reading.

[38] Cf. the analyses of Calame 1996: 95–98, and Segal 1986: 70–71.

[39] See above, 196.

/ μὴ τηλόθεν Ὠαρίωνα νεῖσθαι, *Nem.* 2.10–12), since the verbal similarity of ὀρειᾶν, "mountain," his description of the Pleiades, reveals their proximity in the night sky to Orion, Ὠαρίωνα.[40] It is by virtue of his superior vision that the poet is able to demonstrate the connection between Orion and the Pleiades. Similarly, by describing the fleece with a word that joins within itself the narratives of both victory in a contest and foundation, Pindar is able to suggest a more necessary relation between Arcesilas' victory at Delphi and his projected role as a founder of Cyrene than the mere parataxis of such narratives, as appears at 253–262, can suggest.

Such polysemy is, in fact, quite common in *Pythian* 4. Few examples reach as far as στρωμνάν in joining victory and foundation; but agricultural metaphors are often used to link the narratives of productive marriage and foundation to that of agricultural growth, as demonstrated by the passage (253–262) discussed above, and other linkages are also evident.[41] Polysemy is in fact an important tool for Pindar's promotion of the Battiad ideology. When the different narratives are joined by parataxis, the connections may often seem contingent and even artificial; but when they are joined by polysemy, the very distinction between the narratives seems to disappear. When the offspring of the Argonauts are termed as a "seed" (255), their expansion across the Mediterranean becomes welcome natural growth. By blurring the boundaries between the different narratives, therefore, polysemy plays a central role in the creation of the ode's ideology.[42]

CONCLUSION

To conclude, the oddity of στρωμνάν is fully motivated by Pindar's poetic strategy for supporting Arcesilas' rule. As Calame has shown, part of the ideological work performed by the mythical detours of *Pythian* 4 is to superimpose a number of narratives on Arcesilas' victory: narratives of foundation, of the rising sun, of agricultural increase, and of productive marriage, so that the victor is represented as the proper ruler of Cyrene, on whom the city's continued prosperity depends. The polysemous στρωμνάν serves to impose two of these narratives, foundation and marriage, on Jason's victory in the contest for the Golden Fleece, and so to mark the victor as a talismanic founder figure. Moreover, the fact that

[40] See Instone 1989: 114–115; Bury 1890: 29–30; Bowra 1964: 212–213. For further examples, see Bowra 1964: 211–214. On proper names in archaic Greek more generally, see Calame 1995: 174–185.

[41] In addition to σπέρμ' ... ἀκτῖνος (255), ἀρούραις (255), φυτευθέν (256) and τέλλετο (257) discussed above, one can add μαστῷ (8), ῥίζαν φυτεύσεσθαι (15), ματρόπολιν (20), σπέρμα (43), φύτευθεν (69), μονοκρήπιδα (75), κρηπῖδα (138), and probably ἀρχά, "foundation" as well as "beginning" (70).

[42] Polysemy is also used to serve a second ideological goal, to blur the distinction between land and sea, and to solve the problem of how an island people that was once master of the sea could become a continental people that is now the master of horses and the land. Cf. Farenga 1977: 24–28; Calame 1996: 67–98.

these three narratives are joined in a single term suggests a necessary relation between them, so that the connection between victor and founder figure is cemented. This, and other such examples of polysemy, also service an ideology of the epinician poet himself. Rather than being the creator of the connection between Arcesilas' victory and the success of Cyrene, the poet becomes, like the Delphic oracle in *Pythian* 4, one who is able to reveal connections that are already present. What is needed is thus not imagination, but a superior knowledge of the world.[43]

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