

THALIA ERASIMOLPOS: CONSOLATION IN PINDAR'S FOURTEENTH OLYMPIAN

ANDREW M. MILLER

University of Pittsburgh

Although the *Fourteenth Olympian*, composed for Asopichos of Orchomenos, is one of the shortest and simplest in structure of Pindar's epinicians, it presents in its antistrophe an interpretive difficulty to which no completely satisfactory solution has yet been found.¹ The bulk of the ode is in form a hymn to the *Χάριτες* or Graces, first in their aspect as patron deities of the victor's home-town (1-4), then as authors of "everything pleasant and sweet" in life, indispensable to all occasions of festivity (5-12).² A second invocation (13 ff.) shifts

¹ A shorter version of this paper was read at the annual meeting of the American Philological Association in December, 1975. I wish to express my gratitude to Professor T. G. Rosenmeyer and the *TAPA* referees for valuable criticism and advice, and to the late E. L. Bundy, my teacher, for unfailing illumination and encouragement.

The text used is that of H. Maehler, *Pindari Carmina cum Fragmentis* (Leipzig 1971), and for the scholia A. B. Drachmann, *Scholia Vetera in Pindari Carmina* I (Leipzig 1903). Published discussion of O. 14 is not extensive. Aside from the standard commentaries and general books on Pindar, I have consulted J. Gervais, "La XIV^e olympique de Pindare," *L'Enseignement secondaire au Canada* 19 (1940) 448-59; B. A. van Groningen, "Pindari Olymp. XIV 17," *Mnemosyne*, 3rd ser. 10 (1942) 221-24; C. del Grande, "Lettura della 14 olimpica," *Filologia Minore* (Naples 1956) 115-20; G. F. Osmun, "Pindar: Olympian XIV," *CW* 61 (1967) 6-8; R. von Scheliha, "Interpretation der xiv. Olympischen Ode von Pindar," *Freiheit und Freundschaft in Hellas: Sechs Basler Vorträge* (Amsterdam 1968) 81-105; F. S. Newman, "Unity in Pindar's Fourteenth Olympian Ode," *RBPh* 52 (1974) 15-28; D. S. Carne-Ross, "Three Preludes for Pindar," *Arion* n.s. 2 (1975) 160-93.

² On the Graces see P. F. Eichinger, *Die Chariten von Orchomenos* (Augsburg 1892), R. M. R. Fernandes, *O Tema das Graças na Poesia Clássica* (Lisbon 1962), E. Schwartzberg, *Die Grazien* (Bonn 1966). J. B. Bury catalogues all occurrences of the *χάρις*-root in *The Nemean Odes of Pindar* (London and New York 1890) 241-44.

focus from the Graces' collective nature to their individual personalities:

ὦ πότνι' Ἀγλαΐα
 φιλησίμολπέ τ' Εὐφροσύνα, θεῶν κρατίστου
 παῖδες, ἔπακοοῖτε νῦν, Θάλια τε
 ἔρασίμολπε, ἰδοῖσα τόνδε κῶμον ἐπ' εὐμενεῖ τύχῃ
 κοῦφα βιβῶντα· Λυδῶ γὰρ Ἀσώπιχον ἐν τρόπῳ
 ἐν μελέταις τ' αἰείδων ἔμολον,
 οὔνεκ' Ὀλυμπιόνικος ἁ Μινύεια
 σεῦ ἔκατι.

Although the names and the order in which they appear are Hesiodic, the peculiar prominence which word-order and syntax confer upon Thalia, the last of the three, is Pindar's own innovation.³ Not only do the intervening honorific (θεῶν κρατίστου παῖδες) and prayer-verb (ἔπακοοῖτε) isolate her name from those of her sisters, but she alone is addressed in the lines that follow, as the singular participle ἰδοῖσα (16)⁴ and the singular pronoun σεῦ (20)⁵ demonstrate. Yet why should one Grace be singled out for attention? Why should Thalia, more than the others, look with favor on the *kômos* and receive credit for Asopichos' vistory?

One answer to this puzzle was proposed by Wilamowitz: Thalia is a personification of "blühende Schönheit" and as such naturally takes

³ Cf. *Theog.* 909, Ἀγλαΐην τε καὶ Εὐφροσύνην Θαλίην τ' ἔρατεινῇν. In view of Hesiod's predilection for lines of this pattern (name, name, name + adjective) no special significance can be attached to the fact that Thalia alone is given an epithet; cf. *Theog.* 18, 140, 246, 338, etc.

⁴ τὸ δὲ ἰδοῖσα ἔνιοι φασὶ πρὸς τὴν τρίτην Θαλίην λέγεσθαι (21c), Drachmann (above, note 1) 393. A second scholion proposes a construction ἀπὸ κοινοῦ: τὸ ἰδοῖσα κοινὸν ἐπὶ ὅλων· ἰδοῖσα ὦ Εὐφροσύνα, ἰδοῖσα ὦ Θάλεια, ἰδοῖσα ὦ Ἀγλαΐα (21d). See *P.* 10.4, however, for a participle modifying the last—and similarly postponed—member of a tripartite subject.

⁵ πρὸς μίαν τῶν Χαρίτων ἀπὸ τοῦ πλήθους μετέβη (27g), Drachmann (above, note 1) 394. Inasmuch as Θάλια and σεῦ appear in contiguous sentences linked by γάρ, the objection brought against this interpretation by van Groningen (above, note 1) 222 ("σεῦ satis longe a Thaliae nomina distat") has little force. He himself takes the phrase σεῦ ἔκατι as an apostrophe to the victor (cf. scholia 27d, 27f, 27h), reading Λυδῶ γὰρ Ἀσώπιχ' ἐν τρόπῳ in line 17. Nowhere else, however, does Pindar use ἔκατι to denote *human* agency. A third interpretation is attributed to Aristarchos: ἰδίως, φησί, προτάξας τὰ ὀνόματα τῶν Χαρίτων ἐνικῶς ἐφώνησε· σεῦ ἔκατι, ὦ Χάρι. προσφωνοῦσί τε οἱ ποιηταὶ τοὺς χοροὺς τοὺς ἐκ πλήθους συνεστῶτας ἐνικῶς. βεβιασμένον οὖν νυνὶ προτάξαντα τὰ ὀνόματα λέγειν ἑκατί σου ἐνικῶς (27c; also 27e, 27h). The scholion itself admits that this reading does violence to the Greek. That the corporate entity of a chorus can be addressed in the singular is irrelevant; see van Groningen 221.

special interest in an athlete graced with the flush of youth, even setting the crown on his head herself.⁶ As “florida iuventus,” as “una divindade *κουροτρόφος*,” as “die Göttin der blühenden Jugend-anmut,” as “la floreciente, la que represente mejor la gracia y la juventud de Asópico,” Wilamowitz’ Thalia holds wide sway in modern scholarship⁷—and does so with the apparent sanction of etymology, for the root from which *θαλία* is derived means “flourish, burgeon, bloom.”⁸ The poem itself, however, affords such an interpretation scant support. Asopichos is indeed young, as *νέαν* (22) makes clear, and from that fact we might infer that he possesses a certain physical charm; we may even discern a covert allusion to this beauty in the generic *εἰ καλός* of line 7.⁹ Yet since no textual justification can be found for supposing that Thalia’s professional involvement with *κάλλος* differs in degree or kind from that of her sisters, the young man’s looks remain irrelevant to an understanding of her nature.¹⁰ A glance at our lexicons reveals, moreover, that Wilamowitz’ interpretation honors etymology at the expense of usage, since to poets from the time of Archilochos and before the common noun *θαλία* means

⁶ *Pindaros* (Berlin 1922) 151–52.

⁷ The quoted phrases are from van Groningen (above, note 1) 222, Fernandes (above, note 2) 209, von Scheliha (above, note 1) 100, M. Fernandez-Galiano, *Pindaro: Olímpicas* (Madrid 1956) 333. See also A. Puech, *Pindare: Olympiques* (Paris 1931) 159. While van Groningen interprets Thalia’s name along the lines laid down by Wilamowitz, he also insists that Asopichos himself must be the subject of *ἐστεφάνωσε* (24). On the latter point he is surely right. *υἷὸν εἵπησ ὅτι* is straightforwardly proleptic, *οἱ* is ethical or possessive and refers to Kleodamos; so the scholiast (*περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ εἵπησ ὅτι ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ ἐστεφάνωσε*), Drachmann (above, note 1) 394. See E. des Places, *Le pronom chez Pindare* (Paris 1947) 31.

⁸ See H. Frisk, *Griechisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg 1960) 649.

⁹ If any of the adjectives in line 7 has special reference to Asopichos, however, it is surely *ἀγλαός*; see note 14.

¹⁰ Only if one attempts to match the individual Graces against the disjunctive series *εἰ σοφός, εἰ καλός, εἰ τις ἀγλαὸς ἀνὴρ*, does Thalia become, by a process of elimination, the patroness of beauty; so Wilamowitz (above, note 6) 152, Puech (above, note 7) 158, von Scheliha (above, note 1) 99. Del Grande (above, note 1) 141 and Fernandes (above, note 2) 206 are right to reject this compartmentalization, for the line merely sketches the three provinces—poetic, erotic, agonistic—in which above all the power of the Graces collectively makes itself felt. For the Graces as goddesses of victory cf. *O.* 2.50, *O.* 6.76, *O.* 7.11, *P.* 5.45, *P.* 8.21, *N.* 6.37, *N.* 10.38; as emblematic of the affective power of poetry, cf. *O.* 1.30, *O.* 9.26, *P.* 9.89a, *N.* 4.7, *N.* 9.54, *N.* 10.1, *I.* 5.21, *I.* 6.63, *I.* 8.16a, *Bacch.* 5.9, 9.1, 19.6. On their association with Aphrodite and erotic experience in general, cf. Hes. *Theog.* 910, *P.* 6.1, *Πα.* 6.3–4, fr. 123, and see E. W. Bushala, “*Συζύγαι Χάριτες*, *Hippolytus* 1147,” *TAPA* 100 (1969) 25, note 7.

nothing other than "festivity" or "feasting."¹¹ If Pindar wanted his audience to ignore this fact of language and to regard the third of the Graces as a "goddess of youthful charm," he offered no clues to set them straight. The more reasonable supposition, of course, is that he has simply hypostatized an ordinary noun in its ordinary signification—and then reinforced his intended meaning with pertinent details. Thalia's passion for song and her interest in the *kômos* are scarcely intelligible if she represents "blühende Schönheit," entirely natural in a personification of festivity.

Yet if Thalia personifies festivity, so too must Aglaia and Euphrosyna, for these words as well are used by Pindar and other poets to characterize occasions of celebration,¹² and the presence of *all three* Graces is said to be required at the "dances and feasts" on Olympus. Once again we are compelled to wonder why Thalia in particular is brought so emphatically to the fore. Fortunately two brief comments by B. L. Gildersleeve point the way to a solution. "Thalia presided especially over feasts," he says, and is apostrophized in *σεῦ ἔκατι* "not because she is *κορυφαία* generally, but because this is the *κῶμος*, of which she has special charge."¹³ Closer examination of her name and those of her sisters bears out these somewhat bald assertions. Although in certain contexts *ἀγλαΐα*, *εὐφροσύνα*, and *θαλία* may all be translated as "festivity," they are far from being synonymous in any strict sense, for each bears the individual stamp of its derivation and associations. Formed from *ἀγλαός*, in Pindaric diction a *vox propria* descriptive of agonistic success, *ἀγλαΐα* must represent the glory, sheen, or brilliance conferred upon the festivities by the fact of victory.¹⁴ *εὐφροσύνα*, on the other hand, is used as early as *Od.* 9.6 to denote the

¹¹ E.g., *Od.* 11.603, *Hes. Theog.* 65, 917, *Erga* 115, *Scut.* 284, *h. Herm.* 56, 454, *Archil.* 11.2, 13.2 (West), *Stesich.* 210 (PMG), 148 (SLG), *Theogn.* 778, 983, *Ion* 26.11, *Xenoph.* 1.12 (West), *O.* 7.94, *O.* 10.76, *P.* 1.38, *P.* 10.34, *Πα.* 6.14, *Bacch.* 14.15.

¹² E.g., *h. Herm.* 476, [*Hes.*] *Scut.* 272, 276, 284, *P.* 1.2, *N.* 9.31, fr. 148 (*ἀγλαΐα*); *Od.* 9.6, *Anac. eleg.* 2.4, *Sol.* 4.10, *Theogn.* 776, *Xenoph.* 1.4 (West), *P.* 4.129, *P.* 11.45, *N.* 4.1, *I.* 3.10, *Bacch.* 10.52, 11.12 (*εὐφροσύνα*).

¹³ *Pindar: The Olympian and Pythian Odes* (New York 1897) 238 and 239. So also C. A. M. Fennell, *Pindar: The Olympian and Pythian Odes* (Cambridge 1893) 140.

¹⁴ Gildersleeve (above, note 13) 238, E. Thummer, *Die Isthmischen Gedichte* II (Heidelberg 1969) 43 and 109. Forms of *ἀγλαός* and *ἀγλαΐα* are associated with victory in *O.* 8.11, *O.* 9.99, *O.* 13.14, *P.* 5.52, *P.* 10.28, *N.* 1.13, *N.* 3.69, *N.* 11.20, *I.* 2.18, *I.* 6.62, *Bacch.* 3.6, 12.36; an instance outside of epinician poetry is *Hes. Theog.* 628, *νίκην τε καὶ ἀγλαὸν εὖχος*.

“contentedness of mind” or “good cheer” which accompanies celebration, whether this condition arises from the delights of the feast itself or from the happy circumstance by which feasting has been occasioned.¹⁵ As for *θαλία*, its kinship with *θάλλω* suggests a definite bias towards the physical, and in fact “material abundance” is its meaning in the earliest occurrences of the word, *Il.* 9.143 and 285.¹⁶ Although this physicality is rarely made explicit in the festal contexts to which we find *θαλία* thereafter largely restricted,¹⁷ it survives full-force in certain cognates. The near-homophone *θάλεια*, for instance, is closely associated with food and drink, the most material component of festivity, through the formulaic language of epic,¹⁸ while *θάλλω* itself, even in the metaphorical uses of which Pindar is so fond, retains strong connotations of vigor and abundance.¹⁹ To define the essential semantic flavor of *θαλία*, perhaps no better gloss can be found than the image of the *θάλλον συμπόσιον* with which *I.* 6 begins, implying as it does both a liberal flow of wine and an unimpeded burgeoning of merriment.²⁰

If, as seems to be the case, Pindar’s intention in shifting his address from the Graces as a collectivity to the Graces as three distinct personalities is to analyze agonistic celebration into its constituent elements, the epithets which he applies to them should be consistent in each case with the particular shade of meaning embodied in the name.²¹ *πότνι’ Ἀγλαΐα*, at least, makes excellent sense in this respect: at an occasion whose *raison d’être* is athletic victory, “radiant glory” naturally

¹⁵ For the former, cf. Sol. 4.9–10 (West) *παρούσας εὐφροσύνας . . . δαιτὸς*, Xenoph. 1.4 (West) *κρητῆρ . . . μεστὸς εὐφροσύνης*; for the latter, cf. Theogn. 776 ff. (Megara delivered from the Medes), *I.* 3.10 (Melissos’ double victory). See note 11.

¹⁶ *ὅς μοι τηλύγετος τρέφεται θαλίῃ ἐνὶ πολλῇ.* “In reicher Fülle” (Ameis-Hentze).

¹⁷ See above, note 11.

¹⁸ E.g., *Il.* 7.475, *τίθεντο δὲ δαῖτα θάλειαν*; also *Od.* 3.420, 8.76 and 99, *h. Herm.* 480. Cf. *Od.* 11.415, *εἰλαπίνῃ τεθαλυῖν*, Anac. 410 (PMG), *θάλειαν ἑορτήν.*

¹⁹ For *θάλλω* as descriptive of *ἄλβος* (*εὐδαιμονία*) cf. *P.* 11.53, *I.* 3.6, *Θρ.* 7.7, *P.* 7.21; as a form of *auxēsis* in victory catalogues, cf. *O.* 9.16, *N.* 10.42, *I.* 5.17.

²⁰ *Θάλλοντος ἀνδρῶν ὥς ὅτε συμποσίου
δεύτερον κρατῆρα Μοισαίων μελέων
κίρναμεν . . .*

“A transfigured echo of the Homeric *δαῖτα θάλειαν* (or *εἰλαπίνην τεθαλυῖαν*),” J. B. Bury, *The Isthmian Odes of Pindar* (London and New York 1892) 104.

²¹ It should be stressed that the distinctions outlined in the preceding paragraph are relational, not absolute; in other contexts one of the words may stand for the festal complex as a whole, e.g. *ἀγλαΐα* in *P.* 1.2 or *θαλία* in *O.* 7.94.

presides as mistress of ceremonies. But what of Euphrosyna and Thalia? That personifications of festivity should have an intimate affinity with song and dance, the ἀναθήματα δαιτός, is of course to be expected; no proper feast lacks the accompaniment and embellishment of musical performance.²² What is curious is the way this affinity is expressed—the appearance in close proximity, that is to say, of φιλησίμολπε and ἐρασίμολπε. Although to Farnell these “almost tautologous” adjectives are no more than a regrettable blemish of style,²³ Gildersleeve senses a deliberate play on words: “As one might shift from φιλεῖν to ἐρᾶν, the weaker to the stronger. Toying with synonyms was not impossible for Pindar.”²⁴ That the repetition of -μολπε is symptomatic of impoverished invention is improbable, to say the least, as Farnell himself seems aware; that it is mere idle word-play, though “not impossible,” is hardly more likely. Yet once again Gildersleeve is on the right track, for the contrast between φιλησι- and ἐρασι- which the identity of the second element in each word serves to highlight becomes significant when viewed in the light of the semantic distinctions drawn above. Though not necessarily “stronger” than φιλία, ἔρως is more pronouncedly physical, denoting, as it may, not merely sexual desire but drives like hunger and thirst as well.²⁵ If φιλησίμολπε means “you who love [i.e., feel affection for] music,” then ἐρασίμολπε should be rendered “you who *crave* [i.e., feel physical need for] music,” with emphasis thrown onto ἐρασι- as variable set off against constant.²⁶ In expressing the predilection

²² Cf. *Od.* 1.150–52, 8.98–99, 9.5–10, 21.428–30. For the explicit association of song, dance, or music in general with εὐφροσύνη, cf. *Od.* 9.6, *h. Herm.* 482, *Bacch.* 10.52; with θαλία, cf. *Theogn.* 778, *Ion* 26.11, *Xenoph.* 1.12 (West), *O.* 10.76, *P.* 1.38, *Bacch.* 14.15.

²³ *Critical Commentary to the Works of Pindar* (London 1932) 103: “Pindar does not often show poverty in use of epithets; but emendation merely to improve on Pindar is illegitimate.” No doubt Farnell is thinking of ventures like Vogt’s ἐρασικόλπε, reported by W. Christ, *Pindari Carmina* (Leipzig 1896) 109, and Pauw’s φιλησίδορπε, reported by C. G. Heyne, *Pindari Carmina* I (London 1824) 141.

²⁴ Gildersleeve (above, note 13) 239.

²⁵ Notably in the Homeric formula αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πόσιος καὶ ἐδηνύος ἐξ ἔρον ἔντο (*Il.* 1.469, 2.432, etc.). In *Alc.* 1080 Euripides uses ἔρως to denote the physical craving for tears experienced by the grief-stricken (the Homeric ἱμερος γόοιο); see A. M. Dale’s note on that line in her edition of the *Alcestis* (Oxford 1954).

²⁶ Once again the distinction is specific to this context; it is the proximity that enforces discrimination. Elsewhere the use of a φιλησι- in preference to an ἐρασι- compound (or *vice versa*) may be a matter of indifference; cf. *Πα.* 1.8 δαῖτα φιλησιστέφανον. Most

for song which Thalia, as an incarnation of festivity, shares with her sister Euphrosyna, Pindar contrives to underscore the physicality or materiality inherent in her name and in so doing explicitly defines her nature on the level of bodily craving and satisfaction.

If Thalia is singled out, as Gildersleeve claims, because of her special interest in revelry and feasting, that special interest can be accounted for by the connotations of her name and epithet. Unless the *kômos* has some particular significance for the occasion at hand, however, the fact that Thalia is its divine patroness does nothing to explain her prominence in the poem. In seeking to discover that significance, the first point to be remembered is that the conventions of epinician poetry recognize “two natural longings of those who have achieved success: celebration amid the congratulations of one’s fellows, and song to immortalize one’s achievement.”²⁷ The institution of the *kômos*, the victory revel with its abundant wine and merriment and music, meets the first and more immediate of these needs, while the second looks for its satisfaction to the epinician ode itself.²⁸ The distinction is laid out most clearly in N. 4.1 ff.

Ἄριστος εὐφροσύνα πόνων κεκριμένων
 ἱατρός· αἱ δὲ σοφαὶ
 Μοισᾶν θύγατρες ἀοιδαὶ θέλξαν νιν ἀπτόμεναι.
 οὐδὲ θερμὸν ὕδωρ τόσον γε μαλθακὰ τεύχει
 γυνῆα, τόσον εὐλογία φόρμιγγι συνάορος.
 ῥῆμα δ’ ἐργμάτων χρονιώτερον βιοτεύει . . .

Although both *εὐφροσύνα*, the festive merriment of the *kômos*, and *ἀοιδαί*, “wise daughters of the Muses,” help to soothe the ache of

translators obscure the point of the contrast by giving *-μολπε* a different value in each case, e.g., “delighting in song” and “lover of dancing” (Lattimore), “lover of song” and “delighting in sweet sounds” (Myers), “amica del canto” and “che ti compiaci delle melodie” (del Grande). Even Sandys cannot resist a touch of *variatio* in “that lovest the dance and song” and “that art enamoured of the song and dance.” Ruck and Matheson, however, respect the repetition (“you lover of the dance” and “that yearn to dance”) in *Pindar: Selected Odes, Translated with Interpretive Essays* (Ann Arbor 1968).

²⁷ E. L. Bundy, “Studia Pindarica I: The Eleventh Olympian Ode,” *CPCP* 18.1 (1962) 11.

²⁸ *Kômos* and formal ode are distinguished most elaborately in O. 9.1–14, N. 4.1–8, N. 9.48–55, more briefly in P. 11.45, N. 9.1–3, I. 2.31–32, Bacch. 11.12–13; cf. also P. 10.34–34 and 38–40, Bacch. fr. 4.39–40. See Bundy (above, note 27) 2, 22–23.

"toils that have been brought to judgment," the longevity of song confers upon it an ultimately superior efficacy as a source of consolation.²⁹ Yet the labor and pain involved in achieving victory affect body and spirit both; if the spirit finds its due reward in future fame, for man's bodily nature it is the *kómos* whose remedies, in the aftermath of exertion, are sovereign.³⁰ ἄριστος, "most desirable in the immediate present," grants full recognition to needs which are, though transient, real and poignant nonetheless.³¹

Although part of Pindar's intention in O. 14 is, of course, to preserve and propagate the memory of Asopichos' achievement, this purpose is nowhere explicitly avowed;³² the pleasures of festivity, not the rewards of encomiastic song, are to the fore.³³ Of the victor's "two

²⁹ See Bundy (above, note 27) 2. Since, as the references in note 12 amply demonstrate, a regular meaning of εὐφροσύνα is "festivity" or "festal cheer," and since in an agonistic context "festivity" naturally implies the institution of the *kómos*, Bundy is fully justified in equating the word as used in N. 4.1 with "victory revel;" cf. Bacch. 11.12 κῶμοί τε καὶ εὐφροσύναι. The assumption that εὐφροσύνα means simply "Freude" flaws A. Köhnken's lengthy discussion of the passage in *Die Funktion des Mythos bei Pindar* (Berlin and New York 1971) 192-95. It is precisely Pindar's point that "festal cheer" (i.e., the *kómos* itself) should be "stillschweigend durch die 'Lieder' ersetzt und nach ihrer bedeutungsvollen Erwähnung in Vers 1 im folgenden ganz ausser acht gelassen" (193).

³⁰ So in I. 8.1 the *kómos* is called a λύτρον καμάτων. For πόνος, κάματος and μόχθος used of agonistic effort see W. J. Slater, *Lexicon to Pindar* (Berlin 1969) 265, 341, 440-41. When song is not opposed to revelry, as it is in N. 4, it may itself be represented as a cure or recompense for toil; cf. N. 3.17, N. 5.48-49, N. 7.15-16, N. 8.50, I. 1.46, I. 5.25.

³¹ On ἄριστος see Bundy (above, note 27) 2, note 9.

³² As it is in many odes, e.g., O. 11.15, P. 3.112-15, N. 1.11-12, N. 4.5-7, N. 6.29-30, N. 7.11-16, I. 4.40-41, I. 7.16-19.

³³ Although the Graces are patrons of epinician poetry no less than they are patrons of festivity (see above, note 10), Pindar's interest in O. 14 lies almost exclusively with the latter role. Cf. 8 ff.:

οὐδὲ γὰρ θεοὶ σεμνᾶν Χαρίτων ἄτερ
κοιρανέοντι χοροὺς
οὔτε δαίτας· ἀλλὰ πάντων ταμίαι
ἔργων ἐν οὐρανῷ. . . .

In epic the ταμίη is the "larder-mistress" who heaps food on the tables of those enjoying a δαίτα θάλειαν; cf. Od. 1.139-40, σίτον δ' αἰδοίη ταμίη παρέθηκε φέρουσα / εἷδατα πόλλ' ἐπιθείσα, χαρίζομένη παρεόντων. The generalizing force of πάντων ἔργων makes ταμίαι metaphorical, of course (cf. O. 13.7, P. 1.88, I. 6.57, I. 9.7, N. 6.26), but following so closely on δαίτας the word can hardly fail to provoke reflection on its original and more concrete sense. δαίτας itself is emphatic by a kind of *hysteron proteron*: the order of actual practice—first food and drink, then musical entertainment—is reversed, giving "feasts" the climactic position.

natural longings,” for celebration and for immortality in fame, Pindar addresses himself pre-eminently to the first. What *πόνος* is present in the occasion to demand with such imperiousness the healing touch of the *ἄριστος ἰατρός*?

μελαντειχέα νῦν δόμον
 Φερσεφόνας ἔλθ', Ἀ-
 χοῖ, πατρὶ κλυτὰν φέροισ' ἀγγελίαν,
 Κλεόδαμον ὄφρ' ἰδοῖς, υἱὸν ἐΐπης ὅτι οἱ νέαν
 κόλποις παρ' εὐδόξοις Πίσας
 ἔστεφάνωσε κυδίμων ἀέθλων περοῖσι χαίταν. (20-24)

Once Asopichos' Olympian victory has been proclaimed and tribute has been paid to Thalia's benevolent assistance, an abruptly asyndetic transition shifts attention from the celebration at hand to the “black-walled house of Persephone” where the young man's father waits in lonely exile. The sudden shadow suggests an undercurrent of grief beneath the merriment, grief at the bitter fact that Kleodamos cannot share his son's joy and triumph. We have no way of knowing, of course, how recently he may have died, but on this of all occasions his absence from the family circle would naturally be felt with exceptional acuteness. As one whose official task it is to crown festivity with song, Pindar cannot let this sorrow go unrecognized or unconsoled.

Consolation for the death of loved ones, however, like consolation for agonistic *πόνος*, is of two kinds, one ministering chiefly to man's physical being, the other speaking to his intellect. When Achilles tries to bring Priam comfort in the prototype of all *παραμυθητικοὶ λόγοι*, *Il.* 24.518-51, he does so by setting the private sorrow that so obsesses the old man within the context of universal human suffering.³⁴ To such philosophical consolation, however, Priam's ears are deaf at first, and Achilles must reach him by other means. “Let us now take thought for supper,” he urges, “since even Niobe remembered to eat” (601-02); and after the meal, restored in body and spirit, Priam says with satisfaction, “Now I have tasted food and let the bright wine pass down my throat, though before I had tasted nothing” (642-43).

³⁴ See W. C. Greene, *Moirai: Fate, Good and Evil in Greek Thought* (Cambridge, Mass. 1944) 27. On *consolatio* as a developed genre see Buresch, “Consolationum a Graecis Romanisque Scriptarum Historia Critica,” *LSCP* 9 (1871) 1-164, R. Kassel, *Untersuchungen zur griechischen und römischen Konsolationsliteratur* (Munich 1958).

That in the immediacy of grief the physical comforts of the feast are paramount is a fact of which Pindar was well aware in composing O. 14. Through the fiction of Echo, who bears the rumor of celebration to the underworld, he seeks to encompass the dead within the spirit of the occasion,³⁵ but through the figure of Thalia *ἑρασίμολπος*, most physical of the three Graces, patroness of feasting and of the *kómos*, he seeks to reconcile the living to a loss which no fictions can mitigate. Fortified and consoled by the good things that she dispenses, music and merriment, food and wine, Asopichos and his family and friends may come to face the unalterable reality of death with stronger hearts and calmer spirits.

³⁵ The figure of *Ἀγγελία* is used to the same purpose in O. 8.77–84. Elsewhere in the odes reference to dead relatives is directly encomiastic, commemorating athletic prowess (e.g., N. 4.80–90, N. 8.44–48, I. 8.61–65) or heroism in war (e.g., I. 4.16–17b, I. 7.24–36).