

Contextual interpretation of Pindar's odes has usually ignored the multiplicity of audiences among which the poet must negotiate and calibrate each poem's reception. As I have elsewhere argued, epinicia were not only performed in the victor's home city, but at the pan-Hellenic athletic venues as well. This is particularly likely in the case of Pindar's odes for the Deinomenid rulers of Syracuse, whose zeal for monumental commemoration at Delphi is well-known. Their investment in magnificent and spectacular epinician entertainment was aimed at both securing their ever-tenuous popular support at home and rehabilitating a pan-Hellenic reputation tarnished by mainland Greeks' distaste for modern-day tyranny and resentment of Syracusan non-intervention in the mainlanders' recent struggle with Persia.

Subdivisions within the domestic and pan-Hellenic audiences are also evident. At Syracuse, the odes spoke differently to Hieron's courtiers, his opponents, the new Dorian colonists he attracted to settle Aetna and other conquered territories (Diod. Sic. 11.49.1), and to Hieron himself. Recent scholarship on colonization has emphasized the ethnic diversity and demographic complexity of the population in Syracuse and other Western states; these different constituencies cannot be expected to have univocal responses to Deinomenid propaganda. Similarly, within the pan-Hellenic sphere, Athenians, Dorians, and Arcadians all had different relationships with Syracuse and the Deinomenids: some of the epinicia, such as *O.6*, *P.1*, and *N.9* are targeted at particular external audiences with specific goals in mind, particularly the regime's agenda of recruiting new settlers from the Peloponnese. The poet himself also had to be mindful of his fellow Thebans and other patrons whose reaction to his involvement with the Sicilian tyrants might be problematic.

Pindar's odes must be read as careful triangulations among these competing constituencies both on his own part and on behalf of his patrons. This paper will adduce several examples of myths and gnomes that could from one point of view be construed as advising quietism and submission to beneficent authority (a message Hieron no doubt wanted to promote among the local audience), but that could be read very differently by those less sympathetic to his regime, who might prefer to see them as the poet's frank admonitions of mortality aimed at an overweening tyrant. Whether Tantalus, Ixion, Coronis, or Philoctetes, Pindar narrated his mythological exempla with a delicately balanced sense of ambiguity and tact.