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Framing Hyperbata in Pindar's Odes

Although there have been numerous studies of Pindar's style, including ones by Dornseiff (1921), Lauer (1959), Sulzer (1961), Kambylis (1964), and Race (1990), little or no attention has been paid to one of Pindar's most striking figures, hyperbaton, in which an initial modifier is separated from its noun by several intervening words. Even the brief treatments in the standard grammars (Kühner-Gerth, Schwyzer, Smyth) do not provide a single example from Pindar. For the beginning reader, however, this one of the most puzzling features of Pindaric style. I have collected some thirty examples where at least five words intervene and will show by a careful selection how Pindar employs these hyperbata and what effects such severe dislocations achieve. Perhaps the most extreme example is at Pyth. 4.106-108, where Jason explains that he has returned to his home in Iolkos to reclaim his father's rightful privilege of rule:

hikoman oikad', archaian komizon
patros emou, basileuomenan
ou kat' aisan, tan pote Zeus opasen lagetai
Aioloï kai paisi timan.

The adjective *archaian* is separated by 15 words from its noun *timan*. The effect of this separation is the suspension of the crucial word "honor" until the very last word of the sentence: it is for this very thing, *tima*, that Jason has come, and the antiquity of its pedigree is immediately stressed by *archaian*. In between come qualifiers and justifications that substantiate Jason's claim. It is an extremely artful sentence perfectly befitting Jason's masterful oratory. It also gains added emphasis by ending the antistrophe. Similar in structure, but with a very different effect, is the end of Ol. 14.22-24:

Kleodamon ophr' idois', huion eipeis hoti hoi nean
kolpois par' eudoxois Pisas
estephanose kudimon aethlon pteroisï chaitan.

The point of this poignant ending is that Kleodamos, the young victor's father, is dead and Pindar bids Echo bear the report of the son's victory to him in Hades. The adjective *nean* brings home the point of the victor's youth, while the noun *chaitan*, the last word in the poem, fixes our attention on his hair. In between is the announcement of his crowning at Olympia. Beginning with these two examples, I will illustrate the various ways in which Pindar uses hyperbaton to frame and emphasize statements. Categories include gnomic statements (Ol. 2.15-17, Ol. 6.100-101, Ol. 11.19-20, Ol. 12.5-6a, Pyth. 8.44-45, and Isth. 8.15-15a); withholding a proper name for climactic emphasis until the end of a sentence or stanza (Ol. 7.13-14, Pyth. 1.95-96, and Nem. 3.2-3); and the placement of a thematic adjective first (Ol. 3.39-40, Ol. 6.1-2, Pyth. 5.90-93, Pyth. 6.5-8, Nem. 10.33-34, and Isth. 2.39-40).

Finally, I shall show how consistently Pindar adapts these framing hyperbata to the metrical form and rhetorical intention of his poems and how the intervening words work to create a coherent unit.