In studying the structural forms of the myths in Pindar's odes, we note that the most conspicuous characteristic of his poetical art is the way in which he moves from the present, which he is now celebrating in song, to the mythical past, a world in which he loved to dwell.1 Bowra2 refers to 'the apparent insouciance with which he sometimes introduces a myth', and: 'He seems almost to slide into it through some superficial association of words or ideas.' This method of formal transition from reality to myth by means of the so-called archaic associative way of thinking is typical of Pindar's structural forms; it is also neatly described by Viljoen3 as 'die van punt tot punt aanknopende denkvorm en glydende oorgange in gedagte'. One4 illustration will suffice: in his First Olympian Ode, dedicated to Hieron of Syracuse, winter in the horse-race, Pindar closes his praise of Hieron with the following lines:5

λάμπει δὲ οἱ κλέος
ἐν εὐάνοι Λυδοῦ Πέλοπος ἀποικίᾳ. (23—24)

And his fame shines
among strong men where Lydian Pelops went to dwell.6

The word Πέλοπος thus chimes the keynote of the myth of Pelops and Tantalos, which follows, introduced by the familiar device of the relative pronoun:7

Λυδοῦ Πέλοπος ἀποικίᾳ.
tοῦ μεγαθενής ἔρασσατο Γαῖαιοχος
Ποσειδάν

Pelops,
whom the mighty shaker of the earth once loved,
even Poseidon

1. Only the following odes do not contain any myths: O v, xi, xii, xiv; P vii; also I ii and N xi, but these are not true epinicia.
4. Also O x 15, vii 19, vii 30, vi 28; P xi 15—17, iv 68, ix 4; N ix 9, x 49—50; 11:15—16; etc.
5. In this paper I have made use of the text of C. M. Bowra, Pindari Carmina cum Fragmentis (Oxford 1961).
Pindar, however, uses this method of association in his *Seventh Olympian Ode* to move not only from the present to the past, 8 but also *from one myth to another*. Thus he provides structural patterns displayed by three closely related myths in this ode. These patterns are most important for a better understanding of the significance of the myths, and of the ode in general.

The ode contains three myths 9 conveying a common lesson that ‘the errors of men and gods are corrected by some kind of providence, which is not named or defined but suggests that Rhodes itself, despite its troubles, will turn its misfortunes to good.’ 10 In the first myth (20—34) the crime of Tlepolemos was turned to a good end, resulting in the foundation of Rhodes; in the second myth (39—53) the sons of Helios neglected to take ‘the seed of blazing fire’ and they thus laid out the sacred precinct with fireless sacrifices, but Zeus caused a cloud to draw near and rained on them abundant gold; in the third myth (54—76) Helios was forgotten by the immortals when they divided the earth among themselves, Helios himself being ‘pure of blame’, 11 but Rhodes rose from the depths of the sea to be his allotted portion. The second and third myth have another thought in common. In both the error consists of something or someone being forgotten. In the second the sons of Helios overlooked the ‘seed of the blazing fire’ which resulted in the sacred precinct being laid out with fireless sacrifices; in the third Helios was forgotten and left without any allotment of land. The link that connects these two myths is thus an association of the same idea, that of forgetfulness! Meautis 12 neatly stated: ‘Au moment de la naissance de la fille de Zeus, c’est un oublé qui empêche les Rhodiens d’obtenir ce que va recevoir Athénes et la troisième mythe que va rapporter le poète est encore celui d’un oublé’, and he also refers to Puech’s statement that these two myths are ‘savamment engrenés’. 13

The aim of this paper is to show that these three myths are not only connected and associated with one another by the same lesson or concept, but that they are linked by the *same structure*, especially that of the *chiasmus*, 14 a structure which is developed progressively in the course of the ode.

Compare the first and second myth: In lines 28—29 Pindar relates the

8. Lines 19—20: ἐμφόλων ναιόντας Ἀργεῖα σῶν ἅρμα


11. ἄγνω θεόν (line 60).


13. Notice also that both have their beginning in the middle of an epode.

crime of Tlepolemos as follows:

σκάπτε θεών
σκληρὰς ἐλαίας ἔκτανεν Τίρυνθι Λικύμνιον
ἐλθοῦτι ἐκ θαλάμων Μιδέας

(Tlepolemos) with his staff
of hard-grained olive, smote to death at Tiryns Likymnios
coming from the chamber of Midea

The cause of his crime is stated by Pindar as follows:

αὐ δὲ φρενᾶν ταραχαί
παρέπλαγξαν καὶ σοφόν. (30—31)

But tumult of mind
has driven out of his course even the wise man.

Tlepolemos, however, is forgiven and Apollo bids him sail to Rhodes:

eἰπε Λερναίας ἄπ’ ἀκτάς
τὸν ἐς ὅμφιολασσὸν νομὸν (33)

(Apollo) bade him (sail) from the shore of Lerna
straight to the sea-washed pasture-land

Then follows the myth of the birth of Athena, and at the moment of her
birth Hyperion bids his sons build an altar for the goddess:

τότε καὶ φανοσίμβροτος δεῖμον Ἕπειρονίδας
μέλλον ἐνετίλειν φυλάξασθαι χρέος
παῖσιν φίλοις (39—41)

Then did the god, light-giver to mortals, Hyperion,
enjoin to give heed to the rite soon to be due
even to his dear children

In fulfilling this task, however, they overlooked 'the seed of the bright fire'
(48), the cause of this error being stated as follows:

ἐπὶ μᾶν βαίνει τι καὶ λάθας ἀτέκμαρτα νέφος,
καὶ παρέλκει πραγμάτων ὄρθων ὁδὸν ἐξὼ φρενᾶν. (45—47)
However, near them draws an unpredictable cloud of forgetfulness, and wrenches aside the right way of action far from their thoughts.

Again the error is corrected: Zeus caused a cloud to draw near them and rained abundant gold on them, while Athena ‘herself bestowed upon them every art, so that they surpassed all mortal men by their deftness of hand’ (50—51):

\[\text{αὐτὰ δὲ σφισάν ὄπασε τέχναν πᾶσαν ἐπιχειρών Ἐλαυκῶπις ἀριστοτοπόνοις χερσὶ κρατεῖν.}\]

Thus we have here the first suggestion of a structural pattern chiastic in form; when relating these first two myths Pindar is doing it in a reverse manner, characteristic of the chiasmus: at the beginning he tells of the killing of Likymnios by Tlepolemos, i.e. of his error; then follows the cause of his error; finally the instruction of Apollo. Turning to the second myth we notice a reverse order: firstly he states the instruction of Hyperion; again there follows the cause of the error of his sons, and finally their deftness of hand (which balances the crime at the beginning).

Thus we notice the following pattern (See also note 37!):

**FIGURE A.**

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{ἐκτανε} & \text{φρενῶν ταραχεὶ παρέπλαγξαν} & \text{εἶπε} \\
\text{ἐντείλεν} & \text{παρέλκει έξω φρενῶν} & \text{ἀριστοτοπόνοις χερσὶ}
\end{array}
\]

A similar structure, more clearly developed, is found by comparing the second with the third myth. In line 45 the cause of the error of the sons of Helios is described as follows:

\[\text{ἐπὶ μὰν βαίνει τι καὶ λάθας ἀτέκμαρτα νέφος}\]

However, near them draws an unpredictable cloud of forgetfulness

The result of this error is then stated in lines 48—49:

\[\text{τεῦξαν δ’ ἀπώροις Ιεροῖς ἀλςος . . .}\]

And thus they laid out with fireless sacrifices the sacred precinct . . .

28
Finally the position of the sacred precinct is said to be ‘on the citadel’ (49):

άλσος ἐν ἀκροπόλι.

Turning to the third myth we notice the following: in line 57 mention is made of the position of the isle of Rhodes; it is described as being hidden in the depths of the sea (balancing the elevated position of the sacred precinct):

ἄλμυροις δ’ ἐν βένθεσιν νάσον κεκρυφθαι.

but the isle was hidden in the briny depths of the sea.

In line 59 is stated the result of Helios being forgotten by the gods in their allotment of the earth:

καὶ ἰὰ νῦν χώρας ἀκλάρωτον λίπον

And so they left him without any allotment of land

And, finally, in line 61 Helios reminds Zeus of what had happened:

μνασθέντι δὲ Ζεὺς ἀμπαλον μέλλεν θέμεν.

And when he (Helios) spake thereof Zeus would cast afresh.

The following pattern is then discernable (see also note 38!):

FIGURE B.

Here the link between the two myths is more clearly depicted and the chiastic structure becomes even more apparent than in the case of figure A, the keywords being λάθας — μνασθέντι.16 Opposite the word λάθας, the forgetfulness of that which the sons of Helios should have remembered, stands the word μνασθέντι, the reminding of that which the gods actually have forgotten. Again: opposite to the sacred precinct on the citadel stands the island of Rhodes still hidden in the depths. The centre lines, as in figure

15. This is an illustration of an antithetical association; Viljoen provides us with further examples, op. cit., p. 72, note 29, e.g. P x 63—64: ἀτέκμαρτον — πέποθα.

29
A, are balanced, both consisting of the result of the error in each case.

Once again comparing the second myth with the third, we find yet another chiastic structure. In line 42 Hyperion urges his sons to build an altar for the goddess Athena to be in sight of all men:

δός δὲν θεὰ πρῶτοι κτίσαιευ βαμὸν ἐναργία

that, for the goddess, they should be the first to build a bright altar

In line 53 Pindar relates that, owing to their receiving the blessings of Zeus and Athena, the fame of the sons of Helios was great (deep):

ἡν δὲ κλέος βαθό.

At the beginning of the third myth we find the now well-known phrase:

ἄλμυροις δὲν βένθεσίν νάσον κεκρυφθαι. (57)

But the island was hidden in the briny depths of the sea.

Finally, Pindar tells how Helios urged that Lachesis should agree with Zeus that Rhodes should be his allotted portion when it had risen forth into the light of day:

φαεννόν ἐδε ἀιθέρα νιν πεμφθέεσαν. (67)

Again we notice the chiastic structure:

FIGURE C.

βαμὸν ἐναργία κλέος βαθό

ἐν βένθεσίν ἐς αἰθέρα

16. To this may be objected that βαθό and ἐν βένθεσίν do not represent the same idea, that whilst the island lies hidden, their glory becomes openly known. Yet βαθό is the keyword. Why does he choose βαθό when he usually uses μέγας, μέγα in this connection? So in O viii 10 μέγα τοι κλέος οτει, I vii 29 μέγιστον κλέος, O i 56 μέγαν δόλαν, N viii 25 μέγιστον . . . γέρας, P ii 89 μέγα κλεός, P iv 278 τμῶν μεγίσταν, O viii 5—6 μεγάλον αρετάν — whereas he uses βαθός, βαθό only thrice in this connection: O vii 53, O xii 12, P i 66; Vide J. Rumpel, Lexicon Pindaricum (Georg Olms 1961), p. 84 and 286. We believe Pindar used this particular word here in close connection with βένθεσίν; vide J. B. Hofmann, Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Griechischen (München 1966), p. 31. Vide also note 39.
However, in the third myth itself, we find a similar chiastic structure: in line 57 we again notice the phrase telling that Rhodes is still *hidden* in the *briny* depths:

\[
\text{άλμυροῖς δὲν βένθοςιν νάσον κεκρυφθαὶ.}
\]

In line 69, however, Rhodes is seen as *blossoming forth* from the waters of the *sea*:

\[
\text{βλάστε μὲν ἐξ ἀλῶς ὕγρας}
\]

**FIGURE D.**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{άλμυροῖς} & \quad \text{κεκρυφθαὶ} \\
\text{βλάστε} & \quad \text{ἐξ ἀλῶς ὕγρας}
\end{align*}
\]

Yet another chiastic structure is found in the third myth. At the beginning of the myth we hear of the *division* of the earth among the gods:

\[
\text{διὸ ἡδόνα διάτοντο}
\]

\[
\text{Zeὺς τε καὶ ἀθάνατοι}
\]

(55)

when they divided the earth

Zeus and the immortals

At the end of this myth there is again a *division* of land:

\[
\text{διὰ γαῖαν τρίχα διασοάμενοι}
\]

(75)

having divided the land into three shares . . .

Between these two phrases there is also mention of that which *results* from something being divided and *allotted*: line 58 mentions Helios’ *λάχος* being forgotten whilst the earth was divided, and in line 64 it is none other than *Λάχεσις* (*λάχος, λάχειν*)\(^\text{17}\) who is called upon to secure Rhodes as the allotted portion of Helios when it had risen from the sea.

---

Finally, we notice in the second and third myth a pattern which is parallelistic in structure but antithetical in meaning: (i) turning to the second myth Pindar introduces in line 45 a metaphor of a cloud to describe the cause of the error of the sons of Helios:

\[ \text{ἐπὶ μᾶν βάϊνει τι καὶ λάθας ἀτέκμαρτα νέφος} \]

This error, however, is corrected when Zeus causes a yellow cloud to draw near them and rain on them abundant gold:

\[ \text{κείνοισι μὲν ξαν-} \]
\[ \text{θαύν ἀγαγὸν νεφέλαν} \]
\[ \text{πολὺν δὲς χρυσόν.} \]

(49–50)

The cloud of forgetfulness at the beginning of their undertaking is balanced by the cloud of gold at the end, the former being a symbol of their misfortune, the latter a symbol of their success, wealth and happiness.18

(ii) turning to the third myth we notice in line 57 that Rhodes is still hidden in the depths, but in line 67 she is sent forth into the light of day:

\[ \text{ἐν βένθεσιν . . . . . κεκρύφθαι} \]

\[ \text{ἐς αἰθέρα . . . . . . πεμφθέειν} \]

18. The concept of gold plays an important part in Pindar’s symbolical thought. Vide J. Duchemin, Pindare Poète et Prophète (Paris 1955), Ile Partie, Chapitre I. La mystique de l’or, de la lumière et des couleurs; G. Méautis, op. cit., p. 113, writes: ‘l’or ... est le couronnement de la richesse qui grandit l’homme ... rien ne l’emporte sur l’or.’ On ξανθάν Gildersleeve, Pindar, The Olympian and Pythian Odes (London 1890), p. 188, comments: ‘The cloud takes its colour from the gold that it contains.’
Naturally the question arises as to the significance of these structural patterns. Do they merely embellish, or are they expressive of some deeper denotation? Two aspects call for attention: the person and his family for whom this ode was composed, as well as the general significance of the myths themselves.

Diagoras came of an illustrious family\(^1\) to which he added the glory of personal distinction, being a \(\text{περιοδονίκης}\), a title received as winner in all four national games. So great was his reputation, together with that of his sons, that a statue of him, his three sons and two grandsons was erected at Olympia by Kallikles of Megara.\(^2\) Indeed, \textit{Diagoras' good fortune was proverbial}.\(^3\)

As regards the general meaning of the myths there is more or less agreement that, despite an unfortunate beginning, in spite of men's errors and transgressions, blessings and good fortune may follow.\(^4\) Disagreement, however, arises when we are confronted with the question: to what external event\(\text{s}\) do they refer? Dissen's opinion, based on the Scholion on line 94, that Diagoras had accidentally killed one of his opponents, is generally repudiated.\(^5\) More acceptable is Boeckh's theory that 'Diagoras' family, the Eratidai, who had once been kings in Rhodes, were now in danger of losing what influence and power they retained, under pressure of the commons, abetted by the Athenian democracy',\(^6\) so that these myths convey a warning to the Rhodians to guard themselves against political folly and not to disregard the Eratidae.\(^7\)

However, Fennell,\(^8\) Norwood,\(^9\) and Méautis\(^10\) concur that there is no need to assume any special reference to the past life of Diagoras or his family. At the time of Diagoras' victory the Eratidae were in a state of decline,\(^11\) and this may well be of importance, but it cannot be proved beyond all doubt that Pindar had this in view, therefore it will be more profitable to confine ourselves to the ode itself. The question as to the intrinsic significance of the myths is far more important for our examination of the structural patterns in these myths. Thus we follow Norwood,

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\(^3\) Vide B. L. Gildersleeve, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 183; also F. Mezger, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 438.


\(^6\) G. Norwood, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 142.

\(^7\) So also Leop. Schmidt, cited by F. Mezger, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 439.

\(^8\) C. A. M. Fennell, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 72.

\(^9\) G. Norwood, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 142.

\(^10\) G. Méautis, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 411; also R. Lattimore, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 152.

Gildersleeve and Finley, who, in our opinion, explain the poem most satisfactorily without looking for external events to justify Pindar’s choice of myths.30

Norwood31 writes that these three legends, the story of Tlepolemos, the institution of fireless sacrifice by the Rhodians, the partition of Earth among the gods, maintain an insistence upon gloom beside sunshine, joy following pain, and refers us to lines 25—26:32

τοῦτο δ’ αμάχανον εὑρεῖν,
δι’ τι νῦν ἐν καὶ τελευτᾷ φέρεταν ἄνδρι τυχεῖν.

This thing is impossible to discover,
what is now and at the end best for a man to attain.

Finley (whose work has been considerably influenced by Norwood) comments (p. 70—71) that Pindar ‘describes three events progressively more remote in time, each of which began with seeming mistake but through divine favour ended happily. This is the familiar theme of vicissitude which despite the bravura of the ode and much express optimism, is gloomier here because no release from the process is suggested.’ By these last words Finley is, of course, referring to the shifting of the winds of lines 94—95, but he seems to be too pessimistic33 concerning Pindar’s thought; lines 94—95 do not necessarily imply a change from good to bad, but merely change of some kind.

Therefore, Gildersleeve (p. 183—184) seems to be more correct: he also mentions the vicissitude of shade and light. Diagoras was fortunate; but he might one day forget, passion might overtake him. And should Nemesis have aught against him, he may yet hope to find, like Tlepolemos, like the sons of Helios, like Helios himself, λύτρον συμφορᾶς οἵκτρᾶς γλυκό (77): ‘sweet deliverance after the bitterness of misfortune’.34 The winds shift (94—95), but the divine helmsman steers the ship to its haven.

This dominant motive of vicissitude in the myths is structurally established

30. Here we may state the fact that Pindar in general never uses a myth for embellishment only, as is sometimes the case with Bacchylides, but always for a specific denotation. Vide G. van N. Viljoen, op. cit., p. 126—127, as well as note 6, p. 126.
32. The rose-symbolism (Ῥόδος — rose) which Norwood believes is present in this poem, does not call for any discussion here. Whether we retain Rhodes as an island or a plant (rose), our interpretation of the general meaning of the myth is not affected. For when Norwood writes on p. 141: ‘Pindar’s Rose is no plant of every day; it grows in his quickening imagination to a symbol of our life, of sorrow turned into joy, of a miraculous burgeoning from a spot without fertility or sunlight into final radiance and sovereign beauty’, he is stressing precisely this intrinsic significance of the myth.
34. R. Lattimore, op. cit.
as follows: first of all we notice that except in figures F and G, all the patterns (A—E) are chiastic in structure, which Smyth defines as ‘the crosswise arrangement of contrasted pairs to give alternate stress’.

In figure A the chiastic structure is already present in embryo, the events of the first and second myth being related in reverse manner. Here, however, we already find the suggestion of the vicissitude of shade and light: the first myth begins with the crime of Tlepolemos (ἐκτανε), symbolizing thus the shade, the misfortune. Opposite to ἐκτανε, however, we notice the happy ending of the error of the second myth, ἀριστοπόνος χερσί κρατείν symbolizing their glory and good fortune.

It has already been shown that the chiastic structure in figure B is more fully and clearly developed. Emphasis is here laid on two concepts: (i) the cause of the misfortune in these two myths is expressed by the words λάθος — μνεσθέντι, both reminding us of the error. Standing in an antithetical position to each other they emphasize this error even more; (ii) we find here again the suggestion of that insistence upon shade and light in the second myth the main object is the establishment of the sacred precinct which had to be (and eventually was) laid out on the citadel, so that the altar for the goddess Athena could be in sight of all men (line 42). The phrases ‘on the citadel’ and ‘in sight of all men’ symbolize the light, the joy, the glory to come (line 53). Chiastic antithesis marks the dominant part in the third myth, the isle of Rhodes being here represented as still hidden in the depths, again symbolizing the shade, the pain (because the island is as yet a hidden joy while at this moment Helios is left without portion), that which is still hidden in the dark future, of which there is no certainty at this moment (24—25).
This concept of vicissitude is continued in figures C, D, and E. In figure C the light is symbolized by the phrases βεμόν ἑωρηγεῖα — φαοννόν δ' αἰθέρα, the first representing the altar in sight of all men, the second the island being sent forth into the light of day, once hidden in the depths — this last thought being represented by ἐν βένθεσιν... κεκρύφθαι. In figure D we have a closely related structure taken from the third myth. Again it concerns the island of Rhodes, in line 57 represented as hidden (κεκρύφθαι) in the salt depths (Ἀλμυροῖς δ' ἐν βένθεσιν), and in line 69 as the island that blossomed (βλάστε) from out of the waters of the sea (ἐξ ἄλος ὑγράς). Again the change, the vicissitude, the blossoming 'from a spot without fertility or sunlight into final radiance and sovereign beauty'. In figure E the division of the land by Zeus and the immortals (line 55) has an unfortunate beginning, Helios being left without portion; in line 75 a second division of land takes place, but this time without any error, for each of the three leaders receives his own portion, the land being divided τρίχα. Again, opposite to ἡράς in line 58, representing Helios being without portion, stands Δήμας, goddess of the lot, to secure Rhodes as Helios' portion. Thus, again, we hear of change from bad, the shade, to good, the light.

Finally, a similar concept of the vicissitude of life, of misfortune turned into happiness, of consolation that whenever misfortune befalls man he may hope for the divine favour, is expressed in two patterns (figures F and G), which, although parallelistic in structure, are antithetical in meaning: (i) in figure F the metaphor of the cloud suggests the same emphasis on shadow (error) turned into light (good fortune, especially heightened by means of the 'gold'-concept — see note 18); (ii) in figure G we have the change from bad to good expressed by the dominant theme: the birth of the island of Rhodes. Helios, being absent from the partition of the earth, was left portionless, his portion-to-be at this moment still hidden in the depths; soon, however, Helios would be recompensed when he received Rhodes as the portion of his own choice when this island had risen forth into the light of day. Again the change from shade to light, from the depths of misfortune to the clear sky of joy.

To summarise: whilst the myths themselves convey the idea of success granted by the gods in spite of mistakes made, this idea of light and shade is emphasized even more clearly by the chastic and parallelistic arrangement established in the structural patterns. The appositeness of this idea may lie

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39. βεμόν serves as keyword to the following phrase ἐν βένθεσιν ετός. Vide note 16.
40. The theory of Norwood, op. cit., p. 141, brings άλος ὑγράς in close relation to ἄλμυροῖς by translating it with 'salt' seems attractive, but need not necessarily concern us here, particularly since ἄλμυροῖς is derived from the same root as άλος (Vide J. B. Hofmann, op. cit., p. 13), and therefore serves as a natural bridge to άλος.
42. When the aim of this paper was pointed out at the beginning, mention was also
somewhere in the history of Diagoras or his family. We do not know, owing to the lack of precise data. We can merely endeavour to indicate that Pindar heightens the emphasis on the idea pointed out and already expressed by the myths themselves by means of structural patterns within the myths. 

made that the structural patterns to be established afterwards were developed progressively according to the course of the ode. The following table will serve to illustrate this point:

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