

Two Agonistic Problems in Pindar, *Nemean* 7.70–74 and *Pythian* 1.42–45

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I

GOTTFRIED HERMANN in 1822 offered a clue to a satisfactory interpretation of lines 70–74 of the Seventh *Nemean*. The text itself presents no major problems; and, with the minor exception of the Aeolic form *προβαίς* for the manuscripts' *προβάς*, is given as follows in the most recent editions of Bowra, Snell and Turyn:

- 70 *Εὐξένιδα πάτραθε Σώγενες, ἀπομνύω
μὴ τέρμα προβάς ἄκουθ' ὄτε χαλκοπάραιον ὄρσαι
θοὰν γλῶσσαν, ὃς ἐξέπεμψεν παλαισμάτων
αὐχένα καὶ σθένος ἀδιάντον, αἴθωνι
πρὶν ἀλίῳ γυῖον ἐμπεσεῖν.
74 εἰ πόνος ἦν, τὸ τερπνὸν πλέον πεδέρχεται.*

Hermann's *De Sogenis Aeginetae victoria quinquertii dissertatio* was published in the 1828 edition of his *Opuscula*¹ and has been ignored (not entirely without justification) by recent students of the problem. Yet despite weaknesses in Hermann's overall argument, he made a twofold contribution to the understanding of these lines. First, he saw that there is no validity in the stories given in the scholia about Sogenes' escaping the wrestling: "Nihil facilius usu venire videmus . . . quam ut quis falsa, si ab antiquis auctoribus tradita sint, pro veris habeat," are the words with which he begins his study (*Opuscula* III.22). This suspicion of the scholia has been shared more recently by such scholars as Wilamowitz and Hermann Fraenkel.² Second, Hermann perceived that there is no reference to overshooting the mark, as most commentators have assumed.

¹ Godofredi Hermanni *Opuscula* III (Leipzig 1828) 22–36.

² U. v. Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Pindaros* (Berlin 1922) 163 n.4. Hermann Fraenkel, "Schrullen in den Scholien zu Pindars Nemeen 7 und Olympien 3," *Hermes* 89 (1961) 385–97.

Hermann gives the kernel of his interpretation in an extraordinarily complicated passage which itself, like Pindar, “needs interpreters”; and, accordingly, I offer the following translation:

For since it seems hardly possible that the words *τέρμα προβάς* can mean anything other than what I have suggested, namely ‘setting the limits in advance (of the contest)’ [*terminum praefiniens*], the poet seems to be comparing himself with one who, in the contest itself or in the exercises before the contest (in the latter case imagine the person to be an official of the pentathlon), throwing his javelin marks the limits; and since this person himself is not in the number of the competitors, he is sent away from the javelin (contest) without the sweat of the wrestling before the heat of the midday sun, whereas on the other hand the throwing of the javelin (which from these very words may be inferred to have been last in the pentathlon) sends out the competitors so that they leave the contest after the noonday heat and sweating from the wrestling. . . You may understand the passage briefly as follows: “I did not say anything rashly, as one who sets the limits for the javelin throw at the pentathla while he himself is not a contestant nor subject to the sweat of the wrestling; for there is greater pleasure from toil.”³

This idea of a contrast between a non-contestant who sets the goal or the boundaries and thus escapes the wrestling and the actual contestants who face the wrestling is neither very likely nor very plausible in Pindar’s context; nor are all the parts of Hermann’s interpretation possible in terms of present evidence. Almost certainly the wrestling, not the javelin throw, was last. And why should the official mark the limits or the goal by throwing his javelin (‘. . . *iaculo misso terminum signet*’), a procedure which would leave a great deal to chance? But Hermann’s view of *τέρμα προβάς* as referring to a throw which sets

³ Hermann (*supra* n.1) 34: “Quum enim verba *τέρμα προβάς* vix aliud videantur significare posse, quam quod diximus, *terminum praefiniens*, videtur poeta se comparare cum eo, qui sive in certamine ipso, sive in exercitationibus ante certamen, puta autem eum esse aliquem magistrum quinquertii, iaculo misso terminum signet, quumque ipse non sit in numero certantium, a iaculo ante meridiani solis calorem sine luctae sudore dimittatur, quod contra illos, qui certant, iaculi iactus, quem ex his ipsis verbis ultimum in quinquertio fuisse conici potest, ita dimittat, ut et post meridiem et sudantes a lucta e certamine exeant . . . Paucis haec ita comprehendas: ‘non temere quidquam dixi, ut qui iaculi iactum quinquertionibus praerit, ipse non certans, nec sudans e lucta: maior enim ex labore voluptas est.’”

the outer limits for the contest, though unconvincing in the precise sense in which Hermann took it, leads, if suitably modified, to a view of the passage which solves most of the problems without assuming for the Greek words meanings which they nowhere else have in the classical period.

One of the scholiasts (*ad Nem.* 7, 106b Drachmann) thought that lines 70–73 referred to an extraordinary length of throw on Sogenes' part which discouraged the other contestants so that Sogenes was able to win the pentathlon without having to compete in the wrestling. Among more recent students of the problem, Jüthner accepted this view and took *τέρμα* to mean the end-limits of the throwing-field or the limits set by the previous throws, all of which Sogenes' "record throw" surpasses: "Durch den jeweils besten Wurf ist eine Grenze gesetzt, die die übrigen Werfer zu überbieten haben . . . Auf jeden Fall ist ein Wurf gemeint, der über die anderen hinausgeht und zusammen mit den bisherigen Leistungen den Kampf vor dem Ringen beendet."⁴ We shall come back to this view of *τέρμα*; but we must reject Jüthner's interpretation of the passage as a whole because it gives the impossible meaning, 'surpass' or 'overshoot' to *προβάς*, and also involves for the verb *ἔξέπεμψεν* the equally unexampled meaning 'exempt' (on this point see the further discussion below).

Though Jüthner's view gives at least a plausible meaning to *τέρμα*, his interpretation has not been generally received. The most widely held interpretation is that the throw is not by Sogenes, and Pindar is referring to a foul of some sort: either an opponent's throw which exceeds the proper bounds or an opponent's stepping over the starting line. In either case the opponent disqualifies himself and thus releases Sogenes from the need to engage in the wrestling. Pindar will then be made to say, "I swear that I did not step beyond the due bounds (of my song) like that javelin (of your opponent) which went astray and thus sent you out of the wrestling, *i.e.* freed you from the necessity of competing in the wrestling."

This view, however, labors under three difficulties. (1) The expression *τέρμα προβάς* has an impossible meaning. The noun cannot mean 'starting line', as some of those who take this approach to the passage would have it. Also *προβάς* cannot mean 'overstep' or 'transgress'. Hesychius' gloss, *προβάς· ὑπερβάς*, which may well have been

⁴ Julius Jüthner, "Zu Pindar Nem. 7, 70ff.," *WS* 50 (1932) 169.

invented as a desperate expedient for this very passage, has led interpreters astray. A passage in Gorgias (*Helen* §5, Diels/Kranz, *FVS*¹¹ II.289.17–19), which has not, so far as I know, been brought to bear on the problem, confirms the fact that the two verbs cannot be so identified: τὸν χρόνον δὲ τῷ λόγῳ τὸν τότε <τῷ> νῦν ὑπερβὰς ἐπὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν τοῦ μέλλοντος λόγου προβήσομαι . . . The two words, each in its proper meaning, occur very close together, the first clearly meaning ‘go beyond’, ‘pass by’, and the second ‘advance toward’. One need hardly emphasize how conscious a writer like Gorgias is of the distinctions and similarities between related words. The passage is tantamount to a late fifth-century definition of the difference between the two verbs. (2) The verb ἐκπέμπειν is usually used of sending someone out of a place in which he already is and hence is inappropriate when used of the wrestling match which Sogenes never entered. Even more serious is the fact that it means ‘dismiss’, when what is needed is a verb meaning ‘release’, like ἐκλύειν, as Bury pointed out.⁵ The verb ἐκπέμπειν may also have a pejorative connotation in its meaning ‘dismiss’, not only in the special sense of ‘divorce’, but more generally as well: cf. Homer, *Od.* 18.336; Sophocles, *OT* 789; Aeschylus, *Cho.* 98. Obviously any pejorative connotation would be most out of place if the verb refers to Sogenes’ extraordinary success. (3) Finally the sequence of thought with line 74 is awkward: after congratulating Sogenes on having avoided the wrestling, Pindar will then be alluding to his πόνος. This last objection is not as serious as the first two, for presumably the events preceding the wrestling (assuming that Sogenes escaped the latter) would have involved ‘toil’ enough to justify line 74.

Farnell tried to mitigate some of these difficulties by taking the passage to refer not to Sogenes’ particular case, but rather to the circumstances of the pentathlic competition in general: “By this figure then Pindar avers that he has not blundered by speaking recklessly at Delphi like a careless spear-thrower: he has not overstepped the mark.”⁶ Farnell at least avoids the scholiast’s explanations in terms of the actual details of Sogenes’ victory. But his own view still involves the impossible translation ‘stepping beyond the starting

⁵ For this problem of ἐξέπεμψεν see J. B. Bury, *The Nemean Odes of Pindar* (London 1890) 139–40.

⁶ L. R. Farnell, *The Works of Pindar* II (London 1932) 300. The idea of a foul by stepping beyond the starting line in this passage has even pervaded general discussions of the Greek javelin throw: see H. A. Harris, “Greek Javelin Throwing,” *G&R* 10 (1963) 28 with n.1. For the impossibility of τέρμα meaning ‘starting line’, see Jüthner (*supra* n.4) 168.

line' for *τέρμα προβάς*. It also involves a new difficulty in the relative clause of lines 72–73, *ὅς . . . ἐμπεσεῖν*. The verb *ἐξέπεμψεν* on this view is a gnomic aorist; but such a victory could never have been a very common occurrence, so that the verb, in Farnell's own words, "puts as generally true what was only occasionally true." Farnell's last recourse is a counsel of despair: "It may be that here, as elsewhere in the ode, he [Pindar] fails to make himself quite plain because he has an uneasy conscience."⁷ Both of these difficulties—the meaning of *τέρμα προβάς* and the use of a gnomic aorist for a rather unusual occurrence—will hold true for any interpretation which seeks to translate the former by 'overstepping the limits or the starting line' while yet assuming a general, common situation and not some specific reference to the details of Sogenes' victory.

Wilamowitz proposed an ingenious solution to the passage: he placed a period after *γλώσσαν* and a comma after *ἐμπεσεῖν*.⁸ This repunctuation solves the problem of *πεδέρχεται*, which is usually transitive (except in the Homeric sense of 'go among or between', which is clearly not appropriate here), but here must be given an intransitive and otherwise unexampled meaning 'come after', 'follow after' (see below, section III). Wilamowitz' text gives the sense, "Whoever has sent his neck and strength out of the wrestling unwetted (by sweat) before his limbs fell upon the burning sun, if there was toil, yet he seeks after joy the more." But the sequence of relative clause and conditional clause is awkward and the grammar disturbing, since one would expect in the first clause a conditional relative construction with a subjunctive (cf. *Isthmian* 1.50–51).⁹ Wilamowitz' text also leaves the problems of *τέρμα προβάς* still unsolved. Though Schadewaldt and Snell in his first two Teubner editions accepted this interpretation,¹⁰ it has not met with favor from editors and has now been abandoned by Snell in his third Teubner edition (1959). It has been criticized also by Jüthner and, more recently, by Floyd.¹¹

Solution by textual change and repunctuation is also advocated by Puech, the only modern editor who follows Heyne and keeps the

⁷ Farnell (preceding note) *loc.cit.*

⁸ Wilamowitz, *Pindaros* (*supra* n.2) 163.

⁹ See Edwin D. Floyd, "Pindar's Oath to Sogenes (*Nemean* 7.70–74)," *TAPA* 96 (1965) 149.

¹⁰ W. Schadewaldt, "Der Aufbau des Pindarischen Epinikion," *Schriften der Königsberger Gelehrten Gesellschaft* V Hft. 3 (1928) 317–18; Bruno Snell, *Pindari Carmina cum Fragmentis*, ed. 1 (Leipzig 1953); ed. 2 (Leipzig 1955) *ad loc.*

¹¹ Jüthner (*supra* n.4) 166–67; Floyd (*supra* n.9) 148–49.

reading of B, ἐξέπεμψας. He translates as if there were a strong pause after γλώσσαν: “. . . Sôgênès, je jure n’avoir pas passé la limite en lançant comme un javelot à la joue d’airain, ma parole rapide, ô toi qui as libéré de la lutte ta nuque vigoureuse, sans que la sueur l’eût mouillée, avant que ton corps se fût exposé au soleil torride.”¹² But in addition to the awkward separation of the relative clause from the vocative which it modifies, Puech’s version still presents the same three problems enumerated above.

The only other textual approach worth mentioning is the conjecture of Bergk, adopted by W. Christ in his *editio maior*,¹³ ὃ σ’ ἐξέπεμψεν. But this emendation too, implausible on other grounds as Bury pointed out,¹⁴ also solves none of the three problems. Most scholars are now agreed that the text of D, as given in the first paragraph of this essay, is sound; and it is that which we must now seek to explain.

Floyd, in his recent study of the passage, has at least grappled with the problem of *τέρμα προβάς* and, by showing again the inadequacies of most current interpretations, cleared the ground for a new approach. Floyd’s own suggestion is that *τέρμα* here means the limits or end of the race course and that the oath therefore means, “I swear that I have not come to the end of my course, like your (winning) javelin which sent you out of the contest before the wrestling.”¹⁵ On this view, the oath is a promise that Pindar has not come to the end of his poem, that he will not end too soon. But this view too, while it gives a possible meaning to *τέρμα προβάς*, has several difficulties of its own. First, there is the inherent implausibility of Pindar’s making such an assertion. He is not generally concerned with length or with the abruptness of his endings. Indeed, it is a common feature of his epinikia to end rather suddenly and abruptly; and Floyd offers no parallels in other epinikia to such a promise about not finishing too soon. Second, Floyd’s view of the passage involves a mixture of athletic metaphors. In itself the mixture of metaphors is no surprise in Pindar; but in this particular context it would be awkward. To

¹² A. Puech, *Pindare III, Néméennes*, ed. 3 (Paris 1958) 100.

¹³ W. Christ, *Pindari Carmina Prolegomenis et Commentariis Instructa* (Leipzig 1896) 291.

¹⁴ Bury (*supra* n.5) 140.

¹⁵ Floyd (*supra* n.9) 142 translates lines 70–73 as follows: “Euxenidas from your clan, O Sogenes, on oath I deny that, having advanced to completion, I urged on my swift tongue like the bronze-checked javelin, which sent forth from the wrestling both neck and strength unwetted, before any limb fell in the burning sun.” It is to be noted, incidentally, that Floyd takes ἀλίω in 73b as a locative dative, whereas it seems easier to take it as most interpreters do as a dative with ἐμπεσεῖν, ‘fall upon’, ‘encounter’ the sun.

introduce into this rather technical description of the javelin throw in the pentathlon a metaphor from an entirely different contest would be confusing. Such a mixing of athletic events would be all the more surprising if, as Floyd believes, Pindar is here referring to the special circumstances of Sogenes' own victory.¹⁶ And third, the problem of ἐξέπεμψεν noted above is still unsolved. If Sogenes' javelin enabled him to escape the wrestling, this verb is used to describe his being sent out of a place he never entered, which is contrary to normal usage; and it must be given the unusual meaning 'exempt'.

I come, finally, to what I believe to be the correct interpretation. Hermann adduced (as others have done) *Odyssey* 8.186–203. Here, as Eustathius notes, *τέρματα* and *σήματα* are used more or less synonymously and mean the markers set at the point where the discus lands. Hermann suggests that *τέρμα* has that meaning in *Nemean* 7.¹⁷ This suggestion seems to me the most plausible that has been put forth. In this case (as in Floyd's interpretation too) there is no reference at all to overstepping limits. The contest would, of course, be based not on hitting a target but on the length of the throw, as is the case in *Pythian* 1.42–45 and *Isthmian* 2.35. The distance-throw seems to have been the most frequent, if not the only, form of the javelin contest.¹⁸

The next question is the meaning of *προβάς*. This verb can then have its normal meaning, namely to advance up to a certain point and continue onward to an indefinite distance. There are many examples of this usage, especially in a metaphorical sense (see *LSJ s.v.* 1.3). Aeschylus *PV* 247 is a good example. Prometheus has been describing his benefactions to the human race, and the chorus asks him if he went farther still:

μή πού τι προύβης τῶνδε καὶ περαιτέρω;

Similarly in Euripides, *Medea* 907 the chorus prays,

καὶ μὴ προβαίῃ μείζον ἢ τὸ νῦν κακόν.

One may also compare Sophocles, *Ant.* 853; Euripides, *Alc.* 785, *Hipp.* 342, *Or.* 511 and 749.

The phrase *τέρμα προβάς* will then refer to the effort to win and could be paraphrased loosely as "advancing towards the markers set

¹⁶ Floyd (*supra* n.9) 143 and *passim*.

¹⁷ Hermann (*supra* n.1) 33ff.

¹⁸ For length of throw rather than accuracy in hitting a mark in the ancient javelin contest, see H. A. Harris, *Greek Athletes and Athletics* (London 1964) 92, with n.45, p.206. For a useful collection of passages bearing on the question see Hermann (*supra* n.1) 32–33.

by the javelins of those who have gone before.” The verb *προβάς* will be primarily metaphorical, ‘advancing toward’, ‘reaching toward’. But this metaphorical meaning is perhaps fused with the literal meaning if there is some notion of the action of the throw itself: the athlete, to gain momentum for his throw, runs forward, ‘advances toward’, the markers before him where other javelins have already landed. These markers give both the participant and the audience an immediate knowledge of victory or defeat. For the excitement attaching to the placing of these markers one may cite here part of the relevant passage from *Odyssey* 8.192–98:

ὁ δ' ὑπέρπτατο σήματα πάντων
ρίμφα θέων ἀπὸ χειρός· ἔθηκε δὲ τέρματ' Ἀθήνη
ἀνδρὶ δέμας εἰκυῖα, ἔπος τ' ἔφατ' ἔκ τ' ὀνόμαζε·
“Καὶ κ' ἀλαός τοι, ξεῖνε, διακρίνειε τὸ σῆμα
ἀμφαφόων· ἐπεὶ οὐ τι μεμιγμένον ἐστὶν ὀμίλῳ,
ἀλλὰ πολὺ πρῶτον· σὺ δὲ θάρσει τόνδε γ' ἄεθλον·
οὐ τις Φαιήκων τόδε γ' ἵξεται οὐδ' ὑπερήσει.”

The meaning which I have suggested for the phrase *τέρμα προβάς* gains additional support from the last line of this passage and from line 202 spoken by Odysseus shortly after:

τοῦτον νῦν ἀφίκεσθε, νέοι . . .

In both of these passages a neutral verb of motion (*ἵξεται* 198; *ἀφίκεσθε* 202) with an accusative of place-to-which is used to denote the effort of reaching the marker set by an opponent’s missile. The meaning ‘try to reach this (discus or marker)’ is appropriate to our passage, and the constructions are identical. The fact that Homer refers to the discus-throw, not the javelin, is irrelevant for the principles are the same, and Pindar himself fuses the two contests in *Isthmian* 2.35:

μακρὰ δισκήσαις ἀκοντίσσαιμι τοσοῦθ', ὅσον . . .

If *τέρμα προβάς* is understood as here suggested, it becomes easier to give to *ἐξέπεμψεν* its normal meaning ‘send out’, ‘dismiss’. Only those who had enjoyed some measure of success in the preceding contests could participate in the wrestling (the complicated problem of the scoring of the pentathlon does not concern us here). Arriving at the wrestling match was, therefore, itself a sign that one had done well in previous contests. The phrase *οἱ δ' εἰς πάλην ἀφικόμενοι*, which

Xenophon uses of an Olympic pentathlon (*Hell.* 7.4.29), indicates that even arriving at the wrestling is a mark of achievement.¹⁹ Many enter the pentathlon, but most are excluded before reaching the wrestling. Pindar here gives assurance (metaphorically) that he, like Sogenes, is not one of those who is 'sent out' or eliminated in an early contest. His skill is such that he stays in to the very end.

The verb ἐξέπεμψεν, then, will have a proper and well attested meaning 'dismiss' or 'reject', and will not be, as it should not be, a synonym here for ἐξέλυσεν. The pejorative connotations of dismissal or rejection (see above) will also be appropriate, since the verb refers not to Sogenes, but to the competitors whom he has defeated. Pindar swears that he has not wielded his tongue like one of those *losing* javelins which eliminated the thrower from continuing on to the wrestling.²⁰ For Pindar's vivid sense of the defeated competitors one may compare *Pythian* 8.81–87.

On this view, Sogenes actually did wrestle, and the allusion to πόνος and the ensuing τερπνόν in line 74 is quite appropriate.²¹ The entire passage, then, may be translated as follows:

I swear, Sogenes, that in stepping forth toward the marker (set by other javelins), I did not wield my tongue like the bronze-cheeked javelin which sends the neck and strength (of a losing contestant) unwetted out of the wrestling before his limbs fall on the burning sun.

For this interpretation it would be helpful, though not absolutely necessary, if the javelin contest came fourth, immediately before the wrestling. It would thus be the crucial point at which all but the very few (perhaps in practice all but two) finalists were eliminated. Gardiner, in his study of Greek athletics, places the javelin throw fourth.²² This view, however, has been contested. Though fourth place for the javelin throw is probable for Pindar's time, there seems now to be no certainty about the order of events save that the wrest-

¹⁹ For this phrase and its significance see George E. Bean, "Victory in the Pentathlon," *AJA* 60 (1956) 361–68, esp. 362.

²⁰ For the successive reduction of competitors by elimination at the pentathlon see Bean (preceding note) 364. For a recent and lucid discussion of the problems of victory and scoring in the pentathlon see also Harris (*supra* n.18) 77–80.

²¹ See Hermann (*supra* n.1) 34–35.

²² E. N. Gardiner, *Greek Athletic Sports and Festivals* (London 1910) 363–65; also *Athletics of the Ancient World* (Oxford 1930) 177. See also Julius Jüthner, *RE* 19 (1937) 526 s.v. PENTATHLON; Floyd (*supra* n.9) 144–45.

ling was always last.²³ But even if the javelin throw came earlier, our interpretation is still quite possible. Pindar will have chosen the javelin throw for his simile because it is more suited than, say, the foot race or broad jump to the idea of ‘driving’ or ‘wielding’ the tongue; and the javelin is a finer and lighter missile than the discus (which he might also have used) and hence more appropriate to the context. There are also indications that a metaphor of throwing is something of a poetic convention for such statements in the epinikion (e.g. *Ol.* 13.93–95, *Pyth.* 1.42–45, *Isthm.* 2.35, *Bacchyl.* 10.51), a consideration which would have influenced Pindar’s choice of this particular athletic metaphor here.

Pindar, then, is making no allusion here to having spoken out of line as most commentators assert. He touches on that subject in lines 69 and 75–76; and there is no reason for him to repeat himself as he would be doing if the usual view of 70–73 were accepted. Sogenes might well have good reason for being uncomfortable at this point in the poem since Pindar has said little of his victory. Pindar does consider his client’s possible feelings in so far as he does address him by name in these lines to give a reassurance of some sort. But that reassurance is not necessarily a statement that he has not wandered from the subject of the victory he is celebrating. It would, in fact, be a patent falsehood for Pindar to say, “I swear, Sogenes, that I have not gone off the track and digressed from your victory,” when in actuality he has done exactly that, and in a most blatant manner. What he *does* assure Sogenes in these lines is that he is a winning poet and that his victorious skill is a fitting complement—and compliment—to the victory of Sogenes. The passage will then resemble, in its general purport, other assertions of skill such as *Olympian* 2.83ff and *Pythian* 1.42–45. Passages like *Nemean* 9.55 and *Olympian* 13.93–95 (where it is a question of hitting a target, not throwing for distance),²⁴ along with references to getting off the track in passages like *Pythian* 11.38–40 or *Bacchylides* 10.51–52, have misled interpreters into looking for an allusion to ‘going astray’ or ‘going beyond the limits’ here.

The view of the passage advocated here perhaps helps to explain the form of expression of line 73. Pindar does not use clearly personal

²³ Bean (*supra* n.19) 362–64. Bean’s evidence is mainly for a later period; and the suggestion of Floyd (*supra* n.9) 145–46 that in Pindar’s time the javelin contest still came fourth is most attractive.

²⁴ Hence the confusion of the scholiast on *Pyth.* 1.44 (82 Drachmann). See in general Christ (*supra* n.13) p.118 on *Pyth.* 1.44.

nouns but speaks of the 'neck', 'strength' and 'limbs' involved. Generally these nouns are taken to refer to Sogenes with the pronominal adjective 'your' understood. But if Pindar is referring to the usual circumstances of the contest, these nouns would rather stress the generality of the situation. Their non-specificity and impersonality would also be especially appropriate to the nameless contestants who did not reach the wrestling and hence have not earned the special distinction that makes a winner like Sogenes stand out.

If, as argued here, lines 70–73 refer to the process of elimination in the later stages of the pentathlon, Pindar would be making up for not describing Sogenes' victory in detail by recalling, in his usual condensed but intense manner, the familiar mechanism of the competition and the atmosphere of elation or dejection which must surround such successive eliminations. The passage would thus combine an assertion of Pindar's own poetic prowess with a brief and vivid recapitulation of the excitement of the closing events of the contest, the tense period when, after the initial contests, the finalists begin to be narrowed down for the last and decisive trial.

This last point provides a partial answer to a possible objection to our interpretation. If lines 70–73 contain a reference to the *losing* javelins and not to Sogenes' winning javelin, why does Pindar lavish so detailed a description on his client's opponents and on losers? The reason, as suggested above, is that this vivid description of the usual process of elimination is a partial compensation to Sogenes. As a reminder of the magnitude of his achievement, it fills the place of the enumeration of victories or agonistic description which the victor naturally expected. It may be noted that Pindar gives no such victory-list or description elsewhere in the ode. Also the emphasis on the effort of the wrestling in 73, albeit given from a negative point of view, would be more to the point if Sogenes actually did wrestle.

There is another reason for such an elaboration of detail which lies in the art-form itself. There is a natural tendency in archaic poetry, as in archaic art in general, to elaborate details simply for the sake of adornment, out of a love of the plenitude and richness of the concrete and the sensuous. The Homeric simile is perhaps the most conspicuous example of this tendency, but one may see it in many Pindaric passages as well. The description of the birth of Iamus in *Olympian* 6.39–57 will serve as a clear and famous instance.

As noted earlier, it would be linguistically possible to understand

the javelin of 71 as the *winning* javelin which ‘sends out’ of the contest the victor’s opponents before they reach the wrestling. I mentioned as militating against this view the problem of the transition to line 74. I may now note another and more important difficulty, namely the negative of line 71. If Pindar were referring to the winning javelin, he would swear that he in fact wielded his tongue like such a javelin. But the point of his oath is that his tongue is *not* like such a javelin. If that javelin were Sogenes’, Pindar, in denying such an association, would here be refusing that connection between victor and poet which he is usually fond of making.

These same objections, incidentally, hold for the scholiasts’ and Jüthner’s idea of a winning “record throw” by Sogenes (assuming that such a view were linguistically possible). If Sogenes had won by such an extraordinary cast “beyond the limits,” it would be strange and perhaps tactless for the poet, whose concern it is to *praise* such a throw, to say that he did *not* wield his tongue like such a javelin. The oath that he did not so wield his tongue would thus constitute an implicit criticism of such a throw. To avoid this difficulty, one would have to assume a somewhat humorous irony in the passage. But such irony is hardly likely in a personal oath of Pindar and especially one which begins so solemnly:

Εὐξένιδα πάτραθε Σώγενες, ἀπομύω . . .

II

This passage may help in explaining another difficult agonistic passage, *Pythian* 1.42b–45:

42b ἄνδρα δ’ ἐγὼ κείνον
 αἰνῆσαι μενοινῶν ἔλπομαι
44 μὴ χαλκοπάραιον ἄκονθ’ ὡσεὶτ’ ἀγῶ-
 νος βαλεῖν ἔξω παλάμα δονέων,
45 μακρὰ δὲ ῥίμαις ἀμεύσασθ’ ἀντίους.

In both passages Pindar uses the word *χαλκοπάραιον*, which occurs nowhere else in the odes and is rather unusual as an epithet of javelins. It is possible, then, that he had the one passage in mind when he wrote the other, though given the uncertainty of the date of *Nemean* 7 it is impossible to say which came first.

It is worth considering the possibility that the difficult phrase ἀγώνος βαλεῖν ἔξω in *Pythian* 1.44 may also refer to the process of being eliminated because of an inferior throw and not to a foul or a wild throw.²⁵ “To throw the javelin outside of the contest” would then mean simply to lose, *i.e.* to eliminate oneself from the remaining competition. *Pythian* 1.44 would then assert the condition of victory from a *negative* point of view (*i.e.* not being eliminated), while line 45 will make the *positive* assertion of actual victory. It matters little that this passage does not refer to a pentathlon, for presumably the same process of elimination would be involved even if the contest were only the javelin throw itself. In such a case, each contestant would see himself eliminated, placed “outside of the contest,” as he observed his javelin landing short of the *τέρμα* set by the leading javelins. For the situation one may refer once more to the passage from *Odyssey* 8 cited above. In *Nemean* 7 Pindar need not state explicitly the positive victory, as he does in *Pythian* 1.45, since the context of the pentathlon and Sogenes’ pentathlic victory imply that having reached this point and having passed through the javelin contest into the last event(s), the poet, like the athletic victor, will not fail.

III

It remains only to consider the meaning of *Nemean* 7.74:

εἰ πόνος ἦν, τὸ τερπνὸν πλέον πεδέρχεται.

The problem here is less serious. The verb *πεδέρχεσθαι* (*μετέρχεσθαι*) is usually transitive except in the common Homeric usages ‘come among’, ‘go among’, which are not appropriate here. One expects the meaning ‘seek after’, as in *Isthmian* 7.7. Most commentators (and also *LSJ*, who cite only *Nemean* 7.74) give the verb the otherwise unexampled meaning ‘follow after’, ‘come after’, and translate, “If there was toil, joy comes after the more.” Wilamowitz tried to avoid

²⁵ Farnell (*supra* n.6) II.112 takes the phrase to refer to a wild throw outside “a fixed course of prescribed breadth within which the javelin should be thrown.” His view is adopted by R. W. B. Burton, *Pindar’s Pythian Odes* (Oxford 1962) 100–101. But Burton’s suggestion that ἀγών could designate such a space is by no means certain. *Od.* 8.380 and *Pind. Ol.* 10.24 which he cites are hardly to the point. For such a meaning one would expect a phrase like the *τέρμασιν . . . ἀγώνος* of *Pyth.* 9.114. See also C. A. M. Fennell, *Pindar: The Olympian and Pythian Odes* (Cambridge 1893) p.150 on *Pyth.* 1.44. *Pyth.* 10.30 is more to the point, but still not decisive, since the word there has too general a sense for our passage.

this unattested meaning first by emending to the first person, *πεδέρχομαι*,²⁶ and later in his *Pindaros* by the repunctuation described above.²⁷ Floyd has revived the first of Wilamowitz' solutions, except that he emends, with greater palaeographical plausibility, to the second rather than the first person.²⁸

It is perhaps possible, however, to make sense of the passage without emendation. One may understand *πόνος* from the conditional clause as the subject of *πεδέρχεται* and then give the verb its regular transitive meaning: "If there was toil, it (the toil) seeks after joy the more." The different tenses, imperfect and present, raise no real problem. The difference of tense probably points to the function of the passage as a transition between past and present, a point with which I shall deal more fully in a forthcoming study of the Seventh *Nemean* as a whole.²⁹ The imperfect points back to the past toil and suffering of the athletic contest, of Neoptolemus and of Pindar himself. Over against this past stands the present search for joy: for the athlete the victory ode itself; for Neoptolemus the vindication of lines 44–50; and for Pindar the assertion by a concrete example of his poetic prowess and his innocence of blame.

The vividness of *πόνος* is enhanced by the quasi-personification that occurs when it becomes the subject of an active verb like *πεδέρχεται*. This vividness is appropriate in a context which has brought home the effort and excitement of the pentathlon: the risk and the disappointment of being eliminated before the wrestling and the effort of the wrestling itself for those who have survived the earlier events. Further, the generalizing and non-personal subject *πόνος*, rather than Sogenes himself (whom the readings of Wilamowitz [in part] and Floyd seek to restore), will follow naturally on the general and non-personal language used in lines 72–73, especially as interpreted here. The idea of 'toil' is also important in the ode and hence well deserves the emphasis which it would receive if *πόνος* were the subject of *πεδέρχεται*: cf. line 36: . . . τᾶ καὶ Δαναοὶ πόνησαν.

For the sequence of thought in lines 70–76, then, I offer the following paraphrase: "Those whom a losing throw dismisses from the pentathlon before the wrestling do indeed escape the toil of this contest;

²⁶ U. v. Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, "Pindars siebentes nemeisches Gedicht," *SB Berlin* (1908) 340.

²⁷ Wilamowitz, *Pindaros* (*supra* n.2) 163.

²⁸ Floyd (*supra* n.9) 150–51.

²⁹ "Pindar's Seventh *Nemean*," forthcoming in *TAPA* 98 (1967).

but you, O Sogenes, are a winner in athletics as I am in poetry, and hence we must face the toil of the final test. I did not wield my tongue like one of those losing javelins which eliminates its thrower (nor did you, Sogenes, throw such a javelin). If there was toil (as there was, for you reached the wrestling), that toil seeks (and finds) its reward, joy, the more. Let me (give that joy), for even if I am lifted aloft and carried far from my main theme, I am not harsh at repaying my debt of song to a victor.”³⁰

THE CENTER FOR HELLENIC STUDIES
November, 1967

³⁰ Some aspects of the interpretation offered here were presented in a seminar on *Nemean 7* at Cornell University on 2 November 1967. I am grateful to Professor Gordon M. Kirkwood for the opportunity to address his Pindar seminar and for his own comments.