

# Impressive and Obscure: Three Christian Sources in Eustathius’ *Proem to a Commentary on Pindar*

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**E**USTATHIUS OF THESSALONICA has received much attention over the past decades. Critics have studied both his scholarly output and his interventions in the religious and political life of his time and in so doing have gained a better understanding of how the different strands of his work intertwine.<sup>1</sup> An important part of this effort has been to identify the sources on which Eustathius drew in his works of classical

<sup>1</sup> For Eustathius’ works of classical scholarship see M. van der Valk, *Eustathii archiepiscopi Thessalonicensis Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem pertinentes* (Leiden 1971–1987); A. Kambylis, *Eustathios von Thessalonike: Prooimion zum Pindarkommentar* (Göttingen 1991), and *Eustathios über Pindars Epimikendichtung: Ein Kapitel der klassischen Philologie in Byzanz* (Göttingen 1991); M. Negri, *Eustazio di Tessalonica. Introduzione al commentario a Pindaro* (Brescia 2000); E. Cullhed, *Eustathios of Thessalonike: Commentary on Homer’s Odyssey. Volume I: On Rhapsodies α–β* (Uppsala 2016). For his role in the politics and religion of his time see P. Wirth, *Eustathii Thessalonicensis Opera minora* (Berlin 2000); K. Metzler, *Eustathii Thessalonicensis De emendanda vita monachica* (Berlin 2006); A. Stone, *Eustathios of Thessaloniki. Secular Orations 1167/8 to 1179* (Leiden 2013); G. Karla and K. Metzler, *Eustathios von Thessalonike, Kaiserreden* (Stuttgart 2016); E. Bourbouhakis, *Not Composed in a Chance Manner: The Epitaphios for Manuel I Komnenos by Eustathios of Thessalonike* (Uppsala 2017). For Eustathius’ philological work on Byzantine literature see P. Cesaretti and S. Ronchey, *Eustathii Thessalonicensis Exegesis in canonem iambicum pentecostalem* (Berlin 2014). Eustathius’ letters are published in F. Kolovou, *Die Briefe des Eustathios von Thessalonike* (Munich 2006). For an attempt to take into view Eustathius’ oeuvre as a whole see F. Pontani et al. (eds.), *Reading Eustathios of Thessalonike* (Berlin 2017).

scholarship.<sup>2</sup> Great strides have been made in the study of the ancient sources, but the Christian ones have fared less well, partly perhaps because the classically-trained scholars who studied these works were less well equipped to appreciate them and partly because Eustathius himself seemed less interested in citing Christian authors in his works of classical scholarship. As Marchinus van der Valk writes (*Commentarii* I cxvi):

Eustathius ... maluit in Commentario antiquos auctores citare et hac de causa mentionem Byzantinorum evitavit.

Eustathius ... preferred in his commentary [sc. on the *Iliad*] to cite ancient authors and therefore avoided mentioning Byzantine sources.

The assessment offered by van der Valk holds in general, though we now know that it was based on an incomplete set of data:<sup>3</sup> clearly, Eustathius does prefer to work with classical authors in his classical commentaries, yet he also includes Christian sources. The aim of this contribution is to identify some of these sources and investigate what function they serve.<sup>4</sup> I focus on one of Eustathius' major works of classical scholar-

<sup>2</sup> Van der Valk, *Commentarii*, esp. I xlvi–cxix, II xli–lxxviii, and the *apparatus fontium* of all volumes, with H. M. Keizer, *Indices in Eustathii archiepiscopi Thessalonicensis Commentarios ad Homeri Iliadem pertinentes* (Leiden 1995) 479–641; Kambylis, *Eustathios von Thessalonike, apparatus fontium* and pp.138\* and 75–80; Negri, *Eustazio*, textual notes and pp.211–212 and 226–259; Cullhed, *Commentary, apparatus fontium*. See also A. Stone, “The Library of Eustathios of Thessaloniki: Literary Sources for Eustathian Panegyric,” *ByzSlav* 60 (1999) 351–366; Kolovou, *Briefe, apparatus fontium* and pp.25\*–75\* and 156–173; Cesaretti and Ronchey, *Exegesis, apparatus fontium* and pp. 127\*–162\* and 436–486.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Chr. Theodoridis, “Verse byzantinischer Dichter im Ilias-Kommentar des Eustathios,” *ByzZeit* 81 (1988) 249–252.

<sup>4</sup> For the separate question of how Eustathius treats Christian sources in his one major commentary on a Christian text see Cesaretti and Ronchey, *Exegesis* 128\*–129\* (Bible) and 138\*–162\* (church fathers, liturgical texts, Byzantine poetry).

ship, his *Proem to a Commentary on Pindar*, and ask not how it treats Pindar, or ancient scholarship about him, but how and why it quotes three Christian sources. My argument is in two parts. First, I identify the sources in question, a task that has eluded scholars up to now. Then I ask how Eustathius employs them, taking into view three contexts for my interpretation: the immediate passage in which these Christian sources appear; the *Proem to a Commentary on Pindar* more broadly; and, finally, the wider context of Byzantine literary culture. The overall aim is to understand how Eustathius uses his scholarship to intervene in contemporary debates about literary style and, more specifically, why he praises obscurity.

### 1. *The sources*

Eustathius wrote at least five major works of classical scholarship: the *Proem to a Commentary on Pindar* is one of them.<sup>5</sup> It seems he wrote it early in life but may have revised it at a later stage.<sup>6</sup> For unknown reasons, the commentary that once formed the bulk of the work was lost early in the process of transmission.<sup>7</sup> The extant proem to the commentary was re-edited and studied in detail by Kambylis in 1991 and by Negri in 2000. Since then, it has attracted further interest for its “precious stylistic observations.”<sup>8</sup> It is this strand of recent research that forms the starting point for the present contribution.

<sup>5</sup> The others are commentaries on Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, on Aristophanes, and on the work of Dionysius Periegetes; see Cesaretti and Ronchey, *Exegesis* 18\*–26\*.

<sup>6</sup> Kambylis, *Eustathios über Pindars Epinikiendichtung* 6–7, and Negri, *Eustazio* 12 (composition before 1160); S. Schönauer, “Zum Eustathios-Codex Basiliensis A.III.20,” *JÖB* 50 (2000) 231–241, at 240 (later revision of the *Proem*).

<sup>7</sup> For the commentary see Kambylis, *Eustathios über Pindars Epinikiendichtung* 9–22.

<sup>8</sup> Cesaretti and Ronchey, *Exegesis* 24\*; see also A. Neumann-Hartmann, “Pindar and his Commentator Eustathius of Thessalonica,” in B. Currie et al. (eds.), *The Reception of Greek Lyric Poetry in the Ancient World: Transmission, Canonization and Paratext* (Leiden 2019) 533–552.

In chapters 11–15 of the *Proem* Eustathius discusses what makes Pindar’s style obscure. In this connection, he looks at Pindar’s habit of dropping negative particles (12.1):

ἔτι δὲ ἀσαφὲς αὐτῷ σὺν ἄλλοις καὶ τὸ ἐν στοιβῇ ἀποφάσεων  
μῖαν παραλείπειν ὡς νοουμένην κατὰ κοινοῦ καὶ αὐτὴν ἐκ τῶν  
ἐφεξῆς ἐκπεφωνημένων.

Moreover, Pindar is obscure among other things by leaving out one negation from a cluster of several, on the ground that it can be understood from those that follow.

For illustration, he adduces three passages from Pindar.<sup>9</sup> He then notes that “later authors” (οἱ ὕστερον) emulated him by dropping negative particles themselves. Again he cites three examples (12.2–3):

τοῦτο δὲ τὸ σχῆμα καὶ τοῖς ὕστερον ἐξήλωται, οἶον· “ξίφος  
οὐδὲ πῦρ οὐδ’ αἰκισμοί,” ἤγουν οὐ ξίφος, οὐ πῦρ, οὐκ αἰκία·  
τοιούτων τι καὶ τὸ “βαρουμένη γαστήρ οὐ μόνον πρὸς δρόμον,  
ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ πρὸς ὕπνον ἐπιτηδεῖα”· τὸ γὰρ ἐντελὲς οὐ μόνον οὐ  
πρὸς δρόμον ἐπιτηδεῖα. ἔχοι δ’ ἂν οὕτω συμβιβάσαι τις καὶ τὸ  
“ἐπ’ οὐδενὸς οὖν τῶν ἀπάντων οὐκ ἔστιν, ἐφ’ ὅτῳ οὐχὶ τῶν  
ἀπάντων”· ἀρνήσεως γὰρ ἔνδειαν τὸ πρῶτον ἔχειν δόξοι ἂν κόμ-  
μα νοουμένης ἀπὸ κοινοῦ ἐκ τῆς κειμένης ἐν τῷ δευτέρῳ.

This figure is also emulated by later authors, as in “sword nor fire nor abuse,” that is, “not sword nor fire nor abuse.” Somewhat similar is also “a heavy stomach is suitable not just for racing but not even for sleeping,” for here the complete sense is “suitable not just not for racing.” In this way one might also consider construing the expression “there is no person at all to whom this does not apply in every case.” For the first half of the phrase appears to lack a negation which is understood from the one in the second.

As Negri notes, these three quotations have, so far, eluded attribution (*fonte ignota*).<sup>10</sup> Let me consider each of them in turn.

<sup>9</sup> Pind. *Pyth.* 6.48, 10.29–30, 10.41–42.

<sup>10</sup> Negri, *Eustazio* 34 n.2, cf. 68; Kambylis, *Prooimion zum Pindarkommentar* 12 and *Eustathios über Pindars Epinikiendichtung* 49 n.145.

*A hymn in praise of Saint Tatiana*

Eustathius' first passage from later authors comes from a hymn (*sticheron prosomoion*) in praise of Saint Tatiana which forms part of the Orthodox liturgy for 12<sup>th</sup> January. Here is the passage again:

ξίφος οὐδὲ πῦρ οὐδ' αἰκισμοί  
(not) sword nor fire nor abuse

The corresponding passage in the hymn is:<sup>11</sup>

ξίφος οὐδὲ πῦρ οὐκ αἰκισμοί, θλίψεις οὐ λιμὸς οὐ παντοίας,  
εἶδος κολάσεως, σοῦ τὸν πρὸς τὸν Κύριον, ἤμβλωνεν ἔρωτα.  
(Not) sword nor fire, not abuse, (not) torments, not hunger, not  
every form of punishment diminished your (sc. Tatiana's) love of  
the Lord!

There is a small discrepancy between the hymn and the line quoted in the *Proem* (contrast οὐδ' αἰκισμοί and οὐκ αἰκισμοί), which does not affect the point under discussion: among the many formulations of the “sword and fire” theme in Byzantine literature this one stands out for being nearly identical to the line that Eustathius quotes.<sup>12</sup> It may come as a surprise that Eustathius detects echoes of Pindar in a relatively obscure piece of Byzantine liturgical poetry. However, he quotes several such texts in his *Exegesis in canonem iambicum pentecostalem*,<sup>13</sup> and there

<sup>11</sup> *Μηναῖα τοῦ ὄλου ἐνιαυτοῦ* (Rome 1888–1901) III 215.10–12.

<sup>12</sup> Relatively close are also *Μηναῖα* I 352.33–34 (οὐ ξίφος οὐ πῦρ οὐ διωγμὸς οὐδὲ μάστιγες, τῆς εὐσεβοῦς περὶ θεὸν γνώμης ἐχώρισαν ὑμᾶς) and [Romanos] *Cant.* 79.5.6–7, *On St Ignatius* (ξίφος τε καὶ πῦρ καὶ περιστάσεις δεινὰς / οὐδὲν ἠγοῦμαι). Note, however, that neither of these passages features the ellipsis of negative particle that Eustathius' argument requires. For an early example of such ellipsis in the corpus of Byzantine poetry see Romanos *Cant.* 7.17.3 (Πέτρον γὰρ ὑπουργῆσαι, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ Ἰωάννην, οὐκ Ἄνδρέαν νῦν βούλομαι).

<sup>13</sup> Cesaretti and Ronchey, *Exegesis* 477, with reference to *Exegesis in canonem* 63.10–11 (ἔκδηλον δὲ τὸ ῥηθὲν ἐξ ἑτέρας μελωδίας; cf. *Μηναῖα* I 102.7 and II 430.10–12) and several other examples. I owe this reference to Nikolas Churik.

seems no reason, in principle, why he could not also do so in the *Proem to a Commentary on Pindar*.<sup>14</sup>

*A homily of Basil of Caesarea*

The second phrase that Eustathius quotes to illustrate the practice of later authors reads:

βαρουμένη γαστήρ οὐ μόνον πρὸς δρόμον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ πρὸς ὕπνον ἐπιτηδεῖα.

A heavy stomach is suitable not just (not) for racing but not even for sleeping.

Kambylis suggests that the phrase echoes the day-to-day speech of Byzantine monks, on the ground that Eustathius quotes it also in his *De emendanda vita monachica* (p.243.6–8 Tafel = ch.120.15–16 Metzler).<sup>15</sup> However, Metzler has shown that the quotation in *De emendanda vita monachica* is in fact taken from Basil of Caesarea's second homily on fasting,<sup>16</sup> and this is where the present passage must also originate (*PG* 31.192A):

σὺ δὲ ἐξεπίτηδες σεαυτὸν καταπιέζεις τῷ κόρῳ· τοσοῦτον τῇ γαστριμαργίᾳ καὶ τὰ ἄλογα παρελαύνεις. βαρουμένη γαστήρ οὐχ ὅπως πρὸς δρόμον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ πρὸς ὕπνον ἐπιτηδεῖα· διότι, καταθλιβομένη τῷ πλήθει, οὐδὲ ἡρεμεῖν συγχωρεῖται, ἀλλ' ἀναγκάζεται πολλάς ποιεῖσθαι τὰς περιστροφὰς ἐφ' ἑκάτερα.

But you deliberately weigh yourself down with surfeit: that is how far you surpass even dumb beasts with your gluttony. "A heavy stomach is suitable not just (not) for racing but not even for sleeping." For being afflicted by plenitude it does not even allow you to be still but forces you to toss and turn from one side to the other.

<sup>14</sup> An interest in the language of Byzantine hymnography seems apt in the *Proem to a Commentary on Pindar*, given its close relationship with Eustathius' one major work on this type of literature, the *Exegesis in canonem iambicum pentecostalem*; for echoes between the two works see Cesaretti and Ronchey, *Exegesis* 179\*–181\*.

<sup>15</sup> Kambylis, *Prooimion zum Pindarkommentar* 12.

<sup>16</sup> Metzler, *De emendanda vita monachica* 132. Metzler points out that Basil recycled the passage in one of his sermons; see *PG* 32.1328B.

Basil has been castigating his readers for not persevering with what he considers to be the Christian equivalent of athletic training.<sup>17</sup> To illustrate the dangers of such slackness, he offers what reads like a piece of proverbial wisdom. Eustathius slightly modifies the original, substituting οὐ μόνον for οὐχ ὅπως. He may be quoting from memory, but there can be little doubt about his source.

*Gregory of Nazianzus' funeral oration for Basil of Caesarea*

The third passage quoted by Eustathius is from Gregory of Nazianzus:

ἐπ' οὐδενὸς οὖν τῶν ἀπάντων οὐκ ἔστιν, ἐφ' ὅτῳ οὐχὶ τῶν ἀπάντων.

There is no person at all to whom this does not apply without fail.

The Greek of the passage is difficult to the point of having been declared corrupt.<sup>18</sup> There is, however, every reason to consider it sound. It comes from Gregory of Nazianzus' funeral oration for the same Basil of Caesarea who provided the previous quotation. Gregory opens the speech by reflecting on the scale of Basil's achievement and the enormity of his own task. He then goes on to say that he must accept the duty of praising him (*Or.* 43.1.14–24 Bernardi, modified):<sup>19</sup>

οὐκ οἶδα δ' εἰς ὅ τι ἂν ἄλλο χρησαίμην τοῖς λόγοις, μὴ νῦν χρησάμενος, ἢ ὅ τι ποτ' ἂν μᾶλλον ἢ ἐμαυτῷ χαρισαίμην ἢ τοῖς ἀρετῆς ἐπαινέταις ἢ τοῖς λόγοις αὐτοῖς, ἢ τὸν ἄνδρα τοῦτον θαυμάσας. ἐμοί τε γὰρ ἔσται τοῦτο χρέος ἰκανῶς ἀφωσιωμένον, χρέος δ' εἶπερ ἄλλο τι τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς τά τε ἄλλα καὶ περὶ τὸν λόγον ὁ λόγος. ἐκείνοις θ' ἅμα μὲν ἠδονὴ γένοιτο καὶ ἅμα παρὰ-

<sup>17</sup> PG 31.185B–C: ἔλαιον μὲν γὰρ πιαίνει τὸν ἀθλητὴν· νηστεία δὲ τὸν ἀσκητὴν τῆς εὐσεβείας κρατύνει (“oil fattens the athlete but fasting strengthens the practitioner of piety”).

<sup>18</sup> Kambylis, *Prooimion zum Pindarkommentar* 82\* and 12.

<sup>19</sup> Bernardi brackets ἐπ' οὐδενὸς ... οὐχὶ τῶν ἀπάντων but this seems unnecessary. Byzantine readers certainly considered the sentence genuine.

κλησις εἰς ἀρετὴν ὁ λόγος. ὧν γὰρ τοὺς ἐπαίνους οἶδα, τοῦτων σαφῶς καὶ τὰς ἐπιδόσεις· ἐπ' οὐδενὸς οὖν τῶν ἀπάντων, οὐκ ἔστιν ἐφ' ὅτῳ οὐχὶ τῶν ἀπάντων.

I do not know for what I would be reserving my eloquence if I did not use it now, nor what greater benefit I could reap either for myself or for the adherents of virtue or indeed for eloquence itself than by expressing my admiration for this man. For me, this will be a properly sanctified obligation, for a speech, if anything, is an obligation to those who have eloquence among their gifts. And for those who admire virtue it will bring pleasure and at the same time act as a summons to virtue. For if I know someone's praise, I also have a clear understanding of their growth. There is no person at all to whom this does not apply in every case.

Gregory's speech in honor of Basil is a classic example of Christian oratory.<sup>20</sup> Kennedy (237) calls it "probably the greatest piece of Greek rhetoric since the death of Demosthenes," and Cameron (144) "a near-perfect panegyric." Byzantine authors shared the enthusiasm of modern readers: from the ninth century onward Gregory in general, and *Oration* 43 in particular, set the bar for rhetorical excellence.<sup>21</sup> The scholar known as Basilus Minimus (Βασίλειος ὁ ἐλάχιστος, 10<sup>th</sup> cent.), an early commentator on the works of Gregory, writes of it:<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> G. A. Kennedy, *Greek Rhetoric under Christian Emperors* (Princeton 1983) 228–237; Av. Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse* (Berkeley 1991) 143–144; A. Sterk, "On Basil, Moses, and the Model Bishop: The Cappadocian Legacy of Leadership," *Church History* 67 (1998) 227–253, at 244–249; S. Elm, "A Programmatic Life: Gregory of Nazianzus' *Orations* 42 and 43 and the Constantinopolitan Elites," *Arethusa* 33 (2000) 411–427, at 421–425; F. W. Norris, "Your Honor, My Reputation: St. Gregory of Nazianzus's Funeral Oration on St. Basil the Great," in T. Hägg et al. (eds.), *Greek Biography and Panegyric in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley 2000) 140–159.

<sup>21</sup> S. Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium* (Cambridge 2013) 40–41 and 56–63.

<sup>22</sup> The quotation is taken from R. Cantarella, "Basilio Minimo. II. Scolii



οὔτος ὁ λόγος πάσαις ταῖς τεχνικαῖς ἀπαραλείπτως ἐγκεκαλλώπισται μεθόδοις. ἄθρει<sup>23</sup> γὰρ ἐν προοιμίῳ εὐθέως, ὅσαις ἀρεταῖς πλήθει, τῇ ἐξ ἐπεμβολῆς περιβολῆ, τῇ ἐξ αἰτίας κατάσκευῆ, τῇ τε μακροκωλίᾳ, ὅπερ οἰκεῖόν φασι προοιμίῳ, καὶ τῷ διπλασιασμῷ τῶν τε κώλων καὶ τῶν ὀνομάτων.

This speech is throughout adorned with every rhetorical technique. For note already in the proem with how many points of excellence it abounds: amplification with parenthetical material, causal constructions, extended clauses (which they say is a characteristic of proems), and the doubling of clauses and words.

Basilus singles out *Oration* 43 as an exemplary speech and within it draws particular attention to the proem.<sup>24</sup> He later devotes a lengthy discussion to the phrase ἐπ' οὐδενὸς οὖν τῶν ἀπάντων..., which is part of the proem, praising its beauty and paving the way for its reuse in other works of scholarship.<sup>25</sup> Gaëlle Rioual has recently traced the process whereby Gregory's work entered Byzantine rhetorical theory and education.<sup>26</sup> In this connection, she discusses the habit of mining his speeches for model passages that could rival the pagan sources cited by Hermogenes and other classical authorities. One such passage was ἐπ' οὐδενὸς οὖν τῶν ἀπάντων...<sup>27</sup>

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inediti con introduzione e note," *ByzZeit* 26 (1926) 1–34, at 21. For Basil see G. Rioual, *Lire Grégoire de Nazianze à l'époque byzantine. Édition critique, traduction et analyse des Commentaires de Basile le Minime aux Discours 4 et 5 de Grégoire de Nazianze* (diss. Univ. Laval/Québec and Univ. Fribourg 2017) 9–33.

<sup>23</sup> Cantarella prints ἄθρει but an imperative is plainly required.

<sup>24</sup> The terms of his assessment are lifted from Hermogenes; see especially *Inv.* 1.5.15–31.

<sup>25</sup> Cantarella, *ByzZeit* 26 (1926) 22.

<sup>26</sup> Rioual, *Lire Grégoire de Nazianze* 35–61.

<sup>27</sup> It found its way even into edifying texts like the *Life of St. Nicholas Studites* (PG 105.873c), but it was surely the specialized grammatical literature that was at the back of Eustathius' mind. Two representative examples: John Sikeliotēs (fl. ca. 1000), who stuffed his commentary on Hermogenes' *On Types of Style* with passages from Gregory of Nazianzus (cf. T. M. Conley, "Demosthenes Dethroned: Gregory Nazianzus in Sikeliotēs' Scholia on

## 2. *The significance of Eustathius' sources*

Identifying the sources Eustathius quotes in ch. 12 of his *Proem* represents some progress in relation to previous scholarship, but the more rewarding question is what these sources reveal in terms of Eustathius' broader concerns. In what follows, I consider them in context—in the passage where we find them; in Eustathius' discussion of Pindar's style; and, finally, in their relationship to Byzantine debates about literary style and Eustathius' own stylistic practice.

### *Detailed observations on Pindar's obscurity*

Eustathius introduces his three Christian sources when discussing Pindar's deliberately obscure style. The ancient lyric poet, according to Eustathius, *wants* to be obscure (10.2 καὶ οὕτω μὲν ἐν ἄλλοις ὁ Πίνδαρος ἀσαφῶς ἐθέλει γράφειν, 11.1 ἢ ἀσάφεια, ἣν ἐπίτηδες πολλὴν ἐπισύρεται) and achieves this aim by employing a number of different techniques, which Eustathius treats in the following order. First, he devotes a section (10) of his *Proem* to word order and *pars pro toto* constructions (ten lines of Greek in Negri's edition); a second section (11) focuses on the ellipsis of negative particles, with the addition of a few thoughts on ellipsis of prepositions (seventeen lines); a final, and much briefer, section (12–15) offers assorted other observations (just over six full lines). From this breakdown it is already clear

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Hermogenes' Περὶ ἰδεῶν," *ICS* 27/28 [2002/2003] 145–152; P. Roilos, "Ancient Greek Rhetorical Theory and Byzantine Discursive Politics: John Sikeliotes on Hermogenes," in T. Shawcross et al. [eds.], *Reading in the Byzantine Empire and Beyond* [Cambridge 2018] 159–184, quotes ἐπ' οὐδενὸς οὐδ' ἑνὶ τῶν ἀπάντων... no fewer than four times to illustrate a range of stylistic features, including the so-called "round figure," στρογγύλον σχῆμα (VI 138.22–24 Walz, where ἐφ' ὅτῳ should be read, and 313.2–5); the apophatic statement (219.30–220.2); and the use of two negatives to make a positive statement (344.14–19). Later in the eleventh century Michael Psellos devotes an entire work to the interpretation of ἐπ' οὐδενὸς οὐδ' ἑνὶ τῶν ἀπάντων... and the preceding sentence in Gregory's speech (*Theol.* I 98 Gautier). I return to it at 364 below.

that Eustathius structures his discussion of obscure language in Pindar specifically around his treatment of negative particles.

Several considerations confirm this initial impression. Section 1, on unusual word order and *pars pro toto*, introduces the language that Eustathius will use to frame his discussion of later emulation in section 2 (ζηλώω, οἱ ὕστερον). Lycophron, we learn, emulated Pindaric *pars pro toto*, but Eustathius cites no specific examples: the commentary, we are told, will provide further details.<sup>28</sup> Section 3 rounds off the discussion with several quick-fire comments that add little more than an elaborate *et cetera*. Again Eustathius refers us to the commentary: there is more to say, but no urgency to say it right now, in the *Proem*. We might describe the process as one of zooming in (section 1) until the issue that most interests Eustathius comes into focus (section 2) —after which we quickly zoom back out again (section 3).

The same technique can be observed within the chapter on particle ellipsis itself. Eustathius devotes just under seven lines, in Negri's edition, to introducing the theme of particle ellipsis and illustrating it with examples from Pindar. He then adds just over seven lines with examples from later authors; and two and a half lines to discuss the ellipsis of prepositions. This perfunctory concluding section (12.4), abruptly introduced by Πινδάρικον δὲ καί, serves no apparent purpose other than returning us to Pindar. The opening section introduces Pindar's habit of dropping the first negative particle from a cluster of several (ἐν στοιβῇ ἀποφάσεων), and of inviting us to supply it on the basis of those that follow (ἐκ τῶν ἐφεξῆς ἐκπεφωνημένων). The three illustrations from Pindar (ἄδικον οὔτε ὑπέροπλον ὕβριν δρέπων,<sup>29</sup> *Pyth.* 6.48; ναυσὶ δ' οὔτε πεζὸς ἐὼν εὐροῖς / ἐς Ὑπερβορέους ὁδόν,<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> See Kambylis, *Eustathios über Pindars Epinikiendichtung* 47–48; Neumann-Hartmann, in *The Reception of Greek Lyric Poetry* 537. Eustathius instead cites six examples of Pindar inverting the expected order of words.

<sup>29</sup> Snell/Maehler: ἄδικον οὔθ' ὑπέροπλον ἤβαν δρέπων.

<sup>30</sup> Snell/Maehler: ... ἰών <κεν> εὐροῖς / ἐς Ὑπερβορέους θαυμαστάν ὁδόν.

*Pyth.* 10.29–30; νόσοι οὔτε γῆρας οὐλόμενον κέκραται / γενεᾶ,<sup>31</sup> *Pyth.* 10.41–42) represent the phenomenon equally well and Eustathius makes it clear that they are interchangeable: οἶον..., καὶ πάλιν..., καὶ ἐτέρωθι δέ. He then notes that later authors emulated this technique (τοῦτο δὲ τὸ σχῆμα καὶ τοῖς ὕστερον ἐζήλωται) and again offers three passages to illustrate the point. However, these passages do *not* work equally well, and Eustathius acknowledges as much in the way he frames them: οἶον...; τοιοῦτόν τι καὶ τὸ...; ἔχοι δ' ἂν οὕτω συμβιβᾶσαι τις καὶ τὸ... Note the progressively more detailed, and more guarded, nature of Eustathius' comments. He moves from more to less plausible examples of Pindaric ellipsis, and from one mode of analysis, where the point is simply to exemplify an established phenomenon (οἶον), to another, which explores new connections between phenomena that may or may not be related (ἔχοι δ' ἂν ... συμβιβᾶσαι τις).

The way Eustathius arranges his quotations from later authors may seem puzzling at first, but it makes sense if we accept that he builds deliberately and systematically toward the third quotation, from Gregory of Nazianzus. Unlike Pindar, but like Eustathius himself, Gregory is Christian and writes prose rather than poetry. The hymn to Tatiana, whose poetic style naturally lends itself to comparison with Pindar, bridges the first of these divides. Its use of negative particles in a Christian context matches that of Pindar, and Eustathius indicates as much by framing it in the same way he used earlier to introduce his first quotation from Pindar (οἶον).<sup>32</sup> Basil takes us

<sup>31</sup> Snell/Maehler: νόσοι δ' οὔτε ... κέκραται / ἱερᾶ γενεᾶ.

<sup>32</sup> As a *sticheron prosomoion* modeled on the popular Ὅτε ἐκ τοῦ ζύλου σε νεκρόν, the hymn is bound to a rhythm that discourages οὐ in verse-opening position; contrast οὐ ξίφος οὐ πῦρ... in *Μηναῖα* I 352.33, which follows a different rhythm. Eustathius was keenly aware of the strictures that rhythm placed on the use of language in Byzantine liturgical poetry. In his commentary on the iambic canon for Pentecost he notes on Ode 4 (95.7–8:

from poetry to prose. Eustathius is aware of this being a significant step, since elsewhere in his work he reflects on the different stylistic regimes that are appropriate to poetry and prose and repeatedly warns against the misplaced transfer of features from one to the other.<sup>33</sup> In fact, Basil in the passage cited above does *not* display the harsh up-front ellipsis that Eustathius notes in Pindar and the hymn: leaving out the second οὐ in the phrase οὐ μόνον οὐ is arguably a different matter, and indeed Eustathius introduces it differently (τοιούτων τι καὶ...<sup>34</sup>

From Basil we move on to the funeral oration that Gregory of Nazianzus composed in his honor. This personal connection notwithstanding, Eustathius' final example of particle ellipsis diverts from the topic under discussion since it does little to illustrate Pindaric practice. Eustathius himself is aware of the fact: "in this way," he writes, "one might also consider construing the expression..." (ἔχοι δ' ἂν οὕτω συμβιβάζσαι τις καὶ τὸ...). "One might also consider" is not much of a claim and Eustathius remains guarded also after delivering the quotation. As Negri notes (69), he fails to offer a paraphrase with the missing particle restored, in contrast with all five preceding examples. Instead he observes, rather vaguely, that "the first half of the phrase appears to lack a negation" (ἀρνήσεως γὰρ ἔνδειαν τὸ πρῶτον ἔχειν δόξοι ἂν κόμμα). Eustathius is right to be cautious: on any plausible reading, ἐπ' οὐδενὸς οὖν τῶν ἀπάντων does not

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Cesaretti and Ronchey, *Exegesis* 112): "In the opening two lines the poet tightly compacts (στρυφνοῖ) his expression since the meter does not allow him to expand in the interest of clarity (σαφήνεια)." For further discussion of poetic στρυφνότης see 361 below.

<sup>33</sup> See especially *Comm. Od.* II 128.15–16 Stallbaum (τὸ δὲ ῥάπτειν φόνον ποιητῆ μὲν χρήσιμον, κακόζηλον δὲ ἐν λόγῳ πεζῶ); also *Comm. Il.* I 327.24–26, III 162.19–21, 761.6–8, IV 431.24–432.2 van der Valk; *Comm. Od.* II 132.28–29, 230.42–45, 254.8–10 Stallbaum.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Negri, *Eustazio* 69 n.2.

fit the pattern of Pindaric ellipsis especially well.<sup>35</sup> The question arises of why he adduces this example at all.

*Eustathius on Pindar's style*

Eustathius' *Proem to a Commentary on Pindar* can be read as a sustained defense of the "solemn style" (τὸ σεμνόν, σεμνότης) and the "obscurity" (ἀσάφεια) that it entails.<sup>36</sup> Already Dionysius of Halicarnassus judged Pindar worthy of emulation (ζηλωτός) for the solemn character (σεμνότης) of his writing;<sup>37</sup> and already the Pindar scholia comment extensively on its obscurity.<sup>38</sup> How-

<sup>35</sup> The difficulties were first noted by F. G. Schneidewin, *Eustathii Prooemium Commentariorum Pindaricorum* (Göttingen 1837) 6. Schneidewin deletes οὐκ but Kambylis, *Prooimion zum Pindarkommentar* 82\*, is right to say that this solves nothing. Negri, *Eustazio* 68–70, argues that Eustathius thought of οὐδενός and οὐκ as cancelling each other out. If that is correct, it would result in a positive first half of the sentence and hence explain why Eustathius thinks a negation (ἄρνησις rather than ἀπόφασις, as Negri rightly points out) may be missing.

<sup>36</sup> See Negri, *Eustazio* 169–173 and 178–188; cf. Kambylis, *Eustathios über Pindars Epimikiendichtung* 40–57.

<sup>37</sup> Dion. Hal. *De imit.* 31.2.5 (VI 204.19–205.6 Usener/Radermacher): ζηλωτὸς δὲ καὶ Πίνδαρος ὀνομάτων καὶ νοημάτων εἴνεκα, καὶ μεγαλοπρεπείας καὶ τόνου καὶ περιουσίας κατασκευῆς καὶ δυνάμεως, καὶ πικρίας μετὰ ἡδονῆς· καὶ πυκνότητος καὶ σεμνότητος, καὶ γνωμολογίας καὶ ἐναργείας, καὶ σχηματισμῶν καὶ ἡθοποιίας καὶ ἀξίτησεως καὶ δεινώσεως ("Pindar too is worthy of emulation on account of his language and thought, and his grand manner and forcefulness and the impressiveness of his poetic apparatus and his power, and for his bitterness tempered with pleasure, and his compactness and solemnity, and his maxims and vividness, and his novel formations and character portrayals and amplifications and emotional impact").

<sup>38</sup> Schol. Pind. *Ol.* 2.152c, 3.1b, 10.67b, *Nem.* 4.112b, *Isthm.* 1.60, 4.120b. A standard hermeneutic gambit in the scholia is to "clarify" Pindar's obscure formulations (τὸ δὲ σαφὲς οὕτως ἔχει *vel sim.*): schol. *Ol.* 1.9c, 44a, 2.15d, 3.75a, 7.79d, 98g, 8.33e, 10.83a, *Nem.* 6.14b, *Isthm.* 3.26b, 4.33c, 52c, 5.2c; cf. also the pithy ὁ δὲ νοῦς· ... ("This means: ...") in schol. *Ol.* 1.1c and often elsewhere. The habit of glossing Pindar in this way was traced back to earlier readers and even to Pindar himself: schol. *Ol.* 2.15a (καὶ τοῦτο ἐξ αὐτοῦ Πινδάρου σαφηνίζεται, ὡς καὶ Τίμαιος φησι), 5.19a

ever, it is Eustathius in the *Proem* who works these themes into a coherent account of Pindaric style.<sup>39</sup> The opening section on music sets the terms for the discussion and acts as a limit case: Pythagoras may once have brought music “solemnly” from heaven down to earth (καταγαγεῖν ἐσεμνύνατο) but since then the art has all but died of obscurity and neglect (τὸ ... ἀτριβὲς καὶ ἐκ μακροῦ ἀδιασάφητον καὶ σεσιγημένον τῶν μεθόδων, ὅθεν ἡ τέχνη κατέδου ὡς οἶα καὶ τεθνηκυῖα, 1.5). It is well-nigh impossible to recover it now (1.4), but the connoisseurs of Pindar (οἱ σεμνολογούντες, 2.1) can still appreciate the “solemn robe” (πέπλον σεμνόν) in which he dresses his poetry, and the “solemn chamber” (σεμνή γυναικωνίτις) into which he invites his readers. As these images suggest, Pindaric poetry is successful where music failed (3.1):

ἀυχούσι δὲ ὅμως καὶ ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις πολὺ τὸ σεμνόν ὅσοι τοῦ κατὰ τὴν τοιαύτην ποιήσιν σκοποῦ πρὸς εὐστοχίαν κατάτοξάζονται, ὧν ὑπέρεται Πίνδαρος “πολλὰ” μὲν, ὡς γε αὐτὸς ἂν εἴποι, “βέλεα φανεύντα ὑπ’ ἀγκῶνος” φέρων, οὐδὲν δὲ τι τῶν τῶσων βελῶν εἰς μάτην ἐπαφίεις.

Nonetheless, those who take careful aim and hit the mark in this kind of poetry lay claim to a great deal of solemnity despite these problems. Their master is Pindar. He carries “many missiles of the voice under his elbow,” as he himself would say, and, numerous as they are, shoots none of them in vain.

Achieving “much solemnity,” πολὺ τὸ σεμνόν, is the ultimate aim of lyric poetry, and Pindar is the best at hitting the mark. However, with solemnity comes obscurity, which is what killed ancient music: measures must be taken to keep obscurity within manageable limits. Pindar shows how this is done: we learn

(σαφηνίζει Τιμαίος), 10.67b (τὸ δὲ πρότερον ἀσαφὲς <σαφὲς> καὶ κατάδηλον ἐποίησεν), *Nem.* 4.112b (διὰ τὸ τοῦτο φησι, διασαφήσει), 9.95a (σαφὲς ὁ Τιμαίος ποιήσει), *Isthm.* 4.120b (διασαφεῖ νῦν).

<sup>39</sup> Kambylis emphasizes the originality of Eustathius' discussion: *Eustathios über Pindars Epinikiendichtung* 96–104.

that he embraces the σαφήνεια of Atticism, “so as not to create lifeless texts” (ἵνα μὴ ἄψυχα γράφῃ, 8.2). We have here the same metaphorical nexus between obscurity and death that Eustathius had introduced at the start of the *Proem*, when discussing ancient music. Pindar avoids the level of obscurity that killed music, yet he remains only a fleeting visitor in the realm of σαφήνεια (βραχέα τοῖς τοιούτοις ἐντρέχων ταχὺ μεταπεδῶ, 8.2). His sympathies, Eustathius goes on to emphasize, lie with the strange dialectic forms that make his poetry idiosyncratic (διαλέκτοις ... φίλαις αὐτῷ ἰδιάζων τοὺς λόγους, 8.2). Pindar does occasionally “force himself” toward clarity, but only to a limited extent: ὅτε δὲ θαυμαστῶς γνωμολογεῖν δεήσει καὶ ἄλλως δὲ εἰπεῖν τι ἀστυεῖον, τότε δὴ βιάζεται πῶς εἰς τὰ πολλὰ ἡρέμα πρὸς σαφήνειαν ἑαυτὸν (10.2). With πῶς “somehow,” εἰς τὰ πολλὰ “on the whole,” and ἡρέμα “gently, a little,” Eustathius interposes no fewer than three qualifications between βιάζεται and ἑαυτὸν: he barely brings himself to concede that Pindar sometimes pursues clarity. That is as far as he will go. Eustathius never discusses the details of Pindaric σαφήνεια. Instead he takes us down the path of obscurity, ἀσάφεια.

Eustathius devotes five chapters of the *Proem* (11–15) to explaining how Pindar makes himself obscure. It is precisely in these chapters that he celebrates him as a stylistic model for later authors: the language of ζῆλος, “emulation,” occurs only here in the *Proem*. Pindaric ἀσάφεια, it would seem, offers the most immediate lesson to the style-conscious reader of the *Proem*. In laying out the details, Eustathius suggests how others might put the lesson into practice. Paradoxically, it is here that he makes his own most explicit commitment to σαφήνεια: before taking us into the maze of Pindar’s poetry he must “bring to greater clarity” (εἰς τε σαφήνειαν πλείονα, 9.5) some salient points. It is time to ask why the clarification is necessary and what the quotations from Christian texts contribute to Eustathius’ point.



*The lure of obscurity in Middle Byzantium*

Clarity of expression was a cardinal virtue in ancient rhetoric and continued to be prized in Middle Byzantium. And yet it was also a contested issue. George Kustas has traced the history of debates on σαφήνεια and its opposite, ἀσάφεια, from Aristotle's *Rhetoric* to the Byzantine commentators and grammarians whose outlook directly influenced Eustathius' own.<sup>40</sup> His discussion is especially valuable for explaining how obscurity came to be considered a stylistic virtue in Middle Byzantium. Already Arethas (9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century) defended himself against the charge of obscurity by citing the precedent of Gregory of Nazianzus and his convoluted style.<sup>41</sup> A generation or so later, John Geometres (later 10<sup>th</sup> century) declared that obscurity could be stylistically effective.<sup>42</sup> His younger contemporary John Sikeliotēs (fl. ca. 1000) showed in detail how obscure phrasing (εἰ δὲ ... καὶ ἀσαφῶς φρασθῆ) contributes to the "impressiveness" (δεινότης) of a piece of writing.<sup>43</sup> By the time Eustathius came to write about it, obscurity had become, in the words of Kustas, "a touchstone of rhetoric" in its own right.<sup>44</sup> The drawbacks of not making oneself understood were, nevertheless, still visible to all: Pindar, for one, had created a poetic labyrinth that was, in Eustathius' own words, "impenetrable to the majority of people" (τοῖς πολλοῖς ἀδιόδευτον, 9.3). To explain why his style was worth emulating despite this, Eustathius introduced another concept that not only featured prominently

<sup>40</sup> G. L. Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric* (Thessaloniki 1973) 63–100; see also I. Sluiter, "Obscurity," in A. Grafton et al. (eds.), *Canonical Texts and Scholarly Practices: A Global Comparative Approach* (Cambridge 2016) 34–51.

<sup>41</sup> *Scripta Minora* 17 (I 186–188 Westerink).

<sup>42</sup> Doxopatres in Walz II 226.8–10, quoting John Geometres; cf. Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric* 91.

<sup>43</sup> John Sikeliotēs in Walz VI 457.32–458.6.

<sup>44</sup> Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric* 93.

in contemporary debates about style but was also important to him personally: στρυφνότης (“compactness, intricacy”).

Pindar, Eustathius explains in the *Proem*, can please us by making his poetry comprehensible (οἷς καὶ συνετὰ λαλεῖ, 9.4) but at other times astonishes and perplexes us “by intricately compacting his language in manifold ways” (οἷς καὶ τὴν φράσιν κατὰ πολυτροπίαν στρυφνοῖ ἐτέρωθι, 9.4). The verb that I have translated “intricately compacting” is στρυφνῶ—a buzzword of Byzantine stylistic theory and crucial for understanding Eustathius’ own rhetorical practice, as Emmanuel Bourbouhakis has shown.<sup>45</sup> Here is the heading of Eustathius’ *Epitaphios* for the emperor Manuel Komnenos as given in the only extant manuscript (Bourbouhakis 2):

τοῦ αὐτοῦ τὸ γραφὲν εἰς τὸν αἰοίδιμον ἐν ἀγίοις βασιλευσι κῆριν Μανουὴλ τὸν Κομνηνόν. ὅπερ ὅτι οὐ τυχόντως μεθώδευται, ὁ πεπαιδευμένος διακρινεῖ. πολλῶν γὰρ ἄλλως γραψάντων, ἐστρυφνώθη πρὸς διαφορὰν ὁ παρὼν ἐπιτάφιος.

A speech written by the same author about the lord Manuel Komnenos, who is celebrated among the holy kings. The educated will discern that it was composed with care. For while many have written differently, the present oration stands out for being intricately compacted.

We do not know whether Eustathius himself added this heading and, if so, what exactly he meant by ἐστρυφνώθη πρὸς διαφορὰν.<sup>46</sup> However, it seems clear that he conceived the speech in praise of his favorite emperor as a demonstration of his own favorite style. Eustathius explains the nature of that style when praising the rhetorical prowess of one of his contemporaries, Michael Hagiotheodorites. Among other strengths that Hagiotheodorites possesses, Eustathius admiringly mentions (*Or.* 145.54–56 Wirth):

<sup>45</sup> Bourbouhakis, *Not Composed in a Chance Manner* 83\*–103\*. The following discussion of στρυφνότης is indebted to him.

<sup>46</sup> Discussion in Bourbouhakis, *Not Composed in a Chance Manner* 91–93.

τὸ τῆς ἐν προφορᾷ διαλέξεως σεμνὸν καὶ οὐ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ πυκνὸν καὶ συνεστραμμένον μὲν οἶον εἰς σφίγμα στρυφνόν, καλὸν δὲ ἄλλως καὶ ἠρτυμένον ἡδονῆς μέλιτι.

the solemnity of your utterance, and not only that but also its compactness and the fact that it is wrapped up as though into a tightly fitting belt (εἰς σφίγμα στρυφνόν), as well as being otherwise beautiful and sweetened with the honey of pleasure.

“Solemnity” (τὸ σεμνόν) provides the context in which Hagiotheodorites’ στρυφνός style becomes effective. Eustathius describes that style as “compact” (πυκνός) and “wrapped up” (συνεστραμμένος) as if into a tightly fitting “belt” (σφίγμα), an image which recalls the “belted” (σφιγκτός) dress of Pindaric poetry in *Proem* 2.1. Indeed, Eustathius sees not only Pindar but also Homer as a model for στρυφνότης. Consider the following passage from his *Iliad* commentary (I 155.23–26 van der Valk):

παραφράσας δὲ αὐτό, εἰ βούλεται, μεταγάγη (sc. τις) ἐκ τῆς ποιητικῆς στρυφνότητος εἰς τοιαύτην τινὰ σαφήνειαν· οἱ περίεστε μὲν πάντων τῇ βουλῇ περίεστε δὲ καὶ τῇ κατὰ πόλεμον δεξιότητι.

One could paraphrase the expression and transpose it from its poetic intricacy (στρυφνότης) into a statement that has clarity (σαφήνεια) along the following lines: “you who surpass everyone in counsel and also surpass them with your prowess in war.”

Eustathius contrasts what he calls “poetic στρυφνότης” with the clarity, σαφήνεια, that results from paraphrasing poetry into prose.<sup>47</sup> This gives an important role to poetry as a model of the στρυφνός style but also raises the question whether that style was appropriate in prose. Crucially, those who thought it was could point to the precedent of the church fathers, chief among them Gregory of Nazianzus. I have already mentioned that Arethas invokes him as a model for his own allegedly obscure writing. Here is what he has to say about Gregory’s style (*Scripta Minora* 17, I 187.1–12 Westerink):

<sup>47</sup> Further passages and discussion in van der Valk, *Commentarii* II lxi.

ἀλλὰ τοὺς θείους προβαλοῦνται πατέρας ὁμαλήν παρεχομένους τὴν οἶμον τοῦ λόγου καὶ πᾶσιν εὐπρόσιτον. εἰ μὲν τὴν πρὸς βελτίωσιν τῶν ἡθῶν ἀφορῶσαν, λέγουσι μὲν τι κἀγὼ δέχομαι, ἐπεὶ καὶ αὐτὸς οἶδα τοιοῦτοις χρησάμενος. καίτοι κἀν τούτοις ἐστὶν ἰδεῖν τὴν θεῖαν Γρηγόριον σάλπιγγα τῷ περινενομημένῳ καὶ δυσεφίκτῳ τῶν λόγων καλλωπιζόμενον, ὡς ἔν τε πολλοῖς πεποίηκεν ἄλλοις, οὐχ ἡκιστα δὲ κἀν τῷ εἰς τὰ ἐγκαίνια ἠθικῶ ἄφατον ὄσσην καὶ τοῖς νωθεστέροις ἀπεγνωσμένην τὴν ἀσάφειαν ἐγκατασπείρας, τῇ συντομίᾳ τε καὶ γοργότητι ταχίστας ὅτι μάλιστα τὰς ἀποδόσεις ποιούμενος καὶ τὸ σαφὲς τῶν ἐννοιῶν ἐπηλυγαζόμενος.

But they (sc. Arethas' detractors) will put forward the divine fathers who, they say, trace a smooth path in their writing and one that is accessible to all. If they mean the path that leads to moral improvement they have a point and I accept it, since I know all about it from my own experience with such material. But even there, one can see Gregory, the divine trumpet, embellish his argument with complicated thoughts and difficult writing as he often does elsewhere, not least in his moral speech for the feast of dedication, sowing into his discourse a very large and, to the dull, unacceptable amount of obscurity (ἀσάφεια), creating extremely rapid clauses and covering up the point of his thinking (τὸ σαφές) by virtue of his concision and drive.

The church fathers, it is alleged, “trace a smooth path in their writing and one that is accessible to all.” If true, that would set a damaging precedent for self-confessed obscurantists like Arethas, but the detractors turn out to be mistaken: Arethas shows that Gregory too chose to be obscure. He concludes (I 188.3–5):

οὐκ οὐκ ἀδόκιμον οὐδὲ τοῖς θείοις πατράσι τὸ τοῦ λόγου συνεστραμμένον τε καὶ στριφνὸν καὶ πρὸς σεμνότητα διαιρόμενον.

To the divine fathers too was not at all unacceptable a tightly wrapped (συνεστραμμένον) and intricate (στριφνόν) style of speech, and one that is elevated to a certain level of solemnity (πρὸς σεμνότητα διαιρόμενον).

Note the conjunction of familiar glosses: τὸ συνεστραμμένον, στριφνόν (a variant of στρυφνόν), πρὸς σεμνότητα διαιρόμενον: all

these are positive qualities that church fathers like Gregory achieve by affecting an obscure style (τὴν ἀσάφειαν ἐγκατασπείρας). We encounter a similar cluster of features in Michael Psellos' discussion of the very passage from Gregory's *Or.* 43 that Eustathius quotes in the *Proem to a Commentary on Pindar* (*Theol.* I 98.109–116 Gautier):<sup>48</sup>

ἔστι δὲ ἡ ἔννοια αὐτοτελής μὲν τῇ δυνάμει καὶ τῷ ῥητορικῷ ζήλω καὶ τὸ ὅλον συνεστραμμένη καὶ Ἀριστείδειος, ἐλλείπουσα δὲ ταῖς λέξεσι, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο συγκεχύσθαι δοκοῦσα, μᾶλλον δὲ συγκεκόφθαι καὶ ἡμίτομος φαίνεσθαι. τὰ δὲ τοιαῦτα νοερά μᾶλλον κατὰ φιλοσόφους εἰσὶ καὶ ἄγαν Πλατωνικὰ διὰ τὴν τῶν νοημάτων συναίρεσιν, ὡσπερ σωματικὰ καὶ διαστατὰ ἐν οἷς πολλὴ ἡ ἀνάπτυξις· διὸ καὶ Πλάτων ἐν μὲν τῷ Γοργία πλατὺς ἔστι καὶ διεξωδευμένος, ἐν δὲ τῷ Παρμενίδῃ στρυφνὸς ἄγαν καὶ συνεστραμμένος πρὸς ἑαυτόν.

The thought (sc. in ἐπ' οὐδενὸς οὖν τῶν ἀπάντων...) is perfect in its power and rhetorical drive and altogether wrapped up in the manner of Aristides, though it is phrased elliptically and therefore seemingly confused or rather mutilated or cut in half. This kind of thing is highly intellectual, in the vein of the philosophers, and very Platonic in the way it condenses the thoughts, just as more fully unfolded thought is more concrete and expansive. Therefore, Plato is broad and accessible in the *Gorgias* but in the *Parmenides* extremely tight (στρυφνὸς ἄγαν) and wrapped up in himself.

Psellos was fascinated with the style of Gregory of Nazianzus. As well as writing a major discourse about it for his friend Pothos,<sup>49</sup> he returned to it on several other occasions, including, and at length, in *Theol.* I 98 Gautier quoted above. In that discussion, Psellos sees ἐπ' οὐδενὸς οὖν τῶν ἀπάντων... as representative of Gregory's style, a style he characterizes as

<sup>48</sup> The passage is discussed and paraphrased in P. Gautier (ed.), *Michaelis Pselli Theologica* I (Leipzig 1989) 381.

<sup>49</sup> Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos* 63–87; for Psellos' special interest in *Or.* 43 see Papaioannou 339 s.v. "Gregory of Nazianzos."

“wrapped up” (συνεστραμμένη), “elliptic” (ἑλλείπουσα τοῖς λέξεσι), and “extremely tight” (στρυφνός ἄγαν). Although he associates these qualities with the more philosophical registers of Plato (the *Parmenides*, not the *Gorgias*) he also calls them “Aristidean” (Ἀριστείδειος), thus granting them broader applicability. Such a style, he submits, is perfect in its own way, despite giving the impression of being confused, overly compressed, and even mutilated (συγκεχύσθαι δοκοῦσα, μᾶλλον δὲ συγκεκόφθαι καὶ ἡμίτομος φαίνεσθαι). It will be apparent that this reading of our passage from Gregory echoes in condensed form Arethas’ more general assessment of that author’s style; and that it foreshadows what Eustathius will have to say about Pindar—and, as I hope to have demonstrated, Gregory. Indeed, the echoes in the *Proem* are striking. Did Eustathius read Psellos and take from him the idea of quoting ἐπ’ οὐδενός οὖν τῶν ἀπάντων...? We cannot ultimately know who or what inspired him. What we can say is that, in his *Proem to a Commentary on Pindar*, and especially in 11–15 on Pindaric ἀσάφεια, he joined a conversation about style in which ἐπ’ οὐδενός οὖν τῶν ἀπάντων... had taken on special significance.

### Conclusion

Pindar’s penchant for idiosyncrasy (τὸ ἴδιον), which Eustathius concedes is a defining feature of his art, put him in danger of going the way of ancient music, which perished of its own obscurity. Whether Pindar could survive as a viable model of style depended not on abstract claims about the beauty of his poetry, or on assurances that he never wrote “soulless things,” ἄψυχα (*Proem* 8.2), but on whether style-conscious Komnenian readers could be won over to his use of language. At issue, in other words, was not Pindar himself but Pindar as a model for the στρυφνός style that Eustathius himself promoted in his speeches and other writings.<sup>50</sup> Eustathius worked hard to make

<sup>50</sup> If Eustathius revised the *Proem* late in life (n.6 above) this may suggest a

the case: Pindar was admittedly obscure, but his obscurity had positive value and lent itself to successful emulation. At the center of this argument, wrapped in layers of scholarly apparatus, Eustathius planted a quotation from Gregory of Nazianzus. It is only one line, and Gregory is only one author, but this one line by this one author had iconic significance in twelfth-century Byzantium: if Gregory could be seen to emulate Pindar, even just as a passing thought, then Eustathius' case for the style that Pindar represented was effectively made.

To be persuasive, Gregory's appearance in the discussion had to be carefully managed. Eustathius quotes just one famous passage from one of his most famous speeches—to illustrate his use of particle ellipsis, an acknowledged feature of Pindar's style. Psellos had called ἐπ' οὐδενὸς οὖν τῶν ἀπάντων... "elliptic" not because a particle was missing but because we lack an explanation of what exactly is meant by ἀπάντων (*Theol.* 1.98.107–108). Compared with this rather attractive reading offered by Psellos, Eustathius' suggestion of particle ellipsis may seem far-fetched, but it fits the technical mold of the *Proem* and slots naturally into long-standing debates about this phrase: already Basilus Minimus and John Sikeliotēs had commented on its treatment of multiple negatives, though with different results.<sup>51</sup> Framed in this way, Eustathius could make his genealogy of ἀσάφεια seem reassuringly familiar. And in order to reinforce that impression, he introduced Gregory in the company of a Byzantine hymnographer and Basil of Caesarea. Less central to debates about prose style than their famously eloquent colleague, they helped lead the reader down a path of associations

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growing interest, on the part of the aging scholar, in an impressive and obscure style; cf. his *Exegesis in canonem iambicum pentecostalem*, another work written in old age and conceived, it would seem, as a counterpart to the commentary on Pindar.

<sup>51</sup> Basilus Minimus in Cantarella, *ByzZeit* 26 (1926) 22; John Sikeliotēs in Walz VI 344.14–19.

at the end of which awaited Gregory himself—but which originated with Pindar, and therefore justified the study of this ancient, obscure, and impressive poet.<sup>52</sup>

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