

## **Pindar In and Out of Context**

*Organized by Andrew Ford (Princeton U.), Pauline LeVen (Yale U.), and Anna Uhlig (Princeton U.)*

It has been almost fifty years since Elroy Bundy taught students of Pindar to understand the epinician as primarily encomiastic in function. Countless additions to and revisions of Bundy's position have since been ventured, but few have had more impact than the correction of Bundy's so-called 'formalist' error of ignoring the context of the odes' performance. The keen interest in performance context which has characterized the study of Pindar (and Bacchylides) in recent decades is part of a larger 'contextual' turn which can be found in nearly every corner of Classics. The purpose of this panel will be to try and take stock of what these recent studies have contributed to our understanding of Pindar and to identify fruitful new directions for the way ahead.

The basic task of placing the victory odes in context is of course difficult, in part because of the unique circumstances of epinician performance, contingent as it was on shifting geo-social conditions, as well as the status of particular victors. Recent work on the influence of local factors on the composition of the odes (Burnett 2005, Hornblower and Morgan 2007, Morrison 2007, Kowalzig 2008) has begun to add a welcome degree of sophistication to our sense of how particular characteristics may have shaped the composition and initial reception of the odes, as well as their (possible) re-performance (Loscalzo 2000, Currie 2004, Morrison 2007).

This panel proposes to take stock of the question of performance context with respect to Pindar's epinician poems. As the title suggests, we would like to ask questions both about our evolving sense of what the definition of Pindaric 'performance context' should be, and about the possible limitations of a context-driven approach to epinician. In what ways does geographic diversity manifest itself in a poet whose style is so famously consistent throughout a fifty-year career? To what extent is Pindar's poetry participant in, and influenced by, the specific circumstances and socio-political dynamics of the victor's community? In what way can we reconcile the seemingly paradoxical characterization of Pindar as a local and pan-hellenic poet? Do Pindar's epinicians have anything to say to us outside of the historically bounded frame of their initial reception(s)?

Abstracts must be received by the APA office by February 2, 2009. Please send two copies of Form D and five copies of an abstract (following the format prescribed in this *Newsletter* for individual abstracts) to: American Philological Association, University of Pennsylvania, 292 Logan Hall, 249 S. 36th Street, Philadelphia PA 19104-6304.

Anonymous abstracts will be reviewed by the panel organizers.