Hieron at Pi. O. 6.12-18

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In recent Pindaric scholarship, the brief mythical narrative about Amphiaraos and Adrastus at the beginning of Olympian 6 has become a subject of
controversy regarding the extent of its relevance for the *hic et nunc*. Amphiarraus, who excelled at Thebes both as a reliable seer and as a formidable warrior, is introduced, in unusually explicit terms, as a paradigm for the victor Hagesias, who stands out both as a seer in the Iamid cult of Zeus at Olympia and as an Olympic victor (12-14, 17-18).\(^1\) The role of Adrastus, on the other hand, is not explicitly specified and therefore debated. Traditionally, Adrastus is seen as a parallel for Hieron, Hagesias’ king in Syracuse, who supposedly benefits from the talents of his citizen just as the mythical king of Argus benefits from the talents of his seer and commander.\(^2\) More recently, the parallelism between Adrastus and Hieron has been dismissed in favour of an assumed metapoetic function of Adrastus, who, it is argued, declares Amphiarraus’ qualities in direct speech just as the *laudator* declares those of Hagesias.\(^3\) Since ambiguity may be intended, an exclusive choice between these two interpretations may not be desirable. However, this article aims to demonstrate that a close re-examination of the crucial sentence of lines 17-18 can offer support to the traditional interpretation.

William Race’s translation, printed above, represents the conventional view that the antecedent to τό (17) is ἔποϲ (16), and that πάρεϲτι (18), here understood to mean ‘to be true for’, transposes Adrastus’ words to Hagesias.\(^4\) However, this interpretation involves difficulties. First, it is unlikely that τό refers to ἔποϲ, as this would put too much weight on the analogy between Hagesias and Amphiarraus. As opposed to Amphiarraus, Hagesias is not dead. Hence, Adrastus’ precise words, spoken out of a sense of loss (ποθέω, 16), cannot be applied to Hagesias in this way.\(^5\) Instead, τό is more likely to summarise, somewhat loosely, the notion, introduced as αἶνοϲ in line 12, of a double competence as seer and warrior or athlete respectively.\(^6\) Second, elsewhere in Greek

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1 Σ Pi. O. 6.30c takes this analogy too literally when it states that Hagesias served also as a successful general in Hieron’s campaigns, and Adorjáni 2014, 36-37 in turn gives too much weight to the scholion. Underlying the analogy is the well-known correspondence between martial achievement in the myth and athletic achievement in the *hic et nunc*.

2 Σ Pi. O. 6.30c (implicitly); Dissen 1830, 62; Mezger 1880, 134; Fraccaroli 1894, 234, 241; Kirkwood 1982, 86; Hutchinson 2001, 418 (cautiously); van den Groenendaal 2010, 391; Foster 2013, 300-301.


4 On τό, cf. Σ Pi. O. 6.29 τό ἐπὶ Ἀμφιαράου ῥηθέν; Slater 1969, s.v. ὅ, ὅς B.1h. On πάρεϲτι, cf. Slater 1969, s.v. πάρεϲτι; Eckerman 2010, 304 n. 9; Adorjáni 2014, 15 (‘trifft auch ... zu’); Lehnus 1981, 53; Bonifazi 2001, 113 (‘s’addice’).

5 Similarly Friis Johansen 1973, 2.