

The Materials of Motherhood:
Images of Generativity in Pindar's *Olympian* 6

Passage 1: *Olympian* 6.1-4¹

Χρυσέας ὑποστάσαντες εὖ-
τειχεῖ προθύρῳ θαλάμου
κίονας ὡς ὅτε θαητὸν μέγαρον
πάξομεν · ἀρχομένου δ' ἔργου πρόσωπον
χρῆ θέμεν τηλαυγές.

Let us set up golden columns underneath
the well-walled porch of a storeroom, as
when we build a wondrous hall; for, as the
work begins, it is necessary to make the
façade far-shining.

Passage 2: *Olympian* 6.29-31

ἄ τοι Ποσειδάωνι μι-
χθεῖσα Κρονίῳ λέγεται
παῖδα ἰόπλοκον Εὐάδναν τεκέμεν.
κρύψε δὲ παρθενίαν ὠδίνα κόλοις·

And it is said that [Pitana], having lain with
Poseidon, son of Kronos, gave birth to a
daughter, violet-haired Evadne. But she hid
her maidenly birthing pangs in the folds.

Passage 3: *Olympian* 6.39-45; 53-56

ἀ δὲ φοινικόκροκον ζώναν καταθηκαμένα
κάλπιδά τ' ἀργυρέαν, λόχμας ὑπὸ κυανέας
τίκτε θεόφρονα κοῦρον. τᾶ μὲν ὁ χρυσοκόμας
πραῦμητίν τ' Ἐλείθυι-
αν παρέστασ' ἔν τε Μοίρας·

ἦλθεν δ' ὑπὸ σπλάγχων ὑπ' ὠ-
δίνεσσ' ἐραταῖς Ἴαμος
ἐς φάος αὐτίκα. τὸν μὲν κνιζομένα
λεῖπε χαμαί ·

...

ἀλλ' ἔν
κέκρυπτο γὰρ σχοίνῳ βατιᾶ τ' ἐν ἀπειράτῳ,
ἴων ξανθαῖσι καὶ παμπορφύροις ἀ-
κτῖσι βεβρεγμένος ἀβρὸν
σῶμα·

And Evadne, having set aside her purple-
yellow girdle and silver pitcher underneath a
dark-blue copse, began to give birth to a
god-inspired boy. The golden-haired god
Apollo stood gentle Eileithyia and the Fates
beside her. And Iamos came from her
delightful birthing pangs out of her womb
and immediately into the light. And she left
him on the ground, feeling anxious... for
Iamos lay hidden in a reedbed in an
impenetrable thicket, his delicate body
soaked with the yellow and purple brightness
of violets.

Passage 4: *Olympian* 6.86-87

... πλέκων / ποικίλον ὕμνον.

Weaving a dappled/ multicolored song.

¹ Text throughout from Snell-Maehler (1971); translations my own.

Passage 5: *Olympian* 6.12-18

Ἀγησία, τὴν δ' αἶνος ἐτοῖμος, ὃν ἐν δίκῃ
ἀπὸ γλώσσας Ἄδραστος μάντιν Οἰκλεί-
δαν ποτ' ἐς Ἀμφιάρηον
φθέγγατ', ἐπεὶ κατὰ γαῖ' αὐ-
τόν τε νιν καὶ φαιδίμας ἵππους ἔμαρψεν.

ἐπτα δ' ἔπειτα πυρᾶν νε-
κρῶν τελεσθέντων Ταλαϊονίδας
εἶπεν ἐν Θήβασι τοιοῦτόν τι ἔπος·
'Ποθέω στρατιάς ὀφθαλμὸν ἐμᾶς
ἀμφοτέρων μάντιν τ' ἀγαθὸν καὶ
δουρὶ μάρνασθαι.'
ἀνδρὶ κόμου δεσπότη πάρεστι Συρακοσίῳ.

Hagesias, for you praise is ready, which
Adrastus once rightly proclaimed aloud
about Amphiaraus, the seer, son of Oikles,
after the earth took hold of that man himself
and his shining horses.

Then, when the corpses of seven pyres had
been extinguished, the son of Talau spoke
some such word: "I long for the eye of my
army, both a good seer and good at fighting
with a spear." This is true for the Syracusan
man, master of the revel.

Passage 6: *Olympian* 6.22

ὦ Φίντις, ἀλλὰ ζεῦξον ἤ-
δη μοι σθένος ἡμίονων,
ἄ τάχος, ὄφρα κελεύθῳ τ' ἐν καθαρᾷ
βάσομεν ὄκχον, ἴκωμαί τε πρὸς ἀνδρῶν
καὶ γένος· κεῖναι γὰρ ἐξ ἄλ-
λᾶν ὁδὸν ἀγεμονεῦσαι
ταύταν ἐπίστανται...

O Phintis, come now and yoke for me as
quickly as possible the strength of the mules,
so that we can drive the chariot on the clear
path, and I can arrive at last before this clan
of men. For those mules, more than the
others, know how to lead the way on that
road...

Passage 7: *Olympian* 10.86-96

ἀλλ' ὅτε παῖς ἐξ ἀλόχου πατρί
ποθεινὸς ἴκοντι νεότατος τὸ πάλιν ἤδη,
μάλα δέ οἱ θερμαίνει φιλότατι νόον·
ἐπεὶ πλοῦτος ὁ λαχὼν ποιμένα
ἐπακτὸν ἀλλότριον
θνάσκοντι στυγερώτατος·

καὶ ὅταν καλὰ {μὲν} ἔρξαις ἀοιδᾶς ἄτερ,
Ἀγησίδαμ', εἰς Αἶδα σταθμόν
ἀνήρ ἴκηται, κενεὰ πνεύσαις ἔπορε μόχθῳ
βραχὺ τι τερπνόν. τὴν δ' ἀδυεπὴς τε λύρα
γλυκύς τ' αὐλὸς ἀναπάσσει χάριν·
τρέφοντι δ' εὐρὸν κλέος
κόραι Πιερίδες Διός.

But as a son, born from a wife, is much
desired by a father, who has already come to
the opposite of youth, greatly warms his
mind with love (since his wealth falling to
the master of another home is the most
hateful thing for a dying man), just so,
Hagesidamus, when a man who has
accomplished glorious deeds comes to the
hall of Hades without a song, having lived in
vain, he has achieved some brief delight by
his effort. But upon you the sweet-singing
lyre and the sweet aulos scatter grace, and
the Pierian daughters of Zeus nourish your
broad fame.

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