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"The Dioscuri in Pindar's *Nemean* 10,  
Theocritus' *Idyll* 22 and Ovid's *Fasti* 5.693-720:  
Cattle, Brides, and Strife"

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**1. Introduction**

Pindar's *Nemean 10* and Theocritus' *Idyll 22* are two very complex poems. Although scholars have analyzed these two compositions separately, the rich intertextual relationship between them has been on the whole neglected. In recent years two scholars who examined this issue were Richard Hunter (*Theocritus and the Archaeology of Greek Poetry*, 1996) and Alexander Sens (*Theocritus, Dioscuri (Idyll 22): Introduction, Text, and Commentary*, 1997). However, they explored merely a few aspects of the affinity of the two texts, and only in a brief and sporadic manner, with a focus on Theocritus' poem. Furthermore there has been no individual study that examines concurrently *Nemean 10*, *Idyll 22* and Ovid's *Fasti 5.693-720*, who converses with both Pindar and Theocritus.

The goal of this study will be to investigate the intricate relations among the above-mentioned texts and examine the development of the myth that they recount: the dispute of the Dioscuri and the Apharetiadae. *Nemean 10* falls into three parts: a) eulogy of Argos and catalogue of Argive heroes (1-20), b) Praise of Theaios and his family and catalogue of their athletic victories (21-54), c) the myth of the Dioscuri (55-90). Pindar's narration of the myth is clearly structured and can be summarized as follows. The poet first describes the state of the Dioscuri in the afterlife, namely their alternative existence between the Underworld (visualized in this case as the hollows of Therapnae) and Olympus, and then explains that this fate was Polydeuces' choice after the death of his brother Castor. Then the poet takes us back to the strife of the Dioscuri and the Apharetiadae. Following a dispute over cattle angry Idas wounds Castor mortally and Polydeuces pursues the Apharetiadae, who vainly hurl against him their father's tombstone. Polydeuces kills Lynceus and finally Zeus smites both Idas and Lynceus with a thunderbolt and burns them to ashes. Pindar concludes the episode of the fight with a gnome (72): "*For men to join*

*battle with those superior than they is a difficult struggle.*” Pindar’s only known source for the strife between the two pairs of twins is the fragmentary *Cypria*:

**Argument** (West p. 69):

(3) ἐν τούτῳ δὲ Κάστωρ μετὰ Πολυδεύκους τὰς Ἴδα καὶ Λυγκέως ὑφαιρούμενοι βούς ἐφωράθησαν. καὶ Κάστωρ μὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἴδα ἀναιρεῖται, Λυγκεὺς δὲ καὶ Ἴδας ὑπὸ Πολυδεύκους, καὶ Ζεὺς αὐτοῖς ἑτερήμερον νέμει τὴν ἀθανασίαν.

**fr. 9**

Κάστωρ μὲν θνητός, θανάτου δὲ οἱ αἴσα πέπρωται,  
αὐτὰρ ὃ γ' ἀθάνατος Πολυδεύκης, ὄζος Ἄρηος.

**fr. 16**

αἶψα δὲ Λυγκεὺς Τηϋῆγον προσέβαινε ποσὶν ταχέεσσι πεποιθώς.  
ἀκρότατον δ' ἀναβὰς διεδέρκετο νῆσον ἅπασαν Τανταλίδεω Πέλοπος,  
τάχα δ' εἶσιν κύνιδιμος ἦρωος δεινοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἔσω κοίλης δρυὸς ἄμφω,  
Κάστορά θ' ἵππόδαμον καὶ ἀεθλοφόρον Πολυδεύκεα·  
νύξε δ' ἄρ' ἄγχι στὰ<ς> μεγάλῃν δρῦν <ὄμβριμος Ἴδας

**fr. 17**

Κάστο[ρα δ]ἔ ὑπὸ Ἴδα τὸν [Ἀφα]ρέως κατη[κοντ]ίσθαι  
γέγραφεν ὁ [τὰ Κύπρια] ποιήσα[ς καὶ Φερεκῦ]δης ὁ Ἀ[θηναῖος

Pindar follows the version of the *Cypria* at some points while at others he diverges from it. Specifically he may be deriving from the *Cypria* the tradition according to which Castor was mortal and Polydeuces immortal, presumably as the sons of Tyndareus and Zeus respectively (fr. 9), whereas in Homer (*Od.* 11.298-99) they are said to be Tyndareus’ sons.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, according to the scholiast of Pindar, Hesiod (fr. 24 M.-W.) made them both the offspring of Zeus. Moreover Pindar agrees with the *Cypria* on the cause of the dispute being the theft by the Dioscuri of the cattle of the sons of Aphareus (Argument:

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<sup>1</sup> Heubeck and Hoekstra 1988, 95.

ύφαιρούμενοι έφωράθησαν). The poet is vague, however, about the exact circumstances of the theft, mentioning only that Idas became “somehow” angry over the cattle (*N.* 10.60 *Ίδας άμφι βουσίν πως χολωθείς*), thus probably implying that the Dioscuri had stolen them. Also, in accordance with the *Cypria* (fr. 16) Pindar says that Lynceus spotted from Mt. Taygetus the Dioscuri hiding in the hollow trunk of an oak (61-62) and we assume that he informed his brother Idas. The *Cypria* may be used to illuminate Pindar’s account of how Idas wounded Lynceus. The poet cryptically narrates that the Apharetiadae “arrived immediately on swift feet and contrived quickly a great deed” (63-64), namely the wounding of Castor by Idas mentioned a couple of lines above (60 *έτρωσεν χαλκείας λόγχας άκμᾶ*). The *Cypria* are more specific relating that Idas stood close to the oak tree and pierced it, boring through Castor as well (fr. 16 *νόξε δ’ άρ’ άγχι στας μεγάλην δρῶν*, fr. 17 *Κάστο[ρα δ]έ ύπό Ίδα τον [Άφα]ρέως κατη[κοντ]ίσθαι*) and Pindar might well be suggesting a similar scene in his poem.

On the other hand, while in the *Cypria* Polydeuces slays by himself both the Apharetiadae and then Zeus offers the Dioscuri an alternate existence between mortality and immortality (Argument: *Λυγκεῦς δὲ καὶ Ίδας ύπό Πολυδεύκουσ. καὶ Ζεύς αύτοῖς έτερήμερον νέμει την άθανασίαν*), in *Nemean* 10 Polydeuces kills Lynceus and Zeus strikes Idas with a thunderbolt and then offers Polydeuces the choice between immortality and half-mortality. Whether these divergences are Pindar’s innovations or he draws them from another source remains unknown.

In the final scene of the poem Polydeuces immediately returns to his dying brother and prays to Zeus that he may grant him death as well. Zeus gives him the option of immortality for himself or an alternate existence between Olympus and Underworld to be shared with his brother. He selects the second alternative and the ode ends abruptly and mysteriously with the picture of Polydeuces bringing Castor back to life, or rather to a half-life. Pindar echoes to some extent the description of the Dioscuri’s afterlife in the *Odyssey*:

*τοῦς άμφω ζωοῦς κατέχει φυσίζοος αία·  
οἱ καὶ νέρθεν γῆς τιμὴν πρὸς Ζηνὸς έχοντες  
άλλοτε μὲν ζώουσ’ έτερήμεροι, άλλοτε δ’ αύτε*

τεθνᾶσιν· τιμὴν δὲ λελόγγασιν ἴσα θεοῖσι.

(11.301-304)

Both *Nemean 10* and the *Odyssey* recount that the Dioscuri experience an alternating existence between life and death but while in Homer this alternation strangely takes place below the ground (301 *κατέχει φυσίζοος αἴα*, 302 *νέρθεν γῆς*),<sup>2</sup> in Pindar the Dioscuri migrate back and forth between the hollows of Therapnae below the ground and Olympus (55-56).<sup>3</sup> In the next sections we will first examine the manifold relationship between *Nemean 10* and *Idyll 22* and then Ovid's response to his two models.

## 2. *Nemean 10* and *Idyll 22*

### a. Structural and Thematic Correspondences

Theocritus' *Hymn to the Dioscuri* can be divided into four sections: a) the prologue, where he praises the Dioscuri as divinities who succor men, horses in battle, and ships in tempests (1-26), b) the Polydeuces narrative, which tells the story of Polydeuces' wrestling match with Amycus (27-134), c) Castor's narrative, which relates the dispute between the Dioscuri and the Apharetiadae (135-213), and finally d) the poet's *σφραγίς*, where he eulogizes again the Dioscuri and comments on the poets' mutually beneficial relationship with their subjects (214-223).

In the Castor narrative, which is the subject-matter of this study, the action begins *in medias res* at the moment when the Dioscuri have abducted Leucippus' daughters and are being pursued by the Apharetiadae to whom they were betrothed. When they reach the tomb of Aphareus they all dismount from their chariots and Lynceus addresses a long speech to the Dioscuri containing an embedded previous speech of his in which he had asked them in vain to return the Leucippides to him and his brother and had offered to help them find other wives. His present attempt to "reason" with them is also futile, so he

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<sup>2</sup> Heubeck and Hoekstra 1988, 96.

<sup>3</sup> The alternation of the Dioscuri between the Underworld and Olympus recalls *Olympian 2*, where we find the alternation of the souls between Hades and the world of the living as a trial for those spirits who want to reach the Isle of the Blessed (*O. 2.69-70 ὅσοι δ' ἐτόλμασαν ἐστρίς ἐκατέρωθι μείναντες ἀπὸ πάμπαν ἀδίκων ἔχειν/ ψυχάν, ἔτειλαν Διὸς ὁδὸν παρὰ Κρόνον τύρσιν*). Therefore the eternal rotation of the Dioscuri between the two planes of existence might have functioned as a mythological archetype for the Pythagorean and Orphic theory of *metempsychosis* found in *Olympian 2*.

grudgingly proposes a duel between himself and Castor. The Dioscuri do not respond and thus the two rivals engage in a duel. After some preliminary fighting Castor first disarms and then disembowels Lynceus. Idas prepares to avenge his sibling by hurling his father's tombstone on Castor, at which point Zeus intervenes by first disarming and then incinerating Idas. Theocritus closes the story with a gnome almost identical with that of Pindar with the exception that he applies it specifically to the Dioscuri (212-213): "*Thus no light thing it is to fight against the sons of Tyndareus, for they are powerful and they are born of a mighty father.*" This is an *oppositio in imitando* on the part of Theocritus, intended to emphasize the great differences between the two compositions.

The reader will immediately notice a series of divergences between the two poems. Whereas in Pindar the cause of the strife between the Dioscuri and the Apharetiadae is related to cattle (*N.* 10.60), in Theocritus the dispute arises over the abduction of the Leucippides by the Dioscuri. In fact Theocritus has utilized the motif of the cattle by making them part of the alleged bribe (along with mules and other possessions) that the Dioscuri offer to Leucippus in order to win him over (*Id.* 22.150-51).<sup>4</sup> While in *Nemean* 10 Castor is killed by Idas and then brought back to life by Polydeuces who then proceeds to slay Lynceus, *Idyll* 22 offers the only version of the myth where Castor survives the fight unscathed and actually kills Lynceus, replacing Polydeuces. In Pindar Polydeuces is the one who pursues the Apharetiadae in order to avenge his brother's death (66 *αὐτίκα γὰρ/ ἤλθε Λήδας παῖς διώκων*), but in Theocritus initially Idas and Lynceus chase the Dioscuri, who have carried off their brides, (138-39 *δοιῶ δ' ἄρα τόγε/ ἐσσυμένως ἐδίωκον ἀδελφεῶν υἱ' Ἀφαρηῆος*) and the situation is later reversed with Castor running after the fleeing Lynceus (198-201 *αἶψα δὲ φεύγειν ὠρμήθη... ἀλλὰ μεταῖζας*).<sup>5</sup>

Last but not least, the eschatological dimension disappears entirely in Theocritus, where there is no mention of the afterlife of the Dioscuri. But there is much more to the relationship of the two poems besides these conspicuous differences.

Both texts address a number of common themes which they however handle in a totally different manner. The trademark characteristics of Castor and Polydeuces are horse/chariot-racing and wrestling respectively, which are found as early as Homer:

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<sup>4</sup> Hunter 1996, 66.

<sup>5</sup> Sens 1997, 208.

*Κάστορά θ' ἰππόδαμον καὶ πῶξ ἀγαθὸν Πολυδεύκεα* (*Il.* 3.327).<sup>6</sup> It is thus expected of both *Nemean* 10 and *Idyll* 22 to engage in these two themes. In the middle section of his ode (21-54) Pindar praises his patron Theaios as a wrestler and lists his victories in the Heraia, the Pythian, the Nemean, the Isthmian and the Panathenaic games, praying in addition to Zeus for a future Olympic victory (21-36). Furthermore the poet eulogizes Theaios' maternal ancestors, Thrasyklos and Antias, as outstanding athletes in horse/chariot-racing, and catalogues their victories in the Nemean and the Isthmian games as well as in many other sites (22-48). Theaios' family has achieved all this success because they enjoy the favor of the Charites and the Dioscuri (38). Moreover they are said to be innately good athletes because of the family's special relationship to the Dioscuri (51 *οὐ θαῦμα σφίσιν ἐγγενὲς ἔμμεν ἀεθληταῖς ἀγαθοῖσιν*), which was forged when the Dioscuri were entertained as guests in Pamphaes' home, an ancestor of Theaios (49-50). Therefore it is as if the Dioscuri had bequeathed their athletic virtues to Theaios' family and one may argue that Theaios and his ancestors could be viewed as incarnations of Castor and Polydeuces.

In *Idyll* 22 the Polydeuces narrative describes the wrestling match between him and Amycus, which results in Polydeuces' triumph against his gigantic opponent due to his dexterity and his superior skill (25-134), while the Castor narrative contains an archetypal chariot-race, which is absent in Pindar, namely the initial pursuit of the Dioscuri by the Apharetiadae (139 *ἔσσυμένως ἐδίωκον*, 142 *ἐκ δίφρων ἅμα πάντες ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισιν ὄρουσαν*). Moreover Castor is called *αἰολόπωλος* (34) and *ταχύπωλος* (136) and the Dioscuri are characterized as *ἰππῆες* and *ἀεθλητῆρες* (24). Ovid might also allude to the superior chariot-racing ability of Castor when he says that the Dioscuri could have easily escaped the Apharetiadae, if by the ambiguous *cursu* he means a chariot race (*F.* 5.705 *effugere Oebalidae cursu potuere sequentes*). Therefore we see that *Nemean* 10 hymns the human embodiments of the Dioscuri's athletic excellence, Theaios and his family, whereas in *Idyll* 22 the Dioscuri themselves display their athletic capabilities.<sup>7</sup> There is also a structural correspondence: just as Pindar praises first the wrestling achievements and then the excellence of his maternal ancestors in horse-racing, in an analogous manner

<sup>6</sup> Ovid echoing Homer calls the Dioscuri: *Tyndaridae fratres, hic eques, ille pugil* (*F.* 5.700).

<sup>7</sup> In *Isthmian* 1.16-32 Castor and Iolaus, the mortal brother and brotherly figure of Polydeuces and Heracles respectively, are hymned as victors in chariot-racing, foot-racing, armored-racing, javelin- and discus-throwing.

Theocritus in the first part of the poem hymns Polydeuces the wrestler and in the second Castor the chariot-racer.

Another theme that plays a significant role in both poems is that of hospitality. In Pindar Pamphaes welcomes the Dioscuri in his home as guests and thus wins their favor for himself and all his descendants up to the time of Theaios (49-50 *Κάστωρος δ' ἐλθόντος ἐπὶ ξενίαν παρ Παμφάη καὶ κασιγνήτου Πολυδεύκεος*). We have here a scene of *θεοξενία*, namely the entertaining of a god most often in disguise by a mortal in his home. A very similar scene of *θεοξενία* is found in *Olympian* 3.34-41, where Theron and the Emmenidae offer hospitable feasts to the Dioscuri and in return the gods reward them with glory by making them victorious athletes in the Olympic Games, where they supervise the chariot-races along with Heracles. In an analogous manner the reward of the Dioscuri to Theaios' family for Pamphaes' hospitality is to grant them triumphs in athletic games, which the Dioscuri supervise along with Heracles and Hermes, presumably the Olympic games as in *Olympian* 3 (N. 10.52-53 *ἐπεὶ εὐρυχόρου ταμίαι Σπάρτας ἀγώνων/ μοῖραν Ἑρμᾶ καὶ σὸν Ἡρακλεῖ διέποντι θάλειαν*).

On the other side of the spectrum Amycus in *Idyll* 22 constitutes a model of inhospitality towards the Dioscuri, when he refuses them even to drink water from the spring that he is guarding. This uncivilized behavior leads to the wrestling match between Polydeuces and Amycus, where the primitive king is utterly defeated and thus suffers due punishment. The triumphant Greek hero compels him to take an oath that he will never treat any stranger inhospitably in the future (132-34 *ὄμοσσε δέ τοι μέγαν ὄρκον,/ ὄν πατέρ' ἐκ πόντοιο Ποσειδάωνα κικλήσκων,/ μήποτ' ἔτι ξείνοισιν ἐκὼν ἀνηρὸς ἔσσεσθαι*). Therefore just as the hospitable Pamphaes receives a reward, namely athletic excellence, that extends to all his descendants in the future, the inhospitable Amycus' "punishment" is to show hospitality to guests in all time to come. Furthermore from a structural point of view it may not be coincidental that the stories of Pamphaes and Amycus immediately precede and introduce the myth of the Dioscuri and the Apharetiadae in both poems.

Another theme pervading both compositions is marriage and adultery. In *Nemean* 10 Zeus commits adultery with Alcmena, and this union produces Heracles (16-17 *ἀθανάτων βασιλεὺς ἀλλὰν ἐσῆλθεν,/ σπέρμ' ἀδείμαντον φέρων Ἡρακλέος*). The king of the gods has also an illicit relationship with Leda, who brings forth Polydeuces (79-80 *Ζεὺς δ' ἀντίος*



ἤλυθέ οἱ,/ καὶ τόδ' ἐξάδασ' ἔπος· Ἔσσι μοι υἱός). The two human husbands — Amphitryon, by whom Alcmena bears Iphicles, and Tyndareus, who impregnates Leda with Castor (80-82 τόνδε δ' ἔπειτα πόσις/ σπέρμα θνατὸν ματρὶ τεῦ πελάσαις/ στάξεν ἦρωος) — do not oppose their wives' erotic relationship with Zeus (and are thus not harmed). Amphitryon is actually called “supreme in good fortune” to have entered the family of Zeus (14-15 ὁ δ' ὄλβω φέρτατος/ ἴκετ' ἐς κείνου γενεάν), which implies that Zeus did an honor to Amphitryon by sleeping with his wife (!).<sup>8</sup>

The situation is entirely different in Theocritus, where the Dioscuri abduct the Leucippides, who were betrothed to the Apharetiadae, and are consequently pursued by them. Lynceus in his long speech repeatedly expresses their obsessive desire of marrying the Leucippides and wants to find substitute wives for the Dioscuri. It has been suggested that the Dioscuri in *Idyll* 22 are gods, as the sons of Zeus, who are believed by Lynceus and believe themselves to be mortal.<sup>9</sup> Thus it is only natural that they will prevail and wed the Leucippides. The Apharetiadae, however, unlike Amphitryon and Tyndareus, stand against the desire of the Dioscuri and therefore meet their deaths by the hand of Zeus and Castor. Therefore, while in Pindar adultery between an immortal god and a mortal woman is not only permitted but even praised, in Theocritus it is the cause of a clash between mortals and immortals leading to the inevitable destruction of the former.

Finally a significant motif that can be detected in both compositions is that of human and animal sacrifice. The setting of the ode is the festival of *Heraia* or *Hecatombaia* at Argos, which comprised athletic games with bronze prizes as well as a sacrifice of oxen in honor of Hera (22-23 ἀγὼν τοι χάλκεος δᾶμον ὀτρύνει ποτὶ βουθυσίαν Ἴφρας ἀέθλων τε κρίσιν). This performative context may be connected in some way with the dispute of the Dioscuri and Apharetiadae over cattle, although there is no reference or

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<sup>8</sup> One of the themes that recurs in *Nemean* 10 is that of twins. The Dioscuri are implicitly compared and contrasted with the other pairs of twins of the poem. Apart from the evident connection with the Apharetiadae, the Dioscuri can be juxtaposed with: a) Iphicles and Heracles who unlike Polydeuces does not share his immortality with his mortal brother, b) Proetus and Acrisius (suggested by 41 ἵπποτρόφον ἄστν τὸ Προίτοιο), the Argive twin brothers who fought each other for the kingdom of Argos and eventually divided it in two, and c) Eteocles and Polyneices, suggested by the reference to Amphiaraus' death (8-9) during the war of the *Seven against Thebes*. The war was a consequence of Eteocles' not sharing with his brother Polyneices the rule of Thebes, thus forcing the latter to make an expedition from Argos against his homeland to regain the throne. Therefore the Dioscuri, who constitute a paradigm of brotherly love and devotion, are juxtaposed with other pairs of twins who are characterized either by a hostile relationship (Eteocles-Polyneices, Proetus-Acrisius) or a neutral one (Apharetiadae, Iphicles and Heracles).

<sup>9</sup> Hunter 1996, 72-73.

implication of animal sacrifice in the episode. We can observe, however, an affinity between the fate of the Dioscuri in *Nemean* 10 and that of Neoptolemus in *Nemean* 7, which can shed light on the poem's relationship with *Idyll* 22. Just as Castor and Polydeuces fulfill their destiny by spending one day in Olympus with Zeus and one in the Underworld and presiding over athletic games along with Heracles and Hermes (57 *πότμον ἀμπίπλαντες ὁμοῖον*), Neoptolemus accomplishes his destiny by being buried beside the temple of Apollo in Delphi and presiding over the processions in honor of heroes, i.e. the Pythian Games (44 *τό μόρσιμον ἀπέδωκεν*). Moreover just as Castor is mortally wounded by Idas in a dispute with the Apharetiadae over cattle, Neoptolemus is slain by a man due to a quarrel concerning the distribution of sacrificial meat. What is even more interesting is that the structure of the lines describing their deaths is identical:<sup>10</sup>

*Ἴδας χολωθείς πως ἀμφὶ βοῦς ἔτρωσεν τὸν γὰρ χαλκῆας λόγχας ἀκμᾶ (N.10.60)*  
*ἀνήρ ἀντιτυχόντα μάχας ὕπερ κρεῶν ἔλασεν νιν μαχαίρα (N.7.42)*

A significant difference between the two scenes is the sacrificial context present in *Nemean* 7: Neoptolemus comes to Delphi in order to offer Trojan spoils to Apollo (40-41 *ῶχετο δὲ πρὸς θεόν, κτέατ' ἄγων Τροΐαθεν ἀκροθινίων*) and most probably to make sacrifices but gets somehow involved in a fight over sacrificial meat and becomes the sacrificial victim himself. This kind of ironical inversion has been correctly observed in *Idyll* 22 by Alexander Sens. Lynceus asks the Dioscuri why they are bearing naked *μάχαιραι*, i.e. sacrificial knives (146 *γυμναὶ δ' ἐν χερσὶ μάχαιραι;*).<sup>11</sup> Moreover the slaying of Lynceus by Castor is described in sacrificial terms: Castor's sword is said to cut up the entrails of Lynceus (202-203 *ἔγκατα δ' εἴσω χαλκὸς ἄφαρ διέχευεν*). The verb *διαχέω* in Homer always refers to the cutting up of sacrificial meat<sup>12</sup> while the noun *ἔγκατα* can denote the entrails of animals sacrificed by men.<sup>13</sup> Lynceus who was dreaming of celebrating his wedding sacrifices is soon afterwards to be cruelly butchered by Castor like a sacrificial animal. Therefore the “animal/human sacrifice” of Lynceus in *Idyll* 22 might be viewed as a conflation of the animal sacrifice of the oxen in *Nemean* 10 and the “human sacrifice” of Neoptolemus in *Nemean* 7.

<sup>10</sup> I have changed the word-order to show more clearly the correspondence between the two lines.

<sup>11</sup> Sens 1997, 175.

<sup>12</sup> Sens 1997, 210.

<sup>13</sup> Sens 1997, 210.

## **b. Divergences and Verbal Echoes**

In order to comprehend and appreciate more fully the intertextual relationship between *Nemean 10* and *Idyll 22* we will proceed to explore the points where Theocritus diverges from Pindar and the verbal reminiscences of the ode found in the *Idyll*, which serve to highlight even more the distance that separates two texts treating the same myth.

### **i. Narrative and Thematic Focus**

With regard to the narrative focus, in Pindar the attention of the reader/audience is directed towards the elder brothers, primarily to Polydeuces and to a lesser extent to Idas, whereas Castor and Lynceus play an inferior and more passive role. Polydeuces holds the central role in the mythical episode, since he avenges his brother and then revives him and is the only character who engages in a dialogue with Zeus. In Theocritus on the other hand the lens zooms in on the younger brothers: Lynceus addresses to the Dioscuri a long speech in which a previous speech of his is embedded (flashback) and which is in fact a monologue<sup>14</sup> and then confronts Castor in a duel where the latter plays the central role. Idas' part is even smaller than in Pindar, since for instance he does not kill Castor and his action is limited to 5 lines (207-211), while Polydeuces is a "ghost" figure in the scene, for he does not participate at all in the action or the discussion, which can be explained by the fact that the first part of the hymn focuses entirely on him. He was the one who first conversed with Amycus and then confronted him in a wrestling match and accordingly Castor did not take part in the action. To sum up, Theocritus strikes a balance between the two brothers with regard to narrative focus by constructing one narrative around Polydeuces and one around Castor, whereas in Pindar the attention is clearly centered on Polydeuces.

As regards the thematic focus Pindar lays the emphasis on the brotherly bond of the Dioscuri and on Polydeuces' total devotion to his brother when he dies, illustrated by his instant decision to share his immortality with him. The afterlife state of the Dioscuri is also of pivotal interest to Pindar, who frames with it the episode with the Apharetiadae.

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<sup>14</sup> I follow the interpretation of Sens (1994, 1997) and Hunter (1996) who have convincingly argued that the entire speech (145-180) is spoken by Lynceus rather than the older view according to which the lines 171-180 were Castor's response to Lynceus.

Theocritus on the other hand focuses on the wrestling skill of Polydeuces in the match with Amycus and on the martial superiority of Castor in the duel with Lynceus. Therefore we see that Theocritus separates the two brothers and focuses on each of them individually, whereas in Pindar they are closely connected both in this life and the next. Moreover in *Idyll 22* the long rhetorical speech of Lynceus to the Dioscuri receives special attention and constitutes a significant divergence of Theocritus from his model.

## ii. The paternity of the Dioscuri

We have already seen that although Pindar conventionally calls the Dioscuri Tyndarids (38), he makes Polydeuces the immortal son of Zeus and Castor the mortal son of Tyndareus (80-82) thus diverging from Homer where the Dioscuri are both sons of Tyndareus and from Hesiod where they are born of Zeus. Theocritus on the contrary, following the Hesiodic model, makes clear from the first line of his poem that the Dioscuri are the offspring of Zeus and Leda (1 *Ἵμνέομεν Λήδας τε καὶ αἰγιόχου Διὸς υἱῶ*). Even though he characterizes Polydeuces as well as Castor as sons of Tyndareus (89 *Τυνδαρίδης* (Polydeuces), 136 *Τυνδαρίδη* (Castor)), in the opening of the Castor narrative he calls them again ‘sons of Zeus’ (137 *δύω ... Διὸς υἱῶ*), which is their true identity.<sup>15</sup> From the narrative it is evident that they are both Zeus’ sons, since they are powerful and invincible. The patronymic “Tyndarids” is merely a traditional epithet not to be taken literally, namely it does not mean that Tyndareus was their biological father.<sup>16</sup> Theocritus highlights the irony of the incongruity concerning the Dioscuri’s paternity in the gnome which concludes the Castor narrative: *Οὕτω Τυνδαρίδαις πολεμιζέμεν οὐκ ἐν ἐλαφρῶ· / αὐτοὶ τε κρατέουσι καὶ ἐκ κρατέοντος ἔφουσαν* (212-213). Despite their designation as Tyndarids in the first line, in the second they are said to have been born of a powerful father, who can be no other than Zeus.

Lynceus in his speech repeatedly refers to the kinship of the Dioscuri with himself and his brother by regarding Tyndareus as their father, a claim that indicates his ignorance and misapprehension concerning the true paternal ancestry of the Dioscuri, namely their

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<sup>15</sup> Sens 1997, 170.

<sup>16</sup> Sens 1997, 140

descent from Zeus.<sup>17</sup> Lynceus could thus be said to treat the Dioscuri as a Homeric hero would, since in the *Iliad* there is no mention of their paternity while in the *Odyssey* they are both sons of Tyndareus. Lynceus' misconception engenders many ironies in the speech he addresses to the Dioscuri. In line 145 he calls them *δαιμόνιοι*, meaning "irrational", but on a deeper level there is the sense of "divine".<sup>18</sup> Lines 163-164 where he attempts to praise the Dioscuri team with dramatic irony (*ὄμεϊς δ' ἐν πάντεσσι διάκριτοι ἥρώεσσι,/ καὶ πατέρες καὶ ἄνωθεν ἅπαν πατρώιον αἷμα*). The word *πατέρες* apart from its regular meanings "ancestors" and "parents" might be an ironic allusion to the tradition of Pindar and the *Cypria* where the Dioscuri have two fathers.<sup>19</sup> Lynceus goes as far as to call the Dioscuri his cousins (170 *ἄμφω δ' ἄμμιν ἀνεπιὼ ἐκ πατρός ἐστον*) following the tradition according to which Tyndareus and Aphareus were the sons of Perieres.<sup>20</sup> Finally he refers to Polydeuces as *ῥμαιμος ἐμός* (173),<sup>21</sup> that is his relative by blood.

Lynceus emphasizes the consanguinity between the Dioscuri and the Apharetiadae for the rhetorical purpose of persuading Castor and Polydeuces to give back the Leucippides and in order to avoid bloodshed between them. Nevertheless just as his argumentation is insubstantial, his attempts at persuasion are futile. Moreover it is quite plausible as we have seen that the Dioscuri are not only thought but also think themselves to be the mortal sons of Tyndareus. In Pindar Polydeuces clearly displays knowledge of his paternity when he addresses Zeus in his prayer as *πάτερ Κρονίων* (76) and there is no hint in the ode that any of the heroes is ignorant of the Dioscuri's identity. To recapitulate, whereas in *Nemean* 10 the paternity of the Dioscuri is clearly designated, in *Idyll* 22 there is an ironic interplay between their true paternal ancestry and that conceived by the characters in the episode.

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<sup>17</sup> Sens 1997, 174

<sup>18</sup> Sens 1997, 174

<sup>19</sup> Sens 1997, 186. Sens also notes: "The phrase *ἅπαν πατρώιον αἷμα* contains a further irony, underscored by *ἅπαν*. The Dioscuri's paternal ancestry, at least as far as Lynceus knows, is shared by both Leucippides and Apharetiadae (cf. 170n.), and Lynceus' ostensible flattery, besides being naive, is at once also self-aggrandizing and potentially harmful to his argument: as Gow points out, "if it makes the Dioscuri *διάκριτοι* among heroes it might be held also to make the Leucippides preferable to other young women."

<sup>20</sup> Sens 1997, 189-190

<sup>21</sup> Sens 1997, 193

### iii. The cause of the dispute between the Dioscuri and the Apharetiadae

As we have seen, the quarrel between the Dioscuri and the Apharetiadae in *Nemean 10* arises over cattle and probably Pindar follows here the *Cypria* where they Dioscuri are detected by Lynceus stealing the cattle of the Apharetiadae (Argument: ὕφαιρούμενοι ἐφωράθησαν). In accordance with the *Cypria* Pindar also presents Lynceus spotting from Mt. Taygetus the Dioscuri hiding inside the hollow trunk of an oak, which suggests that the Dioscuri had either set an ambush on the Apharetiadae or were preparing to carry off their cattle. The poet however blurs the details concerning the origin of the fight, saying only that Idas was for some reason wrathful about the cattle (60 Ἴδας ἀμφὶ βουσὶν πῶς χολῶθεις) because his goal in this ode is to praise the Dioscuri which he would not have achieved by explicitly presenting them as cattle thieves.<sup>22</sup>

The vagueness in which the dispute is enveloped in *Nemean 10* recalls again the situation in *Nemean 7*, where Neoptolemus is said to have been slain at Delphi by a man in an altercation over sacrificial meat (42). Pindar presents here a different version of the episode than the one found in *Paeon 6*, where Apollo kills Neoptolemus at Delphi in a quarrel with his attendants over honors or privileges (τιμαί) (111-120). Furthermore in *Nemean 10* Neoptolemus brings the finest spoils from Troy in order to honor the god (40-41), and after he dies he is buried in the god's precinct so as to preside over processions in honor of heroes (43-47), which denotes that he was in turn honored by Apollo. On the other hand in *Paeon 6* Apollo kills Neoptolemus himself in his own sanctuary in order to take revenge on him because he had slaughtered Priam in Troy. Thus from being the victim of Apollo's vengeance in *Paeon 6* Neoptolemus becomes an unjustly slain worshipper of the god who is posthumously honored by Apollo by making him his "neighbor" for eternity. Whatever the relationship between the two poems one can clearly see Pindar's masterly technique of modifying a myth in order to serve his poetic purpose in each poem. It is therefore not implausible to conjecture that Pindar also modified the myth of the dispute between the Dioscuri and the Apharetiadae, which he had derived either from the *Cypria* or from another source and which perhaps depicted the Dioscuri in

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<sup>22</sup> Pseudo-Apollodorus (3.11.2) offers a parallel version of the dispute, according to which the Dioscuri and the Apharetiadae had conducted a cattle-raid together but Idas made an unjust division of the plunder. Thus the Dioscuri stole back their cattle and many more and also set an ambush to the Apharetiadae. Thus in Ps.-Apollodorus the blame for the quarrel is unambiguously laid on the Apharetiadae.

an unfavorable light, and adapted it to the context of *Nemean* 10, where his objective was to eulogize the Dioscuri as divinities who are concerned for just men and are faithful to mortals (53-54 *μάλα μὲν ἀνδρῶν δικαίων περικαδόμενοι. καὶ μὲν θεῶν πιστὸν γένος*). In other words, presenting them as cattle-thieves would interfere with his aim in the ode.

In Theocritus Lynceus claims that the cattle are part of the bribe offered by the Dioscuri to Leucippus along with mules and other possessions in order to win him over and obtain his daughters as brides, although they were betrothed to the Apharetiadae, thus depicting them as cunning and treacherous (150-51 *βουσι καὶ ἡμίονοισι καὶ ἄλλοισι κτεάτεσσιν/ ἄνδρα παρετρέψασθε, γάμον δ' ἐκλέπτετε δώροις*). The Dioscuri are clearly presented here as the initiators of the strife, and Lynceus further describes them as aggressive and bloodthirsty (145-146 *δαιμόνιοι, τί μάχηζμίρετε; πῶς δ' ἐπὶ νύμφαις / ἄλλοτρίαις χαλεποί, γυμναὶ δ' ἐν χερσὶ μάχαιραι;*) as well as unyielding and impervious to his beseeching (169 *σφῶν γὰρ ἀκηλήτω καὶ ἀπηνέες*). Therefore the picture of the Dioscuri drawn in *Idyll* 22 is an entirely negative one, but we must keep in mind that the person talking is their rival Lynceus. In other words we do not know the true background of the story, only Lynceus' subjective account. Sens notes the incongruity of his speech with the narrative frame,<sup>23</sup> and Hunter acutely remarks that “since the Dioscuri probably do not respond, the reader cannot know how accurate Lynceus' story is.”<sup>24</sup> To sum up, while in *Nemean* 10 Pindar modifies the circumstances that lead to the altercation between the two pairs of twins in order to depict the Dioscuri more favorably, in *Idyll* 22 the Dioscuri are represented negatively, albeit by an “untrustworthy” source.

#### **iv. The combat between the Dioscuri and the Apharetiadae**

In Pindar the fight between the Dioscuri and the Apharetiadae unfolds as follows. The elder mortal brother Idas attacks and mortally wounds the younger mortal brother Castor

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<sup>23</sup>Sens 1997, 176: “Lynceus' account of the events is not otherwise attested and is not readily reconcilable with the narrator's earlier statement (137) that the Dioscuri had snatched up and carried off the Leucippides, since there would seem on the face of it little reason for an actual abduction if the Dioscuri had already made arrangements, however deceptive, with Leucippus. The story may be T.'s invention, possibly as a variation of the version, reported critically by Σ Lyc. 547, according to which the Dioscuri, having been taunted by Lynceus and Idas for not giving Leucippus a dowry, abducted the cattle of the Apharetiadae in order to present it to him. In any event, accusations of bribery and corruption are standard fare in legal oratory, and we need not assume that Lynceus' version of events represents the unvarnished truth.”

<sup>24</sup> Hunter 1996, 68-69.

(60), a confrontation where the mightier Idas has the upper hand. Then as Polydeuces pursues the Apharetiadae to avenge his brother they tear up the tombstone from their father's grave and hurl it against him, but it does not crush him or drive him back (66-69). This shows that when the Apharetiadae join forces they are not a match for divine Polydeuces. Thereupon the elder immortal brother Polydeuces attacks and wounds the younger mortal brother Lynceus, which is also an unequal fight (70). Finally Zeus incinerates with his thunderbolt both Idas and Lynceus, which constitutes one more uneven confrontation. Thus the Dioscuri prevail even though with casualties. The gnome that follows (72) conveys the moral that mortals should not come into conflict with those superior to them, namely the gods. The Apharetiadae dared to clash with Zeus and his son Polydeuces and were duly punished.

The poet might be implying that Idas' assault against Castor instead of Polydeuces is a cunning one because he is the mortal of the two brothers as well as possibly weaker than Idas, since he is younger. Another indication of Idas' craftiness may be supplied by the *Cypria*, the version of the myth Pindar probably follows and according to which Idas stood close to the oak tree where the Dioscuri were hiding and made a sneak attack on them by piercing the tree with his spear and thus injuring Castor (Fr. 16 *νόξε δ' ἄρ' ἄγχι στὰς μεγάλην δρῶν*). Moreover the Apharetiadae treacherously hurl the gravestone against Polydeuces (two against one), but this time they are unsuccessful, since Polydeuces is divine. Just as Idas attacked Castor because he was an inferior opponent, Polydeuces attacks the weaker brother Lynceus, thereby avenging himself on Idas in the same way. In fact the attack of Polydeuces against Lynceus with a javelin mirrors that of Idas against Castor (60 *ἔτρωσεν χαλκέας λόγχας ἀκμῆ, 69-70 ἐφορμαθεῖς δ' ἄρ' ἄκοντι θοῶ, / ἦλασε Λυγκέος ἐν πλευραῖσι χαλκόν*). Also just as both the Apharetiadae hurled the gravestone against Polydeuces, almighty Zeus incinerated both of them at the same time, thus taking revenge for their underhand attack against Polydeuces and punishing them for desecrating their father's tomb. This negative representation of the Apharetiadae in the combat might be perceived more fully, if we draw a parallel between the confrontation of Polydeuces and Zeus with the Apharetiadae on the one hand and the clash of Heracles and the gods with the Giants on the other. Just as the Giants commit *hybris* by attempting to storm the sky, the Apharetiadae display insolence by attacking Zeus' son and half-brother. We might



compare Idas' wrath over the cattle (60 ἀμφὶ βουσὶν πῶς χολωθεῖς) with the gnome in *Pythian* 8, where Pindar warns that if someone nurtures relentless rancor in his heart, the goddess *Hesychia* (=Peace) will confront him harshly and punish him for his *hybris*. (8-12 τὸ δ' ὀπόταν τις ἀμείλιχον/ καρδίᾳ κότον ἐνελάσῃ,/ τραχεῖα δυσμενέων / ὑπαντιάξαισα κράτει τιθεῖς/ ὕβριν ἐν ἄντλῳ). The poet applies this maxim to the case of Porphyrion, the leader of the Giants, who provoked *Hesychia* by his improper actions and thus suffered punishment (12-13 τὰν οὐδὲ Πορφυρίων μάθεν παρ' αἴσαν ἐξερεθίζων). Thus, both Porphyrion and Idas are led by their excessive anger to outrageous behavior towards the divine and are duly punished by *Hesychia* and Zeus respectively.

Pindar stresses the close connection between the insolent behavior of the Apharetiadae and Zeus' punishment in lines 64-65: μέγα ἔργον ἐμήσαντ' ὠκέως/ καὶ πάθον δεινὸν παλάμαις Αφαρητίδαι Διός (“they swiftly contrive a great deed and suffer terribly at the hands of Zeus.”) The verb *μήδομαι* has here the negative sense that we find in Homer and means “plot, plan and do cunningly” (cf. *Il.* 7.478 σφιν κακὰ μήδετο μητίετα Ζεύς) and the noun *παλάμαις* suggests that the Apharetiadae will experience the physical manifestation of Zeus' retribution (cf. *Il.* 3.128 ἔπασχον ὑπ' Ἄρηος παλαμάων). Moreover just as Porphyrion is chastised by Zeus' thunderbolt and Apollo's arrows (*P.* 8.17-18 βασιλεὺς Γιγάντων· δμᾶθεν δὲ κεραυνῶ/ τόξοισί τ' Ἀπόλλωνος), Idas is burned to ashes by the father of the gods (*N.* 10.71 Ζεὺς δ' ἐπ' Ἴδα πυρφόρον πλάξε ψολόεντα κεραυνόν). In addition a well known weapon of the Giants is the rocks which they hurl against the gods (*Ps.-Ap.* ἠκόντιζον δὲ εἰς οὐρανὸν πέτρας καὶ δρυὸς ἡμμένας) and the Apharetiadae are said to tear their father's tombstone and hurl it against Polydeuces (67-68 ἔνθεν ἀρπάξαντες ἄγαλμ' Αἴδα, ζεστόν πέτρον, ἔμβalon στέρνω Πολυδεύκεος).

Finally just as the alliance of Heracles and the gods brings down the Giants in *Nemean* 1 (67-68 καὶ γὰρ ὅταν θεοὶ ἐν πεδίῳ Φλέγρας Γιγάντεσσιν μάχαν/ ἀντιάζωσιν, βελέων ὑπὸ ρίπαῖσι κείνου φαιδίμαν γαῖα πεφύρσεσθαι κόμαν), in *Nemean* 10 Polydeuces slays the Apharetiadae in collaboration with Zeus (70-71 ἤλασε Λυγκέος ἐν πλευραῖσι χαλκόν./ Ζεὺς δ' ἐπ' Ἴδα πυρφόρον πλάξε ψολόεντα κεραυνόν). It may not be coincidental that the triumph of Heracles and Polydeuces over the Giants and the Apharetiadae respectively is immediately followed by their apotheosis. Heracles ascends to Olympus, where he marries Hebe and celebrates his wedding with his father Zeus (72-74 ὀλβίους ἐν

δώμασι, δεξάμενον/ θαλεράν Ἥβαν ἄκοιτιν καὶ γάμον/ δαίσαντα παρ Δι Κρονίδα). Similarly Castor and Polydeuces spend half their existence at Olympus with Zeus (55, ἀμέραν τὰν μὲν παρὰ πατρὶ φίλω Δι νέμονται, 88 ἥμισυ δ' οὐρανοῦ ἐν χρυσεῖσι δόμοισιν). Heracles' deification is also implied in *Nemean* 10 (17-18 Ἡρακλέος· οὗ κατ' Ὀλυμπον/ ἄλοχος Ἥβα τελεία παρὰ ματέρι βαίνοισ' ἔστι, καλλίστα θεῶν) and moreover the intimate connection between the Dioscuri and Heracles is confirmed in the poem by the fact that they preside together over athletic games (52-53 εὐρυχόρου ταμίαι Σπάρτας ἀγώνων/ μοῖραν Ἐρμῆ καὶ σὺν Ἡρακλεῖ διέποντι θάλειαν).

In Theocritus the clash between the Dioscuri and the Apharetiadae is depicted in an entirely different manner. Polydeuces does not participate in it but in the first part of the poem he wrestles with the monstrous Amycus. The king of the Bebryces may be physically stronger than he, but Polydeuces is a more dexterous and skilful wrestler and thus prevails. The scene has been viewed as a reworking of Odyssean scenes and more specifically, the confrontations of Odysseus with Polyphemus and with the beggar Iros.<sup>25</sup> In the Castor narrative we are witnesses of a Homeric-style duel between Castor and Lynceus, which constitutes a major divergence from Pindar's account. It has been argued that the scene echoes and reverses in many ways the duel between Paris and Menelaus in *Iliad* 3.<sup>26</sup> In addition Lynceus' previous endeavors to induce the Dioscuri to give back the Leucippides have been thought to reflect Menelaus' embassy to Troy to ask for the return of Helen, remembered by Antenor in the *teichoscopia* of *Iliad* 3.<sup>27</sup>

After a short fight with spears the immortal Castor disarms Lynceus by severing his fingers with his sword, pursues his fleeing opponent and swiftly disembowels him beside his father's tomb. Idas prepares to hurl his father's gravestone against Castor so as to avenge his brother, but Zeus intervenes by making Idas drop the tombstone and then incinerating him with a thunderbolt. It has been observed that Zeus' slaying of Idas reflects Castor's killing of Lynceus,<sup>28</sup> just as we saw Zeus' attack mirroring that of Polydeuces in Pindar. Zeus intervenes because Idas has violated the terms of the duel according to which

<sup>25</sup> Hunter 1996, 64.

<sup>26</sup> Sens 1992, 1994, 1997.

<sup>27</sup> Sens 1997, 178.

<sup>28</sup> Sens 1997, 210: "Zeus's killing of Idas and Castor's killing of Lynceus are parallel: just as Castor causes Lynceus to drop his weapon before killing him (198 ὁ δὲ πληγεὶς ζῆφος ἐκβαλεν) so too does Zeus disarm Idas (210 χερῶν δέ οἱ ἐκβαλε τυκτὴν μάρμαρον) before smiting him with his thunderbolt."

the victor and his brother would marry the Leucippides and the defeated, if he survived, would find with his brother other brides. Another motive for his intercession is that he wants to protect his son Castor from Idas' stone hurling.<sup>29</sup> Polydeuces does not even need to enter the fight and Castor, unlike Polydeuces in Pindar, does not even need to deflect the gravestone. The prevailing of the Dioscuri in Theocritus is absolute. The gnome that closes the episode (213-214 *οὕτως Τυνδαρίδαις πολέμιζέμεν οὐκ ἐν ἐλαφροῦ./αὐτοί τε κρατέοντε καὶ ἐκ κρατέοντος ἔφουσαν*) conveys the moral that the mortal Apharetiadae dared to challenge the divine Dioscuri and thus were duly punished. Pindar's generalizing gnome is here applied only to the Dioscuri and Zeus, since the poem is a hymn to his sons.<sup>30</sup>

It would be interesting to examine Lynceus' motives for entering into a duel with Castor. One reason is that he naively and unknowingly believes that Castor is mortal regarding Tyndareus as his father, whereas the narrative frame makes clear that he is the son of Zeus and thus a demigod. Thus Lynceus believes that he may be able to defeat him.<sup>31</sup> Something that has not been observed is that another possible reason behind Lynceus' decision to fight against Castor is that he actually believes that he has better chances against him than Idas against Polydeuces. He characterizes Polydeuces as *κρατερός* (173 *Ἴδας μὲν καὶ ὄμαιμος ἐμός, κρατερός Πολυδεύκης*), whereas in the narrative preceding his monologue it is Idas who is described as *καρτερός* (140 *Λυγκεὺς καὶ ὁ καρτερός Ἴδας*). This may imply that he considers Polydeuces as mightier than his brother. In the recounting of the duel the poet describes Idas once more as *καρτερός* (198-99 *αἶψα δὲ φεύγειν/ ὠρμήθη ποτὶ σῆμα πατρός, τόθι καρτερός Ἴδας*) at the moment when Lynceus turns to flight and heads for his father's tomb seeking too late the protection of his brother. This time the characterization is loaded with bitter irony for Lynceus, who did not let his mightier brother fight instead (not that he would have been able to overcome divine Polydeuces). Sens correctly observes that lines 198-199 echo and invert the opening of the episode (139-40 *ἐσσυμένως ἐδίωκον ἀδελφεὸν υἱ' Ἀφαρηῆος, γαμβρῶ μελλογάμω, Λυγκεὺς καὶ ὁ καρτερός Ἴδας*). Whereas in the beginning the Apharetiadae pursued the Dioscuri as

<sup>29</sup> See Sens 1994, 213-14.

<sup>30</sup> Sens 1997, 215: "The Dioscuri are depicted on Seleucid coins as symbols of military victory, and if the Dioscuri in the poem can be read as representing the Ptolemies, Cameron's view of the line as "a statement of the futility of resistance to the Ptolemies would be attractive."

<sup>31</sup> Sens 1997, 196: "Lynceus shows a misguided self-confidence: his problem is that he fails to recognize the true status of his rivals, and naively assumes that he actually stands a chance against Castor."

far as Aphareus' tomb, now Castor chases Lynceus who is heading for his father's tomb.<sup>32</sup> Moreover Lynceus as one of the Argonauts must have witnessed the wrestling match between Polydeuces and the monstrous Amycus recounted in the first part of the poem, which resulted in the triumph of Polydeuces. This experience must have surely persuaded Lynceus that Polydeuces would defeat his brother in a one-to-one combat and thus he would have better chances against Castor. The futile and delusional hopes of Lynceus are disproved by the subsequent events of the story, namely his slaughter by Castor.

In his account of the dispute between the Dioscuri and the Apharetiadae Theocritus clearly wants his reader to recall *Nemean* 10 and thus his narrative contains a series of verbal echoes of Pindar's ode. These verbal reminiscences are not intended however to suggest that Theocritus merely reproduces Pindar, but that he has assimilated the material of *Nemean* 10 and then modified, reconfigured or inverted it. In other words he utilizes a favorite technique of the Hellenistic poetry, which is *oppositio in imitando*. In the following paragraphs we will examine these Pindaric reverberations in *Idyll* 22 and employ them in order to better comprehend the relationship of the two poems.

Theocritus opens his narrative with a conspicuous intertextual marker: the poet addresses Castor as *χαλκεοθώρηξ*, i.e. clad in a bronze breastplate, an epithet which clearly echoes the last two words of *Nemean* 10: (90) *χαλκεομίτρα Κάστορος*, "of bronze-armored Castor". In this unambiguous manner Theocritus points to his reader that he has composed this part of the poem with Pindar's ode in his mind. To begin with, whereas in Pindar Lynceus' well-known supernatural sight is illustrated by the fact that he spots from the peak of Mt. Taygetus the Dioscuri hiding inside an oak's hollow trunk (61-62 *ἀπὸ Ταῦγέτου πεδαυγάζων ἴδεν Λυγκεὺς δρυὸς ἐν στελέχει ἡμέρους κείνου γὰρ ἐπιχθονίων πάντων γένετ' ὀξύτατον ὄμμα*), in Theocritus Lynceus does not prove himself worthy of the poet's characterization as "keen-sighted" (194 *ἀκριβῆς ὄμμασι Λυγκεὺς*), because he does not display his acute vision when he tries to strike with his sword Castor's knee thus giving his opponent the chance to cut off his fingers (196-98 *τοῦ μὲν ἄκρην ἐκόλουσεν ἐπὶ σκαιὸν γόνυ χεῖρα φάσγανον ὄξυ φέροντος ὑπέξαναβὰς ποδὶ Κάστωρ σκαιῶ*). Furthermore Sens observes that *ἀκριβῆς ὄμμασι* actually means "accurate with respect to his eyes", a signification that humorously implies that Lynceus is not inherently keen-sighted but

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<sup>32</sup> Sens 1997, 213

merely looks carefully and therefore “has the effect of deflating the remarkableness of Lynceus' traditionally extraordinary eyesight”.<sup>33</sup>

Furthermore, while in Pindar the Apharetiadae assault Castor with extreme speed (63-64 *λαιψηροῖς πόδεσσιν ἄφαρ ἐζικέσθαν...ἔργον ἐμήσαντ' ὠκέως*), Theocritus ironically reverses the situation by depicting Lynceus fleeing swiftly before Castor after he has dropped his sword (198-99 *αἶψα δὲ φεύγειν ὠρήθη ποτὶ σῆμα πατρός*) and by showing Castor pursuing him swiftly (201 *ἀλλὰ μεταίξας*) and cutting up speedily the entrails of his enemy (202-203 *ἔγκατα δ' εἴσω χαλκὸς ἄφαρ διέχευεν*). Therefore, while Pindar emphasizes the swift and cunning action of the Apharetiadae, Theocritus' intention is to praise Castor's superior martial skill.

The two poets converge however when they describe the swift action of the elder brothers: just as Polydeuces takes a swift revenge on Lynceus (69 *ἐφορμαθεὶς δ' ἄρ' ἄκοντι θοῶ*) and quickly runs to his mortally wounded brother (173-74 *ταχέως δ' ἐπ' ἀδελφεοῦ βίαν πάλιν χώρησεν ὁ Τυνδαρίδας, /καὶ νιν οὐπω τεθναότ'*), in an analogous way Idas swiftly tears up the gravestone and prepares to hurl it to Castor in order to avenge his dead brother (208-209 *τύμβου ἀναρρήξας ταχέως Μεσσήνιος Ἴδας/ μέλλε κασιγνήτοιο βαλεῖν σφετέρωιο φονῆα*).<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, while Polydeuces' speed avails him in saving his brother, Idas is not fast enough for Zeus and thus he is burnt to ashes.

The Apharidae in *Nemean 10* are said to contrive a “great deed” (64 *μέγα ἔργον ἐμήσαντ' ὠκέως*), namely the treacherous wounding of Castor by Idas. Theocritus ironically inverts this situation: Lynceus in *Idyll 22* promises to the Dioscuri that if they return the Leucippides to him and his brother they will in turn devise another marriage for them (166 *...γάμον· σφῶν δ' ἄλλον ἐπιφραζόμεθα πάντες*). Just as the enterprise of the Apharetiadae in Pindar is characterized by cunning, we might see behind Lynceus' apparently beneficent and rhetorical promise a devious element.

In *Nemean 10* the Apharetiadae “tear away” (67 *ἀρπάζαντες*) the tombstone of their father's grave in order to fling it against Polydeuces, while in *Idyll 22* the Dioscuri “snatch away” (137 *ἀναρπάζαντε*) and carry off the Leucippides. Theocritus may be ironically echoing and inverting the situation in Pindar: whereas the Apharidae tear away

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<sup>33</sup> Sens 1997, 206.

<sup>34</sup> Sens (1997, 213) has observed the verbal echo.

and hurl the tombstone to Polydeuces, Lynceus' speech is entirely devoted to his vain attempt to persuade the Dioscuri to give back the Leucippides whom they have snatched away. Moreover Sens observes that the verb *ἀναρπάζω* in Homer refers to lions attacking cattle and thus the diction may give the initial momentary expectation that Theocritus follows the Pindaric version, where the dispute arises over cattle theft, which is immediately negated by the next line referring to the Leucippides.<sup>35</sup>

While in Pindar the Apharetiadae tear off and hurl the tombstone on Polydeuces' chest without however checking his charge, in Theocritus Zeus intervenes and strikes the gravestone from Idas' hands before he can fling it to Castor. Thus Pindar's Polydeuces is depicted as more powerful and heroic than Theocritus' Castor.<sup>36</sup> Theocritus' sentence structure mirrors that of Pindar's and thus the difference between the two accounts is rendered more conspicuous:<sup>37</sup>

*ἔνθεν ἀρπάζαντες ἄγαλμ' Αἶδα, ζεστόν πέτρον, ἔμβαλον στέρνω Πολυδεύκεος: ἀλλ' οὖ νιν φλάσαν, οὐδ' ἀνέχασσαν (N. 10. 67-69)*

*ἧ γὰρ ὄγε Μεσσήνιος Ἴδας ταχέως ἀναρρήζας<sup>38</sup> στήλην Ἀφαρηίου ἐξανέχουσιν τύμβου τωκτὴν μάρμαρον μέλλε βαλεῖν κασιγνήτοιο σφετέροιο φονῆα ἀλλὰ Ζεὺς ἐπάμυνε, χερῶν δέ οἱ ἔκβαλε<sup>39</sup> (Id. 22.207-210)*

In an analogous manner Polydeuces' slaying of Lynceus in *Nemean 10*, is reflected structurally in Castor's slaughtering of Lynceus in *Idyll 22*:

*ἐφορμαθεῖς δ' ἄρ' ἄκοντι θοῶ/ ἤλασε Λυγκέος ἐν πλευραῖσι χαλκόν. (N. 10 69-70)*

<sup>35</sup> Sens 1997, 169.

<sup>36</sup> In Pseudo-Apollodorus we find an alternative version of the scene, where Polydeuces falls unconscious being struck on the head by a rock hurled by Idas (3.11.2 τὸν δὲ Ἴδαν διώκων, βληθεὶς ὑπ' ἐκείνου πέτρα κατὰ τῆς κεφαλῆς, πίπτει σκοτωθεὶς). This representation of Polydeuces undercuts his heroic and divine status found in Pindar.

<sup>37</sup> In this and the following examples I have altered the word order so as to give prominence the structural correspondence more clearly.

<sup>38</sup> cf. the figurative use of *ἀναρρήγνυμι* in *Id. 22.172 νεῖκος ἀναρρήξαντας ὁμοίον*.

<sup>39</sup> Sens (1997, 214) has observed that Theocritus' *τωκτὴν μάρμαρον* echoes the Pindaric *ζεστόν πέτρον*.

*ἀλλὰ μεταίξας πλατὸν φάσγανον ὄσσε διαπρὸν/ Τυνδαρίδης λαγόνος τε καὶ ὄμφαλοῦ: ἔγκατα δ' εἴσω/ χαλκὸς ἄφαρ διέχευεν (Id. 22.201-203)*

We observe that Theocritus has transformed the neutral depiction of the killing of Lynceus in Pindar into a savage and grim butchering with grotesque details and sacrificial connotations, thus representing his death with more pathos or perhaps bathos, if we view the poet's tone here as subtly ironical, considering the depiction of Lynceus in his speech before the duel. The mirror-image technique continues in the next scene where Zeus smites with a thunderbolt both the Apharetiadae in Pindar, but Idas alone in Theocritus:

*Ζεὺς δ' ἐπ' Ἴδα πλᾶξε πυρφόρον ψολόεντα κεραυνόν· ἅμα δ' ἐκαίοντ' ἐρῆμοι. (N. 10.71)*

*αὐτὸν δὲ συνέφλεξε φλογέω κεραυνῶ (Id. 22.211)*

Theocritus' innovation in this case is that, whereas the Apharetiadae are said in *Nemean* 10 to burn together all alone, i.e. deserted by all gods and humans, in *Idyll* 22 Idas is even more abandoned, in the sense that he blazes apart from his beloved brother. Theocritus manages once again to heighten the pathos of the scene. Apart from the thematic correspondence between the gnomes that conclude the two narratives, there is also a structural correspondence:

*χαλεπὰ δ' ἔρις ἀνθρώποις ὀμιλεῖν κρεσσόνων. (N. 10.72)*

*οὐκ ἐν ἐλαφρῶ Τυνδαρίδαις πολεμιζέμεν./ αὐτοὶ τε κρατέοντε καὶ ἐκ κρατέοντος ἔφυσαν. (Id. 22.213-14)*

In addition Theocritus makes an implicit allusion to Pindar's gnome in the beginning of the episode and more specifically in Lynceus' speech. He rhetorically asks the Dioscuri why they are harsh with regard to the wives of other men (146-47 *πῶς δ' ἐπὶ νόμφαις ἀλλοτρίαις χαλεποί;*). Lynceus speaking more truly than he knows remarks that the Dioscuri will be *χαλεποί* towards the Apharetiadae if they engage in a conflict with them,

just as Pindar concludes that contending with those that are mightier is a *χαλεπή* strife for mortals. Nevertheless Lynceus will enter a duel with Castor and suffer the consequences.

Last but not least the moment of Lynceus' passing away echoes and reverses Castor's revival to life by Polydeuces:

*ἀνὰ δ' ἔλυσεν μὲν ὀφθαλμόν, ἔπειτα δὲ φωνὰν χαλκεομίτρα Κάστορος (N. 10. 90)*<sup>40</sup>

*ὁ δ' ἐς στόμα κεῖτο νενευκῶς Λυγκεύς, καὶ δ' ἄρα οἱ βλεφάρων βαρὺς ἔδραμεν ὕπνος (Id. 22.203-204)*

Young has plausibly argued that Polydeuces in Pindar inverts the Greek funeral ritual, according to which the eyes and the mouth of the deceased were closed by his relatives, by opening Castor's eyes and "releasing" his voice and thereby partly reverses the death of Castor.<sup>41</sup> Lynceus' head in Theocritus however bends forward and falls on his face to the ground, which implies that his mouth is still open. Moreover the "heavy sleep" of death speeds down upon his eyelids and closes them. Therefore, whereas in *Nemean* 10 Polydeuces brings Castor back to a half-life by inverting the funeral ritual of closing the eyes and mouth of the dead, Theocritus heightens the tragic pathos of Lynceus' death: Idas will not be able to perform even the minimum of the funeral ritual, namely close his brother's eyes and mouth, since a few moments afterwards he will be incinerated by Zeus' thunderbolt. In the end of the scene Lynceus lies prone on the ground beside his father's desecrated tomb with an open mouth and eyes closed not by a relative but by death itself, while Idas has turned to ashes. Pindar's ode does not lack pathos but is expressed in a different kind of scene: Polydeuces has rushed back to his moribund brother who is gasping hard for breath (74 *καί νιν ἄπω τεθναότ', ἄσθματι δὲ φρί σσοντα πινᾶς ἔκιχεν*). Polydeuces' response to his brother's state is to shed warm tears and pray groaning to his father Zeus that he may grant him death as well (75 *θερμὰ δὴ τέγγων δάκρυα στοναχᾶς ὄρθιον φώνασε*). To recapitulate, whereas Pindar invests with pathos the scene between

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<sup>40</sup> Polydeuces' action of opening the eyes and "releasing" (90 *ἀνὰ δ' ἔλυσεν*) the voice of Castor reverberates and inverts the beginning of Polydeuces' prayer where seeks a "release from sorrows" (76 *τίς δὴ λύσις ἔσσειται πενθέων*);

<sup>41</sup> Young 1993, 131-132.



Polydeuces and dying Castor, Theocritus has transferred the emotional intensity to the deaths of slaughtered Lynceus and incinerated Idas.

#### v. Epinician vs. Matrimonial Sphere

In this section I will attempt to show how Theocritus effects a shift from the athletic realm of *Nemean* 10 to the domain of marriage. To begin with, Pindar in the middle section of his ode (21-54), in which he praises Theaios and his family's athletic achievements, presents a long and impressive catalogue with the cities where Theaios and his maternal ancestors have won victories in wrestling and horse-racing respectively: Argos (1, 22-23), Delphi (25), Isthmus, Nemea (26), Athens (34), Corinth, Kleonai (42), Sikyon (43), Pellana/Laconia (44), Kleitor/Arcadia, Tegea/Arcadia, Achaean cities (46),<sup>42</sup> Lycaion/Arcadia (47), and Sparta (52). He also mentions that Theaios aspires to achieve a victory in Pisa (33), that is in the Olympic games. Theocritus echoes this catalogue but humorously transforms it into a list of cities, where Lynceus says that the Dioscuri could find alternative brides. These are Sparta, Elis (156), Arcadia, Achaean cities (157), Messene, Argos, and the Isthmus (158). Apart from Messene all the other name-places correspond to the cities mentioned in Pindar's catalogue. Moreover Lynceus' reference to "horse-breeding Elis" (156) might be an allusion to the Olympic chariot-races. Therefore, we witness the reconfiguration of an epinician catalogue of cities where athletic victories have taken place into a Hellenistic list of cities containing potential wives.

Furthermore Pindar eulogizes Theaios and his family by asserting that they have won countless bronze prizes (45 *ἀλλὰ χαλκὸν μῦριον οὐ δυνατόν ἐξελέγχειν*). Lynceus echoes and reverses Pindar, when he praises the Dioscuri in a rhetorical manner by claiming that brides beyond count are available to them (159-60 *ἐνθα κόραι τοκέεσσιν ὑπὸ σφετέροισι τρέφονται μύρια*). Thus Pindar's epinician encomium is transformed by Theocritus into a eulogy of eligible bachelors. Pindar goes on to cite a series of athletic prizes that Theaios and his family have won: bronze artifacts (22, 45), olive-oil jars (35), silver wine bowls (43), and woolen cloaks (44). Lynceus in his speech claims that the Dioscuri can find brides in "Arcadia, rich in sheep" (157 *Ἀρκαδίη τ' εὐμηλος*) and in

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<sup>42</sup> Note the echo of Pindar's *Ἀχαιῶν ὑψίβατοι πόλιες* (46) in Theocritus' Homeric *Ἀχαιῶν τε πτολίεθρα* (157).

“horse-breeding Elis” (156 *ἰππήλατος Ἥλις*) perhaps implying that through marriage they could obtain material rewards, i.e. a large dowry.<sup>43</sup> Therefore the glorious athletic prizes that Theaios’ family has gained become rich bride-prices that the Dioscuri can obtain.

The motif of the dowry is introduced by Lynceus in the beginning of his speech where he complains that, whereas Leucippus betrothed his daughters to him and his brother (147-48), the Dioscuri have bribed Leucippus with gifts and won him over thereby stealing the brides from the Apharetiadae (149-151). On another level the accusations of Lynceus can be read as follows: whereas the Apharetiadae have received a dowry from Leucippus to marry his daughters (147 *ἔδνωσε*), the Dioscuri have offered a dowry to Leucippus (151 *δώροις*). Thus the sons of Aphareus follow the practice that existed in Theocritus’ time namely that the father of the bride offered a dowry to the bridegroom, whereas the Dioscuri follow another tradition found in the Homeric epics according to which the suitor offers a bride-price to the daughter or her family.<sup>44</sup> It follows that the Dioscuri are the ones who succeed in obtaining the favor of Leucippus.

In *Nemean* 10 we find two corresponding prayers. In lines 29-33 Pindar prays to Zeus that he may grant to Theaios a future triumph in the Olympic games, the only games where he has not been victorious yet, since Zeus is the accomplisher of all deeds (29 *πάν δὲ τέλος ἐν τὴν ἔργων*). Pindar also calls Hera with her title “the fulfiller” connected with her role as patron-goddess of marriage (18 *τελεία παρὰ ματέρι*), which is relevant to the specific context because she gives her daughter Hebe as a wife to Heracles (17-18). Theaios does not dare to ask such a favor of Zeus out of modesty, so he has appointed Pindar as his representative to the god. The poet can hope that his prayer will be fulfilled, because Theaios’ family is dear to the Dioscuri and the Dioscuri are dear to Zeus.<sup>45</sup> By hymning the Dioscuri in this ode the poet thus implicitly asks for their intervention to Zeus on behalf of Theaios so that he may obtain his Olympic victory. Moreover the Dioscuri are said to “conduct the flourishing allotment of games” along with Heracles and Hermes (52), perhaps referring to the Olympic games. Therefore, it may be implied that they Dioscuri can confer (with the approval of Zeus) an Olympic victory upon Theaios. In this way

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<sup>43</sup> Sens 1997, 182.

<sup>44</sup> Sens 1997, 176-177.

<sup>45</sup> Young 1993, 124: “For Marauch (“Pindars Religiositat in Nem. 10”) the main point of the myth is to predict a successful outcome of the victor’s prayer for an Olympic victory (29-33); as Zeus fulfill Polydeuces’ prayer so he will fulfill Theaios”.

Theaios will be able to achieve a half-mortal state similar to theirs: just as they alternate between Therapnae and Olympus, namely eternal life and eternal death, the Olympic victor is mortal because he will inevitably die but at the same time “immortal”, because of the glory conferred upon him by his future Olympic victory and by Pindar’s ode celebrating this victory.<sup>46</sup>

The second prayer of the ode comes in the final scene where Polydeuces mourning at his brother’s impending death prays to Zeus that he may grant him death as well as release from grief. Zeus responds to the prayer by offering him the choice between a life of perpetual immortality on Olympus and an alternate existence between Olympus and Hades, a special kind of deification. Polydeuces selects the second option because he is devoted and loyal to his brother (78 *παῦροι δ’ ἐν πόνῳ πιστοὶ βροτῶν καμάτου μεταλαμβάνειν*). The Dioscuri are also faithful to the mortals that are just and more specifically to Theaios’ family, because Pamphaes offered them hospitality (53-54 *μάλα μὲν ἀνδρῶν δικαίων περικαδόμενοι./ καὶ μὰν θεῶν πιστὸν γένος*), something that reinforces Pindar’s prayer to Zeus on behalf of Theaios.

Therefore *Nemean* 10 contains an epinician prayer of Pindar to Zeus and an eschatological prayer of Polydeuces to his father. I will argue here that Theocritus seems to reverberate and invert these prayers through Lynceus’ mock-prayer to the Dioscuri to give back the Leucippides and find other wives. The concluding part of the embedded speech that Lynceus addressed to the Dioscuri in the past (163-168) can be interpreted as a prayer of a mortal to divine beings. First, Lynceus’ praise of the Dioscuri and their ancestors (163-64) recalls the eulogy of the god and his genealogy by the praying mortal, a standard prayer motif. Moreover, Lynceus recounts in direct speech that in the past he often asked the Dioscuri to let his and his brother’s marriages come to fulfillment (165-66 *ἀλλά, φίλοι, τοῦτον μὲν ἔασατε πρὸς τέλος ἔλθειν ἄμμι γάμον*). His words here are fraught with dramatic irony: since he is ignorant of the fact that the Dioscuri are divine beings, he unknowingly “prays” to them to accomplish his and his brother’s marriage. Therefore, Lynceus’ “prayer” to the Dioscuri to let their marriage be fulfilled playfully alludes on the one hand to the marriage of Heracles and Hebe brought about by Hera the “Fulfiller” (17-

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<sup>46</sup> For this interpretation of the myth see Young, 1993, 132: “the myth underscores its immediate application, that is, Pindar’s implicit claim that his present-day songs can reverse, in part, the deaths of present-day men.”

18 Ἡρακλέος· οὐ̄ κατ' Ὀλυμπον ἄλοχος Ἥβα τελεία παρὰ ματέρι βαίνοισ' ἔστι, καλλίστα θεῶν), and on the other to Pindar's prayer to Zeus, who accomplishes everything (29 πᾶν δὲ τέλος ἐν τῖν ἔργων), that he bestow an Olympic victory upon Theaios. Theocritus again transfers us from the athletic context to the domain of matrimony.

In return for this favor Lynceus promises to the Castor and Polydeuces that they will all together contrive another marriage for them. This points to another typical element of a prayer, namely the promise of the mortal that he will repay the god for his favor, a requital which normally consists in an offering or a sacrifice. Ironically Lynceus himself will be slaughtered like a sacrificial animal by Castor.

We immediately learn however from Lynceus himself that his “prayer” was futile and remained unfulfilled (167-168 ἴσκον τοιάδε πολλά, τὰ δ' εἰς ὕγρον ᾗχετο κῆμα/ πνοιῆ ἔχουσ' ἀνέμοιο, χάρις δ' οὐχ ἔσπετο μύθοις). Lynceus' words here pick up and reverse the prayer of Polydeuces to Zeus and his father's response. Polydeuces claims that honor disappears for the man who has been bereft of his friends (in the specific case Polydeuces has lost his brother) and so prays to Zeus that he grant him death as well (77-78 καὶ ἐμοὶ θάνατον ἂν τῶδ' ἐπίτειλον, ἄναξ. οἴχεται τιμὰ φίλων τατωμένῳ φωτὶ). Zeus gives him instead the choice (which Polydeuces accepts) of an alternation between Hades and Olympus (87-88 ἤμισυ μὲν κε πνέοις γαίης ὑπένερθεν ἐόν,/ ἤμισυ δ' οὐρανοῦ ἐν χρυσεῖς δόμοισιν). Lynceus protests that a breath of wind carrying his “prayer” to the Dioscuri has gone away to the wet waves (167-68), suggesting that his words were to no avail. Thus Lynceus' πνοιῆ ἀνέμοιο, namely the breath of wind that symbolizes the futility of his “prayer” echoes and inverts Zeus' κε πνέοις, the eternal breath of life granted to the Dioscuri.<sup>47</sup> Also this breath of wind which has gone away to the sea (εἰς ὕγρον ᾗχετο κῆμα) recalls Polydeuces' lament that his honor has disappeared due to the loss of his dear brother (οἴχεται τιμὰ), something that is averted by Zeus' intervention. Therefore Lynceus' “prayer” bears verbal reminiscences of the exchange between Zeus and Polydeuces, which serve to underline the fundamental difference between the two situations: Castor and Polydeuces will be *deified*, whereas Lynceus and Idas will *perish*.

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<sup>47</sup> The eternal breath of life that Zeus grants to the Dioscuri (87 ἤμισυ μὲν κε πνέοις γαίης ὑπένερθεν ἐόν) echoes and reverses the state of wounded Castor before the exchange of Polydeuces and Zeus. He is panting with trembling breath as death is at hand (73-74 ἄσθματι δὲ φρίσσοντα πνοᾶς ἔκιχεν (=last breaths of life).

Furthermore Lynceus' complaint that the Dioscuri did not show *charis* to his words but ignored his pleas (168 *χάρις δ' ἄχ' ἔσπετο μύθοις*) echoes and reverses what Pindar says about Theaios and his family. They have often achieved athletic victories in the past because they are blessed with the favor of the Dioscuri and the Charites (36-38 *ἐπέβα δέ, Θεαῖε, ματρῶων πολύγνωτον γένος ὑμετέρων εὐάγων τιμὰ Χαρίτεσσι τε καὶ σὺν Τυνδαρίδαις θαμάκις*). Thus Theaios' family has often been accompanied (38 *σύν...θαμάκις*) by the good will of the Dioscuri and the Charites, whereas Lynceus' "prayers" have not been accompanied (168 *οὐχ' ἔσπετο*) by the *charis* of the Dioscuri, although he often (157 *πολλάκις*) tried to obtain it.<sup>48</sup>

After Lynceus realizes that he will accomplish nothing with words he grudgingly proposes a duel between himself and Castor in order to resolve the dispute over the Leucippides, and concludes his speech with a gnome which is followed by the poet's comment:

*ὀλίγω τοι ἔοικε κακῶ μέγα νεῖκος ἀναιρεῖν.  
εἶπε, τὰ δ' οὐκ ἄρ' ἔμελλε θεὸς μεταμόνια θήσειν*  
(22.180-81)

“It is proper to end a great strife with a small ill’.

So he spoke, and the god was not to make his words idle.”

(Translation Hunter 1996, 72)

This distich contains multiple levels of irony. The identity of the god in question is left unspecified.<sup>49</sup> If the *θεός* in question is Castor, then we have another reminiscence of *Nemean* 10. In Pindar, Theaios and his maternal ancestors have achieved so many athletic victories, because they enjoy the favor of the Dioscuri. The only time however that the Dioscuri fulfill the wishes of Lynceus is when he asks that the dispute ends with a “small ill”, which for Castor is translated into the death of the Apharetiadae.<sup>50</sup> If on the other hand

<sup>48</sup> Sens 1997, 188: “Lynceus means that his words did not win him the favor of his audience and were thus ineffective, but at another level, unrecognized by the speaker himself, Lynceus' speech lacks *χάρις* in that it is ill-conceived from the start”.

<sup>49</sup> Sens 1997, 199: “as often in such contexts, the precise identity of the god is left ambiguous. It may be Zeus, but Hunter, *TAGP* 72 has suggested that it also be Castor himself. If the reference is to the latter, the comment would look back with biting irony to Lynceus' failure to recognize the status of his opponent.”

<sup>50</sup> Hunter 1996, 72: “In the event, the *ὀλίγω κακῶ* is the death of both Lynceus and Idas, which from the point of view of the Dioscuri is indeed 'a small ill'; this savage irony seems to me to argue for Lynceus as the

the *θεός* is Zeus,<sup>51</sup> then the poet foreshadows the imminent intervention of the god in the clash between the two pairs of twins, when he hurls a thunderbolt on Idas and burns him to ashes.<sup>52</sup> The last occurrence of the “unfulfilled marriage” *leitmotiv* is found in lines 205-206:

*οὐ μὰν οὐδὲ τὸν ἄλλον ἐφ' ἐστίῃ εἶδε πατρώῃ  
παίδων Λαοκόωσα φίλον γάμον ἐκτελέσαντα*

“Laocoosa did not even see her other son fulfill  
a dear marriage at his father’s hearth”

The narrator’s parenthetical comment that Laocoosa<sup>53</sup> will not witness either of her sons’ marriage confers a touch of pathos to the scene and anticipates the imminent death of Idas. Idas will not bring to fulfillment the wedding that his brother dreamed of, but will instead be smitten by Zeus’ thunderbolt.<sup>54</sup> Perhaps Theocritus intends here an ironic inversion: Idas will not make burnt offerings to the gods at his father’s hearth as part of his wedding’s ritual,<sup>55</sup> but is going to be burnt himself by Zeus beside his father’s grave, just as Lynceus instead of conducting wedding sacrifices became a sacrificial victim himself.

To sum up, in this section it has been argued that Theocritus has managed with various echoes and inversions of Pindar to transform the athletic and epinician context of *Nemean* 10 into a matrimonial one. While Polydeuces’ prayer to Zeus leads to the accomplishment of the Dioscuri’s apotheosis and Pindar’s prayer to the god anticipates a future Olympic victory by Theaios, Lynceus’ “prayer” to the Dioscuri will not achieve its aim which would have been the happy marriage of the Apharetiadae.

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speaker of v. 180, for Lynceus seems much more likely than Castor to refer to the dispute as a 'great quarrel'.”

<sup>51</sup> Laursen 1992, 89.

<sup>52</sup> Sens 1997, 199: *μεταμόνια* “The outer speech frame here poignantly recalls and reverses Lynceus' own earlier remarks in 167-8 (τὸ δ' εἰς ὕγρον ὄχετο κῆμα/ πνοιῆ ἔχουσι ἀνέμοιο) about the futility of previous attempts to win over the Dioscuri; this time his proposal will be accepted, to his undoing.”

<sup>53</sup> Compare Laocoosa whose twin sons are killed by the Dioscuri with Laocoon in *Aeneid* 2 whose two sons are killed by the two serpents sent by Athena.

<sup>54</sup> Sens 1997, 211: “The narrator's observation that Laocoosa was not able even to witness Idas' marriage looks back with ironic effect to Lynceus' desire to avoid excessive grief for the parents on either side (176-7), and to his expectation that the survivors of the duel will return to their companions and marry (178-80).”

<sup>55</sup> Sens 1997, 211: “As the center of the home and family, the hearth naturally played an integral role in Greek wedding rituals.”

### 3. *Fasti* 5.693-720: Conflation of Pindar and Theocritus

In this final section I will examine Ovid's version of the dispute between the Dioscuri and the Apharetiadae and attempt to show that it has absorbed both *Nemean* 10 and *Idyll* 22 following certain aspects of its models but at the same time introducing innovations. In this way Ovid moulds a story that is an amalgam of Pindar's ode and Theocritus' *Idyll*, but also bears his own seal.

To begin with, Ovid constructs his story as a Hellenistic *aetion*: the poet's persona asks the god Janus to tell him the origin of the constellation Gemini (697 "*dic*" *ego respondi* "*causam mihi sideris huius.*"). This narrative frame might be the Roman poet's innovation, since it is not found in his predecessors. However it is possible that Ovid had another model for this story, Hellenistic or other, that is not known to us and from which he may have borrowed the *aetion* narrative frame. Janus begins the story by saying that the cause of the dispute between the Dioscuri and the Apharetiadae was the abduction of the Leucippides by the former. Therefore Ovid follows Theocritus and not Pindar with regard to the origin of the strife. What is more, it has been observed that the introductory lines of Ovid's story have been modeled on those of Theocritus<sup>56</sup> and there is in fact a perfect structural correspondence between them:

Τὼ μὲν δὴ Διὸς νύϊά ἀναρπάζαντε δοιὰς Λευκίπποιο κόρας φερέτην· δισσὼ δ' ἄρα τώγε  
ἔσσυμένως ἐδίωκον ἀδελφεὸν νῆϊ Ἀφαρήϊος, Λυγκεὺς καὶ ὁ καρτερὸς Ἴδας, γαμβρῶ  
μελλογάμῳ (*Id.* 22.137-40)

*Tyndaridae fraters, hic eques, ille pugil, raptas Phoeben Phoebesque sororem abstulerant.  
bella parant repetuntque suas*<sup>57</sup> *et frater et Idas, / Leucippo fieri pactus uterque gener.*  
(*F.* 5.699-702)

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<sup>56</sup> Sens 1997, 169.

<sup>57</sup> Ovid's account of how the Apharetiadae prepare for war and demand the return of the Leucippides (700 *bella parant repetuntque suas*) might playfully allude to Horace's *C.* 1.15, where Nereus predicts that the Greeks will demand the restitution of Helen (6 *quam multo repetet Graecia milite*) and envisions Pallas preparing her helmet, aegis, chariot and frenzy for war (11-12 *iam galeam Pallas et aegida/ currusque et rabiem parat*).

Ovid however assigns to the two parties an additional motive for the clash, which is not found in Theocritus, namely love for the Leucippides, the object of desire (703-704 *his amor ut repetant, illis ut reddere nolint, / suadet; et ex causa pugnat uterque pari.*). Thus Ovid as an elegiac poet adds an amatory dimension to the strife. With regard to the paternity of the Dioscuri Ovid follows Pindar this time, making Castor the mortal son of Tyndareus and Pollux the immortal son of Zeus.<sup>58</sup>

Another point where Ovid diverges from his models is the setting of the fight. In Pindar and Theocritus the site of the clash between the two pairs of twins is not specified and the only geographical indication given is the tomb of Aphareus which was located either in Laconia or Messenia.<sup>59</sup> Ovid however states that the fight took place in the vicinity of Aphidna, a city in Attica close to Athens: 707-708 *liber ab arboribus locus est, apta area pugnae: / constiterant illo (nomen Aphidna) loco.* Frazer maintains that: “in any case Ovid is clearly mistaken in giving the name Aphidna to the scene of the combat”,<sup>60</sup> but Ovid is not known to have made such conspicuous mistakes. One reason why he may have moved the site of the dispute to Aphidna may be to allude to the invasion of the Dioscuri in Attica in order to rescue Helen who had been abducted by Theseus. We learn from the Iliadic scholia (*Il.* 3.242, West p. 92) that the *Cypria* narrated this myth:

*Ἑλένη . . . πρότερον ὑπὸ Θησέως ἠρπάσθη, καθὼς προεΐρηται.  
διὰ γὰρ τὴν τότε γενομένην ἄρπαγὴν Ἀφιδνα πόλις Ἀττικῆς  
πορθεῖται, καὶ τιτρώσκεται Κάστωρ ὑπὸ Ἀφιδνοῦ τοῦ  
τότε βασιλέως κατὰ τὸν δεξιὸν μηρόν. οἱ δὲ Διόσκουροι  
Θησέως μὴ τυχόντες λαφυραγωγούσιν τὰς Ἀθήνας, ἡ  
ἱστορία παρὰ τοῖς πολεμωνίοις ἢ τοῖς κυκλικοῖς,  
καὶ ἀπὸ μέρους παρὰ Ἀλκμάνι τῷ λυρικοῦ.*

By this reference to Aphidna Ovid may wish to echo and reverse here the Dioscuri's victorious incursion in Attica. While the Dioscuri were the rescuers of Helen from the

<sup>58</sup> Ovid adds an Alexandrian twist to the Dioscuri's patronymic *Tyndaridae* (700) by calling them *Oeбалides* (705), namely the descendants of Oeбалus, who was Tyndareus' father, thus their grandfather.

<sup>59</sup> See Pseudo-Apollodorus (3.11.2) and Pausanias (3.13.1, 4.3.1).

<sup>60</sup> Frazer 1973, 120



hands of Theseus in the myth of the *Cypria*, they are now the abductors of the Leucippides pursued by the Apharetiadae. In the *Cypria* Castor is wounded by king Aphidnus but survives the fight, whereas in Ovid he is slain by Lynceus. Finally the Dioscuri in the account of the *Cypria* sack and pillage Athens without meeting any resistance, since Theseus has descended in the Underworld to carry off Persephone with Peirithous, while in Ovid they engage in a direct confrontation with the Apharetiadae which has casualties, namely the killing of Castor by Lynceus. Therefore Ovid may have inserted Aphidna in this story in order to create the initial ironic expectation that the Dioscuri will repeat their previous triumph in Attica.

Ovid describes the confrontation between the Dioscuri and the Apharetiadae in a compressed narrative of six lines (709-714). The poet presents Lynceus slaying Castor (709-710) thereby inverting the version of Theocritus where Castor is the one who kills Lynceus. He also diverges from Pindar where Idas mortally wounds Castor. Ovid's comment that Castor falls dead by Lynceus' *unexpected* blow with a sword (710 *non exspectato volnere pressit humum*) can be interpreted in a number of ways. First, the phrase may echo and reverse Theocritus' description of the battle where Castor, at the moment when Lynceus attempts to strike his knee, *steps suddenly back* and severs his rival's fingers (196-198 *τοῦ μὲν ἄκρην ἐκόλουσεν ἐπὶ σκαιὸν γόνυ χεῖρα φάσγανον ὄζυ φέροντος ὑπεξαναβὰς ποδὶ Κάστωρ σκαιῶ*). Thus the *non exspectato volnere* corresponds to *ὑπεξαναβὰς ποδὶ*. Another interpretation might be that Castor did not expect to be wounded by Lynceus, because he believed that he was the divine son of Zeus, although in reality he was the mortal son of Tyndareus. If this assumption is accepted, then Ovid might wish here to humorously invert the situation in Theocritus where the Dioscuri are thought by Lynceus and think themselves to be the mortal sons of Tyndareus, whereas they are actually demi-gods.<sup>61</sup> Finally, the poet perhaps implies that Lynceus wounded him treacherously from behind. Next Ovid depicts Pollux killing Lynceus in revenge (711-712), in accordance with Pindar's version. Finally Idas rushes to slay Pollux, but Zeus intervenes by first disarming him and then incinerating him with a thunderbolt (713-714).

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<sup>61</sup> Hunter 1996, 72-73: "In *Idyll* 22 the gods also do not know that they are gods. ...We are assured in the opening verse that the twins are 'the sons of Zeus', but the other characters act in blind ignorance and thus make terrible mistakes."

It is noteworthy however that Ovid says nothing about the gravestone but states that Idas held weapons (714 *tela*), thereby diverging from both of his models.

The disarming of Idas by Zeus' thunderbolt agrees with the version of the story recounted by Theocritus. Ovid however playfully reports an alternative version of the story, according to which Idas was not disarmed by Zeus' thunderbolt (714 *tela tamen dextrae fulmine rapta negant*). Now Ovid may allude here to Pindar's version of the myth where Idas (together with Lynceus) first hurls vainly the gravestone to Polydeuces and then is smitten by Zeus or perhaps to the account by Pseudo-Apollodorus according to which Idas strikes Polydeuces unconscious with a rock and then is smitten by Zeus.

Furthermore Ovid with his usual humorous attitude alters slightly Idas' confrontation with Zeus by reporting that the almighty king of the gods *hardly* managed to drive back Idas with his thunderbolt (713 *vixque est Iovis igne repulsus*), thereby emphasizing Idas' immense strength and degrading Zeus' might. This playful account might be an inversion of *Nemean* 10, where Polydeuces is not crushed, not even driven back by the gravestone hurled by the Apharetiadae (67-69 ἔμβαλον στέρνῳ Πολυδεύκεος· ἀλλ' οὖν νιν φλάσαν οὐδ' ἀνέχασσαν), thus displaying his divine status.

Just as Ovid opened the story with a direct echo of Theocritus, the abduction of the Leucippides (700-702), he closes it with a Pindaric reverberation, the apotheosis of the Dioscuri (715-719). The difference with Pindar is that, whereas in *Nemean* 10 we have an exchange between father and son, where Polydeuces prays for death and Zeus in response grants him the option between immortality and half-mortality, in the *Fasti* we have a simplified version, where Pollux directly addresses his father and asks that his gift of immortality be split in half and shared with his beloved brother (717-718 *quod mihi das uni caelum, partire duobus;/ dimidium toto munere maius erit*). The penultimate line of the poem evokes the last line of *Nemean* 10:

ἀνὰ δ' ἔλυσεν μὲν ὀφθαλμόν, ἔπειτα δὲ φωνὰν χαλκομίτρα Κάστωρος (N. 10.90)  
*dixit et alterna fratrem statione redemit* (F. 5.719)

Just as Polydeuces in Pindar “released” (ἀνὰ δ' ἔλυσεν) the eyes and the voice of Castor thereby reviving him, Pollux in Ovid is said to “have released” (*redemit*) his

brother by an “alternate abode” (*alterna statione*) which echoes the myth of *Nemean* 10 where the Dioscuri experience a rotating existence between Olympus and Therapnae in the Underworld (55-56 μεταμειβόμενοι δ' ἐναλλάξ ἀμέραν τὰν μὲν παρὰ πατ' ῥι φίλω/ Δι νέμονται, τὰν δ' ὑπὸ κεύθεσι γαίης ἐν γυάλοις Θεράπνας).<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Frazer (1973, 121) notes that a more immediate model for this line of Ovid is *Aeneid* 6.121-22: *si fratrem Pollux alterna morte redemit/itque reditque uiam totiens*.

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