This groundbreaking book attempts a fully contextualized reading of the poetry written by Pindar for Hieron of Syracuse in the 470s BC. It argues that the victory odes and other occasional songs composed by Pindar for the Sicilian tyrant were part of an extensive cultural program that included athletic competition, conquest, architecture, sacred foundation, city formation, and more. In the tumultuous years following the Persian invasion of Greece in 480, elite Greek leaders and their cities struggled to capitalize on the Greek victory and to define themselves as free peoples who triumphed over the threat of Persian monarchy. Pindar's victory odes are an important contribution to Hieron's goal of panhellenic pre-eminence, redefining contemporary tyranny as an instantiation of golden-age kingship and consensus with best Greek tradition. In a delicate process of cultural legitimation, the poet's praise deploys athletic victories as a sign of more general preeminence. These initial chapters set the stage by presenting the history and culture of Syracuse under the Dionysian tyrants, exploring issues of performance and performance, and juxtaposing Hieron to rival Greek leaders on the mainland. Subsequent chapters examine in turn all Pindar's preserved poetry for Hieron and members of his court, contextualizing his poetry by comparing it to the songs written for Hieron by Pindar's poetic contemporary, Bacchylides. These odes develop a specifically "tyrannical" mythography in which a hero from the past enjoys unusual closeness with the gods, only to bring ruin on him or herself by failing to manage this closeness appropriately. Such negative exemplars counterbalance Hieron's good fortune and present the dangers against which he must (and does) protect himself by regal virtue.

The readings that emerge are marked by exceptional integration of literary interpretation with the political/historical context.

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Histories of the Fifth Beginning
Historical Record of the Fifth Regiment of Foot, or Northumberland Fusiliers - Richard Cannon - 2009-09-25
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<td>Margaret C. Miller</td>
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