

PINDAR AND THE MERCENARY MUSE: *ISTHM.* 2.1–13

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Pindar wrote the Second Isthmian for Thrasybulus, the son of Xenocrates, who was brother of Theron, the tyrant of Acragas.¹ The ode celebrates a victory won by the father, Xenocrates, with the chariot at the Isthmus, as well as an earlier victory at Delphi. Aristotle (*ap. Schol. Isthm.* 2 Inscr. a Drachmann) dated the Pythian victory in 490, and the Isthmian is generally thought to be that mentioned in the Second Olympian (50) and to have been won about 476. Simonides celebrated both triumphs, according to the Scholiast, but Pindar also praised them in the Sixth Pythian and in this ode, having evidently been commissioned by Thrasybulus, to whom he addresses both poems. The Second Isthmian is usually dated at the end of the 470's, after the death of Theron and the fall of the dynasty of the Emmenids at Acragas, though an earlier date has recently been proposed, during Theron's life-time and soon after Pindar's return from Sicily to Greece in 475.²

¹ A full bibliography of interpretations of the passage will soon be available in Professor D. E. Gerber's forthcoming *A Bibliography of Pindar* 1513–1966, to be published as Monograph no. 28 of the American Philological Association. I give therefore only the most recent studies, along with the most important of the older commentaries; references to these will be made in short form: J. B. **Bury**, *The Isthmian Odes of Pindar* (London 1892) 26–49; U. v. **Wilamowitz-Moellendorf**, *Pindaros* (Berlin 1922) 310–18; L. R. **Farnell**, *The Works of Pindar* (London 1930–1932) 1.245–51. 2.342–46; G. **Norwood**, *Pindar* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1945) 152–57; P. **Von der Mühl**, "Weitere pindarische Notizen," *MH* 21 (1964) 168–72; C. M. **Bowra**, *Pindar* (Oxford 1964) 125–26, 355–57; C. **Pavese**, "χρήματα χρήματα' ἀνὴρ ed il motivo della liberalità nella seconda Istmica di Pindaro," *QUCC* 2 (1966) 103–12.

² Cf. Wilamowitz 310–11. The victory was earlier than *Ol.* 2 of 476, which mentions it (*Ol.* 2.50), but *Isthm.* 2 assumes that Xenocrates is dead (35–42), is silent about the tyranny of Theron (who died in 472), and may hint at political difficulties facing

The proem opens unexpectedly with a nostalgic memory of the poets of old. They mounted the chariot of the Muses, whose hair is dressed with gold, equipped with their resounding lyres, and without more ado (*ρίμφα*) shot their honey-voiced *παιδεῖοι ὕμνοι* at whoever possessed beauty and put others in mind of Aphrodite of the goodly throne. For in those days the Muse did not yet give herself for hire, and sweet, soft songs were not bought and sold, their faces silvered by honey-voiced Terpsichore.³ But now (*νῦν δ'*) the Muse bids us keep the word of the Argive, as nearest to truth. When stripped of both possessions and friends, he said, "It is money, money that makes a man."

Wilamowitz argues that *παιδεῖοι ὕμνοι* must be relevant, not only to the immediate context and the poets of old, but also to the poem as a whole. The victory of 490 had been celebrated by Pindar at once (*ρίμφα*) in the Sixth Pythian, where there is mention of Aphrodite as well as the Charites. It is not necessary, Wilamowitz goes on, to interpret that poem as a *παιδεῖος ὕμνος*, and we have too little of the skolion for Thrasybulus (fr. 124 Snell) to judge of it. But underlying these poems is *παιδεῖος ἔρως*, as Thrasybulus readily understood. There is also, Wilamowitz believes, a hit at the delay of Simonides in furnishing the ode which had been commissioned in celebration of the Isthmian victory.

the surviving Emmenids in Acragas (43; but the struggle against envy is a commonplace). P. Von der Mühl now thinks (170) that there is no need to find a reference here to the end of the Emmenids' rule and dates *Isthm.* 2 in the time of the other "poetic epistles," *Pyth.* 2 and 3 (i.e. after Pindar's return home in 475). He is followed by Pavese, 103-4.

³ The construction and the figure are not difficult, as is shown by a parallel such as *Isthm.* 3.87-88: *λευκωθεῖς κάρα μύρτοις*; and *φωνὰν ὑπάργυρον* at *Pyth.* 11.42 differs only in substituting an adjective for the participle. In these passages, as in *Isthm.* 2.8, the member affected is named; not so in *Nem.* 10.43: *Σικυνώθε δ' ἀργυρωθέντες σὺν οἰνηραῖς φιάλαις ἀπέβαν*, or in *Soph. Ant.* 1077-78: *εἰ κατηγορωμένος λέγω* (of one accused of taking a bribe), or in *Plat. Rep.* 10.607A: *τὴν ἡδυσμένην Μοῦσαν*. *Pind.* fr. 287 Snell: *Μοῖσαι ἀργύρεαι* seems to be only Julian's allusion to *Pyth.* 11.41-42 and *Isthm.* 2.8. The only problem in the latter passage is the question why Pindar specifically mentions the faces of the songs. The phrase has been taken to refer to the practice, known among Oriental dancers, of wearing coins on the face, or to the use of white lead for painting the face: cf. Farnell's note on the passage and Bowra 355-56. It is perhaps more likely that no specific practice is imagined (so in *Pyth.* 11.42 and *Soph. Ant.* 1077) and *πρόσωπα* signifies only the appearance of the songs (cf. *Nem.* 5.17: *φαίνουσα πρόσωπον ἀλάθει' ἄτρεκές*).

Here Wilamowitz is following in part an ancient tradition of interpretation. A fragment of Callimachus (fr. 222 Pfeiffer) has: οὐ γὰρ ἐργάτιν τρέφω / τὴν Μοῦσαν, ὡς ὁ Κεῖος Ὑλίου νέπους, where ἐργάτιν seems to be an allusion to the proem of the Second Isthmian. The Scholiasts (on *Isth.* 2.9a Drachmann), in fact, state that, by his mention of the Μοῖσα ἐργάτις⁴ and the Argivesaying, Pindar is jeering at the money-grubbing of Simonides.

In the proem, on this view, Pindar is showing his concern about the success of Simonides and Bacchylides in Sicily, where he felt that he was himself forgotten. He wrote this poem, then, to recall to Thrasybulus their old friendship as well as his services to the Emmenids of Acragas, and to attack his most successful rival on the ground that he was quick to pocket a fee but slow to produce a poem. The old poets and, it is implied, Pindar himself did not sell their verses for money and gave immediate praise to their loves. In the rest of the poem there is mingled praise of the dead Xenocrates and consolation for Thrasybulus in the loss of his father and the fall of the Emmenids, followed by advice not to be intimidated by the new situation but to perpetuate his memory and to publish the poet's songs.

Wilamowitz' hypothesis has the great merit of combining many disparate facts into an illuminating unity, but it fails to account for a number of others. First, it must have been awkward, to say the least, for Pindar to give preference to his own prompt, though unpaid, παιδεῖοι ὕμνοι over the dilatory, but expensive, services of Simonides. For the Second Isthmian honored a victory won, on Wilamowitz' reckoning, not less than four years earlier, and was addressed to a Thrasybulus who was not less than eighteen years older than he had been when Pindar ploughed the garden of the Charites and Aphrodite in the proem of the Sixth Pythian. And Pindar himself, though he takes a lordly view of wealth, makes no attempt elsewhere (as e.g. in *Pyth.* 11.41-42) to deny that he is paid for his verses. Secondly, the proem, as interpreted by Wilamowitz, does not cohere easily with the rest of the ode. For what has an attack on the avaricious Simonides to do with the praise of the great magnate Xenocrates, who was famous for his vivid victories, his public pieties, and his handsome hospitality?

⁴ The word can take a pejorative sense, as of a πόρνη: cf. the passages quoted by Bergk⁴ as Archil. fr. 184.

Or the repudiation of laggard poets with an exhortation that Thrasybulus publish the old glories of his dead father?

Another interpretation sees in the proem, not an attack on Simonides, but a message for Thrasybulus. Bury believed that Pindar could not have so emphatically preferred the ancient to the modern practice, unless he intended to act in accordance with his preference. The *παιδείος ὕμνος* that he has in mind is, in fact, his own Sixth Pythian which he had written "for love and not for money." Now, though his trade is to write for money, he offers the ode "as a gift from your mercenary friend." He means, therefore, according to Bury, that he is sending the poem without a fee. Farnell, who finds a similar concern here, turns it in the opposite direction. It is, he maintains, "a delicate hint to Thrasuboulos that Pindar would like to receive a fee which he considered due to him" (vol. 1, p. 250). This reading is indeed ancient, for the Scholiasts (Inscr. a Drachmann) report that Callistratus, a pupil of Aristophanes of Byzantium, asserted that Pindar was claiming a debt owed by Xenocrates.⁵

This interpretation, like Wilamowitz', fails to connect the proem closely with the rest of the ode. For the praises of the dead Xenocrates and the advice to publish them can have little to do with either a card marked, "With the compliments of the author," or even the most tactful presentation of a bill that was long overdue. On Bury's view Thrasybulus must have been wise indeed to infer from the cryptic hint, *ἔσσι γὰρ ὧν σοφός*, that Pindar wished to be understood as intending to practice, as well as to praise, the methods of the ancient poets. Farnell, on the other hand, requires that the phrase be the counterpart of a broad wink, as if to say, "Once upon a time an ode might have been tossed off for love, but nowadays *nous avons changé tout cela* and are all up for sale in the market-place." The tone is deplorable, even if, as Farnell writes (I.250), "Pindar is able to hint at his need most delicately, and is such a master in the technique of poetry that he is able to wrap up his meaning in rich and melodious diction." Still, only those who share this judgment of the tone and believe Pindar to be incapable of such a vulgarism will regard this

⁵ The interpretation offered by the Scholiasts and put forward by Farnell is accepted by Bowra 126.

point as decisive. For others, it will be necessary to point out that Pindar's view of wealth is quite different from that implied in Farnell's reading of the passage. An obsession with fees is the least likely of themes for a Pindaric proem.

Gilbert Norwood rightly abandoned the existing interpretations and sought to conceive the poem in an entirely different way. He took it to be a verse epistle composed with "mannered elegance" in a rollicking, convivial spirit, which inspires Pindar to be boisterously merry about the hospitality and victories of Xenocrates and to engage in "a smiling parody of his own manner." The proem, he held, was to be interpreted in the same spirit. It contains no expression of passionate feeling, but only a contrast between the old poetry (for example, love-poetry) which was composed for its own sake, and modern poetry which has become a paid profession. He illustrates his point shrewdly with a characteristically vivid comparison: "So might a poet of our time, who wrote of religion or war or politics, exclaim: 'We poets of today have a hard time—forced to think of publishers and contracts: how different from the Elizabethan who would dash off a sonnet to his mistress' eyebrow and then go a bat-fowling.'" What follows in the poem must refer to the career of the modern poet. "My own conviction," Norwood writes, "is that Thrasybulus, whose fortunes are depressed under the newly-established democracy and who is (as we learn from the Sixth Pythian) himself a poet [*Pyth.* 6.48–49], now seeks to improve his income by the composition of odes; and that Pindar, whose livelihood depended on the same profession, offers him half-jocular sympathy." Thus interpreted, the poem recognizes "Thrasybulus' obsessive 'need of hard cash'" and prepares for the symbol of the coin, which, he believes, is the unifying image of the poem as a whole.

Norwood saw clearly the need to find an interpretation of the opening lines which fits closely into the whole context of the poem, but his own suggestion can meet the requirements only if we accept his general theory of symbols in Pindar and its application in the Second Isthmian. If that theory is rejected, or given less importance in Pindar's poetic practice, Norwood's interpretation is no better able than its predecessors to solve the problem of the poem's unity. It is not altogether clear how sympathy with the hard lot of the contemporary

poet and his obsession about cash can be regarded as characteristic of Pindar, even in a light-hearted mood. If it should be thought Pindaric, how are we to read the cryptic transition in lines 12-13?

ἔσσι γὰρ ὦν σοφός, οὐκ ἄγνωτ' αἶδω
Ἰσθμίαν ἵπποισι νίκαν . . .

Granted that the praise of Xenocrates is exaggerated, what is its relevance? And what can be the significance of the admonition to restrict the expectations of envy and to refuse to cast into silence either the prowess of his father or *these songs*? It looks very much as if Pindar has on his mind something other than the struggles of Thrasybulus to keep up, by the sale of his verses, the position in Acragas of which he had been deprived by the democratic revolution.

It seems to me clear that a fresh approach must be made to the poem, and especially to its opening lines, if an interpretation is desired that fits both these verses themselves and what we know of their author elsewhere. To begin with, it is necessary to identify "the men of old" who, lyre in hand, mounted the Muses' chariot and, without any more preparation, shot their arrows at whatever took their fancy. Once this question is asked, it proves surprisingly easy to answer.

The poets of early lyric who had a reputation for erotic verse of this kind are Alcaeus, Ibycus, and Anacreon, and the surviving fragments of their work confirm their reputation.⁶ The names of Bycchis, Gorgias, and Smerdies, as well as others, are familiar as those of recipients of their παιδεῖοι ὕμνοι. That Pindar has some such poets in mind

⁶ The three poets are named by Aristophanes (*Thesm.* 161-62) as typical composers of Ionian erotic verse; cf. also Athen. 13.600-1; Diog. Babyl. *ap. Philod. De mus.* 14.8 ff., p. 79 Kemke; Cic. *Tusc.* 4.71. Alcaeus and Anacreon are similarly bracketed by Aristophanes in the *Banqueters* (fr. 223 Kock and Edmonds). Ibycus was ἐρωτομανέστατος περὶ τὰ μευράκια, according to the article s.v. in the *Suda*. Other erotic poets of the early period may be excluded from Pindar's reference, Alcman because he did not compose for boys (Archytas *ap. Chamael. ap. Athen.* 13.600 f. = fr. 25 Wehrli), Archilochus and Mimnermus because they were not lyric poets. Stesichorus is marked out by Athenaeus (13.601A) for his erotic verse; cf. fr. 99 (276) and 101 (278) *PMG*. But the evidence is not strong, and the opinion probably rests upon narrative poems (including the wrongly-attributed *Rhadine*) and a confusion, which also occurs in other connections, with Ibycus: cf. C. M. Bowra, *Greek Lyric Poetry*² (Oxford 1961) 86-87. Bacchylides' reference (10.42-43: ἕτερος δ' ἐπὶ παισὶ / ποικίλον τόξον τιτάνει), though it confirms Pindar's image and expression, does nothing to clarify his allusion.

seems necessary, but it is helpful to have the support of the Scholiasts (1a, 13, 17 Drachmann) in this interpretation. They are also able to quote from Anacreon the words, οὐδ' ἀργυρῇ κω τότ' ἔλαμπε Πειθώ (fr. 39: 384 PMG), of which Pindar's lines are an almost baroque development, and from Alcaeus (fr. Z 37: 360 L-P) his version of the saying of Aristodemus, which is quoted with emphatic iteration by Pindar here. It could not be plainer that Pindar, in contrasting the predicament of the contemporary Muse with the easy habits of his predecessors, is turning the words of the latter to the description of the former. The older poets did not dream, when they sang of the shining of silver Persuasion or pronounced the maxim of Aristodemus, that their phrases might ever be turned upon their successors and their Muse. That Pindar has nevertheless performed this twist provides an ironic counterpoint to this theme, which is the change in the condition of poetry.

The next question follows easily: by what change has the Muse gone to work for money? Here Pindar gives a plain hint when he says that it was under the influence of honey-voiced Terpsichore that sweet, soft songs put silver on their faces and were offered for sale. He thinks of the dance, and so of choral poetry only, which he contrasts with the practice of the great monodic poets of the preceding century.⁷ The point of the comparison, which Pindar thinks Thrasybulus wise enough to take for himself, appears to lie in *ρίμφα* of line 3, to which Wilamowitz called attention. The old poets were able to give praise without delay or constraint, in contrast to the poets of the present whom the Muse has made dependent on money. They were free, as their successors are not, to give immediate expression in song to their wishes. In the old days it was sufficient for a poet to equip himself with a lyre, but now that the Muse has gone to work for a wage, money is necessary as well.

⁷ The Muses had already been distinguished by name in Hesiod (*Theog.* 75-79), though the systematic distinction of their functions is not found in archaic or classical poetry. However, Hesiod is unlikely to have used the names without regard to their meanings, and the sense "delighting in the dance" is easy enough, given the use by Homer and later poets of epithets compounded with *τερπι-* and *τερψι-*. Plato saw the etymology clearly (*Phaedr.* 259c) and the idea is expressed by the author of *Scut.* 272-73 (τοὶ δ' ἄνδρες ἐν ἀγλαΐαις τε χοροῖς τε / τέρψιν ἔχων).

In this comparison between the men of old and the contemporary Muse, Pindar provides valuable and unnoticed evidence for the history of Greek lyric poetry. It is not his purpose, to be sure, to sketch even in bare outline the history of the *genre*, but only to contrast the conditions of publication in his own time with those known to the monodic poets of the sixth century. His vision does not take in the choral poetry of Alcman in Sparta nor of Stesichorus in Sicily. These poets may even have been beyond the range of his interests, or of his knowledge, but it is more relevant and more certain that the conditions of publication which they knew must have been different from those with which he is concerned. The worship of the gods provided the means as well as the setting of most of Alcman's choral poetry, as is clear from the *Partheneion*. What institution supported the long choral narratives of Stesichorus is obscure, but there must have been some great, very possibly religious, occasions that provided choruses, music, and dance, and required the narration of the traditional myths of Homer and Hesiod, with local embellishments, in a form that the epic did not offer. Ibycus, who migrated from Sicily to the court of Polycrates at Samos, is perhaps a transitional figure. At home he must have been familiar with the festivals for which Stesichorus wrote, whereas at Samos he shared with Anacreon the convivial society of the tyrant and his friends. There his erotic verse would have been well received, but his style remains the richly decorated manner of choral lyric rather than the elegantly witty informality of Anacreon's solos for the symposium. The long papyrus fragment, if it is correctly attributed to him, appears to show the strain of adapting the great choral themes and style to the frivolities of the Samian court. Whatever the truth about him, Pindar does not here allude to his verse, so far as we can tell, and we must leave him out of account.

Pindar's comparison, then, is drawn within definite limits. He is concerned with the convivial and erotic poetry that Alcaeus and Anacreon wrote for the symposium in the sixth century,⁸ and the choral encomiastic verse, such as the epinician odes, that he, like Simonides and Bacchylides, wrote on commission for the great rulers and nobles of his

⁸ For the connection between παιδικοί ὕμνοι and convivial occasions, cf. Bacch. fr. 4.79-80 Snell⁸.

own time.⁹ Alcaeus and Anacreon enjoyed the freedom of publication offered by the symposium. Occasions were frequent and the poet required, in addition to his entrée, no more than his lyre. Before the end of the century choral poetry was divested of its traditional connections with the festivals of cult, probably by Ibycus, certainly by Simonides, and diverted to the praise of the great.¹⁰ The change meant that the expense of the poet's fee and the choral production was assumed by a wealthy patron, with whom lay the power of decision in regard to all questions relating to the performance of the ode. The Muse, in Pindar's phrase, had grown fond of money and gone to work for a living.

The change in conditions must have brought with it a change in the relation between poet and patron. Anacreon had presumably been well entertained and comfortably maintained by Polycrates, who doubtless made clear what amused him and what he would not tolerate. But within such broad limits Anacreon had much freedom for his talents in the congenial atmosphere of a court which shared his tastes and appreciated his wit. He felt able to sing his *παιδεῖοι ὕμνοι* and other verse without constraint, without permission, and without delay. In Lesbos earlier Alcaeus had composed for cult festivals and for the symposiums of like-minded aristocrats whose political sympathies and choice of pleasures must have been close to his own. Tyrants and rulers appear in his verse as political figures rather than as patrons, and he poured out his hatred and defiance of them in his political verse with the same freedom that he exhibits in his erotic poems and drinking songs.

Simonides seems to have been chiefly responsible for the change.¹¹ The surviving fragments of his verse do not show how he conceived

⁹ That the encomium existed from earlier times was believed by Pindar (*Nem.* 8.50–51), but there is nothing to show that it was commissioned by a patron, written by a professional poet, or performed by a trained chorus.

¹⁰ Cf. W. Schmid, *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur* 1.1 (Munich 1929) 498–99.

¹¹ On Simonides as the first to make a trade of poetry, cf. the *Suda* s.v., Schol. Pind. *Isthm.* 2.9a Drachmann, and M. Detienne in *REG* 77 (1964) 406–7 and *Les maîtres de vérité dans la Grèce archaïque* (Paris 1967) 106. Earlier poets were of course rewarded or compensated for their poems. Thus Odysseus, though a guest in the palace of Alcinoüs, sends a piece of meat to the bard, Demodocus (*Od.* 8.474–81); Xenophanes, who is said by Diogenes Laertius (9.18) to have given public performances of his verse, makes bold (fr. B2 VS) to claim treatment comparable to that given to athletic victors; and

his relationship with the patrons who commissioned his work. But we are in no doubt about the judgment of antiquity in the matter. The tradition of his avarice, which flourished in anecdote and allusion, made the relation frankly commercial.¹² That tradition is best known to us from the fourth century and later, but it was familiar to Aristophanes and may go back to the court of Hiero at Syracuse in the poet's old age. It is likely to have arisen from the circumstances of the new patronage, which he helped to introduce.

Pindar, like Bacchylides, also adopted the new relationship and composed regularly on commission. Concerning his motives, literary gossip did not bring charges so frequent and sweeping as were made against Simonides'. The Scholiasts occasionally make inferences about his love of money when he speaks in praise of wealth or is taken to hint at payment for his songs, and there is an anecdote which says that he asked for a sculptor's fee of 3,000 drachmas for a poem.¹³ The anecdote, however, illustrates, not the poet's avarice, but his assertion of the dignity of poetry in comparison with sculpture, and is in any case evidently spun out of the text of the poem of the Fifth Nemean, for which it is adduced by the Scholiast as a commentary. As for pejorative inferences made by the Scholiasts, they can carry no weight, unless they are supported by the texts from which they are drawn.

It is fortunate for Pindar's reputation that enough of his verse has survived to permit us to judge for ourselves in this question, so that we are not in principle dependent on the uncertain tradition of literary history, as we must be in regard to Simonides. What we find in his verse makes it unlikely that he ever accepted the comparatively bourgeois view, which may well have seemed acceptable to the less traditional Simonides, that poetry is an art that sells its products in the

according to Herodotus (1.24.1) Arion made a fortune in Sicily. But we do not hear before Simonides of poets who sold their verses for a price. A phrase such as ἀμύθος ἀοιδά at Aesch. *Agam.* 979 implies that after his death, song is regularly paid for: cf. Fraenkel's note.

¹² Cf. Schmid (above, note 10) 498, note 3 and passages cited there; Pfeiffer on fr. 222 of Callimachus; Gow on Theocritus 16.10 ff.; N. Austin in *TAPA* 98 (1967) 9–10.

¹³ Cf. e.g. Schol. on *Ol.* 1.1b; *Pyth.* 2.125a, 3.195a; *Nem.* 7.25a; *Isthm.* 5.2a Drachmann; Farnell's note on *Pyth.* 3 (vol. 2, p. 136): "It is astonishing that professional self-interest and self-advertisement should have inspired such high poetry" etc.; and Schmid (above, note 10) 498, note 3.

market-place. His favorite word for himself in this relationship is *ξένος*, which first signifies the Homeric guest-friend who is entertained, protected, and laden with gifts by the rule of hospitality in the heroic age.¹⁴ Honor is due to the host who so deals with his guest and disgrace to whoever fails in this duty; and, although there may be a kind of exchange for mutual advantage, the relationship is primarily supported by the values of what Professor E. R. Dodds has taught us to call a "shame-culture."¹⁵ The honor and fame which the patron seeks are the chief good of the Pindaric poet as well. Moreover, poetry is a wisdom that is inborn with proper breeding, which knows without learning, and draws on inspiration for purposes of prophecy. It is quite capable of dealing on equal terms with the great of the world, whose excellences spring from the same root in inherited, god-given capacities. Poet and patron, in the Pindaric world, are bound together by traditional ties of religion, family, and society, and the commercial value of their exchange of goods and services has relatively small importance.

Wealth, to be sure, is important in Pindar's world. It is the bearer of great epithets: *εὐρυσθένης* (*Pyth.* 5.1), *μεγάνωρ* (*Ol.* 1.2), *ἀγάνωρ* (*Pyth.* 10.18), *ἄβρός* (*Pyth.* 3.110), and the like. Gold, which is everywhere present in the odes as the emblem of gods, princes, and all the great, is as it were its quintessence (*Ol.* 1.1-2). When it possesses the stability that characterizes a gift of fate and the gods, it is a "dear companion" (*Pyth.* 5.1-4 and 2.56; cf. 3.110-11; 10.17-18; *Nem.* 8.17; *Ol.* 2.10-11). It requires also that it be used with sense, with justice, and without excess (*Pyth.* 6.47; *Nem.* 1.31; *Ol.* 13.7; *Pyth.* 5.14, 6.46-47; *Isthm.* 3/4.1-2). It is equally subject to other conditions, for it is especially precious when placed in the context of greater values. Thus it serves to bear a crown of honor (*τιμὰ*: *Pyth.* 1.48-50, 2.58-60) and provides a basis for ambition, which soars above it (*Ol.* 2.53-56; *Pyth.* 8.91-92; *Nem.* 9.32-33; fr. 124b.6-7 Snell). Most clearly of all, it is associated with demonstrated excellences (*ἀρεταί*). It is mixed

¹⁴ On Pindar's relationship of guest-friendship with his patrons, cf. e.g. *Ol.* 2.6, 4.15, 9.83; *Pyth.* 10.64; *Nem.* 7.61, 9.2; in addition to *Isthm.* 2.39 and 48. According to Herodotus (7.228.3-4) Simonides set up his epigram for Megistias, who fell at Thermopylae, because of *ξενίῳ*.

¹⁵ Cf. E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1951) chap. 2.

with them (*Pyth.* 5.2), added to them in combination with χάρις (*Ol.* 2.10-11), compared with them when its use is prudent, as shown by success in contests (*Isthm.* 3.1-2), and their opulent setting (*Ol.* 2.53). Pindar's view of wealth is made most vividly evident at the beginning of the Fifth Isthmian, when he attributes the surpassing power which men find in gold to that goddess of many names whom he calls *Θεία*. She is the divinity that is experienced in the moment of victory in all sorts of contests, which owes to her its supreme value. The value of wealth is not therefore an economic fact nor any monetary reckoning. It is not hidden in vaults nor concealed in account-books; it is by its nature revealed to the public gaze and respect. To conceal it is accordingly wrong and dangerous (*Nem.* 1.31 and *Isthm.* 1.67-68). When rightly used, it is as conspicuous as a star, the truest light for men (*Ol.* 2.55-56).

It is, of course, the function of poetry, as Pindar conceives it, to commemorate, and so to save from decay and oblivion, the moment of glory that was revealed to the common world in the occasion of victory. Wealth therefore must serve, not only to bear the necessary expense of competition,¹⁶ but also to support poetry in giving immortality to mortal splendors. This is often made plain by Pindar, but nowhere more clearly than in his words of praise and advice to Hiero of Syracuse at the end of the First Pythian, which was written in 470 and so at about the same time as the Second Isthmian. Hiero is exhorted to hold fast to what is fair, and, if he wishes to have a reputation that is always pleasing, never to be wearied by expenditure nor to be misled by tricky gains. "Let your sail out," he says, "till it is filled with the breeze." The virtue which he holds up to Hiero is the characteristically aristocratic disposition which Aristotle calls "magnificence."¹⁷ If it is perhaps not itself a virtue in the strictest sense, it is

¹⁶ On *δαπάνη*, cf. *Ol.* 5.15; *Pyth.* 5.106; *Isthm.* 1.42, 3/4.47, 5.57, 6.10.

¹⁷ On the quasi-virtue of magnificence (*μεγαλοπρέπεια*), cf. Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 4.2. In the fifth century it is likely to involve horse-racing, as in the case of Pindar's Xenocrates (cf. also *Nem.* 9.31-33), the young Alcibiades (Plut. *Alcib.* 11), the Pheidippides of Aristophanes' *Clouds* (14-16), and others (cf. Plato, *Lysis* 205C-D). It is an aristocratic virtue, which is rejected by the Pericles of Thucydides (2.40.1), who makes a point of saying that the characteristic culture of democratic Athens does not involve large expense (*φιλοκαλοῦμεν . . . μετ' εὐτελείας*). The idea does not find expression in a single word in Pindar (note, however, the *Κροίσου φιλόφρων ἀρετά* of *Pyth.* 1.94) but is diffused almost everywhere in the odes. Pavese (107-12) believes that the virtue for

the means by which virtues are made to be greater, and to appear greater, than they could without it. It is thus the distinctive virtue or attitude of the great patron of poetry.

By contrast, pay (*μισθός*) and profit (*κέρδος*) are regarded more coolly.¹⁸ The highest pay or profit, in fact, is not any form of wealth, but fame (*Nem.* 7.63 and *Isthm.* 1.50–52), and the pay that the poet expects from praise of Salamis is the *χάρης* of Athenians (*Pyth.* 1.75–77). When not so transformed, profit is a recurrent danger to other values, to *αἰδώς* (*Nem.* 9.33), measure (*Nem.* 11.47), justice (*Pyth.* 4.139–40; cf. 8.13–14), wisdom (*Pyth.* 3.54; *Nem.* 7.18), and generosity (*Pyth.* 1.92, 2.78). It misleads and deceives (*Pyth.* 1.92, 3.55).

Pay and profit are therefore seen to be more dangerous and are more markedly depreciated than naked wealth. But all are on the same footing in finding their value in serving the ends to which Pindar and his society have given their approval. He is consistent in praising the conspicuous use of wealth for these ends and in slighting its mere acquisition and accumulation. This is important, because both ancient Scholiasts and modern commentators have found fault with his attitude, in the belief that his praise is given to wealth for its own sake and that his exhortations to spend conceal an unsatisfied greed for money. Such an opinion cannot withstand an unprejudiced reading of his own words. Whether the more widespread judgment of Simonides' avarice would survive, if we possessed a representative sample of his verse, is matter for conjecture.

The remaining difficulties that have been found in the proem of the Second Isthmian probably arise from the neglect of two conventions that are fundamental to Pindaric criticism.

The first is simply that an epinician ode is a poem of praise.¹⁹ Its function is precisely to celebrate the achievements that Pindar and his

which Thrasybulus receives praise is liberality; but that virtue does not require the conspicuous public display of greatness or the corresponding reputation that are entailed in Pindar's idea. On the distinction of the two virtues, cf. Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 4.2.

¹⁸ On the ambiguity of *κέρδος*, cf. *Pyth.* 2.78: *κερδοῖ δὲ τί μάλα τοῦτο κερδαλέον τελέθει*; *κερδοῖ* is Huschke's conjecture, which is accepted by Turyn and Bowra, but the relevant ambiguity remains, if *κέρδει*, which is given by the MSS, is preferred, as by Snell.

¹⁹ This point has been made with emphasis most recently by E. L. Bundy, "Studia Pindarica I: The Eleventh Olympian Ode," in *Univ. Calif. Publ. Class. Philol.* vol. 18, no. 1 (1962) 3.

patrons valued most highly. Whatever he has to say must be interpreted in the light of this general purpose. It is highly likely that his allusion to the mercenary Muse is relevant to the laudation of Thrasybulus and Xenocrates.

The second is that the Pindaric ode, like Greek lyric in general, is written for public performance.²⁰ The central focus in which his verse is most clearly read is neither the intention of the poet in the act of composition nor the influence of the poem upon the person to whom it is addressed. It is, first and foremost, the judgment of those, family, clansmen, and friends, who were the witnesses of its choral performance.

It follows that the praise of wealth is not primarily the personal opinion of the poet nor his advice to the recipient; it is congratulation of the recipient on his culmination of it.²¹ The recommendation of expenditure is not an admonition for a patron nor a device of self-seeking; it is the glorification of magnificence. Those who were present at the first production of the odes, because they understood their purpose and conventions, were in no danger of misunderstanding; they were themselves part of the celebrations to which the commissioned poems gave expression.

The proem of the Second Isthmian yields a satisfactory sense if it is interpreted on the same lines. The contrast between the ancient poets and the mercenary Muse does not aim at approval of the former nor at reproof of the latter. Its purpose is to demonstrate the increased capabilities and achievements of wealth properly used, and so to praise the public use that Thrasybulus has made of his own wealth by commissioning and producing the present ode. Pindar's voice, which is

²⁰ The notion that some of the Pindaric epinician odes are poetic epistles, intended for the private use of a recipient, is not quite excluded by this rule, if the epistles are written as if for performance. But in that case it becomes extremely difficult to distinguish the imitation from the original, and in any case the interpretation of *Isthm. 2* offered here requires a public performance. The hypothesis of the poetic epistle is often put forward: e.g. Wilamowitz 285-93, 310; W. Schadewaldt, *Der Aufbau des pindarischen Epinikion*, in *Schr. d. Königsb. Gel. Gesellsch.* 5, Heft 3 (Halle 1928) 326 ff.; Norwood 153; Bowra 124; P. Von der Mühl in *MH* 15 (1958) 221 and 21 (1964) 169-70. The lines at the end of *Isthm. 2* have an epistolary character because Pindar has sent his ode to Acragas in care of Nicasippus and is not himself present; they do not require that the ode was a private letter, and 43-46 point to a public performance.

²¹ Pavese (107-12), alone of the commentators and critics, has seen clearly that public praise is the purpose of these various motifs in Pindar.

heard at the end of the ode urging that silence be not permitted to become the fate of Xenocrates' excellence and of this song, which was not made for idleness, is in fact heard by the audience as glorifying Thrasybulus' filial act of commemoration. Both passages unite in celebrating the high magnificence of the generous patron. If the Muse has a love of profit and has gone into service, that can do no harm, because the end she serves is the highest end, and the profit she seeks, the highest profit, the praise of excellence (*Nem.* 7.63 and *Isthm.* 1.47-51).

The public nature of excellence and the dependence upon fame explain the Muse's commendation of the proverbial maxim of Aristodemus.²² For it was spoken, as Pindar says explicitly, when he was deprived at one stroke of possessions and friends.²³ In the Pindaric world, there can be no fame without the approval of generous and approving friends, and wealth is in turn necessary to entertain them in comfort and distinction, whether they form a court, a clan, or a coterie. The Muse's celebration of excellence therefore testifies to the open-handed and conspicuous use of wealth.

It now becomes intelligible why the poet goes on to say that Thrasybulus is wise and well-acquainted with his theme, which is the victory of Xenocrates with the chariot at the Isthmus.²⁴ He is surely not performing any of the incongruous gestures that have been attributed to him, such as shaking his head silently with distaste for the avarice of a rival poet, winking to suggest that payment of his fee is either overdue or unnecessary, or nodding in sympathy with the predicament

²² The proverb is known from Alcaeus fr. 360 L-P (cited by the Schol. on *Isthm.* 2.17), Diog. Laert. 1.31, and elsewhere. The sentiment itself recurs, e.g. in Hes. *Op.* 686 and Theogn. 699-700: cf. D. L. Page, *Sappho and Alcaeus* (Oxford 1955) 315.

²³ On the presence and support of friends and loyal fellow-citizens, cf. *Ol.* 6.7, 7.5; *Nem.* 11.17; and frequent references to the κῶμος. In Pindar honor and all worth are dependent on friends: cf. *Nem.* 10.78: οὔχεται τιμὰ φίλων πατωμένῳ φωτί. The Theognidean collection is rich in illustrations of the relation between wealth and friendship, as in 29-38, 101-4, 105-12, 667-82, and often by implication in what is said of ἀρετή and πενίη.

²⁴ The dative ἀγνώτ(ι), which was preferred by Callistratus, would make the point more sharply than the received accusative (cf. passages such as *Pyth.* 4.142, 9.50-51; Hom. *Il.* 10.250, 23.787; Aesch. *Prom. Vinct.* 441-42; Aristoph. *Lys.* 993), but the combination of the elision with the omission of the pronoun is harsh. In any case, there is no important difference of meaning involved: the well-known Isthmian victory of Xenocrates is especially well-known to the wise Thrasybulus.

of a poet who must earn his living. He is congratulating his patron on the use of his wealth, which is made evident by the performance of his ode and its reception by the company of friends.²⁵ The point is made even clearer a few lines later when, in a second apostrophe to Thrasybulus, he says that his house is *well-acquainted* with the songs of celebrating friends. The occasion itself is proof that Thrasybulus knows very well the importance of the victory and of poetry.²⁶

Pindar displays a characteristically Greek frankness in his praise of wealth. That may be surprising to us but is without embarrassment for him, because of his secure approval of the purposes for which that wealth was used. It is even more surprising that he found it appropriate to enrol his Muse in the service of that same power. That he did so is convincing proof, if any proof is needed, that for him poetry was deeply implicated in the values and the attitudes of the society for which he wrote.

²⁵ Pavese (109–12) compares ἐσσι γὰρ ὦν σοφός (12) with *Nem.* 7.17–21, which he interprets, very persuasively, as praise of the patron's understanding as shown by his open-handed use of wealth in support of celebration in poetry. It is tempting to take *Pyth.* 6.46–49 (also for Thrasybulus) in the same way. Pavese takes οὐκ ἄγνῶτ' proleptically, of a victory which will become famous through the poet's song. This interpretation weakens the connection with the preceding words, shifts the center of focus from the present moment of celebration (which is properly recognized by Pavese in his comment on 9), and misses the significance of the echo ἀγνώτες in 30. This is not to deny, of course, that Pavese is quite right in seeing here an implication of future fame.

²⁶ A similar interpretation is to be given to his practice of regarding the song as a debt owed to the victor or patron: cf. e.g. *Ol.* 3.7, 10.7–8; *Pyth.* 9.103–5; and Schadewaldt (above, note 20) 278 and note 1. The bold passage at *Pyth.* 11.41–45, in which Pindar speaks of the Muse's undertaking for pay to provide a silvered utterance (εἰ μισθοῖο συνέθειν παρέχειν / φωνὰν ὑπάργυρον), is also praise of the patron's use of wealth in the present celebration.