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## SPONSORING THE ARTS: MELIC PERSPECTIVES

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper explores the melic poets' take on art and its sponsors. Since much has been written on the relationship of epinician poets with their patrons, this paper broadens the focus of enquiry to include other melic genres and, in addition to the verbal, to look at the visual arts as well, i.e. melic representations of communities that sponsor songs and of communities or individuals that sponsor other art-forms such as sculpture, architecture, and precious objects. Taking as starting point Xenophon's depiction of Simonides in *Hiero*, I discuss epigrams XXVII and XXVIII Page and relevant testimonia that show Simonides' keen interest in Athenian dithyrambic contests; Bacchylides' *Ode* 19, probably composed for the Great Dionysia; Pindar's *Pythian* 7, *Paean* 8, and *fragment* 3 in conjunction with *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 281-99, Herodotus 1.31, Cicero, *De oratore* 2. 86. 352-353, [Plutarch] *Consolatio ad Apollonium*, and Pausanias – all of which offer precious insights into Pindar's views on sponsoring monumental sculpture and architecture; and Bacchylides' description of the golden tripods that Hieron offered to Apollo in *Ode* 3. On the basis of this evidence I argue that whatever the nature and the range of remuneration of poets and artists may have been, melic rhetoric shows that it was the relationship of poets, artists and their sponsors with the gods that was ultimately at stake. This is why both the poetry and the traditions about Simonides, Pindar and Bacchylides privilege the divine favour that poets, artists and patrons alike either obtained or were hoping to obtain by offering masterpieces to the gods.

**KEYWORDS:** Religious festivals; prize; dithyrambic contests; sponsorship; monumental sculpture; monumental architecture; remuneration; epinician patrons; Bacchylides; Pindar; Simonides; Apollo; Trophonius; Agamedes; Hieron.

## PATROCINANDO AS ARTES: PERSPECTIVAS MÉLICAS

**RESUMO:** Este artigo examina o ofício dos poetas mélicos e seus patrocinadores. Visto que muito já foi escrito sobre a relação entre os poetas de epinícios e seus patronos, este artigo amplia o foco da investigação para incluir outros gêneros mélicos e, além das artes verbais, examina também as artes visuais, isto é, representações mélicas de comunidades que patrocinam canções e de comunidades ou indivíduos que patrocinam outras formas de arte, tais como escultura, arquitetura e objetos preciosos. Tomando como ponto de partida a representação de Simônides feita por Xenofonte em *Hiéron*, discuto os epigramas XXVII e XXVIII Page, e testemunhos relevantes que mostram o grande interesse de Simônides pelas competições ditirâmbicas atenienses; a *Ode* 19 de Baquilides, provavelmente composta para as Grandes Dionísias; a *Pítica* 7, o *Peã* 8 e o *fragmento* 3 de Píndaro, junto com os *Hinos homéricos a Apolo* 281-99, Heródoto 1.31, Cícero, *De Oratore* 2. 86. 352-353, *Consolatio ad Apollonium* [Plutarco], e Pausânias – pois todos oferecem preciosos *insights* a respeito das visões de Píndaro acerca do patrocínio de obras de arquitetura e escultura monumentais; e a descrição por Baquilides das trípodas de ouro que Hiéron ofereceu a Apolo na *Ode* 3. Tomando como base essas evidências, sustento que, independentemente de qual possa ter sido a natureza e o alcance da remuneração dos poetas e dos artistas, a retórica mélica mostra que o que estava em jogo, em última instância, era a relação de poetas, artistas e seus patronos com os deuses. É por isso que tanto a poesia quanto as tradições sobre Simônides, Píndaro e Baquilides privilegiam o favor divino que poetas, artistas e patronos obtinham ou esperavam obter ao oferecer obras primas para os deuses.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Festivais religiosos; prêmio; competições ditirâmbicas; patrocínio; escultura monumental; arquitetura monumental; remuneração; patronos de epinícios; Baquilides; Píndaro; Simônides; Apolo; Trofônio; Agamedes; Hiéron.

This is a very special occasion for me. Before explaining the reason, I wish to express my warmest thanks to the Society of Brazilian Classical Studies for their invitation to this conference whose topic, ‘Arts, citizenship, and politics’, is very dear to me, as many of you know. I have thought a lot about art and politics in melic poetry, but there is one paper that I have published which combines all three. This paper is entitled ‘Dramatic and Political Perspectives on Archaic Sculptures. Bacchylides’ Fourth Dithyramb (c. 18) and the Athenian Treasury in Delphi’.<sup>1</sup> I remember very vividly giving this paper in 2011 at the seminars on Ancient Greek Literature in Delphi to an engaged audience of Brazilian classicists. I don’t know if any of you who were there still remember this event, but I still remember the vivid and productive dialogue that followed my presentation. This is why the present occasion is very special: it gives me the incentive and the opportunity to develop my thoughts further by exploring a different aspect of this stimulating topic.

<sup>1</sup> Athanassaki, 2016.

The aspect I wish to explore is the melic poets' take on art and its sponsors. Since much has been written on the relationship of epinician poets with their patrons, I wish to broaden the focus of enquiry to include other melic genres and, in addition to the verbal, to look at the visual arts as well. Specifically, I shall briefly discuss representations of communities that sponsor songs and of communities or individuals that sponsor other art-forms such as sculpture, architecture, and precious objects.<sup>2</sup> Concerning the status of individual sponsors, I shall look both at rulers and at private citizens. Owing to time and space considerations I can only discuss a few representative examples from the poetry of Simonides, Pindar and Bacchylides – all three sponsored by private citizens, monarchs, and communities – and the relevant ancient testimonia. I hope to show that simultaneous examination of sponsoring verbal and material arts can enrich our understanding of the ways in which poets saw their relationship with their sponsors.

First, however, a very brief and selective summary of scholarly opinion on the poets' remuneration by their sponsors is in order. According to Bruno Gentili it was the tyrants who set a mercenary pattern in their relations with poets such as Ibycus, Anacreon and Simonides.<sup>3</sup> Leslie Kurke, whose influential study focuses on Pindar's epinicians, has argued that Pindar uses the language of aristocratic gift exchange to describe his relations with his patrons, thus masking and therefore elevating the monetary transactions of poets and their patrons.<sup>4</sup> More recently, Hayden Pelliccia has called attention to the problematical value of paid praise, whereas Ewen Bowie has questioned the validity of a sharp distinction between money- and gift-giving (μισθός vs. δῶρον or δωρεά).<sup>5</sup>

In what follows I shall explore the impact of the religious background on sponsorship by focusing on poetry mainly composed for competitions in the context of religious festivals and on art dedicated in the Panhellenic sanctuaries. I shall argue that whatever the nature and the range of remuneration of poets and artists may have been, melic rhetoric shows that it was the relationship of poets, artists and their sponsors with the gods that was ultimately at stake. This is why both the poetry and the traditions about Simonides, Pindar and Bacchylides privilege the divine favour that poets, artists and patrons alike either obtained or were hoping to obtain by offering masterpieces to the gods.

I begin with Simonides, who in antiquity became notorious for his avarice. Although this is the verdict of posterity, it is clearly a one-sided picture, as we shall see. In a forthcoming paper I argue that in antiquity Simonides was also remembered as a great *chorodidaskalos* who won a great number of civic competitions all over Greece.<sup>6</sup> I have discussed elsewhere Xenophon's portrait of Simonides as *chorodidaskalos* in *Hieron*, an imaginary dialogue between

<sup>2</sup> The fundamental study on sponsorship of poetry is Wilson, 2000. For epinician *choregia* see Currie, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Gentili, 1988, p. 160-66. For Gentili's model see also Bowie, 2012, p. 83.

<sup>4</sup> Kurke, 1991

<sup>5</sup> Pelliccia, 2009; Bowie, 2012. For sponsorship of epinician choruses in different celebratory contexts see Currie, 2011. For patronage at Hieron's court see also Morgan, 2015, chapter 3.

<sup>6</sup> Athanassaki, forthcoming.

the poet and the Sicilian tyrant who was a famous patron of the arts. In *Hieron* Simonides, evidently inspired by his own experience, proposes choral competition as an ideal model of government and urges the bewildered tyrant to set up competitions in all civic activities for, in his view, the expense is negligible in comparison to the profit:

εἰ δὲ φοβῇ, ὃ Ἱέρων, μὴ ἐν πολλοῖς ἄθλων προτιθεμένων πολλὰι δαπάναι γίνωνται, ἐννόησον ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμπορεῦματα λυσιτελέστερα ἢ ὅσα ἄνθρωποι ἄθλων ὠνοῦνται. ὀρᾷς ἐν ἵππικοῖς καὶ γυμνικοῖς καὶ χορηγικοῖς ἀγῶσιν ὥς μικρὰ ἄθλα μεγάλας δαπάνας καὶ πολλοὺς πόνους καὶ πολλὰς ἐπιμελείας ἐξάγεται ἀνθρώπων;

Xenophon, *Hieron* 9.11<sup>7</sup>

In case you fear, Hiero, that the cost of offering prizes for many subjects may prove heavy, you should reflect that no commodities are more profitable than those that are bought for a prize. Think of the large sums that men are induced to spend on horse-races, gymnastic and choral competitions, and the long course of training and practice they undergo for the sake of a paltry prize.

According to Simonides, as depicted by Xenophon, people value distinction much more than the effort and money required for success. This is why they are prepared to spare neither effort nor money in order to win distinction in the competitive games. Xenophon's portrayal of Simonides is not very different from the picture that emerges from two epigrams to which we may now turn.

Epigram XXVII has been dated by Denys Page and others to the Hellenistic period. From our point of view, it makes little difference if it is classical or Hellenistic epigram. What is important and astounding is the great number of choral competitions that Simonides entered and won:

ἔξ ἐπὶ πεντήκοντα, Σιμωνίδη, ἦραο ταύρους  
καὶ τρίποδας πρὶν τόνδ' ἀνθέμεναι πίνακα.  
τοσσάκι δ' ἱμερόεντα διδασκόμενος χορὸν ἀνδρῶν  
εὐδόξου Νίκας ἀγλαὸν ἄρμ' ἐπέβης.

XXVII Page

Fifty-six bulls and tripods, Simonides, did you win before setting up this tablet; fifty six times after training the delightful chorus of men did you step aboard the glorious chariot of honoured Victory.

Another epigram, also considered a Hellenistic literary exercise, mentions one of Simonides' dithyrambic victories in Athens:

<sup>7</sup> Greek quotations from Xenophon's works and English translations, the latter slightly modified at a few instances, are taken from the Marchant's Loeb edition.

ἦρχεν Ἀδείμαντος μὲν Ἀθηναίοις, ὅτ' ἐνίκα  
 Ἀντιοχίς φυλὴ δαιδάλεον τρίποδα·  
 Ξεινοφίλου δέ τις υἱὸς Ἀριστείδης ἐχορήγει  
 πεντήκοντ' ἀνδρῶν καλὰ μαθόντι χορῶ·  
 ἄμφι διδασκαλίῃ δὲ Σιμωνίδῃ ἔσπετο κῦδος  
 ὀγδωκονταέτει παιδί Λεωπρεπέος.

## XVIII Page

Adeimantus was archon in Athens when the Antiochid tribe won the intricately-made tripod; one Aristides, son of Xenophilus, was choregos of the chorus of fifty men who had learned well; and for their training glory came the way of Simonides, son of Leoprepes, at the age of eighty.

This is a famous epigram showing that Simonides was very fit at eighty! Syrianus, the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD Neoplatonist who preserves this epigram, prefaces it as follows:

πάσης γὰρ ἐπιστήμων ἀνὴρ ποιητικῆς τε καὶ μουσικῆς ὑπῆρχεν ὥς ἐκ νεότητος μέχρις  
 ὀγδοήκοντα ἐτῶν νικᾶν ἐν τοῖς ἀγῶσιν Ἀθήνησιν, ὥς καὶ τὸ ἐπίγραμμα δηλοῖ ... φασὶ δὲ  
 αὐτὸν μετὰ τὴν νίκην πλεῦσαι πρὸς Ἱέρωνα καὶ μετ' ὀλίγον ἐν Σικελίᾳ τελευτῆσαι.

Syrianus 86

For Simonides was knowledgeable in all poetry and music, so that he won victories in the Athenian contests from his youth to the age of eighty, as the epigram shows ... They say that after the victory he sailed to Hiero and died soon after in Sicily.

This is of course a late testimony, but the stories of Simonides' agonistic successes in Athens go back to the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Aristophanes for instance, mentions Simonides' participation in public competitions, both in the *Wasps* and in the *Birds*.<sup>8</sup> Syrianus' testimony is extremely valuable for it shows that the memory of Simonides' agonistic success was preserved for ten centuries after his death. It also shows that city-sponsored competitions were as important to our poet at the age of eighty as Hiero's presumably much more lavish sponsorship and hospitality.<sup>9</sup>

Bacchylides, probably Simonides' nephew, was also eager to participate in city-sponsored events, as is obvious from the dithyrambs he composed for his fellow-Ceians and for the Athenians. I wish to start with a dithyramb that has received far less attention than the much discussed odes 17 and 18, for the Ceians and for the Athenians respectively:

<sup>8</sup> Aristophanes, *Wasps* 1410-11 shows Simonides and Lasus training rival choruses in all likelihood for a dithyrambic contest. It has been suggested that Lasus' response may indicate Simonides' superiority and almost certain victory; see Molyneux, 1992, p. 101-2 with references; *Birds* 917-19.

<sup>9</sup> See Xenophon, *Hieron* 1.13, where the tyrant complains that poets expect to make a lifetime's fortune from the tyrants.

πάρεστι μυρία κέλευθος  
 ἀμβροσίων μελέων,  
 ὃς ἂν παρὰ Πιερίδων λάχησι  
 δῶρα Μουσᾶν, 5  
 ἰοβλέφαροί τε κ<όρ>αι  
 φερεστέφανοι Χάριτες  
 βάλῳσιν ἀμφὶ τιμάν  
 ὕμνοισιν· ὕφαιné νυν ἐν  
 ταῖς πολυηράτοις τι καινὸν 10  
 ὀλβίαις Ἀθάναις,  
 εὐαίνετε Κηῖα μέριμνα·  
 πρέπει σε φερτάταν ἵμεν  
 ὁδὸν παρὰ Καλλιόπας λαχοῖσαν  
 ἔξοχον γέρας.

Bacchylides, *Ode 19*<sup>10</sup>

Countless paths of ambrosial verses lie open for him who obtains gifts from the Pierian Muses and whose songs are clothed with honour by the violet-eyed maidens, the garland-bearing Graces. Weave, then, in lovely, blessed Athens a new fabric, praiseworthy Cean mind: you must travel by the finest road, since you have obtained from Calliope a superlative prize.

The context of the composition and performance of this dithyramb is unknown. Maehler has suggested the Great Dionysia, probably around 460 BCE.<sup>11</sup> I do not have time to discuss this dithyramb thoroughly, but the praise involved in the second person statement in l. 11, ‘praiseworthy Cean mind’, points to an agonistic context, even if Bacchylides did not compose the dithyramb for the Great Dionysia, but for another Athenian festival. As Kuiper pointed out long ago, the audience of the performance must have understood it as the Chorus’ address to the poet.<sup>12</sup> If the context of this dithyramb was indeed agonistic, the choral address is a clever and subtle subterfuge whereby the poet urges his audience – through the Chorus – to appreciate the merits of his dithyramb and award him the prize.<sup>13</sup> This urge is much subtler than, but ultimately similar to, the comic choruses’ praise of Aristophanes, for instance in the *parabasis*, for the same purpose.<sup>14</sup> Like Simonides, Bacchylides was also sponsored by Hieron and, like Simonides, he found irresistible public events that were sponsored by cities or communities. I shall come back to Bacchylides and Simonides after a quick look at Pindar.

Like the two Ceian poets, Pindar also participated in city-sponsored events in his native Thebes, in Athens and elsewhere. I shall begin my discussion from the honours Pindar

<sup>10</sup> The Greek quotations are taken from Maehler’s edition, the English translations are those of Campbell, slightly adapted.

<sup>11</sup> Maehler, 2004, p. 205.

<sup>12</sup> Kuiper, 1928.

<sup>13</sup> For the fierce competition among dithyrambic poets and among tribes see Ieranò, 2013, p. 373-80.

<sup>14</sup> See for instance Aristophanes, *Acharnians* 626-58, *Clouds* 618-27.

received from the Athenians for a famous dithyramb, frgs. 76 and 77, that he composed for them after the Persian wars. Let us look first at Isocrates' account in the *Antidosis*:

Ἔτι δὲ δεινότερον, εἰ Πίνδαρον μὲν τὸν ποιητὴν οἱ πρὸ ἡμῶν γεγονότες ὑπὲρ ἑνὸς μόνον ῥήματος, ὅτι τὴν πόλιν ἔρεισμα τῆς Ἑλλάδος ὠνόμασεν, οὕτως ἐτίμησαν ὥστε καὶ πρόξενον ποιήσασθαι καὶ δωρεὰν μυριάς αὐτῷ δοῦναι δραχμᾶς, ἐμοὶ δὲ πολὺ πλείω καὶ κάλλιον ἐγκεκωμιακότι καὶ τὴν πόλιν καὶ τοὺς προγόνους μὴδ' ἀσφαλῶς ἐγγένοιτο καταβιβῶναι τὸν ἐπίλοιπον χρόνον.

Isocrates, *Antidosis* 166<sup>15</sup>

It would be even more absurd if, whereas Pindar, the poet, was so highly honored by our forefathers because of a single line of his in which he praises Athens as 'the bulwark of Hellas' that he was made *proxenos* and given a present of ten thousand drachmas, I, on the other hand, who have glorified Athens and our ancestors with much ampler and nobler encomiums, should not even be privileged to end my days in peace.

The Isocratean picture is complemented by the testimony of Pausanias, who saw the statue of Pindar in the vicinity of the temple of Ares in Athens:

τῆς δὲ τοῦ Δημοσθένους εἰκόνος πλησίον Ἀρεῶς ἐστὶν ἱερόν, ἔνθα ἀγάλματα δύο μὲν Ἀφροδίτης κεῖται, τὸ δὲ τοῦ Ἀρεως ἐποίησεν Ἀλκαμένης, τὴν δὲ Ἀθηνᾶν ἀνὴρ Πάριος, ὄνομα δὲ αὐτῷ Λόκρος. ἐνταῦθα καὶ Ἐνυοῦς ἄγαλμά ἐστιν, ἐποίησαν δὲ οἱ παῖδες οἱ Πραξιτέλους· περὶ δὲ τὸν ναὸν ἐστᾶσιν Ἡρακλῆς καὶ Θησεὺς καὶ Ἀπόλλων ἀναδούμενος ταινία τὴν κόμην, ἀνδριάντες δὲ Καλάδης Ἀθηναίοις ὡς λέγεται νόμους γράψας καὶ Πίνδαρος ἄλλα τε εὐρόμενος παρὰ Ἀθηναίων καὶ τὴν εἰκόνα, ὅτι σφᾶς ἐπῆνεσεν ᾠσμα ποιήσας.

Pausanias 1.8.4<sup>16</sup>

Near the statue of Demosthenes is a sanctuary of Ares, where are placed two statues of Aphrodite, one of Ares made by Alcamenes, and one of Athena made by a Parian whose name was Locrus. Here is also a statue of Enyo, made by the sons of Praxiteles. About the temple stand statues of Heracles, Theseus, Apollo binding his hair with a fillet, and statues of Calades who, as it is said, composed nomes for the Athenians, and of Pindar who received other rewards from the Athenians and the statue, because he praised them in a song he composed.

Our sources tell us very little about the event for which Pindar composed the famous dithyramb, but in this instance it is clear that his success went far beyond the actual

<sup>15</sup> The Greek quotation and the English translation is taken from Norlin's Loeb edition.

<sup>16</sup> The Greek quotation (Spiro's text) and English translation are taken from Jones' 1918 Loeb edition. For the prizes awarded to the poets see Ieranò, 2013, p. 376-77: the first prize was an ox or a bull, the second an amphora and the third a goat.



victory in a competition, if we assume he composed the dithyramb for an agonistic event.<sup>17</sup> We do not know if Isocrates' figure is accurate, but 10000 drachmas is an awful lot of money. Ewen Bowie who, as some of you know, is keen on converting ancient to modern currencies, reckons that this must have been equivalent to \$250.000, a quarter of a million dollars! But even if the figure is grossly exaggerated, there is no reason to doubt that the Athenians honored Pindar in his lifetime. With regard to the statue, Isocrates' silence suggests a later dedication, perhaps sometime in the Hellenistic period.<sup>18</sup> Pindar's participation in city-sponsored events in Athens in his own lifetime and his huge reputation after his death clearly facilitated a posthumous dedication that guaranteed the longevity of his fame in a city that, despite its political decline, remained one of the most important cultural centers in the ancient world.

Pindar's favourable reception in Athens sheds light on the long-term advantage communities have over individual sponsors, especially when these communities were important cultural centers. Pindar, like Simonides and Bacchylides, had all been sponsored by powerful tyrants and their milieu and had the opportunity to observe their fleeting power and influence. Simonides, for instance, was active in Athens long after Hipparchus' assassination and the fall of tyranny. Pindar talks about fair-weather friends in the *Second Isthmian*, an ode commemorating Theron's brother Xenocrates after his and probably Theron's death.

Although we know little about the dissemination of these great poets' compositions in the years following their death, our evidence suggests that Athens played an important role in its initial survival until its later canonization by the Alexandrian scholars. We have seen that Simonides was active in the Athenian cultural scene until the age of eighty. Bacchylides composed several dithyrambs for major Athenian festivals and probably belonged to Cimon's milieu. Pindar was a student of Lasus from Hermione at the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century and had close ties with the Alcmaeonids, who were famous for the brilliant restoration of the temple of Apollo in Delphi.

Pindar composed two odes featuring this Alcmaeonid temple, which offer us the opportunity to explore his take on sponsors of architecture and sculpture. I begin the *Seventh Pythian* which he composed for Megacles' chariot victory in 486:

Κάλλιστον αἱ μεγαλόπολεις Ἀθῆναι	
προοίμιον Ἀλκμανιδᾶν εὐρυσθενεῖ	
γενεᾷ κρηπιδ' αἰοιδᾶν ἵπποισι βαλέσθαι.	3/4
ἐπεὶ τίνα πάτρην, τίνα οἶκον ναίων ὀνυμάζεαι	5/6
ἐπιφανέστερον	7
Ἑλλάδι πυθέσθαι;	

<sup>17</sup> The date of composition is also uncertain. The end of the Persian wars is obviously the *terminus post quem*. The 470s seem to me the most probable period. See also Lavecchia, 2000, p. 279 with the references in notes 36 and 37.

<sup>18</sup> The longevity of Pindar's fame is attested in a tradition preserved by Plutarch, *Life of Alexander*, 11 and Arrian, *Anabasis* I. 9. 10: after the conquest of Thebes, Alexander spared the relatives and house of Pindar.

πάσαισι γὰρ πολίεσι λόγος ὁμιλεῖ	
Ἐρεχθέος ἀστῶν, Ἄπολλον, οἱ τεόν	10
δόμον Πυθῶνι δῖα θαητὸν ἔτευξαν.	11/12
ἄγοντι δέ με πέντε μὲν Ἴσθμοι νίκαι, μία δ' ἐκπρεπής	13/14
Διὸς Ὀλυμπιάς,	15
δύο δ' ἀπὸ Κίρρας,	
ὦ Μεγάκλες,	
ὕμαί τε καὶ προγόνων.	17
νέα δ' εὐπραγία χαίρω τι· τὸ δ' ἄχγνυμαι,	
φθόνον ἀμειβόμενον τὰ καλὰ ἔργα. φαντί γε μάν	
οὔτω κ' ἀνδρὶ παρμονίμαν	20
θάλλοισαν εὐδαιμονίαν τὰ καὶ τὰ φέρεσθαι.	

Pindar, *Pythian* 7<sup>19</sup>

The great city of Athens is the fairest prelude to lay down as a foundation for songs to honour the mighty race of the Alcmaeonids for their horses. For what fatherland, what house can you inhabit and name with a more illustrious reputation in Hellas? None, for among all cities travels the report about Erechtheus' citizens, Apollo, who made your temple in divine Pytho splendid to behold. Five victories at the Isthmus prompt me, as does one outstanding at the Olympic festival of Zeus and two victories at Cirrha, belonging to your family and forebears. I rejoice greatly at your recent success, but this grieves me that envy requites noble deeds. Yet they say that in this way happiness which abides and flourishes brings a man now this, now that.

Here, Pindar gives a well-known story an unexpected and interesting turn: he attributes the restoration of the temple of Apollo to the Athenians at large. Yet as is clear from Herodotus and other sources, people in Athens and elsewhere knew that it was not the Athenians at large, but the Alcmaeonids, who undertook the restoration of the temple of Apollo in their attempt to win the favour of Delphi in their political struggles against the Pisistratids.<sup>20</sup> There is no reason to doubt that Pindar knew the story too. I have argued elsewhere that Pindar knowingly attributed the impressive restoration to the Athenians at large both because he wanted to ingratiate the ostracized Megacles with the Athenians, but also to preserve his own good relations with the Athenians.<sup>21</sup> The situation was obviously tricky: Pindar was a friend of Megacles and his family. During his sojourn in Athens in the first decade of the fifth century he had undoubtedly made many other friends in Athens too. At some point Megacles became *persona non grata* in Athens. Pindar on the other hand intended to participate in Athenian musical events, as is clear from the famous dithyramb which, as we have seen, postdates the ode for Megacles. The obvious choice was to come

<sup>19</sup> All Pindaric quotations are taken from Snell-Maehler, 1987 and Maehler, 1989; The translations are those of Race, 1997a and 1997b slightly modified.

<sup>20</sup> See Herodotus 5.62-63.1.

<sup>21</sup> Athanassaki, 2011.

up with a balanced victory song for Megacles which gave the Athenians at large credit for the splendid temple of Apollo, a credit that they did not fully merit.

But Pindar's 'misattribution', as it were, probably springs from and is certainly compatible with the well-known epinician practice of distributing praise equally between the honorand, his family and his native city. If the native city can lay claims to an individual's athletic victory, it can also lay claim to a temple restoration such as the Alcmaeonid restoration. In the case of the temple of Apollo, the adjacent treasury of the Athenians, which was either being built or refurbished at the time of the performance of *Pythian* 7, could only strengthen the city's claim to the splendid restoration of the god's temple.<sup>22</sup> If we read the concluding *gnomē* of *Pythian* 7 with an eye to Megacles' ostracism, what Pindar seems to be saying is that Megacles' misfortune is temporary, for the good fortune of the family has very deep roots. When Megacles returns, what will matter in the democratic city will be Athens' strong ties with and presence in Delphi. Pindar had lived in Athens long enough to know that that was the most effective line of praise of the ostracized Megacles and his great family.<sup>23</sup> But there were other considerations, as we shall see in a moment.

We may now turn to the *Eighth Paean*, narrating the story of the four temples at Delphi and possibly composed either for the inauguration of the Alcmaeonid temple in the end of the sixth century or for a later celebratory occasion.<sup>24</sup> It is a great pity that this song-dance has been so badly preserved. We do not know who commissioned the paean and who performed it. In light of Pindar's ties with the Alcmaeonids it is reasonable to assume that the powerful family commissioned the ode to be performed by an Athenian chorus. Certainty is of course impossible, but the Alcmaeonids had every reason to commission a song commemorating their brilliant achievement. As we have just seen, in the *Seventh Pythian* Pindar extolled the brilliant restoration and attributed it to the Athenians at large. By the same token, the chorus performing the *Eighth Paean* must have represented not the Alcmaeonids but the whole city. In this song Pindar narrated the story of the previous four temples at Delphi and probably concluded with mention of the fifth: the first was built from laurel leaves brought from Tempe; the second, built from beeswax by bees, was sent by Apollo to the Hyperboreans; the third was the work of Athena and Hephaestus; the fourth was the temple built by Trophonius and Agamedes.<sup>25</sup> The fifth was the Alcmaeonid temple. Only the story of the third temple is preserved. The third temple of Apollo is an imaginative combination of the verbal and the visual, the animate and the inanimate: it is a temple with a robotic chorus, the Kēlēdones, whose songs are so enchanting that the *theoroi* forget their families, stay and die in Delphi. For this reason Athena and Hephaestus decide to bury this temple:

<sup>22</sup> See Neer, 2004; Athanassaki, 2011.

<sup>23</sup> I discuss Pindar's praise strategy in detail in Athanassaki, 2011.

<sup>24</sup> See Rutherford, 2001, p. 230 with bibliographical references.

<sup>25</sup> See Sourvinou-Inwood, 1979; Rutherford, 2001, p. 211-32.



ἐβδόμην ἡμέραν ἀποδώσειν, ἐν τοσούτῳ δ' εὐωχεῖσθαι παρακελεύεσθαι· τοὺς δὲ ποιήσαντας τὸ προσταχθέν τῇ ἐβδόμῃ νυκτὶ κατακοιμηθέντας τελευτῆσαι.

[Plutarch] *Consol. Apoll.* 14. 109A<sup>27</sup> = Pindar, fragment 3

And of Agamedes and Trophonius Pindar says that after building the temple in Delphi they asked for their wages from Apollo, who promised to pay them on the seventh day and encouraged them to feast in the meantime. They did what they were ordered, and on the seventh night, after going to sleep, they died.

Fragment 3 is usually linked with fragment 2, an *Isthmian* ode for the boxer Casmylus of Rhodes, which is preserved by Lucian (*dial. mort.* 10).<sup>28</sup> Ian Rutherford suggests that, 'it is also possible that an allusion to Apollo's deadly reward provided a somber conclusion to Pindar's *Paian* on the Delphic temples'.<sup>29</sup> The state of *Paean* 8 does not allow certainty, but the Pindaric take on Trophonius and Agamedes offers a precious insight into the melic poets' perspective on the politics of sponsorship. The great architects Trophonius and Agamedes think that they accomplished their project and must be rewarded. But they think in human terms. This is why they ask for their *misthos*. The god Apollo, who is cast here in the role of the sponsor of his own temple, also thinks that the two architects must be rewarded. Unlike the architects, however, he is thinking in divine terms. This is why he offers them seven days of merriment and then death, presumably at a relatively young age. If *μισθός* was the term Pindar used, he engaged in a clever rhetorical play on *misthos* by showing the superiority of Apollo's immaterial reward to the material recompense that Trophonius and Agamedes probably had in mind. But whether Pindar used *μισθός* or a synonym, it seems that more was at stake in this instance too.

Did Pindar allude to or correct the far less flattering version that Pausanias has transmitted? Let us first look at Pausanias' portrayal of the two architects:

(5) λέγεται δὲ ὁ Τροφώνιος Ἀπόλλωνος εἶναι καὶ οὐκ Ἑργίνου· καὶ ἐγὼ τε πείθομαι καὶ ὅστις παρὰ Τροφώνιον ἦλθε δὴ μαντευσόμενος. τούτους φασίν, ὡς ἠϋξήθησαν, γενέσθαι δεινούς θεοῖς τε ἱερὰ κατασκευάσασθαι καὶ βασιλεια ἀνθρώποις· καὶ γὰρ τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι τὸν ναὸν ᾠκοδόμησαν τὸν ἐν Δελφοῖς καὶ Ὑριεῖ τὸν θησαυρόν. ἐποίησαν δὲ ἐνταῦθα τῶν λίθων ἓνα εἶναι σφισιν ἀφαιρεῖν κατὰ τὸ ἐκτός· καὶ οἱ μὲν αἰεὶ τι ἀπὸ τῶν τιθεμένων ἐλάμβανον· Ὑριεὺς δὲ εἶχετο ἀφασίᾳ, κλεῖς μὲν καὶ σημεῖα τὰ ἄλλα ὁρῶν ἀκίνητα, τὸν δὲ ἀριθμὸν αἰεὶ τῶν χρημάτων ἐλάττονα. (6) ἴστησιν οὖν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀγγείων, ἐν οἷς ὁ τε ἄργυρος ἐνῆν καὶ ὁ χρυσός οἱ, πάγας ἢ τι καὶ ἄλλο ὃ τὸν ἐσελθόντα καὶ ἀπτόμενον τῶν χρημάτων καθέξειν ἔμελλεν. ἐσελθόντος δὲ τοῦ Ἀγαμήδους τὸν μὲν ὁ δεσμὸς κατεῖχε, Τροφώνιος δὲ ἀπέτεμεν αὐτοῦ τὴν κεφαλὴν, ὅπως μὴ ἡμέρας ἐπισχούσης ἐκεῖνος γένοιτο ἐν αἰκίαις καὶ αὐτὸς μηνυθεῖ μετέχων τοῦ τολμήματος. (7) καὶ Τροφώνιον μὲν ἐνταῦθα

<sup>27</sup> The Greek quotations and the English translations of [Plutarch]'s *Consolation ad Apollonium* are taken from Babbitt's Loeb edition.

<sup>28</sup> See Race, 1997b, p. 228-29.

<sup>29</sup> Rutherford, 2001, p. 224.

ἐδέξατο ἡ γῆ διαστῆσα, ἔνθα ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ ἄλσει τῷ ἐν Λεβαδεΐᾳ βόθρος τε Ἀγαμήδους  
καλούμενος καὶ πρὸς αὐτῷ στήλη.

Pausanias 9.37.5-7<sup>30</sup>

[5] Trophonius is said to have been a son of Apollo, not of Erginus. This I am inclined to believe, as does everyone who has gone to Trophonius to inquire of his oracle. They say that these, when they grew up, proved clever at building sanctuaries for the gods and palaces for men. For they built the temple for Apollo at Delphi and the treasury for Hyrieus. One of the stones in it they made so that they could take it away from the outside. So they kept on removing something from the store. Hyrieus was dumbfounded when he saw keys and seals untampered with, while the treasure kept on getting less. [6] So he set over the vessels, in which were his silver and gold, snares or other contrivance, to arrest any who should enter and lay hands on the treasure. Agamedes entered and was kept fast in the trap, but Trophonius cut off his head, lest when day came his brother should be tortured, and he himself be informed of as being concerned in the crime. [7] The earth opened and swallowed up Trophonius at the point in the grove at Lebadeia where is what is called the pit of Agamedes, with a slab beside it.

As scholars have noted this is a folk tale that survives in other versions too.<sup>31</sup> Eugammon of Cyrene, active in 560s,<sup>32</sup> alludes to a variant of the story featuring Trophonius and Agamedes proceeding to loot the treasury they built for king Augeas.<sup>33</sup> Pindar most probably knew this story, but it is highly unlikely that he would portray the architects of the fourth temple of Apollo as robbers. Actually the Homeric Hymn to Apollo, where Trophonius and Agamedes are portrayed as dear to the gods, would offer a version more suitable for the occasion and more congenial to Pindar:

ἐνθεν καρπαλίμως προσέβης πρὸς δειράδα θυῖων,  
ἵκεο δ' ἐς Κρίσην ὑπὸ Παρνησσὸν νιφόεντα,  
κνημὸν πρὸς Ζέφυρον τετραμμένον, αὐτὰρ ὕπερθεν  
πέτρη ἐπικρέμαται, κοίλῃ δ' ὑποδέδρομε βῆσσα  
τρηχεῖ· ἔνθα ἄναξ τεκμήρατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων  
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νηὸν ποιήσασθαι ἐπήρατον, εἴπε τε μῦθον·  
'ἐνθάδε δὴ φρονέω τεύξαι περικαλλέα νηὸν  
ἔμμεναι ἀνθρώποις χρηστήριον, οἳ τέ μοι αἰεὶ  
ἐνθάδ' ἀγινήσουσι τελεέσσας ἐκατόμβας,  
290  
ἡμὲν ὅσοι Πελοπόννησον πείραν ἔχουσιν,  
ἡδ' ὅσοι Εὐρώπην τε καὶ ἀμφιρύτας κατὰ νήσους,  
χρησόμενοι τοῖσιν δ' ἄρ' ἐγὼ νημερτέα βουλὴν  
πᾶσι θεμιστεύοιμι χρέων ἐνὶ πτόνι νηῶι.'

<sup>30</sup> The Greek quotation (Spiro's text) and the English translation are taken from Jones' 1935 Loeb edition.

<sup>31</sup> Huxley, 1960, p. 24-7; Arafat, 2009, p. 585; West, 2003a, p. 167, n. 69.

<sup>32</sup> West, 2003, p. 19.

<sup>33</sup> Schol. *Aristoph. Nub.* 508.

ὥς εἰπὼν διέθηκε θεμείλια Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων  
 εὐρέα καὶ μάλα μακρὰ διηνεκές· αὐτὰρ ἐπ' αὐτοῖς  
 λαῖνον οὐδὸν ἔθηκε Τροφώνιος ἡδ' Ἀγαμήδης,  
 υἱέες Ἐργίνου, φίλοι ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσιν·  
 ἀμφὶ δὲ νηὸν ἔνασσαν ἀθέσφατα φῶλ' ἀνθρώπων  
 κτιστοῖσιν λάεσσιν, ἀοίδιμον ἔμμεναι αἰεὶ.

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*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 281-99<sup>34</sup>

From there you rushed speedily on up towards the ridge, and you arrived at Crisa, under snowy Parnassus, a west-facing spur with the cliff hanging over it and a hollow, rugged glen extending below. There the lord Phoibos Apollo decided to make his lovely temple, and he said:

'Here I am minded to make my beautiful temple as an oracle for humankind, who will ever come in crowds bringing me perfect hecatombs, both those who live in the fertile Peloponnese and those who live in the Mainland and the seagirt islands, wishing to consult me; and I would dispense unerring counsel to them all, issuing oracles in my rich temple.'

So saying, Phoibos Apollo laid out his foundations in broad and very long, unbroken lines. Upon them Trophonios and Agamedes, the sons of Erginus, favorites of the immortal gods, laid a stone floor; and about it the teeming peoples built the temple with blocks set in place, to be a theme of song for ever.

It is worth noting that the *Homeric Hymn* is totally silent concerning the other commissions that Trophonios and Agamedes had. The assertion that they were dear to gods (φίλοι ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσιν) would show the way to Pindar who, I think, wished to exclude the possibility that the architects of Apollo's temple would act as common robbers both in the Isthmian fragment and in all likelihood in the *Eighth Paean*. This is why he capitalized on the gods' affection for the architects by resorting to the belief that premature death is the gods' reward for mortal piety. The additional advantage of setting their death shortly after the completion of Apollo's fourth temple was that it did not leave time for their subsequent far less honourable activities.

The pattern of the story is of course known from other sources. The author of *Consolatio ad Apollonium* who has preserved Pindar's version of the fortunes of the two architects gives a list of similar examples. One of the most famous ones is the story of Cleobis and Biton whose reward for their filial piety was death (Herodotus 1. 31). Among these examples is the anecdote of Pindar's own death:

Λέγεται δὲ καὶ αὐτῷ Πινδάρῳ ἐπισκήψαντι τοῖς παρὰ τῶν Βοιωτῶν πεμφθεῖσιν εἰς θεοῦ  
 πυθέσθαι 'τί ἄριστόν ἐστιν ἀνθρώποις' ἀποκρίνασθαι τὴν πρόμαντιν ὅτι οὐδ' αὐτὸς ἀγνοεῖ,  
 εἴ γε τὰ γραφέντα περὶ Τροφώνιου καὶ Ἀγαμήδους ἐκείνου ἐστίν· εἰ δὲ καὶ πειραθῆναι  
 βούλεται, μετ' οὐ πολὺ ἔσσεσθαι αὐτῷ πρόδηλον. καὶ οὕτω πυθόμενον τὸν Πίνδαρον  
 συλλογίζεσθαι τὰ πρὸς τὸν θάνατον, διελθόντος δ' ὀλίγου χρόνου τελευτῆσαι.

[Plutarch] *Consolatio ad Apollonium* 109ab

<sup>34</sup> The Greek quotation and the English translation are taken from West's Loeb edition (West, 2003b).

It is said that when Pindar himself gave instructions to those who were sent from the Boeotians to the place of god to inquire of the God ‘what is best for mankind’ the prophetess answered that he knew the answer, if the story about Trophonius and Agamedes was his; but if he wished to learn by experience, it would be soon clear to him. And following this inquiry Pindar inferred that he should expect his death; and after a little while he died.

The phrase εἴ γε τὰ γραφέντα περὶ Τροφωνίου καὶ Ἀγαμήδους ἐκείνου ἐστὶν may imply that posterity considered Pindar’s story his own improvement on the tradition. But even if Pindar simply privileged an already existing, but less known, tradition, the point of the story is that the construction of a temple is ultimately a priceless act of piety as is the reward mortals can expect from the gods for pious behaviour.

In the complex nexus of sponsors and sponsorship the gods are known both to punish the impious and reward the pious. The famous story of the punishment of the Scopads and of Simonides’ rescue by the gods is perhaps the most eloquent example:

Dicunt enim cum cenaret Crannone in Thessalia Simonides apud Scopam fortunatum hominem et nobilem cecinissetque id carmen quod in eum scripsisset, in quo multa ornandi causa poetarum more in Castorem scripta et Pollucem fuissent, nimis illum sordide Simonidi dixisse se dimidium eius ei quod pactus esset pro illo carmine daturum: reliquum a suis Tyndaridis quos aeque laudasset peteret si ei videretur. Paulo post esse ferunt nuntiatum Simonidi ut prodiret: iuvenes stare ad ianuam duos quosdam qui eum magnopere evocarent; surrexisse illum, prodisse, vidisse neminem; hoc interim spatio conclave illud ubi epularetur Scopas concidisse; ea ruina ipsum cum cognatis oppressum suis interiisse;

Cicero, *de oratore* 2. 86. 352-353<sup>35</sup>

(352)There is a story that Simonides was dining at the house of a wealthy nobleman named Scopas at Crannon in Thessaly, and chanted a lyric poem which he had composed in honour of his host, in which he followed the custom of the poets by including for decorative purposes a long passage referring to Castor and Pollux; whereupon Scopas with excessive meanness told him he would pay him half the fee agreed on for the poem, and if he liked he might apply for the balance to his sons of Tyndareus, as they had gone halves in the panegyric. (353)The story runs that a little later a message was brought to Simonides to go outside, as two young men were standing at the door who earnestly requested him to come out; so he rose from his seat and went out, and could not see anybody; but in the interval of his absence the roof of the hall where Scopas was giving the banquet fell in, crushing Scopas himself and his relations underneath the ruins and killing them;

The moral of the story could not be clearer. Simonides was rescued by the Dioscuri for his piety, but Scopas was not, for he committed an act of *hybris* when he asked Simonides to

<sup>35</sup> The Latin quotation and the English translation are taken from Sutton’s and Rackham’s Loeb edition.



go get half of the fee from the Dioscuri, because he had praised them as much as Scopas himself.<sup>36</sup>

The similarities and the differences between the Simonidean story and Pindar's version of Trophonius and Agamedes are instructive. It worth noting that Simonides' patron and the architects of Apollo's fourth temple hold the gods financially responsible for the praise and the temples they are offered. To put it differently, they treat gods like mortals. This is especially clear in the case of Scopas who suggests that he splits the cost with the Dioscuri! Trophonius and Agamedes are not nearly as crude, but their attitude towards Apollo is not impeccable, for they should know that gods were above the financial transactions of mortals. As has already been mentioned, Pindar revised an unflattering picture of the legendary architects, as he did in other similar cases, for instance in the story of Pelops in the *First Olympian*. In both cases, however, the revision was not seamless.

What these stories tell us is the cardinal importance of the religious context of architecture, sculpture and melic poetry alike. There is, of course, no doubt that construction and sculptural decorations of temples and sanctuaries involved great expenses that were undertaken by individuals or families or communities. The same is true for musical events, especially choral performances. But the artifact itself, be it a temple, a statue, a song or a dance-song, was above all a gift to the gods who were believed to have power to give mortals what money could not buy. Gods could bestow on mortals good fortune (*eudaimonia*) that sometimes entailed an untimely death and they could bestow health (*hygieia*).

My last example illustrates the close connection between art sponsorship and the human belief in the god's power to bestow health. Unlike all previous examples, the sponsor is a monarch, Hieron of Syracuse, who has had the lion's share of the encomiastic songs that Pindar and Bacchylides composed. We know from Pausanias that both Hieron and Gelon were great supporters of the visual arts: Gelon, Hieron's brother, had dedicated a chariot at Olympia in 488 (5.23.6).<sup>37</sup> By the time of his chariot victory at Olympia, Hieron had already dedicated three helmets from the spoils of his victory over the Etruscans at Cumae (474 BCE). Given their many and impressive dedications at Olympia, it is at first sight odd that in an ode celebrating Hieron's Olympic victory in 468 BCE Bacchylides, mentions only one of Hieron's offerings which was not dedicated at Olympia, however, but at Delphi:

θρόησε δὲ λαὸς υ --	
ἄ τρισευδαίμων ἀνὴρ,	10
ὃς παρὰ Ζηνὸς λαχὼν	
πλείσταρχον Ἑλλάνων γέρας	
οἶδε πυργωθέντα πλοῦτον μὴ μελαμφαρεῖ	
κρύπτειν σκότῳ.	
βρύει μὲν ἱερὰ βουθύτοις ἑορταῖς,	15

<sup>36</sup> For Simonides' relationship with the Scopadae see Molyneux, 1992, p. 121-26.

<sup>37</sup> For the Deinomenids' Panhellenic dedications in the Panhellenic sanctuaries see Harrell, 2002 and Morgan, 2015, p. 31-45.

βρύουσι φιλοξενίας ἀγυιαί·  
 λάμπει δ' ὑπὸ μαρμαρυγαῖς ὁ χρυσός,  
 ὑπιδαιδάλτων τριπόδων σταθέντων  
 πάροιθε ναοῦ, τόθι μέγιστον ἄλσος  
 Φοίβου παρὰ Κασταλίας ῥέεθροις  
 Δελφοὶ διέπουσι. θεὸν θ[εό]ν τις  
 ἀγλαΐζεθώ γὰρ ἄριστος ὄλβων·

20

Bacchylides, *Ode* 3, 9-22

and the (immense) crowd shouted. Ah, thrice-fortunate man, who got from Zeus the privilege of ruling over the greatest number of Greeks and knows how not to hide his towering wealth in black-cloaked darkness. The temples abound in feasts where cattle are sacrificed, the streets abound in hospitality; and gold shines with flashing light from the high elaborate tripods standing in front of the temple where the Delphians tend the great sanctuary of Phoebus by the waters of Castalia. Let God, God, be glorified: that is the best of prosperities.

Hieron's dedication that the poet singles out for mention is the artfully-wrought golden tripods that were placed in front of Apollo's temple in Delphi. But why does Bacchylides mention only the golden tripods that the Sicilian tyrant offered Apollo?

Bacchylides' choice makes perfect sense, if we take into account Hieron's circumstances and the poet's agenda. At the time of his Olympic victory, Hieron was already ill and died a year later in 467 BCE. In the *Third Pythian*, which cannot be securely dated, but belongs in the early 460s as well, Pindar states that if Chiron were alive, he would persuade him to provide a healer, a son of Apollo or of Zeus, who could cure the feverish illnesses of good men (63-67). Bacchylides, I suggest, thought along similar lines and remembered the valuable gift that Hieron had offered Apollo. Once Apollo came into the picture, it was easy to come up with a celebrated paradigm, the story of Croesus, whom Apollo saved as a reward for his piety and generosity to the god's sanctuary. The parallelism between the fabulous generosity of Croesus and Hieron could not be more overt:

ἄπιστον οὐδέν, ὃ τι θ[εῶν] μέ[ριμ]να  
 τεύχει· τότε Δαλογενή[ς] Ἀπό[λλων]  
 φέρων ἐς Ὑπερβορέο[υς] γ[α]ίεροντα  
 σὺν τανισφύροις κατ[έν]ασσε κούραις  
 δι' εὐσέβειαν, ὅτι μέ[γιστα] θνατῶν  
 ἐς ἀγαθέαν <ἀν>έπεμψε Π[ο]σειδῶ.  
 ὅσο[ι] <γε> μὲν Ἑλλάδ' ἔχουσιν, [ο]ὔτις  
 ὃ μεγαίνητε Ἰέρων, θελήσει  
 φάμ[εν] σέο πλείονα χρυσὸν  
 Λοξί[αι] πέμψαι βροτῶν.

60

Bacchylides, *Ode* 3, 57-66

Nothing that the planning of the gods brings about is past belief: Delos-born Apollo carried the old man then to the Hyperboreans and settled him there with his slim-ankled

daughters by reason of his piety, since he had sent up to holy Pytho greater gifts than any other mortal.

But of all men who dwell in Greece there is none, illustrious Hiero, who will be ready to claim that he sent more gold to Loxias than you.

What the Bacchylidean song shows is that, from a melic perspective, the most important aspect of sponsorship of the arts is that they are part of the *do ut des* principle, because they are not simply artifacts, they are brilliant gifts that mortals give to the gods. This is true both for the verbal and the visual arts that we have discussed. And because they are gifts to the gods, the financial aspect is immaterial, not because it did not exist or people did not care about it but because, when it came to the gods, no expense was big enough.

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The stories we have discussed show that in daily life poets, sculptors, architects and their sponsors adopted or/and were perceived to adopt mundane attitudes to the arts and the great expenses involved. Yet Xenophon's imaginary dialogue between Hieron I and Simonides shows that financial profit was neither the sole nor the most important consideration. We have seen that Simonides, usually depicted as intent on financial gain, was also famous for his keen interest and great success in dithyrambic competitions. Similarly Pindar was composing for monarchs and other magnates without losing sight of the importance of civic commissions. The famous dithyramb which secured him eternal fame and huge financial profit could have initially been composed for one of the great festivals, for instance the Panathenaea or the Great Dionysia. In such a scenario all that Pindar could hope for was the prize which he must have won. Although our sources are not explicit, the dithyramb must have made such a great and lasting impression that the Athenians decided to bestow additional honours on the poet at a later stage. Simonides, Pindar and Bacchylides did not snub tyrants and other magnates, but they had been around long enough to know that monarchic power was fragile and transitory and that the same was true for the honours bestowed by monarchs. The sheer volume of their hymnic production indicates that they must have recognized the far greater prestige that victory in Panhellenic competitions carried.

We have seen that financial gain and prestige were secondary to the divine favour that mortals were hoping to obtain through participation in athletic and musical competitions and the subsequent dedications. The story of Scopas shows that not all mortals were keen to honour the gods, but his attitude to the gods was the exception, not the rule. Lavish praise in songs and material dedications in the Panhellenic sanctuaries by individuals and communities show that no effort or money was spared when it came to honour the gods. Bacchylides' puts it in a nutshell when he links his epinician song with Hieron's golden dedication to Apollo: *θεὸν θ[εό]ν τις/ ἀγλαΐξέθω γὰρ ἄριστος ὄλβων* (3, 21-22). And although it would be impossible to escape anybody's notice that Hieron's tripods were costly as was, of course, the restoration of Apollo's temple, the melic poets adopted a lofty rhetoric that shifted the focus from the balance-sheet to the piety of mortals and the divine pleasure

that it was meant to cause. Bacchylides' take on Croesus' and Hieron's generosity in *Ode 3* offers an explanation: the cost was negligible in comparison to the divine favour the gifts of mortals could elicit, which *in extremis* could save one's life.

*Mutatis mutandis* the poets had a similar attitude. Like their sponsors, they too were eager to please the gods by participating and winning in all sorts of festivals. Simonides, for instance, honoured the gods by training choruses at the age of eighty. Pindar's and Bacchylides' hymnic production points in the same direction. The prize was simultaneously a public acknowledgment of their excellence and the proof that, regardless of the nature of remuneration, they had offered the gods the best gifts they could. That was important, because like their sponsors, poets were also mortal.

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