The Muse(s)’s “white noise”, sympotic calm, and the taste of sound: the background of sound-scape and the gustatory acoustics of Pindar’s epinician odes

ΙΣΩΜΙΟΝΙΚΟΣ Β΄ (470?)
<ΞΕΝΟΚΡΑΤΕΙ ΑΚΡΑΓΑΝΤΙΝΩΙ ΑΡΜΑΤΙ>

Α’ Οι μὲν πάλαι, ὁ Θρασύβουλε,
φῶτες, οἱ χρυσαμπόκιον
ἐξ διήνυθον Μοῖσῆν ἐβαίνον
κλωτὰ φόρμαη συναντόμενοι,
ῥύμη παιδίων ἐπόξενον μεληγάρμας ὤμους,
ὅτες ἔκειν καλὸς εἴχεν Αφροδίτας
5 εὐθύρον μνάστειραν ὀψώραν.

ά Μοῖσα γὰρ ὁ φιλοκερδῆς
ποι τότ’ ἰν οὐδ’ ἐργάτης
οὐδ’ ἐπέρναντο γλυκεὶς
αἱ μελιθόγυους ποτὶ Τερψιχόρας
ἀργυρωθεῖται πρόσωπα μαλλικωροφόνων ἀοίδας,
νόν δ’ ἔφητο τὸτ’ τόργευον φυλάζαι
μὴ ἀλαθείας <Τ> ἀνατένει βαϊνον,

“χρήματα χρήματ’ ἄντηρ”
δὸς φα κτείναν θ’ ἀμα λειπθῆς καὶ φίλων.
ἐστι γὰρ ὃν σοφῶς οὐκ ἀγόντω ἀείδω
‟Ισθέμιον ἱππό τι κἀκε
τάν Ξενοκράτα Ποσείδαν ὀπάσαις,

15 Δωρίων αὐτῷ στεφάναμον κόμῳ
πέμπει ἀναδεισθία σάλλων,

Β’ εὐάρματον ἄνδρα γεμαίρων,
Ἀκραγαντίων φῶς,
ἐν Κρίστῳ δ’ εὐρυσθεῖνης
eid’ Ἀπόλλων νῦν πότε τ’ ἀγλάιαν
καὶ τόθ κληναίας <τ’> Ἐρεχθείδιαν χαρίτεσσιν ἀραφός

20 ταῖς λιπαραῖς ἐν Αθηναίας, οὐκ ἐμέμψθη
ὑμίδωρον χέρια πλαξίπποι φωτός,

τάν Νικόμαχος κατὰ καριόν
νεῖμ’ ἀπάσαις ἄνιας
ὅν τε καὶ κάρυκες ὦ-

25 ἀδύνατον τῷ νῦν ἀσπάζοντο φωνῇ
χρυσάσει ἐν γοῦνασι πίνοντα Νίκας
γαίαν ἀνὰ σφετέραν,

τὰν δὴ καλέοισιν Ολυμπίου Δίως
ἄλος· ἰ’ ἀδελάτας Ἀθηναδόμου

30 καὶ γάρ ὡγόντες ὑμῖν ἔντε ὁμοί
οὕτε κόμων, ὁ Θρασύβουλ’, ἐρατῶν,

FOR XENOCRATES OF ACRAGAS
WINNER, CHARIOT RACE

The men of long ago, O Thrasybulus,
who used to mount
the chariot of the golden-wreathed Muses,
taking with them the glorious lyre,
freely shot their honey-sounding hymns of love
at any boy who was beautiful and had the sweetest bloom
5 of late summer that woes fair-throned Aphrodite.

For at that time the Muse was not yet
greedy for gain nor up for hire,
nor were sweet, soft-voiced songs
with their faces silvered over being sold
from the hand of honey-voiced Terpsichore.
But now she bids us heed the Argive’s adage,
10 which comes . . . closest to the truth:

"Money, money makes the man,"

said he who lost his possessions and friends as well.
But enough, for you are wise. Not unknown is
the Isthmian chariot victory that I sing,
which Poseidon granted to Xenocrates,
15 and sent a crown of Dorian parsley
for him to bind upon his hair,
thus honoring the man of fine chariots,
a light to the people of Acragas.

In Crisa mighty Apollo
beheld him and gave him splendor
there too, and when he gained the glorious favor of
Erechtheus’ descendants
20 in shining Athens; he had no cause to blame
the chariot-preserving hand, which the horse-striking

man

Nicomachus applied fittingly
to all the reins
and whom the heralds of the seasons also recognized,
the Elean truce-bearers of Cronus’ son Zeus,
undoubtedly having experienced some act of hospitality,
25 and they welcomed him with a sweetly breathing voice,
when he fell on the knees of golden Victory

in their land,

the one men call Olympian Zeus’
sanctuary. There the sons of Aenesidamus
were joined to immortal honors.

30 And so, your family’s houses are not unfamiliar
with delightful victory revels, O Thrasybulus,
2. (a) II. 1. 601-604, (b) hom. hymn. Apoll. 511-516, (c) Hes. The Shield 272-285

3. fr. 222 S.-M. Δίως παῖς ὁ χρυσός· κείνον οὐ σῆς οὐδὲ κίς δάπει.


Aem. 26.1 Page οὐ μ’ ἔτη, παρεναι καὶ μεληάρεις ιαρόφων, | γυνα φέρνη δύναται

6. Sim. 593 PMG ὀμυλεὶ δ’ ἄνθεσι / ἐξανθόν μέλι μηδομένα

7. Plat. Symposium 211d3-c4: οὗ τέως ἔδης, οὐ κατὰ χρυσοῖν τε καὶ ἐσθήτα καὶ τοῦ καλοῦ παίδας τε καὶ νεανίσκους δύξει σοι εἴναι, οὐς νῦν ὄρδον ἐκπάθησαι καὶ ἐποίησον εἰ καὶ σι καὶ ἄλλοι πολλοί, ὀρέθνες τὰ παιδικὰ καὶ ὑστήματα ἀπ’ αὐτῶς, εἰ ποις οἶνον τ’ ἤν, μήτ’ ἐσθῃν μήτε πίνειν, ἄλλα θεᾶσθαι μόνον καὶ συνεῖναι. τί δήτα, ἔρημον, οἰόμεθα, εἰ το γένοιστα αὐτὸ τὸ καλὸν ἓθεν εἰλικρίνεις, καθάρον, ἄλλα μή ἄνπλοες σαρκός τε ἄνθρωπον καὶ χρωμάτων καὶ ἄλλης πολλῆς φλωρίας θητής, ἄλλ’ αὐτὸ τὸ θεῖον καλὸν δύνατο μονοειδὲς κατίδειν;

nor with songs of honey-sweet acclaim.

For there is no hill,

nor is the road steep.

when one brings the honors of the Heliconian maidens
to the homes of famous men.

35 May I make a long throw with the discus and cast the

javelin as far as

Xenocrates surpassed all men with his sweet disposition.

He was respectful in the company of his townsmen,

he practiced horse-breeding

in the Panhellenic tradition,

and welcomed all the feasts

of the gods. And never did an oncoming wind

40 cause him to hurl the sails at his hospitable table, but he would travel to Phasis in summer seasons,

while in winter he would sail to the shore of the Nile.

Therefore, since envious hopes

hang about the minds of mortals,

let the son never keep silent his father’s excellence

45 nor these hymns, for I truly
did not fashion them to remain stationary.

Impart these words to him, Niciasippus,

when you visit my honorable host.

That, if you ever see it, will not seem to you to be of the same order as gold, and clothes, and the beautiful boys and young men that now drive you out of your mind (ἐκπέλλαξα) when you see them, so that both you and many others (καὶ σοὶ καὶ ἄλλοι πολλοί) are ready, so long as you can see your beloveds

and be with them always, if that were somehow possible, to

stop eating and drinking, and just gaze at them and be with them.

What then”, she said, “do we suppose it would be like

if someone succeeded in seeing beauty itself, pure, clean, unmixed, and not contaminated with things like human flesh, and colour, and much other mortal nonsense (φλωρίας θητῆς) ...
Αίγινα, Αγία, το άργυρον πρόσωπον, διαφάδαν τί τοι λέγω; Ἡγησιόρα μὲν αὐτὰ. Ἐν παντὶ γλυκεῖα ἐργῳ κόρον δ᾽ ἔχει καὶ μέλι καὶ τὰ τέρπν᾽ ἀνθ᾽ Αφροδίσια.

Aigina, I am emboldened to say that for the splendid achievements of your offspring and Zeus’ there is a royal road of words stretching from your home; but rest is sweet in every endeavor and even honey and Aphrodite’s delightful flowers can be cloying.
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