

CHARITES OR HIERO: THEOCRITUS' IDYLL 16

A.S.F. Gow has called *Idyll* 16 one of Theocritus' "most remarkable achievements" and "as a whole . . . strikingly and unexpectedly successful¹)." "Unexpectedly" is here, I imagine, because *Idyll* 16 is a Hellenistic patronage poem and Gow assumes that as such it should be sycophantic. This it is not and therein lies much of its success. It avoids sycophancy primarily by balancing the business about a patron with emphasis on the poet's own persona, his struggle to obtain support and recognition. This is a crucial development in the history of patronage poetry, and one with implications for the future. But its importance has received little recognition from scholars, who generally try to fit the poem into a traditional mold. It has been called a "Bettelgedicht," a begging song²), or even a full-blown encomium, with a goal very like that of archaic epinician³). Those who have seen in it a poet's

1) *Theocritus* II, 2nd ed. (Cambridge 1952) 305. The texts I cite are Gow, ed., *Bucolici Graeci* (Oxford 1952); C. M. Bowra, ed., *Pindari carmina*, 2nd ed. (Oxford 1947); H. Maehler, ed., after B. Snell, *Bacchylidis carmina cum fragmentis* (Leipzig 1970); D. L. Page, ed., *Poetae melici Graeci* (Oxford 1962); R. Pfeiffer, ed., *Callimachus*, 2 vols. (Oxford 1949–53); E. C. Wickham, ed., *Q. Horati Flacci opera* (Oxford 1901).

2) The parallels with begging songs have been stressed by Reinhold Merkelbach, "Bettelgedichte", *RM* 95 (1952) 312–23. For the general view that the poem is a petition, see Carl v. Holzinger, "Theokrit in Orchomenos", *Philologus* 51 (1892) 195; Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Die Textgeschichte der griechischen Bukoliker* (Berlin 1906) 154–59; Gow II 305; Paul Händel, *Die Hellenistische Dichtung* (Stuttgart 1960) 199; Axel Horstmann, *Ironie und Humor bei Theokrit*, *Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie*, Heft 67 (Meisenheim am Glan 1976) 119–37, who finds "Selbstironie"; Anna Rist, trans., *The Poems of Theocritus* (Chapel Hill 1978) 9, 143. J.-H. Kühn, *Der Adressatenwechsel in Theokrits Hieron-Gedicht* (Waldkirch 1978) 15, 19–20, makes the suggestion that the first half and probably the conclusion are a set piece into which appeals to various addressees were set, the one to Hiero having been preserved. Kühn's work came into my hands only after my draft was essentially complete so that I was not able to use it in formulating my thinking. It is significant, therefore, that he has anticipated some of my views on the Charites. Our conclusions on this, reached independently and in the course of general analyses that differ considerably, will perhaps be the more persuasive.

3) Most recently F. T. Griffiths, *Theocritus at Court*, *Mnemosyne* Suppl. 55 (Leiden 1979) 9–50, who finds both petition and encomium, treats Theocritus so exclusively as a court poet that he declares "we may discount what he asserts about

statement about his art have neglected the dominant role accorded the man Theocritus appeals to⁴). I prefer to find room for both the Charites and Hiero, the two alternatives of the title⁵), by showing that Theocritus had good reason to ground his appeal for patronage in statements about art.

The Charites appear in the poem as personifications of Theocritus' poetry; Hiero is the Syracusan warlord who rose to power about 275 B.C. and from whom Theocritus seeks patronage. Each dominates one half of a poem which comes close falling into two disparate parts. The motivating force in the first half is Theocritus' initial picture of his Charites returning, humiliated and angry, from a fruitless quest for a patron. The pain of this rejection leads the poet to a bitter outburst against those who have refused him and then to a somewhat calculating attempt to convert potential patrons to a greater generosity. At the halfway point a skillful transition changes completely the mood of the poem from despair to hope, hope that Hiero, victorious in his imminent war with the Carthaginians, will find need of Theocritus' talent. The *Idyll* closes in a circular manner, with the poet promising, if successful in his quest, not to desert the Charites, those goddesses whose rejection acted as the impetus for the poem⁶).

To reconcile the *Idyll's* two segments with their contrasting moods is to explain how a petition for patronage, made with a promise of encomium, can arise out of a poet's lament for the artistic climate of his time. I shall argue that this is Theocritus'

poetry" (p. 11). See also Johannes Vahlen, "Über Theokrits Hiero", *Gesammelte philologische Schriften* II (Leipzig 1923) 211; Rudolf Petroll, *Die Äusserungen Theokrits über seine Person und seine Dichtung* (Diss. Hamburg 1965) 76-81; Werner Meincke, *Untersuchungen zu den enkomiastischen Gedichten Theokrits* (Diss. Kiel 1965) 74-75, who also sees petition as well as encomium; Francis Cairns, "The Distaff of Theugenis", *PLLS* (1976) 303 and *Tibullus: A Hellenistic Poet at Rome* (Cambridge 1979) 160, who believes that Theocritus is fulfilling a commission from Hiero.

4) Max Treu, "Selbstzeugnisse alexandrinischer Dichter", *Miscellanea di studi alessandrini* (Turin 1963) 283-90; Norman Austin, "Idyll 16: Theocritus and Simonides", *TAPA* 98 (1967) 1-21.

5) The titles in the manuscripts probably do not go back to Theocritus himself (see Gow I lxxix-lxxi). They are ancient, however, since they appear in the scholia and some of the papyri (on *Id.* 16 see also Hermogenes 1.85, p. 355 Rabe).

6) It is now generally agreed that the most probable date for the *Idyll* is 275/4 B.C. See Gow II 306-7 (but for a reservation, cf. 326) and, on Hiero's career, Helmut Berve, *König Hieron II*, Bay. Ak. der Wiss.: Phil.-Hist. Kl., Heft 47 (Munich 1959).

response to his own disinclination to write traditional praise poetry. Although archaic encomium was indeed the dominant model for *Idyll* 16, Theocritus' use of it shows that he was no Pindar⁷). He preferred lesser subjects, those suitable for pastoral, for mime, for mythological narrative with a less than heroic flavor. The problem confronting Theocritus then was the gulf between his own distaste for the grand and Hiero's expectation of glorifying encomium. To establish a common ground for purposes of an appeal required the utmost in tact and rhetorical skill. Theocritus was a master at manipulating the set conventions of a traditional genre for originality of statement. By working primarily with encomiastic precedent, he maintains the outward appearance of being a traditional praise poet, but by subtle changes in nuances of meaning he shifts the emphasis from the exalted to the humble and from the deeds of the patron to the problems of the poet. It is a technique he uses elsewhere for other purposes⁸). Here it is his method of inducing Hiero to support a poet of the new movement, or, failing that, a means of communicating his dilemma to whatever sympathetic audience there be.

Theocritus' problem was only compounded by the kind of praise poetry that was currently being composed for Hellenistic autocrats. At least from the time of Alexander the Great unabashed flattery was the vogue in the form of both hymn and epic⁹). Hymns deifying generals and monarchs were sometimes, as in Athens (Athen. 15.697 a), commissioned publicly. Epics were more surely the product of patronage. In the writing of "Fürstenepen" the name of first rank was Choerilus of Iasus, who

7) A number of scholars have listed parallels between Pindar and Theocritus: K. Kuiper, "De Theocriti carmine xvi", *Mnemosyne* 17 (1889) 378-87; E. B. Clapp, "Two Pindaric Poems of Theocritus", *CP* 8 (1913) 310-16; G. Perrotta, "Studi di poesia ellenistica", *SIFC* 4 (1925) 9-25; Alicja Szastyńska-Siemion, "Z Lirycznych inspiracji Teokryta", *Eos* 55 (1965) 63-66. Although Clapp (p. 315) notices that there is much in the *Idyll* "that is absolutely un-Pindaric", Austin was the first to point out that Theocritus consistently misuses the conventions of encomium. Yet his discussion is only a partial examination of the topic.

8) See my *Studies in the Hellenistic Epyllion*, Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie, Heft 115 (Meisenheim am Glan 1981).

9) On hymns, see Franz Susemihl, *Geschichte der griechischen Litteratur in der Alexandrinerzeit* II (Leipzig 1892) 518-19; R. Wünsch, "Hymnos", *RE* 9¹ (1914) 168. For epics, see Konrat Ziegler, *Das Hellenistische Epos: Ein vergessenes Kapitel griechischer Dichtung*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig 1966); S. Mariotti's review of Ziegler in *Gnomon* 43 (1971) 145-52; Luis Gil Fernández, "La Epica helenística", in *Estudios sobre el mundo helenístico* (Seville 1971) 91-120.

followed Alexander the Great¹⁰). Not only do we hear that his poetry was poor and his flattery intense, but the tradition condemns him for the great sums Alexander paid:

gratus Alexandro regi magno fuit ille
 Choerilus, incultis qui versibus et male natis
 rettulit acceptos, regale nomisma, Philippos.
 (Hor. *epist.* 2.1.232–34)

The ancient commentators on Horace (Porph. *ad loc.*; Ps.-Acro *ars poet.* 357) explain that payment was a gold piece for every line, or at least every good line. This anecdote seems a reflection of Hellenistic aesthetics¹¹). As early as Pindar and Simonides charges of selling one's poetry were used to impugn a rival¹²). Although there is no reason to doubt that pompous epic was quite lucrative, the stories about Choerilus probably stem from an opposing camp.

To identify this group we need only look at the Hellenistic poets who claim poverty with pride. Callimachus is foremost among them¹³). In his epigrams and *iambi* poverty appears in both erotic and poetic contexts. His poetic calling, combined with his hunger, may act as a charm against love (Gow-Page 3 = A.P. 12.150; cf. 7 = A.P. 12.148) or, alternatively, cause the loss of a boy to a wealthy rival (*Iambus* 3). Elsewhere (*Iambus* 12) he implies that his own verse will outlast the gifts of wealthier men. Nor is his poetry for sale. In fr. 222 he disavows the "working Muse" of *Isthmian* 2.6, taking it as a reference to Simonides:

10) On Choerilus, see Crusius, *RE* 3² (1899) 2361–63. Other writers of epic include Simonides of Magnesia, who celebrated Antiochus Soter, Leschides and Musaeus of Ephesus, who served the Attalids (see *Suda* s. vv.).

11) *RE* 3², 2362; Ziegler 23.

12) If Pindar's criticism in *Isth.* 2.6 was not directed at an individual rival (the scholiast says Simonides), Xenophanes' attack on Simonides, reported by the scholiast on *Ar. Pax* 697, most assuredly was.

13) Leonidas of Tarentum, who wrote epigrams about rustics and common folk, is another (Gow-Page 33 = A.P. 7.736, 36 = A.P. 6.300, 37 = A.P. 6.302; cf. 75 = A.P. 7.740). On poverty as a theme in Hellenistic poetry, see Mario Puelma Piwonka, *Lucilius und Kallimachos* (Frankfurt 1949) Sachregister, s. vv. Armut, Geldgier; Walter Wimmel, *Kallimachos in Rom*, *Hermes Einzelschriften*, Heft 16 (Wiesbaden 1960) Stichwortindex, s.v. *paupertas*; Giuseppe Giangrande, "Symptotic Literature and Epigram", *L'Épigramme grecque*, *Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique* (1967) 135–39. On the poverty theme in Callimachus specifically, see Giovanni Capovilla, *Callimaco I* (Rome 1967) 202–9; G. Tarditi, "Le Muse povere", in *Studi Ardizzoni II* (Rome 1978) 1013–21.

οὐ γὰρ ἐργάτιν τρέφω
τὴν Μοῦσαν, ὡς ὁ Κεῖος Ἐλίχου νέπους.

Good poets, then, are of necessity poor because they write from the heart and not for financial gain. This assumption seems to underlie the Prologue to the *Aetia*. Callimachus, as a composer of short but finely worked poetry, represents himself as the cicada, whose sustenance is only the dew from the air¹⁴). We may assume more material advantages for the Telchines, who advocate epics on kings and heroes¹⁵).

Callimachus himself apparently had a good income, once he received a position from the Ptolemies¹⁶). There is good reason to assume, then, that poverty was to some extent a pose for the poet of the leptotic style to contrast himself with the sycophantic panegyrist. Callimachus did, of course, write his own court poetry for the Alexandrian monarchs. But it is short, often witty, and probably restrained by the standards of the day. In all likelihood, he considered it a sincere tribute to his sovereigns rather than flattery written for payment.

It was in this ambience that *Idyll* 16 was written. The proper relationship between patron and poet, whether mercenary or based on something more honorable, was a burning question. Praise for hire and the poverty of the poet became primary themes in the controversy¹⁷). That *Idyll* 16 is built upon these themes is no coincidence, although given its early date it may have set the form for much of the discussion. Puelma has linked Choerilus and Theocritus as devotees of the “Geldmuse”¹⁸). It is true that The-

14) Cf. Puelma 251.

15) See also A.W. Bulloch's discussion of the supplements to Antinoopolis Papyrus 113, fr. 1 (b) in “A New Interpretation of a Fragment of Callimachus' *Aetia*”, *CQ* 20 (1970) 269–76. If his interpretation is correct, we have an exciting addition to our knowledge of Callimachus' use of the poverty theme. According to Bulloch, the first lines of the papyrus may “have been a refusal to write the kind of poetry which was popular merely for money”. But the next lines seem to be a confession that at some point hunger had driven away Callimachus' sense of shame and induced him to write what he did not wish.

16) In fact, the Alexandrian scholars themselves were criticized for their pedantry and guaranteed incomes by Timon of Phlius (quoted by Athen. 1.22 d). For a general account of patronage under the Ptolemies, see P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* I (Oxford 1972) 305–12.

17) For evidence that the controversy was developing throughout the fifth and fourth centuries, and in philosophic circles with reference to *αὐτάρκεια*, see J. M. Bell, “Κίμβιξ καὶ σοφός: Simonides in the Anecdotal Tradition”, *QUCC* 28 (1978) 38–50.

18) Puelma 252.

ocritus suggests he belongs in this company by indiscriminately sending out his Charites and by petitioning a *σπρατηγός* for patronage. But, on the other hand, his pose as poor and rejected (whether autobiographical or not) ties him to the Alexandrian group¹⁹). This ambivalent position suggests that the central issue in the poem is whether Theocritus will be successful both in finding patronage and in remaining true to his art.

Prooemium (1–4)

The prooemium should name the subject of the poem:

*Αἰεὶ τοῦτο Διὸς κούραις μέλει, αἰὲν ἀοιδοῖς,
ὑμνεῖν ἀθανάτους, ὑμνεῖν ἀγαθῶν κλέα ἀνδρῶν.
Μοῖσαι μὲν θεαὶ ἐντί, θεοὺς θεαὶ αἰέδοντι·
ἄμμες δὲ βροτοὶ οἶδε, βροτοὺς βροτοὶ αἰείδωμεν.*

So 1–4 are read by many scholars as an announcement that Theocritus is writing encomium, that he will sing someone of mortals²⁰). Certain more observant scholars have seen in it a statement that the encomium will not be a hymn²¹). But what Hellenistic potentate wanted to be celebrated as a mere mortal or to be expressly told that his status was distinct from that of the gods? As an opening for encomium or for poetry that seeks a patron of the ordinary type, this is a foolhardy prooemium. And Theocritus is no fool, nor is he so careless as not to recognize the import of his words²²).

The introduction to *Idyll 17*, the *Encomium to Ptolemy*, shows that he knew how to write rhetoric that was both cautious and flattering to a patron. While in *Idyll 16* the Muses sing of gods and mortal poets of mortal subjects, in *Idyll 17* Zeus and Ptolemy

19) R. Stark, "Theocritea", *Maia* 15 (1963) 371–72, suggests that Theocritus' poverty may be a "Dichtermaske" inherited from lyric poetry. Cairns, *Tibullus* 20–21, goes so far as to declare that the poverty theme combined with programmatic allusion to the archaic encomiasts "places Theocritus firmly within a Hellenistic manifesto framework".

20) Petroll 78; Meincke 36; Severin Koster, *Antike Epistheorien*, Palingenesia, Band 5 (Wiesbaden 1970) 115.

21) Treu 285; Griffiths 21.

22) Although Gow *ad* 4 would have us think so. He states that the distinction between the function of the Muse and the poet is not intentionally drawn but "dictated by the stiff and antithetical form in which T. has chosen to cast his introductory quatrain". Gow consistently fails to recognize that Theocritus' first person utterances use traditional language to make non-traditional statements.

seem to share equally in the grace of the Muses and the skill of the poet²³):

Ἐκ Διὸς ἀρχώμεσθα καὶ ἐς Δία λήγετε Μοῖσαι,
 ἀθανάτων τὸν ἄριστον, ἐπὴν αἰείδωμεν ἀοιδαῖς·
 ἀνδρῶν δ' αὖ Πτολεμαῖος ἐνὶ πρώτοισι λεγέσθω
 καὶ πύματος καὶ μέσσοις· ὁ γὰρ προφερέστατος ἀνδρῶν.
 ἥρωες, τοὶ πρόσθεν ἀφ' ἡμιθέων ἐγένοντο,
 ὀξέαντες καλὰ ἔργα σοφῶν ἐκύρησαν ἀοιδῶν·
 αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ Πτολεμαῖον ἐπιστάμενος καλὰ εἰπεῖν
 ὑμνήσαιμ'. ὕμνοι δὲ καὶ ἀθανάτων γέρας αὐτῶν. (1–8)

By setting Ptolemy in parallel first with Zeus (1–4) and then with sons of demigods (5–8), Theocritus enhances the mortal's authority, while avoiding a hybristic equation²⁴. The final stroke comes in line 8. Having just announced his intention to hymn (ὑμνήσαιμ') Ptolemy, Theocritus declares that hymns (ὕμνοι) are reward for the immortals themselves. Logically it scarcely follows, but rhetorically it lifts Ptolemy from the comparison with heroes back to the realm of Zeus himself²⁵).

Why then does the prooemium to *Idyll* 16 go so wrong? To some extent Theocritus intentionally throws us off the track. It is his way in this poem to give us an encomiastic mode but not encomium. Yet the prooemium is not just a red herring. If it cannot be read as a statement of praise, it can nevertheless have meaning as a declaration about poetry.

Lines 1–2 appear to mean that both the Muses and poets hymn both gods and men. This is simply a concise version of what we find in Hesiod's *Theogony* (44–50, 100–1)²⁶. In 3–4 Theocritus reorders his subjects and objects to make a different and more straightforward statement: the Muses sing of gods and mortals of mortals. He seems to be first setting out the traditional relationship of Muses, poets, and subjects and then rearranging it to present a new conception. But it is not quite this simple; although ἀθανάτους and θεούς must be the same, ἀγαθῶν ἀνδρῶν and βροτούς are not. Κλέα ἀνδρῶν is a phrase as old as Homer

23) Meincke's insistence that there is a division between singers and subjects (36–37; 91, n. 2) ignores ἀρχώμεσθα.

24) This technique of suggesting that the excellence of a contemporary parallels the excellence of gods or heroes in their own spheres derives from the encomiastic priamel, as for example the one that introduces *Ol.* 2.

25) Cf. Meincke 93–94; Koster 115; Griffiths 72–73.

26) The Muses sing of both gods and men also in *H. Apoll.* 189–91.

and refers to hero tales, topics such as an Achilles (*Il.* 9.189) or a Demodocus (*Od.* 8.73) would sing²⁷). *βροτοί* must be mere mortals, no better than the *βροτοί* who sing of them²⁸). The effect is not to exalt the *βροτοί* by association with the *ἀγαθοὶ ἄνδρες* but rather to mark the separation of the two in Theocritus' new poetic ordering. He rejects Hesiodic subjects and Hesiodic dependence on the Muses. He declares instead his own poetic preference for *βροτοί*, mere mortals, not heroes or gods, subjects amenable to treatment without the Muses²⁹). In the encomiastic context the suggestion seems to be that Theocritus will not allow his subject to masquerade in heroic or divine dress. He thus disavows the pompous flattery then in fashion and promises to write in a more restrained style.

The introductory quatrain does then have an important function in the poem. Under the appearance of announcing a subject, it instead declares a poetic program. It gives us information about the poet qua poet, information which we can use as a yardstick to measure his activity in the coming lines. Will he be able both to find a patron and to maintain his declared avoidance of traditional modes of praise? It is indicative of the struggle that, while he here proclaims separation from the Muses, he will later find need of their company if he is to celebrate Hiero (69, 101–3, 107).

The Rejection (5–21)

If Theocritus distances himself from the Muses in 1–4, in 5–12 he claims a special closeness to the Charites. While the Muses appear as the daughters of Zeus and minstrels of the gods, the

27) See also *Il.* 9.524, where *κλέα ἀνδρῶν ἠρώων* is Phoenix's designation for his tale about Meleager, and *Hes. Th.* 100. For *κλέος* as fame gained specifically through poetry, see Gregory Nagy, *Comparative Studies in Greek and Indic Meter* (Cambridge, Mass. 1974) 244–52 and *The Best of the Achaeans* (Baltimore 1979) Index of Key Words, s.v. *kléos*.

28) Koster 114 also finds three topics here and connects the prooemium with Theophrastus' definition of epic as "an expression of divine, heroic and human deeds" (*Diom.*, Keil, *Gramm Lat.* I, p. 484).

29) In his ode to Polycrates (*PMG* 282) Ibycus likewise rejects topics requiring the aid of the Muses (23 ff.). But the rhetorical effect is altogether different. The rejection is just part of an elaborate *praeteritio* in which Ibycus lists those heroes and themes of the Trojan cycle which he will not treat. The purpose of the device seems to be in fact to enhance the glory of his chosen subject, his patron Polycrates. See J. P. Barron, "Ibycus: *To Polycrates*", *BICS* 16 (1969) 135–36; G. F. Gianotti, "Mito ed encomio: il carmo di Ibcio in onore di Policrate", *RFIC* 101 (1973) 401–10.

Charites become the inspirers of Theocritus' own poetry and in personified form even the scrolls on which it was written. They serve him by canvassing for patronage and when rejected return to crouch on cold knees in the bottom of his coffer. By allying himself with only one set of deities, Theocritus clearly breaks with tradition. From the time of Hesiod the Muses and Charites were companions³⁰). For the Greek poet their functions are not identical but complementary. The Muses have the power to make present for the composer the places and times of the past so that he may celebrate the deeds of heroes and gods³¹). The Charites add that quality that Pindar calls τὰ μείλιχα (*Ol.* 1.30) or τὰ τερπνὰ καὶ τὰ γλυκέα (*Ol.* 14.5–6); pleasure, sweetness, charm are all subsumed under the Greek word χάρις³²). The Muses then have an intellectual function, while the Charites supply that which makes the poetry appealing.

The division of labor between the Muses and Charites was not a forgotten relic by Theocritus' time³³). This is clear from the beginning of the *Aetia* where Callimachus links the two in an original way. The Muse Clio relates to him the first *aition*, which concerns the origin of the Parian sacrifice to the Charites. At the end of her account Callimachus calls on the goddesses to wipe their anointed hands on his elegies so that they may endure for many a year (fr. 7). In this way he acquires the traditional aid of both groups. The Muse provides knowledge of the past in the form of an aetiology. The Charites, who have just been described as having shimmering gowns and locks flowing with unguent,

30) At *Th.* 64–65 Hesiod makes the Charites dwell beside the Muses. Euripides calls their partnership ἀδίσταν σύζυγιαν (*H.F.* 675). See also *H. Apoll.* 189–96; *Hom. H.* 27.15; Sappho, PLF 103.8, 128; Anacreon, PMG 346, fr. 11+3+6.9–10; adesp., PMG 937.7; Theog. 15; Pi. *Nem.* 9.54–55, *Paeon* 6.2–6; Bacch. 9.1–3, 19.3–6; Arist. *Meineke Com. Gr.* II, p. 1086, fr. xvi. For a discussion of the Muses and Charites in Pindar, see Kühn 22–29.

31) Herwig Maehler, *Die Auffassung des Dichterberufs im frühen Griechentum bis zur Zeit Pindars*, Hypomnemata, Heft 3 (Göttingen 1963) 17–19; Jean-Pierre Vernant, *Mythe et pensée chez les Grecs*, 2nd ed. (Paris 1966) 53–54; Marcel Detienne, *Les maîtres de vérité dans la Grèce archaïque*, 2nd ed. (Paris 1973) 9–16, 20.

32) For the Charites in early Greek poetry, see Karl Deichgräber, *Charis und Chariten: Grazie und Grazien* (Munich 1971) 20–36. Bacchylides marks well the distinction between Muses and Charites at 19.1–8. The poet obtains “gifts” from the Muses while the Charites cast τιμή upon his songs. The scholiast on Pi. *Ol.* 1.30 defines χάρις as “the power of poetry itself”.

33) See also the evidence gathered by Kühn 30–38.

symbolize the poetic beauty which his verse must have for lasting remembrance³⁴).

These functions are operative also in *Idyll* 16. Theocritus may sing of contemporary mortals, and these alone, without the Muses³⁵), just as in the third and fourth books of the *Aetia* Callimachus finds sources of knowledge through his own research (fr. 75.53–77). On the other hand, the Charites become indispensable in that they are the personifications of Theocritus' poetry itself. This is not a simple assertion, as most have taken it, that the poet is writing encomium³⁶). It is rather a declaration that despite rejection his compositions have poetic worth in the form of *χάρις*.

There is an additional dimension to the word *χάρις* which comes into play here. It connotes not just the pleasure of poetry itself but a certain reciprocity between the giver and receiver of that pleasure³⁷). The scholiast tells us that Theocritus is playing on an anecdote about Simonides which concerns *χάρις* in this sense. In the version related by Stobaeus³⁸), Simonides told a potential patron who promised *χάρις*, but not money, that he kept two chests, one for *χάριτες*, which was empty, and one for money, which alone met his needs. Since the anecdote stems from Simonides' reputation as a mercenary poet, Theocritus' use of it suggests a self-mocking comparison with the great encomiast³⁹). But at the same time he makes an essentially different point. His Charites are not now the "thanks" or "rewards" which others owe him, but his own poetry, *τὰ οἰκεῖα ποιήματα*, as the scholiast says. Since the poems have found no acceptance, the poet receives no *χάρις* in the Simonidean sense. His Charites remain that only inasmuch as they have *χάρις* in the sense of poetic charm and

34) At the end of the *Aetia* (fr. 112) he speaks again of both the Muses and Charites, but the context is too fragmentary to determine what connection he gives them.

35) In *Id.* 22 as well Theocritus shows something less than total dependence on the Muses. He considers his song a product of both the Muses and his own *οἶκος*, his unique talent (221–22). It should be noted that the Muses are needed here because the Dioscuri are not simple mortals, but heroes and gods.

36) This view is most fully laid out by Perrotta 13–14.

37) See Émile Benveniste, *Le vocabulaire des institutions indo-européennes* I (Paris 1969) 199–202; Joachim Latacz, *Zum Wortfeld "Freude" in der Sprache Homers* (Heidelberg 1966) 78–98.

38) Other sources are Plut. *Mor.* 520 A, 555 F, scholiast on Ar. *Pax* 697, Tzetz. *Chil.* 8.814 ff. The variants in the tradition are discussed by Carl Wendel, *Überlieferung und Entstehung der Theokrit-Scholien* (Berlin 1920) 104, n. 1.

39) Cf. Austin 9–16; Horstmann 128. On Simonides' reputation, see Bell 29–86.

beauty. Theocritus thus asserts both his poverty and his pride in his art.

If the Charites are poems in which Theocritus takes pride because of their poetic qualities, not just encomia for various greedy potentates who care not at all about art for art's sake, the close bond between poet and goddesses is easier to understand. The goddesses exhibit feelings which belong properly to the poet himself. Their bare feet and cold knees are at least partly an indication of their master's poverty⁴⁰). The position they assume in the bottom of the coffer, head on knees, denotes grief⁴¹), a projection of the poet's sorrow over his lack of success. Their anger (*σκυζόμεναι*, 8) and jeering (*τρωθάξισαι*, 9) may suggest his own self-criticism. But we should not forget that inspiring deities had a traditional right to admonish and upbraid. It is enough to recall the Muses' address to Hesiod (*Th.* 26), Apollo's instructions to Callimachus (*Aetia*, fr. 1.21 ff.), and even Lycidas' teasing of Simichidas (*Id.* 7. 19–26)⁴²). The mockery of the Charites may be of this sort, an indication that the poet does not quite have his house in order, that his own ambitions are out of line with the demands of his art.

Apart from the play on the biographical tradition concerning Simonides, the pretense that Theocritus is a writer of encomia is evident in his use, or rather misuse, of encomiastic rhetoric. The question *τίς γὰρ τῶν ὀπόσοι* (5), which opens the poem proper, and its repetition in similar language in 13, *τίς τῶν νῦν τοιόσδε*, recall in form the opening of an epinician by Simonides⁴³):

*τίς δὴ τῶν νῦν τοσάδ' ἢ πετάλοισι μύρων
ἢ στεφάνοισι ῥόδων ἀνεδήσατο,
νικάσσαι ἐν ἀγῶνι περικτιόνων;* (506 PMG)

But the difference between the two is instructive. Simonides asks who has won as many victories as Astylus, and the answer,

⁴⁰) Merkelbach 315 points out that being barefoot is a conventional motif in begging songs sung by children.

⁴¹) See Gow *ad* 10 ff., where he also points out the suggestion of their cramped position in the coffer.

⁴²) The warning deities in Augustan poetry are characteristically abusive. Apollo tweaks Vergil's ear (*Ecl.* 6.3–4), calls Propertius *demens* (3.3.15), and warns Horace with a harsh twang of the lyre (*C.* 4.15.1–2). A laughing Cupid snatches a foot from Ovid's hexameter line (*Am.* 1.1.3–4) and elsewhere makes fun of his tragic dress, buskins, and scepter (*Am.* 2.18.15–16).

⁴³) Austin 3–4 has pointed out the conventional nature of the *aporia* in Theocritus' question. The traditional function of such an aporetic question is preserved in *Id.* 17.9–12.

whether implied or stated, was "no one". Similar in structure is Theocritus' "Who will receive our Charites?" with the answer "I don't know". Yet Simonides is emphasizing the unique success of his patron, while Theocritus despairs of ever finding one. Here at the very beginning of the poem, Theocritus uses traditional rhetorical figures to bring into sharp contrast the reality of his own age and the ideals of the archaic one.

His language also recalls the Pindaric idealization of the relationship of patron and poet as that of host and guest. The following passage is a good summary of it, the poet appearing as *ξεῖνος* and the patron as *φίλος*:

ξεῖνός εἰμι' σκοτεινὸν ἀπέχων ψόγον,
 ὕδατος ὅτε ῥοὰς φίλον ἐς ἄνδρ' ἄγων
 κλέος ἐτήτυμον αἰνέσω (Nem. 7.61–63)

In exchange for hospitality the poet creates fame (*κλέος*) for the victor through praise poetry and thus keeps away the blame (*ψόγος*) that might darken his memory. It is clear that Theocritus has the archaic ideal in mind when he asks who will patronize a poet of talent (*τίς εὖ εἰπόντα φιλήσει*, 13). In 6 *πετάσας* puts the same emphasis on hospitality by recalling the Pindaric *toros* that the victor's doors are spread wide and thronged with guests (see *Nem.* 9.1–3, *ἀναπεπταμέναι*). But Theocritus' poems have found no open doors. There are no patrons to match those of Pindar's day. Great men do not wish to be celebrated (*αἰνεῖσθαι*, 15) for noble deeds, for profit is now the victor (*νενίκηνται δ' ὑπὸ κερδέων*, 15).

If generosity deserves praise, the corollary is that niggardliness elicits blame⁴⁴). This premise is implicit in Pindar, who claims as his highest function to praise the worthy and to blame the unrighteous:

αἰνέων αἰνητά, μομφὰν δ' ἐπισπείρων ἀλιτροῖς. (Nem. 8.39)

But Pindar in truth is concerned only with praise. The blameworthy appear in his poetry merely as a brief foil for the *laudandus*. Theocritus, on the other hand, assumes the tone of the blame poet in satirizing the miser clutching his money under his cloak and in listing the selfish excuses he has received (16–21). Here we have not just the Hellenistic poet's penchant for mime, but a bitterness

44) See Nagy, *Best of the Achaeans* 237.

reminiscent of that of Archilochus or Hipponax⁴⁵). It is significant that scholars have found a parallel between Theocritus' lament here and Callimachus' similar complaint in *Iambus* 3⁴⁶), a piece clearly in the tradition of blame poetry. Even so, does Theocritus' stance as a blame poet have an underlying encomiastic purpose, to point up a contrast with his *laudandus* Hiero? If so, it is a very minor one, for we are yet to hear of Hiero for over fifty lines. In its context the section is more concerned with the poet, with illustrating his mood of despair and the reasons for it.

Attempt at conversion (22–57)

Having graphically depicted the difficulties of obtaining patronage in the current age, at 22 Theocritus turns to advising potential patrons. Wealth is no advantage if hoarded. The rich man should use it for personal enjoyment, the benefit of friends and gods, and especially to honor poets⁴⁷), for they produce fame, all that can remain for a man after death. These are the values that the writers of epinician advocate, granting them to their patrons in the manner of praise⁴⁸). In Theocritus they seem part of an attempt to convert his contemporaries to the ideals of a former age, or, more indirectly, advice addressed to Hiero himself through a "mock-debate"⁴⁹). In either case Theocritus' purpose is clearly not, like Pindar's or Bacchylides', encomiastic, but is it even seriously didactic? Does he truly ignore the changes that have occurred since the fifth century in order to promote "a restitution of poetry to its old role in society"⁵⁰)?

The three main points in 22–33 – hidden wealth, treatment of one's fellows, repute or lack of it in Hades – appear in more concise fashion in *Isthmian* 1.67–68:

45) Hipponax himself is a beggar and poverty one of his themes; see West frs. 32, 34, 36, 38, 39.

46) Meincke 72, n. 1; Horstmann 135.

47) Albert Wifstrand, "Zu Theokrits Charites", *Miscellanea di studi alessandrini* (Turin 1963) 308–9, has argued that *μάλιστα* in 29 does not modify *Μουσάων ὑποφήτας* but the *ἄφρα* clause in 30. Wifstrand bases his argument on his belief that the poet would not make a "wenig anspruchsvoll und taktlos" statement. Meincke 49, n. 1 has effectively refuted the argument, and we shall see that the whole passage is decidedly self-serving.

48) See Bacch. 3.10–21; Pi. *Isth.* 1.67–68, *Nem.* 1.31–32.

49) The phraseology of Griffiths 29; cf. Meincke 51, Horstmann 132.

50) Griffiths 30.

εἰ δέ τις ἔνδον νέμει πλοῦτον κρουφαῖον,
 ἄλλοισι δ' ἐμπύπτων γελᾶ, ψυχὰν Ἰαῖδα τελέων οὐ
 φράζεται δόξας ἄνευθεν.

Theocritus has added a listing of those to receive the rich man's bounty, perhaps partially inspired by passages like Bacchylides 3. 13–16:

οἶδε πυργωθέντα πλοῦτον μὴ μελαμ-
 φαρεῖ κρούπτειν σκότω.
 βρούει μὲν ἱερά βουθύτοις ἑορταῖς,
 βρούουσι φιλοξενίας ἀγυιαί...

But the epinician models do not account for his double emphasis on generosity to poets (24, 29). In such passages poets need not appear at all, because references to the patron's hospitality tactfully encompass the entertainment and payment of the singer. Correspondingly, the song was considered a guest-gift, never wares for which payment was due⁵¹). Theocritus hints at proper conduct towards poets by instructing the host in rules of etiquette (τραπέζῃ μειλίξαντ' ἀποπέμψαι ἐπὴν ἐθέλωντι νέεσθαι, 27–28). Such a reference would be sufficient if he were truly interested in reestablishing the moral code of the Pindaric era. But he is not; his purpose is much more self-serving. The double reference to giving to poets harks back to the Charites who were dismissed ἀδωρήτους (7)⁵²) and makes it clear that this is merely an appeal for funds. The Pindaric moralizing is undercut, for Theocritus is in truth offering his poems as merchandise.

It is a commonplace of archaic lyric that to die unsung is to dwell in Hades ἀκλεῆς⁵³). Theocritus gives a faithful reproduction of this in 30–31 and follows it with a comparison of the forgotten dead man to a peasant with calloused hands weeping for his lack of patrimony (32–33). Perrotta maintains that the simile is based on a lyric convention like that in *Nemean* 7.19–20, ἀφνεὸς πενιχρός τε θανάτου πέρας ἅμα νέονται⁵⁴). Pindar's point is that greed is useless because both rich and poor are fated to die. But Theocritus is saying something else. He compares the sorrow of the noble who dies unsung to the lament of the poor laborer while

51) See Hermann Fränkel, *Early Greek Poetry and Philosophy*, trans. M. Hadas and J. Willis (New York 1973) 430–33; Maehler 88.

52) So Horstmann 126.

53) Most clearly stated at Pi. *Ol.* 10.91–93; see also *Ol.* 8.72–73, *Isth.* 1.67–68.

54) Perrotta 18.

alive. He thus suggests to potential patrons that being forgotten in Hades is no worse than poverty on earth. It is scarcely an archaic sentiment⁵⁵); it only appears to be. Self-advantage is again evident in that Theocritus subtly entices the rich to pity his plight. But the simile has another function, for it introduces what will be an important theme in the poem, the proper relationship of rich and poor.

This theme carries over into the *exempla* of famous patrons remembered only because their deeds were preserved in song (34–47). Again we are dealing with a Pindaric *topos*, as for instance *Pythian* 1.92–94⁵⁶):

ὀπιθόμβροτον αὔχημα δόξας
οἶον ἀποικομένων ἀνδρῶν δίαιταν μανύει
καὶ λογίοις καὶ ἀοιδοῖς. οὐ φθίνει Κροί-
σου φιλόφρων ἀρετά.

The ἀρετά which brought Croesus fame is his generosity, a quality which Pindar has just been recommending to the *laudandus*. In *Idyll* 16 the mention of the wealth of the Aleuadae and Scopadae has ostensibly the same function, to demonstrate the validity of Theocritus' previous advice. But the bucolic coloring of the passage brings other concerns to the fore. There is an explicit contrast between the forgotten noble and the lords remembered in Simonidean song. Implicit, and more visible to the reader's eye, is a contrast between the sorrow of the penniless laborer (32–33) and the contentment of the πενέσται who have generous masters (34–35). The cattle of the Scopadae and the sheep of the Creondae continue what seems a digression in even humbler terms. These pastoral vignettes threaten to overshadow the point to the extent that the scholiast is compelled to interpret: Theocritus simply means that the Thessalian nobles were very wealthy. Pindar would have stressed their largesse. Theocritus does not because he is not so much interested in celebrating the virtues of Simonides'

55) Horstmann 126, n. 55 suggests that Theocritus is playing on *Od.* 11.488–91, where Achilles laments his fate in the underworld. But Theocritus' point is essentially different, for Achilles would *prefer* the life of poor laborer.

56) Horstmann 127–28 and Griffiths 30 have asserted that the *exempla* in 34–57 substitute for the paradigmatic myth of Pindaric encomium. But Theocritus, who is not writing encomium, is not following encomium form; he merely presents a pastiche of Pindaric, or Pindaric-sounding, sententiae. Kuiper 386 and Perrotta 19 note the correct parallels.

patrons as in showing how wealth can be used to benefit the lowly.

While the serfs and their animals are pictured bucolically content in their fields and folds, the lords themselves we find already in the underworld (40–46). By constructing a contrary-to-fact condition with a four-line apodosis preceding the protasis and no modal adverb, the poet emphasizes lack of pleasure in earthly goods, abandonment of wealth, the long duration of wretched death. And, in fact, Simonides' song changes none of this: "They are dead and they would have been forgotten"⁵⁷). In the end Theocritus does mention the *τιμὴ* earned by their prize-winning horses, but it is somehow small consolation following his description of the victors' endless sadness in Hades. The sententiae may be Pindaric, but their application produces pure pessimism. As an attempt to convince contemporary men of wealth (including Hiero) to support him as a writer of encomium, the passage is not likely to be effective.

The characters from the *Cypria*, *Iliad*, and *Odyssey* who form a second series of *exempla* (48–57) also have models in Pindar, as in *Pythian* 3.112–14⁵⁸):

Νέστορα καὶ Λύκιον Σαρπαδόν', ἀνθρώπων φάτις,
ἔξ' ἐπέων κελαδενῶν, τέκτονες οἶα σοφοὶ
ἄρμωσαν, γινώσκωμεν . . .

But Theocritus' choice of heroes is curious. As Griffiths points out, the Lycians, the sons of Priam, and Cycnus with his feminine skin are all losers⁵⁹). Odysseus certainly has *κλέος*, but what of Eumaeus, Philoetius, and Laertes? No Hellenistic king would wish for the kind of remembrance that followed a swineherd, a neatherd, and a debilitated old man. This trio owes its presence to Theocritus' own interest in the bucolic and the humble. Just as the wealth of the Scopadae and Aleuadae reminded him of the peasants and beasts who shared the abundance of their estates, so the mention of Odysseus brings to mind the lesser beings who gained fame through his. At this point Theocritus' argument has come full circle. He set out to show that the benefit (*ὄνασις*, 23) of wealth for the wise was fame through poetry, but he ends by demonstrating that poets benefit (*ὄνασαν*, 57) not just heroes and men of position but the lowly as well. If the prooemium is truly

57) Gow *ad* 43.

58) See also *Nem.* 7.20–21, *Isth.* 5.26–28.

59) Griffiths 31.

programmatic in the sense that it helps us find our way through the rhetorical subterfuge of the poem, we are justified in seeing here Theocritus' own poetic preferences. It is no wonder, then, that he immediately breaks off his attempt to convert his close-fisted contemporaries to the morality of the Pindaric age, having just demonstrated his own inability to write poetry which reflects those values.

The Pindaric *topoi* of 22–57 reappear in *Idyll* 17.108–20. There they are truly encomiastic, celebrating Ptolemy's generosity to gods, subjects, and poets. The last have place of honor because they ensure Ptolemy of *κλέος* to rival that of the Atreidae. If Theocritus can write encomium rhetoric which is effective and complimentary, he can surely use the same commonplaces to produce advice that is persuasive. His failure to do so in *Idyll* 16 seems willful. It is not, then, a serious attempt to convert those who rejected his poetry to outmoded mores, or even advice indirectly addressed to Hiero. It rather tells us something about the poet himself. He needs financial support and is willing to evince a Pindaric mode to get it. Yet his sympathies lie with underlings, and he is truly concerned with the great only inasmuch as they can nurture and support the humble. His need for patronage thus stands in conflict with his poetic inclinations. If there is a message to Hiero, this is it, with hope that the Syracusan will provide patronage in exchange for what Theocritus wishes to give.

Transition to Hiero (58–70)

Before setting out the possibility of an alliance with Hiero, Theocritus must disassociate himself from those avaricious souls he has been petitioning⁶⁰). In bidding farewell to the man *φιλοκερδεία βεβλαμμένον* (63, with Pindaric wording; cf. *Nem.* 7.18), he implies that the new man on whom he pins his hopes is not of this ilk. The transition is rhetorically effective in separating Hiero from Theocritus' rather distasteful picture of contemporary men of wealth. But to see everything in the poem as addressed rhetorically to Hiero is to miss much of importance. The persona of the poet also undergoes a change in the course of these transitional lines, a change from despair to hope. This shift in attitude is

60) I make no judgment about whether Theocritus' poetry had in fact been rejected by potential patrons and who such men may have been. For the interpretation of the poem it is important only that Theocritus represents this as having happened.

not arbitrary, simply a device for tying together the disparate moods of the poem's two segments. It is rather directly related to the poet's decision to abandon the "Geldmuse" and to seek patronage on a more honorary basis. To see this we need to look not so much at what he says explicitly but at what his rhetoric implies.

He begins the transition in traditional encomiastic fashion with two gnomic lines (58–59) which sum up what went before and mark the change in attitude. While the juxtaposition of the sentiments is Pindaric (see *Ol.* 10.86–96), in Theocritus they are suggestive of sour grapes: "From the Muses (i. e., by hiring me to write encomium) good fame comes to men, but the living squander the money of the dead (i. e., see what will happen if you don't)." In Pindar the task of praising the *laudandus* is like counting grains of sand (*Ol.* 2.98) or pebbles in the sea (*Ol.* 13.45–46). By a similar *adynaton*, counting the waves on the shore, and the addition of another, washing a mud brick, Theocritus conveys the impossibility of changing the greedy. He again uses encomiastic conventions, not to praise, but to lament the circumstances that make praise impossible. Yet the wording of the second *adynaton* provides the first indication of the poet's shift in attitude. The proverb in the forms cited by Gow, *πλίνθον πλύνεις* and *laterem lavare*, indicates simply that a brick cannot be cleansed because it will disintegrate. The addition of the adjective *διαειδέι* (62), especially in juxtaposition with *θολεράν*, suggests a further idea: clear water used to wash a mud brick becomes mud too. Theocritus hints that the task of winning patronage from the greedy is not only impossible but defiling as well. This critical view of his previous activities becomes clearer in the concluding segment of the *adynata* (63). Horstmann has correctly argued that the meaning of *παρελθεῖν* here is not "to persuade", as Gow translates it, but "to deceive and to take something" (*ἀπατήσαι καὶ ἀφελεῖν τι*, as the scholiast says)⁶¹. If we accept this meaning, Theocritus must be admitting that his didactic stance was a mere cover for soliciting.

Theocritus' open assessment of the monetary motive behind his previous appeals for patronage leads to the turning point in the poem. In a farewell formula (*χαιρέτω ὅστις τοῖος*, 64) he spurns not only the rich man but his "boundless silver" as well. He now prefers the "honor and friendship of men" to "many mules and horses". We may remember that *φιλότης* (66), denoting Pindaric

61) Horstmann 129–30.

guest-friendship, was previously a euphemism for generosity to poets (*φιλήσει*, 13). Now Theocritus chooses *φιλότης* in place of wealth, specifically the kind of wealth possessed by the patrons of Pindar and Simonides. And he adds the word *τιμή*, which does not now refer to the prestige of a victor (cf. 46), but to respect for the poet himself. In this way the basis on which he seeks patronage is modified. Support is not to be given simply because of a promise of poetic immortality, but because the patron sees in a poet's work those qualities which will make it endure. The next line suggests to Hiero just what Theocritus' talents are.

Theocritus declares that he seeks someone to whom he may come with the Muses *κεχαρισμένος* (68). At this point scholars usually despair of making his original statements about the Muses and Charites fit with the rest of the poem. The solution has been to assert that the Muses in 69 and at the close now represent Theocritus' own poetry, whereas the Charites of the close become revered goddesses⁶²). But does Theocritus confound the sisterhoods in this way? It is certainly wrong to consider the Charites as now poems, now goddesses in *Idyll* 16, for Theocritus chooses that they be both. On the other hand, I see no evidence that the Muses are ever personified poems or that "with the Muses" means anything other than "with the inspiration of the Muses". The problem arises because in 68–69 and at the conclusion Theocritus seems to enjoy the inspiration of those very Muses from whom he set himself aloof in the proemium. Yet it is only select topics, the *βροτοί*, that the poet may handle without them; the Muses share with poets the task of hymning gods and heroes, the traditional *comparanda* for the subjects of encomiastic poetry. So in offering to write encomium for Hiero, to celebrate him as *προτέροις ἴσος ἠρώεσσι* (80), Theocritus must claim their support. Lines 69–70 explain why it is necessary. The statement that journeys are difficult for poets without the daughters of Zeus is not just a traditional declaration that true poetry is inspired poetry (cf. Pindar *Paeon* 7 b.3–5). It means literally that travelling poets need the Muses⁶³), for travel in *Idyll* 16 is connected with praise of a patron and thus requires the Muses as inspirers of encomium (cf. 107). Before, he was sending out the Charites alone, and the result

62) Margrit Sanchez-Wildberger, *Theokrit-Interpretationen* (Diss. Zurich 1955) 10–12; Meincke 38, 59, 71; Rist 146–47; Griffiths 44.

63) So R. J. Cholmeley, ed., *The Idylls of Theocritus*, 2nd ed. (London 1919) *ad loc.* Cairns, "Distaff of Theugenis" 302, makes the same point about the journey in *Id.* 28.

was failure. Now the poet seems willing to make certain compromises to win the patronage of Hiero.

What then of *κεχαρισμένος* in 68? It is usually translated "welcome" and repeats *ἀσπασίως* of 7. It also continues the Simonidean joke, suggesting that Hiero will receive him with both gratitude and reward. But, given the idea of reciprocity in the word, it hints as well that Theocritus will bring his patron *χάρις* in the sense of both favor and poetic charm. If the Muses find a place of prominence here where Theocritus first offers his poetic talents to Hiero, at the close of the poem he will boldly assert that not just the Muses but the Charites as well will accompany him to the patron's house.

Hiero (71–97)

After more than seventy lines Theocritus finally comes to what many consider the encomium proper. Yet we look in vain for any reference to Hiero's noble ancestry, birth, youth, generous use of wealth, past military exploits – all the standard topics found in the *Encomium to Ptolemy*. Praise is of future events, the battles that Hiero prepares for and the resulting peace that the poet prays for. The usual explanation is that there was nothing glorifying to be said about Hiero's past life⁶⁴). His ancestry is uncertain, he held the office of *στρατηγός αὐτοκράτωρ* through force of arms, and his major battles were yet to be fought⁶⁵). We may agree that it was best to steer clear of the past. Yet for a poet seeking a patron there are advantages in concentrating on the future. It allows him to skirt the embarrassing question of why he has not previously been called upon. And by making the patron's need of him yet to be realized, he can to some extent define the areas of that need in his own terms. Thus we find the so-called encomium beginning with concerns proper to a war-lord but ending with a bucolic Sicily that knows the battle-cry no more⁶⁶).

The scenes of Hiero's victory and its consequences for Sicily are not then strictly encomiastic, but rather sketches of encomia, samples of what the poet might offer. At the start the formal nature of the battle description suggests encomium of the tradi-

64) Meincke 64–65; Horstmann 136; Griffiths 13–14.

65) Berve 7–10.

66) The future tense is used in a somewhat analogous fashion in the Roman *recusatio*: see, for example, Verg. *Ecl.* 8.6–10, *Georg.* 3. 10–48; Prop. 2.10.19–20.

tional sort. By comparing Hiero with Achilles and Ajax and by recalling briefly a Homeric arming scene (cf. Gow *ad* 81), Theocritus hints at an epic mode, if not epic. With his prayer to the Syracusan trinity of Zeus, Athene, and Kore he returns to the model of archaic epinician which has been so predominant in the poem. It is an unmistakable reference to *Pythian* 1.67–80, which celebrates the earlier Hiero's triumph at Cumae. The prayer's initial dark note detailing the devastation of the Punic forces gives way to longing for the blessing of peace upon the Sicilian countryside. This too has its start in the Pindaric prayer. But Pindar's mere reference to *ἡσυχία* (*Pyth.* 1.70) is transformed into a detailed description of the *Ἰέρωνος εἰρήνην*. While Bacchylides provides a model for the arms covered by spider webs and the forgotten name of war-cry (*Paean* 4.69–70, 75), they end a list of images that have no counterpart in archaic encomium. Fields in bloom, pasturing sheep, homing cattle hastening on the evening traveler, the cicada singing from his perch to shepherds at noonday rest, all arise from Theocritus' bucolic proclivities. After suggesting praise poetry in the traditional forms of epic and encomium, Theocritus brings forth new possibilities in the realm of bucolic.

As the bond between patron and poet changes, so with it the nature of encomium. Through the ties of guest-friendship a poet of any state may hymn a lord of any other state as hero and victor. So Pindar was the celebrant of many and diverse patrons. But it is only a native poet who sees praise of the ruler's deeds in the peace and contentment that they bring to the countryside. At least we may so interpret Theocritus' bucolic scenes. That poetry of the pastoral type was in fact his preference is the rhetorical suggestion of much that has gone before. The prooemium sets out the program by converting heroes to mortals of a stature to match that of the poet. If the word *βροτοί* enhances Hiero not at all, it suits well the mass of subjects who will enjoy his deliverance. The serfs, cattle, and sheep of the rich Thessalians find their counterparts in the Sicilian landscape. As we saw, the benefits of wealth for the lowly of Thessaly touched Theocritus as much as or more than the posthumous fame purchased by Simonides' patrons. In Sicily too the well-being of the land and its inhabitants seems as important to the poet as Hiero's *κλέος*. The example of Odysseus and his faithful servants prepares us for the relationship between Hiero and his people. It also acts as a justification for choosing pastoral. If Homer wrote of Eumaeus, Philoetius, and Laertes as well as Odysseus, then Theocritus may celebrate bucolic life as well as

Hiero⁶⁷). The rhetorical force of the whole poem comes to a head in this passage which seeks to persuade Hiero of two points: first, that patronage for Theocritus is the inevitable result of his own *ἀρετή* and the native poet's desire to sing of it; secondly, that poetry with a bucolic cast can praise a ruler as well as more traditional forms. The *Idyll* thus becomes an elaborate justification for granting patronage to a pastoral poet.

Conclusion (98–109)

Having given samples of encomia, Theocritus imagines a corps of poets ready to compose them. Continuing in the optative mood, he wishes that *ἀοιδοί* bring Hiero *ὑψηλὸν κλέος* extending beyond the Scythian sea and to the walls of Babylon. He is only one, but the daughters of Zeus love many others beside. The withdrawal of the poet into a crowd of encomiasts is high praise for Hiero indeed, but curiously violative of traditional encomiastic rhetoric. It is true that the phrase *κλέος ὑψηλόν* appears near the end of Pindar's third *Pythian* (111) to Hiero I and that universalizing doublets in the form of geographical references are found in archaic poetry to celebrate extent of fame⁶⁸). But *κλέος* is traditionally a product of one poet's unique talent. It is axiomatic in Pindaric epinician that the best competitor deserves the best poet⁶⁹). In the conclusion to the truly encomiastic *Idyll* 17 Theocritus' own practice continues the archaic manner. In emphatic first person singular (*σέθεν δ' ἐγώ*, 135) he vows to remember Ptolemy with the "other demigods" and boasts that his poem will not be cast aside by men hereafter. But in *Idyll* 16, in proposing encomium rather than writing it, the poet smothers his individuality at just the point when we might expect him to assert it. If there are so many poets willing and able to hymn the spearman Hiero, why should he choose Theocritus as the recipient of patronage?

His modest guise is a necessary part of his somewhat revolutionary proposal that Hiero patronize a non-traditional poet. If he can submerge himself into the many encomiasts, he can bolster his implied claim that his own brand of poetry will pro-

67) Cf. Griffiths 44.

68) Pi. *Isth.* 2.41–42, 6.23; cf. *Nem.* 6.48–49; *Theog.* 247–48.

69) See Pi. *Ol.* 1.115–16, *Pyth.* 1.42–45, *Isth.* 2.35–37. Eulogists do appear in a group in the *Panegyric to Messalla* (35–38), which probably reflects Hellenistic encomium, but it is a question of a competition that the author himself hopes to win.

duce κλέος as well as more conservative forms⁷⁰). Yet he does find a way, albeit a subtle way, of declaring his uniqueness. The withdrawal into the group is only preparation for a statement of what distinguishes him⁷¹).

The Muses love not just Theocritus but many others as well (101–2). When he turns to the Charites in 104–5, it is to a private source of inspiration:

ὦ Ἐτεόκλειοι Χάριτες θεαί, ὦ Μινύειον
ὄρχομενὸν φιλέοισαι ἀπεχθόμενόν ποτε Θήβαις.

The cult at Orchomenus seems a reference to *Olympian* 14, a hymn to the Charites as patron goddesses of that city⁷²). This explains the mention of hostility towards Thebes, which is probably an interpretation of Pindar's *παλαιγόνων Μινυᾶν ἐπίσκοποι* (*Ol.* 14.4) and to the same purpose, to stress the venerable antiquity of the deities⁷³). Only the epithet Ἐτεόκλειοι has no model in Pindar's ode. Eteocles was the founder of the cult⁷⁴) or, according to another legend, the father of the Charites⁷⁵). Theocritus does not tell us which he has in mind⁷⁶), and perhaps that is not important. For it is the epithet itself that is crucial to his final statement of his poetic worth and to the movement of the poem as a whole. I suggest that it is an etymological play. One of the major themes of the poem, perhaps the dominant one, is the importance of obtaining κλέος through song. The word itself or a derivative of it is mentioned no less than five times, including the

70) Yet his rhetoric seems the forerunner of such apologetic lines as Verg. *Ecl.* 6.6–8, where there is a clear distinction between the poet of the humble and the mass of eulogists. Cf. also Prop. 3.1.15–18; Hor. *C.* 1.6.

71) That Theocritus does intend a distinction between himself and the “many others” is supported by a certain similarity to the concluding section of *Id.* 22 (215–23). There he first states that many poets are dear to the heroes of the Trojan War and then makes a subdivision based on what the poet provides. The Chian bard (Homer) furnishes glory, while Theocritus himself brings propitiatory offerings, such as the Muses and his abilities allow.

72) On the cult at Orchomenus, see Escher, *RE* 3² (1899) 2153–54; Erkingen Schwarzenberg, *Die Grazien* (Bonn 1966) 7–11.

73) Holzinger 196; Perrotta 15.

74) Hes., fr. 71 West; Strab. 9.414; Paus. 9.35.1.

75) *Geop.* 11.4.2.

76) This statement is based on the reading *Χάριτες* which Gow prefers to *θυγατέρες* in 104. Yet Rist 146–47 makes the intriguing point that, if Theocritus does envision Eteocles as the father of the Charites, he may be distinguishing the mortal birth of these goddesses from the divine parentage of the Muses (emphasized in 1, 70).

final *ύψηλὸν κλέος* that Theocritus wishes for Hiero (2, 31, 54, 58, 98). Now at the end of the poem the poet calls upon his Charites as *Ἐτεόκλειοι*, that is, bringers of "true fame" (cf. *κλέος ἐτήτυμον*, *Nem.* 7.63). There are many servants of the Muses to serve as encomiasts, but the one who comes with the grace and charm of the Charites will write the poetry most likely to be preserved (cf. again Callimachus *Aet.* fr. 7.13–14). It is a powerful argument for Hiero to pick Theocritus out of the mass, but its abstruseness suggests that the poet is less concerned with its effect on Hiero than with his own resolve to hold fast to the Charites.

Austin has said of the concluding lines, "All attempts to meet a patron are virtually abandoned and the poet is left a solitary figure at the end. What sets out to be an encomium of Hiero becomes a *consolatio* of the poet"⁷⁷). The final lines do return to the poet's own persona:

ἄκλητος μὲν ἔγωγε μένοιμί κεν, ἐς δὲ καλεύντων
 θαρσῆσας Μοῖσαισι σὺν ἀμετέροισιν ἰοίμ' ἄν.
 καλλείψω δ' οὐδ' ὑμμε' τί γὰρ Χαρίτων ἀγαπατόν
 ἀνθρώποις ἀπάνευθεν; αἰὲ Χαρίτεσσιν ἄμ' εἶην.

(106–9)

But he has not given up all hope of striking a bargain with Hiero, and his mood is more one of determination and perseverance than of despondency. The change which has occurred is his resolution no longer to canvass for a patron⁷⁸). He will wait at home until he receives an invitation, as he hopes to do from Hiero. Then he will go with his Muses, a clear statement of his intent to write encomium. The courage which he will need for his journey (*θαρσῆσας*, 107) derives directly from the presence of the Muses and suggests that without their aid praise of a patron may be beyond his capabilities⁷⁹). But the poet is not now proposing to write for

77) Austin 18.

78) It is shameful for a poet to arrive *ἄκλητος* (106), for he thus puts himself in the position of a beggar. Cf. Lycidas' teasing question to Simichidas in *Id.* 7.24, "Are you hurrying uninvited (*ἄκλητος*) to some feast?"

79) Theocritus uses another form of the participle (*θέρσειοσ'*) in *Id.* 28.3 to encourage an ivory distaff to accompany him to Miletus as a gift for the wife of Nicias. Perhaps more pertinent is Aratus' use of *θαρσαλέος* in 460, where he states that his daring fails when he comes to describe the errant courses of the planets. In a Roman context cf. the *recusationes* Prop. 2.10.5–6 (*audacia certe laus erit*); Hor. *Ser.* 2.1.10–11 (*aude Caesaris invicti res dicere*); Ov. *Am.* 2.1.11 (*ausus eram . . . caelestia dicere bella*), 2.18.4 (*ausuros grandia*).

Hiero an entirely traditional encomium. This is the meaning of his insistence on the companionship of the Charites. What *κεχαρισμένος* (68) timidly suggested becomes the clear bold conclusion to the poem. Any encomium Theocritus may compose will have the special qualities of the Charites, those which I suspect he has already illustrated in his vision of the Sicilian countryside.

The final statement – *ἀεὶ Χαρίτεσσιν ἄμ' εἶην* – poses one last comparison with archaic encomium. It was common for the encomiast to close by linking his own poetic accomplishment with the future fame of the patron⁸⁰). Theocritus' wish to be always with the Charites is essentially different, for it is operative whether he obtains patronage or not⁸¹). This is not quite art for art's sake, but in a poem that concerns both poetry and praise it suggests that poetry has first place.

The originality of *Idyll* 16 and thereby its central position in the development of ancient praise poetry should now be clear. Theocritus' primary innovation was to create out of encomiastic convention an autobiographical tone through which the poet may express concerns that differ from those of the patron. The voice of the poet has a similar importance in Callimachus' Prologue to the *Aetia*. But there the refusal to write glorifying epic is kept separate from the question of patronage and converted instead to a quarrel among literati. Despite Callimachus' circumvention of the primary issue of Theocritus' poem, *Idyll* 16 may have influenced the rhetorical techniques and general structure of the Prologue (see Appendix). If so, there emerges a direct line of development from Theocritus' Hiero poem to the Roman *recusatio*. It has been claimed as a Roman contribution to the form that indirect praise of a patron, usually a brief list of his military successes, is coupled with the poet's assertion of his stylistic preferences⁸²). I have argued that this is precisely what we find in *Idyll* 16. If the *Χαρίτες ἢ Τέρον* is given its proper place in the tradition, it becomes clear that the conflict between poetry and patronage, like so much else in Augustan literature, had a prototype in the Hellenistic age⁸³).

80) See, for example, Ibycus, PMG 282.47–48; Bacch. 3.90–98; *Id.* 17.135–37.

81) Is the farewell to the Camenae in *Catalepton* 5, a *recusatio* of poetry in favor of philosophy, a reversal of Theocritus' conclusion?

82) Wimmel finds the first evidence of this "Abwehr und Panegyrik" in *Ecl.* 6; for its development, see Stichwortindex, s.v. "Panegyrik". See also Gordon Williams, *Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry* (Oxford 1968) 46–47, 102–3.

83) Max Pohlenz, "Die Hellenistische Poesie und die Philosophie", *Chari-*

Appendix

Given below is a structural analysis of *Idyll* 16 and Callimachus' Prologue to the *Aetia* (fr. 1) designed to emphasize the similarities between the two. I have noted key Greek phrases which bear comparison.

<i>Idyll</i> 16	<i>Aetia</i> , fr. 1
Prooemium (1–4)	
Unsuccessful canvassing of Charites (5–12)	
Rejection by rich and their excuses (13–21)	Grumbling by Telchines and their objections to Callimachus' work (1–6)
Advice to rich with examples from earlier poetry (22–57)	Instructions on poetry to Telchines with examples from earlier poetry (7–16)
Farewell to greedy (58–72) <i>χαιρέτω . . . αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ</i> (64, 66)	Farewell to jealous Telchines (17–20) <i>ἔλλετε . . . μηδ' ἀπ' ἐμεῦ</i> (17, 19)
	Warning of Apollo (21–28)
Compatibility of Hiero as patron of Theocritus' song (73–97) <i>ἀνήρ δς ἐμοῦ κεχρήσετ' αἰοιδοῦ</i> (73)	Audience who appreciates Callimachus' song (29–30) <i>λιγὸν ἦχον τέττιγος . . . ἐφίλησαν</i> (29–30)
Theocritus as one of a group of court poets (98–103)	Distinction between Callimachus and other poets (31–36)

tes (Berlin 1911) 98, n. 3, reprinted in *Kleine Schriften* II (Hildesheim 1965), pointed out long ago a general structural resemblance between *Id.* 16 and Tib. 1.1, a poem which concerns, in part, the relationship between Tibullus as pastoral lover and Messalla as man of war, and this in the context of a disavowal of wealth. Cf., particularly, *Id.* 16.64–67 and Tib. 1.49–52, a passage usually derived from Callimachus' Prologue.

εἶς μὲν ἐγώ, πολλοὺς . . . ἄλ- ἄλλος, ἐγὼ δ' εἶην (32)
 λους (101)

Theocritus' address to the Charites with invited-uninvited contrast in which Charites are the constant (104–9)

Callimachus' statement that he is favored by the Muses with young-old contrast in which Muses are the constant (37–38)

Analyzed in this way the two pieces show a parallelism which extends to almost every section. Only Theocritus' prooemium, his initial picture of the Charites, and Apollo's warning to Callimachus lack a counterpart, and I have suggested that the Charites may in fact play something of a warning role like Apollo.

It seems unlikely that these similarities are purely coincidental. If *Idyll* 16 is properly dated to the 270's and the Prologue with its reference to Callimachus' old age belongs as late as the 240's, then it is clearly the former that has influenced the latter⁸⁴.

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