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PINDAR AND THE STATUES OF RHODES

In his *Seventh Olympian*, dedicated to Diagoras of Rhodes, Pindar refers to the first inhabitants of that island, the Heliadae, as enjoying the favours of Zeus and Athena, including the gift of technical skill from the goddess, so that they become supreme artisans (*Ol.* 7.50–3):

> ... αὐτὰ δέ σφισιν ὤπασε τέχναν
> πᾶσαν ἐπιχθονίων Γλαυκῶπις ἀριστοπόνοις χερσὶ κρατεῖν.
> ἔργα δὲ ζωοῖσιν ἐρπόντεσσί θ' ὁμοῖα κέλευθοι φέρον·
> ἦν δὲ κλέος βαθύ. δαέντι δὲ καὶ σοφία μείζων ἄδολος τελέθει.

It is a measure of the richness of Pindar's language and its allusiveness here that so many varying interpretations of this passage have been proffered. The lines have been considered variously to contain references to contrasting types of mythic artisans, a critique of Homer, and musings on natural and learned artistic and intellectual talent. Especially problematic has been line 53: δαέντι δὲ καὶ σοφία μείζων ἄδολος τελέθει—the sentence that has attracted the most critical attention. At the risk of launching yet another interpretation doomed to be wrecked against the rugged impenetrability of Pindar's imagery, I offer a new reading of the passage, not entirely exclusive of some of these others, but not, I hope, subject to their pitfalls. My claim is that Pindar tempers the apparent praise of the statues here to make a point about the superior efficacy of his medium of song.

Since Heyne's commentary (1773, rev. 1824) many have seen an allusion here to the Telchines—the *Nibelungen*-like creatures famous for their skill as artisans (cf. Diod. Sic. 5.55.1–3; Strabo 14.2.7)—whose works, they infer, are being contrasted with the sculptures made by the Heliadae.[1] Bowra, for instance, translated *Ol.* 7.53: 'In skilful hands art is better without guile', and went on to explain that the Heliadae are better artists than the Telchines because they are honest.[2] Verdenius saw no such contrast here, but claimed that Pindar in fact identifies the Heliadae with the Telchines, so that the latter are not considered wizards, and took it to mean that in a skilled artist 'even superior skill is honest'.[3] This was in part a response to Ruck's reasonable objections to seeing an allusion to the Telchines here. Ruck rightly pointed out that those figures are unnamed, and their reputation for malice was not linked to their skills as artisans, but rather their associations with the 'evil eye'.[4] Ruck saw instead a Pindaric critique of Homer, who had also dealt with the

[1] C. Heyne, *Pindari Carmina* 1 (Göttingen, 1773; rev. and enlarged by G. H. Schaefer, Leipzig, repr. London, 1824) ad loc., aptly described *Ol.* 7.53 as *sententiae brevitate obscurae*. See D. C. Young 'Pindar and Horace against the Telchines (*Ol.* 7.53 and *Carm.* 4.4.33)', *AJPh* 108 (1987), 153, nn. 7 8 for a list of scholars who accepted Heyne's interpretation, to which add J. E. Sandys, *The Odes of Pindar* (Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, MA, 1919), 77. More recently, M. Willcock, *Pindar. Victory Odes. Olympians 2, 7 & 11, Nemean 4, Isthmians 3, 4 & 7* (Cambridge, 1995) ad *Ol.* 7.52 sees a reference to the Telchines' art in the description of the lifelike statues by the road.

[2] C. M. Bowra, *Pindar* (Oxford, 1964), 339.

[3] W. J. Verdenius, *Pindar's Seventh Olympian Ode. A Commentary* (Amsterdam, 1972), ad loc.

[4] As C. A. P. Ruck, 'Marginalia Pindarica', *Hermes* 96 (1968), 129–30 notes, the ability to make moving statues is not *per se* an indication of malice as this was a feature of Hephaestus' work (e.g. *Il.* 18.417 20).

story of Tlepolemos (*Il.* 2.653–70) which the younger poet has just set aright (*Ol.* 7.20ff); thus Pindar claims his art is greater than Homer's because he knows what he is talking about and his medium is undeceptive.[5] While Ruck plausibly took σοφία as a reference to Pindar's own art,[6] his overall reading sits oddly in the context, which concerns famous lifelike sculpture made by the Heliadae. No mention has been made of Tlepolemos for some twenty lines, and as a virtual non-entity in the *Iliad* (a mention in the catalogue [2.653–70]; killed off by Book 5 [627–67]), it seems unlikely that his name would so readily conjure up associations with Homer that Ruck's reading depends on. It is true that elsewhere Pindar does make criticism of Homeric poetry, most famously at *Nemean* 7.20–7. But there Homer is specifically named, so there would seem to be nothing to prevent Pindar from mentioning the great poet by name again if he wished to criticize him in the way Ruck suggests. The story of Tlepolemos would have been known from other sources, too, and the differences in the Pindaric and Homeric accounts can more easily be explained by the fact that Pindar is simply working within a different tradition, rather than 'correcting' Homer. Apollodorus, for instance, preserves a slightly different tradition about Tlepolemos, noting that the hero's mother is Astyoche (Apollod. *Bibl.* 2.7.6; cf. Pindar's Astydameia, *Ol.* 7.24), and that he killed his uncle Likymnios unwillingly (οὐκ ἑκών: *Bibl.* 2.8.2), while in Pindar's account he does it in a fit of anger (χολωθείς: *Ol.* 7.30).

Young likewise denied any reference to the Telchines, asserting that there is no evidence that they were associated with Rhodes until after the time of Callimachus, who used them as an analogue for his literary rivals (*Aet.* fr. 1, esp. 1 7) and linked them instead to Ceos (*Aet.* fr. 75.54–69).[7] Relying on a scholiast's reading of the passage, and comparing Horace, *Odes* 4.4.33 (*doctrina sed vim promovet insitam*), Young claims that Pindar's point is that the τέχνη which Athena gave to the Heliadae augmented their natural talent, and renders: 'If a man has learned knowledge his native wisdom becomes greater, also.'[8] Following Young, Race in his justly praised two-volume Loeb edition of Pindar gives: 'When one is expert, even native talent becomes greater.'[9] But to interpret Pindar through a Roman writing over four centuries later (even one of Horace's stature!) is not to my mind the most reliable way of understanding the Greek poet's meaning here. Moreover, the translations of σοφία ἄδολος as 'native intellect' (Young) and 'natural wisdom' (Race) needlessly stretch the meaning of ἄδολος. The more literal rendering of 'undeceptive' or 'guileless'[10] is more suited to what I take to be Pindar's agonistic tenor here. Indeed, consideration of Pindar's agonistic tendencies can shed much light on *Ol.* 7.50–53 whose nuances emerge more fully in the light of other Pindaric passages, as well as texts from the archaic and Classical periods where the respective efficacy of visual artworks or aural media is at issue.

As has long been recognized, Pindar's musings on his medium at times entail an assertion of the superiority of his own song over, for instance, sculpture and rituals

[5] Ibid. 132. Ruck (n. 4), 132 translates: 'Is not the poet/Who's informed the greater for his truth?'

[6] See below n. 29.

[7] Young (n. 1), 153.

[8] Young (n. 1), 155. Young's translation appears in his *Three Odes of Pindar. A Literary Study of Pythian 11, Pythian 3, and Olympian 7* (Leiden, 1968), 86, n. 2.

[9] W. Race, *Pindar I. Olympian Odes. Pythian Odes* (Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, MA, 1997), 127. In his generally favourable review S. Instone, *CR* n.s. 48 (1998), 265, legiti mately questions whether σοφία ἄδολος means 'natural talent'.

[10] LSJ, s.v. ἄδολος I.

which likewise commemorated the success of the very figures for whom Pindar composed his epinician odes.[11] This not to say that Pindar is necessarily hostile to visual media, and it is well known that he will use images from the plastic arts to describe his own medium (*Ol.* 6.1 4; *Pyth.* 6.6–18; fr. 194 SM, and so on).[12] But many of these poetic conceits suggest that Pindar is alluding to the supremacy of his own art even as he uses imagery borrowed from the plastic arts.[13] The baldest statement of this agonistic strand in Pindaric poetry, at least as far as sculpture is concerned, is the beginning of *Nemean Five* (esp. 1–5). Here he announces that he is not a sculptor who makes statues doomed to stay on the same pedestal; he continues to bid his 'sweet song' travel on every skiff and proclaim the victory of the successful athlete far and wide. This blunt eschewal of sculpture makes a powerful and enduring distinction between visual and aural media: the former is static and lifeless while the latter moves and travels, as if somehow an animate phenomenon.[14] Pindar's depiction of

[11] See, for instance, T. B. L. Webster 'Greek theories of art and literature down to 400 BC', *CQ* 33 (1939), 176 7; R. R. Holloway, *A View of Greek Art* (New York, 1973), 198 9; J. Svenbro, *La Parole et le Marbre* (Paris, 1976), 190; B. Gentili, *Poet and Public in Ancient Greece*, trans. T. Cole (Baltimore and London, 1988), 163–4; L. Kurke, *The Traffic in Praise. Pindar and the Poetics of Social Economy* (Ithaca, NY, 1991), 251; D. Steiner, *The Tyrant's Writ. Myths and Images of Writing in Ancient Greece* (Princeton, 1994), 95 6. F. Nisetich '*Olympian* 1.8 11: an epinicion metaphor', *HSPh* 79 (1975), 55 68, plausibly argues that Pindar's treatment of wreaths in *Ol.* 1.8 11 recalls the coronation of the athlete to claim that his song 'can do what the victor's coronation had, only better' (68). For fuller discussion of victor statues, see W. W. Hyde, *Olympic Victor Monuments and Greek Athletic Art* (Washington, DC, 1921), *passim*; and, more recently, S. Lattimore, 'The nature of early Greek victor statues' in S. J. Bandy (ed.), *Coroebus Triumphs. The Alliance of Sports and the Arts* (San Diego, 1987), 245–56, and W. R. Raschke, 'Images of victory. Some new considerations of athletic monuments', in W. J. Raschke (ed.), *The Archaeology of the Olympics. The Olympics and Other Festivals in Antiquity* (Madison, 1988), 38 54.

[12] On craft analogies for poetry in general: R. Harriott, *Poetry and Criticism before Plato* (London, 1969), 92–104; Svenbro (n. 11), 186 93 with refs; Gentili (n. 11), esp. 50 3 and 164 5 with nn; Kurke (n. 11), 192 4. Pindar also compares his poetry to cups of wine, nectar, wreaths, and mixtures of milk and honey (e.g. *Ol.* 1.8 11, 7.1 10; *Nem.* 3.76 80, 8.13–16; *Isthm.* 6.2–9).

[13] As Svenbro (n. 11), 190, observed of Pindar's use of ἐργάζομαι in *Isthm.* 2.46 where Pindar announces οὐκ ἐλινύσοντας αὐτοὺς (sc. ὕμνους) ἐργασάμαν: 'Pindare réussit ici non seulement à évoquer le caractère sculptural des ses hymnes mais encore à souligner leur supériorité sur les sculptures, qui restent "inertes".' Gentili (n. 11), 287, n. 57 makes much the same observation also about *Nem.* 5, as does Kurke (n. 11), 251. Steiner 'Pindar's "Oggetti Parlanti"', *HSPh* 95 (1993), 159 80, 'Moving images: fifth century victory monuments and the athlete's allure', *Cl Ant* 17 (1998), 123–49, and *Images in Mind. Statues in Archaic and Classical Greek Literature and Thought* (Princeton, 2001), 260 5 posits interesting links between Pindar's diction and inscriptions on contemporaneous statue bases (as collected by J. Ebert, *Griechische Epigramme auf Sieger an Gymnischen und Hippischen Agonen* [Berlin, 1972], *passim*) to argue for a homology between visual and verbal memorials to athletes. But her claims that Pindar is no different from the sculptor or statue maker (1998), 137, 139, and that statuary and poetry work in a 'co operative venture' (2001), 263, underplay the agonistic elements in Pindar's appropriation of plastic imagery. These receive renewed treatment by P. O'Sullivan, 'Victory statue, victory song: Pindar's agonistic poetics and its legacy' in D. Phillips and D. Pritchard (edd.), *Sport and Festival in the Ancient Greek World* (Swansea, 2003), 75–100.

[14] Pindar was not the first to denigrate sculpture as inert matter, as Simonides (fr. 581 *PMG*) testifies; cf. also Xenophanes (B 15 DK) and Heraclitus (B 5 DK). For fuller discussion of Simonides, who elsewhere shows an interest in the unities between visual and aural media (Paus. 10.27.4; cf. Plut., *De glor. Ath.* 346F 347A), see M. Detienne, *The Masters of Truth*, trans. Janet Lloyd (New York, 1996), 107 16; Svenbro (n. 11), 141–72; Gentili (n. 11), esp. 68 71, 151 62; A. Rouveret, *Histoire et imaginaire de la peinture ancienne* (Paris, 1989), 144 9; A. Carson, 'Simonides painter', in R. Hexter and D. Selden (edd.), *Innovations of*

his own song as a moving and living medium occurs frequently elsewhere in his corpus,[15] and is a widely-attested τόπος as early as Homer.[16] It is well known, of course, that the presentation of poetry as a product of manual craft or skill appears in Pindar's work and goes back to Homer also.[17] But the 'poetry in motion' idea is one of the most important in Pindar's conceptions of his art. This is not merely because of its prevalence and variety in his work, but also because, for Pindar, a song's apparent capacity to move in a number of forms is something unique to his medium, and a sign of its superiority to visual artworks.

With this in mind, we return to the lines in question at *Olympian Seven*. Athena's gift (*Ol.* 7.51) to the Rhodian artisans already suggests some sort of agonistic context in which these artisans operated: ὥπασε τέχναν/πᾶσαν ἐπιχθονίων Γλαυκῶπις ἀριστοπόνοις χερσὶ κρατεῖν. While the wording here is not entirely free of ambiguities, Athena's bestowal clearly results in the supreme craftsmanship enjoyed by the Rhodians by which they surpass other mortals.[18] More importantly, Athena's gift recalls the Homeric simile which describes Athena's embellishment of Odysseus when he is about to meet Nausicaa for the first time (*Od.* 6.229 37). Athena's make-over is compared to the inlaying of gold on silver statues by an artisan (*Od.* 6.233 4):

> ... ὃν Ἥφαιστος δέδαεν καὶ Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη
> τέχνην παντοίην, χαρίεντα δὲ ἔργα τελείει

... whom Hephaestus and Athena have taught all manner of skill, and he produces works of charm.

Verdenius rightly noted this echo and thus saw that Pindar's πᾶσα τέχνα amounts to the τέχνη παντοίη which Athena bestows on the Homeric artisan here.[19] But we may go further to see how both Pindar and Homer make Athena's role as a teacher of craft lead to the production of deceptive images. The goddess, as Homer tells us, assists in the construction of the most famously deceptive image of all, the Wooden Horse. Homer calls this an ἄγαλμα ... θελκτήριον (*Od.* 8.509) which is seen as the product of Epeios under Athena's guidance (Ἐπειὸς ἐποίησεν σὺν Ἀθήνῃ) and is glossed as a δόλος which Odysseus uses to sack Troy (*Od.* 8.491 5).[20]

Antiquity (New York and London, 1992), 51 64. For Pindar's influence on Isocrates, → Race 'Pindaric Encomium and Isokrates' *Evagoras*', *TAPhA* 117 (1987), 131 55, and O'Sullivan (n. 13), who also assesses the poet's legacy in Platonic and sophistic rhetorical theories.

[15] For example, *Ol.* 2.83 95, 9.22 8; *Pyth.* 1.41 5, 2.67 8, 4.299, 8.57; *Nem.* 1.1 7, 3.80 2, 5.19 21, 7.11 12; *Isthm.* 2.1 5, 4.1 3, and so on—cf. fr. 107a (S M). Further references to this kind of imagery are discussed by Harriott (n. 12), esp. 61 70, 88 90. For Pindaric connections between poetry and an athlete in action, see, for instance: *Ol.* 1.109 111, 13.93 7; *Nem.* 4.93 6, 7.71 3, 8.19; *Isthm.* 2.35 7; and, for fuller discussion, see M. Lefkowitz, 'The poet as athlete', *SIFC* 2 (1984), 5 12; and O'Sullivan (n. 13).

[16] For example, Homeric ἔπεα πτερόεντα (*Il.* 1.201, and so on) and songs as οἶμαι (*Od.* 8.74, 481); indeed, such imagery is developed in similes comparing Nestor's speech that flows sweeter than honey (*Il.* 1.249) or Odysseus' words that fall as thickly as snow (*Il.* 3.221 2). Parmenides (B1.1 28) and Empedocles (B3.1 5) similarly invoke the same metaphor of motion for song, as does Bacchylides (5.16 36, 19.1 8, and so on).

[17] Above n. 12. R. Schmitt, *Dichtung und Dichtersprache in indogermanischer Zeit* (Wiesbaden, 1967), 296 8 and G. Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans. Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry* (Baltimore and London, 1979), 297 300, interestingly suggest that such analogies reflect an Indo European tradition of comparing music/poetry with carpentry.

[18] B. L. Gildersleeve, *Pindar. The Olympian and Pythian Odes* (New York, 1890[2]), ad loc., plausibly took κρατεῖν to be dependent on ὥπασε and to govern ἐπιχθονίων, while Verdenius (n. 3), ad *Ol.* 7.51, made the infinitive absolute and connected it with ἀριστοπόνοις.

[19] Verdenius (n. 3), ad loc.

In the craftsman simile of *Odyssey* 6 Homer suggests a slightly deceptive element to Athena's handiwork here, as the goddess makes Odysseus taller and broader to look upon than he really is: μείζονά τ' εἰσιδέειν καὶ πάσσονα (*Od.* 6.230). The effect on Nausicaa, the κούρη (6.237), is one of seductive wonder as she gazes (θηεῖτο) on the hero and desires him as a husband (239 46). The simile occurs again at *Od.* 23.157 61, just before the reunion of Odysseus and Penelope. Athena's attempt to hasten proceedings by beautifying the hero does not have quite the same effect on Penelope, whose intelligence and maturity have been among her chief characteristics in the epic—she is περίφρων here and elsewhere (*Od.* 23.173, 256, and so on). She is not taken in solely by the appearance of the man in front of her whose beauty now matches the preternaturally graceful works of a craftsman trained by Athena; as Penelope herself says: οὔτε λίην ἄγαμαι (*Od.* 23.175). So she subjects her husband to the famous test about the bed he once carved for them (23.174–206). The point here, then, is that the skill Athena gives to the generic craftsman of Homer can at times exercise certain deceptive or quasi-seductive effects on a viewer (Penelope seems aware of these but will not yield to them). If the preternaturally beautiful appearance of Odysseus is best explained by Homer through an analogy with the beguiling (χαρίεντα) works of an Athena-trained artisan,[21] then a precedent has been set for Pindar, whereby the works of other Athena-inspired artisans such as the Rhodians may be seen in similar terms.

The implicitly deceptive elements in the Pindaric connections between the Rhodian artisans and Athena become clearer in the following lines, which stress the lifelike quality of the images they make. In telling us that these craftsmen produce works *similar to* living creatures (ζωοῖσιν ἑρπόντεσσί θ' ὁμοῖα), Pindar subtly underscores the fact that these creations are not in fact living or moving. His description of the Rhodian statues recalls Hesiod's famous distinction of the kinds of poetry the Muses can sing, the truth and ψεύδεα πολλὰ ... ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα 'many lies like the truth' (*Th.* 27), itself a parallel to Homer's description of the lies Odysseus tells Penelope (*Od.* 19.203). Pindar's treatment of the statues not only develops epic conceits but anticipates the Platonic Socrates' description of a painter's works in the *Phaedrus*. These, we are told, stand before us 'as if alive' (ὡς ζῶντα), yet maintain a majestic silence (σεμνῶς πάνυ σιγᾷ) in the face of any questioning, precisely because they are not in fact alive (*Phdr.* 275d–e). For Plato (*Soph.* 233d–234c; *Rep.* 598b–599a, and so on) and the sophistic author of the *Dissoi Logoi* (3.10), who evidently approves of the fact, painting could be a deceptive medium. It is also worth noting that in the *Dissoi Logoi* the deceptiveness of painting (as for poetry) lies in its similarity to the truth, just as in Pindar the Rhodian statues are like real, moving creatures.[22]

In fact, the ability of lifelike artworks to exercise deceptive effects on onlookers is so widespread in the fifth century that it becomes exploited for its comic potential in a number of dramatic texts. Again these provide instructive parallels to the works that

[20] Athena making the horse, or a model of it, appears in fifth century vase painting; for example, *LIMC* II.2 s.v. Athena 48, cf. 42, 49.

[21] Hesiod more explicitly endows χάρις with deceptive connotations in the description of Pandora who is given this quality as well as a deceptive nature (*Op.* 65, 67, 78, 83; cf. *Th.* 583, 589).

[22] The author of the *Dissoi Logoi* says that the painter or tragic poet is best who πλεῖστα ἐξαπατῇ ὅμοια τοῖς ἀληθινοῖς ποιέων. This idea of painting as deceptive has fifth century currency in a fragment of Empedocles (B 23 DK), whose treatment of this medium as an analogy for the appearance of everyday phenomena culminates in his injunction not to let ἀπάτη overrun our mind (B 23.9).

Pindar ascribes to the first artisans of Rhodes. In Aeschylus' satyric *Theoroi* (fr. 78a.1–22 Radt), the images of themselves that the satyrs handle are so lifelike that they are considered to lack only a voice: φωνῆς δεῖ μόνον (7). They resemble talking heads, but they cannot speak; just as the Pindaric statues resemble creatures that move, but in reality cannot. Much of the humour of the Aeschylean scene is predicated on the deceptively lifelike nature of each wrought image, variously described as Δαιδάλου μ[ί]μημα (7) and κόσμος ... καλλίγραπτος εὐχά (11–12). For the satyrs believe it will frighten their own mother, who will think it is her son (13–17), and terrify any traveller who happens to see the images on Poseidon's temple where the satyrs intend to attach them (19–22).[23] Elsewhere, jokes about the deceptive realism of statues which seem to move—but of course do not—are found in Euripides' *Eurystheus* (fr. 372 N); and moving statues appear in the absurd environment of Old Comedy, for example, Cratinus (fr. 75 K-A), and Plato Comicus (fr. 204 K-A). In the *Meno* (97d–98a) Plato makes typically tongue-in-cheek references to the moving statues made by Daedalus that need to be tied down to prevent them from running away.

In *Olympian Seven*, then, Pindar seems to be toying with the same idea regarding the Rhodian statues. For these statues resemble not just ζῶα but ζῶα ἕρποντα, which suggests that the attempt at imitation of motion in these sculptures is a key issue here for Pindar. Within the context of other treatments of sculpture and painting, Pindar's Rhodian statues may be seen to involve δόλος in giving the appearance of movement without being capable of any movement, in contrast to his song. This also has implications for how we translate κέλευθοι φέρον (*Ol.* 7.52). Verdenius sees it as referring to the supposed walking of the statues and suggests 'they went their own way'; and Willcock similarly renders: 'Figures like living and moving things went along the roads.'[24] But Pindar has simply said the statues are *like* moving creatures, which is not the same as saying they actually moved. Indeed, when something is described as 'like' something else, this can be a way of saying in reality it is deceptively different, as passages from Homer, Hesiod and the *Dissoi Logoi* show. Pindar's description of lifelike but immobile or lifeless images is consistent with this mode of thought and fits in well with many contemporary references to statues and paintings in similar terms. The expression κέλευθοι φέρον seems better understood as referring not to the statues' supposed mobility, but to the fact that they were set up along the roads.

These Rhodian marvels are evidently impressive since they enjoy κλέος (indeed, κλέος βαθύ)—a concept fundamental to the epinician poet and a *raison d'être* of his art. Exactly what these images depict is uncertain, yet their fame links them at least vicariously to the function of memorial statues of Pindar's own day, which parallels that of epinician poetry.[25] As a variant on Pindar's habit of borrowing terms from visual artworks to describe his own poetry, this is an instance of praise bestowed by the poet on visual artworks which are presented in terms normally associated with his medium. Yet, given that many of the apparently assimilating tendencies in

[23] For full discussion of the deceptive and the comically apotropaic aspects of these images, see P. O'Sullivan, 'Satyr and image in Aeschylus' *Theoroi*', *CQ* 50 (2000), 353–66, esp. 360–6.

[24] Verdenius (n. 3), ad loc; Willcock (n. 1), ad loc.

[25] For the importance of bestowing κλέος or fame as a prime function of epinikian poetry: *Ol.* 1.23, 2.90, 10.92–96; *Nem.* 7.11–16, 61–3, and so on; cf. *Nem.* 3.6–8 and *Isthm.* 7.18–19. For fuller discussion of the importance of κλέος in archaic poetry, see, for instance, Nagy (n. 17), 15–41, 94–117; id., *Pindar's Homer. The Lyric Possession of an Epic Past* (Baltimore and London, 1990), 146–214; Kurke (n. 11), 15–82; S. Goldhill, *The Poet's Voice. Essays on Poetics and Greek Literature* (Cambridge, 1991), 69–166, esp. 128ff.

Pindar's treatment of the plastic arts are underscored by an agonistic tenor, it is not surprising to see his apparent praise of the Rhodian statues receive some qualification. Elsewhere, in his *Fourth Nemean*, Pindar sees that his poetic task is 'to set up a monument whiter than Parian marble' (*στάλαν θέμεν Παρίου λίθου λευκοτέραν*: *Nem.* 4.81). Here, the force of the poet's claim rests on the impressive gleam of marble statuary in the first place which his ode will attempt to outshine. Similarly, in *Olympian Seven* the statues receive some favourable treatment, which Pindar will then use as a basis for showing that his art is even greater. There is no stark contrast between lifeless statuary and vibrant, far-travelling poetry, as at the beginning of *Nemean Five*, for instance. Instead there is mention of the god-given skills of the sculptors and the *κλέος* enjoyed by the Rhodian statues.

But this is significantly modified in what immediately follows. For Pindar abruptly changes his tone: *δαέντι δὲ καὶ σοφία μείζων ἄδολος τελέθει*. Again, the ambiguities abound. Verdenius, citing Homer (*Il.* 15.411) as a parallel, took the dative in *δαέντι* to mean in effect 'in the case of', thus translating 'in a skilled artist'—an interpretation that would seem to tally with Ruck's and Young's respective readings.[26] But, equally plausibly, *δαέντι* was taken by Gildersleeve to mean 'to him that knows'.[27] If correct, we may see here a Pindaric reference to those in his audience who are savvy enough to appreciate the superior kind of *σοφία* he offers as a poet compared to even the famously mythological sculpture of Rhodes. That *δαέντι* could be taken as such a compliment is supported by the fact that Bacchylides similarly compliments elements within his audience on their ability to grasp his meaning. The poet addresses words of meaning to the wise: *φρονέοντι συνετὰ γαρύω* (3.85). Elsewhere, Bacchylides will single out the laudandus himself, as he does Hieron, who, of all mortals, is described as correctly understanding (*γνώσει ... ὀρθῶς*) Bacchylides' gift of the Muses and is spoken of has having an upright mind (*φρὴν εὐθύδικος*: 5.3 6).[28] Also, Pindar, in an image that presents his song as a moving phenomenon (arrows at the ready), distinguishes between those who understand him and those in need of interpretation (*Ol.* 2.83 6):

> *... πολλά μοι ὑπ' ἀγκῶνος ὠκέα βέλη*
> *ἔνδον ἐντὶ φαρέτρας*
> *φωνάεντα συνετοῖσιν, ἐς δὲ τὸ πὰν ἑρμανέων*
> *χατίζει. σοφὸς ὁ πολλὰ εἰδὼς φυᾷ.*

I have many sharp arrows under my arm in my quiver, that speak to those who understand. But as for the majority, they need interpreters. Wise is he who has much knowledge through natural understanding.

Thus, the 'one who knows' in *Olympian Seven* can be understood as equivalent to those who are *συνετοί* whom Pindar addresses in *Olympian Two*, finding parallels with those among Bacchylides' audience singled out for their discernment.

As for *σοφία* in *Olympian Seven*, Ruck was surely right to see this as an allusion to Pindar's own art. Firstly, *σοφία* and cognates are bywords for poetry and poets used by Solon (13.52), Xenophanes B 2.14 (DK), and Pindar himself (*Ol.* 1.116, 9.38; *Pyth.* 1.12, 4.248, 6.49; *Nem.* 7.23; *Isthm.* 7.18; *Pae.* 7b20).[29] Secondly, Pindar displays, as

[26] Verdenius (n. 3), ad loc.

[27] Gildersleeve (n. 18), ad loc.

[28] Cf. also Aesch. *Ag.* 38 9; I owe this and the Bacchylidean references to *CQ*'s anonymous referee.

[29] On Xenophanes' *σοφίη*, see G. Lanata, *Poetica Pre Platonica: Testimonianze e Frammenti* (Florence, 1963), 114 15; Nisetich (n. 11), 67 8, has made a strong case for

many have noted, an aversion to deceit within poetry, even if, on his own admission, he will at times refrain from telling the whole truth of a situation (*Nem.* 5.16 18). He consistently presents himself as a poet who conveys the truth or at least deals with a straight λόγος (for example, *Ol.* 2.92, 7.21, 13.93; *Pyth.* 4.279; *Nem.* 1.18; cf. *Nem.* 7.14 16); and elsewhere he points out the falsehoods of other poetry and the myths it tells (*Ol.* 1.28 34; *Nem.* 8.32 4; and so on).[30] But it was noted above that the association with deceit is also a widely attested τόπος about visual art, and is manifest again in Pindar's reference to the Rhodian sculptures. Here it is worth recalling Homer's description of the Wooden Horse as a δόλος (*Od.* 8.494). Also Hesiod's Pandora, whose status as a sculpture is stressed, is likewise called a δόλος (*Th.* 589; *Op.* 83).[31] Pindar's σοφία in *Olympian Seven*, then, is an example of truthful—ἄδολος—poetry, whose nature is emphasized in being contrasted not so much with Homeric poetry as with the sculptures of Rhodes. This ἄδολος quality is what makes Pindar's σοφία even greater (καὶ ... μείζων) than the statues whose κλέος and skilful construction he has already mentioned. The essential point about the link between the superiority of Pindar's art and its undeceptive nature compared to sculpture still stands, even if we choose to make μείζων attributive rather than predicative here.[32] Given the frequent invocations of motion as one of his poetic conceits, we can understand Pindar as alluding to the immobility of these Rhodian statues, which, for all their κλέος, do not match up to his own medium, which can embody motion and life. The ambiguities of these rich, if somewhat terse, lines—whether to see a reference to the Telchines or not, whether or not to take δαέντι to refer to a putative observer instead of a practitioner of art (or poetry)—can be accommodated by the interpretation I offer here. Alternative translations for *Ol.* 7.50 3 therefore suggest themselves:

> Then the grey eyed goddess herself gave them every kind of skill to surpass mortals with their superlative handiwork. Their streets bore works of art in the likeness of beings that lived and moved; and high was their fame. But to one who knows (or: in the hands of one skilled) undeceptive art is even greater (or: art that is even greater is undeceptive).

One of the most important and fascinating aspects of Pindar's poetry is his presentation of himself and his songs within the milieu of celebrating the athletic success of his aristocratic patrons. This feature of the poet's output in fact comprises some of his grandest and most sophisticated imagery, culminating perhaps in *Pythian* 1 (esp. 1 12) in the poet's evocation of the powers of music, which quenches the thunderbolt of Zeus, lulls his mighty eagle to sleep, becalms the violent Ares and enchants the Olympians themselves — one of the most magnificent celebrations of the powers of music ever conceived. At *Ol.* 7.50 3 Pindar's dense and allusive language can likewise be seen, albeit in less spectacular terms, to be a characteristically pithy comment on his own medium which becomes all the more agonistic, coming as it

σοφῶν μητίεσσι at *Ol.* 1.9 as referring to the poetic faculties of composers, who are themselves σοφοί elsewhere for Pindar (*Pyth.* 3.113; *Isthm.* 1.45, 7.18–19, 8.47; *Pae.* 18.3; cf. *Pyth.* 4.138, 9.78, 10.22; *Dith.* 2.24, fr. 35b). At. *Isthm.* 5.28 the poet is σοφιστής. The σοφός, applicable to the poet (*Ol.* 2.86) as usually interpreted, could also apply to the sophisticates in his audience.

[30] For further discussion, see Detienne (n. 14), 80 1 with nn; cf. also G. B. Walsh, *The Varieties of Enchantment* (Chapel Hill and London, 1984), 37 41. It is true that σοφία is used of deceptive Homeric poetry at *Nem.* 7. 23, but there Pindar has an openly stated axe to grind against Homer, which, *pace* Ruck (n. 4), is not so readily applicable to *Olympian Seven.*

[31] Note the presence of Athena (*Op.* 63 4; *Th.* 573 7) and the emphasis on Pandora's artificial and deceptive nature (*Op.* 63, 70 1, 67; *Th.* 513 14, 590).

[32] The view of Willcock (n. 1), ad loc., is that μείζων is more likely predicative with τελέθει.

does after his reference to sculpture. The lines, then, are of considerable interest in raising a number of issues central to the poet's understanding of his art, as well as alluding to contemporary ideas on the nature of sculpture, whose full relevance to the passage has been overlooked by other commentators. This reading, which attempts to make the passage more immediately suited to its context, can be sustained even in the face of the ambiguities of Pindar's language. And through it we can gain a further insight into Pindar's conception of his medium and the extent to which it was informed by increasingly sophisticated contemporary thinking on the power and limitations of visual and verbal arts.[33]

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[33] I am grateful to *CQ*'s anonymous referee for comments on an earlier version of this paper.