Genealogies of τέχνη

The Origins and Limits of Craft in Pindar

Max Norman
Trinity College, Cambridge, United Kingdom
maxaustinnorman@gmail.com

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Abstract

Although Pindar’s craft imagery has long been appreciated, scholars have paid relatively little attention to technê in particular, focusing instead on the apparently more elevated, and more Pindaric, sophia. Concentrating on the odes that narrate the origins of specific technai (Pythian 12, Olympian 7, Olympian 13), this paper questions the dichotomy between technical and ethical knowledge in Pindar. Far from dismissing technê as mere banausic craft, as his critics often do, Pindar consistently presents it as a means of promoting civic and even cosmic order. I conclude with a discussion of Pythian 3, where Pindar makes explicit the metapoetics implicit in the previous poems and figures his own activity as a sort of technê. In this light, Pindaric sophia, as the practice of technê within ethical limits, emerges as a relationship of the individual to the cosmos.

Keywords
Pindar – craft – professionalism – metapoetics

The language of craft and skill, applied both to the poet’s subjects and to the poet himself, saturates Pindaric lyric.1 Although he often appeals to the authority of divine inspiration, even twice describing himself as a ‘spokesman’ of the Muses (Pae. 6.5: ἀοίδιμον Πιερίδων προφάταν; cf. fr. 150), Pindar also figures

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1 See, e.g., Pavese 1997, 262; Nülist 1998, 83-134.
poetry as the product of specialized human knowledge. This tension results in a certain ambivalence: Craft metaphors, and terms like μῆτις, μαχανά, σοφία, and τέχνη, convey not just sophistication, but also a “concomitant proclivity for deviousness, lies, and deceptive appearances”, as exemplified most famously in Nemean 7.22-23. Pindar puts us on our guard against poetic craft at the same time as he practices it.

Although such paradoxes are critical mainstays, Pindaric technē has received little direct and sustained attention in its own right. The poet’s discourse of craft is usually mentioned in passing within a larger evolutionary narrative that ends in the classical period. Other scholars have considered craft language in sociocultural terms. Leslie Kurke influentially reads this complex of metaphors as a facet of the poet’s “paradoxical use of economic imagery”. Pindar’s language of craftsmanship, according to Kurke, works in service of a civic ideology in order to “glorify not the poet but the product of his craft, the poem, and thereby to enhance the status of the victor who commissioned it within his community”. In this questionable dichotomy, the poet is effectively a sculptor building patrons’ public monuments. Andrew Ford has argued for a similar elevation of the well-wrought artifact above the technical skill required to produce it. In Ford’s reading, the language of craft, which he associates with literacy, serves as a foil to Pindar’s elevation of aristocratic, and oral, sophia. Following Bowra, Ford concludes that “[t] hose in Pindar’s audience who could catch and decipher the words wafted on the air were not encouraged to see him or themselves simply as craftsmen. Sophia, not tekhne, was on display”.

Scholars have not yet fully appreciated the distinctly cosmic and ethical functions that Pindar assigns to technē. This paper therefore seeks to fill that

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2 For ‘spokesman’, see Maslov 2015, 200-201. For Pindar’s complex relationship to the Muses, Kantzios 2003.
3 Segal 1986, 191.
4 That this constitutes a related set of terms is, I hope, not controversial. The bibliography is vast, but for σοφία in Pindar, see Maehler 1963, 66-68, 94-96; Nagy 1990, 59-68, 116-135, 148-149, 161-162. For μῆτις, see Detienne and Vernant 1974, esp. 176-200. For the association of τέχνη and σοφία in a poetic context, see, e.g., H.Hom. 4.511-512. For the association of σοφία with technical skill, Ili. 15.412, and other passages cited below.
5 Such as the development of sophistic rhetoric (e.g., Rochnik 1996) or the origins of Platonic technē (e.g., Heinimann 1961). Contrast Kerferd 1976.
7 Kurke 2013, 168.
9 Dickson 1986 offers the most sustained discussion of Pindaric technē, concentrating on O. 13 and only mentioning in passing the other poems discussed here. For Dickson, technē ultimately works to “impose human measure on the natural world” (136). I instead concentrate on how humans use technē to participate in the Olympian cosmos, and bring out the concept’s...
gap by investigating how Pindar thinks through and with technē and situates it within a broader worldview. I do not pursue an exhaustive lexicographical study but rather examine the genealogies of technē which have been acknowledged to unite three odes (Pythian 12, Olympian 7, Olympian 13) but which have not yet been studied in depth as a group. Seen together, these odes present technē in a remarkably consistent way. Each carefully extracts technē from any human history to make Athena, rather than a mortal inventor, its ultimate source, thereby framing her gift as an extension of Olympian order within the human realm. Similarly, all three place great emphasis on community, as both the site of ritual performance and the carrier of a native, inborn tendency toward technical accomplishment. In these poems, Pindaric technē functions less as an instrument for human ingenuity or the basis for a professional livelihood and more as a means of promoting civic and even cosmic order.

I cannot do justice to any one of these complex and unique odes, let alone to all three, but, since every ode shines light on the others, I use each to illuminate a different aspect of Pindaric technē. In discussing Pythian 12, I focus on Pindar’s theology of technē: the way in which he links human craft to divine favor and puts technical victory in the service of Olympian order. Olympian 7 in turn helps us to better understand the poet’s anthropology of technē: his integration of craft into the history of a specific community, and of that community into the very fabric of the cosmos. Olympian 13 represents Pindar’s most extensive treatment of an individual’s use (and eventual abuse) of technē, articulating his general ambivalence toward craft and learned skill in a psychological and theological ethics of technē. The genealogical poems cohere to show that technē functions as a conduit for both moral and technical excellence, and as a mediator between the human and the divine.

My concluding section turns to Pythian 3, an ode which, more than any other, makes explicit the metapoetic discourse implicit in the three poems discussed earlier in this essay. Read in relation to Pythian 12, Olympian 7, and Olympian 13, Pythian 3 offers an extended reflection on poetry as itself a form of technē endowed with all of the attendant theological, anthropological, and psychological connotations evident in the other poems. These four progressive metapoetic implications. Hubbard 1986 anticipates some of those metapoetic observations but also limits himself to a single ode, and thus does not treat them systematically.

10 Dickson 1986, 135.
11 Generally, gods give means to excellence; humans apply them. See P. 1.41-42, Hubbard 1986, 32.
12 Cf., e.g., I. 4.34-35, P. 2.32 for the negative use of technē. For general bias against learned skills, see O. 2.86-88, O. 9.107-11 (although note O. 9.91), N. 3.39-42; see further, e.g., Jaeger 1939, 220 and, more recently, Nicholson 2001.
sections build on one another to reveal Pindaric technē as a powerful (and in O. 13 and P. 3, dangerously powerful) means of using ordered human activity to participate in, and advance, the Olympian order. Technē emerges as at least in part constitutive of Pindaric sophia, rather than merely its banausic kid brother.

1 The Theology of Technē in Pythian 12

Pythian 12 is Pindar’s only poem celebrating a fellow musician.13 The epinician praises the aulist Midas of Akragas, and notably attributes the invention of his art—the technē aulêtikē, and perhaps even the aulos itself—to Athena.14 It also appears to be the only extant source that associates the aulos with Perseus, son of Zeus.15 This genealogy of aulêtikē presents Midas’s technical victory as an index of blessedness, casting the musician’s—and by extension Pindar’s—craft as both a feature, and promoter, of Olympian order.

Pindar states that Midas won by means of the technē (6) Athena invented to imitate, and thus memorialize, the wails of the Gorgon slain by Perseus.16 She called the song the ‘many-headed nomos’ (κεφαλᾶν πολλὰν νόμον, 23), a name which preserves the monstrous anatomy of the creature that inspired it, and whose cry is in some sense re-performed each time the nomos is played. The divine invention of a musical mode contrasts with Pindar’s more frequent attribution of lyric innovations to human creators not altogether different from himself.17 This makes Athena’s invention of not just a nomos, but an entire technē, all the more remarkable.

Pindar is explicit about Athena’s craft: she invented (ἐφεύρε, 7) aulos-playing by weaving (διαπλέξαισ’, 8) the lament of the Gorgons into song.18 In

13 Throughout I cite the text of Snell-Maehler 1987; block quotations are drawn, and shorter translations adapted, from Race 1997.
15 The link may be Pindar’s invention, pace Papadopoulou and Pirenne-Delforge 2015, whose inferences from later evidence are unconvincing.
16 The myth of Perseus’s slaying of the Gorgon is also recounted at P. 10.44-48, though without any mention of music. On Athena’s assimilation of the Gorgon’s qualities, see Detienne and Vernant 1974, 173.
17 “For Pindar, the past includes many human inventors who pass on technological and formal innovations to their heirs”, writes Spelman 2018a, 258, who gathers examples.
18 Following Snell and, more recently, Clay 1992, Segal 1995, and Steiner 2013, pace Gentili and Luisi 1995, 8 n. 7, I prefer the manuscript’s ἄυσε(ν) to Boeckh’s ἀνύσσεν. For weaving a melos, cf. N. 4.44-45, and on the semantics of the verb, see Held 1998, 382-384.
this distinctly epinician genealogy, victory is followed by music: after relieving Perseus from his labors (ἐκ τοῦτων ... τόνων, 18), the goddess αὐλῶν τεῦχε πάμφωνον μέλος (19)—‘constructs,’ but also ‘composes,’ a melos\(^{19}\)—in order that she might imitate with musical instruments (σὺν ἔντεσι μιμῆσαιτ’, 21) the discordant wailing of Euryale, one of the dying Gorgons. The poet states flatly: ‘The goddess invented it, but invented it for mortals to have’ (εὗρεν θεός· ἀλλὰ νιν εὗροίσ’ ἀνδράσι θνατοῖς ἔχειν, 22, taking ἔχειν as a final infinitive). The repetition of the verb εὗρειν, ringing with its introductory usage (ἐφεῦρε, 7), emphasizes the agency of the goddess. In yet another expression of authority, Athena herself gives the melody its enduring name (ὡνύμασεν, 23).

Athena’s art thus preserves but also transforms monstrously cacophonous wails (ἐρικλάγκταν γόον, 21), replacing one kind of female sonic expression with another, more sophisticated one in a “process of acculturation”\(^{20}\). Weaving together the Gorgon’s ‘oft-repeated lament’ (σοῦλιον θρήνον, 8),\(^{21}\) Athena fashions an ordered technē that permits repetition of a radically different kind—namely, ritual musical performance: the nomos will serve as ‘the glorifying summoner\(^{22}\) of the people-gathering contests’ (εὐκλεᾶ λαοσσόων μναστῆρ’ ἀγώνων, 24). From the beginning, then, this music is by its very nature connected with memory, both in recalling an event in mythical time (cf. καμάτου, 28) and in reminding people of contemporary contests. And, from the beginning, music was intended by Athena to be integrated into human ritual performances, with the melos repeated (θαμά, 25)\(^{23}\) by the aulos made from reeds personified as ‘faithful witnesses of the choreuts’ (πιστοὶ χορευτέων μάρτυres, 27), a characterization that pulls focus away from Midas’s aulêtikê and toward Pindar’s choral poem.\(^{24}\) While the thrênos of the Gorgon was poured out with suffering (λειβόμενον δυσπενθέϊ σὺν καμάτῳ, 10), at or beyond the extreme limits of civilization,\(^{25}\) now the ordered melos nimbly ‘darts through’ thin, skilfully wrought bronze (λεπτοῦ διανισχομένον χαλκοῦ, 25) and reeds that grow by the city of the Graces (26). The poem’s movement from Akragas, in Sicily, to

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\(^{19}\) For the sense ‘compose’: I. 1.14 (poetic), P. 1.4 (musical).

\(^{20}\) Steiner 2013, 194.

\(^{21}\) So, persuasively, Gerber 1986.

\(^{22}\) For the causative force of εὐκλεᾶ, see O. 2.9, N. 6.28. Chantraine s.v. mimneskô glosses mnaster as ‘qui rappelle’. Here the sense seems to be ‘puts people in mind of the contests’; cf. N. 10.22-23.

\(^{23}\) An adverb applied to the ritual repetition of song at, e.g., Pae. 12.5 and P. 3.78. Further examples gathered by Spelman 2018a, 37 n. 81 and 135 n. 12.

\(^{24}\) This ode (as Steiner 2013 shows) and my broader argument clearly have implications for our understanding of the technically intensive choral performance of Pindar’s poetry. Considerations of space prevent me from taking up this important topic.

\(^{25}\) Authors disagree about the Gorgons’ location (contrast Hes. Th. 274-275 and Hdt. 2.91). See further Dugas 1956 and Gentili et al. 1995, 637-639.
Orchomenos, in Boeotia, points to the Panhellenic reach of Athena's invention, Midas's fame, and perhaps even Pindar's own poetry.

More broadly, Perseus’s victory over Medusa amounts to a conquest of pre-Olympian chaos and monstrosity. Athena’s craft transmutes a monster’s death into the harmonious πάμφωνον μέλος (19), whose very name (κεφαλάν πολλὰν νόμον, 23) memorializes but also aestheticizes the creature’s inhuman anatomy. This musical harmonia reflects and preserves the kosmos of the Olympian dispensation, just as it did in the opening of Pythian 1, where Zeus’s enemies—above all Typhon (16), the noisiest of Hesiod’s monsters—are terrified (ἀτύζονται, 13) by the Muses’ song. Here Zeus’s daughter incorporates the chaotic noise of the Gorgon into the ordered, ritual music of Olympian culture, through which humans, with their labor, may demonstrate their excellence and piety. Every use of Athena’s technê re-performs the goddess’s initial re-performance of the Gorgon’s wails, her organization of chaotic dissonance into music, and evokes the hero’s triumph over the dark pre-Olympian forces embodied in the offspring of primordial Phorkys and Keto (Hes. Th. 270-276). As it memorializes the achievement of Perseus, son of Zeus, Athena’s nomos tames the noise of pre-civilized monstrosity into the beautiful harmonies performed in Panhellenic rituals.

In Pindar’s genealogy, aulêtkê emerges not only as an instrument of human ingenuity but also as a concrete link between the human and the divine. Indeed, the logic of this myth suggests that to play the aulos is to participate in, or even to recreate, the triumph of the Olympian kosmos.

2 The Anthropology of Technê in Olympian 7

Olympian 7, in praise of the boxer Diagoras, works technê into the deepest history of Rhodes and its people. Pindar recounts Athena’s donation of the technê of statuary not to humanity in general, but to a particular human community, the Heliades (who are effectively conflated with the later Dorian colonizers). As Segal points out, the story of Rhodes’ emergence from the sea broadly parallels “a movement from formless and nameless obscurity to the radiance of great achievement: kingship, monuments of song, heroic fame”. Technê serves, in Pindar’s account, as a metonym for this movement from chaos to

26 Hubbard 1985, 90-94.
29 Segal 1986, 96.
kosmos, a concrete manifestation of the Rhodian community's position in the Olympian order, and a means by which, through their excellence, the Heliades promote it.

In contrast to other accounts—and notably that of Homer's Catalogue of Ships (Il. 2.653-670)—Pindar's narration of the history of Rhodes, and the place of technē in that history, extends all the way back to the illud tempus of Olympian theogony. His genealogy of technē is linked not just to the origin of Rhodes but also to the birth of Athena. In giving an aition for Rhodian cults of Athena Lindia and Athena Polias (discussed below), Pindar effectively writes Rhodes into the story of Athena's birth. In an even more interesting innovation, he makes Athena's birth the result of craft, accomplished through the technai (35) of Hephaestus. That god does not appear in Hesiod's account, nor in Apollodorus (1.3.4), who has Prometheus strike Zeus's head. In making Hephaestus collaborate in the birth of Athena by means of technē, Pindar writes the conflict between Hera and Zeus out of the story.

In other words, Hephaestus's collaboration in Athena's birth reworks a narrative of strife and rivalry into one of Olympian harmony. Pindar scrubs technē of its association with divine instability, and instead rigorously associates it with the preservation and indeed the extension of Zeus's hegemony. According to Hesiod, Hera bore Hephaestus independently, as a reaction to Athena's birth (Th. 927-929, and even more explicitly at [Hes.] fr. 343 M-W), and as such the god constituted a threat to Zeus's primacy. But Pindar aligns, rather than opposes, Hephaestus and Athena, and makes clear that what followed Athena's birth was not Hera's spite, but a resounding recognition of Olympian supremacy: the older gods Ouranos and Gaia shuddered at the newborn goddess (Οὐρανὸς

Verdenius 1987 enumerates the revisions and follows Young 1968, 82-83 in arguing for Homer as source. See, however, Mann 1994, 314-315.

Rhodes appears in none of the birth narratives collected by Bernabé 1986. Note that ἁνίχ' (35) carries "un valore generico" (Cantilena 1987, 216) and places Zeus's rain on Rhodes "in the general context of the birth of Athena" (Willcock 1995, 123). The association of Athena with Rhodes may be part of a broader competition for the priority of their respective cults. See Sfyroeras 1993.

As Gentili et al. 2013, 485-486 note.

At Th. 924-927 Hephaestus, born immediately after Athena, is ἐκ πάντων τέχνησι κεκασμένος Οὐρανιώνων (929).

The collaboration also gestures toward the joint worship at Athens of the two divinities of craft, for which see, e.g., Pl. Lg. 920d, cf. Solon, fr. 13.49-50; see also Neubauer-Petzoldt 2010. For the Athenian influence on Rhodes, see Gentili et al. 2013, 170.

Cf. h.Hom. 3.305-355, where an angry Hera (χολωσμένη, 307) bears Typhon to avenge Athena's birth. See further Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti 2016, 64-66 (Hephaestus), 85-96 (Typhon).
δ' ἔφριξέ νιν καὶ Γαῖα μάτηρ, 38). The two primeval Titans predate Zeus’s reign, and their presence emphatically concludes the story of Athena’s birth with a reaffirmation of Zeus’s nascent authority. Hephaestus’s technê, which Hesiod associates with Olympian disorder, works here to advance a stable Olympian hierarchy and confirm its superiority to what came before.

In Pindar’s telling, Athena’s gift of technê to the Rhodians also bolsters Olympian authority. First and foremost, the donation rewards their institutionalization of cultic worship. Directed by Helios himself, the early Rhodians erect an altar, and do so, as the god urges, before any other community, including Athens (ὡς ἂν θε ᾷ πρῶτοι κτίσαιεν | βωμὸ ν ἐναργέα, 42). As if to reiterate the importance of obedience over ingenuity, Pindar explains that the Heliades forget to bring fire for the altar. This ambiguously successful cult foundation is followed by Zeus’s rain of gold and Athena’s gift of ‘every technê to surpass mortals with superlative handiwork’ (τέχναν | πᾶσαν ἐπιχθονίων ... ἀριστοπόνοις χερσὶ κρατεῖν, 50-51), and the gods’ beneficence can only be the result of the Heliades’ piety. Hephaestus, normally credited alongside Athena as teacher of craft, is notably absent, further emphasizing the virginal Athena’s unique relationship with her father. In yet another assertion of independence from tradition, and of Athena’s independence from her counterpart, Pindar has the goddess give the Rhodians the skill to make statues which are like moving things (ἔργα δὲ ζωοῖσιν ἑρπόντεσσί θ’ ὁμοῖα, 52), her own brand of the wondrous automata customarily associated with Hephaestus. A particularly Olympian Athena, then, rewards the Rhodians for their fireless cult with a deeply pious technê that allows them to distinguish themselves by means of their technical skill. Rhodian craft, Pindar implies, ultimately derives from the community’s support and celebration of the Olympian order. This technê is Olympian all the way down.

The gnômê that follows Athena’s gift generalizes from what has just occurred and crystallizes the moral value of technical knowledge in Olympian 7: δαέντι δὲ καὶ σοφία | μείζων ἄδολος τελέθει (53), ‘for one who has been taught, even

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36 Gaia reacts similarly to Zeus’s domination of Typhon at Hes. Th. 839-841.
38 This must be the fireless cult of Athena Lindia on Rhodes, as noted by Gentili et al. 2013, 489. Athena’s civilizing role justifies the cult of Athena Polias, also worshipped on the island, on which see Farnell 1896, vol. 1, 299.
40 Hom. Il. 18.373-379, 417-421; Od. 7.91-94; Hes. Op. 70-71 (Pandora, with Athena).
41 Verdenius’s ‘skilled artist’ may be too strong, but for the sense of teaching/learning see Hom. Il. 15.411-412, Od. 20.72, and especially Stesich. 100.11-12 Finglass-Davies (on Epeius). *δάω used with both technê and sophia at h.Hom. 4.483 and [Hes.] fr. 306 M-W.
greater wisdom turns out to be free from guile’. This line has long exercised commentators. Some have read it, in vain, as an apology for the Telchines, others as an apology for Athena’s technical doloi in Homer (the Trojan horse, Od. 8.491-496) and Hesiod (Pandora, with Hephaestus, Th. 589, Op. 83). It is impossible to prove or disprove engagement with any particular source, but the traditional associations of dolos with technē and sophia—as well as Pindar’s attention to the abuse of both—make this assertion of guilelessness all the more striking. Pindar gives technical skill a pointedly positive, even moral value in Olympian 7, firmly linked to Athena and her place in the Olympian order.

Technē constitutes one aspect of the community’s shared intelligence: it is both their technical mastery, and, as we begin to see, something like moral excellence. The goddess gives technē to the Rhodians in order to help them ‘surpass mortals’ (ἐπιχθονίων … κρατεῖν, 51; again note the final infinitive) with their mimetic art. Pindar’s use of κρατεῖν, a verb that usually signifies athletic victory (e.g., O. 8.20, 10.100), to describe Rhodian technical accomplishments and their resultant κλέ ος βαθ ύ (53) looks forward to Diagoras’s Panhellenic victories (80-87), and ties the boxer’s feats to the collective Rhodian intelligence granted by Athena (90-93). Later in the ode, and even further back in mythical time, Pindar weaves collective cleverness into the genealogy of the Rhodians themselves: the seven children of Helios and Rhodes receive (παραδεξαμένους, 72) the ‘wisest thoughts among men of old’ (σοφώτατα νοήματ’ ἐπὶ προτέρων ἀνδρῶν, 72), with which, the poem implies, they peacefully and justly divide up the island and found the cities that are still named for them (74-76). Wise governance amounts to yet another manifestation of technical intelligence. Once again, sophia is the possession of the group, and once again, it marks the Rhodians as excellent.

At the poem’s conclusion, Diagoras’s accomplishments are more clearly part and parcel of this same tradition of technical-cum-moral superiority, ‘since

42 For a recent overview of the debate on this line, see Gentili et al. 2013, 491. Young 1968, 86 n. 2 construes more persuasively than anyone else, but his translation of ἄδολος as ‘native’—or, as Young 1987 (followed by Race 1997) translates, ‘inborn’—lacks parallels: the only archaic passage cited in LSJ [A. A. 95] means ‘guileless’, and, as Fraenkel 1950 ad loc. notes, the epithet neutralizes the ambiguity of pharmakon.
43 The Telchines’ connection to Rhodes is not attested before Callimachus: Young 1987, pace Brann 1993, 34.
44 O’Sullivan 2005, 103-104.
45 For a Pindaric example, see N. 7.20-23 (sophia). For the risks of technē, see the discussion of O. 13 and P. 3 below.
46 We may hear Homeric praise of craftsmanship in the background, as at Od. 6.232-634.
47 Kurke 2016, 29.
he travels straight upon a road that hates hybris, having clearly learned what an upright mind inherited from noble forebears declared’ (ἐπεὶ ὕβρις ἐχθρὰν ὁδόν | εὐθυπορεῖ, σάφα δαεὶς καὶ τε ὁι πατέρων | ὀρθαὶ φρένες ἐξ ἀγαθῶν ἔχρεον, 90-92). Diagoras ‘clearly learned’ the counsels of his ancestral wits. Just as Tlapolemos consulted the mantis Apollo (μαντεύσατο, 31), the Heliades learned from Athena (50-52), and the seven early children inherited wise thoughts (71-73), so does Diagoras listen to the wisdom of his forefathers. Olympian 7 reflects, as Kurke puts it, an “obsession with τέχνη and σοφία, skilled crafting in all its manifold forms”:48 statuary, governance, and finally Diagoras’s noble success in boxing. Diagoras wins, Pindar suggests, because of this inherited technical excellence. He wins because he is a true Rhodian. In effect, Diagoras embodies the adolos sophia that ultimately stems from Athena’s donation of technê.49 This is a key aspect of the ‘account shared in common’ that Pindar intends ‘publicly to set up’ (ξυνὸν ἀγγέλλων διορθῶσαι λόγον, 21).50

In his final enumeration of Diagoras’s victories, Pindar implicitly compares this song to other rewards for the boxer’s many victories throughout Greece: the bronze in Argos, presumably a prize shield (83); the works (ἐργα) in Arcadia and Thebes, presumably tripods (83-84); and, climactically, the stone stele that records his victory (λιθίνα | ψᾶφος, 86-87) in Megara. Breaking off (ἀλλ', 87) after this Megarian lithina psaphos, Pindar identifies his song in a prayer to Zeus as the traditional hymn in celebration of an Olympian victory (ὕμνου τεθμὸν Ὀλυμπιονίκαν, 88, taking the genitive epexegetically). Like the other prizes in this most technological of Pindar’s victory catalogues, the poem is a product of technê. But as the final element in the catalogue, Pindar’s epinician is implicitly better than the other monuments (cf. N. 5.1-5), just as the Olympic games are more prestigious than other contests. This ode celebrates a more important victory, and does so, the poet implies, using the most sophisticated technê.

The opening image of the golden phiala (1-6) can thus be read as the poem’s emblem.51 When Pindar first mentions his poem, he downplays his own technical contribution by calling it a gift of the Muses (Μοισ ᾶν δόσιν, 7); his art, like Rhodian technê, is a divinely sanctioned craft that works in the service of

48 Ibid.
49 Ibid., 29-30.
50 Young 1968, 78.
51 There was even a tradition that Olympian 7 was inscribed in golden letters in a temple to Athena Lindia; such a materialization suits the presence in the poem of so many precious and perspicuous commemorative objects, and so much gold. See Gorgon of Rhodes 515 F18 FGrH, with Spelman 2018a, 164 n. 44. Kurke 2016, 18 speculates that Pindar wrote O. 7 with this inscription in mind.
the most august tradition. The bowl likewise is a product of technê, and one that has no named maker, but rather belongs to a family;52 its gold, like that rained down by Zeus on the Heliades (34, 50), symbolizes not so much wealth as stability and divine favor. The golden bowl—and in the same way Pindar’s ode—blurs the boundary between individual and collective endowment, and technical and moral excellence.

3 Technical Ethics in Olympian 13

Olympian 13 celebrates Xenophon’s extraordinary double victory in the stadion and the pentathlon (29-31) and praises the technai associated with his native Corinth, the bridle in particular. In the poem’s central myth, Bellerophon’s “act of technical intelligence”53 was made possible yet again by Athena’s donation of technê. Yet Pindar carefully revises the Bellerophon myth in order to make room for the hero’s agency: first with his moral use of technê in service of the Olympian order, and then with his abuse of that technê to transgress the limits of human agency.

Like Olympian 7, Olympian 13 foregrounds the civic and familial origins of Xenophon’s excellence. Pindar dwells on ‘the inborn character’ (τὸ συγγενὲς ἔθος, 13) of the Corinthians, whom he identifies, stressing their shared genealogy, as ‘children of Aletes’ (14). It is to this collective that the Horae granted victories, as well as various sophismata for which Corinth was known:

\[\text{πολλὰ δ’ ἐν καρδίαις ἀνδρῶν ἔβαλον} \]
\[\text{Ὦραι πολυάνθεμοι ἀρ-} \]
\[\text{χαία σοφίσμαθ’. ἀπαν δ’ εὐρόντος ἔργον.} \]

And often have they [the Horai rich in flowers] put into the hearts of your men inventions of long ago. All credit belongs to the discoverer.

The ‘inventions of long ago’ are put directly into the hearts of men by the children of Themis (enumerated as divine residents of Corinth in 6-8); these inventions are thus framed as a tangible result of the community’s orderliness. But the Horae’s donation of sophismata to this collective makes us reconsider Pindar’s gnomic statement about the credit for invention, since the poem never

52 Young 1968, 73 n. 5.
53 Hubbard 1986, 33.
54 O. 13.16-17.
identifies a single ‘discoverer’ (ἐὑρόντος). Indeed, Pindar credits the Corinthian community with the dithyramb (18-19), the bridle (ἱππείοις ἐν ἔντεσσιν μέτρα, 20), and the double-eagle pediment (21). The ode’s central myth expands on the second of these, and the credit for invention remains ambiguous there. The effect of this ambiguity is to de-emphasize any single individual and to make the community as a whole the inventor.

Pindar turns to the myth of Bellerophon after breaking off from his enumeration of the shared victories of the Oligaithidai (45-47). The emphasis is here even more explicitly on collective, civic praise: the poet states that he has been dispatched as a private individual in public service (ἐγ ἴδιος ἐν κοινῷ σταλείς, 49). In an indirect though clear engagement with the Homeric account, Pindar constructs a conspicuously tendentious lineage of Corinthian métis that merely hints at the well-known and ambivalent myths of Sisyphus and Medea on its way back to Bellerophon and the gift by Pallas of the chalinos (65).55 This story had especial resonance for Corinthians, who worshipped Athena Chalinitis and who may actually have invented a distinctive bridle.56

Pindar modifies the Bellerophon myth to accentuate the hero’s pious achievement. Previous accounts, most notably that of Hesiod (fr. 43a.82ff. M-W), have Athena presenting Bellerophon with an already-bridled Pegasus; Pindar, by contrast, attributes the actual act of taming the horse to Bellerophon.57 Yet it is cast less as an act of heroism than one of reverence. The hero makes his move only after receiving the bridle, an instrument of technê, in a dream, and then consulting the seer Polydios, who instructs him to set up an altar to Athena Hippia (82). Once again, as at O. 7.42, a technê is associated with the foundation of cult practice. In a syncretic move that resembles the harmonization of Athena and Hephaestus at O. 7.35-38, Pindar links Bellerophon’s foundation of the new cult of Athena Hippia to the pre-existing cult of Poseidon, traditionally the god of horsemanship (69, 80-81). All of this goes to foreground Bellerophon’s virtue and to point up the significance of the bridle, like the sophismata gifted by the Horae, as a marker of divine favor.

Bellerophon’s application of his newly acquired technê is similarly pious. As in Pythian 12, the hero first uses Athena’s bridle to bring Pegasus, offspring of the Gorgon (τ ᾶς ὀφιώδεος υἱόν … Γοργόνος, 63), within the realm of human, and Olympian, control (84-86). The hero continues to fight for culture and

55 On Pindar’s ‘negative intertextuality’ with Homer see Spelman 2018a, 102 and Spelman 2018b.
56 Yalouris 1950, esp. 38-47.
57 S. OC 712-715 cites Poseidon as inventor. Str. 8.6.21 and Plin. Nat. 7.202 have Bellerophon capture the horse independently (cf. Hubbard 1986, 30). The Iliad makes no mention of the bridle or Pegasus in connection to Bellerophon.
Olympian order when he rides the newly tamed Pegasus to vanquish the dangerous Amazons, the pre-Olympian monstrosity of the Chimaira (spawn of Typhon: Hes. Th. 319-320), and the non-Greek Solymoi, whom the hero takes on here independently (contrast Il. 6.178-186). Empowered by Athena’s gift of the bridle, Bellerophon uses technê to defend the Greek world and the Olympian patriarchy against a veritable lexicon of destabilizing Others.

Once he has reached, and indeed expanded, the limits of the Olympian order, where else can Bellerophon go? Just as Pindar suppresses the negative associations of Sisyphus and Medea, and elides Glaucus’s deception of Bellerophon, so too does he merely allude in praeteritio to the hero’s ultimate abuse of Athena’s technê:

διασωπάσομαι οἱ μόρον ἐγώ·
τὸν δ’ ἐν Οὐλύμπῳ φάτναι Ζηνὸς ἀρχαῖαι δέκονται.59

I shall be silent about his own doom, but as for the other, Zeus’ ancient stalls on Olympus still accommodate him.

Like Hesiod (Th. 285), Pindar only mentions the fate of the horse. He does not feel similarly constrained in Isthmian 7 (43-48), written for a Theban rather than a Corinthian, where he tells us what we all already knew: Bellerophon’s moros was the result of his desire to enter Olympus. In Isthmian 7, even more explicitly than in Olympian 13, Bellerophon illustrates the risks of reaching beyond the bounds of the human into the realm of the divine (46-47). Bellerophon’s error was ultimately a mismanagement of emotion: he desired (ἐθέ λον’ , 45) a pleasure that went contrary to justice (τὸ δὲ πὰρ δίκαν | γλυκύ, 47-48).

As Isthmian 7 suggests, Bellerophon failed to master his will, and we observe that control is a central feature associated with the bridle in Olympian 13. Pindar first refers to the technê as μέτρα for the horse (20), designed to moderate the animal’s spirit. Later, Athena calls the bridle a mysterious taming charm (φίλτρον τόδ’ ἵππειον, 68) and then ‘gold that tames the mind’ (δαμασίφρονα χρυσόν, 78). Finally, Pindar describes the bridle as a ‘gentle drug’ (φάρμακον πραΰ, 85), a term that evokes not just the therapeutic properties of medicine (cf. P. 3.53), but also the techniques of deception (e.g., Helen at Od. 4.220-233). Technê,

58 Only the Chimaira is mentioned in the Hes. Th. 319-326 and [Hes.] fr. 43a.87 M-W. All three are found at Il. 6.178-186, though in a different order.

59 O. 13.91-92.

60 This appears to be a unique use of μέτρα, both in Pindar (see Slater s.v.) and more generally (see LSJ s.v.); the word choice highlights the moderating function of the bridle, rather than its more prosaic use in horsemanship. See further Dickson 1986, 132-136.
per se, is ambivalent, the material incarnation of the θεῶν δύναμις (83), the
d power of the gods that easily brings about that which is ‘both contrary to one's
oath and contrary to one’s hope’ (καὶ τὸν παρ’ ὅρκον καὶ παρὰ ἐλπιδα, 83).61 Like
the pharmakon, this technê is not intrinsically good or bad in human terms; it
is ultimately as responsible for Bellerophon’s wretched fate as for his catalogue
of victories (87-90). As a result, the application of this technê is risky: it requires
a psychological moderation that Bellerophon lacks.

Pindar clearly juxtaposes Bellerophon’s use of technê with his own practice
of poetic craft. Implicitly contrasting himself with the hero, Pindar portrays
his own activity as regulated by metron. The poet claimed that the Horae seek
to ward off Hybris, who is notably qualified, in a poem that attempts to cap-
ture the many achievements of the Oligaithidai, as ‘bold-tongued mother of
Koros’ (10). As Pindar figures it here, praising Corinthian excellence poses a
risk, but one that the poet is compelled to take by ‘straightforward daring’
(τόλμα ... εὔθεστα, 11-12). One element of Pindar’s moderation comes in his prayer
to Zeus before naming the victor (24-31) to avoid the god’s phthonos toward his
poem (ἐπέστειλεν, 25).62 More explicit is the break-off from the first victory cata-
logue (32-42): the Oligaithidai’s triumphs are so numerous that, Pindar claims,
he cannot recite them all (45-46). The following gnômê applies as much to
Pindar as to Bellerophon, the poem’s other wielder of metra: ‘In each matter
there comes due measure, and it is best to recognize what is fitting’ (ἕ πεται δ’
ἐν ἑκάστῳ | μέτρον· νοῆσαι δὲ καιρὸς ἄριστος, 47-48).63 Drawing upon Hesiod,64
Pindar’s quotation of lapidary wisdom is itself a kind of performative speech
act, as his appeal to tradition enacts the moderation he extols, and here, as in
Paean 6.121 or Isthmian 1.62, metron recalls not just its general abstract mean-
ing of ‘measure’, but also the more concrete sense of ‘measure of song’.65 Pindar
makes us hear the metapoetic implications of this praise of moderation: “the
poet puts a bit in his own mouth.”66

As Hubbard well observes, Pindar’s choice to pass over Bellerophon’s unfor-
tunate end—and even his earlier break-off from the victory catalogue—
represents a correction of Bellerophon’s transgression.67 When Pindar begins

61  Cf. S. Ant. 365-367. I thank an anonymous reviewer for reminding me of this passage.
62  There are similar prayers at P. 10.20-21, P. 8.71-72, and before Pindar’s other account of
Bellerophon at I. 7.39.
63  Kairos and metron are also connected at P. 4.286. Cf. praise of metron at P. 2.34, I. 6.71.
65  Fries 2019.
66  Gildersleeve 1890, 232.
67  Hubbard 1986, 40.
another list of triumphs in the poem’s final lines, he holds back once again, this time from continuing his Panhellenic sweep:

καὶ πᾶσαν κᾶτα
Ἑλλάδ’ εὑρήσεις ἐρευνῶν μάσσον’ ἢ ως ἰδέμεν.
ἄγε κούφοισιν ἔκνευσον ποσίν·
Ζεῦ τέλει’, αἰδὼ δίδοι καὶ τύχαν τερπνῶν γλυκεῖαν.68

And if you search throughout all Hellas, you will find more [sc. victories] than the eye can see. Come, swim out with nimble feet. Zeus accomplisher, grant them respect and sweet attainment of success.

Pindar concludes, then, by yielding: he prays to the god of completion and avows his inability to navigate through an entire world’s worth of victories—an acknowledgement of the limits of his poetic ability. Unlike Bellerophon, he stays within his bounds, and ends with a statement of deference to the Olympian order. With his careful avoidance of koros, and more specifically his exclusion of Bellerophon’s fate, Pindar follows his own advice and recognizes the limits of his technê. Pindar is bold, but he applies his craft only to reinforce, and not to transgress, human limitations. Pythian 3 will give us a clearer name for this moderation: sophia.

4 Poetic Technê in Pythian 3

Pythian 3 makes explicit the parallel between the narrated technê and Pindar’s poetic technê that we have observed in several other odes. The poem is clearly about the practice of poetry: rarely do we hear so much about a poem’s composition as in the 70-line recusatio that constitutes Pythian 3’s first half, and never does the poet dwell on his own psychology so extensively as in this record of internal conflict and frustration.69

More importantly, the powers and limitations of various technai are central to Pythian 3.70 In his retelling of the myth of Asklepios, Pindar contrasts the therapeutic power of medicine with the immortalizing power of poetry;71

68 O. 13.112-115.
69 I follow Pelliccia 1987, 2017, contra Young 1968, in interpreting the opening sentence as an unattainable wish, rather than the consideration of such a wish.
70 Noted, but not developed, by Morgan 2015, 280-281.
71 Mezger 1880, 72-73. The linguistic parallels are clear: above all, τέκτονα νωδυνίας (6) of Asklepios looks forward to τέκτονες οἷα σοφοί | ἄρμοσαν of poets (113-114). Note also Pindar’s
in recounting Asklepios’s punishment for a hubristic incursion into the realm of the gods, Pindar reflects on the limits of his own craft as an immortalizing technê. Ford claims that the poet “never refers to his own poetic ‘wisdom’ (sophia) as a tekhne”,72 but Pindar explicitly dedicates Apollo’s oracle to his Μοισαίαις … τέχναισ in Paean 9.39. As the adjective implies, this technê derives from and in some real way still belongs to the Muses, and it is what Pindar is practicing in that poem.73 This rich sense of poetic technê also animates Pythian 3. Asklepios’s misapplication of technê is an error of sophia, and Pindar’s correction implies a mastery of both.

Pindar casts Asklepios as a master of technê, and one which again derives from an Olympian source.74 The connection is partly genealogical: Asklepios is the son of Apollo, the god of healing (P. 5.63-64) as well as prophecy, the two major arts that Pindar thinks through in Pythian 3.75 But, more importantly, Asklepios is taught medicine at Apollo’s behest: ‘and then [Apollo] brought him to the Magnesian centaur for instruction’ (καὶ ῥά νιν Μάγνητι φέρων πόρε [sc. Apollo] Κενταύρῳ διδάξαι, 45, noting again the final infinitive).76 Throughout the poem, Pindar highlights Apollo’s far-reaching omnipotence (τέχναις Ἀπόλλωνος, 11) and modifies the previous myth to stress the god’s omniscience.77 Seen in this light, the story of the formation by the paradoxical ‘wild creature who had a mind friendly to men’ (φῆ ρ’ ἀγρότερον νόον ἔχοντ’ ἀνδρῶν φίλον, 4-5) of a civilized and useful ‘gentle craftsman’ (τέκτονα … ἥμερον, 6) constitutes a Pindaric technological genealogy in nuce: human culture out of pre-Olympian nature.78

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72 Ford 2002, 144.
73 Ford 2002, 114 n. 8 discounts this passage as “unclear”. As Budelmann 2013, 90 (following Rutherford 2001, 196 n. 21) suggests, the unexpected request to dedicate the χρηστήριον to the Muses’ arts, and not vice versa, underlines the importance of the song as product of craft. Pindar implies the same connection at N. 1.25, with Carey 1981, 114. Note in the same passage a link between proper use of technê with traveling down the straight path according to one’s inborn nature, as we observed above in O. 7.90-92. This virtuous movement contrasts with the man who ‘travels in crooked excess’ (σὺν πλαγίῳ … κόρῳ στείχον τ α, 64-65), whom Hercules is prophesied to vanquish.
74 Asklepios here is still a hero, and not yet a god, though the distinction is blurry, as Currie 2005, 354-355 notes. On the ‘impotence’ of Asklepios, see Versnel 2011, 400-421.
75 Aeschylus combines Apollo’s medical and mantic qualities in the epithet ἰατρόμαντις (Eu. 62); see further Parker 1983, 209-210.
76 Reiterated at N. 3.54-55; cf. also A. A. 1022.
77 Cf. πάντα ἰσάντι νόῳ in line 29, with [Hes.] fr. 60 M-W and Stamatopoulou 2017, 66.
78 Cheiron is the son of Kronos (Apollod. 1.9) and Philyra (P. 3.1).
Pindar also describes Asklepios's medical activity at length and in specific technical detail: the healer cures with incantations (μαλακοῖς ... ἐπαοιδαῖς, 51), potions (πίνοντας, 52), drugs and balm (περάπτων ... φάρμακα, 53), and surgery (τομαῖς, 53).\(^79\) After this long catalogue of medical accomplishments, Pindar attributes Asklepios's error to the corruption and misdirection of sophia:

\[
\text{ἀλλὰ κέρδει καὶ σοφία δέδεται.}
\]
\[
\text{ἔτραπεν καὶ κεῖνον ἀγάνορι μισθῷ}
\]
\[
	ext{χρυσὸς ἐν χερσὶν φανεῖς}
\]
\[
	ext{ἄνδρ' ἐκ θανάτου κομίσαι}
\]
\[
	ext{ἤδη ἁλωκότα.}\(^80\)

But even wisdom is enthralled to gain. Gold appearing in his hands with its lordly wage prompted even him to bring back from death a man already carried off.

Asklepios, ‘turned’ (ἔτραπεν) from the right path by gold, attempts the one technical feat that remains: he brings a man back from death. This is a kind of professional error, as gold signifies mere money, without any of the noble implications the substance usually has for the poet. Asklepios hence participates in the proverbial avarice of physicians—and of other sophoi like sailors, soothsayers, and, at Isthmian 2.6, even the modern Muse.\(^81\) Pindar once again commingles the technical and the moral with the adverbial καί in line 54: ‘even’ technical wisdom cannot prevent one from being enslaved to profit. That is to say, technical wisdom implies more than mere professional know-how; its possessor ought to be wiser than to use craft in an immoral or impious way. But Asklepios, here more the son of Coronis than of Apollo, fails to be guided by technical wisdom when he uses his craft to commit an act of hubris by violating fate. In attempting to grant a kind of immortality, he transgresses the limits of the Olympian order in which his technê is so firmly situated. Like Bellerophon, Asklepios suffers a dreadful end when Zeus strikes him and his newly revived patient dead with a bolt of Olympian lightning (57-58) for ignoring his lot (cf. 59-60).

Pindar emphasizes that he avoids a similar mistake, and upon reflection Pindar himself may be the ode’s real hero. Unlike the many who wish for what

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\(^79\) Machemer 1993, 133 argues that malakos may well be a Hippocratic term of art. Similarly Currie 2005, 356-357 for epoida.

\(^80\) P. 3:54-57.

\(^81\) Philokerdia was a charge traditionally leveled at sailors (Od. 8.163, cf. Hes. Op. 644-645) and doctors (e.g., De morbo sacro 1.81 Littré). Lloyd 1979, 17 n. 41 notes that soothsayers—like doctors, predictors of the future—were accused of greed.
they cannot have (πολλοὶ, 20; φῦλον ἐν ἀνθρώποις ματαιότατον, 21), Pindar knows the limits of what he, as poet, can and should accomplish. From the poem’s opening, he contrasts the ‘commonplace’ wish (κοινὸν ... ἔπος, 2) with his own utterance (ἁμετέρας ... γλῶσσας, 2). But he does not claim that moderation comes easily: throughout the poem, Pindar dramatizes his struggle with the dangerous desire to secure immortality for his patron. His vain hope saturates the ode from its first word of longing for the impossible (Ἤθελον, 1), through to the fantasy of sailing across the seas with the pomp of a god, a newly minted (and perhaps less hubristic) divine healer in tow (63-76). Finally, however, the poet chooses to pray to the Mother (ἀλλ’ ἐπεύξασθαι μὲν ἐθέλω | Ματρί, 77-78), a goddess who, unlike all of the distant unattainables in the poem, lies at his doorstep (παρ’ ἐμὸν πρόθυρον, 78). Rejecting the desire for literal immortality, the poet urges himself and his patron to adopt an expansive attitude toward fate:

εἰ δὲ νόῳ τις ἔχει
θνατῶν ἀλαθείας ὁδόν, χρὴ πρὸς μακάρων
tυγχάνοντ’ εὖ πασχέμεν. ἄλλοτε δ’ ἀλλοίαι πνοαὶ
ψυπετάν ἀνέμων.84

If any mortal understands the way of truth, he must be happy with what the blessed gods allot him. Now here, now there blow the gusts of the high-flying winds.

Pindar contrasts the sea journey he wishes he could make, but cannot, with the righteous path down the road of truth.85

In the poem’s final lines, Pindar states that he will follow his own advice:

σμικρὸς ἐν σμικροῖς, μέγας ἐν μεγάλοις
ἐσσόμαι, τὸν δ’ ἀμφέπον’ αἰεὶ φρασίν
δαίμον’ ἀσκήσω κατ’ ἐμὸν θεραπεύων μαχανάν.

82  Despite Slater 1971 and 1988, 58-59 (cf. Pelliccia 2017, 70 n. 24), I follow most scholars in taking Pindar to be the speaker of this prayer. As Currie 2005, 387 observes, “the laudator’s persona in [lines] 68, 73, and 76 is that of someone separated from Syracuse by the sea”. D’Alessio 1994, 139 adds that it would be incoherent for a Syracusan chorus to refer to their Αἰτναίον ξένον (69); cf. Henrichs 1976, 256 n. 10, Carey 1981, 16 n. 37.
83  There is no reason to gainsay the scholiasts’ assumption that Pindar refers to the cult of the Mother of the Gods and Pan. See further Currie 2005, 387-388.
84  P. 3.103-105.
85  A clear invocation of the path of poetry, knowledge of which contributes to the poet’s sophia (cf. σοφίας ὁδὸν, Pae. 9.4; ὁδὸν λόγων, O. 1.110).
I shall be small in small times, great in great ones; I shall honour with my mind whatever fortune attends me, by serving it with the means at my disposal. And if a god should grant me luxurious wealth, I hope that I may win lofty fame hereafter. We know of Nestor and Lykian Sarpedon, still the talk of men, from such echoing verses as wise craftsmen constructed. Excellence endures in glorious songs for a long time. But few can win them easily.

We have already noted how Pindar’s description of poets as technicians echoes his characterization of Asklepios. Here, we see that Pindar uses vocabulary with both cultic and medical resonances (ἀσκήσω … θεραπεύων, 109) to say how he—a first person whose ethic has clear relevance to Hieron, and any other sophos—will attend to the daimon. Pindar invokes not mere kerdos, but rather ‘luxurious wealth’ (πλούτον … ἁβρόν, 110) that comes with Olympian sanction. The poet associates this blessed gain with kleos that redounds into the hereafter (πρόσω, 111), and the repetition of this word (first at line 22)—drawing on the poem’s troping of the near and the far (esp. 60, 78)—suggests that it is only through fame that humans may surpass mortal limits without suffering the fate of Asklepios and his patient. Pointing to the long-dead Nestor and Sarpedon as examples of diverse heroes successfully immortalized by ‘wise craftsmen’ like (we infer) himself, Pindar invokes the shadow of Homer, the poet whose craft exemplifies effective, immortalizing poetry, and in relation to whom Pindar articulates his poetic vocation precisely (as in N. 7) in terms of the sophia (and machana, cf. P. 3.62, 109) that is at issue in this poem.

In Pythian 3, Pindar reveals his poetry to be a technê that bears all the sublime risk of Bellerophon’s bridle, but one that he successfully practices with the wise moderation of the τέκτονες … σοφοί whose poems have proved enduring. For the poet and his heroes, the ultimate expression of technical mastery is knowing the limits of technê.

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86 P. 3.107-115.
5 Conclusion

This paper has sketched the contours and the implications of technē as Pindar presents it in his genealogical odes and in one poem that reflects at length on poetry itself as a form of craft. Each section discussed one aspect of Pindaric technē using the ode in which that feature is most salient: theology in Pythian 12, anthropology in Olympian 7, and what I have called an ethics of technē in Olympian 13. Pythian 3 helped us connect all three of these elements with Pindar’s own poetic praxis.

These readings combine to show that technē does positive and important work in Pindar’s articulation of ethics, both heroic and poetic. Technē has a place not just in the poet’s vision of the city (in the performance of civic musical ritual in P. 12, the manifestation of Rhodian wisdom in O. 7, or the expression of Corinthian ingenuity in O. 13), but also in his vision of the cosmos, and the place of humanity and poetry within that all-encompassing context. More than merely facilitating human achievement, in Pindar’s poetry technē renders its practitioner—the aulos-player, the sculptor, the horseman, the physician, and the poet himself—an active part of the Olympian order. Finally, the four poems examined here suggest that Pindaric sophia, as the practice of technē within the proper ethical limits, may describe not just an internal state, but a relationship of the individual to the cosmos. This is yet another way in which performance collapses into ritual, and in which Pindar’s professional, poetic authority is closely intertwined with his spiritual self-fashioning. The prophatas inspired by the god and the sophos plying his trade blend into one.89

Bibliography


89  Henrico Spelman gratias maximas ago.


