

*Nicholas Lane*

## TWO CONJECTURES ON PINDAR

1) *P.* 9. 36–37:

ὅσια κλυτὰν χέρα οἱ προσενεγκεῖν  
ἦρα καὶ ἐκ λεχέων κεῖραι μελιαδέα ποίαν;<sup>1</sup>

Is it right to lay my famous hand upon her and indeed to reap the  
honey-sweet flower from the bed of love?<sup>2</sup>

Apollo ponders aloud whether he should sleep with Cyrene. The Loeb translates ποία in v. 37 as “flower”, but it means “grass”.<sup>3</sup> Giannini explains the image in μελιαδέα ποίαν as “efficace e delicata”,<sup>4</sup> but he cites no parallels for ποία used metaphorically of a person or an attribute of a person (or perhaps more specifically their virginity). Elsewhere Pindar only ever uses ποία literally.<sup>5</sup> For ποία used “metafóricamente, en relación con el amor” Salvador Castillo compares fragment 122. 6–8 Maehler ὕμῃν ἄνευθ’ ἐπαγορίας ἔπορεν,

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<sup>1</sup> Text is from Snell–Maehler 1987, 91–92.

<sup>2</sup> Translations are from Race 1997.

<sup>3</sup> Liberman 2004, 173 also translates “la fleur”. However, while *CGL* s.v. ποία 3 has “(fig.) flower (ref. to a woman’s virginity) Pi.” within the lemma for “foliage, leaves” (presumably with reference to this instance) and Slater 1969, 434 s.v. ποία b cites just this instance for the alleged sense “(met.), flower of love”, *LSJ* s.v. πόα gives no such sense.

<sup>4</sup> In Gentili–Bernardini–Cingano–Giannini 1995, 598. Ferrari 2018, 179 translates “È lecito che io le accosti la mia mano gloriosa e falci dal letto un’erba dolce come il miele?” and, along similar lines to Giannini, notes (178 n. 12) “Figura della verginità”, but he does not provide any parallels for ποία signifying virginity.

<sup>5</sup> At Theoc. *Id.* 25. 15 μελιιδέα ποίαν is used in the quite different, and literal, sense of the sweet grass which makes bulls grow strong.

| ὦ παῖδες, ἐρατειναῖς <ἐν> εὐναῖς | μαλθακᾶς ὥρας ἀπὸ καρπὸν  
δρέπεσθαι and *Pythian* 9. 109–111 χρυσοστεφάνου δέ οἱ Ἥβας |  
καρπὸν ἀνθήσαντ’ ἀποδρέψαι | ἔθελον,<sup>6</sup> but these instances involve  
the noun καρπός, “fruit”, rather than “grass”, and there are therefore  
no true Pindaric parallels for the supposed metaphorical use of ποία.  
I suggest that μελιαδέα ποίαν might be an error for μελιαδέ’ ὀπώραν.  
Apollo wonders whether it would be right to pluck Cyrene’s honey-  
sweet “fruit”, i.e. her “virginity”.<sup>7</sup> As fruit, ὀπώρα is proverbially  
“sweet”,<sup>8</sup> and the epithet μελιαδής, “honey sweet”, applies naturally  
to fruit.<sup>9</sup> At *Isthmian* 2. 5 Pindar mentions the ἀδίσταν ὀπώραν of the  
young victor. Both Pindar and Aeschylus use ὀπώρα of the reaching  
of sexual maturity by men and women.<sup>10</sup> Certain scholia also  
understood this verse as a reference to Cyrene’s virginity.<sup>11</sup> Pindar  
writes elsewhere of prostitutes (tactfully addressed as παῖδες) being  
permitted by Aphrodite to cull the fruit of soft youth in beds of love

<sup>6</sup> 1996, 70. Kirkwood 1982, 225 comments that “The reaping of crops or cutting of flowers as an erotic image occurs again below, lines 109–10”, but the cutting of grass is not quite the same whereas the metaphor in vv. 109–110 is, as Kirkwood says, one of reaping a crop.

<sup>7</sup> LSJ s.v. ὀπώρα A.III cites A. *Supp.* 998, 1015 and Chaerem. fr. 12. 1 *TrGF* for the noun used metaphorically of “ripe virginity”. Privitera 1982, 157 cites the two Aeschylean instances as instances of the noun denoting the age when a virgin is ready for marriage. For the association of ὀπώρα with youthful beauty, see Friis Johansen – Whittle 1980, vol. 3, 292; see also Sommerstein 2019, 357–358. *Hyperboreus*’ anonymous referee suggests that μελιαδέα ποίαν might be taken as meaning “youth” without any recourse to virginity, but this would only be possible if ποία could mean “youth” and I have not been able to find any evidence for this. Moreover, the context is clear that Apollo is clearly contemplating taking Cyrene’s virginity.

<sup>8</sup> μελιηδέα καρπὸν is a stock epic phrase (Hom. *Il.* 18. 568, *Od.* 9. 94, Hes. *Op.* 172).

<sup>9</sup> The idea that Apollo will not only cull but also “taste” the fruit of Cyrene’s virginity is easier than if we have Apollo wanting to cull and taste “grass”. With fruit the idea that the union of Apollo and Cyrene will bear fruit in the shape of Aristaeus also comes to the fore and since their son was the first bee-keeper, the idea that the fruit of their union is μελιαδής is apt.

<sup>10</sup> See *CGL* s.v. ὀπώρα 2.

<sup>11</sup> Σ 61 c (= Drachmann 1903–1927, vol. 2, 225. 23) δρέψαι τὴν παρθενίαν αὐτῆς, Σ 61 d (= Drachmann 1903–1927, vol. 2, 226. 2) ἀντὶ τοῦ διαπαρθενεῦσαι αὐτήν, Σ 64 c (= Drachmann 1903–1927, vol. 2, 226. 6) ἢ [sc. κείραι] τὴν παρθενίαν.

and later in this ode of suitors of Antaeus' daughter wishing to cull the "fruit" of her youth.<sup>12</sup> Misdivision may have caused the error.<sup>13</sup>

2) *N.* 11. 17–18:

ἐν λόγοις δ' ἀστῶν ἀγαθοῖσιν νιν αἰνεῖσθαι χρεών,  
καὶ μελιγδοῦποισι δαιδαλθέντα μελίζεν ἀοιδᾶις.<sup>14</sup>

17 ἀγαθοῖσιν Tricl. : ἀγαθοῖς BD | νιν Mommsen, μιν Mingarelli :  
μὲν BD

18 μελίζεν Pauw : μελιζέμεν BD

Yet it is necessary that he be praised in townsmen's kindly words,  
and that we celebrate and adorn him with honey-sounding songs.

Most editors since Bowra have printed Pauw's emendation in v. 18.<sup>15</sup> It removes a superfluous syllable on the assumption, right or wrong, that ἀοιδᾶις cannot be dissyllabic. Some hold that Pindar would not have treated α + οἱ as a single syllable,<sup>16</sup> while others admit the possibility.<sup>17</sup> ἀοιδά is the same word as ᾠδᾶ and in the Homeric Hymns ἀοιδή is sometimes dissyllabic (*H. Cer.* 494, *H. Ap.* 20, *H. Hom.* 32. 2). Sophocles and Euripides use both forms in lyric.<sup>18</sup> Pindar's treatment of α + οἱ in e.g. σιγῶμι (fr. 81. 3 Maehler) suggests that he perhaps could have treated ἀοιδᾶις as dissyllabic, but certainty is impossible.

<sup>12</sup> Fr. 122. 6–8 Maehler and *P.* 9. 109–111 (both cited above).

<sup>13</sup> For misdivision as a source of error in Pindar's MSS, see Young 1965, 257–258 (= 1970, 108).

<sup>14</sup> Text and apparatus are from Henry 2005, 20.

<sup>15</sup> Turyn 1952, 192 is the sole modern editor to retain the transmitted text, printing μελιζέμεν ἀοιδᾶις.

<sup>16</sup> So Henry 2005, 127, referring to West 1966, 172–173.

<sup>17</sup> E.g. Farnell 1930–1932, vol. 2, 327 and Verdenius 1988, 105. Schroeder 1900, 39 warned "ne nimis cauti simus in contractione admittenda ἀ(φ)οιδᾶις, monet eiusdem Bacchylidis Ἀλφειῶν VI 3 cl. Pind. O. IX 18", but in his 1923 Appendix (524) he added "μελίζεν ἀοιδᾶις (≅ ἀοιδά 7)?" In his last *ed. min.* (1930, 224) Schroeder printed Pauw's conjecture. Braswell 1988, 137 is less cautious about the possibility of such synizesis.

<sup>18</sup> For ᾠδᾶ, see *S. Aj.* 630; *E. Cyc.* 69, *Med.* 197, *El.* 865, *Her.* 1026, *Tro.* 514, *IT* 179, *Ion* 169, *Ph.* 807 b. For ἀοιδή, see *S. Ant.* 883; *E. Med.* 421, 425, *Hipp.* 743, *Hcl.* 975, *Supp.* 997, *Tro.* 336, 529, *IT* 12832, *Ion* 1096, *Phaeth.* 101 Diggle, fr. 453. 7 Kannicht.

However, other factors make Pauw's emendation unattractive. It alters a more characteristically Pindaric form of the infinitive to one that is less so.<sup>19</sup> It also assumes a corruption that is unparalleled in Pindar's MSS.<sup>20</sup> Henry suggests that αοιδαῖς gains support from *Nemean* 6. 30 αοιδαὶ καὶ λόγοι, but it need not, and αοιδά already appears in v. 7. αοιδαῖς could well be corrupt. Pindar may have written μελιγδούποισι δαιδαλθέντα μελιζέμεν αὐδαῖς, "celebrate and adorn him with honey-sounding voices". This preserves the transmitted form of the infinitive and avoids the question of whether the synizesis of α + οἱ is admissible. Homer associated the voice with honey.<sup>21</sup> Pindar probably coined the epithet μελίφθογος. Both μελίγδουπος here and μελίρροθος are Pindaric hapaxes, and he also uses μελίγαυρος (*O.* 11. 4, *P.* 3. 64, *N.* 3. 4, *I.* 2. 3, *Pae.* 5. 47 = fr. 52 e. 47 Maehler). For μελιγδούποισι ... αὐδαῖς one may compare *Olympian* 13. 100 ἀδύγλωσσος βοά, *Pythian* 10. 56 ὅπ' ... γλυκεῖαν, *Nemean* 2. 25 ἀδυμελεῖ ... φωνᾷ, 10. 33–34 ἀδεῖαι ... | ... ὁμφαί, *Isthmian* 2. 25 ἀδυπνόω ... φωνᾷ, *Paeon* 5. 47 (= fr. 52 e. 47 Maehler) μεγλιγάρυϊ παιᾶνος ... ὁμφᾷ, 8. 78 (= fr. 52 i. 78 Maehler) μελ[ί]φρονι αὐδ[ῖ]α, and fr. 152 Maehler μελισσοτεύκτων κηρίων ἐμὰ γλυκερώτερος ὁμφά. Corruption of αὐδή to αοιδή occurs at Hesiod *Theogony* 31 and elsewhere.<sup>22</sup> The corruption could have arisen from unconscious substitution of a rare word with a much more familiar one and / or because the juxtaposed verb meaning "sing" influenced a copyist to write αοιδαῖς.

Nicholas Lane  
Ealing, London

njglane@yahoo.com

<sup>19</sup> There are 31 instances of -έμεν infinitives in Pindar and six of the -εν form. In his survey of the latter Braswell 1988, 137 observes that none is required by metre and concludes that "There is no compelling reason ... to write -εν where the paradosis has happened to preserve this form except where metrically required".

<sup>20</sup> None of the -εν form infinitives preserved in the MSS is corrupted to the -έμεν form. As Farnell 1930–1932, vol. 2, 327 pointed out, μελιζέμεν "is not likely to have arisen from a MS. blunder".

<sup>21</sup> Hom. *Il.* 1. 247–249 τοῖσι δὲ Νέστωρ | ἠδυεπὴς ἀνόρουσε λιγυρὰς Πυλίων ἀγορητῆς, | τοῦ καὶ ἀπὸ γλώσσης μέλιτος γλυκίων ῥέεν αὐδῆ; cf. Tyrt. fr. 12. 8 West γλῶσσαν ... μελιχόγηρυν.

<sup>22</sup> West 1966, 165 cites instances of this corruption and to his instances may be added Hom. *Od.* 1. 371, Ar. *Av.* 241, Theoc. *Id.* 21. 21 and Bion fr. 9. 11.

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These notes propose conjectures on two passages in Pindar (*P.* 9. 37: μελιάδε’ ὀπώραν; *N.* 11. 18: αὐδαῖς).

Предлагаются две конъектуры к Пиндару (*P.* 9. 37: μελιάδε’ ὀπώραν; *N.* 11. 18: αὐδαῖς).

# CONSPECTUS

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