Lexis

Num. 40 (n.s.) - Dicembre 2022 - Fasc. 2

A Quandary at Hebrus: Bacchylides 16.5-8

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Abstract This article constitutes an effort to supplement the paeanic section of Bacchylides 16. The conjectures that I put forward for verses 5-8, set up a concerted Apolline frame. It is categorically retrievable through the interpretational methods of intertextuality and contextuality.

Keywords Bacchylides. Dithyramb. Apollo. Hebrus. Quandary.



Peer review

 Submitted
 2022-02-09

 Accepted
 2022-07-18

 Published
 2022-12-23

Open access

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Citation Skempis, M. (2022). "A Quandary at Hebrus: Bacchylides 16.5-8". *Lexis*, 40 (n.s.), 2, 347-356.

Bacchylides 16 contains several problems of textual transmission. Its opening section is improperly understood from a contextual point of view because the first eight lines are not wholly attested on the papyrus – left side is missing. Scholars tend to assume that the entire section hinges on the return of Apollo from his three-month winter vacation in the land of the Hyperboreans to Pytho through a stop at the river Hebrus. This is a theme seemingly not suitable for a dithyrambic narration. What causes subgeneric confusion is that this section features two denominations for song classificatorily not straightforward for or impertinent to the identification of a dithyramb: hymn (16.4 $\mathring{\nu}_{\mu\nu\omega\nu}$) and paean (16.8 $\pi\alpha\eta\acute{\rho}\nu\omega\nu$), both of which appear to be linked with Apollo (16.1; 16.10). This dim field of subgeneric diversity is further obfuscated by the severe lack of clarity due to problems of fragmentation.

My aim in this article is to provide supplements for the fragmentary lines 16.5-8 that convey good sense from the perspective of narrative organisation and Bacchylides' poetic ingenuity. My method of doing textual criticism rests on the appreciation of intertextual connections between Bacchylidean narration and the traditions of early Greek epic and hymn, which advance points of deviation from literary predecessors and advertise Bacchylides' own poetic skills. I argue that the supplements I provide, can acquire a deeper meaning on the condition that context is taken into consideration. By context, I mean the authorial management of inter- and intranarrative co-ordinates that conduce to the shaping of discourse, as this has been established in past poetic instantiations.¹ In this way, answers are at one's disposal when it comes to problems of narrative coherence and subgeneric identification.

My understanding of the excerpt at issue is set to question the inference that Apollo stops by the river Hebrus on his way back from the Hyperboreans, and suggest that the narrator contrives a quandary about a different person at this site before the narrative focus is directed onto Apollo at Pytho:

Λοξ]ίου ἀίο[μεν]² ἐπεὶ ὁλκ]άδ' ἔπεμψεν ἐμοὶ χρυσέαν Πιερ]ίαθεν ἐ[ΰθ]ρονος [Ο]ὐρανία, πολυφ]άτων γέμουσαν ὕμνων. κάλλιο]ν εἴ τις³ ἐπ' ἀνθεμόεντι Έβρωι

I am thankful to the anonymous referees of this journal.

- 1 For the role of context in matters concerning textual criticism in Bacchylides see Skempis 2020.
- 2 See Skempis 2019.
- 3 Maehler 1997, 158 has η καλὸ]ν εἴ τις.

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δρυσὶν ἀ]γάλλεται⁴ ἢ δολιχαύχενι κύ[κνωι, όπὶ ὰ]δεΐαι⁵ φρένα τερπόμενος; αἶψα]δ' ἵκηι⁶ παιηόνων ἄνθεα πεδοιχνεῖν, Πύθι' Ἄπολλον· τόσα χοροὶ Δελφῶν σὸν κελάδησαν παρ' ἀγακλέα ναόν. (Β. 16.1-12)⁷

We sense Loxias (approaching) because fair-throned Ourania sent me from Pieria a ship fraught with much-celebrated songs.

Is it better for someone to take delight in the oaks at the banks of flowery Hebrus or in the long-necked swan, soothing his heart with its sweet voice? Quick, come search for blossoms of paeans on the soil, Apollo of Pytho; so many Delphic choruses have sung next to your renowned precinct.

In my version of the text, the narrator, the poet himself, addresses Apollo Loxias at the outset. Then, he sets up a scenario according to which he is caught up in a dilemma about two varying ways of finding pleasure at Hebrus. The scenery changes in turn with what seems

⁴ Jurenka 1898, 112 suggests ἦρος before the verb ἀ]γάλλεται, Jebb 1905, 369 θηρσίν, Maehler 1997, 158 δάφναι, which is put forward by Blass 1898, 131, or μούσαι.

⁵ Kenyon 1897, 149: ὀπὶ ἡ]δεται; Jurenka 1898, 112 and Jebb 1905, 369: ὀπὶ ἁ]δεται; Blass 1898, 131: ὄφρ' ἂν ἀ]δεται. Maehler 1997, 158 is explicative of the status quaestionis in papyrological terms: "]δετᾶι Pap.: das über das Alpha gesetzte Zeichen ist kein Längezeichen, sondern eher ein Zirkumflex, ähnlich den Akzenten über τθεταν in 15,54 und πεδοιχνεῖν in 16,9. D. A. Schmidt schlägt μελια]δετῖν ἰᾶι mit Kürzung der Dativendung (ἰήν = βοήν, φωνήν) vor".

⁶ Maehler 1997, 158-9 thinks of πρὶν τό]δ' κηι, though fails to notice the ensuing repetition of πρίν in the opening of the Heraclean section (16.13), which would make little sense: it creates a spatio-temporal discontinuity in the way the Hebrus scenery segues into the Delphi one because πρίν is a conjunction as opposed to its adverbial use in line 13 – my own argument smooths out the transition from one scenery to another through an adverb. Previous editors: Jurenka 1898, 112 reads νεαρῶν τ' αἴ κε], Blass 1898, 131 ὀπὶ Πυθόα]δ', and Jebb 1905, 369: μέχρι Πυθῶνά]δ'. I refrain from passing judgment on their supplements because they lack not only contextualisation, but also argumentation. On the contrary, I take special heed of both aspects in my approach in order to make a point as plausible as possible.

According to Maehler 1997, 6, the metrical shape of this section is as follows: ---| νειτις ἐπ' ἀνθεμόεντι Ἔβρωι (= 4da ba|) | --- ἀ]γάλλεται ἢ δολιχαύχενι κύ[κνωι (= 5da |) | ---|δεϊαν φρένα τερπόμενος (= --- 2da cho) | ---]δ' ἵκηι παιηόνων (= cho ia ||).

to be an anticipated epiphany of Apollo in his Delphic guise. The supplements I propose, designate an Apolline frame in the opening, paeanic section of Bacchylides 16. In the course of my argument, I shall point out that the midpoint of this Apolline frame is underpinned by allusions to cultic and narrative contexts linked with Apollo.⁸

The Apolline frame rests on what can be reckoned as a threeentry catalogue of placenames: Pieria (16.3), Hebrus (16.5), Delphi (16.11). The ordering of these sites in Bacchylides 16 shows semblance with the two multi-entry catalogues of placenames in the Homeric Hymn to Apollo (Thrace: 33-4: Pieria: 215: Pytho/Delphi: 372. 495-500, 516-19), the first of which (30-50) introduces the Delian section (19-78) and the second (216-45) the Pythian section (179-544). Contrary to the two appellations of Apollo in the upper and lower sideline of the frame, Loxias (16.1) and Pythian (16.10), which are indicative of the cultic setting at Delphi, the three placenames point to the narrative setting of an extant text from the epic-hymnic tradition that hinges on the founding of Apollo's most celebrated cultsite at Pytho. The individual selection of the three sites from the two aforementioned catalogue contexts does not exactly forge a scenario of the god's veneration at Delphi. This leaves plenty of room for further investigating the effect of this awkward spatial configuration at the narrative level.

Keeping these preliminary observations in mind, I proceed to an account of the reasons, intertextual or other, that justify my conjectures:

[1] 16.5 κάλλιο]ν εἴ τις ἐπ' ἀνθεμόεντι Έβρωι

This ought to be the opening of an indirect interrogative clause introduced by $\epsilon \tilde{\imath} \tau \iota \varsigma^{10}$ in the sense 'is it preferable if one is to...?'. The comparative form $\kappa \acute{\alpha} \lambda \lambda \iota o \nu$ is in use in Homer in comparative, non-interrogatory contexts. This particular form is unattested in Bacchylides,

f 8 Franklin 2013, 222 rightly argues that the dithyramb was occasionally linked with Apollo.

⁹ For the identification of Loxias with Apollo at Pytho see Clem. Str. 5.4.21.4 καὶ ὅ γε Ἀπόλλων ὁ Πύθιος Λοξίας λέγεται.

¹⁰ In Bacchylides, εἴ τις occurs four times in conditional clauses: 4.11; 5.190; 9.81; fr. 11.2 S-M.

¹¹ Cf. Plut. fr. 86 Sandbach 'κάλλιόν τοι' εἶπεν 'εἰ φιλόπολις ἐκαλοῦ μᾶλλον ἡ φιλολάκων'. In archaic epic poetry, comparative + clause starting with εἰ is not common: Hom. Il. 17.417-19 τό κεν ἦμιν ἄφαρ πολὺ κέρδιον εἵη | εἰ τοῦτον Τρώεσσι μεθήσομεν ἱπποδάμοισιν | ἄστυ πότι σφέτερον ἐρύσαι καὶ κῦδος ἀρέσθαι; Od. 6.282-3 βέλτερον εἰ καὐτή περ ἐποιχομένη πόσιν εὖρεν | ἄλλοθεν; 20.331-2 ἐπεὶ τόδε κέρδιον ἦεν, | εἰ νόστησ' Όδυσεὺς καὶ ὑπότροπος ἵκετο δῶμα.

¹² See Pi. Pros. fr. 89a S-M; Theocr. Id. 17.166-17.

who turns elsewhere to καλόν (9.82) and κάλλιστον (9.86; 10.47). Hesiod fr. 26 M-W is likely to have exerted considerable influence on the shape of Bacchylides' discourse. Porthaon's daughters take a morning walk around the fountain of the river Euenus where they seek flowers to adorn their heads, and Apollo fetches one of them, Stratonice, and brings her to his son Melaneus. The setting shows several affinities to Bacchylides 16 [rejoice (26.18 ἀγαλ[λόμεναι ~ 16.6 ἀ]γάλλεται), river (26.19 ἀμφὶ περὶ κρ[ήνην Εὐήνου ἀργ]υροδίνεω ~ 16.5 ἐπ' ἀνθεμόεντι Έβρωι; cf. 16.34 ἐπὶ ποταμῶι ῥοδόεντι Λυκόρμαι [= Euenus]), seek out flowers (26.21 ἄνθεα μαι[ό]μεν[αι ~ 16.9 ἄνθεα πεδοιχνεῖν), Apollo $(26.22 \Phi \circ \tilde{\beta} \circ \tilde{$ both stories include versions of how Heracles (26.33 Άμφιτρυωνιάδης ~ 16.15 'Αμφιτρυωνιάδαν) conquers Oechalia (26.32 Οἰχ[αλ]ίη[ν ~ 16.14 Οἰγαλίαν) and carries off Iole (26.31 Ἰόλειαν ~ 16.27 Ἰόλαν). From a discursive point of view, it is possible that the thrice attested καλλ- stem in Hesiod (26.6 περικαλλέα in relation to ἔργα; 26.10 καλλιπ[λο]κάμ[ω]ν in connection to Νυμφάων; 26.27 καλλίζωνος with regard to Στρατονίκη) inspires the comparative κάλλιον.

Bacchylides exhibits a similar sort of contemplative interrogation in Bacchylides 4, a Pythian ode. Instead of setting forth the interrogative mode by dint of the suggested comparative (κάλλιον) and proceeding to a bifurcation of the compared items without pointing out a predilection, as he appears to be doing in Bacchylides 16, in Bacchylides 4 where Apollo at Pytho is praised on the occasion of an epinician ode for Hiero (4.1-6) and Ourania supplies the poet with hymns (4.7-10), the interrogative mode (4.18-20 τί φέρτερον ἢ θεοῖσιν | φίλον ἐόντα παντο[δ]απῶν | λαγγάνειν ἄπο μοῖρα[ν] ἐσθλῶν) takes the shape of a prioritised item against the backdrop of an omitted comparison: "what can be better than...?" instead of "is it preferable if... or...?".13

[2] 16.6 δρυσὶν ἀ]γάλλεται ἢ δολιχαύχενι κύ[κνωι

The person, who is located at Hebrus, 14 can be thought to rejoice in his heart with the oaks ($\delta \rho \tilde{u}_{\varsigma}$). Iliad 11 provides a narrative setting in which oaks and pines are singled out among trees in the natural environment of a river in flood, which is compared to Aias' fury in chasing after Hector by the banks of the river Scamander (492-501). 15 This is an inverted visualisation of what is close to the rivery locus amoenus in Bacchylides 16, yet it is noteworthy that

¹³ For simple interrogative mode see B. 18.3-11; 18.31-41.

¹⁴ For rivers (with preposition) in Bacchylides see 3.6-7; 5.38; 6.3; 9.39; 9.41; 11.26; 11.96: 13.193: 14B.5: fr. 20C.9-10.

On Hebrus and oaks see Nic. Ther. 461-2 (Orpheus); Scyl. Per. 67; Str. 7a.1.48.

oaks are part of a context that revolves around a stream. In the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, Apollo gives an account of the way Hermes drove his cattle to Pylos by drawing attention to how his baby-thief brother walked marvellously, as if he was stepping on slender oak trunks (hMerc. 349 $\dot{\omega}_{\zeta}$ εἴ τις ἀραιῆσι δρυσὶ βαίνοι). The topographical indication of Hebrus inscribes the story of the paeanic section of Bacchylides 16 in Thrace and the North-Eastern part of the Greek world. The semantics of δρῦς fit into this topography because there is a sacred grove near Bosporus named Δρῦς where a precinct of Apollo is located. From this point of view, my conjecture δρυσίν is linked to contexts concerning a river, a cattle-raid, and a cult that all suggest Apollo.

[3] 16.7 ὀπὶ ἁ]δεΐαι φρένα τερπόμενος

'Soothing the heart with a pleasant voice' is a plausible statement about a person, who has the opportunity to take pleasure in the long-necked swan at Hebrus because it highlights the capacity of the swan to venerate the god with his exceptional voice. I want to stress the Apolline frame in which it can be interpreted by pointing out two narrative contexts that acknowledge a link to Apollo:

¹⁶ Dion. Per Bosp. nav. 26 Δρῦς· αἱ μὲν παρὰ τὸ ἡσύχιον τοῦ χωρίου καὶ σκεπανόν - θαλάττη γὰρ ἀπηνέμφ προσκλύζεται -, Δρῦς δ' <ἀπ'> ἄλσους· τοῦτο δὲ τέμενος Ἀπόλλωνος. See Hoffmann 1841, 1542: "Die Gestade des Bosporos entlang [...] waren durch Heiligtümer und Orte ausgezeichnet. So gab es dort einen Ort: Drys mit einem dem Apollon heiligen Hain".

¹⁷ For swan song in honour of Apollo at Hebrus see Ar. Av. 779-84.

¹⁸ Hom. Il. 2.460; 15.692.

- a. in *Iliad* 1, the Danaans sing all day long a paean with a beautiful voice to propitiate Apollo, who soothes his heart in hearing them, ¹⁹ after Chryses has dedicated a prayer to him;
- b. in the final section of the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, Apollo offers Hermes the power of divination to soothe his heart, which he is instructed to use in order to inform mortals about their fate through his voice.²⁰

The Apolline connotations of these passages match the ones in Bacchylides 16 insofar as heart soothing is the outcome of a process that involves someone's voice.

[4] 16.8-9 αἶψα]δ' ἵκηι παιηόνων | ἄνθεα πεδοιχνεῖν

αΐψα]δ' ἵκηι²¹ is conceived as a prospective subjunctive, which renders the expected realisation of an action.²² In this sentence, the epiphany of Apollo at Pytho, not at Hebrus, is at issue (16.10). αἷψα + ἰκάνω is a formulaic expression that occurs in the Homeric Hymn to Apollo in a context relevant for the paean:²³ the band of Cretans, who have arrived at Crise, are headed toward Pytho, as they sing a paean in honour of the god, and quickly they reach Parnassus and the site where they were meant to found a temple.²⁴ This ought to be a strong argument for the view that the paeanic section of Bacchylides 16 does not recount Apollo's sojourn at Hebrus. On the contrary, it stages an abrupt shift of focus from the locus amoenus at Hebrus with its Apolline connotations to an imagined epiphany of the god at Pytho.

¹⁹ Hom. II. 1.472-4 οἱ δὲ πανημέριοι μολπῆ θεὸν ἱλάσκοντο | καλὸν ἀείδοντες παιήονα κοῦροι 治χαιῶν | μέλποντες ἐκάεργον· δ δὲ φρένα τέρπετ' ἀκούων.

²⁰ hMerc. 564-6 τάς τοι ἔπειτα δίδωμι, σὺ δ' ἀτρεκέως ἐρεείνων | σὴν αὐτοῦ φρένα τέρπε, καὶ εἰ βροτὸν ἄνδρα δαείης | πολλάκι σῆς ὀμφῆς ἐπακούσεται αἴ κε τύχησι. For the emphasis on voice in this section see hMerc. 543-5.

²¹ Jebb 1905, 370: "The lacuna in the MS. before δ ' ĭκηι could not hold more than six letters. But the scansion required for the lost syllables is $\sim\sim--\sim$ (cp. v. 20). To find six letters which shall give that metre, and also fit the sense, seems impossible. [...] It seems, then, almost certain that the text of the papyrus was defective here".

²² Prospective/anticipatory subjunctive (mode of prospective realisation): Hale 1894, 167-8; Smyth 1956, 405; Schwyzer, Debrunner 1988, 310.

²³ hAp. 377 αἶψα δ' ἵκανεν (the preceding context is explicative of Apollo's appellation Πύθιος [hAp. 372-3 ἐξ οὖ νὖν Πυθὼ κικλήσκεται, οἳ δὲ ἄνακτα | Πύθιον αὖ καλέουσιν ἐπώνυμον ~ Β. 16.10 Πύθι' Ἄπολλον]).

²⁴ hAp. 517-23 οἱ δὲ ῥήσσοντες ἔποντο | Κρῆτες πρὸς Πυθὼ καὶ ἰηπαιήον' ἄειδον, | οἶοἱ τε Κρητῶν παιήονες οἶσἱ τε Μοῦσα | ἐν στήθεσσιν ἔθηκε θεὰ μελίγηρυν ἀοιδήν. | ἄκμητοι δὲ λόφον προσέβαν ποσίν, αἶψα δ' ἵκοντο | Παρνησὸν καὶ χῶρον ἐπήρατον ἔνθ' ἄρ' ἔμελλεν | οἰκήσειν πολλοῖσι τετιμένος ἀνθρώποισι· | δεῖξε δ' ἄγων ἄδυτον ζάθεον καὶ πίονα νηόν.

'Searching on the soil for flowers [of paeans]' is not just a suggestive metaphor for the amalgamation of nature and the production of song accommodated in a cultic context. From a discursive viewpoint, Bacchylides deploys a craftily constructed hapax legomenon, $\pi\epsilon\delta$ οιχνεῖν 'look out for something on the ground',25 to convey the process of selection that amounts to the recuperation of exquisite songs. $\pi\epsilon\delta$ οιχνεῖν draws on Iliad 22 where 'searching on the soil' refers to the way in which a hunting dog goes after a deer in the woods just as Hector is pursued by Achilles.26 The former is patronised by Apollo, but eventually falls (22.188-213): he meets Apollo to give him strength (22.203 ἤντετ' Ἀπόλλων), who leaves him after he dies (22.213 λίπεν δέ ἑ Φοῆβος ἀπόλλων). As it turns out, Bacchylides draws from the Iliad, which does not exactly flatter the god's patronising power, in order to conjure a celebratory Apolline setting.

The series of conjectures that I have posited for 16.5-8, takes into consideration that the outset of Bacchylides 16 sets up a paeanic frame for Apollo at Pytho. All the intertexts that I have pointed out, are shown to have a link with the god. The narrator is thought to contrive a quandary about how someone, not Apollo, may take pleasure at Hebrus. The initially posed paeanic section (16.1-12) justifies its existence through a specification of hymns provided by Ourania (16.4) in terms of Delphic paeans (16.8). I take this to be a subgeneric refinement of lyric song dedicated to Apollo²⁷ that is set to challenge the dithyrambic narration, which centres on Heracles: the inverted series of allusion to the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, which immediately precedes the conjectured arrival of Apollo at Pytho, suggests a link between the aetiological relation of the cult of Apollo Delphinios at Pytho with the paean and the traditional aetiology of the dithy-

²⁵ I do not concur with Jebb's (1905, 371) erroneous view that $\pi\epsilon\delta$ οιχνεῖν bears overtones of the poetry of Alcaeus.

²⁶ Hom. II. 22.192 ἀλλά τ' ἀνιχνεύων θέει ἔμπεδον ὄφρά κεν εὕρη. For the passage see Richardson 1993, 127-30; de Jong 2012, 106-14.

²⁷ For the hymn as generative song in praise of a god see Plat. Leg. 700b with Carey 2009, 26. On the hymnic nature of the paean see Aesch. Pers. 393; Eur. HF 687-95; IT 179-85; Tim. fr. 15 col. 5 199-205 PMG; Carm pop. 21 PMG; Xen. Hell. 4.7.4; Arist. Pae. in Ap. 45-8 CA; Mac. Pae. in Ap. et Aesc. 1-5, 23-7 CA; Phil. Pae. in Dion. 109-13 CA; Anon. Pae. in Ap. 5-6 Heitsch; Apoll. Soph. Lex. Hom. p. 126 Bekker; Herod. De pros. cath. vol. 3.2 p. 109 Lentz; Pol. On. 1.38; Procl. apud Phot. Bibl. 320a.21-4 Henry. Cf. Schmidt 1990, 22; Schröder 1999, 21; Furley, Bremer 2001, 84; Rutherford 2001, 47; Carey 2009, 27.

²⁸ hAp. 517-19 Κρῆτες πρὸς Πυθώ καὶ ἰηπαιήου' ἄειδον, | οἶοί τε Κρητῶν παιήονες οἶσί τε Μοῦσα | ἐν στήθεσσιν ἔθηκε θεὰ μελίγηρυν ἀοιδήν ~ 16.2-4 ὁλκ]άδ' ἔπεμψεν ἐμοὶ χρυσέα | Πιερ]ίαθεν ἐ[ΰθ]ρονος [Ο]ὐρανία, | πολυφ]άτων γέμουσαν ὕμνων; 16.8-10 παιηόνων | ἄνθεα πεδοιχνεῖν, | Πύθι' Ἄπολλον.

²⁹ hAp. 521 αἶψα δ' ἵκοντο ~ 16.8 αἶψα]δ' ἵκηι.

ramb that is based on dolphin imagery,³⁰ though here substituted by the use of an Apolline frame, which points to a different dolphin cipher.³¹ The three sites of the paeanic section (Pieria, Hebrus, Pytho) are excerpted from catalogues of placenames in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, which stages a spatial shift from Delos to Pytho. The introductory Apolline frame of Bacchylides 16 singles out these three sites in order to sketch out a gradual move from Pieria to Pytho, the venue of paeanic performances in honour of the god.

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- 30 On dithyramb and dolphin imagery see Csapo 2003; Kowalzig 2013; Hedreen 2013.
- 31 hAp. 493-6 ώς μὲν ἐγὼ τὸ πρῶτον ἐν ἠεροειδέϊ πόντφ | εἰδόμενος δελφῖνι θοῆς ἐπὶ νηὸς ὅρουσα, | ὡς ἐμοὶ εὕχεσθαι δελφινίῳ· αὐτὰρ ὁ βωμὸς | αὐτὸς δέλφειος καὶ ἐπόψιος ἔσσεται αἰεί ~ 16.10 τόσα χοροὶ Δελφῶν. Note the placement of πρῶτον before the aetiology of Apollo Delphinios at Pytho in the Homeric Hymn to Apollo and the aforeplacement of the paeanic section in the narration of Bacchylides 16.

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