P.OXY. 2438 AND THE ORDER OF BOOKS IN ARISTOPHANES BYZANTIUS’ EDITION OF PINDAR

Two well-known ancient witnesses report that Aristophanes of Byzantium was responsible for the arrangement of Pindar’s poems into seventeen book-rolls according to lyric genres (dithyrambs, hymns, etc.). These witnesses form fr. 381 in the edition of Aristophanes’ fragments by W.J. Slater (Aristophanis Byzantii fragmenta [Berlin and New York, 1986]):

Vit. Pind. P.Oxy. 2438.35–9 (LDAB 3724, TM 62542; late second/early third century A.D.)¹ δῆμος δὲ αὐτοῦ ἥμετα καὶ ἀριστοφάνῳς εἰς βιβλία ζῇ. διὸ[ν][ο][μ][τ][ο][ν] β’ [προσοδία]ν β’ παίαν διὸ παρ[τ][ε][ν] εἶ[ν] γ’ [ἐπινικίῳ]γ’ δ’ ἐγκόμιον ε’ ἐν [ο] καὶ [σκ]όλι[α]ν = 4 [υ]ι[ν]ων α’ ύπορχημάτων α’ δρ[ή][ν]ον.

| nisi aliter ind., omnia suppl. Lobel | 2 Ἀριστοφάνους Lobel e Vit. Pind. Vat. (q.v.) | 3 εν [ο] καὶ [σκ]όλι[α]ν … de Kreij : ἐν [ο] καὶ [σκ]όλι[α]ν τινα vel ἐν [ο] καὶ [σκ]όλι[α]ν ετήσιον Gallo (1968, 73–4; 1969, 107) : ἐν [ο] καὶ [παροινια]ν D’Alessio (2000) | 4 α’ post θρήνων coni. edd., fort. recte; an θ[ρ]- β’?

Vit. Pind. Vat. page 7.14–17 Dr.² ὁ ἐπὶ ἐπινίκιος οὖ ἡ ἄρχη Ἀριστοφάνους, ὁ ὦν ἡ ἄρχη Ἀριστοφάνους τοῦ συντάξεόν τα Πινδαρικά διὰ τὸ περιέχειν τοῦ ἐγκόμιου καὶ τὰ περὶ τοῦ Πέλοσος, ὃς πρῶτος ἐν Ἡλιδή ἤγιονίστητο.

A much-debated question is whether the order of the poems attested by the papyrus can be credited to Aristophanes, since an ordering principle is apparently not to be found in the list transmitted by it. Moreover, there are some disagreements with the list of Pindar’s works transmitted by the Vita Ambrosiana, which is generally deemed the most authoritative catalogue of the poet’s corpus, on account of its well-recognized criterion of classification: the poems are divided between those for gods (from hymnoi

¹ On the papyrus and its content, see M. de Kreij, ‘Anonymous, Pindar (1132)’, in Die Fragmenten der Griechischen Historiker Part IV (2017), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1873-5363_jciv_a1132>; this edition, based on a fresh collation, has been reproduced here. As de Kreij (this note) points out, ‘after inspection, cleaning, and conservation of the papyrus’, he has been able to revise some readings of the editio princeps and ‘to better establish the size of the lacunae’. Previous editions are E. Lobel, Oxyrhynchus Papyri 26 (Oxford, 1961) and I. Gallo, Una nuova biografia di Pindaro (P. Oxy. 2438), (Salerno, 1968). In the critical apparatus ‘D’Alessio (2000)’ refers to G.B. D’Alessio, ‘Review of S. Schröder, Geschichte und Theorie der Gattung Paian (Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1999)’, in BMCR 2000.01.24; ‘Gallo (1969)’ refers to I. Gallo, ‘Gli scolii di Pindaro. Nota critica al catalogo pindarico del Papiro di Ossirinco XXVI, 2438’. QUCC 8 (1969), 105–12.

² The label Vita Vaticana has been introduced by Gallo instead of the traditional label, Vita Thomana, which is misleading, since the biography cannot be credited to Thomas Magister: it was already known to Eustathius, who not only quoted ample extracts from it in his Introduction to Pindar (25–38 Negri) but also ascribed it to ancient commentators (παλαιοὶ). The ascription to Thomas is based on a brief note by Demetrius Triclinius (E. Abel [ed.], Scholia recentia in Pindarī epinicia, 1 [Budapest and Berlin, 1891], 31), who, however, only says that the text of the biography διωρθοθήκη (‘was corrected’ or ‘was revised’; cf. LBG s.v.) by Thomas, not that it was compiled by him (γένος Πίνακος διωρθοθήκη διε παρὰ τοῦ σφοτάτου Μαγίστρου). On the whole issue, see I. Gallo, ‘Eustazio commentatore di Pindaro’, QUCC 25 (1977), 43–51; at 50; M. Negri, Pindaro ad Alessandria. Le edizioni e gli editori (Brescia, 2004), 16 n. 3, 23 with n. 4.
to hyporchēmata) and those for men (from enkōmia to epinikia), and both of these categories of songs are arranged from the most general (respectively, the hymns and the enkōmia) to the most specific (the remaining genres). This catalogue has been thought to reproduce the order established by Aristophanes in his edition of Pindar.

Here is a comparison between the two lists:

The total number of books (17) is the same in both lists, and the poetic genres are the same. Beside ordering, the other main divergence lies in the number of scrolls containing hyporchēmata: two in the Vita Ambrosiana, only one in P.Oxy. 2438. The papyrus list, as it stands, is one book short of the total number. It is impossible to establish with sufficient probability whether the figure α’ after ἐπιρχήματον (line 3) is mistaken or whether a reference to the seventeenth book of the edition, corresponding to the second volume of hyporchēmata, is lost in the gap following the mention of thrēnoi (θρήνοι α’ ±37 | ±2 ἀν[...]ε[...]] κε[...]κα[...]). None the less, two considerations favour the first possibility: in the string of letters following the gap, the expected figure α’ is missing;

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3 *Vit. Pind. Ambr.* page 3.6–9 Dr. γέγραφε δὲ βιβλία ἐπιρχήματ᾽ Ἰονίων, παρθενείων, διθυράμβου β’, προσοδίων β’, παρθενείων β’. χειρότερα δὲ καὶ γ’ ὀ ἐπιρχήματα κεχωρισμένα, ἐπὶ τὸν Snell: κεχωρισμένα ἐπὶ νομοθετήης, ἐπὶ τὸν Prodi: κεχωρισμένα ἐπὶ τὸν Snell: κεχωρισμένα ἐπὶ τὸν Snell. On this list, see E.E. Prodi, ‘The list of Pindar’s works in the Vita Ambrosiana’, *RhM* 161 (2018), 236–7.

4 Since E. Hiller, ‘Die antiken Verzeichnisse der pindarischen Dichtungen’, *Hermes* 21 (1886), 357–71; but see already A. Boeckh, Πινδάρου τὰ σωζόμενα. *Pindari opera quae supersunt*, vol. 2/2 (Leipzig, 1821), 555–7.

5 I do not take into account either the list offered by Eust. *Intr. Pind.* 342, since it depends upon the *Vita Ambrosiana* (cf. Negri [n. 2], 216 with n. 1), or the lists provided by the *Vita metrica* and the *Vita Vaticana*, for they exhibit only a selection of the poems. As for the *Suda*’s list (π 1617 A.) and its peculiarities, see Gallo (n. 1 [1968]), 42–5. More generally, on the different lists, see Gallo (n. 1 [1968]), 27–45 and Gallo (n. 1 [1969]); W.H. Race, ‘P.Oxy. 2438 and the order of Pindar’s works’, *RhM* 130 (1987), 407–10.

6 Cf. Gallo (n. 1 [1968]), 72–8. Corruptions in numerals are particularly frequent: see Iren. *Haer.* 5.30.1 and Jer. *Tract. Ps.* 77, with Z.J. Cole, *Numerals in Early Greek New Testament Manuscripts* (Leiden and Boston, 2017), 14–15; examples in C. Neri, *Erinnerungen an Hermann Graee*. (Bologna, 2003), 46–7 and 211. For the missing book, cf. Lobel (n. 1), 6.

7 As M. de Kreij informs me, after θρήνοι α’, ‘Gallo believes about 6 letters are missing, but these are all wide letters, as is the number, so the column may have ended after the number; at most 3 letters could be added. It is clear that the right margin was not dead straight in any case (see 6 and 9)’.

8 Cf. Gallo (n. 1 [1968]), 77–8 and (n. 1 [1969]), 111–12, who favours the first possibility; de Kreij (n. 1), on the other hand, is disposed to the second possibility: ‘the genitives plural in l. 40 strongly suggest this was the final entry in the list of Pindar’s works’. 
furthermore, it seems difficult to restore in the gap the name of a poetic genre traditionally associated with Pindar (including the five supplementary titles recorded by Suda). A third, hitherto neglected, possibility is that the figure following θηροφον could have been β’ instead of α’, but this would introduce a further disagreement between the two lists, which seem otherwise pretty similar: though this option cannot be completely discarded, it does not seems to be very appealing.

As for the differences of ordering, Race and Cameron concluded that there was not a fixed editorial arrangement in antiquity, and that the rolls containing Pindar’s poems were to be freely rearranged by scholars. On the other hand, D’Alessio has pointed out that ‘Hellenistic and later quotations and papyri seem all to reflect the 17 books division present in the vita Ambrosiana and this must be due to the existence of a single authoritative edition. The attribution of what is practically the same list in P.Oxy. 2438 to [Aristophan]es confirms that it was his work in this field which had set the standard followed by subsequent scholars, scribes and book publishers. The same stance is held by Negri ([n. 2], 213–25), who explains the divergences between the two lists as a consequence of the different natures and aims of the scholarly works in which they are found. While P.Oxy. 2438 was probably part of a collection of biographies, whose compiler was not interested in accurately reproducing the order of books established by Aristophanes of Byzantium, the Vita Ambrosiana was devised to introduce an edition of Pindar, and therefore the exact order of the book was relevant to its compiler. Other scholars, though accepting the existence of a single authoritative edition by Aristophanes, have also suggested that the different orders of books may reflect different arrangements proposed by ancient scholars: Arrighetti, for instance, traced back the papyrus’ list to Didymus and that of the Vita Ambrosiana to Aristophanes, while Gallo ([n. 1 (1968)], 35, 41–2) took the opposite stance.

It seems difficult to deny the existence of an authoritative edition in seventeen books, namely the edition provided by Aristophanes, with its own arrangement. Which of the transmitted lists reflects such an arrangement is not easy to ascertain, but the only list explicitly associated with the Alexandrian grammarian is the list provided by P.Oxy. 2438. The book order of this list is generally considered to lack a well-recognizable criterion, but is only apparently chaotic: upon closer scrutiny, it betrays a substantial bipartition between songs εϊς θεούς (lines 36–7: dithyrambs, prosodia, paeans,

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9 Cf. Suda π 1617 A. ἐγερθεὶς δὲ [sc. Πινδαρος] ἐν βιβλίοις ἰς’, Δωρίδη διαλέκτῳ ταῦτα: Ὀλυμπιούκας, Πυθηνικάς, προσόδιοι, πορθένια, ἐνθροσιμούς, βεβήκια, δειημορικά, παιδικά, ὑπορχηματα, ιμιους; διθυραμβοὺς, σκολία, ἐγκώμια, θήνους, δράματα τραγικά ἰς’.
10 Cf. Race (n. 5); Alan Cameron, Callimachus and his Critics (Princeton, 1995), 110–11.
11 G.B. D’Alessio, ‘Pindar’s prosodia and the classification of Pindaric papyrus fragments’, ZPE 118 (1997), 23–60, at 52. For references to a seventeen-book edition in antiquity, cf. J. Irigoin, Histoire du texte de Pindare (Paris, 1952), 37–8.
12 Cf. Lobel (n. 1), 1; G. Arrighetti, ‘La biografia di Pindaro del papiro di Ossirincio XXVI 2438’, SCo 16 (1967), 129–48, at 129; Gallo (n. 1 [1968]), 17–18; De Kreij (n. 1), who also takes into account an alternative possibility, namely that P.Oxy. 2438 could be ‘a (para)literary text concerning Pindar to which an excerpted Life was attached, perhaps written at a later time’.
13 Cf. Arrighetti (n. 12), 139–40, 144–5; also N. Natalucci, ‘Il P. Oxy. 2438 e la tradizione biografica di Pindaro: una nuova proposta di lettura’, Qucc 37 (1995), 57–88, at 87.
14 For the attribution of the book-arrangement attributed by P.Oxy. 2438 to Aristophanes, see also I. Cazzaniga, ‘Due contributi filologici’, SCo 19/20 (1970/1), 5–14, at 5; F. Lasserre, ‘Review of B. Snell, H. Maehler, Pindari carmina cum fragmentis. Pars II (Leipzig, 1975)’, Ac 45 (1976), 660–1; L. Lehhus, L’inno a Pan di Pindaro (Milan, 1979), 81–3.
15 D’Alessio (n. 11), 51–5; T. Phillips, Pindar’s Library Performance Poetry and Material Texts (Oxford, 2016), 55–60.
partheneia) and songs εἰς ἄνθρωπος (lines 37–9: epinikia, enkömía, thrēnoi),16 with the only exceptions being hymnoi and hyporchēmata (lines 38–9), both of which are misplaced in the second group of songs. The misplacement, possibly owing to an oversight of the scribe, is, none the less, telling, for it involves two terms that begin with the same letter (¬). Once these two genres are moved to the end of their category—that is, the songs εἰς θεοὺς—the resulting order turns out to conform to two clearly recognizable criteria: a hierarchical principle based on the recipients of the song (gods/men), and, within both of these groups, an alphabetic ordering extending no further than the first letter, as seems to have been customary in the Hellenistic period (ὑπορχήματα, ποσοδία, παίδινες, παρθένεια, ὡμοί, ὑπορχήματα/ἐπινίκια, ἔγκώμια [with σκόλια], θρήνοι).17

These two criteria match those which were arguably used in Alexandrian editions of at least some melic poets. The hierarchical principle seems to govern Aristophanes’ edition of the four books of Pindar’s victory songs (viz. the hierarchy of both Panhellenic games and agonistic disciplines: first the chariot race, then the other equestrian competitions, followed by contact sports and foot races),18 while the alphabetic principle seems to be recognizable in the editions of Bacchylides (within the book of dithyrambs) and Sappho (as a subordinate criterion governing the arrangement of the poems within each thematic section),19 which are generally ascribed to Aristophanes.20 Furthermore, the

16 As pointed out by Lehns (n. 14), 82: ‘l’aspetto polarizzato (odi divine dai ditirambi ai parteni, umane dagli epinici ai treni) prevale visibilmente su quello casuale’.

17 Cf. Arrighetti (n. 12), 139 for the possibility that the list betrays these two criteria. Arrighetti, however, assumed that the overarching criterion was the division between songs performed by a moving chorus and songs performed by a stationary chorus, and that both of these groups were subdivided into songs for gods and songs for men, arranged in alphabetical order. The problems entailed by this approach have been shown by Gallo (n. 1 (1968)), 40 n. 39. On alphabetic ordering in Hellenistic scholarly works, see L.W. Daly, Contributions to a History of Alphabetization in Antiquity and the Middle Ages (Brussels, 1967), 29; J. Rusten, ‘Dicaearchus and the tales from Euripides’, GRBS 23 (1982), 357–67, at 363; K. Alpers, ‘Review of L.W. Daly, Contributions to a History of Alphabetization in Antiquity and the Middle Ages (Brussels, 1967)’, Gnomon 47 (1975), 113–17, at 113; E. Esposito, ‘Fragments of Greek lexicography in the papyri’, TiC 1 (2009), 255–97 (lexica displaying alphabetical arrangement, dating from the third/second century B.C.).

18 On this ordering principle, and others used by Aristophanes in arranging the victory songs, see Negri (n. 2), 152–74; N. Lowe, ‘Epinikian eidography’, in S. Hornblower and C. Morgan (edd.), Pindar’s Poetry, Patrons and Festivals (Oxford, 2007), 167–76, at 171–4.

19 On the alphabetical arrangement of songs within a book, see I. Rutherford, Pindar’s Paeans (Oxford, 2001), 158–9 with nn., with reference to Sappho’s and Bacchylides’ Alexandrian editions. On Bacchylides’ book of dithyrambs, cf. J. Irigoin, Bacchylide. Dithyrambes – Épînîcîes – Fragments (Paris, 1993), XXV–XXVI with n. 6. On Sappho’s edition, see C. Neri, ‘Il Brothers Poem e l’edizione alessandrina (in margine a P. Sapph. Obbink)’, Eikasmos 26 (2015), 53–76, at 69–73, and C. Neri, ‘Dolorosi, imprevisti tradimenti (Sapph. fr. 16A)?’, Eikasmos 29 (2018), 39–54, at 48–51. On the basis of recent papyrus findings, Neri has proposed that the poems by Sappho had probably been arranged within each book of the Alexandrian edition according to two criteria: they were grouped into thematic sections, which were internally arranged according to an alphabetical order (it seems less probable that the alphabetical principle was followed throughout a whole book; for the problems raised by this hypothesis, suggested by E. Lobel, Σαφρούς μέλη [Oxford, 1925], XV, see Neri [this note (2018)], 48–9).

20 In Sappho’s case, the existence of an edition published by Aristophanes is strongly suggested by Heph. Sign. pages 73.11–74.14 Consbr. (test. 236 V. = Neri) and Apoll. Dyse. GG 2/2.443.8–12 (test. 236A Neri); cf. C. Neri, ‘Immagini di Saffo’, in C. Neri and F. Cinti, Saffo. Poesie, frammenti e testimonianze (Santarcangelo di Romagna, 2017), XXIV–XXVI. In Bacchylides’ case, there is no evidence that Aristophanes was responsible for the standard edition of the poet, and it has been suggested that this could have been the work of Aristochos (D’Alelio [n. 11], 54, on the basis of the testimony of P.Oxy. 2368 about Aristarchus’ classification of Bacch. Dith. **23 M. among the dithyrambs; cf. schol. B ad loc. page 128.9–14 Maehler).
bipartite structure of Pindar’s edition (songs εἰς θεοῦς and εἰς ἄνθρωποις) seems to be confirmed by the selected list of Pindaric poems given by Horace in *Carm.* 4.2.10–24 (the celebrated ode *Pindarum quisquis studet aemulari*),21 where only dithyrambs (10–12), hymns (13–16), *epinikia* (17–20) and *threnoi* (21–4) are mentioned, that is, two genres for each group, in both cases in alphabetical order.22 It is also ‘very interesting that P.Oxy. 2438 […] begins with the *dithyramboi* and ends with the *threnoi* exactly as Horace does’ (Race [n. 5], 410). These agreements, taken together, suggest that the Roman poet may have had Aristophanes’ edition in mind when he outlines the poetic work of his model.

Compared with the papyrus list, the list provided by the *Vita Ambrosiana* exhibits an order which seems to be more refined, as noted above. It is perhaps not irrelevant to acknowledge here the work of Didymus on lyric poetry—as, for example, Gallo ([n. 1 (1968)], 40–1) did—which is generally considered to be the basis for Proclus’ classification (*Chrest.* 32–3 Severyns).23 If so, the differences between the two lists could be explained as the result of different attempts to arrange Pindar’s poems. There is evidence that the discussion on the classification of the odes continued after Aristophanes’ edition, and that ‘Didymos himself disagree[d] with the classification of *Nemean XI* among the *Nemeans*: it should not even have been inserted among the *Epinicia*. In this he was following Dionysios of Phaselis. He thought that *Nemean XI*, composed for the investment ceremony of Aristagoras as a πρύτανις in Tenedos, was not a victory ode but a παροίνιον, a “drinking song” (D’Alessio [n. 11], 54).

As well as in the matter of individual poems, Didymus might have proposed some change of Aristophanes’ arrangement in the ordering of poetic genres too.

*University of Bologna*

MARCO ERCOLES

marco.ercoles@unibo.it

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21 Written in 16 or 15 B.C. (cf. E. Fraenkel, *Horace* [Oxford, 1957], 432–3).
22 Cf. Cazzaniga (n. 14), 5–8; Lehnu (n. 14), 81–3 with n. 102. I follow Lehnu in taking *Carm.* 4.2.13–16 as a reference to the hymns: compare the expression *seu deos regesque canit, deorum sanguinem* with Heliod. in *schol. Lond.* Dion. Thrax 1, *GG* I/3 451.6 Hilgard ὤμος ἑστὶ ποίημα περιέχον θεόν ἐγκώμια καὶ ἡρώων μετ’ εὐχαριστίας. For the bipartition between songs for gods and songs for men, see already Pl. *Resp.* 10.607a (köpomos θεοὶς καὶ ἐγκώμια τοῖς ἐγκώμιοις).
23 On the relationship between Didymus and Proclus, see A. Severyns, *Recherches sur la Chrestomathie de Procles*, vol. 2 (Liège and Paris, 1938), 114, who considers Proclus’ classification a development of Didymus’; also R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship. From the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (Oxford, 1968), 184; L.E. Rossi, ‘I generi letterari e le loro leggi scritte e non scritte nelle letterature classiche’, *BICS* 18 (1971), 69–94, at 74–5 with n. 20.