

ἄυσεν vs. ἄνυσσεν at Pindar, *Pythian* 12.11: Does Perseus shout, or does he kill?

In *Pythian* 12, Pindar explains that Athena modeled the τέχνα of pipe-playing on the lament emitted by the Gorgons “when Perseus cried out in triumph as he carried the third of the sisters, bringing doom to wave-washed Seriphos and its people” (lines 11-12). Race’s translation “when Perseus cried out” reflects the reading of the MSS: Περσεύς ὁπότε τρίτον ἄυσεν κασιγνητᾶν μέρος. By contrast, Boekh preferred ἄνυσσεν, an emendation suggested in the scholia: “when Perseus finished off, i.e., killed [Medusa].” Boekh’s emendation was commonly accepted by later editors (Dissen 1843, Gildersleeve 1885, Christ 1896, Bowra 1947, Turyn 1952) until Snell (1953), whose return to ἄυσεν of the MSS reflected a growing trend in twentieth-century scholarship (Wilamowitz 1922, Schadewaldt 1928, Burton 1962, Kohnken 1978, Clay 1992, Segal 1995).

In this paper I argue for Boekh’s emendation from points that have not as yet been raised. The first of these is paleographical. The ἄυσεν of the manuscripts can be explained as the result of dropping intervocalic nu, a type of omission that is fairly common in Pindaric manuscripts and was catalogued by Young (1965). Furthermore, there are several instances where a form retaining the dropped nu is attested in the Pindaric scholia, and is widely adopted by editors over the reading of the MSS.

One objection raised against Boekh’s emendation has been the lack of good parallels in Greek poetry for the use of ἀνύω in the sense of “kill.” We often find compounds such as ἐξάνύω to be used in this sense (e.g., *Iliad* 11.365, 20.452), but not the simplex form of the verb. Dornseiff (1921), however, points out that the use of simplex verbs instead of more commonly seen compounds is characteristic of Pindar’s verse, and indeed of Greek lyric generally.

When we turn to the context, we find that Boekh's emendation works quite well; indeed, this is why it was so long in favor with editors. It is only now, after most modern scholars have opted for the reading of the MSS, that the word order of the passage, along with the interpretation of the phrase τρίτον... κασιγνητῶν μέρος, has proved a great difficulty.

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