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SHORTER NOTES

PINDAR, *ISTHMIAN* 4.47

45 τόλμᾳ γὰρ εἰκώς
θυμὸν ἐριβρεμετᾶν θηρῶν λεόντων
ἐν πόνῳ, μῆτιν δ᾽ ἀλώπηξ,
αἰετοῦ ἅ τ᾽ ἀναπιτναμένα ῥόμβον ἴσχει·
χρὴ δὲ πᾶν ἔρδοντ᾽ ἀμαυρῶσαι τὸν ἐχθρόν.

46 θηρᾶν: Heyne

For he [*sc*. Melissus, the victor] resembles the boldness of loudly roaring wild lions in his heart during the struggle, but in skill he is a fox, which rolls on its back to check the eagle's swoop. One must do everything to diminish one's opponent.[1]

The meaning of ῥόμβον (47) is discussed by some but not all commentators. It is generally explained as indicating either the circling motion of the eagle before it swoops,[2] or the swoop itself.[3] But the former would, implausibly, suggest that the eagle is put off from engaging the fox, as if Melissus' opponent somehow failed to engage.[4] A circling motion at a distance would also be a strange object for a verb like ἴσχω, which normally implies, from its primary sense, physical

[1] The text and apparatus criticus are those of B. Snell and H. Maehler, *Pindarus* (Leipzig, 1987[8]), 147, with line-numbering adjusted to treat *Isthm.* 4 separately from *Isthm.* 3. The translation is that of W.H. Race, *Pindar: Nemean Odes, Isthmian Odes, Fragments* (Cambridge, MA and London, 1997), 167/9.

[2] E.g. L. Dissen, *Pindari carmina quae supersunt cum deperditorum fragmentis selectis ex recensione Boeckhii*, 2 vols. (Gotha and Erfurdt, 1830), 2.556 (although Dissen paraphrases *quae reclinata aquilae impetum cohibet*, which could suggest a different kind of motion); F. Mezger, *Pindars Siegeslieder* (Leipzig, 1880), 284; C.A.M. Fennell, *Pindar: The Nemean and Isthmian Odes* (Cambridge, 1899[2]), 175; E. Thummer, *Pindar: Die Isthmischen Gedichte*, 2 vols. (Heidelberg, 1968–9), 1.175; E. Krummen, *Pyrsos Hymnon: festliche Gegenwart und mythisch-rituelle Tradition bei Pindar* (Berlin and New York, 1990), 91.

[3] E.g. Σ 77b (= A.B. Drachmann, *Scholia vetera in Pindari carmina*, 3 vols. [Leipzig, 1903–27], 3.234.7–10) ἐν δὲ ταῖς μηχαναῖς τεχνικὸς ὡς ἀλώπηξ, ἥτις καὶ τῶν ἀετῶν τὴν ὁρμὴν καὶ τὸν ῥοῖζον δολερῶς ἀνακλινομένη πολλάκις ἀνέκρουσεν; Σ 77c (Drachmann 3.234.12–14) κατὰ δὲ τὴν μῆτιν ἀλώπεκι, ἥτις ἀνακλινομένη ὑπτία πρὸς τὸ ἑτοίμως ἀμύνεσθαι, ἐπέχει τὴν τοῦ ἀετοῦ ὁρμήν, ὅταν ἐπιρομβῇ αὐτὴν βουλόμενος ἁρπάσαι; J.B. Bury, *The Isthmian Odes of Pindar* (London and New York, 1892), 73 (artificially and unrealistically making the swoop a 'circling' one); F.J. Nisetich, *Pindar's Victory Odes* (Baltimore and London, 1980), 308; G.A. Privitera, *Pindaro: Le Isthmiche* (Milan, 1982), 67; M.M. Willcock, *Pindar: Victory Odes. Olympian 2, 7 and 11, Nemean 4, Isthmians 3, 4 and 7* (Cambridge, 1995), 82. For indecision regarding these competing interpretations, cf. e.g. W.J. Slater, *Lexicon to Pindar* (Berlin, 1969), 462, s.v. ῥόμβος, who gives the meaning 'any circling movement', but then translates 'swoop' from the scholia's paraphrase.

[4] On the wrestling analogy, see R.V. Ivanov, *Pindar's Isthmians 3 and 4: Essays and Commentary* (Diss., Cornell University, 2010), 150, referring to Σ 77c–81 (Drachmann 3.234.10–24): 'This description suggests that a pankratist would lie on his back (ὑπτία) and defend himself against the strikes of the opponent (τὰ δὲ ἀμύσσουσα), trying to tie up his arms, legs or head (τὰ μὲν

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contact.[5] The phrase cυμπεcεῖν … βαρύc (51), 'heavy to fall in with', certainly suggests that Pindar has engagement in mind.[6] ῥόμβοc is therefore unlikely to mean any circling motion or related sound before the eagle swoops. If it is understood as the swoop itself, different problems arise. First, ῥόμβοc does not indicate the direct motion of an attacking swoop. It means motion like that of a bull-roarer (or the shape which the noun also describes) around a fixed point.[7] Second, it is a poor way of denoting the noise of an eagle swooping. Bull-roarers roar. Swooping eagles do not.[8] In fact, in the Classical period there is no evidence for the word ῥόμβοc being used of anything like an eagle's swoop. There are two other instances in Pindar. *Ol.* 13.93–5 (ἐμὲ δ' εὐθὺν ἀκόντων | ἱέντα ῥόμβον παρὰ cκοπὸν οὐ χρή | τὰ πολλὰ βέλεα καρτύνειν χεροῖν) is sometimes cited in support of ῥόμβον here. While a superficial reading of that passage might suggest that ῥόμβοc refers to direct motion,[9] that would miss Pindar's pointed use of the adjective εὐθύc to highlight the need to straighten the shot or risk in becoming a poorly aimed volley. Thus ῥόμβοc, without the crucial addition of εὐθύc, suggests aimlessness, and not the direct motion of an eagle's swoop. The other instance, at *Dith.* 2.8–10 Maehler (cεμνᾷ μὲν κατάρχει | Ματέρι πὰρ μεγάλᾳ ῥόμβοι τυπάνων, | ἐν δὲ κέχλαδ[εν] κρόταλ' αἰθομένα τε δαῒc ὑπὸ ξανθαῖcι πεύκαιc), probably refers to the cymbals' motion around a fixed point and possibly also to their sound.[10] Neither instance demonstrates that ῥόμβοc is apt in the sense

cυλλαμβανομένη) presumably in an attempt to pull off a submission by means of a joint-lock or choke.'

[5] ἴcχει should indicate that the fox 'checks' the eagle as it attacks, not before. This is the only instance of ἴcχω in the sense 'restrain' in Pindar. He uses ἔχω in a similar sense at *Pyth.* 4.75, *Nem.* 11.23, *Isthm.* 4.54 (with persons as object) and at fr. 232 Maehler (of preventing fate).

[6] The πίπτω compound mirrors the eagle descending on its prey. A. Köhnken, *Die Funktion des Mythos bei Pindar* (Berlin and New York, 1971), 116 n. 126 notes the similarity between ἴcχει (47) and cχέθοι (54, of Herakles holding Antaeus in the air). This further confirms that Pindar is referring to contact.

[7] LSJ, s.v. ῥόμβοc II: '*whirling motion*, as of a bull-roarer': cf. Eur. *Hel.* 1362–3, ῥόμβου θ' ἑλιccομένα | κύκλιοc ἔνοcιc αἰθερία; *Suda* ρ 222 Adler, s.v. ῥόμβον: κίνηcιν· ἢ κύλινδρον; Hsch. ρ 433 Hansen–Cunningham, s.v. ῥόμβοc: … δῖνοc. κῶνοc …; ρ 434 Hansen–Cunningham, s.v. ῥόμβῳ: περιφορᾷ, κινήcει. That ῥόμβοc does not indicate direct motion should be obvious from its connection with ῥέμβομαι: cf. R.S.P. Beekes, *Etymological Dictionary of Greek*, 2 vols. (Leiden and Boston, 2010), 2.1280, s.v. ῥέμβομαι and Hsch. ρ 206 Hansen–Cunningham, s.v. ῥέμβεται: πλανᾶται, γυρεύει. Anyone who has observed an eagle swooping will have been struck by its astonishing directness and speed.

[8] Cf. Archyt. fr. 1 DK; Diog. Athen. 45 F 1.1–4 *TrGF*; Hsch. ρ 433 Cunningham–Hansen, s.v. ῥόμβοc: ψόφοc … ἦχοc; A.S.F. Gow, *Theocritus*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1952^2), 2.44: 'a muttering roar'; M.L. West, *Ancient Greek Music* (Oxford, 1992), 122: 'demonic roaring noise'; T.J. Mathiesen, *Apollo's Lyre: Greek Music and Music Theory in Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Lincoln, NE/London), 172: 'a whirling or rumbling'. These sounds are not those of an eagle swooping.

[9] The only modern commentator to address the meaning of ῥόμβοc at *Ol.* 13.94 is M. Fernandez-Galiano, *Pindaro: Olimpicas. Texto, introduccion y notas* (Madrid, 1956^2), 323: 'sustantivo verbal de ῥέμβω, con idea de algo que corre vibrando, agitándose o dando vueltas'. (Anac. fr. 501.8 *PMG* ἱέντα ῥόμ[βον is too fragmentary for any conclusions to be drawn about whether it would support its use here.) R. Kannicht, *Euripides: Helena*, 2 vols. (Heidelberg, 1969), 2.357 glosses ῥόμβοc at Eur. *Hel.* 1362 (quoted above, n. 7) as ὁρμήν, but without explaining how something which indicates circular motion can also mean rapid forward motion. The lexicographers give ὁρμᾶν as a meaning of ῥοιζεῖν (e.g. Hsch. ρ 423 Hansen–Cunningham, s.v. ῥοιζεῖ), but ῥόμβοc is nowhere (except in the scholia here and at *Ol.* 13.94 [Σ 133d = Drachmann 1.383.10–12]) glossed as ὁρμή. That the scholia paraphrase ῥόμβοc as ῥοῖζοc and ὁρμή (Σ 77b and 77c, both of them quoted above, n. 3) suggests that they may not have read ῥόμβοc here at all.

[10] Cf. M.J.H. van der Weiden, *The Dithyrambs of Pindar* (Amsterdam, 1991), 69 (on *Dith.* 2.8–9

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required here, because an eagle's swoop is unlike either a poorly directed volley of darts or the sound and motion of cymbals.

Having regard to the problems discussed above, I suggest that ῥόμβον is corrupt and that emendation to ῥοῖβδον should be entertained.[11] The lexicographers give διώκει as a meaning of the verbs ῥοιβδέω and ῥοιζέω, but no similar meaning is given by them to ῥόμβος or its cognates.[12] ῥοῖβδος and its cognates have both a dynamic and an acoustic quality and, although its use in a particular context may suggest that one or other aspect is dominant, the word clearly signifies both sound *and* motion, and there is no need to separate them out or emphasize one at the other's expense.[13] Unlike ῥόμβος,[14] ῥοῖβδος is also closely associated with avian movement and sound, especially when a bird is on the attack or in an agitated state.[15] ῥοῖβδος is sufficiently physical and dynamic enough

Maehler, ῥόμβοι τυπάνων): 'ῥόμβος is used for any circling motion, e.g. of an eagle (Pi. *I.* 3/4, 65), of javelins (*O.* 13, 94). It can also mean the kettledrum itself, cf. Ar. fr. 315 K.–A. ἴθι δὴ λαβὼν τὸν ῥόμβον ἀνακωδώνιcον. The word ῥόμβοι indicates that the τύπανα were moved in the air, so that we should not think of our sort of drums.' As to their sound, cf. n. 8 above. Race (n. 1), 303 focusses on motion, translating ῥόμβοι τυπάνων 'whirlings of tambourines', whereas S.L. Radt, *Strabons Geographika*, 10 vols. (Göttingen, 2002–11), 3.227 concentrates on noise translating 'das Getöse von Zymbeln', i.e. the roaring noise of the cymbals.

[11] On the meaning of ῥοῖβδος, cf. U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Euripides Herakles* (Berlin, 1895[2]), 2.185 (on Eur. *HF* 860): 'ῥοῖβδος ist das durch heftige Bewegung hervorgebrachte Geräusch "Sausen"'; cf. also Hsch. ρ 417 Hansen–Cunningham: ῥοιβδεῖ· ῥοιζεῖ· διώκει· ῥοφεῖ and for further discussion cf. E. Tichy, *Onomatopoetische Verbalbindungen des Griechischen* (Vienna, 1983), 84–5 and 92–4.

[12] Of the numerous meanings given for ῥόμβος at Hsch. ρ 433 Hansen–Cunningham, where one would expect such a meaning to appear, none indicates attack.

[13] There is a perceptible modern tendency to treat ῥοῖβδος, ῥοῖζος and their cognates in a binary way as indicating *either* sound *or* motion: so LSJ s.v. ῥοῖβδος '*any rushing noise* or *motion*'; s.v. ῥοιζέω '*rush* or *whirr through the air*'. This is less apparent in the ancient lexica and scholia: cf. e.g. Phot. ρ 150 Theodoridis: ῥοῖζος· ῥύμη· ἦχος [= *Suda* ρ 275 Adler]; Σ on Aesch. *Eum.* 424 (= O.L. Smith [ed.], *Scholia graeca in Aeschylum*, 2 vols. [Leipzig and Stuttgart, 1982–93], 1.56.4) <ἐπιρροιζεῖ>] ἐπιβοᾷς, ἐπιβάλλεις; Σ on Soph. *Ant.* 1021 (= P.N. Papageorgiou [ed.], *Scholia in Sophoclis tragoedias vetera* [Leipzig, 1888], 266.19): ἀπορροιβδεῖ· ἀπηχεῖ, ἀφίησι; Σ on Soph. *Trach.* 568 (= G.A. Xenis [ed.], *Scholia vetera in Sophoclis Trachinias* [Berlin and New York, 2010], 150) (διερροίζησεν): μετὰ ἤχου ὥρμησεν. In some of these sources sound comes first and in others the dynamic sense.

[14] ῥόμβος and its related verbs are not used of birds anywhere else by Classical or Hellenistic authors.

[15] E.g. Soph. *Ant.* 999–1004 εἰc γὰρ παλαιὸν θᾶκον ὀρνιθοσκόπον | ἵζων ἵν' ἦν μοι παντὸc οἰωνοῦ λιμήν, | ἀγνῶτ' ἀκούω φθόγγον ὀρνίθων, κακῷ | κλάζοντας οἴστρῳ καὶ βεβαρβαρωμένῳ· | καὶ cπῶντας ἐν χηλαῖcιν ἀλλήλλους φοναῖc | ἔγνων· πτερῶν γὰρ ῥοῖβδος οὐκ ἄcημος ἦν; Ar. *Av.* 1182–3 ῥύμῃ τε καὶ πτεροῖcι καὶ ῥοιζήμαcιν | αἰθὴρ δονεῖται; Aratus, *Phaen.* 966–9 καί που κόρακες δίουc †cταλαγμοὺc† | φωνῇ ἐμιμήcαντο cὺν ὕδατοc ἐρχομένοιο, | ἢ ποτε καὶ κρώξαντε βαρείῃ διccάκι φωνῇ | μακρὸν ἐπιρροιζεῦcι τιναξάμενοι πτερὰ πυκνά; Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 2.1247–53 καὶ δὴ Καυκαcίων ὀρέων ἀνέτελλον ἐρίπναι | ἠλίβατοι, τόθι γυῖα περὶ cτυφελοῖcι πάγοιcιν | ἰλλόμενοc χαλκέῃcιν ἀλυκτοπέδῃcι Προμηθεὺc | αἰετὸν ἥπατι φέρβε παλιμπετὲc ἀίccοντα. | τὸν μὲν ἐπ' ἀκροτάτης ἴδον ἔcπερον ὀξέι ῥοίζῳ | νηὸc ὑπερπτάμενον νεφέων cχεδόν· ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔμπηc | λαίφεα πάντ' ἐτίναξε, παραιθύξαc πτερύγεccιν; Nonnus, *Dion.* 26.203–4, οὐ μὲν ἀνακρούει Ζεφυρηίδι cύνθροοc αὔρῃ | ὑμνοτόκων πτερύγων ἀνεμώδεα ῥοῖζον ἰάλλων; Manuel Philes, Περὶ ἀετῶν 57–8(8–9) τούτου [*sc.* ἀετοῦ] δὲ καὶ τὸν ῥοῖζον ἀκούσας δράκων | ἔπτηξε. In the corpus of Aesop's fables, both the eagle and the dove are described moving μετὰ πολλοῦ ῥοίζου or πολλῷ ῥοίζῳ: cf. A. Hausrath, H. Haas and H. Hunger, *Corpus fabularum Aesopicarum*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1959–70[4]), 1.1.4, 1.2.39–40. The words are also used of things that fly like birds: cf. e.g. Aesch. *Eum.* 403–5 ἔνθεν διώκουc' ἦλθον ἄτρυτον πόδα, | πτερῶν ἄτερ ῥοιβδοῦca κόλπον αἰγίδοc, | πώλοιc ἀκμαίοιc τόνδ' ἐπιζεύξαc' ὄχον (of Athena arriving like a bird); Arist. *Hist. an.* 535b26–8 Balme καὶ γὰρ οἱ κτένες ὅταν φαίνωνται ἀπερειδόμενοι τῷ ὑγρῷ, ὃ καλοῦcι πέτεcθαι, ῥοιζοῦcι, καὶ αἱ χελιδόνες αἱ θαλάττιαι (of scallops 'flying' just above the surface of the sea); Lycoph. *Alex.* 65–6 πύργων ἀπ' ἄκρων … | ῥοιζηδὸν ἐκβράcαcα

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to provide a plausible object for ἴcχει.[16] Whereas ῥόμβοc conveys the wrong sort of movement and a sound which eagles do not make, ῥοῖβδοc denotes precisely the right movement and noise to describe the attack which the fox fends off. What Pindar is referring to is the moment at which the eagle strikes, as it adjusts its wings with a flutter and folds them so that it can tear into the victim with its beak and talons while avoiding damage to its wings. By reading ῥοῖβδον a noun is introduced which aptly describes the sound and motion of an eagle swooping to attack the fox, and which avoids the problematic manuscript reading. Pindar uses the word ῥοῖζοc,[17] and there is no reason why he should not have used ῥοῖβδοc too.[18] ΠΟΜΒΟΝ (or Attic ΡΥ̓ΜΒΟΝ) and ΡΟΙΒΔΟΝ look and sound similar enough to have been confounded by a scribe.[19]

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TEXTUAL NOTES ON PINDAR'S ELEVENTH *NEMEAN**

I

εἰ δέ τις ὄλβον ἔχων μορφᾷ παραμεύσεται ἄλλους,
ἔν τ' ἀέθλοισιν ἀριστεύων ἐπέδειξεν βίαν,
θνατὰ μεμνάσθω περιστέλλων μέλη,
καὶ τελευτὰν ἁπάντων γᾶν ἐπιεσσόμενος.
ἐν λόγοις δ' ἀστῶν ἀγαθοῖσί νιν αἰνεῖσθαι χρεὼν
καὶ μελιγδούποισι δαιδαλθέντα μελίζειν ἀοιδαῖς.[1]

κύμβαχον δέμας· (of Oenone throwing herself from the towers of Troy in grief); Lucill. *Anth. Pal.* 11.106.3–4 καὶ τάχ' ἂν ἐρροίζητο δι' αἰθέρος, εἰ μὴ ἀράχνῃ | τοὺc πόδας ἐμπλεχθεὶc ὕπτιος ἐκρέματο (of Chaeremon floating in the air in an accidental ὑπτιασμός).

[16] As the instances of ῥοῖβδοc, ῥοίζημα and ῥοῖζοc cited in n. 15 (of birds rending each other with their talons [Soph. *Ant.* 1103–4], agitating the air [Ar. *Av.* 1182–3] and even shaking a ship's sails [Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 2.1253]) show.

[17] Lobel's conjecture at *Dith.* 4(a).7 Maehler, where the papyrus preserves]οῖζον. van der Weiden (n. 10), 167 (on *Dith.* 4[a].7 Maehler, ῥ]οῖζον ..[) comments: 'in this context, probably of a fight between Hector and a Greek, ῥοῖζοc is best interpreted as the whirring sound of an arrow (cf. *Il.* 16, 361 [sc. cκέπτετ' ὀϊcτῶν τε ῥοῖζον καὶ δοῦπον ἀκόντων]), a javelin etc'. The swoop of an eagle could be described in terms similar to a whirring arrow, which would be a reason for considering ῥοῖζον as a possible alternative correction here. However, I suspect that it would have been much less likely than ῥοῖβδον to become corrupted to ῥόμβον.

[18] The appearance of the cognate ῥοίβδηcιc within a choral lyric passage of Euripides (*IA* 1086) provides support for this.

[19] I am obliged to Roger Dawe, James Diggle and David Kovacs for commenting on an initial draft of this note, as well as to *CQ*'s anonymous referee for salutary criticisms of the final draft.

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[1] The text of *Nem.* 11 printed in these notes is that of W.B. Henry, *Pindar's Nemeans: A Selection* (Leipzig, 2005), 19–21. Otherwise, citations of Pindar are from B. Snell and H. Maehler, *Pindarus*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1987[8]–9).

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