

*Myrtia*, n° 19, 2004, pp. 167-168

**PINDAR AND THE BEES: A WASPISH REPLY**

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A.P. 7,34;

Περικὰν σάλπιγγα, τὸν εὐαγέων βαρὺν ὕμνων  
χαλκευτάν, κατέχει Πίνδαρον ἄδε κόις,  
οὐ μέλος εἰσαίων φθέγγαιό κεν ὡς ἀπὸ Μουσῶν  
ἐν Κάδμου θαλάμοις σμῆνος ἀπεπλάσατο.

This epigram has recently been discussed by Staffan Fogelmark: cf. *Eranos* 100, 2002, 128-136, "To Bee Or Not To Bee? Antipater A.P. 7, 34: A Mistaken Interpretation". Fogelmark refers the reader to the discussion of this epigram in my *New Essays In Hellenistic Poetry* (Amsterdam 1985), page 69ff. According to F. my treatment of this epigram "is of little help as it not only repeats but even adds to the misunderstandings of previous scholars". The reader will note that F. is of the opinion that the theories of other scholars are worthless, and that he alone is capable of understanding the poet's words.

F. argues that the noun σμῆνος, in line 4, cannot mean "a swarm of bees". According to F. σμῆνος must either mean "a chorus", or it should perhaps be altered into τῆνος<sup>1</sup>. Such a rough textual alteration is, however, unlikely to find many supporters.

F. is unable to understand why Antipater should have stated that a swarm of bees fashioned Pindar's poetry. According to F.<sup>2</sup> "to suggest that bees, even a swarm supposedly coming from the Muses, had composed Pindar's songs would not have been a compliment to the poet but an effrontery". F. has failed to understand that bees were said in antiquity to have produced poetry; cf. my *New Essays*, page 72. Similarly at A.P. 7,12, 1 Erinna's poems are said to have been produced by bees : μελισσοτόκων... ὕμνων.

I have suggested that the words ἐν Κάδμου θαλάμοις mean "in the chambers of Cadmus", and refer to the fact that Cadmus was the mythical founder of Thebes. Thus Antipater states that a swarm of bees coming from the Muses<sup>3</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Art. cit., page 136, note 28.

<sup>2</sup> Art. cit., page 136.

<sup>3</sup> It will be noted that the poet has employed a "partiziplose Konstruktion": cf. my *New Essays*, page 72, quoting Giangrande.

fashioned Pindar's song in the chambers of Cadmus, i.e, in Thebes. In other words, the poet stresses that Pindar was a Theban. Cf. *A.P.* II. 382 where Pindar is called the "Heliconian swan of ancient Thebes", and *A..P.* 9,571,1 where Pindar is said to have "screamed aloud from Thebes".

F. argues that Antipater must have been referring in line 4 to the wedding of Cadmus and Harmonia in Thebes, although he admits that his suggestion is not new<sup>4</sup>. However, F. is unable to provide us with any evidence that Antipater is alluding to the marriage of Cadmus and Harmonia. It is just as likely that Antipater means to underline, in line 4, that Pindar was a Theban, and that his poetry was produced in Thebes. There is, in any case, no reason why we should follow F. and accept the rough textual alteration τῆνος instead of the mss reading σμῆνος.

**Conclusion.** Fogelmark's paper adds nothing to our knowledge of Antipater's epigram. Moreover, F. fails to understand that the epigram was written by a Hellenistic poet and not by Pindar. F. argues that if I "had known Pindar a little better" (cf. page 132) I would have understood that Antipater must be referring to the wedding of Cadmus and Harmonia. I might well reply that if F. knew the Hellenistic epigram better he would have understood that we should study not only Pindar but also other epigrams in order to understand Antipater's words. Furthermore, if F. was a better textual critic he would not have proposed a textual alteration because he did not like the fact that there might be a reference to bees in line 4 of the epigram. It would be better if F. attempted to interpret our epigram rather than to rewrite it according to his own tastes<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. art. cit., page 132, note 14.

<sup>5</sup> For similar futile attempts to alter the meaning of the Greek text cf. *Myrtia* 16, 2001, pages 343 and 347.