On the Text of ps.-Oppian, *Cynegetica*

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In the following pages I shall explain certain passages of the *Cynegetica* which so far have not been understood. For the sake of brevity I expect the reader to have read Schmitt’s monograph before proceeding to this discussion.

I 26f. Λέψομεν, ὡς κελέοι τὰ σὲ βάζειν, νύκτερα θύσθλα· δηθάκες ἀμφεχώρευει Θυώναω διονίσω.

The reading τὰ σὲ βάζειν is the opposite of ‘unverständlich’, as the commentators so far have believed. The sense is: “I shall leave Bacchus’ nocturnal rites (λέψομεν νύκτερα θύσθλα) because you are ordering me to sing (ὡς κελέοι βάζειν) things which are of concern to you (τὰ σὲ).” For λέψομεν = ‘omit to sing’ cf. e.g. Cyn 2.586, 605; for βάζειν as used here cf. Kaibel, Epigrammata Graeca 587.5, already quoted by Boudreaux in his apparatus; κέλομαι governs here an infinitive (βάζειν) as usual in Homer; the phrase τὰ σὲ βάζειν corresponds to τὰ δ’ ἐν φρεὶς ἕξει μενονάς . . . λέσομεν in lines 22f: both phrases refer to the order given by the goddess in lines 20f.

I 29 μυθὲ μόνον μερόπων, μὴ μοι Βροτολογοῦν ἀείθης

The reading μὴ ἀείθης commands acceptance for two reasons. First of all, the employment of prohibitive μὴ with the second person singular of the present subjunctive is a Homeric rarity; the reproduction of Homeric rarities was cultivated by late epic poets no less sedulously than by their Hellenistic colleagues. Secondly, the construction under discussion, blamed by grammarians ancient and modern as a

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2 Cf. Schmitt, Schmitt ad loc.
3 Cf. C. Capelle, *Vollständiges Wörterbuch . . . des Homer* (Leipzig 1889) s.v. κέλομαι “mit blossem Infinitiv,” and cf. e.g. Cyn. 1.134.
5 Cf. e.g. W. Weinberger, *Quaestiones de Orphel qui feruntur Argonauticis* (Vienna 1891) 259; F. Vian, *Recherches sur les Posthomerica de Quintus de Smyrne* (Paris 1959) 201 (“raretés homériques”).
'solecism', is in fact well attested in late poetry (e.g. Eratosth. 35.8f Powell, Anth.Pal. 12.16.1: cf. Steph. TGL8 ed. Hase-Dindorf s.v. μῆς, V.953d). Since ps.-Oppian is known to have indulged in syntactical solecisms (cf. R. Keydell, RE 18 [1939] 707.1–10 s.v. Oppianos 2), there is no reason why we should eliminate μῆς δεῖδης here, seeing that the solecism in question, far from being ‘unsicher’ (so Schmitt ad loc.), is shared by him with other late poets. It could in fact well be that both the reasons indicated by me are not mutually exclusive, in the sense that ps.-Oppian deliberately used the construction under discussion as a ‘solecism’ which was justified in Epic upon Homer’s authority.6

The variant φοιτώντων is genuine, whereas φορεοιν, which Schmitt, Mair and others prefer, has not a leg to stand on. It is easy to explain φορεοιν as a syntactical trivialization prompted by the desire to assimilate to the contiguous optatives (Ἰόν, ἐπικράδειον, etc.) the imperative φοιτώντων (used by the ps.-Oppian in variation with the optatives in question, just as he used the imperative ἔχων in line 81),7 whereas it would be difficult to explain why anyone should have replaced φορεοιν by an imperative, if φορεοιν were what the poet had originally written. φοιτώντων is not only supported by the usus auctoris as I have illustrated, but also stylistically difficilior, therefore potior. φοιτώντων is used here by the poet “of young men strutting about to show their persons” (cf. Eur. fr.282.11, quoted in LSJ s.v. φοιτώς 1.1), and δέμας is internal accusative8 governed by κερακάμενοι, whereas the construction δέμας φορεοιν is in itself common and here, therefore, a banalization. Once and for all I wish to point out that trivialization is known to have often affected ps.-Oppian’s text (cf. e.g. Schmitt p.54); as for the line under discussion, the diaskeuast utilized Cyn. 1.200 or 2.107 for his trivialization φορεοιν.

The variant λιπαρός, preferred by Schmitt and Mair, is an evident

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6 For such cases in late epic, cf. E. Oldenburger, De oraculorum Sibyllinorum elocutione (Rostock 1903) 16f.
7 Cf. also Cyn. 1.393–401: μελέθω . . . ἐπιμέλεια . . . κεράσας . . . τεκμήριων . . . πελέθω. The usus auctoris shows that ps.-Oppian liked to mix imperatives with optatives.
8 This type of accusative was usitatissimus by the Oppiani: cf. O. Schmidt, De elocutione Oppiani Apameensis (Jena 1866) 47, and e.g. Cyn. 1.295, 3.185, 4.26.
trivialization. Schmitt defends λπαροὶς on the ground that ποκκὶ δ’ ὑπὸ λπαροὶς ... πέδιλα (II. 2.44, 10.22, 10.132, 14.186, Od. 2.4, etc.) is a 'gelaufiig' Homeric phrase: but the point is precisely that ps.-Oppian, in adherence to the epic canon of imitatio cum variatione, in alluding to this Homeric phrase (the allusion is 'deutlich', to put it with Schmitt) changed Homer's λπαροὶς into στιβαροὶς. The presence of στιβαροὶς in ps.-Oppian's line is therefore easy to explain in so far as it is perfectly in keeping with the epic canon in question, and conversely the intrusion of λπαροὶς as a trivialization aimed at restoring to ps.-Oppian's line the orthodox Homeric form is equally understandable. Apart from the canon just mentioned, another factor, i.e. the context, proves that στιβαροὶς is genuine: 'stout' (στιβαροὶς) is the suitable epithet for feet which, on account of their weight, cause the sandals to make a noise by grating on the soil, whereas 'sleek' or 'smooth' (λπαροὶς) is contextually incongruous. The epithet λπαροὶς was introduced because a diaskeuast not only wanted to substitute the orthodox Homeric epithet for the one used by ps.-Oppian but also thought that στιβαροὶς was contradicted by ποκκὶν ἐλαφρίζοντα in line 85. There is in reality no contradiction: ps.-Oppian says that the hunter must be neither too fat (81 μάλα πίνονε, 86 πιελεοι) nor over-light (λεπταλεῖοι 87); he must be of the correct stoutness which renders him strong, σθεναρὸς (90). στιβαροὶς ποκκὶ ('stout, strong feet') is paralleled by σθεναρῶν ὄμοιον ('strong shoulders') in line 100. ἔλαυφριξω does not mean 'be light' as a permanent quality, but 'use one's limbs in a light, swift manner, when circumstances require' (cf. e.g. Callim. Del. 115, Opp. Hal. 3.300): ps.-Oppian says in line 85 that the hunter must be able to use his feet lightly often (δηθάκει 84) when pursuing wild beasts, not that the hunter must have feet permanently light (and weak) by nature.

I 129  χείματι δ’ ἐν μεσάτω μέσον ἦματος ἀγρύσσου
The reading μέκος ἡματος, also supported by metrical reasons (cf. Schmitt p.93) is sound. Phrases like μέκος ἡμέρας, μέκος ἡματος have already been studied by Lobeck, Phrynichus p.54. In such phrases, μέκος is not prepositional (as in the cases studied in Blass-Debrunner § 215.3 and quoted by Schmitt ad loc.): it is a substantivized neuter (= 'the middle'), as demonstrated by the context (cf. Plut. Cleom. 37.5 μέκος ἡμέρας ἦν, a phrase frequent in Xenophon, cf. F. W. Sturz, Lex. Xenophonteum (Leipzig 1803) s.v. μέκος 1 [d]). In the line under discussion the substantivized neuter μέκος is an accusative denoting a point of time (literally 'at the middle of the day'). Such accusatives are common in Hellenistic Epic, and it is known that ps.-Oppian employed this Hellenistic peculiarity.14

As a variant to εὐσταλέας τε λίνος ταναών τε πάναγρων δίκτυα τε εὐχάλιδας τε βρόχων τε πολύστωνα δεσμά

I 149ff ἐντεα τ' εὔθρημοι μέγα πνείοντα φόνοι,
ἀρκυσα εὐσταλέας τε λίνος ταναών τε πάναγρων
dίκτυα τε εὐχάλιδας τε βρόχων τε πολύστωνα δεσμά

As a variant to εὐσταλέας τε λίνος there exists εὐστρεφέας τε λύγους. λύγους is regarded by most scholars as genuine, because the poet is talking about nets, not about twigs: λύγους evidently denotes a type of net (cf. λύγος= τὸ δίκτυον, quoted by ancient lexicographers, Steph. TGI3 s.v. λύγος, V.310d). Besides, the reading λύγους is supported by paraphrasing (cf. Boudreaux's apparatus ad loc.), and it is evident—although nobody seems to have noticed this—that the poet's λύγους ταναών τε πάναγρων is aimed at producing a 'Klangwirkung' with Hom. II. 5.487 λύγου ἐλόντε πανάγρων. What has hitherto caused difficulties is the epithet εὐσταλέας. I shall demonstrate that the epithet is felicitous: nets had to be made of light thread (cf. Xen. Cyn. 2.4 ἀρκυς . . . λεπτὸς λύγος . . . δίκτυο), and εὐσταλέας (= 'light') is therefore perfectly appropriate. Note the neat metaphor: the tools of the hunter are being compared by the poet to war equipment, and τὸ εὐσταλέας πρὸς πόλεμον (Hdn. 3.8.5) denotes precisely light military equipment. The reading εὐστρεφέας λύγους is a typically diaskeuastic (i.e. learned) 'correction': the diaskeuast could not understand the sense of the epithet εὐσταλέας in the context any more than modern critics did, and was misled by line 151 (δίκτυα τε εὐχάλιδας) into thinking that line 150 required not λύγους but, by parallelism with εὐχάλιδας (cf. Schmitt ad

13 Cf. e.g. Mooney ad Ap.Rhod. 1.278 (also ad Ap.Rhod. 2.1251, where ἐπερεὶν = 'at even'); V. J. Loebe, De elocutione Arati Solensis poetae (Halle 1864) 41.
14 Schmidt, op.cit. (supra n.8) 48.
something denoting wooden props; so he borrowed εὐστρεφέας λύγοις from Homer (Od. 9.427), forgetting that net-props must be the opposite of 'easily twisted' (εὐστρεφέας) for they must be stiff and stand upright (cf. Xen. Cyn. 2.7ff). In sum, the epithet εὐστρεφέας, which the diaskeuast borrowed from Homer, is as contextually inappropriate at Cyn. 1.150 as the epithet λιπαροῖς, which the diaskeuast borrowed from Homer at Cyn. 1.104.

Once more, a trivialization (δεδακμένα) has been preferred by critics. The reading δεδακμένα, neglected by most editors, is obviously correct: it means 'tamed', 'not wild', i.e. 'civilized', and pointedly refers to the fact that civilized peoples eat κτησι, in opposition to savage tribes who eat flesh only (cf. LSJ s.v. κτησι 2). Ancient diaskeuasts were just as much puzzled by ps.-Oppian's pointed δεδακμένα as modern scholars, and replaced it by the contextually incongruous δεδακμένα ('scattered': the fact that human races are 'scattered' is extraneous to their eating κτησι). The verb δαμάω, when denoting domestication, refers as a rule to wild animals. Its employment by the poet with reference to humans is a typical example of the basic conception underlying the philosophy of the Oppiani: animals and humans are zoologically not different, and the terminology used by the poets with reference to men and beasts is therefore often the same.  

15 Sicherl (ap. Schmitt ad loc.) has rightly stressed that the reading δε' in line 166 is the correct one. A few points may be added here. The phrases δε' ἐθναι μυρία φωτῶν and δε' βροτοίς γένεθλα δεδημένα κτίνων ἔδουσών are an obvious case of epiphora (cf. F. Lapp, De Callimachi Cyrenaei tropis et figuris [diss. Bonn 1965] 59f): φωτῶν is synonymous with βροτοῖς (cf. LSJ s.v. φῶς = 'mortal', i.e. βροτός). The alternation between the genitive φωτῶν and the dative βροτοῖς is neatly paralleled by Cyn. 3.393 (on such 'commixtae constructiones' cf. Schmidt, op.cit. [supra n.8] 47). The variant τός came into being in order to eliminate the hiatus, which copyists notoriously abhor and try to obliterate: δε' was changed into τός under the influence of τόκοι ... δέοι in lines 168f.  

16 Cf. A. W. James, ProcCambPhilosSoc 12 (1966) 30; there exist ἀγρα ϕῆλα of humans (Cyn. 1.470) as well as of animals (Cyn. 4.7), because the species ἀδράμως, like other animal species, can be either ἀδραμώς or ἀδραμώς (Arist. Part.An. III 643b5). Note the poet's accuracy: in the two parallel sentences (cf. previous footnote) the plain φωτῶν without an epithet suffices with ἐθναι, because ἐθνος denotes civilized races, whereas the epithet δεδημένα is necessary with γένεθλα, which in itself denotes breeds of beings not necessarily civilized (often animals: cf. A. W. James, Index in Halieutica Oppiani Cilikis et in Cynegetica poetae Apameensis [Hildeshaim 1970] s.v. γένεθλον and γενεθλία). The employment of synonyms in ps.-Oppian's epiphora is therefore impeccable. It will be noted that the poet's epiphora is no
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I 236f

... to de pàmpaoi oppictov
èc filóttita moleiv, thn od thémec.

Gesner's conjecture oppictov, accepted by all the editors, is ungrounded. The manuscripts' reading oppictov is neatly paralleled by Cyn. 2.614 βάζει oppictov κτλ. In both cases ps.-Oppian is concerned about refuting a rumour which is not attested outside the Cynegetica: in the latter passage, the rumour connecting Phineus with the mole has not come down to us in any source other than ps.-Oppian's words (cf. Mair in his Loeb ed. ad loc.), and the same is the case with the rumour concerning mares which ps.-Oppian refutes here. Mares were believed to be λαγνικταται (cf. Ael. NA 4.11 and Arist. HA 572a8): this explains how the tale contradicted by ps.-Oppian arose.

I 272ff

... oiete kimontai
kai trikarfhnoi oroso thnoi sketac 'Egykeladoioi
puroiç aiwheiroiç èreugoménoi keraroun
Sikelikhe Asiya ènèkáxlacev ã'násoi πúr.

The passage has been hitherto misunderstood; for the latest discussion cf. Schmitt ad loc. The text is perfectly sound. sketac 'Egykeladoioi denotes the sea of fluid lava occupying the crater of Aetna, and ã'násoi πúr designates the lava being emitted by the erupting volcano. The sense is literally: "they inhabit the three-peaked mountain, where the ever-fluid fire of Aetna bubbles, whilst the thunderbolt belches forth, in beams reaching to the sky, a cover for Enceladus." In other words, the verb ènèkáxlacev is intransitive (= 'bubbles': cf. Schmitt ad loc.), and is followed by its subject πúr, just as the subject πúr follows the verb áμαρύccæ in Cyn. 2.596f; sketac denotes the sea of lava which is inside the crater and which covers Enceladus; èreugoménoi is transitive and governs an accusative (sketac) as in Hal. 2.488. Zeus' Keranvous goes on belching lava (hence the present participle èreugoménoi) because "das Feuer von Gottes Blitz verlischt nicht wieder, sondern brennt

less impeccable from the conceptual point of view: he states that "the swift breeds of horses are as numerous as the civilized peoples" (which latter are known to be a great number; nobody could know the number of uncivilized peoples, i.e. of those peoples not yet reached by, or known to, civilized man).

17 ã'násoi means here 'ever flowing', because lava was regarded as liquid fire: it is in fact called διαριη φλος in Anth.Pal. 7.123.1 (= 'liquid fire': cf. line 3, δουo Asiya) just as it is called ã'násoi πúr here; cf. Pind. Pyth. 1.23 tò èreugontai àplátòu . . . πυρòs . . . παγαί, of the lava, and Pyth. 1.5f keranvou . . . ã'násoi pýròs.
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fort und fort.’’18 ἐρευγομένου κεραυνοῦ is a genitive absolute, and πυροῖς αἰθερίωσιν a modal dative, as already realized by scholars (Mair, Schmitt et al.)

I 313 καλὸς ὅδειν, ἀταλὸς τε φέρειν ἐὑπεθεῖ δεκμῶ

The text is sound; δεκμῶ means ‘rein’ (cf. Xen. Eq. 5.3–5), and ἐὑπεθεῖ, which has puzzled scholars (cf. now Schmitt ad loc.) is a typical case of adjectival enallage, common in the Oppiani (cf. Eranos 68 [1970] 80f): the rein is said to be ‘obedient’ in that it is applied to a horse which is itself obedient. There is no need to take ἐὑπεθεῖ δεκμῶ as dativus modalis (cf. Sicherl ap. Schmitt ad loc.); the sense is, “beautiful to behold and amenable to transporting on account of its obedient rein (= its being obedient to the rein).”19

I 352f ἐστε γὰρ ἐς φιλότητα θοιὶ τρήρωνες ἰωσι, μηγνύμεναι στομάτεσσι βαρυφθόγγοις ἀλόχοις

Neither θοιὶ nor μηγνύμεναι is necessary, as Desrousseaux and Schmitt believe. The word τρήρωνες here, although of feminine gender, denotes male animals.20

I 478f ...ἐπι καὶ γαῖαν ἱόντων ἦχνων εὑρέμεναι μέγα δὴ σοφός, κτλ.

The phrase καὶ γαῖαν ἱόντων, which has perplexed the critics (cf. Schmitt ad loc.) is an Ionism; on εἴμι used as here with acc. loci, cf. Schweighäuser, Lex. Herod., s.v. εἶμι. Morphological and syntactical Ionisms are, as is well known, a traditional ingredient of Hellenistic and late epic.21 Apollonius borrowed from Ionic authors the transitive use of verbs,22 and ps.-Oppian, who knows Apollonius well, is evidently following the latter’s example.

18 H. Fränkel, Noten zu den Argonautika des Apollonius (München 1968) 313.
19 In sum, Lehrs’ rendering (in his Didot edition) pulcher aspectu, mollisque ad portandum facili habena is correct, provided we realize that ἐὑπεθεῖ is used in enallage as I have explained. On this type of enallage in ps.-Oppian cf. Schmitt himself, pp.187, 197. Lehrs rightly took δεκμῶ to mean ‘rein’ but could not find any parallels; others (e.g. Mair) understood δεκμῶ as ‘bit’. The discussion on this point in Schmitt ad loc. is now ended by the conclusive evidence which I have brought to light (Xen. Eq. 5.3–5).
20 Cf. C. A. Lobeck, Pathologiae sermonis Graeci prolegomena (Lipsiae 1843) 24f.
21 Cf. e.g. Oldenburger, op.cit. (supra n.6) 16ff.
22 Cf. e.g. G. Boesch, De Apollonii Rhodii elocutione (Göttingen 1908) 33, 44.
The ghost-word παραβαδόν, created by Rittershusius in 1597 and accepted by most critics, is unwarranted. The poet’s words παραί βατόν ἄτραπτοτο ἁρέται ἡμῶν, μετέπειτα δὲ δοχμὸν ἐλαύνων, λαίη; δεξιτερῆ; σκολὴν ὀδὸν ἀμφίς ἐλίσσων.

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23 The genitive ἄτραπτοτο is governed by a non-articled word denoting an abstract notion, i.e. the neuter βατόν (lit. ‘passability’) and πολυστιβήν (‘frequent treading’). For another parallel cf. Hdn. 3.1.4, where τὸ δύσβατον τοῦ ὀροῦ means, as all the critics agree (cf. e.g. Whittaker, in his Loeb ed.; E. C. Echols, Herodian [Berkeley 1961]: ‘impassable mountain’), δύσβατον ὄρος (for δύσβατον “mit dem Artikel” here, cf. Kühner-Gerth, loc. cit.; on flosculi used by the Oppiani and late prose writers cf. Eranos 68 [1970] 84).