

Περὶ ὕψους 4.4, 9.10–11

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The passages quoted from περὶ ὕψους follow D. A. Russell's Oxford edition (1968), except where otherwise noted. The critical apparatus supplied is based on Russell's. Other Greek or Latin quotations are taken from Oxford or Teubner editions.

For ease of reference, the author of περὶ ὕψους is called Longinus. "MS", referring to the manuscripts of περὶ ὕψους, means Codex Parisinus graecus 2036.

The translations given of the passages from περὶ ὕψους are my own. They are rather crude, aiming primarily at closeness of word-order and syntax.

4.4

In Chapter 4, Longinus inquires into τὸ ψυχρόν. He quotes Xenophon and Plato to show that even the greatest may be victims of this vice, if they fall into the temptation of μικροχαρῆ, i.e. petty wordplay.

ὁ μὲν γε ἐν τῇ Λακεδαιμονίων γραφῇ πολιτεία· “ἐκείνων [μὲν] γοῦν ἦττον μὲν ἂν φωνὴν ἀκούσαις ἢ τῶν λιθίνων, ἦττον δ' ἂν ὄμματα στρέψαις ἢ τῶν χαλκῶν, αἰδημονεστέρους δ' ἂν αὐτοὺς ἠγήσαιο καὶ αὐτῶν τῶν ἐν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς παρθένων.”¹ Ἀμφικράτει καὶ οὐ Ξενοφῶντι ἔπρεπε τὰς ἐν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἡμῶν κόρας λέγειν παρθένους αἰδήμονας· οἷον δὲ Ἡράκλεις τὸ τὰς ἀπάντων ἐξῆς κόρας αἰσχυνηγὰς εἶναι πεπεῖσθαι, ὅπου φασὶν οὐδὲν² οὕτως ἐνσημαίνεσθαι τὴν τινῶν ἀναίδειαν ὡς <τὸ>³ ἐν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἰταμόν.⁴ “οἰνοβαρές, κυνὸς ὄμματ' ἔχων”⁵ φησὶν.

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¹ Xen. *Resp. Lac.* 3.5.

² οὐδὲν Immisch: οὐδενὶ MS.

³ <τὸ> add. Immisch.

⁴ ὡς ἐν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς, <ὡς καὶ ὁ Ἀχιλλεὺς τοῦ Ἀγαμέμνονος ὄνειδίζων τὸ ἐν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς> ἰταμόν... ex. gr. supp. Russell, simile Cobet.

⁵ Il. I, 225.

(The text contains a conjecture by Immisch and differs slightly from the Oxford edition: see notes 2–4.)

Translation

The former writes in “The Constitution of the Lacedaemonians”: “from those you would hear less sound than from the marbles, less would you make their eyes turn than the bronzes’, more bashful would you consider them than even the eyes’ very maidens.”⁶ Amphicrates and not Xenophon had it befitted to call the pupils in our eyes “bashful maidens”: by Heracles, to reason oneself into believing that all men’s pupils are modest, when they say nothing reveals some people’s shamelessness as the eyes’ boldness! “You wine-heavy drunk, with the eyes of a dog”, he says.

(1)

In the last three lines of 4.4, there is a difficulty regarding a sentence and a half (ὅπου φασὶν κ.τ.λ.). If one tries to read the passage without emendations, the problems will probably start with ἰταμόν, and the quotation following abruptly. Reading the sentence as it is given in the MS (cf. note 8), it might at first seem natural to read οὐδενί as an instrumental dative: “in no way does someone’s shamelessness show so much as in the eyes.” But the rest would be hard to reconcile with this reading.

I assume that the MS is in some places corrupt. Many conjectures have already been proposed. Some of the most attractive make a supplement, assuming one whole line has fallen out in transcription (see note 4).

The version given above, however, is Immisch’s conjecture. οὐδενί is changed to οὐδέν, and an article τό is placed before ἐν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἰταμόν. This may appear a bold emendation, but there are some arguments which support it.

(a) I think <τὸ> ἐν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἰταμόν should be read, with ἰταμόν in an emphasized position at the end of a sentence. It would be meant as an ironic contrast to, and a rhythmical reiteration of, the earlier similar expressions τῶν ἐν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς παρθένων and τὰς ἐν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἡμῶν κόρας. I give it here with these expressions in italics, to try to give a feeling of the rhythm that the text ought to have:

“...αἰδημονεστέρους δ’ ἂν αὐτοὺς ἠγήσαιο καὶ αὐτῶν τῶν ἐν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς παρθένων.” Ἀμφικράτει καὶ οὐ Ξενοφῶντι ἔπρεπε τὰς ἐν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἡμῶν κόρας λέγειν παρθένους αἰδήμονας· οἷον δὲ Ἡράκλεις τὸ τὰς ἀπάντων ἐξῆς κόρας αἰσχυνηλὰς εἶναι πεπεῖσθαι, ὅπου φασὶν οὐδὲν οὕτως ἐνσημαίνεσθαι τὴν τινων ἀναίδειαν ὡς τὸ ἐν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἰταμόν. “οἶνοβαρές, κυνὸς ὄμματ’ ἔχων” φησίν.

⁶ The quoted text (which differs slightly from the extant MSS of Xenophon) plays on the double meaning of the word κόρη, which may mean “girl” or “pupil”. For the sake of literary effect, it changes κόρη for παρθένος, which is not normally used in the meaning of “pupil”.

τὸ ἰταμόν in the eyes is sarcastically contrasted with τῶν παρθένων above. Even stylistically it would be an amusing contrast; compare the ending clausulae of the sentences!

(b) ἐνσημαίνεσθαι seems normally to be transitive in the sense of “indicate”, “show” (see Isoc. 20.22, X.Cyr. VIII.2.3). LSJ gives the above passage as the sole example of a middle/passive form of the verb intransitive in sense, except for a papyrus (*POxy.* 396) in which the aorist is used.

(c) οὐδέν for οὐδενί is probable; the expression οὐδέν οὕτως ... ὥς occurs twice in *περὶ ὕψους*, 8.4 and 41.1.⁷ οὐδενί does not occur elsewhere.

(d) According to Rhys Roberts’ transcription,⁸ the MS has an acute accent on ἰταμόν, which strengthens the thesis that earlier it had an emphasized position at the end of a sentence.

Corruptions in texts are not bound to follow rational, easily explainable patterns, but I may perhaps offer this explanation: ὥς τὸ ἐν becomes ὥστε ἐν, altered by the hand of someone who did not really follow the meaning of the text, but dimly conceived of οὐδέν οὕτως ... ὥστε (“nothing shows ἀναίδειαν so much that in the eyes ἰταμόν”). Some other scribe tried unsuccessfully to make sense of this by deleting τε and adding ἰ to οὐδέν.

(2)

Stating that pupils are not intrinsically αἰδήμονες, Longinus at the same time hints that girls are hardly intrinsically bashful either. The keyword is Ἡράκλεις. Elsewhere, Longinus exclusively invokes Zeus in his oaths, of which there are quite a few. Although this is another type of oath, where νῆ Δία or μὰ Δία would not have been adequate, choosing to invoke Heracles in this context, with κόραι and παρθένοι and ἀναίδεια all around, Longinus would know that his contemporary Roman or Greek reader would associate it with the legends of Heracles’ love-life: “By Heracles! to believe that everybody’s girls are bashful.”⁹ Legends of Hercules were very well known among the Romans, as Galinsky (128) observes. I shall venture to propose that Longinus had one particular legend in mind when he wrote the words οἶον δὲ Ἡράκλεις τὸ τὰς ἀπάντων ἐξῆς κόρας αἰσχυνηγὰς εἶναι πεπεῖσθαι, namely the one about Heracles and the fifty daughters of king Thespius (or Thestius).

⁷ A similar construction is found in 32.5, where οὐκ ἄλλο τι is substituted for οὐδέν, but otherwise fulfils exactly the same function in the sentence.

⁸ In his apparatus criticus, Rhys Roberts presents this transcription from Parisinus 2036: τῆν τινων ἀναίδειαν ὥς ἐν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἰταμόν οἰνοβαρέσ.

⁹ Longinus, as if wanting to show Xenophon how to do his job, follows his example of playing on the meaning of the word κόρη.

Pausanias relates it, and his account suggests that the fable was popular: he had heard two versions (IX.27.6–7):

καὶ Ἡρακλέους Θεσπιεῦσιν ἔστιν ἱερόν· ἱεράται δὲ αὐτοῦ παρθένος, ἔστ' ἂν ἐπιλάβῃ τὸ χρεῶν αὐτήν. αἴτιον δὲ τούτου φασὶν εἶναι τοιόνδε, Ἡρακλέα ταῖς θυγατρᾶσι πενήκοντα οὖσαις ταῖς Θεστίου συγγενέσθαι πάσαις πλὴν μιᾶς ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ νυκτί· ταύτην δὲ οὐκ ἔθελῆσαι οἱ τὴν μίαν μιχθῆναι· * * * νομίζοντα δικάσαι μένειν παρθένον πάντα αὐτὴν τὸν βίον ἱερωμένην αὐτῷ. Ἐγὼ δὲ ἤκουσα μὲν καὶ ἄλλον λόγον, ὡς διὰ πασῶν ὁ Ἡρακλῆς τῶν Θεστίου παρθένων διεξέλθοι τῇ αὐτῇ νυκτί, καὶ ὡς ἄρσενας παίδας αὐτῷ πάσαι τέκοιεν, διδύμους δὲ ἢ τε νεωτάτη καὶ ἢ πρεσβυτάτη.

Other authors' versions of this legend vary slightly in details, but their main theme is the same. Here are, *exempli gratia*, nine authors between the late first century B.C. and the early third century A.D. who either give a full account of the story or just refer or allude to it. They are selected from the instances given in Roscher (s.v. Thespius et Thespiades): Diodorus Siculus IV.29; Pseudo-Seneca, *Herc. Oet.* 369–370; Apollodorus II.4.10 and II.7.8;¹⁰ Statius, *Silvae* III.1.39–43; Theon, *Progymnas.* in *Rhet. Graec.* 2, p. 67, Spengel; Harpocration 1, p. 278, 15, Dindorf; Pausanias IX.27.6–7; Clement of Alexandria, *Protrept.* II.33.4; Athenaeus XIII.556.E-F.

The two Latin poets strengthen the thesis that educated Romans in general were familiar with Hercules' pursuits, even this particular one: they refer to the legend very briefly.¹¹

Finally, the expression τὸ τὰς ἀπάντων ἐξῆς κόρας αἰσχυντηλᾶς εἶναι contains some expressive hints. ἐξῆς had originally, in Homer and later, the explicit meaning of “one after another,” “in order,” “in a row,” which has a bearing on the Thespius myth. And αἰσχυντηλῶς may have the meaning “shameful”, referring to things.¹²

Longinus would thus know that this call to Heracles in connexion with “everybody's virgins in a row” would make Postumius smile. They were beyond doubt both familiar with the story and might even have read one or another of the versions listed above, although this may never be proved.¹³

¹⁰ Apollodorus lists the names of all (in his version 51) the sons of Heracles who were begotten on Thespius' daughters.

¹¹ *Silvae* III. 1. 39–43: *pacatus mitisque veni nec turbidus ira / nec famulare timens, sed quem te Maenalis Auge / confectum thiasis et multo fratre madentem / detinuit, qualemque vagae post crimina noctis / Thespius obstupuit, totiens socer.* *Herc. Oet.* 369–370: *referam quid alias? nempe Thespiades vacant / brevisque in illas arsit Alcides face.*

¹² For this observation I am indebted to Dr. Karin Blomqvist.

¹³ It may be mentioned that Matris, the Hellenistic rhetorician whom Longinus censures in 3.2, wrote an ἐγκώμιον Ἡρακλέους (Athenaeus X.412.B), in which this adventure of the Hero may well have appeared.

9.10-9.11

Longinus has just quoted *Il.* XVII, 645–647, where Ajax begs for light, which is needed to get on with the battle—light, even if Zeus is to destroy him in it. Longinus praises Ajax' heroic courage and goes on:

φῶς ὅτι τάχιστα αἰτεῖται, ὡς πάντως τῆς ἀρετῆς εὐρήσων ἐντάφιον ἄξιον, κἄν αὐτῷ Ζεὺς ἀντιτάττηται. ἀλλὰ γὰρ Ὅμηρος μὲν¹⁴ ἐνθάδε οὐριος συνεμπνεῖ τοῖς ἀγῶσι, καὶ οὐκ ἄλλο τι αὐτὸς πέπονθεν ἢ

μαίνεται, ὡς ὅτ' Ἄρης ἐγγέσπαλος ἢ ὄλοον πῦρ
οὔρεσι μαίνεται, βαθέης ἐν τάρφεσιν ὕλης,
ἀφλοισμὸς δὲ περὶ στόμα γίγνεται.¹⁵

δείκνυσι δ' ὅμως διὰ τῆς Ὀδυσσεύας (καὶ γὰρ ταῦτα πολλῶν ἕνεκα προσεπιθεωρητέον), ὅτι μεγάλης φύσεως ὑποφερομένης ἤδη ἰδιὸν ἐστὶν ἐν γήρᾳ τὸ φιλόμυθον.

Translation

... he demands light as fast as possible, so as to find, at any price, a burial worthy of his virtue, even if Zeus should oppose him. But Homer breathes favourably there with the combatants. And he suffers not otherwise than

rages, as when Ares wielding his spear or ravaging fire
rages in the mountains, in the thickets of a deep forest,
and foam comes round his mouth.

All the same, he shows throughout the *Odyssey* (because this too is for many reasons worth looking into) that a characteristic of a great nature in decline in old age is the love of stories.

The position of μὲν after Ὅμηρος in the MS has caused some confusion. It has been regarded as preparatory for δείκνυσι δ', and scholars of old have therefore re-arranged the word-order and otherwise conjectured the words (see note 14 for two examples), so as to produce a sense of comparison between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Later commentators, however, have wanted to maintain the word-order. De Vries, Bühler (41f.) and Russell (1964) argue for the text as it stands (cf. also Rothstein's suggestion, 540).

Still the common ground for their readings—shared by the earlier ones of Wilamowitz *et al.*—is the anxiety to retain, already at this stage in the text, an antithesis (expressed in a μὲν ...δέ complex) between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The argument of de Vries, Bühler and Russell is that Homer is given special emphasis as being more of his “true self” in the *Iliad* and that μὲν therefore “entgegen seiner logischen Zugehörigkeit hinter das erste Substantiv vorgerückt ist” (Bühler 41, referring, like de Vries, to Denniston 372-373,

¹⁴ ἐνθάδε μὲν Ὅμηρος, Richards: ἐνθάδε] ἐν Ἰλιάδι, Wilamowitz.

¹⁵ *Il.* XV, 605–607.

where transpositions of μέν in μέν ... δέ complexes are described). μέν in their reading “logically” goes with ἐνθάδε. Translations put the primary emphasis on “here” in the text; “here”, as opposed to “in the *Odyssey*”, e.g. Russell (1964): “But here it is the real Homer...”; cf. Rhys Roberts, Müller, Hoogland, Rostagni, Fyfe, Lebègue, Brandt, Russell (1972) and Fyfe & Russell. Mazzucchi’s translation is perhaps more neutral: “Ma se qui Omero spira propizio alle battaglie...”, but he does not elucidate the passage in his commentary. I think the main emphasis should be on *Homer*, as is evident in my translation (see above).

The division into chapters has been misleading in this case. The beginning of sub-chapter 9.11, ἀλλὰ γὰρ Ὀμηρος μέν, does not in fact introduce the new subject of *Iliad* vs. *Odyssey*, but follows up the preceding passage. The μέν clause is contrasted with the preceding, not the following, a usage especially common in the combination ἀλλὰ ... μέν (see Denniston (377)).

The overlooked word is οὐριος. This is an epithet of Zeus (see Roscher s.v. *Urios et Zeus*) and LSJ (s.v. οὐριος): “Ζεὺς οὐριος as *sending fair winds*, i.e. *conducting things to a happy issue*”).

The contrast looked for is then to be found between Homer and Zeus. Zeus is in the end of chapter 9.10 portrayed as hostile: “...even if Zeus should oppose him”. He is thus contrasted with Homer, who is given an epithet that normally befalls Zeus in a good mood. Zeus may be displeased, but Homer is οὐριος in his place here: ... κἂν αὐτῷ Ζεὺς ἀντιτάττηται. ἀλλὰ γὰρ Ὀμηρος μέν ἐνθάδε οὐριος συνεμπνεῖ τοῖς ἀγῶσι ...

Still δείκνυσι δ’ ὁμῶς κ.τ.λ. clearly contrasts with what has been said before. ὁμῶς (“all the same”) is adversative to the whole passage about Homer, but especially the quotation, where he is described as “raging”; certainly Longinus there alludes to the Platonic theories of poetical creation. The inspired poet is contrasted with the story-telling old man. But δ’ may be seen as simply connective, having no relation to the μέν earlier, while ὁμῶς is the sole adversative in the sentence.

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