# SHORTER NOTES

## A NEOLOGIZING TAKE ON HIPPONAX, FR. 92.3 WEST

*'When I use a word', Humpty Dumpty said, in a rather scornful tone, 'it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less.'*[1]

In his recent note on Hipponax in this journal,[2] Joseph Cotter first offers 'a revised version of LSJ's definition' of ὄρχις. At LSJ (incl. *Revised Supplement*, 1996), s.v. ὄρχις I, '… *testicle* Hippon. 92.3 W. …', he would delete the Hipponactean citation and rewrite the second definition, under II ('plant so called from the form of its root …'), to read: 'from similarity of shape, 1 glans penis, Hippon. 92 (95 Degani), 2. <*plant*> from the form of its root …'. Cotter derives his new definition from his reading of that Hipponactean line (= fr. 95.3 Degani), καί μοι τὸν ὄρχιν τῆς φαλ[ … , which he supplements with the name of a marsh bird, φαλ[ηρίδος, also redefined. This supplementary 'coot' is said to mean 'cock', so that the narrator of the fragment's description of (probable) treatment for sexual impotence tells how a Lydian woman 'thrashed with fig-branch (4, κ]ράδηι συνηλοίησεν) the glans of my cock'. We are presented, then, with two previously unattested meanings of two nouns, ὄρχις and φαληρίς, and an accommodating correction of LSJ. What—I have asked Cotter—might Henry Liddell have thought of these innovations, familiar as he undoubtedly was with Humpty Dumpty's semantics!

In reviewing several earlier treatments of Hipponax's τὸν ὄρχιν, Cotter recalls that Romagnoli 'argued that Hipponax here intended ὄρχις to refer metaphorically to the glans penis'.[3] He should have noted, however, that Romagnoli did not understand ὄρχις = 'testicle' in that metaphorical sense, but rather thought that Hipponax may have chosen ὄρχις = 'olive' to denote 'immaginosamente' the glans penis. There was indeed an obscure olive, ὄρχις, so called because its shape resembled a testicle's, but that ὄρχις is feminine (LSJ s.v. III. a kind of *olive*, Colum. 5. 8; cf. ὀρχάς [B] …), whereas Hipponax's ὄρχις is definitely masculine (*τὸν* ὄρχιν).[4] Gender demands therefore must invalidate Romagnoli's reading, even if it were granted the possibility that a testicle-shaped olive might be thought to resemble the glans.

Cotter's reading is similar to Romagnoli's. Citing Beekes's *Etymological Dictionary*, s.v. ὄρχις, '… a kind of olive … after the shape of the fruit', he adduces an 'Ionic vase from Delos, contemporary with Hipponax', which displays a phallus-bird 'with a βάλανος (acorn/glans penis) and a single ὄρχις (testicle)—both organs visually quite similar'.[5] In fact, the bird in question is depicted vividly in distorted profile, so that

[1] Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865).
[2] '"Ορχις: testicle, testiculate and glans penis', *CQ* 67 (2017), 285–6.
[3] E. Romagnoli, *I poeti lirici*, vol. 1 (Bologna, 1931), 231.
[4] Cf. R. Strömberg, *Griechische Pflanzennamen* (Göteburg, 1940), 55.
[5] J. Boardman, 'The phallos-bird in archaic and classical Greek art', *RA* 2 (1992), 227–42, at 228.

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what appears as a 'single testicle' should probably be described as the creature's scrotum; out of view, there is presumably a second testicle, just as there is presumably a second eye. I must confess that I see little resemblance between the bird's erect glans with its single eye and the bulgy, hanging scrotum.

Having identified the vase painting's 'single ὄρχις' as 'testicle', Cotter nevertheless takes ὄρχις as 'glans penis' in Schol. Tzetz. *Clouds* 734: τὸ πέος ] τὸν ὄρχιν.[6] Yet, the Thomas-Triclinian gloss on the same line has τὸ πέος ] τὸ αἰδοῖον,[7] and τὸ αἰδοῖον would consequently seem to be what Schol. Tzetz. means with τὸν ὄρχιν. If Tzetzes himself is the author of the gloss, we may suppose that he here records—with characteristically bookish bravura—an old meaning of ὄρχις, perhaps a metaphorical usage of the plant's name, not unlike English 'root', which denotes primarily an 'underground part of a plant' (compare 'testicle'!), but may then refer to what stems from the root, and so, in vulgar slang, 'penis' (*OED* s.v. I. 1 and 6).[8] Remembering that we owe some thirty of our Hipponactean fragments to Tzetzes, we might even guess that he got that ὄρχις = πέος from the very τὸν ὄρχιν under discussion! Well beyond guessing, however, we may be certain of this: in contexts having to do with the male body, ὄρχις simply cannot mean 'glans penis'. It is an 'old inherited word, attested in several languages' (Beekes), the *vox propria* for 'testicle' in today's Athens as in Hipponax's Ionia.

Cotter bases his equation φαληρίς = φάλης on the Hesychian manuscript's entry, s.v. Φαληρίς: ὄρνις λιμναῖος καὶ τὸ φάλης δερμάτινον καὶ ἀνδρεῖον. Editors today judge the entry corrupt, and posit a lacuna after καὶ τό, supposing that a second definition of φαληρίς has been lost ('marsh bird and the …') and recognizing Φάλης as a distinctly separate gloss (Φαληρίς: ὄρνις λιμναῖος καὶ τὸ <…> Φάλης: δερμάτινον καὶ ἀνδρεῖον).[9] Cotter had claimed earlier that grammatical τό introduces φάλης as a 'second lexeme' of Φαληρίς.[10] He now argues, perhaps in light of criticisms of that claim,[11] that the manuscript's καὶ τὸ φάλης δερμάτινον καὶ ἀνδρεῖον means: *and the '"phales" leather and human'*. His quotation marks, rightly expressing the intent of grammatical τό, imply that he reads 'phales' as *the word* 'phales', and that this *word* is identified by the neuter adjectives as 'leather and human'. This is surely an impossible reading. Never does Hesychius define *gloss X* as *the word Y*, nor could *the word* 'phales' be called 'leather and human'—as we might call it 'dissyllabic' or 'rare'! In support of his reading, Cotter appeals to the learned Marcus Musurus, editor of the Aldine edition of Hesychius (1514), who 'saw no problem with the text'. It is true that Musurus did not emend the text, but arguments from silence have little merit, and if Musurus did not nod, as even Homer does, when he got to Φαληρίς in his editing, he may have given the benefit of the doubt to a possibly discernible etymological observation in the entry, with τό marking φάλης as a form (supposedly) related to φαληρίς etymologically but not semantically (hence the distinguishing explanatory

[6] D. Holwerda (ed.), *Scholia in Aristophanem. Pars iv: J. Tzetsae Commentarii. Fasc. ii*: *Commentarius in Nubes* (Groningen, 1960), 553.

[7] W.J.W. Koster (ed.), *Scholia recentiora in Nubes* (Gronigen, 1974), 111.

[8] I shall be expanding elsewhere on this possibility and may now note merely that the plant name ὄρχις was not coined by Theophrastus in the early third century B.C.E.; cf. J. Endersby, *Orchid: A Cultural History* (Chicago and London, 2016), 14.

[9] So P.A. Hansen and I.C. Cunningham (edd.), *Hesychii Alexandrini Lexicon*, vol. 4 (Göttingen, 2009), glosses φ 103 and φ 104.

[10] J. Cotter, 'Φαληρίς: coot, plant, phallus', *Glotta* 90 (2014), 105–13, at 105.

[11] A. Allen, 'Cootish semantics', *Glotta* 92 (2016), 16–17; 'An Attic coot for Hesychius', *RhM* 159 (2016), 437–8.

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adverbial neuter adjectives δερμάτινον καὶ ἀνδρεῖον = 'used of phallic cult and of the male genitals'). We may compare Suda, s.v. Φαληρίς … ἐσχημάτισται δὲ παρὰ τὸ φάλον. καὶ Φαληρῖται, ἔθνος,[12] where the latter Φαληρῖται is (supposedly) etymologically related to Φαληρίς: the coot and the people (Phaleritai) share a 'white' name (παρὰ τὸ φάλον), but are obviously quite distinct semantically. Whatever Musurus thought or did not think about the entry, it is simply not conceivable that he read τὸ φάλης = *the word* 'phales' as a second meaning of φαληρίς. Nor is φαλαρίς / φαληρίς = 'phallus' attested anywhere in a thousand years of extant Greek, from Homer to Lucian.

Let me end this critique by recalling a suggestion that the 'glans penis' which Cotter desiderates for Hipponax's line may lie in West's 'e.g.' supplement τῆς φαλ[άκρης ἕλκουσα. Taking τὸν ὄρχιν at face value ('testicle'), West translated the line as '[pulling down] my ball by the ba[ld patch',[13] but Gutiérrez has argued reasonably that ἡ φαλάκρη might denote the bald 'head' of the penis, the glans (ἡ φαλάκρη *sc.* βάλανος?) and that West's supplements then could be rendered 'tugging sharply on the head of the cock'.[14] Cotter describes this as a 'complicated scenario', and indeed it is, for present participle ἕλκουσα would seem to imply that the vigorous tugging action is synchronous with the indicative verb's thrashing. Yet, Hipponax is especially fond of participles at line-end, as Medeiros illustrates,[15] and an aorist participle of an overtly aggressive verb might then be suggested to replace that ἕλκουσα. Read: τῆς φαλ[άκρης μάρψασα, '… having grasped [my cock by] its bald head', with genitive of the part grasped, as at Soph. *Trach.* 779, of Heracles seizing Lichas by the foot, μάρψας ποδός νιν.[16]

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## THE SPEAKER AND THE ADDRESSEE OF SOPHOCLES' *TEREVS* FR. 588 RADT AND THE CONTEXT OF FR. 583*

This note offers two related arguments. First, I supplement the existing scholarly consensus that the speaker of Sophocles' *Tereus* fr. 588 Radt[1] is Procne by suggesting

[12] A. Adler (ed.), *Suidas Lexicon* (Leipzig, 1928–35), s.v. φ 48.
[13] M.L. West, *Greek Lyric Poetry. A New Translation* (Oxford, 1994), 121.
[14] D. Gutiérrez, 'Commentario y traducción de un fragmento de Hiponacte', *Anales de Filologia Clásica* 25 (2012), 61–78, at 65.
[15] W. de Sousa Medeiros, *Hipponactea* (Coimbra, 1969), 200 n. 129, listing more than thirty examples and observing that such participles lend themselves agreeably to the limping metre ('Expediente cómodo, afinal, para um coliambógrafo!').
[16] My thanks to the anonymous reader for comments.

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[1] All fragment-numbers from this point on refer to those of Sophocles' *Tereus* in S. Radt (ed.), *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* (= *TrGF*), vol. 4: *Sophocles* (Göttingen, 1977[1], 1999[2]).

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