

## Reading the Shield of Achilles in Aratus (Handout)<sup>1</sup>

### A. *Phaenomena* 1119-21: Mooing Cattle

1113-17 *Ploughmen and cowherds learn of an approaching storm from cattle. . Whenever the cattle lick their front hooves, or they stretch out on their right side in their stall (κοίτῳ), the old ploughman expects a delay from ploughing.*

→ **1118-21** As when being filled with **mooing** the cattle are herded while going **toward their stall** during the unyoking hour, the worried **calves** immediately **observe** [from the sound of their parents] that they will be filled with the nourishment of familiar turf safe from the storm.

**1118** οὐδ' ὅτε **μυκηθμοῖο** **περίπλειοι** ἀγέρωνται  
**1119** ἐρχόμενοι **σταθμόνδε** βόες βουλύσιον ὄρην,  
**1120** σκυθραὶ λειμῶνος **πόριες** καὶ βουβοσίοιο  
**1121** αὐτίκα **τεκμαίρονται** ἀχέιμεροι ἐμπλήσεσθαι.

### B. *Iliad* 18.573-80: The Shield of Achilles

(18.573-69) There [Hephaestus] made a herd of straight-horned cattle, and the cattle he forged from gold and tin, and, with **mooing**, the cattle rush out from their stall **to the pasture** along the babbling brook, along the rushing reeds. And there [he made] four golden herdsmen march in a line with the cattle, and with them nine swift-footed dogs follow. And there [he made] two fierce lions gripping the loud-bellowing bull at the head of the herd. And the bull **bellowed** loudly.

**573** Ἐν δ' ἀγέλην ποίησε βοῶν ὀρθοκραϊράων·  
**574** αἱ δὲ βόες χρυσοῖο τετεύχαστο κασσιτέρου τε,  
**575** **μυκηθμῶ** δ' ἀπὸ κόπρου ἐπεσσεύοντο **νομόνδε**  
**576** πὰρ ποταμὸν κελάδοντα, παρὰ ῥοδανὸν δονακίῃα.  
**577** χρύσειοι δὲ νομῆες ἄμ' ἐστιχόωντο βόεσσι  
**578** τέσσαρες, ἐννέα δὲ σφι κύνες πόδας ἀργοὶ ἔποντο.  
**579** σμερδαλέω δὲ λέοντε δῦ' ἐν πρώτῃσι βόεσσι  
**580** ταῦρον ἐρύγμηλον ἐχέτην· ὃ δὲ μακρὰ **μεμυκῶς**

### C. *Odyssey* 12.264-69: The Remembered Lesson of Tiresias (Cattle of Helios)

12.264-69 Then while still at sea on my black ship, I heard the mooing cattle in their stall and the bleating of sheep. Then I remembered the warning of the blind prophet, Theban Tiresias, and of Aeaeon Circe, who commanded me many times to avoid the island of the Helios, delighter of mortals. . . 295 And then I knew that some god certainly was plotting evils [against me] . . . 395 The flesh crawled, the meat bellowed on the spits.

**264** δὴ τότε ἐγὼν ἔτι πόντῳ ἔων ἐν νηϊ μελαίνῃ  
**265** **μυκηθμοῦ** τ' ἤκουσα βοῶν ἀυλιζομενάων  
**266** οἴων τε βληχῆν· καί μοι ἔπος ἔμπεσε θυμῶ  
**267** μάντιος ἀλαοῦ, Θηβαίου Τειρεσίου,  
**268** Κίρκης τ' Αἰαΐης, ἣ μοι μάλα πόλλ' ἐπέτελλε  
**269** νῆσον ἀλεύασθαι τερψιμβρότου Ἥελίοιο.  
. . .  
**295** καὶ τότε δὴ γίγνωσκον ὃ δὴ κακὰ μῆδετο δαίμων  
. . .  
**395** εἶρπον μὲν ῥινοί, κρέα δ' ἄμφ' ὀβελοῖσ' **μεμύκει**

<sup>1</sup> All translations mine.

## D. *Odyssey* 11.106ff: Warning of Tiresias

Whenever you should bring the well-built ship to the Island of Thrinacia, having fled the crimson sea, there you would find the grazing cattle and fat sheep of Helios **who sees everything and hears everything**.<sup>2</sup> If you care about your return, you should leave these cattle and sheep unharmed, and you would even reach Ithaca — though suffering much hardship. But if you should do harm, then, I tell you, I interpret<sup>3</sup> utter destruction for your ship and your companions. . . .

(126) I shall tell you a sign<sup>4</sup> quite conspicuous, nor will you miss it.

**106** ὅππότε κεν πρότον πελάσης εὐεργέα νῆα  
**107** Θρινακίη νήσῳ, προφυγῶν ἰοειδέα πόντον,  
**108** βοσκομένας δ' εὖρητε βόας καὶ ἴφια μῆλα  
**109** Ἥελίου, ὃς πάντ' ἐφορᾷ καὶ πάντ'  
ἐπακούει.  
**110** τὰς εἰ μὲν κ' ἀσινέας ἕαας νόστου τε μέδῃαι,  
**111** καὶ κεν ἔτ' εἰς Ἰθάκην, κακὰ περ πάσχοντες, ἴκοισθε·  
**112** εἰ δέ κε σίνῃαι, τότε τοι τεκμαίρομ' ὄλεθρον  
νηϊ τε καὶ ἐτάροισ' . . .

**126** σῆμα δέ τοι ἐρέω μάλ' ἀριφραδές, οὐδέ σε λήσει·

## E. *Odyssey* 10.410ff: Calf Simile

Just like pasturing calves, after they are full of grass, all leap together around the herded cattle coming to their stall, nor do the stalls restrain them, but they run about their mothers incessantly mooing. — So my comrades, when they saw me with their eyes, crying, they flooded me with their tears.

**410** ὡς δ' ὅτε ἄγραυλοι πόριες περὶ βοῦς ἀγελείας,  
**411** ἐλθούσας ἐς κόπρον, ἐπὶν βοτάνης κορέσωνται,  
**412** πᾶσαι ἅμα σκαίρουσιν ἐναντία· οὐδ' ἔτι σηκοὶ  
**413** ἴσχουσ', ἀλλ' ἀδινὸν μυκώμεναι ἀμφιθέουσι  
**414** μητέρας· ὡς ἐμὲ κείνοι, ἐπεὶ ἴδον ὀφθαλμοῖσι,  
**415** δακρυόεντες ἔχυντο·

## F. Scholia ad Arat. Phaen. 26 (Maass 34): Crates of Mallos<sup>5</sup>

ΜQΔΔVA — ὑψόθεν ὠκεανοῖο: ἀντὶ τοῦ ὠκεανοῦ. For it is higher and always above the horizon, never setting. And Homer [wrote] about the bear, which is in this [passage]: „οἷη δ' ἄμμορός ἐστι λοετρῶν ὠκεανοῖο“ (Σ 489, ε 275).” Only it does not set, while the other set or some part [sets] as Cepheus from the top of the head. MA ἄλλως: Aratus means the delimiting ocean. Poetically the ocean is the delimitter, after which there is nothing, since the vast and external sea is called ocean, in as much as it flows swiftly. It embraces our world in a circle, from it and to it are both the settings and risings, just as Homer says in many places: carefully understand the ocean delimited by the one speaking.

→ For with the shield of Achilles having been crafted by the demiurge Hephaistos, which he established as an imitation of the world (**κόσμου μίμημα**), he made the ocean the border.

<sup>2</sup> cp. “μεσταὶ δὲ Διὸς πᾶσαι μὲν ἀγυαί, / πᾶσαι δ' ἀνθρώπων ἀγοραί, μεστή δὲ θάλασσα / καὶ λιμένες” (Arat. 2-4)

<sup>3</sup> τεκμαίρομαι is a thematic word in Aratus. In line 18, describes the relationship between the poet and the muses. In line 38, this is how Greeks use the stars to guide their way. In lines 801, 802, and 1129, the second person optative gently invites the student to try reading the sky on their own. And finally, τεκμήραιο is the final word of the poem.

<sup>4</sup> σῆμα — a key word “occurring forty-seven times in the Phaenomena” (Volk, 215).

<sup>5</sup> “Grammarians and philosopher at the Attalid court in Pergamum, 1st half of the 2nd cent. BC, contemporary of Aristarchus [4], teacher of Panaetius (Str. 14,5,16). The Suda refers to him as a ‘Stoic philosopher’ (κ 2342). In 168/7, the Attalides sent him to Rome. After a fall, he was forced to stay there longer than he had intended and, in the meantime, gave public speeches that exerted a significant influence on the emerging philological/exegetical practice in Rome (Suet.Gram. 2,1-4).” (from *New Pauly*)

## G. *Phaenomena* 96-136: Aition of the Maiden

Just beneath both feet of **Bootes**, you may see the Maiden who holds in her hand the dazzling Wheat. Whether she is the descendant of Astraeus, whom they say was the ancient father of the stars, or she is the descendant of another — may she continue in peace.

*Golden Age* Now there is another tale circulating among people, that long ago she was present on the earth. She habitually went face-to-face among people, neither did she ever spurn men nor the race of ancient women. But she sat amidst them even though she was immortal! They used to call her Justice. Whether they were in the market or on the wide street corner, she gathered together the elders, earnestly singing universal laws. At the time, these people never knew of weary strife nor of shameful quarrels, nor of the din of battle. Thus they lived. The unforgiving sea was avoided, ships never imported profit from afar. **But cattle and ploughs and Justice herself, their queen and the bestower of justice, supplied everything in abundance.** As it was, the earth sprouted this golden generation.

*Silver Age* Longing for the ways of the ancient folk, she was not as enthusiastic to associate with the silver age as she was before. Nevertheless she persisted with the silver race. At the setting of the sun she descended from the echoing mountains — alone. Nor did she mince kind words with anyone. But whenever her presence filled the wide hillsides with people, she rebuked them since she grasped their wickedness. Though they summon her, she denies that she will make an appearance. “This race left by your golden fathers is a disgrace! You will beget even worse offspring. I tell you the truth, there will be wars and unnatural slaughter among humanity, evil will impose suffering!” Speaking thus, she sought out the mountain heights and she left the people straining to find her with their eyes.

*Bronze Age* But when that generation perished, the bronze generation sprung up — **they were the first murderous men, the first to wickedly forge the murderous sword, the first to taste farm cattle.** Justice despising that race of men, flew up into the sky. She occupies this place in the sky, where nightly she appears as the maiden to humankind, being near the conspicuous **Bootes**.

- 96 ἀμφοτέροισι δὲ ποσσὶν ὑπο σκέπτοιο **Βοώτεω**  
97 παρθένον, ἣ ῥ' ἐν χερσὶ φέρει Στάχυν αἰγλήεντα.  
98 εἴτ' οὖν Ἀστραίου Κεῖνη γένος, ὃν ῥά τέ φασιν  
99 ἄστρων ἀρχαῖον πατέρ' ἔμμεναι, εἴτε τευ ἄλλου,  
100 εὐκῆλος φορέοιτο: λόγος γε μὲν ἐντρέχει ἄλλος  
101 ἀνθρώποις, ὡς δῆθεν ἐπιχθονή πάρος ἦεν,  
102 ἦρχετο δ' ἀνθρώπων Κατεναντή, οὐδὲ ποτ' ἀνδρῶν  
103 οὐδὲ ποτ' ἀρχαίων ἠνήνατο φύλα γυναικῶν,  
104 ἀλλ' ἀναμιξέκ' ἀθήτο, καὶ ἀθανάτη περ εὐοῦσα.  
105 καὶ ἐ Δίκην καλέεσκον: ἀγειρομένη δὲ γέροντας,  
106 ἠέ που εἰν ἀγορῇ ἢ εὐρυχόρῳ ἐν ἀγυίῃ,  
107 δημοτέρας ἦιδεν ἐπισπέρχουσα θέμιστας.  
108 οὐπω λευγαλέου τότε νεϊκεὸς ἠπίσταντο  
109 οὐδὲ διακρίσιος πολυμεμφέος οὐδὲ κυδοιμοῦ,  
110 αὐτῶς δ' ἔζων: χαλεπὴ δ' ἀπέκειτο θάλασσα,  
111 καὶ βίον οὐπω νῆες ἀπόπροθεν ἠγίνεσκον,  
112 **ἀλλὰ βόες καὶ ἄροτρα καὶ αὐτὴ, πότνια λαῶν,**  
113 **μυρία πάντα παρείχε Δίκη, δώτειρα δικαίων.**  
114 τόφρ' ἦν, ὄφρ' ἔτι γαῖα γένος χρύσειον ἔφερβεν.  
115 ἀργυρέῳ δ' ὀλίγη τε καὶ οὐκέτι πάμπαν ἐτοίμη  
116 ὠμίλει, ποθέουσα παλαιῶν ἠθεα λαῶν.  
117 ἀλλ' ἔμπης ἔτι κεῖνο κατ' ἀργύρεον γένος ἦεν:  
118 ἦρχετο δ' ἐξ ὀρέων ὑποδείελος ἠχηέντων  
119 μουνάς, οὐδὲ τεφ' ἐπεμίσητο μελιχίσιον:  
120 ἀλλ' ὀπὸτ' ἀνθρώπων μεγάλας πλήσαιτο κολώνας,  
121 ἠπείλει δὴ ἔπειτα καθαπτομένη κακότητος,  
122 οὐδ' ἔτ' ἔφη εἰσωπὸς ἐλεύσεσθαι καλέουσιν:  
123 "οἷην χρύσειοι πατέρες γενεῖν ἐλίποντο  
124 χειροτέρην: ὑμεῖς δὲ κακώτερα τεξείσεθε.  
125 καὶ δὴ που πόλεμοι, καὶ δὴ καὶ ἀνάρισον αἶμα  
126 ἔσσειται ἀνθρώποισι, κακὸν δ' ἐπικεῖσεται ἄλλος."  
127 ὧς εἰποῦσ' ὀρέων ἐπεμαίετο, τοὺς δ' ἄρα λαοὺς  
128 εἰς αὐτὴν ἔτι πάντας ἐλίμπανε παπταίνοντας.  
129 ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ Κἀκεῖνοι ἐτέθνασαν, οἱ δ' ἐγένοντο,  
130 χαλκείῃ γενεῇ, προτέρων ὀλοώτεροι ἄνδρες,  
131 **οἱ πρῶτοι κακόεργον ἐχαλκεύσαντο μάχαιραν**  
132 **εἰνοδίην, πρῶτοι δὲ βοῶν ἐπάσαντ' ἀροτήρων,**  
133 καὶ τότε μισήσασα Δίκη Κεῖνων γένος ἀνδρῶν  
134 ἔπταθ' ὑπουρανίη: ταύτην δ' ἄρα νάσσατο χώρην,  
135 ἥχι' περ ἐννουχίῃ ἔτι φαίνεται ἀνθρώποισιν  
136 παρθένος, ἐγγὺς εὐοῦσα πολυσκέπτοιο **Βοώτεω.**

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