Stephan Renker, ed., trans., *Pseudo-Oppian,* Kynegetika, *Griechisch – deutsch,* Sammlung Tusculum, Berlin-Boston: De Gruyter, 2021, 217 pp., ISBN 978-3-11-065741-8.

In the wake of two distinct developments, a broader interest in the Greek poetry from the imperial period as well as the so-called 'animal turn' in the humanities, the two Oppianic poems are slowly beginning to enjoy more serious attention in academic circles. Nevertheless, there are only few resources available for readers interested in these texts. The most accessible edition with translation of the *Halieutica* and *Cynegetica* is Mair's 1928 Loeb edition. This volume is still unsurpassed in terms of its wealth of information on ancient zoology, but, sadly, the translation has not withstood the test of time equally well. Stephan Renker has now offered readers of German an exemplary (and affordable) edition of Pseudo-Oppian's *Cynegetica*, the first complete German translation of this fascinating poem in over 250 years. To make my view clear from the start, I highly recommend this volume to anyone interested in Pseudo-Oppian, and especially to readers who are not familiar with his didactic poem. R. has produced a lucid translation of a not always lucid poem accompanied by many helpful notes on zoological, textual, and literary matters as well as a thorough overview of the secondary literature.

This handy volume is comprised of four main sections: an introduction to the text (29 pages), the Greek text with facing German translation, a brief commentary on the text (30 pages), and a bibliography (9 pages).

The introduction consists of six sections, on the poet's biography, earlier editions and scholarship of the *Cynegetica*, other ancient accounts of hunting, the poem's structure and style, a summary of its content, and finally the principles behind the translation. R. is at his best with his exhaustive overview of scholarship on the *Cynegetica*. Anyone wishing to engage with this text should be directed to his *Forschungsüberblick*, and I suspect that even scholars who worked on the *Cynegetica* on prior occasions will discover further publications in this volume. On other issues, such as hunting in the ancient imagination, the poem's style, and its literary models, the present volume can only offer a selective overview. Nevertheless, R. manages to cover the main bases in the introduction, and at times also finds the space to explore certain topics in greater detail. For instance, R. discusses the juxtaposition of Artemis and hunting with Aphrodite and love in Euripides' *Hippolytus* and how these themes are reflected in the dialogue with Artemis in the proem of *Cyn.* 1 (p. 26). This

type of analysis gives an impression of both the literary environment in which the *Cynegetica* was produced, but also how Ps.-Oppian uniquely reshaped the tradition.

The text printed in this volume is that of Papathomopoulos' 2003 Teubner edition with a few slight changes, listed on p. 177. In these cases, R. justifies his textual decisions in the commentary (except when he simply corrects accentuation). There are few errors in the Greek text and the translation.[1] However, there are several lines where question marks appear after accentuated vowels in the Greek (e.g. ἀ?λλ' in 1.440).[2] I hope that this can be fixed in future printings.

The prose translation, which R. calls a "philologisch orientierten Übersetzung",[3] is designed to aid readers of the Greek. The translation is broken into lines to match Ps.-Oppian's hexameters and retains the syntax and word order of the Greek as much as possible, which makes it easy to find the translation of any particular phrase. The German is clear and easy to follow. While R. generally remains faithful to the Greek, he, fortunately, has a good sense of when a passage needs to be translated more freely to make it comprehensible for a modern reader. This is a necessary skill for anyone translating the *Cynegetia*: even leaving aside any evaluation about the poem's quality, there are some lines where Ps.-Oppian's predilection for rhetorical flourishes or exotic diction comes at the cost of clarity or coherence. As an example of how R. tackles some of the more unwieldy lines the *Cynegetica* offers its translators, let us look at *Cyn.* 1.39-40:

> καὶ θαλάμους ἐν ὄρεσσιν ἀδακρύτοιο Κυθήρης
> καὶ τοκετοὺς ἐνὶ θηρσὶν ἀμαυρωτοῖο λοχείης
>
> "ihre Paarungen in den Bergen der tränenlosen Kythere
> und ihre Geburten, die ja under Tieren verborgen geschehen"[4]

The point being made in line 39 is that non-human animals do not experience pain during mating. Despite the word order, it thus makes the most sense to connect ἀδακρύτοιο Κυθήρης ("tränenlosen Kythere") with θαλάμους ("Paarungen"). R. retains the word order of the Greek, which makes it easy to follow along with the original, but may obscure the zoological information this line communicates (this applies to the Greek

[1] The only typographical errors I noticed: 1.360: ἀχλαά should be ἀχλαὰ; 1.524: ῥε ῖα should be ῥεῖα; 2.55: "bedrohen sich sich" should be "bedrohen sie sich"; 2.385: "augsrüstet" should be "ausgerüstet"; 3.20: "sinyd" should be "sind".

[2] 1.440; 2.116; 2.279; 2.623; 3.43; 3.107; 3.258; 4.185.

[3] "A translation aimed at philologists", p. 36.

[4] "Their mating in the mountains of tearless Kythere and their births, which after all take place in secret among animals".

as well). On the other hand, the translation "die ja verborgen geschehen" for ἀμαυρωτοῖο λοχείης in line 40, literally "of the unseen childbirth" (probably meant to form a pair with the virtually synonymous τοκετούς), makes the purpose of the phrase much more evident than in the original, and that is probably for the best.

The commentary contains a variety of material on zoological, textual, and literary issues, and mainly consists of the following: identification of the animal species mentioned in the *Cynegetica*, insofar as it is possible to accurately identify them; references to modern scholarship on the passages at hand; explanations of mythical, geographical or historical references in the *Cynegetica*; references to the poetic intertexts of particular lines or passages; cross-references to other parts of the *Cynegetica*. These notes are generally relevant and informative, and I imagine that they will be particularly useful to less advanced readers. At times, however, some of the notes on mythology come across as slightly superfluous. For instance, on *Cyn.* 3.222: "*Medusa*: eine der drei Gorgonen, die jeden, der sie anblickt, versteinert. Von Perseus enthauptet."[5] – I doubt whether anyone who picks up an edition of an obscure poet like Ps.-Oppian would be unfamiliar with Medusa. These notes generally do not list other ancient accounts about the creatures featured in the *Cynegetica*, although p. 33 provides some examples of anecdotes also attested in other ancient sources. Readers looking for a more thorough overview of these parallels will still be better served by Mair's Loeb edition, which rivals the scope of a technical commentary.

For the remainder of this review, I will offer some micro-level comments and observations on both the translation and commentary.

Cyn. 1.9: in the opening lines, the narrator equates Septimius Severus' wife, Julia Domna, to the 'Syrian Aphrodite', i.e. the lunar goddess Astarte, and states that her son Caracalla, the reigning emperor and the poem's addressee, is not inferior to the sons of Zeus:

> νύμφη ἀριστοπόσεια, λεχὼ δέ τε καλλιτόκεια
> Ἀσσυρίη Κυθέρεια καὶ οὐ λείπουσα Σελήνη,
> οὐδὲν ἀφαυρότερον Ζηνὸς Κρονίδαο γενέθλης·
> εὐμενέοι Τιτὰν Φαέθων καὶ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων.
> (*Cyn.* 1.6-9)

R. states in his notes, with recourse to Schmitt's 1969 commentary, that it is unclear why specifically "Titan Phaethon" is appeased after the claim about Caracalla's status. Schmitt notes that the reference to Apollo can be explained because Apollo is a son of Zeus, but Phaethon is not presented

[5] "*Medusa*: one of the three Gorgons, who turned everyone who looked at her into stone. Was decapitated by Perseus".

as such. I suspect that this line is not so much concerned with genealogy but rather with astral imagery. Φαέθων is either an epithet for the sun/Helius, e.g. *Il*. 11.735, *Od*. 5.479, as well as *Cyn*. 2.617 (as R. mentions), or the name of Phaeton, the son of the sun. Apollo likewise carried solar associations. Caracalla, meanwhile, is glorified as the son of Astarte; hence, the speaker asks the two sun gods to not hold a grudge against an emperor with lunar ties. This may also be connected with Julia Domna's background, mentioned in the notes on *Cyn*. 1.4: she was a daughter of the high priest of the solar deity Baal, but in the *Cynegetica* she is worshipped as a lunar goddess (Σελήνη in 1.7). Furthermore, both the lunar associations of the emperor and the reference to Apollo anticipate the following dialogue between the poet and Artemis, and the role of Artemis as a structuring deity in the *Cynegetica* book proems more generally (on which see Bartley 2016): Artemis was commonly equated with Selene in the poetic tradition and was the twin sister of Apollo. The *Cynegetica* is thus using a cult title for Domna to consolidate the relationship between the poem's subject matter (hunting, Artemis) and its dedicatee (Caracalla, the offspring of a lunar goddess).

Cyn. 1.24, R. comments on τριετῆ Ὀρίβακχον: "*alle drei Jahre*: nach anderen Quellen wohl alle zwei Jahre stattfindend."[6] A solution to this issue may be that Pseudo-Oppian's three years are the result of inclusive counting, following the practice of the Roman calendar.

Cyn. 1.33: the goddess orders the poet to denounce erotic themes, on which R. rightly notes: "Vgl. aber die Würdigungen der Aphrodite in 1.383-92 und des Eros in 2.410-25."[7] This observation can be extended to the entire *recusatio*, in fact: every theme rejected by Artemis in the proem eventually resurfaces in the natural world or during the hunting expeditions.[8]

Cyn. 1.161-2 ἀλλ' ὅτ' ἀλεύασθαι χρειὼ φιλοδέμνιον ἦτορ | ἵππων ὠκυπόδων, "um den liebestollen Wesen der schnellfüßigen Hengste zu entgehen":[9] in this passage, the *Cynegetica* recommends the use of stallions over mares for hunting. In R.'s translation, ἵππων ὠκυπόδων, the grammatical gender of which is ambiguous in the Greek, refers to stallions specifically, which would in this reading be distracted by the presence of mares. He can also adduce *Cyn*. 1.342-4, describing the mating frenzy of

[6] "*Every three years*: according to other sources, taking place every other year."

[7] "But compare the eulogy of Aphrodite in 1.383-92 and that of Eros in 2.410-25."

[8] S. Goldhill, "Artemis and cultural identity in empire culture: how to think about polytheism, now?", in D. Konstan, S. Saïd, eds., *Greeks on Greekness: Viewing the Greek Past under the Roman Empire*, Cambridge 2006, 112-61, characterises this process, that the themes Artemis originally rejected resurface in the natural world, as "Artemisian poetics" (p. 153).

[9] "to avoid the amorous nature of swift-footed stallions".

stallions, for this position. However, it seems more likely to me that ἵππων in 1.162 refers to either horses in general or mares. These lines establish a principle which is illustrated in the following lines: these describe how the neighing of mares in heat (see the feminine participle, λιλαιόμεναι φιλότητος, 163) can alert potential prey of the hunters' presence.

Cyn. 1.321 τοὶ μὲν γὰρ δειρὴν καλλίτριχά τ' εὐρέα νῶτα, "die einen sind am schönbehaarten, breiten Rücken":[10] the translation, most likely by accident, omits the term δείρήν, neck.

Cyn. 1.353: I appreciate the punning translation of this line (describing pigeon breeding): μιγνύμενοι στομάτεσσι βαρυφθόγγοις ἀλόχοισι, "und mit den tief gurrenden Tauben schnäbeln".

2.57 οἷα κονιόμενοι, "und bedecken sich so mit Staub":[11] this is by no means an inaccurate translation, but I prefer the interpretation by Mair, "even as if they were wrestlers dusting themselves", because it draws out the association between the feuding bulls and athletes which is subsequently established in 2.76 οἷα τις ἀθλεύων ('like an athlete'). The comparison between fighting bulls and athletes or vice versa appears to have been a recurrent trope in the imperial period, most explicitly in Ael. *NA* 6.1: Aelian's defeated bull becomes its own trainer (ἑαυτῷ γίνεται γυμναστής) and covers itself with dust during its athletic practice (ἀθλεῖ πᾶσαν ἄθλησιν κονιώμενος).

2.376 αὐτόδετοι βαίνουσι καὶ αὐτόμολοι περόωσι, "kommen sie gefesselt, aber freiwillig folgend mit":[12] translating αὐτόδετοι as "gefesselt" leaves out the emphasis from the Greek that the juvenile goats allow themselves to be captured (δετοί) by their own will (αὐτο-). I suspect that this line evokes Stoic ideas of fate and free will, especially with its similarity to the Stoic metaphor of a dog bound to a cart (cited by Hipp. *Haer.* 1.21.1): the dog must follow the cart's course but can decide for itself whether it follows willingly or resists and is dragged along. A Stoic reader would thus have enjoyed the notion of these quasi-philosophical goats exhibiting their freedom by electing captivity.

2.438 αὐτὰρ ὅγ' οὐκ ἀλέγων ξείνης φιλίης πανάθεσμος, "Der aber schert sich rücksichtslos nicht um die freundliche Zuneigung":[13] there are two details in the translation this line I would like to point out. First, "freundlich" is perhaps not the best translation for ξείνης. The Greek carries a double meaning: the fish's love for the *subus* is ξείνης because it describes interspecies affection, but it also draws attention to their strange behaviour, that they willingly approach a creature that turns out to be a predator.

[10] "One of them is ... on their fair-haired, broad back".
[11] "And so they cover themselves with dust".
[12] "they come bound, but follow voluntarily".
[13] "it, however, ruthlessly does not care about their friendly affection".

Secondly, πανάθεσμος carries stronger implications than "rücksichtslos". Earlier in this passage, it is claimed that god established interspecies love in the natural world as an unavoidable ordinance (θεσμὸν ἀναγκαῖον δῶκεν θεός, 2.396). The *subus*, in other words, is πανάθεσμος because it defies the very laws (θεσμόν) of nature when it attacks the fish it attracted.

2.484 οὐδὲ μὲν ἐκφυγέειν οὐδ' ἱεμένοισι πάρεστιν, "Obwohl sie nun fliehen wollen, ist es ihnen nicht möglich":[14] these lines are somewhat puzzling, and Kochly (cited by R.) is probably right in positing a lacuna after 481. The subject of 482-5 is presumably the oryx, the animal described in this passage, which has suddenly become wounded (this would most likely have been described in a missing section) and not its assailant, as it would be odd to shift the perspective to another animal at the end of the section. Under these assumptions, I find it more likely to interpret the line as "it is not possible for them [the oryx] to flee and neither do they want to" (in other words, I take the second οὐδ' with ἱεμένοισι). The previous lines have established that the main characteristic of the oryx is its arrogance and hostility (θυμὸς δ' αὖτ' ὀρύγεσσιν ὑπερφίαλος καὶ ἀπηνής, 2.455). This is exemplified in the following six lines, where the oryx does not display fear towards increasingly powerful creatures. It would thus be fitting to conclude the passage by showing how the oryx' overconfidence ultimately proves fatal against more threatening foes: lines 484-485 establish that the oryx had the opportunity to avoid conflict, but its belligerent nature leads it to its demise.

3.2-3 εὐρυκέρωτας ἀγαυοὺς … αἰγλήεντας ἰορκοὺς, "herrliche Breithörner… herrliche Iorkoi". R. tends to translate many of the more generic epic epithets with "herrlich". This is not an issue in itself, but it is slightly awkward when the same translation is used for two distinct epithets in such proximity ("herrlich" reappears again in 3.7 for κλυτήν).

3.226 παῖδα τεὸν γενύεσσι τεῇς οὐκ ἄρσενα θήσεις; "dein Kind willst du mit deinem Kiefer zerrreißen, nur weil es männlich ist?"[15] The translation of this line glosses over the reference to the castration of the donkey foal which is present in the Greek (literally "are you making your child male no more with your fangs?"), a prominent theme in this passage. The donkey father tears off the testicles of his male offspring out of fear that his son will claim his father's mates (περὶ μητέρι μαινόμενος, 205; μὴ μετόπισθεν ἑὸν γένος ἡβήσειεν, 207). The point is thus not that the father kills his son outright (although this may be the case as well), but that he castrates the foal to prevent him from procreating. The donkey father "cuts off his son's testicles" (ταμέσθαι | μήδεα, 206-7), and this idea is evoked twice later in the passage as well through wordplay: the mother laments that the father

[14] "even though they now want to flee, this is no longer possible".

[15] "You want to tear apart your child with your jaws, just because it is male?".

makes their child nothing (παῖδα τὸ μηδὲν ἔθηκας, 228), recalling the lost μήδεα; the father, however, ignores her please and devours the "sad meal from his child" (ἀμειδέα παιδὸς ἐδητύν, 236), with the epithet ἀμειδέα (almost ἀμηδέα, 'without testicles') punningly recalling the castrated state of the foal.

Sean McGrath
Trinity College Dublin
mcgrats9@tcd.ie