Fishing for Pearls

Text, Metre, and Meaning in Leonidas, Menander, and Lucian

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Abstract

The first unmetrical word of Leonidas, *AP* 6.4 requires emendation, not explanation. On the basis of a variant in Lucian, a new textual suggestion is made. The paper explores metrical and intertextual criteria for explaining the passage, but rejects them in favour of emendation.

Keywords

Leonidas – Lucian – Menander – metre – textual criticism – emendation

The main purpose of this paper is to present some reflections on the relationship between metre and text in Greek literature, by concentrating on cases where emendation, in prose and verse, interacts with metrical considerations. The main case study addressed here is an epigram of Leonidas, *AP* 6.4, in which most editions permit an unmetrical first word to stand.

A wider interest will become clear as the paper progresses—the old question of the relative importance of ‘explaining’ apparent irregularities in our texts (in this case, an unmetrical line) as opposed to emending them. Very few editors of Euripides would print the first line of the *Ion* as transmitted by the manuscripts in violation of ‘Porson’s law’;¹ at the same time, a recent commen-

¹ See now Martin 2018, 122-123 (defending Elmsley’s simpler transposition over the more complex rearrangement preferred in the Oxford text).
tator on Virgil has repeatedly pointed out that the ‘rules’ of Latin syntax are treated in the *Aeneid* more as guidelines. This paper is not an edition, and thus need not choose between different modes; it therefore suggests two possible solutions. The crux at issue is Leonidas *AP* 6.4.1, the metrical irregularity of which has been explained, with some brilliance, as a literary device, with reference both to Hellenistic textual culture broadly conceived and the specific aesthetics in Leonidas. The paper tries to test the hypothesis at issue by making the strongest possible case for this explanation, by adding a number of additional arguments and adducing a range of parallels. But the paper suggests that an emendation is not only available, but is the better solution, being based not only on palaeographical and etymological considerations (the emender’s toolkit) but also on the same range of literary allusion that had been adduced in the explanation. While the explanation has much to recommend it, therefore, and constructs a sophisticated series of links between inscriptive and literary epigram and other genres, notably comedy, it will be seen that the emendation is thought preferable.

1

Leonidas *AP* 6.4 (= *HE* 2283-2290 Gow-Page) begins with a famous metrical crux.

†εὐκαμπέξις ἄγκιστρον καὶ δούνακα δουλιχότεντα
χώρμην καὶ τὰς ἱχθυδόκους σπυρίδας
καὶ τοῦτον νηκτοίσιν ἐπ’ ἱχθυσὶ τεχνασθέντα
κύρτον, ἀλιπλάγκτων εὔρεμα δικτυβόλων,
τρηχὺν τε τριόδοντα, Ποσειδαώνιον ἔγχος
καὶ τοὺς ἐξ ἀκάτων διχθαδίους ἐρέτας
ὁ γριπεὺς Διόφαντος ἀνάκτορι θήκατο τέχνας
ὡς θέμις, ἀρχαίας λείψανα τεχνοσύνας.

A well-curved hook, and a long rod, a line, and the baskets that receive the fish, and this pot, contrived for the swimming fish, and the harsh trident, the Neptunian spear, and the twin oars from the boat—these the fisherman Diophantus has dedicated to the lord of his craft, as is correct, the remains of an ancient craftsmanship.

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2 Horsfall 2008, xvii: "In V.’s hands, Latin usage becomes alarmingly flexible and full of surprises for those used to the comfortable verities of the grammars"; this observation was repeated in some of Horsfall’s other commentaries.
The poem is a list of objects dedicated by a fisherman: hook, rod, line, basket, pot, trident and oars. The first word, εὐκαμπές, ‘well-curved’, is out of place metrically. Various alterations have been proposed. Hermann’s suggestions of γαμψόν and γναμπτόν (the latter with Homeric authority, see Od. 4.369, 12.332), as well as Meineke’s στρεπτόν require the addition of an additional particle, τ’, to correct the metre; this in effect requires two corruptions rather than one. Another suggestion by Meineke, χαμπύλον, is rather better, at least restoring an adjective of correct metrical shape; the same can be said in favour of Geist’s εὐπαγές and εὐαγρές. Finally, Hermann recanted and followed Blomfield’s suggestion of reordering the terms: ἄγκιστρ᾿ εὐκαμῆ—again, with the implication of two errors rather than one. However, the only suggestion that recent treatments have thought worthy of recording is Salmasius’ εὐκαπές, a compound with an otherwise unattested second member. In a study of Leonidas’ language, De Stefani simply records the form as Salmasius’ conjecture—“la soluzione migliore, direi”, echoing Gow-Page’s judgement. De Stefani terms the conjecture an “intervento”, but we might have expected to be told that the form is also “inventato”. More recently, Durbec’s paper prints the text of the epigram with εὐκαπές without even indicating that there is a textual problem. Critical opinion thus seems, to some extent, to have solidified around the idea, though Solitario’s recent study cautiously retains the cruces.

Jacobs and Geffcken, meanwhile, took a more daring approach. Comparing the treatment in Homer of ἀνδροτῆτα (apparently scanned ⏑⏑ – ⏑ at Il. 16.857, 22.363, in the estimation of many on the basis of an earlier *anr̥tāta), they propose to scan εὐκαπές as a dactyl. The fact that a different historical situation

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3 Gow and Page 1965, vol. 2, 360 justify their adoption of Knaack’s emendation of δούρατα (MS) to δούνακα.
4 For the reception history of this epigram, see the ‘stemma’ in Geffcken 1896, 113; Ypsilanti 2006; and Durbec 2012/2013. Geffcken 1896, 113 calls the piece an “inhaltloses und geschmackloses Gedicht”, and see von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf 1903, 55: contrast the more charitable assessment by Gigante 1971, 21-22.
5 Dübner 1871, 223. Note that Dübner is not referring to the edition of Leonidas by Albert Meineke, who prints εὐκαπές after Brunck but commends εὐκαπτές in the notes; see Meineke 1791, 46.
6 Gow and Page 1965, vol. 2, 360 call Salmasius’ “the best of the suggestions”. Beckby 1966, 446 records a conjecture by Desrousseaux of κέντρον for ἄγκιστρον, printed by Waltz 1960, 28; in the addenda, Beckby 1966, 702 retracts this conjecture from consideration. I cannot parallel the meaning ‘fish-hook’ for κέντρον specifically, which may be at the root of the retraction.
8 Durbec 2012/2013, 714.
9 Solitario 2015, 57.
10 Geffcken 1896, 114; similarly Gigante 1971, 62 n. 106. For *ἀντατά τα, see West 1988, 156 n. 42 = West 2011, 45 n. 42; differently Tichy 1981; Hajnal 2003, 77-79, 82-84; Barnes 2011.
underlies both forms is, for the avoidance of doubt, immaterial here: the syn-
chronic irregularity of ἀνδροτῆτα only needs to have been available to provide
the basis for an analogy (along the lines of a rule such as ‘regard preconso-
nantal nasal as irrelevant for scansion’).\footnote{Should this ever prove to have been a
synchronic rule, there are interesting implications for the status of the reading ἀνδροτῆτα in
some manuscripts of the Iliad (for details, see West’s apparatus \textit{ad locc.}). This reading
may reflect the loss of /n/ from syllable codas in later Greek, or deliberate adjustments
by metrically informed copyists (and editors). In that case, what of our εὐκαμπές?}
Plainly, however, wholesale discount-
ing of preconsonantal nasals for metrical purposes did not occur: they are far
more often demanded by the metre than not. Recently, however, a version of
this proposal has been defended by Cusset, who sees the use of the word as
an explicit aesthetic choice by a poet intent on bringing his epigram into the
everyday world of the fisherman: the unmetrical word is “l’indice d’une poé-
tique spécifique de l’humilité”.\footnote{Cusset 2017, 39.}
Cusset, rather than considering the unmetrical word a license, sees it as a literary strategy.

Cusset’s claim is far from being unreasonable.\footnote{It should be noted, however, that it can hardly be
reconciled with Gutzwiller’s interpretation, according to which Leonidas’ ornate poems are an act of the
conferral of value, not a creation of ironic distance; see Gutzwiller 1998, 94-95.}
Although this paper will ultimately make an alternative suggestion, Cusset’s argument is nevertheless
serious enough that it is worth making the strongest possible argument in its
favour. Leonidas’ metrical practice is known to have peculiarities.\footnote{Nonetheless, see De Stefani 2005, 157 for a comparison
of Leonidas and Posidippus, according to which the latter is much freer in his hexameters.}
The second line of this very poem (6.4.2) demonstrates an example: the use of the
definite article before the caesura.\footnote{Gow and Page 1965, vol. 2, 121 (on 913) and for Leonidas in particular 336 (on 219f.).
Another peculiarity, the scansion ὁρμῑη, is paralleled in Theoc. 21.11; this is likely metrically
determined and not a thematic link between the two poems, and given the existence of
Greek words in -ῑα there is no need to assume that the author of one of these pieces took
the form from the work of the other.}
It is also true that verses produced for inscriptions—for example, the ‘real’ dedications on which literary
epigrams such as this one are based—not infrequently feature metrical irregularities.\footnote{See Todd 1939.}
Leonidas’ mimesis, therefore, may be of a real, metrically defective dedication, perhaps of the sort we see in \textit{CEG II} 744 (ξυνβώμοις τε 
θεοῖς διδασκαλ | ιας τόδε δῶρον, l. 3, with a trochee in the third foot); 770 (ii) 1 (ἵνα παῖ Λῃτοῦς τε ἰοκόλπου, third foot trochee); 789 (i) 3 (πεζοὶ δ ἱππῆς
τε γέρας θέσαν, οὓς προέηκεν; if the start of the line is scanned, irregularly, as – – – –, with
\footnote{\label{footnote}11\footnote{\label{footnote}12\footnote{\label{footnote}13\footnote{\label{footnote}14\footnote{\label{footnote}15\footnote{\label{footnote}16}}}}}}
an iamb in the second foot, the line is a close match for Leonidas AP 6.4).\(^\text{17}\) Hellenistic poets, engaged in a much more rarefied exercise, were presumably able to detect ‘errors’ in inscriptive material; imitation of such an unrefined style of verse can perhaps not be excluded.\(^\text{18}\)

Slightly disturbingly, however, this kind of line is attested already in archaic verse:

\[\text{ἐτρέφετ᾿ ἀτάλλων, μέγα νήπιος, ὥ ἐν οἶκῳ (Hes. Op. 131)}\]
\[\text{ἥδ᾿ ὅποσα τολύπευσε σὺν αὐτῷ καὶ πάθεν ἄλγεα (II. 24.7)}\]
\[\text{φωνῆς γάρ ἥκουσ᾿, ἀτάρ οὐκ ἴδον ὀφθαλμοῖσιν (h. Cer. 57)}\]

On the whole, the forms ἀτάλλων, ὅποσα and γάρ are interpreted as undergoing metrical lengthening;\(^\text{19}\) the openings of all these lines would in theory work as iambics (albeit with a good deal of resolution), but the case of the Homeric Hymn to Demeter is particularly close to our Leonidas epigram.\(^\text{20}\) In short, Leonidas had a range of models on which to base this kind of metrical ‘exception’; this complicates considerably our ability to gauge exactly what aesthetic effect may be in play. One might just as well see this as a ‘grand’, ‘rugged’ or ‘archaic’ feature as an expression of ‘humility’.\(^\text{21}\)

On the other hand, the figure of the fisherman is one attested rather widely in Hellenistic poetry. Comic tropes about fishermen seem to have inspired Theocritus 21, a conversation between two fishermen—one named Diophantus, which can hardly be a coincidence.\(^\text{22}\) The fishermen of Plautus, Rudens 290ff. and Gripus’ speech at 906ff., if they are reprising material from Diphilus’ original, may be a further link to Hellenistic comedy (even Gripus’ name, from γρίπευς, is an index of the importance of this trope). More direct evidence from

\(^\text{17}\) Obviously the hiatus would, in classical verse, be very strange. Should one understand πεζοὶ δέ (for δή?) δ᾿ ἵππης τε?

\(^\text{18}\) Our understanding of Leonidas’ metrical practice will be put on a new footing by Davide Massimo’s Oxford DPhil thesis (under completion); in the meantime see De Stefani 2005, 147-162. For the metre of Hellenistic inscribed epigram, see Fantuzzi and Sens 2006.

\(^\text{19}\) West 1978, 184 calls the prosody of Op. 131 “unparalleled”; it is striking however that it matches the phonetic environment of II. 24.7. West adduces Ἀπόλλων but this is imprecise, since the first syllable of this form is only lengthened in the oblique cases.

\(^\text{20}\) Richardson 1974, 170 collects relevant parallels from Classical and Hellenistic poetry.

\(^\text{21}\) Solitario 2015, 62-64 calls attention to significant intertextual links with Hesiod. Archaism in poetic form should therefore not be discounted.

\(^\text{22}\) Gow 1950, vol. 2, 369; Gow and Page 1965, vol. 2, 361. The authorship of the piece has been doubted—indeed, Gow records without enthusiasm the theory that the poem was even by Leonidas—but I use ‘Theocritus’ to refer to its author for convenience.
post-classical comedy is supplied by Menander’s Ἁλιεῖς (or Ἁλιεύς), of which we have a fairly generous crop of fragments (frr. 18-30 K.-A.). Theocritus, however, also incorporates features from earlier comedy; the conversation 21.29-67 reprises a number of elements from Aristophanes’ Wasp 13-53. The numerous links between comedy and these Hellenistic literary fishermen suggest a modification of Cusset’s theory. Rather than removing the epigram from the sphere of ‘lofty’ literature in more humble territory, the epigram is refitted explicitly as a piece of comedy. This is signalled not only by the content, but by the metre: an opening – – – – primes the ear for a fragment in trimeters, and the poetics of comedy and the everyday. The opening line of Leonidas 6.4 thus becomes a promise of comic performance, only to be thwarted by the final syllable of ἄγκιστρον, when the hexameter reasserts itself. In the following section we explore this theme a little further, as it seems that this can be fitted into a still wider consideration of metrical form in the Hellenistic period.

Comedy itself is known to have played the same kind of metrical game as that sketched in the previous section: expectations of comic realism are disrupted by Menander fr. 163.1 K.-A., in a passage referring to an ἑταίρα:

ἐμοὶ μὲν οὖν οὐν ἀειδε τοιαύτην, θεά

Sing me a woman like this, goddess

The use of the epic form of the verb ἀειδε (not Attic ἄτεδε), and of θεά (not Attic θεός) as the addressee of the imperative, gives the listener an unmistakable reminder of the first line of the Iliad. Furthermore, Menander fr. 852.1 K.-A.

23 In Menander’s Ἁλιεῖς, a speaker obtains a contrasting effect to that of Leonidas 6.4 by enumerating a catalogue of rare and expensive objects (fr. 26 K.-A.): perhaps a find from a shipwreck? Whatever the true situation, Menander’s play seemed to feature a number of fine objects (καὶ χρυσολαβὲς καλὸν πάνυ | ἐγχειρίδιον fr. 24 K.-A.), perhaps by way of deliberate and significant contrast to the humble setting of the eponymous fishermen. Again, this motif may be comparable to the recognition scene in Rudens (1044-1190, see especially 1169-1171).

24 Morgan 2010, 349-350 has analysed a comparable trick in the Latin hexameter, in which the reader is led to expect elegiac in the opening of Ovid’s Metamorphoses.
may be an example in which Homeric phraseology was borrowed in defiance of the metrical pattern of the fragment:

οἰκτρότατόν ἐστι πεῖραν ἐπὶ γήρως ὀδῷ
ἀδίκου τύχης δίκαιος εἰληφὼς τρόπος.
γήραος οὐδῷ S: γῆρας ὁδὸ

Stobaeus preserves the lightly distorted γῆρας ὁδὸ and Homeric (and thus synchronically unmetrical) ἐπὶ γήραος οὐδῷ, about which Meineke remarked “quod quin a librario, cui Homerica illa in promptu essent, profectum sit, dubitari non potest.”25 I am less sure on the point than was Meineke. The phrase had been Atticised (Lycurg. 1.40.8, Hyp. Dem. 5, and cf. Pollux 2.15, D.H. 8.35.4); but the language of fr. 163 shows that Menander could adopt epicising vocabulary. If this is possible in comedy, then it should be possible in an epigram with clear intertextual relationships to comic portrayals of the same material. In fact, metrically, Men. fr. 852.1 would, if γήραος οὐδῷ is read, have exactly the same structure as Leonidas AP 6.4.1 (iambic opening + hexameter ending); the only distinction is which end of the line counts as ‘irregular’. An even older precedent for the trick can be found in Hipponax (fr. 35 West = fr. 10 Degani):

ἐρέω γάρ σύτω. “Κυλλήνιε Μαιάδος Ἑρμῆ"

Hipponax fr. 23 (= fr. 11 Degani, preserved in the same context by Priscian) has too corrupt a text to be reliable, but seems to have had the same feature. A similar mixture is found in the ‘archilochian’ (– – – – – – | – – – – –), used by Callimachus (ep. 39 Pf. = 1137-1142 HE Gow-Page).

Furthermore, literary theory and practice in the ancient world knew to exploit linguistic features of Greek in metrical ‘games’, in which texts could be analysed according to different metrical schemes.26 Lines such as Il. 23.644 ἔργων τοιούτων. ἐμὲ δὲ χρὴ γήραϊ λυγρῷ, Hes. fr. 270 M.-W. πίσης τε δυσερής καὶ κέδρου νηλέι καπνῷ can be scanned as iambic trimeters as well as hexameters; the observation goes back to Andronicus, recorded in the scholia to the Iliad passage. Three distinct features of Greek are being exploited: (a) the possibility of correction of long vowels as against hiatus e.g. scanning τοιούτων – – – or – – –;
(b) muta cum liquida sequences being treated in separate syllables (‘making position’) or as syllable onsets (‘Attic correction’), as λυγρῷ, καπνῷ ≃ –;
(c) treating diphthongs as sequences of two short vowels, e.g. γήραι, νηλέι – –. Now Callimachus deployed this feature of Greek in a pentameter which quoted a line from Euripides’ Bacchae in an epigram, in which a theatre mask listens to a classroom discussion (ep. 48 Pf. = HE 1165-1170 Gow-Page):

ἐγὼ δ᾿ ἀνὰ τῇδε κεχηνώς
κεῖμαι τοῦ Σαμίου διπλόον, ὁ τραγικός
παιδαρίων Διόνυσος ἐπήκοος· οἱ δὲ λέγουσιν
“ἱερὸς ὁ πλόκαμος”, τούμον ὄνειρ· ἐμοί.

I am sat here yawning, the double of the Samian—the tragic Dionysus listening to the boys. They say “the hair is sacred”—old news to me.

The quotation, in its original context at Bacchae 494, must be scanned – – | – – | – –; the different treatment of muta cum liquida sequences in hexameter, however, also allows the line to be read as – – | – – | – –. Callimachus’ clever game exploits a metrical ambiguity, allowing the incorporation of a quotation from one metrical context into another. How are we to imagine Callimachus reading such a poem aloud? It is not inconceivable that the original prosody was used, and that a performance of elegiac metre was disrupted by a ‘surprising’ (half) trimeter. This would bring the case closer to Hipponax fr. 35 cited above, as well as matching the kind of practice we have suggested for Menander fr. 852; this would seem then to provide an Hellenistic counterpart to the metrical experiment suggested for Leonidas.

3

Cusset’s explanation of the metrical anomaly of Leonidas AP 6.4 thus remains available for those who are convinced by these arguments, and has into the bargain revealed something about the relationship between comedy, particularly Hellenistic comedy, and epigram. Indeed, the fact that it draws on this kind of argument—in particularly its interest in allusive intertextuality—makes it superficially the most attractive solution. For others, via prima salutis, quod minime reris, Syria pandetur ab urbe: we move now to the possibility that the text should be emended, using a clue from, superficially, an unexpected quarter. In other words, emendation itself is based on intertextual reading and
support; nevertheless, textual correction, rather than interpretation, can be shown to be the preferable answer.

At Lucian 23.14 (Prometheus), we read the following in most editions:

ὅτι δὲ καὶ χρήσιμα ταῦτα γεγένηται τοῖς θεοῖς, οὕτως δὲν μάθοις, εἰ ἐπιβλέψειας ἀπασάν τὴν γῆν οὐκέτ’ αὐξημαράν καὶ ἀκαλλῆ οὕσαν, ἀλλὰ πόλει καὶ γεωργίαις καὶ φυτοῖς ἡμέροις διακεκοσμημένην ...

You’d know that these good things come from the gods, if you saw that the whole world was no longer dry and unattractive, but adorned with cities and farms and gentle plants ...

In place of ἀκαλλῆ, ‘unattractive’, the reading of Φ, the scholiast knows the reading ἀκαμῆ, a word the scholiast glosses as ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀκατασκεύαστον, ἀπεριποίητον, ἀκατέργαστον (‘unprepared, unworked, unlaboured on’). If ἀκαμῆς is a possible form, and its word formation is from a linguistic point of view impeccable,27 then it could be that εὐκαμές, ‘well-wrought, well-worked’, is a good emendation for our Leonidas poem. A form εὐκαμές has the advantage over Salmasius’s suggestion εὐκαπές of an attested (albeit weakly attested) second member of the compound, and the advantage of palaeography over the remainder, as well as satisfying metrical criteria. Leonidas is exceptionally fond of forms in εὐ-, so a solution which retains this element (unlike Meineke’s καμπύλον, for example) is in keeping with his practice.28 One notes that of the various authorities canvassed above, Geist came closest to this stylistic trait, while the solution of Blomfield which ultimately satisfied Hermann sacrificed it.

Perhaps the most obvious objection to this conjecture is the following: ‘Well-made’ is a bland epithet for a fisherman’s hook—perhaps even intolerably bland. However, this is a less impressive counter-argument than might

27 We will come to consider the form’s place within Greek systems of internal derivation (i.e. synchronic word-formation rules). From the point of view of modern etymological thought, the second member of the compound would be derived ultimately from the root of the verb κάμνω, *kemh₂; an aorist *ekemh₃ will have given first *ekema(t) and then by regular metathesis ἔκαμε (see Strunk 1967, 133-134). Thence, the stem καμ- could be used to form derivatives such as s-stem adjectives, reinforced by genuine inherited zero-grades like παθ- (ἔπαθον, ἀ-παθής). See Meiβner 2006, 199-203, and 186-197 on the derivation of s-stem adjectives from verbal formations.

28 Particularly relevant here are εὐθύσανον (HE 1955 Gow-Page), εὐφημον (εὐφυλλον Gow; HE 2245 Gow-Page) and εὐμάραθον (HE 2470 Gow-Page), all of which begin poems. See further the list at Gow and Page 1965, vol. 2, 309, and De Stefani 2005, 168-169, who sets this in the wider context of Leonidas’ word-formation; I am grateful to Davide Massimo who drew my attention to this.
appear at first blush. First, Hellenistic aesthetics made much of intense work and craftsmanship being expended on small or trivial (yet valuable) objects: Catullus 1.7, calling Cornelius’ history ‘learned and much worked upon’ (cartis | doctis ... et laboriosi) reflects a similar preoccupation; the trope is a familiar one in the poems of Posidippus, Callimachus and Theocritus. Second, the fact that the term is an unusual lexeme lends the poem an appropriate veneer of learning. At this juncture it is worth considering in more detail how an Hellenistic poet might have understood this word. Besides ἀκαμής in the shadowy corners of Lucian, we have a number of other formations to the same root: ἀ-κμής and ἀ-κάματος (also, e.g., εὐκάματος). The relationship of these forms to κάμνω was transparent in antiquity: the etymology is given at EM 49.28-32 Gaisford (this passage also cites the form καμῆς, ἀκαμής). As explained in footnote 27, there is no reason to suspect the form ἀκαμής in principle: it may simply have been a word seldom written into literature. Nonetheless, we might also reflect on the analogies working within Greek to produce the form; and in fact a precise proportional analogy can be stated:

-θάνατος: -θανής :: -κάματος : Χ, Χ = -καμής

In this case, the analogy works by considering the relationship between different second members of compounds. Since competing formations in -θανής and -θάνατος (e.g. δισθανής and ἀθάνατος) existed, forms such as εὐκάματος (first at E. Ba. 66) and ἀκάματος (in Homer and Hesiod, cf. e.g. Il. 5.4) can be used as the basis for creating a form in -καμής. This is also additional support for the notion that an ἀκαμής in Lucian can be the basis for conjecturing εὐκαμής, since the first members of these compounds likewise agree with those of the assumed models in -κάματος.

In any case, εὐκαμές is no less trivial than the offering of the paradosis, εὐκαμπές, ‘well-curved’, itself hardly a brilliant jeu d’esprit as an epithet for a hook;31 εὐκαμπές is, however, a natural enough slip, or indeed deliberate correction, for the relatively unfamiliar εὐκαμές in an exemplar. It is this consideration that, on balance, makes this proposal more likely than the metrical game proposed

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29 The bibliography is vast, and a complete enumeration will not be attempted: for Posidippus, e.g. Bing 2005, 119-121; for Callimachus, Asper 1997, 160-189; Porter 2011 is a helpful and critical overview of λεπτότης in Hellenistic poetics.
30 I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer for drawing my attention to this gloss.
31 Hence Geffcken 1896, 124 cannot legitimately point to the use of the term in Opp. H. 3.128 as proof of its existence in Leonidas.
32 Massimo 2018, 483 is right to point out (and illustrate with copious examples) the thematic resonance of εὐκαμπές in Greek literature to denote objects of high quality.
by Cusset and developed further in the opening of this article. Even though Leonidas’ metrical practice shows peculiarities, it must be admitted that a line opening with a deliberately unmetrical combination of syllables is unparalleled in literary epigram; and if deliberate, it was an experiment Leonidas never repeated, nor was it imitated by other literary epigrammatists—surely significant in the case of the poet “more imitated by later epigrammatists than any other Hellenistic author”. Furthermore, unusual word-formation, by contrast, is positively a calling-card of the poet, and has been extensively analysed and illustrated in this very poem: “leonideisch” is the laconic remark of Geffcken on ἰχθυδόκος (6.4.2) and τεχνοσύνα (6.4.8); Gow and Page comment on the semantic distinction between τέχνη and τεχνοσύνα, accepted reluctantly by Solitario; and Gigante draws attention to the further play in τεχνασθέντα (6.4.3).

This seems at odds with our earlier conclusion, that Leonidas’ use of metre in 6.4 was paralleled in other texts. Yet the fact is that none of these parallels was quite exact. They relied either on quotation or on some prosodical ambiguity in the Greek language. These prosodical ambiguities—different treatments of long vowels in hiatus, different treatments of mute plus liquid sequences—are of a different order to the metrical license alleged to permit ἀ(ν)δροτῆτα, which cannot have been sprachecht: the ‘rule’ that made preconsonantal nasals transparent for scansion purposes can only have been a literary license. As a result, none of the parallels was in fact as close as it appeared: instead, different phenomena conspired to produce similar looking results. It follows that the emendation of εὐκαμές to εὐκαμπές is the best solution.

To return to our opening reflections. This paper has expended a deal of energy to mount as strong as possible a case to justify an unmetrical text in terms of literary expression. It is important that this sort of explanation is not dismissed. It was possible to mount up parallels which served to confirm the possibility of an explanation, and furthermore these parallels suggested that we have not yet exhausted the exploration of ancient literary technique. If we then turned to emendation after all, it was because none of the parallels turned out to be precise. But emendation itself was shown to depend on literary and linguistic
analysis of texts in quite another department of literature. Emendation, then, is part of literary appreciation, not an adjunct to it—and not simply a means of getting one’s own way before the game has begun. Traditional philology draws on as sophisticated an approach to work on textuality as more modern methods do.

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