

NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS

ARCHILOCHUS FR. 119 W

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THE SCHOLIAST on Eur. *Med.* 679, ἀσκοῦ με τὸν προύχοντα μὴ λῦσαι πόδα, says that here *askos* is the equivalent of *gaster* and then quotes Arch. fr. 119 in support of this meaning:

καὶ πεσεῖν δρήστην ἐπ' ἀσκόν, κάπὶ γαστρὶ γαστέρα
προσβαλεῖν μηρούς τε μηροῖς.

The Euripides passage is obviously an iambic form of the oracle reputed to have been given to Aegeus when he consulted the Pythia about his childlessness:

ἀσκοῦ τὸν προύχοντα ποδάονα, φέρτατε λαῶν,
μὴ λύσης, πρὶν ἐς ἄκρον Ἀθηναίων ἀφίκηαι.

This is the version given in Apollodorus 3.15.6, although in one manuscript and in Plut. *Thes.* 3.5 πόδα, μέγα replaces ποδάονα, without, however, any change in the meaning.¹ As the scholiast on Euripides states and as the sequel makes clear,² both ποδάονα and πόδα serve as a *double entendre* for the penis.³ It also seems clear that in the oracle *askos* is a metaphor for the stomach, but there is less certainty about its meaning in Archilochus.

Most translators either follow the scholiast and render *askon* as "stomach" or simply retain the literal meaning of the word, although it is clear from their translations that they consider it a metaphor for stomach. Scherer, however, states (without any supporting evidence) that δρήστην and ἀσκόν denote "die männlichen und weiblichen Genitalien,"⁴ and West, with similar brevity, claims the correct translation is "be the labourer falling to his flask."⁵

Those who understand *askos* in Archilochus to be the equivalent of

¹For the different sources who cite the oracle and for the variant readings, see H. W. Parke and D. E. W. Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle* 2 (Oxford 1956) 48.

²Aegeus visited Pittheus, ruler of Troezen, before returning to Athens and the latter, discerning the true meaning of the oracle, caused Aegeus to become drunk and to sleep with his host's daughter. The result of this union was Theseus.

³In Epicrates fr. 10.5 Edm., χάλα πόδα, there is a similar *double entendre* involving "penis" and the nautical term "sheet."

⁴A. Scherer, "Die Sprache des Archilochos," *Archiloque* (Geneva 1963) 96.

⁵M. L. West, *CR* 20 (1970) 149. Since he does not elaborate on his translation, it is uncertain whether he sees here a reference to sexual activity or to drinking.

gaster have the support of the oracle and the scholiast on Euripides, and such an interpretation is at first glance attractive, especially since the equivalence of the two words is elsewhere attested. We see this, for example, in Ar. *Ach.* 1000–1001, $\delta\varsigma\ \delta'\ \alpha\upsilon\ \epsilon\kappa\pi\acute{\iota}\eta\ |\ \pi\rho\acute{\omega}\tau\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma,\ \alpha\sigma\kappa\acute{\omicron}\nu\ \text{Κτησιφ\acute{\omega}\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma}\ \lambda\acute{\eta}\psi\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota$, on which the scholiast comments, $\omega\varsigma\ \pi\alpha\chi\upsilon\varsigma\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \pi\rho\omicron\gamma\acute{\alpha}\sigma\tau\omega\rho\ \delta\ \text{Κτησιφ\acute{\omega}\nu}\ \sigma\acute{\kappa}\omega\pi\tau\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota$, and in Antiphanes fr. 19 Edm., $\tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron\nu\ \omicron\upsilon\tau\eta\ |\ \delta\iota'\ \omicron\iota\upsilon\omicron\phi\lambda\upsilon\gamma\iota\alpha\upsilon\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \pi\acute{\alpha}\chi\omicron\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \sigma\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma\ |\ \alpha\sigma\kappa\acute{\omicron}\nu\ \kappa\alpha\lambda\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\ \pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma\ \omicron\upsilon\pi\iota\chi\acute{\omega}\rho\iota\omicron\iota$.⁶ The chief objection, however, is the tautology which then results in view of *gaster* which follows immediately in the fragment. This tautology might be partially removed if *askos* were taken to mean “pot-belly,” as the examples just quoted suggest, but there remains sufficient similarity in meaning between *askos* and *gaster* to give one pause.

The scholiast on Euripides, after quoting the oracle, adds $\alpha\sigma\kappa\omicron\upsilon\ \omicron\upsilon\tau\eta\varsigma\ \gamma\alpha\sigma\tau\rho\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$, but a little farther on, immediately before he cites the Archilochus fragment, he gives a slightly different explanation, $\alpha\sigma\kappa\acute{\omicron}\nu\ \tau\omicron\iota\omicron\upsilon\tau\eta\ \lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\iota\ \tau\omicron\nu\ \pi\epsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\ \tau\eta\eta\ \gamma\alpha\sigma\tau\acute{\epsilon}\rho\alpha\ \tau\omicron\pi\omicron\nu$. It may be that by this vague periphrasis the scholiast is indicating that he understands *askos* in Archilochus as a metaphor for the genitalia.⁷ This meaning seems not to be attested elsewhere, but the use of similar words suggests that it is possible. Wine can be used metaphorically of vaginal secretion⁸ and various vessels or containers can denote the genitalia. Both Gow and Dover, for example, suggest in their commentaries the possibility that $\pi\acute{\eta}\rho\alpha$, “leather pouch,” in Theoc. 15.19 may be a metaphor for the pubic area,⁹ and West’s explanation of Arch. fr. 46, $\delta\iota\acute{\epsilon}\xi\ \sigma\omega\lambda\eta\eta\omicron\varsigma\ \epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\gamma\omicron\varsigma$, as a reference to the male and female genitalia is attractive.¹⁰ Another vessel which can have the same *double entendre* is $\tau\rho\acute{\upsilon}\beta\lambda\iota\omicron\nu$ (cf. Ar. *Eccl.* 847), and I suspect that other similar examples could be found.

The meaning of $\delta\rho\eta\sigma\tau\eta\eta$ is no less difficult. The scholiast explains it with the words $\delta\rho\acute{\alpha}\sigma\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\ \tau\iota$ ($\delta\rho\acute{\alpha}\sigma\omicron\upsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\ \tau\iota$ Schwartz) and commentators have attributed a variety of meanings to it. We have already mentioned the proposals of Scherer and West, and to these may be added Kirkwood’s “and to fall upon her slavish bag,”¹¹ Tarditi’s “e cadere sopra un otre

⁶Cf. also Pl. *Symp.* 190d.

⁷It is perhaps merely a coincidence that *topos* can denote the female genitalia (see LSJ s.v.), since otherwise we would expect $\upsilon\pi\acute{\omicron}$ rather than $\pi\epsilon\rho\acute{\iota}$, as in Longus 3.11, $\tau\acute{\alpha}\ \upsilon\pi\acute{\omicron}\ \gamma\alpha\sigma\tau\acute{\epsilon}\rho\alpha$.

⁸See M. L. West, *Studies in Greek Elegy and Iambus* (Berlin 1974) 142.

⁹Cf. Arist. fr. 273 Edm., $\tau\omicron\ \delta\acute{\epsilon}\ \pi\omicron\rho\rho\eta\epsilon\iota\omicron\nu\ \text{Κύλλου}\ \pi\acute{\eta}\rho\alpha$.

¹⁰West (above, note 7) 142. Although there seems to be no other example of $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ referring to the genitalia, the word denotes “womb” in Hippoc. *Epid.* 6.5.11 and “stomach” in Timotheus fr. 791.63 PMG, and $\sigma\omega\lambda\eta\eta$ signifies “penis” in Sophron fr. 24 K. Cf. also $\sigma\acute{\iota}\phi\omega\upsilon$ in Eur. *Cycl.* 439.

¹¹G. M. Kirkwood, *Early Greek Monody* (Ithaca 1974) 41. He states that the word

eccitato" (fr. 112), Adrados' "y caer sobre el odre dispuesto a hacer algo" (fr. 205), Edmonds' "et impigrum in utrem cadere" (fr. 72), Lasserre-Bonnard's "et me jeter sur cette outre ardente à la besogne" (fr. 90), and Treu's "drauf zu wildem Tun sich stürzen" (fr. 72). As a glance at *LSJ* will show, the word is relatively uncommon, but the basic meaning is clearly "doer" or "worker." No other example seems to occur of *drestes* in a sexual sense, as Scherer proposed for Archilochus, but the use of *drao* and the analogy of similar words make it highly probable that Scherer was right to interpret *drestes* as "penis." The verb *drao* is several times used of sexual activity on the part of the male, e.g., *Anth. Pal.* 11.225.1, ἡ κλίνη πάσχοντας ἔχει δύο, καὶ δύο δρῶντας,¹² and various forms of *ergon* have a sexual connotation: cf. ἐργαστήριον "brothel," ἐργασία "prostitution," ἐργάτις (Arch. fr. 208) and ἐργάσιμος "prostitute," ἔργον "intercourse," and Headlam-Knox on Herodas 11. Cf. also πονεομένη in Arch. fr. 42.2, where sexual activity is almost certainly being described.¹³

One further point remains, the relationship between fr. 119 and fr. 118, εἰ γὰρ ὥς ἐμοὶ γένοιτο χεῖρα Νεοβούλης θιγέιν. Elmsley was the first to join the two fragments and several scholars have followed suit. From the viewpoint of syntax, the combination is attractive, but in the light of the interpretation given above of fr. 119 it seems unlikely that 119 could have followed immediately upon 118. Lasserre (fr. 89) combines the two fragments, but argues that χεῖρα is the subject of the infinitive, thereby enabling θιγέιν to take its normal genitive and at the same time giving the verse the coarser tone required by fr. 119. Others achieve the same effect by emending χεῖρα to χεῖρι (Elmsley) or χεῖρσι.¹⁴ Lasserre's syntax, though possible, is rather forced, and the objection to θιγγάνω governing an accusative is not valid. As Campbell points out, the accusative follows this verb in Alc. fr. 58.2 and in Soph. *Ant.* 546 (an additional example occurs in *Anth. Pal.* 12.208.6), and the accusative may have been written "to avoid using two genitives."¹⁵ Frr. 118 and 119 should, therefore, be

"probably means either 'runaway' (that is, slavish) or 'hardworking'," but the equivalence of δρηστής and δραπέτης appears only in Hesychius and only one example of each of the words δρηστήρ and δρηστis in the sense of "runaway" is cited in *LSJ*, neither before the Hellenistic period.

For πίπτω in an obscene context cf. Ar. *Pax* 885, Machon 257 Gow, and *Anth. Pal.* 12.206.2.

¹²Cf. also *Anth. Pal.* 12.210.1, 12.238.4, Crates fr. 21A.3 Edm., Longus 3.14.

¹³Cf. Hor. *Epod.* 8.19–20, quod ut superbo provocas ab inguine/ore adlaborandum est tibi.

¹⁴H. Della Casa, "Vindiciae Archilochiae," *Lanx Satura N. Terzaghi oblata* (Genoa 1963) 107.

¹⁵D. A. Campbell, *Greek Lyric Poetry* (London 1967) 154. Fr. 118 suggests to me something of the same poignancy that is present in Eur. *IA* 471, ἀδελφέ, δός μοι δεξιᾶς τῆς σῆς θιγέιν.

treated in isolation, the former referring to the time before the engagement was broken off and the latter not necessarily referring to Neoboule at all.¹⁶

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A NOTE ON PERICLES' LAST SPEECH

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IN HIS LAST SPEECH, Pericles urges the Athenians

λέναι... τοῖς ἐχθροῖς ὁμόσε μὴ φρονήματι μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ καταφρονήματι. αὖχνημα μὲν γὰρ καὶ ἀπὸ ἀμαθίας εὐτυχούς καὶ δειλῶ τινὶ ἐγγίγνεται, καταφρόνησις δὲ ὅς ἂν καὶ γνώμῃ πιστεῖται τῶν ἐναντίων προύχειν, ὃ ἡμῖν ὑπάρχει. καὶ τὴν τόλμαν ἀπὸ τῆς ὁμοίας τύχης ἢ ξύνεσις ἐκ τοῦ ὑπέρφρονος ἐχυρωτέραν παρέχεται, ἐλπίδι τε ἥσσαν πιστεύει, ἥς ἐν τῷ ἀπόρῳ ἡ ἰσχὺς, γνώμῃ δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων, ἥς βεβαιότερα ἢ πρόνοια.¹

"It is all very elaborate," says Gomme, "but not so obscure as Dionysios, *Thuc. iud.* 928, thinks and as some modern editors have made it."² Nevertheless, though Gomme explicates clearly and in detail the sense of the passage, I think he joins other commentators in failing to discern Thucydides' unorthodox and original technique of persuasive definition.³ A closer look at the passage will, I think, show Gomme's uneasiness about the treatment of *καταφρόνησις* here to be unwarranted.⁴

After the exhortation to face the enemy *μὴ φρονήματι μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ*

¹⁶Several reviewers of Lasserre's *Les épodes d'Archiloque* rejected his combination of the two fragments: cf. A. Colonna, *Doxa* 4 (1951) 78, A. Lesky, *AAHG* 7 (1954) 10, Q. Cataudella, *Paideia* 11 (1956) 63. A similar objection was already made by O. Crusius in *RE* 2 (1896) 494. West (above, note 7) 131, however, feels that *fr.* 118-120 could be combined, with the *ὥς* of 120.1 answering the *ὥς* of 118.

¹*Thuc.* 2.62.3-5. I follow the Oxford Text of Jones and Powell.

²A. W. Gomme, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides* 2 (Oxford 1970) 172; hereafter Gomme.

³On "persuasive definition" cf. A. W. H. Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility* (Oxford 1960) 38-40 and C. L. Stevenson "Persuasive Definitions," *Mind* (1938) 331 ff. It should be particularly noted, however, that according to Stevenson a persuasive definition gives a word a new meaning "without substantially changing its emotive meaning" (331). When Thucydides redefines *καταφρόνησις*, as we shall see, the most important change is the one that takes place in the emotive force.

⁴In commenting on another passage he remarks, "It would be juster to complain of ii, 62, 3-4 as a meaningless play on the word *καταφρόνησις*" (1.417).