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Archilochus fr. 130 West

Collectanea Philologica 2, 117-119

1995
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τοῖς ἔθεοις τε καὶ ἐνεκρόστατο πολλάκις μέν ἐκ κακῶν
ἀνδρας ὁρθοσιν μελαίνη κοιμάνοντες ἐπὶ χρόνιν,
πολλάκις δὲ ἀνατέρκουσι καὶ μᾶλ' ἐδ μεθρήκατοι
ὑπτίους, κείνος <δ'> ἐπειτα πολλά γίνεται κακά,
καὶ βλού χρήμα πλανάται καὶ νόου παρήκορος

Little need be said about the thought of this fragment, for it represents an outlook, extremely common in all periods of Greek literature, that life is full of vicissitude and that the gods or fate are responsible. Stobaeus, the source of our fragment, cites 63 examples in his chapter (4. 41) entitled 'Ὅτι ἀβεβαιος ἡ τῶν ἀνθρώπων εὐπραξία μεταπιπτούοης ῥάδιος τῆς τύχης and a multitude can be found in Jutta Krause's book, "Αλλοτε ἄλλος. Untersuchungen zum Motiv des Schicksalwechsels in der griechischen Dichtung bis Euripides (München 1976). Fr. 130 is also frequently included in the many anthologies on Greek lyric, but in spite of all this it may still be possible to contribute something, however modest, concerning three passages in the fragment.

1. The first passage is in v. 2 and involves the epithet (μέλαινα) given to earth. In an often-cited article Harvey surmises that "there must at some stage have been some deep religious association behind the word, which was doubtless forgotten even by the time of Homer, but which continued to make the adjective a regular concomitant of the word γη". Harvey raises the possibility that "the colour of rich soil is intended by μέλας".

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1 Some later examples can be found in P. W. van der Horst, The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocidides, Leiden 1978, p. 197.
and goes on to say that this "seems to suit" our passage and Theogenis 878. But an allusion to "rich soil" is surely inappropriate in the context of Archilochus' poem. Either the adjective is simply conventional, as is virtually certain in at least some of its occurrences, or it is intended to add an emotive element to the passage. The latter seems more probable to me. It is clear from the context that κειμένως does not mean simply "lying", but "lying prostrate" or "down and out", and one is reminded of passages such as Iliad 18. 461 ὁ δὲ κεῖται ἐπὶ χθονὶ δυμών ἄχρονον and 20. 483 ὁ δὲ ἐπὶ χθονὶ κεῖτο ταυταυτάς (of a corpse). The adjective may well contribute to this picture of despair because of the negative overtones often associated with it. In addition to the many examples of μέλαι as a description of death, it can also modify such nouns as οἷς (Iliad 4. 117), ἄνη (Aesch. Agam. 770), and ἀρά (Aesch. Septem 832).3

2. The main textual problem, apart from the opening words, is in v. 4. Stobaeus' κινοῦσι was emended to κλίνουσι (with heavy punctuation following it) by Valckenaer and this reading was adopted by many. At first glance it is an attractive emendation. The alteration is slight and the combination υπτίους κλίνουσι can be supported by such passages as ἀνακλίνως πέσεν ὑπτίος (Od. 9. 371), κατεκλίνη ὑπτίος (Pl. Phaedo 117e), and ἀνατρέπει αὐτοὺς καὶ κλίνει ὑπτίους (Aelian NA 6. 24). This reading, however, presents two stylistic problems. The less serious one is the asyndeton which results and which is difficult to defend. More serious is the fact that we are required to give καί the meaning "and", whereas normal Greek style would lead one to expect "even". Although the combination καί μάλ' εὐ does not seem to be attested elsewhere, καί μάλα is common and when followed by a participle regularly gives concessive force to it, as in Iliad 13. 152 or Theognis 1294. I have not been able to find a single parallel for the sequence-verb, καί ("and"), participle, verb-which results from Valckenaer's emendation. Consequently, West seems justified in accepting Blaydes' κείνοις and in eliminating the asyndeton by inserting δ'. A minor, additional advantage in this text is that υπτίους acquires greater force by being isolated in enjambement.4

3. West remarks that in the last verse "the change from plural to singular is harsh, though perhaps possible", and he adds that "more strange


4 There is a lengthy defense of Stobaeus' κινοῦσι by A. A. Nikitas, "Ἀρχιλόχου ἀπ. 58 D. (= 130 W.), "Archaiognosia" 1980, 1, pp. 237-260, but he does not take adequate account of the problem presented by καί.
is the conjunction of penury and mental derangement." Both are valid comments, but it should be pointed out that parallels can be found. There is a similar change from plural to singular in Theognis 381–382.

οδέ τι κεκριμένον πρὸς δαίμονός ἔστι βροτοῖσιν
οδὸς ὀδὸς ἤγετον ἱῶν ἀδανάτοιοιν ἄδοι

For the combination of penury and a distraught state of mind one can compare Rhianus fr. 1 Powell, a fragment whose general tenor is the same as that of Archilochus' lines. Vv. 3–4 describe one who βιότοιο [...] ἐπικεφαλής | στρεφάται (= βίου χρήμα πλανάται) and in v. 6 such a person is οδέ τι ἀδρασίας νοέειν ἐπος οδέ τι βέζαι. As Hopkinson states ad loc., "νοέειν suggests that he cannot even from his thoughts coherently, let alone give them expression".

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5 M. L. West, *Studies in Greek Elegy and Iambus*, Berlin 1974, p. 132. I think "derangement" is slightly too strong a term. The expression νόοο παρηρος probably means simply "distraught".