

## Archilochus' ῥυσμός: A Take on Fragments 128 and 129 West

Hristo Todorov<sup>1</sup>

*Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski  
Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology*

Received 31 March 2018 ▪ Revised 12 October 2018 ▪ Accepted 1 November 2018

### *Abstract*

The paper presents a new interpretation of Archilochus' fragments 128 and 129 West. It argues that the two fragments were part of the same poem. The argument is based on a narrative pattern underlying both fragments and on a new interpretation of the meaning of the word ῥυσμός in v. 7 of fragment 128 West as “a hostile temper or disposition”.

*Keywords:* Archilochus, reciprocity, ῥυσμός, *Doloneia*.

### 1. Introduction

The power of a paraenetic poem derives from some vivid scenario or from the expressive language through which it conveys its precepts; or from both, as is the case with the following tetrameters by Archilochus printed in modern editions as two separate fragments<sup>2</sup>:

Fragment 128 West

θυμέ, θυμή, ἀμηχάνοισι κήδεσιν κυκώμενε,  
†ἀναδευ δυσμενῶν† δ' ἀλέξο προσβαλὼν ἐναντίον  
στέρνον †ἐνδοκοισιν ἐχθρῶν πλησίον κατασταθεῖς  
ἀσφαλῆως· καὶ μήτε νικέων ἀμφάδην ἀγάλλο,·  
μηδὲ νικηθεῖς ἐν οἴκῳ καταπεσὼν ὀδύρεο,  
ἀλλὰ χαρτοῖσιν τε χαῖρε καὶ κακοῖσιν ἀσγάλα  
μὴ λίην, γίνωσκε δ' οἷος ῥυσμὸς ἀνθρώπους ἔχει.

“My heart, my heart, confounded by woes beyond remedy, rise up (?) and defend yourself, setting your breast against your foes by laying ambush (?) and standing steadfastly near the enemy. Do not exult openly in victory and in defeat do not fall down lamenting at home, but

<sup>1</sup> PhD student at Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia.

<sup>2</sup> West (1989) fr. 128-9, Tarditi fr. 105-6, Lassere fr. 118-9, Diehl fr. 67a-b.

let your rejoicing in joyful times and your impatient grief in bad times be moderate. Know what sort of hostile temper possesses men”<sup>3</sup>.

Fragment 129 West

σὺ γὰρ δὴ παρὰ φίλων ἀπάγγεαι

“for you are being strangled by your friends”

The poem may be read purely along gnomic lines, without reference to any particular event (real or fictional) or any performance occasion. However, this would mean to ignore a narrative, which pushes its way to render gnomes and didacticism only epiphenomenal.

- A narrative pattern underlies Archilochus’ exhortation to θυμός in fr. 128 and 129 West.
- The noun ῥυσμός in v. 7 of Archilochus’ fragment 128 West denotes a kind of hostile disposition, not a universal principle of nature or the world.
- Fragment 129 belongs to the same exhortation to θυμός as fragment 128 West.

If we follow the narrative, the question arises whether the war scenario elaborated in the poem is to be taken literally, or metaphorically<sup>4</sup>. On the one hand, even though it is clear that θυμός, the heart or the spirit, cannot literally “set breasts” against his foes, “stand steadfastly near the enemy” or “fall down at home”, the fragment never officially leaves the metaphor to enter non-figurative discourse or another metaphor<sup>5</sup> and as a result, the identification of θυμός with a warrior naturally suggests an identification of the speaker with a soldier. On the other hand, we are under the impression that the poem is not only about a war situation, or even not primarily about one. How is this achieved? The explanation, in my view, lies in the accent that is put on the emotional, motivational and strategic aspects of war, not on military action as such. These could be easily transferred to other social contexts, possibly, to fit a wide range of performance occasions<sup>6</sup>.

The text of the first fragment is in doubt concerning two points. The less problematic one is ἐνδοκοισιν in v. 3, virtually non-existent in other texts and justly corrected to ἐν λόχοισιν<sup>7</sup>. The real crux comes with ἀναδεν δυσμενῶν, where numerous solutions have been proposed<sup>8</sup>. Of

<sup>3</sup> The translation is by Douglas Gerber. I modified the translation of three phrases to bring it in accord with the interpretation presented here: †ἐνδοκοισιν ἐχθρῶν I translated as “by laying ambush(?)” (contrast Gerber’s “as they [the foes] lie in ambush(?)”); ἀσχάλα I translated as “[let your] impatient grief”, whereas Gerber has only “[let your] grief”; οἷος ῥυσμός ἀνθρώπους ἔχει I translated as “what sort of hostile temper possesses men”, whereas he translates “what sort of pattern governs mankind”. In the last modification, my translation is closer to that of J. M. Edmonds: “what sort of temper possess the man”.

<sup>4</sup> John Barron and Patricia Easterling include the poem among songs designed for the military drinking party, with the presupposition that the speaker is a soldier who is engaging in a genuine military exhortation. Cf. (Easterling & Knox, 1985: 121). According to (Rubin, 1981: 4) the speaker’s θυμός is anthropomorphised as a warrior only for a couple of verses, after which the battle metaphor is transformed into another one. For an entirely allegorical interpretation of the poem see (Theunissen, 2000: 173 ff.).

<sup>5</sup> *Contra* (Rubin, 1981). The war theme continues through vv. 4f. (cf. νικέων and νικηθείς). In v. 6 ἀλλά introduces a new message, but it is again on the same topic as the previous verses.

<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, we know nothing of the original performance setting of the poem, but precisely its diffused use of the war metaphor suggests that it might have targeted more than one context. Cf. (Steiner, 2012, esp. 38-40) on the intended wide range of performance occasions for fr. 13 West, a fragment that is often paralleled with ours.

<sup>7</sup> The apparent word ἐνδοκος is found in Hesychius’ lexicon with the meaning ἐνέδρα. Most likely, the word is taken only from one place – this corrupt passage in Archilochus – and the proposed meaning was initially a marginal gloss in the manuscript possessed by Hesychius or his source. Cf. (Jaeger, 1946). On the use of plural instead of singular of abstract nouns to denote single occasions cf. (Katsouris, 1977: 229).

<sup>8</sup> Cf. (Kamerbeek, 1961: 5; Nikitas, 1979: 34-43; Lomiento, 2000).

the two conjectures fulfilling the criteria of meter, sense, style and manuscript evolution at once, ἄνα τε δυσμενέων proposed by Anastasios Nikitas will be taken as a basis for this interpretation<sup>9</sup>.

At the beginning of fragment 128 the speaker confronts the ἀμήχανα κήδεα, the “woes beyond remedy”, by which his θυμός is confounded<sup>10</sup>. Their cause remains unnamed throughout the poem, but hints gradually pile up: first, we may think of the affliction described in v. 1 as similar to that warned against in v. 5; second, judging again retrospectively, this affliction might be caused by some κακά, as those mentioned in v. 6; and finally, if we accept fragment 129 to be part of the same poem, we may be fairly certain that the whole narrative (the κήδεα, as well as the guidelines for escaping from them) is propelled by an act of betrayal on behalf of the speaker’s friends.

For purposes of analysis, but only for such, we shall consider the paraenetic section of the poem (fr. 128, vv. 2-7) as composed of two parts: exhortation to counteract immediate danger (fr. 128, vv. 2-4) and long-term strategic advice (fr. 128, vv. 4-7).

## 2. Counteraction

The first part admits of several interpretations depending on the answer of two questions:

- (1) whether the λόχοι, the ambush, addressed by the aorist participles προσβαλῶν and κατασταθεῖς in vv. 2f. are taken to precede, to coincide with or to follow the κήδεα of v. 1<sup>11</sup>;
- (2) whether ἐχθρῶν in v. 3 is taken as genitivus subiecti or as genitivus obiecti, when regarded as a qualification of ἐν λόχοισι<sup>12</sup>.

---

<sup>9</sup> The criteria are fulfilled by Nikitas’ (1979, p. 39-43) ἄνα τε δυσμενέων δ’ and Lomiento’s (2000) ἀλλὰ δυσμενέων δ’. I prefer Nikitas’ text for the following reasons: (1) I find the evolution from \*ANATEΔΥΣΜΕΝΕΩΝ to αναδεδυσμενων, as explained by Nikitas, more likely than that from \*ΑΛΛΑΔΥΣΜΕΝΕΩΝ to αναδεδυσμενων, as explained by Lomiento: Nikitas’ explanation involves less permutations, and such that are more plausible. (2) The use of the “irregular” corresponsion of particles τε...δ’ might have more easily led to the confusion in the manuscripts than ἀλλὰ...δ’. (3) I suspect that this corresponsion – or rather a slightly different one, but with the very same function – has a more extensive use and a more systematic role in our poem than Nikitas has believed, which in turn would make its appearance in v. 2 even more likely. (4) ἄνα is more consistent with the parallels to the epic *Doloneia*, which I discuss in section 1.

<sup>10</sup> The expression κήδεα θυμοῦ is found in *Il.* 18.53. A very similar expression to ἀμήχανα κήδεα is found in *Od.* 2.79: ἀπρηκτοὶ ὠδύναι. The participle κυκώμενος is also a Homeric one (*Il.* 12.238 and 241; also 21.235, 240 and 324), appearing always to qualify moving water (ποταμός, κῦμα ποτάμου or θαλάσσης). Some scholars see a connection between κυκώμενος in v. 1 and ῥυσμός in v. 7, which is supposed to allude to the hypothetical primary meaning of ῥυσμός (“the running of a river”). See Kamerbeek (1961: 5). On states of anguish, ascribed to the heart or spirit in early Greek poetry, see Sullivan (1996).

<sup>11</sup> Aorist participles which express a circumstance of time are often used in such a way that the action expressed by the participle may temporally precede or coincide with the action expressed with the finite verb. For examples of both types see Seymour (1881, p. 93f.). The finite verb in v. 2 is ἀλέξ<εο> and the aorist participles, most naturally, should be taken to coincide (at some future point) with the action encouraged by this verb. We cannot, however, exclude the possibility for the aorist participles to refer to a point of time preceding or simultaneous with the moment of speaking, expressed by the present participle κυκώμενε in v. 1. Apart from their function to establish a particular narrative, the aorist participles may play their part in rendering the poem gnomic, as Nikitas (1979: 45, n. 81) has noted.

<sup>12</sup> ἐχθρῶν could be paired with πλήσιον and, perhaps less preferably, with ἐν λόχοισι. Cf. (Jaeger, 1946). Regardless of pairing, the question stands: who is laying the ambush – θυμός or his foes? An interpretation with *genitivus subiecti* is proposed by: Edmonds, 1931; Tarditi, 1968: 272; Lasserre & Bonnard, 1958: 39; West, 1993; Gerber, 1999: 167. An interpretation with *genitivus obiecti* is proposed by: Friedländer (1929:

Most of the emerging combinations lead to interpretations that are in a way viable, as I hope to show in the conclusion. However, the one in which λόγοι follow κήδεα and ἐχθρῶν is taken as *genitivus obiecti* particularly stands out: the speaker finds his θυμός in a state of utmost distress caused by a recent event, probably a kind of attack by people whom he calls δυσμενεῖς and ἐχθροί; as a result, he urges θυμός to pull himself together and counteract by laying an ambush, and thus guarantee his own safety. This interpretation is plausible in terms of both internal coherence, and rapport with a background of already existing narrative. The former will hopefully become clear in the course of the analysis, the latter deserves a separate discussion here.

In their study of the *Doloneia* (*Iliad* 10 or Κappa), Casey Dué and Mary Ebbott have restored ambush (λόχος) to its legitimate status as part of Homeric warfare and Homeric narrative. Not only is ambush not un-heroic, but it is also an indispensable part of any war (together with conventional battle, πόλεμος) and consequently, of many heroes’ biographies<sup>13</sup>. The way Archilochus unfolds the ambush metaphor in vv. 1-4 of our poem reminds us strikingly of the epic treatment of the ambush theme, particularly as instantiated in the *Doloneia*. Archilochus’ ἀμήχανα κήδεα signal a situation of despair (caused probably by a devastating attack of his enemies) that gives rise to the inevitability of counteracting not by conventional measures, but by λόχος<sup>14</sup>. In the *Doloneia*, anguish in the face of immediate danger is voiced consecutively by Agamemnon, Menelaus and Nestor<sup>15</sup>, and the noun κήδεα comes up in one of Agamemnon’s speeches<sup>16</sup>. In both *Doloneia* and Archilochus, despair leads to full mobilization of forces<sup>17</sup> and the decision to engage in resistance, not retreat<sup>18</sup>. Then the core ambush scene is in order<sup>19</sup>. The

---

378f.), Jaeger (1946), and Treu (1979: 71). Note, however, that Friedländer and Treu do not take into account the correction ἐν λόγοισι.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. (Dué & Ebbott, 2010: 31-49).

<sup>14</sup> “The decision to undertake a spying mission or an ambush is often born of a situation of desperation, or the need to defeat an enemy who was not or cannot be beaten in conventional battle.” And also: “[...] ambush is a strategy used when *polemos* tactics fail” (Dué & Ebbott, 2010: 70 and 98).

<sup>15</sup> Agamemnon: *Il.* 10.5-16, 47-52, 87-101; Menelaus: 25-8; Nestor: 118, 145, 160-161, 172-3. It is as if Archilochus’ κυκώμενε, alluding to the power of moving water, compresses into one word the description of Agamemnon’s anguish by the forceful natural-disaster simile in vv. 5-10 of the *Doloneia*.

<sup>16</sup> *Il.* 10.91-2: πλάζομαι ὦδ’ ἐπεὶ οὐ μοι ἐπ’ ὄμμασι νήδυμος ὕπνος // ἰζάνει, ἀλλὰ μέλει πόλεμος καὶ κήδε’ Ἀχαιῶν.

<sup>17</sup> Archilochus’ ἀνα τε at the beginning of v. 2 reminds of the consecutive scenes of waking in the *Doloneia*: *Il.* 10.32: βῆ δ’ ἴμεν ἀνστήσων; 55: εἶμι, καὶ ὄτρυνέω ἀνστήμεναι; 67: καὶ ἐγρήγορθαι ἄνωχθι; 138: ἐξ ὕπνου ἀνέγειρε; 146: καὶ ἄλλον ἐγείρομεν; 159: ἔγρευο Τυδέος υἱέ; 175-6: ἀλλ’ ἴθι νῦν Αἴαντα ταχὺν καὶ Φυλῆος υἱὸν // ἀνστήσον; 179: βῆ δ’ ἰέναι, τοὺς δ’ ἔνθεν ἀναστήσας ἄγεν ἦρωσ.

<sup>18</sup> In the *Doloneia* retreat is an option that is explicitly considered (*Il.* 10.147, 310f., 327, 398f.). In Archilochus, the expression ἀλέξ<εο> προσβαλὼν ἐναντίον στέρνον signals the decision to counteract.

<sup>19</sup> A particular feature of the ambush setting is highlighted both in the *Doloneia* and in Archilochus: the enemy is said to be near (cf. *Il.* 10.100: δυσμενεῖς δ’ ἄνδρες σχεδὸν εἶαται; 189f: πεδῖον δὲ γὰρ αἰεὶ τετράφαθ’, ὀππὸτ’ ἐπὶ Τρώων αἴοιεν ἰόντων; 221: ἀνδρῶν δυσμενῶν δῦναι στρατὸν ἐγγὺς ἐόντων Τρώων) – this is the imminent danger – and the ambusher should, in turn, go near the enemy to carry out his mission (cf. *Il.* 10.307f: ὅς τις κε τλαίη [...] // νηῶν ὠκυπόρων σχεδὸν ἐλθέμεν; 320: ἔμ’ ὄτρυνει κραδίη καὶ θυμὸς ἀγῆνωρ // νηῶν ὠκυπόρων σχεδὸν ἐλθέμεν); 394f: ἠνώγει δὲ μ’ ἰόντα θοῆν διὰ νύκτα μέλαιναν // ἀνδρῶν δυσμενῶν σχεδὸν ἐλθέμεν. In Archilochus, this thought is expressed by πλησίον in v. 3. As regards the description of the ambush scene itself, however, the *Doloneia* seems to depart both from the traditional narrative pattern and from Archilochus’ treatment of it, as it does not emphasize the wait (cf. Archilochus’ v. 3: κατασταθεῖς in the meaning of “physically and mentally endure the whole ambush”), but only the surprise attacks (*Il.* 10.349-69 and 482-501). The latter aspect, on the other hand, is entirely absent from Archilochus’ fragment.

success of the ambush guarantees at least a temporary escape from danger<sup>20</sup>. In the *Doloneia*, the success is followed by a glorious return and vibrant expressions of joy<sup>21</sup>. In our poem there is a marked difference on this point: the speaker in fr. 128 explicitly discourages display of joy as a part the overall strategy after the ambush (fr. 128, v. 4)<sup>22</sup>.

The question arises whether we are ready to commit ourselves to the stronger claim that the parallel between the *Doloneia* and Archilochus' fr. 128 amounts to a case of textual allusion, i.e. that Archilochus appealed to the text of the *Doloneia* or some other similar fixed text, or to the weaker, that he drew the theme of ambush out of the pool of oral tradition<sup>23</sup>. The short episode in Archilochus shares rather little with the traditional list of sub-themes that constitute the ambush theme<sup>24</sup>. Notably, the *Doloneia* does not include all traditional sub-themes either<sup>25</sup>. However, as I tried to show, there is a set of sub-themes, perhaps marginal to the tradition, that are common to both the *Doloneia* and Archilochus fr. 128 (anguish, mobilization, decisiveness, menace). What is more, these themes have been expounded through similar figures of expression in both texts. In such case, even if textual allusion is not far to seek, we should not rush to charge the fragment with aspirations of continuation or schemes of subversion. The *Doloneia* or a similar narrative might have been evoked for a reason, that has nothing to do with the appreciation or the rejection of its epic style and values (the principal axes of the continuation-subversion controversy). Some other significant aspect of narrative might have been prompted in order to enrich the audience's perception of the poem's imagery. For instance, by reminding his audience of the *Doloneia*, Archilochus might have intended to evoke the doubling of spying missions and ambushes so characteristic of its narrative<sup>26</sup>, thus representing the λόχοι, laid by θυμός, as a part of several successive moves of this kind<sup>27</sup>. This would be also in an accord with the sort of static-warfare strategy described in the letter part of the paraenesis.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Archilochus' ἀσφαλέως in v. 4 with the reaction of the Trojans in *Il.* 10.515-25.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *Il.* 10. 541f. and 577-9.

<sup>22</sup> In a nutshell, the strategy described in fr. 128, vv. 4-7, is one of defense and minimal reaction. This strategy corresponds strictly to the set goal – achieving safety (v. 4: ἀσφαλέως). Victory and defeat are considered only secondary and the excessive preoccupation with them is vividly warned against in vv. 4-5, as it might impair achieving the primary goal: displaying joy or grief, or indeed any emotion, could make θυμός vulnerable to new attacks. The *Doloneia*, on the other hand, following a typically epic manner, does not present three options (safety, victory and defeat), but only two (victory and defeat) in a framework of life-and-death struggle: *Il.* 10.174f: νῦν γὰρ δὴ πάντεσσιν ἐπὶ ξυροῦ ἴσταται ἀκμῆς // ἢ μάλα λυγρὸς ὄλεθρος Ἀχαιοῖς ἢ ἐ βιωῖναι. In this context, every victory shall be properly celebrated and every defeat – lamented. This peculiar motivational shift allows Archilochus to transfer the narrative of war to other social situations, where life and death are not at stake, but safety is to be valued more than victory and defeat.

<sup>23</sup> A brief recent overview of the relationship between Archilochus and the Homeric epic is found in (Swift, 2012: 140-2).

<sup>24</sup> “The sub-themes that constitute an ambush include: (1) selecting the best men as leaders and/or participants; (2) preparing and arming for the ambush; (3) choosing a location for the ambush; (4) the ambushers concealing themselves and enduring discomfort while they wait; (5) the surprise attack; (6) returning home” (Dué & Ebbott, 2010: 70). For Archilochus' poem sub-theme (1) is irrelevant, as the ambush is to be set by a θυμός. Traces of sub-themes (2) and (4) can be found, whereas sub-themes (3), (5) and (6) seem to be entirely absent.

<sup>25</sup> Theme (4) is entirely absent. For theme (3) there are only occasional hints.

<sup>26</sup> On “ambush doubling” see Dué and Ebbott (2010: 82).

<sup>27</sup> The ἀμήχανα κήδεα, as well as the hesitation about how to call the enemy (cf. n. 27-30) suggest that the attack which has triggered the κήδεα, might itself have been a surprise attack. And the overall strategy (vv. 4-7) of not disclosing one's own attitudes, while keeping a close eye on the other's (see section 3 of this essay) is also targeted at facilitating ambush warfare, rather than direct battle.

But before that, there is one last point in the first part that needs to be discussed. Why are the enemies called once *δυσμενεῖς* and once *ἐχθροὶ* within the span of two subsequent verses?<sup>28</sup> We can either assume that the two terms have different meanings, or that they are synonymous. To suppose that they denote different groups of enemies, is ungrounded, and furthermore, poses too great a complication, given that the straightforward identification of even one group seems difficult at this point. Another possibility would be that the second term, having a different meaning from that of the first, was deliberately introduced to suggest that the entire talk about enemies and warfare is only metaphorical: these enemies are not enemies from a foreign country, they are fellow-citizens, perhaps members of the speaker’s own circle; and respectively the ambush is not an act of war, but some kind of personal injustice or mistreatment within speaker’s own society<sup>29</sup>. This claim rests on the presupposition that *δυσμενής* is part of the war metaphor, whereas *ἐχθρός* is not<sup>30</sup>. But if we stick to the view that the poem never leaves the war metaphor, we might consider yet another possibility: the speaker, in a state of anguish, is uncertain about how to call these people and uses the two synonymous terms<sup>31</sup>, as if he is trying to reassure himself that this is the right qualification for them. This hypothesis appears particularly relevant if these people were his friends and he is being decisive about defining a new attitude towards them in the face of their hostile act against him<sup>32</sup>.

### 3. Long-term strategy

By *ἀσφαλέως* in v. 4 the battle is over, immediate danger is averted. It remains to be seen how the war should be fought from now on. The paraenesis takes the form of a thought experiment, in which different scenarios are played through, depending on the success of the *λόχοι* from vv. 3f. The rare corresponsion of particles *τε...δέ* continues to govern the exhortation up until the end of the fragment: cf. *μήτε...μηδέ* in vv. 4-5 and *ἀλλά...τε...καί...δ’* in vv. 6-7<sup>33</sup>. The stylistic

<sup>28</sup> *δυσμενέων* in v. 2 can be taken only as genitive plural of the adjective *δυσμενής* dependent on *ἐναντίον* as a preposition. If not dependent on *ἐναντίον*, it should be “mentally” taken as the object of *ἄλεξο*, which is grammatically an impossible construction (*ἄλεξομαι* governs the accusative). Cf. (Merone, 1960: 86). Or otherwise, *δυσμενέων* could be taken as an adjectival participle, but then we have to, again “mentally”, supply an object for *προσβαλὼν ἐναντίον στέρνων*. Cf. (Nikitas, 1979: 44).

<sup>29</sup> This interpretation is suggested by Nikitas (1979: 84), according to whom the qualification *ἐχθροὶ* is introduced to avoid misunderstanding of *δυσμενεῖς* as foes from a foreign country. They are rather “verhaßte, böse Mitmenschen” and the *λόχοι* are “Nachstellungen, [...] Ungerechtigkeiten, Beleidigungen, Mißhandlungen o.ä.”.

<sup>30</sup> Indeed *δυσμενής* is used in Homer and in the *Doloneia* in the prevalent meaning of “an enemy from a foreign country”. However, this use is not exclusive and the word may also denote the “internal” enemy: cf. *Od.* 6.184.

<sup>31</sup> They are synonymous in their denotation, but at the same time they describe the two opposite sides of the relation of enmity: *δυσμενής* means “hostile”, whereas *ἐχθρός* means “hated”. *δυσμενής* is used in the first place to refer to the attack by the enemies and *ἐχθρός* comes next to refer to *θυμός*’s reciprocal feeling and his counteraction.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Ammonius, *De adfinium vocabulorum differentia*, p. 63: *ἐχθρὸς πολέμιου καὶ δυσμενοῦς διαφέρει. ἐχθρὸς μὲν γὰρ ἔστιν ὁ πρότερον φίλος, πόλεμος δὲ ὁ μεθ’ ὅπλων χωρῶν πέλας, δυσμενής δὲ ὁ χρόνιον πρὸς τὸν ποτε φίλον τὴν ἔχθραν διατηρῶν καὶ δυσδιαλλάκτως ἔχων.*

<sup>33</sup> This sequence of particles may be analyzed as follows: *ἀλλά* signals the transition from the negative of vv. 4f. to the positive exhortation of v. 6f. (although qualified again by an intervening negative – *μη λήν* – in enjambment); *ἀλλά...τε* has a Homeric sounding to it, cf. (Merone, 1960: 66); *τε...καί* creates a connective corresponsion between the clauses *χαρτοῖσιν χαιρε* and *κακοῖσιν ἀσχάλα*, cf. (Denniston & Dover, 1966: 511-3); in the *τε...καί...δ’*-sequence, the *δ’* adds something distinct to what is expressed by the connective *τε...καί*, cf. (Denniston & Dover, 1966: 199ff.) and again, emphasis is put on the addition, much in the same way as in the *τε...δέ*-corresponsions of v. 2 and vv. 4f. Cf. (Nikitas, 1979: 40 ff.) Thus, in the last two verses of the

organization puts a strong emphasis on necessary actions in a scenario of defeat<sup>34</sup>, either because the speaker considers it the probable one, or because he wants to prepare his θυμός for the worst case.

In vv. 4f., counterproductive behavior is discouraged, whereas in vv. 6f. the right course of action is delineated. Precepts in both the negative and the positive exhortation are concerned at once with: (i) ensuring emotional and motivational preparedness, characterized by both adequacy and proportion (vv. 6f.); (ii) delivering action that does not show any kind of weakness as perceived from a social point of view (vv. 4f.)<sup>35</sup>; (iii) developing control over emotions and actions (vv. 6f.)<sup>36</sup>; and (iv) understanding a particular feature that is common to all people, the ῥυσμός.

The course of action endorsed in these lines takes the λόχοι-tactics of vv. 2f. to the level of war strategy in general: θυμός is advised to stand firm (compare ἄνα τε with μὴ καταπεσών), to engage in concealing (compare ἐν λόχοισιν with μὴ ἀμφάδην)<sup>37</sup>; to endure and be patient (compare κατασταθεις with ἀσχάλα μὴ λήην) and to focus on the minimally achievable (compare ἀσφαλέως with μὴ λήην). The whole strategy builds upon lying in wait: it is generally defensive, insofar as it encourages only reaction or counteraction, and in this it is also minimalistic<sup>38</sup>. Accordingly, the most essential part of it is not the way of counteracting itself, but the recognition of ῥυσμός, which might even spare the need of counteraction.

#### 4. ῥυσμός

Let us, then, consider in some detail the meaning of ῥυσμός. The majority of scholars contend that the noun – this is its first use in Greek literature – designates here an external power, independent of human volition, that is capable of determining the course of human life. Often this power is identified with fate, as it dictates the fluctuations between victory and defeat, success and failure, happiness and misery. Interpretations vary according to the degree of constancy and

---

fragment, three operations organize the paraenesis: (i) continuation: ensured by the use of imperatives and by the particle sequence τε...καί...δ'; (ii) emphasis: conveyed, on the one hand, by the accent on κακοῖσιν ἀσχάλα μὴ λήην due to its position in the ἀπὸ-κοινοῦ-construction of v. 6f. (Merone, 1960: 89), and on the other hand, by the accent on γίνωσκε οἷος ῥυσμός ἀνθρώπους ἔχει achieved through the δ' in v. 7; (iii) addition: the distinct message is added, once again, by the particle δ' in v. 7. This particle may be taken to create contrast, as it emphasizes the shift from emotion and action (χαῖρε and ἀσχάλα) to cognition (γίνωσκε). And besides, by pointing out that θυμός should be only knowing people's ῥυσμός (presumably without succumbing to it himself in his own behavior), δ' creates a contrast with what other people might be getting wrong in their behavior, i.e. they might not be following the precepts of v. 6f. to rejoice and grieve with patience under the right circumstances, and to be moderate in it.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. previous note on the use of particles: μηδὲ νικηθεὶς ἐν οἴκῳ καταπεσών ὀδύρεο is emphasized by the μηδέ; κακοῖσιν ἀσχάλα μὴ λήην is emphasized by its position in the ἀπὸ-κοινοῦ-construction of v. 6f.; γίνωσκε οἷος ῥυσμός ἀνθρώπους ἔχει is emphasized through δ'.

<sup>35</sup> Both boasting around, when victorious, and being out of sight, when defeated, show immoderate reactions, which constitute a strategic disadvantage.

<sup>36</sup> The latter aspect comes forward especially in ἀσχάλα μὴ λήην, where the verb means “to be distressed”, “to resent” or “to grieve” with a strong connotation of impatience or proneness to inconsiderate/indecent behavior. Cf. *Il.* 2.293, 24.403 and 22.412.

<sup>37</sup> Concealing involves both kinds of inconspicuous behavior: not showing off excessively and not dropping out of war / social life.

<sup>38</sup> Fränkel (1951: 196): “Aber der Märchentraum des Epos ist ausgeträumt. Beherrschtheit ist für Archilochos nicht mehr ein Mittel, um einen phantastischen Endsieg über alle Feinde zu gewinnen; sie soll nur Haltung und Widerstandskraft verleihen, und die allzu heftigen Schwingungen des Gemüts abdämpfen”.

regularity (or respectively, unsteadiness) they ascribe those fluctuations<sup>39</sup>. In the case of a regular rhythm, the θυμός is supposed to “understand the pattern that governs mankind” and adjust his behavior to this pattern. In the case of a chaotic rhythm, θυμός has to accept that there is nothing permanent in human affairs and fate can turn life upside down any time. In both cases, γίνωσκε δ’ οἷος ῥυσμός ἀνθρώπους ἔχει should be taken as the motive the speaker points out in order to justify the precepts of vv. 4-7: only after one has recognized the vicissitudes of life, can he adequately direct his affections and temper them. According to this reading, γίνωσκε continues the line of the previous imperatives and at the same time plays the role of a prerequisite for them; the particle δέ is used instead of γάρ<sup>40</sup>; the relative adjective οἷος refers to the essence and qualities of the ῥυσμός (but particularly if ῥυσμός is taken as a scalar noun, οἷος might imply a reference to the degree of ῥυσμός); ἀνθρώποι are introduced to generalize the statement and thus make it gnomic; and ἔχω is in the usual meaning of “have control of”<sup>41</sup>.

The traditional reading seems to have its grounds as seen from the perspective of other poems by Archilochus, expressing the same idea of instability and transitions from one state to its contrary: fr. 13 West, vv. 7-9; fr. 122 West; fr. 130 West. Further, this idea is deeply rooted in Greek thinking and often find its expression in more or less established proverbs about the periodic passage through phases of happiness and misery within the span of life: ἐκεῖνο πρῶτον μάθε, ὡς κύκλος τῶν ἀνθρωπῆϊων ἐστὶ πρηγμάτων, περιφερόμενος δὲ οὐκ ἔῃ αἰεὶ τοὺς αὐτοὺς εὐτυχέειν (Hdt. i. 107. 2) or κύκλος τὰ ἀνθρώπινα πράγματα (Arist *Phys.* iv. 14, 223b24 and Ps.-Arist. *Probl.* xvii. 3, 916a28)<sup>42</sup>.

However, the traditional reading faces some problems as regards consistency with the rest of the poem. First, the poem is a paraenesis and as such, is not easily reconciled with a deterministic worldview. On the proposed terms, it assumes a consolatory tone, which is at odds with its exhortative force: how does the call for counteraction, resistance and endurance bear with resignation in the face of ῥυσμός, be it a resignation of the μηδὲν-ἀγαν-kind? Second, we may infer that θυμός does not need to be reminded of the power of ῥυσμός, as he has already been acquainted with the possibilities of victory and defeat, of success and failure by vv. 4f. at the latest. Why should this motive appear again, in a generalized form, at the end of the poem? Finally and most importantly, the noun ῥυσμός/ῥυθμός has never been attested in the meaning neither of a fixed natural principle governing human affairs, nor of a unpredictable swing between ups and downs<sup>43</sup>. The often pushed analogy with Ionian philosophy, apart from being anachronistic, never points to a use of ῥυσμός/ῥυθμός as a natural principle.

The chronologically closer uses of ῥυσμός/ῥυθμός by Anacreon and in the Theognidean corpus attest to another meaning of the word, namely “character” or “disposition”<sup>44</sup>.

<sup>39</sup> For a more “regular” ῥυσμός see: Pfeiffer (1929: 140), Jaeger (1934: 174f.), Fränkel (1951: 196), Wolf (1955: 109), Lesky, 1971: 138f.), Rankin (1977: 80f, 91), Nikitas (1979: 45), Rubin (1981: 5), Schadewaldt (1989: 124f.), and West (1974: 131), who even proposes the view that ῥυσμός should be conceived as a specific figure, the circle, following Zuntz (1971: 320f.). For a more “chaotic” ῥυσμός see Schroeder (1918: 324f.), Wehrli (1931: 14, n. 2), and Kirkwood (1974: 36).

<sup>40</sup> Cf. (Denniston & Dover, 1966: 169f.).

<sup>41</sup> On two possible meanings of ἔχω along the lines of this interpretation cf. (Theunissen, 2000: 181f.) in an attempt to harmonize the “regular” and the “chaotic” ῥυσμός.

<sup>42</sup> There are also many other instances: Eur. *Iph. A.*, 161ff., Aesch. *Ag.* 928ff., Soph. *Tra.* 1ff., Eur. *Andr.* 100 ff., Eur. *Tro.* 510 and so on.

<sup>43</sup> Wolf (1955: 108) cites examples from Democritus, where ῥυσμός means a fixed or established order, but in these cases social, not natural order is intended. The only place, known to me, that comes close to a similar principle involving swing between ups and downs is Menander, *Georgos*, fr. 2: τὸ τῆς τυχῆς γὰρ ῥεῦμα μεταπίπτει ταχῶς, but here ῥεῦμα is the principle, not ῥυσμός.

<sup>44</sup> Anacreon PMG 416; Thgn. 963-70.

Some scholars have proposed that ῥυσμός should be taken in this sense also in Archilochus' poem<sup>45</sup>. Their view is in better accord with the interpretation developed here: tempering and concealing one's own attitudes in the course of war goes along with understanding the "disposition" of the other players. This latter aspect is even more important, as it could entirely prevent direct conflict with its unclear outcomes. This explains its emphatic position in our poem – emphatic with respect not only to the exhortation of vv. 6f., but also to the whole narrative: if only θυμός had known people's dispositions, he might not have been pressured to counteract by laying ambush in the first place. On this account, then, the words of the last verse of fr. 128 should also be interpreted differently: γινώσκω means to recognize people's disposition, which in turn can be concealed in the same way, as θυμός is urged to conceal his own; δέ is the emphatic extension of the particle series ἀλλά...τε...καί in v. 6; the relative adjective οἷος refers to the qualities of people's ῥυσμός, again supposed to be disguised<sup>46</sup>; ἄνθρωποι is not merely a gnomic generalization, it signals an important turn in the poem – the term is meant to comprise not only the foes of vv. 2f., but also other people, who might potentially become foes; and ἔχω is in the familiar inverted sense appearing often with nouns denoting a particular state, mental or physical<sup>47</sup>.

ῥυσμός in Archilochus' fr. 128 W allows us to further qualify the meaning of this word in its earliest ethical uses. It denotes: (i) a more or less durable mental state (ii) which is always ascribed to people with malicious attitude towards the speaker<sup>48</sup> and (iii) the presence and qualities of which cannot be easily inferred, as this requires time and/or some special cognitive ability.

### 5. Fragment 129 West

Fr. 129 is an incomplete trochaic tetrameter, short by little less than a colon<sup>49</sup>. It is not only metrically, but also semantically incomplete judging from the stand-alone γάρ δῆ. The first part of the verse is likely to have been in enjambment with v. 7 of fr. 128 West or another verse of the same poem<sup>50</sup>. The pronoun σὺ refers to the speaker's θυμός, as we learn from Aristotle's testimony<sup>51</sup>. This is already a serious ground to suppose that it was part of the same poem beginning with fr. 128, as invocations to θυμός are not altogether too common in Greek poetry, not to mention Archilochus. Another serious ground is the fact that Aristotle qualifies θυμός as ἀήττητος ("unconquered, nor beaten"), strongly suggesting a military context for the fragment, similar to that of fr. 128. Even more so, if we take it together with the whole Aristotelian passage that includes the Archilochus quotation among other quotations on war with friends.

If we welcome the fragment into the poem, a ring composition arises as regards the address to θυμός. The initial quandary about κήδεα is finally resolved: they are caused by friends

<sup>45</sup> Petersen (1917: 12), Benveniste (1971: 284), and Calame (1993: 14).

<sup>46</sup> Cf. the use of this word in *Il.* 2.192: οὐ γάρ πω σάφα οἶσθ' οἷος νόος Ἀτρεΐωνος.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. LSJ, s.v. ἔχω and also (Dué & Ebbott, 2010: 231f.), who see a special role of this inverted use in the *Doloneia* and similar episodes.

<sup>48</sup> This is the case both in Anacreon and the Theognidean συλλογή.

<sup>49</sup> The missing part should be of the form: - v - x -.

<sup>50</sup> This is to be judged from the little space in the beginning of the verse, as well as from the frequent use of enjambment in this poem.

<sup>51</sup> Arist. *Pol.* vii. 6, 1328a: "πρὸς γὰρ τοὺς συνήθεις καὶ φίλους ὁ θυμός αἶρεται μᾶλλον ἢ πρὸς τοὺς ἀγνώστους, ὀλιγωρεῖσθαι νομίσας. διὸ καὶ Ἀρχιλόχος προσηκόντως τοῖς φίλοις ἐγκαλῶν διαλέγεται πρὸς τὸν θυμόν: "σὺ γὰρ δὴ παρὰ φίλων ἀπάγχει. καὶ τὸ ἄρχον δὲ καὶ τὸ ἐλεύθερον ἀπὸ τῆς δυνάμεως ταύτης ὑπάρχει πᾶσιν: ἀρχικὸν γὰρ καὶ ἀήττητον ὁ θυμός". On Aristotle citing Archilochus see Moraitou (1994: 123).

who have turned into foes. Initially, the speaker, stricken by surprise, is trying to establish a new qualification for them by calling them *δυσμενεῖς* and *ἐχθροί*. Then they are included among the *ἄνθρωποι* as in anticipation of the final disclosure of them previously being friends. Thus, the *κῆδεα* at the beginning reveal not only strategic concerns on how to lead this particular war, but more general ethical concerns on how to treat one's friends, even in a situation of betrayal<sup>52</sup>.

## 5. Conclusion

In this interpretation, I have argued: (i) that a narrative pattern underlies Archilochus' exhortation to *θυμός*; (ii) that *ῥυσμός* in v. 7 of fr. 128 denotes a kind of hostile disposition, not a universal principle of nature or the world; (iii) that fr. 129 West belongs to the same exhortation to *θυμός* and ultimately explains what event propels the narrative of the poem. I believe that these three claims hold, even if we assume other interpretations of the poem. For instance, we may take the *λόχοι* of v. 3 to precede the *κῆδεα* of v. 1. This is a less plausible scenario in terms of internal coherence, because we will be forced to detach *νικέων* and *νικηθεῖς* of v. 4f. from the *λόχοι*-situation in v. 3 (which will have already ended neither with victory, nor with defeat, but with *ἀσφάλεια*) and assign their reference to some other battle not named in the poem. Or we may take the *κῆδεα* of v. 1 to temporally coincide with *λόχοι* of v. 3 (whether laid by *θυμός* or by the foes). Then, *θυμός* will be found in the middle of the *λόχοι*-situation, which is, in fact, very good reason for the *κῆδεα* of v.1. However, in this scenario the appeal to the ambush theme from the *Doloneia* or even from traditional narrative seems less plausible, if plausible at all, whereas we have seen that this appeal has its basis both on the thematic and the linguistic level. In any case, the poem should be taken to be paraenetic and not consolatory, and to encourage reciprocity towards the newly become enemies.

## Acknowledgments

This work was financially supported by the Austrian agency for international mobility and cooperation in education, science and research (OeAD). I express my gratitude to Stefan Hagel and Andreas Pülz who welcomed me as an exchange student in the Institute for the Study of Ancient Culture (IKAnt) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences in the period covered by the OeAD Ernst Mach Grant – worldwide, October 2017 – June 2018. I am very grateful to Stefan Hagel, who applied his discerning eye to this manuscript and led me to continue thinking about the two Archilochean fragments beyond what I have written here.

Conflicts of interest: none.

---

<sup>52</sup> The message of the poem ultimately boils down to an ethics of retribution. Thus it is similar to that of fr. 23 West, v. 14ff. and fr. 126 West. Cf. also (Gentili, 1984: 249).

## References

- Benveniste, E. (1971). The notion of “rhythm” in its linguistic expression. In: *Problems in General Linguistics* (pp. 281-288).
- Calame, C. (1993). Rythme, voix et mémoire de l’écriture en Grèce classique [Rhythm, voice and memory of writing in classical Greece]. In: R. Pretagostini (Ed.), *Tradizione e innovazione nella cultura greca da Omero all’eta ellenistica: Scritti in onore di Bruno Gentili. Vol. 2.* (pp. 785-799). Roma.
- Denniston, J. D., & Dover, K. J. (1966). *The Greek particles*. Oxford.
- Diehl, E. (1954). *Anthologia Lyrica Graeca. Fasc. 3. Iamborum Scriptores* [Anthology of Greek lyric. Vol. 3. Writers of iambs]. Leipzig.
- Gerber, D. E. (Ed.) (1999). *Greek iambic poetry: from the seventh to fifth centuries BC*. Cambridge, MA.
- Du , C., & Ebbott, M. (2010). *Iliad 10 and the poetics of ambush: A multitext edition with essays and comments*. Washington, DC.
- Easterling, P. E., & Knox, B. M. W. (1985). *The Cambridge history of classical literature. Vol. I. Greek Literature*. Cambridge.
- Edmonds, J. M. (Ed.). (1931). *Greek elegy and iambus. Volume II*. Cambridge, Mass.
- Fr nkel, H. (1951). *Dichtung und Philosophie des fr hen Griechentums: eine Geschichte der griechischen Epik, Lyrik und Prosa bis zur Mitte des f nften Jahrhunderts* [Early Greek poetry and philosophy: A history of Greek epic, lyric, and prose to the middle of the fifth century]. New York.
- Friedl nder, P. (1929). Retractationes [Corrections]. *Hermes*, 64(3), 376-384.
- Gentili, B. (1984). *Poesia e pubblico nella Grecia antica: da Omero al V secolo* [Poetry and its public in Ancient Greece: From Homer to the fifth century]. Laterza.
- Jaeger, W. (1934). *Paideia: Die Formung des griechischen Menschen* [Paideia. The ideals of Greek culture]. Berlin.
- Jaeger, W. (1946). Archilochus, Fr. 67. *The Classical Review*, 60(3), 103.
- Kamerbeek, J. C. (1961). Archilochea [Archilochean themes]. *Mnemosyne*, 14(1), 1-15.
- Katsouris, A. G. (1977). Plural in place of singular. *Rheinisches Museum*, 120, 228-240.
- Kirkwood, G. M. (1974). *Early Greek monody: the history of a poetic type*. Ithaca/London.
- Lasserre, F., & Bonnard, A. (1958). *Archiloque. Fragments. Texte  tabli par F. L., traduit et comment  par A. B.* [Archilochus. Fragments. Text established by F. L., translated and explained by A. B.]. Paris: Les Belles Lettres.
- Lesky, A. (1971). *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur* [History of Greek literature]. Bern/M nchen.
- Lomiento, L. (2000). Archil. fr. 128, 2 W.<sup>2</sup> (= 105, 2 Tard.). *Quaderni Urbinati Di Cultura Classica*, 64(1), 39-41.
- Merone, E. (1960). *Aggettivazione, sintassi e figure di stile in Archiloco* [Use of adjectives, syntax and figures of style in Archilochus]. Napoli.
- Moraitou, D. (1994). *Die  u erungen des Aristoteles  ber Dichter und Dichtung au erhalb der Poetik* [Aristotle’s statement about poets and poetry beyond the *Poetics*]. Stuttgart / Leipzig: Teubner.
- Nikitas, A. A. (1979). Zu Archilochos, Fragm. 67a D. (=128 West) [On Archilochus, Fragm. 67a D. (=128 West)]. *W rzburger Jahrb cher F r Die Altertumswissenschaft*, 5, 33-46.

- Petersen, E. A. H. (1917). *Rhythmus* [Rhythm]. Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung.
- Pfeiffer, R. (1929). Gottheit und Individuum in der frühgriechischen Lyrik [Deity and individual in early Greek lyric poetry]. *Philologus*, 137-152.
- Rankin, H. D. (1977). *Archilochus of Paros*. Noyes Press.
- Rubin, N. F. (1981). Radical semantic shifts in Archilochus. *The Classical Journal*, 77(1), 1-8.
- Schadewaldt, W. (1989). *Die frühgriechische Lyrik (Tübinger Vorlesungen Band 3)* [Early Greek lyric poetry (Tübingen lectures)]. Frankfurt am Main.
- Schroeder, O. (1918). ΠΥΘΜΟΣ. *Hermes*, 53(3), 324-329.
- Seymour, T. D. (1881). On the use of the aorist participle in Greek. *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, 12, 88-96.
- Steiner, D. (2012). Drowning Sorrows: Archilochus fr. 13 W. in its Performance Context. *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, 52, 21-56.
- Sullivan, S. D. (1996). Disturbances of the mind and heart in early Greek poetry. *L'Antiquité Classique*, 65, 31-51.
- Swift, L. (2012). Archilochus the “anti-hero”? Heroism, flight and values in Homer and the new Archilochus fragment (P. Oxy LXIX 4708). *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 132, 139-155.
- Tarditi, G. (1968). *Archilochus: fragmenta edidit, veterum testimonia collegit Iohannes Tarditi* [Archilochus: Fragments edited, ancient testimonies collected by Giovanni Tarditi]. Roma.
- Theunissen, M. (2000). *Pindar: Menschenlos und Wende der Zeit* [Pindar: Human fate and the turn of time]. München.
- Treu, M. (1979). *Archilochos: Griechisch und Deutsch* [Archilochus: Greek and German]. München.
- Wehrli, F. (1931). *Lathe biosas*. Leipzig/Berlin.
- West, M. L. (1974). *Studies in Greek elegy and iambus*. Berlin/New York.
- West, M. L. (1989). *Iambi et Elegi Graeci Ante Alexandrum Cantati. Volumen I. Archilochus, Hipponax, Theognidea* [Greek iambs and elegies sung before Alexander. Vol. I. Archilochus, Hipponax, Theognidean Courpus]. Oxford.
- West, M. L. (1993). *Greek lyric poetry*. Oxford.
- Wolf, E. (1955). Zur Etymologie von ῥυθμός und seiner Bedeutung [On the etymology of ῥυθμός and its meaning]. *Wiener Studien, Zeitschrift Für Klassische Philologie*, 68, 99-119.
- Zuntz, G. (1971). *Persephone: Three essays on religion and thought in Magna Graecia*. Oxford.

