

## A NEW POEM OF ARCHILOCHUS: P. COLON. INV. 7511

The Cologne papyrus Inv. 7511 (21×10 cm, second century) was first published by R. Merkelbach and M. L. West, in *ZPE* 14 (1974) 97—113 and plate V. It is of great importance since it comprises the first known almost complete poem of Archilochus (35 lines), in addition to the beginning of another one (5 lines). The poem contains a dialogue between the younger sister of Neobule, daughter of Lycambes and Amphimedo (lines 1—5, the beginning of the girl's speech is missing), and the young Archilochus (lines 6—27), and ends with a selective description of a love-affair between them (lines 28—35). Merkelbach saw in the poem a hate story, a vengeance of Archilochus on Lycambes and Neobule. I am in strong disagreement with his interpretation. I think we have to do with a fresh and naive love story of Archilochus.

My edition of the papyrus with a commentary will appear in *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* XVI (1975). Since there is no sufficient space on the papyrus for Merkelbach's restoration of [σπ]είσομαι in line 13, I think his interpretation of the whole poem as a *hate* story „... offenbar nur um sich an Lykambes und Neobule zu rächen“ must be discarded. But if we read in line 13 [π]είσομαι ὡς με κέλευαι; („Shall I hearken even as you bid me?“), while bearing in mind the Homeric phrase πείσομαι ὡς σὺ (or ὡς με) κελεύεις (*Iliad* XXIII. 96), then the way may be open for the interpretation of the poem as a *love* story instead. Archilochus falls in love with the younger daughter of Lycambes and Amphimedo (cf. perhaps Archilochus Fr. 38 West: οἴην Λυκάμβεω παῖδα τὴν ὑπερτέρηγν [sc., e.g., φιλέω], „I love only the younger daughter of Lycambes“), and he asks her to satisfy his sexual desire. He treats the girl as an „honest woman“ (cf. ἐσθλή γυνή in line 7), and he claims to know a special form of sexual pleasure given to young me by Aphrodite. This special form seems to be a *coitus interruptus*, which will save the girl from premarital pregnancy. The lover will „light“ upon the girl's *mons Veneris* (v. 15 f. σχήσω γὰρ ἔς... κήτους) Consequently, Archilochus does show certain consideration for the beloved girl.

The description of the sexual act itself in lines 28—35 is selective and euphemistic. It is so due to a conventional device of Greek lyric poets.

In continuation I am giving a free translation of the papyrus as restored by me. „. . .while you abstain completely; but engage in a requited [love]. If, however, you are so eager and your heart's desire drives you on, there is a girl in our house, beautiful and delicate, who now vey much yearms for [you]. I would say she has shape without blemish: [make] her [your beloved wife].”

(6) So much she said, but I replied to her: „Daughter of Amphimedo, that noble and [chaste] lady whom now the dank earth covers: there are many forms of pleasure which Aphrodite gives to young men apart from the marriage rite; one such will do now. As for marriage, with god's help you and I will consider it at our ease some day, when [my cheeks are bronzed].

(13) Shall I obey your request? An immense [desire, however, urges] me on to come as first beneath your lintel and through your portal. Do not begrudge me this, my darling, for I shall light upon your garden abounding in grass.

(16) But know this: another man may have Neobule. Alas, she has become overripe. Gone is her madenly bloom, gone her former charm. For she could not [curb] her desires, and in her madness the woman revealed the scope of her [folly].

(21) Let her begone to destruction! May not [the lord of heaven] lay a behest on me to take such a wife and become the laughing-stock of my neighbors. By far, [my darling,] I prefer you. For you are not faithless or double-dealing, while she is much too sharp, and she makes too many [friends]. I am afraid, if I pursue her in reckless haste, [I may beget] children blind or untimely born, like the proverbial bitch.“

(28) I said no more, but took the girl and laid her down amidst the blooming flowers, covering her [body] with a soft [cloak] and encircling her neck with my arms, while she [fell silent in fear] like a fawn [before a wolf?]. Then gently I touched her [breasts] with my hands, and she revealed a part of her young flesh, the harbinger of her prime. And caressing her beautiful body [all] round I released the [white] life-force, lightly touching her fair [hair].