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## The animal fable and Greek iambus: *ainoi* and half-*ainoi* in Archilochus

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Animal fable is often discussed as a genre in its own right, associated with moralising, criticism, and popular ideology.<sup>1</sup> Yet any instantiation of a fable in a literary text intersects with the conventions of the host-genre. While fable is found in various ancient genres, it has a particular association with Greek iambus, and Hellenistic and Roman imitators of archaic iambus turn regularly to fable when they want to evoke what is distinctive about the form.<sup>2</sup> Discussions of animal fable in iambus tend to focus on the fully-fledged fable narratives, and so underestimate both the amount of animal fable in the poetry, and the sophistication with which poets rework the fable genre. Moreover, when we examine poetic adaptations of well-known fables, we find that the poets do not simply tell the story, but play upon the generic conventions of fable in order to draw attention to their own skill and to shed light on the situation which prompts the telling of an *ainos*.

While fable is found in many archaic poets, it is Archilochus who makes the densest use of it, and the fame of his fables are likely to have been an important factor in the later identification of animal fable as a feature of iambus.<sup>3</sup> An examination of Archilochus’ use of animal fable reveals how rich his use of the device is. Archilochus rarely narrates a fable in straightforward manner, but rather plays with the conventions governing fable as a narratological device, building on his audience’s awareness of these conventions and their role in moralising poetry. While Archilochus is most famous for his telling of full-blown fables (in particular that of the Fox and the Eagle), on analysis he makes at least as much use of a technique I will term ‘half-*ainoi*’, where a fable is alluded to in a compressed manner, which requires the listener to recognise the story and unpack its message. This article will examine two of the most challenging of these half-*ainoi* (fr. 23, 196a W), and show how animal imagery is used to complicate and enrich the apparent ‘message’ of the poems. The second part of the article will then examine the celebrated Fox and Eagle Epode (fr. 172-81 W), and show how even in a clear fable narrative, Archilochus muddies the waters by commenting on and undermining his own use of animals as a moralising device. Similarly, in

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<sup>1</sup> For theoretical discussions of ancient fable, cf. e.g. M. Nøjgaard, *La fable antique, I: la fable grecque avant Phèdre* (Copenhagen, 1964); F. R. Adrados, *Historia de la fábula greco-latina, I: Introducción y de los orígenes a la edad helenística* (Madrid, 1979); S. Jedrkiewicz, *Sapere e paradosso nell’antichità* (Rome, 1989); N. Holzberg, *Die antike Fabel: eine Einführung* (Darmstadt, 1993), and for an overview of modern approaches to fable see G. J. van Dijk, *Ainoi, logoi, mythoi. Fables in Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic Greek literature, with a study of the theory and terminology of the genre* (Leiden, 1997), 3-15.

<sup>2</sup> For full-blown fable narratives cf. Archil. fr. 172-81, 185-7, possibly 237 W; Sem. fr. 9, 13 W, and the animal women in fr. 7 W also draw on the fable tradition. For later usages of fable cf. Callim. *Iamb.* 2, 4, Horace *Satires* 2, 6. This list is conservative and does not take into account the many allusions to animal narratives and half-*ainoi* which draw on animal fable as their basis. As I argue below, we should treat these too as poetic play on the fable genre.

<sup>3</sup> For a detailed study of animal imagery in Archilochus’ poetry, see P. Corrêa, *Um bestiário arcaico: fábulas e imagens de animais na poesia de Arquíloco* (São Paulo, 2010).

the Fox and Ape Epode (fr. 185-7 W), although much less of it survives, we can see a similar self-consciousness in the way fable is used to convey ethical lessons.

As we shall see, Archilochus' use of fables assumes familiarity on the part of his audience not only with the stories, but with the conventions of fable as a didactic device. While a traditional fable (for example of the type preserved for us through the Aesopic collection) is complete in itself, containing all the information the listener needs to understand its point, Archilochus frequently alludes to fables which are not told in full, or where the conventional moral seems to be at odds with the immediate context. Thus Archilochus expects his audience to engage actively with his use of fable-derived animal imagery, and to reflect upon how the animals are used, and how valid the moral lessons of the traditional fable in fact are.

### The angry ant and the lady-warrior (fr. 23 W)

The interpretation of 23 W has long caused bafflement among scholars, for what survives on the papyrus which preserves it appears to be a series of logical leaps, whose interpretation is made harder by the lacunose state of the text. It has been disputed exactly how many poems are contained in this column (printed by West as fr. 23, 24, 25). The first section of papyrus contains a clear division at line 40, where the line of text is too short to be a trimeter and so must be a heading to introduce a new poem (fr. 25 W). It is less certain whether a break is marked in the preceding 39 lines, but the majority of scholars have followed the lead of the *editio prima* in taking these to be two separate poems (fr. 23 and 24).<sup>4</sup> It therefore seems most likely that we have the final section of a poem, which begins for us with a direct speech addressed to a woman:<sup>5</sup>

]. . [
  
]. . . . [ . . . ] . [ . . . ] . [
  
]. . . [ . . . ] . [ . . . ] . [ . . . ] ν [
  
]. . . . [ . . . ] . . . . . γει [
  
]. . . . [ . . . ] . . . . . γὰρ ἐργατ[ (5)
  
]. [ ] . [ . . ] . . . . [ . . . ] . . . . . βεω [
  
]. [ ] ρ. βα . . . . . δ' ἐγὼ ντᾶμειβόμ[ην
  
“γύνα[ι], φάτιν μὲν τήν πρὸς ἀνθρώπῳ[ν κακὴν
  
μὴ τετραμήνης μηδέν· ἀμφὶ δ' εὐφ[ρόνη
  
ἐμοὶ μελήσει· [θ]υμὸν ἴλ[α]ον τίθειο. [ (10)
  
ἐς τοῦτο δὴ τοι τῆς ἀνολβίης δοκ[έω
  
ἦκειν; ἀνὴρ τοι δειλὸς ἄρ' ἐφαινόμην[,
  
οὐδ' οἷός εἰμ' ἐγὼ [ο]ὔτος οὐδ' οἴων ἄπο. [

<sup>4</sup> Cf. E. Lobel, '2310. Archilochus, iambic trimeters', *The Oxyrhynchus papyri* 22 (1954), 3-11. For a further defence that fr. 23 and 24 W should be interpreted as separate poems, see W. Peek, 'Die Archilochos-Gedichte von Oxyrhynchus', *Philologus* 99 (1955), 193-219 at 197; H. J. Mette, 'Zu Archilochos Pap. Ox. 2310 fr. 1 col. 1', *Hermes* 88 (1960), 493-4; M. L. West, *Studies in Greek elegy and iambus* (Berlin, 1974), 122.

<sup>5</sup> The text printed throughout is based on *IEG*<sup>2</sup>, and I note differences from it in the footnotes. On this fragment I print Slings' supplement κακο[ῦν ἄτε for line 15 and supplements by Peek and Lobel on line 17. For defence of these conjectures, see S. R. Slings, 'Archilochus and the ant', *ZPE* 45 (1982), 69-70; S. R. Slings, 'Once more Archilochus and the ant', *ZPE* 53 (1983), 31-6; S. R. Slings, 'For the third time: Archilochus and the ant', *Eikasmos* 3 (1992), 3-17 on line 15; Lobel (n.4) and Peek (1955) on line 17. All translations are mine.

ἐπι[ίσταμαί] τοι τὸν φιλ[έο]ν[τα] μὲν φ[ι]λεῖν[,  
τὸ]ν δ' ἐχθρὸν ἐχθαίρειν τε [κα]ὶ κακοῦ[ν] ἄτε (15)  
μύ]ρμηξ. λόγῳ νυν τ[ῶ]ιδ' ἀλη]θείη πάρα.  
πό]λιν δὲ ταύτη[ν ἦν σ]υ [νῦν ἐ]πιστρέ[φει]αι[  
οὔ]τοι ποτ' ἄνδρες ἐξε[πόρθη]σαν, σὺ δ[ὲ  
ν]ῦν εἶλες αἰχμηῆ κα[ὶ μέγ' ἐ]ξήρ(ω) κ[λ]έος.  
κείνης ἄνασσε καὶ τ[υραν]νίην ἔχε· (20)  
π[ο]λ[λοῖ]σ[ι] θ]η[ν] ζ]ηλωτὸς ἀ[νθρ]ώπων ἔσειαι.” ⊗

... for deeds ... and I replied ‘Lady, do not be afraid of the evil rumours that people spread. I will have a care for (the night?) – make your heart glad (or let your heart be glad overnight – that will be my concern.) Do I seem to you to have reached such a level of misfortune? So I seem to you to be a cowardly man, not the sort of person I am nor born from those ancestors I have. Indeed, I know how to love my friend and hate and attack my enemy, like an ant. There is truth, then, in this statement. But the city you now move about in is one which men have never sacked, but you have now captured it with the spear and you have won great glory. Rule it and hold sovereignty: in truth many people will envy you.’”

The first part of the speech poses no particular interpretative problems: the man responds to anxieties the woman has previously expressed (8-10) and defends his own character as someone who knows how to help his friends and harm his enemies (11-16). This standard Greek moral, however, is explained by comparing himself to an ant (15-16): a statement which seems abrupt which is unexplained in the text. The second part is still more confusing, for the man appears to compliment his addressee for having conquered a city (17-21). Scholars have therefore puzzled over how to understand what survives as a coherent whole, and have resorted at times to radical solutions. Thus for example, several critics have attempted to remove the startling reference to the ant by understanding Murmex as a name or nickname.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, to avoid finding a suitable context for a man to describe a woman as a city-sacker, scholars have suggested that the direct speech ends before this point.<sup>7</sup> Yet as well as being an unnatural way to interpret the text, these interpretations create new problems. There are good reasons to take the metaphor of the ant seriously, for Archilochus’ practice elsewhere is to use realistic names (even if they have significant meanings), and so Murmex would raise the question of why he uses what appears to be a nickname with no explanation. Moreover, the comparison with an ant is in line with Archilochus’ interest in the animal fable tradition, and so our first thought ought to be to deal with the metaphor of the ant constructively and see what its poetic function may be here. Secondly, even with the use of the proper name, ending the speech at 14 would be a very harsh transition, for since the speaker continues to narrate in the first person, and to address a second party, it is hard to see

<sup>6</sup> Originally suggested by Peek (n. 4) 200, and cf. also G. Schiassi, 'De novo Archilochos', *RFIC (rivista di filologia e di istruzione classica)* 85 (1957), 151-66 at 158; Mette (n.4) 494; W. Steffen, 'Die neuen Iambenedichte des Archilochos. Zum Pap. Oxy. 2310, Fr. 1, Kol. 1.', in (ed.), *Proceedings of the IXth International Congress of Papyrology* 1961), 18-29 at 20.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Peek (n.4); F. Lasserre, 'Un nouveau poème d'Archiloque', *MH* 13 (1956), 226-35 at 230-2; H. Rankin, 'Archilochus (Pap. Ox. 2310 Fr. 1, col. 1)', *Eranos* 72 (1974), 1-15.

how the audience could be expected to understand that the speech is meant to end, or that the ‘you’ of the second part of the poem should refer to a different person from the ‘you’ of the previous lines. A transition of this kind would furthermore be out of keeping with what we know of Archilochus’ practice elsewhere in dealing with the beginning and ending of speeches (cf. on line 7, and also fr. 196a.9 below).<sup>8</sup>

If a real ant is meant, we must then explain what message it conveys. The ant is presumably meant as the embodiment of the principle of ‘helping friends and harming enemies’ expressed in lines 14-15: ants are notable for their social behaviour, while anyone who has accidentally sat on an ants’ nest is aware that they also have a painful bite.<sup>9</sup> The ant is also proverbial for its wisdom, and so when the speaker compares himself to an ant, he offers reassurance that he will be able to apply the morality properly, and distinguish between friends and enemies.<sup>10</sup> The Aesopic tradition preserves a fable of the ant and the dove (235 P), which brings out the idea that ants can be simultaneously helpful and dangerous:<sup>11</sup>

μύρμηξ διψήσας κατελθὼν εἰς τινα πηγὴν βουλόμενος πιεῖν ἀπεπνίγετο. περιστερὰ δὲ ἐν τῷ παρεστηκότι δένδρῳ κλάσασα φύλλον ἔβαλε, δι’ οὗ ἐπιβὰς ὁ μύρμηξ ἐσώθη. ἰξευτῆς δὲ τις παραστάς καὶ συνθεὶς τοὺς καλάμους τὴν περιστερὰν λαβεῖν ἤθελεν. ὁ δὲ μύρμηξ ἔδακεν εἰς τὸν πόδα τοῦ ἰξευτοῦ· ὁ δὲ σείσας τοὺς καλάμους ἐποίησε τὴν περιστερὰν φυγεῖν. ὁ μῦθος δηλοῖ, ὅτι καὶ ὑπ’ ἀσθενῶν ἐστὶ τις εὐκαιρὸς βοήθεια.

An ant was thirsty and went to a stream wishing to get a drink, but it began to drown. A dove broke off a leaf from a nearby tree and threw it in, and the ant climbed onto it and was saved. A hunter was standing by and wanted to catch the dove by weaving together reeds. But the ant bit the hunter on the foot, and he shook the reeds and caused the dove to escape. The fable shows that timely help can come even from the weak.

Yet the image of the ant encourages us to make two observations. First, it is striking that Archilochus gives his audience no explanation or context for the image: even without a full fable narrative, we might expect something rather fuller, along the lines of “I know how to love my friends and hurt my enemies, just like an ant, who is kind to his kin but can bite hard if you anger him”. Even if these characteristics of the ant are true, and known to be true by a Greek audience, the image still does not map directly onto a famous fable or proverbial

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. J. Strauss Clay, ‘Archilochus and Gyges: an interpretation of fr. 23 West’, *QUCC* 24 (1986), 7-17 at 10. Some parallels for an unmarked change of speaker can be found in archaic poetry: the closest example is Hipponax fr. 25 W, where a woman and a man abuse each other in turn, while an equally sudden shift is found in Sappho fr. 1.18, where the narrative changes in mid-sentence from reported to direct speech. However, both these examples offer the audience more contextual information with which to understand the change in speaker and so are of limited use as parallels here.

<sup>9</sup> On the kindness of ants within their colony cf. Theoc. 9.31, Dio Chrysotom 40.32, and see W. Morel, ‘Die Ameise bei Archilochos’, *ZPE* 8 (1971), 143-4.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Hes. *WD* 778, where the ant is glossed as ἴδρις; Hor. *Sat.* 1.1.33-8; Virgil. *Georg.* 1.186. On the Hesiodic passage, L. G. Canevaro, ‘The clash of the sexes in Hesiod’s *Works and Days*’, *G&R* 60 (2013), 185-202 at 200-1 sees the ant as a gendered marker, representing male agricultural activity in comparison with the weaving spider in the previous line. If so, the imagery may also form part of the negotiation of the gendered power-dynamic I discuss below.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. J. C. Kamerbeek, ‘Archilochea’, *Mnemosyne* 14 (1961), 1-15 at 12.

expression. Instead, the poet requires his audience to grapple with the image of the ant, and to reach an explanation themselves as to why it should be relevant to the situation here. This is in fact a distinctive feature of Archilochus' half-*ainoi*, and is an inversion of the usual function of the *ainos* as a narrative device. The purpose of a fable is to offer us easily identifiable characteristics through animal figures, which can be mapped straightforwardly back onto the real human world (as in the clear morals given at the end of fables in the Aesopic collection). Here, Archilochus plays with this function of the *ainos*: instead of being an easy moral lesson, it becomes something that requires active thought and ethical engagement.

The second surprising feature of the ant is that it is an oddly humble analogue for this self-assertive male to choose. In the preceding lines, the speaker has presented himself in confident and active terms, stressing the fortitude of his character (οὐ]δ' οἴος εἶμ' ἐγώ, 13) and the nobility of his birth (οὐδ' οἴων ἄπο, 13), and vigorously challenging any assumptions of cowardice (11-12). His behaviour towards the woman is protective, and he depicts himself as a dynamic man who can deal with any possible negative consequences to his actions (8-10). Conversely, we might note that the moral drawn from the Aesopic fable is rather patronising towards the ant: the point of the story is that even the weakest of creatures have some power (καὶ ὑπ' ἀσθενῶν ἐστί τις εὐκαιρος βοήθεια). Similarly, the scholiast to Aristophanes' *Birds* 82 refers to a similar proverb, which uses the ant as an image of something which has a small ability to harm despite its obvious weakness (καὶ ἡ παροιμία “ἔνεστι κὰν μύρμηκι κὰν σέρφω χολή, ‘And there is a proverb: “there’s bile even in an ant or a gnat”’). If, then, the ant conjures up the idea of a humble, small, and apparently insignificant speaker, why does this confident and aristocratic man choose it to identify himself with, rather than using a more masculine or aggressive image?

I would suggest that the answer lies in the final lines of the poem, and that the image of the ant works in conjunction with the martial imagery there to characterise the speaker's rhetorical strategy. Several scholars have taken these lines to be erotic in nature and suggest that they draw on the imagery of city-sacking to represent sexual conquest.<sup>12</sup> This is the most attractive interpretation, partly because of the difficulty of finding a plausible scenario for a real female city-sacker, but also because the structure of the poem resembles that of the Cologne Epode, and hence of the seduction scene.<sup>13</sup> The difficulty with this approach is that it is oddly feminine vocabulary for a male speaker to use: it is common to compare the sexual violation of a woman to the capture of a city, but surprising to find the city likened to a male

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. F. R. Adrados, 'Sobre algunos papiros de Arquiloco', *PP* 11 (1956), 38-48 at 40-1; West (n. 4), 118-20. For interpretations which do posit a real female warrior, see 9-15; Kamerbeek (n. 11), 29; S. R. Slings, *Some recently found Greek poems, text and commentary* by J. M. Bremer, A. Maria van Erp Taalman Kip, S. R. Slings (Leiden, 1987), 6; W. Luppe, 'Ἄμφι εὐφρόνην und Weiteres zu dem Archilochos-Papyrusfragment P. Oxy. XXII 2310, fr. 1', *APF (Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete)* 41 (1995), 20-23 at 21. The most imaginative of the attempts which takes the imagery as non-metaphorical is Strauss Clay (n. 8), who takes the conversation to be between Gyges and the wife of Candaules.

<sup>13</sup> For the structure of the seduction scene as a stock-scene, see N. Forsyth, 'The allurement scene: a typical pattern in Greek oral epic', *ClAnt.* 12 (1979), 107-20; C. A. Sowa, *Traditional themes and the Homeric hymns* (Chicago, 1984), 68-72; R. Janko, ed., *The Iliad: a commentary. Vol IV: books 13-16* (Cambridge, 1992), 170-1.

body.<sup>14</sup> We get rather further, however, if we treat the inversion of the sexual metaphor in 17-21 as a deliberate poetic strategy rather than an interpretative obstacle.<sup>15</sup> Archilochus makes his male speaker present himself as feminised, and the gendered nature of city-sacking is a device to highlight his playful overturning of the normal codes. The speaker sets up his female addressee in ultra-masculine mode: she is presented as both a soldier winning martial glory in hand-to-hand combat (19) and as a political leader (20), the two primary facets of male public identity. Indeed, the addressee outstrips contemporary males in both of these spheres: as a warrior she can conquer a whole city alone, and her *kleos* therefore echoes the greatest feats of epic heroes; in the political arena she has won absolute power (τ[υραν]νίην, 20), while the verb ἄνασσε (20) evokes the might and authority of Homeric kings. A further clue that the poem plays on gender norms is found in line 18-19, which contrasts the failure of men to sack the city (οὐτ[οι] ποτ[ὲ] ἄνδρες ἐξε[πόρθη]σαν) with the achievements of the addressee (σὺ δ[ὲ] |ν]ῆν). The force of ἄνδρες is lost if we imagine the ‘you’ to be a male; rather the point of the contrast implicit in δ[ὲ] |ν]ῆν is the idea that a woman is succeeding where men have failed.<sup>16</sup> If the woman demonstrates masculine power, it follows that the male is feminised in relation to her.<sup>17</sup> Once we break free of the idea that any ‘I’ in Archilochus must be taken autobiographically, it ceases to be problematic for the narrator to present himself in terms which call his masculine prowess into question, for this may be part of the poem’s *frisson*. Thus Archilochus derives tension from the contrast between the speaker’s self-presentation as helpless before the woman’s superior power, and the audience’s awareness of his intentions as a prospective seducer. Hence the power dynamic is more subtle than it seems, for the narrator’s flattery is an attempt to downplay the danger he in fact poses to the woman by reversing their roles and casting himself in the light of the ravished victim. Here too, Archilochus alludes to a traditional motif, for many epic seduction scenes involve power play and deceit, where the females involved have more control over the situation than they care to admit.<sup>18</sup>

The image of the ant is best understood as being part of this strategy of self-deprecation, for it allows the speaker to make the transition between his two major points: first that he is loyal, and can be trusted to protect the woman’s interests and punish those who harm her; secondly, that he does not pose a threat to her and that she holds the balance of power. On analysis, the choice of animals which embody social weakness is a distinctive feature of Archilochus’

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Strauss Clay (n. 8). E. Bowie, 'Sex and politics in Archilochus' poetry', in D. Katsonopoulou, I. Petropoulos and S. Katsarou (ed.), *Archilochus and his age: proceedings of the second international conference on the archaeology of Paros and the Cyclades* (Athens, 2008), 133-43 at 139 suggests (presumably for this reason) that these lines are spoken by the woman rather than the man, but the lack of signposting the change of speaker is a major obstacle to this interpretation. The *locus classicus* for the likening of female sexuality to a city is *Il.* 22.468-72, where Andromache’s torn headdress represents both her own imminent violation and the sack of Troy.

<sup>15</sup> P. Crowther, 'Literary metaphor and philosophical insight : the significance of Archilochus', in G. R. Boys-Stones (ed.), *Metaphor, allegory, and the classical tradition : ancient thought and modern revisions* (Oxford, 2003), 83-100 at 96; J. Heirman, *Space in archaic Greek lyric: city, countryside and sea* (Amsterdam, 2012), 69.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. West (n. 4), 119.

<sup>17</sup> A common trope: cf. Aesch. *Ag.* 1224, 1625; Soph. *Ant.* 484-5.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Sowa (n. 13), 87. In both the *Dios Apate* and *HHaph* the female is in fact the seducer but plays the role of hesitant love-object and allows the male to believe he has the power.

use of imagery derived from animal fable, for he regularly identifies himself with a creature which is insignificant, or which is vulnerable compared to the other beasts in the story.<sup>19</sup> Yet the choice of the ant also draws our attention to the rhetorical function of the image, coming as it does within a direct speech meant to persuade its addressee. The purpose of the animal fable is to offer a straightforward message by likening human relationships or traits to animal characters, and the explicit morals we find at the end of fables transmitted through the Aesopic tradition encourage the audience to accept the story at face value and to understand it as a detached and neutral piece of wisdom. In Archilochus, however, the compressed nature of the ant image instead presents it as something challenging, which requires active participation and must be connected to the context to be understood. Thus, rather than using the *ainos* to provide an easy moralising answer, Archilochus uses it to complicate and enrich, while also reminding the audience that fables, like any other rhetorical strategy, must be viewed in the context of the motivations of those who use them.

### The hasty bitch

A similar technique is found in the First Cologne Epode (fr. 196a W), where the poet uses half-*ainoi* to characterise his narrator and hint at his underlying motivations:<sup>20</sup>

πάμπαν ἀποσχόμενος·  
 ἴσον δὲ τολμ[  
 εἰ δ' ὦν ἐπείγεται καὶ σε θυμὸς ἰθύει,  
 ἔστιν ἐν ἡμετέρου  
 ἢ νῦν μέγ' ἰμείρε[ι (5)  
 καλὴ τέρεινα παρθένος· δοκέω δέ μι[ν  
 εἶδος ἄμωμον ἔχειν·  
 τὴν δὴ σὺ ποίη[σαι φίλην.”  
 τοσαῦτ' ἐφώνει· τὴν δ' ἐγώντανταμει[βόμεν·  
 “Ἀμφιμεδοῦς θύγατερ (10)  
 ἐσθλῆς τε καὶ [  
 γυναικός, ἦν νῦν γῆ κατ' εὐρώεσσ' ἔ[χει,  
 τ]έρψιές εἰσι θεῆς  
 πολλὰ νεοῖσιν ἀνδ[ράσιν  
 παρὲς τὸ θεῖον χρῆμα· τῶν τῆς ἀρκέσει[ι. (15)  
 τ]αῦτα δ' ἐπ' ἠσυχίης  
 εὔτ' ἂν μελανθη[  
 ἐ]γὼ τε καὶ σὺ σὺν θεῶι βουλευόμεν·  
 π]είσομαι ὥς με κέλεαι·  
 πολλόν μ' ε[ (20)  
 θρ]ιγκοῦ δ' ἔνερθε καὶ πυλέων ὑποφ[

<sup>19</sup> The fox who cannot take revenge against the eagle (fr. 172-81), the fox faced with the monkey who is king of the beasts (fr. 185-7); cicada (fr. 223); (probably) the hedgehog (fr. 201).

<sup>20</sup> The text is that of *IEG*<sup>2</sup> except that I print Merkelbach's conjecture λευκ]όν for line 52 (originally proposed in R. Merkelbach and M. L. West, 'Ein Archilochos-Papyrus', *ZPE* 14 (1974), 97-113), which is based on the recurrence of the phrase at *AP* 5.55.7; for a defence of the conjecture see E. Degani, 'Il nuovo Archiloco', *A&R* 19 (1974), 113-28 at 121; Slings (n. 12), 49-50.



μ]ή τι μέγαιρε φίλη·  
 σχήσω γὰρ ἐς προη[φόρους  
 κ]ήπους. τὸ δὴ νῦν γυνῶθι· Νεοβούλη[ν  
 ἄ]λλος ἀνὴρ ἐχέτω· (25)  
 αἰαῖ πέπειρα δις ἔ τόση,  
 ἄν]θος δ' ἀπερρύηκε παρθενήιον  
 κ]αὶ χάρις ἦ πρὶν ἐπῆν·  
 κόρον γὰρ οὐκ[  
 ..]ης δὲ μέτρ' ἔφηνε μαινόλις γυνή· (30)  
 ἐς] κόρακας ἄπεχε·  
 μὴ τοῦτ' ἐφοῖτ' ἀν[  
 ὅ]πως ἐγὼ γυναιῖκα τ[ο]ιούτην ἔχων  
 γεί]τοσι χάρμ' ἔσομαι·  
 πολλὸν σὲ βούλο[μαι πάρος· (35)  
 οὐ] μὲν γὰρ οὕτ' ἄπιστος οὔτε διπλόη,  
 ἦ δ]ἔ μάλ' ὀξυτέρη,  
 πολλοὺς δὲ ποιεῖτα[ι φίλους.  
 δέ]δοιχ' ὅπως μὴ τυφλὰ κάλιτήμερα  
 σπ]ουδῆι ἐπειγόμενος (40)  
 τὼς ὥσπερ ἡ κ[ύων τέκω.”  
 τοσ]αῦτ' ἐφώνεον· παρθένον δ' ἐν ἄνθε[σιν  
 τηλ]εθάεσσι λαβῶν  
 ἔκλινα, μαλθακῆι δ[έ μιν  
 χλαί]νηι καλύψας, αὐχέν' ἀγκάλης ἔχω[ν, (45)  
 . . .]ματι παυ[σ]αμένην  
 τὼς ὥστε νέβρ[  
 μαζ]ῶν τε χερσὶν ἠπίως ἐφηψάμην  
 . . .]ρέφηγε νέον  
 ἦβης ἐπήλυσις χροῶ (50)  
 ἅπαν τ]ε σῶμα καλὸν ἀμφαφώμενος  
 λευκ]ὸν ἀφῆκα μένος  
 ξανθῆς ἐπιψαύ[ων τριχός.

‘abstaining completely, and bring yourself (?). But if you are in haste and your spirit urges you on, in our house there is a maiden, lovely and tender, who greatly desires ... I think she has a faultless figure. Make her your [girlfriend].’ So she spoke, and I replied to her: “Daughter of Amphimedo, that good and ... lady whom the mouldering earth now h[olds], there are many pleasures of the goddess for young men besides the divine thing: let one of them suffice. But you and I will discuss these things at leisure when ... grows dark. I shall do as you ask me. Much ... beneath the coping stone and ... the gates .... Do not begrudge me, my dear: I shall steer my course for (?) the grassy gardens. But be sure of this: let some other man have Neoboule. Goodness, she’s overripe, twice your age; her maidenly flower has dropped off, and the charm she had before. She couldn’t get enough (?) ... that crazed woman has shown the measure of her ... To hell with her! Let (no one ask this)? ... that I should have

a woman like that and be a laughing-stock to my [neigh]bours. I much prefer you: [you] are not unreliable or two-faced, but [she] is painful and makes many [men her friends]. I am afraid lest, pressing on in haste [I may beget] blind and premature offspring like the b[itch].” So I spoke. And I took the girl and laid her down in the blossoming flowers, and covered her with a soft [cloak], cradling her neck in my arm, as she ceased [trembling in fear?], just like a fawn. I gently took hold of her breasts in my hands, [just where?] the young flesh became visible, the bewitchment of her youth, and caressing [all] her lovely body I let go my [white] might, just touching blonde [hair].

The poem describes an encounter between a man and girl in a rural location, and the section we have is comprised of the final lines of the girl’s speech (1-8), in which she rejects the man’s attempts to seduce her and suggests he have sex with another girl instead, the man’s reply (10-41), in which he rebuts her offer of a substitute (who is now revealed to be Neoboule) and proposes some form of compromise, and finally a description of erotic activity between the couple (42-53).<sup>21</sup> The climax of the man’s speech is his comparison of his potential children with Neoboule to the ‘blind and premature offspring’ begot by the bitch (39-41), and scholars have long explained this as based on the Greek proverb ‘hasty bitch, blind puppies’, an equivalent to the English ‘more haste, less speed’.<sup>22</sup> As with the ant, the moral of the hasty bitch finds a fuller expression in a fable, in which it is explained that the bitch boasts about her maternal capacities but fails to understand what it means to be a successful mother (223 Perry):

ἕς καὶ κύων περὶ εὐτοκίας ἤριζον. τῆς δὲ κυνὸς εἰπούσης, ὅτι μόνη τῶν τετραπόδων ταχέως ἀποκύει, ἡ ἕς ὑποτυχοῦσα ἔφη· “ἀλλ’ ὅταν τοῦτο λέγῃς, γίνωσκε, ὅτι τυφλὰ τίκτεις”. ὁ λόγος δηλοῖ, ὅτι οὐκ ἐν τῷ τάχει τὰ πράγματα, ἀλλ’ ἐν τῇ τελειότητι κρίνεται.

A sow and a bitch were arguing about who gave birth most easily. When the bitch said she was the only four-footed animal to give birth quickly, the sow replied: “But when you say this, bear in mind that you give birth to blind babies.” The fable shows that things should not be judged by their speed, but by their result.

<sup>21</sup> The details are much disputed, and scholars have devoted an extraordinary amount of energy to debating exactly what form of sex act is involved (full sex, J. Henderson, 'The Cologne epode and the conventions of early Greek erotic poetry', *Arethusa* 9 (1976), 159-79; A. Casanova, 'Un'interpretazione del nuovo Archiloco', *Prometheus* 2 (1976), 18-40; *coitus interruptus*: M. L. West, 'Archilochus ludens. Epilogue of the other editor', *ZPE* 16 (1975), 217-19; M. Marcovich, 'A new poem of Archilochus. P. Colon. inv. 7511', *GRBS* 16 (1975), 5-14, and for various other suggestions see J. van Sickel, 'The new erotic fragment of Archilochus', *QUCC* 20 (1975), 125-56; W. M. Calder, 'Archilochus, the Cologne erotic fragment. A note', *CJ* 75 (1979), 42-3; J. Latacz, '«Freuden der Göttin gibt's ja für junge Männer mehrere...»: zur Kölner Epode des Archilochos (Fr. 196a W.)', *MH* 49 (1992), 3-12; C. C. Eckerman, 'Teasing and pleasing in Archilochus' first Cologne epode', *ZPE* 179 (2011), 11-19. Fortunately, this problem need not concern us here, though my own position is that the poet leaves the details deliberately unclear, in order to titillate the audience and promote erotically charged discussion: see L. A. Swift, 'Poetics and precedents in Archilochus' erotic imagery', in C. Carey and L. A. Swift (ed.), *Greek iambus and elegy: new approaches* (Oxford, forthcoming), xx; L. A. Swift, 'Negotiating seduction: Archilochus' Cologne Epode and the transformation of epic', *Philol.* (forthcoming),

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Schol. Ar. *Peace* 1079 = Makar. V.32 (*Paroem. Gr.* II.181). For similar proverbs in Akkadian literature, see B. Alster, 'An Akkadian and a Greek proverb', *Die Welt des Orients* 10 (1979), 1-5; J. Bremmer, 'An Akkadian hasty bitch and the new Archilochus', *ZPE* 39 (1980), 28.

At first glance, then, the male speaker's allusion to the proverb in the poem seems clear: he reminds us of the fable of the bitch to emphasise that one should not rush into ill-conceived action (σπ]ουδηι ἐπειγόμενος, 40). As in the rest of his speech, he responds directly to the girl's arguments, for he rebuts her earlier suggestion that he may be in too much haste to control his lust (εἰ δ' ὤν ἐπείγεται, 3). While he rejects the idea of hasty sex with Neoboule, he hints instead that some other solution may be found if impulsiveness is replaced with calm consideration (ἐπ' ἡσυχίης ... βουλεύσομεν, 16-18). As with the ant in fr. 23, the fable is not told in full, but alluded to in a way that requires the listener to decode the reference, and here too, the narrator applies it to himself to characterise his own situation, albeit here in a hypothetical context. Like the ant, the fable is not only highly compressed, but also startling; in this case because the male speaker applies a proverb about child-bearing to himself, and so represents himself as a pregnant female. Here too, the animal fable used as a way of characterising the relationship between the human agents: the implication is that a relationship with the promiscuous Neoboule would emasculate a man.

Yet the animal imagery also serves a further rhetorical purpose, for although the moral of the fable purportedly applies to the speaker himself (ἐπειγόμενος, 40; [τέκω, 41), since he has just been talking about Neoboule's behaviour, we are invited to transfer the image of the bitch onto Neoboule herself, who like the bitch has no self-restraint.<sup>23</sup> Thus what at first seems like a conventional proverb in fact forms another attack on Neoboule's desirability and ties in with the poem's invective function.<sup>24</sup> If Neoboule is presented as a bitch, her children are blind puppies. The image of the blind and premature babies is a disturbing one, and suggests that Neoboule is an unnatural woman incapable of fulfilling her proper function of childbirth; moreover, a premature birth may raise questions about the child's true paternity and so reminds us once more of Neoboule's untrustworthiness (cf. 36-9).<sup>25</sup> If the 'like mother, like child' motif is used to defame Neoboule, by contrast, it is used in a positive light with reference to the other girl, where the praise of her virtuous mother Amphimedo (10-12) acts as implicit flattery of her own character. The image of Neoboule as the hasty bitch is echoed and inverted when the other girl is described as a fawn (ὥστε νέβρ[, 47), for the fawn represents tenderness and timidity, in contrast with the bitch's characteristics of haste, boldness, and bad temper.<sup>26</sup>

In both fr. 23 and fr. 196a, then, Archilochus uses half-*ainoi* and veiled references to the fable tradition to give his use of animal imagery depth and subtlety. In both cases the animal image refers to a fable or proverb, yet turns out to mean something more complex than would at first appear. Both animals are used to characterise the speaker himself, yet they also escape from the boundaries of the fable, since to understand the reasons for the choice of animal, its associations must be applied outside the remit of the direct analogy made within the speech.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. A. P. Burnett, *Three archaic poets: Archilochus, Alcaeus, Sappho* (London, 1983), 93.

<sup>24</sup> For κύων as an abusive term for promiscuous and disagreeable women, cf. *Il.* 6.344, 356, where Helen implicitly uses it to criticise her sexual folly, and Sem. fr. 7.13 W; see also Corrêa (n. 3), 400-2 on the traditional associations of bitches with shamelessness, promiscuity, and bad temper.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. A. Aloni, *Lirici greci. Poeti giambici* (Milan, 1993), 119.

<sup>26</sup> For fawns representing fearfulness cf. *Il.* 4.243, 21.29, 22.1, and Corrêa (n. 3), 405-7; for the erotic appeal of such timidity cf. Anacr. fr. 408 *PMG*. For the fawn as an image of an attractive young girl, cf. Bacch. 13.87; Eur. *Bacch.* 866-76.

Thus the apparent oddity of the man comparing himself to an ant turns out to be part of his persuasive strategy, as it plays a crucial role in his construction of the power dynamics between himself and the woman. Similarly the pregnant bitch is not simply a tried and tested moral for self-control, but also forms part of the abuse of Neoboule through which the speaker attempts to seduce the other girl. Whereas the fable tradition conventionally use their animal protagonists to offer simple and reliable morals, here Archilochus uses fable imagery to offer answers which themselves turn out to be slippery, forming part of the speaker's attempts to manipulate rather than a detached ethical truth. Thus Archilochus combines fable with another distinctive feature of iambus as a genre: its use of a strong personal narrator who presents himself as outside the ordinary social bounds. As far as we can tell from the surviving poems, Archilochus' half-*ainoi* are always used by the narrator speaking *in propria persona*, and as we have seen, the choice of animal tends to be surprising, whether because of its insignificance (as with the ant in fr. 23 W) or its gender (as with the bitch in fr. 196a W). The use of half-*ainoi*, rather than full narrative fables, enables this gap between apparent meaning and context, since the poet can leave the details and relevance of the fable for his audience to reflect upon.

### **A fable for men in the Fox and Eagle Epode**

While the complexity of the half-*ainoi* has been under-recognised, any discussion of Archilochus' use of animal fable must also recognise the sophistication of the longer fable narratives. The best preserved of these is the famous Fox and Eagle Epode, the poem in which Archilochus explains his reasons for his grudge against Lycambes. The poem survives in a series of ten fragments (fr. 172-81 W), and its excellence is evident even from the small sections that remain.<sup>27</sup> It seems that Archilochus' version of the fable is close to the one known to us from the Aesopic collections (1 Perry), which tells of a fox and an eagle who became friends, until one day the eagle carried off the fox-cubs to feed his chicks when the fox was away. On her return, the fox was distressed by her inability to avenge her young, and cursed the eagle. Shortly afterwards, the eagle took a piece of burning sacrificial meat from an altar and brought it back to his nest: the meat contained a spark which set fire to the nest and destroyed the unfledged chicks, who could not escape. The fable finishes with the fox eating the eaglets as they fall from the nest, while the eagle looks on. There is much to be said about Archilochus' choice of fable and its relationship to the Lycambes story, but what interests me for the purposes of this chapter is how Archilochus self-consciously refers to the fable tradition and his own manipulation of it.<sup>28</sup> The idea that this will be more than a simple animal narrative is highlighted at the introduction to the fable, where Archilochus adapts a traditional formula to begin an *ainos* (fr. 174 W):

αἴνός τις ἀνθρώπων ὄδε,

<sup>27</sup> Although we have no testimony explicitly linking the abuse of Lycambes with the fox and eagle fable, we know from Philostratus (4T16; G43) that Archilochus used a fable to attack Lycambes. Moreover, the surviving epodic fragments directed at Lycambes share a metre with those that tell the Fox and the Eagle fable, and so the combination of these factors makes the reconstruction of this Epode relatively secure.

<sup>28</sup> On the choice and handling of the fable, see C. Carey, 'Archilochus and Lycambes', *CQ* 36 (1986), 60-7; E. Irwin, 'Biography, fiction, and the Archilochean "ainos"', *JHS* 118 (1998), 177-83; R. Gagné, 'A wolf at the table: sympotic perjury in Archilochus', *TAPA* 139 (2009), 251-74.

ὡς ἄρ' ἀλώπηξ καίετος ξυνεωνίην  
ἔμειξαν,

There is a fable told by men, of how a fox and an eagle came together in friendship.

It is standard for an *ainos* to begin with a formal *incipit*, and the phrasing suggests that the fable is well known and so adds to its credibility as a conveyer of moral advice.<sup>29</sup> Yet the fable is qualified as being an αἰνός ἀνθρώπων, a surprising formulation for a story which deals with animals. The phrase could mean either 'a fable told by men' (subjective genitive) or 'a fable about men' (objective genitive), and since the fable genre relies on the anthropomorphisation of animals so as to use them as moral illustrations, αἰνός ἀνθρώπων reminds us that it is really human behaviour that is under discussion.<sup>30</sup>

This theme comes to the fore once more in the fox's speech, which seems to have formed the heart of the poem. The speech was clearly substantial, and as well as containing emotional intensity, as the bereaved fox-mother expresses her feelings, it foregrounds the themes of justice and divine punishment that connect the fox's experience to Archilochus' complaint against Lycambes.<sup>31</sup> In what seems to be an Archilochian innovation, the fox prays to Zeus in his capacity of overseer of justice (fr. 177 W).<sup>32</sup>

ὦ Ζεῦ, πάτερ Ζεῦ, σὸν μὲν οὐρανοῦ κράτος,  
σὺ δ' ἔργ' ἐπ' ἀνθρώπων ὄραϊς  
λεωργὰ κάθήμεστά, σοὶ δὲ θηρίων  
ὔβρις τε καὶ δίκη μέλει.

O Zeus, father Zeus, yours is the power in heaven, you see the villainous and lawless deeds of men, and the wickedness and justice of beasts is your concern.

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<sup>29</sup> See van Dijk (n. 1), 140.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. P. d. C. Corrêa, 'A Human Fable and the Justice of Beasts in Archilochus', in P. J. Finglass, C. Collard and N. J. Richardson (ed.), *Hesperos. Studies in Ancient Greek Poetry presented to M.L. West on his Seventieth Birthday* (Oxford, 2007), 101-117 at 103-4. E. Kallos, 'Gloses pour Archiloque', *AAnt* 1 (1951), 67-74 at 68 suggests that the distinction is between poetry with a human origin and that with a divinely-inspired one, but it seems more likely that the dichotomy is between men and beasts rather than men and gods, given the content of the poem.

<sup>31</sup> It is probable that fr. 176 W also comes from this speech, and consists of the fox addressing herself after the loss of her cubs: H. J. Mette, 'Echte Selbstanrede bei Archilochos? Zu Pap. Ox. 2316', *MH* 18 (1961), 35-6; West (n. 4), 133; Dijk (n. 1), 140. I find it likely that fr. 181 W also comes from the same speech (*pace* West's numeration): cf. F. Bossi, *Studi su Archiloco* (Bari, 1990), 202-3; Corrêa (n. 3), 108. In this case the speech must have been substantial, and included the fox's initial response to the loss of her cubs, her inability to achieve vengeance, and her prayer to Zeus (which would follow the logic of the Aesopic narrative).

<sup>32</sup> For line 3 I print the transmitted text rather than Matthiae's emendation καὶ θεμιστά, which is adopted by West in *IEG*<sup>2</sup>. κάθήμεστα is convincingly defended by C. M. Sampson, 'A note on Archilochus fr. 177 and the anthropomorphic facade in early fable', *CQ* 62 (2012), 466-75, who argues that the linguistic case for it is stronger than that for the emendation, since there is no other example of a positive adjectival form of θέμις in archaic Greek, whereas ἀθέμιστος is found commonly, and crasis is attested in Archilochus' epodes (fr. 174.2 W). The transmitted text also gives us a stronger and more poetically effective statement, since rather than simply reiterating the standard idea that Zeus sees both good and bad deeds, the line engages positively with the innovation of line 4, presenting men as the new beasts, and beasts as the new men.

In poetic terms, these are high-flown lines, which use traditional forms of prayer-address to create a solemn tone.<sup>33</sup> The fox's prayer for a universal form of justice emphasises the righteousness of her case and portrays her as pious, in contrast to the arrogant eagle. Because the eagle is the animal normally associated with Zeus, the fox's prayer highlights how far the eagle's behaviour has separated him from his patron god, and so reinforces the message that Zeus' justice applies equally to all. The fox takes the traditional concept of the division of the world into three orders - gods, men, and beasts – and structures her prayer to highlight this tripartite division, with the repeated motif σὸν μὲν (1) ... σὺ δ' (2) ... σοὶ δέ (3), each of which introduces one of the levels and confirms Zeus' authority over it.<sup>34</sup> Yet although the levels are presented in what is traditionally the descending order, with men occupying a midway position between gods and animals, it is in fact the animal world which is capable of moral behaviour (ὑβρις τε καὶ δίκη, 4), while men behave worse than beasts (λεωργὰ καὶ θέμιστα, 3). The attribution of justice to animals is almost unique in archaic Greek thought: and the idea that Zeus oversees the justice of beasts is a self-conscious inversion of the usual trope that humans are unique in their moral capacity.<sup>35</sup> It is likely that Archilochus here alludes to Hesiod's fable of the Hawk and the Nightingale, where the poet uses an animal fable to reinforce the idea that Zeus has allocated *dikē* only to mankind, and that animals are exempt from the moral codes govern human behaviour. Thus the hawk's cruel assertion that might makes right (*WD* 202-11) is picked up by the narrator's explanation in the passage following the fable that humans have been allotted *dikē* and so must behave better than the beasts (276-9). Hesiod's use of the *ainos* is itself a twist on the conventions of the animal fable, since by stressing the ethical differences between humans and animals his coda questions the meaningfulness of the fable genre, whose purpose is to use animals to shed light on human behaviour. Archilochus' use of the *topos* is similarly playful, for by putting it in the mouth of an animal, he draws his audience's attention to the anthropomorphic conventions of fable and takes them to their logical conclusion: a fully anthropomorphised animal would naturally consider that animal-kind was Zeus' special interest and regard men as the bestial 'other'.<sup>36</sup>

At the heart of the fable, then, we find a speech which tests the boundaries of *ainos* as a genre. By inverting the normal order of the universe, the fox playfully reminds us of the reality of the gap between humans and animals, and the artificiality of a genre which presents them as moral equivalents. Despite the pathos of her speech, we should not overlook its self-conscious playfulness, as it challenges the relevance of using animal fable to convey poetic

<sup>33</sup> For the conventionality of the language see Kallos (n. 30), 68-9; W. D. Furley and J. M. Bremer, *Greek hymns: selected cult songs from the Archaic to the Hellenistic period* (Tübingen, 2001), I: 52-6.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. N. Russello, 'Gli dei di Archiloco', *Acme* 45 (1992), 99-116 at 106.

<sup>35</sup> M. L. West, *The east face of Helicon: West Asiatic elements in Greek poetry and myth* (Oxford, 1997), 505 finds only one parallel, Aesch. *Ag.* 55-9, which is probably influenced by the Archilochean passage. On the inversion here and its significance, see M. Gagarin, 'Dikē in archaic Greek thought', *CP* 69 (1974), 186-97 at 190; R. Renehan, 'The Greek anthropocentric view of man', *HSCP* 85 (1981), 239-59 at 254-6; E. Irwin, 'Biography, fiction, and the Archilochean "ainos"', *JHS* 118 (1998), 177-83 at 181; Corrêa (n. 3); Corrêa (n. 30), 112-13; Sampson (n. 32).

<sup>36</sup> As Sampson (n. 32), 474-5 notes, Archilochus therefore anticipates the ideas of Xenophanes, esp. fr. 15 DK. We may find an allusion to Archilochus in fr. 12 DK, where the immoral behaviour of the gods is described as θεῶν ἀθέμιστα ἔργα, a phrase which recalls Archilochus' ἔργ' ... λεωργὰ καὶ θέμιστα.

wisdom. Only small scraps survive from Archilochus' other certain fable narrative, the Fox and Ape Epode (fr. 185-7 W), but here too, there are tantalising hints that the fable was introduced in a way that draws attention to the *ainos* as a narratological device (fr. 185 W):<sup>37</sup>

ἔρέω τιν' ὑμῖν αἶνον, ὦ Κηρυκίδη,  
ἀχθυμένη σκυτάλη,

...

πίθηκος ἦι θηρίων ἀποκριθεὶς  
μοῦνος ἀν' ἐσχατιήν,  
τῶι δ' ἄρ' ἀλώπηξ κερδαλῆ συνήντετο,  
πυκνὸν ἔχουσα νόον.

I will tell you a fable, Kerykides, sad message stick ... A monkey was walking alone in the wilderness, separated from the other animals. A cunning fox met him, with guileful mind.<sup>38</sup>

The sad message stick is a formulation which has baffled scholars since antiquity.<sup>39</sup> However we explain the image, the reference to the *skytalê* makes explicit the traditional idea that an *ainos* offers a message for its hearers. Yet this message stick is a grieving one (ἀχθυμένη), an epithet which reminds us that this is not a fable told in isolation but an invective poem, whose intention is to abuse and embarrass its addressee. If Apollonius is right that the *skytalê* was associated with hidden messages, the parallel becomes still more intriguing, since it would fit the idea that the function of fable as a genre is to convey a message in secret or distorted form: while superficially a story about animals, it in fact has a hidden meaning for the recipient to decode.<sup>40</sup> In the fable itself, the fox achieves its vengeance by tricking the ape into a baited trap which exposes him in a compromising position. The form of the *ainos*, the content of the story, and the image of the *skytalê* are thus all aligned, and we can understand the poem as the equivalent to the trap which exposes the ape's true nature, just as in the Fox and Eagle Epode the poem is the route by which Archilochus will get his revenge on Lycambes and his daughters. The fox's trick replicates in physical terms what the *ainos*

<sup>37</sup> I print ἀχθυμένη σκυτάλη rather than the alternative reading ἀχθυμένηι σκυτάληι which is preferred by West in *IEG*<sup>2</sup>, which seems harder to construe. Whether ἀχθυμένη σκυτάλη should refer to Kerykides, to the narrator himself is also much debated. My view is that the former is the most likely (cf. Bowie (n. 14), 135-6; K. Philippides, 'The fox and the wolf: Archilochus' 81 D/185 W and Pindar's Olympian 6, 87-91: (with reference to Pythian 2)', *QUCC* 91 (2009), 11-21 at 15-16), though for the purposes of the argument here it is not crucial.

<sup>38</sup> Herennius (*de diversis verborum significationibus* pp. 142 sq. Palmieri) quotes lines 1-2 separately from 3-6, and though tells us that the two passages belong in a sequence, it is not clear whether they follow directly from one another. However, I find it likely that even if 3-6 are not directly consecutive, they represent the first point in the narrative where the animal characters are introduced, since Herennius' purpose in quoting the lines is to prove that this is an *ainos* with animals, and it would be odd to skip to partway through the fable. For discussion see S. Luria, 'Der Affe des Archilochos und die Brautwerbung des Hippokleides', *Philologus* 85 (1930), 1-22 at 4; D. E. Gerber, *Euterpe: an anthology of early Greek lyric, elegiac, and iambic poetry* (Amsterdam, 1970), 38; van Dijk (n. 1), 145.

<sup>39</sup> Aristophanes of Byzantium wrote an entire monograph on the subject (περὶ τῆς ἀχθυμένης σκυτάλης), though his views on the subject have not survived. It is also discussed by Apollonius Rhodius (preserved in Athenaeus 451d), who claims that it was a cryptographic device. This has been debated by scholars, but the details of these problems are beyond the scope of this article: for discussion see L. H. Jeffrey, *The local scripts of archaic Greece* (Oxford, 1961) 57-8; S. R. West, 'Archilochus' message-stick', *CQ* 37 (1988), 42-8; T. Kelly, 'The myth of the skytale', *Cryptologia* 22 (1998), 244-60.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. M. S. Silk, *Interaction in poetic imagery with special reference to early Greek poetry* (Cambridge, 1974), 153; Corrêa (n. 3), 124.

achieves in poetic ones, for both appear to be something harmless that turn out to have a hidden trick: what seems a simple story about animals in fact has a sting in the tail for its addressee.<sup>41</sup>

## Conclusion

In conclusion, Archilochus' use of animal fables and imagery not only showcases the poet's sophistication, but also sheds light on the intersection between the genres of fable and iambus. While iambus is notoriously difficult to define, one distinctive feature is the presence of a strong persona, whose personal experiences are charted through the poetry.<sup>42</sup> Our impressions are filtered through this narratorial voice, whose likes and hates colour his depiction of the world and of the other participants in his poetry. The moralising voice of iambus makes it a natural fit with fable, which also uses everyday stories to convey broader truths about human relationships, and to offer lessons about how one should behave. Yet the iambic narrator is not always a reliable source to ethical conduct, and in the case of Archilochus we find the poetic 'I' indulging in some distinctly dubious actions.

Throughout Archilochus' poetry, we find a strong identification between the poetic persona and the use of animal fable. Both of the full fables are told from a strongly personal perspective; in the case of the Fox and Eagle Epode the fable explains the poet's hatred for Lycambes, while in the Fox and Ape Epode it seems that he mocks Kerykides for some kind of pompous folly. As far as we can tell, all of the half-*ainoi* are spoken in *propria persona*: the male narrators in fr. 23 and 196a W are identified as being the poetic 'I', while the image of the cicada in fr. 223 W is identified in the testimonium which preserves it as referring to Archilochus. The only unclear case is the fox and the hedgehog (fr. 201 W), where we do not know who the speaker is, but most scholars have taken this too to be said by the poet himself.<sup>43</sup> Yet the Archilochean narrator uses these fables to convey advice in a way which is distinctly partial. In fr. 23 and 196a, the use of the animal image is a blatant part of the narrator's rhetorical strategy to seduce a woman, and the fable in question is chosen because it suits his agenda, rather than because it reflects some broader moral truth. In the former case, presenting himself as an ant fits with the power-dynamics of the scene, while in the latter, the image of the hasty bitch assists his rejection of Neoboule and his attempts to rebut the girl's suggestion that he is merely controlled by his lust.

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<sup>41</sup> Cf. D. Steiner, 'Making monkeys: Archilochus fr. 185-7 in performance', in V. Cazatto, A. M. P. H. Lardinois, R. Martin and A.-E. Peponi (ed.), *The look of lyric: Greek song and the visual* (Leiden, 2014), xx.

<sup>42</sup> See E. L. Bowie, 'Early Greek iambic poetry: the importance of narrative', in A. Cavarzere, A. Aloni and A. Barchiesi (ed.), *Iambic Ideas: Essays on a Poetic Tradition from Archaic Greece to the Late Roman Empire* (Lanham, Md, 2002), 1-27 on the importance of past-tense narratives to iambus.

<sup>43</sup> Scholars have generally felt that one animal is meant to represent the poet himself: most have taken him to be the hedgehog: cf. F. Lasserre, *Les epodes d'Archiloque* (Paris, 1950), 75; M. Treu, ed., *Archilochos* (Munich, 1959), 239; H. Fraenkel, *Early Greek poetry and philosophy: a history of Greek epic, lyric, and prose to the middle of the fifth century* (Trans. M. Hadas and J. Willis. Oxford, 1975), 140; H. D. Rankin, *Archilochus of Paros* (Park Ridge, N.J., 1977), 91; L. Bodson, 'Le renard et le hérisson (Archiloque, fr. 201 West)', in J. Servais, T. Hackens and B. Servais-Soyez (ed.), *Stemmata. Mélanges de philologie, d'histoire et d'archéologie grecques offerts à Jules Labarbe* (Liège, 1987), 55-9 at 38; Gerber (n. 38) 217, though others have argued that he is the fox: cf. C. M. Bowra, 'The fox and the hedgehog', *CQ* 34 (1940), 26-9; P. d. C. Corrêa, 'The fox and the hedgehog', *Revista Phaos* 1 (2001), 80-92. An exception is L. Bettarini, 'Archiloco fr. 201 W.<sup>2</sup>: meglio volpe o riccio?', *Philologia Antiqua* 2 (2009), 45-51, who sees both animals as equivalents.



The poet's ability to control fables to suit his own ends is also reflected in the self-conscious introductions we find in the Fox and Eagle and Fox and Ape Epodes, both of which draw our attention to the relationship between the *ainos* and the moral it conveys. In the Fox and Eagle Epode, the poet plays with the relationship between the world of the fable and that of the listener, by presenting an anthropomorphised world where only the beasts are capable of understanding *dikê*. In the Fox and Ape Epode, the content of the *ainos* unites with its purpose in the poem, turning fable and invective into equivalents.

This article has only attempted to make small inroads into a rich topic: there remains much to be said on Archilochus' use of animal imagery, and his allusions to proverbs, fables, and similes which use animals to describe the human world. Yet it is apparent that Archilochus' confident play with such imagery presupposes a well-established fable tradition, and an audience who are in a position to appreciate allusions to it which are often dense or startling. His success in refreshing the fable form is a testimony to his creativity as a poet, and abidingly shaped the reception of Greek iambus in the later tradition.