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NEGOTIATING SEDUCTION: ARCHILOCHUS' COLOGNE EPODE AND THE
TRANSFORMATION OF EPIC[1]

Since the original publication of Archilochus' First Cologne Epode (fr. 196a W), scholars
have noted the poem's structural and thematic similarities to epic seduction scenes[2].
However, such discussions have tended either simply to observe the existence of these
parallels, or to use them to argue that the action of the Archilochean poem must conform to
that of the earlier models[3]. Yet this approach to the Cologne Epode runs the risk of
oversimplifying not only Archilochus, but also the epic material on which he draws. In this
article I argue that to understand the Cologne Epode, it is crucial to recognise that
Archilochus is drawing on a traditional type-scene which is not fixed or static, but whose
details can be adapted to draw out what is unique to the particular relationship or situation at
hand. For an archaic audience, a seduction scene is not a fixed set of 'rules' but rather a series
of conventions which are open to being manipulated or overturned according to the poet's
wishes. As we shall see, the Epode follows epic models in playing with these conventions
and opening them up for question or redefinition. Thus the ways in which the Epode differs
from other archaic seduction scenes should not simply be attributed to its being subject to a
different tradition; rather, Archilochus evokes and reworks epic material to suit his own
poetic agenda, just as on the linguistic level he makes extensive use of Homeric formula, yet
applies them in unexpected ways[4]. This article will propose an interpretation of the Cologne
Epode as a mock-epic seduction scene, and will argue that an analysis of the poem through its
interaction with epic guides us towards a richer understanding of Archilochus' achievement.

This approach relies on a detailed understanding of the intrinsic flexibility of
seduction as a type-scene, and so the first section of the article will briefly explore how epic

[2] *Editio prima*: Merkelbach and West (1974). For parallels with epic scenes, cf. e.g. van Sickle (1975) 126; Henderson (1976); Lefkowitz (1976) 186
[3] Cf. Henderson (1976), who though he notes the differences between the Epode and the epic material concludes that 'all other accounts, as far as we can tell, end in full intercourse' (169) and therefore that 'the weight of typology' (170) should guide us towards interpreting the action as penetrative sex, in line with other seduction scenes. Indeed, the Paris scene shows that intercourse need not take place directly within the seduction scene: cf *Il*. 3.445.
[4] For Archilochus' linguistic closeness to epic, see Tarditi (1958); Page (1964); Scherer (1964); Aloni (1981) 21-64; Fowler (1987) 13-33; Létoublon (2008).

seduction scenes play on convention in order to characterise their participants or create humour. I will then offer a detailed discussion of the Epode itself in the light of its epic models, and will suggest that we reach a more nuanced reading of the poem when we take into consideration how it differs from epic scenes, as well as how it resembles them.

Variations on the epic seduction scene

As scholars have noted, the seduction scene in epic poetry forms a type-scene in its own right, with a typical set of components and order in which these are presented[5]. As with other type-scenes, we find variation as to how many of these components are present, and the degree of detail with which they are depicted, but Janko's analysis provides a useful starting point as to the seduction scene in its fullest form[6]:

1. Motivation for the seduction
2. Preparation
3. Physical approach
4. Reaction of the seduced
5. Seducer's tale
6. Feelings of desire
7. Removal of obstacles
8. Intercourse and sleep
9. Awakening

Epic seduction scenes are intrinsically dramatic, titillating, and often amusing. They are rarely 'filler' and are designed to engage the audience's attention and sympathies with the characters involved. The context of these seductions varies widely, and we might define a sub-category of 'meadow seductions', that is, encounters that take place in an isolated rural location[7]. The trope that a meadow is a suitable place for seduction is well established in Greek myth, and draws on deep-seated associations between human and natural fertility[8].

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[5] See Forsyth (1979); Sowa (1984) 68-72; Janko (1992) 170.

[6] Taken (with minor adaptations of phrasing) from Janko (1992) 170-1.

[7] The other broad category is seductions within the home: e.g. Paris's (and Aphrodite's) seduction of Helen in their marital home at *Il.* 3.389-448, Ares and Aphrodite's affair in the house of Hephaestus at *Od.* 8.285-99, Penelope's recognition of Odysseus and their subsequent love-making at *Od.* 23.153-299.

[8] While the Homeric examples are the earliest surviving instances of the trope, its popularity in myth and ritual, as well as literature, suggests that it is a deep-seated cultural trope which preceded our surviving texts (for similar imagery in the Sumerian tradition of the sacred marriage see also Kramer (1969) 59). For literary instantiations cf. *HHDem* 1-18; [Hes]. *Cat.* fr. 140; Eur. *Ion* 887–96, *Hel.* 244–9; Theoc. 11.25–7, Mosch. *Eur.* 63-71. On the association between human and natural fertility see Harrison (1922) 549-51; West (1966) 423.

Moreover, setting a seduction in the wilderness presents it as an escapist fantasy: a place far from the protection of the familial environment where real-life restrictions governing sexual encounters need not apply. Because the meadow is strongly associated with virginity, epic seductions set in the wilderness are portrayed as though they are pre-marital affairs (whether or not this is in fact the case). Yet the fully-fledged seduction scene differs from the *topos* of a girl being abducted or raped in a meadow in that it sets up a dynamic of power-play and persuasion between the two parties, usually achieved by speeches in which the seducer negotiates with their beloved. The process of negotiation is designed to create suspense and engage the audience, in contrast to scenes of rape or abduction which offer less opportunity for tension. The most instructive parallels to the situation of the Cologne Epode are the *Dios Apate* in *Iliad* 14, the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, and Odysseus' encounter with Nausicaa in *Odyssey* 6. As we shall see, all three of these draw on the same basic pattern, yet adapt it for quite different purposes, and do so to characterise the individuals and relationships involved.

A striking feature of epic seduction scenes is the degree to which we find manipulation of the roles and expectations associated with poetic seductions. In the *Dios Apate*, for example, much of the scene's humour derives from the mismatch between Zeus' and Hera's understanding of the situation. This is enhanced by the way in which Hera sets up the scene as a conventional one of seduction, so that Zeus enthusiastically plays his role as the male seducer, trying to persuade a reluctant female to accept his advances. While both Hera and the audience know that her aim is sex, social convention requires that for her plan to succeed Zeus must believe that he is directing the encounter[9]. Thus Hera allows Zeus to be the first to suggest sex (14.313-28), a request which she responds to with apparent outrage for her modesty (330-6) before suggesting a compromise that allows more decorum (return to the marital chamber: 337-40). Zeus then deals with her objection by suggesting an alternative way for him to obtain his goal while removing the obstacle she has placed (a cloud will conceal them: 342-5) and then immediately acting on his desire (346-53)[10]. We find play here on the traditional idea of the sexually assertive male and passive female: for the audience to fully appreciate the joke, they must recognise not only that Zeus is being duped, but also that

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For discussion of the trope in myth see Lefkowitz (1993); Deacy (1997) 44-5; Calame (1999) 151-74. For the importance of space in defining female roles and sexuality, cf. Vernant (1983) 135-42, and see also Swift (2009) and Swift (forthcoming-a).

[9] See Edwards (1987) 249-50; Janko (1992) 198.

[10] For the careful construction and responsion between the speeches, cf. Lohmann (1970) 146-8; Janko (1992) 198.

Hera's apparently modest behaviour is evoking the *topos* of a 'conventional' seduction, and it is by persuading Zeus that he is acting in such a scene that she achieves her goal. Hence the poet makes the characters lapse into typical gender roles, yet uses their responses to highlight the irony inherent in Hera's concealed motivation.

The irony of the scene is further enhanced by the tension between the setting (which in poetic terms suggests pre-marital sex with a young girl) and the participants' actual identity, for Zeus and Hera are the iconic married couple. Homer highlights this mismatch throughout the scene, and we find both the narrator and the characters attempting to cast their actions as youthful seduction rather than a married relationship. This is explicitly flagged by the poet, when he tells us that Zeus' desire was as great as at their first sexual encounter, presented as a secret seduction between a young couple behind the backs of their parents (οἷον ὅτε πρώτιστόν περ ἐμισγέσθην φιλότητι / εἰς εὐνὴν φοιτῶντε, φίλους λήθοντε τοκῆας, 295-6). The theme is continued in Hera's initial lie to Zeus, when she not only claims that she is going to visit Oceanus and Tethys, but also mentions their care for her in her youth (303), a point which is designed to remind Zeus of her girlhood. Zeus' Catalogue of Lovers (317-27) is meant to be humorously tactless, but it also presents Zeus as the veteran of many such seductions of young girls, and shows how easily he can be manipulated into reverting to this role[11]. Hera's reply, however, indicates that these overtones of seduction are in fact inappropriate, for she reminds Zeus that they already have a marital bedchamber (ἔστιν τοι θάλαμος, 338); the detail that this chamber was built for her by her son Hephaestus (338-9) further emphasises that she is a mature and married female, not the young *parthenos* that the impulsive meadow seduction would imply. Thus the poet highlights the mismatch between the participants' real relationship and the illusion that Hera constructs, which allows her to temporarily set aside the role of nagging wife and instead become Zeus' erotic fantasy.

Aphrodite's seduction of Anchises in the *Homeric Hymn* uses the same technique, for this scene too relies on the mismatch between Aphrodite's self-presentation as a bashful virgin and our knowledge of her true intentions, combined with the further irony that her

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[11] Zeus' speech may also have theological significance, since it is through his affairs with other women, and his begetting of his most powerful children with them rather than with Hera that he spreads his power-base on Olympus and ensures Hera unable to fulfil her role as the Consort in the Succession Myth (thus avoiding the fate of his father and grandfather): cf. Allan (2006) 28 n.146.

desire to seduce Anchises is not self-willed but imposed by Zeus[12]. Here the poet plays not only on the conventional power dynamic between the sexes but also that between gods and mortals, for Aphrodite's persona as a vulnerable *parthenos* is set against her true identity, a point made explicit throughout the hymn[13]. Aphrodite's disguise, a young girl lost in the wilderness (παρθένῳ ἀδμήτῃ, 82), is sexually appealing and is moreover designed to make Anchises want to act on his desire, as it sets him in the role of the male seducer who encounters a young girl in an isolated location. Anchises' initial speech (92-106) further plays on generic convention: instead of a seduction scene, we find ourselves taken into a different poetic register, for his speech follows the formal conventions of a hymn in terms of structure, style, and language[14]. While any seduction scene involving a mortal and a god is bound to involve narrative elements associated with the divine, there is an irony in the religious language here, for Anchises attempts to use it to disrupt the progress of the seduction, thus making Aphrodite deny her divinity (and hence the relevance of the hymnic language) and instead stress her own sexual vulnerability, so that the erotic potential of the scene can continue to develop[15].

Aphrodite's response can be read as an attempt not only to reassure Anchises but also to remind him of the model in which he is meant to be operating, and so prompt him to take on the role of seducer. She stresses that she is a mortal and evokes many of the tropes associated with the seduction of young virgins. The story that she was snatched from a chorus by Hermes (118-21) suggests not only the abduction of beautiful girls by gods, but also the idea that girls dance in choruses as a form of display to potential partners[16]. The girls in question are described as 'worth large dowries' (ἀλφεσίβοιαι, 119) and as potential brides (νύμφαι, 119), again a strategy to remind Anchises of the erotic potential of the scene: a

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[12] The parallels between the two scenes have been much discussed: cf. e.g. Reinhardt (1956) 10; Reinhardt (1961) 515; Preziosi (1967); Podbielski (1971) 46-53; Lenz (1975) 126; Strauss Clay (1989) 171; Faulkner (2008) 186.

[13] See Smith (1981) 58-9; Walcot (1991) 146-7; Brown (1997) 34.

[14] The opening address with χαῖρε (92), the list of possible divinities (92-9), the relative expansion to describe some of these (96-9), the offer of worship followed by request for favour (100-6). Cf. Podbielski (1971) 43; Smith (1981) 46-9; Faulkner (2008) 173 and for these conventions in real cultic hymns cf. Furley and Bremer (2001) I 52-6.

[15] *Cf.* Odysseus' use of hymnic language in his speech to Nausicaa (*Od.* 6.149-51, discussed below) to praise, but also to distance himself from any connotations of sexual aggression and make himself appear unthreatening. For a comparison between the two speeches see Olson (2012) 187.

[16] For abductions from choruses, see Calame (1977) 174-7; Lonsdale (1993) 222-30. A close parallel is Hermes' abduction of Polymela at *Il.* 16.181-5, but cf. also [Hes]. frr. 26, 140 M-W; Plut. *Thes.* 31.2. For female choral performance as a form of display see Peponi (2004); Swift (forthcoming-b). As Olson (2012) 200 notes, the detail plays on the typical rape-scene: normally the god would abduct the maiden for himself, and the fact that he takes her for Anchises is not revealed for nine lines.

motif developed by her story that their marriage is divinely ordained (126-7)[17]. It is striking that despite Anchises' respectful demeanour, Aphrodite ends her speech in the manner of a virgin pleading for her modesty against an aggressive seducer: she appeals to his virtuous upbringing (131-2), stresses her own virginity (133), urges him to show consideration for her parents (138), and emphasises the honourable nature of marriage (τίμιον, 142)[18]. Her request that he take her to his parents 'an untamed virgin and without experience of sex' (ἀδμήτην μ' ἀγαγὼν καὶ ἀπειρήτην φιλότητος, 133) is particularly revealing, for while we may take ἀδμήτην simply to refer to her current virginity (which makes her desirable), the Greek could also be interpreted as being a request to remain a virgin for the time being[19]. The speech has the desired effect of getting Anchises into the role Aphrodite has designated for him and, like any red-blooded archaic seducer, he insists on immediate sex. However, the complex power-dynamic of the situation is further suggested by the contrast between the long conditional with which he opens his speech, and the brash confidence with which he declares that his desire cannot be controlled (145-51):

εἰ μὲν θνητή τ' ἐσσί, γυνὴ δέ σε γείνατο μήτηρ,
Ὀτρεὺς δ' ἐστὶ πατὴρ ὄνομα κλυτός, ὡς ἀγορεύεις,
ἀθανάτου δὲ ἕκητι διακτόρου ἐνθάδ' ἱκάνεις
Ἑρμέω, ἐμὴ δ' ἄλοχος κεκλήσεαι ἤματα πάντα·
οὔ τις ἔπειτα θεῶν οὔτε θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων
ἐνθάδε με σχήσει πρὶν σῇ φιλότητι μιγῆναι
αὐτίκα νῦν·

'If you are a mortal, and a woman was the mother that bore you, and Otreus was your father as you claim - a renowned name - and if you come here because Hermes the divine messenger brought you, and you are to be called my wife for ever, no god or mortal man will hold me back until I have made love to you right away.'

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[17] νύμφαι could alternatively mean nymphs, but it seems more likely that it should have the meaning 'marriageable young girls' here, given that Aphrodite is keen to stress that she is in no way divine (in contrast with the nymphs Anchises praises at 97-8): cf. van Eck (1978) 48. For Aphrodite's rhetorical strategy here, cf. Strauss Clay (1989) 176-7; Faulkner (2008) 192-3.

[18] See Bergren (1989) 20 on how Aphrodite hints at her true desire (immediate sex) by denying it, a form of *praeteritio*. Olson (2012) 31 notes how Aphrodite in the guise of a maiden makes no reference to her own desire but presents herself as passive victim, in keeping with cultural expectations about male and female experiences of *eros*.

[19] The meaning has been debated: see Reinhardt (1956) 12; van Eck (1978) 52; van der Ben (1986) 15; Faulkner (2008) 206; Olson (2012) 207. However, the point is that the Greek bears more than one interpretation, and there is therefore a suggestive subtext to Aphrodite's comment.

The beginning of Odysseus' encounter with Nausicaa follows a similar pattern to Anchises' encounter with Aphrodite, and the poet relies on the audience's awareness of the usual conventions governing seduction scenes to create tension and suspense. Although Odysseus' intentions towards Nausicaa are not sexual, the poet sets it up to resemble a seduction (or abduction) scene, and so heightens our awareness of its erotic potential. When Odysseus meets Nausicaa, the game she plays with her handmaidens is represented as a kind of informal choral dance: the girls are described as ἔπαιζον (6.100), a verb regularly used both of parthenaic play prior to seduction and of choral dance, and they sing while they move (τῇσι δὲ Ναυσικάα λευκώλενος ἤρχετο μολπῆς, 101)[20]. The image of dancing girls watched by a male is a *topos* of abduction, and the erotic potential of the scene is enhanced by the description of the girls tossing away their veils (ἀπὸ κρήδεμνα βαλοῦσαι, 100)[21]. The simile comparing Odysseus to a lion preying on herd animals as he advances on the girls creates further overtones of sexual aggression (130-4), especially because of the emphasis placed on Odysseus' nakedness in the lines framing this simile (ὡς ῥύσαιτο περὶ χροῒ μήδεα φωτός, 129; γυμνός περ ἐών, 136). In Odysseus' speech, however, he takes care to frame himself as sexually unthreatening, while alluding to the erotic potential of the situation, as though responding to the poetic convention that has set him up as a possible rapist. He avoids approaching Nausicaa (145-6), respectfully suggests that she may be a goddess (150-2)[22], and though his speech is permeated with erotic language and imagery, he makes a point of directing it towards Nausicaa's unspecified future husband rather than expressing any desire on his part (158-9, 181-4)[23]. Thus the speech acts as a kind of play on the traditional seduction speech, alluding to the possibility of sexual desire, but defusing it so as to turn the scene from one of seduction to one of suppliancy.

Odysseus' encounter with Nausicaa also raises a further trope of the epic seduction scene, for as we have seen in the previous two passages discussed, it is common in the more

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[20] For παίζω used of girls in the moment before they are abducted cf. *HHDem.*5, *HHAph.* 120; for the verb used of dance, cf. *Od.* 8.251, 23.147; [Hes.] *Shield* 277; Aristoph. *Frogs* 390, 409, *Thesm.* 1227. For the connection between dance and play see Lonsdale (1993) 21-4.

[21] Cf. Hainsworth (1990) on 6.100. For the *krêdemnon* as a symbol of chastity and marriage see Nagler (1974) 44-60.

[22] While a comparison to a goddess may be a strategy to compliment rather than to defuse sexual tension, it does suggest that Odysseus wishes to convey his respect for Nausicaa, and is a way of indicating that he does not intend simply to assault her. Love affairs between mortal men and godesses are common, but the power-balance is quite different from that between a mortal man and woman; thus Odysseus hints that he sees himself, rather than Nausicaa, as the vulnerable party, and that she is safe from any potential aggression.

[23] E.g. Odysseus' *makarismos* of Nausicaa's parents (154-5), and his comparison of her to a sapling (163) draw on hymeneal tropes, while his praise of her beauty in general is erotically charged. For the erotic language, see Hague (1983); Lonsdale (1993) 206-10.

sophisticated of these scenes for the female to trick the male into having sex (with negative consequences for him) by appearing to adopt the persona of the vulnerable maiden. In the case of Odysseus, the audience has already encountered the trope of the sexually available female who delays the hero's *nostos*, for we first encounter Odysseus trapped on Calypso's island, and this pattern will be made clear through the *Apologoi*, where Odysseus describes his dealings with a range of dangerous females. The repeated allusions throughout the Phaeacian episode to Nausicaa's marriageability (6.27-35, 66), her desire for Odysseus (6.244-5, 276-84, 8.457-9), and her family's approval of the match (7.311-15) create suspense, as we wait to see whether the apparent hospitality of the Phaeacians will turn into another form of sexual trap[24]. Thus locating Odysseus' encounter with Nausicaa in a meadow, and framing it in terms which evoke the seduction scene, are techniques to foreground this possibility in the minds of the audience. Reading the scene in this light, Odysseus' speech reminds us of the hero's cleverness, and reassures us as to his ability to recognise and avoid the potential danger that Nausicaa could pose to his return.

All three of these meadow encounters, then, manipulate the conventions associated with the seduction scene as a type-scene, and in so doing rely on the audience's awareness of pre-existing models and expectations surrounding poetic seduction. The variations to the basic theme serve to characterise the participants and to delineate what is unique about their particular relationship. In the *Iliad* and *Hymn* scenes, humour is also created through the play on power dynamics and gender roles, and by the mismatch between what the scene superficially appears to be and what it actually is; conversely the *Odyssey* poet uses the conventions of seduction to create suspense. Thus Archilochus inherits from epic a tradition of seduction narratives that are sophisticated and flexible, and whose components can be reworked to suit the poet's narrative goals. When we note parallels and discrepancies between the Cologne Epode and the epic material, we should therefore read them in the light of the tradition's variability, and consider the possibility that Archilochus, like his epic predecessors, deliberately adapts and redefines the conventions to achieve his own poetic goals.

Love in an iambic meadow: the Cologne Epode as a mock-epic seduction

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[24] Cf. Gross (1976); Most (1989) 27-9. Hainsworth (1990) 295 claims that the marriage theme 'adds a certain piquancy to the relations of Odysseus, Nausicaa, and Alcinous, but it is otherwise superfluous ... there is no hint in the text of Odysseus' being detained, or desiring to remain, on Scheria with an amorous princess or her match-making parents'. However, this is to miss the point, for although the Phaeacians prove to be good hosts, and Nausicaa a kind helper, Odysseus does not know that this will be the case, and the poet takes care to keep us in suspense as to whether he will encounter further problems on Scheria: cf. Rose (1969).

The language of the Cologne Epode, like much of Archilochus' poetry, is strongly influenced by epic; indeed the Epode's metre maximises the potential for such interactions, since hexameter formulae can easily be used in the hemiepes with which the asynartetic line begins. These linguistic parallels create an easy bridge from the epic world, and offer the audience hints that the genre's conventions are relevant to interpreting the poem[25]. Despite the fragmentary state in which the Cologne Epode has come down to us, enough survives to show how closely Archilochus draws on the traditional structure of the seduction scene[26]:

πάμπαν ἀποσχόμενος·

ἶσον δὲ τολμ̣[

εἰ δ' ὦν ἐπείγεαι καί σε θυμὸς ἰθύει,

ἔστιν ἐν ἡμετέρου

ἢ νῦν μέγ' ἱμείρε̣[ι   (5)

καλὴ τέρεινα παρθένος· δοκέω δέ μι[ν

εἶδος ἄμωμον ἔχειν·

τὴν δὴ σὺ ποίη[σαι φίλην

τοσαῦτ' ἐφώνει· τὴν δ' ἐγὼντανταμει[βόμην·

"Ἀμφιμεδοῦς θύγατερ (10)

ἐσθλῆς τε καὶ [

γυναικός, ἣ̣ν νῦν γῆ κατ' εὐρώεσσ' ἔ[χει,

τ]έρψιές εἰσι θεῆς

πολλαὶ νέοισιν ἀνδ[ράσιν

π̣αρὲξ τὸ θεῖον χρῆμα· τῶν τι̣ς ἀρκέσε[ι. (15)

τ]αῦτα δ' ἐπ' ἡσυχίης

εὖτ' ἂν μελανθη[

ἐ]γ̣ώ τε καὶ σὺ σὺν θεῶι βουλεύσομε̣ν·

π]είσομαι ὥς με κέλεαι·

πολλόν μ' ε[(20)

θρ]ιγκοῦ δ' ἔνερθε καὶ πυλέων ὑποφ[

μ]ή τι μέγαιρε φίλη·

σχήσω γὰρ ἐς π̣ο̣η[φόρους

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[25] For detailed studies of the poem's use of epic language see esp. Risch (1975); Campbell (1976); Andrisano (1983); Nicolosi (2005).
[26] The text printed is that of West in *IEG²* except that I print Merkelbach's conjecture λευκ]ὸν for line 52 (originally proposed in Merkelbach and West (1974)), which is based on the recurrence of the phrase at *AP* 5.55.7; for a defence of the conjecture see Degani (1974) 121; Slings (1987) 49-50. Translation is my own.

κ]ήπους. τὸ δὴ νῦν γνῶθι· Νεοβούλη[ν
ἄ]λλος ἀνὴρ ἐχέτω· (25)
αἰαῖ πέπειρα δὶς ꞵ τόση,
ἄν]θος δ᾽ ἀπερρύηκε παρθενήιον
κ]αὶ χάρις ἣ πρὶν ἐπῆν·
κόρον γὰρ οὐκ[
..]ης δὲ μέτρ᾽ ἔφηνε μαινόλις γυνή· (30)
ἐς] κόρακας ἄπεχε·
μὴ τοῦτ᾽ ἐφοῖτ᾽ ἀν[
ὅ]πως ἐγὼ γυναῖκα τ[ο]ιαύτην ἔχων
γεί]τοσι χάρμ᾽ ἔσομαι·
πολλὸν σὲ βούλο[μαι πάρος· (35)
σὺ] μὲν γὰρ οὔτ᾽ ἄπιστος οὔτε διπλόη,
ἡ δ]ὲ μάλ᾽ ὀξυτέρη,
πολλοὺς δὲ ποιεῖτα[ι φίλους
δέ]δοιχ᾽ ὅπως μὴ τυφλὰ κἀλιτήμερα
σπ]ουδῆι ἐπειγόμενος (40)
τὼς ὥσπερ ἡ κ[ύων τέκω.”
τοσ]αῦτ᾽ ἐφώνεον· παρθένον δ᾽ ἐν ἄνθε[σιν
τηλ]εθάεσσι λαβὼν
ἔκλινα, μαλθακῆι δ[έ μιν
χλαί]νηι καλύψας, αὐχέν᾽ ἀγκάληις ἔχω[ν, (45)
. . .]ματι παυ[σ]αμένην
τὼς ὥστε νέβρ[
μαζ]ῶν τε χερσὶν ἠπίως ἐφηψάμην
. . .]]ρέφηνε νέον
ἥβης ἐπήλυσις χρόα (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 a hurry and your spirit urges you on, in our house there is a maiden, lovely and tender, who greatly desires ... I think

she has a flawless 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 surviving section clearly reflects (though is not identical to) components 4-8 of Janko's analysis of the epic seduction scene[27]:

4. Reaction of the seduced
5. Seducer's tale
6. Feelings of desire
7. Removal of obstacles
8. Intercourse and sleep

Our text begins with the end of the girl's speech in which she reacts to the seduction attempt (1-8), and so corresponds to element 4. The man's reply (10-41) includes all of elements 5-7: he offers a narrative designed to convince her, suggests some form of compromise which will remove the obstacles she has set in place, and expresses his feelings of desire. The poem then ends with a description of some kind of sexual activity between the man and girl (42-53),

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[27] Janko (1992) 171 himself suggests that only elements 7 and 8 are present in the Cologne Epode, but this is clearly not the case, for the Archilochean speeches closely resemble their Homeric counterparts.

though as we shall see, the differences between this and the epic descriptions of intercourse are significant. It seems likely that the lost part of the poem contained a narrative explaining the background to the encounter, which may well have reflected some of elements 1-3: since the girl is clearly responding to an attempt at seduction, the earlier part of the poem must have described an initial approach (element 3), whether we are to take it as a straightforward encounter between predatory male and passive female, or as evoking the more complex scenario where the female initiates contact, even if she pretends not to wish it (as with Hera and Aphrodite). If Martin West is right to identify fr. 196 as the lost opening to the poem, it began with the speaker explaining his feelings of desire to a companion: ἀλλά μ᾽ ὁ λυσιμελὴς ὦταῖρε δάμναται πόθος ('But limb-loosening desire lays me low, my friend')[28]. The opening would therefore be close to the first element of the epic seduction scenes, in which we are told of the seducer's motivation (for example, Hera's desire to trick Zeus (*Il.* 14.159-65), or Aphrodite's divinely-ordained lust for Anchises (*HHAph.*53-7)). Alternatively, Archilochus could be varying the traditional order by beginning with something that resembles the point in the narrative where the male is normally allowed to express his feelings of lust (cf. element 6), before moving backwards to describe how these arose. In either case, Archilochus certainly deviates from the epic convention of telling the narrative in chronological order, since the poem opens with a present tense description of his current feelings of desire, before moving to the past tense to tell the erotic narrative. Since past tense narrative (particularly on sexual themes) is a distinctive feature of iambus, we have here Archilochus blending epic and iambic techniques to create an epic-style seduction scene with an iambic flavour[29].

The overall structure of the Epode, then, appears to be modelled on epic convention. Yet as this reconstruction of the opening shows, where Archilochus deviates from epic models is crucial to interpreting what is unique about this poem. The surviving section of the girl's speech makes this particularly clear, for while she behaves like a typical female in a seduction scene in hesitating before the man's advances, the manner in which she does so forms a stark contrast with her epic predecessors. Both Hera and Aphrodite purport to reject the possibility of immediate sex by raising obstacles. In Hera's case, she claims to feel shame at the possibility that another god may witness their love-making (*Il.* 14.331-6), while

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[28] The argument for putting the fragments together is metrical: the other example of this type of asynartetic line is the Cologne Epode, and Archilochus rarely (if ever) reuses epodic metres as far as we can tell from the surviving fragments; see West (1977). For Archilochus' use of metre in reconstructing his epodes see also Bowie (1987) on reconstructing the Second Cologne Epode (frr 188-92, according to his analysis).
[29] See Bowie (2002).

Aphrodite pretends to insist on the importance of marriage, asking that Anchises should present him to his parents as a prospective bride (*HHAph.* 131-42). While the audience knows that these objections are specious, they are also characteristically feminine: Hera expresses concern for her reputation and modesty, whereas Aphrodite suggests that marriage is the proper goal for female sexuality. The humour in both passages is in fact derived from the mismatch between the characters' adoption of virtuous feminine ideals, and the audience's knowledge of their real desires. Similarly, the girl's speech in Archilochus makes it clear that she is raising objections to the prospect of immediate sex, and where our text begins she appears to be asking him to control his lust (πάμπαν ἀποσχόμενος, 1). Her next comment, however, is much less feminine, for she suggests that if he is unable to restrain himself she is in a position to offer him a more suitable vessel for his immediate desires (4-6). We find a sudden shift in her behaviour from virgin to pimp, as the girl not only sees it fit to lecture a man on how to manage his sexual desire, but actively seeks to suggest a woman to deal with his urges. That the substitute she suggests is her own sister makes her behaviour all the more shocking: though the girl does not identify Neoboule but merely suggests that she means a maiden 'in our household' (ἐν ἡμετέρου, 4), the man rejects her by name in his speech, which would make little sense if we were not meant to identify her as the substitute previously offered[30].

The girl's attempt to broker a sexual encounter for her suitor is startling in its own right, but the terms in which she describes her substitute make it still the more shocking. She begins by emphasising Neoboule's own sexual desire: ἢ νῦν μέγ' ἱμείρε[ι (5). While the missing line-end means we do not know exactly what Neoboule desires, ἵμερος in epic often means sexual desire, and since she is a foil for the male's feelings of lust in 3, and contrasted with the abstinence required by the other girl, this is the most likely interpretation[31]. The

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[30] Most scholars, beginning with the original editors, have taken the girl to be Neoboule's younger sister. This view has been challenged, but it still remains the most plausible interpretation as it explains the girl's connection to Neoboule, the age gap between the two girls apparent at 26-8, and fits with the testimonia that Archilochus described seducing both Lycambids (e.g. *AP* 7.351, 352); for other views see Ebert and Luppe (1975) 223-4 Lefkowitz (1976); Burnett (1983); Eckerman (2011). We should bear in mind that the opening of the poem may have made the girl's own identity (and hence the reference to Neoboule) more explicit: if it began with a statement such as 'I found the younger daughter of Lycambes on her own', the girl's reference to 'another maiden in our house' would have been clear to the original audience.

[31] For ἵμερος used of sexual desire cf. e.g. *Il.* 3.446, 14.216, 328. Some proposed supplements for the end of 5 make this explicit, e.g. Merkelbach and West's σέθεν, or Ebert and Luppe's λέχεος (which is even more sexually forward). Merkelbach and West's alternative γάμου, which would make Neoboule's desire less inappropriate, seems unlikely, since she is being offered to deal with the speaker's immediate urges rather than as a prospective marriage partner. van der Ben (1986) 10-11 argues that ἵμερος denotes not only desire but the willingness to act on it, and this too presents Neoboule's behaviour as sexually promiscuous.

girl's insistence on maidenly decorum, therefore, involves representing her own sister as not only sexually available but actively willing, and so suggests a more wanton side to her character than was initially apparent. Her enthusiastic description of Neoboule's charms enhances this sense of her acting as pimp: the other maiden is καλὴ τέρεινα παρθένος (6), a tactile and sensuous description which evokes the softness of a young plant. This portrayal is then followed by the statement δοκέω δέ μι[ν /εἶδος ἄμωμον ἔχειν (6-7) which also brings the girl's own erotic judgement to the forefront. While δοκέω raises the gap between appearance and reality, and so prepares the way for the man's rejection of Neoboule, the use of the first person verb also depicts the girl as an active participant in setting up this new sexual encounter[32]. This is compounded by the choice of the adjective ἄμωμον, a word which indicates subjective judgement as it suggests that that there is no fault or blame to be found[33]. The girl's willingness to pass judgement on her substitute's physique creates an uncomfortable juxtaposition with her self-presentation as a modest maiden and brings out a more sexually experienced side of her personality. In a poem about the praise and blame of both female beauty and character, her comments are charged, and characterise her as less innocent than she at first appeared[34]. The advice with which her speech concludes (τὴν δὴ σὺ ποίη[σαι φίλην, 8) forms a further transformation of epic convention, for ποιέω + φίλος is an epic formula used in contexts which describe a marriage union[35]. In these formulae, however, φίλην/φίλον is used adjectivally to qualify ἄκοιτιν/ἀκοίτην: its use as a noun here, without ἄκοιτιν to accompany it, is a wry acknowledgement that what is at stake here is immediate sex rather than legitimate marriage.

Thus the girl's opening speech appears to be a play on the typical female 'stalling' speech of epic. Whereas epic females such as Hera and Aphrodite use feminine modesty as a strategy to negotiate a seduction scene, Archilochus' girl defends her chastity by distinctly unmaidenly means: the attempt to broker a casual encounter with another freeborn woman. Moreover, if we recall the similarity between her behaviour and the activities of Hera and Aphrodite, two sexually aggressive females whose modesty is only a rhetorical stance, the

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[32] See van Sickle (1975) 134-5; Prier (1980-1); Andrisano (1983) 10-11; Nicolosi (2007) 178.

[33] Cf. Sem. fr. 4 W. Archilochus uses a similar technique in his loaded description of the lost shield in fr. 5 W as ἀμώμητον, a word whose connotations of blame and responsibility are central to that fragment's themes: cf. Burnett (1983) 42.

[34] On the dubious presentation of the girl's character, see Stoessl (1976) 247-8; Carey (2009) 158.

[35] Cf. *Il.* 9.397: τάων ἥν κ᾽ ἐθέλωμι φίλην ποιήσομ᾽ ἄκοιτιν; *Od.* 5.120: ἥν τίς τε φίλον ποιήσετ᾽ ἀκοίτην; Hes. F 10(a).22, 59: φίλην ποι]ήσατ᾽ ἀκ[οι]τιν (cf. also Hes. *Th.* 921: θαλερὴν ποιήσατ᾽ ἄκοιτιν). Though φίλην in the Archilochean line is a conjecture, it is widely accepted by scholars who have worked on the poem.

epic resonance may give the audience a further clue that the speaker is not the bashful virgin she seems. Females in epic seduction scenes frequently hide their true intentions to manipulate men, and the epic resonance may be a means of signalling to the audience that the younger daughter of Lycambes is as untrustworthy as her sister[36].

Following epic convention, the male narrator continues to press his suit when confronted with rejection. While the interpretation of his speech is notoriously difficult, reading it through the grammar of traditional seduction scenes helps us to understand what is unusual about this scene. Like his epic counterparts, the man responds to the objections raised, yet insists that he can remove these obstacles while still being able to achieve his goal. Both Zeus and Anchises claim to be offering a compromise: Zeus acknowledges Hera's request to be discreet by providing a magical cloud to cover them (*Il.* 14.342-5) while Anchises presents his pre-ordained marriage as a reason for being allowed immediate sex (148-51, and note the correspondence of the 'eternal' marriage (ἤματα πάντα) in 148 with the 'immediate' sex (αὐτίκα νῦν) in 151). Similarly, the Archilochean narrator claims that he will do as the girl asks (π]είσομαι ὥς με κέλεαι, 19) and so asks that she compromise too (μ]ή τι μέγαιρε φίλη, 22).

Yet the most striking difference between the Epode and the epic scenes is that Archilochus leaves the nature of this compromise deliberately opaque. Both Zeus and Anchises make it explicit that their desire is for intercourse (*Il.* 14.314, *HHAph.* 150), and there is nothing in the passages that encourage us to question this. Conversely, Archilochus' narrator appears to open negotiations over the boundaries of their sexual relationship, while leaving the details of these ambiguous. He begins by announcing that there are many other sexual pleasures besides 'the divine thing' (τὸ θεῖον χρῆμα, 15): a phrase which scholars have variously interpreted as meaning sex or marriage, either of which could be said to be the ultimate expression of sexual urges in a Greek context[37]. The fact that an ancient commentator on the poem appears to have glossed the phrase suggests that it was a subject of

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[36] Cf. also Penelope's manipulation of the Suitors in the pseudo-seduction scene of *Od.* 18.160-2, and the contrast between Helen's claim to hate Paris and the readiness with which she goes to bed with him at *Il.* 3.428-47, even if she has to some extent been intimidated by Aphrodite into doing so.

[37] Sex: e.g. West *ap.* Merkelbach and West (1974) 105; Degani (1975); Degani (1977); Slings (1987) 34; Degani (1990) 193-4; Nicolosi (2007) 190. Marriage: e.g. Snell, *ap.* Merkelbach and West (1974) 105; Koenen (1974); Henderson (1976); Koenen (1980).

debate in antiquity too[38]. After suggesting that the details are better left for discussion later (16-18) the male speaker then announces his suggestion in equally vague terms, for he will do something 'under the gates and the coping' (θρ]ιγκοῦ δ' ἔνερθε καὶ πυλέων ὑποφ[, 21) and 'steer to the grassy gardens' (σχήσω γὰρ ἐς ποη[φόρους / κ]ήπους, 23-4). The lines make dense use of imagery drawn from several different sources - architecture (θρ]ιγκοῦ, πυλέων 21), seafaring (σχήσω, 23), and the natural world (ποη[φόρους / κ]ήπους, 23-4) - and these mixed metaphors act as a strategy to confuse: the man purports to make his intentions clear, but in fact clouds them in language which disorientates the listener as it switches from one field of reference to another. Nor is this a question of metaphors clear to a Greek but obscure to us, for the parallels scholars have cited in their discussion of these lines show that rival uses of these metaphors point to quite different interpretations or are themselves ambiguous[39]. So this apparent compromise is a device aimed to titillate: the audience is invited to debate exactly what is being promised, and to ponder whether the girl in the poem has come to the same conclusion, for part of the humour relies on the question of whether she is likely to understand the man's sexual offer in the same way that we do, and therefore whether she understands what she is getting into.

This ambiguity is compounded if we recall that deception is a central element of the epic seduction scene, and that both seducers and seduced in epic frequently have an ulterior motive or attempt to mislead the other party. Both Hera and Aphrodite found their seductions on a lie, and manipulate their interlocutor into acting in ignorance of the true consequences of their behaviour. Similar attempts at deceit and manipulation are found in the scenes between Paris and Helen, Penelope and the Suitors, and even Odysseus and Penelope, whose reunion and lovemaking is facilitated by a trick[40]. An audience familiar with epic convention would therefore be primed not to take a speech in a seduction scene at face value, and to look for an agenda at work. Yet while Hera or Aphrodite tell outright lies to achieve their goals, the narrator in the Cologne Epode simply offers ambiguity; the vagueness of his suggestion

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[38] Hesych. π 839 πάρεξ τὸ θεῖον χρῆμα· ἔξω τῆς μίξεως, discovered by Degani (1975). Hesychius is thought to have had access to an older commentary on the poem, plausibly the commentary on Archilochus by Aristarchus, who is known to have been one of Hesychius' sources. The gloss is often thought to resolve the problem, but in fact it is only evidence of one (much later) scholar's opinion. However, it does demonstrate that it was an ambiguous and debated passage even to ancient scholars with a full text of the poem.
[39] For ambiguity as inherent here see. Mayer (2006) 12; Strauss-Clay (2008) 115; Heirman (2012) 106-7; Swift (forthcoming-a). The lines are much debated: for competing interpretations cf. e.g. West (1975); Marcovich (1975) 10-12; Slings (1975); Campbell (1976) 155; Treu (1976) 114-18; Kamerbeek (1976); Henderson (1976) 169-70.
[40] See Janko (1992) 170 who characterises lies as a key part of the seducer's tale in such scenes. Cf. also Strauss Clay (1989) 173 who describes deception as a core tool of seduction.

leaves his real intentions unclear, and invites us to ask what is actually being promised. The fact that the poem ends with such lack of clarity (discussed further below) perpetuates this motif, for the audience is kept in suspense as they wait to see what the man will in fact do, and the poem offers space for them to ponder whether they have correctly interpreted his suggestion, and whether he will break or keep the agreement made.

The final element of the seducer's speech which Archilochus draws on is the expression of feelings of desire for the beloved, which is typically used as a way of convincing the other party to give way to the seducer's wishes. Thus Anchises expresses his uncontrollable lust for Aphrodite (*HHAph.* 149-54) and Paris claims that his desire for Helen is greater than ever (*Il.* 3.442-6): in both cases the praise and desire is the final part of the seducer's strategy[41]. This too is a motif often played with in sophisticated epic scenes: for example Zeus' Catalogue of Women in the *Iliad* tests the convention, for rather than simply praising Hera's beauty, he tactlessly compares her to the other women he has bedded and the illegitimate children he has fathered with them (*Il.* 14.317-27), so that what purports to be praise of Hera's desirability is instead a reminder of Zeus' failings as a husband, or his wish to reduce Hera's potential influence by preventing her from becoming the mother of his most powerful children[42]. Even when the beloved is praised in more fulsome terms, the terms in which this praise is offered can vary in accordance with the scene's wider significance. Thus for example, Odysseus praises Nausicaa in terms which evoke the traditional tropes of wedding song: in particular his comparison of her to a goddess and a young tree (*Od.* 6.150-2, 162-9) draws on the hymenaeal tradition of *eikasia*, where the bride and groom are praised by being likened to examples of beauty from the natural world or the world of myth[43]. The hymenaeal language not only fits with the explicit mentions of marriage during Odysseus' speech, but is also relevant to the question of Nausicaa's own future marriage (and the issue of whether Odysseus or someone else will be her bridegroom), and so is part of the way in which Odysseus acknowledges, yet tries to deflect, the sexual tension implicit in the encounter. Similarly, Paris' praise of Helen refers to his own previous lust for her and the

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[41] Note, conversely, how Odysseus praises Nausicaa's beauty but distances himself from any sexual interest in her by anticipating her marriage to another man (*Od.* 6.149-85).

[42] Anchises' feelings of desire for Aphrodite are also humorously mitigated by the cautious way they are introduced (*HHAph.* 145-8), which reminds us that he is only hesitantly adopting the role of seducer.

[43] Cf. Sapph. frr. 111, 115 (and probably 105a) V; for the technique in Sappho's wedding songs cf. Mich. Ital. *Or. Ad Mich. Oxit*; Him. *Or.* 9.19. For *eikasia* as a trope of other (literary) *hymenaioi* cf. Theoc. 18.26-31; Luc. *Symp.* 41.4-11, and see Swift (2010) 245-6. For the hymenaeal echo in the Odyssey passage, cf. Hague (1983) 136-7.

first consumation of their love (*Il.* 3.442-6). He explicitly refers to his abduction of Helen from her marital home (οὐδ' ὅτε σε πρῶτον Λακεδαίμονος ἐξ ἐρατεινῆς / ἔπλεον ἁρπάξας, 343-4), a detail which reminds the audience of the transgressive nature of their relationship. The information that Paris and Helen first had intercourse while their ship was at anchor at the island of Kranae (immediately off the coast of Gythion, the Spartan port) reminds the audience of the impetuosity of their passion, and the harm that it is now causing the Trojan community. Thus the seduction scene between Paris and Helen within the action of the *Iliad* is framed in terms which cast it as a re-enactment of their original crime, just as the *teichoskopia* and the duel between Paris and Menelaus which preceded it represent the origins of the war and the original marshalling of the Greek heroes[44].

Archilochus' narrator expresses his desire in a peculiarly iambic style, for the girl is not praised in her own right, but only by contrast with the unattractive Neoboule. Thus the man's first explicit statement of desire for the girl (πολλὸν σὲ βούλο[μαι πάρος, 35) is preceded by ten lines of abuse of Neoboule in which he dwells on her unappealing age (26-8), her moral character (29-30), and imagines her and any prospective partner as objects of public scorn (32-4). πάρος in 35 explicitly presents his desire for the current girl as relative to his dislike of Neoboule, and this idea continues in the following lines where the μέν ... δέ construction sets up the two girls as contrasting opposites (36-7). The girl herself is only offered one line of praise, and it is expressed in negative form (σὺ] μὲν γὰρ οὔτ' ἄπιστος οὔτε διπλόη, 36): her positive qualities are merely the absence of Neoboule's negative ones, which again are spelled out in far more detail in 37-41. So Archilochus offers a humorous inversion of the seducer's attempt to persuade with honeyed words by presenting a strategy of invective seduction. The man responds to the girl's attempt to offer Neoboule as an alternative love object with an attack on her desirability: by rebutting her argument that Neoboule is an appropriate sexual partner, he is able to reiterate his request for some form of erotic activity with her instead. However, in terms of the conventions of erotic behaviour, the speaker's description of Neoboule presents blame and abuse as a substitute for flattery and praise. This fits with the Epode's function as (at least partly) an invective poem, for despite the delicacy of the erotic language, it nonetheless forms part of the series of attacks on the character of the Lycambids which, according to tradition, eventually drove them to suicide[45]. It is clear enough that the description of Neoboule is intended to be abusive, but even the

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[44] Cf. Allan (2006) 3.
[45] Cf.P. Dublin inv. 193a; *AP* 7.69, 71, 351, 352; Eust. in Hom. *Od.* 11.277; Hor. *Epist.* 1.19.30-1; Pseudoacronis schol. ad Hor. *Epod.* 6.11-14.

positive portrayal of the young girl comes with a sting in the tail, for we know from later tradition that Archilochus' claim to have seduced the sisters was regarded as a slur on their honour in its own right[46].

After the man's speech, he moves directly into erotic activity, taking the girl and laying her down among the flowers (42-4). When we contrast the Archilochean narrative to epic descriptions of love-making, we find that here too, Archilochus nods to convention but deviates from it. It is typical for the seducer simply to act on his passion after reiterating it: thus Zeus simply takes Hera into his arms (*Il.* 14.346), Anchises leads Aphrodite to his bed (155-60), as does Paris with Helen (*Il.* 3.447). The flowery location evokes the poetic trope of the meadow of love as an appropriate place for seduction, and the specific detail that the girl lies among the flowers as he prepares her for sexual activity draws on the same symbolism as the flowers which spring up around Zeus and Hera (*Il.* 14.347-9). However, if scholars are correct that the scene is located in the *temenos* of Hera where Archilochus is known to have encountered the Lycambids, the meadow setting takes on a new resonance. Rather than representing an ideal erotic environment, full of sexual imagery yet free from the constraints of societal norms, the meadow represents the violation of religious and civic duties, since to have sex in a religious sanctuary would be an act of pollution[47]. More generally, since seductions in flowery meadows are associated in myth with encounters between mortals and gods, Archilochus is taking a setting normally used of 'high' and glamorous encounters, and reworking it for his own more vulgar love-affair. Similarly, the cloak with which the man covers the girl reflects the cloud which Zeus creates to cover Hera (*Il.* 14.350-1): the magical beauty of the epic scene is transformed into something much more everyday[48].

Indeed, compared to the epic material, Archilochus' description manages to combine a level of graphic detail with a degree of ambiguity we do not find elsewhere. Epic sex scenes vary in the level of detail they offer: we frequently find short euphemisms that give us no

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[46] Cf. *AP* 7.351 and 352, where the ghosts of the Lycambids defend themselves by denying they ever had sexual contact with Archilochus. See Carey (2009) 157: 'in a world where a female's chastity is vital to her family's honour, [the young girl's] behaviour is shameful for a free woman.'

[47] For Archilochus meeting (at least one of) the Lycambids in the *temenos* of Hera cf. *AP* 7.351. Locating the Cologne Epode here was first suggested by Merkelbach and West (1974) 102; for a defence of their position see Nicolosi (2007) 168.

[48] Cf. Janko (1992) 171. A similar pattern is found at *Od.* 11.243-4 where Poseidon creates a huge wave to hide himself and Tyro. For covering a woman with a cloak as a symbol of sexual possession cf. Soph. *Trach.* 539-40, Eur.fr.603.4 K, Theocr. 18.19, and see Gentili (1976).

sexual detail, but poets occasionally provide a little more titillating build-up[49]. The most erotically charged is the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, where the poet describes the removal of Aphrodite's clothing as a kind of strip-tease (162-5). Nevertheless, we still find no graphic description of the sex act itself, or of any other kind of physical activity between the participants. Similarly, the blossoming flowers (*Il*.14.347-8) and falling dew (*Il*.14.351) in the *Dios Apate* may be suggestive of intercourse, but the poet steers away from any explicit detail, telling us only that Zeus and Hera 'went to bed together' (τῷ ἔνι λεξάσθην, 350), and that Zeus is overcome 'by sleep and passion' (ὕπνῳ καὶ φιλότητι δαμείς, 353)[50]. Yet all the epic scenes leave the audience in no doubt that what occurs is intercourse.

The Archilochean scene creates a very different effect. The poet begins by giving us a detailed account of the narrator's actions: he lays the girl down (42-4), covers her with a cloak (44-5), cradles her neck in his arm (45) and begins to fondle her breasts (48) and then the rest of her body (51). We therefore find a steady progression towards increasingly sexual behaviour, yet just as the action becomes explicit, the poet veers away from detail: we move suddenly to the moment of climax, yet although this is expressed in graphic terms (52) Archilochus draws a veil over exactly how it is achieved[51]. We are left with an image of ejaculation which is startling in its vividness (λευκ]ὸν ἀφῆκα μένος, 52), followed by a description which is anything other than clear (ξανθῆς ἐπιψαύ[ων τριχός, 53)[52]. Scholars have tended to respond to these lines by debating which specific sex act they think Archilochus envisaged, but such an approach is misguided, for the point is that the poet is deliberately avoiding certainty[53]. Had Archilochus wanted the nature of the sex act to be clear, he could have made it so without difficulty: his other erotic fragments show that he hardly shies away from sexual descriptions. Even if he wished to avoid coarse language in

[49] Note the discretion of the descriptions of lovemaking at: *Il*. 3.447-8; *Od*. 8.295-6, 10.347; 23.296. Slightly more explicit is *Od*. 11.245-6, where the poet briefly describes Poseidon undressing Tyro before making love to her.
[50] For the symbolic significance of dew, see Boedeker (1984) 54-5.
[51] For the ambiguity in this image, cf. Slings (1980) 300-4; Slings (1987) 51.
[52] Scholars have debated whether]τριχός or κόμης is the better supplement: since the former can mean both hair on the head and on the body while the latter is only used of head hair, the word has gained significance, since scholars use it to argue for their proposed interpretation of the passage. For discussion cf. e.g. Kamerbeek (1976); Slings (1987) 50; Degani (1993) 87; Nicolosi (2005) 251-4. Yet in either case, the word does little to resolve the problem: τριχός is still ambiguous as to which hair is meant, while κόμης tells us only that the man touches the girl's hair, and avoids giving information about how he has achieved ejaculation.
[53] Almost every conceivable sex act has been suggested: full intercourse: Henderson (1976); Casanova (1976); Koenen (1980); *coitus interruptus*: West (1975); Marcovich (1975); masturbation: Calder (1979); ejaculation over the girl's genitalia: van Sickle (1975); Rubin (1978-9); premature ejaculation: Lloyd-Jones (1975) 99 (or 'spontaneous combustion': Calder (1979)); intercrural sex: Latacz (1992); *fellatio*: Eckerman (2011).

this context, the epic seduction scenes demonstrate that one can be clear without being graphic.

Rather, the ambiguity in the poem's final lines is another way in which this seduction differs from its poetic models. Archilochus sets up a dynamic where the point of negotiation between the couple appears to be the level of sexual detail permitted in the relationship: a vulgar and humorous take on seduction, and suitable for an iambic reworking of a seduction scene. Having set this up, the poet then titillates the audience by hinting at sexually explicit material, yet leaves the listener to engage his own erotic imagination to piece together the details. In doing so, Archilochus allows him to become more emotionally implicated in the poem than would be achieved by a straightforward description. The fact that modern scholars have spent so long debating the nature of the sexual climax is itself testament to the technique's effectiveness. This invitation for the audience to engage in the erotic details forms a counterpoint to the delicate and euphemistic descriptions in epic. Moreover, when we consider that the poem was probably designed for performance in a symposium, a context suitable for discussing sexually explicit material, fuelled by drinking and male companionship, the deviation from the epic technique makes a great deal of sense. Since Archilochus' other erotic *iamboi* are extremely graphic in their description of sexual activity (cf. e.g. frr. 41-4), the audience may well be anticipating a similar level of vulgarity, and the apparent focus on sexual detail at the beginning of the erotic description reinforces this expectation[54]. Yet the epic language suggests a different, and more delicate, set of conventions, and the closing scene hovers between the two. Thus the final lines of the Epode become a comment on the generic conventions of both epic and iambus, which are drawn together in an enjoyable and titillating clash.

It is therefore significant that Archilochus, unlike his epic predecessors, chooses to end his seduction scene with the moment of ejaculation, rather than going on to include the final elements of the traditional scene: sleep, followed by awakening. The ending of the Epode is abrupt on its own terms, but when taken in the light of the conventional pattern, it seems positively startling. The 'awakening' element of the seduction scene allows the poet to

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[54] Scholars have sometimes argued that the language of Archilochus' trimeters is more graphic than that of the Epodes (cf. West (1974) 124), but given the small size of the surviving *corpus* of both metrical forms, this is a risky argument to make: cf. cf. Corrêa (2010) 266. Indeed, Archil. fr. 189 W (πολλὰς δὲ τυφλὰς ἐγχέλυας ἐδέξω, 'many blind eels (i.e. penises) did you take in') is as vulgar and vivid a metaphor as anything found in the trimeters: for the sexual language in this fragment see Gerber (1973); Corrêa (2002).

consolidate the purpose of the seduction, and gives the characters the opportunity to recognise the consequences of their actions: Anchises is confronted with Aphrodite in her full glory (176-82), Ares and Aphrodite are caught in a net and mocked for their adultery (*Od.* 8.296-305), Odysseus persuades Circe to turn his men back to their human form (*Od.* 10.378-87) and Odysseus and Penelope reestablish their marital bonds by conversation (*Od.* 23.300-9). The awakening and realisation may be separated from the description of the love-making, but it usually occurs at the next chronological point we encounter the participants. Thus Zeus and Hera's intercourse is followed by the rallying of the Achaeans, but the next time the poet shows us Zeus in the poem, it is to show him waking at Hera's side and realising he has been duped (*Il.* 15.4-13). Similarly, the poet does not offer us the immediate aftermath of Paris and Helen's love-making, but the pattern is resumed on their next appearance, when the couple are still in their bedroom, and Hector's angry response forces them to confront the consequences of Paris' departure from the battlefield (*Il.* 6.321-3). Even the embryonic seduction scene of Poseidon and Tyro contains Poseidon's revelation of his true identity and his prophecy concerning their children (*Od.* 11.248-52). Conversely, the ending of the Cologne Epode precludes the audience (and possibly the characters) from coming to a clear understanding of the seduction's true outcome. In his speech, the man refers to discussions that can wait till later (16-18), and so implies that some kind of negotiation will take place after sexual activity. But this is not only a rhetorical device to persuade the girl, for in narratological terms it also reminds the audience that such a conversation would be the usual end-point for this type of scene. Since the poet has already left it ambiguous what the man's intentions are, and precisely what the nature of the compromise he suggests is, leaving the scene on such an abrupt note heightens the ambiguity, and further encourages the audience to engage their erotic imaginations and draw their own inferences.

Conclusion

The structure and details of the Cologne Epode, then, are a skillful manipulation of the tropes of epic seduction. As in the longer epic scenes, Archilochus reworks the conventions to bring out what is unique about the particular seduction he describes. Although epic seduction scenes are formed around a set of typical building blocks, there is great flexibility in how these are handled, and all of the longer seduction scenes rework them to playful effect. Seduction scenes are intrinsically light-hearted and emotionally engaging, and it is therefore unsurprising that poets seek to be creative in the way they present them. The core elements

are used to characterise the participants or their relationship to each other: thus the way they are handled sheds light on the scene's power dynamics or the parties' ulterior motives. An archaic audience, attuned to the conventions of such scenes, would have been in a position to notice such alterations and understand their poetic significance.

Archilochus inherited a series of conventions for seduction scenes, associated with the high-flown world of epic, and the grand tales of gods and heroes that inhabit it. In the Cologne Epode we see him alluding to and reworking these conventions, to create a seduction suitable for the vulgar and sexually explicit iambic world he describes. In general terms, Archilochus' poetry engages pervasively with epic: both the details of his language and the broader ethical and political themes he deals with draw heavily on such poetry, and we can therefore infer that his audience was sufficiently steeped in this poetic tradition to appreciate the references. Moreover, the fact that the Epode uses language derived from epic throughout further allows the audience to make the connection, and to see the poem as an iambic take on an epic tradition.

Most importantly, reading the Cologne Epode as a travesty of an epic seduction scene sheds light on many of the poem's interpretative problems, and in particular helps us see what is achieved by the poem's surprising ending. On analysis, the poem's structure and content is remarkably close to epic: we have a speech from the love object where she attempts to raise obstacles, followed by a speech from the seducer where he presses his case by countering those obstacles and reiterating his desire, and finally a description of erotic activity. Yet at each point, the Archilochean narrative offers something different from epic, and so subverts the audience's expectations. The girl's offer of a substitute sex object alludes to the convention that the beloved in a seduction scene attempts to place obstacles in the seducer's path, but does so in way which shocks, presenting her not as a bashful maiden but as a kind of pimp. Similarly, the man's speech responds to this by reiterating his desire, yet does so by means of invective rather than praise, presenting the girl as nothing more than a foil to the undesirable Neoboule. The man's attempt to remove the obstacles and to negotiate a compromise draws on epic convention, but Archilochus leaves the details of his suggestions crucially vague and clouded in metaphor, while the pervasive element of deceit in the epic seduction scenes alerts the audience to the difficulty of interpreting the speaker's intentions.

This ambiguity is then reinforced by the poem's ending, which unlike epic seductions invites us to focus on the sexual details of the erotic activity, yet avoids clarity. The abrupt ending with its graphic imagery of ejaculation leaves the audience in suspense, and invites us to question how the scene should be interpreted: indeed, the heated scholarly debate that has raged over the sexual details is itself testament to Archilochus' success in creating an erotic cliff-hanger. Epic convention would prime us to expect some kind of aftermath to help us make sense of the seduction's consequences, and the man himself alludes to this in his speech; hence the absence of any kind of resolution is doubly striking. Finally, the meadow setting itself evokes the romanticised poetic trope of the *locus amoenus*, yet if scholars are right to locate the action in the *temenos* of Hera, we find here too an iambic parody of a high-flown poetic motif, which turns the location from a romantic fantasy into a sordid and sacrilegious act.

Thus Archilochus' transformation of epic poetry, and particularly epic's handling of erotic motifs, illustrates the Cologne Epode's poetic sophistication. The degree of skillful generic allusion in the poem is not only testament to Archilochus' creativity, but also gives us a richer insight into the Epode's unique blend of delicacy, humour, and invective.

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