S. R. SLINGS

ARCHILOCHUS, FR. 188, 1–2


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Oùkèth' òymòc thàllleis ápallon xhòsa kàrrfetai gàr ëdò
dàymòc' kákoù dé gèr&qüu;os kàthairei
sèmma'.

òymòc Hephaestion cett.: (...).]c P. Köln 58, 37: òymòc B. Snell

In a recent paper Christopher G. Brown and Douglas E. Gerber support me in my defence of the transmitted òymòc against the majority of scholars. I had rejected Snell’s dative because it did not, and does not, make sense to me: the most natural interpretation would be: ‘your skin is dried out by wrinkles’, which is illogical as the wrinkles are not the cause of the withering of the skin. Brown – Gerber’s interpretation of the clause kàrrfetai – òymòc, however, is very different from mine. Before discussing it, I have to clarify some points on which I see I have been too brief.

First, Snell’s emendation is often thought to receive support from a parallel in Horace: Epod. 8, 3–4 cum sit tibi ... et rugis uetus frontem senectus exaret. I should have said more clearly than I did that apart from the metaphor furrow – wrinkle there is no correspondence between the two passages, and more in particular, that those who perceive a parallel between kàrrfetai òymòc(i)c and rugis exaret (not including Snell) should spend some time pondering the difference between arare and ðre.

Second, I neither said nor implied that kàrrfetai òymòc means ‘your wrinkles are withered’, a phrase which Brown – Gerber rightly call ‘incoherent’. What I did mean was this, òymòc (which I take to be a collective singular here) can be used as object of ðlaënv, lit. ‘to produce a furrow (swathe) by moving in a straight line’; cf. such expressions as táfroν ðlaënvo and especially ðlaënvo. My proposal, which was based on a remark by Snell, is to assume that Archilochus used kàrrfø ðymòc by analogy, meaning ‘to

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4 Which Horace may have borrowed from Archilochus: there are no parallels in extant Greek literature and those in Latin literature (Martial. III 72, 4; Apul. Apol. 16, 7) are all later than the Epodes.
5 Æ 68; Arat. Phaen. 745; Nic. Ther. 570; as object of ðymòc: Theoc. 10, 2.
6 See also A 575 kolaiòn ðlaënvo, for which I may refer to my remarks ZPE 21, 1976, 284.
7 Loc. cit. ‘Danach wäre also nicht ... ãrhos Subjekt zu kàrrfetai (vgl. ν 398 kàrrfø µèn ãrhos ðalò), sondern òymòc. Eine ähnliche Stelle wüßte ich nicht anzuführen, aber kàrrfø òymòc mit effizierterem Objekt
produce a wrinkle by drying up’ – in other words, the expression is a contamination of ὀγμὸν ἑλαύνω (with an object denoting the result of an action, ‘effiziertes Objekt’) and χρόνα κάρφω (with an object denoting the entity affected by an action, ‘affiziertes Objekt’). The contamination is made easier by the fact that ὀγμὸς is fairly often used as a result object. A parallel is ναῦν πήγνυμι ‘to build a ship by fastening boards’. And whereas contamination is frowned upon by the various prescriptive grammars of the modern languages, it was for Greek poets perhaps the primary means of enriching their poetic language. All in all, I take it that the phrase means ‘wrinkles are already being produced by drying up’, i.e. ‘the parching of your skin is already producing wrinkles’.

Brown – Gerber take ὀγμὸς as a metaphor for the ‘woman’s procreative capability’, which is said to be ‘drying up’. For this they cite the analogous use of αὐλαξ. But in the parallels they give from Greek poets, the metaphor is clarified by an addition which I sorely miss here. Besides, on their interpretation the connection of the two clauses by means of γάρ is hard to understand: ‘your skin has lost its softness because you can no longer be pregnant’. I fail to see the causal link. (The same objection goes for J. Henderson’s interpretation of ὀγμὸς as ‘cunnus’.) And finally, in the normal cause of nature, a woman’s skin starts losing its ἐπαλότης long before menopause.

Amsterdam, Free University

S. R. Slings

äre wohl möglich und dazu das Passiv: die Runzel wird geschrumpelt.’ Snell goes on to reject this because he prefers the plural to a collective singular, but there are parallels for the latter in Archilochus, which I collected in my note ad loc.

8 S. OT 1211–1213 πῶς ποτὲ πῶς ποθ’ αἰ πατροίαι ε’ ἄλοκες φέρειν ... ἐδυνάθησαν: E. Phoen. 18 μή επείρε τέκναν ἄλοκα.