
This is very strongly a book of fashion. A fair number of fashionable theories and techniques ("Rezeptionsforschung", oral poetry, the study of assonance, the study of Homeric parallels in lyric poetry) are the ingredients of a theoretical *farrago used to show how* Archilochus employs the epic technique of oral, formulaic creation (we are given no arguments *that* he actually did so) in the poems known as fr. 1 W., fr. 2 + 4 W. (which, following Gentili's hypothesis'), the author takes together as belonging to the same elegy) and fr. 196A W. (the First Cologne Epode). The result is, on the whole, disappointing, because the author combines these fashions without stopping to consider how each of them relates to his central assumption about Archilochus' poetic technique.

The instrumentarium of reception is employed for the relation of poet and audience. Relying especially on the excellent studies of W. Röslerț), the author makes the interesting suggestion that the more Homeric a poet's diction is, the larger the audience addressed will have been (27ff.). It is rather a pity that in the analysis of the poems this suggestion is not worked out; Archilochus' public is virtually neglected in practice.

The version of the oral creation theory used here combines the widest conception of the formula (an unrestricted use is made of "structural formulas") with Nagler's generative *Gestalt*-theory'). No answer is given to the following questions. Is it permitted to transfer the notion of oral creation (which is, essentially, an explanation of how *epic* poetry is made) to the field of lyric, where the conditions are wholly different? Do you need a technique necessary for the improvisation of poems of hundreds or thousands of verses if you want to improvise a poem of a couple of dozens of verses? Granted that Archilochus improvised some of his poems (there is some evidence that he did, as did most Greek poets, at times⁴), how certain can we be that any given poem is the result of creation on the spur of the moment? If we encounter epic formulas in lyric poetry, especially in elegy, does this mean that poets using such formulas are oral poets? Are we, in such cases, studying a purely oral technique or a technique of versification, such as we might study also in admittedly non-oral poets?

The importance of assonance (including alliteration and rhyme) in archaic Greek poets has recently been stressed, among others by an important scholar like R. Fuhrer. No matter what role one attributes to it, I wonder how anyone can busily analyze phonetic patterns in lines of Greek poetry and maintain at the same time that these lines were orally created: oral creation and use of sound effects on any scale would seem to me to exclude each other mutually.

Much of the work done recently on the earlier Greek lyricists, even by excellent scholars, is infected with the plague of epic parallels; any combination of words in these poets which happens to occur also in Homer or Hesiod is said or assumed to be a conscious reflexion of the epic passages in which they occur. Even allowing for the fact that in this respect Mr. Aloni is following what seems to become an ingrained, if deplorable, habit of many scholars, it must be said that he is following it to an absurd extent. He writes out various passages from Homer, underlining every word which happens to occur also in the First Cologne Epode (102-114), thus discovering what he calls ‘matrici tematiche paragonabili’ (102), whatever that may mean. He seems to think that this procedure is warranted by his authorities on oral creation (which it is not); even so, wholesale imitation of fixed texts is contrary to what we know of the practice of oral poets.

This is not to say that Mr. Aloni has written an absolutely worthless book. The analysis of fr. 1 (31-48) is on the whole rather good (though I cannot believe that the Μουσέων ἔρατον δῶρον refers to Archilochus’ status as a poet and to the lyre at the same time), and the minute analysis of the Cologne fragment may shed some light on Archilochus’ technique of versification. But it is precisely the thoughtless combination of various modern theories which makes the result of these investigations unacceptable.

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4) Archil. fr. 251 W.; perhaps also fr. 120. Cf. my note on Pl. Smp. 197c5-6, Mnemos. IV 36 (1983), 418.