HOMERIC EPITHETS IN GREEK LYRIC POETRY

ONE of the ways in which a poet may show his quality is by discrimination and originality in his choice of adjectives. Poetry likes to adorn the bare noun; a noun such as 'the sky' calls out for an attribute. But in practice the poet has to take care to avoid the cliché. He can seldom write 'the blue sky'; even 'the azure sky' has become trite. He has to search for the epithet which will be both apt and original. One recollects the story that A. E. Housman pondered for months before the right one came: '. . . and see the *coloured* counties and hear the larks so high'.

Homeric language has the peculiarity that one of its main resources is the use of epithets which, by virtue of frequent repetition, already have a ring of triteness or conventionality. I refer to the 'Homeric formula' or 'ornamental epithet'. There are occasions when it is significant that Achilles was fleet of foot, and on these the epithet *πόδας ὠκύς* adds something to the line. But when the context contains no reference to running, this epithet is purely ornamental and conventional. The frequency of these ornamental epithets is familiar to every reader of Homer. As an element in Homeric style, they may be satisfactory and effective. Regarded in isolation, they retain little vitality: they are 'dead'.

This, of course, is by no means a defect, but simply an interesting characteristic, of the Greek epic style. It is not confined to Homer. Hesiod, also writing in hexameters, draws almost entirely upon the traditional Homeric vocabulary, and the innovations, though significant, are few; and the same goes for almost the whole collection of Homeric Hymns, despite the differences of generation among them. Elegy, however, partly no doubt owing to the slight originality demanded by the metrical innovation of the pentameter, shows a progressive development. Tyrtaeus still uses Homeric epithets indiscriminately; but Solon is already more original, and the Theognis collection is on the whole sparing with ornamental phrases, even though in certain contexts (such as any mention of the sea) it is a slave to them.

Now the presence of these Homeric phrases in post-Homeric hexameter and elegiac poetry is perhaps not surprising. By choosing to write in the metre of Homer, or one as closely related to Homer's as the elegiac, the poet was committing himself to a position of discipleship towards the master, and his task was not to find a new language for himself but to invest the one bequeathed to him with a certain freshness by introducing, here and there, an element of originality; and in course of time the original elements began to preponderate over the traditional ones. But the survival of Homeric phrases in the completely new context of lyric poetry is a much stranger phenomenon. Archaic lyric poetry is often a long way from the epic. It may use entirely different metres, it may be personal instead of narrative, and its language is fresh and direct. Nevertheless, conventional Homeric epithets occur. Sometimes it seems fairly easy to explain their occurrence: if a lyric poet adopts a dactylic metre, or narrates a heroic story, it is not too surprising if features of epic dialect and vocabulary tend to appear. But there are many more instances which are not

so readily explicable, and which are especially disconcerting in that they occur in passages where the diction is otherwise crisp and economical. To put the problem in its sharpest form: when, in a poem where every word tells (in Sappho, for example), we come across what I have called a 'dead' expression, an ornamental epithet borrowed from Homer, should we be shocked or delighted? Is it simply a cliché, and therefore a defect in the poem, or is it a conscious archaism, a judicious borrowing from an honoured tradition?

Despite the interest of scholars in the survival of Homeric language into later literature, I am not aware that the sharp aesthetic problem raised by this survival has been properly examined.[1] It may be that the problem has no answer, or that it has been shunned for its associations with literary criticism rather than rigorous scholarship; yet I believe that it is possible to approach it in a reasonably scientific way. For this purpose I propose to concentrate upon a part only of the already small field of lyric poetry. The choral Dorian lyric (with the exception of Alcman, whose language is limpid and direct) is not very helpful: the diction of Simonides, Pindar, and Bacchylides tends to aim at an effect of rich profusion, in which a large number of epic words and phrases occur together with rarer expressions and original coinages; and since these poets (despite individual differences) were drawing on all the linguistic resources available to them, among which Homer naturally held an important place, it is impossible to subject their practice to rigorous control. Certain specific instances are illuminating, and will be referred to in what follows; but a systematic analysis of the poems does not yield any clear result. The same applies to tragedy. Here the number of Homeric epithets is in any case exceedingly small; but the language is often of such a richness that it can apparently absorb a few conventional expressions without any noticeable effect on the style, and although there are isolated instances which lend striking support to the interpretation here proposed of certain tendencies discernible in lyric, the writing of the tragic poets is too varied and original to support any general conclusions. There remains the 'monodic' lyric of Lesbos and Ionia (under which head I include, for convenience, Archilochus). These poets write in concise metrical forms (and usually also in non-dactylic metres) with an extreme economy of words and directness of expression. Any superfluity is at once noticeable; and this makes their practice with regard to ornamental Homeric epithets easy to control. A simple principle can be applied: where an adjective occurs which is neither predicative nor essential to the sense—which is ornamental, in fact, in so far as the sentence would be complete and meaningful without it; and where that adjective is already familiar in such a context from Homer, and there is no striking originality in its employment; we can count this as a gratuitous Homerism, an occurrence of a 'dead' expression. And these instances form the basis of a reasonably objective and systematic statistic.

But merely to present the result of such an analysis statistically would be to ignore both the subtlety and the interest of the problem. A mere list of Homerisms will have no value in itself unless it can be shown that any noticeable peculiarities in the distribution of the phrases are unlikely to be fortuitous, but reflect a more-or-less conscious variation in the practice of the poet. Some

[1] M. Leumann, in *Mus. Helv.* iv (1947), pp. 119 ff., well describes the phenomenon, but does not consider its implications.

evidence must first be produced that archaic poetry had achieved this degree of self-consciousness in its choice of vocabulary and its conventions of diction.

It is easy to observe that the appearance of an epic subject or of epic characters in a lyric poem tends to be accompanied by Homeric phraseology. This tendency is particularly marked in Bacchylides, where the difference between the vocabulary used in the narrative and the non-narrative passages is so striking that no doubt is possible about a deliberate intention behind it. To take an example: the central part of the thirteenth Epinikion relates the story of Ajax defending the Trojan ships from the attack of Hector. There are certain divergences from the version in the *Iliad*, but the main lines of the Homeric story are adhered to, and the passage contains many verbal echoes of Homer. Of the 29 ornamental epithets in these lines (vv. 97–169), 17 can be found in Homer; that is to say, the proportion of traditional to non-traditional epithets is 17 to 12. But in the following passage (vv. 175–231), which is concerned with extolling the victor and offering moral guidance, the ornamental epithets, though only a little less abundant (there are 16), are all, with only two exceptions, ones that are *not* to be found in Homer; 2 to 14, therefore, is the proportion of traditional to non-traditional epithets. An analysis of the fifth Epinikion produces a closely similar result. Verses 56–175 tell the story of Meleager. This time there is no parallel version in Homer, but the subject is treated in the heroic style, and there are a number of verbal allusions to Homer. In these lines the proportion of Homeric to non-Homeric ornamental epithets is 32 to 22. In the non-narrative passages on either side (1–55, 176–200) the proportion is 12 to 29.

This bald statistical variation in vocabulary can hardly be fortuitous, and invites us to look for the same tendency elsewhere. And indeed, the earliest choral lyric we possess, Alcman's *Partheneion*, conforms obediently. The poem apparently fell into two parts, the first relating the legend of the slaughter of the Hippocoontids, the second, by contrast, concerned only with the immediate present—the details of the religious dance and the personalities of the performers. Of the first part only a few half-lines survive; but these contain a catalogue of the Hippocoontids who met their death. The name of each hero is accompanied by an epithet, and of the six that are legible, four are traditional Homeric epithets for heroes (*ποδώκης*, *κορυστής*, *ἔξοχος ἡμιθέων*,[1] and *μέγας*). The concentration of these four epithets into six lines is all the more striking in that in the remaining ninety lines of the poem there are only four such epithets altogether. Moreover, the remaining fragments of Alcman (with one important exception) are exceedingly sparing of Homeric epithets, but mentions of Ajax and Odysseus are accompanied by *φαίδιμος*, *δορὶ ξυστῷ*, and *ταλασίφρων*, (frr. 76, 77, 80), a reference to Paris by *Ἑλλάδι βωτιανείρᾳ* (fr. 73).

The tendency, then, must be recognized; but it still needs explanation. We are no nearer to understanding the role of what, begging the question, we are inclined to call 'clichés', even if they do tend to be concentrated in passages of heroic narrative; for, if they are really clichés, their presence is prima facie no less a stylistic defect here than anywhere else. However, a possible solution to this problem is suggested by a characteristic of Bacchylides' language as a whole. Bacchylides uses a language in which many of the adjectives, though

[1] Homer would have said *ἔξοχος ἡρώων*: *ἡμιθέων* is post-Homeric. But the effect is no more original for that.

not actually Homeric, are formed on the Homeric model and give the impression of Homeric compounds while retaining some of the freshness of original coinages: 'Homerica epitheta audire tibi videris, si nova illa Bacchylidis auribus percipis.'[1] The following three phrases, chosen at random from a few lines of Epinikion 5 (73 ff.), will amply illustrate the point: *νευρὰν λιγυκλαγγῆ* (cf. *νευρὴ δὲ μέγ' ἴαχε Δ* 125, *λιγύφθογγος, λιγύφωνος*, etc.), *χαλκεόκρανον ἰόν* (cf. *ἰὸς χαλκοβαρής O* 465), *τραχὺν ὀϊστόν* (*πικρὸν ὀϊστόν* Homer). Instances of this kind in Bacchylides are numerous; and their purpose is clearly to build up a Homeric 'tone' which will pervade the diction without robbing it of its originality. Now it is evident that this Homeric tone is especially cultivated in passages of heroic narrative, and that the simplest way to reinforce this tone is to introduce a number of phrases which are *in fact* Homeric and unoriginal. It looks as if there existed a poetic convention allowing, in heroic contexts, a judicious admixture of these unoriginal phrases, which contributed to the desired Homeric tone, and which, in these surroundings, did not have the ring of banality, so long as a reasonable proportion of unoriginal to original phrases was not exceeded—in the case of Bacchylides, about three to two.

This hypothesis may now be tested on the more exacting material of archaic lyric. A particularly favourable instance is afforded by Sappho, whose poems appear to be written either in a 'normal' (purely vernacular) style, or in an 'abnormal' style, in which Homeric usages are found side by side with the vernacular.[2] Only one of these 'abnormal' poems is long enough to be of any use to us, but this (β 2 = 55 D = 44 L.P.) is an excellent example of Homeric 'tone'. The scene described is the arrival of Hector and Andromache, newly married, in Troy. This has no immediate prototype in Homer (though the phrase *πολύδωρος Ἀνδρομάχη Z* 394, cf. *X* 471 f., suggests that it may have occurred somewhere in the epic tradition), and although there are certain scenes in Homer which may have suggested some of the details here (e.g. Priam harnessing his wagon *Ω* 265 ff. or the gifts offered to Penelope by the suitors *σ* 292 ff.) it would be a mistake to regard Sappho's poem as a mere rewording of a Homeric prototype:[3] a number of the details are anachronistic for Homeric times, and the manner of narration is lyric rather than epic. However, the linguistic licences occurring in nearly every line leave no doubt of a deliberately created Homeric tone, and the adjectival phrases yield the following analysis.

(*a*) Homeric:

τάχυς ἄγγελος (*Ω* 292, etc.)
κλέος ἄφθιτον (*I* 413, etc.)
ἑλικώπιδα Ἀνδρομάχαν (cf. *A* 98; *ἑλίκωπες Ἀχαιοι passim*)
Θήβας ἐξ ἱέρας (*Iliad, passim*)
Πλακίας ἀ[ι]ν⟨ν⟩άω (?)[4] (*ἀενάων* once in Homer, *ν* 109, with *ὕδατα*)
ἄλμυρον πόντον (Hesiod, *Th.* 107; *ἅλμυρον ὕδωρ* Homer)

[1] Hermann Buss, *De Bacchylide Homeri Imitatore* (Giessen, 1913), p. 27. On Bacchylides' original coinages see E. Eberhard's review of this in *B.Ph.W.* xxxiv (1914), col. 1225.

[2] The distinction is carefully formulated by D. L. Page, *Sappho and Alcaeus*, pp. 65 f.

[3] Diehl's observation, 'carmen conditum esse ad exemplum Hectoris *λύτρων* (*Ω* 265 ss.)', is misleading. Cf. Page, op. cit., p. 71.

[4] Cf. *Z* 396 f. *ὃς ἔναιεν ὑπὸ Πλάκῳ ὑληέσσῃ, Θήβῃ ὑποπλακίῃ* (i.e. the birthplace of Andromache). There is no known place, river, or monument called *Πλακιή* except a Pelasgian colony near the Mysian Olympus, a long way to the north-east of Thebes (which

ποίκιλ' ἀθύρματα (cf. *o* 416 *μυρί' ἄγοντες ἀθύρματα νηΐ*)
πάτηρ φίλος[1] (Homer, *passim*)
πτόλιν εὐρύχορον (*λ* 265 *Θήβη εὐ.*)
σατίναις ὑπ' ἐυτρόχοις (*ἅρμα, ἅμαξα ἐύτρ.* Homer, *passim*)
ἴκελοι θεοῖς (cf. *B* 478 *ἴκελος Διί*, etc.)
ἄχω θεσπεσία (10 times in Homer)
Πάον' ἑκάβολον (*Ἀπόλλων ἑκ. passim* in Homer)
. . . *θεοεικέλοις* (in Homer, *passim* of heroes)
(? *παρθενίκαν* [⏑ ⏑ -]*σφύρων*)

(*b*) Original:

ἄβραν Ἀνδρομάχαν (*ἁβρός* first in Hesiod, fr. 218 Rzach)
ἐλίγματα χρύσια, ἀργύρα ἀνάριθμα ποτήρια
αὔλος ἀδυμέλης (the compound first here: Homer only once uses *ἡδύς* of *sound* *θ* 64)
μέλος ἄγνον (the expression is unique)
ἐπήρατον ὄρθιον (perhaps cf. *I* 228 *δαιτὸς ἐπήρατου ἔργα*)
Πάον' εὐλύραν (*εὐλ.* only here before fifth century)

This analysis may be regarded as a model for all those from which I have drawn my statistics, and it will be convenient to draw attention at once to certain points in its arrangement. It will be observed that no account is taken of the frequency with which a given phrase occurs in Homer, or the relative antiquity of the passage in which it occurs; indeed some phrases are placed under (*a*) which either occur first only in Hesiod, or else cannot be found verbatim in archaic epic at all. Thus *ποίκιλ' ἀθύρματα* has no exact prototype in Homer, *ἄλμυρος πόντος* none before Hesiod. The criterion which has been used is necessarily a little subjective, but not, I think, arbitrary. Our concern is not so much with the adjectival phrase as an entity, but with the adjective itself; and the question is not whether a certain phrase occurs once, or infrequently, or frequently, in Homer, but whether the adjective which the poet chose was already a familiar conventional one for objects of a certain class. Presumably far more epic poetry was current in the time of Sappho than we now possess; consequently a phrase which already sounds conventional in Hesiod or the Homeric hymns should not be regarded as the more original for the fact that it does not occur in the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*. Thus *ἀθύρματα*, though a rare word, occurs in a closely similar context in the *Odyssey*, and the Homeric adjective *ποικίλα* which goes with it sounds more ornamental than descriptive; the phrase is therefore placed under (*a*). Again, it matters little that *ἑλικώψ* is used always of men in Homer, except once, for Briseis (in a Homeric Hymn it is also used once of the Muses). The adjective can have had little descriptive

is at the foot of Mt. Ida). According to Dicaearchus (Schol. Venet. A *Z* 396), *Πλακίη* was an epithet of *Θήβη*, owing to Thebes' propinquity to *τὸ Πλάκιον καλούμενον ὄρος τῆς Λυκίας*. Now it seems unlikely that Sappho had direct geographical knowledge of the area: it is more probable that she picked up the name from Homer, in which case there are two possibilities. Either *ἀ.*[. .]*νάω* conceals a noun, and *Πλακία* is correctly used as an adjective (this is barely conceivable); or else Sappho *misdivided* *ὑποπλακίῃ* in *Z* 397 as *ὑπὸ Πλακίῃ*, in which case the last word in the line will be a purely ornamental epithet for something (*Πλακίη*) which never existed.

[1] H. Fränkel, *G.G.N.* 1924, p. 64, points out that in Homer the phrase *πατὴρ φίλος* would be used in closer syntactical connexion with the rest of the sentence; but I cannot agree with him that in Sappho the phrase is full of meaning. Cf. *φίλων τοκήων*, Sappho fr. 27 a 10.

force for Sappho, and there can be no doubt that she learnt it from epic poetry.

To return to the analysis itself: it can be seen that in this poem of Sappho, where both metre and subject invite the use of Homeric language, the proportion of conventional to original epithets is about 14:8—closely similar, in fact, to the proportion in the narrative passages of Bacchylides. The technique of building up Homeric 'tone' seems to be much the same in both.

By itself, of course, this proportional consistency is neither an explanation nor a justification of the presence of these phrases in a heroic context: it merely suggests the existence of a poetic convention. There are, however, instances where a more deliberate intention can be discerned in the use of Homeric epithets. It has already been observed that in Alcman's *Partheneion* the sons of Hippocoon are each furnished with a more-or-less conventional epithet. Now the sons of Hippocoon were not a distinguished company: it is exceedingly unlikely that they figured in any considerable epic poem, and their importance was a local one. Is it not conceivable that Alcman wished to invest them with a more heroic stature by giving them some of the stock attributes of epic heroes? This would remain a mere guess were it not for a striking parallel in tragedy. In the *Persae* 28 ff. the chorus is describing the glorious army of the Persians, and gives a list of the commanders, each again with an epic (or epic-sounding) epithet—*Ἀρτεμβάρης ἱππιοχάρμης, ὁ τοξοδάμας* (*τοξοφόρος* or *τοξότης* Homer) *ἐσθλὸς Ἰμαῖος, ἵππων ἐλατὴρ Σοσθάνης*; and another list of army commanders towards the end of the play shows the same tendency (967 ff., cf. 999 *Τόλμον αἰχμᾶς ἀκόρεστον*). Now Aeschylus is very sparing of Homeric epithets, and it seems highly probable that in these passages he was deliberately using words with epic associations in order that, in the mouth of the chorus, the Persian officers might be invested with something of the dignity of epic heroes. The conjecture that Alcman was doing the same for the sons of Hippocoon finds, to this extent, support.

However, one must be cautious in assuming that a poet as early as Alcman was so sensitive towards the use of Homeric language: the evidence is simply insufficient. By the time of Anacreon, on the other hand, there can be no doubt at all that words were used deliberately for their epic associations. The following three examples will make this clear.

(*a*) Anacreon fr. 88:

πῶλε Θρῃκίη, τί δή με λοξὸν ὄμμασιν βλέπουσα
νηλεῶς φεύγεις, δοκεῖς δέ μ' οὐδὲν εἰδέναι σοφόν . . ..

Amid the direct and simple idioms of this light-hearted poem, one is brought up short by *νηλεῶς*, a word of uncertain meaning which has almost disappeared since Homer. What is it doing in these gay, intimate surroundings?

The history of the word is difficult. It was Schulze[1] who first discerned that besides the word meaning 'pitiless' to which the popular ancient etymology,[2] *(α)ν-ελεος*, is appropriate, there is another word, derived from **ναλεϝής*, 'inevitable' (cf. *ἀλέϝομαι*, to avoid), which appears most commonly in the phrase *νηλεὲς ἦμαρ* (a euphemism for death). This sense of 'inevitable' explains one or two other Homeric phrases as well, notably the *νηλέϊ δεσμῷ* of the *Doloneia* (*K* 443—the chain which cannot be avoided, from which there is no release)

[1] *Kl. Schr.*, p. 375, *Qu. Epicae*, p. 289, followed by Boisacq, s.v.

[2] *Et. Mag.* 603. 26 *νηλεὴς ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔλεος κτλ.* Cf. Hesychius, s.v.

and perhaps even the puzzling *νηλέϊ ὕπνῳ* (*μ* 372), 'sleep which one cannot avoid (indefinitely)'; just as the phrase *φυγὼν ὑπὸ νηλεὲς ἦμαρ* becomes pregnantly paradoxical, 'escaping (on that day) the fate which no one can escape (for ever)'. Both these senses, 'pitiless' as well as 'inevitable', survive after Homer; the first appears in Theognis 1125 *νηλέϊ θυμῷ* (of Odysseus slaying the suitors) and becomes curiously inverted in Sophocles (*Ant.* 1197 *νηλεὲς σῶμα*, unpitied corpse); the second in Hesiod, *Th.* 217 *Μοίρας καὶ Κῆρας νηλεοποίνους*, and elsewhere. But already in Homer there are instances of a much vaguer use, which suggest that the two original meanings of the word have coalesced into something general and imprecise. For instance, *νηλεής* as an epithet of Achilles: sometimes the translation 'pitiless' is apt enough: in *Π* 33, for instance, Patroclus throws the word at Achilles as a reproach, and adds that he must be the son of grey sea and sheer rocks to have a temper so hard (*νόος ἀπηνής*). But 'pitiless' does not render the force of *I* 496 f.:

> . . . *Ἀχιλεῦ, δάμασον θυμὸν μέγαν· οὐδέ τί σε χρὴ*
> *νηλεὲς ἦτορ ἔχειν· στρεπτοὶ δέ τε καὶ θεοὶ αὐτοί.*

Here there is a contrast between *στρεπτός* and *νηλεής*. The gods may be moved by entreaty: but Achilles is utterly obdurate, stubborn, unyielding. One might say the two meanings of *νηλεής* have run together. Achilles is so pitiless that no human resource remains for influencing his purpose, which, as a result, is as inevitable as fate. But to translate it here, one must say 'stubborn' or 'obdurate'. Similarly, only one sense is suitable in *T* 229, where the Greeks are told to bury their dead *resolutely*, *νηλέα θυμὸν ἔχοντας*.

This diversity of meanings is clear proof that already in Homer *νηλεής* was losing its sharpness, and that neither of the original senses was any longer vividly perceived; and this dilution of its meaning must account for queer phrases like *νηλέα φωρήν* in *H. Herm.* 385 or *κέδρου νηλέϊ καπνῷ* in Hesiod (fr. 215 Rz.): for here only a general sense of 'baneful' is appropriate. Thereafter, except for the Theognis passage already mentioned and a doubtful occurrence in Alcman (110 D), the word disappears completely until it reappears here in Anacreon. Aeschylus and Pindar use it to express something like 'stubborn', 'ruthless', Sophocles for 'unpitied'.

What does the word mean in Anacreon? Foals are not 'pitiless', nor is 'inevitable' in the least appropriate; what they are, above all, is 'stubborn', and we have seen that *νηλεής* could mean this, when used of Achilles, in Homer. But in Homer it could mean several other things besides, and by the end of the sixth century it must have become an archaism and have lost all sharp definition of meaning. Anacreon could certainly have found a more incisive word for stubborn; why did this astonishingly neat and careful writer here borrow a dead word from Homer? Surely there is only one possible explanation: that he was deliberately introducing a heroic overtone into the banter of the poem. The verses are a delicate mockery of the girl: Anacreon taunts her for her childish shyness, comparing her to a Thracian foal; but not to *any* Thracian foal—this one could figure in a heroic setting, it runs away *νηλεῶς*. The word may convey no precise meaning,[1] but its associations are powerful, and give a

[1] For another instance of a word losing its precision, compare *ῥαδινός*. This occurs once in Homer (*Ψ* 583) of a whip, in Sappho of a plant; and its root meaning is doubtless something like 'pliant'. But even in the archaic period its vagaries are notable. Stesichorus (19 D) writes *ῥαδινοὺς δ' ἐπέπεμπον ἄκοντας*, Anacreon (165 B[4]) uses the word of horses, to mean 'swift', and Ibycus (58 B[4]) *ῥαδινοὺς . . . ἀντὶ τοῦ εὐμεγέθεις λέγει.*

mock solemnity to the line. The girl is stubborn with the epic stubbornness of an Achilles. 'You *steadfastly* flee me' perhaps catches the delicately ironic intonation.

This suggestion seems to be confirmed by the rest of the line. Anacreon wants to say, 'You think I have no skill'.[1] But instead of saying, in the contemporary idiom, *δοκεῖς μ' οὐκ εἶναι σοφόν*, he uses the Homeric idiom *δοκεῖς μ' οὐδὲν εἰδέναι σοφόν* (cf. L.S.J., s.v. **εἴδω* B. 1: 'frequent in Homer with neut. Adj. to express character or disposition', e.g. *ἄγρια οἶδε, ἄρτια ᾔδη, φίλα εἰδότες*, etc.), and farther on in the poem he keeps up this mock-heroic tone with his portentous chariot-metaphor *ἀμφὶ τέρματα δρόμου*. Discreet allusions to Homer are his method of subtly underlining the raillery.

(*b*) fr. 5:

ἡ δ'—ἔστιν γὰρ ἀπ' εὐκτίτου
Λέσβου—τὴν μὲν ἔμην κόμην—
λευκὴ γὰρ—καταμέμφεται,
πρὸς δ' ἄλλην τινὰ χάσκει.

In the preceding stanza of this poem each noun is artistically coupled with a colour-adjective and the two verbs placed together in the clausula—a miracle of neat construction. In the second stanza (quoted here) the composition is again vigorous and compact; but once more we are brought up short by the one word *εὐκτίτου*. It adds nothing to the sense, and looks simply like a piece of padding.

But then we observe that in four out of the seven cases in which Lesbos is mentioned in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* it is coupled with the epithet *εὐκτιμένη*. Now for Anacreon this form was metrically inconvenient: it could only have been accommodated in one central position in glyconics; but *εὔκτιτος*, also a Homeric word,[2] was easier, and was close enough to the original to make the allusion unmistakable.

It looks, then, as if *ἔστιν γὰρ ἀπ' εὐκτίτου Λέσβου* is a deliberate echo of Homer—for it is impossible to think that Anacreon, with his astonishing sense of style and within the rigorously constricted space of these tiny stanzas, did not choose his words deliberately. But why did he want a Homeric echo? The answer, again, is that he wished to introduce a note of mock-solemnity. What he had to convey was the fact that the girl was a Lesbian—in both senses of the word. One sense—what we should call the 'pejorative' sense—is conveyed by the gender of the pronoun in the last line, *πρὸς δ' ἄλλην τινὰ χάσκει*. The other, the literal one, ran the risk of sounding a trifle banal. So Anacreon, instead of saying simply, 'she comes from Lesbos', uses a more elevated phrase—as we might say, 'she *hails* from Lesbos'; by so doing he raises the girl for a moment out of her contemporary setting into a more dignified world. For a moment she assumes the proportions of a personage from heroic times, to whom one might ask the question, *τίς πόθεν εἰς ἀνδρῶν;* and attach more than a passing significance to the reply, 'I hail from finely-built Lesbos'.[3]

(*c*) fr. 51: *ἀσπίδα ῥῖψ' ἐς ποταμοῦ καλλιρόου προχοάς.*

Homer has *ποταμοῖο καλλιρόοιο* (ε 441) and *ἐς ποτάμου προχοάς* (ε 453). *ῥίπτειν*

[1] I cannot agree with Wilamowitz and Diehl that *μ'* = *μοί*. The following lines must be understood as an answer to the imputation that he, Anacreon, is not sufficiently skilful. The point is made by B. Snell in *Philologus*, xcvi (1944), pp. 285 f.

[2] *B* 592 *εὔκτιτον Αἰπύ*.

[3] Cf. Soph. *El.* 707 *ἕνατος Ἀθηνῶν τῶν θεοδμήτων ἄπο*. Here the whole passage—the list of competitors in the Pythian games—is tinged with epic vocabulary.

moreover implies something of a heroic effort. These Homerisms are in sharp contrast with Anacreon's usual style. What is the explanation?

There is no trace of any tendency in Anacreon to give straightforward descriptions of battles. This line must therefore be taken as a jest in the tradition of Archilochus (fr. 6) and Alcaeus (fr. 49), who preferred to throw away their shields and win immortality through the life of a poet rather than through the death of a hero. And how does Anacreon add salt to his jest? By the simple expedient we are beginning to recognize in his poems: he gives the line a mock-heroic tone by using a row of purely Homeric expressions.

This deliberate use of words for their epic associations is by no means confined to Anacreon, but is a recognizable feature of Greek poetry from the end of the sixth century onwards. There are numerous instances in tragedy. The word *μέροπες* was presumably no more comprehensible to Aeschylus than it is to us; yet this detracts nothing from its power when, in describing the mystery of the ways of god towards man, he writes the phrase (*Hik.* 90) *μερόπεσσι λαοῖς*: the sad heroic notion of the blind mortality of man resonates in this single adjective. Or consider the fine irony which Sophocles achieves with the phrase (*Ajax* 374 f.) *ἐν δ' ἑλίκεσσι βουσὶ καὶ κλυτοῖς πεσὼν αἰπολίοις*. Ajax's prowess is of heroic quality, to be described in epic terms, even when the exploit is only a demented attack on—a flock of sheep. These instances could be multiplied: the technique is established.

Whether it also appears earlier than Anacreon is a more delicate question, and the evidence is not decisive; but there is at least one passage in Archilochus which seems to exploit the associations of epic language in a similar way. Consider fr. 112:

> *τοῖος γὰρ φιλότητος ἔρως ὑπὸ καρδίην ἐλυσθεὶς*
> *πολλὴν κατ' ἀχλὺν ὀμμάτων ἔχευεν*
> *κλέψας ἐκ στηθέων ἁπαλὰς φρένας.*

Each line has its prototype in Homer:

(i) *ι* 433 *λασίην ὑπὸ γαστέρ' ἐλυσθείς* (of Odysseus under the ram);

(ii) *Υ* 321 *κατ' ὀφθαλμῶν χέεν ἀχλύν* (Poseidon's intervention against Achilles);

(iii) *Λ* 115 *ἁπαλόν τέ σφ' ἦτορ ἀπηύρα* (of a lion attacking a stag).

The verbal echoes are so close as to be unmistakable, but the difference in treatment is critical. In Homer the subjects of the phrases are Odysseus, Poseidon, and a lion; in Archilochus exactly the same actions are attributed to—an emotion! This is not merely a new and bold piece of psychological description: it is a piece of literary brilliance which depends for its effect on the adaptation of familiar Homeric phrases to a totally new situation.[1]

By the end of the sixth century, therefore, and probably a great deal earlier, the lyric poets were fully conscious of the conventional associations of Homeric diction. Consequently it seems unlikely that they will have used purely ornamental Homeric epithets indiscriminately, and it is reasonable to think that some sort of poetic convention was responsible for the concentration of these apparent clichés in certain contexts. One such context (the narration of an epic

[1] Fr. 104 *χαλεπῇσι . . . ὀδύνῃσιν πεπαρμένος δι' ὀστέων* is a striking combination of the literal and figurative uses of *πείρω* in Homer, and might be added as a further example. Archilochus' particular interest in Homeric words is discernible in 54, 56, 116 D, 186 B⁴. See also Hauvette, *Archiloque*, pp. 269–72.

story) has already been sufficiently commented on. Another very noticeable one is the invocation of a god in a hymn. This observation is prompted particularly by Alcaeus' *Hymn to the Dioscuri* (78 D = B2 L.P.) which, in the short space of twelve lines, contains no less than six Homeric epithets ([*παῖδες ἴφθ*]*ιμοι, εὕρηαν χθόνα, ὠκυπόδων ἐπ' ἵππων, εὐσδύγων νάων, ναῒ μελαίνᾳ, ἀργαλέᾳ νύκτι*) as against one more-or-less original epithet (*θανάτω ζακρυόεντος*, cf. *φόβος κρυόεις* in Homer). Now Alcaeus is the most careless of all the lyric poets in his use of Homeric epithets, and this poem in any case is not one of his best (Wilamowitz regarded it as frankly inferior to the 'Homeric hymn' to the Dioscuri); consequently the remarkable proportion of unoriginal to original epithets may simply be a piece of carelessness. But the incidence of *πώλων ὠκέων*, *Πωλυδεύκης κυδρός*, *Πάφον περιρρύταν*, and *Μῶσα λίγεια* in invocations of Alcman, of *αἰγιόχω* and *καλλίκομοι Μοῖσαι* in invocations of Sappho, of *παῖ μεγάλω Δίος* in another hymn of Alcaeus, and of *ἐλαφηβόλε ξανθὴ παῖ Διός* and *ἀγρίων θηρῶν* in an invocation of Anacreon, suggests that the proper solemnity required for addressing a god was achieved, as often as not, by a free use of Homeric epithets. This is not just a matter of the epithets applied to the divinities themselves. These, in lyric as elsewhere, are fairly stereotyped in any context,[1] and original coinages (such as Sappho's *βραδίναν δι' Ἀφροδίτην*) are less common than traditional attributes. What is noticeable in the context of hymns is the prevalence of Homeric phrases in general: the substantives, whatever they are, tend to be qualified by conventional epithets. The analyses below will amply illustrate this; here it is merely worth adding that this concentration appears to be neither accidental nor confined to lyric poetry. The great prayer in the parodos of the *Oedipus Tyrannus* (151–215) contains, in the space of sixty lines, some ten expressions of a more-or-less conventional character. In the rest of the play there are barely any at all.[2]

Another area in which these phrases are common, particularly in the Lesbian poets, is the description of nature. The unusual poem of Alcman (fr. 58), describing the Sleep of Nature, has four of them in seven lines (*ὀρέων κορυφαί, μέλαινα γαῖα, ἐν βένθεσι πορφυρέας ἀλός, οἰωνῶν τανυπτερύγων*) as well as several other Homerisms; and the vivid metaphor in fr. 59

Ῥίπας ὄρος ἀνθέον ὕλᾳ
νυκτὸς μελαίνας στέρνον

is built out of two common Homeric phrases. In Sappho descriptions of, or comparisons with, nature contain the following: *ὕδωρ ψῦχρον, λείμων ἱππόβοτος, κάλοι ὤκεες στροῦθοι, πύκνα πτέρα*,[3] *κάλαν σελάνναν . . . ἀργυρίαν, φάεννον εἶδος* (of the moon), *θάλασσαν ἀλμύραν, ἀνθέων ἐριθαλέων*. This concentration, again, can hardly be accidental, and it is not very difficult to suggest an explanation. The description of natural scenes demands considerable linguistic resources; it is not as simple as writing love poems or political verses and cries out for an elaborate poetic diction. Only one ready-made poetic diction was available to the lyric poets, that of Homer; and it is perhaps not surprising that they drew upon it more liberally than usual when faced with the task of describing the beauties of nature.

There are two more limited instances which it may be convenient (even

[1] I have therefore allowed a separate category for them in the analyses below.

[2] Soph. *Ant.* 1115 ff. is another example.

[3] The context of these four is also that of a *hymn*. Here, as elsewhere, some overlapping of the categories is inevitable, but immaterial.

though the reasons for them are probably quite different) to regard as special cases of the description of nature. They concern the sea and the earth. First, the sea. In archaic poetry it is remarkably rare to find the sea referred to without either an elaborate periphrasis or an ornate adjectival phrase. In the whole Theognis collection, which is not unduly free with ornamental epithets, I know of only one instance where 'the sea' is mentioned without at least a qualifying adjective. Solon, a tidy writer, confronts us unexpectedly with *πόντου πολυκύμονος ἀτρυγέτοιο* (fr. 1. 19) and Archilochus twice fills half a line with Homeric arabesques: fr. 7. 3 *κατὰ κῦμα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης* and fr. 12. 1 *πολιῆς ἁλὸς ἐν πελάγεσσιν*.[1] These instances are all from elegiac poems; but the tendency in lyrics is equally marked. The sea occurs twice in Alcman, with the phrases *πορφυρέας ἁλός* and *ἐπὶ κύματος ἄνθος*; it occurs twice also in Sappho, with *θάλασσαν ἐπ' ἀλμύραν* and *ἅλμυρον πόντον*; of the nine mentions of the sea in Alcaeus, six involve ornamental expressions; and none of the three instances in Anacreon is unadorned. Out of all these phrases only one shows any originality, Alcman's *ἐπὶ κύματος ἄνθος*: the rest are purely conventional. We can hope for no explanation of this strange phenomenon; but conventional descriptions of the sea seem to be an integral element in the poetic diction of the time, and we cannot assume that they produced a banal effect. We must simply accept this as a literary convention of the period.

The second case is in some ways even more mystifying: I mean the continual recurrence of the phrase *γῆ μέλαινα* (or, less frequently, *χθὼν μέλαινα*)—more mystifying because it is far from clear what the phrase means or why, already in Homer, it became a commonplace. The commonest application of the word *μέλας* in Homer is to *ships*—not, probably, because they were treated with black pitch[2] (for they were sometimes *μιλτοπάρῃοι*) but because, from a distance, they *look* black. In the same way Apollonius Rhodius explains that Corcyra was called 'Black' (*Μέλαινα*) because, seen from the sea with its dark forests, it *looks* black (4. 567–9). And indeed Aristotle's account of blackness (*De coloribus*, c. 1) treats the word *μέλας* as if it simply denoted deep shadow. But this clearly will not help for *γῆ μέλαινα*. The Greeks did not always think of the land as seen from the sea, and if one is on land the landscape, particularly in Greece, appears anything but black. Perhaps, therefore, the colour of rich soil is intended by *μέλας*. This seems to suit phrases such as *μελαίνῃ κειμένους ἐπὶ χθονί* (Arch. 58. 2) and especially the remarkable line in Theognis (878) . . . *ἐγὼ δὲ θανὼν γαῖα μέλαιν' ἔσομαι*. This application of *μέλας* (since the notion of '*pitch*-black' is surely strange to the archaic period) can perhaps be justified by the sense of *opacity* which it has in connexion with water, whether ruffled by the wind (cf. *φρὶξ μέλαινα*) or deep and still (Theognis 959 *κρήνη μελάνυδρος*—the water *before* it has been stirred up with mud).[3] But if Sappho can write (27a D), 'Some say that a fleet of ships is the fairest thing on the *black earth*', she clearly cannot have been thinking of the *soil* when she used the expression *μέλαινα γαῖα*. I am inclined to think that there must at some stage have been some deep religious association behind the word,[4] which was

[1] I cannot believe that in this verse *ἐυπλοκάμου* also goes with *ἁλός*. The name of some divinity must have preceded.

[2] Hesych., s.v. *μέλαιναι νῆες αἱ βαθεῖαι καὶ πισσόχριστοι.*

[3] Cf. Suidas, s.v. *μελάνυδρος· βαθεῖα· κυρίως δέ, καθάρου ὕδατος.*

[4] There may be traces of this in the mythical and vague personage *Μέλαινα* (Paus. 10. 6. 4) who seems to have chthonic associations, and in the cult-title *μέλαινα Δημήτηρ* in Phigalaea (Paus. 8. 5. 8; 8. 42. 1). Cf. O. Gruppe, *Gr. Mythologie*, p. 103 n. 10, also Schol. Eur. *Or.* 1094, Callim., *fr.* 52 Pf.

doubtless forgotten even by the time of Homer, but which continued to make the adjective a regular concomitant of the word γῆ, even when the earth was personified as a goddess (Solon fr. 24. 4 f.):

μήτηρ μεγίστη δαιμόνων Ὀλυμπίων
ἄριστα γῆ μέλαινα . . ..

But it is probably useless to probe further for an explanation; it is sufficient here to note that the phrase occurs so frequently in lyric poetry (particularly in Sappho) that it must once again be regarded as a proper element in the poetic diction of the time. By contrast it does not occur once in Aeschylus or Sophocles. They, perhaps, found it banal: the lyric poets evidently did not.[1]

These three categories (heroic contexts, hymns, nature) will be found to absorb by far the greater part of the Homeric epithets in the lyric poetry I have chosen to examine, and those that remain over are relatively few. This remainder cannot usefully be discussed in general terms; nevertheless, before proceeding to the detailed analyses, there are a few individual cases to be considered and certain qualifications to be introduced which affect the compilation of the analyses and still further reduce the number of unexplained epithets.

(*a*) The German word *Lieblingswörter* is the most convenient label for the first qualification to be made. Every period in the history of poetry has certain favourite words of affection and appraisal which occur with the frequency of clichés but are yet such an integral part of the contemporary poetic idiom that it would be a mistake to regard them as trite or dead. 'Soote' in Chaucer, 'doux' in Ronsard, 'fair' in Elizabethan lyrics, are all instances of *Lieblingswörter* of the period; and Greek lyric is particularly rich in words of this kind. Mostly, however, they are words of a slightly sensuous connotation (ἁβρός, ἁπαλός, ἱμερόεις, etc.) and do not occur in the same contexts in Homer; moreover the fact that Homer uses ἐρατεινός and the lyric poets the slightly different (though metrically no more tractable) form ἐρατός (which only occurs once in Homer) indicates clearly that these *Lieblingswörter* were very much alive and were in no sense a loan from an already existing poetic vocabulary. In the main these words (ἁβρός, ἀγανός, ἐρατός, ἐρόεις, ἐφίμερος, ἱμερόεις, ἱμερτός, χαρίεις are the principal ones) either do not occur in Homer or are used there in a different way,[2] and consequently do not concern us; but it would be rash to conclude that there are no instances of words which are favourites both to Homer and to the lyric poets. I suspect that one instance of this is the word λιγυρός, which, together with the compound λιγύφωνος, accounts for four prima-facie clichés in Sappho and seems to have been her favourite word for characterizing sounds.

(*b*) Certain words for colour, pattern, material, etc. (e.g. ξανθός, πορφύρεος, ποικίλος, χρύσιος), occur rather frequently in both Homer and the lyric poets, and there is a temptation to rank them among the 'dead' expressions. But this would probably be a mistake. The visual sense of the lyric poets was strong, and the objects they describe are often rendered more vivid by these epithets. Moreover, words for colour and brilliance were a standard resource for adding lustre to a scene. When Alcaeus writes λάμπραι κυνίαι, or Alcman ποικίλος

[1] At least until the fifth century. Pindar (*O.* 9. 50) and Bacchylides (13. 153) each only use the phrase once, and τηλέφαντον κυανέας χθονὸς ἄστρον (Pindar fr. 33 b Sn.) looks like a conscious elaboration on it.

[2] Cf. Max Treu, 'Von Homer zur Lyrik' (*Zetemata*, xii [1955]), pp. 175 ff., for a valuable discussion of the lyric poets' use of these words.

δράκων παγχρύσιος, these poets are using words to a deliberate effect: it is easy to distinguish this from the degenerate use of lustre-words which can be observed in a purely conventional phrase like ἀγλαὸς ἥβη (Theognis 985). Particularly striking is the sensibility towards colour shown by Anacreon, who was fond of placing two or more contrasting colours in close apposition, e.g.

fr. 2 καὶ Νύμφαι κυανώπιδες
πορφυρέῃ[1] τ' Ἀφροδίτῃ

fr. 5 σφαίρῃ δεῦτέ με πορφυρέῃ[2]
βάλλων χρυσοκόμης Ἔρως
νήνι ποικιλοσαμβάλῳ

fr. 53 [Ἔρως] . . . μ' ἐσιδὼν γένειον
ὑποπόλιον χρυσοφαέννων πτερύγων ἀήταις
παραπέτεται.

In this last example the juxtaposition of colours is particularly forceful:[3] '*greying* cheek . . . *gold*-shining wings'; and in general this acute colour-sensibility accounts for a number of expressions which we might otherwise be tempted to regard as purely ornamental. When Anacreon writes of the 'dark-shielded Ialysians' (Ἰηλυσίους τοὺς κυανασπίδας fr. 15), of a girl 'with golden raiment' (χρυσόπεπλε κούρη fr. 91), and of 'golden-helmeted Athene' (χρυσολόφου Παλλάδος Ox. Pap. 2321[6]) he clearly intended to convey vivid visual images. There is nothing conventional or banal about the language in which he did so.

(*c*) Anacreon, in fact, was a consummate stylist, and this may be the place to mention another of his characteristic devices. He is fond of building periods in such a way that each noun is attended by an adjective, forming a kind of syntactical symmetry through successive verses. The opening of fr. 5 (quoted above) is a good example; the following is another:

fr. 44 πολιοὶ μὲν ἡμὶν ἤδη κρόταφοι, κάρη τε λευκόν,
χαρίεσσα δ' οὐκέτ' ἥβη πάρα, γηράλεοι δ' ὀδόντες,
γλυκεροῦ δ' οὐκέτι πολλὸς βιότου χρόνος λέλειπται.

Here each noun has its adjective. Four of the six—πολιοί, λευκόν, γηράλεοι, πολλός—are essential to the sense; but the remaining two, χαρίεσσα and γλυκεροῦ, are purely ornamental, and are, moreover, unoriginal loans from Homer. Yet their presence is justified—if justification is necessary—by the formal structure of the lines. Each of the two nouns *had* to have an attendant adjective; but the sense was already full, there was no room for a new idea, and a strongly original expression would have overloaded the period. These two slightly colourless words were all that the verses could take.

(*d*) It is impossible for us now to grasp the associations carried by the word ἱερός,

[1] This is probably not an indication of a particular colour so much as a suggestion of rich, varied colour in general, cf. Weber, *Anacreontea*, p. 65, L. Deroy in *Ét. classiques*, xvi (1948), pp. 3 ff. B. Marzullo even argues (*Maia*, 1950, pp. 132 ff.) that πορφυρέα is an old cult-title for Aphrodite meaning 'marina'.

[2] The ball of the Phaeacian dancers in θ 372 was πορφυρέη (= versicolor?), and this may also have been in Anacreon's mind. Eustathius, ad loc., says σεμνύνων (τὸ πορφυρέην) ἐπάγει: it is more the brilliance of the ball than its colour which is suggested, the fact that it was coloured rather than its specific hue.

[3] Aeschylus, it has long been believed (Schol. *P.V.* 128), learnt the ionic metre from Anacreon: did he also learn this trick with colours from the same poet? Cf. *Hik.* 529 f. λίμνᾳ δ' ἔμβαλε πορφυροειδεῖ τὰν μελανόζυγ' ἄταν, *Eum.* 181 ff. μὴ καὶ λαβοῦσα πτηνὸν ἀργηστὴν ὄφιν,|χρυσηλάτου θώμιγγος ἐξορμώμενον,|ἀνῇς ὑπ' ἄλγους μέλαν' ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων ἀφρόν.

a favourite word of the lyric poets and one probably rich in meaning. When it does not mean ceremonially 'sacred' (as in *ἴρας ὀλολύγας* Alcaeus G2. 35 L.P., cf. *ὀλολυγμὸν ἱερόν* A. *Sept.* 268) they use it mainly with some natural scene or object: e.g. *ἁλιπόρφυρος ἰαρὸς ὄρνις* Alcm. 94, *ἱερᾶς νυκτός* Stes. 6, *ὥραν ἱρὰν ἀλκυόνος* Sim. 20—and they doubtless convey a good deal by it (for this use is post-Homeric). On the other hand, the word seems to have none of this power when used, as in Homer, of *cities*. Phrases like *Θήβας ἐξ ἱέρας* (Sappho 55. 6), *Ἴλιον ἴραν* (Alcaeus 74. 4), *Βαβύλωνος ἴρας* (Alcaeus 82. 10), *ἱερᾶν ἀπ' Ἀθανᾶν* (Timocreon 1. 3, cf. Soph. *Aj.* 1221), have the ring of clichés, and I have listed them accordingly.

The principles by which the following analyses are composed should by now be clear. The first four categories in each correspond with the main points discussed in this article; all instances occurring in dactylic poems are placed together; and one or two special categories are added for individual poets where this seems justified by what has already been said. Square brackets indicate that the same instance has been listed under more than one category: some overlap is inevitable, and it is not always clear which of two possible categories is the correct one. The brackets are simply there to show my personal opinion and to prevent the phrase from being counted twice. A question mark indicates doubt about the text, the attribution, or the context. All references are to Diehl, unless qualified by B (= Bergk, *P.L.G.*[4]) or L.P. (= Lobel-Page, *Poetarum Lesbiorum Fragmenta*). I have not normally thought it necessary to give references to lines within the fragments.

Archilochus

A. (i) *Heroic context*: None.
(ii) *Hymnodic*: None.
(iii) *Divinities*: *Ἄρεω μιαιφόνου* (31), *παῖς ἐρικτύπου Διός* (51), *?ἵππιος Ποσειδῶν* (117), *Δήμητρος ἀγνῆς* (119).
(iv) *Nature*: (*a*) The sea *βαθὺς πόντος* (56), *θαλάσσης ἠχέεντα κύματα* (74).
(*b*) *μελαίνῃ ἐπὶ χθονί* (58).
(v) *Dactylic poems*: (12 in about 40 lines) *θαμειαὶ σφενδόναι, πολύστονον ἔργον* (cf. *Ἔρις π. Λ* 73, etc.), *δεσπόται δουρικλυτοί* (3), *θοῆς νηός, οἶνον ἐρυθρόν* (5 A), *ἔντος ἀμώμητον* (cf. *ἀμύμονι τόξῳ O* 463) (6), *κήδεα στονόεντα, πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης, ἀνηκέστοισι κακοῖσι* (7), *καθαροῖσιν ἐν εἵμασιν* (10), *ἐυπλοκάμου, πολιῆς ἁλὸς ἐν πελάγεσσι, γλυκερὸν νόστον* (12).
ἀνθρώποισι . . . θνητοῖσ' occurs in a deliberate paraphrase of Homer (68). It is difficult to know whether *λυσιμελὴς πόθος* (118) was a conventional expression by this time or not.

B. *Unexplained*: *νῆες θοαί* (twice: 56 A, Pap. Ox. 2313[3]), *ὠκείῃσι ν]ηυσί* (Marmor Parium B I 35, v. *Philol.* xcix, 1955, pp. 4 ff.), *λαιψηρὰ πτερά* (92 b), ? *Θρήικες ἀκρόκομοι* ([79 a]), *ἤβην ἀγλαήν* (Pap. Ox. 2310[1]. 35).

Alcman

A. (i) *Heroic context*: *ποδώκη, κορυστάν, ἔξοχον ἡμιθέων, μέγαν* (1), *φαίδιμος Αἴας* (76), *δωρὶ ξυστῷ* (77), *Ὀδυσσῆος ταλασίφρονος* (80), *Ἑλλάδι βωτιανείρᾳ* (73).
(ii) *Hymnodic*: *πώλων ὠκέων, Πωλυδεύκης κυδρός* (2), *Πάφον περιρρύταν* (35).

(iii) *Divinities*: *Μῶσαι κροκόπεπλοι* (34).

(iv) *Nature*: *οἰωνῶν τανυπτερύγων* (58), *ὄρος ἀνθέον ὕλᾳ, νυκτὸς μελαίνας* (59).
(*a*) The sea *πορφυρέας ἁλός* (58).
(*b*) *μέλαινα γαῖα* (58).

(v) *Dactylic poem*: *οἷά τε ποιμένες ἄνδρες ἔχουσιν* (37).

(vi) *?Lieblingswörter*: *Μῶσα λίγεια* (7), *ἁ λίγεια Σηρήν* (10).

(vii) *Doubtful*: *Ἀρέτα θιειδής, ἁ καλλίσφυρος Ἀγησιχόρα, ἵππον παγὸν ἀεθλόφορον* (a simile for Hagesichora) (1),[1] *?ἀνηλεὴς ἀνάγκα* (110), *?ἀγέρωχοι* (122 B).[2]

B. *Unexplained*: *εὐπύργω Σεράπνας* (7), *Σαρδίων ἀπ' ἀκρᾶν* (13), *πῦρ δάριον* (57).

Sappho

A. (i) *Heroic context*: *φίλων τοκήων* (27a), *]τοι βασίληες* (28), fourteen in 55 (see above, pp. 209 f.), *ἔσχατα γᾶς, βροδόπαχυν Ἄὔων* (65 A).

(ii) *Hymnodic*: *ναῦον ἄγνον*, [*ὕδωρ ψῦχρον*], [*λείμων ἱππόβοτος*] (2 L.P. = 5 D.), *αἰγιόχω* (86 L.P.), *καλλίκομοι Μοῖσαι* (90).

(iii) *Divinities*: *χρυσοστέφαν' Ἀφρόδιτα* (9), [*Πάον' ἐκάβολον* 55], *ἄγναι Χάριτες* (103 L.P.), *βροδοπάχεες ἄγναι Χάριτες* (57), *Χάριτες μάκαιραι* (80), *χρυσοπέδιλλος Ἄὔως* (103 L.P.).

(iv) *Nature*: *κάλοι ὤκεες στροῦθοι, πύκνα πτέρα* (1), *φάεννον εἶδος* (cf. *Θ* 555) (4), *βροδοδάκτυλος μήνα, θάλασσαν ἐπ' ἀλμύραν, πολυανθέμοις ἀρούραις* (cf. *πολυανθής ξ* 353) (98).
(*a*) The sea [*ἄλμυρον πόντον* (55)], [*θάλασσαν ἐπ' ἀλμύραν* (98)].
(*b*) *γᾶ μέλαινα* (three times: 1. 10, 27a 2, (?) 31. 6).

(v) *Dactylic poems*: *ποίμενες ἄνδρες, χάμαι δέ τε πόρφυρον ἄνθος* (117).

(vi) *Lieblingswörter*: *ἀ λιγύφωνος* (30 L.P.), *λιγύραν χελύνναν* (65 A), *λιγύραν* [*ἀοί*]*δαν* (103 L.P.), *ὕπνος . . . γλύκυς θέος* (67), *μέλος τι γλύκερον, λίγυραι δ' ἀη*[(70), *γλύκηα μᾶτερ* (114).

(vii) *Stylistically accountable for*: *ποίκιλος μάσλης*[3] (17), *ξάνθᾳ Ἑλένᾳ εἴσκην*[4] (35), *ἀμαύρων νεκύων* (58), *λωτίνοις δροσόεντας ὄχθοις Ἀχέροντος* (97), *χρυσίοισιν ἀνθέμοισιν* (152). The unoriginality of the words does not detract from the visual effectiveness of these expressions.

(viii) *Doubtful*: *Ἔρος ὁ λυσιμέλης* (see under *Archilochus* vi) (137).

B. *Unexplained*: *ὀνίαν λύγραν* (25), *ἀνθέων ἐριθαλέων* (98 L.P.), *μέγαν εἰς Ὄλ*[*υμπον* (27 L.P.).

Alcaeus

A. (i) *Heroic context*: *Ἴλιον ἴραν, ὄλβιον ξάνθαν ἐλάτη*[*ρα πώλων*[5] (74), *Ἐλένας Ἀργείας, εὔστρωτον λέχος, ἐλίκωπες* (N1, L.P.), *νύμφαν ἐνναλίαν* (76), [*κὰτ οἴνοπα . . .*] (Q1, L.P.), [*μελαίνας χθόνος*] (73).

(ii) *Hymnodic*: *παῖ μεγάλω Δίος* (1), *]ιμοι παῖδες, εὕρηαν χθόνα, ὠκυπόδων*

[1] It is possible that these heroic phrases are used of the girls deliberately, as in the passages of Anacreon discussed above, pp. 211 ff.

[2] Alcman and Alcaeus used this word differently, Eust. *Il.* 314. 41.

[3] See above, p. 217.

[4] *ξανθός* may have implied exceptional beauty as well as colour: Eust. in *Il.* 432. 27 *ἔπαινος δὲ κόμης παρὰ τοῖς παλαίοις τὸ ξανθόν.*

[5] Alcaeus probably understood *Π* 148–9 *τῷ δὲ καὶ Αὐτομέδων ὕπαγε ζυγὸν ὠκέας ἵππους | Ξάνθον καὶ Βαλίον, τὼ ἅμα πνοιῇσι πετέσθην* as giving the colour, not the names, of Achilles' horses.

ἐπ' ἵππων, εὐσδύγων νάων, ναῒ μελαίνᾳ, ἀργαλέᾳ ἐν νύκτι (78–79 = B 2, L.P.), ἀθανάτων μακάρων, εὔδειλον τέμενος,[1] ἀργαλέας φύγας (G 1, L.P.).

(iii) *Divinities*: εὐπέδιλλος Ἶρις, χρυσοκόμᾳ Ζεφύρῳ (8), Δίος ἐξ αἰγιόχω (11), ἄγναι Χάριτες (12), ?Μοίσαν ἀγλα[(T 1. ii, L.P.)

(iv) *Nature*:[2] εὐωδεσ[. . . γλ] αύκαν ψῦχρον ὕδωρ ἀμπελοεσσ[(F 1, L.P.), ἦρος ἀνθεμόεντος (98), cf. γᾶς ἀπὺ περράτων (135).

(*a*) The sea ἄλμυρον πόντον (51), πορφυρίαν θάλασσαν (77), πολίας κῦμ' ἄλος (109/110, 27), κὰτ οἴνοπα . . . (Q 1, L.P.).

(*b*) μέλαινα χθών (twice: 73, G 2. 29, L.P.).

(v) *Stylistically accountable for*: Λεσβίαδες ἐλκεσίπεπλοι, ἄχω θεσπεσία (G 2. 32 ff., L.P.): that these two Homeric epithets were used deliberately is suggested by the presence in the same lines (which describe a ritual beauty contest) of the Homeric verb πωλεῖν and the tmesis περὶ δὲ βρέμει. But we can hardly guess at the reason.

(vi) *Doubtful*: βλήχρων ἀνέμων[3] (22),]τον μελιήδεα (35. 25), (probably used as a substantive, cf. 98) ἀγέρωχος[4] (Z 79, L.P.), ἴραν ἐς πόλιν (? vel Ἶραν) (42).

B. *Unexplained*:]ννην ἴραν (83), Βαβύλωνος ἴρας (82), ναῒ μελαίνᾳ (46 A), ὠκυ.[. . .]ς ναῦας (? ὠκυάλους) (H 28. 20 L.P.), δινν άεντ' Ἀχέροντα (twice in 73), θυμοβόρω λύας (43), οἶνον λαθικάδεα (96).

Anacreon

A. (i) *Heroic context*: None.

(ii) *Hymnodic*: Νύμφαι κυανώπιδες (2), ἐλαφηβόλε ξανθὴ παῖ Διός, ἀγρίων θηρῶν (1).

(iii) *Divinities*: καλλίκομοι κοῦραι Διός (63).

(iv) *Nature*: νεβρὸν νεοθηλέα γαλαθηνόν (39) (Homer uses γαλαθηνός and νεηγενής).

(*a*) The sea πολιὸν κῦμα (17), κῦμα πόντιον, ἰχθυόεν (Pap. Ox. 2321[6]), ? πόντον θυίοντα πορφυρέοισι κύμασι (? Anacr. Pap. Ox. 2322[1]. 17).

(v) *Dactylic poems*[5] (6 in 23 lines): πόλεμον δακρυόεντα, ἀγλαὰ δῶρα (96), πατρίδος αἴης, ὑγρὰ κύματα (102), ἀγλαὸν κόσμον (107), δυσαχέος ἐκ πολέμοιο (111).

(vi) *Stylistically accountable for*: εὐκτίτου Λέσβου (5—v. p. 213 above), ποταμοῦ καλλιρόου (51—v. pp. 213 f. above), χαρίεσσα ἥβη, γλυκεροῦ βιότου (44—v. p. 218 above).

Colours: σφαίρῃ πορφυρέῃ (5), Ἰηλυσίους τοὺς κυανάσπιδας (15—cf. λεύκασπις *X* 294), ξανθῇ Εὐρυπύλῃ (16), χρυσόπεπλε κούρη (91),

[1] It is possible that a second substantive stood in v. 2 and went with εὔδειλον. In Homer this adjective is used only of islands; but Alcaeus' use of it is not much more original for that. κυδαλίμαν θέον, however, has a certain freshness (v. 6).

[2] Cf. also sub 'Incertum utrius auctoris' L.P.: ὦκυν αἰετον (10), πόας τέρεν ἄνθος (16).

[3] M. Leumann, *Homerische Wörter*, p. 340, argues that this phrase derives from a misdivision of ἀβλήχρων ἀνέμων in some passage of the Homeric poems now lost.

[4] See above, p. 220, n. 2.

[5] Out of conservatism, I attribute no more than the following elegiac fragments to Anacreon: 96–99, 101, 102, 107, 108, 110–12. Cf. Weber, pp. 31 ff., Wilamowitz, *S.u.S.*, p. 107, C. A. Trypanis in *C.Q.* xlv (1951), pp. 31 ff.

?*μέλαιναν κόνιν* (? Anacr. Pap. Ox. 2322[1]. 6).
Ironic:[1] *τρύγα μελιηδέα* (21).

B. *Unexplained*: *ἱρὸν ἄστυ* (25), *θάλειαν ἑορτήν* (37), ? *Ζηνὸς ὑψερεφὴς δόμος* (? Anacr. 7).

Further exegesis is unnecessary. The number of conventional phrases which cannot be accommodated in these few and clearly defined categories is very small indeed—only in Alcaeus do they exceed five; so that, even if a substantial margin of error is allowed for (and I make no claim to rigorous objectivity) these analyses seem to sustain the conclusion that ornamental Homeric epithets were not used indiscriminately by the lyric poets. Those phrases which remain 'unexplained' either have overtones which we can no longer hear, or else are simply clichés, and the product of careless writing.

It may be useful, in conclusion, to compare these analyses with that of some poetry of which the date is uncertain. First, the Polycrates poem attributed to Ibycus (Pap. Ox. 1790=3 D). This, though it contains some eighteen unoriginal epithets in forty-two lines, shows no great statistical divergence from, say, a narrative passage in Bacchylides: the proportion of Homeric to non-Homeric epithets is again about 3 to 2. But the phrases themselves, which furnish this statistic, are somewhat peculiar. In the first place, there is a kind of *entassement* of conventional epithets which is unlike anything else in archaic Greek. For instance, Homer commonly writes *Πριάμοιο Δαρδανίδαο* and also *ἄστυ μέγα Πριάμοιο*: here the poet runs the two together into *Δαρδανίδα Πριάμοιο μέγ' ἄστυ*, and then, not content with this, he adds *περικλεές* as an equivalent to Homer's *περικλυτὸν ἄστυ*, and throws in *ὄλβιον* for good measure. The resultant rigmarole, *Δαρδανίδα Πριάμοιο μέγ' ἄστυ περικλεὲς ὄλβιον*, has little to recommend it. Or again, Homer has both *μέγας Τελαμώνιος Αἴας* and *Τελαμώνιος ἄλκιμος Αἴας*: this poet rolls the two expressions into one with *μέγας Τελαμώνιος ἄλκιμος Αἴας*. In the second place, the phrases which are not borrowed directly from Homer are either trite or infelicitous. For triteness, consider (*a*) *δῆριν πολύυμνον ἔχοντες*: Homer has *δῆριν ἔχειν*, *πολύυμνος* occurs in H. Hom. 26. 7; while the phrase as a whole is simply a periphrasis for 'fighting', and is further amplified by *πόλεμον κατὰ δακρυόεντα*. (*b*) *ξειναπάταν Πάριν*: the word is already in Alcaeus (N 1. 5, L.P.), the notion a commonplace by the fifth century. For infelicity consider the only two phrases which are original, *ἁλώσιμον ἆμαρ ἀνώνυμον* and *ὑπεράφανον ἀρετήν*: both these contain ambiguities. *ἀνώνυμος* normally means, not 'unnameable' (as here) but 'unnamed', i.e. unknown— a most undesirable overtone in this passage; and *ὑπεράφανος* is elsewhere always *pejorative* until Plato. It may have been permissible for the poet to press these words into new uses; but he can hardly have prevented the

[1] Anacreon fr. 21:
⟨*ὁ*⟩ *Μεγιστῆς δ' ὁ φιλόφρων δέκα δὴ μῆνες ἐπείτε*
στεφανοῦταί τε λύγῳ καὶ τρύγα πίνει μελιηδέα.
Cynulcus (Athen. 671 f) comments *ὁ γὰρ τῆς λύγου στέφανος ἄτοπος*—and indeed the question much exercised the grammarians. Hephaestion even wrote a book called *Περὶ τοῦ παρ' Ἀνακρέοντι λυγίνου στεφάνου*, and many learned theories were advanced to explain why Megistes wore such an 'odd' garland. But surely it is just as odd that he should have drunk *τρύξ*, which means either new, unfermented wine, or the dregs, the lees of wine; neither of which could be described as *μελιηδής*. There is one perfectly simple answer: Anacreon is *mocking* Megistes for wearing a rustic wreath (*Τέναρος δὲ ἀγροίκων εἶναι λέγει στεφάνωμα τὴν λύγον* Athen. l.c.) and drinking cheap raw wine. *φιλόφρων* and *μελιηδής* are used with irony.

old meanings from being present to the hearers' minds. And in these passages the old meanings are disastrous.

The genuine poems of Ibycus are unfortunately too scanty to provide a reliable standard of comparison. However, one may observe that his adjectival phrases, though fulsome, are original: his description of nature in spring (fr. 6), for instance, contains no clichés. In the fragments with certainty attributed to him, the Homeric epithets are distributed as follows. Three qualify heroic personages: *λευκίππους κόρους* of the Molionidae (2), *γλαυκώπιδα Κασσάνδραν* (16), and ? *ὀνομακλυτὸν Ὄρφην* (17); the simile of the horse (7) brings with it *σὺν ὄχεσφι θοοῖσ'* and *φερέζυγος ἵππος ἀεθλοφόρος* (cf. the similar phraseology in Alcman); and *τανυσίπτερος* (9) and *τανύπτερος* (10) are used in descriptions of birds. That is to say, in about sixty lines there are altogether seven conventional epithets, most of which admit of stylistic explanation.

Corinna

It would be wrong to suggest that the thesis of this article provides any new criterion for deciding between the alternative dates proposed by Professor Page for Corinna—viz. the middle of the fifth century or the end of the third. Nevertheless it is worth observing that her diction is not only distinctly classical in the sense that (apart from four *ἅπαξ λεγόμενα*) it contains only five words which do not appear somewhere else in Greek literature by the end of the fifth century, but shows the same sort of discrimination in the use of Homeric epithets that characterizes archaic lyric. That is to say, if her language is in fact not archaic but archaizing, the work has been done by a singularly delicate and well-trained hand. The following analysis (in which allowances must be made for the particularly fragmentary nature of the material) follows the pattern of the others; and it should be noticed that the two discernible *Lieblingswörter* (*νίκαν ἐρατάν* (4), *λιγούραν Μουρτίδα* (15)) are also favourites of archaic lyric.

A. (i) *Heroic context*: ? *ὠκυπόρῳ* (5 A = *PSI* 1174); [*Θάβαν*] *ἑπτάπυλον* (5 B).

(ii) *Hymnodic*: None.

(iii) *Divinities*: *ἀγκυλομείταο Κρόνω, μάκηρα Ῥέα* (4), *Δεὺς βασιλεύς, πόντῳ μέδων Ποσείδων* (5).

(iv) *Nature*: ? *Λάδοντος δονακοτρόφῳ*.

B. *Unexplained*: *λούπησι χαλεπῆσι, λιττάδα πέτραν* (4), *καλλιχόρῳ χθονός* (18), ? *γῆαν εὐρού[χορον* (Pap. Ox. 2370[1]. 8).

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