

## A SCYTHIAN ARES (AESCH. *CH.* 161–162)?

It is usually assumed that in the astrophic lyrics of the first act of Aeschylus’ *Libation Bearers* the chorus refers to the Scythian bow. Unfortunately, the passage in question is seriously corrupted, and despite multiple corrections no consensus has been reached as to how it should be interpreted. I cite it from Page’s edition, which preserves the main difficulties of manuscript tradition,<sup>1</sup> adding in the apparatus some further conjectures which will be discussed below, *Ch.* 160–163:

ἴτω τις δορυσθενῆς ἀνὴρ,  
ἀναλυτὴρ δόμων †Σκυθιτὰ τ’ ἐν χεροῖν  
παλίντον’ ἐν ἔργῳ† βέλη ’πιπάλλων Ἄρης  
σχέδιά τ’ αὐτόκωπα νωμῶν ξίφη.

---

160 ἰὼ M : ἴ<τ>ω Bothe : δορυσθενῆς <εἶς> Weil | 161 Σκυθιτὰ, supra ιτ in M additum ης : Σκυθικά Robortello : Σκύθην Heimsoeth | 162 παλίντον’ del. Paley tamquam e schol. ad Σκυθικά illatum : παλίντονον Wilamowitz : παλίντον<ον ἰέντ> Groeneboom | ἐν ἔργῳ M : ἐναργῶς Bothe : del. Murray : ἐν del. Headlam | Ἄρης M : Ἄρη Heimsoeth : Ἄρεως Blaydes (cum ἐν ἔργῳ iungendum) : ἀρῆς Headlam | 163 βέλη M : del. Wilamowitz : ξίφη Pauw ex M<sup>2</sup>

The transmitted text lacks a verb, so Bothe’s ἴτω instead of M’s ἰὼ, accepted by Page, seems to be an easy solution. The insertion of εἶς before ἀνὴρ proposed by Weil is evidently less preferable. The argument that it restores two dochmiac cola in the line cannot be regarded as decisive because dochmiac cola are frequently combined with iambics. Page has also accepted Pauw’s ξίφη for M’s βέλη, which can be easily explained away by the influence of βέλη in the previous verse.

A more serious corruption seems to have affected the key word of our Scythian reference, for which M preserved a nonsensical reading

---

<sup>1</sup> Page 1972. Page’s reading of the text is reproduced in Garvie’s edition of the *Libation Bearers* (Garvie 1986).

σκυθιτατ. It spreads into the following verse, probably affecting its first part: παλίντον' ἐν ἔργῳ. M's σκυθιτατ was corrected into σκύθης by a scribe who wrote ης above the letters ιτ. The reading Σκύθης was accepted by a number of scholars, including R. Porson (1806), Ch. G. Schütz (1823) and M. Untersteiner (1947).<sup>2</sup> U. Wilamowitz (1914) and G. Murray (1947) adopted Heimsoeth's correction Σκύθην... Ἄρη, but understood Scythian Ares as a reference to the bow.<sup>3</sup> Wilamowitz deleted βέλη and corrected παλίντονον (to be combined with Ἄρη): Σκύθην ἐν χεροῖν / παλίντονον ἐν ἔργῳ [βέλη] ὑπὸ πάλλων Ἄρη, while Murray rejected both παλίντον' βέλη and ἐν ἔργῳ – the former as a gloss on Σκύθην Ἄρη and the latter on ἐν χεροῖν.<sup>4</sup> Σκύθην... Ἄρη is also the reading adopted by P. Groeneboom (1949), who additionally supplemented the text: Σκύθην τ' ἐν χεροῖν παλίντον<ον ἰέντ> ἐν ἔργῳ βέλη ὑπὸ πάλλων Ἄρη, conceiving βέλη as arrows. In all three cases, the sentence is thought to have only one subject – a man.

However, the majority of modern readers prefer Robortello's conjecture Σκυθικά, conceived as modifying βέλη.<sup>5</sup> In this case, it is Σκυθικά βέλη that is understood as a Scythian bow, and the question now shifts to the person holding that bow. If one retains the transmitted nominative Ἄρης, the sentence has two subjects – ἀνὴρ and Ἄρης, with the bow placed in the hands of Ares. So for instance A. Garvie who reproduces Page's text.<sup>6</sup> Another solution is suggested by Blaydes' emendation Ἄρεως which is to be combined with ἐν ἔργῳ (in the deed of Ares). It was accepted by M. West who produced the following restoration of the text:

ἰώ, τίς δορυσθενῆς <εἶς> ἀνὴρ  
ἀναλυτὴρ δόμων, Σκυθικά τ' ἐν χεροῖν  
{παλίντονα} ἐν ἔργῳ βέλη ὑπὸ πάλλων Ἄρεως  
σχέδιά τ' αὐτόκωπα νωμῶν βέλη;

<sup>2</sup> For others see Marengi 1959, 322.

<sup>3</sup> F. Heimsoeth himself conceived Scythian Ares as iron (Heimsoeth 1861, 132). Because he thought that the avenger to whom the chorus appealed was Orestes, he reasonably supposed that he could not be equipped with all kinds of arms but only with normal Greek spear and sword: "Allein es kann hier <...> nicht unbestimmt und phantastisch von allerlei Bewaffnung oder von allen Arten zugleich die Rede sein, sondern nur von der gewöhnlichen griechischen Bewaffnung, also von einem Kriegermanne mit Speer und Schwert".

<sup>4</sup> Garvie correctly objects that one would expect τόξον, not βέλη as such a gloss and that ἐν χεροῖν does not mean ἐν ἔργῳ here (Garvie 1986, 84 f.).

<sup>5</sup> Mazon 1925; Thomson 1966; Rose 1958, 134 f.; Garvie 1986, 86 f.; West 1990; Citti 2006, 78; Sommerstein 2008; 2010.

<sup>6</sup> Garvie 1986, 85. More on his interpretation of Ares in the passage will be said below.

Headlam's emendation ἔργω... ἄρῆς accepted by G. Thomson in his edition did not find support elsewhere.<sup>7</sup>

In both Thomson's and West's readings, as well as in the readings of those who print ἄρη (see above), the sentence has only one subject – ἄνῆρ. This poses an interpretive problem, for in that case we would have to imagine a man skilled at wielding not only a spear, i. e. a Greek hoplite, but also a Scythian bow. However, the Greeks of the Classical Age clearly distinguished between these types of weapons and related them to two different kinds of warriors (more on this below). F. Heimsoeth rightly saw the difficulty but found no better solution than to construe the Scythian Ares as iron, i. e. a spear wielded by a spearman,<sup>8</sup> which cannot be supported by any reliable evidence. G. Thomson tried to get round this difficulty by suggesting that the chorus refers to Heracles, and supported this idea by adducing the evidence of Soph. *Tr.* 510–512 where Heracles is described as brandishing a spear, a bow and a club (τόξα καὶ λόγχας ῥόπαλόν τε τινάσσων).<sup>9</sup> Though this image of Heracles is attested, it is highly unusual (Heracles' arms are normally a bow and a club), and it would deserve a separate discussion.<sup>10</sup> A more serious objection to Thomson's hypothesis is that it is very unlikely that the chorus would have referred to Heracles as simply *a* man (τις ἄνῆρ). It would doubtless be more appropriate for Heracles as a paradigmatic Greek hero to be called ὁ ἄνῆρ, *the* man (cf. Soph. *Phil.* 727). On the other hand, it would probably be rather anachronistic to assume that the chorus is here summoning *a* Heracles, i. e. someone like Heracles, to come. Garvie also points out that the identification of Orestes with Heracles “would be much less clear and specific than that of Orestes with Perseus” at *Ch.* 831.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Thomson 1966, 134. Blaydes' ἄρεως in combination with ἔργω is, however, by far more preferable in view of Homeric ἔργον ἄρηος (*Il.* 11. 734, cf. also Simon. 107).

<sup>8</sup> See n. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Thomson 1966, 134. In this he follows W. Headlam's hypothesis (Headlam 1909, 225 n. 3).

<sup>10</sup> R. C. Jebb in his commentary to Soph. *Tr.* 510 parallels it in *Phil.* 727 where Heracles is named ὁ χάλκασπις ἄνῆρ (Jebb 1955, 727). The arms and the armor of hoplites were first given to Heracles in [Hes.] *Sc.* (Boardman 1988, 729). But they did not become his constant characteristic. Probably the use of hoplites' arms by Heracles was associated particularly with the capture of Oechalia (Soph. *Tr.* 478: καθηρέθη ... Οἰχαλία δορί) which was followed in Sophocles by Heracles' death and rise to Olympus (this would explain Heracles' image in *Phil.* 727, so Ussher 2001, comm. ad loc.). But according to Eur. *HF* Heracles had never used any spear or shield (159–160) and Oechalia was captured with the bow (472 f.). See in particular vv. 157–164, where the bow, Heracles' weapon, is called the worst of the arms and sharply opposed to spear and shield, the arms of a true man.

<sup>11</sup> Garvie 1986, 85.

To return to the passage in question, the restoration Σκυθικά is unconvincing for a number of reasons. First of all, Aeschylus uses as an adjective only the form Σκύθης (*Sept.* 218 Σκύθη σιδήρω; *PV* 2 Σκύθην ἐς οἶμον, 417 Σκύθης ὄμιλος), not Σκυθικός, which is otherwise attested in tragedy only once (Agathon 4. 3 Snell–Radt). Garvie’s argument that the latter was used in our passage *metri gratia* does not work because Σκύθης would perfectly fit another common form of the dochmiac (Σκύθης τ’ ἐν χεροῖν:  $\cup - - \cup -$ ). Besides, it is not easy to explain why the form Σκυθικά, which is more usual in later periods and which, in the context, would modify βέλη, could have been misconceived and corrupted. In view of these problems, the scribe’s conjecture Σκύθης seems far more attractive. It would agree with Ἄρης, and, quite plausibly, it is the distance between the noun and the adjective that could have occasioned the later misconception and corruption of the original reading Σκύθης.

The question of how to read the corrupt σκυθιτατ has consequences for our understanding of the following verse as well. Those who assume that Σκυθικά τ’ modifies βέλη reject παλίντον’ as a gloss on Σκυθικά.<sup>12</sup> It is hardly justified, however. One can easily recognize in the expression παλίντονα βέλη an allusion to the standard Homeric formula παλίντονα τόξα (*Il.* 8. 266, 10. 459, 15. 443; *Od.* 21. 11, 59), which makes the rejection of παλίντονα in the Aeschylean text utterly unwarranted. The use by Sophocles of an almost identical expression (*Tr.* 511 f.: παλίντονα... τόξα... τινάσσω) only strengthens the impression that παλίντονα must be genuine. If we retain παλίντονα, then Σκυθικά as another epithet modifying βέλη would be superfluous, as it would produce a rather awkward style and weaken the Homeric allusion.

The rejection of παλίντονα on metrical grounds is not necessary either. It is true that, if we keep the transmitted reading of v. 162, we will have to postulate a combination of a rare form of the dochmiac (παλίντον’ ἐν ἔργῳ /  $\cup - \cup\cup - -$ )<sup>13</sup> and a syncopated ia dim (ia cr: βέλη ἑπιπάλλων

<sup>12</sup> Garvie is inclined to accept the following restoration: Σκυθικά ἐν χεροῖν ἐν ἔργῳ βέλη ἑπιπάλλων Ἄρης (*ibid.*).

<sup>13</sup> Conomis 1964, 27 (no. 27). The only two examples would be Eur. *IT* 894, 896 though, according to Conomis, not certain because of the mixed context. Garvie classifies Euripidean instances as reizianum in dochmiac surroundings (Garvie 1986, 357). However there would be no other example of Aeolic cola in this song and the multiple alternation of dochmiacs with dactylo-anapestics prove Conomis’ point more plausible. The duality of the colon  $\cup - \cup\cup - -$  as dochmiac (?) among dochmiacs and reizianum among Aeolic cola would be paralleled in the dochmiac of the form  $- \cup\cup - \cup -$ , one of the most popular in the Drama, which in Aeolic context is known as dodrans A.

ἄρης / ◡ – ◡ – – ◡ –) rather than the two standard dochmiacs found in the previous and the following verses. But it is not at all unusual for dochmiac lyrics to be mingled with iambics, and when dealing with such astrophic lyrics as the passage in question, we have no internal criteria for preferring dochmiac rather than iambic cola. The closest parallel to our case is *Ch.* 940 = 951 (ia cr: ◡ – ◡ – – ◡ –), which stands between dochmiac cola in a predominantly dochmiac strophe.<sup>14</sup>

However, in the absence of any reliable evidence for ◡ – ◡◡ – – as a variant of the dochmiac, one should probably look for another restoration of the verse that would not affect παλίντονα. It was rightly remarked that ἐν ἔργῳ in v. 162 after ἐν χεροῖν in the previous verse is not an elegant expression.<sup>15</sup> If we were to delete the second ἐν and read παλίντον ἔργῳ βέλη πιπάλλων ἄρης, the text would look much less problematic in terms of metre: v. 162 would then consist of ia cr followed by a standard dochmiac (◡ – – ◡ –). This correction was in fact proposed by Headlam though he combined it with the reading ἀρῆς instead of M's ἄρης (see above). But if we retain the manuscript reading ἄρης, we should ask ourselves what ἔργῳ could mean by itself in the context. I will turn to this question below.

Further arguments against the reading Σκυθικά can be adduced on the basis of a more in-depth interpretation of the passage in question. Ares, if we retain the transmitted reading, should be imagined with a bow. However, it has been observed that Ares does not normally fight with a bow but with a spear and a sword (*Il.* 5. 852; 15. 125–127, cf. also Ares' epithet χάλκεος).<sup>16</sup> But is Ares here a god at all? If we read Σκύθης with Ares, we would arrive at a totally different understanding of the passage. Irrespective of how we read v. 160 (I prefer Bothe's ἴτω τις as it demands the slightest change in the manuscript text), the syntactic structure of the whole remains transparent. We have two subjects: ἀνὴρ and ἄρης. The former is characterized as skilled as wielding a spear, i.e. as a hoplite warrior. Both of the two participles that modify Ares refer to one of his characteristic weapons – the bow and the sword, which only makes sense if the Scythian Ares is understood as a Scythian warrior in opposition to the Greek hoplite. We may suggest then that the chorus

<sup>14</sup> The percentage of iambics in *Ch.* 935–941 = 946–952 is near to *Ch.* 160–163 as it stands.

<sup>15</sup> Thomson 1966, 134; Garvie 1986, 85. On the other suggestions see Citti 2006, 75.

<sup>16</sup> Thomson 1966, 134. It is even more so if παλίντονα is rejected: Σκυθικά τ' ἐν χεροῖν / ἐν ἔργῳ βέλη πιπάλλων ἄρης, as Garvie is inclined to read; in this situation Bothe's ἐναργῶς seems to him deserving attention (Garvie 1986, 85).

appeals in its song to two kinds of warriors – the Greek hoplite fighting with a spear and the Scythian archer armed with a bow for distant fight and a sword for close combat.

A telling parallel in support of this interpretation is provided by Aeschylus' *Persians*. In this drama, Xerxes is said to lead Ares who conquers by his bow, i. e. a host of Persian archers, against men renowned for their spear, i. e. the Greeks (*Pers.* 85: ἐπάγει δορυκλύτοις ἀνδράσι τοξόδαμνον Ἄρη). The same opposition appears once again when Atossa asks, which of the two, the drawing of the bow or the might of the sharp spearhead, has prevailed (*Pers.* 146–149: πότερον τόξου ρῦμα τὸ νικῶν, / ἢ δορυκράνου / λόγχης ἰσχὺς κεκράτηκεν;).<sup>17</sup> In this context τοξόδαμνος Ἄρης clearly means a warrior fighting with a bow or, as is clear from the context, the Persian army. So, according to this logic, in the *Libation Bearers* Σκύθης Ἄρης could mean a Scythian warrior. Likewise, a hoplite and a Scythian archer as two types of warriors are referred to in the fragment of Sophocles' *Nauplius* (fr. 427 Radt: ὡς ἀσπιδοῦχος ἢ Σκύθης τοξεύμασιν;), which would be the closest parallel to our Aeschylean text.

But we still have to specify the meaning of ἔργῳ, which has been proposed for the v. 162 in lieu of the manuscript reading ἐν ἔργῳ. To this end, it is necessary to define more exactly the function of the participles modifying Ἄρης. One possibility is to understand them as attributive ones. In this case ὀπιπάλλων and νωμῶν would constitute a general depiction of how Scythian Ares acts in the battle: he brandishes his bow and wields a sword in close combat. It is clear that the manuscript ἐν ἔργῳ in this context would mean 'in the action', i. e. in the battle. However, it seems preferable to ascribe to these participles a circumstantial function. It would convey an immediate picture of the action accompanying the advent of the Scythian Ares: when he comes, he will brandish his bow and wield a sword in close combat.<sup>18</sup> In this context, ἔργῳ meaning 'in very deed, actually' (cf. Pind. *Pyth.* 8. 80: Ἦρας τ' ἀγῶν' ἐπιχώριον | νίκαις τρισαῖς ... δάμασσας ἔργῳ; *Ol.* 10. 63: εὐχος ἔργῳ καθελῶν) would add to the chorus' appeal a highly emotional note and greatly enhance the impression produced by Ares' anticipated deeds.

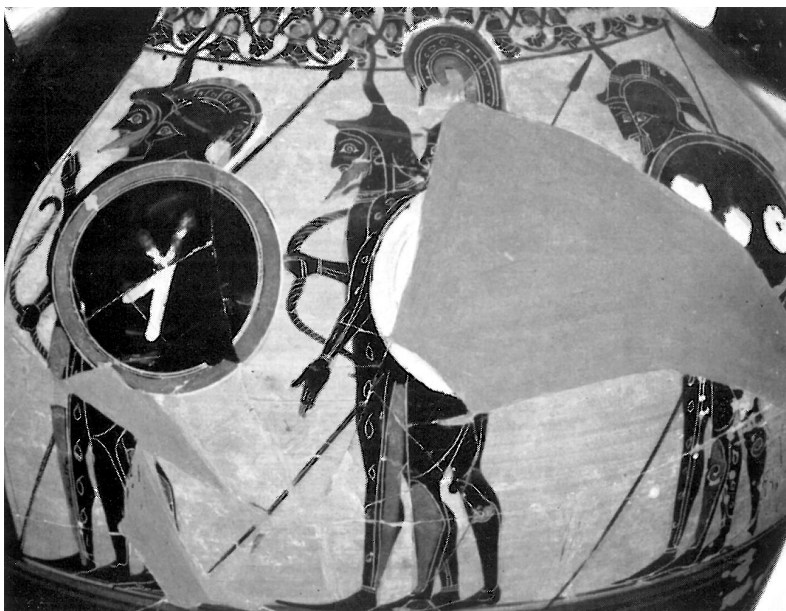
Now we have reached the final peculiar detail of our text. In contrast to the *Persians*, where the hoplites and the archers are opposed to each other

<sup>17</sup> "The phrase τόξου ρῦμα stands here for the Persian archers (cf. 86), opposed to the Greek spearmen (δορυκλύτοις ἀνδράσι, 85)" (Broadhead 1960, comm. ad loc.).

<sup>18</sup> For a similar use of present participle. see Aesch. *Agam.* 1449–1451: φεῦ, τίς ἄν ἐν τάχει <...> / μόλοι τὸν αἰεὶ φέρουσ' ἐν ἡμῖν / μοῖρ' ἀτέλευτον ὕπνον <...> (cf. Goodwin 1998, 335, § 840).

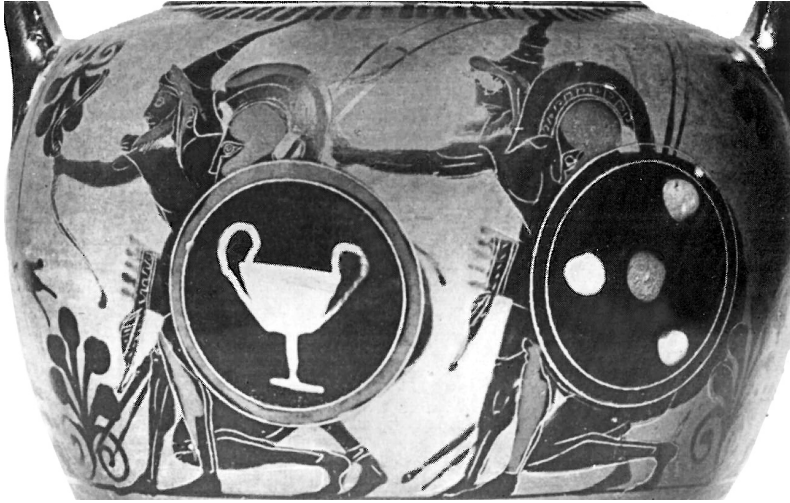


as representative of two civilizations about to clash with each other, the use of additive τε in the *Libation Bearers* (δορυσθενῆς ἀνὴρ ... Σκυθῆς τ' ... Ἄρης) indicates that a spearman and an archer are invited to come together.<sup>19</sup> Thus, far from being opposed to each other, the hoplite and the archer form an even closer link than in Sophocles' fragment. This poses some difficult questions. Firstly, how are we to interpret this pairing of a hoplite and an archer? And secondly, is the "Scythian Ares" a reference to a real ethnicity or is it simply a way to underscore the distinction between an archer and a spearman? What I find particularly relevant in this connection is that the juxtaposition of a spearman and a Scythian archer in our text finds a close parallel in numerous Archaic Attic vases where hoplites and archers in Scythian attire are represented as marching in pairs or acting together in battle, as is the case on the following images.



1. Black-figure amphora, Basle market  
(from: Vos 1963, Pl. V a)

<sup>19</sup> Garvie in his interpretation of vv. 161 f. ('or Ares brandishing in his hands in combat the Scythian weapons') disregards the τε in the phrase, although it can only be understood as an additive conjunction that joins ἀνὴρ and Ἄρης. The general sense of the passage according to him would be that "the Chorus is comprehensively enumerating the three possible types of weapons in the hands of **either** man **or** god" (Garvie 1986, 85).



2. Black-figure amphora, Berlin 1865  
(from: Vos 1963, Pl. VI b)



3. Black-figure hydria, London B. M. B 304  
(from: Burow 1989, Taf. 107)

There are about 700 extant images of Scythian archers in Attic vase painting, most of them, with the exception of a small group of earlier depictions, dating to the period between c. 540 and c. 490 BC, with the majority falling into an even shorter period between 530 and 510 BC. Since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the origin and the meaning of these images have been the focus of attention of many studies – especially after the publication of M. F. Vos' book on the topic, in which a large number of vases (more than 400) with Scythian archers was for the first



time catalogued and studied, thereby giving a new impulse to the scholarly discussion of the phenomenon.<sup>20</sup> A constant characteristic of archers, who first appear in Attic vase painting on the Francois vase (a volute crater now in Florence, c. 570 BC), is a pointed cap and a sigma-shaped Scythian bow. From about 530 BC, the archers in Attic depictions acquire a full Scythian costume featuring either a combination of overly decorated trousers and a jacket or a one-piece suit.<sup>21</sup> Their weapons, in addition to the bow, may include either an axe or a dagger (an *akinakes* usually pictured next to the quiver at waist level). For reasons of space, I cannot go into a detailed discussion of the topic. Instead, I will restrict myself to a few observations accepted by most experts.

Contrary to earlier scholarship, it is now generally agreed that the vase paintings featuring archers do not imply that there were real Scythians among the residents of the sixth-century Athens.<sup>22</sup> It also seems very probable that the Scythian attire of these archers is not a mark of their ethnicity (it is clear from a number of images in which such non-Scythian characters as Heracles or Paris are depicted in this way), but simply constitutes part and parcel of the typified visual representation of archers in general.<sup>23</sup> It is also agreed that battle scenes on Archaic Attic vases reflect the realities of epic battles and not of contemporary war tactics of the mid-sixth century Athenians (the painters' predilection for chariots is perhaps the most telling giveaway).<sup>24</sup> In his structural analysis of several typical scenes (arming, hieroscopy and departure), which feature archers alongside with hoplites, F. Lissarague saw archers as subordinate figures whose role was "to secure the excellence of the hero-worshipped

---

<sup>20</sup> Vos 1963. The discussion continued in the following studies: Ferrari Pinney 1983; Lissarague 1990; Osborne 2004; Ivantchik 2006; Davies 2013.

<sup>21</sup> In fact, during the entire period of the existence of the depictions with archers in Attic vase painting they were also represented in a short belted (decorated or not) tunic in which they appear on the earliest vases, and even naked. The variants of archers' dressing and equipment are at length discussed in Vos 1963, 40–43. Despite the variety of dressing attested on vases Vos thought that painters depicted a really existing costume from nature (see critical remarks on this: Ferrari Pinney 1983, 129–130).

<sup>22</sup> K. Wernike (1891) and W. Helbig (1897) thought that the archers represented real life Scythians at the service of Peisistratids. Vos, to explain archers' persistence on vases after the fall of Peisistratids, argued that they formed an independent archers' corps at the service of the Athenian state. However we have no reliable data in support of this suggestion, on the contrary there is some evidence that Athens first acquired a corps of archers after Salamis (Andoc. *De pace* 5. 7; Aeschin. *De falsa legatione* 173. 5, cf. Hdt. 6. 112 on the absence of archers in Athenian host in the battle of Marathon), see Welwei 1974, 9–17; Lavelle 1992, 78–97; Ivantchik 2006, 241–243.

<sup>23</sup> Lissarague 1990, 103f., Ivantchik 2006, 203 ff.

<sup>24</sup> Ferrari Pinney 1983, 131; Lissarague 1990, 97 f.

hoplite”.<sup>25</sup> However, his study did not explain, to quote R. Osborne, “what made setting the hoplite off against e.g. a Thracian so different from setting him off against a Scythian”.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, while Lissarague focuses extensively on the above-mentioned types of images, which are much less widespread, he pays too little attention to the by far more numerous representations in which archers are depicted as engaging in battle or marching in pairs with hoplites.<sup>27</sup>

Far from being supplementary figures relegated to the background in order to underscore the predominant role of the hoplites, the archers in these battle scenes are represented as warriors equal in worth to the hoplites and fighting side by side with them. On some images, for instance, the archers are portrayed as shooting their arrows from behind the hoplites’ shields and thereby evoking the tactic that the *Iliad* attributes to Teucer who shoots his arrows protected by the shield of Aias (8. 266–272).<sup>28</sup> It is quite likely, therefore, that the archers featured in the battle scenes of Attic vase painting were depicted because they were an integral part of the epic warfare.

R. Osborne stresses the strikingly small number of serious military confrontations in which Athens was involved between 560 and 510 BC, which suggests that the scenes depicting hoplites and archers represented a virtual world “both linked to and distanced from the world of epic”.<sup>29</sup> It is primarily in the battle scenes that the martial world of Attic vase painting displays close ties with the epic world while other scenes, such as the scenes of departure that take place in the hoplite’s *oikos* (emblemized by the presence of a woman and an old man), show how the vase painters reflected the realities and the emerging ideals of their own contemporary world. But be that as it may, the basis of this imagined reality is located in the world of heroic epics which we know from the *Iliad* and it is from there that the visual representation of archers may ultimately derive.

Indeed, in the *Iliad* we find not only famous archer-heroes among both the Trojans and the Achaeans (such as Pandarus and Teucer) but also the companions of Philoctetes described as τόξων ἐν εἰδότες ἱφι

---

<sup>25</sup> Lissarague 1990, 101. He is more precise in the Conclusion of his book: “Le guerrier lourdement armé vu au centre de l’oikos où il figure la cité en armes ne peut être perçu comme tel qu’à côté d’un compagnon qui ne soit pas porteur de ces valeurs et dont la différence fasse apparaître ce qui est central dans les catégories de la guerre” (*ibid.*, 236).

<sup>26</sup> Osborne 2004, 47.

<sup>27</sup> For the statistics on the different scenes with archers see Osborne 2004, 53 (Table 1).

<sup>28</sup> Welwei 1974, 17; Ferrary Pinney 1983, 131.

<sup>29</sup> Osborne 2004, 50.

μάχεσθαι (*Il.* 2. 720) or the Locrians who fought with a bow despite the fact that their leader Aias, son of Oileus, was a spearman (*Il.* 13. 712–718; 5. 527–530). It deserves attention that when the Locrians are described as archers they are contrasted to those who fight with shields and spears. On another occasion, Homer explains that Ereuthalion was named κορυνήτης (mace-bearer) because he fought neither with a bow nor with a spear, but with a mace (*Il.* 7. 140 f.: οὐνεκ' ἄρ' οὐ τόξοισι μαχέσκετο δουρί τε μακρῷ / ἀλλὰ σιδηρεῖη κορύνη ῥήγνυσκε φάλαγγας). It is clear from this that two usual types of epic warriors were a spearman and an archer.

Though some archer-heroes in the *Iliad* can fight also with spear and shield, the two types of warfare are differentiated because these arms could not be used simultaneously: when Teucer is forced to leave his bow, he puts it ἐνὶ κλησίσῃσι and takes the arms and the armor of a spearman – the shield, the spear and the helmet (15. 478–482). It is worth noting that, while the archers can also fight with spear and shield, the spearmen in the *Iliad* never use a bow. This probably says something about a correlation between the respective statuses of spearmen and archers. Although it does not doubt the merits of archery, as it begins to be the case in the fifth-century martial discourse,<sup>30</sup> the *Iliad* surely represents the spearman as a predominant figure of epic battle.

If we see the battle scenes with archers in this perspective, we can assume that multiple depictions of archers and hoplites marching in pairs refer to the same reality of epic battle where two main kinds of warriors were the spearman and the archer. Chronologically earlier, the depictions of archers as companions of heavy-armed soldiers in battle scenes may have spread to the other types of scenes featuring hoplites, such as the scenes of departure and, later, the scenes of arming and hieroscopy, which take place at the hoplite's *oikos*. It is only in these scenes that archers make the impression of redundant and decorative figures because they do not take part in the interactions between the hoplite and his relatives.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> A condescending attitude towards the bow was clearly articulated in Soph. *Ai.* 1120–1123; later the spear and the bow are sharply contrasted in Eur. *HF*, see n. 10 above.

<sup>31</sup> Scenes of arming and hieroscopy were in detail analyzed by Lissarague who rightly notes that in them, in contrast even to the scenes of departure, the archer is constantly dissociated from the hoplite who alone interacts with the representatives of his *oikos*: “À l'intérieur de la série hiéroskopique <...>, l'archer scythe a une position spécifique par rapport à toutes les catégories de la cité. Comme dans les scènes de l'armement, il est du côté de ceux qui partent, avec l'hoplite, face à ceux qui restent, femme et vieillard. Cependant, face aux opérateurs, vieillard et hoplite, il n'est que spectateur, à la fois présent et en marge” (Lissarague 1990, 68).

This hypothesis agrees with the chronological and quantitative distribution of different scenes with archers.<sup>32</sup>

Why Attic vase painters portrayed archers wearing Scythian attire is a separate question that so far has not found any satisfactory answer. However, the clue may be found in fifth-century literary sources that show that the Greeks of the Classical Age firmly associated the art of archery with the Scythians. This is the case in Sophocles' fragment mentioned above. Herodotus, too, knew that even the Medes had learned the art of archery from the Scythians (Hdt. 1. 73). According to Socrates in Xenophon, the Scythians are as unsurpassed in archery as the Spartans (i. e. the Greeks) are unconquerable as hoplites (armed with a large shield and a spear) and as the Thracians are the best in the use of the light shield πέλτα and the javelin.<sup>33</sup> It is clear from this evidence that for the Greeks the art of archery was of Scythian origin, even though, from their first-hand experience of the Persian Wars, they knew well enough about the widespread use of archery in the Persian army. It is therefore a fairly obvious hypothesis that this view may well go back to the VI century BC. If so, Scythian attire could have been associated with archers as a result of the renown that the Scythians acquired in the Aegean world as archers from the time of their raids to the Middle East. In the beginning, as our earliest examples show, the only Scythian attributes of the portrayals of archers on Attic vases were a pointed cap and a bow. This primary information about Scythian attire could have reached Athens through connections with the Ionian Greeks who had first-hand experience with the Scythians not only in Asia Minor but also in their colonies in the North Black sea. A full Scythian costume does not appear on Attic vases until 530 BC, and even then it was not uniform, so that it seems highly unlikely that these images were based on autopsy.<sup>34</sup> So, one can assume that it was a kind of idealized costume that reflected the basic traits of its real prototype, which included not only the ubiquitous pointed cap but also trousers and was made of a highly ornate fabric. With this general picture

---

<sup>32</sup> According to the statistics adduced by Osborne arming and hieroscopy scenes comprise in the whole only 35 cases (24 and 11 accordingly) and date from the years c. 520–500, while departure scenes, numerous in this period (127 cases), appear only 4 times before 520 BC; at the same time battle scenes of all kinds (with or without chariots) by far outnumber all these categories in both periods, before and after 520 BC (Osborne 2004, 53).

<sup>33</sup> Xen. *Mem.* 3. 9. 2: Νομίζω μέντοι πᾶσαν φύσιν μαθήσει καὶ μελέτη πρὸς ἀνδρείαν αὖξεσθαι· δῆλον μὲν γὰρ ὅτι Σκύθαι καὶ Θρᾶκες οὐκ ἂν τολμήσειαν ἀσπίδας καὶ δόρατα λαβόντες Λακεδαιμονίοις διαμάχεσθαι· φανερόν δ' ὅτι Λακεδαιμόνιοι οὐτ' ἂν Θρᾶξι πέλταις καὶ ἀκοντίοις οὔτε Σκύθαις τόξοις ἐθέλοιεν ἂν διαγωνίζεσθαι.

<sup>34</sup> See n. 21.

in mind, individual painters could modify it according to their imagination. The appearance of this imaginary costume around 530 BC and the quick rise of its popularity in this particular period may be linked to the fact that under Peisistratus the Athenians had remarkably improved their positions on the Hellespont and had already established trading contacts with the North Black sea, as can be judged from numerous finds of Attic pottery there.<sup>35</sup> Through these contacts, even though they were probably partly mediated by Ionians and Aeginetans,<sup>36</sup> Attic artists could have acquired more precise information about what Scythian archers looked like.<sup>37</sup>

Concluding this excursus into the representations of archers in Attic vase painting, I would like to argue that the frequent appearance of Scythian archers in different kinds of battle scenes inspired by epic not only confirms the view that Scythian attire served as a typical visual marker of archers, but it also prompts the suggestion that the very adjective Scythian could have been perceived as a generic reference to archers – although the connection of the archers' attire with real Scythians was probably never forgotten. I suggest, therefore, that the Scythian Ares in the *Libation Bearers* may simply mean an archer, and that the chorus in the passage under discussion refers to the epic pair of warriors, a spearman and an archer, which it summons to come and to revenge the death of Agamemnon.

This interpretation of *Ch.* 161 f. is perfectly in keeping with how the theme of a future avenger is introduced and articulated in the *Parodos* of the drama. Here Aeschylus very carefully differentiates between Orestes and the

---

<sup>35</sup> Shapiro 1983, 112. It is in 530<sup>ies</sup> BC that Peisistratus won back Sigeion in the Troad which lies just on the way to the Black sea. Earlier in 560 BC the Thracian Chersonese was colonized by the Athenians under Miltiades the Elder, and thus Athens acquired control of the entrance to the Black sea from both sides (Andrewes 1982, 403–405; Brashinskij 1963, 23–34; Bouzek 1990, 40, 42).

<sup>36</sup> G.R. Tsatskheladze argued that the evidence for direct Athenian trading interests in the Black sea in the VI century BC is weak and drew attention to the Ionian trademarks on Archaic Attic painted pottery from the North Black sea sites, which suggests Ionian mediation. He also adduces some evidence for possible role of Aeginetans as mediators of Athenian trade with the North Black sea (Tsatskheladze 1998, 51 f.). We should not neglect however another sort of historical evidence, which tells us that Athens by the middle of VI century BC had already in its disposal a fleet, was very active in the Aegean and that in particular it increased its influence on the Hellespont (see n. 35). It would be strange if this advantage had not been used by Athens for its trading purposes with the Black sea without mediation.

<sup>37</sup> Regarding the problem of sudden rise and decline of archers' popularity during the last third of VI century BC, I suppose that we should not separate it from the statistics on the popularity of battle scenes in general. Their comparative study may well show some interesting results which will help further comprehension of archers' phenomenon in Attic vase painting. But this work is yet to be done.



notion of a possible avenger. Orestes is mentioned for the first time among those who are well-disposed to Agamemnon (*Ch.* 109–116) when the chorus instructs Electra what to say during the libation. Thus, when immediately thereafter the chorus sings that Electra should pray for somebody to come who will kill the killer (117–121), it is not Orestes that they have in mind. This contraposition – on the one side Orestes and herself, on the other an avenger who will retaliate the death of their father – is twice repeated in Electra's prayer (142–148) being strongly underlined by repeated structural oppositions. In her prayer for Orestes (138 f.), Electra wishes for him to come back home and for herself (140 f.) to become better than her mother (142: ἡμῖν μὲν εὐχὰς τάσδε ... 145: ταῦτ' ἐν μέσῳ τίθημι τῆς καλῆς ἀρᾶς, 147: ἡμῖν δὲ πομπὸς ἴσθι τῶν ἐσθλῶν ἄνω), but at the same time, in a curse, she wishes for a future avenger to punish her father's killers (142 f.: τοῖς δ' ἐναντίοις / λέγω φανῆναι σοῦ, πάτερ, τιμάορον, 146: κείνοις... τὴν κακὴν ἀράν). Of course, this arrangement only serves to express a deeply ironical vision of Orestes who is at the same time an object of Electra's prayer and the subject of her curse. But this will become clear only after Orestes reveals Apollo's decision to make him take revenge on his father's murderers (269–274, note especially ἀνταποκτεῖναι λέγων in v. 274 which echoes chorus's ὅστις ἀνταποκτενεῖ in v. 121). Thus, in the short astrophic lyrical passage that precedes Orestes' revelation to Electra and to the chorus, it is the idea of an unknown avenger that still dominates, and it is ironically associated with the image of the military might symbolized by the epic pair of a spearman and an archer. It is tempting to suggest that this pairing also plays a special part in Aeschylus' dramatic irony in that it anticipates the appearance of the pair of Orestes and Pylades, who in fact join forces in effectuating the revenge. Aeschylus most effectively uses the mute person of Pylades by giving him only a few words (*Ch.* 900–902) at the crucial moment of Orestes' indecision as he confronts Clytemnestra (*Ch.* 899), which urge him to make a decisive step and to kill his mother. Thus, he makes Pylades' figure absolutely necessary for the accomplishment of Apollo's order.

So, on the basis of the above interpretation, I propose the following reading of the *Ch.* 160–163:

ἴτω τις δορυσθενῆς ἀνὴρ	υ – – υ – υ – υ –	do ia
ἀναλυτὴρ δόμων Σκυθῆς τ' ἐν χεροῖν	υ υ υ – υ – υ – – υ –	do do
παλίντων ἔργῳ βέλη πῖπ' ἀλλων Ἄρης	υ – υ – – υ – υ – – υ –	ia cr do
σχέδιά τ' αὐτόκωπα νομῶν ξίφη.	υ υ υ – υ – υ – – υ –	do do

Viktoria T. Musbakhova  
Thessalonica

vmusbakhova@gmail.com

## Bibliography

- A. Andrewes, “The Tyranny of Pisistratus”, in: J. Boardman, N. G. L. Hammond (eds.), *The Cambridge Ancient History* III. 3 (Cambridge<sup>2</sup>1982) 392–416.
- J. Boardman, “Heracles”, *LIMC* IV. 1 (Zürich–München 1988) 728–838.
- J. Bouzek, *Studies of Greek Pottery in the Black Sea Area* (Prague 1990).
- I. B. Brashinskij, *Afiny i Severnoje Prichernomorje v VI–II vv. do n. e.* [*Athens and the North Black Sea Area in VI–II cent. BC*] (Moscow 1963).
- H. D. Broadhead (ed., comm.), *The Persae of Aeschylus* (Cambridge 1960).
- J. Burow, *Der Antimenes Maler* (Mainz, Rhein 1989).
- V. Citti, *Studi sul testo delle Coefore* (Amsterdam 2006).
- N. C. Conomis, “The Dochmiacs of Greek Drama”, *Hermes* 92 (1964) 23–50.
- A. T. Davies, *Archery in Archaic Greece*, Diss. (Columbia University 2013).
- G. Ferrari Pinney, “Achilles Lord of Scythia”, in: W.G. Moon (ed.), *Ancient Greek Art and Iconography* (Madison 1983) 127–146.
- A. F. Garvie (ed., comm.), *Aeschylus, Choephoroi* (Oxford 1986).
- W. W. Goodwin, *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of the Greek Verb* (London 1889, repr. Bristol 1998).
- P. Groeneboom (ed., comm.), *Aeschylus’s Choephoroi* (Groningen 1949).
- W. Headlam, C. E. S. Headlam (tr., comm.), *The Plays of Aeschylus* (London 1909).
- F. Heimsoeth, *Die Wiederherstellung der Dramen des Aeschylus* (Bonn 1861).
- W. Helbig, “Eine Heerschau des Peisistratos oder Hippias auf einer schwarzfigurigen Schale”, *SB der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philos.-Philol. und Hist. Kl.* 2 (1897) 259–320.
- A. I. Ivantchik, “Scythian Archers on Archaic Attic Vases: Problems of Interpretation”, *Ancient Civilisations from Scythia to Siberia* 12: 3–4 (2006) 197–271.
- R. C. Jebb (ed. abr. by G. A. Davies), *The Trachiniae of Sophocles* (Cambridge 1955).
- B. M. Lavelle, “Herodotos, Scythian Archers, and the *doryphoroi* of the Peisistratids”, *Klio* 74 (1992) 78–97.
- F. Lissarague, *L’autre guerrier. Archers, peltastes, cavaliers dans l’imagerie attique* (Paris–Rome 1990).
- G. Marengi, “Tra cruces ed emendationes”, *Maia* 11 (1959) 320–325.
- P. Mazon (éd., tr.), *Eschyle* (Paris 1925).
- G. Murray (ed.), *Aeschyli septem quae supersunt tragoediae* (Oxford<sup>2</sup>1955).
- R. Osborne, “Images of a Warrior. On a Group of Athenian Vases and their Public”, in: C. Marconi (ed.), *Greek Vases: Images, Contexts, and Controversies*. Proceeding of the conference sponsored by the Center for the Ancient Mediterranean at Columbia University, 23–24 March 2002 (Leiden–Boston 2004) 41–54.
- D. L. Page (ed.), *Aeschyli septem quae supersunt tragoediae* (Oxford 1972).
- R. Porson (ed.), *Aeschyli tragoediae septem cum versione Latina* II (London 1806).
- H. J. Rose, *A Commentary on the Surviving Plays of Aeschylus* II (Amsterdam 1958).

- Ch. G. Schütz (ed., comm.), *Aeschyli tragoediae quae supersunt* II (London 1823).
- H. A. Shapiro, "Amazons, Thracians, and Scythians", *GRBS* 24 (1983) 105–114.
- A. H. Sommerstein (ed., tr.), *Aeschylus* II. *Oresteia*, LCL (Cambridge, MA – London 2008).
- A. H. Sommerstein, "Textual and Other Notes on Aeschylus", *Prometheus* 36 (2010) 97–122.
- G. Thomson (ed., comm.), *The Oresteia of Aeschylus* I–II (Amsterdam–Prague 1966).
- G. R. Tsatskheladze, "Greek Colonisation of the Black Sea Area: Stages, Models, and Native Population", in: G. R. Tsatskheladze (ed.), *The Greek Colonisation of the Black Sea Area* (Stuttgart 1998) 9–68.
- R. G. Ussher (ed.), *Sophocles, Philoctetes* (Warminster 2001).
- M. F. Vos, *Scythian Archers in Archaic Attic Vase-painting* (Groningen 1963).
- K.-W. Welwei, *Unfreie im Antiken Kriegsdienst* (Wiesbaden 1974).
- K. Wernike, "Die Polizeiwache auf der Burg von Athen", *Hermes* 26 (1891) 51–75.
- M. L. West (ed.), *Aeschyli tragoediae cum incerti poetae Prometheus* (Stuttgart 1990).
- U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf (ed.), *Aeschyli Tragoediae* (Berlin 1958).

After a survey of multiple textual problems of Aesch. *Ch.* 161 f., the author proposes (1) to accept the scribe's correction Σκύθης for the nonsensical manuscript σκυθιτα, (2) to retain the manuscript reading Ἄρης, which is to be combined with Σκύθης, and (3) to read ἔργω, instead of ἐν ἔργω, which results in the following restoration of the text: ...Σκύθης τ' ἐν χεροῖν / παλίντων ἔργω βέλη ἑπιπάλλων Ἄρης (do / ia cr do). The Scythian Ares, who finds a parallel at Aesch. *Pers.* 85: τοξόδαμνον Ἄρη, is to be understood as a Scythian warrior, i. e. an archer, who would thus be juxtaposed with a spearman. As a result, the sentence (*Ch.* 160–163) has two subjects and may be interpreted as the chorus' appeal to a spearman and a Scythian archer to come together as rescuers of the house of Agamemnon. This pairing can be paralleled in Archaic Attic depictions of heavily armed warriors and archers in Scythian attire acting together in battle or marching in pairs – depictions that evoke the virtual world of epic battles as it is known from the *Iliad*, where spearmen and archers also fight side by side. The chorus' summoning of this pair of warriors as a combined symbol of epic warfare should be understood along the lines of the ironical treatment of the theme of a future avenger in the Parodos, where Aeschylus does his best not to connect the retaliation of Agamemnon's death with Orestes until, at a later point, he reveals his mission as his father's avenger. Besides, this pairing anticipates the joint role that Orestes and Pilades play in fulfilling Apollo's order.

В статье рассматриваются проблемы чтения стихов 161–162 трагедии Эсхила "Хоэфоры" и предлагается принять поправку переписчика Σκύθης вместо рукописного σκυθιτα, а также читать ἔργω вместо ἐν ἔργω, что дает следующую реконструкцию текста: ...Σκυθῆς τ' ἐν χεροῖν / παλίντων ἔργω βέλη

ἑπιπλάλλον Ἄρη (do / ia cr do). Скифский Арес, на основании Aesch. *Pers.* 85: τοξόδαμνον Ἄρη, понимается как скифский воин, т. е. лучник, который в тексте противопоставлен “мужу, сильному копьем”, т. е. гоплиту. Т. о., призыв хора прийти и освободить дом Агамемнона обращен к копьеносцу и лучнику (Aesch. *Ch.* 160–163). Подобное объединение находит параллель в архаических аттических вазовых изображениях тяжеловооруженных воинов и скифских лучников, действующих совместно или марширующих парами, где средствами живописи воссоздаются картины эпических битв, некоторое представление о которых дает “Илиада”. Призыв хора к этой паре воинов, олицетворяющей эпическую воинскую мощь, может быть понят с учетом драматической иронии, применяемой Эсхилом в пародии “Хоэфор” с тем, чтобы не связывать фигуру мстителя с Орестом, пока он сам не объявит об этой своей роли. Кроме того, призыв к паре воинов предвосхищает совместные действия Ореста и Пилада в осуществлении убийства Клитемнестры.

## CONSPECTUS

VIKTORIA T. MUSBAKHOVA	
A Scythian Ares (Aesch. <i>Ch.</i> 161–162)?	181
CARLO M. LUCARINI, MARIA SCERMINO	
Il ruolo di Posidonio e della dossografia per la datazione del <i>Περὶ κόσμου</i> e i rapporti di quest'ultimo con l' <i>Elogium geographiae</i> . I	198
AUDRONĖ KUČINSKIENĖ	
Play on the Meaning of Name in Cicero's <i>Verrines</i> : Some Remarks on <i>Div. Caec.</i> 48–50	229
WJATSCHESLAW K. CHRUSTALJOW	
<i>Sic est (non) iusta causa belli?</i> Issues of Law and Justice in the Debate Concerning a Roman Annexation of Egypt in 65 BC	244
SOFIA EGOROVA	
<i>Novisque rebus infidelis Allobrox</i> (Hor. <i>Epod.</i> 16. 6)	265
DENIS KEYER	
The Train of Thought in Horace, <i>Epist.</i> 2. 2. 213–216	274

## EPIGRAPHICA

NADEZHDA NOVOSELOVA, ANNA NAMOYLIK	
A Chalcedonic Die of Astynomos Ἡράκλειος from Tauric Chersonesus	289
NATALIA PAVLICHENKO, NIKOLAJ FEDOSEEV	
A New Inscription of Herakas, Son of Pontikos, ἀρχερμηγεὺς Ἀλανῶν	315

## COMMENTARII BREVIORES

S. DOUGLAS OLSON	
Some Late 4 <sup>th</sup> -century Comic Fragments (Antiph. fr. 288 = Timocl. fr. 41 = adesp. tr. fr. 123a; Antiph. fr. 167; adesp. com. fr. 149) and Eratosthenes of Cyrene on Demosthenes	339
ЕКАТЕРИНА НОВИКОВА	
De <i>rutilo</i> metri Graeci nomine	343
Keywords	346

---

Статьи сопровождаются резюме на русском и английском языке  
Summary in Russian and English