Archilochus and Odysseus

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I

Plutarch reports that Archilochus, when he came to Sparta, was expelled because he had stated in a poem that it was better to throw away one's arms than to be slain.¹ As evidence for the Spartan charge Plutarch adds four lines (5 W. = 6 D.), which even today, more than 2000 years after they were written, have lost nothing of their fresh liveliness and provocative unconventionality:

![Greek text]

Not only do the unusually large number and the variety of ancient testimonia bear witness to the popularity of the poem,³ but Alcaeus, Anacreon, and even Horace more than 600 years later, decided to follow the lead of the great ancestor of personal lyric poets and throw their shields away too.⁴ Aristophanes also paid tribute to the famous

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¹ Plut. Inst. Lac. 34, 239α; for a variant of the story see Val. Max. 6.3 Ext. 1.
³ For the testimonia see West ad fr. 5. Most critics think that the four lines form a complete poem; but see H. Fränkel, Dichtung (infra n. 6) 152; and earlier F. Jacoby, Hermes 53 (1918) 277 n. 1, and M. Theunissen, “A propos des fragments 2 et 6 (Diehl) d’Archilochus,” AntCl 22 (1953) 406–11, who fancies the idea that 2 D. and 6 D. belong together.
⁴ Alcaeus fr. 428 L.-P., cf. D. L. Page, Sappho and Alcaeus (Oxford 1955) 153ff; Anacreon, PMG 36 (31 D.); Hor. Od. 2.7.9ff, cf. E. Fraenkel, Horace (Oxford 1957) 11ff. Most critics will agree that here (at least in the cases of Anacreon and Horace) we are dealing with a literary topos and not with a biographical detail; for Archilochus see infra pp. 19f.
lines in his own way. He ridiculed them at the end of Peace (1298ff), while at about the same time the philosopher and conservative politician Critias, in his attack on Archilochus, branded this poem and the event and attitude celebrated in it as "especially revolting and disgraceful." It seems therefore that already in antiquity the shield poem was of crucial importance for the image of Archilochus.

This is certainly the case in modern criticism, as a brief look at some of the most influential interpretations and evaluations (Snell, Fränkel, Treu) will show. "No one today," says Russo correctly, "reads the early lyric poets without an acute awareness that he is hearing the first utterances of the 'personal' voice in early Greece, and no commentary on these poets fails to call attention to the dramatically expanded self-awareness of the seventh century, which expresses itself in its emphasis on new personal values in lieu of—or in deliberate contradiction of—the traditional Homeric values." The ἀετεῖς poem, together with the other equally famous quatrain, the iambos about the bowlegged commander (114 W., 60 D.), is a key witness for this development of a new un-Homeric spirit.

Snell's diachronic model (epos to lyric to drama) and his insistence on a strong cleavage between epic and lyric have been questioned, however, by many scholars. Russo, to give a recent example, has

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8 Critias 88 n 44 Diels-Kranz (= Ael. VH 10.13).


8 The Archilochus symposium of the Foundation Hardt (Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique 10, Geneva 1964) brought together the opposing views (Snell, Treu versus Dover, Page) in an ideal way.
tried to show that the poem about the two captains is much closer to Homer’s world, especially the world of the Odyssey, than is commonly allowed. Although I feel that here, in the attempt to correct an extreme, Russo pushed his argument too far and has underestimated the difference in tone and spirit between the Odyssey and Archilochus, his observations and comments are in principle correct. A close look at the other poem, which has been used—in Russo’s words—as “prima facie evidence for the conceptual gap supposed to exist between Homer and Archilochus” may therefore not be inappropriate.

II

In a detailed analysis of the fragments Page has shown to what degree Archilochus was influenced by the traditional epic language not only in his elegies and epodes but in the iambics and trochaic tetrameters also. Fragments 13 W. (7 D.) and 3 W. (3 D.) are particularly impressive examples for this thesis. But Page, as several critics have pointed out, tends to overstate the importance of the Homeric element. With regard to 5 W. (6 D.), the shield poem, he states: “The theme is (or seems) modern, but there is no attempt to express the matter in any but the commonest traditional terms.”

Now, it is true that “all the words are Homeric” (Page) or, to be more prudent, that they can be paralleled in the Homeric epics. But as Scherer, Dover and others have pointed out, this does not necessarily mean that Archilochus is using traditional poetic language when he says ἐξεικάωςα or ἐρρέτω, ἐξαιτίας or κτήσομαι. In fact, it is more likely that he is using the contemporary Ionic dialect spoken by him and his fellow Parians. Page’s observations of the sort that, e.g., “ἐρρέτω begins the line in II. 9.377” or “ἐξαιτίας occupies the same position more than once in the Odyssey” are certainly correct in themselves, but they do not justify his rather bleak conclusion: “The poet

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9 Russo, op. cit. (supra n.7) 141.
10 Page 144, 154 (and passim).
11 Cf. e.g. Kirkwood 219 n.26, 220f n.29; D. A. Campbell, Arthena 9 (1976) 152–54; and already Dover, Snell and Treu in the discussions following the papers of Page and Scherer (supra n.6).
12 Page 132.
13 Scherer, op. cit. (supra n.6) 97; Dover, in the discussion following Scherer’s paper, 108, 110.
neither intends nor achieves any special effect by the contrast between contemporary theme and traditional phrasing. He composes in this manner because he has no choice; his technique is wholly that of oral Epic.”

The only convincing pieces of evidence on which Page could base such an assumption—the typical formulaic combinations—are scarcely crammed cheek by jowl into these four lines; they occur only in the poem’s second line, where Archilochus appears to have created a formula (ἐντος ἀμώμητον)] and used an existing epic combination (οὐκ ἐθέλων), not because he was limited by choiceless fatality but precisely because he wanted to produce a “special effect.” The epic coloring is particularly appropriate in this line, which describes the precise moment of the break from the heroic convention; the playful irony of ἐντος ἀμώμητον (the blameless shield of a blameworthy owner) is slight but nevertheless clear, and the two epic phrases form a nice ironic frame around the crucial word κάλλιπον.

Further, it seems likely that line 1 contains another deliberate and significant use of a Homeric word. Page says that “ἄγαλλεταί in this position [i.e., before the bucolic diaeresis] is traditional” and quotes Iliad 17.473 and 18.132. In both cases the reference is to Hector, who, after he has killed Patroklos, is said to exult in Achilles’ beautiful armor. The second passage (18.130-32) is of special interest for our poem: Thetis reminds Achilles, who wants to return to the battlefield immediately to take revenge for Patroklos, that he needs new weapons:

άλλα τοι ἐντεα καλὰ μετὰ Τριέσσεσιν ἔχοντα,
χάλκεα μαρμαρωτὰ· τὰ μὲν κορυφαῖολος Ἑκτωρ
ἀυτὸς ἔχων ἀμοικείν ἄγαλλεταί.

If one remembers that in the following lines Thetis promises Achilles new weapons which, made by the god Hephaistos himself, will be better than the ones he lost, the parallel to Archilochus’ poem is seen to be remarkably close. Thetis: you lost your splendid armor (ἐντεα), but I will get you new and better ones. Archilochus: I lost my shield

14 Page 133. Page’s statement about 3 W. (3 D.), “nothing but the metre distinguishes these lines from any five average lines of the Iliad” (132), could certainly not be repeated for 5 W. (6 D.).

15 The words are epic, form and combination are not. Homer does not have the singular ἐντος (only ἐντεα and ἐνεμε), and ἀμώμητος (ll. 12.109) is used of a person, whereas for objects Homer prefers ἀμώμων.

16 Page 132.
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(the blameless gear), but I will buy a better one. Is it possible that Archilochus is making an ironic allusion to the famous scene from the *Iliad*, evoking the greatest heroes of the Trojan war as contrasting foil for his own little Saian adventure?

The language may indeed be largely traditional, but it is the pointed and playful use of the traditional medium which reveals the originality of Archilochus as a poet no less than his new ideas and attitudes.

The simplicity of language, syntax and argument and the direct immediacy of the tone have led (or misled) critics to concentrate mainly on the content of the poem and to neglect the artistic form of this little masterpiece. The two distichs form a carefully constructed antithesis, held together by μὲν (1) and δὲ (3): I left my shield behind (1–2), but I saved my life (3–4). The words which are central for the antithesis ἄσπιδι and ψυχήν (or αὐτόν) are emphasized by their position at the beginning of each distich; against the Saian soldier who boasts of the shield he has only found behind a bush, Archilochus sets his scornful τί μοι μέλει; secondly, κάλλιτον οὐκ ἔθελων is effectively contrasted with the forceful and resolute ἔρρέτω, and finally the slight ironic regret which seems to lie in ἐντὸς ἀμώμητον is squelched by κτήσομαι οὐ κακίω.

Syntactical structure, style and tone are antithetical too.\(^\text{17}\) The first distich is formed by a single period (main clause, relative clause, locative phrase, inserted apposition and added participle); the crucial word κάλλιτον is held back almost to the end of the sentence; the style appears traditionally poetic (especially line 2), and the tone is deliberate, almost hesitating. The second distich has a totally different syntactical rhythm and tone. Four short sentences follow each other in rapid movement; the central point (ψυχήν δ’ ἐξεσόμενα) is placed at the beginning; the style appears to be more personal, almost colloquial;\(^\text{18}\) the tone is self-assured and determined.

The artistic possibilities of word order are employed in the same masterful manner. I have already pointed to the accentuated position of ἄσπιδι and ψυχήν; ἐντὸς ἀμώμητον and οὐκ ἔθελων correspond nicely with each other at the beginning and the end of the pentameter; the

\(^{17}\) The unequal pair of distichs are bound together not only by the correlative particles μὲν – δὲ and by the careful arrangement of the corresponding elements of the antithesis but also by the sound repetition in lines 2 and 4: κάλλιτον οὐκ ἔθελων = κτήσομαι οὐ κακίω.

\(^{18}\) Cf. especially τί μοι μέλει; and ἔρρέτω.
contemptuous *ekêivγ* is also stressed by its position at the end of line 3, and in the last line the words which carry the emotion are again placed in the stressed positions of the pentameter.

The little poem is an ideal example of Archilochus' artistic skill at creating, by the use of all stylistic tricks which the four lines can hold, the effect of natural simplicity and personal immediacy. As pointed out, however, it is not the form but the content which has absorbed the main interest of biographic and literary critics from Critias to Kirkwood.

III

Jaeger, Snell and Fränkel,19 to name only the most influential critics, have stressed the personal tone and the unreserved frankness with which Archilochus speaks about his questionable behavior and attitude in the raid against the Saians. They emphasize the strong self-confidence with which the poet in these lines sets his personal judgement against the traditional ideology. "The traditional code of honor, as the Spartans long maintained it, prescribed death in such a case. 'With it or on it' the Spartan mother adjured her son when she handed him his shield as he went forth to battle: come back a corpse rather than shieldless! ... Archilochus seriously balances the value of life against an exaggerated notion of honor, draws a realistic conclusion, and acts accordingly; and at once, in a tone of aggressive challenge, he proclaims to all the world what he has done."20

We should perhaps not call Archilochus' attitude anti-Homeric but it certainly seems to be un-Homeric21 or, to be even more precise, un-Iliadic. Fränkel points to the famous scene in the *Iliad* where Achilleus toys for a moment with the idea that his life could mean more to him than his honor.22 This shows that the possibility of an Archilochan decision can be envisaged by the hero, but only as negative foil, as unheroic contrast, only to be pushed aside. An Achilleus (or Diomedes or Aias for that matter) who would actually

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19 Jaeger, *op.cit.* (supra n.6) 166; Snell, *Entdeckung* (supra n.6) 61f; Fränkel, *Dichtung* (supra n.6) 152f.
20 Fränkel, *Dichtung* (supra n.6) 153 (quoted from the English translation, p.137).
21 *Cf.* Kirkwood 33. The tone is not polemic but playful and ironic. Archilochus does not attack Homer but rather uses him as an implicitly underlying foil, against which his own value system stands out more clearly.
leave his shield behind to save his life is unimaginable.\textsuperscript{23} Granted; and yet, is Archilochus \textit{indeed} the ancestor of all poetic \textit{μηφάσπιδες}, as is always maintained?

In the second half of the \textit{Odyssey} the \textit{polyμητις} Odysseus invents four Cretan tales, lie-stories, to hide his true identity.\textsuperscript{24} In the most elaborate of these amusing mixtures of fiction and truth he tells his faithful old swineherd Eumaios, among other things, about a raid which he and his comrades undertook after the Trojan war. After a successful start they are attacked and put to flight by an overwhelmingly superior Egyptian force. In this hopeless situation, while his companions are killed or enslaved, the ‘false’ Odysseus saves his skin by putting aside his weapons, helmet, spear and shield, and surrendering to the Egyptian king (\textit{Od.} 14.276ff):

\begin{quote}
\begin{quote}
a\textsuperscript{v}t\textsuperscript{ik\upsilon\prime} \textit{απ\textsuperscript{ò} κρατ\textsuperscript{ò}ς κυν\textsuperscript{ή}ν ε\textsuperscript{υτυκτον ε\textsubscript{θ}η\textsuperscript{κ}α} \\
κ\textit{αι ε\textit{κακ\textit{ς ω\textit{μ}οι\textit{ν, δ\textit{όρυ δ\textit{ε\textit{κβαλον ε\textit{κτ\textit{οςε χειρ\textit{ός}c}}}}}}}} \\
α\textsuperscript{υτ\textsuperscript{άρ ε\textsuperscript{γ\textit{ώ βασιλ\textsuperscript{ή\textit{ς ε\textsuperscript{ναντιόν ή\textsuperscript{λυθον ἵππων}}}}}}}} \\
k\textit{αι κ\textit{ύσα γο\textsuperscript{ύναθ' ε\textsuperscript{λ\textit{ων' δ\textit{ε\textit{ρύ\textit{σατο και μ' \textsuperscript{ελ\textit{έ\textit{\epsilon\textit{ς}}εν, . . .}}}}}}}}}}}}
\end{quote}
\end{quote}

Thus the Cretan Odysseus, in a situation which is, to be sure, not identical but in principle quite comparable, acts like the Archilochus of our poem: he puts his shield aside and saves his life. Like Archilochus he does not portray himself as coward; his martial spirit and valor are stressed repeatedly in the story; he is maybe acting dishonorably but, under the circumstances, pragmatically and reasonably.\textsuperscript{25}

We may thus call not only the vocabulary but also the theme of Archilochus' poem ‘Homeric’. But again ‘Homeric’ does not mean more than the \textit{theme} can be paralleled in the Homeric epic. The flippant irony with which Archilochus talks about the blameworthy loss of his “blameless shield” and the provocative independence with

\textsuperscript{23} Hector’s monologue in the 22nd book when he is waiting for Achilleus is another instructive example.

\textsuperscript{24} \textit{Od.} 13.256ff, 14.192ff, 17.415ff, 19.165ff (24.244ff).

\textsuperscript{25} An important difference between the Homeric and the Archilochan loss of a shield lies in the fact that Odysseus’ pragmatic action is inspired by Zeus (\textit{Od.} 14.273–74 α\textsuperscript{υτ\textsuperscript{άρ \textit{εμοι \ Ζ\textsuperscript{ε\textit{υς α\textsuperscript{υ\textit{τ\textsuperscript{ός ε\textit{ν\textsuperscript{ί τρε\textsuperscript{ε\textit{ιν ω\textsuperscript{δε νό\textsuperscript{η\textsuperscript{μα | ποι\textit{ής}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}} (whereas Archilochus simply says: \textit{κ\textsuperscript{άλλι\textsuperscript{πον ο\textit{ν\textsuperscript{ίκ ε\textsuperscript{θ\textsuperscript{η\textsuperscript{λοων; for this difference see Snell’s comments (in Entdeckung, supra n.6) on the nature of the decision-making process.}}}}}}}}}}}
which he informs the world about his decision against the traditional
code of honor are totally absent in Odysseus' story.26

A closer look at the context of the Homeric parallel (14.191ff) reveals
further surprising points of contact with Archilochus. Odysseus opens
the story with the statement that he is a bastard, the son of a rich and
respected father and a slave mother (199ff); after the death of his
father, his legitimate brothers grant him only a very small part of the
inheritance; he nevertheless manages to win the daughter of a rich
man for his wife (211ff). Ships and battles, spears and arrows are his
world (224ff); before the Trojan war he has already put to sea nine
times to raid foreign countries (229ff); after the war he again fits out
ships, hires a crew, feasts and drinks with his companions for six
days, and sets sail once more (245ff). Then follows the account of the
battle in Egypt mentioned above, and he finally concludes with a
long-winded story containing many more adventures, all as an answer
to Eumaios' initial question: "how did you get to Ithaca, stranger?"
In 1968 Latte27 pointed out how well this story illustrates the 'life'
of Archilochus, and it is indeed strange (as Latte himself indicated) that
the striking correspondence had not been noted earlier. In addition to
the shield parallel, which Latte does not mention, there is the
illegitimate birth, the slave mother, the marriage into a rich family
(Odysseus' successful, Archilochus' not), and the restless adventurous
life in wars and marauding seafaring expeditions. "Die Erzählung der
Odyssee und die Reste des Archilochos zeigen eine Welt, in deren
Mittelpunkt der Beutezug und die daran teilnehmenden Gefährten
stehn."28 Latte confines his interest to the general socio-historical
parallelism between the fictitious life which Odysseus designs for
himself and the life of Archilochus as it has been reconstructed by
ancient and modern critics.29 The surprising degree of correspondence
suggests, however, the question whether this parallelism is indeed
accidental. Before I try to answer this question and its implications,

26 The same is true, κατ’ ἀναλογίαν, for Archilochus' mocking attack on the bowlegged
commander. The theme can be paralleled in Homer. But the difference in tone and spirit
between Archilochus' ironical antithesis of seeming and truth, outer appearance and inner
quality, and the various Homeric parallels which Russo (op.cit. [supra n.7]) adduces, is
considerable.
28 Latte, op.cit. (supra n.27) 386.
29 F. Jacoby, "The Date of Archilochus," CQ 35 (1941) 97ff: Treu, op.cit. (supra n.2) 150ff.
let us look at some further interesting resemblances and possible connections between Archilochus and Odysseus.

IV

In 1 W. (1 D.) Archilochus introduces himself as squire of Lord Ares by being at the same time a poet who knows the Muses’ lovely gift:

\[ \text{εἰμὶ δ’ ἐγὼ θεράτων μὲν ἔνυναλλοιο ἀνακτός} \\
\text{καὶ Μουσέων ἐρατόν δῶρον ἐπιστάμενος, . . .} \]

For modern criticism the most interesting aspect of the distich has been the fact that in these two lines for the first time, as far as we can see, two hitherto separate activities are paired, those of the warrior and the bard or poet. Page\textsuperscript{30} uses strong words, “A social revolution is epitomized in this couplet”; and Kirkwood\textsuperscript{31} maintains that “by pairing the two traditionally separated activities Archilochus is asserting a new role in society, characteristic of the century that followed him, and played by the elegist-politician Solon and the lyricist-politician Alcaeus, a role that makes the poet no longer the onlooker.” As parallel and contrast, both Page and Kirkwood refer to Achilleus and Patroklos, who in \textit{Iliad} 9 (185ff) try to entertain themselves during their boring leisure by singing heroic songs.\textsuperscript{32} “In the Epic,”—so Page\textsuperscript{33}—“a man may be as good in speech as in action (ll. 9.443), and a great warrior might pass the time singing a song (ll. 9.189); but it is inconceivable that the same man should be both soldier and poet . . . there is no bridge over the gulf between a Phemius and an Ajax.”

There is, however, a Homeric hero who comes close to the double rôle Archilochus claims for himself, and again we do not find him in the \textit{Iliad} but in the \textit{Odyssey}, and again it is Odysseus himself. Already the introduction formula \textit{εἰμὶ δ’ ἐγὼ} recalls the famous \textit{εἰμὶ Ὀδυσσεύς}.

\textsuperscript{30} Page 134.
\textsuperscript{31} Kirkwood 31.
\textsuperscript{32} Apparently they are reproducing, not producing epic poetry (cf. also Aleman, PMG 41, praising the Spartans for being good warriors who are nevertheless able to play (and sing to) the cithara: \textit{ὢπεὶ γὰρ ἀντα τῷ εἰδάρῳ τὸ καλῶς κιθαρίς}).
\textsuperscript{33} Page 134.
with which Odysseus opens the narration of his adventures (Od. 9.19f):^{34}

εἰπ’ Ὅδυσσεὺς Δαερτιάδης, δὲ πάει δόλοις
ἀνθρώποις μέλω, καὶ μεν κλέος οὐρανῶν ἰκεί.

More important, however, is the fact that Odysseus, for more than 2000 lines in Books 9–12, does indeed turn into a ‘poet’ of his own life. There is, to be sure, no lyre; Odysseus does not sing, he speaks; but that is soon forgotten. He takes over the rôle of Demodokos, who shortly before sang scenes out of the life of Odysseus, first his quarrel with Achilleus and then, asked by Odysseus, the story of the Trojan horse and the final conquest of Troy (8.73ff; 8.499ff). Like Phemios in the first book Odysseus tells the story of the “bitter homecoming of the Achaeans” and thereby creates, so to speak, a part of the epic cycle. The effect is appropriate. When, in the middle of the nekyia, he stops, his audience is sitting in absolute silence, spellbound (11.333f):

ως ἐφαθ’, οἱ δ’ ἄρα πάντες ἀκὴν ἐγένοντο σιωπή,
κηληθμω δ’ ἐσχοντο κατὰ μέγαρα εκιόντα.

Odysseus’ story has enchanted them like the songs of the Muses, the Sirens, or a good bard, and when Alkinoos after a short intermezzo asks him to continue, he adds (367ff):

κοι δ’ ἔπι μὲν μορφὴ ἐπέων, ἐνὶ δὲ φρένες ἐκθλαί,
μόνον δ’ ως ὅτ’ ἀοίδος ἐπισταμένως κατέλεξας,
πάντων Αργείων σέο τ’ αὐτοῦ κήδεα λυγρά.

The king (or better, Homer through the mouth of the king) thereby confirms the impression of the listener (and reader). Odysseus has indeed performed like a skilled bard. Six books later, Odysseus is again praised in a quite similar way, this time by Eumaios, whom he has impressed with his Cretan story. Summoned by Penelope to bring the old beggar to her so that she may ask him about Odysseus, the swineherd says (17.518ff):

ὅς δ’ ὅτ’ ἀοίδον ἀνήρ ποτιδέρκεται, δὲ τε θεῶν ἔξ
ἀείδη δεδαὼς ἐπέ’ ἰμερόεντα βροτοίς,
τοῦ δ’ ἀμοτον μεμάιαν ἀκούεμεν, ὅπποτ’ ἀείδην
ὅς ἐμὲ κεῖνος ἐκθλεῖς παρῆμενος ἐν μεγάροις.

^{34} R. Harder, “Zwei Zeilen von Archilochos,” Hermes 80 (1952) 381–84; Treu, op.cit. (supra n.2) 189f.
Again we hear about the enchanting quality of Odysseus' words, again he is compared to a skilled bard, and this time the parallel to Archilochus (line 2) is even clearer. Odysseus, hero and victor over Troy, veteran of many battles and storms, here 'is' a skilled and inspired bard.\(^{35}\)

In Homer it is only a comparison, of course; Odysseus does not really combine the two activities as Archilochus does. But the narration of his adventures, the so-called 'Apologoi', and the various Cretan stories he invents in the second half of the epic present this Homeric hero as a 'poet'. This, and the fact that he is not speaking about the deeds and feelings of others but about his own life makes him the poetic ancestor of and possible model for Archilochus.

That Archilochus did indeed have a certain liking for Odysseus is apparent from the fact that he frequently took up Odyssean thoughts. The linguistic and thematic connections between Homer and Archilochus have been much studied since antiquity.\(^{36}\) The linguistic influence is pervasive,\(^{37}\) motif allusions are not rare,\(^{38}\) and sometimes Archilochus seems to quote a Homeric gnomic statement;\(^{39}\) but only in very few cases, as far as we can see, is the thematic connection explicit and fundamental for Archilochus' world view, and in these cases we are again and again led back to passages in which Odysseus formulates his experience and knowledge, won in long years of fighting and travelling, bitter hardship and sudden reversals of luck.

\(^{35}\) Note that in Od. 19.203 Homer comments on one of Odysseus' Cretan tales by saying: ἵκες ἰδεῖς πολλὰ λέγων εὐφώμουσιν ὅμοια. At Theog. 27 very similar words are used by the muses of Mount Helicon to characterize the gift they are going to bestow on the future poet Hesiod.


\(^{37}\) Cf. especially Page and Treu, op.cit. (supra n.6).

\(^{38}\) e.g. 119 W. (72 D.)–II. 13.130ff; 191.3 W. (112.3 D.)–II. 14.217; 193.2f W. (104.2f D.)–II. 5.399.

Given the scarcity of the remains, this can of course be mere coincidence; but it is certainly a strangely significant coincidence.

Fr. 25 W. (41 D.) contains the gnome: ἀλλ’ ἄλλος ἄλλωι καὶ ἔρθην ἱαὐ[τ]έ[ρα]ι. Snell calls this perception “eine Grundeinsicht der archaischen Zeit” and begins his interpretation of early Greek lyric in *Die Entdeckung des Geistes* with this line. The thought which becomes a topos of Greek and Roman lyric poetry from Solon and Sappho to Horace is first to be found in the *Odyssey*. It is, of course, Odysseus who “saw the towns and learned the minds of many distant men,” who was first to formulate the experience that all men are different and have different pleasures and goals. He tells the swineherd Eumaios that he always preferred ships and fighting to the quiet life of a farmer and adds the general statement (Od. 14.228): ἄλλος γάρ τ’ ἄλλοις ἄνηρ ἐπιτέρπεται ἔργους. It certainly cannot be proven beyond doubt that Archilochus took over this gnome directly from the *Odyssey*, but the similarity suggests that he had Odysseus’ words in mind. We have already seen the context of the quoted lines. It is the fictitious Egyptian adventure; the shield parallel follows shortly afterwards.

Archilochus (131/132 W. = 68 D.) shares more, however, with Odysseus than the conviction that men and their ways of life are different.

toίος ἀνθρώποις θυμός, Γλαύκε Λεπτίνως πάι,
γίνεται θυητικός, ὁποίην Ζεῦς ἐφ’ ἡμέρην ἄγη.
καὶ φρονέουσι τοῖ’ ὁποίως ἐγκυρέως ἔργαιον.

Fränkel has shown the fundamental importance of these lines for Archilochus and his view of human life. Again the theme comes from the *Odyssey*, and again it comes from a speech by Odysseus the beggar. In 18.130ff he addresses Amphinomos, one of the suitors:

οὐδὲν ἀκιδνότερον γαῖα τρέφει ἀνθρώποιο
[πάντων, ἰδία τε γαῖαν ἐπὶ πνεεί τε καὶ ἔρπει.] ὕπ’ μὲν γάρ ποτὲ φησὶ κακῶν πείσεθαι ὄπισσω,
δέρ’ ἀρετὴν παρέχως θεοὶ καὶ γούνατ’ ὀράργῃ

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40 Snell, *Entdeckung* (supra n. 6) 59.
41 The gnome was known from different ancient sources (West, testimonia ad 25 W.); a papyrus (P.Oxy. XII 2310 fr.1 col.1 40–48, ed. Lobel) has recently provided bits and scraps of what appears to be a typically Archilochan priamel context.
42 Fränkel, *Dichtung* (supra n. 6) 148ff; Wege 23ff.
This realistic view of man’s frailty and the instability of his feelings and moods must have been attractive to Archilochus, and the linguistic similarity between fr.131 W. and lines 136f is so strong that a direct connection between the two passages can hardly be doubted.

Three times Odysseus stresses the fact that he too has been a blessed and wealthy man once. But Zeus, out of sheer willfulness (ζθελε γάρ που), has taken everything away and turned the man who used to give generously to wandering beggars into a beggar himself (17.419ff; 19.75ff; 18.138). Like Odysseus, Archilochus is deeply convinced of the fickle unreliability of fortune and the impermanence of human affairs; like Odysseus, Archilochus calls upon his friends and himself to “fight despair and endure” (13 W.=7 D., 5ff):

In a quite similar way Odysseus tries to comfort and encourage his comrades after the terrible adventure with the Laistrygonians (10.174ff) and before the dreadful encounter with the Skylla (12.208ff). Closer, however, is the thematic connection with the Odyssey and Odysseus in Archilochus’ famous address of his ὑμός (128 W.=67 D.). The first line (θυμέ, θύμ’, ἀμηχάνοις κήδειν κυκάμενε) seems to recall the equally famous self-address of the πολύτλας Odysseus at 20.18: τέτλαθι δή, κραδή, καὶ κύντερον ἄλο ποτ’ ἔτλης. It certainly would not be surprising if Archilochus in this poem intended to allude to the figure of Odysseus. For the concept of τλημοσίνη, of patient endurance, and the idea of a ρυθμός, a constant change of ebb and flow,

43 130 W. (58 D.); 122 W. (74 D.); 128 W. (67 D.); Kirkwood 36; Fränkel, Dichtung (supra n.6) 160.
44 R. Merkelbach, Untersuchungen zur Odyssee (Zetemata 2, München 1969) 231; Treu, op.cit. (supra n.2) 221; but see J. A. Davison, “Quotations and Allusions in Early Greek Literature,” Eranos 53 (1955) 125–40.
failure and success, happiness and misery, and for the seastorm imagery, he could not evoke a better and more powerful poetic paradigm.45

Kirkwood46 has pointed out correctly that Archilochus shares not only the τλημοσύνη of the πολυτλακ Ὀδυσσεύς but also the other central quality of the hero's character which Homer has honored with formulaic epithets, "the resourcefulness and the belief in action that characterizes Odysseus the πολυτροπος" (and the πολυμήχανος). The preserved poems and fragments present a man who knows his way around (on the battlefield and at home, with his hand and with his sharp tongue), and in his animal fables Archilochus has apparently cast himself repeatedly in the rôle of the fox. Stanford47 considers the possibility that "the pseudonym Αἴθων which [Odysseus] assumes in Od. 19.183, refers to a fox's proverbially torchlike tail." Is Odysseus perhaps calling himself 'redfox'? Could 'fox' perhaps be a characterization already used for the hero in the epic tradition outside Homer? This is, however, highly uncertain. As far as we can see, Odysseus receives this title of honor—and blame—for the first time in Sophocles, when Aias calls him "that knavish fox" (Aj. 103 τοῦπιτρεπτον κίναδος). But although the name 'fox' is still absent from the Odyssey, all the qualities of a fox are certainly there. We need only remember the ironic characterization of Odysseus by Athena at their first encounter in Ithaca (13.291ff).

V

That the 'younger' Odyssey is closer than the Iliad to the world of Archilochus and the spirit of his poems has been stressed by many scholars and is hardly surprising. Neither the Odyssey nor the lifetime of Archilochus can be dated precisely, but it is, if not likely, at least possible that not more than a generation and possibly less separates the epic poem and the first lyric poet we have.48 It is therefore perhaps

44 I do not intend to play down the small but very significant differences between the Homeric passages and Archilochus, repeatedly stressed by Snell (see e.g., "Wie die Griechen lernten, was geistige Tätigkeit ist," JHS 93 [1973] 172ff ad Archil. 128 W. [67 D.], 173/74). Archilochus does not merely quote Homer, he adapts him for the expression of his own ideas and attitudes.

45 Kirkwood 36.


47 For the date of Archilochus cf. Jacoby, op.cit. (supra n.27); for the date of the Odyssey now W. Burkert, "Das hunderttorige Theben und die Datierung der Ilias," WS 89 (1976) 5–21.
not astonishing to find that there are points of contact between Archilochus and Odysseus, who as the hero of the Odyssey embodies the spirit of that epic. What is remarkable, however, is the number and the importance of parallels and connections which can be drawn: (1) Latte has observed the striking similarity between the 'life' of the pseudo-Odysseus in the Cretan tale (14.191ff) and the life of Archilochus as it appears; (2) Archilochus as he presents himself in his poems shares the central character traits and attitudes of both the true and the false Odysseus, endurance and resourcefulness; and (3) the poet reveals an unmistakable liking for this one epic hero. We have seen that in the several cases in which we are justified, or at least tempted, to assume a direct and important thematic influence, we are always led back to Odysseus. Archilochus always adapts lines from speeches Odysseus makes in the second half of the Odyssey.

It appears then quite likely that Archilochus felt (and followed) a congenial spirit in Odysseus, the πολύτλως and πολυμήχανος, the heroic soldier, curious adventurer and pseudo-poet, the "untypical hero" (Stanford), who talks so much about the vicissitudes and constraints of human life and who nevertheless, clever like a fox, always knows a way out.

This, finally, brings us back to the starting point of our considerations, Odysseus’ Cretan story and the shield of Archilochus. Dover has reminded critics and readers of Archilochus that it is not correct to assume that “whenever a fragment of an early Greek poet contains a first person singular, it comes from a genuinely autobiographical poem.” The simple truth that the ἐγώ of a poem is not necessarily the ego of the poet is indeed often forgotten. Quoting a number of examples from preliterate song, Dover has shown that “assumed personality and imaginary situation” are as old as the lyric expression of feelings, attitudes and events. He consequently asks: “Are we sure—to take a crucial example—that Archilochus himself threw away his shield in combat against the Saioi?” The Homeric precedent strengthens these doubts. We certainly cannot rule out the possibility that the parallel is accidental, that Archilochus indeed talks about a personal experience. But the poetic parallel and the fact that it comes from a literary context which was not only well known but, as I have

49 Dover, op.cit. (supra n.6) 209.
50 An instructive recent example is R. Merkelbach’s (mis)use of the new Archilochus, ZPE 14 (1974) 113; cf. West’s answer, ZPE 16 (1975) 217ff (and Catullus 16).
51 Dover, op.cit. (supra n.6) 209.
tried to show, very attractive to Archilochus make it appear much more likely that we are, in fact, dealing with an “imaginary situation.” It is at least possible that the poet, who repeatedly evokes or even quotes Odysseus, here also consciously identifies himself with his model.

The new Archilochus papyrus has rekindled the old doubts about the historical authenticity of the traditional Archilochus biography. Is the story about Lycambes and his daughters true and not rather a literary ‘Wandermotiv’ of iambic poetry? Was the name of Archilochus’ mother indeed Enipo or is Ενίπω a ‘speaking name’ by which the writer of invective and satirical squib called himself—quite appropriately—the son of mother Blame? Was Archilochus really a bastard, or is the illegitimate birth an assumed poetic rôle, a ‘persona’? And now a minor detail: did he really lose his shield in Thrace? We cannot answer these questions. Most if not all we know about Archilochus, whether it comes from ancient sources or our own speculations, is derived from his poems. Therefore it is evident that we are dealing not with the ‘real’ but with the so-called ‘poetic personality’ of the poet. To what degree the two are identical cannot be verified on the basis of our present evidence. And what does it matter anyway? What is interesting and informative for the ‘Geistesgeschichte’ of the archaic period is the spirit of Archilochus’ poetry, the attitudes and opinions which manifest themselves in his verses, and not the question whether a certain individual two and a half millennia ago did actually throw his shield away and buy another one.

VI

I conclude with an observation, the importance of which is difficult to judge. Hesychius under the lemma Σάιοι gives the brief explanation

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54 G. Nagy, “Iambos, Typologies of Invective and Praise,” Arêthusa 9 (1976) 192f; this is an idea which was first promoted by F. Welcker, “Archilochos” (1816) = Kl. Schriften I (Bonn 1844) 72ff.

55 Lefkowitz, op.cit. (supra n.51) 181f.
oi πρώτερον Κίκονες. The Odyssey again. The unfortunate encounter with the Kikones is the first of Odysseus' adventures after the Trojan war. The wind carries him to Ismaros on the coast of the Kikones. He storms and plunders the town and shares the booty with his men. But when he tells them to leave they refuse and start to feast by the shore, eating and drinking excessively. Meanwhile fugitives alarm the Kikonian king, who soon arrives with a huge army to take revenge, and Odysseus, having lost many of his men, barely manages to get away (Od. 9.39–61). Only as an aside I note that Odysseus here is drinking wine from Ismaros as does Archilochus in fr.2 W. (2 D.):

ἐν δορὶ μὲν μοί μάζα μεμαγμένη, ἐν δορὶ δ’ οἶνος

'Ισμαρικός· πίνω δ’ ἐν δορὶ κεκλιμένος.

At this moment Odysseus has not yet been driven out of reality into the fairy tale world of the Lotus-eaters and the Cyclops, of Circe and the Sirens. This is Thrace, and Ismaros, the town Odysseus and his companions plunder, is well known, especially well known to Archilochus, who lived so close by and probably had his own adventures in Thrace. It is of course impossible to say how old the equation Saioi=Kikones is, but even if Archilochus did not identify the Saians with the Homeric Kikones, it is more than likely that he was aware of the fact that he, unsuccessfully raiding the Saians near Ismaros, was treading in Odysseus' footsteps.

We may even be able to pursue our argument one step further. One of the most charming aspects of the Cretan tales and the one which, I think, is most neglected is the shrewd and amusing way in which Odysseus, in a silent conspiracy with the audience, uses material from his 'true' adventures (Books 9–12) to build his false experiences. Listening to the Cretan stories we are constantly led back to the stories we heard at the Phaeadan court. Now, the Egyptian adventure of the pseudo-Odysseus is clearly modelled after the real Odysseus' unpropitious encounter with the Kikones. The dramatic structure of the two stories is almost identical: (a) arrival, (b) plundering of the city or fields and villages, (c) futile warning of the companions, (d) call for help, (e) arrival of a huge army, (f) Odysseus and his companions are

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56 The island Thasos had a bridgehead on the Thracian coast; cf. Strabo VII C 331, fr.44; RE 9 (1916) 2134f s.v. Ismaros (Oberhummer).

57 The equation is known only from Hesychius; the Saioi are not attested anywhere else in ancient literature.
routed and Odysseus barely manages to escape disaster. The only major difference is that in the Egyptian adventure (b) and (c) appear in reverse order.

The structural and thematic parallelism is so complete that no one hearing or reading the Egyptian adventure can fail to realize that here the disguised Odysseus is offering his Kikones adventure in an Egyptian set-up. As we remember, however, it is the Egyptian story in which Odysseus gets rid of his shield and saves his life, and it is intriguing to think that Archilochus perhaps connected the two stories as we do and consequently was even more attracted by the Egyptian ἔφαγος Odysseus.

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