

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:

ἀσπίδι μὲν Σαῖων τις ἀγάλλεται, ἦν παρὰ θάμνῳ,
ἔντος ἀμώμητον, κάλλιπον οὐκ ἐθέλων·
ψυχὴν δ' ἐξεσάωσα. τί μοι μέλει ἀσπίς ἐκείνη;
ἐρρέτω· ἐξαὔτις κτήσομαι οὐ κακίῳ.²

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

¹ Plut. *Inst.Lac.* 34, 239b; for a variant of the story see Val.Max. 6.3 Ext.1.

² Editions: E. Diehl, *Anthologia Lyrica Graeca* I.3³ (Leipzig 1952); F. R. Adrados, *Liricos griegos, elegiacos y yambógrafos arcaicos I* (Barcelona 1956); F. Lasserre, *Archiloque, Fragments* (Paris 1958); M. Treu, *Archilochos* (München 1959); G. Tarditi, *Archilochus* (Rome 1968); M. West, *Iambi et Elegi Graeci I* (Oxford 1971). For the difficult textual problems in line 3 of fr.5 W. (6 D.) cf. L. Weber, "Σῶκα ἐφ' Ἑρμῆι," *Philologus* 74 (1917) 92–98; A. Colonna, "Su alcuni frammenti dei lirici greci," *SIFC* 21 (1946) 23–30; V. de Falco, "Note ai lirici greci," *ParPass* 1 (1946) 347–59; and esp. M. Gigante, "Il testo del fr.6,3 di Archiloco," *ParPass* 11 (1956) 196–200, who gives a good survey of the extensive discussion. With Treu and Lasserre I prefer the beginning of line 3 which is attested by Ar. *Pax* 1298f, 1301: ψυχὴν δ' ἐξεσάωσα.

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'Archiloque," *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 (51 D.); Hor. *Od.* 2.7.9f, 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.”⁵ 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.⁶ “No one today,” says Russo⁷ 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 *ἀσπὶς* 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.⁸ Russo, to give a recent example, has

⁵ Critias 88 v 44 Diels-Kranz (= Ael. *VH* 10.13).

⁶ D. A. Campbell, *Greek Lyric Poetry* (New York 1967) 1–8, 136–61; K. J. Dover, “The Poetry of Archilochus,” *Entretiens Hardt* 10 (Geneva 1964) 183–222; H. Fränkel, *Wege und Formen frühgriechischen Denkens*³ (München 1968) 1–96 [hereafter, FRÄNKEL, *Wege*]; *id.*, *Dichtung und Philosophie des frühen Griechentums*³ (München 1962) 147–70 [hereafter, FRÄNKEL, *Dichtung*]; D. E. Gerber, *Euterpe* (Amsterdam 1970); W. Jaeger, *Paideia I*⁴ (Berlin 1959) 160–86; G. M. Kirkwood, *Early Greek Monody* (Ithaca 1974) 20–52 [hereafter, KIRKWOOD]; A. Lesky, *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur*³ (Bern 1971) 132–43; D. Page, “Archilochus and the Oral Tradition,” *Entretiens Hardt* 10 (Geneva 1964) 119–79 [hereafter, PAGE]; G. Perrotta/B. Gentili, *Polinnia*³ (Messina/Florence 1965) 63–97; A. Scherer, “Die Sprache des Archilochos,” *Entretiens Hardt* 10 (Geneva 1964) 89–116; B. Snell, *Die Entdeckung des Geistes*⁴ (Göttingen 1975) 56–81 [hereafter, SNELL, *Entdeckung*]; *id.*, *Dichtung und Gesellschaft* (Hamburg 1965) 56–112 [hereafter, SNELL, *Dichtung*]; M. Treu, *Von Homer zur Lyrik*³ (*Zetemata* 12, München 1968); *ad* 5 W. (6 D.) *cf. edd.citt. (supra n.2)* and W. Klinger, “Do fragmentow elegijnych Archilocha,” *Eos* 24 (1919/20) 26ff; N. Terzaghi, “Abiecta non bene parmula,” *BFC* 34 (1928) 13ff; Chr. Karathanasis, “*Ἡ ἀσπὶς τοῦ Ἀρχιλόχου καὶ ἡ Νεοβούλη*,” *Platon* 14 (1955) 296ff; G. Broccia, *Πόθος ε ψόγος, Il frammento 6 D. e l’opera d’Archiloco* (Rome 1959); for further literature see Gigante, *op.cit. (supra n.2)*.

⁷ J. Russo, “The Inner Man in Archilochus and the *Odyssey*,” *GRBS* 15 (1974) 139.

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.⁹ 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.¹⁰ 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.¹¹ 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.”¹²

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, Dover¹³ and others have pointed out, this does not necessarily mean that Archilochus is using traditional poetic language when he says *ἐξεάωσα* or *ἐρρέτω*, *ἐξαῦτις* or *κτῆσομαι*. 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 *Il.* 9.377” or “*ἐξαῦτις* 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

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, *Arethusa* 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.”¹⁴ 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 (ἔντος ἀμώμητον)¹⁵ 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 ἔντος 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 says¹⁶ that “ἀγάλλεται 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:

ἀλλά τοι ἔντεα καλὰ μετὰ Τρώεσσι ἔχονται,
χάλκεα μαρμαίροντα· τὰ μὲν κορυθαίολος Ἔκτωρ
αὐτὸς ἔχων ὤμοισιν ἀγάλλεται·

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 (ἔντεα), 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 ἔντος (only ἔντεα and ἔντεσι), and ἀμώμητος (*Il.* 12.109) is used of a person, whereas for objects Homer prefers ἀμύμων.

¹⁶ Page 132.

(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 *δέ* (3): I left my shield behind (1–2), but I saved my life (3–4). The words which are central for the antithesis *ἀσπίδι* and *ψυχὴν* (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, *κάλλιπον οὐκ ἐθέλων* is effectively contrasted with the forceful and resolute *ἐρρέτω*, and finally the slight ironic regret which seems to lie in *ἔντος ἀμώμητον* is squelched by *κτῆσομαι οὐ κακίω*.

Syntactical structure, style and tone are antithetical too.¹⁷ The first distich is formed by a single period (main clause, relative clause, locative phrase, inserted apposition and added participle); the crucial word *κάλλιπον* 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 (*ψυχὴν δ' ἐξεάωσα*) is placed at the beginning; the style appears to be more personal, almost colloquial;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 *ἀσπίδι* and *ψυχὴν*; *ἔντος ἀμώμητον* and *οὐκ ἐθέλων* 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* – *δέ* and by the careful arrangement of the corresponding elements of the antithesis but also by the sound repetition in lines 2 and 4: *κάλλιπον οὐκ ἐθέλων* = *κτῆσομαι οὐ κακίω*.

¹⁸ Cf. especially *τί μοι μέλει*; and *ἐρρέτω*.

contemptuous *ἐκείνη* 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 Achilles 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 Achilles (or Diomedes or Aias for that matter) who would actually

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.

²² *Il.* 9.307ff (356ff, 408-18).

leave his shield behind to save his life is unimaginable.²³ Granted; and yet, is Archilochus *indeed* the ancestor of all poetic *ῥιψάσπιδες*, as is always maintained?

In the second half of the *Odyssey* the *polymētis* Odysseus invents four Cretan tales, lie-stories, to hide his true identity.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 (*Od.* 14.276ff):

αὐτίκ' ἀπὸ κρατὸς κυνέην εὐτυκτον ἔθηκα
καὶ κάκος ᾤμοιῖν, δόρυ δ' ἔκβαλον ἔκτοσε χειρός·
αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ βασιλῆος ἐναντίον ἤλυθον ἵππων
καὶ κύσα γούναθ' ἐλών· ὁ δ' ἐρύκατο καί μ' ἐλέησεν, . .

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.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 *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

²³ Hector's monologue in the 22nd book when he is waiting for Achilles is another instructive example.

²⁴ *Od.* 13.256ff, 14.192ff, 17.415ff, 19.165ff (24.244ff).

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 (*Od.* 14.273–74 *αὐτὰρ ἔμοι Ζεὺς αὐτὸς ἐνὶ φρεσὶν ᾗδε νόημα | ποίησ'*), whereas Archilochus simply says: *κάλλιπον οὐκ ἐθέλων*; 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.

²⁷ K. Latte, "Zeitgeschichtliches bei Archilochos," *Hermes* 92 (1964) 385–90.

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:

εἰμι δ' ἐγὼ θεράπων μὲν Ἐνναλίοιο ἄνακτος
καὶ Μουσέων ἐρατὸν 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. Page³⁰ uses strong words, "A social revolution is epitomized in this couplet"; and Kirkwood³¹ 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 Achilles and Patroklos, who in *Iliad* 9 (185ff) try to entertain themselves during their boring leisure by singing heroic songs.³² "In the Epic,"—so Page³³—"a man may be as good in speech as in action (*Il.* 9.443), and a great warrior might pass the time singing a song (*Il.* 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 *Iliad* but in the *Odyssey*, and again it is Odysseus himself. Already the introduction formula εἰμι δ' ἐγὼ recalls the famous εἴμι' Ὀδυσσεύς

³⁰ Page 134.

³¹ Kirkwood 31.

³² Apparently they are reproducing, not producing epic poetry (cf. also Alcman, PMG 41, praising the Spartans for being good warriors who are nevertheless able to play (and sing to) the cithara: ἔρπει γὰρ ἄντα τῷ σιδάρῳ τὸ καλῶς κιθαρίσδην).

³³ Page 134.

with which Odysseus opens the narration of his adventures (*Od.* 9.19f):³⁴

*εἴμ' Ὀδυσσεὺς Λαερτιάδης, ὃς πᾶσι δόλοισιν
ἀνθρώποισι μέλω, καί μεν κλέος οὐρανὸν ἵκει.*

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 Achilles 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 *nekylia*, he stops, his audience is sitting in absolute silence, spellbound (11.333f):

*ὡς ἔφαθ', οἱ δ' ἄρα πάντες ἀκὴν ἐγένοντο σιωπῆ,
κηληθμῶ δ' ἔσχοντο κατὰ μέγαρα κκίοεντα.*

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):

*κοὶ δ' ἔπι μὲν μορφῆ ἐπέων, ἔνι δὲ φρένες ἐσθλαί,
μῦθον δ' ὡς ὄτ' αἰδοὺς ἐπισταμένως κατέλεξας,
πάντων Ἀργείων κέο 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):

*ὡς δ' ὄτ' αἰδοὺν ἀνὴρ ποτιδέρκεται, ὃς τε θεῶν ἔξ
αἰείδη δεδαῶς ἔπε' ἱμερόεντα βροτοῖσι,
τοῦ δ' ἄμοτον μεμάασιν ἀκουέμεν, ὀππότ' αἰείδη
ὡς ἐμὲ κείνος ἔθελγε παρήμενος ἐν μεγάροισι.*

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: ἴσκει ψεῦδεα πολλὰ λέγων ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα. 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.

³⁶ Arist. *Ἀπορήματα Ἀρχιλόχου, Εὐριπίδου, Χοιρίλου* (V. Rose, ed. *Arist. Fragmenta* [BT, Leipzig 1886] p.16,144); Heracl.Pont. *Περὶ Ὀμήρου καὶ Ἀρχιλόχου* fr.178 Wehrli; *P.Hibeh* II 173 = 219, 220, 221 W. (cf. Treu, *op.cit.* [supra n.2] 6f and 174–76); Vell.Pat. 1.5; [Longinus] *Περὶ ὕψους* 13.3; AP 7.674; Dio Chrys. Or. 33.11; cf. O. von Weber, *Die Beziehungen zwischen Homer und den älteren griechischen Lyrikern* (Diss. Bonn 1955); G. Tarditi, "Motivi epici nei tetrametri di Archiloco," *ParPass* 13 (1958) 26ff; Scherer, *op.cit.* (supra n.6); Page; E. Degani, "Note sulla fortuna di Archiloco e di Ipponatte," *QUCC* 16 (1973) 79ff (87f); Kirkwood, *passim*; and, in connection with the new Archilochus, J. van Sickle, "Archilochus, A New Fragment of an Epode," *CJ* 71 (1975) 1ff; *id.* *QUCC* 18 (1975) 123ff; Campbell, *op.cit.* (supra n.11) 151–54; J. Henderson, *Arethusa* 9 (1976) 159f, 165ff.

³⁷ Cf. especially Page and Treu, *op.cit.* (supra n.6).

³⁸ e.g. 119 W. (72 D.)–*Il.* 13.130ff; 191.3 W. (112.3 D.)–*Il.* 14.217; 193.2f W. (104.2f D.)–*Il.* 5.399.

³⁹ 38 D.–*Il.* 18.309; 111 W. (57 D.)–*Il.* 7.102; 25.5 W. (41 D.)–*Od.* 14.228; 134 W. (65 D.)–*Od.* 22.412; 131 W. (68 D.)–*Od.* 18.136ff.

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 καρδίην
 ἰαίνεταί. Snell⁴⁰ 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' ἄλλοισιν ἀνήρ
 ἐπιτέρπεται ἔργοις. 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.⁴¹ 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.

τοῖος ἀνθρώποισι θυμός, Γλαῦκε Λεπτίνεω παῖ,
 γίνεται θνητοῖς, ὁποῖόν Ζεὺς ἐφ' ἡμέρην ἄγει.
 καὶ φρονέουσι τοῖ' ὁποίοις ἐγκυρέωσιν ἔργμασιν.

Fränkel⁴² 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, ὅσσα τε γαῖαν ἔπι πνεῖει τε καὶ ἔρπει.]
 οὐ μὲν γάρ ποτέ φησι κακὸν πείσεσθαι ὁπίσσω,
 ὄφρ' ἀρετὴν παρέχωσι θεοὶ καὶ γούνατ' ὀρώρη;

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.* XXII 2310 fr.1 col.i 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.

ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ καὶ λυγρὰ θεοὶ μάκαρες τελέωσι,
καὶ τὰ φέρει ἀεκαζόμενος τετληότι θυμῷ.
τοῖος γὰρ νόος ἐστὶν ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων,
οἷον ἐπ' ἡμᾶρ ἄγχι πατήρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε.

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 (*ἤθελε 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;⁴³ like Odysseus, Archilochus calls upon his friends and himself to "fight despair and endure" (13 W.=7 D., 5ff):

ἀλλὰ θεοὶ γὰρ ἀνηκέστοι κακοῖσιν
ὦ φίλ' ἐπὶ κρατερὴν τλημοσύνην ἔθεσαν
φάρμακον. ἄλλοτε ἄλλος ἔχει τόδε· νῦν μὲν ἐς ἡμέας
ἐτρέπεθ', αἱματόεν δ' ἔλκος ἀναστένομεν,
ἐξαῦτις δ' ἑτέρους ἐπαμείψεται. ἀλλὰ τάχιστα
τλήτε, γυναικεῖον πένθος ἀπωσάμενοι.

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 *θυμός* (128 W.=67 D.). The first line (*θυμέ, θύμ', ἀμηχάνοισι κήδεσιν κυκώμενε*) seems to recall the equally famous self-address of the *πολύτλας* Odysseus at 20.18: *τέτλαθι δὴ, κραδίη, καὶ κύντερον ἄλλο ποτ' ἔτλης*.⁴⁴ It certainly would not be surprising if Archilochus in this poem intended to allude to the figure of Odysseus. For the concept of *τλημοσύνη*, of patient endurance, and the idea of a *ῥυθμός*, 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*² (*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 *πολύτλας 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 *πολύτροπος*" (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 *τοῦπίτρεπτον 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

⁴⁵ 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.

⁴⁶ Kirkwood 36.

⁴⁷ W. B. Stanford, *The Ulysses Theme*² (Oxford 1963, repr. Ann Arbor 1968) 262 n.8.

⁴⁸ 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 *πολύτλας* 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. Dover⁴⁹ 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.⁵⁰ 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?"⁵¹ 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.⁵² Is the story about Lycambes and his daughters true and not rather a literary 'Wandermotiv' of iambic poetry?⁵³ Was the name of Archilochus' mother indeed Enipo or is *'Ενιπώ* a 'speaking name' by which the writer of invective and satirical squib called himself—quite appropriately—the son of mother Blame?⁵⁴ 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.⁵⁵ 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 *Σάϊοι* gives the brief explanation

⁵² A fairly complete bibliography for the new Archilochus now by E. Degani, "Sul nuovo Archiloco (Pap.Colon. inv. 7511)," in *Studi in memoria di M. Barchiesi* 1977, repr. in *Poeti greci giambici ed elegiaci, Letture critiche* (Milano 1977) 15–43; for Archilochus' biography see M. Lefkowitz, "Fictions in Literary Biography: The New Poem and the Archilochus Legend," *Arethusa* 9 (1976) 181–89, and in the same volume, Henderson 160 and G. Nagy 191–94.

⁵³ M. West, *Studies in Greek Elegy and Iambus* (Berlin 1974) 25–27.

⁵⁴ G. Nagy, "Iambos, Typologies of Invective and Praise," *Arethusa* 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.

οἱ πρότερον 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 μοι μᾶζα μεμαγμένη, ἐν δορὶ δ' οἶνος
Ἴσμαρικός· πίνω δ' ἐν δορὶ κεκλιμένος.*

At this moment Odysseus has not yet been driven out of reality into the fairytale world of the Lotophagoi 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.⁵⁶ It is of course impossible to say how old the equation *Saioi*=*Kikones*⁵⁷ 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 Phaeacian 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

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 *ῥήσασπις* Odysseus.

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