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ON THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE BRAGGART SOLDIER

PART ONE: ARCHILOCHUS AND EPICHARMUS*

ABSTRACT: The *miles gloriosus* of ancient comedy is characterized by an inherent contradiction between appearance (impressive looks and aggressive braggadocio) and reality (inner cowardice). Long before the Lamachus of Aristophanes' *Acharnians*, the figure of the braggart warrior had been formed in earlier Greek humorous literature. Well-developed specimens occur in Archilochus' satirical poems, such as the foppish general of fr. 114 and the self-proclaimed "war heroes" of fr. 101. The soldier who abandoned his shield (fr. 5) also displays traits of the military *alazon*, notably the discrepancy between his extraordinary weapon and his actual deficiency in battle. Aristophanes (*Pax* 1295–1304) seems to have read Archilochus' poem in this way, given that he places it in the mouth of the son of Cleonymus, a personage which resembles the typical swaggering *miles* in some respects. Archilochus' boastful soldiers express themselves in elevated epic style or affected language, which matches their pretentiousness. This seminal technique was taken over by the comic poets. Epicharmus' dramas, which abounded in character sketches, also offered primordial examples of the *miles gloriosus*. In the mythological burlesque *Odysseus the Deserter*, the type of the boastful captain was projected on the mythical figure of Odysseus (a technique later adopted in the myth burlesques of Attic comedy). Ironically reversing the Homeric prototype of the enduring hero, the Epicharmean Odysseus abandons his military duty and is afraid of blows; yet he tries to conceal his cowardice with pompous bragging about false feats, and his speech is loaded with Homeric locutions. Cf. the title *Periallos* ("Mr. Above-all-others"), which alludes to the Homeric expression *περὶ ἄλλων ἔμμεναι* or *γενέσθαι*, repeatedly applied to warrior heroes of the epic. Both the archaic iambus and Epicharmus' works were known to the poets of Old Comedy and may have inspired them to further develop the type of the soldier, as Aristophanes did with his boastful Lamachus.

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1. THE TYPE AND HIS CHARACTERISTICS

AS ACKNOWLEDGED IN EVERY handbook of theatre history, the braggart soldier or *miles gloriosus*, a recurrent type in the European comedy of characters, is derived from ancient Graeco-Roman drama. Indeed, the soldier of ancient comedy provides an exemplary case for a historical character study, due to his early formation, long theatrical career, and idiosyncratic evolution in the course of time. The military captain had been fully elaborated and established as a stereotyped stage figure by the time of New Comedy, at the dawn of the Hellenistic era. At that advanced phase of development, innovative dramatists such as Menander could even play with the traditional characteristics of the comic soldier, ironically undermine or reverse them, in order to surprise the audience and renew the commonplace materials of their craft. In a series of plays (*Perikeiromene*, *Misoumenos*, *Sikyonioi*), Menander turned the stock figure of the boastful captain upside down, transforming him into a true human being with genuine feelings and sincere passion. The *miles* now became the sympathetic hero of the comedy, who finally won the hand of his ladylove, while his young rival was pushed aside or ridiculed as a conceited brat. With these strokes of novelty, the ingenious Menander infused new life into an old scenic construct, which was probably wearing out from use.[1]

Such sophisticated experiments of renovation smell already of the ink of Hellenistic poetics. Before undergoing this last stage of literary evolution, the military swaggerer had enjoyed a long career in Attic theatre. He was portrayed with verve in many plays throughout the fourth century, during the era of the so-called Middle Comedy, and probably already since the late phases of Old Comedy. In the course of this long period, the comic soldier's peculiar dramatic identity was established, and his figure entertained several generations of spectators before it finally reached the point of trite repetition. Afterwards, the Roman playwrights reworked the Greek models and bequeathed the figure of the *miles gloriosus* to the European imagination, which was eventually destined to produce such hilarious and fascinating creations as Matamore and Parolles, Falstaff and Captain Munchausen. The tree that bore these fruits has very deep roots in time.

1. On Menander's innovative handling of the soldier's figure, see Wehrli (1936) 110–113; MacCary (1972) 279–292, 297–298; Hofmann-Wartenberg (1973) 32–39, 43–45, 49–50; Webster (1974) 18, 22; Goldberg (1980) 45–53, 111; Hunter (1985) 66–69; Brown (1987) 188–190; Zagagi (1994) 29–35, 38–40, 173; Blume (2001) 192–195; Brown (2004) 8–14; Petrides (2014) 202–216.

It is useful to delineate here the main characteristics of the comic *miles* on the basis of the classical Greek examples and the Roman adaptations. The braggart soldier belongs to the broader ethological category of the *alazon,* which comprises various arrogant and blustering figures of the comic stage, such as the grandiloquent cook, the jargonizing medical doctor or pharmacist, the pretentious philosopher and scientist, the yarn-spinning traveller, the pompous official or ambassador, and the charlatan priest or seer.[2] According to Aristotle's ethical typology, the *alazon* is someone who pretends to be more than he is in reality.[3] He poses as a master of lofty virtues or as a connoisseur of intricate knowledge, to which he has no access in fact. In theatrical terms, as will presently transpire from the analysis of the comic army officer, the temperament of the *alazon* is regularly expressed through the use of fanciful and bizarre language, which starkly diverges from the common speech norm of the comic stage. Through bombastic rhetoric, pompous high-style and poetic locutions, imitation of epic, dithyrambic or tragic discourse, abstruse philosophical terminology or scientific jargon, accumulated culinary recipes, extraordinary tales, and other manifestations of linguistic exhibitionism, the stage braggart tries to give voice to his pretended superiority and impress his interlocutors.

In particular, the comic soldier's sham affectation concerns military activity and warlike capacities.[4] The *miles* heaps up boasts about his stunning feats in battle, unsurpassable warrior's courage, invincible muscular strength, and other manly and combative virtues. He regularly expresses himself in pompous speech and thunderous exclamations. He is also full of aggressive threats

2. On the *alazon* and his many variants in comedy and humorous literature, see Ribbeck (1882), especially 1–26, 42–54; Süss (1905) 8–48; Cornford (1914) 132–171; Legrand (1917) 94–102, 163–165; Gil (1981–1983); MacDowell (1990); Baldwin (1997) 121–171; Diggle (2004) 431–444.

3. See Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 2.7.12, 1108a 19–22: *περὶ μὲν οὖν τὸ ἀληθὲς ὁ μὲν μέσος ἀληθής τις καὶ ἡ μεσότης ἀλήθεια λεγέσθω, ἡ δὲ προσποίησις ἡ μὲν ἐπὶ τὸ μεῖζον ἀλαζονεία καὶ ὁ ἔχων αὐτὴν ἀλαζών. Ibid.* 4.7.2, 1127a 20–22: *δοκεῖ δὴ ὁ μὲν ἀλαζὼν προσποιητικὸς τῶν ἐνδόξων εἶναι καὶ μὴ ὑπαρχόντων καὶ μειζόνων ἢ ὑπάρχει.* See further *ibid.* 4.7.10–13, 1127b 9–22; Arist. *Eth. Eud.* 2.3.7, 1221a 24–25, and 3.7.6, 1234a 1–2; Xen. *Cyr.* 2.2.12, *Mem.* 1.7; Theophr. *Char.* 23; Ribbeck (1882) 3–5, 77; Hofmann-Wartenberg (1973) 5; MacDowell (1990) 289–292; Baldwin (1997) 122–123; Diggle (2004) 6–7, 166–167, 431–432; Torres (2013).

4. Generally on the character and features of the comic soldier, see Ribbeck (1882) 26–42; Fest (1897) 1–17, 48–59; Süss (1905) 45–48; Legrand (1917) 94–97, 220–222; Wehrli (1936) 101–113; Boughner (1954) 3–20; Hanson (1965); Hofmann-Wartenberg (1973) 11, 90–97; Gil (1975) 74–81, 86–88; Hilgar (1982); Blume (2001); Petrides (2014) 213–220, 232–243.

against his adversaries or the people of his environment in general. This vocal and lexical maximalism is well matched by the character's impressive external appearance. The army captain shows off his magnificent uniform and shiny weapons.[5] He also carries himself with a majestic poise, puffs up his large body, and walks with enormous strides. However, this stately spectacle is only superficial, a mere linguistic and visual disguise which conceals the most contemptible pusillanimity. Deep inside, the blustering officer is a faint-hearted coward and loafer. All his braggadocio about his war exploits is a lie; his menaces are nothing but fake show. He would do anything to avoid the battlefield, as well as any dangerous situation, dispute, or quarrel, which would call for a display of true courage.

This inherent contradiction between appearance and reality is the very substance of the *miles gloriosus*, his dramatic hallmark and the core of his psychology. Aristotle anatomizes exactly this type of *alazoneia* in another passage of his *Nicomachean Ethics*, attributing it to the "rash man who pretends to possess courage". This kind of person "wishes to appear to have the same attitude towards fearful things as the courageous man actually has; therefore, he imitates the courageous man in those situations in which he can". However, as the philosopher concludes, most men of this category "are in fact cowards, for they make a show of boldness but do not really endure fearful things". As happens also with other passages of the *Ethics*, the reader wonders how much Aristotle's analysis of character types may owe to the creations of contemporary comedy.[6]

Other traits were developed in the course of time, as the comic *miles* was being adapted to special historical circumstances or generic codes. For instance, it is not necessary for the military swashbuckler to be a mercenary or a

5. Excessive, dandy-like ostentation concerning dress, accoutrements, and overall external appearance was considered as one of the basic marks of the *alazon* by the ancients; see the passages collected by Ribbeck (1882) 2–3. For examples from the soldiers of the comic stage, see Ar. *Ach.* 572–589, 964–965, 1103–1140; Plaut. *MG* 1–8, 58–68; and the second part of this study, forthcoming in the next volume of the *Logeion* (Konstantakos [2016]).

6. Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 3.7.8–9, 1115b 29–33: *δοκεῖ δὲ καὶ ἀλαζὼν εἶναι ὁ θρασὺς καὶ προσποιητικὸς ἀνδρείας· ὡς γοῦν ἐκεῖνος* (sc. *ὁ ἀνδρεῖος*) *περὶ τὰ φοβερὰ ἔχει, οὗτος βούλεται φαίνεσθαι· ἐν οἷς οὖν δύναται, μιμεῖται. διὸ καὶ εἰσὶν οἱ πολλοὶ αὐτῶν θρασύδειλοι· ἐν τούτοις γὰρ θρασυνόμενοι τὰ φοβερὰ οὐχ ὑπομένουσιν*. On the links between Aristotle's discussion of the *alazon* and contemporary comedy, cf. Süss (1905) 25, 45; Cornford (1914) 136–138; Cooper (1922) 117–123; Webster (1970) 179–180; Gil (1975) 75; Gil (1981–1983) 40–41; Janko (1984) 85, 216–218; MacDowell (1990) 287, 292; Golden (1992) 91–98; Baldwin (1997) 121–123; Torres (2013) 76–78.

foreigner to the city in which the play is set. Employment as a mercenary is, of course, a standard attribute of the army professional in New Comedy and its Roman adaptations. This clearly reflects the state of affairs in the Hellenistic world, when the various potentates were served by vast mercenary armies.[7] It is not an absolute rule, however, with regard to the earlier Greek specimens of the soldier's type. In the late 5th and the 4th century, the braggart *miles* might well be a native citizen and an elected official in the *polis* where his adventures unfold. The cases of Lamachus in Aristophanes' *Acharnians*, the title-figure of Plato Comicus' *Peisandros*, and Demosthenes in Timocles' *Heroes* (fr. 12) are good examples. All these comic characters display the typical features of the *miles gloriosus*; most of their traits are paralleled in the braggart soldiers of Middle, New, and Roman comedy. However, in accordance with the corresponding historical personalities, the theatrical Lamachus, Peisandros, and Demosthenes are represented as native citizens and prominent public figures of Athens.[8] The same principle applies to the poetic prehistory of the comic type in archaic lyric. Nothing in the relevant fragments of Archilochus implies that his boastful soldiers are mercenaries rather than members of a citizen army.[9]

It thus seems unjustifiable to surmise that the *miles gloriosus*, as a comic character, could be developed only in the environment of a society which systematically used professional mercenary soldiers.[10] Mercenary employment is rather a secondary characteristic, acquired in the course of time due to particular historical conditions, and not a primary constituent of the type. Nonetheless, in most cases, including the oldest ones, the boastful officer has

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7. See Fest (1897) 6–7; Legrand (1917) 220–222; Parke (1933) 234–235; Boughner (1954) 5–6, 14–15; Hofmann-Wartenberg (1973) 9–10, 17, 19–20, 23, 31–32, 35, 37, 42–43, 45–46, 49–55, 61, 80–81, 91–92, 102–106; Gil (1975) 79–80, 86–88; Hunter (1985) 66; Nesselrath (1990) 325; Blume (2001) 184–188; Brown (2004) 1–5, 7–14; Trundle (2004) 32–34.
8. For detailed analysis, see the second part of my study (Konstantakos [2016]). Even in New Comedy, some soldiers are implied to be natives of the city where the action occurs, and not alien outsiders: thus Polemon in Menander's *Perikeiromene* and Stratophanes in the *Sikyonioi*; also probably Thrasonides in the *Misoumenos* and Therapontigonus in Plautus' *Curculio*; see Brown (2004) 4–13. It remains true, however, that all these figures are employed as mercenaries and have served as such in various expeditions abroad.
9. See Burnett (1983) 27; Tsantsanoglou (2008) 176–179; and below, section 2.
10. Thus Wysk (1921) 3–6; Gil (1975) 86; cf. Legrand (1917) 220–222; Hofmann-Wartenberg (1973) 9–10; Kerkhof (2001) 162–165; Trundle (2004) 34. By contrast, Cornford (1914) 155 had already seen the truth; so also Parke (1933) 234; Ehrenberg (1962) 301–302.

some kind of career relationship to the army or certain ties of interest to war. He is not a simple soldier fighting for his homeland, but rather a personage that obtains material profits from the war or bases his public career on military rank and office.[11]

Another standard feature is worth noting: the boastful captain bears a significant or speaking name, which points to war, military virtues, or courage in battle.[12] The dramatist may choose a warlike name attested in everyday life, for the sake of realism. Thus, the subtle Menander christens his soldiers Bias, Polemon, Stratophanes, Thrasonides, or Thrasyleon. In Roman comedy, the Menandrian habit is imitated by Terence, who uses the name Thraso for the conceited captain of his *Eunuchus*, and sometimes even by Plautus (see Stratophanes in the *Truculentus* and Cleomachus in the *Bacchides*).[13] This "realistic" practice, however, was not the only option. Comic writers who were fond of broader humour might also invent imaginary *nomina* for their swashbucklers. These are usually composite and long-winded linguistic conglomerates, which heap together various terms of war and weaponry within a grotesque formation and thus ludicrously emphasize the pompous attitude of the martial boaster. Diphilus, who appears to have had a propensity towards farcical effects and popular comedy, called the military hero of one of his plays *Αἰρησιτείχης* ("Wall-Conqueror"), possibly a satirical allusion to the famous sobriquet "Poliorcetes" ("Besieger") borne by Demetrius I of Macedon.[14] In Roman theatre, the same technique was fully exploited by Plautus, the master of comic extravagance, who coined a series of exuberant

11. On this point, see the analysis of Lamachus in the second part of my study (Konstantakos [2016]).
12. On the comic soldiers' speaking names, see Ribbeck (1882) 34–35; Gatzert (1913) 54–55, 63–64; Duckworth (1952) 349–350; Boughner (1954) 53–55; Hanson (1965) 55–56; Gil (1975) 76, 79; MacCary (1972) 281–282; Hofmann-Wartenberg (1973) 45, 95, 99–101, 131, 146; Webster (1974) 22, 94; Hunter (1985) 66; Mastromarco (2002) 212; Brown (2004) 4–7, 13.
13. Most of these names are attested in Classical and Hellenistic Athens, and all are good Greek formations, apt for ordinary everyday use; see Schmidt (1902) 184, 209; Gatzert (1913) 54–55, 63–64; Hofmann-Wartenberg (1973) 45, 95, 130–131, 146; and the relevant lemmata in *LGPN*.
14. The first version of Diphilus' comedy bore the title *Αἰρησιτείχης*; a second, reworked version (*διασκευή*) of the same comedy was called *Εὐνοῦχος* and is also recorded under the double title *Εὐνοῦχος ἢ Στρατιώτης* or simply as *Στρατιώτης* (Athen. 11.496e–f, 15.700e). *Αἰρησιτείχης* was presumably the personal name or sobriquet of the soldier, who must have been a major character of the play. See Meineke (1839–1857) I 451–452; Wagner (1905) 20–21; Breitenbach (1908) 80–81; Hofmann-Wartenberg (1973) 17–18; Kassel-Austin (1983–2001) V 54.

mouth-filling compounds for his own braggart captains: Pyrgopolynices (*MG*), Therapontigonus Platagidorus (*Curc.*), and further (for figures only described without appearing on stage) Polymachaeroplagides (*Pseud.* 988ff.) and Bumbomachides Clutomestoridysarchides (*MG* 14).[15]

Lamachus in Aristophanes' *Acharnians* is often regarded as the first known braggart soldier of world drama, or at least as the most ancient forerunner of the stock *miles gloriosus* of later comedies.[16] Nonetheless, the remains of Greek humorous literature offer indications for even older specimens of this figure. Some scholars have detected the earliest antecedents of the warlike *alazon* already in the Homeric poems. Certain figures of the epics, such as Ares the blustering god of war (e.g. *Il.* 5.825–904, 21.391–433) or Iros, the bulky boaster that proves a weakling in combat (*Od.* 18.3ff.), display notable similarities to the stock braggart of the comic stage — although Iros at least is by no means a man of the army. Especially Paris in the *Iliad* is sometimes characterized by a combination of qualities strongly reminiscent of the typical comic captain (arrogance and facile exhibitionism together with cowardliness before real danger, see e.g. *Il.* 3.16ff.).[17] It has even been argued that Thersites (*Il.* 2.212–277) is a prototypical *miles gloriosus*, although on rather superficial grounds. Thersites does have some elements in common with the military blowhard, notably his speaking name (derived from *θέρσος*/*θάρσος*, "boldness") and his momentary boasts about supposed military exploits (*Il.* 2.228–231); he is a base coward who falsely poses as a warrior, laying claim to a quality he does not possess, like the *alazon* of the Aristotelian definition.[18]

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15. On these Plautine formations, cf. Schmidt (1902) 202–203, 357–358, 380–381, 385; Duckworth (1952) 349–350; Hofmann-Wartenberg (1973) 99–101, 116; Papaioannou (2009) 81–82, 405–408.
16. See Ribbeck (1882) 27; Fest (1897) 3–5; Süss (1905) 45–48; Cornford (1914) 155; Wehrli (1936) 101; Hanson (1965) 51; Webster (1970) 64; MacCary (1972) 280; Hilgar (1982) 250; Halliwell (1984) 10–12, 14; Thiercy (1986) 195; Nesselrath (1990) 325; Zagagi (1994) 173; Storey (1998) 110; Blume (2001) 180–182; Mastromarco (2002) 211–216; Ercolani (2002) 235, 246–247; cf. Legrand (1917) 226, 488; Ehrenberg (1962) 302; Whitman (1964) 68; Gil (1975) 77–79; Hunter (1985) 8, 66; Baldwin (1997) 129–132.
17. On these Homeric specimens, cf. Ribbeck (1882) 27; De Martino (1990) 45; Müller (1994) 182; Baldwin (1997) 204–208; Perrotta-Gentili (2007) 95. The case of Paris will also be adduced below; see section 2 and n. 26.
18. See Baldwin (1997) 130, 134–171. Baldwin unfortunately bases his analysis on the narrow definition of the *alazon* provided by Cornford (1914) 140–142, 148, which was tailor-made for the description of Aristophanic comedy specifically and concerns the broader category of the *alazon* in general, not the soldier in particular. As Baldwin rarely cites scholarship in languages other than English, he does not use the richer and

However, Thersites also displays features that are in direct contrast with the typical attributes of the boastful soldier, such as his extreme physical ugliness, which is a far cry from the impressive looks of the stock comic *miles*. This Homeric scoundrel does not truly demonstrate the contradiction between appearance and reality, which lies at the core of the braggart officer.

In these Homeric cases, many of the peculiar and constitutive features of the comic *miles* —those elements which were to be standardized in the later, theatrical specimens of the type— are still somewhat underdeveloped or summarily sketched. Presumably, the warlike atmosphere of the Trojan epic adventures, along with the heroic ideals and the overall lofty tone which permeate the greatest part of the Homeric compositions, were not favourable to the full evolution of a kind of character that largely ridiculed military life and its representatives. Thus, the first well-developed soldierly personages that can be clearly shown to conform to the basic typology of the boastful captain are traceable in other early Greek genres, which were of genuinely humorous nature: namely, in the archaic satirical poetry of Archilochus and in the Sicilian comic drama of Epicharmus. These will provide the main focus of the analysis in the following sections.

As will become evident in the light of these examples, Aristophanes need not have created the personage of the boastful army officer *ex nihilo*; neither did he base his warmongering Lamachus solely on the observation of the social and political reality in his contemporary Athens. The great comic poet may have inherited a fully-fledged type of braggart warrior from the earlier poetic and dramatic tradition. However, as will be argued in the second part of this study (Konstantakos [2016]), Aristophanes creatively adapted that traditional figure to the satirical purposes and the special political agenda of his own mode of comic writing.

2. ARCHILOCHUS: THE GRANDIOSE GENERAL AND THE BLAMELESS SHIELD

The swaggering officer is already pictured in some compositions of Archilochus. A prominent example is the famous fr. 114, from a satirical poem in trochaic tetrameters. The sketch here is somewhat rough, but it clearly dis-

better documented studies of the comic *miles* by Ribbeck (1882), Süss (1905), Hofmann-Wartenberg (1973), Gil (1975), or Nesselrath (1990); these would have helped him to form a fuller and more nuanced picture of the military braggart and to identify more apt examples of the type in the Homeric corpus.

plays the distinctive marks of the comic type. The speaker overtly expresses his disgust for the foppish big-bodied general, contrasting him with his own notion of the model fighter:

> *οὐ φιλέω μέγαν στρατηγὸν οὐδὲ διαπεπλιγμένον*
> *οὐδὲ βοστρύχοισι γαῦρον οὐδ' ὑπεξυρημένον,*
> *ἀλλά μοι σμικρός τις εἴη καὶ περὶ κνήμας ἰδεῖν*
> *ῥοικός, ἀσφαλέως βεβηκὼς ποσσί, καρδίης πλέως.*
>
> I do not like the tall general who walks about with long strides and takes pride in his hair locks and his shaven chin. I would rather have someone short and quite visibly bow-legged, who yet stands firmly on his feet, full of heart.[19]

Archilochus' mocking portrait of the *μέγας στρατηγός* gathers in a nutshell all the main elements of the braggart soldier's comic idiosyncrasy.[20] The conceited general has an impressive external look, like the officers of the theatrical stage. His long and wide straddles (*διαπεπλιγμένον*) find an exact counterpart in Plautus' *Pseudolus*, where the orderly of a blowhard captain walks "magnificently" (*magnufice*, 911) and "with military strides" (*gradibus*

19. Allusions to specific persons of Archilochus' contemporary Parian society have often been traced behind the two opposite characters described in this stanza. Thus, the big, well-coiffured general is identified with the poet's friend Glaucus (who is teased for his well-sculptured bunch of hair in fr. 117), or with an influential political leader, such as Leophilus (fr. 115) or the *archon* Amphitimus, son of Peisistratus (fr. 93a, 94). See Gerber (1970) 27; West (1974) 31–32, 130; Rankin (1977) 40, 44, 90–91; Burnett (1983) 43; Stein (1990) 67–68; Tsantsanoglou (2008) 169, 175–176, 179. The poem may naturally have borne such concrete resonances for its primary audience in the poet's own time. However, topical currency does not preclude a reading in terms of comic characters, such as the one proposed here (cf. Toohey [1988] 8–9; Müller [1994] 180; Carey [2009] 154; and below, n. 57). Archilochus could have fused figures of the humorous popular tradition (such as the braggart officer) with particular personalities of his own world — in the same way as he could also have made up fictional characters according to the model of any well-known humorous type. In any case, the references to actual Parians would have been largely lost for the listeners and readers of the poem in subsequent ages and other areas, such as Aristophanes' Athens. These later audiences would tend to perceive rather the cast of typical humorous figures. Cf. Aloni (1981) 138; Bowie (1993) 30; Rosen (2007) 251–252.

20. On Archilochus' *stratēgos* as a forerunner of the *miles gloriosus*, see Ribbeck (1882) 28; Legrand (1917) 226; Halliwell (1984) 10; Hunter (1985) 163; Stein (1990) 68; Burzacchini (2001–2002) 200; Mastromarco (2002) 211; Perrotta-Gentili (2007) 95; Rotstein (2010) 312.

militariis, 1048), an obvious reference to a grandiose gait. Both cases may entail conscious parody of the exalted warriors of the epic. The greatest Homeric heroes are often described as taking long strides (*μακρὰ βιβάς* or similar forms) while launching an attack or challenging an enemy in battle.[21] The big legs and the majestic martial gait, together with the large body, will later become standard qualities of the braggart officer in Renaissance comedy.[22]

Further, the general's well-groomed hairstyle recalls Pyrgopolynices, the hero of Plautus' *Miles Gloriosus*, perhaps the most emblematic play, after which the entire comic type has been named. Pyrgopolynices similarly sports well-tended curly locks of hair (*usque caesariatus*, 768; *cincinnatum*, 923) and coquettishly shows them off to womenfolk (cf. 64, where one of his supposed female admirers exclaims: *vide caesaries quam decet*). In Greek New Comedy, the *alazon* soldier wore a mask with a crest of long wavy hair (Pollux 4.147: *τῷ δ' ἐπισείστῳ, στρατιώτῃ ὄντι καὶ ἀλαζόνι … ἐπισείονται αἱ τρίχες*).[23] Apparently, the good-looking hair and coiffure was a long-standing attribute of the braggart officer in ancient humorous tradition. In this respect, the comic *miles* offers again a parody of the heroic warriors of the epic; cf. the formulaic *κάρη κομόωντας Ἀχαιούς* of the *Iliad*.

The antithesis between the handsome field-marshal and the ugly dumpy leader, who nonetheless stoutly holds his place in danger, is doubtless not limited to their external appearance. Archilochus' phrasing clearly implies that, by contrast to the malformed but brave fighter, the dandyish general does not possess a valiant heart and does not stand his ground with resolution.[24] His long,

21. See *Il.* 7.213, 13.809, 15.676, 15.686 (Ajax), 15.307 (Hector), cf. 3.22 (Paris) and 16.534 (Glaucus); Treu (1955) 71–73; Gerber (1970) 28; Russo (1974) 151; Toohey (1988) 3, 6.
22. Thus the *capitano* Trasimaco in Giambattista Della Porta's *La Sorella* (1604) brags of the impressive size and build of his body, including his "tower-like shanks" ("questi torreggianti gamboni", Act 3, sc. 7); so also captain Bellerofonte Scarabombardon in Sforza degli Oddi's *La Prigione d'amore* (1590, Act 4, sc. 7). In the prologue of Pietro Aretino's *Il Marescalco* (1533) the actor playing the *miles gloriosus* is described as moving with martial steps ("moverei il passo, come si muove al suono del tamburo"). The vainglorious Spaniard Don Armado in Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* is similarly characterized by "his gait majestical" (5.1.11). More generally, the *bravo* Galdelone in Boneto Ghirardi's *La Leonida* (1585) likens himself to "un bel colosso" (Act 3, sc. 18). Cf. Ribbeck (1882) 34; Fest (1897) 9, 53; Boughner (1954) 64.
23. See Cornford (1914) 176; Legrand (1917) 488; Hanson (1965) 58–59; MacCary (1972) 280–281; Brown (2004) 7; Petrides (2014) 8, 96, 189–190, 213–216, 231, 240.
24. Cf. Treu (1955) 71; Kirkwood (1974) 33–34; Russo (1974) 142–143; Rankin (1977) 44; Burnett (1983) 43–44; Miralles-Pòrtulas (1983) 143; Toohey (1988) 3–4; Stein (1990) 65–68; Müller (1994) 177–179; Lavelle (2008) 149, 151; Tsantsanoglou (2008) 175.

wide-straddling shanks presumably serve him for one purpose: namely, to run away from the battlefield with greater speed, as soon as the real danger approaches.[25] In this respect, the Archilochean general recalls the Homeric Paris, who has occasionally been singled out as a forerunner of the *miles gloriosus*.[26] In *Iliad* 3.16–37, the beautiful Paris comes to the front of the Trojan army as a champion and arrogantly paces with long strides (*μακρὰ βιβάντα*, 3.22), challenging the best of the Achaeans to fight him. However, as soon as he perceives Menelaus rushing towards him like a wild lion, Paris is filled with terror and shrinks back to the throng of the Trojans, to avoid death. In this Homeric passage, the conceited warrior's wide straddles are ironically reflected in his quick movement of retreat shortly afterwards.[27] Archilochus' fr. 114 calls us to imagine an analogous sequel for the long-legged *stratēgos*. In brief, the Archilochean swaggerer suffers from the same fundamental contradiction which is the defining characteristic of the *alazon* of comedy. His stupendous appearance is merely a screen that hides cowardice and flight from battle.

Glimpses of the army blowhard are also afforded elsewhere in Archilochus' war poems, which present the realities of the soldierly life in a wry, down-to-earth manner, often coloured with acrid sarcasm. In fr. 101, the celebration of a victory is ironically undercut by an ignoble spectacle of vainglory in the winners' camp:

> *ἑπτὰ γὰρ νεκρῶν πεσόντων, οὓς ἐμάρψαμεν ποσίν,*
> *χείλιοι φονῆές εἰμεν*
>
> Seven men are fallen dead — on foot we overtook them; a thousand of us claim to be their slayers.

Clearly, most of these thousand "enemy-slayers" are mere boasters *post eventum*, claiming glory for exploits they did not perform.[28] Telling lies about the victims he has supposedly killed in war is a regular trait of the braggart cap-

25. Cf. Snell (1955) 90; Toohey (1988) 7; Müller (1994) 179. Another Archilochean passage may be relevant in this connection: *πόδες δὴ κεῖθι τιμιώτατοι* (fr. 233), conceivably referring to soldiers fleeing before the enemies (cf. Burnett [1983] 42). In Pierre de Larivey's comedy *Les Jaloux* (1579), the young hero sarcastically remarks with regard to the boastful captain Fierabras and his supposed battle feats: "s'il sçait, combien il est obligé à ses jambes!" (Act 2, sc. 5). Cf. Fest (1897) 62.

26. See above, section 1. Paris also has in common with the Archilochean *stratēgos* the elegant coiffure (*Il.* 11.385); cf. Russo (1974) 144.

27. *Il.* 3.32: *ἂψ δ' ἑτάρων εἰς ἔθνος ἐχάζετο. Ibid.* 36: *αὖτις καθ' ὅμιλον ἔδυ Τρώων.*

28. Cf. the comments of Plut. *Galb*. 27.9, who cites the fragment: *οὕτως τότε πολλοὶ τοῦ φόνου μὴ συνεφαψάμενοι, χεῖρας δὲ καὶ ξίφη καθαιμάσσοντες, ἐπεδείκνυντο*. See Bur-

tain of comedy. The later playwrights may make the boasts much more exorbitant, to the point of outrageousness, in order to achieve a more grotesque and farcical effect. Pyrgopolynices claims credit for having slain seven thousand enemies of various nationalities within a single day (Plaut. *MG* 42–46). Antamoenides (Plaut. *Poen*. 470–487) raises his own record of slaughter to sixty thousand men (and flying ones at that), again in a one-day fight. Lucian, presumably under the influence of Greek New Comedy, takes over the motif in his *Dialogues of Courtesans*, where a braggart soldier purports to have annihilated a fair number of barbarians in a cavalry battle and to have decapitated a terrifying satrap in single combat (13.1–3); but he soon admits that his boasts are pure lies (13.5–6). In all these examples, the essence of the motif remains the same, as in the case of Falstaff who pretends to have killed the redoubtable Hotspur.[29] In Archilochus' mordant satire, the typical attitude of the *miles gloriosus* infects the ranks of an entire army. It is easy to imagine the grandiose *stratēgos* of fr. 114 among this multitude of sham "war heroes".

Another poem by Archilochus is relevant to the same theme, if only because it seems to have been later read by Aristophanes as a statement fit to be associated with a kind of braggart soldier. This is the notorious fr. 5, spoken by a warrior who abandoned his splendid shield, while fleeing from a fight against the Saians, a wild tribe of Thrace:

> *ἀσπίδι μὲν Σαΐων τις ἀγάλλεται, ἣν παρὰ θάμνῳ,*
> *ἔντος ἀμώμητον, κάλλιπον οὐκ ἐθέλων·*
> *αὐτὸν δ' ἐξεσάωσα. τί μοι μέλει ἀσπὶς ἐκείνη;*
> *ἐρρέτω· ἐξαῦτις κτήσομαι οὐ κακίω.*
>
> A Saian man will be now exulting in my shield, a blameless weapon, which I left next to a bush — against my will, of course. Yet I saved myself. So what do I care about that shield? To hell with it! I shall soon acquire another one, every bit as beautiful.

Traditionally, this stanza is interpreted as the statement of a practically minded veteran soldier, who criticizes and transcends the old epic, heroic, or aristocratic ideals of unflinching battlefield virtue and knightly conduct. Rather than stand steadfast in the midst of carnage, like an Ajax, Hector,

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nett (1983) 38; De Martino (1990) 45; Perrotta-Gentili (2007) 96; Lavelle (2008) 148, 150, 156.

29. *Henry IV First Part* 5.4. Cf. Fest (1897) 33–36, 85, 88, and Boughner (1954) 35–40, 62, 101, 152–153, with more such examples from Renaissance comedies.

Diomede, or any other Homeric monolith of honour, and be pointlessly slaughtered by unstoppable savages, the seasoned serviceman prefers to retreat and live to fight another day.[30] It is better to timely abandon a battle that cannot be won, so as to save your force for a more advantageous opportunity in the future. It is useless to struggle over armour, as though its possession were the greatest insignia of warlike distinction. The shield is no more than a tool, easily lost and as easily replaced, clearly not to be valued above the survival of the warrior himself. The reality of war is an ugly one, totally unaccommodating to outdated illusions about heroism or nobility.[31] Though hardly consonant with the honourable stance of the warlike heroes of the *Iliad*, the Archilochean soldier's individualism and orientation towards survival have often invited comparison with another Homeric figure, the enduring, dogged, and resourceful Odysseus, who displays similar determination to live on through unpleasant circumstances.[32]

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30. There have been attempts to exculpate the speaker of fr. 5 from the charge of desertion. Some scholars argue that turning tail in battle and discarding one's weapons were not yet regarded as particularly disgraceful in Archilochus' time; see O. Reverdin in Wistrand (1964) 285–286; Schwertfeger (1982); Brown (1997) 59; cf. Lavelle (2008) 148, 156. According to others, the verses do not describe a flight from any open fighting engagement. The main character simply lost his shield; or he left it behind when surprised by the enemy, while he was resting or answering a call of nature; or he took part in a sea raid on difficult terrain followed by quick withdrawal; or he managed to heroically defend himself without the shield and was thus saved. See D. L. Page in Wistrand (1964) 286; Gerber (1970) 15; Kirkwood (1974) 32; Rankin (1977) 14, 42; Loscalzo (1997) 12–18; Anderson (2008). Nonetheless, the frank statement of v. 3 (*αὐτὸν δ' ἐξεσάωσα*, with an audible pun on *ἐκ Σαΐων*, "I saved my skin", sc. "by removing myself away from the Saians") clearly implies flight or retreat before the barbarians, and some kind of military skirmish seems most plausible as the context of such an escape. It is also insinuated that the speaker did not stand his ground to fight the enemies. The Saian is imagined to be proudly flaunting the blameless captured shield, which was therefore abandoned in good condition, without battering or damages from enemy blows. Cf. K. J. Dover in Wistrand (1964) 287; Burnett (1983) 41–42; De Martino (1990) 53–54; Di Benedetto (1991) 20; Lavelle (2008) 148.
31. For interpretations of this kind, see e.g. Bowra (1938) 9–10; Jaeger (1946) 118–120; Harder (1952) 383; Snell (1955) 90–91; Dover (1964) 196; Gerber (1970) 15; Kirkwood (1974) 32–34, 220; Fränkel (1975) 137, 139–140; Rankin (1977) 43–44; Burnett (1983) 41–42; Podlecki (1984) 40–43; Di Benedetto (1991) 17–21; Létoublon (2008) 55–57; Griffith (2009) 82; Nicolosi (2013) 70; cf. Tsagarakis (1977) 16–18; Stein (1990) 61–65; Burzacchini (2001–2002) 199–200; Perrotta-Gentili (2007) 87–88; Anderson (2008) 256–257; Lavelle (2008) 148, 150, 156–158.
32. See Kirkwood (1974) 33; Rankin (1977) 43–44; Seidensticker (1978) 10–22; Schwertfeger (1982) 260–261, 280; Müller (1994) 176; Loscalzo (1997) 10–11; Aloni (2006) 96; Nicolosi (2013) 70.

Much in these widely accepted readings is of permanent value. Yet, the poem is a more complex construction, revealing at close sight deeper and richer resonances of irony and ambivalence, as has been pointed out by several critics.[33] It thus calls listeners or readers to venture further interpretative approaches, so as to decode the multiple layers of traits artfully intermingled in the prosopography of the speaking character.

As in many other passages of archaic lyric, readers should beware of straightforwardly or naively identifying the "poetic I" of fr. 5 with Archilochus the author himself and his personal experiences or convictions — even though ancient critics, such as Critias (88 B 44 Diels-Kranz) and Plutarch (*Mor.* 239b), tended to read this and other Archilochean poems in a biographical manner. Like poets in all places and periods, the creator of Greek lyric may substantially invent both the "poetic ego" and the occasion he describes in his song. The events and situations narrated in the poem may constitute a fictional setting, a well-crafted piece of storytelling, not necessarily inspired by an incident in the author's individual life. As for the first-person voice heard in the verses of the text, this may represent a made-up figure or a persona put forward for the duration of the poetic performance. The personage speaking the lines, whatever his alleged identity according to the text, is in essence a "role", a concocted or assumed character delivering a poetic monologue, not to be biographically identified with the author's personality. The author does not need to openly declare in his composition that the identity of the speaker is a borrowed one, different from the poet's own, although he may sometimes choose to do so.[34] The poet may simply assume a particular role and let his audience divine the kind of character supposed to be de-

33. See Burnett (1983) 41–42; Stein (1990) 62–63; Rougier-Blanc (2008) 24–25; Nicolosi (2013) 71.

34. Some of Archilochus' poems were expressly presented as poetic monologues delivered by different personages. Fr. 19 was placed in the mouth of a carpenter named Charon; fr. 122 was spoken by a father referring to his ugly daughter (see Arist. *Rhet.* 3.17.16, 1418b 28–31, and Anon. Comm. *ad loc.*, *CAG* XXI.2, pp. 255.31–256.5 Rabe). We would never have guessed this on the basis of the now preserved verses of these poems, without the additional information provided by the ancient interpreter. Theoretically, the same may be true of other fragments of Archilochus. If more of their text had been preserved, we might well discover that in some cases the first-person speaker was expressly or implicitly denoted as an individual character, like Charon and the ugly girl's father. Cf. Dover (1964) 206–210, 214–216; Tsagarakis (1977) 3–5, 16, 31–34, 45–47; Burnett (1983) 66–69; Miralles-Pòrtulas (1983) 109–111; Bowie (1993) 28, 35; Steinrück (2000) 8–11; Braghetti (2001) 136–137; Lavigne (2008) 99–102, 108–109; Rotstein (2010) 63–65, 198–200.

livering the lines. This method of reading, though still disputed by some scholars, is by now common among critics of archaic Greek lyric.[35]

In the context of the same approach, it is also conceivable that the "poetic I" of the lyric text may be represented in an ironical or satirical manner. Especially in compositions of a humorous tone, the speaker's character may be implicitly taunted or mocked by means of the very text placed in his mouth. The persona reciting the poem may appear laughable through the incongruity or exorbitance of his words, his transpiring emotions, or his described actions.[36]

If this line of interpretation is applied to Archilochus fr. 5, then the speaker of the verses appears to possess some of the determinant traits of the *miles gloriosus*.[37] His retreat before the enemy does not fit with the ideal of the stouthearted leader who firmly holds his ground, as described in fr. 114. The fellow who procured a fine-looking shield only to leave it behind and flee looks more like the foppish general, whose long shanks enable him to run more quickly away from the danger. It is noteworthy that the text places emphasis again on an item of the soldier's superb outward appearance: his faultless shield, an extraordinary weapon which fills its owner with pride and joy, described here in elevated epic vocabulary (see below). Plautus' *Miles* similarly begins with Pyrgopolynices praising with rhetorical exaggeration his lustrous buckler, whose radiance surpasses the sun and dazzles the eyes of his foes (1–4). In the same way, the Aristophanic Lamachus, immediately upon his first entrance on stage, invokes his horrendous shield with its Gorgon emblem (*Ach*. 574), which is afterwards mentioned many times as Lamachus' standard accessory (582–583, 964–966, 1095, 1122–1124, 1136, 1140, 1181).

35. See the seminal studies of Dover (1964) 201–212, 214–216; West (1974) 27–33, 36–37; Burnett (1983) 2–7, 19–23, 31–32; see also Tsagarakis (1977) 2–9, 16–22, 30–47; Seidensticker (1978) 19–20; Aloni (1981) 135–148; Miralles-Pòrtulas (1983) 21–48, 58–59, 109–111, 131, 135–157; Rosen (1988b); Stein (1990) 55–56, 70–74; Bowie (1993) 28–36; Degani (1993) 22–23; Steinrück (2000) 6–10, 71–80; Braghetti (2001); Aloni (2006); Kurke (2007); Rosen (2007) 243–268; Rotstein (2010) 307–309; Lavigne (2008); Budelmann (2009) 14–17. I refrain from listing here the contributions of scholars critical of this line of interpretation, with the exception of Rösler (1985), who offers a cautious appreciation of the debate, and Lennartz (2010) 18–20, 180–234, 352–367, 506–516, because of his exhaustive overview and abundant bibliography.

36. Archilochus fr. 19 and 122, as well as some fragments of Hipponax, are often interpreted as examples of this practice. See Kirkwood (1974) 48; Tsagarakis (1977) 34, 103; Vox (1988); Stein (1990) 70; Steinrück (2000) 8–9; Lavigne (2008) 100–102, 108–109; Rotstein (2010) 65, 199.

37. Cf. De Martino (1990) 45.

Apparently, the impressive shield was the first and foremost accoutrement of the *miles gloriosus* in the entire humorous tradition of antiquity.

Behind this excellent piece of military gear, however, stands in fact a scared man, ready to abandon the ranks and take to his heels before the attacking enemies. Thus, Archilochus' poem humorously brings forth a discrepancy between appearance and reality — the same kind of disharmony that forms the ethological core of the braggart soldier. The speaker of fr. 5 tries to justify or rationalize his action by presenting the shield as a mere object, which can easily be replaced; he plans to acquire another buckler as good as the lost one. The audience is left to assume that the soldier wants the new weapon for use in a future battle.[38] Significantly, the same assertion —running away from combat under the pretext of "living to fight another day"— will later become the motto of the braggart *capitano* in Italian Renaissance comedy.[39] Still, it is noteworthy that the Archilochean character does not openly specify the purpose of the new shield. For all we know, he might only intend to show it off to others *post eventum*, in order to pretend that he fought bravely with it in the clash against the Saians and cover up the actual abandonment of his equipment. This kind of behaviour would suit the alazon, a hare on the battlefield that poses as a roaring lion after the event. Note that *οὐ κακίω* may mean not only "no worse" but more specifically "no less beautiful, not inferior in appearance".[40] The runaway fighter is still interested in keeping up the impressive outward look of his armour.

The "poetic ego" of fr. 5, therefore, whatever its presumed identity, has assimilated distinctive characteristics of the boastful soldier. The speaker likes to show off his splendid weapons, praising their value in epic style, but has no qualms about abandoning them in order to save his own skin. The poem's satire of epic or heroic battle ideals is voiced through the persona of a humorous character. Peculiar features of the armed bravado-monger

38. See e.g. Harder (1952) 383; Whitman (1964) 39; Gerber (1970) 15; Loscalzo (1997) 10, 13; Anderson (2008) 257; Nicolosi (2013) 71, 78.
39. Thus Fracasso, the boastful officer in Niccolò Secchi's *Il Beffa* (1584), justifies his avoidance of a dangerous quarrel with the lapidary maxim: "uomo che fugge, può di nuovo combattere" (Act 3, sc. 11). The *capitano* Basilisco in Della Porta's *La Furiosa* (1609) rationalizes in a similar way his humiliation after a rough bastinado: "meglio è viver codardo, che morir gagliardo" (Act 3, sc. 5). The braggart recruit in Ruzzante's one-act *Parlamento de Ruzante che iera vegnù de campo* (1529) declares: "me par che chi sa defendere la so vita, quelù sea valent'omo". Cf. Fest (1897) 59; Boughner (1954) 42, 89–90, 101, 128.
40. Cf. e.g. *Il.* 10.316; *Od.* 4.245, 12.191, 13.434, 14.506, 23.95, 23.115, 24.156; Anacreon, *PMG* fr. 388.4 (*κακῆς ἀσπίδος*).

are appropriated, perhaps in order to denounce the hypocrisy of military officers who disguise their cowardice or inertia under a sham external impression of valour.[41] It is unknown whether fr. 5 is a complete poem or an excerpt from a longer composition.[42] If the runaway soldier's monologue continued for several lines after the end of the extant citation, it may have revealed more of his actions and thoughts, completing the portrait of the *alazon* with further examples of the ironic dichotomy between glossy appearance and down-to-earth reality.

Of course, the poetic persona of Archilochus' composition is not a typical *miles gloriosus*. The very fact that the speaker acknowledges his flight from battle distinguishes him from the standard specimens of the comic type, who would always feign indomitable bravery, even when making up preposterous pretexts for avoiding peril.[43] Archilochus' poem can thus be viewed as a portrait of the military swaggerer "from the inside", and in this respect it is a rare gem. It throws light into the ostentatious warrior's inner world, into his true thoughts and feelings, displaying him at a moment of self-consciousness and avowal — a most unusual phenomenon in the classical humorous tradition. The man who used to flaunt his blameless shield now admits his evasion of fighting with a down-to-earth, self-preserving practicality, and even with a touch of self-irony. Archilochus' fragment may be the only work offering a view into the mind and psyche of the boastful soldier before the sublime Shakespearean Falstaff. In some respects indeed, the Parian poet assumes here a "Falstaffian" persona. Military honour is no skilled surgeon that can set to one's lopped-off limbs or take away the grief of a wound. The emblem of a shield held for too long in battle may easily become a funeral scutcheon over the corpse of its former bearer.[44]

Aristophanes, the comic poet who staged the first fully-fledged *miles gloriosus* known from Attic theatre, seems to have read Archilochus' poem in

41. See Burnett (1983) 27.
42. On this question see Burnett (1983) 41; Stein (1990) 62; Anderson (2008) 258; and Nicolosi (2013) 70, who offers a large collection of references.
43. For this kind of behaviour among comic soldiers, see e.g. Thraso in Ter. *Eun.* 771–816 and Antamoenides in Plaut. *Poen.* 1296–1321. Cf. Ribbeck (1882) 35, 40; Fest (1897) 109; Legrand (1917) 164–165; Wehrli (1936) 104, 109; Duckworth (1952) 265, 322; Boughner (1954) 15–18, 82–90, 107–108; Hofmann-Wartenberg (1973) 128–129, 140; Gil (1975) 80–81; Hilgar (1982) 256; Blume (2001) 181–182; and the second part of this study (Konstantakos [2016]).
44. See Shakespeare, *Henry IV First Part* 5.1.130–140. Cf. Thersites, who contests the heroic code of steadfastness in war (*Il.* 2.235–238) although he is himself a military boaster (*Il.* 2.228–231, see above, section 1); Baldwin (1997) 145–146, 167–168.

such a manner. In the *Peace*, the first lines of fr. 5 are recited by the young son of Cleonymus, who has been invited to sing, along with another boy, at Trygaeus' wedding feast (1295–1304). The Aristophanic caricature of Cleonymus, a recurrent *komoidoumenos* in the corpus of Old Comedy, has some traits in common with the typical *miles gloriosus*.[45] Cleonymus has an imposing outward appearance, being a big man of huge size (*Ach*. 88, cf. *Eq*. 956–958, 1290–1299, and *Av*. 289 on his voracity). The epithet *μέγας* is repeatedly applied to him (*Vesp*. 16–19, 592, *Av*. 1477), the same word that was used to describe the swaggering Archilochean *stratēgos* of fr. 114. His bulky exterior, however, does not correspond to a valorous disposition. Cleonymus is a coward and a loafer that would do anything to stay away from combat. He pulls strings to change his hoplite registration in the enrolment catalogue, so as to avoid regular military service (*Eq*. 1369–1372). In battle, he throws down his shield or his weapons and takes to his heels (*Nub*. 353–354, *Vesp*. 19–23, 592, 822–823, *Pax* 444–446, 673–678, *Av*. 290, 1470–1481, Eupolis fr. 352); because of his cowardice, he is mocked as an effeminate or a eunuch (*Nub*. 673–680, *Vesp*. 27, 822–823).

Although Cleonymus is not represented anywhere in extant comedy as uttering vainglorious boasts about his supposed feats in war, yet the discrepancy between his massive body and his inner faint-heartedness, i.e. essentially between show and truth, coincides with the core trait of the *alazon* captain. Once again, it is exactly the same kind of antithesis that is implicitly attributed to the king-size general of Archilochus fr. 114.[46] Indeed, Aristophanes often connects this particular *komoidoumenos* with typical representatives of the braggart officer. Cleonymus wears a crest on his helmet (*Av*. 290), just like the boastful Lamachus (*Ach*. 575, 584ff., 965, 1103–1111, 1182); both of them are compared to strange birds because of this accoutrement (*Av*. 289–290 ~ *Ach*. 588–589, 1182). Cleonymus is also likened to the pompous warmongering taxiarch (*Pax* 444–446), another Aristophanic *alazon*, who is ridiculed later in the same play (*Pax* 1172–1187) as a fully-fledged specimen of the *miles gloriosus*. The taxiarch in question is magnificently outfitted with

45. On Aristophanes' satirical invective against Cleonymus, see Whitman (1964) 194–195; Schwertfeger (1982) 267–270; Halliwell (1984) 13; Storey (1989); Storey (1998) 99–101, 112. On the Aristophanic reception of Archilochus fr. 5 generally, see Whitman (1964) 39; Schwertfeger (1982) 267–270; Storey (1989) 253–254, 258–259; Di Benedetto (1991) 21–22; Loscalzo (1997) 7, 9–10, 14–17; da Cunha Correa (1999) 553–555; Nicolosi (2013) 75–76.

46. Cf. Legrand (1917) 226; Boughner (1954) 3; Blume (2001) 182. Already Ribbeck (1882) 28 called Cleonymus "den athenischen Falstaff".

an impressive purple uniform and triple crest (just like Lamachus and Cleonymus) but is the first to run away from battle. Such loathsome figures, as the comic poet concludes, are truly *ῥιψάσπιδες* in the eyes of gods and men (*Pax* 1186), another link with the shield-thrower Cleonymus.[47]

The stock comic mockery of Cleonymus' *ῥιψασπία* (whatever its historical background) is the main reason why Archilochus' verses about the abandoned shield are placed in the mouth of Cleonymus' son. Nonetheless, it is significant that Aristophanes associates this poem with such a figure, a sham Goliath so close to the braggart soldier of comedy. The playwright seems to have grasped the essential similarities between the speaker of Archilochus fr. 5 and the character of the *miles gloriosus*. The son of Cleonymus is naturally supposed to have taken after the character of his father, and therefore sings a song appropriate to Cleonymus' comic temperament. Later, in New Comedy, it will become a *topos* that the children of braggart captains inherit the same qualities of extravagant braggadocio which distinguished their parents (see Plaut. *MG* 1077–1082, *Truc.* 505–511).[48] Aristophanes' use of the Archilochean lines is humorous and parodic, but interestingly reveals how the poetic persona of the shield poem could be read in terms of comic ethology.

Another element in the representation of these Archilochean soldiers is worth noticing. In all the poems discussed so far, the language employed by or applied to the boastful warriors imitates the grandiloquent vocabulary and diction of epic poetry; or it shows more generally a propensity towards extraordinary, high-style or unusual words. The soldier speaks with poetic and stilted expressions, which betray his *alazoneia*; but his epic braggadocio is ironically undercut by the falsity of his claims or his inefficient performance in the actual battle. In this way, the Parian satirist introduces a seminal technique, which will be subsequently taken over by the comic tradition and become a prominent part of the braggart captain's stage portrayal. The swashbuckling officer of comedy usually expresses himself in highly affected and ornate style, often borrowed from serious poetry. This accords with his overall vocal exaggeration and contributes to the caricature of his arrogance and pompousness.

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47. The braggart taxiarch of *Pax* 1172–1187 presents many similarities to the Lamachus of the *Acharnians*. It is as though Aristophanes strove to connect his earlier peace play (*Ach.*) with the later one (*Pax*), by inserting into the latter a cameo of the braggart officer who was starring in the former. See Halliwell (1984) 12; Storey (1989) 257; Kerkhof (2001) 163–164; Mastromarco (2002) 213; Perrotta-Gentili (2007) 95; and the second part of this study (Konstantakos [2016]).
48. Cf. Hilgar (1982) 250.

Thus, in Archilochus fr. 101, the very feat that the braggarts falsely claim for themselves (*ἐμάρψαμεν ποσίν*) is cast into a distinctively Homeric locution, which the *Iliad* repeatedly applies to the swift-footed Achilles when he is chasing his adversary (Hector or Agenor) on the battlefield (*Il.* 22.201, *μάρψαι ποσίν*; 21.564, *μάρψῃ … πόδεσσιν*). The effect is more extensively developed in Archilochus fr. 5, where the speaker uses epic diction and morphology both for praising his martial equipment and for narrating the key moments of his overall adventure. With regard to the shield, *ἔντος* is a specifically epic word, although in Homeric poetry it occurs exclusively in the plural (*ἔντεα* or *ἔντεσι*).[49] The rare epithet *ἀμώμητον* also derives from the same poetic repository, even though in epic it is connected only with heroic personages (*Il.* 12.109, *Hom. Hymn* 33.3), while weapons and other objects are usually characterized by the kindred adjective *ἀμύμων* (e.g. *Il.* 15.463). Further, the Saian man's exultation in the looted shield is expressed through the verb *ἀγάλλεται*; the exact same form, placed in an equivalent metrical position in the hexameter, is employed in the *Iliad* for Hector, who similarly triumphs wearing Achilles' armour, after he has plundered it from the slain Patroclus (17.472–473, 18.131–132).

The same stylistic practice is applied to the speaker's main deeds and experiences, namely his abandonment of the shield and his flight for salvation. The verb *κάλλιπον* displays a characteristically epic feature in the apocope of the preposition (cf. *Il.* 9.364, *Od.* 22.156 etc.); *οὐκ ἐθέλων* is a Homeric formula (cf. *Il.* 4.300, 23.88, *Od.* 5.155, and also in other cases and in the feminine, *Il.* 6.165, 20.87, 21.36, 24.289 etc.). The form *ἐξεσάωσα* is equally borrowed from the epic (see *Il.* 4.12, where *ἐξεσάωσεν* has the same metrical position, and *Od.* 4.501), although Archilochus adds a humorous aspect by means of the pun on *ἐκ Σαΐων*.[50] The very metre and rhythm of fr. 5 (the elegiac couplets with their regular dactylic flow) resound with rich epic echoes.[51] The purposeful parody of the epic style is perhaps the reason

49. The singular *ἔντος* is otherwise used only in the dubious Hesiodic fr. 343.18 Merkelbach-West and in Archilochus fr. 139.5, again in a martial context, side by side with references to shields and javelins (see vv. 1 and 6). Cf. Kirkwood (1974) 220; Anderson (2008) 257; Nicolosi (2013) 73–74.

50. The form *ἐξεσάωσα*, whether its object was *αὐτόν* or *ψυχήν*, was undoubtedly part of Archilochus' original text. For a successful defence of this reading, against the variants *αὐτὸς δ' ἐξέφυγον θανάτου τέλος* or *αὐτὸν μέν μ' ἐσάωσα*, see West (1974) 118; Di Benedetto (1991) 21–27; da Cunha Correa (1999); Magnani (2006); and Nicolosi (2013) 74–76, with references to previous scholarship.

51. On the epic resonances in these passages, see Treu (1959) 219; Scherer (1964) 110; Page (1964) 132–133; Kirkwood (1974) 32, 220–221, 226; Rankin (1977) 43, 117;

why the elegiac metre was chosen for this poem, although its satirical content would seem more suitable for an iambic or epodic composition.[52] Similarly, the vainglorious soldiers of comedy, from Epicharmus and Aristophanes down to the Roman dramatists, borrow plenty of words and expressions from high-style epic or tragic poetry.[53]

As for Archilochus fr. 114, although its text does not contain such emblematically epic expressions, yet it does employ extraordinary and affected language for the portrayal of the arrogant *stratēgos*. The phrase *βοστρύχοισι γαῦρον* has a highly poetic ring.[54] Especially noteworthy are the long, polysyllabic, and very rare terms *διαπεπλιγμένον* and *ὑπεξυρημένον*, which emphatically close both verses of the general's description with a jingling rhyme. These mouth-filling and recherché words suit both the large size and the haughtiness of the foppish *alazon*; they offer a striking contrast to the short (two-syllable or at most three-syllable) forms used for the small but unpretentious and stout-hearted man (*σμικρός τις εἴη*, *περὶ κνήμας ἰδεῖν ῥοικός*, *βεβηκὼς ποσσί*, *καρδίης πλέως*).

Similar practices were adopted by the poets of Middle and New Comedy. In Antiphanes' *Stratiotes* fr. 200, a Munchausenesque captain describes an exotic wonder which he supposedly witnessed in a foreign campaign: a king of Cyprus fanned by the wings of doves, which were flying around him while he was having dinner. For the narration of this extraordinary sight, the captain uses a string of rare, often long-winded or specialistic words and uncommon turns of phrase (*τρυφερὸν διαφερόντως*, *ἐπικαθιζάνειν*, *ἀνερρίπιζον*, *σύμμετρον*, *περίσκληρον*).[55] In Philemon fr. 130, a soldier narrates one of his feats in battle and uses a strange non-Attic term (*βουνός*, possibly a Cyrenaic or Libyan idiom for "mound"), which his interlocutor cannot understand. Several other mercenary officers of New Comedy pour out unusual names of precious vases or other objects, when they enumerate their rich spoils (*πρίστις*, *τραγέλαφος*, *βατιάκη*, *λαβρώνιος*, *ἐλέφας*, *κόνδυ* etc.; see Diphilus fr. 81; Hipparchus fr. 1; Damoxenus fr. 1; Men. fr. 26.2–4, cf. *Col.*

Seidensticker (1978) 7–9; Burnett (1983) 42; Stein (1990) 64; Di Benedetto (1991) 13–18; Loscalzo (1997) 13; Anderson (2008) 256–257; Létoublon (2008) 55–56; Nicolosi (2013) 17–18, 21, 71–78.

52. Cf. Dover (1964) 184; Rankin (1977) 43–44; Steinrück (2000) 113–114; Burzacchini (2001–2002) 199; Aloni (2006) 95; Lennartz (2010) 130; Nicolosi (2013) 17–21, 71.
53. For Epicharmus, see below, section 3. For the soldiers of Attic and Roman comedy, see the second part of this study (Konstantakos [2016]).
54. Cf. Eur. *Or.* 1532 (*βοστρύχοις γαυρούμενος*) and Page (1964) 158.
55. See Konstantakos (2000) 222–231 for detailed linguistic analysis.

fr. 2 Arnott).[56] Plautus' braggarts also pepper the accounts of their fantastic exploits with extravagant polysyllabic names, especially of fictitious geographical areas where they claim to have fought and won: e.g. *in campis Curculionieis* and *Scytholatronia* (*MG* 13, 43); *pugna Pentetronica* (*Poen.* 471); *Perediam et Perbibesiam, Centauromachiam et Classiam Unomammiam … omnem Conterebromniam* (*Curc.* 444–446). In these passages, Plautus is driving to its ultimate farcical extremes a technique already exploited by the Greek playwrights and poets since the time of Archilochus.

These Archilochean forerunners of the *miles gloriosus* are not an "ethological singularity" in the corpus of archaic poetry. Several passages of the early iambographers —and of archaic lyric more generally— contain similar facetious sketches of figures which will later play important roles in the comic tradition. Apart from the swaggering *miles*, we find elsewhere the greedy gatecrasher who comes uninvited to the banquet, guided by the commands of his belly, like the parasites of comedy; the wily and profit-loving hetaira, with her many lovers, sexual allure, and cunning artifices; the young profligate and his complaining grumpy father; the doctor who sets out in jargon his knowledge of anatomy and medical cures; the cook who praises his own culinary talents; and further the rustic boor, the miser, the charlatan seer, and the dirty ascetic.[57] Many of these characters may have been intended to mock specific personalities of the iambic poet's contemporary local society. They cannot be unreservedly taken to represent stereotyped personages or stock types, such as those later employed in Greek comedy.[58] Nevertheless,

56. For all these comic passages, see Petersmann (1972) 241–246; Hofmann-Wartenberg (1973) 16, 20–21, 27–28, 52; Bruzzese (2011) 272–275; and further discussion in Konstantakos (2016).

57. Uninvited parasite: see Archilochus fr. 124; Asius fr. unic.; cf. also the gluttons in Archilochus fr. 167, Hipponax fr. 26a, 114c, 118, 128, and Semonides fr. 12, whose greedy eating habits are described in terms that recall the portrayal of parasites in fourth-century comedy. Hetaira: see e.g. Archilochus fr. 30, 31, 41, 48.5–6, 119, 189, 206–209, 302, and 331 (if authentic); Hipponax fr. 14–17, 92, 129, 135, 135a, 135b; Semonides fr. 16; cf. Dover (1964) 185; West (1974) 124; Rankin (1977) 41, 64–67; Burnett (1983) 78–82; Kurke (1997) 112–131, 139–146. Profligate: see Hipponax fr. 26, which resembles the portraits of young spendthrifts from Middle and New Comedy; the speaker is probably a grumpy *agroikos*; see West (1974) 29, 33, 141. Miser: Archilochus fr. 250; Hipponax fr. 167. Cook: Semonides fr. 24. Doctor: Archilochus fr. 66, 67; cf. Mimnermus fr. 24. Seer: Archilochus fr. 182, 183; Hipponax fr. 4, 4a; Semonides fr. 41; Aristoxenus fr. unic. Ascetic: Semonides fr. 10a. In general, cf. West (1974) 32–33, 37; Miralles-Pòrtulas (1983) 140; Degani (1993) 23–30; Aloni (2006) 89–92; Lennartz (2010) 486.

58. Cf. Carey (1986) 64–65.

the number of such iambic figures that find parallels in comic theatre is impressively large. Possibly the folk imagination of the archaic Greeks had developed from early on a gallery of funny social types, and the lyric poets may have regularly drawn on that popular repertoire of ethological caricatures for creating their own mocking verse portraits.

Archaic iambus was a performative genre with strong mimetic and "proto-dramatic" elements.[59] The poet could assume and play roles in front of his audience, report dialogues and deliver speeches through the persona of one or more characters. Significantly, an analogous repertoire of stereotypical comic figures —including the trickster thief, the conceited and jargonizing doctor, the cook, and the glutton— can be glimpsed through the testimonia concerning the early folk farcical performances of various Hellenic regions, especially of Doric areas, such as Sparta and Megara.[60] These popular spectacles, which are often termed "pre-comic" or "proto-comic" because of their rudimentary similarities to the mature genre of Attic comedy, have also been frequently compared or connected to archaic iambus.[61] In any case, the poets of Athenian Old Comedy were keen readers of archaic iambic poetry (and of earlier Greek lyric in general), which they imitated, parodied, or creatively exploited in many passages.[62] Thus, Aristophanes and his colleagues could easily have noticed the humorous types which recurred in the iambic corpus, and they might have taken inspiration from them, so as to develop similar figures in their own scenic productions.

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59. See West (1974) 23, 27–37; Rankin (1977) 90, 127; Miralles-Pòrtulas (1983) 110–116; Bartol (1992) 67–70; Rosen (2007) 25–26; Lavigne (2008); Griffith (2009) 93–94; Willi (2015) 131–133.
60. The main testimonia are Ar. *Vesp.* 57–60; Theopompus fr. 3; Sosibius, *FGrHist* 595 F 7 (= Athen. 14.621d–f); Ar. Byz. fr. 363 Slater and Chrysippus, *SVF* III 200.29–31, fr. 13 (=Athen. 14.659a–b); Festus p. 118.23–25 Lindsay. For analysis see Kerkhof (2001) 1–38; Konstantakos (2012); and Konstantakos (2015) 24–25, with further references.
61. Already Semus of Delos (*FGrHist* 396 F 24, from Athen. 14.622b) associates the appellation *ἴαμβοι* with the performances of the *autokabdaloi*. Modern scholars have also traced connections with other forms of early popular spectacles, such as the South Italian *phlyakes*, the Spartan *deikēlistai*, the proto-comic *ithyphalloi*, *phallophoroi*, and padded dancers, and the mime. See West (1974) 23, 34–37; Miralles-Pòrtulas (1983) 111; Brown (1997) 31–40; Lennartz (2010) 164–166, 508–509; Rotstein (2010) 213–221, 267–276; Willi (2015) 131–134.
62. For overviews of the relations between archaic iambus and Old Comedy, see most notably Rosen (1988a); Degani (1993); Zanetto (2001); Lennartz (2010) 310–337. For the comic poets' knowledge of iambic poetry, see Rosen (1988a) 9–49, 64–73; Degani (1993) 15–17, 20–21; Rotstein (2010) 201–206, 216–221, 289–293. Bowie (2002) 40–41, 50, despite his overall scepticism, does not deny this knowledge.

3. EPICHARMUS: THE *MILES* PROJECTED ONTO MYTH BURLESQUE

The Sicilian drama of Epicharmus, the first example of a highly sophisticated and artistic humorous theatre in the Greek world, was distinguished for its keen interest in comic ethology and in the typology of dramatic characters. Epicharmus developed a number of stage types that were later exploited in Attic comedy, such as the parasite (*Elpis or Ploutos* fr. 31–34), the rustic (*Agrōstinos*), the old woman (*Gēraia*), the gluttonous Heracles (e.g. *Bousiris* fr. 18), and possibly the hetaira (*Megaris* fr. 79–80). Both he and other Sicilian playwrights had a flair for the broad category of the comic *alazones*. The pretentious intellectual or know-all philosopher (*alazon doctus*) seems to have been a distinctive figure of Epicharmean repertoire; see fr. 136, 213, 214, and a series of passages of contested authenticity (fr. 275–279), whose genuineness has been successfully defended by several modern scholars.[63] The conceited doctor, a figure also known from folk Doric farce, featured in Deinolochus' *Iatros* and possibly elsewhere (see Epicharmus or Pseudo-Epicharmus fr. 295). A cook speaks in Epicharmus fr. 98.118 and may have made loquacious appearances in several other plays, which contain long and elaborate descriptions of food and cooking preparations. Charlatan female seers or prophetesses, who deceive credulous ladies for money, are described in the *Harpagai* (fr. 9, cf. fr. 10). Another Epicharmean drama, entitled *Epinikos* or *Epinikios*, may have ridiculed a boastful athlete or a grandiloquent poet of victory odes — like Pindar or Simonides, who were pursuing profitable careers in Hieron's Syracusan court at approximately the same time as Epicharmus.[64]

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63. On the satirical representation of the philosopher in Epicharmus' works, see Süss (1905) 33–35; Wüst (1950) 362; Pickard-Cambridge (1962) 247–255, 278, 282; Berk (1964) 17, 85–101, 122–123, 143; Carrière (1979) 202–207; and most recently Álvarez Salas (2007); Willi (2008) 122–124, 163–166, 170–175; Álvarez Salas (2009); Willi (2012) 58–63; Rodríguez-Noriega Guillén (2012) 87–95; and Willi (2015) 118–122. Especially these recent studies rebut the scepticism of Kerkhof (2001) 65–78, 171–173, and vindicate the authenticity of Epicharmus fr. 275–279.

64. On the hetaira in Epicharmus, see von Salis (1905) 51; Kerkhof (2001) 130. On the medical doctor, see Kerkhof (2001) 110–111 and Konstantakos (2012) 133 with further references. On the cook, see Berk (1964) 130 and Konstantakos (2015) 25–28 with more bibliography. On the *Epinikos* or *Epinikios* see Pickard-Cambridge (1962) 269, 282; Berk (1964) 17; Kerkhof (2001) 132, 151–153. Generally on the Epicharmean "comedy of characters", cf. Wüst (1950) 358–363; Pickard-Cambridge (1962) 268–

Given this keen interest in the various manifestations of the *alazon*, it seems likely that Epicharmus (or other Sicilian dramatists) also created some specimen of the military braggart, who was one of the most favoured *alazon* characters in the ancient Graeco-Roman comic tradition. Many scholars have hypothesized that Epicharmus staged a *miles gloriosus*, although the apparent lack of relevant evidence among the Sicilian poet's extant fragments has always been invoked as an impediment to the verification of this theory.[65] Nonetheless, there are indications of such a role in the surviving materials of Epicharmean drama. The fragmentariness of the transmission may cause many dark spots and prevent a proper appreciation of the development and function of the boastful soldier's figure in Epicharmus' productions. Yet the basic hallmarks of the type are traceable.

The fortunate discoveries of papyri have yielded small portions of one of Epicharmus' mythological burlesques, entitled *Odysseus the Deserter* (*Ὀδυσσεὺς αὐτόμολος*). Fr. 97 of this play has been pieced together from two papyri, which also furnish extensive remains of ancient commentaries and scholia on the text. The passage comes from a scene in which the title-hero Odysseus engages in conversation with a second personage:

(ΟΔ.)]κ[. . . . .] πλ[άνον] τουτόνη

α[. . . . .]ευονθορως οἷόνπερ ἐπι . . . συντυχών

– ⏑ – x ῥᾳστά κα τοῦτ' ἐργασαίμαν ἢ ὅτι

ἀλλ' ὁρέω (τί, ὠζύρ', ἀνιῆς;), τοίδε τὠχαιοὶ πέλας

ὡς ἔω πονηρ<ότ>ατος. (Β.) <ἀλλ'> ἁλιδίως πονηρὸς <εἶ>. 5

(ΟΔ.) οὐ γὰρ ἔμπα[λίν] χ' ἁνύσαιμ' οὕτως ἀλοιῆσθαι κακόν

– ⏑ ε]νθὼν τεῖδε θωκησῶ τε καὶ λεξοῦ[. . .]ως
ῥᾴδιν' εἶμειν ταῦτα καὶ τοῖς δεξιωτέροις ἐμεῦ[ς.
(Β.) – ⏑ –]ἐμὶν δοκεῖτε πάγχυ καὶ κατὰ τρόπον

270, 273–275, 277–278, 282, 286; Berk (1964) 17–19, 77–78, 119–125, 130–131; Kerkhof (2001) 129–133, 162–173; Olson (2007) 8, 40, 55–61; Willi (2015) 122–123, 128, 139.

65. See Wysk (1921) 3–6; Körte (1921) 1225; Wehrli (1936) 101; Duckworth (1952) 19; Pickard-Cambridge (1962) 282; Berk (1964) 17; Gil (1975) 76–77, 86; cf. Wüst (1950) 358, 361–362; Kerkhof (2001) 162–163, 165; Mastromarco (2002) 211; Willi (2015) 139.

καὶ ἐοικότως ἐπεύξασθ', αἴ τις ἐνθυμεῖν γ[α λῇ.
(ΟΔ.) – ⏑ –]γ' ὤφειλον ἐνθὲν ὕσπερ ἐκελήσ[– ⏑ –
– ⏑ –]των ἀγαθικῶν κακὰ προτιμάσαι θ[⏑ –
– ⏑ κίν]δυνον τελέσσαι καὶ κλέος θεῖον λ[αβεῖν
– ⏑ –]ν μολὼν ἐς ἄστυ, πάντα δ' εὖ σαφα[νέως
πυθόμε]νος δίοις τ' Ἀχαιοῖς παιδί τ' Ἀτρέος φί[λῳ
ἄψ ἀπαγ]γείλαι τὰ τηνεῖ καὐτὸς ἀσκηθὴς .[

(ODYSSEUS) … this roaming … just as if … encountering … I could very easily do this or any other thing. But I see —what is it, you wretch, why are you vexing me?— here are the Achaeans, close at hand, so that I be utterly miserable!
(B.) Well, you are quite miserable indeed.
(OD.) For I have no intention to hurry back. It is awful to be thrashed like this. I will rather go there; and I will sit down and make a speech that these things are easy even for people cleverer than I.
(B.) … In my view, gentlemen, the curses you are calling down are fully fitting and reasonable, come to think of it…
(OD.) … I ought to have gone where I was ordered to … prefer hardships over goods[66] … accomplish my dangerous mission and obtain divine glory … after I came to the city and was informed of everything well and clearly, bring back a report about the situation there to the sublime Achaeans and the beloved son of Atreus, and being myself unharmed …

The papyrus texts are lacunose and only preserve a small portion of the scene, thus leaving several details in obscurity. Many points of the plot are difficult to understand and will necessarily remain contested. Still, it is possible to form a general idea about the content of this comic episode and the character portrayal of Odysseus.[67] The dramatic situation, in view of the title, is probably to be connected with some kind of dangerous spying mission to Troy, which was assigned to Odysseus by the Achaeans. Such feats of infiltration into the

66. Cassio (2002) 81–82 proposes that a negative *μή* stood in the gap at the beginning of v. 12, before]*των ἀγαθικῶν*. In that case, the text would mean "not prefer bad actions to the brave/virtuous ones"; cf. Olson (2007) 50; Willi (2008) 183, 186; Willi (2012) 64–65.

67. The discussions of this passage which I found most congenial are Casolari (2003) 47–54, 205–207, and Jouanno (2012) 250–252. Other important commentaries are Webster (1962) 85–88; Berk (1964) 116–118, 145–150; Pickard-Cambridge (1962) 255–257; Kerkhof (2001) 123–129; Cassio (2002) 73–82; Olson (2007) 47–51; Willi (2008) 177–191; Copani (2009) 74–80; Willi (2012) 63–73.

enemy area are repeatedly performed by the crafty Ithacan king in epic tradition. See the nocturnal espionage foray into the Trojan encampment, which Diomede and Odysseus undertake at Nestor's behest in the *Iliad* (10.204ff.); the theft of the Palladium from Troy, accomplished again by Odysseus and Diomede; and above all the story that Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, penetrated into the city of Troy to reconnoitre, met Helen there, and killed some men before he escaped.[68]

Similarly in Epicharmus' play, as indicated by fr. 97.14–16, Agamemnon and the Achaeans would have expected Odysseus to sneak into the enemy city (*ἄστυ* doubtless referring here to Troy), collect reliable and lucid information, and come back to report it to the Greek army. The Epicharmean Odysseus, however, was apparently afraid and did not carry out the mission. He is now pondering what he will tell Agamemnon and the other Achaean leaders, as soon as he returns. His plan, as far as it can be made out from the surviving text, is to make a false speech and claim in pompous style that he accomplished everything.

The commentary on one of the papyri (P.Oxy. 2429 = Epicharmus fr. 98) attests that a second personage is present and speaking in this scene. Therefore, Odysseus is conversing with another character (B), possibly an Achaean who escorts or meets him on the way, as Odysseus is returning to the Greek encampment.[69] Diomede (cf. *Iliad* 10) and Thoas (cf. *Little Iliad* fr. 8 West), who accompany or assist the Ithacan king in his spying missions in the epics, have been suggested as possibilities.[70] As it seems, Odysseus has just

68. See Hom. *Od*. 4.242–264; *Little Iliad* fr. 8–11 West and Proclus' argument § 4. Cf. Moessner (1907) 43; Webster (1962) 86–88; Pickard-Cambridge (1962) 255–256; Berk (1964) 146, 150; Kerkhof (2001) 123–124, 127; Casolari (2003) 47–48, 51, 205; Olson (2007) 47–48; Willi (2008) 184–185; Copani (2009) 75–76; Jouanno (2012) 250–251; Willi (2012) 69.

69. See fr. 98.34–35 (referring to fr. 97.5): *ὁ μ(ὲν) [τὸν ἐπί]πονον σημαίνει ὁ δ(ὲ) τὸν κακοήθη ἐγδέχεται καὶ ε[. . . . .] . λέγει 'ἁλιδίως πονηρός'*. Also v. 52 (referring to fr. 97.9–10): *τ]οῦθ' ὁ ἕτερος τῶν ὑποκριτῶν*.

70. See Lobel-Turner (1959) 42; Gentili (1961) 336; Webster (1962) 87–88; Berk (1964) 149–150; Pickard-Cambridge (1962) 256; Cassio (2002) 77; Casolari (2003) 49, 52; Copani (2009) 76. This seems more likely than to assume (with Kerkhof [2001] 127–128, Willi [2008] 181–188, and Willi [2012] 66–70) that character B is a Trojan enemy, perhaps the one responsible for the bad thrashing mentioned in fr. 97.6. Exactly the formulation of v. 6 —"I am not going back there (sc. to Troy or the Trojan camp, because) it is unpleasant to be beaten like that"— implies that Odysseus has escaped from the Trojans' area and has no wish to return to it, because he is afraid that a beating awaits him there. The Trojan assaulter would hardly have followed the fugitive all the way to the very place of the Greeks, who now visibly appear before Odysseus (v. 4).

fled from an unpleasant place, where he received or was threatened with a severe thrashing, and for this reason he is reluctant to return there (fr. 97.6). It is an easy assumption that this place is Troy (the *ἄστυ* of v. 14) or at least an encampment of the Trojans.[71] The anonymous Doric comic fr. 16 (*ἢ παίσει <τυ> βάκτρῳ καλίνῳ κὰτ τὰ σκύτα Φρὺξ ἀνήρ*, "or a Phrygian man will strike you with a wooden stick on the scruff") fits this scenario. It might derive from *Odysseus the Deserter* and refer to the blows Odysseus was given or threatened with by a Trojan.[72]

Now the Ithacan hero has escaped from the Trojan area and is drawing near to the Achaean camp; he sees his Achaean comrades close by (v. 4). Paradoxically, this fills him with wretchedness (v. 5), instead of the joy or relief we would have expected. The reason for this oddity is implied by the text of a few lines below (vv. 7–8), if read in conjunction with a scholion written on the upper margin of one of the papyri (P.Vindob. 2321). Odysseus decides that, rather than turning back, he prefers to "go there", i.e. forward to the Achaean camp (*τεῖδε* presumably referring to *τῷχαιοὶ πέλας* of v. 4), where he will "sit down" and speak about the great easiness of a certain task, presumably one he had been assigned to. As implied by the strong emphasis on the "easiness", the Ithacan king plans to claim that he has readily fulfilled his duty.[73] This is confirmed by the words of the scholion (v. 7, I p. 61 Kassel-Austin), which are offered as a paraphrase of Odysseus' formulation or intended meaning: *καθεδοῦμ(αι) κ(αὶ) προσποιήσομ(αι) πάντ(α) διαπεπρᾶχθ(αι)*, "I will sit down and pretend that everything has been fully accomplished".[74]

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71. Cf. Barigazzi (1955) 128; Willi (2008) 181–182, 185–188; Willi (2012) 67–70; Willi (2015) 122.
72. See Kaibel (1899) vii; Barigazzi (1955) 128; Willi (2008) 187. For *Φρύξ* = Trojan, see Konstantakos (2000) 105 with many examples.
73. As noted in the comment in P.Oxy. 2429 (fr. 98.49–50), the phrase "easy even for people cleverer than I" is meant as a *para prosdokian* joke (instead of an expected "duller than I" or "utter fools"), presumably with self-deprecating irony.
74. Cf. Moessner (1907) 43; Lobel-Turner (1959) 41; Gentili (1961) 337; Kerkhof (2001) 124, 126; Cassio (2002) 73, 76; Casolari (2003) 49–50; Olson (2007) 48–49; Willi (2008) 179–180, 183, 186; Jouanno (2012) 251–252; Willi (2012) 70. Before *καθεδοῦμ(αι)*, the scholion writes]*πόρρω* ("away"), but the sizeable lacuna in the papyrus (both at the beginning of line 7 of the scholion and at the end of the previous line 6) does not allow an exact interpretation of this word. The scholiast may mean that Odysseus will sit and make his show "away from Troy", i.e. in the safety of the Achaean encampment, far from the blows of the Trojans. Alternatively, a supplement such as *οὐ*]*πόρρω* might be suggested, meaning that the Ithacan king will sit down and talk "not far" from where he is now, i.e. again at the camp of the Achaeans, which can be seen nearby.

As becomes evident from the surrounding text, this is a downright lie. Odysseus would have no reason to feel miserable in beholding the Achaeans (v. 5) if he had duly carried out his assignment. His fear of the thrashing offers the key for understanding his reaction. The Ithacan king presumably set out to execute his mission, under orders to penetrate into Troy and gather espionage information (to judge from vv. 14–16). At the enemy city or nearby, however, a Trojan gave Odysseus a rough treatment or menaced him with blows; this was enough to discourage the Ithacan spy and make him run away. The resourceful and long-suffering Homeric hero, a paragon of efficiency and endurance in the epic tradition, appears in this comic drama as a scared little man who is unnerved by a bastinado. His wry exclamation —"It sucks to be thrashed!" (v. 6)— reads like a mocking colloquial reversal of the Homeric Odysseus' emblematic *τέτλαθι δή, κραδίη* (*Od.* 20.18), the epitome of the hero's courageous perseverance in the epic. Unlike his Homeric prototype, the Epicharmean Odysseus runs away from his duty like a coward, daunted by the first instance of violent opposition.[75]

In this context, character B also seems to adopt an ironic stance towards the epic tradition. B's sarcastic response to Odysseus' lament about his impending misery (*ἁλιδίως πονηρὸς <εἶ>*, v. 5) can be read as a humorously self-conscious allusion to the traditional Homeric image of the *πολύτλας Ὀδυσσεύς*. Odysseus exclaims: "See, the Achaeans! Now I shall be wretched!" And B answers: "Of course you will be. You are wretched indeed" — a phrase which may also imply, on another level, "you are the 'wretched hero' *par excellence*". The protagonist of the *Odyssey* is literally the *πονηρότατος* of all heroes, in that he suffers the most numerous and gravest *πόνοι* in the entire course of his story.[76] Character B thus indulges in an amusing meta-literary play with the Homeric tradition, which foreshadows some of the sophisticated parodic effects of Attic comedy.[77]

If the Ithacan hero has started by now to resemble Parolles (cf. *All's Well That Ends Well* 4.1), the rest of fr. 97 offers more points of contact with this Shakespearean braggart. After a rather obscure remark of character B

75. Cf. Moessner (1907) 43–44; Berk (1964) 111, 116–117; Casolari (2003) 52–54, 205–207; Willi (2008) 191; Copani (2009) 79–80; Jouanno (2012) 251. On the colloquial tone of *ἀλοιτῆσθαι*, cf. Willi (2008) 191; Willi (2012) 71.
76. Cf. *Od.* 20.47–48 (Athena to Odysseus): *ἐγὼ … ἥ σε φυλάσσω ἐν πάντεσσι πόνοις*. *Ibid.* 12.116–117 (Circe to Odysseus): *καὶ δὴ αὖ τοι πολεμήϊα ἔργα μέμηλε καὶ πόνος*. *Ibid.* 23.249–250 (Odysseus for himself): *ἔτ' ὄπισθεν ἀμέτρητος πόνος ἔσται … τὸν ἐμὲ χρὴ πάντα τελέσσαι*.
77. The commentator of P.Oxy. 2429 (fr. 98.33–35) did not grasp this literary joke.

(vv. 9–10),[78] Odysseus begins another speech, which seems to have extended over several lines. In this speech, the hero describes in detail the labours he should have accomplished in the context of his mission: go to the place he was ordered to, duly undertake the bravest course and carry out the dangerous assignment, infiltrate into the enemy city, collect sufficient information as a spy, and safely report it back to his fellow-warriors, all for winning splendid heroic glory (vv. 11–16). It is a plausible assumption that this tirade is somehow connected to the false narration with which Odysseus plans to mislead the Achaeans into believing that he has done his duty (see above). Possibly the Ithacan king imagines or rehearses the deceiving oration he will presently hold before the Greek leaders, as soon as he reaches their encampment.[79] The grandiose rhetorical naming of "the sublime Achaeans and the beloved son of Atreus" would then serve as an imaginary apostrophe to the audience before which Odysseus pictures himself as giving the speech. The use of the third person at this point, instead of the expected second plural ("to you, the Achaeans…"), is probably meant to convey a sense of rhetorical elevation, strong emphasis, or affected seriousness. Many parallels for such use of the third person plural with reference to the speaker's immediate audience can be cited from Old Attic Comedy, especially from the

78. This intervention of speaker B is the greatest *crux* of the fragment. Scholars do not agree on the restitution and interpretation of the text, and none of the hitherto forwarded explanations seems fully satisfactory. If I may tentatively propose another theory, I think that character B is sarcastically imagining here the self-humiliating excuses which Odysseus will have to make before the Achaeans, so as to placate their anger, when they discover the failure of his mission. The Achaeans will doubtless start calling down curses on the Ithacan king (*ἐπεύξασθ'* in a negative sense), as soon as they find out his cowardice. Odysseus then will try to appease them with a diplomatic apology: "Yes, of course, it is quite right and fitting for you to curse me, but...". Character B imitates the apologetic speech which he fancies Odysseus will be forced to make; lines 9–10 are placed in the mouth of this purported Odysseus, whom B here pictures to himself. This interpretation accounts for the plural *δοκεῖτε* (v. 9), which is addressed to a group of personages, although there is no indication for any more characters, other than B and Odysseus, currently involved in the dialogue. B has in mind the Greek leaders whom his imaginary Odysseus will apostrophize. Cf. a similar approach in Cassio (2002) 77 and Olson (2007) 50, according to whom speaker B is rehearsing a cover story which he and Odysseus must present to the Achaeans with regard to the failed mission. Already Lobel-Turner (1959) 42 understood that the subject of *δοκεῖτε* must be the Achaeans. For different explanations, see Pickard-Cambridge (1962) 256; Berk (1964) 147, 149; Kerkhof (2001) 126–127; Willi (2008) 180, 183, 186–188; Copani (2009) 77–78; Willi (2012) 66–71.

79. See Gentili (1961) 337; Berk (1964) 148; Casolari (2003) 50–52, 206; Olson (2007) 50; Jouanno (2012) 251, 261; cf. Copani (2009) 75, 78–79.

self-justifying anapaests of the parabasis, but also from characters' speeches with prominent rhetorical colour.[80]

In that case, the verb *ὤφειλον* (v. 11) involves humorous semantic play on a double meaning. *Prima facie*, Odysseus will be describing the duties he had been assigned to: "I was obliged/bound to go to the city and do so and so". On the other hand, *ὤφειλον* with the infinitive is also a common way of formulating a hypothetical, unrealized wish: "If only I had performed all these tasks and gained divine glory". The comic Odysseus, while deceiving his comrades with a lying tale about his feats, would slyly admit with the very same words that all these purported exploits are in fact nothing but wishful thinking.[81] The Achaeans of the drama would be expected to be taken in by the first, superficial meaning of Odysseus' false discourse; but the knowledgeable audience would enjoy the crafty wordplay.

It is noteworthy that this lying speech of Odysseus is full of epic locutions, used with rhetorical exaggeration to create a pompous mock-elevated style. The phrase *δίοις τ' Ἀχαιοῖς* (v. 15) slightly adapts the Homeric hexameter clausula *δῖοι Ἀχαιοί* (e.g. *Il.* 5.451, 11.455, 18.241, 20.354). The use of *φί[λῳ* (v. 15) is also characteristically epic. The whole combination *παιδί τ' Ἀτρέος φί[λῳ* has arisen from an amalgamation of diverse Homeric locutions: *παιδὶ φίλῳ* (e.g. *Od.* 17.38, 19.404, 24.347; cf. *φίλῳ παιδί*, *Il.* 16.568, 18.147; *παῖδα φίλον*, *Il.* 16.460; *φίλον παῖδα*, *Il.* 20.210, 24.619); genitive of a proper name + *φίλος παῖς* or *φίλος υἱός* (e.g. *Ἀδμήτοιο φίλος*

80. Cf. e.g. Ar. *Ach.* 632, in a similarly self-defensive context: the comic poet in the parabasis *ἀποκρίνασθαι δεῖται νυνὶ πρὸς Ἀθηναίους μεταβούλους* (third person), although the rest of the section is addressed directly to the Athenian audience in the second plural (633–634, *φησὶν δ' εἶναι πολλῶν ἀγαθῶν ἄξιος ὑμῖν ὁ ποιητής, παύσας ὑμᾶς* etc.; and further 636, 639, 641, 652, 655–656). The same effect is found in *Vesp.* 1016–1023: *μέμψασθαι γὰρ τοῖσι θεαταῖς ὁ ποιητὴς νῦν ἐπιθυμεῖ*, followed after some lines by *τιμηθεὶς ὡς οὐδεὶς πώποτ' ἐν ὑμῖν*. Similar is also *Nub.* 528–533: *ἐξ ὅτου … ὑπ' ἀνδρῶν, οἷς ἡδὺ καὶ ψέγειν, ὁ σώφρων τε χὠ καταπύγων ἄριστ' ἠκουσάτην*, and then again the second plural with reference to the very same comedy and audience (*ὑμεῖς δ' ἐξεθρέψατε … ἐκ τούτου μοι πιστὰ παρ' ὑμῶν γνώμης ἔσθ' ὅρκια*). For a character's speech, cf. *Vesp.* 503–505: Bdelycleon mentions his father in the third person (*τὸν πατέρ' ὅτι βούλομαι τούτων ἀπαλλαχθέντα τῶν … τρόπων*), even though Philocleon is present and engages in the conversation. The examples could be multiplied. In subsequent lines of his speech, after the end of the preserved text, Odysseus could similarly have turned to the Achaeans in the second plural. Therefore, I do not believe, like Stanford (1950) 167–168, Willi (2008) 182, and Willi (2012) 68, that the use of the third person excludes the Achaeans as Odysseus' addressees at this point.

81. Cf. Casolari (2003) 52; Copani (2009) 78. Other commentators only recognize the hypothetical wish.

πάϊς, *Il.* 2.713; *Πριάμοιο φίλος παῖς*, *Il.* 7.44; *παῖδα φίλον Μελανῆος*, *Od.* 24.103; *Ὀδυσσῆος φίλος υἱός*, *Od.* 2.2, 3.64 etc.); and *Ἀτρέος υἱόν* or *υἷέ* for Agamemnon or Menelaus (*Il.* 2.23, 3.37, 4.98, 17.553 etc.). In particular, Epicharmus paraphrases characteristic expressions from a speech of the *Iliad* (10.204ff.), with which Nestor proposes the nocturnal spying expedition to be undertaken by Odysseus and Diomede. The phrase *κλέος θεῖον λ*[*αβεῖν* (v. 13) recalls Nestor's *μέγα κέν οἱ ὑπουράνιον κλέος εἴη* (*Il.* 10.212; similarly in *Od.* 9.264, and cf. *κλέος ἄφθιτον*, *Il.* 9.413). *πυθόμε*]*νος … [ἄψ ἀπαγ*]*γείλαι τὰ τηνεῖ καὐτὸς ἀσκηθής* (vv. 15–16) corresponds to Nestor's *ταῦτά κε πάντα πύθοιτο, καὶ ἄψ εἰς ἡμέας ἔλθοι ἀσκηθής* (*Il.* 10.211–212). Even *ἐνθὲν ὕσπερ ἐκελήσ*[(v. 11) together with *μολὼν ἐς ἄστυ* (v. 14) may be considered a variation on Nestor's *μετὰ Τρῶας μεγαθύμους ἐλθεῖν* (*Il.* 10.205–206).[82]

As it seems, the title-hero's role in *Odysseus the Deserter* presents a series of similarities to the comic *miles gloriosus*. Epicharmus' hero lost heart, abandoned his military duty and ran away, as soon as he encountered a stout opposition which put him in real physical danger. In the same way, the soldiers of later comedies are instantly unnerved, relinquish their aggressive attitude, and become entirely tame, as soon as another personage opposes them with firmness or threatens them with violent treatment.[83] Further, the Epicharmean Odysseus intends to cover up his actual cowardice and desertion with pompous bragging about false feats of war. He will boast of the hardships and dangers he was bound to endure in order to assist his fellow-warriors and win immortal glory; but all his braggadocio will be a lie, not corresponding to any real achievement. Once again, a fake show of blowhard discourse serves to hide the speaker's lack of true courage, as is typical of the braggart captains of comedy. Significantly, Odysseus' boastful speech is full of Homeric echoes and imitations. Epicharmus is here taking up the stylistic mannerism which Archilochus had already developed for his own satirical portraits of braggart soldiers.[84]

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82. On these epic resonances, see Lobel-Turner (1959) 42; Berk (1964) 76, 139; Kerkhof (2001) 127; Cassio (2002) 70, 78–80; Casolari (2003) 48; Olson (2007) 47, 50–51; Willi (2008) 184, 188–191; Jouanno (2012) 251; Willi (2012) 69, 71–72.
83. See Lamachus in Ar. *Ach.* 590–622; Antamoenides in Plaut. *Poen.* 492–498, 1296–1328; Pyrgopolynices in Plaut. *MG* 1394ff.; Thraso in Ter. *Eun.* 781–790, 803–814; and the *miles* in Plaut. *Epid.* 437–457. Cf. above, n. 43, and detailed discussion in Konstantakos (2016).
84. Compare the situation of Sosia at the beginning of Plautus' *Amphitruo* — the martial hero's slave, who displays many traits of the braggart and cowardly soldier (see Hanson [1965] 67; Christenson [2000] 166–167, 172, 177). Sosia is ordered by his master Amphitruo to bring home a report of the great battle and victory against the Teleboans

One of the few book fragments of *Odysseus the Deserter* is a lyrical praise of the quiet and moderate life (fr. 100): *ἁ δ' Ἡσυχία χαρίεσσα γυνά, | καὶ Σωφροσύνας πλατίον οἰκεῖ*, "Peacefulness is a charming lady and lives near Moderation". These words may have been pronounced by the frightened Odysseus; even if they were placed in another character's mouth, they would fit well with the protagonist's overall attitude and ethos. The Epicharmean Odysseus, having little courage for heroic exploits, would prefer a life of peace and quiet, prudently avoiding the risks of dangerous missions and unpleasant thrashings.[85] If so, Epicharmus' play introduces a characteristic ethological touch, which will resurface much later in the braggart *capitano* of Renaissance comedies. The latter, although he brags of his military valour, yet covets a life of rest and quiet and would gladly exchange the dangers and toils of his martial trade with the tranquillity and comfort of civilian life.[86]

(195ff.). This poses him a problem, because the faint-hearted slave has actually run away and has not witnessed the battle (199); while the armies were fighting, he hid in the tent and spent his time drinking (425–432). Sosia, therefore, decides to pretend that he was present in the battle, in the same way as Odysseus resolves to simulate that he has accomplished his mission; compare *Amph.* 200 (*quasi adfuerim tamen simulabo*) with the Epicharmean scholiast's paraphrase, *προσποιήσομ(αι) πάντ(α) διαπεπρᾶχθ(αι)*. To support his claim, Sosia devises a fictitious account of the battle, based on what he has heard (197–200). But he wants first to think and rehearse by himself this story, before he tells it to his mistress (201–202); and he does so in front of the audience, making up a splendid speech of epic battle description (203–262). Similarly, the Epicharmean Odysseus rehearses beforehand on stage the false narration he plans to present to the Achaeans in a short while (fr. 97.11–16); cf. Christenson (2000) 177. Interestingly, Sosia's long war narrative is full of epic resonances, parodying especially the epic style of Ennius and Naevius (see Hanson [1965] 67; Christenson [2000] 172–194 with a full collection of parallels). Similarly in Epicharmus' play, Odysseus' fictitious discourse is permeated with Homeric phrases.

85. See Barigazzi (1955) 123–124, 132–135; Pickard-Cambridge (1962) 257; Berk (1964) 62–64, 117; Kerkhof (2001) 128; Casolari (2003) 51; Olson (2007) 52; Willi (2008) 185; Copani (2009) 79–80; Jouanno (2012) 251–253. Because of their metre (anapaestic dimeters) and the lyrical personification of Hesychia (cf. Pi. *Pyth.* 8.1–12, fr. 109, and the choral song in Ar. *Av.* 1321–1322), the lines have sometimes been attributed to a Chorus. However, the existence of a Chorus in Epicharmus' dramas is a much disputed issue, and I do not consider it likely (cf. the survey of Kerkhof [2001] 151–155).

86. Thus the *soldato* Tinca in Pietro Aretino's *La Talanta* (1542), a figure modelled after the Terentian Thraso, compares himself to the mythical Hector, brags of his feats in war, and calls for a poet and a musician to sing of them (Act 3, sc. 12; Act 4, sc. 8 and 16); but in fact Tinca deeply yearns to escape from the hardships of his soldierly profession and lead a life of comfort and rest (Act 4, sc. 17). Cf. Boughner (1954) 49–52, 70, 89–90, 188, 197, 259, with more examples.

It is unknown how Epicharmus' drama might have developed in subsequent scenes; but fr. 97 at least shows Odysseus in the role of the cowardly and boastful soldier. Epicharmus has projected the character of the military *alazon* on the mythical Odysseus.[87] He cast the hero of his mythological burlesque in the role of the *miles gloriosus*, amalgamating the mythical personage with a recurrent figure of the comic stage. The same technique was later fruitfully pursued in the myth burlesques of Attic Middle Comedy, in which the mythical characters were regularly assimilated to stereotypical figures of the comic repertoire, such as the parasite, the *senex* in love, the tricky slave, or the angry moneylender. In Ephippus' *Bousiris* Heracles was portrayed, at least for part of the comedy, as a swaggering comic *miles*. He bragged about his martial prowess, but his boasts were exposed by another character as the lies of a faint-hearted deserter (fr. 2).[88]

In fact, the technique can already be observed in Aristophanes' *Frogs*. Throughout the early part of this comedy, Dionysus appears as a cowardly *alazon* who dons Heracles' costume and feigns Herculean valour but is in fact soft and flabby and almost dies of fright whenever he faces real danger (see especially *Ra.* 38–51, 108–145, 197–205, 278–310, 464–502, 549–673). In one particular moment, near the beginning of the play, Dionysus displays a touch of specifically military braggadocio: in order to bolster up his self-presentation as a valiant hero, he unbelievably claims to have fought in a sea-battle and sunk twelve or thirteen enemy ships (49–51). A comment of the slave Xanthias, however ("And then I woke up", 51), exposes Dionysus' pretence for what it is, namely, a braggart's daydream. Here, once again, the type of the *miles gloriosus* is conflated with a burlesqued mythical figure.[89]

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87. Cf. Jouanno (2012) 260–261, who compares Ar. *Av.* 1556–1564. There the Homeric Odysseus of the Nekyia is paralleled with Peisandros, an Athenian statesman regularly mocked in comedy for his overt bellicosity and inveterate cowardice, i.e. the two basic traits of the *miles gloriosus* (on this portrayal of Peisandros, see the second part of my study, Konstantakos [2016]). See also Barigazzi (1955) 130–132 on Odysseus as a coward in ancient humorous tradition.

88. Ephippus fr. 2: (HP.) *οὐκ οἶσθά μ' ὄντα, πρὸς θεῶν, Τιρύνθιον / Ἀργεῖον; οἳ μεθύοντες αἰεὶ τὰς μάχας / πάσας μάχονται.* (B.) *τοιγαροῦν φεύγουσ' ἀεί* ("HER.: By God, don't you know that I am an Argive from Tiryns? These people are always drunk when they fight their battles. B.: Yeah, this is why they run away every time"). In order to intimidate his interlocutor, Heracles claims that he and his countrymen get drunk so as to become furious in battle and fight without heeding danger. Speaker B, however, is not impressed but openly regards Heracles and his people as cowards that flee the battlefield. See Casolari (2003) 272; Konstantakos (2014) 171–175.

89. See Boughner (1954) 3–5; Ehrenberg (1962) 302–303; Baldwin (1997) 122; Casolari (2003) 119.

To all appearances, Epicharmus was the first dramatist to introduce this fertile comic practice into mythological travesty. Significantly, Epicharmus also wrote a *Bousiris* and other myth burlesques which featured Heracles as their central character (*The Marriage of Hebe*, *Heracles coming for the belt*, *Heracles chez Pholus*). In one or another of these plays, the Sicilian dramatist may conceivably have invested his comic Heracles with the characteristics of the braggart warrior — exactly as he treated the other favourite hero of mythological burlesque in *Odysseus the Deserter*.[90] The roaring and muscular Heracles was eminently suitable to be cast in the part of the *fanfaron*, as shown by Ephippus' comedy, as well as by Dionysus' role-playing in the *Frogs*.

Another drama of Epicharmus, the *Περίαλλος*, may have contained the figure of a boastful *miles*. The title should probably be taken as a proper name designating the main character of the play. The preposition *περί* has doubtless the meaning "above, beyond" and denotes superiority; the adverb *περίαλλα* is used exactly in the sense "above all others", "superlatively", in epic, lyric, and tragic poetry.[91] A female proper name *Περίαλλα* (Hdt. 6.66) was borne by the prophetess of Delphi at the time of King Demaratus' dethronement (491 B.C.), i.e. within Epicharmus' lifetime. The male *Περία*[*λλ*]*ος* is also inscriptionally attested in Euboea in the 5th century B.C. (*IG* XII.9, 56.324). As a comic personage's appellation, Periallos will mean something like "Mr. Above-all-others", "Mr. Extraordinary". It thus ironically implies an *alazon* or a boastful figure as the protagonist. But which particular type of *alazon*? Perhaps the name was meant to allude to the well-known Homeric expression *περὶ ἄλλων γενέσθαι* (or *ἔμμεναι* or *τέτυκτο*), which is repeatedly applied to the exalted warrior heroes of the epics (Achilles, Tydeus, Antilochus, Ajax, and Hector), often precisely in connection with their superior virtue in battle.[92] In that case, the main character of the *Periallos* may have been a braggart warrior sketched again with mock-epic overtones.

One of the extant testimonia implies that the *Periallos* also contained the figure of a parasite. Athenaeus (4.139b) quotes fr. 34 (*ἐκάλεσε γάρ τύ τις* /

90. Cf. Hilgar (1982) 251.

91. See *Hom. Hymn* 19.46; Pi. *Pyth.* 11.5, fr. 52k.48; Soph. *OT* 1219, fr. 245; Eur. fr. 115; Ap. Rh. 2.217, 3.529 etc. Cf. von Salis (1951) 51–52; Pickard-Cambridge (1962) 270; Kerkhof (2001) 132.

92. See *Il.* 1.287 (Achilles *ἐθέλει περὶ πάντων ἔμμεναι ἄλλων*); *Il.* 4.373–375 (Tydeus used to *πολὺ πρὸ φίλων ἑτάρων δηΐοισι μάχεσθαι … περὶ δ' ἄλλων φασὶ γενέσθαι*); *Il.* 17.279–280 and *Od.* 11.550–551 (*Αἴας, ὃς περὶ μὲν εἶδος, περὶ δ' ἔργα τέτυκτο τῶν ἄλλων Δαναῶν*); *Od.* 4.201–202 (*περὶ δ' ἄλλων φασὶ γενέσθαι Ἀντίλοχον … μαχητήν*); cf. *Il.* 13.727–728 (addressed to Hector: *οὕνεκά τοι περὶ δῶκε θεὸς πολεμήϊα ἔργα, τοὔνεκα καὶ βουλῇ ἐθέλεις περιίδμεναι ἄλλων*).

ἐπ' αἶκλον ἀέκων· τὺ δὲ ἑκὼν ὤχεο τρέχων, "Someone called you to dinner unwillingly, but you willingly hurried and rushed to it") from Epicharmus' *Elpis or Ploutos*, a play in which the parasite played a prominent part (see fr. 31–33). Clearly, fr. 34 was addressed to this same gluttonous and bibulous character, who is also described in other passages of the play as eagerly rushing to banquets, whether he is invited or not (fr. 31 and 32). Immediately after fr. 34, Athenaeus continues (4.139b = Epicharmus fr. 109): *τὰ αὐτὰ εἴρηκε καὶ ἐν Περιάλλῳ*, "(Epicharmus) makes the same statement (i.e. concerning the parasite) in the *Periallos*". The parasite would fit well with the military *alazon*, given that the *miles gloriosus* and his parasite form a standard pair later in Middle and New Comedy.[93] However, in spite of these circumstantial indications, the precise identity and character of Epicharmus' Periallos remain a matter of speculation.[94]

Epicharmus' works doubtless became known in Athens during the fifth century. Aristotle clearly hints at this process of transmission, when he notes that the construction of comic plots was introduced from Sicily to Athens, where Crates was the first comic poet to create generalized stories and plots. It is naturally implied that Crates followed the model of the Sicilian authors, such as Epicharmus, who were the pioneers of this kind of comic writing.[95]

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93. See Konstantakos (2000) 218 with many references.

94. Another fragment of the *Periallos* (fr. 108) describes Semele dancing joyfully to the music of the *kithara* and/or the *aulos*, which is played by a skilled personage. *Prima facie*, this would imply mythological burlesque; cf. Pickard-Cambridge (1962) 270–271; Berk (1964) 30; Rotstein (2010) 235–237. Mythical figures, of course, could appear in the roles of the *miles gloriosus* or the parasite in a comic burlesque, as shown above. Normally, however, Epicharmus' myth travesties have the name of one or more well-known mythical figures as their title, while *Periallos* does not fit with this practice. Does fr. 108 perhaps come from a fantastic narrative of the *alazon* protagonist, who boasted e.g. of having witnessed the revels of the gods at Olympus? Cf. Matamore in Corneille's *L'Illusion comique* (2.2.291–312) and several soldiers of Graeco-Roman comedy who claim divine associations and descent (Ephippus fr. 17; Plaut. *MG* 11–15, 61–62, 1043, 1054a, 1078–1083, 1265, 1413, 1421; *Truc.* 515; cf. Ar. *Ach.* 566–568, 575, 578, 964, and Konstantakos [2016]). Alternatively, "Semele" might be here the name or *nom de guerre* of a hetaira in a play with contemporary setting. Various hetairai, from the fifth century to the Hellenistic age, bore names or nicknames with mythological associations: Anteia (Athen. 13.567c, 586e, 593f, Anaxandrides fr. 9.3, cf. the mythical seductress of Bellerophontes, Hom. *Il.* 6.160ff.); Satyra (Idomeneus, *FGrHist* 338 F 4a = Athen. 13.576c); Chimaira (Athen. 13.583e); Danaë (Phylarchus, *FGrHist* 81 F 24 = Athen. 13.593b–d); Bacchis (Theopompus, *FGrHist* 115 F 253, Athen. 13.594b–c, 595a); cf. Callistion nicknamed "Ptochelene" ("Beggar-Helen", Athen. 13.585b–c).

95. Arist. *Po.* 5, 1449b 5–9: *τὸ δὲ μύθους ποιεῖν [Ἐπίχαρμος καὶ Φόρμις] τὸ μὲν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐκ Σικελίας ἦλθε, τῶν δὲ Ἀθήνησιν Κράτης πρῶτος ἦρξεν ἀφέμενος τῆς ἰαμβικῆς ἰδέας καθό-*

The Syracusan tyrant Hieron fostered cultural relations and exchanges with Athens in the 470s, inviting Aeschylus to present his tragic works in Sicily. In this context, texts of Epicharmus could easily have been transported by a literate traveller to Athens, where they would have been keenly studied by the small community of dramatic artists. Thus, the gallery of humorous characters developed by the Sicilian poet could have inspired some Attic playwrights to create analogous amusing figures.[96] Together with other literary models, such as archaic iambic and satirical lyric, the theatre of Epicharmus may also have provided specimens of the *miles gloriosus*, which would have served as antecedents or exemplars for Aristophanes, when he sat down to write the part of his boastful Lamachus.

It is time to draw a partial conclusion, by way of transition to the next part of this study. The military *alazon* turns out to have been an established figure in the humorous imagination of the Greeks long before the production of the *Acharnians*. The specimens traced above in archaic satirical lyric and in Epicharmean drama suggest that the type may have had deep roots in Hellenic folk humour. Aristophanes could easily have found fully-fledged examples of the boastful soldier both in such literary antecedents and in the popular tradition. And of course, he might also have been familiar with scenic examples of the same character from earlier Attic comedies. The fact that the Lamachus of the *Acharnians* is the earliest traceable *miles gloriosus* of the

λου ποιεῖν λόγους καὶ μύθους. Cf. *ibid.* 3, 1448a 30–34: *ἀντιποιοῦνται … τῆς κωμῳδίας … οἱ Μεγαρεῖς … οἱ ἐκ Σικελίας, ἐκεῖθεν γὰρ ἦν Ἐπίχαρμος ὁ ποιητὴς πολλῷ πρότερος ὢν Χιωνίδου καὶ Μάγνητος*. For interpretation, see Cassio (1985) 40–41, with further references; Kerkhof (2001) 173–177; Willi (2015) 109–112, 136, 140–141. Aristotle's access to a wide range of sources unknown to us should not be underestimated. The philosopher clearly had personal knowledge of Epicharmus' and Crates' works and could make comparisons between them. This particular passage of the *Poetics* might also have been based on an authentic statement from one of Crates' plays. In the parabasis of a comedy, Crates might e.g. have invoked by name the example of Epicharmus, in order to vindicate his own peculiar kind of comic fiction (cf. Aristophanes' retrospect of earlier comic authors in the parabasis of *Eq.* 516–540). Such a statement would have provided Aristotle with a firm testimony about the relations between Sicilian and Attic comedy.

96. The Attic comic poets' knowledge of Epicharmus' works has been brilliantly demonstrated by Cassio (1985) 38–43 and Willi (2015) 109–117, 136–145. See also von Salis (1905); Körte (1921) 1225; Pickard-Cambridge (1962) 285–288; Carrière (1979) 192–193, 200; Cassio (2002) 52; Casolari (2003) 150, 164; Jouanno (2012) 252–253; Willi (2012) 58. Kerkhof (2001) 133–177 remains sceptical with regard to the extent of Epicharmean influence on Attic comedy, but does not deny that Epicharmus' dramatic scripts were known and studied by the poets of 5th-century Athens, such as Crates, Pherecrates, and even Cratinus and Aristophanes. Earlier bibliography is surveyed by Wüst (1950) 337–340 and Kerkhof (2001) 51–55.

Athenian stage may simply be due to an accident of transmission. If more material had been preserved from the works of playwrights such as Crates and Pherecrates, or even from Cratinus, it might be discovered that these poets had already treated the braggart warrior in their comedies.[97] The models of Archilochus or Epicharmus would also have been available to these comic authors. Whether they presented the swaggering *miles* in a contemporary Athenian setting or projected his characteristics on mythical personages, these earlier Attic dramatists might well have initiated the history of the boastful soldier in Athenian comedy, which would then be carried forward by the young Aristophanes.

Still, by establishing that Aristophanes inherited from earlier traditions the personage of the braggart officer and his basic traits, we have only stated a half-truth. The most important issue, in terms of literary history, is to investigate what Aristophanes did with the materials he received: how he reworked the boastful officer in his own innovative way, so as to adapt the traditional figure to the special concerns of his own politically engaged theatre and public invective. A full examination of this question will be attempted in the second part of my study, to appear in the next volume of the *Logeion*. *Opperiatur lector*.

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97. It has been hypothesized that Pherecrates' *Pseudheracles* may have revolved around an *alazon* soldier who undertook Heracles' role or pretended to Herculean valour (cf. Dionysus in the *Frogs*); see Casolari (2003) 183–185. The same poet produced a series of plays concerning hetairai and their affairs, which would offer opportunities for the involvement of a military man (cf. the similar scenarios of Middle and New Comedy). In the *Korianno*, for example, the hetaira enjoys a symposium in the company of a man (perhaps a lover) who seems to have come from the Asiatic coast of the Pontus (fr. 74, note *ἐν τοῖς Μαριανδυνοῖς ἐκείνοις βαρβάροις*); see Kassel-Austin (1983–2001) VII 137. This might have been a character returning from a military campaign abroad, although other possibilities, such as a merchant, are not excluded.

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