7) Jebb (supra n. 3), 390-91 n. 131 writes: ‘There is a strong case for writing φένας, since the similar Homeric phrases are so frequent that it is difficult to understand how B[acchylides] could have assumed ἵνα before the verb: Iliad 19. 174 φέσει σήμιν λαθήσῃ, 23. 600 θυμός λαθήςì, Odyssey 4. 840 ἢτορ λαθῆςì, 23. 47 θυμόν λαθήςì, etc. ... But on the other hand B[acchylides] could write εἰλετο ποιον (v. 75), in face of Iliad 4. 116 εἴ μὲν ἔλευς ἵνα, the very passage which was his model ... ‘This warning instance is my sole reason for leaving φένα in the text”'; Herwig Maehler, Die Lieder des Bakchylides (Leiden 1982), II:106 n. 75 “Das gleiche Versehen scheint 17. 131 φένα (φ)αινθεὶς vorzuliegen...” Bacchylides’ very point was to write ἵνα and not ἵνα, so that he could allude to the epic line and show both the similarities and the differences between his situation and Homer’s. F.G. Kenyon, The Poems of Bacchylides (London 1897), 175 however suggests the alternate possibility that here Bacchylides is following the analogy of ἱόπλοκος, ἴόλαος.

**SOPHOCLES AND THE ODYSSEY*)**

One of the most puzzling parts of the ancient anonymous Life of Sophocles is the section dealing with the tragic poet’s artistic relationship with Homer. It runs as follows:1):

Τὸ πῶς μὲν οὖν Ὅμηρος ὄνομαζε· τοὺς τε γὰρ μέθυσιν φέρει κατ’ ἤχον τοῦ ποιητοῦ· καὶ τὴν Ὅδυσσειαν δὲ ἐν πολλοῖς δράμασι ἀπογράφεται. 

ρατύμαλοτε δὲ καθ’ Ὅμηρον καὶ τούνομα τοῦ Ὅδυσσεώς: ὁρθός δ’ Ὅδυσσεύς εἰμ’ ἐπόνυμος κακῶν· 

πολλοὶ γὰρ ὀδυσσάντο δυσμενείς ἐμοί. 

ἥσοποιεὶ τε καὶ ποικιλεῖ καὶ τοῖς ἐπονομαζεῖ τεχνικῶς χρηταί, Ὅμηρην ἔκματτόμενος χάριν. θεῖν εἰπεῖν ἄ’ Ἰονικόν τινα | μόνον Σοφοκλέα τυχάνειν Ὁμηροῦ μαθητήν. καὶ ἄλλοι μὲν πολλοὶ μεμισθης τινα τῶν πρὸ αὐτῶν ἢ τῶν καθ’ αὐτῶς, μόνον δὲ Σοφοκλῆς ἢ ἐκάστου τὸ λαμπρὸν ἀπανθίζει· καθ’ ὧν καὶ μελέτα ἐλέγετο. ἥγετε δὲ τὰ μικτα’ εὐκαρίαν, γλυκύτητα, τόλμαν, ποικιλίαν. 

ὑπεί ὃ καὶ πράγματα ὡστε ἐκ μικρῷ ἡμιστιχίῳ ἢ λέξεως μίας ὅλον ἥσοποιεόν πρόσωπον. ἔστι δὲ τούτο μέγιστον ἐν ποιητικῷ, δηλοῦν ὡς καὶ πάθος.

The main problem is centred on the two apparently linked statements near the beginning of the passage: τοὺς τε γὰρ μέθυσιν φέρει κατ’ ἤχον τοῦ ποιητοῦ· καὶ τὴν Ὅδυσσειαν δὲ ἐν πολλοῖς δράμασι ἀπογράφεται. At first sight anyway, neither of these statements makes good sense. As far as the second is concerned, Sophocles seems to have used incidents from the Odyssey only for the subject matter of his Nausicaa and Niptra and perhaps also his Phaiaces. And with regard to the first statement, the titles of Sophocles’ lost plays show clearly that Homer in general was not an important plot source for the tragic poet, whereas the epic cycle was (particularly the Trojan part of the cycle), a situation accurately reflected in Zoilus’ remark in Athenaeus (7.277C) that: ἔχαρις δὲ Σοφοκλῆς τὸ ἐπικῷ κύκλῳ, ὡς καὶ ὃλα δράματα ποιῆσαι καταχολουθῶν τῇ ἐν τούτῳ μεθοποίη.

In his excellent discussion of the Sophoclean fragments, Stefan Radt2)
tries hard to come to terms with the meaning of the two statements in the *Life*. He finds the first especially troublesome, reluctantly accepting Welcker’s explanation that the *Life* author was claiming for Sophocles the practice of finding subjects for his plays in allusions within the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* to stories both from the wider Trojan cycle and from other epic cycles altogether, such as the allusion to the story of Meleager in *Iliad* Book 9). Radt finds such a claim forced, and suggests that the *Life* author might have been going out of his way to make Sophocles appear to be as ‘Homeric’ as possible, perhaps as a means of promoting one side of an ancient argument, the other side of which emphasised Sophocles’ more obvious subject matter debt to the epic cycle). This general approach to the *Life* statement is certainly possible, but it does seem difficult to believe that the anonymous author could have thought that he could convince his readers that Sophocles was likely to have turned to incidental Homeric references to epic stories suitable for dramatic treatment, rather than to direct elaborations of such stories in the cyclic epics themselves.

Radt finds the second statement καὶ τὴν Ὁδύσσεαν δὲ ἐν πολλοῖς δράμασιν ἀπογράφεται much easier to explain. What the *Life* author has in mind here, Radt argues, are “die vielen Anklänge an einzelne Züge, Motive, Wendungen u. dgl. der Odyssee”, of which an example is then immediately given in παρετμολογεῖτε δὲ καθ’ Ὄμηρον καὶ τούνομα τοῦ Ὁδύσσσεας. Radt goes on to argue that the *Life* discussion, as it continues, reflects an ancient appreciation that Sophocles bestowed on his dramas an Homeric χάρις. What is under the spotlight is not plot material but individual elements and artistic touches of the type later to be stressed by Eustathius.

Now there is no denying the extent of the Homeric colouring in Sophocles which Radt identifies. However, his analysis of the *Life* passage glosses over a real difficulty which is that the Homeric colouring in Sophocles is by no means exclusively derived from the *Odyssey*. As is well known, there is a wealth of *Iliadic* reminiscence in the *Ajax*, and the *Iliad* figures prominently in the background to passages such as the chariot race in *Electra*. Significantly too it is the *Iliad* which provides Eustathius with so many of his Sophoclean Homerisms. And it is reasonable to assume that Iliadic colouring as well as Odyssean will have been a feature of many of the lost plays too. Why, then, does the *Life* author pick out the *Odyssey* for exclusive mention?

In an earlier paper concerned specifically with Sophocles’ *Electra*), I argued that, quite apart from all the individual Homeric touches, Sophocles might be seen in this play to have built his basic ‘return and revenge’ structure on the central pattern of the *Odyssey*, starting from a prologue which echoes the landing of Odysseus on Ithaca in *Odyssey* Book 13. In a subsequent paper on the *Philoctetes*), I have further argued that in this play too Sophocles might be seen to be following a basic Odyssean pattern, in having Odysseus make landfall in an environment strongly