



Communicating Identity:  
The Significance of Epithets in Homer's *Odyssey*

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## Abstract

Epithets are one of most characteristic elements of Homeric epic style. Yet, despite their inherent beauty, Homer's winged words have not always received the attention they deserve. Since the rise of Milman Parry's structuralist theories at the beginning of the twentieth-century, Homer's epithets have been considered merely 'decorative insofar as they are neither essential to the immediate context nor modeled especially for it' (Burkert, 1992: 116). The epithets only use, therefore, is to help fill the metrical requirements of a hexameter line. Despite subsequent revisions of Parry's oral theories, there still remains a "Parryist Hangover" when it comes to our understanding and appreciation of Homer's epithets. This legacy is best felt in the most recent translations of Homer which still consider Homer's repetitive epithets 'moments to skip' for a modern, highly literate, audience (Wilson, 2018: 84). Equally, one may find the same assumptions in Homeric Commentaries, where analysis and discussion of epithets is almost entirely overlooked. To date there has been no comprehensive analysis of their purpose. The aim of this thesis is to correct this oversight, combining statistical analysis with literary methodologies in an attempt to determine the role that pronoun epithets play in the communication of identity in Homer's *Odyssey*.

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'The minute gradations of rank that entitled one to "most excellent", "most distinguished", or "most illustrious" were not empty words, but marked out a place in society, determining matters of etiquette and precedence.'

~ Matthew Innes

## INTRODUCTION

### The “Parry Question”

A poet with his eye fixed chiefly on metrical economy could never have produced either the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*.<sup>1</sup>

Milman Parry produced the last extensive corpus on Homeric epithets nearly one hundred years ago. The impact of this work caused such fundamental changes to Homeric scholarship that it has challenged and frustrated Homerists ever since. At its core *L'épithète traditionnelle dans Homère*, along with Parry's other works (now collected in a volume by his son Adam Parry<sup>2</sup>), established two main hypotheses: first, that fixed positions of nominative noun-epithet formulas within the hexameter line prove that Homer – and by extension, all oral poetry – is entirely formulaic in its construction and ergo; that, in the poet's need to extemporaneously weave together a narrative from a bank of pre-established formulas, he cannot have been concerned with the aesthetic style or meaning of his epithets.<sup>3</sup> In short, the intransigent principles of ‘formulaic economy’ (as Page later dubbed them) prove that the oral poet was forced to construct his poem from a collection of pre-existing stock lines in the moment of performance – rather than, for example, reciting (all, or part of,) his song from memory – and as such he had no freedom to prioritize the meaning of a word meaning over the metre.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Austin (1982): 63.

<sup>2</sup> In: Parry, A. (1971), hereafter *MHV*.

<sup>3</sup> The extension to “all oral poetry” supported by his, and Lord's, field research in Yugoslavia, see: *MHV*: 421-478, and Lord (1960). The alternative plural ‘formulae’ is used in mathematical and scientific contexts, while ‘formulas’ is traditionally reserved for general writing and is therefore used in this manner throughout.

<sup>4</sup> Page (1959): 224. Parry, for example, remarked that the poet is guided by ‘considerations of versification and in no way by sense’ and that the purpose of the epithet is ‘to help the poet fit a noun into a line... once the noun has been fitted in... the epithet has no further function’ *MHV*: 149, 165. Likewise Page says, in summary of Parry: ‘For this one idea, “the sea,” and for

These two axiomatic hypotheses have since been challenged. The first premise: that oral poetry is fundamentally formulaic, was initially sustained by Parry through a combination of linguistic (data from the Homeric poems), and comparative evidence (anthropological field-work in Yugoslavia). The linguistic evidence was questioned by scholars like Hainsworth who, in 1968, produced a thesis which challenged those Homeric scholars who had readily adopted and expanded Parry's structuralist claims.<sup>5</sup> In *The Flexibility of the Homeric Formula*, Hainsworth objected to the sweeping conclusions attributed to all Homeric 'formula' which Parry had based solely on the evidence of nominative pronoun-epithet word groups. Nominative pronoun epithets almost exclusively appear in the introduction of speeches, which is where some of the most verbally and metrically fixed lines are to be expected in any recorded dialogue (consider, for example, the number of times the likes of "he said"/"she replied" appear in any book). Hainsworth reasonably postulated that the nominative pronoun-epithet word groups upon which Parry had based his theories were untypical examples of epithet phrases and were therefore not likely to be representative of the range of 'phrase-patterns' in Homer.<sup>6</sup>

In order to either confirm, or deny, Parry's conclusions, Hainsworth focused his analysis on all of the noun-epithet phrases which belong to two metrical units (- u u - ū / u u - ū, e.g. ὠκέες ἵπποι, or μέγα πῆμα) in order to examine the extent to which the components are used flexibly, or rigidly.<sup>7</sup> His findings demonstrated that these phrase-patterns are not

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its expression in noun + epithet phrases only, [the poet] relied upon his memory to provide him with a ready-made formula for almost every requirement... He has no freedom to select his adjectives: he must adopt whatever combination of words is supplied by tradition for a given part of the verse; and that traditional combination brings with it an adjective which may or may not be suitable to the context': Page (1959): 225-6.

<sup>5</sup> Hainsworth (1968). At the time Parry's theories could be found in influential Homeric scholarship such as: Severyns (1943); Page (1959); Kirk (1962), and of course Lord (1960).

<sup>6</sup> Hainsworth (1968): 14-16, 110-112.

<sup>7</sup> Hainsworth (1968): 11-12.

fixed to their metrical positions, but that about half of the - u u - ū, and about a third of the u u - ū units are either modified, expanded, or separated, where necessary.<sup>8</sup> Hainsworth's conclusion – that Homeric formulas are flexible more often than they are fixed – was therefore distinctly opposite to Parry's. Thus he suggested that the oral poet actually relied on the inherent flexibility of his language, but that these phrases may have become ossified through frequency of use, particularly when they occur in the more naturally formulaic parts of the poem (such as dialogue).<sup>9</sup>

The sorts of noun-epithet phrases which become ossified are more likely to be those studied by Parry: in the nominative cases which are used to introduce speech. Therefore, given that Parry was right with regard to at least some percentage of 'fixed' formulaic lines, the argument can still be made that singers of a given poetic tradition may have shared a collection of these 'stock' lines (one of the main tenets of the Parryist theory).<sup>10</sup>

Parry's supposition was initially supported in other comparative literature. Rychner, for example, through an application of Parryist theories, identified what appeared to be evidence for just such a shared reservoir among poets of the *chansons de geste* by noting that certain formulas were typically used to describe battle episodes across multiple works.<sup>11</sup> However, the theory was later challenged by Maurice Delbouille, who demonstrated that the majority of formulas in any given *chanson de geste* are exclusive to the poem and therefore to each individual author.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Hainsworth (1968): chapters 5, 6, and 7 respectively.

<sup>9</sup> He was later supported in this by Hoekstra (1969). See also: O'Neill (1942): 103-178; Minton (1965): 241-253, and Clark (2004): 120-126.

<sup>10</sup> Magoun (1953): 446-447.

<sup>11</sup> Rychner (1955).

<sup>12</sup> Delbouille (1959): 295-408: 354. There is also evidence which suggests that the poets of the *chansons de geste* may not even have been oral: Bumke (1991): 521-2.

In support of this finding, Wathelet-Willem argued that – due to factors of individual preference – there could be no substantial collection of pre-fabricated formulas shared by improvising bards.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, even if it were possible to prove the existence of a shared reservoir of formulas, it seems absurd to assume that any poet would restrict themselves to the words and phrases in use by their competitors, instead of striving for originality of the kind lauded by Homer himself.<sup>14</sup> The supposition that a selection of pre-prepared, shared, formulaic expressions were somehow stored in the folk-memory of generations of bardic performers is therefore unsupported by comparative evidence.<sup>15</sup>

Further arguments against Parry’s theory of formulaic oral composition from comparative literature were collected by Douglas Young who comprehensively demonstrated that there are no set rules governing the construction of oral poetry.<sup>16</sup> In his 1967 paper Young provided examples of illiterate oral poets who compose without formula, as well as literate poets whose works are demonstrably more formulaic than Homer’s. He identified, for example, the illiterate poet Duncan Bàn Macintyre (1724-1812) who mentally composed the 554 line poem *Moladh Beinn Dobhrain* over fourteen years, thus demonstrating that illiterate poets can construct verse to at least the same length as a single Homeric book, and memorize it for performance, without the requirements of pre-existing stock formulas, or extemporaneous composition.<sup>17</sup> Young also found early, literate, poets whose works

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<sup>13</sup> Wathelet-Willem *et al.* (1964): 705-27.

<sup>14</sup> *Odyssey* 1.351-352:

τὴν γὰρ ἀοιδὴν μᾶλλον ἐπικλείουσ’ ἄνθρωποι,  
ἢ τις ἀκούοντεςσι νεωτάτη ἀμφιπέληται.

Another possibility, of course, is that Homer is here referring to his *own* ‘new song’, and that *other* poets drew from collective “stock” formulas.

<sup>15</sup> This is something even Lord considered: Lord (1953):126-129, and: Lord (1960): 43. See also: Austin (1982): 17.

<sup>16</sup> Young (1967): 279-324. For more on the value of this contribution: Wender (1978): 5-6.

<sup>17</sup> Young (1967): 284-5. For the poem see: Thomson (1993), and for its analysis see: Ban MacIntyre (1866): 53-57.

are more formulaic than Homer's, such as the Anglo-Saxon *Cynewulf* (fl. 9<sup>th</sup> century CE), 20 percent of whose verses consist of, or contain, repeated phrases.<sup>18</sup>

Young also presented evidence from the European tradition. He demonstrated that the formulaic *chansons de geste* were composed by literate, Latin-reading, *trouvères* who wrote lays to be memorized and performed by the *jongleurs*.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, the Gaelic court poets, who wrote in formulaic verse, were described by John MacInnes as 'highly literate' in comparison with their oral counterparts who 'compose[d] without using formulaic expressions at all'.<sup>20</sup> Young's impressive range of examples provides a substantial contrast to Parry's own comparative findings, not least because of their closer chronological proximity to Homer than twentieth-century Yugoslavia.<sup>21</sup>

The combined findings of these philologists and comparative historians have undermined the groundwork of Parry's initial conclusion that the oral poet composed live, and also that he wove his composition together from a collection of fixed, stock formulas. Instead, the evidence suggests that, for centuries, poets across Europe have composed both with and without fixed phrases, and either from memory or extemporaneously. The weight of these findings over the years has led many Homeric scholars away from Parry's theory of the fixity of Homeric 'formula', and yet they are still plagued by the inescapable conclusion that the oral poet utilized formula to at least some extent. Thus a conflict has arisen in the mind of the Homerist between the presence of formulaic patterns, and the

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<sup>18</sup> Cook (1900): lxxxii; Diamond (1959): 228–41; Bradley (1982): 217; Chadwick & Chadwick (1986): 478, see also; Zacher (2002): 379.

<sup>19</sup> Bumke (1991): 521-2.

<sup>20</sup> Private correspondence recorded in: Young (1967): 285.

<sup>21</sup> For more criticism on the utility of Parry's modern day linguistic comparisons, see: Austin (1982): 17-18.

innate instinct that all poets – however “primitive” – are entitled to complete freedom within their compositions.

The dichotomous cloud of the Parry Question is the ‘archetypal schism’ – acknowledged by Homeric scholars – which has divided us all into Parryists ‘of one shade or another’.<sup>22</sup> For the Hard-Parryists, the weight of the fixed oral tradition behind Homer’s epics means that any poetic aesthetic found contained therein must be a mere by-product of formulaic oral composition and it is thereby fruitless to study Homer with any kind of literary methodology. Conversely, for the Soft-Parryists, the original principles of formulaic economy have since been so substantially negated that they find the literary approach to Homer is once more a valuable field of criticism, but that the good critic will take artefacts from the oral tradition (such as the crystalized phrases identified by Hainsworth) carefully into account.<sup>23</sup>

### The Hard-Parryists

We must not suddenly endow the oral poet with the mentality of the developed literary artist in a written tradition.<sup>24</sup>

Despite the criticisms laid against Parry’s theory of formulaic oral composition – which Shive believed should have been substantial enough to render the majority of his conclusions moot – the years following Parry’s publications saw several scholars readily

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<sup>22</sup> Austin (1976): 226; Austin (1985): 67. Lowenstam calls it the ‘essential question’, Lowenstam (1993): 53.

<sup>23</sup> Pietro Pucci laid much of the groundwork for this. His methodological approach to the Parry Question led him to the conclusion that the Homeric formula, far from being a ‘precise linguistic entity’ is actually a ‘modern critical tool’ which allows us to better understand Homeric diction, but which does not prevent us from reading meaningful intent behind the words of Homer: Pucci (1995): 239. See also; Pucci (1993): 151-290.

<sup>24</sup> Lord (1960): 156.



accept and, expand upon, his structuralist conclusions.<sup>25</sup> In 1955 Denys Page produced a monograph in which he extended Parry's theory of formulaic economy to include both the plot and structure of Homer's *Odyssey*.<sup>26</sup> He demonstrated that the presence and construction of repeated narrative segments – much like Parry's formulaic phrases, but on a grander scale – were further evidence of a pre-existing oral tradition from which the poet wove his master narrative. A few years later, he used inscriptional evidence for the Trojan War to 'substantially increase' Parry's findings; this time demonstrating that the *Iliad* was indeed constructed from earlier poems 'welded together' so as to compose something new.<sup>27</sup>

While Page was defending Parry with further formulaic examples from the epics and their tradition, his contemporary Frederick Combellack was busy contesting the 'pet passages' of scholars who were beginning to write in defence of Homer's artistic freedom and authorial intent.<sup>28</sup> In his 1959 paper 'Milman Parry and Homeric Artistry' Combellack argued that Parry's findings had removed 'an entire area of normal literary criticism' from the field of Homeric scholarship: namely the critics' ability to identify 'stylistic artistry' in Homer in the same manner they would of any other poet.<sup>29</sup> While he calls this conclusion 'regrettable', Combellack was certain that the scholar could no longer confidently identify any poetic intention behind any scenes in Homer.<sup>30</sup> To Combellack, the beauty scholars were then defending in Homer – such as the 'tender irony' Ruskin read into *Iliad* 3.243-4,

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<sup>25</sup> Shive (1987).

<sup>26</sup> Page (1955).

<sup>27</sup> Page (1959), and Kirk (1961): 14.

<sup>28</sup> Combellack (1959): 198.

<sup>29</sup> Combellack (1959): 193, 196, 205. Carroll Moulton similarly remarked that 'all literary criticism of the Homeric poems must be radically altered by the Parry-Lord hypothesis', (1977): 12.

<sup>30</sup> Combellack (1959): 195.

or the pleasing artistry Bowra discerned in *Iliad* 4.104 – were merely ‘coincidental’ side-effects of the formulaic tradition, not intentionally meant by the poet at all.<sup>31</sup>

Twenty-five years later Combellack returned to what he had called the ‘profitless path’ of Homeric creativity in light of the numerous efforts scholars had made to identify particular aspects of Homer which might be considered evidence for his genius.<sup>32</sup> In his ironically titled ‘Homer the Innovator’ Combellack dismissed arguments presented by the likes of Renata von Scheliha (1943) and J. A. Scott (1944) – that it is possible to identify those characters which Homer had invented himself – on the grounds that such pursuits are ‘the last resort of despair’ of searchers after Homeric originality.<sup>33</sup> He then applied the same summary treatment to those who sought original (and thus possibly also invented) episodes, such as the exchange between Akhilleus and Aeneas in *Iliad* 20. These Combellack deftly twisted into evidence supporting Parry’s formulaic theories: it is actually ‘the standard method of composition [which has here] caused the poet to retain features... that do not fit the context’.<sup>34</sup> Given the unmitigated conclusions of his earlier work, and his need to return to the same conclusions despite over a quarter of a century of progress away from Hard-Parryism, Combellack’s summary dismissal of those arguments which favoured Homeric innovation seems to suggest that he might have been fitting the evidence to suit his pre-supposition (that there cannot be originality in Homer), rather than truly appreciating each argument for their own merit. Judging by these articles, Combellack is a Hard-Parryist indeed.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> For Ruskin, see: Cook & Wedderburn (1904): 213. Bowra (1958): 83. Combellack (1959): 208.

<sup>32</sup> Combellack (1959): 195.

<sup>33</sup> Combellack (1976): 47.

<sup>34</sup> Combellack (1976): 52.

<sup>35</sup> By 1982, he still believed Homer’s epithets are ‘used almost automatically, without conscious thought’ but conceded that Homer ‘may now and then have chosen an epithet for its effectiveness’, Combellack (1982): 371.

He gives most consideration to two unusual applications of epithet formula which appear to make the strongest case for considerations of context: the instances of στεροπηγερέα Ζεύς and μέγαθυμος Ἀχιλλεύς.<sup>36</sup> With regard to the former, Combellack remarked that the typical epithet for Zeus: νεφεληγερέα ('cloud-gathering'), occurs twenty-two times in the *Iliad* and eight in the *Odyssey*. However, at *Iliad* 16.298 only, Homer exchanges the typical epithet for the metrically equivalent *hapax*: στεροπηγερέτης ('lightning-gathering').<sup>37</sup> Why then should Homer – in this singular instance – select a metrically equivalent epithet if the usual, and far better known, νεφεληγερέα would adequately fit the metre? According to Parry's principle of formulaic economy, the poet should select the most obvious and common "stock" epithet regardless of context. The most logical explanation for the employment of this alternative relies on its context: that, in this scene, Zeus is moving the dense cloud *away* and therefore it would be senseless for him to simultaneously be gathering it in.<sup>38</sup>

An argument for context can also be applied to the second example. *Iliad* 23.168 is the only instance where Akhilleus is given the epithet μέγαθυμος ('great-hearted') instead of something more usual such as πόδας ὠκύς ('swift-footed').<sup>39</sup> In this example Combellack acknowledged Bowra's assertion that it would be inappropriate to stress Akhilleus' swiftness of foot while he is grieving over Patroklos, and that, instead, a more appropriate

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<sup>36</sup> *Iliad* 16.298 and 23.168 respectively. Lowenstam later identified the instances of 'broad-shouldered' in the *Iliad* where the poet modifies his description of Thersites (2.265-266), so as not to contradict his previous description of the man as 'hunched' (2.217-218): Lowenstam (1993): 36-37.

<sup>37</sup> On *hapax legomena* in Homer, Richardson once remarked that their prevalence 'suggests a greater awareness of the force of the individual word than some have suspected' and also that we should be dubious of the claim that works which contain so many unique words (35% *Iliad* and 33% *Odyssey*) could possibly be so heavily formulaic as Parry claims: Bremer *et al.* (1996): 183, and 167. For a full list of Homeric *hapax*, see: Kumpf (1984), also: Pope (1985): 1-8.

<sup>38</sup> Combellack (1976): 54.

<sup>39</sup> Translations of epithets from the *Odyssey* can be found in the *Catalogue of Epithets*.

emphasis for this scene might be on the greatness of his heart, which would serve to magnify his feelings in this episode.<sup>40</sup>

However, rather than support an argument from contextual appropriateness, Combellack instead offers an alternate rationalization for both of these examples: that the poet wished to prevent acoustic repetition.<sup>41</sup> Had Homer kept the more common epithets in each instance there would be the following repetitions:

*Iliad* 16.298:

κινήση πυκινήν **νεφέλην νεφεληγερέτα** Ζεύς

*Iliad* 23.168:

δημόν ἐλών ἐκάλυψε νέκυν **πόδας** ὠκύς Ἀχιλλεὺς

ἔς **πόδας** ἐκ κεφαλῆς

Another explanation for phonetic quality which Combellack failed to consider was proposed by Stanford, namely that the particular choice of epithet *μεγάθυμος* in this scene enhances the phonetic quality of *ἐκάλυψε νέκυν* by repeating the ε-ά-u sound.<sup>42</sup> Stanford repeatedly asserts the value of epithets in both their semantic and especially acoustic capacity, and argues that on these grounds the repetition of formula can become significant.<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, despite the range of alternative arguments in favour of contextual appropriateness, Combellack denies any proposition that these two examples represent a *deliberate* movement of the poet away from the metrical impositions of “stock”

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<sup>40</sup> Bowra (1962): 31.

<sup>41</sup> Combellack (1976): 54.

<sup>42</sup> Stanford (1969): 15. See **Soft Parryists** below for more on Stanford.

<sup>43</sup> Stanford (1971): 48-50.

epithets. Instead he concludes that the ‘ultimate total’ of such contextually appropriate examples are unlikely to ever be of a sufficient number, or magnitude, to prove Homeric innovation. Again he concludes that – given Parry’s findings – the likelihood that these few instances are merely coincidental far outweighs the likelihood that they were intended by the poet.<sup>44</sup>

What Combellack perhaps failed to realize was that Parry himself initially postulated that the patterns of epithet use he had identified in Homer may simply be a poetic (that is, aesthetic) expression of proper epic style, but he soon dismissed this interpretation in favour of his theory of formulaic oral composition.<sup>45</sup> It is unfortunate that he devoted more of his work to the latter of these two interpretations and concluded that the purpose of the epithet formula is explicitly to aid oral composition. The problems with this conclusion are twofold. First of all his ‘Principle of Formulaic Economy’ does not *a priori* prove the purpose of these formula, merely their presence. Therefore there is no reason why stylistic explanations for their presence (such as the contextual, or euphonic examples from the *Iliad* above) should not be considered before, or alongside, any metrical concerns. Secondly, there is also no reason to assume, as Parry does, that the two interpretations (of style and metre) are mutually exclusive. The only reason to believe that the poet was not capable of balancing considerations of style and metre against word-choice is that the poet was too “primitive” (i.e. illiterate) to do so.

Parry was admittedly not the first to insist that *poesie* – the stylized poetic language of imagination – only came into existence with the introduction of written literature. He was

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<sup>44</sup> Combellack (1976): 55.

<sup>45</sup> This is evidenced in the progression from ‘The Traditional Epithet in Homer’ (1928) to ‘Studies in the Epic Technique of Oral Verse-Making’ (1930), both reproduced in: *MHV*: pp.1-190, and pp.266-324 respectively.

no doubt influenced in this thinking by contemporary philologist Marcel Jousse.<sup>46</sup> Despite his repeated insistence on what he might call the primitive aesthetic of Homer's formulaic style, Parry is careful never to attribute *poesie* to the oral poet.<sup>47</sup> This dichotomy – between oral formula and poetic style – persisted after Parry in the works of his followers. Frederick Combellack warned the reader not to see beauty in Homeric language where it was not intended and Albert Lord tells the reader not to find intentional beauty in Homer, particularly in his epithets.<sup>48</sup> The desire of Jousse, Parry, Lord, Page and Combellack to apply the precision of scientific methodologies to the aesthetic intractability of poetry is not perhaps surprising given the rise of structuralism at the time, and yet the same fallacies revealed in Jousse should have been applied, in their turn, to Parry.<sup>49</sup>

However, what is astonishing is the ready adoption of Parry's conclusions among classical scholars, particularly those conclusions which undermined their literary methodologies by claiming that the most memorable parts in Homer, such as his epithets, are inherently meaningless. Austin described the Hard-Parryist approach as the 'orthodox opinion' of Homeric composition in the 1970s, and argues that as late as 2009 'no one dares write of Homer' as they did before Parry because of his 'devastating analysis' of Homeric aesthetic.<sup>50</sup> The ready acceptance of Parry's theory of Formulaic Economy for

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<sup>46</sup> Jousse (1925): 127-128, 131.

<sup>47</sup> Austin (1982): 19.

<sup>48</sup> Combellack (1959): *passim*, and Lord (1960): 66.

<sup>49</sup> Lord (1967): 45-46; Austin (1982): 20, 63, and Vivante (1982): 168. See also, Eagleton (1983): 15-46, 79-109. Equally unsurprising was Parry's desire to apply an anthropological comparison to Homer, given the popularity of anthropological linguistics made famous at the time by the works of his contemporary Levi-Strauss.

<sup>50</sup> Austin (1982): 11, 12, and Austin (2009): 69. He comments in particular on Edwards (1968): 257-283. Likewise Nagy initially believed that Parry 'caused a serious problem of esthetics [*sic.*]' which could only be corrected through an examination of fiction which predated Greek hexameter (Nagy (1979): 2), but he also insisted that the 'outraged reactions' of scholars were a result of their either misunderstanding or over-interpreting Parry's theories (in the 1990 reprint of the same: 22-23). Though it is hard to accept that the most straightforward reading of Parry's assertions, such as those of n.6 above, could be construed as a misinterpretation of his intent.

over half a century is particularly worrisome given that his conclusions seem to invalidate the very premise of ancient literature studies; which is to explain, develop, and expand the meaning and understanding of words.

## The Soft-Parryists

I have tried to cure Homer from blindness, and instead put a pen in his hand.<sup>51</sup>

Advocates of the Parry school, thankfully, did not hinder scholars from seeking further examples of poetic genius in Homer's epics.<sup>52</sup> Many scholars today would likely identify as Soft-Parryists who place at least some value on the aesthetic qualities of Homer's epics. There is also a greater likelihood today for the Homeric scholar to write from an assumption of poetic unity and aesthetic intention. Some twenty-first century scholars even pursue their studies without so much as a nod to the Parry Question: in 2004 Jeffrey Barnouw, for example, relegated his discussion of Parry to the Appendix, while Nikoletta Kanavou's 2014 study of Homeric names (and, on occasion, their associated epithets) fails to mention him altogether.<sup>53</sup> This transformation in scholarly opinion has nevertheless been the product of a gradual, generational process which has undermined Parry's conclusions against Homeric artistry and innovation, while simultaneously offering a range of alternative explanations for the presence of formulaic phrasing (besides metre).

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<sup>51</sup> Shive (1987): 139,

<sup>52</sup> Whitman (1958): 113; Beck (1964): 40 n.2; Griffin (1983): 84-88, and Shive (1987): 124. Despite his unerring support of Page and Parry even Kirk touches upon the subject: Kirk (1962): 81.

<sup>53</sup> Barnouw (2004): 347-354, and Kanavou (2015).

William B. Stanford was one of the first close contemporaries of Parry to defend Homeric innovation in spite of the Parryist school. Nowhere does Stanford deviate from the assumption that Homer was a conscious writer capable of aesthetic artistry. In the same decade as Parry's theses, Stanford produced his own works which both approached Homer squarely from a perspective of literary criticism.<sup>54</sup> Within these works, Stanford reverently described the language of the *Iliad* as grand and rich, and the *Odyssey* as flexible and delicate, and spoke of the poet exploiting linguistic ambiguity with subtlety and dramatic effect.<sup>55</sup>

This belief in an intentional Homer incentivised Stanford to criticise Parry on the grounds of the latter's reliance on 'sweeping assertions' – no doubt caused by a 'youthful yearning for intellectual absolutes' – which led to his 'inconsistent' and 'idiosyncratic' interpretations of the data.<sup>56</sup> Stanford believed that Parry's absolutism manifested itself most clearly in his fundamentalist separation of aesthetic and formulaic construction, as well as in the plethora of unambiguous phrases which litter his works, such as 'invariably', 'unquestionably' and 'must'.<sup>57</sup> Stanford ultimately called Parry's oral-formulaic concept of poetic composition 'hardly convincing' given that it 'conflicts with a view widely held by poets... that metrical and other formal patterns *stimulate* rather than *confine* poetic expression'.<sup>58</sup>

Though Stanford's explicit criticism of Parry came 35 years after Parry's death his paper seems to have been motivated by the 1971 publication, and translation, of Parry's

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<sup>54</sup> Stanford (1936), and Stanford (1939).

<sup>55</sup> Stanford (1939): 98.

<sup>56</sup> Stanford (1971): 51, 43.

<sup>57</sup> Stanford (1971): 43, 37.

<sup>58</sup> Stanford (1971): 39 (my emphasis). He was not alone in this belief, Bassett had earlier described Parry's theories as 'not logical or convincing', in Bassett (1938): 15-17.



collected works earlier in the same year, which Stanford feared would subject young scholars to ‘the full force of Parry’s powerful advocacy of his view’.<sup>59</sup> The publication of Parry’s works in English was a phenomenon, Stanford clearly believed, which would revert a new generation of scholars back to the structuralist view. His fears seem to have been largely unmerited judging by the next generation of scholarship who – whether directly motivated by Stanford’s criticism or not – made a definite move away from the views of Lord, Combellack, and Page.

In defence of an intentional Homer, Stanford primarily argued that the poet of the *Iliad* deliberately selected words so that he might play on their sonic qualities, citing the assonance of: τῶν μὲν Πρόθοος θοὸς ἡγεμόνευε, and ἔς πόλεμον πωλήσειαι, from *Iliad* 2.758 and 5.350 as examples.<sup>60</sup> His interest in Homeric phonics as an explanation for Homeric formula was expanded in his 1969 article published in *Hermathena*.<sup>61</sup> Here he argued that in their concern for an essentially metrical and syntactic meaning, scholars had overlooked the oral, or rather aural, nature of Homeric poetry; an error not made by the ancient scholiasts.<sup>62</sup> In both his 1967 book and 1969 article Stanford presented a series of examples in support of his belief that the poet intentionally modified lines in order to incorporate euphonic qualities, such as the consonantal μάλα μέρμερα μήσατο ἔργα of *Iliad* 10.289.<sup>63</sup> Elsewhere Homer appears to have modified formula in order to avoid euphonic clashes, such as sigmatism (the following of a terminal sigma –ς which other

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<sup>59</sup> Stanford (1971): 36. It appears that Stanford reserved his criticism for publication until after the death of Parry’s son, and Stanford’s friend: Adam Parry, who died in early June 1971.

<sup>60</sup> Stanford (1939): 100; ‘swift Prothoos’ (*Iliad* 2.758) is not mentioned anywhere else in the *Iliad* and thus appears here as a tautologous and onomastic pun on a generic heroic characteristic (‘swiftness’) commonly found in names of Iliadic heroes such as Alkathoos (12.93 &c.), Areithoos (7.8 &c.), Hippothoos (2.840 &c.), Thoon (5.152) and Thootes (12.342). In the *Odyssey*: Boethoides (4.31 &c.), and Nausithoos (6.7 &c.), see: Kanavou (2015): 136-137. For more on this, see: von Kamptz (1982): 73-4.

<sup>61</sup> Stanford (1969): 14-17.

<sup>62</sup> Stanford (1967): 16, 29, chapters 3-5.

<sup>63</sup> The alliteration does not scan in English. Transliterated it reads: *mala mermera mēsato erga*.

sigma or zeta sounds) which would occur more frequently if the epithet Κρονίδης Ζεύς was more common.<sup>64</sup> Stanford's belief in an intentional, artistic Homer was therefore profound enough for him to assume a poetic mastery which went beyond the merely syntactical or semantic and into the aural. A Homer of this calibre is far from Parry's mindless – if sometimes lucky – assembler of “stock” metre.

Soon after Stanford's 1971 critique of Parry, Norman Austin produced his own seminal work, which simultaneously attacked Parry's data, and proposed an alternative explanation for the presence of repeated phrase-patterns.<sup>65</sup> In *Archery at the Dark of the Moon* (1983) Austin sought to present a synthesis of language and structure through an insightful and subtle study of the poetic value of Homer's *Odyssey*. Austin's work has since been described as ‘a most valuable corrective to the destructive criticism and overconfident judgements’ of other Homeric scholars.<sup>66</sup> Given that the majority of *Archery at the Dark of the Moon* is devoted to an aesthetic defence of Homeric formula, it is likely that this statement from Willcock's review is aimed at zealots of the Hard-Parryist school, and suggests that Austin's alternative, poetic, interpretation of Parry's data was a welcome change to at least some Homer enthusiasts by the late twentieth century.

Austin remains adamant that Homer was a mindful innovator, and so he devoted the introduction of his work almost exclusively to the question of Homeric artistry, and begged the field of Homeric criticism to ‘reorient itself’ away from the ‘relentless engines of demolition’ caused by the evolutionary theorists’ insistence of the primordial, and

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<sup>64</sup> Stanford (1969): 14-15. The epithet is more commonly expressed as Κρονίδης on its own. For more on the connection between euphonics and etymology, see: Macleod (1982): 50-53.

<sup>65</sup> Austin (1982): 6-7.

<sup>66</sup> Willcock (1978): 144.

therefore primitive, poet.<sup>67</sup> Unlike other scholars, who had largely attempted to defend Homer using only single instances of words or phrases (what Combellack called their ‘pet passages’) in their attempts to claw away from Parry’s intractable tables any remaining semblances of poetic intent, Austin presented a re-evaluation of Parry’s data comprehensive enough to provide a ‘substantial corrective’ to the argument for formulaic composition.<sup>68</sup>

Like Hainsworth, Austin began with Parry’s data and questioned the findings which had been drawn from the statistically insignificant selection of nominative formulas. He argued that, while Parry’s tables may give the illusion that πολύμητις Ὀδυσσεύς belongs to the “stock” nominative formula, the tables themselves provide no context for this formula, namely that it introduces Odysseus’ speech 95 percent of the time. Nor is this the only nominative formula Homer uses to introduce speech, for example πεπνυμένος Τηλέμαχος is used by the narrator to introduce Telemakhos’ speech 100 percent of the time. Furthermore, he argued, if epithets are inherently meaningless and applied wherever they fit the metre, then by a law of averages we would expect to find the metrically equivalent πολύμητις Ἀχιλλεύς or πόδας ὠκὺς Ὀδυσσεύς at least as often as we find πολύμητις Ὀδυσσεύς and πόδας ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεύς, yet no such instances exist. Instead, ‘the poet is prevented from making such a mistake’ due to his knowledge of the epithets’ inherent meaning.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Austin (1982): 9, 1. See also Chapter Two of the same (pp.81-129), first published: Austin (1973): 219-274. Lest it seem that Austin is not referring to Parry in his reference to ‘evolutionary theorists’, it is worth remarking that Theodore Wade-Gery called Parry ‘the Darwin of Homeric studies’ who ‘removed the creative poet from the *Iliad*’ just as Darwin removed God from the universe: Wade-Gery (1952): 38-39.

<sup>68</sup> Willcock (1978): 144.

<sup>69</sup> Austin (1982): 40-47.

Given that there is no *metrical* reason for Homer to prefer one formula over the other, Austin asserts that there must be a ‘conscious attempt at variety’ on the part of the writer based either on context (such as speech) or characterisation.<sup>70</sup> It follows that there must be some connection between the adjectives and the quality of the characters, or their speech, and so we must assume an inherent significance in the deliberate characterisation which makes Odysseus crafty, Telemakhos reasonable, and Akhilleus impetuous.<sup>71</sup> After all, if Odysseus did not speak so very often, the weight of the formula προσέφη πολύμητις Ὀδυσσεύς in Parry’s tables would be almost entirely negated.<sup>72</sup> Austin proposed, therefore, that Homeric epithets – far from having no semantic relevance to their context beyond metrical utility – have clear sensical rules governing their placement: namely, they can be contextually explained by rules and conventions of speech.<sup>73</sup>

While it is unfortunate that Austin here only extends his insight to Homer’s *Odyssey* and appears not to offer opinion on the *Iliad* (perhaps due to his self-proclaimed favouring of the *Odyssey*<sup>74</sup>) it is understandable that he may have wanted to narrow his scope given the other subjects for discussion in the book (namely the themes of recognition and unity).<sup>75</sup> Regardless of its scope, Austin’s book – in particular his tables – are the first demonstrable attempt to examine the pronoun epithet for its contextual propriety on a scale akin to Parry’s. Austin’s conclusions, that the epithet forms ‘an essential part of

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<sup>70</sup> Austin (1982): 29-30. He further argues that the prodigious amount of variation in speech introductions is itself indicative of a poet concerned more with variety than formulaic repetition: 63.

<sup>71</sup> Austin (1982): 40-47. Further examples can be found in Whallon (1999): 113-124.

<sup>72</sup> Austin (1982): 29. He similarly points out that Parry fails to take into account instances where the name occurs on its own (which are the majority of instances): 38-39. See also: Saïd (1998): 46, 52.

<sup>73</sup> Patterns of formula used to introduce speech have been recently examined in: Beck (2012). See also: Edwards (1970): 1-36.

<sup>74</sup> Austin (2009): 68.

<sup>75</sup> This thesis is equally guilty of limiting its discussion to evidence from the *Odyssey*, given not only the limitations of space, but more importantly, the emphasis the *Odyssey* places on the significance of naming in general, see below: **Methodology**.

[character] address', provide the springboard from which this thesis begins in its attempt to find the sorts of 'recognisable patterns' and 'higher principle[s]' which might govern epithet distribution in Homer.<sup>76</sup>

Thanks to scholars such as Austin, Stanford, Hainsworth and Young, Homeric studies had 're-examined, elaborated upon... reconfirmed or partially rejected' the majority of conclusions held by the Hard-Parryist school by the early 1990s.<sup>77</sup> Nevertheless, Parry's fundamental assertions regarding the use of epithets (e.g. that they have a particularised sense) has 'persisted'.<sup>78</sup> In an attempt to re-evaluate this last bastion of the Parryist School, Lowenstam analysed Parry's arguments concerning the insignificance of epithets. In Chapter One of *The Scepter and the Spear*, Lowenstam lists Parry's arguments in the following manner:<sup>79</sup>

1. Metrical convenience accounts for choice and use:
  - a. Epithets are employed in some passages and not others with no seeming contextual reason;
  - b. Epithets are limited to grammatical cases: e.g. Odysseus is πολύμητις in the nominative (86x) but θεῖος in the genitive (29x).
  
2. Some fixed epithets are constantly applied to a large number of characters. For instance, thirty-two different men are characterised as δῖος.

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<sup>76</sup> Austin (1982): 37, 39-40.

<sup>77</sup> Lowenstam (1993): 38.

<sup>78</sup> Lowenstam (1981): 39, also: Lowenstam (1993): 38.

<sup>79</sup> Lowenstam (1993): 38-53, and 39 n.64-67 for Parry references. The four strands of the Parryist theory outlined here are not dissimilar to those identified by Austin, though Lowenstam does not cite him: 'We can observe *metrical pressure* producing such variants as Odusseus or Oduseus, Achilleus or Achileus... More telling still is *the ubiquity of a word like dios* which forms with trisyllabic names... Then there are those myriad lines such as 'swift-footed Akhilleus spoke' *where the epithet seems to owe its presence more to metrical convenience than contextual appropriateness*... Finally... Odysseus may be *polumetis* when his name appears in the *nominative case*, but when his name is in the oblique cases he is given other epithets', in Austin (1982): 16 (my emphasis).

3. The meaning of some traditional epithets is unknown to the poet (and they are therefore not preserved for sense).
4. Epithets are 'often' used irrationally.

The first of these arguments (1a.) had already been challenged by those scholars who have presented specific, unique, examples of appropriate contextual placement. Equally, 1b. had been cogently dealt with by the likes of Austin and Hainsworth. The second of these arguments is, as Lowenstam rightly ascribes, 'not cogent' given that wide distribution does not, of itself, reflect a lack of meaning: many Homeric heroes, for example, claim a divine lineage and so may rightly be described as *δῖος*.<sup>80</sup> With regard to the third argument, Lowenstam remarks that it is 'unconvincing in isolation' particularly given that Homer must have believed that he understood the use of his words – a point elsewhere admitted by Parry himself.<sup>81</sup>

In this manner Lowenstam boils the "Parry Question" down to a single, specific argument:

4. Epithets are 'often' used irrationally.

So-called "irrational epithets" have been identified since antiquity as those epithets which may appear contextually absurd, such as Nausikaa's 'shining' (*φαινός*) but 'soiled' (*ῥυπτόομαι*) laundry.<sup>82</sup> About twenty of these contextually inappropriate epithets were identified in antiquity, but many of them are no longer considered problematic. Aristarchus, for instance, suggested that epithets can denote either a "usual" quality

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<sup>80</sup> Lowenstam (1993): 39. For more on *δῖος*, see: **Chapter Four: Familial Epithets: Divine Heritage.**

<sup>81</sup> Lowenstam (1993): 40, and *MHV*: 248. This example is one of the reasons why scholars such as Bassett and Stanford found Parry's work inconsistent.

<sup>82</sup> *Odyssey* 6.74, 69.

(Nausikaa’s laundry, for example, is usually ‘shining’) or a “particularised” quality (only in this instance it is ‘soiled’, for example).<sup>83</sup> For Aristarchus, the existence of particularized epithets explains any incongruous application by insisting that epithets which may not seem to apply to a particular instance, instead represent essential ideas (of a character, or thing) which are usually appropriate.<sup>84</sup> Other incongruous instances were explained away by changes in the interpretation of meaning: epithets like *διος* and *ἀμύμων* for example, can be considered physical qualities rather than moral ones.<sup>85</sup> Of the twenty or so “irrational epithets” in Homer, only three have stubbornly persisted: Iros’ queenly (*πτόνια*) mother, Penelope’s thick (*παχύς*) hand, and Aigisthos’ “blameless” (*ἀμύμων*) character, all of which appear in the *Odyssey*.<sup>86</sup>

Note that, in his typically absolutist style, Parry holds these few examples up as proof that *all* epithets are inherently nonsensical and therefore can only be metrical fillers. This argument is the precise antithesis of Combellack’s (above). While Combellack claims that the few examples of seemingly contextually appropriate epithets *cannot* prove that all epithets are contextually appropriate, Parry asserts that the few examples of irrational epithets *can* and *do* prove that all epithets are inherently senseless.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> *Scholia* II.2.41, 8.250; Schironi (2018): 332-333; Romer (1912): 346; Apollonius *Homeric Lexicon* 161.20-6, and Porphyry *Homeric Questions on the Iliad* 8.555. See also, Lowenstam (1993): 42-43.

<sup>84</sup> This is another area in which Parry seems inconsistent: at times appealing to a distinction between generic and particularized epithets, and at others ignoring the difference between them: *MHV*: 146.

<sup>85</sup> On the latter, see: Parry, A. A. (1973): 25 n.2. See also: Combellack (1982): 361-372. For the purposes of this thesis, *ἀμύμων* is interpreted as ‘irreproachable’.

<sup>86</sup> 18.5; 21.6, and 1.29 respectively. On the first, see: Lowenstam (1993): 17-30, and Lowenstam (1981): 39-47. On the second, see: Schlesinger (1969): 236-237; Wyatt (1978): 343-344; Eide (1980): 23-26; Austin (1982): 73-74; Eide (1986): 5-17, and: Vergados (2009): 7-20. On the last, see: Parry, A. A. (1973).

<sup>87</sup> *MHV*: 119-24, 128, 151-152, 249, 305 n.2. In his work Parry lists eight instances of ‘the improper assignment of individual epithets’ *διά* x8 to Antikleia and Klytaimnestra; *δῖος* for Eumaios and Paris; *ἀμύμων* to Aigisthos; *ἀντίθεος* to the Suitors; *δαίφρων* to Antimachos; and *ἦρωες* to Demodokos.

In order to assess this claim Lowenstam reintroduces and re-examines some of the so-called “irrational epithets” in Homer – such as Penelope’s ‘thick hand’ and Iros’ ‘queenly’ mother in order to measure the extent to which the poet ‘was sensitive to’ and ‘in control of’ his language.<sup>88</sup> Lowenstam, like Austin and Stanford before him, feels that we are entitled to look for wider significance beyond the purely formulaic when we consider these unusual examples. To that end he outlines six broad approaches which have been applied to “irrational epithets” over the past twenty-two centuries. These are:<sup>89</sup>

1. **Corruption and/or emendation of the text** of the kind proposed by Eustathius, Berard, Miller, Agar, Roemer, and Grashof.<sup>90</sup>
2. **Distinction between generic and particularized epithets** applied to these examples by Rosenmeyer, Ameis and Hentze.<sup>91</sup>
3. **Ornamental, fixed epithets** of the kind proposed by Parry.
4. **Deliberate irony or humour** as suggested by Monro.<sup>92</sup>
5. **That they are appropriate after all** as suggested by Cauer and Stanford.<sup>93</sup>
6. **That they have been misunderstood** as Anne Parry asserted: ‘it is [precisely] the meanings traditionally assigned to such epithets that make them seem inappropriate’.<sup>94</sup>

After a fair appraisal of solutions 1 through 5 (the first three of which can assume the lack of authorial intent in line with Hard-Parryism), Lowenstam uses the last approach as a spring-board for the remainder of his study. He then proceeds to present twenty pages on a discussion of two of the most famous examples of “irrational epithets”: Iros’ ‘queenly’

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<sup>88</sup> Lowenstam (1993): 14.

<sup>89</sup> Lowenstam (1993): 14-17.

<sup>90</sup> Berard (1933): 109; Miller (1868): 308; Agar (1908): 373-375; Romer (1912): 346, and Grashof (1852): 26, all *c.f.* Lowenstam (1993): 15 n.1-5.

<sup>91</sup> Rosenmeyer (1965): 296-297; Ameis & Hentze (1872): 149, all *c.f.* Lowenstam (1993): 16 n.9-10.

<sup>92</sup> Monro (1901): 125, *c.f.* Lowenstam (1993): 16 n.12.

<sup>93</sup> Cauer (1921): 455, and Stanford (1971): 46, *c.f.* Lowenstam (1993): 17 n.13.

<sup>94</sup> Parry, A. A. (1973): 2.



mother and Penelope's 'fat' hand and whether or not they can be used as justification for Parry's assertion that all epithets are meaningless.<sup>95</sup>

From his analysis Lowenstam concludes that Parry's assertion that the poet has 'often' used the epithet irrationally simply does not hold up either on a case-by-case analysis, or even numerically. He questions whether twenty examples out of twenty-seven thousand lines should be consistent enough to be called 'often', let alone used as evidence for a 'rule' of composition.<sup>96</sup> Ultimately, he writes, no 'genuine instances of misused epithets' can be identified and that the argument for fixed, meaningless epithets should be abandoned altogether.<sup>97</sup>

The selection of each epithet must, therefore, be sanctioned by the poet and cannot merely be a result of 'metrical exigencies' which have been 'forced upon the poet' by his tradition.<sup>98</sup> In this relatively brief account of epithet usage Lowenstam does far more than 'push [against] the trend' of Parryism, he all but undermines its founding premise: that meaningless epithets prove the existence of fixed formulas, which in turn proves the existence of an oral poet composing from stock epithets.<sup>99</sup>

The evidence provided by the Soft-Parryists - such as Stanford, Austin and Lowenstam - suggests that if we start from the stipulation that epithets *are* meaningful, then any apparently irrational occurrence can be explained away either through a better understanding of their meaning, or through a better appreciation of their context. For

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<sup>95</sup> Given that ἀμύμων was dealt with at such length by A. A. Parry. Similar examples have been examined by others, such as Shive, who examines 'Akhilleus city-sacker' as a replacement for the more usual 'blameless son of Peleus' in *Iliad* 8.372 in: Shive (1987): 99.

<sup>96</sup> Lowenstam (1993): 53.

<sup>97</sup> Lowenstam (1993): 53.

<sup>98</sup> Lowenstam (1993): 38, also 26, 32.

<sup>99</sup> Hainsworth (1995): 4.

example, when one considers all instances of πόντια in Homer, it becomes clear that it is more likely to mean ‘wedded woman’ than ‘queen’ (for which βασίλεια would be the more appropriate choice).<sup>100</sup> Likewise, contextual analysis of the idle but ‘swift-footed’ Akhilleus at *Iliad* 9.307 suggests that the epithet is being used to establish a deliberate contrast between Akhilleus’ current state and his ultimate potential in pursuing Hektor.<sup>101</sup> Far from *detracting* from the aesthetic value by ignoring contextual meaning, explanations which assume meaning *enhance* our understanding of the beauty of Homer.

The works discussed above have been instrumental in the century-long revision of Parry’s structuralist theories. They have provided both arguments and evidence in support of meaningful epithets in Homer. Yet their examples of epithets from either epic have been rather limited (they examine only unique occurrences of euphony, or formulas for speech contained in Parry’s tables, or specific instances of the so-called “irrational” epithets, for example). To date, no Soft-Parryist has presented a comprehensive study of Homer’s epithets.<sup>102</sup>

The only scholar since Parry to devote a substantial work exclusively to Homeric epithets was Paulo Vivante in 1982. Yet he did so with little to no regard to the Parry school, instead presenting his argument squarely from the field of literary analysis.<sup>103</sup> Vivante’s apparent obliviousness to the “Parry Question” established a unique approach to Homer unencumbered by structuralist theories. For Vivante, the notion that metre is the *raison d’être* for Homeric language is a presumption that must be rejected outright in favour of

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<sup>100</sup> Lowenstam (1981): 40-43.

<sup>101</sup> Where he is repeatedly swift of foot: *Iliad* 22.14, 229, 260, 244. See: Lowenstam (1993): 43, also; Vivante (1982): 175.

<sup>102</sup> James Dee compiled a list of divine epithets in 1994, and another on heroic epithets in 2000 but his work provides no analysis of these epithets: Dee (1994), (2000).

<sup>103</sup> He refers very obliquely to contemporary academic practices here: Vivante (1980): 159, 171-2, and here; Vivante (1982): viii, 163-168.

the primary question of semantics, which is, after all, essential to the reading of any piece of literature, including Homer.<sup>104</sup>

In *The Epithets of Homer* and his earlier paper ‘Men’s Epithets in Homer’, Vivante examined the contextual placement of common noun epithets in order to determine what it is they draw our attention to (or otherwise evoke in some way). Vivante’s main argument is that the presence of an epithet ‘arrest(s) the occasion to the mind’s eye’ and imbue the noun with a ‘sense of decision and purpose’.<sup>105</sup> In short, he argues that the essential relationship between a noun and its epithet is for the epithet to draw attention to its associated noun. For example, the proem of the *Iliad* gives no epithet to the Muse, but does award Akhilleus the epithet Πηληϊάδης (‘Peleus’ son’), thereby drawing the readers’ attention to what is ‘poetically essential’, namely Akhilleus.<sup>106</sup> A better example can be provided by *Iliad* 13.1-6, where epithets are awarded both to Zeus’ eyes, and also the people and places he is looking at, but not to the warriors fighting on the beaches of Troy:<sup>107</sup>

When Zeus had brought the Trojans and Hektor to the ships,  
leaving them alongside [the ships] to bear hardship and woe  
unceasingly, but himself turning back his **shining** eyes,  
looking afar, down to the land of the **horse-herding** Thrakians,  
to the **close-fighting** Mysians, and the **illustrious** Hippemolgi

<sup>104</sup> Vivante (1982): 164.

<sup>105</sup> Vivante (1980): 158; for more on this see: Vivante (1982): vii, 86-100.

<sup>106</sup> Vivante (1980): 158. To this end his argument is not unlike Foley’s notion of ‘traditional referentiality’ which suggest that the epithet is used in the moment in which something (its associated noun) is invoked that exceeds the importance of its literal meaning: Foley (1991): 7, 23.

<sup>107</sup> Epithets have been highlighted for convenience (all translations are my own unless otherwise stated).

Ζεὺς δ’ ἐπεὶ οὖν Τρωῶς τε καὶ Ἑκτορα νηυσὶ πέλασσε,  
τοὺς μὲν ἕα παρὰ τῆσι πόνον τ’ ἐχέμεν καὶ οἴζιν  
νωλεμέως, αὐτὸς δὲ πάλιν τρέπεν ὅσσε **φαεινῶ**  
νόσφιν ἐφ’ **ἵπποπόλων** Θρηκῶν καθορώμενος αἴαν  
Μυσῶν τ’ **ἀγχεμάχων** καὶ **ἀγαυῶν** ἱππημολγῶν  
**γλακτοφάγων** Ἀβίων τε **δικαιοτάτων** ἀνθρώπων.

**the drinkers of horsemilk, and the law-abiding** Abion men.

The effect of this particular distribution of epithets is to distinguish between the Trojans, Hektor and the ships which are mere 'terms of reference' for the scene, and the trajectory of Zeus' gaze, and the people and places he is looking at which are accentuated by their epithets.<sup>108</sup> On the absence of epithets he remarked that 'a complete analysis... would show the many ways in which the lack of epithet reflects a curtailment of perspective'.<sup>109</sup> Vivante believed that interpretations can be inferred from both the absence and presence of epithets, with regard to how they direct the audience's attention to particular parts of the narrative.

While Vivante's work is no doubt a fresh perspective on the purpose of Homeric epithets, unencumbered by the need to defend itself against the Parryist tradition, Vivante devoted the majority of his work to common noun epithets, and thus provides very little discussion of the proper noun epithets most cited by Parry.<sup>110</sup> The reason he provides for this underrepresentation is that this particular category 'present[s] a far greater complexity than [common nouns]' for which 'no easy classification is possible'.<sup>111</sup> In order to approach such a complicated analysis Vivante recommended that a separate study should be undertaken.<sup>112</sup> The purpose of this study, therefore, is to provide just such an analysis and thereby extend the conclusions of Austin and Vivante through a comprehensive examination of pronoun epithets in Homer's *Odyssey*.

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<sup>108</sup> Vivante (1980): 158.

<sup>109</sup> Vivante (1980): 163.

<sup>110</sup> The obscurely titled 'Men's Epithets in Homer' is actually a study of epithets which describe mankind, not individual male characters.

<sup>111</sup> Vivante (1982): 86.

<sup>112</sup> The same conclusion is drawn by one of his reviewers, who finds potential significance in his material but believes that they demand further investigation: Jones (1984): 304-305.

What Vivante does say regarding pronoun epithets is that they are either used to highlight an essential characteristic of their associated person (and so in this respect he agrees with Austin's argument for essential characterisation), or that they too are enhancers of perspective which can be directed to the character speaking, arriving, challenging, assuming a position, and other acts of perception.<sup>113</sup> Equally, their absence directs the focus away from the character and toward some other character or action. For example, Meriones in *Iliad* 17.620-625 is not awarded epithets so as not to distract the audience's attention from his instructions to Idomeneus and the latter's subsequent actions. In much the same way, the words a character speaks might be awarded an epithet like 'honeyed' but the character will not, in order to emphasise that what is being spoken is more important than who is saying it.<sup>114</sup> Finally, Vivante argued that a character will usually lack an epithet when they are 'opposed to another character in a μέν ... δέ ... relation' as both characters are being awarded equal consideration.<sup>115</sup>

Vivante's argument that epithets act as focalizers for the audience's attention which magnify the inherent characteristic of their subject is not dissimilar to Gregory Nagy's assertion that epithets function as 'theme songs' which conjure up for the audience a 'capsule of traditional themes' or the essential idea of the character to whom they belong.<sup>116</sup> Egbert Bakker expanded upon this idea of essential characterisation posited by Nagy, Austin, Vivante and Foley and argued that the purpose of epithets is to 'stage a character' only when they are actively forwarding the plot of the narrative by acting in line

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<sup>113</sup> Vivante (1982): 93, 167; 86-93.

<sup>114</sup> Vivante (1982): 88-89.

<sup>115</sup> Vivante (1982): 89.

<sup>116</sup> Nagy (1976): 24. In this, Nagy is also like Foley who described pronoun epithets as 'metonymic pathways' to the conjuring of personalities: Foley (1992): 281. These are what Bakker called 'epiphanies': Bakker (1997): 161.

with their fate.<sup>117</sup> In support of this supposition he cites the example of Hektor in *Iliad* 6 who is repeatedly awarded epithets while his advisors are not, but only when what he says is indicative of his future actions.<sup>118</sup> Equally, characters like Patroklos are not awarded epithets, according to Bakker, when they are ‘unstaged’, meaning that their actions are so fully ‘preordained and determined’ that what they do or say will make no impact on the plot.<sup>119</sup>

The problem with arguments for focalization and characterisation is that they only attempt to explain those epithets which are used by the narrator, and thus do not explain why characters themselves would use epithets during social dialogue.<sup>120</sup> Vivante, Nagy, and Bakker again only apply their arguments to a collection of epithets or phrase types and so fall prey to the same criticisms here laid against Parry: that a collection of select instances cannot determine a general rule. For those instances which he cannot explain, Bakker resorts to Parryism, making the case that some epithet phrases become ‘so routinized, indeed obligatory, as to be virtually a matter of grammatical rule’.<sup>121</sup> They also devote the majority of their attention to the *Iliad* with Bakker claiming that ‘staged epiphanies’ occur far less frequently in the *Odyssey*, and yet the two works have a roughly approximate number of epithets relative to their lengths. What then are we to say of

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<sup>117</sup> Bakker (1997): 167.

<sup>118</sup> *Iliad* 6.263, 359, 440, see: Bakker (1997): 169.

<sup>119</sup> Bakker (1997): 172. For more on the passive role of Patroklos and his association with the audience, see: Frontisi-Ducroux (1986): 23-25, and Kahane (1994): 139-141.

<sup>120</sup> For more on the focalization of the narrator, see: Booth (1961): 4; Block (1982): 7-22; Clay (1983): 21-25; Bal (1985); and de Jong (1987a). The difference between narratorial and speaking character epithet selection was also noted by Austin, who correctly recognised that some epithets which are used by the narrator are never used by speaking characters (such as *ἰερέϊς*), but who wrongly stated that speaking characters use epithets for one another less often than the narrator, (1982): 59-61.

<sup>121</sup> Bakker (1997): 190.

epithets in the *Odyssey*? That these ones must be metrical fillers, but that in the *Iliad* they are not?<sup>122</sup>

### The “Parry Hangover”: A Problem with Translation

No human speech or communication, in prose or in verse, shall have any real meaning for those who fail to pay attention to the whole.<sup>123</sup>

The original dichotomy of Parryism ostensibly presented a choice between two explanations for epithet formulas: either they are meaningless fillers for the patchwork poet, or they are intentional stylistic devices used, among other things, to enhance characterisation or focus the audience’s attention on a particular object or event. However, the review of scholarship presented here demonstrates that the Homeric scholar is not required to choose between a total acceptance of an economic formulaic system and the poet’s aesthetic freedom. What can be rejected is Parry’s absolutist assertion that the principles of formulaic economy are antecedent and universal. There has been a clear movement away from Hard-Parryism toward Soft-Parryism, and even, in twenty-first century scholarship, an avoidance of the “Parry Question” altogether. Homerists such as Pucci advocate for the aesthetic value of the epics, utilizing them in order to better examine the heritage of these unique works instead of accepting absolutely Parry’s theories of oral composition.<sup>124</sup>

Homeric scholarship therefore exists today in a Post-Parry world. Yet, whatever we may think of the unity, complexity, intertextuality, or beauty of Homer’s epics, Parry’s legacy

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<sup>122</sup> Bakker (1997): 181-183, 196-198.

<sup>123</sup> Hack (1940): 481.

<sup>124</sup> See: Pucci (1995): 239.

still casts a shadow over the study of Homeric epithets. Whatever scholars may claim with regard to Homer's artistry, Parry's conclusions have been imposing enough to prevent serious scholarship on Homeric pronoun epithets which does not – at some level – resort to explanations from metrical expedience.<sup>125</sup> The Parry Hangover can be most clearly felt in the English translations of Homer's epics where Homer's epithets are frequently misrepresented, mistranslated, or simply omitted altogether.

All translators, of course, write in accordance with their own intentions, and mindful of their own audiences. As a result, some writers are self-admittedly more preoccupied with accurate translation than others. Yet all wish to convey something of the feeling, or true sense, of the poem. The following (brief) synopsis therefore is not intended as an indictment of poetic translation but aims to demonstrate that – whatever the poet's own motivation or audience – Homer's epithets are frequently treated as if they were nothing but metrical fillers, or, at the very least, pretty metrical fillers.<sup>126</sup>

In the introduction to his popular translation of the *Iliad*, for example, Richmond Lattimore asserts that he 'try(s) to avoid mistranslation... by rating the word of my own choice ahead of the word which translates the Greek', an achievement which Dimock alleges 'no one does more beautifully' than he.<sup>127</sup> Yet, whatever his accuracies elsewhere, Lattimore is inconsistent in his portrayal of epithets; perhaps because he deliberately prioritises a need for variety over the repetition of epithets. Throughout his *The Odyssey of Homer*,

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<sup>125</sup> A brief survey of the indices of Oxford and Cambridge Companions to Homer, the *Odyssey* or *Iliad*, for example, will turn up no references and/or dedicated chapters to epithets. Clark referred to the scholastic potential of a revival of epithet studies post-Parry, in his 2004 article 'Formulas, Meter, and Type-Scenes': 130.

<sup>126</sup> Evidence of the 'epic style', as Parry put it: Parry (1928): 236.

<sup>127</sup> Lattimore (1951): 55; Dimock (1967): 706. I have overlooked the Penguin translation by E. V. Rieu who is non-specific in his use of Homer's epithets, despite benefitting from the freedom of prose composition which would allow him to include adjectives with no constraint of metre: Rieu (1946).



for example, he provides ten different translations for the epithet: δῖος, including: ‘great’, ‘beautiful’, ‘noble’, ‘radiant’, ‘bright’, ‘splendid’, ‘shining’, ‘glorious’, ‘divine’ and even ‘in her splendor [*sic*]’.<sup>128</sup> He also lacks consistency in his presentation of repeated formulaic lines, as he renders πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς mostly as ‘long-suffering, great Odysseus’ but also chooses ‘noble and long-suffering’, ‘much-enduring, noble’, or ‘great, enduring’ Odysseus. Sometimes he simply omits one of the two epithets in a given formula altogether (e.g. 24.176, 537). These inconsistencies in epithet translation become more apparent when they occur in such close proximity to one another, such as across Book Five where Kalypso is at first ‘shining’ (5.263) and then ‘divine’ (5.321) while Odysseus transforms from being ‘glorious’ (5.269) to being ‘great’ (5.354) when all the while they are δῖα or δῖος respectively. Another example is found in his translation of 20.67-73 where Aphrodite changes from being ‘radiant’ to being ‘bright’, when in the Greek she remains δῖα.

The same confusion of meaning also appears when epithets are treated synonymously in the Greek, such as when Lattimore applies the translation ‘great’ to different adjectives in close proximity, e.g. 13.65-66:

ὡς εἰπῶν ὑπὲρ οὐδὸν ἐβήσετο **δῖος** Ὀδυσσεύς,  
τῷ δ’ ἅμα κήρυκα προΐει **μένος** Ἀλκινόοιο,

So spoke **great** Odysseus, and strode out over the door sill,  
and **great** Alkinoos sent his herald to go along with him,

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<sup>128</sup> Lattimore (1965). The distribution of these adjectives might betray some unconscious sexism – as ‘beautiful’, ‘radiant’, ‘bright’, ‘shining’, and ‘divine’ are applied only to female characters, whereas only the males are considered to be ‘noble’, ‘great’ and ‘glorious’.

Lattimore is not, of course, the only translator to misrepresent epithets in this manner. In a far newer translation, Anthony Verity is heralded by reviewers as being committed to ‘word-to-word translation’ particularly in the case of epithets where his ‘commitment to reproducing every word of the original’ is considered ‘exceptional, even among the most literal translations of Homer’.<sup>129</sup> Verity is indeed consistent to character, and to formula, with his δῖος epithets for Odysseus, calling him either ‘glorious’ or ‘much-enduring, glorious’ as appropriate.<sup>130</sup> However he is also guilty of indicating different classes of characters by altering his translation of the same epithet to fit his perception.

When his ‘glorious’ δῖος appears in the feminine (δῖα) he alters the translation: Kalypso, Dawn, Naeria and Kharybdis are instead ‘bright’ (but, for an unknown reason, Klytaimnestra and Dawn are also sometimes ‘glorious’, 3.265, 16.368). The discrepancy might be explained by the English similarity between ‘glorious’ and ‘bright’ – which both refer to qualities of light – and yet in an epic context the English word ‘glorious’ conveys overtones of κῦδος which Verity cannot be intending if he is interpreting δῖος here as a physical characteristic. Yet, his treatment of δῖος when it comes to servants suggests that he is indeed implying a moral quality. The servants Eumaios and Philoitios apparently cannot possibly be considered ‘glorious’ like their master, and so instead are ‘excellent’ or ‘good’, while Demodokos alone is ‘god-inspired’.<sup>131</sup>

In her self-proclaimed female, and subsequently feminist, portrayal of the *Odyssey*, Emily Wilson argues that she has actively tried ‘to avoid importing contemporary types of sexism’ into the epic, such as the tendency of the male translator to soften, or avoid,

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<sup>129</sup> Beck (2017).

<sup>130</sup> Verity (2016).

<sup>131</sup> The latter is the only translation close enough to the meaning derived from the genitive of Ζεύς.

Penelope's 'thick' hand, or their need to identify the executed slaves as 'sluts' and 'whores' (nouns which do not appear in the Greek).<sup>132</sup> Instead, she seeks only to highlight the original 'forms of sexism and patriarchy' which are inherent in the poem where they appear.<sup>133</sup> Sadly, Wilson also believes that repeated epithet phrases are unnecessary artefacts of the oral tradition. She states that, while epithets were once a useful 'anchor' for the audience 'in a quick-moving [oral] story', they are now merely 'moments to skip' for the modern, literate listener.<sup>134</sup> This belief, so typical of the "Parry Hangover", causes Wilson to miss a number of opportunities where she might have drawn attention to those moments where women's power, and Homer's admiration for them, comes to the fore. For example, where Homer describes Penelope as the 'strong queen' (ἰφθίμη βασίλεια) using an epithet denoting physical prowess which is shared by both genders, Wilson opts to call her only 'queen'.<sup>135</sup>

These translators are, of course, only a sample of the many Homeric translations rendered in English. They have been selected merely for the range of examples they provide with regard to differing translating styles and genres across the past 75 years, as space did not allow for a fuller review of epithet (mis)translation in English works.<sup>136</sup> What can be concluded is that, whatever their other qualities, they all abuse epithet translation to a greater or lesser extent. The reason for this can only be that translators still find

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<sup>132</sup> Wilson (2018): 86, 89-90. For the reception of Wilson as a 'feminist' reading, see: Pache (2018), and Higgins (2017). Fagles (1996, reprinted 2006), for example, writes for 22.462-464:

"No clean death for the likes of them, by god!  
Not from *me*—they showered abuse on *my* head,  
my mother's too! You sluts—the suitors' whores!"

<sup>133</sup> Wilson (2018): 89.

<sup>134</sup> Wilson (2018): 83-4.

<sup>135</sup> *Odyssey*: 16.335.

<sup>136</sup> I hope to provide such a review at a later date.

themselves under the impression – whether consciously or not, and regardless of whatever they believe about the artistry of the poet – that the epithets, of themselves, have no inherent meaning, and so find that there is no need to translate them carefully or consistently.

The Parry Hangover – found most keenly in translation, but also in the general avoidance of academic discussion around epithets, as if they were somehow “explained away” or “solved” by Parry – is indicative of the ‘troubled state’ Vivante believes Parry has left Homeric scholarship in.<sup>137</sup> Thus the scene has been set for a work which makes a consistent and careful examination of the proper noun, or character, epithet as a deliberate product of poetic style. This thesis therefore aims to identify and explain which aspects of proper noun epithets can be considered to have a stylistic component and what purpose they might function within the narrative. Proper noun epithets have been selected as a focus for study as the majority of any existing scholarship on epithets centres on those associated with common nouns, such as ‘wine-dark sea’.<sup>138</sup> Proper noun epithets are also vulnerable to more of the formulaic contradictions as they mostly appear in and around character dialogue, rather than narrative expression. The intention of this thesis is to place considerations of metre secondary to the poet’s ability and desire to present characters in a suitably epic style.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Vivante (1982): 171.

<sup>138</sup> E.g. Vivante (1982).

<sup>139</sup> Meister, K. (1921): 12.

## Methodology

Ὀδύσσειαν ἐξ Ὀδυσσεΐης σαφηνίζειν

In more recent decades a reasonable consensus has arisen amongst Homeric scholars that the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*, as we have them, are individual, unified works, each composed by a single poet and at a single time.<sup>140</sup> The real identity and geographical origin of that poet (or those poets) was hotly contested in antiquity, and the “Homeric Question” of single versus dual authorship litters the early scholarship.<sup>141</sup> The modern consensus would consider the extent to which they once dominated the scholarly literature hard to credit; to that extent at least, Parry’s thesis may have come as a sharp and timely rejoinder.<sup>142</sup> More pressing for recent Homerists, though, are the questions of approximately when the poems were composed, and above all, how. Late twentieth-century scholarship in particular devoted a great deal of ink to the presumed polarity between orality and literacy, resulting in anxious aporia as to whether one could properly treat Homeric epics as literary artefacts at all.<sup>143</sup> However, the relation between writing and Homer only remains paradoxical if one also perceives there to be an oppositional relation between the generation of the work as it was composed, and the means through which we interpret it today.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Graham (1995): 3, see also; Griffin (1983): xvi; Heubeck *et al.* (1988): 6-7, and Pucci (1995): 18.

<sup>141</sup> The question of what is meant by ‘Homer’ will not be addressed in this study, for a recent comprehensive overview, see: Fowler (2004): 220-232 (and bibliography). For a summary which includes the impact of the likes of Parry on this theory, c.f. Saïd (1998): 31-70.

<sup>142</sup> Griffin (1983): xvi.

<sup>143</sup> Finnegan (1977): 2; Griffin (1983): xiii; Shive (1987): *preface*; Pucci (1995): 28, and Powell (1997): 4.

<sup>144</sup> Eco (1990): 51.

The paradox is dependent upon the extent to which problem(s) of composition are perceived to have implications for contemporary textual interpretation.<sup>145</sup> For literary analysts outside the field of Homeric scholarship debate rages as to where the outer limits of interpretation lie, but the Homeric scholar instead questions where interpretation may begin.<sup>146</sup> The answer to this challenge depends largely on the methodologies we apply to the text, primarily: is it possible to apply contemporary literary methodologies to a so-called 'oral text'?<sup>147</sup>

Parry's theory of formulaic economy, as demonstrated above, has left a lasting legacy that the alleged "rules" of the oral tradition have a negative impact on any literary interpretation of the text. A critic of Homer, for example, might present a literary interpretation which involves discussion on the relations between one passage and another. However, Hard-Parryists would oppose such an interpretation on the grounds that 'the oral poet plan[ned] no such coherent structures' and that any relation between passages is merely 'due to the fortuitous operation of the [formulaic] Tradition'.<sup>148</sup> From this perspective, it is simply not possible for contemporary literary methodologies to be applied to the texts of Homer.

Today the epic(s) are approached in the same manner as the majority of literature and the oral theory is no longer considered an impediment to an aesthetic reading of Homer.<sup>149</sup> The difficulty, therefore, becomes a matter of intentionality: how much of the

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<sup>145</sup> Clay (1983): 3, and Pucci (1995): 19.

<sup>146</sup> Eco (1990): *passim*.

<sup>147</sup> Young remarked that the term 'oral poetry' (like 'oral text') is oxymoronic, as something oral cannot, by definition, simultaneously be written: Young (1967): 279-324. See also: Finnegan (1977): 2.

<sup>148</sup> *MHV*: liv, and Vivante (1982): 168-9.

<sup>149</sup> Vivante (1982): 169, 171; Griffin (1983): xiii-xv, for a summary of the return towards literary analysis; de Jong (1991): 407.

reader's interpretation is an imposition on the *intentio operis*?<sup>150</sup> The solution to this question can be reached by the satisfaction of two criteria: one which examines the coherency of the text, and one which scrutinizes the integrity of the reader.

### **Question One: Coherency**

Is the text an organized unity, comprised of navigable sections which both refer back to, and foreshadow, one another?<sup>151</sup>

In the fourth century BCE Aristotle believed that the *Odyssey* was a 'unified' (συνίστημι) entity, and this same conclusion has been drawn by modern Homeric scholars.<sup>152</sup>

Whatever we might conclude about the intentions of the composer, the narrative that survives is a successful and coherent 'representation of a single piece of action' (μίμησις ἐνός) comprised of 'component incidents' (μέρη συνεστάναι) successfully arranged 'so that if one of them be transposed or removed, the unity of the whole [would be] dislocated and destroyed'.<sup>153</sup> The same conclusion was also drawn by the author of *Scholia* bT who writes that Homer 'considered not only what he said, but also what he did not say' suggesting that ancient grammarians believed Homer to be a selective and deliberate composer.<sup>154</sup> More recently, scholars such as George Dimock have devoted a great deal of attention to proving the unity of the Homeric epics. Dimock argued that – whatever the limits imposed upon him by an oral tradition – Homer would have selected words and phrases which were most suited to his purposes; just like any other skilled poet.<sup>155</sup>

Identifying the structure of either a sentence, or an episode, as 'formulaic' (using Parry's

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<sup>150</sup> Eco (1990): 58.

<sup>151</sup> Dimock (1989): 9; Pucci (1995): 7, and Powell & Morris (1997): 4.

<sup>152</sup> Aristotle *Poetics* 1451a; Heubeck *et al.* (1988): 6-8.

<sup>153</sup> πραγμάτων οὕτως ὥστε μετατιθεμένου τινός μέρους ἢ ἀφαιρουμένου διαφέρεσθαι καὶ κινεῖσθαι τὸ ὅλον, Aristotle *Poetics* 1451a.

<sup>154</sup> οὐ γὰρ μόνον, τί εἶπη, ἀλλὰ καὶ τί μὴ εἶπη, ἐφρόντισεν *Scholia* bT at *Il.*1.449.

<sup>155</sup> Dimock (1989): 11-12, and Fenik (1974): 218-219; 221.

definition of the term) does not necessarily mean that the poet did not *choose* the components of that formula for particular, sensical, reasons.<sup>156</sup>

Whatever its origins, author, or process of composition – which may indeed impact *some* aspects of our interpretation, but not *all* of it – there is little disagreement that the *Odyssey*, at least as it survives today, is a complete, and unified, written text. Therefore, given the complexity and unity of Homer’s poetry, the texts can rightly be compared with anything composed in the later literary tradition.<sup>157</sup> Methodologies applied in contemporary literary criticism can and should be applied to Homer, just as they are to any another anonymous or indeterminately dated text (like the *Gilgamesh*, for instance). It is entirely possible that we can draw intratextual connections between words and passages of the poem which will meaningfully inform our understanding and appreciation of the text.

### **Question Two: Integrity**

Are the reader’s interpretations dependent solely upon connections and relationships between aspects of the text alone with as little external influence or bias as possible?<sup>158</sup>

With the first criterion met, the next question of interpretation concerns the approach of the critic. This thesis will begin where the foremost ancient scholar of Homer, Aristarchus of Samothrace, began.<sup>159</sup> Aristarchus believed that the reader of Homer should ‘accept the worth of those things presented more mythically by the Poet, according to the poet’s own authority’ and should not concern themselves ‘about anything outside of those matters’.<sup>160</sup> While this passage is usually taken to mean that Aristarchus had a distaste

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<sup>156</sup> Dimock (1989): 225; Clay (1983): 6.

<sup>157</sup> Dimock (1989): 9.

<sup>158</sup> Clay (1983), and Eco (1990): 6-7, 21.

<sup>159</sup> Haslam (2012).

<sup>160</sup> Ἀρίσταρχος ἀξιῶ τὰ φραζόμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ Ποιητοῦ μυθικώτερον ἐκδέχασθαι, κατὰ τὴν Ποιητικὴν ἐξουσίαν, μηδὲν ἔξω τῶν φραζομένων ὑπὸ τοῦ Ποιητοῦ περιεργαζομένους: D *Scholia* on *Iliad* 5.385.



for the popular practice of allegorically interpreting Homeric texts (because Eustathius added the term ἀλληγορικῶς to his paraphrase of Aristarchus' quote in an attempt to clarify its meaning) the original quote makes no mention of allegorical interpretation.<sup>161</sup> Instead, Aristarchus states only that the reader not look for meaning anywhere other than in the poet's own words.

Aristarchus' approach is best summed up in the maxim that Homer is best 'elucidated from Homer' ("Ὀμηρον ἐξ Ὀμήρου σαφηνίζειν).<sup>162</sup> It is the intent of this thesis to follow the same approach, by containing its analysis to within the text of *Odyssey*, and drawing conclusions which rely only the poem's own interpretations as much as possible.<sup>163</sup> The methodological framework of this thesis postulates that it is sufficient to say that "something is true to Homer", or better still, to the sense and world of the *Odyssey* (as we cannot be certain the two epics were composed by the same author).<sup>164</sup> Therefore the majority of examples used throughout this thesis originate from the text of the *Odyssey* itself and analysis or references are only drawn from the *Iliad*, or other works, when comparison is striking enough to demand it.<sup>165</sup>

Furthermore, this thesis does not attempt to present conclusions which could serve as evidence for the social and cultural habits of the *historic* Greeks at any given period. All

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<sup>161</sup> For allegorical interpretations of Homer, see: Grey (2019a): 187-213. Eustathius 561.28, in, Van der Valk (1971): 2.101.13; Porter (1992): 70; Nünlist (2011): 106-108.

<sup>162</sup> Porphyry, *Homeric Questions* 1.12-14. Otherwise put, more poetically, by Goethe: 'whoever wants to understand the poem / must go to the poets' land' (Wer den Dichter will verstehen, / muß in Dichters Lande gehen).

<sup>163</sup> Porphyry, *Homeric Questions* 1.12-14; 1.1.

<sup>164</sup> For the argument in favour of separate authors, see: West (2011): 7-8, and West (2014): 1. For the argument in favour of same authorship, see: Janko (1982): 83-4, 191.

<sup>165</sup> In doing so this thesis hopes to avoid the question of chronology between Homer, Hesiod, and the *Hymns*, see: West (1995): 203-219; West (2011): 708, and Janko (2012): 20-43. While it is my opinion that the *Odyssey* probably evolved at a similar time to the *Iliad*, and that each was aware of the other, particularly during the time of their fixed composition, it is not necessary to compare one to the other in order to draw conclusions from within the text. For more on this perspective see: Pucci (1995): 18, 41, and Saïd (1998): 302-4.

arguments contained herein are only presented as evidence for the social and cultural mechanisms presented in the (mytho-fictional) Homeric Universe. By these means it is hoped that examination of the text, at every level, is generated purely from within itself (Ὀδύσσειαν ἐξ Ὀδυσσεΐης σαφηνίζειν).<sup>166</sup>

Issues raised by the imposition of the *intentio lectoris* upon the *intentio operis* are therefore negated as far as is possible, leaving the text to be approached from a purely literary perspective. By adopting a methodology which begins (and ends) with the text, this thesis circumvents questions of both authorship and composition, neither of which are fundamental to a discussion of the *Odyssey* as it survives and is interacted with today, which is *sine qua non* a written text.<sup>167</sup>

### *The Odyssey*

Only one genre of literature was defined by the Greeks as the ‘word’ (ἔπος), the genre which began with Homer.<sup>168</sup> The words of Homer are some of the most striking and elegant examples in the history of European literature, and they continue to enchant and attract scholars of every generation – this one included. While the *Iliad* is considered by many to be the superior of the two poems, the *Odyssey* is a text which requires greater delicacy and nuance from both its author and its reader.<sup>169</sup> Odysseus is a character who relies on intellectual weapons such as subterfuge and cunning to convey his prowess and such a characterisation demands from his poet an increased subtlety – of language, of

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<sup>166</sup> Vivante (1982): vii-viii.

<sup>167</sup> Griffin (1980): xiii-xiv; Wolf (1985): 209; Nagy (2004): xi, and Kanavou (2015): 13 n.82. See also: Currie (2012): 544-580.

<sup>168</sup> They defined other genres in terms of action: *drama*, *komodeia*, *choros*, *lyrikos*, *historia*, and *mimos*.

<sup>169</sup> Eustathius described it as the ‘sharper’ (ὀξύς) of the two epics in *Commentary on Homer’s Odyssey* vol.1 (proem, p.2). Heubeck *et al.* (1988): 4, and West (1999): 364.

characterisation, and of narrative – in order to express more complicated circumstances.<sup>170</sup> In some regards then, the *Odyssey* becomes a more intricate work than the *Iliad*.<sup>171</sup> Certainly, the *Iliad* never employs the same ‘ambiguities of deception’, particularly with regard to the plays on names and naming which, in the *Odyssey*, are far more significant.<sup>172</sup> The ambiguity and meaning of names repeatedly become central to whole scenes (e.g. the Cyclops episode of Book 9) and their use becomes an important, highly stylized, device throughout the *Odyssey*.<sup>173</sup> This lexical and phonetic play on names in the *Odyssey*, combined with the necessary verbal and intellectual subtlety demanded of its protagonist, create the sense that the whole poem ‘grew around Odysseus’ name and epithets’.<sup>174</sup> It is for this reason that the *Odyssey* has been selected for an examination of the significance of names, epithets, and forms of address in Homer.

As demonstrated above, a preponderance of modern translators reposition, mis-translate, or even ignore epithets for their own purposes. The indifference to Homeric epithets, evidenced by these adaptations, no doubt stems from a fundamental, albeit possibly unconscious, acceptance of Parry’s belief that epithets have no real meaning and can therefore be changed or omitted without truly affecting the text. Due to the inherent issues of reading in translation, all Homeric translations from the Greek are my own and are as literal as possible throughout (repetition and all). Other ancient works consulted have been translated where necessary for comparison, and indicated in the footnotes if

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<sup>170</sup> Stanford (1939): 98. See also: Kanavou (2015): 90. For the purposes of this thesis ‘the poet’ is used to stand for the ‘poems’.

<sup>171</sup> Todorov described the *Odyssey* as the best means of dispelling illusions about “primitive narrative”, (1997): 53.

<sup>172</sup> See: **Chapter One**.

<sup>173</sup> Stanford (1939): 100-101, 113; Rank (1952): *passim*; Peradotto (1990): 94-5; Silk (2004): 41, and Goldhill (2011): 1.

<sup>174</sup> Vivante (1982): 180.

otherwise. It is hoped that the implications of effective and faithful translation (of epithets) become manifest through the conclusions of this work.

### *The Catalogue of Epithets*

In order to properly examine the distribution of proper noun epithets in the *Odyssey* it has been necessary to compile a comprehensive database of these epithets which is referred to as 'The Epithet Catalogue' throughout. The unfortunate lack of scholarship on Homer's pronoun epithets to date has meant that sections of this thesis (particularly Part II) have relied heavily on data drawn from the Epithet Catalogue to make their conclusions. In these cases it is hoped that the relative lack of citation is forgiven. The Catalogue is the product of several years work, and accompanies this thesis in the form of a USB drive. The benefits of this method are that the reader will be free to navigate the database as freely as possible, and be able to search for a variety of factors swiftly and efficiently.<sup>175</sup> I hope that, as a result of this thesis, the Catalogue can be made available as an open-access online resource in the future.

The purpose of Part II of this thesis has been to examine the patterns borne out by the Epithet Catalogue and analyse them, first on their own merits, and secondly in line with contemporary scholarship on particular passages or tropes. While attempts have been made to be as accurate as possible, there is always the possibility of human error in the presentation of such a large undertaking which has been updated and altered over the past four years. In order to establish the most reliable translation of particular epithets for

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<sup>175</sup> The compendiums of Dee are limited by their lack of analysis and rendered in the less accessible format of print: Dee (1994), (2000).

the Catalogue, a range of Greek dictionaries and lexica have been consulted, including both the comprehensive Liddell, Scott and Jones *Greek-English Lexicon*, and the Autenrieth *Homeric Dictionary*.<sup>176</sup> Ultimately, however, the translations selected throughout are the author's own.<sup>177</sup>

### *Structure*

The thesis has been presented in three sections. The first provides a brief overview of the significance of names and naming in Homer, and includes a study of Odysseus' name about which Homeric onomastic scholarship inevitably spills a great deal of ink. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that Homeric names – particularly Odysseus' own, and the pseudonyms he adopts– have been understood to be meaningful and significant by both scholars and readers of the poem for centuries and, more importantly, that there are social and cultural conventions within the Homeric universe which place inherent importance upon the meaning of names. What is frequently lacking in this scholarship, however, is an appropriate consideration of pronoun epithets as integral parts the name, despite this being the preferred understanding in antiquity.

After first establishing the centrality of naming (and therefore, potentially, epithets) to heroic identity, the thesis continues in Part II to present four chapters built from data provided by the Epithet Catalogue. It opens with a Glossary of Terms which outlines the technical matters of categorisation and terminology that have been constructed for the purposes of this study. Due to the Parry Hangover there has been little effort before now

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<sup>176</sup> Liddell, Scott & Jones (1996), hereafter LSJ; Autenrieth (1891).

<sup>177</sup> See: **Catalogue of Epithets**. This is also true for the presentation of names, which has kept to the Greek as far as possible – given the emphasis throughout this thesis on literal translation – but which has also allowed for some English pronunciations.

to categorise proper noun epithets satisfactorily, or to provide an appropriate terminology through which they can be described. The Glossary therefore intends to arm the reader with the ability to better appreciate and discuss epithets in Homer.

The four chapters in this section cover areas of interest, drawn from the Catalogue, which have provided the widest and most fruitful range of significant findings. They have been divided into two distinct parts so that the greatest consideration can be given to those epithets which are most commonly overlooked: pronoun epithets in character dialogue (Chapters Two, Three and Four), closely followed by an overview of how the narrator differs in his own use of them (Chapter Five).

Chapter Two: Speaking Among Peers uses data from the Catalogue to examine the essential role epithets play in Homeric social discourse. Through analysis of a variety of social relationships, including guest-to-host, peer-to-peer, and servant-to-master, this chapter examines how the dialogic use of extended epithets correlates directly to the social standing of the character being addressed.<sup>178</sup> In short, it proposes that epithets primarily act as sociolinguistics markers which construct status identity and therefore play different and nuanced roles depending on social context. Chapter Three: Talking with the Gods is an extension of Chapter Two concerning only the dialogue shared by gods, or between gods and mortals. It has been presented separately due to the wealth of information contained therein. This chapter concludes that dialogue with and between gods follows its own set of rules and further suggests a hierarchy of epithet exchange which reflects the mortality of the addressee.

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<sup>178</sup> See: **Glossary** s.v. 'Extended Epithet'.

Chapter Four: Communicating in the Family is a study of both epithets and appellatives used within the family dynamic.<sup>179</sup> After examining how epithets are shared among family groups through a case study of Odysseus' extended family, this chapter then explores the rules of familial dialogue which seem to rely more heavily on appellatives (such as 'mother') than epithet titles, thereby reinforcing the argument that epithets are sociolinguistic markers of status better suited to public dialogue. This chapter also contains a study of patronymics, focusing particularly on the anomalous examples of this trend, including papponymics and even paedonymics.

The following chapter, concerning Narratorial Epithet Selection, moves away from spoken epithets into the unspoken world of the narrator. It demonstrates how the narrator is free to manipulate social markers like epithets in order to highlight the status of otherwise disenfranchised or "voiceless" characters, such as women, servants, and antagonists (such as the Suitors). Part II then concludes with a summary of the rules of epithet exchange, as borne out through analysis of the data drawn from the Catalogue, which concern both the private and the public dialogue of speaking characters, as well as the different applications used by the narrator.

Following the analysis of the data, Part III proceeds to apply these findings to an in-depth literary analysis of how Odysseus' name and epithets are manipulated throughout the narrative across two chapters. The first (Chapter Six) concerns Odysseus' anonymity and the impact of namelessness for a hero in the Homeric world. It also examines how sympathetic and antagonistic characters use Odysseus' name and titles for their own agendas. Chapter Seven then explores how a revival of Odysseus' names and epithets

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<sup>179</sup> See: **Glossary** s.v. 'Appellatives'.

leads to the recovery and construction of Odysseus' identity through acts of both memory and revelation. It presents the argument that Odysseus chooses to surrender his identity as the Iliadic Hero, only to adopt an identity as the Returning King of Ithaka. By returning full-circle to the initial analysis of names and their significance in the opening chapter, these final chapters are designed to demonstrate that Odysseus' epithets are just as significant and meaningful as his name.



# I: The Significance of Names: An Overview

## CHAPTER ONE: Homer's Significant Names

ἢ οὐκ οἶει αὐτὸν μέγα τι καὶ θαυμάσιον λέγειν  
ἐν τούτοις περὶ ὀνομάτων ὀρθότητος  
~ *Cratylus* 391d<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

Within Homeric Greek there is an adjective used to describe a name which has been given for a specific reason: ἐπώνυμος.<sup>2</sup> Literally, the word means a name (ὄνομα) which has been placed upon (ἐπί) a person. It is used in contexts where the name is demonstrated as being significant; that is to say that it resonates with the thematic or linguistic context/s of the poem.<sup>3</sup> Often, the significance of an ἐπώνυμος name is believed to stem from the achievements or attributes of the child's father or close relative.<sup>4</sup> Kleopatra, for example, is otherwise called Ἀλκυόνη in the *Iliad* because her mother experienced the grief of losing a child, like the mythical 'kingfisher' (ἄλκυών).<sup>5</sup> Likewise, in the *Odyssey*, Odysseus' maternal grandfather, Autolykos, dismisses Eurykleia's suggestion that the child should be named Πολυάρητος as he was 'much-prayed for' and instead demands that as he, Autolykos, has suffered much 'hatred' (ὄδυσσάμενος) the child should 'therefore' (τῷ) be called 'Odysseus' (Ὀδυσσεύς).<sup>6</sup> Other children have

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<sup>1</sup> 'Do you not think that, in those passages, he says great and wonderful things about the correctness of names?'

<sup>2</sup> LSJ: s.v. ἐπώνυμος. It appears twice in the *Odyssey*: of Arete (7.54) and of Odysseus (19.409), and once in the *Iliad*: of Kleopatra (9.562). See also: *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 373, *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 198-9, *Homeric Hymn to Pan* 47; Hesiod *Theogony* 144, 195-8, 207-20, 252, 271, 281-3, 311, *Works and Days* 80-82. Hesiod also uses the adjectives εὐώνυμον ('well-named') of Asteria because she became a constellation (ἀστερόεντος, *Theogony* 409-414); and πολυώνυμον ('much-named', 'of many names' in the sense 'famous', *Theogony* 785) of the Styx. Later examples include Pindar describing the naming of Aias in *Isthmian* 6.53, as well as examples in Archilochus and Alcman, see: Kanavou (2015): 22 and footnotes. Sappho also writes about the name of Hesperus (104a L.-P); and Aeschylus about the naming of Helen (*Agamemnon* 689-690) and Apollo in the same play (1080). For more, see O'Hara (2017): 11-17.

<sup>3</sup> Hahn (1969): 94-101; Austin (1972): 1-19; Koning (2010): 69.

<sup>4</sup> Sulzberger (1926): 421-2; Clay (1983): 55, and Dimock (1989): 74.

<sup>5</sup> Hence 'halcyon', *Iliad* 9.562. All other Homeric 'double' names also appear in the *Iliad*: Astyanax-Scamander, Paris-Alexandros, Pyrrhos-Neoptolemos, see: von Kamptz (1982): 33-35.

<sup>6</sup> *Odyssey* 19.409. For more on Odysseus' name, see below.

‘additional names’ (ἐπίκλησις), such as Astyanax, who is described as being named for his father who ‘saved their gates and his walls’.<sup>7</sup>

These examples lead scholars to assume an etymological connection to the qualities or experiences of the father (or another relative), and yet such a connection is not always made explicit by the author. In the *Odyssey*, at least, it is not always clear if a name refers to the namer, the child in its own right, or maybe even both the namer and the child.<sup>8</sup> Eurykleia’s suggestion in *Odyssey* 19 clearly refers to an inherent quality of the child, i.e. that he was ‘much-prayed for’ (Πολυάρητος). Arete also does not appear to be named after a relative, though her name is explicitly described by the poet as being ἐπώνυμος (7.54). Nowhere does the poet explain *why* Arete’s name is significant, however, a few suggestions might be proposed. The first, and most likely, is that her name stems from the verbal adjective ἀράομαι (‘pray to’) and is therefore associated both with Odysseus’ supplication to her (she is identified as the one who has the power to help him, 7.74-7), and Athena’s assertion that ‘the people look upon her as a goddess’ (7.71).<sup>9</sup> An alternative suggestion is that she, like Odysseus, was also ‘prayed *for*’ (i.e. by her husband), in the sense that she has all the qualities most desirable in a queen (7.73-4).<sup>10</sup> Ancient scholars certainly interpreted it as a mix of both: ‘insofar as she was both prayed for, and prayed to’.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> *Iliad* 22.506, also Plato *Cratylus* 392b-e. The verb ‘save’ ῥύομαι in this context is also used to describe Hektor at 6.403. O’Hara (2017): 1.

<sup>8</sup> This is especially true if the person is awarded a second name later in their life, such as Paris-Alexandros, see: Kanavou (2015): 83-86 and footnotes.

<sup>9</sup> This is the interpretation proposed by Stanford (1965): 322.

<sup>10</sup> von Kamptz (1982): 150, 240. Some scholars propose that this is the intended meaning so as to associate her more closely with Πολυάρητος Odysseus: Skempis & Ziogas (2009): 225 n.34.

<sup>11</sup> καθό ἀρητῶς καὶ εὐκταίως ἐγεννήθη, *Scholia P-V Odyssey* 7.54. Other proposals include the meaning of ‘accursed’ because her father was killed at his wedding (7.64-5), see: Peradotto (1990): 108 (though such an interpretation is perhaps more likely if it refers to the fact that he died with only female offspring, see the names awarded to only daughters in: Watson (1986): 619-

These examples represent a tradition in antiquity that a name can somehow reveal the nature of the thing it designates.<sup>12</sup> However, while the interpretation of significant name components relies primarily on the characterisation of the owner (and/or their relatives) both the linguistic and thematic contexts also play a part in our understanding of a name's significance. Demodokos' name, for example, which literally means 'gift (δῶκεν) [of the gods] for the people (δεμος)', is explained linguistically at *Odyssey* 8.44, where he is described as being 'gifted by the gods for his singing' (θεὸς πέρι δῶκεν ἀοιδῆν), and also contextually at 8.472, where he is described as being 'valued by the people' (λαοῖσι τετιμένον).<sup>13</sup> Semantic references to names can therefore appear elsewhere in the narrative and so be separated from the name in certain contexts.<sup>14</sup> While such connections may, at times, seem tentative they should not be treated lightly given both the 'semantic power' of names to ancient cultures in general, and the etymological instincts of a native, 'attentive' audience.<sup>15</sup> The *Odyssey* in particular is so rife with examples of paronomasia that no name should be dismissed without first being examined for a more significant meaning. While it is not the intention of this thesis to provide such an onomastic study, it behoves the study of those pronoun epithets associated with names to establish the scholastic history surrounding their significance.

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631). Alternatively, it might be a pun on 'virtue' given her qualities: Rank (1952): 84. Or even connected to ἄρητος because she does not speak after Odysseus' supplication: Skempis & Ziogas (2009): 222-8.

<sup>12</sup> 'Homer has the art of revealing the whole character of a man by one word' Scholiast D on *Od.* 8.85. See also: Clay (1983): 55; Goldhill (1991): 27; Struck (2004): 37; Nünlist (2009): 51-57; Kanavou (2015): 26, and O'Hara (2017): 9

<sup>13</sup> Nagy (1979): 17 and §4n.1; Heubeck *et al.* (1988): 348, and Segal (1994): 129.

<sup>14</sup> 'Names in particular tend to ... affect portions of the text around them' or even 'suggest associated proper nouns whether or not those names are enunciated at that point in the text', Loudon (1995): 27-28.

<sup>15</sup> Kanavou (2015): 24-5, 139, 152. Also: O'Hara (1996): 3, and Currie (2012): 574. For more on the ability of the audience to read messages encoded in poetry, see: Nagy (2013): 66-70, 172-175. For the counter-argument that the audience did not find repetition and the like significant, see: Scott (1974): 128-140, and Heubeck *et al.* (1988): 308. That the repetition of epithets was significant for the audience, see: Lowenstam (1993).

## Names and Naming: A Literature Review

Scholarly interest in Homeric names spans two interrelated fields which can be considered extra-textual and intertextual: etymological origin, and thematic or contextual significance, respectively.<sup>16</sup> The former category – particularly that scholarship which is concerned with the real-world historicity of the Homeric accounts – argues that names provide us with useful linguistic and historical evidence which both informs our understanding of the development of Indo-European languages, and helps us contextualize our archaeological records.<sup>17</sup> To this end, Higbie identified two different types of etymological methodology which can be applied to Homeric characters: the first is the traditional, or “folk”, etymology used by the ancient authors who often derived meaning from a ‘perceived similarity between two words because of their shared sounds’ regardless of any linguistic association (for example the interpretation of ‘Arete’ as stemming from ἀρετή); the second is a more scientific etymology which is based instead on lexical and phonetic principles of the type developed by modern linguists.<sup>18</sup> Like many contemporary scholars, Higbie places greater significance upon the latter, more scientific, etymologies.

The difficulty with a scientific approach is that many Homeric names are derived from a time which is still considered pre-history, and so we have to be particularly careful in our philological appraisal of these nouns given that they are not recorded in written evidence

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<sup>16</sup> On Homer and the Greek tradition: McCartney (1918): 343-358; Woodhead (1928); Fordyce (1932a): 44-46; Fordyce (1932b): 290; Rank (1952); Quincy (1963): 142-148, Frame (1978): esp. 28 n.3, and Baxter (1992). For a comprehensive overview of later practices, see: O’Hara (2017).

<sup>17</sup> See, for example: Palmer (1956): 7; Page (1959): 215; Palmer (1963): 79; Ventris & Chadwick (1973): 93, and Varias (1999): 350.

<sup>18</sup> Higbie (1995): 4.

prior to Homer.<sup>19</sup> Many of these early names are not even considered Greek in their origin and so may not stem from exclusively Indo-European roots but from more complex lexical ancestries, like Βελλερο-, Ποντο-, and Πρωτεσι-.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, while ancient ‘folk’ etymologies are not always bound by modern linguistic or scientific rules, it is important to recognise that, as they are often made by natives, they are naturally intuitive and can sometimes lead to a variety of proposals which may overlap with modern scientific interpretations.<sup>21</sup> In the hands of the ancient grammarians and scholiasts in particular, ancient etymologies were often considered to have a didactic purpose and so may still be considered scientific today.<sup>22</sup> Due to these difficulties it appears that an holistic approach may be more useful in helping us understand and appreciate the means by which poetry ‘unif[ies] characters and themes’ through the meaningful application of names.<sup>23</sup>

The philological and historical studies of Homeric names have bled into the field of literary criticism, where etymological significance has played a substantial role in our understanding of the Homeric universe. After all a hero’s identity is inescapably bound up with his name and therefore any discussion of names implicitly becomes a discussion of characterisation.<sup>24</sup> Stanford was one of the earliest twentieth-century scholars to examine what he called ‘significant names’ in Homer.<sup>25</sup> He noted, as above, that names within the Homeric world often act as *figura etymologica* that are relevant, either ‘to a person’s own

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<sup>19</sup> von Kamptz (1982): 7-8; Reece (2009): 7; Ruijgh (2011): 255, and Kanavou (2015): 9.

<sup>20</sup> Kanavou (2015): 9. For a discussion of the non-Greek stems of Akhilleus, Odysseus, Aias and Nestor, see Ventris & Chadwick (1973): 93, and Page (1959): 215.

<sup>21</sup> Kanavou (2015): 9.

<sup>22</sup> Peraki-Kyriakidou (2002): 490-2.

<sup>23</sup> Kanavou (2015): 9.

<sup>24</sup> Higbie (1995): 5, and Peradotto (1990): 102. In addition to the interplay between naming and identity comes the impact of recognition in the Homeric universe, particularly within Homer’s *Odyssey*, see: **Part III**.

<sup>25</sup> Stanford (1939): 97-110; Stanford (1959): xxi-xxii; others include: Strasburger (1954): 117, and Rüter (1969): 125.

condition', or to the condition of 'some close relative', and he cited a variety of examples which support this thesis.<sup>26</sup>

Under the first category (names which reflect the person) Stanford includes names such as Phemios Terpiades ('Singer, son of Pleasure-man'), Arete ('prayed to'), and Kalypso ('concealer'), whose names refer to their occupation, role or activities within the text.<sup>27</sup> The second category (names which reflect a relative) includes the likes of Astyanax, Telemakhos, Eurysakes, or Megapenthes who are variously thought to be named for qualities of their fathers.<sup>28</sup> The name Tele-makhos, for example, suggests the 'fighter far away' or the 'fighter who fights from afar' (i.e. an archer) – both of which describe Odysseus more than they do his son who neither fights from afar, nor wields a bow. Some names in the *Odyssey* are even considered by other scholars to be so paronomasiacal that they appear to have been inventions hypostasized purely for comic effect: Noemon son of Phronis ('Intelligence, son of Mind'), is one such example.<sup>29</sup> Phronis is named within the text immediately after Athena twice says that, before she arrived to correct his behaviour, Telemakhos had been acting 'witless' (ἀνοήμων), and that the Suitors are 'without thought' (οὐ τι νοήμονες), as if to contrast their stupidity and therefore enhance it, by then going away to visit a supremely intelligent counterpoint.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Stanford (1939): 99.

<sup>27</sup> Phemios: Kanavou (2015): 143; or alternatively 'Market Poet' as per: Bakker (2002): 142; Arete, see below and Dimock (1956): 64; Kalypso: Nagy (2013): 305-6.

<sup>28</sup> Stanford (1939): 99. For more on the names of sons, see: Germain (1954): 483, and West (2007): 440-443.

<sup>29</sup> For more on Homer's love of paronomasia, see: Bright (1977): 423-6; Haywood (1983): pp.215-8; Peradotto (1990): 94-5, and Louden (1995): 27-46. For more on the paronomasia of divine names in particular, see: Pfeiffer (1968): 4-5, and Lamberton (1986): 38.

<sup>30</sup> *Odyssey* 2.270-285, see also: Austin (1972): 1.

The former category – of names which reflect personal characteristics – is further subdivided by Stanford to include those whose names represent their heroic deeds or qualities, and those whose names are more descriptive of their everyday occupation (Demodokos, Iros).<sup>31</sup> While the distinction between these two types may, at first, appear to be one associated with class (aristocratic heroes are more likely to be known for great deeds, whereas their servants can only be identified by their profession) Stanford suggests that the difference between these two types may also have arisen from Homer's need to invent lesser characters, and his desire to make their names as meaningful as those of the heroes he had received from the poetic tradition.<sup>32</sup> An alternative, though perhaps more whimsical suggestion, is that some characters were named after friends of the poet whom he included out of gratitude, though in many ways this suggestion seems rather too anachronistic for a writer who was building from a well-known, collective heritage.<sup>33</sup>

Minor, or lower-status, characters typically have names which emphasise their skills or duties, such as charioteers whose names include words associated with 'horse' (ἵππος) or 'reins' (ῆνιά).<sup>34</sup> Names can also be constructed to indicate a servant's loyalty. In the *Odyssey* "good" servants – those who are loyal to the protagonist – have names which begin with the positive prefix εὐ-, such as Eumaios, but those who are antagonistic to Odysseus have names which reflect their evil intentions, such as Melanthos and

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<sup>31</sup> Stanford (1939): 99-100, see also: Clarke (2004): 86-90.

<sup>32</sup> Stanford (1939): 100.

<sup>33</sup> Pseudo-Herodotus *Life of Homer*: 26. For a discussion of its veracity see: Nagy (2010): 40.

<sup>34</sup> Kanavou lists a great many examples in: Kanavou (2015): 134-150.



Melantho, whose names stem from ‘black’ (μέλας).<sup>35</sup> Those servants and lower-status characters who are insignificant to the plot, in contrast, usually remain unnamed.<sup>36</sup> These examples support the argument that, for whatever reason, some names in Homer are intentional inventions of the poet.<sup>37</sup>

### Odysseus: The Suffering Man

No other name in literature has perhaps received as much attention as that of Odysseus. Dimock even went so far as to suggest that ‘the whole problem of the *Odyssey* is for Odysseus to establish his identity’ while Vivante believed the entire story sprang from Odysseus’ name and titles.<sup>38</sup> This chapter will therefore present a brief case study of Odysseus’ name in order to demonstrate how the twin onomastic approaches of etymology and contextual linguistics are typically applied by contemporary scholars. The first person to provide a justification for Odysseus’ name was Homer himself:<sup>39</sup>

My son-in-law and daughter, lay upon [him] the name that I say: 406  
 I come here as one who has been **hated by** many<sup>40</sup>  
 men and women over the fruitful earth.  
 Therefore let his eponymous name be **The Hated One** [Odysseus].

<sup>35</sup> The category of “good” would extend to Philoitos if his name is interpreted as ‘of auspicious destiny’ from φυλ- οἶτος: Kanavou (2015): 129-131. On “bad” names, see: Buxton (2010): 3-13, and de Jong (2001): 42-3, 417.

<sup>36</sup> Higbie (1995): 7.

<sup>37</sup> See: Lowenstam (1993): 35.

<sup>38</sup> Dimock (1956): 52, and Vivante (1982): 180.

<sup>39</sup> *Odyssey* 19.406-409:

‘γαμβρός ἐμός θυγάτηρ τε, τίθεισθ’ ὄνομ’ ὅτι κεν εἴπω·  
 πολλοῖσιν γὰρ ἐγώ γε ὀδυσσάμενος τόδ’ ἰκάνω,  
 ἀνδράσιν ἠδὲ γυναιξίν ἀνά χθόνα πουλυβότειραν·  
 τῷ δ’ Ὀδυσσεὺς ὄνομ’ ἔστω ἐπώνυμον.

This extract sits within the wider origin story of 19.391-466.

<sup>40</sup> It is not clear whether an active or passive sense is intended, i.e. whether he hates the men and women over the fruitful earth, or was hated by. The passive sense ‘hated by’ has been selected to refer to the best translation of Odysseus as a man who suffers the wrath of the gods (see discussion below).

An isolated reading of this extract would suggest that the name is ἐπώνυμος with respect to Autolykos, rather than Odysseus (as Astyanax's is for Hektor). The direction to a significant name in this scene could also refer to Autolykos' own name which also seems to be ἐπώνυμος. The name suggests 'the Wolf-Himself', a translation which suits the traditional depiction of Autolykos as a man of deceit and cunning intelligence.<sup>41</sup> However, while Autolykos is described here as recommending the name due to his own experiences, the name is demonstrated throughout the text as being more relevant to Odysseus than his grandfather.<sup>42</sup> Of course, there is no reason not to assume that the name 'Hated One' could be appropriate for more than one person, nor that such a quality could not be passed down in a family. The similarity in character traits between Autolykos and Odysseus may retrospectively explain why Homer has Autolykos feature in the naming of his grandson, rather than Laertes or Antikleia (who are conspicuously absent in this episode).<sup>43</sup>

But how is the ὀδυσσάμενος / Ὀδυσσεὺς pun to be translated? It is clearly a *figura etymologica*.<sup>44</sup> Yet the participle ὀδύσ(σ)ομαι is obscure. The meaning is interpreted by translators and scholars variously as hate, wrath, and anger, though it is certainly possible for the sense to be quite broad. Grammatically, its form (ὀδύσσομαι, ὀδύσομαι, ὀδύζομαι, ὀδύιομαι, or ὀδύομαι) is disputed, though some consensus has been reached that \*ὀδύιομαι, or \*ὀδύομαι, is the present form.<sup>45</sup> In the *Odyssey*, it is only ever used in

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<sup>41</sup> Cook gives 'Werewolf', Cook (2009): 116. For Autolykos as trickster see *Iliad* 10.266; Hesiod *Catalogue of Women* fr.67b M-W. For his relationship with Hermes *Odyssey* 19.394; Hesiod *Catalogue of Women* fr.66, 65 M-W.

<sup>42</sup> Clay suggests an etymology connecting the variant Olyseus (hence Ulysses) to the distinguishing boar-tusk scar (οὐλή): Clay (1983): 59 n.10, while Marót argued that the Autolykos episode is in fact a pun on ὄλοξ ('whole'): Marót (1960):1-6. For more on the etymology, see: Brommer (1983): 18; Immerwahr (1990): 45, and Wachter (2001): 265-8.

<sup>43</sup> For more on their shared characteristics see: **Chapter Four: Grouping Epithets**.

<sup>44</sup> Louden (1995): 29, also; Baxter (1992): 113.

<sup>45</sup> It occurs only in the aorist and perfect tenses, and in an ambiguous voice. Stanford (1952): 209.

connection with Odysseus.<sup>46</sup> Since antiquity there has been scholastic disagreement between interpreting an active ('hater'), or passive ('hated'), sense.<sup>47</sup> Odysseus' personality and experiences certainly embrace both of these translations and so the meaning may therefore be deliberately ambiguous. Some scholars maintain that the ambiguity of Odysseus' name is an intentional reflection of the duality of his character.<sup>48</sup>

There are instances within the text which seem to reinforce the double meaning of ὄδυσσάμενος / Ὀδυσσεύς as 'the one who causes hate', or 'the one who receives it'. The most immediate context of the boar hunt is presented as a coming-of-age tale where Odysseus seems to earn his name for the first time. The Scholia on *Odyssey* 19.410 describes ἡβήσας as 'four years past puberty', or 'reaching manhood' with ὄδυσσάμενος as if to imply that the name is earned through the progression to manhood. Yet, during this 'coming-of-age' hunt, Odysseus both causes and receives harm from the boar and so it is not clear in which sense the name is earned.

There are also other ambiguities concerning Odysseus' name and the concept of hostility presented in the text. In the Ithakan Assembly, for example, Telemakhos complains to the counsel: 'unless good Odysseus, my father, out of hostility (δυσμενής) injured the Akhaians in return for which, in your hostility (δυσμενέων) you [the Ithakan people] injure me'.<sup>49</sup> In this instance, δυσμενής bears a similar ambivalence, meaning both hostile toward and hostile against, depending on context. The adjective δυσμενής has no apparent etymological association with ὀδύσσομαι but the association of this dualistic

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<sup>46</sup> It also appears in the *Iliad* 8.37 where it refers to Zeus' wrath, and in Hesiod's *Theogony* 617 where it refers to Uranos'. It is, of course, distinct but similar to the far more common ὀδύρομαι ('lament, bewail').

<sup>47</sup> *Scholia* V at 19.407 describes ὀδύσσομαι as 'provoking anger' or 'causing injury'.

<sup>48</sup> Radin (1956): 23, and Clay (1983): 56, 64. Nagy argues that the same duality of meaning can be found in the name Akhilleus (1979): 69-83.

<sup>49</sup> *Odyssey* 2.71-74, Dimock (1989): 27.

quality of hatred/hostility with Odysseus further reinforces the idea that ὀδύσσομαι might also be an intentionally ambiguous quality.<sup>50</sup>

Modern scholars certainly attempt to provide translations of ὀδυσσάμενος which convey both the phonetic pun on ὀδυσσάμενος / Ὀδυσσεύς and convey its inherent ambiguity of meaning. Clay, for example, translates ὀδυσσάμενος as ‘a curse’ in order to play on an inversion of Eurykleia’s preceding suggestion: Πολυάρητος ‘much prayed-for’ (19.404), while still retaining both an active and passive sense of cursing vs. cursed.<sup>51</sup> On the other hand Dimock explains the duality as a transitional one, arguing that Odysseus’ challenge is to learn that pain can be turned to one’s advantage, or that a man can turn suffering he has received outward into the suffering of others. This interpretation suggests a progression from receiving hatred to causing it, which Dimock argues through Athena’s use of ὑποδύσσει which ‘for the sake of the pun may be mis-divided as ὑπο [and] οδύσει’ (meaning ‘overcoming his \*οδύσει’).<sup>52</sup> Dimock therefore suggests a translation for ‘Odysseus’ as ‘sowing seeds of doom’ which associates Odysseus’ name with the common trope associated with his actions: κακὰ φύτευεν (‘planting evil’). This translation also attempts a kind of homonym in the English between Odysseus and doom, in the same way Stanford suggests ‘doomed to odium’.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Kanavou also suggests a possible connection to ὀδύσσομαι in Hermes’ ὤ δύστηνε: Kanavou (2015): 93 n.18.

<sup>51</sup> Clay (1983): 59-60. Coincidentally this is also how Nausikaa identifies him at 6.280. This interpretation also plays nicely with the curses upon his name found in the Cyclops and Kirke sections, see: **Chapter Six**.

<sup>52</sup> ὑποδύσει is typically translated as ‘plunge’ (as per *Odyssey* 4.435) but is also used in the sense of ‘escaping from’ (*Odyssey* 6.127). This line is from *Odyssey* 20.52-53, discussed in: Dimock (1989): 164, 266. Similarly, de Jong argues that Athena deliberately uses words which echo his name in the *Odyssey* (2001): 14, in this she references Rank (1951): 51-2.

<sup>53</sup> Dimock (1989): 195, who also offers ‘Trouble’ (*ibid.* 57); Stanford (1952): 209-213: 212.

However, the translation which is most frequently implied through most of the poem is a straightforwardly passive interpretation.<sup>54</sup> Sophocles once suggested that Odysseus should be translated in the sense of ‘Man-hated’ in order to best refer to ἀνδράσιν ἠδὲ γυναῖξιν in the Autolykon passage.<sup>55</sup> The sense of being hated by mankind is clearly borne out in the *Odyssey* through his comrades’ general mistrust of their captain’s honesty, and also in the *Iliad*, where both Agamemnon and Akhilleus seem suspicious of Odysseus’ intelligence and artful speech.<sup>56</sup> Book 23 of the *Odyssey* is semantically direct about Odysseus’ relationships with other people. Here, in summation of his adventures, Odysseus tells Penelope that he caused ‘troubles’ (κῆδω) to other men, but that he in turn ‘suffered’ (οἰζύω) at their hands.<sup>57</sup> By drawing on the acoustic parallel between ὀδύσσομαι and οἰζύω, and contrasting his active κῆδω with the passive οἰζύω he has received, Odysseus suggests that he understands ὀδύσσομαι to be a hatred that is received and not given.

This verb οἰζύω is used again in the passive sense by Menelaos who is reminded by Telemakhos of the suffering Odysseus had endured for his sake (4.151-152). Yet, other than in the Autolykos digression, οἰζύω is exclusively limited to references of divine enmity, usually that of Poseidon toward Odysseus.<sup>58</sup> In Book 5, for example Leukothea/Ino asks Odysseus why Poseidon is so ‘terribly angry’ (ὠδύσατ’ ἐκπάγλως) with him, from which Odysseus later determines that it must be the famous earth-shaker

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<sup>54</sup> The passive sense is also better supported by linguistic evidence, see: Marót (1961): 24-30, esp. 27; Kohnken (2009): 44-61, and Peradotto (1990): 129. A more active sense would only seem to refer to Odysseus’ treatment of the Suitors, but the participle is never used in this context.

<sup>55</sup> Fragment 965: ὀρθως δ’ Ὀδυσσεύς εἰμ’ ἐπώνυμος κακοῖς πολλοὶ γὰρ ὠδύσαντο δυσσεβεῖς ἔμοι, in: Pearson (1917).

<sup>56</sup> *Odyssey* 10.34-46; *Iliad* 4.336-341, 9.307-315, (however he is also relied on for exactly these traits in the embassy to Akhilleus *Iliad* 10.242). See: Stanford (1952): 211.

<sup>57</sup> *Odyssey* 23.306-8.

<sup>58</sup> Of Poseidon: *Odyssey* 5.340, 423; 17.563, of Zeus: 1.62; 19.275. Stanford (1952): 211, and Dimock (1989): 13, 73-4.

who is 'so angered' (ὀδύσσομαι) at him.<sup>59</sup> In his beggar disguise he later remarks to Eumaios that both he and 'Odysseus' received the same 'suffering' (ὀιζύς) which we as the audience know to be caused by the enmity of Poseidon.<sup>60</sup> Athena also makes it very clear in Book 13 that Odysseus was prevented in his homecoming by Poseidon who was 'angry' (χώομαι) with Odysseus, and held a grudge against him for blinding Polyphemos (13.341-343).

Despite repeated accusations against the gods, it is clear that the divine wrath preventing Odysseus' homecoming does not stem from any other god but Poseidon. In the opening Book Athena neatly puns on Odysseus' name as she asks her father: τί νύ οἱ τόσον ὠδύσσο, Ζεῦ ('why are you so wroth with him?'), to which Zeus indignantly replies that he is not.<sup>61</sup> Similarly at 19.275, Odysseus (mis-)identifies both Zeus and Helios as the cause of his suffering: ὀδύσαντο γὰρ αὐτῷ / Ζεὺς τε καὶ Ἥλιος. The exclusivity of ὀιζύω to these instances makes it clear that Odysseus is one who suffers the wrath of Poseidon.<sup>62</sup> Autolykos might have been 'hated by men and women over the fruitful earth', but his grandson suffered the hatred of Poseidon across the wine-dark sea.

In short, by summarising the entire poem through repeated plays on ὀδυσσάμενος / ὀιζύς / Ὀδυσσεὺς Homer places an ὄνομα μαντικόν in Autolykos' mouth which causes Odysseus to 'carry his epic destiny' within his name.<sup>63</sup> However it is interpreted, whether passive or active, or even both, there is no denying the implication that Odysseus' name is meant to

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<sup>59</sup> *Odyssey* 5.339, 423.

<sup>60</sup> Dimock believes this to be an intentional hint at his own name: Dimock (1989): 230.

<sup>61</sup> *Odyssey* 1.62.

<sup>62</sup> There is also an argument to be made that the general characterisation of Odysseus leans towards a passive interpretation, given that his survival often depends on his patience and endurance (his so-called 'passive heroism') as opposed to a more physical (βίε) heroism, such as Akhilleus'. See: Schein (1995): 20-21; Cook (2009): 121-7; Clay (1983): 70.

<sup>63</sup> Pucci (1995): 65, also; Clay (1983): 63, 65, and Aristotle *Poetics* 1451a.

be read with significance and, furthermore, that this significance is expressed through repeated linguistic and contextual references throughout the text.<sup>64</sup>

#### Κλέος: Naming and Immortality

Outside of etymological concerns, there is, of course, an intrinsic relationship between the hero's name and its afterlife through his κλέος.<sup>65</sup> The Homeric noun which describes the posthumous concept of 'glory' (κλέος) is derived from the verb κλύειν ('to hear') which associates it with the reception of a 'song that glorifies the heroes of the distant heroic past'.<sup>66</sup> The *Odyssey* explores the connection between hearing and fame in Book One where Odysseus is at risk of being carried off without glory (ἀκλείης), out of sight (ἄιστος) and, specifically, out of the hearing of men (ἄπυστος).<sup>67</sup> In other words, if his name cannot be heard, then his κλέος cannot be remembered.

In order for a name to be remembered, the Muse must allow the bard to sing of this same κλέος by granting him 'access (ἀνίημι) to the song of mankind's glory'.<sup>68</sup> The verb ἀνίημι here draws an essential link between the role of the Muse and that of the bard in the recounting of men's κλέος, for it is she who acts as a conduit between the mind of the singer, and the events of the past. In this manner, the Muse represents a collective social

<sup>64</sup> For more on these puns, see: Louden (1995): 34-36.

<sup>65</sup> *Iliad* 2.486-488. Nagy (2013): 31-32. On the connection between afterlife and naming, see: Grey (2019b): 101-116.

<sup>66</sup> Nagy (1979): 16-18, and Nagy (2013): 26. For more on this etymology, see: Nagy (1974): 231-255, and Schmitt (1967): 61-102, 202.

<sup>67</sup> 1.241, see: Segal (1994): 134. Another example is found in *Iliad* 22.303-305 where Hektor says that he does not want to die 'without glory' (ἀκλείης) but in a manner in which men can learn about by hearing of it (πυνθάνομαι). Further examples: *Iliad* 3.352-354; 6.357-358; 7.87-91.

<sup>68</sup> μοῦσ' ἄρ' ἀοιδὸν ἀνήκεν ἀειδέμεναι κλέα ἀνδρῶν, *Odyssey* 8.73.

memory which the bard draws upon to sing his tale.<sup>69</sup> The *Iliad* makes it clear that the purpose of the Muse is to remember (μιμνήσκεισθαι) the glorious acts of men:<sup>70</sup>

unless the Muses of Olympos, daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus  
remembered the great many who came to Troy.

There is even an example of this process of memorisation found within the *Iliad*: Hektor remarks that a memory of him setting fire to the Akhaian ships should exist (μνημοσύνη τις ἔπειτα πυρὸς δηϊοιο γενέσθω, 8.181), and the Muse duly obliges at 16.112-125.

An invocation of the Muse therefore becomes an endless act of transmission: moving from a collective historical memory (personified by the Muse), through the mind of the bard and into his song which, in its turn, transmits the κλέος to be remembered by men who then store it once again in their folk memory.<sup>71</sup> The bard is a conduit for divine recall; it is he who transmits the goddess's memory to the minds of men.<sup>72</sup> The verb ἀνίημι used to describe the relationship between Demodokos and the Muse thus represents the process by which the Muse transmits her knowledge to the bard, giving a sense of 'sending forth'<sup>73</sup> even though it is most commonly translated in this passage to mean 'sing'. Elsewhere in Homer it conveys the sense of 'sending forth' natural elements such as the wind or the sea (*Odyssey* 4.568; 12.105), implying that the relationship between

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<sup>69</sup> That the name of the Muse indicates 'memory' see: Vernant (1959): 1-29, and Nagy (1974): 249-250, 253 n.24. For more on the role of the Muse in the transmission of action to song, see: Bakker (1997a): 165-167, and Bakker (1997b): 11-36.

<sup>70</sup> *Iliad* 2.492-493:

εἰ μὴ Ὀλυμπιάδες Μοῦσαι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο  
θυγατέρες μνησαΐαθ' ὅσοι ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθον.

See also: Nagy (2013): 48-54.

<sup>71</sup> As also suggested by the proximity of κλέος to the Muses invocation in *Iliad* 11.218-227, see: Nagy (1979): 17 and n.4.

<sup>72</sup> The verb μιμνήσκω literally means 'to put into one's mind' as indicated by *Odyssey* 12.38: μνήσει δέ σε καὶ θεὸς αὐτός. LSJ: s.v. μιμνήσκω.

<sup>73</sup> LSJ: s.v. ἀνίημι.



the Muse and the bard is a natural one equivalent to the movement of the winds and tides.<sup>74</sup>

With regard to the κλέος of names in particular, we need only to turn to Akhilleus and his account of his fate as portrayed in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. In the former, he remarks that he has two options: to fight and die – and have imperishable (ἄφθιτος) κλέος – or to live and return home but have his κλέος destroyed (ὄλλυμι) instead (9.410-416). The verb Akhilleus uses here to describe the destruction of his κλέος is the same word Agamemnon uses in *Odyssey* 24 when he remarks that Akhilleus' name was indeed *not* destroyed when he won 'a glory among mankind' (24.92-93): 'thus, you are dead, but your name (ὄνομα) is not destroyed (ὄλλυμι)'.<sup>75</sup> There is, therefore, a direct association with the name of a hero and his imperishable glory, as transmitted through the memory of the muse which is relinquished to the bard and his song.<sup>76</sup>

## Conclusion

The consensus of scholars who have written extensively on significant Homeric names (such as Stanford, Higbie, and Kanavou) is that, within Homer, there is a definite tradition surrounding the manipulation of etymologies and phonetics through prefixes and word play. The presence of these paronomastic names gives rise to the conclusion that 'Greek names are generally meant to be significant constructions' which, in pieces of literature like the *Odyssey*, are used to inform and enhance characterisation.<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, the idea that names can and do act as significant constructs in Homer should not be

<sup>74</sup> Elsewhere it refers to the act of 'letting go' or 'releasing': *Iliad* 2.71, 276; 5.422, 761; *Odyssey* 2.185; 8.73, 359; 17.425.

<sup>75</sup> For more on the significance of ὄλλυμι, see: **Chapter Six**.

<sup>76</sup> *Odyssey* 24.93; see also Russo *et al.* (1992): 371. As Goldhill writes: 'the power of the poet's voice [is to] make known and preserve the name of men' (1991): 59.

<sup>77</sup> Kanavou (2015) 2, also; Higbie (1995): 5-6.

surprising given that – within the epic tradition – a hero's name is essential to his immortality.<sup>78</sup>

However, while these scholars preoccupy themselves with considerations of names and naming, they often fail to extend their discussion to the nature, or purpose, of those epithets which appear alongside the name. The distinction is summarised by the following dichotomy: that scholars will assert, on the one hand, that the poet was free to construct his own names to suit the needs of context and characterisation, but, on the other, that epithets are metrical constructs.<sup>79</sup> To use an example of this kind of academic double-think one of the most recent writers on Homeric names, Nikoletta Kanavou, devotes sixteen pages to Odysseus and his pseudonyms (Outis, Eperitos etc. which she argues 'carry meaning and function [like a name]') and yet only discusses two (of his twenty-four) epithets, despite him having more epithets than any other Homeric character.<sup>80</sup> One of the many consequences of such omission is that epithets are not used to inform our discussions of the kind outlined above. If one takes into account Odysseus' most common epithets such as πολύτλας and ταλασίφρωνος for example, then a stronger argument for the passive characterisation of his name might be made.<sup>81</sup>

It is the contention of this thesis that epithets which accompany the proper nouns of their associated characters rightly belong to the category of names, just as they did in antiquity, and that this modern day disassociation between epithets and names, once so

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<sup>78</sup> Nagy (1990b): 206, and Russo *et al.* (1992): 6-7.

<sup>79</sup> Gomme (1954): 4-5, and Gray (1958): 43-48.

<sup>80</sup> Kanavou (2015): 100, 104-5.

<sup>81</sup> The most common epithets exclusive to Odysseus are: πολύμητις x68, πολύτλας x37, Λαερτιάδης x34, διογενής x22, πολυμήχανός x16, and ταλασίφρων x11.

fundamental, is further evidence of the dissection between style and semantics performed by the likes of Milman Parry.<sup>82</sup>

The purpose of the remainder of this thesis, therefore, is to present an analysis of proper noun epithets in Homer's *Odyssey* based on data drawn from the Epithet Catalogue. The following chapters aim to demonstrate that epithets are just as significant as names, not least in the characterisation of individuals (in which context they are most commonly studied<sup>83</sup>), but also for a variety of other purposes. Rather than transmitting a hero's glory across time – particularly past his death – his epithets instead serve to communicate his status while he is alive. That is not to say that epithets do not play an important role in establishing a hero's κλέος – as Part III makes clear – for they are as intrinsic to a hero's identity as his name, merely that, as essential social identifiers, epithets are far more significant than previously believed.

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<sup>82</sup> Steinthal (1863): 251-252, also 239; for Dionysus Thrax, see: Schneider & Uhlig (1901): 636, 19; for Apollonius Dyscalos, see: Schneider & Uhlig (1910): 48-54, 38, and Apollonius Dyscalos *De Syntaxi* 19.7. Modern scholars, such as Kanavou, go only so far as to claim they are 'close in form to onomastic labels': Kanavou (2015): 104 (my emphasis).

<sup>83</sup> See: Whallon (1969): 1-68, and (1999): 113-124.

II: The Significance of Epithets:  
A Study of Pronoun Epithets and their Data

## GLOSSARY of Epithet Terminology

A man has a variety of names and titles,  
each with its proper function and occasion.<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

In the *Odyssey* Homer awards nearly 500 different epithets and epithet phrases to his characters approximately 2350 times.<sup>2</sup> In order to study the information provided by such a vast number in the most effective manner, it has been necessary for the purposes of this thesis to develop a robust and responsive framework of categorization and definition within which these epithets can be better quantified and analysed.<sup>3</sup> Previous attempts at categorization have often been limited to the sorts of distinctions best suited to Parry's redundant structuralism, such as the division between 'particular' and 'ornamental' epithets. 'Particular epithets' were those perceived by ancient scholars to be correctly distributed: 'rightly does Nestor use the epithet *μενεπτόλεμος* ['staunch in battle'] for Thrasymedes, and not his other sons; for Thrasymedes served in the army with his father'.<sup>4</sup> Whereas the more common 'ornamental' type represented those which were considered contextually improper, redundant, or nonsensical.<sup>5</sup> The greatest example of the latter are the so-called "inappropriate" epithets such as *ἀμύμων* Aigisthos, discussed in the Introduction.<sup>6</sup>

Modern scholars have also presented various systems of epithet categorisation, though many of them appear to begin with patronymics and work backwards from there. Meylan-Faure, for example, first isolated what he called 'distinctive' epithets (these are unique titles like patronymics) and then divided the remainder into three types: 'descriptive' (referring to physical characteristics); 'laudative' (such as those referring to honour or position), and 'moral' (referring to internal

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<sup>1</sup> Austin (1982): 64.

<sup>2</sup> These are all adjectives applied to proper nouns (such as 'wide-eyed Zeus') opposed to common nouns (such as 'wine-dark sea'). A full list of epithets from Homer's *Odyssey* can be found in the *Catalogue of Epithets*. All data is drawn from the same.

<sup>3</sup> Hereafter the word 'epithet' will be used to refer only to pronoun epithets, as this is the only type of epithet this thesis concerns itself with.

<sup>4</sup> *Scholia* H.M.Q. *Odyssey* 3.44.

<sup>5</sup> *Scholia A Iliad* 2.45, examples include 'snowy' Boreas being born in a 'clear sky' (*Scholia* b.T. *Iliad* 15.170-171), or the application of *δῖος* to 'a man so outrageous' as Paris (*Scholia* b. *Iliad* 3.16). Elsewhere the ancient Scholiasts assert that the epithet is sometimes imposed by the poet and does not refer to the character (*Scholia* b.T. *Iliad* 6.377), or that they are a result of poetic periphrasis (*Scholia* AbT *Iliad* 8.1).

<sup>6</sup> *Scholia* H.P.V. *Odyssey* 1.29.

characteristics such as chastity).<sup>7</sup> Around the same time, Heinrich Düntzer also singled out what he called ‘determinative’ epithets (such as patronymics) and then classified the remainder into two different types: ‘stress epithets’ (such as great, glorious), and ‘characterising’ epithets by which he meant those which indicate a noun’s essential trait (e.g. ‘evil’).<sup>8</sup> The problem with the latter category, of course, is that such a definition could be applied to any epithet given that the purpose of an adjective is to inform their associated noun.

Parry reintroduced the idea of ‘inappropriate’ epithets to classical philology in the early 1900s, and ‘limited’ the range of types to: courage, strength, fame, royalty, and divinity.<sup>9</sup> His contemporary, George Calhoun, provided a similar – though more expansive – list, which covered nearly a dozen categories, including: prowess, wealth, wisdom, power, fame, physique, bravery, *esprit*, appearance, address, and leadership.<sup>10</sup> Some scholars who have written on epithets after Parry, such as Bergson, have not been so liberal. While he accepted the classification of some epithets as ‘ornamental’ (or ‘inappropriate’) Bergson divided the remainder into various other categories including ‘determinative’ (this time referring to intelligence), and ‘qualifying’ or ‘affective’ (i.e. those which introduce tone or nuance). The problem with the latter category, again, is that is far too broad to be considered effective.<sup>11</sup>

The first problem with effective epithet categorisation is that there is a tendency for the reader to classify the adjectives merely by types they, individually, see which can lead to discrepancies over those epithets whose definitions seems to change depending on their context: δαίφρων, for example, seems to take on a more martial sense in the *Iliad* (‘warlike’) than it does in the *Odyssey* where it is often translated in a more intellectual capacity (‘wise’). Usually, gender confuses the sense of an epithet: ἰφθιμος, for example, means ‘physically strong’ when applied to male characters such as Proteus, Hades, the Giant Laistrygonians, or Odysseus’ companions but is considered inappropriate by some translators when it is applied to Arete, Ktimene, Pero, and Penelope.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore it is not always possible to restrict epithets to conceptual qualities like ‘strength’ when they sometimes seem to refer to personal dispositions or attitudes of a character

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<sup>7</sup> Meylan-Faure (1899): 14-16.

<sup>8</sup> Düntzer (1872): 509-511.

<sup>9</sup> Parry (1971) *MHV*: 139. See also: Lowenstam (1993): 39, 46.

<sup>10</sup> Calhoun (1934a): 192-208, and Calhoun (1934b): 301-316.

<sup>11</sup> Bergson (1956): 17-18.

<sup>12</sup> Vivante (1982): 129. For more on ἰφθιμος, see: **Appendix One: Skills**. There are clear connections and parallels between Arete and Penelope (see: **Chapter Four: Grouping Epithets**) as well as Pero and Penelope (see: **Chapter Five: Women**). For the connection between the Laistrygonian princess and Arete, see Lowenstam’s assertion that the Laistrygonian princess leads Odysseus to meet her mother, just as Odysseus is led to Arete: Lowenstam (1993): 195.

which can be more abstract.<sup>13</sup> Some epithets are even interchangeable with names: ἴφθιμος is not only used to describe Penelope, but is also the name of her sister: Iphthime.<sup>14</sup> They can also be used to refer to a character in place of a name, such as when the narrator calls Odysseus πολύτροπος ('much-turning') in line 1.1., or even applied as a kind of nickname shared between characters: such as the vocative instance of ποικιλομήτα ('mercurial') which Athena uses of Odysseus in Book 13.<sup>15</sup>

The second problem is that – due to the needs of analysis – these categories must be suited to the purposes of the categoriser, which leads to inherent bias in data selection. Parry, for example – who wished to demonstrate the metrical necessity of epithets – began from a position of utility and so distinguished between those epithets which supported his position ('ornamental') and then dismissed those which contradicted him ('particular'). For the purposes of this thesis, the specific categorisation of epithet type has not been essential to the following discussion, and so the impact of bias has been limited. Instead, data in the Epithet Catalogue has been categorised merely to provide a field of reference so that it is possible, for example, to state that Odysseus has more †Intellectual epithets than any other character, or that epithets which refer to †Physical Appearance are more frequently applied to women.<sup>16</sup> The categories and any notable qualities pertaining to their distribution are discussed in greater length in Appendix One.<sup>17</sup>

An alternative way of categorizing epithets which does feature repeatedly throughout this work, is by the pattern of epithet construction: in other words, the number of epithets collected in a single phrase. This distinction is something which does not seem to be directly addressed in any scholarship on epithets, short of oblique references to a character's "full titles" or descriptions of a longer series of epithets as an "honorific" form of address.<sup>18</sup> These epithets are sometimes called an epithet "formula" inasmuch as they pertain to a collection of distinct adjectival units. However, to disassociate the present discussion from Parry's metrical theories, this thesis describes any such collection of epithets as †Extended Epithets (meaning a collection, or list, of

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<sup>13</sup> Vivante (1982): 128.

<sup>14</sup> *Odyssey* 4.797. There is, of course, the possibility that some names originated as epithets and then became names (in the same manner as descriptive nicknames become names), see: Higbie (1995): 21-22, and for Ino as an example of this transition: *Ibid.*: 25.

<sup>15</sup> *Odyssey* 13.293, for more on this nickname see: **Chapter Three: Gods and Mortals: Reciprocal (manifest)**. Note that Russo *et al.* wrongly attribute this epithet to Zeus: Russo *et al.* (1992): 203.

<sup>16</sup> Throughout this chapter the obelisk glyph † is used to indicate subheadings which can be found elsewhere in the **Glossary**.

<sup>17</sup> It is my intention to examine peculiarities of their distribution more fully in later publication.

<sup>18</sup> Whallon refers to them as 'titles which fill the entire line' (1999): 114.

more than one epithet). These †Extended Epithets further divide into specific types based on their number: †Double Epithets, †Triple Epithets, and the occasional †Quadruple Epithet.

Other than their number, epithets can also be described by the patterns of their construction. †Embedded Epithets, for example, are epithets for a secondary character found within the epithet of a primary character and are indicated by single inverted chevrons, such as ‘Athena, daughter of ›aegis-bearing‹ Zeus’. Throughout, reference will also be made to †Adopted epithets, which indicate epithets or extended epithets that have been “adopted” by a character after hearing it/them used by another character.<sup>19</sup> A distinction has also been made between epithets as adjectival titles and alternative nouns which also act as identifiers, such as ‘mother’, ‘father’, ‘guest’, or ‘queen’. The term used throughout for these nouns is †Appellatives, though they are also sometimes called periphrastic denominations – to use a term coined by Irene de Jong – for the sake of variety.<sup>20</sup> All of these terms are fully explained in the Glossary below. The purpose of this Glossary is to arm the reader with the appropriate terminology necessary to navigate the remaining key chapters.

An important caveat: the research behind this thesis leads me to the conclusion that there is no such thing as a “generic”, “ornamental” or “inappropriate” epithet, at least with regard to the pronoun epithets contained in Homer’s *Odyssey*. It is my contention that, simply because an epithet is commonplace, or distributed to a wide number of characters, does not mean that it does not somehow characterise those individuals in a fundamental way. Many men in the world, for example, are described as tall, but it does not follow from this fact that the adjective ‘tall’ is meaningless. One of the aims of this thesis is to demonstrate that the distribution of epithets between characters is not arbitrary, or primarily based on metrical value (though, of course, this may be a factor). Instead careful analysis shows that epithets are rarely ‘ineptly shared’ in Homer and that more often than not he is meticulous in his selection and distribution of †Shared Epithets.<sup>21</sup> †Uncommon Epithets in particular often draw an analogous association between the characters who share them.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Combellack once referred to Telemakhos ‘picking up’ on the use of ‘wily Aegisthos’ by Mentor-Athena, but – to my knowledge – no consistent study of these Adopted epithets has been presented to date, Combellack (1982): 364.

<sup>20</sup> de Jong (2001): xvi. Austin calls them ‘circumlocutions’ (1962): 47-48. Note that, although de Jong’s commentary covers a considerable breadth of narratological aspects in the *Odyssey*, there is little – if any – consideration made of pronoun epithets despite her interest in ‘the relationship between speech and narrator’ (viii) which is where most of these epithets are found. This is likely due to her belief that ‘epithets are an instrument of versification and that [they] can hardly be said to be contextually significant’, (1998): 126.

<sup>21</sup> Stanford (1950): 109.

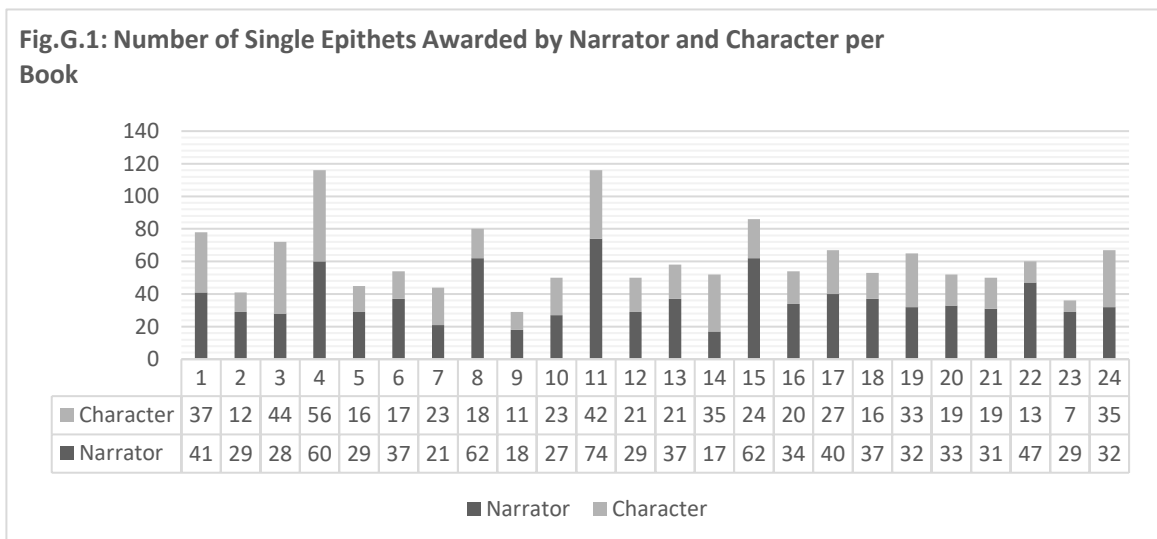
<sup>22</sup> Stanford (1950): 109.



In addition to this, it is also my contention that specific epithets mean specific things, and cannot be so easily exchanged as translators would like to believe.<sup>23</sup> Though they may occupy a similar semantic field, epithets such as ἀντίθεος and θεῖος – for example – are not synonymous, any more than δῖος and διογενής are, nor are they easily interchangeable with one another. Unlike ἀντίθεος and θεῖος which refer to ‘godhood’ (θεός), δῖος and διογενής stem ultimately from Ζεὺς as *The Δῖος* and therefore refer to the ultimate godhead. Equally, if Homer had wanted to render ἀντίθεος and θεῖοιο the same, he would have removed the prefix from the former, but he uses ἀντί- expressly to denote equivalence,<sup>24</sup> while θεῖοιο is the genitive of θεῖος: thereby creating a clear difference between ‘as a god’ and ‘of a god’ respectively. The latter is therefore more similar to δῖος (looks just like the genitive of Ζεὺς, and therefore meaning ‘of Zeus’<sup>25</sup>), while διογενής includes the suffix from γίγνομαι and thus refers to a more explicit genesis from Zeus.

#### Epithet / Single Epithet

These are the most common type of epithet. They consist of single adjective (e.g. ‘irreproachable’), or single adjectival phrases which convey a single idea (e.g. ‘shepherd of the people’). Like all the epithets described in this thesis, these adjectives are all associated with a proper (not common) noun, and are therefore awarded to a character, almost always appearing alongside their name. The range of this epithet type is exceedingly broad and appears in its most unique occurrence as patronymics which – by their very nature – are highly individualistic.



<sup>23</sup> See: **Introduction: Methodology.**

<sup>24</sup> *Odyssey* 8.546; *Iliad* 9.116; 21.75. LSJ: s.v. ἀντί.

<sup>25</sup> LSJ: s.v. δῖος.

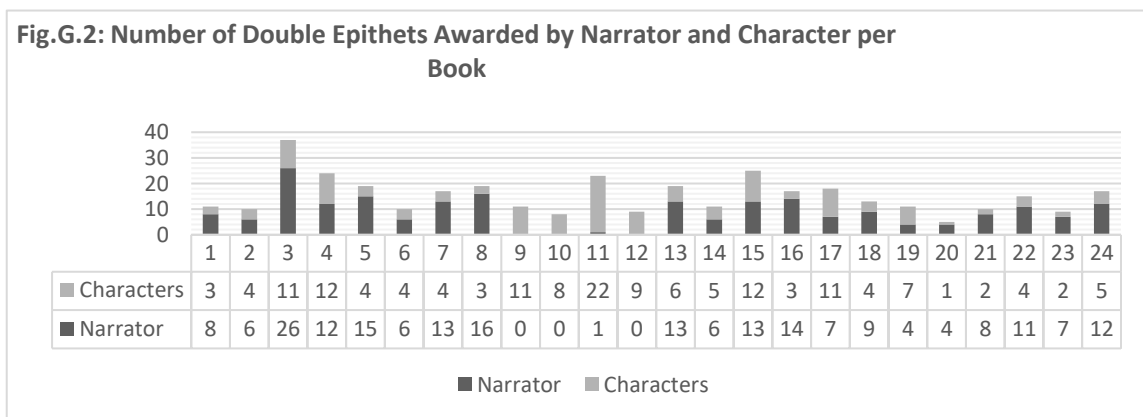
## Extended Epithet

This term refers to any collection of more than one epithet or epithet phrase: it includes the sub-types:

†Double Epithet, †Triple Epithet, and †Quadruple Epithet. Ergo, ‘broad-minded Penelope’ is an example of a †Single Epithet, while ‘much-enduring, divine Odysseus’, or, ‘Zeus-sprung, Laertes’ son, much-skilled Odysseus’, or, ‘good husband, lion-hearted, surpassed in all virtues among the Danaans, whose fame goes wide through Hellas and midmost Argos’ are all examples of †Extended Epithets.<sup>26</sup>

## Double Epithet

This is the second most common epithet type. Double epithets are a sub-category of †Extended Epithets which combine two †Single Epithets to create a unique expression, such as: ‘much-enduring, divine, Odysseus’. Double epithets tend to be standardized, meaning that they are not assembled from two random epithets each time, but reappear in the same combination and order in application to the same character. In total 70 mortals and 20 immortals receive double epithets in the *Odyssey*.



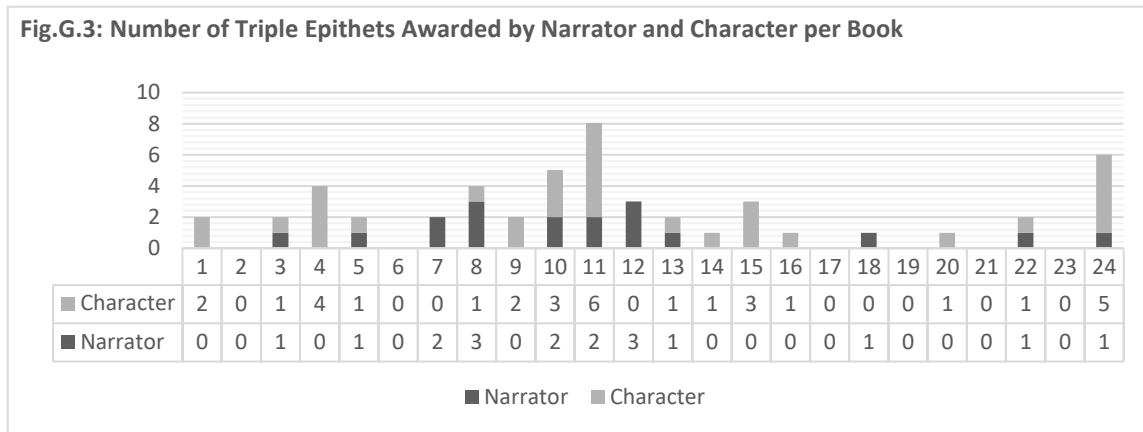
## Triple Epithets

Another sub-category of †Extended Epithets, though less common, Triple Epithets are a combination of three †Single Epithets, for example: ‘Zeus-sprung, Laertes’ son, much-skilled Odysseus’. Analysis of these epithets indicates that the order of titles may also be significant though space did not allow for further discussion.

## Quadruple Epithets

These are a very uncommon type of †Extended Epithet which consist of combination of four †Single Epithets. They are awarded only to Odysseus and prophets in the *Odyssey*.

<sup>26</sup> To clarify the individual components of these phrases, I have separated the epithets with commas in both the English and Greek throughout my translations, such as in the example: ‘child of Telamon, blameless Aias’ (παῖ Τελαμῶνος, ἀμύμονος Αἴας).



### Embedded Epithets

These are epithets for a secondary character which are “embedded” within an epithet for the subject character. The most common example of this epithet type is: ‘Athena, daughter of ›Aegis-bearing‹ Zeus’.<sup>27</sup> In this example, the primary epithet is for Athena who is being described as the ‘daughter of Zeus’, but the secondary character, Zeus, has also been awarded an epithet in his own right: ‘›Aegis-bearing‹’ (as indicated by the chevron parentheses). Here, Zeus is not the actual recipient of the address and so the epithet ‘Aegis-bearing’ is considered embedded within the primary epithet for Athena: ‘daughter of Zeus’. While there are clearly two distinct epithets in this phrase, the recipient – Athena – is only described by one (‘daughter of Zeus’), therefore this instance is simultaneously an example of a †Single Epithet.<sup>28</sup>

### Personal Epithets

This term denotes epithets which are used solely of, and thus “belong” to, a single character.<sup>29</sup> The personalised nature of these epithets often indicates that they are more intimate than their †Shared counterparts and they are also far more common (Fig.G.5), largely due to the preponderance of patronyms which – given their often unique nature – often fall under this heading. By definition this category also includes any Odyssean *hapax legomena*. Examples include: the ‘loud-voiced’ (ἀδινάων) Sirens, Menelaos ‘of the great war cry’ (βοῆν ἀγαθός), and ‘high-thundering’ (ὑψιβρεμέτης) Zeus.

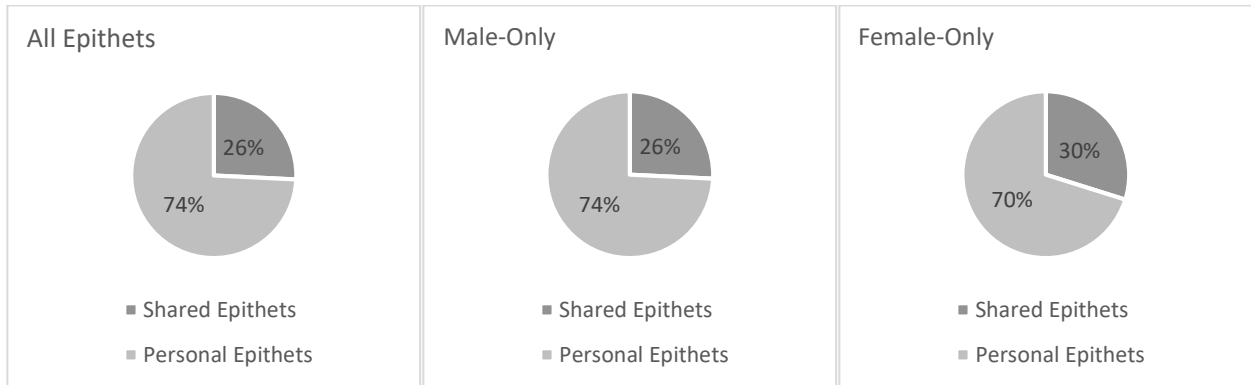
<sup>27</sup> *Odyssey* 3.42, 352; 4.752, 762; 6.324; 13.252, 371; 24.529, 547.

<sup>28</sup> A peculiar feature of this epithet type is that the two recipients are almost always related (child/parent), and so this epithet type can also be considered a kind of extended patronymic. See: **Chapter Four: Familial Epithets** for more on patronymics.

<sup>29</sup> What Meylan-Faure called ‘distinctive’ (1899): 14-16.

Fig.G.4: List of Embedded Epithets in Homer's *Odyssey*

RECIPIENT	EPITHET (ENGLISH)	EPITHET (GREEK)
Aias	Child of ›blameless‹ Telamon	παῖ Τελαμῶνος ›ἀμύμονος‹
Aiolos	Beloved to the ›undying‹ gods	φίλος ›ἀθανάτοισι‹ θεοῖσιν
Amphiaros	Whom Zeus ›of the Aegis‹ loved in his heart	περὶ κῆρι φίλει Ζεὺς τ' ›αἰγίοχος‹
Antikleia	Daughter of ›great-hearted‹ Autylokos	Αὐτολύκου θυγάτηρ ›μεγαλήτορος‹
Antilokhos	Radiant son of ›outstretched‹ Dawn	Ἡοῦς ›ἔκτεινε‹ φαεινῆς ἀγαλῶς υἱός
Arete	Daughter of Rhexenor ›who resembles a god‹	θύγατερ Ῥηξήνορος ›ἀντιθέοιο‹
Ariadne	Daughter of ›baleful‹ Minos	κούρην Μίνωος ›ὀλοόφρονος‹
Artemis / Athena	Daughter of ›great‹ Zeus	Διὸς κούρη ›μεγάλοιο‹
Athena	Daughter/Child of Zeus ›of the Aegis‹	κούρη/ τέκος Διὸς ›αἰγίοχοιο‹
Chloris	Daughter of Amphion ›Iasos' son‹	κούρην Ἀμφίωνος ›Ιασίδαο‹
Circe	Sister to ›baleful‹ Aietes	αὐτοκασιγνήτη ›ὀλοόφρονος‹ Αἰήταο
Euryalos	The equal of Ares ›bane of men‹	›βροτολοῖγδ' isos Arēi
Eurykleia	Daughter of Ops ›son of Peisenor‹	Ἔπος θυγάτηρ ›Πεισηνορίδαο‹
Eurymakhos	Son of ›inured‹ Polybos	Πολύβοιο ›δαΐφρονος‹ υἱόν
Hebe	Child of ›great‹ Zeus and Hera ›of the golden sandals‹	παῖδα Διὸς ›μεγάλοιο‹ καὶ Ἥρης ›χρυσοσπεδίλου‹
Herakles	Son of ›Kronian‹ Zeus	Ζηνὸς μὲν παῖς ἦα ›Κρονίουος‹
Iphthime	Daughter of ›great-hearted‹ Ikarios	κούρη ›μεγαλήτορος‹ Ἰκαρίοιο
Itylos	Child of ›lord‹ Zethos	κοῦρον Ζήθιοιο ›ἄνακτος‹
Megara	Daughter of ›high-spirited‹ Kreon	Κρείοντος ›ὑπερθύμοιο‹ θύγατρα
Megapenthes	Son of ›glorious‹ Menelaos	υἱὸς Μενελάου ›κυδαλίμοιο‹
Nausikaa	Daughter of ›great-hearted‹ Alkinoos	θυγάτηρ ›μεγαλήτορος‹ Ἀλκινόοιο
Nisos	Son of ›lord‹ Aretiades	Ἀρητιάδαο ›ἄνακτος‹
Penelope	Wife of Odysseus ›son of Laertes‹	γύναι ›Λαερτιάδεω‹
Penelope	Daughter of ›far-famed‹ Ikarios	Ἰκαρίου κούρη ›τηλεκλειτοῖο‹
Periboia	Daughter of ›great-hearted‹ Eurymedon	θυγάτηρ ›μεγαλήτορος‹ Εὐρυμέδοντος
Telemakhos	Son of ›godlike‹ Odysseus	υἱὸν Ὀδυσσεῆος ›θειοιο‹
Telemakhos	Son of ›great-spirited‹ Odysseus	Ὀδυσσεῆος ›μεγαθύμου‹ υἱόν
Tyro	Wife of Kretheus ›Aiolos' son‹	Κρηθῆος γυνή ἔμμεναι ›Αἰολίδαο‹
Tyro	Sprung from ›blameless‹ Salmoneus	Σαλμωνῆος ›ἀμύμονος‹ ἔκγονος
Unknown	Daughter of ›Laistrygonian‹ Antiphates	θυγατέρ' ›Λαιστρυγόνοιο‹ Ἀντιφάταο
Zeus	Child of Kronos ›crooked of counsel‹	Κρόνου παῖς ›ἀγκυλομήτεω‹

**Fig.G.5: Percentage Distribution of Personal and Shared Epithets in the *Odyssey* by Gender**

### Shared Epithets

Contrary to †Personal Epithets, these are epithets which are shared by more than one character, such as ‘divine’ (δῖος). To distinguish them further, Shared Epithets can either be uncommonly, or commonly, distributed. An uncommon Shared Epithet is one that might only apply to a small number (two to four) of characters, whereas common Shared Epithets apply to five or more different characters. They are thus defined by *the number of characters* who share them, rather than by *the rate of their recurrence*.

‘Atreides’, for example, can only be applied to Menelaos or Agamemnon and is thus uncommon for it only applies to two people, but it appears over 40 times, which makes it relatively frequent. In contrast, the common epithet ‘equal to the gods’ (ἀντίθεος) is applied to more than a dozen characters, but only appears 23 times. A common epithet, therefore, is not necessarily a frequent one.

### Adopted Epithets

The term Adopted Epithet is used to refer to those epithets which have been overheard by a character, who then learns them and thereafter “adopts” them for their own use. Recognizing the distribution of adopted epithets both informs our understanding of speech patterns and also helps us identify sympathetic relationships between characters. While they make an appearance in some discussions throughout the thesis, further work is needed to examine them as a phenomenon in their own right.

### Appellatives

Otherwise called ‘periphrastic denominations’ in the style of de Jong, appellatives are nouns which operate as epithets inasmuch as they serve as titles, or forms of address, used to describe a character with regard to their social position.<sup>30</sup> They include: ‘mother’, ‘old man’, ‘guest’, and so on. Many adjectival epithets appear in conjunction with these appellatives, giving such combinations as ‘beloved father’

<sup>30</sup> de Jong (2001): xvi.

(elsewhere φίλος appears as an epithet in its own right), or 'queenly mother' (where the adverb is taken as an adjectival epithet and thus does not represent a combination of the two appellatives 'queen' and 'mother'). The ancients themselves referred to these titles as 'antonyms' (αντωνομασια) but the modern translation of this word renders it unintelligible for this purpose.<sup>31</sup>

## Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to outline the terminology used throughout this thesis which refers to the different ways in which pronoun epithets are discussed and so familiarize the reader. The concept of †Extended Epithets and its sub-categories, †Double, †Triple etc., as well as the types of epithet called †Embedded, †Adopted and †Shared, are of primary importance to the theories presented going forward.

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<sup>31</sup> *Scholia on Iliad* 13.154; de Jong (1993): 289-306.

## CHAPTER TWO: Speaking Among Peers: Epithets as Status Identifiers in Social Dialogue

‘I have never before attempted close words.  
A young man must feel αἰδώς when speaking with his elder.’  
~ *Odyssey* 4.22-23

### Introduction

The recognition of a hero’s status is central to his identity in the Homeric world and yet a coherent system of address in Homeric dialogue has yet to be successfully produced.<sup>1</sup> As essential and oftentimes unique attributes epithets play a significant role in establishing this heroic status where language becomes a *mimesis* of social convention.<sup>2</sup> On its own, the type of epithet can indicate the social authority, lineage, wealth, skills, and/or achievements of a character.<sup>3</sup> It is when these accolades stack in double or triple epithet phrases, however, that social rank starts to become comparable and nowhere is this more obvious than during character dialogue.<sup>4</sup> For this reason, the use and distribution of epithets in formal dialogue will be examined over the following three chapters.<sup>5</sup>

The main rule of epithet exchange in social dialogue, as demonstrated in this chapter, is that the length of an epithet series increases in direct proportion to the perceived status

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<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Weise devoted a whole thesis on the subject of address in the *Iliad*, which largely focused on vocative forms of address, Weise (1965).

<sup>2</sup> For more on the social world of Homer, see: Calhoun, G. M. (1934a, b); Straßburger (1953): 97-114; Hohendahl-Zoetelief (1980), and Haubold (2000).

<sup>3</sup> See: **Appendix One** for the categorisation of these epithet types.

<sup>4</sup> Note that scholars typically follow Parry, and argue that double epithets are usually placed only for metrical reasons, and that only rarely is any kind of significant use ‘defendable’, see: de Jong (2001): 335.

<sup>5</sup> Austin remarks that epithets ‘only rarely [form] part of the vocabulary of the characters in the poem’ (1982): 59, a point with which I disagree – not least because speech makes up 66% of the *Odyssean* text and that nearly all dialogic speech opens with epithet exchanges.

of the character. A younger character, for example, will address a (non-familial) social superior using double or triple epithets, but never receives the same number in return.<sup>6</sup> Analysis of epithet exchange during social dialogue therefore establishes societal order, thereby providing the audience with a more nuanced appreciation of complex social interactions and helping them to understand societal hierarchies.<sup>7</sup>

Alterations to this rule in turn provide their own interpretations. There may be inversions of propriety caused by the uttering of insulting epithets, or by deliberate equivocations and omissions of appropriate titles. These rules of epithet exchange in social discourse also extend to servants, where good and bad can be ranked by their manners and also provide a great deal of information about the role of women with regard to whether they are strangers, divinities, or objects of lust.

This chapter therefore provides an overview of epithets exchanged during spoken dialogue in the *Odyssey*. It first demonstrates how the length of epithet phrases indicates social position, before moving on to consider how this rule of epithet exchange plays out between guests, equals and servants.

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<sup>6</sup> See: **Glossary**: s.v. 'Extended Epithet', 'Double Epithet', 'Triple Epithet'.

<sup>7</sup> Some scholars have applied theories of sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and politeness theory to Homeric dialogue. However, where they examine epithets, their efforts largely focus either on patronymics, and/or the *Iliad* and not the number of epithets exchanged. See: Weise (1965); Adkins (1969): 7-21; Edwards (1970): 1-36; Griffin (1986): 36-57; Martin (1989); Beck (1998); Hooker (1998): 14-18; Haubold (2000); Friedrich (2002): 1-13; Brown (2003); Lloyd (2004): 75-89; Beck (2005); Brown (2006): 1-46, and Blazokatairinaki (2016). On the fields of sociolinguistics and pragmatics in general, see: Ervin-Tripp (1972): 225-240; Hudson (1980): 120-131; Levinson (1983); Brown & Levinson (1987); Collinge (1988): 1-13; Blackmore (1992); Dickey (1996); Dickey (1997), and Dickey (2010).



## Epithets and Social Hierarchy

The number of epithets in any Extended Epithet title used during dialogic exchanges can convey as much information about a person's rank as an epithet can in isolation, if not more: not least because they serve to indicate the real, or perceived, status of characters.<sup>8</sup> Analysis of epithet distribution in character dialogue reveals that characters who receive lengthier combinations of epithets are presented as being of a higher status than those who receive shorter titles. These distinctions in status afforded by epithet selection follow a pattern of social hierarchy which is found across the text.

The social hierarchy indicated by epithet distribution reveals that sons of aristocratic men are considered to be of lower status than the heroes of their fathers' generation, and therefore must address their seniors with longer, more honorific titles than they can expect to receive themselves. Similarly we would not expect to find any servant or worker being addressed with an Extended Epithet by any other character situated above them. That is not to say that longer epithet phrases are only ever used of high-status characters; merely that, within dialogic exchange, there are clear rules which directly correlate social status with the number of epithets awarded.<sup>9</sup>

The number of epithets awarded by one character to another is therefore based entirely on social context. One such context is the mixing of social superiors and inferiors, where guests and strangers address hosts, masters speak with servants, and gods speak with

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<sup>8</sup> Higbie (1995): 6, and: Brown (2006): 1-46.

<sup>9</sup> They are distributed differently by the Narrator, see: **Chapter Five**.

mortals. Outside of public interactions and within intimate, familial, settings, however, these formal rules need not apply.<sup>10</sup>

### Guests and Hosts

Most of the dialogue between guests and hosts in the *Odyssey* is shared by Telemakhos and his hosts: Nestor and Menelaos, or otherwise between Telemakhos and his guests: the Suitors. These exchanges are vital to our understanding of both proper and improper epithet exchange between hosts and their guests. Furthermore, they also portray a maturation of Telemakhos' social learning across the Telemakheia which mirrors other scholastic interpretations of his character.<sup>11</sup>

Before he embarks on his sojourn to the mainland, Telemakhos' conversations with the Suitors are marked by (their) insults and (his) hesitation in establishing dominance as the man of the household. Yet, on the mainland, he and Peisistratos speak at length with their social superiors Nestor and Menelaos and it is here, during these exchanges, that Telemakhos' social skills are demonstrably improved. The education Telemakhos receives from the Iliadic heroes regarding the social propriety of correct guest-host dialogue then informs his behaviour with the Suitors upon his return to Ithaka.

Telemakhos' initial conversations with the Suitors can best be described as artless. The dialogue lacks any real social markers, indicated by exchanges of epithets, which are typical of other Homeric discourse. When speaking with the Suitors individually

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<sup>10</sup> See: **Chapter Four**.

<sup>11</sup> Woodhouse (1930): 208-214; Miller & Carmichael (1954): 58-64; Clarke (1967): 30-44; Austin (1969): 45-63; Jones (1988): 496-506; Reece (1993); Roisman (1994): 1-22; Thalmass (1998): 206-222, and Heath (2001): 129-157. For a contrary viewpoint, see: Olson (1995).

Telemakhos uses only their names: collectively, he calls them ‘Suitors of my mother’ (μητρὸς ἐμῆς μνηστῆρες, 1.368), or simply ‘Suitors’ (μνηστῆρες, 2.312).<sup>12</sup> μνηστῆρες appears to be a title which he has learnt from Penelope who similarly calls them ‘my young Suitors’ (κοῦροι ἐμοὶ μνηστῆρες, 2.96).<sup>13</sup> This adoption of social etiquette from his mother indicates that Telemakhos – like any young person – has learned his social etiquette from his environment, which sadly comprises of boorish and bad-mannered young men. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that Telemakhos has a relative lack of skill when it comes to correct social speaking given the examples he has witnessed. During his childhood Odysseus’ absence as a father figure and teacher has meant that both the audacity of the Suitors, and Telemakhos’ own youth, have blurred the bounds of correct social interaction. Convention demands that the host be treated as the superior and yet Telemakhos has grown up among these men and only had them to learn from.<sup>14</sup>

At the start of the narrative there has been no dynamic shift of power marking Telemakhos’ transition to adulthood which would establish his authority as the man of the house. This transition begins in Book One with Athena’s divine interference. Here, Athena incentivises Telemakhos to assert his status as host by reminding him of his heritage. His first attempt at social dominance is directed at an easy target: someone who is lower in social standing than himself. He instructs his mother to ‘return to the house and take up her work’ for ‘speech [the song of Phemios] is the interest of all men... and especially mine’.<sup>15</sup> Her initial surprise (θαμβήσασα, 1.360) in response to this statement indicates

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<sup>12</sup> By their names: 1.368-413, 2.130, 209, 310.

<sup>13</sup> Thus marking μνηστῆρες out as an Adopted Epithet/Appellative.

<sup>14</sup> Indeed, the primary sin of the Suitors is precisely their mistreatment of this social rule.

<sup>15</sup> 1.356-359. For a slightly alternative take on the reasons behind this statement, though still relevant to Telemakhos’ maturation, see: Heath (2001): 138-9. Heath examines the process from the description of Telemachus’ speech as emblematic of his πεπνυμένος (as a progression from his ‘foolishness’ (νήπιος)).

that her son is not usually so forceful in his dealings with her. This statement therefore represents an inversion of their typical roles where Penelope – as the mother figure – is usually dominant, but here acquiesces to his demand in acknowledgement of his authority. It is at precisely this moment that Telemakhos socially repositions himself from a child, to an aristocratic young man, as indicated by his statement: ‘for mine is the power (κράτος) in this house’.<sup>16</sup>

However, the same tactic does not work with the Suitors, who call him out on his new found confidence:<sup>17</sup>

He spoke, and they all bit their lips in  
wonder at Telemakhos, and his bold speech.  
And so Antinoos, son of Eupitheos answered:  
‘Telemakhos! Surely it must be the gods have instructed you to  
speak beyond yourself and so boldly in your address...’ 385

Across these five lines there is a repeated semantic emphasis on the quality of Telemakhos’ speech.<sup>18</sup> Twice it is qualified by the verb ἀγορεύω which Homer typically associates with negative adverbs, such as: ‘insidiously’ (παραβλήδην, *Iliad* 4.6), or ‘reproachfully’ (ὄνειδίζω, *Odyssey* 18.380). Here, ἀγορεύω is combined with the adverb θαρσαλέως which, while usually translated with a positive sense of heroic ‘daring’ in the *Iliad*, is here marred by its association with the typically negative ἀγορεύω.<sup>19</sup> Instead of

<sup>16</sup> 1.359.

<sup>17</sup> 1.381-385:

ὡς ἔφαθ', οἱ δ' ἄρα πάντες ὀδᾶξ ἐν χεῖλεσι φύντες  
Τηλέμαχον θαύμαζον, ὃ **θαρσαλέως ἀγόρευεν**.  
τὸν δ' αὐτ' Ἀντίνοος προσέφη, Εὐπίθεος υἱός·  
‘Τηλέμαχ', ἦ μάλα δὴ σε διδάσκουσιν θεοὶ αὐτοὶ  
ὕψαγόρην τ' ἔμεναι καὶ **θαρσαλέως ἀγορεύειν**. 385

<sup>18</sup> Note also that the Suitors, who should be deferential guests, call Telemakhos only by his name (384) as if they were his social superiors. That the use of a name *sans* epithets indicates superiority, see below.

<sup>19</sup> θαρσαλέως in the *Iliad*: 5.602; 10.223; 16.493; 21.430, 589; 22.269. See also: LSJ: s.v. θαρσαλέος.

‘daring’, then, θαρσαλέος takes on a negative tone, meaning something more like ‘overbold’. The negative quality of Telemakhos’ ‘overbold speech’ (θαρσαλέως ἀγορεύειν) is further underscored by the Suitors’ use of the noun ὑπαγόρας which, as a combination of the excessive prefix ‘hyper’ and the verb ἀγορεύω, again creates a negative sense of ‘one who speaks beyond [one’s station]’. These five lines therefore lay great emphasis on the unexpectedly bold and overreaching quality of Telemakhos’ speech, suggesting that this is the first time he has chosen to speak in this manner.

Antinoos later draws greater attention to Telemakhos’ ‘bold speaking’ when he incorporates the noun ὑπαγόρας into a pseudo-Double Epithet: the purpose of which is to mock his host through an inversion of the proper titles Telemakhos – as his host – is due.<sup>20</sup> When Telemakhos again tries to assert his authority before the Ithakan Assembly, Antinoos publicly subverts the proper form of extended address for a superior by instead offering the double negative: ‘boldly spoken, might-ungoverned Telemakhos’ (ὑπαγόρη, μένος ἄσχετε, 2.85, 303).<sup>21</sup> Nor is Telemakhos the only subject of their impropriety. Mentor is identified as an old companion to whom Odysseus had entrusted the care of his house (2.225-228) and should therefore be deserving of his guests’ respect given both his age and his position, even if they do not recognise the authority of Telemakhos. Yet, Mentor’s appeals for civility are also met with mockery when Leokritos also offers him the mock-heroic Double Epithet: ‘mischievous man, wild in your wits’ (ἀταρτηρέ, φρένας ἦλεέ, 2.243).

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<sup>20</sup> de Jong remarks that the majority of speeches initiated by the Suitors are ‘marked by mockery or derision’ and frequently use ‘indirect dialogue [to] underscore the condescending attitude they adopt toward him’, but she does not apply this observation to an inversion of appropriate epithet exchange: de Jong (2001): 62-63.

<sup>21</sup> To contrast with a correct titular sequence, see the exchanges between Telemakhos and Nestor, or Menelaos, below.

The only speaking etiquettes Telemakhos has learnt during his childhood, therefore, are the insults which have been exchanged by men who should be his guests, peers, and role-models. He even says as much to Penelope:<sup>22</sup>

‘I cannot always know the reasonable way, 230  
for I am beaten down by the minds of these outsiders  
who surround me, and so I have no one to help me.’

Later, during his travels abroad, Telemakhos has more luck flexing his social vocabulary which increases as he learns a range of new honorific titles (see Fig.2.2). This is no doubt what Athena intended when she contrived to ‘put might into his mind’ (οἱ μένος ἐν φρεσὶ θεΐῳ, 1.89) so that he might ‘speak out against all the Suitors’ (πᾶσι μνηστήρεσσιν ἀπειπέμεν, 1.91). The verb ἀπειῖπον is particularly significant here, as – given the negative prefix (ἀπ- εῖπον) – it implies an antagonistic or retaliatory form of speech.<sup>23</sup> Elsewhere in the *Odyssey* this verb refers only to Telemakhos’ speech: once describing what he intends to say to the Suitors in the Assembly (1.373) where it is qualified by the adverb ἀπηλεγέως (‘bluntly’), and later in Book 16 where it qualifies the commands (ἐφημοσύνη) Telemakhos gives to Eumaios.<sup>24</sup> Athena certainly succeeds in placing the ability of

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<sup>22</sup> 18.230-232:

ἀλλά τοι οὐ δύναμαι πεπνυμένα πάντα νοῆσαι· 230  
ἐκ γάρ με πλήσσουσι παρήμενοι ἄλλοθεν ἄλλος  
οἶδε κακὰ φρονέοντες, ἐμοὶ δ’ οὐκ εἰσὶν ἄρωγοί.

The adjective ἄρωγός is an Odyssean *hapax*, but is used in the *Iliad* it refer to the giving of assistance (4.235), usually martial (8.205; 21.371, 428), but also regarding the proprieties of social exchange (18.502), and so could mean either “no one to help me learn correct social etiquette” or, “no one to help me physically eject these curs”, but the references to πεπνυμένος and νοέω in this context suggest the former interpretation.

<sup>23</sup> And should therefore not be rendered as a passive action, such as Lattimore’s ‘make a statement’. Autenrieth: s.v. ἀπειῖπον.

<sup>24</sup> From the same prefix ἀπό- ‘without’, and ἀλέγω ‘care; heed’, and therefore indicating ‘without care; carelessly; brazenly’, see also *Iliad* 9.309 where the same phrase describes Akhilleus bold speech to Odysseus: LSJ: s.v. ἀπηλεγέως. 16.340.

forceful speech into Telemakhos' mind as it is only he who speaks in this way for the remainder of the text.

A correct understanding of how Telemakhos' speech is described by the narrator provides a contrast from which the Suitors' mockery can be measured, for it is precisely the quality of his speech which they attack in the epithet: ὑπαγόρη, μένος ἄσχετε (2.85, 303). It is the sudden change in Telemakhos' behaviour which has led the Suitors to consider the 'might' (μένος), which Athena has instilled in him, to be ἄσχετος ('unchecked'), and his speech (in this instance his ἀγορεύω rather than his εἶπον) to be excessive.<sup>25</sup> The idea of Telemakhos' developing mental strength – as borne out in his speech – is therefore emphasised by: first, the semantic and thematic repetition of 1.89-91 and 2.85, 303, and secondly; its refutation in the double negative epithet phrase compiled by the Suitors. It is Athena's will that her presence improve Telemakhos' speech to such an extent that he might publicly confront the Suitors, travel abroad and thus achieve good κλέος among the people. Yet, at the same time, this is precisely what the Suitors are afraid of and thus berate him for; as if further evidence was needed of their hubris.

The entirety of Books Three and Four can be – and have been – interpreted as a process of maturation for the character Telemakhos.<sup>26</sup> Yet, given the influence of the Parry Hangover, scholars who have examined this progression often fail to examine the change in Telemakhos' dialogue, particularly the forms of address he uses when speaking with hosts who are his social superiors. Here too the same evolution of character can be seen.

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<sup>25</sup> Note here that μένος, like many other Iliadic words in the *Odyssey*, takes on a more intellectual meaning than a physical one (compare, for example, δαίφρων).

<sup>26</sup> See: n.11.

Before he travels abroad, Telemakhos never directly addresses a character with an extended epithet: instead he only uses names and appellatives despite the social range of the people to whom he speaks.<sup>27</sup> Athena/Mentes when s/he first appears is ‘guest-stranger’ and later ‘Mentes’, Eurykleia is ‘nanny’, Penelope is ‘mother’, his sailors are ‘friends’, and the Suitors are ‘Antinoos’ or ‘Eurymakhos’. As demonstrated above, the only epithets he has heard in return are much of the same: names, appellatives, and insults. Telemakhos understands that his experience of social discourse has been insufficient and, after arriving in Pylos, admits this same trepidation to Athena/Mentor:<sup>28</sup>

‘Mentor, how should I approach him? And how entreat him? 22  
I have never before attempted close words.  
A young man must feel αἰδῶς to speak with his elder.’

Telemakhos’ choice of the noun, αἰδῶς, here is multifunctional for it can either refer to the ‘respect’ one must feel for one’s social superiors, or to the ‘shame’ he would suffer should he speak out of turn.<sup>29</sup> Later, Peisistratos similarly remarks to Menelaos that Telemakhos is loath to speak ‘rashly’ (ἐπεσβολία) before a man who speaks like a god.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Throughout, I use the word directly to mean dialogue spoken “to their face”, or “in person” (a similar distinction is also made between these Term of Address and Term of Reference, the latter of which denotes indirect references to another person.

<sup>28</sup> 3.22-24:

Μέντορ, πῶς τ’ ἄρ’ ἴω; πῶς τ’ ἄρ προσπύξομαι αὐτόν; 22  
οὐδέ τί πω μύθοισι πεπεῖρημαι πυκινόισιν·  
αἰδῶς δ’ αὖ νέον ἄνδρα γεραίτερον ἐξερέεσθαι.

<sup>29</sup> Elsewhere in the *Odyssey*, its context implies ‘respect’ (8.172) but in the *Iliad* it refers quite clearly to ‘shame’ (5.787; 15.561; 16.422; 17.336). See: LSJ: s.v. αἰδῶς, and Cairns (1993).

<sup>30</sup> 4.159. ἐπεσβολία is a rather unusual *hapax* which seems to mean the same as ἐπεσβόλος in *Iliad* 2.275 (from ἔπος + βάλλω or ‘throwing words’), and so seems to imply unwelcome speech, see: Heubeck *et al.* (1988): 204. de Jong attributes Peisistratos’ statement simply to Telemakhos’ ‘shyness’, (2001): 94, and yet, again, the poet is explicit here about the power and quality of proper speech.



Athena/Mentor reassures him, telling him that he will either understand what to say in his own mind, or else ‘some divinity’ (we are to presume, herself), will put it there for him (3.26-27). The giveaway here – further underscoring her role in his development – is that she uses the same description of ‘putting into his mind’ (ἐν φρεσὶ) that she used in Book One when speaking of the μένος she would instil in him to improve his speech.<sup>31</sup>

Peisistratos then greets his guests and Athena/Mentor respectfully supplicates her uncle. Nestor speaks, welcoming his guests and then – in an expansion of the usual short formula for dialogic exchange – Telemakhos’ first speech is described:<sup>32</sup>

Then reasonable Telemakhos answered him  
taking courage, for Athena had put that courage into  
his mind: so that he could ask after his absent father  
and so earn good κλέος among men.

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The passage again refers to qualities which Athena has put ‘into his mind’ (ἐν φρεσὶ) so that he might be able ‘to ask after his absent father’: a process which will ‘earn [him] good κλέος among men’ (1.95 verbatim). In short, the narrator emphasises for the third time qualities which Athena has instilled in Telemakhos in order to ensure that he learns to speak properly. The attentive audience has been made aware of Telemakhos’ lack of elocution by both Athena’s interference and his own admission and should therefore notice the direct connection between the qualities Athena wishes to instil in Telemakhos, Telemakhos’ attempt at social authority on Ithaka, the Suitors’ catty response/s, and his

<sup>31</sup> 1.89, see above.

<sup>32</sup> For more on those formulaic phrases which introduce speech see: Beck (2005), and Beck (2012).

*Odyssey* 3.75-79:

τὸν δ’ αὖ Τηλέμαχος πεπνυμένος ἀντίον ἠΰδα  
θαρήσας· αὐτὴ γάρ ἐνὶ φρεσὶ θάρσος Ἀθήνη  
θῆχ’, ἵνα μιν περὶ πατρός ἀποιχομένοιο ἔροιτο  
ἦδ’ ἵνα μιν κλέος ἐσθλὸν ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ἔχησιν.

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own trepidation leading up to and immediately before his first speech with Nestor. Through either his own innate skill, borne from his parentage, and/or from Athena's careful guidance, Telemakhos will learn how proper speech ensures a man's κλέος.

The importance of correct social discourse for the Homeric hero is thematically fundamental to the Telemakheia as it is a narrative which repeatedly draws the reader's attention to the patterns of its protagonist's speech. The semantic phrasing pertaining to Telemakhos' speech has built across three books and leads here to the first proper use of an honorific double epithet spoken by a mortal character, which is incidentally also Telemakhos' first proper attempt at social discourse:<sup>33</sup>

‘O Nestor, Neleus’ son, great glory of the Akhaians.’

What follows in Pylos is an exchange between Telemakhos and Nestor during which Nestor repeatedly calls his young guest by the appellatives ‘friend’ and ‘child’, and Telemakhos again calls him ‘Nestor, Neleus’ son, great glory of the Akhaians’. Once Telemakhos has achieved his aim – of encouraging his host to remember (μιμνήσκω) his father – and Nestor has thus identified his guest by acknowledging both his father (3.122) and his mother (3.212), a level of intimacy is established between the pair. At this point Telemakhos opts for an alternative form of address and exchanges the double epithet he has been using for the appellative: γέρων (3.226). ‘Old sir’ is a title which he has both heard, and previously used, to address other knowledgeable and respected heroes back

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<sup>33</sup> 3.79: ὦ Νέστορ, Νηληϊάδη, μέγα κῦδος Ἀχαιῶν.

at home on Ithaka, thus explaining why he would know this to be an appropriate title for Nestor.<sup>34</sup>

Continuing their exchange, the Gerenian horseman Nestor said:	102
‘Dear friend, since you remind me of the sorrows we endured...’	
...	
Then reasonable Telemakhos answered him:	
‘Nestor, Neleus’ son, great glory of the Akhaians...’	202
...	
Continuing their exchange, the Gerenian horseman Nestor said:	210
‘Dear friend, since you have spoken and reminded me of these things...’	
...	
Then reasonable Telemakhos answered him:	225
‘Old sir, I foresee that your words will not come to pass.	

Telemakhos’ change from the formal ‘Neleus’ son, great glory of the Akhaians’ to the less formal appellative ‘old sir’ marks a transition in their relationship where both status and intimacy have been established by mutual recognition. By opening their dialogue with formal titles, Telemakhos has demonstrated his respect for a man who is his social superior. Nestor, in his turn, reinforces the difference between their ages through his use of the appellative ‘child’, and later shows his respect for his companion’s offspring through his use of ‘friend’. Never does Nestor use anything other than these indirect appellatives to address his guest: he never even uses Telemakhos’ name. The difference between their relationship, and Telemakhos’ previous relationships with Mentos, or the Suitors for example, is made obvious by this exchange of titles and demonstrates an evolution of the young man’s social education.

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<sup>34</sup> Previously used as an address for Aigyptios (2.40) and Halitherses (2.178, 192, 201) during the Ithakan Assembly.

Now that their relative social positions have been established there are only a few reasons why Telemakhos would return to using the more formal title: either because sufficient time has passed between their dialogue (such as a new day), or because he needs to redirect his speech from one person to another. Telemakhos' stay is brief and Nestor does not speak with him again in the morning. However, Telemakhos does use the slightly abbreviated title 'O Nestor, Neleus' son' once more during his exchange in Pylos: when he is re-directing his speech from Mentor to the old man without a narratorial break (3.247). Despite the substantial amounts of spoken dialogue in the *Odyssey* redirections such as this are exceptionally rare. Where they do occur they are often marked by a similar offering of formal titles, as if to reaffirm the character's status for the audience. Penelope, for example, uses the same method when she shifts from addressing the disguised Odysseus ('dear stranger', 19.350) to her housemaid ('broad-minded Eurykleia', 19.357) in Book 19. Thus Telemakhos' use of 'Nestor, Neleus' son' at 3.247 is entirely appropriate to the context and follows patterns of conversation found elsewhere in the poem. In sum, in Pylos, under Athena's supervision, Telemakhos always follows the correct progression of speech etiquette, despite his trepidation and lack of experience, just as she predicted he would.

Athena ensures that Telemakhos' education continues, even after she leaves. Before leaving Pylos, she ensures that Nestor introduce her protégé to the youth Peisistratos (whom she earlier recognised as possessing both reason and judgement, 3.52) by marking her suggestion with a miraculous transformation and thus ensuring Nestor's co-

operation (3.268-270).<sup>35</sup> Peisistratos is identified as the only son of Nestor who remains a bachelor (3.401) and so he makes a fitting companion for Telemakhos based on their similar social rank: a fact which Telemakhos himself later admits.<sup>36</sup> Their interaction allows Telemakhos time to form a bond of equals away from the eyes of their parents, something which he has had no prior experience of on Ithaka.

While little of their relationship is recorded, it is possible to measure its progression through their dialogue. In their first recorded interaction Telemakhos uses a patronymic sobriquet for his companion: Νεστορίδης, and adds the more intimate gesture that Peisistratos is ‘pleasing to his heart’ (τῷ ἐμῷ κεχαρισμένε θυμῷ, 4.71). There is no recorded reply from Peisistratos before the young men interact with Menelaos but they do speak again in Book 15 when the story returns to Sparta. Here, Telemakhos again prefers more respectable patronymic titles for his friend, calling him: ‘Peisistratos Nestor’s son’ (Νεστορίδη Πεισίστρατε), and then simply Νεστορίδης (15.46, 195).

However, the change in their intimacy is most notably marked at 15.196-201. Here, Telemakhos asserts the guarantee of their future camaraderie:<sup>37</sup>

You and I can vow ourselves guest-friends through and through  
because of our fathers’ love, that and the similarity in our age,  
and this journey has inspired a unity of feeling between us.

<sup>35</sup> Race (1993): 89-90. Heath remarks that Peisistratos has ‘the sense to respect her seniority in a speech of greeting’ but does not explain how this seniority is communicated, i.e. he does not talk specifically of appropriate epithet phrases: Heath (2001): 141.

<sup>36</sup>15.196-201: translated below.

<sup>37</sup> 15.196-201:

ξεῖνοι δὲ διαμπερὲς εὐχόμεθ’ εἶναι  
ἐκ πατέρων φιλότητος, ἀτὰρ καὶ ὁμήλικές εἰμεν·  
ἦδε δ’ ὁδὸς καὶ μᾶλλον ὁμοφροσύνησιν ἐνήσει.  
μὴ με παρέξ ἄγε νῆα, διοτρεφές, ἀλλὰ λίπ’ αὐτοῦ,  
μὴ μ’ ὁ γέρων ἀέκοντα κατάσχη ᾧ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ  
ιέμενος φιλέειν· ἐμὲ δὲ χρεῶ θᾶσσον ἰκέσθαι.

Before you bear me past the ships, διοτρεφές, leave me here,  
 otherwise the old man will hold reluctant me in his house 200  
 out of love: and I must be quickly away.

The intimacy of his friendship is here marked by the vocative epithet διοτρεφές ('fostered-by-Zeus') which Telemakhos uses as a nick-name in place of Peisistratos' name. This is an instance of an Adopted Epithet which Telemakhos has heard both Helen and Peisistratos use of Menelaos during previous discourse on Sparta, and which he has also awarded to Menelaos himself.<sup>38</sup> Telemakhos' re-application of the title to Peisistratos indicates that he privately holds Peisistratos in the same regard he publicly holds the son of Atreus.<sup>39</sup> His selection of this particular epithet is all the more flattering given that 'fostered by Zeus' is only ever applied in the *Odyssey* to men who are descendants of Zeus: Odysseus, Menelaos, and Agamemnon, and that Nestor's family are decidedly un-associated with this type of heritage given the lack of δῖος epithets they receive.<sup>40</sup>

On his part, Peisistratos is far more casual, and calls Telemakhos only by name (15.49) or uses no identifier at all, suggesting an easier and more ready acceptance of their social equality. Peisistratos is far too well-mannered to misidentify his young friend, either by offering him epithets beyond his station, or by dismissing him with a simple appellative.

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<sup>38</sup> 4.138, 156, 235, 291, 316; 15.64, 87, 155, 167.

<sup>39</sup> It is never again awarded to Peisistratos.

<sup>40</sup> The exception to this rule is the Suitor Agelaos, who receives this epithet from the servant Melanthios at 22.136. The reason for its presence here is unclear. Russo uses the Parryist excuse that it is a metrical application, due to the similarity between Agelaos and Menelaos (to whom the epithet is most often awarded), but this does not explain why Telemakhos should choose to award it to Peisistratos (Russo *et al.* (1992): 246). An alternative explanation might be that Agelaos, via his father Damastor (a relationship which is emphasised by the repetition of his patronym), might well be a 'descendant of Zeus'. Though we are not told as much directly, we might infer the relationship given the general trend of the epithet. Otherwise, it may be a case of the obsequious Melanthios wishing to flatter his new master given that the other two leaders of the Suitors are now dead. It is used in much the same way by Odysseus' companions when they seek to flatter him (10.266, 409). For more on δῖος as an epithet of divine lineage, see: **Chapter Four: Familial Epithets: Divine Heritage.**

He is also not as green as Telemakhos, who too quickly proffers titles of intimacy and friendship which might be conveyed as disrespectful to the casual eavesdropper.<sup>41</sup>

In fact, Peisistratos' manners are precisely the reason why Athena chooses him as a companion for Telemakhos. In Pylos, he has had a more fortuitous upbringing than his friend, not only earning his own epithets but also receiving an education in diplomacy from one of the greatest orators of the time. Athena therefore chooses Peisistratos as her replacement, safely delivering Telemakhos to a more suitable travelling companion who can correctly ingratiate him into the new social environment at Sparta where the more experienced man, Peisistratos, is the first to address his host:<sup>42</sup>

Then Nestor's son Peisistratos spoke in answer:	155
'Atreus' son, Menelaos, fostered by Zeus, leader of the people...'	
...	
Then, in reply, tawny-haired Menelaos answered him:	168
'Ah me, this is the son of a beloved man who has come to me...'	

Unlike Telemakhos' first social interaction, there is no retardation leading up to Peisistratos' speech. Peisistratos clearly has experience in this sort of diplomatic social exchange, as Menelaos makes clear, for he has inherited it from his father. Notice how Peisistratos greets his host with the highly honourable triple epithet: (1) 'Atreus' son', (2) 'fostered by Zeus', (3) 'leader of the people'.<sup>43</sup> An immediate contrast should be noted

<sup>41</sup> Note the slightly disrespectful way he refers to Nestor here.

<sup>42</sup> 4.155-156, 168-169:

τὸν δ' αὖ Νεστορίδης Πεισίστρατος ἀντίον ἠΐδα·	155
Ἄτρεΐδῃ Μενέλαε διοτρεφέες, ὄρχαμε λαῶν	
...	
τὸν δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη ξανθὸς Μενέλαος·	168
ὦ πόποι, ἦ μάλα δὴ φίλου ἀνέρος υἱὸς ἐμὸν δῶ ἵκεθ'	

<sup>43</sup> The notion that a longer title inherently implies greater formality seems instinctive given subsequent societal protocols in the West (as per: de Jong (2001): 136), however to my knowledge the numerical significance of epithets has not yet been examined in critical detail.

between how Telemakhos greeted Nestor and how Peisistratos greets Menelaos: the former used only two epithets, while the latter uses three. Differences between the length of epithet phrase for the two heroes inform the reader that Menelaos is a hero of higher status than Nestor – or, at least, that he is considered to be so by the two young men – without requiring that the two heroes interact with each other directly. The types of epithet provide insight into the reasons behind their hierarchical variance. Both receive a patronym ('Atreus' son' and 'Neleus' son') and both an indicator of social standing ('leader of the people' and 'great glory of the Akhaians') but only Menelaos receives the additional honorific: *διοτρεφής*, indicating that it his connection to Zeus by marriage which proffers him an increase in rank when compared with Nestor who (as we have seen) has no such association with Zeus.<sup>44</sup>

Returning to the dialogue, Peisistratos then modulates his choice of titles, changing to the shorter, yet still formal: *Ἀτρείδης*, and following it with courteous flattery: 'Nestor used to say you were reasonable beyond other men' (4.190). His deft move matches the pattern of address used by Telemakhos in Pylos and so provides the reader with the following structure for correct guest-host interaction between younger and older men:

1. Guest greets host with formal titles reflecting the host's relative social position, e.g. 'Atreus' son, fostered by Zeus, leader of the people' and 'Neleus' son, great glory of the Akhaians'.
2. Guest continues with this pattern of address until the host acknowledges their heritage, e.g. Nestor identifies Telemakhos as the son of Odysseus and Penelope, Menelaos identifies Peisistratos as the son of Nestor.
3. Guest acknowledges the mutual recognition. Intimacy is established and indicated through the use of a shortened honorific title, e.g. 'Neleus' son' or 'Atreus' son' alone.
4. Host may eventually replace diminutive denominations such as 'child' or 'friend' with the guest's name if he feels it is suitable.

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<sup>44</sup> As per *Iliad* 1.280.



Peisistratos has clearly followed the correct protocol of speaking as Menelaos remarks that his young guest speaks with ability beyond his years:<sup>45</sup>

Then in reply tawny-haired Menelaos answered him:

‘Dear friend, since you speak well, as great as any man might speak or act, even one who is born before you...

205

Thus Peisistratos’ smooth transition from the more formal ‘Atreus’ son, Menelaos, fostered by Zeus, leader of the people’ in his first greeting to the more familiar ‘Atreus’ son’ in the second, demonstrates to his host that he is both knowledgeable of social etiquette, and proficient enough in its use to move confidently into less formal titles. This talent for speaking marks him as one who has learned to speak beyond his years: he speaks like an older man (ὄς προγενέστερος εἶη) and this talent identifies him as a true son of Nestor. ‘This is the way your father is, and so you too speak with reason’ (τοίου γὰρ καὶ πατρός, ὃ καὶ πεπνυμένα βάζεις, 4.206) Menelaos says, indicating both his respect and recognition. The respect Peisistratos has earned, however, is not one of equals, given that he is still an untested youth (whatever his heritage) and so, as the younger man, Peisistratos remains Menelaos’ social inferior. The difference in their status is marked by the terms Menelaos uses to address his guest/s. Like Nestor, Menelaos relies on simple denominations such as ‘friend’ (φίλος, 4.204).

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<sup>45</sup> 4.203-205:

τὸν δ’ ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη ξανθὸς Μενέλαος·  
 ‘ὦ φίλ’, ἐπεὶ τόσα εἶπες, ὄσ’ ἂν πεπνυμένος ἀνὴρ  
 εἴποι καὶ ῥέξειε, καὶ ὄς προγενέστερος εἶη·

Telemakhos is a fast learner, and soon imitates the example set by his companion.<sup>46</sup> He too begins with the standard triple honorific for Menelaos (4.291), *despite the progression of social precedent set by his friend* which implies that each guest must establish an individual relationship with his host and not rely on any kind of group privilege. In short, while the dialogue between Peisistratos and Menelaos has swiftly progressed to more informal titles, Telemakhos cannot rely on the relationship established between them, and must instead develop his own relationship with his host. So he repeats:<sup>47</sup>

Then reasonable Telemakhos said in answer: 290  
 'Atreus' son, Menelaos, fostered of Zeus, leader of the people,

The progression of their social relationship moves in a slightly different direction as their next interaction occurs in a private setting and so necessitates a shift in dialogic patterning. The reader is told explicitly that Telemakhos is put to bed on the portico while Menelaos retires to his inner bedroom (4.301-305). Then, in the morning, Menelaos leaves his own chamber and sits beside Telemakhos who, we must presume, has not left his place on the porch (4.306-310). Here, in this private setting, Menelaos speaks more frankly with his guest.<sup>48</sup>

He sat down beside Telemakhos, and spoke and addressed him:  
 'what is the need that brought you here, hero Telemakhos, 312  
 to divine Lakedaimon over the wide surface of the sea;

<sup>46</sup> That he also finds an exemplar of correct speaking in Menelaos, see: Heath (2001): 142.

<sup>47</sup> 4.290-291:

τὸν δ' αὖ Τηλέμαχος πεπνυμένος ἀντίον ἠΐδα· 290  
 'Ἀτρεΐδη Μενέλαε διοτρεφές, ὄρχαμε λαῶν.

<sup>48</sup> 3.311-314:

Τηλεμάχῳ δὲ παρῖζεν, ἔπος τ' ἔφατ' ἔκ τ' ὀνόμαζεν· 312  
 τίπτε δέ σε χρεῖώ δεῦρ' ἦγαγε, Τηλέμαχ' ἦρωσ,  
 ἐς Λακεδαιμόνα δῖαν, ἐπ' εὐρέα νῶτα θαλάσσης;  
 δήμιον ἦ ἴδιον; τόδε μοι νημερτές ἐνίσπες.

is it a public or private matter? Tell me truthfully.'

This is the only time during Telemakhos' sojourn on the mainland that he is either named by one of his hosts or given an epithet by one of them, it is also the only time he is addressed in private and the connection is no coincidence. 'Hero' is one of the more generic epithets in the *Odyssey*, applied to a range of men regardless of their age, accomplishments, or status (including, for example, Demodokos, Peisistratos, Menelaos and Laertes). The inclusion of the bard Demodokos and the herald Moulis in otherwise noble company repudiates a translation of ἥρωϝ as 'warrior' or Iliadic 'hero' and so it must instead be understood as a simple title of honour which can be applied to all free men. Despite more modern interpretations of the term, the breadth of its application in Homer (and particularly in the *Odyssey*) mark it as a relatively basic honorific.<sup>49</sup> Nevertheless the presence of any kind of epithet, however common, is a notable mark of respect given the patterns of social discourse established by the text. Indeed, neither Telemakhos nor Peisistratos receives any other epithets from the host of Sparta during their stay. What, then, is the explanation for its presence here? The answer can only be that the context is a private one. But what is Menelaos' intent?

One might argue that Menelaos, in this private context, uses an epithet for his young guest only to better encourage him to tell the truth: as a tactful form of flattery intended to lull Telemakhos into a more intimate acquaintance so that he might speak more openly. However, Menelaos is never presented as a Machiavellian figure in the Homeric universe, and his fondness for his friends' son seems nothing but genuine. This affection is made

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<sup>49</sup> Austin remarks that its presence here is due to Telemakhos' presence in the heroic, or Iliadic, world of the mainland where the epithet is more prominent, (1982): 61. This argument is supported by the narrator's use of the same epithet within the same context (4.21, 303).

clear at 4.609-610 where Menelaos marks his affection through a smile and a touch of his hand:<sup>50</sup>

So he spoke, and Menelaos of the loud war-cry smiled,  
He stroked him with his hand, and spoke and addressed him: 610

The verb καταρρέζω, indeed the entire formula ‘epithet + name smiled, and stroked him with his hand, and spoke and addressed him’, occurs only two other times in the *Odyssey*, at 5.181-182 and 13.287-288. Both instances occur when a goddess is amused by the wit of Odysseus and wishes to show her affection to him. This passage therefore foreshadows the divine patronage of Kalypso and Athena toward Odysseus by imitating it on a lower plane: through a close social intimacy between Telemakhos and Menelaos. There may also be something of the pseudo father-son relationship here. Certainly the movement toward physical intimacy marks a transition in the relationship between Telemakhos and Menelaos which has come about through Telemakhos’ looking and speaking so like his father and thus eliciting Odysseus’ memory from his comrade.<sup>51</sup> Menelaos remarks “your blood is true, dear child, you speak (ἀγορεύω) so well” (4.611), thereby bringing the Telemakheia full circle to the speaking skills of its protagonist which have progressed from requiring divine assistance (1.89-91 and 3.22-24) to manifesting an innate skill true to his parentage, just as Athena promised.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> 4.609-610:

ὥς φάτο, μείδησεν δὲ βοὴν ἀγαθὸς Μενέλαος,  
χειρὶ τὲ μιν κατέρεξε νῆπος τ’ ἔφατ’ ἔκ τ’ ὀνόμαζεν· 610

For smiling as indicative of friendship, see: Levine (1982b): 97-104, and non-verbal communication in general; Lateiner (1995).

<sup>51</sup> See: **Chapter Six: Οὗτιν δέ με φίλοι κικλήσκουσι.**

<sup>52</sup> For more on inherited intellectualism in the Laertiadae, see: **Chapter Four: Grouping Epithets.**

Certainly by the end of Menelaos' long digression about the Old Man of the Sea, Telemakhos feels comfortable enough to offer a more familiar exchange. Imitating the same progression Peisistratos made from formal triple to less formal single epithet he offers:<sup>53</sup>

Then reasonable Telemakhos said in answer:

'Atreus' son, do not detain me here for long... 594

Telemakhos diplomacy and increased intimacy with the Spartan King is matched by the latter's use of his guest's name, only this time in public. This is the manner in which Menelaos addresses Telemakhos for the remainder of their time together.<sup>54</sup>

Continuing their exchange, Menelaos of the great war cry said:

'Telemakhos, I will not detain you for long...' 68

The relationship between Menelaos and Peisistratos, however, has made no such advancement. Given that the pair have had no opportunity to further their acquaintance, Peisistratos remains at a formal distance from his host. The difference is marked in Book 15 just as the young men are leaving Lakonia where the last words the young men speak to their host are markedly different. Peisistratos offers the adjusted double epithet form: 'Menelaos, fostered by Zeus, leader of the people' (15.167) as it is a new day and he has

<sup>53</sup> 4.593-594:

τὸν δ' αὖ Τηλέμαχος πεπνυμένος ἀντίον ἠΰδα·  
'Ἀτρεΐδη, μὴ δὴ με πολὺν χρόνον ἐνθάδ' ἔρυκε. 594

<sup>54</sup> 15.67-68, also: 111.

τὸν δ' ἠμείβετ' ἔπειτα βοῆν ἀγαθὸς Μενέλαος·  
'Τηλέμαχ', οὐ τί σ' ἐγὼ γε πολὺν χρόνον ἐνθάδ' ἔρύξω 68

de Jong attributes this change in address to a representation of Telemakhos' overall maturation (2001: 104) but I would argue it is specific to the establishment of his personal relationship with Menelaos.

not yet spoken with his host, whereas Telemakhos is permitted to proffer the far more intimate vocative: διοτρεφές (15.155).

The exchanges between Telemakhos, Peisistratos, and Menelaos in Books Four and 15 indicate that there are complex rules governing public dialogue.<sup>55</sup> First of all, the young guest is expected to indicate respect for his social superior and host by offering an extended (double or triple) epithet, suited to his rank. Once identity has been established, the guest may attempt a more relaxed exchange – comprised of fewer, less formal epithets. If the host is accepting of this attempt at familiarity he will change his form of address in turn from something generic; ‘guest’, ‘friend’ or ‘child’ to something more specific, such as his guest’s name, as a marker of their shared intimacy.

**Fig.2.1: List of Epithets and Epithet Phrases learned by Telemakhos: Pylos**

EPITHET	RECIPIENT	SPEAKER
‘surpassingly swift of foot, a fighter’ πέρι μὲν θείειν ταχύς ἤδὲ, μαχητής	Antilokhos*	Nestor
‘lord, inured, mercurial’ ἄνακτα δαΐφρονα, ποικιλομήτην	Odysseus	Nestor
‘son of Tydeus, devoted to Ares’ Τυδέος υἱὸς ἀρήιος	Diomedes	Nestor
‘Tydeus’ son, tamer of horses’ Τυδεΐδew, ιπποδάμοιο	Diomedes	Nestor
‘radiant son of ›great-spirited‹ Akhilleus’ Ἀχιλλῆος ›μεγαθύμου‹ φαίδιμος υἱός	Neoptolemos	Nestor
‘Poias’ splendid son’ Ποιάντιον ἀγλαὸν υἱόν	Philoktetes	Nestor
‘Atreus’ son, tawny haired’ Ἀτρεΐδης, ξανθός	Menelaos	Nestor
‘Onetor’s son, who surpassed the race of men in the steering of a ship’ Ὀνητορίδην, ὃς ἐκαίνυτο φῦλ’ ἀνθρώπων νῆα κυβερνήσαι	Phrontis	Nestor

<sup>55</sup> There is also evidence of Telemakhos’ social maturity to be found in his interaction with Theoklymenos, see: de Jong (2001): 372, and: Race (1993): 98-9.

Fig.2.2: List of Epithets and Epithet Phrases learned by Telemakhos: Sparta

EPITHET	RECIPIENT	SPEAKER
'Atreus' son, fostered by Zeus, leader of people' Ἀτρεΐδη Μενέλαε διοτρεφές, ὄρχαμε λαῶν	Menelaos	Peisistratos
'surpassing all others, surpassingly swift of foot, and a fighter' περὶ δ' ἄλλων φασὶ γενέσθαι Ἀντίλοχον, πέρι μὲν θείειν ταχὺν ἠδὲ μαχητὴν	Antilokhos*	Peisistratos
'infallible, Old Man of the Sea' γέρων ἄλιος νημερτής	Proteus	Menelaos
'the undying one, Egyptian, who knows the depths of every sea, Poseidon's underling' ἀθάνατος, Αἰγύπτιος, ὃς τε θαλάσσης πάσης βένθεα οἶδε, Ποσειδάωνος ὑποδμῶς	Proteus	Menelaos
'early born, rosy fingered' ἠριγένεια ῥοδοδάκτυλος	Dawn	Menelaos
'undying ones who hold wide heaven' ἀθανάτοισι τοῖ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσι	Gods	Menelaos
'Atreus' son, nobleman, famed for the spear' ἥρωσ Ἀτρείδης, δουρικλειτὸς Μενέλαος	Menelaos	Peisistratos
'nobleman, Sidonian king' ἥρωσ Σιδονίων βασιλεύς	Phaidimos	Menelaos

\*Note the differences between the number of epithets Nestor and Peisistratos award to Antilokhos. As his father, and therefore superior, Nestor calls him only 'surpassingly swift of foot, a fighter' (3.112) but Peisistratos, his younger brother, and therefore inferior, extends this to the triple epithet 'surpassing all others, surpassingly swift of foot, a fighter' when he describes Antilokhos to Telemakhos (4.201-202). Similarly, Nestor devotes more lines to his own kin than he does to the "greater" heroes Ajax, Akhilleus, and Patroklos (3.109-112).

No small wonder, then, that when Telemakhos returns to Ithaka, both Penelope and the Suitors are taken aback at the confidence and propriety of his speech.<sup>56</sup> Penelope, for example, while first acknowledging his initial attempts at mature speech in Book One did not – in actuality – obey his instructions to 'work on her own tasks, the loom and the distaff' (1.356-357) for she then went upstairs to sleep (1.363-364). Upon his return, however, when he tells her to 'bathe, wash her clothes, and return to her rooms with her

<sup>56</sup> For Penelope see 21.343-355. He first expresses his directness at Eumaios, after meeting his father, his typical speech introduction changes to the unique: τὸν καὶ Τηλέμαχος πρότερος πρὸς μῦθον ἔειπεν (16.460). This is also where he first manifests his ability to keep silent – like his father: Beck (1998): 133.

handmaids to promise holy hecatombs to Zeus' (17.48-50) she actually obeys him (17.58-60).<sup>57</sup>

After Telemakhos' return from the mainland, the Suitors immediately pick up where they left off. When Telemakhos derides Antinoos for his treatment of the new beggar (Odysseus) in Book 17 Antinoos responds with his old mock-heroic insult: ὑπαγόρη, μένος ἄσχετε (17.406). But Telemakhos has learnt much from his experiences abroad and no longer accepts the Suitor's impudence:<sup>58</sup>

'Daemons! You are driven mad, and can no longer conceal  
what you have eaten and drunk: it must be some god who rouses you... 406

His speech here presents a reversal of the relationship previously established between guests and host on Ithaka. Telemakhos' accusation of the Suitors' impropriety here presumes that 'some god' (τις θεῶν) must have roused them, just as Antinoos had previously accused Telemakhos of being directed by a god in his speech (διδάσκουσιν θεοὶ αὐτοὶ), and thus treated his daring address (θαρσαλέως ἀγορεύειν) with scorn (1.384-5). Now it is Telemakhos who accuses the Suitors of being driven by the gods in *their* speech.

Telemakhos' quick temper had previously been met with scorn, and even where Eurymakhos had attempted to be placatory, there was still a patent lack of respect. For

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<sup>57</sup> Heath (2001): 147.

<sup>58</sup> 18.406-407:

'δαμόνιοι, μαίνεσθε καὶ οὐκέτι κεύθετε θυμῷ 406  
βρωτῶν οὐδὲ ποτῆτα· θεῶν νύ τις ὑμῖν ὀροθύνει.

Ὁν δαμόνιοι: Meaning "possessed" both in the good and bad sense, and to be translated according to the situation': Autenrieth: s.v. δαμόνιος. 'Often in Homer, introduces a rebuke... and in translating it we need to concentrate on ... what [the speaker] regards as mental aberration', Heubeck et al. (1988): 241. It is also an Adopted Epithet, first used by Odysseus 18.15 to describe Iros (in Telemakhos' hearing) and only then by Telemakhos to the Suitors (18.406). See also: Erbse (1986): 259-273, and de Jong (1987a): 158.



example in Book One, Telemakhos makes an impassioned statement that he wishes the Suitors would ‘perish in this house’ (1.380) to which Antinoos replies, equally brazenly, that ‘I hope the son of Kronos never makes you our king’ (1.386). Eurymakhos’ attempt to calm the situation is full of equivocation: ‘these matters ... are questions that lie in the lap of the gods’, he says (1.400) in a speech that bears no other marks of respect toward his host. Even the epithet, φέριστε, which he uses to redirect the conversation to new matters (1.405), is not as flattering as it first may seem. The adjective is translated as the vocative form of φέρτατος – itself a superlative of ἀγαθός – and so meaning something like ‘best’ or ‘bravest’.<sup>59</sup> Yet, this particular vocative occurs in contextually dubious places in the *Odyssey*.

First φέριστε appears, here, where it would seem unusual for the spiteful Suitors to genuinely flatter their host, particularly given that Eurymakhos’ motives in this scene are both opportunistic and selfish.<sup>60</sup> Secondly Odysseus uses it in Book Nine when he pleads with Polyphemos to obey the laws of ξενία (9.270). In both contexts the term is used by a guest appealing to a host they despise, and so some flattery might be expected. However, it is clear that neither guest has any genuine regard for the person to whom they are speaking. The term should therefore be understood as a typical Odyssean inversion of an Iliadic mark of respect. In the *Iliad*, φέριστε occurs only once during an exchange between mortals (6.123) when Diomedes addresses Glaukos for the first time, and twice between mortals and gods (15.247; 24.387) where both gods are acting favourably toward the speaker. In its Odyssean contexts, therefore, φέριστε produces an heroic

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<sup>59</sup> Autenrieth: s.v. φέρτατος.

<sup>60</sup> de Jong (2001): 141.

echo, swiftly reversed by the banality of its context: Telemakhos is no Iliadic hero, and Polyphemos is no patron god, and so neither has earned the right to be addressed in such a manner. Eurymakhos' use of φέριστε in Book One is no compliment, but rather his own mock-heroic version of the double epithet adopted by Antinoos. Both titles are inverted forms of a style of address to which Telemakhos should be entitled given his position, a fact which can be better appreciated following the more appropriate exchanges on the mainland where double epithets and intimate vocatives are used in the correct manner.

Returning to the dialogue on Ithaka, we find that Telemakhos' assertion of authority is this time met with courtesy. Instead of disparaging, or further insulting, their host, Amphinomos remarks upon the justness of Telemakhos' position and even comments on the rights he has within his own home:<sup>61</sup>

Friends, no man can attack what has been appropriately said	
nor oppose it with angry words...	415
...permit the stranger in Odysseus' halls	420
to be cared for by Telemakhos, since it is his house he came to.	

Amphinomos' remark is the first time Telemakhos' speech has been met with acceptance by the Suitors, and it sets a precedent for what follows. Instead of speaking 'above himself' (ὑψαγόρας) Telemakhos is now believed to have spoken 'appropriately' (δίκαιος).<sup>62</sup> Telemakhos takes Amphinomos at his word, and seats the beggar (Odysseus)

<sup>61</sup> 18.414-421:

ὦ φίλοι, οὐκ ἄν δὴ τις ἐπὶ ῥηθέντι δικάϊω	
ἀντιβίοις ἐπέεσσι καθαπτόμενος χαλεπαῖνοι...	415
... τὸν ξεῖνον δὲ ἐώμεν ἐνὶ μεγάροις Ὀδυσῆος	420
Τηλεμάχῳ μελέμεν· τοῦ γὰρ φίλον ἵκετο δῶμα.	

<sup>62</sup> Note that this is the same quality Athena recognised in Peisistratos at 3.52.

inside the hall (20.257-261), reiterating that, as the son of Odysseus, it is his house (264-266), and then warns his guests again:<sup>63</sup>

But you, Suitors, keep your rebuking hearts and hands  
to yourselves, or else you will incur strife and dispute between us. 266

Again, the Suitors are stunned to silence by the self-assured weight of Telemakhos' words. There has been a notable development from the hot-headed outburst of Book One "I hope you all die!" to the far more balanced, "behave well or else you will incur my displeasure". This fact has also not been missed by the Suitors as, this time, it is Antinoos who is intimidated by the change in Telemakhos. Here again, they remark upon the quality of his speech, no longer using the negative ὑπαγόρας to describe him, but instead obscuring their contempt in sarcasm:<sup>64</sup>

'Though it is difficult, we must accept Telemakhos' words, Akhaians,  
though we find it exceedingly hard when he threatens us with his speech. 272  
Zeus, son of Kronos, did not permit us before now to have  
made an end of him in these halls, for he is a clear speaker.'

Antinoos claims that, now, Telemakhos' speech is 'threatening' (ἀπειλέω) whereas 'before now' his voice was λιγύς. The adjective λιγύς is predominantly used in the *Odyssey* to describe feminine sounds, like the sound of lamentation or women singing,

<sup>63</sup> 20.266-267:

ὕμεῖς δέ, μνηστῆρες, ἐπίσχετε θυμὸν ἐνιπῆς 266  
καὶ χειρῶν, ἵνα μὴ τις ἔρις καὶ νεῖκος ὄρηται.

<sup>64</sup> 20.271-274:

καὶ χαλεπὸν περ ἐόντα δεχόμεθα μῦθον, Ἀχαιοί, 272  
Τηλεμάχου· μάλα δ' ἦμιν ἀπειλήσας ἀγορεύει.  
οὐ γὰρ Ζεὺς εἶασε Κρονίων· τῷ κέ μιν ἤδη  
παύσαμεν ἐν μεγάροισι, λιγύν περ ἐόντ' ἀγορητήν.

and is therefore frequently translated as ‘shrill’ or ‘clear’.<sup>65</sup> In this context, the feminine association implies that the Suitors have previously found themselves unable to kill Telemakhos because he sounded like a woman or an immature male. In short, his voice was high-pitched (λιγύς) because it had not yet broken but, now, it has audibly matured and become more threatening.

The battle for Telemakhos’ status culminates in his response to Ktesippos, who has thrown an ox-hoof at his guest (20.304-319). Telemakhos orders the Suitors ‘let no man act so outrageously (ἀεικείας) in my house’ and calls them out on their threats of violence against him (20.308-316). Again, they are stricken to silence (οἱ δ’ ἄρα πάντες ἀκὴν ἐγένοντο σιωπῇ, 20.320) and Agelaos repeats Amphinomos’ earlier statement that ‘no man can attack what has been appropriately said nor oppose it with angry words’ (20.322-323). An argument might be made that the Suitors are only going along with Telemakhos’ assertiveness so as not to anger Penelope, however, the change in their references to Telemakhos indicates that their behaviour has changed significantly. Antinoos no longer calls Telemakhos ‘boldly spoken’, or ‘might-ungoverned’ as he did at 17.406: the joke of the subverted double epithet ended the moment Telemakhos called the Suitors δαιμόνιοι. Instead, the change in his social dominance confuses the Suitors to such an extent that they never directly speak to Telemakhos again.<sup>66</sup> Every time he rebukes them directly, they respond by speaking only among themselves. While such behaviour is still impolite, it is at least an improvement upon insulting him every time he speaks.

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<sup>65</sup> The sound of wind (3.176, 289; 4.357, 567), the sound of lamentation (4.259; 8.527; 10.201; 11.391; 18.216; 21.56), the more pleasing sound of the lyre and women singing (8.67, 105, 254, 261; 10.254; 22.332; 23.133), it also refers to the quality of the Muse’s own voice (24.62). LSJ: *s.v.* λιγύς.

<sup>66</sup> They refer to his name, once, indirectly during teasing which Telemakhos ignores or does not hear. 20.375 is clearly framed with an indirect formula: ὧδε δέ τις εἶπεσκε νέων ὑπερηνορέοντων.

While Telemakhos' journey to the mainland has long been considered a process of maturation for the young hero, a careful examination of the distribution of epithets during his dialogic exchanges sheds new light on this progression. In the beginning, Telemakhos is a shy man who has the common-sense not to be rude to a guest, but whose knowledge of social etiquette is woefully lacking because his education (from his peers) has been poor. During his time in Pylos and Sparta, he covers this deficit first by imitating Athena/Mentor, and then Peisistratos, from whom he learns the proper code of conduct (how to be δίκαιος), and so begins to appreciate the nuances of address imposed upon him as the son of a hero. As a host, he also learns that he is entitled to the respect of his guests, and so returns home with a confidence born of a new appreciation for his station.<sup>67</sup> His transition is also marked by a change in how the Suitors speak to him: their initially mocking and subversive use of correct modes of address coming to be replaced either by stunned silence or acceptance of his newly confident speaking.

#### Peers

When two speakers are of equal social status, the rules of discourse change. Considering the substantial amount of dialogue in the *Odyssey* it is perhaps surprising that there is not more conversation between men of equal rank, but then Odysseus is the last of the Iliadic heroes to return home and does not stop to visit his companions on the way. Thus one of the very few places heroes of aristocratic status meet during this text is toward the end of the First Nekyia, when Odysseus speaks with Agamemnon, Akhilleus, and Herakles.

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<sup>67</sup> de Jong (2001): 363.

Of these companions the first one to speak with Odysseus is Agamemnon.<sup>68</sup> Here, the progression of epithets as status indicators in dialogue moves in a similar manner to the exchanges between Telemakhos and his hosts inasmuch as both speakers open with formal, triple epithet, titles:<sup>69</sup>

Atreus' son, honoured, lord of men, Agamemnon 397

Zeus-sprung, Laertes' son, much-skilled, Odysseus 405

Yet the parity in their introductions is unlike the asymmetrical discourse between the guests and hosts examined elsewhere in this chapter and so indicates that these two characters consider each other to be men of equal status.<sup>70</sup> Both speakers quickly move from this manner of address to less formal titles including the name alone – ‘Odysseus’ – and the patronymic – ‘Atreus’ son’ – which, as a direct patronym, is typically used in place of a name and is therefore indistinguishable from the name as a stand-alone title.<sup>71</sup> These two heroes, then, move from full honorific titles to close, intimate titles in swift progression with the ease of old acquaintances.

An argument could be made that the hiatus between the longer formal (stage 1 and 2) and more brief informal titles (stage 4a, and 5) might be a marker of posturing in the sense that neither one makes the decision to immediately move to more intimate dialogue. The pattern of their exchange is as follows:

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<sup>68</sup> 11.385-464.

<sup>69</sup> 11.397: Ἀτρεΐδη κύδιστε, ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγάμεμνον, and 405: διογενὲς Λαερτιάδη, πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ.

<sup>70</sup> Compare, for example, how Nestor and Agamemnon speak to one another in *Iliad* 9. Nestor says: Ἀτρεΐδη κύδιστε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγάμεμνον (9.96) but Agamemnon calls him only: ὦ γέρον (9.115). For more on the epithets exchanged between kings and wise elders see **Chapter Two: Elders**.

<sup>71</sup> For more on direct and indirect patronyms see **Chapter Four: Familial Epithets**. Also: Brown (2006): 1-46.

1. Odysseus speaks, using a formal triple epithet for Agamemnon (11.397).
2. Agamemnon returns, using a formal triple epithet for Odysseus (11.405).
3. Odysseus speaks, giving no title (11.436).
4. Agamemnon replies, giving no title (11.441).
  - a. Agamemnon then modifies with the informal use of 'Odysseus' (11.444).
5. Odysseus returns the honour with the informal equivalent 'Atreus' son' (11.463).

Following this argument, the interval between formal and informal title might be interpreted as an intentional pause on Odysseus' part in an attempt to wait and see how Agamemnon will address him, or otherwise to make Agamemnon address him first as a demonstration of his deference. If such an interpretation were to be made, then Odysseus must be considered successful in this, as it is Agamemnon who first "breaks" by preferring the informal title. However, there is insufficient textual evidence to move this supposition much beyond musing, though future research into the *Iliad* might confirm or deny this to be a demonstrable pattern of discourse.

Odysseus' exchange with Akhilleus is similarly brief (11.465-537), and follows the same patterning, though this time it is Akhilleus who makes the first move:<sup>72</sup>

Zeus-sprung, Laertes' son, much-skilled Odysseus 473

O Akhilleus, son of Peleus, greatest of the Akhaians 478

Note that there is a disparity here which does not exist between Agamemnon and Odysseus. Akhilleus awards Odysseus the same triple epithet, yet Odysseus awards this

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<sup>72</sup> 11.473: διογενὲς Λαερτιάδη, πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ, and 478: ὦ Ἀχιλλεῦ Πηλεΐος υἱέ, μέγα φέρτατ' Ἀχαιῶν.

hero only a double.<sup>73</sup> The difference between them is then further reinforced by the intimate titles which Akhilleus uses for Odysseus, which include: ‘radiant’ (φαίδιμος) and ‘hardened’ (σχετίλιος).<sup>74</sup> The first instance of ‘radiant Odysseus’ in the texts appears as a sobriquet applied to him by his companions (10.251), and then by Teiresias (11.100), by Antikleia (11.202), by Circe (12.82) and here, by Akhilleus (11.488). All of these instances – where the epithet φαίδιμος precedes the name – are applied to Odysseus immediately before, during, and immediately after, the First Nekyia.<sup>75</sup> Otherwise, the adjective only appears in variations of the patronymic phrase ‘radiant son of x’.<sup>76</sup>

One reason for the particular distribution of this epithet around the First Nekyia is that – given the association between light and life as opposed to darkness and death in the Homeric universe – characters in the underworld draw attention to the ‘light’ Odysseus emits as a living man walking among the dead.<sup>77</sup> The other two instances (by the Companions, and Circe) would therefore first foreshadow and then conclude the events in the Nekyia. This explanation, however, would not account for the presence of the epithet elsewhere in its patronymic phrasing unless it refers to the fact that these young

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<sup>73</sup> There is a possibility that, in this instance, the *quality* of the superlative epithet ‘greatest of the Akhaians’ is itself indicative of Akhilleus’ greater or equal status to Odysseus. However, this same bias against Akhilleus in the *Odyssey* is seen in the narrator’s unusual use of the deictic pronoun κείνος at 24.19.

<sup>74</sup> 11.488, and 474 respectively. Odysseus, on the other hand, has no additional epithets to award Akhilleus, not even a patronym, though he does repeat his name multiple times during their brief conversation (11.482, 486).

<sup>75</sup> There is an exception in the Second Nekyia, where it is applied to Akhilleus, bringing its use full circle: 24.76.

<sup>76</sup> Noemon 2.386; Neoptolemos 3.189; Amphinomos 16.395; 18.413; Telemakhos 15.2, after which it is shortened – exclusively for the latter – to ‘radiant son’: 16.308; 19.31; 22.141; 24.526.

<sup>77</sup> Grey (2019b): 102-105; Nagy (2013): 299-300, and Frame (1978). Note that Aiaia is not quantified as the seat of Eos and Helios until after Odysseus returns from the Underworld (12.4-5). Pindar later remarked that the difference between being τις (‘someone’) and οὐ τις (‘no one’) happens only when ‘the light of the sun is given by Zeus’ which grants ‘radiant light and gentle life’ to men (*Pythian* 8.95-97):

ἐπάμεροι· τί δέ τις; τί δ’ οὐ τις; σκιάς ὄναρ  
 ἄνθρωπος· ἀλλ’ ὅταν αἴγλα δίοσδοτος ἔλθῃ,  
 λαμπρὸν φέγγος ἔπεστιν ἀνδρῶν καὶ μείλιχος αἰών.

This description also informs the potency of Helios’ threat to ‘shine among the dead’ (*Od.* 12.383), see: Grey (2019b): 103-104.



men are all alive. Alternatively – considering that there is nothing in common between the characters who use this epithet for Odysseus – the appearance of the epithet in these three books, might instead be due to who the narrator is. Certainly it is an epithet for Odysseus exclusive to passages where Odysseus is narrating. Further research into narrating styles will be needed to determine whether or not narrators can be identified by their choice of epithet, though a similar pattern can be found in the distribution of πολυμήχανος which also tends to cluster around the Fabulae (as if Odysseus’ strategies manifest themselves most strongly in the mystical world) and otherwise is only shared by Odysseus and Eumaios.<sup>78</sup>

The other epithet Akhilleus uses of the protagonist is the vocative σχέτλιε (‘hardened one’) which appears far less frequently in the *Odyssey* than φαίδιμος. It is only used to describe Odysseus, Penelope, and Zeus.<sup>79</sup> The context of these applications always implies a quality of hard-heartedness: Athena calls Odysseus ‘hard’ because he refuses to identify himself despite being once more on Ithaka, and Circe calls him ‘hard one’ for not giving way to the inevitability of Skylla’s victory. Likewise Penelope is thought ‘hard-hearted’ for re-marrying, and Zeus the same for denying the Akhaians an easy homecoming. Here, in Book 11, Akhilleus uses it in the same sense when commenting on Odysseus’ audacity in coming into the underworld:<sup>80</sup>

‘Hard one, what greater deed will you contrive in your heart?  
Why suffer the descent to Hades?’

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<sup>78</sup> Austin (1982): 52-53. For more on the differences between narratorial and spoken epithet distribution, see: **Chapter Five**.

<sup>79</sup> First by Circe 12.116, then by Athena 13.293. For Zeus by Nestor: 3.160. For Penelope by an Ithakan: 23.150. The quality of hardness which is shared by Penelope and Odysseus is one of a number of qualities they both possess which are identified by other people (they never use this epithet to describe each other), see: **Chapter Four: Grouping Epithets**.

<sup>80</sup> 11.474-475:

σχέτλιε, τίπτ’ ἔτι μείζον ἐνὶ φρεσὶ μήσεαι ἔργον;  
πῶς ἔτλης Ἄιδόσδε κατελθέμεν,

Analysis of the exchange between these two heroes serves to inform that scholarship which concerns itself with the relative status of the two great protagonists: Akhilleus and Odysseus. Those with an eye on the niceties of social discourse will have noticed that Odysseus did not offer Akhilleus the same level of respect he received himself, and therefore marks himself as the superior man. The disparity is further reinforced by Akhilleus' choice of individual titles for Odysseus: one slightly more common, and one rather more individual – though both contextually appropriate – which comment directly on Odysseus' appearance in the underworld. Is this difference a true representation of the heroes' relative positions now that Akhilleus is dead, or is something more elaborate at play? The clue, again, is in the epithets. The giveaway is Akhilleus' use of φαίδιμος. Every single time this epithet is applied to Odysseus it occurs during moments of his own narration meaning that the application of that particular epithet to Odysseus is one of his own constructions. Furthermore it is not used of any other character but he in the *Fabulae* despite its relative distribution outside of these chapters in its patronymic form – including Neoptolemos in Book Three, who is otherwise given three alternative epithets during the *Nekyia*.<sup>81</sup> These factors combined support the argument that what Odysseus conveys of his adventures – particularly those parts concerning his visit to the underworld – if not whole fabrications, are at least edited to paint the hero in the most positive light. Whatever their relationship in the *Iliad*, Odysseus ensures that his audience remember him as the superior hero in the *Odyssey*.

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<sup>81</sup> He is first 'high-born' (ἀγαυός, 11.492), then 'beloved son' (παιδός φίλιου, 11.506), and finally; 'most beautiful' (κάλλιστον, 11.522).

## Masters and Servants

Another area of social interaction in which the *Odyssey* provides us with abundant examples is the discourse between masters and their workers, not least because of the lengthy interactions between Eumaios and Odysseus. As may be expected, the complexities of Odysseus' identity and the vast differences in their status are borne out by the forms of address they use for one another: here, epithets denoting occupation are far more likely to appear. There is also some evidence elsewhere in the text for conversations shared between the servants themselves which provides the reader with a class contrast to the peer-to-peer dialogue shared by the heroes. These different portrayals of class interaction allow insight into the interchanges and machinations of the working class of Homer's universe.

Analysis of the epithets awarded to the working class presents the reader with a hierarchy equal in nuance to that of the world of heroes. Unlike the speech of heroic peers, servants usually employ a coarser form of speech where status is indicated through profession rather than personal achievement or heritage. Very rarely, for example, are servants awarded patronyms by other speakers (which are the most popular identifier amongst aristocratic families) instead, it is far more likely for a servant to be identified by their occupation such as 'herald' or 'swineherd'.<sup>82</sup>

There is one similarity between them inasmuch as the use of a name marks a level of – either attempted or established – intimacy between the speakers: on Scheria, for

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<sup>82</sup> For more on how the narrator highlights the positions of servants, see: **Chapter Five: Servants**.

example, Alkinoos calls his herald by name: ‘Pontonoos’ (7.179), while the stranger Odysseus uses: ‘herald’ (κῆρυξ, 8.477) despite being knowledgeable of the herald’s name from Alkinoos’ earlier use of it.<sup>83</sup> Yet when Odysseus wishes to speak with the Phaiakian bard, he calls him by name (8.487). The difference between the manner in which Odysseus, as a stranger, interacts with the servants Pontonoos and Demodokos therefore indicates to the reader the level of intimacy he is seeking to establish. At 8.477, Odysseus is merely utilising Pontonoos in his role as herald, but at 8.487 he is seeking to establish a rapport with the bard so that he can make a very particular request, and so uses his name rather than his professional title in order to establish a more familiar relationship.<sup>84</sup>

Master-servant relationships do not always guarantee familiarity. Alkinoos is familiar enough with his herald to call him by name, and yet Penelope does not share the same intimacy with the Ithakan herald Medon, instead also preferring to call him κῆρυξ.<sup>85</sup> The formality in her address stems either from her gender (women are less familiar with male servants: she also treats Eumaios differently from Eurykleia, for example), or from Medon’s self-serving, sycophantic behaviour around the Suitors which leads her to suspect his loyalty.<sup>86</sup> Evidence for the latter explanation is borne out in Medon’s own choice of epithets for the Suitors, whom he calls κοῦροι (‘young men’, 17.174), when they are more frequently called μνηστῆρες by speakers who are more openly antagonistic

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<sup>83</sup> This is a kind of “Un-Adopted Epithet” which is deliberately avoided due to distinct social contexts.

<sup>84</sup> This example is also a version of Verity’s theory of using epithets to target the reader’s attention, except in this instance the speaker uses a name – rather than an epithet – to focus attention: ‘Herald,’ he says ‘take and give this portion to Demodokos’ thereby directing the reader’s attention away from the anonymous ‘herald’ to the named bard.

<sup>85</sup> 4.681-712; 16.337.

<sup>86</sup> Ovid and Apollodorus distrusted him enough to list Medon among the Suitors (*Heroides* 1. 91; *Bibliotheca* 4.7.26, respectively).

toward them (e.g. Melanthios, 17.370). Thus, despite Medon's attempt to provide Penelope with important information during his dialogue with her, she still perceives him as an ally of the Suitors and so maintains her social distance from him through her use of his professional title.

The former explanation for Penelope's reticence – that women in general use less intimate forms of address with their (male) servants – is borne out through a comparison between handmaiden/mistress speech patterns and their male-servant/mistress counterparts. Examples of both these speech patterns in the *Odyssey* usually involve Penelope speaking either with her handmaids, or with the swineherd Eumaios. Penelope indicates her intimacy with her female staff through her use of appellatives, names and even epithets. She calls her maids 'friends' (φίλαι, 4.722) instead of 'attendants' (ἀμφίπολοι) as the less experienced Nausikaa does (6.199-246). The difference between them in this regard is likely due to their age: Penelope has been relocated since her marriage and is therefore more dependent upon other females for companionship, regardless of the differences in their class, whereas Nausikaa – as an unmarried girl – remains at home with her family and so is less dependent upon her servants for intimate relationships.<sup>87</sup>

The relationship between Penelope and her maids – as marked by her use of φίλαι – is therefore more like Odysseus' relationship with his comrades (e.g. 10.174) than it is like her relationship with heralds and swineherds with whom she does not need to establish such intimacy. Penelope is also more likely to call her attendants by name (23.177) or softens her use of professional titles with the addition of the more intimate φίλη. She even

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<sup>87</sup> For more on the differences and parallels between Nausikaa and Penelope, see: **Chapter Four: Familial Epithets.**

gives her maid Eurykleia an epithet: 'broad-minded Eurykleia' (περίφρων Εὐρύκλεια, 19.357) an occurrence made more striking as she says it to her directly. It is one thing for a woman to be awarded a title outside of her lineage, especially for a servant, and another thing entirely for that title to be addressed to her.

Peculiarities such as this, as demonstrated by Vivante, tend to occur in moments of tension where the reader's attention is being drawn to a particularly important scene.<sup>88</sup> The use of this epithet for Eurykleia occurs in just such a scene. Penelope's entire speech is rife with dramatic irony, and foreshadows one of the most important identification scenes in the text: the moment when Odysseus is recognised by Eurykleia:<sup>89</sup>

Then broad-minded Penelope said to him:  
 'Dear guest-stranger, never before has there been such a reasonable man, 350  
 among the dearest guest-friends who have come to my house,  
 who speaks with such propriety and reason in every way.  
 I have an old woman, who bears a mind of strong arts,  
 it was she who reared that unhappy man, and raised him well,  
 she took him into her hands when he was first born of his mother, 355  
 she will wash your feet, though she has little strength for it.  
 Come, stand, broad-minded Eurykleia,  
 wash this man who is the same age as your master; somewhere Odysseus  
 by this time will have feet and hands such as these  
 for in misfortune men grow old more quickly.' 360

<sup>88</sup> Vivante (1982).

<sup>89</sup> 19.349-360:

τὸν δ' αὖτε προσέειπε περίφρων Πηνελόπεια·  
 'ξεῖνε φίλ'· οὐ γάρ πώ τις ἀνὴρ πεπνυμένος ὦδε 350  
 ξείνων τηλεδαπῶν φίλιων ἐμὸν ἵκετο δῶμα,  
 ὡς σὺ μάλ' εὐφραδέως πεπνυμένα πάντ' ἀγορεύεις·  
 ἔστι δέ μοι γρη῏ς πυκινὰ φρεσὶ μήδε' ἔχουσα  
 ἢ κείνον δύστηνον εὖ τρέφεν ἡδ' ἀτίταλλε,  
 δεξαμένη χεῖρεσσ', ὅτε μιν πρῶτον τέκε μήτηρ, 355  
 ἢ σε πόδας νίψει, ὀλιγηπελέουσά περ ἔμπης.  
 ἀλλ' ἄγε νῦν ἀνστάσα, περίφρων Εὐρύκλεια,  
 νίψον σοῖο ἀνακτος ὁμήλικα· καὶ που Ὀδυσσεὺς  
 ἤδη τοιόσδ' ἐστὶ πόδας τοιόσδε τε χεῖρας·  
 αἴψα γάρ ἐν κακότητι βροτοὶ καταγηράσκουσιν. 360

There are two general themes to this speech. The first, and most obvious, is the irony made by Penelope's comparison of the stranger to Odysseus. Note that this is merely a physical comparison ('this man has feet and hands such as Odysseus' must look') and that Penelope does not here contrast her guest's intellect with her husband's. Instead, his πεπνυμένος is superlative only to other guest-strangers ('never before has there been such a reasonable, well-spoken guest-friend amongst all those who have come to my house'). What her guest's intelligence does bring to Penelope's mind, however, is her housemaid and not (as we might expect) her husband. Note the repeated use of intellectual epithets and adjectives which are particular to the House of Odysseus and shared between Odysseus, Penelope, and Eurykleia:<sup>90</sup>

τὸν δ' αὖτε προσέειπε **περίφρων** Πηνελόπεια·  
 'ξεῖνε φίλ'· οὐ γάρ πώ τις ἀνήρ **πεπνυμένος** ὦδε 350  
 ξείνων τηλεδαπῶν φιλίων ἐμὸν ἴκετο δῶμα,  
 ὡς σὺ μάλ' εὐφραδέως **πεπνυμένα** πάντ' ἀγορεύεις·  
 ἔστι δέ μοι γρη῏ς **πυκινὰ φρεσὶ μήδε** ἔχουσα  
 ἢ κείνον δύστηνον ἐὺ τρέφεν ἠδ' ἀτίταλλε,  
 δεξαμένη χεῖρεσσ', ὅτε μιν πρῶτον τέκε μήτηρ, 355  
 ἢ σε πόδας νίψει, ὀλιγηπελέουσά περ ἔμπης.  
 ἀλλ' ἄγε νῦν ἀνστᾶσα, **περίφρων** Εὐρύκλεια,

Indeed, the phrase πυκινὰ φρεσὶ μήδε' ἔχουσα (19.353) is reminiscent of two other character descriptions in the Homeric corpus. In the First Nekyia, Agamemnon uses the description φρεσὶ μήδεα οἶδε, while Helen describes

<sup>90</sup> See: **Chapter Four: Grouping Epithets.**

Odysseus as possessing μήδεα πυκνά in *Iliad* 3.<sup>91</sup> The similarity between the three phrases and their recipients thereby draws a closer tie around the family's shared intellectual epithets, and stresses the commonality of their μήδεα. There is also a parallel here between Penelope and Eurykleia, who are the only ones to share the περίφρων epithet, and Odysseus with his son, Telemakhos, who is otherwise the most frequent recipient of πεπνυμένος.

The peculiarity of the epithet which Penelope awards Eurykleia is further marked by its presence as a redirected title. As noted earlier in this chapter, such markers are very unusual in Homer and usually serve to reaffirm the status of the person newly addressed for the benefit of the audience. It might be concluded that the epithet is included here merely to obey this dialogic protocol, and thus does not indicate any mark of real respect by Penelope. Yet the same epithet is also awarded to Eurykleia, directly, by another speaker in the *Odyssey*: Eumaios uses it in the opening of his speech, before he instructs Eurykleia to bar the doors (21.381). Despite the similarity in their positions, as veteran servants, it is highly unusual for a man to directly compliment a non-aristocratic mortal female in such a way. Therefore, περίφρων Εὐρύκλεια appears to be a title used by members of Odysseus' household as a marker of respect for a much-loved and long-serving nurse. The fact that it is not only an intellectual adjective applied to a woman

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<sup>91</sup> *Odyssey* 11.455, and *Iliad* 3.202. The description of Eurykleia's φρήν as μήδεα is usually overlooked by translators who seem to draw no parallel with this description and that of either Odysseus or Penelope. For example: Lattimore gives Eurykleia 'prudent (presumably his translation of πυκνός) thoughts' and Penelope 'good thoughts' (translating the descriptive εὖ) and thus consistently translates φρήν as 'thoughts' but overlooks both instances of μήδεα (which he translates as 'counsels' in his *Iliad* 3.202). For Verity there is no continuity of translation at all: Eurykleia has a 'shrewd temper' while Penelope has 'thoughts in her heart which are right and proper'.



(opposed to a physically descriptive one), but also that it is awarded directly to a servant, marks this epithet as all the more precious and reverent.<sup>92</sup>

Eumaios is also awarded epithets by speaking characters, by both his social superiors and his equals. It has been elsewhere remarked that it is unusual for Eumaios, a lowly servant, to receive the ennobling epithet *δῖος*, which has been perceived as a respectful epithet typically reserved for heroes or characters from illustrious families.<sup>93</sup> Its presence is sometimes justified by Eumaios' previous aristocratic heritage before he was taken as a slave to Ithaka.<sup>94</sup> What fewer scholars focus on, however, is who exactly uses this epithet to describe Eumaios and when. It is typically reserved for use by the narrator (76% of the time), which – as demonstrated in Chapter Five – can indicate the narrator's own positive bias toward the character (which is further indicated by his frequent apostrophising of him).<sup>95</sup> Otherwise, the only speaking characters to call him *δῖος* are: Odysseus, Penelope, and Telemakhos, and always in the phrase 'divine Eumaios' (he is only ever 'divine swineherd' to the narrator).<sup>96</sup> While it may be expected for Telemakhos and Penelope to indicate their respect for the swineherd by using the epithet *δῖος* (as they similarly respect Eurykleia), it is notable that Odysseus only addresses him as such *in his capacity as the master* – i.e. after he has revealed himself to Eumaios – and never in his

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<sup>92</sup> Women are far more likely to receive epithets denoting Physical Appearance in the *Odyssey* (30%) than Intellect (10%), see: **Appendix One**. Note that, in her turn, Eurykleia also emphasises the intelligence of Telemakhos when she remarks upon his discretion in keeping Odysseus' identity a secret, where she calls him *σωφροσύνη* ('sound-minded' 23.30, which is itself a reference to Telemakhos' earlier claim that he is not 'loose-minded' (*χαλιφροσύνη*, 16.310)), see: de Jong (2001): 548.

<sup>93</sup> It is used in the *Odyssey* to describe: the Akhaians; Agamemnon; Demodokos; Ekephron; Eumaios; Memnon; Mentor; Odysseus; Orestes; the Pelasgians; Phemios; Philoitios; Aphrodite; Athena; Charybdis; Dawn; Kalypso; Klytaimnestra, and Neria. In their *Commentary*, Heubeck and Hoekstra remark that: 'the choice of the epithet is strange... [it] does not seem particularly suitable for the young man we meet in the *Odyssey*', Heubeck & Hoekstra (1990): 192. Parry argued that it was a 'generic' epithet which denoted all characters of the Homeric Age, Parry (1971) *MHV*: 151-152.

<sup>94</sup> Segal (1995): 167.

<sup>95</sup> **Chapter Five** demonstrates how the narrator – as an external voice – is able to apply epithets to characters who would otherwise not be able to receive them, owing to their lower status.

<sup>96</sup> Telemakhos: 16.461; 22.157. Penelope: 17.508.

role as the beggar even after Eumaios recalls his noble heritage.<sup>97</sup> In Book 21, he calls both Eumaios and Philoitios δῖος, but only after he has made both of them adoptive brothers of Telemakhos, and therefore ennobled them.<sup>98</sup>

The Suitors, and other characters antagonistic to the family, never refer to Eumaios with the epithet δῖος, which surely they would if it were as ‘generic’ and therefore ‘meaningless’ as Parry and others believe it to be. Antinoos calls him ‘O unmistakable swineherd’ (ὦ ἀρίγνωτε συβῶτα, 17.375), while to both Melanthios and another, nameless, Suitor he is ‘unenviable swineherd’ (ἀμέγαρτε συβῶτα, 17.219 & 21.362), otherwise he and Philoitios are ‘foolish countrymen’ (νήπιοι ἀγροιώται, 21.85) and ‘cowardly ones’ (ᾗ δειλώ, 21.86). There is, therefore, a clear distinction between the terms of address servants receive from their true masters and other social superiors. The “good” masters, it would seem, are more polite, generous, and familiar with their servants, while the “bad” masters – exemplified by the Suitors – are rude, offensive, and coarse in their speech regardless of whether they are talking to their superiors (Telemakhos) or their inferiors (Eumaios).

The Suitors speak equally badly to the disguised Odysseus, as they perceive him to be of lowly status. Patterns in their discourse also reveal a subtlety to Odysseus’ speech which is to be expected of the wily hero. The first time the beggar-Odysseus speaks to Antinoos there is an immediate tension in their words. Odysseus offers up some of the same kind of inverted epithets the Suitors have been hurling at their social betters, though his of course are much more subtle. At 17.415 the beggar-Odysseus tries ‘Give, friend

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<sup>97</sup> In his position as the beggar, Homer could have had Odysseus use the more familiar title δῖος in order to reveal his identity to Eumaios, as he does by referring to himself as πολύμητις to Penelope (19.585). This omission suggests that Odysseus was not ready or willing to reveal himself to Eumaios until he needed to.

<sup>98</sup> 21.215-216, 234, 240.

(φίλος), I suspect you are not the worst of the Akhaians'. As an inversion of the most ennobling epithet μέγα φέρτατ' Ἀχαιῶν ('far greatest of the Akhaians, 11.478), the phrase κάκιστος Ἀχαιῶν ἔμμεναι is a measured insult encased in a double negative. Whether he has noticed the slight or not, Antinoos' response is one of disdain, he opts not to use the correct appellative 'guest-stranger' (ξένος) and instead calls Odysseus a 'shameless beggar' (άναιδής προΐκτης, 17.449). So Odysseus adds greater insult with another play on the usual titles for great men when he says: 'oh dear, it would appear that your wits do not match your looks' (ὦ πόποιοι, οὐκ ἄρα σοί γ' ἐπὶ εἶδει καὶ φρένες ἦσαν, 17.454) which is not only a parody of the more common epithet 'best in form and frame' (ὄς ἄριστος ἔην εἶδός τε δέμας, e.g. 11.469), but also perhaps a comment on one interpretation of Antinoos' name ('Witless').<sup>99</sup> His barbs are finally enough to stir Antinoos to anger (17.459), who then throws a footstool at the beggar (17.462).

Later, after Odysseus has defeated Iros, he finds himself in a better position amongst the ribald Suitors. He is rather more civil with Amphinomos who also uses more appropriate language for the stranger. At 18.122 Amphinomos offers the more respectful title 'father-stranger' (πάτερ ὦ ξεῖνε), and Odysseus acknowledges this respect with his own response: 'Amphinomos' he says 'I suspect you are a reasonable man' (ἦ μάλα μοι δοκέεις πεπνυμένος εἶναι, 18.125), a line which follows the same structure – and thus contrasts – the line he used for Antinoos, when he said: 'I suspect you are not the worst of the Akhaians'. The difference being, of course, that where Odysseus was rude to Antinoos he seems genuinely more relaxed with Amphinomos, who is otherwise one of the more sympathetic Suitors, and where he offered Antinoos only insults, he does

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<sup>99</sup> Peradotto (1990): 107. For the alternative interpretation 'hostile-minded', see: Louden (1999): 18-20, 36-40.

Amphinomos the courtesy of using his name and refers to his lineage (though he does not use a familiar patronymic epithet).<sup>100</sup> The same cannot be said of Eurymakhos, however, whose initial attempts at civility (18.357) mask only spite and hostility; a pattern which Odysseus mirrors in his seemingly polite use of the name ‘Eurymakhos’ but which nevertheless precedes a directed insult (18.366-386). His wit is too much for Eurymakhos who immediately descends into open antagonism (18.389) and again throws a footstool at the stranger (18.394).

Odysseus’ last attempt to speak to the Suitors is framed in all the proper etiquettes. While making a move for the bow, Odysseus calls them ‘Suitors of the renowned queen’ (μνηστῆρες ἀγακλειπῆς βασιλείης, 21.275) – again, this is a carefully measured statement which compliments Penelope rather than his audience – and follows with specific, names and even titles: ‘Eurymakhos and godlike (θεοειδῆς) Antinoos’ (21.277).<sup>101</sup> True to form, however, Antinoos meets this with one of his characteristically antagonistic appellatives: ‘ah, wretched stranger, (δειλὲ ξείνων) you have not even a little sense!’ (21.288). Odysseus has through his discourse with the Suitors thereby proven their insolence and disrespect – not least in correct patterns of social discourse to the less fortunate – and so in his last address to them, is fully justified in his collective title for them: after striking Antinoos down he calls them only ‘dogs’ (κύνες, 22.35).

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<sup>100</sup> This is a subtle instance of epithet omission where status is inferred but not correctly given. For more on Amphinomos and his epithets, see: **Chapter Five: Suitors**.

<sup>101</sup> The phrase ‘Suitors of the renowned queen’ is an Adopted Epithet which Odysseus has heard said by Melanthios (17.370). The title θεοειδῆς is physically descriptive, from εἶδος ‘form’ and θεός ‘god’, meaning ‘like a god in form’. The epithet suits Antinoos whose only other (positive) epithet – aside from his patronym – is another physically descriptive one: ἰερὸν μένος ‘full of strength’.

Even “good” masters are not always polite to their servants, particularly those who prove disloyal. Book 19 provides an excellent example for the titles selected when characters of different classes are at odds with one another:

For the second time, again, Melantho chided Odysseus:	65
‘Stranger, still here? Will you now bother us the whole divine night circling around the house, and spying on the women? Throw yourself out the doors, <b>wretch</b> , and be grateful...’	
Then, scowling, artful Odysseus said:	70
‘ <b>Daemon!</b> Why do you spew your resenting spirit against me? ...’	
So, <b>woman</b> , take care lest your beauty is destroyed...’	81
So he spoke, and broad-minded Penelope heard and called her attendant by name, chiding her:	90
‘Enough! You <b>daring, fearless bitch</b> , none of your deeds escape my notice...’	
So she spoke and then addressed her housekeeper, Eurynome:	96
‘ <b>Eurynome</b> , fetch the stool and its fleece just there...’	

The different appellatives used during the exchanges between these characters indicate the various ways in which they feel able to speak to one another. The servant Melantho calls the beggar Odysseus ‘wretch’ (τάλας) and in return he calls her ‘daemon’ (δαιμονίη) and ‘woman’ (γύναι), a fairly balanced exchange of insults given the (supposed) similarity in their positions. In her position of power, however, Penelope opts for the weightier double epithet insult ‘daring, fearless bitch’ (θαρσαλέη, κύον ἀδέεζς) to which Melantho can offer no reply before Penelope’s speech transitions to another maidservant. The quick switch creates a distinct contrast with the far more friendly address she uses for

Eurynome, whom she calls by name (19.97). In one masterful breath Penelope dismisses one servant as a 'daring and fearless bitch' and then sweetly asks another to bring her guest a padded stool.

## Elders

Age presents an exception to the rule when it comes to the social exchange of epithets between men who are otherwise of the same, or similar, rank. These exchanges draw a clear correlation between age and entitlement to respect as borne out in the number and type of epithets shared by the characters. Again, the patterns elucidated from the epithets match conclusions drawn elsewhere.<sup>102</sup>

Outside of guest/host interactions, only two examples demonstrate the number of epithets exchanged between characters of significantly different generations. The first example is the brief conversation between Odysseus and Elpenor in Book 11. Amongst Odysseus' companions Elpenor is identified as the youngest (νεώτατος) of the crew (10.552), he has not had the experience to demonstrate either his wisdom or his bravery, as implied by the epithet: 'not over valiant in war nor sound of understanding' (οὔτε τι λίην ἀλκιμος ἐν πολέμῳ οὔτε φρεσὶν ἦσιν ἀρηρώς, 10.522). In comparison with Odysseus, then, who is both intelligent and brave (θρασύς, 10.436), Elpenor is a young man indeed. The differences in their age (and therefore relative status) is exemplified in the epithets these

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<sup>102</sup> de Jong, for example, remarks that 'youth is regularly associated with recklessness... just as old age stands for wisdom', and compares the indiscretions of the suitors with the youthful servants and the young Phaiakians, in (2001): 63. See also: Lowenstam (1993): 153. In contrast, Telemakhos, Peisistratos and Nausikaa are more sensible, see: Preisshofen (1977): 33.

two characters select when speaking with each other in the underworld. Odysseus offers the young man no epithets, calling him simply by name:<sup>103</sup>

**'Elpenor**, how did you come to be beneath the murky darkness; 57  
Coming on foot you have arrived before myself and my black ship.'

To which Elpenor responds with a respective triple epithet, awarding Odysseus both name and full titles:

**'Zeus-sprung, Laertes' son, much-skilled Odysseus,** 60  
Some evil god misled me, and a prodigious amount of wine...

The epithet selection in this dialogue indicates, first of all, that both characters accept Odysseus to be the superior man, but also reinforces Elpenor's youth by omitting any epithet at all from Odysseus' address to him, much like Menelaos speaks with Telemakhos. To contrast, for example, Odysseus calls even his *swineherd* 'divine Eumaios' (δῖ' Εὔμαιε, 21.234) because he recognises the qualities and experience Eumaios possesses, and so by the law of epithets Eumaios is closer in familiarity to Odysseus than even his own comrade Elpenor. Indeed, Elpenor receives no other epithets in the text, even from the narrator.

A second example from the other end of the spectrum can be found in Book Seven and concerns the exchange between Alkinoos and his advisor Ekhenos. Here, Ekhenos

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<sup>103</sup> 11.57-61:

**Ἐλπήνορ**, πῶς ἦλθες ὑπὸ ζόφον ἠερόεντα; 57  
ἔφθης πεζὸς ἰὼν ἢ ἐγὼ σὺν νηὶ μελαίνῃ.'

...  
**Ἰογενὲς Λαερτιάδη, πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ,** 60  
ἄσέ με δαίμονος αἴσα κακῆ καὶ ἀθέσφατος οἴνος.

addresses his king merely by name (7.159) and then instructs him in the best manner to receive his strange guest (7.159-166).<sup>104</sup> The absence of epithet might not be surprising were it not that Ekhenos is a subject of King Alkinoos, and therefore technically his social inferior. However, Ekhenos is specifically described by the narrator as old and therefore exceedingly wise. He is ‘the old, nobleman, Ekhenos, born before all the Phaiakians, excellent in speech, and knowledgeable of all things from times past’.<sup>105</sup> The Phaiakian elder Ekhenos is an otherwise unknown character but his epithets tell the reader a great deal about this character:

1. That this is an extended epithet phrase indicates his high status within the Phaiakian community.
2. The order of epithets indicates:
  - a. That he is primarily known for his age, like Aegiptos, Halitherses, or Nestor.<sup>106</sup>
  - b. That it is his age which has awarded him the skills of excellent speech and knowledge.
3. The length of these epithets individually, emphasises his intelligence as intellectual epithets are commonly some of the longest in the text.<sup>107</sup>

It is on the grounds of age (and associated wisdom), therefore, that Ekhenos is permitted to omit epithets when speaking to his king.<sup>108</sup> A further qualification of his ability to speak in this manner is indicated by the description of his speech as ἐὺ φρονέων (‘with good

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<sup>104</sup> The name ‘Ekhenos’ follows the nautical pattern of Phaiakian names ‘bringer of ships’, (see: **Chapter Four: Grouping Names**) which clarifies his epithet ‘born before all the Phaiakians’ (Φαίηκων ἀνδρῶν προγενέστερος), implying that he was one of the original sailors of their naval colony.

<sup>105</sup> γέρων ἥρωσ Ἐχένηςος ὃς δὴ Φαίηκων ἀνδρῶν προγενέστερος ἦεν καὶ μύθοισι κέκαστο, παλαιὰ τε πολλὰ τε εἰδῶς, 7.155-157. For more on the Narrator’s freedom to convey social position through epithets, see: **Chapter Five**.

<sup>106</sup> *Odyssey* 2.15, 157; Heubeck *et al.* (1988): 331.

<sup>107</sup> See: **Appendix One: Intellectual**.

<sup>108</sup> That age confers authority, see: Donlan (1979): 53; Falkner (1989): 21-67, and: Brown (2006): 34-35.



counsel', 7.158). Alkinoos' acceptance of this power dynamic is indicated by his conformity to Ekhenos' instruction (7.166-171).

Ekhenos' exceptional position in relation to his king is further emphasised by a comparison with other characters who share dialogue with Alkinoos. Aside from Nausikaa, who is a family member and therefore bound to separate rules, he is only otherwise addressed by Euryalos and Odysseus.<sup>109</sup> Odysseus first offers the simple name: 'Alkinoos' when addressing his host, thus indicating that, though he is a stranger, he perceives himself to be of equal status to the king (7.208). From then on his epithets become longer: from 'nobleman' (7.303), to 'great-hearted' (8.464), and finally to 'lord, famous among all the people' as his familiarity with – and respect for – his host increases.<sup>110</sup> Note how this process is an inversion of the king typically found between characters who are familiar with one another (where the number of epithets decreases during extended conversation) and is thus demonstrative of the steady development in Odysseus' regard for his host.

Euryalos on the other hand is a young Phaiakian who is berated for speaking out of turn (οὗ τι ἔπος κατὰ μοῖραν ἔειπεν) to their guest.<sup>111</sup> The recklessness of his youth – and subsequent lack of intelligence – is emphasised by his physical qualities (as it is for the Suitors): his narratorial epithets are 'best in form and frame among the Phaiakians' and

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<sup>109</sup> Nausikaa calls him 'beloved father' (6.57), see: **Chapter Four: Familial Dialogue**.

<sup>110</sup> 'Great-hearted' is an epithet for the king which Odysseus has Adopted from Nausikaa 6.196. *Odyssey* 9.2; 11.355, 378; 13.38.

<sup>111</sup> 8.159-164, 397.

‘like Ares ›bane of men‹’.<sup>112</sup> This description of him – as beautiful and yet intellectually inept – is neatly outlined by Odysseus who, following the insult, retorts with his own:<sup>113</sup>

‘Stranger, that was not well said; befitting of a reckless man.  
 So it is that the gods do not give graces to all  
 men, not in stature, nor mind, nor eloquence.  
 Some men come into being with a frailer form,  
 but the gods crown his words, and so others find 170  
 delight in looking upon him: he speaks assuredly,  
 with gentle respect, and is distinguished in a gathering,  
 and the lords of the city look upon him as a god.  
 Others have a form resembling the Undying Ones,  
 but his words are not crowned with any grace, 175  
 just as your form is very distinguished, as not even  
 a god could produce, but your mind is empty.’

In his turn, Alkinoos agrees with the stranger, and does Euryalos the dishonour of explicitly avoiding his name when describing the impropriety of his behaviour:<sup>114</sup>

you are angered because **this man** stood beside you in the assembly

<sup>112</sup> 7.115-117. Note that Odysseus’ later description (which follows here) directly leads from this description: de Jong (2001): 200. For more on the comparison between Euryalos and Odysseus see: Lowenstam (1993): 152-153.

<sup>113</sup> 7.166-178:

‘ξεῖν’, οὐ καλὸν ἔειπες· ἀτασθάλῳ ἀνδρὶ ἔοικας.  
 οὕτως οὐ πάντεσσι θεοὶ χαρίεντα διδοῦσιν  
 ἀνδράσιν, οὔτε φυὴν οὔτ’ ἄρ φρένας οὔτ’ ἀγορητύν.  
 ἄλλος μὲν γάρ τ’ εἶδος ἀκιδνότερος πέλει ἀνὴρ,  
 ἀλλὰ θεὸς μορφὴν ἔπεισι στέφει, οἱ δέ τ’ ἐς αὐτὸν 170  
 τερπόμενοι λεύσσοουσιν· ὁ δ’ ἀσφαλῆως ἀγορεύει  
 αἰδοῖ μειλίχη, μετὰ δὲ πρέπει ἀγρομένοισιν,  
 ἐρχόμενον δ’ ἀνὰ ἄστῳ θεὸν ὡς εἰσορόωσιν.  
 ἄλλος δ’ αὖ εἶδος μὲν ἀλίγκιος ἀθανάτοισιν,  
 ἀλλ’ οὐ οἱ χάρις ἀμφιπεριστέφεται ἐπέεσσιν, 175  
 ὡς καὶ σοὶ εἶδος μὲν ἀριπρεπές, οὐδέ κεν ἄλλως  
 οὐδὲ θεὸς τεύξειε, νόον δ’ ἀποφώλιός ἐσσι.

Note the appellative ‘stranger’, rather than ‘friend’ which Odysseus later uses as a token of acceptance (8.413).

<sup>114</sup> 7.238-240:

χωόμενος ὅτι σ’ οὗτος ἀνὴρ ἐν ἀγῶνι παραστάς  
 νείκεσεν, ὡς ἂν σὴν ἀρετὴν βροτὸς οὐ τις ὄνοιτο,  
 ὅς τις ἐπίσταίτο ἦσι φρεσὶν ἄρτια βάζειν· 240

For the power of anonymity and un-naming, see: **Chapter Six**.

and insulted you, no man would find fault with your excellence  
if he knew in his mind how to speak correctly.

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Following their quarrel, there are some changes in Euryalos' discourse. First of all, he awards his king an appropriate double epithet (which he has actually adopted from the articulate Odysseus, 8.382): 'lord, famous among all the people' (Ἀλκίνοε κρεῖον, πάντων ἀριδείκετε λαῶν, 8.401). He then turns to Odysseus and calls him by the respectful dual-appellative 'father and stranger' (πάτερ ὦ ξεῖνε, 8.408), to which Odysseus graciously responds by acknowledging him as a 'friend' (φίλος, 8.413) instead of a 'stranger' (ξένος, 8.159, 166).

These interactions demonstrate that youthful characters – however noble in heritage and appearance – are typically marked by their inability to speak and behave appropriately. The only other characters to be described as 'young men' (κουροῖ) in the *Odyssey* are the Suitors, and Odysseus' companions, who are all demonstrably foolish.<sup>115</sup> All three groups of young men are sons of the nobility, and yet still act in ignoble ways, unlike Telemakhos (and Peisistratos) who learns and matures. Some of these young men, like Euryalos, learn how to behave appropriately given the correct social punishment by their betters, while others are doomed to suffer punishment commensurate with their transgressions. Older men, however, are presented as quite the opposite. As Odysseus remarks, though they may be frail in body, they are intellectually excellent, and therefore know how to speak appropriately in all social situations. These men, like Ekhenos, are

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<sup>115</sup> Also demonstrated in the dual association of νήπιος as both 'child' and 'fool'.

awarded a measure of respect which allows them to speak to kings without the usual sociolinguistic markers.

## Conclusion

Far from appearing in places of metrical convenience, the epithets examined in this chapter demonstrate that there are strict rules governing the distribution of titles and appellatives in various types of social exchange. Guests must show deference to their hosts, while friends exchange intimate titles of mutual respect. Some masters are kindly to their loyal servants, while others are rude or openly antagonistic. Finally, young men are often considered boorish – however beautiful they might be – while the elderly are accorded a measure of respect in keeping with their experience. Common to all these exchanges is a difference between formal (extended epithet) address, and more informal – or intimate – exchanges which are usually marked by appellatives or personal epithets. What is most striking from this analysis, is that the hierarchical exchange of epithets is demonstrably *relative to the person speaking* and not integral to a character irrespective of social context. Odysseus might call one king (Akhilleus) by two epithets, and another (Agamemnon) by three. But when Agamemnon speaks with Akhilleus, he chooses to use three, while Akhilleus awards him two.<sup>116</sup> These conversational protocols shared by mortals in their many social contexts, however, are not shared by the immortals whose interactions instead follow markedly different patterns.

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<sup>116</sup> For their exchange in the Second Nekyia, see: **Chapter Five: Suitors**.

## CHAPTER THREE: Talking with the Gods: Epithet Exchange in (Im)Mortal Dialogue

Hear me, child of aegis-bearing Zeus, Atrytone  
~ *Odyssey* 4.762

### Introduction

The previous chapter examined the rules of epithet exchange in various manifestations of mortal conversation, yet analysis of character dialogue which includes divinities was substantial enough to warrant its own section. The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to examine the rules which govern epithet exchanges between the gods, as well as those which occur in conversations between gods and mortals. The differences in these exchanges indicate an alternative hierarchy of communication which demarcates divine and mortal speaking etiquettes.<sup>117</sup>

Amongst themselves, the gods use the same overall pattern of extended epithet exchange as mortals – the more epithets in the title, the higher the status of the god. As with mortals, the differences in status are dependent upon the speaker and therefore do not provide evidence for an objective divine hierarchy. In private conversation with Zeus, for example, Athena will award him three epithets, but the fact that Apollo awards Hermes three epithets, does not put the latter on a par with Zeus. Such a conclusion could only be drawn if the same speaker awarded the same number of epithets to separate

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<sup>117</sup> These findings mirror Higbie's conclusion that the naming patterns for gods are different from those for mortals as well: Higbie (1995): 6, 23-26. They therefore counter Hesiod's assertion that men and gods have the same names for things *Theogony* 197, 271.

characters. As king of the gods, and therefore top of the status hierarchy, Zeus will – like other, mortal kings – often receive triple epithet titles, yet he is also king of all things and so – unlike mortal kings – he will never be found issuing a triple epithet to anyone else.

Conversations between mortals and gods, however, are entirely different from all other forms of epithet exchange so far examined. The rules here are far more complex due to the vast difference in status between a mortal and an immortal. There are stricter protocols for dialogue between slaves and kings, for example, than there are between mortals and immortals, particularly as there are a number of ways in which humans communicate with the gods. The analysis and conclusions made in this chapter will likely be greatly advanced by comparison with the divine exchanges of the *Iliad*, where the gods play more of an active role, and where dialogue between them is not often shrouded in the lays of an internal narrator. The little dialogue that does occur between divinities in the *Odyssey* includes: the few lines Athena and Zeus share in Books One (45-95), Five (7-27), and 24 (472-486); Zeus' brief instructions to Hermes (5.28-42), Helios (12.377-388), and Poseidon (13.128-158); and the exchanges which appear in the song of Ares and Aphrodite, as sung by Demodokos (8.292-366). Likewise, the only gods who speak directly with mortals are Athena, Proteus, Hermes, and lesser divinities such as Eidotheia, Ino, Kalypso and Circe. Elsewhere the gods manifest themselves as humans, where they instead follow the rules of discourse appropriate to mortals as part of their disguise.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Though she does not focus on epithet patterning, Clay examines differences in mortal and immortal speech in: Clay (1974): 129-136, see also: Clay (1984).

## Gods amongst Themselves

### *Zeus*

Given the intimate familial ties amongst Homeric immortals, one might expect divine discourse to follow the same pattern as mortal families. Yet their dialogue is closer in style to that of aristocratic public discourse. While other children offer their fathers familiar appellatives, such as ‘father’, Athena speaks to Zeus more like other inferiors to their social betters, i.e. with a triple epithet: ‘Our father, Kronos’ son, higher-most ruler’ (ὦ πάτερ ἡμέτερε, Κρονίδη, ὕπατε κρειόντων).<sup>119</sup> The first of these epithets, while perhaps appearing to be a familial appellative, is actually combined with the collective adjective ἡμέτερος (‘our’) thereby extending the epithet to encompass all living things in creation, just as he is elsewhere: ‘father of men and gods’.<sup>120</sup> The collective title ‘our father’ is clearly distinguished from the more intimate qualifier ἐμός (‘mine’) which is applied to the appellative ‘mother’ by mortal children to their parents. Zeus’ other common epithet: Ζεῦ πάτερ (‘Father Zeus’) is also used in a figurative sense since it is used not only by Zeus’ children: Athena and Hephaistos, but also by his brother: Poseidon; his uncle, Helios; and by mortals (such as Odysseus) and so cannot be a literal reference to biological fatherhood.<sup>121</sup> The epithet Ζεῦ πάτερ should not, therefore, be considered an immortal variant of the familial title πάτερ φίλε – certainly as no mortal child ever combines their father’s name with the title ‘father’ – and should instead be understood as a ritual title indicative of Zeus’ primordial role as ‘Father to all’.

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<sup>119</sup> 1.45, 81; 24.473. For more on familial discourse, see: **Chapter Four**.

<sup>120</sup> πατήρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν: 1.28; 12.445; 18.137.

<sup>121</sup> 5.7; 7.331; 8.306; 12.371, 377; 13.128; 20.98, 112; 21.200.

The way Zeus replies to his fellow gods is equally indicative of the relative esteem in which he holds them. Here, again, the patterns follow the same social hierarchy as mortals whereby peers are granted titles befitting their perceived status in relation to the speaker; less important men are addressed by their name and inexperienced juniors given a diminutive appellation such as ‘child’. Zeus calls Athena – the only female divinity who addresses him directly in the *Odyssey* – simply: ‘my child’ (τέκνον ἐμόν), just as we have seen friendly mortals do to their younger charges.<sup>122</sup> As with mortals, this form of address is not necessarily indicative of a literal paternal role, but rather represents a term of affection from a social superior. The differences in their titles for one another are iterated in the following excerpts:<sup>123</sup>

Book One:

Then the gray-eyed goddess Athena answered him: <b>‘Our father, Kronos’ son, higher-most ruler’</b>	45
...	
Then, in reply, Zeus the cloud-gatherer answered her: <b>‘My child, what word has escaped the barrier of your teeth?’</b>	62

<sup>122</sup> See: **Chapter Two: Guests and Hosts.**

<sup>123</sup> 1.44-45; 62-63; 80-81:

τὸν δ’ ἠμείβετ’ ἔπειτα θεά, γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη· ἦ πάτερ ἠμέτερε Κρονίδη, ὕπατε κρειόντων,	45
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... τὴν δ’ ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη νεφεληγερέτα Ζεὺς· τέκνον ἐμόν, ποῖόν σε ἔπος φύγεν ἕρκος ὀδόντων.	62
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... τὸν δ’ ἠμείβετ’ ἔπειτα θεά, γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη· ἦ πάτερ ἠμέτερε Κρονίδη, ὕπατε κρειόντων	80
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24.472-473; 477-478:

αὐτὰρ Ἀθηναίη Ζῆνα Κρονίωνα προσηύδα· ἦ πάτερ ἠμέτερε, Κρονίδη, ὕπατε κρειόντων	472
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... τὴν δ’ ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη νεφεληγερέτα Ζεὺς· τέκνον ἐμόν, τί με ταῦτα διείρεαι ἠδὲ μεταλλᾶς;	478
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For more on the dialogue between Athena and Zeus, see: Sternberg (1978): 59-60.



...  
 Continuing their exchange, gray-eyed Athena said: 80  
 ‘**Our father, Kronos’ son, higher-most ruler...**’

Book 24:

But to Kronian Zeus Athena said: 472  
 ‘**Our father, Kronos’ son, higher-most ruler...**’

...  
 Then, in reply, Zeus the cloud-gatherer answered her:  
 ‘**My child**, why do you question and inquire into these matters?’ 478

The patterning of dialogue shared by Zeus and Athena provides a clear contrast to how the Father of Gods then speaks to his son, Hermes, and also to his brother Poseidon. During these interactions: where Athena was called ‘my child’ (τέκνον ἐμόν), Hermes is instead addressed by name (5.29), indicating – as per our understanding of mortal dialogue – that Zeus ranks him more highly than he does Athena (likely because of their genders). Unfortunately, Hermes never speaks to Zeus and so we cannot know how he chooses to address the Father of Gods.<sup>124</sup> In indirect speech, Athena and Zeus both show Hermes similar levels of respect. When speaking in terms of reference Zeus will call him ‘keen-sighted, Argeiphontes’ (εύσκοπον, ἀργεϊφόντην, 1.38) and Athena will similarly use the double epithet: ‘guide, Argeiphontes’ (διάκτορον, ἀργεϊφόντην, 1.84). To be described with a double epithet phrase *in absentia* is indicative of the high position Hermes holds amongst the gods even if Zeus chooses not to so compliment him in his hearing. Neither

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<sup>124</sup> The same pattern occurs in the *Iliad*, where Zeus instructs Hermes – calling him by name – and Hermes moves to action without verbal response: 24.330-340.

Athena nor Zeus, of course, would award him three epithets in each other's hearing as to do so would place Hermes on a par with Zeus.

Perhaps unexpectedly, Zeus treats Helios with the same level of esteem that he treats his son, despite the powers Helios seems capable of wielding (12.385) and his position as a Titan; he calls him simply 'Helios' at 12.385. We might expect even mortal kings to greet their uncles with more reverence than this but perhaps the difference indicates an animosity between them still festering from the Titanomakhia. In his turn, Helios hails Zeus with a common supplicatory expression which realistically comprises only of a single epithet for Zeus and also an extended epithet for the gods as a collective: 'Father Zeus and the blessed, everlasting gods' (Ζεῦ πάτερ ἡδ' ἄλλοι μάκαρες θεοὶ αἰὲν ἔόντες, 12.377). The variance between single epithet only, and name only, address therefore indicates the difference between the two. Helios treats Zeus with the bare minimum of respect but more honour than he receives himself while Zeus treats his uncle in the same manner as he would a young son.

Poseidon ranks above all Zeus' relations. He is the only divinity whom Zeus graces with an epithet, and a personal double Moniker to boot. Zeus calls him: 'Earth-shaker, of wide strength' (ἐννοσίγαι', εὐρυσθενές, 13.140).<sup>125</sup> Therefore, an analysis of how Zeus speaks to his relatives would place his respect for them in the following hierarchy: first Poseidon (two epithets), second Hermes and Helios (name only), and lastly Athena (appellative in place of a name).

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<sup>125</sup> For the sake of clarity with these similar epithets: Ἐννοσίθων has been distinguished from Ἐννοσίγαιος given the difference between the endings -χθών and -γαῖα. They are therefore translated throughout as 'Ground-shaker' and 'Earth-shaker' respectively.

The relationship between Poseidon and Zeus is, in fact, rather more complicated than it first appears, as evidenced by their dialogue in Book 13:<sup>126</sup>

...But the Ground-shaker	125
was not unaware of the threats he had made godlike Odysseus in the beginning, and so enquired into Zeus' will: ' <b>Father Zeus</b> , no longer among the undying gods will I be honoured,	
...	
Then cloud-gathering Zeus said in reply: 'Ah, <b>Earth-shaker, of wide strength</b> , what are you saying?	140
...	
Then Poseidon Ground-shaker said in exchange: 'I would act quickly, <b>dark-clouded one</b> , as you say	147
...	
Then cloud-gathering Zeus said in reply: 'ὦ <b>πέπων</b> , <sup>127</sup> this is what my heart believes best	154

There are three points of curiosity in this exchange. The first is the difference in use between the two similar epithets: Ground-shaker (Ἐνοσίχθων) and Earth-shaker (Ἐννοσίγαιος), inasmuch as the former is used by the narrator, and the latter is used by

<sup>126</sup> 13.125-129; 139-140; 146-147; 153-154:

...οὐδ' ἔνοσίχθων	125
λήθητ' ἀπειλάων, τὰς ἀντιθέω Ὀδυσῆϊ πρῶτον ἐπηπείλησε, Διὸς δ' ἐξείρετο βουλὴν· ' <b>Ζεῦ πάτερ</b> , οὐκέτ' ἐγὼ γε μετ' ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι τιμήεις ἔσομαι,	
...	
τὸν δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη νεφεληγερέτα Ζεὺς· 'ὦ πόποι, <b>ἐννοσίγαι</b> · <b>εὐρυσθενές</b> , οἷον ἔειπες,	140
...	
τὸν δ' ἠμείβετ' ἔπειτα Ποσειδάων ἔνοσίχθων· 'αἶψά κ' ἐγὼν ἔρξαιμι, <b>κελαινεφές</b> , ὡς ἀγορεύεις·	147
...	
τὸν δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη νεφεληγερέτα Ζεὺς· 'ὦ <b>πέπων</b> , ὡς μὲν ἐμῷ θυμῷ δοκεῖ εἶναι ἄριστα,	154

<sup>127</sup> For a translation: see discussion below.

Zeus as part of the double epithet. Both of these methods follow the patterns of distribution for these two epithets established elsewhere in the text. Ἐννοσίγαιος is by far the least common of the two (making up 24% of their collective usage) and is more often used – as it is here – in conjunction with other epithets: twice with the addition of κλυτός and once in the tautologous phrase: ‘earth-moving Earth-shaker’ (γαιήοχος ἔννοσίγαιος).<sup>128</sup> As part of the double epithet phrase: ἔννοσίγαι’ εὐρυσθενές, it occurs only here and can therefore be considered a personal title Zeus uses for his brother. Ἐννοσίγαιος is also never used by the narrator and only appears in character dialogue, whereas Ἐνοσίχθων is an epithet shared equally between the narrator and characters; but only by other divinities in indirect terms of reference: i.e. *about* Poseidon.<sup>129</sup> This instance (13.140) is the only place where either ‘ground-shaker’ or ‘earth-shaker’ is spoken – in any variation – directly to Poseidon. This anomaly is explained, however, when we consider: (a) that it is more appropriate for Zeus to select Ἐννοσίγαιος as an epithet when he wishes to attach a secondary epithet to it as speaking characters never associate Ἐνοσίχθων with another epithet; and (b), that since Ἐνοσίχθων is more commonly associated with the narrator, it cannot be used in this context as Zeus is speaking.

The second point of curiosity in this exchange is the use of the personal epithet: κελαινεφής (‘dark-clouded one’), as a title for Zeus. Of the thirty different epithets Zeus receives, κελαινεφής is among the least common, occurring only three times in the text.

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<sup>128</sup> With κλυτός, see: 9.518, and also: 5.423, where it incidentally draws a parallel with Amphitrite:  
οἷά τε πολλὰ τρέφει κλυτός Ἀμφιτρίτη·  
οἶδα γάρ, ὡς μοι ὀδώδυσται κλυτός Ἐννοσίγαιος.

For γαιήοχος ἔννοσίγαιος, see: 11.241.

<sup>129</sup> See: **Gods and Mortals: Reciprocal (disguised)** below, for more on this.

Why then, should Poseidon use such an unusual epithet when speaking to his brother? Contextual analysis provides an interesting explanation. Outside of the exchange between Poseidon and Zeus the adjective κελαινεφής is only used by the narrator in sacrificial contexts (of a ram: 9.552, and a bull: 13.25). The association with sacrifice is made obvious by the use of κελαινεφής outside of its (pronoun) epithetic capacity. At both 11.36, and 11.153 κελαινεφής is used to describe the blood flowing from the sacrificial victims Odysseus provides for the ghosts of the underworld. The ‘dark-clouded’ nature of κελαινεφής then refers to the ‘black’ (κελαινός) blood which swirls like a ‘cloud’ (νέφος) and is therefore sacred to Zeus in a sacrificial capacity. Given that κελαινεφής is only used to refer either to the blood of sacrificial victims, or awarded to Zeus during moments of sacrifice, why should Poseidon present it to him as an epithet in this context?

The answer to this question is found through a comparison with the other scenes in which the epithet appears: Odysseus’ sacrifice of a ram (9.552), and Alkinoos’ sacrifice of a bull (13.25). All three of these episodes have a common thread as they relate specifically to divine appeals for Odysseus’ homecoming, and therefore – whether directly or indirectly – to Poseidon’s role in this event. In the first instance, Odysseus sacrifices with the hope that Zeus might return himself and his comrades home, but, according to Odysseus, Zeus ‘did not take heed of the offerings’ and was ‘still debating the manner in which he would obliterate all the well-benched ships and my faithful companions’ (9.553-555). Odysseus’ fault here, of course, is twofold. Not only is he appealing to the wrong god, since it is now Poseidon who denies him his νόστος (9.536), but he has also not selected the most appropriate sacrificial victim, since the ram he has just slaughtered is the beloved pet

(9.447) of Polyphemos: the same son of Poseidon who has prayed for his wrath to be turned against Odysseus.

In the second instance, Alkinoos' sacrifice is also to ensure Odysseus' νόστος which has now been guaranteed by Zeus (1.77). The two scenes, united by the ritual epithet κελαινεφής, could not be more different, and yet they mark a transition which frames the beginning of Poseidon's prevention of Odysseus' homecoming, and its end, when Odysseus can finally be conveyed home without hindrance. It is therefore precisely by Zeus' role as a receiver of blood sacrifice (κελαινεφής) that Odysseus' conveyance has been assured and so it is to this same manifestation that Poseidon begs for permission to punish the conveyers, since he can no longer alter Odysseus' journey. He therefore appeals to Zeus "the one in receipt of the dark-clouded sacrifices which have enabled Odysseus' homecoming". Poseidon's punishment of the Phaiakians also marks the end of his involvement in the narrative. Thus it seems fitting that both the introduction and conclusion of his role in Odysseus' νόστος are framed by appeals to Zeus κελαινεφής.

One final point of curiosity is Zeus' use of ὦ πέπρον as a term of endearment for his brother (13.154). This adjective occurs only three times in the *Odyssey* (though it is five times more common in the *Iliad*): here, by Zeus to describe Poseidon; once, by Polyphemos to describe his ram (9.447); and once, by Athena to describe Odysseus (13.233). Though it is translated in *LSJ* as 'ripened by the sun' the term takes on a metaphorical meaning in Homer, as it is clearly used as a term of endearment, and indicative of a cherished relationship which has aged well, blossomed, or improved over time, like the ripening of fruit.<sup>130</sup> There may also be a sense of patronage in the tending of one of the parties as if

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<sup>130</sup> *LSJ*: s.v. πέπων.

one may cultivate the development of the other (this is clearly the case with the latter two relationships).<sup>131</sup>

Given the variety of its contexts – particularly this exchange between Zeus and Poseidon – πέπων is a difficult appellative to translate poetically into English. Whichever way it is translated there is certainly a very intimate and charged meaning intended (even if such intimacy may sometimes appear farcical as it does in Polyphemos' relationship with his ram). Thus, the reader who is attentive to their epithets will notice that Zeus' exchange with his brother is one filled with unusual forms of address which highlight both the contextual and the familial intimacy shared by the pair. The scene is therefore unusual both with regard to the particular epithets exchanged, and the more familial intonations implied by these epithets. The difference between this exchange, and others in the *Odyssey* may be that the scene is a private one, and so Poseidon does not feel the need to stand on ceremony when speaking with his brother.

*The Song of Demodokos*

How Zeus speaks to other gods is not indicative of how the other gods speak among themselves when they are not in conversation with him. While Zeus may call Hermes by his name, other gods will address him differently. Kalypso, for example, gives him both name and epithet.<sup>132</sup> The differences in these exchanges presents the reader with a

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<sup>131</sup> Alternative translations suggested for πέπων include: 'good', 'dear', 'kind', or 'gentle', or the more colloquial 'old bean' or 'old fruit' (de Jong (2001) offers 'tender bloom': 245). These terms all have other words in Homeric Greek and would therefore create confusion if selected in an accurate translation. The alternative 'pet' would work well for Polyphemos' ram, and even for Odysseus given that his relationship with Athena is one of immortal to mortal, but it does not seem right to me that Zeus has a Geordie accent when he speaks with his brother.

<sup>132</sup> Ἐρμεία χρυσόραπι (5.87). In reply, Hermes gives her neither name nor title.

complex series of divine relationships which convey something of divine status hierarchies.

The intricacies of these patterns are expressed in the only other divine dialogue in the *Odyssey*: Demodokos' tale of Ares and Aphrodite in Book 8.<sup>133</sup> Assuming that – as an internal narrator – Demodokos is playing by the same rules of general narration, and therefore recording a “genuine” exchange between the gods, there are some interesting insights to be gleaned here which may alter some perspectives of divine hierarchy in Homer. An examination of the epithets and appellatives used by the various divinities in this scene produces the following tables (Fig.3.1, and 3.2).

There are several distinct conversations happening across these tables and this scene where the gods speak both to, and of, one another. One of these conversations is the intimate exchange between Ares and Aphrodite, as marked by his use of the intimate φίλη ('beloved'). The presence of this epithet in this exchange is made all the more endearing because this is the only time in the *Odyssey* that the term is used by one immortal to another. Sadly, Aphrodite's response is not recorded, indeed, she does not speak at all during the entire episode. The epithet Demodokos selects for her as the narrator, however, changes between the opening and closing of the scene to reflect changes in her characterisation. When he is establishing intimacy between the pair, Demodokos describes Aphrodite as: 'well-crowned' (εὐστέφανος, 8.267); a physically descriptive epithet which emphasise her attractiveness to Ares. At the end of the episode, after she has fled the scene, the singer gives no description of her feelings about being

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<sup>133</sup> 8.265-366.



caught *in flagrante delicto* by her husband and a host of other gods. Yet the epithet awarded to her indicates that she does not feel shame about her actions (as Heubeck supposes), for she still ‘loves to smile’ (φιλομμειδής, 8.362).<sup>134</sup>

**Fig.3.1: List of Divine Epithets Spoken Directly to the Recipient (Song of Ares and Aphrodite)**

LINE	SPEAKER	RECIPIENT	TERM OF ADDRESS
292	Ares	Aphrodite	‘Beloved’ φίλη
306	Hephaistos	Gods	‘Zeus father, and the blessed everlasting gods’ Ζεῦ πάτερ ἡδ’ ἄλλοι μάκαρες θεοὶ αἰὲν ἐόντες
335	Apollo	Hermes	‘Hermes, son of Zeus, guide, giver of good things’ Ἑρμεία, Διὸς υἱέ, διάκτορε, δῶτορ ἑάων
339	Hermes	Apollo	‘Lord, who strikes from afar, Apollo’ ἄναξ ἐκατηβόλ’ Ἄπολλον
350	Hephaistos	Poseidon	‘Poseidon, Earthshaker’ Ποσειδάων γαιήοχε
355	Poseidon	Hephaistos	‘Hephaistos’ Ἥφαιστος

**Fig.3.2: List of Divine Epithets Spoken About the Recipient (Song of Ares and Aphrodite)**

LINE	SPEAKER	RECIPIENT	TERM OF ADDRESS
308	Hephaistos	Aphrodite	‘Daughter of Zeus’ Διὸς θυγάτηρ
309	Hephaistos	Ares	‘Destructive’ αἰδηλος
329	Gods	Hephaistos	‘Slow’ βραδύς
331	Gods	Ares	‘Swiftest of all the gods on Olympus’ ώκύτατόν περ ἐόντα θεῶν οἴ’ Ὀλυμπον
337	Apollo	Aphrodite	‘The Golden’ χρυσέη
342	Hermes	Aphrodite	‘The Golden’ χρυσέη

<sup>134</sup> Heubeck *et al.* (1988): 369. For more on the act of smiling in Homer see: Levine (1982b): 97-104, though he comments on the gods’ laughter in this scene (8.343) and overlooks her epithet.

One of the key speakers in the song is Hephaistos whose relative position with regard to the other divinities is indicated by the length of introductory epithet phrases he ascribes to them and the way in which they refer to him in turn. To summon the gods to the scene of the crime Hephaistos uses the same, standard, supplicatory formula for Zeus and the immortals that we have seen Poseidon and other mortals use when appealing to higher powers: Ζεῦ πάτερ ἢ δ' ἄλλοι μάκαρες θεοὶ αἰὲν ἔοντες, 8.306.<sup>135</sup> After which the male gods Poseidon, Hermes, and Apollo all enter but Hephaistos only speaks directly with Poseidon, to whom he offers the same moniker 'Earth-shaker' as Zeus does (see above). The difference in status between himself and his uncle is indicated by Poseidon's response to him (8.355) – he calls him only 'Hephaistos'.

Outside of their conversation, Hephaistos refers indirectly to both Ares and Aphrodite. To the latter – his wife – he awards 'daughter of Zeus' (Διὸς θυγάτηρ) which, as a patronym for a female, is a respectful title in and of itself.<sup>136</sup> However, this gesture is undermined by the omission of Aphrodite's usual, personal epithet: 'golden', and so his choice of the far more common patronym 'daughter of Zeus' – a title she shares with Athena, Artemis, Nymphs in general, and even the mortal Helen – may not only be indicative of his displeasure toward her, but also intended to emphasise her familial and marital duty to him.<sup>137</sup> Hephaistos' choice of epithet is thus contrasted by the use of her personal epithet by both Apollo and Hermes in this scene. To them, she is still 'Golden'.

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<sup>135</sup> de Jong wrongly calls this a 'unique speech introduction' (2001): 125.

<sup>136</sup> See: **Chapter Four** for more on patronyms.

<sup>137</sup> Athena and Nymphs (throughout); Helen 4.227; Artemis 20.61.

Hephaistos also awards Ares a single epithet, though here he expresses more vitriol, calling the adulterer ‘destructive’ (ἀίδηλος). This is an otherwise unique epithet for Ares and again contrasts with the epithets awarded to him by Demodokos (who calls him ‘Ares of the golden reins’, 8.285), and the gods themselves, who call him ‘swiftest of all the gods on Olympos’ (8.331).<sup>138</sup> The latter is used by the gods as a direct comparative between Hephaistos – who they call ‘slow’ – and Ares, who is normally ‘swift’.<sup>139</sup> As an adjective, ἀίδηλος is elsewhere used in the *Odyssey* only to describe the Suitors and their supporters, and therefore – through association – carries with it the destructive nature of cuckoldry.<sup>140</sup> The implication being that Hephaistos is not using ἀίδηλος here in a martial context, but rather a marital one. The difference between the two epithets Hephaistos selects for the lovers and the alternative ways in which they are described in this scene emphasises the direction of his anger toward Ares, as borne out in the rest of his conversation with Poseidon.<sup>141</sup>

The exchange between Apollo and Hermes also evidences the central significance of Hermes as a key divinity in the *Odyssey* (compared with Apollo’s in the *Iliad*. While Apollo is far more central in the *Iliad* he only appears in the *Odyssey* as a commentator on Ares’ and Aphrodite’s tryst. Hermes, on the other hand, is a far more substantial player in the

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<sup>138</sup> Given the romantic content of this scene, it seems bizarre that Ares should be described with such a militaristic epithet, unless one draws an association between his χρυσήνιος and Aphrodite’s epithet χρύσεος. The association between them might be another reason why Hephaistos is loath to describe her as ‘golden’ in this scene, but why the other gods do.

<sup>139</sup> 8.229-332. For more on Hephaistos, and the thematic opposition between physical power and intellectual artifice, see: Newton (1987): 12-20, and Lowenstam (1993): 159-162.

<sup>140</sup> Suitors: 16.29; 23.303, and their servant Melanthios: 22.165. In the *Iliad* it is used in far more martial capacities: Ares himself uses it to describe Athena’s assault (5.880), and the River Scamander uses it to describe the killing power of Akhilleus (21.220), otherwise it refers to the destructive power of fire (2.455; 9.436; 11.155).

<sup>141</sup> 8.347-357.

*Odyssey*, responsible both for the transmission of Odysseus back into the mortal realm, and for guiding the ghosts of the Suitors into the underworld.<sup>142</sup>

During their exchange Hermes awards Apollo the only double epithet in the entire scene, calling him both ‘lord’ and ‘[one] who strikes from afar’. The first of these epithets (ἄναξ) is used to describe a host of characters in the *Odyssey*, both mortal and immortal, and refers to the dominion a character has over a land and/or its peoples.<sup>143</sup> The second epithet, ‘who strikes from afar’ (ἐκατηβόλος) is particular to Apollo in both epics and is therefore more personal.<sup>144</sup> In short, Hermes’ address for Apollo is suitably respectful.

In return, however, Apollo offers Hermes a triple epithet title, calling him: ‘Hermes, son of Zeus, guide, giver of good things’ (8.335).<sup>145</sup> Like ‘lord’, the patronym ‘son of Zeus’ is relatively common and shared by both mortal and immortal characters, including Apollo himself.<sup>146</sup> The second two titles are both exclusive to Hermes. The first, διάκτωρ, refers to his pivotal role in the *Odyssey* as a transgressor of boundaries, while the second is a far more elusive epithet, which appears only here and in the *Homeric Hymns*.<sup>147</sup> The repeated association between the epithet ‘giver of good things’ and Hermes’ other transformative epithets, both here and in the *Hymns*, suggests that the ‘good things’ he

<sup>142</sup> For more in the significance of Hermes in the *Odyssey*, see: Grey (2019b): 113-115.

<sup>143</sup> Recipients of this epithet include: Zeus, Poseidon, Hephaistos, Apollo, Minos, Priam, Odysseus, Idomeneos, Atreides, Peisandros, Aretios, Zethos, Polypemon and Teiresias. For more on ἄναξ, see: **Chapter Five: Suitors**.

<sup>144</sup> 20.278; *Iliad*: 1.370; 5.444; 15.231; 16.711; 17.333.

<sup>145</sup> Ἑρμεία, Διὸς υἱέ, διάκτορε, δῶτορ ἑάων. Note how the importance of these epithets increases with their progression: from a Shared patronym, to a personal but still occupational role, to a unique personal identifier, it is therefore seems inappropriate for translators to adjust the order of these epithets for any kind of poetic reason (which they frequently do) as to do so negates their collective significance. I hope to examine this phenomenon in greater depth at a later date.

<sup>146</sup> Recipients of this epithet in the *Odyssey* include: Hermes, Apollo, and the mortals Herakles and Minos.

<sup>147</sup> For more on διάκτωρ, see: Grey (2019b): 114. See also: Austin (1972): 7; Stanley (1993): 237-239, and: de Jauregui (2011): 37-68. Also: *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, l.12; *To Hestia*: l.9. The latter part of this two word phrase is very unusual in Homer, appearing only here and in the *Iliad* (24.528) where it is also used of divine gifts and is clearly used to mean ‘good’ in opposition to ‘bad’ (δίδωσι κακῶν, ἕτερος δὲ ἑάων).

is distributing are also related to his role as a psychopomp.<sup>148</sup> No other divinity but Zeus in the *Odyssey* is awarded a triple epithet by another divinity (that is not to say, however, that they are of comparable status, as we do not know what Apollo calls Zeus), and so Apollo is demonstrating a great level of respect in this scene by awarding Hermes an extended epithet title.

It might be argued, of course, that this scene is a farce and so Apollo and Hermes are subverting the typical rules of discourse in order to magnify the humour of the scene. But the same difference in their status can be found elsewhere in the text. Throughout the *Odyssey* Hermes is frequently awarded double epithets by gods and mortals, while Apollo typically only receives one. Indeed, Hermes receives double epithets more often than he receives single titles: he is the ‘keen-sighted, slayer of Argus’ (εύσκοπον, ἀργεϊφόντην, e.g.1.38), or otherwise the ‘guide, slayer of Argus’ (διάκτορον, ἀργεϊφόντην, e.g.1.84), Odysseus even calls him ‘the guide, who brings grace and glory to all the works of men’ (διακτόρου, ὅς ῥά τε πάντων ἀνθρώπων ἔργοισι χάριν καὶ κῦδος ὀπάζει, 15.319-320). Apollo by contrast is usually referred to with a single title, whether it be ‘Phoibos’ (3.279), ‘silver-bowed’ (ἀργυρότοξος, 7.64) or ‘famous archer’ (κλυτότοξος, 17.494). In fact, the only other speaker than Hermes to award Apollo a double epithet in the *Odyssey* is the narrator, who offers the rather bland ‘lord, son of Zeus’ (ἄναξ, Διὸς υἱὸς, 8.334), epithets which could – even collectively – refer to almost anyone: god and mortal alike. The exchange between Hermes and Apollo in Demodokos’ song is therefore in keeping with

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<sup>148</sup> In the *Hymn to Hestia* the epithet is juxtaposed with χρυσόραπις, referring to the golden wand which Hermes carries into the underworld and uses to send men to sleep (*Odyssey* 24.3-4). In the *Hymn to Hermes* it appears in the same manner as *Odyssey* 8.335 with the added epithet χαριδότης ‘giver of grace’. In the *Odyssey* χάρις is used to refer to the gratitude of the receiver (4.695) and thus Hermes’ epithet might refer to the gentle blessings he bestows upon the dead and their gratitude for his escort.

their portrayal throughout the text, and should not be dismissed as a subversive element of incongruous humour added by Demodokos.

**Fig.3.3: Narratorial Epithets used between 5.85 and 5.149.**

LINE	EPITHET	RECIPIENT	LENGTH
85	‘divine among goddesses’ δῖα θεάων	Kalypso	Single / Shared
94	‘guide, Argeiphontes’ διάκτορος ἀργειφόντης	Hermes	Double / Personal
116	‘divine among goddesses’ δῖα θεάων	Kalypso	Single / Shared
145	‘guide, Argeiphontes’ διάκτορος ἀργειφόντης	Hermes	Double / Personal
148	‘powerful, Argeiphontes’ κρατύς ἀργειφόντης	Hermes	Double / Personal
149	‘queenly Nymph’ πότνια νύμφη	Kalypso	Single (+ Appellative) / Shared

The relatively high status of Hermes compared with other divinities is also demonstrated by his interactions with Kalypso in Book Five. Throughout their entire exchange (5.85-147) Hermes avoids even naming the nymph (5.97) despite her use of the formal title: ‘Hermes, of the golden staff’ (5.87).<sup>149</sup> The reason for the difference is likely because Kalypso is not only a mere nymph, but also a female, and so ranks far below Hermes in the grand scheme of things. Even the narrator further reinforces the difference in their stations through the titles he selects for them in the scene, as indicated by the difference in the double and single epithet distribution in Fig.3.3. Otherwise Hermes’ significance as a divinity is borne out by the pure number of different titles he is awarded: he receives

<sup>149</sup> The use of this particular epithet here recalls his earlier picking up of the staff and its rather lengthy digression in the previous scene (5.47-49), as well as referring to his role here as a conveyer of souls (See: **Chapter Seven**). de Jong calls this attribute merely his ‘trademark’ (2001): 128. For more on the importance of his staff for his characterisation, see: Grey (2019b): 114, and de Jauregui (2011): 44.

more than any other god (except Zeus), despite the fact that Athena and Poseidon occupy greater amounts of the text.<sup>150</sup>

The gods, therefore, obey the same principles in their epithet exchanges as mortals do: longer epithet titles indicate higher status. The difference in their behaviour is that it does not mimic the interactions shared by members of families (see Chapter Four) but by exchanges in social discourse thereby indicating that status is more important to the presentation of the gods' relationships than their familial intimacy. The only intimate exchanges are shared between the lovers Ares and Aphrodite, and to some extent the brothers Zeus and Poseidon. Though interactions between immortals are few and far-between in the *Odyssey*, these examples demonstrate that the hierarchies of their status are intricate, but follow generally expected patterns in which Zeus occupies the top position, and perceives his brother to be greater than his sons, who in turn are greater than his daughters. Among the gods themselves, however, the differences in rank are subtle and articulated more through power and gender, than lineage. Hephaistos as the son of Zeus positions himself below his uncle, while Apollo gives the same deference to Hermes as many characters do Zeus, thereby emphasising the latter's pivotal role in the text. Individually, this chapter has also demonstrated that the type of epithets (whether shared or personal) also play a role in the communication of status: where opting for a personal epithet seems to be more flattering than a shared epithet – as indicated by Hephaistos' use of 'daughter of Zeus' rather than 'golden' for Aphrodite.

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<sup>150</sup> Number of Personal Divine Epithets: Zeus (x30); Hermes (x13); Athena (x10); Poseidon (x7); Apollo (x5); Ares (x4); Aphrodite (x3); Hephaistos (x3).

## Gods and Mortals

Not all divine communication takes place between the gods themselves. They also communicate with mortals in both reciprocal (dialogue), and non-reciprocal ways (prayer/visitation). A further complication of these relationships is that a divinity will sometimes interact with a mortal when disguised as a mortal, and so in these instances might be expected to adopt their rules of epithet exchange in dialogue.

### *Reciprocal (manifest):*

Almost all of the reciprocal dialogue between mortals and manifest immortals takes place between male aristocrats and female divinities or sub-divinities. In the exchanges between Odysseus and female divinities – Kalypso, Circe, Ino, and Athena – the protocols of communication become more nuanced, as gender begins to blur the boundaries of hierarchy.

The best examples of this are the interactions shared by Odysseus and Circe in the *Fabulae*. In these Books, Circe repeatedly addresses Odysseus with the triple epithet title: ‘Zeus-sprung, Laertes’ son, much-skilled, Odysseus’ (διογενὲς, Λαερτιάδη, πολυμήχαν’, Ὀδυσσεῦ) and yet he never returns the favour when speaking to her.<sup>151</sup> Instead he describes her with extended epithets, such as ‘beautiful-haired, fearful, goddess, who speaks with a human voice’ (ἑυπλόκαμος, δεινὴ θεὸς αὐδήεσσα), only in his role as the narrator.<sup>152</sup> This distinction between the epithets he receives and those he uses to describe the nymph may be due to Odysseus’ performance to an audience, during which he might wish to enhance his esteem by first raising her status through his narrative

<sup>151</sup> Circe to Odysseus: 10.401, 488, 504. Odysseus to Circe: 10.337, 383, 483, 501.

<sup>152</sup> Odysseus describes Circe 10.136; 11.8; 12.150; Odysseus describes Kalypso 12.449.



description of her and then, in turn, raising his own status by having her address him as a social superior.

However, this same pattern of exchange between female immortal and male mortal continues outside of the *Fabulae* and so cannot be considered an artefact of Odysseus' narration. They recur when Kalypso addresses him by the same triple epithet in Book Five while he similarly calls her only by variations of the appellative: 'goddess'.<sup>153</sup> Perhaps in this instance we might make the same argument that it is Homer himself who seeks to raise his protagonist's status through the manipulation of titles, yet he reproduces the same pattern with Menelaos and Eidotheia. Like Odysseus, Menelaos describes the goddess as 'daughter to strong Proteus' and 'divine among goddesses' when he is narrating events, but uses no name, appellative, or title when speaking to her in person. On her part, Eidotheia first awards him the appropriate epithet 'stranger' and then by his titles 'fostered by Zeus' and 'hero'.<sup>154</sup>

Unlike Eidotheia, Kalypso, and Circe, who only receive extended epithets from the narrator(s), Athena is no minor divinity and therefore surely superior enough to be addressed by extended epithets and yet the only speaking character to award her one is Nestor during an indirect and pseudo-supplicatory prayer. When speaking with Telemakhos he first refers to her by a double epithet as 'gray-eyed one, daughter of a mighty sire' (γλαυκώπιδος, ὄβριμοπάτρης, 3.135) but later – once she has revealed herself as a goddess – he must increase his titles to 'daughter of Zeus, most honoured,

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<sup>153</sup> Kalypso to Odysseus: 5.203; Odysseus to Kalypso: 5.173, 178, 215. The exchange between Ino and Odysseus in Book Five is too brief to be truly indicative, she calls him 'unlucky one' (5.339) (there is no indication that she knows who is so that she might call him by name or titles) and he does not speak to her at all.

<sup>154</sup> 4.365-422.

Tritogeneia' (Διὸς θυγάτηρ, κυδίστη, Τριτογένεια, 3.378).<sup>155</sup> Athena only otherwise receives extended epithets by the narrator, or during other moments of prayer (see below).

Despite her higher position in the divine hierarchy Athena also offers extended epithets to mortal males, though exclusively to members of Odysseus' family. She calls Laertes 'Son of Arkeisios, far dearest of my companions' (24.517) but calls Telemakhos only by his name both when appearing as herself (15.10) and when manifesting as Mentor (2.270, 402; 3.14, 230). The way in which she adjusts her titles for the Arkeisiads mirrors their respective social standing: Odysseus the king receives a triple epithet (13.375), old Laertes the abdicated king receives a double epithet, and the young unaccomplished prince is called by name only.

Why then is there a discrepancy between the way in which Odysseus speaks to these female divinities and the way in which they speak to him? The difference in how Odysseus speaks with Kalypso and Circe (and how Menelaos speaks with Eidotheia) – despite their godhood – might be explained on the grounds that they are lesser divinities, and that this – combined with their gender – actually lowers their status to a position more in keeping with any other mortal female.<sup>156</sup> But this same explanation does not account either for Athena, who is a high-standing goddess and the daughter of Zeus; or for the way in which

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<sup>155</sup> Note that both of these extended titles make explicit reference to her paternity, as is quite typical for females, see: **Chapter Four: Familial Epithets.**

<sup>156</sup> Perhaps this adoption of mortal speaking protocols is what is implied by their shared epithet ἀυδήεις ('speaking with a human voice'), for more on this epithet, see: Clay (1974): 129-136. For the argument that Circe and Kalypso should receive the same treatment due to their nature as a character doublet, see: de Jong (2001): 130.

Odysseus speaks to mortal women, to whom he is happy to directly award numerous titles.<sup>157</sup>

As demonstrated previously, the exchange of triple epithets between two mortals indicates their parity, and yet it cannot be supposed that the same exchange would convey the same meaning across people who are already separated by something as significant as mortality.<sup>158</sup> Therefore we should not expect the bestowing of a triple epithet between mortals to be equivalent to the bestowing of a triple epithet between mortals and gods. A king may deign to call another king by his appropriate titles, but when a god addresses a mortal even the speaking of a name can be considered praise beyond measure. Hermes avoids naming Odysseus when he meets him in Book 10, and yet Athena is happy to identify her favourites among Odysseus' household by naming Telemakhos and awarding epithets to Laertes and Odysseus.<sup>159</sup>

It is one thing for a god to acknowledge a mortal by naming them, and something else altogether to award them an epithet of any kind, especially directly. It is all very well for gods to identify mortals by their individual titles when speaking *of* them, as Athena and Zeus do in Book One for instance, but it is another thing entirely to communicate the same respect to their face.<sup>160</sup> Yet Athena repeatedly awards Odysseus full titles throughout the

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<sup>157</sup> He calls Nausikaa and her attendants: 'lovely-haired maidens' (6.222); Nausikaa: 'white-armed' (7.12), 'like a goddess' (7.291), and 'daughter of ›great-hearted‹ Alkinoos' (8.464). He calls Penelope: 'broad-minded' (15.314), 'highly-renowned queen' (17.468), 'daughter of ›far-famed‹ Ikarios' (19.546), and repeatedly offers her the double epithets: 'respected, wife of ›Laertes' son' (19.165, 262, 336, 583) and 'broad-minded, daughter of Ikarios' (17.562).

<sup>158</sup> Indeed the difference in their longevity is precisely what separates them (as emphasised by immortal epithets like ἀθάνατος καὶ ἀγήρωσ), see: Garcia (2013): 161-174.

<sup>159</sup> She is similarly exclusive in her beautification of Odysseus' family (Telemakhos 2.12-13; 17.63-64; Odysseus 6.229-235; 8.17-20; 23.156-162; Penelope 18.187-205; Laertes 24.367-369).

<sup>160</sup> In Book One alone, Athena refers to Odysseus as 'inured' (48), 'ill-fated' (49), 'much-thinking' (83), 'enduring' (87), 'divine' (196), and 'much-skilled' (205), while Zeus indirectly awards him the double epithet 'godlike, beyond all other men in mind' (65). Athena also describes Helen as 'well-bred, white-armed' (22.227). Proteus directly calls Menelaos 'Atreus' son' and 'fostered by Zeus' (4.462, 492, 543 and 4.561 respectively) and also refers to a number of other heroes by similar patronyms (though we only have Menelaos word for this).

text. When Athena awards Odysseus such a tremendous honour as a triple epithet, perhaps her intention is to raise him to a position closer to hers. This supposition is reinforced by her description of him at 13.297-299 where she draws a parallel between their skills: ‘just as (μέν), among men, you are by far the greatest in counsel and speech; so (δέ) am I, among the gods, celebrated for my cunning intelligence and arts’ and remarks that not even a god could outstrip (παρέρχομαι) his δόλος (13.291). Athena’s triple epithet for Odysseus, therefore, is an exceptional demonstration of her respect for his intelligence which, in her mind, marks him out as her mortal equivalent.

Circe and Kalypso can equally be motivated by a desire to raise his status to one closer to godhood, since they would like to make him a permanent bedfellow, and yet the relationships shared by Odysseus with these goddesses are nothing like the one he shares with Athena. Odysseus is always respectful in his use of appellations for the nymphs (he calls them both ‘goddess’) but – at least through his direct use of titles – never implies intimacy with them, despite the intimacy they may share in the boudoir.

Yet he does share familiar titles with Athena. In Book 13 Athena is the only one to call him by the vocative ποικιλομήτα which – since it stands in place of his name – acts as an intimate nickname for him used solely by her (13.293). Unlike the more common vocative title σχέτλιε which she also uses here and which by many people know him (and others), it seems far more appropriate that the goddess of cunning recognises her favourite by a title which emphasises his intelligence. She also calls him πέπων, the same pet title Polyphemos uses for his ram and Zeus uses for his brother. This is thus the only instance in the *Odyssey* where a divinity calls a mortal something like ‘apple of my eye’, thereby instilling the expression with a strong sense of affection. In his turn, Odysseus also calls

her by a vocative: γλαυκῶπι ('Gray-eyed one'), a nickname which is otherwise reserved for use by her father.<sup>161</sup> In order to explain why Odysseus does not award Athena a triple epithet in return, it be that (outside of a ritual context, and particularly as a direct term of address) to do so would actually be to draw her down to a parallel with his mortal self. While she may call him as she likes, it would be hubristic for him to liken himself to her and so he cannot suggest that they have equal status by addressing her with a triple epithet in return.

Reciprocal exchanges between gods and mortals therefore operate across two different planes and so direct parallels cannot be made between how they address one another. A triple epithet may be the highest marker of respect for a mortal to give a mortal, or even for an immortal to give a mortal but the respect intimated by the latter is far greater, for the god stands already well beyond the mortal and so is indicating great respect for even deigning to name (and thereby acknowledge) an individual person, let alone award them their full titles. Equally, a mortal is not likely to directly address a god with a triple epithet, or indeed any epithet other than deferential appellatives like 'goddess' or 'queen', as to do so would be to draw a hubristic comparison between themselves and a divinity, or to assume an inappropriate familiarity.<sup>162</sup> As a stranger to the motives and desires of Kalypso and Circe, Odysseus remains carefully reverential in his choice of titles. But with Athena Odysseus shares a far more candid and authentic relationship, based on their

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<sup>161</sup> Though not to her face: *Iliad* 8.406.

<sup>162</sup> Note that the (internal) narrator is allowed to draw such comparisons, for example by applying the epithet πολύφρων to both Odysseus and Hephaistos (a characteristic which is also extended in the expression κακὰ φρεσὶ βυσσοδομεύων, which is also applied to them both: 8.273; 9.316; 17.465; 20.184). Another example is the description of Aphrodite as κυνώπις (8.319) which is also applied to Helen (4.145) and Klytaimnestra (11.424) in their role as adulterers, see: Newton (1987): 12-20, and Stanford (1950): 8-10. These parallels suggest that the internal narrators share a collective narrator-language with the external narrator, see: de Jong (1987a).

mutual love of cunning and artifice. Yet, even so, he never assumes to proffer her titles which – from a mortal – might be conveyed as insults.

*Reciprocal (disguised):*

It is worth inserting a brief caveat here which compares the way Athena speaks to her favourite when she adopts a mortal disguise. On Phaiakia, when Athena takes the form of a little girl, she adopts appropriate mannerisms: twice calling him ‘friend and father’ (7.28, 48). There is, however, a slip-up in Athena’s use of epithets during this scene, she refers to Poseidon as ‘Earth-shaker’ (Ἐνοσίχθων). As demonstrated earlier in this chapter Ἐνοσίχθων is used of Poseidon only by the narrator and *immortal* speaking-characters. By using it twice in this scene to refer to Poseidon’s relationship with the Phaiakians (7.35, 56) Athena – whether consciously or not – is indicating her divine connections. Perhaps this is why Odysseus later remarks that he saw through her disguise on Phaiakia; recognising her as the one who led him to the palace of Alkinoos:<sup>163</sup>

You make it difficult, goddess, for a mortal to perceive you in person	312
even a very skilled man; for you can take the likeness of anything.	
...	
at least until I reached the rich land of the Phaiakians	322
where you gave me encouraging words and led me into their city yourself.	

Note that Athena does not give the game away when interacting with Telemakhos, her

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<sup>163</sup> 13.312-313, 322-323:

ἀργαλέον σε, θεά, γνῶναι βροτῶν ἀντιάσαντι,	312
καὶ μάλ’ ἐπισταμένω· σὲ γὰρ αὐτὴν παντὶ εἴσκεις.	
...	
πρὶν γ’ ὅτε Φαιήκων ἀνδρῶν ἐν πίοισι δῆμω	322
θάρσυνάς τε ἔπεσσι καὶ ἐς πόλιν ἤγαγες αὐτή.	

invocation of Poseidon in her role as Mentor.<sup>164</sup> The difference in her choice of epithets suggests that in the Phaiakian scene she is testing Odysseus, as she later does on Ithaka. Odysseus, in his turn, adopts this divine epithet for the sea-god and uses it when speaking to Arete (and elsewhere on Phaiakia) to indicate his knowledge of the Phaiakian heritage.<sup>165</sup>

*Non-reciprocal: Prayer*

One area in which female divinities do receive extended titles is in the ritualistic context of prayer. Here, the uttering of extended epithets is understood as a respectful and humble appeal *in absentia* and is therefore not the same thing as addressing a divinity directly. In these scenes Penelope, for example, calls Athena ‘child of ἄεγος-bearing Zeus, Atrytone’ and Artemis ‘queenly goddess, daughter of Zeus’.<sup>166</sup> While it may be supposed that these extended titles may only be evidence of gender disparity (as women are otherwise more likely to award other women names and titles than men are), Eumaios is equally respectful to female divinities; for example, he appeals to the ‘Nymphs, of the fountain, daughters of Zeus’.<sup>167</sup> There is also no difference between how men or women appeal to male gods in the *Odyssey*; both the Ithakan mill-woman and Polyphemos apply double-epithets to the object of their prayers: ‘Father Zeus, master of gods and men’ and ‘blue-maned, earth-mover’.<sup>168</sup>

<sup>164</sup> Here she calls him γαίροχος (‘earth-encircler’, 3.55) an epithet which is used both by gods (Zeus, 1.68; Hephaistos 8.350; Polyphemos 9.528) and mortals (Demodokos 8.322; Odysseus 11.241).

<sup>165</sup> 7.271; 9.283, 525. That the Phaiakians should include themselves amongst the divinities who use this title for Poseidon is not surprising given that they are, by his own admission, of his bloodline, and by theirs, close to the gods. Indeed, it is precisely in his capacity as their forebear that Athena uses the epithet Ἐνοσίχθων in front of Odysseus (7.56) and so it is appropriate that Odysseus should continue to do so when addressing Arete.

<sup>166</sup> Athena: 4.762; 6.324; Artemis: 20.61.

<sup>167</sup> 17.240: νύμφαι κρηναῖαι, κοῦραι Διός.

<sup>168</sup> 20.112: Ζεῦ πάτερ, ὅς τε θεοῖσι καὶ ἀνθρώποισιν ἀνάσσεις, and 9.528: Ποσειδάων γαίροχε, κυανοχαῖτα.

A quick survey of prayers in the *Iliad* supports the argument that it is far more likely for epithet distribution in prayer to be a result of context rather than the speaker's gender. Hektor, for example, appeals to 'Zeus, honoured, greatest, dark-clouded, heaven-dwelling' (2.412), which might seem particularly extensive, before one realises that prayers in the *Iliad* are generally more loquacious.<sup>169</sup> Chryses offers: 'hear me, silver-bowed one, who dwells in Chryse and sacred Cylla, holy lord of Tenedos, Sminthean' (1.36-39) but perhaps a priest is expected to be more hyperbolic in his piety.<sup>170</sup> Men in the *Iliad* also award female divinities lengthy epithets in moments of prayer, as Diomedes offers the same 'child of ›aegis-bearing‹ Zeus, Atrytone' (5.115; 10.284) that Penelope does at *Odyssey* 4.762. Women in the *Iliad* do seem more reverent in their invocations as the priestesses of Athena (and Hekuba) offer her two epithets and an appellative: 'Queen, Athena, protectress of the city, divine goddess' (6.305), though, again, their reverence is more likely due to their occupation than their gender.<sup>171</sup>

Mortals will also be more liberal with their epithet use for divinities in other, quasi-ritualistic contexts: either through descriptions of sacrifice or when they are asking a divinity to grant them a favour. The former are all repetitions of a standard refrain describing the practice of performing hekatombs which includes a double epithet for the gods in general:<sup>172</sup>

<sup>169</sup> 2.412: Ζεῦ κύδιστε μέγιστε κελαινεφές αιθέρι ναίων.

<sup>170</sup> 1.36-39: κλυθί μευ ἀργυρότοξ', ὄς Χρύσην ἀμφιβέβηκας Κίλλάν τε Ζαθέην, Τενέδοιό τε Ἴφι ἀνάσσεις, Σμινθεῦ. Other examples of lengthy prayers in the *Iliad* include: 'Zeus, honoured, greatest, and the other deathless gods' (Ζεῦ κύδιστε μέγιστε καὶ ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι, 3.298); 'Father Zeus, guardian of Ida, honoured, greatest' (Ζεῦ πάτερ Ἰδηθεν μεδέων κύδιστε μέγιστε, 3.320; 7.202; 24.308); 'Lord Zeus, Dodonaean, Pelasgian, far-dwelling, guardian of wintry Dodona' (Ζεῦ ἄνα Δωδωναῖε Πελασγικὴ τηλόθι ναίων Δωδώνης μεδέων δυσχειμέρου, 16.233-4)

<sup>171</sup> 6.305: πότνι Ἀθηναίη, ἐρυσίππολι, δῖα θεάων. On his discussion of ritual epithets in the *Iliad* Strittmatter argues that it is the number of *instances* of prayer which indicate status hierarchy (e.g. that Zeus is prayed to more frequently because he is the most powerful) but he says nothing of the number of epithets themselves or the gender of the speaker. He further remarks that the preponderance of location epithets invoked answers to the localised nature of cultic worship, something which is likely to be true but which is not relevant to prayers in the *Odyssey* due to the lack of their presence, see: Strittmatter (1925): 83-87.

<sup>172</sup> 4.479; 11.133; 23.280:

...ῥέξης θ' ἱεράς ἑκατόμβας



...and perform holy hecatombs  
to the undying gods, who hold wide heaven.

However, double epithets for gods are found far more frequently when a mortal is invoking a divinity outside of the standard prayer trope. As a general rule, mortals only utter double epithets for divinities when they are asking a divinity to grant a favour: i.e. during the ‘may x grant’ speeches, rather than during the more official ‘hear me’ (κλυθή μευ) prayers discussed above. Requests for divine favour are instead indicated by verbs which describe a god ‘granting’ (δίδωμι), ‘ensuring’ (τίθημι), ‘permitting’ (έάω), or ‘fulfilling’ (τελέω) a request or desire, for example:

4.172-173:

If we had been **granted** (έδωκε) homecoming across the salt-sea  
On our swift ships by Olympian, wide-eyed Zeus.

8.465-466:

may Zeus, high-thundering, husband of Hera, **ensure** (θείη)  
That I arrive home and see the day of homecoming.

9.518-519:

[I will] **ensure** (θείω) you are escorted with a guest gift  
And urge the renowned Earth-shaker to **grant** (δόμναι) it.

13.359-360:

If the daughter of Zeus, bringer of plunder **permits** (έᾶ)  
That I live and my dear son prospers

15.111-112:

Telemakhos, may your homecoming, in the manner your heart yearns for,  
Be **fulfilled** (τελέσειεν) by Zeus, high-thundering, husband of Hera.

15.180-181:<sup>173</sup>

May Zeus, high-thundering husband of Hera **ensure (θείη)**  
That I come home, and there pray to you as a goddess.

Outside of these ritualistic and quasi-ritualistic contexts (or narratorial sections) there is only one instance where a mortal uses a double epithet to describe a divinity: in Book 19 when the disguised Odysseus is convincing Penelope that he is used to sleeping rough:<sup>174</sup>

There have been many nights I have slept on shameful  
sheets and awaited **beautifully-throned, divine Eos**.

An exploration of Eos' epithets suggests that this instance should be understood as an artefact of Odysseus' narratorial vernacular, rather than his character speech. First of all, Eos' most frequent double epithet (ήριγένεια ροδοδάκτυλος Ἡώς) is spoken exclusively by the external and internal narrators.<sup>175</sup> Secondly, both of the epithets Odysseus uses (εὔθρονος and δῖος) are used as epithets for Eos far more frequently by narrators than by characters. 'Beautifully-throned' is used by the narrator twice (6.48 and 15.495) and only otherwise by Odysseus here (19.342) and when he is in disguise (18.318). The second (δῖος) is used primarily when Odysseus is narrating: either when he is 'sleeping and waiting for divine Eos', or when he is 'sighing and waiting for divine Eos'.<sup>176</sup> In all of

<sup>173</sup> Note that this epithet is Adopted by Telemakhos from the instance above (Telemakhos repeats it to Helen only after he has heard it said by Menelaos).

<sup>174</sup> 19.341-342:

πολλάς γάρ δὴ νύκτας ἀεικέλιω ἐνὶ κοίτῃ  
ἄεσα καὶ τ' ἀνέμεινα εὔθρονον Ἡῶ δῖαν.

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<sup>175</sup> Narrator: 2.1; 3.404, 491; 4.306; 5.228; 8.1; 13.18; 15.189; 17.1; 19.428. Odysseus (narrating): 9.152, 170, 307, 437, 560; 10.188; 12.8, 316. Menelaos (narrating): 4.431, 576.

<sup>176</sup> Sleeping: 9.151; 12.7: ἀποβρίξαντες ἐμείναμεν Ἡῶ δῖαν. Sighing: 9.306, 436: στενάχοντες ἐμείναμεν Ἡῶ δῖαν.

these instances the epithet Ἡῶ δῖαν occupies the end of the sentence. Otherwise it occurs in Antinoos' account (which is a pseudo-narration) of the Suitors' ambush where both its line position and content mark it as a parody of Odysseus' epic formula: ἀλλ' ἐνὶ πόντῳ / νηϊ̄ θοῆ̄ πλείοντες ἐμίμνομεν Ἡῶ δῖαν (16.368). Thus, given that these epithets both individually and collectively are hallmarks of narratorial description, the instance in Book 19 should be considered an example of divine double epithet used by a narrator.<sup>177</sup>

*Non-reciprocal: Visitation*

For the sake of completeness it is worthwhile to examine briefly the ways immortals speak when they are visiting mortals in dreams and dream-like states. The only divinity to do this in the *Odyssey* is Athena, who appears to Penelope, Nausikaa, and Telemakhos.<sup>178</sup> These three interactions all follow roughly the same pattern, where Athena greets the sleeper by name only:

Are you asleep, Penelope, your loving heart full of sorrow?

Nausikaa, was your mother remiss in your upbringing?

Telemakhos, it is no longer right that you wander away from home.

This pattern of initial interaction in the form of a name is highly unusual since most interactions open with status identifiers such as epithets and/or appellatives. The discourse which follows is equally devoid of these kinds of titles. Between Penelope and Athena, the goddess offers no epithets for any mortal she mentions, and refers to herself

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<sup>177</sup> For more on Eos' epithets in the *Odyssey*, see: Austin (1982): 67, and: Saïd who calls the variations 'extremely significant' (1998): 58, 55-57.

<sup>178</sup> 4.804-837: εὐδεις, Πηνελόπεια, φίλον τετιημένη ἦτορ; 6.25-40: Ναυσικάα, τί νύ σ' ὤδε μεθήμονα γείνατο μήτηρ; 15.10-42: Τηλέμαχ', οὐκέτι καλὰ δόμων ἄπο τῆλ' ἀλάλησαι, respectively.

only as Pallas Athena. In the second example she awards no epithets to the Phaiakians she mentions (though she is very liberal with them when talking directly to Odysseus in the opening of Book Seven). Finally, during her longer speech to Telemakhos, she offers epithets only to Menelaos and Penelope.

The reason behind this relative lack of epithets is a rather simple one. In these private scenes – where there is no outside social pressure – Athena need only appeal to the sleeping character’s most intimate sense of self: their name. The same epithet-less pattern of speaking is also found when characters speak inwardly to themselves, suggesting that in these brief internal settings, a character has no need to identify themselves (or others) by standard societal measures.<sup>179</sup> In short, epithets are used only in public moments (that is when the character is interacting with one or more other people) while in private moments a character – whether they are dreaming, or musing – does not need to employ epithets as social markers, as no social interaction is taking place.

**Fig.3.4: List of Divine Epithets used Exclusively by Immortals**

Argeiphontes	Our father	Of the golden staff
Baleful	Giver of good things	Renowned
Blue-maned	Highermost ruler	Slow
Dark-clouded One	Keen sighted	Son of Zeus
Dark-eyed	Lord who strikes from afar	Strong
Daughter of Phorkys	Naiads	Swiftest of all the Olympian gods
Deep-eddying	Nymphs	The Egyptian
Destructive	Of far-reaching might	The Golden
Earth-moving	Of the aegis	

<sup>179</sup> For more on internal monologue, see: de Jong (1994): 27-50.

**Fig.3.5: List of Divine Epithets shared by Mortals and Immortals**

Aegis-bearing	Great	Of the Aegis
Awesome	Ground-shaker	Of the golden throne
Blessed	Guide	Of the silver bow
Chaste	Hyperion	Old man of the Sea
Daughter of Atlas	Infallible	Pallas
Daughter of Zeus	Kronos' son	Rosy-fingered
Earth-shaker	Lord	Undying
Everlasting	Lovely-haired	Who bear the broad sky
Father	Nymph	

**Fig.3.6: List of Divine Epithets used Exclusively by Mortals**

Aiain	First among gods	Rewarder of Suppliants
Atrytone	Goddess	Silver-footed
Avenger of suppliants	Gray-eyed (daughter)	Spinners of Fate
Bringer of plunder	High-born	Subtle
Child of Zeus	Highest and best of gods	The God of Guests
Child of ›aegis-bearing‹ Zeus	High-thundering	The Gray-eyed One
Daughter of a mighty sire	Honoured	Tritogeneia
Daughter of ›great‹ Zeus	Husband of Hera	Unwearying
Daughter of ›aegis-bearing‹ Zeus	Immortal	Who breaks and calls the assemblies of men
Daughter(s) of Zeus	Master of gods and man	Who brings grace and glory to the works of all men
Divine	Much-counselling	Who delights in thunder
Divine Ones	Of the counsels	Who gladdens the heart of men
Dread Goddess	Of the fountain	Who hold Olympos
Early-born	Olympian	Who hold wide heaven
Famous Archer	Phoibos	Who showers arrows
Far-famed	Protector of strangers	Wide-eyed
Father of men and gods	Queenly goddess	

## Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to expand upon earlier conclusions, with a specific focus on how conversations between gods, and gods and mortals might differ. The evidence has demonstrated that similar rules regarding the exchange of extended epithets operate in divine communication too. The interactions here, however, are slightly more nuanced primarily because of the more complex power dynamics between gods and mortals. Nevertheless, patterns of epithet distribution as a whole follow the same pattern whereby the number of epithets awarded reflect the social standing of the recipient.

This chapter ended with a brief discussion concerning the relative lack of epithets in internal monologues, whether these are presented as visitations from the gods during sleep, or by a character speaking with themselves. Though this section was brief (due largely to lack of examples) it is nevertheless significant given the claims made about epithets by Hard-Parryists. If Homer was so blind to the meaning of epithets that he distributed them metrically, then we would expect them to appear in internal monologues just as they appear in dialogic exchanges and yet they do not. Therefore, their absence during these moments of internal focalization – contrasted with their presence during moments of social interaction – provides the proof that epithets are markers of status distributed according to appropriate context and not for metrical convenience.

Further, the interactions explored in this chapter offer additional strong evidence that epithets constitute a nuanced system which facilitates the social interactions of all speaking characters in the Homeric Universe. Mortals and immortals alike are – or aspire to become – experts in finessing their relationships through epithet choices and combinations.

CHAPTER FOUR:  
Communicating in the Family:  
Epithets and Appellatives in Intimate Dialogue

Call each man by his lineage and the name of his father,  
to give each his honour.  
~ *Iliad* 10.68-69

### Introduction

Homer's use of family epithets, particularly patronyms, indicates that genealogy is fundamental to the formation and presentation of heroic identity (see epigraph).<sup>1</sup> Much of the scholarship that has been produced on pronoun epithets in Homer has therefore understandably devoted its attention to patronyms, particularly in the male-dominated *Iliad*, where they serve to provide the warrior class with 'context, membership [...] and honour'.<sup>2</sup> The different nature of the two epics is demonstrated in the distinction between Akhilleus who receives the greatest range of patronym types (Πηλείδης, Πηλείων, and Πηληϊός υἱός) through which the greatest number of family members (two fathers, a grandfather, and his mother) are indicated, whereas Odysseus receives nothing like the same range in the *Odyssey* despite the fact that Odysseus has more unique epithets than any other Homeric character, the metrical similarity between their names, and the emphasis of family in the latter's story.<sup>3</sup>

Compared with other familial epithets patronyms are rather limited in function (as this Chapter will later demonstrate), especially when they are used to describe males.

Distinctions of rank as informed by patronyms, for example, dictate the relative authority

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<sup>1</sup> Higbie (1995): 100, 190. The epigraph from *Iliad* 10 is repeated almost verbatim in Thucydides *Histories* 7.69.2: 'he summoned each one of the trierarchs calling them by name, patronym, and tribe, requiring each to betray neither that which brought him fame, nor the accomplishments of his ancestors'. For the classification of Family epithets in this thesis, see: **Appendix One**.

<sup>2</sup> Higbie (1995): 5, 9-10.

<sup>3</sup> For more on the distinction between -ης, -ων, and υἱός types, see: Higbie (1995): 47, 64 n.13.

with which characters might speak during moments of dialogic exchange, but little more. Odysseus makes it clear that it is only because Amphinomos is the son of Nisos that he will speak with him, while the patronym-less Thersites is easily dismissed from aristocratic conversation in the *Iliad*.<sup>4</sup> Yet, on their own, patronyms provide little additional information of note.<sup>5</sup>

While the *Iliad* may be dominated by the protocols of patronymic exchange, the *Odyssey* provides a greater range of familial scenarios and intimate relationships which, in their turn, present a broader range of familial epithets and appellatives. These terms of address follow specific patterns which this chapter will examine in turn, including: how the well-documented phenomenon of particular names clustering around family groups can also extend to the distribution of family epithets; how the rules governing the exchange of names and titles are adapted to intimate family settings, and how patronyms and other familial titles ('son', 'daughter' etc.) serve very different functions depending on factors such as the character's gender. This chapter, therefore, devotes little space to the well-trodden phenomenon of patronyms and focuses instead on these other terms of familial address which demonstrate new and consistent patterns in moments of private dialogue.

### Grouping Names

Onomastic scholarship has long recognised that the epics – particularly the *Odyssey* – contain etymologically grouped names which are indicative either of the characters'

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<sup>4</sup> *Odyssey* 18.125-129; *Iliad* 2.212-265.

<sup>5</sup> It is also arguable that – of all pronoun epithets – these are most likely to be distributed for metrical convenience, see: Higbie (1995): 43, 46-7.



identity or their profession.<sup>6</sup> The most extensive example can be found in the list of Phaiakian inhabitants of Scheria who, almost exclusively, share nautical sounding names (see Fig.4.1).<sup>7</sup> The effect of this etymological grouping is best demonstrated by the following lines from Book Eight:<sup>8</sup>

Akroneos stepped forth, and Ōkyalos and Elatreus,  
 Nauteus, Prymneus, and both Ankhialos and Eretmeus,  
 Ponteus, Proreus, Thoon, Anabesineos,  
 Amphialos the son of Polyneος ›son of Tekton‹:  
 and Euryalos also, like Ares ›the bane of men‹, 115  
 Naubolos' son, who was best in form and frame  
 among all the Phaiakians but ›blameless‹ Laodamas.  
 With them stood the three sons of blameless Alkinoos:  
 Laodamas, Halios and Klytoneos equal to the gods.

At least by Ἀναβησίνεώς (whose name seems to be derivate of ἀναβαίνω + ναῦς) the narrator seems to be deliberately constructing names for comic effect; no other name in the epics uses ἀνα- as a prefix and so its irregularity draws immediate attention to the verb ἀναβαίνω, used repeatedly throughout the *Odyssey* to describe the boarding of

<sup>6</sup> Most comprehensively, Higbie (1995): 7, and also; Kanavou (2015): 121.

<sup>7</sup> Even their national name is indicative of the 'people of light' (φάος), indicating – I contend – Odysseus' deliverance and return to life (see more on the associated adjective φαίδιμος in: **Chapter Two: Peers**). For an alternative etymology from φαῖός ('grey') see: Segal (1994): 61. Phaiakian names are found across *Odyssey* 6.1-8.586; 11.335-376; 13.1-75. Fitzgerald's imaginative translation of the *Odyssey* (1963) has the Phaiakians coming forward 'with seaside names' and lists their names as direct translations e.g. 'Tip-mast', 'Tide-race', etc.

<sup>8</sup> 8.111-119:

ὦρτο μὲν Ἀκρόνεώς τε καὶ Ὀκύαλος καὶ Ἐλατρεύς,  
 Ναυτεύς τε Πρυμνεύς τε καὶ Ἀγχίαλος καὶ Ἐρετμεύς,  
 Ποντεύς τε Πρωρεύς τε, Θόων Ἀναβησίνεώς τε  
 Ἀμφιάλος θ' ἢ υἱὸς Πολυλήου ›Τεκτονίδαο‹  
 ἄν δὲ καὶ Εὐρύαλος, ›βροτολογῶν ἴσος Ἄρηι, 115  
 Ναυβολίδης, ὃς ἄριστος ἔην εἰδός τε δέμας τε  
 πάντων Φαιήκων μετ' ἰάμύμονα Λαοδάμαντα.  
 ἄν δ' ἔσταν τρεῖς παῖδες ἀμύμονος Ἀλκινόοιο,  
 Λαοδάμας θ' Ἄλιός τε καὶ ἀντίθεος Κλυτόνηρος.

ships, suggesting a more blatant pun.<sup>9</sup> Other names in this list – or elsewhere in the Phaiakian books – emphasise connections either to the sea (ἄλς, ἄλός or πόντος) or to ships in general (ναῦς, νεῶς). Together these etymologically significant names indicate both the Phaiakians collective lineage as descendants from Poseidon, but also their primary occupation as sailors and transporters.<sup>10</sup>

Other Phaiakian names which are not included under the nautical theme are nevertheless significant with regard to the rank or occupation they convey; for example, Periboia (‘worth many oxen’) – the progenitor of Phaiakian kings – is a suitable name for the daughter of the giant king Eurymedon (‘wide-ruling’).<sup>11</sup> Similarly, Rhexenor and his nephew, Laodamas – as other members of the royal family – have typically aristocratic names meaning ‘breaker of men’ and ‘subduer of people’ respectively.<sup>12</sup> The names Alkinoos and Arete are more complex, not only is Arete indicated by the narrator as having a significant name (ἑπώνυμος) but both names could also have multiple meanings.<sup>13</sup> ‘Alkinoos’ could mean something like ‘νόστος-helper’ (from ἀλκή ‘strength to help/defend’) if the etymological roots of νόστος and νόος are related and thematically central as Nagy and Frame suggest.<sup>14</sup> However, if this (at best) subtextual connection was missed by an ancient audience, then the most obvious alternative would be to translate νοός in the typical sense as ‘mind’ and ἀλκή as ‘strength’, giving a name akin to ‘strong-minded’.

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<sup>9</sup> *Odyssey* 1.210; 3.157; 4.473, 842; 9.178, 562; 11.637; 12.145, 293, 401; 13.285; 14.252; 15.209, 475, 547. For the etymology, see von Kamptz (1982): 65.

<sup>10</sup> Dougherty (2001): 114. On the ethnography of Homer more broadly, See: Skinner (2012).

<sup>11</sup> *Odyssey* 8.56-59. The majority of etymologies in this chapter are drawn from the comprehensive scholarship of Kanavou (2015) unless stated otherwise.

<sup>12</sup> Kanavou (2015): 125; 126.

<sup>13</sup> *Odyssey* 7.54. For more on Arete’s name, See: **Chapter One: Names and Naming**.

<sup>14</sup> LSJ: s.v. ἀλκή. See: Frame (1978), and: Nagy (2013): 275-307 (esp.299), but also: Frei (1968): 48-57.

Such an interpretation would tie closely with the intellectual nature of Alkinoos' epithets: θεῶν ἄπο μῆδεα εἰδῶς ('given knowledge of μῆδεα by the gods') and δαίφρων ('inured').<sup>15</sup>

**Fig.4.1: Names of the Phaiakians**

NAME	GREEK	PROPOSED TRANSLATION <sup>16</sup>
<i>Akroneōs</i>	Ἀκρόνεως	'farthest of ships'
<i>Amphialos</i>	Ἀμφιάλος	'sea-surrounded'
<i>Anabēsineōs</i>	Ἀναβησίνεως	'board the ship'
<i>Ankhialos</i>	Ἀγχίαλος	'near the sea' <sup>17</sup>
<i>Ekhenēos</i>	Ἐχένης	'possessor of ships'
<i>Elatreus</i>	Ἐλατρεύς	'rower' <sup>18</sup>
<i>Eretmeus</i>	Ἐρετμεύς	'furnisher of oars'
<i>Euryalos</i>	Εὐρύαλος	'of the broad sea' <sup>19</sup>
<i>Halios</i>	Ἅλιος	'of the sea'
<i>Naubolos</i>	Ναύβολος	'ship with casting net'
<i>Nausikaa</i>	Ναυσικάα	'excelling in ship/s' <sup>20</sup>
<i>Nausithoos</i>	Ναυσίθοος	'swift with ships'
<i>Nauteus</i>	Ναυτεύς	'shipman'
<i>Ōkyalos</i>	Ὠκύαλος	'swift-moving [sea]' <sup>21</sup>
<i>Polynēos</i>	Πολύνης	'of many ships'
<i>Ponteus</i>	Ποντεύς	'throw into the sea' <sup>22</sup>
<i>Pontonoos</i>	Ποντόνοος	'sea-minded'
<i>Prōreus</i>	Πρωρεύς	'prowman'
<i>Prymneus</i>	Πρυμνεύς	'steersman'
<i>Tekton</i>	Τεκτον	'builder [of ships]'
<i>Thoōn</i>	Θόων	'quick'
<i>Klytonēos*</i>	Κλυτόνης	'renowned for sailing'

\*This name also corresponds to Dymas' epithet: ναυσικλειτοῖο ('famous for sea-faring', *Odyssey* 6.22).

<sup>15</sup> Heubeck (1987): 227-238, and Beekes (2010): s.v. νοός.

<sup>16</sup> The majority of these proposed etymologies are from: Kanavou (2015): 120-126, those not contained therein are the author's own. See also: Peradotto (1990) *Man in the Middle Voice*: 94-119.

<sup>17</sup> This is a name recycled from earlier in the *Odyssey* (1.180) where he appears as another sailor; the father of Mentos who is 'lord over the oar-loving Taphians'. It also appears with no other contextual descriptors in *Iliad* 5.609.

<sup>18</sup> Perhaps derived from a lost noun \* ἔλατρον meaning 'oar', as proposed by von Kamptz (1982): 28, 124.

<sup>19</sup> It's proximity to these other names implies that this is analogous, see: Snell (1995): s.v. Εὐρύαλος.

<sup>20</sup> If the suffix is from καίνυμαι 'surpass, excel' (*Odyssey* 3.282), as proposed by: von Kamptz (1982): 112.

<sup>21</sup> Like Ankhialos, Euryalos and Amphialos it is supposed that the suffix -αλος is an enlargement of ἄλος ('sea').

<sup>22</sup> From ποντώ ('throw into the sea'), LSJ: s.v. ποντώω.

The same significant grouping of names can also be found among the Suitors who all have names pertaining to their youth, wealth and/or status (see Figure 4.2).<sup>23</sup> Some of these names are very obviously associated with their characterisation elsewhere in the text. Like his foil Alkinoos, Antinoos can be translated as ‘against’ (ἀντί-) either ‘mind’ (νοός) or ‘homecoming’ (νόστος) for both are suitable to his portrayal.<sup>24</sup> In defence of the latter, he is openly antagonistic to the return of both Telemakhos and Odysseus, but again the same assumption in connecting νόστος and νόος must be made. With regard to the former, the translation ‘anti-minded’ sits well with Odysseus’ description of him as having ‘wits which do not match your looks’ (οὐκ ἄρα σοί γ’ ἐπὶ εἶδεῖ καὶ φρένες ἦσαν, 17.454) but the name of his father, Eupheithes, suggests an inherited talent for being ‘good at persuading’ which is demonstrated in the positive reception of his speeches both amongst the Ithakan assembly and the Suitors.<sup>25</sup>

Other Suitors have suitably aristocratic “stock heroic” names, though – given the penchant for paranomasia in the *Odyssey* – these should perhaps be called “mock heroic” names. The co-leader Eurymakhos is a ‘fighter far and wide’ like Eurydamas who ‘overpowers far and wide’, while Amphimedon, Agelaos and Peisandros have names pertaining to leadership. Likewise Eurynomos has ‘wide-reaching law[s]’ while Amphinomos sits ‘on both sides of the law’. Other names are more descriptive of physical beauty: Leokritos and Leodes are ‘smooth[-skinned]’ (i.e. beardless), which is appropriate

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<sup>23</sup> Higbie (1995): 7.

<sup>24</sup> Kanavou (2015): 132-133.

<sup>25</sup> *Odyssey* 2.84-128; 4.660-73; 18.42-50. For more on proposed meanings of Antinoos, see: Louden (1999): 18-40; West (2014): 304. For an alternative (passive) translation, see: von Kamptz (1982): 76. For more on the names of fathers impacting sons see: **Chapter One: Names and Naming.**

to the generally youthful description of the Suitors; while Euenor is ‘pleasing to look at’.<sup>26</sup> Finally, some are described for their wealth. Polyktor means either ‘having many possessions’ if derived from κτήτωρ, or ‘much-giving’ if instead related to the root κτερ- (‘to give’ c.f. κτέρας ‘gift’ *Iliad* 10.216; 24.235).<sup>27</sup> The generally selfish nature of the Suitors, combined with the adoption of this same name by Hermes in *Iliad* 24 where he qualifies it with the additional description: ‘a man rich in substance’ (ἀφνειὸς μὲν ὃ γ’ ἐστί), makes it far more likely that Polyktor means the former.<sup>28</sup>

**Fig.4.2: Names of the Suitors**

NAME	GREEK	PROPOSED TRANSLATION <sup>29</sup>
<i>Antinoös</i>	Ἀντίνοος	‘against intelligence’ / ‘against homecoming’
<i>Amphimedōn</i>	Ἀμφιμέδων	‘rules on both sides’
<i>Amphinomos</i>	Ἀμφίνομος	‘[on] both sides of the law’
<i>Agelaos</i>	Ἀγέλαος	‘leader of the people’ <sup>30</sup>
<i>Eupeithēs</i>	Εὐπείθης	‘good at persuading’
<i>Ktesippus</i>	Κτήσιππος	‘possessing horses’
<i>Dēmoptolemos</i>	Δημοπτόλεμος	‘land of war’
<i>Elatos</i>	Ἐλατος	‘driver’
<i>Euryadēs</i>	Εὐρυάδης	‘widely sounding’ <sup>31</sup>
<i>Eurydamas</i>	Εὐρυδάμας	‘overpowers far and wide’
<i>Eurymakhos</i>	Εὐρύμαχος	‘fighter far and wide’
<i>Eurynomos</i>	Εὐρύνομος	‘wide[reaching] laws’
<i>Leōkritos</i>	Λειώκριτος	‘chosen [for his smooth skin]’
<i>Euēnor</i>	Εὐήνορ	‘pleasing to look at’
<i>Leōdēs</i>	Λειώδης	‘smooth in shape’
<i>Oinopos</i>	Οἴνοπος	‘wine-drinker’
<i>Peisandros</i>	Πείσανδρος	‘leader of men’
<i>Polyktor</i>	Πολυκτορ	‘much possessing’

<sup>26</sup> That the Suitors are κοῦροι: 17.174; 22.30. Leokritos and Leodes from λειός ‘smooth’, with Leokritos’ suffix from κριτός ‘chosen, distinguished’. Euenor: if from the standard prefix Εὐ- and ἐνοράω, alternatively ‘manly’ if from the same and ἠνορέα.

<sup>27</sup> For the former: Russo *et al.* (1992): 27. For the latter: von Kamptz (1982): 69, and Chantraine (1968): s.v. κτέρας.

<sup>28</sup> For more on the connection to Hermes, see: Richardson (1993): 309-314.

<sup>29</sup> Some are found in: Kanavou (2015). Others are the authors’ own.

<sup>30</sup> An onomastic equivalent of the epithet: ὄρχαμε λαῶν, rendered in the alternative ἄγω λαος. This is an appropriate name given that Agelaos takes on the leadership of the Suitors after both Antinoos and Eurymakhos die; Russo *et al.* (1992): 123. There might be a homologous pun on ‘belonging to a herd’ (ἀγελαῖος, as applied to horses in *Iliad* 19.281), a name which would then evoke an association between his father’s name, Damastor, and δαμαῖος (‘horse-tamer’), an epithet elsewhere attested in Pindar (for Poseidon, *Olympian*, 13.69). However it is more likely that Damastor stems from the verb δαμάζω ‘overpower’, giving a translation of something like ‘Subduer’.

<sup>31</sup> The suffix of his name likely stems from αἰίδω, which is the sound Odysseus’ bow makes when he strums it (21.411).

The wealth-related names of Ktesippus ('Horse-possessor') and Elatos ('herder') are perhaps more ironic. Ktesippus is described as being 'inhumanely wealthy' (20.289), and his name 'possessing horses' would also be suitably aristocratic were it not that he is also described as being from Same (20.288). Same is one of the small peripheral islands comprising Odysseus' Ithakan territory (1.230) and is specifically described in the *Odyssey* as being παιπαλόεις ('rugged'); an epithet largely reserved for the rocky and mountainous paths of Ithaka.<sup>32</sup> Telemakhos explicitly tells Menelaos that the territories of Ithaka and her vassals are no fit place for feeding or breeding horses:<sup>33</sup>

Ithaka has no broad courses, and no meadows: 605  
 [we can] feed goats; but you need a lovelier place to graze horses.  
**None of the islands** is fit with good meadows for horsemanship,  
 they are all sea-slopes, and Ithaka most of all.

Therefore it seems unlikely that Ktesippus' abundant wealth stems from an actual possession of horses, whatever might be implied by his name. The irony of Elatos' name is also made apparent by closer contextual reading. Both he and Peisander are named when they are killed by Eumaios and Philoitios (22.267-8). In this brief passage, however, neither killer is explicitly named, they are instead referred to obliquely by their professions as herdsmen of pigs and cows respectively ("Ελατον δὲ συβώτης / Πείσανδρον δ' ἄρ' ἔπεφνε βοῶν ἐπιβουκόλος ἀνήρ). Elatos' name might have taken on a more noble sense in the *Iliad* as a driver of chariots or even a rustler of cattle, but here its proximity to συβώτης and βουκόλος suggests an intentional parallel to other 'drivers' of farm

<sup>32</sup> *Odyssey* 3.170; 4.671; 10.97, 148, 194; 13.33. *Iliad*: 12.168; 13.17; 17.743. For Ithaka: *Odyssey* 11.480; 17.204.

<sup>33</sup> *Odyssey* 4.605-608:

ἐν δ' Ἰθάκῃ οὔτ' ἄρ' δρόμοι εὐρέες οὔτε τι λειμῶν· 605  
 αἰγίβοτος, καὶ μᾶλλον ἐπήρατος ἵπποβότιο.  
**οὐ γὰρ τις νήσων** ἱππήλατος οὐδ' ἐυλείμων,  
 αἳ θ' ἀλὶ κεκλίεται· Ἰθάκῃ δέ τε καὶ περὶ πασέων.

animals.<sup>34</sup> Other puns are far more obvious, like Leodes son of Oinops ('wine-coloured'), who is 'always sat in the far corner beside the wooden mixing bowl' and so closest to the wine.<sup>35</sup>

### Grouping Epithets

These clusters of names have been well examined in Homeric scholarship and have been outlined here in order to emphasise again, despite their intimately close association, the disparity between onomastic and epithetic analysis. The subsequent lack of scholarship on epithet grouping is another casualty of the Parry Hangover which, now revived, can begin to bear fruit. The unusually complete nature of Odysseus' family tree (Fig. 4.3) provides the best example of how epithets can be inherited or grouped around a family. While Shared epithets constitute 25% of the total number of epithets in the *Odyssey*, only 3% of epithets are shared by both genders and so any epithets which appear across families are highly anomalous indeed.<sup>36</sup> More unusual still is that the type of epithets shared by this family all fall into the category of 'Intellectual' epithets which, as a group, consist of only 9% of epithets by type. Yet amongst this particular family intelligence is certainly a widespread trait; epithets pertaining to intelligence are applied primarily to the main characters Laertes, Eurykleia, Odysseus, Penelope, and Telemakhos but are found across all relations who are named in the text.

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<sup>34</sup> All senses are attested throughout the epics, see: LSJ: s.v. ἐλαύνω.

<sup>35</sup> 21.145-146. The reader would be familiar with the Homeric phrase οἴνοπα πόντον ('wine-coloured sea'), and so there is perhaps another sense of "mock-heroism" here.

<sup>36</sup> See: **Glossary: s.v. Shared Epithets**. Almost all of the fifteen epithets shared by both genders are used to describe mortal or immortal males and a female *divinity*. The only mortal females to share epithets with a male are: Penelope ('highly renowned' and 'unwearying'), Klytaimnestra ('divine' and 'wily') and Pero ('strong'). Arete, Ktimene and Penelope are all strong + appellative ('wife', 'daughter', or 'queen' respectively) rather than 'strong' in their own right.

Intellectual epithets are also unusual in their distribution throughout the text, largely because they are primarily associated with Odysseus and Penelope (as well as their immediate family members) and so occupy more of the narration and dialogue in the Ithakan books.<sup>37</sup> Statistically speaking, intellectual epithets found in the Ithakan books of the *Odyssey* (1-2, 13-24) refer almost exclusively to Odysseus' family when applied to mortals (otherwise they apply only to gods who are known for their foresight: Zeus and Athena). Across the entire text, only twenty characters are awarded positive intellectual epithets (Aigisthos and Klytaimnestra both receive the contextually negative epithet δολομήτης). These characters are typically heralds (Peisenor, Medon), elderly counsellors (Aigyptos, Neleus, Ekhenos, and additionally Patroklos), prophets (Teiresias) or otherwise divinities for whom intelligence is a regular trait (Athena, Proteus, Hephaistos, Zeus, Kalypso and Circe). The only characters for whom intelligence is not a pre-requisite – either by their divinity or occupation – are the following two family groups:<sup>38</sup>

Laertes		Alkinoos
Odysseus		Arete
Telemakhos	<i>and</i>	
Penelope		
Eurykleia		

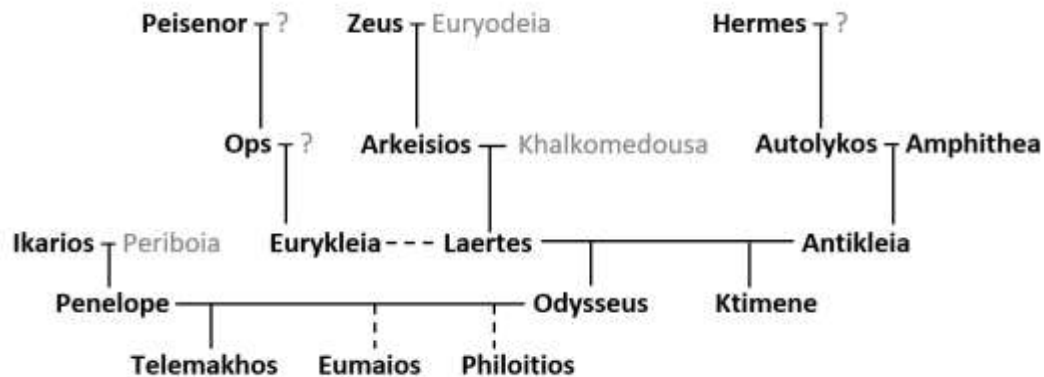
<sup>37</sup> See: **Appendix One: Intellectual: Fig.A.4.**

<sup>38</sup> It would also be possible to allocate Aigisthos and Klytaimnestra to another pairing if one were to consider the small example an example of collective negative epithets. Similarly Menelaos is described as being 'sensible' (3.328 and 3.20) a far more fitting partner to Helen than the warlike man of the *Iliad*, see: Hohendahl-Zoetelief, I. M. (1980) *Manners in the Homeric Epic*, Leiden: Brill: 143-183. But the number of epithets in these examples is not sufficient to call it a 'trait'.



These are two families for whom many other thematic and characteristic parallels are drawn but who also share intellectual epithets both between, and amongst, them. Alkinoos, for example, is one of the characters who also shares ‘inured’ (δαίφρων) with both Laertes and Odysseus, while Arete shares ‘broad-minded’ (περίφρων) exclusively with Penelope and Eurykleia.<sup>39</sup> Putting aside Alkinoos and Arete as foils for the Arkeisiad family, we therefore find that the majority of intellectual epithets are awarded to Odysseus and his family (Fig.4.3).

Fig.4.3: The Arkeisiad Family Tree<sup>40</sup>



Odysseus, of course, is renowned for his intelligence.<sup>41</sup> But he is evidently not the only one either among his immediate, or broader, family to share this trait.<sup>42</sup> Odysseus’ maternal grandfather Autolykos (‘the wolf-itself’) is described as one ‘who surpassed

<sup>39</sup> For Alkinoos and Odysseus see: Louden (1997): 95-114. For Penelope and Arete, see: Lang (1969): 159-168; Doherty (1995a): 65-86, and Lowenstam (1993): 215-229. Note that the Suitors compete for Penelope’s ἀρετή (2.206).

<sup>40</sup> For Euryodeia (‘with broad ways’ an epithet of the sea in both the *Iliad* 16.635, and *Odyssey* 3.453) as mother of Arkeisios (‘bear-like’ from ἄρκειος?), and Khalkomedousa (‘ruler over the bronze’ from χαλκός + μέδω?) as his wife, see: *Scholia* on *Odyssey* 16.118. The union of Euryodeia with Zeus is presumed from Odysseus’ epithet διογενής and attested in Ovid *Metamorphoses* 13.144. For (another) Periboia as mother of Penelope, see: Pseudo-Apollodorus *Bibliotheca* 3.10.3-6. Hermes is known traditionally as either the father or ancestor of Autolykos, and Autolykos’ mother is given variously as Philonis (Hesiod *Ehoiai* fr.64) or Khione (Hyginus *Fabulae* 201).

<sup>41</sup> See: Part III.

<sup>42</sup> Austin remarks that intelligence runs in the family (1962): 39-40, and Austin (1969): 46, but draws the conclusion from characterisation and not from shared epithets. Similarly Saïd, who comments on Penelope’s intellectual epithets but does not compare them to the wider family beyond Odysseus/Laertes: Saïd (1998): 276.

mankind in thievery and the art of the oath' and known to be descended from the trickster god Hermes (who shares the personal epithet πολύτροπος with Odysseus).<sup>43</sup> Autolykos, as a minor character, is given few additional epithets, other than 'great-hearted' (which he shares with several characters including his family members: Ikarios, Laertes, Odysseus and Telemakhos).<sup>44</sup> Odysseus' cunning, and kinship with Hermes, however, undoubtedly follow this bloodline.

The familial exchange of epithets is stronger through Odysseus' paternal and marital lines. Here, two types of intellectual gifts can be traced. The first is the kind of intellectual resilience manifest in epithets such as δαίφρων, which has been translated here to mean something like 'inured' or 'made wise through hardship'. It is used to describe only a few characters in the *Odyssey*, including the family members Laertes, Odysseus, and Telemakhos.<sup>45</sup> In the case of Laertes' line, it is possible that the family develop this resilience from the same 'unwearying' (σχήτλιος) power of his grandfather Zeus: an epithet which Zeus shares exclusively with Odysseus and Penelope.<sup>46</sup> The second type of intelligence manifest in this family is associated with epithets based on roots of μητις and/or φρων- of the kind most commonly associated with Odysseus.

Laertes (who sports a typically heroic name meaning 'urge on the men') receives no intellectual epithets other than δαίφρων, yet he is described in Book Four as being capable of 'weaving' (ὑφαίνω) μητις.<sup>47</sup> His abilities are carried through to his son

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<sup>43</sup> *Odyssey* 19.395-396.

<sup>44</sup> As well as Alkinoos, Eiolos, Eurymedon, Eurylokhos and Polyphemos.

<sup>45</sup> As well as: Alkinoos, Ankhialos, Polybos, and Ortilokhos. The latter three all belong to the generation of Trojan warriors and these are more likely to be typically Iliadic in their application, while its application to Alkinoos (a decidedly un-Iliadic hero) is likely to present it as a foil for Odysseus.

<sup>46</sup> *Odyssey* 3.160; 12.21; 23.150.

<sup>47</sup> Laertes: from λαός and the root \*ἔρ- 'set in motion': Chantraine (1968); von Kamptz (1982), and Beekes (2010), all s.v. Λαέρτης. For his μητις: 4.739. Odysseus 9.422, and Athena 13.303, 386. The same description is applied to the Suitors at 4.678,

Odysseus, who is both δαίφρων and literally quite full of μητις (πολύμητις). Similarly, both Laertes and Telemakhos are πεπνυμένος ('reasonable'), while Penelope and Eurykleia are both κεδνὰ ἰδυῖα ('careful-minded') and περίφρων ('broad-minded').<sup>48</sup> Odysseus and Penelope are awarded the other two φρων- epithets 'much-thinking' and 'mindful' (πολύφρων and ἐχέφρων respectively).<sup>49</sup> While Penelope is never πολύφρων like her husband (presumably because he is the master of all things πολύ-) Odysseus *is* described by Athena using Penelope's otherwise exclusive personal epithet ἐχέφρων in 13.332. No small wonder, then, that it is precisely their φρήν which is homogenous (ὁμοφροσύνη, 6.181).<sup>50</sup>

Odysseus' family is the most extensively recorded in all of Homer. It is also the most nepotistic when it comes to the distribution of epithets. The characters still possess traditional epithets which mark their status, gender, or occupation – Laertes is 'great-spirited' (μεγάθυμος), Telemakhos is 'clad in bronze' (χαλκοχίτων), Penelope is 'divine among women' (δῖα γυναικῶν), Odysseus is a 'city-sacker' (ππολίπορθος) and the servants are nurses and swineherds – yet they also share specific intellectual traits which are not found among any other heroic family (other than their Phaiakian counterparts: Alkinoos and Arete).<sup>51</sup> The distribution of epithets amongst family groups, therefore, seems to be as deliberate as the selection of etymologically related names, and indicates

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though at this point the narrator makes it clear that their plot is so blatant that Penelope hears of it in minutes. Ino similarly weaves δόλος (5.355).

<sup>48</sup> Eurykleia is elsewhere described as being πεπνυμένα (19.353) but it is not used in this context as an epithet.

<sup>49</sup> For more on Penelope's intelligence see: Marquardt (1985): 32-48. For more on thematic comparisons between Penelope and Odysseus, see: Foley (1978): 7-26.

<sup>50</sup> Goldhill (1991): 17 n.31. Felson and Slatkin remark that the *Odyssey* attributes the reunion of Penelope and Odysseus to their individual μητις: Felson & Slatkin (2004): 103. Similarly Felson attributes Penelope's μητις to her ability to stave off the Suitors in: Felson (1987): 61-83.

<sup>51</sup> That Eurykleia and Eumaios are considered part of the extended family, see the discussion of their appellatives below.

that Odysseus' defining characteristics (as expressed through his epithets) are as much a part of his inheritance as his kingship on Ithaka.

The manifestation of intellectual inheritance in the Arkeisiad family is also expressed through the maturation of Telemakhos as a younger version of Odysseus. Chapter Two has already revealed how the epithets Telemakhos' uses in his speech mature in relation to his social education, but this same process of learning is also demonstrated through the epithets by which he is described.<sup>52</sup> Scholars who have followed this argument disagree on the specifics of Telemakhos' similarity to Odysseus but all converge on the same conclusion that Telemakhos displays a maturation from a man who is uncomfortable or unexperienced in public discourse (for he is 'like a child' (νήπιος)), to a man who learns how to speak and act with nuance and discretion – like his father.<sup>53</sup> For Roisman, Telemakhos' personal epithet, πεπνυμένος, which she translates as 'straightforward' – thereby indicating his lack of eloquence – contrasts with Odysseus' characterisation as κερδαλέος ('crafty', 13.291).<sup>54</sup> Unlike Telemakhos, who is πεπνυμένος over 60 times in the *Odyssey*, Odysseus is only described as such when other characters believe him to be speaking in a direct manner, such as when Alkinoos remarks on his justness in berating Euryalos (8.388) and when Penelope remarks on his straightforwardness in turning down a bed and a bath (19.350, 352). Roisman argues that when the narrator eventually describes Telemakhos as κέρδος (20.257) he is intentionally

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<sup>52</sup> See: **Chapter Two: Guests and Hosts**. Austin (1969): 45-63; Martin (1993): 234-236; Roisman (1994):1-22; Heath (2001): 129-157. Note that Deborah Beck has examined this same progression from the perspective of Speech Introductions for Telemakhos, though she fails to examine the epithets he selects in direct speech where she concludes that 'the language for Telemachus changes in the same way as the character himself does' (my emphasis). She believes his epithet πεπνυμένος is 'relatively colorless': Beck (1998): 135.

<sup>53</sup> Heath (2001): 129-157. Austin prefers to read Telemakhos' childish portrayal as a persona, in-keeping with Odysseus' penchant for disguises: Austin (1969): 62-63.

<sup>54</sup> Roisman (1994):1-22. See also: de Jong (1987b): 79-81.

comparing Telemakhos to his father as indicative of his personal development.<sup>55</sup> In her paper Roisman provides an addition to the collection of Arkeisiad's shared epithets by pointing out that κέρδ- words are 'a trait of Odysseus' family and his close accomplices' given that they are used to describe Eumaios, Autolykos, and Athena.<sup>56</sup>

While Roisman's translation and interpretation of πεπνυμένος as 'straightforward' might be attractive, given the initial difficulties and later improvements Telemakhos makes in his social discourse (Chapter Two: Guests and Hosts), it fails to explain why Telemakhos should continue to be called πεπνυμένος after he has been revealed as capable of κέρδος. Heath instead proposes that πεπνυμένος is an epithet which Telemakhos 'grows into' as he grows up, and demarcates his 'successful navigation of speaking and silence' which is so integral to the themes of the *Odyssey*.<sup>57</sup> However, for Heath's interpretation that πεπνυμένος is 'the mark of a man who has reached mature judgement and can speak and act accordingly' to be true, it would have to explain why Telemakhos is πεπνυμένος from the very beginning, i.e. before he has learned how to speak effectively from his role models on the mainland.<sup>58</sup>

Whether the epithet represents Telemakhos' unsubtle (Roisman), or experienced (Heath), speech, there is no escaping its fundamental relation to speech: 91% of its occurrences apply to a person speaking, a person about to speak, a person's abilities as a speaker, or the content of a speech.<sup>59</sup> That it should clearly "belong" to Telemakhos in

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<sup>55</sup> Roisman (1994): 22. A similar argument is made by Austin, who states that πεπνυμένος Telemakhos represents the 'Odyssean potential in the boy' (1982): 74-79 (esp.78), and by Goldhill who sees a similarity in their suffering of ἄλγεα πολλά (16.189), see: Goldhill (1991): 10-11.

<sup>56</sup> Roisman (1994): 13.

<sup>57</sup> Heath (2001): 156.

<sup>58</sup> Heath (2001): 135.

<sup>59</sup> Dale (1982): 208.

the *Odyssey* is a reflection of the connection between social status and the ability to speak well and therefore emphasises the need for him to be able to speak correctly in the Homeric world. Instead of placing too much emphasis on how Telemakhos must become *like* his father (as he clearly resembles him physically) and so must adapt his speech patterns to be more manipulative, the steadfast attribution of this epithet to Telemakhos alongside its relative avoidance when applied to Odysseus (except in other people's false perceptions of him) combine to suggest that Telemakhos – while intelligent and eventually learned in his speech – is not entirely the same person as his father. The preservation of this epithet for Telemakhos demonstrates that while intelligence and cunning may run in the family, it can manifest itself in different ways for different people. While he is more than capable of enacting his father's proclivity for κέρδος, he describes himself instead as a man who 'loves to speak the truth' (ἦ γὰρ ἐμοὶ φίλ' ἀληθέα μυθήσασθαι, 17.15) as so is intellectually honest just as his father is intellectually cunning.<sup>60</sup>

### Familial Dialogue

Family groups also share intimate appellatives when speaking to one another.<sup>61</sup> These appellatives include nouns like 'father' and 'mother' but also 'guest-friend', 'old man', and 'queen'. The preceding chapters on social dialogue demonstrated that characters follow specific rules when addressing friends, acquaintances, and even strangers, where the number and type of epithet awarded construct the perceived status of the addressee. Yet

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<sup>60</sup> Goldhill suggests an interplay between 'wandering' (ἀλάομαι) and 'truth' (ἀληθής) as if 'the lying of wandering men is taken for granted' (1991): 38.

<sup>61</sup> For the definition of Appellative, see: **Glossary: Appellative**.

it would be absurd for family members to follow the same rules when speaking to one another. This is perhaps one of the most important counter-arguments to Parry, for if epithets truly were employed for metrical formulation only, then we would expect to find them in all dialogue whether public or private. Yet they are only ever distributed in social, public, discourse and never appear in intimate familial interactions. It would be absurd for Nausikaa call her father: Ἀλκίνοε κρεῖον, πάντων ἀριδείκετε λαῶν ('Lord Alkinoos, famous among all the people') when speaking with him privately and so Homer ensures that she never does. Nor, once his father's identity has been revealed to him (16.188), do we find Telemakhos call Odysseus anything other than 'father' (πάτερ), despite his use of a number of different epithets when speaking of Odysseus in the third person.<sup>62</sup>

The *Odyssey* is unlike the *Iliad* both for the number of family groups portrayed and the length and quality of intimate scenes they share. Familial dialogue occurs between Nestor and his children; Menelaos and his wife; Alkinoos, his wife, and children; as well as between Odysseus, Penelope, Telemakhos and their extended family.<sup>63</sup> While the first three of these family groups do not speak to each other a great deal, their dialogue demonstrably follows the same patterns of address and exchange established by the Arkeisiad family.

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<sup>62</sup> He describes Odysseus as δῖος and διογενής, ἀντίθεος and θεῖος, as well as ταλασίφρων and ἐσθλός (1.396, 3.84; 2.351; 15.90; 17.402; 3.84, 17.114; 3.98, 4.328).

<sup>63</sup> That is to say nothing of the narrator's choice of familial epithets, such as the rather unique appellative 'wife of Agamemnon' (3.264) which seems to have been chosen to emphasise Aigisthos' cuckholdry, see: de Jong (2001): 82.

*Wives and Husbands*

To the guest-stranger Odysseus, Arete is the ‘daughter of godlike Rhexenor’ or ‘queen’ (βασιλεια) but to Alkinoos she is simply ‘wife’ (γυνή).<sup>64</sup> Odysseus also addresses Penelope as γυνή, but in his silver-tongued mouth the word takes on a far more subtle meaning; for he uses it both while disguised as a stranger (to mean something like ‘lady’ e.g. 19.262), but also when he has revealed himself to her (presumably then to mean ‘wife’, e.g. 23.350). The audience in the original language is perhaps expected to adapt the noun in relation to its context, while the translator must give up and go to the pub.<sup>65</sup> Homer, no doubt, chose this term intentionally in order to better suit Odysseus’ inherent ambiguity and so further complicate the question of when Penelope truly recognises her husband. Like Alkinoos to Arete, and Odysseus to Penelope, Menelaos too calls his wife γυνή when speaking to her (4.148, 266). For males, therefore, this term can be used in a number of situations, whether they be public, private, or – in Odysseus’ case – euphemistically.

Terms of address which wives use for their husbands, however, are more difficult to navigate. Arete never speaks directly to, or of, Alkinoos, while Penelope describes her husband by the longest series of epithets in the text, which include the phrase ‘good husband’ (πόσιβ ἔσθλόν), but only when she is speaking to others.<sup>66</sup> In direct

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<sup>64</sup> Odysseus to Arete: 7.146, 241; 13.59; Alkinoos to Arete: 8.424.

<sup>65</sup> Lattimore opts first for ‘lady’, and later for ‘wife’ while Fagles and Verity are more consistent, the former translating it as ‘dear woman’ and the latter choosing ‘lady’. The difficulty with these complimentary titles, of course, is that Odysseus uses the same noun when referring to Melantho (19.81); here, the translators all change the noun to ‘woman’. de Jong believes the narratees ‘may savour the ambiguity’ in this passage: (2001): 467. Note the difference between how Odysseus addresses Penelope, and how he addresses Nausikaa whom he calls ἀνασσα (‘lady’ 6.149, 175), an appellative reserved only for divinities, thereby underscoring both his, and the narrators, conflation of her with Artemis in the same scene (6.151-2, and 101-109 respectively), see: de Jong (2001) *Commentary*: 161.

<sup>66</sup> Arete’s reticence has been interpreted as being significant by some scholars. Montiglio, for example, remarks that Arete only speaks to Odysseus once his name and lineage have been revealed to her: Montiglio (2010): 268. For the extended titles used by Penelope: 4.724-726;



conversation Penelope calls him simply ‘Odysseus’, though the simple uttering of his name in this context is highly charged in light of her previous careful avoidance of it.<sup>67</sup> It would be a poor writer, indeed, who, after twenty-two books has constant Penelope collapse at the knees, weeping, and breathlessly whisper ‘husband’. Following their recognition scene, Penelope uses no form of address at all when speaking with Odysseus (23.257, 286). It is enough that she has recognised him and finally uttered his name.

The dialogic exchange between Menelaos and Helen sets up a foil to the happy marriages of Alkinoos/Arete and Odysseus/Penelope, thereby providing an insight into the nature of their relationship after the Trojan War.<sup>68</sup> Unlike Penelope and Arete, Helen only ever addresses her husband by his formal titles, using either the single: ‘Menelaos fostered-by-Zeus’, or even the double: ‘Atreus’ son, Menelaos, fostered-by-Zeus’ (4.138, 235). The reason/s for this are unclear: she might be removed from intimacy with him, following her entanglement with Paris and so does not perceive him as occupying the role of ‘husband’, or she might be intentionally offering him deference in public to make up for her past mistakes. It is hard to compare her spousal interactions with those on Ithaka, as Penelope’s exchange with Odysseus is private and also highly charged, whereas Helen is speaking to Menelaos in a public setting and in front of strangers to boot. A comparison with Arete might be more revealing, but she never directly addresses Alkinoos and therefore provides no comparison for how a contented wife might speak to her husband in public.

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<sup>67</sup> 23.209. For more on the exclusion of his name, see: **Chapter Six**.

<sup>68</sup> Dilworth (1994): 1-24. Though much of this scholarship focuses on the similarities between Helen and Penelope: e.g. Mueller (2010): 1-21; Hofgren (2015), and Johnson (2016).

The scene between Helen and Menelaos can therefore be read a number of ways. Perhaps wives are not supposed to address their husbands in public – thus explaining the behaviour of Arete – and Helen is therefore being characteristically recalcitrant by breaking precedent and speaking to her husband. Her behaviour might then be justified by the use of formal titles which emphasise his civic role *qua* king. An alternative reading is that women are allowed to address their husbands in public by the same titles as any other speaker and so Helen is following the correct protocol here, though we have no evidence to support this from either Arete or Penelope.<sup>69</sup> Another explanation might be that women typically call their husbands *πόσις* in public, just as husbands call their wives *γυνή* (as per Menelaos, Alkinoos and Odysseus) and that Helen is somehow attempting to assuage the dishonour she has brought to her marriage by repeatedly affirming her husband's status. If the latter were the case, then Helen is striking a fine balance through the number of epithets she awards him, as she follows more closely the pattern of Menelaos' intimate friend Eteoneus who also uses 'fostered-by-Zeus', but does not go so far as to award him his full titles as a stranger might do (Telemakhos and Peisistratos call him 'son of Atreus, Menelaos, fostered-by-Zeus, leader of the people').<sup>70</sup> This interpretation would suit Helen's characterisation; through a careful selection of titles Helen positions herself inside Menelaos' intimate circle, but does not present herself as so intimate with him as to publicly call him 'husband'.

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<sup>69</sup> For more on gendered differences in naming, see: Higbie (1995): 111-119.

<sup>70</sup> 4.26, and: 4.156, 291, 316.

*Children and Parents*

Nestor and Alkinoos demonstrate how fathers might publicly speak to their children. Nestor, for example, uses either ‘dear children’ (τέκνα φίλα) or ‘my children’ (παῖδες ἐμοί) to stir his collective offspring to action.<sup>71</sup> But he never speaks to any of them individually and so no private term of endearment is recorded. Alkinoos similarly calls his daughter ‘child’ (τέκος), while Nausikaa calls him ‘father dear’ (πατρι φίλω) as she sidles up to ask a favour.<sup>72</sup> Note that there is a preponderance of φίλος in association with family appellatives which indicates the level of their intimacy, Nagy translates φίλος as ‘near and dear’ for precisely these reasons; it is far more likely to be associated with nouns such as ‘father’ and ‘child’ than with ‘stranger’ or ‘swineherd’.<sup>73</sup> Though they occur less frequently, mothers also use the same term of address for their sons.<sup>74</sup> As demonstrated in previous chapters, τέκος is also used by older heroes when they are addressing the offspring of friends and strangers of noble blood, thus φίλος can be added to a noun in order to distinguish between ‘child’ and ‘child who is near and dear to me’, an observation which would add a degree of distance or suspicion to Alkinoos’ conversation with his daughter.

On Ithaka, the extended family of Odysseus provides much deeper insights into how the different generations address one another. The main distinctions are found between male and female relatives, or between intimate household servants and their charges. When Odysseus chooses a periphrastic denomination for Laertes (which he does 50% of the time) then he refers to him directly as ‘father’ (πατήρ), or alternatively precedes it with the

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<sup>71</sup> 3.418, 475.

<sup>72</sup> 6.57-68. de Jong remarks that the use of appellatives in these family scenes is indicative of a ‘homely and intimate tone’, which is further enhanced by the physical proximity of the pair (6.56), see: de Jong (2001): 154-155.

<sup>73</sup> Nagy (1979): 82-83; 102-111 (my emphasis).

<sup>74</sup> 11.155, 216; 23.105

exclamatory ‘Ο’ (ὦ), though the application of the latter does not seem to serve any obvious contextual purpose (and therefore is likely a metrical addition used in order to cue the vocative).<sup>75</sup> Telemakhos similarly addresses Odysseus as either πατήρ, or ὦ πάτερ, (once he knows who his father is). He occasionally uses the alternative ‘father dear’ (πάτερ φίλε), but all these instances indicate a different kind of contextual propriety.<sup>76</sup> The first occurs immediately after Telemakhos finally accepts that the man standing before him is, indeed, Odysseus and is therefore the first time Telemakhos calls Odysseus ‘father’ to his face: ‘What kind of ship was it, father dear, in which sailors brought you here to Ithaka?’<sup>77</sup>

The second example occurs soon after Telemakhos berates Penelope for not being more welcoming to the bloodied stranger in her halls whom Telemakhos knows to be Odysseus. Referring to the stand-off between his father and mother, Telemakhos offers the helpful comment that: ‘You must look to this yourself, father dear’.<sup>78</sup> In this instance, it appears as if Telemakhos is trying to emphasise his relationship with his father in front of Penelope, in order to encourage her to accept that it really is Odysseus standing before her. Telemakhos is suggesting that he would not use such an intimate title as πάτερ φίλε if he were not sure who the man was.

The final example occurs near the end of Book 24 over four speaking parts during which the lineage of Laertes-Odysseus-Telemakhos is repeatedly emphasised. After seeing

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<sup>75</sup> 24.321, 331, 357, 373.

<sup>76</sup> 16.222; 23.124; 24.511. de Jong remarks that book 16 – more than any other – uses appellatives to underscore the reunion of father and son, (2001): 385, see also: de Jong (1993):302-306.

<sup>77</sup> 16.222-223:

ποίη γὰρ νῦν δεῦρο, πάτερ φίλε, νηῖ σε ναῦται  
ἤγαγον εἰς Ἴθάκην;

<sup>78</sup> 23.124: αὐτὸς ταῦτά γε λεῖσσε, πάτερ φίλε.

Athena appear on the scene, Odysseus is inspired to address his son in order to remind him of his ancestry:<sup>79</sup>

Telemakhos, now that you yourself are here  
 in the place where men do battle and distinguish their greatness,  
**you must not dishonour the line of your fathers**, for in time past 208  
 [our line] has excelled in manhood and valour.

Telemakhos replies, using the more intimate address for his father, saying that he will not bring shame upon his family:<sup>80</sup>

You will see if you are willing, **father dear**, upon my heart,  
**I will not dishonour your blood**, as you say. 512

From which Laertes remarks on the courage of his descendants:<sup>81</sup>

What a day for me, dear gods, I am so glad,  
**My son and my grandson** are competing over their greatness. 515

Following this exchange, Athena then addresses Laertes using the *hapax* 'son of Arkeisios' (Ἀρκεισιιάδη) and so inspires him to action by invoking his identity as part of the Arkeisiad family who must now assert their rightful inheritance.<sup>82</sup> She appeals to his martial prowess (that he throw his spear) in order to bring Odysseus' initial appeal to

<sup>79</sup> 24.206-209:

Τηλέμαχ', ἤδη μὲν τόδε γ' εἴσσαι αὐτὸς ἐπελθὼν,  
 ἀνδρῶν μαρναμένων ἵνα τε κρίνονται ἄριστοι,  
**μή τι καταισχύνειν πατέρων γένος**, οἷ τὸ πάρος περ 208  
 ἀλκῆ τ' ἠνορέη τε κεκάσμεθα πᾶσαν ἐπ' αἴαν.

<sup>80</sup> 24.511-512:

ὄψεται, αἶ κ' ἐθέλησθα, **πάτερ φίλε**, τῷ δ' ἐπὶ θυμῷ  
**οὐ τι καταισχύνοντα τεὸν γένος**, ὡς ἀγορεύεις. 512

<sup>81</sup> 24.514-515:

τίς νύ μοι ἡμέρη ἦδε, θεοὶ φίλοι; ἧ μάλα χαίρω·  
 υἱός θ' υἱωνός τ' ἀρετῆς πέρι δῆριν ἔχουσιν. 515

<sup>82</sup> For more on the patronyms in this scene, see: Goldhill (1991): 19-20. On the significance of heritage in this scene more broadly, see: Wender (1978): 63-71.

inherited valour to a four-generational close. It is fitting, therefore, in this particular instance that Telemakhos should appeal to the intimate relationship between himself and his father. In all three instances, Telemakhos' use of *πάτερ φίλε* is used to emphasise his loyalty to, and more specifically his descent from, Odysseus. Just as Penelope's use of Odysseus' name deliberately reflects her previous omission, so it is fitting for Telemakhos to accentuate his relationship to his father at key points after denying it at the start of the narrative.<sup>83</sup>

Thus, in the only instances of children speaking to their fathers in the *Odyssey*, Telemakhos, Odysseus, and Nausikaa all use the appellative *πατήρ*. Similarly, both Odysseus and Telemakhos also call their mothers *μήτηρ*, usually with the additional possessive 'mine' (*μητέρα ἐμή*).<sup>84</sup> While Odysseus exclusively includes the possessive *ἐμή* when addressing Antikleia, Telemakhos does not always use it when speaking to Penelope. He omits it once, in Book 17, when Penelope is making him feel guilty for not disclosing his intention to travel abroad ("I will go back to bed and cry since you don't have the patience to talk to me", 17.101-106) and so a certain level of exasperation can be read into Telemakhos' line: 'well then, *mother*, I will give you a truthful account' (17.108).

Equally telling are those scenes when Telemakhos does choose the extended form. The scene in which Telemakhos berates Penelope for her standoffishness towards Odysseus, for example, has often been interpreted as the culmination of a strained mother-son relationship, largely because of Telemakhos' use of the negative *δυσμήτηρ* ('un-mother',

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<sup>83</sup> See: **Chapter Six: Οὐτιν δέ με φίλοι κικλήσκουσι.**

<sup>84</sup> Odysseus to Antikleia: 11.164, 210. Telemakhos to Penelope: 1.346; 17.46; 18.227; 21.344; 23.97.

‘not-mother’).<sup>85</sup> Yet immediately before this powerful deformation Telemakhos also calls her μητηρ ἐμή. The juxtaposition of the two different nouns – ‘my mother, un-mother’ – better conveys Telemakhos’ conflicting feelings of his love for her and loyalty to his father in this scene, which would be lacking without the possessive ἐμή, or if δυσμήτηρ had been used in isolation. Telemakhos is therefore not as heartless in this scene as others would like to believe.

**Fig.4.4: Intimate Terms of Address used by Servants**

APPELLATIVE	SPEAKER	ADDRESSEE	REFERENCE
‘child’ τέκνον	Eurykleia	Telemakhos	19.22; 20.135
	Eumaios	Telemakhos	16.61
	Eurykleia	Odysseus	19.363; 22.420
	Eurynome	Penelope	18.170
‘dear child’ φίλε τέκνον	Eurykleia	Telemakhos	2.363
	Eurykleia	Odysseus	19.474
	Eurykleia	Penelope	23.5, 26
	Eumaios	Telemakhos	16.25
‘my child’ τέκνον ἐμόν	Eurykleia	Odysseus	19.492; 22.486
	Eurykleia	Penelope	23.70
‘dear girl’ νύμφα φίλη	Eurykleia	Penelope	4.743

In the House of Arkeisios intimate appellatives are also shared with extended family members, including Eurykleia, Eurynome and Eumaios, although there are subtle variations which sometimes distinguish their relationships.<sup>86</sup> When addressing their

<sup>85</sup> 23.97: μητηρ ἐμή, δυσμήτηρ, ἀπηνέα θυμὸν ἔχουσα. de Jong perceives this exchange as evidence of their characteristic tension, de Jong (2001): 551. See also: Russo *et al.* (1992): 322. For more on acts of deformation, see: **Chapter Six: The Power of Anonymity**.

<sup>86</sup> I intentionally include the Eurykleia and Eumaios within the rubric ‘extended family members’ precisely because of the familial intimacy which is indicated by their shared epithets in both dialogue and narratorial contexts. Note also that the narrator takes pains to associate Eumaios with Ktimene (15.363-370) as if to emphasise his association with the family, see: de Jong (2001): 378. This same intimacy is noted by Austin in his brief examination of their epithets: Austin (1982): 50-51. There is

charges, whatever age they may be, both male and female family servants will typically use variations on ‘child’ whether it is simply τέκνον, the more intimate φίλε τέκνον, the possessive τέκνον ἐμόν, or the more gender specific νύμφα φίλη (see Fig. 4.4). In this way they are not dissimilar to other speaking characters who use variations on the denomination τέκνον whether they are family or not.<sup>87</sup>

However, when being spoken to, these servants receive unique denominations which distinguish them from true-blood parents. While Penelope and Antikleia are ‘mother’ (μήτηρ), Eurynome and Eurykleia are instead heralded by the vocative μαῖα which Heubeck describes as a hypocorism of the maternal root μα-.<sup>88</sup> However it is translated (variously as ‘good mother’, ‘auntie’, ‘nurse’ or ‘nanny’) the term is never used for maternal mothers in the *Odyssey* and is instead only applied to housekeepers who play a pseudo-maternal role in the family. The term is usually used in isolation, but again, the intimate marker φίλος is added in charged moments. Telemakhos uses it at 20.129 in order to emphasise his affection for his nanny when he is feeling critical of his actual mother.<sup>89</sup> Elsewhere, Penelope adds it when Eurykleia is attempting to convince her that Odysseus has returned. This entire exchange, in fact, features a plethora of φίλος-based appellatives which Eurykleia concludes with the endearingly possessive τέκνον ἐμόν.<sup>90</sup>

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some discussion as to whether or not Eurykleia and Eurynome are the same character. The use of familial appellatives does not help clarify the matter as they are both called μαῖα.

<sup>87</sup> Note also that Athena refers to Telemakhos as παῖδ’ ἀγαπητὸν (‘beloved child’ 5.18) an adjective which is reserved only for characters who have a parental relationship with him (Eurykleia 2.365, and Penelope 4.727, 817): de Jong (2001): 125.

<sup>88</sup> Heubeck *et al.* (1988): 151. Used for Eurykleia: 2.349, 372; 19.16, 482, 500; 23.171; for Eurynome: 17.499.

<sup>89</sup> 20.129-133:

μαῖα φίλη, τὸν ξεῖνον ἐτιμήσασθ’ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ  
 εὐνῆ καὶ σίτῳ, ἧ αὐτῶς κεῖται ἀκηδής; 135  
 τοιαύτη γὰρ ἐμὴ μήτηρ, πινυτή περ ἐοῦσα·  
 ἐμπλήγηδην ἕτερόν γε τίει μερόπων ἀνθρώπων  
 χείρονα, τὸν δέ τ’ ἀρείον’ ἀτιμήσασ’ ἀποπέμπει.

<sup>90</sup> φίλον τέκος (23.6), μαῖα φίλη (23.11), φίλη τροφός (23.25), τέκνον φίλον (23.26), μαῖα φίλη (23.36), φίλη τροφός (23.39), μαῖα φίλη (23.59), μαῖα φίλη (23.81). The repetition of φίλος in their exchange therefore marks the plainer τέκνον ἐμόν (23.70)



The distinctive abundance of φίλος appellatives in this scene creates an air of close confidentiality and lends weight to an already intensely emotional scene.

In a similar vein, while all biological fathers are called πατήρ by their children, non-biological father-figures are called ἄττα.<sup>91</sup> *LSJ* calls this term merely as a ‘salutation to elders’ which Heubeck believes might ‘imply familiarity’ but such loose definitions do not adequately represent the intimacy of the term which is used exclusively in Homer for characters who have played surrogate paternal roles to young heroes with whom they clearly have very close relationships.<sup>92</sup> Both ἄττα and μάϊα, therefore, are non-biological alternatives for ‘father’ and ‘mother’ awarded to intimate family members who have played the role of parents but who are not related by blood to their charges.

The intimacy of Telemakhos’ and Eumaios’ relationship is further indicated by the pseudo-epithet/appellative pet name Eumaios uses for Telemakhos: γλυκερόν φάος (‘sweet light’) which is used by both Eumaios (in his role as “father”) and Penelope when they are first reunited with Telemakhos following his treacherous sea-voyage.<sup>93</sup> The context of its occurrences in the *Odyssey* implies that the phrase is indicative of their relief that Telemakhos has returned to the land of the living (the place of sunlight) as opposed to their fear that, while absent, he may be dead without their knowledge. This supposition is supported by the associations of light and life demonstrated elsewhere in the poem, as well as Eumaios’ and Penelope’s remark that ‘I thought I would never see you again, after

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as an anomaly, used to highlight Eurykleia’s tone when she berates Penelope for refusing to acknowledge that Odysseus is home.

<sup>91</sup> Of Phoinix, *Iliad* 9.607, and of Eumaios: 16.31, 57, 130; 17.6, 599. Note that Odysseus specifically chooses πατήρ when he reveals himself to Telemakhos (16.188).

<sup>92</sup> *LSJ*: s.v. ἄττα<sup>2</sup>, and: Heubeck & Hoekstra: 266.

<sup>93</sup> 16.23 and 17.41. Sometimes translated as ‘light of my life’, *LSJ*: s.v. φάος (though this translation fails to incorporate the adjective γλυκερός).

you went on the ship to Pylos'.<sup>94</sup> The use of γλυκερὸν φάος in Book 16 is therefore entirely contextually appropriate as it emphasises the familial relationship between Eumaios and Telemakhos which has been prepared for in previous books (14.174-84). The exchange of Τηλέμαχε, γλυκερὸν φάος and Telemakhos' responding ἄττα also deeply enhances the pathos for Odysseus, who must watch the reunion of adoptive-father and his own son from the position of a stranger.<sup>95</sup>

Homer is equally careful not to allow Odysseus and Telemakhos to refer to one another with familial appellatives when they are speaking amongst those who are unaware of Odysseus' identity. Before revealing his identity to his son the disguised Odysseus addresses Telemakhos with the typical guest-stranger appellative 'friend' (φίλος), but then, during the revelation scene, switches to 'child' (τέκνον, 16.226). Critically, when he is once again disguised, Odysseus switches back to φίλος when speaking to Telemakhos with other people present (e.g. 17.17).<sup>96</sup> Telemakhos is just as careful, addressing Odysseus as πατήρ only when they are alone, and opting instead for 'guest-stranger' (ξένος) when they are in public.<sup>97</sup> The distinction is also made by the narrator who, when focalizing Telemakhos with regard to his relationship to his father, also makes sure to employ the correct appellative: 'so he spoke, and pious Telemakhos smiled, catching the eye of his father, while avoiding that of the swineherd'.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> 16.23-4; 17.41-2. For more on φάος and its connection to life, light, and the theme of returning, see: **Chapter Two: Peers.**

<sup>95</sup> de Jong (2001): 388; Goldhill (1991): 9.

<sup>96</sup> As a stand-alone noun φίλος can therefore be employed in either a strong or weak sense depending on the speaker. It is one thing for Telemakhos to address the Ithakan Assembly as 'friends', for example, and another thing for the Odysseus to publicly call his son 'friend' when disguised as the beggar.

<sup>97</sup> 18.16.

<sup>98</sup> 16.476-477:

ὥς φάτο, μείδησεν δ' ἱερὴ ἴς Τηλεμάχοιο  
ἔς πατέρ' ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἰδών, ἀλέεινε δ' ὑφορβόν.

The exchange between Eurykleia and Odysseus in Book 19 is also meticulously executed. In ear-shot of Penelope, the vagabond Odysseus calls Eurykleia by the feminine version of the common denomination γέρων: ‘old woman’ (γραῦς, 19.383). After the digression of the scar, however, when Odysseus has pulled his old nursemaid in close and Penelope is distracted by Athena, Odysseus appeals to Eurykleia twice as μάϊα (19.482, 500).<sup>99</sup> The only other instance when Odysseus uses this term for Eurykleia is when he is appealing to her in front of Penelope (23.171). Just as Telemakhos emphasises his familiarity with his father in the preceding exchange, Odysseus is likely here attempting to exaggerate his relationship with Eurykleia in order to convince Penelope of his identity: only someone intimately involved with the family would call their nurse μάϊα. He otherwise maintains his disguise by publicly referring to her as γραῦς (22.411, 481).

The contextual propriety of all of these exchanges indicates that the appellatives employed by family members are deliberately and carefully selected. Like epithets, these appellatives follow strict rules of dialogic exchange, whereby the speaker employs the most appropriate phrase for the level of intimacy they wish to establish. As demonstrated above, for example, Telemakhos can emphasise his relationship with his father at critical moments through the addition of φίλος just as Odysseus can identify himself through his close relationship with his μάϊα, Eurykleia. The particular distribution of these periphrastic

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<sup>99</sup> Penelope is distracted, 19.478-479:

ἢ δ' οὐτ' ἀθρήσαι δύνατ' ἀντίη οὔτε νοῆσαι·  
τῆ γὰρ Ἀθηναίη νόον ἔτραπεν.

But she was not able to see or think of her,  
for Athena had turned her mind aside.

denominations, regardless of metrical equivalence, therefore leads to the same conclusions that apply to the distribution of epithets: namely, that forms of address are chosen specifically for their purpose and can, therefore, convey deeper meaning when examined in context.

### Familial Epithets

Outside of the appellatives used in familial dialogue, there is also a range of epithets which are employed by both the narrator and speaking characters to iterate a character's dynastic and marital position.<sup>100</sup> The main purpose of these familial epithets is to indicate the transmission of κλέος or status through association with a better-known or better established relative. It has been demonstrated elsewhere in this thesis, i.e. in the character development of Telemakhos (Chapter Two) or the collection of epithet types around families, that it is axiomatic in Homer that the appearance, skills, and even morality of one relation (usually the father) can be passed on to other relations (usually the son). It is therefore essential that a hero's lineage be correctly identified by all dialogic participants, thus explaining the prevalence of patronyms in these heroic epics.

#### *Husbands, Fathers, and Sons*

Patronyms are by far the most frequent type of epithet in the *Odyssey*, though (unlike other epithets examined in this thesis) their lack of discernibly intentional distribution suggests that they are most susceptible to Parryist accusations of metrical filler.<sup>101</sup> But there are some aspects of patronyms which can enhance our appreciation of them as

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<sup>100</sup> On the category of Familial Epithets, see: **Appendix One**.

<sup>101</sup> In this I agree with Higbie (1995): 43, 46.

Homeric epithets, for example, they can act as names in their own right (e.g. Atreides) or help to enhance a woman's status through her ancestry. Higbie delineates patronyms into three distinct categories, those which directly incorporate the father's name, such as those which end in -ης or those which end in -ίων, -ίος, and those which separate the father's name from the son/daughter/child, e.g. Πηληϊός υἱός.<sup>102</sup> For the purposes of this thesis the former incorporative form has been designated the "direct" patronym while the latter adjectival phrase has been called the "indirect" patronym. In order to emphasise this distinction they have been rendered directly as 'Atreus' 'son' and indirectly as 'son of Atreus', the purpose of which is to separate the noun for son from the name of the father in the latter instance so as to best represent the distinction in the Greek. It is not the author's intention to repeat the excellent work of Higbie and so this chapter will now examine patronymic distribution in the *Odyssey* only in relation to how these epithets interact with the theories presented elsewhere in this thesis, while also laying the groundwork for a study of the more anomalous examples (particularly those which contain embedded epithets and those which are used to describe women).

The first direct (-ης) type has 35 unique examples in the *Odyssey* (Fig.4.5). The most common of these are only frequent because they typically feature in longer forms of address, such as Λαερτιάδης (x34) which appears in either 'Zeus-sprung, Laertes' son, much-skilled Odysseus', or 'wife of Laertes' son' 78 percent of the time.<sup>103</sup> In these instances the name of the father is blended with the identifier for son, and is therefore reminiscent of surnames such as Thomson, Wilson, and Jameson. This style of

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<sup>102</sup> Higbie (1995): 47, 64 n.13.

<sup>103</sup> It is otherwise used indirectly, by Helios (12.378), Antinoos (21.262), Odysseus himself (when disguised, 16.104; 18.24) or by the Narrator 17.361; 18.348; 20.286; 22.339.

patronymic epithet operates in some ways like a surname, and is thus occasionally isolated from the character's name altogether (the most frequent occurrence of this is Κρονίδης) where it then acts as its own independent epithet identifier for a character. After all, there is only one person the narrator could mean when they refer to Ἀγαμέμνονίδης and so the addition of the personal name is often superfluous.

The indirect (υἱός) type has slightly fewer (x28) unique examples.<sup>104</sup> The two are clearly distinct however. While the direct (-ης) type operate more like a surname ("Laertesson"), a typical indirect patronym instead operates more like a lineage trope ("x begat y") where both the name of the father and the son are always identified, e.g. 'Antinoos son of Eupheithes'. The distinction between the two types of patronym may, of course, be metrical, but the construction of the indirect type allows it to perform another function, such as embedding an additional epithet which qualifies a further characteristic of the relation, such as: 'Telemakhos son of ›godlike‹ Odysseus' (Fig.4.6), or providing an additional layer of lineage, such as 'Amphinomos son of Nisos [who was] son of Aretiades'.<sup>105</sup>

The only characters to receive both types of patronym are those which feature repeatedly throughout the epic (or epics) and so are subject to a great deal of description which must be changed for the sake of variance: Zeus, the Iliadic heroes Akhilleus, Diomedes, Menelaos and Odysseus, and also Peisistratos.<sup>106</sup> The latter, no doubt, receives a variety

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<sup>104</sup> They are used of: Akhilleus, Amphialos, Amphinomos, Antinoos, Apollo, Diokles, Diomedes, Eperitos, Eurymakhos, Herakles, Hermes, Leodes, Maron, Megapenthes, Melanthios, Menelaos, Minos, Neoptolemos, Nisos, Odysseus, Orsilokhos, Peisistratos, Telemakhos, Thoas, Thrasymedes, Tityos, and Zeus.

<sup>105</sup> 3.398; 15.63, 554; 17.3; 20.283; 21.432; 24.151. Note that any argument that the indirect patronym is necessary for the inclusion of an embedded epithet due to the need to separate the nouns from the adjective in the formula: son(°) of godlike(°) father(°) is Anglo-centric and does not account for the distribution of adjectives in the Greek (more than half of the examples in Fig 4.6 position the embedded epithets at the end of the patronymic).

<sup>106</sup> Higbie (1995): 50.

of patronyms because he is so commonly addressed and described by both characters and the narrator across the few books in which he appears.

**Fig.4.5: List of -ης Patronyms**

EPITHET	RECIPIENT	#	EPITHET	RECIPIENT	#	EPITHET	RECIPIENT	#
Λαερτιάδης	Odysseus	34	Εύηνοριδης	Leokritos	2	Μενοιτιάδης	Patroklos	1
Κρονίδης	Zeus	30	Εύρυτιδης	Iphitos	2	Μερμερίδης	Ilos	1
Άτρείδης	Agamemnon Menelaos	27	Ίασίδης	Amphion Dmetor	2	Ναυβολίδης	Euryalos	1
Νεστορίδης	Peisistratos	11	Μαστορίδης	Halitherses	2	Όνητορίδης	Phrontis	1
Νηληϊάδης	Nestor	4	Τυδεΐδης	Diomedes	2	Όρμενίδης	Ktesios	1
Βοηθοΐδης	Eteoneus	3	Άγαμεμονίδης	Orestes	1	Πολυθερσεΐδης	Ktesippos	1
Δαμαστορίδης	Agelaos	3	Αιολίδης	Kretheus	1	Πολυκοριδης	Peisander	1
Πεισηνοριδης	Ops	3	Άλκιμίδης	Mentor	1	Τεκτονίδης	Polynaos	1
Πηληϊάδης	Akhilleus	3	Εύρυμιδης	Telemon	1	Τερπιάδης	Phemios	1
Άγχιαλητιάδης	Mentes	2	Θυεσειάδης	Aigisthos	1	Τηλεφίδης	Eurypylos	1
Αιακίδης	Akhilleus*	2	Ίπποτάδης	Aiolos	1	Ύλακίδης	Kastor	1
Άρκεισιάδης	Laertes	2	Κλυτίδης	Peiraios	1			

\*This is actually a reference to Akhilleus' grandsire.

**Fig.4.6: List of υιός Patronyms with Embedded Epithets**

RECIPIENT	EPITHET (GREEK)	EPITHET (TRANSLATED)
Telemakhos:	υιόν Όδυσσῆος ὀθειοιο	Son of ὀgodlikeῶ Odysseus
	Όδυσσῆος ὀμεγαθύμου υιόν	Son of ὀgreat-spiritedῶ Odysseus
Aias:	παῖ Τελαμῶνος ὀἀμύμονος	Child of ὀblamelessῶ Telamon
Antilokhos:	Όυῖς ὀἔκτεινε φαεινῆς υιός*	Son of ὀoutstretched, shiningῶ Eos
Eurymakhos:	Πολύβοιο ὀδαΐφρονος υιόν	Son of ὀinuredῶ Polybos
Herakles:	Ζηνός παῖς ὀΚρονίουος	Child of ὀKronianῶ Zeus
Megapenthes:	υιός Μενελάου ὀκυδαλίμοιο	Son of ὀgreat-heartedῶ Menelaos
Zeus:	Κρόνου παῖς ὀἀγκυλομήτεω	Child of ὀcrooked-counselledῶ Kronos
Amphinomos:	Νίσου υιός ὀΆρητιάδαο ἄνακτος*	Son of ὀlord Aretiades' sonῶ Nisos

\*This is a matronym but it follows the same pattern.

\*This is an unusual case (see below).

Zeus is worth mentioning here as he is almost exclusively referred to in the –ης style but the indirect type occurs only once: when the poet wishes to embed an additional epithet for Kronos into the line (ἀγκυλομήτης, 21.415).<sup>107</sup> The epithet ἀγκυλομήτης is an Odyssean *hapax* formed ultimately from μῆτις (‘cunning’ via μητίετα ‘counsels’) and ἀγκύλος (‘curved’) and its presence here is entirely appropriate. The adjective ἀγκύλος itself is another Odyssean *hapax* used to describe Odysseus’ bow a mere one hundred and fifty lines earlier: ἀγκύλα τόξα (21.264). Thus the reader is first introduced to Odysseus’ μῆτις and the curved bow (ἀγκύλα τόξα) which only he can wield. Once he has finally strung and fired the bow it is the Zeus who is described as ‘child of Kronos ὁ curved cunning’ who then thunders to indicate his approval of Odysseus’ ploy.<sup>108</sup> As to why it is not Zeus who is awarded the epithet but Kronos (the plosive alliteration only occurs in English), one explanation can be that Zeus is not elsewhere known specifically for his artifice, only his intelligence. His epithets typically refer to his strength, or his dominion over men and gods, but his intellectual capabilities extend only as far as being ‘good at counsels’ (μητίετα).<sup>109</sup> In short, a highly unique epithet – which combines an exclusive adjective for Odysseus’ bow with a personal noun for his cunning – appears at the precise moment Odysseus’ cunning plans are brought to fruition: at the moment he fires his curved bow.

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<sup>107</sup> There is no discernible reason why the more diminutive and gender-neutral πάϊς should be preferred over the masculine υἱός in this context, though it seems to be used when the genitive ends in an ‘ο’, e.g. Πολύβου πάϊς and Λαέρταο πάϊ. For more, see: Golden (1985): 91-104.

<sup>108</sup> Russo *et al.* also note that ἀγκυλομήτης is a metrical equivalent of ποικυλομήτης – a particular epithet of Odysseus – which also occupies the same position in the line, Russo *et al.* (1992): 202-203. Their metrical similarity may draw a further connection with Odysseus’ μῆτις.

<sup>109</sup> 14.243; 16.298; 20.102. The epithet ἀγκυλομήτης elsewhere “belongs” to Kronos as it is used to describe him in *Iliad* 4.59 outside of the patronymic phrase.



Males are not only described in relation to their children or fathers, however. There is also a small number of epithets and appellatives which indicate their marital status. The appellative for 'husband' (πόσις) is uncommon and, despite the abundance of family scenes in the *Odyssey*, is only applied to Odysseus and Zeus. For the former, Penelope employs it's as a substitute when she is characteristically avoiding Odysseus' name, instead referring to him as a 'good (ἔσθλός) husband' (4.724). The latter is thrice described by speaking characters as the 'high-thundering, husband of Hera' (ἐρίγδουπος πόσις Ἥρης) in three contextually significant places. Odysseus uses it first in his farewell to Nausikaa (8.465), perhaps as a gentle way for him to remind her of his own marriage to Penelope.<sup>110</sup> Later, in Book 15, it frames Helen's gift of a bridal gown to Telemakhos as he departs from Sparta, where it is spoken first by Menelaos and then adopted by Telemakhos (15.111, 180). The contextual similarity of these farewell scenes suggests that the epithet 'husband of Hera' is evoked when male guests depart for home as an appeal to Zeus' domestic patronage.

### *Wives, Mothers, and Daughters*

After epithets which describe physical appearance, the greatest number of remaining female epithets indicate their familial connections.<sup>111</sup> Odysseus makes this dependence of female identity on the male bloodline clear in his summary description of the women in the underworld who are merely 'the many wives and daughters of heroes' (ὄσσας ἡρώων ἀλόχους ἴδον ἠδὲ θύγατρας, 11.329).<sup>112</sup> While they share as many unique patronyms

<sup>110</sup> Here he also finally uses the vocative appellative 'girl', to emphasise their age difference (8.468). The emphasis is made all the more significant by the unique placement of this form of address at the end of the speech.

<sup>111</sup> Number of unique epithets for females by Category: Physical Appearance (x34), Family (x30), Status (x25), Character (x17), Physical Skill (x9), Intelligence (x6), Monikers (x6), Occupation (x5), Negative and Location (both x4).

<sup>112</sup> Dimock (1989): 151.

relative to their male counterparts, female patronyms are far more likely to include an embedded epithet which emphasises their lineage where more generations are included in their epithet. Female embedded epithets therefore operate differently from male ones for, rather than emphasising the qualities of the father – as in the case of ‘Telemakhos son of ›godlike‹ Odysseus’ for example – they instead emphasise an additional generation, such as ‘daughter of Ops ›Peisenor’s son’ (see Fig. 4.7).<sup>113</sup> Given the relatively lower status of females in Homer’s warrior society it is understandable that more female characters in the *Odyssey* should receive epithets which mark their status by emphasising the marital or paternal line.<sup>114</sup>

**Fig.4.7: Female Embedded Familial Epithets**

CHARACTER	EPITHET	REFERENCES
<i>Klytaimnestra</i>	Wife of ›Atreus’ son ›Ατρεΐδαο γῆμ	1.36
<i>Penelope</i>	Wife of ›Laertes’ son γύναι ›Λαερτιάδεω	17.152; 19.165, 262, 336, 583
<i>Tyro</i>	Wife of Kretheus, ›Aiolos’ son Κρηθῆος γυνή ›Αιολίδαο	11.237
<i>Eurykleia</i>	Daughter of Ops, ›Peisenor’s son Ἔπος θυγάτηρ ›Πεισηνορίδαο	1.429; 2.347
<i>Chloris</i>	Youngest daughter of Amphionos, ›Iasos’ son ὀπλοτάτην κούρην Ἀμφίονος ›Ιασίδαο	11.283
<i>Polykaste</i>	Youngest daughter of Nestor ›Neleus’ son Νέστορος ὀπλοτάτη θυγάτηρ ›Νηληϊάδαο	3.465

While these embedded patronymics are far more common for women than men (10:1), not all female embedded epithets follow this pattern. Megara is the daughter of ‘high-spirited’ (ὑπέρθυμος) Kreon, while Ariadne is the daughter of ‘baleful’ (ὀλοόφρων)

<sup>113</sup> The only males who receive a patronymic embedded epithet are Herakles and Amphinomos. The former is ‘Son of ›Kronian Zeus’ 11.620, and its appearance is likely due to the emphasis here on his divine heritage, in order to distinguish him from his ‘Son of Amphitryton’ identity (11.270). Amphinomos’ lengthy heritage is key to Odysseus’ positive treatment of him (see: **Chapter Five: Suitors**).

<sup>114</sup> Higbie (1995): 113-135.

Minos.<sup>115</sup> Antikleia, Iphthime, Periboia and Nausikaa are all daughters of ‘great-hearted’ (μεγαλήτωρ) fathers and Arete is the daughter of ‘godlike’ (ἀντίθεος) Rhexenor.<sup>116</sup> Penelope’s embedded patronym is typically unusual, like many of her other epithets. Her sister Iphthime is described as the daughter of ‘great-hearted’ Ikarios, but when Odysseus addresses Penelope, Ikarios instead becomes ‘far-famed’ (τηλεκλειτός) perhaps in order to draw a parallel between other family names (*Telemakhos*, *Antikleia*, *Eurykleia*) and epithets (Odysseus is repeatedly described as having ‘fame which goes up to heaven’ or ‘wide across Hellas and Argos’).<sup>117</sup>

Unlike mortals, female divinities rarely receive these kinds of patronymic embedded epithets as the fame of their fathers is absolute. Circe, however, receives the highly anomalous epithet: αὐτοκασιγνήτη ὀλοόφρονος Αἰήταιο ‘sister to baleful Aietes’ (10.137), though their ancestry is quickly expanded in the following lines (they are both ‘the children of Helios... and their mother is Perse, the daughter of Okeanos’). There is no need for Perse’s lineage to go back further than the primordial Okeanos, just as there is no reason for Eidotheia’s heritage to go back further than ‘strong Proteus’, or for Athena’s to extend beyond Zeus when she is awarded the epithet ‘daughter of Aegis-bearing Zeus’. When Athena identifies herself, however, she chooses to omit the embedded descriptor and proudly announces herself to Odysseus as ‘Pallas Athena, daughter of Zeus’.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Megara 11.269; Ariadne 11.322.

<sup>116</sup> Antikleia 11.85; Periboia 7.58; Nausikaa 6.17, 196, 213, and 8.464; Arete 7.146.

<sup>117</sup> Iphthime 4.797; Penelope 19.546. Odysseus 1.344; 4.726.

<sup>118</sup> 13.300. The same epithet with the embedded ‘of the Aegis’ is only used by the narrator, see: Fig.5.10 in: **Chapter Five: Women.**

The penchant for papyponymics in female mortal epithets suggests that the status of female characters is so tenuous that it must be reinforced through the listing of her husband's father, her grandfather, or even her brother. The distinction is understandable. Unlike male heroes, women have less opportunity to "win a name for themselves" through the acquisition of κλέος and must instead rely on the fame of their most illustrious male relative(s). Penelope's example is again the most interesting, as she is mostly called 'wife of ›Laertes' son‹' by the vagabond Odysseus (and the other sympathetic character Theoklymenos).<sup>119</sup> Given her inclination to avoid using his name, it is sympathetic of Odysseus to follow suit and yet simultaneously remind her of her marriage to him, while the Suitors instead choose to reinforce her status as 'daughter of Ikarios'. This unique choice of epithet is further complicated by his appellative address for her: γυνή. As previously noted, Odysseus cannot possibly (or, rather, publicly) mean 'wife' when he addresses Penelope as γυνή while disguised as the stranger and yet the other main title he awards her during these scenes (γύναι Λαερτιάδεω) uses precisely the same noun to stress her marital status.

The Suitors, in contrast, specifically refer to Penelope through her kinship to her father ('daughter of Ikarios, broad-minded Penelope') and thus emphasise her availability as a woman to be married.<sup>120</sup> Athena makes this connection for us in Book One where she tells Telemakhos that if Penelope wishes to remarry she should return to her father's house whence he can arrange for her to remarry (1.276-278).<sup>121</sup> That the Suitors wish to emphasise Penelope's availability in this manner is not surprising since they are hoping

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<sup>119</sup> 19.165, 262, 336, 583.

<sup>120</sup> 16.435; 18.245, 285; 21.321. Dimock (1989): 23.

<sup>121</sup> It is emphasised again at 2.51-54, 113-114, 130-137, 195-197.

to wed her themselves and so they deliberately avoid the tone of bigamy which might be implied through referring to her as ‘wife of Odysseus’.<sup>122</sup> The only other character to award her the epithet ‘daughter of Ikarios, broad-minded Penelope’ (aside from the narrator) is Agamemnon, who typically uses it – as demonstrated above – to compare her with his disloyal wife.<sup>123</sup>

Women also, of course, receive standard patronymics. These patronymics also take two forms, like their male counterparts, though here they are separated by the choice of noun rather than structure. The noun for ‘daughter’ in the epithet ‘daughter of x’ is given either as θυγάτηρ (80%), or κόρη (20%), which are typically translated as ‘daughter’ and ‘girl’ respectively, though they are rarely distinguished as such by translators.<sup>124</sup> Another, more accurate, translation of κόρη would be ‘maiden’ in the truest definition of ‘unmarried girl’, particularly given the matrimonial context of its use in *Odyssey* 18.279. The *Iliad* draws a similar distinction between the wives (ἄλοχοι) of Priam’s sons and his unmarried daughters (κοῦραι) who are given separate quarters (6.246-247). Again, given the context, a specific distinction is being made between those women who are married and those who are not. The distinction thereby separates the generic description of ‘daughter’ (θυγάτηρ) from the specific description of ‘unmarried daughter’ (κόρη). The emphasis on marital availability in the Suitors’ title for Penelope further reinforces this distinction as they call her κούρη Ἰκαρίοιο.

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<sup>122</sup> The context of this epithet also explains the distinctive association between Penelope and κούρη (see below), as the Suitors wish to draw attention to what they perceive to be her unmarried status.

<sup>123</sup> 11.445; 24.195. The implied misogyny is typical of the slighted Atreides brothers.

<sup>124</sup> LSJ: s.v. θυγάτηρ; κόρη.

Despite this distinction, there appears to be no explanation for the 80/20 difference in distribution between θυγάτηρ and κόρη in the *Odyssey*, as many women with the epithet θυγάτηρ are also unmarried. Metrically speaking the fathers' names are of varied lengths and so one cannot consider a bias of the tri-syllabic θυγάτηρ toward shorter names and/or κόρη toward longer names to achieve metrical balance; for example there is an Αὐτολύκου θυγάτηρ and a Διὸς θυγάτηρ, just as there is a Πανδαρέου κόρη and a κόρη Μίνως (see Fig. 4.8).

**Fig.4.8: Distribution of θυγάτηρ and κόρη Patronyms**

θυγάτηρ				κόρη	
Antikleia	Autolykos	Kalypso	Atlas	Aedon	Pandareos
Antiope	Asopos	Kassandra	Priam	Ariadne	Minos
Aphrodite	Zeus	Laistrygonian	Antiphates	Artemis	Zeus
Arete	Rhexenor	Megara	Kreion	Athena	Zeus
Artemis	Zeus	Muse	Zeus	Klytemnaestra	Tyndareos
Athena	Zeus	Nausikaa	Aikinoos	Penelope	Ikarios
Eidotheia	Proteus	Nymphs	Zeus		
Euridike	Klymenos	Periboia	Eurymedon		
Eurykleia	Ops	Persephone	Zeus		
Helen	Zeus	Polykaste	Nestor		
Ino	Kadmos	Thoosa	Phorkys		
Iphthime	Ikarios				

There is, however, very little overlap between the two types. Only Athena and Artemis are called both θυγάτηρ and κόρη (of Zeus). This is perhaps to be expected for Athena, who, like the few male characters who receive both types of patronym, appears regularly throughout the text and so deserves more variety in her descriptions. An alternative explanation is that Athena and Artemis are daughters who will always remain virgins and so their virginity is sometimes emphasised more than their role as daughters. Athena, for

example, is κόρη far more often than she is θυγάτηρ (75%:25%). The only contextual difference for Artemis' epithet is the speaker: Penelope uses the far more typical θύγατερ Διός in a series of epithets when praying to the goddess at 20.61 but it is Odysseus who uses Διὸς κούρη when he supplicates Nausikaa (6.152). In the latter instance he also adds an embedded epithet for Zeus: 'great' (μεγάλοιο). Note that, given the embedded epithet, this form of address is far too long to balance out the missing syllable and so its selection cannot be a metrical one. An argument could be made that Odysseus here is commenting on the marital status of Nausikaa by likening her to the 'maiden Artemis' and so deliberately opts for κόρη in his description of the goddess since he is ignorant of the girl's actual marital status. Nausikaa is never directly described as κόρη, despite her hopes of marriage to Odysseus, as if to emphasise the lack of her marital availability to him in this scene; during the Phaiakian books she remains θυγάτηρ ἠμεγαλήτορος Ἄλκινόοιο.

Putting aside the divinities, only four mortal women are granted the κόρη-based patronymic: Aedon, Ariadne, Klytaimnestra, and Penelope. Of these four the only one to receive the noun more than once is Penelope, who is referred to by both the narrator and speaking-characters as κούρη Ἰκαρίοιο, περίφρων Πηνελόπεια ('daughter of Ikarios, broad-minded Penelope'). What becomes striking upon closer analysis of the other characters is that Aedon and Klytaimnestra are only awarded this epithet when they are being compared with Penelope. In Book 24 Agamemnon condemns faithless Klytaimnestra Τυνδαρέου κούρη in the same breath as he praises Penelope for her faithfulness:<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> 24.194-202:

Such a good mind has blameless Penelope  
 daughter of Ikarios: how well she remembered Odysseus 195  
 her wedded man: in this way the glory of her virtue  
 will never be destroyed, the immortals will make ready upon the earth  
 the graceful song of mindful Penelope;  
 but because of Tyndareos' daughter's evil-minded works,  
 killer of her wedded husband, her song shall be hated 200  
 among mankind, and bring a hateful reputation  
 to womankind, even to those who do good works.

These lines follow a precise mirror structure: (a) Penelope κούρη Ἰκαρίου had a good mind, (b) she remembered her absent husband, (c) the fame of her virtue will never die, but (a) Klytaimnestra Τυνδαρέου κούρη had an evil mind, (b) she killed her absent husband, (c) her infamy will only cause harm to other women. The specific structure of this comparison makes the reprise of κόρη all the more impactful, thereby marking Klytaimnestra's epithet as a direct reference to Penelope's. One might therefore read Τυνδαρέου κούρη with a certain amount of sarcasm on Agamemnon's part.

The epithet of Aedon provides an entirely different context which nevertheless draws a distinct parallel with Penelope. Aedon is the nightingale of Penelope's unusual simile in Book 19.<sup>126</sup> During this simile, Penelope compares her changeable mind with the fluctuating songs of Pandareos' daughter:<sup>127</sup>

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ὡς ἀγαθαὶ φρένες ἦσαν ἀμύμονι Πηνελοπείη,  
 κούρη Ἰκαρίου· ὡς εὖ μέμνητ' Ὀδυσῆος, 195  
 ἀνδρὸς κουριδίου· τῷ οἱ κλέος οὐ ποτ' ὀλεῖται  
 ἧς ἀρετῆς, τεύξουσι δ' ἐπιχθονίοισιν ἀοιδὴν  
 ἀθάνατοι χαρίεσσαν ἐχέφρονι Πηνελοπείη,  
 οὐχ ὡς Τυνδαρέου κούρη κακὰ μήσατο ἔργα,  
 κουρίδιον κτείνασα πόσιν, στυγερὴ δέ τ' ἀοιδὴ 200  
 ἔσσειε' ἐπ' ἀνθρώπους, χαλεπὴν δέ τε φῆμιν ὀπάσσει  
 θηλυτέρησι γυναιξί, καὶ ἦ κ' εὐεργὸς ἔησιν.

<sup>126</sup> de Jong (2001): 479.

<sup>127</sup> 19.518-524:



Just as Pandareos' daughter, the brown-green nightingale  
 sings her lovely song at the start of spring,  
 sitting in the close-leaves of the trees, 520  
 she often alters her many-toned [πολυηχής] melodies  
 lamenting Itylos, her beloved child, whom she once  
 unknowingly killed with bronze, the son [κοῦρον] of lord Zethos.  
 So my mind is split in two and is stirred here and there  
 [on account of my son].

Note the unusual selection of the masculine κοῦρον for Itylos in this context, which is used either to draw attention to the unusual use of κόρη for Aedon, or to emphasise the wasted potential of his youth (he is also a 'beloved child'). There is a further poetic touch here, which draws a closer parallel with Penelope and her family, namely that Aedon's music is described by the Odysseus-esque πολυ- epithet: πολυηχής.<sup>128</sup> Less than 200 lines later, in Book 20, Penelope further compares herself with Aedon's sisters. In one of her darker moments, she prays to Artemis to spirit her away to the underworld just as the gods did with the daughters of Pandareos:<sup>129</sup>

Artemis, queenly goddess, daughter of Zeus, would that,  
 with the cast of your arrow, you seize the heart from my breast

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ὡς δ' ὅτε Πανδαρέου κόρη, χλωρῆς ἀηδῶν,  
 καλὸν ἀείδησιν ἔαρος νέον ἰσταμένοιο,  
 δενδρέων ἐν πετάλοισι καθεζομένη πυκινούσιν, 520  
 ἢ τε θαμὰ τρωπῶσα χέει πολυηχέα φωνήν,  
 παῖδ' ὀλοφυρομένη Ἴτυλον φίλον, ὃν ποτε χαλκῶ  
 κτεῖνε δι' ἀφραδίας, κοῦρον Ζήθιοιο ἄνακτος,  
 ὡς καὶ ἐμοὶ δίχα θυμὸς ὀρώρεται ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα.

<sup>128</sup> For the preponderance of Odysseus-based πολυ- epithets, see: Stanford (1950): 108-110.

<sup>129</sup> 20.61-66:

Ἄρτεμι, πότνα θεά, θύγατερ Διός, αἶθε μοι ἤδη  
 ἰὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσι βαλοῦσ' ἐκ θυμὸν ἔλοιο  
 αὐτίκα νῦν, ἢ ἔπειτα μ' ἀναρπάξασα θύελλα  
 οἴχοιτο προφέρουσα κατ' ἡρόεντα κέλευθα,  
 ἐν προχοῆς δὲ βάλαι ἀψορρόου Ὀκεανοῖο. 65  
 ὡς δ' ὅτε Πανδαρέου κόρας ἀνέλονται θύελλαι

right this moment, or otherwise snatch me up in storm-winds  
 and drag me downwards to the dank paths  
 in the outpouring threshold of recurrent Okeanos.  
 Just as the storm-winds took Pandareos' daughters [κούρας].

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Again, during this comparison with Penelope the same epithet for Pandareos' daughters is used: κούρας. In these instances, Klytaimnestra, Aedon, and the other daughters of Pandareos are contrasted with Penelope and therefore necessarily adopt the only part of her epithets which can be made applicable to them: κόρη. However, unlike Penelope, who is always awarded a personal epithet and named in her association with her father, none of these women is named when κόρη is applied to them (24.199; 19.518), perhaps because the reader is expected to know who they are, or perhaps the omission deliberately underplays their names so that the allusion to Penelope is made more apparent. The only character who is named when awarded this epithet is Ariadne, who is Ἀριάδην, κούρην Μίνωος ὀλοόφρονος (11.322). There is no direct reference in this scene to Penelope; the context emphasises the near-marriage of Ariadne to Theseus who 'got no use of her' (οὐδ' ἀπόνητο) before she was killed by Artemis.<sup>130</sup> Both the wasted marital potential of Ariadne, and her death at the hands of Artemis, however, evoke a subtle parallel with Penelope – whose child-bearing years are wasting away in Odysseus' absence and who herself wishes to die at the hands of Artemis.

If all κοῦραι point to Penelope, the question remains why is Penelope so frequently κόρη rather than θυγάτηρ? The most likely answer lies, again, in the motives of the speaker: for the Suitors who call her this wish to emphasise her sexual "availability" as the property,

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<sup>130</sup> The better known version of the myth (that Theseus abandoned her on Naxos where she was then claimed by Dionysos) seems to be later (*Oxford Classical Dictionary* (2015) s.v. 'Ariadne'). Homer seems to be referring here to an earlier version of the story in which Ariadne was already married to Dionysos and killed by Artemis for her betrayal.

once again, of her father, given that her husband is presumed dead. While distinct from θυγάτηρ in the added sense of ‘unmarried’, therefore, κόρη should not be mistaken as ‘virgin’.

### *Anomalies*

While the majority of family epithets draw attention to the relationships between fathers and their children, or husbands and their wives, there are a few exceptional outliers, such as the limited number of papponyms: Orestes is both Agamemnonides and Atreides, for example.<sup>131</sup>

Males, as demonstrated above, are most commonly awarded the direct -ης type epithet, which – despite the number of female patronyms – does not appear to be used for women, who as we have seen are always ‘daughter’ or ‘unmarried daughter’ of x. There is one instance, however, where a female character has been thought to have been awarded a patronymic epithet derived from the name of her father in the -ης style. In a pivotal scene of Book 23, Penelope calls her maidservant ‘Aktoris’ (Ἀκτορίς) which has been translated by Liddell and Scott as ‘daughter of Aktor’.<sup>132</sup> There has been some speculation as to this name or epithet and to whom it refers.<sup>133</sup> One argument is that this is a patronym for Eurynome, Penelope’s maidservant.<sup>134</sup> Eurynome’s paternity is nowhere else noted and so it may of course be possible that Aktor was her father (if this is the same Aktor from *Iliad* 11.785 then Eurynome would be the sister of the Argonaut Menoitios and aunt of Patroklos). However, the *Odyssey* has already set a precedent for providing the lineages

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<sup>131</sup> *Odyssey* 1.30, 40.

<sup>132</sup> LSJ: s.v. Ἀκτορίς.

<sup>133</sup> Stanford (1958): 401.

<sup>134</sup> Scott (1918): 77-79.

of servants in the instances of both Eurykleia (who is ‘daughter of Ops, ›son of Peisenor‹’) and Eumaios son of Ktesios (who is provided with a whole back-story in Book 15). Neither of these servants is awarded a patronym in this style, which would make Eurynome Aktoris particularly unusual. Furthermore, this Aktoris is described as a general handmaid (ἀμφίπολος) of Penelope, whereas Eurynome is given the more official titles ‘maid-of-the-chamber’ (θαλαμηπόλος, 23.293) and ‘housekeeper’ (ταμίη, 23.153). While it is entirely possible that Eurynome could also be described as a handmaid should she be Aktoris, she is specifically denied this title in the two other places where her position is noted.

The alternative possibility is that Aktoris, the handmaid given to Penelope by her father, has subsequently died. Bassett argues that this interpretation is supported by the imperfect use of εἶρυτο in ἡ νῶϊν εἶρυτο θύρας πυκινοῦ θαλάμοιο (‘who *used* to guard the thick doors of our bed-chamber’).<sup>135</sup> The tense of this sentence suggests that Aktoris is either dead, or that she no longer fulfils this duty, which would be a nonsensical description for Eurynome given that she is also a nurse and chambermaid. Furthermore, if Aktoris is indeed dead, then Penelope can be absolutely certain that no other living soul could have told the disguised Odysseus about the secret of their bed, a certainty which she could not otherwise have, given that Eurynome has close and private interactions with Odysseus.<sup>136</sup> If the latter explanation is correct, then Aktoris would merely be the feminine form of Aktor – and not the recipient of the highly improbable patronymic ‘daughter of Aktor’ – which would be better in keeping with the distribution of patronymics among female characters.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Bassett (1919): 1-3.

<sup>136</sup> 20.4; 23.154.

<sup>137</sup> Other females in the Odyssey with –ίς name endings include: Artemis, Charybdis, Chloris, Themis, and Thetis.

A more definite anomaly is the presence of matronymics in the *Odyssey*.<sup>138</sup> Given the relative status of female family members as indicated by their epithets (i.e. as subordinate to their grandfathers, fathers, husbands, and brothers) as well as the general purpose of patronyms to associate descendants with illustrious ancestors, it seems unlikely that any child should wish to be identified through their maternal line. Yet there are two particular matronymics in the *Odyssey*: son of Gaia (Γαίηιον υἰόν) and son of Maia (Μαϊάδος υἱεῖ), applied to Tityos and Hermes respectively, but both of these males are sons of divinities and so are also divine in their own right. The giant Tityos is described first by Alkinoos as the 'son of Gaia' (7.324) and then by Odysseus when he recounts his visit to the underworld in Alkinoos' palace where he adds the epithet ἐρικυδής to his description (11.576). Odysseus therefore 'adopts' the epithet from Alkinoos and throws in a little embellishment given his narratorial role. As to why Tityos should be identified as the son of Gaia when he is also (according to *scholia*) the son of Zeus is unclear.<sup>139</sup> One explanation might be that Gaia supersedes Zeus in generational authority, given that she is a primordial divinity and mother of Titans and so this is one instance where the female ancestor is more noteworthy than the male. Alternatively, the preponderance of characters which could be described as 'son of Zeus' rather negates any specificity in the descriptor and in order to be explicit, therefore, Odysseus has chosen to identify Tityos through his mother.

The same argument cannot be made for Hermes, the son of Maia (14.436), given that she is merely an Oread daughter of the Titan Atlas and that he is also the son of Zeus

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<sup>138</sup> Higbie (1995): 122.

<sup>139</sup> *Scholia Argonautica* 1.761.

(and elsewhere awarded an epithet to that effect 8.335).<sup>140</sup> Context provides a possible explanation. While this epithet is used by the narrator in Book 14, it occurs during the focalization of Eumaios, where he ‘sets aside [the portions] with a prayer for the nymphs, and Hermes, son of Maia’.<sup>141</sup> Commentators have nothing to say of this remarkable occurrence, other than stating that there was a local cult to the nymphs on Ithaka (13.104) and that Hermes was a special patron of herdsmen which is why both are evoked in this bucolic meal type-scene.<sup>142</sup> The same commentators, however, are swift to point out Homer’s error that, following this scene, Odysseus addresses Eumaios without having learnt his name (14.440-441). It is hard to avoid the association between Εὐ- μαιος and Μαιά given both the proximity and significance, of the names in this context. Demont has proposed that the etymological root of Eumaios’ name is μαιά (the same appellative used of the nurse Eurykleia).<sup>143</sup> He argues that – given this is the only time this particular epithet appears – Eumaios’ invocation to Hermes ‘son of Maia’ is a deliberate pun on his own name, which would both explain and pre-empt Odysseus’ use of the name ‘Eumaios’.<sup>144</sup> The only other explanation for Odysseus’ knowledge of this name (in his guise as the stranger) relies on extra-textual assumption (e.g. that he overheard it from another swineherd), an assumption which de Jong believes ‘should not bother the narratees’.<sup>145</sup> Demont’s argument would supersede the more popular etymological proposal: from the root μαιόμαι (‘to seek’), or its alternative: a shortened form of εὐμενής (‘gracious’) which

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<sup>140</sup> Hesiod *Theogony* 938.

<sup>141</sup> 14.436: τὴν μὲν ἴαν νύμφησι καὶ Ἑρμῇ, Μαιάδος υἱεῖ, θῆκεν ἐπευξάμενος.

<sup>142</sup> Stanford (1958): 233, and de Jong (2001): 357-358.

<sup>143</sup> Demont (2003): 381-385. Μάϊος is a recorded male variant of this name, *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*, s.v. ‘Μάϊος’.

<sup>144</sup> Demont (2003): 383.

<sup>145</sup> Stanford (1958): 233; de Jong (2001): 358.

appears in Homer only once as εὐμενέτης.<sup>146</sup> Kanavou maintains – in support of the former – that there is also a proximal use of μαίεσθαι and Eumaios (14.356, 360), which would provide a name that ‘seem[s] more relevant to Eumaios’ main function, which is *not* that of a father figure’.<sup>147</sup> From the root μαίομαι, and the prefix εὐ-, Kanavou proposes a name which means something like ‘he who sets out for something with good intentions’ which to her mind better characterises Eumaios as a ‘servant determined to help his master’.<sup>148</sup> Arguably a characterisation of Eumaios built through a close study of his epithets, his relationship to his family, and his periphrastic denomination ἄττα, all suggest that his primary role is precisely as an adoptive or pseudo- father, whose loyalty to his master is most truly demonstrated through his relationship with that master’s son. Given the propensity of Odysseus and the *Odyssey* itself to play with names, as well as the well-placed peculiarity of the matronym ‘son of Maia’, it seems most likely that Eumaios’ name is indeed a paronomasia of εὐ- μαία (‘good mother’) as originally proposed by Demont, rather than the more forced version of ‘good seeker’ proposed by Kanavou and others.

Matronyms may be exceedingly uncommon but these two instances support the argument that patronyms in general serve to associate a character with a more prestigious relation. The only reason Gaia and Maia can be invoked is because they are divinities. Furthermore, invoking these female divinities is helpfully specific, whereas Zeus had a lot of sons and so the epithet ‘son of Zeus’ alone is not much use at all. While further exploration is required, the same appears to be true of the *Iliad*, where Akhilleus is awarded the matronym ‘son of Thetis’, a title which – due to its divinity – clearly has

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<sup>146</sup> *Odyssey* 6.185. For the former: Peradotto (1990): 107; von Kamptz (1982): 72; Beekes (2010): s.v. μαίομαι. Chantaine disagrees: Chantaine (1968): s.v. μαίομαι. For the latter: Heubeck & Hoekstra (1990): 196.

<sup>147</sup> Kanavou (2015): 129-130 (my emphasis).

<sup>148</sup> Kanavou (2015): 129-130.

more significance than his standard, mortal patronym.<sup>149</sup> Yet a female ancestor, however divine, does not always match up to male authority, as Nestor compares Akhilleus' parenthood with Agamemnon's forces in *Iliad* One and concludes that it Akhilleus who must concede: 'you are a stronger fighter, and borne of a goddess mother, yet he is mightier for he rules over more'.<sup>150</sup>

Despite the relative status of women in Homer, there is certainly a sense that sons can bear the qualities of their mothers and that lineage from a female can convey its own authority. While this is not borne out through their epithets, this idea does extend to mortals. Athena, for example, remarks that Telemakhos cannot remain anonymous because he was born to Penelope: 'The gods have not appointed you a nameless birth, since Penelope bore such a son as you'.<sup>151</sup> It is more common, however, for a mother to play a role in the criticism of heroes: 'Odysseus' mother bore him to an evil fate', 'Nausikaa did your mother bear you to be careless?', and 'your lady mother did not bear you to be a user of bows and arrows'.<sup>152</sup>

There is, finally, an entirely unique *paedonym* in Homer's *Odyssey* – and a maternal one to boot – Eumaios refers to Penelope as 'the mother of Telemakhos' (μήτηρ Τηλεμάχοιο, 17.554).<sup>153</sup> This highly unusual family epithet does follow the same rules as those discussed in this chapter as it associates a woman with named male relative. Eumaios does not know Ikarios – or any other of Penelope's kin – and so cannot refer to her as 'daughter of Ikarios' (alternatively he does not wish to emphasise her availability to the

<sup>149</sup> Higbie (1995): 51, 6 n.13.

<sup>150</sup> 1.280-281: εἰ δὲ σὺ καρτερός ἐσσι θεὰ δέ σε γείνατο μήτηρ, ἀλλ' ὃ γε φέρτερός ἐστιν ἐπεὶ πλεόνησσι ἀνάσσει.

<sup>151</sup> 1.222-223: οὐ μὲν τοι γενεήν γε θεοὶ νώνυμον ὀπίσσω, θήκαν, ἐπεὶ σέ γε τοῖον ἐγείνατο Πηνελόπεια.

<sup>152</sup> *Odyssey* 3.95, 4.325; 6.25; 21.172-173 (see also: *Iliad*. 13.777).

<sup>153</sup> Odysseus calls himself 'father of Telemakhos' in *Iliad* 2.260.



Suitors by referring to her in this manner). Nor can he refer to her as ‘wife of Odysseus’ (as Odysseus-the-beggar does) as Eumaios believes Odysseus to be dead, making this belief clear in the avoidance of his absent master’s name.<sup>154</sup> Telemakhos, therefore, is the only male relative to whom Eumaios knows Penelope to be related, and – by placing the power of her autonomy on him, rather than her distant father – Eumaios is indicating the central role Telemakhos plays in the governance of his household. It is not up to Ikaros to (re)give her away, as the Suitors would hope, it is up to her son Telemakhos – the man of the household – to choose whether or not his mother should remarry. Eumaios’ emphasis on the power Telemakhos has in the household in turn reiterates the Suitors’ own reluctance to acknowledge the same as manifest in their use of ‘daughter of Ikaros’. ‘Mother of Telemakhos’ is therefore a deft and subtle example of character focalization which occurs at the appropriate moment of Odysseus-the-beggar’s introduction to the queen of Ithaka. In one move Eumaios introduces the vagrant to the family, but leaves the guest clear on who is actually in charge of the household – Telemakhos.<sup>155</sup>

### *Divine Heritage*

The final type of family epithet are those which indicate lineage from a divinity. These epithets feature most in examples of what scholars have called “generic” epithets. The most recurrent of these in both use and application is δῖος which is used to describe 21 characters (12 males and nine females), and appears 128 times in the *Odyssey*. The word is derived from Ζεύς/ Δῖος and therefore has a primary sense of ‘like Zeus (in

<sup>154</sup> See: **Chapter Six: Οὐτιν δέ με φίλοι κικλήσκουσι.**

<sup>155</sup> It contrasts therefore with Athena’s introduction of Odysseus to Arete – who has the deciding say on the treatment of guests on Phaiakia (7.75-77). See also: de Jong (2001): 434. Note that the matronym also recalls Athena’s assertion that Telemakhos would be famed for being the son of Penelope in *Odyssey* 1.222-223, and recalls Odysseus’ unique claim to be ‘father of Telemakhos’ in *Iliad* 2.260 (Τηλεμάχοιο πατήρ εἶην).

appearance, attributes, or status)'.<sup>156</sup> For the purposes of this study δῖος has been translated as 'divine' in order to convey the general sense of "like the gods in quality or appearance".<sup>157</sup> The popularity of this epithet in the epics has led to it being dubbed "generic" or "meaningless". However, there are clear rules to its distribution. The feminine instances (δῖα), for example, are only ever awarded to those of divine lineage.

**Fig.4.9: Lineage of δῖα characters:**

CHARACTER	PARENTS / ANCESTORS	REFERENCE
Aphrodite	Zeus and Dione	<i>Iliad</i> 5.370; 20.105; Cyrino (2010): s.v. 'Aphrodite'.
Athena	Zeus	<i>Iliad</i> 5.880; Hesiod <i>Theogony</i> 885-900, 929.
Charybdis	Poseidon and Gaia	<i>Scholia on Odyssey</i> 12.104.
Eos	Helios and Theia	Hesiod <i>Theogony</i> 371-374.
Kalypso	Atlas	<i>Odyssey</i> 1.52.
Klytaimnestra	Descendant of Lakedaímōn, son of Zeus	Apollodorus <i>Library</i> 3.10.3.
Neaira	Oceanos and Tethys	As a sea-nymph and wife of Helios, it is likely that Neaira has divine lineage: <i>Odyssey</i> 12.133.

The pattern of this distribution suggests that the same might also be true for δῖος:<sup>158</sup>

**Fig.4.10: Lineage of δῖος characters:**

CHARACTER	PARENTS / ANCESTORS	REFERENCE
Agamemnon	Desc. Tanatalos, son of Zeus and Plouto	Pausanias <i>Descriptions of Greece</i> 2.22.3.
Ekephron	Desc. Neleus, son of Poseidon	<i>Odyssey</i> 11.245-255
Memnon	Eos and Tithonos	Hesiod <i>Theogony</i> 984; <i>Hymn to Aphrodite</i> 215
Mentor	Desc. Neleus, son of Poseidon	<i>Odyssey</i> 22.235, and assuming he is son of the same Alkimos from <i>Scholia to Iliad</i> 11.692.
Odysseus	Desc. Arkeisios, son of Zeus	<i>Odyssey</i> 4.755; 24.270; Eustathius on <i>Odyssey</i> 16.118.
Orestes	Desc. Tantalos, son of Zeus	<i>Odyssey</i> 1.30; Pausanias <i>Descriptions of Greece</i> 2.22.3.

The only apparent exceptions to this rule are the swineherds (Eumaios and Philoitios) and the bards (Demodokos and Phemios) none of whom receive genealogies in the text,

<sup>156</sup> The nominative of the regular second declension masculine δῖος is identical to the genitive of Ζεύς/ Δῖος, suggesting that to be δῖος is to be godly (because) of Zeus. See: Heubeck *et al.* (1988): 270; Chantraine (1968-80): s.v. 'δῖος'.

<sup>157</sup> The other, popular, translation 'heavenly' has been dismissed as it would refer more to the realm of the gods, οὐρανός, rather than the gods themselves.

<sup>158</sup> My thanks to Georgia Mystrioti for bringing this suggestion to my attention, also; Lowenstam (1993): 51-52.

except Eumaios who was descended from royalty (and therefore, quite possibly, divinity).<sup>159</sup> However, Eumaios and Philoitios are adopted by Odysseus to be brothers of Telemakhos, and so his divine lineage would extend to them by proxy.<sup>160</sup> Notably, Eumaios and Philoitios are only called 'divine' following the verbal contract of their adoption by Odysseus.<sup>161</sup> The bards, on the other hand, are both under the patronage of the Muses, and so might be considered Zeus-like in their singing, or in their benefaction. Finally, the regional application of δῖος to the 'Akhaians' and the 'Pelasgians' could refer to their relative mythical patriarchs.<sup>162</sup>

The argument for δῖος as an epithet indicative of divine ancestry is not conclusive. Not all of these genealogies can be found in Homer and might be later additions created because of the presence of the epithet in Homer rather than the reason for its presence. However, it is also possible that audience members were aware of the relevant myths or stories surrounding these characters and would therefore consider the applications of δῖος in Homer to be accurate. To date, a corroborative examination of δῖος epithets has not been extended to the *Iliad*.<sup>163</sup> Nevertheless, for the *Odyssey*, δῖος could be considered an alternative for διογενής ('descendant of Zeus/a god') where the latter is used to convey lineage and the former used more broadly to convey the inheritance of 'god-like' qualities. Literally meaning 'descendent of the line of Zeus', διογενής is also used to indicate a hero's divine lineage. While it is used for a variety of heroes in the *Iliad*, διογενής is used

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<sup>159</sup> *Odyssey* 15.413-414; Phemios' patronym Τερτιάδης is more a sobriquet than a lineage, meaning 'son of the giver of delight', Russo *et al.* (1992): 278.

<sup>160</sup> *Odyssey* 21.118-220.

<sup>161</sup> *Odyssey* 21.234, 240. This would not account for the Narrator's use of δῖον ὑφορβόν.

<sup>162</sup> The *Iliad* refers to Pelasgian Zeus, 16.233-235. Hesiod records Akhaios as the descendant of Prometheus, via Hellen: *Ehoiai* fragment fr. 10a.20-4 '.

<sup>163</sup> It is my intention to follow up this research with a study of Iliadic epithets, but Lowenstam reaches the same conclusion: Lowenstam (1993): 51.

exclusively of Odysseus in the *Odyssey* where it appears 14 times with the triple epithet phrase *διογενές, Λαερτιάδη, πολυμήχαν'*, *Ἄδυσσεῦ* when characters are speaking to, or about, Odysseus. Telemakhos and Eurykleia use a simplified version of the extended phrase *διογενής Ἄδυσσεύς* in their exchange (2.351, 365).<sup>164</sup> The narrator also uses this simplified version, or adds it to other epithets: *πτολίπορθος* (8.3), and *πολύμητις* (18.312). It is first used by the narrator when he is drawing a parallel between the rising of the sun at Dawn and the awakening of the heroes Alkinoos and Odysseus:<sup>165</sup>

When early-born Dawn with the rosy-fingers shone forth 1  
Alkinoos, full of strength, arose from his bed  
as did Zeus-born Odysseus, the city-sacker.

Within this context it would not be sufficient to identify Odysseus by an epithet as simple as *πτολίπορθος* as it would fail to raise him to a status akin to Alkinoos and Eos. Eos is a divinity in her own right, and Alkinoos is both *διοτρεφής* ('fostered by Zeus'), and king of a "quasi-divine" people who are repeatedly described as being close to the gods in origin (*ἀγχίθεοι γεγάασιν*).<sup>166</sup> Therefore the choice of the epithet *διογενής* is appropriate to this context: first of all, because it serves to elevate Odysseus to the same status as his host (who is 'fostered by Zeus') and secondly, by exaggerating the divine status of both mortals, the metaphor between the heroes and the rising dawn is better served.

<sup>164</sup> Odysseus' companions use it once in the vocative in place of his name (10.443), suggesting that the fundamental aspect of their respect for him is based in his divine lineage.

<sup>165</sup> 8.1-3:

ἧμος δ' ἠριγένεια φάνη ῥοδοδάκτυλος Ἥως, 1  
ᾤρνυτ' ἄρ' ἐξ εὐνῆς ἱερὸν μένος Ἀλκινόοιο,  
ἄν δ' ἄρα διογενής ᾤρτο πτολίπορθος Ἄδυσσεύς.

<sup>166</sup> *Odyssey* 7.49; 5.35; 8.35. Segal (1994): 22.

The same association between Odysseus and the rising dawn is continued in the unique expression διογενῆς, πολύμητις, Ὀδυσσεύς (18.312). Within this context Odysseus uses his πολύμητις speech to manipulate the housemaids into letting him light the household braziers as the suitors stay up waiting for the dawn. In this context, the presence of διογενῆς reminds the reader that Odysseus is more than a beggar despite the baseness of his status (lighting torches as if he were a slave) and further repeats the association between dawn and Odysseus which is first implied at 8.3.<sup>167</sup>

‘Fostered by Zeus’ (διοτρεφής) is the last of these divine lineage epithets used in the *Odyssey*. It is sometimes translated as ‘beloved’ or ‘cherished’ by Zeus, given that τρέφω can be taken to mean ‘maintained’.<sup>168</sup> However, this is a later interpretation which is not found in Homer where it is instead used specifically to refer to the rearing of children, or animals.<sup>169</sup> In the *Odyssey* the verb also describes the advances of Kalypso.<sup>170</sup> It therefore lends itself to a translation something like ‘tended by’ or even ‘raised’ (if we assume the English sense of “raising up” in status from the perspective of Kalypso). Of heroes in the *Odyssey*, it is primarily applied to Menelaos (who receives it as part of his triple epithet title Ἀτρείδῃ, Μενέλαε, διοτρεφές, ὄρχαμε λαῶν) though it is also applied to Odysseus, Peisistratos, the suitor Agelaos, and Agamemnon (in the underworld). Of these, it is only Menelaos who is so cherished by Zeus (through his marriage to Helen) that he will visit the Elysian Fields. Certainly Odysseus, Menelaos, and Agamemnon, as heroes who have been wronged in the domestic/guest setting, should have in common the patronage of Zeus as God of Guests and Peisistratos is only awarded it by

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<sup>167</sup> He is elsewhere radiant like the sun (19.235), see also: **Chapter Two: Peers**.

<sup>168</sup> LSJ: s.v. τρέφω.

<sup>169</sup> Children: *Iliad* 8.283; 16.191; *Odyssey* 2.131; 19.35. Animals: *Iliad* 2.766; 22.69; *Odyssey* 14.22.

<sup>170</sup> 5.135; 7.256.

Telemakhos who – as we have seen – appears to be wishing to compliment his new friend (Chapter Two: Guests and Hosts). A similar explanation would frame Melanthios' application of it to Agelaos in Book 22 as further evidence of his obsequious flattery. Perhaps a broader examination of its applications in the *Iliad* is required to draw firmer conclusions.

## Conclusion

While the blood ties in families make their relationships a little more straightforward than public ones, epithets as markers for familial status can convey a great depth of information regarding the role(s) people play within their family as well as the role a family member can play in the wider society. Both women and men receive a certain amount of status which is inherited from their ancestors, but women are more likely to receive epithets referring to their extended ancestry in order to reaffirm the κλέος of their lineage. Men can otherwise earn epithets in their own right – for their achievements and character – but women are limited in this form of glory, unless they are beautiful. Within family groups, the poet can use similar titles to indicate inherited qualities (such as Odysseus' clever relations). More striking is that these characteristics are not only inherited through bloodlines but also through marriage – thereby highlighting the *homophrosune* two people can share (namely, Odysseus and Penelope).

Epithets are intrinsically social markers and so they have no place in family dialogue where, instead, intimate appellatives are used to indicate the relationships between children and their parents, or even spouses. The intimacy of these titles is often accentuated in appropriate contexts with the addition of the adjective φίλος. They can also be applied to characters outside of the family bloodline in order to emphasise

significant relationships with surrogate parents and/or wet-nurses. Though these rules do not directly apply to epithets, their presence as epithet substitutes in private contexts, as well as the sorts of rules they follow, collectively convey both the significance of forms of address in Homer and their appropriateness to particular contexts. In all forms of dialogue, therefore, epithets have a part to play in conveying the status and relationships of characters and are therefore fundamental to the appropriate understanding of the highly complex world of Homeric society.

## CHAPTER FIVE: Narratorial Epithet Selection: Speaking for the Unspoken

Chloris bore strong Pero, that marvel among mortals,  
who was wooed by all the neighbours.  
~ *Odyssey* 11.287-288

### Introduction

The previous chapters concerning character dialogue have demonstrated that epithets and appellatives are used by characters in different contexts in order to communicate their perceptions of status in Homeric society. The great heroes will greet each other with titles of similar length, social inferiors will give and receive titles reflective of their position, and families replace official titles with affectionate nouns. But does the narrator find himself bound by these same protocols? As a speaker outside of his social construction, unbound by the confines of character-language, the narrator is free from those strictures which govern his characters' social proprieties.<sup>1</sup> One of the ways in which the narrator indicates his external position most frequently is by the use of disguised characters' real names. He is also meticulous, for example, in distinguishing between the focalization of characters when they are disguised, ensuring that Peisistratos sees Athena/Mentor as a man (hence *πρωτέρω*) while she thinks of herself as a woman (*πρωτέρη*).<sup>2</sup> The narrator's freedom from his characters' social confines allows him to manipulate the rules of epithets in order to convey important information about his characters to his audience. He can indicate disapproval, for instance, by withholding epithets or by using insults where more

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<sup>1</sup> On character-language, see: de Jong (2001): xii.

<sup>2</sup> *Odyssey* 3.52, see: de Jong (2001): 21.



polite characters would not.<sup>3</sup> Thus a new form of dialogue between narrator and audience arises, in which the rules of epithet distribution can be manipulated in order to direct 'our beliefs, our interests, and our sympathies'.<sup>4</sup>

This chapter will demonstrate that the narrator uses extended (particularly triple) epithets for reasons entirely different from his characters. Instead of indicating levels of pre-existing status, the narrator uses these longer epithet phrases to award status to disenfranchised and under-represented characters – such as women and servants – who are otherwise unable to receive indicators of status by speaking characters. It would be inappropriate for a male aristocrat to award a woman a triple epithet title, as to do so would place her on a par with himself and his peers, but the narrator can do so with no fear of social rebuke. Chapter Three demonstrated that even the gods are loath to acknowledge the powers of their female counterparts, let alone award them any kind of extended title. Similarly Chapter Four revealed that if women are to receive epithets, they are almost always physically descriptive or pertain to their status as property of her male relations. How then might women be revealed to be superior to one another, or even – as in Penelope's case – superior to some men? The answer lies in the words of the narrator.

The same pattern can be found in the allocation of epithets to servants. Some servants, such as Eumaios and Philoitios, are nobler than the men they serve, while others, such as the nannies Eurykleia and Eurymedousa, have a measure of authority which places

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<sup>3</sup> For example in his use of ὕβριν ἔχοντες at 4.627: de Jong (2001): 114-115. For more on how the narrator comments on events see: Block (1982): 7-22.

<sup>4</sup> Booth (1961): 4. The difference between narratorial and speaking character epithet selection was noticed by Austin, who correctly recognised that some epithets used by the narrator are never used by speaking characters (such as ἱερὴ ἴς Telemakhos): (1982): 59-61.

them in some ways above their aristocratic charges. But how might the status of these superior servants be expressed? It cannot be spoken by their masters, for to do so would place the servants on an equal social footing. Again, the narrator steps in to convey the qualities of loyal servants which the characters are not permitted to identify. This chapter will therefore demonstrate that the narrator's selection of extended epithets is always appropriate; a conclusion which further reinforces the argument that the rules of epithet use are dependent upon their user.

#### Narratorial Distribution of Triple Epithets

Throughout the *Odyssey* the narrator uses epithets nearly twice as much as speaking characters.<sup>5</sup> Yet speaking characters are two times more likely to use triple epithets than the narrator (see Figs. 5.1 and 5.2).<sup>6</sup> Given that it is the narrator's job to describe characters and that epithets – at their core – either are, or function as, descriptors, we might expect the narrator to be as liberal with his extended epithets as he is with others. What, then, might be the reasons for the narrator's selection and distribution of extended epithets?

**Fig.5.1: Distribution of Triple Epithets Awarded by the Narrator(s)**

TRIPLE EPITHETS (MEN)		TRIPLE EPITHETS (GODS)		TRIPLE EPITHETS (WOMEN)	
NAME	#	NAME	#	NAME	#
Demodokos	3	Circe	3	Eurymedousa	1
Amphimedon	1	Zeus	1	Pero	1
Moulios	1	Ino	1	-	-
Odysseus	1	Kalypso	1	-	-
Polites	1	-	-	-	-
Tiresias	1	-	-	-	-

<sup>5</sup> Narrator 63% (approx. 1527) of total epithets awarded. See also, Austin (1987): 59-61.

<sup>6</sup> Data for the narrator includes Odysseus' narration from 9.39-11.332 and 11.385-12.450, Menelaos' narration (4.351-586), and Demodokos' songs in Book Eight.

**Fig.5.2: Distribution of Triple Epithets Awarded by Speaking Characters**

TRIPLE EPITHETS (MEN)		TRIPLE EPITHETS (GODS)		TRIPLE EPITHETS (WOMEN)	
NAME	#	NAME	#	NAME	#
Odysseus	18	Zeus	3	-	
Menelaos	5	Athena	1	-	
Agamemnon	2	Hermes	1	-	
Akhilleus	1	-		-	
Antilokhos	1	-		-	

A brief survey of these tables indicates that the narrator offers triple epithets to an entirely different range of people than his speaking characters. The most obvious disparity is that the majority of characters in receipt of triple epithet titles from the narrator are servants, women and goddesses (76%) compared with a rather large majority of aristocratic males and male divinities who receive epithets from speaking characters (the exception to this rule is Athena, who is at least a divinity, and who is awarded this title in a pseudo-supplicatory context).<sup>7</sup> The trend of narratorial epithet distribution therefore goes against that established in previous chapters where the typical receipts of extended titles are aristocrats and divinities. Yet the narrator almost exclusively awards his triple epithets to under-represented characters.

Of the twelve characters who receive these titles from the narrator only three are high-status males: Zeus, Odysseus, and Amphimedon, but even these instances do not follow the trends found in previous chapters. The triple title awarded to Zeus in Book 13 has previously been discussed in Chapter Three: Gods amongst Themselves and appears contextually to foreshadow the description of κελαινεφής Zeus which is relevant to that

<sup>7</sup> For more on this See: **Chapter Three: Gods and Mortals.**

particular episode.<sup>8</sup> The triple epithet which the narrator awards Odysseus in Book 22 is actually a focalization of his servants Eumaios and Philoitios and thus is more representative of the manner in which these characters typically identify their master than a direct description by the narrator:<sup>9</sup>

So they rushed at him, seized him, and dragged him  
by the hair, inside they threw him to the ground, grieving in his heart,  
they twisted his feet and hands behind him and  
bound them fast with tormenting rope, as they had been urged to 190  
by the **son of Laertes, much-enduring, divine Odysseus.**

The passage in question matches the typical title these same characters give Odysseus elsewhere, as per this example from earlier in the Book:<sup>10</sup>

but the divine swineherd saw him [Melanthios]  
and quickly called to Odysseus who was close by;  
**'Zeus-sprung, Laertes' son, much-skilled Odysseus,**  
there is that destructive man, the one we suspected, 165  
going into the chamber...'

<sup>8</sup> The extended epithet in question is: Ζηνί, κελαινεφέϊ, Κρονίδη, ὃς πᾶσιν ἀνάσσει (13.25).

<sup>9</sup> 22.187-191:

τὼ δ' ἄρ' ἐπαΐξανθ' ἐλέτην ἔρυσάν τε μιν εἴσω  
κουρίξ, ἐν δαπέδῳ δὲ χαμαὶ βάλλον ἀχνύμενον κῆρ,  
σὺν δὲ πόδας χεῖράς τε δέον θυμαλγέϊ δεσμῶ  
εὔ μάλ' ἀποστρέψαντε διαμπερές, ὡς ἐκέλευσεν 190  
υἱὸς Λαέρταο, πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς·

<sup>10</sup> 22.162-166:

... νόησε δὲ δῖος ὑφορβός,  
αἴψα δ' Ὀδυσσῆα προσεφώνεεν ἐγγὺς ἔοντα·  
διογενὲς Λαερτιάδη, πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ,  
κεῖνος δ' αὖτ' αἴδηλος ἀνὴρ, ὃν ὀϊόμεθ' αὐτοί,  
ἔρχεται ἐς θάλαμον 165

The only difference between these titles is that the epithets change from the phrase most commonly used by speaking characters ('Zeus-sprung, Laertes' son, much-skilled Odysseus') to epithets more frequently used by the narrator (including 'much-enduring' and 'divine'). Given that the epithet appears during the focalization of Eumaios and Philoitios, it is entirely appropriate that they would refer to Odysseus with a full set of titles, but the narrator simultaneously ensures that he does not adopt titles reserved for his speaking characters.

Finally, Amphimedon – while technically an aristocratic male – is primarily a Suitor, and therefore an antagonistic character unworthy of extended epithets (collectively, the Suitors receive only 2.5% of the spoken double epithets, and these are almost all insults). The narrator must therefore have a specific reason for choosing to describe the otherwise maligned Suitor as 'beloved, child of Melaneos, highly renowned, Amphimedon' in Book 24. This reason will be discussed in the following section.

**Fig.5.3: List of Double Epithets Awarded by the Narrator**

ODYSSEUS' FAMILY MEMBERS		HEROES (AND FAMILIES)		PHAIAKIANS AND ITHAKANS	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Odysseus	Penelope	Neleus	Epikaste	Ekhenos	Nausikaa
Telemakhos	Iphthime	Nestor	Polykaste	Laodomas	Maids
Eumaios	Eurykleia	Thrasymedes	Helen	Euryalos	
		Peisistratos	Hermione	Demodokos	
		Menelaos		Phaiakians	
		Herakles		Aigyptos	
		Iphitos		Noemon	
		Orestes		Halitherses	
		Akhilleus		Phemios	

## Suitors

The pattern of triple epithets in Figures 5.1 and 5.2 indicate that triple epithets are typically awarded to sympathetic characters and not antagonistic ones. The same is largely true of the distribution of double epithets which the narrator in particular almost exclusively awards to characters who act in support of the protagonist (Fig.5.3).<sup>11</sup>

It should be concluded, therefore, that – as per his distribution of triple epithets – the narrator also uses double epithets to indicate his favouritism toward certain characters in the text. Support for this hypothesis can be found in the case of Iphitos and Herakles. The opening of Book 21 records, at not inconsiderable length, the transmission of Odysseus' bow from the hands of Eurytos, through Iphitos, to Odysseus and tells the tale of how Iphitos was killed by Herakles.<sup>12</sup> During this passage Herakles is once referred to by the double epithet 'strong-hearted, son of Zeus' (Διὸς υἱὸν, καρτερόθυμον, 21.25), and Iphitos is twice referred to as 'Eurytos' son, like the undying gods' (Εὐρυτίδης, ἐπιείκελος ἀθάνατοισι, 21.14, 37) and yet the two characters are antagonistic to one another (Herakles stole the horses and then murdered Iphitos) so why should they be praised equally? Herakles, in particular, is painted in a very negative light: he is a guest-killer, no less, who is without respect for the gods (οὐδὲ θεῶν ὄπιν ἠδέσασα', 21.28). So why should the narrator award him the same kind of epithet as innocent Iphitos, who is described as a good friend (ξείνοιο φίλοιο) of Odysseus (21.41)? The answer here would be that, whatever grounds Iphitos and Herakles had for their mutual enmity, neither of them

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<sup>11</sup> The exception to this rule is Amphinomos, see below. The narrator and Telemakhos insist that Phemios was pressed into service by the Suitors (22.331, 356).

<sup>12</sup> 21.10-41.

shared that antagonism with Odysseus – Herakles is clearly presented as sympathetic to Odysseus at the end of the First Nekyia – and so the narrator awards them both double epithets with regard to their position as “supporters of Odysseus”.<sup>13</sup>

**Fig.5.4: Epithets of the Suitors**

NAME	EPITHETS USED BY NARRATOR	EPITHETS USED BY SPEAKING CHARACTERS
Antinoos	‘Son of Eupheithes’ (x10) ‘Full of Strength’ (x1)	‘Bringer of Violence’ (x1) ‘Deviser of Evil’ (x1) ‘Godlike’ (θεοειδής) (x1)
Eurymakhos	‘Child of Polybos’ (x2) ‘Godlike’ (θεοειδής) (x2)	‘Splendid’ (x1)
Amphimedon	‘Melaneos’ child (x1) Highly renowned’ (x1) ‘Beloved’ (x1)	-
Amphinomos	‘Son of Nisos’ (x2) ‘Radiant’ (x2) ‘Commander of the people’ (x1)	-
Agelaos	‘Damastor’s son’ (x3)	‘Fostered by Zeus’ (x1)
Leokritos	‘Euenor’s son’ (x2)	-
Leodes	‘Son of Oinops’ (x1)	-
Peisandros	‘Polyktor’s son’ (x1)	-
Ktesippus	-	‘Lover of mockery’ (x1) ‘Polytherses’ son’ (x1)
Demoptolemos	-	-
Elatos	-	-
Euryades	-	-
Eurydamas	-	-
Eupheithes	-	-
Eurynomos	-	-
TOTAL	30	7

The only two exceptions to this narratorial bias are the two Suitors: Amphimedon and Amphinomos. Statistically speaking, the Suitors receive very few epithets in the *Odyssey* despite being both numerous in number and appearing in over 45% of the text (see Fig. 5.4). The narrator awards 81% of these epithets since “good” speaking characters are

<sup>13</sup> 11.617-626.

unlikely to compliment the horde of Suitors. Those epithets which speaking characters do use therefore are either negative ('bringer of violence, deviser of evil', 16.418 and 'Polytherses' son, lover of mockery', 22.287), or used in an ironic sense ('splendid son' 15.519 and 'godlike Antinoos' 21.277). Otherwise they are spoken by their supporters.

The remaining epithets used by the narrator for the Suitors are largely patronyms (73%) used to introduce speech. The formulaic placement of these epithets suggests that, at least in their application to the Suitors, the narrator uses these markers of lineage as the basest form of identification he possibly can. As demonstrated in Chapter Four patronyms tend to act more like surnames (Johnson, Thomson etc.) and so are not descriptive of the actual qualities of their bearer. They are the simplest descriptors that the narrator can use to identify a character without complimenting them directly; they are, after all, sons of noblemen. The only exceptions to this rule are the two single epithets: Antinoos' 'full of strength' (ἰερόν μένος) and Eurymakhos' 'godlike' (θεοειδής). But both of these epithets are physical descriptors and so do not highlight the sorts of qualities other males are identified by, such as divine lineage, feats of accomplishment, civic status, or martial skill. Indeed, in the *Odyssey* where intelligence is favoured over physical beauty or strength, the category of physically descriptive adjectives belongs more to women than it does men and so these epithets suit the characterisation of the Suitors as young, vain, and stupid.<sup>14</sup> This leaves only the triple epithet used by the narrator for Amphimedon and the double epithet awarded to Amphinomos as exceptions to the rule. These instances therefore require closer examination.

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<sup>14</sup> On their names, see: **Chapter Four: Grouping Names**, and on the dichotomy of age and beauty, see: **Chapter Two: Elders**.



*Amphimedon*

The context in which Amphimedon receives his triple epithet φίλον παῖδα Μελανῆος, ἀγακλυτὸν Ἄμφιμέδοντα as ever, is highly informative.<sup>15</sup> First of all, and most critically, it is used to describe him only when he is deceased. Distribution of extended epithet titles in the First and Second Nekyia indicate that deceased heroes are more likely to both give and receive triple epithets due to a posthumous increase in their status.<sup>16</sup> This particular triple epithet occurs during the dialogue between the ghosts of Amphimedon, Akhilleus, and Agamemnon (24.24-202). While this exchange would have provided one of the best examples of triple epithet exchange during dialogue it has been included in this chapter so as to demonstrate how the narrator manipulates epithet combinations outside of, and in comparison with, standard dialogue in order to achieve different goals.

Akhilleus is the first to speak. He addresses Agamemnon simply as the ‘Son of Atreus’ (Ἀτρείδης, 24.24). The brevity of his choice of titles (compared with, for example, Odysseus’ greetings in Book 11) indicates that Akhilleus still feels disdain for the king of Mykene, who he perceives to be of lesser status. The rudeness of this address informs the rest of his speech, colouring his description of Agamemnon’s ‘pitiful’ (οἴκτιστος, 24.34) death with derision. Indeed, through a proper appreciation of the distribution of epithets in this scene, one can read the entirety of Akhilleus’ speech – as triggered by the initial, dishonourable, single title – with the appropriate level of derision: ‘would that you had faced your destiny and death in the country of Troy while you were at the joyous height of your honour as lord [of us all]’ he says, “but instead you were killed by a woman” he

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<sup>15</sup> 24.103.

<sup>16</sup> See the exchanges between Odysseus and his Iliadic peers in **Chapter Two: Peers**.

implies.<sup>17</sup> The irony behind this statement is made more apparent by its comparison to his description of Agamemnon in the *Iliad* where he accuses him of being a cowardly king and lord of men whom he does not care for:<sup>18</sup>

Drunkard, with the eyes of a dog but the heart of a deer, 225  
 never have you armed for battle with your people  
 never formed an ambush with the best of the Akhaians,  
 coward, to you this seems like death.

...  
 People-devouring king, lord of men who hold no value to you, 232  
 now, Atreus' son, this will be your last outrageous act.

In return, Agamemnon finally seems to regret his earlier behavior and humbly bestows Akhilleus with his first triple epithet in the *Odyssey*, calling him 'fortunate, son of Peleus, who resembles a god' (ὄλβιε, Πηλέος υἱέ, θεοῖς ἐπιείκελος, 24.36). The epithet ὄλβιος is unusual; used only by Agamemnon in this Book to describe both Akhilleus and Odysseus. However, it is also appropriate. Agamemnon is suggesting that Akhilleus was fortunate to die at war and not at home or at the hands of a woman. Despite what Akhilleus may think about his own death, Agamemnon believes him to be 'fortunate' for dying on the battlefield, receiving a lavish funeral, and for earning glory among all men.<sup>19</sup> The disparity in their titles therefore lets the reader know where things stand between them after the events of Troy have transpired and both have met their deaths.

<sup>17</sup> *Odyssey* 24.30-31:

ὡς ὄφελος τιμῆς ἀπονήμενος, ἧς περ ἄνασσεσ,  
 δήμῳ ἔνι Τρώων θάνατον καὶ πότμον ἐπισπεῖν·

<sup>18</sup> *Iliad* 1.225-232:

οἶνοβαρές, κυνὸς ὄμματ' ἔχων, κραδίην δ' ἐλάφιοι, 225  
 οὔτε ποτ' ἔς πόλεμον ἅμα λαῶ θωρηχθῆναι  
 οὔτε λόχον δ' ἰέναι σὺν ἀριστήεσσιν Ἀχαιῶν  
 τέτληκας θυμῷ· τὸ δέ τοι κῆρ εἶδεται εἶναι.

...  
 δημοβόρος βασιλεὺς ἐπεὶ οὔτιδανοῖσιν ἀνάσσεισ· 232  
 ἦ γὰρ ἂν Ἀτρεΐδῃ νῦν ὕστατα λωβήσαιο.

<sup>19</sup> *Odyssey* 11.467-564; 24.36-94.

Following their discussion, Agamemnon recognises the ghost of an old guest-friend being led by Hermes into the underworld (24.101-104). It is here that the narrator describes Amphimedon as ‘beloved, child of Melaneos, highly renowned,’ (παῖδα φίλον Μελανῆος, ἀγακλυτὸν Ἀμφιμέδοντα).<sup>20</sup> The narrator’s description is clearly distinct from the title Agamemnon chooses for him. He greets Amphimedon merely by name and offers no adjoining epithet, not even a patronymic. The lack of spoken titles distinguishes Amphimedon from both Akhilleus and Odysseus whom Agamemnon addresses with a triple epithet in this scene (even when apostrophising the latter). The difference marks Amphimedon as a social inferior regardless of his position as an old guest-friend. The deferential epithet he gives Agamemnon in return only serves to reinforce his position: he calls Agamemnon: ‘Atreus’ son, honoured, lord of men’.<sup>21</sup>

The number of epithet titles is not the only significant socio-linguistic feature in this exchange, so are the qualities which the individual epithets describe as they can also be ranked according to value. The lowest noble, Amphimedon, is described with the humble and widely distributed epithet ‘beloved’ (φίλος) which in the context of ‘beloved son’ is nearly always used in a diminutive manner to refer to the son of a great(er) hero.<sup>22</sup> The modesty of the patronym is emphasised further by the gender-neutral ‘child’ (παῖς) rather than the more typical ‘son’ (υἱός).<sup>23</sup> His father also shares a type of name whose etymological roots are the same as that “bad” character doublet: the ‘black’ servants

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<sup>20</sup> To clarify, due to the significance of φίλος as an additional marker (Chapter Four: Familial Epithets) those extended titles which describe someone using the formula ‘beloved’ + ‘noun’ (e.g. beloved wife, beloved son, beloved husband) have been separated as two distinct epithets in order to contrast them with the more basic style (wife of, son of, husband of etc.). παῖδα φίλον Μελανῆος, ἀγακλυτὸν Ἀμφιμέδοντα is therefore separated into the three descriptors ‘beloved’, ‘child of Melaneos’, ‘highly renowned’ and, consequently, is a triple epithet.

<sup>21</sup> 24.121: Ἀτρεΐδη κύδιστε, ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγάμεμνον.

<sup>22</sup> Including Telemakhos, Neoptolemos and Orsilokhos.

<sup>23</sup> Golden (1985): 91-104.

Melantho and Melanthios.<sup>24</sup> Amphimedon's third epithet 'highly renowned' (ἀγακλυτός) is the only one which can be considered truly complimentary, first of all because it is personally descriptive and secondly because it is enhanced by the additional ἀγα- prefix. This epithet, however, is gender-neutral in the sense that it is awarded to both male and female characters in the *Odyssey*. In the grand scheme of things, it is therefore neither the most masculine nor unique epithet a man could hope to receive. All in all Amphimedon is described by the narrator with two diminutive titles: 'beloved' and 'child of', both of which are typically applied to the younger, inexperienced, generation of Greek heroes and by a personally descriptive epithet which can easily be read as a measured insult.

By comparison, Agamemnon and Akhilleus both receive standard patronyms alongside personal and civic titles. Agamemnon ('Atreus' son') is described as 'honoured' (κύδιστος) and 'lord of men' (he is no longer βασιλεύς, of course, because he is deceased). The epithet 'honoured' (κύδιστος) is used exclusively of Agamemnon and Athena in the *Odyssey* and only when a person of lower rank is addressing them. It should therefore be considered very complimentary indeed. The title 'lord of men' (ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν) emphasises Agamemnon's societal role, thereby reinforcing his relationship in relation to the civilian Amphimedon, who has no such title.

Through the epithets awarded him by Agamemnon, Akhilleus ('son of Peleus') ranks higher still. He is 'like a god' (ἐπιείκελος θεοῖς) – another Odyssean *hapax*: ἐπιείκελος is typically associated with the ἀθάνατοι in the epithet 'like the undying ones'.<sup>25</sup> In being likened to a divinity, Akhilleus' epithet ranks higher than Agamemnon's merely civic title.

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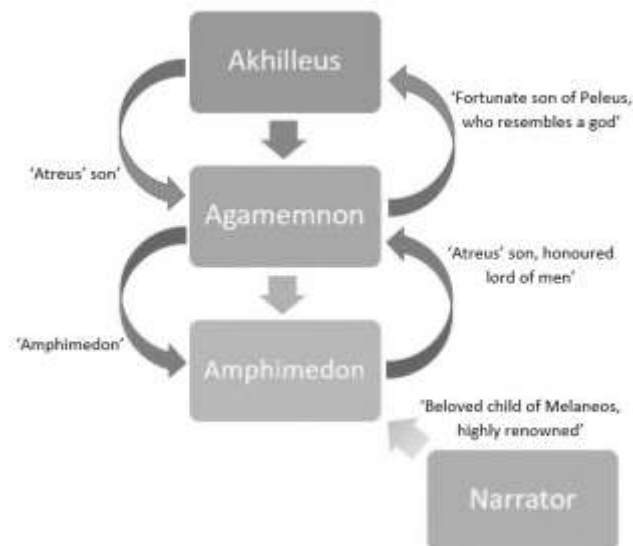
<sup>24</sup> It is also a near homonym, but direct inversion of, Menelaos and therefore implies that his family are a mirror-image, i.e. inversion, of the Atreides.

<sup>25</sup> *Odyssey* 15.414; 21.14, 37.

In short, the triple epithets of the Amphimedon-Agamemnon-Achilleus encounter are not only awarded according to social rank, but also consist of epithets which are indicative of each character's social position.

The canny reader will have noticed that the distribution of triple epithet titles in this encounter also correctly follows the social conventions outlined elsewhere, despite the uncommon inclusion of a triple epithet for a Suitor (see Fig. 5.5). Amphimedon is deserving of an extended epithet in this context only because, like Achilleus, he has died in battle (however minor, or dishonourable the fight may have been) and therefore numbers among the 'glorious dead'. However, neither Achilleus nor Agamemnon can address him as such because – as dead men all – he remains their social inferior; so the narrator does it for them.

**Fig.5.5: Epithets Exchanged between Achilleus, Agamemnon, and Amphimedon in Book 24**



Indeed, the narrator often disregards – or rather, equalises – social boundaries in other scenes. Menelaos and Helen, for example, might exchange complex titles when they are

speaking to one another – Helen calls her husband ‘Atreus’ son, Menelaos, fostered-by-Zeus’ and he calls her simply ‘wife’– but the narrator will use double epithets for both of them.<sup>26</sup> To the narrator, Menelaos is ‘the king, fostered by Zeus’ (διοτρεφένος βασιλῆος, 4.44) while his wife receives the equally honorific ‘Argive, born of Zeus’ (Ἀργεῖη, Διὸς ἐκγεγαυῖα, 4.184); both iterate their realm of power and their divine relations. If anything, the comparison between being merely ‘fostered’ by Zeus and actually ‘born of’ him (ἐκγίγνομαι) places Helen in the higher position here. Again, this is a distinction which could never be made by the characters’ themselves. The same equalisation is found for the Ithakan couple who each receive an intellectual and hereditary epithet apiece. The narrator calls Odysseus ‘much-enduring, divine’ (πολύτλας δῖος, 18.90) and Penelope the ‘broad-minded, daughter of Ikarios’ (κούρη Ἰκαρίοιο, περίφρονι Πηνελοπείη, 18.159).

The impartial appointment of double epithets by the narrator is most keenly felt in Pylos where almost the entire line of Neleus are awarded twofold titles – including the women. Here, the grandfather Neleus is ‘great-spirited, the most high-born man alive’ (μεγάθυμον, ἀγαυότατον ζώντων, 15.229), the father Nestor is the ‘Gerenian horseman’ (Γερήνιος ἵππότης, 3.69 &c.), his wife is the ‘august, daughter of Klymenos’ (πρέσβα, Κλυμένοιο θυγατρῶν, 3.452), and his sons are either the ‘well-speared, leader of men’ (ἔυμμελίην, ὄρχαμον ἀνδρῶν, 3.400), or ‘high-spirited, son of Nestor’ (Νέστορος υἱὸς ὑπέρθυμος, 3.448). The narrator is therefore not distinguishing between age, status, or gender in his distribution of double epithets among this family, instead it is the subtle variance in epithet *type* which differentiates them.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> See: **Chapter Four: Familial Dialogue.**

<sup>27</sup> Neleus’ superlative ‘most high-born’ (ἀγαυότατον) is superior to Nestor’s military descriptor: ‘horseman’ (ἵππότης). As qualities belonging to the domain of men both of these are more illustrious than ‘august’ Eurydike (despite it being unique to

### *Amphinomos*

Amphinomos is the only other antagonistic character to receive an extended epithet from the narrator, though in this instance it is only a double title.<sup>28</sup> This title also differs from the one awarded to Amphimedon inasmuch as it is twice awarded to Amphinomos while he is living. The epithet phrase in question is the highly complex: ‘Radiant, son of Nisos, ››lord‹ Aretiades’ son‹’.<sup>29</sup>

To break the sequence of titles down: Amphinomos himself receives only two of the four epithets which form this phrase: he is ‘radiant’ (φαίδιμος) and the ‘son of Nisos’ (Νίσου υἱός). The other epithets refer to secondary and tertiary members of his lineage. Through the first embedded epithet we learn that Amphinomos’ father, Nisos, is the ‘son of Aretiades’ (Ἀρητιάδης) and through the second embedded epithet we learn that Aretiades himself is ‘lord’ (ἄναξ).<sup>30</sup> Why then, should one of the Suitors receive this unusual double epithet papponymic from the narrator not only once, but on two separate occasions?

The answer lies in the characterisation of Amphinomos as read from the text. While he may be the only Suitor to receive a double epithet, he is also the only Suitor with whom Odysseus’ family and the reader, have any sympathy. When Amphinomos first appears in Book 16 he is explicitly described as the Suitor whom Penelope prefers:<sup>31</sup>

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her and thus a personal title). Between the sons, there is an interesting distinction. The elder Thrasymedes is described with his Iliadic epithet ‘high-spirited’ and also marked as the heir of Nestor. The younger Peisistratos, however, receives two unusually militaristic epithets (unusual as he has never seen combat) but which suit his description in the *Odyssey* as a ‘leader of men’ i.e. Telemakhos while ‘well-speared’ likens him to Polydamas and Euphorbos in *Iliad* 17.9, 23 and 59, perhaps because they were brothers like himself and Thrasymedes.

<sup>28</sup> For more on the characterisation of Amphinomos, see: **Chapter Two: Guests and Hosts** through **Masters and Servants**, **Chapter Four: Grouping Names and Familial Epithets** and, later in this chapter, under **Servants**. Elsewhere, see: Woodhouse (1930): 204, and: Fenik (1974): 192-194.

<sup>29</sup> 16.395; 18.413: Νίσου φαίδιμος υἱός, Ἀρητιάδαο ἄνακτος.

<sup>30</sup> For more on the use of ἄναξ in epithets of lineage see below: **Peisandros?**.

<sup>31</sup> 16.394-398:

τοῖσιν δ’ Ἀμφίνομος ἀγορήσατο καὶ μετέειπε,

Then Amphinomos addressed their assembly and spoke,  
 radiant, son of Nisos, »lord« Aretiades' son«, 395  
 he came from grassy Doulichium, rich in corn,  
 he pleased Penelope more than the other Suitors  
 in his words; for he spoke with a good heart.

This description makes it clear, through repeated references to his speech, that it is his words (μῦθοι), specifically the goodness with which he speaks them (χράω), that Penelope prefers. The emphasis here on his speech – rather than his appearance, like the other Suitors – suggests that Penelope appreciates this Suitor for his intelligence, as well as his goodness (ἀγαθός), which are both qualities she also appreciates in her husband. The remainder of this first introduction to Amphinomos emphasises the righteousness of his speech: 'With good mind (εὐφρονέων) he addressed their assembly and spoke'.<sup>32</sup>

Note that the introduction to this speech frames his character description, transitioning from 'Amphinomos addressed their assembly and spoke' to 'with good mind he addressed their assembly and spoke', thereby adding to the latter his most pivotal feature: that he has a good mind. The kindness of his speech is then validated by his own words:<sup>33</sup>

'Friends, I for one am not willing to kill 400

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Νίσου φαίδιμος υἱός, Ἀρητιάδαο ἄνακτος, 395  
 ὃς ῥ' ἐκ Δουλιχίου πολυπύρου, ποιήεντος,  
 ἠγεῖτο μνηστήρσι, μάλιστα δὲ Πηνελοπείῃ  
 ἦνδανε μῦθοισι: φρεσὶ γὰρ κέχρητ' ἀγαθῆσιν·

Note the presence of a πολυ- epithet (l.396) which triggers an association with Odysseus; Stanford (1950): 108-110.

<sup>32</sup> 16.399: ὁ σφιν εὐφρονέων ἀγορήσατο καὶ μετέειπεν.

<sup>33</sup> 16.400-402:

Ἵ φίλοι, οὐκ ἂν ἐγώ γε κατακτείνειν ἐθέλοιμι 400  
 Τηλέμαχον· δεινὸν δὲ γένος βασιλῆϊόν ἐστιν  
 κτείνειν· ἀλλὰ πρῶτα θεῶν εἰρώμεθα βουλάς.



Telemakhos, it is dreadful to kill the descendant of a king; if first one does not ask the gods for counsel.'

This is one of two places where Amphinomos openly speaks out against the other Suitors' desire to kill Telemakhos (20.245) and he is the only one of them ever to do so. He is careful enough, of course, not to contradict them outright (he sits 'on both sides' remember) but instead suggests that they only ought to take so rash an action as killing a prince if the gods have ordained it.<sup>34</sup> His equivocation is enough to calm the Suitors – they are 'grateful' (ἐφανδάνω) for his 'word' (μῦθος, 406). Penelope's judgement of him was therefore astute; here is a man who puts his good words (ἀγαθός μῦθοι, 16.398) to use.

His words are also well-received elsewhere. He is the first one to tell the Suitors that they should obey Telemakhos as ruler of the household:<sup>35</sup>

Friends, no man can attack what has been appropriately said  
nor oppose it with angry words... 415

...permit the stranger in Odysseus' halls 420  
to be cared for by Telemakhos, since it is his house he came to.

His words again are carefully equivocal – deferentially placing the duty of host at Telemakhos' feet, while simultaneously shifting responsibility for the beggar. They are

<sup>34</sup> On his name, see: **Chapter Four: Grouping Names.**

<sup>35</sup> 18.414-421:

ὦ φίλοι, οὐκ ἂν δὴ τις ἐπὶ ῥηθέντι δικαίῳ  
ἀντιβίους ἐπέεσσι καθαπτόμενος χαλεπαίνοι... 415

... τὸν ξεῖνον δὲ ἐώμεν ἐνὶ μεγάροις Ὀδυσῆος  
Τηλεμάχῳ μελέμεν· τοῦ γὰρ φίλον ἵκετο δῶμα. 420

also persuasive; his words ‘delights them all’ (πᾶσιν ἑαδότα μῦθον ἔειπε, 18.422) and they readily return to their drinking.

Following Odysseus’ altercation with Iros, Amphinomos is also the only Suitor to be kind to the beggar. He feeds him bread (18.120) and is the only one to offer him the same, more civilised and extended appellation that Eumaios does, when he toasts him:<sup>36</sup>

Be glad, **father-stranger**, may prosperity follow you 122  
in the future, for now you bear many evils.

In return Odysseus-as-beggar is sympathetic towards him, for he warns him of Odysseus’ impending return and urges him to escape the bloodshed (18.146-150). He also reiterates the same qualities of Amphinomos’ characterisation which have been emphasised by his epithets thus far, namely, his heritage and his good speech:<sup>37</sup>

‘Amphinomos, you seem to be a very reasonable (πεπνυμένος) man, 125  
So too was your father, I have heard of his good κλέος  
Nisos of Doulichium, a nice and wealthy man:  
they say you are of his line, as you are a compassionate man.

Odysseus describes him here as πεπνυμένος an adjective which – as an epithet – is typically applied to members of Odysseus’ own family (Laertes and Telemakhos) and further stresses that he is ἐπητής (‘compassionate’) an adjective which only appears here and in the list of adjectives Athena ascribes to Odysseus (ἐπητής καὶ ἀγχίνοος καὶ

<sup>36</sup> 18.122-123:

χαῖρε, **πάτερ ὦ ξεῖνε**, γένοιτό τοι ἕς περ ὀπίσσω 122  
ὄλβος· ἀτὰρ μὲν νῦν γε κακοῖς ἔχειαι πολέεσσι.

Eumaios: 17.553. Athena also uses it when disguised as the Phaiakian girl: 7.28, 48.

<sup>37</sup> 18.125-128:

‘Ἀμφίνομ’, ἧ μάλα μοι δοκέεις πεπνυμένος εἶναι· 125  
τοίου γὰρ καὶ πατρός, ἐπεὶ κλέος ἐσθλὸν ἄκουον,  
Νῖσον Δουλιχίᾳ ἐϋν τ’ ἔμεν ἀφνειὸν τε·  
τοῦ σ’ ἔκ φασι γενέσθαι, ἐπητῆ δ’ ἀνδρὶ ἔοικας.

ἐχέφρων. 13.332); both are therefore compliments coming from the mouth of Odysseus.<sup>38</sup>

The descriptive similarity between them draws a comparison between Amphinomos and Odysseus, as if Amphinomos in his kindness and intelligence is the most Odysseus-like man among the Suitors – even if he does not quite match him for cunning – and this is why Penelope prefers him above all the other suitors.

The other epithet awarded to Amphinomos by the narrator is κοσμήτορι λαῶν (18.152). As this line occurs through Odysseus' embedded focalization, it should be understood that it is from Odysseus' perspective that Amphinomos is also a 'commander of the people'.<sup>39</sup> This epithet is a *hapax* in the *Odyssey* and only appears in the *Iliad* as a plural (κοσμήτορε) to collectively describe either the brothers Agamemnon and Menelaos, or the brothers Kastor and Polydeukes.<sup>40</sup> It is therefore not an epithet for the narrator (or indeed Odysseus) to award freely to one of the Suitors unless they wished to evoke great Iliadic heroes. At its root it is not necessarily a martial epithet, but one which has taken on a martial meaning through its Iliadic context. It is from κοσμέω 'order, arrange' and so perhaps Odysseus uses it here as an indicator that, through his carefully constructed speech, Amphinomos marks himself as the true leader among the Suitors. Odysseus' respect for Amphinomos is further outlined at the end of Book 18, when he takes a seat by Amphinomos' knee, in the position of a supplicant, for "fear" of Eurymakhos (18.395).<sup>41</sup>

As for Amphinomos' own motivations, he is clearly saddened by the behaviour of the Suitors and recognises the wickedness of their behaviour (18.153-154). Even during the

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<sup>38</sup> For πεπνυμένος in the family, see: **Chapter Four: Grouping Epithets.**

<sup>39</sup> The epithet also foreshadows the role Amphinomos will play in taking over the leadership of the Suitors after both Antinoos and Eurymakhos have perished (23.89).

<sup>40</sup> *Iliad* 1.16, 375; 3.236.

<sup>41</sup> de Jong (2001): 456.

fight in Book 23, he does not seem motivated actually to harm Odysseus, but only seeks to move him from his position by the door (so that he and the others might leave):<sup>42</sup>

But Amphinomos moved against glorious  
Odysseus, drawing his sharp sword,  
hoping that he would move from the doorway.

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Sadly, he is fated by Athena to die at the hands of Telemakhos (18.156) and so falls the only “good” Suitor. This survey of his characterisation throughout the text demonstrates that, of all the Suitors, Amphinomos is the only one who seems to act appropriately and for this he is received kindly by both Odysseus and Penelope. The epithets and adjectives used to describe him match more closely those of Odysseus and his kin than the Suitors. Finally, even his name suggests the ambivalence in his position between Odysseus and the bad Suitors, for he is ‘on both sides of νόμος’.<sup>43</sup> While this is a common word in the *Iliad* and in later sources – in Herodotus it is translated to mean something like ‘custom’ or ‘law’ – νόμος only appears in the *Odyssey* in reference to Polyphemos’ breach of protocol (9.216). His is a behaviour which elicits immediate parallels to the Suitors’ own disregard of the rules of hospitality. Amphinomos then, sits on the fence between breaching the rules of ξενία and behaving loyally to his liege-lord and so is neither truly one of the Suitors, nor truly one of “good guys”. That he alone of all the living Suitors is

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<sup>42</sup> 23.89-91:

Ἀμφίνομος δ’ Ὀδυσῆος εἰείσατο κυδαλίμοιο  
ἀντίος ἄϊξας, εἴρυτο δὲ φάσγανον ὄξυ,  
εἴ πῶς οἱ εἴξειε θυράων.

90

Compare this to Agelaos, for example, who claims he will take all of Odysseus’ possessions once ‘with the bronze we have taken away all your lives’ 22.219.

<sup>43</sup> For the etymology, see: **Chapter Four: Grouping Names.**

awarded a double epithet by the narrator is therefore entirely appropriate inasmuch as he, like Phemios, is never actually antagonistic to Odysseus, but is roped in to the same sticky end as the Suitors, despite his kindness and his eloquence.<sup>44</sup>

*Peisandros?*

The narrator awards Peisandros a patronym at 18.299 which reads:

ἐκ δ' ἄρα Πεισάνδροιο Πολυκτορίδαο ἄνακτος  
ἴσθμιον ἦνεικεν θεράπων, περικαλλὲς ἄγαλμα. 300

The lack of clarity as to who receives the epithet ἄναξ in the line Πεισάνδροιο Πολυκτορίδαο ἄνακτος has led some translators to offer what would be the double epithet: 'lord, Peisandros, son of Polyktor' and others to offer, the single (plus embedded) epithet: 'Peisandros, son of ›lord‹ Polyktor'.<sup>45</sup> The reader would be forgiven for believing, given the preponderance of translations in favour of the former, that it is indeed Peisandros who is lord (ἄναξ), and would therefore conclude against the evidence found elsewhere in this thesis that this – demonstrably bad – Suitor is also awarded a double epithet.

However, patterns of epithet distribution for ἄναξ throughout the *Odyssey* suggest that the common translation is actually the most inappropriate. First of all, neither Peisandros, nor anyone like him in rank or role, is ever awarded the single epithet 'lord'. The epithet "belongs" only to gods and established heroes who are kings of their own dominions, or men who walk the line between the two such as Teiresias (who might be considered in some ways to be "lord of the dead").<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, in cases where the epithet is included

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<sup>44</sup> Besslich (1966): 77-79.

<sup>45</sup> For the former, see: Lattimore (1967), Rieu (1946), Murray (1919). For the latter, see: Verity (2016).

<sup>46</sup> Recipients include: Zeus, Poseidon, Hyperion, Apollo, Hephaistos, Priam, Minos, Agamemnon, and Odysseus.

in a description of lineage (as it is here) it is always the *original* ancestor of the sequence who is described as ‘lord’, presumably because this is the man from whom the monarchic lineage begins:<sup>47</sup>

19.523:

... Itylos, child of lord Zethus

... κοῦρον Ζήθοιο ἄνακτος,

24.305:

Eperitos, son of Arheidas, son of lord Polypemon

υἱὸς Ἀφείδαντος Πολυπημονίδαο ἄνακτος.

16.395 & 18.413:

Amphinomos, son of Nisos, lord Aretiades’ son

Νίσου φαίδιμος υἱός, Ἀρητιάδαο ἄνακτος

In these examples, it is clear that the first ancestor in the lineage is called ‘lord’.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, the first ancestor is also typically indicated in other patronyms to be illustrious in some way so as to emphasise their genealogical precedence: Telemakhos, for example, is the son of ‘godlike’ Odysseus.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, considering: (a) how ἄναξ is otherwise disseminated as an epithet throughout the text, (b) how lineage epithets

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<sup>47</sup> In another example, during one of the Cretan Tales, Aethon-Odysseus recalls that it is his elder brother, Idomeneus, who is ‘lord’ (19.181) and not his father – suggesting that his father may have abdicated in favour of his eldest son – but the description is not rendered in the standard lineage epithet sequence.

<sup>48</sup> There is perhaps an implication here that the progenitor (who is ‘lord’) is still living and so the civic title has not yet passed on to the son. This would explain why it is sometimes necessary (as in the case of Peisandros) for two generations to be indicated, for his grandfather is still living. In embedded patronyms, therefore, ‘lord’ could be taken as a short-hand for “oldest living male ancestor”.

<sup>49</sup> For more on embedded lineage epithets, see: **Chapter Four**.

function in general (by typically awarding additional epithets to the oldest family member), and (c) that no other “bad” Suitor is ever awarded a flattering double epithet, it would be highly irregular for Peisandros to be awarded the epithet ‘lord’ in this instance. Instead, the far more likely recipient of the epithet is Polyktor (as he is the progenitor) and so a correct translation for 18.299 would be:

From the house of Peisandros, son of ›lord‹ Polyktor,  
his attendant brought a necklace, a very beautiful gift.

Where the narrator uses epithets to describe “baddies” such as the Suitors he generally limits himself to the standard patronymic formulas applied to the introduction of speech. Elsewhere he might only offer the leaders of the Suitors physically descriptive epithets which are in-keeping with their portrayal as young, handsome, aristocratic wooers of Queen Penelope. This section has shown that the other examples (Amphimedon and Amphinomos) are exceptions which prove this rule.

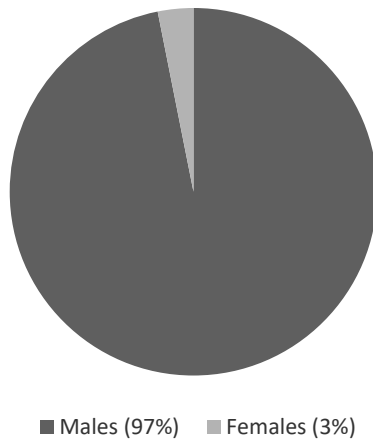
## Women

Narratorial triple epithets in the *Odyssey* are, at the most fundamental level, used to indicate status that would be improper for a character to express, usually because it refers to a person of lower status (such as a woman or a servant). As demonstrated in the examples above, the narrator is not confined to the same social etiquettes as his speaking characters and is therefore free to use triple epithets to indicate to the reader that a character of lesser status is significant within a certain context. These contexts usually include variations of the rule: “a character of lower status is exemplary within their own social caste”, even if that caste is “the luckless dead” or even “hubristic antagonist”. The

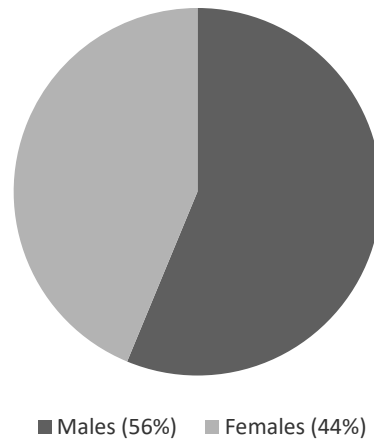
remainder of this section will present an analysis of the triple epithets awarded by the narrator to women and demonstrate how they too are entirely contextually appropriate despite the gender of the recipient.

Statistical evaluation of narratorial triple epithets by gender reveals that, compared with the number of spoken triple epithets, there is a 40% increase in the amount of females who are awarded triple epithets (see Figs. 5.6 and 5.7). This evidence supports the argument that the narrator uses triple epithets to draw attention to minority figures in the text (both mortal women females in general) who are otherwise overlooked or under-addressed by majorities.

**Fig.5.6: Distribution of Spoken Triple Epithets by Gender**



**Fig.5.7: Distribution of Narratorial Triple Epithets by Gender**



Due to their lack of status relative to men in the Homeric universe, females are far less likely to receive extended epithets of any kind (statistics for female extended epithets in general are skewed by the narrators repetition of the double epithets ‘gray-eyed, goddess, Athena’ and ‘early-born, rosy-fingered Eos’). Where extended epithets are given, they are typically awarded to immortals (Eos, Athena, Kalypso &c.). In fact, no mortal female ever



receives a triple epithet from another speaking character, either directly or indirectly. The only female ever to be described with a triple epithet by a speaking character is Athena and even this occurs in a quasi-ritualistic moment.<sup>50</sup> Triple epithets for females, whether they are mortal or immortal are thus almost entirely the prerogative of the narrator/s.

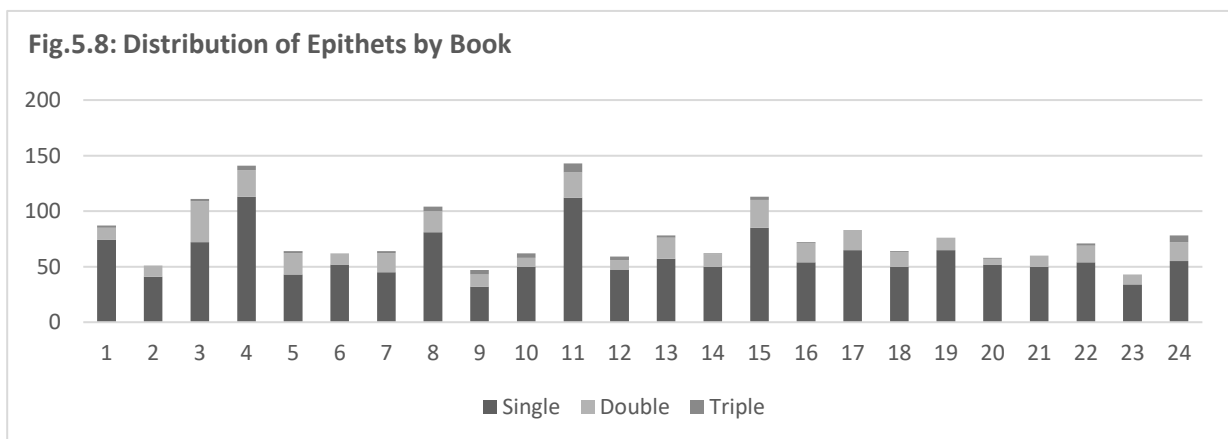
One might be forgiven for thinking that the lack of female triple epithets is not a deliberate choice indicative of their position, but simply an artefact created by a combination of the poem's preponderantly male cast, compounded by the relatively low number of triple epithet occurrences in general. However, careful analysis of the application of Kalypso's extended epithets suggests that the author is deliberate in his distribution of them, provided one pays close attention to where Odysseus' role as an internal narrator begins and where it ends. If 9.37 is taken to be the beginning of his internal narration – due to its proem-like construction (with subject in accusative, adjective, verb of speaking, relative clause and starting point, bar an invocation to the Muse) – and the end of Book 12 – when Odysseus begins to repeat himself – taken to be its end, then Odysseus describes Kalypso with a triple epithet *only* during his role as narrator (12.449) and fails to give her one when speaking of her in his role as a character (9.29).<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> 3.378 when Nestor describes her before praying to her.

<sup>51</sup> de Jong (2001): 229, 312.

Even if Odysseus-as-narrator is not conflated with the “real” narrator, or if the opening and closing of Odysseus’ narration were placed in different lines, then the fact would still remain that the only females to be given extended epithets by speaking characters are goddesses – the numbers would merely extend from two (Athena) to three (Athena and Kalypso). All other instances fall within narratorial sections of the text. Within all of these instances the narrator (or internal narrator) selects triple epithets in order to emphasise a goddess’s power or relative status in comparison with a mortal.<sup>52</sup> Ino, for example, is ‘daughter of Kadmos, beautiful-ankled, Leukotheia’ (Κάδμου θυγάτηρ, καλλίσφυρος, Λευκοθέη, 5.333) when she provides Odysseus with the divine means to save himself from Poseidon’s storm. Similarly – in his role as narrator – Odysseus describes Circe with the triple epithet ‘lovely-haired, dread goddess, who speaks with mortal voice’ (ἔυπλόκαμος, δεινὴ θεὸς, αὐδήεσσα) either when he is describing her power to control the wind (11.6-8; 12.148-150), or when declaiming her extensive, divine lineage (which, for a woman in particular, is to emphasise their power 10.135-139). As a speaking character, he never addresses Circe with a triple epithet despite the fact that she repeatedly offers one to him.



<sup>52</sup> The same can be said for instances where they are awarded by characters, as prayer is also a context in which the goddess is appealed to because of their power, see: **Chapter Three: Gods and Mortals**.

*Pero*

Pero is the only mortal female to receive a triple epithet from the narrator (and therefore the only mortal female). The epithet is awarded in the First Nekyia (where the majority of all epithets occur, see Fig. 5.8) during a passage which recounts her aristocratic ancestry (epithets highlighted):<sup>53</sup>

And Chloris I saw, **beyond beautiful**, whom Neleus once  
 took to wife for her divine beauty, giving numberless bride-gifts to her.  
 She was the **youngest daughter** of Amphion, **Ἰασός' ἄριστος**,  
 who once ruled over the **Minyeian** Orkhomenians by force.  
 She was **queen of Pylos**, and bore him splendid children. 285  
 Nestor, and Chromios, and **lordly** Periklymenos.  
 But also she bore **strong** Pero, **that marvel among mortals**,  
**wooed by all the neighbours**. Yet Neleus  
 would not give her away, unless (a Suitor) could drive the **curve-horned**  
**broad-faced** bulls of **forceful** Iphikles out of Phylake. 290  
 No simple thing. Alone, the **irreproachable seer** (Melampous)  
 drove them out; but grievous fate, sent from a god, bound him fast,  
**rough** herdsmen binding him in complex chains.

This is certainly an illustrious family and one might be forgiven for feeling that the complicated lineage and extensive list of adjectives surrounding her name has the effect

<sup>53</sup> 11.281-293:

καὶ Χλωρίν εἶδον περικαλλέα, τήν ποτε Νηλεὺς  
 γῆμεν ἐὼν διὰ κάλλος, ἐπεὶ πόρε μυρία ἔδνα,  
 ὀπλοτάτην κούρην Ἀμφίονος Ἰασίδαο,  
 ὃς ποτ' ἐν Ὀρχομενῶ Μινυεῖω Ἴφι ἄνασεν·  
 ἢ δὲ Πύλου βασιλεὺς, τέκεν δὲ οἱ ἀγλαὰ τέκνα, 285  
 Νέστορά τε Χρόνιον τε Περικλύμενόν τ' ἀγέρωχον.  
 τοῖσι δ' ἐπ' ἰφθίμην Πηρῶ τέκε, θαῦμα βροτοῖσι,  
 τὴν πάντες μνώνοντο περικτίται· οὐδ' ἄρα Νηλεὺς  
 τῷ ἐδίδου ὃς μὴ ἔλικας βόας εὐρυμετώπους  
 ἐκ Φυλάκης ἐλάσειε βίης Ἰφικληείης 290  
 ἀργαλέας· τὰς δ' οἷος ὑπέσχετο μάντις ἀμύμων  
 ἐξελάαν· χαλεπὴ δὲ θεοῦ κατὰ μοῖρα πέδησε,  
 δεσμοὶ τ' ἀργαλέοι καὶ βουκόλοι ἀγροῖῳται.

of smothering her triple epithet. However, what does stand out is that even though Pero is listed after her three brothers, only one of them has any kind of epithet at all. Surprisingly, the brother awarded an epithet is not Nestor despite the fact he is a well-established character.<sup>54</sup> Instead it is the Argonaut Periklymenos who is described by the Odyssean *hapax* ἀγέρωχος, the exact meaning of which is unclear but seems to convey a sense of nobility.<sup>55</sup> An argument could, of course, be made that the metre of line 286 requires that the adjective must be awarded to Periklymenos, as no other combination would be metrically expedient. However, a poetically liberated Homer would be free to incorporate these names into his narrative howsoever he wished.<sup>56</sup> In other lists of siblings, Homer places the most significant character at the end of the line for the purposes of enjambment. For example (11.321-324):

Φαίδρην τε Πρόκριν τε ἴδον καλήν τ' Ἀριάδην,  
 κούρην Μίνωος ὀλοόφρονος, ἦν ποτε Θησεύς  
 ἐκ Κρήτης ἐς γουνὸν Ἀθηνάων ἱεράων  
 ἦγε μὲν, οὐδ' ἀπόνητο·

And, shortly after (11.326-327):

Μαΐράν τε Κλυμένην τε ἴδον στυγερὴν τ' Ἐριφύλην,  
 ἢ χρυσὸν φίλου ἀνδρὸς ἐδέξατο τιμήντα.

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<sup>54</sup> Note that even her father Neleus does not have an epithet when elsewhere he receives some of the most illustrious titles in the text. He is 'the most high-born man alive' (ἀγαυότατον ζώντων); 'equal to the gods' (ἀντίθεος); 'godlike' (θεῖος); 'like the gods for counsel' (θεόφιν μῆστωρ ἀτάλαντος), and 'great-spirited' (μεγάθυμος).

<sup>55</sup> Heubeck & Hoekstra (1990): 95. A more negative, later interpretation of 'arrogant' or 'impetuous' is translated if from ἐρωή (as per Archilochus 154, and Alcman 120), see: LSJ: s.v. ἀγέρωχος; Autenrieth (2000): s.v. ἀγέρωχος. Given his relationship to the illustrious Neleus, it seems likely that it means something like 'born into a good family'. His name means 'very famous' perhaps referring to his role in the *Argonautica*, but he does not appear anywhere else in Homer: Hesiod *Catalogue of Women* fr. 33(a); Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 1.156.

<sup>56</sup> See, **Introduction**.

But, in Periklymenos' example, the narrator instead interrupts the audiences' focus on Periklymenos by suddenly transitioning to Pero with the adversative δέ ('but'); Chloris may well have borne these three sons, but instead of adding more information about the famous Argonaut, attention is drawn to strong Pero.

Pero's mother is also described at length with the three single epithets περικαλλής ('beyond beautiful'), ὀπλοτάτην κούρην ('youngest daughter'), and Πύλου βασίλευε ('queen of Pylos'). The deliberate emphasis on the female ancestor thus draws attention to Pero as her mother's daughter and therefore parallels the story of her courtship with that of her mother's. Just as Neleus once wooed Chloris with 'numberless bride-gifts', so he ensured that men would compete for his daughter. Just as her mother was beyond others in her beauty, so Pero is a 'marvel among mortals' (θαῦμα βροτοῖσι). The man who could succeed in pursuing Pero should be considered every bit as noble as Neleus, even if he is nameless in this account (an omission which only draws further attention to the description of Pero).<sup>57</sup> The passage therefore focuses on the females Chloris and Pero and so – far from being hidden amongst the other adjectives – Pero's triple epithet actually stands out prominently, distinguishing her from her brothers, her father, her suitor, and even her mother (whose three adjectives span five lines). Why then, should Pero receive such a mark of respect given that this is the only place she appears in the Homeric Epics?

The answer may be found in a comparison between Pero and Penelope, who also bears a variety of epithets and descriptions similar to those in the Pero passage. The most distinguishing feature of their comparison is Pero's exclusive epithet: 'wooed by all the neighbours' (πάντες μνώοντο περικίται 11.288), a description which immediately

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<sup>57</sup> The story is concluded in 15.223.

reminds the audience of Penelope.<sup>58</sup> Indeed the noun περικτίονες ('neighbours') is only otherwise used to describe the dwellers on Ithaka (2.65), just as the verb μνάομαι ('wooed') refers almost exclusively to the actions of the Suitors. The difference between the two women is that Neleus asks Pero's suitors to rustle the bulls of their neighbour to increase their wealth, whereas the Suitors of Penelope are consuming the cattle which constitute her wealth.

'Wooed by all the neighbours' is not the only description in this passage which draws a comparison with Odysseus' wife. Pero and Penelope are two of the only four mortal women who share the controversial epithet 'strong' (ἴφθιμος).<sup>59</sup> Moreover Penelope is 'divine among women' (δῖα γυναικῶν, 18.208) much like Pero is a 'marvel among mortals' (θαῦμα βροτοῖσι) who has inherited the 'divine beauty' (διὰ κάλλος) of her mother, Chloris, who is also 'beyond beautiful' (περικαλλέα, 11.287, 281). Like Pero, Penelope also comes from an illustrious family. She is the only woman in the *Odyssey* to be described as 'highly renowned' (ἀγακλυτὸς), while her father is τηλεκλειπός (when described in relation to her).<sup>60</sup>

Alongside the similarity in their epithets, the overall story of Pero's courtship is reminiscent both of the Suitors' and (extra-textually) Odysseus', pursuit of Penelope.<sup>61</sup> First of all, Odysseus' cattle also share the common noun epithet 'broad-browed' (εὐρυμετώπους,

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<sup>58</sup> See: for example, the instances of: 1.245-248; 2.50; 3.212-215.

<sup>59</sup> Controversial in that it is typically understood as a physical adjective only suited for males and so is often synonymised by translators when applied to females, see: **Glossary: Introduction**, and: **Appendix One: Skills**.

<sup>60</sup> Penelope: 17.468; 18.351; she shares it with Odysseus: 8.502. For more on the family, see: **Chapter Four: Familial Epithets**. Her father was the brother of Tyndareos, Helen's mortal father making her Helen's cousin (Apollodorus *Bibliotheca* 1.9.5 & 3.10.3). Pausanias later described that, like Neleus, Ikarios would not give Penelope away unless her suitor passed a challenge, in this instance beating him in a running contest: Pausanias *Description of Greece* 3.12.2.

<sup>61</sup> Pausanias later described that, like Neleus, Ikarios would not give Penelope away unless her suitor passed a challenge, in this instance beating him in a running contest: Pausanias *Description of Greece* 3.12.2.

20.212), and are driven away by the Suitors of Penelope's hand instead of being gifted to her family. The description of 'driving out' (ἐξελαύνω) the cattle also extends to a simile which elsewhere describes the 'driving out of the wooers' by Odysseus (2.248).<sup>62</sup> Moreover, the challenge of 'driving out' the Suitors is also described as 'no simple thing' (ἀργαλέος) by Leokritos (2.244) and Telemakhos (16.88), just as it would be 'no simple thing' for Pero's suitor to rustle the cattle of Iphikles.

The fate of Melampous in Pero's tale also foreshadows the capture of Melanthios, not least from the similarity of their "black" names, for Odysseus' cattle (and livelihood) are protected by his 'rough' (ἀγροιώτης) herdsmen, who 'bind' (δεσμεύω) Melanthios.<sup>63</sup> They then order him to 'keep watch' (φυλάξεις) until nightfall, the verb playing on the meaning of Φυλάκης.<sup>64</sup> Pero's story might therefore be rephrased with entirely accurate epithets and verbs (highlighted in bold) to summarise Books 18-22 of the *Odyssey*:

**Strong** Penelope, **divine among women**,

was wooed by all the neighbours. Yet Telemakhos

would not give her away, unless someone could **drive-out** the Suitors

who were **driving out** the **broad-faced** bulls of **great-hearted** Odysseus.

**No simple thing**. Alone, the **well-known herdsman** (Melanthios)

**drove** cattle to the Suitors; but he was bound by grievous fate, sent from **godlike** Odysseus,

whose **rough herdsmen restrained** him to **keep watch** 'til dawn.

The location of this comparison between Penelope and Pero might first appear to be unusual given that it occurs in the middle of the Catalogue of Heroines during the First Nekyia and is therefore as geographically removed from Penelope as it is possible to be.

<sup>62</sup> Recall also the possible etymology of one of the Suitors: Elator, **Chapter Four: Grouping Names**.

<sup>63</sup> Both of their names come from the root 'black' μέλαν-; Buxton (2010): 6-7, and Kanavou (2015): 148, 131. The description of the herdsmen is the only other use of ἀγροιώτης in the *Odyssey*: 21.86; 22.187-194, 195.

<sup>64</sup> Without the indicated pronoun a literal translation of 11.289-290 might be 'unless (a Suitor) could drive the curve-horned, broad-faced bulls of forceful Iphikles out of his watch (φυλάξεις)'.

However, the story of Pero is situated amongst repeated reminders of Odysseus' wife. Far from providing him with the knowledge or means of how to return home, Book 11 actually serves as an extensive reminder of what Odysseus is missing at home on Ithaka – a reminder which focuses heavily upon the relentless pursuit, and fidelity, of his wife. Odysseus first encounters Teiresias, who informs him of the 'calamity in his household' which consists of 'overbearing men devouring [his] livelihood' and pursuing his 'godlike wife, giving her bride-gifts' (11.115-117) – a feature which is also found in the story of Pero.<sup>65</sup>

This is the first Odysseus has heard about the situation at home and so he goes on to ask the ghost of his mother for more details:<sup>66</sup>

What of my father and son, who were left behind,  
do they still hold my inheritance, or does 175  
another man hold it, because they say I will not return?  
Tell me of my wedded wife (ἀλόχος), her counsels and her mind,  
does she stay strong beside my child, keeping guard over all,  
or has she taken one of the Akhaian aristocracy to bed (γαμέω)?

These two questions directly parallel the two pieces of information Teiresias has previously given him about events on Ithaka: (1) men are threatening his livelihood and

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<sup>65</sup> Notice that the narrator also describes the Suitors as ὑπερμενής (19.61) which could be translated positively ('of exceeding might') and used as a comparative between them and Zeus (who is ὑπερμενής in the *Iliad*, e.g. 2.116). However, given the number of negative ὑπερ- epithets for the Suitors in the *Odyssey*, this should be interpreted as a negative ('over-bearing in their might') – perhaps even as a deliberate, ironic, comparison between their behaviour and a descriptor for the god of guests, see: de Jong (2001): 465.

<sup>66</sup> 11.174-179:

εἰπέ δέ μοι πατρός τε καὶ υἱέος, ὃν κατέλειπον,  
ἢ ἔτι πάρ κεινοῖσιν ἐμόν γέρας, ἧέ τις ἤδη 175  
ἀνδρῶν ἄλλος ἔχει, ἐμὲ δ' οὐκέτι φασὶ νέεσθαι.  
εἰπέ δέ μοι μνηστῆς ἀλόχου βουλὴν τε νόον τε,  
ἧέ μένει παρὰ παιδί καὶ ἔμπεδα πάντα φυλάσσει  
ἢ ἤδη μιν ἔγημεν Ἀχαιῶν ὅς τις ἄριστος.



therefore his identity *qua* his social position as king, and (2) these same men are pursuing his wife and therefore threaten his identity *qua* husband.<sup>67</sup> His mother answers them in reverse order, starting with what she perceives to be Odysseus' primary concern: his wife.<sup>68</sup> Responding 'quickly' (αὐτίκα) she tells her son that his wife faithfully endures (11.181); only then does she tell him of his son and his father. Antikleia ends the conversation with another reference to Penelope: 'remember all these things', she says, 'so that you may one day tell your wife' (11.224). This statement seems out of place: what is it that Odysseus is supposed to remember exactly? Prior to her statement, Antikleia has been telling her son about the ephemeral nature of ghosts in the underworld, something which he is unlikely to forget. The plural 'all these things' (ταῦτα δὲ πάντα) also implies that it is not simply his encounter with his mother that Antikleia is asking him to remember. If Antikleia's request prepares for Odysseus' digression at 23.310-241, then ταῦτα δὲ πάντα can only be understood as referring to the number of people Odysseus met in the Underworld (23.324), in which case, Antikleia is indicating the ghosts of famous women which follow her.<sup>69</sup>

Immediately after his encounter with Antikleia, Persephone sends forth the women of the underworld as if, by parading other 'wives and daughters of princes' (11.227) before him, she might remind Odysseus of his wife's qualities.<sup>70</sup> It is amongst their stories that we find the account of Pero and Chloris, whose many Suitors and infinite bride-gifts draw such a powerful association with Teiresias' earlier description of Penelope. Finally, after the

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<sup>67</sup> The questions are also foreshadowed by Elpenor's Iliadic appeal in the name of Odysseus' wife, father, and son at the opening of the book (11.66-67) (for similar appeals in the *Iliad* see: 15.662-5; 22.338; 24.466-7).

<sup>68</sup> Heubeck & Hoekstra (1990): 87-88.

<sup>69</sup> He 'tells her all' (πάντ' ἔλεγ', 23.308). Heubeck & Hoekstra (1990): 90.

<sup>70</sup> For more on the catalogue of heroines see: Northrup (1980): 150-159, and Pade (1983): 7-15.

analogies and horror stories of these women, Odysseus greets Agamemnon. The great king immediately collapses into tears as he regales Odysseus with the account of his own faithless and murderous wife (11.387-426). He warns his friend that ‘nothing is more horrible or more dog-like than a woman’ (ὥς οὐκ αἰνότερον καὶ κύντερον ἄλλο γυναικός, 11.427), a phrase which unsettles Odysseus who then remarks on the ‘counsels’ and ‘schemes’ of women like Helen and Klytaimnestra which bring death to men:<sup>71</sup>

Alas, how wide-eyed Zeus has brought great calamity 436  
 on the sons of Atreus, through the counsels of hateful women  
 from the beginning: Helen brought utter destruction to many,  
 while Klytaimnestra schemed from afar.

His apprehension is palpable in this line; Odysseus earlier used the same noun to refer to the mind of his wife (εἶπε δέ μοι μνηστῆς ἀλόχου **βουλήν** τε νόον τε, 11.177), suggesting that he is now comparing Penelope to her cousins: Helen and Klytaimnestra. As if to ease the fears triggered by the parade of women and Agamemnon’s story, Agamemnon lavishes praise on Penelope. She is not like Klytaimnestra, he tells Odysseus, ‘you will never be murdered by your wife! For the daughter of Ikarios, broad-minded Penelope, is exceedingly prudent, and her mind is full of virtuous schemes (εὖ φρεσὶ μήδεα)’ (11.445). However, he does sandwich this flattery between two cautionary suggestions: that Odysseus lie to his wife (11.443) and that he keep his return to Ithaca

<sup>71</sup> 11.436-439:

‘ὦ πόποι, ἦ μάλα δὴ γόνον Ἀτρείος εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς 436  
 ἐκπάγλως ἤχθηρε γυναικείας διὰ βουλάς  
 ἐξ ἀρχῆς· Ἑλένης μὲν ἀπωλόμεθ’ εἵνεκα πολλοί,  
 σοὶ δὲ Κλυταιμνήστρη δόλον ἤρτυε τηλόθ’ ἐόντι.

For more on Penelope’s comparison to Helen and Klytaimnestra in this scene, see: Goldhill (1994): pp.51-73.

a secret, for ultimately there 'is no trusting in women' (οὐκέτι πιστὰ γυναῖξιν, 11.456). By the end of the Nekyia, poor Odysseus is left with no assurances of his wife's fidelity.

Pero's story is therefore situated within a narrative which repeatedly emphasises the experiences of Penelope on Ithaka. It is only now, after he has been informed of her situation, does Odysseus use Penelope as the reason for his desire to return home. Until this point, his curiosity has encouraged him to seek out the Laistrygonians, the Lotus-bearers, the Cyclopes, the Kimmerians, and the nymph on Aiaia. If he did think of home it was only to return to the land of his fathers (10.49, 475) rather than to his wife. But following his trip to the underworld he longs to return to Penelope. When Kalypso asks him whether he is still 'so eager to return to your own house and the land of your fathers?' (5.204-5) or if it is his plain and mortal wife he pines for (5.209-10), Odysseus responds that it is indeed the thought of his wife which draws him home (5.215-219). Similarly, he tells Alkinoos that he wishes to return to his house and find there an 'irreproachable wife' (ἀμύμονα ἄκοιτιν, 13.42). Finally, remember just who is actually recounting the Catalogue of Women in Book 11. It is Odysseus. Who better to so greatly honour a female member of the illustrious dead in a manner that so recalls his own wife?

It has long been noted that Teiresias never actually gives Odysseus any instructions on how to successfully return to Ithaka; he only predicts what Odysseus will find there.<sup>72</sup> What Teiresias does impart, however, is the knowledge of Penelope's Suitors that drives Odysseus forward for the remainder of his journeys. Therefore, Pero's poignant triple epithet, which so mirrors Odysseus' strong, divine, and well-wooed wife, becomes a turning point for the hero and is therefore entirely contextually appropriate – even though

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<sup>72</sup> Lord (1960): 166-167; Peradotto (1990): 59-94; Peradotto (1993): 173-182, and more recently; Gartzou-Tatti (2010): 17-20.

it is applied to a woman. In a graceful denouement, it is also Pero's ancestor Theoklymenos who informs Penelope of Odysseus' impending return.<sup>73</sup>

### *Eos*

Double epithets for females are slightly more common (Fig.5.9 and Fig. 5.10) and they are spoken by a variety of characters to describe mortal and immortal females alike. Those used to describe mortals are almost always used indirectly, such as when Eumaios describes Ktimene (15.364) or Penelope and Athena describe Helen (23.218, 22.227). The only exception to this rule is Penelope, who is repeatedly addressed as the 'broad-minded, daughter of Ikarios' or the 'respectable wife of Laertes' son' by her suitors and her husband (Agamemnon and Eurykleia only do so indirectly). This distinction marks the double epithet as highly flattering. Double epithets used to describe immortal women follow a different pattern, they are mostly used in supplication (see Chapter Three) or otherwise only used by other females (Kalypso, Circe and Penelope). Note that it is also Penelope and Athena who describe Periboia, Aedon and Helen.

**Fig.5.9: List of Double Epithets for Mortal Females**

RECIPIENT	EPITHET	SPEAKER	
Aedon	'brown-green nightingale, Pandareos' daughter'	Penelope	
Arete	'broad-minded, queen'	Ekhenos	
	'strong, wife'	Odysseus	
Epikaste	'beautiful, Oidipode's mother'	Odysseus-as-narrator	
Eurydike	'August, daughter of Klymenos'	Narrator	
Helen	'Argive, born of Zeus'	Penelope	Narrator
	'Divine among women, of the flowing robes'	Narrator	
	'Well-bred, white-armed'	Athena	
Hermione	'irreproachable, daughter'	Narrator	
Iphthime	'Daughter of >great-hearted< Ikarios, wed to Eumelos'	Narrator	

<sup>73</sup> *Odyssey* 15.223-256; 17.151-161.

Ktimene	'strong, daughter'	Eumaios	
Laistrygonian Princess	'strong, daughter of Antiphates'		Odysseus-as-narrator
Nausikaa	'fair-eyed, maiden'		Narrator
Penelope	'broad-minded, daughter of Ikarios'	Eurymakhos	Narrator
		Odysseus	
		Antinoos Agamemnon Eurykleia	
	'respectable, wife of ›Laertes' son'	Theoklymenos Odysseus	
	'broad-minded, mother of Telemakhos'	Eumaios	
Periboia	'best in form of women, young daughter of ›great-hearted‹ Eurymedon'	Athena	
Polykaste	'beautiful, young daughter of Nestor'		Narrator

The narrator, however, uses double epithets to describe females about as often as speaking characters do (statistics are skewed by the frequency of 'gray-eyed, goddess' and 'early-born, rosy-fingered'). Space does not allow for a full account of these instances, suffice to say those characters which the narrator selects for comment are either mythic exemplars or nobility. There is also a certain amount of focalization in some of these scenes, Aphrodite for instance is described as 'well-crowned, Kytherian' from the point of view of Athena who is enhancing Penelope's beauty with her own sister in mind.<sup>74</sup> However, once the statistics have been adjusted, a few interesting anomalies stand out as good examples of narratorial epithet manipulation.

**Fig.5.10: List of Double Epithets for Immortal Females**

RECIPIENT	EPITHET	SPEAKER	
Aphrodite	'well-crowned, Kytherian'		Narrator Demodokos
Artemis	'chaste, of the golden throne'	Kalypso	
	'daughter of Zeus, queenly goddess'	Penelope	
Athena	'gray-eyed, goddess'		Narrator
	'Pallas, daughter of Zeus ›of the aegis‹'		Narrator

<sup>74</sup> 18.187-196.

	'Pallas, daughter of Zeus'	Athena	
	'Gray-eyed, daughter of a mighty sire'	Nestor	Narrator
	'child of Zeus >of the aegis', Atrytone'	Penelope Odysseus	
	'dread, lovely haired'		Narrator
	'bringer of plunder, daughter of Zeus'	Odysseus	
Circe	'Aiaia, subtle'	Odysseus	
Eos	'early-born, rosy-fingered'		Narrator Menelaos-as- narrator Odysseus-as-narrator
	'beautifully-throned, divine'		Odysseus-as-narrator
Kalypso	'divine among goddesses, queenly nymph'		Narrator
	'lovely-haired, nymph'	Zeus	
	'daughter of Atlas, subtle'	Odysseus	
Lamp. & Phae.	'lovely-haired, nymphs'	Circe	
Nymphs	'daughters of Zeus, of the fountain'	Eumaios	

Once the epithets for Eos have been adjusted for formulaic repetition (i.e. by removing all those which describe her as 'early-born, rosy-fingered' at the start of the day) we are left with only one double epithet for the goddess of dawn.<sup>75</sup> The exception occurs toward the end of the text where it demonstrates a masterful sleight of the poet's hand. At 23.347 Eos receives a double epithet entirely different from her famous refrain which causes her to transform from ἡριγένεια ῥοδοδάκτυλος ('early-born, rosy-fingered') to ἡριγένειαν χρυσόθρονον ('early-born, golden-throned'). The difference between the standard double epithet and this novel double epithet is the transition from '*rosy-fingered*' Eos to '*golden-throned*' Eos. Why then should the narrator choose an alternative double epithet for dawn in this singular instance?

<sup>75</sup> 2.1; 3.404, 491; 4.306; 5.228; 8.1; 13.18; 15.189; 17.1; 19.428.

The answer lies in the context. The events described at 23.345-8 describe the climax of Athena's horologic intervention:<sup>76</sup>

When she supposed that the heart of Odysseus had  
had its joy of bed with his wife and of sleep,  
she immediately urged **the early-born, golden-throned One**  
from Okeanos, to bring the light of day to mankind. 235

This passage, of course, marks the end of an action which is initiated a hundred lines or so previously, after Penelope has flung her white arms around Odysseus in her moment of recognition:<sup>77</sup>

And now **rosy-fingered** Eos would have shone on their weeping,  
had the gray-eyed goddess Athena not been aware.  
She held back the long night at its farthest course, and stayed  
**golden-throned** Eos in the ripples of Okeanos, she would not permit  
her swift-footed horses that bring light to men to be yoked: 245  
Lamos and Phaethon, the colts who bear Eos forwards.

Here, the same two epithets are presented singly: *ῥοδοδάκτυλος* and *χρυσόθρονος*. The first forms one part of Eos' usual, formulaic, double epithet *ἠριγένεια ῥοδοδάκτυλος*, and the second stand-alone as a single epithet. The transition from 'early-born, *rosy-fingered*' Eos to 'early-born, *golden-throned*' Eos therefore occurs at the moment when Athena

<sup>76</sup> 23.345-8:

ὄππότε δὴ ῥ' Ὀδυσῆα ἐέλεπετο ὄν κατὰ θυμὸν 235  
εὐνήσ ἧς ἀλόχου ταρπήμεναι ἠδὲ καὶ ὕπνου,  
αὐτίκ' ἀπ' Ὀκεανοῦ **χρυσόθρονον ἠριγένειαν**  
ᾤρσεν, ἴν' ἀνθρώποισι φῶς φέροι.

<sup>77</sup> 23.241-246:

καὶ νύ κ' ὀδυρομένοισι φάνη ῥοδοδάκτυλος Ἥως,  
εἰ μὴ ἄρ' ἄλλ' ἐνόησε θεὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη.  
νύκτα μὲν ἐν περάτῃ δολιχὴν σχέθεν, Ἥω δ' αἴτε  
ῥύσατ' ἐπ' Ὀκεανῶ **χρυσόθρονον**, οὐδ' ἔα ἵππους  
ζεύγνυσθ' ὠκύποδας, φάος ἀνθρώποισι φέροντας, 245  
Λάμπον καὶ Φαέθονθ', οἳ τ' Ἥω πῶλοι ἄγουσι.

holds back ‘golden-throned’ Eos. By selecting this epithet the poet is pre-empting its later application in the alternate double-epithet. It is, therefore, precisely Athena’s disruption of Eos’ usual courses which causes a disruption of her epithets. Where the reader anticipates ἠριγένεια ῥοδοδάκτυλος, they are instead greeted with ἠριγένειαν χρυσόθρονον and so the poet jars the reader as much as Athena jars the cosmos. The anomaly is both contextually appropriate – it is the same golden-throned Eos whom Athena detains (21.244), as she releases (21.347) – and poetically expedient – as the change in epithet creates a disruption reflective of both the reader and the Athena’s extraordinary cosmic interference.

### *Athena*

Athena’s list of double epithets also features a striking anomaly when adjusted for the common speech-introduction ‘gray-eyed goddess’. At 7.41 the narrator instead describes her as ἔυπλόκαμος, δεινὴ θεός (lovely-haired, dread goddess). Individually, neither of the epithets ‘lovely-haired’, nor ‘dread (goddess)’ is ever applied to Athena in the *Odyssey*. Furthermore, as a combination of two epithets, this phrase is never applied to any other character in the text: elsewhere, it either forms part of a triple epithet for Kalypso and Circe by Odysseus-as-narrator, or appears as the alternative ‘lovely-haired nymph/s’ (which is used by speaking characters to describe Kalypso and Helios’ daughters).<sup>78</sup> Why, then, should the narrator select such a peculiar combination of epithets for Athena in this context?

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<sup>78</sup> Odysseus-as-narrator uses the two epithets with the addition of ἀυδήεις (‘who speaks with mortal voice’) at: 11.8; 12.150, and 12.449, making this triple epithet formula unique to him in his role as narrator. Note also the comparison between how O-as-narrator describes Kalypso: ‘dread goddess, lovely-haired, who speaks with a mortal voice’, and the more indifferent way Zeus describes her: ‘lovely-haired nymph’ (5.30).



The key to its use might be found in other instances where *ἐυπλόκαμος* is applied as an epithet to other characters. ‘Lovely-haired’ (*ἐυπλόκαμος*) is used twice in Book 5: once to describe Kalypso and once to describe Eos.<sup>79</sup> More appropriate to the Phaiakian context, however, is the application of *ἐυπλόκαμος* twice to describe Nausikaa and/or her attending girls.<sup>80</sup>

So Odysseus was compelled to mingle with the lovely-haired maidens.

...

So she [the *κούρη* Nausikaa] spoke to her lovely-haired handmaidens:

These descriptions appear not long before Athena herself takes on the guise of a similar young maiden (*παρθενικῆ ἔικυῖα νεήνιδι*, 7.20) so as to interact with Odysseus on the streets of Scheria.<sup>81</sup> It is shortly thereafter, when he begins to follow her through the streets, that Athena is described as having ‘lovely-hair’ (*ἐυπλόκαμος*). The association between these two descriptions is further enhanced by the parallel use of *παρθενική* (an epic instance of *παρθένοσ*) which is also found only in the Phaiakian context and only otherwise used to describe Nausikaa.<sup>82</sup>

The implication of these descriptions is therefore that Athena has disguised herself as a ‘lovely-haired’ (*ἐυπλόκαμος*) ‘virgin-girl’ (*παρθένοσ*) in order to better camouflage herself among other lovely-haired maidens, namely Nausikaa and her companions. Indeed, she also refers to herself as the daughter of a ‘irreproachable father’ who is the neighbour of

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<sup>79</sup> An alternative *εὐκομος* is used to describe Kalypso at 8.452, which – while still meaning ‘lovely-haired’ – indicates that the hair was less intricately arranged. My thanks to Georgia Mystrioti for clarifying this. Refs: 5.57, 390.

<sup>80</sup> 6.135: ὣς Ὀδυσσεὺς κούρησιν *ἐυπλοκάμοισιν* ἔμελλε μίξεσθαι, and: 6.238: δὴ ῥα τότε ἄμφιπόλοισιν *ἐυπλοκάμοισι* μετηύδα.

<sup>81</sup> The use of *νεᾶνις* to describe a young girl is a *hapax* in the *Odyssey*, used only here to describe Athena’s transformation. The reason for this might be that she is not actually taking the form of a *κούρη* like Nausikaa and her maidens, but only resembling (*εἰκόσ*) one, and so an alternative noun has been selected to better emphasise the difference.

<sup>82</sup> 6.33, 109, 228.

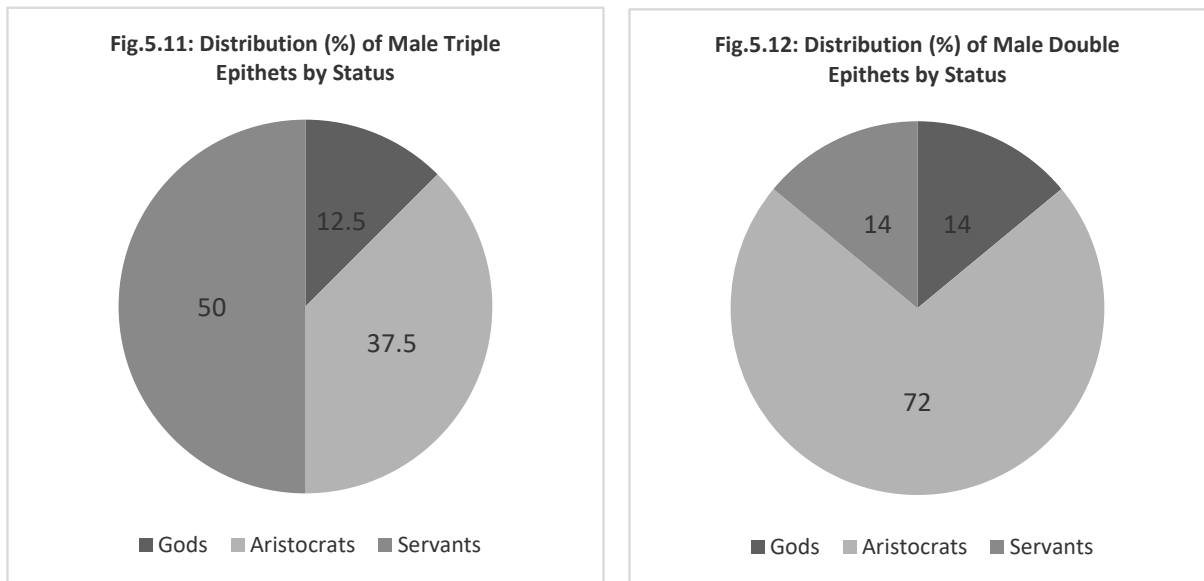
Alkinoos (7.29) and so positions herself as an aristocratic girl approximating Nausikaa in status. The epithet *ἑπιλόκαμος* is selected at this point as a deliberate, contextually-appropriate comparative. As to why Athena might also be ‘dread goddess’ in this instance, one can only assume that the formidable goddess of war does not like to be associated too much with an overly feminine appearance and so the second epithet is introduced to balance her disguise: to remind the reader that this is no simpering girl leading Odysseus through to his salvation.<sup>83</sup>

### Servants

The vast numerical difference between male and female characters in the *Odyssey* in general means that males are always going to receive the majority of epithets in any set of data. However, if one considers the relative *status* of the male characters who received triple epithets from the narrator (Fig. 5.1) compared with the status of male characters who receive double epithets from the narrator, then one finds that the narrator still greatly favours minority characters (i.e. servants) in his use of triple epithets (Figs.5.11 and 5.12).

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<sup>83</sup> For more on how Athena conducts herself in this scene, see: **Chapter Three: Gods and Mortals.**



The data in these charts show that, when awarding epithets to male characters, the narrator will rarely give a double epithet to a servant (14%), but is far more likely to award a triple epithet to a servant (50%). Therefore, when the reader comes across a triple epithet for a male spoken by the narrator, it would be far more likely for that epithet to belong to a servant than if the reader came across either a double epithet spoken by the same, or a triple epithet spoken by a character. The direction of this data is therefore a direct inversion of the standard protocols for epithet distribution in spoken dialogue, whereby the higher the character's status, the more epithets they receive. The data for the narrator's use of triple epithets therefore raise the question as to why this might be the case.

*Eurymedousa*

It is certainly true that mortal women receive triple epithets only from the narrator or from Odysseus as an internal narrator. Even so, there are only two women who receive this honour: Eurymedousa (7.8) and Pero (11.287, see above).

Nausikaa's nurse is described by the narrator as 'the old woman, of Apeire, the chambermaid Eurymedousa' (γρῆς, Ἀπειραΐη, θαλαμηπόλος Εὐρυμέδουσα, 7.8). Individually, each epithet belongs to the lowest stratum of its category. θαλαμηπόλος is an occupational epithet, shared by slaves and servants. Ἀπειραΐη is a location epithet which, in the context of Eurymedousa's occupation, indicates the place of origin from which she was plundered.<sup>84</sup> This fact is elaborated in the epithets' wider context:<sup>85</sup>

The well-oared ships delivered her from Apeire,  
taken as a gift of honour for Alkinoos, because he was 10  
lord over all the Phaiakians, who listened to him like a god.

The final epithet γραῦς is unusual as a feminine version of the male epithet γέρων which we have seen elsewhere used to describe other serving women for whom it is used an indicator of status in its own right.<sup>86</sup> The masculine equivalent γέρων is used to describe a generation of men in the *Odyssey* who are all respected for their wisdom: Nestor, Ekhenos, Laertes, and Halitherses.<sup>87</sup> The same intelligence can be extended to old females: Eurykleia, for example, is an 'old woman' (γραῦς) who is also 'broad-minded'

<sup>84</sup> For the distinction between Location and Occupational epithets, see: **Appendix One**.

<sup>85</sup> 7.9-11:

τὴν ποτ' Ἀπεΐρηθεν νέες ἤγαγον ἀμφιέλισσαι·  
Ἀλκινόω δ' αὐτὴν γέρας ἔξελον, οὐνεκα πᾶσιν 10  
Φαιήκεσσιν ἄνασσε, θεοῦ δ' ὡς δῆμος ἄκουεν·

<sup>86</sup> See: **Chapter Four: Familial Epithets**. LSJ: s.v. γραῦς. For age as a marker of respect, see: **Chapter Two: Elders**.

<sup>87</sup> Nestor: 3.436, 444; 4.190; Ekhenos: 7.154; 11.342; Laertes: 1.188; 4.110; 14.9, 173, 451, and Halitherses: 24.451.

(περίφρων) and ‘careful-minded’ (κεδνὰ ἰδυῖα).<sup>88</sup> Elderly women, therefore, appear to be granted the same respect for their wisdom as elderly men. The meaning of Eurymedousa’s name may also be indicative of her wisdom if it derives from a combination of εὐρύς and μῆδος giving something like ‘she who uses her wit for a wide range of functions’, a description not too dissimilar to the characterisation of Eurykleia in 19.353.<sup>89</sup> Whatever the specifics of her name, her age marks Eurymedousa as superior to her young charge with regard to her wisdom, if not to her ancestry which precisely suits the function she has been employed to fulfil.

Eurymedousa’s position in relation to Nausikaa is further clarified by the information that she is also the girl’s nanny: τροφὸς (from the verb τρέφω: 7.12). This role compares Eurymedousa to Telemakhos and Odysseus’ nurse: Eurykleia.<sup>90</sup> The comparison between them continues through their names; both begin with the positive εὐ-, a prefix which is reserved only for sympathetic servants in the *Odyssey*.<sup>91</sup> ‘Nanny’ (τροφὸς) is also an occupation which transgresses both social and gender barriers, as it is a position occupied by slaves or servants who are given authority over young people of aristocratic lineage.<sup>92</sup> Judging by Eurykleia’s relationships with Telemakhos and Odysseus, this authority may sometimes continue even when the charge has reached maturity. Despite their relatively high status granted by both gender and breeding, Odysseus and

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<sup>88</sup> γρήυς 19.353; 22.481; κεδνὰ ἰδυῖα: 1.428; περίφρων: 19.357, 491; 20.134; 21.381.

<sup>89</sup> This is one possible translation provided by Kanavou (2015): 130. If, instead, the root was considered to be μέδω then the name would instead be taken to mean ‘wide-ruling’, a name appropriate perhaps to Nausithoos’ grandfather of the same name: Eurymedon (*Odyssey* 7.58), see: Kanavou (2015): 130 n.237, and West (2014): 186-7.

<sup>90</sup> *Odyssey* 22.419, 479, 485, 492; 23.25, 39, 69.

<sup>91</sup> Also Eurynome, and Eumaios, Kanavou (2015): 130-131, 142.

<sup>92</sup> For more on the intimacy between nurses and their charges, see: **Chapter Two: Masters and Servants**, and **Chapter Four: Familial Dialogue**.

Telemakhos still treat their female servant Eurykleia with respect because she is their 'beloved nurse' (φίλη τροφός).<sup>93</sup>

Within the context of the opening of Book Seven, therefore, Eurymedousa is awarded a triple epithet in order to emphasise the authority she has over Nausikaa in her role as the girl's nanny. Individually, the epithets refer to some of the humblest status descriptions provided in Homer: both her occupation and place of origin reinforce her position as slave or servant to the House of Alkinoos. The seemingly dismissive 'old woman', however, is used to indicate that she is someone who could be respected for her wisdom. It is this, combined with the epithet's position within a lengthy extended phrase, which informs the reader that Eurymedousa has the authority in this scene.

Given the patterns found in the narrators' application of triple epithets in the *Odyssey*, we would expect the authority granted by this triple epithet to operate within a context which might not otherwise be openly expressed in society. The additional description of her role as Nausikaa's nurse therefore resolves the question. In short, the narrator's decision to award a triple epithet to a lowly female servant is indicative of his need to compare her status to that of her younger aristocratic charge, to whom she is in some ways superior (to the extent that any governess has authority over her charge). These titles must be granted by the narrator and not a speaker, however, for to do so would be openly to compare her status to Nausikaa's.

Through its application to Eurymedousa, the triple epithet can serve a final function. The narrator allows us to hold up a mirror to Nausikaa's status by comparing their relative

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<sup>93</sup> E.g. 22.419.

epithets. Such a comparison informs us that, despite her lineage, Nausikaa's status in the world (as a young, unmarried, woman) is relatively low. This position is emphasised by the epithets which are used to describe her. Nausikaa is one of only two characters described in terms of their youth: she is both 'maiden' (κόρη) and 'unwedded girl' (παρθένος ἀδμής).<sup>94</sup> Therefore, while the application of a triple epithet to a living, mortal, female might be extremely unusual, it is not unmerited in this context. The narrator needs to award a triple epithet to Eurymedousa in order to emphasise her authority over Nausikaa in her role as the girl's nurse. As a servant, however, Eurymedousa cannot receive epithets of great individual standing and so the narrator has opted for an unassuming collection of titles which further emphasise Eurymedousa's relationship to her charge.

### *Moulios*

The same analysis can be applied to the unusual description of Moulios in Book 18. According to the narrator he is: 'noble Moulios, the Doulichian, herald' (Μούλιος ἥρωσ κῆρυξ Δουλιχειύς 18.423), an odd combination of titles indeed. First of all, only warriors are awarded the epithet ἥρωσ, which is indicative of their noble birth, but epithets denoting occupation are exclusively reserved to those of low birth; usually slaves and servants. Furthermore when Location epithets are applied to servants, they usually indicate their place of origin and in turn provide evidence of their master's wealth by serving as reminders of the places they have ransacked or raided.<sup>95</sup> Yet, far from being a slave-of-conquest, Moulios is described as the 'attendant' (θεράπων) of Amphinomos (18.424)

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<sup>94</sup> Epithets which are exclusive to her and her attendants, as the youngest female characters in the *Odyssey*: 6.113; 6.109, 228. The other character is Elpenor: 10.552.

<sup>95</sup> Like a male equivalent of the female embedded patronymic, a servant's epithets can indicate their master's previous military achievements and sphere of influence.

who, we are told, is also from Doulikhia (18.395) and so the epithet cannot refer to his place of origin pre-mancipation.

Moulios' relationship to Amphinomos is described in language more akin to martial companions of the *Iliad* such as Patroklos and Meriones.<sup>96</sup> This relationship would therefore explain why they are of the same place of origin and also why Moulios is awarded the more martial epithet ἥρωζ. He is not a slave taken from war, but a military companion who acts as an equerry. Compared with Amphinomos who has both a patronymic, 'son of Nisos' (Νίσου υἱός, 16.395; 18.413), and a rank, 'commander of the people' (κοσμήτορι λαῶν, 18.152), Moulios is clearly a social inferior (he does not even have a patronym). But he is still a noble in his own right (as determined by the epithet ἥρωζ) and so can be justly described by the narrator as Μούλιος ἥρωζ κῆρυξ Δουλιχιεύς, even if social convention prevents Amphinomos from doing the same. Given that Moulios is the only quasi-servant (herald) on Ithaka to receive a triple epithet from the narrator, one might argue that it is his precisely his close relationship to Amphinomos "the good suitor" – emphasised by the shared homeland – which earns him his own triple epithet from the narrator.

### *Demodokos*

Finally, the narrator uses two different triple epithet phrases to describe the bard Demodokos: 'faithful, singer, whom the Muse loves greatly' (ἐρίηρον, ἀοιδόν, τὸν πέρι μοῦσ' ἐφίλησε, 8.62) and 'faithful, singer, valued among men' (ἐρίηρον, ἀοιδόν, λαοῖσι τετιμένον, 8.471). Given that the consistent epithet denotes the character's occupation

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<sup>96</sup> *Iliad* 18.152; 23.113, 124, 528, 860, 888. In martial contexts, θεράπων typically conveys the sense of 'companion in arms' which is sometimes translated as 'squire', though the chivalric sense of the latter is rather anachronistic and does not portray the relationship accurately: LSJ: s.v. θεράπων, also: Autenreich: s.v. θεράπων.



(ᾄδοις) it is surprising that a triple epithet is awarded at all until we remember that the narrator is more likely to award a triple epithet to a character of lower status. Just as in the cases above, the narrator describes Demodokos in a way which raises his status in comparison with other singers. Phemios, by contrast, receives a series of double epithets: he is also 'faithful, singer' (ἐρίηρον ᾄδοιν, 1.346), but also a 'far-famed singer' (ᾄδοις περικλυτός, 1.325), 'Terpias' son the singer' (Τερπιάδης δ' ἔτ' ᾄδοις, 22.330), and 'the singer who abounds in legends' (πολύφημος ᾄδοις, 22.376). Demodokos, by virtue of his extended epithet, is therefore superior in status to all other singers in the *Odyssey*. Within society at large, however, he clearly remains inferior to his master. Alkinoos can describe him only as a 'god-given singer' (θεῖον ᾄδοιν, 8.43), leaving any indication of Demodokos' enhanced status amongst bards to the purview of the narrator.

## Conclusion

The previous three chapters have demonstrated through a variety of examples how the stratification of Homeric society is directly correlated with the number of epithets awarded by its speaking characters. Yet, when a narrator has control of the text, he becomes free to invert this protocol and instead awards double and triple epithets to the more disenfranchised among the Homeric community (notably females, servants, and sometimes even antagonists). The ratio of male to female epithets even increases in relation to the length of the epithet phrase, as if to represent the narrator's progression away from the protocols of spoken epithet exchange: Single Epithets 75%(M) / 25% (F), Double Epithets 71% (M) / 29% (F), and Triple Epithets 66% (M) / 34% (F).

In short, both the narrator and the speaking characters will tailor the number of epithets they use to describe characters in order to convey status. The difference between them is that the status of characters increases in direct proportion to the number of epithets spoken by other characters, while the social status of characters described by the narrator decreases in direct proportion to the number of epithets. This chapter has therefore demonstrated a key insight into the manipulation of extended epithets in the *Odyssey*. The narrator is allowed to indicate his own biases and raise awareness of certain characters in certain contexts, through the application of epithets. This chapter has also demonstrated that the type of epithets within an extended phrase also contributes to the status of the epithet phrase since some individual epithets rank more highly than others in the κλέος stakes. Further research is needed to determine whether or not this is the case in all instances of epithet exchange.

Following the analysis of data which has been presented in Part II, the thesis will now move on to examine how these same rules of epithet use and exchange inform our reading of the text through a literary case study of Odysseus' name(s) and epithets.

III: Odysseus, A Case Study:  
The Significance of Name and Epithets for Heroic Identity

## CHAPTER SIX: Ὀὐ τις Ὀδυσσεύς: The Anonymous Hero

No-one is altogether nameless... for once his parents  
have brought him life they give him a name.  
~ *Odyssey* 8.552-555

### Introduction

To this point, the thesis has demonstrated not only the significance of names – etymologically, symbolically, and textually – but also the conventions surrounding the use and application of epithets both by the narrator and by speaking characters in a variety of contexts. Given that the ancient Greeks themselves did not isolate the name from the epithet and instead perceived the epithet to be intrinsic to their noun, this thesis would not be complete without connecting the analysis of epithets to the aforementioned significance of names and naming in the Homeric world.<sup>1</sup> This section will therefore end where the thesis began, by presenting a case study of Odysseus which examines how he, his family, friends and enemies use his name and titles to convey beliefs about his status throughout the *Odyssey*.

This chapter first posits that there exists within the Homeric universe a convention that “being” is synonymous with “being named” and therefore antithetically, that the act of “un-naming” is synonymous with destruction.<sup>2</sup> These conclusions are based on the supposition presented first in the *Iliad* that a hero can seek to obtain his immortality through the afterlife of his name.<sup>3</sup> The *Odyssey* presents us with many examples of how

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<sup>1</sup> See: **Chapter One: Concusion**. Modern Greeks colloquially use επίθετο for ‘surname’ even today (my thanks to Elena Theodorakopoulos for bringing this to my attention).

<sup>2</sup> This argument was presented as part of an essay on Homeric afterlives in: Grey (2019b): 101-116. The act of “un-naming” is described by Higbie (1995): 16, though Stanford identified the phenomenon as a ‘reversal of etymology’, Stanford (1939): 32.

<sup>3</sup> See: **Chapter One: Κλέος: Naming and Immortality**.

the subversion of a name is connected to the supposed – or wished for – obliteration of the thing that name identifies. After examining the impact of this Homeric trope, the chapter moves on to examine how Odysseus' names and titles are used, subverted, or avoided by a variety of characters whose motives and beliefs concerning Odysseus' return are all reflected in the use and abuse of his name(s).

### The Power of Anonymity

Within the Homeric universe, being named is synonymous with living. In the Phaiakian court Alkinoos reminds Odysseus that 'no-one is altogether nameless... for once his parents have brought him life they give him a name'.<sup>4</sup> Louis Rank proposed that this conceit – that the name itself conveys a person's essence – is encapsulated in the relationship between the Greek verbs εἶναι ('to be') and καλεῖσθαι ('to call').<sup>5</sup> In Homer, the verb 'to call' is used in a variety of circumstances, including "to summon someone" (i.e. to council or to one's home) but it is also used in the passive sense of "call by name" or rather, "*to be called* [something] because of one's status".<sup>6</sup> 'To call' is instead best translated, Rank argues, as 'to speak into being' in order to convey the more literal interpretation of engendering something through the act of naming it. To be, therefore, is to be named. This interpretation is supported by the etymological conventions discussed in Chapter One, which demonstrate that a character's name is deliberately indicative of

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<sup>4</sup> *Odyssey* 8.552-555.

<sup>5</sup> Rank (1952): 25.

<sup>6</sup> "To summon": *Odyssey* 1.90; 2.348; 8.43; 10.231; 17.382. *Iliad* 1.270, 402; 10.195 16.693; 20.4. "To be called": *Odyssey* 5.273; 6.244; 7.313; 8.550; 15.433. *Iliad* 1.403; 2.260, 684; 3.138; 4.61; 5.306; 11.578.

either their intrinsic, or inherited, qualities. Odysseus is called ‘the hated one’ because that is who he is and to name him as such is to bring these qualities of him into being.

While we might say that speaking a name is synonymous with the act of genesis it is perhaps truer to say that, in Homer, being unnamed is synonymous with death. In Book Four Penelope fears that Telemakhos might lose his name should the Suitors succeed in killing him: ‘must it be that even his name (ὄνομα) should be lost (λείπω) among men?’<sup>7</sup> Similarly, in Book 24, the soul of Agamemnon remarks that Akhilleus’ name managed to survive past his death: ‘thus, you are dead, but your name (ὄνομα) is not destroyed (ὄλλυμι)’ because he has won an immortal κλέος which will last for all time, i.e. the *Iliad*.<sup>8</sup> These examples warn us that to die means to risk losing one’s name, though a suitable death may ensure its continuation. Therefore the deliberate act of altering, or surrendering, one’s name should be understood as a serious act of transgression akin to surrendering one’s life.

Book 18 is a revealing example of this convention. In the competition between Odysseus-as-beggar and the vagrant Iros, the Suitors associate un-naming Iros with the end of his existence:<sup>9</sup>

Forthwith, Iros will be Un-Iros, for bringing this evil upon himself ...

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<sup>7</sup> *Odyssey* 4.710.

<sup>8</sup> *Odyssey* 24.93; see also Russo *et al.* (1992): 371. In *Works and Days* Hesiod remarks that βῆσαν ἐς εὐρώεντα δόμον κρυεροῦ Αἴδαο νώνυμοι (‘they went into the damp and icy house of Hades, nameless’, 153-154). Pucci (1995): 15, 154, 183, and ‘(Odysseus goes) even to the point of not existing at all’ Higbie (1995): 163.

<sup>9</sup> *Odyssey* 18.73-79.

ἢ τάχα Ἴρος Ἄϊρος ἐπίσπαστον κακὸν ἔξει,

...

νῦν μὲν μήτ’ εἴης, βουγάϊε, μήτε γένοιο

Iros itself is a pun on Iris, as he runs messages for the Suitors 18.6-7. The application of the alpha-privative negates the noun, Ἄϊρος becomes ‘Un-Iros’. The second half of this insult is repeated after Iros loses at 18.115-116, and later used against Odysseus himself: 21.308. For more on the relationship between Iros and the Suitors, see: Levine (1982a): 200-204.

It will be as if you never were, you great ox, nor had ever been.

The Suitors here imply that the contest with Odysseus will be the undoing of Iros as he will either die immediately at Odysseus' hands (18.91) or eventually at the hands of Ekhetos (18.85; 116).<sup>10</sup> Once Odysseus' physicality is magnified by Athena (18.67-71), the Suitors recognise Iros' fate and so unname him in expectation of his impending demise.<sup>11</sup> Thus, their two statements: that he is 'Un-Iros', and 'it will be as if you never [had existed]', are simply repetitions of the same expected outcome – his death.

In a similar manner, Penelope attempts to undermine the power of Troy by subverting its name. First she renames it Κακοίλιον 'Evil-Ilium' and then denies it a name altogether, saying it is, οὐκ ὀνομαστήν ('not to be named').<sup>12</sup> Penelope's un-naming of Troy can even be perceived as an attack on the Iliadic tradition itself, as a warrior's κλέος exists through the naming (and singing) of his heroic achievements.<sup>13</sup> Thus, if she were to damn the naming of Troy from memory – by denying its songs in her halls (1.337-34) – she would simultaneously be forgetting the heroes who fell there and thus denying them their eternal afterlife. Similarly, the prefix δυσ-, which is also applied to nouns to express the negative, is employed by Telemakhos (in his use of δυσμήτηρ, 23.197) and by Penelope who calls the coming dawn δυσώνυμος ('ill-named', 19.571).<sup>14</sup> These acts of deformation are

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<sup>10</sup> Russo *et al.* (1992): 52-53.

<sup>11</sup> Dimock believes the Suitors' actions also foreshadows their own death: Dimock (1989): 232-3. Other proposals of 'un-naming' or 'negative' naming through the privative prefix, include: Louden argues that Agamemnon's name is formed from a negative compound of γαμέω ('to marry') in reference to his fatal marriage: (1995): 31. Peradotto makes the case for Argos the dog and his inability to run, by Peradotto (1990): 112-113. Rank suggests an additional wordplay on ἀπτηνής and Πηνελόπεια in which Penelope intimates a deformation of herself (*Odyssey* 19.324), see: Rank (1952): 56.

<sup>12</sup> *Odyssey* 19.260, 597; 23.19.

<sup>13</sup> Higbie (1995): 15.

<sup>14</sup> Of Penelope: δυσμήτηρ, see: **Chapter Four: Familial Dialogue**. Hektor also calls Paris: Δύσπαρις in *Iliad* 3.39. See also, the compound δυσώνυμος (*Odyssey* 19.571; *Iliad* 6.255; 12.116-117) discussed by Griffin who notes that most instances of this phenomenon are spoken by females (1986): 42. It is also discussed by Higbie (1995): 15-16.

intentional. Their purpose is to tie namelessness to the hope, knowledge, or expectation, of something's destruction.<sup>15</sup> This convention implies that whenever Odysseus surrenders his own name, or adopts a pseudonym, he is choosing to become a nameless man who therefore does not exist because he cannot be remembered, just as those who dislike him are stating their belief in his demise by refusing to name him.<sup>16</sup>

With this convention in mind, it is expedient to examine one of the most famous instances of Odyssean anonymity in the *Odyssey*.<sup>17</sup> His encounter with the Cyclops is one of the longer stories from the *Fabulae*, and centres upon an onomastic pun where Odysseus identifies himself as Οὐτίς:<sup>18</sup>

Κύκλωψ, εἰρωτᾷς μ' ὄνομα κλυτόν, αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ τοι  
 ἐξερέω· σὺ δέ μοι δὸς ξείνιον, ὥς περ ὑπέστης. 365  
 Οὐτίς ἐμοί γ' ὄνομα· Οὐτίς δέ με κικλήσκουσι  
 μήτηρ ἠδὲ πατήρ ἠδ' ἄλλοι πάντες ἑταῖροι.

Cyclops, you ask me my famous name, and I will  
 say it aloud: so that you will grant me *xenia* and submit to it. 365  
 No-one is my name; No-one is what they call me,  
 my mother, my father, and all of my friends.

The paronomasia which follows in this scene is more potent in the Greek, where it is augmented by the various layers of humour which play on the similarities between οὐτίς and μητις.

<sup>15</sup> Louden (1995): 31, see also: Higbie (1995): 15; and Russo *et al.* (1992): 52.

<sup>16</sup> Note also that Menelaos avoids naming the deceased characters: Agamemnon (who is instead ἀδελφός), Aigisthos (who is merely ἄλλος), and Klytaimnestra (his 'accursed wife' οὐλομένης ἀλόχοιο), in his version of the Oresteia narrative (4.91-92). Higbie likewise notices that Polydamas deliberately avoids naming Akhilleus in the *Iliad* calling him instead 'a man' and 'that man' (13.746; 18.257): Higbie (1995) 15 n.54.

<sup>17</sup> This is the only place in Homer where ambiguity and paronomasia motivate a whole episode', Stanford (1939): 104-5. See also: Austin, (1972): 1-19; Podleck (1961): 125-133; Clay (1983): 27, and Louden (1995): 36-37.

<sup>18</sup> *Odyssey* 9.364-367. The Scholiast on ὄνομα κλυτόν (9.364) renders κλυτός not by the adjective 'famous' but rather as the verb 'by which I am called' (καλέω) i.e. 'you ask me the name by which I am called'.



Οὔτις ἐμοί γ' ὄνομα

Later in the episode, after Polyphemos has been being blinded by Odysseus and his comrades, he cries out in anguish. His neighbours come running to his aid, and from outside the cave they inquire:<sup>19</sup>

ἦ μή τις σευ μῆλα βροτῶν ἀέκοντος ἐλαύνει; 405

ἦ μή τις σ' αὐτὸν κτείνει δόλω ἢ ἐ βίηφιν;

Surely, **some one**, some mortal man, is driving your sheep against your will? 405

Or else, **some one** is killing you by guile or by force?

To which Polyphemos replies (9.408):

ὦ φίλοι, **Οὔτις** με κτείνει δόλω οὐδὲ βίηφιν.

My friends, **No-one** is killing me by guile, nor force.

There are several puns to be found here. The first is that οὔ τις ('no one') is an equivalent of μή τις ('(not) some one'); the main difference between the two forms being that μή expects a negative answer from a direct question.<sup>20</sup> Therefore when Polyphemos responds to his neighbours, they think that he is saying οὔ τις ('no[t any]one'), rather than the name by which Odysseus has identified himself: Οὔτις ('No-one'). By seeming to agree with his neighbours, Polyphemos is providing them with the anticipated negative response of their μή τις queries.<sup>21</sup>

These puns on οὔ τις and μή τις continue throughout the episode. One instance even foreshadows events in the cave; the sailors arrive at the island to find it enshrouded in a

<sup>19</sup> *Odyssey* 9.405-406.

<sup>20</sup> LSJ: s.v. μή. For more on the association between these words see: Schein (1970): 73-83, and Mariani (1987): 211-23.

<sup>21</sup> Podlecki (1961): 130.

mist so thick that ‘no one [οὐ τις] could see the island with their eyes’ (9.146). Another possible account is when the Cyclops questions his ram: ‘you never [οὐ τι] were left behind the sheep before’ (9.448); the irony of course being that he is simultaneously, though unwittingly, addressing his guest, Οὐτίς, who is concealed beneath the ram and who certainly has never been left behind the sheep before either.<sup>22</sup> A final possible example from this scene is from 9.460. Eustathius noted that when Polyphemos calls Odysseus a ‘worthless Nobody’ (οὐτιδανός... Οὐτίς) the narrator is playing on the relationship between οὐτίς and οὐτιδανός, as if he were “Nobody’s nobody”.<sup>23</sup>

The second pun is that the negative μή τις is audibly similar to the noun μῆτις, meaning ‘cunning intelligence’.<sup>24</sup> Podlecki and Stanford both note that ‘there is no grammatical reason’ why Homer should have the Cyclopes employ μή instead of οὐ in their questions because Homer ‘elsewhere always uses οὐ when the indicative follows εἶ’, unless he was consciously intending a play on μῆτις (or trying to avoid the over-repetition of οὐ τις before the “punch-line”, 9.408).<sup>25</sup> This pun on μῆτις therefore appears to be a deliberate choice which is further reinforced when Odysseus remarks that:<sup>26</sup>

ὤς ὄνομ’ ἔξαπάτησεν ἔμὸν καὶ μῆτις ἀμύμων.

My name [*Outis*] and my irreproachable *mētis* deceived them.

This line is evocative, as it creates a direct association between Odysseus’ name and his most frequent epithet: πολύμητις; turning “Odysseus πολύμητις” into “Οὐτίς the man of

<sup>22</sup> Podlecki (1961): 131 n.14. In *Iliad* 3.197-198 Priam likens Odysseus to a fleecy ram who leads a flock, but Higbie calls any comparison to the *Odyssey* ‘tempting, though pointless’: Higbie (1995): 181 n.20.

<sup>23</sup> *Odyssey* 9.460; Stanford (1939): 104-5; Austin (1972): 16 n.24.

<sup>24</sup> LSJ: s.v. μῆτις. For a full discussion on μῆτις, see: Detienne & Vernant (1991).

<sup>25</sup> Podlecki (1961): 130; Stanford (1959) on 9.408.

<sup>26</sup> *Odyssey* 9.414.

μητις”. The same connection reoccurs in Book 20 where it is πολύμητις Odysseus who reminds himself that he ‘took courage until [his] μητις led [him] from the cave’ (20.20-21).<sup>27</sup>

Finally, the exchange between Polyphemos and the Cyclopes puns on a connection between μῆτις and another intellectual quality which Odysseus holds in abundance: δόλος (‘guile’).<sup>28</sup> The terms are roughly synonymous, though the latter refers more to a practical form of mischief while the former is more of a cerebral trait and so, with Odysseus’ adopted name in mind – along with his own self-association between οὔτις and μητις – we could easily imagine the Cyclopes asking, and Polyphemos replying, that: ‘Οὔτις is killing me with his μῆτις, not with force’ instead of Οὔτις με κτείνει δόλω οὐδὲ βίηφι (9.408).

Odysseus quickly begins to develop this more practical δόλος once he realises the threat his captor poses. His first exchange with Polyphemos is described as consisting merely of words (ἔπεσσι).<sup>29</sup> However, once the Cyclops has started killing his guests and so admits to having no fear of Zeus Xenios, Odysseus changes his tactic. After being awarded the appellative ‘fool’ (νήπιός, 9.273) – instead of the more appropriate title ‘guest-stranger’ – Odysseus realizes that Polyphemos is trying to trick him into giving away the location of his ships: ‘Thus he spoke, testing me (πειράζω)’ (9.281). Odysseus, in response, turns to his intellect: ‘but I know much (εἰδότα πολλά) so it did not escape my notice (οὐ λάθην)’. Both verbs οἶδα and λανθάνω indicate knowledge, the former

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<sup>27</sup> Clay (1983): 119.

<sup>28</sup> With Odysseus ‘the meaning [of δόλος] seems to go beyond the idea of military stratagem... and suggests trickery ... of all sorts’: Pucci (1995): 62.

<sup>29</sup> τὸ δὲ νήπιος οὐκ ἐνόησεν *Odyssey* 9.257.

meaning ‘know’ and the latter meaning literally ‘it was not [οὐ] unknown to me’. Only then does Odysseus choose to alter the manner in which he speaks to ‘guileful words’ (δολίοις ἐπέεσσι) as he begins to weave the μῆτις of his new identity. By a tidy dénouement, it is Odysseus who then makes the Cyclops look a fool.<sup>30</sup>

The Οὔτις-μητις identity which Odysseus adopts in Book Nine manifests itself throughout most of the remainder of the poem and it is even pre-empted in Book Four. Here, Menelaos recounts his own memory of the Trojan Horse, where Helen likened her voice to the wives of the Argives, and called out to the concealed heroes ‘naming them by name’ (ὄνομακλήδην... ὀνόμαζες, 4.278). Odysseus was the only hero able to resist, suggesting first, that he was already proficient at surrendering his identity, and second, that his μῆτις was more powerful than Helen’s.<sup>31</sup>

Later, on Ithaka, Odysseus further reinforces this disassociation from his given name by repeatedly referring to himself in the third person. During the first revelation scene, for example, he tells Telemakhos that ‘No other Odysseus than I will ever come back to you’ (16.204).<sup>32</sup> Later, he demands that his comrades ‘Let no one (μή τις) hear that Odysseus is in the palace’ (16.301); a clear play on the same οὐ τις / μή τις pun previously used in Book Nine.<sup>33</sup> Other third-person accounts appear throughout the “Cretan Lies” where his alter-egos tell of their encounters with “Odysseus”.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup> *Odyssey* 9.442: Podlecki (1961): 131.

<sup>31</sup> *Odyssey* 4.284: Austin (1972): 15, and Higbie (1995): 17.

<sup>32</sup> Higbie calls this a ‘scene of self-identification’ not a scene of recognition, Higbie (1995): 166. See also: Pucci (1995) 96.

<sup>33</sup> There is perhaps another reference to be found at 10.501 where Odysseus remarks that ‘no one [οὐ ... τις] has yet reached Hades by black ship’.

<sup>34</sup> For example: 14.321-333, and 19.185. Odysseus also refers to himself in the third person during The Cloak Tale 14.470-506. For more See: Haft (1984): 289-306. Helen refers to herself in the third person at *Odyssey* 15.125.

Odysseus' identity is especially negated through his repeated adoption of the beggar disguise which even alters his physical appearance and thus undermines the status which can be conveyed through the beauty of nobility.<sup>35</sup> In Troy he 'concealed his likeness' (κατακρύπτων ἦισκε), and used his 'cunning' (κερδοσύνη) to avoid Helen's questions (4.244-250).<sup>36</sup> He then inveigles his way into Ithaka in a similar manner, first in Eumaios' hut and then in his own palace. Though Eumaios has the manners to address his guest using the appropriate appellatives – 'old man' or 'stranger' – Odysseus' rags and haggard appearance clearly mark him as a beggar (Antinoos calls him προίκτης).<sup>37</sup> The Suitors, in contrast, endorse the role of Odysseus-as-beggar by deriding and assaulting him, much as they do the beggar Iros.<sup>38</sup> The power in Odysseus' disguise is that it serves to remove him from all the physical trappings of status as well as the possession of a name and associated lineage. Iros, for example, has a real name: Arnaios but, because of his base position, the Suitors feel free to name, rename, and even un-name him for their own amusement. In his manifestation as beggar, therefore, Odysseus truly becomes one of society's 'no-bodies'.<sup>39</sup>

Οὐτιν δέ με φίλοι κικλήσκουσι

Many other characters also avoid naming Odysseus throughout the text. Even the narrator avoids uttering his name for the entire proem, triggering what de Jong calls 'the

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<sup>35</sup> A theme explored throughout the Phaiakian episode, for example, see: **Chapter Two: Elders**.

<sup>36</sup> From κέρδος 'self-serving gain', for more on this as an Odyssean quality see: Roisman (1994): 1-22.

<sup>37</sup> *Odyssey* 17.337, and for προίκτης: 17.449

<sup>38</sup> *Odyssey* 17.377, 449, 483.

<sup>39</sup> Higbie (1995): 160, and Goldhill (1991): 35.

story's preoccupation with (the concealing of) names'.<sup>40</sup> Instead, as Eustathius noticed, the narrator makes reference to his protagonist by the unique epithet πολύτροπος.<sup>41</sup> For those knowledgeable of their epithets, πολύτροπος could refer only to the characters Hermes or Odysseus, but the clarifying ἄνδρα has eliminated one of those possibilities.<sup>42</sup> Within the proem, therefore, the narrator 'reveals the whole character of a man by one word'.<sup>43</sup> If to name something is to bring it into being as per Homeric eschatology, then Odysseus is not truly engendered by a character until Athena utters his name at 1.48.<sup>44</sup> The narrator's reticence, in turn, sets up the trope of namelessness which follows Odysseus throughout the text and is central to his characterisation as the "No-man".

Norman Austin remarks that Odysseus' friends and family are also cautious in their use of his name and associates this aversion to their knowledge of name 'taboos'.<sup>45</sup> In other words, Austin believes that Οὐτίς is precisely what 'his mother and father and all his friends call him' (as Odysseus tells Polyphemos) because they are trying to protect him from the sort of curses the name may bring upon itself.<sup>46</sup> It is certainly true that sympathetic characters overtly avoid Odysseus' name, instead replacing it with a series

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<sup>40</sup> de Jong (2001): 7. That this is intentional see: Austin (1972): 10, and: Clay (1983): 26-29, 55. In comparison with the *Iliad*, see: Bernadette (1963): 12.

<sup>41</sup> Eustathius 1381.20-25: 'the poet keeps silent concerning the name of Odysseus from the beginning, signalling him out by solemn and praiseworthy epithets'.

<sup>42</sup> *Hymn to Hermes* 13, 439. For more on πολύτροπος see: Rüter (1969): 34-37; Parry (1971) *MHV*: 154; Clay (1983): 25-34; Nagy (1990b): 33-34; Peradotto (1990): 115-117; Goldhill (1991): 3-4 (n.6), and Pucci (1995): 24-5. There may even be an ancestral connection implied by the possibility of Hermes' relation to Odysseus' grandfather Autolykos (Hesiod fr.64 M-W; Ps. Hyginus *Fabulae* 201; Ovid *Metamorphoses* 11.301; Pherecydes, quoted in *Scholia* to xix.432). For more on the role of ἄνδρα in the proem and as an indicator for Odysseus, see: Goldhill (1991): 4; and Kahane (1992): 115-131.

<sup>43</sup> Scholiast D on *Odyssey* 8.85; Pucci (1995): 24, 128. Alternately, Goldhill suggests that their aversion is due to the ill meaning of Odysseus' name: Goldhill (1991): 24-36. See: **Chapter One: Odysseus: The Suffering Man**.

<sup>44</sup> Here, she describes him in almost exactly the same manner as the narrator presents him in Book 5: unhappy man (δυσμόρω / κάμμορε) suffering grief as he longs to die (πήματα πάσχει... θανέειν ἱμείρεται / κατείβετο δὲ γλυκύς αἰὼν νόστον ὀδυρομένω), detained on a far island (ὀμφαλός ἐστι θαλάσσης / νῆσον τηλόθ'). She is also the first to mention his name to a mortal (1.196).

<sup>45</sup> Austin (1972): 5, 9; Austin (1982): 47-48, 50-51, see also: Higbie (1995): 190, and Olson (1992): 57-71.

<sup>46</sup> *Odyssey* 9.364-367.

of pronouns; του, ὁ, αὐτῷ, ἀνέρος, κεινόν, οἱ, or μιν. In his exchange with the disguised Odysseus, for example, Eumaios evades the name of his master with nearly as much skill as Odysseus himself demonstrates at Alkinoos' court.<sup>47</sup> After nearly one hundred lines of careful evasion, Eumaios openly admits that he 'respectfully avoids his [master's] name, when he is absent' (οὐ παρεόντ' ὀνομάζειν αἰδέομαι), preferring instead to call him simply 'Honourable' (ἡθεῖον).<sup>48</sup> In a similar manner, Telemakhos stubbornly refuses to acknowledge his father's name in Book One, even when his guest uses it so casually.<sup>49</sup> Finally, when talking to the image of her sister Iphthime which Athena has summoned to speak with her in the dream world, Penelope names neither her son (παίς, 4.817), nor her husband whom she instead calls: κείνον ὀϊζυρὸν (4.835).<sup>50</sup>

In support of Austin's observation is Penelope, Telemakhos, and Eumaios' distinctive use of ἀπόλλυμι to describe the manner of Odysseus' death.<sup>51</sup> While, on its own, the verb ὀλλυμι is typically translated as 'perish, destroy, come to an end', the addition of the prefix ἀπο- creates the sense of 'perish, or destroy *utterly*'.<sup>52</sup> But how is "utterly" to be quantified? What is the difference between dying and dying utterly, for surely death is an absolute state? The answer lies in Homeric eschatology, specifically the association between naming and being (εἶναι/καλεῖσθαι) previously discussed. If "to exist" is "to be named", as Rank presumes, then the text also bears out the antithesis of this convention,

<sup>47</sup> *Odyssey* 14.56-71, 80-108, 122-147.

<sup>48</sup> West attributes this delay to dramatic effect rather than any integral significance in the uttering of a name; West (2014): 237. See also: Rose (1980): 285-297, and: Roisman (1990): 215-238.

<sup>49</sup> *Odyssey* 1.158-241; Austin (1969): 45-63. de Jong calls this an example of the 'suppression of Odysseus' name motif' but does not offer an explanation as to why the name might be suppressed: de Jong (2001): 18.

<sup>50</sup> ὀϊζυρὸν is one of the homonyms of ὀδύσσομαι which act as stand-in's for Odysseus' name (**Chapter One: Odysseus: The Suffering Man**). For more on the avoidance of naming in Homer see: Griffin (1986): 36-57; Goldhill (1991): 116-117, and Higbie (1995): 35 n.54.

<sup>51</sup> Penelope: 4.724, 814. Telemakhos: 1.166, 354, 413; 2.46. Eumaios: 14.137.

<sup>52</sup> LSJ: s.v. ἀπόλλυμι; s.v. ὀλλυμι.

where ἀπόλλυμι represents “dying in a manner so complete that *even the name is lost*”. We should therefore translate ἀπόλλυμι as ‘to die ignominiously’ in the most literal sense of the word, as distinct from the simple ending of life which is indicated by ὀλλυμι.<sup>53</sup> The most compelling evidence for this translation is found in Book 24 (quoted earlier) where Agamemnon remarks: ‘thus, you are dead, but your name (ὄνομα) is not destroyed (ὀλλυμι)’, i.e. you have not been destroyed so utterly (ἀπόλλυμι) so as to lose your name.<sup>54</sup>

The majority of ἀπόλλυμι instances elsewhere reinforce this reading of a disreputable or nameless death. The verb describes the death of Agamemnon and his companions, or others who died at the hands of a woman, as well as the death of Aias by his own hubris.<sup>55</sup> It is also used to refer to death at sea, death by other obscure means, death by one’s own folly, or the collective deaths of nameless masses.<sup>56</sup> These are all the sorts of deaths which will receive no κλέος and so are deaths that will subsequently cause the loss of one’s name.<sup>57</sup> Ignominious indeed. Furthermore, ἀπόλλυμι frequently appears in conjunction with νόστος – a ‘day of return’ (νόστιμον ἦμαρ) is ‘destroyed utterly’.<sup>58</sup> The connection between εἶναι/καλεῖσθαι is also made apparent in the act of naming an appointed day in order to bring it into fruition, while un-naming the appointed day means that it cannot be fulfilled by Fate; it cannot exist.<sup>59</sup> The absolute destruction (ἀπόλλυμι) of

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<sup>53</sup> Ignominious: from the Latin *nomen* (‘name’), with the negating prefix *ig-* giving the translation: ‘loss of a (good) name’: Lewis & Short (1879): s.v. *ignominia*.

<sup>54</sup> *Odyssey* 24.93-5: ὡς σὺ μὲν οὐδὲ θανῶν ὄνομα ὤλεσας.

<sup>55</sup> Agamemnon 3.234; 11.384, 438; Ajax 4.511; 11. 557.

<sup>56</sup> Sea: 2.333; 9.554; 17.426 (implied). Obscurity: 1.166; 3.185; 9.303; 14.137. Folly: 4.511; 10.27. Masses: 3.87; 4.497; 8.511; 9.265. The case of the Suitors could apply to the latter three categories: 24.186.

<sup>57</sup> Highbie (1995): 18

<sup>58</sup> *Odyssey* 1.354, 413; 4.497; 11.384; 17.253. ‘Day of return’: *Odyssey* 1.9, 168, 345; 3.233; 5.220; 6.311; 8.465; 16.149; 17.253, 51; 19.369. Heubeck *et al.* (1988): 74.

<sup>59</sup> This is perhaps why those characters which “prophecy” Odysseus’ return are quite specific in their time frames: e.g. ‘he will return either at the waning moon or at its onset’ 19.307, they are ‘naming the day’ so to speak.



such a day sees the end both to the appointed day and the person to whom the day has been appointed. The phrase ἀπώλεσε νόστιμον ἦμαρ is therefore synonymous with a man's ignominious death precisely because the day and the man are both un-named. This is why the trope is usually used to describe a death at sea, for such a death results in the man being neither buried nor memorialised.<sup>60</sup>

The same characters that refuse to name him (Penelope, Telemakhos and Eumaios), all use ἀπόλλυμι to refer to Odysseus' fate; Penelope even doubts by the end if he had ever even existed at all (εἴ ποτ' ἔην γε, 19.315). Telemakhos similarly believes his father to be irrecoverably absent: 'The [Gods] have caused him to pass from sight, as they have no other man' (1.235-6), he has been swept away by the Harpies to a place out of sight and out of hearing (ἄιστος ἄπυστος, 1.242). Even for Eumaios, Odysseus is gone (οἴχομαι) and will never return home (οὔτ' οἶκον ἐλεύσεται).<sup>61</sup> Nor do any of them accept rumours of Odysseus' return, even when he is finally standing before them. If his family are so adamant that he is deceased, why then would they name him? Their words, or rather, the absence of them, serve to remind us that a nameless man is indeed a dead man.

Therefore Austin's argument that this careful omission of naming is an act of protection, would be better rendered as an argument that Odysseus' family members avoid using Odysseus' name because they believe he is dead. This would account for the speaking patterns of other benevolent characters, such as Athena, Kalypso and Circe who have no qualms identifying Odysseus by name. Indeed Athena is both the first, and last, character

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<sup>60</sup> See: Idomeneos and Nestor fearing that the Akhaians will die away from home in anonymity (νωνύμνους): *Iliad* 13.225-227; 14.69-70, and Elpenor fearing that he will go unburied and un-known: *Odyssey* 11.71-76.

<sup>61</sup> *Odyssey* 14.144, 167.

to speak the name “Odysseus”.<sup>62</sup> Admittedly, these latter characters are divinities and so perhaps lack the same mortal superstitions regarding the avoidance of naming, but – unlike mortal characters – they are also armed with the knowledge that Odysseus is alive and so do not feel the need to avoid using his name as they have no fear that he is dead. Furthermore, though they may not use his name, Odysseus’ loved ones certainly make no attempt to hide his κλέος through the awarding of his epithets. Penelope is first among the people who would wish him the most protection, yet she awards Odysseus some of the longest ennobling epithets in the text.<sup>63</sup> Austin calls this series of accolades ‘an honorific... *alternative* rather than [an] *evasion*, *interchangeable* with the name’.<sup>64</sup> Austin here implies that when epithets are used in place of a name, they do not carry the full force of an actual name; it is just the same as when they use pronouns. However, this thesis has demonstrated that epithets are not only used as the literal equivalent of a name (to identify Odysseus as πολύτροπος is the same thing as naming Odysseus), but that they are also used – at the most fundamental level – to convey the status of the character with whom they are associated, usually in an individualistic manner (no other character is διογενὲς, Λαερτιάδη, πολυμήχανος). Why then should Penelope, Telemakhos, and Eumaios, all avoid his name while continuing to refer to his epithets if they are so scared to bring the gods’ wrath down upon him, as Austin believes? The conventions examined elsewhere in this chapter, combined with the analysis of triple epithets used for the dead (Chapter Five), suggest that their reticence is more likely to be associated with their belief, or fear, that Odysseus is dead, for the dead can – and indeed should – be awarded

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<sup>62</sup> *Odyssey* 1.48; 24.542.

<sup>63</sup> *Odyssey* 4.724-6; 814-6.

<sup>64</sup> Austin (1972): 6, my emphasis.

extensive epithets.<sup>65</sup> There are even patterns in the type of epithets Odysseus' family members use to describe him which betray the motives of those speaking them.

*Penelope*

Just as family members use their own sets of expressions when speaking to one another, so Penelope uses specific epithets when referring to Odysseus in particular contexts.<sup>66</sup> When Antinoos and Amphimedon recount the weaving narrative (as verbatim copies of one another), they recall that Penelope described her husband as δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς; but this is an epithet which she applies to him in no other context.<sup>67</sup> Their recollection of her epithet use in this passage is also surprising given that she is not usually so brief when referring to Odysseus in front of the Suitors. After 'approaching the Suitors' (μνηστῆρας ἀφίκετο) Penelope says that Phemios' song reminds her of her husband 'whose fame goes wide through Hellas and midmost Argos' (1.344). Elsewhere, both with her maids and with her sister (Athena disguised) she repeats this epithet as one among a lengthy series:<sup>68</sup>

Good husband ... lion-hearted,  
 Surpassed in all virtues among the Danaans, 725  
 Good, whose fame goes wide through Hellas and midmost Argos.

<sup>65</sup> Specifically **Suitors: Amphimedon**, and **Women: Pero**.

<sup>66</sup> Austin (1982): 49-50. See also, **Chapter Four**.

<sup>67</sup> 2.96; 24.131.

<sup>68</sup> 4.724-726, 814-816:

πόσιν ἐσθλὸν ... θυμολέοντα,  
 παντοίης ἀρετῆσι κεκασμένον ἐν Δαναοῖσιν, 725  
 ἐσθλόν, τοῦ κλέος εὐρὺ καθ' Ἑλλάδα καὶ μέσον Ἄργος.

Note that, during her description of Phemios' song, she describes the actions of the Akhaians in the past tense (ἐπετείλατο), leaving only his κλέος to travel through Hellas and Argos. The description of his 'wide-fame' (εὐρὺ κλέος) is also typical of family names: Eurykleia and Antikleia.

In her own words, then, Penelope uses epithets which emphasise Odysseus' fame (associated with his bravery at Troy) and his goodness; she does not typically refer to his divinity (δῖος). Why then should the Suitors recall that she uncharacteristically described him with the common and brief epithet δῖος? The answer is likely behind their motives, rather than hers, as they are otherwise reluctant to award their absent host particular or personal titles just as they are reluctant to name him or emphasise his relationship with Penelope by calling her 'daughter of Ikarios'. The Suitors' choice of δῖος in their version of events is evidence of their desire to undermine Odysseus' status and not a true account of Penelope's description of him.

Where Penelope does use the more common epithet 'godlike' (θεῖος), which she employs in both private and public contexts, she does so only in reference to his possessions which is entirely contrary to how the Suitors claim she refers to her husband in the Weaving Narrative (where she is alleged to have said: ἐπεὶ θάνε δῖος Ὀδυσσεύ. Privately, she uses θεῖος when conversing with the herald Medon (4.682). The privacy of this context is framed by the movement of Medon first into the women's quarters – 'the house of Penelope' (4.679) – and then out of it and back into the public quarters – 'the house of Odysseus' (4.715) – meaning that Penelope's third person speech to the Suitors at 4.686-695 is an apostrophe).<sup>69</sup> In this private context she also calls her son δαίφρων ('inured', 4.687) which is the only time Telemakhos receives this epithet, reinforcing the personal context of her speech.<sup>70</sup> Later, she again describes Odysseus as 'godlike', this time in front of the Suitors (21.74).

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<sup>69</sup> de Jong (2001): 117.

<sup>70</sup> Now he has travelled abroad Telemakhos, like his father, must endure hardships (set by the Suitors) and so Penelope describes him with an epithet which reflects the quality he must now adopt.

In all of these instances the epithet is used in the genitive to refer to the possessions ‘of godlike Odysseus’. In the first instance it is the ‘maids of godlike Odysseus’ to which she refers and, in the second, it is the ‘bow of godlike Odysseus’. It is insufficient to identify these instances of θεῖος as mere examples of a “stock, genitive, epithet formula”, for such a summary fails to take into account *why* Penelope should choose to describe Odysseus as ‘godlike’ only in relation to his possessions. Unlike the other contexts, where Penelope speaks directly about Odysseus and his fame, she emphasises his godlike quality only when speaking of property he has won in his role as king (as a city-sacker who claims slaves (δμωή) and as an aristocratic guest-friend who receives great gifts (21.13)). Therefore Penelope rightly employs θεῖος when she wishes to emphasise the civic status which is granted to him by his lineage.

Elsewhere Penelope uses other epithets to describe Odysseus, such as when she refers to him by his personal epithet: πολύμητις (4.763). The context here is particularly appropriate: she is praying to Athena and so describes her husband in such a way that will resonate with his patron goddess. It is for his arts that Athena loves him.<sup>71</sup> In the opening of her prayer she also appeals to Athena using *her* personal epithet ‘Atrytone’, a title used only by herself and Odysseus in the *Odyssey*.<sup>72</sup> In this private context, therefore, Penelope uses personalised titles both for her husband and her patron divinity, no doubt to better target the efficacy of her prayer.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Remember that Athena calls him by the vocative ποικιλομήτηα ‘of various μήτις’ when speaking to him on Ithaka 13.293.

<sup>72</sup> See: **Chapter Three: Gods and Mortals: Non-reciprocal (Prayer)**.

<sup>73</sup> See: **Chapter Seven**.

*Telemakhos*

Unlike Penelope, Telemakhos is keen to use epithets which convey the divine connections of his father.<sup>74</sup> He first hears Odysseus described as *δῖος* when Mentos-Athena visits and assures him that Odysseus is still alive, claiming: divine Odysseus has not yet died upon the earth.<sup>75</sup> Barely two hundred lines later Telemakhos adopts this same epithet and repeats this description of his father twice in quick succession before the Suitors:<sup>76</sup> (1.394-398):

There are other Akhaian kings, many of them  
 on sea-girt Ithaka, young and old, 395  
 let one of them possess [this right], since **divine Odysseus** is dead:<sup>77</sup>  
 For myself, I shall be lord of my house and  
 servants, whom **divine Odysseus** plundered for me.

He uses the same epithet elsewhere in an extended phrase when speaking with Nestor. After complimenting Nestor with a double epithet title, he indicates the equality in status between the Gerenian charioteer and his father by employing the same pattern of title for Odysseus:<sup>78</sup>

<sup>74</sup> He otherwise repeats the line *λίσσομαι, εἴ ποτέ τοί τι πατήρ ἐμός, ἐσθλός Ὀδυσσεύς* containing the epithet 'good (*ἐσθλός*) Odysseus' when appealing to Nestor (3.98) and Menelaos (4.328); a descriptor which Penelope also repeats in her extended epithets (4.724-726, 814-816).

<sup>75</sup> 1.196: οὐ γάρ πω τέθνηκεν ἐπὶ χθονὶ δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς.

<sup>76</sup> 1.394-398:

ἀλλ' ἦ τοι βασιλῆες Ἀχαιῶν εἰσὶ καὶ ἄλλοι  
 πολλοὶ ἐν ἀμφιάλῳ Ἰθάκῃ, νέοι ἠδὲ παλαιοί, 395  
 τῶν κέν τις τόδ' ἔχῃσιν, ἐπεὶ θάνε **δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς**·  
 αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν οἴκοιο ἄναξ ἔσομ' ἡμετέροιο  
 καὶ δμῶν, οὐς μοι ληίσσατο **δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς**.

<sup>77</sup> This is the same line the Suitors falsely attribute to Penelope in the Weaving Narrative (2.96; 24.131).

<sup>78</sup> 3.79-85:

ὦ Νέστορ Νηληϊάδη, μέγα κῦδος Ἀχαιῶν,  
 εἴρεαι ὀππότεν εἰμέν· ἐγὼ δέ κέ τοι καταλέξω. 80  
 ἡμεῖς ἐξ Ἰθάκης ὑπονηίου εἰλήλουθμεν·  
 πρῆξις δ' ἦδ' ἰδίη, οὐ δῆμιος, ἦν ἀγορεύω.  
 πατὴρ δ' ἐμοῦ κλέος εὐρὺ μετέρχομαι, ἦν που ἀκούσω,

O Nestor, **Neleus' son, great glory of the Akhaians**,  
 you ask where we are from; so I shall tell you fully. 80  
 We are from Ithaka, under Mount Neion,  
 I speak of business that is private, not public.  
 We seek news of the wide *kleos* of my father,  
**divine, enduring** Odysseus, who they say  
 fought with you when you sacked the Trojan city. 85

But nowhere else thereafter does Telemakhos use a double epithet to describe his father. The extended titles in this context therefore must be due to its nature as his first public address – where he is eager to come across as properly spoken and so uses the most formal titles he knows in order to draw a parity between his host and his father. The double epithet here is indicative of his own heritage rather than an identifier for his father *per se*.<sup>79</sup>

Telemakhos is also keen to emphasise his father's divine lineage when speaking with Eurykleia; where he calls Odysseus διογενής for the first time in the text (2.352). Eurykleia adopts this epithet and repeats it back to him a dozen lines later (2.365). He otherwise only refers to Odysseus with the ταλασίφρων epithet he uses with Nestor and by variations on θεῖος. Like Penelope, he uses θεῖος only in the genitive: 'the house of godlike Odysseus' at 17.402, and also employs the alternative αντίθεος when referring directly to his father in front of Menelaos (μὴ πατέρ' αντίθειον διζήμενος, 15.90). Telemakhos is far more likely to refer to his father with epithets denoting his divinity and divine lineage, whereas Penelope is keener to emphasise the extent of his fame. The reasons for the

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δίου Ὀδυσσεύος ταλασίφρονος, ὃν ποτέ φασί  
 σὺν σοὶ μαρνάμενον Τρώων πόλιν ἐξαλαπάξει.

<sup>79</sup> Note also that he adopts Penelope's longer epithet describing Odysseus' 'wide fame' (εὐρὺ κλέος).

disparity are clear when we consider the characters' own internal motives, for Penelope believes her husband to be dead and so wishes to ensure his everlasting κλέος, while Telemakhos is motivated by a desire to prove his paternity and so refers to his father by epithets which emphasise his divine lineage.

### *Friends Abroad*

The manner in which his friends refer to Odysseus reinforces what has thus far been demonstrated concerning the importance of titles in speech. As demonstrated previously, Odysseus' dialogue with the heroes Agamemnon, Akhilleus and Herakles, as well as the noble Tiresias, fulfils the proper rules of discourse for men of their rank whereby they call Odysseus 'Zeus-sprung, son of Laertes, much-skilled Odysseus'.<sup>80</sup> Once the social niceties have been established, those who have extended conversations with him in the Underworld then shift to informal titles like 'radiant'.<sup>81</sup> However, the *Odyssey* also provides the opportunity to examine how these characters refer to Odysseus in his absence. The Second Nekyia of Book 24, for example, presents a conversation between Agamemnon, Akhilleus and the Suitor Amphimedon where Odysseus is constantly referenced.<sup>82</sup> Here, no character uses the same titles they award to Odysseus in person, thus emphasising the difference in the socio-contextual distributions of epithets.

This is the first time Agamemnon refers to Odysseus in the Second Nekyia:<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> διογενὲς Λαερτιάδη, πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ. While Tiresias' lineage is never stated in the *Odyssey*, he is described as 'lord' (ἄνακτος, 11.150) and 'leader of the people' (ἄρχαμε λαῶν, 10.538) which are both titles reserved for the aristocracy. He also receives extensive titles from Circe 10.493. For Akhilleus, Agamemnon, and Herakles addressing Odysseus: 11.92, 405, 473, 616. For their discourse, see: **Chapter Two: Peers**.

<sup>81</sup> Tiresias, 11.100; Akhilleus, 11.488.

<sup>82</sup> This conversation is also discussed in Chapters Two and Five. Amphimedon continues with the same epithets the Suitors always use for Odysseus when speaking about him, calling him both 'godlike' (θεῖος, 24.151) and 'divine' (δοῖος, 24.176), see below.

<sup>83</sup> 24.115-119:

ἦ οὐ μέμνη ὅτε κέϊσε κατήλυθον ὑμέτερον δῶ,



Do you remember when I came to your house,  
to encourage Odysseus with godlike Menelaos  
to follow us in the well-benched ships to Troy;  
we drove over the wide sea for an entire month  
eager to persuade Odysseus, the city-sacker.

115

Agamemnon does not use the same full titles here that he earlier awarded Odysseus in person in the First Nekyia. Instead he first uses no epithet and then the simple πτολίπορθος. Note that he offers Menelaos – his own brother – the same honour of a single epithet ‘godlike’ (ἀντίθεος), thus drawing a parallel in status between his brother and Odysseus. The epithet he selects for Odysseus in this description is, as usual, entirely appropriate to the context. It is Odysseus the sacker of cities whom Menelaos and Agamemnon wish to employ for their Trojan campaign, not the ‘great-hearted’ or ‘enduring’ Odysseus. The title πτολίπορθος is one of Odysseus’ Iliadic epithets, as all its instances refer to Odysseus in a martial, Trojan, or past context. It appears in the opening to Book Eight where the narrator plants it as a ‘seed’ to foreshadow both Demodokos’ tales of the Trojan War and Odysseus’ own declaration of his identity in the Polyphemos tale.<sup>84</sup> While the epithet is used more liberally of other characters in the *Iliad* it is restricted to Odysseus in the *Odyssey* as if to imply ‘*The sacker of The City*’.<sup>85</sup>

In the same exchange, Agamemnon refers to Odysseus in an entirely different manner – with a triple epithet, no less:<sup>86</sup>

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ὄτρυνέων Ὀδυσῆα σὺν ἀντιθέῳ Μενελάῳ  
Ἴλιον εἰς ἅμ’ ἔπεσθαι εὐσσέλμων ἐπὶ νηῶν;  
μηνὶ δ’ ἄρ’ οὖλῳ πάντα περήσαμεν εὐρέα πόντον,  
σπουδῆ παρπεπιθόντες Ὀδυσσῆα πτολίπορθον.

<sup>84</sup> de Jong (2001): 192. He identifies himself as Ὀδυσσῆα πτολιπόρθιον, υἷὸν Λαέρτew, Ἰθάκη ἐνὶ οἴκῳ ἔχοντα (9.505).

<sup>85</sup> Heubeck, *et al.* (1988): 346.

<sup>86</sup> 24.192-193:

Fortunate, child of Laertes, much-skilled Odysseus,  
surely you procured a wife of great virtue.

192

The context again informs his selection of titles. Though Agamemnon is speaking with Amphimedon from 24.105 through 24.203, the presence of the vocative titles in these lines indicate that he is apostrophizing Odysseus *in absentia*, despite the fact that Amphimedon is indicated as the listener (τὸν).<sup>87</sup> Commentators remark that the reasons for this unusual speech redirection are, first of all, that it thematically relates the lines with Agamemnon's initial condemnation of women (including Penelope) in the First Nekyia which he now appears to be recounting, and second, that it compositionally reflects Agamemnon's earlier titles for Akhilleus ('Fortunate, son of Peleus, like the gods, Akhilleus', ὄλβιε Πηλέος υἱέ, θεοῖς ἐπιείκελ' Ἀχιλλεῦ, 24.93) thus drawing a pattern of association between the two epic protagonists.<sup>88</sup> Neither of these two major commentaries, however, observe that the occurrence of a triple epithet itself is just as much an indicator of direct speech as the vocative case. The two Nekyias therefore present a case study of the different titles the same character will use of the same person whether they are communicating directly, indirectly, or even intransitively. There can be no mistaking that at 24.192 Agamemnon is addressing Odysseus, for he would not use a triple epithet title to speak of him indirectly, as he does at 24.119.

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ὄλβιε Λαέρταο πάϊ, πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ,  
ἧ ἄρα σὺν μεγάλῃ ἀρετῇ ἐκτήσω ἄκοιτιν.

192

<sup>87</sup> That he is talking to Amphimedon is indicated by the framing lines: 'First to speak was the soul of Atreus' son' (τὸν προτέρη ψυχὴ προσεφώνεεν Ἀτρεΐδαο, 24.105), and: 'So the two spoke to one another' (ὡς οἱ μὲν τοιαῦτα πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἀγόρευον, 24.203). That he is apostrophizing Odysseus: Russo *et al.* (1992): 380, and de Jong (2001): 573-4.

<sup>88</sup> See previous footnote.

Among his other Iliadic friends are Nestor and Menelaos, who speak of Odysseus to his son during the Telemakheia.<sup>89</sup> The two Books in which these characters appear are characterised by their high number of epithets: they are two of the five most epithet-prolific episodes (see Fig. 6.1). The abundance of epithets in Books 11 and Four is not surprising given their content, as the former contains the list of noble ghosts in the First Nekyia, and much of the latter covers Menelaos' narrative of his encounter with Proteus, who is awarded the double epithet title 'infallible, Old Man of the Sea', among others, a total of eleven times (17% of all epithets given in Book Four). However, Books 11 and Four are also the two longest chapters of the *Odyssey* (comprising 640 and a staggering 847 lines respectively). When the length of each Book is measured against the number of its epithets (Fig. 6.2) the data reveal that Nestor's book is actually the most epithet-dense episode, surpassing even Book 11.<sup>90</sup> Furthermore, while Book Four might contain the second highest number of epithets of any chapter, it is actually only the tenth most epithet-dense Book, given its disproportionate length.

A closer examination of the epithets in Book Three reveals that Nestor utters 77% of the total number of epithets spoken by characters. The epithets Nestor uses are also some of the most unusual of any character: not only is he the most prolific in his use of extended titles, he also speaks the greatest number of Odyssean *hapax legomena*. The individual epithets Nestor uses (excluding patronyms which are inevitably singular) are either exclusive to him (56%), Nestorian inventions which are later adopted by other characters,

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<sup>89</sup> Menelaos does not speak of him in Book 15 when he bids farewell to Telemakhos.

<sup>90</sup> The difference in total number of epithets between this figure and 6.1 is due to the latter accounting for the individual epithets contained within the extended phrases. E.g. Fig. 6.1 records 10 double epithet phrases for Book 3, which is a total of 20 individual epithets recorded in Fig. 6.2.

or shared only by Nestor and divinities or the narrator.<sup>91</sup> There is most definitely a sense that Nestor speaks in a way which indicates his affinity with the gods. ‘Tritogeneia’, for example, is a moniker of Athena only otherwise spoken by Zeus (*Iliad* 8.39), while the gods ‘who last forever’ (αἰὲν ἔόντας) is a divine title otherwise spoken only by gods: Athena and Hyperion.<sup>92</sup>

It should not be surprising that the epithets Nestor uses for Odysseus are also unusual. He first describes him simply as ‘divine’ (δῖος, 3.121, 126). The spoken epithet δῖος is one of the best examples of a title whose transmission can be tracked throughout the text.<sup>93</sup> It first appears in Book One during Athena’s discourse with Telemakhos where she remarks for the first time that ‘divine Odysseus’ is indeed ‘alive, somewhere on the wide sea’ (1.196-7). Telemakhos, in turn, adopts the epithet, perhaps indicating that he not only believes Odysseus to be alive, but that he is starting to trust his own heritage. He uses it twice before the Suitors (1.396, 398), later, in the Assembly (2.96) and in the underworld (24.131) the Suitors use the same epithet when quoting Penelope, but do not use it in their own dialogue.<sup>94</sup> Telemakhos then carries the epithet to Pylos (3.84) where Nestor repeats it back to him during his account of Odysseus’ role in the war (3.121, 126). From Book Three onwards δῖος becomes far less common among spoken characters as

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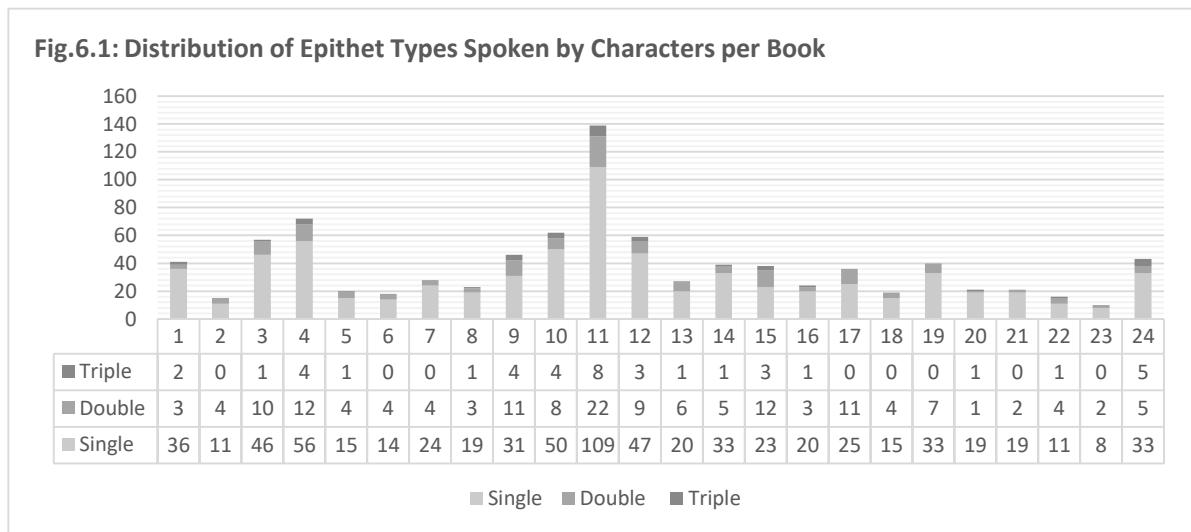
<sup>91</sup> Exclusively spoken by Nestor: ‘deep-girdled’ (βαθύζωνος), ‘devoted to Ares’ (ἄρειος), ‘hated and impotent’ (στυγερῆς καὶ ἀνάγκιδος), ‘one who smelts gold’ (χρυσόχοος), ‘Tritogeneia’ (Τριτογένεια), ‘who surpassed the race of men in the steering of a ship whenever storm-winds were blowing’ (ὅς ἐκαίνυτο φύλ’ ἀνθρώπων νῆα κυβερνήσαι, ὅποτε σπέρχοιεν ἄελλαι). Spoken first by Nestor and later adopted by Peisistratos or Telemakhos: ‘a fighter’ (μαχητής), ‘surpassingly swift to run’ (πέρι μὲν θείειν ταχύς ἤδὲ), ‘of the great war cry’ (βοὴν ἀγαθός) (also used by the narrator). Spoken only by Nestor, the gods and/or the narrator: ‘daughter of a mighty sire’ (ὀβριμοπάτρη), ‘glorious’ (κυδάλιμος), ‘mercurial’ (ποικυλομήτης), ‘unwearying’ (σχέτλιος), ‘who last forever’ (αἰὲν ἔόντας). It is my supposition that Nestor speaks in a fundamentally Iliadic way, that is to say using epithets more commonly found in the *Iliad* (ἄρειος, for instance, occurs far more often in the martial epic). However this hypothesis will have to be examined in later study given limitations of space.

<sup>92</sup> 1.264; 5.7; 12.377.

<sup>93</sup> It does, of course, occur frequently (x36) in Narratorial use as part of the formula: πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς.

<sup>94</sup> He never uses it in front of them again.

a descriptor for Odysseus until Zeus finally completes the circle in his announcement that δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς – having killed the Suitors – can now ‘be king always’ (βασιλευέτω αἰεὶ, 24.482). The transmission of this epithet through these speaking characters supports the argument made later in Chapter Seven that the purpose of the Telemakheia is to bring forth Odysseus’ name from memory so that he may be returned to the real world.<sup>95</sup>



**Fig.6.2: Percentage of Epithets in Relation to Length of Book**

BOOK	# OF LINES	# OF EPITHETS	PERCENTAGE
3	497	150	30%
11	640	182	28%
1	444	105	27%
15	567	144	25%
7	347	85	24%
6	331	78	24%
13	440	101	23%
8	586	131	22%
24	549	119	22%
4	847	179	21%
5	493	87	20%
16	481	91	19%

<sup>95</sup> With this in mind, it is worth noting that no character uses this epithet for Odysseus during the Fabulae.

9	566	72	18%
22	500	89	18%
18	428	79	18%
17	606	102	17%
12	453	74	16%
21	433	70	16%
20	394	65	16%
19	604	87	14%
10	574	83	14%
14	533	75	14%
2	434	61	14%
23	372	53	14%

In fact, δῖος occurs only once as an epithet for Odysseus outside of the Telemakheia and Ithakan Books altogether: when it is used by Odysseus himself in Book Eight. Indeed, all three instances of δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς which occur between Books Four and 23 are used in distinctly Iliadic passages, just like πτολίπορθος. The first appears during Menelaos' account of the Trojan horse (4.280), the second when anonymous-Odysseus asks Demodokos to tell of 'divine Odysseus' stratagem' of the horse (8.494), and the third when Aethon-Odysseus describes what Odysseus was wearing on his way to Troy (ἰέμενον Τροίηνδε) to Penelope (19.225). The reader, then, is encouraged to identify the original, Iliadic Odysseus as δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς as this is how Menelaos and Odysseus both recall him. This is why Mentos-Athena places this particular image of his father into Telemakhos' mind at the opening of the narrative. Telemakhos dutifully transmits this version of his father both to the Suitors and to the mainland, where Nestor and Menelaos are reminded of 'divine Odysseus' cunning and stratagems, after which δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς indeed does return to Ithaka, slaughters the Suitors (24.176) and reclaims his kingship (24.482).<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> For more on Telemakhos' role in the recovery of Odysseus' identity, See: **Chapter Seven**.

Nestor also awards Odysseus the unique triple epithet phrase: ‘Odysseus, lord, inured, mercurial’ during his reminiscing.<sup>97</sup> This occurrence is highly unusual for many reasons. Not least because it is a unique combination of epithets for Odysseus which occurs nowhere else in either epic, but also because it is a triple epithet phrase which is not addressed directly to its recipient. The only other triple epithet phrases (between social equals) which are not addressed to their recipients are those which are used of the dead.<sup>98</sup> Given this pattern in epithet exchange, it should be presumed that Nestor also believes Odysseus to be dead since he has not returned home. While he never explicitly says so, he does nothing to correct Telemakhos’ assertion that ‘his homecoming is no longer real’ (οὐκέτι νόστος ἐτήτυμος, 3.241) and that the ‘gods must have contrived his death’ (ἤδη φράσσαντ’ ἀθάνατοι θάνατον, 3.242).

The epithets are also remarkable individually. In the *Odyssey* ἄναξ (‘lord’) does not occur in a triple epithet for any other character. Furthermore the only other character to use it in either epic to describe Odysseus is Eumaios, who refers to his ‘lord, equal to the gods’ (ἀντιθέου, ἄνακτος, 14.40), which is an altogether different title than the one Nestor chooses in Book Three. While a more common epithet in the *Iliad*, δαίφρων occurs far less frequently in the *Odyssey*, particularly by speaking characters. The only other time it is used to refer to Odysseus is during an adopted epithet exchange, Telemakhos learns it from Nestor and then uses it in front of Penelope, (4.687). Finally, outside of the

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<sup>97</sup> Ὀδυσῆα ἄνακτα, δαίφρονα, ποικιλομήτην, 3.162. The standard double epithet combination δαίφρονα ποικιλομήτην, of which Nestor’s address is a longer variant, is a narratorial phrase, *Odyssey*, 7.168; 22.115, 202, 281. The combination of the epithets δαίφρων and ποικιλομήτης suggests that it is because of Odysseus’ hardships that he has needed to learn many different types of *metis*. This interpretation is in-keeping with the representation of Odysseus’ name which has been demonstrated to be associated with the physical and mental endurance Odysseus develops at the hands of Poseidon’s wrath (See: **Chapter One: Odysseus: The Suffering Man**). The narrator uses the double epithet Ὀδυσῆα δαίφρονα ποικιλομήτην in *Iliad* 11.482, but the line positioning is not the same.

<sup>98</sup> Peisistratos of his brother Antilokhos (4.201-2), and Odysseus of his deceased comrade Polites (10.224-5). For the Narrator’s use of triple epithet phrases, see: **Chapter Five**.

narrator's standard double epithet title for Odysseus, ποικιλομήτης is only used once by Athena.<sup>99</sup> These factors together identify this extended epithet as an exceptionally unique series of titles. Nestor's adapted narratorial epithet phrase, with his addition of another unusual (for Odysseus) epithet: ἄναξ ('lord'), draws the attention of the reader to the extended epithet and therefore emphasises its significance, i.e. that it indicates Nestor's opinion regarding Odysseus' death.

Epithets awarded to Odysseus by Helen and Menelaos are also unusual. Helen opts for 'great-hearted' (μεγαλήτωρ) as an embedded epithet for Odysseus when she first sees Telemakhos and calls him the 'son of >great-hearted< Odysseus'.<sup>100</sup> This epithet is never awarded to Odysseus by another speaking character in the *Odyssey* or the *Iliad* (where it is applied to him only once by the narrator: 5.674) thus Helen is identifying Telemakhos as the son of the Iliadic Odysseus. While relatively common in both epics (occurring twenty-six times to describe twelve individual men in the *Odyssey*) μεγαλήτωρ is one of the epithets which "belongs" to Odysseus' family in this epic, as it describes Telemakhos (3.432), Ikarios (4.797), Autolykos (11.85), Laertes (24.365), and even Eurylokhos (presumed to be his brother-in-law, 10.207).<sup>101</sup> However, it is not exclusive to this family: it is elsewhere applied to Alkinoos.<sup>102</sup> Indeed, after Helen uses it here in Book Four, the narrator adopts it and begins to repeat it in the events leading up to Phaiakia.<sup>103</sup> The

<sup>99</sup> 13.293. Athena also uses it in the nominative when talking to Zeus (1.205).

<sup>100</sup> 4.143. As distinct from the less common 'great-spirited' (μεγάθυμος).

<sup>101</sup> Eurylokhos is one of Odysseus' companions and described as being 'nearly a kinsman [to Odysseus] by marriage' (πηῶ περ ἔοντι μάλα σχεδόν, 10.441), though it is unclear whether he is a brother of Penelope or the husband of Ctymene (either way he is a brother-in-law). Other instances of πηός suggest that it refers specifically to the brother of a spouse (*Odyssey* 8.581, and *Iliad* 3.163). There is, of course, a possibility that he is both and was wed to Odysseus' sister at the same time Odysseus was wed to Penelope. If this interpretation is correct, the text would suggest that, following the marriage, he was given lordship of Same, as this is where Ctymene was sent to after her wedding (15.363).

<sup>102</sup> As demonstrated in **Chapter Four: Grouping Epithets**, those epithets which can be identified as "belonging" to the Arkeisiad family are typically also shared by the Phaiakian royal family who are presented as a "foil" to the former.

<sup>103</sup> 5.81, 150, 233.



opening of Book Six then “transfers” the epithet from Odysseus to Alkinoos (6.14-6.17) to whom it continues to be applied for the next three Books.<sup>104</sup> During these Books the epithet also appears to describe Eurymedon, Alkinoos’ great-grandfather (7.58), and is applied to both Eurymedon and Alkinoos via embedded epithets used to describe their female relatives: Periboia and Nausikaa.<sup>105</sup> Helen’s use of *μεγαλήτωρ* in Book Four therefore acts as a precursor to the following four chapters where epithets referring to Odysseus’ family are transferred to Alkinoos’ family – thus enhancing their similarity.

Finally, both Helen and Menelaos use the epithet ‘enduring’ (*ταλασίφρων*) to describe Odysseus. This is one of Odysseus’ personal epithets, otherwise used only of him by Penelope, Telemakhos, Athena, Zeus and the narrator, suggesting that it should be understood as a sympathetic epithet.<sup>106</sup> It is also an adopted epithet between all three character sets: Telemakhos to Penelope (17.114, 510), Athena to Zeus (1.87, 5.31), and Helen to Menelaos (4.241, 270), though the latter also uses it of Odysseus in *Iliad* 11.466. None of these characters use it when addressing Odysseus; it is an epithet of reference only.

### *Friends At Home*

Elsewhere, other sympathetic characters use titles which often emphasise Odysseus’ divine lineage. Even these titles follow distributive patterns, further reinforcing the argument that different characters and speakers employ different epithets depending on their relation to the receiver. During the Ithakan Assembly, the real Mentor calls him

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<sup>104</sup> 6.196, 213, 299; 7.85, 93; 8.464.

<sup>105</sup> There is a lovely transmission from it being used in Nausikaa’s embedded epithet (6.19, 196, 213) to her using it to describe her father (6.299) and thereafter it being applied singly to Alkinoos.

<sup>106</sup> Narrator (1.129; 17.34, 292; 18.311), Telemakhos (3.84; 17.114), Athena (1.87), Helen (4.241), Penelope (17.510), Menelaos (4.270), and Zeus (5.31).

‘godlike (θεῖος) Odysseus’, who was lord of the people of Ithaka (2.234-5), suggesting that – in-keeping with its application by Penelope and Telemakhos – this epithet is a particularly Ithakan title which refers to Odysseus in his role as the godlike king of Ithaka. Indeed, Athena repeats the same complaint verbatim in Book Five when lamenting to her father that ‘no-one remembers godlike Odysseus’ specifically referring to ‘not even the people who he was lord of’, and never otherwise applies this epithet to him though she describes him a great deal.<sup>107</sup> These two instances (in addition to 1.65, 5.198 and 16.53) contradict Parry’s argument that epithets are used in certain cases in a manner that is metrically expedient, as they demonstrate instead that θεῖος is only applied to Odysseus in the genitive case when they are referring to him in a certain role. Elsewhere θεῖος only appears in the embedded patronym ‘Telemakhos son of ›godlike‹ Odysseus’ which similarly emphasises the significance of Ithakan kingship through its extended lineage.<sup>108</sup>

Like Penelope and Telemakhos, Odysseus himself only uses θεῖος to describe himself and his possessions when speaking of his Ithakan role, he also does so only on Ithaka. He describes first the ‘house of godlike Odysseus’ (15.313) and also ‘the mother of godlike Odysseus’ (15.347). That Odysseus uses this epithet to refer to himself only in relation to specifically Ithakan entities (his physical palace and his royal lineage) draws a contrast with the epithets he chooses to describe himself throughout Books 9-12, thus reaffirming the categorisation of this epithet as an “Ithakan” one.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> ὡς οὐ τις μέμνηται Ὀδυσσεύος θεῖου, λαῶν οἷσιν ἄνασσε, 5.12.

<sup>108</sup> A quick survey of the different patronyms ‘beloved son of Odysseus’ and ‘(beloved) son of ›godlike‹ Odysseus’ reveals that Telemakhos transforms from the former to the latter when he leaves Sparta for Ithaka (except in two instances where his is being “fathered” by Eumaios, 15.337, 16.48). This transformation further reaffirms his acceptance of his place as son of the divinely bred King of Ithaka.

<sup>109</sup> It is only otherwise used of him by Zeus, see below.

Theoklymenos, as a guest on Ithaka, also mirrors Odysseus' use of θεῖος in exactly the same phrases. He also uses the alternative divine title: ἀντίθεος ('equal to the gods' 20.369), one which Philoitios – an Ithakan – later employs as well (22.29).<sup>110</sup> These characters – Theoklymenos and Philoitios – are also the only two to call Odysseus ἀμύμων.<sup>111</sup> Philoitios uses both epithets after Theoklymenos, and yet he does not appear to be “adopting” them as it is nowhere indicated that he is present at the times Theoklymenos is speaking. Neither could their repetition be accounted for in terms of metrical similarity, as they appear in a variety of positions:

Theoklymenos:<sup>112</sup>

... τό κεν οὔ τις ὑπεκφύγοι οὐδ' ἀλέαιπο  
μνηστήρων, οἳ δῶμα κάτ' **ἀντιθέου Ὀδυσῆος**  
ἀνέρας ὑβρίζοντες ἀτάσθαλα μηχανάασθε. 370

Philoitios:<sup>113</sup>

τοῦτο τοι ἀντὶ ποδὸς ξεινήϊον, ὄν ποτ' ἔδωκας 290  
**ἀντιθέω Ὀδυσῆϊ** δόμον κάτ' ἀλητεύοντι.

Theoklymenos:<sup>114</sup>

ἴστω νῦν Ζεὺς πρῶτα θεῶν, ξενίη τε τράπεζα 155  
ἴστίη τ' **Ὀδυσῆος ἀμύμονος**, ἣν ἀφικάνω,

<sup>110</sup> Note that these are the same descriptions the beggar-Odysseus uses (16.104; 18.24) lending support to the notion that Theoklymenos is a foil for the returning Odysseus (below). For more, see: van Nortwick (2010): 75, and n.14, 80, 100, and: Reece, S. (2011) 'Penelope's "Early Recognition" of Odysseus from a Neoanalytic and Oral Perspective', in, *College Literature*, 38 (2): pp.101-117: 113, and n.9.

<sup>111</sup> 17.156; 20.209.

<sup>112</sup> 20.368-370:

not one of you Suitors will flee or escape,  
from the house of **Odysseus, equal to the gods**,  
you men of hubristic and reckless devices. 370

<sup>113</sup> 22.290-291:

This guest-gift will match the hoof you earlier gifted 290  
**Odysseus equal to the gods** when he begged through the house.

<sup>114</sup> 17.155-156:

Zeus first of gods bear witness, and the table of guest-friendship, 155  
and the hearth of **irreproachable Odysseus**, where I have arrived.

Philoitios:<sup>115</sup>

ὦ μοι ἔπειτ' Ὀδυσῆος ἀμύμονος, ὅς μ' ἐπὶ βουσίῃ  
εἶσ' ἔτι τυτθὸν ἐόντα Κεφαλλήνων ἐνὶ δήμῳ.

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Given that Ithakans – whether sympathetic or antagonistic to their king – are wont to call Odysseus ‘godlike’ (θεῖος) and that Theoklymenos, because he is an outsider, instead opts for the titles ἀμύμων and ἀντίθεος, a supposition could be made that Philoitios is also being marked as a (friendly) outsider by his use of the same terms. This conclusion is inferred both from the fact that he is in charge of Odysseus’ Kephallenian cattle, and – as Eumaios implies – that he is not a frequent visitor to the household on account of his lowly status.<sup>116</sup> Another explanation, not exclusive to this one, takes into account the contexts in which these epithets appear, upon which some tentative similarities can be drawn.

As noted previously, epithets rarely act as synonymous replacements of one another and applications of ἀντίθεος and θεῖος to Odysseus attest to this fact as they are very clearly used in neither the same contexts nor by the same types of people.<sup>117</sup> While the Suitors and Ithakans use θεῖος to refer to Odysseus’ divine heritage, Theoklymenos and Philoitios use ἀντίθεος in situations where they wish to draw a comparison between Odysseus and the lawless Suitors. The comparison is more apparent in the first example (20.369). Theoklymenos compares Odysseus who is ‘equal to the gods’ (ἀντίθεος) to the mere ‘men’ (ἀνέρας) who are ‘reckless’ (ἀτάσθαλος) and ‘hubristic’ (ὕβριζω), the latter adjective

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<sup>115</sup> 20.209-210:

Alas for **irreproachable Odysseus**, who set me upon his cattle,  
when I was little, in the Kephallenian country.

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<sup>116</sup> 15.371-379. This region may indicate some parts of the Ithaka and all its nearby islands: Russo *et al.* (1992): 118.

<sup>117</sup> **Appendix One: s.v Location.**

implying an excess beyond proper conduct or placing oneself above the proper domain of men and into godhood. Thus, Theoklymenos says, it is Odysseus who is truly ‘equal to the gods’, unlike you men who “liken yourselves to gods” in your acts of transgression. Similarly, Philoitios compares the “guest-gift” Odysseus has given Ktesippos (namely, death), to the “guest-gift” Ktesippos earlier gave Odysseus (namely, throwing a hoof at him). Neither of these ξεινία are appropriate, of course. Ktesippos’ act was a violation of ξεινία whereas Odysseus’ “gift” is a righteous act ordained by the gods of justice and of ξεινία itself (Athena and Zeus), therefore Philoitios emphasises that it was Odysseus ‘equal to the gods’ who acted rightly.<sup>118</sup>

The same sort of contrast between a godly man and a violator of ξεινία is also made through the application of αντίθεος in Book One, though the epithet is not used for – but rather against – Odysseus in this context. In response to Athena’s request to return Odysseus home, Zeus remarks:<sup>119</sup>

My child, what word escaped the barrier of your teeth?  
 How could I forget **godlike (θείοιο) Odysseus** 165  
 who is beyond other mortals in his *noos*, and beyond them  
 gave sacrifices to the immortal gods, who hold wide heaven?  
 But it is the ever unwearying anger of earth-moving Poseidon  
 over the Cyclops, who he blinded,

<sup>118</sup> It was an ‘outrage’ (ἀεικία, 20.308) akin to the violation of Hektor’s body in the *Iliad* (24.19).

<sup>119</sup> 1.64-73:

τέκνον ἐμόν, ποῖόν σε ἔπος φύγεν ἕρκος ὀδόντων.  
 πῶς ἂν ἔπειτ’ Ὀδυσῆος ἐγὼ θείοιο λαθοίμην, 165  
 ὃς περὶ μὲν νόον ἐστὶ βροτῶν, περὶ δ’ ἰρὰ θεοῖσιν  
 ἀθανάτοισιν ἔδωκε, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν;  
 ἀλλὰ Ποσειδάων γαιήροχος ἀσκελὲς αἰεὶ  
 Κύκλωπος κεχόλωται, ὃν ὀφθαλμοῦ ἀλάωσεν,  
 ἀντίθεον Πολύφημον, ὄου κράτος ἐστὶ μέγιστον 170  
 πᾶσιν Κυκλώπεσσι· Θόωσα δέ μιν τέκε νύμφη,  
 ὧφ’ Ὀρκυνος θυγάτηρ ὠχλὸς ἀτρυγέτοιο μέδοντος,  
 ἐν σπέσσι γλαφυροῖσι Ποσειδάωνι μιγεῖσα.

**Polyphemos equal to the gods (ἀντίθεον)**, whose strength is greatest 170  
among all the Cyclopes, child of Thoosa the nymph,  
›Phorkys' daughter, ›ruler of the barren sea‹,  
in whose hollow caves she flowed with Poseidon.

In these lines, it is Polyphemos, instead, who is ἀντίθεος. Such a description is entirely sensible as from Poseidon's perspective (it is from his focalization that this line is made) it is Odysseus, the guest, who has transgressed ξενία by blinding his host. He also has the 'greatest strength' (μέγιστον κράτος) among all the Cyclopes, just as Zeus has the 'greatest strength' of all gods (5.4) and so is more 'equal to the gods' (ἀντίθεος) than Odysseus during this particular description. Note also that Odysseus' great νόος in this scene extends only so far as all mortal men, emphasised by the sanguinous nature of βρότος and so places him firmly in the corporeal realm.<sup>120</sup>

There is also a demonstrable pattern to the distribution of ἀμύμων ('irreproachable'), at least insofar as Odysseus is concerned. When applied to Odysseus by characters (including himself in the third-person) this epithet appears most commonly in the supplicatory formula expressed by Theoklymenos at 17.516 (n.114 above), though in all other instances it is used by the beggar-Odysseus: first to Eumaios, then later to Penelope, and finally when replying to Philoitios.<sup>121</sup> In all four of these instances the speaker is re-affirming their anticipation that Odysseus will soon return home, if he is not there already.<sup>122</sup>

<sup>120</sup> βροτός associates 'man' with 'blood', LSJ: s.v. βροτός as opposed to ἀνὴρ, for example. Further examination of ἀντίθεος is needed to confirm, or deny, the hypothesis that it appears contextually to place the recipient in line with the behaviour of the gods.

<sup>121</sup> 15.159; 19.304; 20.231. The latter follows after Philoitios has aptly described the stranger as πολύπλαγκτος (20.195), the same πολύ- epithet Penelope uses to describe the stranger at 17.511, and which echoes the description of him as πολλά πλάγχθη in the opening of the proem.

<sup>122</sup> Note how the other formula (ἦ μὲν τοι τάδε πάντα τελείεται ὡς ἀγορεύω, τοῦδ' αὐτοῦ λυκάβαντος ἐλεύσεται ἐνθάδ' Ὀδυσσεύς, τοῦ μὲν φθίνοντος μηνός, τοῦ δ' ἰσταμένοιο) "belongs" to Odysseus and is not used by Theoklymenos.

Beggar-Odysseus to Eumaios:<sup>123</sup>

... I detest the man who speaks falsely.  
 Zeus first of gods bear witness, and the table of guest-friendship,  
 and the hearth of irreproachable Odysseus, where I have arrived.  
 These things will all be accomplished as I say:  
 Odysseus will arrive here within the year 160  
 either when the moon wanes, or when it is full,  
 he will return home, and exact his revenge upon those  
 who have dishonoured his wife and radiant son.

Theoklymenos to Penelope:<sup>124</sup>

I will prophesy truthfully and conceal nothing:  
 Zeus first of gods bear witness, and the table of guest-friendship, 155  
 and the hearth of irreproachable Odysseus, where I have arrived.  
 Surely Odysseus is already in the land of his fathers.

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<sup>123</sup> 14.156-164:

... ὄς πενίη εἴκων ἀπατήλια βάζει.  
 ἴστω νῦν Ζεὺς πρῶτα θεῶν, ξενίη τε τράπεζα,  
 ἰστίη τ' Ὀδυσῆος ἀμύμονος, ἦν ἀφικάνω·  
 ἦ μὲν τοι τάδε πάντα τελείεται ὡς ἀγορεύω.  
 τοῦδ' αὐτοῦ λυκάβαντος ἐλεύσεται ἐνθάδ' Ὀδυσσεύς 160  
 τοῦ μὲν φθίνοντος μηνός, τοῦ δ' ἴσταμένοιο.  
 οἴκαδε νοστήσει, καὶ τίσεται ὄς τις ἐκείνου  
 ἐνθάδ' ἀτιμάζει ἄλοχον καὶ φαίδιμον υἱόν.

<sup>124</sup> 17.154-157:

ἀτρεκέως γάρ σοι μαντεύσομαι οὐδ' ἐπικεύσω·  
 ἴστω νῦν Ζεὺς πρῶτα θεῶν, ξενίη τε τράπεζα 155  
 ἰστίη τ' Ὀδυσῆος ἀμύμονος, ἦν ἀφικάνω,  
 ὡς ἦ τοι Ὀδυσσεὺς ἤδη ἐν πατρίδι γαίῃ,

Beggar-Odysseus to Penelope:<sup>125</sup>

So you see he is safe and already here, 300  
 he is very near, your beloved is not far and no longer  
 away from his fatherland I swear you this oath.  
 Zeus first of gods, highest and most noble, bear witness,  
 and the hearth of irreproachable Odysseus, where I have arrived.  
 These things will all be accomplished as I say: 305  
 Odysseus will arrive here within the year,  
 either when the moon wanes, or when it is full.

Beggar-Odysseus to Philoitios:<sup>126</sup>

Therefore I will speak and swear this great oath: 230  
 Zeus first of gods bear witness, and the table of guest-friendship,  
 and the hearth of irreproachable Odysseus, where I have arrived  
 Odysseus will come home while you are here  
 you will see him with your own eyes, if you are willing,  
 as he kills the Suitors, who are lords here. 235

<sup>125</sup> 19.300-307:

ὥς ὁ μὲν οὕτως ἐστὶ σόος καὶ ἐλεύσεται ἤδη 300  
 ἄγχι μάλ', οὐδ' ἔτι τῆλε φίλων καὶ πατρίδος αἴης  
 δηρὸν ἀπεσσεῖται· ἔμπης δέ τοι ὄρκια δώσω.  
 ἴστω νῦν Ζεὺς πρῶτα, θεῶν ὑπατος καὶ ἄριστος,  
 ἰστίη τ' Ὀδυσῆος ἀμύμονος, ἦν ἀφικάνω·  
 ἧ μὲν τοι τάδε πάντα τελείεται ὡς ἀγορεύω. 305  
 τοῦδ' αὐτοῦ λυκάβαντος ἐλεύσεται ἐνθάδ' Ὀδυσσεύς,  
 τοῦ μὲν φθίνοντος μηνός, τοῦ δ' ἴσταμένοιο.

<sup>126</sup> 20.230-235:

τοῦνεκά τοι ἐρέω καὶ ἐπὶ μέγαν ὄρκον ὁμοῦμαι· 230  
 ἴστω νῦν Ζεὺς πρῶτα θεῶν ξενίη τε τράπεζα  
 ἰστίη τ' Ὀδυσῆος ἀμύμονος, ἦν ἀφικάνω,  
 ἧ σέθεν ἐνθάδ' ἐόντος ἐλεύσεται οἴκαδ' Ὀδυσσεύς·  
 σοῖσιν δ' ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἐπόψεαι, αἶ κ' ἐθέλησθα,  
 κτεινομένους μνηστῆρας, οἳ ἐνθάδε κοιρανέουσιν. 235



The application of ἀμύμων in relation to Odysseus is not entirely formulaic, however, as not all of its uses appear within this repeated oath. Philoitios' use occurs only after he likens the beggar-Odysseus to his master (20.204-209), after which it is Odysseus who swears by the hearth of that same 'irreproachable Odysseus' that Odysseus has indeed returned. Likewise, in Book 16, the beggar-Odysseus remarks to Telemakhos that were he the son of 'irreproachable Odysseus' or Odysseus himself (!) he would enter the palace and slaughter the Suitors even at the risk of his own life (16.99-111). Whether or not they appear in the oath-formula, all instances of Ὀδυσῆος ἀμύμονος are uttered by friendly characters, all converge on the return of Odysseus to Ithaka, and all (but one) of them refer to his destruction of the Suitors. The thematic context is clear: Odysseus is ἀμύμων in relation to his return to his hearth and – by extension – in his destruction of the Suitors.<sup>127</sup>

Οὐ̄τιν δέ με ἐχθροὶ κικλήσκουσι

As demonstrated in Chapter Four, the Suitors take pains to avoid emphasising Odysseus' relationship to Penelope and typically refer to her as 'daughter of Ikarios' to emphasise her unmarried status, while the beggar-Odysseus and his allies repeatedly call her 'wife of Odysseus'.<sup>128</sup> They continue this same treatment when referring to Odysseus inasmuch as they try to avoid identifying him by his heritage, either as son of Laertes, or

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<sup>127</sup> It is for this reason that ἀμύμων has been translated literally as 'irreproachable' meaning beyond the reproach of the people in his actions. For more on this debate, see: Parry, A. A. (1973).

<sup>128</sup> Note also that Odysseus invariably adds the embedded epithet 'Laertes' son' to this title for Penelope, which is one of the very few epithets he uses to describe himself, as observed by Austin (1982): 48.

as ruler of Ithaka, thus drawing a stark contrast to his friends, family, and even the gods (who also repeatedly refer to his lineage). They also meticulously avoid using his personal epithets: those that indicate his intelligence and his endurance.<sup>129</sup> Instead, the Suitors (and their servants) almost exclusively use θεῖος ('godlike') when speaking of their absent host, though they prefer to avoid talking of him altogether.<sup>130</sup> The only two Suitors who do not use this epithet are the leaders, Antinoos and Eurymakhos, though the alternatives they select are always contextually appropriate.

Antinoos only ever applies one epithet to Odysseus: when he describes him as 'Laertes' son'. Here, however, Antinoos is not describing Odysseus as much as his property and specifically referring to its sanctity:<sup>131</sup>

I suppose that no man would enter the halls  
of Odysseus Laertes' son and carry off [the axes].

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In this instance, Antinoos does not imitate the same possessive pattern that Penelope and Telemakhos do when referring to the property of 'godlike Odysseus' – which would require him to admit that his host is indeed θεῖος – despite the other Suitors' use of this epithet when referring to him. The difference here lends further support to the argument that it is not a metrical reason which causes Penelope and Telemakhos to refer to his

<sup>129</sup> Austin (1982): 51.

<sup>130</sup> Instances of Suitors using θεῖος for Odysseus: 17.230; 18.417; 20.298, 325; 24.151 (notice that the first instance only occurs after Odysseus has defeated Iros, before which they use the more negative δαίμων (17.446), See: de Jong (2001): 441). Amphimedon's ghost opts for the alternative 'divine' (δαίμων) when speaking to Agamemnon and Akhilleus in the underworld (24.176) but here he is mirroring the envy of Eurymakhos (see below). Other instances of δαίμων are all used when the Sutor is quoting Penelope verbatim. The epithet θεῖος is otherwise applied to the characters: Alkinoos; Antinoos; Companions; Deiphobos; Demodokos; Enipeus; Eurylokhos; Eurymachos; Menelaos; Nausithoos; Neleus; Odysseus; Telemakhos; Theoklymenos, and Rhexenor.

<sup>131</sup> 21.261-262:

οὐ μὲν γάρ τιν' ἀναιρήσεσθαι ὄϊω,  
ἐλθόντ' ἔς μέγαρον Λαερτιάδεω Ὀδυσῆος.

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property in this way. In the context of Book 21, Antinoos chooses an alternative epithet to refer to Odysseus ('Laertes' son') in order to emphasize the longevity and therefore nobility of his palace, which has instilled upon it a form of sanctity which would deter thieves. No man would dare to rob from the halls of the family who have been king for two generations, is what Antinoos says. The epithet is not therefore a direct compliment to Odysseus, as much as a comment on the noble status of his property.

Eurymakhos is altogether different. He uses three other epithets for Odysseus in three different contexts for three very different reasons. In Book 16, when speaking with Penelope, he wishes to belay her fears over threats to her son and does so by reminiscing about a time when Odysseus the 'city-sacker' (πολίπορθος, 16.442) would bounce him on his knee (as if he were his own son). That his reply redirects Penelope's speech from Antinoos to himself (which he reframes as if it were intended for him) combined with the fact that the reader knows what he says about Telemakhos' safety to be an outright lie (they have already plotted to kill Telemakhos) indicates that he is making overtures of diplomacy here.<sup>132</sup> The presence of the flattering Iliadic epithet πολίπορθος reinforces the obsequiousness of his speech, while also drawing attention to the irony that it is Odysseus the city-sacker who later kills him (22.82).<sup>133</sup>

Elsewhere Eurymakhos' description of Odysseus as 'equal to the gods' (ἀντίθεος) seems a little more sincere but only inasmuch as it is filled with envy. It appears during the comparative statement 'we do not have the strength of Odysseus equal to the gods, because we are not strong enough to string his bow' (21.254). Thus, in order to excuse

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<sup>132</sup> On Eurymakhos' redirection, See: de Jong (2001): 404-405.

<sup>133</sup> πολίπορθος is always by the narrator except in this instance: 14.447; 18.356; 22.283.

their relative lack of strength and skill in stringing the bow, Eurymakhos is suggesting that Odysseus must have superhuman powers.<sup>134</sup> Given what has already been discussed about ἀντίθεος, its use here also likely pre-empts Odysseus' just revenge of the Suitors with the same bow of which Eurymakhos is despairing.

Finally, he utters the rather unusual epithet 'of Ithaka' (Ἰθακήσιος, 22.45). Both instances of this epithet in the *Odyssey* are used by Suitors and appear in the same metrical position which may imply formulaic consistency were it not for the limited examples. Certainly, their position in the narrative provides a deeper contextual meaning. Both instances frame the returning of Odysseus to Ithaka. In the first instance (2.246) Leokritus claims that Odysseus 'of Ithaka' should never return if he wishes to fight the Suitors who outnumber him. This prediction is contradicted in the second instance (22.45) where Eurymakhos identifies the man who has slaughtered the Suitors as the returned Odysseus: 'if indeed you are Odysseus of Ithaka, come home'. Note that the same Suitors are called the 'men of Ithaka' (Ἰθακήσιοι) by Mentor (2.229). The epithet is therefore more than an identifier of location of origin – it demarcates Odysseus as the only citizen capable of restoring order in Ithaka by controlling its inhabitants.<sup>135</sup>

The Suitors and their servants, therefore, collectively avoid attributing epithets to Odysseus which are either flattering or personal. The only instances where they divert from the usual application of θεῖος are all contextually appropriate and serve to enrich the text in every case.

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<sup>134</sup> Austin argues that this instance is a begrudging mark of respect for the hero, indicative of their embarrassment (1982): 51-2.

<sup>135</sup> Bowra (1959): 31; Higbie (1995): 168.

## Conclusion

Austin was certainly correct in identifying the reticence sympathetic characters have in using Odysseus' name. However, his reason for this – that they are knowledgeable of name taboos and so do not wish to bring down bad luck upon him – accounts neither for the liberal use of his name by divinities, nor for the vast numbers of epithets they are happy to award him: for epithets identify a man just as much as his name does. Instead, it seems more likely – given the significance of epithets as status identifiers – that the same characters who avoid using Odysseus' name freely use his epithets in order to communicate his κλέος and their association with a famous man. In fact, it is precisely their use of epithets in combination with the avoidance of his name, which indicates that these characters believe Odysseus to have died some ignominious death, and so they wish to reaffirm the glory of a dead man, even if they cannot bear to speak his name.

A comparison of how Odysseus' friends and enemies refer to him indicates that epithets are far more likely to be used by partisans than adversaries, again because the communication of status is largely a benefic one. The observation of epithet distribution between these characters in turn supports the argument that epithets are primarily social markers used to indicate respect and social status: factors which enemies of Odysseus would be loathe to acknowledge.<sup>136</sup>

As an Homeric hero, whose κλέος is determined by the continuation of name and titles, it is remarkable indeed that Odysseus – alone of all the Homeric heroes – should choose

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<sup>136</sup> For more on the interaction between Trojans and Greeks, see: Mackie (1996).

to surrender his name so easily and frequently. We now understand why his family might do so, but why should he? The reason for this is to be found in the power of names.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: μέμνηται Όδυσσῆος: Re-calling the Anonymous Hero

οὐ τις μέμνηται Όδυσσῆος θείοιο  
~ *Odyssey* 5.11

### Introduction

If Odysseus' friends and enemies can so easily render him into oblivion by avoiding his name and manipulating his titles, how can Odysseus hope to regain his rightful place as king of Ithaka; a position which is fundamentally constructed from his name and titles? Furthermore, why should Odysseus himself ever choose to surrender them willingly? This final chapter examines these questions through an extension of Austin's observation that the purpose of the Telemakheia is for Odysseus' son to travel to the mainland in order to recall the memory of his father which, in turn, will enable Odysseus to return from the mystical land of the *Fabulae* and back into the mortal realm.<sup>1</sup>

While Austin's argument is compelling, it is – just like his associated observation of the avoidance of Odysseus' names by sympathetic characters – incomplete, for it fails to take into account the place epithets play in the recovery of Odysseus' identity. This chapter will first present the reasons behind Odysseus' choice to surrender his name and identity, along with the risks he faces when revealing itself. It will then expand upon Austin's reading of the Telemakheia as an 'extended embassy scene' before finally examining the name and titles Odysseus chooses for himself upon his return to Ithaka. The names and titles which identify him finally as the re-turning king of Ithaka and not the sacker of Troy.

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<sup>1</sup> Austin (1972): 1-19.

## The Power of a Name

The reason behind Odysseus' surrender of his name – despite the significance a name has with regard both to manifestation and memory – is again to be found in the Polyphemos episode, where the revelation of Odysseus' name is tied to his destruction.<sup>2</sup> After Odysseus identifies himself as 'the city-sacker, son of Laertes, who makes his home on Ithaka' Polyphemos calls upon him a curse which precisely repeats these same titles:<sup>3</sup>

[φάσθαι] Ὀδυσσῆα πτολιπόρθιον [ἐξαλαῶσαι], υἶὸν Λαέρτεω, Ἰθάκῃ ἔνι οἰκί' ἔχοντα.	505
...	
[ἴδὼς μὴ] Ὀδυσσῆα πτολιπόρθιον [οἴκαδ' ἰκέσθαι] υἶὸν Λαέρτεω, Ἰθάκῃ ἔνι οἰκί' ἔχοντα.	530

The Cyclops' verbatim repetition of Odysseus' name, patronym and titles has been considered by some translators to be meaningless imitation and so explained away, or removed from the text entirely.<sup>4</sup> Other translators put it down to Polyphemos's 'hot-headedness', or Odysseus' hubristic need to complete his vengeance by being identified.<sup>5</sup> Yet none of these explanations conforms to the eschatology of Homer, i.e. that names and their associated titles are powerful and meaningful. Instead, an appreciation of this

<sup>2</sup> For more on the suppression of Odysseus' name as a common motif see: Clay (1983): 26-9; Peradotto (1990): 114-116; Olson (1992): 1-8.

<sup>3</sup> *Odyssey* 9.504-505; 530-531:

Say that Odysseus, city-sacker, son of Laertes, who makes his home on Ithaka, blinded you completely.	505
...	
May the gods grant that Odysseus, city-sacker, son of Laertes, who makes his home on Ithaka, never return home.	530

Note that Odysseus uses the verb φημί ('say') which alludes to the name Polyphemos 'full of songs and legends' (LSJ: s.v. πολύφημος).

<sup>4</sup> Ameis (1889): n.9.531; Van der Valk (1939): 268.

<sup>5</sup> Rouse (1937): 111 n.1; Aristotle *Rhetoric* 2.3.16. For an excellent study on repetition in Homer see: Lowenstam (1993).



convention allows us to understand that what makes Polyphemos' curse efficacious is his knowledge of Odysseus' name and full titles.<sup>6</sup> To this end, the addition of Odysseus' epithets 'city-sacker, son of Laertes, whose home is in Ithaka' compounds the potency of the curse by enhancing Polyphemos' knowledge concerning his identity.<sup>7</sup>

Odysseus learns, from this lesson, about the power of names and subsequently adopts anonymity as frequently as possible in his remaining encounters in order to protect himself from the dangers which can be brought about by the malevolent wielding of a name. Later in the story Odysseus rather rudely asserts that his host should 'not inquire as to my lineage and my fatherland' as such knowledge only ever leads to pain and sorrow.<sup>8</sup> By the time he has reached Ithaka Odysseus has certainly learnt that knowledge of a person's name and full titles is a dangerous thing.

Following the Island of the Goats, the next full account of guest-host identification is on Aiaia.<sup>9</sup> However, introductions in this episode are also irregular. The encounter has significant parallels with the Cyclops episode as it equally seems to rely on the power of names for the efficacy of a curse.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Stanford (1964): 364 n.504; Brown (1966): 196, 201; Austin (1972): 1-19; Heubeck & Hoekstra (1990): 40, and: Goldhill (1991): 33. It is for similar reasons that people of many cultures studiously avoid the giving of their true name: Levi-Strauss, for instance, studied the conventions of Nambikwara Indians and found that '*les noms propres ne sont jamais prononcés* (proper names are never spoken)': (1948): 36. For other anthropological studies concerning naming; Tambiah (1968): 175-208; Kripke (1980); Watson (1986): 619-631; Barnes (1987): 211-226; Alford (1988), and Blum (1997): 357-379.

<sup>7</sup> Note how the reverse is also true in this episode, in that Odysseus does not name the Cyclops (referring to him as ἀνήρ; 9.187, 214, and later as Κύκλωψ 9.296, 347, 364, 475, 502) even after the other Cyclopes do (9.403), despite his usual confidence in displaying this kind of hindsight knowledge, see: de Jong (2001): 232.

<sup>8</sup> 19.116-118:

μηδ' ἔμὸν ἐξερέεινε γένος καὶ πατρίδα γαῖαν,  
μή μοι μᾶλλον θυμὸν ἐνιπλήσης ὀδυνᾶων  
μνησαμένω μάλᾳ δ' εἰμὶ πολύστονος.

<sup>9</sup> Literally: 'place of wailing', as borne out by the companions' incessant lamenting.

<sup>10</sup> Further parallels between the pair include: their pre-existing knowledge of Odysseus' visit; their belief that 'no-man' tricked them; their realisation that the man who cheated them was Odysseus; that they are tricked into releasing the companions; that the companions become animals/food; the mind-numbing potency of drinks.

After Eurylokhos returns with the news that their companions have been kidnapped by ‘some goddess or woman’ (10.255) and transformed into swine, Odysseus heads out to confront her. On the way he encounters Hermes who tells Odysseus how to overcome the nymph’s magic.<sup>11</sup> Alongside the protective remedy (ἔσθλὸν φάρμακον), and the knowledge of what to do (ἔρέω δὲ ἕκαστα), Hermes also tells Odysseus his antagonist’s name, identifying her an excessive five times in twenty lines.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, having learnt from the Polyphemos episode, Odysseus retains his anonymity, while also possessing the name of his attacker (something he did not previously exploit). Could this factor contribute to the failure of her magic?

After he has survived her initial attack, the first thing Circe demands to know is Odysseus’ name and heritage, she asks: ‘what kind of man are you? Where is your city and who is your father?’.<sup>13</sup> This is precisely the same information Polyphemos uses to make his spell effective: the name and title, lineage, and place of birth of his victim. That this is the very same information which Circe demands suggests that she believes it was the lack of this knowledge that rendered her spell impotent. Circe then makes further references to the power of his anonymity in the play on words which follows:<sup>14</sup>

I am amazed that you drank this potion and were not enchanted:  
**no one** before has endured this potion,

<sup>11</sup> 10.275-306.

<sup>12</sup> Compare Hermes’ volubility here with his complete avoidance of Odysseus’ name when he speaks with Kalypso across a similar length of speech: *Odyssey* 5.97-115.

<sup>13</sup> 10.325. I interpret the first use of πόθεν in this line as a request for Odysseus’ origin, i.e. his clarifying personal epithet which would identify his status among his peers, rather than a request to know his address (the second use). This is not a standard request: Circe’s speech is a marked variant of the standard “identification of the guest” exchange, in which she both asks *and answers* the questions herself, see: de Jong (2001): 262.

<sup>14</sup> 10.326-328:

θαῦμά μ’ ἔχει ὡς οὔ τι πίων τάδε φάρμακ’ ἐθέλχθης·  
 οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδέ τις ἄλλος ἀνὴρ τάδε φάρμακ’ ἀνέτλη,  
 ὃς κε πῆχαι καὶ πρῶτον ἀμείψεται ἔρκος ὀδόντων.

once he drank and it passed the barrier of his teeth.

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Line 327 can be read one of two ways. Circe is either saying that ‘no-one has withstood her enchantment before’, or that ‘οὐδέ τις [an alternative of Οὐτίς, i.e. Odysseus] has withstood her enchantment’. This double-meaning reinforces her concern over Odysseus’ anonymity by evoking the same pun of 9.408, Polyphemos wails that ‘no-one [Οὐτίς] is killing me’. Together, the first four lines of Circe’s rebuttal repeatedly emphasise the anonymity of her victim: she does not know what man he is, his lineage or origin, and she unwittingly refers to him by the same anonymous pseudonym which protected him in a previous encounter.

Nowhere in her speech does Circe refer to the moly Odysseus possesses to resist her enchantment, despite the emphasis placed on the herb in previous lines. Instead she stresses that it is his ‘mind [νόος] which no magic will work on’ (10.329): implying that it is some kind of knowledge which has resisted her, rather than any kind of divine amulet. This is reminiscent of Odysseus’ earlier claim that it was his anonymity and μητις which deceived the Cyclops, rather than the ‘great strength’ (μεγάλην ἀλκήν) which Polyphemos had expected.<sup>15</sup> That it should be Odysseus’ νόος, rather than the moly, which resists Circe’s spell can be explained by a closer examination of the gift which Hermes gives Odysseus.

The moly episode has long been identified by scholars as a contentious passage. One interpretation centres upon the naming of the plant as an example of the Homeric ‘language of the gods’ i.e. knowledge of words, or names, that divine characters possess

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<sup>15</sup> 9.414; 514. For more on the antithesis between intelligence vs. physical force see: Segal (1994): 98.

which mortals do not.<sup>16</sup> The audience is explicitly told at 10.305 that μῶλυ δέ μιν καλέουσι θεοί ('the gods bring moly into being [by naming it]'), the line implying that mankind has no name for the plant because it is unknown to them.<sup>17</sup> Under this rubric, and through a close analysis of Hermes' speech, it becomes apparent that "moly" represents the divine knowledge of Circe's name which Hermes gives to Odysseus.

Upon first arriving at the island, Odysseus remarks at length about an uncharacteristic loss of μῆτις.<sup>18</sup> He is geographically and mentally untethered. Hermes reiterates this sentiment when he encounters Odysseus in the forest, warning him that should he remain 'ignorant' (ἄιδρις) he will not return home (οὐδέ νοστήσειν).<sup>19</sup> The 'ignorance' Hermes accuses Odysseus of is directly related to his knowledge of Circe, as implied by the copulative δέ which connects the question 'why are you ignorant of this country?' with the answer "your companions are over there in Circe's sties":<sup>20</sup>

πῆ δὴ αὖτ', ὦ δύστηνε, δι' ἄκριας ἔρχεαι οἶος,  
 χώρου αἰδρις ἐών; ἔταροι δέ τοι οἶδ' ἐνὶ Κίρκης  
 ἔρχονται ὡς τε σύες πυκινούς κευθμῶνας ἔχοντες.

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So Hermes offers to help Odysseus. This help consists of two parts: a 'good remedy'

<sup>16</sup> 10.305; Heubeck (1949-50): 197-218, based on; Guntert (1921): 90-91.

<sup>17</sup> Following the interpretation of καλέω as outlined in **Chapter Six: The Power of Anonymity**. Clay (1972): 128.

<sup>18</sup> 10.192-193. Dimock recognizes another pun here, Dimock (1989): 125.

<sup>19</sup> 10.281-285. αἰδρις: literally 'without' (ἄ-) 'knowledge' (ἴδρις), see: Autenreith s.v. αἰδρις. αἰδρις is an Odyssean *hapax*, which also appears once in the *Iliad*, where it also refers to an uncharacteristic loss of intelligence for Odysseus' (3.214-224). The antonym (ἰδρις) is otherwise used in the *Odyssey* to refer to the skill of the master craftsman (in the hyacinth simile: 6.233 and 23.160, and in relation to the Phaiakian sailors: 7.107). It does not appear in the *Iliad*. Thus the word in both its forms is largely associated with Odysseus.

<sup>20</sup> 10.281-283:

Why are you here, unhappy men, alone on this hill,  
 ignorant of this country? Your companions are in Circe's  
 clutches, penned like pigs in close-packed sties. 282

(φάρμακον ἐσθλόν) and the knowledge of what to do in order to defeat Circe: (ὃ τοι δώσω, ἐρέω δὲ ἕκαστα):<sup>21</sup>

...οὐ γὰρ ἐάσει  
φάρμακον ἐσθλόν, ὃ τοι δώσω, ἐρέω δὲ ἕκαστα.

Hermes says that he ‘will give Odysseus a good remedy, [by] telling him everything’. He certainly does not say that he will give him a remedy *and* tell him everything. The argument that his gift is primarily one of knowledge is reinforced by his earlier claim that the main obstruction to Odysseus’ return is his ignorance (ἄιδρις). Hermes’ φάρμακον, therefore, is – quite literally – a remedy to this ignorance. By telling Odysseus ‘everything’ (ἕκαστος) Hermes is providing him with a protective φάρμακον. So what is it that Hermes tells him? It is something which only a god could know: that Odysseus should draw (ἐρύω) his sword as soon as Circe strikes him with her staff. The verb ἐρύω echoes the description of Hermes ‘drawing’ the moly from the earth (ἐκ γαίης ἐρύσας), thereby making the drawing of the sword and the drawing up of the moly analogous acts.<sup>22</sup> Finally, Hermes’ advice is enclosed in a ring-composition which associates the act of speech with the gifting of φάρμακον, further associating the φάρμακον with the advice:<sup>23</sup>

φάρμακον ἐσθλόν, ὃ τοι <b>δώσω</b> , <b>ἐρέω</b> δὲ ἕκαστα	291
[followed by advice on how to overpower Circe]	
ὣς ἄρα <b>φωνήσας πόρε</b> φάρμακον ἀργεῖφόντης	302

Up until now, there has been no direct reference to a plant, or herb, of any sort: only a remedy, the knowledge of Circe’s name and directions on how to resist her. Then is the

<sup>21</sup> 10.291.

<sup>22</sup> 10.294, 303.

<sup>23</sup> 10.291-302.

moly drawn from the earth, brought into the light and given to Odysseus. It is described as being something which only the gods know the nature of (10.306), something which Hermes literally brings into being for Odysseus by naming (καλέω, 10.305) and *explaining* to him (μοι φύσιν αὐτοῦ ἔδειξε, 10.303).<sup>24</sup> The mystical “moly” is therefore described in exactly the same manner as the knowledge which Hermes has already imparted to Odysseus.<sup>25</sup> It is a knowledge which is ‘hard for mortal men to dig up, but which all the gods are capable of doing’ (10.306), precisely because no-one but a god would know how to overpower another god. This interpretation of the ‘good remedy’ explains why Circe is so shocked by Odysseus’ resistance and why she comments on the power of his νόος, rather than the presence of any kind of amulet, as she does not understand why any mortal man could have the knowledge of how to defeat her.

After recognising that his intelligence has the power to defeat her magic, Circe quickly realises he ‘must therefore be Odysseus πολύτροπος, whom Argeiphontēs of the golden staff always said would come’, using an epithet which further associates Odysseus with Hermes.<sup>26</sup> The prediction mirrors the Cyclops episode, where Polyphemos, now apprised of Odysseus’ identity, cries that ‘a prophecy of old has come to be’ that he would be ‘deprived of his sight at the hands of Odysseus’.<sup>27</sup> Both revelations are made only after

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<sup>24</sup> Note that Odysseus identifies Hermes in his role of transitioner through reference to the epithet χρυσόραπις, 10.277. For more on Hermes’ wand, see: Grey (2019b): 113-115, and Segal (1995): 69-70.

<sup>25</sup> Partly black and partly white, perhaps, because Hermes is a god of transition between upper, and nether, worlds. μέλας is used to refer (among other things) to death, or fate, night, earth, and blood – associating it with the netherworld; while milk-white may represent the brilliance of Olympus 6.42-45, for more, and for Hermes as the god of transition, see: Grey (2019b): 101-116. For more on transition as a theme in the *Odyssey*, see: Segal (1994): 67-89.

<sup>26</sup> 10.330-331. Pucci (1995): 25. See: **Chapter Six: Οὐτὶν δέ με φίλοι κικλήσκουσι.**

<sup>27</sup> 9.507-514. Higbie (1995): 78. There are further parallels between the two episodes, namely: that the companions are trapped behind a door which only their captor can open (9.240-244; 10.241, 389), and that there is a figurative or literal transformation into animals (sheep and pigs respectively), see n.10 above.

the intelligence of Odysseus has become manifest, suggesting that his cunning intelligence is the identifying factor of the prophecy; equivalent to his name.<sup>28</sup>

Furthermore, this is the only other instance in the text where Odysseus is described by his initial epithet from the proem – where it is also associated closely with his νόος.<sup>29</sup> These two passages both draw a contrast between Odysseus’s νόος and his comrades’ lack of it. In the proem Odysseus’ νόος is juxtaposed with the companions’ foolishness (νήπιοι), an adjective which likens them to witless children.<sup>30</sup> Unlike Odysseus, his companions lack the divine knowledge of νόος and are therefore vulnerable to Circe’s spells as well as the temptation of Helios’ cattle.<sup>31</sup> As both the proem and Hermes explain: ignorance prevents homecoming.<sup>32</sup>

These encounters, when combined with the significance placed upon naming throughout the epic, explain why Odysseus should choose to be careful when identifying himself in strange lands. Odysseus indeed learns from the Fabulae that anonymity is by far the safer course, and so adopts a series of false identities on Phaiakia and Ithaka before he reveals his true identity. Indeed, his anonymity is even guaranteed by the prophecy of Halitherses who recalls that Odysseus will come home ἄγνωστος (2.175). This prophecy is then fulfilled by Athena, who also renders Odysseus ἄγνωστος by disguising him before he heads home (13.191, 397).

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<sup>28</sup> Clay (1983): 26-27.

<sup>29</sup> Frame (1978): ix-x.

<sup>30</sup> νήπιος is presented as an antithesis of νόος at 9.442: τὸ δὲ νήπιος οὐκ ἐνόησεν. See: Autenreith s.v. νήπιος.

<sup>31</sup> 10.281-285.

<sup>32</sup> Frame (1978): 33; Heubeck & Hoekstra (1990): 61-62; Segal (1994): 98.

## A Journey into Memory

As demonstrated in the previous chapter Odysseus' namelessness whilst abroad is directly associated with the reticence of his family and friends to name him. He is symbolically dead, having entered a limbo world of the nameless.<sup>33</sup> The purpose of the Telemakheia, indeed of all the books up to 13, is therefore to recover him from this anonymous state and – according to Austin – it is his family and friends who actually achieve this. Austin argues that in order to recall Odysseus, his name and likeness must first be drawn into memory.<sup>34</sup> To this end, the Telemakheia is presented as an extended Embassy Scene where Athena, Hermes and Telemakhos work together to summon Odysseus back into the world of the living.<sup>35</sup>

Austin's argument is as follows. After motivating Zeus to recall Odysseus (1.76), Athena sends Hermes to demand Odysseus' release from Kalypso who has been 'concealing' (καλύπτω) him.<sup>36</sup> Athena then visits Ithaka, where she quite literally 'puts the memory' (ὑπομιμνήσκω) of Odysseus into Telemakhos' mind specifically by the repetition of his name, despite Telemakhos' aforementioned evasions.<sup>37</sup> For Telemakhos, this is a process of moving from imagination (literally 'seeing in his mind' ὄσσομαι 1.115) to memory. As demonstrated in his use of Odysseus' epithets in the previous chapter, Telemakhos progresses from denying his parentage, to publicly declaring it in the

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<sup>33</sup> Grey (2019b): 101-116, see also; Germain (1954): 511-582.

<sup>34</sup> Austin (1982): 78-79. For more on the role of memory in the *Odyssey*: Apthorp (1980): 1-22; Rutherford (1986): 146 n.6, and; Crane (1988): 42-44.

<sup>35</sup> Austin (1982): 79, and Lowenstam (1993): 180-183.

<sup>36</sup> Telemakhos is also 'concealed' (καλύπτω) at the end of Book One (1.443), just as Odysseus is concealed on Ogygia. This messenger scene is paralleled in *Iliad* 11.1-2 where Zeus sends the messenger Eris to the Akhaians; Pucci (1995): 21 n.10. See also, Clay (1983): 41-2.

<sup>37</sup> 1.321, 158-241. Austin (1982): 77-80; Pucci (1995): 20-21, and Higbie (1995): 152-4. Athena's name here (Mentes) suggests the same spirit (*menos*) which she inspires (see also 1.89); Dimock (1989): 16, 30.



Assembly, where several characters are then reminded of Odysseus and his prophesied homecoming.<sup>38</sup> Penelope, of course, needs no such reminder, for – although she is as reticent to name her husband as her son – some of the very first words she utters are: ‘a head such as his I remember always’ (μεμνημένη αἰεί, 1.343).

Following Athena’s direction, Telemakhos then travels to the mainland in order to gather knowledge of his father. Telemakhos’ intellectual and physical resemblance of his father (Chapter Four) make him perfect for this role, as he can act as a psychopomp for the human world, just as Hermes navigates Odysseus’ release from the “world beyond”.<sup>39</sup> This diplomatic role is itself emphasised by Telemakhos’ common epithet πεπνυμένος which is otherwise used in Homer to introduce heralds.<sup>40</sup> At Pylos, Telemakhos asks Nestor to recall from memory (μνήσαι, 3.101) what he knows of Odysseus, Nestor is reminded (μιμνήσκω, 3.103) of the wretched man (οἰζύος, another pun).<sup>41</sup> He also remarks with wonder how much Telemakhos resembles his father physically.<sup>42</sup> After reminding Nestor, Telemakhos then travels to the other great king: Menelaos. Here, both Menelaos and Helen are also amazed by Telemakhos’ likeness to his father (4.141-150), that they are reminded (μιμνήσκω, 4.151) of the man himself. Athena’s machinations and Hermes/Telemakhos’ diplomacy seem to serve their purpose as it is from this point (Book Five) that Odysseus remembers himself and is thus released back to the human world, as indicated by the wonderful, succinct line: οὗ τις μέμνηται Ὀδυσσεύος θείοιο, as if ὄυτις

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<sup>38</sup> 1.215-216; 2.71. Assemblymen reminded: 2.26-27, 161-176, but had previously forgotten 5.11. **Chapter Six: Friends Abroad** identified δῖος as a particular marker of this transmission of remembered knowledge.

<sup>39</sup> Porter calls Ogygia ‘an Eden-like Hell’, Palmer & Porter (1962): 3-5, similarly: Güntert (1919). For more on Odysseus’ concealment, see: Philippon (1947): 15; Pollard (1965): 144; Austin (1982): 79; Dimock (1989): 13, and Pucci (1995): 13.

<sup>40</sup> See: Austin (1982): 75.

<sup>41</sup> Dimock (1989): 39.

<sup>42</sup> 3.124-125. Hermione also shares Helen’s beauty 4.14.

has finally remembered the divine lineage which marks him as Odysseus, King of Ithaka.<sup>43</sup>

Note the connection made here between the act of memory and Odysseus' return to the mortal world. A connection which is reflected in the centrality of memory as a gateway between the knowledge of the Muse and the song produced by the bard (Chapter One). In short, the Telemakheia is an act of transference which literally re-calls Odysseus from the memories of his companions so that – through the repeated uttering of his name – he is able to travel from concealment in the mythical world of the Fabulae to the “real” world of the narrative, just as the song itself is an act of transference which re-calls Odysseus from the memory of the muse into the world of epic song.<sup>44</sup>

Nemo: The Anonymous Man

Despite being recovered from the mystical world of the Fabulae through the act of recollection enabled by his son, Odysseus still finds it hard to reveal his identity while travelling on unknown seas. The lengthy delay Odysseus takes identifying himself on both Phaiakia and Ithaka has been well documented.<sup>45</sup> Arete first appeals for her guest's name and titles in a variation on Circe's questions at 7.237 – ‘who are you, and where are you from?’ – and yet he does not answer ‘I am Odysseus, son of Laertes’ until 9.19, a full 715 lines later.<sup>46</sup> Dimock argues that, during this episode, Odysseus chooses instead to

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<sup>43</sup> ‘No-one remembers divine Odysseus’ 5.11. Segal calls it life-giving memory’, (1994): 135, also: Pucci (1995): 19-22. Some argue, counter to Austin, that this return is motivated by Odysseus himself; Schein (1995): 20.

<sup>44</sup> For the audience's role in the act of memory, see: Segal (1995): 12.

<sup>45</sup> Brown (1966): 200; Fenik (1974): 53; Webber (1989): 1-13; Dimock (1989): 84-109, and Higbie (1995): 164.

<sup>46</sup> 8.28-29, 573-575. Note that when Odysseus returns to Ithaka, Athena also withholds the name of his homeland: 13.237-249.

identify himself by his ‘distance from [the] divine felicity’ of the kind enjoyed by his hosts, wanting them instead to understand ‘the meaning of himself as Man of Pain’.<sup>47</sup> He likens himself to people who bear the greatest misery with a characteristic pun on his own name ‘μάλιστ’ ὀχέοντας **ὀιζῦν** ἀνθρώπων’.<sup>48</sup> He then repeatedly mentions the misfortunes he has suffered: ‘I bear sorrow in my mind’ (ἐγὼ πένθος μὲν ἔχω φρεσίν, 7.219), ‘I am unfortunate’ (ἐμὲ τὸν δύστηνον, 7.223), mentioning his ‘grievous woes’ (στονόεις, 9.12) and the ‘great distress’ the gods had given him (κῆδε’ ἐπεὶ μοι πολλὰ δόσαν θεοὶ, 9.15). If Dimock is correct in his assertion that Odysseus – through these admissions – is identifying himself primarily as a man far distant from the divine felicity of the Phaiakians then why does he finally identify himself as quite the reverse, using the epithets ‘known among men for all his wiles’ and ‘whose κλέος has reached wide heaven’?<sup>49</sup>

The moment Odysseus reveals himself as such immediately follows Demodokos’ account of the Trojan Horse (8.500-521). Some have pointed out that Odysseus’ request to hear the tale was therefore misguided as if he had foolishly set up an account that would raise suspicions of his identity through his grief.<sup>50</sup> Yet the protagonist is rarely so misguided in his machinations. An alternative interpretation instead suggests that by requesting the song of the Trojan Horse Odysseus is, in fact, testing the extent of Demodokos’ knowledge of his Iliadic identity in order to ascertain the extent of his κλέος in this strange place, so that he may be sure to reveal himself in a benevolent environment.

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<sup>47</sup> Dimock (1989): 90-91. See also; Mattes (1958): 140.

<sup>48</sup> 7.211: ‘I bear the greatest suffering of all men you know’. For more on the etymology of Odysseus’ name, See: **Chapter One: Odysseus: The Suffering Man.**

<sup>49</sup> 9.19-20; instead of, for example, Odysseus the enduring one (ταλασίφρων), See: Segal (1994): 92.

<sup>50</sup> E.g. Finkelberg (1987): 128-132, and Broeniman (1996): 3-13.

He sets up the pieces of this revelation artfully. Grabbing the arm of a herald he instructs him:<sup>51</sup>

‘Here, herald, take this prime cut of meat to Demodokos,  
so that he might eat, and I – though troubled – might entreat him.  
For among all men upon the earth singers  
are endowed with honour and respect, because they 480  
are taught by the Muse and since she loves the caste of singers.’

While ostensibly seeming to flatter the bard here, Odysseus never explicitly states that Demodokos actually possesses the inspiration of the Muse.<sup>52</sup> He then teases Demodokos, saying: ‘*either* (ἢ) the Muse has instructed you, child of Zeus, *or else* (ἢ) Apollo did’ (8.488). Here he implies that, while Demodokos certainly has a gift for music (from Apollo), Odysseus doubts whether or not he is actually inspired by the Muse. The difference being that the Muse awards her bard a preternatural knowledge, of the kind only the gods could possess. Until now, Demodokos has only sung of the Akhaians ‘as if *either* (ἢ) [he] had been there, *or else* (ἢ) heard it from one who was’ (8.491): the latter would therefore be a mere performance which contains no evidence of divine inspiration.

To test Demodokos’ relationship with the Muse, Odysseus then asks the bard to ‘sing of the building of the wooden horse...’ and adds: ‘*If* (αἶ) you can recount this part of the tale exactly’ thereby questioning the extent of Demodokos knowledge outside of the Iliadic account.<sup>53</sup> The bard has earlier proved that he knows details from within the Iliadic

<sup>51</sup> 8.477-481:

κῆρυξ, τῆ δὴ, τοῦτο πόρε κρέας, ὄφρα φάγησιν,  
Δημοδόκῳ· καὶ μιν προσπύξομαι ἀχνύμενός περ·  
πᾶσι γὰρ ἀνθρώποισιν ἐπιχθονίοισιν αἰδοὶ  
τιμῆς ἔμμοροί εἰσι καὶ αἰδοῦς, οὐνεκ’ ἄρα σφέας 480  
οἴμας μοῦσ’ ἐδίδαξε, φίλησε δὲ φύλον αἰοιδῶν.

<sup>52</sup> Despite what the Phaiakians and even the narrator believe: 8.44, 63, 73.

<sup>53</sup> 8.493-497. That this is a test of Demodokos’ skill, see: Slatkin (1996): 230.

account – namely the quarrel between Odysseus and Akhilleus – but Odysseus asks him for knowledge outside of that tale.<sup>54</sup> This knowledge is something which could only have been transmitted from the Muse as the Phaiakians otherwise ‘do not offer their hands to strange men, nor do they lovingly regard those from other places’ and so would not likely have entertained other bards or travellers.<sup>55</sup> If Demodokos can sing of the Trojan Horse then he can prove to have knowledge of something he could only have learnt from the Muses, only then will Odysseus happily ‘declare to all that the goddess has readily granted you inspired song’.<sup>56</sup>

Why is it important that Odysseus know where Demodokos has received his poetic information? Because he wishes to know if his ‘fame has reached heaven’ (κλέος οὐρανὸν ἴκει) i.e. whether or not it has reached the Muse so that it can be immortalised in song. Then, as if in response to Odysseus’ challenge, the singer is indeed ‘stirred by the goddess’ and so ‘reveals’ (φαίνω) the song.<sup>57</sup> The use of φαίνω here differentiates this particular song from all of Demodokos’ previous songs, which were merely ‘sung’ (ἀείδω).<sup>58</sup> Once Demodokos has proved that he knows of Odysseus’ stratagem, his ‘great endurance of grimmest fighting’ and the divine assistance of ‘great-hearted Athena’ (8.500-520), Odysseus concedes that Demodokos is indeed inspired by the gods: θεοῖς ἐναλίγκιος αὐδῆν (9.4). Note the plural, implying both the Muse and Apollo.

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<sup>54</sup> 8.75-83. It has been disputed whether the quarrel actually refers to Agamemnon, rather than Odysseus, see: Clay (1983): 96-112, 241-246. Also discussed by Broeniman (1996): 4-5 with footnotes, and Lowenstam (1993): 150-151.

<sup>55</sup> 7.32-33. Rose (1969): 387-406.

<sup>56</sup> 8.498.

<sup>57</sup> 8.499: ὧς φάθ’, ὃ δ’ ὀρμηθεὶς θεοῦ ἤρχετο, φαῖνε δ’ αἰοιδῆν.

<sup>58</sup> 8.73, 266.

Demodokos has previously asserted that the Iliadic heroes, in general, have a fame that reaches wide heaven.<sup>59</sup> Yet, in the first Trojan story, he fails to honour Odysseus with an epithet, thereby undermining his status. He does, however, rectify this in his account of the Trojan Horse, where he awards Odysseus the rather unusual epithet: ἀγακλήης (‘very famous’, 8.502).<sup>60</sup> The novelty of this epithet is purposeful within the context as it is precisely Odysseus’ fame which is being measured in this scene and it thus establishes Odysseus’ fame as a subject worthy of epic song. Odysseus can now identify himself. “I am *that* Odysseus”, he says, “the one known for all those wiles you have heard of (like the horse) and whose fame has reached heaven, as Demodokos says, so that the Muse can transfer it to the minds of the bards”.<sup>61</sup>

Within the Homeric corpus it is peculiar that a hero should refer to his own κλέος and so the adoption of these particular epithets in this context should identify them as a very deliberate choice: one which aligns Odysseus’ identity with the Iliadic poetic tradition.<sup>62</sup> Though the name ‘Odysseus’ is the same, this is in actuality another persona.<sup>63</sup> He assumes the role of ‘Odysseus the Warrior from Troy’, the ‘Iliadic Odysseus’, the ‘Man of wide κλέος’, just as Penelope remembers him when triggered by the Iliadic songs of Phemios. This is an identity which he adopts as another mask; a trick which he uses to obtain the assistance of his hosts who might recognise him from legend. No small wonder, then, that the narrator introduces Odysseus’ Iliadic epithet πολίπορθος for the very first

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<sup>59</sup> κλέος οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἵκανε, 8.74-83.

<sup>60</sup> This is the only instance where this epithet is applied to Odysseus. It is otherwise reserved for a diverse assortment of characters: Idomenos (14.237), Eurytion the Centaur (21.295), and Amphimedon the Suitor (24.103); as well as the palaces of both Nestor and Alkinoos (3.388, 429; 7.3, 46).

<sup>61</sup> εἴμι’ Ὀδυσσεὺς Λαερτιάδης, ὃς πᾶσι δόλοισιν / ἀνθρώποισι μέλω, καί μευ κλέος οὐρανὸν ἵκει. *Odyssey* 9.19-20 (see also 8.74). Note the unusually emphatic placement of εἴμι at the opening of the line. Athena similarly claims that her κλέος is due to her μήτις at 13.199.

<sup>62</sup> Segal (1994): 88.

<sup>63</sup> Pucci (1995): 15, see also; Goldhill (1991): 51-52, 56.

time at the opening of this same Book, deftly foreshadowing the revelation in Demodokos' song of the name-epithet 'Odysseus sacker of cities' as a character from the epic tradition.<sup>64</sup>

Odysseus continues this adopted identity when he begins his own narrative: 'We are Akhaians from Troy' he tells Polyphemos; 'I am the city-sacker' he boasts from his ship.<sup>65</sup> Polyphemos' then specifically curses the Iliadic manifestation of Odysseus (through a repetition of the epithet *πολίπορθος*), thereby leading Odysseus to avoid his fate by discarding this Iliadic identity. After the Polyphemos incident Odysseus 'sacker of cities' never does return to Ithaka. He never again refers to himself with that particular name and title. The remaining handful of its instances (where it is mostly employed by the narrator) refer either to a martial/Trojan context, or to Odysseus in the past.<sup>66</sup> Polyphemos' curse is, to this end, successful. Instead Odysseus reverts to the safer anonymity of the *Οὔτις πολύμητις*, man of *δόλος* identity. It is under this guise that he navigates the fantastical 'world beyond' and encounters the Sirens.<sup>67</sup>

At this point in the narrative, Odysseus has travelled from Troy to the Underworld, where he has witnessed the true fruits of war and learnt that a *κλέος* of the warrior's 'beautiful death' is not a desirable end.<sup>68</sup> After being reminded of his past glories in the Underworld, the Sirens then offer a further more temptation of his Iliadic self.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> 8.3; Segal (1994): 97.

<sup>65</sup> 9.259, 504. I therefore disagree with the argument that Odysseus is fully restored to his former self when he leaves Phaiakia, as proposed by the likes of: de Jong (2001): 150, 171, 214; Segal (1994): 22, 32, 38, and Newton (1984): 5-20.

<sup>66</sup> Martial/Trojan context: 14.447; 18.356-386; 22.283. Odysseus in the past: 18.356, 24.119.

<sup>67</sup> 12.158-200.

<sup>68</sup> 11.488-491.

<sup>69</sup> 12.189-190:

ἴδμεν γάρ τοι πάνθ' ὅσ' ἐνὶ Τροίῃ εὐρείῃ  
Ἄργεῖοι Τρωῶές τε θεῶν ἰότητι μόγησαν,

We know of all that occurred in wide Troy:  
 how much the Argives and Trojans suffered by will of the gods. 190

They even identify him here by a specific Iliadic double epithet: πολύαιν' Ὀδυσσεῦ, μέγα κῦδος Ἀχαιῶν (12.184). 'Much-sung of' (πολύαινος) is an Odyssean *hapax* which is applied solely to Odysseus in the *Iliad*, while 'great glory of the Akhaians' is never applied to Odysseus in the *Odyssey* but shared between himself and Nestor in the *Iliad*.<sup>70</sup> The precise selection of both components of this extended epithet is therefore as significant as the choice of the epithet 'city-sacker' in the Polyphemos and Phaiakian, episodes. They have been selected in order to associate Odysseus with a particular manifestation of himself: the man of Iliadic κλέος.<sup>71</sup>

The context of this κλέος is not as tranquil as the song of his Phaiakian hosts as it is riddled with the reality of war's aftermath. A sense of death permeates this scene. The island is littered with the bodies and skulls of the Sirens' victims (12.45-6). The ships are becalmed in a sleep like death (κοιμάω, 12.169).<sup>72</sup> The Sirens can therefore be interpreted as the 'unauthorized' Muses of Hades, who live close to the underworld and draw men to their death rather than perpetuating their memory in true song.<sup>73</sup> Their song appears to have all the qualities of a bardic lay: it is definitely a song (ᾠοιδή, 12.44, 183, 198); it brings joy (τέρπω, 12.52, 188), and it is beguiling (θέλγω, 12.40, 44), yet the

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Pucci argues that the text of the Sirens is composed of Iliadic diction: Pucci (1979): 121-132. See also; Gregory Nagy in the introduction of Segal (1994): ix-x.

<sup>70</sup> Double epithet πολύαιν' Ὀδυσσεῦ, μέγα κῦδος Ἀχαιῶν: *Iliad* 9.673 and 10.544. Single epithet πολύαινος: *Iliad* 11.430. Nestor is μέγα κῦδος Ἀχαιῶν in *Iliad* 10.87, 555; 11.511; 14.42 (also 22.217) and in the *Odyssey* 3.79, 202.

<sup>71</sup> Clay (1983): 28.

<sup>72</sup> The verb implies a lack of vitality caused by motionlessness, see: *Iliad* 11.241.

<sup>73</sup> Pollard (1965): 137-145; Doherty (1995b): 85, and Pucci (1995): 212.



lifelessness of their landscape reminds the audience that their song is one of 'retrospective heroism' which is 'frozen and lifeless' in the past.<sup>74</sup> Unlike Demodokos or Phemios, theirs is not a κλέος which survives through the Muses: it is not an act of memory, but an act of knowledge (ἴδμεν).<sup>75</sup> The bewitching quality of the Sirens recalls the previous curses and spells which Odysseus has endured, particularly the loss of memory incurred by the Λωτοφάγοι.<sup>76</sup> Odysseus once again successfully evades a divine enchantment because his would-be captors have the wrong name. Odysseus has already surrendered that identity. The Sirens' song therefore marks the absolute end of Odysseus' Iliadic κλέος.

#### Ὀδυσσεὺς Ἰθακήσιος: the Re-turning Hero

The loss of his Iliadic identity does not signal the loss of Odysseus' κλέος entirely. We must remember that, in the narrative, the stories of the Cyclops and the Sirens follow the song of Demodokos on Phaiakia. Odysseus first reminds his hosts of his feats at Troy through his manipulation of Demodokos and then demonstrates to them, this time through his own narrative, how he had to surrender that identity in order to survive in the aftermath of Polyphemos' curse. His hosts seem to understand this transition. After badgering him about his identity across three Books, and despite receiving the impressive answer

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<sup>74</sup> 2.45-6, 156, 167-72, 185: Segal (1994): 100-101.

<sup>75</sup> Etymology of Muse=memory see: Pucci (1977): 22-24; Pucci (1995), and Dimock (1989): 141, citing 11.66, 71. On the lack of memory see: Segal (1994): 102.

<sup>76</sup> 10.291, 318, 326. On the curse of the siren song, see: Pucci (1995): 210.

Ὀδυσσεὺς Λαερτιάδης, ὃς πᾶσι δόλοισιν ἀνθρώποισι μέλω, καί μευ κλέος οὐρανὸν ἵκει, they refer to him as simply ‘Odysseus’ for the remainder of his time with them.<sup>77</sup>

In recounting his adventures like a bard, Odysseus rewrites his κλέος.<sup>78</sup> He uses his μῆτις to change himself from ‘Odysseus the city-sacker’ into ‘Odysseus of many-turns’. He becomes instead, Odysseus the Wanderer.<sup>79</sup> He has tested Demodokos in order to determine if he has indeed been recorded in the Muse’s memory and then embarks on a narrative which rewrites this Iliadic account. He trusts that Demodokos will remember the new story and reveal this new κλέος once he has told his version of events.<sup>80</sup> The transmission of Odysseus’ new song will also continue on Ithaka as is implied when Odysseus spares the life of the Ithakan bard, Phemios, whom Odysseus playfully awards the name-punning epithet πολύφημος as if he will embody the tale of the Cyclops and continue to sing of Odysseus’ ‘many tales’.<sup>81</sup>

The events on Ithaka become the second half of Odysseus’ new narrative. This narrative is a reimagining of the Trojan story, where a combination of cunning disguise and brute force will be required. Using his new knowledge regarding the power of names and namelessness, conceals himself through the façade of a beggar, rather than inside a wooden horse, and withholds his identity until the last possible moment, this time being

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<sup>77</sup> 11.363; 13.4.

<sup>78</sup> 11.368. For more on Odysseus’ authenticity as narrator: Barrett & Barrett (2002): 156.

<sup>79</sup> While Higbie calls this epithet ‘virtually untranslatable’, the most literal translation of πολύτροπος is ‘much-turning’ from the verb τρέπω ‘turn about, turn one’s steps’: Higbie (1995): 181. The *physical* return of Odysseus is referred to in like terms, i.e. ὑπό-τροπος (22.35). Those who also stress the translation of ‘much wandering’ include: Kakrides (1921): 288-291; Woodhouse (1930): 24; Stanford (1965): 1.1, and Clay (1983): 29; Pucci argues that the epithet suggests a cheating of death by constant transition which certainly fits the presentation of him throughout the narrative; Pucci (1995): 149. The alternative common translation involves a sense of mental dexterity (being able to ‘turn one’s mind’) which is textually suggested by the application of the verb to Kalypso 7.263: ἦ καὶ νόος ἐτρέπετ’ αὐτῆς.

<sup>80</sup> Nagy (1979): 100.

<sup>81</sup> 2.345-346, 377; Pucci (1995): 235, see also: Louden (1995): 41, and Slatkin (1996): 228. On Polyphemos’ name see: Bergren (1983): 49, 69, and Higbie (1995): 12.

tested by the wiles of his wife rather than the wife of Menelaos.<sup>82</sup> He will then literally manipulate the poetic tradition by wielding a weapon that sings like a lyre. The audience is explicitly told that Odysseus' bow is symbolic of diplomatic friendship, and has no military history: 'divine Odysseus never took it to war'.<sup>83</sup> It is untainted by any association with the Trojan tradition (unlike, for example, Herakles' bow). Instead, when Odysseus handles his bow, he is likened to a bard plucking the strings of his lyre and so through this simile Odysseus transforms a weapon of war into an instrument of song.<sup>84</sup>

The battle against the Suitors will be like (οἶος 13.388) a new Trojan War, he says to Athena, and she – in turn – reminds him that he is no longer the physical man he was at Troy.<sup>85</sup> Indeed, the opening of Book 22 is the most Iliadic in its martial description. In a new re-telling of the Trojan story, Odysseus has inveigled his way into the place of his enemies, using a cunning disguise which requires the surrender of his identity and then executes the inhabitants who have transgressed social laws by keeping a married woman hostage. Eurymakhos sums it up well: 'we fear that some other Akhaian might tell the story of how some beggar man, came wandering in (ἀλάλημαι), and easily strung the bow' (21.324-328). It is entirely fitting therefore that the account of the Trojan Horse should appear in the *Odyssey*, rather than the *Iliad*, where it is far better suited to foreshadow the events on Ithaka.

After they have finished slaughtering the Suitors, Telemakhos executes the faithless maids (22.446-472). This account might appear to be heartless and has been excused

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<sup>82</sup> Helen recognises Odysseus-the-beggar (4.234-251), but is foiled when she calls out the names of the Greek heroes in the Trojan Horse (4.265-289). For more on Helen's pivotal role as a revealer, see: Due & Ebbot (2010).

<sup>83</sup> 21.38-39.

<sup>84</sup> *Odyssey* 21.405-411. Dimock (1989): 292-293.

<sup>85</sup> 22.226: οὐδέ τις ἀλκή.

by some as a manifestation of Telemakhos' martial maturity, but it has significance in the context of the telling of a new Trojan tale.<sup>86</sup> There are two groups of women in the household: those who have been faithless and those who have been faithful. In light of the militaristic context, the former are reminiscent of war widows, who grieve over their fallen husbands before being shipped into slavery, while the latter evoke the happy wives of the returning heroes.<sup>87</sup>

Odysseus has also been perceived to be cruel in his treatment of Laertes in Book 24. He continues to withhold his identity before the suffering old man even though he no longer needs a disguise. Higbie interprets this scene as a necessary reconfirmation of his patronymic – and thus rightful – lineage by being recognized by his father.<sup>88</sup> This scene is much like Odysseus' earlier interaction with Eumaios in that the family member is reluctant to name Odysseus outright and instead relies on pronouns (μιν, ὄς) and appellatives (ξεῖνον δύστηνον, ἐμὸν παῖδ', δύσμορος).<sup>89</sup> Even when Odysseus identifies himself he still avoids using his name: 'Truthfully, I am that person, father, the one you ask about. I have come back in the twentieth year to the land of my fathers.'<sup>90</sup> The significance of paternity in this scene is then reinforced by the three-generational interaction between Telemakhos, Odysseus, and Laertes through which Laertes is also reinvigorated through a re-assertion of his own lineage ('son of Arkesios').<sup>91</sup> Odysseus has indeed returned to the land of his forefathers as he claims. The emphasis on lineage

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<sup>86</sup> Fulkerson (2002): 335-350; Heath (2001): 151-152.

<sup>87</sup> Grief pours (χέω) over them, like the war-widow simile of 8.22. For the latter: 22.498-501.

<sup>88</sup> Higbie (1995): 175.

<sup>89</sup> 24.280-297.

<sup>90</sup> 24.321-322: κείνος μὲν τοι ὄδ' αὐτὸς ἐγώ, πάτερ, ὃν σὺ μεταλλάξ, ἤλυθον εἰκοστῷ ἔτει ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν.

<sup>91</sup> For more on this scene, See: **Chapter Four: Familial Dialogue: Children and Parents**. Also: Higbie (1995): 160-191.

in this scene is integral to the reimagining of Odysseus' identity as the rightful King of Ithaka as mirrored in the attribution of the epithet Ἴθακήσιος.<sup>92</sup>

However, to Penelope, Odysseus remains his truest self. While in her memory he may have been the bold-hearted Hero of Troy, famous throughout Hellas, his transformation into the Wandering King of Ithaka does not resonate for her, to whom he instead reveals his truest identity as Odysseus πολύμητις.<sup>93</sup> During the revelation scene in Book 23, she never calls him anything other than 'Odysseus' and he in turn never refers to himself in any way. Instead it is through a manifestation of his epithetic skills that she recognises him. First of all, by identifying himself as the craftsman of their bed Odysseus reveals the μηχανή of his πολυμήχανος (23.183-204). Then, through his understanding of her need to trick him, Penelope reveals that he is a man beyond others for πέπνυμαι (a manifestation of the family epithet πεπνυμένος, 23.109). Finally, he identifies himself to her through his most personal epithet πολύμητις when he tells her:<sup>94</sup>

Oh, honoured wife of Odysseus ›Laertes' son‹,  
no longer postpone this contest in your halls,  
for soon πολύμητις Odysseus will be here, 585  
before these men can handle his well-wrought bow,  
pull the string, and fire it through the iron.

<sup>92</sup> See: **Chapter Six: Οὐτὶν δέ με ἐχθροὶ κικλήσκουσι.**

<sup>93</sup> Pucci (1995): 92-93; Higbie (1995): 173.

<sup>94</sup> 19.583-587:

ὦ γύναι αἰδοίη ›Λαερτιάδεω‹ Ὀδυσῆος,  
μηκέτι νῦν ἀνάβαλλε δόμοις ἐνὶ τοῦτον ἄεθλον·  
πρὶν γάρ τοι πολύμητις ἐλεύσεται ἐνθάδ' Ὀδυσσεύς, 585  
πρὶν τούτους τόδε τόξον ἐϋξοον ἀμφαφώντας  
νευρήν τ' ἐντανύσαι διοῖστεῦσαι τε σιδήρου.

Note the dual use of πρὶν which can be alternately translated in the past or future tense, LSJ: s.v. πρὶν. Each use is here qualified by the tense of the associated verb and so transitions from medium future to aorist. The quick contrast in tense creates a sense of atemporality as if the return of Odysseus before the Suitors can string the bow is simultaneously imminent and current.

While the reader might imagine πολύμητις to be “the” Odyssean epithet, given its prolific recurrence in the *Odyssey* (x68), it is actually very rarely spoken by characters: once, by Halitherses when he prophesies the return of Odysseus in Book Two and once by Penelope when she prays to Athena for the return of her husband. It was earlier suggested in this thesis that the epithet is therefore a personal one shared between the pair, just as Atrytone is an epithet they exclusively share for Athena. Thus, Odysseus’ selection of this particular epithet to describe “Odysseus” here is charged with meaning, for other than the prophet (who may well be channeling a kind of divine knowledge of Odysseus’ characteristics), only Penelope and Odysseus use this epithet for him in the *Odyssey*.<sup>95</sup> He also reinforces this aspect of his identity with two other πολύ- epithets, first at 18.319 when he tells Penelope he is πολυτλήμων, another epithet which belongs only to Odysseus and secondly with the use of πολύστονος which combines his mercurial quintessence with his endurance of suffering.<sup>96</sup> When speaking with her as the beggar in Book 19, Odysseus also speaks his own name a remarkable eighteen times which is totally uncharacteristic of him. His constant repetition has the desired effect. It alters Penelope’s speech so that she too is freer in her use of his name, something which she has previously taken great pains to avoid.<sup>97</sup> The exchange between husband and wife in

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<sup>95</sup> On the use of πολύμητις in this scene, de Jong writes that ‘Odysseus almost forgets his role as beggar’ (2001): 481. See also, Vester (1968): 428, and: Goldhill (1991): 46.

<sup>96</sup> 19.118. On the latter, see de Jong (2001): 467. Here, Penelope also alludes to her own epithet περίφρων, in the line: δαίσεαι εἴ τι γυναικῶν ἀλλᾶων περίεμι νόον καὶ ἐπίφρονα μήτιν (19.325-6).

<sup>97</sup> In his turn, Odysseus makes clear his recognition of her, first as his wife (through the repetition of γύναϊ in contexts of both ‘wife’ and ‘lady’), and also through his returning to her the same epithet they both use elsewhere to identify him: ‘[whose] fame goes up to wide heaven’ (19.108). He is also more truthful with her than he is in his other Cretan Tales, inasmuch as he admits to Odysseus being shipwrecked and then saved by the Phaiakians. Finally, he employs a simile for her which compares her actions as a queen to his social role as king (19.109-114) and in so doing makes his respect for her painfully clear. The comparative simile is later reinforced through the shipwreck simile employed by the narrator (23.233-240). Similes also unite the pair across the two epics, for Penelope is described as melting like snow at the words of Odysseus (19-205-207), just as his

Book 19 can therefore be interpreted as a parallel of Telemakhos' Embassy to the mainland, but this time it is the guest-stranger who seeks to remind his host-wife of Odysseus' identity. The identity Odysseus wishes to impart to her, however, is not one of mere Iliadic κλέος but one of deep and personal intimacy, through the epithets that Penelope most associates with her husband.

### Conclusion

By sentencing the Iliadic Odysseus to obscurity, the interaction with Polyphemos marks the beginning of a new story which Odysseus begins to forge outside of the *Iliad's* shadow. The Cyclops's name literally means 'many-fames' or 'many-stories' and so it is fitting that he should signify the end of one of Odysseus' tales and the beginning of the next.<sup>98</sup> Our protagonist can now be remembered by his new κλέος, the one which the narrator first awards him in the opening of the epic: Odysseus the Wanderer. This is the man who came after (ἐπει) Troy, who travelled (πλάζω), who learnt many minds (including his own), who suffered on the wide sea and who returned home as the rightful king of Ithaka.<sup>99</sup>

The *Odyssey* teaches us that the act of revelation is a potent thing and should be approached with caution.<sup>100</sup> The revelation of Odysseus' name in Book Nine draws upon him a powerful and long-lasting curse which truthfully never sees the return of Odysseus

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words are compared with snowflakes (*Iliad* 3.222). There is finally a delightful repetition in the appellative δαιμόνιος which the pair use for each other: 23.166, 174, 264.

<sup>98</sup> Dimock (1989): 116.

<sup>99</sup> LSJ: s.v. ἐπει. Dimock (1989): 8.

<sup>100</sup> Aristotle calls the *Odyssey* 'all about recognition' (ἀναγνώρισις γὰρ διόλου *Poetics* 1459b).

‘city-sacker’ to Ithaka. This act of revelation becomes pivotal to the whole poem as it is from this point onwards that much of the thematic unity regarding Odysseus’ identity depends.<sup>101</sup>

Throughout his transition – from the Iliadic Warrior to the Odyssean Wanderer – one factor of Odysseus’ identity remains constant: his ability to discard his name and become a manifestation of Οὔτις-μητις.<sup>102</sup> There is therefore an argument to be made that Odysseus may personify this anonymity more than his name: that Οὔτις is not his pseudonym but his actual name.<sup>103</sup> This is, after all, the true message of epic poetry: all men are nameless if they are never sung of. The name lives only in the song.

So, who is the man really? It is perhaps telling that we name the one poem *Odyssey* and the other *Iliad* (rather than *Achillead*), for we keep his name alive through his song.<sup>104</sup> Yet the idea that the κλέος of Odysseus’ name should be contingent on the survival of his song is strongly contrasted with his actual survival within the story, where it is contingent upon his anonymity. If a name constitutes a man and a nameless man does not exist, then when is mercurial Odysseus ever alive other than when we sing of him? Ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, μοῦσα, πολύτροπον, indeed.

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<sup>101</sup> Austin (1972): 14.

<sup>102</sup> Cook (2009): 124-5; Pucci (1995): 149, also Pucci (1982): 39-62.

<sup>103</sup> Austin (1972): 15; Dimock (1956): 52-70; Pucci (1995): 16, 89 and Clay (1983): 119 n.123.

<sup>104</sup> Pucci (1995): 82.



## CONCLUSION

ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, μοῦσα, πολύτροπον  
 ~ *Odyssey* 1.1

The intention of this thesis was twofold. First, to provide a comprehensive counterpoint to the Parryist supposition that epithets are entirely meaningless formulas used only to complete a metrical unit, and secondly, to examine the role pronoun epithets might play in the construction of status in the Homeric world. The primary assumption of this thesis, therefore, was that pronoun epithets should be understood as integral extensions of the name (as the ancients believed) and that they should be examined as such.

Chapter One demonstrated that onomastic and etymological scholarship, to date, has neglected this most basic assumption by removing those pronoun epithets which are associated with names from their field of study. In doing so, they have done a huge disservice to Homer, who is famous far and wide for his epithets. Their systematic aversion has both stemmed from, and simultaneously reinforced, the Parryist agenda which has largely removed the study of epithets from Homeric scholarship altogether.

In order to correct this oversight, a Catalogue of pronoun epithets in Homer's *Odyssey* was constructed in order to analyse more thoroughly any patterns in their distribution. Had Milman Parry been correct in his assertions, then a database of this type should have provided the grist to his mill by documenting a measurable, metrical distribution of formula across all epithet types. Yet, as Part II of this thesis demonstrated, entirely different patterns of distribution emerged, across both character speech and narratorial text.

The most noticeable of these new patterns appears in character speech, where epithet distribution strongly correlates with social hierarchies established elsewhere in the

Homeric world. Heroes and kings are the recipients of longer epithet titles, while commoners and slaves receive no such social acknowledgement. Nor is this pattern merely a general trend in distribution brought about by the law of averages; it has been demonstrated throughout this thesis to be a sociolinguistic rule of discourse in Homer, where the very anomalous exceptions only serve to prove the rule.

The correlation between extended epithet length and social position is borne out in a wide variety of public contexts, as Chapters Two and Three have demonstrated. Guests are – or should be – deferential to their hosts, the young ought to be – but are not always – polite to their elders, and elders, in turn, are respected for their wisdom. Servants can indicate their loyalty by speaking well of their masters, while their masters allow a certain level of familiarity by calling them by name. Aristocratic friends greet one-another with easy formalities built upon years of acquaintance.

Conversations with divinities are fraught affairs. There are levels of interaction here which require a mortal to tread carefully indeed. Amongst themselves, the gods speak to one another as social peers rather than family units. Status is indicated by the deference of extended titles in a manner that places Hermes close to the top of divine echelons; a position deserving of the god of transitions who alone has the power to traverse to the other side and who navigates Odysseus' return from the fantasy realm to the real world. Zeus, meanwhile, reinforces gender stereotypes by placing his beloved daughter in the diminutive category of 'child', while simultaneously demonstrating affection for his brother, who he calls πῆπτων even as Poseidon obsequiously lavishes supplicatory phrases upon the 'higher-most ruler of gods and men'.

For mortals, interactions with divinities can occur in a number of ways and each has its own rules of address. In moments of prayer, one might call upon a deity with titles that best represent one's own relationship with a goddess, or otherwise emphasise aspects of their divinity which are most suited to one's needs in the moment. Directly, however, mortals must navigate the minefield of reverence without hubris; a tricky task where the normal sociolinguistic indicators of respect do not apply and where a god might call a mortal by titles which would only be insulting for the mortal to reciprocate. Mortals and divinities are, after all, far from equal in all respects.

Families are altogether different. In these easy, private moments the typical markers of public discourse disappear only to be replaced with intimate appellatives. Alkinoos is not 'the great-hearted king of the Phaiakians' to Nausikaa, but only "daddy", or – when she really wants something – "daddy *dearest*". Even servants can be deserving of these familiar names, Eumaios and Eurykleia are elevated to 'papa' and 'nana' by their loving charges even when they have no blood ties to the family. Publicly, familial epithets can be used to indicate heritage, a factor which is all the more essential for women, whose status is dependent upon their extended family or marital history. The patterns of epithet use follow this convention: embedded papponyms are awarded far more frequently to the fairer sex.

Outside of both public and private character discourse looms the narrator. Here, we might have expected the distribution of epithet use to be most formulaic, for the narrator has no need to be bound by the societal rules of his creations. Yet the bias of the narrator is most telling of all. It is precisely because he is free from the bounds of social etiquette that the narrator is allowed to manipulate epithets so as to convey status to the otherwise under-

deserving. The narrator is able to draw attention to society's unmentionables in a manner which is impossible for speaking characters, through his construction of their epithets. Pero, Eurymedousa, Amphinomos, Moulis, Demodokos and Amphimedon all benefit from his attentions; characters who might otherwise be lost among the jostling of the story's major players.

Above them all, of course, roams Odysseus. He is the beneficiary of the greatest number of unique personal epithets of any Homeric hero, deservedly so, for he is the most changeable of them all. His story is one which centres upon the various manifestations of his identity, as expressed in the use and abuse of his name and epithet titles. His story is one of transition, from Iliadic Warrior to Odyssean Wanderer, from city-sacker to much-turner, from bold philanderer to devoted husband, but always, through it all, Οὐτις man of μητις. His story teaches us that names are powerful, but that our titles are more powerful still. For a name may tell others what we are called or even what our parents wished us to be, but our titles tell others who we are, where we have been and what we have overcome. In some ways, epithets are the fundamental building blocks of Homeric society inasmuch as they communicate and construct status in the public domain. Beyond this, however, epithets are the means through which Odysseus' story is remembered, for it is not his name but his epithet which summons him into being in Homer's first line.

## Future Research

The findings and conclusions of this thesis open up a wide range of avenues for further discussion. Linguistics, for example, would no doubt provide boundless methodologies both through sociolinguistic analysis and through the construction of CORPUS databases which would provide greater statistical insight into the patterns of epithet composition. The social role of epithets also raises questions for translators, who should be alert to the dangers of Parryist assumptions, must carefully consider how to most faithfully represent this complex, nuanced but ultimately central aspect of social identity in Homer.

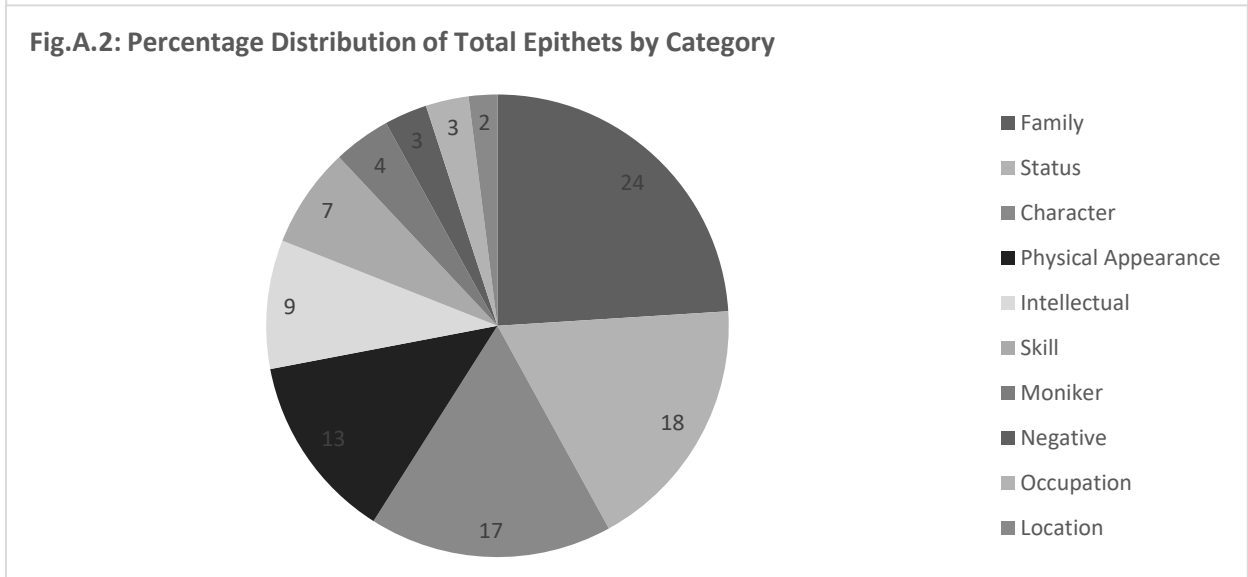
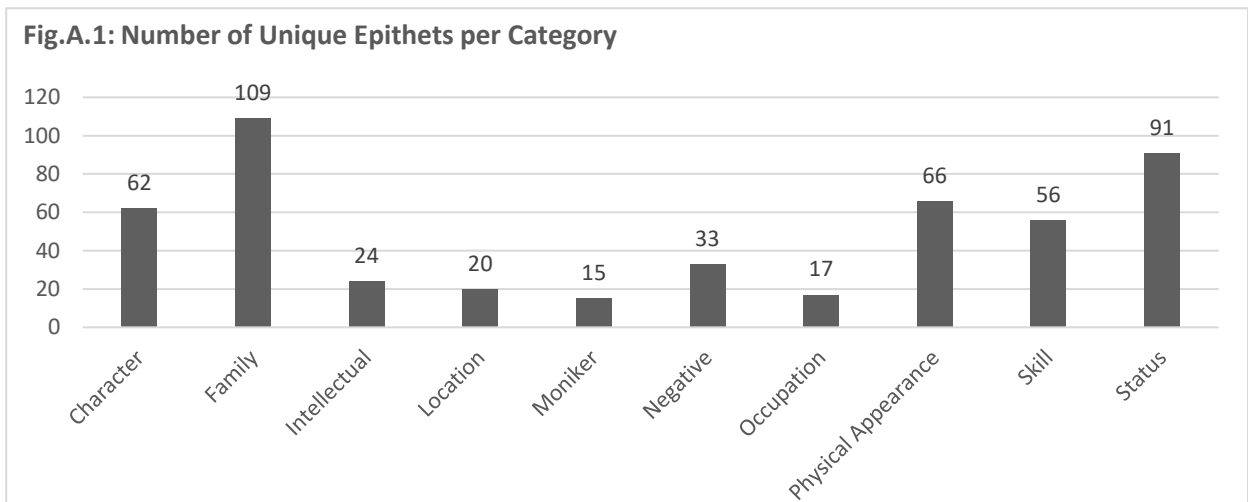
That is to say nothing, of course, of the *Iliad* where the extension of this thesis' methodologies is most demanded. Higbie once remarked that patterns of naming in the *Iliad* are very different from the *Odyssey* (1995: 85) and so no analysis of Homer's epithets would be complete without examining the differences and similarities between these texts. The findings might also provide new fodder for Analysts, as they may indicate that, with regard to epithet construction and distribution, the epics are more different than they are the same. There may even be nuances of social interaction hitherto undiscovered, particularly with regard to the exchanges between Greeks and Trojans, but also through the analysis of Trojan-to-Trojan discourse.

There are also areas which this thesis has had to leave under-explored, such as the patent lack of epithets in personal moments of interior monologue, the wider study of narratorial epithet distribution with regard to single epithets, as well as the ranking of epithets as individual units. Is it more flattering, for instance, to call a man 'king of kings' than to call him 'noble'? Is it possible to categorically rank such minute gradations? So many questions, so much *timē*.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX ONE: EPITHET CATEGORIES

The following categories were originally derived during the construction of the Epithet Catalogue so as to assist the analysis of epithet distribution. The most frequent characteristics which epithets describe were isolated first, so that they could be examined more closely, such as †Family, †Status, †Physical Appearance, and †Character. Classification of the remaining epithets was then relatively straightforward given their distribution and/or significance. Data and points of interest – perhaps for further study – of these categories has been presented below. All epithets listed in these categories can be found in the attached Epithet Catalogue.



### *Family*

This category covers a wide collection of 109 unique epithets, which are used over 470 times in the *Odyssey* to refer to the bearer's marital and blood relations. Including the common 'husband' or 'wife' of *x* epithet type, as well as all patronyms, papponyms, matronyms and even paedonyms. Family epithets also include those which refer to divine lineage by blood: 'Zeus-sprung' (διογενής), 'born of Zeus' (Διὸς ἐκγεγαυῖα), and those pertaining to divine lineage by marriage: 'fostered by Zeus' (Διοτρεφής). These are examined in more detail in **Chapter Four**.

### *Status*

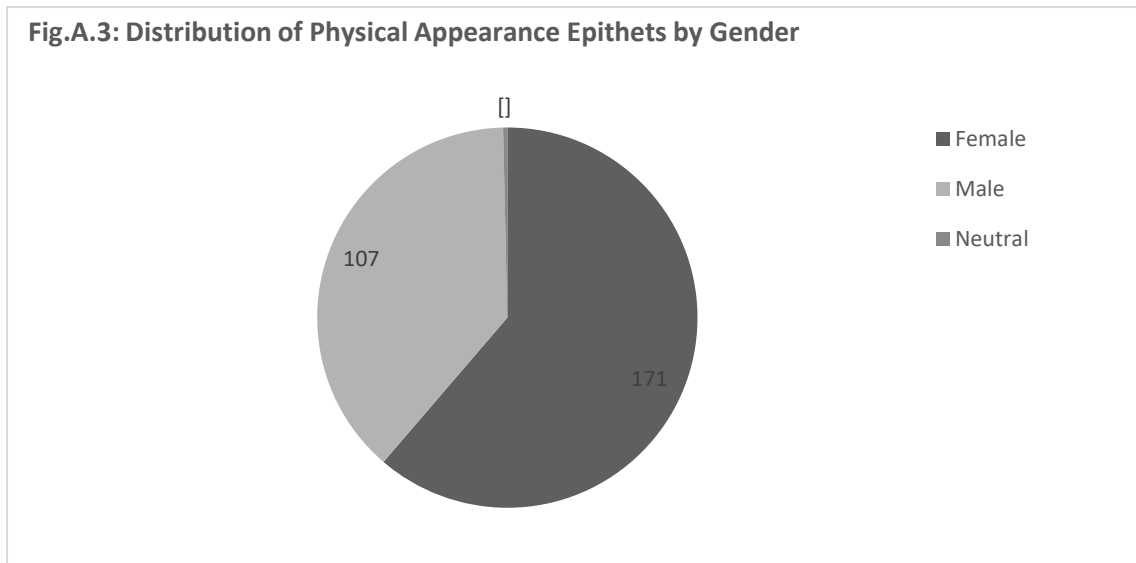
These epithets refer to positions which a character occupies by inheritance, election, or by public standing. Inherited or elected titles include civic, social, monarchic, or aristocratic positions, such as: goddess, hero, king, or leader. Publicly appraised epithets include the 'best of the *x*', or 'first among *x*' epithet types. Epithets which refer to wealth and fame are also included under this rubric, as they serve to indicate the reputation of the bearer. A distinction has been made between those epithets which identify a location of origin (under †Location) and those which indicate rulership of a people, the latter of which are included here under Status.

### *Physical Appearance*

More commonly used to describe females (see Fig.A.3), and more prevalent in the *Iliad*, these epithets describe a character by their physical attributes, including: clothing, hair and voice.<sup>1</sup> Vocal epithets are distinguished from those that refer to abilities in speaking (which are instead categorised as †Intellectual) based on the distinction between form and function. For example, 'rough-voiced' (ἀγριόφωνος), 'loud-voiced' (ἄδινός) and 'divinely sounding' (θεσπέσιος) all refer to the sonic quality of the voice, and so constitute part of the character's overall appearance. However, 'excellent in speech' (μύθοισι κέκαστο) describes the intellectual skills of a character in dialogic contexts. This category also includes those epithets which describe accessories a character may wield or be known for, such as a 'of the golden distaff' (χρυσηλάκατος), or 'beautifully crowned' (ἔυστέφανός).

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<sup>1</sup> de Jong remarks - on descriptions of female beauty - that they are typically evoked indirectly through the reactions of other characters, rather than by the narrator (2001): 449. See also: Saïd (1998): 276. However, Foley comments that 'both men and women are praised for physical appearance, stature, and a balanced capacity for thought and feeling': Foley (1995): 95. In the same volume, Schein remarks that the *Odyssey* gives relatively few descriptions of its female characters' physical appearances': 17. Further study into the distribution of these epithets is required to confirm or deny these suppositions.



### *Character*

This is another substantial category with regard to the number of unique epithets it covers, though not with regard to the range of the type of characteristic it covers.<sup>2</sup> Character epithets encompass what Vivante identified as the more abstract personal qualities of individuals such as ‘brave-spirited’, ‘chaste’, ‘great-hearted’, or ‘respectable’. They tend toward what might be described as moralistic virtues; ‘good’, or inherent character traits; ‘enduring’, which cannot otherwise be described as a developed or innate †Skills (see below), or relating to exterior †Physical Appearance, or an externally recognised social †Status. Two of the most frequent Character epithets are δῖος and ἀμύμων.<sup>3</sup>

The majority of Character epithets for men refer to qualities of their heroic greatness, usually in relation to the ‘spirit’ (θυμός) or the ‘heart’ (ἦτορ).<sup>4</sup> They are also quite common in their distribution, referring to the heroic qualities of both protagonistic and antagonistic characters. None of their applications seems out of place, except perhaps for the description of Thrasymedes as ‘high-spirited’ (ὑπέρθυμος), which is typically used of more villainous characters in the *Odyssey* but matches the valiant description he is given in the *Iliad*.

<sup>2</sup> Stanford (1950): 108.

<sup>3</sup> δῖος is discussed in **Chapter Four: Familial Epithets**. ἀμύμων is discussed in **Chapter Seven**.

<sup>4</sup> Vivante (1982): 127.



Another group of Character epithets describes the relationship the bearer has to another person, (as opposed to their personal qualities), such as ‘beloved’ (φίλος), ‘trustworthy’ (κεδνός), and ‘faithful’ (ἐρίηρος).<sup>5</sup> Relationships between mortals and gods which indicate piety or patronage are also included under this heading e.g. ‘devoted to Ares’ (ἄρειος), as are direct epithets which describe characteristics of the gods which are inherent to them rather than descriptive of their skills or appearance, e.g. ‘blessed’ (μάκαρ).

### *Skills*

In contrast to †Physical Appearance, Skills have been identified as a category which encompasses a broad range of epithets referring to a character’s specific talents, or expertise (outside of the intellectual sphere). Military aptitudes such as ‘spearman’ or ‘charioteer’ are also included in this category. Epithets denoting strength presented a particular area of difficulty given the crossover with †Physical Appearance. At first reading the epithets ‘full of strength’ (ἰερὸν μένος), ‘very strong’ (ἐρισθενής), or ‘strong’ (ἴφθιμος), could be understood as describing a character’s muscular build and therefore should be included under †Physical Appearance. However, when compared with the more passively descriptive epithets ‘huge’ (πελώριος) or ‘tall’ (μέγας), it becomes apparent that a distinction can be made between how a person might appear to *look* “strong” based on their height or girth, in contrast to the active applications of their actual strength in the world. Therefore the more active descriptions ἰερὸν μένος, ἐρισθενής, and ἴφθιμος are considered physical Skills, while the more passive πελώριος and μέγας are listed under †Physical Appearance.

Physical strength is considered one of the primary manly virtues in Homer. Thus, those epithets which denote physical strength seem to create difficulties for translators when applied to both genders, as in the case of ἴφθιμος, translated as ‘strong; stout’ in the physical sense and therefore deemed inappropriate for females for whom various other synonyms are devised.<sup>6</sup> The fondness translators have for interpreting individual adjectives with unmerited synonyms is made more superfluous by Homer’s careful and distinctive applications of similar epithets. He has a word for ‘powerful’ (κρατερὸς), which is used to refer to the wielding of ‘power’ in the sense of authority that is given or delegated to a person. In every contextual application κρατερὸς is clearly differentiated from physical strength which would be translated as ἴφθιμος. For divinities, κρατερὸς

<sup>5</sup> Nagy gives ‘near and dear’ which I believe creates a similar sense to ‘beloved’: Nagy (1979): 82-83; 102-111.

<sup>6</sup> Dimock (1989): 97. For a deeper description of the term, see *Iliad* 20.355-357. The etymology is uncertain, connecting perhaps to ἰερὸς, or perhaps to ἴς, ἴφι, ἴφιος, both having the sense of ‘strength’, Lowenstam (1993): 31.

appears with a second epithet denoting their particular sphere of control. Hades is ‘powerful’ only when he is also ‘god of the Gates’ (Αἶδαο πυλάρταο κρατεροῖο, 11.277), but when he is invoked alongside Persephone he is ‘strong’ (ἴφθιμος) and she is ‘awesome’ (ἐπαινός, 10.534; 11.47). In the same manner Hermes is ‘the Guide Argeiphontes’ when he is strapping on his sandals and speaking with Kalypso (5.43, 145), but he is ‘powerful Argeiphontes’ when wielding his wand (5.49). The differentiation tells us that Hermes’ power resides in his transgressional skills just as Hades’ power is associated with his dominion over the Underworld.<sup>7</sup>

Zeus’ power, on the other hand, is absolute. He has the ‘power that is greatest’ (κράτος ἐστὶ μέγιστον, 5.4). Similarly Polyphemos is ‘equal to a god’ (ἀντίθεος) in his power because he is ‘greatest among the Cyclopes’ (ᾄου κράτος ἐστὶ μέγιστον πᾶσιν Κυκλώπεσσι, 1.70). The mortals to whom κρατερός are awarded are always descendants of powerful men: Megapenthes, Mantios and Antiphates are κρατερός only in relation to their fathers. Megapenthes is both the ‘son of glorious Menelaos’ (υἱὸς Μενελάου κυδαλίμοιο), and ‘powerful’ (κρατερός), while Mantios and Antiphates (who are of the same generation as Nestor) are described as the ‘powerful sons’ (υἱε κραταιώ) of Melampous.<sup>8</sup>

Though it is a noun, Homer typically uses μένος in an adverbial sense (such as ὡς εἰπῶν δεσμὸν ἀνίει μένος Ἥφαιστοιο, 8.359) so that it is commonly translated as ‘mighty’. This adverbial noun is only used to describe Alkinoos and Hephaistos in the *Odyssey*. The distribution of this epithet is particular: it is primarily an epithet of Alkinoos, but used by his bard in Book Eight to describe Hephaistos.<sup>9</sup> Alkinoos’ shared epithet with Hephaistos, therefore, should not be dismissed as an oddity. A relationship between them has already been established in the description of Alkinoos’ palace, and the fact that the distribution of this epithet is restricted to the Phaiakian narrative.<sup>10</sup> Our narrator calls Alkinoos μένος, just as Demodokos calls Hephaistos μένος.

The only other character with whom Hephaistos exclusively shares epithets with in the *Odyssey* is Odysseus: they are both πολύφρων.<sup>11</sup> To complete the circle, Alkinoos also shares some his epithets with Odysseus. Both are ‘inured’ (δαίφρων) and ‘great-hearted’ (μεγαλήτωρ).<sup>12</sup> Odysseus even describes himself with the unusually self-aggrandising ‘known among all people for his guile, and whose fame has reached heaven’ only after he has christened Alkinoos with the similar

<sup>7</sup> Grey (2019b): 113-115.

<sup>8</sup> Megapenthes: *Odyssey* 15.141, 121; 4.11. Mantios and Antiphates: *Odyssey* 15.242.

<sup>9</sup> *Odyssey* 8.423; 13.49, 64; 8.359.

<sup>10</sup> *Odyssey* 7.90-95.

<sup>11</sup> For further comparison, see: Newton (1987): 12-20.

<sup>12</sup> *Odyssey* δαίφρων 8.8 1.48; μεγαλήτωρ 8.464, 4.143.

sounding 'lord Alkinoos famous among all the people' (Ἀλκίνοε κρείον, πάντων ἀριδείκετε λαῶν), and heard the same title adopted by the citizenry.<sup>13</sup> The parallels between Alkinoos and Odysseus are extensive, and have been noticed.<sup>14</sup> That both kings share epithets with Hephaistos, therefore, seems a calculated act intended to emphasise the parallels between them.

Alkinoos is not only simply μένος, he is also described by the narrator as ἱερὸν μένος 'full of might', but only when he is in the process of instructing his people, or performing some other quality of civic leadership.<sup>15</sup> Therefore the improbable application of ἱερὸν μένος to Antinoos in Book 18 can be understood as a parody: comparing Alkinoos' stately diplomacy to Antinoos' attempts to incite hungry vagrants to violence.<sup>16</sup> Alkinoos' actions further mark him as deserving of Penelope's scathing negative epithet: 'bringer of violence and deviser of evil'.<sup>17</sup> Finally, the two brothers Zeus and Poseidon share σθένος based epithets which refer to an all-encompassing 'might makes right' strength that is moral as well as physical.<sup>18</sup> Zeus is ἐρισθενής which has been translated as 'almighty' to convey the omnipotence of his powers, while also conveying the restriction of the term to the head of the pantheon.<sup>19</sup> The all-encompassing breadth of Zeus' σθενές is then contrasted to Poseidon's which is only 'wide' (εὐρύ), when he is also the 'Earth-shaker' (ἐννοσίγαι εὐρυσθενές).

Further distinctions are made for the less common strength based epithets. Herakles for instance is strong only when his mortal lineage is being described. He is 'ever unyielding in might' when he is 'son of Amphitryton' (Ἀμφιτρυῶνος υἱὸς μένος αἰὲν ἀπειρής, 11.270), and he is also 'forceful' (literally 'full of bodily strength': βία) like his mortal brother Iphikles.<sup>20</sup> But when he is described as the 'son of Zeus' he is instead 'strong-hearted' (21.21) in the sense that he is a steadfast hero.

In contrast to manly strength, divine skills tend to occur in genitive phrases such as 'avenger of suppliants' (ἐπιτιμῆτωρ ἱκετῶν), or 'rouser of men' (λαοσσός) or otherwise refer to unique skills which belong to that deity. Apollo for example is 'far-striking', Zeus is 'cloud-gathering' or 'high-thundering', Hermes is 'keen-sighted' and Poseidon is 'earth-circling'. The remaining skills attributed to male mortals are almost entirely descriptive of martial ability, e.g 'chariot-fighter' (ἵππιοχάρμης).

<sup>13</sup> *Odyssey* 9.18; 8.382, 9.2; 11.355, 378; 13.38, and 8.401.

<sup>14</sup> See: **Chapter Four: Grouping Epithets.**

<sup>15</sup> Heubeck *et al.* (1988): 332. *Odyssey* 7.167; 8.2, 4, 385, 421; 13.20, 24.

<sup>16</sup> *Odyssey* 18.34.

<sup>17</sup> *Odyssey* 16.418. See 'Negative. He is only otherwise 'son of Eupheithes' 16.363.

<sup>18</sup> LSJ (1996): s.v. σθένος.

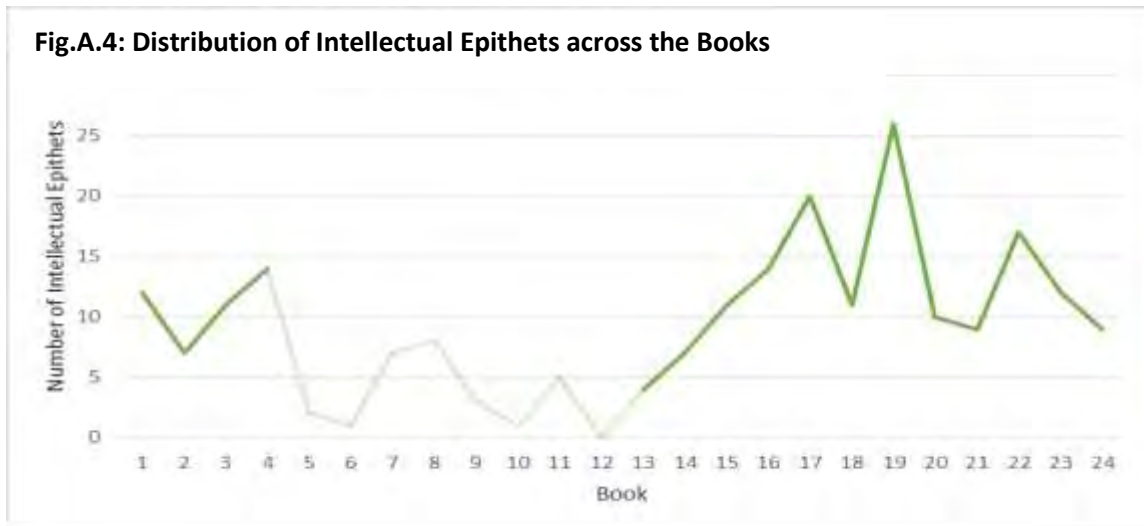
<sup>19</sup> *Odyssey* 8.290; *Iliad* 13.54; 19.355; 21.184.

<sup>20</sup> *Odyssey* 11.290, 296, 601.

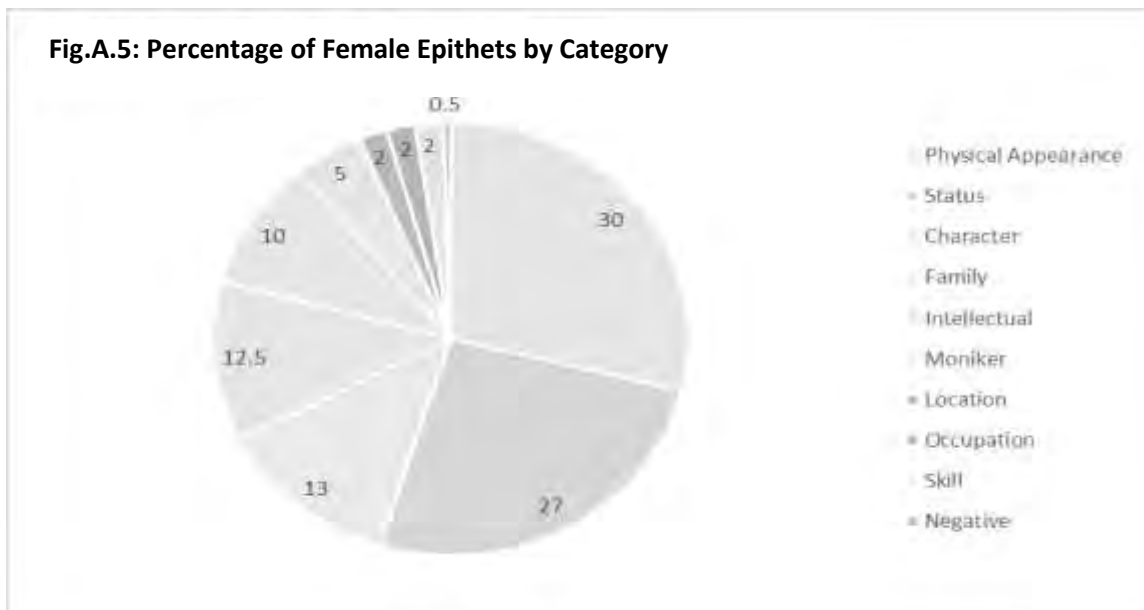
### Intellectual

Intellectual epithets can also be categorised with ease due to their relative scarcity: there are only 25 epithets which refer to intelligence, knowledge, or speech in the *Odyssey*. However, they do appear disproportionately often throughout the text, largely due to their primary association with the two main characters: Odysseus and Penelope and so occupy more of the narration and dialogue.<sup>21</sup> The number of intellectual epithets per Book therefore rises during the Telemakheia when Telemakhos and Penelope make up much of the content, and increases again after Odysseus returns to Penelope and Telemakhos on Ithaka (Fig.A.4).

**Fig.A.4: Distribution of Intellectual Epithets across the Books**



**Fig.A.5: Percentage of Female Epithets by Category**



<sup>21</sup> As well as their immediate and extended family members, see **Chapter Four: Grouping Epithets**.

Unsurprisingly, female characters receive fewer cerebral epithets than male characters (76% are awarded to males, and 24% to females). However, the distribution of them *as a relative proportion of total female epithets* is interesting given that they are more common than Skills (such as weaving, see Fig.A.5).

The most striking features of intellectual epithets in general is their length. The vast majority of Single Epithets are pithy, consisting of one to three words: ‘august’, ‘divine’, ‘leader of men’.<sup>22</sup> But only one third of Intellectual epithets are formed of single words (in the Greek). More striking, is that these long descriptions are also frequently combined with other intellectual epithets to create some of the longest epithet phrases in Homer, such as Ekhenos who is ‘born before all the Phaiakians, excellent in speech and knowledgeable of many things from times past’ (ὄς δὴ Φαιήκων ἀνδρῶν προγενέστερος ἦεν καὶ μύθοισι κέκαστο, παλαιά τε πολλά τε εἰδώς) or, ‘Theban Teiresias, the blind seer, whose mind remains steadfast and to whom alone Persephone has granted consciousness’ (Θηβαίου Τειρεσίαο, μάντηος ἀλαοῦ, τοῦ τε φρένες ἔμπειδοί εἰσι: τῷ καὶ τεθνηῶτι νόον πόρε Περσεφόεια).<sup>23</sup> As a direct result of their unusual length, intellectual epithets tend to be unique in their application. The same cannot be said for those which consist of one, or two, word phrases. For example πολύφρων, νημερτής (‘infallible’), and μητίετα (‘of the counsels’) are consistently repeated in combination with Hephaistos and Odysseus, Proteus, and Zeus respectively. Generally speaking, therefore, the longer the Single Epithet or epithet phrase, the more likely it is to denote intelligence, and the less frequently it will appear in the text. The prominence of this epithet type with regard to their length and individuality is perhaps not surprising given the thematic importance of intelligence within the *Odyssey*.

### *Location*

There are only 18 individual location epithets in the text, and they occur infrequently. They are easily identifiable as descriptors of geographical locations with which the subject character has a relationship. Some refer to cities, countries, or regions, such as Theban, Ithakan, and Olympian, whereas others refer to specific geographical locations or landmarks and have therefore been rendered with the pronoun capital. Eumaios, for example, evokes the ‘Nymphs of the Fountain’ (νύμφαι κρηναῖαι) in his cursing (17.240), which refers to the sacred cave on the coast of Ithaka described in Book 13 (and therefore they should be considered Nymphs of *The* Fountain, and not

<sup>22</sup> See: **Glossary s.v. Single Epithets.**

<sup>23</sup> *Odyssey* 7.156-7. The first part of this triple epithet is not intellectual. *Odyssey* 10.492-494.

fountains in general).<sup>24</sup> Hades is given the ominous epithet ‘of the Gates’ (Αἶδαο πυλάρταο, 11.277) referring to his possession of and/or proximity to the Gates of the Underworld.<sup>25</sup> Finally Skylla is described as ‘of the Rock’ in reference to the cliffside cave she inhabits.<sup>26</sup> Occasionally location epithets are elongated to ‘whose house abides/who makes his home in x’. The same is true for divinities, with Location epithets referring to cities to which they are tutelary deities, or the supposed places of their birth, such as Kytherian Aphrodite.

The relative infrequency of these epithets, combined with their straightforward translations, makes them rather unremarkable. They tend to be distributed regardless of social rank, gender, or divinity. Among those of lower ranks, a location epithet is commonly paired with an epithet which identifies that character’s occupation such as Doulichian herald, or Apeirian chambermaid. These pairings may suggest a place of origin for the servant and thus tell us more about the extent of their owner’s military exploits than the character in question.<sup>27</sup> For higher-status characters, location epithets describe their region of power or control such as Ithakan Odysseus, or simply identify their homeland, particularly if they are foreign or have lived in multiple locations, such as Argive Helen.

### *Monikers*

Monikers contain some of the most famous or memorable epithets in Homer, such as Pallas Athena or Phoibos Apollo. They are what Heubeck calls ‘alternative’ names in the sense that they are additional proper names exclusively applied to a single character, and so should be printed with the pronoun capital.<sup>28</sup> They are reserved for immortal or mythical characters only, and therefore likely indicate religious practices of invocation. While they typically occur alongside the name, their easily recognisable nature means that they are sometimes employed as substitutes. Penelope can invoke Atrytone, for example, and leave the audience in no doubt that she is calling upon Athena.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *Odyssey* 13.96-112.

<sup>25</sup> *Odyssey* 24.12.

<sup>26</sup> *Odyssey* 12.233, 255, 260.

<sup>27</sup> See: **Chapter Five: Servants.**

<sup>28</sup> Heubeck *et al.* (1988): 79.

<sup>29</sup> E.g. *Odyssey* 4.762. Penelope and Odysseus are the only characters to refer to Athena as Atrytone ‘Unwearied’, both when they are invoking her in prayer, indicating that it is a title for their patron goddess which they alone share. The only character to refer to her thus in the *Iliad* is Hera (2.157).

Heubeck remarked that epithets do not seem to evoke ‘single exploits’ but instead refer to more general qualities or characteristics.<sup>30</sup> However, one of the defining traits of divine monikers is precisely that they do refer to an achievement or event in the character’s history. Hermes, for example, is known as Argeïphontes ‘the slayer of Argos’ due to the story of how he defeated the hundred-eyed guardian of Io: Argos Panoptes.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, Athena is called Tritogeneia which the earliest grammarians derived from τριτώ meaning ‘head’, referring to the birth of the goddess from the head of her father.<sup>32</sup> Though these myths are not outlined anywhere in Homer, they must have been well-enough known for the audience to understand their application to Hermes and Athena, particularly when they are used in place of a name.

Unlike other epithets, the use of monikers is very restricted (they comprise only 4% of total epithets). They are mostly used by the narrator (and internal narrators), when the gods speak to one another (suggesting that they are nicknames shared between divinities), or by mortals during moments of prayer. The only mortals who are permitted to use divine monikers to describe the gods are heroes of the highest calibre: Odysseus, Menelaos, and Nestor. Sometimes monikers are only used by these mortals after they have been uttered by a divinity in their presence: this is an example of the Adopted Epithet type. In Book Four Menelaos, for example, only identifies Proteus as ‘Old Man of the Sea’ after Eidotheia addresses him as such. Similarly Odysseus only calls Poseidon ‘Ground-shaker’ after Athena does. This pattern is not always the case, as some monikers are clearly more well-known, or ritualistic in their application.

### *Negative*

These are some of the most readily identifiable epithets, and are more common than one might think. Negative and insulting epithets are used 65 times in the *Odyssey*, and constitute 6.6% of the total amount of individual epithets. While many of them are single words, such as ‘slow’ (βραδύς), or ‘worthless’ (οὔτιδανός), they occasionally extend into double epithets. Antinoos describes Telemakhos as ‘boldy-spoken, might ungoverned’ (ὑψαγόρη, μένος ἄσχετε), and

<sup>30</sup> Heubeck *et al.* (1988): 79.

<sup>31</sup> Ps.Hesiod *Catalogue of Women* fr.122, and *Aegimius* fr.294. Later, Aeschylus *Suppliant Women* 299-233.

<sup>32</sup> *Homeric Hymn 28: To Athena* 4; Hesiod *Theogony* 924. Later interpretations associated τριτώ with Lake Tritonis in Libya; Herodotus 4.180; Euripides *Ion* 872, or the Triton river in Boeotia; Pausanias 9.33.4; Apollodorus 1.3.6 both of which are claimed to be the birth-place of the goddess. Alternative translations give, ‘third child’ (after Apollo and Artemis), or; ‘born on the third day (of the month)’, τρίτη φθίνοντος, *Scholia* BT on *Iliad* 8.39. ‘True-born’ has also been proposed by Kretschmer (1919): 38-62.

Leokritos dismisses Mentor/Athena as ‘mischievous [and] wild-witted’ (ἀταρτηρέ, φρένας ἤλεέ).<sup>33</sup> Most negative epithets intended to be insulting are either spoken to, or by, antagonistic characters, emphasising their breaches of social etiquette, lack of loquacity and poor judgement (Fig.A.6).<sup>34</sup> They are very rarely used to describe divinities, except in the rare instance where one god might be mad enough at another to cast invectives, but certainly never by a mortal to an immortal.

Not all negative epithets are directed as insults. Elpenor’s memorable ‘not over valiant in war, nor sound in understanding’ (οὔτε τι λίην ἀλκιμος ἐν πολέμῳ οὔτε φρεσὶν ἦσιν ἀρηρώς), while undesirable, does not seem to be used in a pejorative sense by Odysseus to describe his comrade-in-arms, especially given the sympathy he shows to Elpenor’s ghost in the underworld.<sup>35</sup> Similarly, many divinities have what we would understand to be negative characteristics, but which are intrinsic to their powers or personalities. To describe Charybdis as ‘deadly’ or the Erinyes as ‘abhorrent’ is to outline their inherent qualities, not to intentionally insult them. In order to determine which negative epithets are intentionally insulting it is necessary to carefully examine the context in which they appear. Ares’ description as ‘bane of men’, for example, refers to his martial prowess and is therefore merely illustrative, but Hephaistos’ description of him as ‘destructive’ – spoken in the context of Ares’ affair with Aphrodite – is contextually understood as an insult. Similarly, Hephaistos’ attribute ‘slow’ might simply refer to his lameness, as per the moniker Ἀμφιγυῖεις, but its use by the gods during Demodokos’ song is mocking, and should therefore be interpreted as an insult.

### *Occupation*

These 16 unique epithets refer to a character’s profession, such as ‘swineherd’ (σὺβώτης), or ‘herald’ (κῆρυξ), and therefore typically refer to members of lower social status.<sup>36</sup> Due to their inherent nature as nouns, many of these occupational descriptors are also used as Appellatives in their own right.

<sup>33</sup> *Odyssey* 2.85, 303; 2.243. For more on these insults, see: Chapter Two: Guests and Hosts. In the *Iliad*, Hektor uses a negative triple epithet, calling Paris ‘best in looks, woman-crazy, cheater’ (εἶδος ἄριστε, γυναίμανές, ἠπεροπευτὰ: 13.769).

<sup>34</sup> See: **Chapter Two: Guests and Hosts.**

<sup>35</sup> *Odyssey* 10.552; 11.80. The epithet seems to be the antithesis of what de Jong calls ‘the Homeric ideal of a hero’ who is a ‘doer of deeds and speaker of words’ expressed in *Iliad* 9.443, and *Odyssey* 2.272, de Jong (2001): 291.

<sup>36</sup> Parry called these ‘epithets of profession or trade’ Parry (1971) *MHV*: 88.



Fig.A.6: List of Negative Epithets: Given as Insults

RECIPIENT	EPITHET	REFERENCES
<b>Suitors</b>	‘arrogant’ ἀγήνωρ	1.106, 144; 2.235; 16.462; 17.65, 79; 18.43, 346; 20.292; 21.68
	‘overbearing’ ὑπερφίαλος	11.116; 14.27; 15.315; 16.271; 18.167
	‘shameless’ ἀναιδής	13.376; 20.29, 39, 386
<b>Cyclopes</b>	‘lawless’ ἀθέμιστος	9.106, 428
	‘overbearing’ ὑπερφίαλος	9.106
	‘monster’ πέλωρ	9.428
	‘man-eating’ άνδροφάγος	10.200
<b>Antinoos</b>	‘deviser of evil’ κακομήχανος	16.418
	‘bringer of violence’ ἕβριν ἔχων	16.418
<b>Aigisthos</b>	‘hated and impotent’ στυγερός καὶ ἀναλκις	3.310
<b>Aigisthos; Klytaimnestra</b>	‘wily’ δολομήτης	1.300; 3.198, 250, 308
<b>Klytaimnestra</b>	‘accursed’ οὐλόμενος	11.411
<b>Ares</b>	‘destructive’ αἰδηλος	8.309
<b>Companions</b>	‘bad’ κακός	10.68
<b>Eriphyle</b>	‘hateful’ στυγερός	11.326
<b>Hephaistos</b>	‘slow’ βραδύς	8.330
<b>Ktesippos</b>	‘lover of mockery’ φιλοκέρτομος	22.287
<b>Mentor</b>	‘mischievous and wild in your wits’ ἀταρτηρός καὶ φρένας ἠλεέ	2.243
<b>Odysseus</b>	‘worthless’ οὐτιδανός	9.460
<b>Odysseus</b>	‘reproachful creature’ ἐλέγχιστε ζώντων	10.72
<b>Phoenicians</b>	‘greedy’ τρωκτός	14.289; 15.415
<b>Telemakhos</b>	‘boldly spoken, might ungoverned’ μένος ἄσχετε ὑψαγόρας	2.85, 303; 17.406

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