A sampling of comments on the Iliad and Odyssey

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A sampling of comments on the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*

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**Highlighting Legend**

- readable even for first-timers
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**Iliad** Rhapsody 1

2016.06.09 / enhanced 2018.08.16

The comments I offered in *Classical Inquiries* 2016–2017 on *Iliad* Rhapsody 1 through Rhapsody 24, starting here with Rhapsody 1, were based mostly on details that derive from seven books that I indicate in the Bibliography by way of these abbreviations: BA, GMP, H24H, HC, HPC, HQ, HR, MoM, PasP, PH. Each one of these books has its own *index locorum*. My colleague Anita Nikkanen, an Associate Editor for the online project *A Homer commentary in progress*, tracked the sequences of Homeric verses as listed in the indices for six of these books and then summarized my comments on those verses. Following up on her meticulous work, I am in the process of converting her summaries into a form of commentary that is being incorporated into *AHCIP*. My comments on the *Iliad* as I presented them in *Classical Inquiries* 2016–2017 are merely samplings of the content that I hope to contribute to the overall commentary, to which a number of other colleagues are also contributing their own comments. That said, I now proceed to offer a sampling of comments on Rhapsody 1.

At this point, my comments about this beginning of beginnings need no further introduction of their own. [[2016.06.09.]]
I.01.001–012

subject heading(s): mēnis ‘anger’; Muse as goddess of poetic inspiration; Master Narrator; narrative subject as grammatical object; aeidein ‘sing’; erizein ‘have strife’; eris ‘strife’; micro-iliad; [First Song of Demodokos; neikos ‘quarrel’:] Cypria; epic; epic Cycle

On mēnis ‘anger’: see especially the comment on I.01.001–002

On eris ‘strife’: see the comment on I.01.008–012

On neikos ‘quarrel’: see the comment on I.02.221

The main theme of the narration is signaled right away. By theme I mean a basic unit of content or meaning in Homeric poetry: see the Inventory of terms and names. The signaling is accomplished by way of the first word of the very first verse of the Homeric iliad. The word is mēnis ‘anger’, I.01.001, and it refers to the anger of Achilles. A definitive book on this word is Muehlener 1996. The Master Narrator begins his narration by focusing on this anger: he invokes a Muse, as a goddess of inspiration whom he addresses here simply as thea ‘goddess’, and he calls on her to sing for him this anger, I.01.001. On the term Master Narrator, see the Inventory of terms and names; on the idea of the Muse(s) as the goddess(es) of poetic inspiration, see the general comment at I.02.484–487 and the special comments at I.02.484 and at I.02.761. The subject that the Master Narrator has chosen to narrate, the anger of Achilles, is the grammatical object of the verb aeidein ‘sing’. So, the
narrative subject is the grammatical object. The Master Narrator is calling on the Muse to sing the anger, not just sing about the anger. The song is not only about the anger: it is the anger itself. The song captures the total reality of the anger. The Master Narrator proceeds to tell about this anger: it happened because of a quarrel, as signaled especially by the words erizein ‘have strife’ at I.01.006 and eris ‘strife’ at I.01.008. **This quarrel in the Iliad is parallel to another quarrel that is narrated in a “micro-Iliad” that we find embedded in the Odyssey.** This micro-Iliad is the First Song of Demodokos, O.08.072–083, and the quarrel there is signaled especially by the word neikos ‘quarrel’ at O.08.075. It has been debated whether the quarrel scene in this “micro-Iliad” was modeled on a quarrel-scene in the Cypria, which was part of the epic Cycle. On the terms epic and epic Cycle, see the Inventory of terms and names. But the quarrel scenes of the Iliad, the Cypria, and the “micro-Iliad” can be seen as stemming from epic traditions that were originally independent of each other. On the term epic, used here for the first time in these comments on the Homeric Iliad, see again the Inventory of terms and names. [[GN 2016.06.05 via Nagy 2015.05.27 and 2015.04.10; BA 23; see also HPC 111–115.]]

I.01.001–002

Q&T I.01.001 via BA 73–74 and Q&T for part of I.01.002 via BA 73–74

subject heading(s): mēnis ‘anger’; [[timē ‘honor’ of Achilles;] Akhaioi ‘Achaeans’; algea ‘pains’ of the Achaeans

The mēnis of Achilles is a special kind of ‘anger’. The hero feels this anger after histimē ‘honor’ is damaged by the over-king Agamemnon. The Master Narrator says at verse 2 that this special anger caused algea ‘pains’ for the Achaeans. The name Akhaioi ‘Achaean’ here at verse 2 refers to the heroes who were viewed by the ancient Greeks in a later age as their prototypes in an earlier age of heroes; two synonyms for ‘Achaean’ in the Iliad are Danaoi ‘Danaans’ and Argeioi ‘Argives’. The word mēnis at verse 1 does not yet refer to the anger of persons other than Achilles in the Iliad. As the narration continues, however, it becomes clear that the god Apollo felt mēnis ‘anger’ at the Achaean even before the hero Achilles felt his own mēnis. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 73–75.]]

I.01.001

subject heading(s): mēnis ‘anger’

The mēnis ‘anger’ of Achilles at I.01.001 towards Agamemnon the over-king is parallel to the mēnis of Aeneas at I.13.459–461 towards Priam the over-king. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 265; also GMP 28.]]

I.01.001

subject heading(s): aidein ‘sing’; Muse as theā ‘goddess’; Aeolic; Aeolians; Ionic; Ionians; ennepein ‘narrate, tell’; singing as narrating

By saying ‘sing, goddess [theā]’, the Master Narrator is saying that the song that he will perform is something that he hears from the Muse. The addressing of the Muse as theā ‘goddess’ is an Aeolian signature, as it were, since the form theā is Aeolic, as opposed to the form (hē) theos, which is Ionic. See the anchor comment at I.01.463 on Aeolians as speakers of Aeolic, vs. Ionians as speakers of Ionic. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 271.]]

I.01.002

subject heading(s): oulomenē ‘disastrous’; epithet for narrative subject; lugos ‘disastrous’

The placement of this adjective oulomenē ‘disastrous’ as an epithet for mēnis ‘anger’ in the previous verse corresponds to the placement of the adjective lugos ‘disastrous’ at O.01.327 as an epithet for nostos ‘homecoming’ in the previous verse at O.01.326. See the comment on O.01.326–327. [[GN 2017.01.02.]]

I.01.002

subject heading(s): epithet for narrative subject; relative clause as introductory outline of the entire narrative

The epithet oulomenē ‘disastrous’ here at I.01.002, which describes the narrative subject of the entire performed narration of the Iliad as designated by the driving word mēnis ‘anger’ at I.01.001, is now immediately followed at I.01.002 by a relative
clause that outlines the plot of this narration. Similarly, the epithet ἱγρός ‘disastrous’ at O.01.327, which describes the poetic subject of a performed narration as designated by the driving word ῥοστός ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’ at O.01.326, is then immediately followed at O.01.327 by a relative clause that outlines the plot of that narration. See the comment on O.01.326–327. [[GN 2017.01.02.]]

I.01.002

subject heading(s): algea ‘pains’ of the Achaeans; akhos ‘grief’; name Akhil[le]us as derived from akhos

The reference to algea ‘pains’ here is relevant to the etymology of the name Akhil[le]us—if this name can successfully be explained as a shortened by-form of *Akhī- lāuos in the sense of ‘he who has the grief [akhos] of the people [lāuos]’. In comments to come, the word akhos ‘grief’, will be traced as a marker for a most pervasive theme in the iliad: how the anger of Achilles caused grief for his people. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 77, 79; also 65.]]

I.01.003–005

subject heading(s): psūkhē ‘spirit’; Hādēs; autos ‘self’; [sōma ‘body’]; exposition of the dead body to dogs and birds; [cremation;] eschatology

In the iliad, the word autos ‘self’ refers to the body as the basis of identity for heroes, while the word psūkhē ‘spirit’ refers to (A) the life-force of heroes when they are alive and (B) the disembodied conveyor of identity when they are dead. Here at the beginning of the iliad, the dead body of the generic hero is identified with the ‘self’, autos. When a warrior dies in the iliad, his psūkhē ‘spirit’ goes to the realm of Hādēs while his body, which is his ‘self’, is left behind and must be treated with proper ritual care. In the iliad, the ritually correct treatment of a warrior’s dead body, which is called sōma, is cremation. See I.22.342–343 and the comment on I.22.335–354. The very idea of exposing a dead body to be devoured by dogs and birds is considered to be an abomination in the iliad, as in the verses here at I.01.3–5, by contrast with the ritually correct practice of cremation. See the comment on I.22.335–354. There is also a cross-cultural contrast to be noted here: the practice of exposing a dead body to be eaten by dogs and birds is considered to be ritually correct in Iranian traditions that uphold Zoroastrian orthodoxy, while the very idea of cremating a dead body is for Zoroastrians an abomination. Both practices, exposition and cremation, are linked with ideas of eschatology, that is, of a permanent kind of afterlife. In Zoroastrian traditions, such an afterlife is endangered by cremation, while in Homeric traditions the danger comes from exposition. There will be more to say about ideas of afterlife in the anchor comment at I.23.071–076, where it will be argued that Hādēs in Homeric poetry is merely a transitional phase of afterlife for the psūkhē ‘spirit’ of a hero who died: in other words, Hādēs is not eschatological. [[GN 2016.06.05 -> 2016.12.27 via BA 208; also GMP 88, 175.]]

I.01.005

Q&T via BA 65

subject heading(s): boulē ‘wish, plan’; Will of Zeus; [sēma ‘sign’;] [nōos ‘mind’;] [mūthos ‘wording’;] plot of the iliad; narrative arc


The Will of Zeus is presented here as the plot of the narration or narrative arc that we know as the iliad. The Greek noun boulē, translated here as ‘Will’, is what the god ‘wishes’, as expressed by the verb boulēthai ‘wish’. For boulēthai ‘wish’, see the comment on I.11.078–079. But the noun boulē conveys also the idea of ‘planning’, not just ‘wishing’: when Zeus wishes to do something, he engages in planning what he wishes, so that the Will of Zeus is also the Plan of Zeus. See the comment on I.01.524–530 concerning the Plan of Zeus. In comments still to come, there will be further observations on the Will of Zeus with reference to other relevant words, including sēma ‘sign’, nōos ‘mind’, mūthos ‘wording’ (see also GMP 222). [[GN 2016.06.09 via BA 65; also PH 238; more on the Will of Zeus in Nagy 2016.05.26.]]

I.01.008–012

subject heading(s): Muse; eris ‘strife’; Will of Zeus; agency of Apollo; plot of the iliad
On eris ‘strife’: I.01.008–012, I.01.177, I.01.177, I.03.100, I.05.891, I.11.005–016

The Master Narrator calls on the Muse to explain the cause of the eris ‘strife’. See also the pointed use of the word eris ‘strife’ at Pindar Paean 6.50–53. It is now revealed that the god Apollo has a basic role in the plot of the Iliad, and that he too was angry at Agamemnon, even before Achilles became angry at this over-king. It is now also revealed that Apollo himself has agency in the outcome of the epic that we know as the Iliad. On the term epic, mentioned already in the comment at I.01.001–012, see the Inventory of terms and names. In the version of the epic as we have it, however, such an agency of Apollo is subsumed under the ultimate divine agency represented by the Will of Zeus. In earlier versions of the Iliad, on the other hand, the events of the epic could actually be attributed to the agency of Apollo. More on this subject in HPC 111–115. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 61.]]

I.01.015

subject heading(s): skēptron ‘scepter’

Speakers who hold a skēptron ‘scepter’, speak with a kingly authority emanating from the over-king of the gods, Zeus. [[GN 2016.06.09 via GMP 52.]]

I.01.028

subject heading(s): skēptron ‘scepter’

I.01.052

subject heading(s): aiei ‘forever’; aiōn ‘life-force, lifetime’

The adverb aiei ‘forever’ is the old locative case of the noun aiōn ‘life-force, lifetime’. The use of the locative indicates that the ‘life-force’ keeps coming back to life by way of a ‘recircling of time’. So, aiei means literally ‘in a recircling of time’, signaling an eternal return, a perpetual starting-over. [[GN 2016.06.09 via GMP 126, H24H 14§34.]]

I.01.069

Q&T via BA 32

subject heading(s): Kalkhas as ‘the best of the bird-watching seers’

Kalkhas, as ‘the best of the bird-watching seers’, belongs to a more restricted category than the category we see in the expression ‘the best of the Achaeans’. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 32.]]

I.01.074–083

subject heading(s): three kinds of anger in Homeric diction; mēnis ‘anger’; kholos ‘anger’; kotos ‘anger’; teleîn ‘reach an outcome’

The words spoken by Kalkhas the seer here at I.01.074–083 indicate three different kinds of anger: mēnis at I.01.075, kholos at I.01.081, and kotos at I.01.082. In the case of mēnis, it is a kind of “cosmic sanction”: cite the definitive work of Muellner 1996, especially ch.1. As for kholos, it is a kind of explosive anger that is generally instantaneous, as opposed to kotos, which is an anger that is timed to go off only in the fullness of time, when the course of events in the narration has come to fulfillment, as expressed here at I.01.082 by way of the verb teleîn ‘come to fulfillment’. On kotos in particular and on kholos in general, see Walsh 2013, especially ch. 1, where he analyzes the wording of the seer here at I.01.074–083 as a kind of “folk definition” for all three of the different kinds of anger mentioned in this passage. [[GN 2017.08.08.]]

I.01.075

subject heading(s): tīmē ‘honor’ of Achilles; agency of Apollo

The narration of the Iliad, from the start, sets up a parallelism between the hero Achilles and the god Apollo. [[GN 2016.06.09 ...]
I.01.086

subject heading(s): Doppelgänger; Achilles; agency of Apollo

When the hero Achilles swears by the god Apollo, he marks himself as a Doppelgänger of the god. (I use here the word Doppelgänger, borrowed from German, in line with standard definitions found in English-language dictionaries.) [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 143.]]

I.01.091

Q&T via BA 26 and 44

subject heading(s): eukhêthai ‘declare’; ‘best of the Achaeans’

The meaning of eukhêthai as ‘declare’ has to do with speaking for the record in the form of ‘boasting’ or ‘praying’ or ‘juridically declaring’ (Muellner 1976). The question of who is the ‘best of the Achaeans’ is being contested here. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 26, 44.]]

I.01.096–098

Q&T via BA 74–75

subject heading(s): mênis ‘anger’; algea ‘pains’; akhos ‘grief’

Before the hero Achilles ever felt mênis ‘anger’, the god Apollo already felt mênis, and it was the god’s anger that ultimately led to the hero’s anger. Relevant are the words akhos ‘grief’ and algea ‘pains’, which are used in equivalent contexts. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 74–75 and 79.]]

I.01.097

subject heading(s): timê ‘honor’ of Achilles; agency of Apollo

I.01.110

subject heading(s): algea ‘pains’; akhos ‘grief’

The words akhos ‘grief’ and algea ‘pains’ are used in equivalent contexts. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 79.]]

I.01.122

subject heading(s): philo-kteanôtatos ‘most loving of material gain’

When Achilles insults Agamemnon by calling him phîlô-kteanôtatos ‘most loving of material gain’, the framing narration is referring to the general theme of Agamemnon’s greediness. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 313.]]

I.01.153

subject heading(s): aitios ‘responsible’; Will of Zeus

The theme of the Will of Zeus is relevant to questions of juridical responsibility, as expressed by the adjective aitios ‘responsible’. [[GN 2016.06.09 via PH 238; more on the meaning of aitios and its relevance to the Will of Zeus in Nagy 2016.05.28.]]

I.01.155

subject heading(s): bôêt-aneira ‘she who nourishes men’; epithet; Phthiê (homeland of Achilles); phthinenêthai ‘wilt, perish’
The traditional epithet for Phthie, the homeland of Achilles, is bṓt-aneira ‘she who nourishes men’. There is a paradox built into this noun-epithet combination, since the name Phthie is associated with the idea of ‘witting’, as conveyed by the verb phthinesthai ‘wilt, perish’. See also the comments on line 19.322–323 and lines 19.329–330, 19.337. [GN 2016.06.05 via BA 185.]

I.01.159

subject heading(s): ‘having the looks of a dog’; language of praise/blame

When Achilles calls Agamemnon kun-ó-pa ‘having the looks of a dog’, he is engaging in the language of blame. [GN 2016.06.05 via BA 226, 312.]

I.01.177

Q&T via BA 131

subject heading(s): eris ‘strife’; language of praise/blame

In Agamemnon’s language of blame as directed against Achilles, eris ‘strife’ is a defining feature of Achilles. [GN 2016.06.05 via BA 131.]

I.01.188

subject heading(s): akhos ‘grief’; mēnis ‘anger’; Briseis; algea ‘pains’ of the Achaeans

Insulted by Agamemnon, Achilles experiences instantaneous akhos ‘grief’, I.01.188, which will then undergo a metastasis into mēnis ‘anger’. As we will see in what follows, that anger will then cause akhos ‘grief’ for the Achaeans as an aggregate, and that collective akhos ‘grief’ will end only after Achilles unsays his mēnis ‘anger’, as signaled finally at line 19.074–075. [GN 2016.06.05 via BA 80.]

I.01.197

subject heading(s): xanthos/xanthē ‘golden’ (with reference to hair); epithet; immortalization; Achilles

The epithet applied to the hair of Achilles, xanthos/xanthē ‘golden’, is a marker of the hero’s future immortalization. [GN 2016.06.05 via BA 210.]

I.01.207

subject heading(s): menos ‘mental power’; mēnis ‘anger’; root ‘men- ‘act or be in a given mental state’; synonym; formulaic system

There are three Homeric contexts where the word menos ‘mental power’ seems to be the functional equivalent of mēnis ‘anger’. But the question is, can we say that such functional equivalence is relevant to the derivation of both nouns menos and mēnis from the root ‘men-’, which refers to mental activity or mental state? This question is relevant to another question: in the language of Homeric poetry, how do we define a synonym? As we will see in comments to come, an answer to such a question depends on our understanding of Homeric language as a formulaic system. On the terms formula and formulaic system, see the Inventory of terms and names. [GN 2016.06.05 via BA 73; on mēnis in general see Muellner 1996.]

I.01.225

Q&T via BA 226, 312

subject heading(s): language of praise/blame; ‘having the looks of a dog’

This insult, kunos ommat’ ekhōn ‘having the looks of a dog’, directed at Agamemnon by Achilles, exemplifies the language of blame. As also at I.01.159, the translation ‘having the looks of a dog’ conveys the idea that vision is treated as a “two-way street.” When you look at Agamemnon and he looks back at you, he both looks like a dog and he looks back at you just as a
dog would be looking back at you. The English word look conveys a comparably two-way attitude: I can say “I look at a disgraceful person” and I can also say “this person looks disgraceful to me.” To convey the two-way attitude in the original Greek here, the wording of the translation gives ‘having the looks of a dog’ instead of merely ‘having the eyes [omnata] of a dog’. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 226, 312]]

I.01.231

subject heading(s): dėmōboros ‘devourer of the community’; language of praise/blame; dēmos ‘community, district’; dēmōs ‘fat, grease’; metaphor

This insult directed at Agamemnon by Achilles exemplifies the language of blame. Another aspect of the blame here is the double meaning of dēmo- in the compound formation dėmōboros: it could refer either to dēmos ‘community, district’ or to dēmōs ‘fat, grease’. Metaphorically, Agamemnon is a ‘devourer of the community’ because he is like a predatory beast that devours the fat of his prey. **On metaphor, see the Inventory of terms and names.** also MoM 0§01, 0§1 Extract 0-A. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 313]]

I.01.233–246

Q&T I.01.233–237 via BA 179–180

subject heading(s): skēptron ‘scepter’; Oath of Achilles; horkos ‘oath’; plot of the iliad; narrative arc; mēnis ‘anger’

Achilles swears by the skēptron ‘scepter’ that he holds and then throws down to the ground. This oath of Achilles is correlated with the plot or narrative arc of the iliad, starting from a point in time when Achilles declares his mēnis ‘anger’ all the way to the point in time when he un-declares or unsays it. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 179–180, 188]]

I.01.233–237

subject heading(s): skēptron ‘scepter’; Oath of Achilles; horkos ‘oath’

The skēptron ‘scepter’ by which Achilles swears his Oath is here viewed as a thing of nature transformed into a thing of culture, by contrast with the scepter that is pictured in the Electra of Sophocles, 417–423. [[GN 2016.06.09 via GMP 143. On the scepter in the Electra of Sophocles, see Nagy 2017.01.12.]]

I.01.244

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’; Master Narrator

The insulting of Achaeans by Agamemnon takes on a special meaning in the iliad because the Master Narrator recognizes Achilles as the ‘best of the Achaeans’. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 26.]]

I.01.247

subject heading(s): mēnis ‘anger’

The meaning of mēnis ‘anger’ in a situation where X is angry at Y does not preclude the idea that Y is also angry at X. There is an ongoing reciprocity of anger between Achilles as the supreme warrior of the Achaeans and Agamemnon as their supreme leader or over-king. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 73–74.]]

I.01.282

subject heading(s): menos ‘mental power’; mēnis ‘anger’; root ‘men- ‘act or be in a given mental state’; synonym; formulaic system

Here is one of the three Homeric contexts where menos ‘mental power’ seems to be a functional equivalent of mēnis ‘anger’. But note the further comments at. I.01.207. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 73.]]

I.01.291
subject heading(s): oneidos (plural oneidea) ‘words of insult’; language of praise/blame

Agamemnon as speaker refers to the oneidea ‘words of insult’ directed at him by Achilles, who has been resorting to the language of blame in his quarrel with the over-king. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 226.]]

I.01.320–348

subject heading(s): loigos ‘devastation’; Battle for the Ships; fire of Hector; mēnis ‘anger’

The wording of Achilles refers to the future predicament of the Achaeans during the Battle for the Ships; in this phase of the Trojan War, the Achaeans will be losing while the Trojans led by Hector will be winning, on the verge of burning down all the ships of the Achaeans and thus destroying the heroic ancestors of Greek civilization. The threat of such destruction will be signaled by references to the fire of Hector. The word loigos ‘devastation’ refers to the plight of the Achaeans during this phase of the war, when their ships are in danger of being destroyed. For parallel wording, see also I.01.341. For another context—and in this case loigos ‘devastation’ signals a cosmic disaster in the making—see I.01.398. As for the context that is now being considered, I.01.320–348, the plight of the Achaeans is caused here by the mēnis ‘anger’ of the hero Achilles; earlier, the Achaeans suffer loigos ‘devastation’, I.01.067, I.01.097, I.01.456, when they are afflicted by the disease that is visited upon them by Apollo. In that case, their plight is caused by the mēnis ‘anger’ of the god himself. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 75–76.]]

I.01.321

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’

Here is the first occurrence of the noun therapōn in the iliad; the dual form here is theraponte. In the immediate context, only the surface meaning, ‘attendant’, is evident. In other contexts, as at I.04.227, there are traces of a deeper meaning, ‘ritual substitute’. [[GN 2016.08.11.]]

I.01.335

subject heading(s): aitios ‘responsible’; Will of Zeus

I.01.337

subject heading(s): Patroklos=Patrokleēs

The name Patroklos=Patrokleēs occurs here at I.01.345 for the first time. For the etymology, see the comment on I.01.345. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 102.]]

I.01.341

subject heading(s): tīmē ‘honor’ of Achilles; agency of Apollo

I.01.345

subject heading(s): Patroklos=Patrokleēs; kleos ‘glory’ (of poetry)

The name Patroklos=Patrokleēs means ‘he who has the glory [kleos] of the ancestors [pateres]’. On kleos in the sense of an overall reference to the ‘glory’ of poetry, see I.02.325. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 102.]]

I.01.350–359

subject heading(s): pontos ‘crossing [of the sea]’

The hero Achilles is linked with the word pontos in the sense of a ‘crossing’ of the sea—a ‘crossing’ that is dangerous but sacralizing. [[GN 2016.06.08 via BA 343–344.]]
subject heading(s): *penthos* ‘grief’; *akhos* ‘grief’; synonym; *tímé* ‘honor’ of Achilles; Homeric diction

The word *penthos* is used here to indicate the ‘grief’ of Achilles. Both words *akhos* ‘grief’ and *penthos* ‘grief’ refer to the emotion felt by Achilles over the damage done to his *tímé* by Agamemnon when the over-king insults him. In general, *penthos* ‘grief’ is a synonym of *akhos* ‘grief’ in Homeric diction. On Homeric diction, see the Inventory of terms and names. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 94]]

I.01.365-392

subject heading(s): [daï ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’] daïesthai ‘feast, divide (meat), apportion, distribute’; Strife Scene

The theme expressed by the verb daïesthai ‘feast; divide (meat), apportion, distribute’ at I.01.368 is at work in the Strife Scene at the beginning of the *liad*—although a ‘feast’ as expressed by the noun daïs is not literally the setting. Still, the grievance of Achilles has to do with his being deprived of his equitable portion of the spoils of war. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 132]]

I.01.396-406

subject heading(s): *mētis* ‘mind, intelligence’; Thetis

The *mētis* ‘mind, intelligence’ of the local goddess Thetis is linked with the heroic potential of her son Achilles. [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 345-346]]

I.01.403-404

subject heading(s): Briareos; Aigaion; biē ‘force, violence, strength’; pontos ‘crossing [of the sea]’

The monstrous figures of Briareos and Aigaion, synthetized as one person in this context, conjure up the theme of the Achilles-who-would-have-been if his father had been the god Zeus instead of the hero Peleus. This Achilles-who-would-have been is connected with the primal themes of biē ‘force, violence, strength’. (Here and everywhere, I transcribe this word by way of its Homeric form, biē, instead of its later form, biática.) [[GN 2016.06.05 via BA 347]]

I.01.407-412

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaean’; *akhos* ‘grief’; *tímé* ‘honor’ of Achilles; *mēnis* ‘anger’; Oath of Achilles; horkos ‘oath’; sképtron ‘scepter’; Will of Zeus; plot of the *liad*; narrative arc

In the words of the mortal hero Achilles, speaking to his immortal mother Thetis, the status of the hero as ‘best of the Achaean’ is linked with the *akhos* ‘grief’ that he experiences over the damage to his *tímé*—damage caused by the insult inflicted by Agamemnon in the quarrel between the two heroes. The *akhos* ‘grief’ of Achilles leads to his *mēnis* ‘anger’, which in turn will lead to the collective *akhos* of all the Achaean. The horkos ‘oath’ of Achilles, I.01.233, which he will swear by as he holds the sképtron ‘scepter’, I.01.234, and which he then throws to the ground to mark his oath, is coextensive with the *akhos* ‘grief’ that the Achaean will suffer because of the hero’s *mēnis*. To the extent that the Oath of Achilles is sacred, so too is the coextensive plot of the *liad*. This plot or narrative arc, leading to devastation for the Achaean, will be enhanced by the *mētis* or ‘intelligence’ of Thetis, immortal mother of Achilles; and it will be enacted by the Will of Zeus. [[GN 2016.06.08 via BA 26, 48, 82, 188, 334, 336, 346]]

I.01.412

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaean’; *atē* ‘aberration’

The status of Achilles as ‘best of the Achaean’ is primarily formalized by way of the epithetaristos Akhaiôn ‘best of the Achaean’. For Agamemnon to dishonor this status of Achilles is a sign of the over-king’s *atē* ‘aberration’. [[GN 2016.06.08 via BA 26, 48, 82, 188, 334, 336, 346]]
I.01.416

subject heading(s): morceau du héros; aïsa ‘portion; fate, destiny’

The theme of *le morceau du héros*, which is the ‘champion’s portion’ of meat awarded to a dominant hero, is coextensive with the theme of a hero’s epic ‘destiny’, one word for which is *aïsa*, as here. Literally, such a ‘destiny’ is the hero’s ‘portion’ or ‘allotment’. In the *Iliad*, the focus is on the destiny of this epic’s most dominant hero, Achilles. [[GN 2016.06.08 via BA 134.]]

I.01.418

subject heading(s): morceau du héros; aïsa ‘portion; fate, destiny’

I.01.423–425

subject heading(s): dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’; Aithiopes ‘Aethiopians’; Ókeanos; coincidence of opposites; daiesthai ‘feast, divide (meat), apportion, distribute’; Strife Scene

When the Olympian gods are away from their home situated on Mount Olympus, they customarily attend a *dais* ‘feast’, I.01.424, in the Land of the *Aithiopes* ‘Aethiopians’, I.01.423, whose home is situated at the two farthest imaginable extremities of the known world, that is, both in the Far East and in the Far West, on the banks of the world-encircling river named Ókeanos, O.01.022–024. The idea that the Aethiopians live at both extremes of the world is an example of a theme that can best be described as a *coincidence of opposites*. When the gods attend the stylized feast of the Aethiopians, as when Poseidon visits them at O.01.022–026, they cannot pay attention to the feasts arranged by mortals in the central world of the heroes’ here-and-now. Such feasts would be sacrifices, involving a *dais* or literally a ‘division’ of meat. The word *dais* means ‘feast’ because any occasion of feasting in the heroic world requires a ritualized ‘division’ of the cooked meat of animals sacrificed for the occasion. See the comment on O.08.061. The word *dais* does not distinguish between an occasion where gods and humans feast together, as in the case of marginal figures like the Aethiopians, and an occasion where humans offer sacrifice to the gods, as in the case of central figures like the heroes in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. For an example of *dais* with reference to a feast shared by Poseidon with the Aethiopians, see O.01.026 and the comment on O.01.022–026. For an example of *dais* with reference to a feast resulting from a sacrifice of animals to the gods, see O.08.061. [[GN 2016.06.08 via BA 131, 205, 213, 218; GMP 237.]]

I.01.454

subject heading(s): Chryses; prayer; tîmân ‘honor, give honor to’

Chryses uses the same words in praying to Apollo as Achilles does in praying to Zeus at I.16.237. [[GN 2016.06.08 via BA 82.]]

I.01.456

Q&T via BA 75

subject heading(s): *logos* ‘devastation’; *amunein* ‘ward off’

See the comment on I.01.320–348; see also I.16.032. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 75–76.]]

I.01.463

subject heading(s): *Life of Homer, pempŏbola* ‘five-prong forks’;[[1]]* Aeolian, Aeolic; Ionian, Ionic; Homer the Aeolian; Homeric diction; “Aeolic default”*; Homer the Ionian; Aeolian Dodecapolis

definitions for Aeolic, Ionic, Aeolian, Ionian, Homeric diction, “Aeolic default”: see the Inventory of terms and names

The anonymous author of a *Life of Homer* (on the *Lives of Homer*, see the Inventory of terms and names), in Vita 1.517–537,
argues that Homer, as the poet of the Iliad and Odyssey, was an Αἰολεύς ‘Aeolian’, and, in making this argument, he cites among other facts the existence of the form pempōbola (πεμπόβολα) in the expression here at I.01.463, ‘and the young men were getting ready for him [= the priest Chryses] the five-pronged-forks [pempōbola] that they were holding in their hands’ (νέοι δὲ παρ’ αὐτὸν ἔχον πεμπόβολα χερον). The reasoning given by the author is this: the Aeolians, he says, are the only Greek-speaking people who roast the spláŋkhna ‘innards’ of a sacrificial animal by using forks that have five prongs instead of three. All other Greeks use three-prong forks. This argument, based on facts of culture, is combined here with an argument based on facts of language: the Aeolic word for ‘five’ is pémpe, as opposed to the Ionic word, which is pέnte. So pempōbola ‘five-prong forks’ must be an Aeolic and not an Ionic word. (On debates about the phonology and morphology of pempōbola, see Nagy 2011b:173–174.) In highlighting the form pempōbola ‘having five prongs’, the narrator of Vita 1 is making the point that ‘Homer’ as a speaker of Greek defaults to Aeolic usage when he speaks about customs that are most familiar to him, as in the case of the Aeolian custom of using five-prong forks instead of three-prong forks for roasting sacrificial meat at an animal sacrifice. In terms of such an argument, that is why ‘Homer’ uses the Aeolic dialectal form pέmpe ‘five’ instead of the Ionic dialectal form pέnte ‘five’. This argument, combining cultural and linguistic facts, can be seen as a metaphor for explaining a linguistic process, to be defined here as the ‘Aeolic default’. (See also under ‘Aeolic default’ in the Inventory of terms and names.) In terms of such a definition, Homeric diction defaults to an Aeolic dialectal form, as here, in the absence of a corresponding Ionic dialectal form. (On Homerian diction, see the Inventory of terms and names.) In general, it is this linguistic process of the ‘Aeolic default’ that generates the Aeolic component of Homerian diction. But this component, it is essential to keep in mind, is secondary to the Ionic component of Homerian diction, which is primary. To put it another way: the Ionic component of Homerian diction is dominant, while the Aeolic component is only recessive. Such a relationship of Ionic and Aeolic components is metaphorized in myths claiming that the birthplace of Homer was the city of Smyrna, which was originally Aeolian but then became Ionian. (For historical background on Smyrna, see under Aeolian Dodecapolis in the Inventory of terms and names.) In myths about Smyrna as Homer’s birthplace, the identity of Homer as a native of Aeolian Smyrna is superseded by the identity of Homer as a native of Ionian Smyrna. (See again under Aeolian Dodecapolis in the Inventory of terms and names). [GN 2016.09.07 via Nagy 2011b:144 and 173–174.]

I.01.463

anchor comment on Aeolians as speakers of Aeolic, vs. Ionians as speakers of Ionic

subject heading(s): Aeolian, Aeolic; Ionian, Ionic; Dorian, Doric; Thessaly; Boeotia; Lesbos; European/ Asiatic Greeks; Achilles the Aeolian

From a purely linguistic point of view, an ‘Aeolian’ was whoever spoke a dialect known as Aeolic, which along with Ionic and Doric was a major dialectal grouping of the Greek language. From an anthropological point of view, however, there is more to it: as we see from such sources as Herodotus in the fifth century BCE, an Αἰολεύς ‘Aeolian’ was whoever belonged to a social and cultural grouping of Greeks who distinguished themselves in their rituals and myths from other social and cultural groupings. Thus the Αἰολείς ‘Aeolians’ were socially and culturally distinct from, say, the Λόνες ‘Ionians’, as we see for example from the remarks of Herodotus 1.149 about a twelve-city confederation of Αἰολείς ‘Aeolians’ located on the mainland of northern Asia Minor, which rivaled a corresponding twelve-city confederation of Λόνες ‘Ionians’ located on the mainland of central Asia Minor. (See under Aeolian Dodecapolis and Ionian Dodecapolis in the Inventory of terms and names.) And these differentiated social groupings of Αἰολείς ‘Aeolians’ and Λόνες ‘Ionians’—as also Δορείς ‘Dorians’—corresponded neatly with the linguistic groupings of the dialects spoken in Asia Minor and in its outlying islands:

1. The Aeolian speakers of Aeolic inhabited the northern part of coastal Asia Minor together with the outlying islands of Lesbos and Tenedos.

2. The Ionian speakers of Ionic inhabited the central part together with the outlying islands of Chios and Samos.

3. The Dorian speakers of Doric inhabited the southern part together with outlying islands like Rhodes.

By contrast with the dialects of these Asiatic Greeks, however, the corresponding dialects of the European Greeks inhabiting the mainland and islands on the western side of the Aegean Sea are in some cases more difficult to track linguistically. Such is the case with Aeolic dialects spoken on the European mainland, notably in Thessaly and in Boeotia. In the case of Thessaly
in particular, the various dialects spoken in this overall region are difficult to correlate with the dialect spoken on the islands of Lesbos and Tenedos as also on the facing Asiatic mainland, but it can be argued that both these sets of European and Asiatic dialects are Aeolic; and it can also be argued that the Thessalians figured themselves as true Aeolians in their rituals and myths. And their primary hero, as we will see in the anchor comment at 1.02.689–694, was Achilles of Thessaly, figured as the ultimate Aeolian. [[GN 2016.09.07 via Nagy 2011b:162–167.]]

I.01.468

subject heading(s): dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’; isos/isē ‘equitable’; daesthai ‘feast, divide (meat), apportion, distribute’; Strife Scene

The idea of ‘division’ latent in contexts where dais refers to a ‘feast’ becomes overt in expressions like ἔκροτος ἑλοντ ‘equitable dais’ referring to an ‘equitable’ (adjective isos/isē) division of meat on the occasion of a feast. [[GN 2016.06.08 via BA 128, 133.]]

I.01.473

subject heading(s): paiēōn ‘paean’ as a song; algea ‘pains’ of the Achaeans; kūdōs ‘sign of glory’

There are two comparable situations in the iliad where a paiēōn is sung to mark a major remedy for the Achaeans. In the present situation, the singing of such a song marks the cessation of algea ‘pains’ for the Achaeans. In another situation, I.22.391, it marks the winning of a mighty kūdōs ‘sign of glory’ for the Achaeans, which is, the killing of Hector by Achilles: see the overall context of I.22.391–394. [[GN 2016.06.08 via BA 77.]]

I.01.477

subject heading(s): Éos, goddess of the dawn; rhododaktulos ‘rosy-fingered’ []; thugatēr Dios ‘daughter of Zeus’; epithet

We see here in the iliad the first occurrence of the epithet rhododaktulos ‘rosy-fingered’, applied to Éos, goddess of the dawn. This epithet can be explained as a substitution for another epithet, thugatēr Dios ‘daughter of Zeus’, which is applied to other goddesses, most notably to Aphrodite: see the anchor comment at I.03.374. [[GN 2017.04.12 via GMP 247–250; also 150n27.]]

I.01.503–510

subject heading(s): akhos ‘grief’; timē ‘honor’ of Achilles; mēnis ‘anger’; Will of Zeus; ‘best of the Achaeans’; Oath of Achilles; horkos ‘oath’; skēptron ‘scepter’; plot of the iliad; narrative arc; mētis ‘intelligence’

In the words of the immortal goddess Thetis, speaking to the all-powerful god Zeus on behalf of her mortal son Achilles, the status of this hero as ‘best of the Achaeans’ is linked with the akhos ‘grief’ that he experiences over the damage to histimē ‘honor’. The mother is here reframing the words of her son, spoken earlier at I.01.407–412. The akhos ‘grief’ of Achilles leads to his mēnis ‘anger’, which in turn will lead to the collective akhos ‘grief’ of all the Achaeans, and it will be enacted by the Will of Zeus, who is the father that Achilles never had. And the Will of Zeus will be enhanced by the mētis ‘intelligence’ of Thetis, whom Zeus never got a chance to impregnate. [[GN 2016.06.08 via 72, 81–82, 85, 132, 346.]]

I.01.509

subject heading(s): akhos ‘grief’; kratos ‘winning-power’; Akhaio-/Akhaiā-; etymology; Will of Zeus

Once the Achaeans collectively have akhos ‘grief’, ordained by the Will of Zeus, the Trojans will correspondingly have kratos ‘winning-power’, likewise ordained by the god. This correspondence is relevant to the etymology of the name Akhaio-/Akhaiā-. [[GN 2016.06.08 via 81–82, 85, 334.]]

I.01.524–530

subject heading(s): boulē ‘will, plan’; Will of Zeus; Plan of Zeus; Oath of Achilles; plot of the iliad; narrative arc; skēptron ‘scepter’
The Will of Zeus, which is made coextensive with the plot or narrative arc of the Iliad, is formalized by the all-powerful god when he nods his head, as he does here at I.01.524–530. When Zeus nods his head here to signal what is called the Will of Zeus, which is the plot or narrative arc of the Iliad, his plan is to make the story of the Iliad happen. That is the Plan of Zeus, not only the Will of Zeus. Likewise coextensive with the plot of the Iliad is the Oath of Achilles, retold at I.01.233–246, where Achilles formalizes his speech-act when he throws to the ground the scepter by which he swore when he spoke his Oath. [[IGN 2016.06.08 via BA 188.]]

I.01.528–530

Q&T via MoM 1§102

subject heading(s): Will of Zeus; Plan of Zeus; plot of the Iliad; narrative arc; metonymy; theo-eroticism

The action of Zeus in nodding his head to express his Will results in his making contact, by way of metonymy, with the emotions of Achilles. On metonymy, see the Inventory of terms and names. The effect of such divine metonymy in making contact with human emotions is seen by ancient critics as an attempt at familiarizing, personalizing, and even eroticizing the gods. [[IGN 2016.06.09 via MoM 1§106, with reference to the quoting of these verses by Strabo 8.3.30 C354 in the context of narrating what exactly inspired Phidias to sculpt the colossal gold-and-ivory statue of Zeus in Olympia; also HC 4§95; also MoM 1§113 with reference to the theo-eroticism of this statue.]]

I.01.558–59

subject heading(s): Will of Zeus; plot of the Iliad; narrative arc; tímē ‘honor’ of Achilles; akhos ‘grief’; Battle for the Ships; fire of Hector

The reference here to the Will of Zeus, as recapitulated in the words of the goddess Hērā, repeats a main theme in the plot or narrative arc of the Iliad: the damaging of the tímē ‘honor’ of Achilles by the Achaeans will lead to the akhos ‘grief’ that they will experience at the Battle for the Ships, when their very survival will be threatened by the fire of Hector. What Achilles had wished for has by now become the Will of Zeus: the Achaeans—as a group—will from now on keep losing until the fire of Hector reaches the ships. [[IGN 2016.06.08 via BA 82, 132, 334, 336.]]

I.01.602

subject heading(s): dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’; isos/isē ‘equitable’; daiestaï ‘feast, divide (meat), apportion, distribute’; Strife Scene

I.01.603–604

subject heading(s): singing/dancing/instrumentation; Muses and Apollo

A totaling idea of song—including not only the actual singing but also the dancing and the instrumental accompaniment—is embodied in a performance by the Muses and Apollo combined in the idealized context of the divine abode on top of Mount Olympus. [[IGN 2016.06.08 via BA 291; also PH 351, 361.]]
of Ships, now happening in the tenth year of the war, as a replacement for any old Catalogue that would have logically happened already in the first year. This new Catalogue is of course not really new: rather, it is the oldest possible Catalogue that is now being renewed for the newest possible retelling of the Trojan War, reconsidered in the glaring light of the grim consequences facing the Achaeans now that Achilles has withdrawn from the war. With these consequences in view, the Catalogue will reassess all the Achaean heroes involved in the Trojan War. Of special interest will be the role of Protisilaos, who had been the first Achaean to die in the war, as a model for Achilles. As the Master Narrator notes most ruefully, Protisilaos is now terribly missed by his fellow warriors. So too will Achilles be missed. [[GN 2016.07.01.]]

Figure 2. Inscription on the reverse side of the coin: ΘΗΒΑΙΩΝ. Pictured: the Greek hero Protisilaos, the first Achaean to step on Trojan soil and, according to the myth, the first to die in the Trojan War. The myth is retold in *Iliad* 2.695–709.

1.02.001–006

subject heading(s): False Dream; Will of Zeus; plot of the *Iliad*; narrative arc; sub-plot; timē ‘honor’ of Achilles; Battle for the Ships; fire of Hector; boulē ‘wish, plan’

The False Dream that is sent by Zeus to the sleeping Agamemnon is a false Will of Zeus. Whereas the true Will of Zeus is the real plot or narrative arc of the *Iliad*, as noted in the comments on 1.01.005 and on 1.01.558–559, the false Will of Zeus is a false plot for the epic, since the eventual victory of the Achaeans over the Trojans in the tenth year of the Trojan War will not be quick and easy and painless but prolonged and difficult and painful. In the real plot of the *Iliad*, the Achaeans will suffer a new pain: they will find themselves on the losing side of the Trojan War while the Trojans will now be on the winning side. This temporary reversal in the tenth year of the Trojan War goes back to the moment when Agamemnon damages the timē ‘honor’ of Achilles. Because this damage was tolerated by the Achaeans, they will suffer—and keep on suffering—the akhos ‘grief’ of being on the losing side until the fire of Hector finally reaches the ships of the Achaeans at the climax of the Battle for the Ships. By way of this reversal, through the Will of Zeus, Achilles will recover the timē or ‘honor’ that he had lost. At 1.02.003-004, Zeus is shown in the act of planning this reversal: it is the Will of Zeus that he will give timē ‘honor’ to Achilles, and this honor, it is said here, will require the destruction of many warriors at the Battle for the Ships. Such destruction will be a source of great grief for the Achaeans. For them, victory at Troy will now become a most prolonged and difficult and painful goal to achieve. Such is the real plot of the *Iliad*, whereas the false plot that tells of a quick and easy and painless victory is only a dream. Nevertheless, the dream of this false plot is still a part of the real plot, since the Will of Zeus subsumes the false
plot. The dream, then, is a subplot. After all, it is the boulê ‘will’ of Zeus to send the dream at I.02.005, and this boulê is here described as the ‘best’ boulê in the sense of a ‘best plan’ for now. The plan of Zeus here is a subplot that is the best of all possible subplots because it is part of the overarching plot of the iliad, a master epic that subsumes all of its various subplots. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 64, 82, 132, 334, 336]]

I.02.007–015

subject heading(s): False Dream; Will of Zeus; micro-iliad; First Song of Demodokos; fire of Hector; kulindesthai ‘roll’; boulê ‘wish, plan’ in the specific sense of ‘plan’

The False Dream, personified, is instructed by Zeus to tell Agamemnon that the victory of the Achaeans over the Trojans will be quick and easy and painless, since the goddess Hèrè at a council of the divinities has supposedly persuaded the other gods to acquiesce to such a victory. The instructions of Zeus as formulated at I.02.011–015 are carried out by the False Dream, who delivers the formulation to the sleeping Agamemnon at I.02.028–032. Later on, at I.02.065–069, Agamemnon retells this formulation. I note that Zeus does not instruct the False Dream to say that these instructions are the Will of Zeus, though the wording of the False Dream implies it. The implication happens in an additional verse that follows the False Dream’s formulation as the messenger of Zeus at I.02.028–032. In this additional verse, at I.02.033, the False Dream says that the ultimate doom of the Trojans will be caused by Zeus. And the same addition is made in the retelling of Agamemnon, at I.02.070 following I.02.065–69. But there is no such corresponding addition after the verses containing the original formulation of Zeus at I.02.011–015. In any case, what results from the formulation delivered by the False Dream as messenger of Zeus is that Agamemnon will misunderstand what the god really wants. Agamemnon will think that victory over the Trojans will now be quick and easy and painless. But Zeus plans instead just the opposite: in order to restore the timē ‘honor’ of Achilles, Zeus will make sure that the struggles awaiting the Achaeans will be prolonged and difficult and painful, so that the Achaeans will now be on the losing side until the fire of Hector finally reaches the ships of the Achaeans at the Battle for the Ships. Likewise in the “micro-iliad” of O.8.072–083, which is the First Song of Demodokos, Agamemnon misunderstands the Will of Zeus, not knowing what pains the god is planning to inflict on the Achaeans as well as the Trojans. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 64, 82, 334, 336]]

I.02.026

subject heading(s): Dios angelos ‘messenger of Zeus’; ossa ‘oracular voice’

The False Dream, personified, describes himself here as the Dios angelos ‘messenger of Zeus’. Later on, at I.02.063, Agamemnon himself describes the personified False Dream as the Dios angelos ‘messenger of Zeus’. Still later on, at I.02.93, the False Dream will be equated with Ossa, personification of an ossa ‘oracular voice’. And this personified Ossa is then described at I.02.94 as Dios angelos ‘messenger of Zeus’ [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 138.]]

I.02.029–030

The False Dream tells Agamemnon that he will capture Troy ‘now’. It is a promise of instant gratification. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 64.]]

I.02.036–040

Q&T via BA 65

subject heading(s): False Dream; Will of Zeus; teleîsthai ‘come to fulfillment’; algea ‘pains’ of the Achaeans

These verses describe most accurately how Agamemnon, dreaming his False Dream, misunderstands the Will of Zeus. As we read at I.02.036 here, Agamemnon is thinking things that will definitely not ‘come to fulfillment’, teleîsthai, through the will of the god. As we read further at I.02.037, Agamemnon thinks that he will now capture Troy in just one day, in accordance with the Will of Zeus. Of course he is wrong to think this, as we read still further at I.02.038–040, since Zeus is now planning to inflict many more algea ‘pains’ in battle not only for the Trojans but also, more pertinently, for the Achaeans. The Trojan War is about to be prolonged for the Achaeans, causing them much more hardship and pain. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 65, 77, 138.]]

I.02.041
subject heading(s): False Dream; omphē ‘oracular voice’; ossa ‘oracular voice’; micro-Iliad; First Song of Demodokos; pēma ‘pain’; kulindesthai ‘roll’; Will of Zeus; boulē ‘wish, plan’ in the specific sense of ‘plan’

When Agamemnon wakes up from dreaming the False Dream, he experiences the sensation of an omphē ‘oracular voice’ that has just now been poured all over him. This idea of omphē as an ‘oracular voice’ (the word is cognate with English song) is picked up by the word ossa ‘oracular voice’ at I.02.093, which refers there to the personified False Dream who had announced himself as the Dios angelos ‘messenger’ of Zeus to the sleeping Agamemnon at I.02.026. In the context of Theognis 1.808 and elsewhere, omphē refers to the oracular voice of the Oracle of Apollo at Delphi. Such contexts show that omphē in the sense of ‘oracular voice’ is relevant to the misunderstanding experienced by Agamemnon in Iliad 2. Just as Agamemnon misunderstands the oracular voice that is mediated by the False Dream, so also he misunderstands the oracular voice of the god Apollo himself in the First Song of Demodokos O.08.072–083. At verses 77–78 of that “micro-Iliad,” it is said that Agamemnon was happy to see Odysseus and Achilles quarrelling; at verses 79–83, it is said that such a quarrel was predicted by the Oracle of Apollo at Delphi to Agamemnon when this over-king went there for an oracular consultation. And at verses 81–82 it is said that this quarrel was really a sign that foretold a great pēma ‘pain’ that was about to befall the Achaeans as well as the Trojans in the Trojan War. [[GN 2016.06.30 via Nagy 2015.05.27; also via BA 65, 77, 138.]]

I.02.046

subject heading(s): skēptron ‘ scepter’; apthito- ‘imperishable, unwithering’; Oath of Achilles

The skēptron ‘ scepter’ that is held by Agamemnon is described as golden, and gold is the symbol for the artificial continuum of immortality as expressed by the epithet apthito- in the sense of ‘imperishable, unwithering’. But this scepter was originally wooden and then covered over in gold; and wood is a symbol for the natural discontinuity of mortal life as expressed by the verb pthines thanai in the sense of ‘wilt’. This aspect of the skēptron ‘ scepter’ as a symbol for the natural discontinuity of mortal life is highlighted by the Oath of Achilles at I.01.233–246. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 179, 188; PH 278; GMP 125.]]

I.02.063

subject heading(s): Dios angelos ‘messenger of Zeus’; ossa ‘oracular voice’

The False Dream, personified, announces himself to the sleeping Agamemnon, describing himself as the Dios angelos ‘messenger of Zeus’. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 65, 77, 138.]]

I.02.082

Q&T via BA 26

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’; eukhesthai ‘claim; declare’

Countering the claim of Achilles to be the ‘best of the Achaeans’, Agamemnon here lays claim to the same title, and the verb for expressing such a claim is eukhesthai ‘claim’. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 26, 45; on eukhesthai see also Muellner 1976.]]

I.02.086

subject heading(s): skēptomkhoi basileēs ‘ scepter-bearing kings’; skēptron ‘ scepter’

This expression needs to be added to the cumulative evidence showing that a person who holds askētron ‘ scepter’ speaks with the authority of a king—an authority emanating from Zeus. [[GN 2016.06.30 via GMP 52.]]

I.02.094

subject heading(s): Dios angelos ‘messenger of Zeus’; ossa ‘oracular voice’

In this verse, I.02.094, the epithet Dios angelos ‘messenger of Zeus’ applies to the noun ossa ‘oracular voice’ as found in the previous verse, I.02.093. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 138.]]

I.02.100–108
subject heading(s): Pelops

In the Homeric *Iliad*, the hero Pelops figures as an archetype of political power. The sequence of kings in the Peloponnesus is limited to the dynastic lineage starting with Pelops. [[GN 2016.06.30 via PH 130, 299]]

I.02.101

subject heading(s): *skēptron* ‘scepter’

I.02.108

subject heading(s): *skēptron* ‘scepter’

I.02.110

subject heading(s): *therapōn* ‘attendant; ritual substitute’; *therapontes* of Ares; hero cult; cult hero

This is the second occurrence of the noun *therapōn* in the *Iliad*; the plural form here is *therapontes*. The surface meaning of *therapōn* in Homeric diction is ‘attendant’, and a fitting example is the word's first occurrence in the *Iliad*, at I.01.321; the deeper meaning, however, is ‘ritual substitute’. In contexts where the plural *therapontes* in combination with *Arēs* ‘of Ares’ is applied to the Achaean=Danaean=Argive (at I.02.110, to the Danaans) as a grouping of warriors, the deeper meaning is more evident than in other contexts. When a warrior is killed in war, he becomes a *therapōn* or ‘ritual substitute’ who dies for Ares by becoming identical to the war god at the moment of death; then, after death, the warrior is eligible to become a cult hero who serves as a sacralized ‘attendant’ of the war god in contexts of hero cult. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 293–295; GMP 48; H24H 6§32]]

I.02.119–130

subject heading(s): epic traditions of the Epigonoi; epic traditions of the Seven against Thebes

The words of this challenge directed against the over-king Agamemnon by Thethilos, chariot driver of Diomedes, recall the epic traditions of the Epigonoi = Sons-of-the-Seven-against-Thebes. Since Sthenelos figures as a character in two epic traditions, both the Iliadic and the Epigonic, his wording here can be seen as a cross-reference from the Iliadic tradition to the Epigonic. The cross-reference sets up a rivalry between the two epic traditions: the question is, are the Epigonoi as heroic characters superior to the heroic characters of the *Iliad*? [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 163]]

I.02.186

subject heading(s): *skēptron* ‘scepter’

I.02.212

subject heading(s): *a-metro-epēs* ‘without measured speech’; language of praise/blame; blame as foil for epic

This word indicates the language of blame vs. praise. Such words can refer to blame as a foil for epic. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 264]]

I.02.214

subject heading(s): Thersites as exponent of blame poetry; language of praise/blame; blame as foil for epic; *erizemenai basileusin* ‘engage in strife against kings’; ‘speaking name’ (nomen loquens)

The expression *erizemenai basileusin* ‘engage in strife against kings’ is a programmatic way of referring to the language of blame as a challenge to royalty. In the *Iliad*, Thersites is a prime exponent of blame poetry. He has a “speaking name” (nomen loquens), since *Thersitēs* is related to the noun *thersos/thrasos*, which refers to a negative kind of ‘boldness’ in contexts of blame poetry: see the comment at O.18.001–004. [[GN 2016.08.17 via BA 262-263]]
I.02.216

subject heading(s): aiskhistos 'most disgraceful'; aiskhos 'disgrace, shame'; aiskhro- 'disgraceful, shameful'; Thersites as exponent of blame poetry; language of praise/blame; blame as foil for epic; Aristotle on blame poetry

The programmatic representation of Thersites as an exponent of blame poetry is summed up in the description of this character as aiskhistos 'most disgraceful'. In the Poetics of Aristotle (1449a), the semantics of the underlying (a) noun aiskhos 'disgrace, shame' and (b) adjective aiskhron 'disgraceful, shameful' can be seen as the basic context of blame poetry. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 262.]]

I.02.217–219

subject heading(s): Thersites as exponent of blame poetry; language of praise/blame; blame as foil for epic; ugliness of blame; Aesop as exponent of praise/blame; Thersites as pharmakos 'scapegoat'; Aesop as pharmakos 'scapegoat'; ainos 'coded words; fable'; neikein 'quarrel with'; aiskhro- 'disgraceful, shameful'; Hector; Paris=Alexandros

The content of the words of Thersites as blame poetry is matched by the form of the blame poet: just as the content is ugly, the form too is ugly. Thersites actually looks ugly. If we compare the figure of Thersites with the figure of Aesop, who is represented in myth as an exponent of blame as well as praise whenever he performs an ainos 'fable', those aspects of Aesop that gravitate toward blame are reflected in the portrayals of this character as markedly ugly. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 262, 308.]]

I.02.221

subject heading(s): Thersites as exponent of blame poetry; language of praise/blame; blame as foil for epic; Thersites as ekthhistos 'most hateful' to both Achilles and Odysseus; neikein 'quarrel with'; neikos 'quarrel'; aiskhro- 'disgraceful, shameful'; Hector; Paris=Alexandros

As an exponent of blame poetry, which is antithetical to the poetry of epic as a vehicle for praising what is good about heroes, Thersites is truly ekthhistos 'most hateful' to the primary two heroes of epic poetry as represented by the Homeric Iliad and Odyssey, who are of course Achilles and Odysseus respectively. As we read at I.02.220–221, Thersites has his quarrels especially with these two heroes, and the verb neikein 'quarrel with' as used here at I.02.221, together with the corresponding noun neikos 'quarrel' as used elsewhere, refers programatically to the poetics of blame. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 260, 263.]]

I.02.222

subject heading(s): Thersites as exponent of blame poetry; language of praise/blame; blame as foil for epic; oneidos (plural oneidea) 'words of insult'; oneidizein 'say words of insult'

Besides the noun neikos (plural neikea) 'quarrel' and the verb neikein 'quarrel with', on both of which see the comment on I.02.221, another set of words referring to the poetics of blame as antithetical to the poetics of praise in general and of epic in particular is the noun oneidos (plural oneidea), as here, meaning 'words of insult', and the verb oneidein, meaning 'say words of insult', as elsewhere. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 263.]]

I.02.224

subject heading(s): Thersites as exponent of blame poetry; language of praise/blame; blame as foil for epic; neikein 'quarrel with'

Here again, the verb neikein 'quarrel with' refers to the poetics of blame. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 263.]]

I.02.225–242

subject heading(s): Thersites as exponent of blame poetry; language of praise/blame; blame as foil for epic; insults about greed
Epic quotes here directly the poetry of blame as displayed by Thersites. His words of blame are introduced and concluded at I.02.224 and I.02.243 respectively by way of the word neikein ‘quarrel with’. Although Thersites addresses Agamemnon, insulting him directly, he insults indirectly all the Achaeans, including Achilles. Among the specific insults hurled at Agamemnon are accusations of greedy behavior, I.02.237. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 261-263, 313.]]

I.02.235

subject heading(s): elenkhos ‘disgrace’

Thersites directs his blame at the Achaeans, ridiculing them by feminizing them. The noun elenkhos ‘disgrace’ is meant to shame the persons insulted by the poetics of blame. [[GN 2016.06.264.]]

I.02.241–242

subject heading(s): Thersites insults Achilles

Here the words of blame uttered by Thersites insult Achilles, calling into question the motives of that hero. It is as if the anger of Achilles were not real. This kind of misrepresentation by way of blame poetry is described as ekttrē parenthesis ‘invidious side-wording’ in Pindar Nemean 8.32. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 263.]]

I.02.243

subject heading(s): Thersites as exponent of blame poetry; language of praise/blame; blame as foil for epic; neikein ‘quarrel with’

I.02.245

subject heading(s): blaming of blame

Thersites here is insulted by words of blame because he has used the words of blame to insult the noble. Nobility, when insulted by words of blame, can stoop to insult in return by way of using the same words. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 262.]]

I.02.246–264

subject heading(s): blaming of blame

Throughout this speech, Thersites is insulted by words of blame because he has used the words of blame to insult the noble. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 262.]]

I.02.246

subject heading(s): a-krito-mūthos ‘having words that cannot be sorted out’

The insulting language of Thersites is here being insulted in return: his discourse is described as a-krito-mūthos ‘having words that cannot be sorted out’. So, the blame poetry of Thersites is bad poetry. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 264.]]

I.02.247

subject heading(s): Thersites as exponent of blame poetry; language of praise/blame; blame as foil for epic; erizemenai basleusin ‘engage in strife against kings’; “speaking name” (nomen loquens)

Here again, the expression erizemenai basleusin ‘engage in strife against kings’ is a programmatic way of referring to the language of blame as a challenge to royalty. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 262-263.]]

I.02.248–249

subject heading(s): worst of the Achaeans
Just as Achilles and Odysseus are the ‘best of the Achaeans’, Thersites is the ‘worst’, according to the insulting words of counter-blame spoken by Odysseus. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 260.]]

I.02.251

subject heading(s): oneidos (plural oneidea) ‘words of insult’

I.02.255

subject heading(s): oneidizein ‘say words of insult’

I.02.256

subject heading(s): kertomein ‘say words of insult’

This word kertomein ‘say words of insult’ is yet another term referring to the act of insulting by way of blame poetry. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 263.]]

I.02.265–268

subject heading(s): blaming of blame

I.02.268

subject heading(s): skêptron ‘scepter’

I.02.269–270

subject heading(s): blaming of blame

Thersites, by blaming the heroes of the Iliad, had intended to turn them into objects of laughter by way of ridicule. But the blame is reversed, and now it is Thersites who becomes the object of laughter. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 262.]]

I.02.275

subject heading(s): epes-bolos ‘thrower of words’

This word epes-bolos ‘thrower of words’ is yet another term referring to the act of insulting by way of blame poetry. A possible parallel is Latin locus, if derived from iaciō / iacere ‘throw!’. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 264; GMP 164.]]

I.02.277

subject heading(s): oneidos (plural oneidea) ‘words of insult’

I.02.299–332

Q&T via HPC 123–125; also HC 1§8.

subject heading(s): telos ‘fulfillment’ as the outcome of the epic plot; Shield of Aeneas; epic Cycle

Here in the Iliad, the telos or ‘fulfillment’ of the plot is being realized only in the form of a prophecy—by contrast with the epic Cycle, where the conquest of Troy is the ultimate telos. On the epic Cycle, see the inventory of terms and names. There are comparable themes in Virgil Aeneid 8.615–629, 729–731, featuring the Shield of Aeneas. [[GN 2016.06.30 via HPC 123–125; see also HC 1§8 and C§§15–19 on the Shield of Aeneas.]]

I.02.299–310

subject heading(s): omen of the serpent; petrifaction; terror and pity
The omen of the serpent in *Iliad* 2 is comparable to the omen of the serpent in *Virgil Aeneid* 2.199–227. [GN 2016.02.30 via HC 1§82; also HC 1§11 on terror and pity.]

I.02.308

subject heading(s): sēma ‘sign, signal’; etymology of drakōn ‘serpent’; thelgēin ‘put a trance on, enchant’ as an effect of visual attraction

The omen of the serpent that devours the nine birds is a sēma ‘sign, signal’ that calls for interpretation. This interpretation is needed, in terms of the poetry itself, for understanding the plot of the *Iliad*. [GN 2016.06.30 via GMP 204; also HC 1§§83–84 and §121 on the poetics of enchantment as conveyed by the story about the drakōn ‘serpent’; also on the etymology of drakōn.]

I.02.318

Q&T via HC 1§19

subject heading(s): omen of the serpent; petrification; arizēlon / aridēlon ‘most visible’; aïdēlon ‘invisible’

The serpent, once it is petrified, is arizēlon / aridēlon ‘most visible’; according to an alternative version, the serpent does not get petrified but rather is made suddenly aizēlon ‘invisible’. [GN 2016.06.30 via HC 1§§26–32.]

I.02.319

subject heading(s): arizēlo- / aridēlo- ‘most visible’; aïdēlo- ‘invisible’; variant adduced by Aristarchus; athetesis; arizēlo- ‘most visible’

The reading aïdēlon ‘invisible’ at I.02.318, adduced by Aristarchus, is incompatible with this verse, I.02.319, which is accordingly athetized by him. On athetesis, see the Inventory of terms and names. [GN 2016.02.30 via HC 1§§20–21, 26, 28, 32.]

I.02.325

subject heading(s): kleos ‘glory’ (of poetry); kleos aphthiton ‘unwitting glory’ as something eternal, not just long-lasting

The expression kleos oupop’ oleita ‘its glory [kleos] will never perish’ (κλέος οὐ ποτ’ ὀλέηται), as here at I.02.325, is parallel with kleos aphthiton estai (κλέος ἄφθιτον ἔσται) at I.09.413, which can be translated ‘the glory [kleos] will be imperishable [aphthiton]’. This parallelism shows that aphthito- at I.09.413 and elsewhere was understood to be not just long-lasting, as some have thought, but eternal. As for the interpretation ‘the glory [kleos] will be imperishable [aphthiton]’, we will see in the comment on I.09.413 that an alternative interpretation is also possible: ‘and there will be a glory [kleos] that is imperishable’. [GN 2016.06.30 via GMP 123–126.]

I.02.330

subject heading(s): sign of the serpent; telein ‘reach an outcome’; prophecy; poetics of unchangeability; concretization; petrification

The petrified serpent is equated with the story of Troy, and the word telein ‘reach an outcome’ here conveys the inevitable outcome of that story. The prophecy expressed by telein reveals a poetics of unchangeability in narrating the story. And the concretization of such unchangeability is visualized as the petrification of the serpent. The imperfective aspect of the verb telein ‘reach an outcome’ here is referring to the story of Troy as it is still being told, as it is still in progress. [GN 2016.06.30 via HC 1§§12, 18, 61, 63.]

I.02.401

subject heading(s): mölos Arēs ‘struggle of Ares’; biē ‘force, violence, strength’
The expression mölos Arêos ‘struggle of Ares’ refers to a war-dance. It is as if the violence of warfare were primarily a war-dance. To be compared is the Arcadian festive event of the Môleia, which is a ritualized dramatization of martial biê ‘force, violence, strength’. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA.332]]

I.02.402–429

subject heading(s): late arrivals of Menelaos

Epitome from Nagy 2015§103:

Menelaos seems to be idiosyncratic in his arrivals at sacrifices. A striking example is the passage here at I.02.402–429 where Agamemnon sacrifices an ox to Zeus, I.02.402–403, 422, and makes a wish-in-prayer, as expressed by the verb eukheisai, I.02.411, that he will conquer the city of Troy, I.02.414–415, and kill Hector together with as many other enemies as possible, I.02.416–418. To attend this sacrifice as well as the feast that follows the sacrifice, Agamemnon invites six heroes, I.02.404–407. But the hero Menelaos is not included in this group of six. Nevertheless, Menelaos does manage to attend, arriving as the seventh hero, without having been invited to the sacrifice, I.02.408–409: rather, he comes automatos, which is conventionally interpreted to mean ‘of his own accord’, or, to put it into popular idiom, ‘automatically’, I.02.408. But the reason that is given here to explain why Menelaos comes automatos is uncanny: it is because, the narrative says, Menelaos can read the mind of his brother, I.02.408–409. [[GN 2017.03.29.]]

I.02.402–429

anchor comment on prayers heeded or not heeded by gods

subject heading(s): eukheisai ‘pray’

Epitome from Nagy 2015§85. Here at I.02.402–429, when Agamemnon sacrifices an ox to Zeus, I.02.402–403, 422, he makes a wish-in-prayer, as expressed by the verb eukheisai, I.02.411, that he will conquer the city of Troy, I.02.414–415, and kill Hector together with as many other enemies as possible, I.02.416–418—all within the space of one single day, I.02.413. But Zeus refuses to bring this prayer to fulfillment, I.02.419—even though the god accepts the offering of the sacrifice, I.02.420, and even though Agamemnon and his guests go ahead and cook the meat after killing the ox, dividing the beef among themselves and then feasting on it together, I.02.421–429. Although the narrative leaves it open whether, one fine day, Agamemnon will still succeed in his wish to conquer the city, I.02.419, it is made clear that the present wish-in-prayer, as performed by the hero on the occasion of this particular sacrifice, is a failure, I.02.419. To paraphrase in Latin terms: the vōtum as a ‘wish-in-prayer’ is not granted here. [[2017.04.06.]]

I.02.408–409

subject heading(s): Menelaos mind-reader of Agamemnon

Menelaos in his thûmos ‘heart, mind’ knows what Agamemnon is feeling. [[GN 2016.02.30; see also PasP 191n14 with reference to Athenaeus 5.177ef.]]

I.02.408

subject heading(s): automatos ‘having a mind of his own’; dominant and recessive twins

Epitome from Nagy 2015§104:

Point 1. The ability of Menelaos to read the mind of Agamemnon indicates a special meaning for the adjective automatos here. On the one hand, if Menelaos comes to the feast ‘on his own’, then we can expect his mind to be ‘operating by itself’—which is the meaning built into automatos as a compounding of the element auto- ‘self’ with the element ma-t-, derived from the root *men/-‘mn- meaning ‘mind’. So, Menelaos has a mind of his own. On the other hand, something unexpected is going on here: this mind of Menelaos, exceptionally, can read the mind of the brother, and so
automatos in this context means not only ‘having a mind of his own’ but also ‘having the same mind’ as the brother has. In terms of this interpretation, Agamemnon and Menelaos have the same mind because they share their own selves with each other. We can find mythological patterns of twin-like behavior in Homeric descriptions of Agamemnon and Menelaos, and these patterns affect even their thinking. See Frame 2009:177, with a further reference at pp. 72–73 n. 156. More from Frame pp. 209–215: Also, Menelaos in the Iliad consistently fails to take the initiative whenever he undertakes an activity together with his brother. In such situations, Menelaos is recessive in his twinned thinking, while Agamemnon is dominant.

Point 2. There is an allusion in Plato Symposium 174b-d to the wording here in I.02.408. And, on the basis of Athenaeus 1.8a, we can reconstruct a relevant proverb, to which Plato’s text is also alluding. This proverb can be reconstructed as αὐτόματοι ὀν ὀν ον ἐπὶ δαίμονας λαοί ‘automatically do the noble go to the feasts of the noble’. In such a context, I add, not only does each noble person have ‘a mind of his own’: that mind is also the ‘same’ mind that the other noble persons have. The point is, ‘like-minded’ or ‘same-minded’ people congregate with each other automatically at dinners. [[GN 2017.03.29.]]

I.02.431

subject heading(s): dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’

I.02.484–487

Q&T I.02.485–486 via BA 16, 271.

subject heading(s): performance & composition; kleos ‘glory’ as ‘the thing heard [kleuein]’; Muse(s) as goddess(es) of poetic inspiration

The immediacy of the Master Narrator’s performance here is counterbalanced by an attitude of remoteness from the composition. Such a counterbalance indicates the Narrator’s deference to the epic tradition of Homeric poetry. The Narrator does not claim that he knows the tradition: instead, he says he just ‘hears’ it from the Muses, goddesses of poetic inspiration, and this act of ‘hearing’ is kleos, I.02.486, derived from the verb kleuein ‘hear’. The literal meaning of kleos as ‘the thing heard’ has an enormous prestige that translates into the idealized meaning of ‘glory, fame’ as applied to the composition and performance of Homeric poetry. The Narrator of Homeric poetry is proud of his capacity to ‘hear’. To hear what? To hear ‘the thing heard’, which is kleos. This capacity translates into ‘glory, fame’ not only for Homeric poetry but also for the poet who performs the poetry. Such a poet claims access to both the form and the content of what he ‘hears’ the Muses tell him. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 16, 271; PH 148, 227, 422; PasP 61.]]

I.02.484

subject heading(s): re-invocation of Muse(s); ennepein ‘narrate, tell’; Mousa ‘Muse’; singing as narrating

lemmatizing: ἐπιτε νῦν μοι Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δῶμαι ἔχουσαι

In this verse, which can be translated ‘tell me now, you Muses who have your dwellings on Mount Olympus’, we see a rhyming of … Mousai, situated before the primary mid-verse word-break, with … ekhousei, situated before the verse-final word-break. Such rhyming is rare and archaizing. (On archaic patterns of rhyming in early Greek poetry, see Nagy 1974:99–101.) On the poetics of re-invocation here, there will be more to say in the comments on I.02.761, I.11.218, I.14.508, I.16.112. For now, it suffices to observe that the re-invocation of the Muses here at I.02.484 pictures these goddesses in the plural, by contrast with the singular Muse who had been initially invoked at I.01.001. There will be another invocation of the singular Muse at I.02.761, to be followed by invocations of plural Muses at I.11.218, I.14.508, and I.16.112. In the case of each invocation, there is a heightened level of poetic self-awareness about the importance of what is about to be narrated. Here at I.02.484, for example, the Master Narrator shows his concern about the need for accuracy in re-creating a comprehensive catalogue of essentially all the cultural ancestors of the Greek-speaking world. On other occasions of re-invocation, there will be comparable poetic concerns, as we will see in comments still to come. [[GN 2016.10.27.]]
I.02.486

subject heading(s): elliptic plural; Homer’s ‘I’ and Homer’s ‘we’

The ‘I’ of Homer is interchangeable with ‘we’. The ellipsis of successive ‘I’-s in this ‘we’ indicates a vertical succession of performers. [[GN 2016.02.30 via HTL 174.]]

I.02.488–493

Q&T via HTL 174–175

subject heading(s): re-experiencing of performance

| I.488 πλήθουν δ' οὐκ ἄν ἐγὼ μυθήσομαι οὐδ' ὄνομήνω, | I.489 οὐδ' εἶ μοι δέκα μέν γλώσσαι, δέκα δὲ στόματ' εἶν. | I.490 φωνὴ δ' ἀρρητος, χάλκεσαν δὲ μοι ἤτορ ἑνεῖν, | I.491 εἰ μὴ Ὄλυμπιάδες Μοῦσαι Διὸς αἰγόχοιο | I.492 θυγατέρες μνησιαθ' ὀσοὶ ὑπὸ Ἰλιῶν ἠλθον. | I.493 ἀρχοὺς αὐ νηὼν ἐρέω νήας τε προπόσας.

But the number [of Achaean] I could not tell nor name (not even if I had ten tongues and ten mouths) and a voice that was unbreakable, and if a heart of bronze were within me) if the Muses of Olympus, of Zeus the aegis-bearer the daughters, did not mentally connect me, (about) how many came to Troy. But now I will say the leaders of the ships, and all the ships.

The performer here is re-experiencing the here-and-now of his own performance. See further the comment at I.02.492. [[GN 2016.06.30 via HTL 175.]]

I.02.492

subject heading(s): mnē- ‘mentally connect, put the mind in touch’

What the Muses do is ‘put the mind in touch’; the translation of mnē- as ‘mentally connect’ is more accurate than ‘remind’, since the idea of ‘reminding’ in a language like English restricts the idea of mental contact to the past. But the idea ‘mentally connect’ as conveyed by the word mnē- is broader. This Greek word refers to mental contact not only with the past but also with the present and even with the future. The Muses have the power to put the mind in touch with times and places other than one’s own. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 17.]]

I.02.493

subject heading(s): prooimion ‘proemium, prelude’

We see here a transition from the prooimion ‘proemium, prelude’ that introduces the Catalogue of Ships to the actual narration of the Catalogue. The transition is formalized by way of picking up a basic idea from the prooimion. This idea, signaled by the word ἡγεμόνες ‘leaders’ at I.02.487 in the prooimion, is now picked up by the word archōi ‘leaders’ here in the first verse of the actual narration, I.02.493. For the etymology of prooimion ‘proemium, prelude’, see the comment on O.08.074. [[GN 2016.06.30 via PH 493.]]

I.02.540

subject heading(s): ozos Ἄρεως ‘attendant of Ares’

Here is the first Iliadic occurrence of the epithet ozos, which can be translated generally as ‘attendant of Ares’. The application of this epithet to a hero indicates that such a hero, as a warrior, is destined to become a ritual substitute for the war-god Ares. See the anchor comment at I.12.188. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 295.]]

I.02.546–552
subject heading(s): Erekhtheus; Athena and Athens

And there were those who held Athens [Athēnai], well-founded city [dēmos of Erekhtheus], the one with the mighty heart, whom once upon a time Athena [Athēnē] nourished, daughter of Zeus, but the grain-giving earth gave birth to him. And she [ = Athena] established him in Athens [Athēnai], in her own rich temple. There he is supplicated, with sacrifices of bulls and rams, by the young men of Athens, each time the seasonal moment comes round. And their [= the Athenians’] leader was Menestheus, son of Peteos.

Pictured here is the installation of the hero Erekhtheus within the sacred precinct of the goddess Athena in Athens. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 192, with other examples of such a relationship between hero and goddess; also GMP 254; HTL 161; more on Erekhtheus in HC §138.]]

I.02.546

subject heading(s): Athena and Athens

The name of the goddess Athena and the name of the citadel of Athens were originally the same, as we see from O.07.078–081. [[GN 2016.06.30 via HTL 161.]]

I.02.547–548

subject heading(s): Gaia, Athena, and Erekhtheus; trephein ‘nourish’

Although Erekhtheus here is born of the goddess Gaia as ‘Mother Earth’, he is nursed by the goddess Athena. This division of labor between Gaia and Athena is signaled by the verb trephein ‘nourish, nurse’, revealing a pattern of differentiation between older and newer concepts of a mother goddess. In terms of an older concept, an autochthonous hero would be both born of and nursed by a mother goddess, visualized primarily as the Earth. We may compare the wording in Plato Menexenus 237b on Mother Gaia, ‘the one who gave birth, nourished [trephein], and accepted [them] into her care’ (τῆς τεκούσης καὶ θρεψάσης καὶ ὑποδεσμαίης), with reference to the Athenians as her autochthonous children. See HTL 161, with bibliography. [[GN 2017.08.07.]]

I.02.548

subject heading(s): Dios thugatēr / thugatēr Dios ‘daughter of Zeus’

For the first time in the Iliad, we see here the epithet Dios thugatēr (ι’ thugatēr Dios) ‘daughter of Zeus’, applied in this case to the goddess Athena. This epithet is also applied to other goddesses, most notably to Aphrodite. See the anchor comment at I.03.374.

[[GN 2017.04.12 via GMP 247–249; also 150n27.]]

I.02.553–554

subject heading(s): homoios ‘similar to, same as; relativism/absolutism

The word homoios ‘similar to, same as, used in comparisons, is essential for understanding the semantics of relativism as
well as absolutism in Homeric diction. See the anchor comment at I.05.441. \[GN 2016.07.06.\]

I.02.557–568

subject heading(s): Hesiod F 204.44–51

The narrative as presented here is significantly different from the corresponding narrative as presented in Hesiod F 204.44–51. \[GN 2016.06.30 via PH 73.\]

I.02.557–558

subject heading(s): Solon

Tradition has it that the Athenian statesman Solon once cited these verses in the context of a territorial dispute between the city-states of Athens and Megara. Such a tradition shows that myths were used as juridical evidence. Especially useful were myths mediated by prestigious forms of poetry like the Homeric *Iliad*. In earlier phases of Homeric poetry when this medium could still be described as a living oral tradition, any verses that would commonly be recognized as part of this poetry could thereby become acceptable as a form of proof in arguing a territorial claim. In later phases of Homeric poetry, however, when it was no longer a living oral tradition, antiquarians were prone to interpret verses once cited in territorial disputes as interpolations promoted by those whose political interests were served by tampering with the textual transmission of Homeric poetry. \[GN 2016.06.30 via PH 320 and HPC 355.\]

I.02.577

Q&T of part of the verse, via BA 26

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’

The *Iliad* entitlement of Achilles as the ‘best of the Achaeans’ is confronted here with a rival theme: Agamemnon too claims the title. \[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 26.\]

I.02.580

Q&T via BA 27

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’

This verse expands on the rivalry of Achilles and Agamemnon for the title of ‘best of the Achaeans’. \[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 27.\]

I.02.594–600

subject heading(s): Thamyris

This negative encounter between Thamyris and the Muses in the *Iliad* is to be contrasted with the positive encounter between Homer and the Delian Maidens in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*. \[GN 2016.06.30 via PH 376; see also PasP 178 on the reportage of Pausanias 9.30.2 on Thamyris; more on Thamyris in HC 3§41n.\]

I.02.637

subject heading(s): red. vs. purple color-coding

The ships of Odysseus here are described by way of the epithet *mitto-parèloí* ‘with cheeks of red’; at O.09.125, the same epithet describes generic ships. To be contrasted is another epithet for ships, *phoiniko-parèloí* ‘with cheeks of purple’, applied to generic ships at O.11.124 and O.23.271. Inventories of chariots in the Linear B tablets of Knossos show a parallel dichotomy of red and purple in descriptions of colors painted on chariots: the noun i-qi-ja ‘chariot’ is described as either *mito-we-sa = mittòwessa* ‘red’ as in Knossos tablet Sd 4407 or po-ni-ki-ja = *phoinikia* ‘purple’ as in Knossos tablet Sd 4402. \[GN 2016.06.30 via PasP 172n70.\]
I.02.653–670

subject heading(s): ktēsis-poetry

We see here the earliest attestation of a reference to ktēsis-poetry, which is a special form of poetry centering on the colonization of daughter-cities by mother-cities. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 140.]]

I.02.655–656

subject heading(s): phylē ‘subdivision’

The division of the island of Rhodes into three cities is comparable to the division of any given Dorian city into three phulai ‘subdivisions’. [[GN 2016.06.30 via GMP 285.]]

I.02.658

subject heading(s): biē ‘force, violence, strength’; kleos ‘glory’; biē Hērakléieī ‘force of Hēraklēs’

The name of Hēraklēs is linked with the epic theme of biē in the sense of martial ‘force, violence, strength’; even the name of Hēraklēs can be formulated periphrastically as ‘the force of Hēraklēs’. [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 318.]]

I.02.663

subject heading(s): ozos Arēos ‘attendant of Ares’

See anchor comment at I.12.188.

I.02.666

subject heading(s): biē ‘force, violence, strength’; kleos ‘glory’; biē Hērakléieī ‘force of Hēraklēs’

See the comment on I.02.658. [[GN 2016.09.25 via BA 318.]]

I.02.668

subject heading(s): phylē ‘subdivision’; kata-phuladon ‘by way of subdivision’

The tripartition of the whole island of Rhodes kata-phuladon ‘by way of subdivision’ is comparable to the traditional tripartition of many Dorian cities into three phulai ‘subdivisions’. In Dorian societies comprised of three phulai, kings are conventionally chosen from the second phylē. Similarly in Indic traditions, kings are conventionally chosen from the second vāra- or ‘subdivision’ of society. [[GN 2016.06.30 via GMP 285.]]

I.02.681–694

subject heading(s): homeland of Achilles

The first part of this micro-narrative, I.02.681–685, highlights various territories unified here under the leadership of Achilles, who sails in fifty ships with warriors originating from these territories, I.02.685. Relevant names of special interest here are: ‘Pelasgian’ Argos at I.02.681, Phthiē and Hellās at I.02.683, Myrmidones and Hēliēnes and Akhaidai at I.02.684. The second part of this micro-narrative, I.02.686–694, highlights the fact that the warriors who sailed on the fifty ships and were led by Achilles have lost their leader, since Achilles is now refusing to participate in the Trojan War. And a sub-part of this micro-narrative, I.02.689–694, retells the story about the anger of Achilles over the seizing of Briseis by Agamemnon. [[GN 2016.09.07.]]

I.02.689–694

subject heading(s): epic deeds of Achilles before the time dramatized in the Iliad; Achilles the Aeolian
The *Iliad* refers to a variety of epic deeds performed by Achilles, and the relative chronology of these deeds is in many cases situated before or after the time-frame of the *Iliad* as we know it. One category of deeds stands out: before he joins the other Achaean leaders at Troy, Achilles conquers various places that are culturally identifiable as Aeolian as a result of his conquest, and, in each case, he captures aristocratic women who are likewise Aeolian—but only as a result of their being captured by Achilles the Aeolian. For a definition of ‘Aeolian’, see the anchor comment at I.01.463. The significance of the Aeolian identification of Achilles—and, by extension, of the women he captured—is analyzed in the anchor comment that immediately follows, at I.02.689–694; also at I.09.128–131 / I.09.270–272 and at I.11.624–627. [[GN 2016.10.05.]]

**I.02.689–694**

**anchor comment on Aeolian women in the *Iliad*, part 1**

subject heading(s): Achilles the Aeolian; Briseis the Aeolian; conquest of Lymnesos by Achilles the Aeolian; Chryseis the Aeolian; conquest of Thēbē by Achilles the Aeolian; Andromache the Aeolian; songmaking of Sappho/Alcaeus

These verses at I.02.689–694 focus on Briseis, war-prize of Achilles. An aristocratic woman, she was taken captive by Achilles when he conquered the city of Lymnesos and killed her husband Mynes, who was defending that city, I.02.690–691. The story about the conquest of Lymnesos by Achilles and about his capturing of Briseis stemmed from poetic traditions that were distinctly Aeolian in origin. And this Aeolian origin has to do with a most basic fact about the principal hero of the *Iliad*: **Achilles himself was an Aeolian, and he originated from a poetic tradition that was Aeolian.** Achilles was an Aeolian not only in the limited sense that he was born and raised in Aeolian Thessaly, to the west of the Aegean Sea: much more than that, the poetic traditions about this hero’s conquests of territories to the east of the Aegean, across the sea from Thessaly, shaped his identity as a prime hero not only for the Thessalians in the European mainland but also for all Aeolians, including the Aeolic-speaking populations that inhabited the coastal mainland of northern Asia Minor and the outlying islands of Lesbos and Tenedos. As we will see in the course of further analysis, it was the myths about the conquests of Achilles in the East, including the regions of Troy and beyond, that shaped the ultimately Aeolian identity of the Aeolic-speaking populations that inhabited those eastern regions—which as I noted in the anchor comment at I.01.463 included the islands of Lesbos and Tenedos as well as the coastal mainland of most of northern Asia Minor. The conquests of Achilles in that whole area can be interpreted as a charter myth that aetiological a prehistoric or even non-historical “colonization” by Aeolians from Thessaly. (See Nagy 2011b:171–173.) It is in this light that we may view the hero’s conquest of Lymnesos, which was a city located in the region of Troy, south of Mount Ida. For more details about the location of Lymnesos, see the comment on I.20.089–102.

The conquest of Lymnesos by Achilles was part of the myths conveyed by Aeolian poetic traditions, and that is how the captive woman Briseis becomes part of that tradition. In other words, Briseis is figured as an Aeolian because she is appropriated by the Aeolian poetic tradition. Likewise, as we see at I.02.691 here, Achilles conquered not only the city of Lymnesos but also the city of Thēbē. This parallelism of Lymnesos and Thēbē is most significant, as we will now see. Thēbē was originally not an Aeolian city, and the non-Aeolian identity of Thēbē is accentuated by way of a detail: as we read at I.06.397 and at I.06.415, the inhabitants of Thēbē before its destruction by Achilles had been non-Greek *Kilikos* ‘Cilicians’. And there is a striking parallelism here between Thēbē and Lymnesos: the same non-Greek population had reportedly inhabited Lymnesos as well. We read in Strabo 13.1.7 C586 that the region of the *Kilikos* was evenly divided between the cities of Thēbē and Lymnesos. Nevertheless, as in the case of Lymnesos, the poetic tradition about the conquest of Thēbē by Achilles was Aeolian. And when Achilles conquered the city of Thēbē, as we see at I.01.366–369, he captured there an aristocratic woman named Chryseis. So, as in the case of Briseis, Chryseis too becomes an Aeolian by virtue of being appropriated by the Aeolian poetic tradition about the conquests of the Aeolian hero Achilles. In the case of Chryseis, she was allotted by the Achaean kingdom as his very own war-prize, I.01.369, while Briseis had been allotted to Achilles, I.01.392. (For background on the Aeolian poetic traditions about Briseis and Chryseis, I strongly recommend the work of Dué 2002 and 2006, listed in the Bibliography.) And now we come to a third aristocratic woman who is likewise identified by way of parallel Aeolian connections: she is Andromache, wife of Hector. Just as Achilles captured the women Chryseis and Briseis when he conquered the cities of Thēbē and Lymnesos respectively, so too Achilles would have captured Andromache at the same time—if she had not already married off to Hector, who had brought her as his bride to Troy before the Achaeanas ever even arrived at Troy. Andromache originated from the city of Thēbē, as we see at I.06.394–396, and we have already seen at I.01.366–369 that Thēbē was the place where Achilles captured Chryseis when he conquered that city. The father of Andromache, Étioin, was the king of the *Kilikos* who had inhabited the city of Thēbē, I.06.395–398, and he was killed by Achilles when that hero conquered this city, I.06.416–420. There is an important parallel noted by Strabo 13.1.7 C586 (also
13.1.61 C611–612): the husband of Briseis, Mynes, was evidently the king of the other Kilikes who had inhabited the city of Lynnessos; Strabo draws attention to this parallelism in the context of citing I.02.691 and I.19.295, both of which verses refer to the time when Achilles conquered Lynnessos and killed Mynes. In sum, all three of the women who are highlighted in these Iliadic contexts—Chryseis, Briseis, and Andromache—were appropriated by the Aeolian poetic traditions about the conquests of Achilles the Aeolian. And such Aeolian poetic traditions of songmaking are directly attested in Song 44 of Sappho about the wedding of Hector and Andromache. The songs attributed to Sappho as also to Alcaeus, both of whom are dated around 600 BCE, originate from the Aeolian island of Lesbos. There will be more to say about these traditions in the anchor comment at I.09.128–131 / 270–272 on: Aeolian women in the Iliad, part 2. See also anchor comment at I.09.128–131 and I.09.270–272 on: Aeolian women in the Iliad, part 2; and anchor comment at I.11.624–627 on: Aeolian women in the Iliad, part 3. [[GN 2016.06.30 via HPC 243]]

I.02.695–709

Q&T via H24H 14§13

subject heading(s): Protesilaos; potheinen ‘long for’; hero cult; cult hero

This micro-narrative tells how Protesilaos, who was the first Achaean to die in the Trojan War, was sorely missed by his people back home in his native land of Thessaly. At I.02.703 and I.02.709, it is said that the natives of this land ‘feel a longing’ for the hero after his death at Troy, and this ‘longing’ is expressed by way of the verb potheinen ‘long for, desire’. The wording here, it can be argued, shows an indirect reference to the worship of Protesilaos as a cult hero. [[GN 2016.06.30 via H24H 14§13–14; HPC 162]]

I.02.704

subject heading(s): ozos Arēs ‘attendant of Ares’

See anchor comment at I.12.188.

I.02.745

subject heading(s): ozos Arēs ‘attendant of Ares’

See anchor comment at I.12.188.

I.02.760–770

Q&T 760–761 and 769 via BA 27

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’; ring-composition

The Master Narrator addresses here a singular Muse: see the comment on I.02.761. The Muse is asked for an answer to the Iliadic question: who is the ‘best of the Achaeans’? The answer of the Muse is that Achilles is the best—and that Ajax is the second-best within the framework of the Iliad. The formulation of the Muse’s answer is an exquisite exercise in ring-composition. [[GN 2016.02.30 via BA 27; PasP 61–62 on I.02.761]]

I.02.761

subject heading(s): re-invocation of Muse(s); ennepein ‘narrate, tell’; singing as narrating

Unlike what we see at I.02.484 above, where the Muses are invoked as plural goddesses, the Muse here at I.02.761 is invoked as a singular goddess, as already at I.01.001. See the anchor comment below. [[GN 2016.10.22.]]
anchor comment on the singular Muse of the Iliad and Odyssey

Unlike what we see at I.02.484, I.11.218, I.14.508, I.16.112, where the Muses are invoked as plural goddesses, the Muse here at I.02.761 is invoked as a singular goddess. And the Muse is of course singular also at the beginning of the Iliad, I.01.001, and at the beginning of the Odyssey, O.01.001. There are also two other cases where a singular Muse is invoked:

A) In the First Song of Demodokos, O.08.73–82, which is featured as a proto-Iliad (see the comment at O.08.73–82), a singular Muse inspires the singer of tales at the beginning of his performance, at O.08.073. I think that the self-awareness here in invoking a singular Muse has to do with the singularity
of the subject at I.02.760–770, since the subject in this case is Achilles. The Muse is asked for an answer to the Iliadic question: who is the ‘best of the Achaeans’? The answer of the Muse is that Achilles is the best. He is the singularity of the *Iliad* as epic, just as Odysseus is the singularity of the *Odyssey* as epic. That is why, I propose, the singular Muse here is the goddess Calliope. She is the perfect singularity of a Muse for these notionally singular heroes of two singularly important epics. After all, Calliope is the Muse of Epic. I refer here to my relevant arguments in *Homer the Preclassic Epilegomena* §109 (p. 345) about Calliope as the Muse of kings (Hesiod *Theogony* 79–93). Similarly, as I argue there, Orpheus was once the singular poet of kings, but his status was degraded in the Athenian phase of Homeric reception. [[GN 2018.08.20 via Nagy 2018.08.16, HPC E§109.]]

_B) In the Third Song of Demodokos, O.08.499–533, when the singer of tales marks the beginning of his performance at O.08.499, the anonymous ‘divinity’ that he invokes at that point is a *theos*, in the singular. Short-term, this *theos* ‘divinity’ can be understood to be either Apollo or ‘the Muse’, as the disguised Odysseus himself remarks at O.08.488. Long-term, however, Apollo and the Muses are surrogates here for Zeus himself, who at O.13.025 is finally identified as the transcendent source of inspiration for the singing of Demodokos. The figuring of Zeus as such a transcendent source was traditionally considered to be a signature, as it were, of ‘Homer’ himself, as we read in the reference at Pindar *Nemean* 2.1–3 to the *Homēridai*, a guild of singers from Chios who claimed, as ‘descendants of Homer’, to be the legitimate transmitters of ‘Homer’ as their poetic ancestor. An example of such a reference is the wording at the very beginning of Pindar *Nemean* 2.1–3: δὲ ἐν περ καὶ Ὄμηριδαι | ἄκουσου τὰ πόλλα ὀνόματι | ἤχος ἐκ προοίμιου (starting) from the point where [hathen] the *Homēridai*, singers, most of the time *ta pola* begin [arkhesthai] their stitched-together words, from the prelude [prooimion] of Zeus …[[GN 2016.10.22 via HPC 103–109.]]

Homer’s medium is imagined here as writerly, not performative, but such historical inaccuracies do not bother me. After all, the artist imagines Homeric reception in terms of a reading public. More bothersome is the representation of writing here as vertically running down the scroll instead of across the scroll. “Calliope” (1869). Giuseppe Fagnani (1819–1873). Image via Wikimedia Commons.
The medium for the reading of Homer here is imagined as a codex, not as a scroll: compounding of anachronisms.

I.02.811–815

subject heading(s): kolônē ‘tumulus’; kolônos ‘tumulus’; language of immortals vs. language of mortals; polu-skarthmos ‘taking many leaps and bounds’

The word kolônē ‘tumulus’ here at I.02.811 refers to the place where, as we read further at I.02.814, the sêma ‘tomb of an otherworldly female named Murinê is located; she is pictured here as polu-skarthmos ‘taking many leaps and bounds’. We may compare the word kolônē ‘tumulus’ here to the word kolônos ‘tumulus’ referring to the tomb of Protesilaos in Philostratus On heroes 9.1, where this same tomb is also called a sêma at 9.3, and to the tomb of Achilles in On heroes 51.12, where that same tomb is also called a sêma at 53.11 (also at 51.2, 52.3). The naming of the location known as ‘the sêma of Murinê who takes many leaps and bounds’ is said at I.02.814 to originate from the language of the immortal gods, whereas the same location is said at I.02.813 to be called Bateia in the language of mortal men. On Murine as both cult hero and Amazon, see Nagy 2017.10.18, with reference to Pausanias 1.2.1. On the picturing of an Amazon in the act of leaping, see Nagy 2018.01.12, with reference to Pausanias 1.17.2. [[GN 2016.02.30 via HPC 166; H24H 14§§24–25.]]

I.02.829

subject heading(s): anthropogony; mantis ‘seer’

There is a wide variety of myths about anthropogony. According to one version, the first human was the first mantis ‘seer’. According to another version, the first human was generated from a tree. And such versions may overlap with one another. [[GN 2016.06.30 via GMP 198.]]

I.02.831–832

subject heading(s): anthropogony; mantis ‘seer’

I.02.835

subject heading(s): anthropogony; mantis ‘seer’
I.02.842

subject heading(s): ozos Arëos 'attendant of Ares'

See anchor comment at I.12.188.

I.02.867–869

subject heading(s): Ionian Dodecapolis; Samos; Chios; Miletus; Carians; barbarophônai 'speaking a barbarous language'

In Homeric poetry, both in the Iliad and Odyssey, there is a pattern of avoidance in making overt references to the twelve confederated states known as the Ionian Dodecapolis. In Herodotus 1.142.3, the locations of these states are listed as follows: Miletus, Myous, Priene, Ephesus, Colophon, Lebedos, Teos, Klazomenai, Phocaea, the island-states of Samos and of Chios, and, lastly, Erythrai. (See under Ionian Dodecapolis in the Inventory of terms and names.) Even in the two exceptional cases where Homeric poetry refers to any of these locations, what gets highlighted is merely the place, not the status of that place as a city-state or, when it comes to Chios and Samos, as an island-state. In one of these two exceptional cases, the mention of Chios at O.03.170 and at O.03.172 refers not to the famous island-state that Chios eventually became but simply to the island. In the other case, which we have here at I.02.868, the mention of Miletus refers not to the spectacularly famous polis or ‘city-state’ that Miletus eventually became but simply to the city—and this city is supposedly not even Greek as of yet. It is as if the Ionians had not yet settled Miletus: instead, Miletus at the time of the Trojan War is supposedly inhabited only by Carians, who do not even speak Greek: at I.02.867, these Carians who inhabit Miletus are described as barbaro-phônai 'speakers of a barbarous language'. [[GN 2016.02.30 via HPC 227.]]

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Iliad Rhapsody 3

2016.07.07 / enhanced 2018.08.16

The Master Narrator of the Homeric Iliad is looking here at Helen for the very first time—or, to say it more accurately, as if for the very first time. Just as Rhapsody 2 needed a new Catalogue of Ships—or, again to say it more accurately—a renewed Catalogue, so also Rhapsody 3 needs a new look at Helen. It seems as if the Trojan War is happening all over again, starting from the very beginning. The old grievances of Menelaos about the abduction of Helen by Paris can now be renewed and even relived, becoming fresh new grievances as the estranged husband and the new lover proceed to engage in mortal combat. But this one-on-one struggle over life and death will soon modulate into a renewal of all-out war between the Achaeans and the Trojans.
I.03.038

subject heading(s): language of praise/blame; neikein ‘quarrel with’; aiskhro- ‘disgraceful, shameful’; Hector; Paris=Alexandros

Hector quarrels with Paris, as signaled by the verb neikein ‘quarrel with’. He aims words of blame at Paris, and these words are aiskhra ‘disgraceful, shameful’ because they are meant to make Paris feel ashamed. Hector’s words are shaming, since he blames things done by Paris that are perceived as shameful and disgraceful. [[GN 2016.06.07 via BA 256.]]

I.03.059

subject heading(s): language of praise/blame; neikein ‘quarrel with’; aisa ‘portion; fate, destiny’; moira ‘portion; fate, destiny’; plot of the iliad

In situations of strife among heroes as warriors, there is contention over status. Quarreling happens, as indicated here by way of the verb neikein ‘quarrel with’. Positive things about each warrior need to be praised, but negative things need to be blamed. At stake for each contending warrior-hero is the honor that he is apportioned in the course of any contention, and the contention itself is expressed by way of negative and positive speech, that is, by way of blame and praise respectively. Such an apportioning of honor is the essence of a warrior-hero’s aisa, which is visualized not only as a portion of plundered goods that gets apportioned to each warrior after such goods are communally divided (as at I.18.327) but also, in general, as a warrior’s ‘fate, destiny’ (as at I.01.416, and so on). The same can be said about the word moira, which can mean not only a ‘portion’ of plundered goods (as at O.11.534) or even of sacrificial meat (as at O.03.066) but also, in general, ‘fate, destiny’ (as at I.06.488, and so on). What is at stake, in the long run, is the aisa or moira of each contending warrior-hero. And this aisa or moira, in the sense of a ‘portion’ that is being apportioned, becomes the warrior’s ‘fate’ or ‘destiny’ in the poetry that tells about him. To restate in colloquial English: aisa or moira becomes the “bone of contention” in the language of praise and blame. Here at I.03.059 as also at I.06.333, Paris actually accepts the words of blame directed at him by his quarreling brother. He says that these words fit his own aisa, admitting that Hector’s words of blame here are kat’ aisan ‘in accord with aisa’ (κατ’ αἰσαν) and not huper aisan ‘in disaccord with aisa’ (ὑπὲρ αἰσαν). We find in Homeric diction comparable combinations of moira, synonym of aisa, with the same adverbs/prepositions kata ‘in accord with’ and huper ‘in disaccord with’, as for example in the case of kata moiran at I.09.059 (κατὰ μοῖραν) and huper moiran at I.20.336 (ὑπὲρ μοῖραν). Further, when the actual words of praise or blame fit the aisa or moira of a given warrior-hero, they will fit not only his destiny but even the overall plot of the epic, as at I.16.707 in the case of aisa and at I.16.853 in the case of moira. The plot of epic has a
destiny of its own, and this overarching destiny integrates all the individual destinies of the heroes who populate the epic. [[IGN 2016.07.07 via BA 287]]

I.03.100

subject heading(s): eris ‘strife’; arkhē ‘beginning’; neikein ‘quarrel with’; ainein ‘praise’; language of praise/blame; Paris=Alexandros; abduction of Helen

The Trojan War is eris ‘strife’. See also eris ‘strife’ at Pindar Paeans 6.50–53. That is how this war is seen in the words of Menelaos the Achaean, who claims a juridical grievance on the part of the Achaeans against the Trojans. In terms of the thinking revealed by these words, the beginning of the strife was the abduction of Helen, wife of Menelaos the Achaean, by Paris the Trojan. The Persian idea that this juridical grievance of Menelaos was an affair of state is the reference to Paris here by way of his princely name, Alexandros. In royal Hittite correspondences where the Hittite king speaks to and about the king of Ahhiyawa—which is the Hittite way of referring to the land of the Achaeans—we find occasional references to a princely figure by the name of Alaksandu, which is the Hittite pronunciation of Alexandros (Nagy 2015.07.22§25). By contrast, the name Paris is on the surface merely a shepherd’s name (on the symbolism, however, of the shepherd as a king-in-the-making, see Nagy 2009:309). In any case, the eris or ‘strife’ between the Achaeans and the Trojans was caused by ‘my strife’— according to Menelaos the Achaean. To say it more precisely in his words, the Trojan War was ‘because of my strife’ (ἐνεκ’ ἐμῆς ἐρήμων). Correspondingly, the arkhē or ‘beginning’ of the strife as begun by Paris=Alexandros was ‘his beginning’ of that strife. To say it again more precisely in the words of Menelaos, the beginning of the Trojan War was ‘because of the beginning on the part of Paris=Alexandros’ (Ἀλεξάνδρου ἐνεκ’ ἐρήμων). Here it is important to compare what was narrated in the Cypria, which as an epic belongs to a set of epics known as the epic Cycle. On the epic Cycle, see the Inventory of terms and names. In the Cypria of the epic Cycle as also in the Iliad, the Trojan War is likewise seen as eris ‘strife’. As we read in the plot-summary of the Cypria in Proclus 102.13–19 (ed. Allen 1912), it all began at a feast celebrating the marriage of Thetis and Peleus—a marriage that led to the conception of Achilles himself. It was the Will of Zeus that Eris ‘Strife’ personified would bring about a neikos ‘quarrel’ among the gods that would ultimately result in the Trojan War (Proclus 102.14/15 on Eris/neikos). As we see further in the plot-summary of the Cypria, Proclus 102.14–19, the Eris/neikos extends to the figure of Paris, who has to choose from among Hēra, Athena, and Aphrodite, Cypria/Proclus 102.14–19. This Judgment of Paris is recapitulated at I.24.025–030: the fact that Paris chose Aphrodite means that he aimed negative words at Hēra and Athena, as expressed by the verb neikein ‘quarrel with’ at I.24.029 (ἐνεκ’ ἐμῆς), while he aimed positive words at Aphrodite, as expressed by the verb ainein ‘praise’ at I.24.030 (ἡμῶν). These verbs ainein ‘praise’ and neikein ‘quarrel with’ express both the social and the poetic significance of praise and blame respectively. [[IGN 2016.07.07 via BA 219 and GMP 16]]

I.03.125–128

Q&T via MoM 2§79

subject heading(s): pattern-weaving; diplax ‘pattern-woven fabric that folds in two’; porphureē ‘purple’; marmareē ‘gleaming’; huphaiēnein ‘weave’; aethiōs (ἀθής) ‘ordeal’

Helen is seen here at I.03.125–128 for the first time in the Iliad. She is shown in the act of pattern-weaving. Instead of singing while weaving, she weaves her song into the web that she pattern-weaves. See also the comment on I.22.440–441, where comparable wording shows Andromache weaving a web of her own. In the case of Helen at I.03.125–128 here, the song that she weaves into her web is about the aethlai (ἀθλοὶ) ‘ordeal’ of war suffered by Trojans and Achaeans alike—a war they suffered all because of her. The song of the Trojan War is the song of the Iliad—and it is Helen’s song. Purple is the dominant color of Helen’s web, matching the blood of war that stains her song. There also exists, however, a variant epithet for the web that Helen weaves at I.03.126: this diplax ‘pattern-woven fabric that folds in two’ is described in some medieval manuscript versions as porphureē ‘purple’ but in others as marmareē ‘gleaming’. For more on this variant marmareē ‘gleaming’, see the comment on I.22.440-441 on the web of Andromache. [[IGN 2016.07.07 via MoM 2§79–82; on pattern-weaving, see also HPC 276; on aethiōs (ἀθής) as the ‘ordeal’ of war, see also PH 132, 154]]

I.03.126

subject heading(s): en-passein ‘sprinkle’ (by way of pattern-weaving)
This word *en-passein‘sprinkle’ conveys a metaphor for the process of pattern-weaving. See further at I.22.441. [[GN 2016.12.23 via HPC 275.]]

I.03.147

subject heading(s): ozos Arēos ‘attendant of Ares’

See anchor comment at I.12.188.

I.03.164

subject heading(s): *aitios ‘responsible’; Will of Zeus; abduction of Helen

By referring to the will of the gods in general instead of the Will of Zeus in particular, Priam avoids saying directly that the abduction of Helen is part of the overarching plot of the Homeric *Iliad*. [[GN 2016.07.07 via PH 238.]]

I.03.237

subject heading(s): Kastor and Poludeukēs

Kastor and Poludeukēs, latinized as Castor and Pollux, are the Divine Twins, sons of Zeus. Another name for them is Dioskouroi ‘sons of Zeus’. Kastor and Poludeukēs are also mentioned at O.11.300. The wording of I.03.237 and of O.11.300 is cognate with the wording we find a fragment of Stesichorus: see PH 458. On the etymology of *Poludeukēs*, I epitomize from PasP 51. The noun *Poludeukēs* as a name is straightforwardly related to the adjective *poludeukēs*, in that the recessive accent of the name is typical of the naming function, as we see from such morphologically related formations as *Poluneikēs ‘having many quarrels [stem neikos]’ or ‘having quarrels in many different ways’ (or ‘many times’)*. In the mythological functions of the divine figure *Poludeukēs*, the idea of continuity, conveyed by the root *tēuk-,* seems as evident as that of variety, since the Divine Twins are models of consistency, perseverance, reliability (as in Homeric *Hymn* 33). In an astrological sense, we could say that *Poludeukēs*, in the role of Morning Star, is ‘repeating many times’, the symbol of many happy returns. On the Divine Twins as alternating Morning Star / Evening Star, I offer an analysis in GMP 258–259. And the repetition can be visualized as a cyclical one—a pattern of eternal return. There is a striking semantic and morphological parallel in *poluderkēs ‘seeing in many different ways’ (or ‘many times’)*, epithet of the dawn-goddess Éos in Hesiod (*Theogony* 451). [[GN 2017.06.08.]]

I.03.242

subject heading(s): *aikhos* (plural *aikhēa*) ‘disgrace, shame’; *oneidos* (plural *oneidea*) ‘words of insult’

The noun *aikhos ‘disgrace, shame’ is used here as a synonym of the noun *oneidos ‘words of insult’*. [[GN 2016.07.07 via BA 255.]]

I.03.284

subject heading(s): xanthos/xanthē ‘golden’ (with reference to hair); epithet; immortalization; Achilles; Menelaos

The epithet *xanthos ‘golden’ (with reference to hair)* is a stylized signal of a mystical immortalization after death for mortal heroes in Homeric poetry. In the case of Menelaos, his immortalization is prophesied at O.04.561–569. [[GN 2016.07.07 via BA 210.]]

I.03.374

anchor comment on *Dios thugatēr / thugatēr Dios ‘daughter of Zeus’*

subject heading(s): *Dios thugatēr / thugatēr Dios ‘daughter of Zeus’*

The epithet *Dios thugatēr / thugatēr Dios ‘daughter of Zeus’*, applied here to Aphrodite, can signal the beneficence of such goddesses toward privileged heroes like, in this case, Paris=Aleksandros. In general, this epithet is applied to the following
The Trojan War is being fought here as if for the very first time. There is a sense of novelty at first in contemplating all the violent woundings and deaths yet to follow. Of special interest is all the beautiful detail lavished on the wounding of Menelaos: it is as if his bleeding wound here could be pictured as the original trauma of the Trojan War. [[GN 2016.07.21.]]
425. The division of meat on the occasion of a *dais* necessarily concerns immortals as well as mortals, and the epithet ἰσή 'equitable' referring to the *dais* or 'division of portions' here concerns primarily the god Zeus himself. It looks as if the word *dais* can evoke a primordial time when immortals and mortals once actually feasted together at one table, as it were. [[GN 2016.07.21 via BA 218.]]

I.04.110

subject heading(s): *ar-ar-iskein* ‘fit together, join together’; *tekton* ‘carpenter, joiner’; collocation

The collocation ἐκεῖνον ἑκατέρον *the joiner joined together* is relevant to the etymologies of both the verb and the noun here, which are respectively *ar-ar-iskein* ‘fit together, join together’ and *tekton* ‘carpenter, joiner’. Although the Indo-European verb-root from which *tekton* is derived, *tek(s)-*, is no longer attested in Greek, it does in fact survive in Latin as texō, which can refer to the craft of woodworking, not only the craft of weaving. Correspondingly, although there is no Greek attestation of an abstract noun *ar-ti- derived from the verb-root of *ar-ar-iskein*, such a noun does in fact survive in Latin as ars, artis ‘craft’. [[GN 2016.07.21 via BA 300.]]

I.04.118–121

subject heading(s): *eukheštai* ‘pray’

Epitome from Nagy 2015§85. When the hero Pandaros makes his announcement-in-prayer, as expressed by the verb *eukheštai*, I.04.119, he says that he will perform an animal sacrifice, I.04.120, in hopes that Apollo, the god to whom he is praying, will grant him what he is wishing for, which is a safe homecoming, I.04.121. But the wish—and therefore the prayer—is a failure, since Pandaros will soon be killed on the battlefield, I.05.290–296. To paraphrase in cognate Latin terms: the vōtum as an ‘announcement-in-prayer’ is a failure here because the same vōtum as a ‘wish-in-prayer’ is not fulfilled: the hero Pandaros will never return home safe and sound. [[GN 2017.04.06.]]

I.04.128

subject heading(s): *Dios thugatēr* / *thugatēr Dios* ‘daughter of Zeus’

The epithet *Dios thugatēr* / *thugatēr Dios* ‘daughter of Zeus’, applied here to Athena, can signal the beneficence of such goddesses toward privileged heroes like, in this case, Menelaos. [[GN 2016.07.21 via BA 205 and GMP 128.]]

I.04.178–179

Q&T via GMP 299

subject heading(s): syntax of expressing wishes

The syntax here conveys a wish for a general situation based on a specific situation. [[GN 2016.07.21 via GMP 299.]]

I.04.183

subject heading(s): *xanthes/xanthē* ‘golden’ (with reference to hair); epithet; immortalization; Achilles; Menelaos

The epithet applied to the hair of Menelaos, *xanthes/xanthē* ‘golden’, is a marker of the hero’s future immortalization. [[GN 2016.07.20 via BA 210.]]

I.04.196

subject heading(s): elliptic plural

The plural *toxa* here and at I.04.206 is elliptic: whereas singular *toxon* as at I.04.124 means ‘bow’, plural *toxa* as at I.04.196 and I.04.206 means not ‘bow+bow+bow+bow…’ but rather, elliptically, ‘bow+arrow+arrow+arrow+…’. In other words, *toxa* means ‘bow and arrows’. [[GN 2016.07.21 via PH 177 and HTL 158.]]

I.04.197
subject heading(s): penthos ‘grief’; akhos ‘grief’; synonym

What is penthos ‘grief’ for the Achaeans becomes a kleos ‘glory’ for the Trojans. We see here a clear example of penthos ‘grief’ as a synonym of akhos ‘grief’ in Homeric diction. In the present context, the underlying sense of pain conveyed by penthos ‘grief’ is not only new, but it is also collective, since the pain of Menelaus is a pain felt by all the Achaean, who now find themselves on the losing side of the battle because they have lost Menelaus as leader—at least, they have lost him for the moment. The healing of the pain will be up to the warrior-physician Makhaon, son of the ultimate physician Asklepios. [[GN 2016.07.21 via BA 94.]]

I.04.227

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; Eurymedon; Sthenelos; Patroklōs; chariot driver/killer; “taking the hit”

This is the first Iliadic occurrence of the noun therapōn in the singular; at I.01.321, this noun occurs in the dual; at I.02.110, it occurs in the plural. Besides the surface meaning, ‘attendant’, we can see here some traces of the deeper meaning, ‘ritual substitute’. In Iliadic battle scenes, a chariot driver sometimes “takes the hit,” as it were, for the chariot fighter who ordinarily rides with him on the platform of the war chariot. In “taking the hit,” the chariot driver could die for the chariot fighter, and, in this role, the chariot driver is sometimes described as a therapōn of the chariot fighter. Thus the chariot driver becomes the ‘ritual substitute’ as well as ‘attendant’ of the chariot fighter. Also relevant is the word hēnī-okhos ‘chariot driver’, the first occurrence of which in the Iliad is at I.05.231. See Nagy 2015.05.01, 2015.05.08, 2015.05.15, 2015.05.20. Such is the relationship between Achilles as chariot fighter and Patroklōs as his premier chariot driver and therapōn in the dual sense of ‘ritual substitute’ and ‘attendant’: see H24H 6§§24–42. In the present context, we see that the hero Eurymedon, named at I.04.228, is described at I.04.227 as the therapōn of Agamemnon. Eurymedon is at this moment taking care of the horse team and chariot of Agamemnon while the king leaves him behind and goes off ‘on foot’, pezos, at I.04.231, in order to harangue the troops. Evidently, Eurymedon is pictured here as the chariot driver of Agamemnon, who is of course the chariot fighter and who has just stepped off his chariot. Potentially, then, Eurymedon as therapōn of Agamemnon is also his ritual substitute. The name Eurymedon recurs at I.08.114, where he is paired with Sthenelos, the chariot driver of Diomedes: the two of them are seen in the act of taking the disabled chariot and horse team of Nestor back to a zone of safety, I.08.116–117. In the act of taking care of Nestor’s horse team, both Sthenelos and Eurymedon are described at I.08.113—and already at I.08.109—as therapontē, which is of course therapōn in the dual. Evidently, Eurymedon is visualized as the therapōn ‘attendant’ of Nestor already at I.08.113, and the context there shows that he is also the designated chariot driver of Nestor: see the comment on I.08.076–117. Later on, at I.11.620, Eurymedon is explicitly called the therapōn of Nestor, functioning as the ‘attendant’ of the old hero: at this moment, Eurymedon is taking care of the horse team of Patroklōs, who has just driven his chariot to the headquarters of Nestor as the old hero’s guest, I.11.618–622. [[GN 2016.07.21 via BA 292 and H24H 6§§24–42, Nagy 2015.05.01, 2015.05.08, 2015.05.15, 2015.05.20.]]

I.04.241

subject heading(s): neikein ‘quarrel with’; language of praise/blame

The verb neikein ‘quarrel with’ here again marks the language of blame as opposed to the language of praise. [[GN 2016.07.21 via BA 258.]]

I.04.242

subject heading(s): elenchos ‘disgrace’; language of praise/blame

The objects of blame here are those who hesitate in battle, described as elenkhēa, plural of the adjective elenkhē ‘disgraceful’, which is a derivative of the noun elenchos ‘disgrace’, on which see also I.02.235. [[GN 2016.07.21 via BA 258.]]

I.04.313–314

Q&T via GMP 301
subject heading(s): wishes correlated with premises

The expression of admiration here is amplified by way of a wish. And the admiration is the premise for the wish. For more on this kind of correlation of wishes and premises, see the comment on I.18.464–466. I now offer a working translation of I.04.313–314: ‘Aged sir, if only it could be that, just as surely as the spirit [thûmos] within your chest is steadfast, | so also your knees would keep up with the pace, and that your force [bîe] would be steadfast [empedos] as well (ὁ γέρον, εἰδ’, ὡς θυμός εἰναί στήθεσιν φιλοι, ὁς τοὺς γονάτ’ ἐποιητ’, βή δὲ τοι ἐμπεδός εἰη). [[GN 2016.07.21 via GMP 301.]]

I.04.327–328

subject heading(s): Menestheus

Menestheus, as the leader of the Athenians who came to fight at Troy, is stationed here next to Odysseus and Agamemnon. On the significance of such proximity, see the comment on I.12.331–337. [[GN 2016.07.21 via HPC 161.]]

I.04.368–410

Q&T I.04.404–410

subject heading(s): neikein ‘quarrel with’; language of praise/blame

Agamemnon starts quarreling with Diomedes, as signaled by neikein ‘quarrel with’ at I.04.368. The over-king’s language of blame here is meant to diminish the epic reputation of Diomedes and his chariot-driver Sthenelos, who were prominent heroes in the Theban Wars epic tradition of the past before they became heroes also in the Trojan Wars epic tradition of the present. Diomedes and Sthenelos were main characters in the epic tradition known as the Sons of the Seven against Thebes, or Epigoni, while their fathers Tydeus and Kapanes were the main characters in the earlier epic tradition known as the Seven against Thebes. In terms of the blame directed at Diomedes and Sthenelos by Agamemnon, the fathers must have been better than the sons. But the rejoinder of Sthenelos at I.04.404–410 make an opposite claim: the sons were really better than the fathers, since they succeeded in capturing Thebes, whereas the fathers failed. These epic themes are comparable to the Hesiodic reference at Works and Days 156–173 to both the Theban and the Trojan Wars: here too, the burning question is whether a given generation of heroes in the present is superior or inferior to the immediately preceding generation of heroes in the past. [[GN 2016.07.21 via BA 161–163.]]

I.04.386

subject heading(s): bîe ‘force, violence, strength’; kleos ‘glory’; bîe Hêrákliêeiêiê ‘force of Hêráklês’; bîe Eteokléieiêiê ‘force of Eteoklês’

The periphrasis of the name Eteokléios here as bîe Eteokléieiêiê is comparable to the periphrasis of the name Hêrákliêeiê as bîe Hêrákliêeiê. See the comment on I.02.658. The element kleos in these names of Hêráklês and Eteoklês signals an epic theme, so that the names Hêrákliêeiê and Eteokléieiêiê are simultaneously treated as the epics belonging to Hêráklês and Eteoklês. [[GN 2016.07.21 via BA 319.]]

I.04.389

subject heading(s): nikê ‘victory’

This verse indicates that the goddess Athena can be responsible for the nikê ‘victory’ of a hero in an athletic event, not only in events of warfare. In most Homeric situations, however, it is Zeus who is primarily responsible for heroic victory. [[GN 2016.07.21 via HC 4§109, with a survey of all Homeric situations where either Zeus or Athena awards nikê ‘victory’.]]

I.04.513

subject heading(s): kholos ‘anger’; [Meleagros]

The idea of mulling one’s kholos ‘anger’, where a more literal translation of pessein would be ‘cooking’ or ‘digesting’ the
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The momentum of the war is spirited, and the fighting mood of the warriors verges on overreaching. An outstanding example is Diomedes, who already owns a glorious past as a conquering hero in the epic tradition known as the Sons of the Seven against Thebes or Epigoni. Now in the epic present of the Iliad he has a chance to outdo himself, performing deeds so glorious that they would outshine perhaps even the deeds of Achilles, who is now out of the picture. The successes of Diomedes reach the point where he is capable of feats that are superhuman, as when he lifts a rock that even two humans today could not budge—or as when he wounds the god of war himself, Ares, and then, shortly thereafter, the goddess of love and sexuality, Aphrodite. But such momentum is not to last, and the antagonism of Diomedes toward divinities will have its consequences. [[GN 2016.07.28]]
I.05.048

subject heading(s): therapón ‘attendant, ritual substitute’

In this context, plural therapontes indicates the ‘attendants’ of the king Idomeneus. [[GN 2016.08.04.]]

I.05.059–064

subject heading(s): abduction of Helen; Paris=Alexandros

This micro-narrative about Phereklos, a master carpenter who built that ships sailed by Paris=Alexandros for the abduction of Helen, concerns epic events that precede the narrative arc of the Iliad as we have it—but these events are here explained as the real beginning of that same narrative arc. In terms of this micro-narrative, the plot of the Iliad—in the sense that the name Iliad means ‘the story of Ilion [Troy]’—was started or even caused not by the mēnis ‘anger’ of Achilles, as our Iliad says at the beginning, but rather by an event that preceded that anger. According to this micro-narrative, what really started the Trojan War was the abduction of Helen, which was the kakon ‘bad thing’ that caused all the subsequent bad things, as we read here at I.05.063. And, as predicted at I.05.064, this same event caused the ‘bad thing’ that is about to happen to Phereklos himself. All these events, taken together, thus become part of the overarching plot of the Iliad as we have it. [[GN 2016.07.28 via BA 299, PH 307.]]

I.05.059–061

subject heading(s): ar-ar-iskein ‘fit together, join together’; tēktōn ‘carpenter, joiner’; collocation; tektainein ‘build-as-a-carpenter’

The collocation of tēktōnos huion (τέκτονος ιού) ‘son of the joiner [tēktōn]’ at I.05.059 with Harmonideo (Ἀρμονίδεο) ‘son of Harmōn’ at I.05.059 indicates three generations of ‘joiners’, in that Phereklos is a son of a joiner who is in turn a son of a joiner. The grandfather Harmōn has a name that can be reconstructed as a noun ‘ar-s-mōn, derived from the verb ar-ar-iskein ‘fit together, join together’. And the grandson Phereklos is said at I.05.061 to have ‘built-as-a-carpenter’, tektainesthai (τεκταινεσθαι), the ships sailed by Paris=Alexandros for the abduction of Helen. This verb tektainein is derived from the noun tēktōn ‘carpenter, joiner’, which is in turn derived from the verb-root tek(s)·. No longer attested in Greek, this verb-root tek(s)· survives in Latin as tepox, which can refer to the craft of woodworking, not only the craft of weaving. On verbal art as woodwork, see HC 2§282n. [[GN 2016.07.28 via BA 299.]]

I.05.063

subject heading(s): arke-kakoi ‘beginning the evil’

The epithet arke-kakoi ‘beginning the evil’ at I.05.063 describes the ships in the previous verse, at I.05.062. These ships, as we have seen, were sailed by Paris=Alexandros for the abduction of Helen. The ominous tone of the epithet, and its positioning in the verse immediately following the mention of the ships, is comparable to the ominous tone of the epithet oulōmenē ‘accursed’ at I.01.02 in the verse immediately following the mention of the mēnis ‘anger’ of Achilles in the previous verse, at I.01.01, which is the beginning of the Iliad. Even the meaning of the epithet arke-kakoi ‘beginning the evil’ at I.05.063 indicates in its own right the beginning of an epic, though of course this beginning does not correspond to the beginning of the Iliad as we have it. Another point of comparison is the epithet dourateos ‘wooden’ at O.08.493, which is a verse that immediately follows the mention of the hippos ‘horse’ in the previous verse, at O.08.492. Here again we see an ominous mention: this wooden horse, the Trojan Horse, is the marker of yet another potential beginning of an epic narration. [[GN 2016.07.28 via HC 2§283n.]]

I.05.077–078

subject heading(s): ārētēr ‘priest’; ārāsthai ‘pray’; tīein ‘honor, give honor to’; tīmē ‘honor’; dēmos ‘community, district’; hero cult; cult hero
I.05.077–078

anchor comment on the expression ‘(and) he was honored θείον as a god [theos] in the district [dēmos]’ θεός [θ] ως τίτο δήμῳ

subject heading(s): hero cult; cult hero; the expression ‘(and) he was honored θείον as a god [theos] in the district [dēmos]’ θεός [θ] ως τίτο δήμῳ

Wherever priests (as here at I.05.077–078 and at I.16.604–605) or kings (as in other Homeric contexts: I.10.032–033, I.13.217–218) are said to receive honor as conveyed by the verb τίειν ‘honor, give honor to’ (or by the noun τίμη ‘honor’ and the verb τίμαν ‘honor, give honor to’, as at I.12.310), Homeric diction is thereby referring indirectly to the receiving of hero cult by a cult hero; such reception happens in the localized context of the dēmos ‘community, district’. The cult of heroes is parallel to, though in some ways different from, the cult of gods, but the cult of gods is likewise conveyed by the verb τίειν ‘honor, give honor to’ or by the noun τίμη ‘honor’ and the verb τίμαν ‘honor, give honor to’. [GN 2016.07.28 via BA 149, GMP 132–133; see also Nagy 2012:67–68.]

I.05.083

subject heading(s): Moira krataiā ‘fate, whose power has the upper hand’

This verse-final adjective krataiā can be explained as a morphologically leveled replacement of an older feminine form, to be reconstructed as *kratai-ui-ā* and meaning ‘whose power [ul-] has the upper-hand [kratos]’. The morphological leveling involves a replacement of the alternation *-ā/-u-ā* by way of non-alternating *-ā*; [GN 2016.08.25 via comment on I.09.002.]

I.05.103

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’; aristeīa ‘epic high point’; plot of the iliad; narrative arc

This verse shows that the hero Diomedes has a chance to qualify as the ‘best of the Achaeans’, aristos Akhaiōn. In the long run, however, in line with the plot or narrative arc of the iliad as we have it, Diomedes fails to qualify. Still, his greatest epic moments in the Homeric iliad are traditionally known as his aristeiā (as in the scholia for I.06.448), which I translate here as ‘epic high point’. [GN 2016.07.28 via BA 30.]

I.05.173

subject heading(s): eukhesthai ‘declare’

Here the verb eukhesthai ‘declare’ expresses a hero’s superiority not overall but only in a one given area of heroic endeavor, archery. [GN 2016.07.28 via BA 45.]

I.05.231

subject heading(s): hēni-okhos ‘chariot driver’

This is the first occurrence of the noun hēni-okhos ‘chariot driver’ in the iliad. Literally, the word means ‘he who holds the reins’. [GN 2016.08.04.]

I.05.263–273

subject heading(s): Dardanidai; four-horse chariot

The genealogy of the Trojan Dardanidai is appropriated here into the genealogy of Athenian kings, and the references to a four-horse chariot team at I.05.271 is an Athenian signature. In the present action, however, at I.05.272–273, the four-horse team is reduced to a two-horse team, which is the canonical number for chariot teams in the iliad. [GN 2016.07.28 via HPC 210.]

I.05.269
lemmatizing: ἰδάς ἱπποὺς

In the combination ἰδάς ἱπποὺς, the first-declension accusative plural in -as, positioned before a vowel, is scanned here as a short rather than long syllable. The attestation of such a form -as reflects not dialectal variation but formulaic simplification: an earlier complementary distribution of prevocalic -άς (which becomes -áς) and preconsonantal -á̱ς is simplified, resulting in occasional instances of prevocalic -ás. [[GN 2016.07.28 via GMP 62]]

I.05.296

subject heading(s): menos ‘mental power’; psúkhē ‘spirit’; luein ‘release’; release of consciousness from the body

At the moment of his death here, the hero’s menos ‘mental power’ is released from his body, and this moment of release is expressed metaphorically by way of the verb luein ‘release’. Just as a horse is released from being harnessed to the chariot that it draws, as at I.05.369, so too the menos is released from the body. On metaphor, see the Inventory of terms and names. In the present context, the noun psúkhē ‘spirit’ is used as a synonym of menos. [[GN 2016.07.28 via GMP 88]]

I.05.312

subject heading(s): Dios thugatēr / thugatēr Dios ‘daughter of Zeus’

The epithet Dios thugatēr / thugatēr Dios ‘daughter of Zeus’, applied here to Aphrodite, can signal the beneficence of such goddesses toward privileged heroes like, in this case, Aeneas. [[GN 2016.07.28 via BA 205, GMP 251]]

I.05.369

subject heading(s): luein ‘release’; menos ‘mental power’; psúkhē ‘spirit’; luein ‘release’; release of consciousness from the body

I.05.370–371

subject heading(s): [Dios thugatēr / thugatēr Dios ‘daughter of Zeus’;] Diōnē

The function of Aphrodite as Dios thugatēr / thugatēr Dios ‘daughter of Zeus’, as at I.03.374, is reinforced here at I.05.370–371 by the designation of this same goddess as the daughter of Diōnē, which is a feminized version of the name Zeus: [[GN 2016.07.28 via GMP 258]]

I.05.395–404

subject heading(s): Hēraklēs; Hādēs; Gates of Hādēs; Gates of the Sun; Pylos; entrance to the underworld

The wounding of the god Hādēs here with an arrow shot by Hēraklēs is associated with the place-name Pylos, Pylōs, which is figured at I.05.397 here as a ‘gateway’ of the sun as it passes at sunset into the underworld. The name of Pylos as a place that can serve as a setting for ritual can stand for the name of a mythical place that is associated with the given ritual. Such a mythical place is the ‘Gates of the Sun’. By implication, the setting sun passes through the same gates as do the psúkhai ‘spirits’ of the dead who are entering the underworld. [[GN 2016.07.28 via GMP 225–226]]

I.05.401

subject heading(s): Paíēn;

In this context, Paíēn (from Paíawōn) is still distinct from rather than identical to Apollo. [[GN 2016.07.28 via HPC 290n61]]

I.05.406–415

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’; Diomedes; aristeiā or ‘epic high point’; wife of Diomedes; Aphrodite; plot of the Iliad; narrative arc
Although Diomedes is recognized as arístos Ἀκθαῖὸν ‘best of the Achaians’ here at I.05.416, in the present moment of his aristeía or ‘epic high point’, this hero’s epic momentum is about to peak, and his martial superiority will soon recede. Further, the present verses at I.05.406–415 imply that something sinister will happen to Diomedes after he comes back home from the Trojan War. His wounding of Aphrodite, goddess of sexuality and love, will have its consequences. As we read in the scholia for I.05.412, there is a myth that tells how Aphrodite punished Diomedes: the goddess induced his wife, Aigialeia, to cheat on him back home by taking many lovers. [[GN 2016.07.28 via BA 31 on Diomedes as arístos Ἀκθαῖὸν ‘best of the Achaians’ here at I.05.416.]]

I.05.430

subject heading(s): thoós ‘running, swift’; Ares

The adjective thoós ‘running, swift’ is derived from the verb thein ‘run’. The god Ares is traditionally pictured as thoós ‘running, swift’; by implication, he is as swift as a violent wind. [[GN 2016.07.28 via BA 327.]]

I.05.432–444

subject heading(s): antagonism between immortal and mortal

Apollo is engaged here with Diomedes in a deadly form of antagonism between immortal and mortal [[GN 2016.07.28 via BA 143.]]


I.05.438

subject heading(s): ‘equal to a superhuman force [daemon]; antagonism between immortal and mortal; ‘equal to Ares’

Diomedes is daímoni ísos ‘equal to a superhuman force [daemon]’ when this hero dares to attack the god Apollo. Ultimately, he backs off. The use of this expression daímoni ísos ‘equal to a superhuman force [daemon]’ here at I.05.438, and also again at I.05.459, goes to the core of the central idea of ritualized antagonism between immortal and mortal. [[GN 2016.07.28 via BA 30–31.]]

I.05.440–442

Q&T via MoM 2§31

subject heading(s): simile; hoio- ‘such as’; enalíŋkio- ‘looking like’; ísos- ‘equal to’; atalanto- ‘equal to’; ‘equal to a superhuman force [daemon]’; antagonism between immortal and mortal; ‘equal to Ares’

These verses show the fatally serious difficulties encountered in differentiating between mortals and immortals, in the context of similes comparing mortals to immortals by way of words like hoio ‘such as’ and enalíŋkio ‘looking like’; of special relevance are these two words: ísos ‘equal to’ and atalanto ‘equal to’. The idea of being ísos ‘equal to’ a divinity, as
expressed already at I.05.338, is made parallel here at I.05.440–442 with the idea of thinking ‘in ways that are equal’, ἵσα, to divine ways of thinking, as expressed at I.05.441. These ideas are part of the larger idea, centering on a basic pattern of antagonism between immortal and mortal. [[GN 2016.07.28 via MoM 2§31.]]

I.05.441–442

subject heading(s): phūlon ‘grouping’; phūlē ‘subdivision’

The word phūlon marks a given group as distinct from another group. In this case, the grouping of mortals is marked as distinct from the grouping of immortals as superhumans. Comparable is the word phūlē, which I have translated as ‘subdivision’ in the contexts of I.02.655–656 and I.02.668. [[GN 2016.07.28 via GMP 290.]]

I.05.441

anchor comment on homoio- ‘similar to, same as’

subject heading(s): homoio- ‘similar to, same as’; metaphor; simile; antagonism between immortal and mortal

As the god Apollo says at I.05.441–442, the immortals as a ‘grouping’, phūlon, are different from mortals as a ‘grouping’, phūlon. So, he goes on to say, immortals and mortals are not the same. In the Greek, the ‘grouping’ of immortals and mortals is not homoio-, I.05.441. In terms of this negative context, then, the meaning of homoio- can be interpreted to be ‘the same as’. Meanwhile, the meaning of this same word homoio- in non-negative contexts can be interpreted to be ‘similar to’. In non-negative or let us say positive contexts, homoio- exemplifies the making of comparisons in the form of metaphors and similes.

In the case of metaphors, Aristotle himself actually uses the word homoio- in his own definition of metaphor, Poetics 1459a5–8:

πολὺ δὲ μέγιστον τὸ μεταφορικόν εἶναι. μόνον γὰρ τοῦτο οὔτε παρ’ ἄλλου ἔστι λαβεῖν εὐφυίας τε ὁμοιών ἔστι: τὸ γὰρ εὖ μεταφέρειν τὸ τὸ ὁμοῖον θεωρεῖν ἐστίν

But the greatest use of words is the use of metaphor ἰὸ metaφορίκον ‘that which is transferable’.

This is the only thing that cannot be learned from someone else; and it is also a sign [sēmeion] of a-good-quality-that-is-inborn [euphuia], since the making of good metaphors [eu metaφoρεиn ‘good transference’] is the same thing as the contemplation [θεορείν] of what is similar [homoioin] to what.

What follows is epitomized from MoM 2§§6–7. Now we turn to similes. This term simile is derived from the neuter form of the Latin adjective similis meaning ‘similar’, from which the English word similar is in turn derived. In English, a simile is signaled by expressions such as like or as or similar to. As for Greek, the primary word for signaling a simile is homoio- in the sense of ‘similar to’. But the etymology of homoio- shows that the meaning ‘similar’ derives from a more basic meaning, ‘same as’. From the standpoint of Indo-European linguistics, the Greek adjective homoio- (ὁμοίο-) derives from hom- (ὁμό-) ‘same as’, which in turn derives from a prototypical form ‘somo-’, meaning ‘same as’. The English adjective same is derived from this same prototypical form. Another derivative is the Latin adjective similis, meaning ‘same as’ or ‘similar to’. In the usage of both Latin similis and Greek homoio- (ὁμοίο-), the same semantic principle applies: for A to be similar to B, it has to be the same as A in some respect, which is X. Further, for A to be the same as A, it has to be one with B in respect to X. That is because the Indo-European root ‘som-’ of ‘somo- ‘same as’ means ‘one’, as we see in such forms as the Latin adverb semel ‘one time’. And the idea of ‘one’ in words like English same has to do with an act of comparing. When we compare things, what is the ‘same as’ something else in some respect becomes ‘one with’ that something in that respect. That is how a word like Latin similis, deriving from the concept of ‘one’, means ‘similar to’ in the sense of ‘one with’. What is similis ‘similar to’ something else in some respect is ‘one with’ that something in that respect. Similarly in the case of the Greek adjective homoio- (ὁμοίο-), it refers to something that is ‘one with’ and therefore ‘the same as’ something else in some respect. And, as we will see in the comment on O.16.172–212, if something else is not the same, then it is alloio- (ἀλλοίο-) ‘a different kind’, which is the opposite of homoio- (ὁμοίο-) or ‘the same kind’. As we will also see in that same comment, the extension-iο- (-io-) of the two adjectives homoio- (ὁμοίο-) ‘the same kind’ and alloio- (ἀλλοίο-) ‘a different kind’ is parallel to the extension-iο- (-io-) of the adjectives hoio- (ὁίο-) ‘what kind’ and toio- (τοίο-) ‘that kind’.
Here we loop back to what the god Apollo says at I.05.441–442: in a negative sense, immortals cannot be the same as mortals. Still, in a special positive sense, mortals can momentarily become the same as immortals when their identities merge in contexts of ritual. Such a special positive sense applies in situations of ritualized antagonism between immortal and mortal. In such situations, the mortal becomes one with the immortal—and can die as a consequence. That is what almost happens to Diomedes, but then he backs off. [[GN 2017.07.04.]]

I.05.459

subject heading(s): ‘equal to a superhuman force [daimōn]’; antagonism between immortal and mortal; ‘equal to Ares’

Retrospectively, Apollo in his own words is saying that Diomedes was daimoni ἰσος ‘equal to a daimōn’ when this hero dared to attack the god. The use of this expression daimoni ἰσος ‘equal to a daimōn’ here at I.05.459, and also before at I.05.438, goes to the core of the central idea of antagonism between immortal and mortal. Most relevant are the intervening verses at I.05.440–442. [[GN 2016.07.28 via BA 30–31.]]

I.05.473–474

Q&T via BA 146

subject heading(s): Hector; ekhein ‘hold, uphold, protect, guard’; “speaking name” (nomen loquens)

The “speaking name” (nomen loquens) of Hector, Ἡἐκτορ, is morphologically an agent noun derived from the verb ekhein ‘hold’, which can have the specialized sense of ‘uphold’ or ‘protect’ or ‘guard’, as in the present context. The expected role of Hector is to protect the city of Troy, and the direct object of ekhein ‘uphold, protect, guard’ here at I.05.473 is polis ‘city, citadel’, referring to Troy. [[GN 2016.07.28 via BA 146.]]

I.05.500

subject heading(s): xanthos/xanthē ‘golden’ (with reference to hair); epithet

The goddess Demeter is the only divinity in Homeric poetry who is described by the epithet xanthē ‘golden’ (with reference to hair). [[GN 2016.07.28 via BA 210.]]

I.05.541

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’; Achaeans=Danaans=Argives

Aeneas here kills two Achaeans=Danaans, who are described as ‘the best [aristoi] of the Danaans’. But the use of the plural aristoi in the sense of ‘best’ does not convey the same kind of zero-sum competition among the Achaeans=Danaans=Argives as does the use of the singular arista in the sense of ‘the very best’. [[GN 2016.07.28 via BA 32.]]

I.05.571

subject heading(s): thoós ‘running, swift’; generic/particularized epithet; Ares

The use of this adjective thoós ‘running, swift’ as a generic epithet of a warrior, as here, is related to the use of this same adjective as a particularized epithet of Ares as god of war, as at I.05.430: Ares is as swift as a violent wind. [[GN 2016.07.28 via BA 328.]]

I.05.580

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; ħēni-okhos ‘chariot driver’

The hero Mūdōn is identified here as both a therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’ and a ħēni-okhos ‘chariot driver’. The collocation of these nouns therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’ and ħēni-okhos ‘chariot driver’ in describing Mūdōn here implies that he functions as a ritual substitute for an unnamed hero who is primarily a chariot fighter. [[GN 2016.08.04 via the comment on I.04.227 via Nagy 2015.05.01 and 2015.05.08.]]
I.05.638

subject heading(s): biē ‘force, violence, strength’; kleos ‘glory’; biē Hēraklēieī ‘force of Hēraklēs’

See the comment on I.02.658. [[GN 2016.09.25.]]

I.05.639

subject heading(s): thūmoleōn ‘having the heart [thūmos] of a lion’; Hēraklēs; Achilles; Odysseus

In the iliad, Hēraklēs as the only hero besides Achilles who qualifies as thūmoleōn ‘having the heart [thūmos] of a lion’; Achilles is thūmoleōn at I.07.228. In the Odyssey, Hēraklēs is the only hero besides Odysseus who qualifies as thūmoleōn ‘having the heart [thūmos] of a lion’, at O.11.267; Odysseus is thūmoleōn at O.04.724 and O.04.814. [[GN 2016.07.28 via BA 137.]]

I.05.646

subject heading(s): Hadēs; Gates of Hadēs; Gates of the Sun; Pylos; entrance to the underworld; pulartēs ‘gate-closer’

The idea of the ‘gates’ or pulai of Hadēs is a variant of the idea of a ‘gate’ or Pulos of the Sun, where the mythical idea of such a Pulos is parallel to the ritual reality of Pylos as a place where the myth is realized. By implication, the setting sun passes through the same gates as do the psükhai ‘spirits’ of the dead who are entering the underworld. [[GN 2016.07.28 via GMP 225-226.]]

I.05.669

anchor comment on noε̃̃in ‘take note (of), notice’

This verb noε̃̃in ‘take note (of), notice’ is attracted to contexts where the subject of the verb is seen as taking the initiative. Here at I.05.669 is the first Iliadic application of this verb to the actions of Odysseus, who is specially linked with the meaning of noε̃̃in, ‘take note (of), notice’. [[GN 2016.07.28 via BA 51.]]

I.05.696–698

subject heading(s): psükhē ‘spirit; life’s breath’; release of consciousness from the body; ana-pneīn/ en-pneīn ‘take a breath, breathe in’

At the moment of his fainting or swooning here, the hero’s psükhē ‘spirit’ in the sense of his ‘life’s breath’ is released from his body. But then he ‘comes to’, as it were, and now his life’s breath returns to him. The verb that expresses this idea of revival is ana-pneīn (αναπνεύστην)—variant en-pneīn (ἐνπνεύστην)—in the sense of ‘taking a breath’—‘breathing in’. So, the hero’s breath comes back into him, and that is what had left him when his psükhē in the sense of ‘life’s breath’ had left him. But if we take this same word psükhē in the sense of a disembodied ‘spirit’, then the spirit that has come back to the hero’s body has not only revived him: it has brought him back to life. Such a mystical sense of revival is most appropriate to the hero Sarpedon: after he is killed in battle, Sarpedon’s funeral leads to his mystical immortalization, as analyzed in the comments at I.16.456–457 and I.16.674–675. [[GN 2016.07.28 via BA 168, GMP 142.]]

I.05.710

subject heading(s): dēmos ‘community, district’

In this context, the localized meaning of dēmos in the sense of ‘district’ is still overt. [[GN 2016.07.28 via BA 149, PH 251.]]

I.05.722

subject heading(s): kukla ‘chariot wheels’; kuklos ‘cycle, chariot wheel’ as a metaphor for the epic Cycle; Homēros as ‘joiner, carpenter’
The neuter plural *kukla* corresponding to masculine singular *kuklos* means ‘chariot wheels’. The metaphorical use of *kuklos* ‘cycle, chariot wheel’ with reference to the epic Cycle as the sum total of Homeric poetry is relevant to the meaning of *Homēriōs* in the sense of a ‘joiner, carpenter’ who makes chariot wheels. See the comment on 0.17.384–385. **On the epic Cycle in general, see the Inventory of terms and names.** [[GN 2016.07.28 via PasP 74–75, HPC 255.]]

1.05.733–747

subject heading(s): *peplos* ‘robe’; *khītōn* ‘tunic’; pattern-weaving; metonymy; Athena Polias (goddess of the citadel); Athena Parthenos (goddess virgin); Gigantomachy ‘battle of the gods and giants’

When the goddess slips out of her *peplos* ‘robe’ and into the *khītōn* ‘tunic’ that belongs to her father Zeus, there is an intervening moment of nudity. **See MoM 3§1-3§7.** This passage shows (a) the complementarity of the *peplos* ‘robe’ and the *khītōn* ‘tunic’ worn by Athena and (b) the complementarity of her roles as Athena Polias (goddess of the citadel) and Athena Parthenos (goddess virgin) in the myths and rituals of Athens. This complementarity is re-enacted in the *Iliad*. **See MoM 3§9–12.** We see in these verses a linearity that follows a sequence controlled by time in the Homeric reference to the Peplos of Athena. This linearity substitutes for the circular sequence of the Athenians’ charter myth about Athena and the Gigantomachy, which means ‘battle of the gods and giants’. The *Iliad* here shows a metaphorical substitution of the Trojan War for the Gigantomachy. **On metaphor, see the Inventory of terms and names; also MoM 0§01, 0§1 Extract 0-A.** For the Athenians, Athena is the primary narrator of the Gigantomachy by way of pattern-weaving the narration in her own Peplos as a masterpiece of metonymy. **On metonymy, see the Inventory of terms and names.** [[GN 2016.07.28 via HC 4§§101, 186, 195, 233; MoM 3§§20–28.]]

1.05.734–735

subject heading(s): *poikilo* ‘patterned, varied; pattern-woven’; *peplos* ‘robe’; Panathenaic Peplos; metonymy; metaphor; *poikilma* ‘pattern-weaving’; *pan-poikilo* ‘completely pattern-woven’

The *peplos* ‘robe’ made by the goddess Athena is seen as a prototype of a perfect masterpiece of pattern-weaving. It is also a perfect masterpiece of metonymy coordinated with metaphor. **On metaphor and metonymy, see the Inventory of terms and names.** Further, the *peplos* ‘robe’ of the goddess is a prototype, in the world of myth, for the re-enacting of its pattern-weaving in the world of ritual in Athens. The *peplos* that is pattern-woven by Athena in Athenian myth is the prototype of the Panathenaic Peplos from the standpoint of Athenian ritual. The Panathenaic Peplos was pattern-woven for ritual presentation to the goddess Athena at the climax of the quadrennial Athenian festival known as the Great Panathenaia. [[GN 2016.07.28 via PasP 65; MoM 2 §§56, 94–100; 3§17.]]

1.05.795

subject heading(s): *ana-psūkhein* ‘revive, reanimate’; *psūkhē* ‘spirit; life’s breath’; release of consciousness from the body; *ana-pnein/ en-pnein* ‘take a breath, breathe in’

In this context, the hero is simply ‘reviving’ from a wound; but there are intimations, already here, of a future reanimation or immortalization that awaits this hero after he is killed at a later point in the narrative, in *Iliad* 16. For more, see the earlier comment on I.05.696–698, in anticipation of the later comment on 16.456–457. [[GN 2016.07.28 via BA 168.]]

1.05.839

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’

The description of Diomedes here as *aristos* ‘best’ implies that he is still in contention for the absolute title ‘best of the Achaeans’ in the *Iliad*. [[GN 2016.07.28 via BA 31.]]

1.05.843

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Aetolians’; ‘best of the Achaeans’

The description of the hero Periphas here as ‘best of the Aetolians’ can be seen as a subcategory of the all-important title
I.05.891

subject heading(s): eris ‘strife’; language of praise/blame

The insulting of Ares by Zeus here is parallel to the insulting of Achilles by Agamemnon at I.01.177. For both Ares and Achilles, eris ‘strife’ is a defining feature. [[GN 2016.07.28 via BA 131.]]

I.05.899

subject heading(s): Paiēôn

In this context, Paiēôn (from Païwōn) is still distinct from rather than identical to Apollo. [[GN 2016.07.28 via HPC 290n61.]]

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Iliad Rhapsody 6

2016.08.04 / enhanced 2018.09.08

A high point here in Rhapsody 6 is a tearful scene of farewell for Andromache and Hector. The loving wife will never again see her husband alive. The scene is justly admired for its artistic portrayal of this tragically doomed couple, but the verbal artistry extends even further: also to be most admired here is the remarkable precision of poetic language in representing lament as it was actually performed in ancient Greek song culture. [[GN 2016.08.04.]]

Figure 6. Apulian red-figure column-crater (ca. 370–360 BCE) depicting an intimate family scene: Hector removes his helmet as he says his final farewell to his wife Andromache and to their child Astyanax. Public domain image by Jastrow via Wikimieda Commons.

I.06.018

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; hup-hēnioskhos ‘chariot driver’

The hero Kalēsios is identified here at I.06.018 as the therapōn ‘attendant’ of the hero Axulos, who is named at I.06.12–13. In the immediate context, at I.06.018, only the surface meaning of therapōn as ‘attendant’ is evident. But Kalēsios is not only the therapōn of Axulos: he is also described at I.06.019 as the hup-hēnioskhos ‘chariot driver’ of Axulos. This description of Kalēsios not only as a therapōn but also as a hup-hēnioskhos ‘chariot driver’ points to the deeper meaning, ‘ritual substitute’, for therapōn. [[GN 2016.08.04; see also the comment on I.05.580.]]
1.06.053

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’

In the immediate context, at 1.06.053, only the surface meaning of *therapōn* as ‘attendant’ is evident. [[GN 2016.08.04.]]

1.06.067

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; *therapontes of Ares*

In contexts where the plural *therapontes* in combination with *Aρῶς ‘of Ares’* is applied to the Achaeans= Danaans= Argives (at 1.06.067, to the Danaans) as a grouping of warriors, the deeper meaning of *therapōn* as ‘ritual substitute’ is more evident than in other contexts. [[GN 2016.08.04; via the comment on 1.02.110 via BA 293–295; GMP 48; H24H 6§32]]

1.06.090–093

Q&T via HPC 266–267

subject heading(s): peplos ‘robe for Athena; peplos of Athena; pattern-weaving; Panathenaic Peplos; split referencing

Helenos is telling Hector what to tell Hecuba to do, which is, to offer *apeplos* ‘robe for Athena as the goddess of the citadel of Troy. [[GN 2016.08.04.]]

1.06.119–149

subject heading(s): nature/culture

The encounter of Glaukos and Diomedes prompts an exquisite meditation on the opposition of heroic mortality vs. immortality in terms of nature vs. culture. [[GN 2016.08.04 via BA 178.]]

1.06.271–273

Q&T via HPC 267

subject heading(s): peplos ‘robe for Athena; peplos of Athena; pattern-weaving; Panathenaic Peplos; split referencing

Hector is telling Hecuba what to do, which is, to offer *apeplos* ‘robe for Athena as the goddess of the citadel of Troy. [[GN 2016.08.04.]]

1.06.209

subject heading(s): pateres ‘ancestors’; name of Patroklos; “speaking name” (*nomen loquens*)

The singular noun *pater* ‘father’ has an elliptic meaning in the plural: *pateres* in the sense of ‘ancestors’. The “speaking name” (*nomen loquens*) of Patroklos, *Patrokleis*, means ‘he who has the glory [ήλεος] of the ancestors [pateres]’. See the comment on 1.01.345. [[GN 2016.08.04 via BA 102]]

1.06.211

subject heading(s): geneē ‘immediate paternal lineage’; genos ‘paternal lineage’

The pair *geneē/genos* can be analyzed as marked/unmarked members of a semantic opposition: whereas *geneē* as at 1.06.211 here refers specifically to ‘immediate paternal lineage’, *genos* as at 1.06.209 refers only generally to ‘paternal lineage’. [[GN 2016.08.04 via BA 178.]]

1.06.286–311

subject heading(s): antagonism between immortal and mortal; hero cult; cult hero
The general hostility of the divinity Athena toward the Trojans in this narrative sequence, despite the fact that the women of Troy are shown here in the act of formally worshipping her as the divine protector of their citadel, can be correlated with a pattern of personal hostility felt by the goddess toward Hector as a hero who aspires to some of the same roles that Athena herself exemplifies. In the case of the verses here, I.06.286–311, this goddess is worshipped in her role as *protector of citadels under siege*: that is why Theano as high priestess of Troy prays to Athena by invoking her as *erusito polys* ‘protector of the citadel [πτολις]’ at I.06.305. Like the goddess, Hector can be seen as an exponent of defensive tactics in protecting a citadel from sieges: as we saw in the comment on I.05.473–474, even his name fits his intended role as the protector of the citadel of Troy, since *Hék-tór* is an agent noun derived from the verb *ekhein* ‘hold’ in the specialized sense of ‘uphold’ or ‘protect’ or ‘guard’. In the context of I.05.473–474, the expected role of Hector is to *protect the city of Troy*, and the direct object of *ekhein* ‘uphold, protect, guard’ at I.05.473 is *polis* ‘city, citadel’, referring to Troy. But the tragedy is, Hector will fail in the role of protecting Troy, since he will abandon strategies of defending the city and will opt instead for staying on the offensive against an enemy that will ultimately capture Troy. And a key to his failure, as we will see in the course of the macro-narrative, is the fact that Athena herself will delude Hector into staying on the offensive until it is too late for him to revert to a defensive role. Such a pattern of antagonism between immortal and mortal, it can be argued, derives from the ideologies of hero cult. [[GN 2016.08.04 *via BA 147*.]]

I.06.286–296

Q&T via HPC 267–268

subject heading(s): *peplos* ‘robe’ for Athena; *peplos* of Athena; pattern-weaving; Panathenaic Peplos; split referencing

Hecuba goes ahead and does what she has been told to do, which is, to offer *apeplos* ‘robe’ for Athena as the goddess of the citadel of Troy. The repetition of ritual wording in the sequence of three passages—from I.06.090–093 to I.06.271–273 to I.06.286–296—will culminate in a master plan, as it were, for performing the ritual of presenting the *peplos* ‘robe’ to Athena as goddess of Troy. What has just been described as a “repetition,” however, needs to be explained further (HPC 268):

In this sequence of three passages [I.06.090–093 to I.06.271–273 to I.06.286–296], we see three consecutive restatements of the same ritual act. I say *three restatements* instead of *one statement and two restatements* because none of the three passages is basic, from the standpoint of traditional formulaic diction. Not one of the three passages is formulaically predictable on the basis of the other two passages. To put it another way, the variation that we find in the three passages shows that none of the three forms is formally prior to the other two. What priorities we find are purely a function of the narration, not of any chronological order in the composition of the three passages. In terms of oral poetics, such variation is a display of virtuosity in the art of composition in performance. [[GN 2016.08.04]]

I.06.289–292

subject heading(s): variant readings; detours of Helen; *pan-poikilo* ‘completely pattern-woven’

lemmatizing: *παμποίκιοι* vs. *παμποίκιλα*

There are variant stories about detours experienced by Helen after her abduction by Paris. A trip to Sidon in Phoenicia is one such variant story. Besides the versions of I.06.289–292, which represent a longer variant reading, I posit also a shorter variant featuring one verse only, I.06.289 minus I.06.290–292. In terms of such a one-verse variant, no detour of Helen is mentioned here, and the reading for the epithet describing the *peploi* ‘robes’ would then be *pan-poikilois* = *παμποίκιοι* instead of *pan-poikilia* = *παμποίκιλα*. Both variants of this adjective *pan-poikilo* mean ‘completely pattern-woven’. In terms of the longer variant, the *peploi* ‘robes’ stored in the chest were pattern-woven by Phoenician women; in terms of the posited shorter variant, by contrast, these robes presumably would have been pattern-woven by Trojan women or even by Helen. Herodotus (2.116.1–2.117.1) argued that the longer variant was truly Homeric in its grandeur, contrasting it with the shorter variant that he knew from the epic *Cypria* of his day. The historian treats the unaugmented story of a direct voyage of Paris and Helen from Sparta to Troy as a foil for the augmented story of their Phoenician detour. The poet of the unaugmented story, as Herodotus sees it, is a foil for Homer as the rightful poet of the augmented story. [[GN 2016.08.04 *via HPC 271*; see also PH]]
subject heading(s): poikilma ‘pattern-weaving’; pan-poikilo- ‘completely pattern-woven’; Panathenaic Peplos

The noun poikilma at I.06.294 refers to ‘pattern-weaving’ in a concrete and not an abstract sense: so, ‘pattern-woven thing’. The ‘pattern-woven things’ here are the peploi ‘robes’ described by the adjective pan-poikilo- ‘completely pattern-woven’ at I.06.289. These words pan-poikilos and poikilma, which refer to the peplos ‘robe’ that is being chosen for Athena, convey not only the general idea of variation, which is relevant to the variability of the wording that describes the ritual of presenting the peplos to Athena. More than that, they convey also the specific idea of pattern-weaving a picture into a fabric. Such a picture was pattern-woven into the Panathenaic Peplos of Athena. See the comment on I.05.734–735. The adjective pan-poikilos ‘completely pattern-woven’ is the epithet of the Panathenaic Peplos (scholia for Aristophanes Birds 827), and the noun poikilma designates the pattern-weaving of the charter myth of the Gigantomachy into the Panathenaic Peplos (Plato Euthyphro 6b-c). [[GN 2016.08.04 via HPC 270–271; see also again the comment on I.05.734–735]]

I.06.297–310

Q&T via HPC 269–270

subject heading(s): peplos of Athena; pattern-weaving; Panathenaic Peplos; split referencing

With each repetition of the wording for the presentation of the peplos ‘robe’ to Athena as goddess of Troy—from I.06.090–093 to I.06.271–273 to I.06.286–296—the master plan seems to fit more and more the ritual of presenting a pattern-woven peplos ‘robe’ to Athena as goddess of Athens at the Athenian festival of the Panathenaia. On the Panathenaic Peplos, see again the comment on I.05.734–735; see also HPC 270. Looking back at the entire narrative sequence as analyzed here—I.06.090–093, I.06.271–273, I.06.286–296, I.06.297–310—I highlight two most salient visual details at I.06.297, namely, the citadel or acropolis of Troy and the temple on top of that acropolis. These two details correspond to the two most visible details distinguishing the city of Athens from most other cities. At work here is a process I describe as split referencing. The reference is split between Troy and Athens. The referent is both the prehistorical citadel of Troy and the historical citadel or acropolis of Athens. As for the narrative here at I.06.286-311 about the presentation of the peplos ‘robe’ to Athena, the peplos to be chosen is highlighted as the biggest of all the peploi (I.06.90, I.06.271, I.06.294). It is the peplos that is most ‘beautiful’ or kalon (I.06.294), with the most ‘pleasurable beauty’ or kharis (I.06.90, I.06.271). The size and the beauty of the fabric evoke a vision of the quadrennial Panathenaic Peplos, which is notionally the biggest and most beautiful of all imaginable peploi. As for the association of the word kharis ‘pleasurable beauty’ with the fabric, it is appropriate not only to the peplos that is being described but also to the medium that describes the peplos. That medium is Homeric poetry as performed at the quadrennial festival of the Panathenaia. The concept of kharis conveys the charisma of Homeric poetry as described by Homeric poetry. In terms of this description, the peplos in this narrative, I.06.286-311, can be seen as a metaphor for epic as performed at the Panathenaia. This epic is notionally the biggest and the most beautiful of all epics. Like the peplos that is being offered by the women to Athena, this epic as performed at the Panathenaia has more kharis than all other epics. [[GN 2016.08.04 quoting and paraphrasing from HPC 270–271.]]

I.06.325

subject heading(s): language of praise/blame; neikein ‘quarrel with’; aiskhros- ‘disgraceful, shameful’; Hector; Paris=Alexandros

Hector quarrels with Paris, as signaled by the verb neikein ‘quarrel with’. He aims words of blame at Paris, and these words are aiskhros ‘disgraceful, shameful’ because they are meant to make Paris feel ashamed. Hector’s words are shaming, since he blames things done by Paris that are perceived as shameful and disgraceful. [[GN 2016.06.07 via BA 256.]]

I.06.333

subject heading(s): language of praise/blame; neikein ‘quarrel with’; aisa ‘portion; fate, destiny’; moira ‘portion; fate, destiny’; plot of the iliad
Here at l.06.333 as also at l.03.059, Paris actually accepts the words of blame directed at him by his quarreling brother. [IGN 2016.08.04]

I.06.402–403

subject heading(s): name of Hector; Astyanax; “speaking name” (nomen loquens); Scamandrius; Aeolian traditions about the Trojan War

The first name for the son of Hector, Astyanax [Astuanax], I.06.403, means ‘king [anax] of the city [astu]’. The meaning of this “speaking name” (nomen loquens) is relevant to the heroic function of the father as guarding a citadel from sieges. See the comment on I.22.506–507. The second name for the son of Hector, Scamandrius [Skamandrios], I.06.402, derives from a rival Aeolian tradition, here undermined by the prevailing Ionian tradition of the Iliad (HPC 203–205). According to this rival tradition, as we read in Euripides Andromache 224 (together with the scholion for that verse), Scamandrius was a bastard son of Hector who survived the Trojan War, to be distinguished from the legitimate son of Hector and Andromache, Astyanax, who tragically failed to survive. According to Aeolian traditions, Scamandrius not only survived the Trojan War but later became king of Troy (scholia T for I.24.735). By contrast, according to the dominantly Ionian traditions as represented by the Iliad as we have it, Scamandrius could not have survived if he was the same child as Astyanax, which is what we read here at I.06.402–403. So, the version as we have it kills off the potentially surviving half-brother. [IGN 2016.08.04 via HPC 204]

I.06.407–439

anchor comment on ancient Greek lament

subject heading(s): lament; sorrows of Andromache

Here at I.06.407–439, the wording of Andromache in addressing her departing husband Hector, whom she will never again see alive, is not just a speech expressing her sorrows: it is also, in terms of Homeric representation, a song of lament. What now follows is a general introduction to what is meant here. Ancient Greek lament is a deeply ritualized ritual practice, and there are survivals of this practice even to this day in some Greek-speaking communities. For background on the continuities and the discontinuities of this practice, I recommend the book by Margaret Alexiou, The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition (1974). Aside from the specific example of ancient Greek laments, there are many other examples of such a practice to be found in a wide variety of societies throughout the world. In general, lament is understood to mean the formal expression of the emotion that we know as sadness—or, to say it more formally, sorrow. In Homeric diction, the primary words that are used for referring to sorrow are akhos or penthos, both of which I ordinarily translate as ‘grief’. In the case of ancient Greek society as also in many other cases, however, the general definition of lament as an expression of sorrow is insufficient. A lament can be more than just an expression of some inner sorrow by way of outward signs like crying. The outward signs can be formalized by way of crying and verbalizing at the same time. And the act of verbalizing can even become an act of singing, as in the case of ancient Greek traditions. In terms of these traditions, the act of lamenting is an act of singing while crying and crying while singing. And this kind of singing is crying; this kind of crying is singing. The physical aspects of crying are all integrated into the singing: the flow of tears, the choking of the voice, the convulsions of the body, and so on, are all part of the singing. And such physical aspects are also formalized into a kinetic system of stylized movements—to be seen as a kind of dancing that is integrated with the singing. On such a kinetic aspect of lament, see further the comment on I.18.051–060. [IGN 2016.08.04 -> GN 2016.12.17 via HC 1§$208–211, 2§$344–345, 4§$262; H24H 3§$10–11]

I.06.407–439

anchor comment on three laments by Andromache, part 1

subject heading(s): lament; sorrows of Andromache

In the Iliad, Andromache is represented as singing three songs of lament for Hector. Each one of these three laments is quoted, as it were, by the Master Narrator, and each one of the quotations corresponds morphologically to a genuine song of lament as sung by a lamenting woman. It must be emphasized, however, that the laments that we see being quoted by the epic of Homeric poetry do not represent the actual meter of lament as sung in real laments. The genre of epic regularly uses its own meter, which is the dactylic hexameter, in representing other genres that it quotes, including unmetrical genres
(Martin 1989:12–42; also pp. 87–88, specifically on lament). But the morphology of laments quoted by epic still follows the rules of lament. On this point about the morphology of lament, see further the anchor comment on 1.19.282–302. In other words, each quotation of each one of the three laments performed by Andromache is meant to be heard as a re-enactment, performed by the Master Narrator, of a genuine song of lament. In the first lament, as quoted by the Master Narrator here at 1.06.407–439, Andromache is already lamenting the death of Hector before he is even dead. As for the second lament, at 1.22.477–514, Andromache will sing it when she sees the corpse of Hector for the first time. As for the third lament, at 1.24.725–745, Andromache will sing it on the occasion of Hector’s funeral. The first two laments can be seen as previews, as it were, of the more formal third lament. But it must be kept in mind that the traditions of lamentation can allow for the spontaneous singing of a lament as an instant response to a deep loss that has just happened—or even as a premonition of a future loss that has yet to happen. On this point about premonition, there are further comments in H24H 3§§23–24; see also Nagy 2015:6.17. See also anchor comment at 1.22.476–515 on: three laments by Andromache, part 2; and anchor comment at 1.24.723–746 on: three laments by Andromache, part 3. [GN 2016.12.17.]

I.06.447–464

Q&T via HC 2§336

subject heading(s): lament; sorrows of Andromache

The wording of Hector, addressed to Andromache here at I.06.447–464, reveals a morbid but realistic premonition of the grim future that awaits her. This kind of premonition is typical in women’s laments: see the anchor comment at I.06.407–439. Here at I.06.447–464, however, it is Hector who expresses the premonition, which could otherwise have been expressed by Andromache herself in her own song of lament. [GN 2016.08.04 via HC 2§§336–340.]

I.06.466–470

subject heading(s): Hector’s helmet

The “great floating horsetail crested helmet” worn by Hector frightens his child when the hero first tries to embrace him. I follow here the incisive observation of Vermeule 1987:146… This wistful detail can be dated back to a world otherwise long forgotten, if Vermeule is right in saying that this kind of helmet went out of production sometime around the middle of the second millennium BCE. [GN 2016.08.04 via HPC 310 via Vermeule 1987:146.]

I.06.484

lemmatizing: δακρυόεν γελάσασα

As Andromache watches her husband Hector embracing their child, she ‘smiles through her tears’, or, more literally, she ‘smiles a smile that is tearful’. This weak smile carries over from I.06.471, where both father and mother smile when their child is frightened by the helmet of Hector. [GN 2016.08.04.]

I.06.494–496

Q&T via HPC 308–309

subject heading(s): one last glimpse

After they say farewell to each other, Hector turns away and goes off to the battlefield, facing the certainty of death, while Andromache turns away and goes off to her chamber. But ‘she keeps turning back again and again’ toward Hector, entropalizomenē at I.06.496, hoping to catch one last glimpse of the receding view of her doomed husband. [GN 2016.08.04 via HC 1§210, HPC 308–310.]

Iliad Rhapsody 7

2016.08.12 / enhanced 2018.09.08
Up to now, Diomedes has been the hero who comes closest to Achilles in competing for the title ‘best of the Achaeans’. Here in Rhapsody 7, however, the focus shifts to Ajax, who responds to the challenge of Hector to fight in a duel the one hero among all the Achaeans who is truly the ‘best of the Achaeans’. As we know from the overall references to Ajax in both the iliad and the Odyssey, this hero is considered to be the second-best of the Achaeans in both epics. So, it does not bode well for Hector that, in his duel with Ajax, he cannot succeed beyond fighting such a hero to a draw. If Hector can do no better than fight to a draw the second-best of the Achaeans, he is surely doomed when the time comes for him to face the very best of the Achaeans in Rhapsody 22. [[GN 2016.08.12.]]

Figure 7. Hector and Ajax separated by heralds, pen and ink drawing by John Flaxman, 1790’s. Image via Victoria and Albert Museum.

I.07.015–017

subject heading(s): elliptic plural/dual; hippoi/hippō as meaning not ‘horses’ but ‘chariot’

The hero Dexion is described at I.07.015 by way of the participle epi-almenos meaning ‘one who leaps on’, and the preverb epi- ‘on’ of the participle takes as its object the noun hippoi ‘horses’ in the genitive case. But the meaning of this combination is not ‘one who leaps on horses’ but rather ‘one who leaps on the chariot drawn by horses’. That is, hippoi in such a context is an elliptic plural referring not only to the two horses that conventionally draw a chariot in Homeric diction but to the chariot drawn by the two horses. In the action being described here, the same hero Dexion is mortally wounded at I.07.13 by a spear-throw that hits him and knocks him out of the chariot, and here the preposition epi ‘out of’ in combination with the noun hippoi ‘horses’ as its grammatical object in the genitive case means that the hero has been knocked off the platform of the chariot, falling out of the chariot and landing on the ground with a mighty thud. In short, then, epi + the genitive of hippoi at I.07.11 means ‘on the chariot’, with reference to standing on the platform of a chariot, while epi + the genitive of hippoi at I.07.13 means ‘out of the chariot’, with reference to getting knocked out of the chariot while standing on the platform. [[GN 2016.08.11.]]

I.07.015–017

anchor comment on special ways of saying ‘chariot’

In general, the noun hippoi/hippō as elliptic plural/dual means not ‘horses’ but ‘chariot’ when this noun functions as a grammatical object in the genitive (G) or dative (D) or accusative (A) case in combination with prepositions or preverbs referring to such situations as standing on the platform of a chariot (epi+G, epi+D) or leaping down from the platform (apo+G, kata+G) or leaping up onto the platform (epi+G, eis+A) or getting knocked off and falling down from the platform (ek+G, kata+G). What follows is a list showing these occurrences of the word hippoi/hippō with the elliptic meaning of ‘chariot’ but not showing other occurrences where the ellipsis is canceled by way of correlating this word with other words like harma and
I.07.017–061

subject heading(s): antagonism between immortal and mortal; métis ‘mind, intelligence’

The divinities Athena and Apollo are not only supporting the Achaeans and the Trojans respectively. They are also opposing the Trojans and the Achaeans respectively. Even more than that, these divinities are also personally antagonistic toward individual heroes: Athena opposes Hector while Apollo opposes Achilles. In this passage, the antagonism between Athena and Hector is particularly evident. When the seer Helenos at I.07.047 addresses his brother Hector by describing him as comparable to the god Zeus himself with respect to Hector’s qualities of métis ‘mind, intelligence’, the wording of this description is a direct affront to the divinity of Athena, who is the goddess of métis ‘mind, intelligence’ personified. [[GN 2016.08.11 via the comment at I.06.286–311 via BA 145, 149; GMP 204.]]

I.07.021

subject heading(s): nikē ‘victory’

The role of Athena in awarding nikē ‘victory’ to the Achaeans is only secondary, while the corresponding role of Zeus is primary. [[GN 2016.08.11 via HC 4§109.]]

I.07.063–064

subject heading(s): phrix ‘shuddering; Phrixos; “speaking name” (nomen loquens); simile of a storm at sea; Zephyros the West Wind; Boreas the North Wind; Hellespont; pontos ‘crossing [of the sea]’

The noun phrix ‘shuddering’, which conveys the subjectivized feeling of an observer who shudders when he looks at the sea being stirred up by the West Wind named Zephyros while feeling the sudden blast of the wind, is related not only formally but even thematically to the “speaking name” (nomen loquens) of Phrixos, a hero who escaped the dangers of the pontos ‘[sea-] crossing’ that is the Hellespont, as we read in Pindar Pythian 4.160–161. The wording of Pindar goes on to say there that Phrixos was ‘saved’, saōthè, because he was carried to safety by the ram with the golden fleece. Before the occurrence of the name Zephyros here at I.07.063, the same name for the West Wind has occurred in previous similes: I.02.147, I.04.276, 04.423. In a forthcoming simile showing the sea stirred up by the North Wind named Boreas together with the West Wind named Zephyros, I.09.004–008, the subjective feeling of fear that overcomes the observer is described as krooes ‘chilling’, I.09.002. So, the observer shudders at the chilling power of the storm at sea. The stormy combination of Boreas and Zephyros is described as stirring up the pontos ‘sea-[crossing]’ also at I.23.230, and this sea, described there as ‘Thracian’, is to be equated with the Hellespont. [[GN 2016.08.11 via BA 340.]]

I.07.067–091

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’; tomb of Achilles; sēma as ‘tomb’; Hellespont
Whoever is ‘best of the Achaeans’ is challenged by Hector to fight him in a one-on-one duel. Hector boasts that he will kill this fighter, still to be named, who will then be entombed inside a sēma ‘tomb’ overlooking the Hellespont, I.07.086, and thus Hector will have a kleos ‘glory’ that is eternal, I.07.091. The irony here is that the fighter still to be named will be the winner of a future duel with Hector. That fighter will be Achilles, and the eternal kleos ‘glory’ will be primarily his. On the other hand, Hector’s wording is on the mark when he says at I.07.086 that the hero who is ‘best of the Achaeans’ will be entombed inside a sēma ‘tomb’ overlooking the Hellespont. And that hero will be Achilles. [[GN 2016.08.11 via BA 28, 341]]

I.07.084–086

subject heading(s): tomb of Achilles; tarkhuein ‘ritually prepare’

As noted in the previous comment, the tomb of the hero whom Hector imagines he will kill is the tomb of Achilles, who in fact will kill Hector before he dies his own death. For details about the funeral and entombment of Achilles see the comment on I.16.456–457, with special reference to the word tarkhuein ‘ritually prepare’, as attested here at I.07.085. [[GN 2016.11.09.]]

I.07.089–090

The memorial language imagined here in the wording of Hector corresponds to the formulaic language of poetry written down on stone in the form of epigrams. So, Homeric diction shows here an awareness of the genre of epigrammatic poetry. But this genre needed the technology of writing only for the sake of recording a given epigrammatic poem, not for the sake of actually composing it. Therefore, the awareness of epigrammatic language in Homeric diction does not require us to think that the technology of writing was needed for either the composition or the performance of Homeric poetry. [[GN 2016.08.11 via PH 19.]]

I.07.090

subject heading(s): aristeuein ‘strive to be the best, have an epic-high-point [aristeiā]’

In Hector’s imagined scenario of an outcome for his duel with a hero who is the ‘best of the Achaeans’, that hero, whom he will kill, is pictured as ‘striving to be the best’, as expressed by the verb aristeuein, I.07.090. The corresponding noun, not attested in Homeric diction, is aristeiā ‘epic high point’, on which see the comment on I.05.103. [[GN 2016.09.25.]]

I.07.092–169

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’; aristeuein ‘strive to be the best’; goading by blaming

The Achaeans, faced with Hector’s challenge, hesitate, I.07.092–093. Their hesitation seems to indicate that not one of them is really the ‘best of the Achaeans’. Finally, Menelaos is first to volunteer for a one-on-one duel with Hector, I.07.094–103. An absence of volunteers, Menelaos knows, would be aklees ‘a thing without glory [kleos]’, I.07.100. It seems of course fitting for him to be the first, since his grievance against the Trojans over the abduction of Helen is primary, but the problem is that all the Achaean chieftains are aware of his inferiority to Hector, I.07.106, and so, fearing for his life, they restrain him from arming himself for a duel. Even the Master Narrator says outright that Hector was superior to Menelaos, I.07.104–105. Then Nestor goads the chieftains to take up the challenge of Hector, I.07.123–161, and his goading now prompts nine of these chieftains to volunteer, I.07.161–169: they are Agamemnon, Diomedes, the two Ajaxes, Idomeneus and Meriones, Eurypyllos, Thoas, and Odysseus. It is significant that Nestor’s words refer to these nine chieftains as aristeis Panakhaión, I.07.159. For a translation of this expression, the singular form aristeus of plural aristeis first needs to be correlated with the verb aristeuein, which can be translated as ‘strive to be the best, to be aristos’, as at I.06.208 and I.11.784. In the second of these two passages, I find it most significant that the referent is Achilles himself. An aristeus, then, is a man who strives to be the best, aristos. Correspondingly, the expression aristeis Panakhaión at I.07.159 must refer to ‘men who strive to be the best of all the Achaeans’. [[GN 2016.08.11 via BA 29–30.]]

I.07.095

subject heading(s): neikos ‘quarrel’; oneidizein ‘say words of insult'
While volunteering to accept the challenge of Hector, Menelaos blames the other Achaean chieftains for hesitating. He engages them in ‘quarrel’, neikos, and ‘he says words of insult’, oneidizein. [[GN 2016.08.11.]]

I.07.122

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’

In the immediate context, only the surface meaning of therapontes as ‘attendants’ is evident. [[GN 2016.08.04.]]

I.07.123–161

subject heading(s): goading by blaming

Not only Menelaos but Nestor too blames the other Achaean chieftains for hesitating. He goads them into action not only by blaming them but also by telling a story about one of his past successes as a warrior. [[GN 2016.08.18.]]

I.07.132–157

subject heading(s): thoós ‘running, swift’; Ares

Nestor’s story of his fight with Ereuthalion amounts to a lesson about strategy in warfare. A pivotal figure in the story is the predecessor of Ereuthalion: he is Arē-thoös, at I.07.137 and again at I.07.138, whose name is a combination of themes involving the god Ares and a primary characteristic of Ares: this god runs with the speed of wind, as conveyed by the adjective thoós ‘running, swift’, derived from the verb theein ‘run’. [[GN 2016.08.11 via BA 328–330.]]

I.07.147

subject heading(s): mōlos Arēs ‘struggle of Ares’;

See the comment at I.02.401. [[GN 2017.07.20.]]

I.07.149

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’

In the immediate context, only the surface meaning of therapōn as ‘attendant’ is evident. [[GN 2016.08.04.]]

I.07.161

subject heading(s): neikein ‘quarrel with’; language of praise/blame; goading by blaming

By goading the Achaeans, Nestor is engaged in the act of neikein: so he ‘quarrels with’ the Achaeans. This way, he engages in the language of blame as opposed to praise. And, even before Nestor starts blaming the Achaeans, Menelaos has already engaged in his own act of neikos ‘quarrel’, I.07.095. [[GN 2016.08.11 via comments at I.02.220–221, I.02.225–242, I.03.038, I.03.059, I.03.100.]]

I.07.177–180

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’

The field of nine Achaeans competing for the title of ‘best of the Achaeans’ in response to Hector’s challenge and to Nestor’s reproach is now narrowed down to three: Ajax, Diomedes, and Agamemnon. [[GN 2016.08.11 via BA 30.]]

I.07.197–198

subject heading(s): biē ‘force, violence, strength’; mētis ‘mind, intelligence’

Ajax boasts that he is superior to other Achaeans both by way of biē ‘force, violence, strength’, I.07.197, and by way of idreī
‘intelligence’, I.07.198. In Homeric diction, a synonym for the second of these two words would be mētis ‘mind, intelligence’. [IGN 2016.08.11 via BA 31.]

I.07.203

subject heading(s): nikē ‘victory’

The role of Zeus in awarding nikē ‘victory’ to the Achaeans is primary, while the corresponding role of Athena is only secondary. [IGN 2016.08.11 via HC 4§109.]

I.07.228

subject heading(s): thūmoleōn ‘having the heart [thūmos] of a lion’; Hēraklēs; Achilles; Odysseus

I.07.288–289

subject heading(s): biē ‘force, violence, strength’; mētis ‘mind, intelligence’

Even Hector acknowledges the superior status of Ajax among the Achaeans: Ajax excels in biē ‘force, violence, strength’, I.07.288, and in pinutē ‘intelligence, I.07.289. In Homeric diction, a synonym for the second of these two words would be mētis ‘mind, intelligence’. [IGN 2016.08.11 via BA 31.]

I.07.298

subject heading(s): eukheštai ‘declare; pray, boast’; hero cult; cult hero

Hector seems to be saying that the Trojan women ‘pray’ to him, as expressed by the verbeukheštai. This turn of phrase may point to the status of Hector as cult hero beyond his epic existence. [IGN 2016.08.11 via BA 149.]

I.07.319–322

Q&T via BA 133

subject heading(s): dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’; isos/isē ‘equitable’

The theme of awarding the choice cut of meat to the foremost warrior in the context of adais ‘feast, division’ continues to accentuate what is missing in this picture, which is the fact that Achilles lost his equitable share at the beginning of the Iliad. [IGN 2016.08.11 via BA 133.]

I.07.324

subject heading(s): biē ‘force, violence, strength’; mētis ‘mind, intelligence’

The choice of the word mētis ‘mind, intelligence’ in the sense of ‘plan’ here is relevant to the undercurrent of an opposition between this word and the word biē ‘force, violence, strength’. The opposition of mētis and biē corresponds to a potential antagonism between Odysseus and Achilles. [IGN 2016.08.11 via BA 48.]

I.07.336–343

subject heading(s): Achaean Wall

Nestor, in speaking to the assembled Achaeans, prescribes that they build a Wall for the purpose of protecting both them and their ships from the attacks of the Trojans. This purpose is spelled out at I.07.338. What Nestor prescribes for the Achaeans to accomplish here at I.07.336–343 is then actually accomplished by them, as described at I.07.434–442, where the purpose of protecting both the Achaeans and their ships is restated, I.07.437. The details of the prescription and of the description supplement each other. For example, an important detail that is absent in the prescription is supplemented in the description: the word teikhos ‘wall’, referring to the overall structure that the Achaeans are building, is absent in the prescription, I.07.337, but this word is present in the description, I.07.436. Both in the prescription and in the description, at
I.07.336–338 and at I.07.435–437 respectively, the Wall is linked to the collective tomb that the Achaeans are to build for their war dead: this tomb is located right next to the pyre where the bodies of the dead are cremated, I.07.337 and I.07.436. [[GN 2016.09.29.]]

I.07.382

subject heading(s): *therapōn* ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; *therapontes of Ares*

In contexts where the plural *therapontes* in combination with *Aρεός* ‘of Ares’ is applied to the Achaeans=Danaans=Argives (at I.07.382 here, to the Danaans) as a grouping of warriors, the deeper meaning is more evident than in other contexts. [[GN 2016.08.04 via the comment on I.02.110 via BA 293–295; GMP 48; H24H 6§32]]

I.07.421–423

subject heading(s): Ókeanos

What follows is epitomized from H24H 10§30. The cosmic river Okeanos is situated at the outermost limits of the world, which is encircled by its stream. The circular stream of the Ókeanos flows eternally around the world and eternally recycles the infinite supply of fresh water that feeds upon itself; see I.14.246–246a, I.18.399, I.20.065. This mystical river Ókeanos, surrounding not only the earth but even the seas surrounding the earth, defines the limits of the known world. Every evening, as the sun sets at sunset, it literally plunges into the fresh waters of this eternally self-recycling cosmic stream, I.08.485, and it is from these same fresh waters that the sun rises again every morning at sunrise, as here at I.08.421–423 as also at O.19.433–434. This cosmic river Ókeanos, encircling the known world, is a boundary delimiting light from darkness, wakefulness from sleep, life from death. The movement of the sun both into and out from the waters of the Ókeanos is envisioned as a cosmic model for an alternation between sleep and awakening, between death and rebirth. [[GN 2017.07.23 via BA 196; GMP 99, 237–238, 246]]

I.07.433–465

subject heading(s): Achaean Wall; Trojan Wall

Within these verses I.07.433–465 is a description of the building of the Achaean Wall at I.07.434–442 that matches the prescription given by Nestor at I.07.336–343. While the Wall is being built, I.07.434–442, the gods are watching, I.07.443–444, and Poseidon makes a speech to Zeus, I.445–453, indicating that this Achaean project is against his will and, presumably, against the will of Apollo. Poseidon is concerned that the *kleos* or epic ‘glory’ of the Achaean Wall, I.07.451, will detract from the corresponding glory of the Trojan Wall that had been built by him together with Apollo for Laomedon, who had been king of Troy before Priam, I.07.452–453. Zeus responds with reassurances, I.07.454–464, reaffirming the *kleos* or epic ‘glory’ that belongs to Poseidon, I.07.458 (οὗν ...κλέος). In other words, Poseidon and Apollo will never lose the epic glory that is theirs because they built the Wall of Troy. And Zeus then utters a prophecy about the *teikhos* ‘wall’ of the Achaeans, I.07.461: it will be destroyed once the Achaeans leave the Trojan landscape, I.07.459–464. So the *kleos* or epic ‘glory’ of the Achaean Wall, as signaled in the wording of Poseidon at I.07.451, will not destroy the *kleos* or epic ‘glory’ that is owed to Poseidon and to Apollo for their building of the Trojan Wall. In terms of this formulation made by Zeus, it is not clear whether the Trojan Wall will later be utterly destroyed or simply damaged when the Achaeans finally conquer Troy. Such a distinction is relevant to a claim made in historical times by the inhabitants of New Ilion, which was in fact the Old Ilion, otherwise known simply as Troy: the people of Ilion maintained that their Wall had not been completely destroyed by the Achaeans in the Trojan War and that their city, despite all the destruction, had never been left completely abandoned. This claim is documented but rejected by Strabo 13.1.40 C599. See Point 7 of the anchor comment at I.09.328–333 about efforts of Aeolians to possess ancient Troy and its environs in the historical period. [[GN 2016.10.01 via HPC 179–180, 207.]]

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**Iliad Rhapsody 8**

2016.08.18 / enhanced 2018.09.08

In my comments here on Rhapsody 8, I sense I am not far from reaching a critical mass of details that shed light on the unity
and integrity of the Homeric *Iliad*. With the upcoming comments on Rhapsody 9, this sense will I hope reach a definitive stage. [[GN 2016.08.18.]]

![Image](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

*Figure 8. "Hera, Athena, and Iris in the Trojan War," Jacques Réattu (1760–1833). Image via Wikimedia Commons.*

I.08.002

**subject heading(s):** terpi-kéraunos ‘he whose bolt strikes’

I.08.002

**anchor comment on terpi-kéraunos ‘he whose bolt strikes’**

This compound noun *terpi-kéraunos*, interpreted here as ‘he whose bolt strikes’, is an epithet that applies exclusively to Zeus: a parallel epithet, also applied exclusively to Zeus, is the compound noun *argi-kéraunos* at I.19.121, I.20.016, I.22.178, which can be interpreted to mean ‘he whose bolt shines’ ([GMP 195]). Both epithets fit Zeus in his role as a thunder-god. The second part of both compounds *terpi-kéraunos* and *argi-kéraunos* is clearly derived from *kéraunos* ‘thunder’, and the first part of *argi-kéraunos* is clearly related to *arg-ős* (earlier *argr-ős*) ‘shining, speeding’, but the first part of *terpi-kéraunos* seems at first unclear. Related forms in other Indo-European languages, however, help elucidate the meaning of *terpi-* as combined with *kéraunos*. In the case of *kéraunos*, we find in the Baltic and Slavic branches of Indo-European the parallel forms perkūnas and perunā respectively, both of which are nouns meaning ‘thunder’ and/or ‘god of thunder’. Although the Greek and the Baltic/Slavic roots here, *kerh₂(u)-* and *per(₃)ₗ-* respectively, are different in form, they are parallel in meaning, ‘strike’, and the morphology of their suffixation is also parallel ([GMP 194–195]). As for the *terpi-* of *terpi-kéraunos*, we find a comparable form in the Ithic branch of Indo-European: it is the Latin noun *quercus*, meaning ‘oak tree’. This form, it can be argued, refers to the defining sacred moment when a thunderbolt strikes an oak tree: *here the root of the u-stem noun quercus, from *perk”u-*, is *perk”₃-, meaning ‘strike’ ([GMP 186]). So, *terpi-kéraunos* can be derived from *k”erpi-kéraunos* via metathesis from *perk”₇-kéraunos*. [[GN 2016.08.16 via GMP 181–201; see also Nagy 2010:337.]]

I.08.066–077

**subject heading(s):** kêr ‘cut, slice, portion, fated death’; *talanta* ‘scales’ of Zeus; *selas* ‘flash of light’; Will of Zeus

The momentum of the fighting between the Achaean and Trojans is hanging in the balance—until high noon arrives, at which point Zeus decides to get out his golden *talanta* ‘scales’. I.08.69, as he ready to weigh who will win and who will lose. In just a moment, the balance will be tipped in favor of the Trojans. As we see at I.08.070, Zeus had put two kêrë ‘portions’ at either end of the scales. Or, to say it etymologically, there are two ‘slices’ that are being weighed at either end, since the noun
kér is derived from the verb *keirein* ‘cut, slice’. You can slice it both ways, life or death. Right from the start, though, the slicing is viewed negatively, and that is why at I.08.070 the two slices that Zeus weighs on the scales are already both viewed as ‘slices of death’. For the moment, though, these slices are not yet really ‘slices of death’, since the action is still only at the tipping point, and the outcome is supposedly still in the balance. But the negative connotations of the word *kér* in Homeric diction, which regularly means ‘fated death’ in the singular, as at I.18.118, have already predetermined the prematurely negative view of the fate that now awaits the Achaeans. Once the tipping actually gets underway, the slices for the Achaeans now sink downward at I.08.073–074, while the slices for the Trojans lift upward at I.08.074. So now the ‘slices of death’ are meant for the Achaeans, not for the Trojans. For the Achaeans, both original slices now mean death, and, in fact, the originally single slice on the Achaean side of the scales can now be viewed as many slices for the many fighters. Many of these fighters will die, and so the original *kér* or ‘fate of death’ for the Achaeans cannot any longer be seen as a singularity. Now the slices can be viewed distributively: different Achaeans will get different slices of death, and that is why the single slice that had been pictured at each end of the scale at I.08.070 can now become the plural *kères* ‘slices’ of death for the Achaeans at I.08.073. Then at I.08.075 Zeus thunders from on high on top of Mount Ida, and he sends at I.08.075–076 a flaming thunderbolt toward the Achaeans. At I.08.076, the word for the thunderbolt is *selas*, meaning literally a ‘flash of light’. We see here the first occurrence of the word *selas* ‘flash of light’ in the *Iliad*. In occurrences to come, we will see that this powerful word signals the Will of Zeus. [[GN 2016.08.18 via BA 334–336, 338]]

I.08.078–117

subject heading(s): *hēnī-okhos* ‘chariot driver’; *parēoros* ‘trace horse’; Nestor’s entanglement; evocation; epic Cycle
What follows is a general commentary on these verses; what follows after that is an anchor comment on Nestor’s entanglement and the poetics of evocation.

Seeing the lightning sent by Zeus, I.08.076, the Achaeanschieftains are now thunderstruck with fear, I.08.076–077. Mentioned by name at I.08.078–079 as those chieftains who now retreat in terror are Idomeneus, Agamemnon, and the two Ajaxes. Only Nestor, it is said, does not retreat, though not because he does not want to: he simply cannot retreat because his chariot has been immobilized, I.08.080–086. The trace horse of Nestor’s chariot team of three horses has been shot dead by Paris and has fallen down violently to the ground, I.08.080–086. The old hero, drawing his sword, is now struggling to cut himself loose from the *parēoriai* ‘traces’ that were connected to the fallen horse and that have now entangled the chariot team, I.08.087–088. This trace horse, not named, is analogous to the trace horse of Achilles, named Pedasos, who is killed at a much later point in the *Iliad*, in a scene of chariot fighting that takes place at I.16.466–476. In that scene, a spear throw by Sarpedon in the course of his chariot fight with Patroklos hits Pedasos instead of Patroklos, I.16.466–468. At I.16.471 and at I.16.474, the narrative there refers to Pedasos explicitly as the *parēoros* ‘trace horse’ of a three-horse chariot team. As a trace horse, Pedasos is not attached to the yoke that attaches the other two horses to the chariot. This distinction is made clear at a slightly earlier moment, I.16.145–154, leading up to the chariot fight. At this moment, the premier chariot driver of Achilles, Automedon, is harnessing for Patroklos the war chariot of Achilles. On this chariot, Automedon and Patroklos will be riding off together as chariot rider and chariot fighter respectively. At this slightly earlier moment, we see that there are two immortal horses of Achilles, Xanthos and Balaos, who are attached to the yoke of the chariot, I.16.148–149, while the mortal trace horse Pedasos is simply connected to the *parēoriai* ‘traces’, I.16.152. At this same moment, I.16.153, a significant detail is added about Pedasos: this horse had been captured once upon a time by Achilles when that hero killed the horse’s former owner, who was Eītion the father of Andromache. Then, at I.16.466–469, when Pedasos is killed by the spear-throw of Sarpedon and falls violently to the ground, the traces of this trace horse get entangled in the reins connected to the other two horses, I.16.470–471, and Automedon the chariot driver must free himself from the entanglement by drawing his sword and cutting the traces, thus severing the ties to the dead trace horse, I.16.472–475. Having noted what will happen in this future action, we now return to the present, I.08.087–088: so, what happens to Nestor as he struggles to cut himself loose from his entanglement? Well, meanwhile, the old hero’s predicament has been spotted by Hector, who is now driving his own chariot at high speed toward Nestor, I.08.088–090, intending to attack him before Nestor can disentangle himself from his disabled chariot. As Hector charges ahead, he is holding on to the reins of his own chariot horses, since he is described at I.08.090 as the *hēnī-okhos* ‘chariot driver’ for the moment, or, to translate the word more literally, as ‘the one who holds on to the reins’. For the moment, then, it is the chariot fighter Hector and not his chariot driver who is here taking the initiative of attempting a high-speed attack on Nestor. Hector is thus taking over here from his own chariot driver. As we are about to see, this driver is a hero named Eniopeus, who at this precise moment must be standing next to Hector on the platform of the speeding chariot—but not driving the vehicle himself. This detail about Hector as the momentary chariot driver helps explain what happens
later on. Eventually, Hector’s driver Eniopeus will be killed while apparently still standing on the chariot platform: it will happen at I.08.119–124, where Diomedes throws his spear at Hector but hits Eniopeus instead, who dies instantly and falls out of the chariot. In that context, we will see that Eniopeus is now and only now described explicitly as the ἡνὶ-οξυος ‘chariot driver’, I.08.119. There is an irony here. If Eniopeus and not Hector had been driving the chariot when Diomedes threw his spear, it could have been Hector who got hit and killed. Having noted once again what will happen in the future action, we now return to the present. The Master Narrator goes on to say at I.08.090 that the entanglement of the old hero Nestor would surely have resulted in his death at the hands of Hector—had it not been for the intervention of the young hero Diomedes, I.08.091. Urging Nestor to leave behind his disabled chariot, Diomedes offers him an invitation: let the two heroes ride together on the new chariot of Diomedes and let them now counterattack Hector, I.08.092–112. And let the two theraponte ‘attendants’ meanwhile take away the horses and the chariot of Nestor, taking them back to a zone of safety, I.08.109. The old hero agrees to the invitation, I.08.112. So, the two ‘attendants’ now proceed to take away the chariot team of Nestor, I.08.113, and these two figures are identified here as Sthenelos, chariot driver of Diomedes, and Eurymedon, chariot driver of Nestor, I.08.114. Meanwhile the old hero Nestor joins Diomedes, mounting the platform of the young hero’s chariot. And then he even takes the reins of the chariot of Diomedes in hand and drives the chariot himself, I.08.116–117. So, for the moment, Nestor takes over from Sthenelos as the designated charioteer of Diomedes. [[GN 2016.08.18 via PH 207–214 (especially 208), H24H 7§8.]]

I.08.078–117

anchor comment on Nestor’s entanglement and the poetics of evocation

subject heading(s): Nestor’s entanglement; evocation; epic Cycle

This whole epic narrative about Nestor’s entanglement and his rescue by Diomedes is evocative of another epic narrative where the old hero gets entangled—and gets rescued this time by another young hero, his own son Antilokhos, from the onslaught of another enemy, the chariot fighter Memnon. In this other narrative, however, the son will die in the act of rescuing the father. He will be killed by Memnon. There is a reference to this other epic narrative in a song of Pindar, Pythian 6.28–42. The death of Antilokhos was also narrated in a part of the epic Cycle, the Aithiopis, attributed to Arctinus of Miletus, as we read in the plot-summary of Proclus p. 106 lines 4–6 (ed. Allen 1912). On the epic Cycle, see the inventory of terms and names. And there is a passing reference to the death of Antilokhos in O.04.186–188. That said, it is important to add a clarification: to say that the iliadic narrative about an entanglement experienced by Nestor is evocative of another epic narrative as found in the epic Cycle is not to say that the iliad is referring to a pre-existing text. In poetic traditions that stem from an evolving process of recomposition-in-performance, as in the case of Homeric poetry, any act of referencing needs to be viewed in terms of the historical context for any given performance. What can work as a reference in one context may not work so well—or work at all—in some other context. A performance that follows one epic version can refer—however indirectly—to another epic version, but only if those who hear the performance are expected to know both versions. Referencing can be direct, as when Sthenelos the chariot driver of Diomedes refers at I.02.119–130 to the role of these two heroes in the epic traditions of the Epigonoi, that is, The Sons-of-the-Seven-against Thebes. Or referencing can be indirect, as is the case here. The narrative about the entanglement of Nestor and his rescue by Diomedes is sure to have a special effect on those who already know of another narrative about a later entanglement of Nestor that leads to tragic consequences. So, the term evocation suits such indirect referencing. Viewed in this light, evocation in Homeric poetry can be defined simply as a reference made not directly but only indirectly from one traditional context to another. For another evocation of the epic moment when Nestor’s chariot gets entangled and his son Antilokhos gets killed in an effort to save the old hero, see the comment on I.09.057–058. [[GN 2016.08.18 via PH 207–214 (especially 208), H24H 7§8.]]

I.08.079

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; therapontes of Ares; ‘the two Ajaxes’

In contexts where the plural therapontes in combination with Αἰνίος ‘of Ares’ is applied to the Achaeans=Danaans=Argives (here, to the ‘two Ajaxes’) as a grouping of warriors, the deeper meaning is more evident than in other contexts. [[GN 2016.08.04 via the comment on I.02.110 via BA 293–295; GMP 48; H24H 6§32]]

I.08.104
I.08.107

subject heading(s): Plato’s Homeric quotations; Koine; Aristarchus

When a word break occurs before the final metrical sequence – – – – of the dactylic hexameter, the wording before the break tends to avoid a metrical sequence …– in Homeric manuscripts that Aristarchus considered more sophisticated, and the preferred metrical sequence is instead …–. In other manuscripts that Aristarchus considered koinei in the sense of ‘common’, however, wording shaped …– instead of …– is more freely allowed in that position. In Plato’s Homeric quotations, the ‘common’ version is occasionally attested. For example, in the case of I.08.107, Plato at Laches 191a-b quotes a version of this Homeric verse showing the infinitive διώκειν, with the last syllable scanned …–, whereas the medieval manuscript tradition, influenced by the judgment of Aristarchus, shows the alternative form διωχάμεν, with the last two syllables scanned …–. Also, in the case of I.14.097, Plato at Laws 4.706d quotes a version of this Homeric verse showing the infinitive ἔχειν, with the last syllable scanned …–, whereas the medieval manuscript tradition shows the alternative form ἐκάμεν, with the last two syllables scanned …–. Another kind of ‘common’ usage is the emotional exclamation οἵ οἵ (σιά) as quoted by Plato at Republic 3.388c for I.16.433, whereas the medieval manuscript tradition shows ὅ μοι (θ μοί). Such Homeric quotations by Plato, in can be argued, indicate that he had access to a manuscript or manuscripts of Homeric poetry that reflected an official version of Homeric poetry as it was notionally owned and managed by the Athenian State in the fifth century BCE and extending into the fourth, during which period a term like koine thus applied to a Homeric manuscript would have meant not only ‘common’ but also ‘standard’, since the adjective koine- was used in general with reference to the agenda of the Athenian State. By shorthand, the Athenian State version of Homeric poetry can be described as the Koine. For more on Aristarchus and the Koine, see under Aristarchus and see under Koine in the Inventory of terms and names. [[GN 2016.08.18 via HC 3§165.]]

I.08.113–114

subject heading(s): therapon ‘attendant, ritual substitute’

The dual therapontes here at I.08.113 is referring to Sthenelos and Euryomed, named at I.08.114, who as we know from related contexts are respectively the chariot drivers of Diomedes and Nestor. For the moment, however, Nestor has replaced Sthenelos as the chariot driver of Diomedes. And, also for the moment, Nestor has also displaced Euryomed in the role of chariot driver. For now, then, both Sthenelos and Euryomed function merely as attendants. [[GN 2016.08.04 via the comment on I.108.104.]]

I.08.119

subject heading(s): therapon ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; hēni-okhos ‘chariot driver’; “taking the hit”

The hero Eniopeus son of Thebaios is here both the hēni-okhos ‘chariot driver’ and the therapon ‘attendant, ritual substitute’ of Hector. When Diomedes throws his spear at Hector, it is Eniopeus who “takes the hit” instead, I.08.119–124. This detail is relevant to the fact, highlighted from the start, that Eniopeus is both the hēni-okhos ‘chariot driver’ and the therapon ‘attendant, ritual substitute’ of Hector, I.08.119. In this context, then, the deeper meaning of therapon as ‘ritual substitute’ is overt. The narrative goes on to say that Hector is deeply saddened by the death of his chariot driver, but he leaves the corpse of Eniopeus where that hero fell: instead of trying to rescue the corpse, Hector decides to fight on and immediately proceeds to select a new chariot driver, I.08.124–129, whose name is Arkeptolomos, I.08.128. [[GN 2016.08.04 via the comment on I.04.227 via Nagy 2015.05.01, 2015.05.08, 2015.05.15, 2015.05.26.]]
subject heading(s): menos ‘mental power’; psūkhē ‘spirit’; luein ‘release’; release of consciousness from the body

At the moment of his death here, the hero’s menos ‘mental power’ is released from his body, and, in the present context, the noun psūkhē ‘spirit’ is used as a synonym of menos. [[GN 2016.08.18 via GMP 88]]

I.08.130–171

subject heading(s): Will of Zeus

Here is where the momentum of Diomedes, aspiring for the title ‘best of the Achaeans’, is stopped dead in its tracks. Zeus signals it with his thunder and lightning, I.08.133, and now we see the Will of Zeus come alive, as anticipated already at I.08.066–077. The supreme god’s bolt lands right in front of the speeding horses that pull the chariot carrying Diomedes along with his temporary driver Nestor, and these horses now freeze in fear while the reins drop out of Nestor’s grip, I.08.134–138. [[GN 2016.08.18 via BA 334–335]]

I.08.170–171

subject heading(s): Will of Zeus; sēma ‘sign, signal’; nikē ‘victory’

Three times Zeus thunders from on high on top of Mount Ida, I.08.170, making a sēma ‘sign’, I.08.171, signaling that nikē ‘victory’ will now go to the Trojans, not to the Achaeans, I.08.171. See HC 4§109 for a survey of all Homeric situations where either Zeus or Athena awards nikē ‘victory’. [[GN 2016.08.18]]

I.08.175–176

subject heading(s): Will of Zeus; nikē ‘victory’; pēma ‘pain’

Hector recognizes the Will of Zeus here, as signaled by the nodding of the god’s head at I.08.175: for the moment, Zeus will give nikē ‘victory’ to Hector while giving pēma ‘pain’ to the Achaeans, I.08.176. [[GN 2016.08.18 via BA 64, 77, 334]]

I.08.180–183

subject heading(s): mnēmosunē ‘memory’; Battle for the Ships; fire of Hector

Hector predicts that there will be mnēmosunē ‘memory’, I.08.181, of the moment when he will set fire to the beached ships of the Achaeans in the epic Battle for the Ships. And this moment will be in fact pivotal for the Will of Zeus, which will find expression in the fire of Hector. It will be a moment to be recorded by the poetic memory of the Homeric iliad. See the comments on I.16.112 and on I.16.113. [[GN 2016.08.18 via BA 17, 335]]

I.08.185

subject heading(s): four-horse chariot; Dardanidai

Unlike other heroes in Homeric narrative, Hector has a chariot drawn by four rather than two horses. There are Athenian connotations to be seen here. As we learn from the Parian Marble, FGH 239 section 10, the Athenians claimed that Erikhthonios, a prototypical hero of Athens, was the inventor of the four-horse chariot on the occasion of the first chariot race held at the first Panathenaic festival in 1505/4 BCE. Correspondingly, there is a prototypical hero of Troy who is likewise Erikhthonios: is is said at I.20.219 and I.202.30 that this Erikhthonios was son of Dardanos and father of Tros, who in turn was the ancestor of Anchises father of Aeneas. In this light, we may compare the reference at I.05.271 to four chariot horses owned by Anchises. It can be argued that these details about four-horse chariots are relevant to Athenian agenda at work during an Athenian phase of Homeric transmission. [[GN 2016.08.18 via HPC 210]]

I.08.215
subject heading(s): ‘equal to Ares’, armor of Achilles

Hector here is said to be *atalantos* or ‘equal’ to Ares. This kind of equating of a hero with the war god will figure prominently in future scenes of mortal combat. Relevant are previous scenes of mortal combat involving Diomedes: see the comments at I.05.438, I.05.440–442, I.05.459. Besides Hector, as here at I.08.215 another hero who will be pointedly described as ‘equal to Ares’ is Patroklos. Besides sharing such an epithet, Hector and Patroklos will also be sharing the armor of Achilles: first it is Patroklos who wears this armor when he goes off to fight as a substitute for Achilles; and then Hector will wear it after he kills Patroklos. [[GN 2016.08.18 via BA 294; see also BA 327.]]

**I.08.220–227**

subject heading(s): bay of the Hellespont; sterns of the Achaeans ships; Scamander; *klisiā* ‘shelter’; Hellespont; *eris* ‘strife’; post-heroic age; headquarters of the Achaeans; *naustathmon* ‘ship-station’

The ships of the Achaeans are beached along the shores of a large U-shaped bay that opens into the Hellespont. See Map 1 and Map 2 at HPC 157 and 158 respectively. Such a bay no longer exists, because of long-term silt from the river Scamander, which emptied into the bay. In the second millennium BCE and even later, however, the bay was very much of a reality, as the maps show, and the visualization in the Homeric *iliad* approximates such a topographical reality. This is not to say, however, that we should imagine the ships of the Achaeans as floating at anchor in the waters of such a bay: rather, the *iliad* pictures the ships beached along the shores of the bay, with their sterns facing inland and their prows facing out toward the waters. On this positioning, see also the comment on I.14.027–036. Exploring further the Iliadic visualization, we can see that the beached ship of Odysseus is located at the bottom of the U-shaped bay, at the south in the middle of the bayline, while the beached ships of Achilles and Ajax are located respectively at the upper left and the upper right tips of the U, at the northwest and northeast. To be highlighted here is a detail about the ship of Odysseus: the king Agamemnon is shown standing on the deck of this beached ship, which is said to be located *en messatōi* ‘in the middlemost space’, I.08.223, and from here this over-king projects his voice of royal authority, shouting mightily to all the Achaeans stationed at their own ships, I.08.227. Correspondingly, all the Achaeans stationed at all the beached ships can hear the king’s voice—from the ship of Achilles at one extreme of the U-shaped bay all the way to the ship of Ajax at the other extreme, I.08.224–226 (HPC 160–161). Agamemnon’s own beached ship, together with the ships of Diomedes and Nestor, is located near the ship of Odysseus, and it is in this ‘middlemost space’ of the U-shaped bayline that the central station of the Achaeans is visualized by the narrative, I.08.223. In the later comments at I.11.005–016, I.11.806–808, and I.14.027–036, there will be more to say about the locations of all these beached ships. To be highlighted already now, however, is the general reference to the *klisiā* or ‘shelters’ here at I.08.220, which are the abodes of the heroes. Then at I.08.224 the same word *klisiā* refers specifically to the abodes of Achilles and Ajax, mentioned at I.08.224–225. The description here shows that the *klisiā* ‘shelters’ of these two heroes are pointedly aligned with their beached ships. As for the ships beached at the middle of the bayline in the south, they mark a political and sacral centerpoint for the Achaeans. The evidence for the preceding formulation will be presented in the comment on I.11.806–808. [[GN 2016.08.18 via HPC 153; also HPC 160-161.]]

**I.08.228–235**

Q&T via BA 44

subject heading(s): goading by blaming; distributive action in the plural; *dais* ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’; micro-Iliad; First Song of Demodokos; *eukhesthai* ‘declare’; ‘best of the Achaeans’

By blaming or insulting his fellow Achaeans for not daring to stand up to the onslaught of Hector, Agamemnon is goading them into action. His insulting words recall a scene that took place in their collective epic past, on the island of Lemnos, where the Achaeans were competitively boasting about the exploits they will perform in the future when they fight in the Trojan War. The idea of ‘boasting’ is conveyed by the noun *eukhōlē*, which is derived from *eukhesthai* ‘declare’. As we already saw at I.01.091, what is at stake when an Achaean hero boasts in the *iliad* centers on the all-important question: who is the ‘best of the Achaeans’? The noun *eukhōlē* ‘boastings’ in the plural here at I.08.229 indicates a distributive action: the Achaeans were boasting not as a group but individually and competitively. The object of such competition and dispute would have been: to show who is the *aristos* ‘best’ of them all. When Agamemnon says at I.08.229 ‘we were saying that we were best [aristoi]’, the plural construction here is distributive in meaning: ‘each one of us was saying that he was the best
aristost]. We see in this scene of a past event at Lemnos an epic precedent for what is ongoing in the present time of the Trojan War as narrated in the Iliad. Just as there was a dispute at Lemnos, there is a dispute ongoing in the Iliad about that all-important question: who is the ‘best of the Achaeans’? A most relevant detail in the story about the dispute at Lemnos is the fact that the context for the quarrel that took place at that time over the same question, who is the ‘best of the Achaeans’, was a feast where meat was being distributed. I.08.231. So the setting for the quarrel was an event that is elsewhere called a dais, to be defined as ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’ in Homeric diction. As we saw in the comment for I.01.423–425, a dais is a feast where meat is distributed, and this meat comes from the sacrifice of a sacrificial animal. Thus the act of sacrifice converts the feast of humans into a notional feast of the gods. This notion, ‘feast of the gods’, is made explicit in the “micro-Iliad” of O.8.072–083, which is the First Song of Demodokos. At O.08.076, the setting is described this way: θεός ἔν δόριν δώλῳ ‘at a sumptuous feast [dais] of the gods’. So, what is happening at this feast? There is a dispute going on (διποικίον at O.08.076), and the dispute is called a neikos ‘quarrel’ at O.08.075. The disputants are Odysseus and Achilles, who are described at O.08.078 as ‘the best of the Achaeans’. In terms of such a dispute in the context of a feast, each one of the two heroes would be claiming to be the ‘best of the Achaeans’. Similarly in the context of the feast at Lemnos as narrated by Agamemnon, each one of the heroes attending would be making such a claim. [GN 2016.08.18 via BA 44–45.]

I.08.315

subject heading(s): menos ‘mental power’; psükhe ‘spirit’; luein ‘release’; release of consciousness from the body

At the moment of his death here, the hero’s menos ‘mental power’ is released from his body, and, in the present context, the noun psükhe ‘spirit’ is used as a synonym of menos. [GN 2016.08.18 via GMP 88.]

I.08.339

subject heading(s): haptesthai ‘grab a hold of’; language of praise/blame

The verb haptesthai ‘grab a hold of’ here at I.08.339 has as its subject a hunting dog that bites and as its object the animal that is bitten by the dog, as we see at I.08.338. In other contexts, to be cited in the comment on O.10.379, the same verb can be metaphorized with reference to the language of blame. [GN 2016.08.18 via BA 226.]

I.08.363

subject heading(s): aethlos (áthlos) ‘ordeal’; Labors of Héraklēs

The noun aethlos (áthlos) ‘ordeal’ in the plural, aethloi, programmatically refers to the Labors of Héraklēs. These aethloi ‘ordeals’ were life-and-death struggles imposed on the hero by Eurystheus, who was socially superior to him but inferior otherwise. [GN 2016.08.18 via PH 138.]

I.08.367

anchor comment on Gates of Hädēs

subject heading(s): pulartês ‘gate-closer’; Héraklēs; Hädēs; Gates of Hädēs; Gates of the Sun; Pylōs; entrance to the underworld

The constellation of words linked with pulē in the sense of ‘gate’, such as pul-artēs ‘gate-closer’ here (genitive πυλάρτων), is linked with the idea of the pulai ‘gates’ of Hädēs. See the comments on I.05.395–404, I.05.646, I.11.671; see also Points 5 and 6 in the anchor comment at I.23.071–076. [GN 2016.08.18 via GMP 225–226.]

I.08.379–380

subject heading(s): exposition of the dead body to dogs and birds; cremation

The very idea of exposing a dead body to be eaten by dogs and birds, as conjured here at I.08.379–380, is considered to be an abomination in the Iliad, by contrast with the ritually correct practice of cremation. See the comment on I.01.003–005. [GN 2016.08.18 via BA 226.]
The cosmic river Ókeanos, encircling the known world, is a boundary delimiting light from darkness, wakefulness from sleep, life from death. The sun rises from the Ókeanos at sunrise, just as it sets into it at sunset. At I.07.421–423 we saw sunrise; now at I.08.485–486 we see sunset. [[GN 2016.08.18 via BA 196; also GMP 99, 237–238, 246, 257.]]

The words spoken by Hector here reveal an overweening desire to be an immortal god, not a mortal human. By speaking this way, the hero is challenging the cosmic order. [[GN 2016.08.18 via GMP 299.]]

subject heading(s): impossible wishes

lemmatizing: ἔλπομαι εὐχόμενος vs. εὐχόμαι ἔλπόμενος

Aristarchus debated with Zenodotus of Ephesus (the debate is indicated by way of the sign ἢ in front of the verse), who attested the variant ἔλπομαι εὐχόμενος. (On the readings of Zenodotus as opposed by Aristarchus, see under Zenodotus and under Aristarchus in the Inventory of terms and names.) Aristarchus preferred the variant εὐχόμαι ἔλπόμενος, which has been transmitted in the medieval manuscript tradition. As Muellner 1976:58-62 shows, both variants can be justified on the basis of analyzing the formulaic system of Homeric diction. [[GN 2016.08.18 via PasP 133, 148.]]

subject heading(s): wishes correlated with premises; aspiration for immortality

Here is a working translation: ‘If only I [539] could be immortal and unaging for all days to come, [540] and if only I could be honored [tiesthai] just as Athena and Apollo are honored, [541] — as surely as this day brings misfortune to the Argives’ (ἐά γάρ ἐγών ὡς [539] εἰς ἄθανατος καὶ ἀγήρως ἡματα πάντα [540] τιοῦμη δ’ ὡς τίετ’ Αθηναίη καὶ Ἀπόλλων, [541] ὡς νῦν ἡμέρῃ ἢ δε κακὼν φέρει Ἀργεῖοι). Hector’s aspiration to become immortal and ageless and to receive the same honors as received by the divinities Athena and Apollo, I.08.538–540, is worded in such a way as to invite a cosmic sanction. On the syntax of the wording, see the comment on I.18.464–466. Hector’s wording here is especially dangerous because it would be provocative to Athena, who figures as this hero’s divine antagonist: see the comment on I.06.286–311. [[GN 2016.08.18 via BA 148; also GMP 294–301.]]

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**Iliad** Rhapsody 9

2016.08.26 / enhanced 2018.09.08

The Master Narrator now approaches what can surely be seen as the highest point so far in the narrative arc of the Homeric Iliad. Achilles has not spoken since Rhapsody 1. Now, in Rhapsody 9, he will speak again. And what he says will define what can and cannot happen in the rest of the Iliad. [[GN 2016.08.26.]]
I.09.001–003

anchor comment on a Rhapsody as one of 24 units of performance

subject heading(s): rhapsodic sequencing

The beginning of Rhapsody 9 picks up where Rhapsody 8 ended. There is a brief reference at I.09.001 to the ending of Rhapsody 8. Then, in the rest of the verse at I.09.001 and continuing into I.09.002–003 there is a transition into the narrative as it now resumes. A fitting term for this sort of transition is rhapsodic sequencing. Here as elsewhere, the transition of the narrative from one rhapsody to the next shows that each one of the 24 rhapsodies of the Iliad—and each one of the 24 rhapsodies of the Odyssey—is a distinct unit of performance. In the classical period of Athens, as we see in Plato’s Ion, professional performers of Homeric rhapsodies were known as rhapsoïdoi ‘rhapsodes’. The term rhapsoïdēs, translated in this comment as ‘rhapsody’, originates from the traditions of rhapsoïdoi ‘rhapsodes’ who performed poetry in competitive relay with other rhapsodes. Accordingly, the rhapsoïdai ‘rhapsodies’ of Homeric poetry can be seen as units of relay performance. [[GN 2016.08.25 via PasP 180–188.]]

I.09.002

subject heading(s): morphology of hetairē ‘companion’

The name Phōuza, which is a personification of phōüza ‘running away out of fear’ is described here at I.09.02 as the hetairē ‘companion’ of Phōbos, which is a personification of phōbos ‘turning and running out of fear’. The immediate context is that the Trojans are now winning while the Achaeans are losing, I.09.1–2. The verse-final feminine form hetairē, a morphologically leveled replacement of the older feminine form hētairē, likewise meaning ‘companion’, occurs only here in the Iliad. In this case, the morphological leveling can be explained as a replacement of the alternation *i̞a-/i̞ē* by way of non-alternating *i̞ē*. In the Odyssey as well, feminine hetairē occurs only once, O.17.271. Elsewhere in the Homeric tradition, feminine hetairē occurs only in Homeric Hymn to Hermes 31 and 478. In all three of these other occurrences as well, hetairē is verse-final. The application of hetairē to Phōuza here at I.09.02 is comparable to the application of the vocalically rhyming form krataié to Moïra, personification of moïra in the sense of ‘fate, destiny’. This form krataié, which is likewise verse-final, is found nine times in the Iliad but not once in the Odyssey. For the occurrences, see the comment on I.05.083. As in the case of hetairē, this feminine form krataié can be explained as a morphologically leveled replacement of an older feminine form, to be reconstructed as kratai-úl-ē and meaning ‘whose power [υρ-] has the upper-hand [kratos]’. In this case as well, the morphological leveling involves a replacement of the alternation *i̞a-/i̞ē* by way of non-alternating *i̞ē*. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 351–352.]]

I.09.003

subject heading(s): pēnthos ‘grief’; akhos ‘grief’
As the Achaeans are being routed by the Trojans, I.09.1–2, they are afflicted with penthos ‘grief’. Whenever the Achaeans are losing and the Trojans are winning, they suffer *penthos* or, to say it by way of this noun’s synonym, *akhos*. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 351–352; also BA 94, 333, 337, 339; HTL 132]]

I.09.004–008

subject heading(s): simile of a storm at sea; Boreas the North Wind; Zephyros the West Wind; Hellespont; *phrix* ‘shuddering’; *Phrixos*; “speaking name” (*nomen loquens*); *pontos* ‘crossing [of the sea]’

The *penthos* ‘grief’ felt by the losing Achaeans is now compared, by way of a simile, to a seastorm brought by the North Wind and the West Wind personified respectively as Boreas and Zephyros, I.09.005: these winds come suddenly and violently from the direction of Thrace, blowing across the narrow strait of the Hellespont. See the comment on I.07.063–064. As the narrative of the *illiad* advances, such a violent seastorm will become a fitting synonym also for the danger facing the Achaeans as their fortunes in war start giving way to the overwhelming momentum of the Trojan offensive led by Hector. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 333, 337, 339]]

I.09.004

subject heading(s): *ikthuoeis* ‘fish-swarming’ as an epithet of *pontos* ‘crossing [of the sea]’

As an epithet describing the noun *pontos* ‘crossing [of the sea]’, the adjective *ikthuoeis* ‘fish-swarming’ signals danger. At O.14.135 and O.24.291, for example, the fear is expressed that Odysseus in his travels at sea could have died by falling overboard, and then the *ikthuoe* ‘fish’ in the *pontos* ‘crossing [of the sea]’ would have devoured him. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 340]]

I.09.008–009

subject heading(s): *akhos* ‘grief’; *penthos* ‘grief’

After the intervening simile, at I.09.004–008, of the storm at sea, the *penthos* ‘grief’ felt by the Achaeans at I.09.003 is described further: this grief, it is said at I.09.008, is felt by them inside their collective ‘heart’, as expressed by *thūmos*. But then, at I.09.009, the *penthos* ‘grief’ of I.09.003 is now reconfigured as the *akhos* ‘grief’ felt by the leader of the Achaeans, Agamemnon, in his individuated ‘heart’, as expressed this time by *ētōr*, which is a partial synonym of *thūmos*. In this ring-composition, the *penthos* ‘grief’ of verse 3 comes full circle with the synonym *akhos* ‘grief’ of verse 9, but the circle has in the meantime rotated the perspective from a collective to an individuated ‘heart’. [[GN 2016.08.25]]

I.09.057–058

subject heading(s): Nestor’s entanglement; evocation; epic Cycle

Here at I.09.057–058, Nestor makes a remark to Diomedes about that hero’s relatively young age. You could be, Nestor tells Diomedes, the youngest of my sons. Elsewhere, at O.03.412–415, six of Nestor’s sons are mentioned, including Peisistratos, who figures prominently in the *Odyssey*, and Thrasymedes, who has a major role in the fighting at Troy in the *illiad*. Missing from this list in the *Odyssey*, because he had been killed in action at Troy, is Antilokhos. There is a passing reference to the death of Antilokhos at O.04.186–188. When Nestor makes his remark at I.09.057–058 about the youngest of his sons, the referent here must be Antilokhos, since that hero’s relatively young age is noted elsewhere as well in the *illiad*. For example, in a battle scene where the Achaeans are urging each other to fight hard, Menelaos singles out Antilokhos as he urges him on, telling him there is no Achaean there who is younger. And the relatively young age of Diomedes is likewise noted in the *illiad*. In another battle scene, at I.14.109–114, while addressing his fellow warriors, Diomedes boasts that ‘I am the youngest among you’ (νεώτερος είμι μεθ' ὑμών), I.14.112. So, it may be that Diomedes is even younger than Antilokhos, but that is not the point. Rather, the point is that Antilokhos and Diomedes are comparably young. Nestor himself highlights the youth of Antilokhos when he addresses him on a later occasion, I.23.306. In view of all these other Homeric references, Nestor’s remark at I.09.057–058 about Diomedes as comparable in age to Antilokhos can be seen as an evocation of an epic moment that is awaiting Nestor in the future. At that future moment, Antilokhos, his own young son, will try to save the old hero when Nestor gets entangled in his chariot and is about to be attacked and killed by the chariot fighter Memnon. Antilokhos will
succeed in saving Nestor, but it is the young son and not the old father who will now get killed by Memnon. This epic moment, which is in the future for the *iliad*, is evidently narrated in a part of the epic Cycle, the *Althiopis*, attributed to Arctinus of Miletus, as we read in the plot-summary of Proclus p. 106 lines 4–6 (ed. Allen 1912). On the epic Cycle, see the Inventory of terms and names. There is also a reference to this same epic moment in a song of Pindar, Pythian 6.28–42. These non-iliadic passages have already been cited in the anchor comment on the relevant Iliadic passage, I.08.076–117. In that passage, which is already in the epic past from the standpoint of the current Iliadic passage taken from I.09.057–058, Diomedes was acting as a stand-in for Antilokhos, performing in the epic past a task that mirrors the task that will be undertaken by Antilokhos in the epic future. That task was to save Nestor from his entanglement in his chariot. Diomedes saved the life of Nestor, and Nestor knows it when he now compares young Diomedes to his own young son, I.09.057–058. As for Antilokhos, he too will save the life of Nestor, but, unlike Diomedes, he will lose his own life in performing this same task in the future, which is, to save Nestor from another entanglement. And of course Nestor does not yet know it. So, there is an irony in the remark made by the old hero here in comparing young Diomedes to young Antilokhos, though of course the character of Nestor did not intend such an irony. The intentionality, rather, is to be found in the poetics of evocation. [[GN 2016.08 via PH 208]]

I.09.076–077

subject heading(s): fire of Hector; Battle for the Ships

Nestor makes a remark about the watchfires of the Trojans: these fires, he says, are too close for comfort—too close, that is, to the beached ships of the Achaeans. We see here a premonition of the Battle for the Ships and of the fire of Hector, which will threaten to burn down the ships and thus destroy the Achaeans. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 335.]]

I.09.097–099

subject heading(s): skēptron ‘scepter’

By virtue of holding the skēptron ‘scepter’, I.09.099, Agamemnon is the holder of royal authority when he speaks, and this authority emanates from Zeus. By implication, Agamemnon would not have the authority to speak if he did not hold the scepter. [[GN 2016.08.25 via PH 258 and GMP 53.]]

I.09.104–108

subject heading(s): noeĩn ‘take note (of), notice’

This verb noeĩn ‘take note (of), notice’, corresponding to the noun nóos ‘mind’, is used in contexts where the subject of the verb is taking the initiative in doing whatever is being done. Here at I.09.104–105 it is the hero Nestor who boasts of possessing a special aptitude for ‘taking note, noticing, having things in mind’, noeĩn. At I.09.104–105, Nestor literally ‘has in mind’ a ‘mindfulness’, nóos, that is superior to the thinking of all other heroes. [[GN 2016.08.25 and GN 2016.09.14 via BA 51.]]

I.09.115–120

subject heading(s): atē ‘aberration’

Agamemnon here at I.09.115 admits that it was atē for him to dishonor Achilles. In such a context, the noun atē can be translated as an ‘aberration’. The noun is used here in the plural, atai, indicating specific instances of aberration, not just an overall error. After all, in his quarrel with Achilles, Agamemnon insulted the prime hero of the Iliad in multiple ways. Agamemnon goes on to say that he is ready to pay apoĩna ‘compensation’, I.09.120, for his aberrations. For Achilles to reject this compensation has its own risks, as we see in the comment on I.09.502–512: here too, there is a danger of atē ‘aberration’, I.09.512. [[GN 2016.08.25 via PH 254.]]

I.09.120–161

subject heading(s): offer of Agamemnon to Achilles; claim of Agamemnon to superiority over Achilles
Agamemnon here formulates the terms of the compensation that he offers to Achilles. The last four verses of his formulation, I.09.158–161, bluntly reassert his claim to be superior to Achilles. When Odysseus restates to Achilles the terms of Agamemnon, I.09.260–299, he omits what Agamemnon claims about his superiority to Achilles. It can be argued that Achilles, if he had accepted the terms of Agamemnon as reasserted by Agamemnon himself, would have put at risk his own epic stature in the Iliad. [GN 2016.08.25 via BA 51.]

**I.09.128–131 / I.09.270–272**

Q&T via HPC 241

subject heading(s): epic deeds of Achilles before the time dramatized in the Iliad; seven captive Aeolian women from Lesbos; Achilles the Aeolian

Among the prizes that Agamemnon at I.09.128–131 offers as compensation to Achilles are seven captive Aeolian women who were captured by Achilles when he conquered the Aeolian island of Lesbos. The story about these women as it is told here is then retold at I.09.270–272. The significance of the Aeolian identification of these women will be analyzed in the anchor comment that follows. The focus in the present comment, by contrast, is on the moral problems that are raised in the story about the actual capture of these women—and of other women in the Iliad who suffer the same fate of captivity. Two prominent examples are Briseis and Chryseis, captured by Achilles when he conquered the cities of Lynessos and Thêbê respectively, as noted in the anchor comment at I.02.689–694. All these women—the seven unnamed ones and the two named ones—evidently became the common property of the Achaeans after being captured by Achilles, and it appears that Agamemnon as the Achaeans over-king originally had a say, ostensibly by way of public deliberation with the rest of the Achaeans, in deciding which woman was allotted as a war-prize to which Achaeans man. Even though all these women were captured by Achilles alone, they were thereafter to be distributed as war-prizes among the Achaeans men as a group. In terms of this reconstruction of the story as outlined here, the role of Agamemnon in having a say about the awarding of these captive women as war-prizes is morally problematic. Likewise problematic is this over-king’s role in the original awarding of the captive woman Briseis, with the approval of the Achaeans, as a war-prize to Achilles—and in the parallel awarding of the captive woman Chryseis to himself. Moreover, the seizing of Briseis by Agamemnon after his loss of Chryseis is even more problematic. Here, then, is the overriding question to be asked about the treatment of all these women as war-prizes: is Agamemnon entitled to have a say in deciding which Achaeans man will have sex with which woman? And the question can be broadened: are the Achaeans as a group entitled to make such decisions? Such a broader question extends also to Achilles. [GN 2016.08.26.]

**I.09.128–131 / I.09.270–272**

anchor comment on Aeolian women in the Iliad, part 2

subject heading(s): conquest of Lesbos by Achilles the Aeolian; seven captive Aeolian women from Lesbos; conquest of Lynessos and Thêbê by Achilles the Aeolian; Briseis the Aeolian; Chryseis the Aeolian; Andromache the Aeolian; charter myth; etiology; "colonization"; “Aeolian Migration”; Lesbos, Tenedos, and the facing mainland of Asia Minor; songmaking of Sappho/Alcaeus; Aeolian poetics; Achilles the Aeolian

The story that is being told here at I.09.128–131 and retold at I.09.270–272 centers on one single stunning event: Achilles captured the entire island of Lesbos. By implication, this island became Aeolian precisely because it was captured by the principal hero of the Achaeans. The vastness of this story is even broader in scope, since we can see in the Iliad occasional references to other such conquests accomplished by Achilles. Most prominent are the Iliadic references to his capturing of two cities located on the Aeolian mainland of Asia Minor: they are Lynessos and Thêbê. In the Iliad, the conquest of Lynessos by Achilles and his capturing of Briseis are mentioned for the first time at I.02.690–691. What then follows at I.02.691 is a mention of his conquering the walled city of Thêbê as well. Thêbê is mentioned already at I.01.366: it was there that Achilles captured another woman, Chryseis, when he conquered that city, I.01.366–369. For background on Briseis and on Chryseis, I again strongly recommend the work of Duê 2002 and 2006, listed in the Bibliography. Another native of Thêbê was Andromache, who had been married off to Hector at Troy before the beginning of the Trojan War: she was taken captive only later, after Troy was captured, and she was then allotted as a war-prize to the son of Achilles, Neoptolemos: the story was told in an epic that was part of the epic Cycle and was known as the Iliou Persis ‘ Destruction of Ilion’, attributed to
Arctinus of Miletus, plot summary by Proclus p. 108 line 9 (ed. Allen 1912). That said, I now elaborate further on the argument initiated in the anchor comment at I.02.689–694: the conquests of these territories by Achilles, especially his capture of Lesbos, can be interpreted as a charter myth that etiologizes a prehistoric or even non-historical “colonization” of east Aeolis, as it were, by west Aeolian migrants from Thessaly, situated in the European mainland, which was the reputed birthplace of Achilles. See Nagy 2011b:171–173. In using the term “east Aeolis” here, I am referring to the islands of Lesbos and Tenedos, together with the facing mainland of northern Asia Minor. The “colonization” of this area has conventionally been described as the “Aeolian Migration,” and the term ‘migration’ here matches neatly the appropriate Greek word, apoikía as used in Strabo 9.2.3 C401 and elsewhere (see Nagy 2011b:161). The reference at I.09.129 to the captive women from Lesbos can be correlated with the poetic traditions of Lesbos as later attested in the songs of Sappho and Alcaeus, both dated around 600 BCE. These poetic traditions, which are decidedly Aeolian, derive not only from the island of Lesbos but also from the island of Tenedos and from the mainland of northern Asia Minor facing these two islands. See HPC 184–185. Traces of these Aeolian poetic traditions can be seen in the Iliadic references to such figures as Briseis, Chryseis, Andromache, and the seven unnamed captive women from Lesbos. All these figures derive from Aeolian poetic traditions, and the same can be said about the figure of Achilles himself: in terms of his poetic heritage, he is Achilles the Aeolian. See Nagy 2011b:171–172. But there is an important difference to be highlighted here: Achilles is an Aeolian from European Thessaly, while the captive women are Aeolians from Asia Minor and from the offshore islands of Lesbos and Tenedos (on the captive woman Hekamede from Tenedos, see the anchor comment at I.11.624–627). In the Ionian poetic traditions of epic as exemplified by Homeric poetry, we can track the early influence of corresponding Aeolian poetic traditions as exemplified at a later period, around 600 BCE, by the songmaking of Sappho and Alcaeus. See also anchor comment at I.02.689–694 on: Aeolian women in the iliad, part 1 and anchor comment at I.11.624–627 on: Aeolian women in the iliad, part 3.

[[GN 2016.08.25 via HPC 149, 241; see also BA 140–141.]]

I.09.130

subject heading(s): seven captive Aeolian women from Lesbos; beauty contest in Lesbos; sacred space of Hérâ in Lesbos; songmaking of Sappho/Alcaeus; pattern-weaving

The description of the women from Lesbos as victorious over other women in their beauty can be interpreted as a reference to a local tradition at Lesbos known as the Kallistêia, which was a kind of ritualized beauty contest for girls and for women. The scholia D for the iliad give details, with specific reference to I.09.130: this beauty contest was a seasonally recurring event that took place in a federal space that was shared by five cities on the island of Lesbos, and this space was sacred to the goddess Hérâ. See Nagy 2015 §§135–159. There are occasional references to this space in what remains of the songs of Sappho and Alcaeus (again, Nagy 2015). Also, as we see at I.09.128, the beauty of the women of Lesbos is matched by the beauty of their handiwork, which externalizes their aristocratic charisma. Such handiwork, as we will see in another comment, comes to life in the skillfulness displayed by women in practicing their art of pattern-weaving: a prime example is Andromache the Aeolian, described at I.22.440–441 in the act of pattern-weaving. There and elsewhere, the craft of pattern-weaving by Aeolian women is linked with the power of the craft of Homeric poetry to make contact with the Bronze Age. See MoM 2 §§69–81. [[GN 2016.08.25 via HPC 237, 242, 245, 302.]]

I.09.158–161

subject heading(s): claim of Agamemnon to superiority over Achilles

Here is where Agamemnon reasserts his claim to be superior to Achilles. See the comment on the whole passage, I.09.120–161. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 52.]]

I.09.167–170

Q&T via BA 50

subject heading(s): sequence of speakers for the embassy to Achilles; visual cues reinforcing verbal cues

Here is where Nestor formulates the sequence of speakers for the embassy to Achilles: Phoenix must lead, I.09.168, followed by Ajax and then by Odysseus, I.09.169. At I.09.167, Nestor reinforces his verbal formulation by specially glancing at each one of the three ambassadors. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 50.]]
I.09.179–181

subject heading(s): visual cues reinforcing verbal cues

Q&T via BA 51

Nestor signals to the three ambassadors, glancing at them with coded looks, especially at Odysseus. Once again, the special glances of Nestor, I.09.180, reinforce his verbal formulation. See the comment on I.09.167–170. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 51.]]

I.09.182–198

subject heading(s): problematic duals of Rhapsody 9; dual vs. plural; plural vs. dual; ellipsis

As the three ambassadors and the two heralds proceed toward the shelter of Achilles, a series of dual forms is activated in the narrative, starting already with the very first verse and continuing from there: 182, 183, 185, 192, 196, 197, 198. The intervening plurals as at 186 are negligible, since plurals can normally substitute for duals in Homeric diction. But duals cannot substitute for plurals. So, the problem is, who are the referents in these contexts where the dual form is used? One way to approach the problem is to follow through on the formulation of Nestor, who had said that Phoenix must lead the embassy, I.09.168, followed by Ajax and then by Odysseus, I.09.169. See the comment on I.09.167–170. But then, when the group reaches the shelter of Achilles, it is said explicitly that Odysseus now takes the lead, I.09.192. Further, when Ajax signals to Phoenix at I.09.223, it is Odysseus who picks up the signal instead, as indicated by the verb noēn ‘take note (of), notice’ (see further the comment on I.09.223), and now it will be Odysseus and not Phoenix who delivers the first of the three speeches. At I.09.224, Odysseus fills a goblet with wine and toasts Achilles—a gesture that may have seemed more appropriate for Achilles to perform as the host, not for Odysseus as the guest. For Odysseus to violate the etiquette is not to violate the traditions of myth, however, in that it is traditional for the figure of Odysseus to violate rules of etiquette. At O.08.475–476, to cite another example, Odysseus seems to be behaving like a host in a situation where he is really the guest. For more on this point, see HQ 142. In any case, right after pouring the wine and toasting Achilles, Odysseus starts at I.09.225 to deliver the first of the three speeches addressed by the three ambassadors to Achilles. Only after this speech of Odysseus, I.09.225–306, and after the reply of Achilles to that speech, I.09.308–429, will Phoenix get a chance to give his own speech, I.09.434–605—even though Nestor had intended for Phoenix to be the first speaker. So, returning to I.09.192, where Odysseus already takes the lead away from Phoenix, we can view this point in the narrative as the marker of a transition: before this point, the dual forms could refer to Ajax and Odysseus, as led by Phoenix, but then, after this point, the dual forms could refer to Phoenix and Ajax, as led by Odysseus. Alternatively the dual forms in these verses could have an elliptic function, where a singular X is paired with a group Y. This way, the dual still refers to a pair, even though the second part of the pair is a group. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 42–58, HQ 138–145.]]

I.09.185–191

subject heading(s): klea andreōn ‘the glories [klea] of men’; name of Patroklos; “speaking name” (nomen loquens); rhapsodic sequencing; sorrows of Andromache; lament

As the three ambassadors and the two heralds enter the shelter of Achilles, they find the hero singingklea andreōn ‘the glories [klea] of men’ while his companion Patroklos is listening to the song, waiting to continue it where Achilles will leave off. We see here a dramatization of relay singing, which is a model for the poetic world of rhapsōdοi ‘rhapsodes’ who perform Homeric poetry in sequence. But the relay from one performance to the next is a sequencing that does not have to happen only at one particular time. The sequencing can be seen as happening over time. Relevant here is the meaning of the name of Patroklos, which is a “speaking name” (nomen loquens), Patroklēōs ‘he who has the glories [klea] of the ancestors [patēres]’. Here the etymology of the name is adjusted by way of interpreting the componentkleōs ‘glory’ in the plural sense of the word, not only in the singular sense that was noted in the comment on I.01.345. In terms of this meaning, the kleōs ‘glory’ of song is passed on, from one generation to the next, as the living heritage of the patēres ‘ancestors’. As for the original singing of Achilles himself in his shelter, it mirrors the singing of the god Apollo, who performs his songs while accompanying himself on the lyre. In the case of the lyre played by Achilles as he sings, it had once belonged to Eōtion, father of Andromache. As we have seen in the anchor comment at I.06.407–439, Andromache in the iliad sings laments in expressing her sorrows. Such singing is relevant to songs sung about and perhaps also by Achilles himself. In the case of
songs sung about Achilles, we know for a fact that these songs touched on that hero’s direct involvement in the sorrowful fate of Andromache herself. On that involvement, see the comment on I.17.194–214. [[GN 2016.08.25 via PasP 71–73, HTL 143, HPC 239; also PH 201–202.]]

I.09.193–198

subject heading(s): ascending scale of affection; *philos* (plural *philoi*) ‘near and dear’; *philtatos* ‘nearest and dearest’; *ekhthros* ‘hateful, hostile’

Achilles greets the ambassadors in the dual, I.09.197–198, and not in the plural. And he refers to them first as *philoi* ‘near and dear’, I.09.197, and then as the *philtatoi* ‘most near and dear’ among the Achaeans, I.09.198; again at I.09.204, he refers to them as *philtatoi* ‘most near and dear’. But are the ambassadors really at the very top of this hero’s ascending scale of affection? The dual construction of the verb in the syntax of I.09.197 might indicate that one of the three ambassadors is being left out of the hero’s reference to his nearest and dearest friends among all the Achaeans. The ambassador who might be left out is Odysseus. At I.09.312–313, Achilles says to Odysseus: whoever says one thing but means another thing is as *ekhthros* ‘hateful’ to me as the Gates of Hádēs, I.09.313. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 52–57, 106.]]

I.09.223

subject heading(s): *noeîn* ‘take note (of), notice’; *neueîn* ‘nod’

Here again the verb *noeîn* ‘take note (of), notice’ applies to the actions of Odysseus, who is specially linked with the meaning of this verb. [[GN 2016.09.14.]]

I.09.225–306

subject heading(s): speech of Odysseus to Achilles

Here is the speech of Odysseus to Achilles. It is the first of the three speeches to be delivered by the three ambassadors, and it is now being delivered out of sequence, in contradiction of the plan formulated by Nestor, who had wanted Phoenix to deliver the first speech: see the comment on I.09.182–198. See also BA 51. The speech of Odysseus starts abruptly at I.09.225, since the Master Narrator does not use formal wording to introduce the speech: instead, at I.09.224, Odysseus simply fills a cup with wine and, gesturing at Achilles, he just starts speaking directly to him, toasting him at I.09.225. [[GN 2016.08.25 -> 2016.12.31.]]

I.09.225–228

subject heading(s): *daîs* ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’; *daîesthai* ‘feast, divide (meat), apportion, distribute’; Strife Scene

In these first four verses of the speech spoken by Odysseus to Achilles, there is an evocative reference to the *daîs* as a ‘feast’ where portions of meat are being divided in an equitable way, I.09.225. The wording seems to evoke an epic scene where Odysseus and Achilles attended a *daîs* ‘feast’ and quarreled. Such an epic scene is narrated at O.08.072–083. [[GN 2016.09.25 via BA 133.]]

I.09.229

subject heading(s): *pêma* ‘pain’

The wording of this verse, I.11.347, like the wording of the four previous verses, seems to evoke an epic scene as narrated at O.08.072–083. The future *pêma* ‘pain’ that is feared by the Achaeans here at I.09.229 is comparable to the future *pêma* ‘pain’ of the Trojan War as described at O.08.081. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 57.]]
I.09.236

subject heading(s): sēma 'sign, signal'

The thunder and lightning of Zeus are interpreted here as a sēma 'sign, signal' of the Will of Zeus. [[GN 2016.08.25 via GMP 204.]]

I.09.241–243

subject heading(s): fire of Hector

The fear of the Achaeans is that Hector's fire will reach their ships beached at the Hellespont, and such a disaster would surely destroy them. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 335.]]

I.09.249–250

Q&T via BA 80

subject heading(s): akhos 'grief'; akos 'remedy'; a man of constant sorrow

As Odysseus warns, I.09.249, Achilles will suffer akhos 'grief' in some unforeseeable way if he does not help the Achaeans right now. And there will be no akos 'remedy' for the pain of this grief, I.09.250. The warning will come true, since the future death of Patroklos will turn Achilles into a man of constant sorrow. See especially the comment on I.18.015–073; also the comment on I.23.046–047. Of special interest here at I.09.249–250 is the morphological parallelism of akhos 'grief' at I.09.249 with akos 'remedy' at I.09.250. Another morphological parallel for akos 'remedy' is the synonym althos 'remedy'. Whereas akos and althos are synonyms, they are both antonyms of akhos, and the morphological parallelism of all three words serves to highlight the semantic contrast of akhos on one side with akos and althos on the other side. The morphological parallelism extends to names derived from the antonyms althos and akhos, since althos 'remedy' is to Althaiā as akhos 'grief' is to Akhaiā (see BA 88). [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 80.]]

I.09.260

subject heading(s): kholos 'anger'

The wording of Odysseus refers here to the kholos 'anger' of Achilles. But this word is only a partial synonym of mēnis 'anger', which is a more specialized word that suits more accurately the relevant emotion of Achilles. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 104.]]

I.09.260–299

subject heading(s): offer of Agamemnon to Achilles

Embedded here within the speech of Odysseus is his restatement of Agamemnon's terms for compensating Achilles. For a significant omission, see the comment on I.09.120–161. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 51.]]

I.09.270–272

subject heading(s): conquest of Lesbos by Achilles; seven captive Aeolian women from Lesbos; conquest of Lyrnessos and Thèbê by Achilles the Aeolian; Briseis the Aeolian; Chryseis the Aeolian; Andromache the Aeolian; charter myth; aetiology; "colonization"; "Aeolian Migration"; Lesbos, Tenedos, and the facing mainland of Asia Minor; songmaking of Sappho/Alcaeus; Aeolian poetics; Achilles the Aeolian

In the speech of Odysseus, he reports here at I.09.270–272 what Agamemnon said at I.09.128–131, but now the action of Achilles is narrated in the second person. [[GN 2016.08.25.]]

I.09.307–430
subject heading(s): speech of Achilles in response to Odysseus

Whereas the Master Narrator did not use formal wording to introduce the speech of Odysseus at I.09.225–306, he does use formal wording both to introduce at I.09.307 the speech of Achilles and then to conclude it at I.430. [[GN 2016.12.31.]]

I.09.308–311

subject heading(s): offer of Agamemnon rejected by Achilles

In these four verses, Achilles begins his own speech in response to the speech of Odysseus, and he rejects straightaway Agamemnon’s offer for compensation. The tone is hostile toward Odysseus, not only toward Agamemnon. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 52.]]

I.09.312–313

Q&T via BA 52–53

subject heading(s): ekkthros ‘hateful, hostile’

Achilles expresses here his hostility toward Odysseus: someone who says one thing and means another thing is asekkthros ‘hateful’ to Achilles as the Gates of Hādēs. If in fact Odysseus has misrepresented the offer of Agamemnon by leaving out the part of the offer that would have compromised the epic status of Achilles, then Odysseus is ekkthros ‘hateful’ and thus not philos ‘near and dear’ to Achilles. And that is why it can be argued that the earlier wording of Achilles in greeting the ambassadors is designed to exclude Odysseus from the company of those who are near and dear. See the comment on I.09.193–198. There is, then, a traditional enmity between these two heroes. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 52–53, 58.]]

I.09.314–429

subject heading(s): offer of Agamemnon rejected by Achilles

The response of Achilles to the speech of Odysseus continues. The passion intensifies even further. [[GN 2016.08.15 via BA 52.]]

I.09.328–333

subject heading(s): Achilles conquers 11 cities on foot and 12 cities by way of ships

I suggest that the story embedded here about 11 cities that Achilles conquers on foot, I.09.329–333, may be an indirect reference to the 12 cities of the Aeolian Dodecapolis minus Smyrna, which was lost to the Ionians. For details about these 12 cities, see the Inventory of terms and names under Aeolian Dodecapolis. By contrast, Achilles conquers 12 other cities not on foot but sun nēusí (ouvνυοι) ‘by way of ships’, I.09.328. Similarly at I.06.640–642, Hēraklēs had earlier conquered Troy itself hex oïēs sun nēusí (έξ οίης ούνυοι) ‘by way of merely six ships’, I.06.641. The analogous deed of Ἥρακλης here leads me to think that Achilles too was conquering the 12 cities in the vicinity of Troy, whereas the other 11 cities would have been situated further south on the mainland of Asia Minor, that is, in the territory of the ancient Aeolian Dodecapolis. Herodotus 1.149.1 lists the cities of the Aeolian Dodecapolis, and one of them happens to be Killa. I think that this Killa is the same place that is mentioned twice in the Iliad, I.01.038 and I.01.452, in the context of Aeolian places that are specially sacred to Apollo. The two other places mentioned both times in those passages at I.01.038–039 and at I.01.451–452 are Chrysa and Tenedos. It has been argued that the Homeric Killa cannot be the same place as the Killa mentioned by Herodotus (Leaf 1923:310), but such arguments are based on the assumption that Homeric Killa was near Lynnessos and Thēbē, two other places said to be conquered by Achilles. Herodotus 1.151.1 notes that the Aeolian cities on the mainland of northern Asia Minor in the region of Mount Ida—that is, in the general area of ancient Troy—were grouped separately from the Aeolian Dodecapolis, but he does not list those cities by name. Therefore, I suspect, is that any federation of cities situated in this area would have been already severely disrupted by the Athenian empire in the fifth century BCE, that is, in the era of Herodotus, and, earlier, by the domination of this area by the Aeolian city of Mytilene in the seventh and the sixth centuries BCE. In that era, this city on the island of Lesbos was a major rival of Athens in seeking to possess the sacred real estate, so to speak, of ancient Troy and its environs. See Point 7 in the anchor comment that follows immediately below. [[GN 2016.10.08.]]
anchor comment on efforts of Aeolians to possess ancient Troy and its environs in the historical period

There are ten points in this anchor comment, epitomized mostly from HPC 131–146:

Point 1. Our point of departure is New Ilion, which in the historical period was an Aeolian city built over the ruins of the old Troy of the Trojan War as narrated in the epic that we know as the Homeric Iliad. Archaeologists have verified that Hisarlık, which is the Turkish name for the site of New Ilion, was in fact the same place as the site of old Troy, which was also known in the ancient world as Ilion. [HPC 131]

Point 2. After a major destruction of the citadel at old Troy sometime around the beginning of the 12th century BCE, which marks the end of a phase that archaeologists recognize as Troy VIIa, the importance of the site was radically diminished, and things stayed that way through the phase known as Troy VIIIb, lasting into the 10th century BCE. After Troy VIIIb comes Troy VIII, which marks a “Greek era” extending all the way to the so-called “Roman era” that is Troy IX. In the earliest phase of Troy VIII, from the 10th to the mid-7th century BCE, a small population was occupying the area of the citadel, and, on the western side of the citadel wall, they left behind some archaeological remains of a “place of memory” that must have commemorated in some way the epic traditions of the Trojan War (Asian and Rose 2013:11). At a later phase of Troy VIII, in the mid-7th century BCE, there was a destruction, to be followed in the late 7th century by a reoccupation. From this time onward, in the latest phase of Troy VIII, we see the beginnings of the historical period. Now the old Troy is on its way to becoming the new Troy, that is, New Ilion. [HPC 131.1]

Point 3. As in modern times, the old Troy of New Ilion was sought out in antiquity, most prominently by rulers striving to link themselves with the heroes who fought in the Trojan War of the epic past. In 480 BCE, as we read in Herodotus 7.43.2, Xerxes the king of the Persian Empire traveled to New Ilion and made sacrifice there to the goddess Athena, and his magi made libations to the ἥρωις ‘heroes’ who were entombed in the environs. Over a century later, Alexander the Great likewise sacrificed to Athena in New Ilion (Strabo 13.1.26 C593; Arrian Anabasis 1.11.7). [HPC 131–132.]

Point 4. I highlight the term used by Herodotus here at 7.43.2 in referring to the goddess Athena as worshipped in her sacred space at New Ilion: she is ἡ ἱλιάς, meaning something like ‘she who is in Ilion’. But the name can also be interpreted to mean ‘she who is in the Iliad’, in the sense that ἱλιάς as an ‘Iliad’ means simply ‘the song about Ilion’. [HPC 126.]

Point 5. Elsewhere, at 5.122.2, Herodotus uses the same expression ἡ ἱλιάς in referring to the territory of Ilion as inhabited by Aeolians. The context is this: a Persian general was redeploying his forces at the time of the Ionian Revolt, ongoing in the first decade of the 5th century BCE, and he was moving his troops westward in the direction of the Hellespont (ἐπὶ τὸν Ἑλλησπόντον). Then, along the way to the Hellespont, ‘he captured all the Aeolians who inhabit the territory of Ilion [ἡ ἱλια],’ (καὶ εἶθε μὲν Ἀιολᾶς πάντας ὅσοι τὴν Ἱλιᾶν νέμοντο). This detail from Herodotus concerning ἡ ἱλιάς as ‘the territory of Ilion’ is one of the most valuable piece of evidence showing that New Ilion was at this time inhabited by Αἰολεῖς ‘Aeolians’. I should add that there is a plethora of further evidence showing the Aeolian identity of New Ilion in the era of Troy VIII. [HPC 142–146.]

Point 6. But now we must confront a big complication. This New Ilion was not the only ‘new Ilion’. As early as the late seventh century BCE, a rival ‘new Ilion’ emerged, and its occupants claimed that their site replaced the real Troy of olden days. This alternative New Ilion was located not far from the old Troy, but it was a different site. The inherited name of the site was Sigeion, and it was situated on a promontory at Kum Kale, overlooking the entrance to the narrows of the Hellespont. Archaeologists have securely identified the site at Cape Yenişehir as Sigeion. [HPC 143; see the map at HPC 158.]
Point 7. Like the New Ilion that was built over the old Troy, the site of Sigeion used to be occupied by Aeolians. Also, for some time in the seventh century BCE, Sigeion had been dominated by one particular sub-group of Aeolians, namely, the elites of Mytilene, which was then the most powerful city in Lesbos, an Aeolian island situated due west across the sea from the Aeolian mainland of northern Asia Minor. As we read in Strabo 13.1.38 C599, the Mytileneans under the leadership of one Archenax built the walls of the citadel of Sigeion from the stones of the ruined walls of the ancient citadel of Troy. Strabo thinks that this important piece of information validates arguments made in the second century BCE by the antiquarian Demetrius of Scepsis, who denied any continuity between the old Ilion and the city of New Ilion as it existed in his own day, claiming that there was no trace left of the old Ilion—and that the site of this old city was not New Ilion but rather a village located some 30 stadium-lengths to the southeast, in the territory of Scepsis. In terms of the theory posited by Demetrius, all the stones of the old Ilion had been used up in the process of building the walls of other cities like Sigeion. But we have already seen at Point 2 that the stones of the old Ilion were in fact still very much in evidence throughout the phase known as Troy VIII, and so the theory of Demetrius is invalidated. See also the comment on 1.07.433–465 on the myth about the building of the Trojan Wall by Poseidon and Apollo for Laomedon, who had been king of Troy before Priam, 1.07.452–453. Still, the information reported by Demetrius and transmitted by Strabo about the re-using of stones from old Troy for the building of new Troy retains its full value. A shining example of another such new Troy was the Aeolian city of Neon Teikhos ‘New Wall’, which belonged to a confederation of twelve Aeolian cities situated on the mainland of Asia Minor and commonly known as the Aeolian Dodecapolis (Herodotus 1.149.1 lists them all). [HPC 145–146. About Neon Teikhos, see also HPC 180.]

Point 8. Unlike New Ilion, which remained an Aeolian site, the city of Sigeion underwent a drastic change in identity, and this happened already in the late seventh century BCE. Somewhere around that time, control of Sigeion was seized by the Ionian city of Athens and taken away from the Aeolian city of Mytilene-in-Lesbos, which had dominated Sigeion earlier, as we saw at Point 7. I cannot go into details here about this drastic change, but I will at least highlight the fact that Sigeion is pictured as already belonging to Athens in the poetry of Alcaeus, who can be dated to the late seventh century BCE. Herodotus notes that Alcaeus himself says in his own poetry that his armor was captured from him by the Athenians in a battle against the Mytileneans, and that it was displayed by the enemy at the Athênaion ‘sacred space of Athena’ in Sigeion. Here is the way Herodotus says it at 5.95.1: ‘the Athenians have his [= Alcaeus’] armor and they have hung it up for display at the space of Athena [Athênaion] in Sigeion’ (τὰ δὲ ο UserDefaults Αθηναίοι καὶ σφέα ἀνεκρέμασαν πρὸς τῷ Αθηναίοι τὸ ἐν Σιγείω). Strabo quotes the words of Alcaeus telling about the captured armor, and these words actually give the name of Athena’s sacred space as Glaukôpion (Alcaeus F 401B via Strabo 13.1.37 C600). This same name Glaukôpion, derived from the sacred epithet of Athena glaukôpis ‘having the looks of the owl’, is attested in Athens as well. There it applies to the sacred space of Athena Nike at the southwest corner of the acropolis (Callimachus F 238.11), and this space, like the Glaukôpion in Sigeion, can be dated at around 600 BCE. On the protracted war between the Athenians and the Mytileneans over the possession of Sigeion, I cite the primary sources here: Herodotus (5.94–95), Strabo (13.1.38–39 C599–600), and Diogenes Laertius (1.74); a most admirable secondary source is Aloni 1986. [HPC 142–146.]

Point 9. Just as Athens had a sacred space in the new Ilion of Sigeion, so also she had her own sacred space in the New Ilion built on top of the old Troy, where as we have already read in Herodotus 7.43.2 the goddess was worshipped as hê ilias, meaning not only ‘she who is in Ilion’ but also ‘she who is in the Ilia’. As noted at Point 4, such an ‘Ilia’ was not the Homeric Ilia that we have but instead ‘the song about Ilion’ as it was known then—and as it was known even earlier when the occupants of Troy VIII were already venerating a “place of memory” commemorating the epic traditions of the Trojan War, as we saw at Point 2. [HPC 131.]

Point 10. There may be some uncertainties about positively identifying an earlier version of ‘Ilia’ic Athena—hê ilias—as the goddess who presided over the “place of memory” in the early phases of Troy
VIII, but we can be quite certain about the actual linking of the old Troy with epic traditions about an old Troy. And here again the same expression ἡ ἱλιασ applies: at Point 5, we already saw that Herodotus 5.122.2 says ἡ ἱλιασ in referring to the territory of Ilium as inhabited by Aeolians. But now we will see that Herodotus also uses the same expression ἡ ἱλιασ in a context where he refers to a territory belonging not only to Ilium but also to the Iliadic tradition of poetry. The context is this: Herodotus is describing a scene where representatives of the cities of Mytilene and Athens, which have evidently already fought in many wars over the possession of Sigeion, are submitting their dispute to inter-state arbitration, and now the Aeolians of Mytilene are demanding that the Athenians give back to them the territory of Sigeion and its environs (Herodotus 5.94.2): ‘You see, the Mytileneans and the Athenians had been waging war with each other for the longest time. One side [= the Mytileneans] operated out of the city [πόλις] of Akhilleion and the other side [= the Athenians], out of Sigeion. They [= the Mytileneans] were demanding the return of the territory [κόρα] but the Athenians rejected the demand, trying to demonstrate by way of what they said that the Aeolians were no more entitled to the Iliadic territory [ἡ ἱλιασ κόρα] than were they [= the Athenians] and all the other Hellenes who had joined forces in avenging Menelaos for the abduction of Helen’ ἐπιλέγειν γὰρ ἐκ της Ἀχληλῆιος πόλις ἐρωτώντες καὶ Σηγείου επὶ χρόνον συχνὸν Μυτηληναίοι τε καὶ Αθηναίοι, οἱ μὲν ἀπαιτῶντες τὴν χώρην, Ἀθηναίοι δὲ οὖτε συγγνωσόμενοι ἀποδεικνύσες τις λόγω οὕτων μᾶλλον Ἀινεῖοι, μετέκα τῆς ἡείδος πόρης ἢ ὧν καὶ σφίξι τοῖς ἀλλοις, ὡς ἡ Ακλήληιν συνεπτήμεντο Μενέλαω τὰς Ἐλένης ἀρραβάζει. As the wording of Herodotus indicates, the Aeolian city of Mytilene in Lesbos claimed to be representing all Aeolic-speaking Hellenes in claiming possession of the Iliadic territory of Sigeion in the Troad. By contrast, the city of Athens claimed to be representing all Hellenes who took part in the Trojan War. From the standpoint of both sides, then, the disputed territory is poetic as well as political. [HPC 145.]

[[GN 2016.10.08]]
I.09.340–343

Q&T via BA 107–108

subject heading(s): Achilles as lover

By now the feelings of Achilles about the captive woman Briseis whom he had won and then lost as a war-prize have deepened and intensified. He says that he now loves her as if she were his wife. And he asks ironically: are Agamemnon and Menelaos the only Achaeans entitled to love their wives? And do they even love them? Whether or not they do, is the wife of Menelaos, Helen, really worth fighting for and even dying for? [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 107–108]]

I.09.346–352

Q&T via BA 46–48

subject heading(s): fire of Hector; [biē ‘force, violence, strength’; mētis ‘mind, intelligence’] phrazesthai ‘devise a plan’

Achilles in his speech here returns to something that Odysseus had said at I.09.241–243: how the Achaeans are afraid that Hector’s fire will reach their ships beached at the Hellespont, and that such a disaster would surely destroy them. Achilles now gives a biting response at I.09.347: let Agamemnon find a way to ward off the fire of Hector without the help of Achilles. The verb used here for the idea of finding a way, phrazesthai ‘devise a plan’, is correlated with the noun mētis ‘mind, intelligence’ in Homeric diction, as we see in the wording of Achilles at a later point, I.09.423. Since Odysseus is the primary exponent of mētis ‘mind, intelligence’ in Homeric poetry, Achilles is in effect saying to him at I.09.347: let Agamemnon rely on your mētis, Odysseus, since he cannot any longer rely on my biē ‘force, violence, strength’. Achilles is the primary exponent of biē ‘force, violence, strength’ in Homeric poetry, just as Odysseus is the primary exponent of mētis ‘mind, intelligence’. According to the scholia A for I.09.347, Aristarchus apparently thought that the passage we are now considering, I.09.346–352, was an allusion to another passage, O.08.072–083, which is about a quarrel that once took place between Achilles and Odysseus over one overriding question: will Troy be conquered by relying on the physical power of Achilles or on the mental power of Odysseus? [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 46–48; also BA 24, 335]]
I.09.359–363

subject heading(s): Hellespont

As we will see in later comments, especially starting with the comment on I.19.373–380, Achilles has a special relationship with the Hellespont. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 343.]]

I.09.360

subject heading(s): Hellespont; ikthuoeis ‘fish-swarming’ as an epithet of the Hellespont; ikthuoeis ‘fish-swarming’ as an epithet of potnos ‘crossing [of the sea]’

At I.07.063–064, we saw that a young hero named Phrixos escaped the dangers of the pónos ‘[sea-] crossing’ that is the Hellespont, as we read in Pindar Pythian 4.160–161: Pindar’s wording goes on to say that Phrixos was ‘saved’, saothē, because he was carried to safety by the ram with the golden fleece. But the young heroine Hélē, who was the sister of Phrixos, did not escape the dangers: she fell off the ram and drowned in the stormy waters of the Hellespont, as we read in Apollodorus 1.9.1. That is why the Hellespont is named after her: Hellēs-pontos means ‘the [sea-] crossing of Hēlē’. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 340.]]

I.09.404–405

subject heading(s): Apollo at Delphi

In the Iliad and Odyssey, Apollo at Delphi is mentioned only here at I.09.404–405 and at O.08.079–081. [[GN 2017.05.18.]]

I.09.410–416

subject heading(s): kér ‘cut, slice, portion, fated death’; kleos ‘glory’; nostos ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’

From the standpoint of its etymology, derived as it is from the verb keirein ‘cut, slice’, the noun kér in the sense of a ‘cut’ or a ‘slice’ or a ‘portion’ need not convey the negative idea of a ‘fated death’. When a hero chooses between two alternative kères or ‘fates’, one of the two alternatives may be death but the other may be life. Thus when Achilles here speaks of two alternative kères or ‘fates’ that may await him, namely, either the kleos or ‘glory’ that he will get if he dies young in the Trojan War or the nostos or ‘homecoming’ that will be his if he abandons that war, I.09.413, the second alternative is not really a ‘fated death’ for Achilles as is the first alternative. Instead, a nostos ‘homecoming’ would give him life. But this life would be limited. It would last only until the hero’s age runs out of time, just as the age of a plant will surely run out of time. Conversely, the kleos ‘glory’ that the hero would get from dying young in the Trojan War would have an unlimited life of its own, because this kleos is conferred by poetry, and this poetry is held to be imperishable. [[GN 2016.08.25.]]

I.09.413

subject heading(s): kleos ‘glory, fame’; aphthitο- ‘imperishable, unwitting’; Phthiē (homeland of Achilles); kér ‘cut, slice, portion, fated death’; nostos ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’

The kleos ‘glory’ of the song that glorifies Achilles will be aphthitο- ‘imperishable, unwitting’, I.09.413. The analysis here will focus first on the general sense of ‘imperishable’ and then on the specific sense of ‘unwitting’. The Greek combination of the adjective aphthitο- ‘imperishable’ with the noun klēos ‘glory, fame’ here at I.09.413 is parallel to the Indic combination of the adjective āksita- ‘imperishable’ with the noun sārvas ‘glory, fame’ at Rig-Veda 1.9.7 (full argumentation in GMP 123–126).

From the standpoint of the formulaic system inherited by Homeric diction, the function of the adjective aphthitο- in combination with the noun klēos ‘glory, fame’ in the expression kleos aphthitοn esta (κλέος ἄφθιτον ἔσται) at I.09.413 can be not only predicative, ‘the glory will be imperishable’, but also attributive, ‘there will be a glory that is imperishable’. An attributive syntax is indicated by the shorter expression kleos esta (κλέος ἔσται), as at I.07.458, meaning ‘there will be a glory’. There is also the comparative evidence of the attributive syntax that we see at work in the cognate wording of Sappho Song 44.4, ... kleos aphthitοn (κλέος ἄφθιτον) ‘imperishable glory’ (line-final), and of Ibycus S151.47, ... kleos aphthitοn hexeis (κλέος ἄφθιτον ἕξεις) ‘you will have imperishable glory’ (line-final). On the other hand, the expression kleos
aphithton estai (ἅλεος ἀφθιτὸν ἔσται) at I.09.413 seems to be coefficient with the expression kleos oupopt' oleitai (κλέος οὔποτ' ὀλέιται) as at I.02.325, ‘the glory will never perish’. See the comment on I.02.325. The syntax ofkleos oupopt' oleitai ‘the glory will never perish’, if we compare it to the syntax ofkleos aphithton estai at I.09.413, may point to a predicative use of the adjectiveaphithton: ‘the glory will be imperishable’. It has been suggested that the expressionkleos oupopt' oleitai (κλέος οὔποτ' ὀλέιται) ‘the glory will never perish’ could have been used instead ofkleos aphithton estai (κλέος ἀφθιτον ἔσται) even at I.09.413 if it were not for the fact that the wordολεο (ὁλέο) ‘perished’ (the subject is nostos ‘[safe] homecoming’) is already used at the beginning of the same verse. It does not follow, however, that the wordingkleos aphithton estai (κλέος ἀφθιτον ἔσται) instead of kleos oupopt' oleitai (κλέος οὔποτ' ὀλέιται) at I.09.413 must be some kind of a reactive innovation: on the contrary, this wording can be an archaism that survives precisely for the stylistic purpose of avoiding an awkward duplication of wording in the same verse. As a general approach to poetics, I suggest that allowance should regularly be made for the possibility that older forms can be activated in situations where a more innovative equivalent form might create a poetically awkward side-effect (GMP 122–123). That said, my focus of analysis now shifts from the general sense of the adjectiveaphthito- as ‘imperishable’ to its specific sense as ‘unwitting’. This sense has already been noted in the comments on I.01.155, I.02.046, I.02.325. Unlike a plant that runs out of time, the kleos of poetic ‘glory’ is like an imperishable flower that will never wilt, never lose its vibrant color and aroma. Accordingly, the kleos aphithton of Achilles will be like an unwitting flower. And the way for a hero to be adorned with such an unwitting flower is to experience a fated death. That is why the alternative of death in a choice between kères ‘fates’ is the desired choice for the hero to make. And that is why the meaning of kër defaults to ‘a fated death’ as desired by heroes in the epic world of heroes. See again the overall comment on I.09.410–416. For Achilles, the kleos aphithton ‘unwitting glory’ that he chooses is really an alternative form of life, while the nostos ‘homecoming’ that he ultimately rejects is an alternative form of death, since the name of his homeland is Phtieh, a “speaking name” (nomen loquens) that means literally ‘the land of witting’. See the comment on I.01.155. See also HPC 168n67 on the ritualized idea of wearing garlands that are ‘unwitting’ in a Thessalian ritual that honors Achilles. By contrast with the hero Achilles, however, who chooses kleos or poetic ‘glory’ instead of a nostos ‘homecoming’, the heroOdysseus does not need to make a choice. In fact, as we will see in a future comment, Odysseus cannot even make such a choice, since he needs a nostos ‘homecoming’ to achieve his ownkleos or poetic ‘glory’, which will be ‘a song of homecoming’. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 135; also BA 29, 35, 39, 95, 102, 111, 119, 175–176, 184–185; PH 147, 227, 244–245; GMP 122–126, 136, 138.]]

I.09.421–422

subject heading(s): plural vs. dual; dual vs. plural

The syntax for referring to the pair of Ajax and Odysseus here is constructed in the plural. To be contrasted are the earlier constructions in the dual, I.09.182–198, where the referents might be the pair of Phoenix and Ajax—or a pairing of Phoenix with the whole group that he leads. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 55.]]

I.09.434–605

subject heading(s): speech of Phoenix to Achilles

Here, finally, is the speech of Phoenix, postponed because Odysseus took the initiative of speaking first. Whereas the Master Narrator did not use formal wording to introduce the speech of Odysseus at I.09.225–306, he does use formal wording to introduce at I.09.432–433 the speech of Phoenix. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 51.]]

I.09.435–436

subject heading(s): fire of Hector

Phoenix speaks here about the need for Achilles to prevent the fire of Hector from setting the beached ships of the Achaeanson fire. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 335.]]

I.09.502–512

subject heading(s): atē ‘aberration’

The words of Phoenix warn against the dangers of atē ‘aberration’, I.09.512. The Litai, goddesses of supplication personified,
I.09.502, afflict with ἀτέ a man who does wrong by showing cruelty to suppliants and rejecting their supplications, I.09. 510–512. The warning here is intended for Achilles. But why is it that Achilles should heed the Λιταί? An answer emerges at I.09.507, where the Λιταί are said to heal the damage caused by the ἀτέ ‘aberration’ that is committed by wrongdoers when these wrongdoers offer compensation for such ἀτέ. As we saw in the comment on I.09.115–120, Agamemnon admits his ἀτέ ‘aberration, for which he stands ready to offer ἀποίνα ‘compensation’, I.09.120. In rejecting the Λιταί, one is rejecting the process whereby compensation can be awarded for damage suffered—and the word for ‘damage’ is ἂτε personified at I.09.504 and I.09.505. Further, the punishment for such refusal is another round of ἂτε ‘aberration’—this time suffered by the one who rejects the Λιταί, I.09.510–512. For Achilles, such an ἀτέ would be the death of his other self, Patroklos, who personally experiences ἂτε at the moment of his death, I.16.805, in the form of an aberration of the senses. See the comments on I.16.685–687 and on I.16.804–806. At I.19.268–275, Achilles seems to recognize that both he and Agamemnon have in the end been afflicted with ἂτε. [GN 2016.08.25 via PH 242, 254.]

I.09.522

subject heading(s): ascending scale of affection; philos (plural philoi) ‘near and dear’; philatatos ‘nearest and dearest’

Phoenix refers to the three ambassadors, including himself, as philatatoí, the ‘nearest and dearest’ to Achilles. But the relationship of Achilles to the three has its problems, as analyzed in the comment for I.09.193–198. [GN 2016.08.25 via BA 57.]

I.09.524–599

Q&T of I.09.524–525 via BA 103–104

subject heading(s): the story of Meleagros and Kleopatra; houto(s) ‘this is how’; [ainos ‘coded words; fable’] klesandrōn | hērōōn ‘the glories [klea] of men who were heroes’; name of Patroklos; name of Kleopatra; ‘speaking name’ homen loquens); ascending scale of affection; philos ‘near and dear’; hetairōs ‘companion’

The story told by Phoenix about Meleagros and Kleopatra is introduced at the very beginning, I.09.524, by the expression houto ‘this is how’, which conventionally introduces a discourse containing a moral message, such as a fable. The Greek word for such discourse is ainos, the meaning of which is impossible to translate by way of any single English word. For want of a better alternative, I define ainos pragmatically as ‘coded words’—a ‘coded message’. In the case of the story told by Phoenix, it is intended to carry a moral message for Achilles. The story is described, already at I.09.524, as klesandrōn | hērōōn ‘the glories [klea] of men who were heroes’. By convention, such an expression refers to song, especially to the medium of epic. We saw at I.09.185–191 a truncated version of this expression, klesandrōn, ‘the glories [klea] of men’, I.09.189, and the performer in that context was Achilles himself, singing his song while accompanying himself on the lyre. The male hero in the story of Phoenix, Meleagros, is like Achilles. He too is angry at his community, and he too has withdrawn from fighting in a war, leaving his own people in desperate trouble. Those who are near and dear to him now approach Meleagros, imploring him to return to the fight and making their appeals to him as suppliants. The narrative arranges the order of the suppliants in terms of the hero’s ascending scale of affection. Those who are starting off on the lower levels of this scale will be mentioned earlier, while those who end up on the higher levels will be mentioned later. So, the highest someone on this scale will be mentioned last. Near the top of the scale are the hetairōs ‘companions’ of Meleagros, I.09.585, who are described at I.09.586 as philtatoi ‘nearest and dearest’ to him. So also Phoenix thinks that he and his fellow ambassadors, as companions of Achilles, should be placed at the very top of his ascending scale of affection. But the highest person on the ascending scale of affection for Meleagros turns out to be his wife, named Kleopatra, I.09.556. Her name fits the moral message of the story, since Kleopatrā means ‘she who has the glory [kleos] of the ancestors’. Thus Kleopatra is the very embodiment of the story described as klesandrōn | hērōōn ‘the glories [klea] of men who were heroes’, since heroes are figured as stylized ancestors of the community. But the question is, what meaning will this story have for Achilles? For this hero, the top of his own ascending scale of affection will turn out to be Patroklos, whose full name, Patrokλέες, has the same meaning as the name of Kleopatrā, but the two elements of the name, kleos ‘glory’ and pateres ‘ancestors’ are in reverse. Each of the two names is a “speaking name” (nomen loquens), and both names mean ‘he/she who has the glory [kleos] of the ancestors’. Further, as noted in the comment for I.09.185–191, the etymology of the name Patrokλέες can be adjusted by way of interpreting the component klēos ‘glory’ in the plural sense of the word, not only in the singular sense: ‘he who has the glories [klea] of the ancestors [pateres].’ And the same can be said for Kleopatrā: ‘she who has the glories [klea] of the
ancestors [paterēs]. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 103–106, 111, 238; PH 196–197, 205]]

I.09.561–564

subject heading(s): second name of Kleopatra; “speaking name” (nomen loquens); lament

Here at I.09.561–564, it is revealed that Kleopatra had a second “speaking name” (nomen loquens), and that this name had to do with the singing of laments. Her second name was Alkuónē, I.09.562, which was given to her as a reminder of sorrows suffered by her mother, who is said to have lamented just as a songbird laments, I.09.562–564. The lamenting songbird here is the halkōn ‘halcyon’, described as polupenthēs ‘having much grief’, I.09.563. See also the comments on I.22.483 and on I.24.708, analyzing further contexts where penthos ‘grief’ is connected with singing songs of ritual lament. [[GN 2016.08.25 via PasP 51.]]

I.09.590–594

subject heading(s): lament by Kleopatra; ascending scale of affection

For Meleagros, what elevates Kleopatra to the top of his own ascending scale of affection is her lament at I.09.590–594 expressing her grim premonition about a destroyed city. Suddenly, Meleagros comes to his senses and sees for the very first time that the doomed city as pictured in the lament of Kleopatra will be his very own city if he does not take immediate action. [[GN 2016.08.25 via PasP 51.]]

I.09.602

subject heading(s): fire of Hector

Once again, the fire of Hector looms as a threat to the salvation of the Achaeans. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 335.]]

I.09.606–619

subject heading(s): speech of Achilles in response to Phoenix

The speech of Achilles in response to Phoenix is remarkably brief in comparison to his speech in response to Odysseus. If Phoenix had spoken first, the response of Achilles would have been different. [[GN 2016.12.31.]]

I.09.617–618

subject heading(s): plural vs. dual

Once again, the pairing of Ajax and Odysseus is a plural instead of a dual construction. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 55.]]

I.09.624–642

subject heading(s): speech of Ajax, but not to Achilles

This speech is not even addressed to Achilles: Ajax speaks to Odysseus, telling him that it is not even worth trying to speak to Achilles. It is a form of ignoring a person, comparable perhaps to the partial ignoring of Odysseus by way of dual constructions. See the comment on I.09.193–198. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 51.]]

I.09.628–638

subject heading(s): ascending scale of affection

Ajax here is accusing Achilles of ranking Briseis ahead of his own companions by failing to be swayed when they assure him that they are near and dear to him. There will be more about this speech in a future comment, with analysis of parallelisms between this passage and a passage dealing with a litigation scene as depicted on the Shield of Achilles. [[GN 2016.08.25 via PH 253.]]
I.09.642

subject heading(s): ascending scale of affection

As Ajax declares, the three ambassadors desire to be philtatoi ‘most near and dear’ to Achilles. So, they desire to be at the very top of this hero’s ascending scale of affection. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 106.]]

I.09.643–655

subject heading(s): speech of Achilles in response to Ajax

The response of Achilles to Ajax is stark, as we see in common on I.09.650–653. [[GN 2016.12.31.]]

I.09.650–653

subject heading(s): fire of Hector

This time, Achilles himself declares that he will not concern himself with the Trojan War until Hector’s fire reaches the Achaean ships beached on the Hellespont. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 335.]]

I.09.656–657

subject heading(s): plural vs. dual

Phoenix stays behind in the shelter of Achilles while the rest of the delegation make their way back to the headquarters of Agamemnon. Odysseus is the leader of the remaining group, I.09.657, and this group is designated in the plural, not in the dual. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 51, 55.]]

I.09.664–668

subject heading(s): Aeolian women in the Iliad

In this passage, two more women whom Achilles had captured are named: (1) Diomede, daughter of Phorbas, from Lesbos and (2) Iphis from Skyros. [[GN 2016.08.25 via BA 140.]]

I.09.674

subject heading(s): fire of Hector

Now Agamemnon is asking Odysseus whether Achilles is willing to ward off the fire of Hector from the beached ships of the Achaean. The obsession with this fire has lost none of its intensity. [[GN 2016.08.25.]]

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Iliad Rhapsody 10

2016.09.14 / enhanced 2018.09.11

There is a pronounced shift in mood in Rhapsody 10. Unlike the narratives in the rest of the Iliad, this narrative focuses on how heroes behave at nighttime, as distinct from daytime. What dominates now is a poetics of ambush, which is a different kind of warfare. And a prime exponent of such poetics is the wolfish figure of Dolon. My comments here on Rhapsody 10 are mere supplements to the extensive commentary of Dué and Ebbott 2010. [[GN 2016.09.14.]]
I.10.000

At the very beginning of the Iliadic text of Rhapsody 10, we find an interesting claim in the accompanying annotations known as the T scholia, which stem from Homeric research ongoing in the ancient world. According to that claim, this rhapsōidai had been composed by Homer separately, not as part of the Iliad, and the separate composition was later arranged, tetákhthai, by Peisistratos to fit into the Iliad. Such a sense of separateness in the content of Rhapsody 10—a separateness that was noted, as we have just seen, in the ancient world—is due at least in part to a basic fact: the actions of heroes here take place at night, not in the daytime. The tactics and even the ethics of nighttime warfare are in many ways different from the protocols of daytime warfare as narrated in the rest of the Iliad, and the differences are traced in the commentary of Dué and Ebbott 2010. And I would add that there are cognate patterns of nighttime warfare in Iranian epic traditions: see Davidson 2013:95–97 (for relevant observations on the figure of Dolon in Rhapsody 10 of the Iliad, see also Davidson 1979). As for the ancient claim that Rhapsody 10 was supposedly inserted into a pre-existing series of 23 rhapsodies, I have serious problems even with the chronology of such a claim. Whereas Peisistratos of Athens lived in the sixth century BCE, the division of the Iliad and Odyssey each into 24 performance-units or rhapsōidiai can now plausibly be dated as far back as the late eighth and early seventh century BCE; see Nagy 2015.12.24 following Frame 2009 ch. 11. My view here supersedes an
earlier view of mine as noted in PasP 181–182, where I considered the era of Demetrius of Phaleron, late fourth century BCE, as a possible setting for the division of the Iliad and Odyssey into 24 rhapsodiai. [[GN 2016.09.14]]

I.10.032–033

subject heading(s): the expression ‘(and) he was honored [τείν] as a god [θεός] in the district [δήμος]’ θεός [τό] ὡς τίετο δήμοι; hero cult; cult hero

Agamemnon in his role as king here is described in a way that goes beyond the epic action of the moment: the idea that he is honored as a god in his community back home evokes the further idea of his being worshipped there as a cult hero. See anchor comment at I.05.077–078. [[GN 2016.09.14 via BA 149, GMP 132–133.]]

I.10.043–052

subject heading(s): antagonism between immortal and mortal; boule ‘wish, plan’; mētis ‘mind, intelligence’

In these verses, Agamemnon worries about the partiality shown by Zeus to Hector. According to Agamemnon, Zeus favors Hector because of the hiera ‘sacrifices’ offered by that hero to the god, I.10.046, and Zeus shows his favor by letting Hector win against the Achaeans. That is why the Achaeans now need to devise a boule in the specific sense of a clever ‘plan’, I.10.043, which is kerdalei ‘crafty’, I.10.044—a plan that is crafty enough to counter the many baneful things that Hector will do to damage the Achaeans by way of his mētis ‘mind, intelligence’, I.10.048. The idea of ‘doing by way of mētis’ here at I.10.048 is expressed by the derivative verb mēвещаisthai (aorist mēтивasisthai)—which is later picked up by the verb mēdvēsthai ‘devise’ at I.10.52, referring again to the many baneful things that Hector will do—or ‘devise’—against the Achaeans. You would think, adds Agamemnon, that Hector was the son of some god or of some goddess, I.10.050. This wording about Hector evokes the reality of an ongoing antagonism between the goddess Athena and the hero Hector. Already at I.07.047, the wording of the seer Helenos is referring to such a reality: Helenos addresses his brother Hector by describing him as comparable to the god Zeus himself with respect to Hector’s qualities of mētis ‘mind, intelligence’, and the wording of this description is a direct affront to the divinity Athena, who is the very personification of mētis ‘mind, intelligence’. [[GN 2016.09.11 via BA 145.]]

I.10.212–213

subject heading(s): ep’ ἀνθρώπου ‘throughout humankind’,

Nestor is speaking to the assembled Achaeans chieftains about a spying mission to be undertaken by a volunteer Achaeans: whoever succeeds in accomplishing such a mission will have kleos ‘glory’ because he will be remembered and named in a song of praise that will be sung about him, I.10.212, and such a song will be sung ep’ ἀνθρώπου ‘throughout humankind’, I.10.21. [[GN 2016.09.14]]

I.10.213

anchor comment on ep’ ἀνθρώπου ‘throughout humankind’, used in combination with words referring to remembrance by way of song

Homeric occurrences of ep’ ἀνθρώπου ‘throughout humankind’: I.10.213 (with kleos [κλέος] at I.10.212); I.24.202 (with kleesthai [κλεοθῇ] at the same verse); I.24.535 (with kēkastrai [κήκασται] at the same verse); O.01.299 (with kleos [κλέος] at O.01.298); O.03.252 (in this context, the question is where Menelaos was wandering when Agamemnon was killed by Agisthos: the question is about that story, but the word for ‘story’ or ‘song’ here is not made explicit); O.14.403 (with εὐκλείει [ἐυκλείζει] at O.14.402); O.19.334 (with kleos [κλέος] at O.19.333); O.23.125 (there is a reference here to the storied fame of the mētis ‘intelligence, mind’ of Odysseus, but the word for ‘fame’ here is not made explicit); O.26.094 (with kleos [κλέος] at the same verse); O.24.201 (with aoidē [αἰοίδη] ‘song’; here the song about Klytaitemstra is not glorious but inglorious); Homerian Hymn to Apollo 82 with poluōnumos [πολυώνυμος] at the same verse: the temple of Apollo will have great fame and thus it will be ‘having many names’

The syntax of this expression ep’ ἀνθρώπου, meaning ‘throughout humankind’, is unusual in Homer, diction, since there are no obvious parallels to be found for the combination of the preposition epi, ordinarily meaning ‘on’, with the accusative of
anthropoi 'humans'. Here and in other occurrences of this expression, what holds the syntax together, it appears, is the idea of a song that spreads the remembrance or even the fame and glory of a story throughout all of humanity. The anchor comment here at I.10.213 accounts for all the occurrences of this expression in Homeric diction. [[GN 2016.09.13 via BA 37]]

I.10.224–226

subject heading(s): noēn 'take note (of), notice'

In the wording of Diomedes here, it all comes down to the need for noēn 'take note (of), notice' in the special sense of 'taking the initiative', as the verb is used at I.10.224 and at I.10.225, both times in conjunction with the related noun nóōs 'mind' at I.10.226. See also anchor comment at I.05.669 on: noēn 'take note (of), notice'. [[GN 2016.09.14 via BA 51]]

I.10.227–232

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’

The catalogue here of heroes who volunteer to accompany Diomedes on his nighttime spying mission is organized by way of repeating the verb (et)helean 'wish' in the specialized sense of 'volunteer', and the various heroes who do volunteer are figured as the subjects of the repeated verb. Each one of these heroes is a potential candidate for the title ‘best of the Achaeans’. As the narrative proceeds, Odysseus will emerge as the most qualified for that title at this moment. [[GN 2016.09.14]]

I.10.228

subject heading(s): therapōn 'attendant, ritual substitute'; therapontes of Ares; ‘the two Ajaxes’

In contexts where the plural therapontes in combination with Arēs 'of Ares' is applied to the Achaeans=Danaans=Argives (here, to the ‘two Ajaxes’) as a grouping of warriors, the deeper meaning is more evident than in other contexts. [[GN 2016.08.04 via the comment on I.08.079 via BA 293–295; GMP 48; H24H 6§32]]

I.10.233–240

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’

Diomedes has to choose among the volunteers who are willing to accompany him on his nighttime spying mission. Agamemnon addresses Diomedes at this point, urging him to choose the hero who is truly most qualified, truly aristos 'best', I.10.236, and not to defer to someone who is superior in social status but inferior in heroic status, I.10.237–238. Agamemnon fears for the life of his brother, Menelaos, who is one of the volunteers, I.10.240. Evidently, Agamemnon fears that at least one of the other volunteers in fact superior to Menelaos. But the wording of Agamemnon betrays his own potential inferiority: he says explicitly to Diomedes that he should not chose a hero just because that hero may be basileuteros 'more kingly', I.10.239. The same wording, ironically, is used by Agamemnon in another context, where he claims superiority to Achilles himself on the grounds that he, Agamemnon, is basileuteros 'more kingly', I.09.160. In the present context, Agamemnon neglects to think of himself as a potential referent, since he was not one of the heroes who volunteered for the nighttime mission. See also I.09.392, where Achilles sarcastically uses the same word in rejecting the offer of Agamemnon: let the over-king choose as his son-in-law someone who is basileuteros ‘more kingly’ that I am. [[GN 2016.09.14 via BA 34; see also Dué and Ebbott 2010:283–284.]]

I.10.241–247

subject heading(s): noēn ‘take note (of), notice’; nostēn ‘have a safe homecoming [nostos]’.

Diomedes chooses Odysseus as the most qualified to accompany him, saying at I.10.247 that he and Odysseus would have the best chance at ‘having a (successful) homecoming’, expressed here by the verb nostēn, because Odysseus has superior expertise in ‘taking note’, expressed here by the verb noēn ‘take note (of), notice’. Here we see the special links of the hero Odysseus with the Odyssean themes expressed by the noun/verb nóōs/noēn, basically meaning ‘mind’ / ‘take note (of), notice, have in mind’, and the noun/verb nóstos/nostēn, basically meaning ‘homecoming’/‘have a homecoming’. On the
ideas expressed by noeĩn in connection with Odysseus, see the anchor comment at I.05.669. [[GN 2016.09.14 via BA 34–35, 51.]]

I.10.249–253

Q&T via BA 34, 240

subject heading(s): aĩneĩ ‘praise’; neĩkeĩ ‘quarrel with’; language of praise/blame

The words of Odysseus here, I.10.249–253, spoken in response to the preceding words of Diomedes, I.10.241–247, highlight the need for balancing the positive force of praise poetry and the negative force of blame poetry, as expressed respectively here by way of aĩneĩ ‘praise’ and neĩkeĩ ‘quarrel with’. The idea that Diomedes is speaking to a group who are ‘knowing’, eidoũes, is a stylized way of referring to the audiences of epic in general: such audiences would be knowledgeable about how much praise and how much blame Odysseus deserves. [[GN 2016.09.14 via BA 34, 240; GMP 16; see also Dué and Ebbott 2010:289–290.]]

I.10.316

subject heading(s): podōkẽs ‘swift-footed’

Except for this verse, where Dolon is described as podōkẽs ‘swift-footed’, the only hero in the Iliad who is described by way of this same epithet—together with related epithets—is Achilles. [[GN 2016.09.14 via BA 326.]]

I.10.329

subject heading(s): ἰστὸ ‘let him/her be a witness’

This expression, imperative perfect of eidoũai, which is normally translated ‘know’, needs to be compared with the corresponding agent noun (h)įstɔr ‘witness, arbitrator’. [[GN 2016.09.14 via PH 251.]]

I.10.415

subject heading(s): boulẽ ‘wish, plan’

Hector here is reportedly ‘planning plans’: boulas bouleũei, at the sêma ‘tomb’ of Ilos, cult hero of Ilion, that is, of Troy. By implication, Hector achieves mental connectivity with the spirit of Ilos. [[GN 2016.09.14 via BA 145 and PH 293.]]

I.10.437

subject heading(s): thematic links for the swiftness of horses, the violence of wind, and the role of the war god Ares as a model for warriors

There is a hint here, but only a hint, of a Homeric theme linking the swiftness of horses with the violence of wind, and such a link extends also to the role of the war god Ares as a model for warriors. [[GN 2016.09.14 via BA 327.]]

I.10.437

Q&T via MoM 2§32

subject heading(s): simile

The simile here is activated by the adjective hómoio- ‘similar to’, where the likeness expressed by the simile does not have to be permanently applicable. On the concept of a simile, see the anchor comment at I.05.441. [[GN 2016.09.14 via MoM 2§32.]]

I.10.482

subject heading(s): menos ‘mental power’

The goddess Athena is engaged here in the act of en-pneĩn ‘breathing into’ the hero Diomedes something called menos
‘mental power’, l.10.482. Such ‘mental power’ makes the hero aware of his physical power and thus energizes him to perform heroic deeds. At highlighted moments in the Odyssey, Athena engages in comparable moments of intervention. [[GN 2016.09.14 via GMP 114]]

Iliad Rhapsody 11
2016.09.22 / enhanced 2018.09.11

Rhapsody 11 marks the point in the Iliad where Patroklos is drawn into a fatal pattern of impersonating Achilles. Pivotal is the story that Patroklos hears from the old hero Nestor. My comments here on Iliad 11 work around Nestor’s story at I.11.670–803 as analyzed in the book Hippota Nestor by Douglas Frame, 2009:105–130. [[GN 2016.09.22]]

Figure 11. Nestor and his sons sacrifice to Poseidon. Attic red-figure calyx-krater, ca. 400–380 BCE. © Marie-Lan Nguyen / Wikimedia Commons, via Wikimedia Commons.

I.11.001–002

subject heading(s): Æôs ‘Dawn’, Thitônos

At O.05.001–002 and here at I.11.001–002, Æôs as goddess of the dawn is linked with a myth that tells how she abducted the young hero Thitônos. The myth is narrated in Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite 218–238. [[GN 2017.04.12 via GMP 252]]

I.11.005–016
As indicated already in the comment for I.08.220–227, the ships of the Achaeans are beached along the shores of a large U-shaped bay that opens into the Hellespont. See again Map 1 and Map 2 at HPC 157 and 158 respectively. At the upper left and the upper right tips of the U-shaped bay, at the northwest and northeast, are the beached ships of Achilles and of Ajax respectively, I.11.008–009. Also at those points are the klísiā ‘shelters’ of these two heroes, I.11.007. As for the beached ship of Odysseus, it is located at the base of the U-shaped bay, at the south in the middle of the bayline, I.11.005–006. There will be more to say about this location in the later comments at I.11.806–808 and at I.14.027–036. To be highlighted already now, however, is a detail about the ship of Odysseus: the goddess Eris ‘Strife’, who is here the spirit of war personified, I.11.004, is shown standing on the deck of this beached ship, which is said to be located en messatői ‘in the middlemost space’, I.11.006, and from here she projects her voice of divine authority, shouting mightily to all the Achaeans stationed at their own ships, I.11.005–014, and all the Achaeans stationed at all the beached ships can hear the divine voice—from the ship of Achilles at one extreme of the U-shaped bay all the way to the ship of Ajax at the other extreme, I.11.007–009. Then, Agamemnon too shouts to the Achaeans, I.11.015–016, and his royal voice is figured here as an extension of the divine voice emanating from the goddess Eris herself, I.11.005–014. Later, in the comment on I.18.587–589, there will be more to say about the klísiā ‘shelter’ of Achilles, mentioned here together with the klísiā of Ajax, I.11.007–008: it can be argued that Achilles frequents this ‘shelter’ not only as an epic hero in the time of the Trojan War but also, in post-heroic times, as a cult hero (HPC 153). [[GN 2016.09.22.]]

I.11.032–040

In the ancient world, the description of this shield was interpreted by some as an allegory of the cosmos, analogous to the description of the Shield of Achilles at I.18.478–609. One such interpreter was Crates of Mallos, contemporary of Aristarchus. For background on Crates, see the comment on I.14.245–246–246a. [[GN 2016.09.22 via HPC 358.]]

I.11.041

The description of the helmet of Agamemnon here at I.11.041 is cognate with the description of the helmet of Athena at I.05.743. [[GN 2016.09.22 via HC 4§100.]]

I.11.058

The description of the epic hero Aeneas here indicates that there were rituals honoring him as a cult hero, and it may be that such rituals of hero cult were linked with myths about what happened to him after death. See anchor comment for I.05.077–078. [[GN 2016.09.22 via BA 149, 269; GMP 132–133]]

I.11.078–079

At I.11.078, the gods are said to hold Zeus aitíos ‘responsible’, as expressed by the verb aitian, derived from the adjective aitíos, for the fact that the Trojans are now winning in the Trojan War while the Achaeans are losing. At I.11.079, this fact is attributed to the Will of Zeus: the god ‘wishes’ for this to happen, as expressed by the verb boulethai ‘wish, plan’. [[GN 2016.09.22 via PH 238.]]

I.11.104–112

subject heading(s): epic deeds of Achilles before the time dramatized in our Iliad; Achilles the Aeolian
This narrative alludes to the epic deeds of Achilles in the region of Mount Ida. These deeds, taking place before the time dramatized in the *Iliad*, will be analyzed in another comment. [[GN 2016.09.22 via BA 140.]]

**I.11.200**

subject heading(s): antagonism between immortal and mortal; *mētis* ‘mind, intelligence’

The description of Hector here as comparable to the god Zeus himself with regard to *mētis* ‘mind, intelligence’ is an implicit affront to Athena, who is the divine personification of *mētis*. See the comments on I.06.286-311, I.07.017-061, I.08.538-541, and I.10.043–052. [[GN 2016.09.22 via BA 145 and GMP 204.]]

**I.11.218–231**

subject heading(s): *aristeia* ‘epic high point’; ‘best of the Achaeans’; plot of the *Iliad*; narrative arc

This narrative centers on the *aristeia* ‘epic high point’ of Agamemnon in the *Iliad*. On *aristeia* ‘epic high point’, see the comment on I.05.103. [[GN 2016.09.22 via BA 17.]]

**I.11.218**

subject heading(s): re-invocation of Muse(s); *ennepein* ‘narrate, tell’; *Mousa* ‘Muse’; singing as narrating

lematizing: ἔποπτε νῦν μοι Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δώματ’ ἔχουσα

It has already been noted in the comment on I.02.484 that the Master Narrator tends to re-invoke the Muse or the Muses at special moments of poetic self-awareness about the need for high fidelity to tradition (see also Martin 1989:238). Such a moment is now at hand as Agamemnon the over-king is about to have his own moment of experiencing an ‘epic high point’. At such a moment, the Narrator must be ready to do his very best in recapturing that heroic experience. And, to express his readiness, the Narrator in all his self-awareness will now re-invoke the Muse or the Muses. In this context, the ‘I’ who is re-invoking the Muse(s) is meant to be seen as a re-enactment of ‘Homer’ himself, as originally enacted by the speaker who invokes the Muse at I.01.001 and at O.01.001. [[GN 2016.09.22 via PasP 44n11, 61.]]

**I.11.227**

subject heading(s): *kleos* ‘glory’ of the Achaeans

Even the most minor character in the *Iliad*—and the hero Iphidamas here is a striking example—is willing to die simply for the chance of getting included in the *kleos* ‘glory’ of the present performance, which is of course the Homeric *Iliad* itself. What makes the example of Iphidamas even more striking is that he is not even fighting on the Achaeans side in this war. [[GN 2016.09.22 via BA 57, PH 148, H24H 1§§14–20.]]

**I.11.288**

subject heading(s): *aristeia* ‘epic high point’; ‘best of the Achaeans’; plot of the *Iliad*; narrative arc

Here at I.11.288, Hector is boasting that Agamemnon, ‘the best man’, *ho aristos*, is now out of the picture. There is an irony built into the words of Hector, and this irony emerges from the context. The *aristeia* ‘epic high point’ of Agamemnon in the *Iliad*, inaugurated in grand style when the Master Narrator invokes the Muses at I.11.218, does not go all that well for the high king. Early on in the fighting, he gets wounded in the hand, I.11.253. He tries to fight on, but the pain from the wound finally gets to him, I.11.268–272. The intensity of his pain is compared here to the birth-pangs experienced by a woman at the climax of her labor, I.11.269–271. Unable to withstand such pain any more, Agamemnon jumps back on the platform of his war chariot and orders his driver to drive him back to the safety of the beached ships of the Achaeans, I.11.273–274, shouting to his fellow warriors that they should now follow him in retreat and defend the ships, I.11.275–278, since, as he says, Zeus has not supported the ongoing offensive initiated by the Achaeans, I.11.278–279. So, the *aristeia* ‘epic high point’ of Agamemnon has not exactly turned out to be a spectacular success. And Hector knows it. As the chariot of Agamemnon speeds this over-king away from the scene of battle, I.11.280–283, Hector notices, I.11.284, as expressed by the verb *noeĩn*
‘take note’. It is in this context, then, that Hector says what he says at I.11.288: ‘the best man’, ho arístos, is now out of the picture. But of course the truly best of all the Achaeans is not yet in the picture. [[GN 2016.09.22 via BA 31.]]

I.11.295

subject heading(s): ‘equal to Ares’; thó̂s ‘running, swift’; Ares; ‘equal to a blast of wind’

The description of Hector as ἰσὸς Ἀρεί ‘equal to Ares’ here at I.11.295 is parallel to his being described as atalontos Arēi ‘equal to Ares’ at I.08.215. For Hector and in fact for any heroic warrior in the iliad, even for generic warriors, the idea of being ‘equal to Ares’ is parallel to the idea of being a therapón of Ares, where therapōn is to be understood in the deeper sense of ‘ritual substitute’. About this deeper sense, see the comment on I.02.110. [[GN 2016.09.25.]]

I.11.297–298

subject heading(s): Battle for the Ships

The onslaught of Hector and his Trojans against the Achaeans is pictured here as a violent blast of wind in a storm that churns up the sea, which is called the pontos here at I.11.298. This onslaught will threaten the safety of the beached ships of the Achaeans, and thus it will threaten the very survival of the Achaeans and even of all Greeks as notional descendants of the Achaeans. See further on the Battle for the Ships in the comment on I.01.320–348. [[GN 2016.09.25 via BA 334, 337.]]

I.11.297

subject heading(s): ‘equal to a blast of wind’; thó̂s ‘running, swift’; Ares

Here at I.11.297, two verses after I.11.295, where Hector is described as ἰσὸς Ἀρεί ‘equal to Ares’ (iōc Ἀρη), the same Trojan hero is now further described as ἰσὸς αἰλέι ‘equal to a blast of wind’ (iōc αἰλέη). This verse-final phrase ἰσὸς αἰλέι ‘equal to a blast of wind’ (iōc αἰλέη) matches rhythmically the verse-final phrase ἰσὸς Ἀρεί ‘equal to Ares’ (iōc Ἀρη). Aside from the match in form, there is also a deep-seated match in meaning here between the phrases ‘equal to Ares’ and ‘equal to a blast of wind’, since the god of war is traditionally linked with violent winds. See the comment on I.05.430. Such a link is also attested in the cognate poetics of other Indo-European languages besides Greek: analysis in BA 334, 337. [[GN 2016.09.25 via BA 294, 327.]]

I.11.317–319

Q&T via BA 81

subject heading(s): Will of Zeus; kratos ‘winning-power’; akhos ‘grief’; Akhaio-/Akhaïa-; etymology; Will of Zeus

In the words of Diomedes, the Will of Zeus is now in effect: the plan of the god is to give kratos ‘winning-power’ to the Trojans and to take it away from the Achaeans, I.11.319. In this verse, we see that Zeus ‘wishes’ for this to happen, as expressed by the verb boulethai ‘want, wish, plan’. See also the comment on I.11.078–079, where boulethai ‘wish, plan’ is already expressing the same idea. And, by taking kratos ‘winning-power’ away from the Achaeans, Zeus is giving them akhos ‘grief’ instead, on which see the comment on I.01.509. [[GN 2016.09.25 via BA 81, 334, 337.]]

I.11.322

subject heading(s): therapón ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; “taking the hit”

Diomedes and Odysseus agree to fight as a team, I.11.310–319. Diomedes throws a spear at Thumbraios, who is riding on a chariot and who gets knocked to the ground by the piercing wound, I.11.320–321. Then Odysseus symmetrically wounds with his own piercing spear-throw the charioteer of Thumbraios, Molion, who is described here as the therapón of Thumbraios, I.11.322. Presumably, Molion too has been riding on the same chariot and gets knocked to the ground. Molion is not overtly called the hēni-ακhos ‘chariot driver’ of Thumbraios, but the context shows that he is exactly that, the chariot driver. And, although Molion is the therapón of Thumbraios, Molion does not get to “take the hit” for Thumbraios the chariot fighter, since that fighter is hit even before his driver is hit. So we see here an unexpected variation on the theme of the therapón as ‘ritual substitute’ as well as ‘attendant’. [[GN 2016.08.04 via the comment on I.04.227 via Nagy 2015.05.01.]]
I.11.347

subject heading(s): pēma ‘pain’; micro-Ilïad; First Song of Demodokos; kulindesthai ‘roll’; Will of Zeus; boulē ‘wish, plan’ in the specific sense of ‘plan’

In the words of Diomedes, Hector is a pēma ‘pain’ for the Achaeans, I.11.347. The pain that he inflicts on them is visualized by way of the verb kulindesthai ‘roll’ in this same verse, I.11.347. The comparison that is implied by this verb becomes explicit at I.13.136–142, where we will see the menacing image of a boulder that breaks off from mountainous heights overhead and starts rolling downward from above, ever increasing in speed as it nears ground zero: only when the boulder has reached a level plain does it finally stop ‘rolling’, as expressed by the verb kulindesthai at I.13.142 (see H24H 5§10). In the framing verses of I.13.136–142, this visualization of the menacing boulder that is rolling down from the heights above is being compared to Hector himself as he rushes toward the Achaeans. The same visualization is implicit in the use of the verb kulindesthai ‘roll’ at I.11.347, where Hector is pictured as a pēma ‘pain’ that is rushing toward his enemies. See also the comment on I.17.098–101, where the death of Patroklos is viewed retrospectively as a great pēma ‘pain’, I.17.099, that was sure to kulindesthai ‘roll’ down from the heights like some boulder and to crush anyone daring to attack a warrior who is being protected by a god. And the same visualization of a breakaway boulder is implicit also in the combination of pēma ‘pain’ with kulindesthai ‘roll’ at O.08.081 of the “micro-Ilïad” that is narrated at O.08.072–083, which is the First Song of Demodokos. In this song, at O.08.081, the ‘beginning of the pain [pēma]’ is pictured at the very beginning of the overall narrative: the pēma ‘pain’ is starting to ‘roll’, as expressed again by way of kulindesthai, and we see further at O.08.082 that this pain will be rolling toward Trojans and Achaeans (= Danaans) alike. Ultimately, both sides in the Trojan War will feel the pain, and it is all because Zeus willed it to be this way: everything will happen the way it will happen ‘because of the plans [boula] of Zeus’, O.08.082 ἄγος μεγάλου διὰ θεοῦ [boula]c. [GN 2016.09.25 via BA 77.]

I.11.488

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’

The immediate context here shows that the therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’ is a chariot driver. He is not named. Nor is he described explicitly as a hēnī-okhos ‘chariot driver’, but that is what he is doing here—driving the chariot. [GN 2016.08.04.]

I.11.497–500

subject heading(s): left-right co-ordination; viewing the scene of chariot fighting; Scamander; Achaean Wall; viewing the “theater of war”

Hector does not yet notice that Ajax is fighting on the right-hand side of the battleground since he, Hector, is at this moment fighting on the left-hand side, near the banks of the river Scamander. Although the perception is attributed to Hector here, the actual perspective is that of the Master Narrator, who consistently views the scene of chariot fighting from the Achaean point of view. In terms of this perspective, Hector is now fighting on the east side of the battleground while Ajax is fighting on the west side. The map of the battleground can be visualized on the cumulative basis of references, as here at I.11.497–500, to left-right positioning in descriptions of the fighting. What follows is an outline of the overall mapping: The Achaeans are encamped in the north and defending the Wall that separates them and their beached ships from the Trojans, who are attacking from the south. The river Scamander, flowing from the southeast toward the northwest and emptying into the Hellespont, separates Troy in the northeast from the encampment of the Achaeans in the northwest. Meanwhile, the Wall of the Achaeans separates their encampment and their ships in the northwest from the Trojans who are attacking the Wall from the south. The Achaeans built the Wall because the Trojans, emboldened by the momentum of Hector, have by now crossed over from the southeast side of the river Scamander to the southwest side, moving into the plain situated to the south of the Achaean Wall. So now this whole plain to the west of the Scamander has become a battleground for chariot fighting. Hector is fighting further to the east, staying close to the west bank of the Scamander, while Ajax is fighting further to the west. [GN 2016.09.25 via HPC 160–165 (especially 164n53), with bibliography.]

I.11.506
subject heading(s): aristeiā ‘epic high point’; ‘best of the Achaeans’; plot of the iliad; narrative arc; aristeuein ‘strive to be the best’

The wounding of a hero, as in the case of the wound suffered by the hero Makhaon here, can put a stop to his aristeiā ‘epic high point’. See also the comment on I.11.288. The verb aristeuein here at I.11.506 can be interpreted as meaning ‘have an epic high point’, and we see that the wounding of Makhaon has stopped him from having such a high point. For more on aristeuein, which can also be translated as ‘strive to be the best, to bearistos’, see the comment at I.07.092–169. [[GN 2016.09.25 via BA 31.]]

I.11.508

tag: ‘breathing-out [pnein]; menos ‘mental power’

The idea of ‘breathing out’ something called menos ‘mental power’ implies that such power was previously ‘breathed in’, that is, ‘breathed into’ the hero, by a divine force. Such a ‘breathing in’ happens for example at I.10.482: as it is pointed out in the comment on that verse, the goddess Athena is pictured there in the act of literally ‘breathing’, pnein, into the hero Odysseus something called menos ‘mental power’. Here at I.11.508, the aggregate of warriors who are ‘breathing-out [pnein] mental-power [menos]’ are the Achaeans viewed as a group; so also at I.03.008; by contrast, at I.02.536, the epithet applies to a subgroup, the Abantes. [[GN 2016.09.25 via GMP 114.]]

I.11.564

subject heading(s): polu- as ‘many different’ vs. ‘many’

The epikouroi ‘allies’ of the Trojans are described as polu-égerées, which means not ‘consisting of many groups’ but ‘consisting of many different groups’. Compare also I.02.804, I.17.156, I.11.642. [[GN 2016.09.25 via PasP 49n29.]]

I.11.599–600

subject heading(s): viewing the “theater of war”; viewing the scene of chariot fighting

The perspective of Achilles in viewing from his shelter the scene of chariot warfare as narrated here is precisely coordinated with the overall visual mapping of the ongoing battle. See the comment at I.11.497–500. [[GN 2016.09.25 via HPC 162n43.]]

I.11.604

Q&T via BA 33

subject heading(s): ‘equal to Ares’; ‘equal to a superhuman force [daimôn]’

Achilles calls out to Patroklos, who now comes out of the shelter. At this moment Patroklos is described asïsos Arēi ‘equal to Ares’, and the very application of this epithet here to Patroklos dooms him to die as a ritual substitute for Ares as god of war. That is why the ominous remark is added: ‘and that was the beginning of his doom’ (ἀκούστω δ’ άρα οί πέλεν άρχη). Much later, when he is finally killed, Patroklos is described as atalantos Arēi ‘equal to Ares’, I.16.784. For Patroklos, however, the ritual substitution involves not only Ares who is the god of war for the generic warrior: it involves also the god Apollo as the divine antagonist of Achilles. In iliad 16, the death of Patroklos as a ritual substitute will be marked not only by the epithet atalantos Arēi ‘equal to Ares’ at I.16.784 but also by the epithet daimoni ìsos ‘equal to a superhuman-force [daimôn]’ at I.16.705 and at I.16.786. This daimôn ‘superhuman force’ will be Apollo, the divine antagonist of Achilles. [[GN 2016.09.25 via BA 33, 293–294; PH 307.]]

I.11.620

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; Eurymedon

Eurymedon here is explicitly called the therapōn of Nestor, functioning as the ‘attendant’ of the old hero: at this moment, Eurymedon is taking care of the horse team of Patroklos, who has just driven his chariot to the headquarters of Nestor as the
old hero’s guest, I.11.618–622. That passage is analyzed in the context of comparable passages at I.04.227. [[GN 2016.08.04]]

I.11.624–627

subject heading(s): epic deeds of Achilles before the time dramatized in the *Iliad*; Achilles the Aeolian

The narrative here at I.11.624–626 refers to the epic deeds of Achilles on the Aeolian island of Tenedos. These deeds, taking place before the time dramatized in the *Iliad*, will be analyzed in the anchor comment that immediately follows, at I.11.624–627. [[GN 2016.09.25 via BA 140.]]

I.11.624–627

anchor comment on Aeolian women in the *Iliad*, part 3

subject heading(s): conquest of Tenedos by Achilles the Aeolian; Hekamede the Aeolian; conquest of Lesbos by Achilles the Aeolian; seven captive Aeolian women from Lesbos; conquest of Lyrnessos and Thèbê by Achilles the Aeolian; Briseis the Aeolian; Chryseis the Aeolian; Andromache the Aeolian

The references at I.09.128–131 and at I.09.270–272 to the story about the conquest of the Aeolian island of Lesbos by Achilles are complemented by the reference here at I.11.624–627 to a story about the conquest of the Aeolian island of Tenedos by the same hero. At Lesbos, Achilles is said to have captured seven unnamed Aeolian women, I.09.128–131 / I.09.270–272. At Tenedos, he is said to have captured one particular Aeolian woman named Hekamede, who was thereafter allotted as a war-prize to Nestor I.11.624–627. And why was Nestor allotted this war-prize? Because Hekamede excelled in intelligence, signaled here by way of the word *boulê*, I.11.627. On the meaning of *boulê* in the specific sense of clever ‘planning’, see the comment on I.11.627 immediately after this comment. For the moment, however, the focus of interest is not on the matching of Nestor with Hekamede in terms of their shared intelligence but rather on the degrading of Hekamede as a captive woman. In the narrative at I.11.624–627, we can see how it all happened. After Achilles conquered Tenedos and captured Hekamede, what must have happened next is that he handed her over to his fellow Achaeans, who then acted as a group in allotting her as a war-prize to Nestor. Parallel is the story of the seven unnamed Aeolian captive woman who were captured by Achilles when he conquered the Aeolian island of Lesbos, as noted in the anchor comment at I.09.128–131 / I.09.270–272: again, Achilles must have handed over these seven unnamed Aeolian captive women to his fellow Achaeans, who then acted as a group in allotting them as war-prizes to Agamemnon. Also parallel are the stories of two other Aeolian captive women, Chryseis and Briseis, who were captured by Achilles when he conquered the cities of Thèbê and Lyrnessos respectively, as noted in the anchor comment at I.02.689–693: yet again, Achilles must have handed over these two Aeolian captive women to his fellow Achaeans, who then acted as a group in allotting them as war-prizes—to Agamemnon in the case of Chryseis and to Achilles himself in the case of Briseis. Yet another Aeolian captive woman is of course Andromache herself, who originated from the city of Thèbê: in this case, however, as noted in the anchor comment at I.09.128–131 / I.09.270–272, she is taken captive only after Troy is conquered by the Achaeans, who allot her as war-prize to Neoptolemos, son of Achilles, as we read in the *Iliou Persis*, attributed to Arctinus of Miletus, plot summary by Proclus p. 108 line 9 (ed. Allen 1912). See also anchor comment at I.02.689–694 on: Aeolian women in the *Iliad*, part 1 and anchor comment at I.09.128–131 / I.09.270–272 on: Aeolian women in the *Iliad*, part 2. [[GN 2016.10.06.]]

I.11.627

subject heading(s): *boulê* ‘wish, plan’

The Aeolian captive woman Hekamede excels in intelligence, as does Nestor, and such excellence is expressed here by way of the noun *boulê* in the specific sense of ‘plan, planning’, that is, having an aptitude for cleverness in planning. [[GN 2016.10.05.]]

I.11.664–667

subject heading(s): fire of Hector

Achilles is said here to be uncaring whether Hector sets fire to the ships of the Achaeans. [[GN 2016.09.25 via BA 335.]]
subject heading(s): is ‘force, violence, strength’

This noun is ‘force, violence, strength’ is a synonym of the noun biē. [[GN 2016.09.25 via BA 89.]]

subject heading(s): is ‘force, violence, strength’

This noun is ‘force, violence, strength’ is a synonym of the noun biē. [[GN 2016.09.25 via BA 89.]]

subject heading(s): four-horse chariot; Dardanidai

Homer's references to four-horse chariot teams are rare, indicative of Athenian agenda. See the comments on I.05.263–273 and I.08.185. [[GN 2016.09.25 via HPC 210.]]

subject heading(s): Gates of the Sun; Pylos; entrance to the underworld; pulartēs ‘gate-closer’; Hēraklēs; Hādēs; Gates of Hādēs

In the course of this lengthy narrative, I.11.671–761, the idea of a ‘gate’ of the Sun is linked with Nestor’s Pylos and with the underworldly Pylos of I.05.397. See also the comment at I.05.395–404. [[GN 2016.09.25 via GMP 225–226.]]

subject heading(s): biē Hēraklēseiē ‘force of Hēraklēs’; biē ‘force, violence, strength’; kleos ‘glory’

See the comment on I.02.658. [[GN 2016.09.25 via BA 318.]]

subject heading(s): phaethōn ‘shining’ as epithet of Helios

At later points, at O.12.132 and at O.23.246, the links that connect phaethōn ‘shining’ as epithet of Helios with the names Phaethōn and Phaethousa will be examined. [[GN 2016.09.25 via GMP 235.]]

subject heading(s): aien aristēuein ‘strive to be the best always’; aristēuein ‘strive to be the best’

To ‘strive to be the best always’, that was the instruction of Peleus to his son Achilles, and this instruction is relevant to the title ‘best of the Achaeans’ as claimed by the figure of Achilles. [[GN 2016.09.25 via BA 28.]]

subject heading(s): biē ‘force, violence, strength’

Conventionally, the heroic superiority of Achilles is measured in terms of his biē ‘force, violence, strength’. See the comment on I.09.346–352. [[GN 2016.09.25 via BA 47.]]

subject heading(s): bay of the Hellespont; headquarters of the Achaeans; naustathmon ‘ship-station’; sterns of the Achaeans ships; Scamander; klisē ‘shelter’; Hellespont; erēs ‘strife’; post-heroic age
Here as well as earlier at I.08.220–227 and at I.11.005–016, also later at I.14.027–036, the headquarters of the Achaeans are said to be located at the same place where the ship of Odysseus is beached, on the shores of the south end of the bay of the Hellespont. It is here, next to the beached ship of Odysseus, that the Achaeans of the Iliad hold their assemblies and perform their sacrifices, as we see from the wording at I.11.807–808. Such a centerpoint, then, is not only topographical: it is also political—even sacral. And it is from here that the king Agamemnon shouts his speech of royal authority, as we saw at I.08.220–227. Likewise, it is from here that the goddess Eris ‘Strife’, who is the spirit of war personified, shouts at the Achaeans with her voice of divine authority at I.11.005–014, echoed by Agamemnon’s voice of royal authority at I.11.015–016. The location of this political and sacral centerpoint is the naustathmon ‘ship-station’ of the Achaeans according to Strabo 13.1.31–32 C595 (quoted at HPC 153) and 13.1.36 C598 (quoted at HPC 154), who equates such a station with something called the limēn ‘harbor’ of the Achaeans. But such a notion of ‘harbor’ is misleading from the standpoint of the Iliad. As noted in the comment on I.08.220–227, the ships of the Achaeans were not floating at anchor in the bay of the Hellespont: rather, they were beached along the shores of the bay. [[GN 2016.09.25 via HPC 155–158, 160–161.]]

I.11.818

subject heading(s): devouring of corpses by dogs

For Patroklos to picture here the devouring of heroes’ corpses by dogs is to show the intensity of his anxious feelings about the future. [[GN 2016.09.25 via BA 226.]]

I.11.832

subject heading(s): Cheiron the Centaur; dikaios ‘righteous’

The description of Cheiron as dikaiotatos ‘most righteous’ among the Centaurs is relevant to the conflicted temperament of Achilles: from boyhood on, this hero has a savage streak, tempered by the civilizing power of the Centaur as his mentor. [[GN 2016.09.25 via BA 226.]]

I.11.843

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’

In the immediate context, only the surface meaning of therapōn as ‘attendant’ is evident. [[2016.08.04 via BA 292.]]
The Achaeans built the Wall to protect themselves and their beached ships from the Trojans: see the comments on I.07.336–343 and I.07.433–465. But this Achaean Wall is doomed to disappear without a trace in the future, since it was built ‘against the will of the immortal gods’, I.12.008–009. That is, the Wall was built against the will of the gods Poseidon and Apollo: see the comment on I.07.433–465. And when will it happen, that the Achaean Wall disappears? The timespan of the Wall, says the Master Narrator, depends on the timespan of narrating the story of the Iliad: ‘while Hector was still alive and while Achilles had his-anger [mênein], I.12.010. But then, in the very next verse, the timespan is extended further: the Wall of the Achaeans will not be destroyed while Troy, that mighty city of the king Priam, is not yet destroyed, I.12.011. Why the extension? It is because the epic fame of the Achaean Wall depends on the epic fame of the Iliad, and the narration of the Iliad is still in progress. Once the Iliad is narrated, there will be no further need for the Achaean Wall. But there will still remain a further need for the Wall of Troy, which will not yet be destroyed when the narration of the Iliad is completed. Meanwhile, the epic fame of the Achaean Wall, which depends on the narration of the Iliad, still in progress, is threatening the older epic fame of the Trojan Wall, as we can observe already at I.07.448–453: there we see that the Trojan Wall had been built by the gods Poseidon and Apollo for the former king of Troy, Laomedon, who was predecessor of the current king, Priam, and, in the words of Poseidon himself, the Wall built by the Achaeans has an epic glory or kloes, I.07.451, which now threatens to eclipse the corresponding glory of the Trojan Wall built earlier by the two gods, I.07.452–453. The wording at I.07.451 already highlights the epic glory or kloes of the Iliad, which concentrates on the Achaean Wall, as distinct from the kloes conferred by earlier epic traditions that concentrate on the Trojan Wall, I.07.458, as noted in the comment on I.07.433–465. After the story of the Iliad is told—or, more precisely, after Troy is destroyed and the Achaeans are already departing for home, I.12.13–16—then the gods can finally remove this Iliadic threat to the kloes of the Trojan Wall: now Poseidon and Apollo will let loose all the rivers in the region of Troy, which will then flood away all traces of the Achaean Wall, I.12.17–33. This divine action, as foretold here, of removing the mis-en-scène or scenery of the Iliad is already foretold at an earlier point by Zeus himself, at I.07.455–463. Relevant to these prophecies is what we read in Strabo 13.1.36 C598: ‘νεώστη γάρ γεγονέναι φησιν τὸ τείχος (ἡ οὐδ’ ἐγένετο, ὅ δὲ πλάσας ποιητὴς ἦρμαν, ὡς Αριστοτέλης φήσει) ‘the Poet [= Homer] says that the Wall [= the Achaean Wall] had only recently come into existence, or it never existed at all, and the Poet made it up [plattein] and then made it disappear, as Aristotle [F 162 ed. Rose] says’. To paraphrase Aristotle: Homeric poetry foretells the non-existence of the Achaean Wall in a future time of its own performance, and such a future time will be a post-heroic age (HPC 155n16). On the Homeric conceptualization of a post-heroic age, see the comment on I.12.023 below, featuring the word hēmitheoi ‘demigods, half-gods’. [[GN 2016.09.27 via BA 159–160, 340; see also Nagy 2006§64.]]
subject heading(s): Trojan Wall

This reference here to the future destruction of Troy leaves the question open: was the Wall of Troy totally destroyed or only partially so? See the comment on I.07.433–465. [[GN 2016.10.01 via HPC 179–180, 207.]]

subject heading(s): menos ‘mental power’

Not only heroes (and their horses) but also forces of nature—such as rivers, as here—can havemenos. In the comments so far, menos has been consistently translated as ‘mental power’, not just ‘power’, and this translation can apply even in the present context, I.12.018. Forces of nature can have a mind of their own, as it were, because they are connected to the mental power of divinities who control the cosmos and to whom humans using their own mental power can pray for the activation of such control. Besides rivers, as here, other natural forces that have menos include the sun (I.23.190), fire (I.06.182, I.17.565), and winds (O.19.440). Like heroes, cosmic forces have to be reminded of their menos, and this is precisely what gets done by worshippers who use their own mental power in praying to divinities controlling such cosmic forces, as we see for example in Indic traditions centering on the word mānas-, which I likewise translate as ‘mental power’ and which is actually a cognate of Greek menos. [[GN 2016.10.01 via GMP 114.]]

subject heading(s): hēmitheoi ‘demigods, half-gods’; Achaean Wall; hero cult; post-heroic age

As the rivers of the Trojan landscape flood away all traces of the Achaean Wall, they also obliterate all traces of the epic battles fought by the Achaean heroes in the mise-en-scène or scenery of that landscape. These heroes are called hēmitheoi ‘demigods, half-gods’ here at I.12.023, and we find no other attestation of this word hēmitheoi in either the Iliad or the Odyssey: in both epics, the word for ‘heroes’ is consistently hēroës. Unlike hēroës, the word hēmitheoi is appropriate to a style of expression that looks beyond epic. The use of this word to mark the Achaean heroes here belongs not to the epic tradition of the Homeric Iliad and Odyssey but to alternative poetic traditions having to do with cosmogony and anthropogony, as we see when we consider the attestations of hēmitheoi in Hesiodic poetry, F 204.100 and Works and Days 160; relevant too are the attestations of this word in the poetry of the Homeric Hymns, 31.19 and 32.19 (Nagy 2006§66). In the Hesiodic Works and Days, 160, the word hēmitheoi signals the last generation of heroes, who were obliterated in the time of the Theban and the Trojan Wars, 161–165, but who were preserved after death and immortalized by being transported to the Islands of the Blessed, 167–173. It can be said in general that the theme of heroic immortalization is central to myths and rituals related to hero cult, and so the use of the word hēmitheoi ‘demigods’ in this Hesiodic context is highly significant (BA 342-343): yes, all epic heroes must die, but then, by way of becoming cult heroes, they are mystically immortalized after death (Nagy 2006§80–108). And the significance of such a theme is further heightened by the idea of divine parentage as built into the meaning of word hēmitheoi as ‘half-gods’, which shows a genetic understanding of the hero. The heroic potential is programmed by divine genes, as it were. There has to be a god involved in any hero’s “family tree.” Still, the literal meaning of the word hēmitheos as ‘half-god’ does not imply an exact half-and-half distribution of immortals and mortals in a hero’s genealogy. Rather, this meaning marks a tenuous balancing of immortality with mortality in the hero’s self. In the case of the hero Achilles, for example, the divinity of his mother is not the only ‘half’ of immortality that he inherits, since his mortal father Peleus is descended, by way of that man’s own mortal father Aiakos, from the immortal father Zeus himself. But the bitter fact remains that Peleus is a mortal. And, since Peleus as one of the two parents of Achilles is mortal, Achilles must be mortal as well, even though his other parent is Thetis, who is not only immortal but even endowed with limitless cosmic powers (BA 346–347). So Achilles, despite the limitless potential he inherits from Thetis, is subject to death. The same can be said about all other Homeric heroes: even though they are all descended in some way or another from the gods, they are all mortals. They all have to die, like ordinary mortals. No matter how many immortals you find in a heroic “family tree,” the intrusion of even a single mortal will make all successive descendents mortal. Mortality, not immortality, is the dominant gene (GN 2006§70). So, the meaning of hēmitheoi as ‘half-gods’ can cut both ways: the ‘half-divinity’ of the hero can point downward to the grim facts of mortality just as it can point upward to the sublime hopes for immortalization after death. The
scenario of obliteration followed by immortalization for the ἥμιθεοι in Hesiodic poetry, Works and Days 161–173, must be contrasted with the scenario of obliteration followed by no mention of immortalization for the ἥμιθεοι in Homeric poetry, I.12.17–33. The inevitability of death for the hero enhances the pathos of hoping for immortalization after death. Such a pathos is visible in the exceptional Homeric occurrence of ἥμιθεοι at I.12.023, where we see a correspondingly exceptional shift in the Homeric narrative perspective: instead of viewing heroes through the lens of the heroic age, seeing them as they were back then, alive and hoping to be remembered, the poetry now views them through the lens of a post-heroic age, seeing them as already dead and hopefully immortalized after death (Nagy 2006§67). [[GN 2016.10.01 via BA 159-161, GMP 15–16, 54; many of the formulations in the paragraph here come directly from Nagy 2006; that article also explores the relevance of this word ἥμιθεοι ‘demigods’ to myths about cosmic floods and fires, stylized in Greek traditions as cataclysm and ecpyrosis respectively.]]

I.12.070

subject heading(s): nōnumnoi ‘nameless’

The wish is expressed, on the Trojan side, that the invading Achaean warriors should die nōnumnoi ‘nameless’ at Troy. The same word nōnumnoi ‘nameless’ is used in the Hesiodic Works and Days, 154, to describe the truly nameless warriors of the Bronze Generation, who live a life devoted exclusively to martial violence and who deserve to earn no epic glory after their violent death, 146-155. At I.12.070, the Achaean warriors are viewed through such a Hesiodic lens, as it were. [[GN 2016.10.01 via BA 157.]]

I.12.076

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute; ἡνί-οXPathos ‘chariot driver’

In the immediate context, the plural therapontes functions as a virtual synonym of a word used elsewhere, ἡνί-οXPathoi ‘chariot drivers’. [[GN 2016.08.04.]]

I.12.090

subject heading(s): breaking through the Wall of the Achaeans

Here is the first explicit reference to the objective of the Trojans to break through the Wall of the Achaeans. For further references, see the list in the comment for I.12.198. [[GN 2016.10.02.]]

I.12.111

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; ἡνί-οXPathos ‘chariot driver’

The immediate context shows that the hero Asios has a ἡνί-οXPathos ‘chariot driver’ who is also the therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’ of Asios precisely because he is the chariot driver. [[GN 2016.08.04.]]

I.12.118–123

subject heading(s): left-right co-ordination; viewing the scene of chariot fighting; Achaean Wall; elliptic plural

Reference is made at I.12.118 to the left-hand side of the encampment protecting the ships of the Achaeans. So, in terms of the Master Narrator's perspective, the positioning refers to the east side: see the comment on I.11.497–500. Described here at I.12.118–123 is the opening in the Achaean Wall through which the charioteers drive their chariots from the Achaean encampment to the scene of chariot fighting and then back again. The use of the word πυλῆ ‘gate’ in the plural at I.12.120 does not necessarily point to the existence of more than one gate, since the function of the plural πυλai here may be elliptic: ‘the gate and related things that belong to the gate’. There is a reference to the same πυλai at I.07.339–340 and at I.07.438–439. On the concept of an elliptic plural, see the comment on I.04.196. And it is next to this gate that the sacred common tomb of the Achaean dead is located, I.07.336–337. [[GN 2016.10.01 via HPC 163 and with reference also to the scholia for I.07.339b1.]]

I.12.130
subject heading(s): ‘equal to Ares’

Besides Hector (I.11.295, I.13.802), Patroklos (I.11.604), and Achilles (I.20.046), the hero Leonteus, mentioned here, is the only other Iliadic figure who is called ἰσός Ἀρεῖ ‘equal to Ares’ (BA 33). Relevant to the fact that Leonteus qualifies here at I.12.130 as ἰσός Ἀρεῖ ‘equal to Ares’ is the fact that he qualifies at I.12.188 as ὀζὸς Ἀρεῖος ‘attendant of Ares’, also at I.02.745, I.23.841. For the etymology of ὀζὸς Ἀρεῖος, see the anchor comment at I.12.188. [[GN 2016.10.02 via BA 33, 295.]]

I.12.159

subject heading(s): verb in plural for neuter plural subject

In Homeric diction, a neuter plural subject can “take” a verb in the plural instead of the singular. [[GN 2016.10.02 via HTL 124.]]

I.12.188

anchor comment on ὀζὸς Ἀρεῖος ‘attendant of Ares’

As noted in the comment on I.12.130, Leonteus is the only Iliadic figure who is called ‘equal to Ares’ besides Hector, Patroklos, and Achilles (see also BA 33). Relevant is the fact that he qualifies here at I.12.188 as ὀζὸς Ἀρεῖος ‘attendant of Ares’, also at I.02.745, I.23.841. The word ὀζὸς in this description, which applies also to other heroes as listed above, can be explained etymologically as *(h)o*sd-ōs, meaning ‘seated together with’: so a hero who qualifies ὀζὸς Ἀρεῖος ‘attendant of Ares’ can be pictured as literally ‘seated together with Ares’ (BA 295 = ch.17§5n8). The application of this epithet to a hero indicates that such a hero, as a warrior, is destined to become a ritual substitute for the war-god Ares, in the sense that generic warriors are described as therapontes Ἀρεῖος ‘attendants of Ares’ in the iliad. See the comment on I.06.067. [[GN 2016.10.02 via BA 33, 295.]]

I.12.198

anchor comment on Battle for the Ships, fire of Hector, breaking through the Wall of the Achaeans

subject heading(s): Battle for the Ships; fire of Hector, breaking through the Wall of the Achaeans; κῦδος ‘sign of glory’

In the Battle for the Ships, the objective of Hector is for the Trojans to set on fire the beached ships of the Achaeans, and, for this objective to be realized, the Trojans must break through the Wall of the Achaeans. There is a reference to such a breakthrough already at I.12.090. For further references, which occur mostly in iliad 12, to the Trojan objective of breaking through the Wall, see I.12.090, I.12.223, I.12.257, I.12.261–262, I.12.308, I.12.418, I.12.440–441, I.13.679–680. Many of these references mention also the fire that threatens the beached ships of the Achaeans. From here on, further Iliadic mentions of (1) the Battle for the Ships, (2) the fire of Hector and his Trojans, and (3) the breakthrough of the Trojans in penetrating the Wall of the Achaeans will intensify. Accordingly, for practical reasons, comments on these mentions will from here on refer back only to the anchor comment as formulated here at I.12.198. [[GN 2016.10.02 via BA 335.]]

I.12.228

Q&T via HC 1§14

subject heading(s): theopropos ‘interpreter of signs’; hupokrinesthai ‘respond to (a sign), interpret’

The meaning of the noun theopropos as ‘interpreter of signs’ is defined clearly in this verse: the role of such a person is ‘to interpret signs’, hupokrinesthai, that is, ‘to respond to signs’ by distinguishing what is real from what is unreal. See the note on O.19.535. Relevant are the post-Homeric uses of the derivative agent noun hupokrītēs in two senses, ‘dream-interpreter’ and ‘actor’ (HC 1§14). Also relevant is the implication here at I.12.228 of a coextensiveness between oracular poetry and epic. [[GN 2016.10.02 via HC 1§14.]]

I.12.235–236
subject heading(s): boulē ‘wish, plan’; Will of Zeus

Hector here says that he understands the Will of Zeus, and that the god has already signaled his Will by nodding, I.12.236. We have seen such nodding before, at I.01.524–530 and at I.08.175–176. We have also seen, at I.08.175–176, that the Will of Zeus as signaled by his nodding will bring níkē ‘victory’ to the Trojans and pēma ‘pain’ to the Achaeans. So too the nodding of Zeus here at I.12.236 signals once again the Will of Zeus, expressed in this case by way of the plural of boulē, ‘will’, which is boulai. This noun boulē, as noted already at I.01.005, I.01.524–530, I.10.043–052, I.10.415, I.11.627, also conveys the idea of ‘planning’, not just ‘wishing’. We may compare the plural boulai ‘plans’ of Zeus at O.08.082, as noted in the comments on I.11.347. [[GN 2016.10.02 via BA 64, 334.]]

I.12.252

subject heading(s): terpi-kerau̱nos ‘he whose bolt strikes’

Zeus as terpi-kerau̱nos ‘he whose bolt strikes’ is asserting here his authority as the god of thunder and lightning. He now sends a violent windstorm from the heights of Mount Ida, thus making a positive signal for the Trojans and a negative one for the Achaeans, I.12.252–254. [[GN 2016.10.02 via GMP 195.]]

I.12.255–257

subject heading(s): kúdos ‘sign of glory’; breaking through the Wall of the Achaeans

Zeus, sending a violent windstorm from the heights of Mount Ida at I.12.252–254, now signals at I.12.255 that this kúdos or ‘sign of glory’ goes to the Trojans, who are already starting to break through the Wall of the Achaeans, I.12.256–257. For more on the breakthrough of the Trojans, see the list of references in the comment for I.12.198. [[GN 2016.10.02 via BA 64, 334.]]

I.12.270

Q&T via MoM 2§9

subject heading(s): homoio- ‘similar to, same as’; relativism/absolutism; Aiante

The two warriors who are jointly named by way of the dual form Aiante here, about whom there will be more to say in the comment on I.12.335–336, are urging the Achaeans to keep up the fight. To encourage the Achaeans, the dual Aiante say that it does not matter whether different warriors will make greater or smaller contributions to the effort: after all, warriors are not homoioi ‘the same as’ each other, since some are superior and some are middling and some are inferior in warfare, I.12.269–270. The word homoio- ‘similar to, same as’, used in comparisons, displays the semantics of relativism as well as absolutism in Homeric diction. For more on homoio- ‘similar to, same as’ see the anchor comment at I.05.441. [[GN 2016.10.02 via HTL 165 on Aiante.]]

I.12.310–321

Q&T via GMP 137

subject heading(s): hero cult; cult hero; tímē ‘honor’ of cult hero; kloēs ‘glory’ of epic hero

The objective of the hero Sarpedon, as he declares here at I.12.318 to his fellow warrior Glaukos, is that the two of them must not be aklēeës ‘without epic glory [kloēs]’. The people whom the two of us rule in Lycia, he continues, must recognize such an objective. This way, the tímē ‘honor’ that the two of us receive in Lycia, I.12.310 (tēmoruecia), which is a sign of our status there as cult heroes, will be matched by the kloēs ‘glory’ that the two of us will receive as epic heroes here in the Iliad. [[GN 2016.10.02 via GMP 137; also Nagy 2012:67–69.]]

I.12.319

subject heading(s): diet of sacrificial sheep for the cult hero; hero cult; cult hero

The reference here to Sarpedon’s diet of mutton in the context of his dwelling in his native land of Lycia can be correlated
with archaeological evidence showing that cult heroes received from their worshippers primarily the meat of sheep that were sacrificially slaughtered in rituals of hero cult. [[GN 2016.10.02 via GMP 137.]]

I.12.322–328

subject heading(s): immortalization for the cult hero after death

The wording of Sarpedon implies here that he is already assured of immortalization as a cult hero, but now he desires another form of immortalization as well, which is the immortal fame conferred by the medium of epic. Sarpedon now thinks that such fame is worth dying for, right away. [[GN 2016.10.02 via GMP 138.]]

I.12.331–377

subject heading(s): Menestheus; Athenian transmission

Menestheus, the leader of the Athenians who came to fight at Troy, is stationed to guard apurgos ‘tower’ of the Achaeans Wall, I.12.332/333/373. It is at this point in the Wall that the attacking forces on the Trojan side are making their breakthrough, and so the station of Menestheus is evidently located next to the political and sacral centerpoint of the Achaeans, where the stations of Agamemnon and Odysseus are also located. On this concept of a political and sacral centerpoint, see the comments on I.11.806–808. The proximity of the Athenian leader Menestheus to such a centerpoint can be seen as a subtle reference to the importance of Athens in the transmission of the Iliad and Odyssey [[GN 2016.10.03 via HPC 161.]]

I.12.335–336

subject heading(s): Aiante, with or without Teukros; elliptic dual; an evolutionary model for the making of Homeric poetry; Aiante

The two warriors who are jointly named by way of the dual form Aiante here are to be identified as the greater and the lesser Ajax—in contexts where the hero Teukros, who is the bastard brother of the greater Ajax, is also named as a participant in the action. In other contexts where Teukros is not named as a participant, however, the dual Aiante are to be identified as the greater Ajax and his bastard brother Teukros. Such contexts reveal an elliptic use of the dual. The use of the dual form Aiante in the contexts of Iliad 12 can be cited as evidence for building an evolutionary model for the making of Homeric poetry. [[GN 2016.10.03 via HTL 165–166.]]

I.12.387–391

subject heading(s): eukhetásthai ‘boast’; epea ‘words’ spoken in the act of boasting or in the act of performing epic

Heroes strive to avoid being seen in situations where they are bested: this way, they can also avoid the boasting of warriors who best them; at I.12.391, such a word for ‘boasting’ is eukhetásthai, while the ‘words’ spoken in the act of boasting are epea—which are coextensive with the ‘words’ spoken in the act of performing epic poetry. [[GN 2016.10.03 via BA 30.]]

I.12.400

subject heading(s): Ajax and Teukros

See the comment at I.12.335–336. [[GN 2016.10.03 via HTL 168.]]

I.12.436–441

subject heading(s): Battle for the Ships; fire of Hector, breaking through the Wall of the Achaeans

Most appropriately, Hector is the very first of the Trojan warriors to break through the Achaean Wall. See also anchor comment at I.12.188. [[GN 2016.10.03 via BA 335.]]

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The momentum of the Trojan onslaught led by Hector intensifies here, and the prospects of the Achaeans look grim, almost hopeless. Hector is so successful that he feels tempted, toward the end of Rhapsody 13, to equate himself with immortal gods. Meanwhile, the intensity of the narrative keeps pace, and the poetic virtuosity approaches the sublime. [[GN 2016.10.13.]]

I.13.023–031

Q&T via HC 1§148

subject heading(s): chariot teams driven by divinities

Poseidon's grand entrance here, as he drives his chariot team to the scene of battle, is comparable to other narratives about ceremonial arrivals by divinities. See HC 1§145, with a line drawing of an image painted on an Attic red-figure pyxis lid: unattributed, dated at around 425–375 BCE, Copenhagen, National Museum, 731. The image shows three goddesses—Hērā, Athena, and Aphrodite—arriving at the Judgment of Paris in their chariots drawn by customized chariot teams. Hērā is driving two horses; Athena, two serpents; and Aphrodite, two boyish Erōtes. Figure 10a shows the whole image, while Figure 10b shows a detail from that image. [[GN 2016.10.13 via HC 1§148.]]

I.13.046–047

subject heading(s): Αἰάντη

On the two warriors who are jointly named here by way of the dual form Αἰάντη, see especially the comment on I.12.335–336. [[GN 2016.10.13 via HTL 165.]]

I.13.054

subject heading(s): euκhēsthai ‘declare; pray, boast’, aspiration for immortality

As noted in the comment on I.01.091, the meaning of the verb euκhēsthai as ‘declare’ has to do with speaking for the record in the form of ‘boasting’ or ‘praying’ or ‘juridically declaring’ (Muellner 1976). According to the speaker here, who is the god Poseidon himself in the guise of Kalkhas, Hector aspires to be immortal by way of ‘boasting’, as expressed by the verb euκhēsthai, that he is the son of the god Zeus. [[GN 2016.10.13 via BA 148–149.]]

I.13.066

subject heading(s): Αἰάντη, with or without Τευκρός; elliptic dual; an evolutionary model for the making of Homeric poetry;
The reference here to the lesser Ajax shows that the dual Aiante at I.13.046–047 refers in this case to the greater and the lesser Ajax together, not to the greater Ajax and to his bastard brother Teukros. See the comment at I.12.335–336. [GN 2016.10.13 via HTL 165–166.]

I.13.084

subject heading(s): ana-ψυχεῖν ‘revive, reanimate’; ψυχή ‘spirit; life’s breath’; release of consciousness from the body; ana-πνεῖν/ en-πνεῖν ‘take a breath, breathe in’

As at I.05.795, the heroes are simply ‘reviving’. As for intimations of a mystical revival from death, there is still more to say: see the comments on I.16.456–457. [GN 2016.10.13 via BA 168.]

I.13.111–113

subject heading(s): ἀληθός ‘responsible’, ἀτιμᾶν ‘dishonor’; Will of Zeus

In the words of the god Poseidon, it is conceded that Agamemnon is ἀληθός ‘responsible’, I.13.111, for having ‘dishonored’ Achilles, I.13.113, as expressed by the verb a-τιμᾶν. [GN 2016.10.13 via PH 238.]

I.13.197

subject heading(s): Aiante

In this context, as also at I.13.201, the referents for the dual Aiante are Ajax the greater and Teukros, his bastard brother. [GN 2016.10.13 via HTL 164–165.]

I.13.201

subject heading(s): Aiante

See the note on I.13.197. [GN 2016.10.13 via HTL 164–165.]

I.13.202–204

subject heading(s): Aiante

Here the reference of Aiante shifts away from referring to the pair of Ajax the greater and Teukros. That is because the spotlight on the action shifts from Teukros to Ajax the lesser, so that the lesser Ajax can now become, retroactively, the implied second member of the dual Aiante. [GN 2016.10.13 via HTL 164–165.]

I.13.216–218

subject heading(s): the expression ‘(and) he was honored ἱεῖν] as a god [θεός] in the district [δῆμος]’ (θεὸς [θ] ὥς τίτο 5ημος); hero; cult hero

See anchor comment at I.05.077–078. [GN 2016.10.13 via BA 149, GMP 132–133]

I.13.227

subject heading(s): ὁνομαίοι ‘nameless’

The fear is expressed that the invading Achaeans could die ὁνομαίοι ‘nameless’ at Troy. On the connotations, which can be seen by way of comparing the Hesiodic Works and Days 146–155, see the comment on I.12.079. [GN 2016.10.13 via BA 157.]

I.13.242–244
subject heading(s): the look of Zeus; arizēlos 'most visible'; augai 'lights' as 'eyes'

Zeus, in the act of launching his thunderbolt, can be visualized simultaneously in two ways, as here. First, he can be seen as casting his thunderbolt by throwing it with his own divine hand, I.13.243. But, second, he can be seen as casting his divine eye on his target, and his angry looks will thus launch his thunderbolt from within: that is the sense of the expression at I.13.244 here, 'and his eyes [augai] are most visible [arizēloi]' (αἱ ἄριζηλοι δέ οἱ οὖν). The noun augai, which means literally 'lights', refers here to the eyes of Zeus, as also at I.13.837. On the expression the look of Zeus, see the comment on I.19.003-017. [[GN 2016.11.26.]]

I.13.244

subject heading(s): sēma 'sign, signal'

The lightning made by Zeus is a sēma 'sign, signal' that needs to be interpreted. [[GN 2016.10.13 via GMP 204, 211.]]

I.13.246

subject heading(s): therapōn 'attendant, ritual substitute'

In the immediate context, where Meriones is highlighted as therapōn of Idomeneus, only the surface meaning, ‘attendant’, is evident. [[GN 2016.08.04 via BA 292.]]

I.13.313–314

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’

Here the title ‘best of the Achaeans’ is narrowed in scope: Teukros is ‘best of the Achaeans’ in archery. [[GN 2016.10.13 via BA 32.]]

I.13.331

subject heading(s): therapōn 'attendant, ritual substitute'

Idomeneus together with Meriones as his therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’ take their stand side by side on the battlefield. [[GN 2016.10.13.]]

I.13.347

subject heading(s): nikē ‘victory’

The role of Zeus in awarding nikē ‘victory’ is primary, while the corresponding role of Athena is secondary. [[GN 2016.10.13 via HC 4§109.]]

I.13.386

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; hēni-okhos ‘chariot driver’

While the hero Asios is fighting pezos ‘on foot’ against the Achaeans, I.13.385, the two horses that draw his chariot are right behind him, practically breathing down his neck—that is, down his shoulders. The driver of the horses is an unnamed hēni-okhos ‘chariot driver’, who is described as the therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’ of Asios, I.13.386. After Asios is killed, I.13.386–393, and his corpse is just lying there in front of the horses that once drew his chariot, I.13.392, the focus reverts to the hēni-okhos ‘chariot driver’, I.13.394. Still standing on the chariot platform, the chariot driver freezes, failing to turn the chariot around and drive the horse team back to safety, I.13.394–396. The Achaean hero Antilokhos takes this opportunity to spear the chariot driver, who then falls out of the chariot, and now Antilokhos can mount the empty chariot and drive it away himself, horses and all, I.13.396–401. [[GN 2016.10.13.]]

I.13.402–423
subject heading(s): formulaic variants

Variants like *stenakhonta* and *stenakhontes* at I.13.423 can be seen as formulaic—in terms of the overall system of Homeric diction. [[GN 2016.10.13 via HTL 114–115.]]

I.13.435

subject heading(s): *thelgein* ‘put a trance on, enchant’

In this context, the use of a noun for ‘eyes’ as the direct object of the verb *thelgein* ‘put a trance on, enchant’ shows the visual connotations that are built into this verb. See the comment on I.02.308, with reference to the omen about the serpent and the nine birds: here the etymology of *drakōn* ‘serpent’ as ‘the one who looks [derkesthai]’ is relevant. [[GN 2016.10.13 via HC 16121.]]

I.13.444

subject heading(s): death by Ares

At the very moment when the hero dies here, the war-god Ares literally takes away the hero’s life *ormenos* ‘mental power’. To be compared is I.105.296, where the hero’s *menos* ‘mental power’ is released from his body at the moment of death. But now we see that the agent for taking away the *menos* of the hero is Ares. Thus the ultimate killer of the generic hero as warrior is Ares himself, no matter who the immediate killer may be—as in this case, where the killing is performed by the hero Idomeneus with the direct help of the god Poseidon. The role of Ares in taking away the life of the generic hero at the moment of heroic death is relevant to the epithet of heroes as generic warriors: *therapontes* or ‘ritual substitutes’ of Ares. See the comment on I.02.110. [[GN 2016.10.13 via BA 294.]]

I.13.459–461

subject heading(s): *mēnis* ‘anger’

Besides Achilles, another epic hero who experiences *mēnis* ‘anger’ is Aeneas, and this hero’s anger is directed at the king Priam. [[GN 2016.10.13 via BA 73, 265–266, GMP 28.]]

I.13.600

subject heading(s): *therapōn* ‘attendant, ritual substitute’

A nameless *therapōn* is mentioned here in passing: he happens to be the ‘attendant’ of the hero Agenor. [[GN 2016.08.04.]]

I.13.628–629

subject heading(s): fire of Hector

See the anchor comment at I.12.198 on: Battle for the Ships, fire of Hector, breaking through the Wall of the Achaean. [[GN 2016.12.13 via BA 335.]]

I.13.631–639

subject heading(s): *hubristai* ‘men of outrage’; *atasthala* ‘reckless’

This insulting epithet *hubristai* ‘men of outrage’ at I.13.633 is applied here to the Trojans, whose *menos* ‘mental power’ is said to be *atasthala* ‘reckless’, I.13.634. The connotations of these words are comparable to what is said in Pindar *Pythian* 11.34 about the *habrótas* ‘luxuriance’ of the Trojans. [[GN 2016.10.13 via BA 163, PH 290–291.]]

I.13.659

subject heading(s): *poinē* ‘compensation’.
To be added is a relevant comment. [[GN 2016.10.13 via PH 251.]]

I.13.681

subject heading(s): ship of Protesilaos

At I.15.704–746 we will see more details about the beached ship of Protesilaos. Here at I.13.681, the details are few: the reference to this hero’s ship is followed by a passing reference to the ships of Ajax, likewise beached along the shore, and this extended perspective now leads to a wider view of all these ships, the sterns of which are somehow contiguous with the Wall of the Achaeans, I.13.682–684. [[GN 2016.10.13 via HPC 162.]]

I.13.685

subject heading(s): Ionians in the Homeric *Iliad*

Here is the only direct reference to Ionians in Homeric *Iliad* and *Odyssey* The juxtaposition of Ionians with Boeotians is significant. [[GN 2016.10.13 via HPC 227 and 227n16.]]

I.13.688

subject heading(s): fire of Hector as a *phlox* ‘burst of flame’

The comparison of Hector here to *aphlox* ‘burst of flame’ is relevant to the overall theme of Hector’s fire. See the anchor comment at I.12.198 on: Battle for the Ships, fire of Hector, breaking through the Wall of the Achaeans. [[GN 2016.12.13 via BA 335, 337.]]

I.13.689–691

subject heading(s): Athenians in the *Iliad*

It is significant that the Ionians, mentioned only at I.13.685, are drawn into proximity with the Athenians. [[GN 2016.10.13 via HPC 227.]]

I.13.700

subject heading(s): Boeotians in the *Iliad*

It is also significant that the Ionians and Athenians are together drawn into proximity with the Boeotians. [[GN 2016.10.13 via HPC 227n16.]]

I.13.726–735

Q&T via GMP 204

subject heading(s): nóos ‘mind’; *gignóskein* ‘recognize’.

It is said here that the nóos ‘mind’, I.13.732, enables the hero to ‘recognize’, *gignóskein*, I.13.734. [[GN 2016.10.13 via GMP 204.]]

I.13.737–739

subject heading(s): epic traditions of the Epigonoi; epic traditions of the Seven against Thebes

The taunting here of Agamemnon by Sthenelos, chariot driver of Diomedes, recalls the epic traditions of the Epigonoi = Sons-of-the-Seven-against-Thebes. See also I.02.119–130 and the comments on those verses. [[GN 2016.10.13 via BA 163.]]

I.13.795–799
subject heading(s): fire of Hector

See the anchor comment at I.12.198 on: Battle for the Ships, fire of Hector, breaking through the Wall of the Achaeans. [[GN 2016.12.13 via BA 335, 337.]]

I.13.802

subject heading(s): ‘equal to Ares’

Hector here is said to be ἰδός or ‘equal’ to Ares. This kind of equating of a hero with the war god will figure prominently in future scenes of mortal combat. [[GN 2016.10.13 via BA 294.]]

I.13.825–829

subject heading(s): wishes correlated with premises; aspiration for immortality; antagonism between immortal and mortal

Here is a working translation: ‘If only I could be the child of aegis-bearing Zeus Ἐος for all days to come, and the Lady Ἡρα could be my mother, [ἐν] and if only I could be honored [τις] just as Athena and Apollo are honored, – as surely as this day brings misfortune to the Argives, all of them’ ([ἐώς ἔν γὰρ ἐγὼν οὖτω νε Δίος πάϊς αἰγιόχοι Ἐος ἐν ἥματα πάντα, τέκοι δὲ μὲ πότνια Ἡρα, Ἐν τοιούν δ’ ὡς τίπτ’ Αθηναίαι καὶ Ἀπόλλων, Ἐος ὡς νῦν ἡμέρη ἡδὲ κακόν φέρει Ἀργείοις Ἐν πᾶσι μόλις). Hector expresses his aspiration to be immortal—not only to be the son of the divinities Zeus and Ἡρα but also to be divine just as Athena and Apollo are divine. On the syntax of the wording here, see the comment on I.18.464–466. Hector’s aspiration typifies a pattern of antagonism between immortal and mortal, divinity and hero: see the comments at I.08.538–541 and, further back, at I.06.286–311. [[GN 2016.10.13 via BA 148; also GMP 294–301.]]

I.13.831–832

subject heading(s): exposition of the dead body to dogs and birds

Hector’s threat, to feed to dogs and birds the corpses of the Achaeans that he expects to kill, shows that he is ready to descend to the depths of brutality, matching the horror of such a prospect as expressed at the very beginning of the epic, I.001.003–005. [[GN 2016 via BA 226.]]

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Iliad Rhapsody 14

2016.10.19 / enhanced 2018.09.11

The momentum of the attacking Trojan warriors gets stalled here, since Ἡρα interrupts the ongoing Plan of Zeus. The goddess seduces the god, and the setting for their divine sexual encounter is the spectacular landscape of Mount Ida, which is the private abode of the thundering almighty. During the tryst of the god and the goddess, the Achaeans regain the upper hand in the fighting. But this new momentum is soon headed for a downturn. The divine interruption, despite all its cosmic sexual energy, becomes retrospectively a mere interlude in the narrative arc of the Iliad—once the tryst is over and the Plan of Zeus resumes its relentless course of action. [[GN 2016.10.19.]]
I.14.027–036

subject heading(s): bay of the Hellespont; headquarters of the Achaeanoi; naustathmon ‘ship-station’; micro-Iliad; First Song of Demodokos; sterns of the Achaeanoi ships; Scamander; klisia ‘shelter’; Hellespont; eris ‘strife’; post-heroic age

Nestor here reconnects with Agamemnon and other leaders of the Achaeanoi at their headquarters, I.14.027–028. The headquarters are pictured as a massing of ships beached on the shores of the south end of the bay of the Hellespont, and this location has been reconstructed in the comments on I.08.220–227, I.11.005–016, and I.11.806–808. But there is now an added detail to be noted here at I.14.030–032: the ships had been beached with their sterns facing inland and their prows facing out toward the waters, so that the Wall of the Achaeanoi, built ten years after the original beaching of the ships, was made to be contiguous with the sterns of the ships lined up along the southern shores of the bay of the Hellespont. See also the comment at I.15.385. As for the other ships of the Achaeanoi, they had been beached along the shores of the rest of the U-shaped bay, as we read at I.14.033–036. See the comment on those verses. These other ships, then, are peripheral to the ships beached at the central shoreline of the bay, which are pictured as the headquarters of the Achaeanoi. And these headquarters, as noted in the comment on I.11.806–808, are called the naustathmon ‘ship-station’ by Strabo 13.1.31–32 C595 (quoted at HPC 153) and 13.1.36 C598 (quoted at HPC 154). Also, as noted in the comments on I.11.806–808, Homeric poetry pictures such a ‘station’ as a political and sacral centerpoint for the leaders of the Achaeanoi. See also the comments on I.08.220–227. It is this central station that becomes the political stage of Agamemnon when he stands on the beached ship of Odysseus and projects his voice of authority to all the Achaeanoi stationed at their ships, I.08.220–227. And it is this central station, we will see later in more detail, that becomes the prime target of the Trojan hero Hector when he succeeds in penetrating the Achaean Wall. Also in a later comment, there will be more to say about the sharing of this central space by two figures in particular, Agamemnon and Odysseus. The joint participation of these two Homeric heroes in the innermost political zone that is marked by this spatial centerpoint is homologous with their engagement in two epic quarrels involving Achilles as a political outsider: the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon in the Iliad, it can be argued, is linked with the quarrel between Achilles and Odysseus in the “micro-Iliad” at O.08.072–083, which is the First Song of Demodokos [BA 42–58]. [[GN 2016.10.19 via HPC 160–162]]

I.14.070

subject heading(s): nōnumnoi ‘nameless’

Again, as at I.13.227, the fear is expressed that the invading Achaean warriors could die nōnumnoi ‘nameless’ at Troy. On the connotations, which can be seen by way of comparing Hesiodic poetry, see the comment on I.12.079. [[GN 2016.10.19 via...]]
I.14.187
subject heading(s): kosmos ‘order, arrangement’

As Héra readies herself for her sexual encounter with Zeus, her cosmetic self-adornment is pictured here as a cosmic ‘arrangement’, kosmos, of beauty. [[GN 2016.10.19 via PH 145.]]

I.14.200-210

subject heading(s): hieros gamos ‘sacred sexual intercourse’

Héra’s wording here rationalizes her initiating a sexual encounter with Zeus. The idea of such an encounter is conventionally known as hieros gamos—in the sense of ‘sacred sexual intercourse’ (as in Theocritus 17.131). From the dramatic standpoint of the immediate narrative context, Héra is making up what she is saying; in the comments that follow, however, it is argued that the wording of the goddess here derives from genuine theogonic traditions centering on the idea of sacred intercourse as an act of cosmogonic creation. [[GN 2016.10.19 via HC 2§145n147.]]

I.14.201

subject heading(s): Ókeanos

Highlighted in the comments so far on the cosmic river Ókeanos is the role of this world-encircling fresh-water stream as a boundary delimiting light from darkness, wakefulness from sleep, life from death. Such delimitations, as we have seen, are elaborated poetically in contexts that picture the rising of the sun out of the waters of the Ókeanos at sunrise—after its setting into these same waters at sunset. See the comments on I.07.421–423 and I.08.485–486. And now, in the context of a scene that evokes the themes of hieros gamos ‘sacred sexual intercourse’, we find that the role of Ókeanos evokes also the themes of theogony and cosmogony. These themes are conveyed by wording that points to the role of Ókeanos as a personified god who combines with a personified goddess Tēthys in prototypically initiating a genesis ‘generating’ of gods, as we see here at I.14.201, and even a genesis ‘generating’ of all things, as we will see at I.14.245–246–246a. [[GN 2016.10.19 via BA 196, HC 2§§132, 140, 144, 146, with reference also to Plato Cratylus 402a-d and Theaetetus 152a.]]

I.14.238–240

subject heading(s): apṭhito- ‘imperishable, unwilting’

The goddess Héra promises to commission the making of a beautiful thronos ‘throne’, I.14.238. The maker will be the divine artisan Hephæastos, son of Héra, I.14.239–240. This throne made by the god will be apṭhito- ‘imperishable’, and this imperishability will last aieί ‘forever’, I.14.238. Also, this throne will be khrūseo- ‘golden’, I.14.239. On the combination of apṭhito- ‘imperishable’ and khrūseo- ‘golden’ in symbolizing the artificial continuum of immortality, see BA 179. The Greek combination of the adjective apṭhito- ‘imperishable’ with the adverb aieί ‘always’ here is comparable to the Indic combination of the adjective ákṣita- ‘imperishable’ with the adjective viśvāyur ‘lasting for all ages’ at Rig-Veda 1.9.7: the form viśvāyur is the neuter of viśvāyus-, agreeing with śravas ‘glory, fame’. [Full argumentation in GMP 123–126 for interpreting viśvāyur as a neuter and not masculine adjective in this context: it goes with śravas ‘glory, fame’ and not, as some have argued, with the name of the god Indra.] The element āyus- in this Indic form is cognate with Greek aḯn ‘life-force, lifetime’, the original locative singular of which became the adverb aieί, meaning ‘forever’. See the note on I.01.052. The formulaic combination apṭhito aieί is attested elsewhere as well in Homeric diction, at I.02.046 and at I.02.186. And there is even an instance of the combination klēos apṭhito aieί ‘a glory that is imperishable forever’ in an archaic piece of poetry inscribed in the seventh century BCE: Κλεός ἀπόθητον αἰεί, DGE no. 316. This combination brings us back to the wording klēos apṭhitoν ἐσται = klēos apṭhition éstai ‘there will be an imperishable glory’ at I.09.413. To be noted again is the parallelism between the Greek combination of the adjective apṭhition ‘imperishable’ with the noun klēos ‘glory, fame’ at I.09.413 and the Indic combination of the adjective ákṣita- ‘imperishable’ with the noun śravas ‘glory, fame’ at Rig-Veda 1.9.7 (full argumentation in GMP 123–126). [[GN 2016.10.19.]]

I.14.245–246–246a
subject heading(s): Ókeanos; “plus verse”

Our source for this set of verses, I.14.245–246–246a, is Plutarch On the face in the moon 938d, whose narrative provides a context for including verse 246a in such a set. Without the testimony of Plutarch, we would not know about this verse, since it does not survive in the medieval manuscript tradition. But it had survived, as we know from Plutarch, in the text of the Homeric iliad as edited by Crates of Mallos, Director of the Library of Pergamon [see under Crates in the Inventory of terms and names]. In that text, verse 246 of iliad 14 was followed by another verse, labeled as 246a in modern editions:

I.14.246 Ὄκεανος, ὀσπερ γένεσις πάντασι τέτυκται
I.14.246a ἄνδρασιν ἤδε θεόις, πλείστην <τ'> ἐπί γᾶιαν ἴριν

Taken together, these verses can be translated this way:

I.14.246 ... Ókeanos, who has been fashioned as genesis for all
I.14.246a men and gods, and he flows over the Earth in all her fullness.

What is said about Ókeanos in the “plus-verse” I.14.246a as attested here by Crates is closely related to what we find in poetic traditions attributed to Orpheus. The existence of such Orphic traditions is clearly attested in relevant quotations and paraphrases made by Plato, especially in Cratylus 402a-c regarding the role of Ókeanos as a primordial source of creation. Details in HPC 2§§128–147. As for Crates (F 20 ed. Broggiato 2001), he cited the “plus verse” I.14.246a as evidence in arguing for his theory that the Ókeanos was a salt-water Ocean covering a spherical Earth. For Crates, then, these verses at I.14.245–246–246a about the Ókeanos were an argument of an allegory about the cosmos. According to this theory of Crates, the earth was a sphere, located at the center of a universe that was likewise spherical. Crates evidently interpreted in a modernizing sense the expression at I.14.246a: ‘[which flows] over most of the earth’ (πλείστην ... ἐπὶ γᾶιαν). In other words, the salt-water ocean covers most of the spherical Earth. This theory was opposed by Aristarchus, Director of the Library of Alexandria [see under Aristarchus in the Inventory of terms and names], who viewed the Homeric Ókeanos as a fresh-water river surrounding an Earth that is circular and flat (HC 2§150). See further my comment at HC 2§153 about this dispute between Crates and Aristarchus. What was at stake, as I say in my comment there, was no trivial matter. In this case, in fact, the stakes were of cosmic proportions. Both sides of the dispute were attempting to establish their theories of the cosmos by way of deciding the rightness or wrongness of different variants in the text of Homer. I find it ironic, I went on to say, that I am describing this ancient state of affairs in an era when it appears fashionable to dismiss Homeric textual variations as “trivial,” “banal,” and even “boring.” There will be more to say in my comment on I.18.478–609, in the context of the Shield of Achilles in iliad 18, about the conceptualization of Ókeanos as some primordial work of art as suggested by the verb tetuktai (téptuktau) “has been fashioned” here at I.14.244. For more on the narrative that is taking shape at I.14.245–246–246a, see the comment on I.14.301–302. [[IGN 2016.10.19 via HC 2§§149–157.]]

I.14.270–280

subject heading(s): swearing by the Styx

Gods can take an irrevocable oath in the form of swearing by the waters of the underworld river Styx, which is what the goddess Hērā is asked to perform here at I.14.271–276 and which she actually does perform at I.14.277–280. See further in the comment on I.15.037–038. [[IGN 2016.10.27.]]

I.14.282–293

subject heading(s): a view from Lesbos

The visualization of the landscape here, as the narrative views the goddess Hērā traveling toward Mount Ida, corresponds to what you would see if you looked due north while standing on the north shore of the island of Lesbos. Across the sea, beyond the strait separating this island from the mainland to the north, is the shoreline of the region leading uphill to the heights of Mount Ida. Just as you are looking north from the shores of Lesbos when you see that skyline, so also Hērā is traveling north as she hastens to arrive at her point of assignation with the mighty thunderer on the peaks of Mount Ida. This view from Lesbos, then, shows an Aeolian poetic vantage point in visualizing the narrative space of Troy in its entirety. [[GN
I.14.301–302

Q&T via 2§132 / 2§140, where I.14.302 (= I.14.201) is quoted by Plato Cratylus 402a-d / Theaetetus 152e

subject heading(s): Ökeanos

The goddess Hēra refers here at I.14.302 to the cosmic river Ökeanos as the ‘genesis of the gods’ (θεῶν γένεσις). This reference is a continuation of the earlier reference at I.14.246 to Ökeanos as a god ‘who has been fashioned as genesis for all’ (ὅς περ γένεσις πάντως τέτωκται). Supplementing my comment on I.14.245–246–246a. I now offer further comment on those verses in the context of the narrative as it continues here at I.14.301–302. What follows is an epitome of what I have to say in HC 2§§156–157; I start with I.14.248, where the immediate point is this: Ökeanos is a primal ancestor of the gods Zeus and Hēra. At I.14.246a, this theme is developed further: Ökeanos is a primal force that ultimately generated humans as well as gods, and this force pervades the earth. Such a theme is actually implicit already at I.14.246, even without the explicit amplification of I.14.246a: the adjective pantessi (πάντους) ‘all’ at I.14.246 implies that Ökeanos is the father of not only ‘all’ gods but also, by extension, ‘all’ men. There is a parallel idea in Homeric references to Zeus himself as the ‘father’ of gods and men, patēr andrōn te theōn te, as at I.01.544, and so on. Further, the noun genesis (γένεσις) in the same verse, I.14.246, which I translated above by using the English borrowing ‘genesis’, implies a depersonalized cosmic power that generates not only all gods and all men but also all things. The idea that Ökeanos is the ‘genesis’ of all is ultimately not so much the expression of an interpersonal relationship, such as parenthood in the immediate narrative context, but of a depersonalized cosmic creation, a cosmogony. Thus the adjective pantessi (πάντους) ‘all’ is in fact all-inclusive, even without I.14.246a. I should add that there is nothing non-Homerian about picturing the Ökeanos simultaneously as an anthropomorphific father of gods and as a cosmic force for everything on earth. The cosmogonic themes of I.14.246-246a, less explicit as read by Aristarchus without 246a and more explicit as read by Crates with 246a, are in any case deeply rooted in the Homeric tradition. The more explicit Homeric readings of Crates reflect, more clearly than the corresponding readings of Aristarchus, an earlier phase in the evolution of the Homeric tradition. I propose that Crates derived “plus verses” like I.14.246a from a “Homerus Auctus,” on which I have this to say at HC 2§178: “a verse like [I.14.246a], stemming from a Homerus Auctus as edited by Crates in Pergamon, need not be dismissed as an interpolation from Homeric editions that had been contaminated, as it were, by Orphic traditions. The Homerus Auctus need not be viewed as an editorial conflation of incompatible texts but as a predated corpus of undifferentiated oral traditions that later became differentiated into distinct textual traditions that we recognize as Orphic, Hesiodic, Cyclic, and even Homeric.” On the term “Orphic” as I use it here, see the comment on I.14.245–246–246a above. [IGN 2016.10.19 via HC 2§§156–157; also BA 196 and GMP 237.]

I.14.436

subject heading(s): ana-pneîn/en-pneîn ‘take a breath, breathe in’; psūkhē ‘spirit; life’s breath’; release of consciousness from the body; ana-pneîn/ en-pneîn ‘take a breath, breathe in’

After Hector faints, he ‘comes to’, as it were, and now his life’s breath returns to him. The verb that expresses this idea of revival is ana-pneîn (ἀναπνεῖν) —variant en-pneîn (ἐναπνεύσα) in the sense of ‘taking a breath’— ‘breathing in’. See the comment on I.05.795. [IGN 2016.10.19 via BA 168.]

I.14.483

subject heading(s): poinē ‘compensation’

To be added is a relevant comment. [IGN 2016.10.19 via PH 251.]

I.14.508

subject heading(s): re-invocation of Muse(s); ennepeîn ‘narrate, tell’; Mousa ‘Muse’; singing as narrating

lemmatizing: ἔπειτε νῦν μοι Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δῶμαι ἔχουσαι

This re-invocation of the Muses signals a false start, since the interlude of the sexual encounter between Zeus and Hēra has
resulted in a reversal of fortunes that is not to last for long. Right now, while Zeus is asleep after having made love to Hērā, the temporary intervention of Poseidon on the side of the Achaians results in a compressed sequence of clipped narratives featuring only a few personal victories for only a few Achaean heroes. At I.14.509–510, the Master Narrator is asking the Muses: which one of the Achaians has the first of these personal victories? The answer comes right away at I.14.511: Ajax son of Telamon is the first. What follows at I.14.511–512 is a most abbreviated narrative about this personal victory of Ajax, and what follows after that is a string of comparably abbreviated narratives about further personal victories achieved by five other Achaians, I.14.513–522. Then, once these abbreviated narratives are completed, *Iliad* 14 comes to a hasty end. As soon as *Iliad* 15 begins, Zeus will be waking up, I.15.004–005. But before the god awakens, we see within the abbreviated space of I.14.513–522 a series of five more Achaians achieving their own personal victories. Their victories, together with the initial victory of Ajax, are narrated at a pace that is noticeably hurried. There is no time to lose, and that is because, as already noted, Zeus will soon be waking up, I.15.004–005. Once the god does awaken, the momentum will belong once again to the Trojans. So, the Achaians benefit here only from a temporary upswing, which will soon be followed by another downswing.

**Iliad Rhapsody 15**

*2016.10.27 / enhanced 2018.09.11*

The climax of the fighting in the *Iliad* is now approaching. Patroklos is about to enter the war, and the Will of Zeus is about to be fulfilled. [[GN 2016.10.27.]]

![Figure 15. Ajax defending the ships of the Greeks. After a drawing by John Flaxman.](Image via Wikimedia Commons)

**I.15.037–038**

subject heading(s): swearing by the Styx

When gods swear by the waters of the underworld river Styx, as the goddess Hērā does here, I.15.037, their oath must be irrevocable and therefore absolute. The basis for the absoluteness of the oath is the absolute imperishability of the material substance that has been chosen as the basis for the oath. That substance is the water of this river. And the imperishability is signaled by the adjective *aphthito* - 'imperishable', which is actually used as the epithet of the Stygian waters at Hesiod *Theogony* 805. Further, *aphthito* - 'imperishable' at Hesiod *Theogony* 397 is the epithet of Styx as a personified female divinity. On the epithet *aphthito* - 'imperishable, unwilting', see the comments on I.02.325, where further attestations are also cited. [[GN 2016.10.27 via BA 187.]]

**I.15.059–060**

subject heading(s): *menos* 'mental power'; *en-pneîn* 'breathe into'

The god Apollo is about to be engaged here in the act of *en-pneîn* 'breathing into' the hero Hector something called *menos*
'mental power', l.15.060. See the comment on l.15.262. [[GN 2016.09.27 via GMP 114.]]

I.15.056–077

subject heading(s): boulē ‘wish, plan’; Will of Zeus; Plan of Zeus; plot of the iliad; narrative arc

Zeus here reaffirms what he wishes or wills, that is, he reaffirms his plan. And this Plan of Zeus, which is the wish or Will of Zeus, will be coextensive with the plot or narrative arc of the iliad, starting with the original promise of Zeus to Thetis at the beginning of the epic, at l.01.524–530. What the god had then promised, that he will honor Achilles by letting the Achaeans lose until the fire of Hector reaches their beached ships, had been signaled when Zeus originally nodded his head at l.01.524–530. Now at l.15.075 Zeus refers again to this nodding of his head as he briefly retells the plot or narrative arc extending from the time of inception, which was the time when he had originally nodded. That narrative arc now extends not only to the present time of his retelling but also into a future time that has not yet been narrated in the iliad: within this time-frame of future events, Poseidon will stop interfering on behalf of the Achaeans, l.15.056–058, and then Hector will be re-energized by Apollo and will thus stop the present momentum of the Achaeans, chasing them back to their beached ships, l.15.059–064, and then Achilles will send out Patroklos to stop the Trojans, l.15.064–065, and then Patroklos will be killed by Hector, l.15.065—but not before Patroklos himself kills many heroes fighting on the Trojan side, l.15.066–067, and among those killed heroes will be Sarpedon, who is the son of Zeus himself, l.15.067—and then, to top it all off, Achilles will experience anger [kholos] over the killing of Patroklos by Hector and will kill Hector, l.15.068. In the course of this almost breathlessly rapid retelling of the plot by Zeus, the foretelling of events yet to happen touches on the upcoming drama of the god’s personal loss of Sarpedon, who is his own human son. But the drama of this divine loss is still being elided for the moment, since Zeus at present is saying only that Sarpedon will be killed by Patroklos. The god is not yet saying that Sarpedon is his own beloved son. But that is not all. All has not yet been retold, even at this point, at l.15.068, which signals the killing of Hector by Achilles. The god’s retelling of the plot in the form of a foretelling is not yet completed at this point. The retelling by Zeus continues even further, starting with l.15.069: after Achilles kills Hector, Zeus will plan to bring about a reversal for the Trojans, who will now be driven back from the beached ships that they had threatened to destroy under Hector’s leadership, and the story of this paliōxis ‘driving back’, l.15.069, is described in the god’s wording as if it were some kind of an artifact that Zeus himself has fashioned in the mode of an artisan: the key word is teukhein ‘make-as-an-artisan’ (τευκχείν), l.15.070, which takes the noun paliōxis ‘driving back’ as its direct object, l.15.069. After this story of the paliōxis ‘driving back’, fashioned by Zeus in the mode of some divine artisan who creates the story by narrating the story, there will be a relentlessly consequential narrative that will lead all the way to the very end, which is, the destruction of Troy, l.15.070–071. This ending, however, extends beyond the time-frame that will be narrated in the iliad. And such an ending, perhaps surprisingly, is said by Zeus to result from the boulai ‘plans’ of the god’s divine daughter, the goddess Athena, l.15.071 (Ἀθηναίης διὰ βουλάς). Why does Zeus speak here about the plans of Athena, as if they were not his own plans? It is because the plans of the goddess are by implication coextensive with the plans of her divine father as well. But Zeus is not yet finished with the announcement of his plan. Having indicated the outer limit of the epic plotline, which is the destruction of Troy at l.15.071, Zeus now returns to the present, indicating how it will extend into the immediate future of the iliad. I will not cease my anger [kholos] against the Achaeans, the god declares at l.15.072, and I will not let any other god intervene on their behalf, l.15.073, until the wish of Achilles is fulfilled, l.15.074. That wish, as we already know, is that the Achaeans will keep losing until the fire of Hector reaches their beached ships. But Zeus here does not repeat the wording of that wish, even though he has promised to make the wish happen. Instead, he simply declares that he had made for Achilles a promise by way of nodding his divine head, l.15.075, and that this promise had been formulated for him by Thetis, the mother of Achilles, l.15.076–077. What Zeus had promised, the god says, was that Achilles should be ‘given honor’, as expressed by the verb timān, l.15.077 (τίμησαι). [[GN 2016.10.27 via HTL 83.]]

I.15.064–071

subject heading(s): compressed narration; epic Cycle

The rapid retelling by way of foretelling here, starting from the time when Achilles will send forth Patroklos to stop the attack of the Trojans and continuing all the way to the time when Troy will be destroyed by the Achaeans, is a compressed narration that extends beyond the narrative arc of the iliad as we know it. The outlines of such a compressed epic narrative, formulated here as the Plan of Zeus, resemble what we see in the surviving plot-summaries of the epic Cycle. On the epic Cycle, see the Inventory of Terms and Names. The narrative as narrated here by the god Zeus himself shows “the bare outlines of distinct
phases in the development of the *Iliad* as a composition subject to ongoing recomposition-in-performance" (HTL 83). [[GN 2016.10.27.]]

I.15.069–071

subject heading(s): *boulē* in the sense of ‘intelligence’

The use of the word *boulai* ‘plans’ at I.15.071 (Ἀθηναίης ὁδὸς *boulās*) conveys not only the idea of Athena’s divine planning as a prime motivation for the overall epic plotline but also the idea of intelligence as a prime characteristic of this goddess [see BA 24]. On connotations of intelligence by way of the word *boulē* in the sense of ‘planning’, see the comments on I.10.043–052, to be supplemented by the comments on I.11.200 and on I.11.627. [[GN 2016.10.27 via BA 24.]]

I.15.189

subject heading(s): tripartition

The three-way division of the cosmos among the sons of Kronos is an example of various models of tripartition as studied in later comments. [[GN 2016.10.27 via GMP 285.]]

I.15.233

subject heading(s): Hellespont

The ships of the Achaeans are beached along the shores of the bay of the Hellespont. See especially the comment on I.08.220–227. [[GN 2016.10.27 via BA 343.]]

I.15.262

subject heading(s): *menos* ‘mental power’; *en-pnein* ‘breathe into’

As foretold at I.15.059–060, the god Apollo is engaged here in the act of *en-pnein* ‘breathing into’ the hero Hector something called *menos* ‘mental power’, I.15.262. To be compared is the intervention of the goddess Athena, earlier at I.10.482. Now too, at I.15.262, such ‘mental power’ makes the hero aware of his physical power and thus energizes him to perform heroic deeds. [[GN 2016.09.27 via GMP 114.]]

I.15.309–310

subject heading(s): *khalkeus* ‘bronze-smith, smith’

As the divine artisan or craftsman, the god Hephaistos is conventionally called a *khalkeus* ‘bronze-smith’, as here. It will become clear from later contexts, like I.18.474–475, that this appellation of the god does not restrict him to work in bronze: he works in other metals as well. See the comment on I.18.468–613. [[GN 2016.10.27 via HPC 291, 298; MoM 4§4.]]

I.15.383

subject heading(s): *is* ‘force, violence, strength’

This noun *is* ‘force, violence, strength’ is a synonym of the noun *biē*. Here, as elsewhere, it refers to the elemental force or violence of a storm. [[GN 2016.09.25 via BA 89, 321.]]

I.15.385

As we see here, the sterns of the beached ships are contiguous with the Achaean Wall. See also the comment at I.14.027–036. [[GN 2016.10.27 via HPC 160.]]

I.15.401

subject heading(s): *therapōn* ‘attendant, ritual substitute’
A nameless therapôn is mentioned here in passing: he happens to be the ‘attendant’ of the hero Eurypylus. [[GN 2016.08.04.]]

I.15.405–407

subject heading(s): language of praise/blame

Even though the attacking Trojans here are fewer in number than the defending Achaeans, they are evenly matched in strength. This detail is relevant to the taunt of Sthenelos when he insults Agamemnon at I.04.407. See the comment on I.04.368–410. [[GN 2016.10.27 via BA 163.]]

I.15.414–421

subject heading(s): suspense

Hector and Ajax are struggling one-on-one with each other here: Hector is trying to set on fire the ship that Ajax is protecting from the fire. No clear outcome of the struggle is as yet visible. [[GN 2016.10.27 via BA 335.]]

I.15.428

subject heading(s): agon ‘coming-together’

The ships of the Achaeans, as a sum total of all the ships, are pictured here as anagôn in the sense of ‘coming together’. See the comment on I.23.257–258. [[GN 2016.10.27 via PH 136.]]

I.15.431

subject heading(s): therapôn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; “taking the hit”

Hector is throwing his spear at the hero Ajax but misses, and the flying spear hits instead the hero Lykophron, described here as the therapôn of Ajax, I.15.431. So, Lykophron as therapôn is not only the ‘attendant’ of Ajax but also his ‘ritual substitute’. When Lykophron “takes the hit” for Ajax, he is standing right next to him, as if the two of them were standing side by side on the platform of a chariot. It is the physical reality of thus standing side by side that makes the chariot driver the prime alternative target for “taking the hit” in place of the chariot fighter. The chariot driver is thus the perfect substitute for the chariot fighter. In this case, however, Ajax and Lykophron are standing side by side not on the platform of a chariot but on the deck of the beached ship that the two of them are defending from the fire of Hector. The venue for ritual substitution is different, but the ritual pose, as it were, of standing side by side remains the same. [[GN 2016.08.04 via the comment on I.04.227 via Nagy 2015.05.01, 2015.05.08, 2015.05.15, 2015.05.26.]]

I.15.494–499

subject heading(s): la belle mort

What follows is an epitome from HC 4§268. These verses containing the words of Hector, I.15.494–499, are quoted in a speech delivered by the Athenian statesman Lycurgus, Against Leokrates [103]. The context is this: Lycurgus is arguing that the beautiful death foreseen by Hector, his belle mort, can be pictured as a model for Athenians when they contemplate the possibility that they too will die when they fight their wars. Lycurgus refers to the willingness of Athenian citizens to die in war not only for their own patris ‘fatherland’ but also for all of Hellas as a patris ‘fatherland’ that is koinê ‘common’ to all Hellenes (Against Leokrates 104). Lycurgus invokes as his prime example the belle mort of the Athenian citizen-warriors who fought at Marathon and who thereby won for Hellas a freedom from terror, an adeia ‘security’ that is koinê ‘common’ to all Hellenes (104). The Athenian statesman is making this reference to the interests of Athens in the context of actually quoting the words of Hector in the Iliad, who says that he is willing to die for his fatherland in order to protect it against the Achaeans (Lycurgus Against Leokrates 103 lines 4–9). These heroic words of Hector correspond to I.15.494–499 here, and Lycurgus quotes them in the larger context of saying that the Homeric Iliad and Odyssey, as performed at the quadrennial Athenian festival of the Panathenaia, are the ancestral heritage of the Athenians and the primary source of their education as citizen-warriors (Against Leokrates 102). In this invocation of Homeric poetry as the most sublime expression of the Athenian empire, the statesman is
quoting the words of a Trojan, not the words of an Achaean. It is the *belle mort* of Hector that motivates the Athenians to live up to the heroic legacy they learn from Homer. [[GN 2016.08.04.]]

I.15.564

In urging his fellow-warriors to fight on, Ajax says that there is no ownership of *kleos* ‘glory’ for those who flee in battle. The implications here are most threatening for the epic reputation of Ajax, since the momentum of the fighting will soon be forcing him into making a strategic partial withdrawal, I.16.122: see the comment on I.16.122–124. [[GN 2016.10.27 via BA 32.]]

I.15.585

subject heading(s): *thoós* ‘swift’

This adjective is conventionally associated with the war-god Ares, pictured as the swiftest of runners. [[GN 2016.10.27 via BA 328.]]

I.15.592–602

subject heading(s): *sélas* ‘flash of light’; *kúdos* ‘sign of glory’; Battle for the Ships, fire of Hector, breaking through the Wall of the Achaeans

Zeus has been waiting for the *sélas* ‘flash of light’. It will appear when the first of the beached Achaeans ships is set on fire, I.15.600. Once the god sees that fire with his own eyes, his promise to Thetis will be fulfilled. He will have given to Achilles the honor that he had promised when he had nodded his head to indicate his plan, which was the Will of Zeus up until now. But now the *paliókis* or ‘driving back’ of the Trojans by the counterattacking Achaeans, I.15.601, can get underway, I.15.602. On the technical function of *paliókis* or ‘driving back’ as a poetic term referring to a specific part of the Iliadic narration, see I.15.609 and the comment on I.15.056–077. And now the *kúdos* ‘sign of glory’ will shift away from the Trojans and return to the Achaeans, I.15.602. Earlier, at I.12.255, the *kúdos* ‘sign of glory’ had gone over to the Trojans. See the comment on I.12.255–257. [[GN 2016.10.27 via BA 64, 335–336.]]

I.15.640

subject heading(s): *bié* ‘force, violence, strength’; *kleos* ‘glory’; *bié Hērákłéeié* ‘force of Hērákłés’

See the comment on I.02.658 [[GN 2016.06.30 via BA 318.]]

I.15.696–746

subject heading(s): Battle for the Ships, fire of Hector, breaking through the Wall of the Achaeans; *kúdos* ‘sign of glory’

Here at last begins the final push made by the Trojans in the Battle for the Ships—before Patroklos enters the fighting. Hector and his Trojans have broken through the Wall of the Achaeans, and now his fire threatens to set on fire the beached ships of the Achaeans. [[GN 2016.10.27 via BA 335.]]

I.15.704–746

subject heading(s): ship of Protesilaos; Battle for the Ships, fire of Hector, breaking through the Wall of the Achaeans; *kúdos* ‘sign of glory’

The ship of Protesilaos, which had been the first of all the Achaeans ships to be beached on the shores of the bay of the Hellespont, now becomes the prime target for the fire of Hector. *What follows is an epitome of further analysis from Nagy 2011c:193.* In the course of leading the attack, Hector grabs hold of the *prumnē* ‘stem’ of one of the beached ships—the ship that had belonged to the hero Protesilaos, I.15.705–706, who was first of the Achaeans to be killed at Troy. On Protesilaos, see the earlier comment on I.02.695–709 and I.13.681, also the later comment below on I.15.704–706. Holding on to the *prumnē* ‘stem’ of this ship, I.15.716, Hector now shouts to his fellow Trojans and calls on them to bring him fire so that he may set this specially prized ship ablaze, I.15.718. In this context, Hector describes himself as fighting next to the *prumnai* ‘stems’of the ships, I.15.722, which had been pulled ashore with their backs facing away from the sea and facing toward the
attacking Trojans, I.15.718–725. The view of the narrative now shifts to Ajax, who is shown to be unable to hold off the attacking Trojans any longer, I.15.727: Ἀμφώ δ’ οὐκέτ’ ἐμύλε ‘Ajax could not hold them off any longer’. Now Ajax makes a strategic partial withdrawal, I.15.728, stepping off the ikria ‘deck’ of the ship of Protesilaos, I.15.729, which is where he had been standing, I.15.730. So, Ajax now fights on a lower level, I.15.729, and from further back inside the ship, I.15.728, but at least he continues to fight back, I.15.743–746, encouraging his fellow Achaeans to fight back as well, I.15.732, and his words of encouragement, as quoted at I.15.733–741, are uttered in the form of a ritual shout, as expressed by the verb boían, I.15.732. The focusing at I.15.696–746 on the stern of the ship of Protesilaos will become an essential narrative link in later phases of the narration about the Battle of the Ships. Already at I.15.704–706, Hector’s action in grabbing the stern of the ship of Protesilaos signals a tipping point: the defenses of the Achaeans, especially as represented by Ajax, are about to fail. In Bacchyrides Ode 13.105–108, on the other hand, there is a reference to an alternative epic tradition about the role of Ajax. In this version, Ajax stands ground on the stern of the beached ship: ἐκ δ’ ἐπὶ πρῶμα σταθ[είς] Ταρσικόρδιον [ὁρ] ἔχει ὦτοι Μαίοντα ηὗτος Ποίμην ποι[ —] ‘Ajax, the one who, standing on the stern of the ship, held off Hector of the bold heart. (Hector) was attacking the ships with his fire [pūr], wondrous to tell about, […]’. [[GN 2016.10.27 via HPC 162, Nagy 2011c:187–189.]]

I.15.733

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; therapontes of Ares

In contexts where the plural therapontes in combination with Areōs ‘of Ares’ is applied to the Achaeans=Danaans=Argives (at I.06.067, to the Danaoi) as a grouping of warriors, the deeper meaning is more evident than in other contexts. [[GN 2016.08.04 via the comment on I.02.110 via BA 293–295; GMP 48; H24H 6§32]]

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Iliad Rhapsody 16

2016.11.09 / enhanced 2018.09.11

It seems at first as if everything is coming together here in Iliad 16. Achilles, best of the Achaeans, sends out his other self, Patroklos, to fight Hector and his Trojans, who are now on the verge of setting on fire and destroying all the beached ships of the Achaeans. Patroklos does in fact succeed in stopping the fire, which had been endangering not only the survival of the Achaeans but even the very existence of their notional descendants, imagined as the Greeks who are listening to the story of the Iliad in their own time. The conflagration that could have burned down the beached ships of the Achaeans is now literally ‘quenched’ by Patroklos, whose heroic action in putting out the fire of the Trojans is compared in a simile to a cosmic action taken by Zeus himself when this weather-god drenches and thus destroys in a violent rainstorm the farmlands of unjust men. Clearly, Zeus is now once again on the Achaeans side of the Trojan War. But the success of Patroklos is not to last: soon after he kills Sarpedon, son of Zeus himself, in the course of a spectacular chariot fight, Patroklos now gets killed in the course of a second spectacular chariot fight. This time, Patroklos has gone too far, daring to attack not only Hector but also the divine protector of that hero, Apollo himself. Now everything is about to come apart again, and Achilles has yet to find out about the tragedy that awaits him. [[GN 2016.11.09.]]
I.16.021

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’; *phertatos* ‘best’

Here the idea of ‘best of the Achaeans’ is expressed by way of *phertatos* ‘best’. In the *Iliad*, only Achilles is designated as *phertatos* in comparison with the rest if the Achaeans as an aggregate. See also I.02.769. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 27.]]

I.16.022

*Q&T via BA 79*

subject heading(s): *akhos* ‘grief’

See the comments on I.01.188, I.01.407–412, I.01.503–510, I.01.509, I.01.558–559, I.09.003, I.09.008–009, l.11.317–319. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 79, 90, 94; also HTL 132.]]

I.16.032

subject heading(s): *loigos* ‘devastation’; *amunein* ‘ward off’

See the comment on l.01.320–348. On *loigos* ‘devastation’ as the direct object of *amunein* ‘ward off’, see also l.10.456, l.15.736, l.16.075, l.16.080. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 75–76.]]

I.16.052

subject heading(s): *akhos* ‘grief’

See the comments on l.01.188, l.01.407–412, l.01.503–510, l.01.509, l.01.558–559, I.09.003, I.09.008–009, l.11.317–319. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 94; also HTL 132.]]
subject heading(s): akhos ‘grief’; algea ‘pains’

See the comments on I.01.188, I.01.407–412, I.01.503–510, I.01.509, I.01.558–559, I.09.003, I.09.008–009, I.11.317–319. Here at I.16.055, the akhos ‘grief’ that Achilles feels because he was dishonored by Agamemnon and by the Achaeans in general is equated, in his own words, with algea ‘pains’, object of the verb paskhein ‘suffering’. The idea of personal heroic suffering as expressed by way of the combination paskhein and algea here in the case of Achilles is parallel to what we see in the case of Odysseus at O.01.004. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 79, 94; also HTL 132]]

I.16.057

subject heading(s): Pedasos as variant for Lymessos

In this verse, Achilles is speaking about Briseis. In the scholia T for this same verse, I.16.057, a variant tradition is reported about this captive woman: it comes from the epic known as the Cypria, which was part of the epic Cycle. On the epic Cycle, see the inventory of terms and names. In the Cypria, as we are told by the scholia T here at I.16.057, Achilles captured Briseis when he conquered the city of Pedasos. In the Iliad, by contrast, the city that Achilles conquered when he captured Briseis was Lymessos, I.02.689–694. For more about such variation between Pedasos and Lymessos, see the comments on I.20.089–102 and I.20.187–194. See also the anchor comment at I.02.689–694 on: Aeolian women in the Iliad, part 1; see also the anchor comment at I.09.128–131 / 270–272 on: Aeolian women in the Iliad, part 2. [[GN 2016.11.09 via HPC 243]]

I.16.075

subject heading(s): loigos ‘devastation’; amunein ‘ward off’

See the comment on I.01.320–348; see also I.16.032. Here the subject of the verb amunein ‘ward off’ switches from Achilles to Patroklos. This way, Patroklos becomes the savior of the Achaeans by rescuing them from the fire of Hector. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 75–76, 328, 336]]

I.16.080

subject heading(s): loigos ‘devastation’; amunein ‘ward off’

Here again the subject of the verb amunein ‘ward off’ switches from Achilles to Patroklos. See the comment on I.16.075. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 75–76, 328, 336]]

I.16.087–096

subject heading(s): limits set for Patroklos by Achilles

Achilles tells Patroklos not to go beyond the limits that he sets for him in these verses. If Patroklos does exceed these limits, as he will, he will lose his shared identity with Achilles. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 293]]

I.16.097–100

Q&T BA 325

subject heading(s): Indic heroes Bhima and Arjuna

The heroic tendency of Achilles to behave as a lone warrior, not as a member of a group of warriors, is comparable to heroic tendencies that play out in the Indic epic known as the Mahābhārata. In that epic, Bhima is the “loner,” as it were, while Arjuna is the “joiner.” But the characteristic of Achilles as a “loner” is complicated by the fact that Patroklos, so long as he shares his identity with Achilles, likewise behaves as a “loner” in the Iliad. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 325]]
subject header: re-invocation of Muse(s); ennepein 'narrate, tell'; Mousa 'Muse'; singing as narrating

lemmatizing: ἔπες νῦν μοι Μούσαι Ὀλύμπια δώµατ' ἔχουσαι

On the use of the plural here, see the comment on I.02.484. I repeat here the translation: ‘tell me now, you Muses who have your dwellings on Mount Olympus’. It has already been noted in the comment on I.11.218—and earlier on I.02.484—that the Master Narrator tends to re-invoke the Muse or the Muses at special moments of poetic self-awareness about the need for high fidelity to tradition. For more on the poetics of re-invocation, see also the comments on I.02.761, I.14.508. Here at I.16.112 the special moment of poetic self-awareness corresponds to the heroic self-awareness of Hector, as analyzed in the comment on I.08.180–183. Since the Muses are the goddesses of poetic memory, their re-invocation by the Master Narrator here at I.16.112 is a fulfillment of the original prediction of Hector: there will be mnēmosunē ‘memory’, I.08.181, of the moment when he will set fire to the beached ships of the Achaeans in the epic Battle for the Ships. [[GN 2016.11.09]]

subject header: the fire of Hector finally reaches the ships of the Achaeans

Here is where it all comes together: what the Muses are re-invoked to sing is ‘how the fire of Hector finally reached the ships of the Achaeans’, I.16.113: ὄππως δὴ πρῶτον πῦρ ἐμπέσει νημοῖν Ἀχαιῶν. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 17, PasP 61]]

subject header: Will of Zeus

Ajax sees, to his horror, that the dreaded moment has arrived. Now that the fire of Hector is about to reach the ships of the Achaeans, the Will of Zeus is finally about to be fulfilled: what Zeus now literally bouletai ‘wills’ is nikē ‘victory’ for the Trojans, I.16.121. See also HC 4§109, with a survey of all Homeric situations where either Zeus or Athena awards nikē ‘victory’. [[GN 2016.11.09]]

subject header: fire of Hector as phlokh ‘burst of flame’

Ajax makes another strategic partial withdrawal, I.16.122. For an earlier reference to Ajax in the act of withdrawing, see I.15.727–732 and the comment on I.15.704–746. Meanwhile a fiery missile lands on one of the beached ships of the Achaeans, I.16.122–123, and a phlokh ‘burst of flame’ envelops the prumnē ‘stem’ of that ship, I.16.123–124. As we know from earlier references to this ship, it had belonged to Protesilaos: see the comment on I.15.704–746. Achilles sees that the beached ship is on fire, and he now urges Patroklos to arm himself and go off to defend the ships from the fire. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 336, HPC 162]]

subject header: meliē ‘ash spear’ of Achilles

Patroklos wears the armor of Achilles, but he leaves behind that hero’s meliē ‘ash spear’ I.16.143. Only Achilles can wield that weapon, I.16.140–144. The symbolism of this spear corresponds to the myth of the bronze generation of heroes in Hesiod Works and Days 143–151, who were born of ash trees and were made of bronze, just as the shaft of the spear of Achilles is made from an ash tree while the tip is made of bronze. By contrast with the immortalizing armor that Achilles receives from his immortal mother Thetis, he receives the ash spear from his mortal father Peleus. For more on the symbolism of the hero’s ash spear, I recommend Shannon 1975. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 158]]

subject header: Xanthos the immortal horse of Achilles
See the comments at O.12.132 and at O.23.246 on myths about solar horses; the name of Xanthos is relevant. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 209–210]]

I.16.150–151

Q&T via GMP 238

subject heading(s): harpuia ‘Harpy’

On the word harpuia, personified as ‘Harpy’, see Parts 3 and 4 of the comment at O.15.250–251. [[GN 2017.08.02 via GMP 244–245; also 238.]]

I.16.165

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’

Here, for the first time in the Iliad, Patroklos is marked as the therapōn of Achilles. His dual role as ‘attendant’ and ‘ritual substitute’ is already implicit. [[GN 2016.08.04 via the comment on I.04.227; see also BA 292.]]

I.16.189

subject heading(s): kratero- ‘having the power to win’; hiero- ‘sacred’

I note here only in passing the semantic and morphological links between these two adjectives kratero- ‘having the power to win’ and hiero- ‘sacred’ in contexts where they describe the noun menos ‘mental power’. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 88.]]

I.16.213

subject heading(s): biē ‘force, violence, strength’

This word biē ‘force, violence, strength’ and its synonymēs are conventionally associated with violent winds. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 321.]]

I.16.235

subject heading(s): hupophētai ‘spokesmen’

This word hupophētai ‘spokesmen’ refers to interpreters of oracular pronouncements. [[GN 2016.11.09 via HPC 118n12 ]]

I.16.237

Q&T via BA 82

subject heading(s): tīman ‘honor, give honor to’; Chryses; prayer

As it was noted in the comment on I.13.111–113, Agamemnon ‘dishonored’ Achilles, I.13.113, as expressed by the verba-tīman, and Zeus therefore punished the Achaeans. Again here at I.16.237, the Achaeans are being punished by Zeus, while he ‘honors’, tīman, Achilles. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 82.]]

I.16.240–248

subject heading(s): self-identification of Achilles with Patroklos

Achilles is sending off Patroklos to fight in his place, but he is not sure whether he can identify himself with his best friend when Patroklos goes off on his own. This uncertainty, as we will see in the comment on I.16.244, is relevant to the use of the word therapōn. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 292.]]

I.16.244
Here, for the second time in the *Iliad*, Patroklos is marked as the *therapōn* of Achilles. His dual role as ‘attendant’ and ‘ritual substitute’ is already implicit. [[GN 2016.08.04 via the comment on I.04.227; see also GMP 130.]]

I.16.255-256

subject heading(s): *klisía* ‘shelter’

Achilles is pictured as standing in front of his *klisía* ‘shelter’, to get a better view of the battle scene. In the comments on I.08.220–227 and on I.11.005–016, there is more about the positioning of this *klisía*. [[GN 2016.11.09 via HPC 162.]]

I.16.271–272

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Argives’

The wording of Patroklos describes Achilles as the ‘best of the Argives’—which is another way of saying that Achilles is ‘the best of the Achaean’. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 26.]]

I.16.272

subject heading(s): *therapōn* ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; *ankhe-makhoi* ‘fighting side by side’; “taking the hit”

In the words of Patroklos, there are warriors and then there are *therapontes* of warriors. These *therapontes* are *ankhe-makhoi*, literally ‘fighting next to them’, that is, fighting side by side with the warriors. Here we see the stance of a chariot driver who is speaking about standing next to the chariot fighter. They stand together, side by side on the chariot platform. So, standing here side by side with the chariot fighter is his very own chariot driver, his very own *therapōn* in the dual role of ‘attendant’ and ‘ritual substitute’. The ritual pose, as it were, of the *therapōn* as he takes his stand side by side with the primary warrior on the platform of the chariot is a physical embodiment of his role as ritual substitute. [[GN 2016.08.04 via the comment on I.15.431 and, secondarily, via the comment on I.04.227 via Nagy 2015.05.01, 2015.05.08, 2015.05.15, 2015.05.20. See also BA 293.]]

I.16.273–274

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaean’; *atē* ‘aberration’

For Agamemnon to dishonor the status of Achilles as ‘the best of the Achaean’, as Achilles himself says at I.01.412, is a sign of the over-king’s *atē* ‘aberration’. Patroklos says it again here, I.16.273–274. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 26.]]

I.16.279

subject heading(s): *therapōn* ‘attendant, ritual substitute’

As Patroklos rides off to battle, soon to die as the ritual substitute of Achilles, we see here standing next to him on the chariot his very own *therapōn*. It becomes clear, as the narrative proceeds, that this *therapōn* is the hero Automedon. Does this hero function here not only as the ‘attendant’ of Patroklos but also as that hero’s very own ‘ritual substitute’? The answer is: no. Automedon is temporarily the chariot driver for Patroklos, but he will not become a ritual substitute for him. True, we see Automedon functioning as an ‘attendant’ at I.16.145–154, where he yokes the horses of Achilles to the chariot that he will drive for Patroklos: so, Automedon is definitely a temporary attendant for Patroklos as well as his temporary chariot driver. But Automedon will not become a ritual substitute for Patroklos. [[GN 2016.08.04.]]

I.16.282

Q&T via BA 106

subject heading(s): *mēnithmos* ‘anger’; *philotēs* ‘being near and dear to one’s near and dear ones’

For Achilles to renounce his *mēnithmos* ‘anger’ is equated, already here, to his restoring the relationship that should exist
among companions who are philai ‘near and dear’ to each other: such a relationship, as we see here, is philatês ‘being near and dear to one’s near and dear ones’. In the Iliad, Patroklos takes on the role of restoring, by way of his own death, such philatês between Achilles and the Achaeans. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 106]]

I.16.286

subject heading(s): ship of Protesilaos

Patroklos, hastening to reach the scene of battle, finally arrives at the center of the action, where the ship of Protesilaos is beached. Now he is right next to the prunê ‘stem’ of that ship. See also the comment on I.15.704–746. [[GN 2016.11.09 via HPC 162]]

I.16.293/301

Q&T via BA 336

subject heading(s): quenching the fire

At I.16.287–292, Patroklos successfully defends the beached ships of the Achaeans: he kills Puraikhmês, the foremost attacker, and he puts the other attackers to flight, thus saving the Achaeans by ‘quenching’, as expressed by way of sbennunai, I.16.293, the fire that had threatened their ships. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 336]]

I.16.294–298

subject heading(s): ship of Protesilaos

Patroklos now leads the Achaeans in counterattacking the Trojans, leaving behind the ship of Protesilaos, half of which has by now been burned down in the battle, I.16.294. [[GN 2016.11.09 via HPC 162]]

I.16.301

subject heading(s): averting the fire from the beached ships

The successful action so far is now summed up here: the Achaeans=Danaans, led by Patroklos, have succeeded in pushing back the fire that had threatened the beached ships. [[GN 2016.11.06.]]

I.16.362

subject heading(s): nikê ‘victory’

So, Zeus has now shifted the momentum of the battle, andnikê ‘victory’ has gone over to the side of the Achaeans. [[GN 2016.11.09 via HC 4§109]]

I.16.364–366

The victory that Zeus is now making possible for the Achaeans is compared here to a storm that is stirred up by the god. [[GN 2016.11.09 via HC 4§109]]

I.16.383–393

The momentum of Hector’s chariot, as he is driving away from the ships, is compared to the flooding caused by a violent rainstorm stirred up by Zeus against the unrighteous. Since Patroklos had effectively ‘quenched’ the fire that had threatened the beached ships of the Achaeans, I.16.293, the comparing of his success against the fleeing Trojans to a cataclysmic rainstorm stirred up by Zeus is all the more appropriate. [[GN 2016.11.09 via Nagy 2016.05.12§3–4; see also BA 323, GMP 211]]

I.16.437
In this context, the localized meaning of ἀρχή in the sense of ‘district’ is still overt. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 149, PH 251.]]

I.16.440–457

subject heading(s): Sarpedon as cult hero; hero cult; cult hero

The description here of an impending funeral and entombment for Sarpedon is replete with references to hero cult. Some of these references, as we will now see in detail, indicate that the cult hero is destined to be immortalized after death. [[GN 2016.11.09 via GMP 138.]]

I.16.454–455

subject heading(s): Hypnos and Thanatos

The symmetry of personified Sleep and personified Death here is comparable to Homeric attestations of parallel syntax for describing explicitly an awakening after sleep and implicitly a revival after death in scenarios for the immortalization of a cult hero. [[GN 2016.11.09 via GMP 142.]]

I.16.455

subject heading(s): ἀρχή ‘community, district’

In this context, the localized meaning of ἀρχή in the sense of ‘district’ is still overt. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 149, PH 251, GMP 131–133.]]

I.16.456–457

subject heading(s): tarkhuen ‘ritually prepare’; hero cult; cult hero

These two verses, repeated at I.16.674–675 and foreshadowed by three verses at I.07.084–086 containing an indirect reference to the funeral and entombment of Achilles, refer to the funeral and entombment of Sarpedon in his role as a cult hero. Here I give an epitome of a far more detailed argumentation in Nagy 2012:60–69. In terms of hero cult, the wording that refers here at I.16.456–457 to a funeral and an entombment implies a ritual preparing of the dead body for a mystical revival after death. The word that refers to such immortalization in these Homeric passages is tarkhuen (ταρχύευον), at I.07.085, I.16.456, I.16.674. It can be argued that this Greek word tarkhuen, which I translate here neutrally as ‘ritually prepare’, is a borrowing from the Anatolian language that we know as Lycian, and that the corresponding Lycian word conveys the idea of ‘immortalize’. The most relevant forms in the surviving corpus of Anatolian linguistic evidence are (1) Lycian Trqqu-, name of a Lycian thunder god; (2) the cognate Luvian form Tarḫunt-, name of the thunder god who is head of the Luvian pantheon; (3) the cognate Hittite form tarḫu- /tarḫub- /tarx̂u̯-, a verb meaning ‘be victorious, overcome’. Cognates of this Hittite verb tarḫu- in other Indo-European languages convey the idea of ‘overcome’ or ‘transcend’ in contexts where the object of transcendence is death itself (GMP 139). An example is the Greek compound noun ἀνεκ-ταρ (ἀνεκτρ), consisting of roots meaning ‘death’ (ἀνε- as in ἀνεκος ‘corpse’) and ‘conquer’ (-ταρ, cognate with Hittite tarḫu-). I argue that the Lycian and the Luvian names of the thunder god convey the idea of revivifying as well as overcoming, since thunder gods as described in Indo-European languages have the power to use their thunder weapons not only to overcome violently their enemies but also to preserve and thus make sacred their own devotees—and even to revivify them (GMP 197; see also GMP 132–134). [[GN 2016.11.09.]]

I.16.464

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; “taking the hit”

In the first round of this duel of Patroklos and Sarpedon as chariot fighters, Patroklos is the first to aim his spear at Sarpedon, and then Sarpedon in turn aims at Patroklos, I.16.462–469. Here is what happens in these verses. First, Patroklos misses, hitting Thrasyrellos, the therapōn of Sarpedon. So, the chariot driver as therapōn “takes the hit” for the chariot fighter,
fulfilling his role as a ritual substitute. Then, Sarpedon misses hitting Sarpedon with his spear, hitting instead Pedasos the mortal horse of Achilles. [[GN 2016.08.04.]]

I.16.514

subject heading(s): δῆμος ‘community, district’

In this context, the localized meaning of δῆμος in the sense of 'district' is still overt. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 149, PH 251.]]

I.16.548–553

subject heading(s): penthos ‘grief’

The Trojans experience collective penthos ‘grief’, I.16.548, over the death of Sarpedon. On the collective aspects of penthos ‘grief’ see the comment on I.04.197. On collective akhos ‘grief’, see the comment on I.01.407–412 and on I.01.509. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 94.]]

I.16.605

subject heading(s): the expression ‘(and) he was honored [θείειν] as a god [θεός] in the district [δῆμος]’ (θεός δῆμος); hero cult; cult hero

See anchor comment at I.05.077–078. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 149, GMP 132–133.]]

I.16.653

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; “taking the hit”

Before the duel of Patroklos and Hector as chariot fighters begins, the momentum is with Patroklos, and he is marked as the therapōn of Achilles in this context. His role as a ritual substitute is only implicit here. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 292.]]

I.16.670

subject heading(s): ambroto- / ambrosio- ‘immortalizing’

We see here further indications of Sarpedon's impending immortalization: Apollo anoints the hero's body with ambrosiē ‘immortalizing substance' and clothes him in vestments that are ambrota 'immortalizing'. [[GN 2016.11.09 via GMP 141.]]

I.16.671–673

subject heading(s): Hypnos and Thanatos

See the comment on I.16.454–455. [[GN 2016.11.09.]]

I.16.673

subject heading(s): δῆμος ‘community, district’

See the comment on I.16.455. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 149, PH 251, GMP 131–133.]]

I.16.674–675

subject heading(s): tarkhuein ‘ritually prepare’

See the comment on I.16.456–457. [[GN 2016.11.09.]]

I.16.680

subject heading(s): ambroto- ‘immortalizing’
I.16.682

subject heading(s): Hypnos and Thanatos

See the comment on I.16.454–455. [[GN 2016.11.09.]]

I.16.683

subject heading(s): dēmos ‘community, district’

See the comment on I.16.455. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 149, PH 251, GMP 131–133.]]

I.16.685–687

subject heading(s): aāsthai ‘veer off-course’ as the verb of atē ‘aberration’

At I.16.685, Patroklos experiences a personal atē ‘aberration’, as expressed by way of the verb aāsthai ‘veer off-course’. [[GN 2016.11.09 via PH 254.]]

I.16.705–711

subject heading(s): mēnis ‘anger’ of Apollo; daimoni isos ‘equal to a superhuman force [daimōn]’; antagonism between immortal and mortal

Patroklos confronts Apollo four times and then backs off, thus avoiding the mēnis ‘anger’ of the god, I.16.711. At the moment of his climactic fourth confrontation with Apollo, Patroklos is described as daimoni isos ‘equal to a daimōn’, I.16.705. The ‘superhuman force’ to which this word daimōn refers here can be understood to be Apollo himself. We see here a climactic moment in a pattern of divine-human antagonism that links the god Apollo with the hero Achilles, but Patroklos can now take upon himself the role of a ritual substitute for Achilles. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 143–144.]]

I.16.722–723

Q&T via GMP 300

subject heading(s): wishes correlated with premises

We see at I.16.722 a wish that is predicated on confidence in some specific certainty: αἰθ ὅσον ἵππον εἶμι, τόσον σὸν φέρτερος εἶναι ‘If only I could be superior to you—as surely as I am that much inferior to you!’ On the syntax of such wishes, see the comment on I.18.464–466. In this case, however, the predicated certainty is falsified, since the speaker is Apollo disguised as Hector’s uncle, and the god is of course superior rather than inferior to Hector. Here I epitomize the analysis in GMP 300. Apollo now says, in the guise of Hector’s uncle: if you were that much inferior, then you would retreat in battle, I.16.723. But, since Hector is supposedly that much superior to his uncle, he is of course expected not to retreat. What is hidden in these comparisons is the relative stature of the god himself: the uncle is to Hector as Hector is to Apollo. From the standpoint of Hector, the premise in Apollo’s use of the idiom is reality: the uncle is inferior to Hector. Here I repeat the wording of I.16.722: αἰθ ὅσον ἵππον εἶμι, τόσον σὸν φέρτερος εἶναι ‘If only I could be superior to you—as surely as I am that much inferior to you!’ From the standpoint of Apollo and the framing narrative, however, the premise is false: Apollo is superior, not inferior, to Hector. Therefore the wish that is based on the premise is augmented: the ‘that much’ of ‘let me be that much superior to you’ is immeasurably more than Hektor might think. [[GN 2016.11.09 via GMP 300.]]

I.16.767

subject heading(s): meliâ as ‘ash tree’ or ‘ash spear’

Here the word means ‘ash tree’; elsewhere, as we saw in the comment on I.16.140–144, it means ‘ash spear’, I.16.143. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 156.]]
subject heading(s): ‘equal to Ares’

Patroklos has reached the point where he is about to die by way of Apollo’s direct intervention. At this point, I.16.784, he is described as atalantos Arēi ‘equal to Ares’. But this hero’s death is more complex, as we will see in the comment on I.16.786–804. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 293.]]

I.16.786–804

subject heading(s): mēnis ‘anger’ of Apollo; daimoni isos ‘equal to a superhuman force [daimōn]’; antagonism between immortal and mortal

Patroklos confronts Apollo four times and then, the fourth time around, he fails to back off as he had backed off in the previous confrontation at I.16.705–711. In the course of that previous confrontation, Patroklos had thus avoided the mēnis ‘anger’ of the god, I.16.711. But now he will fail to avoid the god’s anger. At the moment of his climactic fourth confrontation with Apollo, Patroklos is once again described as daimoni isos ‘equal to a daimōn’ at I.16.786, just as he had been described in the previous confrontation I.16.705. And, once again, the ‘superhuman force’ to which this word daimōn refers here at I.16.786 can be understood to be Apollo himself. As earlier, we see here a climactic moment in a pattern of divine-human antagonism that links the god Apollo with the hero Achilles, and Patroklos will now take upon himself the role of a ritual substitute for Achilles. In this role, Patroklos is not only daimoni isos ‘equal to a superhuman force [daimōn]’ at I.16.786: he is also atalantos Arēi ‘equal to Ares’, I.16.784. See the comment above on I.16.784. As a warrior, Patroklos is matched with Ares as the god of war. As a ritual substitute of Achilles, however, he is also matched with Apollo as the divine antagonist of Achilles. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 143–144, 293.]]

I.16.787

subject heading(s): second-person addressing of heroes

At this climactic moment of the hero’s death, the Master Narrator addresses Patroklos in the second person. Such poetic conventions reflect a phase of epic poetry when it was not yet fully differentiated from praise poetry. [[GN 2016.11.09 via PH 197.]]

I.16.804–806

subject heading(s): atē ‘aberration’

As Apollo strips away the protective armor from the body of Patroklos, piece by piece, the hero is being prepared for his ritualized death. At this moment, Patroklos is possessed by atē ‘aberration’, I.16.805. [[GN 2016.11.09 via PH 254.]]

I.16.815

subject heading(s): gumnos ‘stripped’

Patroklos is now gumnos ‘stripped’ of all his armor, ready to be killed. While he was still wearing the armor, he would have been been invulnerable. At a later point, after Hector has already taken possession of this armor and is now seen wearing it, I.17.194, the adjective ambrotoa ‘immortalizing’ is applied to these teukheia ‘arms’. This adjective ambroto- ‘immortalizing’ is applied to words that make the hero immune to death. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 173.]]

I.16.844–845

subject heading(s): nikē ‘victory’

The nikē ‘victory’ of Hector over Patroklos was granted, says Patroklos, by Zeus and Apollo. In most Homeric contexts, nikē ‘victory’ is ordinarily granted by Zeus alone. [[GN 2016.11.09 via HC 4§109.]]
subject heading(s): *psūkhē* ‘spirit’

The *psūkhē* ‘spirit’ of Patroklos leaves him at the precise moment of his death. Here we see the most basic Homeric way of visualizing the psychology, as it were, of dying. [[GN 2016.11.09 via BA 168, GMP 88–89]]

I.16.865

subject heading(s): *therapōn* ‘attendant, ritual substitute’

After having just killed Patroklos, Hector goes after Automedon, who is evidently still standing on the platform of the chariot and who is marked here as the *therapōn* of Achilles. Hector takes aim with his spear, but he misses hitting Automedon, who drives off with the chariot. I.16.864–867. Automedon here is no ritual substitute for Patroklos, nor is he now a ritual substitute for Achilles, since Patroklos has just now fulfilled that role by getting killed instead of Achilles. [[GN 2016.08.04.]]

Iliad Rhapsody 17

2016.11.18 / enhanced 2018.09.20

The main preoccupation of the Achaeans here in *Iliad* 17 is to recover the corpse of Patroklos. Their efforts are understandable, in that they are showing their sense of solidarity by trying to rescue from harm the body of a fellow warrior who has fallen in battle. But the motivation here goes deeper. Patroklos is a cult hero in the making, and the corpses of heroes are essential for establishing hero cults in their honor. And the foreseen status of Patroklos as cult hero prefigures a comparable status for Achilles himself beyond the *Iliad*. [[GN 2016.11.18.]]

![Figure 17. Copperplate etching (1795) by Tommaso Pirola, after a drawing (1793) by John Flaxman. Photographed/scanned by H.-P.Haack (Antiquariat Dr. Haack Leipzig) [CC BY 3.0 or Public domain]. Image via Wikimedia Commons.](image-url)

I.17.050–060

subject heading(s): *beau mort* (a dead body made beautiful by way of a beautiful death, *une belle mort*)

The hero Euphorbos, fighting on the Trojan side of the war, has just been killed by Menelaos the Achaean. The corpse of Euphorbos is described here as a *generic beau mort*, that is, as a dead body made beautiful by way of a beautiful death, *une belle mort*. (See the anchor comment on I.23.184–191 on the salvation of Hector’s body, with reference to Hector as the definitive *beau mort* of the *Iliad.*) There are two levels to be seen in the overall wording that describes the corpse of Euphorbos here. First, at I.17.050–051, the beauty of the body is indicated incidentally by way of focusing on a detailed description of the dead hero’s hair. Second, at I.17.53–60, the entire body of the dead hero is compared, by way of simile, to
a tender young olive seedling or ernos that has just been uprooted by a violent gust of wind. [[GN 2016.11.17 via HPC 295–296.]]

I.17.051–052

Q&T via HPC 296

subject heading(s): kharis as ‘grace’ or as ‘myrtle blossom’

The droplets of blood that are foregrounded on the hair of the fallen hero Euphorbos are compared here tokharites, plural of kharis, which can mean ‘grace’ or ‘gracefulness’ in general but also, far more specifically in some Greek dialects, ‘myrtle blossom’ (scholia D [via A] for I.17.051). It is as if the besprinkling of the dead hero’s hair with droplets of his own blood could be pictured as a foregrounding of red myrtle blossoms against a background of green darkness. [[GN 2016.11.18 via HPC 296 [with n80] and MoM 4$146.]]

I.17.053–060

subject heading(s): ernos ‘seedling’; lament

The comparison of the dead Euphorbos to an olive ‘seedling’ orernos that has just been uprooted by a violent gust of wind corresponds to conventional descriptions of the dead in songs of lament. For more on such descriptions, see the comment on I.18.051–060. [[GN 2016.11.18 via of BA 183.]]

I.17.072

subject heading(s): equal to Ares

Hector is said to be atalantos or ‘equal’ to Ares. Such a description here is part of a buildup to the eventual confrontation between Hector, who will be wearing the old armor of Achilles, and Achilles himself, who will in turn be wearing his own new armor. [[GN 2016.11.18 via BA 294.]]

I.17.088

subject heading(s): phlox ‘burst of flame’

Hector is compared here to a phlox ‘burst of flame’ streaming from Hephaistos as god of fire. See also I.13.688 and I.16.122–124 on the fire of Hector as a phlox ‘burst of flame’. [[GN 2016.11.18 via BA 337.]]

I.17.098–101

subject heading(s): pêma ‘pain’; kulindesthai ‘roll’

The death of Patroklos is viewed here retrospectively as a greatpêma ‘pain’, I.17.099, that is sure to kulindesthai ‘roll’ down from the heights like some boulder and destroy anyone daring to attack a warrior who is being protected by a god. On the metaphor of such a pêma ‘pain’ as a boulder that ‘rolls’ down from the heights, see the comment on I.11.347. In the present context, I.17.098–101, the pêma ‘pain’ has descended upon Patroklos, who has dared to attack Hector while that warrior was being protected by Apollo. This pêma ‘pain’ for Patroklos prefigures what will happen to Achilles himself beyond theliad when he dares to attack Paris while that warrior is in turn being protected by Apollo. [[GN 2016.11.18 via BA 63, 77.]]

I.17.164

subject heading(s): therapôn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; ‘best of the Achaeans’

In this retrospective, it is said that Patroklos has been killed as a therapôn of Achilles, who is described here as ‘best of the Achaeans’. The immediate context accommodates here even the deeper meaning of therapôn as ‘ritual substitute’, since Patroklos himself could become temporarily the ‘best of the Achaeans’ at the moment of his death. At that moment, he is substituting himself for Achilles by prefiguring a future moment, beyond theliad, when Achilles will die in a way that matches
the way that Patroklos died in Iliad 16. [GN 2016.08.04 via BA 292–293.]

I.17.165

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; ankhe-makhoi ‘fighting side by side’

The Argives=Achaeans are described here as attended by therapontes who are ankhe-makhoi ‘fighting side by side’ with them. [GN 2016.08.4 via the comment on I.16.272.]

I.17.176–178

subject heading(s): nikē ‘victory’

In most Homeric situations it is Zeus who is primarily responsible for heroic victory. [GN 2016.11.18 via HC 4§109.]

I.17.187

subject heading(s): bие ‘force, violence, strength’; kleos ‘glory’

Like other names containing the element kleos ‘glory’ in Homeric diction, the name of Patroklos=Patrokleēs can have a periphrastic alternative, as here: ‘the bие of Patroklos’. Comparable is the periphrasis of the name Hēraklēēs as bие Hēraklēēiē, or of the name Eteoklēēs as bие Eteoklēēiēi. See the comments on I.02.658 and I.04.386. [GN 2016.11.18 via BA 319.]

I.17.194–214

Q&T via MoM 1§101

subject heading(s): armor of Achilles; Will of Zeus; metonymy; lament; sorrows of Andromache; Plan of Zeus; plot of the Iliad; narrative arc; metonymy; theo-eroticism

When Zeus sees Hector putting on the armor of Achilles, he nods his divine head, thus signaling his will, which in this case is a specific plan to make into a part of the overall narrative a special scene where the death of Hector at the hands of Achilles will cause grief for Andromache, who will never get to see Hector wearing the armor of Achilles—since her husband will never return to her alive. Instead of welcoming back her husband in Iliad 22, Andromache will be lamenting him, and the wording at I.22.444 in the context of her impending lament at I.22.476–515 is already prefigured here at I.17.207, referring to the wife’s fond hope to be reunited with her loving husband. See also the comment on I.22.444. Thus the Will of Zeus, the god’s plan, is to create an exquisite artistic effect. Zeus plans here to put in motion a scene of sublime poetic virtuosity, since the epic narrative in Iliad 22 will soon re-enact the lyrical lament of Andromache over the death of Hector, I.22.476–515. Here at I.17.194–214, Zeus is speaking as if he were already the director of the scenario for such a future scene of lament. The god is in effect prefiguring the scene here by way of formally announcing his artistic involvement. Such an involvement can be seen as a kind of metonymic contact with the emotions of Andromache. On the metonymy here, see also the comment on I.01.528–530. See also under metonymy in the Inventory of terms and names. [GN 2016.11.18 via MoM 1§101; also HC 1§203 and 4§269; also HPC 127.]

I.17.194–197

subject heading(s): armor of Achilles

The armor that was given to Achilles by his immortal mother is immortalizing, whereas the armor that was given to him by his mortal father, the ash spear, symbolizes the hero’s mortality. On the ash spear, see the comment on I.16.140–144. [GN 2016.11.18 via BA 158–159.]

I.17.194

subject heading(s): armor of Achilles; ambroto- immortalizing

The armor of Achilles, which had covered the body of Patroklos and which is now about to cover the body of Hector, is not just ‘immortal’: it is ‘immortalizing’. It will make you immortal unless it stops covering you, as when this armor falls off the
body of Patroklos in the course of his death scene as narrated in *Iliad* 16. On the semantics of *ambroto*- as 'immortalizing', see the comment on l.16.670. [[GN 2016.11.18 via BA 173, 294, 325.]]

I.17.211

subject heading(s): *Enüalios*

The name *Enüalios* can function as an epithet of Ares as war god. In other contexts, the same name can refer to a separate divine personality, likewise a war god. [[GN 2016.11.18 via HPC 290.]]

I.17.213–214

Hector here is quite the picture, looking like Achilles because he wears the armor of Achilles. [[GN 2016.11.18 via BA 294.]]

I.17.271

subject heading(s): *therapōn* ‘attendant, ritual substitute’

Another retrospective: Patroklos has been killed as a *therapōn* of Achilles. [[GN 2016.08.04 via the comment at l.17.164; see also BA 292.]]

I.17.279–280

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’

Ajax is described here as second-best to Achilles both in looks and in deeds. [[GN 2016.11.118 via BA 32.]]

I.17.319–322

subject heading(s): *kratos* ‘winning-power’; *aisa* ‘portion; fate, destiny’

Here the Achaeans almost win the Trojan War. But that would be premature. In terms of the ordained narrative, such an event of winning would be ‘in-disaccord-with *huper*’ the portion *aisa* of Zeus’ (*unnēp Διος αἰσα*). I.17.321. That is, the *aisa* or ‘apportionment’ of victory or defeat to the Achaeans and to the Trojans by Zeus is up to Zeus. Zeus gets to decide according to the plan of Zeus. And that plan cannot be contradicted, since the plot of the Homeric *Iliad* must be the Will of Zeus. For more on the expression *huper aisan* ‘in disaccord with *aisa*’ (*unnēp αἰσα*), see the comment on l.03.059. And, since the victory of the Achaeans depends on the Will of Zeus, the very idea that the Achaeans could win ‘by way of their own winning-power *kratos*’ (*καρποί καὶ ἐθελει οφέστηκα*)—such an idea is entertained at l.17.322—is an impossibility, since *kratos* ‘winning-power’ comes from the gods in the logic of Homeric diction. On this logic, see the comments on l.01.509 and l.11.317–319. [[GN 2016.11.18 via BA 82.]]

I.17.331–332

subject heading(s): *nikē* ‘victory’

Apollo, disguised as a Trojan, is claiming that Zeus still ‘wishes’, as expressed by the verb *bouletai* at l.17.331, to give *nikē* ‘victory’ to the Trojans instead of the Achaeans, l.17.332. On the basis of what is humanly perceivable by the Trojan whom the god is impersonating here, this claim is still true, but the truth of the claim is not to last. [[GN 2016.11.18 via HC 4§109.]]

I.17.388

subject heading(s): *therapōn* ‘attendant, ritual substitute’

Yet another retrospective: Patroklos has been killed as a *therapōn* of Achilles. [[GN 2016.08.04 via the comment at l.17.164; see also BA 292.]]

I.17.411
subject heading(s): ascending scale of affection; philos (plural philoi) ‘near and dear’; philattos ‘nearest and dearest’; hetairos ‘companion’

Thatis, the divine mother of Achilles, had foretold some things to her mortal son, but she did not foretell the death of Patroklos, described here as the philattos ‘nearest and dearest’ of all the hetairoi ‘companions’ of Achilles. For Achilles, his ascending scale of affection evolves in such a way as to show that Patroklos turns out to be at the very top of this scale. See the comments on I.09.193–198, I.09.522, I.09.524–599, I.09.642. In those passages, it still seems as if the three companions who approach Achilles as ambassadors should be at the very top of his scale. [[GN 2016.11.18 via BA 105, PH 253.]]

I.17.432

subject heading(s): Hellespont

The Hellespont is pictured here, in a general way, as the station of Achilles. [[GN 2016.11.18 via BA 343.]]

I.17.456

subject heading(s): menos ‘mental power’

The horses that draw the chariot of Achilles are energized by themenos ‘mental power’ that Zeus literally breathes into them. Their animal mentality can now enable them to perform physically what they need to do, which is, to draw the chariot of Achilles away from danger. In other contexts, heroes are energized by the menos ‘mental power’ that gods breathe into them, and such an enhanced human mentality enables them to perform physically their heroic deeds. See the comments on I.10.482, I.11.508, I.12.018, I.15.059–060, I.15.262. [[GN 2016.11.18 via GMP 114, 116.]]

I.17.474–483

subject heading(s): apobatic maneuvers

Automedon, who has been the chariot driver for Patroklos, calls out to Alikmedon to take his place as the driver, since he now wants to become the chariot fighter, thus stepping off the platform of the chariot, as indicated by the verb apobainein ‘step off’, I.17.480. For background on apobatic maneuvers in chariot warfare, see Nagy 2015.05.01, 2015.05.08, 2015.05.15, 2015.05.20. The new relationship of Automedon and Alikmedon as chariot fighter and chariot driver respectively is relevant to the potential function of the chariot driver as a ritual substitute for the chariot rider. See the comment on I.04.227. [[GN 2016.11.18 via PH 211.]]

I.17.547–549

subject heading(s): name of Iris; “speaking name” (nomen loquens)

The name of Ἴρις ("Iρις"), the goddess who functions as divine messenger, is a “speaking name” (nomen loquens), deriving from the root ‘uí- as in is ‘force, violence, strength’. This word is and also the word biê, which likewise means ‘force, violence, strength’, is conventionally associated with the power of winds, as at I.17.739 and at I.16.213 respectively. Likewise, the goddess Iris herself is powered by windspeed, as we see from the expression podēnemos ὀκέα Ἴρις (ποδήνεμος ὀκέα "Iρις) ‘Iris swift with feet of wind’ at I.18.196 and elsewhere. [[GN 2017.07.20 via BA 327.]]

I.17.565

subject heading(s): menos ‘mental power’

Hector is said to have the menos ‘mental power’ of fire itself. See the comment on I.12018, where it is noted that forces of nature can have a mind of their own, as it were, because they are connected to the mental power of divinities who control the cosmos and to whom humans using their own mental power can pray for the activation of such control. One such natural force is fire, as at I.06.182 and here at I.17.565. [[GN 2016.11.18 via GMP 114.]]

I.17.627
subject heading(s): nikē ‘victory’

Even at this relatively late stage in the plot of the Iliad, Zeus is still being perceived as giving nikē ‘victory’ to the Trojans, not to the Achaean. [[GN 2016.11.18 via HC 4§109.]]

I.17.655

subject heading(s): ascending scale of affection; philos (plural philoi) ‘near and dear’; philtatos ‘nearest and dearest’; hetairo ‘companion’

Once again, Patroklos is described here as the philtatos ‘nearest and dearest’ of all the hetairo ‘companions’ of Achilles. In his ascending scale of affection, then, Achilles holds Patroklos at the very top. See the comment on I.17.411. [[GN 2016.11.18 via BA 105, PH 253.]]

I.17.685–690

subject heading(s): pēma ‘pain’; kulindein ‘roll’; ‘best of the Achaean’; nikē ‘victory’; pothē ‘longing’; hero cult; cult hero

The news of the death of Patroklos is being poetically formulated here. This death is apēma ‘pain’, I.17.688, which a god has ‘rolled’ down, as expressed by way of the verb kulindein, upon the Achaean. See the comment on I.11.347, where we see that this pain is pictured as some boulder that has broken away from the heights above and is now about to crush anyone and anything that stands in the way. And what is this pain? It is the death of the ‘best of the Achaean’, who is identified here as Patroklos, ritual substitute of Achilles. And the pain caused by this death will cause in turn a pothē ‘longing’ for the hero who has fallen. This noun pothē ‘longing’, like the verb pothein ‘long for’, evokes the feelings of those who worship cult heroes: see the comment on I.02.695–709. [[GN 2016.11.18 via BA 33, 63, 77.]]

I.17.736–741

subject heading(s): selas ‘flash of light’; ἵς ‘force, violence, strength’

The heat of battle is being compared here to the fire of lightning, I.17.737, in a thunderstorm that ravages the habitations of humankind with its selas ‘flash of light’ amidst the ἵς ‘force, violence, strength’ of a storm wind, I.17.739. For the special significance of this powerful word selas ‘flash of light’, see the comment on I.19.003–017. [[GN 2016.11.18 via BA 321.]]

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Iliad Rhapsody 18

2016.11.25 / enhanced 2018.09.20

The centerpiece of Iliad 18 is the shield of Achilles, envisioned as a work of art that defines the universe. The divine artisan Hephaistos makes this shield by way of metalwork, but Homeric poetry reconfigures the artistry of this metalwork by way of verbal art. And the artistry of Homeric poetry will now create or re-create a cosmos that is designed to contain the Iliad itself. [[GN 2016.11.25.]]
subject heading(s): ‘best of the Myrmidons’; ‘best of the Achaeans’

Before he has even been told about the death of Patroklos, Achilles is feeling anxious, and his anxiety is a premonition of the bad news coming his way. He is already thinking a thought that matches what has already happened, I.18.004, that Patroklos has been killed. In thinking this thought, Achilles reminds himself of something that his divine mother Thetis had once foretold to him: that the ‘best of the Myrmidons’ would be killed while Achilles was still alive, I.009–011. But why did Achilles fail to think this thought at an earlier time? Why did this thought about death for the best of the Myrmidons never occur to him when he sent out Patroklos to fight as his own substitute? It is as if Achilles had already recognized, back then, that Patroklos as his substitute had thereby already taken over, at least for the moment, the identity of Achilles as ‘best of the Achaeans’. [GN 2016.11.24 via BA 33.]

I.18.015–073

subject heading(s): mourning for Patroklos, mourning for Achilles; lament; akhos ‘grief’; a man of constant sorrow

At I.18.015–021, Achilles gets the grim news: that Patroklos has been killed by Hector, and that the fighting to recover his body, despoiled of the armor of Achilles, is still underway. Immediately, Achilles feels akhos ‘grief’, I.18.22. But the mourning and lamentation that is caused by this grief is aimed not only at Patroklos but also at Achilles in the narrative that follows, I.18.021–073. Within this narrative, Achilles gets to have his own wake, as it were. And the akhos ‘grief’ that is now felt by Achilles will never leave him, even after he unsays his mēnis ‘anger’ later on in iliad 22. Unlike the goddess Demeter in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter, for whom the akhos ‘grief’ that she felt at verses 40 and 90 will go away at verse 436 as soon as she is reunited with Persephone, the akhos ‘grief’ of Achilles will never go away. As Thetis the lamenting mother of Achilles declares at I.18.061–062, this hero will never again stop ‘grieving’, akhristhai, I.18.062. From now on, Achilles will be a man of constant sorrow (on precedents for this expression, see H24H §54). See the comments on I.09.249–250 and on I.23.046–
I.18.051–060

subject heading(s): lament; lament by Thetis; göos ‘lament’; group performance of lament

Thetis not only mourns her son Achilles as if he were already dead: she formally laments him in song. The wording of the verses spoken by Thetis here at I.18.051–060 corresponds morphologically to the wording of a song that could actually be sung as a lament. Leading her Nereid sisters, Thetis begins the singing at I.18.051, as signaled by the verb ex-arkhein ‘lead off [in performing]’, which indicates a performance by a lead performer in a song of lament performed by a group (see also PH 362). In this case, that group is represented by the Nereid sisters of Thetis. Such a performance involves not only singing but also a kinetic system of stylized movements—which is a kind of dancing that is integrated with the singing. On this point, see already the anchor comment on I.08.407–439. The movements of this kind of kinetic system can be formalized by way of gestures such as swaying, tearing the cheeks, beating the chest, and so on, and it must be kept in mind that the singing of lament could regularly include the kind of stylized dancing that I describe here. As for the overall practice of singing this kind of lament, it is indicated here by a special word, göos, I.18.051. As we will see when we encounter further occurrences of this word, the göos is ordinarily sung only by relatives or close friends of the person who died. A typical theme in such a lament is what we see being sung by Thetis here at I.18.056–057, evoking the image of a tender young seedling that has tragically been cut down before its time. [[GN 2016.11.24 via BA 183–184.]]

I.18.070–071

subject heading(s): Achilles as a prefigured corpse

The grieving Achilles, shown lying prone here as if he himself were a corpse that needed to be mourned, is now held by the head from behind by her lamenting mother Thetis, I.18.071. This gesture re-enacts what typically happens at a real wake: the primary mourning woman will hold the head of the corpse from behind as she sings her song of lament. As we will see at I.24.724, such is the stance of Andromache when she cradles the head of her husband’s corpse while she sings her lament for him. See the comment on I.24.720–776. And the act of mourning performed by Thetis for Achilles here in lliad 18 actually prefigures what will happen at the funeral of Achilles, which is of course not shown in the lliad. At that funeral, which is shown only toward the end of the Odyssey, the corpse of Achilles will lie in state, and he will be mourned then by Thetis together with her Nereid sisters, O.24.058–059. Earlier in that narrative, as the corpse of Achilles is first seen lying in the dust after his death in battle, he is described there as larger than life in size, O.24.040: ‘you lay there, so huge in all your hugeness’ (κεῖτο μέγας μεγαλωσθή). So also Achilles here in the lliad is now being pictured as lying in the dust, and he is described here too in the same way, I.18.026–027: ‘all stretched out, so huge in all his hugeness, he lay there’ (μέγας μεγαλωστὶ τανυθείς | κεῖτο). So, Achilles is already being prefigured here as a corpse that is larger than life. [[GN 2016.11.24 via BA 113.]]

I.18.073

subject heading(s): penthos ‘grief’

The akhos ‘grief’ experienced by Achilles at I.18.022 upon hearing the news about the death of Patroklos is here called a penthos ‘grief’. As in other Homeric contexts, we can see a synonymity here. [[GN 2016.11.24 via BA 94, 102; also HTL 132.]]

I.18.074–077

subject heading(s): Will of Zeus

In this retrospective narrative, I.18.074–077, Thetis recalls what Achilles had originally prayed for: the hero had wished that Zeus would allow the Trojans to succeed in their onslaught against the Achaeans—to the point where the attackers would reach the sterns of the beached ships of the Achaeans. At that point, the Achaeans would surely recognize how much they needed Achilles. Now that this wish of Achilles has already been translated into the Will of Zeus, what is to happen next? That is the point of the question asked by Thetis, but of course the answer of Achilles will have to be framed in terms of the consequences resulting from his original wish. Now that Patroklos has been killed, what is Achilles to do? [[GN 2016.11.24 via BA 82, 334, 336.]]
I.18.076

subject heading(s): sterns of the Achaean ships

This compressed reference to the positioning of the beached ships of the Achaens needs to be seen in the broader context of the expanded references, on which see especially the comment on I.08.220–227. [[GN 2016.11.24 via HPC 160.]]

I.18.080–082

subject heading(s): Patroklos; philos ‘near and dear’; hetairos ‘companion’

The restoration of honor for Achilles can now give him no pleasure, since the price for this restoration has been the death of the hetairos ‘companion’ who was most philos ‘near and dear’ to him. [[GN 2016.11.24 via BA 102, 105; PH 253.]]

I.18.082–085

subject heading(s): armor of Achilles

The armor of Achilles has been stripped from the body of Patroklos by Hector, who is now wearing it. This armor represents what Achilles has inherited from his immortal mother. By contrast, the ash spear as described at I.16.140–144 represents what Achilles has inherited from his mortal father. See the comment on I.16.140–144. [[GN 2016.11.24 via BA 158–159, 325.]]

I.18.095–099

subject heading(s): öku-moros ‘soon to have a fated death’

Thetis calls Achilles öku-moros ‘soon to have a fated death’, I.18.095, since she sees that the hero is resolved to kill Hector despite the consequences—which will be fatal for Achilles. [[GN 2016.11.24 via BA 102.]]

I.18.102–103

subject heading(s): hetairos ‘companion’

Achilles, recognizing his immeasurable loss in having caused the death of Patroklos, who was all along his nearest and dearest hetairos ‘companion’, has only now come to recognize his commensurate loss in having also caused the deaths of many other hetairoi ‘companions’ who died defending the ships of the Achaeans from Hector’s fire. [[GN 2016.11.24 via BA 106.]]

I.18.121

subject heading(s): kleos ‘glory’ (of poetry); esthlo- ‘real, genuine, good’; arnusthai ‘struggle to win as a prize’

Now that Patroklos has been killed, Achilles can finally recognize what he has to do. He has to kill Hector, thus ensuring his own death soon thereafter, and by doing so he will win for himself a kleos ‘glory’ that is esthlon ‘real, genuine, good’. The verb arnusthai, which takes kleos ‘glory’ here as its direct object, means ‘struggle to win as a prize’. For more on this verb, see the comment on O.01.05. [[GN 2016.11.24 via BA 102.]]

I.18.150

subject heading(s): bay of Hellespont

Now that Patroklos has been killed, the Trojans are on the attack again, and they pursue the Achaeans all the way to the last point of refuge for those notional ancestors of Greek civilization. That point, once again, is visualized as the shores of the bay of Hellespont. [[GN 2016.11.24 via BA 343.]]

I.18.152
subject heading(s): therapón ‘attendant, ritual substitute’

Yet again, a retrospective: Patroklos has been killed as a therapón of Achilles. [[GN 2016.08.04 via the comment at I.17.164.]]

I.18.205–206

subject heading(s): fire streaming from the head of Achilles; phlox ‘burst of flame’

As Achilles gets ready to rejoin his companions in the war against the Trojans, his head catches on fire, lit up by the power of the goddess Athena. This fire is described at I.18.206 as a phlox ‘burst of flame’. [[GN 2016.11.24 via BA 323.]]

I.18.214

subject heading(s): fire from the head of Achilles; selas ‘flash of light’

The word here for the fire bursting from the head of Achilles is selas ‘flash of light’. On this word, which signals the Will of Zeus, see especially the note on I.19.003.017. [[GN 2016.11.26.]]

I.18.225–226

subject heading(s): fire streaming from the head of Achilles

The word here for the fire emanating from the head of Achilles is simply pūr ‘fire’, I.18.225. [[GN 2016.11.24 via BA 323.]]

I.18.242

subject heading(s): kratero- ‘having the power to win’; kratos ‘winning-power’

I note here only in passing the association of this adjective kratero-, in the sense of ‘having the power to win’, with the noun kratos ‘winning-power’. For more about this noun, see the comments on I.01.509 and I.11.317–319. [[GN 2016.11.24 via BA 85.]]

I.18.243–314

subject heading(s): assembly of the Trojans; antagonism between immortal and mortal; mêtis ‘mind, intelligence’

At this assembly, Polydamas advocates a defensive strategy now that Achilles has re-entered the war. But Hector insists on a strategy of maintaining the offensive, and his opinion prevails. The Master Narrator comments: this was a bad decision by the assembly, to approve the strategy of Hector, since the goddess Athena had taken away from their senses, that is, their phrenes ‘thinking’, I.18.311. If the assembly had been sensible, they would have recognized that Hector’s mêtis ‘mind, intelligence’ had failed him, I.18.312. As noted in the comments on I.06.286–311, I.07.017–061, I.08.538–541, I.10.043–052, I.11.200, and I.13.825–829, there is a pattern of personal hostility felt by the goddess Athena toward Hector as a hero who aspires to some of the same qualities that Athena herself exemplifies. Like the goddess, Hector can be seen as an exponent of (1) defensive tactics in the warfare of protecting a citadel from sieges and (2) mêtis ‘mind, intelligence’—two qualities that are now tragically taken away from him when he most needs to have them in the macro-narrative of the Iliad. [[GN 2016.11.24 via BA 147, GMP 204.]]

I.18.354–356

subject heading(s): rhapsodic sequencing

The particle de (56) of I.18.356 is syntactically correlated with the particle men (μὲν) in a preceding verse, I.18.354. But a rhapsode (ῥαψόδος) could begin his performance with the de-clause, thus “stranding,” as it were, the preceding men-clause. Here is an example, with reference to the performance of a rhapsode in the Ptolemaic era of Alexandria:

καὶ ὁ μὲν Ῥαψόδος εὐθὺς ἦν δία στόματος πάσιν, ἐν τοῖς Πτολεμαίοι γάμοις ἀγομένου τὴν ἄδελφην καὶ πράγμα δράν ἀλλόκοτον ἔνομις ομένου καὶ ἄσειμον ἀρξάμενος ἀπὸ τῶν ἐπών ἑκείνων
The rhapsode [ραψώδης] was the talk of everybody—the one who, at the wedding of Ptolemy who, in marrying his own sister was considered to be committing a deed unnatural and unholy, began with the following words: ‘And [de] Zeus summoned Hērā his sister, his wife’ [I.18.356]

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The historical occasion is the wedding, in the first quarter of the third century before our era, of Ptolemy II Philadelphus to his sister, Arsinoe, in accordance with the practice of Egyptian pharaohs—and in violation of Hellenic practices. Evidently, then, the particle de could be used to begin a rhapsodic performance, even in contexts were such a use was dependent on a preceding men-clause. For an example of such a de at the beginning of a Homeric rhapsody, see the comment on O.03.001. [[GN 2017.03.29 via PP 161–162]]

I.18.369–371

subject heading(s): apthito - ‘imperishable’


I.18.399

subject heading(s): Ὄκεανος

The cosmic river Ὄκεανος is described here at I.18.399 as apsorros ‘backward-flowing’ (ἀψορρός Ὄκεανος). Since this river is visualized as flowing around the world in a circle, its flow always comes back to where it started. Since the flow comes back full circle, the Ὄκεανος is ‘backward-flowing’. [[GN 2016.11.20 via HC 2§165.]]

I.18.464–466

subject heading(s): wishes correlated with premises

Here is what the divine artisan wishes as he proceeds to make a new set of armor for Achilles: ‘[464] If only I could have the power to hide him from sorrowful death, [465] when his dreadful fate comes upon him [466] —as surely as there will be fine armor for him! [464 ἢ ἀγά i τὴν θανάσιον δυσλεκές ὠδε δυνασιήν ἢ ἔσι ποτρύνονται; ὡς μὲ νόσον ικάνος ἢ ἀγά i τεύξεις καλά παράσσονται!]. What follows is an epitome from GMP 296. Hephaistos is here wishing for something that is uncertain, and the wish is linked by the adverb hōde (ὁδε) ‘so’ with the conjunction ἢ ὁδε (οὐκ) ‘as’ introducing an absolute certainty, that Achilles will have fine armor. In other words, the uncertainty of the wish, that Achilles be saved from death, is correlated with the certainty of the premise, that Achilles will have fine armor. I highlight the wording ai gar (αἰ γάρ + optative) ‘if only’, which expresses the wish, and the wording hōde... ὡς (ὁδε...οὐκ) ‘as surely as’, which connects this wish to the premise. We see here a parallelism with the wording ei gar (εἰ γάρ + optative) ‘if only’ when Hector expresses his wish to become an immortal, I.08.538 and I.13.825, and with the wording ἢ ὁδε/houto...ἥ ὡς (ὅμως/οὖτω...οὐκ) ‘as surely as’, which connects his wish to his premise as expressed at I.08.538-541 and I.13.825–828—that disaster will surely befall the Achaeans. In some cases, as in the three I have just highlighted, it sounds as if the speaker of the wish were expressing an obvious impossibility. But there are many cases where the wish being expressed is not at all meant to sound impossible: for an example, see I.04.313–314 and the comment there. Other such examples include O.03.218–220, O.14.440–441, O.15.341–342, O.17.494, O.17.496, O.18.235–240. For a more complicated example, see I.16.722–723 and the comment there. I save for a later comment some further examples. [[GN 2016.11.24 via GMP 294–301.]]

I.18.468–613

subject heading(s): making new armor for Achilles; ring-composition; Ὅκεανος as ring-composition

The god Hephaistos makes a new set of metallic armor for Achilles to wear, replacing the older set that is now worn by Hector. The divine metalworker commences the work at I.18.468 and completes it at I.18.613. Then at I.18.614 the narrative
announces that the overall work on the armor has now been completed. The metalwork itself is described as primarily bronzework, I.18.474, since bronze is the very first kind of metal that the god 'was casting in the fire' (ἐν τούτῳ ἔμαλλεων), and then there are three secondary metals that are mentioned in succession at I.18.474–475: tin, gold, and silver. But bronze dominates the narrative. And the very first piece of armor to be made by the divine metalworker, as announced at I.18.478–479, is the sakos or ‘shield’, I.18.478, which is the centerpiece of the entire process of manufacturing the new set of armor for Achilles. The narrative that describes the making of the shield, which is already a description of the shield in the making, lasts from I.18.478 all the way to I.18.608. Then at I.18.609 the narrative announces that the work on the shield has now been completed. Just as the beginning of the narrative about the making of the shield announces the word sakos ‘shield’ at I.18.478, so also the ending that announces the completion of the work also announces again the same word sakos ‘shield’ at I.18.609, and thus the narrative has come full circle in a spectacular display of ring-composition. This ring-composition expresses here the circularity of the shield, but that circularity is also expressed by way of the adornment that encircles the shield. This adornment is the rim of the shield, presumably imagined as blue, and its encirclement of the shield is said to represent the cosmic river Οἶκον, I.18.607–608. Such an encirclement of the shield by a representation of the Οἶκον corresponds to the encirclement of the cosmos by the ever-circular flow of the Οἶκον itself. See the comment on I.18.399. So, the correspondence shows that the shield in the making is in fact the cosmos in the making. As soon as the shield, as a narration in the making, is finally complete, the shield as an object in the making can finally be seen as a made object. What then follows at I.18.610–613 is the making of other parts of the armor: breastplate, helmet, greaves. And then comes the announcement at I.18.614, as already noted, that the work is now complete. Thus the beginning and the completion of the work on the shield, signaled in the ring-composition that starts at I.18.478 and comes full circle at I.18.608, is enveloped by a wider ring-composition that starts at I.18.468 and comes full circle at I.18.614. [[GN 2016.11.20 via BA 325; also GMP 238]]

I.18.478–609

Q&T via HC 2§164

subject heading(s): making a new shield for Achilles

As noted in the previous comment, which analyzes the wider narrative, the narrower narrative about the making of the shield begins at I.18.478 and comes full circle at I.18.608, followed by an announcement of the completion at I.18.609. For the wider narrative, see again the comment on I.18.468–613. As for the narrower narrative here, the analysis will require a different perspective. As the camera zooms in, as it were, on the world of images that are being worked into the surface of the shield by the divine metalworker Ἡφαῖστος, the artistic microcosm that we now see being pictured here represents a physical macrocosm that turns out to be the Homeric cosmos itself, defined by the world-encircling river Οἶκον as its outer limit. The cosmic essence of this Οἶκον, signaled at I.18.607–608, has already been analyzed in the earlier comment on I.18.468–613. Also, as noted in the still earlier comment on I.14.245–246–246a, the Homeric traditions about Οἶκον coexisted with older traditions attributed to Orpheus, and, already in the ancient world, various interpreters developed various influential theories about the cosmos by viewing such Orphic traditions about the Οἶκον together with the corresponding Homeric traditions. One such interpreter was Crates of Mallos, for whom the Οἶκον was an essential part of an allegory about the cosmos: see the comment on I.14.245–246–246a. For Crates, his interpretation of the verses about the Οἶκον at I.14.245–246–246a as a cosmic allegory was evidently coextensive with his interpretation of the verses about the shield being made for Achilles here at I.18.478–609. And there is a further extension: for Crates, the verses at I.11.032–040 about the images worked into the shield of Agamemnon were likewise a cosmic allegory: see the comment on I.11.032–040. [[GN 2016.11.20 via HC 2§§165–167; also HPC 289, 358–359]]

I.18.479–480

subject heading(s): antux ‘rim’; triplax ‘three-fold’; marmareē ‘gleaming’

The antux ‘rim’ that is being made for the shield of Achilles, mentioned here at I.18.479 and again at I.18.608, istriplax ‘threefold’, I.18.480, and the outermost fold or circle of this antux is the Οἶκον, I.18.608. For Crates, as noted in the comment on I.18.478–609, this design representing the Οἶκον is part of an overall cosmic allegory. In Eustathius Commentary on the iliad vol. 4 p. 218 lines 14–17, the commentator draws attention to the morphological parallelism of triplax ‘threefold’ with diplax ‘twofold’, the second of which words refers at I.03.126 and at I.22.441 to a pattern-woven fabric. So, Eustathius recognizes here a crossover between the artistic worlds of metalwork and weaving. On the diplax, see already the
I.18.483–608

subject heading(s): narrating the Shield of Achilles; ecphrasis; athetesis; Zenodotus; Aristarchus; Crates

Beginning at I.18.483 and ending at I.18.603 are the verses that actually narrate the images that are worked by the divine metalworker into the surface of the Shield of Achilles. So far in the comments on lliad 18, I have not capitalized the first letter of the word referring to the Shield, since I have been viewing this object primarily as an object in the making. But now, as I begin to view this imagined object primarily as a narrative in the making, I write Shield, not shield. And I now apply the technical term ecphrasis to this core narrative, by which I mean the narration of visual—or at least visualized—art by way of verbal art. From the start, I find it most noteworthy to report what we learn from the testimony of the scholia A for I.18.483: that Zenodotus of Ephesus (see under Zenodotus in the Inventory of terms and names) athetized this entire ecphrasis, that is, all the verses that narrated, by way of verbal art, the visual or at least visualized narrative of the Shield, I.18.483–608. (On athetesis and athetizing, see the Inventory of terms and names.) But Zenodotus retained these verses in the base text of his edition. (On base text, see the Inventory of terms and names). We know this from the fact that Aristarchus, in his edition of Homer, reported a variant textual reading that had been attested by Zenodotus in the case of one of these athetized verses, I.18.499. See the comment below on I.18.499. By contrast with Zenodotus, an editor like Crates of Mallos considered the entire narrative of the Shield to be an all-important part of the lliad ret: large: see the comment on I.18.478–609. [[GN 2016.11.20 via PP 151; also HC 2§152, 165, 168, 173, 195, 198; also HPC 352]]

I.18.482–489

The mapping here of earth and sky on the Shield shows the centrality of the physical cosmos in the overall design of the visual narrative. [[GN 2016.11.23 via HC 2§165.]]

I.18.487–489

subject heading(s): Orion; Éos; Arktos

The astral configuration of Orion the Hunter and Arktos the Bear here at I.18.487–489, recurs at O.05.273–275, on which see the comments there. [[GN 2016.11.22 via BA 201–202 and GMP 253.]]

I.18.490–491

Q&T via HC 2§173

subject heading(s): a tale of two cities

The tale of two cities begins here. So, there is a transition from the realm of a natural world to what seems at first to be the realm of a social world. The narrative connects immediately with the first of the two cities. As this narrative proceeds, it would seem as if the first city were at peace, since the second city is at war: when the narrative actually turns to the second city, starting at I.18.509, we see right away a scene of warmaking. [[GN 2016.11.22 via HC 2§173.]]

I.18.491–508

subject heading(s): wedding scene on the Shield of Achilles; wallpaper effect

The first scene to be featured in the city at peace is a wedding. But there is not just one wedding: rather, there is a distributive sequence of wedding scenes to be viewed one after the other, as if each viewing were a repetition of the previous viewing. From here on, I will refer to such a visual trope as a wallpaper effect. [[GN 2016.11.22.]]

I.18.492
subject heading(s): numphê ‘local goddess, bride’

This word numphê, meaning ‘local goddess’ as at I.06.420, can refer to a ‘bride’ at the ritual moment of getting married. Such an extension of meaning, where the human can be merged with the divine, is a characteristic of climactic moments in ritual. More in other comments, especially in the comment on I.19.155. [[GN 2016.11.22 via PP 84.]]

I.18.497–508

subject heading(s): litigation scene on the Shield of Achilles; neikos ‘quarrel’; poînê ‘blood-price’; wallpaper effect

The litigants in this litigation scene are anonymous, but the noun neikos ‘quarrel’ at I.18.497 and the verb neikîn at I.18.498 are evocative of the quarrel that took place between Achilles and Agamemnon in iliad 1. If the plaintiff and the defendant in the litigation scene are comparable to Achilles and Agamemnon, then what would be the cause of their quarrel? In terms of the micro-narrative that has been worked into the Shield, the quarrel is about the price of a human life. The quarrel is about payment of a poînê ‘blood-price’, I.18.498, for the life of a man who perished. But who would be this man who perished? In terms of the iliad as a macro-narrative containing the micro-narrative of this litigation scene, the man who perished could be seen as Patroklos. If Agamemnon had not insulted Achilles in iliad 1, Patroklos would not have been killed as a substitute for Achilles. So, it would seem justifiable for Achilles to blame Agamemnon for the death of Patroklos. And if Achilles were to prosecute Agamemnon, how much would Agamemnon pay as a blood-price for the life of Patroklos? In the litigation scene, the defendant who is being blamed for the death of the man who perished claims the right to pay the blood-price in full, but the plaintiff refuses to accept any compensation at all. Following the interpretation of Muellner 1976:100–106, I translate as follows the relevant wording at I.18.499–500: ‘The one made a claim [eukheto] to pay back in full, [declaring publicly to the district [dêmos], but the other was refusing to accept anything’ (διὰ μὲν εὔχετο πόντο ἀποδόοιαι | δὲ μὲν πιθανόκοιων, δὲ ἀναίνετο μηδὲν ἐλέοδοια). In this context, the collocation of the political term dêmos ‘district’ (δῆμος at I.18.500) with the juridical term eukhesthai ‘make a claim’ (εὔχετο at I.18.499) is cognate with the collocation of the same political term dâmos (da-mo) with the same juridical term eukhesthai ‘make a claim’ (ἐ-υ-κή-ε-το = eukheto) in the Linear B tablet Ep 704 from Pylos (HR 75–76). In terms of the macro-narrative in the iliad, there is for Achilles no price that could ever repay the loss of his nearest and dearest companion. But who is to determine how to achieve justice in the course of the litigation as described in the micro-narrative? As we see at I.18.501, both litigants opted for arbitration: ‘both were heading for an arbitrator [histôr], to get a limit [peirai]’ (ὁμοφως δ’ ἠσοφην ἐπὶ ἵστορι πείραι ἐλέοδοι). The context of the arbitration is narrated at I.18.502–508. Surrounding the litigants is an outer circle of lâoi ‘people’, I.18.502, who shout their approval for one side or the other, and an inner circle of elders who compete with each other in striving to reach the most equitable formula for a successful arbitration, I.18.503–508. These elders are taking turns as each one of them stands up, with scepter in hand, to pronounce their competing formulations (details in H24H 13§36; also GMP 53, 64). Their action is thus distributive, since they make their pronouncements not as a group but individually and competitively (see the scholia A for iliad 18.506 and the comments in HPC 67). So, when the elders are described at I.18.505 as ‘holding their scepters’, it is not that they are all holding scepters at the same time: rather, each one takes turns in holding the scepter, and you hold it only when it is your turn to speak. Again I see here a wallpaper effect. [[GN 2016.11.22 via BA 109, 312; PH 250–252, 255, 258; GMP 53, 64; HC 2§174.]]

I.18.499

subject heading(s): base text; Aristarchus; Zenodotus

The anonymous dead man whose life has been lost is described at I.18.499 as apophthimenos (ἀποφθημένου), that is, as someone who ‘perished’. This reading comes from the base text once used by Aristarchus, but there was a variant reading apoktamenos ‘killed’ (ἀποκτημένου) in the base text used by Zenodotus. For the implications of such variation between the base texts of Aristarchus and Zenodotus, see the comment on I.18.483–608. [[GN 2016.11.22.]]

I.18.509–515

subject heading(s): a city besieged

Now the narrative turns from the first city, viewed in a time of peace, to the second city, viewed in a time of war. The city at war is under siege, and the warriors who are besieging this city have not yet decided whether to destroy it completely if they
win—or whether they keep the spoils of war, dividing among themselves whatever they acquire by conquest, I.18.509–512.
While the besiegers encircling the city are deliberating at ground level down below, the visual narration turns around and looks upward to view the city walls of the besieged: standing up there on the walls are the women and children and old men, I.18.514–515, awaiting their fate. The whole scene evokes the siege of Troy in the macro-narrative of the *Iliad*. [[GN 2016.11.22.]]

I.18.515–519

subject heading(s): picturing warriors on the attack; Ares and Athena as divinities of war

The scene picturing the besieged city now shifts to a scene picturing warriors on the attack. Leading them are the divinities Ares and Athena, I.18.516, who are pictured here as *pictures*, so to speak, since the divine artisan Hephaistos has metalworked them in gold, I.18.517. But these two divinities are at the same time pictured also as life-size, so to speak, since they are metalworked as larger in size than the warriors whom they lead, I.18.519. The pairing of Ares and Athena as divinities of war stems from an old tradition going back to the Bronze Age. See the comments on O.14.216. [[GN 2016.11.23 via HC 4§100.]]

I.18.519

subject heading(s): *arizēlo*—‘most visible’

This epithet *arizēlo*—‘most visible’, applied here to the divinities Ares and Athena as worked in gold, marks a notionally everlasting vision, pictured by Homeric poetry as a perfect and permanent work of art. [[GN 2016.11.23 via HC 1§§54–55, 2§§170–171.]]

I.18.567–572

subject heading(s): singing and dancing at a festival; *molpē* ‘song and dance’

After an extensive description of life in the countryside, I.18.541–566, the vision centers on occasions of festive celebration marking the successful completion of work on the land. Such celebration is figured as a festival featuring ‘song and dance’, *molpē*, I.18.572. The singers / dancers are *parthenikai* ‘young unmarried women’ and *ēthei* ‘young unmarried men’ who have just completed the harvest, I.18.567. Taking the lead in the singing / dancing is a *pais* ‘boy’ positioned at the center of a group of celebrating singers / dancers, I.18.569. This leader of the song and dance is figured as accompanying himself on a string instrument while he ‘sings the song of Linus’, I.18.570. The whole group sings and dances in response to the leader of song and dance, I.18.571–572. [[GN 2016.18.23 via PH 352–353.]]

I.18.587–589

Q&T via HPC 152

subject heading(s): pastoral scene; *stathmos* ‘station’; *klisiā* ‘shelter’; *sēkos* ‘enclosure’; metonymy; hero cult; Hellespont

In this compressed pastoral scene, we see at I.18.589 three important words referring to places where herdsmen can shelter their herds: *stathmos* ‘station’; *klisiā* ‘shelter’; *sēkos* ‘enclosure’. In what follows, I epitomize from my analysis of these three words in HPC 152–153: All three of these words are applied in the context of describing a generic pastoral setting. When we compare the etymologies of these three words with the contexts of their usage in other pastoral settings, we find that their reconstructed meanings are interrelated: *stathmos*, derived from the root *sta*- meaning ‘stand up’, is the makeshift post of a herdsman’s shelter or tent; *klisiā*, derived from the root *kli*- meaning ‘lie down’ or ‘lean’, is the space in the shelter where the herdsman reclines—or, alternatively, it is a ‘lean-to’ covering that affords a makeshift shelter; and *sēkos*, derived from the root *sak*- meaning ‘fill [an empty space]’, is the enclosure where the herdsman’s herd is penned in. By way of metonymy, the *klisiā* is not only an aspect of the shelter but also the entire shelter; likewise, the *stathmos* is not only the post of the shelter but also the entire shelter and everything contiguous with the shelter, including the *sēkos*. In this sense, then, the *stathmos* is the herdsman’s ‘station’. The pastoral word *sēkos* refers not only to the enclosure where a herd is penned in but also to the enclosure where a cult hero is entombed and worshipped. And it can be argued that such sacral connotations are attached to the pastoral words *klisiā* and *stathmos* as well. On *metonymy*, see the Inventory of terms and names. All three
words connote traditional images typical of cult heroes. In the Iliad, the word klisis refers to the abode that a hero like Achilles frequents in life: his klisis is his shelter, which marks the place where his ship is beached on the shores of the Hellespont during the Trojan War, as we see at I.8.224, I.11.007, and so on. See the comments on I.8.227–227 and on I.11.005–016. In later poetry we see a related use of stathmos (plural stathma) with reference to the places where the ships of Achaean heroes are beached on the shores of the Hellespont (“Euripides” Rhesus 43); these places are also called naustathma ‘ship stations’ (Rhesus 136, 244, 448, 582, 591, 602, 673). Among these stathma ‘stations’ lining the coast of the Hellespont is the heroic space occupied by Achilles. [GNC 2016.11.23 via HPC 152–153.]

I.18.590–606

Q&T via MoM 4§5

subject heading(s): Homer’s “signature”; khoros ‘place for singing / dancing’, group of singers /dancers’; Daedalus; Hephaistos; Ariadne

[590] Εν δὲ χορόν ποικίλλει περικλυτός ἀμφιγυμείς, [591] τῷ ἱκελόν οἴον ποτ’ ἐνι Κυνηγὸς εὐρέη[592]
Δαίδαλος ἠκορείς καλλιπολκάμοι Ἀριάδνη. [593] ἔθα μὲν ἤθεοι καὶ παρθένοι ἄλπαρβοι [594] ὅρχευν’
ἀλλήλων ἐπὶ καρπὸ σεμείῳ ἔχοντες. [595] τῶν δ’ αἱ μὲν λεπτὰς ὄλθοι ἔχον, οἱ δὲ χιτῶνας [596] έλατ’
ἐξωντούς, ἡκα τι στίθοντας ἑλαῖο[597] καὶ ρ’ αἱ μὲν καλάς στεφάνας ἔχον, οἱ δὲ μαχαίρας [598] ἔχον
χρυσέας ἃς ἄργυρων τελμάων. [599] οἱ δ’ ἐξ ἵνα μὲν θρέσσεον ἐπιστάμενοι πόδεσσο [600] ρεία μάλ’,
ὡς ὅτι τοι τροχόν ἄρμουν ἐν πάλμῃμ [601] ἐξόμος καιράς περιήγησε, αἱ κε θέραν [602] ἄλλοτε
d’ αὐτὰ θρέσσον ἐπὶ στίχος ἄλληλους. [603] πολλάς δ’ ἕμετεντα χορὸν περισσαθ’ ὀμίλος [604]
tερπόμενοι: μετὰ δὲ σφιν ἐμέλεπτο λεον νοῦς [605] φορμιζόν- δοξῆ δὲ κυβιστιτήρη κατ’ αὐτοῦ [606]
μολῆς ἔξαρχοντος ἐδίνειν κατὰ μέσοςσ.”

[590] The renowned one [= Hephaistos], the one with the two strong arms, pattern-wove [poikillēne] into it [= the Shield of Achilles] a place for singing-and-dancing [khoros], [591] It [= the khoros] was just like the one that, once upon a time in far-ruling Knossos, [592] Daedalus made for Ariadne, the one with the beautiful tresses [plokarōn]. [593] There were young men there, and young women who are courted with gifts of cattle, [594] and they all were dancing [orkheisthai] with each other, holding hands at the wrist.

[595] The girls were wearing delicate dresses, while the boys were clothed in tunics [hit ὁν plural] [596] well woven, gleaming exquisitely, with a touch of olive oil. [597] The girls had beautiful garlands [stephana], while the boys had knives [598] made of gold, hanging from knife-belts made of silver. [599] Half the time they moved fast in a circle, with expert steps, [600] showing the greatest ease, as when a wheel, solidly built, is given a spin by the hands [601] of a seated potter, who is testing it whether it will run well. [602] The other half of the time they moved fast in straight lines, alongside each other. [603] A huge crowd stood around the place of the song-and-dance [khoros] that rouses desire, [604] and they were feeling delight [terpesthai]; in their midst sang-and-danced [melpesthai] a divine singer [aoidos], [605] playing on the special lyre [phorminax]; two special dancers [kubistetēre] among them [606] were swirling as he led [ex-arkein] the singing-and-dancing [molpē] in their midst.

This set of verses is potentially a reference to Homer by Homer, as if he had left behind his own “signature” for the future, marking himself not only as an artisan of words but also as a performer of song writ large. This vision of Homer as a performer predates the later vision of Homer as a reciter of epic verses. In this older vision, Homer sings to the accompaniment of a lyre, and he is not only a soloist: he can lead the singing and dancing performed by a choral group. The word for ‘choral group’ in Greek is khoros, which refers to an ensemble of performers who dance as well as sing—unlike the English borrowing chorus, which refers exclusively to an ensemble of singers. And that is why the word khoros here at I.18.603 refers to the combined singing and dancing that we now see being performed by a festive ensemble of unmarried young women and men. But the same word khoros can also refer to the setting for such singing and dancing, as we see at I.18.590. That is, khoros can refer to the actual place where the singing and dancing happens, and, at I.18.591–592, that place is compared by way of simile to a ritual setting that had been constructed once upon a time in the city of Knossos on the island of Crete. That setting, known in other traditions as the Labyrinth, had been constructed by the prototypical artisan Daedalus for the princess Ariadne, daughter of Minos the king of Knossos. Myth has it that Ariadne was the daughter of Minos, king of Knossos in Crete, who dominated the Aegean Sea as the mighty ruler of the prototypical Minoan Empire; see
Nagy 2015.08.26, 2015.09.03, 2015.09.10, 2015.09.17, 2015.09.24. So, the setting that was figured by the divine artisan Hephaistos for the performance of Homer is being compared at I.18.591–592 to a setting that had been figured by the prototypical human artisan Daedalus for a choral performance that had once taken place in the Bronze Age of Minos and Ariadne. For more on Ariadne, see the comment on O.15.001–009. It is as if the choral setting figured by Daedalus the human were a prefiguration of the choral setting figured by Hephaistos the god. But such an impression is an illusion. The god is of course timeless, and his metalwork is an art that must be synchronized with the art of Homer in refiguring what Hephaistos is figuring. For the sake of enhancing the verbal art that refigures the visual art of Hephaistos, the visual art of Daedalus can be envisioned as a precedent. And this art of Daedalus is a most prestigious precedent for Homeric poetry, going back as it does all the way to the Bronze Age. Moreover, the synchronization of the god’s art with Homeric art makes it possible for the god’s art of metalworking to be versatile enough to be comparable to still other prestigious forms of art. A shining example is the Homeric use of poikillein ‘pattern-weave’ at I.18.590 in referring to the metalwork of Hephaistos in refiguring the choral scene. We see here once again a crossover between the artistic worlds of metalwork and weaving. See the previous comment on I.18.479–480 and the following comment on I.18.590. Such a crossover is also evident in the myths and rituals that were central to the festival of the goddess Hērā at Argos. In terms of local Argive traditions, the pictures that were metalworked by Hephaistos into the original Shield of Achilles were the same as the pictures that were pattern-woven into the patos or ‘robe’ (Hesychius, under nētroc) that was presented to the goddess in the context of choral singing and dancing performed by celebrants at her festival (Callimachus Aetia F 66; scholia for Pindar Olympian 7.152; Euripides Electra 432–477). [[GN 2016.11.23 via PH 352, HC C§74; HPC 290, 299–300, 367–368; MoM 4§§5, 14, 156–157, 159]]

I.18.590

subject heading(s): poikillein ‘pattern-weave’; Shield of Achilles; Shield of Aeneas; metonymy

At I.18.479–480, we saw a crossover between the artistic worlds of metalworking and weaving. The metalwork of Hephaistos in manufacturing the Shield of Achilles was metaphorized as the pattern-weaving of fabric. There is a comparable crossover here at I.18.590, where the word poikillein ‘pattern-weave’ refers to the metalwork performed by the god Hephaistos in making the Shield of Achilles. Here I epitomize my relevant analysis in HC C§15, where I focus on a comparable crossover in the case of Virgil’s Shield of Aeneas in Aeneid 8. I start by focusing on arma ‘armor, arms’, which is the first word at Aeneid 8.616. To be compared is the beginning of the epic, at Aeneid 1.1: arma virumque cano ‘armor I sing, and the man’. When we read Aeneid 8.616, where the narrative refers to the arma ‘armor’ of Aeneas, the description of this hero’s Shield as a shield has not yet happened. So far, only the armor in general is being described. But there is more to it: the word arma ‘armor’ at Aeneid 8.616, by way of cross-referring to the initial use of arma at Aeneid 1.1, stands metonymically for the whole epic, not only for the ‘armor’ of Aeneas. The arma ‘armor’ at the beginning of Aeneid 1.1 can apply at Aeneid 8.616 if we understand the deployment of arma at Aeneid 1.1 as a masterstroke of metonymy. On metonymy, see the Inventory of terms and names. What is being signaled by the arma at Aeneid 8.616 is a description of the Shield that becomes coextensive with the overall narration of the epic that is the Aeneid in its entirety. But when the actual description of the Shield begins at Aeneid 8.625, the wording makes it clear that this description defies any immediate narration: clipei non enarrabile textum ‘the shield, the weaving [textus] of which is beyond all power to narrate’. To describe the cosmic power of the Shield’s meaning will require an overall epic narration, from beginning to end, which cannot be successful until the story is fully told. Such a narration calls for a metaphor to substitute for the narration: instead of a tale that is being told, the narration is reconfigured as a ‘web’ that is being woven, a textus. The story has to be told from beginning to end, just as a web has to be woven from beginning to end. [[GN 2016.10.20 via HC C§16, HPC 291, MoM 4§8]]

I.18.603–604–(605–)606

subject heading(s): ex-arkhein ‘lead off [in performing]’; molpē ‘singing and dancing’

In the Homeric textual tradition, there are traces of a longer version of the narrative here, containing verses 603–604–605–606, to be contrasted with a shorter version containing 603–604–606. The shorter version, which was favored by the editor Aristarchus, elided the “signature” of Homer as analyzed in the comment on I.18.590–606. By contrast, the longer version highlights this “signature.” The shorter version is what was ultimately preserved in the medieval manuscripts of Homer, while the longer version was lost. But this longer version can be reconstructed by way of attestations that we find in a source that dates back to the late second century CE, Athenaeus 5.180c–e and 181a–f. The reconstructed longer version is as follows: ‘[603] A huge crowd stood around the place of the song-and-dance [horos] that rouses desire, [604] and they were feeling
delight [terpesthai]; in their midst sang-and-danced [melpethai] a divine singer [oidos]. |005 playing on the special lyre [phorminx]; two special dancers [kubistētēre] among them |006 were swirling as he led [ex-arkhein] the singing-and-dancing [molpe] in their midst’ |006 πολλὸς δ’ ἰμερόντα χορὸν περίσταθ’ ὀμίλος |004 τερπόμενοι· μετὰ δὲ σφίν ἐμέλπητο θείος ὀιδός |005 φορμίζων· δοιω δὲ κυβιστήρησε κατ’ αὐτοὺς |006 μολὴς ἔξαρχοντος ἐδίδειν χατά μέσους. By contrast, the attested shorter version is as follows: ‘|003 A huge crowd stood around the place of the song-and-dance [khoros] that rouses desire, |004 and they were feeling delight [terpesthai]; in their midst sang-and-danced [melpethai] a divine singer [oidos]. |005 playing on the special lyre [phorminx]; two special dancers [kubistētēre] among them |006 were swirling as they led [ex-arkhein] the singing-and-dancing [molpe] in their midst’ |006 πολλὸς δ’ ἰμερόντα χορὸν περίσταθ’ ὀμίλος |004 τερπόμενοι· μετὰ δὲ σφίν ἐμέλπητο θείος ὀιδός |005 φορμίζων· δοιω δὲ κυβιστήρησε κατ’ αὐτοὺς |006 μολὴς ἔξαρχοντος ἐδίδειν χατά μέσους. The deletions here are in line with the Greek text as I quote it, where we see an omission of the wording μετὰ δὲ σφίν ἐμέλπητο θείος ὀιδός |005 φορμίζων. And my translation here follows the Greek text as I quote it, where we read ἔξαρχοντες and not ἔξαρχοντος. In the longer version, melpethai ‘sing-and-dance’ at 1.18.604 and molpe ‘song-and-dance’ at 1.18.606 refer to the combined activities of singing and dancing by the khoros, and ex-arkhein ‘lead off [in performing]’ at 1.18.606 signals an individuated act of performance that interacts with the collective performance of a khoros. In the shorter version, by contrast, the very presence of such an individuated act in a choral context is elided. In later comments, there will be further analysis of 1.18.603–604–(605–)606 by way of comparing O.04.017–018, O.08.370–379, O.13.024–028. Already now, in any case, this much can be said: a formulaic analysis of both the longer and the shorter versions of 1.18.603–604–(605–)606 indicates that both versions are compatible with Homeric diction, suitting different phases in the evolution of this diction as a formulaic system. In an earlier phase of such an evolution, Homer could be appreciated as a lead singer interacting with choral performance; in a later phase, by contrast, he would be recognized only as a soloist who recites epic verses. [[GN 2016.11.23 via MoM 4§§9–19, 21, 22, 30, 33, 34, 37, 38, 112, 115, 123, 124; also HC 2§74, HPC 93n29, 300nn87–88.]]
subject heading(s): Éos; Ōkeanos

The goddess of dawn, Éos, is pictured here as emerging from the streams of the cosmic river Ōkeanos at sunrise. The dawn emerges just as the sun itself is pictured as emerging from the Ōkeanos at every sunrise after having submerged into it at every sunset. See the comments on I.07.421–423 and I.08.485–486. [[GN 2016.11.28 via GMP 252.]]

subject heading(s): armor of Achilles; Shield of Achilles; selas ‘flash of light’; Will of Zeus; look of Zeus; look of Achilles

The goddess Thetis proceeds to bring for Achilles the armor that was made for him by the god Hephaistos, I.19.003, and she
finds the hero embracing the body of Patroklos and weeping over it, mourning together with all his fellow warriors, the Myrmidons, I.19.004–006; she now makes a formal presentation of the armor to Achilles, I.19.007–013. At the sight of this armor, all the Myrmidons recoil: no one can bear to look at the divine work of art, I.19.014–015—no one, that is, except for Achilles, who now looks directly at the Shield, I.19.015–017, and whose eyes, as he is looking, now give off a terrifying seías ‘flash of light’, I.19.017. The first time we saw this word seías in the iliad was at I.08.076, where it referred to the lightning that comes from Zeus as he thunders from on high on the top of Mount Ida—and this flash of light brings holy terror for the Achaeans, I.08.076–077. See the comment on I.08.066–077. There is a comparable reference at I.17.739 to the seías ‘flash of light’ in a thunderstorm. See the comment on I.17.736–741. Other evocative occurrences of seías ‘flash of light’ include the references at I.08.509 and at I.08.563 to the threatening fires of the Trojans. And we see yet again this powerful word in the context of I.15.599–600: it is said there that Zeus has been waiting to see with his own divine eyes the seías ‘flash of light’, I.15.600, that will appear when the first of the beached Achaeans ships is set on fire. Once this divine vision is visualized, the Will of Zeus will have been fulfilled. Thus this word seías ‘flash of light’ signals the driving force of the whole epic, which is the Will of Zeus. See the comment on I.15.592–602. Another powerful moment where the Will of Zeus manifests itself as a seías ‘flash of light’ happens at I.18.214, where this word refers to the fire that bursts from the head of the enraged Achillēs. See the comment on I.18.214. With regard to I.15.599–600, I also note a coextensiveness between the seías ‘flash of light’ at I.15.600 and the terrifying look of Zeus. I deliberately use the word look here because, unlike other English words for the act of seeing, the verb look and the noun look or looks can refer to a stream of vision not only as it comes into the eye but also as it goes out of it. Zeus can see the terrifying flash of light when the beached ship of Protesilaos is set on fire, but that look of his can transmute into the terrifying flash of light that comes out of his own eye in the act of his casting his thunderbolt. Zeus hurls his thunderbolt by casting his eye on the target: see the comment on I.13.242–244. I see a comparable pattern of coextensiveness here at I.19.015–017: the seías ‘flash of light’ at I.19.017 that comes from the terrifying look of Achillēs as he looks at the shield will translate into a flash of light that comes from the shield itself: only Achillēs dares to look at it, while the other Myrmidons shrink back in terror, avoiding the gaze. [[GN 2016.11.26.]]

I.19.015–017

subject heading(s): Shield of Achillēs; blinding of Homer

This detail about Achillēs as the only hero who can look at the seías ‘flash of light’ streaming from his Shield, I.19.017, is relevant to a myth about the blinding of Homer. I epitomize here from my analysis in Nagy 2016.02.18§§11–12 (via HPC 256-257n13). In the Life of Homer traditions, Vita 6 [see the Inventory of terms and names], there is a myth that explains the blinding of Homer as the result of a mistake he made. He conjured the poetic vision of Achillēs wearing the new set of bronze armor that the divine smith Hephaistos had made for him. Here is my translation of the text [Vita 6.46–50]: ‘Visiting the tomb of Achillēs, he [= Homer] prayed if he could only see the hero just the way the hero was like at the moment of entering the field of battle while wearing his second set of armor. The hero then appeared to him, and, as soon as Homer looked at the hero, he was blinded by the gleam [aμχή] of the armor’ (ἐλάθοντα γὰρ ἐπὶ τὸν Αχιλλέως τάφον εὐξασθαι θεάσασθαι τὸν ἤρωα τοιούτου ὁποίος προῆλθεν ἐπὶ τὴν μάχην τοῖς δευτέροις ὀπλοῖς κεκοσμημένος: ὀφθέντος δ᾽ αὐτῷ τοῦ ἀχιλλέως τυφλωθήσαντι τὸν Ὀμηρον ὑπὸ τῆς τῶν ὀπλῶν αμχῆς). This heroic moment, when Achillēs finally returns to the field of battle, is what we have just read at I.19.014–017, where it is said that the gleam emanating from the new bronze armor of Achillēs was so blindingly bright that none of his fellow warriors could even look directly at it. It is this gleam that blinds Homer himself, who is imagined as the only poet in the whole world who could conjure such a blinding vision in his own poetry. [[GN 2016.11.26.]]

I.19.031

subject heading(s): aρέθφατοι ‘killed in war, killed by Ares’

This epithet, applied generically to warriors killed in war, is relevant to their relationship with Ares as god of war. [[GN 2016.11.26 via BA 294.]]

I.19.044

subject heading(s): ταμιαί ‘dividers of meat’; dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’

This reference made by Achillēs to workers whose work it is to divide meat at feasts is relevant to the special links of this hero
to the concept of dais ‘feast’ in its basic sense of ‘division (of meat)’. [[GN 2016.11.24 via BA 129]]

I.19.047

subject heading(s): therapôn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; therapontē (dua) of Ares

In contexts where the dual therapontē in combination with Arēs ‘of Ares’ is applied to the Achaeans=Danaans=Argives (here, to the pair of Diomedes and Odysseus) as a grouping of warriors, the deeper meaning is more evident than in other contexts. [[GN 2016.08.04 via the comment on I.02.110 via BA 293–295; GMP 48; H24H 6§32]]

I.19.056–073

subject heading(s): mēnis ‘anger’

In this speech of Achilles, he himself refers to his mēnis ‘anger’ by way of the verb apomēnein at I.19.062 ἀπομνικαύρος. This anger has been the main theme of the Iliad ever since I.01.001, and Achilles now expresses regret over the many deaths that resulted for his Achaeans companions. The speech of the hero here contains also other words that are relevant to mēnis: of special interest are meneainein ‘get angry’ at I.19.058 μενειναιευμεν and mimnēskein ‘mentally connect, remind’ at I.19.064 μιμνῄσκειν. Both of these words convey a sense of mental reciprocity in the feelings of anger as experienced by both heroes. See the comments on I.01.207 and I.01.247. See also BA 73 and 312. In the present speech, Achilles goes so far as to regret that he and Agamemnon quarreled over Briseis. If only she had died, he says at I.19.059–060, on the day when he captured her after he conquered the city of Lyrnessos. But Achilles stops short of saying that he regrets having conquered Lyrnessos. [[GN 2016.11.26]]

I.19.058–060

subject heading(s): Briseis the Aeolian; conquest of Lyrnessos by Achilles the Aeolian

In referring to Briseis here, the words of Achilles briefly retell the story about his conquest of Lyrnessos and his capture of Briseis. I refer here again to my three anchor comments about Aeolian women in the Iliad. See also anchor comment at I.02.689–694 on: Aeolian women in the Iliad, part 1; anchor comment at I.09.128–131 and at I.09.270–272 on: Aeolian women in the Iliad, part 2; and anchor comment at I.11.624–627 on: Aeolian women in the Iliad, part 3. [[GN 2016.11.27 via BA 140]]

I.19.074–075

Q&T via BA 92

subject heading(s): unsaying the mēnis ‘anger’; root khar-, in the sense of ‘rejoicing’ in response to the unsaying

The mēnis ‘anger’ of Achilles has now finally been ‘un-said’ by the hero, as expressed by the verb apapo-epeirn, I.19.075. The response of the Achaeans as an aggregate is a collective feeling of joy, as expressed by the root khar- of the verb khairein in the sense of ‘rejoice’. By contrast, while the mēnis ‘anger’ was still ongoing, the Achaeans had collectively felt grief, as expressed by the root akh- of the verb akhnotusθai ‘feel grief’ and of the noun akhos ‘grief’. See especially the comments on I.01.188 and on I.01.509. Such a semantic contrast between collective joy and collective grief is re-enacted in names like Khari-laius and *Akhri-laios. The second of these two names is my reconstruction of an older form of the name Akhilloios: see the comment on I.01.002. (BA 77, 79; also 65). [[GN 2016.11.27 via BA 92]]

I.19.076–138

Q&T via H24H 1§36

subject heading(s): the apology of Agamemnon; aitios ‘responsible’; atē ‘aberration’; Hēraklēs

In seeking to settle his quarrel with Achilles, Agamemnon claims that he was not aitios ‘responsible’, I.19.086. Rather it was atē ‘aberration’ or ‘derangement’ that made him ‘act deranged’, aôsthai, I.19.091. This word aôsthai, which can be translated more literally as ‘veer off-course’, functions here as the verb for the noun atē, which can be translated correspondingly as ‘veering off-course’. In what follows, I can even translate the noun atē simply as ‘mistake’ and the verb aôsthai as ‘making a
mistake’. In the verses that are being covered in this general comment, here are the occurrences of aásthai in the sense of ‘make a mistake’ and functioning as the verb that matches the noun atê: I.19.091, I.19.095, I.19.113, I.19.129, I.19.136, I.19.137. In juridical terms, atê can refer either to a mistake that you made or to the damages that you have to pay to remedy that mistake. The mistake is the cause of the damages, and the damages are the effect of the mistake. And, since atê can refer either to the cause or to the effect of the mistake, it can be personified as a malevolent goddess Atê who presides over the whole process of cause-and-effect. That is why Agamemnon can say that I am not aítios ‘responsible’, but Zeus and his entire divine apparatus are responsible, since they inflicted on me the goddess Atê. In effect, the goddess Atê made me do it. In the verses that are being covered in this general comment, here are the occurrences of atê/Atê: I.19.088, I.19.091, I.19.126, I.19.129, I.19.136. Agamemnon has more to say about the personified Atê: this goddess had once upon a time caused even Zeus himself to make a big mistake. That mistake resulted in the epic traditions about Hêraklês, to be analyzed in the comment on I.19.95–133. But, happily for the gods, Atê no longer lives in Olympus: she was thrown out of there by Zeus for having caused him to make a mistake, and she landed on Earth, where she could now cause trouble only for us humans. We are the ones who make mistakes, while the Olympians no longer make mistakes—now that Atê cannot go back to Olympus. I see at work here a theological fact of life: in the age of myth, gods used to make mistakes, but not today in the age of ritual. [[GN 2016.11.27.]]

I.19.076–082

subject heading(s): public speaking while seated

The following is epitomized from H24H §36. Agamemnon, who is the high king among all the kings of the Achaean warriors participating in the war at Troy, is speaking here in a public assembly of the Achaean forces. Strangely, he speaks to his fellow warriors while remaining in a seated position, I.19.077, saying that it is a good thing to listen to a man who speaks in a standing position and that it is hard for even a good speaker to hupoballein (ὑποβάλλειν) him, I.19.080. So, what does this mean? Achilles had just spoken to the assembly at verses I.19.056–073, and it is made explicit at I.19.055 that he was standing. In the Greek-English dictionary of Liddell, Scott, and Jones (LSJ), hupoballein is interpreted as ‘interrupt’ in the context of I.19.080 here. A related context is the adverb hupoblêdon (ὑποβλέδον) at I.01. 292, where Achilles is responding to Agamemnon in the course of their famous quarrel. Some translate that adverb as ‘interruptingly’ (details in PR 20). Instead, I interpret hupoballein and hupoblêdon as ‘speak in relay [after someone]’ and ‘speaking in relay’ respectively, and I argue that the concept of relay speaking is a characteristic of competitive speech-making (PR 21–22). As Richard Martin has shown, the iliad can dramatize Agamemnon and Achilles in the act of competing with each other as speakers, not only as warriors and leaders, and Achilles is consistently portrayed as the better speaker by far (Martin 1989:117; also 63, 69–70, 98, 113, 117, 119, 133, 202, 219, 223, 228). At I.01.292, where I interpret hupoblêdon as ‘speaking in relay’, Achilles engages in verbal combat with Agamemnon not so much by way of ‘interrupting’ but by picking up the train of thought exactly where his opponent left off—and out-performing him in the process. So, here at I.19.080, Agamemnon backs off from verbal combat with Achilles, using as an excuse the fact that he is wounded: I can’t stand up, and therefore I can’t compete by picking up the train of thought where Achilles left off—and therefore I can’t out-perform him (and perhaps I don’t anymore have the stomach even to try to do so). The successful performer remains standing, and the unsuccessful performer fails to stand up and compete by taking his turn, choosing instead to sit it out. He will still speak to Achilles, but he will speak without offering any more competition (PR 22). [[GN 2016.11.29 via H24H §36.]]

I.19.078

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; therapontes (plural) of Ares

Agamemnon addresses his fellow warriors here as therapontes (plural) of Ares. In contexts where the plural therapontes in combination with Arêos ‘of Ares’ is applied to the Achaean= Danaans=Argives as a grouping of warriors, the deeper meaning is more evident than in other contexts. [[GN 2016.08.04 via the comment on I.02.110 via BA 293–295; GMP 48; H24H 6§32.]]

I.19.083

subject heading(s): Agamemnon declares that he is making an offer

Instead of competing with Achilles as a public speaker, Agamemnon says that all he wants to do now is to make Achilles an offer. [[GN 2016.11.29 via H24H §36.]]
Agamemnon says that he will say a mūthos, and the word occurs twice here: I.19.084, I.19.085. As Richard Martin (1989) has shown, this word as used in Homeric poetry means ‘wording that is spoken for the record’. Thus mūthos “is a speech-act indicating authority, performed at length, usually in public, with a focus on full attention to every detail” (Martin 1989:12). Another example of mūthos occurs at I.19.107, where it is Zeus who says something for the record, ‘wording spoken for the record’. In Homeric terms, any wording that is called a mūthos by the Master Narrator himself in the act of actually quoting the words of the wording will have the prestige of reality—to the extent that the listeners were actually expected to accept the idea that such wording had once upon a time been really spoken exactly as quoted. In short, any mūthos that is quoted in Homeric poetry must be real because it is supposedly spoken for the record by Homer himself. The modern word myth, derived from post-Homeric uses of the word mūthos, has obviously veered from the Homeric meaning (HQ 119-125, 127-133, 152). [[GN 2016.11.29 via H24H 1§36.]]

I.19.085–086

subject heading(s): myth as rhetoric

According to Agamemnon, the myth about Hēraklēs has been used against him by the Achaeans. But he will now try to use the same myth to excuse himself. [[GN 2016.11.29 via H24H 1§36.]]

I.19.086–088

subject heading(s): holding Zeus responsible; aitios ‘responsible’

Agamemnon in claiming that it was not he but rather Zeus together with his divine apparatus that can be held aitios ‘responsible’ for the mistake that resulted in what is narrated in the iliad. Zeus is well aware of such claims, as we will see when we read the comment on O.01.32–34. [[GN 2016.11.29 via PH 242; also 238.]]

I.19.088

subject heading(s): atē ‘aberration’

The word atē, which I have been translating as ‘aberration’ or ‘derangement’ or even ‘mistake’ in the general comment on I.19.076–138, is both a passive experience, as described here by Agamemnon, and an active force that is personified as the goddess Atē, as we see later, starting at verse 91. See again the general comment on I.19.076–138. [[GN 2016.11.29 via H24H 1§36.]]

I.19.091

subject heading(s): Dios thugatēr ‘daughter of Zeus’

The application of the epithet Dios thugatēr ‘daughter of Zeus’ to the personified Atē as goddess confers on her an Olympian status here, despite her impending demotion from Olympus. [[GN 2016.11.29 via GMP 250.]]

I.19.095–133

subject heading(s): the epic narrative about Hēraklēs; atē ‘aberration’; Hērā; kleos ‘glory’ (of poetry); antagonism between immortal and mortal

The epic narrative about Hēraklēs, as retold here by Agamemnon, would never have happened if Zeus had not made a mistake, as indicated by the verb aōsthai ‘make a mistake’ at I.19.095, also at I.19.113. This verb, as I noted in the comment on the overall passage, I.19.076–138, corresponds to the noun atē, which I originally translated there as ‘aberration’. To say it more formally, then: the epic narrative about Hēraklēs resulted from an aberration on the part of Zeus, who was deceived by his divine wife Hērā. Call it what you will, Zeus made a big mistake. He inadvertently allowed it to happen that Hērā, who is
normally the goddess in charge of perfect timing in the cosmos, threw off the timing for the birth of Hēraklēs, so that the hero’s cousin Eurytheus was born earlier and thus became king instead of Hēraklēs. Even though Hēraklēs was by far superior as a hero, he was now by birth forever socially inferior to Eurytheus, and throughout his life he was obliged to undertake seemingly impossible tasks that were imposed on him by his malevolent cousin. But Hēraklēs prevailed in performing these tasks, which became the famed Labors of Hēraklēs, as indicated by the programmatic word aethlai ‘labors’ at I.19.133, and these Labors conferred on Hēraklēs a poetic kleos ‘glory’ that became the epic tradition of Hēraklēs. It is these same epic traditions that Agamemnon is now retelling. This retelling, it must be added, is subversive. In the very act of retelling the epic narrative about Hēraklēs, Agamemnon is inadvertently undermining his own status: just as Eurytheus was socially superior but heroically inferior to Hēraklēs, so also Agamemnon is socially superior but heroically inferior to Achilles. One big question still remains about this whole epic narrative: why is the name of Hēraklēs connected to the name of Hērā, who was the direct cause of the the social inferiority experienced by the hero? Why does the "speaking name" (nomen loquens) of Hēraklēs have the meaning ‘he who has the glory [kleos] of Hērā’? The answer is evident: if it had not been for the intervention of Hērā, Hēraklēs would never have had to perform his Labors, and, if it had not been for these Labors, he would never have won the kleos or poetic ‘glory’ that was his to keep forever. We see here the positive side of myths about antagonism between immortal and mortal, divinity and hero. [[GN 2016.11.19 via H24H 1§35–39; also GMP 12.]]

I.19.098

subject heading(s): biē ‘force, violence, strength’; kleos ‘glory’; biē Hēraklēeiē ‘force of Hēraklēs’

See the comment on I.02.658. [[GN 2016.09.25 via BA 318.]]

I.19.105

subject heading(s): divine deceit

The wording of Zeus hides the fact that Hēraklēs was fathered directly by him. [[GN 2016.11.29 via H24H 1§36.]]

I.19.111

subject heading(s): divine deceit

The wording of Hērā hides the fact that she is speaking about the mother-to-be of Eurytheus, and that this woman is the wife of the hero Sthenelos, who is the son of the hero Perseus, who in turn was fathered directly by Zeus. Later, at I.19.116 and at I.19.123, the identity of this woman is revealed. For now, however, Zeus is being deceived into thinking that Hērā is speaking about the mother-to-be of Hēraklēs. [[GN 2016.11.29 via H24H 1§36.]]

I.19.134–138

subject heading(s): atē ‘aberration’; Agamemnon’s offer of compensation; apoîna ‘compensation’

Having finished at I.19.134 with the retelling of the epic narrative about Hēraklēs, Agamemnon now comes back to his admission that it was atē for him to dishonor Achilles, I.19.136. This word, as we have seen, can be translated as ‘aberration’ or ‘derangement’ or even simply ‘mistake’. In the present context, the noun atē is paired twice with the verb ãēsthai, at both I.19.136 and I.19.137, and I translate this verb here simply as ‘make a mistake’. Agamemnon then declares his readiness to pay apoîna ‘compensation’, I.19.138. This gesture brings us back to I.09.115, where Agamemnon had already admitted his atē ‘aberrations’ in dishonoring Achilles, adding at I.09.120 that he was ready to payapoîna ‘compensation’ for these aberrations. See the comment on I.09.115–120. [[GN 2016.11.29 via PH 242; also 254.]]

I.19.143

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; therapontes (plural) of Ares

Agamemnon here refers to his unnamed attendants as therapontes. [[GN 2016.08.04.]]

I.19.155
subject heading(s): *theoeikelos* ‘looking like a god’

This epithet *theoeikelos* ‘looking like a god’ occurs only two times in the *Iliad*. Besides the occurrence here, l.19.155, we see it also at I.01.131. In both cases, the referent is Achilles. In Song 44 of Sappho, “The Wedding of Hector and Andromache,” the same epithet *theoeikeloi* ‘looking like gods’ occurs in the plural at line 34 (θεοεικέλοι), applying to Hector and Andromache together. The act of comparing humans to divinities is a conventional trope in the ritual context of weddings, and so the application of the epithet *theoeikeloi* ‘looking like gods’ to Hector and Andromache on the happy occasion of their wedding is perfectly understandable. Most commonly, the bride is equated with Aphrodite and the bridegroom, with Ares. See the comment on l.18.492 (also H24H 4§§14–21). But there may be an irony in the application of the same epithet *theoeikelos* ‘looking like a god’ to Achilles in the *Iliad*, since this hero tragically dies before he can ever get married (H24H 5§§98–102, 110–114). Conversely, there may also be an irony in the application of *theoeikeloi* ‘looking like gods’ to Hector and Andromache in Song 44 of Sappho, since the lives of this couple, once happy, will now tragically be ruined by Achilles in his role as the bridegroom that never was: he will kill Hector and make Andromache a widow. This is not to say that the use of the epithet *theoeikeloi* ‘Looking like gods’ in Sappho Song 44.34 evokes the *Iliad* as we have it. The evocation may center on a local epic tradition that was current in the Aeolic song culture of Lesbos. The doomed triad of bride and bridegroom and killer of bridegroom was surely involved in such a local tradition as well. Another sign of such a free-standing iliadic tradition originating from a distinctively Aeolian song culture is the occurrence of the expression *kleos apithiton* ‘imperishable glory [*kleos*]’ in the same song, Sappho 44.5. This expression corresponds exactly to the expression we find in the *Iliad*, *kleos apithiton* ‘imperishable glory [*kleos*]’, as spoken by Achilles himself about his own poetic glory at l.09.413. The two matching expressions, in Song 44 of Sappho and in *Iliad* 9, are cognate with each other both in wording and in metrical positioning. See the comment on l.09.413. So, the doomed triad of bride and bridegroom and killer of bridegroom are not only part of comparable stories about the different kinds of doom that await each one of the three: they are also part of two comparable media, both of which are meant to make eternal the poetic ‘glory’ or *kleos* of all three. One of these two media has just barely survived, in Song 44 of Sappho. The other of the two, by contrast, became the definitive form of epic, as represented by the Homeric *Iliad*. [GN 2016.11.30 via HPC 239; H24H 4§§15–21, 5§§36–48.]

I.179–180

Q&T via BA 129

subject heading(s): dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’; dikē ‘judgment, justice’

The wording of Odysseus here refers to the special relationship of Achilles to the dais ‘feast’, l.1.179, as a ‘division’ of meat that needs to be equitable. See the comment on l.01.468 with regard to expressions like oarós, ōrion: ‘equitable dais’, referring to an ‘equitable’ (adjective isos/iso) division of meat on the occasion of a feast; see also the comments on l.04.048, l.07.319–322, l.08.228–235, l.09.225–228, l.19.044. In the present context, this kind of equitability is drawn into a parallel with the noun dikē in the sense of a ‘judgment’, l.19.180. Such ‘judgment’ likewise needs to be equitable. And for a ‘judgment’ to become so equitable, it can become idealized as absolute ‘justice’. [GN 2016.11.30 via BA 129, 134.]

I.186

subject heading(s): moira ‘portion; fate, destiny’

The use of this word *moira* in the sense of ‘portion; fate, destiny’ is relevant to the need felt by Achilles to get his equitable share. See the comment on l.03.059. [GN 2016.11.30 via BA 129.]

I.199–214

This speech is relevant to the need felt by Achilles to get his equitable share. [GN 2016.11.30 via BA 129.]

I.216–237

This speech is relevant to the need felt by Achilles to get his equitable share. [GN 2016.11.30 via BA 129.]

I.216
subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’; phértatos ‘best’

The addressing of Achilles here as phértatos ‘best’ of the Achaeans is most distinctive. See the comment on I.16.021. [[GN 2016.11.30 via BA 27.]]

I.19.224

subject heading(s): tamiēs ‘divider [of portions]’

The application of this noun to Zeus as the ultimate ‘divider’ of the portions of war is relevant to the need felt by Achilles to get his equitable share. [[GN 2016.11.30 via BA 129, 134–135.]]

I.19.245–246

Q&T via HPC 242

subject heading(s): conquest of Lesbos by Achilles the Aeolian; seven captive Aeolian women from Lesbos; conquest of Lynnessos by Achilles the Aeolian; capture of Briseis by Achilles the Aeolian

The seven Aeolian women that Achilles had captured when he conquered the island of Lesbos—all of whom had originally been allotted to Agamemnon—are now re-allotted to Achilles, along with Briseis as an additional eighth woman. On the seven captive women from Lesbos, see the anchor comment at I.09.128–131 / 270–272. Once again, we see the dominantly Ionic traditions of Homeric poetry showing signs of influence from a dominantly Aeolic tradition as attested in the songs of Sappho and Alcaeus. Of special interest, with regard to such a tradition, is the emphasis here at I.19.245–246 on the expertise of the seven captive women of Lesbos in working on elaborate fabrics. The sub-text of such work, here and elsewhere, is the craft of pattern-weaving. See the comment on I.09.130. [[GN 2016.11.30 via HPC 242, 302.]]

I.19.268–281

subject heading(s): conquest of Lesbos by Achilles the Aeolian; seven captive Aeolian women from Lesbos; conquest of Lynnessos by Achilles the Aeolian; capture of Briseis by Achilles the Aeolian

The property that Agamemnon promised to give as compensation to Achilles is now being delivered for possession. This property to be possessed by Achilles includes not only material objects but also women who are awarded as objectified war-prizes. Achilles the Aeolian will now be awarded possession of the seven captive women whom he had originally captured from Aeolian Lesbos. More than that, he will now get to repossess the captive woman Briseis, whom he had originally captured from Lynnessos and who had originally been awarded to him by the Achaeans—before Agamemnon had forcibly taken Briseis away from him at the beginning of the Iliad, thus causing the monumental dishonor that had given shape to the entire narrative arc of the epic, up to this point. [[GN 2016.11.30.]]

I.19.268–275

subject heading(s): holding Zeus responsible; atē ‘aberration’

In this brief speech by Achilles, he seems to be holding Zeus responsible for causing the atai ‘aberrations’ that have led to this point in the epic. See the comment on I.19.086–088. The context here at I.19.268–275 shows that Achilles has in mind not only the atai ‘aberrations’ of Agamemnon but also his own. On the atē ‘aberration’ of Achilles himself, see the comment on I.09.502–512. See also the comment on I.09.115–120: there too we see atai ‘aberrations’ in the plural. [[GN 2016.12.01 via PH 242, 254.]]

I.19.275

subject heading(s): feasting and fighting

Achilles concedes here that the Achaeans must feast on meat before they can fight again. But Achilles refuses to join them, I.19.304–308. He craves instead to enter the bloody stoma ‘mouth’ of war itself, I.19.312–313. [[GN 2016.12.01 via BA 129, 138.]]
anchor comment on lament by Briseis

subject heading(s): lament; group performance of lament; Sappho as choral personality; antiphonal refrain: ἀπι-στενακχεσθαί
‘wail in response

The wording of Briseis in addressing the corpse of Patroklus is not just a speech expressing her sorrows: morphologically, it is a song of lament. In what follows, I make ten points about this lament:

Point 1. On the morphology of lament, see already the comment on the wording of Andromache at I.06.407–439. It is worth repeating here a caution as expressed in that comment: the laments of characters quoted by epic do not represent the actual meter of lamentation as sung in real laments. The genre of epic regularly uses its own meter, which is the dactylic hexameter, in representing other genres that it quotes, including unmetrical genres (see again Martin 1989:12–42; also pp. 87–88, specifically on lament). But the morphology of laments quoted by epic still follows the rules of lament.

Point 2. In the case of the lament performed by Briseis here at I.19.282–302, the song is a performance by a group of captive women, led in this case by Briseis herself. Such a performance involves not only singing but also dancing, to be visualized as a stylized form of swaying accompanied by gestures such as beating the chest. See the comment on I.18.051–060, where we see Thetis and her Nereid sisters performing a song of lament for Achilles as if he were dead already. To be noted is the reference there at I.18.050–051 to the gesture of beating the chest. Such a group performance by Thetis and the other Nereids is choral, in the sense that the Greek word ἱχόρος can be defined as ‘a group of singers/dancers’: see the comment at I.18.590–606. And the same description applies to the group performance by Briseis and the captive women here at I.19.282–302: once again, the performance is choral.

Point 3. The occasion for a choral performance can be sad, as in the case of the laments led by Thetis and Briseis, or it can be happy: see the comment on I.18.590–606, where we see a description of a merry celebration at the time of a harvest.

Point 4. Viewed in such a larger context, the lament of Briseis can be seen as a masterpiece of verbal artistry. This song of lament starts as if it were a wedding song, not a lament, since Briseis is envisioned at I.19.282 as an eroticized bride who matches the goddess Aphrodite herself in beauty and gracefulness. On the convention of comparing the bride to a goddess, especially to Aphrodite, see the comments on I.18.492 and I.19.155. But as soon as Briseis sees the corpse of Patroklus, all cut up by the sharp bronze, I.19.283, happy thoughts about weddings now turn to sad thoughts about funerals. She instantly starts weeping bitterly and singing her song of lament.

Point 5. The vision of Patroklus all cut up by the sharp bronze leads to another vision for Briseis. In the back of her mind is another vision, stored in her memory. It is a vision of the husband she once had, Mynes. Just as she now sees the corpse of Patroklus, all cut up by the sharp bronze, I.19.283, she remembers seeing the corpse of her husband Mynes, all cut up by the sharp bronze, I.19.292. But the sad image of Mynes, who had once been the bridegroom of Briseis, brings back happy memories as she thinks of her own wedding—and of songs sung at that wedding. Such thoughts now evoke the sad image of Achilles, that bridegroom-to-be who will not live long enough ever to become a bridegroom—and who has killed the happy thoughts of Briseis about a bridegroom in her own past. It was Achilles, Briseis keenly remembers, who had killed her lover Mynes and conquered the city of Lynnessos, I.19.295–296, but she also remembers that Patroklus would not let her lament for Mynes, saying that Achilles would become her new lover, making her a bride of his own, I.19.297–299.

Point 6. So, the theme of a wedding song returns in this lament of Briseis, but there is a sad irony to it
all, since there will never be any future wedding for the doomed bridegroom. There will be no marriage for Achilles. All that Achilles has done for Briseis is to kill off her own marriage to Mynes, and meanwhile the death of the kind and gentle Patroklos has cut short that hero’s own intermediacy in trying to arrange a marriage for Briseis and Achilles.

Point 7. In her crying and singing, singing and crying, Briseis performs as a prima donna of lament. She is a distinctly choral personality, analogous to the personality of Sappho herself in the choral songs attributed to that Aeolian prima donna of a later era. [On Sappho as a choral personality, see PH 370, with reference to Calame 1977:367–377; also 126–127.]

Point 8. Meanwhile, the choral group of lamenting women who are likewise captives is singing and swaying in response to the lead song of Briseis, I.19.301–302. Here I epitomize from some relevant remarks in Nagy 2010a:23–24. The group is shown in the act of responding to the lament of Briseis by continuing it with their own lament, in antiphonal performance, at I.19.301: ‘So she [= Briseis] spoke, and the women wailed in response’ (ὡς ἔφατο κλαίουσιν, ἐπὶ δὲ στενάχοντο γυναῖκες). The verb ἐπί – στενάκαθεθαι, which I translate here as ‘wail in response’, is the conventional way for epic to signal an antiphonal performance in lamentation. See the anchor comment at I.24.720–776 on laments at Hector’s funeral.

Point 9. In singing her song of lament, Briseis as lead singer touches on her feelings as a captive woman who has become the war prize of Achilles—and who hopes to become his war bride. But she also touches on the projected feelings of the ensemble of captive women who respond to her lament in antiphonal song. These women too are war prizes, and they must therefore share in some ways the sorrows felt by the lead singer as she sings her lament. But the lead singer laments primarily the death of Patroklos and only secondarily her own misfortunes, while the ensemble of women who respond in antiphonal song are lamenting primarily their own misfortunes and only secondarily the death of Patroklos. Sorrow over the death of Patroklos seems to be the primary concern of Briseis—to the extent that her lament projects the sorrow of Achilles, which is a driving theme in the plot of the epic. By contrast, the sorrow expressed by the ensemble of captive women over their own misfortunes seems to be a primary concern only for them. Or is it? In what follows at Point 10, I argue that the overall lament will communalize the sorrow expressed by the epic narrative.

Point 10. In the lament of Briseis, the sorrow of the captive women is projected as the primary sorrow of Briseis herself over her own misfortunes, which had been caused by the deaths of her husband and the rest of her family at the hands of Achilles. Briseis shows that she remembers that old sorrow, since her wording indicates that she had wanted to lament her dead husband in the same way that she now laments the dead Patroklos. That death in her past is relevant to the death of Patroklos in the present. And the love of Briseis for her husband and the rest of her family is relevant to her love for Patroklos as a stand-in for Achilles. There is a diversity of emotions here. And the antiphonal exchange of laments between the captive women and their lead singer leads to a communalization of these emotions. The example of Briseis, then, supports the argument that lament is a communalizing experience. It leads here to a communalization of diverse emotions. [[GN 2016.12.01 via HPC 243–245, 248–249]]

I.19.284

subject heading(s): lament by an unnamed woman in the Odyssey

The wording here at I.19.284 in the lament by Briseis over Patroklos is comparable to the wording about a lament by an unnamed woman at O.08.527. See Nagy 2015.06.17. [[GN 2016.12.01 via HPC 249.]]

I.19.302

subject heading(s): prophase ‘pretext’

Laments performed by women can focus on personal as well as communal sorrows. See the anchor comment on I.19.282–

subject heading(s): feasting and fighting

See the comment on I.19.275. [[GN 2016.12.01 via BA 136.]]

I.19.322–323

subject heading(s): (apo-)phthinesthai ‘wilt, perish’; Phthiē (homeland of Achilles)

The name Phthiē here at I.19.323 is associated with the verb phthinesthai ‘wilt, perish’ at I.19.322. See also the comment on I.01.155 and I.19.329–330, 337. [[GN 2016.12.01 via BA 185.]]

I.19.314–338

subject heading(s): lament; lament by Achilles

After the epic is done with quoting, as it were, the lament of Briseis for Patroklos, I.19.282–302, it proceeds to quote the lament of Achilles himself for his best friend, I.19.314–338; like Briseis, Achilles too is represented as actually singing the lament. [[GN 2016.12.01.]]

I.19.327

subject heading(s): Pyrrhos/Neoptolemos as Purēs

In the textual transmission of this verse, there is a trace of a variant form for the name of Pyrrhos/Neoptolemos, son of Achilles: it is Purēs. [[GN 2016.12.01 via BA 119.]]

I.19.329–330, 337

subject heading(s): (apo-)phthinesthai ‘wilt, perish’; Phthiē (homeland of Achilles)

The name Phthiē here at I.19.330 is associated with the verb (apo-)phthinesthai ‘wilt, perish’ at I.19.329 and at I.19.337. See also the comments on I.01.155 and I.19.322–323. [[GN 2016.12.01 via BA 185.]]

I.19.368–391

subject heading(s): armor of Achilles

Achilles finally puts on the armor that had been made for him by the divine artisan Hephaistos. What dominates the visualization of this armor is the Shield. [[GN 2016.12.01.]]

I.19.373–380

subject heading(s): Shield of Achilles; selas ‘flash of light’; Hellespont; pontos ‘crossing [of the sea]’; lighthouse; statthmos ‘station’; tomb of Achilles

As Achilles lifts the mighty Shield, there is a selas ‘flash of light’ that streams from its bright surface, I.19.374, which is compared to the radiant light that streams from the moon; then this same selas ‘flash of light’ streaming from the surface of the Shield at I.19.374 is also compared to a selas ‘flash of light’ streaming from a fire that sends forth its light from a lighthouse, I.19.375. This saving light, with its promise of salvation for sailors lost at sea who are longing to be reunited with their loved ones at home, I.19.375, I.19.377–378, streams from a fire that is burning at a remote place described here as a solitary statthmos ‘station’ situated in the heights overlooking the dangerous seas below, I.19.376–377. By way of ring-composition, the description now returns, I.19.379, to the picturing of the selas ‘flash of light’ that is streaming from the Shield. This flash of light is aptly compared here to the moon, not to the sun, since it is nighttime, not daytime: the sailors who are lost at sea are literally in the dark, desperately looking for a light to orient them. And the source of the light as a blazing
fire is most appropriate not only from a practical point of view, since a strong fire is needed for sending from the lighthouse a light strong enough to be spotted in the darkness from far away at sea, but also from a symbolic point of view, since the burning looks that emanate from the angry eyes of Achilles are compared at an earlier point to a selas ‘flash of light’ that emanates from a blazing fire, I.19.366 (μπρός στάθμος). On the angry looks of Achilles as he streams fire from his eyes and lights up the surface of his Shield, see the comment on I.19.003–017. As for the lighthouse that sends forth the light of salvation to sailors lost at sea, it is visualized as a solitary statmos ‘station’ situated on the heights overlooking the sea, I.19.376–377. Such a statmos, as I indicate in the comment on I.18.587–589, can be visualized more precisely as a herdsman’s shelter that looms over the shores of the Hellespont, where the ship of Achilles is beached. This shelter is actually the tomb of Achilles, located on a high promontory that reaches into the Hellespont. See the anchor comment at I.23.125–126 on the tomb of Achilles, part 1, and the anchor comment at I.23.245–248...256–257 on the tomb of Achilles, part 2; also to be noted is the anchor comment at O.24.076–084 on the tomb of Achilles, part 3, posted in 2017.01.03. Here at I.19.373–380, the gleam from the bronze surface of the Shield is being compared to the light that streams from the blazing fire of a lighthouse marking the tomb of Achilles, and this comparison can be seen as a metaphor for the overwhelmingly radiant prestige of the Bronze Age. [[GN 2016.12.01 via HPC 151–152, 297–298, 366–367; also BA 338–340, 342; GMP 220]]

I.19.404–418

subject heading(s): Xanthos, immortal horse of Achilles; Erīnues ‘Furies’

Xanthos, immortal horse of Achilles, is telling the hero a prophecy: Achilles will be killed by an unnamed hero who will be helped by an unnamed god. Before the fate of Achilles is fully revealed, however, Erīnues ‘Furies’ block the divine horse from revealing any further details about the death of Achilles. Correspondingly, the Master Narrator of the Homeric iliad is blocking—for now—the revelation of any further details. [[GN 2016.12.01 via BA 104, 144, 209–210, 327.]]

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Iliad Rhapsody 20

2016.12.09 / enhanced 2018.09.20

By now Achilles has a new set of armor, and he is ready to fight the Trojans. But his first major opponent seems to be a distraction. At least, our initial impression may lead us to think that there is a distraction going on here. The first major opponent of Achilles in iliad 20 is Aeneas, hero of epic traditions that eventually became absorbed into the Aeneid of Virgil. Is this hero, we may ask, a truly worthy opponent of Achilles? Are the epic traditions that figure this son of Aphrodite / Venus truly worthy of the epic that is the Homeric iliad? Once we examine more closely the oldest Greek epic traditions of Aeneas, it will become clear that this hero is indeed a most important opponent of Achilles, in that he represents ancient Greek epic traditions that are different from and antithetical to the epic tradition that prevailed in the Homeric iliad as we know it. Not only does Aeneas challenge Achilles: even the epic traditions that figure Aeneas will challenge the epic traditions that figure Achilles. To say it another way, Aeneas represents a proto-Aeneid that challenges the proto–iliad of Achilles. What makes Aeneas and his Aeneid—or, better, Aeneids—such a formidable challenge to Achilles is the enormous political prestige of the epic tradition that backs up Aeneas. By virtue of being the son of Aphrodite/Venus, Aeneas possesses a genealogical and dynastic charisma that threatens to overshadow the purely epic charisma of his Iliadic opponent Achilles. [[GN 2016.12.09.]]
I.20.001–074

subject heading(s): council of divinities; Olympian divinities; local divinities; Will of Zeus; Xanthos; Scamander; language of immortals vs. language of mortals

Zeus convenes a council of divinities. Many gods and goddesses are invited, and they all assemble, I.20.005–006. Included are all kinds of local divinities who preside over locales of their own, such as gods of various rivers and goddesses of various wildlands, I.20.007–009. A detail is ostentatiously added here: all the river gods actually attend the council—with the notable exception of Ókeanos, I.20.007. This council of the divinities, held on Mount Olympus, is different from other such councils, which normally exclude local divinities and include only those gods and goddesses who are imagined as living on Mount Olympus together with Zeus. What, then is this special occasion? Or, to put it in terms of the question that Poseidon asks of Zeus, I.20.015, what is the Will of Zeus here? In response, Zeus tells Poseidon that, yes, the Will of Zeus is now at work, I.20.020, and he proceeds to say what he wants to happen: while Zeus stays behind on Mount Olympus, the other divinities may now proceed to the battleground of the Trojan War, and they will be allowed to give their individual help to whichever side they favor, Trojan or Achaeans, I.20.021–030. Accordingly, the divinities now travel to the battlefield, I.20.31–40, and they are listed as follows: Hērā, Athena, Poseidon, Hermes, Hephaistos, Ares, Apollo, Artemis, Leto, Xanthos, and Aphrodite. Included in this list, almost surreptitiously, is the local river god Xanthos, I.20.40. On the battlefield, the divinities line up in opposition to each other, and the matches that are highlighted are: Poseidon and Apollo at I.20.057–068, Ares and Athena at I.20.069 (also already at I.20.047–052), Hērā and Artemis at I.20.70–71, Leto and Hermes at I.20.072, Hephaistos and Xanthos at I.20.073–074. Missing, so far, from any further matchings is Aphrodite. Later, at I.21.415–433, we will see that this goddess does in fact get involved in the upcoming conflict of divinities, but not as a combatant in her own right. For the moment, what is most striking about this list of matchings is the prominence given to the river god Xanthos at I.20.073–074. And, as we learn here at I.20.074, the immortals call this river god Xanthos, but mortals call him Skamandros. See also the comment on I.02.811–815. This name Skamandros, latinized as Scamander, refers to the most important river in the region of Troy. On this river, see already the comments on I.08.220–227 and I.11.497–500. As we will see later, in the comment on I.21.001–021, the role of Scamander as the local river god of the Trojans is vitally important for the plot of Iliad 21. [IGN 2016.12.16.]

I.20.089–102

subject heading(s): epic deeds of Achilles before the time dramatized in the Iliad; conquest of Pedasos by Achilles the Aeolian; conquest of Lynessos by Achilles the Aeolian; Aeneas the Ionian
Aeneas tells about a past encounter with Achilles in an epic story that is situated outside the time-frame of the Iliad, l.20.089–102. At a later point, l.20.187–194, the story will be supplemented by what Achilles himself says about such an encounter. As we will see, what Achilles says at that later point reflects a different though related version of the same story. In the story as told by Aeneas here at l.20.089–102, he was pasturing his cattle in the highlands of the mountain range known simply as Mount Ida, and Achilles evidently caught him off guard in a cattle-raid, l.20.090–091. Aeneas, as he was being pursued by Achilles, fled from the highlands of Mount Ida all the way down to the coastalland in the south. The general direction of the flight of Aeneas is indicated by a detail about the pursuit by Achilles. After he chased Aeneas down from the heights of Mount Ida, Achilles conquered the cities of Pedasos and Lynessos, l.20.092. As we know from other contexts, l.06.034–035 and l.21.086–087, Pedasos was a city situated near the river Satnioeis, and we know from Strabo 13.1.50 C605 that this river flowed into the Gulf of Adramyteion at the coastline situated to the southwest of Mount Ida. As for Lynessos, it was situated further off to the east along the coastline, as we know from Strabo 13.1.60 C611. Whereas Lynessos was inhabited by Kilikes, as noted in the anchor comment at l.02.689–693 with reference to Strabo 13.1.7 CS86, Pedasos was inhabited by Leleges, as we read at l.21.086–087. The story as told by Aeneas explains how he succeeded in escaping from Achilles: at l.20.092–093, Aeneas boasts that he received the divine aid of Zeus himself, who gave to him the superhuman speed that he needed to run away from that most prodigious of all runners, Achilles. As for the story as told by Achilles at l.20.187–194, we will see in the comment on those verses that there are added details about the escape of Aeneas from Achilles, and that some of those details do not mesh with the version of the story as told by Aeneas. [[GN 2016.12.04 via BA 140, 270.]]


subject heading(s): speech of Achilles to Aeneas

In this speech, Achilles speaks to Aeneas from the standpoint of an epic tradition that glorifies primarily Achilles. On the other hand, in the corresponding speech of Aeneas to Achilles, l.20.200–258, we will see that Aeneas speaks to Achilles from the standpoint of a different though related epic tradition. This different traditions, as we will see, glorifies primarily Aeneas himself. [[GN 2016.12.06.]]

I.20.187–194

subject heading(s): epic deeds of Achilles before the time dramatized in the Iliad; conquest of Pedasos by Achilles the Aeolian; conquest of Lynessos by Achilles the Aeolian; Aeneas the Ioni

Achilles tells about a past encounter with Aeneas in an epic story that is situated outside the time-frame of the Iliad, l.20.187–194. The story supplements what Aeneas says at l.20.089–098 about such an encounter, where that hero tells a different though related version of the same story. The differences are highlighted in the story as told by Achilles here at l.20.187–194, where we find additional details about the escape of Aeneas from Achilles. According to this version of the story, Aeneas seems to have escaped from Achilles not once but twice: after Aeneas ran down from the highlands of Mount Ida and reached the coastalland without getting caught by Achilles, he found refuge in the city of Lynessos, which Achilles then destroyed—but without catching him, since Aeneas somehow escaped, l.20.190–194. In this narrative, Achilles knows that it must have been the gods who made it possible for Aeneas to escape, but he does not know the exact identity of the god who actually rescued that hero: the wording of Achilles is ostentatiously vague when he refers at l.20.194 to the action of ‘Zeus and other gods’ in rescuing Aeneas from the besieged city of Lynessos before Achilles destroyed it. This vagueness about the interference of the gods is relevant to what will happen in the upcoming encounter between Aeneas and Achilles. As we will see in the comment on l.20.290–352, Achilles will be literally kept in the dark about the identity of the god who will rescue Aeneas from being killed when the two heroes finally engage in mortal combat. That said, I return to my focus on the second escape of Aeneas from Lynessos—following his first escape when he ran down to that city from the highlands of Mount Ida. The details we have seen about the second escape explain why only Lynessos is mentioned in the version of the story as told by Achilles, unlike the version as told by Aeneas, where both Pedasos and Lynessos are mentioned. The second escape of Aeneas, from a besieged city, could only have happened at one of the two cities of Pedasos and Lynessos, which were both ultimately destroyed by Achilles. Aeneas could not have been present in two besieged cities at the same time. I propose, then, that Pedasos and Lynessos were alternative places of refuge for Aeneas in alternative versions of his story, just as these same two cities had been alternative places of residence for Briseis in alternative versions of her own story, as I noted in the comment on l.16.057. In yet another story, there was yet another city from which Aeneas escaped before it was
completely destroyed. The dramatic time of this other story, unlike the stories we have just considered about the cities of Pedasos and Lynessos, comes after rather than before the dramatic time of the Iliad. This other story is about the city of Troy itself, and, in this story as well, Aeneas managed to escape before the city was completely destroyed. The story was told in an Ionian epic that belonged to the epic Cycle, and the name of this epic was the Iliou Persis ‘Destroy of Ilion’, attributed to Arctinus of Miletus, Proclus summary p. 107.24–26 ed. Allen 1912. On the epic Cycle, see the Inventory of terms and names. [[GN 2016.12.05 via BA 140, 270]]

I.20.189

subject heading(s): ‘swift-footed Achilles’

In the wording of Achilles here, his boast about his swift-footedness is a paraphrase, as it were, of the epithets that describe him as swift-footed. There are over 30 occurrences of the epithet podas ōkus ‘swift-footed’ and over 20 occurrences of podōkēs ‘swift-footed’. [[GN 2016.12.06 via BA 328]]

I.20.200–258

subject heading(s): counter-speech of Aeneas to Achilles; epea ‘words; words of poetry’; neikos ‘quarrel’; neikein ‘quarrel with’

In this speech, Aeneas speaks to Achilles from the standpoint of an epic tradition that glorifies primarily Aeneas, not Achilles. At I.20.200, Aeneas uses the word epea ‘words’ in referring negatively to the earlier speech of Achilles, I.20.178–198, where Achilles had spoken from the standpoint of an epic tradition that glorified primarily Achilles. This word epea—pronounced as epē in prose—normally means simply ‘words’ when it is used inside of epic diction, but it can also mean ‘words of poetry’ when it is used outside of such diction in contexts referring to poetry, especially to epic poetry. In prose, this kind of usage leads to the explicit meaning of epē as ‘epic poetry’. And, exceptionally, such a meaning of epē can even occur within the diction of epic poetry itself. That is what seems to be happening in the context of I.20.200, where epea refers to the words of Achilles as if they were the ‘poetic words’ of epic—that is, as if these words were the equivalent of epic itself. Do not try to intimidate me, Aeneas says to Achilles at I.20.200–201, by telling epea ‘words’ about past epic events like our mutual encounter in the highlands of Mount Ida and beyond. Yes, some epics will glorify you, but there are other epics that will glorify me instead. See further in the comment below on I.20.248–250. By implication, Aeneas is saying here that he has access to a different though related version of epic events, and that such a version will glorify him at the expense of Achilles.

In fact, the entire speech of Aeneas at I.20.200–258 is a glorification of this hero by way of an epic tradition that is different from though related to the tradition that glorifies Achilles. This different tradition, as Aeneas goes on to demonstrate, glorifies primarily Aeneas himself. Meanwhile, the poetic implications of the word epea as ‘epic’ now become more explicit at I.20.203–205. Aeneas says here that he and Achilles know stories about each other not because they have been eyewitnesses to these stories, I.20.205, but because they both have heard, as other listeners have also heard, the epea that are the stories, and these epea are pro-kluta ‘glorious’, I.20.204. In this context, then, the word epea comes close to meaning ‘epics’, since the idea of pro-kluta as poetically ‘glorious’ is linked with the etymology of this adjective as ‘prominently heard’, just as the idea of kleos as a poetic kind of ‘glory’ is linked with the etymology of this noun as ‘the thing that is heard’. See the comment on I.02.484–487. Also relevant to the sense of epea as ‘words of poetry’ is the mutual negativity of the rivalry that is ongoing here between the two different epic traditions about Aeneas and Achilles. For example, there is an insulting reference that Aeneas makes at I.20.211 to the epea as recounted by Achilles about Aeneas. Those epea or ‘words of poetry’, as a veritable ‘epic’ told by Achilles, were certainly negative about Aeneas, just as Aeneas is now speaking negatively about Achilles and about that hero’s role in those same epea. Such mutual negativity is expressed by way of using words of blame poetry as contained within the epic, even though epic sees itself as a form of poetry that engages primarily in words of praise. The negativity of blame poetry is actually signaled in the words of Aeneas at I.20.251, who uses the noun neikea, plural of neikos ‘quarrel’, in referring to the mutual negativity that the two heroes express in their speeches to and about each other. See further in the comment on I.20.244–256. [[GN 2016.12.06 via BA 270–272, 274; GMP 27]]

I.20.209

subject heading(s): eukhesthai ‘declare’

In boasting about his own genealogy, the hero Aeneas uses the verbeukhesthai ‘declare’ here at I.20.209, thus making a
most definitive epic statement of identity. When the genealogy is completed at I.20.241, the verb eukthesthai ‘declare’ recurs, indicating the simultaneous completion of the boast. For Aeneas, an all-important aspect of his lengthy genealogy is his most immediate genetic link: as this hero boasts by way of that most solemn word eukthesthai ‘declare’ here at I.20.209, he is the son of Aphrodite herself. And, from this goddess of sexuality, who is the embodiment of eternal regeneration, Aeneas has inherited what could best be described as eternal genes, as it were. Such an arresting idea is at the same time a political ideology, since any dynasty that can claim Aeneas as ancestor is thereby destined to be regenerated, successor after successor, for all eternity. There is evidence, as noted by Strabo 13.1.53 C608, for the existence of dynastic powers that did in fact claim Aeneas as their ancestor. In the end, though, only one of these powers noted by Strabo actually succeeded in making permanent such a claim. That power was Rome, and, retrospectively, the surviving record that made such a claim permanent was of course the Aeneid of Virgil, which tells how Aeneas escaped from Troy before it was completely destroyed and how he traveled all the way to Italy, where he became the originator of the world power that became Rome. [[GN 2016.12.08 via BA 269.]]

I.20.209

anchor comment on Aeneas the Ionian, part 1

So, Aeneas in the Homeric Iliad can boast about the eternal genes that make him the ideal ancestor of any dynasty that claims to be descended from him. And that is how, from the hindsight of world history, Rome could claim its destiny as the Eternal City. I have already noted that Strabo (13.1.53 C608), after listing various dynasties in the past that had been vying with each other for possession of Aeneas as their ancestor, concludes by acknowledging Rome as the world power that ultimately won out in claiming Aeneas as its founder. And Virgil’s Aeneid can go down in history as a most powerful statement of such a claim. But what about the era when the Homeric Iliad took shape? Does this epic make a claim that is comparable to what we see in the Aeneid of Virgil? Such questions need to be consolidated and asked retrospectively, not just prospectively, since the historically earlier cases where dynasties claimed descent from Aeneas are not nearly as well attested as is the case of Rome. So, the consolidated question is this: from the standpoint of the Iliad as we have it, was there any existing political power that could have claimed ownership, as it were, of Aeneas? The answer is simple: there did exist some grouping of Ionians that had such power, and, for them, Aeneas was an Ionian. But the details, as we will see in what follows, are complicated. And, to complicate things further, there were two phases of Ionian ownership, which I summarize here in the form of two points to be made from the start.

Point 1. [Epitomized from HPC 196–197.] The first of two phases for an Ionian ownership of Aeneas can be traced back to the seventh century BCE or perhaps even earlier. It was a time when the Ionians of the Ionian Dodecapolis in central Asia Minor, dominated by the Ionian city of Miletus, were continuing to expand their influence in northern Asia Minor. (For more on the Ionian Dodecapolis, see the Inventory of terms and names.) One sign of such expansionism was the success of these Ionians in making inroads into the region of ancient Troy in northern Asia Minor and establishing there a new Troy, as it were. Such success is reflected in the Ionian epic tradition. The primary example is the Ionian epic of the Iliou Persis, attributed to Arctinus of Miletus. Here I offer a brief review of the relevant parts of this epic (Proclus summary p. 107.24–26 ed. Allen 1912):

After Troy was completely destroyed by the Achaeans, a handful of prominent survivors sought to find alternative places to live. The most prominent of these survivors of Troy’s total destruction was the hero Aeneas; foreseeing the destruction that was about to happen, he withdrew from the doomed city and moved to a palace he established in the highlands of Mount Ida.

This version of the Aeneas story matches not only the plot of the epic Iliou Persis. It matches also the local mythology of the city of Sccephis, located in the region of Mount Ida. As we learn from Strabo (13.1.53 C607), Demetrius of Sccephis claimed explicitly that the basileion ‘royal palace’ of Aeneas was in the city of Sccephis. The idea of a royal city founded by Aeneas in the region of Mount Ida reflects the political interests of Ionians in general, not only of Sccephis in particular. To make this point, I start by focusing on two details reported by Demetrius of Sccephis by way of Strabo (13.1.52 C607):
A. The city of Scepsis, after being founded by Aeneas, was later ruled jointly by Ascanius (Askanios) son of Aeneas and Scamandrius (Skamandrios) son of Hector.

B. The population of Scepsis was augmented at a later period by immigrants from the Ionian city of Miletus.

Scepsis had a special meaning for Ionians not only because this city was supposedly the site of the palace of the hero Aeneas but also because the ancient site of Troy was supposedly located within its territory, in the highlands of Mount Ida. Here was the kôme ‘village’ of the Illeis ‘people of Ilion’, a site that Demetrius of Scepsis claimed was the real ancient Troy, while the Aeolian site of Ilion, some 30 stadium-lengths to the northwest, was supposedly a false Troy (Strabo 13.1.35–36 C597–598; also 13.1.25 C593). So, the Trojan War, according to this Ionian version, supposedly happened in territory that Ionians once claimed as their own. In this version, ancient Troy was totally destroyed and then later reoccupied as a mere village, while Aeneas established at Scepsis a new city of Troy for the surviving Trojans. And the relocation of Aeneas to Scepsis at a time that anticipated the total destruction of ancient Troy now made it possible for the new Troy that was Scepsis to become the legitimate heir to the Trojan heritage—all within the framework of Ionian territory. In terms of this particular Ionian version of the Trojan War, everything happened within the Ionian territory of Scepsis.

In contrast to this version of the Trojan War, which suited the interests of the Ionians, the Aeolians made a rival claim: that Troy was in fact not totally destroyed and that some of its population survived to rebuild the old city, originally called either Troy or Ilion, as the New Ilion, or, more simply, Ilion. See the anchor comment at I.09.328–333 about efforts of Aeolians to possess ancient Troy and its environs in the historical period. This rival version of the Aeolians was actually promoted by the historian Hellanicus of Lesbos, whose publications can be dated as far back as 406 BCE (scholia for Aristophanes Frogs 694). Hellanicus in his Tröika (FGH 4 F 25b), as mediated by Strabo (13.1.42 C602), says that the city of New Ilion was in fact the same place as the old Ilion, that is, ancient Troy. Strabo (again, 13.1.42 C602) remarks that this claim of Hellanicus—who was a native of Aeolian Lesbos—reflects the historian’s partiality toward the people of the Aeolian city of New Ilion. Modern archaeology, however, has proved that the claim of the Aeolians as represented by Hellanicus of Lesbos was basically right and that the rival claim of the Ionians as later represented by Demetrius of Scepsis was wrong. There is in fact no historical or archaeological support for the claim that the old Ilion, ancient Troy, was located in the Ionian territory of Scepsis. Here I return to the Ionian version as restated by Demetrius and then by Strabo (13.1.35–36 C597–598; also 13.1.25 C593). According to this version, as we saw, the site of the old Ilion was the kôme ‘village’ of the Illeis ‘people of Ilion’ in the territory of Scepsis, some thirty stadium-lengths away from New Ilion. Despite the fact, however, that Demetrius thinks of this ‘village’ as the site of ancient Troy, he concedes (via Strabo 13.1.38 C599) that he could see absolutely no trace of any epic ruins there.

Point 2. [Epitomized, radically, from HPC 143–146.] The second of two phases for an Ionian ownership of Aeneas can be traced back to an era that starts, by my estimation, somewhere around the late seventh century BCE. The city of Athens, which was emerging as a primary representative of Ionian identity at that time, was making its own inroads into the region of ancient Troy, eventually establishing there a new Troy of its own by occupying and reconfiguring the city of Sigeion, which had been formerly an Aeolian stronghold. The formerly Aeolian identity of Sigeion is noted by Strabo 13.1.25 C593. As for the reconfigured Ionian identity of Sigeion as a new Troy, I refer again to Points 6 and 8 in the anchor comment at I.09.328–333. This reconfigured city of Sigeion as a new Troy became a rival of another new Troy, Ilion, which had been built by the Aeolians on the foundations of what remained of the old Troy, as noted at Points 1–5 in the same anchor comment at I.09.328–333. See also anchor comment at I.20.302–308 on: Aeneas the Ionian, part 2; and anchor comment at I.20.302–308 on: Aeneas the Aeolian. [[GN 2016.12.07 via BA 269; also HPC 196–197 and 143–146, in that order]]
I.20.213–214

subject heading(s): eidēnai ‘know’

The use of the verb eidēnai ‘know’ in both verses here at I.20.213–214 is relevant to the poetics of knowing something by way of hearing the authoritative testimony of epic. There is a reference to such poetics already earlier at I.20.203, where eidēnai ‘know’ refers to knowing the facts of genealogy by way of hearing geneaepea as ‘epic’, described at I.20.204. On this point, see the general comment on the speech of Aeneas at I.20.200–258. And the basic fact about that entire speech of Aeneas is a fact of genealogy. As we saw in the comment on I.20.209, Aeneas is making a most solemn heroic boast, signaled by the word eukhēsthai ‘claim’, that he is the son of the goddess Aphrodite herself. [[GN 2016.12.07 via BA 271.]]

I.20.215–219

subject heading(s): Erikkhonios

Erikkhonios, son of Dardanos, is figured here at I.20.215–219 as a kind of proto-Trojan king who was an ancestor of Aeneas. The name of this foundational king Erikkhonios, I.20.219, converges with the name of a foundational king of Athens, as we will see in the comment on I.20.230–241. Such a convergence signals an Athenian connection with the Ionian ownership, as it were, of epic traditions about Aeneas. On Athenians as would-be representatives of Ionian cultural heritage, see Point 2 in the anchor comment at I.20.209 about Aeneas the Ionian: [[GN 2016.12.08 via HPC 209.]]

I.20.230–241

subject heading(s): Erikkhonios

As we learned previously from I.20.215–219, the foundational proto-Trojan king named Erikkhonios was fathered by an even earlier proto-Trojan king named Dardanos. The narrative of the genealogical succession now continues at I.20.231–241:

Erikkhonios fathers Trōs, whose name means ‘Trojan’; so, from here on, the succession of kings is no longer proto-Trojan but Trojan; then Trōs fathers Ilos and Assarakos; then Ilos—whose name presupposes the alternative name of Troy, Ilion—fathers Laomedon who fathers Priam, but Assarakos fathers Kapys who fathers Anchises; finally, Priam fathers Hector but Anchises fathers Aeneas. There is a match here in the chronological sequencing for the king Erikkhonios of Troy and for the king Erikkhonios of Athens. The Athenian king Erikkhonios was a differentiated mythological by-form of another Athenian king, Erekhtheus. Such a differentiation can probably be dated as far back as the late seventh century BCE, when the Athenians gained control of Sigeion, a city that now became their very own new Troy. See Point 2 in the anchor comment at I.20.209 about Aeneas the Ionian, part 1: What resulted from this differentiation was a set of two different kings located in two different zones of time within the genealogical sequence of Athenian kings. The earlier location of Erikkhonios in this Athenian genealogy matches chronologically the location of Erikkhonios in the Trojan genealogy that culminates in Aeneas. According to the Parian Marble (FGH 239 section 23), Troy was conquered in 1209/8 BCE, and that event would have happened roughly three centuries after an event that coincides with the era of the Athenian king Erikkhonios: according to the Parian Marble (FGH 239 section 10), the Athenians claimed that Erikkhonios was the inventor of the four-horse chariot for the occasion of the first chariot race held at the first Panathenaic festival in 1505/4 BCE. So, the differentiation of the Athenian Erekhtheus into an earlier Erikkhonios and a later Erekhtheus made it possible to connect more easily the Athenian Erikkhonios with the Trojan Erikkhonios, ancestor of Aeneas. This way, the prestige of the Trojan genealogy, culminating in the dynastic figure of the epic hero Aeneas, could be appropriated into the Athenian genealogy of kings. A signal of such an Athenian appropriation in the iliad is a pointed reference at I.05.271 to four chariot-horses owned by Anchises, father of Aeneas, to be complemented by two chariot-horses owned by Aeneas himself. I.05.272. The narrative introduces these two sets of chariot-horses by revealing at I.05.263–270 that Anchises secretly bred six horses from the original set of chariot-horses given by Zeus to Trōs in compensation for the abduction of the king’s son, Ganymede; of these six, he kept four for himself and gave two to Aeneas, I.05.271–272. As we have already learned from the Parian Marble (FGH 239 section 10), the Athenians claimed that Erikkhonios was the inventor of the four-horse chariot for the occasion of the first chariot race held at the first Panathenaic festival in 1505/4 BCE. So, the Iliadic reference to the four-horse chariot team of Anchises is an implicit Athenian signature. To be contrasted are the two-horse chariot teams used by almost all warriors—including Aeneas himself, I.05.270–272—for fighting battles in the Trojan War. An exception is the four-horse chariot team used by Hector, I.08.185. He too, like Aeneas, is a descendant of Dardanos, I.20.240. So here again we see the makings of an implicit Athenian signature.
I.20.238

subject heading(s): ozoš Arēos ‘attendant of Ares’

See anchor comment at I.12.188.

I.20.241

subject heading(s): eukheštai ‘claim’; ring-composition

In boasting about his own genealogy, the hero Aeneas started the boast by signaling it with the verbeukheštai ‘declare’ at I.20.209, thus making a most definitive epic statement of identity. Now that the genealogy is completed at I.20.241, the verb eukheštai ‘declare’ recurs, indicating by way of ring-composition the simultaneous completion of the boast. For more on the semantics of boasting as signaled by eukheštai ‘declare’, see Muellner 1976. [[GN 2016.12.08 via BA 269.]]

I.20.244–256

subject heading(s): neikos ‘quarrel’; neikein ‘quarrel with’; oneidos (plural oneidea) ‘words of insult’

As noted in the general comment on I.20.200–258, Aeneas uses the noun neikea, plural of neikos ‘quarrel’, in referring to the mutual negativity that he and Achilles are expressing in their speeches to and about each other. Also used in the same context is the verb neikein ‘quarrel with’ at I.20.252 and I.20.254. On the noun neikos ‘quarrel’ and the verb neikein ‘quarrel with’ as programmatic markers of blame poetry, see especially the comments on I.02.221, I.03.059, I.03.100, I.10.249–253. Yet another word that is used in the same context here at I.20.244–256 is the noun oneidea, plural of oneidos ‘words of insult’, at I.20.244. On this word, see the comments on I.02.222. [[GN 2016.12.10 via BA 270–271, 274.]]

I.20.248–250

subject heading(s): epea ‘words; words of poetry’; mūthos ‘wording spoken for the record’

The word epea is used here at I.20.249 to mean not only ‘words’ but also, more specifically, ‘words of poetry’, such as the words of epic. The words of poetry are spoken here in an act of boasting—which is framed within the act of performing epic. See the general comment on I.20.200–258; see also the earlier comment on I.12.387–391. Here at I.20.248–250, Aeneas is cautioning Achilles about the variability of epea as ‘poetic words’. There is a wide range of different ways of saying different things. Different epics, Aeneas is saying in effect, can have different truth-values in different places. What is said in a positive sense at one place may be said in a negative sense at another place. That is the nature of mūthoi, I.20.248, which are ‘wordings spoken for the record’. For more on the Homeric sense of this word mūthos as ‘wording spoken for the record’, see the comment at I.19.084–085. As I noted in that comment, any wording that is called a mūthos by the Master Narrator himself in the act of actually quoting the words of the wording will have the prestige of reality—to the extent that the listeners were actually expected to accept the idea that such wording had once upon a time been really spoken exactly as quoted by Homer himself. In the context of I.20.248–250 here, however, it becomes clear that there were in fact different regional versions of epics as quoted, as it were, by Homer. As Aeneas says at I.20.248–249, there is no single mūthos in the sense that there is no single way of wording a story for the record: rather, there are many ways of wording a story, and so there are many mūthoi to be heard by listeners, not just one. And, to repeat, there is a wide range of different ways of saying different things. As Aeneas says it, I.20.249, the nomós or ‘range’ of epea as ‘words of poetry’ is vast, varying from place to place. The choice of wording here is most evocative: the word nomós can mean literally ‘range of lands used for pasturing’, as at I.02.475, and the metaphorical application here to the wide range of epics about Aeneas and Achilles may evoke a pastoral scene of a cattle-raid in the highlands of Mount Ida, where Achilles was once upon a time rustling the cattle that were pastured there by Aeneas. Such a pastoral scene is signaled in the story as told by Aeneas at I.20.089–102: he was pasturing his cattle in the highlands of Mount Ida, and Achilles evidently caught him off guard in a cattle-raid, I.20.090–091. See the comment on I.20.089–102. [[GN 2016.12.09 via GMP 24, 43; also BA 270–271, 274.]]

I.20.290–352

[[GN 2016.12.08 via HPC 209–210.]]
subject heading(s): why does Poseidon rescue Aeneas?

In the short-term logic of the narrative here about the one-on-one battle between Aeneas and Achilles, I.20.290–352, it becomes certain that Aeneas will lose the battle and be killed by Achilles, I.20.290. But now, most abruptly, this short-term certainty is contradicted by a long-term certainty, which is, that Aeneas must not be killed by Achilles. It simply cannot happen. And the divine agent of this long-term certainty is the god Poseidon, who notices what is happening short-term and will now intervene directly, I.20.291, in order to insure the long-term certainty that Aeneas must not be killed in this battle-scene. As Poseidon declares to his fellow divinities before he takes action, it is morimon ‘destined’ that Aeneas must avoid being killed by Achilles at this epic moment, I.20.302, since Aeneas as a descendant of Dardanos must not die without having further descendants of his own, I.20.303–306, and these descendants may then continue to rule over the Trojans even after Troy is completely destroyed, I.20.307–308. So, there is an eternity that is destined for the genes, as it were, of Aeneas, as I noted already in the anchor comment at I.20.209, since this hero’s descendants will have eternal rule over the Trojans. But this rule, says Poseidon, will not be in Troy, since both Hērā and Athena have committed themselves by oath to the complete destruction of that city, I.20.313–317. Having made these declarations, Poseidon now takes action. What happens right away is that Aeneas is literally lifted into the air by the power of the god, I.20.325, who spirits him off to a safe place that is removed from the battle scene, I.20.328–329. Once Aeneas is safe, Poseidon appears to him and declares that it would have been huper moira[n] ‘beyond fate [moira]’ for this hero to die at this epic moment, I.20.336. And, while Poseidon is taking action by rescuing Aeneas, he simultaneously beclouds the vision of Achilles, I.20.321–322, so that this hero cannot get to see the actual rescue of his opponent. Achilles is literally in the dark here. Then, after the rescue, the vision of Achilles is restored, I.20.341–342, and he now comprehends that some god must have arranged the escape of Aeneas, I.20.342–350. It is significant, however, that Achilles does not know the identity of the god who rescued Aeneas. Similarly, Achilles did not know the exact identity of the god who rescued Aeneas from the city of Lymnusös, where that hero had once upon a time taken refuge from the pursuing Achilles. As I noted in the comment on I.20.187–194, the wording of Achilles is ostentatiously vague when he refers at I.20.194 to the action of ‘Zeus and the other gods’ in helping Aeneas escape from the besieged city of Lymnusös before it was destroyed by Achilles. By contrast, the wording of Achilles is clear when he refers at I.20.192 to the action of Zeus and Athena together in helping him destroy Lymnusös. I propose, then, that Achilles was kept in the dark about the agency of the god or goddess who helped Aeneas escape from Lymnusös before it was destroyed, just as he is now being kept in the dark about the agency of Poseidon. Further, just as Achilles at I.20.194 is complaining about the divine help given to Aeneas, so also Aeneas at I.20.097–102 complains about the divine help given to Achilles—and there the one divinity who is singled out as that hero’s greatest divine helper is Athena, I.20.094–096. The implication of this complaint by Aeneas is that Athena gives to Achilles an unfair advantage, and that the two heroes would be evenly matched if Athena were taken out of the picture. Ironically, Athena is in fact out of the picture in the one-on-one battle between Aeneas and Achilles, and the only god who intervenes in this battle is Poseidon, who helps not Achilles but Aeneas. But, even with the help of Poseidon, Aeneas does not win the one-on-one battle. He succeeds only in escaping death at the hands of Achilles. [GN 2016.12.09 via HPC 203.]]

I.20.302–308

anchor comment on Aeneas the Ionian, part 2

The prophecy that is made by the god Poseidon here about the descendants of Aeneas as heirs to eternal rule over the Trojans—but not in Troy—is a basic theme that pervades Ionian epic traditions. The identity of Aeneas as an Ionian depends ultimately on the idea that he must be relocated from ancient Troy, since that city simply must be destroyed completely. There are four points that now need to be made about this idea:

Point 1. A starting point is the city of Scepsis in its Ionian phase of existence. As we have already seen in Point 1 of the anchor comment at I.20.209, this Ionian city claimed control over the territory of Troy. Essentially, Scepsis now became the new Troy for the Ionians in this region. Meanwhile, the ancient city of Troy was supposedly never rebuilt and never again amounted to anything more than a simple village that was located within the territory of Scepsis. Such Trojan connections of Scepsis were not limited to this city’s claim that ‘the village of the people of Ilion’, which was under its control, had once been the sacred ground of the real Troy of the Trojan War. The city also claimed as its own the hero Aeneas. From the anchor comment at I.20.209 about Aeneas the Ionian, part I, I repeat here two
relevant details reported by Demetrius of Scæpis by way of Strabo (13.1.52 C607): (A) The city of Scæpis, after being founded by Aeneas, was later ruled jointly by Ascanius (Askanios) son of Aeneas and Scamandrius (Skamandrios) son of Hector; and (B) the population of Scæpis was augmented at a later period by immigrants from the Ionian city of Miletus. I also repeat here the fact that Scæpis claimed to be the original site of the basilieion ‘royal palace’ of Aeneas, as reported by Demetrius of Scæpis by way of Strabo (13.1.53 C607). By implication, it was this palace that became the stronghold of the dynasty of Aeneas that survived the Trojan War.

Point 2. The descendants of Aeneas in the city of Scæpis represented the Ionians not only generally, in the sense that Scæpis eventually became an Ionian city. More specifically, as I have just reiterated on the basis of reportage originating from Demetrius by way of Strabo, Scæpis as an Ionian city was closely connected to the Ionian city of Miletus. So, the connection here is not only Ionian in general but also Milesian in particular. Such a connection is most significant in view of the fact that the Ionian city of Miletus once dominated the federation of Ionian cities known as the Ionian Dodecapolis, as we see from Herodotus 1.142.3 and other sources (HPC 216–217).

Point 3. And this Milesian connection of Scæpis is represented not only by the status of Aeneas as an adoptive dynastic hero of the city’s Ionian population but also by his prominent status as an epic hero who fought in the Trojan War. Here I return to the Ionian epic tradition about Aeneas that became part of the epic Cycle and was known as the Ilïou Persïs, an epic attributed to Arctinus of Miletus. As we have seen earlier, this Milesian epic narrates how Aeneas and his followers withdrew from Troy before its total destruction and moved back to his home in the highlands of Mount Ida (Proclus summary p. 107.24–26 ed. Allen 1912).

Point 4. There is a clear sign of this Ionian epic tradition in the overall Homeric narrative about the rescue of Aeneas by the god Poseidon in 1.20.290–352. This god, though he is generally pro-Achaean in the Iliad, has a special link to the figure of Aeneas. That is because Poseidon also has a special link to the Ionians belonging to the federation of the Ionian Dodecapolis headed by Miletus: as Poseidon Helliðînios, he was the chief god of the Panionion, the sacred site of the festival of the Panonia, which expressed the communality of the twelve cities of the Ionian Dodecapolis as headed by the city of Miletus (Pausanias 7.24.5, scholia b T for l.20.404). See also anchor comment at l.20.209 on: Aeneas the Ionian, part 1; and anchor comment at l.20.302–308 on: Aeneas the Aeolian. [IGN 2016.12.09 via HPC 200, 202–203.]

I.20.302–308

anchor comment on Aeneas the Aeolian

The four points that have just been made about Aeneas the Ionian need to be juxtaposed with twelve points that now need to be made about Aeneas the Aeolian, as featured in rival traditions. [These twelve points are epitomized from HPC 197–201.]

Point 1. The Aeolians of New Ilion, unlike the Ionians of Scæpis, claimed that Troy was not totally destroyed and was not left uninhabited. Rather, the Aeolians converted the ruins of Troy into the city of New Ilion. Our source for such a claim is Strabo (13.1.40 C600), evidently following Demetrius of Scæpis, who reported the claim of the Aeolians but went on to dispute it. Strabo (13.1.42 C602), however, also cites an important textual source that supported the same claim, namely, the Trōλka of Hellanicus of Lesbos (FGH 4 F 25b). See Point 1 of the anchor comment at l.20.209. As we will see, this claim of the Aeolians as reported by Hellanicus meshes with the idea that the hero Aeneas was originally an Aeolian, not an Ionian.

Point 2. In terms of the Aeolian claims, according to which Troy was not completely abandoned after its capture by the Achaeans, there was not only a surviving population that stayed in old Ilion but also a dynasty that ruled over such a population. There are traces of a traditional narrative about such a dynasty in the Trōλka of Hellanicus of Lesbos (FGH 4 F 31), as reported by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (Roman Antiquities 1.45.4–1.48.1); according to this narrative, Aeneas himself was at least indirectly involved in such a dynasty. In this role, Aeneas would have been not an Ionian but an Aeolian. Here is
a summary of what Hellenicus says:

A. After Aeneas escaped the capture of Troy by retreating to the highlands of Mount Ida, he negotiated with the victorious Achaeans his relocation to the city of Aineia on the Thermaic Gulf.

B. Meanwhile, his son Ascanius was relocated as king of Daskylitis on the coast of the Sea of Marmara.

C. Eventually, Ascanius returned to the old Ilion, where he joined forces with Scamandrius (Skamandrios) son of Hector in refounding it as the New Ilion.

Point 3. Another source, however, indicates that the joint rule of the descendants of Aeneas and Hector over New Ilion was not to last. Here is what we read in the scholia for I.20.307–308: “but some say that the Aeolians expelled the descendants of Aeneas” (οἱ δὲ ὁτι Αἰολίες ἐξῆλθον τοὺς ἀπογόνους Αἰνείου). Such a story about an expulsion from Ilion, it must be emphasized, could still be part of an Aeolic version of the story about ancient Troy. The wording here, if the text is not corrupt, would still assume an Aeolian re-founding of Ilion after the destruction of the ancient city.

Point 4. What is being problematized in the scholia that I have just cited is the prophecy made by the god Poseidon, in the iliad as we have it, concerning the descendants of Aeneas. The god is prophesying that these descendants, to whom I will refer hereafter simply as the Aeneadai, will survive the Trojan War and will rule their subjects forever, I.20.306–308, but the context makes it clear that this rule will never happen in the old city of Troy, which will have to be destroyed completely, I.20.309–317. For now, I emphasize one basic fact about this prophecy: it implies that the Aeneadai will have to be relocated from Troy. Such a story about a relocation, of course, does not have to follow the Ionian tradition about Scæpsis as a final place of refuge for the Aeneadai. The scholia for I.20.307–308, which we have already considered at Point 3, also report an alternative story about the relocation of the Aeneadai: “some say that it was by way of the Romans, with regard to whatever things the Poet knew on the basis of oracles emanating from the Sibyl” (οἱ μὲν δὲ ἴδια Ρωμαίους φαρίν, ἄπερ εἰδέναι τὸν ποιητὴν ἐκ τῶν Σβύλλης χρησίμων). So, the point made in the Iliadic text about the relocation of the Aeneadai could be explained in terms of a Roman appropriation of Aeneas: according to the Roman version, the Aeneadai were relocated from Ilion all the way to Italy, and such a relocation could still be explained in terms of the prophecy uttered by Poseidon at I.20.306–308.

Point 5. In terms of the Aeolian version of the story about the conquest of Troy by the Achaeans, as we saw at Points 1 and 2 above, the relocation of the Aeneadai was not predicated on the total destruction of Troy. The Aeolians, unlike the Ionians, did not need to own Aeneas in order to own their claim to ancient Troy, since an essential part of their overall claim was that they had built the city of New Ilion on the ruins of the original Ilion. As we have seen, our earliest source for the essentials of the Aeolian version of this story is the Tröika of Hellenicus of Lesbos (FGH 4 F 31), as reported by way of Dionysius of Halicarnassus (Roman Antiquities 1.45.4–1.48.1). After the Trojan War, according to this Aeolian version of the story, New Ilion was ruled jointly by Ascanius the son of Aeneas and Scamandrius the son of Hector and by their descendants. But then, as we can see from the scholia for I.20.307–308, the descendants of Aeneas were expelled from New Ilion by “the Aeolians”, so that New Ilion was in later times ruled exclusively by the descendants of Hector. The story about the expulsion of the Aeneadai by the Aeolians from Ilion can be seen as a political reaction to the adoption of Aeneas by Ionians who claimed this hero as the founder of their very own new Ilion.

Point 6. To be contrasted with the Aeolian tradition about the New Ilion is the Ionian tradition about Scæpsis. In this case, as we have seen, our primary source is Demetrius of Scæpsis by way of Strabo (13.1.52 C607). After the Trojan War, according to this version of the story, Scæpsis was first ruled by Aeneas. Then it was ruled jointly by Ascanius the son of Aeneas and Scamandrius the son of Hector and by their descendants. But then it was ruled by a coalition including immigrants from the Ionian city
of Miletus.

Point 7. Retrospectively, in terms of the Aeolian tradition about New Ilión, Scamandrius represents the Aeolians who dominated New Ilión while Ascanius represents Ionians who may have originally inhabited the city together with the Aeolians. Once the Ionians appropriated a rival new Ilión as supposedly founded by Aeneas, however, the Aeolian version of the story would have to change: accordingly, the Aeneadae would now have to be expelled from the city of New Ilión. If the Ionians wanted to designate Aeneas as the founder of their rival new Ilión, as in the case of Scopas, then the Aeolians of New Ilión would no longer want to designate the Aeneadae as partners in the dynasty that ruled them. In terms of the Ionian tradition about Scopas, by contrast, Scamandrius represents the non-Ionians who ruled jointly with the Ionians the relocated new Ilión that is Scopas, and the dominantly Ionian character of this city is then reinforced by Ionians immigrating from Miletus, leader of the Ionian Dodocapolid. There is evidence for the intensification of the Ionian identity of Scopas over time, at the expense of its formerly Aeolian identity: Leaf 1923:273 notes a shift from Aeolic to Ionic dialect in the language found on the coinage of Scopas around the fifth century BCE (HPC 200n145).

Point 8. The conflicting Aeolian and Ionian myths about Troy after the Trojan War can be correlated with an eventual differentiation of New Ilión and Scopas as respectively Aeolian and Ionian cities. We know by hindsight that New Ilión was in fact a predominantly Aeolian city, whereas Scopas, once an Aeolian city, eventually shifted toward an Ionian identity. The earlier Aeolian identity of Scopas matches the identification of the Aeolians with the descendants of Hector, who ruled the city jointly with the descendants of Aeneas (Strabo 13.1.52 C607). And, conversely, the later Ionian identity of Scopas matches the identification of the Ionians with the descendants of Aeneas.

Point 9. This is not to say that the Aeneadae were all along perceived as Ionians. Their Ionian identity was merely a function of the eventual Ionian identity of some of the places where they were relocated after the Trojan War, such as Scopas. That is why the identity of the Aeneadae remains Aeolian if they are relocated to places that still have an Aeolian identity. We see an example in a myth about Aeneas as retold by the mythographer Conon, who flourished in the first century BCE and CE. According to this source (Conon FGH 26 F.1.46), Aeneas founded a settlement in the region of Mount Ida but was later displaced from there by two surviving sons of Hector, namely by Oxynos and Skamandros (F.1.46.2); Aeneas then migrated to the Thermaic Gulf (F.1.46.3), where he founded the city of Aleneia, also known as Ainos (F.1.46.4). The same name Ainos applies to a city on the banks of the river Ebro; that city, and Aleneia as well, were Aeolian settlements.

Point 10. Reviewing the various myths about Scamandrius son of Hector, as mentioned in Point 7 (also about one Skamandros son of Hector, as mentioned in Point 9), I emphasize that not one of them is represented in the Homeric iliad, according to which the Trojans of the future will be ruled exclusively by the descendants of Aeneas, not by any descendants of Hector. The wording comes from the god Poseidon himself, as we have seen at I.20.307–308. Strabo (13.1.53 C608) quotes these same Homeric verses and then proceeds to quote a variant version of I.20.307–308, according to which the Aeneadae will rule not only over the surviving Trojans but also over all humanity. Depending on whether we follow the first or the second of the two versions as reflected in these two textual variants, we can say that the population to be ruled by the lineage of Aeneas will be either the Trojans or all humanity, I.20.307. Either way, the point that is being made in both versions is that the lineage of Aeneas will last forever, I.20.307–308, whereas the lineage of Hector the son of Priam will be extinct, I.20.302–306. The same point is being made in a prophecy made by the goddess Aphrodite in the Homeric Hymn (6) to Aphrodite (196–197). So, the version of the myth that is validated by both the iliad and the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite is decidedly anti-Aeolian, not just pro-Ionian. The extinction of Hector’s descendants is a prerequisite in Homeric poetry as we have it.

Point 11. In terms of Homeric poetry, then, the future Trojans who are destined to be ruled by the descendants of Aeneas—and not by the descendants of Hector—could not be equated with the population of the New Ilión dominated by the Aeolians, who as we have seen ultimately expelled the
descendants of Aeneas from their city, according to the scholia for I.20.307–308. That much is not surprising any more—provided that we keep in mind the Ionian ideology that drives the myth in Homeric poetry as we have it. What is surprising, however, is that the Ionian ideology that we see at work in the myths stemming from Scæpsis can still leave room for the descendants of Hector as well as the descendants of Aeneas. In terms of the Homeric version as we have it, the Trojans of the future cannot even be equated with the population of the would-be new Ilion that was Scæpsis, who were ruled not exclusively by Ascanius the son of Aeneas but jointly by him and by Scamandrius the son of Hector and grandson of Priam, as we saw from the testimony of Demetrius by way of Strabo (13.1.52 C607). So, what kind of Ionian ideology prevailed in the Homeric version of the myth? I propose that this ideology originated from the city of Sigeion in the Ionian phase of its existence, at a time when it was dominated by Athens. The Trojans of the future as pictured in the prophecy of Poseidon were imagined as the population controlled by the would-be new Ilion that was Sigeion, and this population was to be ruled exclusively by the descendants of Aeneas, not of Hector. Tracing the history of Sigeion forward in time into the early fifth century BCE, I propose that the possession of this city by Athens made it a more prestigious would-be new Ilion than was Scæpsis, which must have gone into a severe decline after its main source of support, the city of Mileitus, was captured by the Persian Empire in 494 BCE. By contrast with Scæpsis, Sigeion persisted as a rival of New Ilion until sometime in the Hellenistic period. By the time of Strabo, however, who flourished in the late first century BCE, the city of Sigeion no longer even existed: the geographer reports that the site where the city had once stood had been systematically demolished (13.1.31 C595). The most likely cause of the city’s total destruction, it may be added, was its history of rivalry with New Ilion. So, by the time of Strabo, which matches the time when Aeneas became definitively recognized as the founder of the world power that was Rome, the only Ilion that still mattered any more was the Ilion of the Aeolians. But these Aeolians, unlike the ultimately doomed Ionians of Sigeion, did not need an Aeolian Aeneas as their source of legitimation;

Point 12. Here I return one more time to the two Iliadic versions of the prophecy made by the god Poseidon to Aeneas, as reflected in the two attested textual variants that we have already considered at I.20.307–308. According to the variant in one version, as quoted by Strabo (13.1.53 C608), the lineage of Aeneas will rule all of humanity, not only the Trojans of the future. Besides the textual variant that is cited by Strabo here to support this version, there is also another similar variant cited by other sources in support of the same version, as we read in the scholia for I.20.307 (see HPC 200n144, where it is suggested that the source for such a variant was Aristonicus, contemporary of Strabo). As we read in Strabo (13.1.27 C594–595), this version of the Aeneas story became suitable for appropriation by the lineage of Julius Caesar, who claimed to be descended from Iulus, alternatively named Ascanius, who was the son of Aeneas. In terms of this version, the descendants of Aeneas would one day rule all humankind, in that the Roman imperial rule of Caesar followed by Augustus and by their successors was viewed to be universal. According to the other version, on the other hand, it was the Trojans themselves who would be ruled forever by the descendants of Aeneas, and these future Trojans would have been equated with the population of Sigeion—until, as we saw at Point 11, that city was totally destroyed in the Hellenistic period. Meanwhile, the population of New Ilion remained Aeolian well into the Roman period, without ever needing Aeneas as a legitimating of their Aeolian identity. See also anchor comment at I.20.209 on: Aeneas the Ionian, part 1; and anchor comment at I.20.302–308 on: Aeneas the Ionian, part 2; [[GN 2016.12.09]]

I.20.350

subject heading(s): ásmenos ‘returning to light and life’

The etymology of this word can be explained as ‘returning to light and life’. See the anchor comment on O.09.566. [[GN 2017.05.31]]

I.20.403–405
[Epitomized from HPC 229–230.] Here at I.20.404–405, the bellowing of a mortally wounded Trojan warrior is compared to the bellowing of a bull that is about to be sacrificed on the occasion of a ritual that was central to the people of the Ionian Dodecapolis in worshiping the god Poseidon. Such a comparison, which occurs in a context that is proximal to the narrative about the rescue of Aeneas by Poseidon, I.20.290–352, evokes the Ionian connections of the god with Aeneas as a hero who was appropriated by the Ionians of the Ionian Dodecapolis; see Point 4 of the anchor comment at I.20.302–308 about Aeneas the Ionia, part 2. Strabo (8.7.2 C384) makes it explicit that the Ionians even in his own time worshipped Poseidon Helikônios and celebrated (thuein) the festival of the Panonia at the Panionion: ‘even today, the Ionians honor ἱππάν him [= Poseidon], and they still celebrate thuein at that place [= the Panionion] the festival of the Panonia’ ὃν καὶ νῦν ἐπὶ τιμῶν Ιούνες, καὶ θόουσαν ἑκά τά Πανιώνια. And he proceeds to describe this festival as a thūsiā ‘sacrifice’ in the context of noting that Homer actually mentions it here at I.20.404–405: ‘he [= Homer] makes mention, as some suggest, of this sacrifice thūsiā when he says …’ (μέμνηται δ’, ὡς ὑπονοοῦσι τινες, τοντες τῆς θουίας, ὁμήρος ὅταν φη … [the quotation from Homer follows]). I draw special attention to Strabo’s metonymic use of thūsiā ‘sacrifice’ here to designate the whole festival of the Panonia. On metonymy, see the Inventory of terms and names. The geographer then proceeds to quote the verses at I.20.404–405 that concern the sacrifice of a bellowing bull to Poseidon Helikônios: ‘as when a bull | bellows when he is being dragged toward the lord who is Helikônios’ ὃς ὅτε ταῦρος | ἤργεν ἔλκομενος Ἑλικόνιον ἂμφι ἄνκατα. As Strabo observes (again, 8.7.2 C384), the climax of the festival of the Panonia at the Panionion is the sacrifice of the bull to Poseidon Helikônios—I note the word thūsiā, used here in the specific sense of ‘sacrifice’—and special care must be taken by the sacrificers to induce the bull to bellow before it is sacrificed. Accordingly, Strabo continues, the reference at I.20.404–405 to the sacrifice of a bellowing bull to Poseidon Helikônios can be used to argue that the birth of Homer ‘the Poet’ par excellence is to be dated after the Ionian apoiikia ‘migration’, on the grounds that Homer actually mentions the Panonian sacrifice of the Ionians to Poseidon Helikônios in the environs of Priene: ‘they use [this] as evidence for arguing that the Poet was born after the Ionian migration [apoiikia], given that he makes mention of the Panonian festival [thūsiā] that the Ionians celebrate in the territory of the people of Priene in honor of Poseidon Helikônios’ τεκμαίροντα τῇ νεώτερῃ εἶναι τῆς ἱλικῆς ἁπάσκιας τοῦ ποιητῆ, μεμημένου γε τῆς Πανιώνικης θουίας ἤν ἐν τῇ Πρηνέων χώρᾳ συντελεσάν ἵναις τῷ Ἑλικόνιῳ Ποιοδώνες. (On the Ionian Migration, see the Inventory of terms and names.) As we see from Strabo, then, this Homeric passage may well refer to the special way of sacrificing bulls at the festival of the Panonia at the Panionion in Priene. The testimony of Strabo is in fact corroborated by the Homeric scholia (bT for I.20.404). As we see from the context of the Iliadic passage here, the mode of inflicting the mortal blow in sacrificing the bull highlights the vitality of the bull, who is “pumped up” with fear and rage. In the scholia bT for I.20.406a (see also dT for 404b), the commentator takes great care in noting the explosion of arterial blood at the climactic moment when the sacrificial blow severs the carotid artery of the “pumped up” animal. It appears that this mode of sacrificing the bull intensifies the rush of arterial blood spurted from the sacrificial blow. [[GN 2016.12.09 via HPC 203, 230.]]

I.20.487

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; therapontes (plural) of Ares

First, the chariot fighter is killed. Then and only then is the chariot driver, thetherapōn, also killed: he is pierced in the back by a javelin as he turns the chariot team around and attempts to drive away from the scene of battle. [[GN 2014.08.04.]]

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Iliad Rhapsody 21

2016.12.15 / enhanced 2018.09.20

The momentum of Achilles continues to heat up. The Trojans are now retreating as fast as they can, heading back toward Troy to find safety there within the sacred walls of that ancient citadel. In their hurry to get away from the field of battle, their hasty retreat has quickly turned into a chaotic and humiliating rout. Achilles is right behind them, in hot pursuit, slaughtering left and right and the fleeing Trojans. The hero seems unstoppable. But Achilles meets his match when he provokes the river god Scamander, whose clear streams he has polluted with the gore of countless Trojans that he slaughters while they are desperately attempting to ford his god’s river. . [[GN 2016.12.15.]]
I.21.001–021

subject heading(s): Scamander

So long as the anger of Achilles remains in force, the Trojans will remain in possession of the east side of the river Skamandros, latinized as Scamander, while they continue to fight the Achaeans on the west side. On this principal river of the Trojan plain, see already the comments on I.08.220–227 and I.11.497–500. Only after Achilles rejoins his companions and returns to the battlefield will the Trojans be pushed back to the east side of the Scamander, and this major retreat finally happens here in Iliad 21. Now the raging Achilles pushes the Trojans back to the edge of the west bank of this river, I.21.001, and there they perish in droves, either at the hands of Achilles or by drowning, I.21.007–021—unless they manage to escape by crossing over to the east bank of the river, I.21.002–004. [[GN 2016.12.14 via HPC 164]]

I.21.134–135

Q&T via BA.75

subject heading(s): loīgos ‘devastation’

We see here a retrospective reference to the loīgos ‘devastation’, I.21.134, suffered by the Achaeans because of the absence of Achilles. [[GN 2016.12.16 via BA.75]]

I.21.184–199

subject heading(s): eukhēsthai ‘claim’; Asteropaioi; river gods; Axsioi; Akhelōios; Œkeanoi

In this speech of Achilles, the hero is boasting, as expressed by way of the solemn word eukhēsthai ‘claim’, I.21.187, about his genealogy as son of Peleus son of Aiakos son of Zeus himself, I.21.188–189. The point of the boast that Achilles makes here is that his genealogy is superior to that of the hero Asteropaioi, whom he has just killed, I.21.139–183. This hero of the Trojans, as we learn at I.21.130–143, is the grandson of the river god Axios. Provocatively, Achilles is boasting that the lineage of Zeus, from which he is descended, is superior to the lineage of any river god, I.21.193–199, and, in this context, Achilles mentions by name two of the mightiest river gods: Akhelōios at I.21.194 and Œkeanos at I.21.195. Even the Œkeanos, Achilles goes on to say, would be defeated by Zeus in a one-on-one combat of cosmic proportions, I.21.196–199. This whole speech of Achilles is of course a direct provocation to the river Scamander, I.21.136–138. As we saw previously at I.20.74, the name of this river Scamander, Skamandros in Greek, is also the name of the river god who embodies the river, and that is how mortals address the god of the river, as Scamander, while Xanthos is the name that the gods themselves give to him.
See the comment on I.20.001–074. Thus the river god Scamander can take it personally that Achilles here is insulting not only the river god Axios, from whom his dead enemy Asteropaios was descended, but also all river gods. And Achilles goes even further: he insults Scamander directly, declaring earlier at I.21.130–132 that the river god had failed to rescue the Trojans—despite the fact that they would customarily offer sacrifices of bulls and stallions to Scamander, I.21.131–132. [[GN 2016.12.16]]

I.21.194–197

subject heading(s): river gods; Akhelōios; Ōkeanos; athetesis

In his edition of Homer, Zenodotus athetized—that is, he rejected as non-Homeric—the verse at I.21.195, as we know from the scholia for this verse in the Geneva manuscript of the iliad. (On Zenodotus and on athetesis, see the Inventory of terms and names.) At I.21.195, Ōkeanos is named as the referent of the relative clause at I.21.196–197, where Ōkeanos is described as a cosmic river that has always been the ultimate source for all the water in the world. If this verse at I.21.195 were omitted, then the referent for this description of the ultimate source for all water would shift from the river Ōkeanos to the river Akhelōios, which is named at verse 194. Zenodotus’ rejection of verse 195 was not the result of some arbitrary editorial decision: there is external evidence for an alternative textual tradition of the iliad where this verse 195 was in fact missing, and there is also external evidence for an alternative oral poetic tradition where Akhelōios rather than Ōkeanos figures as the primal stream that generates all other streams (HC 2§196; also D’Alessio 2004). For example, Pausanias 8.38.10 follows a version of I.21.194–197 that does not include the verse we know as I.21.195. Similarly, at I.18.483–608 in his edition of Homer, Zenodotus athetized the entire sequence of verses that narrated the images displayed on the Shield of Achilles. By dissociating the world of the Shield from the world of Homer, Zenodotus also dissociated the Ōkeanos, the cosmic river that ever encircles and defines the Shield at I.18.607–608. See the comment on I.18.483–608. Unlike Zenodotus, however, Aristarchus in his edition of Homer refrained from athetizing the verses describing the images on the Shield at I.18.483–608 (HC 2§198, with reference to primary and secondary sources). So, he did not athetize the verses about the Ōkeanos at I.18.607–608; nor did he athetize the verse about Ōkeanos at I.21.195 (again, HC 2§198, with reference to primary and secondary sources). Here we have the clearest indication that all these verses were conventionally thought to belong to the Homeric tradition—even in the age of Aristarchus. (On Aristarchus, see the Inventory of terms and names.) Viewing the differences between Zenodotus and Aristarchus in their editorial treatment of Homeric passages involving the Ōkeanos, we can see that Zenodotus was more extreme than Aristarchus in his efforts to purge Homeric poetry from what he considered to be Orphic elements. At the other extreme was Crates, whose edition of Homer did not treat the supposedly Orphic elements as extraneous to Homeric poetry (HC 2§199). For more on Orphic elements in Homeric poetry and on the occasional preservation of such elements in the edition of Homer by Crates, see the comment on I.14.245–246–246a. (On Crates in general, see under Crates in the Inventory of terms and names.) In view of what what we know, then, about the textual transmission of I.21.194–197, I argue that both the longer version, featuring Akhelōios and Ōkeanos, and the shorter version, featuring only Akhelōios, are authentic multiforms. On multiform, see the Inventory of terms and names. And, what is more, Homeric poetry recognizes both versions as multiforms. Here I return to the comment on I.20.001–074, where I noted that Ōkeanos is ostentatiously singled out at I.20.007 as the only river god who did not attend the council of divinities that Zeus had assembled in his divine plan to allow those attending to intervene in the ongoing struggle between the Achaeans and the Trojans. Just as this river god Ōkeanos is ostentatiously present in the story by way of being specially marked as absent at I.20.007, so also now he can continue to be ostentatiously present at I.21.195 by not being marked as absent in the longer version—or he can continue to be present by being ostentatiously absent from the words of insult formulated by Achilles in the shorter version, just as he was absent also from the original council of the divinities. The river god Scamander, by contrast, was not absent but present at that council, and he did intervene in the war, since he was provoked to fight Achilles not only by hero’s actions when he was slaughtering droves of Trojans in the waters of the river but also by that earlier boast where Achilles claimed to be superior in genealogy to heroes who were descended from river gods. It was in the context of that boast, as I noted in the comment on I.21.184–199, that Achilles had insulted Scamander. But he also insulted Ōkeanos and Akhelōios in one version of I.21.194–197. Or at least, according to the other version, he also insulted Akhelōios. Considering that Achilles was almost destroyed by Scamander, we may infer an even worse outcome for the hero if he had faced in combat not this local river god but rather the cosmic river gods Akhelōios or Ōkeanos. By implication, Akhelōios chose not to intervene, though he was present, whereas Ōkeanos could not intervene, since he was absent. Through its multiformity, then, the Homeric tradition acknowledges both a potential presence and a potential absence for Ōkeanos. [[GN 2016.12.16 via HC 2§§144, 155, 196, 198, 207–213; HPC 356; see also GMP 238]]
subject heading(s): battle between Achilles and the river god Scamander

Outraged by all the carnage caused by Achilles as that hero relentlessly keeps slaughtering droves of Trojans and clogs the river with their bloody corpses, Scamander as the divine embodiment of the river rises up with all his watery might and proceeds to fight Achilles one-on-one. *What follows is an epitome from HQ 145–146.* We know that ancient Greek narratives about hostile encounters between heroes and river gods can traditionally picture the river as taking the shape of a ferocious beast: a prime example is Archilochus F 286-287 (ed. West), where the hero Hēraklēs fights with the river god Akhelōĩos, who has taken on the shape of a raging bull. We may contrast the treatment of the fight between the hero Achilles and the river god Scamander here in *Iliad* 21, where the river Scamander does not take the shape of a bull and is not even theriomorphic: rather, the narrative opts for a variant tradition highlighting the elemental aspect of the river, as water personified, struggling with a hero whose ally, as we are about to see, will be the god Hephaistos in his role as fire personified. It has been argued, partly on the authority of the scholia for I.21.237, that the Archilochean representation is pre-Homeric. But it is enough for now to say that the Archilochean representation stems from a tradition that is independent of Homer. And the Homeric narrative goes out of its way to make an indirect reference to the other tradition. The river god Scamander, in the heat of battle with the hero Achilles, is described at I.21.237 as ‘bellowing like a bull’ (Ἱππὸς ὑττο ῥαποκ). The simile amounts to a conscious acknowledgment of a variant tradition. Finally the river god, after a lengthy struggle, is starting to overwhelm Achilles, and now this main hero of the *Iliad* finds himself in danger of getting swept away, cut off from all epic memory, in the flooding streams of the enraged Scamander. [[GN 2016.12.16.]]

I.21.328–384

subject heading(s): cosmic conflict between Fire and Water

In order to save the endangered Achilles, Hērā now induces her son Hephaistos to join the fray and to fight actively against the river god Scamander. Since Hephaistos is god of fire, he is the elemental antithesis of Scamander as god of water, that is, as the local god who embodies the principal river that waters the plain of Troy. So now the fight between fiery hero and streaming god escalates into a cosmic conflict between the elements of fire and water. In the end, then, fire wins over water, but now Hērā induces Hephaistos to stop his fight with Scamander. [[GN 2016.12.16 via BA 321–322.]]

I.21.385–514

subject heading(s): comic brawl between pro-Achaean and pro-Trojan divinities; divine burlesque

Following up on the combat between Hephaistos and Scamander, other gods now also join in the fight, and, the next thing you know, the cosmic conflict between the elemental forces of fire and water is transformed into a personalized brawl between divine partisans of Trojans and Achaean. The personalization intensifies to the point of becoming ludicrous, and, once such a point is reached, the whole scene becomes an exquisite exercise in *divine burlesque*. As Walter Burkert (1960:132) has observed, however, such a comic form is not innovative but archaizing, and there are numerous parallels to be found in the myths and rituals of ancient Near Eastern civilizations; this observation applies also to the divine burlesque that characterizes other narrative sequences Homeric poetry, most notably in *Odyssey* 8 and in *Iliad* 1 as well as here in *Iliad* 21—and in the *Homeric Hymns*. [[GN 2016.12.16 via HPC 88–89.]]

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**Iliad Rhapsody 22**

2016.12.24 / enhanced 2018.09.20

The time has come for Hector to die at the hands of Achilles, and his final moments of life are singularly grim. Achilles shows him no mercy, expressing the most brutal thoughts even before he vengefully finishes off the killer of Patroklōs. Hector is forced to know in advance, before he loses consciousness to the death blow from Achilles, that his executioner intends to mutilate his corpse instead of allowing for a proper funeral. And the form of this mutilation is particularly horrific and morally
shocking: attaching the body of Hector to the back of his chariot, Achilles will drag it around the walls of Troy for all to see the humiliation of his hated enemy. Is there any hope, then, for transcending such degradation? Only divine intervention, in the story yet to be told, could prevent the disfigurement of a heroic body’s beauty in death. But the story of transcendence must wait. For now, the focus is on the horror and the sorrow of a heroic death as seen through the eyes of Hector’s lamenting widow Andromache. [[GN 2016.12.24.]]

Figure 22. Copperplate etching (1795) by Tommaso Piroli, after a drawing (1793) by John Flaxman. Image via Wikimedia Commons.

I.22.110

subject heading(s): eû-kleiôs ‘with the genuine glory [kleos] of poetry’

Hector is well aware that he may die at the hands of Achilles, but he wishes to die in a way that will assure him of having the kleos ‘glory’ of poetry, and such ‘genuine’ glory, as marked by the prefix eû- of the adverb eû-kleiôs ‘with the genuine glory [kleos] of poetry’, is simultaneously ‘good’ glory, as also in the case of the adjective esthlon ‘genuine, good’, which applies as the epithet of kleos at I.18.121. See the comment on I.18.121. The overarching ambition of Hector to achieve the genuine kleos ‘glory’ of poetry is recognized at the end of Andromache’s second lament, I.22.514. See the comment on I.22.514. [[GN 2016.12.23 via BA 29.]]

I.22.122–130

Q&T I.22.126–127 via GMP 200

subject heading(s): proverb of the oak and the rock

On this proverb about the oak and the rock, see the comment at O.19.162–163. [[GN 2016.12.23 via GMP 199–200.]]

I.22.297–305

subject heading(s): Hector’s delusion; antagonism between immortal and mortal

In this speech, Hector finally understands that he has been delusional all along in thinking that he could possibly defeat Achilles. Athena has actively contributed to the hero’s tragic delusion, and now Hector sees clearly that his death at the hands of Achilles is near. Hector’s delusion is already signaled at I.18.243–314, where the assembly of the Trojans approves of Hector’s plan to stay on the offensive against the Achaeans—even after Achilles has already re-entered the Trojan War. The Master Narrator had commented at I.18.311: this was a bad decision by the assembly, to approve the strategy of Hector, since the goddess Athena had taken away from them their senses, phrênes. If the assembly had been sensible, they would
have recognized that Hector’s *mētis* ‘mind, intelligence’ had failed him, I.18.312. As noted in the comment on I.18.243–314 as also in the earlier comments on I.06.286–311, I.07.017–061, I.08.538–541, I.10.043–052, I.11.200, and I.13.825–829, there is a pattern of personal hostility felt by the goddess Athena toward Hector as a hero who aspires to some of the same qualities that Athena herself exemplifies. Like the goddess, Hector can be seen as an exponent of (1) defensive tactics in the warfare of protecting a citadel from sieges and (2) *mētis* ‘mind, intelligence’—two qualities that were tragically taken away from him when he most needed to have them. [[GN 2016.12.23]]

I.22.304

subject heading(s): *a-kleiōs* ‘without the genuine glory [*kλeοs*] (of poetry)’

Hector is now quite certain that he will in fact die at the hands of Achilles, but he wishes all the more to die in a way that will assure him of having the *kλeοs* ‘glory’ of poetry, and such ‘genuine’ glory is marked here by the negation of the adverb-*kleiōs* ‘without the genuine glory [*kλeοσ*] (of poetry)’. What he is saying, then, is that he wishes not to die without being assured of the *kλeοs* ‘glory’ of poetry. He has already been saying that at I.22.110. See also the comment on I.22.110, where it is already noted that the overarching ambition of Hector to achieve the genuine *kλeοs* ‘glory’ of poetry is recognized at the end of Andromache’s second lament, I.22.514. See the comment on I.22.514. [[GN 2016.12.23 via BA 29.]]

I.22.335–354

subject heading(s): mistreating the corpse of Hector; exposition of the corpse to dogs and birds; cremation

After wounding Hector mortally at I.22.326–330, Achilles now declares to his enemy his intention to expose Hector’s corpse as prey for dogs and birds to devour while Patroklos will be getting a proper funeral, I.22.335–336. In response, the dying Hector begs to be spared the horror of exposition to dogs and birds, offering ransom if his sōma ‘body’ is restored safely to his family, I.22.342, who can give him a proper funeral that features the all-important ritual of cremation, I.22.342–343. But Achilles rejects the offer, I.22.344–354, and he declares again his intention to deprive Hector of cremation and to subject his enemy’s corpse to the horrors of exposition, I.22.354. [[GN 2016.12.27.]]

I.22.346–348

**Q&T via GMP 300**

subject heading(s): an unthinkable wish; *thūmos* ‘heart’; *menos* ‘mental power’

Achilles declares to the dying Hector how certain he is about his ghastly intent to expose the corpse of his hated enemy for dogs and birds to devour, I.22.248 (also I.22.354). This certainly is linked to an even more ghastly uncertainty, expressed as a wish: if only the *thūmos* and the *menos* of Achilles, I.22.346, which can be translated here as his ‘heart’ and his ‘mind’ respectively, could bring him to do something that would otherwise be unthinkable, which is, to cut up the body of Hector and eat it raw, I.22.346–347. The use of the two words *thūmos* and *menos* here at I.22.346 is relevant to a comparison made earlier by Achilles at I.22.262: Hector is to Achilles as men are to lions. Elsewhere in Homeric diction, Achilles is in fact described as *thūmōleōn* ‘having the heart of a lion’, at I.07.228. As for the noun *menos*, which can be translated more literally as ‘mental power’ in contexts where it applies to heroes, it is used at I.20.174 in collocation with *thūmos* ‘heart’ in describing the impetus of Achilles as an elemental force of nature, comparable to the impetus of an attacking lion, I.20.171. [[GN 2016.12.27 via BA 135–137, 320–321; also GMP 300.]]

I.22.368–375

subject heading(s): mistreating the corpse of Hector

Achilles strips the armor from the corpse of Hector, I.22.368–369, who is lying there naked on the battleground while the companions of Achilles are jeering at him and taking turns at inflicting further wounds on his dead body, I.22.369–375. Such mistreatment of the corpse can be seen as a form of degradation that anticipates an even more horrific form of degradation that is still waiting to happen, which is, the dreaded exposition of Hector’s body to dogs and birds. [[GN 2016.12.27.]]

I.22.395–405
subject heading(s): mistreating the corpse of Hector; dragging of Hector; aeike- ‘unseemly’

Further degradation awaits the naked corpse of Hector. Here at I.22.395–405, Achilles proceeds to subject the body of Hector to an act that is meant to disfigure it, and the Master Narrator hints at his own moral disapproval by referring to this act as aeikea... erga ‘things unseemly’, I.22.395. The generalized idea of ugliness as conveyed by aeikea ‘unseemly’ and other such words in Homeric diction is reciprocal: when you do something ugly to someone, making that someone look ugly, you are thereby making yourself look ugly as well. To be specific, I describe here in detail the ugly things that Achilles will now do to Hector. First, he pierces a hole between the ankle and the heel of Hector’s two feet, and then he threads through these two holes a leather strip that he attaches to the back of his chariot, I.22.396–398. Then he will drag the corpse through the dust and grime of the battleground as he mounts the chariot and drives off at top speed, with Hector in tow. At this horrific moment in the Homeric narrative, feelings of pity are prompted by the narrative itself at I.22.401–403. The Master Narrator prompts his listeners by focusing here on Hector’s hair, once so beautifully groomed but now all disheveled, and then on his head, with a face that was once so charming to look at—but now you expect this beautiful head to be mutilated beyond recognition, once it gets dragged over the harsh and scraping surface of the battlefield. The Master Narrator concludes ruefully: the god Zeus himself is allowing all this to happen, I.22.403–404. But what is the god really allowing to happen? So far, there has been a mistreatment and even degradation of Hector’s body, yes. But, at least so far, there has been no disfigurement to be seen. As the Master Narrator takes one last look here at the corpse of Hector, the hero’s head is shrouded in a swirl of dust, I.22.405, and so his face is not visible. The next time the Master Narrator looks at the corpse of Hector, Achilles is displaying the body lying face down in the dust, I.23.024–026, near the stand where the dead body of Patroklos is lying in state, obviously face up. For a preview of this later moment, see the comment on I.23.1–64. Even there at I.23.1–64, though, it cannot be known whether the body that Achilles is intending to degrade has in fact already been disfigured. Once again, the face is not visible. At a later point, however, at I.23.184–191, it will become clear that the face and the head in fact the whole body of Hector cannot be disfigured. The body is saved. In the anchor comment at I.23.184–191, there will be an analysis of this vision of salvation for Hector’s body. [[GN 2016.12.27.]]

I.22.437–475

subject heading(s): lead-in for the second lament of Andromache

Although Priam and Hecuba, the parents of Hector, have already seen with horror and sorrow what has happened to him at the hands of Achilles, Andromache does not yet know, I.22.437–439. She is in her private quarters, weaving, I.22.440–441, and she calls out to her handmaids to prepare a bath for Hector’s expected arrival, I.22.442–444, not knowing what has already happened to him, I.22.445–446. Then and only then does she hear the sound of wailing, I.22.447, and now she starts to feel emotionally and physically undone, as her legs and arms start shaking and her weaving pin drops from her trembling hand, I.22.448. She calls out to her handmaids, telling them to accompany her to the walls of Troy, so that she may see for herself what is happening, I.22.449–450, and then she starts to express her premonitions about the fate of Hector, which are already becoming a part of the lament that formally gets underway only at I.22.477, lasting all the way to I.22.515. While she expresses her premonitions, she is feeling more and more undone, I.22.450–459. Now her heart is in her throat, I.22.451–452. As she rushes up to the walls of Troy, where she will see what has happened, Andromache is compared to a maïnas or ‘maenad’, that is, a frenzied woman possessed by Dionysus, I.22.460. Then, finally, she and her handmaids get to see the grim scene, I.22.261–265: Hector is dead, and his corpse is being dragged behind the speeding chariot of Achilles. At the ghastly sight, Andromache faints, I.22.466–467, and her elaborate headdress comes undone, falling to the ground, I.22.468–472. The women of her immediate family surround her as she comes out of her swoon, I.22.473–475, and now she begins her lament in earnest, I.22.476–515. [[GN 2016.12.23 via HPC 246, HC 1§205.]]

I.22.440–441

subject heading(s): pattern-weaving; diplax ‘pattern-woven fabric that folds in two’; porphurop ‘purple’; marmare ‘gleaming’; huphainein ‘weave’; throne ‘flower patterns, love charms’

Like Helen at I.03.125–128, Andromache is shown here at I.22.440–441 in the act of pattern-weaving. And, like Helen, she is not pictured as singing while weaving: rather, she weaves her song into the web that she pattern-weaves. The song that she
weaves into her web is pictured as *thrana*, which can mean ‘flower patterns’ or ‘love charms’. It can be argued that both meanings apply in the present context. A similar argument can be made in the case of the epithet *poikilo-thronos* applied to the goddess Aphrodite in Sappho Song 1.1: this word can mean either ‘with varied [poikilo-] flower patterns [that are pattern-woven on your robe]’ or ‘with varied [poikilo-] love charms’. I have more to say about these details in MoM 2§76 (also PasP 101n40). Further, at I.22.441, there exists a variant epithet for the web that Andromache weaves: this *diplax* ‘pattern-woven fabric that folds in two’ is described in some medieval manuscripts as *porphureë* ‘purple’ but in others as *marmareë* ‘gleaming’. And we find the same variation of epithets for the web that Helen weaves at I.03.126: this *diplax* too is described in some medieval manuscripts as *porphureë* ‘purple’ but in others as *marmareë* ‘gleaming’. Similarly, the *antux* ‘rim’ that is being made for the Shield of Achilles at I.18.479 is described as *triplax* ‘threefold’ and *marmareë* ‘gleaming’ at I.18.480. In Eustathius *Commentary on the Iliad* vol. 4 p. 218 lines 14–17, the commentator draws attention to the morphological parallelism of *triplax* ‘threefold’ with *diplax* ‘twofold’. So, Eustathius recognizes here a crossover between the artistic worlds of metalwork and weaving. See the comment on I.18.479–480. See also the comment on I.09.130, where it is argued that the craft of pattern-weaving by Aeolian women is linked with the power of the craft of Homeric poetry to make contact with the Bronze Age. Finally, in the case of the two textual variants *porphureë* ‘purple’ and *marmareë* ‘gleaming’ as applied to the web of Helen at I.03.126 and to the web of Andromache at I.22.441, we learn from the scholia for I.03.126 that *porphureë* ‘purple’ happened to be the reading preferred by all three major Alexandrian editors of Homer—Zenodotos, Aristophanes, Aristarchus (see also HPC 274nn3, 4). [[GN 2016.12.22 via MoM 2§§69–81, 91; see also HPC 274, 281, 302, 358n81; HC 1§203.]]

I.22.441

subject heading(s): en-passein ‘sprinkle’ (by way of pattern-weaving)

This word en-passein ‘sprinkle’ conveys a metaphor for the process of pattern-weaving. As we learn from the AT scholia for I.22.441, (en-)passein in the Cypriote dialect means *poikillein* ‘pattern-weave’. Metaphorically, Andromache is sprinkling flowers as love charms into her story by way of pattern-weaving floral patterns into a web that tells her story of love. By extension, the metaphorical world of pattern-weaving applies also to the process of making the kind of poetry that tells about the pattern-weaving of Andromache. [[GN 2016.12.23 via HPC 273–275; see also HC 1§203.]]

I.22.444

subject heading(s): sorrows of Andromache

The wording here at I.22.444 is part of the lead-up to the lament of Andromache, which formally gets underway only at I.22.476. And the wording in this part of the lead-up, I.22.444, is prefigured by the wording of Zeus himself at I.17.207 in expressing the Will of Zeus regarding the sorrows of Andromache. To say it another way: the narrative arc represented by the Will of Zeus extends from the wording of the god’s plan all the way to the wording of the widow’s lament, I.22.476–515. See the comment on I.17.194–214. [[GN 2016.12.23 via HC 1§203.]]

I.22.460–474

subject heading(s): Andromache as maenad; mainás ‘maenad’; *krídemon* ‘headdress’

At I.22.460, just as she is about to see with her own eyes the corpse of Hector, the distraught Andromache is already pictured as *isê* ‘equal’ to a *mainás* ‘maenad’ (μαινάς ἑορτά), that is, she is being compared to a woman possessed by Dionysus. Earlier, in an analogous context at I.06.389, Andromache is pictured as ‘looking like a woman possessed’ (κατὰ τὴν ἑορτήν) when she rushes toward the walls of Troy to see for herself the fate of the Trojans on the battlefield. In the case of the present context, I.22.460, the comparison of Andromache to a maenad is relevant to the undoing of her hair when her elaborate headdress falls from her head at the moment when she goes into a swoon, I.22.468–472. The undoing of a maenad’s hair is a traditional Dionysiac theme, as we see for example in a painting on a vase made in Athens sometime in the decade of 480–470 BCE (Munich, Antikensammlungen no. 2418): this painting shows a maenad transfixed by the gaze of Dionysus, who is looking directly into her eyes, and the maenad’s loose strands of flowing curls of hair are seen cascading down from behind her ears at either side of her head garlanded with the ivy of Dionysus. As we look at the maenad’s hair coming undone, we see a distinctive sign of her starting to lose control to Dionysus, of becoming possessed by Dionysus, of surrendering the self to Dionysus. See also Nagy 2007c:252–253, citing further examples from the visual arts. Andromache looks similarly maenadic when she falls into a swoon, I.22.466–467, while at the same time letting her elaborate headdress fall from her
head to the ground, I.22.468–470. What follows is an epitome of further analysis in Nagy 2007c:249–251. In the dramatic context of Andromache’s swoon, I draw attention to the evocative word krēdemon ‘headress’, I.22.470. It refers to the overall ornamental hair-binding that holds together three separate kinds of ornamental hair-binding that serve to keep Andromache’s hair in place, under control, I.22.469: in this verse, the three separate terms for ornamental hair-bindings are ampus ‘frontlet’, bekuphalos ‘snood’, and anadesmē ‘headband’. The overall hair-binding or ‘headress’ that keeps it all in place is the krēdemon, I.22.470. Similarly, Varro (On the Latin language 5.130) speaks of three separate terms for ornamental hair-bindings traditionally used by Roman matrons: lanea ‘woolen ribbon’, reticulum ‘net-cap’ or ‘snood’, and capital ‘headband’. To these three words Varro (7.44) adds a fourth, tutulus (derived from the adjective tutus ‘providing safety’), which seems to be an overall term for the generic headress worn by brides and Vestal Virgins as well as matrons. When Andromache lets drop from her head her elaborate krēdemon ‘headress’, I.22.470, thus causing her hair to come completely undone, she is ritually miming her complete loss of control over her own fate as linked with the fate of her husband: we see here a ritually eroticized gesture that expresses her extreme sexual vulnerability as linked with the violent death and degradation of her husband. For Andromache to do violence to her own krēdemon is to express the anticipated violence of her future sexual humiliation at the hands of the enemy. Pointedly, the goddess Aphrodite herself had given this krēdemon to Andromache on her wedding day, I.22.470–471 (further analysis by Dué 2006:4, 78). Another example of such ritual miming is the moment in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter, verses 40–42, when Demeter teases off her krēdemon in reacting to the violation of her daughter Persephone by Hàdès. The explicit association of the krēdemon with Aphrodite reveals its erotic properties. The undoing of a woman’s hair, caused by the undoing of her krēdemon, produces what I will call an Aphrodisiac effect. So long as a woman’s krēdemon is in place, her sexuality is under control just as her hair is under control. When the krēdemon is out of place, however, her sexuality threatens to get out of control. This ritual symbolism is part of a “cultural grammar of hair” (Levine 1995:95). Such a “grammar” helps explain why the virginal Nausikaa would not think of going out in public without first putting on her krēdemon, O.06.100. She won’t leave home without wearing her headress. Her gesture here is hardly a signal of being married. Clearly, she is unmarried. So, we see that unmarried women as well as married women like Andromache wear the krēdemon in public. The gesture is simply a signal of propriety. Such a “grammar” is in fact typical of the Mediterranean world in general. A striking point of comparison is the figure of the sotah ‘errant woman’ in Hebrew Bible traditions, who is marked by the ritual dishevelment of her hair (Numbers 5:11–31). In this case, the ‘errant woman’ is a foil for the properly married woman. ([GN 2016.12.23 via Nagy 2007c:249–251; see also HPC 246, 249; also HC 1§205.])

1.22.476–515

anchor comment on three laments by Andromache, part 2

subject heading(s): amblēdēn ‘making a start’; [gōos ‘lament’] goān ‘make lament’; eπi–stenakhesthai ‘wail in response’

In the first lament of Andromache for Hector, as we saw in the anchor comment at 1.06.407–439, she was already lamenting the death of Hector before he was even dead. As for her second lament, here at I.22.476–515, she sings it when she sees the corpse of Hector for the first time. As for her third lament, to be featured at I.24.723–746, Andromache will sing it on the occasion of Hector’s funeral. The second lament here is in some ways a preview of the third, which as we will see is technically the most formal of Andromache’s three laments. The beginning of Andromache’s second lament is signaled here at I.22.476 by the technical poetic term amblēdēn, an adverb that means ‘making a start [in performance]’ just as the adverb hupoblēdēn at I.01.292 means ‘continuing [in response]’. As Andromache starts to sing her second lament, the word that refers here at I.22.476 to the form of her singing is the verb goān ‘make lament’, corresponding to the noun gōos ‘lament’. We have already seen the noun gōos at I.18.051, with reference to the lament sung by Thetis for the future death of Achilles. This form of lament, gōos, is conventionally sung by female members of the bereaved family, and there will be more to say about this form in the comment on I.24.720–776. For the moment, however, I focus on what happens after Andromache has finished singing her lament at I.22.476–514. Now the Trojan women who are attending her respond to her lament by continuing it with their own lament, in antiphonal performance, at I.22.515: ‘So she [= Andromache] spoke, and the women wailed in response’ (ωκ ἐφατο κλαίοντας, ἐπὶ δὲ στενακεθθὴν γυναίκην). The antiphonal refrain here at I.22.515 is signaled by the verb eπι–stenakhesthai ‘wail in response’, matching the antiphonal refrain at I.19.301 in response to the lament of Briseis. See the anchor comment at I.19.282–302. So, the second lament of Andromache, as we see it come to a conclusion at I.22.515, is a classic example of a group performance as rounded out by way of an antiphonal refrain. For more on such group performance, see again the anchor comment on I.19.282–302, where it is emphasized that Briseis the Aeolian is featured as a
distinctly choral personality, analogous to the personality of Sappho herself in the choral songs attributed to that Aeolian prima donna of a later era. See also anchor comment at I.06.407–439 on: three laments by Andromache, part 1; and anchor comment at I.24.723–746 on: three laments by Andromache, part 3. [[GN 2016.12.19 via HC 4§262; HPC 246–247.]]

1.22.483

subject heading(s): *penthos* ‘grief’

In the lament of Andromache, she refers here at I.22.483 to the *penthos* ‘grief’ that the death of Hector has caused her. This word *penthos* ‘grief’ is a programmatic marker of lament, as we have already seen at I.09.562–564, where a songbird is pictured as singing a song of lament: that songbird is the *halukōn* ‘halcyon’, described in that context as *polupenthēs* ‘having much grief’, I.09.563. See the relevant comment on I.09.561–564. [[GN 2016.12.18.]]

1.22.500

subject heading(s): Astyanax

On the naming of the son of Hector, Astyanax, see the comment on I.22.506–507. [[GN 2016.12.23.]]

1.22.506–507

subject heading(s): name of Hector; “speaking name” (*nomen loquens*); *ekhein* ‘hold, protect’; Astyanax; antagonism between immortal and mortal

Here at I.22.506–507, the meaning of the name of Hector is made explicit. As noted already in the comment on I.06.402–403, the first of two names given to the son of Hector, Astyanax [Astuanax], I.06.403, means ‘king [anax] of the city [astu]’. This meaning is relevant to the heroic role of the father as *protecting a citadel from sieges*. This role is expressed by the “speaking name” (*nomen loquens*) of Hector, Ἡκτόρ, which is an agent noun meaning ‘one who holds [ekhein]’. The translation ‘hold’ here conveys the sense of ‘uphold, protect, guard’; so Hector’s name destines him to be the ‘protector’ of the city of Troy. See the comment on I.05.473–474. The name of Hector is relevant to the fact that Hector’s son is named after him. More than that, Hector’s son is named after the primary function of Hector as signaled by the father’s name, and the rationale for that naming is made explicit at I.22.506–507: as Andromache says to her dead husband here, Astyanax is named Astyanax or ‘king of the city’ precisely because his father was protector of the city. Here is the wording at I.22.507: ‘because you [= Ἡκτόρ], all by yourself, protected [erueståthai] for them [= the Trojans] the gates and the walls [of their city]’ (οἷος γὰρ οὗν ἐρύσω πύλας καὶ τεῖχας μακρά). We see at work here the mythological convention of naming a son after a primary heroic trait of the father, as in the case of the son of Ajax, whose name *Eurusakēs* means ‘the one with the wide shield [sakos]’; this meaning is made explicit in the wording of Sophocles Ajax 574–578. In the case of Hector’s name as Ἡκ-τόρ or ‘protector’, there is a serious danger portended by his function as protector of the citadel of Troy: this heroic function of Hector makes him a rival of the goddess Athena in her own divine function as protector of the same citadel of Troy. See the comment on I.06.286–311, especially with reference to the epithet of Athena as *erusi*-ptolis ‘protector of the citadel [ptolis]’ at I.06.305. [[GN 2016.12.20 via BA 144–147.]]

1.22.514

subject heading(s): *kleos* ‘glory’

Reaching the end of her lament for Hector, Andromache declares ruefully: all that Hector cares about is whether the men and women of Troy will in the end think of him as a hero who deserves to have the *kleos* ‘glory’ of poetry. Even in defeat, Hector hopes to be worthy of epic. See already the comment on I.22.110. [[GN 2016.12.20 via BA 111.]]

1.22.515

Q&T via HPC 247

subject heading(s): lament; lament by Andromache; group performance of lament; antiphonal refrain

The lament of Andromache, as we see it come to a conclusion here at I.22.515, is a classic example of a group performance
as rounded out here at I.22.515 by way of an antiphonal refrain. For more on such group performance, see the anchor comment on I.19.282–302, where Briseis the Aeolian is featured as a distinctly choral personality, analogous to the personality of Sappho herself in the choral songs attributed to that Aeolian prima donna of a later era. [[GN 2016.12.17 via HPC 247.]]

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Iliad Rhapsody 23
2016.12.30 / enhanced 2018.09.20

The funeral that Achilles arranges here for Patroklos in the *Iliad* is in some ways a preview of the funeral that the Achaeans will arrange for Achilles himself beyond the time-frame of the *Iliad*. A high point of the funeral in *Iliad* 23 is a spectacular chariot race arranged by Achilles to honor his dead comrade Patroklos. But an earlier high point is a comparably spectacular cremation of his friend’s body. But this cremation of Patroklos, as a ritual, is far from perfect: it is in fact polluted, and the pollution will make Achilles look bad, at least for the moment. The polluted thoughts of the hero, as evidenced by his dragging the corpse of Hector behind his speeding chariot, will drive him to extremes that will challenge the cosmic order. But the Master Narrator of the *Iliad* will remedy the pollution, and the remedy will take the form of actually narrating the grim story. In the process of this narration, a great lesson will be learned about life, death, and a hoped-for recovery of life. [[GN 2016.12.30.]]

Figure 23. Achilles dragging the body of Hector. Copperplate etching (1795) by Tommaso Piroli, after a drawing (1793) by John Flaxman. Image via Wikimedia Commons.

I.23.001–064

Q&T I.23.58–64 via H24H 8§6

subject heading(s): preparing for the funeral of Patroklos; dysfunctionality in myth vs. functionality in ritual; post-heroic age

While the Trojans are mourning Hector in Troy, I.23.001, Achilles and his fellow Achaeans have all returned to the ships beached at the Hellespont, I.23.001–002, and the hero now calls on the Myrmidons, whose leader he is, to perform special funerary rituals in mourning for Patroklos. The Myrmidon warriors are to mourn Patroklos while driving their chariots around his dead body three times, I.23.007–009, I.23.013–014, after which they are to unharness the chariots and join in a funeral feast arranged by Achilles. The ritual act of mourning while driving, as performed by the Myrmidons, is described overall as a γόος ‘lament’, I.23.010, for which Achilles himself is the principal performer, as signaled by the verbarkhein ‘lead off [in performing]’, I.23.012. The words of his lead-off lament are quoted at I.23.019–023. In this lament, Achilles addresses the dead Patroklos and repeats to him at I.23.20–23 the two deeds that he had promised at I.18.334–337 to perform before the funeral could take place. First, Achilles had promised to bring back, together with the dead body of Hector, the armor that Hector had stripped from the dead body of Patroklos, and now he reiterates that promise, adding two ghastly details about the dead body of Hector: he has dragged the corpse behind his chariot and intends to feed it to the dogs, I.23.021. And, second, Achilles had also promised to slaughter twelve captive Trojan youths on the funeral pyre of Patroklos and then to
cremate their bodies together with the body of Patroklos himself, I.23.022–23. After repeating these promises to Patroklos within the wording of his quoted lament, I.23.020–023, Achilles now prepares for the funeral feast—but not before displaying the dead body of Hector, lying face down in the dust, I.23.024–026, next to the stand where the dead body of Patroklos is lying in state. Then, after the Myrmidons unharness their chariots, I.23.026–027, they sit down next to the ship of Achilles in order to partake of the feast, I.23.028, and the slaughter of the sacrificial animals to be eaten at the funeral feast gets underway, I.23.029–034. Nothing is said here about cooking the meat. Instead, the last thing said about this funeral feast of the Myrmidons is that the blood flowing from the mass slaughter of sacrificial animals is streaming all around the corpse of Patroklos, I.23.034. It seems as if the Myrmidons were feasting on raw meat, just as their leader Achilles had expressed the ghastly desire to cut up the mortally wounded Hector and to eat him raw, I.22.346–347. See the comment on I.22.346–348. Meanwhile, the leaders of the Achaeans come to the ship of Achilles and persuade him, with some difficulty, to leave behind the funeral feast of the Myrmidons and to come along with them to the headquarters of Agamemnon, I.23.035–038, where the order is given to prepare for Achilles some hot water for him to wash off all the blood that still covers him, I.23.039–041. Evidently, Agamemnon is preparing for an all-Achaean feast to be attended by Achilles, who is now expected to wash up before the feast begins. And it is only at this moment that we see for the first time that Achilles is still covered in gore. The blood of all the Trojans he has slaughtered on the battlefield is still on him and with him. Already before, Achilles must have been covered in gore when he had hosted the feast for that sub-set of Achaeans who were his own people, the Myrmidons. Back then, neither Achilles nor any of his Myrmidons had washed off the human blood of the killing fields before the shedding of the animal blood at the sacrifice that preceded their funeral feast. But now, for the all-Achaean feast, Achilles is expected to wash up. Not surprisingly, Achilles refuses, declaring at I.23.043–044 that he will remain covered with gore and will refrain from washing off the blood until he performs three sacred tasks. He now names these tasks at I.23.045–046: first, he will cremate Patroklos, I.23.045, and, second, he will make a tumulus that will be a sêma ‘tomb’ for Patroklos, I.23.045, and, third, he will at an earlier point cut off a long lock of his own hair as a sacrifice to be burned on the funeral pyre of his friend, I.23.046. That said, however, Achilles goes on to urge Agamemnon to continue with the plan for an all-Achaean feast, I.23.048—provided that the Achaeans follow up on their nighttime feasting by going out next morning in order to gather firewood for constructing the funeral pyre that will be used for the cremation of Patroklos, I.23.049–053. The Achaeans proceed to indulge in their feasting and then return to their shelters for a night’s sleep, I.23.054–058, while Achilles goes off without having had anything to eat, mourning Patroklos, and he finds a solitary spot on the beach, where he lies down, exhausted, and falls into a deep sleep, I.23.059–064. What will happen next, at I.23.071-076, is the apparition of the spirit of Patroklos. Before commenting on the apparition scene, however, I must pause to note that the narrative has already indicated five salient points of dysfunctionality in the preparations of Achilles for the funeral of Patroklos:

Point 1. The intent of Achilles to slaughter twelve captive Trojan youths as a human sacrifice is understood to be ritually incorrect. See the comment on I.23.163–183. And the fact that he will go through with it and will actually perform the deed will in retrospect be understood to be morally incorrect as well. See the comment on I.23.163–183. In myth, human sacrifice is a pollution, both ritually and morally. And such pollution is typical of what can perhaps best be described as a traditional pattern of dysfunctionality in myth—as opposed to functionality in ritual, where animal sacrifice is understood to be a salvific replacement of human sacrifice. As we see from the myth of Pelops as narrated in Pindar’s Olympian 1, for example, the slaughtering of Pelops is a dysfunctional sacrifice in the heroic world of myth, but it becomes an aetiology for the functional sacrifice of rams in the post-heroic world of ritual as practiced in Olympia during the archaic and Classical periods and beyond (detailed analysis in PH 116–135). In this connection, I offer a working definition of aetiology (background in PH 118, 125–130; 141–142; 386; 395–397; also Nagy 2011a§68) an aetiology focuses on a foundational catastrophe in the mythologized past that explains and thus motivates continuing success in the ritualized present and future.

Point 2. The dragging of Hector’s corpse by Achilles is likewise understood to be ritually incorrect, and such incorrectness is in this case noted by Homeric poetry, which signals also the moral incorrectness of mistreating a corpse. See the comment on I.23.163–183. Here I invoke a general principle at work in myths about ancient Greek heroes: whenever heroes commit deeds that clearly violate moral codes, such deeds are not condoned by the heroic narrative. See H24H §52, where I work out an analysis of such a principle, to be summarized in this formulation: the pollution of a hero in myth is relevant to the worship of that hero in ritual. Especially relevant to this formulation, as we will see in later comments,
are myths that aetiologize rituals of seasonally recurring athletic competitions: the ritual of competing in an athletic event is thought to purify the original pollution of the hero in myth (analysis in H24H 7a§14).

Point 3. The intent of Achilles to feed Hector’s corpse to dogs and birds is clearly understood to be a blatant abomination both ritually and morally. In this case, however, Achilles will never get to perform such a horrific deed.

Point 4. There is something wrong about the funeral feast of the Myrmidons as arranged by Achilles. The blood of sacrifice is not offset here by any mention of cooking the meat to be eaten.

Point 5. Achilles is ritually incorrect in not purifying himself of human blood before he undertakes the three ritually correct actions of cutting his hair, cremating the body of Patroklos, and entombing his bones.

All five of these points, as we will see retrospectively in the anchor comment at I.23.184–191, are examples of pollution. [[GN 2016.12.27.]]

I.23.012

subject heading(s): arkhein ‘lead off [in performing]’

This word arkhein ‘lead off [in performing]’ refers here to the performance of lament as song correlated with dance, and Achilles is the lead performer here. The stylized dance that is correlated here with the singing of lament includes the choreographed parading of Myrmidons riding in their chariots around the corpse of Patroklos. [[GN 2016.12.29 via BA 112, 117.]]

I.23.016

subject heading(s): pothein ‘long for’; hero cult; cult hero

The Myrmidons, led by Achilles, ‘feel a longing’ for Patroklos as they mourn him here in lament, and this ‘longing’ is expressed by way of the verb pothein ‘long for, desire’. The wording here evokes the feelings of those who worship cult heroes, as we see especially at I.02.703 and I.02.709: see the comments on I.02.695–709 and also on I.17.685–690. [[GN 2016.12.29.]]

I.23.017

subject heading(s): ex-arkhein ‘lead off [in performing]’; gōs ‘lament’

The word ex-arkhein ‘lead off [in performing]’ refers here to the same performance that was signaled at I.23.07, and Achilles remains the lead performer of lament as sung and danced by the Myrmidons. The specific form of ‘lament’ here is specified as gōs. [[GN 2016.12.29 via BA 112, 116.]]

I.23.045

subject heading(s): sēma ‘tomb’

The sēma ‘tomb’ that will be made for Patroklos is visualized as a tumulus. [[GN 2016.12.29 via PH 209; GMP 215.]]

I.23.046–047

Q&T via BA 81

subject heading(s): akhos ‘grief’; a man of constant sorrow

The word akhos ‘grief’ here at I.23.047, indicative of lament, is embedded in the actual words of lamentation performed by Achilles at I.23.043–053. The grief that Achilles feels for Patroklos, he says, will never go away: Achilles is now a man of
constant sorrow. See especially the comment on I.18.015–073; also the comment on I.09.249–250. [[GN 2016.12.29 via BA 81, 94, 112, 117; HTL 132.]]

I.23.065–092

Q&T I.23.065–092 via H24H 8§6

subject heading(s): apparition of psükhe ‘spirit’ of Patroklos; cremation; entombment

At I.23.065, the psükhe ‘spirit’ of the dead Patroklos appears to Achilles while the hero sleeps. Achilles is instructed by the ghostly spirit of Patroklos to cremate his corpse, I.23.070–071 / I.23.076, and to construct a tomb that will be shared by the two heroes after Achilles too is dead, I.23.083–084, 091–092. [[GN 2016.12.20 via GMP 89, 226.]]

I.23.071–076

anchor comment on what the psükhe ‘spirit’ of Patroklos really wants for itself—and for Achilles

subject heading(s): psükhe ‘spirit’; cremation; entombment; Ökeanos; Hädēs; Gates of Hädēs; Gates of the Sun

On the surface, what the psükhe ‘spirit’ of Patroklos wants is a proper funeral for the corpse of Patroklos. But what does the psükhe really want for itself? I ask the question this way in order to highlight a basic fact about the use of the word psükhe in Homeric diction: as a disembodied conveyor of identity after death, the psükhe is distinct from the body once the body is no longer alive. In view of this distinction, the answer to the question I just posed is partly evident—but also partly mystical. Here is my formulation of the answer: what the psükhe really wants for itself is to be reunited with the body, and such a reunion must be achieved by way of a proper funeral. The part that is mystical about this formulation is the fact that the very idea of a proper funeral is a ritual construct that fits the mythological construct of the psükhe. The ritual must be done right, and then the myth of the psükhe will turn out to be right. So, it is imperative for Achilles to get things right in preparing a proper funeral for Patroklos. And how will Achilles make sure that the funeral of Patroklos is a proper funeral? Most important, there must be a ritually correct entombment, I.23.071, and a vital part of this entombment will be the actual cremation of the corpse, I.23.070–071 / I.23.076. Before cremation of the corpse, the psükhe as a ‘spirit’ that used to belong to the body will be haunting the world of the living, but, after cremation, there will be no more haunting, I.23.075–076. So, what will happen to the psükhe after cremation of the body? It is often assumed by readers of these verses at I.23.071–076 that the psükhe as ‘spirit’, once the body is cremated, will now simply join the other psükhai or ‘spirits’ who are already in Hädēs, and that will be the end of that. But the original Greek wording does not say that. In my opinion, what it really says gets misunderstood. What follows is a reinterpretation of I.23.071–076, divided into ten points:

Point 1. I start with evidence from Homeric poetry about the underworld known as Hädēs. I argue that Hädēs is a zone of transition for the psükhe ‘spirit’ as it journeys from the Far West to the Far East. In this mystical zone, psükhai can get lost along the underworld pathways leading from west to east, and then they will wander around, but they can also find the way, and, from the very start, the right way can be achieved by way of cremation. There will be much more to say about Hädēs in comments on the Odyssey. For now, however, it is enough to say at least this much more on the basis of the internal evidence of I.23.071–076: without a proper cremation and entombment, the psükhe of Patroklos will not achieve safe passage through Hädēs. I make a special point here of saying through Hädēs and not to Hädēs. As I will argue further in comments on the Odyssey, Homeric poetry treats Hädēs as something that is transitional, not eschatological. In the Iliadic passage that is now being analyzed, I.23.071–076, even the psükhe ‘spirit’ is something that is ultimately transitional in its own right.

Point 2. At I.23.073, it is said that the psükhe ‘spirit’ of Patroklos is not allowed by the other psükhai ‘spirits’ to join them ‘on-the-other-side-of [huper] the river [potamos]’ (ὑπὲρ ὄρομαυολο), and that is why it is then said at I.23.074 that the psükhe of Patroklos is left to wander all over the realm of Hädēs. The point is, the psükhe of Patroklos is already in Hädēs, wandering around, and thus his psükhe is not being excluded from Hädēs by the other psükhai. Rather, as I argue here, the psükhe of Patroklos is being excluded from joining other psükhai who are no longer wandering around in Hädēs.
Point 3. And why are these other psúkhai no longer wandering around? It is because they have already found the way to get to the other side of the potamos ‘river’, I.23.073. And what is ‘the river’ here? In terms of Homeric poetry, this river must be the world-encircling fresh-water stream named Ökeanos, which as we saw in the comment on I.07.421–423 is a boundary delimiting light from darkness, wakefulness from sleep, life from death. The sun rises from the Ökeanos at sunrise in the Far East, as we see at I.07.421–423, just as it sets into it at sunset in the Far West, as we see at I.08.485–486. And the movement of the sun both into and out from the Ökeanos in the Far West and in the Far East respectively is envisioned as a cosmic model for an alternation between darkness and light, between sleep and awakening, between death and revival from death.

Point 4. This model is most relevant to what is meant when the psúkhé ‘spirit’ of Patroklès says at I.23.073 that the other psúkhai ‘spirits’ do not allow his spirit to join them ‘on-the-other-side-of [huper] the river [potamos]’ (ὑπὲρ ὄρμου). In this case, I argue, the circular cosmic river Ökeanos is imagined as separating the dead from the living in the Far East, where the sun rises, not in the Far West, where the sun sets.

Point 5. Correspondingly, the pulai ‘gates’ of Hādēs mentioned at I.23.071 are situated in the Far East, where the sun rises, not only in the Far West, where the sun sets. In support of this interpretation, I note that the pulai ‘gates’ of Hādēs at I.23.071 can be seen as a by-form of the pulai ‘gates’ of Hēlios the Sun, mentioned at I.24.012. See also the anchor comment at I.08.367 on: Gates of Hādēs. (Further analysis in GMP 225–226.)

Point 6. If, then, the Gates of Hādēs are the Gates of the Sun, then I can make more sense of what the psúkhé ‘spirit’ of Patroklès is saying at I.23.071, where this spirit expresses its desire to pass through the Gates of Hādēs. I argue that the psúkhē of Patroklès here is seeking passage through the gates of Hādēs that are situated in the Far East, where the sun rises, not through the gates that are situated in the Far West, where the son sets. See also the anchor comment at I.08.367 on: Gates of Hādēs.

Point 7. Similarly, the psúkhē ‘spirit’ of Patroklès seeks to cross the world-encircling cosmic river in the Far East, not in the Far West. Whereas the other side of the river in the Far West is the zone of Hādēs from the standpoint of the living, the other side of the same river in the Far East is a mystical place beyond the zone of Hādēs—from the standpoint of the dead who are still wandering around in Hādēs but who seek a renewal of life. As the psúkhē of Patroklès says at I.23.074, his spirit is still wandering around in the zone of Hādēs. And that is because his body has not yet received the ritual of cremation, which as we will now see will lead to a recovery of life after death.

Point 8. The scenario that I have put together here is based not only on the internal evidence of the wording at I.23.071–076 and elsewhere in Homeric poetry. It is based also on the comparative evidence of cognate Indic traditions centering on rituals of cremation as correlated with myths about a recovery of life after death. There is a detailed survey in the essay “Patroklès, Concepts of Afterlife, and the Indic Triple Fire,” GMP 85–121 (the essentials can be found at pp. 87, 115–121). In terms of Indic ritual and myth, cremation leads to a reunion: once the cremation takes place, the spirit without body and the body without spirit can now be reunited, and, this way, the dead can now be revived after death. Further, such a revival results in the reunion of the revived dead with the already revived pitṛ-s or ‘ancestors’. It is most relevant to note here that the Indic word pitṛ- ‘ancestor’ is cognate with the Greek word Patro- in the name Patrokliēnes, which means ‘he who has the glory [kleos] of the ancestors [pateres]’: thus the role of Patroklès in instructing Achilles about the vital importance of cremation is in and of itself a deeply traditional theme.

Point 9. On the basis of both the internal and the comparative evidence that I have assembled so far, my formulation about the the ritual of cremation as visualized in myth can now be extended. In this extended formulation, I start with a scenario that reconstructs the initial phase of what happens to the psúkhē after the body is successfully cremated:
After a successful cremation, the psūkhē will cease wandering around in Hādēs and will now find its way out. The psūkhē will cross the world-encircling river in the Far East and pass through the Gates of Hādēs, which are the Gates of the Sun, just as the sun passes through these same gates when it rises at sunrise.

Point 10. I now continue with a scenario that reconstructs the next phase of what happens to the psūkhē after the body is successfully cremated. In this case, I find no internal evidence in Homeric poetry, and so I turn to the comparative evidence of Vedic poetry in Indic traditions, which show at least the broad outlines. From here on, since I now rely primarily on the Indic comparanda, I will no longer say psūkhē but simply ‘spirit’, which can serve as an adequate translation for both the Greek word and the corresponding Indic word, máṇas-. This Indic word refers to the breath of life that leaves the body at death and is destined to be mystically reintegrated with the body after cremation. That said, I resume the scenario:

After finding its way out of the lower world, the spirit follows the path of the sun and joins the rising sun at sunrise, ascending into the skies and seeking to be reunited there with the body. Meanwhile, the body has already been vaporized by way of cremation, and its fumes ascend into the skies, seeking to be reunited there with the spirit.

Such a prospective reunion of spirit and body is the secret of immortalization after death, and the key to that secret is the ritual of cremation. [[GN 2016.12.26 via GMP 85–121, 226.]]

I.23.090

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’; therapontes (plural) of Ares; endukēōs ‘continuously, uninterrupted’

The spirit of the dead Patroklos is recounting how Peleus had entrusted Patroklos as atherapōn to Achilles. On the adverb endukēōs ‘continuously, uninterrupted’, see the anchor comment at O.07.256. Here the adverb may be highlighting an idea of continuity, linked with the ritual process of serving as a therapōn. [[GN 2017.05.30.]]

I.23.093–098

subject heading(s): the dreaming Achilles responds to the apparition; cremation; entombment; cutting of hair; mistreating the corpse of Hector

Achilles responds to the apparition in his dream, I.23.094–096, declaring to the spirit of Patroklos that he intends to do exactly what this spirit has instructed him to do. But the hero’s declaration here is interwoven with a question that he asks of the spirit: why do you appear to me and instruct me to do things that I already intended to do? This interwoven question at I.23.094–096 is most curious, since it is patently unjustifiable. I argue that the things intended by Achilles fail in more than one way to match the things intended by the psūkhē of Patroklos. There are two main reasons for making this argument:

First, Achilles intends to do more than the two things that Patroklos instructs him to do. As we saw at I.23.045–046, Achilles intends not only to cremate Patroklos and to entomb him but also to cut off a long lock of his own hair as a sacrifice to be burned on the funeral pyre of his friend. And he intends to do even more than that. As we saw in the lament of Achilles where he addressed the dead Patroklos, he repeats to him there at I.23.20–23 the two deeds that he had promised at I.18.334–337 to perform before the funeral could take place: first, Achilles had promised to bring back, together with the dead body of Hector, the armor that Hector had stripped from the dead body of Patroklos, and, second, he had also promised to slaughter twelve captive Trojan youths on the funeral pyre of Patroklos and then to cremate their bodies together with the body of Patroklos himself. And there is even more: as we have seen at I.22.326–330, at I.22.354, and at I.22.248 (together with I.22.354), Achilles intends to expose the body of Hector to be devoured by dogs and birds, after having degraded the corpse by
dragging it behind his chariot. But the fact is, the spirit of Patroklos had not spoken to Achilles about any of these other things.

And here is the second reason for arguing that the interwoven question of Achilles at I.23.094–096 is not justifiable: the fact is, Achilles had never spoken about any intent to have himself entombed together with Patroklos when the time comes for his own funeral. The idea of such a double entombment came from the psūkhē of Patroklos. [[GN 2016.12.27.]]

I.23.099–107

subject heading(s): the awakened Achilles reacts to the apparition; psūkhē ‘spirit’

While Achilles is still dreaming, he asks Patroklos to embrace him, I.23.097–098. With these words, Achilles finishes his speech to the spirit of Patroklos. Now the Master Narrator can take over, and he narrates how Achilles, having finished speaking to Patroklos, then reaches out to embrace him, I.23.099. But no contact can be made, since Patroklos is merely a psūkhē ‘spirit’, I.23.100, which recedes like a wisp of smoke and disappears beneath the earth, I.23.100–101. Now Achilles is jolted out of sleep, and he reflects ruefully on what he just experienced, I.23.101–106: this psūkhē ‘spirit’—he now refers to Patroklos this way at I.23.104 and I.23.106—is just an eidōlon ‘likeness’ of Patroklos and is devoid of any phrenes ‘senses’, and yet he looked just like the real Patroklos, I.23.107. The surprise expressed by Achilles here in reacting to the realistic appearance of Patroklos recalls an earlier point in the narrative: when the psūkhē of Patroklos is first sighted at I.23.065, already in that first moment of its apparition, it is pictured as life-size, I.23.066—so, it is not a miniature version of the self. In other traditions, as reflected in vase-paintings dated mostly to the late sixth century BCE, the size of such a psūkhē ‘spirit’ is in fact miniaturized. See the comment on I.24.014–121. [[GN 2016.12.27.]]

I.23.108–126

subject heading(s): firewood for the funeral pyre

Now that the spirit of Patroklos has departed and Achilles has reacted to the evanescence of this spirit, morning comes. It is time for the Achaeans to gather the firewood that will be used to construct the funeral pyre for the cremation of Patroklos. [[GN 2016.12.28.]]

I.23.113

anchor comment on Meriones as therapōn of Idomeneus

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’

Meriones is consistently marked as the therapōn of Idomeneus, just as Patroklos is the therapōn of Achilles. Though Meriones as a therapōn of Idomeneus is a ritual substitute for that king of all the Cretans, this recessive member of the pair does not die for that dominant member. We see here a radical contrast with Patroklos, who does in fact die for Achilles. Meriones stays alive, destined to become a dominant hero in his own right. And a dress-rehearsal, as it were, for this status of eventual dominance is the role of Meriones as a competing chariot driver in the chariot race of iliad 23. It is Meriones who competes in that race, not Idomeneus. [[GN 2016.08.04 via Nagy 2015.05.01.]]

I.23.124

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’

See anchor comment at I.23.113 on Meriones as therapōn of Idomeneus. [[GN 2016.08.04 via Nagy 2015.05.01.]]

I.23.125–126

anchor comment on tomb of Achilles, part 1

Q&T via HPC 150
The anchor comment here at I.23.125–126, combined with the anchor comments at I.23.245–248...256–257 and at O.24.076–084, add up to an overall commentary on the three direct references that are made to the tomb of Achilles in Homeric poetry. In the first reference here, at I.23.125–126, it is already made clear that the place for constructing the funeral pyre that will cremate the corpse of Patroklos will be the same place where the tomb for Patroklos will also be constructed—and that this tomb will ultimately enclose not only the bones of Patroklos but also the bones of Achilles. This place is described as a lofty aktē 'promontory', I.23.125, and εἰριόν is the word for the 'tomb' that will be prepared after the cremation, I.23.126. It is specified that this tomb is intended for entombing not only Patroklos but also Achilles, when the time comes for his own funeral, I.23.126. So, we now see that Achilles has heeded the instructions of Patroklos to make a tomb for the two heroes to share. And, as we will see when we reach the anchor comment at I.23.245–248...256–257, this tomb will be incomplete until Achilles is entombed together with Patroklos. Ultimately, this tomb will belong primarily to Achilles. See also anchor comment at I.23.245–248...256–257 on: tomb of Achilles, part 2; and anchor comment at O.24.076–084 on: tomb of Achilles, part 3. [[IGN 2016.12.26.]]

I.23.127–137

subject heading(s): funeral procession for Patroklos; cutting the hair

At the place where the firewood is gathered for the funeral pyre, Achilles organizes a funeral procession of the Myrmidons in honor of Patroklos. The Myrmidons are in in full battle gear as they make their appearance at the event: in the forefront are their chariot drivers and chariot riders, parading in their chariots, followed by the masses of infantry, I.23.132–134. Then they all cut their hair, placing the sheared locks on the body of Patroklos, lying in state, I.23.135–136. Achilles presides over the entire event as the chief mourner, I.23.136–137. [[IGN 2016.12.28 via H24H 14§26a.]]

I.23.138–153

subject heading(s): making the funeral pyre; Achilles cuts his hair; post-heroic age

Now the making of the funeral pyre may begin. And, in preparation, Achilles will cut his own golden-blond hair, I.23.141, placing into the lifeless hands of Patroklos the long lock that he shears off, I.23.152–153. (What follows is epitomized from H24H 12§26a.) The long unshorn hair of Achilles had ostentatiously signaled his pre-adult status. Once his hair is cut short, he can become an adult. In this Homeric scene, as we see Achilles standing on the heights of the promontory that will become the setting for the tumulus that encloses his own body, he wistfully looks out over the seas of the outer Hellespont, fixing his gaze toward the far west, in the direction of his native land of Thessaly, and longing for the river Sperkheios that flows through that distant land: it was to the waters of that river, which he will never live to see again, that he had hoped to sacrifice his long hair after he came of age and was ready to cut it, I.23.142-153. But now Achilles cuts his long hair prematurely and unseasonably as he stands there on the promontory, I.23.142. Meanwhile, the Myrmidons led by Achilles will anticipate his example, likewise cutting their hair, I.23.135–136. (At H24H 14§26a, I need to clarify what I say about I.23.135–136: it is only the Myrmidons, not the Achaeans en masse, who cut their hair here.) This ritual gesture of cutting the hair in mourning for Patroklos will later be extended after Achilles himself is killed: what then happens at his own funeral is that all the Achaeans, not only the Myrmidons, will join in the same gesture: as we learn at O.24.046, all the Danaoi=Achaeans will cut their hair for Achilles. But now, at I.23.138–153, Achilles himself will show the way by cutting his own hair, thus prefiguring what all the Achaeans will do en masse at his own funeral. Do as I do. Achilles shows the way to mourn him later by now cutting his own hair in mourning for his other self Patroklos. Moreover, this same ritual gesture of cutting the hair in response to the death of Achilles becomes an aetiology for explaining why it is that Greek men of the post-heroic age customarily wear their hair short, not long—except for such notable counter-examples as the Spartans. In a work of Philostratus, On Heroes (51.13), we read the following succinct formulation of an aetiology for this generalized Greek custom: ‘no longer could they [= the Achaeans] consider it a beautiful thing to grow their hair long, in the time after Achilles’ (οὐδὲ κομήν ἕπι μετά τοῦ Ἀχιλλέα καλὸν ηγούμενοι). In the wording of this aetiology, it is as if the death of Achilles were the single reason that explains why adult men of the post-heroic age no longer wore their hair long. It is as if all the ‘sons of the Achaeans’ were now ready to shift from pre-adult to adult status—once Achilles was dead and buried. The term ‘sons of the Achaeans’—as the Achaeans warriors are conventionally described in the Iliad (I.01.162 and so on)—implies a pre-adult status for all those ‘boys’ who fought in the Trojan War. But now those fighting ‘boys’ of the heroic age have reached a post-heroic maturity that inaugurates a post-heroic age. [[IGN 2016.12.28.]]
subject heading(s): attendance at the cremation of Patroklos is restricted

So far, the preparations for cremation, with all the preliminary rituals, have been open to all the Achaeans. But now Achilles urges Agamemnon to send them away to their dinners. So, attendance at the cremation will be restricted. Only the kind of person who was a kēdeos ‘mourning-relation’ for Patroklos may attend the event, I.23.160. Other than these men, only the agoi ‘leaders’ of the Achaeans are also allowed to attend, I.23.160. But there is something odd about the exclusion of the Achaean masses from participating in the cremation. This exclusion, as we are about to see, can be connected with five signs indicating that the ritual of cremation for Patroklos was about to be somehow compromised, even polluted. [[GN 2016.12.28.]]

I.23.163–183

subject heading(s): cremation of Patroklos

Now the cremation proceeds to the finish. The kēdeomenes or ‘mourning-relations’ who stayed behind may now complete the task of making a mighty funeral pyre, I.23.163–164, and then they place the corpse of Patroklos on top of the pyre, I.23.165. What follows next is a spectacular array of sacrificial offerings that are also placed on the pyre, to be burned together with Patroklos, I.166–178. The offerings include sacrificial animals that are ritually slaughtered before being placed on the pyre: included are sheep and cattle at I.23.166, horses at I.23.171–172, and dogs at I.23.173–174. And then, the last and most important of the sacrificial offerings are the twelve Trojan youths that Achilles had already promised to slaughter as a human sacrifice: Achilles will now personally cut their throats and leave their bodies to be cremated alongside Patroklos, I.23.175–178. Then, to finish off the ritual of cremation, Achilles addresses Patroklos, picturing him in the realm of Hādēs, I.23.179. Achilles boasts again, as he had done before, that he has done everything that he has promised to do, I.23.180—but the only one of those things that he now mentions here specifically is the sacrifice of the Trojan youths, I.23.181–182. There is something very wrong here, and the Master Narrator knows it. Already at I.23.176, where he highlights the moment when the Trojan youths are killed before being cremated, the Master Narrator says about Achilles: ‘and he had bad intentions in in his mind’ (κακά δὲ φρεοὶ μῆτετο ἔρυγο). By intending things that look bad for his victims, he is making himself look bad. See also the comment on I.22.395–405, with reference to I.22.395. So, what makes Achilles look bad here? For an answer, I repeat what I already said at Point 1 in the comment on 1.23.01–064: the killing of the Trojan youths as a form of human sacrifice is in retrospect understood to be morally wrong. In myth, human sacrifice is a pollution. And such pollution is an instance of dysfunctionality in myth as opposed to functionality in ritual, where animal sacrifice is understood to be a salvific replacement of human sacrifice. And the idea that something is polluted in the thinking of Achilles when he slaughters the youths is linked to something else in his train of thought as he goes on to say one more thing about this killing: at least the bodies of the youths were devoured by the fire of cremation, I.23.183. But then he adds in the same train of thought: by contrast, the body of Hector will be devoured by dogs, I.23.183. So, Achilles expresses here once again a ghastly intention that he has expressed so many times before. But, this time, the expression becomes the final moment in the ritual of cremation for Patroklos. And to bring the whole ritual of cremation to such a conclusion is I think a sign of pollution. Here I find it relevant to epitomize what I already said at Points 2 and 3 in the comment on 1.23.01–064 about the mistreatment of Hector’s corpse by Achilles: both the dragging of the corpse and the intent to feed it to dogs and birds are signs of pollution [[GN 2016.12.28.]]

I.23.184–191

anchor comment on the salvation of Hector’s body

subject heading(s): beau mort (a dead body made beautiful by way of a beautiful death, une belle mort)

As we will now see, the gods are well aware of the ongoing pollution, and they counteract it by way of purification, which takes the form of preserving the body of Hector from the mistreatment intended by Achilles. Right after Achilles declares once again at I.23.183 that he will expose his enemy’s body as prey to be devoured by dogs, the Master Narrator firmly contradicts him at I.23.184: no, the dogs will not be devouring the body of Hector. And why? Because the gods will not allow it. Aphrodite herself is keeping the hellish hounds away from the corpse, I.23.185–186. And the goddess is applying to Hector’s skin a salve that is ambrosia- ‘immortalizing’, thus keeping it intact and saving the beautiful flesh from any
disfigurement—no matter how many times Achilles will drag the corpse behind his speeding chariot, I.23.186–187. (On the word *ambroto-/ambrosio-* in the sense of ‘immortalizing’, not ‘immortal’, see the relevant comment on I.16.670.) So, the goddess of sexual beauty has kept the naked body of Hector beautiful to the point of becoming sexually attractive: Hector is now the definitive *beau mort*, the beautiful corpse, since his dead body has been made beautiful by way of a beautiful death, *une belle mort*. (See HC 4§286, with bibliography on the French terminology; see also the relevant comment on I.17.050–060.) For the first time here at I.23.184–191, we see that the body of Hector was never even disfigured—despite the horrific visions of disfigurement that the Master Narrator allowed to be imagined at I.22.395–405 and even later at 1.23.1–64. (See especially the comment on I.22.395–405.) Now, all those darkly horrific visions of ugliness recede in the beautiful light of divine intervention. Not only does Aphrodite apply her immortalizing salve to Hector’s flesh, I.23.186–187, but Apollo does even more, enveloping the hero’s entire body in a divine glow that will shield it from all decay and pollution, I.23.188–191. And by now we can see that the action of the gods in perfectly preserving the dead body of Hector is an act of perfect purification that counteracts the self-pollution of Achilles in mistreating the corpse. We have already seen that the polluted thoughts of Achilles had even compromised the ritual of cremation for Patroclus. But now we will see that the saving of Hector’s body by the gods will lead to an overall purification that will in the course of time counteract not only the specific pollution of mistreating the corpse of Hector but also the overall pollution that has compromised the ritual of cremating the corpse of Patroclus. And the gods will accomplish this overall purification by saving Hector’s body as a ritually idealized corpse that is worthy of a ritually ideal cremation—which will actually take place in *Iliad* 24. Even before we reach the narration of that ideal cremation in *Iliad* 24, eight points need to be made already now about the picturing of Hector’s body as a ritually idealized corpse here at I.23.184–191:

Point 1. The etymology of the noun *sōma*, conventionally translated as ‘body’, is relevant to the ritual idealization of Hector’s corpse in *Iliad* 23. To make this argument, I start by returning here to the basic idea that Hector’s corpse is ideal because it was saved for a ritually ideal cremation—and thus saved from the horrors of exposition to dogs and birds.

Point 2. That said, I propose that this idea of something that is saved matches the etymology of *sōma*, which I explain as an action-noun derived from a verb that survives as *sōzein* in classical Greek prose, meaning ‘save’. This relatively late form of the verb, *sōzein*, is already attested in Homeric poetry (as at O.05.490: ouc[ou]v), though the dominant use of the same verb in this poetry preserves an uncontracted (and thus older) shape of the root, which is *sa(w)xɔ*- (as at I.24.035: πακ[α]ζων). The contracted (and thus newer) shape of the root, which is *sɔ*- occurs normally in the ‘weak’ metrical positions of the Homeric hexameter (that is, in the second long of a sequence long-long, which derives from a sequence long-short-short), but there is already an attestation of this same shape in a “strong” metrical position (that is, in the first long of a sequence long-long or in the long of a sequence long-short-short): in this case, the root is attested in the adjective *sós*, meaning ‘safe or ‘saved’, at I.22.332 (ὀντως ὤμομεν). Similarly, the root of the noun *sōma* is attested in a “strong” metrical position throughout its occurrences in Homeric hexameter. In terms of my proposal, then, *sōma* was an action-noun derived from a contracted form of its verb-root: so, from *sɔ*-, not from *sao*- As an action-noun derived from a verb meaning ‘save’, it would have originally meant ‘saving’ — and then later became concretized to mean ‘the thing saved’. Here is a semantic parallel: the action-noun *sperma*, derived from the verb-root *sper-*, meaning ‘sow’, originally meant ‘sowing’—and then later become concretized to mean ‘a thing that is sown’, that is, ‘seed’. An ideal corpse, then, in terms of the etymology I propose, is a thing that is saved.

Point 3. In Homeric diction, this word *sōma* as applied to heroes refers to a ‘body’ that is already dead but needs to be saved from mistreatment or from dangers in general. The clearest example is at I.22.342: Hector, mortally wounded by Achilles and already on the verge of death, is making a final plea to Achilles, asking him to show mercy not to the dying Hector but to the dead Hector that he will be after he has died, and this dead Hector is called here the *sōma* of Hector. To say it another way, Achilles is asked to show mercy to the *sōma* of Hector after Hector is already dead and his body is already a corpse. That is why Hector is pleading for his *sōma* to be returned to Troy, where the Trojans can arrange for it to have the proper ritual of cremation, I.22.342–343. Such an arrangement is anticipated already at I.07.079–080.
Point 4. By making this plea, Hector is at the same time pleading for his body not to be exposed as prey for dogs to devour, I.22.339: ‘don’t let the dogs at the ships of the Achaeans ravage me’ (μη με ἐκ παρὰ νησίων κύκαις καταδάψῃ Ἀχαϊῶν). Here the future corpse of Hector is starkly equated with the present self of Hector. He is not even saying here, ‘don’t let the dogs devour my body’, but instead he says more simply, ‘don’t let the dogs devour me’. This idea of the dead body as the self has already been highlighted in the comment at I.01.003–005.

Point 5. As for the outcome of Hector’s plea here, I have already analyzed in the comment on I.22.346–348 the savage response of Achilles, who declares his certainty that, yes, he will expose Hector’s corpse as prey for dogs and birds to devour, I.22.248 (also I.22.354). But I concentrate here only on the wording of the original plea that provoked the response. In terms of this wording, the sōma is something that needs to be saved for cremation and thus saved from harm. The sōma must be saved. It needs salvation. And, ideally, the sōma is in fact saved. That is the ritualized ideal that we see reflected in the etymology, to be interpreted as ‘the thing that is saved’.

Point 6. I find it relevant to add, however, that Homeric diction can also turn the meaning of sōma upside down: in two contexts, I.03.023 and I.18.161, sōma refers to a carcass that is being devoured by a ravenous lion that holds on to it and won’t let go. For wild animals, then, the sōma is something that must be saved for devouring. For humans, by contrast, the sōma is something that must be saved from being devoured by wild animals—and thus saved for cremation.

Point 7. In Homeric poetry, the saving of the corpse for cremation translates into a salvation of the self by way of cremation. Hector’s cremation in the heroic age, as we will see it described in iIiad 24, will become a model for all cremations in the post-heroic age. And this cremation of Hector in iIiad 24 will undo the pollutions that had compromised the cremation of Patroklos in iIiad 23. These pollutions will be purified by way of narrating the cremation of Hector, which will be done right and which will therefore be free of pollution. In the future, as the cremation of Hector demonstrates, there will be no more polluting of cremation as a ritual, as there had been at the cremation of Patroklos. No longer will there by any human sacrifices. No longer will the mistreatment of corpses be condoned. The polluting of rituals like cremation in the heroic age of myth will be superseded by the purifying of these same rituals in the post-heroic age of ritual, which is the era of the Homeric present, when rituals can be done right.

Point 8. The rituals of the post-heroic age include not only the aristocratic and vastly expensive practice of cremation. They include also the wildly popular medium of epic performance as exemplified by the Homeric poetry of the iIiad. If epic performance is ritualized, which is what I argue, then the actual narration of all the events that supposedly took place in the heroic age is a ritual in and of itself. And, as a ritual, epic performance can be a form of purification in its own right. Whatever events are narrated in Homeric poetry, the performance of these events, good or bad, is purified simply by way of being narrated. It is in this context that we can view the five salient points of dysfunctionality in the preparations of Achilles for the funeral of Patroklos, as listed in the comment on 1.23.01–064. In retrospect, all five of these points show examples of pollution. And all five of these examples can ultimately be counteracted by the purifying power of narration in epic performance. Epic narration can purify pollution. [[GN 2016.12.29.]]

I.23.245–248 ... 256–257

anchor comment on tomb of Achilles, part 2

The tomb of Patroklos, called tumbos here at I.1.23.245, will also become the tomb of Achilles when his time comes to die. It is to be built on a small scale until Achilles is entombed there as well, I.23.245–246. But then, with the entombment of Achilles together with Patroklos, the size of the tomb will become spectacular in both height and width, I.23.246–247. So, this tomb will be incomplete until Achilles is entombed together with Patroklos—at which point it becomes truly the tomb of Achilles. So, instead of saying here that the tomb of Patroklos will also become the tomb of Achilles, it would be more accurate to say...
that the tomb of Patroklos will simply belong to Achilles. The spirit of Patroklos, when he appeared to Achilles and instructed him to construct a tomb for the two of them, was really pointing the way for Achilles to have a tomb of his own. There now follows at I.23.248 a pointed reference to the Achaeans of the future who will be sailing past the promontory on top of which the tomb is located and marvelling at the sight of the structure, which is called a σέμα ‘tomb’ at I.23.257. This visualization, as we will see in the anchor comment at O.24.076–084, makes it all the more clear that the tomb of Patroklos will in fact turn into the tomb of Achilles. See also anchor comment at I.23.125–126 on: tomb of Achilles, part 1; and anchor comment at O.24.076–084 on: tomb of Achilles, part 3. [[GN 2016.12.31.]]

I.23.257–258

subject heading(s): ἀγών ‘competition’

An ἀγών, as here at I.23.258, is literally a ‘coming together’ for competition; so, by extension, the word comes to mean ‘competition’. For more on the meaning and the etymology, see H24H 21§1. Here at I.23.257–258 is where the so-called Funeral Games for Patroklos will commence. And they will end at I.24.001. See the comment on that verse. The ritual practice of athletic competition as a compensation for death is amply attested in Greek traditions: see H24H 8a§1–14. Here at I.23.258 the ἀγών can now begin to compensate for the death of Patroklos. [[GN 2016.12.31.]]

I.23.326–343

Q&T via H24H 7§3

subject heading(s): σέμα ‘sign, signal; tomb’


[326] I [= Nestor] will tell you [= Antiokhos] a sign [σέμα], a very clear one, which will not get lost in your thinking. [327] Standing over there is a stump of deadwood, a good reach above ground level. [328] It had been either an oak or a pine. And it hasn’t rotted away from the rains. [329] There are two white rocks propped against either side of it. [330] There it is, standing at a point where two roadways meet, and it has a smooth track on both sides of it for driving a chariot. [331] It is either the tomb [σέμα] of some mortal who died a long time ago [332] or was a turning point [νύσσα] in the times of earlier men. [333] Now swift-footed radiant Achilles has set it up as a turning point [τεμπέρα plural]. [334] Get as close to it as you can when you drive your chariot horses toward it, [335] and keep leaning toward one side as you stand on the platform of your well-built chariot, [336] leaning to the left as you drive your horses. Your right-side horse [337] you must goad, calling out to it, and give that horse some slack as you hold its reins, [338] while you make your left-side horse get as close as possible to the turning point, [339] so that the hub will seem to be almost grazing the post [340] - the hub of your well-made chariot wheel. But be careful not to touch the stone [of the turning point], [341] or else you will get your horses hurt badly and break your chariot in pieces. [342] That would make other people happy, but for you it would be a shame. [343] yes it would. So, near and dear [ phíλος] as you are to me, you must be sound in your thinking and be careful.

(Epitomized from H24H 7§3–6) I concentrate here on the use of the word σέμα in two verses, I.23.326 and I.23.331, concerning the σέμα or ‘sign’ given by the hero Nestor to his son, the hero Antiokhos, about the σέμα or ‘tomb’ of an
unnamed hero. I divide my analysis into four parts:

Part 1. The two verses come from a passage where Nestor gives instructions to Antilokhos about the driving skills required for a charioteer to make a left turn around a landmark. As we will now learn from the context, this landmark is meant to be used as a turning point in the course of a chariot race that is being planned as the culminating athletic event of the Funeral Games for Patroklos in *Iliad* 23. In the words of Nestor, this landmark is either a sēma, ‘tomb’, of an unnamed hero of the distant past, I.23.331, or it was once upon a time a ‘turning point’, a nussa, I.23.332, used for chariot races that must have taken place in such a distant past. As I will argue, the master narrative of the *Iliad* shows that this sēma or ‘tomb’ is to be understood as the tomb of Patroklos himself, which he will share with Achilles once Achilles too is dead. To understand this is to understand the sēma or ‘sign’ given by the hero Nestor.

Part 2. The sēma that is the ‘tomb’ of the unnamed hero at I.23.331 is also a ‘sign’ of that hero’s cult, as signaled by the sēma or ‘sign’ that is conveyed by the speaker at I.23.326. That is what I once argued in an essay entitled “Sēma and Noēsis: The Hero’s Tomb and the ‘Reading’ of Symbols in Homer and Hesiod” (GM 202-222). As I pointed out in that essay, we know from evidence external to Homeric poetry that the tomb of a cult hero could be used as the actual turning point of a chariot race: in the historical period, starting with the adoption of chariot racing in the athletic program of the Olympics (this adoption has been dated at around 680 BCE), the turning-point of chariot-races could be conceptualized as the tomb of a hero, whose restless spirit was capable of “spooking” the horses at the most dangerous moment of the chariot-race, the left turn around the turning point. (GMP 215-216, with reference to Pausanias 6.20.15-19).

Part 3. According to the wording of Nestor, however, there seem at first to be two different interpretations of the landmark that he is showing to Antilokhos: what is being visualized is either a tomb of a cult hero from the distant past or it is a turning point for chariot races that must have taken place in such a distant past. The landmark is an ambivalent sign. At least, it seems ambivalent, short range, on the basis of Nestor’s wording in this passage. Long range, however, on the basis of the overall plot of the *Iliad*, this wording will lead to a fusion of interpretations. And the sign that seemed at first to be ambivalent will become clear. Long range, the tomb of the unnamed hero from the distant past becomes the same landmark as the turning point of a chariot race from the distant past. That is because the unnamed hero from the distant past becomes a named hero from the immediate present of the *Iliad*. That hero is Patroklos, and he died just now, as it were, in *Iliad* 16.

Part 4. But Patroklos dies not only in the present time of the *Iliad*. He also did die a long time ago, from the standpoint of later generations who are listening to the story of the *Iliad*. So, the storytelling of the *Iliad* makes it possible for the athletic event of a chariot race from the distant past to become the same thing as the athletic event of a chariot race that is being held right now, in the same immediate present time of the story, in *Iliad* 23. And, as I argue, this race is intended to honor Patroklos as a future cult hero. See also the comment on O.11.119–137. [[GN 2017.06.08.]]

I.23.528

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’

See anchor comment at I.23.113 on Meriones as therapōn of Idomeneus. [[GN 2016.08.04 via Nagy 2015.05.01.]]

I.23.841

subject heading(s): ožos Arēos ‘attendant of Ares’

See anchor comment at I.12.188.

I.23.860
Iliad Rhapsody 24
2016.12.31 / enhanced 2018.09.20

The Iliad ends with the funeral of Hector, not of Achilles. And it is Hector, not Achilles, who is lamented at the end. But it is Achilles who makes it all happen, since he has transcended his rage and has shown mercy to an old father. The tears of Priam had made Achilles think of his own old father, of his own ancestors—and of Patroklos, who embodied the glories of the ancestors. Achilles was looking bad at the beginning of Iliad 23 and even at the beginning of Iliad 24, but he looks very good by the time Iliad 24 comes to a close. [[GN 2016.12.31.]]

Figure 24. Mourers lament as Hector's corpse is laid out in preparation for the funeral that closes Iliad Rhapsody 24. Copperplate etching (1795) by Tommaso Pioli, after a drawing (1793) by John Flaxman. Image via Wikimedia Commons.

I.24.001

subject heading(s): agōn 'competition'

The agōn ‘competition’, that is, the ‘coming together’ for the sake of competition, is now over. Or, to say it in Greek, the coming-together is now undone, as expressed by the verb luein ‘undo’. Now all the participants disperse, returning to their beached ships. See the comment on I.23.257–258. [[GN 2016.12.30.]]

I.24.006

subject heading(s): pothein 'long for'

While the others sleep, Achilles is awake and restless, and he sorely misses Patroklos, as expressed by the verb pothein 'long for'. This verb pothein 'long for', like the noun pothē 'longing', evokes the feelings of those who worship cult heroes: see especially the comment on I.17.685–690. [[GN 2016.12.30.]]
subject heading(s): sēma ‘tomb’; mistreating the corpse of Hector; dragging of Hector

In these four verses, there is a compressed narration of what Achilles does over and over again during a sleepless night. He harnesses his chariot and drives it around the tomb of Patroklos three times while dragging the corpse of Hector. The tomb is called the sēma at I.24.16. The Master Narrator states here that this tomb belongs to Patroklos, as if the ultimate ownership of the tomb by Achilles were still in doubt. But the statement is justified, since the size of the tomb has not yet been adjusted to fit the prestige of Achilles himself: on this point see the anchor comment at I.23.245–248 and 256–257. Achilles drives his chariot around the tomb three times, then rests in his klisíē ‘shelter’, I.24.017, and then drives around three times again, and so on. Each time he rests inside his shelter, he leaves the body outside, lying prone in the dust, face down, I.24.017–018. The body has been shown before in this same degraded state: see the comment on I.22.395–405. Once again here, it is left to the imagination whether the body is horribly disfigured. It cannot be known, however, whether the body that Achilles is intending to degrade has in fact already been disfigured. Once again, the face is not visible. But, once again, it will become clear that the face and the head and in fact the whole body of Hector cannot be disfigured. This time, the clarification happens immediately, in the verses that follow. [[GN 2016.12.31.]]

I.24.018–022

subject heading(s): aeikeiē ‘unseemliness’; khrōs ‘complexion’

Once again, divine intervention prevents the disfiguration of Hector’s body. The intervention starts midline at I.24.018, and the narrative of the intervention extends through I.24.018: the god Apollo will not allow any aeikeiē ‘unseemliness’ to happen to the body of Hector, I.24.019. Apollo focuses here on Hector’s khrōs ‘complexion’, I.24.019, worrying that the hero’s skin will be grotesquely scraped away by the harsh surface over which it is being dragged behind the speeding chariot of Achilles, I.24.021. This time, the protective covering that is granted by the gods is not an enveloping glow, as it was at I.23.188–191 (see the anchor comment at I.23.184–191), but rather a mystical aigis ‘skin-shield’, I.24.020. Then, at I.24.022, by way of ring-composition, the thinking returns to the horrors of mutilation by way of ‘disfiguring’ the body, as expressed here by the verb aeikizein. But the disfigurement is canceled. Once again, the body is saved. See again the anchor comment at I.23.184–191, where the vision of salvation for Hector’s body is fully analyzed. [[GN 2016.12.30.]]

I.24.023–28

subject heading(s): atē ‘aberration’

The gods pity Hector and are on the verge of sending Hermes to hide the corpse of Hector, but this plan is vetoed by Hērā and Poseidon, in that order. They bear a grudge against Troy and Priam because of an atē ‘aberration’ of Paris=Alexandros. But the narrative concentrates only on Hērā, since the atē ‘aberration’ that the Master Narrator has in mind involves a direct insult to that goddess. On the story of that insult, see the comment on the verses that immediately follow. [[GN 2016.12.31.]]

I.24.029–30

subject heading(s): Judgment of Paris; neikein ‘quarrel with’; ainein ‘praise’

In the story about the Judgment of Paris, as we read in the plot-summary of the Cypria, Proclus 102.14–19 (ed. Allen 1912), Paris=Alexandros has to choose from among three goddesses, Hērā, Athena, and Aphrodite, Cypria/Proclus 102.14–19. Which of the three is supreme? Paris chooses Aphrodite, who rewards him by arranging his love affair with Helen. The story of the Judgment of Paris is recapitulated, in a most compressed form, here at I.24.025–030. And the story is told in terms of a contrast between positive and negative words. The fact that Paris chose Aphrodite means that he aimed negative words at Hērā and Athena, as expressed by the verb neikein ‘quarrel with’ at I.24.029 (νηκεῖον), while he aimed positive words at Aphrodite, as expressed by the verb ainein ‘praise’ at I.24.030 (αἰνέω). As noted in the comment on I.03.100, the verbs ainein ‘praise’ and neikein ‘quarrel with’ express both the social and the poetic significance of praise and blame respectively. [[GN 2016.12.31.]]

I.24.032–054
subject heading(s): sêma ‘tomb’; biê ‘force, violence, strength’; thûmos ‘heart; dais ‘portion (of meat); sacrifice’; [sôma ‘body’]

In the speech of Apollo here, I.24.032–054, there is a compressed retelling of unseemly deeds committed by Achilles. At I.24.050–052, the god condemns especially the violence of Achilles, and he points to the hero’s dragging of the corpse of Hector, I.24.050–052, around the sêma ‘tomb’ of Patroklos, I.24.051. In this context of condemning the hero’s violence, the god compares him to a ravenous lion at I.24.041–043. The wild beast is driven by its wild instincts, described here as its biê ‘force, violence, strength’ and its thûmos ‘heart’, I.24.042, as it lungen to devour the sheep that it is attacking, and here the word dais ‘portion (of meat)’ is used in referring to the meat of its prey, I.24.43. There is an irony here in the use of the word dais, since this word is closely connected to stories about Achilles: see the comments on I.07.319–322, I.19.044, I.19.179–180. The picturing of a ravenous lion that is lungen for the meat of its prey is comparable to the use of the word sôma at I.03.023 and I.18.161: what is pictured in both these contexts is a carcass that is being devoured by a ravenous lion that holds on to it and won’t let go. Here is what I said about such contexts in Point 6 of the anchor comment for I.23.184–191: for wild animals, the sôma is something that must be saved for devouring, while for humans thesôma is something that must be saved from being devoured by wild animals. See also the comment on I.22.346–348, where I analyze other comparisons of Achilles to lions. [[GN 2016.12.30.]]

I.24.055–063

subject heading(s): eris ‘strife’; neikos ‘quarrel’

In the speech of Hèrè here, I.24.055–063, we see a reference to a primal story that is connected to the Judgment of Paris. It is the story about the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, the mortal and immortal parents-to-be of Achilles. As we read in the plot-summary of the Cypria in Proclus 102.13–19 (ed. Allen 1912), there was eris ‘strife’ at the feast celebrating the marriage of Thetis and Peleus. It was the Will of Zeus that Eris ‘Strife’ personified would bring about a neikos ‘quarrel’ among the gods that would ultimately result in the Trojan War (Proclus 102.14/15 on Eris/neikos). Hèrè notes that even Apollo attended the wedding, singing at the feast, I.24.062–063. [[GN 2016.12.30.]]

I.24.064–076

subject heading(s): council of divinities

In the speech of Zeus here, I.24.064–076, an elaborate plan leads to a most elaborate plot for the conclusion of the Iliad. [[GN 2016.12.30.]]

I.24.105

subject heading(s): penthos alaston ‘unforgettable grief’ for Thetis

On this expression, see the comment at O.01.342. [[GN 2016.12.30.]]

I.24.112–116

subject heading(s): releasing the body of Hector

Zeus tells Thetis to tell Achilles that the gods are angry at him and want him to release Priam the body of Hector. In this case, the Will of Zeus becomes an unambiguous moral force for the maintenance of ritual correctness in the post-heroic age. [[GN 2016.12.30.]]

I.24.133–137

subject heading(s): releasing the body of Hector

Thetis conveys the Will of Zeus to her son. Her role here in Iliad 24 is symmetrical with her role in Iliad 1. [[GN 2016.12.30.]]

I.24.158
subject heading(s): endukéōs ‘continuously, uninterruptedly’
See the anchor comment at O.07.256. [[GN 2017.05.30 via PasP 44.]]

I.24.187

subject heading(s): endukéōs ‘continuously, uninterruptedly’
See the anchor comment at O.07.256. [[GN 2017.05.30 via PasP 44.]]

I.24.396

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’
In speaking to Priam, the god Hermes disguises himself as a therapōn of Achilles. It is as if he were the spirit of the dead Patroklos, the other self of Achilles himself. [[GN 2016.08.04.]]

I.24.406

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’
See again the comment on I.24.393. [[GN 2016.08.04.]]

I.24.438

subject heading(s): endukéōs ‘continuously, uninterruptedly’
See the anchor comment at O.07.256. [[GN 2017.05.30 via PasP 44.]]

I.24.474

subject heading(s): ozos Arēs ‘attendant of Ares’
Here it is Alkimos who is called ozos Arēs ‘attendant of Ares’. See the anchor comment at I.12.188. [[GN 2017.01.02.]]

I.24.509–512

subject heading(s): mourning for Hector; mourning for ancestors by way of Patroklos; name of Patroklos; “speaking name” (nomen loquens)
While Priam mourns for his own son Hector, Achilles alternates in mourning for his own father Priam and for Patroklos as his own other self. By mourning for both his father and for Patroklos, Achilles shows the way—showing how to mourn for ancestors. Do as I do. Relevant is what the “speaking name” (nomen loquens) of Patroklos means: ‘he who has the glory [kleos] of the ancestors [pateres]’. See the comments on I.01.345, I.06.209, I.09.185–191. Such a meaning signals the basic fact that one’s father is one’s most immediate ancestor. The kleos ‘glory’ of Achilles is thus linked, for all time to come, with a poetic glory that originates from the ancestors. [[GN 2016.12.31.]]

I.24.573

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’
The two heroes Automedon and Alkimos are both marked as therapontes of Achilles, I.24.573, by virtue of this detail: Achilles honored the two of them more than anyone else after the death of Patroklos, I.24.574–575 (tieîn ‘honor’ at I.24.575). Here they are acting as the attendants of Achilles, I.24.576–580. [[GN 2017.01.02.]]

I.24.707–776

The funeral of Hector may now begin. A funeral procession takes Hector to his bier, where the laments can begin. [[GN
subject heading(s): penthos ‘grief’

The word *penthos* ‘grief’ here at I.24.708 refers to the context for performing laments, I.24.720–776, on the occasion of Hector’s funeral. The word recurs in the actual words of the lament sung by Andromache at I.24.741, where she says that Hector, by dying, has caused *penthos* ‘grief’ and *gôos* ‘lament’ for his parents. [GN 2016.12.18.]

**I.24.720–776**

*anchor comment on laments at Hector’s funeral*

subject heading(s): *thrênos* ‘lament’; *thrênein* ‘make lament’; *ex-arkhos* ‘lead singer’; *ex-jarkhein* ‘lead off [in performing]’; *gôos* ‘lament’; *goân* ‘make lament’; *epi-stenakhesthai* ‘wait in response’; *epi-stenein* ‘wait in response’; *dêmos* ‘community, district; populace’

The laments for Hector at his funeral can be divided into two main parts, the second of which can be subdivided into three sub-parts. The first main part is at I.24.720–722, where professional *aoidoi* ‘singers’ who are men, I.24.720, perform *thrênoi* ‘laments’, I.24.721; as they perform, the word that refers to their performance is *thrênein* ‘make lament’, I.24.722, which is a verb derived from the noun *thrênos* ‘lament’. Following up on the laments performed by the professional singers are laments performed by the gunaiikes ‘women’ of Troy, I.24.722. These women, as women singers, are of course non-professionals, and their role as singers is subordinated to the role of the professional singers, as we see from the use of the verb *epi-stenakhesthai* ‘wait in response’ at I.24.722 in referring to their performance. This act of wailing-in-response is treated here as an antiphonal complement to the singing of the professional singers, who are described as *ex-arkhoi* ‘lead singers’ of the *thrênoi* ‘laments’ that they sing, I.24.721. By now we have reached the end of the narrative about the first main part of the laments performed at the funeral of Hector. Now the narrative about the second part of the laments begins, and this part, as noted already, can be subdivided into three sub-parts. The Master Narrator now quotes, as it were, three laments, to be performed by Andromache at I.24.725–745, by Hecuba at I.24.748–759, and by Helen at I.24.762–775. But the two main parts in this overall scheme are not kept separate here, since the same women who sang at I.24.722 their responses to the laments sung by men who were lead singers will now perform responses to the three women who will now be singing their own laments, and these three will now be singing as lead singers in their own right, as expressed by the verb *arkhein* / *ex-arkhein* / *ex-arkehein* ‘lead off [in performing]’ in the case of Andromache / Hecuba / Helen at I.24.723 / I.24.747 / I.24.761.

These three singing women are not professionals, but nevertheless they hold positions of great social status, since they all belong to Hector’s immediate family: as family members, they sing a form of lament that qualifies as a *gôos*, not as a *thrênos*. This word *gôos* ‘lament’ is applied to the singing of Andromache / Hecuba / Helen at I.24.723 / I.24.747 (also at I.24.760) / I.24.761. Of these three, the most important performer of lament here is Andromache, since she gets to cradle the head of Hector from behind while she sings her song of lament over his corpse, I.24.724. The special importance of Andromache is also signaled by the fact that the verb *epi-stenakhesthai* ‘wait in response’, which had signaled at I.24.722 the antiphonal singing of the women of Troy in response to the *thrênoi* ‘laments’, I.24.721, that were sung by the professional lead singers, is also used at I.24.746 to signal the antiphonal singing of the women of Troy in response to the *gôos* ‘lament’, I.24.723, that is sung by Andromache as the non-professional lead singer. The general response at I.24.746 by the women of Troy to the lament of Andromache is an intensification of the more specific response at I.22.515 by the women who attended her when she previously sang her second lament, though the wording is exactly the same at I.24.746 as at I.22.515: ‘So she [= Andromache] spoke, and the women waited in response’ (*òc ἔφατο κλαῖον, ἐπὶ δὲ στενάκητον γυναῖκα*)]. An even more general response, however, occurs at I.24.776, where not just the women of Troy but the entire *dêmos* or ‘populace’ of the city joins the antiphonal singing, as signaled here by the verb *epi-stenein* ‘wait in response’: ‘So she [= Helen] spoke, and the vast populace [*dêmos*] waited in response’ (*òc ἔφατο κλαῖον, ἐπὶ δὲ ἐστενε θημος ὁπείρων*). Now the whole community is lamenting in response to the *gôos* ‘lament’ as re-started at I.24.761 by Helen as the last of the three women who sing here as lead singers. [GN 2016.12.19.]

**I.24.723–746**

*anchor comment on three laments by Andromache, part 3*
In the first of the three laments performed by Andromache, as quoted by the Master Narrator at I.06.407–439, she is already lamenting the death of Hector before he is even dead. As for the second lament, as quoted at I.22.476–515, she sings it when she sees the corpse of Hector for the first time. As for her third lament, here at I.24.723–746, she sings it on the occasion of Hector’s funeral. As Andromache starts her song of lament at I.24.723, the verb {\textit{arkhein}} in the sense of ‘lead off [in performing]’ signals that she is leading off as a lead singer, and the song that she sings is called here a \textit{gōs} ‘lament’. Then, as Andromache finishes her lead song at I.24.746, the women of Troy sing an antiphonal refrain as signaled by the verb \textit{epistenakhizesthai} ‘wail in response’. See also anchor comment at I.06.407–439 on: three laments by Andromache, part 1; and anchor comment at I.22.476–515 on: three laments by Andromache, part 2. [[GN 2016.12.17.]]

I.24.747–760

subject heading(s): lament of Hecuba.

See the anchor comment at I.24.720–776. [[GN 2016.12.30.]]

I.24.761–776

subject heading(s): lament of Helen.

See the anchor comment at I.24.720–776. [[GN 2016.12.30.]]

I.24.777–784

subject heading(s): firewood for the funeral pyre

It takes ten days inclusively for the people of Troy to gather the firewood needed to construct the funeral pyre for the cremation of Hector, I.24.784. See the comment on I.24.785–804 on the archaeological evidence showing the vast volume of firewood needed for a funeral pyre. [[GN 2016.12.30.]]

I.24.785–804

subject heading(s): cremation of Hector

The corpse of Hector is placed on top of the funeral pyre, and then the pyre is lit, I.24.786–787. The next morning, the fires of the cremation are extinguished and the bones of Hector are gathered, I.24.792–795, to be placed into a \textit{larnax} ‘repository’, I.24.795. A tumulus is heaped over the remains, I.24.799, and the tumulus itself is called a \textit{sēma} ‘tomb’, I.24.799/801. What we see here in \textit{Iliad} 24, in the conclusion to the entire epic narrative, is a perfect description of a perfect entombment after a perfect cremation—to be contrasted with the ritually flawed cremation of Patroklos as described in \textit{Iliad} 23. Here I find it relevant to cite the archaeological background on the practice of cremation in the Mycenaean era. I quote a brief summary in Nagy 2015.07.22§31:

When I last considered the practices of cremation in a Mycenaean context [[in 1990: GMP 85–86]], those practices were barely attested archaeologically. But now, with the discovery of nine cremations at the site of Chania, some three kilometers southwest of the acropolis of Mycenae [Palaiologou 2013], the picture has changed. I note with special interest the splendor of the tumulus that contained these cremations, dated to the 12th century BCE [Palaiologou 2013.274]. The archeologist of record describes as “monumental” the stone tumulus with its circular “cyclopean” enclosure, and she notes that the ritual moment of the actual cremation, which required vast pilings of firewood, must have been “spectacular” [Palaiologou 2013.251]. This splendid tumulus, situated on a plain contiguous with Argos, was most visible to all: “it served as a landmark for the control of the commercial route to Argos and the cultivated area simultaneously” [Palaiologou 2013.275]. By this time, in the 12th century BCE, the glory days of Mycenae and of its Achaean realm were becoming evanescent, but the vitality of Mycenaean culture was still a forceful presence, acknowledged and respected by the local population.

[[GN 2016.12.30.]]
Epilogue 1: Hector as the ultimate beau mort

subject heading(s): beau mort (a dead body made beautiful by way of a beautiful death, la belle mort)

[epitome from HC 4§267]

The focus of the iliad on Hector as the ultimate beau mort is evident at the conclusion of this epic. The iliad as we know it ends with the funeral of Hector, not of Achilles. It is Hector, not Achilles, who is lamented at the end. Even the very last word of the iliad as we have it is a signature for Hector: it is his ornamental epithet hippodamos, the ‘horse-tamer’, l.24.804 (Sacks 1987). So, the Homeric iliad evolved in such a way as to highlight Hector as the primary point of interest in the poetics of terror and pity. To be contrasted is an alternative epic like the Achilleis, attributed to Arctinus of Miletus, where the focus at the end is evidently on Achilles as the primary beau mort. Pindar’s reference to the dead Achilles in Isthmian 8 (56-60) alludes to this alternative epic tradition (PH 204–206). In the iliad, the doomed figure of Hector has been substituted for the equally doomed figure of Achilles, who is the ultimate beau mort of epic. Hector in the iliad prefigures Achilles as that ultimate beau mort. See also anchor comment at l.23.184–194.

Epilogue 2: Hector as an ideal for Athenians

[epitome from HC 4§268]

This foregrounding of Hector in the iliad as we know it is a matter of politics as well as esthetics. The beautiful death of Hector, his belle mort, is for Athenians an expression of their empire. See the comment on I.15.494–499, where I made an epitome from HC 4§268. In what follows, I repeat the relevant parts of that epitome. The Athenian statesman Lycurges says it best when he refers to the willingness of Athenian citizens to die in war not only for their own patris ‘fatherland’ but also for all of Hellas as a patris ‘fatherland’ that is koine ‘common’ to all Hellenes (Against Leocrates 104). Lycurges invokes as his prime example the belle mort of the Athenian citizen-warriors who fought at Marathon and who thereby won for Hellas a freedom from terror, an adeia ‘security’ that is koine ‘common’ to all Hellenes (104). The Athenian statesman is making this reference to the imperial interests of Athens in the context of actually quoting the words of Hector in the iliad, who says that he is willing to die for his fatherland in order to protect it against the Achaeans (Lycurges Against Leocrates 103 lines 4-9). These heroic words of Hector correspond to I.15.494–499, and Lycurges quotes them in the larger context of saying that the Homeric iliad and Odyssey, as performed at the quadrennial Athenian festival of the Panathenaic, are the ancestral heritage of the Athenians and the primary source of their education as citizen-warriors (Against Leocrates 102). In this invocation of Homeric poetry as the most sublime expression of the Athenian empire, the statesman is quoting the words of a Trojan, not the words of an Achaeans. It is the belle mort of Hector that motivates the Athenians to live up to the heroic legacy they learn from Homer.

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Odyssey Rhapsody 1

2017.03.02 / enhanced 2018.10.06

The comments I offered in Classical Inquiries on Odyssey Rhapsody 1 through Rhapsody 24, starting here with Rhapsody 1, were based mostly on details that derive from seven books that I indicate in the Bibliography by way of these abbreviations: BA, GMP, H24H, HC, HPC, HQ, HR, MoM, PasP, PH. Each one of these books has its own index locorum. My colleague Anita Nikkanen, an Associate Editor for the online project A Homer commentary in progress, tracked the sequences of Homeric verses as listed in the indices for six of these books and then summarized my comments on those verses. Following up on her meticulous work, I am in the process of converting her summaries into a form of commentary that is being incorporated into AHCIP. My comments on the Odyssey as I presented them in Classical Inquiries are merely samplings of the content that I hope to contribute to the overall commentary, to which a number of other colleagues are also contributing their own comments. That said, I now proceed to offer a sampling of comments on Rhapsody 1. At this point, my comments about the beginning of the Odyssey need no further introduction of their own. [[GN 2017.02.28.]]
That man, tell me O Muse the song of that man, the one who-turns-into-many-different-selves [polutropos], who in very many ways [h] veered from his path and wandered off far and wide, after he had destroyed the sacred [hieron] citadel of Troy. [5] Many different cities [astea] of many different people did he see, getting to know different ways of thinking [nōs]. [6] Many were the pains [algē] he suffered in his heart [thūmos] while crossing the sea [pontos], [7] struggling to merit [amusthai] the saving of his own life [pśükhe] and his own homecoming [hōstos] as well as the homecoming of his companions [hetairoi]. [8] But do what he might he could not save his companions [hetairoi], even though he very much wanted to. [9] For they perished through their own deeds-of-recklessness [atasthaliā plural], [9] disconnected [nēpioi] as they were, because of what they did to the cattle of the sun-god Ἥλιος. [10] They ate them. So, the god [Hēlōs] deprived them of their day of-homecoming [nostimōn]. [10] Starting-from-any-single-point-of-departure [hamothēn]. O goddess, daughter of Zeus, tell-me-as-you-have-told-those-who-came-before-me [eipe kai hāmin].

There are three main points to be made in my comments here.

Point 1. The epic of the Homeric Odyssey begins in a way that resembles closely the beginning of its twin, the epic of the Homeric Iliad. On the term epic, used here for the first time in these comments on the Odyssey, see the Inventory of terms and names. The main theme of the Odyssey is signaled right away. On the term theme, see again the Inventory. The signaling is accomplished by way of the first word of the very first verse of the epic. This word is the noun andra ‘man’, in the accusative case, which would be anēr in the nominative. The accusative case of anēr ‘man’ here marks this noun as the grammatical object of the verb enpepein ‘narrate, tell’, O.01.001. The Master Narrator is addressing a goddess who is the Muse of the Odyssey, asking the goddess to narrate for him the story of a man who is not yet named as Odysseus. On the term Master Narrator, see the Inventory of terms and names. The ‘man’ is the subject of the story. In other words, he is the subject of the narration, or the narrative subject. And this narrative subject is the grammatical object of the verb enpepein, meaning ‘narrate, tell’. Similarly at the beginning of the Homeric Iliad, as analyzed at I.01.001–012, the narrative subject is
the first word in the very first verse. That word is the noun mēnis ‘anger’, in the accusative case, which would be mēnis in the nominative. The accusative case of mēnis there marks that noun as the grammatical object of the verb aieidein ‘sing’, I.01.110. There the Master Narrator is addressing a thea ‘goddess’ who is the Muse of the Iliad, asking that goddess to sing for him that anger, I.01.001. The song that will be narrated by the Muse for the Master Narrator will in turn be narrated by the narrator for his listeners. That song is The Song of the Anger, in the sense that the anger is the song. The anger is the narrative subject. Similarly in the Odyssey, the Master Narrator calls on the Muse of the Odyssey to ‘narrate the man’, that is, to ‘tell the song of the man’. Here too the song that will be narrated by the Muse for the Master Narrator will in turn be narrated by the narrator for his listeners. This song is The Song of the Man, in that the man is the song. The man is the narrative subject. And the song captures the total reality of the man.

Point 2. But this reality is not so easy to capture, since the man who is Odysseus is many-sided, as we will now see. Odysseus at O.01.001 is polutropos ‘turning-into-many-different-selves’. This translation makes explicit what is only implied in an alternative way of rendering this elusive word, ‘versatile in many ways’ (H24H 0§21, also 9§4, also 10§2), where the Latin root vert- ‘turn’ of the Latinate word versatile can mean not only ‘turn around’ but also ‘turn into a different self’, as we see most clearly in the Latin word for ‘werewolf’, versi-pellis, which literally means ‘he whose skin has turned’ (Pliny Natural History 8.34; Petronius 62; details in GMP 264–265). Similarly, polutropos applies to a figure who is different at every turn, and who becomes different many times and in many ways. That is why the ultimate shape-shifter, the god Hermes, is polutropos in the Homeric Hymn to Hermes (verses 13, 439). And that is why, in the only other context where Odysseus is described as polutropos, O.10.330, he is associated in that context with his polytropic model, Hermes himself, O.10.331–332. (Further commentary in GMP 34) Since Odysseus can turn into something different at every turn, the multiplicity of angles to be seen at every turn helps explain why this hero will not yet be named at the beginning of the Odyssey.

Point 3. There is still more to be said about this adjective polutropos ‘turning-into-many-different-selves’ describing Odysseus at O.01.001: it is used here as an epithet for the narrative subject, which in this case is anēr ‘man’. Another such epithet is the adjective oulomenē ‘disastrous’ describing the mēnis ‘anger’ of Achilles at I.01.002. See the comment there. [[GN 2017.02.28.]]

O.01.001–004

subject heading(s): poetics of multiplicity

The multiplicity to be seen in the shape-shifting figure of Odysseus is poeticized by way of repeating the element polt-‘many’ of polutropos ‘turning-into-many-different-selves’, spilling over from O.01.001 into O.01.003–004: πολύτρωπον...πολλὰ [...πολλὰ...].

O.01.001

subject heading(s): ennepein ‘narrate, tell’; Mousa ‘Muse’; singing as narrating

By saying ‘tell me, Muse’, the Master Narrator is saying that the song that he will perform is something that he hears from a goddess who is invoked here as a singular Mousa ‘Muse’. See also I.01.001, where the Master Narrator likewise calls on a singular Muse. Although ennepein ‘narrate, tell’ here at O.01.001 does not explicitly refer to singing as does aieidein ‘sing’ at I.01.001, the narrative that the Master Narrator narrates is notionally a song in both the Iliad and the Odyssey. See in general the comment on O.01.001–010. [[GN 2017.02.28 via PasP 61.]]

O.01.001–002

subject heading(s): relative clause as introductory outline of the overall narrative

We have seen that the epithet polutropos ‘turning-into-many-different-selves’ at O.01.001 describes the narrative subject of
the entire performed narration of the Odyssey as designated by the driving word anēr ‘man’ in the accusative, andra at O.01.001, used here as the grammatical object of the verb ennepein ‘narrate, tell’. Now we see that this epithet polutropos ‘turning-into-many-different-selves’ at O.01.001 is immediately followed at O.01.001–002 by a relative clause that outlines the overall narrative of the Odyssey: Odysseus veered many times and in many ways before he achieved a safe homecoming for himself. Similarly, we saw that the epithet oulomenē ‘disastrous’ at I.01.002 describes the narrative subject of the entire performed narration of the lliad as designated by the driving word mēnis ‘anger’ in the accusative, mēnīn at I.01.001, used there as the grammatical object of the verb aeidein ‘sing’. And we saw that this epithet oulomenē ‘disastrous’ is immediately followed at I.01.002 by a relative clause that outlines the overall narrative of the lliad: the anger of Achilles caused immeasurable suffering. And we will see a further similarity when we consider the epithet lugros ‘disastrous’ at O.01.327, which describes the poetic subject of a performed narration as designated by the driving word nostos ‘homecoming’ in the accusative, noston at O.01.326, used there as the grammatical object of the verb aeidein ‘sing’. This epithet lugros ‘disastrous’ at O.01.327 is then immediately followed in the same verse by a relative clause that outlines the overall narrative there. See the comment on O.01.326–327. [[GN 2017.02.28.]]

O.01.002

subject heading(s): [mētis ‘mind, intelligence’; biē ‘force, violence, strength’; First Song of Demodokos; Third Song of Demodokos]

Odysseus in the Odyssey gets credit already here, at the very beginning of the epic, for the conquest of Troy. By contrast, Achilles will never get credit for such a deed, even though he is the dominant hero of the lliad, which means ‘the story of illion=Troy’ and which presents itself as the primary epic about the Trojan War. It is made explicit elsewhere in the Odyssey, though not here at the beginning, that mētis ‘mind, intelligence’ was the heroic quality that made it possible for Odysseus to become the conqueror of Troy. This theme is relevant to an epic story about a competition between Achilles and Odysseus centering on this question: who will get credit for conquering Troy? Will it be Achilles, exponent of biē ‘force, violence, strength’, or will it be Odysseus, exponent of mētis ‘mind, intelligence’? The story is reflected in the First Song of Demodokos in Odyssey 8, and it can be argued that the beginning of the Odyssey here alludes to that story. It can also be argued that the beginning of the lliad also alludes to that same story. See the comment on I.01.001–012. In the end, though, as we know from the story of the Trojan Horse in the Third Song of Demodokos, retold in Odyssey 8, the mētis ‘mind, intelligence’ of Odysseus did succeed. And, by implication, the biē ‘force, violence, strength’ of Achilles had already failed, since Achilles was already dead by the time Troy was conquered. [[GN 2017.03.02 via BA 40; see also HPC 102.]]

O.01.003

subject heading(s): nōos ‘mind’; nostos ‘homecoming, song of / about homecoming’

Etymologically, the noun nōos ‘mind’ indicates consciousness as distinct from the unconsciousness of sleeping, swooning, and death itself. This noun is derived from the verb-root ‘nes- ‘return, come back’. The root ‘nes- has a deeper meaning: ‘come to’, in the sense of ‘come back to consciousness’. Another noun derived from ‘nes- is nostos ‘homecoming, song of / about homecoming’. This noun nostos also has a deeper meaning: ‘coming back to light and life’. See the comment on O.01.05. Two definitive books on the Greek reflexes of the root ‘nes- ‘return, come back’: Frame 1978 and 2009. I add here a special note on my translation of O.01.003: ‘Many different cities of many different people did he see, getting to know different ways of thinking [nōoṣ]’. I translate nōos ‘mind’ here as ‘way[s] of thinking’ because the wording says that Odysseus gets to know different ways of thinking by making contact with many different persons in the course of all his travels. Because he gets to know their different ways of thinking, his knowledge now makes it possible for Odysseus himself to think in many different ways. So he is getting to know his own ‘mind’ differently by getting to know the different minds of others. [[GN 2017.03.02.]]

O.01.004

subject heading(s): algea ‘pains’ of Odysseus

It is announced here, at the very beginning of the Odyssey, that many algea ‘pains’ await Odysseus in this epic, O.01.004. There is a parallel announcement at the beginning of the lliad: many algea ‘pains’ await the Achaeans in that epic, I.01.002. See further the comment on I.01.002. [[GN 2017.03.02.]]
subject heading(s): nostos ‘homecoming, song of homecoming; return; return to light and life’; nótos ‘mind’; amünsthai ‘struggle to merit’ (or ‘struggle to win as a prize’)

Etymologically, the noun nostos ‘homecoming’ indicates a ‘return’ or ‘coming-back’, derived from the verb-root *nes- ‘return, come back’. This root *nes-, as already noted, has a deeper meaning: ‘come to’, in the sense of ‘come back to consciousness’. The noun nostos itself, meaning ‘homecoming’, also has a deeper meaning: ‘coming back to light and life’. Etymologically related to the noun nostos in the sense of ‘coming back to light and life’ is the noun nótos ‘mind’, which has the deeper meaning of ‘coming to’ in the sense of ‘coming back to consciousness’. Two definitive books on the Greek reflexes of the root *nes- ‘return, come back’: Frame 1978 and 2009. As for nostos ‘homecoming’ in the sense of ‘song of homecoming’, see O.01.326–327. On amünsthai in the sense of ‘struggle to merit’ (or ‘struggle to win as a prize’), see also the comment on l.18.181. [GN 2017.01.02.]

subject heading(s): atástaliá ‘recklessness’; Will of Zeus

The companions of Odysseus are destroyed because of their own atástaliái ‘deeds-of-recklessness’. The narrative emphasizes that the companions must own their mistakes. It is essential to note here that the destruction of the companions here is caused not by the Will of Zeus: rather, they are destroyed because they suffer the consequences of doing what they did of their own free will. I add a further note here: I translated the plural of atástaliá ‘recklessness’ here as ‘deeds-of-recklessness’ in order to convey the fact that a singular noun expressing an abstraction can refer to concrete examples of the abstraction when it is used in the plural. So for example atástaliá ‘recklessness’ is an abstraction, but here at O.01.007 the plural atástaliái refers to concrete examples of recklessness—in this case, the recklessness is exemplified by the killing and eating of the Cattle of the Sun. [GN 2017.03.02 via BA 113.]

subject heading(s): nēpios ‘disconnected’

The Homeric contexts of nēpios, as the work of Edmunds 1990 | 2016 has shown, point to an etymology involving a combination of the negative prefix *n- with the root *Hp- in the sense of ‘connect’, as in Latin in-ceptus ‘non-connected’, not with the root *gek-’ in the sense of ‘speak’, as in Latin in-fāns ‘non-speaking’. What is at stake in the meaning of nēpios is connectivity with parental models and, by extension, with ancestral models. The connectivity may be merely behavioral, as in the case of young animals that survive by staying connected to the older animals that generated them. In the case of humans, the connectivity that begins at infancy is not only behavioral but also mental, extending into adult patterns of consciously following ancestral models of behavior. Further, such connectedness to models may be not only mental but also emotional and even moral. And to be disconnected from such models runs the risk of being doomed for destruction, as we see here at O.01.008 in the case of the companions who did not heed Odysseus. Their disconnectedness is moral as well as mental. [GN 2017.03.08.]

subject heading(s): hamothēn ‘starting-from-any-single-point-of-departure’; theā ‘goddess’; elliptic plural; Homer’s ‘i’ and Homer’s ‘we’; ellipsis of ‘we’ for ‘I’ in referring to the Master Narrator

Detail 1. I translate hamothēn as ‘starting-from-any-single-point-of-departure’ as a way of differentiating this expression from enthēn ‘starting-from-that-[specific]-point-of-departure’ as at O.08.500, where Demodokos starts his narrative at a specific point in the action.

Detail 2. The form theā ‘goddess’ is Aeolic: see the comment at l.01.001.

Detail 3. On the epithet thugatēr (vocative thugater) Dios ‘daughter of Zeus’, see the anchor comment at l.03.374.
Detail 4. I translate ἐπεὶ καὶ ἡμῖν, which means literally ‘tell us also’, as ‘tell-me-as-you-have-told-those-who-came-before-me’ in order to convey the idea that the ‘us’ here refers not only to the ‘me’ of the Master Narrator but also, elliptically, to all the previous master narrators of the Odyssey. In other words, the narration acknowledges not only the horizontal singular ‘me’ of O.01.001 but also the vertical plural succession of performers that led up, in the course of time, to the ultimate ‘me’ of the here-and-now in performance. On ellipsis, the elliptic plural, and the ellipsis of successive ‘I’-s in the ‘we’ of the Master Narrator, see also the comment on I.02.486. On ellipsis in general, see I.04.196; also I.06.209, I.07.015–017. [[GN 2017.03.06 via HTL 174.]]

O.01.022–026

subject heading(s): dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’; Aithiopes ‘Aethiopians’; Ὄκεανος; coincidence of opposites

The Olympians habitually go to the realm of the Aethiopians, situated on the banks of the cosmic river Ὄκεανος, to dine with them there. The Aethiopians simultaneously inhabit the Far West and the Far East. This simultaneity is a mark of a theme that can best be described as a coincidence of opposites. See the comments on I.01.423–425. Here at O.01.022–026, only Poseidon is visiting the Aethiopians. Unlike other humans, who no longer dine with the gods, the Aethiopians still dine with them. Other humans have been separated from the gods and must therefore sacrifice to them instead of dining with them. [[GN 2017.03.02 via BA 205–206, 213, 218; also GMP 237.]]

O.01.023–034

Q&T via PH 241

subject heading(s): atasthaliā ‘recklessness’; Will of Zeus

Near the beginning of the Iliad, in contemplating the countless algea ‘pains’, 1.01.002, suffered in the Trojan War, the Master Narrator declares that his narration is the Will of Zeus in the process of reaching fulfillment, 1.01.005. Near the beginning of the Odyssey, by contrast, Zeus himself declares that mortals are unjustified in saying that the algea ‘pains’ that they suffer, O.01.034, are caused by the gods. The god continues: it is of their own free will, O.01.033–034, that mortals commit atasthaliā ‘deeds of recklessness’, O.01.034, and so their pains are huper moron ‘beyond what is fated’, O.01.034. See already the relevant comments at O.01.007. So, mortals are unjustified in trying to hold the gods legally responsible, as expressed by the verb aitāsthai ‘hold responsible’, O.01.032. [[GN 2017.03.02 via PH 241.]]

O.01.088–095

Q&T via H24H 9516

subject heading(s): journey to Pylos and Sparta; menos ‘mental power’; punthanesthai ‘learn’; akouein ‘hear’; nostos ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’; kleos ‘glory’ (of poetry)

As for me, I will go travel to Ithaca, going to his [= Odysseus’] son in order to give him [= Telemachus] more encouragement and to put mental power [menos] into his heart [phrenes]. He is to summon the long-haired Achaeans for a meeting in assembly, and he is to speak out to all the suitors [of his mother Penelope], who persist in slaughtering again and again any number of his sheep and oxen. And I will conduct [pempein] him to Sparta and to sandy Pylos, and thus he will learn [punthanesthai] the return [nostos] of his dear [philos] father, if by chance he [... Telemachus]
Here the nostos of Odysseus, O.01.094, is shown to be not only a ‘homecoming’ but also a ‘song of homecoming’. On the meaning ‘song of homecoming’, see the comment on O.01.326–327. On kleos in the sense of an overall reference to the ‘glory’ of poetry, see the comment on I.02.325. Here at O.01.088–095, we can see that nostos as a ‘song of homecoming’ is a prerequisite for the quest of Odysseus to achieve the kleos ‘glory’ of poetry. Odysseus will receive the kleos ‘glory’ of his own Odyssey only if he achieves a successful nostos ‘homecoming’, and it is the kleos ‘glory’ of poetry that turns his homecoming into a song of homecoming. What the goddess says at O.01.094 is not that Telemachus will learn about the nostos of Odysseus if he is fortunate enough to hear about it. In the original Greek text, the noun nostos is the direct object of both the verb punthanesthai, ‘learn’ and the verb akouein ‘hear’ at O.01.094 here, and that is why I chose to translate the verse this way: ‘and thus he will learn [punthanesthai] the return [nostos] of his dear [philos] father, if by chance he [= Telemachus] hears [akouein] it’. Elsewhere too in the Odyssey, we see nostos as the direct object of punthanesthai ‘learn’: O.02.215, O.02.264, O.02.360, O.04.714—as also of akouein ‘hear’: O.01.287, O.02.218, O.02.360. It is not a question of learning about a homecoming, of hearing about a homecoming. Rather, Telemachus will learn the actual song of the homecoming, the song of nostos, by hearing it. He will actually hear the song from the hero Nestor in Odyssey 3 and from the hero Menelaos along with his divine consort Helen in Odyssey 4. (This formulation is epitomized from H24H §920; see also Stone 2016.09.28.) [IGN 2017.03.02.]

O.01.088–089

subject heading(s): menos ‘mental power’; Athena as mentor; Ménēs and Ménōr

(What follows is epitomized from H24H §17.) At a council of the gods, the goddess Athena declares her intention to go to Ithaca to become a mentor to the young hero Telemachus, O.01.088–089. Descending from Olympus and landing in Ithaca, the goddess assumes the human form of a fatherly hero named Ménēs, O.01.105, who proceeds to give wise advice to the young hero. In a subsequent intervention, O.02.268, the goddess will assume the human form of another fatherly hero, named Ménōr, and, as in the present intervention, this other father-substitute will likewise proceed to give wise advice to the young hero. These two names Ménēs and Ménōr are both related to the noun menos, which I translate as ‘mental power’. This word, as we can see here at O.01.089, refers to the heroic ‘power’ that the goddess Athena says she will put into Telemachus. The noun menos, usually translated as ‘power’ or ‘strength’, is derived from the verb-root mnē-, meaning ‘mentally connect’ (details in GMP 113). Likewise derived from this verb-root are the agent nouns Ménēs and Ménōr, which both mean ‘he who connects mentally’. When a divinity connects a hero to his heroic mentality, the hero will have menos, that is, ‘power’ or ‘strength’. To have heroic power or strength, you have to have a heroic mentality. See further the comment on O.01.320–322. [IGN 2017.03.02.]

O.01.093

Q&T via Nagy 2015.09.24§35 (with modifications)

subject heading(s): Cretan Odyssey; “Cretan lies”

The text as transmitted by Aristarchus (see Inventory of terms and names) reads:

πέμψω δ’ ἑς Σπάρτην τε καὶ ἑς Πύλων ἡμαθέντα

‘I [= Athena] will conduct [pempein] him [= Telemachus] on his way to Sparta and to sandy Pylos’

But the text as transmitted by Zenodotus (see again the Inventory) reads:

πέμψω δ’ ἑς Κρήτην τε καὶ ἑς Πύλων ἡμαθέντα

‘I [= Athena] will conduct [pempein] him [= Telemachus] on his way to Crete and to sandy Pylos’

The variant reading that we see transmitted here by Zenodotus (quoted in the scholia for O.03.313) indicates a variant epic tradition to which I will refer hereafter as a Cretan Odyssey. Further details at O.01.284–286, anchor comment on Cretan Odyssey. [[GN 2017.03.05 via Nagy 2015.09.24§35; see also HTL 39.]]
O.01.103

subject heading(s): δήμος ‘community, district’

Here Ithaca is figured as one single δήμος ‘community, district’. [[GN 2017.03.02 via BA 233.]]

O.01.105

subject heading(s): Μέντης

The meaning of the name Μέντης, ‘he who connects mentally’, is relevant to the plot of the Odyssey: see the comments on O.01.088–089. [[GN 2017.03.07 via GMP 113.]]

O.01.153–155

subject heading(s): Phemios; aeidein ‘sing’; kitharís ‘lyre’; phormizein ‘play on the lyre’; rhapsodes; citharodes

The singer of tales here, named Phemios, O.01.154, is ‘singing’ for the suitors as his audience, and the word translated as ‘sing’ here is aeidein at O.01.154 and at O.01.155. Such a singer is not exactly the equivalent of a “court poet,” since Phemios is singing for the suitors against his will, that is, he is singing anankêi ‘by way of constraint’, O.01.154. And what kind of a singer is this Phemios? He sings while accompanying himself on a kind of lyre, designated by the noun kitharís at O.01.153; also, his playing on the lyre is designated by the verb phormizein at O.01.055. In Plato Ion 533b-c, Phemios is described as a rhapsôïdos ‘rhapsode’. The description is accurate in the sense that rhapsodes were professional performers of Homeric poetry in the classical period, as we see clearly in the overall context of Plato’s Ion. But this same description is inaccurate in the sense that rhapsodes in the classical period performed Homeric poetry without accompanying themselves on the kitharâ ‘lyre’: as we see overall in Plato’s Ion and elsewhere, the rhapsodic form of ‘singing’ Homeric poetry was basically recitative, with reduced melody. By contrast, as we read in Plato Ion 533b-c, performers in the classical period who sang with full-blown melody while accompanying themselves on the kitharâ ‘lyre’ were called kitharôïdoi ‘citharodes’, that is, ‘kitharâ-singers’. In other words, these ‘lyre-singers’ were performers of what we calllyric. At the festival of the Panathenaia in Athens during the classical period, these lyre-singers or citharodes competed with each other in singing epic. As we can learn from Plato Ion 533b-c, the prototypical citharode was considered to be Orpheus, while the prototypical rhapsode was Phemios. But Phemios, even though he sings epic and not lyric, is not exactly a rhapsode in the classical sense of the term: as I have already pointed out, Phemios sings while accompanying himself on a kind of lyre, designated by the noun kitharís at O.01.153; also, his playing on the lyre is designated by the verb phormizein at O.01.055. Nevertheless, Plato has a point in considering Phemios a prototypical rhapsode, since what he sings is epic, which is what rhapsodes recite in the classical period—and which is not what citharodes any longer sing. On Phemios as a singer of epic, see the comment on O.01.325–327. [[GN 2017.03.07 via HC 3§41.]]

O.01.241

subject heading(s): abduction by gusts of wind; harpuiai ‘rapacious gusts of wind, Harpies’

The theme of abduction by gusts of wind is analyzed at length in the comment at O.15.250–251. [[GN 2017.08.03 via BA 194, GMP 243.]]

O.01.284–286

anchor comment on a Cretan Odyssey

Q&T via Nagy 2015.09.24§35

subject heading(s): Cretan Odyssey; “Cretan lies”

The text as transmitted by Aristarchus (see Inventory of terms and names) reads:

πρώτα μέν ἐς Πύλον ἐλθὲ καὶ εἶρεν Νέστορα δίον.
‘First you [= Telemachus] go to Pylos and ask radiant Nestor
and then from there to Sparta and to golden-haired Menelaos,
the one who was the last of the Achaeans, wearers of bronze tunics, to come back home.’

But the text as transmitted by Zenodotus (see again the Inventory) reads:

‘First go to Pylos …
and then from there to Crete and to king Idomeneus
who was the last of the Achaeans, wearers of bronze tunics, to come back home.’

Here at O.01.284–286, as also already at O.01.093, the variant reading that we see transmitted by Zenodotus (quoted in the scholia for O.03.313) indicates a variant epic tradition to which I have already referred as a Cretan Odyssey in my comment on O.01.093. As I argue in Nagy 2015.09.24§§36–37, what we see in these variant verses is a trace of a Cretan Odyssey as primarily represented in our Odyssey by the “Cretan lies,” which are micro-narratives embedded in the epic macro-narrative of the Homeric Odyssey. In comments forthcoming, there will be more to say about these “Cretan lies.” Here I confine my comments to points that are relevant to what we read at O.01.093 and O.01.284–286. In “our” Odyssey, as Nestor reports at O.03.191–192, Idomeneus after the Trojan War returns to Crete with all his men safe and sound. In the Cretan Odyssey, by contrast, Idomeneus seems to have traveled with Odysseus after the conquest of Troy by the Achaeans, and this king of the Cretans even experienced, together with Odysseus, the horrors of the Cave of the Cyclopes: such a story about joint adventures experienced by Idomeneus and Odysseus is attested in a painting on a red-figure stamnos, 480 BCE, featuring the name-tags ΙΔΑΜΕΝΕΥΣ ‘Ida-meneus’ [sic] and ΟΔΥΣΥΣ ‘Odusus’ [sic] appended to images of these two heroes, showing each one of the two clinging to a ram’s underbelly (Levaniouk 2011:105). [[GN 2017.03.05 via Nagy 2015.09.24§§35–37 [see also HTL 39].]]

O.01.299

subject heading(s): ep’ anthrōpous ‘throughout humankind’

This expression ep’ anthrōpous ‘throughout humankind’ is conventionally associated with words referring to remembrance by way of song. See the anchor comment at I.10.213. [[GN 2016.09.14 via BA 37].]

O.01.320–322

Q&T via H24H 9§18

subject heading(s): menos ‘mental power’; Mēntēs and Mēntōr; hupo-mnē- ‘mentally connect’

... Into his heart [thūmos] she [= Athena] had placed mental power [menos] and daring, and she had mentally-connected [hupo-mnē-] him with his father even more than before.

(Here I epitomize from H24H 9§§18–19.) The idea of menos as ‘mental power’ is elegantly recapitulated here at O.01.320–321. The goddess Athena has just finished the first phase of her role as mentor to Telemachus. She had initiated this phase at O.01.088–089 after having assumed, as we saw at O.01.105, the human shape of the fatherly Mēntēs. This name Mēntēs, as I indicated in the comment on O.01.088–089, means ‘he who connects mentally’. Having finished with the role of Mēntēs, the goddess now transforms herself into a bird and flies out of the palace through a lightwell on the roof, and what we see here at O.01.320–321 is the wording that describes what Athena had accomplished so far in connecting the mind of Telemachus with the mind of his father. In her role as Mēntēs, ‘he who connects mentally’, the goddess has given to the hero Telemachus the menos or ‘mental power’ of connecting with the heroic identity of his father. That act of doing this is expressed here at
O.01.321 by the verb *hupo-mnē*-, which means literally ‘mentally connect’ (details in GMP 113). But the mental connectivity of Telemachus is not yet complete, as we will see in the comment on O.01.346–352. [[GN 2017.03.02 via GMP 113.]]

O.01.320

**anchor comment on *thūmos* ‘heart’ and on *phrenes* as ‘heart’**

The noun *thūmos*, which I translate here as ‘heart’, expresses in Homeric diction the human capacity to feel and to think, taken together. In some Homeric contexts, *thūmos* is used as a synonym of *phrenes*, which can also be translated as ‘heart’, as in my comment on O.01.089. In other Homeric contexts, on the other hand, *thūmos* is pictured as the vital force that is contained by the *phrenes* (details in GMP 113n111). Even in such contexts, both words can be approximated as ‘heart’. In still other contexts, *phrenes* is best translated as ‘thinking’. Such a meaning is not contradictory, since Homeric diction leaves room for the idea that you can think with your heart. [[GN 2017.03.07 via H24H 9§18.]]

O.01.325–327

**subject heading(s): Phemios; *aoidos* ‘singer’; *aeidein* ‘sing’; *nostos* ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’; epic; epic Cycle**

At O.01.325, Phemios is described as the *aoidos* ‘singer’ who *aeidei* ‘sings’ epic songs, and the epic song that he sings here is the *nostos* of the Achaeans, also at O.01.325, where *nostos* can be translated as not only ‘homecoming’ but also ‘song of homecoming’. Such a song is evidently epic, as we see for example in the title *Nostoi* ‘Songs of Homecoming’ in the epic Cycle. See under epic and epic Cycle in the Inventory of terms and names. See also the comment on O.01.153–155. [[GN 2017.03.07 via HC 3§41.]]

O.01.326–327

**subject heading(s): nostos ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’; *lugros* ‘dastrous’; epithet for narrative subject; relative clause as introductory outline of the overall narrative**

The syntax here in O.01.326–327 shows that the use of the noun *nostos* ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’ at O.01.326 as the grammatical object of *aeidein* ‘sing’ in the same verse makes this same noun the narrative subject of the song that is being sung by the singer Phemios. The *nostos* ‘homecoming’ is the song that the singer sings, and so the ‘homecoming’ is also a ‘song of homecoming’. My translation ‘song of homecoming’ is meant to show that the homecoming is the song. The placement of the adjective *lugros* ‘dastrous’ at O.01.327 as an epithet for the narrative subject *nostos* ‘homecoming’ in the previous verse at O.01.326 is parallel to the placement of the adjective *oulomenē* ‘dastrous’ at I.01.002 as an epithet for the narrative subject *mēnis* ‘anger’ in the previous verse at I.01.001. See the comment on I.01.001–002. Another parallel is the placement of the adjective *polutropos* ‘turning-into-many-different-selves’ at O.01.001 as an epithet for the preceding narrative subject *anēr* ‘man’ in the same verse. There is further parallelism to be noted here. The epithet *lugros* ‘dastrous’ at O.01.327 for the narrative subject *nostos* ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’ at O.01.326 is immediately followed by a relative clause that outlines the overall narrative here: Athena caused misfortune for some of the Achaeans. Similarly, the epithet *oulomenē* at I.01.002 for the narrative subject *mēnis* at I.01.001 is immediately followed by a relative clause that outlines the overall narrative of the *iliad*: the anger of Achilles caused immeasurable misfortune. See the comment on I.01.002. Also, the epithet *polutropos* ‘turning-into-many-different-selves’ at O.01.001 for the preceding narrative subject *anēr* ‘man’ in the same verse is immediately followed by a relative clause that outlines the overall narrative of the *Odyssey*: the hero Odysseus suffered many misfortunes by veering many times and in many ways before he achieved a safe homecoming for himself. [[GN 2017.02.28 via GMP 47.]]

O.01.338

**subject heading(s): *kleiein* ‘turn [deeds] into glory [kleos]’; *epi-kleiein* ‘turn [deeds] into glory [kleos] and pass it on’**

To sing the kind of song that the singer Phemios sings—the song is called *nostos* ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’ at O.01.326—is described here at O.01.338 as an act of transforming the *erga* ‘deeds’ of men and gods into the *kleos* ‘glory’ of poetry. The verb *kleiein* ‘turn into glory [kleos]’ takes as its direct object the noun *erga* ‘deeds’. [[GN 2017.03.02 via BA 97, PH 150.]]
O.01.340–341

subject heading(s): lugros ‘disastrous’; epithet for narrative subject carried over from one verse to the next

At O.01.326–327, we saw lugros ‘disastrous’ functioning as the epithet of the narrative subject of nostos ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’. The narrative subject nostos as ‘song of homecoming’, O.01.326, was followed by the epithet as the first word in the next verse, lugros ‘disastrous’, O.01.327. So, the epithet was carried over from one verse to the next. Similarly here at O.01.340–341, the word aoidê ‘song’ referring to the song of homecoming, O.01.340, is followed by the epithet lugrê ‘disastrous’ as the first word in the next verse, O.01.341. Once again, the epithet is carried over from one verse to the next. Similarly also at I.01.001–002, the word mênis referring to the song of the anger of Achilles, I.01.001, is followed by the epithet oulomenê ‘disastrous’ as the first word in the next verse, I.01.002. Yet again, the epithet is carried over from one verse to the next. [[GN 2017.03.08.]]

O.01.342

subject heading(s): perithos alaston ‘grief unforgettable’; “speaking name” (nomen loquens); epi-kleiein ‘turn [deeds] into glory [kleos] and pass it on’

For Penelope, the song that is sung by the singer Phemios, which is supposed to turn the deeds of men and gods into the kleos ‘glory’ of poetry, as we saw at O.01.338, produces the opposite effect here at O.01.342. The song sung by Phemios reminds her of her missing husband Odysseus, making her feel perithos alaston ‘grief unforgettable’, O.01.342. This expression signals lament, which is presented here as antithetical to the kind of kleos ‘glory’ that is heard by the audience of Phemios, who are the suitors of Penelope. The personal involvement of Penelope in the song of Odysseus is what makes the kleos that she hears different from the kleos that the suitors hear. For her the kleos contains perithos, while for them it does not. Relevant here is the meaning of the ‘speaking name’ (nomen loquens) of Phemios: the adjectival Phêmios is derived from the noun phêmê, which can be interpreted as meaning ‘something said that means more than what is meant by the one who says it’. On phêmê, see the comment at O.02.035. In terms of this interpretation, Phemios is a singer whose songs mean more than what is meant by that singer. [[GN 2017.03.02 via BA 17, 97–98.]]

O.01.346–352

subject heading(s): epi-kleiein ‘turn [deeds] into glory [kleos] and pass it on’

Telemachus argues with his mother, defending the song that is sung by the singer Phemios about misfortunes experienced by heroes in the course of seeking a successful homecoming. There is a pleasure in the hearing of such a song, Telemachus says at O.01.346–347. Evidently, he does not yet understand the personal involvement of Penelope in the story of such homecoming—or of course his own involvement—because he does not yet understand that the ultimate character in the ultimate story of homecoming will be Odysseus himself. Telemachus speaks positively about the reception of the song of homecoming as sung by the singer Phemios. He says that the audience gives glory to the song, and the verb that is used in his wording is epi-kleiein at O.01.351, which I translate as ‘turn [deeds] into glory [kleos] and pass it on.’ I render the epi- of epi-kleiein here as ‘and pass it on’, in the sense that epi- conveys the idea of ‘in addition to, on top of’, supplementing -kleiein in the sense of ‘turn [deeds] into glory [kleos]’. The wording of Telemachus is justifiable to the extent that the glory of heroes and gods as produced by the singer produces also glory for the song itself as received by the audience. That is to say, this verb epi-kleiein ‘turn [deeds] into glory [kleos] and pass it on’ is reciprocal: there is not only the giving of glory by the audience to the song sung by the singer but there is also the giving of glory by the singer to the song that he sings. Thus it is justifiable for Telemachus to say that the greatest glory goes to the aoidê ‘song’, O.01.351, that is neôtatê ‘newest’, O.01.352, since the glory to be transmitted must be the latest glory to be received. The reception by the most recent audience must be decisively successful. What Telemachus does not yet understand, however, is that the most recent audience for an ongoing song of homecoming will be not the suitors but the ultimate audience of the Odyssey. The audience of the Odyssey will be the definitive audience for the reception of this ongoing song of homecoming. And, for that ultimate audience of the Odyssey, the ultimate hero of the song of homecoming will be Odysseus himself. [[GN 2017.03.02 via BA 98, PH 69.]]
subject heading(s): Antinoos

Here we see for the first time the leader of the suitors. His name, Anti-noos, is antithetical to the identity of Odysseus as an exponent of nóos ‘mind’, which stands for that hero’s special way of thinking in the Odyssey. On the nóos of Odysseus, see already the comment on O.01.003. [[GN 2017.03.08.]]

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The mentoring of Telemachus by Athena continues. First the goddess was Mêntê. Now she will become Mêntôr to the young hero. Through the mentorship of the goddess, Telemachus modulates into mental connectivity: he will no longer be disconnected from the epic legacy of his father. As he boards the ship that will take him to Pylos, he is ready to connect with the Odyssey in progress. [[GN 2017.07.22.]]

![Figure 26. Telemachus with Athena as Mentor (1810). Drawing by John Flaxman. Image via Wikimedia Commons.](image)

O.02.001

subject heading(s): Éos; éri-geneia ‘early-generated’ or ‘early-generating’

This epithet of Éos, goddess of the dawn, has a prefix éri-, meaning ‘early’. See the comment at O.19.320. [[GN 2017.07.22 via GMP 248.]]

O.02.006–008

subject heading(s): assembling an assembly; agorê ‘assembly’

Thanks to mentoring by the goddess Athena, Telemachus takes the initiative of assembling an assembly. [[GN 2017.03.08.]]

O.02.026

subject heading(s): agorê ‘assembly’

As we see from the context here, the agorê ‘assembly’ that is about to take place now in Ithaca is the first assembly to be assembled since Odysseus had left for Troy twenty years earlier. [[GN 2017.03.08.]]
O.02.032

subject heading(s): piphauskesthai ‘say formally’; agoreuein ‘say in assembly’; démios ‘of the community [demos]’; demos ‘community, district’

The verb piphauskesthai ‘say formally’, referring here to what is being spoken in the agorē ‘assembly’, can be compared with the active form of the verb, piphauskein ‘say formally’, as it is used at I.18.500 in the context of describing what is happening at an agorē ‘assembly’, I.18.497, which is the context for the litigation scene as depicted on the Shield of Achilles. Whatever is spoken at an assembly like the one that is now in progress, O.02.032, can qualify as démon ‘of the community [demos]’ if it is public business, not private business. If whatever is spoken at the assembly qualifies as public business, then it is the business of the demos. See also the comment on O.02.080. On demos as ‘community, district’, see O.01.103; see also I.05.077–078. [IGN 2017.03.08 via BA 149, PH 251.]

O.02.035

subject heading(s): phēmē ‘something said; something said that means more than what is meant by the one who says it’; name of Phemios; “speaking name” (nomen loquens)

The speech of the old man Aiguptios, O.02.025–034, is described by the Master Narrator as aphēmē ‘something said’, O.02.035. This translation ‘something said’ does not fully capture, however, the deeper meaning of the word, which is something like this: something said that means more than what is meant by the one who says it. Such a deeper meaning is made explicit at O.20.100 and O.20.105. See the comment at O.20.098–121. [HR]3523. This interpretation of the meaning of phēmē is relevant to the meaning of the “speaking name” (nomen loquens) of Phemios the singer: the adjectival Phēmios is a derivative of the noun phēmē. Accordingly, Phemios is a singer whose songs mean more than what is meant by that singer. See the comment on O.01.342. [IGN 2017.03.08.]

O.02.037

subject heading(s): skēptron ‘scepter’

The context here shows that a speaker in an assembly holds the skētron ‘scepter’ when it is his turn to speak. See I.01.015. [IGN 2017.03.08.]

O.02.044

subject heading(s): piphauskesthai ‘say formally’; agoreuein ‘say in assembly’; démios ‘of the community [demos]’; démos ‘community, district’

See the comment on O.02.032. [IGN 2017.03.08.]

O.02.047

subject heading(s): épios ‘connected, connecting’; back-formation

This form is a back-formation from népios ‘disconnected’, becoming that negative word’s positive alternative. A typical source of connectivity is the father in relation to his son. Full argumentation by Edmunds 1990 | 2018. [IGN 2017.03.08.]

O.02.067

subject heading(s): mēnis ‘anger’

Here the word refers generally to the cosmic sanction of the immortals in reaction to injustices committed by mortals. On mēnis ‘anger’ as cosmic sanction in general, I refer to the definitive work of Muellner 1998. [IGN 2017.03.08.]

O.02.080

subject heading(s): skēptron ‘scepter’
The gesture here of throwing the scepter to the ground is comparable with what happens at I.01.233–246. See the comment there. [[GN 2017.03.08.]]

O.02.085–128

subject heading(s): speech of Antinoos; web of Penelope

This speech is most noteworthy for its incorporation of the myth about the continual weaving and unweaving of the web of Penelope. [[GN 2017.03.08.]]

O.02.092–109

subject heading(s): web of Penelope; nóos ‘mind’

The intent of Penelope to outwit the suitors by way of her continual weaving and unweaving of her web is described in terms of her qualities of nóos ‘mind’, O.02.092. [[GN 2017.03.08.]]

O.02.121–122

subject heading(s): nóēma ‘feat of the mind [nóos]’; homoio- ‘similar to, same as’

The mental feats of Penelope are described here as nóēmata ‘feats of the mind [nóos]’ that are incomparable to any other woman’s feats. The comparison is expressed by way of the adjective homoio- ‘similar to, same as’ (further analysis in MoM 2§12). This adjective homoio- ‘similar to, same as’ can be used in comparisons that express rhetorically the incomparability of the referent, as here. [[GN 2017.03.08.]]

O.02.163

subject heading(s): pēma ‘pain’; kulindesthai ‘roll’

The oncoming pēma ‘pain’ is pictured here as a boulder that breaks off from mountainous heights overhead and starts rolling downward from above, ever increasing in speed as it nears ground zero: only when the boulder has reached a level plain does it finally stop ‘rolling’, as expressed by the verb kulindesthai. For other instances of such an image, see the comment on I.11.347. [[GN 2017.03.08.]]

O.02.212–218

subject heading(s): journey to Pylos and Sparta; punthanesthai ‘learn’; akouein ‘hear’; nostos ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’; kleos ‘glory’ (of poetry)

Athena’s idea of conducting Telemachus on a journey to Pylos and Sparta is introduced, as we saw, already at O.01.088–095. See the comment there. Here too at O.02.212–218, as there, nostos in the sense of ‘song of homecoming’ is the direct object of the verb punthanesthai ‘learn’, O.02.215, and also the direct object of the verb akouein ‘hear’, O.02.218. Elsewhere too in the Odyssey, we see nostos as the direct object of punthanesthai ‘learn’: O.02.264, O.02.360, O.04.714. Also of akouein ‘hear’: O.01.094, O.01.287, O.02.360. Further, such nostos as ‘song of homecoming’ is linked with kleos ‘glory’ (of poetry), as at least indirectly at O.02.217 here. [[GN 2017.03.08.]]

O.02.224–228

subject heading(s): Athena as mentor; Mēntŏr

Athena speaks as mentor and as Mēntŏr. [[GN 2017.03.08.]]

O.02.225

subject heading(s): Mēntŏr
The meaning of the name Mėntōr, ‘he who connects mentally’, is relevant to the plot of the Odyssey: see the comments on O.01.088–089. [[GN 2017.03.08.]]

O.02.234

subject heading(s): épios ‘connected, connecting’; back-formation

On this back-formation from nēpios ‘disconnected’, see again the comment on O.02.047. [[GN 2017.03.08.]]

O.02.239

subject heading(s): dēmos ‘community, district’

From the context here, we can see that the dēmos ‘community’ of Ithaca is populated not only by the families of the suitors. [[GN 2017.03.08.]]

O.02.262–269

subject heading(s): Athena as mentor; Mėntōr; nostos ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’; punthanesthai ‘learn’

In the exchange between Athena and Telemachus here, the role of the goddess as mentor of the young hero converges with her role as the hero Mėntōr. Once again here, nostos ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’ is the direct object of punthanesthai ‘learn’ at O.02.264. [[GN 2017.03.08.]]

O.02.270

subject heading(s): menos ‘mental power’

The idea that menos ‘mental power’, O.02.270, has been instilled into Telemachus by his father is conveyed here by the verb stazein, which literally means ‘drip’. We may compare line 35 of Archilochus F 196A (ed. West), where menos refers explicitly to ejaculated semen. For other references to male arousal by way of words referring to mental power, see Nagy 1974:267–268. [[GN 2017.03.08.]]

O.02.282

subject heading(s): dikaios ‘righteous’; dikē ‘justice, righteousness’

We see here at O.02.282 an occurrence that is rare in Homeric diction: dikaios in the sense of ‘righteous’, derived from dikē in the absolutized sense of ‘justice, righteousness’. [[GN 2017.03.08.]]

O.02.313

tagging: nēpios ‘disconnected’

Telemachus admits here that he had been nēpios ‘disconnected’ in the immediate context of asserting that he is now no longer so. What made him grow up, so to speak? The overall context shows that it was the mentorship of the goddess Athena. [[GN 2017.03.08.]]

O.02.323

subject heading(s): lōbeuein ‘say words of insult’; kertomein ‘say words of insult’; language of praise/blame; blame poetry

The verb lōbeuein ‘say words of insult’ is parallel to kertomein ‘say words of insult’, on which see the comment at I.02.256. [[GN 2017.03.08.]]

O.02.350

subject heading(s): láros ‘delicious’ as epithet of wine
O.02.360

subject heading(s): nostos ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’; punthanesthai ‘learn’; akouein ‘hear’

On nostos ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’ as the direct object of both punthanesthai ‘learn’ and akouein ‘hear’, see again the comment on O.01.088–095. [[GN 2017.03.08 via BA 40.]]

Odyssey Rhapsody 3

2017.03.29 / enhanced 2018.10.06

Aided by the goddess Athena, young Telemachus becomes an ideal guest for his host, the elderly Nestor. Telemachus dearly needs the diplomatic skills of Athena, since Nestor is a prime devotee of the god Poseidon, who is not only a major rival of the goddess but also a relentless antagonist of Odysseus. Nestor’s stories about the travels of the Achaeans as they try to make their way back home after the Trojan War will help connect Telemachus with the ultimate story of his father’s own homecoming. [[GN 2017.03.29.]]

Figure 27. Nestor’s Sacrifice (1805). Engraving after John Flaxman (1755-1826). Purchased as part of the Oppé Collection with assistance from the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund 1996. Image released under Creative Commons CC-BY-NC-ND (3.0 Unported).

O.03.001

subject heading(s): rhapsodic sequencing

At O.02.434, which is the last verse of Rhapsody 2, there is a clause featuring the particlemen (μέν). And now at O.03.001, which is the first verse of Rhapsody 3, there is a clause featuring the particle de (δὲ). It can be argued that such divisions are typical of rhapsodic practice, where one performing rhapsode (rhapsōidos) could leave off performing after he finishes with the men-part of a syntactical construction while the next rhapsode, in relay, could take up the performance by restarting with the following de-part. See the comment at I.09.001–003 / anchor comment on a Rhapsody as one of 24 units of performance. [[GN 2017.03.29 via PasP 161n30, also with reference to I.18.354–356.]]

O.03.033

subject heading(s): dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’
See the comments on I.01.423–425 and I.04.048. [[GN 2017.03.29 via BA 218.]]

O.03.036

subject heading(s): Peisistratos; Peisistratidai

Here is the first mention of Peisistratos, son of Nestor, in the Odyssey. (He is not mentioned in the Iliad.) It can be argued that this Peisistratos was claimed to be the ancestor of Peisistratidai, the lineage that dominated Athens in the sixth century BCE. On Peisistratos of Athens, see also I.10.000. [[GN 2017.03.29 via PH 155, 192.]]

O.03.066

Q&T via BA 128

subject heading(s): dais ‘feast; division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’; daiesthai ‘feast; divide (meat), apportion, distribute’; figura etymologica

The derivation of the noun dais ‘feast; division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’ from the verb daiesthai ‘feast; divide(meat), apportion, distribute’ is re-enacted here by way of a figura etymologica: that is to say, the combination of the verb here with the noun as its direct object actually re-enacts the etymology. [[GN 2017.03.29 via BA 128.]]

O.03.083

subject heading(s): kleos ‘glory (of poetry); akouein ‘hear’; nostos ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’

On the collocation of kleos ‘glory (of poetry) with nostos ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’ in the context of references to the glorification of Odysseus in the Odyssey, see the comments on O.01.088–095; also O.02.212–218 and O.02.360. [[GN 2017.03.209 via BA 40.]]

O.03.112

subject heading(s): Antilokhos; Nestor’s entanglement; evocation; epic Cycle

Here is the first mention of Antilokhos, son of Nestor, in the Odyssey. On the importance of this figure in the Iliad, see I.08.078–117 / anchor comment on Nestor’s entanglement and the poetics of evocation. See also the comments on I.09.057–058. [[GN 2017.03.29 via PH 155.]]

O.03.118

subject heading(s): rhaptein ‘sow, connect threadings’ in the sense of ‘plotting’

Metaphors of fabric-work can have negative connotations, as here. [[GN 2017.03.29 via PasP 64n23.]]

O.03.120–121

subject heading(s): homoio- ‘similar to, same as’

This adjective homoio- ‘similar to, same as’ and its verb homoioûn ‘compare’ can be used in comparisons that express rhetorically the incomparability of the referent, as here. See also I.02.553–554 and I.10.437. [[GN 2017.03.29 via MoM 2$9.]]

O.03.130–183

anchor comment on two variant myths in Odyssey 3 and Odyssey 4, part 1

subject heading(s): mutually contradictory local variations in mythmaking; dominant vs. recessive versions of myths; nostos ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’; eris ‘strife’

Epitome from Nagy 2015§§69–75:
[§69] In Odyssey O.03.130–183, old Nestor is telling a tale to young Telemachus about the various homecomings of the Achaean soldiers after they succeeded in conquering the city of Troy. (Nestor’s tales of homecoming in Odyssey 3 reflect poetic traditions of great antiquity, which are analyzed most incisively and intuitively by Frame 2009:180–193.) The tale is told from the perspective of Nestor’s own experiences. My point of departure is a detail at O.03.169, where Nestor says that he and a group of his fellow Achaean soldiers stopped over at the island of Lesbos on their way home from Troy, O.03.169. One time before and one time after their stopover at Lesbos, Nestor and his group participated in making sacrifices. The story about the first of these two sacrifices, as we will see [§75], contradicts a story in Song 17 of Sappho, which tells about a single sacrifice that involves Agamemnon and Menelaos.

[§70] The first of the two sacrifices mentioned by Nestor in Odyssey 3 takes place at the island of Tenedos, O.03.159, which is situated directly to the west of Troy. By contrast, the island of Lesbos is further away, to the southwest of the Trojan coastland. In Odyssey 3, the divine recipients of the sacrifice at Tenedos are designated only in general terms, as the gods’, O.03.159. Then, continuing their voyage back home from Troy, Nestor and his group set sail from Tenedos, and their next stopover, as already noted, is the island of Lesbos, O.03.169.

[§71] After their stopover at Lesbos, O.03.169, Nestor and his group continued their sea voyage back home. Next, they sailed over the open sea, with no more stopovers, until they reached the city of Geraistos, at the southern tip of the island of Euboea, O.03.177. By now the homecoming of this group of heroes was nearly complete, since the island of Euboea is situated right next to the European mainland. And here, at Euboea, Nestor participated in the second of the two sacrifices to which I have been referring, O.03.178–179. This second sacrifice involving Nestor was meant as a signal of thanksgiving for the successful homecoming of his group of Achaean voyagers, and the divine recipient of the sacrifice here is specified as the god Poseidon, O.03.178, whom Nestor and his fellow Achaean soldiers honored by slaughtering, according to his tale, a multitude of bulls, O.03.178–179.

[§72] So, the second sacrifice attended by Nestor and his group, which took place on the island of Euboea, was a success. But the first sacrifice, which he had already attended and which had taken place on the island of Tenedos, was a failure. The failure, as narrated by Nestor in Odyssey 3, can be linked with a quarrel that broke out, evidently in the context of the feasting that followed this first sacrifice. The quarrel is marked by the word eris ‘strife’, O.03.160. Compare the words erizein ‘have strife’ at I.01.006 and eris ‘strife’ at I.01.008, with reference to the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon. In the case of the eris ‘strife’ at O.03.160, who quarreled with whom? The narrative answers the question: the two heroes who quarreled with each other were Nestor and Odysseus, O.03.161–166.

[§73] This quarrel between Nestor and Odysseus, O.03.161–166, cannot be understood without first considering an earlier quarrel that is central to the narration of Odyssey 3, and the narrator is once again Nestor. According to the tale as Nestor tells it, the two Sons of Atreus, Agamemnon and Menelaos, had quarreled with each other right after their victory at Troy. In this case as well, quarrel is marked by the word eris ‘strife’, O.03.136. And, as a result of this quarrel, all the Achaean soldiers split into two groups, so that half of them followed Menelaos as he sailed off from Troy to Tenedos while the other half stayed with Agamemnon at Troy, O.03.130–158. In terms of this story, Agamemnon intended to perform a sacrifice of one hundred cattle to the goddess Athena before leaving Troy, O.03.143–144, but Menelaos, leading half of the Achaean soldiers, had sailed off together with Nestor and Odysseus and Diomedes before such a sacrifice could take place, O.03.153–154. It was only after Menelaos and his half of the Achaean soldiers stopped over at the nearby island of Tenedos that they arranged for their own sacrifice there, O.03.159. And it was there at Tenedos that a second quarrel broke out—the quarrel between Nestor and Odysseus, O.03.161–166.

[§74] This second quarrel in the tale told by Nestor in Odyssey 3 resulted in a splitting of the group that had sided with Menelaos after the original splitting of all the Achaean soldiers into one separate group siding with Menelaos and another separate group siding with Agamemnon. What resulted from this new split after the quarrel between Nestor and Odysseus was that Odysseus, together with his followers, now sailed off from Tenedos back to Troy in order to rejoin Agamemnon there, O.03.160–164, while Nestor together with Diomedes sailed on from their stopover at the island of Tenedos and arrived with their followers at the next stopover, at the island of Lesbos, O.03.165–169. When Nestor and Diomedes were already at Lesbos, O.03.169, they were joined there by Menelaos, who arrived later, O.03.168.

[§75] And here I stop to highlight the contradiction between the story as told here in the Odyssey and the story as told in Song 17 of Sappho. In the Odyssey, we see that Menelaos came to Lesbos, but there is no mention here of Agamemnon. In
Song 17, by contrast, it seems that both brothers came to Lesbos [Nagy 2015§50]:

_1_ Close by, …. [O Queen _potnia_ Hērā, … your […] festival _porē_,] 3 which, vowed-in-prayer _arāsthai_, the Sons of Atreus did arrange _poiein_ 4 for you, kings that they were, 5 after first having completed great labors _aethōi_, 6 around Troy, and, next _apseron_, 7 after having set forth to come here _tūde_, since finding the way 8 was not possible for them 9 until they would approach you (Hērā and Zeus lord of suppliants _antaios_, 10 and (Dionysus) the lovely son of Thyone. 11 And now we are arranging _poiein_ [the festival], 12 in accordance with the ancient way […] 13 holy _agnā_ and […] a throng _οἶχοι_, 14 of girls _pαthēnōi_ […] and women _gυnaiκες_ 15 on either side … 16 the measured sound of ululation _oλόλογα_.

Sappho Song 17.1–16

On the reading τοί (with the acute accent preserved in P.GC inv. 105 fr. 2.), see Nagy 2015§50. [[GN 2017.03.29.]]

O.0.130

subject heading(s): _nostos_ ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’; _lugros_ ‘disastrous’; epithet for narrative subject; _mēnis_ ‘anger’

Nestor’s story about the _nostos_ ‘homecoming’ of the Achaeans is in and of itself a ‘song of / about homecoming’, as we see from the description of this _nostos_ as _lugros_ ‘disastrous’, an adjective that is used here as an epithet of the narrative subject. See the comment on O.0.326–327, where _nostos_ ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’ at O.0.326 is described as _lugros_ ‘disastrous’ at O.0.327. See also the comment on I.0.1.002, where the adjective _oulomenē_ ‘disastrous’, describing _mēnis_ ‘anger’ in the previous verse, I.0.1.001, is likewise an epithet of the narrative subject. In that case, the narrative subject is the _mēnis_ ‘anger’ of Achilles. Similarly in the context of the ‘disastrous _lugros_ homecoming _nostos_’ of the Achaeans here at O.0.130, there is a foregrounding of _mēnis_ ‘anger’, at O.0.135. In this case, the anger emanates from the goddess Athena herself. [[GN 2017.03.29 via GMP 215.]]

O.0.133–135

subject heading(s): _mēnis_ ‘anger’; _dikaios_ ‘righteous’; _dikē_ ‘justice, righteousness’; _noēmōn_ ‘mindful’; _nōs_ ‘mind, mindfulness’; antagonism between immortal and mortal

The _mēnis_ ‘anger’ of the goddess Athena, O.0.135, is provoked by a failure, on the part of some of the Argives=Achaeans, to be _dikaios_ ‘righteous’ and _noēmōnes_ ‘mindful [= having _nōs_]’, O.0.133–134. The wording of Nestor is diplomatic in avoiding the mention of specific heroes as deserving blame for a failure in _dikē_ ‘justice, righteousness’ and _nōs_ ‘mind, mindfulness’. Among those heroes who are implicated, even without being named, is Odysseus himself, so that even this hero may be a target here of the _mēnis_ ‘anger’ of Athena. [[GN 2017.03.29 via GMP 215, with reference to a latent antagonism between Athena and Odysseus.]]

O.0.160–169

subject heading(s): splitting of groups into sub-groups

Epitome from Nagy 2017§78:

Here we see that Odysseus together with a sub-group of Achaeans had already sailed from Tenedos back to Troy in order to rejoin Agamemnon, who was still there, O.0.160–164, while Nestor and Diomedes together with their Achaeans sailed on from their stopover at the island of Tenedos and arrived at the next stopover, which was the island of Lesbos, O.0.165–169. There, at Lesbos, Nestor and Diomedes were joined by Menelaos, who arrived later, O.0.168–169.
He came late, golden-haired [xanthos] Menelaos did, after the two of us [= Nestor and Diomedes]. It was at Lesbos that he [= Menelaos] caught up with us, as we were planning the long part of our sea voyage.

Nestor and Diomedes are already at Lesbos, and there they are joined by Menelaos, who arrived later. What follows is an epitome of Nagy 2017§§101–103, 105–106:

§101 I interpret the wording of O.03.168–169 to mean that Menelaos arrived too late to participate fully in a sacrifice of one hundred cattle at Lesbos. And the place for this sacrifice to happen would have been the precinct of Héra on that island. From the standpoint of the local myth that originated from Lesbos, as I have argued with reference to Song 17 of Sappho (Nagy 2015§§51–67), both Agamemnon and Menelaos had announced-in-prayer, already at Troy, the arrangement of a festival for Héra at Lesbos, and what was wished-for in return was to find the best possible way to achieve a safe homecoming from Troy. So, in terms of my argument, what was announced-in-prayer was the performing of a sacrifice as the centerpiece of the festival to be arranged, but only one of the Sons of Atreus did his part in at least trying to make the sacrifice a success. That was Agamemnon. As for the other Son, Menelaos, he somehow failed to do his part. And, in terms of my reconstruction, it was because Menelaos arrived too late for the sacrifice. Similarly, as we will see in Odyssey 4, Menelaos arrived too late in his homecoming: by the time he got home, he was too late to save his brother—and he was too late even to avenge his brother’s death, since Orestes, son of Agamemnon, had already done so by killing Aigisthos.

O.04.546–547:

§102 This theme of failing by being late is an essential piece of my overall reconstruction of the myth about a sacrifice of one hundred cattle at Lesbos—a sacrifice that is featured as the climax of the festival that was announced-in-prayer by Agamemnon and Menelaos in Song 17 of Sappho (again, Nagy 2015§§51–67). In terms of this reconstruction, Agamemnon sailed to the island and arranged to sacrifice one hundred cattle to Héra there, but Menelaos joined him only after the sacrifice was already in progress, since he did not arrive at Lesbos on time. In terms of this reconstruction, the quarrel between the Sons of Atreus, Agamemnon and Menelaos, must have happened during the feast that followed the sacrifice at Lesbos, just as the quarrel between Nestor and Odysseus happened at the feast that followed the sacrifice at Tenedos.

§103 Menelaos seems to be idiosyncratic in his arrivals at sacrifices. For a striking example, see the comment on I.02.402–429. In that passage, we see a mental link between Menelaos and Agamemnon, allowing one brother to read the mind of the other.

§105 At Lesbos, by contrast, it seems that the mental link between the brothers has somehow been broken. That is why Menelaos fails to arrive in time for the festival. And now the quarrel between Menelaos and Agamemnon ensues. So, who is to blame? Perhaps it was Menelaos, who was late. Or perhaps it was Agamemnon, who might have forgotten to invite Menelaos, assuming that his brother was still reading his mind.

§106 But what was the quarrel about, anyway? Here I must add one last relevant detail to be found in Odyssey 3. As Nestor is recounting the moment when Menelaos arrives late at Lesbos, O.03.168 (ἐπιλαυνότας), about two alternative ways of continuing their sea voyage. I argue that, in the version of the myth originating from Lesbos, Agamemnon was also part of these deliberations, and then the latecomer Menelaos joined in as well. I must stress that, although Menelaos was late for the sacrifice at Lesbos, he would have been there for the feasting that happened after the sacrifice. That was when, in terms of my reconstruction, the deliberations took place—and that was when...
the quarrel between the Sons of Atreus broke out in the version of the story that originated from Lesbos. [[GN 2017.03.29.]]

O.03.170–178

subject heading(s): alternative ways to sail home from Troy

What follows is an epitome of Nagy 2017§107–108:

§107 In the deliberations, as narrated in Odyssey 3, about two alternative ways for the Achaeans to sail home after their conquest of Troy, one of the two ways was to take the sea route north of Chios, thus venturing into the open sea and heading straight for the island of Euboea, O.03.170–171. The alternative way was to take the sea route south of Chios, O.03.172. That was the safer way. Nestor goes on to say that he and Diomedes and their followers, before deciding which sea route to take, had consulted a divinity, not named, who advised that they should head straight for the distant island of Euboea, thus taking the more direct sea route, O.03.173–178. In this version of the story as transmitted in Odyssey 3, Menelaos and his followers sailed along with Nestor and Diomedes, O.03.276–277. Or, to say it more precisely, Menelaos sailed with them at least as far as Cape Sounion.

§108 Here I reconstruct another aspect of the alternative version of the story, originating from Lesbos, that told about the deliberations following the sacrifice performed by Agamemnon at Lesbos. After the deliberations, Agamemnon did not sail along with Nestor and Diomedes, and, instead, he took the more indirect sea route after he left Lesbos, while Menelaos, unlike Agamemnon, had taken the more direct sea route, choosing the same way that was chosen by Nestor. In terms of this alternative version, I argue, the deliberations about choosing between more direct and less direct sea routes led to a quarrel between Agamemnon and Menelaos, who disagreed about which way was the right way. I see an irony built into the idea that the setting for the quarrel would have been the sacrifice at Lesbos—and that Menelaos had been late in arriving at that ritual event. And, as I have already noted §101, he will also be late—eight years too late—in arriving back home, O.04.546–547, even though he had chosen the more direct route from Lesbos. [[GN 2017.03.29.]]

O.03.202–224

subject heading(s): wishes correlated with premises

The syntax of the wording at O.03.205–207 indicates that Telemachus is on the verge of giving up hope, but the fuller use of comparable syntax in the wording of Nestor at O.03.218–224 reaffirms the hope. Telemachus uses a curtailed form of the syntax and then overtly says that his wish is impossible—only to be corrected by Nestor, who uses a full form. Telemachus wishes that the gods could give him the dunamis ‘power’ to kill the suitors: οἱ γὰρ ἐμοὶ τοιοῦτοι δεσμοί δύναμιν προδέχεσθαι ‘if only the gods would grant me a power so great’, O.03.205. Then, instead of giving a premise as grounds of hope, he gives up hope by claiming that the gods have granted such a power neither to him nor to his father, O.03.208–209. At this point Nestor responds by resorting to a full form of the idiom: εἰ γὰρ ο’ ὡς ἐθέλοι φιλέαν γλαυκώτης Αθηνή | ὡς τότ’ ὅμοιον περικλῆστο κυδαλίμων | δήμῳ ἐνι Τρώων ‘If only Athena with the looks of the owl would deign to love you | as surely as in those days she cared for glorious Odysseus in the district [dēmos] of Troy’, O.03.218–220. This time there is indeed a premise, there is reason to hope: if Athena does love you this much, Nestor is telling Telemachus, then the suitors will indeed be killed, O.03.223–224. [[GN 2017.03.29 via GMP 298.]]

O.03.207

subject heading(s): hubris ‘outrage’; atasthalar ‘reckless’

These two negative terms hubris ‘outrage’ and atasthalar ‘reckless’ are closely linked with each other in Homeric diction. [[GN 2017.03.29 via BA 163.]]

O.03.262

subject heading(s): aethlos (áthlos) ‘ordeal’

On the use of this word aethlos (áthlos) ‘ordeal’ with reference to the Trojan War, see the comment on I.03.125–128. [[GN 2017.03.29 via PH 138; for more on aethlos (áthlos) as the ‘ordeal’ of war, see also PH 132, 154.]]
subject heading(s): aoidos 'singer'

The generic aoidos 'singer', as represented by the anonymous figure who is mentioned here, has the power to supervise the deeds of men and women by way of praising what is good and blaming what is bad. The aoidos that Agamemnon left behind to supervise Clytemnestra cannot be neutralized by way of removal from the scene. The aoidos does not need to see bad deeds in order to tell about them, since he can hear about them from the Muses. [[GN 2017.03.29 via BA 37–38, PH 392.]]

O.03.267

In the scholia for O.03.267 we see the only incontrovertible reference to Demetrius of Phaleron. [[GN 2017.03.29 via PasP 191n14.]]

O.03.464–468

subject heading(s): asaminthos 'bathtub'; homoiο- 'similar to, same as'

[What follows is epitomized from Nagy 2017.03.16.] Telemachus the son of Odysseus is bathed in a tub called an asaminthos, O.03.468. The bath is part of a welcoming ceremony organized by Nestor, king of Pylos, who is hosting the young prince. Telemachus is being bathed by Polykaste, youngest daughter of Nestor. After the bath, O.03.469, Telemachus proceeds to a dinner hosted by Nestor in his honor. But while he is still finishing the bath, as we see him emerging from the bathtub, Telemachus is described this way at O.03.468: 'he [= Telemachus] emerged from the bathtub [asaminthos], looking the same as [homoiοs] the immortals in shape' (ἐκ ρ’ ἄσμανθου βῆ δεμας ἀθανάτων ὁμοίος). For more on homoiο- in the sense of 'same as', see the comment on O.16.172–212. [[GN 2017.03.29 via MoM 2§16.]]

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Odyssey Rhapsody 4

2017.04.05 / enhanced 2018.10.06

With the continued aid of the goddess Athena, young Telemachus now becomes an ideal guest for his new hosts, Menelaos together with Helen. The identity of Helen as a goddess becomes more evident now that she is back in Sparta. This divine identity will point to the future immortalization of the hero Menelaos by virtue of his winning back Helen as his consort. [[GN 2017.04.06.]]
O.04.001–019

subject heading(s): a wedding feast arranged by Menelaos

As Telemachus, accompanied by Peisistratos, arrives at Sparta, he finds that a wedding feast is in progress, in celebration of not one but two weddings. Menelaos, king of Sparta, is giving away his daughter in marriage to Neoptolemos, son of Achilles. She will be sent off to Neoptolemos. Meanwhile, Menelaos is also marrying off his bastard son Megapenthes. [[GN 2017.04.06.]]

O.04.011

subject heading(s): name of Megapenthes; “speaking name” (nomen loquens)

We see at work here the mythological convention of naming a son after a primary heroic trait of the father, as in the case of the son of Ajax, whose name Eurysakēs means ‘the one with the wide shield [skos]’; the meaning of this “speaking name” (nomen loquens) is made explicit in the wording of Sophocles Ajax 574–578. See also the comment on I.22.506–507 with reference to the the first of two names given to the son of Hector, Astyanax [Astuanax], I.06.403, which means ‘king [anax] of the city [astu]’. This meaning is relevant to the heroic role of the father as protecting a citadel from sieges. Such a role is expressed by the very name of Hector, Hēktōr, which is an agent noun meaning ‘one who holds [ekhein]’ in the sense of ‘one who protects’. In the case of Megapenthēs, the meaning of his name as ‘the one with the great sorrow [penthos]’ is made explicit by references to the great penthos ‘sorrow’ experienced by the Achaeans in reaction to a most painful wounding of
Menelaos in the context of the Trojan War, I.04.197, I.04.207. Also viewed in general are the sorrows of the Trojan War itself, which Menelaos expresses in detail at O.04.093–112. See the comment on O.04.093–116. As we will see at O.04.220–226, Helen attempts to neutralize such sorrows by drugging the wine to be poured for the feast hosted by Menelaos in honor of Telemachus: the word for this drug is nēpentes, O.04.221, which can be interpreted as ‘negating sorrow ἱπένθος’. [[GN 2017.04.06 via BA 146]]

O.04.015–019

Q&T via MoM 4§20

subject heading(s): ex-arkhein ‘lead off [in performing]’; molpē ‘singing-and-dancing’

|15 ὡς οἱ μὲν δαίμονα καθ’ ύψορεφές μέγα δῶμα |16 γείτονες ἤδε ἦταν Μενελάου κυδαλίμοιο, |17 τερπόμενοι: μετὰ δὲ σφῖν επελιπτὸ θεῖος ἀοίδος |18 φορμίζων· δοῖο δὲ κυβιστήπηρη κατ’ αὐτοὺς |19 μολπής ἔξαρχοντος εὖδιενον κατὰ κέρασος:

|15 So they feasted throughout the big palace with its high ceilings, |16 both the neighbors and the kinsmen of glorious Menelaos, |17 and they were feeling delight [terpesthai]; in their midst sang-and-danced [melpēsthai] a divine singer [aoidos], |18 playing on the special lyre [phorminx]; two special dancers [kubistētēre] among them |19 were swirling as he led [ex-arkhein] the singing-and-dancing [molpē] in their midst.

This passage provides comparative evidence for interpreting both the shorter and the longer versions of another passage, analyzed in the comment on I.18.603–604–(605–)606. As argued in that comment, a formulaic analysis of both the longer and the shorter versions of I.18.603–604–(605–)606 indicates that both versions are compatible with Homeric diction, suiting different phases in the evolution of this diction as a formulaic system. [[GN 2017.04.06 via MoM 4§§19–21, 29, 36, 38; HC 2§74, HPC 300nn87, 88; PH 352]]

O.04.043–075

Q&T O.04.043–047 and O.04.071–075 via Nagy 2016.02.18§1–4

subject heading(s): palace of Menelaos and Helen; heavenly bronze

Epitome from Nagy 2016.02.18§1–4

[§1] The wording about to be quoted describes the very first impression experienced by the young hero Telemachus when he sees the splendor of the palace of Menelaos and Helen. We join the action as Telemachus and his traveling companion, the young hero Peisistratos, son of Nestor, are both being escorted into the palace of Menelaos and Helen:

|43 αὐτούς δ’ εἰσήγην θείων δόμων. οἱ δὲ ἰδόντες |44 θαύμαζον κατὰ δῶμα διστρέφονς βασιλῆς, |45 ὡς τε γὰρ ἤλιον αἰγὴ πέλεν ἡ σεληνής |46 δῶμα καθ’ ύψορεφές Μενελάου κυδαλίμοιο. |47 αὐτάρ ἐπεὶ τάρτησαν ὀρφιμενοι ὑψαλμιοι ...

|43 They were escorted inside the heavenly [theion] palace. Seeing what they were seeing, |44 they were filled with awe [thauma] as they proceeded through the palace of the king, that man whose origins are celestial. |45 There was a gleam [aige] there, which was like the gleam of the sun or the moon, |46 spreading throughout that palace famed for its high ceilings, that home of radiant Menelaos. |47 But then, after they had feasted their eyes on what they saw ...

O.04.043–047

[§2] At this point, the story proceeds to take the visitors through a series of welcoming rituals, followed by a grand dinner arranged by Menelaos as the gracious host, O.04.047–070. And now the dinner conversation gets underway, starting with words of appreciation spoken by Telemachus and intended for Menelaos. Telemachus speaks here as a grateful guest, addressing his fellow guest Peisistratos, son of Nestor, but his words are really intended for Menelaos as the generous host. I will now quote these words of Telemachus as spoken to the son of Nestor—words that not only compPaleGreennt Menelaos
but also express most sincerely the young guest’s awestruck reaction to the splendor of the king’s palace:

|71 | “φράζε τον Νεστόρι τιφέκο λερεριμένε θυμή, |72 | χάλκου τη στεροπήν κατά δώματα ἥχηντα |73 | χρυσού τη ἕλεκτρον τε καὶ ἄργυρου ἕδ’ ἐλέφαντος. |74 | Ζηνός που τοιγήθε γ’ Όλυμπίου ἐνδοθεν αὐλή, |75 | ὅσα τάδ’ ἀστετα πολλά’ σέβας’ μ’ ἔχει εἰσορόωντα.” |

|71 | “I want you to notice something, son of Nestor, you who are so dear to my heart: |72 | notice the flash [stereope] of bronze [khalkos] as its light pervades the echoing hall |73 | and also the flash of gold and of electrum and of silver and of ivory. |74 | I’m guessing that Zeus, who lives on Olympus, has such a hall inside his palace, |75 | and he would have as many indescribable things as are here. A sense of holy awe [sebas] takes hold of me as I look at these things.” |

O.04.071–075

[3] What first catches the young man’s eye here is all the shining bronze he sees. And then it’s the gold, then the electrum, then the silver, and finally the ivory. But the first impression is the bronze, all that bronze. The light that he sees streaming from the bronze envelopes everything with its radiance, and it’s just like heaven for the young man.

[4] “Thought I’d died and gone to heaven.” The colloquial saying that I just quoted, which has become the title of a popular song recorded in 1991 by Bryan Adams, captures the young man’s awareness that he has just experienced something celestial. The reduced theology of this kind of imagined heaven resembles the celestial realm of the ancient Greek gods. Their ‘sky’ or ouranos, as we read at 1.17.425, is traditionally visualized as ‘made of bronze’, khalkeos (χάλκεον οὐρανόν). This expression shows its own special kind of reduced theology: from out of the sky, when it’s bright, the gleam of a mighty bronze dome envelops everything on earth. Presiding over this bronze dome is the god Zeus, whose heavenly residence is called the khalkebates dò, ‘the palace with floor made of bronze’ (χαλκοβατές δό), I.01.426; I.14.173, I.21.438, I.21.505, O.08.321—a residence situated high above Mount Olympus, I.01.426, I.21.438, I.21.505. As we will see at O.07.084–090, the heavenly residence of Menelaos is comparable to the palace of Alkinos (latinized as Alcinous), king of the Phaeacians. [[GN 2017.04.06]]

O.04.093–116

subject heading(s): sorrows of the Trojan War; personal involvement in the sorrows; [penthos ‘sorrow’; akhos ‘sorrow’; nēpentes ‘negating sorrow’]

Menelaos laments here the sorrows of Trojan War, O.04.093–112, and Telemachus responds by weeping, O.04.113–116. These sorrows are accentuated by the personal involvement of heroes like Menelaos and Odysseus as main participants in the war. The very idea of lament, as signaled elsewhere by words like penthos and akhos, is seen here as an aspect of genuine narrative about the heroic world. As we are about to see, such a genuine narrative is to be contrasted with the false narrative induced by the drug nēpentes, O.04.221, which prevents contact with the emotional world of lament. For the interpretation of nēpentes as ‘negating sorrow [penthos]’, I refer ahead to the comment on O.04.220–226.[[GN 2017.04.06 via BA 95, 98–99]]

O.04.182–185

subject heading(s): sorrows of the Trojan War; personal involvement in the sorrows; [penthos ‘sorrow’; akhos ‘sorrow’; nēpentes ‘negating sorrow’]

At O.04.113–116, we saw that Telemachus weeps in response to the laments of Menelaos over the sorrows of the Trojan War. And now we see at O.04.182–185 that Telemachus weeps again in response to further laments of Menelaos, whose sad words are at this point referring directly to the disappearance of Odysseus; also weeping are Helen and Menelaos himself, O.04.184–185, and Peisistratos too, O.04.186–189, who laments the death of his brother Antiokhos in the Trojan War. As we are about to see, the emotions conjured by such events as transmitted in genuine narratives about the Trojan War are to be contrasted with the absence of emotions in a false narrative induced by the drug nēpentes, O.04.221, which prevents contact with the emotional world of lament. For the interpretation of nēpentes as ‘negating sorrow [penthos]’, I again refer ahead to the comment on O.04.220–226. [[GN 2017.04.06 via BA 99]]
subject heading(s): aethlos (ἀθλος) ‘ordeal’

On aethlos (ἀθλος) ‘ordeal’ in the specific sense of ‘ordeal of war’, see the comment on I.03.125–128. [[GN 2017.04.06 via PH 138.1]]

subject heading(s): death of Antilokhos

On the traditions surrounding the death of Antilokhos, son of Nestor and brother of Peisistratos, see the anchor comment at I.08.078–117 on: Nestor’s entanglement and the poetics of evocation. See also the comment on I.09.057–058. [[GN 2017.04.06 via PH 207–214 (especially 208), H24H 7§8.]]

subject heading(s): nêpenthes ‘negating sorrow [penthos]’

Before she narrates her own version of the Trojan War at O.04.235–264, Helen attempts to neutralize the sorrows experienced by those involved in the war. Most prominent among those present who had in fact been involved in the war is of course Helen’s consort Menelaos, who laments at O.04.093–112 the sorrows of the war. See the comment on O.04.093–116. Helen attempts to neutralize such sorrows by drugging the wine to be poured for the feast hosted by Menelaos in honor of Telemachus: the word for this drug is nêpenthes, O.04.221, which can be interpreted as ‘negating sorrow [penthos]’. So, nêpenthes is an antidote to the pain of penthos ‘sorrow’. [[GN 2017.04.06 via BA 99–100.]]

subject heading(s): a sojourn of Helen in Egypt

These verses, cited by Herodotus 2.116.1–117.1 derive from a narrative tradition that indicates more than one stopover for Paris–Alexandros and Helen after her abduction/elopement from Sparta. |Epitome here from HPC 75–79 [= I§§184–187]: Herodotus makes a point of distinguishing Homer from what he describes as the poet of the Cyprus, and, in making this distinction, he actually quotes a passage from the Homeric Iliad to prove his point (Herodotus 2.116.1–2.117.1):

Δοκείει δὲ μοι καὶ Ὄμηρος τὸν λόγον τούτον πυθέσαται: ἀλλ’, οὐ γὰρ ὁμοίως ἂς τῇ ἐπιποίησίν εὐφρετῆς ἢ τῷ ἐτέρῳ τῇ περὶ ἐχρήσατο, [ἐς δὲ] μετήκε αὐτῶν, δηλώσας ὡς καὶ τοῦτον ἐπίστατο τὸν λόγον. Δὴλον δὲ, κατὰ πέρ ἐπισίγια ἐν Πλαδί (καὶ οὐδαμῇ ἄλλῃ ἀνεπόδισε εὐμνών) πλάςη τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρου, ὡς ἀπενείβη ἄγων Ἐλένην τῇ τε δῇ ἄλλῃ πλαζόμενος καὶ ἄς ἐς Σιδώνα τῆς Φοινίκης ἄπικετο. Ἐπιμέμηται δὲ αὐτοῦ ἐν Διομήδεω Αριστήη: λέγει δὲ τὰ ἐπεα ὥδε:

ἐνθ’ ἔσαν οἱ πέπλαι παμποίκλαι, ἔγραν γυναικῶν
Σιδώνιων, τὰς αὐτῶς Ἀλεξάνδρος θεοειδῆς
ήγαγε Σιδονίθην, ἐπιπλώς εὐρέα πόντον,
τὴν ὀδὸν ἦν Ἐλένην περ ἄνὴγαν εὐπατέρειαν.

[[1.06.289–292]]

Ἐπιμέμηται δὲ καὶ ἐν Ὀδυσσείη ἐν τοῦτο τοῖς ἐπεάι:

τοῖς Δίως θυγάτηρ ἔχει φάρμακα μητώνειν,
ἔσθια, τὰ οἱ Πολυδαμίνα πόρεν θόνον παράκοιται. Αἰγυπτιὴ, τῇ πλεῖστα φέρει ξειδώρος ἄροιρα
φάρμακα, πολλὰ μὲν ἐσθίλα μεσιμένα, πολλὰ δὲ λυγρά.
I think that Homer was aware of this story [= the story of Helen in Egypt]. But, because it [= this story] was not as appropriate for epic composition as was the other one [= the other story] that he used, he omitted it, though he made it clear that he was aware of this story [= the story of Helen in Egypt] as well. It is clear on the basis of the way he composed in the Iliad (and nowhere else has he [= Homer] retraced his steps to this) the detour of Alexandros [= Paris]—how he [= Paris], as he was bringing Helen, was blown off course and was detoured in various places and then how he reached Sidon in Phoenicia. He [= Homer] mentions the story [of Helen in Egypt] in the part about the greatest deeds of Diomedes. And the epic words he says are as follows.

There they were, the peploi, completely pattern-woven [paikilo], the work of women from Sidon, whom Alexandros [= Paris] himself, the godlike, had brought home [to Troy] from the land of Sidon, sailing over the vast sea, on the very same journey as the one he took when he brought back home [to Troy] also Helen, the one who is descended from the most noble father.

[1.06.289–292]

He [= Homer] mentions it [= the story of Helen in Egypt] in the Odyssey also, in these epic words:

Such magical things she had, the daughter of Zeus,
things of good outcome, which to her did Polydamna give, wife of Thon.
She was Egyptian. For her, many things were produced by the life-giving earth,
magical things—many good mixtures and many baneful ones.

[O.04.227–230]

And these other things are said to Telemachus by Menelaos:
I was eager to return here, but the gods still held me in Egypt,
Since I had not sacrificed entire hecatombs [hekatómbai] to them.

[O.04.351–352]

In these epic verses the Poet makes clear that he knew of the detour of Alexandros [= Paris] to Egypt; for Syria borders on Egypt, and the Phoenicians whose territory is Sidon dwell in Syria. In terms of these epic verses, this shows most clearly that the epic of the Cypria is not by Homer but by someone else. For in the Cypria it is said that on the third day after setting sail from Sparta Alexandros [= Paris] arrived in Troy bringing Helen, having made good use of a favorable wind and smooth seas. In the Iliad, on the other hand, he [= Homer] says that he [= Paris] was detoured as he was bringing her [= Helen].
So much for Homer and the epic of the Cypria.

(A note on Herodotus 2.116.4–5.) I question the judgment of modern editors who bracket sections 4 and 5 of Herodotus 2.116. Granted, the topic in these sections is the detour of Menelaos and Helen in Egypt after the war at Troy, not the detour of Paris and Helen before the war. But these passages are relevant to what Herodotus says thereafter (2.118–119) about Helen in Egypt after the war. Herodotus is making the point that there are other Homeric stories about Helen in Egypt,
whereas there are no other Homeric stories about Helen in Phoenicia.

I now offer a paraphrase of the arguments made by Herodotus here at 2.116.1–2.117.1:

In a non-Homeric version of an epic called the Cypria (a version known to Herodotus but not to us), it is said that Paris and Helen sailed to Troy without making any detour. There is an alternative version in the Homeric Iliad, and Herodotus quotes the relevant verses. In this version, it is said that Paris and Helen did make a detour: they went to Phoenicia before they went to Troy. On the basis of an Egyptian story about Paris and Helen, Herodotus goes on to argue that they went to Egypt as well as Phoenicia, and that Homer knew it. After all, Egypt is next to Phoenicia. But the problem is, Homer later elided the story of Helen in Egypt as inappropriate. So the Iliad tells the story about Helen in Troy, not the story about Helen in Egypt. And the Odyssey follows the Iliad in accepting the story of Helen in Troy. Both epics, however, show traces of the story of Helen in Egypt, though the traces in the Iliad are only indirect.

Next, I offer a critical analysis of this paraphrase:

Herodotus considers the stories about detours in Egypt and Phoenicia within the larger context of stories about Helen in Egypt. Upon retelling an Egyptian version of a story about a detour of Paris and Helen in Egypt after he abducted her from Sparta (2.112–115), Herodotus says that Homer must have known that story (2.116.1). Then, in order to show that this is so, Herodotus offers proof (2.116–117), quoting I.06.289–292 and O.04.227–230 together with O.04.351–352. The passage I.06.289–292 concerns the detour of Paris and Helen before the war at Troy while the passages O.04.227–230 and O.04.351–352 concern the detour of Menelaos and Helen after the war. The first passage is meant as indirect proof that the story of Helen in Egypt was recognized by Homer in the Iliad while the other two passages are meant as direct proof that the story of Helen in Egypt was recognized by Homer in the Odyssey. The passages from the Odyssey are relevant to what Herodotus goes on to argue about the story of Helen in Egypt: he finds that this story is more believable than the story of Helen in Troy (2.118–119). In the Egyptian version, Paris is forced to leave Helen behind in Egypt after the two of them are detoured there (2.115.5). That is where Menelaos finds her after the war. According to this Egyptian version, then, Helen never went to Troy. For Herodotus, this version makes more sense than the Homeric version that dominates the Iliad and Odyssey.

I conclude by considering again the fact that Herodotus distinguishes Homer as the poet of the Iliad from the poet of the Cypria. This fact shows that the historian is familiar with the Panathenaic Homer. That is, he thinks of Homer as the poet of the two epics performed at the Panathenaia, the Iliad and the Odyssey. Nevertheless, Herodotus does not presuppose that everyone thinks this way. That is why he makes a point of establishing the distinction in the first place. He speaks of the poet of the Cypria as someone who may be considered to be Homer by others, but Herodotus knows better.

[[GN 2017.04.06 via HPC 75–79 = §§184–187; also PH 420.]]

O.04.227

subject heading(s): Helen as Dios thugatēr / thugatēr Dios ‘daughter of Zeus’

The application of this epithet ‘daughter of Zeus’ to Helen is an overt reference to her divinity. On the use of Dios thugatēr / thugatēr Dios ‘daughter of Zeus’ as an epithet for goddesses, see the anchor comment at I.03.374. For more on the divinity of Helen, I epitomize from Nagy 2016.05.02§§0–4:

[§0] The picturing of Helen as a ‘daughter of Zeus’ here at O.04.227 is a most fitting description of a goddess who was already worshipped at Sparta in an era as early as the second half of the second millennium BCE—an era that marks the rise and the eventual fall of an early Greek civilization that archaeologists recognize as the Mycenaean Empire. But there is a problem with this picture: how do we square the idea of Helen as goddess of Sparta with the idea of Helen of Troy as we see her come to life in the Homeric Iliad? I hope to address this problem here by taking a second look at the idea of Helen’s
'image-double', the word for which in Greek was eidolon.

[§1] Helen of Troy, as we know her in the Homeric iliad, appears to be a woman, not a goddess. But the remarkable fact is—I highlight its relevance from the start—that the Homeric Odyssey describes Helen here at O.04.227 by way of the epithet Dios thugatēr, which means ‘daughter of Zeus’. And I spotlight here another relevant fact that is even more remarkable: the Homeric iliad describes Helen as Dios ekgegauia ‘daughter of Zeus’ at I.03.199, I.03.418, and the same epithet occurs also at O.04.184, O.04.219, O.23.218. But the most remarkable relevant fact of them all is that Dios thugatēr ‘daughter of Zeus’, as we see this epithet deployed elsewhere not only in the iliad but also in the Odyssey, can be used only with reference to goddesses: Aphrodite at I.03.374 and I.05.131 and I.05.312, Athena at I.02.548 and I.04.128 and I.04.515, Artemis at O.20.061, Persephone at O.11.217, Ate at I.19.091, and the Muses at I.02.491–492 (plural) and at O.01.010 (singular). These and other facts to be brought up later lead me to argue that, although Helen appears to be a woman and not a goddess in the iliad, she is still a goddess. And I argue further that, despite appearances as poetically created in the iliad, Helen is recognized even there as a goddess. In terms of my argument, then, Helen is recognized as a goddess not only in Sparta but also in the Troy or ‘Ilium’ of the iliad, the name of which epic means of course ‘the song of Illion’. And she is a goddess in ‘the song of Illion’ precisely because she is Helen of Sparta.

[§2] Someone may object that, even if it is a fact that you have Zeus as your father, this fact alone is not enough to make you a goddess or a god. Your mother must also be a goddess. In other words, you have to have two divine immortals as your biological parents in order to be worshipped as an immortal divinity in your own right. After all, as I myself have argued in H24H 0§5, the dominant gene in the genetic code of ancient Greek mythmaking is mortality while the recessive gene is immortality, not the other way around. In other words, if the family tree that produced you includes even one solitary mortal ancestor, that will be enough to make you mortal as well—not matter how many immortal ancestors grace your genealogy. So, what about Helen’s mother in Sparta? If she were a goddess, then the status of Helen as a goddess in her own right would be a given.

[§3] In one version of the surviving myths about Helen, the mother of Helen is in fact a goddess, named Nemesis Cypria fragment 7 ed. Allen, by way of Athenaeanus 8.334b–d). In terms of this version, then, there is no question about the divinity of Helen. But things are more complicated. There are also other versions, native even to Sparta, where the mother of Helen is not Nemesis but Leda, as we read in the wording of a Spartan song dramatized by Aristophanes in the Lysistrata (line 1314). And this Leda, as we are about to see, is a mortal woman who is impregnated by Zeus. So, I am faced with a problem here. In terms of my own argument concerning mortality as the dominant gene, as it were, I should expect the mortality of Leda as mother to undo the divinity of Helen as daughter of Zeus. In other words, even the paternity of immortal Zeus would not be enough to cancel the mortality of a mortal mother.

[§4] But Leda is no ordinary mortal mother, since her impregnation by Zeus produces not only Helen but also two sons who are twins, commonly known in English by their Latin names Castor and Pollux—Kastor and Poludeukēs in the original Greek—who are also known as the Dioskouroi, meaning ‘sons of Zeus’ in Greek. See the comment on I.03.237. I argue that the mythological identity of Helen as a goddess at Sparta can best be understood by contemplating the mythological identity of these two brothers of hers, the Dioskouroi. [[GN 2017.04.06 via PH 346, GMP 250].]

O.04.238–243

subject heading(s): sorrows of the Trojan War; personal involvement in the sorrows; terpesthai ‘feel delight’ [; penthos ‘sorrow’; akhos ‘sorrow’; nēpenthes ‘negating sorrow’]

Helen presents her story about the sorrows of the Trojan War as an entertainment, marked by the the programmatic word terpesthai ‘feel delight’, O.04.239. Evidently, the drug nēpenthes has occluded the sorrow of her listeners. See the comment on O.04.220–226. [[GN 2017.04.06 via BA 99].]

O.04.250

subject heading(s): anagignōskein ‘recognize’; [sēma ‘sign’]

Here, unlike elsewhere, the cognitive act of recognizing Odysseus, as marked by the verb anagignōskein ‘recognize’, does not require the explicit use of the word sēma ‘sign’. [[GN 2017.04.06 via GMP 203].]
subject heading(s): ἀτέ ‘aberration’

Helen refers to her elopement with Paris=Alexandros as an ἀτέ ‘aberration’ caused by Aphrodite. [[GN 2017.04.06 via PH 242]]

O.04.279

Q&T via MoM 2§26 (modified)

subject heading(s): εἰσκεῖν ‘make likenesses, liken’

φωνήν ἵσκουσ’ ἀλόχοιαν.

She [= Helen] was likening [εἰσκεῖν] her voice to the voices of their wives.

Helen possesses the art of ‘making a likeness’ of the voices of others. By ‘likening’ her voice to the voices of any wife of any Homeric hero, she is actually making her voice the same as theirs. We see here a Muse-like feat of verbal art. On this point, I have more to say in the comment on O.19.203. [[GN 2017.04.06 via MoM 2§26]]

O.04.341–344

subject heading(s): tales about the island of Lesbos

In Odyssey 3, Nestor was telling young Telemachus tales about the adventures experienced by the Achaeans after their capture of Troy. Some of the tales involved the brothers Agamemnon and Menelaos. In the context of those tales, there was a mention of the island of Lesbos at O.03.169. And now in Odyssey 4, we get to know more about the adventures of Agamemnon and Menelaos after Troy, but here it is Menelaos himself who is telling tales about these adventures, and, in his tale, there is a detail about Lesbos that contradicts the tale told by Nestor in Odyssey 3.

Here I epitomize from Nagy 2015§§ 77–78:

[§77] While telling his tale to Telemachus in Odyssey 4, Menelaos expresses a wish that the young man’s father, Odysseus, will return to Ithaca and will defeat the suitors of Penelope—just as this hero of the Odyssey had once upon a time defeated an opponent named Philomelides in a wrestling match that had taken place on the island of Lesbos, O.04.341–344. The verses here at Odyssey 4.341–344 are repeated at 17.132–135, where Telemachus retells to Penelope the story told to him by Menelaos.

[§78] In terms of what Menelaos says at O.04.341–344, he was in Lesbos when Odysseus performed his heroic feat there. There is some agreement here with the narrative of Nestor at O.03.168–169, who says that Menelaos had sailed from Tenedos to Lesbos. So too had Nestor himself and Diomedes sailed to Lesbos, and they were already there by the time Menelaos arrived. See the comment on O.03.168–169. But the problem is, Odysseus himself did not sail from Tenedos to Lesbos in the narrative of Nestor: rather, as we saw at O.03.160–169, Odysseus together with a sub-group of Achaean followers had already sailed from Tenedos back to Troy in order to rejoin Agamemnon, who was still there at Troy, O.03.160–164, while Nestor and Diomedes together with their Achaean followers sailed on from their stopover at the island of Tenedos and arrived at the next stopover, which was the island of Lesbos, O.03.165–169. There, at Lesbos, Nestor and Diomedes were joined by Menelaos, who as we saw arrived later, O.03.168–169. In short, the parting of ways for Odysseus in Odyssey 3 had already happened on the island of Tenedos, when he had left Nestor and Diomedes and Menelaos in order to rejoin Agamemnon. Here in Odyssey 4, by contrast, Odysseus seems to be still present in Lesbos when Diomedes and Nestor and Menelaos are present in Lesbos. And that is how Menelaos could have witnessed the victory of Odysseus in a wrestling match at Lesbos. [[GN 2017.04.06.]]

O.04.343–344

anchor comment on two variant myths in Odyssey 3 and Odyssey 4, part 2
Epitome from Nagy 2015§79-91:

§79] I argue that there were two variant myths at work in *Odyssey* 3 and 4, and that these myths could never be completely reconciled with one another. Nor, as I also argue, did they ever really need to be reconciled. In Homeric poetry, there is a built-in awareness of mutually contradictory local variations in mythmaking, and there are many examples where the poetry shows this awareness by ostentatiously including, without overt self-contradiction, details from recessive as well as dominant versions of any given myth. For another example, see the anchor comment at O.04.512–522 on: mutually contradictory local variations in mythmaking.

§80] Keeping in mind the Homeric capacity to track such mutually contradictory local variations, let us consider the myth, as we saw it at work in *Odyssey* 3, about a grand sacrifice that took place on the island of Tenedos, O.03.159. Of the two Sons of Atreus, only Menelaos was present, while Agamemnon had stayed behind at Troy and was arranging a correspondingly grand sacrifice back there, to be attended by his half of the Achaeans—and that sacrifice was intended for Athena, O.03.143–145. As for the sacrifice at Tenedos, the divine recipients are not named, O.03.159. And, at the competing sacrifice on the island of Tenedos, arranged by Menelaos and attended by his half of the Achaeans, a quarrel broke out between Nestor and Odysseus, with the result that Odysseus and his followers went back to Agamemnon, O.03.160–164. After Tenedos, the only Achaeans leaders who sailed on homeward with their followers were Nestor and Diomedes, O.03.165–167—to be joined later by Menelaos at Lesbos, O.03.168.

§81] From here on, I refer to this ‘Tenedos version’ of the myth, O.03.159–164, as Myth One. But there is also a Myth Two, which is the ‘Lesbos version’, O.04.341–344. According to Myth Two, as we see it at work under the surface in *Odyssey* 4, there was a grand sacrifice that took place on the island of Lesbos, not on the island of Tenedos. At Lesbos, Odysseus was still together with Nestor and Diomedes—to be joined later by Menelaos. Unlike Myth One as we read it at O.03.159–164, which is a myth originating from Tenedos, this second variant myth originates from Lesbos. A signature of this Myth Two at O.04.341–344 is the reference, initiated by the speaking persona of Menelaos, to that primal wrestling match between Odysseus and Philomeleides on the island of Lesbos. In fact, there are traces of this Myth Two in sources external to Homeric poetry. As we learn from Hellenicus of Lesbos (FGH 4 F 150), the people of Lesbos had their own local stories about Philomeleides: he had been a king of theirs in the age of heroes, and he used to challenge visitors to engage with him in a wrestling match—but then his reputation for invincibility was undone by Odysseus, helped by Diomedes, when these heroes visited Lesbos. On Philomeleides of Lesbos, I have more to say in Nagy 2008:57.

§82] I have so far left out a further detail in Myth Two as I have reconstructed it. According to this myth, which would be compatible with the myth as we see it at work in Song 17 of Sappho, Menelaos was not the only one of the two Sons of Atreus who visited Lesbos. Also visiting was his brother Agamemnon.

§83] We have already seen that Myth One, compatible with the mythological traditions of Tenedos, situates the quarrel between Menelaos and Agamemnon at Troy, even before Agamemnon arranges for a sacrifice of one hundred cattle there. But now I argue that Myth Two, with the mythological traditions of Lesbos, situates the quarrel of Menelaos and Agamemnon not at Troy—and certainly not at Tenedos—but rather at Lesbos. In Myth Two, as we are about to see, both Sons of Atreus visited Lesbos, and they quarreled there with each other. Further, we will see that such a quarrel between Menelaos and Agamemnon at Lesbos happened not before but after a grand sacrifice of one hundred cattle there. And, even further, we will see that the quarrel was linked with the ultimate failure of that sacrifice.

§84] Here we return to Song 17 of Sappho, the relevant parts of which are quoted in the anchor comment at O.03.130–183 on two variant myths in *Odyssey* 3 and *Odyssey* 4, part 1 at §75. The clearest sign of failure, in terms of the narrative embedded in Song 17 of Sappho, is the wish that we see being formulated in heroic times—when it was announced-in-prayer that a festival is to be arranged at Lesbos. The eorē ‘festival’ (2: ἐορή[a]) that was arātē ‘announced-in-prayer’ (3: ἀρατή)—in the context of an animal sacrifice, as I reconstruct it—was instituted in hopes of ‘finding the way’ back home from Troy (7: [ὡ][σ][ω ... ἐπονύ][βl]. Hērā, as the primary divinity to whom it was announced-in-prayer that there would be a seasonally recurring festival at Lesbos, would be heeding the Sons of Atreus, who had prayed to her, imploring her to help them find their way back home safe and sound.

§85] But the question remains: did Hērā heed the prayer of the Sons of Atreus? In the mythical world of heroes, a wish
expressed by a hero who makes an announcement-in-prayer to a divinity is often not heeded by the divinity. See the anchor comment at I.02.402–429 on prayers heeded or not heeded by gods; also the comment on I.04.118–121.

[§86] Similarly, in terms of my reconstruction of the announcement-in-prayer made by the Sons of Atreus in Song 17 of Sappho, the sacrifice that was announced-in-prayer by these heroes was a failure, since their wish to find the safest way back home was not granted to either one of them. In the case of Agamemnon, we will see that he was killed after having sailed home safely, O.4.514–537. As for Menelaos, he will be sailing around aimlessly for eight years before he finally finds his way back home. At least, that is what we read in the version of the story as told at O.04.082 (see [§87] below).

[§87] Before I can proceed with my reconstruction, I must first situate its relevance to Song 17 of Sappho. In this song, I argue, we see a reference to a sacrifice of one hundred cattle in the precinct of Hērā at Lesbos, and this sacrifice is viewed, I also argue, as a failed ritual in the heroic past of a myth. In the myth, there is an announcement-in-prayer about performing the sacrifice, which will turn out to be a failure, whereas the seasonal reperforming of this sacrifice at the same place during the festival of Hērā is expected to be a successful ritual in the present time of reperformance as signaled in the song. In Song 17, as we have already seen (§75), the persona of Sappho is praying to Hērā herself, speaking to her about the eortá ‘festival’ [2: ἔορτας] that is being arranged in honor of the goddess. The speaking Sappho goes on to say that this festival, which ‘we’ in the present are arranging (11: ποίησεν) as ‘we’ offer supplications to Hērā, is being arranged ‘in accordance with the ancient way’ (12: κατὰ τῷ παλαιῷ) of celebration. In terms of the reading that we find in the papyrus, both Agamemnon and Menelaos had arranged (3: ποίησαν) such a festival in ancient times by virtue of having announced-in-prayer the arrangement of such a festival in the first place. These conquerors of Troy needed to offer their prayer to Hērā, Zeus, and Dionysus (9–10) and, in that prayer, they were to announce the arrangement of the eortá ‘festival’ [2: ἔορτας], which was thus aratá ‘announced-in-prayer’ (3: ἀρατέας). It is at this festival that the persona of Sappho is ‘even now’ praying to Hērā, ἀνυ βίοι (11). And, in terms of my reconstruction, I argue that the centerpiece of such a seasonally recurring festival at Lesbos was a hekatomb, that is, the sacrificial slaughter of one hundred cattle. On the word hekatombē ‘hecatomb’, see the comment on O.04.351–353.

[§88] So, the central question is this: if such a ritual of sacrificing one hundred cattle was a failure in the past time of the myth, how could it become a model for the success of that ritual as it exists in its own present time?

[§89] Such an idea of failure in myth and success in ritual is typical of anaetiology. I repeat here my working definition (see the comment on I.23.01–064 Point 1): an aetiology focuses on a foundational catastrophe in the mythologized past that explains and thus motivates continuing success in the ritualized present and future.

[§90] An example of an aetiology that I have studied elsewhere in some detail is a complex of rituals and myths involving the god Apollo and the hero Pyrrhos at Delphi, where the overall ritual of slaughtering sheep and distributing in an orderly way their sacrificial meat inside the precinct of Apollo stands in sharp contrast with a myth, as reflected in Pindar’s Nemean 7 and Paean 6, about a disorderly distribution that resulted in the slaughtering of Pyrrhos himself when the hero arrived at Delphi to make sacrifice inside the precinct of the god (Nagy 2011a §§67–68, 70–72).

[§91] For another example of such an aetiology, I cite a story as retold by Herodotus (1.31.1–5) about a priestess of Hērā and her two boys, named Kleobis and Biton. The mother and the two sons, all three of them, are involved as major characters in an aetiological myth about the ritual practice of the hekatomb, which was a sacrificial slaughtering of one hundred cattle in the precinct of the goddess Hērā at the climax of the festival celebrated in her honor at Argos. On the word hekatombē ‘hecatomb’, see the comment on O.04.351–353. Also involved as major ‘characters’ in the story are two sacrificial oxen. The two boys, described as ἀθλοφόροι ‘prize-winning athletes’, willingly took the place of the two sacrificial oxen, chosen to pull the wagon carrying the priestess across the plain of Argos—over a distance of 45 stadium-lengths—along a sacred way leading up to the precinct of Hērā (1.31.2). The oxen had been late in arriving at the starting-point of the procession (again, 1.31.2), and this lateness, in terms of the story, is the aetiological explanation for their replacement by the two athletes. If these two oxen had not been late, they would have been slaughtered along with the other ninety-eight oxen that had been chosen for the mass sacrifice of one hundred cattle at the finishing-point of the procession, inside the precinct of Hērā. At the feast that followed the sacrifice inside the precinct, the two boys died a mystical death after having pulled the wagon of the priestess from the starting-point all the way to this finishing-point of the procession (1.31.5). Thus, by way of this death that they shared with each other, the boys became sacrificial substitutes for the two premier victims of the animal sacrifice. (See Nagy 2015 ch. 4§142*1, with references to further commentary.) [GN 2017.04.06.]
O.04.351–362

subject heading(s): hekatombē 'hecatomb'; failure to perform a hecatomb

Epitome from Nagy 2015§92:

Menelaos, narrating for Telemachus and the assembled company the tale of his own homecoming from Troy, explains why the gods had temporarily checked the winds that could bring him back home in the final phase of his sea voyage, O.04.351–362. At one point in the tale, Menelaos is stranded on the island Pharos, offshore from Egypt O.04.354–360. And, in telling this part of the tale, the explanation that he gives for his temporary failure to sail on and to reach his homeland is this: because (στὸς [ἐν τῷ] he had not performed a hecatomb. On the word hekatombē 'hecatomb', referring to a sacrificial slaughtering of one hundred cattle, see the comment on O.04.351–353. [IG 2017.04.06.]

O.04.351–353

Q&T via Nagy 2015§92

subject heading(s): hekatombē 'hecatomb'; failure to perform a hecatomb

351 ἀνάπτυξι μοι ἐπὶ δεύο πείτε μεμαθα νεσσαθαι [352] ἔσχασιν ἐπειδὴ οὐ πιν ἔρεξα τελήσας ἐκατόμβας.
353 οἱ δ' οἰεί βαλύντος πεῖτε μεμνησθαὶ ἐφετέμειν.

351 In Egypt did they hold me up, the gods did, though I sorely wanted to make a homecoming [neesthai] back here [deuro = at home, where I am speaking now]. [352] Yes, they held me up, since [epei] I did not perform for them a perfect sacrifice of one hundred cattle [hekatomba]. [353] The gods always wanted their protocols to be kept in mind.

O.04.351–353

I interpret hekatom-b-ē 'hecatomb' as 'sacrifice of one hundred [hekaton] cattle [b-]' in Homeric contexts, as here. But I should note that there are some cases where the sacrifice is scaled down, referring not to cattle but to other sacrificial animals. In l.04.102, for example, the hekatombē involves sheep, not cattle. The passage here at O.04.351–353 is relevant to the narrative in Song 17 of Sappho, as quoted in the anchor comment at O.03.130–183 on two variant myths in Odyssey 3 and Odyssey 4, part 1. [IG 2017.04.06.]

O.04.354–355

This description of Pharos is most relevant to the charter myth narrated in Plutarch Life of Alexander 26.5 about the Library of Alexandria. [IG 2017.04.06 via PasP 202.]

O.04.363

subject heading(s): kata-phtinesthai 'wilt, perish'

See the comments on l.01.155. [IG 2017.04.06 via BA 185–186.]

O.04.489

anchor comment on adeukōs 'discontinuous, interrupting'

This adjective adeukōs is used in contexts referring to an interrupted sequence. In the present context, for example, adeukōs describes the ὀλιθρος 'doom' that destroys a ship. See also O.06.273, O.10.245. The opposite of this adjective adeukōs 'discontinuous, interrupting' can be seen in the adverb endukēōs, which can be interpreted as 'continuously, uninterruptedly'. See the anchor comment at O.07.256. In terms of this interpretation, the root deuk-/duk- for this adjective/adverb conveys the sense of 'continue'. [IG 201705.30 via PasP 44.]

O.04.512–522
anchor comment on mutually contradictory local variations in mythmaking

subject heading(s): dominant vs. recessive versions of myths

Epitome from Nagy 2015§79:

Narrated here in O.04.512–522 is the final phase of the sea voyage of Agamemnon as he sails his way back home after the Trojan War. At first, the winds carry him around the headlands of Maleiai, bringing him toward Spartan territory, but then, before he can land there, the winds correct themselves, as it were, and they now carry him in a different direction, toward Argive territory, which is where he finally lands. This way, the Spartan myth that localizes the home of Agamemnon at Amyklai in Spartan territory is recognized—before it is overruled by the rival Argive myth that localizes his home at Mycenae in Argive territory. In Homeric poetry, the Argive version of the myth is dominant, while the Spartan version is recessive. [[GN 2017.04.06.]]

O.04.512–513

Q&T via Nagy 2015§93

subject heading(s): the temporary success of Agamemnon and the temporary failure of Menelaos

¶512 σὸς δὲ ποι ἐκφυγε κήρας ἀδελφεῖς ἢδ’ ὑπάλλεξεν ὡς ἐν νησὶ γλαφυρής: σάώσε δὲ πότνια Ἡρώ.

¶512 But your brother [= Agamemnon] escaped from the forces of destruction, and he slipped away in his hollow ships. Héra had saved [sōzein] him.

Epitome from Nagy 2015§93–100:

§93 By contrast with the temporary failure of Menelaos in his homecoming, as narrated by the hero himself at O.04.351–353, Agamemnon had already succeeded in sailing home, and Menelaos himself mentions this detail as he tells his own tale in Odyssey 4. In telling the tale, the explanation that Menelaos gives for his brother’s successful sea voyage is this: because the goddess Héra had saved Agamemnon. I note here the background: Proteus had told Menelaos about this salvation of Agamemnon from the sea, and that is how Menelaos knows about it. As he retells the tale to Telemachus, Menelaos is quoting here the words of Proteus about the success of Agamemnon at sea, to be contrasted with the temporary failure of Menelaos himself.

§94 As we learn, then, from the words of Proteus in Odyssey 4, Agamemnon was in fact saved at sea, since his voyage by sea was successful. But then he was killed after he landed near home, ambushed by Agisthos, and so the rest of his voyage, by land, became a failure O.04.514–537. After treacherously hosting him at a dinner, Agisthos had slaughtered Agamemnon as if that hero were some sacrificial ox that is being fed in a manger, O.04.535. By contrast, the voyage of Menelaos by sea was ultimately successful, because he finally got around to making a sacrifice of one hundred cattle in Egypt, O.04.581–586. In making this sacrifice, Menelaos was following the instructions of Proteus, O.04.472–480, and, this way, he appeased the anger of the gods, O.04.583. Now Menelaos could at long last sail back to his homeland, safe and sound O.04.584–586. At l.05.714–717, Héra remarks to Athena that the two of them had promised to Menelaos a safe homecoming after the conquest of Troy.

§95 We have seen, then, from the narrative of Menelaos in Odyssey 4, that Agamemnon was saved at sea by the goddess Héra, O.04.512–513. But why had Héra saved him? It was because, I argue, Agamemnon had at least tried to make a perfect sacrifice of one hundred cattle at Lesbos. By contrast, Menelaos had somehow failed to do his part in the corresponding sacrifice. In terms of my interpretation, based on the wording of Song 17 of Sappho, both Sons of Atreus had made an announcement-in-prayer about performing a sacrifice at Lesbos, but only Agamemnon succeeded in following through on that announcement:

§96 I have already quoted the passage at O.04.252–254 where Menelaos says that the final phase of his sea voyage as he headed back home was held up by the gods precisely because he had not made a sacrifice of one hundred cattle. From the context, it is clear that this failure that made the gods so angry was a sin of omission, not commission. And his sin, I argue,
was that he somehow failed to perform a sacrifice of one hundred cattle at Lesbos. But later on, when Menelaos does finally get around to performing a sacrifice of one hundred cattle in Egypt O.04.581–586, his performance is successful, and thus he finally appeases the anger of the gods, O.04.583.

The reader’s first impression may be that the sin of omission on the part of Menelaos, that is, his failure to perform a successful sacrifice of one hundred cattle, happens in Egypt: after all, the finding of a solution for the sin happens at this place—when Menelaos finally gets around to performing such a sacrifice. But such a first impression is wrong. I think, since Egypt was merely the last possible place as an occasion for such a sin of omission. There were many other places that Menelaos had visited before he ever reached Egypt, and Egypt had been for him merely the final stopover in the course of a most problematic overall sea voyage back home from Troy. Yes, the gods were in the process of punishing Menelaos in Egypt for his sin of omission when we see them interfering there with his sea voyage. And yes, the gods kept on interfering until Menelaos finally made the sacrifice, in Egypt, which was the place that turned out to be his point of departure in the very last phase of his sea voyage. But, as we will now see, the gods were already interfering with Menelaos in earlier phases of his sea voyage, and so the divine punishment for his sin of omission can be viewed as an ongoing series of misfortunes that kept on interfering with his travels after Troy.

The first such misfortune is already narrated by Nestor in Odyssey 3, concerning the death, at Cape Sounion, of the hero Phrontis, who had been steering the ship of Menelaos, O.03.276–283. That death, caused by the god Apollo, O.03.279–280, holds back Menelaos from sailing ahead. Only after he conducts a proper funeral for his companion, O.03.284–285, does he recommence his sea voyage. Then, as Menelaos sails past the headlands of Maleiai, his ships are blown off course: some are swept away to Crete, where they run aground and are shattered, O.03.286–299, while five of them reach Egypt, O.03.299–300. (The details here are parallel to what is narrated in the epic Cycle: Nostoi, Proclus summary p. 108 lines 20–23 ed. Allen 1912). In sharp contrast, the hero Nestor has a safe and swift sea voyage back home to Pylos, O.03.182–183, having evidently rounded successfully the headlands of Maleiai. (I follow here the analysis of Frame 2009:184n79.) Meanwhile, once he reaches Egypt, Menelaos takes to plundering and looting there, and he amasses vast treasures, O.03.301, as ‘he was wandering around with his ships’, O.03.302 (ἠλάτο ξύν νημι). Later, in Odyssey 4, we learn from the narrative of Menelaos that his sea voyage had reached not only Egypt but also other exotic places, including Cyprus and Phoenicia, O.04.083, even Libya, O.04.085. After experiencing all these adventures, he was still just ‘wandering around’ in an aimless way, O.04.081 and O.04.083 (ἐποληθείς), O.04.091 (ἠλώμην). As Menelaos himself remarks, he spent eight years just wandering around, O.04.082.

Already in the narrative of Nestor in Odyssey 3, the aimlessness of the sea voyage of Menelaos is anticipated: whereas Agamemnon got back home from Troy relatively soon, only to get killed by Aigisthos, Menelaos kept on wandering from one place to the next in his many sea voyages, and the word for his directionless maritime wanderings is plazeto ‘he was veering’, O.03.254 (πλαζότα). Comparative, of course, are the even more extensive veerings of Odysseus in the overall Odyssey, as expressed by the same word plazethai ‘veering’ already at the beginning of the epic: Odysseus is a hero ‘who veered [plangthi] in very many ways’, O.01.001–002 (ὅς μάλα πολλά | πλάγιθη).

So, where did all the veering begin for Menelaos? Where did his sea voyage start to go off course? According to one version of the myth about this hero’s travels by sea after Troy, as I will now argue, the veering can be traced all the way back to something that happened at Lesbos. I focus here on a detail we find in the tale told by Nestor in Odyssey 3. In that tale, Menelaos was late in arriving at Lesbos. See the comment on O.03.168–169. [[GN 2017.04.06.]]

O.04.561–569

subject heading(s): Elysium; immortalization of Menelaos; xanthos ‘with golden hair’

Proteus makes a prophecy here, foretelling the immortalization of Menelaos in a pedion ‘field’ named Ἐλύσιον ‘Elysium’, O.04.563. A comparable setting for immortalization is a place known as the Makarón nēsoi ‘Islands of the Blessed’ (as in Hesiod Works and Days 164–173). The name Ἐλύσιον ‘Elysium’, as is evident from attestations outside of Homeric poetry, can refer to a mystical setting of immortalization as experienced by heroes worshipped in cult. From what evidence we have about hero cults, we can see that the rituals of worshipping heroes in cult places are ideologically synchronized with corresponding myths about the immortalization of these same heroes in paradise-like settings that are far removed from the everyday world. In fact, the forms Ἐλύσιον ‘Elysium’ and Makarón nēsoi ‘Isles of the Blessed’ are appropriate as names for actual cult sites. The proper noun Ἐλύσιον coincides with the common noun en-élusión, referring to a place made sacred by
The form Ἐλύσιος itself is glossed in the Alexandrian lexicographical tradition (Hesychius) as κεκεραυνωμένον χωρίον ἢ πεδίον 'a place or field that has been struck by the thunderbolt', with this added remark: καλείται δὲ καὶ ἐνέλυσια 'and it is also called enélusia'. As for Makarón nēsos 'Island of the Blessed', there is a tradition that the name was actually applied to the old acropolis of Thebes, the Kadmeion; specifically, the name designated the sacred precinct where Semele, the mother of Dionysus, had been struck dead by the thunderbolt of Zeus (Parmenides via the Suda and via Photius, under Makarón nēsos; Tzetzes on Lycophron 1194, 1204). We are immediately reminded of the poetic tradition that tells how Semele became immortalized as a direct result of dying from the thunderbolt of Zeus (see Pindar Olympian 2.25, in conjunction with Hesiod Theogony 942). Inhabiting Elysium is the hero Rhadamanthys, O.04.564, who is described in this context as xanthos ‘with golden hair’. Similarly, Menelaos himself is conventionally described as xanthos: I.03.284, I.03.434, I.04.183, I.04.210, I.10.240, I.11.125, I.17.006, I.17.018, I.17.113, I.17.124, I.17.578, I.17.673, I.17.684, I.23.293, I.23.401, I.23.438, O.01.285, O.03.168, O.03.257, O.03.326, O.04.030, O.04.059, O.04.076, O.04.147, O.04.168, O.04.203, O.04.265, O.04.332, O.15.110, O.15.133, O.15.147. [[GN 2017.04.06 via BA 167, 171, 179, 196, 206, 210, GMP 140.]]

O.04.567–568

subject heading(s): ana-psükhein ‘revive, reanimate’

Gusts of wind emitted by the cosmic river Ōkeanos have the power of ‘reviving’ humans in the sense of ‘reanimating’ them, as expressed by way of the verb ana-psükhein, O.04.568. On the mystical force of this verb, see the comment on I.05.795. [[GN 2017.04.06.]]

O.04.727

subject heading(s): abduction by gusts of wind

See the comment on O.01.241. [[GN 2017.04.06 via BA 194, GMP 243.]]

O.04.739

subject heading(s): huphainein ‘weave’ plus mêitis in the sense of ‘plan’ as object

See also the contexts of I.03.125–128, I.03.212, I.07.324, I.18.367, O.03.118, O.12.189–191. [[GN 2017.04.06 via PasP 64n23.]]

O.04.809

subject heading(s): Gates of Dreams

On pulai ‘gates’ as liminal points of entry and departure for consciousness and for the sun itself, see the comments at I.05.395–404, I.05.646. See also the anchor comment at I.08.367 on the Gates of Hādēs; also the anchor comment at I.23.071–076 on what the psükhei ‘spirit’ of Patroklos really wants for itself—and for Achilles (Points 5 and 6 and 9). [[GN 2017.04.06 via GMP 226.]]

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**Odyssey Rhapsody 5**

**2017.04.12 / enhanced 2018.10.07**

The rhapsody starts with the releasing of Odysseus by one goddess and ends with the mystical saving of his life by a second goddess, who is Leukothēa, the White Goddess. The beautiful Leukothēa saves Odysseus by undoing her hair and giving him as a life-saver the veil that had held her curls in place. As for the first goddess, who is Calypso, her action in releasing Odysseus from their mutual love affair becomes another life-saver for him. That is because the chances of success for such an affair between a mortal man and an immortal goddess would have been minimal, as we will see by observing other myths that tell about other such affairs. If the liaison of Odysseus with Calypso had continued, it is a certainty that he would have
been killed off, just as Orion had died because of his liaison with Éos the goddess of the dawn. [[GN 2017.04.12.]]

Figure 29. “Leucothea, the White Goddess, Preserving Ulysses” (1805). John Flaxman (1755–1826).
Purchased as part of the Oppé Collection with assistance from the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund, 1996. Image via the Tate.

O.05.001–002

subject heading(s): Éos, goddess of dawn; Tithônos

Only here in the Odyssey is the hero Tithônos ever mentioned, O.05.001. In the Iliad, there is a parallel mention of Tithônos at I.11.001. The wording of O.05.001–002 here matches the wording of I.11.001–002. The story of the abduction of Tithônos by Éos, goddess of dawn, is told in the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite 218–238. The liaison between the mortal man Tithônos and the immortal goddess Éos is parallel to the liaison between the mortal man Anchises and the immortal goddess Aphrodite. And, as a result of both these affairs, the mortal man is permanently damaged. In the case of Tithônos, he loses his youth though he holds on to life, but old age renders him immobile, as we read in the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite, verse 234. In the case of Anchises, he too is afflicted with immobility—which is why his son Aeneas has to carry him on his shoulders in ancient depictions of that hero’s escape from Troy together with his family (for a splendid example, I refer to a vase painting dated to the early fifth century BCE, British Museum inventory number 1836.0224.138). Such stories of permanent damage are relevant to the story of the affair between Odysseus and the goddess Calypso. In sum, the fact that Rhapsody 5 begins with a reference to an affair between a mortal man and an immortal goddess indicates the dangers that now threaten Odysseus. [[GN 2017.04.12 via GMP 252.]]

O.05.047

subject heading(s): rhabdos ‘wand’; thelegein ‘put a trance on, enchant’

The accusative of ommata ‘eyes’ here, as the direct object of thelegein, indicates that the idea of looking is built into this verb. Accordingly, it can be argued that the Lithuanian verb žvelgiu ‘look’ is a cognate of thelegein, which I translate as ‘put a trance on, enchant’. I interpret the enchantment here as an effect of visual attraction. [[GN 2017.04.13 via Nagy 2008:50 and HC 1§121.]]

O.05.121–124

subject heading(s): Éos; Orion; rhododaktulos ‘rosy-fingered’; thugatēr Dios ‘daughter of Zeus’

The myth about the liaison between the mortal man Orion and the immortal goddess Éos is retold by Calypso herself as an example of the double standard shown by the divine powers in not tolerating a relationship where the immortal lover of a mortal is female, not male. It is to be noted that Éos, at the moment when she takes the initiative in seducing Orion at O.05.121, is described with the epithet rhododaktulos ‘rosy-fingered’ instead of the epithet thugatēr Dios ‘daughter of Zeus’, which would have been appropriate if the seducer had been a goddess like Aphrodite. See the anchor comment at O.12.001–
010. [GN 2017.04.13 via BA 197, 201–203; GMP 207, 242, 251–252]

O.05.121

subject heading(s): helēto ‘took’

The verb helēto ‘took’ referring here at O.05.121 to the seduction of Orion by Eōs the goddess of the dawn is neutral in comparison to other verbs indicating an abduction by force, as when Eōs hērposan ‘seized’ Thēthōnos in Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite 218. For more on the links of heroes like Orion and Thēthōnos with Eōs, see the comment on O.15.250–251. [GN 2017.04.13 via GMP 242, 244, 248, 251]

O.05.123–124

subject heading(s): killing of Orion by Artemis

The goddess Artemis shoots Orion with her arrows. [GN 2017.04.13 via GMP 251]

O.05.136

subject heading(s): athanatos ‘immortal’; agērōs ‘ageless’; Ganymedes

At O.05.136, Calypso says that she was intending to make Odysseus athanatos ‘immortal’ and agērōs ‘ageless’. Similarly in Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite 214, Zeus when he abducts Ganymedes makes him athanatos ‘immortal’ and agērōs ‘ageless’. By contrast, in Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite 221, Eōs forgets to ask for agelessness after she abducts Thēthōnos and asks only that her mortal lover be athanatos ‘immortal’. So, she forgot to ask that he should have lasting hēbē ‘youth’, Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite 224. [GN 2017.04.13 via BA 197]

O.05.160–161

subject heading(s): aiōn ‘life-force, lifetime’; phthi̯nesthai ‘wilt, perish’

At O.05.160, aiōn ‘life-force, lifetime’ is a potential recycling of time: see the comment on I.01.052. But such a recycling is threatened at O.05.161 by a linear prolongation of life, which would result in what is indicated here by the verb phthi̯nesthai ‘wilt, perish’. [GN 2017.04.13 via GMP 126]

O.05.185–186

subject heading(s): swearing by the Styx

For a god to swear by the Styx is to reaffirm the absolute permanence of its waters, as indicated by the epithetaphthî̯thi̯o- ‘imperishable’ in Hesiod Theogony 389, 397, 805. See the comment on I.02.046; also the comment on Homeric Hymn to Demeter 259, where Demeter swears by the Styx that she would have made the child Demophon athanatos ‘immortal’ and agērōs, 260, if the mother of this child had not spoiled what the goddess intended. [GN 2017.04.13 via BA 187]

O.05.248

subject heading(s): harmoniā ‘joint’ (in woodworking)

We see here a specialized sense of this noun harmoniā ‘joint’, derived from the root ar- as in arariskein ‘join’. [GN 2017.04.13 via BA 299]

O.05.273–275

subject heading(s): Odysseus as stargazer; Eōs; Arktos

If Odysseus could read the stars correctly, he would see that the constellation of Orion shows him what would have happened if his liaison with Calypso had been prolonged: Odysseus too would have been killed off, like Orion. The astral configuration of Orion the Hunter and Arktos the Bear here at O.05.273–275 is pictured also at I.18.487–489. The stars in this
configuration are re-enacting the myth of Orion: how Éos the goddess of dawn made Orion her lover and how the goddess Artemis the huntress then shot Orion with her arrows and killed him. The myth, as we have already seen, is narrated at O.05.121–124. A special point of interest in the description of Arktos the Bear at O.05.274—also at I.18.488—is the expression dokeuei: it appears that this she-bear is ‘taking aim’ at Orion. It can be argued that this pose of Arktos the she-bear reveals her to be a stand-in for the goddess Artemis herself at the moment when the goddess takes aim at Orion in order to shoot him dead with her arrows. It can also be argued that the dangerous liaison of Éos with Orion at O.05.121–124 is viewed as a relevant parallel to the liaison of Calypso with Odysseus. [[GN 2017.04.17 via BA 201–203; GMP 207, 253; PH 232]]

O.05.308–311

subject heading(s): the wish of Odysseus to have died at Troy

The formulation of this wish shows that Odysseus is longing to be defined by an epic that is limited to the happenings in the Trojan War, excluding the happenings that he experiences in the Odyssey. But this is not to be. For Odysseus to be hero in his own epic, he must have a safe homecoming from Troy. [[GN 2017.04.13 via BA 35.]]

O.05.333–353

subject heading(s): Ino; Leukothea ‘White Goddess’; krēdemnon ‘headdress’ or ‘veil’

Odysseus is saved from drowning by Ino, O.05.333, who was once a mortal woman but who has become immortalized after death by becoming the Leukothea or ‘White Goddess’, O.05.334. The White Goddess gives to Odysseus her krēdemnon, that is, her headdress or ‘veil’, which becomes his life-saver: O.05.346, O.05.351, O.05.373, O.05.459. In order to give the hero her headdress, she would first have to undo her hair, as we can see by comparing the scene where Andromache lets fall from her head her own headdress, the word for which is, here again, krēdemnon, I.22.470. See the commentary on I.22.460–474, where I noted that the undoing of a woman’s hair, caused by the undoing of her krēdemnon, produces what I called an Aphrodiasic effect. So long as a woman’s krēdemnon is in place, her sexuality is under control just as her hair is under control. When the krēdemnon is out of place, however, her sexuality threatens to get out of control. Also, while saving the hero, the goddess assumes the form of a diving bird called aithuia, O.05.337 and O.05.353. These actions of Ino in saving Odysseus from the mortal dangers of the sea are parallel to the actions of the goddess Athena herself. [What follows is epitomized from Nagy 1985:80–81 (= §78).] Ino as aithuia has a parallel agent in ensuring the salvation of Odysseus from the sea: Athena herself redirects the storm sent against the hero by Poseidon, O.05.382–387, and then she saves him from immediate drowning by giving him a timely idea for swimming to safety, O.05.435–439. The hero submerges but then emerges from a wave that would surely have drowned him had it not been for Athena, O.05.435 and O.05.438, and this detail corresponds closely to the preceding emergence and submergence of Ino herself, O.05.337 and O.05.352–353. Such a correspondence suggests that Ino, the former mortal who is now a goddess, O.05.334 and O.05.335, is a model for a transition from death to life anew. [[GN 2017.04.13 via BA 203; H24H 11§53.]]

O.05.396

subject heading(s): täkesthai ‘melt away, dissolve’

Here the verb täkesthai ‘melt away’ refers to wasting away in illness. For other metaphorical applications, see especially the comment at O.19.204–212. [[GN 2017.04.13 via HC 2§256n.]]

O.05.432–435

subject heading(s): Odysseus as octopus

The comparison of Odysseus to an octopus here is a signature, as it were, of his reputation for being polutropos ‘turning-into-many-different-selves’. This epithet is analyzed in the comment on O.01.001–010. On the polytropic nature of the octopus, I cite two relevant passages: Theognis 215–218 and Pindar F 43 SM. [[GN 2017.04.13 via PH 425.]]

O.05.437
subject heading(s): *epiphrosunê* ‘impulse of wisdom’

For this translation of *epiphrosunê*, ‘impulse of wisdom’, see HPC 45n33. [[GN 2017.04.13.]]

0.05.458

subject heading(s): *ana-pneîn* ‘take a breath, breathe in’

This verb expresses the idea of revival, *ana-pneîn* (*āμvûrû*) in the sense of ‘taking a breath’ or ‘breathing in’. See the comment on l.05.696–698. [[GN 2017.04.13 via GMP 90.]]

0.05.493

subject heading(s): *ponos* ‘pain’; *kamatos* ‘pain’

The elements *ponos* ‘pain’ and *kamatos* ‘pain’ in the expression ὀσπονέος καμάτος at O.05.493 are conventional designations of the life-and-death struggles of a hero. [[GN 2017.04.13 via PH 139.]]

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**Odyssey Rhapsody 6**

**2017.05.04 / enhanced 2018.10.07**

Nausicaa, princess of the Phaeacians, makes her appearance as a potential but unattainable love-interest for Odysseus—and as a delight for all who find themselves irresistibly drawn into the story of her girlish but principled encounter with the enthralled hero.
This Rhapsody belongs to Nausicaa. I spell her name in its familiar latinized form, with ac, since her fame extends far beyond the ancient Greek world, where she appears as Ναυςίκα. In any case, the name has a certain primacy of place. I have no idea who said it first, but I first heard it from the long-departed Sterling Dow in the early 1960s: if you look up all surviving ancient Greek names in reverse alphabetical order, the first one you see is Nausicaa = Ναυςίκα, while the very last of them all is Calypso = Καλυπτό. Surely we see here a coincidence, not some mysterious signal emanating from some grand cosmic plan, but the coincidence itself seems just as lovely as Nausicaa is lovely. Some critics view her as a youthful love-interest for Odysseus, matching Calypso as the hero’s divine love-interest. But such a view detracts from the loveliness: Nausicaa is meant to be a love-interest for all who hear her story—just as Calypso is a universal love-interest in her own story as told in Rhapsody 5. In the story of Nausicaa as told in Rhapsody 6, she is pictured as the perfect bride for any man fortunate enough to succeed in marrying her—and she knows it. The self-awareness of Nausicaa is shaped by the poetry that idealizes her eligibility by animating her beauty and her charm to the point where she becomes comparable to the goddess Artemis. Odysseus himself initiates the comparison and, by comparing the girl to the goddess, he is signaling to himself that Nausicaa, even if she does not know it yet, is for him enticingly unattainable. [[GN 2017.05.04.]]
subject heading(s): rhapsodic sequencing

The wording that starts Rhapsody 6 here at O.06.001–112 picks up where the wording of Rhapsody 5 left off, at O.05.491–493, where Odysseus had fallen asleep after his ordeals at sea. [[GN 2017.05.04.]]

subject heading(s): Cyclopes; biē ‘force, violence, strength’

The Cyclopes, when they were neighboring enemies of the Phaeacians, O.06.005, are said to have been superior because of their biē ‘force, violence, strength’, O.06.006. [[GN 2017.05.04 via BA 322]]

subject heading(s): homoio- ‘similar to, same as’; kourē ‘girl’

Nausicaa, daughter of Alkinoos (latinized as Alcinous), is named here for the first time, O.06.017. She is akourē ‘girl’, O.06.015, and she is said to be homoioē ‘similar to’ or ‘same as’ the immortal goddesses. This comparison is a prelude to the wording of the narrative at O.06.102–109, where Nausicaa is compared directly to the goddess Artemis; also to the wording of Odysseus himself at O.06.150–152, where the hero himself compares Nausicaa directly to Artemis. [[GN 2017.05.04 via MoM 2§32]]

subject heading(s): spinning wool

Nausicaa wakes up at dawn, O.06.048–049, and goes from her room to the central part of the palace O.06.050–051, where she finds her mother sitting at the hearth and spinning wool in the company of the women who attend her O.06.052–053. A question here: did the mother start her spinning at dawn, or has she been spinning all night? [[GN 2017.05.04.]]

subject heading(s): paizein ‘play’; molpē ‘singing and dancing’; arkhesthai ‘lead off [in performing]’; sphaira ‘ball’; krēdemnon ‘headdress’ or ‘veil’

At O.06.085–099, Nausicaa and the girls who attend her are at the banks of a river, washing the clothes they have brought from the palace, and then waiting for the wet clothes to dry in the sun; while they wait, they clean up and enjoy each other’s company as they indulge in a picnic. Next, at O.06.100–101, after having finished eating and drinking, they start playfully singing and dancing with each other: the playfulness of the song and dance is expressed by the verb paizein ‘play’ at O.06.100, while the actual singing /dancing is expressed by the noun molpē ‘singing and dancing’ at O.06.101. The prima donna / prima ballerina of the singing / dancing is Nausicaa herself, as expressed by the verb arkhesthai ‘lead off [in performing]’, again at O.06.101. The dancing in this case includes the playful tossing of a sphaira ‘ball’, O.06.100. While the girls are feeling all freed up in their playfulness, they throw off the krēdemna or ‘veils’ that they are wearing. So, now we can see that Nausicaa and the girls who attend her would not even think of going out in public without first putting on their krēdemna ‘veils’. They won’t leave home without wearing their headdresses. But now they are no longer in public—or so they imagine. The detail about wearing a veil when the girls leave home and go outdoors is hardly a signal of their being married. Clearly, all these girls are unmarried. So, we see here that unmarried women as well as married women like Andromache wear the krēdemnon in public. The custom is simply a signal of propriety. On the function of the krēdemnon ‘headdress’ as an equivalent of a ‘veil’, I recommend the work of Levine 1995 (especially pp. 96–110), who shows that the custom of wearing a veil is part of a “cultural grammar of hair” (Levine p. 95). Relevant are my comments about O.05.333–353 with reference to Ino the White Goddess and, earlier, about I.22.460–474 with reference to Andromache. In both sets of comments, I noted that the undoing of a woman’s hair, caused by the undoing of her krēdemnon, produces what I called an Aphrodisiac effect. So long as a woman’s krēdemnon is in place, her sexuality is under control just as her hair is under control. When the krēdemnon is
out of place, however, her sexuality threatens to get out of control. But there is even more to it. When a woman or girl has her hair undone in a private place, then her sexuality is under control—so long as the vision of the woman or girl with hair undone is private. But what happens when the undoing of the hair is represented in the verbal arts or visual arts? Then the view becomes public and even voyeuristic, as we see for example in the painting I show here:

Figure 30b. Red-figured pyxis, picturing Nereids at home, “indoors”: the Nereid with her hair down is labeled as Thaleia. Image via The British Museum.

Similarly, there is something voyeuristic about the representation of Nausicaa and the girls who attend her as they sing and dance without wearing their veils: they imagine they are in a private place, but the medium of verbal art is watching them, making their performance public. In this scene, Odysseus is not the only voyeur. [[GN 2017.05.04.]]

O.06.102–109

subject heading(s): paizein ‘play’

Nausicaa is compared directly to the goddess Artemis: just as Nausicaa is the prima donna / prima ballerina in relation to the group of singing / dancing girls who attend her, so also is Artemis in relation to the group of nymphs that correspondingly attend her, O.06.105; their singing / dancing here is expressed by way of the word paizein ‘play’ at O.06.106, corresponding to the singing / dancing of Nausicaa and of the girls attending her at O.06.100–101. [[GN 2017.05.04.]]

O.06.150–152

subject heading(s): [homoio- ‘similar to, same as’]

Odysseus here compares Nausicaa directly to Artemis. He is not only saying that Nausicaa is ‘the same as’ Artemis, as
expressed by the adjective homoiō- 'similar to, same as'. Rather, the hero is saying that perhaps Nausicaa is in fact Artemis. [[GN 2016.05.04.]]

**O.06.160–168**

subject heading(s): phoinix ‘date palm’; Delos; Ionians; post-heroic age

Odysseus here compares Nausicaa in all her beauty to a sacred phoinix ‘date palm’, O.06.163, which is located next to the altar of the god Apollo at Delos, O.06.162. The phoinix is also mentioned in the *Homer Hymn to Apollo* 18 and 117. Odysseus claims to have seen this date palm with his own eyes when he visited Delos, O.06.163–165. This mention of Delos is a rare Homeric reference to locales that are distinctly Ionian in culture (*HPC 227*). Also, we see epic distancing here (*Taplin 1996*): back in the age of heroes, the date palm was still young and small, O.06.166–168—much smaller than it is imagined to be in the post-heroic age. [[GN 2017.05.04.]]

**O.06.231**

subject heading(s): similes about hair compared to flowers

The comparison of hair here to hyacinth blossoms is analogous to the comparison of hair with myrtle blossoms, as at I.17.051–052. [[GN 2017.05.04 via HPC 296n80.]]

**O.06.273**

subject heading(s): adeukēs ‘discontinuous, interrupting’

See the anchor comment at O.04.489 on root duk-/deuk-‘continue'

This adjective adeukēs occurs in contexts referring to an interrupted sequence. Nausicaa is concerned that the Phaeacians may say something, as expressed by the noun phēmis ‘something said’, that is adeukēs for her reputation. Good reputation is conceived as a steady stream of speech, the interruption of which threatens to produce a bad reputation. [[GN 2017.05.30 via PasP 44.]]

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**Odyssey Rhapsody 7**

**2017.05.11 / enhanced 2018.10.08**

Following the instructions of Nausicaa, Odysseus approaches the palace of her father Alkinooos (latinized as Alcinous), king of the Phaeacians. This palace and the adjacent garden of Alkinooos are not only enchanting but even enchanted, as will be argued in the comments for Rhapsody 7 here. And, as we will see later in the comments for Rhapsody 13, the garden of Alkinooos was thought to have survived on the island of Kerkyna, known in Roman sources as Corcyra and in modern times as Corfu. In ancient times, the people of Kerkyra claimed that their island was in fact the fabled realm of the Phaeacians.[[GN 2017.05.11.]]
subject heading(s): Eurymedon, king of the Gigantes ‘Giants’

The mythical Gigantes ‘Giants’ are relevant to Athenian mythology. [GN 2017.05.11 via HPC 283n38.]

subject heading(s): Athena and Athens; ellipsis; Erekhtheus

Ω76 ὁς ἄρα φωνῆσαι ἀπεβή γλαυκώπις Αθηνή | 79 πότον ἐπὶ ἀτρύγετον, λίπε δὲ Σχερίνη ἐρατεῖνην, | 80 ἱκέτο δὲ ἐς Μαραθώνα καὶ εὐδόκιμον Αθηνήν, | 81 δύνε δ' ἔρεχθησος πικινὸν δόμον, αὐτάρ Ὅδυσσεύς | 82 Ἀλκινόον πρὸς δύματ' ἐς κλυτά.

Ω78 Speaking thus, Athena [Athēnē], with the looks of an owl, went off | 79 over the barren sea, leaving behind lovely Skheria. | 80 She came to Marathon and to Athens [Athēnē], with its wide causeways, | 81 and she entered the well-built palace of Erekhtheus. As for Odysseus, | 81 he headed for the renowned palace of Alkinooos.

[The comments that follow are epitomized from Nagy 2015.09.10§§6–9.] At Ω7.078, we see the name Athēnē for the goddess Athena. At Ω7.080 we see the same name Athēnē for the place that is known in historical times as the city of Athens. As a place-name, Athēnē is attested only here in the singular. Everywhere else, in the entire surviving textual evidence of the Greek language, this place-name is attested only in the plural, Αθήναι. The plural has an elliptic function, but I think that even the suffix -ēnē of Athēnē is elliptic. Here is a working definition of ellipsis: a form that is elliptic refers not only to X but also to everything that belongs to X, such as X2, X3, X4 etc. An elliptic form of X implies X2, X3, X4 etc. without naming X2, X3, X4 etc. explicitly. In terms of this definition, the name Athēnē refers not only to the goddess ‘Athena’ but also to everything that belongs to the goddess. An example of such ‘everything’ would be the acropolis of Athens. And we see a further level of ellipsis in the plural form Athēnai: this elliptic plural refers not only to the acropolis of Athens but also to everything that belongs to the acropolis, and this everything becomes the city of Athens. Eventually, the ellipsis extends to everything that belongs to the city, which is ultimately the region of Attica. Earlier, however, in the second millennium BCE, the extended region of Attica was not yet dominated by Athens. And a rival dominant power in Attica was Marathon,
mentioned here at O.07.80 as an alternative residence of the goddess Athena. But even if Athena had alternative residences in Attica, only in one place did she have a condominium, as it were, with Erekhtheus, and that place was the acropolis of Athens. On the relationship of the goddess Athena with the hero Erekhtheus, see the comment on I.02.546–552. Comparable to the name Athēnē is the name of the nymph or local goddess Mukēnē, who presides over the acropolis of Mycenae. As for the elliptic plural Mukēnai, it must refer not only to the acropolis but also to the region dominated by the acropolis. Another comparable form is the place-name Messēnē, which means something like ‘Midland’. Here I compare the place-name me-za-na written on a Linear B tablet from Pylos, Cn 3.1. And here is another relevant piece of information from the Linear B texts: in a tablet from Knossos, V 52, the name of a female divinity in line one is a-ta-na-po-ti-ni-ja, which I interpret as athēnās potniāi ‘to the lady [potnia] of Athens’. I translate athēnā here as ‘Athens’, by which I mean simply the acropolis of Athens as it existed as far back as the second millennium BCE. [Further analysis in Nagy 2015.07.10.] [[GN 2017.05.11 via HTL 159, 161; more on Erekhtheus in HC 1§138]]
O.07.081–111, 112–132

subject heading(s): palace and garden of Alkinooς; present-tense descriptions of permanence

The palace of Alkinooς, described at O.07.081–111, is comparable to the heavenly residence of Menelaos. See the comment at O.04.043–075. I now argue here that the garden of Alkinooς, described at O.07.112–132, is likewise presented as a heavenly place. At O.07.103–130, where we see verses that overlap the descriptions of the palace and the garden, we find that the describing verbs avoid the past tense. The descriptions are restricted to the present tense. It has been argued that a textual interpolation has happened here (West 2000:480), on the grounds that Homeric diction does not use the present tense to indicate the past, and that only those aspects of the past that are viewed as permanent can be described in the present tense: examples include the chariot of Hērē, I.05.724–728; the abode of Poseidon under the sea at Aigai, I.13.021–022; the springs of the river Scamander, I.22.147–154; the harbor and cave of the Nymphs at Ithaca, O.13.096–112; and, most important for my argumentation here, the dwelling-place of the gods on Mount Olympus, O.06.043–046. Arguing against the theory of interpolation, I propose that not only the palace of Alkinooς but also his garden are modeled on an idealized and thus heavenly prototype. Both the palace and the garden are models of permanence. In the case of the palace, its permanence is actually made explicit in a reference at O.07.091–094 to golden and silver watchdogs that guard the palace and that are made to last forever by the divine smith Hephaistos. The aura of this beautiful place is not only enchanting but even enchanted. In terms of my argument, then, there is no need to posit (as does West 2000:483–486) a textual interpolation from an unattested passage that would have followed what is spoken by Nausicaa at O.06.255–303 with reference to the palace of Alkinooς and its environs. The present tenses that are used in descriptions of the palace and the garden at O.07.081–111 and 112–132 respectively are appropriate to the heavenly aura of the whole place. [[GN 2017.05.11.]]
O.07.167

subject heading(s): menoς ‘mental power’; epithet hieron ‘sacred’

Alkinooς here qualifies for an epithet that would mean ‘he whose mental-power [menos] is sacred [hieron]’. Instead, however, the name of Alkinooς is expressed periphrastically: ‘the sacred [hieron] mental-power [menos] of Alkinooς’, as if the agency of the king originated from his mental power, not from his existence as a person. See also O.07.178. [[GN 2017.05.18 via BA 86, 89.]]
O.07.215–221

subject heading(s): gastēr ‘stomach’

Hunger for food in the gastēr ‘stomach’ drives the poet as guest to say what his host wants to hear. The poet, then, is dependent on the patronage of his local audiences. [[2017.05.11 via PH 190, GMP 44–45, 274.]]
O.07.221

subject heading(s): lēth- ‘forget’; [mnē- ‘mentally connect, remember’]

The idea of forgetting as expressed by lēth- is the poetic foil for the idea of remembering as expressed by mnē- ‘mentally
O.07.256

anchor comment on endukéōs ‘continuously, uninterruptedly’

This adverb endukéōs ‘continuously, uninterruptedly’ expresses the idea of an uninterrupted sequence. The opposite of this adverb endukéōs ‘continuously, uninterruptedly’ can be seen in the adjective adeukés, which can be interpreted as ‘discontinuous, interrupting’. See the anchor comment at O.04.489. In terms of this interpretation, the root duk-/deuk- for this adverb/adjective conveys the sense of ‘continue’. [[GN 2017.05.11 via PasP 43–45, 45n14.]]

O.07.257

subject heading(s): preservation from mortality

The project of Calypso was to make Odysseus immortal, he reports. [[GN 2017.05.11 via BA 197.]]

O.07.321

subject heading(s): Euboea

The Ionian island of Euboea is ostentatiously described as very far away from the island of the Phaeacians. The point of this description may be related to the poetic agenda of the Odyssey in describing the kingdom of the Phaeacians as a mythological replica of the confederation known as the Ionian Dodecapolis as it existed around the late eighth and early seventh centuries BCE. (On the Ionian Dodecapolis, see the anchor comment on I.01.463; also the comment on I.02.867–869 and on I.20.403–405; see also under Ionian Dodecapolis in the Inventory of terms and names.) For a reconstruction of the poetic agenda originating from the Ionian Dodecapolis around the late eighth and early seventh centuries BCE, I recommend the analysis of Frame 2009 ch. 7. (As for a relatively later phase of the poetic agenda, where the kingdom of Alkinos is reshaped as a mythological replica of the island-state of Kerkysa / Corcyra, I refer to my initial comments on Rhapsody 7 of the Odyssey, where I cross-refer to my further comments on Rhapsody 11.) From the standpoint of Ionian Dodecapolis, dominated by the city-state of Miletus in Asia Minor, the island of Euboea was situated far away to the west. The territory of Euboea was shared by two rival Ionian cities, Eretria and Khalkis, and the first of the two was a close ally of Miletus. The distancing of the Ionian Dodecapolis from Ionian Euboea could be explained as a playfully ostentatious reference to the far reach of East Greeks in dealing with West Greeks. [[GN 2017.05.18; see also HPC 227.]]

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Odyssey Rhapsody 8

2017.05.18 / enhanced 2018.10.08

Odysseus encounters the blind singer Demodokos, who performs three songs that reveal hidden truths about the hero of the Odyssey. Alkinos prepares a feast for Odysseus, who has not yet identified himself. This feast becomes a mythologized replica of a festival that puts on display a dazzling variety of old poetic traditions, soon to be replaced by the new poetry of the Odyssey.
O.08.002

subject heading(s): *menos* ‘mental power’; epithet *hieron* ‘sacred’

Once again, as at O.07.167 and O.07.178, the name of Alkinoos is expressed periphrastically: ‘the sacred *hieron* mental-power [*menos*] of Alkinoos’, as if the agency of the king originated from his mental power, not from his existence as a person. See also O.08.04. [[GN 2017.05.18 via BA 86, 89]]

O.08.026–045

subject heading(s): *pompē* ‘escort’; sacrifice; *xenos* ‘stranger; guest’; *dais* ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’; *aeîdein* ‘sing’; *aoidē* ‘singing, song’; *aoidos* ‘singer’; Demodokos; *terpein* ‘give delight’

Alkinoos the king is addressing his subjects, the Phaeacians, and he speaks of the ‘escort’ that he plans to provide for the stranger who has not yet identified himself as Odysseus. The word that I translate as ‘escort’ here is *pompē*: O.08.030, O.08.031, O.08.033. And the word that I translate as ‘stranger’ is *xenos*: O.08.028. Alkinoos intends to be a host to this stranger, treating him as a ‘guest’, and the word that I translate as ‘guest’ here is likewise *xenos*, O.08.042. What Alkinoos plans to offer his guest is a *dais*, which refers on the surface to a ‘feast’. The feast will evidently include a dinner, O.08.042, and this dinner will include entertainment in the form of ‘singing’, the noun for which is *aoidē* at O.08.044 and the verb for which *aeîdein* at O.08.045. The one who will be singing is an *aoidos* ‘singer’, O.08.043, whose name is Demodokos, O.08.044. This singer’s singing ‘gives delight’, as expressed by way of the verb *terpein*, O.08.045. [[GN 2017.05.19 via HPC 85]]

O.08.036

subject heading(s): *dēmos* ‘community, district’

Here the entire kingdom of the Phaeacians is figured as one single *dēmos* ‘community, district’. On *dēmos* as ‘community, district’, see the comments on O.01.103 and O.02.032; and see also the comment on I.18.497–508, with reference to a scene of litigation in the context of a *dēmos* ‘district’ (*δῆμος* at I.18.500), which is parallel to a litigation recorded in the Linear B tablet Ep 704 from Pylos, again in the context of a *dámōs* (da-mo) ‘district’ (HR 75–76). [[GN 2017.05.18.]]

O.08.038

subject heading(s): *dais* ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’; stylized festival
As I will start to argue in the comment at O.08.061, the dais ‘feast’ that is planned here by king Alkinoos for his guest will eventually be rethought as a stylized festival, centering on a sacrifice that leads to a division of meat at the feast. [[GN 2017.05.18 via HPC 85 and 101.]]

O.08.044

subject heading(s): name of Demodokos; [dêmos ‘community, district’]; “speaking name” (nomen loquens)

The “speaking name” (nomen loquens) of the singer, Dêmôdkos, can be interpreted as meaning ‘one who is received [verb dekhíjesthai] by the community [dêmos]’, and, in the present context, the dêmos ‘community, district’ that gives to the singer’s singing its reception is indicated at O.08.036: that community is the dêmos or ‘district’ of the kingdom ruled by Alkinoos the king. I translate Dêmôdkos as ‘received by the community’, not just ‘received in the community’, because the noun dêmos implies an authority that is endowed with agency: the dêmos can perform a function, such as the reception of a song. We can see such agency at work in the use of the word dêmos (da-mo) in the Linear B tablet Ep 704 from Pylos: in the litigation that is described in that text, the dêmos literally speaks as one of the two parties engaged in the litigation over land-tenure: dêmos de min phâsi … ekheen (da-mo-de-mi-pa-si … e-ke-e) ‘but the dêmos says [phâsi] that she [= the priestess] has …’ (HR 75–76). [[GN 2017.05.19 via BA 149.]]

O.08.059–061

subject heading(s): hieruein ‘sacrifice’; dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’

The king Alkinoos ‘sacrifices’, as indicated by the verb hieruein at O.08.059, a number of sacrificial animals. They are twelve sheep, eight pigs and two head of cattle, as indicated at O.08.059–060, and the meat of these sacrificial animals will now be prepared for a dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’, as indicated at O.08.061—and as already indicated earlier at O.08.038. Following up on my comment at O.08.038 as also on the comment here at O.08.059–061, I will have more to say in the comment at O.08.061, coming up, about the dais ‘feast’ that is planned by king Alkinoos for his guest. [[GN 2017.05.19 via HPC 85 and 101; also MoM 4§§72, 99.5]]

O.08.061

subject heading(s): dais ‘feast; division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’; [daiesthai ‘feast; divide (meat), apportion, distribute’] stylized festival

[Epitomized from MoM 4§73] The noun dais ‘feast’, as we see it used here at O.08.061, is derived from the verb daiesthai in the basic sense of ‘distribute’, which is used in contexts of animal sacrifice in referring to the ‘distribution’ of cooked meat among the members of a community, as at O.15.140 and O.17.332. Then, by way of synecdoche, the specific idea of distribution extends metonymically to the general idea of feasting and further to the even more general idea of afestival. Following the logic of this sequence of meanings, we see that the animal sacrifice at O.08.059 had led to the cooking and the distribution of the meat, O.08.061, which will lead to communal dining, O.08.071–072, which will lead to the First Song of Demodokos, O.08.073–083, and so on. On metonymy and synecdoche, see the Inventory of terms and names. In terms of this logic, the metonymic use of the word dais in the sense of ‘feast’ here at O.08.061 marks a whole complex of events that are typical of festivals: animal sacrifice, communal feasting, singing as well as dancing at the feast. As we will see in comments that follow, this dais ‘feast’ as signaled at O.08.061 will be rethought as a stylized festival, centering on a sacrifice that leads to a division of meat at the feast. Such a festival will continue from here in Odyssey 13. [[GN 2017.05.18. See also HPC 81 and 93; also MoM 4§99.5]]

O.08.062–095

subject heading(s): First Song of Demodokos

Demodokos is an aoidos ‘singer,’ O.08.062, and he is is blind, O.08.63–64. The song that he sings about the Trojan War, O.08.073–082, prompts Odysseus to break down in tears and weep, O.08.083–095. Every time the singer ‘leaves off’ singing,
as indicated by légein, O.08.087, he then restarts his song, as indicated by aps arkhesthai, O.08.090, since his Phaeacian listeners ‘feel delight’, as indicated by the verb terpesthai, as they hear his singing, O.08.091. So, the listeners of Demodokos so enjoy his singing that they don’t let him stop. (See the comments at HC 2§299 and 2§343.) There is a contradiction here between the reactions of Odysseus and the other listeners. Every time the singer restarts his singing, Odysseus restarts his weeping, O.08.092. But Odysseus pretends to be enjoying the performance of Demodokos, O.08.089, and he manages to evade the notice of all the Phaeacians, O.08.093—except for Alkinos, O.08.094–095. As I will argue with reference to the Third Song of Demodokos, that song can be interpreted as a restarting of the First Song of Demodokos—followed by a parallel restarting of the tears of Odysseus in response to it. [[GN 2017.05.19 via HPC 96–98.]]

O.08.067

subject heading(s): phorminx ‘special lyre’

The singers as represented in Homeric poetry are traditionally pictured as accompanying themselves on a string instrument or ‘lyre’, called a phorminx here. [[GN 2017.05.18 via BA 291.]]

O.08.071–072

subject heading(s): [dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’]

Before the singer starts singing, the Phaeacians and their unidentified guest are already feasting: they partake of both food and drink, O.08.072. The eating and drinking had begun at O.08.071, signaled already at O.08.061 by the noun dais ‘feast, feasting’. As we will see later, however, the singing itself is part of the dais ‘feasting’. [[GN 2017.05.19 via MoM 4§§72–73, HPC 81, 85.]]

O.08.073–082

subject heading(s): Homeric paraphrase of the First Song of Demodokos

At O.08.073–082, we see the plot of the First Song—at least, the plot of the start of the First Song. We cannot be sure about the whole plot because the singer more than once ‘leaves off’ his song, as signaled by légein at O.08.087, and then ‘restarts’ it, as signaled by aps arkhesthai at O.08.090. The multiple restartings are prompted by the fact that the singer’s Phaeacian listeners ‘feel delight’, as indicated by the verb terpesthai, as they hear his singing, O.08.091, and they want to hear more. As I noted in my comment for O.08.062–095, even Odysseus pretends to be enjoying the performance of Demodokos, O.08.089. On points of comparison between the iliad and the First Song of Demodokos as a micro-iliad, see HPC 115–116, especially with reference to (1) the idea of being inspired by a single Muse and (2) the subsuming of the agency of Apollo under the Plan of Zeus; see also HC 2§309. On the Third Song of Demodokos as a continuation of the First, see HPC 101. On epic poetry about the Trojan War as a hymnic consequent, see MoM 4§73 and 4§99.2; also HC 2§326. (By hymnic consequent here, all I mean is whatever comes after something that is shaped like a hymn.) On the epic of Demodokos as cognate with the poetic form of the epic Cycle, see HC 2§331. [[GN 2017.05.19.]]

O.08.073–074

subject heading(s): kleaandrón ‘the glories [klea] of men’; kleos ‘glory’ (of poetry)

For more on the epic traditions of kleaandrón ‘the glories [klea] of men’, see the comment on l.09.185–191; also on l.09.524–599. On the poetics of kleos ‘glory’ as the glory conferred by poetry, especially by epic, see the comment on O.01.088–095. [[GN 2017.05.18 via BA 100.]]

O.08.074

subject heading(s): oimē ‘thread, story-thread’; prooimion ‘proemium, prelude’

I translate the genitive of oimē [οἴμην] here as ‘starting (from a story-thread)’. (See also PP 63, HC 2§92n.) The paraphrasing here of the song of Demodokos recapitulates the prooimion ‘proemium, prelude’ of the song. [What follows is epitomized from HC 2§92–93.] In the case of the compound noun prooimion / προοιμίον, conventionally translated as ‘proemium’, the
element -oim- / -oim- is derived from a root that we find also attested in two simple nouns, oimos / οίμος and oimē / οἴμη. The Attic by-form of prooimion / προοιμίον, which is phroimion / φροίμιον, elucidates the prehistory of the root: we must reconstruct it not as *oim-* but as *hoim-*, from *soim-* . This reconstruction helps elucidate the surviving contexts of both oimos / οίμος and oimē / οἴμη, which do not always give a clear picture of the basic meaning of either form. In some contexts, the meaning seems to be ‘song’, as here at 0.08.074, while in others it seems to be ‘way, pathway’, as in Hesiod Works and Days 290. With the help of comparative evidence, however, the primary meaning of oimos and oimē can be reconstructed as ‘thread, threading’, and the meanings ‘song’ or ‘way, pathway’ can be explained as secondary: that is, ‘song’ and ‘way, pathway’ are metaphorical generalizations derived from the meaning ‘thread, threading’ (PR 72, 81; also PP 63n20). And it is such a primary meaning ‘thread, threading’ that we find in comparable forms attested in other Indo-European languages: for example, the form *soimos that we reconstruct from Greek oimos as attested by Old Icelandic seimr, meaning ‘thread’ (for this and other examples, see Durante 1976:176). In terms of such a primary meaning, the etymology of the compound noun prooimion ‘proemium’ can be interpreted as a metaphor referring to the ‘initial threading’ of a song. A close semantic parallel to the etymology of Greek prooimion ‘proemium’ as an ‘initial threading’ of a song is the etymology of Latin exordium, which likewise means ‘proemium’ in poetic and rhetorical contexts: the meaning of this noun as well can be traced back to the basic idea of an ‘initial threading’ (PP 63n20). The poetic and rhetorical concepts of both Greek prooimion and Latin exordium in the sense of ‘proemium’ have a common Indo-European ancestry. As I will argue later, not only oimos / oimē / prooimion but also humnos, ordinarily translated as ‘hymn’, are derived from roots that refer to the making of fabric. Moreover, I note that the word oimos is formulaically interchangeable with the word humnos at verse 451 of the Homeric Hymn (4) to Hermes, where we see the attestation of both oimos δοιδής and ύμνος δοιδής in the manuscript tradition; at a later point, we will also consider the cognate expression δοιδής ούμνον at verse 429 of Odyssey 8. I interpret the combinations of humnos and oimos with aoidē ‘song’ to mean respectively the ‘weaving’ of song and the ‘threading’ of song. Relevant to this interpretation is the context of oimē at verse 74 of Odyssey 8: we see here a metaphorical reference to the initial part of performing a song, that is, to the ‘initial threading’ of a song. To sum up, the meaning of oimos or oimē as ‘song’ results from a metaphorical extension: the idea of making song is being expressed metaphorically through the idea of making fabric. As for contexts where oimos and oimē seem to mean ‘way, pathway’, I argue that such a meaning is likewise a result of metaphorical extension: here the general idea of moving ahead from one point to another is being expressed metaphorically by applying the specific idea of threading one’s way from one point to another (more on this point at HC 2§311, in the excursus there). On points of comparison with the proemium that introduces the History of Herodotus, see PH 221, [GN 2017.05.19.]

O.08.075–078

subject heading(s): neikos ‘quarrel’; dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’; ‘best of the Achaeans’; ἔντις ‘mind, intelligence’; biē ‘force, violence, strength’.

The narrative subject of the epic that is being paraphrased here is a neikos ‘quarrel’ between Odysseus and Achilles, O.08.075. And the setting for this quarrel is a dais ‘feast’ that is explicitly correlated with a ‘sacrifice’, O.08.076: ἔσειν ἐν σαμί 8άζειν ‘at a celebratory feast [dais] of the gods’. The same epithet thaleiēi (θαλείη) is also used to describe the ongoing dais ‘feast’ at O.08.099. This epithet is of special interest in light of the meaning of the noun thaliai in the plural, ‘celebrations, festivities’, as at O.11.603 (HPC 85n13). We may compare another feast, described at I.08.228–235, where the describer is Agamemnon, recalling a scene from the collective past of the Achaeans: the setting of this other feast was the island of Lemnos, and each one of the Achaeans leaders took turns in boasting that he was the best Achaean of them all, I.08.229. In my comment on I.08.228–235, I noted that the noun euθώλαι ‘boastings’ in the plural at I.08.229 indicates a distributive action: the Achaeans were boasting not as a group but individually and competitively. The competitive boasting evidently centered on the question: who would be superior to all others in performing heroic exploits in the upcoming Trojan War? And the setting for this quarrel was a feast where the meat of oxen to be eaten in vast quantities was being apportioned among the Achaeans leaders, I.08.231. Since the narrative here makes a point of adding that these leaders were also drinking wine, I.08.232, it is implied that all the boasting could get out of hand and lead to quarrels about the awarding of prime cuts of meat. It would have been expected that the best portion of meat should go to the best hero. On the idea of a champion’s portion of meat, see the comment on I.07.319–322. Having reconstructed for I.08.228–235 a scene of quarreling in the context of apportioning cuts of meat, I return to the scene at O.08.075–078, where we see once again a scene of quarreling in the context of apportioning cuts of meat. And here the ‘quarrelling’ is explicitly called a neikos, O.08.075, while the ‘apportioning of meat’ is explicitly called a dais, O.08.076. As we saw in the comment for I.01.423–425, a dais is a feast where
meat is distributed, and this meat comes from the sacrifice of sacrificial animals. Thus the act of sacrifice converts the feast of humans into a notional feast of the gods. This notion, ‘feast of the gods’, is made explicit at 0.08.076, where the setting is described explicitly this way, as we have already seen: ἥδεν ἐν δαίμονι δαίλειν ‘at a celebratory feast [dais] of the gods’. In this festive setting, as I already highlighted in the comment on I.08.228–235, the neikos ‘quarrel’ at 0.08.075 is between Odysseus and Achilles, who are described at 0.08.078 as ‘the best of the Achaeans’. In terms of such a dispute in the context of a feast, each one of the two heroes would be claiming to be the ‘best of the Achaeans’. Achilles would have claimed to be ‘best’ because of his superior biē ‘force, violence, strength’, while Odysseus would have counter-claimed to be ‘best’ because of his superior métis ‘mind, intelligence’. See the comments on 0.01.002; see also, further back, the comments on I.01.001–012, where I argue that the quarrel between Odysseus and Achilles came from an epic tradition that was independent from the epic tradition that featured the quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles. Further, see the comment on I.09.346–352, where I note that this iliadic passage was thought by Aristarchus (scholia A for I.09.347) to be an allusion to the quarrel at 0.08.075–078 between Achilles and Odysseus over one overriding question: will Troy be conquered by relying on the physical power of Achilles or on the mental power of Odysseus? [[GN 2017.05.19 via BA 18, 21–23, 25, 40, 43–46, 56–59, 317.]]

O.08.079–081

subject heading(s): Apollo at Delphi

In the iliad and Odyssey, Apollo at Delphi is mentioned only at I.09.404–405 and here at O.08.079–081. Agamemnon consults the oracle at Delphi, and he misunderstands what the oracle prophesies to him. See the next note, on O.08.081–082. [[GN 2017.05.18 via BA 122–123, 127, 130–131, 134, 137–141, especially with reference to myths about Pyrrhos/Neoptolemos, son of Achilles.]]

O.08.081–082

subject heading(s): pēma ‘pain’; kulindesthai ‘roll’; Will of Zeus

Agamemnon misunderstands the oracle of Apollo at Delphi, which had evidently prophesied to him that Troy would be captured when the ‘best of the Achaeans’—Odysseus and Achilles—engage in a quarrel at a feast. Agamemnon rejoices when he sees the two heroes quarreling, since he thinks that victory over the Trojans will be quick and easy—and painless. But the war will be a great pēma ‘pain’, O.08.081, for the Achaeans as also for the Trojans, O.08.082. This pain is compared to a breakaway boulder that ‘rolls’ down from the heights above, as expressed by way of kulindesthai, O.08.081, and this boulder will crush anyone that stands in its way. And all that pain will be caused by the Will of Zeus, O.08.082. For another comparable misunderstanding on the part of Agamemnon, see the comments on I.02.007–015 and on I.02.036–040. [[GN 2017.05.19 via BA 63–64, 69, 77.]]

O.08.094

subject heading(s): noeĩn ‘take note (of), notice’; “speaking name’ (nomen loquentis); name of Alkinoos

Alkinoos notices the weeping of Odysseus, and this act of noticing will lead to recognition. See the anchor comment at I.05.669 on noeĩn ‘take note (of), notice’. This characteristic of Alkinoos, to ‘notice’ things, is relevant to his “speaking name”: see the comment at O.22.031–033. [[GN 2017.05.18 via GMP 205.]]

O.08.096–103

subject heading(s): dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’; aethloí (áthloí) in the sense of ‘athletic contests’

Alkinoos pauses the dining and the singing, though the dais at O.08.098 and at O.08.098 in the general sense of ‘feasting’ can continue. But now, instead of dining and singing, what will commence are aethloí (áthloí) in the sense of ‘athletic contests’, O.08.100. Listed at O.08.103 are athletic events in boxing, wrestling, long-jump, and footracing. [[GN 2017.05.19 via MoM 4574.]]

O.08.099
subject heading(s): dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’; *thaleiē* (θαλεῖη) ‘celebratory’

Once again, as at O.08.076, the epithet *thaleiē* (θαλεῖη) ‘celebratory’ is used to describe the ongoing dais ‘feast’ (δαίμ). O.08.099. On the meaning of this epithet, see the comment on O.08.075–078. [[GN 2017.05.19 via HPC 85n13.]]

O.08.131

subject heading(s): *terpesthai* ‘feel delight’; *aethloι (áthloι) in the sense of *athletic contests’

All those attending the athletic event ‘felt delight’, as expressed by way of the verb *terpesthai*; in Hittite, the cognate noun *tarpa-*-, likewise derived from the root ‘terp-’, is used with reference to athletic events. (See MoM 4§78.) [[GN 2017.05.19.]]

O.08.200

subject heading(s): *agōn* ‘competition’

Here at O.08.200 the word *agōn* ‘competition’ is used with reference to a continuum of competitive athletic events. In this context, it becomes clear that the entire series of athletic events in this festive continuum can be viewed as an *agōn* ‘competition’. See also O.08.238. [[GN 2017.05.18 via MoM 4§74.]]

O.08.230–233

subject heading(s): Second Song of Demodokos

In the Second Song, O.08.329–332, Hephaistos as the god who is slow on his feet will catch up with the fleet-footed god Ares the adulterer. Similarly, Odysseus says here at O.08.230–233 that he is slow on his feet. But, when the time comes, we know that he too will catch up with those fleet-footed would-be adulterers, the suitors of his wife. [[GN 2017.05.18 via HPC 86.90.]]

O.08.250–269, 367–369

Q&T via MoM 4§31

subject heading(s): Second Song of Demodokos

| 250 | “āll’ ἄγε, Φαίηκων βητάρμονες δόσαι ἄριστοι, 251 | παίσατε, ἢς χ’ ὁ ἐξείνος ἐνείπε οἷα φίλοιοι, 252 | οἰκαδε νοστήσασ, δόσαι περιγνώμεθ’ ἄλλων 253 | ναυτιλή καὶ ποσαὶ καὶ ὀρχηστὶ καὶ ἀοίδη]. 254 | Δημοδόκω δὲ τις αἴφα καὶ φόρμυμα λέγειν 255 | οἰκεῖ, ἢ που κείται ἐν θεῷ τερπεῖν δόμησιν.” 256 | ὡς ἐφατ’ Ἀλκίνωνος θεοεἰκός, ὥριτo δὲ κήρυξ 257 | οἶων φόρμυμα γλαφροῦ ὀμοῦ ἔκ βασιλῆς, 258 | οἰσιμητὴi δὲ κρηταὶ ἐνείπε πάντες ἀνέσταν, 259 | δήμιοι, οἱ κατ’ αγώνα ἐὰν πρόσωσαν ἐκκατα, 260 | λείηνα δὲ χόρον, καλὸν δ’ ἔνθραμμα ἀγώνα. 261 | κήρυξ δ’ ἡγοῦν ἡλίθει φέρον γόμον λέγειν 262 | Δημοδόκω: ὡς δ’ ἐπείτα ἡ ἴδια μέσον ἀμφι δὲ κούροι 263 | πρωθῆκαι ἵππον, δόσαις ὀρχηστῷ, 264 | πέπληγον δὲ χόρον δειον ποιοῦν, αὐτάρ ’Οδυσσεὺς 265 | μαρμαράς θεῖοτο ποσά, θαυμάζε δὲ θυμώ, 266 | αὐτάρ ὁ φορμίζων ανεβάλλετο καλὸν αἰσθεῖν 267 | ἄμφ’ Ἀρεος φιλότητος ἑιστεφάνου τ’ Ἀφροδίτης, 268 | ὡς τὰ πρῶτ’ ἐμίσθαν ἐν Ἡραίστῳ δόμῃς 269 | λάβρη. [The story that has just started at line 266 now continues, ending at line 366.] 267 | ταῦτ’ ἄρ’ ἀοίδος ἀοίδε περικλύτως; αὐτάρ ’Οδυσσεὺς 268 | τέρπετ’ ὑπὶ φρεσκὸν ἔδιψεν ἄκουσαν ἤδη καὶ ἄλλοι 269 | Φαίηκες διαλείψων, ναυίκλατοι ἀνδρές. (At line 267, there is a variant reading attested: φιλότητα in the accusative, instead of φιλότητος in the genitive.)

| 250 | [Alkinoos is speaking.] “Let’s get started. I want the best of the Phaeacian acrobatic dancers [bētarmones] 251 to perform their sportive dance [paizien], so that the stranger, our guest, will be able to tell his near-and-dear ones, 252 when he gets home, how much better we (Phaeacians) are than anyone else 253 in sailing and in footwork, in dance [phrēstus] and song [aoidê]. 254 One of you go and get for Demodokos the clear-sounding special lyre [phorinx], 255 bringing it to him. It is in the
palace somewhere." [256] Thus spoke Alkinoos, the one who looks like the gods, and the herald [kérux] got up, [257] ready to bring the well carved special lyre [phorminx] from the palace of the king. [258] And the organizers [aissumētai], the nine selectmen, all got up [259] — they belonged to the district [dēmos]— and they started arranging everything according to the rules of the competition [agôn]; [260] they made smooth the place of the singing-and-dancing [khoros], and they made a wide space of competition [agôn]. [261] The herald [kérux] came near, bringing the clear-sounding special lyre [phorminx] [262] for Demodokos. He [= Demodokos] moved to the center [es meson] of the space. At his right and at his left were boys [kouroi] [263] in the first stage of adolescence [prōthēbol], standing there, well versed in dancing [orkhēthmos]. [264] They pounded out with their feet a dance [khoros], a thing of wonder, and Odysseus [265] was observing the sparkling footwork. He was amazed in his heart [thūmos]. [266] And he [= Demodokos], playing on the special lyre [phormizein], started [anaballesthai] singing beautifully [267] about [amphi] the bonding [philotēs] of Ares and of Aphrodite, the one with the beautiful garlands [stephanoi], [268] about how they, at the very beginning, mated with each other in the palace of Hephaistos, [269] in secret. [The story that has just started at line 266 now continues, ending at line 366.] [267] These things, then, the singer [aoidos] was singing [aedein], that very famous singer. As for Odysseus, [268] he felt delight [terpesthai] in his heart as he was listening—and so too did all the others feel, [269] the Phaeacians, those men with their long oars, men famed for their ships.

As we are about to see, the Second Song of Demodokos is remarkably different from the First and the Third Songs—not only in form but also in content. [[GN 2018.10.08.]]

O.08.259

subject heading(s): Second Song of Demodokos; agôn ‘competition’

Officials who are experts in setting up a place for holding competitive choral events of singing and dancing are here preparing to set up such a place. Such a choral event is an agôn ‘competition’, just like the athletic events that preceded. So, all these events are seen as a festive continuum. [[GN 2017.05.19 via HPC 91, 93.]]

O.08.260

subject heading(s): agôn ‘competition’; khoros ‘place for choral singing / dancing’; stylized festival

So, the competitive choral event is properly arranged, and a place is prepared for the ‘choral singing /dancing’, the word for which is khoros. The stylized festival continues. [[GN 2017.05.19 via HPC 91, 93.]]

O.08.261–265

subject heading(s): khoros ‘place for choral singing / dancing’

Acrobatic dancers lead off the choral singing and dancing, and the khoros or ‘place for choral singing-and-dancing’ becomes their dancing floor. This pattern of leading off resembles the pattern we see in versions of O.04.019 and I.18.606 where we see the variant reading εξαχοποῦται instead of εξαχοποῦτος. In terms of this reading, the acrobatic dancers lead off, starting their performance before the singer starts. [[GN 2017.05.19.]]

O.08.266

subject heading(s): anaballesthai ‘begin performing’

Now Demodokos the singer ‘begins performing’, as indicated by anaballesthai, and he sings, O.08.266. What the singer now sings is a proemium, the form of which is analogous to what we read in the Homeric Hymns. [[GN 2017.05.18 via HPC 87–88.]]

O.08.267

subject heading(s): amphi ‘about’; philotēs ‘sexual bonding’; divine burlesque
The subject of the song is the philotès ‘sexual bonding’ of Ares and Aphrodite. The adulterous lovers will be caught in the act by the husband of Aphrodite, Hephaistos. The introduction of the story by way of the preposition amphí ‘about’ is typical of hymns. The story of the sexual encounter of Ares and Aphrodite is typical of a genre known as divine burlesque, on which see the comment on I.21.385–514. The subject of such a philotès ‘sexual bonding’ is treated seriously by Empedocles DK B 35. [[GN 2017.05.18 via HPC 88.]]

O.08.367–369

subject heading(s): terpesthai ‘feel delight’

Reacting to the Second Song of Demodokos, both Odysseus and the Phaeacian listeners react by ‘feeling delight’ as expressed by way of terpesthai, O.08.368. [[GN 2017.05.18 via MoM 4§31–4§32.]]

O.08.370–380

subject heading(s): hymnic consequent

What follows the Second Song of Demodokos, which can be viewed as a hymnic proemium, is further dancing and perhaps singing, which can be viewed together as a hymnic consequent. And the setting is called an agón ‘competition’, O.08.380. [[GN 2017.05.18 via HC 2§321.]]

O.08.390–391

subject heading(s): dēmos ‘community, district’; basilês ‘kings’; Ionian Dodecapolis

Alkinoos says that the kingdom of the Phaeacians, described here as a dēmos ‘community, district’, is ruled by twelve basilês ‘kings’, O.08.390, and that he counts himself as the thirteenth. (On krainêin in the sense of ‘authorize’ and thereby ‘rule’, see GMP 59.) In terms of this description, Alkinoos figures himself as an over-king, and maybe the word basilês here has the meaning of ‘sub-kings’—which is in fact the meaning of the corresponding word gênasilêwes (qa-si-re-we) in Linear B texts. According to Frame 2009 ch. 7, the twelve kings of the Phaeacians may represent a mythological replica of the confederation known as the Ionian Dodecapolis as it existed around the late eighth and early seventh centuries BCE. On the Ionian Dodecapolis, see the anchor comment on I.01.463; also the comment on I.02.867–869 and on I.20.403–405; see also under Ionian Dodecapolis in the Inventory of terms and names. [[GN 2017.05.18.]]

O.08.429

subject heading(s): dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’; terpesthai ‘feel delight’; stylized festival; aoidê ‘song’; humnos (reconstructed meaning: ‘web’ or ‘connecting by way of fabric work’)

Alkinoos wishes that the feasting should continue and that Odysseus should continue to ‘feel delight’, as expressed by terpesthai, while he hears at this feast the ‘weaving’ of the aoidê ‘song’ that started with the First Song of Demodokos and that will now connect with the Third Song. In this context, we see the meaning of the noun dais extended from the specific idea of ‘feast’ to the more general idea of a stylized ‘festival’. And the continued weaving of the song, which corresponds to the continuation of the stylized festival, is expressed here by way of the noun humnos, which is attested only here and nowhere else in either the Iliad or the Odyssey. In this unique context at O.08.429, the meaning of humnos can be reconstructed as ‘web’ or ‘connecting by way of fabric work’. In terms of such a reconstructed meaning, the humnos as a ‘web’ connects the First and the Second and the Third Songs of Demodokos and forms a continuum of song that extends throughout Odyssey 8, as if the ongoing dais of this Rhapsody were not only a continued feast but also a sustained festival. This festival makes room for events of athletics as well as songmaking. [[GN 2017.05.19 via HC 2§§93, 274, 276, 280, 290, 291, 302, 303.]]

O.08.485–498

Q&T via HPC 93–94

subject heading(s): Third Song of Demodokos; metabainein ‘shift forward”
When they had satisfied their desire for drinking and eating, [486] then Odysseus, the one with many a stratagem, addressed Demodokos: [487] “Demodokos, I admire and pointedly praise you, more than any other human. [488] Either the Muse, child of Zeus, taught you, or Apollo. [489] All too well, in accord with its construction [kosmos], do you sing the fate of the Achaeans [490] — all the things the Achaeans did and all the things that were done to them, and they suffered for it— [491] you sing it as if you yourself had been present or had heard it from someone else. [492] But come now, move ahead and shift forward [metabainei] and sing the construction [kosmos] of the horse, [493] the wooden horse that Epeios made with the help of Athena, [494] the one that Odysseus, the radiant one, took to the acropolis as a stratagem, [495] having filled it in with men, who ransacked Iion. [496] If you can tell me these things in due order [katalegein], in accord with proper apportioning [moira], [497] then right away I will say the authoritative word [muthos] to all mortals: [498] I will say, and I see it as I say it, that the god [theos], favorably disposed toward you, granted [opazein] you a divinely sounding song.”

When Odysseus calls on Demodokos to sing his Third Song, he challenges the singer at O.08.492 to metabainei ‘shift forward’. So, the starting point of the Third Song is not where the singer had left off when he last sang about the Trojan War. Demodokos will have to begin his story at a new starting-point, at a later starting point. [[GN 2017.05.19 via HC 2§311.]]

O.08.499–533

Q&T via HPC 99–101

subject heading(s): Third Song of Demodokos; metabainei ‘shift forward’

[499] Thus he [= Odysseus] spoke. And he [= Demodokos], getting set up for his point of departure [homètheis], started [arkhethal] from the god [theos]. And he made visible the song, [500] taking it from
the point where they [= the Achaeans], boarding their ships with the strong benches, |601 sailed away, setting their tents on fire. |602 That is what some of the Argives [= Achaeans] were doing. But others of them were in the company of Odysseus, the one with the great glory, and they were already |603 sitting hidden inside the Horse, which was now in the meeting place of the Trojans. |604 The Trojans themselves had pulled the Horse into the acropolis. |605 So there it was, standing there, while they [= the Trojans] were saying many different things, |606 sitting around it. There were three different plans: |607 to cut open the hollow wood with pitiless bronze, |608 or to throw it off the rocky heights after pulling it up to the peak [of the acropolis], |609 or to leave it, great artifact [palma] that it was, as a charm [theiktéron] of the gods |610 —which, I now see it, was exactly the way it was sure to [mellein] reach an outcome [teleután], |611 because it was fate [aisa] that the place would be destroyed, once the city had enfolded in itself |612 the great Wooden Horse, when all the best men were sitting inside it, |613 the Argives [= Achaeans], that is, bringing slaughter and destruction upon the Trojans. |614 He sang how the sons of the Achaeans destroyed the city, |615 pouring out of the Horse, leaving behind the hollow place of ambush. |616 He sang how the steep citadel was destroyed by different men in different places. |617 —how Odysseus went to the palace of Deiphobos, |618 how he was looking like Ares, and godlike Menelaos went with him, |619 and how in that place, I now see it, he [= Demodokos] said that he [= Odysseus] dared to go through the worst part of the war, |620 and how he emerged victorious after that, with the help of Athena, the one with the mighty spirit. |621 Thus sang the singer [aoidos], the one whose glory is supreme. And Odysseus |622 dissolved [tēkesthai] into tears. He made wet his cheeks with the tears flowing from his eyelids, |623 just as a woman cries, falling down and embracing her dear husband, |624 who fell in front of the city and people he was defending, |625 trying to ward off the pitiless day of doom hanging over the city and its children. |626 She sees him dying, gasping for his last breath, |627 and she pours herself all over him [amphi-khu-] as she wails with a piercing cry. But there are men behind her, |628 prodding her with their spears, hurting her back and shoulders, |629 and they bring for her a life of bondage, which will give her pain and sorrow. |630 Her cheeks are wasting away with a sorrow [akhos] that is most pitiful [eleinon], |631 So also did Odysseus pour out a piteous tear [dákron] from beneath his brows; |632 there he was, escaping the notice of all while he kept pouring out his tears [dákrua]. |633 But Alkinoos was the only one of all of them who was aware, and he took note [noeín].

Complying with the request of Odysseus, Demodokos begins the story of his Third Song at a later point in the story—evidently later than where he had left off before. As signaled at O.08.500, the story begins with the Wooden Horse, exactly as Odysseus had requested. And the story can now focus on the greatest deed accomplished by Odysseus in the Trojan War: he was the hero who invented the Wooden Horse. Here was a feat of intelligence that finally resulted in the capture of Troy by the Achaeans. But the story also focuses on what was perhaps the worst deed of Odysseus in the Trojan War: as we can read in the surviving plot-outline of the Iliou Persis, an epic belonging to the epic Cycle and attributed to Arctinus of Miletus, Odysseus had a major role in the grim story of Troy’s final hours. He was the Achaean hero who captured Andromache, widow of Hector, and who executed the child of this doomed couple. But right before Demodokos reaches this horrific part of the story, Odysseus breaks down in tears, and his tears will interrupt the outcome of this story. The interruption, as we see in the narration that I have just quoted, takes the form of a simile that compares the weeping of the hero with the lament of an unnamed woman who has just been captured in war, O.08.521–531. The simile of the unnamed lamenting woman is substituted for the outcome of the story that tells of the final tearful moments of Troy’s destruction (HC 2§334–344). In the epic Cycle, as represented by the Iliou Persis, that unnamed lamenting woman would be Andromache (HC 2§344). In the Homeric Odyssey, the tears of the captive woman lead to the tears of Odysseus, which in turn can now lead to the story of his own odyssey as a continuation of the tearful story that almost ended the narrative continuum at the feast of the Phaecians. The story can now continue, shifting from an Iliad to an Odyssey. [[GN 2017.05.19]]

O.08.499

subject heading(s): hormásthai ‘get set for a point of departure’

This verb hormán (’hormásthai), meaning ‘set up (‘get set up) for a point of departure’, is understood as a poetic concept by Plato, Ion 534c. [[GN 2017.05.19 via PR 25–26, 72]]
subject heading(s): tēkēsthai ‘melt away, dissolve’; dissolving while weeping

The metaphor of ‘dissolving’ into tears while weeping, as expressed here by way of the verb tēkēsthai ‘melt away, dissolve’, extends into a further metaphor: with your own tears, you can be ‘pouring all over’ a loved one whom you are embracing: see the comment at O.08.527. Further relevant comments at O.19.204–212. [[GN 2017.07.22 via HC 2§344.]]

O.08.527

subject heading(s): amphi-ku- ‘pour all over’; dissolving while weeping

The metaphor of ‘pouring all over’ someone in the act of embracing that someone, as expressed here by way of the verb amphi-ku-., is an extension of the metaphor of ‘dissolving’ while weeping, on which see the comment at O.08.522. When you are weeping, pouring out your tears from your eyes, it is as if your whole self were dissolving into tears, which can then ‘pour all over’ the beloved someone whom you are embracing. Further relevant comments at O.19.204–212. [[GN 2017.07.22 via HC 2§344.]]

O.08.533

subject heading(s): noeîn ‘take note (of), notice’; “speaking name” (nomen loquens); name of Alkinoos

Once again, Alkinoos notices that Odysseus is weeping, and this act of noticing will lead to recognition. See again the anchor comment at I.05.669 on noeîn ‘take note (of), notice’. This characteristic of Alkinoos, to ‘notice’ things, is relevant to his “speaking name”: see the comment at O.22.031–033. But the tears of Odysseus will conjure not only his own past sorrows: these sorrows are inseparable from the story of that dashing young rival of Odysseus, Achilles himself, who had died far too soon before his time. [[GN 2017.05.18.]]

O.08.570–571

subject heading(s): prophecy of Nausithoos

See the comment on O.13.175–177, where the lines are quoted and translated. [[GN 2017.06.22]]

O.08.581–586

subject heading(s): hetairos ‘companion’

At O.08.581–583, Alkinoos asks the unrecognized Odysseus: does the singing of Demodokos about the Trojan War make you sad because you lost a relative in that war? Then, he asks an alternative question at O.08.584–586: or did you lose a hetairos ‘companion’ in the Trojan War? Well, Odysseus did in fact lose many companions, but the greatest of them all was Achilles. Pointedly, Alkinoos refers to the sadness of Odysseus as akhos ‘grief’ at O.08.541. In Homeric poetry, this word akhos ‘grief’ conjures the name of Achilles himself, as I noted already in the comment on I.01.002. [[GN 2017.07.19 via BA 176§3n2.]]
Odyssey combined. Odysseus will perform his song in the style of the Homéridai, notional descendants of Homer who performed the Iliad and Odyssey in relay. The relay performance, which was competitive as well as collaborative, consisted of twelve units, each unit consisting of four rhapsodies, and it took place at the seasonally recurring festival of the Panionia at a place called the Panionion in Asia Minor. As already noted before, this festival was the political and cultural self-expression of the Ionian Dodecapolis, a confederation of twelve states that reached its apogee in the eastern Greek world during the late eighth and early seventh century BCE. (On the Ionian Dodecapolis, see the anchor comment on I.01.463; also the comment on O.07.321; also on I.02.867–869 and on I.20.403–405; see also under Ionian Dodecapolis in the Inventory of terms and names.) The division of the Iliad and Odyssey into twelve units, six for the Iliad and six for the Odyssey, with each unit containing four rhapsodies, corresponds to the division of the Ionian confederation into twelve states. It may be argued, then, that each one of the twelve states of the Ionian Dodecapolis fielded a rhapsode for performing competitively one of the twelve epic units. Which rhapsode was assigned which one of the twelve epic units could have been determined by lottery or perhaps by way of seasonal rotation. It may also be argued that the rhapsodic unit extending from the start of Rhapsody 9 here all the way through the end of Rhapsody 12 represents an idealized rhapsodic performance in the style of the Homéridai. And Rhapsody 9 begins with a kind of Homeric signature at O.09.03–011—the mark of Homer, as it were. [[GN 2017.05.25.]]
festivity [euphrosune] prevails throughout the whole community [dēmos], and the people at the feast [daïtumones], throughout the halls, are listening to the singer [aoidos] as they sit there—you can see one after the other—and they are seated at tables that are filled with grain and meat, while wine from the mixing bowl is drawn by the one who pours the wine and takes it around, pouring it into their cups. This kind of thing, as I see it in my way of thinking, is the most beautiful thing in the whole world.
thinking thoughts about the uncertain future that awaits her and the child they had together, he remarks that ‘all these things are-on-my-mind [melei] as well’, I.06.441: ἢ καὶ ἑμοὶ τάδε πάντα μέλε. Such things are the subject of Homeric poetry, and so Homer must have such things on his mind as well. In poetical as also in prosaic contexts, the things that are on someone’s mind may be simply things that this someone is thinking about. But they may be more than that, as in the example I just gave concerning the things that are on the minds of Andromache and Hector. And these things are not just thoughts: they are caring thoughts, concerned thoughts, even worried thoughts. A word that refers to a song about such worried thoughts, as an expression of caring and concern, is merimna ‘care’, as used in the Hippolytus of Euripides, with reference to a custom originating in the city of Trozen, where girls who were celebrating their coming of age are seen in the act of singing and dancing a song. Their song is described as a sad love song, ‘a troubled thought that comes along with songmaking’ (μουσικός ... μέριμνα 1428–1429). The noun that I translate here as ‘a troubled thought’ is merimna, which means literally a ‘care’ or a ‘concern’. A merimna, in other words, is what you have on your mind. In a song of Bacchylides (19.11), the same noun merimna, which I translate here as ‘a troubled thought’, refers to the thought-processes of the poet himself as he is pictured in the act of composing his song. A merimna, then, is a song that is ‘on one’s mind’. Similarly, I argue, the noun melos in the sense of ‘melody’ is derived from melei ‘is on one’s mind’; a melos is a song that is ‘on one’s mind’. Further examples in Nagy 2016.02.11§7. [[GN 2017.06.01.]]

O.09.063

subject heading(s): ásmenos ‘returning to light and life’

Odysseus and most of his companions have escaped from the land of the Kikones, where some of them died, and now the survivors are sailing on, described as ásmei, which I translate as ‘returning to light and life’. See the anchor comment on O.09.566. [[GN 2017.05.31.]]

O.09.082–104

subject heading(s): land of the Lotus-Eaters; nostos ‘homecoming, song of homecoming; return; return to light and life’ nóos ‘mind, thinking’

(What follows is epitomized from H24H 10§§8–9.) As we saw already at the very beginning of the Odyssey, the hero’s nostos, ‘return’ at O.01.005 connects with his nóos ‘mind, thinking’ at O.01.003 not only in the explicit sense of thinking about saving his own life but also in the implicit sense of being conscious of returning home. This implicit sense is encoded in the telling of the myth about the land of the Lotus-Eaters here at O.09.082–104. When Odysseus visits this land, those of his comrades who eat the lotus lose their consciousness of home and therefore lose their power to return home. The verb lēth-, ‘forget’, combined with nostos, ‘return’, as its object, conveys the idea of such unconsciousness, O.09.097/102. By contrast, the noun nóos ‘mind, thinking’ conveys the idea of being conscious of nostos. So, here is the basic teaching to be learned from the myth about the land of the Lotus-Eaters: if you lose the ‘implant’ of homecoming in your mind, you cannot go home because you no longer know what home is. [[GN 2017.06.15.]]

O.09.106–141

subject heading(s): land of the Cyclopes; ktisis poetry

This land, as described here with reference to a mainland correlated with an offshore island, is a poetized version of a colony in the making—before colonization actually happens. The Greek word for such colonization is ktisis, which literally means ‘foundation’. On ktisis poetry, see BA 180–181 and GMP 74; see also under ktisis poetry in the Inventory of terms and names. [[GN 2017.05.25.]]

O.09.125–129

subject heading(s): Cyclopes as non-seafarers

The description of the Cyclopes ostentatiously presents them here as non-seafarers. But there were other traditions where the Cyclops and his followers were aggressively seafaring: they could even pursue Odysseus all over the Mediterranean Sea, as we see from the explicit testimony of the scholia PY for O.01.198; see Alwine 2009. [[GN 2017.05.25.]]
subject heading(s): mittparēioi ‘having cheeks of red’; phoinikoparēioi ‘having cheeks of purple’

(Epitomized from PasP 172.) Eustathius (1.9), in the Prolegomena to his commentary on the Iliad, says that performers of the Iliad wore red while performers of the Odyssey wore purple. He may perhaps be guessing when he attributes to ‘the ancients’ the idea that red stands for the blood shed in war, and purple, for the sea, as the setting for the wanderings of Odysseus. Still, his report about the actual dichotomy in color seems to be grounded in tradition. In Homeric diction, we find a parallel dichotomy of red and purple in descriptions of colors painted on ships: we already saw nēes mittparēioi ‘ships having cheeks of red’ at I.02.637, with reference to the ships of Odysseus, and now we see it again here at O.09.125, with reference to generic ships. To be contrasted is the expression neas phoinikoparēious ‘ships with cheeks of purple’ at O.11.124 and O.23.271. Moreover, the inventories of chariots in the Linear B tablets show yet another parallel dichotomy of red and purple in descriptions of colors painted on chariots: the noun i-qi-ja ‘chariot’ is described as either mi-to-we-sa = mitowessa ‘red’ as in Knossos tablet Sd 4407 or po-ni-ki-ja = phoinikiä ‘purple’ as in Knossos tablet Sd 4402. For the translation ‘purple’ in the latter case, I note φοινικόβαπτα ςοθήματα ‘clothing dyed in purple’ in Aeschylus Eumenides 1028. [[GN 2017.05.25.]]

O.09.133

subject heading(s): apthito- ‘imperishable, unwilting’; nature and culture

In the context of this idealized description of a colony in the making, the use of apthito- ‘imperishable, unwilting’ in describing the vines growing there can be explained as an aspect of the poetic idealization, indicating a wished-for permanence by way of imposing culture on nature. [[GN 2017.05.25 via BA 180–181, 186.]]

O.09.355–422

subject heading(s): mētis ‘mind, intelligence’; ous ‘no one’; outidanos ‘good-for-nothing’; biē ‘force, violence, strength’

(Epitomized from Nagy 2007b:70–72.) Even in situations where the mētis ‘mind, intelligence’ of Odysseus in the specialized sense of ‘craft’ helps advance the homecoming of the hero in the Odyssey, it does nothing to advance the kleos or poetic ‘glory’ of his past epic exploits at Troy. At a case in point is the decisive moment in the Odyssey when Odysseus devises the stratagem of calling himself Ooutis ‘no one’, O.09.366, in order to deceive and then blind Polyphemus the Cyclops. The pronoun ou tis ‘no one’ used by the hero for the crafting of his false name deceives not only the Cyclops but also the monster’s fellow Cyclopes when they use the same pronoun to ask the blinded Polyphemus this question: perhaps someone has wronged you?—O.09.405–406. The syntax of the question, expressing the uncertainty of the questioners, requires the changing of the pronoun ou tis ‘no one’ into its modal byform mē tis ‘perhaps someone’, which sounds like the noun mētis ‘craft’. The modal byform mē tis is intentionally signaling here the verbal craft used by Odysseus in devising this stratagem. And this intentional act of signaling is made explicit later on when the narrating hero actually refers to his stratagem as a mētis, O.09.414. The same can be said about the hero’s previous stratagem of blinding the Cyclops with a sharpened stake, an act of craftiness compared to the craft of blacksmiths, O.09.390–394. These and all other stratagems used by the hero against the Cyclops qualify as mētis ‘craft’, O.09.422. It goes without saying that the stratagem of crafting the false name Ooutis succeeds: when the blinded Cyclopes answers the question of his fellow Cyclopes, perhaps someone has wronged you?—O.09.405–406—he uses the non-modal form of the pronoun, saying ou tis ‘no one’ has wronged me, O.09,408. Still, though this stratagem succeeds in rescuing Odysseus (and, for the moment, some of his companions), it fails to rescue the hero’s past kleos in Troy. In fact, the stratagem of Odysseus in calling himself Ooutis ‘no one’ produces just the opposite effect: it erases any previous claim to any kleos that the hero would have had before he entered the cave of the Cyclops. Such erasure is signaled by the epithet outidanos ‘good-for-nothing’, derivative of the pronoun ou tis ‘no one’: whenever this epithet is applied to a hero in the Iliad, it is intended to revile the name of that hero by erasing his epic identity, as at I.11.390. Such erasure means that someone who used to have a name will now no longer have a name and has therefore become a nobody, a no one, ou tis. In the Odyssey, the Cyclopes reviles the name of the man who blinded him by applying this same epithet outidanos ‘good-for-nothing’ to the false name Ooutis, O.09.460. The effect of applying this epithet completes the erasure of the hero’s past identity that was started by Odysseus when he renamed himself as ou tis ‘no one’. The name that the hero had heretofore achieved for himself has been reduced to nothing and must hereafter be rebuilt from nothing. It is relevant that the annihilation of the hero’s identity happens in the darkness of an otherworldly cave, in the context of
extinguishing the light of the single eye of the Cyclops, thereby darkening forever the monster’s power to see the truth unless he hears it. [[GN 2017.05.25.]]

O.09.390–394

subject heading(s): blinding of the Cyclops; invention of technology; simile; nature and culture

(Epitomized from Nagy 2007b:61.) The power of the Homeric simile in advancing the plot of epic is evident in the simile here at O.09.390–394, referring to the blinding of the Cyclopes: when Odysseus and his men thrust into the single eye of the monster the fire-hardened tip of a wooden stake they had just crafted, the sound produced by this horrific act is compared to the sound produced when a blacksmith is tempering steel as he thrusts into cold water the red-hot edge of the axe or adze he is crafting. From a cross-cultural survey of myths that tell how a hero who stands for the civilizing forces of culture blinds a monster who stands for the brutalizing forces of nature, it becomes clear that such myths serve the purpose of providing an aetiology for the invention of technology (Burkert 1979:33–34). On the concept of aetiology, see the Inventory of terms and names. It is no coincidence that the three Cyclopes in the Hesiodic Theogony (139–146) are imagined as exponents of technology: they are identified as the three blacksmiths who crafted the thunderbolt of Zeus (Burkert 1979:156n23). Thus the simile about the tempering of steel in the Homeric narration of the blinding of the Cyclopes serves the purpose of contextualizing and even advancing that narration by way of highlighting aspects of an underlying myth that is otherwise being shaded over. [[GN 2017.05.25.]]

O.09.566

anchor comment on ásmenos (ἄσμενος) ‘returning to light and life’

subject heading(s): ásmenos ‘returning to light and life’

Odysseus and his companions have escaped from the cave of the Cyclops, where some of them died, and now the survivors are sailing on, described as ásmenoi, which I translate as ‘returning to light and life’. As argued by Frame 1978:6–33 (also 2009:39–41), the etymology of this participle ásmenos can be explained by deriving it from ἅσ-menos, where the element ἅσ- is the zero grade of the Indo-European root 'neys-', meaning ‘return to light and life’. This etymology has been confirmed by de Lamberterie 2014. Here at O.09.566, the etymological explanation ‘returning to light and life’ corresponds to what has just happened to Odysseus and his companions: they have escaped from the darkness of the cave and from the threat of death there, emerging into the light and thus winning back their lives. So, they have literally returned to light and life. For more on the semantics of ‘return to light and life’ as conveyed by the words nóos ‘mind’ and nostos ‘homecoming’, see the comment on O.01.003. [[GN 2017.05.31.]]

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Odyssey Rhapsody 10

2017.06.01 / enhanced 2018.10.08

This Rhapsody centers on the bewitching goddess Circe, whose mystical powers will lead Odysseus to make direct contact with the dead—and with the world of heroes who have already died. Circe, like her mystical island, is at first disorienting for Odysseus, but the goddess will in due course reorient the hero, making it possible for him to learn how he will ultimately make his way back home. Odysseus will find his reorientation in the realm of the unconscious. [[GN 2017.05.30.]]
The values of "at any rate" and "indeed" vary from 0.025 to 0.086.

subject heading(s): eastward and westward sailing

With the help of king Aeolus, keeper of the winds, Odysseus and his companions sail off from this king’s island, propelled by Zephyros, the West Wind, O.10.025. So, they are traveling from west to east. At O.11.0028–030, we see that they have already sailed for nine days, and then, on the tenth day, Ithaca finally comes into view. But now Odysseus falls asleep at the steering oar, and his companions make the human error of opening the Bag of Winds, so that their ships are blown back, east to west—all the way back to where they started, to the island of Aeolus, O.10.031–055. Aeolus now refuses to help Odysseus and his companions any further, O.056–076, and, as they sail on, O.077–79, it is no longer clear where they are headed. No longer will they be propelled toward Ithaca by the favoring West Wind that Aeolus had provided for them earlier. Their sea voyage is now directionless, and, by the time their ship reaches the land of the Laestrygonians, they have already lost their navigational compass, since this land appears to be a twilight zone, O.080–086. The disorientation will only intensify later, after Odysseus and some of his companions manage to escape from the land of the Laestrygonians and sail to the island of Circe: see the comment on O.10.189–202. [[GN 2017.05.30.]]
O.10.065

subject heading(s): endukéōs ‘continuously, uninterruptedly’

See the anchor comment at O.07.256. Aeolus, keeper of the winds, had intended an uninterrupted voyage home for Odysseus, but human error has by now undone all the good intentions. [[GN 2017.05.30 via PasP 44.]]

O.10.134

subject heading(s): ásmenus ‘returning to light and life’

Odysseus and some of his companions have escaped from the land of the Laestrygonians, where most of them died, and now the survivors are sailing on, described as ásmonoí, which I translate as ‘returning to light and life’. See the anchor comment on O.09.566. [[GN 2017.05.31.]]

O.10.135

subject heading(s): Aia; coincidence of opposites

This name for the island of Circe will be a marker for coincidence of opposites that reveals itself at O.12.001–004. [[GN 2017.05.30 via BA 206, GMP 237.]]

O.10.189–202

subject heading(s): disorientation of Odysseus; mêtis ‘mind, intelligence’; biē ‘force, violence, strength’; Antiphates the Laestrygonian; Cyclops; androphagos ‘man-eating’; megalētōr ‘having a heart that is mighty’; Iliadic nightmares

Odysseus here at O.10.189–197 confesses to his companions that he no longer knows where the sun rises or where the sun sets, O.10.190–192, and, accordingly, he expresses his own despair by questioning whether there will be for him any further access to mêtis ‘mind, intelligence’, O.10.193. So, the disorientation of Odysseus is linked with loss of mêtis. Clearly, the mind of the hero is correlated here with the celestial dynamics of sunset and sunrise. See further the comment on O.10.190–102. (More on this subject in GMP 246.) In response to the hero’s expression of despair, his companions weep uncontrollably, O.10.198–202, and now all they can think about are the horrors they remember having experienced in their encounters with the Cyclops and with Antiphates the Laestrygonian, O.10.199–200. The epithet for one of these two monsters here, the Cyclops, is androphagos ‘man-eating’, O.10.200, which suits not only the cannibalistic Cyclops but also Antiphates the Laestrygonian, who as can be seen at O.10.115–116 is likewise a cannibal. These memories of cannibalism are most telling, since the name of the Cyclops is linked here with the biē ‘force, violence, strength’ of this monster, O.10.200. And the link surely extends to Antiphates the Laestrygonian. That monster too, like the Cyclops, is a negative exponent of biē ‘force, violence, strength’. And such memories evoke the worst moments of the story of the Trojan War as narrated in the Iliad, as when Achilles himself expresses the ghastly urge to eat the body of Hector raw, I.22.346–347. See the comment at I.22.346–348; also at I.23.001–064. So, Achilles as the primary exponent of biē ‘force, violence, strength’ in the Iliad can be seen in this context as a foil for Odysseus as the primary exponent of mêtis ‘mind, intelligence’ in the Odyssey. Even the Iliadic contexts of biē ‘force, violence, strength’ are evoked here, since Cyclops at O.10.200 is described not only as androphagos ‘man-eating’ but also as megalētōr ‘having a heart that is mighty’. Similarly at O.10.106, in an attested variant of that verse, this same description applies also to Antiphates the Laestrygonian. Beyond these two attestations, this epithet megalētōr ‘having a heart that is mighty’ occurs nowhere else in the Odyssey, whereas it occurs regularly as a conventional description of generic warriors in the Iliad. That is why I propose to describe the horrific visions of cannibals in the Odyssey as Iliadic nightmares. [[GN 2017.05.30 via BA 320–322, H24H 10§41.]]

O.10.190–193

subject heading(s): mêtis ‘mind, intelligence’

Q&T via H24H 10§39
My friends, I am speaking this way because I do not know which place is west and which place is east — which is the place where the sun, bringing light for mortals, goes underneath the earth and which is the place where it rises. Still, let us start thinking it through, as quickly as we can, whether there is still any craft left. I must tell you, though, I think there is none.

(Epitomized from H24H 10§§38, 40, 42) When Odysseus reaches the island of Circe and learns that this place, though it first seems familiar and reminiscent of his own island, is in fact strange and alien and antithetical to home, he despairs. As noted in the previous comment, the hero feels he has no intelligence or méthis left in him to devise a stratagem for a successful homecoming, and his despair is expressed as a feeling of disorientation. He is no longer able to distinguish between orient and occident. To restate in terms of two words used elsewhere in the Odyssey, the hero is experiencing a loss of orientation in his nóos or ‘thinking’, and this loss is presently blocking his anostos, ‘homecoming’. Despite such moments of disorientation for Odysseus, however, his nóos, ‘thinking’ will ultimately reorient him, steering him away from his Iliadic past and toward his ultimate Odyssean future. That is, the hero’s nóos will make it possible for him to achieve anostos, which is not only his ‘homecoming’ but also the ‘song about a homecoming’ that is the Odyssey. [[GN 2017.05.30.]]

O.10.245

subject heading(s): adeukēs ‘discontinuous, interrupting’

See the anchor comment at O.04.489. Again I note the use of this word adeukēs in a context referring to an interrupted sequence. The potmos ‘fate’ of Odysseus’ companions is adeukēs because they have been turned into swine and their journey home has thus been interrupted. [[GN 2017.05.30 via PasP 44.]]

O.10.330–331

Q&T via GMP 34

subject heading(s): polutropos ‘turning-into-many-different-selves’

In Point 2 of the comment on O.01.001–010, it was noted that the god Hermes, as the ultimate shape-shifter, is described as polutropos ‘turning-into-many-different-selves’ in the Homeric Hymn to Hermes (verses 13, 439). Here at O.10.330, Odysseus is likewise described as polutropos ‘turning-into-many-different-selves’, and the description is happening in a context where the hero is explicitly being linked with the god Hermes. So, Odysseus too is a shape-shifter, like his divine model Hermes. The importance of this quality of Odysseus as polutropos ‘turning-into-many-different-selves’ is highlighted by the use of this epithet in the very first verse of the Odyssey. Only there at O.01.001 and here at O.10.330 is Odysseus described as polutropos ‘turning-into-many-different-selves’. [[GN 2017 via GMP 33–34.]]

O.10.379

subject heading(s): haptesthai ‘grab at’

The use of this verb here in the context of ‘grabbing at’ food is relevant to the wording in Pindar Nemean 8.22, with reference to the language of blame. [[GN 2017.05.30 via BA 226.]]

O.10.450

subject heading(s): endukēōs ‘continuously, uninterruptedly’

See the anchor comment at O.07.256. The ceremonial washing and anointing here is uninterrupted and therefore ritually effective. [[GN 2017.05.30 via PasP 44.]]

O.10.490–495
subject heading(s): psukhê ‘spirit’; phrenes ‘heart, thinking’; telein ‘reach an outcome; bring to fulfillment (in active forms of the verb)’

But first you [= Odysseus] must bring to fulfillment [telein] another journey and travel until you enter [491] the palace of Hades and of the dreaded Persephone, [492] and there you all will consult [phrê-] the spirit [psukhê] of Teiresias of Thebes, [493] the blind seer [mantis], whose thinking [phrenes] is grounded [empedoï]: [494] to him, even though he was dead, Persephone gave consciousness [nôos], [495] so as to be the only one there who has the power to think [pepnûsthai]. But the others [in Hâdês] just flit about, like shadows [skiaì].

Circe describes for Odysseus what to expect when he sees Teiresias in Hâdês. Exceptionally, thepsukhê ‘spirit’ of the hero, O.10.492, will have consciousness: that is, his phrenes ‘thinking’ will be empedoï ‘grounded’, O.10.493. On phrenes in the sense of ‘thinking’, see the anchor comment at O.01.320, where I note that Homeric diction leaves room for the idea that you can think with your heart. But what is it that confers on the psukhê ‘spirit’ of Teiresias the exceptional power to think even when he is dead, in Hâdês? The answer is given at O.10.494–495: Persephone, queen of Hâdês, has exceptionally given permission for Teiresias to have the nôos ‘consciousness’, O.10.494, that is needed for ‘thinking’, pepnûsthai, even in Hâdês. Here I translate nôos ‘mind’ as ‘consciousness’, referring to the mystical force that will reintegrate the consciousness of the self with the body after death. It is relevant that the nôos or ‘consciousness’ of the ‘spirit’ or psukhê of the seer Teiresias is properly activated only after he drinks the blood of two sacrificial sheep that Odysseus slaughters in order to make mental contact, as we will see at O.11.095–098. I offer further analysis in H24H 11§35. But there is a complication that I did not note in that analysis: Circe instructs Odysseus to perform a libation for the dead when he is in Hâdês, O.10.516–520, and he is further instructed to promise in a prayer directed at these dead that he will perform a sacrifice for them if he succeeds in getting back home to Ithaca: there Odysseus will slaughter a barren cow for the dead in general, O.10.522–523, and a black ram for Teiresias in particular, O.10.524–525. When the right time comes in Hâdês, and Odysseus performs his libations for the dead, O11.024–028, he will follow through and make that promise to them, namely, that he will sacrifice in Ithaca a barren cow for the dead in general, O.11.029–030, and a black ram for Teiresias in particular, O.11.032–033. (At H24H 11§35, I leave it unsaid that this black ram to be sacrificed in Ithaca is different from the black ram and black ewe that Odysseus sacrifices in Hâdês: see the comment on O.10.521–537.) As we know from external sources, such as Pausanias 5.13.1-2, a black ram is the preferred sacrificial animal to slaughter for the purpose of making mental contact with a male cult hero (H24H 0§11). [[GN 2017.05.30 via GMP 219; see also GMP 92, 212 ]]

O.10.493

subject heading(s): mantis ‘seer’

The description of Teiresias as a mantis ‘seer’ is relevant to his prophecy about a future for Odysseus that transcends the boundaries of the narrative that frames the Odyssey. [[GN 2017.06.08.]]

O.10.508–512

subject heading(s): Ôkeanos

For Odysseus to make his transition from the realm of the living to the realm of the dead, he must first sail his ship to the end of the sea, delimited by the cosmic river Ôkeanos, and then he must sail on by somehow crossing this river. The verb that I translate here as ‘cross‘ is perainein, O.10.508. Then he must beach his ship on the banks of the Ôkeanos, O.10.511, before he can disembark and then proceed into Hâdês. [[GN 2017.05.30 via GMP 239]]

O.10.516–520
Circe instructs Odysseus to offer a kхоё ‘libation’ to the dead after he enters Hәdәs, O.10.518. This libation, to be poured into a shallow botθros ‘pit’ that he is to dig, O.10.517, will consist of three liquids, which will be poured in the following sequence, O.10.519–520: emulsified honey, water, wine. [[GN 2017.05.31.]]

O.10.521–537

subject heading(s): black ram for Teiresias; black ram and black ewe for all the dead; botθros ‘pit’

Circe’s instructions continue: in the course of offering his libation, in Hәdәs, to the dead, Odysseus should also offer them a prayer, promising them that, if he succeeds in getting back home to Ithaca, he will then sacrifice there a barren cow for the dead in general, O.10.522–523, and a black ram for Teiresias in particular, O.10.524–525; then, having thus prayed, he should sacrifice to the dead a black ram and a black ewe together, O.10.526–527. It is understood that the blood of the black ram and the black ewe will flow into the botθros ‘pit’ mentioned at O.10.517—and that the dead will drink from there the blood of these sacrificial animals, O.10.536–537. [[GN 2017.05.31.]]

O.10.521

subject heading(s): [menos ‘mental power’;] neku∂namenēnakaɾēna‘skulls of the dead, having no menos inside them’

The dead can be visualized as karēna ‘heads’, that is, ‘skulls’, as here, which no longer contain any menos or ‘mental power’. To be compared are kepʰalai ‘heads’ at I.11.055 and in the variant verse adduced by Zenodotus at I.01.003. [[GN 2017.05.31; see also GMP 88, 226.]]

O.10.536

subject heading(s): [menos ‘mental power’;] neku∂namenēnakaɾēna‘skulls of the dead, having no menos inside them’

See the comment on O.10.521. [[GN 2017.05.30 via GMP 88, 226.]]

O.10.551–560

subject heading(s): Elpenor

The death of Elpenor will be most relevant to the homecoming of Odysseus, and this relevance will be signaled at O.11.051–083. [[GN 2017.06.08.]]

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Odyssey Rhapsody 11

2017.06.08 / enhanced 2018.10.08

The encounter of Odysseus with the seer Teiresias in Hәdәs is a mystical experience that defines the hero of the Odyssey in a new way: Odysseus now learns that he will have a homecoming that leads to a most startling discovery of his own self as a cult hero in the making. [[GN 2017.06.08.]]
Figure 35. “Teiresias appears to Ulysses during the sacrifice,” (1780–1785). Henry Fuseli (German, 1741–1825). Image via Wikimedia Commons.

O.11.012–019

subject heading(s): Ókeanos

As Odysseus and his companions navigate toward the entrance to Hādēs, the atmosphere becomes ever darker. They are pushing the limits of the Extreme West, which the sun no longer illuminates. They are entering a zone where the sun can no longer be seen, O.11.015–016. Here the darkness that comes after sunset will be permanent, unlike the sunset that has already happened at O.11.012, which for the rest of the world will be followed by sunrise on the next day. But here, in this part of the world, the next day will never be found. Demarcating this zone, at the limits of the Extreme West, is the world-encircling cosmic river Ókeanos, O.11.013. [[GN 2017.06.08.]]

O.11.020–022

subject heading(s): Ókeanos; coincidence of opposites
Having arrived at the Okeanos, Odysseus and his companions beach their ship there and disembark, O.11.020, proceeding to the place in Hades where Circe had instructed them to make sacrifice to the dead, O.11.021–022. To get there, they go along the streams of the Okeanos, O.11.021. It is not said explicitly here that they have crossed the Okeanos in order to make their entrance into Hades, though the crossing is made explicit in the instructions of Circe at O.10.508. See the comment on O.10.508–512. Nor is it said that they will cross the Okeanos when they finally make their exit from Hades, O.11.636–640. When they do make their exit, Odysseus and his companions are pictured as reembarking on their ship and navigating it in the streams of the Okeanos, O.11.639–640, heading back to the sea that will take them back to the island of Circe. Then, at O.12.001–003, when they finally reach the sea again, from where they will navigate back to the island of Circe, this island is situated no longer in the Extreme West but in the Extreme East, O.12.003–004. So, by implication, they will have navigated all the way around the world by way of the Okeanos, from the Extreme West all the way to the Extreme East. This circumnavigation ends up at the same place where it started, at the island of Circe, but now this island is situated not in the Extreme West but in the Extreme East. So, the location of Alba, this island of Circe, is a coincidence of opposites. The achievement of such a coincidence by way of the Okeanos can be imagined as either a looping around the world or, better, a looping under the world: either way, the circular cosmic river Okeanos flows from West to East to West and so on forever. For more on coincidences of opposites, see the comments at I.01.423–425 and at O.01.022–026, O.10.135. [GN 2017.06.08 via BA 201 and GMP 237.]

O.11.024–036

subject heading(s): khoē ‘libation’; bothros ‘pit’

At O.10.516–520, Circe had instructed Odysseus to offer a khoē ‘libation’ to the dead after he enters Hades, O.10.518. This libation, to be poured into a shallow bothros ‘pit’ that he had to dig, O.10.517, would consist of three liquids, which would be poured in the following sequence, O.10.519–520: emulsified honey, water, wine. Following the instructions of Circe here at O.11.024–036, Odysseus does as he was told to do. But now we see a further detail: when he digs the shallow bothros ‘pit’, O.11.025, he uses his sword for the digging, O.11.024. Then he goes ahead and pours the khoē ‘libation’ to all the dead, O.11.026, and again the sequence of the three liquids he pours will be the same, O.11.027–028: emulsified honey, water, wine. [GN 2017.06.08.]

O.11.029–036

subject heading(s): black ram for Teiresias; sheep for all the dead; bothros ‘pit’

Here at O.11.029–036, Odysseus continues to follow the instructions of Circe as articulated earlier at O.10.521–537: in the course of offering his libation, in Hades, to the dead, Odysseus should also offer them a prayer, promising them that, if he succeeds in getting back home to Ithaca, he will then sacrifice there a barren cow for the dead in general, O.11.030–031, and a black ram for Teiresias in particular, O.11.032–033. And then, after having performed this prayer and these promises for all the dead, he sacrifices the two sheep that he and his companions have brought with them from the island of Circe: he cuts their throats, O.11.034–035, and then he lets their blood flow into the shallow bothros ‘pit’ that he has dug, O.11.036. Unlike O.10.526–527, where the sheep are said to be one black ram and one black ewe, those details are omitted here at O.11.034–035. Conversely, the detail at O.11.035–036 about the blood that flows into the bothros ‘pit’ from the cut throats of the sheep had been omitted at O.10.526–527. Likewise omitted at O.10.536–537—though it is implied—is the picturing of the dead in the act of actually drinking from the pit this blood that has flowed there from the cut throats of the sheep. Such drinking cannot happen, as Circe had instructed, until Teiresias arrives at the scene, O.10.536–537. And now that the blood has actually flowed into the pit, the instructions of Circe must be followed: no drinking of blood can be allowed until Teiresias arrives at the scene and drinks first, O.11.049–050. Teiresias finally gets to have his drink of blood only in O.11.095–098. Once he has his drink, Teiresias will make mental contact with Odysseus. See already the comment on O.10.490–495. [GN 2017.06.08.]

O.11.029

subject heading(s): [menos ‘mental power’;] nekuôn amenēn karēna ‘skulls of the dead, having no menos inside them’

The dead can be visualized as karēna ‘heads’, that is, ‘skulls’, as here, which no longer contain any menos or ‘mental power’. 
O.11.051–083

subject heading(s): Elpenor; psūkhē ‘spirit’

The very first psūkhē ‘spirit’ of all the dead in Hādēs who will speak to Odysseus in Hādēs is Elpenor, O.11.051–083, who had been left behind, dead and unburied, on the island of Circe. The story of his death was told at O.10.551–560. In the comment on those verses, I already noted that the relevance of this figure to the homecoming of Odysseus is signaled here at O.11.051–083. And there will be a further signal at O.12.014–015. [[GN 2017.06.08]]

O.11.075–078

Q&T via H24H 11§47

subject heading(s): sēma ‘sign, signal; tomb’; teilein ‘reach an outcome; bring to fulfillment (in active forms of the verb)’

[57] σημά τά μοι χείλα πολής ἔτπι δινι θαλάσσης, ὡς ἀνδρός διωστήναι, καὶ ἐσομένοις πυθέβαιναι; [57] ταύτα τά μοι τελέσαι πησά τ’ ἐπὶ τύμβῳ ἐρετίνον, [78] τῷ καὶ ψυκή ἐρετεν εὖν μετ’ ἐμοίσ’ ἔταρσοιν.

[57] Heap up a tomb [sēma] for me [= Elpenor] at the shore of the gray sea, [78] wretched man that I am, so that even those who live in the future will learn about it. [77] Bring to fulfillment [teilein] these things for me, and stick the oar on top of the tomb [tumbos] [78] — the oar that I used when I was rowing with my companions [hetairoi].

These instructions are given to Odysseus by Elpenor himself or, more accurately, by his psūkhē, O.11.051, and the wording makes it explicit that the tomb that is to be made for this dead sailor is a sēma ‘sign, signal; tomb’. [[GN 2017.06.08 via PH 232, GMP 214–215, H24H 11§47.]]

O.11.090–137

Q&T via H24H 11§33

subject heading(s): revelations of Teiresias; [nōdō ‘mind’;] nostos ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’

Then came also the spirit [psûkhê] of Theban Teiresias, 91 with a golden scepter in his hand. He recognized [gigôseîn] me and said, 92 "Odysseus, you who are descended from the gods, noble son of Laertes, 93 Why, wretched man, have you left the light of day ἥλιος and come down to see the dead in this place without any delights? 95 Stand back from the trench and draw back your sharp sword ᾃδρισσειν and so that I may drink of the blood and tell you unmistakably true things." 97 So he spoke, and I [= Odysseus] drew back, and sheathed my silver-studded sword, 98 putting it back into the scabbard, and then he [= Teiresias], after he had drunk the black blood, 99 began to address me with his words, faultless seer [mantsia] that he was: 100 "It's your homecoming [nostos] that you seek, a homecoming sweet as honey, Ο ὀρατὸς Ὀδυσσεύς, 101 But the god will make this painful for you. I say that because I do not think 102 that the earth-shaking god [= Poseidon] will not take notice, who has lodged in his heart [thûmos] an anger [kotos] against you, 103 being angry that you blinded his dear son [= Polyphemus]. 104 Still, even so, after enduring many bad experiences, you all may get home ἕλπις if you are willing to restrain your own heart [thûmos] and the heart of your companions [hetairoi] 105 when you pilot your well-built ship to 106 the island of Thrinacia, seeking refuge from the violet-colored sea, 107 and when you find the grazing cattle and the sturdy sheep 108 that belong to the god of the sun, Hélios, who sees everything and hears everything. 109 If you leave these herds unharmed and think only about homecoming [nostos], 111 then you could still make it to Ithaca, arriving there after having endured many bad experiences. 112 But if you harm the herds, then I forewarn you of destruction 113 both for your ship and for your companions [hetairoi], and, even if you may yourself escape, 114 you will return [neesthai] in a bad way, losing all your companions [hetairoi], 115 in someone else's ship, not your own, and you will find painful things happening in your house, 116 I mean, you will find high-minded men there who are devouring your livelihood 117 while they are courting your godlike wife and offering wedding-presents to her. 118 But you will avenge the outrages committed by those men when you get home. 119 But after you kill the suitors in your own house 120 killing them either by trickery or openly, by way of sharp bronze, 121 you must go on a journey then, taking with you a well-made oar, 122 until you come to a place where men do not know what the sea is 123 and do not even eat any food that is mixed with sea salt, 124 nor do they know anything about ships, which are painted purple on each side, 125 and well-made oars that are like wings for ships. 126 And I will tell you a sign [ēkôma], a very clear one, which will not get lost in your thinking. 127 Whenever someone on the road encounters you 128 and says that it must be a winnowing shovel that you have on your radiant shoulder, 129 at that point you must stick into the ground the well-made oar 130 and sacrifice beautiful sacrifices to lord Poseidon: 131 a ram, a bull, and a boar that mounts sows. 132 And then go home and offer sacred hecatombs 133 to the immortal gods who possess the vast expanses of the skies. 134 Sacrifice to them in proper order, one after the other. As for yourself, death shall come to you from the sea, 135 a gentle death, that is how it will come, and this death will kill you 136 as you lose your strength in a prosperous old age. And the people all around [your corpse] 137 will be blessed [oibôlo]. All the things I say are unmistakably true."
subject heading(s): skēptron ‘scepter’

This detail about a skēptron ‘scepter’ held by Teiresias is relevant not so much to him but to Odysseus, who is seeking to recover his kingship in Ithaca by way of a homecoming that only Teiresias can help him attain. On skēptron ‘scepter’ as a signal of kingship, see the comment on 1.01.015. [[GN 2017.06.08 via GMP 52.]]

subject heading(s): mantis ‘seer’

The prophetic powers of Teiresias make it possible for him to see beyond the plot of the narrative that frames the Odyssey as we know it. See the comment on 0.10.493. [[GN 2017.06.08; further analysis in PH 163.]]

subject heading(s): prophecy of Teiresias; plot of the Odyssey

This stretch of the prophecy made by Teiresias, O.11.100–118, covers the plot of the Odyssey as we know it. After this stretch, however, the prophecy will extend beyond such a plot. [[GN 2017.06.08.]]

subject heading(s): prophecy of Teiresias; plot of an odyssey beyond the Odyssey; coincidence of opposites; sēma ‘sign, signal; tomb’

This stretch of the prophecy made by Teiresias, O.119–137, will extend beyond the plot or narrative frame of the Odyssey as we know it. [What follows is an epitome of H24H 11 §§33, 41–44.] In an essay entitled ‘Sēma and Nôsis: The Hero’s Tomb and the ‘Reading’ of Symbols in Homer and Hesiod’ (GMP 202–222), I analyzed at some length the mystical prophecy spoken by the psūkhē ‘spirit’ of the mantis ‘seer’ Teiresias at O.11.119–137 about an odyssey beyond the Odyssey. As I argued in that essay, the verses of this prophecy point to the future death of Odysseus and to the mystical vision of his own tomb, where he will be worshipped as a cult hero. My argument can be divided into four parts:

Part 1. Teiresias is predicting that Odysseus will meet his death in a mystical moment where he experiences a coincidence of opposites. And what is this mystical moment? It is a point where the sea and the negation of the sea coincide. That is, Odysseus goes as far away as possible from the sea, only to experience death from the sea: ‘death shall come to you from the sea, §35 a gentle death’, O.11.134-135. See the comment below on these lines. At this same point, where the sea and the negation of the sea coincide, the oar that he carries on his shoulder, which is an instrument linked exclusively with the sea, will be mistaken for a winnowing shovel, which is an instrument linked exclusively with the earth, that is, with the cultivation of the land: ‘Whenever someone on the road encounters you §128 and says that it must be a winnowing shovel that you have on your radiant shoulder’, O.11.127-128. And here is another coincidence of opposites: Odysseus at this point must sacrifice to Poseidon, god of the sea, O.11.130-131, even though this point is as far away from the sea as possible.

Part 2. And now we come to a mystical vision: in sacrificing to Poseidon, Odysseus must mark the place of sacrifice by sticking into the ground the oar that he was carrying on his shoulder: ‘at that point you must stick into the ground the well-made oar’, O.11.129. As I will now argue, what we are seeing here is a mystical vision of the tomb of Odysseus himself. The key to my argument is what the psūkhē of Teiresias says in introducing his prophecy: ‘And I [= Teiresias] will tell you [= Odysseus] a sign [sēma], a very clear one, which will not get lost in your thinking’, O.11.126. The wording here matches exactly the wording of Nestor addressed to Antilokhos in the Iliad: ‘And I [= Nestor] will tell you [=
Antilokhos] a sign [sēma], a very clear one, which will not get lost in your thinking’, I.23.326. In that case, it can be argued that the sēma of Nestor for Antilokhos is a ‘sign’ as marked by the ‘tomb’ of a cult hero who has not yet been identified as Patroklos. See the comment on I.23.326–343. In the Odyssey as well, I argue, the sēma of Teiresias for Odysseus is a ‘sign’ as marked by the ‘tomb’ of a cult hero who has not yet been identified as Odysseus himself.

Part 3. There is archaeological evidence for the existence of a hero cult of Odysseus on the island of Ithaca, dating back to an early period when the Odyssey as we know it was still taking shape [H24H 11§43]. And, in the version of the story as we see it in the Odyssey, Odysseus dies finally in Ithaca, which figures here as his homeland, O.11.132–137. In terms of this version of the story, then, Ithaca is recognized in the Odyssey as a prime location for the hero cult of Odysseus.

Part 4. This is not to say, however, that Ithaca was the only place where Odysseus was worshipped as a cult hero. From the testimony of Pausanias 8.44.4, for example, we see traces of a hero cult of Odysseus in landlocked Arcadia, which is located in the Peloponnesus and which is as far away from the sea as you can possibly be in the Peloponnesus. Here is the relevant testimony of Pausanias 8.44.4:

ἐστι δὲ ἄνωθεν ἐξ Ασσας ἐς τὸ ὅρος τὸ Βόρειον καλούμενον, καὶ ἐπὶ τῇ ἄκρᾳ τοῦ ὅρους σημεῖα ἐστὶν ἵππον· ποιησαί δὲ τὸ ἱερὸν Ἀθηνᾶ τε Σωτείρα καὶ Ποσειδώνῳ Ὀδυσσέα ἐλέγετο ἀνακομισθέντα ἐκ Ἰλίου.

There is a path leading uphill from Asea [in Arcadia] to the mountain called the North Mountain [Boreion], and on top of that mountain there are traces of a sacred space; it is said that Odysseus had made this sacred space in honor of Athena the Savior [sōteira] and in honor of Poseidon, in return for his having arrived back home safely from Ilion [= Troy].

[[GN 2017.06.08 via PH 231–232, GMP 211–215.]]

O.11.124

subject heading(s): phoinikoparēioi ‘having cheeks of purple’; mittoparēioi ‘having cheeks of red’

The description of ships here at O.11.124 and also at O.23.271 as phoinikoparēioi ‘having cheeks of purple’ is to be contrasted with the description mittoparēioi ‘having cheeks of red’ at O.09.125 as also at I.02.637. See the comment on O.09.125. [[GN 2017.06.08 via PasP 172n70.]]

O.11.136–137

subject heading(s): olbios ‘blessed’

In this context, where Teiresias is foretelling the death of Odysseus, the word olbios (plural) means ‘blessed’ or ‘blissful’, applying to ordinary humans who come into mental and even physical proximity to cult heroes by way of worshipping them. [[GN 2017.06.08 via PH 246, GMP 127, H24H 11§39.]]

O.11.138–224

subject heading(s): encounter of Odysseus and Anticleia

Not only the psūkhē ‘spirit’ of Teiresias but other psūkhai as well can now make mental contact with Odysseus—so long as their consciousness is activated by drinking sacrificial blood: such is the case with Anticleia, mother of Odysseus, O.11.146–153. [[GN 2017.06.08 via GMP 92.]]

O.11.151
subject heading(s): *thesphaton* ‘mantic utterance’

This word *thesphaton* is ordinarily linked with the utterance of *a mantis* ‘seer’. [[GN 2017.06.08 via GMP 198]]

O.11.179

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’

Whoever succeeds in marrying Penelope would surely qualify as ‘the best of the Achaeans’. But the events of the *Odyssey* will prove that only Odysseus is qualified, and, since he has no rivals for that title, he is qualified to stay married to Penelope. [[GN 2017.06.08 via BA 38]]

O.11.201

subject heading(s): *tēkedôn* ‘melting away, dissolving’

The application of this word in such moments of emotional intensity is not just a metaphor: it is also a metonym, connecting with the dynamics of the cosmos. See the comment at O.19.204–212. [[GN 2017.06.08 via HC 2§256]]

O.11.217

subject heading(s): *Dios thugatēr* ‘daughter of Zeus’

On this epithet, see the anchor comment at I.03.374. [[GN 2017.06.08 via GMP 250–251]]

O.11.222

subject heading(s): *psūkhē* ‘spirit’ as dream

The comparison of a *psūkhē* ‘spirit’ to a dream is relevant to questions about the connotations of this word with reference to unconsciousness. [[GN 2017.06.08 via GMP 226]]

O.11.225–329

subject heading(s): Catalogue of Women

I defer here to the definitive analysis of Frame 2009:227–329. [[GN 2017.06.08]]

O.11.290

subject heading(s): *biē* ‘force, violence, strength’; *kleos* ‘glory’; *biē ἱρυκλεῖεῖ* ‘force of Iphiklēs’

As we saw at I.02.658, the name of Hēraklēs is linked with the epic theme of *biē* in the sense of martial ‘force, violence, strength’; even the name of Hēraklēs can be formulated periphrastically as ‘the force of Hēraklēs’. And now we see the same pattern of naming applied to a hero named Iphiklēs. The application is all the more apt here, since the element is ‘force, violence, strength’ in the name of Iphiklēs is a synonym of *biē* ‘force, violence, strength’. [[GN 2017.06.08 via BA 319, 326]]

O.11.296

subject heading(s): *biē* ‘force, violence, strength’; *kleos* ‘glory’; *biē ἱρυκλεῖεῖ* ‘force of Iphiklēs’

See the comment on O.11.290.

O.11.300

subject heading(s): Kastōr and Poludeukēs

Kastōr and Poludeukēs, the Divine Twins, are also mentioned at I.03.237. See the comment there. [[GN 2017.06.08]]
O.11.330–385

subject heading(s): duration of performance

At O.11.330, Odysseus breaks off his performance, and the break continues till O.11.385, when the performance recommences. In between, there is a series of polite exchanges between Odysseus as performer and Alkinoos as the primary representative of the audience. The question is, has the duration of the performance become overlong? The answer is: no. On behalf of the audience, Alkinoos insists that Odysseus continue, and the master performer obliges. [[GN 2017.06.08 via BA 19.]]

O.11.433

subject heading(s): aiškhos ‘disgrace, shame’; language of praise/blame; blame poetry; praise poetry

It is claimed that the deeds of Clytemnestra have disgraced not only herself but all women, and that women will be blamed for her deeds by way of blame poetry. On the poetics of blame, which is antithetical to praise, see the comments on I.02.216 and on I.03.242. [[GN 2017.06.08 via BA 255.]]

O.11.467–540

subject heading(s): Hādēs vs. immaterialization

The scene of this encounter in Hādēs between Odysseus and thepsúkhē ‘spirit’ of Achilles exemplifies the general tendency in Homeric poetry to shade over any indications of immortalization after death. [[GN 2017.06.08 via BA 166–167.]]

O.11.475–476

subject heading(s): Hādēs and unconsciousness

The nekoi ‘dead’ who are in Hādēs, O.11.475, have no consciousness: they are aphrades ‘non-conscious’—precisely because they are in Hādēs. [[GN 2017.06.08 via GMP 92.]]

O.11.478

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’

Odysseus pays Achilles the compliment of addressing him here as phertatos ‘the best’. [[GN 2017.06.08 via BA 35–36.]]

O.11.489–491

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’

Achilles says that he would give up the status of a king among the dead if he could only be alive again—even if he became an abject underling in life. It is as if Achilles were now ready to trade places with Odysseus. [[GN 2017.06.08 via BA 35.]]

O.11.550–551

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’

It is implied here that Ajax, not Odysseus, is really the second-best of the Achaeans. [[GN 2017.06.08 via BA 36.]]

O.11.558–560

subject heading(s): aítios ‘responsible’; Will of Zeus

Odysseus blames the misfortunes of Ajax on the Will of Zeus, saying that the god is aítios ‘responsible’. See the comments on I.01.153, I.11.078–079, I.19.086–088, O.01.032–034. [[GN 2017.06.08 via PH 238.]]
O.11.568–571

subject heading(s): Minos

Minos presides here as judge in Hādēs, and this positioning of Minos was imitated by Hippias of Elis, as we read in Plato’s *Hippias Minor*; [[GN 2017.06.08 via HC 3 §§109–110, 4 §§136; HPC 365.]]

O.11.597

subject heading(s): krataîs (epithet for the rock of Sisyphus)

This form may be compared with *krataî* as analyzed in the comment on I.05.083. Its meaning can be explained as ‘having a power that has violence’. See also the comment on O.12.124. [[GN 2017.06.08 via BA 88–89, 349–350.]]

O.11.601–626

subject heading(s): Hēraklēs in Hādēs; autos ‘self’

At O.11.602–604, it is said that Hēraklēs, described here as autos ‘himself’, O.11.602, is in Olympus, together with the immortal gods and married to Hēbē, so that the vision of Hēraklēs that is seen in Hādēs is just that, an *eidōlon* ‘vision’, at O.11.602. At I.01.004, we have seen that *autoi* ‘selves’ refers to dead bodies of heroes, to be contrasted with the word *psūkhē* ‘spirit’, which refers to either (A) the *life-force* of heroes when they are alive or (B) the disembodied conveyer of identity when they are dead—as in the case of the *psūkhai* ‘spirits’ at I.01.003. See the comment on I.01.003–005. At O.11.602–604, by contrast, the autos ‘self’ that is Hēraklēs is no longer dead but regenerated and thus immortalized. We may infer, then, that the *psūkhē* ‘spirit’ of Hēraklēs as his life-force has been reunited with his body, with his self, and that is why his *psūkhē* in Hādēs must be seen as a disembodied conveyer of his identity—as a mere *eidōlon* ‘vision’. [[GN 2017.06.08 via BA 166–167, 208.]]

O.11.601

subject heading(s): biē ‘force, violence, strength’; kleos ‘glory’; biē Hēraklēeiē ‘force of Hēraklēs’

On the use of biē Hēraklēeiē ‘force of Hēraklēs’ to name Hēraklēs, see the comment on I.02.658. [[GN 2017.06.08 via BA 318.]]

O.11.620–624

subject heading(s): Labors of Hēraklēs

The word that is used here for what we translate as the Labors of Hēraklēs is *aethlos* (ätlos) ‘ordeal’, O.11.622 and O.11.624. See the comment on I.03.125–128. [[GN 2017.06.08 via PH 138.]]

O.11.631

subject heading(s): interpolation; expansion (vs. compression); Peisistratos

Hereas of Megara (*FGH* 487 F 4, via Plutarch *Theseus* 20.1–2) argued that Peisistratos interpolated this verse about Theseus. As I argue, such narratives about textually added verses reflect the mechanism of expansion (vs. compression) in oral poetics. [[GN 2017.06.08 via HPC 353.]]

O.11.636–640

subject heading(s): Ōkeanos

After departing from Hādēs, Odysseus and his companions get back into their ship and navigate toward the sea by way of the Ōkeanos, O.11.639. [[GN 2017.06.08 via GMP 238.]]
Odyssey Rhapsody 12
2017.06.15 / enhanced 2018.10.08

The storytelling of Odysseus is about to confront three of its most mystical moments here: the Song of the Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis, the Cattle of the Sun. The myths that shape these moments will become for Odysseus a set of powerful metaphors that drive his own odyssey. [GN 2017.06.15.]

![Ulysses and the Sirens](image)

Figure 36. “Ulysses and the Sirens” (ca. 1909). Herbert James Draper (English, 1863–1920). Image via Wikimedia Commons.

O.12.001–004

Q&T via BA 206

subject heading(s): Aiaia; coincidence of opposites; Circe; name of Circe; “speaking name” ῥομεν ἱοκουνεν; Ὀκεανός; khoros ‘place for choral singing / dancing’

(What follows is epitomized from H24H 10§§31, 36–38, 42.)

Part 1. After his sojourn in Hādēs, which is narrated in Odyssey 11, here at the beginning of Odyssey 12 Odysseus finally emerges from that realm of darkness and death. As Odysseus now returns from Hādēs, crossing again the circular cosmic stream of Ὀκεανός at O.12.001–002 and coming back to his point of departure, that is, to the island of the goddess Circe at O.12.003, we find that this island is no longer in the Far West: instead, it is now in the Far East, where Ἁλλιος the god of the sun has his ‘sunrises’, ἀνατολαι, O.12.004, and where Ἐός the goddess of the dawn has her own palace, featuring a special space for her ‘choral singing-and-dancing’, ἱχροί, O.12.003–004. Before the hero’s descent into the realm of darkness and death, we saw the Ὀκεανός as the absolute marker of the Far West; after his ascent into the realm of light and life, we see it as the absolute marker of the Far East (GM 237). In returning to the island of Circe by crossing the circular cosmic river Ὀκεανός for the second time, the hero has come full circle, experiencing sunrise after having experienced sunset. Even the
name of Circe may be relevant, since the form Kirkê may be a “speaking name” (nomen loquens),
cognate with the form kirkos, a variant of the noun krikos, meaning ‘circle’ (DELG under krikos).
As we will now see, this experience of coming full circle is a mental experience—or, to put it another
way, it is a psychic experience.

Part 2. The return of Odysseus to light and life replicates the mystical journey of the sun as it travels
every night from the Far West to the Far East, and thus the hero’s return becomes a substitute for the
mystical journey of a soul. This way, the nostos ‘return’ of Odysseus, as an epic narrative, becomes
interwoven with a mystical subnarrative. While the epic narrative tells about the hero’s return to Ithaca
after all the fighting at Troy and all the travels at sea, the mystical subnarrative tells about the soul’s
return from darkness and death to light and life.

Part 3. In some poetic traditions, the mystical subnarrative of the hero’s nostos can even be
foregrounded, as in these verses of Theognis (1123–1128):

1123 μή με κακών μύμνησκε· πέπονθά τοι σίτ᾽ Ὀδύσσεως, 1124 δοσ’ Ἀιδεώ μέγα
dούρ’ ἠλυθεν ἔξοικον. 1125 δς δή καὶ μνητήρας ανείλατο νηλεί δυτφ. 1126
Πνεύμονής ἐφάρμον κουρδής ἄλοχο, 1127 ὥ μιν δὴθ’ ὑπέμενε φίλω παρὰ παιδί
μένονσα, 1128 δόρα τε γῆς ἐπέβη δελ’ ἄλοχς τε μυχώς.

1123 Do not remind me of my misfortunes! The kinds of things that happened to
Odysseus have happened to me too. 1124 He came back, emerging from the
great palace of Hādēs, 1125 and then killed the suitors with a pitiless heart
[thūmos], 1126 while thinking good thoughts about his duly wedded wife
Penelope, 1127 who all along waited for him and stood by their dear son 1128
while he [= Odysseus] was experiencing dangers on land and in the gaping
chasms of the sea.

Part 4. The return of Odysseus from Hādēs leads to a rebuilding of his heroic identity. Earlier in the
Odyssey, the status of Odysseus as a hero of epic had already been reduced to nothing. As we saw in
the tale of his encounter with the Cyclops, the return of Odysseus from the monster’s cave deprives
him of his past identity at Troy. His epic fame can no longer depend on his power of métis, ‘craft’,
which had led to the invention of the Wooden Horse, which in turn had led to the destruction of Troy.
After his encounter with the Cyclops, Odysseus must achieve a new epic identity as the hero of
his own epic about homecoming, about his own nostos, but, for the moment, his confidence in his power
to bring about this nostos is reduced to nothing. He has lost his confidence in the power of his own
métis, ‘craftiness’, to devise a stratagem for achieving anostos. When he reaches the island of Circe
and learns that this place, though it first seems familiar and reminiscent of his own island, is in fact
strange and alien and antithetical to home, he despairs, as we saw at O.10.189-202.

Part 5. Despite such moments of disorientation for Odysseus, hisnóös, ‘thinking’, will ultimately
reorient him, steering him away from his Iliadic past and toward his ultimate Odyssean future. That is,
the hero’s nóös will make it possible for him to achieve anostos, which is not only his ‘homecoming’
but also the ‘song about a homecoming’ that is the Odyssey. For this song to succeed, Odysseus must
keep adapting his identity by making his nóös fit the nóös of the many different characters he
encounters in the course of his nostos in progress. In order to adapt, he must master many different
forms of discourse. The epithet for this ability to adapt, as we will see, is poluainos, ‘having many
different kinds of coded words’: that is how Odysseus is described by the Sirens when he sails past
their island, O.12.184).

[[GN 2017.06.15 via BA 206, GMP 237, PH 236-237.]]
O.12.004

subject heading(s): Eōs the dancer
Just as the Greek goddess Eōs is a dancer, so too is the Vedic goddess Uṣas: her epithets ∥ma a means ‘good dancer’. [[IGN 2017.06.15 via GMP.150.]]

O.12.014–015

Q&T via H24H 11§46

subject heading(s): Elpenor; coincidence of opposites; the tomb of Odysseus revisited

|14 τύμβον χεώντες καὶ ἔπι στῆλην ἔρωσαντες |15 τίζαμεν ἀκροτάτῳ τύμβῳ εὐήρες ἐρεμοὺν.

|14 We heaped up a tomb [tumbos] for him, and then, erecting as a column on top, |15 we stuck his well-made oar into the very top of the tomb [tumbos].

The story of Elpenor’s death was told at O.10.551–560. In the comment on those verses, I already noted that the relevance of this figure to the homecoming of Odysseus is signaled at O.11.051–083, and, further, here at O.12.014–015. Here we see Odysseus and his men making for Elpenor a tomb by heaping a tumulus of earth over the seafarer’s corpse and then, instead of erecting a stēlé or vertical ‘column’ on top, they stick his oar into the heap of earth. (What follows is epitomized from H24H§§47–50.)

Part 1. The ritual procedure for making the tomb of Elpenor follows the instructions given to Odysseus during his sojourn in Hādēs, O.11.051-080; these instructions were given by Elpenor himself or, more accurately, by his psūkhē ‘spirit’, O.11.051, and the wording makes it explicit that the tomb to be made is a sēma, O.11.075.

Part 2. In the light of this description, we can see that the ritual act of Odysseus when he sticks his own well-made oar into the ground at O.11.129 and sacrifices to Poseidon at O.11.130-131 points to the making of his own sēma or ‘tomb’, corresponding to the sēma or ‘sign’ given to him by Teiresias at O.11.126.

Part 3. There are two meanings to be found in this ritual act of Odysseus, since he sticks his oar into the ground at the precise moment when the oar is no longer recognized as an oar, O.11.129. In this coincidence of opposites, the oar is now a winnowing shovel, O.11.128—an agricultural implement that is used for separating the grain from the chaff after the harvesting of wheat. You toss the harvested wheat up in the air, and even the slightest breeze will blow the chaff further to the side while the grain falls more or less straight down into a heap in front of you. The winnowing shovel looks exactly like an oar, but it is not an oar for agriculturists. Conversely, the oar looks exactly like the winnowing shovel, but it is not a winnowing shovel for seafarers. For Odysseus, however, this implement could be both an oar and a winnowing shovel, since he could see that the same sēma or ‘sign’ has two distinct meanings in two distinct places: what is an oar for the seafarers is a winnowing shovel for the inlanders. And, in order to recognize that one sēma or ‘sign’ could have two meanings, Odysseus must travel, as we see from the key wording he learned from the instructions of Teiresias. Odysseus himself is represented as the user of this key wording when he retells to Penelope a retrospective story of his travels, O.23.266–268. And, as we saw at O.01.003, the travels of Odysseus throughout ‘the many cities of mortals’ were the key to his achieving his special kind of heroic consciousness, or nóos.

Part 4. Just as the implement carried by Odysseus is one sign with two meanings, so also the picture of this implement that we see stuck into the ground is one sign with two meanings. We have already noted the first of these meanings, namely, that the sēma or ‘sign’ given by Teiresias to Odysseus at O.11.126 is in fact the tomb of Odysseus, imagined as a heap of earth with an oar stuck into it on top, just as the tomb of the seafarer Elpenor is a heap of earth with his own oar stuck into it on top, as we just saw at O.12.14-15 and at O.11.075–078 respectively; in fact, as we saw O.11.075, this heap of earth is actually called the sēma of Elpenor, and the word here clearly means ‘tomb’.
Part 5. Accordingly, I paraphrase the first of the two meanings as a headline, “the seafarer is dead.” As for the second of the two meanings, I propose to paraphrase it as another headline, “the harvest is complete.” Here is why: the act of sticking the shaft of a winnowing shovel, with the blade pointing upward, into a heap of harvested wheat after having winnowed away the chaff from the grain is a ritual gesture indicating that the winnower’s work is complete (as we see from the wording of Theocritus 7.155-156). And the act of sticking the shaft of an oar into the ground, again with the blade facing upward, is a ritual gesture indicating that the oarsman’s work is likewise complete—as in the case of Odysseus’ dead comrade Eipenor, whose tomb is to be a heap of earth with the shaft of his oar stuck into the top, as we see at O.11.075–078 and here at O.12.014–015. So also with Odysseus: he too will never again have to sail the seas.

[GN 2017.06.15 via GMP 214 and PH 232] ]

O.12.021–022

Q&T via H24H 11§60

subject heading(s): mystical return to light and life

[ɔ1 σχέτλιοι, οἱ ζώοντες ύπηλάτε δώμ’ Αίδαο, ɔ2 δισθανέεις, ὅτε τ’ ἄλλιοι ἀπαξ θυγακου’ ἀνθρωποι.

ɔ1 Wretched men! You went down to the House of Hādēs while you were still alive. ɔ2 You are dis-thanees [= you experience death twice], whereas other mortals die only once.

Circe understands the mystical experience that Odysseus and his companions have undergone by entering Hādēs in the Far West and then returning from there in the Far East, just as the sun mysterically travels from west to east during the night. That is why Circe, after Odysseus and his men arrive back on her island, addresses the whole group as dis-thanees, that is, ‘those who experience death twice’. (What follows is epitomized from H24H 11§61.) So, Odysseus together with his companions had died metaphorically when he went to Hādēs in Odyssey 11 and then he had returned to light and life in Odyssey 12. But Odysseus will die for real in a future that is beyond the limits of the story told in the Odyssey as we have it: just as the seer Teiresias had predicted it when he gave to Odysseus a sēma or ‘sign’ at O.11.126, Odysseus will die after he experiences another coincidence of opposites—while carrying the oar that becomes a winnowing shovel. [GN 2017.06.15.]

O.12.068

subject heading(s): thuella ‘gust of wind’

Here the thuella ‘gust of wind’ is linked with fire, and this link evokes a visualization of fire caused by the thunderbolt of Zeus. [GN 2017.06.15 via BA 204, 322.]

O.12.069–070

Q&T via Nagy 2016.02.11

subject heading(s): Argo; melein ‘be on one’s mind’

οὴ δὴ κείνη γε παρέπλω ποντοπόρος νηώς | Ἀργῷ πάσι μέλουσα, παρ’ Αἰήταια πλέουσα

The only seafaring ship that has ever yet sailed past that [rock] was | the Argo, which is-on-the-minds-of [μέλουσα] all [νῆοι], and this was when it sailed away from Aietes.

(What follows is epitomized from Nagy 2016.02.11.) Homeric poetry is here telling a story by channeling Odysseus in the act of telling his own story, and the act of universalizing Odysseus is immediately expressed. It happens at O.12.070 here: the wording says right away that the ship Argo, ‘which-is-on-the-minds-of’ (μέλουσα) humans, is an all-important subject, since it is on the minds of ‘all’ (νῆοι) humans in the universe. The sailors of the good ship Argo faced the challenge of sailing past a most
dangerous rock in the treacherous seas, and now Odysseus, admirer of the Argonauts, is faced with the same challenge in his own story. The verb *melein* ‘be on one’s mind’ is used here in the sense of referring to a song that is on the minds of all who hear it or want to hear it. See the comment on O.09.019–020. [[GN 2017.06.15.]]

O.12.124

subject heading(s): Kratáli’s (name for mother of Scylla)

This name Kratáli’s is parallel to the epithet *kratáli’s* at O.11.597, the meaning of which can be explained as ‘having a power that has violence’. See the comment on I.05.083. [[GN 2017.06.15 via BA 88-89, 349–350.]]

O.12.132

subject heading(s): Phaethousa and Lampetiē

The names for these two daughters of Hēlios the god of sunlight, *Phaéthousa* and *Lampetiē*, both refer to the radiance of the sun. These names are parallel to the names *Phaéthōn* and *Lámpos* as solar horses that draw the chariot of Eōs the goddess of the dawn. See also the comment at O.23.246. These four names and the myths linked with them reflect mythological traditions that can be reconstructed by way of Indo-European linguistics. Of special interest is the morphology of Lampetiē. [[GN 2017.06.15 via BA 198–200, GMP 249–250, HC 1§147.]]

O.12.176

subject heading(s): Huperiōn

Whereas *huperiōn* ‘the one who travels up above’ can function as an epithet of Hēlios the god of the sun, it can also function as the name of the father of Hēlios. [[GN 2017.06.15 via GMP 235.]]

O.12.184–191

Q&T via H24H 10§19

subject heading(s): Song of the Sirens

184 δεύτερ’ ἀγ’ ἰών. πολύων’ Ὀδυσσεό, μέγα κύδος Ἀχαιών, ἵπτα κατάστασιν, ὑπανωτέρην ὑπὶ ἀκούσης. 185 οὐ γὰρ πιὰ τὰ πρῶτα παρῆλθεν ζητὴν μελαίνη, 186 πρὶν γ’ ἡμέραν μελημέρην ἀπὸ στομάτων ὑπὶ ἀκούσαι. 187 ἄλλ’ ὅ γε τεραξμένον νείπαι καὶ πλείονα εἴδως. 188 οἴμεν γὰρ τοι πάνθε’, δο’ ἐνι Τροιῆ ἐυρέη ἀργείδοι Τρώες τε θεῶν ἴστητι μόγησαν. 189 οἴμεν δ’ ὅσα γένηται ἐπὶ χθονὶ ποιλυβοτείρη.

184 Come here, Odysseus, you of many riddling words [πινοὺ], you great glory to the Achaeans name, 185 stop your ship so that you may hear our two voices. 186 No man has ever yet sailed past us with his dark ship 187 without staying to hear the sweet sound of the voices that come from our mouths, 188 and he who listens will not only experience great pleasure before homecoming [νέα]thai but will also be far more knowledgeable than before, 189 for we know everything that happened at Troy, that expansive place, 190 —all the sufferings caused by the gods for the Argives [= Achaeans] and Trojans 191 and we know everything on earth, that nurturer of so many mortals—everything that happens.

Part 1. The two Sirens—there are only two of them in the *Odyssey*—declare here that they know everything in general—but also declare that they know everything about the Trojan War in particular. By knowing everything, they are like the Muses. The repeated word *idmen* ‘we know’ at O.10.189/191 is comparable to what the Muses say to the Narrator in Hesiod *Theogony* 27/28, *idmen* ‘we know’. Also comparable is what the Narrator says to the Muses at I.02.485: *iste te panta* ‘you know everything’. By knowing everything about the Trojan War, the Sirens are like the Muses of the *Iliad*, as at I.02.485. It may be said that the Sirens are the false Muses of the *Iliad*.

Part 2. The Song of the Sirens is relevant to I.09.413, where Achilles says he will have to choose
between a nostos, which is a safe ‘homecoming’, and the kleos or ‘glory’ of the poetry that will be his if he dies young at Troy. See the comment on I.09.410–416. Achilles will have to forfeit nostos in order to achieve his kleos or ‘glory’ as the central hero of the Iliad. By contrast, Odysseus must have both kleos ‘glory’ and nostos ‘homecoming’ in order to merit his own heroic status in the Odyssey (BA 36–40). For him, the nostos is not only a ‘homecoming’ but also a ‘song about a homecoming’, and that song is the Odyssey. It is the kleos or ‘glory’ of that song that will be his—if his quest for a homecoming is to succeed.

Part 3. (What follows is epitomized from H24H 9§14.) The narrative of the kleos or ‘glory’ of song that Odysseus earns in the Odyssey cannot be the Iliad, which means ‘tale of Troy’ (Ilion is the other name for Troy). The Iliad establishes Achilles as the central hero of the story of Troy, even though he failed to destroy the city—while Odysseus succeeded, by devising the stratagem of the Wooden Horse. Because of the Iliad tradition, “the kleos of Odysseus at Troy was preempted by the kleos of Achilles” (BA 41). Thus the kleos that Odysseus should get for his success in destroying Troy is elusive, by contrast with the kleos that Achilles gets in the Iliad, which is permanent. So, Odysseus cannot afford to dwell on his success at Troy, because the kleos he may get for that success will become permanent only if it extends into the kleos that he gets for achieving a successful homecoming. Odysseus, then, must get over the Iliad.

Part 4. As we see from the wording of the Sirens’ Song here in the Odyssey, O.12.184–191, the sheer pleasure of listening to a song about the destruction of Troy will be in vain if there is no nostos, no safe return home from the faraway world of epic heroes; and, by extension, the Iliad itself will become a Song of the Sirens without a successful narration of the Odyssey (BA [1999] xii).

Part 5. (What follows in Parts 5 and 6 is epitomized from H24H 10§§19–20.) So, to repeat, Odysseus must get over the Iliad. But, to get over the Iliad, he must sail past it. His ongoing story, which is the Odyssey, must be about the seafarer who is making his way back home, not about the warrior who once fought at Troy. The kleos of Odysseus at Troy cannot be the master myth of the Odyssey, since the kleos of Achilles at Troy has already become the master myth of the Iliad. As I already noted, the kleos or poetic ‘glory’ of Achilles in the Iliad has preempted a kleos for Odysseus that centers on this rival hero’s glorious exploits at Troy. For the hero of the Odyssey, the ongoing kleos of his adventures in the course of his nostos is actually threatened by any past kleos of his adventures back at Troy. Such a kleos of the past in the Odyssey could not rival the kleos of the more distant past in the Iliad. It would be a false Iliad. That is why Odysseus must sail past the Island of the Sirens. The Sirens, as false Muses, tempt the hero by offering to sing for him an endless variety of songs about Troy in particular and about everything else in general.

Part 6. The sheer pleasure of listening to the songs of the Sirens threatens not only thenostos, ‘homecoming’, of Odysseus, who is tempted to linger and never stop listening to the endless stories about Troy, but also the soundness of his ‘thinking’, his nóos. And it even threatens the ongoing song about the hero’s homecoming, that is, the Odyssey itself (BA [1999] xii). Accordingly, the use of the verb néasthai ‘return, have a homecoming’ at O.12.188 signals what is at stake for both the nostos ‘homecoming’ and the nóos ‘mind’ of Odysseus, and it is no accident that these two nouns are actually both derived from that verb.

[[GN 2017.06.15 via BA 271; see also PasP 64n23 on patterns of negativizing poetry and metaphors for poetry]]

O.12.184

subject heading(s): poluainos ‘of many riddling words; of many fables; fabled’; Polyphemus; ainos ‘coded words; fable’

The translations ‘of many fables’ or more simply ‘fabled’ reflect the specialized meaning of ainos as ‘fable’. In addressing Odysseus this way, the Sirens are recognizing the hero’s fame as a master of ainos, which is a form of speech that can more generally be described as a coded message (on which see the comment on I.09.524–599). So, Odysseus is recognized as ‘able to speak about many things in code’. Such coded speech is by nature ‘riddling’, as we see from the meaning of aínigma.
‘enigma, riddle’, which is a derivative of ainōs. In order to survive, Odysseus must master many different forms of discourse, many different kinds of ainōs. That is why he is addressed as poluainōs ‘having many different kinds of ainōs’ by the Sirens here when he sails past their island, O.12.184. (What follows is epitomized from H24H 10§43.) Even the transparent meaning of Polyphemus, Poluphēmos, which is the name of the Cyclops blinded by Odysseus, foretells the hero’s mastery of the ainōs. As an adjective, poluphēmos means ‘having many different kinds of things said’, derived from the noun phēmē, ‘thing said’, as at O.20.100 and at O.20.105. See the comment at O.20.098–121. [HR]3$23. This adjective poluphēmos ‘having many different kinds of things said’ is applied as an epithet to the singer Phēmios, O.22.376, portrayed as singing songs that have many different meanings: see the comments at O.01.342 and O.02.035 (see also BA 17). In the case of Polyphemus, the very meaning of his name, which conveys the opposite of the meaning conveyed by the false name of Odysseus, Outis, ‘no one’, foretells the verbal mastery of the hero who blinded the monster. [[GN 2017.06.15 via BA 240, PH 236–237.]]

O.12.447–450

subject heading(s): Calypso revisited

(The following is epitomized from H24H 10§28.) At O.07.241–266, Odysseus told the story of his liaison with the goddess Calypso, and that part of the story ended there with the releasing of Odysseus from the cave of the goddess. Here at O.12.447–450, the storytelling comes full circle as Odysseus revisits that story about the liaison, which had led into the story of his arrival in the land of the Phaeacians. The hero’s arrival as revisited at the end of the storytelling in Odyssey 12 is implicitly a return to light and life from the cave of Calypso, comparable to the return of the hero to light and life from the darkness and death that were linked with the cave of the Cyclops Polyphemus at the end of the storytelling in Odyssey 9. Similarly at the end of the storytelling in Odyssey 11, Odysseus was ready to emerge from the darkness and death of Hādēs and return to light and life at the beginning of Odyssey 12. [[GN 2017.06.15.]]

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Odyssey Rhapsody 13

2017.06.22 / enhanced 2018.10.08

The storytelling of Odysseus has come to an end, and he will now be sent home to Ithaca by his hosts, Alkinoos and the Phaeacians. Sailing through the night in a ship provided by king Alkinoos, Odysseus is in a deep sleep, which is compared to death itself. At the precise moment when the ship reaches the shores of his homeland, Ithaca, Odysseus will ‘come to’, experiencing a mystical return to light and life. [[GN 2017.06.22.]]
subject heading(s): dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’; stylized festival

The mention of dais ‘feast’ here at O.13.023 takes us all the way back to the dais ‘feast’ that is planned by king Alkinos for his guest back at O.08.038. See the comments at O.08.059–061 and at O.08.061. The dais ‘feast’ is eventually rethought as a stylized festival, centering on a sacrifice that leads to a division of meat at the feast. Such a festival continues from Odyssey 8 all the way to here, at the beginning of Odyssey 13. [[GN 2017.06.22 via HPC 92–94, 101, 109, 126]]

subject heading(s): melpethai ‘sing-and-dance’


On their [= the Phaeacians’] behalf Alkinos, the one with the holy power, sacrificed an ox to Zeus, the one who brings dark clouds, the son of Kronos, and he rules over all. [26] Then, after burning the thigh-pieces, they feasted, feasting most gloriously, [27] and they were feeling delight [tereptehai]; in their midst sang-and-danced [melpethai] the divine singer [oiodos], [28] Demodokos, honored by the people.

(What follows is epitomized from MoM 4§§35–38.)

Part 1. Here the singer Demodokos performs one last song before Odysseus leaves the land of the Phaeacians. The occasion is most festive, marking the conclusion of the overall festivities that had started in Odyssey 8—and had continued ever since then. Bringing these festivities to a spectacular close, Alkinos the king of the Phaeacians slaughters a sacrificial ox to the god Zeus, and this animal sacrifice is the cue for Demodokos to emerge once again as the lead singer in the midst of a festive crowd.

Part 2. I note that the wording at O.13.027 is exactly the same as at O.04.017. See the comment on O.04.015–019. More important, we see the same wording also at I.18.604, which is the line that shows a part of the longer version of I.18.603–606. See the comment on I.18.603–604–(605–)606. In each one of these three lines that I just noted, O.13.027 and O.04.017 and I.18.604, a solo singer is shown, but the individuated soloist is leading into a choral song combined with dance, as signaled by the word melpethai in all three contexts. This word, as we have seen, combines the idea of singing with the idea of dancing—that is, choral dancing. That is why I translate melpethai in a hyphenated format, ‘singing-and-dancing’. See also the comments on I.18.603–604–(605–)606 and O.04.015–019.

Part 3. The text of O.13.024–028 is a most decisive piece of comparative evidence validating the authenticity of the corresponding passage in the longer version of I.18.603–606. Both of these two passages show an individuated lead singer in the midst of a festive crowd surrounding a choral performance that brings delight to all. Both in O.13.027 and in I.18.604, the decisive word that shows the interaction of the individuated lead singer with choral performance is melpethai ‘sing-and-dance’. (The verb melpethai ‘sing-and-dance’ at I.18.604 is picked up by the corresponding noun molpē ‘singing-and-dancing’ at I.18.606.) But the passage at O.13.024–028 occludes any direct mention of dancers, thus differing from the corresponding passage in the longer version of I.18.603–606, which
highlights two individuated dancers as well as a chorus. Conversely, the passage in the shorter version of I.18.603–606 occludes any direct mention of a singer, thus differing from the corresponding passage in O.13.024–028 here, which highlights Demodokos as an individuated lead singer.

Part 4. The decisive evidence of this passage, O.13.024–028, is missing from the reportage of Athenaeus (5.181c) about the editorial decisions of Aristarchus concerning O.04.015–019 and I.18.603–606. And it is missing also from the argumentations of some who build theories about various kinds of textual interpolation. As I argued in the comment on I.18.603–604–(605–)606, the evidence of the wording at I.18.604–605 indicates that both the shorter and the longer versions result from formulaic variation. [[GN 2017.06.22; see also HPC 300n87, n88]]

O.13.024–025

subject heading(s): sacrifice to Zeus; hymnic subject; signature of Homeric; styled festival

The sacrificing of an ox to Zeus here marks this god as the ultimate hymnic subject of the festive performances starting with the three songs of Demodokos in Odyssey 8 and capped by the narrative of Odysseus himself in Odyssey 9–12. As we see most clearly in the Homeric Hymns, the invoked divinity who presides over a given festival is the hymnic subject of the hymn (MoM 4§82). We know from Pindar Nemean 2.1–3 that Zeus was the hymnic subject of the Homeric, notional descendants of Homer, who performed the Iliad and Odyssey in relay (HPC 240, MoM 4§99.4, 99.5). Accordingly, I interpret the sacrifice to Zeus here at O.13.024–025 as a signature, as it were, of the Homeric. See also the comment that introduces Rhapsody 9. [[GN 2017.06.22 via MoM 4§99.5; also HPC 92–93, 101–102, 109]]

O.13.027

subject heading(s): terpesthai ‘feel delight’

The programmatic word terpesthai ‘feel delight’ as used here at O.13.027 can be connected to the use of the same word at O.08.429 with reference to the festive performances described in Odyssey 8. See the comment on O.08.429. [[GN 2017.06.22 via MoM 4§65; also HPC 92–93, 102]]

O.13.028

subject heading(s): name of Demodokos [, dēmos ‘community, district’]; “speaking name” (nomen loquens)

The description here of Demodokos as ‘honored by the people (δῆοι)’ reinforces the etymology of his “speaking name” (nomen loquens): ‘one who is received [verb dekhēsthai] by the community [dēmos].’ See the comment on O.08.044. [[GN 2017.06.22 via BA 17]]

O.13.078–095

Q&T via H24H 10§11

subject heading(s): [nōos ‘mind, thinking; consciousness’;] nostos ‘homecoming, song of homecoming; return; return to light and life’

[78 ἑάθ’ o’i ἀνακλινόντες ἀνερρίπτουσιν ἄλα πτηψ. | 79 καὶ τῷ νήδωμος ὑπνός ἐπὶ βλεφάροισιν ἐπιπτε, | 80 νήγρετος ἦεστος, θανάτῳ ἁγίατα ἐοίκυς, | 81 ἴ δ’, ὡς τ’ ἐν πεδίῳ τετράδοροι ἄροινες ἰπτοί, | 82 πάντες ὁμ’ ὁρυμβάντες ὑπὸ πληγήναν ἰμάσθηκε, | 83 ψύφα’ ἀερόμενοι ρήμα φοράσαν κέλευθον, | 84 ὡς ἄρα τῆς πρώυνης μέν ἀείρετο, κόμα ἰ δ’ ὅπιαν ὑπ’ ἐπιφύαν, μέγα θείο τευχοῦσι δούλου τοῦ βασιλείου, | 85 ἴ δ’ ἔλλ’ ἀσφαλέως θείον ἐμπέδον’ οὐδὲ κεν ἰρήν, | 86 κύριος ὁμάρτητος, ἐλαφρότατος πεπτόνων, | 87 ὡς ε’ ὑδαθα θεάσατος κύματ’ ἐστάνει, | 88 ἀνδρα πέρουσα θεοί’ ἐναλίγκα μηδέ’ ἔχοντα, | 89 ὁ δ’ ὡς πρὸς μέν μάλα πολλὰ πάθ’ ἄλγεα ἄν κατὰ θυμόν, | 90 ἀνδρόν τε πτολέμους ἀλεγείνα τε κόματα πείρων, | 91 δὴ τότε γ’ ἄτρεμας εὐδέ, λελαμκένος δόσ’ ἐπεπόνθει, | 92 ὁ δ’ ἐστ’ ἀστὴρ ὑπερέχει φαώτατος, ὡς τε μᾶλλ’ ὧν ἀρχεῖται ἀγγέλλων φάσ’ Ἡώς ἡργείνεις, | 93 μή τόμος δ’ ἡ νήσῳ προσεπλίνατο ποντότορος νῆσος.]}
When they [= the Phaeacian seafarers] began rowing out to sea, he [= Odysseus] felt a sweet sleep falling upon his eyelids. It was a deep sleep, the sweetest, and most similar to death. Meanwhile, the ship was speeding ahead, just as a team of four stallions drawing a chariot over a plain speeds ahead in unison as they all feel the stroke of the whip, galloping along smoothly, with feet raised high as they make their way forward, so also the prow of the ship kept curving upward as if it were the neck of a stallion, and, behind the ship, waves that were huge and seething raged in the waters of the roaring sea. The ship held steadily on its course, and not even a falcon, raptor that he is, swiftest of all winged creatures, could have kept pace with it. So did the ship cut its way smoothly through the waves, carrying a man who was like the gods in his knowledge of clever ways, who had beforehand suffered very many pains in his heart [thūmos], taking part in wars among men and forging through so many waves that cause pain, but now he was sleeping peacefully, forgetful of all he had suffered. And when the brightest of all stars began to show, the one that, more than any other star, comes to announce the light of the Dawn born in her earliness, that is when the ship, famed for its travels over the seas, drew near to the island.

(The following is epitomized from H24H 10§11–12.) The very idea of consciousness as conveyed by nōdos is derived from the metaphor of returning to light from darkness, as encapsulated in the moment of waking up from sleep, or of regaining consciousness after losing consciousness, that is, of ‘coming to’. See the comment on O.01.003; also on O.09.082–104. This metaphor of coming to is at work not only in the meaning of nōdos in the sense of consciousness but also in the meaning of nostos in the sense of returning from darkness and death to light and life. See the comment on O.01.005. Remarkably, these two meanings converge at one single point in the master myth of the Odyssey. It happens here at O.13.078–095, when Odysseus finally reaches his homeland of Ithaca. Odysseus has been sailing home on a ship provided by the Phaeacians, against the will of the god Poseidon, and the hero falls into a deep sleep that most resembles death itself, O.13.079–080. This sleep makes him momentarily unconscious: he ‘forgets’, as expressed by the verb ἐλθεῖν, O.13.092, all the algea, ‘pains’, of his past journeys through so many different cities of so many different people, O.13.090–091. Then, at the very moment when the ship reaches the shore of Ithaca, the hero’s homeland, the morning star appears, heralding the coming of dawn, O.13.093–095. The Phaeacians hurriedly leave Odysseus on the beach where they placed him, still asleep, when they landed, O.13.119, and, once they sail away, he wakes up there, O.13.187. So, the moment of the hero’s homecoming, which is synchronized with the moment of sunrise, is now further synchronized with a moment of awakening from a sleep that most resembles death. [[GN 2017.06.22 via GMP 219; see also Frame 2009:54]]

O.13.081–083

subject heading(s): four-horse chariot

Homer’s references to four-horse chariots are confined to contexts having to do with chariot racing. For chariot fighting, two-horse chariots are the Homeric norm. For exceptions, see the comments on l.05.263–273 and on l.08.185. [[GN 2017.06.22 via HPC 210n159]]

O.13.149–152

Q&T via Nagy 2001:82–83

subject heading(s): petrified ship; enveloping mountain

So now I want to smash the very ship of the Phaeacians when it comes back, in a misty crossing of the sea, from its conveying mission, so that these people [= the Phaeacians] will hold off, at long last, and stop their practice of conveying humans. And I want to make a huge mountain envelop their city.

The god Poseidon is speaking, and he is very angry at the Phaeacians for providing Odysseus with one of their ships to
convey the hero back to his home in Ithaca. The god now plans to take revenge, and he asks Zeus to approve his plan, which has two parts: (1) to smash the ship as it sails back home to the Phaeacians and (2) to make a huge mountain ‘envelop’ their city. [[GN 2017.06.22.]]

O.13.155–158

Q&T via Nagy 2001:82–83

subject heading(s): petrified ship; enveloping mountain

[155] ὄπιστοτε κεν δὴ πάντες ἐλαυνομένην προίδωσιν | [156] λαοί ἀπὸ πτόλιος, θείης λίθον ἐγκυθεῖ γαῖῃς
[157] νηθὶ θοῇ ὕκελων, ἵνα θαυμάζωσιν ἄπαντες | [158] ἄνθρωποι, μέγα δὲ σφίν ὄρος πόλει ἀμφικαλύψαι

When all the people of the city look out and see the ship sailing in, [156] turn it into a rock, just as it is about to reach land. [157] Make it look like a swift ship, so that people will look at it with wonder [158] — all of humanity will do so; and make the huge mountain envelop their city.

Before Zeus gives his approval, he modifies the terms of Poseidon’s two-part plan for vengeance. In the case of the first part, as we see here, the Will of Zeus is not that the ship be smashed but only that it be turned into a rock at the very moment that it sails into the entrance to the harbor—a rock destined to be a famous landmark for all time to come. In the case of the second part of the sea god’s plan, it seems that Zeus will indeed allow Poseidon to make a huge mountain ‘envelop’ the city. We see here the precise wording of these two parts of the Will of Zeus, addressed as commands to Poseidon. [[GN 2017.06.22.]]

O.13.158

subject heading(s): a formulaic variant

[158] ἄνθρωποι, μηδὲ σφῖν ὄρος πόλει ἀμφικαλύψαι

[158] — all of humanity will do so; but do not make the mountain envelop their city

Here we see another version of O.13.158, adduced by the Alexandrian editor Aristophanes of Byzantium (as we learn from the scholia for O.13.152). This different version was disputed by the later Alexandrian editor Aristarchus of Samothrace: he preferred the version of O.13.158 that I showed earlier, which is the one that survives in the medieval manuscript tradition. According to the version that survives only by way of Aristophanes, the future of the Phaeacians is not at all closed off. It remains open-ended, extending into the “present” when the epic is being narrated. For more, see the Excursus at the end of this section of comments on Rhapsody 13. [[GN 2017.06.22.]]

O.13.160–164

subject heading(s): petrified rock, enveloping mountain

Complying with the reaction of Zeus to the original two-part plan of revenge, Poseidon proceeds to turn the returning ship into a rock at O.13.160–164. The first part of Poseidon’s two-part plan has now been accomplished, although in modified form, in compliance with the Will of Zeus. The ship has been petrified at the approach to the harbor, instead of being ‘smashed’ at midsea. [[GN 2017.06.22.]]

O.13.165–169

subject heading(s): shock and awe for the Phaeacians

At this midpoint in the ongoing narrative about the fate of the Phaeacians, we see their reaction to the petrifaction of their ship. They are in shock: awestruck as they are, they cannot understand how this disaster could have happened to them, O.13.165–169. [[GN 2017.06.22.]]
Alkinous, king of the Phaeacians, has comprehended what is still in the process of happening. He explains to the Phaeacians that he now understands a prophecy that his father Nausithoos had once told him: it must have been this present disaster, Alkinous says, that his father had prophesied to him—along with that other disaster still waiting to be narrated in the Odyssey, which is, the occlusion of the Phaeacians from the world of the present. Such an occlusion will happen if Zeus arranges for a huge mountain to envelop the city of the Phaeacians, thus blocking their harbor from access to the sea. [[GN 2017.06.22.]]


The audience of our Odyssey already knows this prophecy as recapitulated in O.13.173–177, because Alkinous had already “quoted” it to Odysseus at O.08.565-569. The textual transmission of O.08.565–569 and O.13 173–177 leaves the two passages matching almost exactly, word for word. There is some degree of non-matching, though: for example, the ship is ἐφεργέα ‘well-built’ in most manuscripts at O.08.567 vs. περικαλλέα ‘very beautiful’ in most manuscripts at O.13.175, while the mutually alternative forms are attested in a minority of manuscripts at both places. In terms of oral poetics, such variation may be justified even where the “quoting” of a character’s words happens to be a narrative requirement of the composition, as it is here. At that earlier point in the narrative, however, Alkinous had said something in addition, which he does not say now (O.08.570–571):

That is what the old man said. And now you and I see that all these things are being brought to fulfillment. But come, let us all comply with exactly what I am about to say.

Now, instead of “repeating" this part of the old man’s prophecy, Alkinous commands the Phaeacians to take immediate action, as we see from the wording of O.13.178–179, quoted and translated above. When Alkinous had first “quoted" the prophecy of his father at O.08.570–571, the “quotation” had left a loophole: Poseidon may or may not bring ‘these things’ to fulfillment, as he wishes. But now at O.13.178–179 there is the greatest urgency, and Alkinous exclaimed hyperbolically that ‘all these things are being brought to fulfillment’. The rhetorical point of this hyperbole is to motivate the Phaeacians to take immediate action. Even though the half-hopeful words of Alkinous at O.08.570–571 are not repeated but are replaced by the increasingly desperate words of O.13.178–179, there is still a trace of hope—provided that the Phaeacians take immediate action by following the emergency orders of Alkinous, which are formulated in the verses that immediately follow, O.13.180–182. [[GN 2017.06.22.]]
O.13.180–182

subject heading(s): a possible way out for the Phaeacians

King Alkinoos here orders the Phaeacians to do two things without delay: to resolve never again to engage in the otherworldly pompē ‘conveying’ of mortals back to their real world, O.13.180, and to offer a sacrifice of twelve bulls to Poseidon, O.13.180–182. The Phaeacians must do these two things before the second of the two disasters should happen, which is, the blocking of their harbor by a huge mountain. [[GN 2017.06.22.]]

O.13.182–183

Q&T via Nagy 2001:85

subject heading(s): a possible way out for the Phaeacians

| ἠπίστανται ἵππον περίπλως ὁρῶν πόλει ἀμφικαλύψῃ |

| ἠπίστανται ... in hopes that he [Poseidon] will take pity and will not make the tall mountain envelop our city. |

The hope, Alkinoos says here, is that Poseidon may still take pity and stop his plan. [[GN 2017.06.22.]]

O.13.182–183

subject heading(s): a possible way out for the Phaeacians

The Phaeacians immediately proceed to make sacrifice to the sea god, supplicating him, O.13.184–187. At this sacrifice, we may presume that they do indeed resolve never again to engage in the otherworldly “conveying” of mortals back to their “real” world. Such a resolution by the Phaeacians would of course cancel their own otherworldly status as mediators between the inner world of the narrative and the outer world of “reality” as implicit in the “present” time when the narration of epic is actually happening. [[GN 2017.06.22 via Nagy 2001:86, with bibliography.]]

O.13.187

subject heading(s): the fate of the Phaeacians

So, what will happen to the Phaeacians according to the narrative? We cannot be completely certain. The Homeric narrative about the Phaeacians breaks off here at O.13.187, at the very moment when they are offering sacrifice and praying to Poseidon to take pity on them. The narrative break takes place most abruptly, dramatically, and even exceptionally—at mid-verse. In the first part of the verse at O.13.187, the Phaeacians are last seen standing around the sacrificial altar; in the second part of the verse, Odysseus has just woken up in Ithaca. A new phase of the hero’s experiences has just begun in the “real” world of Ithaca. [[GN 2017.06.22 via Nagy 2001:86, with bibliography.]]

O.13.256–286

subject heading(s): Cretan Odyssey; “Cretan lies”; First Cretan Tale

Here at O.13.256–286 we see the first example of “Cretan lies” told by Odysseus in the context of his re-entry into the kingdom of Ithaca. The concept of “Cretan lies” was introduced in the anchor comment at O.01.284–286 on a Cretan Odyssey. [[GN 2017.06.29.]]

O.13.299–310

subject heading(s): Athena as patroness of Odysseus; mētis ‘mind, intelligence’; antagonism between immortal and mortal

The goddess here formally declares to Odysseus her support for the hero, which leads ultimately to his success in his final confrontation with the suitors. But there is an undercurrent of antagonism between the goddess and the hero, insofar as they
Excursus on O.13.158

(Epitomized from Nagy 2001:84–91, where bibliography is provided about various different views concerning this verse.)

According to the version of O.13.158 that survives only by way of Aristophanes, the future of the Phaeacians is not at all closed off. It remains open-ended, extending into the “present” when the epic is being narrated. The threatening mountain will not block the harbor of the Phaeacians from the outside world — if we read μέδε ‘but not...’ instead of mega de ‘and a huge...’ at O.13.158.

Two questions immediately come to mind. First, how could this different version fit the overall narrative of the Homeric Odyssey? Second, is the textual basis of this version “legitimate”?

I already addressed the first question in the comments above, taking a close look at the logic of the narrative after O.13.158. Here I turn to the second question about O.13.158: is the textual basis of the different version featuring μέδε ‘but not...’ really “legitimate”? We can now add a related question: if it is legitimate, then does that delegitimize the version featuring mega de ‘and a huge...’?

Whether we need to choose one or the other variant depends on the way we look at Homeric poetry. If this poetry is merely a static text, then we are indeed forced to make a choice. If, however, we view Homeric poetry as a living system—an oral tradition that evolves ultimately into the textual tradition inherited by the Alexandrian editors — then we do not have to choose whenever we see a variation. Rather, as I will now go on to argue, the choices were already being made by Homeric poetry itself, which could opt for different variants in different phases of its own evolution.

My reasoning here derives from an overall “evolutionary model” that I have worked out as a general way of accounting for the making of Homeric poetry (Pasp 109–114 and HQ 29–112). In terms of this model, as I now plan to argue, the living and evolving oral tradition of Homeric poetry itself allowed for a choice either to seal off its own past from the present time of narration or to reach into this present time and thereby make its presence fully manifest.

According to the narrative option linked with the first of our two variants from O.13.158, mega de ‘and a huge...’, the outlook is hopeless for the Phaeacians, since Poseidon’s plan to seal off the city of the Phaeacians has been restated by Zeus and is therefore tantamount to the Will of Zeus, which the Homeric tradition conventionally equates with the way things ultimately turn out in epic narrative, as at l.101.005. At the beginning of the Odyssey, however, Zeus himself undercuts the equation of epic plot with the Will of Zeus, O.01.032–034. That is, there are differences in shades of meaning between the Iliadic and the Odyssean perspectives on the Will of Zeus as the plot of epic (PH 241–242).

According to the narrative option linked with the second variant μέδε ‘but not...’, the outlook is still hopeful. After all, at an earlier point in the narrative, O.13.144–145, we can see a way out when Zeus tells Poseidon to exact any punishment he pleases ‘if any human honors you not at all’ (ἀνδρών δ’ ε’ περ τίς σε ... οὗ τί τίς), O.13.143–144. The context is this: Poseidon has been angrily questioning Zeus, calling on him to explain the Will of Zeus (Διὸς δ’ ἐξίρητο βουλή), O.13.127. That is, Poseidon calls on Zeus to explain the overall plot of the narrative—now that the Phaeacians have conveyed Odysseus back home to Ithaca. How can I be honored among the gods, Poseidon plaintively asks Zeus, ‘when the Phaeacians do not honor me at all? (ὅτε με βροτοὶ οὗ τί τίουσι) Φαίηκες), O.13.129–130. But then, as we have already seen in the comments, the story goes on to say that the Phaeacians will indeed initiate a remedy after the first disaster by proceeding to honor Poseidon with sacrifice in order to avert the second disaster, which is, the envelopment of their harbor by a huge mountain.

The narrative option that I link with the variant μέδε ‘but not...’, according to which the Phaeacians are to be spared the second disaster of an all-enveloping mountain, depends on whether this variant as adduced by Aristophanes of Byzantium in place of mega de ‘and a huge...’ at O.13.158 is a genuine formulaic variant or only a textual variant. If it is the latter, then μέδε ‘but not...’ may be just an editorial conjecture. That possibility would severely reduce the chances for arguing that μέδε ‘but not...’ is a genuine alternative to mega de ‘and a huge...’. In what follows, however, I will argue against that possibility on several levels.
From an analysis of the formulaic system in which mēde ‘but not...’ is embedded, this form can be justified as a functioning element in that system, just as the form mega de ‘and a huge...’ is a functioning element: in other words, mēde and mega de can be considered compositional alternatives in the formulaic system of Homeric diction.

As Leonard Mueller points out in a message written 1998.03.10 to me and to Chad E. Turner, mega de ‘and a huge...’ at O.13.177 is syntactically and formulaically parallel to mēde ‘but not’ at O.13.183. In a message written 1998.02.03, Turner had pointed out to me that the metrical placement of mēde ‘but not...’ at O.13.198 is singular (although there are cases where this word straddles the last syllable of a spondee and the first syllable of a dactyl in the third and fourth feet, he finds no other cases in the second and third feet). But the formulaic system is capable of generating rare forms and combinations. For a striking example, we may compare the unique attestation of mēden at 1.18. 500: here is a word that is found this one and only time in the iliad and the Odyssey put together, and yet it can be shown to be formulaic. See Mueller 1976:101–102, 106.

Moreover, there is immediate contextual as well as formulaic evidence to support the argument that mēde ‘but not...’ is a functioning compositional variant in the formulaic system. Let us consider the wording of Zeus in his answer to Poseidon’s angry questioning at O.13.145:

|145| ἔρξον ὅπως ἔθελες καὶ τοι φίλον ἐπέλετο θυμῷ
|145| Do as you wish and as was pleasing to your heart.

This open-ended wording of Zeus matches formulaically the wording of Alkinnoos, when he had originally “quoted” the prophecy of his father, O.08.570–571:

|570| ὃς ἀγόρευ' ὅ γέρων, τὰ δὲ κεν θεοῖς ἢ τελέσειεν, ἴτα, ἵν' κ᾽ ἀτέλεστ' εἴη, ὃς οἱ φίλον ἐπέλετο θυμῷ
|571| That is what the old man said. And the god [Poseidon] could either bring these things to fulfillment
|571| or they could be left unfulfilled, however it was pleasing to his heart.

The formulation of Zeus, then, in leaving it still undecided whether or not the Phaeacians are to be ‘enveloped’, can be used as evidence to argue that mēde ‘but not...’ is indeed a genuine compositional alternative to mega de ‘and a huge...’.

As for the possibility that mēde ‘but not...’ is an emendation based on an editorial conjecture, my own cumulative work on Homeric variants as adduced by the three great Alexandrian editors of Homer (Zenodotus, Aristophanes, and Aristarchus) leaves me skeptical, since I find that these editors normally do not make emendations without manuscript evidence (PasP 107–152).

In making the specific argument that both variants mega de ‘and a huge...’ and mēde ‘but not...’ are genuine compositional alternatives, I return to my general argument that Homeric poetry is not a static text but a slowly evolving system. In terms of this general argument, the variant mega de produces a narrative closure for the Phaeacians: their fate is sealed. The variant mēde, however, produces an outcome that is open-ended.

These two variants, I contend, reflect different phases in the evolution of Homeric poetry. Let us begin with the variant mega de ‘and a huge...’, the context of which can be linked with a relatively more Panhellenic phase of epic. (On the relativity of Panhellenism—despite the absolutist implications of the term—as a cultural impulse, see PH p. 53.) I have defined this phase elsewhere as one that “concentrates on traditions that tend to be common to most locales and peculiar to none” (PH 54). The Panhellenic phases of epic make contact with the “present” time of narration by shading over any “local color” that might distract from the widest possible range of ways to visualize this “present” (PH 53). A Panhellenic version, then, will tend to universalize the concerns of the present.

But there are also other, less Panhellenic, ways for epic to make contact with the “present” time in which narration happens: the “local color” can be highlighted, though only at the cost of narrowing the range of ways to visualize this “present.” The context of the variant mēde ‘but not...’ can be linked with such a relatively less Panhellenic phase of epic. This variant makes contact with the epic “present” in a less universalized and more localized way. One focus of localization is historical Corcyra, modern-day Corfű.
The fact is, the Corcyraeans of the Classical period claimed to be residents of the land of the Phaeacians, as we know from a remark of Thucydides (1.25.4); from another remark of his, we know also that they worshipped King Alkinos as their local cult hero (3.70.4).

In O.13.155–158, we hear how the Phaeacians will one day look out at their harbor and see their returning ship suddenly turn into a rock, and we hear also how that fabulous petrified ship will continue to be a most wondrous sight for future generations of humanity to see and to keep on seeing for all time to come. There are references to this “real-life” rock in Pliny (Natural History) 4.53 and Eustathius (Commentary on Odyssey vol. II p. 44 line 27), and to this day the “petrified ship” remains a most celebrated tourist attraction for visitors to Corfu. But the essential point is, the reference to this rock is already there in the Odyssey—that is, in a version of the Odyssey that says μέδε ‘but not...’ instead of μεγά ‘and a huge...’ at O.13.158.

The identity of the Corcyraeans as descendants of the Phaeacians depends on the Will of Zeus as he formulates it at O.13.155–158, and it depends especially on the variant μέδε ‘but not...’ of O.13.158, which yields an open-ended narrative that reaches directly into the “present” of the Classical period and beyond.

As a political and cultural fact of life, the self-identification of the Corcyraeans with the Phaeacians has been dated as far back as the eighth century BCE, when the island was settled by colonists from Eretria and, soon thereafter, from Corinth (Plutarch Greek Questions 293a; further sources analyzed in Frame 257n159). The variant represented by μέδε ‘but not...’ at O.13.158 may be just as early, and in fact it may be the vehicle for expressing just such a political and cultural fact of life. This is not to say that the other variant represented by μεγά ‘and a huge...’ at O.13.158 may not be just as early. It is only to say that both variants were still available to the Homeric tradition of epic as it evolved during the pre-Classical period. In such an early period, the affirming—or the denying—of a claim of descent from the Phaeacians was essential not just poetically but also politically and culturally. It really mattered then, and it continued to matter well into the Classical period of the fifth century and beyond, as we have seen from the remark of Thucydides (1.25.4, 3.70.4) about the Corcyraeans’ claim that they inhabited the land of the Phaeacians, whose king, Alkinos, they worshipped as their local hero.

In the Hellenistic period of the Alexandrian editors of Homer, by contrast, the question of choosing μεγά ‘and a huge...’ or μέδε ‘but not...’ would have mattered purely from a poetical rather than a political or cultural point of view. The Corcyraeans’ claims to the land of the Phaeacians would not be a major concern any more, at least not politically. But it would still really matter in another way: was the petrified ship of the Phaeacians a figment of the poetic imagination, walled off in the epic past, or was it the same thing as the real-life rock at the entrance to the harbor of Corcyra, accessible to all humanity in the contemporary Hellenic world? The disagreement between Aristarchus and Aristophanes over the choice of μεγά ‘and a huge...’ or μέδε ‘but not...’ respectively must have centered on such questions. One way, we see a beautiful snapshot from the enchanted imaginary world of the epic past. The other way, we see a comparably beautiful vista in the enchanting touristic world of the non-epic present, still anchored in the permanence of the epic past. Either way, petrified ship or scenic rock, what we see is a beloved cultural landmark of Hellenism.

All this is not to say that we must ultimately choose between these two versions of seeing things Homeric. It is only to say that both variants were still available to the Homeric tradition of epic as it evolved into the Classical period and beyond. And it is to ponder the power of epic either to close down or to open up its pathways to the present. The fate of the Phaeacians in conveying the heroic past to the present depends on that power of Homeric dimensions.

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Odyssey Rhapsody 14

2017.06.29 / enhanced 2018.10.09

Now that he has finally returned to his homeland of Ithaca, Odysseus must accomplish another kind of return: he must be restored to kingship. Such a restoration, however, must start from the bottom up. The goddess Athena, his ultimate benefactor but occasional antagonist, has made Odysseus seem to be ‘base’ on the outside, hiding his inner moral nobility. Only those who are likewise morally ‘noble’ will be able to read, as it were, the hero’s true nature. Meanwhile, the coded tales told by Odysseus point toward the truth of his kingship—without revealing it outright. A telling example here in Rhapsody 14 is the second Cretan tale told by Odysseus: it is about a Cretan princeling, not unlike the dapper figure we see in the
romanticized restoration of a Minoan fresco as featured in the cover-illustration for Rhapsody 14. [[GN 2017.07.14.]]

Figure 38. Minoan—probably Neopalatial—fresco commonly known as the "Lily Prince," Whatever the exact type of this personage (perhaps a crowned acrobat, according to the interpretation of Maria Shaw), the Lily Prince is certainly a Minoan of elite standing. Public domain image based on a famous watercolor by Émile Gilliéron of a reconstruction by Arthur Evans. Image via Wikimedia Commons.

O.14.055

subject heading(s): name of Eumaios

Here is the first time in the Odyssey that Eumaios is mentioned by name. On the meaning of E우마이오스, see the note on O.17.292. [[GN 2017.07.14.]]

O.14.063

subject heading(s): endukéōs ‘continuously, uninterruptedly’
See the anchor comment at 0.07.256. Here at O.14.063, the idea of ritual and moral correctness in host-guest relationships is conveyed by the idea of not interrupting the proper sequence of procedures and protocols. [[GN 2017.06.29 via PasP 44.]]

O.14.109

subject heading(s): *endukéös* ‘continuously, uninterruptedly’

See the comment on O.14.063. [[GN 2017.06.29 via PasP 44.]]

O.14.124–125

Q&T via GMP 44

subject heading(s): *pseudesthai* ‘lie’; *alēthe- ‘true’*

The wording at O.14.124–125 refers indirectly to itinerant poets/singers who are ready to adapt the content of their poetry/song to whatever the local audience expects to hear as its own local truth-value. It is as if such poets/singers were ‘lying’, as expressed at O.14.125 by the verb *pseudesthai*, which is contrasted here in this line with the adjective *alēthe- ‘true’. Such itinerant poets/singers are described here as if they were wanderers in general who are ready to adapt the content of whatever they say to the standards of whomever they encounter in a given locale. By implication, those standards represent the real truth, while the mental process of adapting the truth is the equivalent of lying. Wandering beggars are like that: they will lie in order to please those who might give them food to express their pleasure. By implication, hunger for food in the stomach drives the poet as guest to say what his host wants to hear. The poet, then, is dependent on the patronage of his local audiences. See also the comment on O.07.215–221. There is a relevant passage in Hesiod *Theogony* 26–28. [[GN 2017.06.29 via PH 190, GMP 44-45, 274.]]

O.14.126

subject heading(s): *dēmos* ‘community, district’

Here again Ithaca is figured as one single *dēmos* ‘community, district’. See already the comment on O.01.103. [[GN 2017.06.29 via BA 233.]]

O.14.135

Q&T via BA 340

subject heading(s): man overboard devoured by fish; *ikthhuoeis* ‘fish-swarming’ as an epithet of *pontos* ‘crossing (of the sea)’

This scenario, where a man falls overboard into the sea and dies, so that his body is devoured by fish, is a “favorite fear” that motivates the epithet *ikthhuoeis* ‘fish-swarming’ as an adjective describing *pontos* ‘crossing [of the sea]’. See the comment on I.09.004. [[GN 2017.06.29 via BA 340.]]

O.14.192–359

subject heading(s): Cretan Odyssey; “Cretan lies”; Second Cretan Tale

Here at O.14.192–359 we see the second example of “Cretan lies” told by Odysseus in the context of his re-entry into the kingdom of Ithaca. The first example is at O.13.256–286. The concept of “Cretan lies” was introduced in the anchor comment at O.01.284–286 on Cretan Odyssey. [[GN 2017.06.29; see also BA 138-139, 234.]]

O.14.199

Q&T via Nagy 2017.04.11

subject heading(s): ellipsis; elliptic plural
I say solemnly [eukheis tēn] that I was born and raised in Crete, the place that reaches far and wide

(What follows is epitomized from Nagy 2017.04.11 5§27–28.) Odysseus, disguising himself as a Cretan princeling, begins with a statement about his origins. He says he is from Crete. In the singular, Krētē refers to the island of Crete. But here at O.14.199 we see the plural Krētai, which cannot mean a multiplicity of islands named Crete. There is no such thing. Rather, we see here an elliptic plural, meaning ‘Crete and everything that belongs to it’. And of course whatever belongs to Crete are all the Aegean islands and lands controlled by the thalassocracy of Crete (HTL 163–164, following Mullner 1976:70). At O.19.178, we will see a pronoun that refers to Crete, and, like the noun Krētai here at O.14.199, that pronoun too appears not in the singular but in the plural. So, again at O.19.178, we will see an elliptic plural. Also, in the comment on O.07.078–081, I noted a parallel example: it is the elliptic plural Athēnai, which means ‘Athēnē and everything that belongs to it’. My translation here shows ‘it’ instead of ‘her’ for a simple reason: the fact is, the singular form Athēnē refers not only to the goddess Athena but also to the place that she personifies. As we see at O.07.080, the noun Athēnē in the singular can refer not only to the goddess Athena but also to the place that she controls, which was primarily the acropolis of Athens. So, to put that singular form into the plural, which is an elliptic plural, is a way of referring to all the places controlled by the acropolis of Athens. Besides Athēnai in the sense of ‘Athens’, other such elliptic plurals include Ἑκέναι ‘Mycenae’ and Thēbai ‘Thebes’. See the comment on O.07.078–081 (see also, again, HTL 163–164). On ellipsis in general, see the comment on I.04.196; also on I.06.209, I.07.015–017. [[GN 2017.06.29.]]

O.14.216

subject heading(s): Ares and Athena as divinities of war

(What follows is epitomized from HPC 289–290, where I offer supplementary bibliography.) A comparable pairing of Ares and Athena as divinities of war is found at I.18.515–519. See the comments on those lines. As I noted already in those comments, such a pairing of Ares and Athena is so old as to be traceable all the way back to the Bronze Age. Here I offer some details. As we know from the documentary evidence of the Linear B tablets found in the palace of Knossos in Crete, the divinities Athena and Ares (in that order) are paired as symmetrical recipients of offerings: in one tablet, V 52, a-ta-na-po-ti-ni-ja is listed together with e-nu-wa-ri-jo and pa-ja-wo-ne and po-se-da-o-ne. I interpret these syllabic spellings as follows: a-ta-na-po-ti-ni-ja = Athēnās potniāi (see the comment on O.07.078–081), e-nu-wa-ri-jo = Enūaliōi, pa-ja-wo-ne = Paḯawonei, po-se-da-o-ne = Poseidāonēi. As we know from the evidence of Homeric diction, the divine name Enūaliōs became an epithet of Ares, as we see for example at I.18.21. In some Homeric contexts, as at I.20.069, Enūaliōs is a god in his own right, distinct from Ares, just as Paḯāwōn (Homeric Paḯēōn) is in some contexts distinct from Apollo, as at I.05.401, I.05.899–900. As for the name of Ares, it too is attested in the Linear B tablets, Knossos Fp 14 and Fp 5816, in the form a-re = Arei. The Cretan connection of Athena and Ares is attested here at O.14.216 as well, where Odysseus in the second of his “Cretan lies” represents himself as a Cretan prince who professes his devotion to these two divinities in moments of crisis in battle. I should add that the pairing of Ares and Athena in the world of images represented on the Shield of Achilles is expressed by way of bronzework that is overlaid with gold, I.18.517–519. Such a technique of metalwork, as narrated on the Shield, is notionally linked to the heroic age or, as archaeologists would say it, to the Bronze Age. [[GN 2017.06.29.]]

O.14.337

subject heading(s): endukēōs ‘continuously, uninterruptedly’

See the comment on O.14.063. [[GN 2017.06.29 via PasP 44.]]

O.14.371

subject heading(s): abduction by gusts of wind; harpuiā ‘rapacious gusts of wind, Harpies’

The theme of abduction by gusts of winds is analyzed at length in the comment at O.15.250–251. [[GN 2017.08.03 via BA 194, GMP 243.]]

O.14.403
subject heading(s): *ep’ anthrōpos* ‘throughout humankind’

This expression *ep’ anthrōpos* ‘throughout humankind’ is conventionally associated with words referring to remembrance by way of song. See the anchor comment on l.10.213. [[GN 2017.06.29 via BA 37.]]

O.14.418–438

subject heading(s): sacrificial deposition of meat

We see here a rare Homeric glimpse of a sacrificial practice where sacrificers deposit choice cuts of meat in honor of the gods. [[GN 2017.06.29 via BA 217.]]

O.14.440–441

Q&T via GMP 296

subject heading(s): wishes correlated with premises

Syntactically, the premise here reinforces the probability of the wish. [[GN 2017.06.29 via GMP 296.]]

O.14.462–506

subject heading(s): Odysseus as poet

The discourse of the disguised Odysseus, shown here in the act of speaking to Eumaios, matches the discourse of a poet/singer who is performing at a festive occasion. [[GN 2017.06.29 via BA 234–237, PH 236.]]

O.14.462–467

Q&T via Nagy 1994:24

subject heading(s): festive poetics


Listen to me now, Eumaios and all you other companions! Speaking proudly [eukhesthai], I will tell you an utterance. The wine is telling me to do so. [464] Wine, distracting as it is, impels even the thinking man to sing [465] and to laugh softly. And it urges him on to dance. [466] It even prompts an utterance that may be better left unsaid. [467] But now that I have shouted out loud [anakrazein], I will not suppress it.

The wording here, as delivered by the disguised Odysseus to Eumaios, is cognate with the poeticiized replication of a festive occasion in the words of Pindar, Nemean 7.75–76:

ἐξα με· νικώντι γε χάριν, εἰ τι πέραν ἄρπεθεις ἂνέκραγον, οὐ τραχὺς εἴμι καταθέμεν.

Your indulgence, please! If I—to reciprocate the victor—shouted something out loud [anakrazein] as I soared too far up, I am not unversed in bringing it back down.

[[GN 2017.06.30 via BA 236, MoM 4§130.]]

O.14.508

subject heading(s): ainos ‘coded words; fable’
Eumaios compliments the discourse of Odysseus, calling it a fine example of anainos. Here the meaning of anainos can be interpreted in a general poetic sense, as ‘coded words’—a ‘coded message’. But there is also a specific poetic sense that is conveyed by the same word: anainos can be festive, highlighting the merriment of song and dance. The same kind of festivity is formalized also in the victory odes of Pindar, where the medium of the odes can refer to itself by way of the same word, anainos, as we see for example in the case of Olympian 11.7. See also the general comment on O.09.003–011 and the specific comment there on the word euphrasionē ‘festivity, merriment’ at O.09.006. On the programmatic implications of this word as an indicator of the festive atmosphere, as it were, of the poetic occasion, I refer again here to a definitive formulation by Bundy 1986:2 with reference to the poetics of Pindar (see BA 91, 235; also PH 198). [IGN 2017.06.29 via BA 235, 237; PH 197–198, 237; GMP 274.]

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Odyssey Rhapsody 15

2017.07.03 / enhanced 2018.10.12

Now that Odysseus is back home in Ithaca, it is time for his son Telemachus to return home as well. The goddess Athena now travels to Sparta, where she will initiate the return of Telemachus back home to Ithaca. [(IGN 2017.07.03.]


O.15.001–009

subject heading(s): Sparta; eurukhoros ‘having a wide dancing-place’; khoros ‘place for singing / dancing’, group of singers /dancers’; Daedalus; Hephaistos; Ariadne

(What follows is epitomized from Nagy 2017.04.11 §§29–31.) In the Homeric Odyssey, the Minoan-Mycenaean world is linked more directly to Sparta than to Crete. To make this point, I start with the beginning of Odyssey 15, where the goddess Athena appears in an epiphany to Telemachus at Sparta. As Athena tells Telemachus at O.15.001–009, it is time for the young hero to conclude his visit at Sparta and to go back home to Ithaca. I highlight the fact that Sparta is described here at O.15.001 as eurukhoros (εἱκ euryuclopos λακευκαυα, meaning ‘having a wide dancing-place’. I see here a Minoan-Mycenaean signature. Relevant is the word Kallikhoron, which is explained this way in the dictionary of Hesychius:

Καλλικρόων· ἐν Κνωσῷ ἐπὶ τῆς Αριάδνης τόπῳ ‘Kallikhoron was the name of the place of Ariadne in Knossos’. And the meaning of this ‘place of Ariadne’, Kallikhoron, is ‘the dancing-place that is beautiful’. It is most relevant to highlight here the fact that the word khoros can designate either the ‘place’ where singing and dancing takes place or the group of singers and dancers who perform at that place. Such a beautiful place, as we already saw in the comment on I.18.590–606, is made visible by the divine smith Hephaistos when he creates the ultimate masterpiece of visual art, the Shield of Achilles. At I.18.593–606, we see in action the singing-and-dancing that happens in the picturing of the divine place, the word for which
is khoros, l. 18.590. And the prima donna for such singing and dancing can be visualized as the girl Ariadne, for whom Daedalus had made the ultimate place for song and dance, l. 18.592. [[GN 2017.07.03.]]

**O.15.001–003**

subject heading(s): nostos ‘homecoming, song of homecoming’; nēsthai ‘return, come back’; hupo-mnē- ‘mentally connect’

At O.13.439–440 it was said that the goddess Athena, after parting with Odysseus on the island of Ithaca, ‘next’ went off to Sparta in order to connect with Telemachus there. The moment of that connection, which was going to happen ‘next’, was expressed by way of the adverb epeita, O.13.439. Now at O.15.001–003 this moment that had been destined to happen ‘next’ is finally at hand, and we see the goddess arriving at Sparta, where she will make it possible for Telemachus to connect mentally with his own nostos ‘homecoming’ to Ithaca, O.15.003. Essential here at O.15.03 is the use of the verb hupo-mnē-, meaning ‘mentally connect’. The same verb is used in a comparable context at O.01.322. See the comment on O.01.320–322. Here at O.15.001–003, Telemachus will mentally connect not only with the idea of his own homecoming but also with the song of that homecoming, which will merge with the song of his father’s homecoming. Telemachus needs to be mentally connected to his own nostos not only in the sense of ‘homecoming’ and ‘song of homecoming’ but also, more mystically, ‘return to light and life’. On this mystical meaning, see the comment on O.01.005, where this noun nostos is explained as meaning etymologically a ‘return’ or a ‘coming-back’, derived from the verb-root *nes- ‘return, come back’, which has a deeper meaning as well: ‘come to’, in the sense of ‘come back to consciousness’. The noun nostos itself, meaning ‘homecoming’, likewise has a deeper meaning: ‘coming back to light and life’. Etymologically related to this noun nostos in the sense of ‘coming back to light and life’ is the noun ndos ‘mind’, which has the deeper meaning of ‘coming to’ in the sense of ‘coming back to consciousness’. As I argued in the comment on O.13.078–095, the idea of ‘coming to’ as embedded in the noun nostos is activated at the moment when Odysseus comes home to Ithaca: there he wakes up from a death-like sleep at the precise moment when the sun rises. To experience such a nostos as a ‘homecoming’, as I also argued in the same comment, is to experience a symbolic ‘return to light and life’, and the Odyssey as a ‘song of homecoming’ is such a nostos. Here at O.15.001–003, we see that the son of Odysseus must likewise experience a nostos, expressed here at O.15.003 not only by the noun nostos but also by the verb nēsthai, derived from the root *nes-. This line, O.15.003, shows that the song of this nostos, of this homecoming, is meant to merge with the song of the father’s homecoming. See also the comment on O.01.088–089. [[GN 2017.07.02.]]

**O.15.140**

subject heading(s): [daíais ‘feast; division of portions of meat; sacrifice’;] daieithai ‘feast; divide (meat), apportion, distribute’; moira ‘portion; fate, destiny’

See further details in the comment on O.08.061; also in the comment on l.03.059. [[GN 2017.07.03 via MoM 4§73.]]

**O.15.247**

subject heading(s): death of Amphiaraoas

Here as also at O.15.253, it is said explicitly that the hero Amphiaraoas died in the war of the Seven against Thebes. See also the note on O.15.253 [details in BA 204]. ([What follows is epitomized from H24H 15§34.]) In the myth about the death of Amphiaraoas as retold by Pausanias (1.34.2), the hero is riding back home on his war chariot after the defeat of the Seven against Thebes, when suddenly the earth opens up underneath and swallows him—together with his speeding chariot and horses and all—and, at the spot where this engulfment happened, there is a hieron, ‘sacred space’, where worshippers of the hero come to consult him, though Pausanias reports that there is some disagreement about matching the place of the ritual consultations with the actual place of the mythical engulfment. In any case, I propose that the engulfment of Amphiaraoas by the earth signals not only his death but also his subsequent return from death as a cult hero. Here at O.15.247 and at O.15.253, the death of Amphiaraoas after the expedition against Thebes is made explicit, though this death is only implicit in the references to the engulfment of the same hero as narrated in the songs of Pindar: Olympian 6.14; Nemean 9.24–27, 10.8–9. The poetic reticence we see in Pindar’s songs about mentioning the actual death of Amphiaraoas at the moment of his engulfment by the earth is a sign, I also propose, of a keen awareness about the subsequent resurrection of the hero (BA 154, 204). [[GN 2017.07.05.]]
subject heading(s): Polupheidēs

The morphology of this name Polupheidēs can be interpreted as meaning ‘having parsimony in many different ways’ or ‘...many times’. [GN 2017.07.03 via PasP 51n36.]

O.15.250–251

subject heading(s): Éōs, goddess of dawn; Kleitos; harpazēin ‘snatch, seize’; abduction by gusts of wind; harpuia ‘rapacious gust of wind, Harpy’

Here at O.15.250–251, Éōs the goddess of the dawn abducts the beautiful young hero Kleitos by way of ‘snatching’ him away, as expressed by the verb harpazēin ‘snatch, seize’. The picturing of such an abduction is part of an overall mythological complex that I analyzed in some detail in GMP 242–245. I epitomize that analysis in what follows:

Part 1. Here is an inventory of verbs expressing the abduction of beautiful heroes by divinities:

A. Éōs abducts Kleitos, here at O.15.250: hērpaśen ‘snatched’

B. Éōs abducts Tithōnos, Hymn to Aphrodite 218; hērpaśen ‘snatched’ (on Éōs and Tithōnos, see already the comment at O.05.001–002)

C. Éōs abducts Orion, O.05.121: héleto ‘seized’

D. Éōs abducts Kephalos, Euripides Hippolytus 455: an-hērpaśen ‘snatched up’

E. Aphrodite abducts Phaethon (son of Kephalos), Hesiod Theogony 990: anereípāsəmēnē ‘snatching up’.

Part 2. I draw attention here to a parallelism found in another case of abduction, where Zeus abducts Ganymedes. The parallelism is explicit in the Hymn to Aphrodite, where Aphrodite herself mentions the abduction of Ganymedes by Zeus at lines 202-217 and the abduction of Tithōnos by Éōs at lines 218-238 as precedents for her own seduction of the beautiful hero Anchises. In the Iliad, we find a further detail about the myth of Ganymedes: the gods abduct him for Zeus ‘on account of his beauty, so that he may be with the immortals’, I.20.235 (κάλλος εἶναι οἷος, ἵνα ἄθανατοι συνέτην). So also here at O.15.250–251: when Éōs abducts Kleitos, it is for the same reason: ‘on account of his beauty, so that he may be with the immortals’ (κάλλος εἶναι οἷος, ἵνα ἄθανατοι συνέτην). These thematic parallelisms of Ganymedes/Tithōnos and Ganymedes/Kleitos are relevant to the fact that the verb used in the Iliad to describe how the gods abducted Ganymedes is an-éreípəsanto ‘snatched up’, I.20.234. This verb an-éreípəsanto, used here as an aorist indicative, corresponds to the aorist participle an-éreípəsəmēnē ‘snatching up’, which designates how Aphrodite abducted the beautiful hero Phaethon (son of Kephalos) in Hesiod Theogony 990. But how are we to imagine this divine action of ‘snatching up’ a beautiful hero? The answer to this question is signaled at line 208 of the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite, where the verb that is used to describe the abduction of Ganymedes is an-hērpaśe ‘snatched up’, line 208—and where the subject of the verb is áella ‘gust of wind’. The verb an-hērpaśe ‘snatched up’ at line 208 is coextensive with hērpaśe at line 202—where the subject of this verb is specifically Zeus himself, to be contrasted with the more general theoi ‘gods’, subject of an-éreípəsanto ‘snatched up’ at I.20.234. Not only in the case of an-éreípəsanto ‘snatched up’ with reference to the abduction of Ganymedes at I.20.234 but also in every other Homeric case of an-éreípəsanto ‘snatched up’, the subject of this verb refers to gusts of wind. In such contexts, we can see that thūella ‘gust of wind’ can be used as a synonym of áella ‘gust of wind’. When Penelope bewails the unknown fate of the absent Telemachus, she says that it was thūellai ‘gusts of wind’ that an-éreípəsanto ‘snatched up’ her son, O.04.727. Further, when Telemachus bewails the unknown fate of the absent Odysseus, he says that it
was ἀρπύια ‘snatching winds, Harpies’ that an-ἐρέιπσαντο ‘snatched up’ his absent father, O.01.241. The same expression is used when Eumaios bewails the unknown fate of the absent Odysseus, O.14.371. In general, the meaning of θὐέλλα ‘gust of wind’ is coextensive with the meaning of ἀρπύια ‘snatching wind, Harpy’: see the comments at O.20.061–080, where we find the combination of θὐέλλαι ‘gusts of wind’ with ἀν-ἥλεοντο ‘seized’ at O.20.066. Comparable is the combination of Ἐός with ἥλετο ‘seized’ at O.05.121—where Ἐός the goddess of the dawn abducts Orion. In the context of O.20.061–080, as highlighted in the comments on those lines, the combination of θὐέλλαι ‘gusts of wind’ with ἀν-ἥλεοντο ‘seized’ at O.20.066 is then restated at O.20.077 by way combining ἀρπύια ‘snatching winds, Harpies’ with an-ἐρέιπσαντο ‘snatched up’. By now I have accounted for all the Homeric attestations of an-ἐρεῖπσαντο ‘snatched up’ as also for the solitary Hesiodic attestation of anereipsaménē ‘snatching up’.

Part 3. As for ἀρπύια ‘snatching wind, Harpy’, the only other Homeric attestation besides those already surveyed in Part 2 is in the iliad. At I.16.149–151, we see that a ἀρπύια ‘Harpy’ by the name of Podárgē, meaning ‘swift of foot’, was the mother of Xanthos and Balios, horses of Achilles, while the father of these horses was Zephyros the West Wind. In this connection, we may consider the Hesiodic description of the ἀρπύια ‘snatching winds’ or ‘Harpies’, two in number, in Theogony 267–269: one is named Aëlló, line 267, from Æella ‘gust of wind’, and the other, Ὀκυπέτē, the one who is ‘swiftly flying’, line 267. In short, the epic attestations of ἀρπύια betray a regular association with wind. Furthermore, this noun ἀρπύια may be formally connected with the verb transmitted as anereipsantos ‘snatched up’ and anereipsaménē ‘snatching up’ in Homeric and Hesiodic diction respectively, as surveyed in Part 2: a decisive piece of evidence is a variant of ἀρπύia, shaped arepulā (οπνύη), attested in the Etymologicum Magnum (138.21) and on a vase inscription from Aegina (dual ὀπνύη, see DELG under ὀπνύη).

Part 4. On the basis of these surveys in Parts 1–3, we can see how beautiful young heroes like Kleitok, Tithõnos, Orion, Kephalos, Phaethon, and Ganymedes were abducted: in the poetic imagination, they were snatched away by gusts of wind. The imagery is most explicit in the story of Ganymedes. The immediate agent of the abduction is a gust of wind, and the father of Ganymedes does not know what happened to his son after the Æella ‘gust of wind’ ‘snatched [him] up’, an-ἐρρά, as we read at line 208 of the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite. We should observe, however, that the ultimate agent is Zeus himself, who is the subject of the verb ἐρράσεν ‘snatched’ designating the abduction of Ganymedes at line 203 of the Hymn to Aphrodite. As compensation for the abduction of Ganymedes, Zeus eventually gives to the boy’s father a team of wondrous horses, lines 210-211, who are described as aëllópodes ‘having gusts of wind as their feet’, line 217 (ἀλλοπόδησον). In this instance, both the action of taking and the action of giving in return center on the element of wind. But now, after having ascertained how such heroes were abducted, we may still ask where they were taken. In some cases, we can see that the outcome is positive, as when Ganymedes is taken to Olympus. In other cases, however, where a crossing of the cosmic river Οκανός is involved, the outcome may be either positive or negative. A case in point is a complicated passage at O.20.061–080, which I will analyze when I reach my comment on those lines, though I highlight already here a relevant detail. When Penelope wishes for a gust of wind to snatch her up and drop her into the Οκανός, O.20.063–065, the immediate agent is a θὐέλλα ‘gust of wind’, O.20.063, though the ultimate agents are the gods themselves, O.20.079. This linking of the Οκανός at O.20.063–065 with the wished-for abduction of Penelope by gusts of wind is relevant to what we read at I.16.149–151: it is on the banks of this cosmic river Οκανός that the ἀρπύια ‘Harpy’ named Podárgē ‘swift of foot’ gave birth to the wind-horses of Achilles. See the comment at Part 3 above. I note also that a variant reading for ὄκανοι Οκανός at I.16.151 is Ἰράνοι Ερίδανος. The cosmic river Ερίδανος is a mythological variant of the cosmic river Οκανός: see the comment on O.19.320.

[[GN 2017.08.03]]

O.15.253
subject heading(s): death of Amphiaraos

Here as also at O.15.247, it is said explicitly that the hero Amphiaraos died in the war of the Seven against Thebes. For details, see the note on O.15.247 (further details in BA 204). [[GN 2017.07.05.]]

O.15.305

subject heading(s): endukēōs ‘continuously, uninterruptedly’

Besides the anchor comment on endukēōs ‘continuously, uninterruptedly’ at O.07.256, see also the comment on O.14.063. [[GN 2017.07.03 via PasP 43.]]

O.15.329

subject heading(s): biē ‘force, violence, strength’; hubris ‘outrage’

The parallelism of biē ‘force, violence, strength’ with hubris ‘outrage’ here at O.15.329 shows that the first word, as applied to the suitors of Penelope, is to be interpreted in a strictly negative sense. [[GN 2017.07.03 via BA 319.]]

O.15.341–342

subject heading(s): wishes correlated with premises

Syntactically, the premise here reinforces the probability of the wish. See also the comment on O.14.440–441. [[GN 2017.07.03 via GMP 297.]]

O.15.491

subject heading(s): endukēōs ‘continuously, uninterruptedly’

Besides the anchor comment on endukēōs ‘continuously, uninterruptedly’ at O.07.256, see also the comment on O.14.063. [[GN 2017.07.03 via PasP 43.]]

O.15.521–522

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’

Here again, as at O.11.179, it is said that whoever succeeds in marrying Penelope would surely qualify as ‘the best of the Achaeans’. [[GN 2017.07.03 via BA 39.]]

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**Odyssey Rhapsody 16**

2017.07.06 / enhanced 2018.10.12

Odysseus, because of his external appearance as an old beggar, cannot be recognized by his own son Telemachus. To make the recognition happen, the goddess Athena temporarily transforms the father into a young aristocrat. For Telemachus, however, the transformation itself can be read as the epiphany of a god. [[GN 2017.07.06.]]
Figure 40. “Minerva Restoring Ulysses to his Own Shape” (1805). John Flaxman (English, 1755–1826). Purchased as part of the Oppé Collection with assistance from the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund 1996. Image via the Tate.

O.16.062–064

Q&T via HTL 164

subject heading(s): ellipsis; elliptic plural

Here at O.16.062 as also at O.14.199, we see an elliptic plural, meaning ‘Crete and everything that belongs to it’. See the note on O.14.199. [[GN 2017.07.06 via HTL 164.]]

O.16.076

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’

Here again, as at O.11.179 and at O.15.521–522, it is said that whoever succeeds in marrying Penelope would surely qualify as ‘the best of the Achaeans’. [[GN 2017.07.06 via BA 39.]]

O.16.086

subject heading(s): hubris ‘outrage’; atasthalo- ‘reckless’

These two negative terms hubris ‘outrage’ and atasthalo- ‘reckless’ are closely linked with each other in Homeric diction. The two words together are also closely linked with the suitors of Penelope in the Odyssey. [[GN 2017.07.06 via BA 163, 319.]]

O.16.161

subject heading(s): Athena recognized by Odysseus

The fact that Athena here can be recognized by the main character of the Odyssey may be relevant to the role of Athena as the goddess presiding over the festival of the Panathenaia in Athens as the venue for the performance of this epic. [[GN 2017.07.06 via PasP 112n24.]]

O.16.164

subject heading(s): noeín ‘take note (of), notice’; neuein ‘nod’
So spoke Athena, and she touched him [= Odysseus] with her golden wand. §172 First she made his mantle and his tunic to be cleanly washed, §174 she made it be that way, what he was wearing over his chest, and she augmented his size and his youthfulness. §175 His tan complexion came back, and his jaws got firmed up, §176 and dark again became the beard around his chin. §177 Then she [= Athena], having done her work, went back where she came from, while §178 Odysseus headed for the shelter. His dear son [= Telemachus] marveled at him, §179 and, in his amazement, he [= Telemachus] cast his gaze away from him, in another direction, fearing that he [= Odysseus] might be a god. §180 And he [= Telemachus] addressed him [= Odysseus], speaking winged words: §181 "As a different kind of person [alio-], stranger, have you appeared [phainesthai] to me just now, different than before. §182 You have different clothes and your complexion is no longer the same kind [homoio-]. §183 You must be some god, one of those gods who hold the wide sky. §184 So be gracious, in order that we may give you pleasing sacrifices §185 and golden gifts of good workmanship. Have mercy on us." §186 And he [= Telemachus] was answered then by the one who suffered many things, the radiant Odysseus: §187 "I am not some god. Why do you liken [eiskein] me to the immortals? §188 But I am your father, for whom you mourn and §189 suffer many pains, enduring the violent acts of men." §190 Having said these things, he kissed his son and let fall from his cheeks §191 a tear, letting it fall to the ground. Until then he had persisted in showing no sign of pity. §192 And Telemachus, since he was not yet convinced that he [= Odysseus] was his father, §193 once again addressed him with words in reply: §194 "You are not Odysseus my father. Instead, some superhuman force §195 is enchanting me, and it makes me weep and mourn even more. §196 I say this because no mortal man could craft these things that are
happening to me, no mortal could do these things by way of his own devising, unless a god comes in person and, if he so wishes, easily makes someone a young man or makes him an old man. Why, just a little while ago you were an old man wearing unseemly clothes, but now you look like perfect of eiskein the gods who hold the wide sky." He was answered by Odysseus, the one with many kinds of craft, who addressed him thus: "Telemachus, it does not seem right perfect of eiskein for you to be amazed at your father who is right here inside [the shelter], for you to be amazed too much or to feel overwhelmed. There will never again be some different [allo] person who comes here, some different Odysseus but here I am such [toios] as I am. I have had many bad things happen to me. I have been detoured in many different ways. But now I am here, having come back in the twentieth year to the land of my ancestors. I tell you, this was the work of Athena, the giver of prizes, who has made me be such [toios] as she wants me to be, for she has the power. One moment, she has made me to be looking like [enalinkos] a beggar, and then, the next moment, like a young man who has beautiful clothes covering his complexion. It is easy for the gods, who hold the wide sky, to make a mortal man become exalted with radiance or to debase him.

(What follows is epitomized from MoM 2§§18-20.) As soon as Odysseus has been stroked by the wand of Athena, his outward appearance—his khrōs ‘complexion’—is no longer the same as it had been before, O.16.182. That is what Telemachus is saying to Odysseus. The son is amazed that the father no longer looks like an old beggar. The word used here to express the idea of sameness is homoio- ‘similar to, same as’, O.16.182. This word homoio-, derived from homō-, further derives from the Indo-European form *somo- meaning ‘same’. In fact, the English word same is cognate with the Greek word homō-. See the anchor comment at L.05.441. Because the complexion of Odysseus is no longer the same, he no longer looks the same. Now he looks different. He is now a different kind of person. In the wording of O.16.181, Odysseus the person is now alloio- ‘a different kind’. This word alloio- (ἀλλοίο) ‘a different kind’ is the opposite of homoio- (ὁμοίο) ‘the same kind’. I note that the extension -i.o. (-io) of the adjectives homoio- (ὁμοίο) ‘the same kind’ and alloio- (ἀλλοίο) ‘a different kind’ is parallel to the extension -i.o. (-io) of the adjectives hoio- (ὁιο) ‘what kind’ and toio- (τοίο) ‘that kind’. At O.16.205 and O.16.208 in the passage I have just quoted and translated, we also see this meaning of toio- ‘that kind’ in action. In this same passage, it is said that Odysseus looks like an old man or looks like a young man, whatever a divinity may wish, O.16.198. But when he looks like a young man for Telemachus to see, his son needs to avert his eyes because he sees what he now sees, O.16.179. What he now sees is that Odysseus at that moment looks not only like a young man but also like a divinity. Relevant is the question that Odysseus asks his son at O.16.187: ‘Why do you liken [eiskein] me to the immortals?’... In answer to this question, Telemachus can rightly say at O.16.200: ‘but now you look like perfect of eiskein the gods who hold the wide sky’. And, in terms of the ritual transformation of Odysseus by way of a sacred contact with the wand of the goddess Athena herself, this mortal not only looks like one of the gods but he actually becomes a god in the ritual moment marked by the similes that liken him to the god. So, the contexts of eiskein ‘make likenesses, liken’ at O.16.187 and O.16.200 show that Telemachus was justified in saying that Odysseus looks the same as a god after being touched by the wand of Athena. Similarly at O.03.464–468, there is a ritual transformation of Telemachus when he is bathed in a bathtub called an asaminthos, O.03.468. As I note in the comment on O.03.464–468, here is what happens at O.03.468 to Telemachus as a result of this ritual bath: ‘he [Telemachus] emerged from the bathtub [asaminthos], looking the same as [homoio-] the immortals in shape’ (ἐκ ρ’ ἀσαμινθοῦ βῆ δέμας ὁθανάτοιοι ὁμοίοιοι).

In the light of this analysis, I offer a general formulation: for a mortal to appear like an immortal to other mortals is to become a divinity in a ritual moment of epiphany—as marked by the similes that make mortals equal to divinities in that ritual moment. [[GN 2017.07.06 via MoM 2§17.]]

O.16.214

subject heading(s): amphi-khu- ‘pouring all over’; dissolving while weeping

The image of ‘pouring all over’ someone whom you are embracing, as expressed here by way of the verbamphi-khu-, extends from the idea of dissolving in tears: when you are weeping, pouring out your tears from your eyes, it is as if your whole self were dissolving into tears, which can then ‘pour all over’ that beloved someone whom you are embracing. The metaphor of dissolving while weeping, as here, can also be found at O.08.527. See also the comment at O.19.204–212. [[GN 2017.07.06 via HC 2§344n.]]
subject heading(s): *neuein* 'take note (of), notice'; *neuein* 'nod'

The act of noticing is here again connected with a special signal: *neuein* 'nod'; see the comment on l.16.164. [[GN 2017.07.06 via BA 51.]]

O.16.418–432

subject heading(s): Antinoos as the ultimate ingrate; reciprocity; *dēmos* 'community, district'

As Penelope says in her words of blame directed at Antinoos here, this suitor of hers violates the rules of reciprocity more blatantly than any of the other suitors. That is because he shows no gratitude for the kindness that Odysseus as king had shown to Eupeithes, the father of Antinoos, back when Eupeithes was a refugee seeking the favor of Odysseus the king. In the story as told all too briefly by Penelope, O.16.424–429, this man Eupeithes had once sought refuge at the palace of Odysseus, asking the king to protect his food-supply, which was about to be expropriated, O.16.429. The threat of expropriation came from the *dēmos* 'community', described here as being very angry at Eupeithes, O.16.425. But Odysseus had intervened and prevented the expropriation, O.16.430. That is why it is now all the more outrageous, says Penelope at O.16.431, that the son of the same man whose livelihood had thus been saved by a beneficent king should now turn right around and expropriate the livelihood of his family’s benefactor, since Antinoos and the other suitors are now consuming the livelihood of Odysseus, depleting the resources of that generous king. That is bad enough, says Penelope, but Antinoos goes even further, much further: this ingrate also makes advances at the king’s wife and even plots the murder of the king’s son, O.16.431–432. [[GN 2017.07.09 via BA 233.]]

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**Odyssey Rhapsody 17**

2017.07.13 / enhanced 2018.10.13

Back in Rhapsody 16, Eumaios the swineherd had left behind in his shelter an unrecognized Odysseus and had gone off to the palace in order to contact Penelope; in the swineherd’s absence, Telemachus, left alone with Odysseus, could now get to see his father transformed into an idealized godlike hero, made visible through a luminous epiphany produced by the sacred wand of the goddess Athena. This way, Telemachus could recognize the true Odysseus. But this true hero must not yet be recognized by the returning Eumaios. So, before the swineherd had ever made his return from the palace to the shelter, Athena had already produced a reverse transformation of Odysseus, and the hero could thus revert to his disguise as a lowly beggar. Now, at the beginning of Rhapsody 17, Odysseus can ready himself to go off to the palace in order to engage the suitors as a beggar, thus testing them. The testing will clearly reveal that all the suitors, down to the last man, are morally debased on the inside while seeming to be noble on the outside. Odysseus, in his degraded state as an elderly beggar, is matched by the degradation of his beloved hunting dog Argos, who at least lives long enough to recognize the hero. [[GN 2017.07.09.]]
subject heading(s): *dais* ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’

To beg for a meal is to engage at ground zero, as it were, in the protocols of the *dais* as a ‘feast’. But even at ground zero, a *dais* is a *dais*, and such feasting requires the moral observance of ritualized protocols. [[GN 2017.07.09 via BA 231.]]

subject heading(s): *dais* ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’

Again, a *dais* is a *dais*, even for beggars. [[GN 2017.07.09 via BA 231.]]

subject heading(s): *endukéōs* ‘continuously, uninterruptedly’

See the anchor comment at O.07.256. [[GN 2017.07.11.]]

subject heading(s): *argós* ‘swift, alert; bright’

This adjective *argós* ‘swift, alert; bright’, applied here at O.17.062 to two hunting dogs of Telemachus (*kúveç ... árhoi*), is relevant to the name of the dog Árgos: see the comment at O.17.292. [[GN 2017.07.11.]]

subject heading(s): *endukéōs* ‘continuously, uninterruptedly’

See again the anchor comment at O.07.256. Here at O.17.111 and at O.17.113, Telemachus is saying that Nestor as a host *eφilei* ‘loved’ him *endukéōs* ‘continuously, uninterruptedly’, fostering him as if he had been a son of his own who had just
returned after an absence. In this case, then, the status of a child as a dependent has been interrupted, but the love of the father has not, thanks to the ritual and moral correctness of observing the protocols of fosterage: Nestor as a foster father substitutes for Odysseus in fostering Telemachus. [[GN 2017.07.11 via PasP 43-44.]]

O.17.113

subject heading(s): *endukéōs* ‘continuously, uninterruptedly’

See again the anchor comment at O.07.256. [[GN 2017.07.11 via PasP 43-44.]]

O.17.228

subject heading(s): *anáftos* ‘unnourished’

The element *al-* of *an-al-tos* ‘unnourished’ here is cognate with the root *al-* of Latin *alō* ‘nourish’. [[GN 2017.07.14 via GMP 157.]]

O.17.251–253

Q&T via GMP 300

subject heading(s): wishes correlated with premises

The outrageousness of the wish here is correlated with the self-deluding assumption that is built into the premise. [[GN 2017.07.14 via GMP 300.]]

O.17.261–263

subject heading(s): Phemios; *aídein* ‘sing’; *anáballesthai* ‘begin performing’; *phorminx* ‘special lyre’

On Phemios as a singer of tales, see the comment at O.01.153–155. On *anáballesthai* ‘begin performing’, see the comment at O.08.266. On the *phorminx* as a ‘special lyre’, see the comment at O.08.067. [[GN 2017.07.14 via HC 3§41; see also PH 360.]]

O.17.273–289

subject heading(s): *noeĩn* ‘take note (of), notice’

In the exchange that takes place between Eumaios and Odysseus here at O.17.273–289, both speakers express their awareness of the need for awareness as indicated by the verb *noeĩn* ‘take note (of), notice’, O.17.281, which must anticipate the awareness of those who are ready to harm them, O.17.278. [[GN 2017.07.14 via GMP 208.]]

O.17.292

subject heading(s): name of Argos the hunting dog; *argós* ‘swift, alert; bright’; *argeiphóntēs* ‘killing by way of speeding brightness; Argos-killer’; [name of Argos the panoptic] Hermetic signature; name of Eumaios; “speaking name” (*nomen loquens*)

The comments here can be divided into five parts

Part 1. The form *Árgos*, as used here at O.17.292 and also at O.17.300, derives from the adjective *argós* ‘swift, alert; bright’. For example, hunting dogs or *kúnes* are conventionally described as *argoi* (*kúneç ... árhoi*). See the comment at O.17.062. The recessive accentuation of *Árgos* marks it as a proper noun—a name—as distinct from the adjective *argós* ‘swift, alert; bright’, which has a word-final accent. This “speaking name” (*nomen loquens*) here applies to a beloved hunting dog of Odysseus. It has been twenty years since the hero last saw Argos, and he finds the hound in a pathetically degraded state: old and decrepit, Argos dies almost immediately after recognizing Odysseus, who appears on the surface to be similarly old and decrepit. The recognition is signaled by the verb *noeĩn* ‘take note of, notice’, O.17.301, which is used elsewhere as well in contexts of signaling recognition, as at O.08.094 and at O.08.533. See the comments there. See also the anchor comment
at I.05.669 on noēn ‘take note (of), notice’. Relevant is the note at I.13.726–735 about a generalizing statement that is made in those lines: it is said there that a person’s nóos ‘mind’, I.13.732, is what enables him or her to ‘recognize’, gignōskein, I.13.734.

Part 2. At O.17.301, the recognition of the true Odysseus by a hound named Árgos can be seen as a Hermetic signature. In Homerian diction, the god Hermes is conventionally described as argēphōntēs, as at O.01.038, and this agent noun can be read etymologically as ‘killing by way of speeding light’. The translation ‘speeding light’ corresponds to the etymology of the adjective argós ‘swift, alert; bright’, the more basic meaning of which is ‘shining with the speed of light’. (The etymology is analyzed at length in DELG under ἀργός.) Such a meaning is evident in forms that we find attested also in other Indo-European languages: for example, a cognate form of the es-stem arges- as in argēi-phōntēs is attested in the Indic epithet/name jī-śvan- (as in Rig-Veda 1.101.1), where śvan- is cognate with Greek kūon ‘dog’; this epithet means something like ‘he whose hounds are swift’. But argēi-phōntēs must also have meant ‘killer of Árgos’ in contexts where the name Árgos refers to a many-eyed and thus all-seeing hound that had been killed once upon a time by the god Hermes. The relevant myth, which centers on the transformation of a woman named li into a cow guarded by Árgos, is reflected for example in Aeschylus Suppliant 305: ‘Άργος, τὸν Ἐρμής παίδα γῆς κατέκτανεν / Άργος the earthborn, whom Hermes killed’; at 304, in the same context, Árgos is described as panóptēs ‘all-seeing’. In this myth, the name Árgos signals a monstrous double of Hermes himself, who is in his own right a panoptic marvel of perception and perceptiveness.

Part 3. We find a comparable situation in a medieval Irish myth about the hero Cú Chulainn, whose name is overtly understood to mean ‘Hound of Culann’. This hero had once upon a time killed a monstrous watchdog belonging to a smith named Culann. According to the myth as retold in Recension 1 of The Cattle Raid of Cooley (http://celt.ucc.ie/published/T301012/index.html, p. 142), the smith laments the death of the hound, saying that this wondrous beast had been the main protector of his herds of cattle and flocks of sheep; responding to the lament, Cú Chulainn promises that (1) he will raise another hound to replace the watchdog he had killed and that, in the meantime, (2) he, Cú Chulainn, will serve as the main protector of the smith’s herds of cattle and flocks of sheep. Hearing the twofold promise of Cú Chulainn, a man named Cathbad, who is the druid of Conchobar, king of the Ulstermen, now makes a pronouncement: from here on, says the druid, the hero who killed the hound of the smith Culann will forever be called Cú Chulainn, which means ‘Hound of Culann’. Cú Chulainn responds to the druid’s pronouncement by formally accepting his new name. In this Irish myth, the detail about the association of Cú Chulainn with herds of cattle and flocks of sheep is comparable with what we know about the association of the god Hermes with cattle and sheep, as for example in the Homeric Hymn (4) to Hermes: sheep at line 2, cattle at line 14. In the same Irish myth, we see another detail that is comparable to what we know about Hermes: Cú Chulainn, before he kills the Hound of Culann, is named Sétanta (http://celt.ucc.ie/published/T301012/index.html, p. 137). Etymologically, the meaning of this name seems to be ‘knower of the roads’ (sēt mean ‘road’; see Ó hÚiginn 2006:508. [I owe this reference to Joseph Nagy.])

Part 4. By way of comparison, I highlight a detail in the Homeric Hymn (4) to Hermes, line 303, where Hermes is told to lead the way to the secret place where he had hidden the cattle of Apollo: ‘you lead the way (οὐ δ’ αὐτ’ ὄδον ἡγομονεύομαι); the idea of ‘leading the way’ is repeated at line 392 (Ἑρμην δὲ ... ἡγομονεύω). In the case of Hermes, the myth about his killing Árgos, who can be seen as a monstrous canine version of his other self, signals the god’s absolutized powers of perception and recognition. Such powers are characteristic of the hero Odysseus as well, who as we have seen already at O.01.001 is linked with the god Hermes by way of his own heroic capacity for shape-shifting, which can be viewed as the ultimate challenge to a recognition of the true self. See the comment on O.01.001–010, Point 2.

Part 5. Another relevant Hermetic signature, I propose, is the name Eúmaios, the first occurrence of which can be found at O.14.055. The context there is this: Eúmaios the swineherd has just called off a pack of fierce watchdogs that had been threatening to harm the disguised Odysseus, O.14.029–038. What seems to be Hermetic about the name of this swineherd is the element -maios, which I connect with the name of the god’s mother, Maía, as in the Homeric Hymn (4) to Hermes line 4. This name is derived from the noun maía, meaning ‘midwife’ (DELG under μαία). Accordingly, I interpret Eúmaios as a “speaking name” (nomen loquens) meaning something like ‘linked with good midwifery’. [IGN 2017.07.14.]

O.17.332

subject heading(s): dæiesthai ‘feast; divide (meat), apportion, distribute’; daitros ‘distributor (of meat)
subject heading(s): testing of generosity

What the speakers are speaking about here at O.17.336–355 is the ethical imperative of feeding the hungry who cannot afford to feed themselves. Someone who responds to such an ethical imperative will be performing an act of generosity that shows ethical nobility. Such nobility, which comes from within, distinguishes Telemachus from the suitors of Penelope, who are noble only in their exterior appearance. The begging that is about to be performed by the disguised Odysseus here will be a testing of the suitors—whose lack of generosity will fully expose them in all their ethical deficiency. [[GN 2017.07.14 via BA 231–233]]

subject heading(s): xenos ‘stranger; guest’

Addressing Antinoos, Eumaios scolds him for his lack of generosity. Antinoos, he says, fails to observe the common rules of decency, which require that you treat any ‘stranger’ as a ‘guest’, xenos, O.17.382. Thus you must perform the role of a good host. See the comment at O.08.026–045 on the meaning of xenos as both ‘stranger’ and ‘guest’.

subject heading(s): dēmiourgoi (dēmiōrgoι) ‘craftsmen of the dēmos’; [dēmos ‘community, district’]; mantis ‘seer’; iētēr ‘physician’; tēktōn ‘carpenter’; aiodos ‘singer’

Aside from beggars, there are of course many other kinds of xenoi ‘strangers’ to be hosted as potential guests. In the wording of Eumaios, such potential xenoi include various kinds of craftsmen or dēmiourgoi (dēmiōrgoι), O.17.383. This word means literally ‘craftsmen of the dēmos’, where dēmos ‘community, district’ is to be understood as a legally-sanctioned zone of activity within which craftsmen are authorized to be practicing their crafts. Comparable is the concept of āes cerd ‘people of the crafts’ in medieval Irish legal traditions: these craftsmen are entitled to juridical immunity as they travel from one petty kingdom or tūath to another in the course of practicing their crafts, and the practitioners of such crafts include various social grades of poets. (Details in Nagy 2011a§149.) Similarly in the case of the dēmiourgoi (dēmiōrgoι) ‘craftsmen of the dēmos’ at O.17.383: these craftsmen too must have been juridically immune as they traveled from one dēmos to another in the course of practicing their crafts. The practitioners of such crafts included the categories of mantis ‘seer’, iētēr ‘physician’, and tēktōn ‘carpenter, joiner’, as we see at O.17.384. And, as in the case of the medieval Irish craftsmen, these crafts also included the category of the aiodos ‘singer’ or poet, as we see at O.17.385. [[GN 2017.07.14 via BA 234, 298; also GMP 3]]

subject heading(s): tēktōn ‘carpenter, joiner’; aiodos ‘singer’; name of Homer; “speaking name” (nomen loquens)

The parallelism of the tēktōn ‘carpenter’ with the aiodos ‘singer’ is particularly noteworthy, since the craft of the singer is conventionally compared to the craft of the carpenter. Especially relevant is the wording in Pindar Pythian 3.113–114: here the poets of epic are compared metaphorically to tēktōnes ‘carpenters, joiners’ who ‘join together’—as expressed by the verb-stem harmot-/harmod-—the epea ‘words’ of poetry (ἐπειδ’ ὁ πατὴρ τὸν γιον ... τέκτονες οία ... ἠμοίσατο). The verb-stem harmot-/harmod- that I translate as ‘join together’ here (ἀμοίσατο) derives from the root ται-, meaning ‘join’. Relevant is the “speaking name” (nomen loquens) of Homer, Hóm-ēros, which can be analyzed morphologically as a compounding of homo- ‘together’ with
the root ar- ‘join’, meaning ‘he who joins together’ in the metaphorical sense of a ‘joiner, carpenter’. See also the note at I.05.722. [[GN 2017.07.14 via PasP 74–75; also PH 56.]]

O.17.494

Q&T via GMP 297

subject heading(s): wishes correlated with premises

Here at O.17.494 the premise is indicated simply by way of houtös ‘thus’. [[GN 2017.07.14 via GMP 297.]]

O.17.496–497

subject heading(s): wishes correlated with premises

Here at O.17.496–497 the wish is predicated on the wish that has just been uttered at O.17.494. That previous wish, since it is a curse, can be treated as a premise in its own right. [[GN 2017.07.14 via GMP 298.]]

O.17.513–521

Q&T via BA 234

subject heading(s): Odysseus as aoidos ‘singer’

Speaking to Penelope, Eumaios describes the stranger whom he has been hosting in his shelter: for Eumaios, the disguised Odysseus is comparable to an aoidos ‘singer’, O.17.518. Thus the reciprocity that this would-be beggar is offering in the role of a would-be guest needs to be reassessed from minimum to maximum. The reciprocation that Eumaios as a good host will ultimately receive from Odysseus—and from the poets for whom Odysseus as poet will be a model—is destined to be most positive. Most negative, on the other hand, is the reciprocation that is destined for Antinoos and for the other suitors. [[GN 2017.07.14 via BA 234.]]

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Odyssey Rhapsody 18

2017.07.20 / enhanced 2018.10.13

In Rhapsody 18, Odysseus as a make-believe beggar is challenged by a most questionable character named Iros, who figures as a real beggar. What makes Iros so questionable is his similarity to characters who figure in a poetic form that can best be described as mock epic. [[GN 2017.07.20.]]
subject heading(s): story of Iros; mock epic; ἴς ‘force, violence, strength’; βιὲ ‘force, violence, strength’

This story, extending from line 1 of Rhapsody 18 all the way through line 117, shows a temporary change in poetic form. There is a sudden switch here from epic to non-epic. The character of Iros, as named at O.18.06, is non-epic, even anti-epic or, better, mock epic. We see here the story of a mock epic character who looks like an epic hero on the outside but who does not measure up, on the inside, to epic standards. In outward appearance, he qualifies as megas ‘great, big’. O.18.04, but he is ridiculously weak on the inside: that is, he lacks the epic inner quality of ἴς ‘force, violence, strength’. O.18.03. This quality, so blatantly lacking in the character of Iros, is also indicated by way of the word βιὲ at O.18.04, which means the same thing as does ἴς at O.18.03: ‘force, violence, strength’. The action that will take place after Iros insults and even threatens Odysseus will prove that Iros is weak on the inside, and this weakness will disqualify him from surviving in epic.

[[IGN 2017.07.20 via BA 228–232]]

O.18.001–004

Q&T, with modifications, via BA 229

subject heading(s): Iros; mock epic; margos ‘gluttonous, wanton’; language of praise/blame; blame poetry; praise poetry; Margites; Thersites; “speaking name” (nomen loquens)

Then came a beggar [ptōkhs], ranging-all-over-the-district [dēmos], who all through the town [astu]

of Ithaca would go around begging. He stood out, with his gluttonous [margē] stomach, because of his endless eating and drinking. And he had no ἴς, nor βιὲ, but in appearance he was big to look at.

Here I leave untranslated the synonyms ἴς and βιὲ, both of which I had previously translated as ‘force, strength, violence’ in the note at O.18.001–117. As I already observed in that note, appearances here are deceiving: Iros looks strong on the outside but he is weak on the inside, and the exposure of his weakness will prove to be something that is ridiculed in epic. The act of ridiculing is the program, as it were, of mock epic, but here the mocking is reversed: now it is epic that will be mocking mock epic. As we are about to see, epic will overcome mock epic. Odysseus, even though he looks weak on the outside, will beat up on Iros, who looks strong on the outside. The mock epic form to which the epic refers here is signaled by a most telling word: it is margos ‘gluttonous, wanton’, at O.18.002, describing the gastēr ‘stomach’ of Iros, who stands out as an ostentatiously greedy consumer of food and drink, O.18.002–003. A character who is margos is not just a negative example of lowly humans in general: in the poetic language of praise/blame, such a character is a negative example of lowly poets in particular. A lowly man who is margos ‘gluttonous, wanton’ is to be seen generically as a greedy blame poet. Such a blame poet, as we will now see, is typical of a poetic form that I describe here as mock epic. We can see the formal features of such a poetic form at the very beginning of Rhapsody 18, where the wording matches in syntax the beginning of a mock epic known as the Marginites. There the main character to be introduced on stage, as it were, is described not as aptōkhs ‘beggar’, as here at O.18.001, but as a poet who turns out to be a blame poet. I show here the actual wording that we find at the beginning of that mock epic (Marginites F 1 ed. West):

Then came to Colophon some man, an old man, a divine [theios] singer [aoidos], surrogate [therapōn] of the Muses and of Apollo who shoots from afar, and in his hands, those hands of his, he held a lyre that made a beautiful sound.
As we see from the explicit description here, Margites is an aoidos ‘singer’: that is, he is a poet. Moreover, he is a blame poet, as we see even from the morphology of his name Margitēs, derived from the adjective margōs ‘gluttonous, wanton’. This “speaking name” (nomen loquens) Margitēs is morphologically parallel to another “speaking name,” Thersitēs, which means ‘the bold one’ (tharsos/thesis is ‘boldness’ in negative contexts of blame poetry). This character named Thersites is represented in the Iliad as a blame poet of the worst kind; see the comments at I.02.214, I.02.216, I.02.217–219, I.02.221, I.02.222, I.02.224, I.02.225–242, I.02.235, I.02.241–242, I.02.243, I.02.245, I.02.246–264, I.02.246, I.02.247, I.02.248–249, I.02.251, I.02.255, I.02.256, I.02.265–268, I.02.269–270, I.02.275, I.02.277. In the narrative about Thersites in the Iliad, as I pointed out in my comments on the verses I just listed, it is clear that blame poetry is antithetical not only to praise poetry but also to epic, and that epic has the power to blame, in its own right, this blame poetry. Thus, epic can defeat blame poetry, making it an object of ridicule just as blame poets attempt to make epic an object of ridicule. When Odysseus beats up on Thersites in the Iliad, epic is defeating blame poetry. Similarly, when Odysseus beats up on Iros in the Odyssey, epic is defeating blame poetry and, further, epic is also defeating mock epic. In the case of the Margites, this mock epic starts off mock seriously by describing the poet simply as a poet, though he will turn out to be a blame poet as the narrative proceeds. The metrical form of such mock epic is a combination of two kinds of verses: (1) dactylic hexameters, which are the medium of epic, and (2) iambic trimeters, which had once been the medium of mock poetry in general—the word for which is iambos (BA 243–252). A case in point is what we find in the attested fragments of the Margites: in the three verses of this poem’s beginning, already quoted above, the first two verses are dactylic hexameters, to be contrasted with the third verse, which is an iambic trimeter (Nagy 2015.10.15§§28–29). At a later point in this same fragmentary poem, we see other such iambic trimeters, the most notable example of which is this verse (Margites F 201.1 ed. West F 4b.1):

πόλλ’ οίδ’ ἀλώπητης, ἀλλ’ ἐχῖνος ἐν μέγα.

The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing.

The same verse is attested in a fable, “The Fox and the Hedgehog,” which is embedded in blame poetry attributed to Archilochus (F 201.1 ed. West):

πόλλ’ οίδ’ ἀλώπητης, ἀλλ’ ἐχῖνος ἐν μέγα.

The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing.

Such uses of fables in both poetry and prose are suitable for praising or for blaming or simply for warning (BA 280–288; Nagy 2011a§§6–7, 129, 138–146). In the case of “The Fox and the Hedgehog,” Fable 427 (ed. Perry), there is such an element of warning attested in a version attributed to Aesop by Aristotle Rhetoric 2.1393b22–1394a1, who reports that this fable was narrated by Aesop to the people of Samos on the occasion of their impending execution of a ‘demagogue’. [[GN 2017.07.20.]]

Addendum: In Poetics 1448b24–34, Aristotle reconstructs an early phase of praise poetry and blame poetry where praise evolves into epic, as exemplified by the Homeric Iliad and Odyssey, while blame evolves into the poetry of playful ridicule, as exemplified by the mock epic Margites, which Aristotle actually attributes to Homer. In Poetics 1448b34–1449a6, Aristotle goes on to argue that the poetry of mock epic evolved further into tragedy while the poetry of playful ridicule evolved further into comedy (additional comments in Nagy 2015.10.15§§15–16). In terms of Aristotle’s terminology, then, the mock epic Margites can be described as a hybrid form of comedy. [[GN 2017.07.20.]]

O.18.006–007

subject heading(s): name of Iros; name of Iris; “speaking name” (nomen loquens); mock epic

The “speaking name” (nomen loquens) of Iros (I’ōs), O.18.006, is linked here with the name of Iris (I’rīs), the goddess who functions as divine messenger. On the name of Iris, see the comment on I.17.547–549. Iros too carries messages, as we see here from the use of apangelein ‘carry messages’ at O.18.008; unlike Iris, however, Iros carries messages indiscriminately: ‘whenever anyone tells him [to carry a message]’, O.18.008. Such an indiscriminate function as performed by Iros is ridiculous compared to the deliberate and serious function performed by Iris, who carries only those messages that are sent by the immortal gods themselves. Just as Iros himself has no inner ‘force’—no is and no biē, as we saw at O.18.003 and
O.18.004 respectively, so also the messages that he carries from one random person to another random person have no inner ‘force’ either. To be contrasted is the goddess Iris, who as carrier of divine messages is the embodiment of the inner ‘force’ that is contained in these messages: her name actually derives from the root ‘υἱ as in ἵς ‘force, violence, strength’.

Also, as I point out in the comment at 1.17.547–549, the conventional association of this goddess Iris with windspeed is parallel with the association of windspeed with the words ἵς and βιή, which both mean ‘force, violence, strength’. [[GN 2017.07.20.]]

O.18.009

subject heading(s): neikein ‘quarrel with’; neikos ‘quarrel’; blame poetry

When Iros ‘quarrels with’ Odysseus, as expressed by the verb neikein here at O.18.009, he is acting as a blame poet who is hostile not only to Odysseus but also to the epic of the Odyssey. See the comment at 1.02.221, where neikein ‘quarrel with’ refers to the blame that Thersites aims at both Achilles and Odysseus, the main heroes of the Iliad and Odyssey respectively. On blame as blame poetry, see the comment at O.18.001–004. [[GN 2017.07.20.]]

O.18.015–019

Q&T via BA 228

subject heading(s): phthonein ‘begudge’; blame poetry; olbos ‘prosperity’

15 δαιμόνι, οὔτε τι σε ῥέξω κακόν οὔτε ἄγορεύω, 16 οὔτε τινα φθονέω δόμεναι καὶ πόλλ’ ἄνελόντα. 17 οὐδέ δ’ ἀμφιτέρους ὀδὴ χεῖσται, οὐδὲ τί σε χρή 18 ἀλλοτρίου φθονεῖν· δοκεῖς δὲ μοι εἶναι ἀλήτης 19 ὡς περ ἑγών, ἄλβον δὲ θεοὶ μέλλουσιν ὀπάζειν

15 O you, you who must be possessed by some superhuman-force [daimôn]! I am harming you by neither deed nor word. 16 And I do not begudge [phthonein] that someone should be a giver [to you], even when someone [like you] has already been a taker in great quantities. 17 This threshold will accommodate both of us, and you should not be be begudging [phthonein] about the property of others. You seem to be a wandering-beggar [alētēs] 19 like me, and it is the gods who are likely to grant prosperity [olbos].

[What follows is epitomized from BA 228.] The verb phthonein ‘begudge’ corresponds to the noun phthinos ‘being begudging’. To begudge is to feel ungenerous about giving something for someone else to have, or even about accepting a pre-existing situation where someone else already has something that you don’t want for that someone to have—because you want to have it instead. In the praise poetry of Pindar, as at Olympian 8.55, phthinos conventionally applies to blame poetry. In such praise poetry, blame poets are viewed as ungenerously negative about the very thought that someone should be getting praised by praise poetry. It is this kind of phthinos ‘begudging’ that we find encapsulated in the behavior of Iros toward Odysseus. Picking a quarrel, as expressed by the verb neikein at O.18.009, Iros hurls words of blame against Odysseus. In doing so, he also orders Odysseus to get out of the way, O.18.010, threatening that the present eris ‘strife’ between the two of them, O.18.013, may escalate from verbal to physical violence, O.18.010–013. The disguised master of the household refuses to budge from the doorway, answering Iros with the words that I have just quoted from O.18.015–019. There the collocation of olbos ‘prosperity’ at O.18.019 with phthonein ‘begudge’ at O.18.016 and O.18.018 reflects a traditional way of thinking, well attested also in Pindar’s praise poetry, which teaches that prosperity is given by the gods to the righteous—and that this gift is threatened by the unrighteous, who feel begudging about such god-given prosperity. Ironically, the prosperity of Odysseus himself is now being threatened by the suitors, whose messenger Iros, as a mock Iris, is so begudging as to hinder our hero from even entering his own household. Without having to identify himself as the real householder, however, Odysseus warns Iros not to be begudging [phthonein] about the property of others’ (ἀλλοτρίου φθονεῖν), O.18.018. Such a begudging attitude on the part of Iros is directly comparable to blame poetry in its function as a traditional negative foil of praise poetry within praise poetry, where the vice of glutony is pictured as a prime characteristic of blame poetry: hence the saying ‘words are a morsel for those who are begudging [phthonein]’ (ἡφαιστεῖον τοῦ λόγου φθονεῖν) in Pindar Nemean 8.21. In fact, we now see from the Homeric description of Iros that his role as a blame poet is manifested in precisely this sort of glutony. And the key word is margos ‘gluttonous, wanton’. [[GN 2017.07.20 via BA 228–232.]]
subject heading(s): name of Iros; name of Airos; “speaking name” (nomen loquens)

Even before the physical combat between the disguised Odysseus and Iros takes place, Iros is already losing his nerve as he sees Odysseus half-revealed in the hero’s true form through the intervention of the goddess Athena, O.18.069–071. The reaction of the suitors is to start maliciously gloating over the fear shown by Iros, and the Master Narrator quotes here at O.18.073–074 what any one of the suitors might be saying as they gloat. And what the suitors say is already mocking Iros for failing to live up to his outward appearance of manly strength: the suitors are saying derisively that Iros is really unmanly, not manly. Just as the Master Narrator had previously said—and I highlighted this already in the comment at O.18.001–004—Iros may seem to be megalos ‘great, big’ on the outside, O.18.004, but he is ridiculously weak on the inside: that is, he lacks the epic inner quality of is ‘force, violence, strength’, O.18.003. This quality, so blatantly lacking in the character of Iros, is also indicated by way of the word biē at O.18.04, which means the same thing as does is at O.18.03: ‘force, violence, strength’. The fear shown by Iros, leading to his defeat at the hands of Odysseus, proves that he really has no is, no biē. Accordingly, the suitors now call him Á-iros, O.18.073, which may be reconstructed as ἄ-ʔiros and glossed etymologically as ‘he who has no force = ʔiš’. This form serves as a comic correction for what now emerges as the sarcastically misapplied meaning of the “speaking name” (nomen loquens) Iros as ʔiš ‘he who has force = ʔišs’. Now we see that the form ʔiros seems to be a play on an unattested Greek word ʔiros, cognate with Latin vir ‘man’, etc. The mocking name Á-iros O.18.073 explains the sarcasm built into the mocking name Iros. This mocking name Iros in the sense of ʔiros ‘he who has ʔišs’ is not incompatible with the likewise mocking association of Iros with Isir, the messenger of the gods, as analyzed in the comment at O.18.006–007: as I argued in that comment, the name Isir itself can be derived from the same root ʔiš- as in is ‘force, violence, strength’. [[GN 2017.07.20 via BA 228–232, especially p. 229]]

subject heading(s): an ominous threat for Iros

The words that Antinoos addresses to the beggar Iros here at O.18.079–087 intensify the fear already felt by this beggar at O.18.075, now that he has had second thoughts about ever having challenged Odysseus, disguised as a rival beggar. The intensification of the fear is understandable, given that Antinoos threatens to do horribly cruel things if Iros loses his upcoming fight against this rival, O.085–087. [[GN 2017.08.08]]

O.18.085–087

anchor comment on extreme cruelty in Homeric narrative

subject heading(s): Ekhetos; Melanthios; Iros; Eurytion the Centaur

Here is what Antinoos threatens to do to Iros if this beggar loses the fight with the disguised Odysseus, O.18.085–087: Iros will be put on a ship and sent off from the island of Ithaca over to the mainland, and there the hapless beggar will be handed over to a mysteriously infernal figure named Ekhetos, who will proceed to cut off his prisoner’s nose and ears and then ‘pull out’ his genitals, feeding them to the dogs. I have a special reason for choosing to focus on these horrific torments in presenting my anchor comment on extreme cruelty in Homeric narrative. Here is the reason: these same horrific torments, which are imagined here at O.18.085–087 as happening only in the future, become realities later on, at O.22.474–479. But who will inflict the same torments in this later passage? Will it be the infernal Ekhetos? No, in this case, the agents of torment will be Philoitios the cowherd and Eumaios the swineherd, perhaps with the help of Telemachus, the son of Odysseus. True, the person who is punished at O.22.475–477, the goatherder Melanthios, is presented as a morally negative character, no better than the beggar Iros. But the persons who inflict the tortments in this passage are understood to be morally positive. See the comment at O.22.437–479. So, an explanation is still needed for understanding how these supposedly righteous men could ever bring themselves to the point of inflicting horrors that were parallel to the horrors potentially inflicted by the mysteriously infernal Ekhetos. Part of an explanation can be found in another passage, O.21.308–309, where Antinoos commands the disguised Odysseus not even to make an attempt at stringing the bow: if you persist, Antinoos threatens, you will be sent off to that infernal character Ekhetos. Although the words of Antinoos leave unmentioned here at O.21.308–309 any threatened loss of nose and ears and genitals, his earlier words at O.21.300–301 have already compared Odysseus to a
Centaur named Eurytion, whose ears and nose were indeed chopped off by his outraged hosts after he misbehaved at their feast. For more on the story of Eurytion the Centaur, see the comment at O.21.288–310. [[GN 2017.08.08.]]

O.18.115–116

subject heading(s): an ominous threat for Iros

The suitors as a group reinforce the threat to send Iros to the mysteriously infernal Ekhetos. See the anchor comment at O.18.085–087. [[GN 2017.08.08.]]

O.18.204

subject heading(s): aiōn ‘life-force, lifetime’; pthìnēsthai ‘wilt, perish’

See the comments at O.05.160–161 and I.01.052. [[GN 2017.07.20 via GMP 126.]]

O.18.233

subject heading(s): mōlos ‘struggle’

Here the reference to mōlos ‘struggle’ is comic, in that the fight between Odysseus and Iros is a mock struggle, not serious fighting that befits epic, as in the case of mōlos Arēōs ‘struggle of Ares’, analyzed in the comment at I.02.401. [[GN 2017.07.20 via BA 332.]]

O.18.235–240

Q&T via GMP 297

subject heading(s): wishes correlated with premises

Syntactically, the premise here reinforces the probability of the wish. See also the comments on O.14.440–441 and O.15.341–342. [[GN 2017.07.20 via GMP 297.]]

O.18.289

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’

The speaker here is Antinoos himself: whoever succeeds in marrying Penelope, he says, would surely qualify as ‘the best of the Achaeans’. As the narrative will make clear, however, Antinoos is the least worthy of all the suitors in pursuit of this double goal of marrying Penelope and thus qualifying as ‘the best of the Achaeans’. See also the comments at O.11.179, O.15.521–522, and O.16.076. [[GN 2017.07.20 via BA 39.]]

O.18.321–326

subject heading(s): blame poetry; aiškhro- ‘disgraceful, shameful’; oneidēio- ‘insulting’; eniptein ‘scold’

The insults hurled by Melantho at the disguised Odysseus are replete with words indicating the language of blame poetry. For aiškhro- ‘disgraceful, shameful’, see the comments at I.02.216, I.03.038, I.06.325. For oneidēio- ‘insulting’, see the comments on oneidōs (plural oneidēa) ‘words of insult’ at I.01.291, I.02.222, I.03.242, I.20.244–256. As for eniptein ‘scold’ at O.18.321 and O.18.326, it applies not only to unrighteous blame, as here, but also to righteous blame, as when Penelope scolds Antinoos at O.16.417. [[GN 2017.07.20 via BA 255.]]

O.18.347

subject heading(s): lōbē ‘words of insult’; blame poetry

See the comment on lōbeuein ‘say words of insult’ at O.02.323. [[GN 2017.07.20 via BA 261.]]

O.18.350
subject heading(s): blame poetry; kertomein ‘say words of insult’

On kertomein ‘say words of insult’, see the comments at O.02.323 and I.02.256. [[GN 2017.07.20 via BA 261.]]

O.18.366–386

subject heading(s): Hesiod and Perses

What Odysseus says to Eurymakhos here at O.18.366–386 can be seen as a poetic admonition given by the righteous to the unrighteous, especially in the wording at O.18.366–375, which is comparable to what Hesiod says to Perses in the Hesiodic Works and Days. [[GN 2017.07.20 via GMP 71.]]

O.18.390

subject heading(s): tharsaleōs ‘boldly’; blame poetry

The suitor Eurymakhos is stung by the words spoken to him by the disguised Odysseus. These words, spoken tharsaleōs ‘boldly’, O.18.390, can be seen as blame poetry—but here the blame is justified, unlike the blame that is hurled at Odysseus by the suitors and by the disloyal members of his own household. [[GN 2017.07.20 via BA 261.]]

O.18.424

subject heading(s): therapōn ‘attendant, ritual substitute’

In the immediate context, here at O.18.424, only the surface meaning of therapōn as ‘attendant’ is evident. [[GN 2017.07.20 via BA 292.]]

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Odyssey Rhapsody 19

2017.07.24 / enhanced 2018.10.13

Rhapsody 19 is best known for a scene where Odysseus is recognized by his old nurse Eurykleia. She notices a tell-tale scar on his leg—the result of a wound that marks the moment in his youth when he was gored in a boar hunt. This scar can be seen as a sēma or ‘sign’ of the hero’s identity. [[GN 2017.07.22.]]
O.19.107–114

Q&T (modified) via H24H 12§3

subject heading(s): kleos ‘glory’; basileus ‘king’; eudikiai ‘good acts of justice [dikē]’; olbios ‘blessed’

My lady, who among mortals throughout the limitless stretches of earth would dare to quarrel [neikeln] against you with words? For truly your glory [kleos] reaches the wide firmament of the sky itself — like the glory of some faultless king [basileus], who, godlike as he is, and ruling over a population that is multitudinous and vigorous, upholds good acts of dikē [= eu-dikiai], while the dark earth produces wheat and barley, the trees are loaded with fruit, the ewes steadily bring forth lambs, and the sea abounds with fish, by reason of the good directions he gives, and his people are-meritorious [arettān] under his rule.

(What follows is epitomized from H24H 12§4–12§4–7.) The wording here at O.19.107–114 shows the only place in the Odyssey where Penelope is said to have kleos or ‘glory’ herself, O.19.108, but even here the glory emanates more broadly from the poetic tradition that features primarily Odysseus and only secondarily those who are close to him, especially Penelope. This passage here will be relevant to the context of the kleos ‘glory’ attributed to Odysseus at O.24.196, to be analyzed in the comment on that line (further analysis in H24H 9§22–23; also BA 38). Here at O.19.107–114, the kleos ‘glory’ of Penelope depends on the validity of comparing this glory with the corresponding glory of the unnamed king whose ‘good acts of dikē’ energize the fertility and prosperity of the land he rules. Since the words about this just king are spoken by the disguised Odysseus, it is evident that he himself will take the role of that just king when the time comes. But when exactly will that time come? Will it be after he kills the suitors? Or will it be after he dies? I ask the second question because the wording that refers to the inhabitants of the fertile and prosperous land of the just king is remarkably parallel to the wording that
referred to the inhabitants of the kingdom of Odysseus after he is dead: they are said to be olbioi ‘blessed’, O.11.137. See the comment at O.11.136–137. This wording comes from the prophecy of Teiresias to Odysseus at O.11.090–137, which I quoted in my comments on Rhapsody 11. As also in those comments, I draw attention once again to the word olbioi here, which I continue to translate here as ‘blessed’, and which describes the inhabitants of the kingdom of Odysseus. As I argued in the comment at O.11.136–137, this word olbioi, ‘blessed’, refers to the blessings of fertility and prosperity that the inhabitants of Ithaca receive as a result of the hero’s death (the prophecy of his death at O.11.136–137 will be retold at O.23.283–284). This death will lead to the transformation of Odysseus into a cult hero [further analysis in H24H 11§59]. In the Hesiodic Works and Days, verse 172, this same word olbioi, ‘blessed’, is used to describe cult heroes who are immortalized after death and who enjoy a state of bliss in the Islands of the Blessed, which is a paradisiacal setting that transcends the temporal and the spatial constraints associated with sites where the bodies of cult heroes are believed to be buried [further analysis in H24H 11§15]. My argument, then, is that the picture of a just king who rules over a fertile and prosperous land here at O.19.107–114 refers to the future status of Odysseus as a cult hero. But I still need to confront a possible objection: why would a cult hero be described as a basilēus, ‘king’, at O.19.109? And besides, would not the title of ‘king’ fit Odysseus when he is alive, right after he kills the suitors and recovers his kingdom—and before he is dead? True, the title would fit then as well, but I maintain that the context of the words spoken by the disguised Odysseus to Penelope is more transcendent. The fact is, the title of ‘king’ fits the cult hero as well. There is evidence to show that the generic cult hero is conventionally described as a basilēus, ‘king’ [further analysis in BA 170–172]. In a stylized thrēnos or ‘lament’ composed by Pindar (F 133, quoted by PlatoMen 81b), for example, hērōes hagnoi, ‘holy heroes’, are equated with basilēes, ‘kings’ (Βασιλέως ἥγαιοι τοὺς ἧραν τοὺς βασιλείς). Also, in an inscription grounded in rituals honoring the dead, in a context of promising a blissful life after death, the dead person is told: καὶ τὸ τάτος ἄνδροι μέσον οὕτως ὑπαγορεύειν οὗτος καὶ γενομένη (‘and then you will be king ἑκατέσθεια among the other heroes ἑρᾶς’) [IG XIV 638 = SEG 40.824[2]; further analysis in BA 171, where the citation needs to be corrected]. [[GN 2017.07.22 via BA 38, PH 248, GMP 275.]]

O.19.135

subject heading(s): dēmiourgoi (dēmioergoi) ‘craftsmen of the dēmos’; [dēmos ‘community, district’:] kērux ‘herald’

In the comment at O.17.381–394, I noted the listing there of four kinds of craftsman who belong to the category of dēmiourgoi (dēmioergoi) ‘craftsmen of the dēmos’, where dēmos ‘community, district’ is to be understood as a legally-sanctioned zone of activity within which craftsmen are authorized to be practicing their crafts. The four kinds of craftsmen were the mantis ‘seer’, the iētēr ‘physician’, and the tekton ‘carpenter, joiner’ at O.17.384 and the aoidos ‘singer’ or poet at O.17.385. Now we see here at O.19.135 a fifth kind of craftsman, the kērux ‘herald.’ [[GN 2017.07.22 via GMP 3.]]

O.19.136

subject heading(s): tēkesthai ‘melt away, dissolve’; dissolving while weeping

For more on tēkesthai ‘melt away, dissolve’ as a metaphor for weeping, see the note at O.19.204–212. [[GN 2017.07.22 via HC 2§256n.]]

O.19.163

Q&T via GMP 182 and 198 (modified)

subject heading(s): anthropogony; tree and rock; palaiaphato- ‘going back to an old saying’

οὐ γάρ ἀπὸ δρυός ἐσοὶ παλαιφάτου σύν ἀπὸ πέτρης

‘For surely you are not from an oak, going back to an old saying, or from a rock.’

In asking the disguised Odysseus to reveal his origins, Penelope says she assumes that the genealogy of this unidentified man is not all that difficult to trace: surely this man does not need to trace his ancestry all the way back to the prototypes of humanity, which would be an exercise in a special kind of mythology that can best be described as anthropogony. In the anthropogonic myths that have survived in the Greek language—as also in other Indo-European languages—two most common alternative versions claim that the First Human originated from a tree or from a rock. The tree is commonly pictured
as an oak. The epithet palaiphato- ‘going back to an old saying’ here at O.19.163 applies not only to the proverbial drús ‘oak’ but also to the comparably proverbial petrè ‘rock’. Both versions of such an anthropogenic myth center on a violent act that is simultaneously destructive and regenerative: the ignition, as it were, of the First Human happens when a thunderbolt strikes a primordial tree or rock. Details in GMP ch. 7, “Thunder and the Birth of Humankind.”

O.19.165–203

subject heading(s): Cretan Odyssey; “Cretan lies”; Third Cretan Tale

Here at O.19.165–203 we see the third example of “Cretan lies” told by Odysseus in the context of his re-entry into the kingdom of Ithaca. The first example is at O.13.256–286 and the second is at O.14.192–359. The concept of “Cretan lies” was introduced in the anchor comment at O.01.284–286 on Cretan Odyssey. [[GN 2017.07.22.]]

O.19.172–193

Q&T via Nagy 2017.04.11 4§1

subject heading(s): description of Crete; Aithôn

There’s a land called Crete, in the middle of the sea that looks like wine. It’s beautiful and fertile, surrounded by waves, and the people who live there are so many that you can’t count them. They have 90 cities. Different people speak different languages, all mixed together. There are Eteo-Cretans, those great-hearted ones. And Cynodians. There are Dorian, with their three divisions, and luminous Pelasgians. In this land [plural] is Knossos, a great city. There it was that Minos, who was renewed every nine years [ἐννεόρος], ruled as king. He was the companion [οικίστες] of Zeus the mighty. And he was the father of my father, Deukalion, the one with the big heart. Deukalion was my father, and the father also of Idomeneus the king. That man [= Idomeneus], in curved ships, went off to Ilion [= Troy], yes, he went there together with the sons of Atreus [= Agamemnon and Menelaos]. As for my name, which is famous [κλών], it is Aithôn. I’m the younger one by birth. As for the other one [= Idomeneus], he was born before me and is superior to me.

(What follows is epitomized from Nagy 2017.04.11 4§1–2.) In the Third Cretan Tale of Odysseus, the hero assumes the “false” identity of a Cretan prince named Aithôn, who is a grandson of Minos and the younger brother of Idomeneus. The relationship of Aithôn to Minos and to Idomeneus reflects a synthesizing of Minoan and Mycenaean “signatures.” A clearly Minoan signature is the detail about Minos as the grandfather, and a clearly Mycenaean signature is the detail about Idomeneus as the older brother: this Idomeneus is of course one of the most prominent Achaean warriors in the Homeric Iliad as we know it. On Idomeneus, Mycenaean king of Crete, see the anchor comment at O.01.284–286. [[GN 2017.07.22.]]

O.19.177

subject heading(s): trikháikes ‘with three-way homes’

Here at O.19.177, the epithet of the Doriarchs is trikháikes [Δωριές ... τριχαίκες], which reflects the traditional division of Dorian communities into three phulai ‘subdivisions’, Dumánes/Hulleis/Pámpphuli. So, I interpret the formation ‘trikhā-ŭik’ to mean ‘with three-way homes’, where ‘ŭik’ is the same root that we find in oikos ‘home’, from *’oikos. [[GN 2017.07.22 via GMP 284, with many further details there.]]
subject heading(s): elliptic plural

Here at O.19.178, I translate the pronoun τέσσερα [τέσσαρα] as ‘in this land [plural]’. This pronoun, referring to the land of Crete, is in the plural, not in the the singular, as we might have expected. The explanation can be found in the comment at O.14.199, where we see Krētē, the name of Crete, not in the singular but in the plural, Krētai. As I point out in that comment, plural Krētai cannot mean a multiplicity of islands named Crete. There is no such thing. Rather, we see there an elliptic plural, meaning ‘Crete and everything that belongs to it’. And of course whatever belongs to Crete are all the Aegean islands and lands controlled by the thalassocracy of Crete. So also in the case of the pronoun τέσσαρα that I translate as ‘in this land [plural]’ at O.19.178, we see an elliptic plural referring to Crete together with everything that belongs to Crete. Even the pronoun signals the imperial power of Crete. [IGN 2017.07.22 via Nagy 2017.04.11 §§527.]

subject heading(s): name Aithôn

This name Aithôn derives from the participle aithôn of the verb aithēin ‘burn’. In the lore of fable, aithôn suits such characters as the crafty fox who is ‘burning’ with hunger and will rely on his craftiness to find ways to feed his insatiable stomach. Such lore is reported in the scholia for Pindar Olympian 11.9, where the generic alōpēx ‘fox’ is actually described as aithôn. Such a description can apply in negative contexts to a beggar in pursuit of food for his insatiable stomach, who in turn is comparable to a greedy blame poet in pursuit of rewards for his poetry. See the comment on O.18.001–004. In positive contexts, on the other hand, the name Aithôn can apply to a righteous man who is ‘burning’ with hunger for justice, as in Theognis 1209–1210 (commentary and further details in GMP 273–274). For more on Aithôn, I strongly recommend the analysis of Levanouk 2011:36–49. [IGN 2017.07.22 via GMP 273–274.]

Q&T via Nagy 2017.04.11 §§3

subject heading(s): Odysseus enters a Cretan Odyssey

There [in Crete] is where I [= Aithôn] saw Odysseus and gave him gifts of guest-host friendship [xenia]. You see, he had been forced to land at Crete by the violent power [s] of a wind. He was trying to get to Troy, but the wind detoured him as he was sailing past the headlands of Maleiai, and he was dropped off [by the violent wind] at Amnisos, exactly where the cave of Eileithia is situated. It was a harsh landing, and he just barely avoided being destroyed by the blasts of the sea-gales. Right away he asked to see Idomeneus as soon as he came to the city [= Knossos]. You see, he was saying that he was a guest-friend [xenos] of Idomeneus and that they had a relationship of mutual respect. But it was by now already the tenth or eleventh day since he [= Idomeneus] had departed, sailing off with a fleet of curved ships on his way to Ilion [Troy].

(What follows is epitomized from Nagy 2017.04.11 §§3.) Here, at this confluence of Minoan-Mycenaean signatures, is where the hero of the Odyssey once again enters the stream of mythmaking about a Cretan Odyssey. In this version, Odysseus has not yet reached his destination, which is Troy, but Idomeneus has presumably already arrived. [IGN 2017.07.22.]

subject heading(s): Amnisos; Eileithia
Detoured by violent winds, the Odysseus of this Cretan Odyssey lands in Crete. The place where he lands is Amnisos, and a poetic landmark for this place is a cave of Eleuthia. As we know from the reportage of Strabo, who flourished in the first century BCE, Amnisos was reputed to be the sea harbor of Minos the king. Here is the precise wording of Strabo (10.4.8 C476): Μίνω νεότατος ἐπίνειαν χρήσοντα, ὅπου τὸ τῆς Ἐλευθείας ἱερὸν ‘they say that Minos used Amnisos as his seaport, and the sacred-space [hieron] of Eleuthia is there’. According to Pausanias (4.20.2), the priestess of Eleuthia at Olympia makes a regular offering to this goddess as also to her cult-hero protégé Sosipolis, and this offering is described as mazas ... memagmenas meli ‘barley-cakes [mazai] kneaded in honey [meli]’ (μάζας ... μεμαγμένας μέλιν). In Laconia and Messenia, the goddess Eleuthia was known as Eleuthia, and this form of her name is actually attested in a Linear B tablet found at Knossos. Here is my transcription of the relevant wording that is written in Knossos tablet Gg 705 line 1:

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a-mi-ni-so / e-re-u-ti-ja ME+RI AMPHORA 1
Amnisos: Eleuthiāi meli [followed by the ideogram for “amphora”] 1
‘Amnisos: for Eleuthia, honey, one amphora’.
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We see here at O.19.188 a striking example of details in Homeric poetry that show continuity with the era of Minoan-Mycenaean civilization. My original argumentation concerning the Minoan-Mycenaean heritage of the details we read in this Homeric verse at O.19.188 appeared in Nagy 1969. For further details on what is said by Pausanias 4.20.2 about Eleuthia, see Nagy 2015.02.25. For more on O.19.188 in the overall context of O.19.185–193, I strongly recommend Leveniuk 2011:93–96, [[IGN 2017.07.22 via 2017.04.11 4§§4–5; also HPC 301n90.]]

O.19.203

Q&T via MoM 2§23

subject heading(s): eiskein ‘make likenesses, liken’; pseude- ‘deceptive’; homoiο- ‘same as, looking like’

loke ψεῦδα πολλά λέγον ἐτύμοιοιν ὁμοία

‘He made likenesses [eiskein], saying many deceptive [pseudea] things looking like [homoia] genuine [etuma] things.’

This verse, which closes the Third Cretan Tale, signals that Odysseus has been speaking as a poet whose art can be understood only by those who are qualified. Most comparable are the verses that are said to be spoken by the Muses to Hesiod in the Hesiodic Theogony, 26–28:

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26 ποιμένες ἄγραυλοι, κάκί ἐλέγχεια, γαστέρες οἶον, ἵκεν ψεῦδα πολλά λέγειν ἐτύμοιοιν ὁμοία, 28 ἵκεν δ’, εὕτε ἑθέλωμεν, ἀληθεὰ γνῶσοσθαι,
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26 Shepherds camping in the fields, base objects of reproach, mere stomachs [gasteres]! We know how to say many deceptive [pseudea] things looking like [homoia] genuine [etuma] things, but we also know how, whenever we wish it, to proclaim things that are true [alethea].
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(What follows is epitomized from MoM 2§§22–28.) In these Hesiodic verses, what is deceptive is not the fact that some things ‘look like’ other things. Rather, what is deceptive is that pseudea ‘deceptive things’ can look like etuma ‘real things’. On this point, see also the comment at O.14.124–125. And even deceptive things that look like real things can still be equal to real things, the same as real things. As I indicated in my comments at O.16.172–212, for example, Odysseus is really ‘equal to the immortals’ when he looks like an immortal in ritual contexts. As I also indicated in those comments, the contexts of eiskein ‘make likenesses, liken’ at O.16.187 and O.16.200 show that Telemachus was justified in saying that Odysseus looks the same as a god after being touched by the wand of Athena. If Telemachus was at first deceived by the looks of Odysseus in such contexts, then the deception was happening from the viewpoint of an uninitiated beholder who could not yet distinguish between what is deceptive and what is real. Similarly in the Hesiodic Theogony, the figure of Hesiod has been such an uninitiated beholder before his poetic initiation into the art of the Muses. After his initiation, however, he can now envision what is real even when he beholds things that can be deceptive. The same principle holds whenever Odysseus utters words to be envisioned only by those who have already been initiated into the art of the Muses of poetry. That is what
happens here at O.19.203. What is deceptive about the deceptive things that Odysseus is saying in his Third Cretan Tale is not the fact that some things ‘look like’ other things. Rather, what is deceptive is that psuedea ‘deceptive things’ look like etuma ‘real things’. And, once again, even these deceptive things that look like real things can still be equal to real things—the same as the real things that are seen by those who are initiated into the art of the Muses. This art is the art of poetic imagination, which can make even deceptive things look like real things, be equal to real things, be the same as real things. Such is the art that is borrowed by the alluring figure of Helen when she makes her voice identical to the voice of any wife of any Homeric hero: see the comment on eksein ‘iken’ at O.04.279. Helen’s voice, borrowed from the poetry of the Muses, has the power of conjuring the voices of the wives themselves. And, by extension, her poetic voice has the power of conjuring the very images of the wives. True, Helen means to deceive, but her deceptive words in this narrative frame are the same as the real words of Homeric poetry in the overall narrative frame of that poetry—real words that activate visions of the real things of Homeric poetry. These real things are whatever is real for this poetry, which is figured as true overall, even if it contains things that seem at first to be deceptive. For Homeric poetry, whatever is divinely true can contain deceptions and still be true. [[GN 2017.07.22 via GMP 44, 274.]]

O.19.204–212

subject heading(s): tékeithai ‘melt away, dissolve’; dissolving while weeping

The emotional response of Penelope to the Third Cretan Tale as told by the disguised Odysseus is to break down in tears. The idea of her melting away in tears, as expressed by way of the verb tékeithai ‘melt away, dissolve’ at O.19.204 and O.19.208, is directly compared here by way of simile—ὅσα ‘just as’ at O.19.205—to the melting of snow on top of a mountain when it makes contact with the West Wind: here the basic physical process of a melting of snow is expressed by way of the verb kata-tékeithai/kata-tékein ‘melt away, dissolve’ at O.19.205/O.19.206. If such familiar idioms as melting away in tears did not exist in the English language today, as also in other modern languages, then the very idea that the khrôs ‘complexion’ of Penelope at O.19.204 and her parêia ‘cheeks’ at O.19.208 were ‘melting away’, as expressed by tékeithai, would surely seem far more defamiliarizing. But the fact is, a feeling that is quite alien is happening in the Homeric comparison here: a macrocosmic process of melting snow is being drawn into a microcosmic personal experience of pouring out your tears from your eyes, all over your complexion—with the result that all of you liquefies. Here the world of similes and metaphors extends into the world of metonymy: the emotional intensity of personal experience connects to the dynamics of the cosmos, as when snow melts. On simile and metaphor, also on metonymy, see the Inventory of terms and names. [[2017.07.22 via HC 2§255, 2§255n.]]

O.19.215–248

subject heading(s): noeîn ‘take note (of), notice’

Penelope tests the disguised Odysseus, who claims to have encountered the real Odysseus. If you really did encounter him, tell me details about him! Here are the questions at O.19.215–219: what was his outer appearance, what did he wear, and who were his nearest companions? In responding to Penelope with a detailed description, O.19.221–248, the disguised Odysseus displays his mental bravura in making connections between his disguised self and his real self. In this context, at I.19.132, while describing a tunic worn by the real Odysseus, the disguised Odysseus uses the word noeîn: ‘I took-note [noeîn]of the tunic’ (τῶν δὲ χίτων ἐνώνη). As we have already seen in other contexts, the act of noticing as indicated by noeîn ‘take note (of), notice’ is programmed to lead toward recognition. See the comments at O.08.094 and O.08.533. See also especially the anchor comment at I.05.669 on noeîn ‘take note (of), notice’. [[GN 2017.07.22 via GMP 205.]]

O.19.250

subject heading(s): sêma ‘sign’; anagignôskein ‘recognize’

The disguised Odysseus has just finished narrating to Penelope a description of the real Odysseus, giving a variety of details. Here at O.19.250, these details are described as sêmata ‘signs’ that are all ‘recognized’ by Penelope, as indicated by the verb anagignôskein (ἀγιγνώσκειν) as noted already in the comment at O.19.215–248, the verb noeîn ‘take note of, notice’ already indicates that a recognition is about to take place. [[GN 2017.07.22 via GMP 205.]]

O.19.255–257
subject heading(s): tokens of recognition

Penelope formally confirms here that the details recounted by the disguised Odysseus at O.19.221–248 have been recognized by her as indications of the real Odysseus. [[GN 2017.07.22 via GMP 203]]

O.19.264

subject heading(s): tēkein ‘melt away, dissolve’

Once again, the emotional experience of Penelope is conveyed by the metaphor of dissolving while weeping. See especially the comment at O.19.204–212. [[GN 2017.07.22 via HC 2§256n.]]

O.19.309–316

subject heading(s): hospitality of Odysseus

Penelope shows that she knows how to match the hospitality that Odysseus had consistently demonstrated as king of Ithaca. What she says here will be elaborated further at O.19.325–334. See the comments on those verses. [[GN 2017.07.22 via BA 38.]]

O.19.320

subject heading(s): Éos; ēri ‘early’

The goddess of the dawn, Éos, has a fixed epithet éri-géneia, meaning ‘early-generated’ or ‘early-generating’, as at O.02.001. This epithet, which is exclusively hers, has a prefix that derives from the old locative adverb ēri ‘early’, and Homeric diction actually preserves ēri in collocation with éos ‘dawn’ here at O.19.320. This form éri-géneia is comparable to the name of the earth-encircling river Éri-danós, as described in Apollonius of Rhodes Argonautica 4.596. The first part of this name Éri-danós likewise has the prefix ēri; the second part –danos seems to mean ‘dew’ or ‘fluid’, and a likely cognate is Indic dąnu- ‘fluid, dew’. See also Part 4 of the comment on O.15.250–251. [[GN 2017.07.22 via GMP 246.]]

O.19.325–334

subject heading(s): hospitality of Odysseus; klesos ‘glory’

Once again, Penelope shows that she knows how to match the hospitality that Odysseus had consistently demonstrated as king of Ithaca—hospitality that will earn for him poetic klesos ‘glory’, O.19.333. This passage, then, will be relevant to the context of klesos ‘glory’ at I.24.196. [[GN 2017.07.22 via BA 37–38.]]

O.19.334

subject heading(s): ep’ anthrōpous ‘throughout humankind’

This expression ep’ anthrōpous ‘throughout humankind’ here at O.19.334 is conventionally associated with words referring to remembrance by way of song. In this case, the relevant word is klesos, O.19.333, referring to the ‘glory’ of poetry and song. See the anchor comment at I.10.213. [[GN 2017.07.22 via BA 37–38.]]

O.19.331

subject heading(s): ephepsiaásthai ‘mock’

Here at O.19.331 the objects of mockery as expressed by the verb ephepsiaásthai ‘mock’ are the unjust, who therefore deserve to be mocked. Such mockery comes from blame poetry, and here the blame is directed at those who violate the moral protocols of hospitality. [[GN 2017.07.23 via BA 257.]]

O.19.370–374
subject heading(s): ephepsiāståthai ‘mock’; lōbē ‘words of insult’; aiskhos ‘disgrace, shame’

Here at O.19.370 and O.19.372 the objects of mockery as expressed by the verb ephepsiāståthai ‘mock’ are not the unjust but the just, such as the disguised Odysseus and others like him who are despised as beggars. Once again, such mockery comes from blame poetry, but here the blame is unjustifiable. The women who mock the disguised Odysseus are described at O.19.373 as engaging in lōbē ‘words of insult’ and aiskhea ‘disgraceful things’. Both these words point to unjustified forms of blame. On lōbē ‘words of insult’, see the comment at O.18.347. As for aiskhea ‘disgraceful things’, it is the concrete plural of the abstract singular aiskhos, which means ‘disgrace, shame’: see the comment on aiskhos at O.11.433. [[GN 2017.07.23 via BA 257]]

O.19.388–507

subject heading(s): scar of Odysseus; [sēma ‘sign, signal’] boar hunt at Mount Parnassus; gignōskein ‘recognize’

Eurykleia recognizes Odysseus when she is washing his feet. The sign for her recognition is the scar that she notices on his leg—a wound that marks the time when he went on a boar hunt to Parnassus with his mother’s father, Autolykos. The word that signals the recognition is gignōskein ‘recognize’ at O.19.392 and at O.19.468. The scar that Eurykleia recognizes here turns out to be a sēma ‘sign, signal’ of the hero’s true identity, as we see from the use of that word at O.21.217 and at O.23.073. See the comments at O.21.217–224 and at O.23.073–077 respectively. This word sēma ‘sign, signal’ does not occur here at O.19.388–507, but the occurrences at O.21.217 and O.23.073 and O.24.329 indicate clearly that the scar as a sēma is a subtext, as it were, for the recognition scene that frames the narrative about the boar hunt at Parnassus. [[GN 2017.08.09]]

O.19.433–434

subject heading(s): Ókeanos

As we see here at O.19.433–434, the sun rises from the waters of the world-encircling river Ókeanos at sunrise, as also at I.07.421–423, and it sets into these same waters at sunset, as we see at I.08.485–486. See the comment at I.07.421–423. [[GN 2017.07.23 via BA 196 and GMP 237–238, 426]]

O.19.440

subject heading(s): menos ‘mental power’

The translation of menos here at O.19.440 as the ‘mental power’ of winds is explained in the note at I.12.018. I epitomize here: forces of nature can have a mind of their own, as it were, because they are connected to the mental power of divinities who control the cosmos and to whom humans using their own mental power can pray for the activation of such control. [[GN 2017.07.23 via GMP 114]]

O.19.518–523

Q&T via PasP 7–8

subject heading(s): aëdōn ‘nightingale’; myth of Aëdōn

\[\text{At} \ \text{as the daughter of Pandareos, the nightingale [aëdōn] in the green [sings beautifully at the onset anew of springtime, [perched in the dense foliage of trees, [sounding it around [trōpōsa] thick and fast, a voice with many resoundings [pulēkhēs], [lamenting her child, the dear Itylos, whom once upon a time with weapon of bronze [she killed inadvertently, the son of Zethos the king.} \]
Here at O.19.518–523 the figure of Penelope expresses her anxieties by comparing them to the emotions expressed in the song of a generic αἰδών ‘nightingale’, O.19.518, and the bird is in this context immediately identified with a woman named Aëdon who became the prototype of all nightingales when she was turned into a nightingale as a result of the immeasurable sorrow she experienced over having inadvertently killed her own son. What is most remarkable about this comparison, framed as a simile by way of the phrase ὥς δέ ὦτε ‘just as when’ at O.19.518, is that the primal emotions of the woman Aëdon are figured as the prototype of the emotions conveyed by the song sung by any nightingale. For mythological variations on the theme of a woman who turned into the prototype of all nightingales, see Nagy 2016.01.07. For more on the myth of Aëdon and its relevance to Penelope, I strongly recommend the analysis of Levaniouk 2011:213–228. [[GN 2017.07.23.]]

O.19.521

subject heading(s): τρόποσα ‘changing around’; poluēkhēs ‘with many resoundings’; poludeukēs ‘with many continuations’

The generic nightingale, as she sings her song, modulates her tune, ‘changing it around’—which is how I translate τρόποσα (τρυμώσα) here at I.19.521. The sound made by the songbird’s song is described in this same verse as poluēkhēs ‘with many resoundings’ (accusative πολυηχέον), but there is a variant reading reported by Aelian On the nature of animals 5.36: poludeukēs (likewise accusative πολυδεικέα) ‘with many continuations’. Morphologically, this form poludeukēs ‘with many continuations’ is the opposite of adeukēs, meaning ‘discontinuous, interrupting’—in other words, ‘with no continuations’. For more on the meaning of adeukēs, see the anchor comment at O.04.489. [[GN 2017.07.23 via PasP ch.1.]]

O.19.522

subject heading(s): Itylos

There is a pattern of onomatopoeia built into the name Itylos = ἵτυλος, as derivative of ἵτυς (´Ituc), a name of the son of the unfortunate mythical woman who was turned into a nightingale. The doubling of this name produces a “tweeting” effect, as in Aeschylus Agamemnon 1144: ἵτυν ἤτυν στάνου ὴ [the nightingale] mourning “Itun Itun’”; also Sophocles Electra 148: ἢ ἵτυν αἵτιν ἵτυν ὁλοφόρεται ‘who keeps on mourning “Itun Itun”.’ [[GN 2017.07.23 via PasP 41.]]

O.19.528

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’

Here again at O.19.528, as at O.11.179, O.15.521–522, O.16.076, O.18.289, it is said that whoever succeeds in marrying Penelope would surely qualify as ‘the best of the Achaeans’. And now it is Penelope herself who is saying this. [[GN 2017.07.23 via BA 39.]]

O.19.535–565

subject heading(s): dream of Penelope

Penelope tests the disguised Odysseus by challenging him to interpret a dream that she had, which is for her a sign that she says she needs to be interpreted for her, O.19.535–553. Odysseus responds to the sign, giving his interpretation, O.19.555–558, and then Penelope responds to the interpretation, O.19.560–569. What Penelope dreams, O.19.535–553, is that the geese in her courtyard are suddenly killed by an eagle that swoops down on them. She cries and cries over the loss of her geese. But then, within the narrative of the dream itself, O.19.546–550, the eagle is quoted as saying to Penelope that he is Odysseus and that the geese are the suitors, who are to be punished for their unjust behavior. The disguised Odysseus responds to the convoluted words of Penelope by saying that her dream has already interpreted itself and that no response is needed from him—except to say what he has just said, that the dream has already interpreted itself, O.17.555–558. This way, Odysseus postpones identifying himself to Penelope, but at the same time he shows his good judgment in distinguishing between what is false and what is true about his own heroic identity as defined by his sense of justice, which is being challenged by the injustices inflicted on him by the suitors. [[GN 2017.07.23 via H24H 13§24.]]

O.19.535
subject heading(s): hupokrinesthai ‘respond to (a sign), interpret’

‘Come, respond [hup-o-krinesthai] to my dream [oneiros], and hear my telling of it.’

When Penelope challenges the disguised Odysseus to interpret her oneiros ‘dream’, the word that is used in her challenge here at 0.19.535 is hupokrinesthai, which I translate as ‘respond to (a sign), interpret’; the same word is used at 0.19.555 when the disguised Odysseus refers to the challenge. The verb hupokrinesthai is used at 0.19.535 in the imperative, and the word for ‘dream’, oneiros, is in the accusative; likewise at 0.19.555, hupokrinesthai takes the accusative of the word for ‘dream’, oneiros. This verb is derived from krinein/krinesthai, the basic meaning of which is ‘separate, distinguish, judge’. The verb krinein, in the active voice, can be translated as ‘interpret’ when combined with the noun opsis, ‘vision’, as its object (Herodotus 7.19.1-2) or with enupnion, ‘dream’, as its object (Herodotus 1.120.1). It is a question of interpreting-in-performance. In the middle voice, hupokrinesthai suggests that the performer is interpreting for himself as well as for others. The basic idea of hupokrinesthai, then, is to see the real meaning of what others see and to quote back, as it were, what this vision is really telling them. Such a vision distinguishes what is real from what is unreal. [GN 2017.07.23 via H24H 13§§24-25; further analysis in HR 24-25.]

O.19.547

subject heading(s): or-‘dream’; hupar ‘dream that turns into reality’; esthlo- ‘real, genuine, good’; hupar esthlon ‘wakful reality’; telein ‘reach an outcome; bring to fulfillment’

In Penelope’s dream as she reports it here at O.19.547, the talking eagle that dream-interprets itself to be really Odysseus says that this dream is not just any oran or ‘dream’ but rather, more than that, it is a hupar esthion or ‘waking reality’ (ouk οναρ, άλλον υπάρχην και άκούσαν). The reality that is being foretold in the dream here at O.19.547 is signaled by the word hupar, which refers to a dream that is seen when one is asleep but will also be seen after one is awake, as opposed to the word oran (also oneiros), which refers to a dream seen only in sleep. (The word hupar is cognate with the element suppar- of the Hittite verb suppaniya- ‘sleep’; see DELG under υπάρχην.) The reality foretold by a dream that is hupar is reinforced here at O.19.547 by the epithet esthion ‘real, genuine, good’, which is derived from the root esth- ‘to be’ as in esti ‘is’. The vision signaled by the hupar esthlon or ‘waking reality’, as I have translated it, will come to fulfillment, that is, it will reach its real outcome, as expressed by the verb telein ‘reach an outcome’. Imperfective uses of this verb telein ‘reach an outcome’ refer to realities that are still in the making, that have not yet come to fulfillment: see for example the comment at I.02.330. Perfective uses of this same word, on the other hand, refer to a reality that has come to fulfillment. Here at O.19.547, we see a future perfect use: the talking eagle of the dream is foretelling a reality that will have already happened when the right moment in the narrative finally arrives. This verb telein ‘reach an outcome’, as used here at O.19.547, focuses on a central idea in contexts of composition-in-performance. The idea is this: whatever is being said in the performance will come to fulfillment in the composition when all is said and done. [GN 2017.08.03 via HC 1§63.]

O.19.562–569

subject heading(s): Gates of Horn and Ivory

In the response of Penelope, O.19.562–569, to the response of Odysseus in interpreting her dream, she says that there are two kinds of dreams, passing through two kinds of pulai ‘gates’, O.19.562: the first kind passes through a gate of keros ‘horn’, and the second kind, through a gate of elephas ‘ivory’, O.19.563. The first kind signals what is real, while the second, what is deceptive. That is why the mental power of distinguishing what is real from what is unreal becomes so seriously important. But there is also a playful side to these images of horn and ivory, as reflected in the word play that links (1) the noun keros ‘horn’ with the verb kraisein in the sense of ‘authorize as real’, O.19.567, and (2) the noun elephas ‘ivory’ with the verb elephairesthai in the sense of ‘deceive’, O.19.565. The object of the verb kraisein ‘authorize as real’ here is etuma ‘real things’ (etumai). O.19.567: that is what dreams from a Gate of Horn will bring. Correspondingly, the object of what is brought by dreams from a Gate of Ivory is a-krain-ta ‘unauthorized’ (akpaivta), O.19.565. The playfulness extends further: I suspect that the symbolism of keros ‘horn’ here involves not only the elevated sense of ‘authorization' but also the earthy sense of
sexual desire. I suspect that the Aphrodisiac properties linked with horn as a substance are in play here. Perhaps relevant is all the folklore surrounding the earthy English adjective ‘horny’. When I speak of ‘horn’ here, I have in mind primarily the kerata ‘antlers’ of deer, the aphrodisiac properties of which are highlighted for example by the physician Galen (vol. 14 p. 240 ed. C. G. Kühn 1827). I ask myself: why does Penelope cry and cry in her dream about losing her geese? Perhaps her familiarity with the geese can be linked with her familiarity—however unwelcome—with the suitors. The geese have been around for twenty years, and where was the eagle during all this time? Perhaps that is why it is safe for Penelope to offer a recusal at O.19.568–569: surely my dream came from a Gate of Ivory, not from a Gate of Horn. For more on Penelope’s dream, I strongly recommend the analysis of Levaniousk 2011:229–246, with a critical survey of the multifarious interpretations that have been offered over the years by experts and nonexperts alike. [[GN 2017.08.03.]

O.19.562

subject heading(s): [menos ‘mental power’;] amenêna ‘having no menos inside’

The adjective amenêna ‘having no mental power [menos] inside’ applies elsewhere exclusively to the dead. Here it applies to dreams. See further the comment at O.10.521. [[GN 2017.07.23 via GMP 226.]]

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Odyssey Rhapsody 20

2017.08.03 / enhanced 2018.10.13

Rhapsody 20 reveals the darkest thoughts of Penelope. There she is, lying awake in bed, unable to fall asleep, and now she starts to think the unthinkable, tearfully spilling her private thoughts by praying to Artemis: I want to die in the worst way, she confides to the goddess, so why don’t you shoot me with your arrows, putting me out of my misery? Or maybe my death should be even worse? Penelope is now haunted by horror stories about unfortunate girls who thought they were getting married but who instead became servants to infernal Furies. She cries for them and she cries for herself, thinking of a dream she had about sleeping with Odysseus, who was looking the way he had looked twenty years ago. Her crying carries over till daybreak, and her laments are overheard from not that far away by Odysseus, who is having his own dark thoughts about the vengeance he so passionately desires. [[GN 2017.08.01.]]

Figure 44. “The Harpies Going to Seize the Daughters of Pandareus” (1805). John Flaxman (English, 1755–1826). Purchased as part of the Oppé Collection with assistance from the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund 1996. Image via the Tate.
subject heading(s); death wish of Penelope; daughters of Pandareos; *θυελλαί* ‘gusts of wind’; *harpuiai* ‘rapacious gusts of winds, Harpies’; abduction by gusts of wind; ጅκεανος; Aphrodite; Hèrā; Artemis; Athena; *Ερινεύς* ‘Furies’; ring composition

In a despondent mood, unable to fall asleep, Penelope prays to the goddess Artemis, wishing for a death that should happen ἐδὴ ‘already now’, O.20.061 (ἥν), that is, *autika nûn* ‘right this instant’, O.20.063 (autīka vôv). Such a death, if it is to happen ‘right this instant’, would come from arrows shot by Artemis, O.20.061–063. And such an instantaneous death would thus happen before Penelope were to be forced into marry one of the suitors. Alternatively, however, the death that she wishes for could happen at a later point, as indicated by way of the expression ἢ ἐπείτα ‘or later’, O.20.063 (ἡ ἐπείτα). In the case of such a postponed death, the sequence of events would have already reached a moment where a forced marriage has already been arranged for an unwilling Penelope—and where the wedding is already about to take place. Penelope’s alternative wish to die at such a later moment, right before an actual wedding, pictures the same kind of death that had been experienced once upon a time by the daughters of Pandareos, whose story will now be retold, starting at O.20.066. The retelling of this story from a distant past will be worded by Penelope herself, who will now make a comparison between what had happened to the daughters of Pandareos and what she imagines will eventually happen in her own story if she is forced to marry one of the suitors. I will now consider the wording that introduces the comparison between the dreaded future of Penelope and the dreaded past of the daughters of Pandareos. A moment in that past time is described most ominously here: ‘just as when gusts of wind *θυελλαί* took away [ἀν-ελείν] the daughters of Pandareos’, O.20.066 (ὡς δ’ ὁτε Πανδαρέου κοῦρας ἀνέλαντο θυελλαί). Thus, just as the daughters of Pandareos had been taken away by gusts of wind right before their wedding, so also Penelope, in her prayer, wishes for a comparable death if she cannot die right away. Here is how she says it: ‘or later ἢ ἐπείτα] may a gust of wind *θυελλαί*, snatch me away [ἀν-ἐπαξάσα...’, O.20.063 (ἡ ἐπείτα μ’ αναρφάζεσα θυελλαί). ‘... and drop me into the forward-flowing streams of the ጅκεανος’, O.20.063–065 (ἐν προχής βάλο ... ጅκεανοί). This world-encircling river ጅκεανος, as we have already seen in other Homeric contexts, separates the living from the dead. See especially the comment at O.10.508–512: to *cross the streams of the ጅκεανος is to cross into Hădēs*. So, if Penelope cannot be granted her first wish, which is, to die right now, shot to death by the arrows of Artemis, then the wording of her prayer allows her to ask for her alternative second wish, which is, to experience death before any wedding is arranged against her will. But how does such a wedding, dreaded by Penelope, compare with the wedding that had been arranged for the daughters of Pandareos? At O.20.073–076, we see that the divinity who was arranging for these girls to get married was Aphrodite, seemingly acting as a sole agent. Earlier, at O.20.067–069, we see that Aphrodite had saved the girls from dying after their parents had been destroyed by the gods: it seems that the orphan girls were still infants, and Aphrodite raised them on a diet of cheese, honey, and wine, O.20.068–069. As the little orphans, saved by Aphrodite, were growing up, other female deities took part in raising them: (1) Hèrā gave them beauty and intelligence, O.20.070–071, (2) Artemis gave them just the right dimensions to grow into, O.20.71, and (3) Athena gave them skills, O.20.072—which surely included expertise in weaving. But then, at a point where the girls are already so perfectly ready for marriage—a marriage that Aphrodite had personally arranged for them—they are snatched away by violent gusts of wind, O.20.077, which deliver them to *Ερινεύς* ‘Furies’ whom they are now destined to serve as attendants, O.20.078. And the removal of the girls from the visible world is described here in wording that is more violent than the wording that had previously described the death wished by Penelope for herself. Penelope’s wording had referred to a *θυελλαί* ‘gust of wind’ that would snatch her away from the visible world, O.20.063, and carry her off to the ጅκεανος, where she would cross into the realm of Hădēs. But now, at O.20.077, the gusts of winds that snatch away the daughters of Pandareos are *harpuiai*, and the violence of these gusts of wind is evident in the English word that is used to translate the personifications of these ‘rapacious gusts of wind’. These personified gusts of wind are the *Harpies*. And the death of these unfortunate girls who were seized by the Harpies is then followed by a horrific afterlife, imagined as an eternity of servitude to *Ερινεύς* ‘Furies’, O.20.078. How, then, to account for the dreaded fate of the daughters of Pandareos? Something went very wrong here. Although the Homeric narrative gives no details about the identity of the bridegrooms intended for these would-be brides, I suspect that there was something wrong with them in particular—and that the sole agency of Aphrodite in arranging for the would-be wedding, seemingly to the exclusion of Hèrā, Artemis, and Athena, signals what might have gone wrong for the daughters of Pandareos. Whatever it was that did go wrong for these doomed girls, Penelope says that the infernal fate that awaited them is for her still preferable to the dreaded prospect of her getting married off to any of the suitors. Before I can bring this analysis to a close, I must return here to the wording ἢ ἐπείτα at O.20.063, which I have translated simply as ‘or later’. The function of this wording can easily be misunderstood if we lose track of the ring composition that is activated at this point. Penelope wishes for an immediate death caused by the shafts of Artemis, O.20.061–063, or a delayed death caused by the abducting winds, O.20.63–65. At O.20.066, the story about the abduction of the daughters of Pandareos is introduced as a precedent. The story is further
developed at O.20.067–076, climaxed at O.20.077, where we see a recap of O.22.066. Then the line at O.20.079 recaps Penelope’s wish for a delayed death, and, to close out the ring composition, the line at O.22.080 recap her original wish for an immediate death. So, the force of ἐπείτα ‘or later’ in expressing a delayed death at O.20.063 is that the winds would snatch Penelope away at a later point in the presumed narrative, right before her marriage to one of the suitors, just as the Harpies abducted the daughters of Pandareos right before the arranged marriage of these doomed girls. O.20.073–074. My interpretation of ἐπείτα ‘or later’ here at O.20.063 helps explain the connotations of the epithet metamórphos ‘delayed’ as applied to the Ἀρπαίαι ‘Harpies’ at Hesiod Theogony 269. [[GN 2017.08.01 via BA 194–196; see also GMP 99, 244, 251–252]]

O.20.061

subject heading(s): thugatér Dios ‘daughter of Zeus’

This epithet thugatér Dios ‘daughter of Zeus’, applied here to the goddess Artemis, derives from contexts that apply to the goddess of the dawn, Ἐως. See the anchor comment at I.03.374. [[GN 2017.08.02 via GMP 244–246, 250–252]]

O.20.087–090

subject heading(s): dream of Penelope; hupar esthlon ‘wakeup reality’

In her wakeful agonizing, Penelope recalls a dream she had, O.20.087–090, where she was lying in bed with Odysseus at her side, and he looked the way he had looked when she had last seen him twenty years earlier. It seemed to her, she says at O.20.090, that this was not an onar ‘dream’ but a hupar esthlon ‘wakeup reality’ (ὦκ ὁμαρ, ἀλλ’ ὁπαρ ἔθαιλόν). On my interpretation of this ‘wakeup reality’, see the note at O.19.547. Penelope’s remembrance of such a dream here validates the reality that is foretold in the dream as narrated and then interpreted at O.19.535–565. See the comment on the lines there. Further, this dream as remembered here at O.20.087–090 will in fact come true in Odyssey 23, when Penelope and Odysseus are finally reunited. As we will see, Odysseus at O.23.163 emerges from a ritual bath looking like a perfect bridegroom. See the comment at that line. So, Penelope will soon be lying together in bed with the man of her dreams. [[GN 2017.08.03.]]

O.20.098–121

subject heading(s): a double omen for Odysseus; phémē ‘something said; something said that means more than what is meant by the one who says it’; kléádon ‘prophetic utterance’

(What follows is epitomized from HR 55–60 = 3§§20–33.)

§20.] At O.20.103–104 Odysseus is praying to Zeus for both an omen and a phémē ‘something said’ as indications telling him that he will indeed prevail over the suitors. Zeus responds by sending both thunder, O.20.103–104, and a phémē, O.20.105.

§21.] The phémē takes the form of a prayer uttered by an anonymous woman grinding grain with her handmill, O.20.112–119. She is not sure for whom the sign of the god’s thunder is intended, O.20.114 (τοι for someone), but she prays to Zeus that he should intend it for her too, O.20.115 (καὶ ἐποί for ‘me too’) by bringing to fulfillment the epos ‘words’ that she now speaks, O.20.115. The narrative that frames what she says in her prayer likewise refers to the prayer as an epos, adding that this epos is meant to be a σῆμα ‘sign’ for Odysseus, O.20.111.

§22.] What the woman is quoted as saying is poetically represented here as a song, as we can see from the reference to “milling songs” in Plutarch Banquet of the Seven Sages 157 (Carmina Popularia [PMG] no. 869): in this case, it is stated explicitly that a woman is heard singing while grinding grain with her handmill. At O.20.111, the poetic representation of singing here is also indicated by way of the word epos, plural epea, which means not just ‘words’ but also specifically ‘poetic words’ in Homeric diction (see the comments on epea ‘words’ at I.12.387–391 and at I.20.248–250; see also GMP 221).

§23.] For some interpreters, an irreversible mistake can be found here in what seems to be a contradiction between the words of the narrative framing the phémē and the words of the “quoted” phémē itself. In the words of the phémē as spoken by the woman, she says that the thundering of Zeus came from the starry sky, O.20.113 (ὅπανον ὠπερέσδοντος), where no cloud is to be seen, O.20.114 (οὐδὲ ποθὲ νεφος ἐστι ‘and there is not a cloud ἄραphos] anywhere’). This, then, was the sign
that the woman had received: it was a thundering from a clear sky. By contrast, the narrative that frames what she says refers to the thundering of Zeus ‘from ‘radiant Olympus’, O.20.103 (ἄπι ἀιμαλήνης Ὀλύμπου), and the thundering had come ‘from on high, from out of the clouds [nephea]’, O.20.104 (ὑψόθεν ἐκ νεφέων).

[§24.] Of course, no Homer critic would have any problem if the narrative frame here had been more simple, featuring only one sign—that is, if Odysseus had prayed for only one sign, the thunder of Zeus. The problem seems to arise from the combining of two signs in the narration—the thunder of Zeus and the song of the anonymous woman. It is this combination that has led to what appears to be a contradiction between these two signs. And yet, I propose that the combining of two narrative signs here amounts to an artistic narratological elaboration, which succeeds in producing a special poetic effect by way of juxtaposing the perceptions of the anonymous woman and the perceptions of Odysseus.

[§25.] For the anonymous woman, only one sign had been needed, the thundering of Zeus, and that is the sign that she had received. For Odysseus, however, the thundering of Zeus was not the complete sign that he had received. It was an incomplete sign. In terms of his own prayer, it had to be completed, complemented, by something that is actually said, which turned out to be the words of the woman. Those words, however, could not become a completed ἐκθέμεν ἕνα ἐρωτικόν sign for Odysseus unless Zeus heeded those words on their own terms, on the woman’s terms. For the woman, the thundering of Zeus came from a clear sky. For Odysseus, the same thundering had come from a clouded sky, and the message of Zeus became clear only after the woman received her own message from a clear sky. The wording of the woman, an incipient ἐπόσ is what as yet unclear for her, became a finished ἐπόσ that was indeed clear for Odysseus, just as the thundering of Zeus shifted perceptually from a clouded to a clear sky. For Odysseus, the clarification and hence the fulfillment of the ἐπόσ of the woman makes this ἐπόσ into a genuine prophetic utterance: the ἐκθέμεν ‘thing said’ as it is called at O.20.100 and at O.20.105 turns out to be a κλεόδιν ‘prophetic utterance’, as it is finally called at O.20.120. The woman’s words have now become fulfilled as a speech-act. Her speech—or song—has now become an act of special prophecy, of cledonomancy. At the moment of fulfillment, Odysseus rejoices at both omens: (1) the prophetic utterance, κλεόδιν, and (2) the thundering of Zeus. Here is the wording: ‘he rejoiced at the κλεόδιν | and at the thundering of Zeus’, O.20.120–121 (χαίρεν δὲ κλεόδιν ... | Ζηνός τε βροντή).

[§26.] The prophecy, of course, starts with Zeus, whose thundering is in itself the primal act that leads to the cledonomancy. Zeus himself is ultimately prophetic in his manifestations of weather, and his meaning can be ambivalently bright or dark, clear or cloudy, positive or negative. The Indo-European form *djeu-, which becomes Greek Zeus (Ζεύς), means basically ‘sky’, thus conveying a cledonomadic ambivalence: it portends either clear or clouded weather. Despite this ambivalence of clear or clouded, positive or negative, in the meaning ‘sky’, the Indo-European noun *djeu-stems from the verb ‘di u-, which has only the positive meaning ‘be bright / clear’, not the negative ‘be dark / cloudy’. The darkness and the clouds show the other side of Zeus.

[§27.] There is a similar cledonomadic ambivalence in the meaning of the Indo-European form *hēbhos, which becomes Greek nephos (νέφος) ‘cloud’: it means basically ‘cloud’ in ambivalently good or bad weather. This ambivalence explains the fact that in some Indo-European languages the derivative of *hēbhos means primarily ‘sky’, by way of metonymy. Such is the case with Russian nebo ‘sky’. Thus in Russian idiom, на неbe ni oblaka means ‘there’s not a cloud [oblaka] in the sky [nebo]’. From the standpoint of Indo-European linguistics, we see here a new word for ‘cloud’, oblako, while the old word for ‘cloud’ has become, metonymically, the new word for ‘sky’. This new word can even stand for a cloudless sky, as in the idiom we have just seen: na nebe ni oblaka means ‘there’s not a cloud [oblaka] in the sky [nebo]’.

[§28.] Such a metonymic sense of Indo-European *hēbhos as ‘sky’ is visible also in some Homeric usages of the noun nephos / nephea ‘cloud’ / ‘clouds’, which is potentially ambivalent in its own right concerning questions of good or bad weather. When Zeus thunders ‘from on high, from out of the clouds [nephea]’ at O.20.105 (ὑψόθεν ἐκ νεφέων), he is thundering from the sky, through the metonymy of the clouds. In this case, the ambivalence of clouds or sky is canceled only by the explicit statement, in the words of the singing woman at 20.114, that there is no nephos ‘cloud’ in the sky. In all other Homeric attestations, the potential metonymic sense of nephos / nephea as ‘sky’ can remain in force. A particularly striking example of this metonymic sense of ‘sky’ is evident at I.13.523–524, where Zeus is pictured as sitting in grand isolation on the summit of Olympus, under a shining canopy of ‘golden nephea’ (Ἀλλὰ ὁ γὰρ ἄρφω Ὀλύμπῳ ὑπὸ χρυσότοιο νέφεσιν ἔστο). At that moment in the narrative, the god is described as ‘wrapped up’ in his own thoughts, which are conventionally called the Will of Zeus, I.13.524 (Διὸς θυμόν οὐκέλευοι). The scholia V for O.20.104 actually cite this Iliadic passage, explaining the usage of nephea at O.20.104 in terms of metonymy. A similar explanation is offered in Scholia BQ: that the word nephea at O.20.102 is to be understood as referring to a realm where clouds can be expected to happen.
[§29.] I propose that the theme of the Will of Zeus, as a conventional plot device of Homeric narrative, is essential for understanding the double omen of Zeus’ thunder and the woman’s song in the Odyssey. I propose, further, that the weather in this passage of the Odyssey depends on the Will of Zeus, and that the sudden shift from a cloudy to a clear sky is a choice in Homeric narratology, not a mistake in Homeric meteorology.

[§30.] Moreover, the sudden shift from cloudy to clear skies can happen only after the narrative makes it clear that there is not a cloud in the sky. Before that clarification, it was left unclear whether or not the sky was cloudy. If the thundering of Zeus comes out of a clear blue sky, it is a bigger omen than if it comes out of a cloudy sky. If Odysseus had prayed for just one omen, not two, it would not be clear whether the thundering of Zeus had happened in cloudy or in clear weather. Since he prayed for two omens, however, and since the second omen was granted, now everything is clear, and the prophecy is augmented.

[§31.] The shift from a clouded sky to a clear one depends on the clarification of the Will of Zeus in the course of the narrative. Further, the sēma ‘sign’ meant by Zeus for Odysseus at O.20.111 depends implicitly on the faculty for both encoding and decoding it, and that faculty is conventionally expressed by the noun nóos ‘mind’ and the verb noēĩn ‘take note (of), notice’ (see the anchor comment at I.05.669). The nóos or ‘intentionality’ of Zeus is key to understanding the plot-constructions of Homeric narrative. In the Iliad, for example, when Zeus expresses his Will by nodding his head, I.01.524–527, Hērā reacts by chiding him for not telling what it is that he really intends—literally, for not making an epos out of what he ‘has in his nóos’, as expressed by the verb noēĩn at I.01.543. Zeus replies that the mūthos ‘wording’ that he ‘has in his nóos’ as expressed again by noēĩn at I.01.549, is for him alone to know. And yet, the Homeric audience may already know, since the Iliad declares programmatically that its plot is the Will of Zeus, I.01.005. See the comment at that line (see also GMP 222).

[§32.] To sum up, I repeat my earlier formulation: when Zeus thunders ‘from on high, from out of the clouds ἱερεῖα’ at O.20.105 (οὐκ ὅπερ ἐκ νεφεῖαι), he is essentially thundering from the sky, through the metonymy of the clouds. This poetic description in the framing narrative does not contradict, per se, the later perception of a clear sky within the framed speech, O.20.114: ‘and there is not a cloud [nephos] anywhere’ (οὐκ ἐστὶν νεφος ἐκτός). But that later perception does indeed clarify the earlier narrative perception of a sky that may be clouded over. Now the sky is clear, as the cledonomantic words have finally been clarified.

[§33.] The time has come to rethink the passage I have analyzed here in terms of oral poetics, not just poetics per se. I hold that the complexities of this passage reflect the accretions of a highly sophisticated oral poetic tradition that kept on continually recombining its older and its newer elements in the productive phases of its evolution. These older and newer elements may at times seem to contradict each other if we stop and view each of them as individual parts, but I suggest that such contradictions were transcended by the actual re-combinations of these parts into the totality of an ongoing system that we know as Homeric poetry. In order to account for such an ongoing system, I developed my evolutionary model for the making of Homeric poetry. For more on such a model, see the comment at I.12.335–336 and at I.13.066; also the Excursus on O.13.158. [[GN 2017.08.03.]]

O.20.204–205

subject heading(s): noeiĩn ‘take note (of), notice’; mnē- ‘mentally connect’

The cognitive process of noeiĩn ‘take note (of), notice’ at O.20.204 is associated here with a moment of ‘remembering’ as expressed by the root of the verb mnē- ‘mentally connect’ at O.20.205. [[GN 2017.08.03 via GMP 211.]]

O.20.263

subject heading(s): kertomiai ‘words of insult’; language of praise/blame; blame poetry

The noun kertomiai ‘words of insult’ is correlated with the verb kertomeĩn ‘say words of insult’, as attested at I.02.256, O.02.323, O.18.350. [[GN 2017.08.03 via BA 261.]]

O.20.266

subject heading(s): enīpē ‘scolding’; language of praise/blame; blame poetry
The noun enipē ‘scolding’ is correlated with the verb eniptein ‘scold’, on which see especially the comment at O.18.321–326. [[GN 2017.08.03 via BA 261.]]

O.20.276–280

anchor comment on festival of Apollo

subject heading(s): hekatombē ‘hecatomb’; dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’; daiesthai ‘feast; divide (meat), apportion, distribute’; stylized festival

The feasting that we see being described here at O.20.276–280 involves the whole astu ‘city’ of Ithaca, O.20.276, and, as we see in the wording of O.20.276–277, all this feasting climaxes in a hekatombē ‘hecatomb’, as proclaimed throughout the city by kērūkes ‘heralds’. On the word hekatombē ‘hecatomb’, a priestly word referring to the sacrifice of one hundred cattle, see the comment on O.04.351–353. The occasion for this hecatomb is evidently a festival of Apollo, signaled by the vivid description at O.20.277–278: the Achaeans are now seen assembling inside the sacred alsos ‘grove’ of the god Apollo, O.20.278. What follows after the sacrifice of a hundred cattle is then described at O.20.279–280: the meat is cooked and divided among the participants. And the whole occasion of this feasting is indicated at O.20.280 by way of two all-important words here: (1) dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’, and (2) daiesthai ‘feast; divide (meat), apportion, distribute’. On dais ‘feast’ as a stylized way of referring to an overall festival, see the introductory comments at O.08.038 and at O.08.061; also the follow-up comments at O.08.429, O.09.003–111, O.13.023. For further references to the festival of Apollo, see the comments at O.21.267, O.21.404-411, and O.21.429-430. [[GN 2017.08.11.]]

O.20.285

subject heading(s): lōbē ‘words of insult’; blame poetry

See also O.18.347. [[GN 2017.08.03 via BA 261.]]

O.20.292–302

subject heading(s): Ktesippos; escalation from blame to physical violence; [hekatombē ‘hecatomb’;] festival of Apollo

The suitor Ktesippos goes even beyond the base behavior of the other suitors by throwing thepous ‘foot’ of a cow at Odysseus, O.20.299, though he misses. Presumably, this part of the sacrificial animal was the least prestigious portion of all the beef to be consumed on the occasion of the feasting that followed the hecatomb marking the festival of Apollo. For more on this hecatomb, which involved the sacrifice of notionally one hundred cattle to celebrate the festival of Apollo, see the anchor comment at O.20.276–280. The insulting of the disguised Odysseus by the provocative Ktesippos is bipartite here: (1) Ktesippos mocks Odysseus in words by sarcastically offering him a portion of the feast that would suit the most lowly of participants, and (2) he mocks him in action by throwing that portion at him instead of handing it over to him. [[GN 2017.08.03 via BA 261.]]

O.20.335

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’

See also O.11.179, O.15.521–522, O.16.076, O.18.289, and O.19.528. Here again it is said that whoever succeeds in marrying Penelope would surely qualify as ‘the best of the Achaeans’. [[GN 2017.08.03 via BA 39.]]

O.20.346

subject heading(s): noēma (from verb noēin ‘take notice [of], notice’ ‘thinking [by way of nóos]’

Because the goddess Athena has destabilized for the suitors their noēma ‘thinking [by way of nóos]’, they will be incapable of ever recognizing the disguised Odysseus—until it is too late for them. The noun noēma is derived from the verb noēin ‘take note of, notice’, which signals the kind of thinking that leads to recognition. See especially the comment at O.19.215–248. [[GN 2017.09.03 via GMP 206.]]
Among the many signs that signal the doom of the suitors, this omen as pictured here at O.20.354 is perhaps the most striking. [[GN 2017.08.03 via GMP 206]]

O.20.367–368

subject heading(s): noēin 'take note (of), notice'

Theoklymenos the seer can read with his mind, as expressed by the verb noēin 'take note (of), notice', the doom of the suitors. [[GN 2017.08.03 via GMP 206]]

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**Odyssey Rhapsody 21**

2017.08.10 / enhanced 2018.10.13

Toward the end of Rhapsody 21, Odysseus will pass an all-important test set by Penelope: he will string his famous bow—which none of the suitors could string, no matter how hard they tried—and he will shoot an arrow straight through all the holes of twelve axe-heads lined up in a row for this one-time occasion, designed to be viewed as the contest to end all contests in the skills of archery. This contest will determine, once and for all, who is really eligible, among all the Achaean soldiers, to be recognized as the husband of the queen. But the winning of this ultimate contest by Odysseus is not enough: the king must now kill, with the same bow, all the would-be husbands of the queen. So, once Odysseus passes the test set by Penelope, as narrated toward the end of Rhapsody 21, the killing of the rival Achaean can begin in Rhapsody 22. And the overall occasion for both the passing of Penelope’s test and the killing of the suitors is the beginning of a grand festival celebrating the god Apollo and the arrival of spring. [[GN 2017.08.008]]

Figure 45a. Hēraklēs stringing a bow. Silver stater, c. 450–440 BCE, Thebes (Boeotia). Image via Wikimedia Commons.

O.21.026

subject heading(s): Hēraklēs; bow of Odysseus; epí-histōr ‘one who has witnessed [events in which one was involved]’

Hēraklēs is involved here, however indirectly, in the story that tells how Odysseus once upon a time acquired his famous bow. The epithet epí-histōr describing Hēraklēs in this context, at O.21.026, can be interpreted as an agent noun: ‘one who has witnessed great events’ (Hρακλητα μεγάλων ἑπιστορο δικών). As an agent noun, histōr is derived not only from eidēnai ‘know’ but also from idein ‘see’: a case in point is the meaning of ep-idein at l.22.061, ‘having witnessed many evil events’ (κακά πόλλα ἑπιδόντα). [[GN 2017.08.008 via PH 250.]]

O.21.110
subject heading(s): aínos ‘coded words; fable; praise’

Telemachus recognizes here that the praise deserved by Penelope is self-evident, in the sense that the word aínos here can mean ‘praise’. What is less clear, however, is whether he fully recognizes—as of yet—the right words to use for encoding and decoding what should be said about his mother. The further meaning of aínos as ‘coded words’ leaves room for such lack of full clarity. [[GN 2017.08.08 via BA 235]]

O.21.185

subject heading(s): bîê ‘force, violence, strength’

Here we see that Odysseus is a paragon of bîê ‘force, violence, strength’ in his own right. He and only he has the strength to string his own bow, while all the suitors fail to show any matching strength. So, Odysseus here is a paragon not only of mêtis ‘mind, intelligence’ but also of bîê ‘force, violence, strength’. [[GN 2017.08.08 via BA 317]]

O.21.205

subject heading(s): nóos ‘mind’; anagnôskein ‘recognize’

Odysseus here can read minds, as it were. What Philoittios the cowherd and Eumaios the swineherd are thinking is understood by Odysseus, as expressed by way of the verb anagnôskein ‘recognize’, which takes as its object here the noun nóos ‘mind’. [[GN 2017.08.09 via GMP 205]]

O.21.217–224

subject heading(s): sêma ‘sign’; nóos ‘mind, thinking’

Odysseus at O.21.217–224 shows his scar to Philoittios the cowherd and Eumaios the swineherd: this way, he is finally recognized by them. In this context, the scar is explicitly called a sêma ‘sign’, O.21.217. As we saw at O.21.205, Odysseus already knows that both the cowherd and the swineherd have the right way of thinking, the right nóos ‘mind’, and it is this mentality that will enable them to recognize him. See the comment on O.21.205. [[GN 2017.08.09 via GMP 203 and 205]]

O.21.253–255

subject heading(s): bîê ‘force, violence, strength’

Already here at O.21.253–255, it is becoming evident that the suitors will not have the strength to string the bow of Odysseus, and the word for ‘strength’ here is bîê, O.21.253. For more on the relevance of this word, see the comment at O.21.185. [[GN 2017.08.09 via BA 318]]

O.21.288–310

subject heading(s): Eurytion the Centaur; Perithoos; Lapiths; extreme cruelty in Homeric narrative

The story about the drunken and reckless behavior of the Centaur Eurytion when he was a guest of Perithoos and his Lapiths is embedded in a morally flawed mental exercise here. The narrator of the story is Antinoos, whose behavior as a bad guest is comparable to that of the Centaur, but the suitor is perversely comparing the behavior of the Centaur to that of Odysseus. Antinoos is feeling outraged that a lowly beggar would dare to compete with the suitors as Odysseus prepares to string the bow, and so the suitor warns the disguised king at O.21.305–306, threatening that Odysseus will receive the same cruel punishment that was once upon a time received by the Centaur at the hands of his outraged hosts. On the horrific details of this punishment, see the anchor comment at O.18.085–087 on extreme cruelty in Homeric narrative. [[GN 2017.08.09 via GMP 271]]

O.21.314–316

subject heading(s): bîê ‘force, violence, strength’
Once again, it is made evident that Odysseus will be able to string his bow by virtue of his strength, as indicated by that most telling word ἐνεργεία ‘force, violence, strength’, O.21.315. [[GN 2017.08.09 via BA 318.]]

**O.21.267**

subject heading(s): festival of Apollo

The wording of Antinoos here refers to an act of sacrifice that the Achaeans are expected to perform in worshipping Apollo on the occasion of his festival. See the anchor comment at O.20.276–280 on the festival of Apollo; also the comment at O.21.429–430. [[GN 2017.08.09.]]

**O.21.402–403**

Q&T via GMP 298

subject heading(s): wishes correlated with premises

In this case, a negative wish is correlated with a faulty premise. [[GN 2017.08.09 via GMP 298.]]

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![Image of Swallows](image_url)

Figure 45b. Swallows, detail of the Spring Fresco at Thera, image via Flickr user [F. Tronchin](https://flickr.com/photos/Tronchin), reproduced under a [CC BY-NC-ND 2.0 license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/).

**O.21.404–411**

subject heading(s): stringing the bow, plucking the string; *phorinx* ‘special lyre’; *aoidē* ‘song’; *hup-aeidein* ‘sing while accompanying oneself (on a lyre)’; metaphor; complex metaphor; simile; festival of Apollo

Odysseus effortlessly strings his bow, O.21.409, and this feat of strength for a warrior in stringing his weapon is now compared to a feat of skill for a singer who effortlessly strings his musical instrument, which is here a *phorinx*, a special lyre played by the singer in accompanying his *aoidē* ‘song’, O.21.406. Next, Odysseus tests the tautness of his bowstring, plucking it, and the sound that emanates from the string is said to be like a song: the string literally ‘sings’, as expressed by the verb *hup-aeidein* ‘sing (aeidein)’ while accompanying [*hupo-*], O.21.411. The bowstring ‘sings’ like a singer who sings while accompanying himself by playing on the strings of his lyre. So, the sound of the bowstring that is plucked matches not only the sound of the strings on a lyre that are being plucked by the singer as he sings but also the sound of the singer’s voice. The metaphor is complex, since the comparison with the sound of the taut bowstring combines the sound of a musical instrument with the sound of the human voice. And the complexity is now intensified by the addition of a simile that follows the metaphor: this sound of the plucked bowstring, first compared by way of metaphor to the sound of a singer’s voice...
combined with the sound of the strings that he plucks in accompaniment of his song, is next compared, by way of simile, to the sound of the singing of a swallow, O.21.411. This singing of the swallow heralds not only the coming of spring but also the occasion that inaugurates this season of renewal, which is, a festival sacred to Apollo. See the anchor comment at O.20.276–280 on the festival of Apollo. [[GN 2017.08.09.]]

Figure 45c. Original artwork, by Flickr user Veronica Roth, reproduced under a CC BY-NC-ND 2.0 license.

O.21.429–430

subject heading(s): hōrā ‘season’; dais ‘feast, division of portions (of meat); sacrifice’; molpē ‘singing-and-dancing’; stylized festival; festival of Apollo; aetiology

The wording here at O.21.429–430 is a reference to the festival of Apollo, picking up from O.20.276–280. See the anchor comment on those lines. After having successfully accomplished the two feats of stringing the bow and shooting through the holes of the twelve axe-heads, Odysseus can truly say to Telemachus: now is the hōrā ‘season’, O.21.428 (vuv 5’ úpN). As the wording of Odysseus goes on to explain at O.21.429–430, now is the season for ‘the Achaeans’ to be feasting, in daylight, and there will be eating and drinking, also singing and dancing, as expressed by the noun molpē ‘singing-and-dancing’, O.21.430. On molpē as a combination of singing and dancing, see the note at O.04.015–019. Such merriment, as the wording highlights in the same line, O.21.430, is what happens on the occasion of a dais ‘feast. The word is used here in the general sense of ‘feast’, with reference to a stylized festival. On the use of this word dais ‘feast’ elsewhere as well in this general sense, see especially the comments at O.08.429 and at O.13.023; also the comment at O.20.276–289 with specific reference to the festival of Apollo. The overall wording of Odysseus here at O.21.429–430 can be read as good news about good
feasting ahead for those in the post-epic future who will be participating in the festival of Apollo—but it is bad news for the suitors, whose perverted feasting in the epic present will soon lead to the carnage that commences in Rhapsody 22. This killing of the suitors, which follows the stringing of the bow and the winning of the ultimate contest in archery, is the third part of an epic mythological complex that functions as an aetiology for the post-epic ritual complex of celebrating the festival of Apollo by happily eating and drinking, singing and dancing. As Odysseus says at O.21.428, the season has arrived for such celebration. It is the season of springtime, and the song of swallows has once again returned to the land, as we saw previously at O.21.411. See again the comment at O.21.404–411. The mythological violence in the epic present will lead to ritual order in the post-epic future as celebrated at the festival of Apollo. For more on the ritualized function of this festival as stylized in the narrative of the Odyssey, I recommend the comprehensive analysis of Levaniouk 2011, especially pp. 13–15. [IGN 2017.08.09.]

O.21.429

subject heading(s): hepsiásthai ‘mock’; blame poetry; festival of Apollo

In the context of a future celebration, taking place in a post-heroic age at the festival of Apollo, the term hepsiásthai ‘mock’ could refer to the ridiculing of the suitors by way of blame poetry. Odysseus as speaker here may be speaking beyond his own epic time, beyond the heroic age, by mocking his rivals for not yet knowing what he already knows full well will happen to them. On the perspectives of a post-heroic age with regard to the festival of Apollo, see the comment at O.22.437–479, where it is argued that the various grim dysfunctionalities that pollute the heroic world in myth are expurgated in the post-heroic world by way of ritual, as in the case of seasonally recurring festivals where primal ordeals are re-enacted in contexts of festive celebration, even merriment. [IGN 2017.08.23.]

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Odyssey Rhapsody 22

2017.08.17 / enhanced 2018.10.13

At the end of Rhapsody 21, Odysseus has already passed, in rapid succession, two of three successive tests that needed to be endured by the true king of Ithaca. That is, he has already performed a stringing of his mighty bow and has already won an ultimate contest in archery by executing a perfect shot with the very first arrow that he shoots from the bow. But now, at the beginning of Rhapsody 22, the third test awaits Odysseus. He must now kill the suitors, and the successive killings that follow will ultimately eliminate all the would-be husbands of Penelope. In the end, Odysseus will be the only Achaean left standing. And he has by now been revealed as the only true husband, the only true king. So, he has become the best of the Achaeans in the Homeric Odyssey. But a question remains. Now that all the suitors have been killed, what will happen to the other characters in the Odyssey who had turned against the king in the course of his lengthy absence? Here is where things get really ugly. The extreme cruelty of the retribution that awaits these characters, as we see it narrated here in Odyssey 22, presents the modern reader with moral problems that cannot be evaded. [IGN 2017.08.16.]
O.22.001-125

subject heading(s): a third test for Odysseus

Now, at the beginning of Rhapsody 22, a third test awaits Odysseus: he must kill the suitors. The king shows no hesitation. Having just won the contest in archery with the very first arrow that he shoots after stringing his mighty bow, he now goes on to aim his next arrow at Antinoos, who has been by far the worst of those leftover Achaeans of Ithaca. Odysseus shoots the arrow, and it hits the mark: Antinoos is instantly killed, O.22.008–021. The successive arrows, each one of them, will also hit the mark, and he keeps on shooting until there are no arrows left, O.22.116–119. Then, after Odysseus has run out of arrows to shoot, he arms himself with his armor for hand-to-hand combat, O.22.120–125. The slaughter of the suitors will continue until in the end all are killed. [[GN 2017.08.16.]]

O.22.001-021

subject heading(s): transition from one rhapsody to the next

The rapid succession of actions at the end of Rhapsody 21, where the stringing of the bow had been followed immediately by the shooting of the first arrow, is now matched at the beginning of Rhapsody 22 by a similarly rapid succession of actions taken by Odysseus. The king shows no hesitation as he proceeds to kill Antinoos, O.22.008–021. And he will thereafter keep on killing the suitors, one after the other. Correspondingly, the transition from Rhapsody 21 to Rhapsody 22 shows no hesitation: the shooting of the first arrow, which wins the contest in archery at the end of one rhapsody, is followed immediately by the shooting of the next arrow that kills Antinoos here in the next rhapsody—to be followed in turn by the successive killings that will ultimately eliminate all the other would-be husbands of Penelope. [[GN 2017.08.16.]]

O.22.001-007

subject heading(s): arrows of Odysseus; Plato’s Iōn

Here at O.22.001–007 is the moment when Odysseus finally strips off the rags of a beggar and stands tall at the threshold as he scatters at his feet the arrows from his quiver. He will now pick up the arrows, one by one, and shoot them at the suitors. And he starts by taking aim at Antinoos. In Plato’s Iōn, this moment is treated as the greatest of all scenes pictured in Homeric poetry. In a conversation with the rhapsode Iōn, who specializes in the performance of Homeric poetry, Plato’s Socrates is making a mental list of what he considers to be the greatest Homeric scenes. First place in the list goes to the moment that we see here at the beginning of Rhapsody 22, where Odysseus stands at the threshold and pours the arrows from his quiver. This moment in the Odyssey, as we see in the order of mention by Plato’s Socrates, outranks even the
greatest moment in the *liiad*, which gets only second place. The Iliadic moment is where Achilles lungen at Hector, evidently for the last time. And third place goes to any one of those moments in the *liad* where Andromache or Hecuba or Priam, in that order, are shown lamenting. In this mental list of Plato’s Socrates, we see two examples of *fear or terror* and one combined example of *pity*—two emotions that are considered to be primary in tragedy as analyzed by Aristotle in his *Poetics*. I quote here the relevant wording, where Plato’s Socrates is speaking directly to the Homeric rhapsode Ion (Plato *Ion* 535b–c):

ΣΟ: “Εξε δή μοι τόδε εἶπε, ὦ Ἰων, καὶ μὴ ἀποκρύψῃ ὃτι ἂν σε ἔρωμαι· ὅταν εὐ εἶπης ἔτη καὶ ἐκπλήξεις μάλιστα τοὺς θεωμένους, ἢ τὸν Ὀδυσσέα ὅτι ἐπὶ τὸν οὐδὸν ἐφαλλόμενον ἄρσις, ἐκφανήγιαν τοις μνημείας καὶ ἐκχέοντα τοὺς ὀσταύς πρὸ τὸν ποδίν, ἢ Ἀχιλλα ἐπὶ τὸν Ἐκτορα ὀρμώντα, ἢ καὶ τὸν περὶ Ανδρομάχην ἔλεινον ἢ περὶ Ἑκάβην ἢ περὶ Πρίμαρον, τότε πότερον ἐμφρών εἶ ἢ ἔξω [c] σαυτοῦ γίγνη καὶ παρὰ τοῖς πράγμασιν ὑποτασσόμενοι σου εἶναι ἢ ψυχῆς αἰών χειρισθεὶσαν ὑπερθεωρητέα, ἢ ἐν Θάκη οὖσαι ἢ ἐν Τροιά ἢ ὅπως ἂν καὶ τά ἔτη ἔχει;  

SOCRATES: Hold it right there. Tell me this, Ion—respond to what I ask without concealment. When you recite well the epic verses [epos plural] and induce a feeling of bedazzlement [ekplēxis] for the spectators [theomene]—when you sing [as the subject of your singing] Odysseus leaping onto the threshold and revealing himself to the suitors and pouring out the arrows at his feet, or [as another subject of your singing] Achilles rushing at Hector, or [as still another subject of your singing] something connected to the pitiful things about Andromache or Hecuba or Priam— are you then in your right mind, or outside yourself? Does your spirit [psukhe], possessed by the god [enthousiasmén], suppose that you are in the midst of the actions you describe in Ithaca or Troy, or wherever the epic verses [epos plural] have it? 

This description captures the high drama of Homeric performance, as here at the beginning of Rhapsody 22. [[GN 2017.08.16 via HC 3§198.]]

O.22.005

subject heading(s): *aethlos (áthlos)* ‘ordeal’; *ektelein* ‘reach an outcome; bring to fulfillment (in active forms of the verb)’

As noted in the comment at O.22.001–125, Odysseus passes three tests in proving that he is the lawful husband of Penelope and the genuine king of Ithaca: (1) the stringing of the bow, (2) the contest in archery, and (3) the killing of the suitors. Here at O.22.005, we see that the Greek word referring to the second test, the contest in archery, is *aethlos (áthlos)* ‘ordeal’. Now that he has performed his winning shot, Odysseus is saying that the contest has ‘reached an outcome’, as expressed by the verb *ektelein*, O.22.005. On the use of this word *aethlos (áthlos)* ‘ordeal’ with reference to the heroic Labors of Héraklēs, see the comment at O.11.620–624. On the use of this same word with reference to the ‘ordeals’ of warfare, see the comments at I.03.125–128; also at O.03.262 and O.04.170. On its use with reference to contests in athletics, see the comment at O.08.096–103. The masculine noun *aethlos (áthlos)*, in referring to the ritualized ‘ordeal’ of ἀθληται ‘athletes’, is correlated with the neuter noun *aethlon (áthlon)*, which refers to a ‘prize’ that is won in competition among athletes. [[GN 2017.08.17.]]

O.22.027–033

subject heading(s): *aethlon (áthlon)* ‘prize won in a contest’; ‘best of the Achaeans’

Seeing that Odysseus has just now shot an arrow that has killed the suitor Antinoos, the rest of the suitors are feeling outraged, assuming as they do that this killing was accidental, O.22.031–032. They revile Odysseus, whom they still fail to recognize, exclaiming that he has accidentally shot the very best of all the young men in Ithaca, O.22.029–030. In effect, they are delusionally assuming that Odysseus has killed the best of the Achaeans in Ithaca. They exclaim further that they will kill the would-be beggar and feed his corpse to vultures, O.22.030, adding derisively: so, *don’t expect to win some prize for this shot of the arrow*, O.22.027–028. And the word that is used here at O.22.027 for ‘prize’ is *aethlon (áthlon)*, O.22.027. Whereas the masculine noun *aethlos (áthlos)* refers to the ritualized ‘ordeal’ of competition, as noted in the comment at O.22.005, the neuter noun *aethlon (áthlon)* ordinarily refers to a ‘prize’ that is won in the competition—as also noted in the comment at O.22.005. [[GN 2017.08.17 via BA 39.]]
Reacting to the death of Antinous, the remaining suitors were now ‘making likenesses’, as expressed by the verb *eiskein* ‘make likenesses, liken’; [‘best of the Achaeans’:] *noeĩn* ‘take note (of), notice’; “speaking name” (*nomen loquens*); name of Alkinoos; name of Antinous.

On the infusion of strength as by way of divinely breathing it into the hero and thus reminding him of his own *menos* in the sense of his ‘power’, see the comments at I.10.482, I.11.508, I.15.059–060, I.15.262. Here at O.22.203, the *menos* ‘power’ that is breathed-out had been presumably breathed-in by divine agency. [[GN 2017.08.17 via GMP 114.]]
subject heading(s): Phemios; aoidos ‘singer’; Medon; kêrux ‘herald’

All those who cooperated with the suitors are killed, except for two: Odysseus spares the lives of the poet Phemios and the herald Medon. Phemios is described as an aoidos ‘singer’ at O.22.330 and Medon as a kêrux ‘herald’ at O.22.357. [IGN 2017.08.17.]

O.22.330–331

subject heading(s): name of Phemios; Terpiadês; “speaking name” (nomen loquens)

The name of this aoidos ‘singer’ Phemios is a “speaking name” (nomen loquens): the adjectival Phêmios is derived from the noun phêmê, defined in the comment at O.02.035 as ‘something said that means more than what is meant by the one who says it’. Accordingly, as I note in the same comment, Phemios is a singer whose songs mean more than what is meant by that singer. On the content of what Phemios sings, see the comment on O.01.342. For still more on the content, see the comment at O.22.376, where we see that an epithet of this singer is poluphêmos having many different kinds of things said’. Not only the name Phêmios is a “speaking name”: so too is the patronymic of this singer, Terpiadês, O.22.330, derived from the verb terpein meaning ‘give delight’. On the poetic connotations of this verb, see especially the comment at O.08.026–045. [IGN 2017.08.17 via BA 17, PH 86, HC 3§41.]

O.22.347

subject heading(s): oimē ‘thread, story-thread’

On oimē as the ‘story-thread’ of song, see the comment at O.08.074. [IGN 2017.08.17 via HC 2§92n.]

O.22.376

subject heading(s): poluphêmos ‘having many different kinds of things said’

The description of the aoidos ‘singer’ here at O.22.376 as poluphêmos ‘having many different kinds of things said’ is relevant what is noted in the comments at O.01.342 and O.02.035: the content of the epic songs sung by this singer could be understood differently by different listeners. See also the comment at O.22.330–331 and, further back, at O.12.184. [IGN 2017.08.17 via BA 17.]

O.22.437–479.

subject heading(s): extreme cruelty in Homeric narrative; the disloyal handmaiden; Melanthios the goatherd; Ekhetos; Eurytion the Centaur; dysfunctionality in myth vs. functionality in ritual; post-heroic age; festival of Apollo; Apollo and Marsyas

At O.22.437–473, the disloyal handmaids of the household are executed by hanging. There is considerable emphasis on the terror and suffering of these wretched women as they get strung up in a row, twisting and turning in their agony, O.22.471–473. Those who participate in the execution are Telemachus, the cowherd Philoitios, and the swineherd Eumaios; Odysseus too is present. Then at O.22.474–479 follows the punishment of the goatherd Melanthios: his nose and his ears are chopped off, then his genitalia are ‘pulled out’, to be fed to the dogs, and then, finally, his hands and his feet are also chopped off. After these torments, it appears that he is left still alive. Participating in this horrific retribution are the cowherd Philoitios and the swineherd Eumaios. It is not clear in this case whether Telemachus is also participating, though it is clear enough from O.22.479 that Odysseus is no longer present. In any case, as I already noted in the anchor comment at O.18.085–087 with specific reference to the extreme cruelty involved in the punishment of the goatherd, an explanation is needed for understanding how the supposedly righteous adherents of Odysseus could inflict horrors that were parallel to the horrors inflicted by the mysteriously infernal Ekhetos, as recounted in gashly detail at O.18.085–087. In the anchor comment, I already indicated that at least one part of the explanation may involve the words of Antinoo at O.21.300–301 concerning a comparable mutilation inflicted on the Centaur Eurytion. But we are still left with the moral problem of the extreme cruelty at work here. Addressing this problem, I now turn to another part of my explanation, which involves what I described in the comment at I.23.001–064 as a dynamic tension between dysfunctionality in the heroic world of myth and functionality in the
post-heroic world of ritual. I find it significant, in this regard, that the main agents of extreme cruelty in the narrative about the punishment inflicted on Melanthsios are herdsman, just as Melanthsios himself is a herdsman. This pastoral context is relevant, I think, to the cruelty described in the narrative of O.22.474–479, which takes place in the festive setting of a festival that is sacred to Apollo. This festival, after all, is a pastoral celebration, centering on the sacrifice of a hundred cattle. For further pastoral details, I refer again to the anchor comment at O.20.276–280 on the festival of Apollo. But this festival as narrated here in Rhapsody 22 is not yet a ritually correct event: a correction can come about only in the post-heroic age, when the pollutions of the heroic age that happen in myth, including all the horrific cruelty, are purified year after year, into eternity, by way of festive re-enactment in ritual. The pastoral festivities of a festival of Apollo in the post-heroic world of ritual can now transcend the horrors that still pollute the heroic world of myth. But the first steps in purifying the pollution are already being taken in the myth, since Odysseus insists on the fumigation of his household in the aftermath of all the carnage. In my overall explanation, I have been emphasizing the festivities that mark the occasion of any festival, and this emphasis is relevant to a most telling insight shown by Plato when he looks into one of the most horrific of all narratives in Greek mythology. I am thinking here of the myth about Marsyas, a satyr who was an ultimate master in the art of playing the double-reed known as the aulos. According to this myth, Marsyas was skinned alive by the god Apollo, that ultimate master in the art of playing the lyre known as the kitharē. In Plato’s Symposium 215a-b, we can see how the extreme violence of Apollo in the world of myth, where he strips the skin from the body of Marsyas, is counterbalanced by the festive merriment of discovering what is under the skin of Marsyas in the world of ritual. In the passage that I have just cited from the Symposium, the speaker is Alcibiades, and he is comparing the external ugliness of Socrates to that of Marsyas—but here the focus is on the Marsyas of ritual, not of myth. As we now learn, there used to be a festive custom of making hollow figurines of Marsyas that contained in the inside the smaller figurines of gods. I infer that the defining god that was hidden in the inside of Marsyas was Apollo himself, so that, when you peeled off the Marsyas on the outside of the figurine, you found the god Apollo on the inside. Thus, the grim violence of the myth is purified here in the festive merriment of a ritual celebrating Apollo. There could be many parallels I could draw from other festive customs as we find them world-wide—perhaps my favorite is what I could fancifully call the “John Barleycorn Syndrome”—but I content myself here with presenting my formulation in its most basic form. Of course, the shock of the violence in myth remains, and I cannot exorcise it in my own mind, but at least it is expurgated by the merriment in ritual. A similar explanation could be attempted in the case of those wretched women who were caught in that snare, O.22.471–473, since they are compared to kikhai ‘thrushes’ and peleiai ‘pigeons’ at O.22.468. These birds get comparably snared—but the difference is, they are caught in order to be cooked and eaten as delicacies. [IGN 2017.08.17.]

Figure 46b. Still life showing eggs, thrushes, napkin: from the House of Julia Felix, Pompeii. Image via Wikimedia Commons.

O.22.498

subject heading(s): amphi-khu- ‘pour all over’; dissolving while weeping

The women who were loyal to Odysseus, now that he has emerged victorious, weep with joy as they embrace him. The metaphor of ‘pouring all over’ someone in the act of embracing that someone, as expressed here by way of the verb amphi-
OE 2.3.031

subject heading(s): biē ‘force, violence, strength’

The reference here at OE 2.3.031 to the biē ‘force, violence, strength’ of the suitors shows that this word is used here in a strictly negative sense. See the comment at OE 1.15.329. [GN 2017.08.22 via BA 329.]

OE 2.3.073–077

subject heading(s): sân/a ‘sign, signal’; scar of Odysseus; boar hunt at Mount Parnassus; gignōskein ‘recognize’

Eurykleia reassures Penelope that the real Odysseus has returned, OE 2.3.073–077, and she notes as proof the hero’s tell-tale scar, OE 2.3.074, which she saw with her own eyes, as first narrated at OE 1.19.388–507. See the comment on those lines. This scar, says Eurykleia, is a sân/a ‘sign, signal’ of the hero’s true identity, OE 2.3.073. Again, I refer to the comment on OE 2.3.073–077. [GN 2017.08.22 via GMP 203.]
subject heading(s): sēma ‘sign, signal’; bed of Penelope and Odysseus; anagignōskein ‘recognize’

The ultimate sēma ‘sign, signal’ for the mutual recognition of Penelope and Odysseus is the immovable bed that the king had made to be shared with the queen. Within the space of the lines demarcated by O.23.107–230, the noun sēma recurs at O.23.110, O.23.188, O.23.202, O.23.206, O.23.225. The mutual recognition is confirmed by the verb anagignōskein ‘recognize’, when Penelope at long last overtly recognizes Odysseus at O.23.206. [GN 2017.08.22 via GMP 203.]

O.23.130–151

subject heading(s): a mock feast; festival of Apollo

Odysseus instructs his dear ones, together with the household servants, to make merry by singing and dancing, led off by the singing of Phemios to the tune of the lyre. It is as if they were all attending a feast in celebration of a wedding. Such a pretend-feast in heroic-time, where the purpose is to fool those on the outside of the royal household who would start to retaliate if they only knew what had really happened to the suitors on the inside, would be a mock feast, of course. But such a mock feast could also be seen as a preview, as it were, of the merry feasting that will happen at a seasonally recurring festival of Apollo in post-heroic time. By now the feasting would be real, no longer mock feasting—except insofar as the merriment at the feast would be mocking the misfortunes of the suitors while celebrating the eternally recycled sacred wedding of a righteous king and queen. On the epic stylization of Apollo’s festival, see the anchor comment at O.20.276–280; also the comments at O.21.404–411, O.21.429–430, O.21.429, O.22.285–291, O.22.437–479. On the mocking of the suitors in the context of such a festival, see the comments at O.21.429 and especially at O.22.437–479. [GN 2017.08.22.]

O.23.143–147

subject heading(s): molpē ‘singing-and-dancing’; paizein ‘play’

With reference to the mock feast that Odysseus has orchestrated, the use of this word molpē ‘singing-and-dancing’ at O.23.145 here makes it clear that the merriment of the feasting involves singing as well as dancing. On the use of this same word at O.21.430 with reference to singing and dancing at the festival of Apollo, see the comment at O.21.429–430. While molpē at O.23.145 refers to the actual singing-and-dancing, the playfulness of the song and dance is expressed by the verb paizein ‘play’ at O.23.147. For comparable wording, see the comment at O.06.100–101. [GN 2017.08.22; see also HPC 87n18.]

O.23.156–163

subject heading(s): Odysseus transformed; simile of hair as hyacinth

Odysseus is given a ritualized bath, in the course of which the goddess Athena transforms his appearance: he now looks the way he did on his wedding day. One detail here is of special interest: at O.23.158, the hero’s locks of hair are said to look like blossoms of hyacinth. Such a simile fuses the picturing of blossoms woven together in a garland with the picturing of the hair that is adorned by the garland. Similarly at I.17.051–052, the droplets of blood that are splattered over a dead hero’s locks of hair evoke a picturing of myrtle blossoms, but the simile here compares the locks themselves, not the droplets of blood, with the blossoms. Here again, then, we see a fusion in visualizing garland and hair. See the comment on I.17.051–052. [GN 2017.08.22 via HPC 296n80.]

O.23.163

subject heading(s): asaminthos ‘bathtub’; homoio- ‘similar to, same as’

After a ritual bath in an asaminthos ‘bathtub’, O.23.163, Odysseus is described this way: ‘he [= Odysseus] emerged from the bathtub [asaminthos], looking the same as ἥν ομοίοιοι θεοί ὄμοιοι διὰ ναυτοῦ ὁμοίοιοι’. For parallel wording in a description of Telemachus emerging from a ritual bath in an asaminthos ‘bathtub’, see O.03.468 and the comment at O.03.464–468. For homoio- in the sense of ‘same as’ in a similar ritual context, signaling an epiphany, see
the comment on O.16.172–212. At this point, Odysseus no longer looks like a middle-aged man: in the context of the ritual bath that he has taken, he looks like a perfect bridegroom, at the perfect age for a perfect wedding. Thus he looks like the Odysseus who slept with Penelope in her dream as described at O.20.087–090. I review here the essentials: in her wakeful agonizing, unable to fall asleep, Penelope had recalled a dream she once had: there she was, lying in bed with Odysseus at her side, and he was looking the way he had looked when she had last seen him twenty years earlier. It seemed to her then, she says at O.20.090, that this was not an onar ‘dream’ but a hupar esthlon ‘wakeful reality’ (οὐκ ὄναρ, ἀλλ’ ὑπάρ εὐθλόν). But now at O.23.163, as Odysseus emerges from his ritual bath looking like a perfect bridegroom, that dream of Penelope is about to become a wakeful reality. [[GN 2017.08.22 via MoM 2§16.]]

Figure 47b. Big Ed and Norma have just now broken free of the troublesome relationships that have kept these lovers apart for 27 years. Now at long last they can have a life together. Still from Twin Peaks 3 Episode 15, reworked by Jill Curry Robbins.

O.23.246

subject heading(s): Phaethōn and Lāmpōn

The two divine horses that draw the chariot of Eōs, goddess of the dawn, are here named as Phaethōn and Lāmpōn. These names, both referring to the radiance of the sun, are parallel to the names for the two daughters of Hēlios, god of sunlight, who are Phaēthousa and Lampetīē. See also the comment at O.12.132. As already noted there, these four names and the myths linked with them reflect mythological traditions that can be reconstructed by way of Indo-European linguistics. [[GN 2017.08.22 via BA 198–200, GMP 249–250, HC 1§147.]]

O.23.264–284

subject heading(s): prophecy of Teiresias; plot of an odyssey beyond the Odyssey; sēma ‘sign, signal; tomb’

At O.23.264–284, Odysseus retells to Penelope the prophecy of Teiresias about the odyssey that still awaits the hero after he has re-established himself as husband of Penelope and as king of Ithaca. The retelling here does not add to what was said already at O.11.119–137, on which I refer to the comment at those lines. But there is one big exception, centering on a most interesting detail: in his quest to travel as far inland as possible, until the oat that he carries on his shoulder is mistaken for a winnowing shovel, the wording of Odysseys has it that he will be passing through many astea ‘cities’ of humankind, O.23.267–268. The word astea ‘cities’ here recalls the same word as used in O.01.003, with reference to the journeys of Odysseus in the Odyssey; there too, it is said, the hero will be passing through many astea ‘cities’ of many different kinds of people. The question is, do those astea ‘cities’ belong to the Odyssey or to an odyssey beyond the Odyssey? [[GN 2017.08.22 via PH 231–232, 236; GMP 213–214.]]

O.23.271

subject heading(s): phoinikoparēioi ‘having cheeks of purple’

For this epithet of ships, phoinikoparēioi ‘having cheeks of purple’, see also at O.11.124. Also the comment at O.09.125. [[GN
subject heading(s): last line of the Odyssey
The scholia report that this line was the very last line of the Odyssey as supposedly composed by Homer—in the opinion of both Aristarchus and his predecessor, Aristophanes of Byzantium. Whatever their opinion may have been, there is evidence to show that both these editors of Homeric poetry retained in their editions of the base text the remaining lines of Odyssey 23 and the lines of Odyssey 24. For an example of such evidence, see the comment at O.23.310–343. [[GN 2017.08.22 via PasP 182n107; HPC 120.]]

subject heading(s): athetesis; base text
The scholia report that these lines were athetized by Aristarchus. Such a report shows that, even where editors like Aristarchus expressed doubts concerning the authenticity of a given set of verses in Homeric poetry, they would still retain such verses in the base text of their editions. This point is relevant to the comment at O.23.296. On athetesis and on base text, see the Inventory of terms and names. [[GN 2017.08.22 via PasP 182n107.]]

back

Odyssey Rhapsody 24
2017.08.31 / enhanced 2018.10.13

Before the Odyssey comes to an end, the Singer of Tales reaches back to what seems to be the beginning of the Iliad. It is as if the second epic, the Odyssey, could now restart before it ends by reaching back into the first epic, the Iliad. Still, there will be no restart here. The plot of that first epic had started with a grand feud between Achilles and Agamemnon, but the plot of the second epic will now come to an end with a resolution of that feud. The feud is over, so that the two main characters of the Iliad can now take time to review not only what happened in the Iliad but also, beyond the Iliad, how the two of them died, each his own way. Since they are now dead, they have to speak ghost to ghost, but that is not enough for Agamemnon. He must also speak with the new ghosts, the suitors, who will now give him a retrospective on the Odyssey. This way, Agamemnon can compare the story of his own life with the stories of both Odysseus and Achilles. And the comparison must be most depressing for him. But the Odyssey does not end with the sad thoughts of Agamemnon. Odysseus still has to reconnect with his own ancestors, and so there needs to be a final recognition scene between the son and his father Laertes. But even after this reconnection of the generations is finally achieved, the story is still not done. The feud that has been triggered by the killing of the suitors must end; otherwise, the story cannot end. [[GN 2017.08.30.]]
O.24.001–014

subject heading(s): Hermes as conductor of ἀνακτήματα 'spirits' of the dead; Ὀκεανός; White Rock; Gates of the Sun; District of Dreams; Meadow of Asphodel

The god Hermes conducts the ἀνακτήματα 'spirits' of the dead suitors from the world of light and life into a world of darkness and death. Another way to think of these two distinct worlds is picture consciousness on one side and unconsciousness on the other side. Situated between these two worlds here are five mythological landmarks: the cosmic river Ὀκεανός, O.24.011; the White Rock (λευκὸς πέτρα), O.24.011; the Gates (πύλης) of Ἁλλίος the Sun, O.24.012; the District (δῆμος) of Dreams (ὀνείρων), O.24.012, and, finally, the Meadow (λείμνη) of Asphodel (the flower ἀσφόδελος). In other Homeric contexts, it would be sufficient for only one of these five landmarks, the Ὀκεανός, to figure as a separator of light and life from darkness and death, of consciousness from unconsciousness. See especially the comments at O.10.508–512 O.11.012–019, O.11.020–022, O.12.001–004. In the present context, four other separators are listed, each one of which can be considered a multiform that has the same kind of built-in function of referring to a separator and a meeting-point between two opposite worlds. In Homeric poetry, there is no other attestation of the White Rock or of the District of Dreams, although other poetry shows traces of such landmarks (as in Alcman PMG 1.45–49; comments at GMP 224). But Homeric poetry does refer elsewhere to the Gates of the Sun: see the comments at I.05.395–404, I.05.646, I.11.671–761, I.23.071–076, O.04.809; see also the anchor comment at I.08.367 on the Gates of Ἁδής and the anchor comment at I.23.071–076 on what the ἀνακτήματα 'spirit' of Patroklos really wants for itself—and for Achilles (Points 5 and 6 and 9). As for the Meadow of Asphodel, see the comment at O.24.014–023. [GN 2017.08.30 via GMP 224, 226, 230, 234; BA 166–167, 195]

O.24.002–003

subject heading(s): ῥαβδὸς 'wand'; ἀλγεῖν 'put a trance on, enchant'

See the comment at O.05.047. [GN 2017.08.30.]

O.24.014–023

subject heading(s): ἀνακτήματα 'spirits' of the dead suitors; ἀνακτήματα 'spirit' of Achilles; Meadow of Asphodel; meeting-place for ἀνακτήματα 'spirits' of Achilles, Patroklos, Antilokhos, Ajax; 'best of the Achaeans'; ἀνακτήματα of Agamemnon; Aigisthos

As the ἀνακτήματα 'spirits' of the dead suitors are being conducted by the god Hermes toward their ultimate otherworldly destination, which is unspecified, they come to a place called the Meadow of Asphodel, O.24.013, which is an abode for
psûkhai ‘spirits’ described here as eîdôla ‘images’ of the dead, O.24.014. Elsewhere in Homeric diction, I.23.072 and O.11.476, this same description applies to disembodied spirits of the dead who populate a mystical place that resembles what is known in other contexts as Hâdês. But the Meadow of Asphodel is not exactly Hâdês. Elsewhere in Homeric diction, this Meadow is where the spirit of Achilles himself abides, O.11.539. Also, at O.11.573, the Meadow of Asphodel is pictured as a “happy hunting ground”—to borrow an image from the Great Plains tribes of native Americans—where the great hunter Orion can hunt for all time to his heart’s content, O.11.572–575. In the Homeric Hymn to Hermes, verses 221 and 344, the same Meadow of Asphodel becomes a pathway for the Cattle of the Sun after Hermes steals this solar herd from Apollo. And now, as we see here at O.O.24.013 just as we saw earlier at O.11.539, the Meadow of Asphodel is once again featured as the place where the psûkhei ‘spirit’ of Achilles is to be found: here he is, in the company of other psûkhai ‘spirits’, who are listed in the following order: Patroklos, Antilokhos, Ajax, O.24.015–018. In this same context, Ajax is described as the second-best of the Achaean, after Achilles, O.24.017–018. This company of psûkhai ‘spirits’ is now joined by the psûkhe of Agamemnon, who is coming from some other direction, at the head of another company of psûkhai ‘spirits’—those who had been killed together with Agamemnon by Aigisthos after they had made their way back home from Troy, O.24.021–022. At this point, we might have expected the psûkhe of Agamemnon to address the psûkhei ‘spirits’ of the dead suitors, asking them directly: how did you all die? And then I will tell you how I died. But such a dialogue is postponed till O.24.099–105. Instead, here at O.24.023, it is Achilles himself—or, let us say, it is his psûkhe ‘spirit’—who initiates a dialogue with the psûkhe ‘spirit’ of Agamemnon. You would think that the psûkhe ‘spirit’ of Achilles had only now for the first time encountered the psûkhe ‘spirit’ of Agamemnon since he died. But, as we will see at O.24.024–034, Achilles already knows what happened to Agamemnon and to his followers after they had made their way back home from Troy: they died an ignominious death, through the treachery of Aigisthos. Conversely, as we will see at O.24.036–097, Agamemnon already knows what happened to Achilles: he never went home because he died at Troy, but his glorious death there earned him the greatest honors. [[GN 2017.08.28.]]

O.24.016

subject heading(s): parallelism of Antilokhos and Patroklos

On the parallelism of Antilokhos and Patroklos as dearest companions of Achilles, see especially the comment at I.23.326–343. [[GN 2017.08.30 via PH 211; also 54.]]

O.24.023–098

subject heading(s): retrospective retellings of the stories of Agamemnon and Achilles at Troy

Although the gender of psûkhe ‘spirit’ in referring here to the spirits of Achilles and Agamemnon is feminine, O.24.023 and O.24.035, the pronouns referring to the two dead heroes in the narrative that frames their dialogue continue to show the masculine gender, and the use of the feminine gender is discontinued altogether in the wording of the actual I-you dialogue: instead, as Achilles and Agamemnon proceed to speak to each other at O.24.024–034 and at O.24.036–097 respectively, they revert in their I-you dialogue to the masculine gender that they once had owned as speakers in Homeric narrative. The dialogue between the psûkhe ‘spirit’ of Achilles and the psûkhe ‘spirit’ of Agamemnon frames a retrospective retelling of stories, taken separately, about what the two heroes had achieved at Troy—after all is said and done. In the case of Agamemnon, the retelling centers on his ultimate failure as a character in his own story. In the case of Achilles, on the other hand, the retelling centers on his ultimate success—despite his death. The verses at O.24.024–034 are spoken by the psûkhe ‘spirit’ of Achilles, O.24.023, who is addressing the psûkhe ‘spirit’ of Agamemnon: too bad, Achilles says without gloating, that things did not work out well for you. Then the verses at O.24.036–097 are spoken by the psûkhe ‘spirit’ of Agamemnon, O.24.035, who in turn addresses the psûkhe ‘spirit’ of Achilles: without attempting to detract from the glory in store for Achilles, Agamemnon retells, in second-person narrative, the death and funeral and entombment of Achilles. You were killed; we arranged for your funeral and for funeral games in your honor; and then we made a tomb for you. [[GN 2017.08.28.]]

O.24.024–034

subject heading(s): retrospective on the story about Agamemnon at Troy

In these verses spoken by the psûkhe ‘spirit’ of Achilles to the psûkhe ‘spirit’ of Agamemnon, O.24.024–034, the outcome of the story about Agamemnon is a foil for the outcome of the subsequent story about Achilles. Whereas Achilles will get glory
for dying on the battlefield at Troy, away from home, Agamemnon gets no glory for his ignominious death back home: see the note at O.24.030–034. What gives the story of Achilles a “happy ending,” as we will see in the commentary ahead, is the glory that he gets not only from his death on the battlefield but also from his funeral and his entombment in the environs of Troy. On the tomb of Achilles, see the anchor comment at O.24.076–084. [[GN 2017.08.30.]]

O.24.030–034

subject heading(s): tomb and kleos ‘glory’ of song

In the words of Achilles here at O.24.0230–034, Agamemnon would have been better off if he too, like Achilles, had been killed at Troy: then the Achaeans would have made a tomb for him there, just as they had earlier made a tomb for Achilles. See the note at O.24.024–034. This way, as we read at O.24.033, Agamemnon would have achieved a future kleos ‘glory’ of song for himself and also for his son. The reference here to the son of Agamemnon, who would be Orestes, may be relevant to myths concerning the involvement of Agamemnon’s descendants in the region of Troy: for example, the island of Lesbos was reportedly settled by a hero named Penthilios, who was son of Orestes (Pausanias 2.18.5–6, Aristotle Politics 5.1311b27; see further at PH 155). [[GN 2017.08.30 via BA 36.]]

O.24.036–097

subject heading(s): retrospective on the story about Achilles at Troy; hero cult of Achilles

[What follows is an epitome of the comments in Nagy 2012:49–51] The narrative here at O.24.036–097 is pervaded by references to the hero cult of Achilles. I offer here a brief inventory of some of these references:

—O.24.036, ἀλβίς Πηλός ὑπὲρ, θεοῖς ἐπικελέω Ἀχιλέω ‘O you olbios son of Peleus, godlike Achilles’. So, Agamemnon here addresses Achilles as olbios, which would mean ‘favorable’ on the surface. Beneath the surface, however, olbios here can be interpreted as ‘blessed’, referring to the sacred status of a cult hero: see the comment at O.19.107–114, with special reference to uses of olbios in the sense of ‘blessed’, as at verse 172 of the Hesiodic Works and Days.

—O.037–039, ἁμφὶ δὲ σ’ ἀλλοι | κτείνοντο Τρώων καὶ Ἀχαιῶν υἱὸς ἱπποτοι | μαρτάνοντει περὶ σεό ‘On all sides of you [= your corpse], the rest of them | were being slaughtered, sons of both Trojans and Achaeans, the best, | as they were fighting over you [= your corpse]’. The Achaeans and the Trojans are battling here over the possession of the corpse of Achilles. The mentality of needing to possess the body of the dead hero, whether he was a friend or an enemy in life, is typical of hero cults, in that the corpse of the cult hero was viewed as a talisman of fertility and prosperity for the community that gained possession of the hero’s body. Details in PH 32, 178; also Nagy 2006§97.

—O.24.039–40, σὺ δ’ ἐν στροφάλλην κοίνης | κείσα μέγας μεγαλώστι ‘There you were, lying in a swirl of dust. | You lay there so huge in all your hugeness’. The corpse of Achilles is described here as larger than life. This wording applies to Achilles also at I.18.026–027, where he stages himself as a corpse in mourning the death of Patroklos and where he is mourned by Thetis as if he were already a corpse: see the comment at I.018.070–071 (see also BA 113, especially with reference to I.18.071). At I.16.775–776, cognate wording applies to the corpse of the hero Kebriones. The corpse of Achilles is described as nine cubits long in the Alexander of Lycophron (860). As we see from lore preserved in the historical period about cult heroes, they were conventionally pictured as far larger in death than they had been in life. Among the most striking examples is the corpse of Orestes as cult hero, described in Herodotus 1.68.


—O.24.073–077. After the cremation of the corpse of Achilles, his bones and those of the already cremated corpse of Patroklos are placed into a golden jar that had been given by the god Dionysus to the goddess Thetis. This jar, as we know from the comparative evidence of other poetic references (especially Stesichorus PMG 234), is a sign of the hero’s immortalization after death. See BA 209; also Dúe 2001.

—O.24.085–086. After the making of the tumulus which will be the tomb shared by Achilles and Patroklos, O.24.080–084,
funeral games are held in honor of Achilles. The details of this description match closely the details we can gather from historical evidence about athletic contests held in honor of cult heroes. [Details in BA 116–117.]

—O.24.091. The athletic contests at the funeral games of Achilles and the prizes to be won in these contests are instituted for the purpose of compensating for his death, and, in this verse, such an act of compensation is expressed by way of the prepositional phrase epi soi (εἰπὶ σοὶ), which can be translated roughly as ‘in your honor’. As we can see clearly from a variety of prose sources, the syntactical construct combining the preposition epi with the dative case of a given hero’s name refers to the cult of that hero. [Details in PH 121.] Perhaps the most striking example is this entry in the dictionary attributed to Hesychius: ‘balletus: a festival event at Athens, held in honor [ēpi plus object in dative case] of Demophon son of Keleos’ (Βαλλέτος: ἐορτή Ἀθηναίων, ἐπὶ Δημοφώντος τοῦ Κέλεου ἄγιον).

O.24.058–061

subject heading(s): laments for Achilles; [gōos ‘lament’;] thrēnein ‘make lament’

The goddess Thetis and her sister Nereids, as the family of Achilles, are lamenting Achilles: presumably, their singing can be described as gōos ‘lament’, as I infer by comparing the use of this word in referring to the laments performed by Hector’s family at I.24.723 / I.24.747 (also at I.24.760) / I.24.761. In the case of Hector’s funeral, there are also laments performed by non-family professionals, I.24.720–722: these professionals are aoidoi ‘singers’ who are men, I.24.720, and they perform thrēnoi ‘laments’, I.24.721; as they perform, the word that refers to their performance is thrēnein ‘make lament’, I.24.722, which is a verb derived from the noun thrēnos ‘lament’. So also here at O.24.61, we see the same verb thrēnein ‘make lament’ applied to the singing of laments by the Muses themselves, who are in this context “professionals” by contrast with the Nereids, who are “family.” The lamenting of Achilles by the Muses is also described in Pindar Isthmian 8.56–60. [[GN 2017.08.31. via PH 36; also BA 113, 172, 177, 184]]

O.24.076–084

anchor comment on tomb of Achilles, part 3

subject heading(s): post-heroic age

What follows was originally posted in Nagy 2017.01.03.

Here is the original introduction to this anchor comment:

The Homeric Iliad as we have it refers at least two times directly and two times indirectly to the tomb of Achilles, while the Odyssey refers to it one time directly. In the direct references that we see in the Iliad, it is made clear that this tomb starts off as a small-scale structure, located at the same place where a funeral pyre is constructed for the cremation of the body of Patroklos, and that the original function of this tomb is to enclose the bones of that hero after his body is cremated. But it is also made clear, in both the direct and the indirect references as we see them in the Iliad, that this same tomb will in a future time enclose the bones of Achilles as well, which will then be mixed together with the bones of Patroklos inside a golden jar. In this future time, when Achilles too is dead, it will be his own body that will need to be cremated at the same place and then entombed in the same structure. For this new entombment to happen, however, the small-scale structure that had enveloped the bones of Patroklos will now grow into a large-scale structure, exponentially larger than the original. Such is the tomb of Achilles as pictured in Odyssey 24. [[GN 2017.01.03.]]

The Introduction was then followed by five interconnected points:

Point 1. At I.23.125–126 and at I.23.245–248, we find two direct references to the tomb of Achilles, though at first it may seem as if the tomb belongs to Patroklos primarily and to Achilles only secondarily. See the anchor comments at I.23.125–126 and at I.23.245–248. Here at O.24.076–084, however, where we find the third and most detailed direct reference to the same tomb, it becomes clear that (A) this structure belongs primarily to Achilles and (B) the cremation and entombment of Patroklos were designed all along to prefigure the cremation and entombment of Achilles. Even in the Iliad, the two indirect references to the tomb show that Achilles is the primary occupant of the structure: see the comments on I.07.067–091 and on I.19.373–380.
Point 2. In the direct references that we find at I.23.125–126 and at I.23.245–248, it is made clear that this tomb starts off as a small-scale structure, located at the same place where a funeral pyre is constructed for cremating the body of Patroklos, and that the original function of this tomb is to enclose the bones of that hero after his body is cremated. But it is also made clear, not only in the direct references at I.23.125–126 and I.23.245–248 but also in the indirect references at I.07.067–091 and I.19.373–380, that this same tomb will in a future time enclose the bones of Achilles as well, which will then be mixed together with the bones of Patroklos inside a golden jar that had been given by the god Dionysus to the mother of Achilles, I.23.092. In this future time, when Achilles too is dead, it will be his own body that will need to be cremated at the same place and then entombed inside the same structure.

Point 3. Once the cremation of Achilles is completed, O.23.071, the bones of the hero are mixed with the bones of Patroklos and placed inside the golden jar, gift of Dionysus, that Thetis has now brought to the funeral, O.24.072–077. That golden jar signals a future of immortalization for Achilles and, by extension, for Patroklos, whose psûkhē ‘spirit’ had originally indicated the need for the bones of both heroes to be stored inside the golden jar, I.23.092 (BA 209–210). Now that the bones are safely stored in the golden jar, the two heroes must be entombed together. For this new entombment to happen, however, the small-scale structure that had enveloped the bones of Patroklos will now grow into a large-scale structure, exponentially larger than the original. As noted in the anchor comment at I.23.245–248...256–257, the entombment of Achilles together with Patroklos will now lead to an upgrading of the tomb, the size of which will become spectacular in both height and width, I.23.246–247. And it is this large-scale structure, in all its splendor, that we see pictured in Odyssey 24.

Point 4. The structure is a tumbos ‘tomb’, O.24.080, which is ‘heaped up’ by the Achaeans=Argive warriors to entomb the bones of Achilles and Patroklos, O.24.081: so the tomb is a tumulus. And this tumulus is situated on top of a high promontory that looks out over the sea of the Hellespont, O.24.082, so that it may shine from afar as a beacon light of salvation for all those who sail through the troubled waters of that dangerous sea—not only ‘now’ in the heroic past but also in the post-heroic future, O.24.083–084. The time frame indicated as ‘now’ here is the era of the heroes who fought in the Trojan War, but the future is of course the ever movable here-and-now of Homeric reception (Nagy 2012:48). Already at I.23.248, Achilles makes a pointed reference to the Achaeans of the future who will be sailing past the promontory on top of which his tomb is located and marveling at the sight of the structure, which is called a sêma ‘tomb’ at I.23.257. See the anchor comment at I.23.245–248...256–257.

Point 5. By now we can picture the tomb of Achilles, situated on a promontory overlooking the dangerous sea of the Hellespont, as a magnificent structure resembling a splendid lighthouse. There is a comparable image to be seen at I.19.373–380: in these verses, which refer indirectly to the tomb of Achilles, the sefas ‘flash of light’ streaming from the bright surface of the hero’s Shield, I.19.374, is compared to a sefas ‘flash of light’ streaming from a fire that sends forth its light from a lighthouse, I.19.375. See the comment on I.19.373–380. As I note in the comment there, this saving light is described as holding forth a promise of salvation for sailors lost at sea who are longing to be reunited with their loved ones at home, I.19.375, I.19.377–378. And this light is said to be streaming from a fire that is burning at a remote place described here as a solitary stathmos ‘station’ situated in the heights overlooking the dangerous seas below, I.19.376–377. To picture the tomb of Achilles as a stathmos ‘station’ that shelters herdsman and that protects sailors is another traditional way of viewing the sacred place where the hero Achilles once lived and died. See the comments on I.18.587–589 and I.19.373–380.

See also anchor comment at I.23.125–126 on: tomb of Achilles, part 1; and anchor comment at I.23.245–248 on: tomb of Achilles, part 2 [[GN 2017.01.03; on an ancient rivalry between the cities of Mytilene and Athens in claiming ownership of the tomb of Achilles, see HPC 177–189.]]
O.24.080–084

subject heading(s): Hellespont

The location of the tomb of Achilles on a promontory looking out over the Hellespont is consistent with the visualizations of this tomb in the Iliad. See the anchor comment at O.24.076–084. [GN 2017.08.31; see also BA 28, 160, 160, 341–342, 344; GMP 215–216, 220; PH 330; HPC 149–150; for an allusion in Herodotus 1.188.2 to the tomb of Achilles at the Hellespont, see PH 330.]

O.24.094

subject heading(s): kleos ‘glory’ of song; ep’ anthrōpous ‘throughout humankind’

The expression ep’ anthrōpous ‘throughout humankind’ is conventionally associated with words referring to remembrance by way of song. See the anchor comment at l.10.213. [GN 2017.08.31 via BA 37.]

O.24.107–108

subject heading(s): ‘best of the Achaeans’

There is an irony here in the reference to the dead suitors as arīsta/ ‘the best’, since they have all been already bested by Odysseus in his role as the best of the Achaeans in the Odyssey. [GN 2017.08.31 via BA 39.]

O.24.121–190

subject heading(s): retelling the story of the suitors

This retelling accentuates one more time the victory of Odysseus over his inferior rivals. [GN 2017.08.31 via BA 36.]

O.24.161

subject heading(s): hurling insults or objects as projectiles of insult; epes-bolos ‘thrower of words’

The collocation here of epea ‘words’ and bolai ‘throwings’ is a contextual confirmation of the meaning of epes-bolos as ‘he who hurls words [epea] of insult’, as at l.02.275. See the comment on that line. [GN 2017.08.31 via BA 264.]
Q&T via H24H 11§22

subject heading(s): olbios ‘blessed’ (or ‘fortunate’)

O blessed [olbios] son of Laertes, Odysseus of many wiles, it is truly with great merit [aretē] that you got to have your wife. For the thinking [phrenes] of faultless Penelope was sound; she, daughter of Iliakos, kept Odysseus well in mind, that properly-wedded [kouridios] husband of hers. Thus the glory [kleos] will never perish for him, the glory that comes from his merit [aretē], and a song will be created for earthbound humans—a song that brings beautiful and pleasurable recompense for sensible Penelope—unlike the daughter of Tyndareos [= Clytemnestra], who masterminded evil deeds, killing her properly-wedded [kouridios] husband, and a hateful subject of song she will be throughout all humankind, and she will give a harsh reputation to women, female [thēlutterai] that they are—even for the kind of woman who does noble things.

Notes on the translation

In the original Greek wording, the prepositional phrase meaning ‘with great merit’ at O.24.193 cannot “modify” a noun, and so we cannot translate this wording as ‘you got to have a wife with great merit’, in the sense of ‘you got to have a wife who has great merit’; rather, the phrase modifies the verb ‘you got’. At O.24.197, I translate ‘his merit’, not ‘her merit’, interpreting this instance of aretē ‘merit’ at verse 197 as referring to the previous instance, at verse 193. At O.24.198, the epithet foraoidē ‘song’ is kharīessa ‘having kharis’, and I interpret the concept of kharis as ‘beautiful and pleasurable recompense’ in this context. On kharis as a word that conveys both beauty and pleasure, see HC 2§33. At O.24.202, thēlutterai means not ‘more female’ but rather ‘female—as opposed to male’.

Further commentary at BA 36–38.

(What follows is an epitome of H24H 11§23, §§26–27.) The word olbios that we see being used here in the first verse seems at first ambivalent: we cannot be sure whether it means ‘fortunate’ or ‘blessed’. While a hero like Odysseus is still alive, it is dangerous for him to be described as olbios in the sense of ‘blessed’. A negative example of what can happen is the case of the hero Priam. Most telling are the words that Achilles addresses to him at I.24.543: ‘I hear that you, old man, were once upon a time olbios’ (καὶ σὺ γέρων τὸ πρῶτον άριστον δόμησαν ηλικίᾳ). When Achilles is saying this to Priam, the old man is experiencing the worst moments of his life. During those moments, he is neither fortunate nor blessed. Only after death could Priam ever become truly olbios. In the case of Odysseus, however, the Odyssey shows that this Homeric hero is ultimately not only fortunate but also blessed, and so the epithet olbios will in fact ultimately apply to him.

As we see here in O.24.192–202, Odysseus owes his successful homecoming to the faithfulness of his wife Penelope, who deserves only praise, O.24.193–198. And it is in this context of success that Agamemnon addresses Odysseus as olbios, ‘blessed’, O.24.192. By contrast, Agamemnon blames his own wife Clytemnestra for sabotaging his own ‘homecoming’ or nostos, O.24.096. Agamemnon contrasts his loss of ‘homecoming’ or nostos with the poetic ‘glory’ or kleos that Achilles will keep forever, O.24.094. But now, in O.24.192–202, we see that Agamemnon makes another basic contrast—between himself and Odysseus. What caused Agamemnon to lose his own kleos—and his own nostos—was the fact that his wife was Clytemnestra, who was unfaithful to him and who contrived his murder, O.24.199–202. By contrast, the faithfulness of Penelope to Odysseus helped that hero secure his own kleos, O.24.196, in the context of O.24.196–198. To add to the irony, Agamemnon’s words describe his violent death as lugros, ‘disastrous’, O.24.096, and his wife Clytemnestra as oulomenē, ‘disastrous’, O.24.097. Both of these epithets, as we have seen earlier, are words that evoke the poetry of epic: lugros,
'disastrous', is the epithet of both the nostos or 'song about homecoming' that Phemios sings in O.01.327 and of the nostos that Nestor narrates in O.03.132, while oulomenē, 'disastrous', is the epithet of the anger of Achilles in l.01.002. [[GN 2017.08.31 via BA 36–38, 254–256.]]

O.24.201

subject heading(s): ep’ anthrōpous ‘throughout humankind’

As noted before, the expression ep’ anthrōpous ‘throughout humankind’ is conventionally associated with words referring to remembrance by way of song. See the anchor comment at l.10.213. Here at O.24.201 the remembrance is not positive but decidedly negative. So, there is a shift from praise to blame. [[GN 2017.08.31 via BA 37.]]

O.24.291

Q&T via BA 340

subject heading(s): man overboard devoured by fish; ikthhuoeis ‘fish-swarming’ as an epithet of pontos ‘crossing (of the sea)’

See the comment at O.14.135. [[GN 2017.08.31 via BA 340.]]

O.24.328–346

subject heading(s): sēma ‘sign, signal’; scar of Odysseus; boar hunt at Mount Parnassus; gignōskein ‘recognize’

Odysseus shows to Laertes his tell-tale scar, O.24.331, after the father asks his son for a sēma ‘sign, signal’ as proof of identity. Odysseus then also proves that he knows every detail about the Garden of Laertes, O.24.336–346. These sēmata ‘signs, signals’, O.24.346, are now recognized by Laertes, and the verb that signals such recognition is once again gignōskein ‘recognize’. [[GN 2017.08.31 via GMP 203.]]

O.24.349

subject heading(s): thūmos as breathing and phrēn as container of breath

As noted in the anchor comment at O.01.320, I normally translate both thūmos and phrēn (plural phrenes) as ‘heart’. But here at O.24.349 we see an old context where the idea of breathing is still conveyed by both words. [[GN 2017.08.31 via GMP 90.]]

O.24.352

subject heading(s): hubris ‘outrage’; atasthalo- ‘reckless’

These two negative terms hubris ‘outrage’ and atasthalo- ‘reckless’ are closely linked with each other in Homeric diction. See also the comments at O.03.207 and at O.16.086. [[GN 2017.08.31 via BA 163, 319.]]

O.24.365–371

subject heading(s): asaminthos ‘bathtub’; enalinkel- ‘looking like’

Taking a ritual bath, Laertes emerges looking like the gods, O.24.371. Again we see a transformation in the context of a ritual bath in an asaminthos ‘bathtub’, O.24.370. [[GN 2017.08.31 via MoM 2§16.]]

O24.423

subject heading(s): penthos alaston ‘grief unforgettable’

In the present context, it is evident that the emotion of grief can undergo a metastasis into the emotion of anger, fueling the desire for vendetta. [[GN 2017.08.31 via BA 95.]]
subject heading(s): ‘breathing-in [pneĩn] mental power [menos]’

Here at O.24.520, Athena ‘breathes’ into Laertes the ‘mental power’ that he needs to be victorious, as expressed respectively by pneĩn and menos. This situation is the converse of ‘breathing-out [pneĩn] mental-power [menos]’, as attested at O.22.203. For other situations where a divinity breathes menos ‘mental power’ into a hero, see the comments at l.10.482, l.11.508, l.15.059–060, l.15.262. [[GN 2017.08.31 via GMP 114]]

O.24.531–532

subject heading(s): end of vendetta

Athena intervenes in the feuding between the relatives of the suitors on one side and the followers of Odysseus on the other side. She commands the people of Ithaca to stop the feud. She prevents further vendetta, just as she will prevent further vendetta at the conclusion of the Eumenides of Aeschylus.

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Inventory of terms and names

**Aeolian.** As a noun, this word refers to Greek-speaking people who spoke an ancient Greek dialect known as Aeolic. As an adjective, this same word refers to the social and cultural institutions of these Aeolic-speaking people. [[GN 2016.09.07; see the anchor comment at l.01.463.]]

**Aeolian Dodecapolis.** A confederation of twelve Aeolian cities located on the mainland of Asia Minor. Herodotus 1.149.1 lists them in the following order: Cyme, Lērisai, Neon Teikhos, Tēnnos, Killa, Notion, Aigiroessa, Pitanē, Aigaiai, Myrina, Gryneia, and, lastly, Smyrna. Herodotus 1.151.1 notes that the Aeolian cities on the mainland of Asia Minor in the region of Mount Ida were grouped separately from the Aeolian Dodecapolis, and he does not list those cities by name. Then there is Lesbos: Herodotus 1.151.2 says that this island was politically organized as a federation of five Aeolian cities. (Further details in HPC 138.) In one of the Lives of Homer, Vita 1.18–19, the Aeolian city of Smyrna is described as the daughter city of Cyme; also, in Vita 1.17–31, Smyrna is recognized as the city where Homer was born. The same point is made by Strabo 14.1.37 C646, who recognizes the special claim of Smyrna as the birthplace of Homer while duly noting the counterclaims of rival cities. (Further details in HPC 135.) The Aeolian Dodecapolis became destabilized when Smyrna was captured by the Ionians. The story of the capture is told by Herodotus 1.149–150, who adds at 1.150.2 this detail: the stranded Aeolians of Smyrna were then absorbed by the remaining eleven Aeolian cities of the original Dodecapolis. (Further details in HPC 138–139.) With the capture of Smyrna by the Ionians, not only was the Aeolian Dodecapolis destabilized: even the identity of Homer as an Aeolian native of Smyrna was reconfigured. We can observe the reconfiguration by tracking Homer’s shifting identity in two Lives of Homer. In one of these Lives, Vita 1.3–17 and 1.17.31, Homer is conceived in Aeolian Cyme and born in Aeolian Smyrna. In terms of this Life, the time of Homer’s conception and birth is situated in a mythical era that precedes the Ionian Migration. This version stands in sharp contrast to the version we read in another Life, Vita 2.9–12 (and in other sources as well): in this version, as in the previous version, Homer is born in Smyrna, but now his birth is synchronized with the Ionian Migration, which happens admittedly later than the Aeolian Migration. (See under Aeolian Migration and Ionian Migration.) So, the Homer who had originated from a diminished Aeolian Dodecapolis now becomes reconfigured as a Homer who originates from an augmented Ionian Dodecapolis. (Further details in HPC 134, 142, 211.) [[GN 2016.09.07; see also the anchor comment at l.01.463.]]

**Aeolian Migration.** The Greek word translated here as ‘migration’ is apoikia; a closer translation would be ‘colonization’, with reference to myths about settlers who settled the Aeolian coastlands of Asia Minor and the major offshore Aeolian islands of Lesbos and Tenedos. According to Strabo 13.1.3 C 582, the Aiolikē apoikia ‘Aeolic colonization’ started sixty years after the Trojan war and four generations before the start of the Iōnikē apoikia ‘Ionian colonization’. [[GN 2016.09.07 via Nagy 2011b:164.]]

**Aeolic.** A major dialectal branch of the ancient Greek language. It is the “recessive” dialect of Homeric diction, as opposed to Ionic, which is the “dominant” dialect. See also under Ionic; also under Homeric diction. [[GN 2016.09.07 via Nagy]]
Aeolic default. Homeric diction defaults to Aeolic forms in the absence of corresponding Ionic forms. (Details in Nagy 2011b:175.) See under Aeolic; also under Ionic; also under Homeric diction. [[GN 2016.09.07.]]

aetiology. A myth that explicitly motivates (1) a ritual or (2) a custom that includes ritualized behavior. It cannot be assumed that such a myth is independent of the ritual that it motivates: rather, the myth can be considered to be a part of the ritual that is ostensibly being motivated by the myth. [[GN 2017.05.25.]]

Aithiopis. See under epic Cycle.

archaic period of Greek history. By archaic I mean a historical period extending roughly from the second half of the eighth century BCE up to the second half of the fifth, which is the beginning of the classical period. See BA vii n1. In the printed version of BA 1999, I wrote “through” where I now say, more correctly, “up to” in the online version. [[GN 2016.12.26.]]

Aristarchus of Samothrace, director of the Library of Alexandria in the middle of the second century BCE. He was the most prestigious editor of the Homeric iliad and Odyssey in the ancient world. For his edition, he used as his base text (see under base text) the readings that he found in the koinai or ‘common’ Homeric manuscripts, but he kept track of variant readings that he found in other Homeric manuscripts that were supposedly kharisterai or ‘more graceful’. He recorded these variants in his hupomnemata or ‘commentaries’, and he often preferred them to the variants in the koinai. But he kept the variants of the kharisterai out of his base text and left them in his commentaries. Later followers of Aristarchus, however, started transferring the variant readings that he had found and moving them into the original base text. That is why the medieval manuscript tradition of Homeric poetry is “infiltrated” with readings that originally derived from the hupomnemata of Aristarchus, not from his base text. [[GN 2016.08.18 via HC “Prolegomena”; see also the comment on I.08.107.]]

Aristophanes of Byzantium. Editor of the Homeric iliad and Odyssey, lived in the second century BCE. The immediate predecessor of Aristarchus. [[GN 2016.08.18 via HC “Prolegomena.”]]

athetesis. When ancient editors of Homer have doubts about the authenticity of a given verse, they mark that verse with a prefixed obelos ‘skewer’ to indicate their doubts. The noun athetesis refers to such marking, and the verb for making such a mark is athetein ‘athetize’. In the case of editors like Zenodotus and Aristarchus, there is evidence to show that they did not omit such athetized verses in the base text that they used: rather, they retained them, marked with the appropriate prefixing of an obelos. [[GN 2016.11.20.]]

base text. In comparing manuscripts that feature variant readings, an editor may choose one manuscript or collation of manuscripts as the basis for comparison with other manuscripts. So, a base text is simply a basis, and it is not assumed to be a reconstruction of the original text. Rather, such a text is simply a point of departure for investigating the history and prehistory of any textual transmission. [[GN 2016.08.18 via HTL 33–36, 64–65, 71–72, 86, 95, 101, 103.]]

Classical period of Greek history. This period follows the archaic period, which ends around the middle of the fifth century BCE. [[GN 2016.12.26.]]

Crates of Mallos. Director of the Library of Pergamon in the middle of the second century BCE. [[GN 2016.08.18 via HC “Prolegomena.”]]

Cypria. See under epic Cycle.

epic. In my comments, I use this term in a restricted sense, referring to the form of poetry that is exemplified by the Homeric iliad and Odyssey, also by the poetry of the so-called epic Cycle (see under epic Cycle). [[GN 2016.12.06.]]

epic Cycle. By the time of Aristotie, in the fourth century BCE, the textual traditions of epics (see under epic) that were known as the epic Cycle or kuklos (κύκλος) were considered to be non-Homeric. In earlier times, by contrast, such epics were thought to be composed by Homer himself, and they were thus grouped together with the iliad and Odyssey. It was as if the epic Cycle represented the sum total of Homeric composition. (See under Homer; see also the comment on I.05.722 on kuklos in the sense of ‘chariot wheel’ as a metaphor for the sum total of Homeric composition.) The epics of the epic Cycle have not survived except for fragments and plot-summaries, the original texts of which are most easily accessible in the old but still useful edition of Allen 1912. The plot-summaries of the epics in the Cycle are attributed to one Proclus, who can most
probably be dated to the second century CE (Nagy 2015.12.24§1n5). These plot-summaries cover the following epics, attributed to otherwise unknown poets as named here: *Cypria*, by Stasinus of Cyprus; *Aithiopis*, by Arctinus of Miletus; *Little Iliad*, by Lesches of Lesbos; *Iliou Persis* or ‘Destruction of Ilion’, by Arctinus of Miletus; *Nostoi* or ‘Songs of Homecoming’, by Agias of Troizen; *Telegony*, by Eugammon of Cyrene. [[GN 2016.12.06.]]

**formula.** A basic unit of Homeric diction on the level of form. A connected term is theme, which is a basic unit of Homeric diction on the level of content or meaning. Some linguists and classicists who study Homeric poetry show a narrow and superficial understanding of the Homeric formula, viewing it simply as a repeated phrase that fits the meter. By contrast, this commentary follows an understanding of the formula in the context of oral composition-in-performance. Such an understanding is exemplified by the research of Milman Parry (especially Parry 1932) and Albert Lord (especially Lord 1960). Lord (1960:47) has said, with reference to any orally composed poem, “There is nothing in the poem that is not formulaic.” The commentary here aims for such a broad understanding of the Homeric formula, viewing all the phraseology of Homeric diction as formulaic. [[GN 2016.07.21 via HQ 20; also via Nagy 2011b:133–134; further, HQ 23–26; see also under theme.]]

**formulaic system.** The meaning of this term is shaped by the results achieved through the combined research of Milman Parry (especially Parry 1932) and his student Albert Lord (1960). Just as Antoine Meillet (1921:16) understood language as an integral system where every component has its place, “un système où tout se tient,” so also Parry and Lord understood the formulaic language of oral poetry as an integral system in its own right. [[GN 2016.07.21 via HQ 24.]]

**Homer.** In the Classical period and toward the end of the earlier archaic period, he was thought to be the Master Narrator of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. (See under Classical period, archaic period, and Master Narrator.) During the post-Classical period as represented by the works of figures like Plutarch and Pausanias in the second century CE, Homer was thought to be the author of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and his authorship was viewed as a matter of ‘writing’, *graphein*. (HPC 31.) During the Classical period as represented by the works of figures like Plato and Aristotle in the fourth century BCE, Homer was likewise thought to be the author of the Homeric *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, but his authorship was viewed as a matter of ‘making’, *poiein*, analogous to the crafting of an artifact by an artisan or craftsman: Plato and Aristotle avoided any references to the making of Homeric poetry as a matter of ‘writing’, *graphein*. (HPC 31.) During the earlier Classical period as represented by the work of Thucydides in the fifth century BCE, Homer was thought to be the author of not only the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* but also of at least some Homeric Hymns, like the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo*. (HPC 18.) During this same period, as we see from the reportage of Herodotus in the fifth century BCE, Homer was thought by some to be the author of a wider range of epics, such as the *Cypria*. (HPC 75–78.) In the archaic era, such epics were thought to be parts of a poetic corpus body of epic poetry known as the epic Cycle. (See under archaic period and epic Cycle.) In the varied narrative traditions known as the *Lives of Homer*, we can trace the reception of the poetry that had been attributed to Homer during all the periods mentioned here. (HPC 29–58.) [[GN 2016.07.21 -> 2016.12.30 via the references to HPC as interspersed above.]]

**Homeric diction.** This term was used by Milman Parry (1932) in analyzing the formulaic system of Homeric poetry. [[GN 2016.07.21 via Nagy 2011b:133.]]

**Iliad and Odyssey.** In this commentary, the article “the” will be avoided in wording that refers to *the Iliad* and *Odyssey* together, as here. That is because the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are treated as complementary epics in this commentary. In other words, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are treated together as a structural unity. Such a unity can be traced back to the late eighth and early seventh centuries BCE: see Nagy 2015.12.24 following Frame 2009 ch. 11. [[GN 2016.07.21.]]

**Iliou Persis.** See under epic Cycle.

**Ionic.** As a noun, this word refers to Greek-speaking people who speak an ancient Greek dialect known as Ionic. As an adjective, this same word refers to the social and cultural institutions of these Ionic-speaking people. [[GN 2016.09.07; see the anchor comment at I.01.463.]]

**Ionic Dodecapolis.** A confederation of twelve Ionic cities, ten of which were locataed on the mainland of Asia Minor while the other two were island-states located offshore from the mainland. Herodotus 1.142.3 lists them in the following order: Miletus, Myous, Priene, Ephesus, Colophon, Lebedos, Teos, Klazomenai, Phocaea, the island-states of Samos and of Chios, and, lastly, Erythrai. [[GN 2016.09.07; see the anchor comment at I.01.463.]]

**Ionic Migration.** The Greek word translated here as ‘migration’ is *apoikia*; a closer translation would be ‘colonization’, with reference to myths about settlers who settled the Ionic coastslands of Asia Minor and the major offshore Ionic islands of
Chios and Samos. According to Strabo 13.1.3 C 582, the Ἰονίκη ἀποκική ‘Ionic colonization’ started four generations after the start of the Αἰολικὴ ἀποκική ‘Aeolian colonization’. [[GN 2016.09.07 via Nagy 2011b:164.]]

**Ionic.** A major dialectal branch of the ancient Greek language. It is the “dominant” dialect of Homeric diction, as opposed to Aeolic, which is the “recessive” dialect. See also under Aeolic; also under Homeric diction. [[GN 2016.09.07 via Nagy 2011b:175; see also the anchor comment at I.01.463.]]

**Koine.** This term, derived from the word κοιναί ‘common’ as used by Aristarchus (see under Aristarchus) in referring to the Homeric manuscripts that he chose for establishing the base text (see under base text) for his edition of the Homeric liiad and Odyssey, is a short-hand way of referring to the version of Homeric poetry as transmitted by the Athenian State in the fifth century BCE extending into the fourth. [[GN 2016.08.18 via HC “Prolegomena”; see also the comment on I.08.107.]]

**ktisis poetry.** A form of poetic narrative that presents the mythological foundations of a community. The meaning of ktisis is ‘foundation’. [[GN 2017.05.25.]]

**lemmatizing.** This coined word is based on the ancient Greek noun λέμμα (lēmma), which will be spelled throughout simply as “lemma” (and the plural will be spelled as “lemmata”). This noun refers to whatever wording is literally ‘taken’ (the corresponding verb is λαμβάνειν/laβein) out of the overall wording of a scriptio continua that is being quoted. (In pre-Byzantine conventions of writing, words were not separated from each other by way of spacing; hence the term scriptio continua ‘continuous lettering’). For example, in the case of the scholia or ‘notes’ that are interwoven into the tenth-century manuscript of the iliad known as the Venetus A, what happens is that the wording of any given lemma is notionally being ‘taken’ out of the overall wording of a Homeric verse and then transferred into the scholia, where the lemma serves to lead off the wording of the relevant commentary. Literally, the string of letters that is the lemma gets ‘taken’ out of the longer string of letters that is the overall verse, which had formerly been written in scriptio continua. The explanations that follow the lemmata in the scholia of the Venetus A, as in the scholia of other manuscripts containing Homeric poetry (such as the Venetus B), were meant to enhance the reader’s understanding of the Homeric verses from which the lemmata were taken. And, from time to time, the explanations were specifically meant to enhance the actual reading of those verses out loud. In AHCP, the coined term lemmatizing is applied to words or groups of words that are ‘taken out’ from the string of letters that had constituted the wording of a whole verse. Lemmatized words will be formatted in Greek boldface, as with θηλάς ἵππους at I.05.269. [[GN 2016.08.04 via Nagy 2009b:135–136.]]

**Life of Homer.** See under Vita 1, Vita 2, and Vita 6.

**Little iliad.** See under epic Cycle.


**Master Narrator.** In the Classical period, he is the speaking ‘I’ who narrates the iliad and Odyssey. He was generally thought to be the one person who controls the story of the iliad and the story of the Odyssey. In that period, he was thought to be Homer. See also under Homer; also Classical period of Greek history. [[GN 2016.07.21.]]

**Meillet, Antoine** (1866–1936). A pioneer in the scientific methodology of Indo-European linguistics. He strongly influenced the research of Milman Parry in developing the concepts of formula and formulaic system. See de Lamberterie 1997. [[GN 2016.07.21.]]

**metaphor.** An expression of meaning by substituting something unfamiliar for something familiar. [[GN 2016.07.28 via MoM 0§01, 0§1 Extract 0–A.]]

**metonymy or metonym.** An expression of meaning by connecting something familiar with something else that is familiar. [[GN 2016.07.28 via MoM 0§01, 0§2 Extract 0–B.]]

**multiform.** A form that coexists with other forms within the system that is Homeric diction. [[GN 2016.10.16 via PasP 9, 27, 33, 43, 107, 134, 151–152, 205–206.]]

**Nostoi.** See under epic Cycle.

**Parry, Milman** (1902–1935). A most representative work of his: Parry 1932. A collection of his papers, with his French texts
translated into English, was published by his son Adam Parry (1971). The introduction to this “English Parry,” written by Adam Parry, discounts the influence of Antoine Meillet on the research of Milman Parry. But see now de Lamberterie 1997. [[GN 2016.07.21.]]

**scholia.** Notes or annotations that accompany texts in manuscripts.

**simile.** Like a metaphor, a simile makes a comparison. Unlike a metaphor, however, a simile signals explicitly that a comparison is being made, and the signaling is achieved by way of words meaning ‘as’, ‘same as’, ‘looking like’, ‘like’, and so on. [[GN 2017.07.22.]]

**synecdoche.** A special kind of metonymy, where a part of the whole refers to the whole. [[GN 2018.10.08.]]

**Telegonia.** See under epic Cycle.

**theme.** A basic unit of *Homerian diction* on the level of content or meaning. A connected term is *formula*, which is a basic unit of Homerian diction on the level of form. [[GN 2016.07.21 via HQ 20.]]


**Zenodotus of Ephesus.** Editor of the Homerian *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, lived in the third century BCE. Whenever Aristarchus disagreed with a variant reading attested by Zenodotus, he would place the sign > in front of the verse that featured the variant. [[GN 2016.08.18 via HC “Prolegomena.”]]

### Bibliographical Abbreviations


DGE = Schwyzer 1923.

GMP = *Greek Mythology and Poetics*, Nagy 1990b.

H24H = *The Ancient Greek Hero in 24 Hours*, Nagy 2013

HC = *Homer the Classic*, Nagy 2009|2008

HPC = *Homer the Preclassic*, Nagy 2010|2009

HQ = *Homerian Questions*, Nagy 1996b

HR = *Homerian Responses*, Nagy 2003


MoM = *Masterpieces of Metonymy*, Nagy 2016|2015

PasP = *Poetry as Performance*, Nagy 1996a

PH = *Pindar’s Homer*, Nagy 1990a

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### Bibliography


Winkler, D. 1977 [2017]. Ankle and Ankle Epithets in Archaic Greek Verse. Cambridge, MA. http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-
Footnotes

[ back ] 1. In subject headings, I do not write out accents of transliterated Greek words. But I do write them out in the course of strictly linguistic discussions, as in the discussion here.

[ back ] 2. Here and elsewhere, I cite verbs via the infinitive, not via the indicative first person singular.