THE PORTRAYAL OF THE FAMILY IN EARLY GREEK HEXAMETER POETRY

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the portrayal of the family in Early Greek hexameter poetry, and to describe the influence of that portrayal upon the identity of the characters within the poems and upon the structure of the poems themselves. The introductory chapter defines the family as described in early Greek. The definition of the family is governed by two distinct concepts, γένος and οἶκος. I describe γένος as a 'vertical axis' which consists of the male line of genealogy (usually associated with sons); I describe the οἶκος as a 'horizontal axis' which includes the household (usually associated with marriage). I examine these familial axes and their attendant polarities (male/female, immortality/mortality, stability/flux, loyalty/treachery).

Chapter One examines the family as a backdrop for the scenes of male heroism which dominate the *Iliad*. The relationship of father and son is portrayed as highly valued, that of husband and wife as fragile and ambiguous. The figure of Hektor provides an example of the valuing of γένος over οἶκος, heroic glory over the home. I examine the anomalous figure of Achilleus in relation to his own familial situation, and with respect to his shifting attitudes towards the vertical and horizontal axes. I also discuss the role of female family members who are helpless spectators and provide a counterpoint to the world of war; and the family of the gods, whose inability to rescue their mortal children amplifies the theme of familial tragedy which pervades the poem. I also describe the *Iliad*'s structural framework in terms of the father-son relationship and the husband-wife relationship.

In Chapter Two I discuss the family in the *Odyssey*. The *Odyssey* is framed by the accounts of Odysseus' son and father, with the theme of the treacherous wife woven throughout. The *Telemacheia* serves to establish Telemachos as Odysseus' son, and, along with the wanderings of Odysseus, it offers other familial paradigms which contrast with Odysseus' οἶκος. The eventual homecoming of Odysseus and his reunification with his family reveals the trustworthiness of blood relationships and the potential treachery inherent in social relationships.

Chapter Three shifts us to the world of the gods as described in the *Homeric Hymns*.

I examine the immortal father-son relationship, and the threat that an immortal son can pose to the reign of his father. The *Hymns* celebrate Zeus' successful Olympian reign, which can be partially explained in terms of his successful dealings with his children and wives. I also examine the anxiety surrounding immortal mothers and birth, and the intersection of mortal and immortal within the medium of the family.

Chapter Four covers Hesiod's *Theogony* and *Works and Days*. Hesiod covers the world of gods and of men, providing a portrayal of the family which contrasts with the other epic poems, in that it is almost entirely negative. The succession myth emphasises the problem of immortal sons, and celebrates Zeus' success in producing a few dutiful sons, numerous dutiful daughters, and his success at controlling procreation. Hesiod's own family provides a counterpart to the familial portrayal in the poems, for he depicts tension between father and son, brother and brother, and husband and wife. The conclusion of his *Works and Days* somewhat alleviates his predominantly negative view of the family. The Conclusion of the thesis summarises the contents of the chapters, and explores some broader issues regarding the role of the family in early Greek literature.

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Table of Contents

List of Figures

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Dedication

εἰς τὴν δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ

To my family, who made this topic one of personal meaning and interest.

Introduction

Early Greek poetry has been scrutinised, critiqued, deconstructed and reconstructed ever since some gifted soul (or souls) committed the texts to the written page (and probably even earlier, while the poems were being created by the oral poet[s]). Out of the ever-increasing aggregation of literary criticism have arisen many works which treat specific elements found within the poems, such as the role of the hero, the birth of the gods, or the portrayal of the elderly.[1] One of the most notable trends in recent literary criticism has been the examination of the role of women in Homeric and Hesiodic poetry.[2] Yet there is no literary study which focusses on the unit which brings all of these seemingly disparate elements together: the family. For indeed, the roles of hero and slave, god and mortal, male and female, old and young, are all united by the fact that they exist in the context of the family. The family is a literary construct which offers a means of understanding connections between humans and/or gods. It provides a foundation for each character's *identity*. Who would Achilleus be, if he were not portrayed as the son of an old, mortal father named Peleus and an immortal, sorrowing mother named Thetis; or who would Odysseus be, with no faithful Penelope or glorious son Telemachos? Without the portrayal of the family, the entire complexion of the poems would be altered. The family is an integral component in early Greek poetry, for it functions as a structural element within the poems, and it offers a means of exploring the larger themes found in the poems.[3]

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1 See Redfield and Schein, among others, for the role of the hero; Brown, Clay, and Sussman for the birth of the gods; Bertman, Falkner, King, and Reinhold for the portrayal of the elderly.

2 See Arthur, Bergren, Cantarella, duBois, Marquardt, Murnaghan, and Pomeroy.

3 'Early Greek hexameter poetry,' for the purpose of this thesis, includes Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the *Homeric Hymns*, and Hesiod's *Theogony* and *Works and Days*. I have investigated all of these works because, like Thalmann, "I believe that much can be gained from thinking of early Greek epic as a homogeneous and coherent body of poetry," William G. Thalmann, *Conventions of Form and Thought in Early Greek Epic Poetry* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), xiii. For the "fundamental kinship" of all of these poems, see Thalmann, xi ff.; and Richard Janko, *Homer, Hesiod and the Hymns: Diachronic Development in Epic Diction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982). I have approached each text as a complete, unified whole, since I have chosen the role of literary critic rather than textual critic. I have omitted the fragmentary poems, such as the *Shield of Herakles*, the *Catalogue of Women*, and the Epic Cycle.

My approach is literary, rather than social-historical. As Billigmeier notes, "Homer was not a historian, nor an anthropologist, nor an archaeologist, but a poet, the heir to an oral tradition going back from his own time through the Dark Age and the Mycenaean period to the mists of the Indo-European past."[4] It is generally accepted that the Homeric poems contain a blend of material extending from the thirteenth century (or earlier) to the eighth century.[5] This mixture of material makes it difficult to link the Homeric family to a specific historical era, or to trace its structure and development. This does not mean that the emotions and relationships expressed in the poem may not be an accurate reflection of a specific or extended historical period: but verification is difficult, if not impossible. Certainly the poetry appears to the reader as an accurate reflection of human nature: "Although he was describing a different society, Homer was one of the most outstanding figures in world literature for knowledge of the human heart."[6] Hesiod's works are also problematic sources for social history. Millet points out that Hesiod's outlook appears to be contemporary, whereas the Homeric epics are looking back into the heroic past: thus the evidence of material collected over the centuries, present in Homer, is not as conspicuous in Hesiod.[7] Nevertheless, the "horrendous methodological problems that inevitably arise when artistic representations are used as a source for social history" apply to Hesiod and to

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4 Jon-Christian Billigmeier, "Studies on the Family in the Aegean Bronze Age and in Homer," in *Trends in History*, vol. 3-4 (New York: Haworth Press, 1985), 17-18.

5 "It seems probable that oral poetry was being composed across at least the whole period from the thirteenth to the eighth century, and it has been possible for historians to see the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as describing a society from any point within these five centuries, or even as a conflation or pure fantasy, related to no social reality at all," Ian Morris, "The Use and Abuse of Homer," *Classical Antiquity* 5, no. 1 (1986): 82. His article explains the problem of using Homer for social history, although he himself attempts to establish that eighth-century society is reflected in the Homeric poems.

6 W. den Boer, *Private Morality in Greece and Rome: Some Historical Aspects*, Mnemosyne Supplement no. 57 (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1979), 171.

7 Paul Millett, "Hesiod and His World," *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 210 (1984): 86. Millett does analyse the *Works and Days* from a social-historical perspective, patterning his work after Moses Finley's *World of Odysseus* (New York: Viking Press, 1954). But Nagy argues that there is a Hesiodic tradition which did pass material down through the centuries: Gregory Nagy, "Hesiod," in *Ancient Writers: Greece and Rome*, edited by T. James Luce, vol. 1 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1982), 43-73.

the *Hymns* as well as to the Homeric poems.[8] My approach to the poems has been neatly expressed by Halverson (regarding the *Odyssey*): an understanding of the family in the poem is important "not in order to reconstruct history, but to understand the poem, for whether presented realistically or fancifully, social institutions, traditions, relationships, attitudes and problems are, to a significant degree, what the poem is about."[9]

The early Greek concept of the family, as revealed in the vocabulary of the poems, is rather different from our own.[10] We tend to have preconceived notions about what a family is or is not: "unlike other areas in which we may admit that we have no special competence, this particular field is, naturally enough, one we all feel we know well—we were all born into a family . . . . this empirical, felt knowledge of the family makes it one of the most ideologically loaded of topics."[11] Our definition of the family would probably be similar to the first entry found in the Oxford English Dictionary: "a set of parents and children, or of relations, living together or not"—the nuclear family.[12] Thus, when I began my study of the family, feeling confident that I knew what it was, I was surprised to find that there is no early Greek word which signifies 'family' in the way I have just described.[13] Rather, there are two concepts which are related, yet different.

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8 Linda S. Sussman, "Workers and Drones: Labor, Idleness and Gender Definition in Hesiod's Beehive," *Arethusa* 11, nos. 1, 2 (1978): 35.

9 John Halverson, "Social Order in the *Odyssey*," *Hermes* 113 (1985): 129. For those who do wish to examine the historical family as extracted from Homer and Hesiod, I would recommend (in addition to Billigmeier, Finley, Millet, and Morris cited above) Antony Andrewes, *The Greeks* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1967); M. M. Austin and P. Vidal-Naquet, *Economic and Social History of Ancient Greece: An Introduction*, translated by M. M. Austin (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977); and the classic work of W. K. Lacey, *The Family in Classical Greece* (1968; London: Thames and Hudson, 1972).

10 I do not mean to imply that we all hold the same view as to what constitutes a family, merely that there is present in our society a general notion of what the word 'family' means.

11 Martine Segalen, *Historical Anthropology of the Family*, translated by J. C. Whitehouse and Sarah Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 1.

12 *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 8th ed., s.v. "family."

13 "Our concept of the 'family' in that sense cannot be translated into Greek," Austin and Vidal-Naquet, 41.

The first concept is expressed by the term οἶκος. Closest to our meaning of the word 'family,' it could be accurately translated as 'household.' "An *oikos*, even in its purely human aspect, is much more than a family in the present sense of the word (that is to say, the group of parents and children as a minimum, the nuclear family)."[14] The οἶκος includes human family members who are either related by blood or bonded by marriage, exiles who are household members placed under the master's protection,[15] slaves, possessions, "land, buildings, livestock, reserves, equipment and so forth."[16] This unit, the οἶκος, is a collection of people and goods gathered together at a particular point in time. It is marked by temporal brevity: it can be passed on from generation to generation, but its contents and owners change through time. Birth, death, marriage, wife-stealing, raids, and war all contribute to a constant state of flux for the οἶκος.

The other Greek concept of family, γένος, somewhat contrasts with the οἶκος. Γένος refers to the line of male descent ('genealogy').[17] It embodies the diachronic, vertical movement of generation following generation, whereas the οἶκος encompasses synchronic, horizontal relationships, especially that of husband and wife. We can visualise the two concepts as axes: γένος, genealogy, can be pictured as a vertical axis, proceeding down through time, and the οἶκος can be thought of as a horizontal axis, existing at a particular point in time. The two intersect, but also diverge. The γένος/vertical axis is actually intersected by many οἶκοι, since the offspring necessary to keep the vertical line

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14 Austin and Vidal-Naquet, 41. For further definitions of the οἶκος, see Finley, 54; George M. Calhoun, "Polity and Society: The Homeric Picture," in *A Companion to Homer*, edited by Alan J. B. Wace and Frank H. Stubbings (London: Macmillan & Co., 1962), 433. For the οἶκος in the literature of the Classical period, see Judith Maitland, "Dynasty and Family in the Athenian City State: A View From Attic Tragedy," *Classical Quarterly* 42, no. 1 (1992): 27.

15 For example, Patroklos is a member of Peleus' οἶκος because he killed the son of Amphidamas. He was removed from his own home and raised in Peleus' (*Iliad* 23.84-90).

16 Austin and Vidal-Naquet, 41. See also Lacey, 44-45; 48-50.

17 There are several synonyms for γένος: see Cunliffe's *Lexicon* s.v. γενεή, γενέθλη, γονή, γόνος, ἔκγονος. For an excellent discussion of the meaning of γένος, see Laura L. Nash, "Concepts of Existence: Greek Origins of Generational Thought," *Daedalus* 107 (1978): 2.

alive arise from the οἶκος.[18] The permanency and stability of the male line of descent is portrayed in contrast to the instability and temporal brevity of the οἶκος. The οἶκος is associated with mortality, γένος with immortality. The mortals in early Greek poetry are described as having two means of obtaining a rather abstract form of immortality. By abstract, I mean that the person does indeed suffer physical death, but that some memory or essence of that person can still be found on earth. One way of gaining this sort of immortality is by winning glory, κλέος, a reputation which does not perish, but is passed on from generation to generation. A second way is by having a son (or many sons) and in this manner obtaining a form of immortality through offspring. "One's descendants are not so much one's property as heralds into the future, guaranteeing immortality by committing acts worthy of the ancestors and perpetuating the family's name."[19] Both means of gaining immortality are closely associated with the concept of γένος.

The vertical axis is closely associated with the father-son relationship.[20] There is a blood-kinship between father and son, an easy-to-define relationship that is unalterable.[21] Sons are generally portrayed as highly valued, trustworthy, and obedient, and ideally they surpass their fathers in heroic prowess. The single son, the 'only child,' is a precious commodity, the only guarantor of the male line. The poems seem to abound with single sons: Achilleus, Neoptolemos, Odysseus, Telemachos, Aineas, and Demophoön (to name

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18 The terms 'vertical' and 'horizontal' have been used in psychology with reference to the family. The "flow of anxiety" is described as occurring "along both horizontal and vertical dimensions. The 'vertical' flow derives from patterns of relating and functioning that are transmitted historically down the generations .... the 'horizontal' flow of anxiety emanates from current stresses on the family as it moves forward through time, coping with the inevitable changes, misfortunes and transitions in the family life cycle," Monica McGoldrick and Randy Gerson, *Genograms in Family Assessment* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1985), 6.

19 Page duBois, *Sowing the Body: Psychoanalysis and the Ancient Representations of Women* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 43.

20 Of course, the relationships of father-daughter, mother-son, and mother-daughter can be described as 'vertical' ones, but genealogy is usually an account of the male line of descent, and mothers and daughters play a relatively insignificant role among mortals in the poems. Immortal mothers and daughters are more prominently portrayed.

21 Doubt can be expressed about paternity, but the only two examples I could find in the poems were Telemachos' doubt about his paternity (discussed in Chapter Two), and Eidothea's in *Odyssey* 4.387, but she is a female sea-divinity, not the son of a hero.

a few). Because sons are so important, the frequent appearance of the single son adds a heightened sense of suspense concerning his fate and the fate of his family. Although there is anxiety over the son's survival in this respect, there is little anxiety surrounding the father-son relationship itself: it was "felt to be a model for affection and concern."[22] The male line is valued for its permanency and stability, a form of "continuity set over against the flux."[23]

The husband-wife relationship, associated with the horizontal axis, is much more open to question and disintegration, because it is not a relationship founded on blood-kinship, but on social agreement.[24] Finley notes that "there is no marital relationship which contains the emotional intensity found in the attachment between father and son."[25] This is not to say that husbands are not portrayed as being attached to their wives, but their attachment is tempered by doubt and suspicion. The woman, although she lives out her daily life in the confines of the οἶκος, is a highly portable commodity. She can be stolen away, as Paris stole Helen; she can be taken away, as Briseis was from Achilleus; she can be wooed away and made a conspirator with her new husband, as Klytaimestra was from Agamemnon. Even a loyal wife like Penelope is tinged with the dye of doubt. The focus of male anxiety is upon the wife: he must keep her in his own οἶκος, at times at great cost and effort. The movement of the wife from one οἶκος to another is associated with the disintegration of the former οἶκος: thus the wife acts as a physical representative of the

22 Henry Phelps Gates, *The Kinship Terminology of Homeric Greek*, Supplement to the International Journal of American Linguistics, vol. 37, no. 4, part 2, Indiana University Publications in Anthropology and Linguistics, Memoir 27 (Baltimore, Indiana: Waverly Press, 1971), 7.

23 Thomas Greene, *The Descent from Heaven: A Study in Epic Continuity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), 47.

24 There are some husbands and wives who are related to each other by blood, although these incestuous unions are usually limited to the gods (in which case it would not be a 'blood' relationship, since ἰχώρ, not blood, flows through the veins of the gods).

25 Finley, 137-38, paraphrased by Philip E. Slater, *The Glory of Hera: Greek Mythology and the Greek Family* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), 27.

temporal brevity and mortality of the home.[26]

Even defining 'wife' within the poems is a challenging task. There is the 'legitimate wife,' that is, the one woman in a socially-recognised permanent bond with the master of the οἶκος. There are also concubines—perhaps slaves, or women obtained as spoil from raids or war. The distinctions between these designations are blurred, and the debate as to whether Homeric men were 'monogamous' or not is ongoing. Earlier critics have held a somewhat romantic view. Jebb believes that "polygamy is not found among Greeks . . . . [the marriages] attest a pure and tender conception of conjugal affection."[27] Keller confidently states: "There is in Homer no trace of promiscuity."[28] Engels has a more realistic view: monogamy has "its specific character of monogamy *for the woman only*, but not for the man. And that is the character it still has today."[29] Whether a woman was fully a 'wife' or not is often difficult to determine. Lacey states that "the line between wife and concubine was extremely fine, and marriage was essentially a question of fact and not of law."[30] It appears that public acknowledgement of the marriage made the marriage legitimate, and provided children with a legitimate status.[31] Certainly all of the women, even slave women, are part of the οἶκος, since they are possessions of the head of the household. For the purposes of this thesis, then, my discussion of the 'family' will not only include what we would call the nuclear family, but also those present in the οἶκος—slaves, and suppliants (like Patroklos). I will also survey the sexual liaisons of the

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26 For the connection between motherhood and mortality, see Sheila Murnaghan, "Maternity and Mortality in Homeric Poetry," *Classical Antiquity* 11, no. 2 (1992): 242-64.

27 R. C. Jebb, *Homer: An Introduction to the Iliad and the Odyssey*, 5th ed. (Glasgow: James Maclehose and Sons, 1894), 53.

28 Albert Galloway Keller, *Homeric Society: A Sociological Study of the Iliad and Odyssey* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1902), 201.

29 Frederick Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, edited by Eleanor Burke Leacock, translated by Alec West (New York: International Publishers, 1972), 126.

30 Lacey, 42.

31 Several illegitimate children are mentioned in the *Iliad* (2.727, 5.70, 11.103, 13.694, 15.333). Both the Achaian and the Trojan sides had them, and even the polygamous Priam had illegitimate children.

heroes and of the gods, for these have implications for both οἶκος and γένος.

My examination begins in Chapter One with the *Iliad*, a poem concerned with war and male heroism, yet it is also rich in familial detail: the family provides an effective background for the scenes of war. The *Odyssey*, discussed in Chapter Two, shows the family after the Trojan war. The family of Odysseus is, naturally, given the most description, but the families of some of the other Trojan War heroes, as well as some of the families Odysseus meets in his wanderings, are given a significant role in the poem. The first two chapters thus pair the two poems which are longest, apparently earliest composed, and which show the heroes and their families during a time of war, and a time of peace.[32] The next two chapters cover the poems which have a lesser amount of material: the *Homeric Hymns* and the works of Hesiod. Chapter Three takes us into the οἶκος of the gods, as shown in the *Homeric Hymns*. The gods' depiction tallies quite well with the portrayal in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, although the poems' action is chronologically slightly earlier than the epic poems. Hesiod's *Theogony*, described in Chapter Four, portrays the gods during a time earlier than all of the other poems, and it also portrays a more jaded view of the family as a whole. This pessimistic portrayal is extended to the mortal family life described in Hesiod's *Works and Days* (also analysed in Chapter Four), and it provides somewhat of a contrast to the portrayal of the family in the other poems. The sum of these poems, then, provides us with a broad spectrum of familial representations which, when examined, yield layers of meaning and structural patterns which may have otherwise remained unobserved.

[32] For the possible dates of composition, see Janko, 231.

Chapter One: Heroism and Home in the *Iliad*

The separate threads of heroism and home twine throughout the richly woven tapestry of the *Iliad*. At times the two threads intersect, at other times they are vastly divergent. As Lacey has observed, "in the society of the Homeric poems, the ambitions, hopes, desires and fears of the heroes are centred in their families."[1] This chapter is an examination of how the hero's actions are guided, governed, and shaped by the claims of his family during a period of war. These claims are depicted as being both public and private, with tension often expressed between the two. In the Introduction, I described the early Greek concept of the family, consisting of the γένος, which I defined as the vertical axis of male descent, and the οἶκος, which I defined as the horizontal axis of familial relationships. In the *Iliad*, we can clearly see the polarised tensions clustering around the dual axes: immortality and mortality, male and female, duty and desire, valorous conduct and self-preservation. We will see that the father-son relationship is of prime importance, and the husband-wife relationship is rather ambiguous, a source of anxiety as well as of tenderness and affection.[2] I will also examine the οἶκος of the gods, for they are an important element in the action of the *Iliad*, and they are to a great extent defined by their familial relationships. The examination of the family in the *Iliad* will yield a clearer understanding of the poem's structure, of the characters' motivations, and, to a certain extent, of the importance family had in Greek thought: identity and familial relationships are closely interrelated.

The family is indeed a presence felt throughout the poem. The Achaians (Homer's main focus)[3] are separated from home and family by the sea's formidable barrier; the

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1 W. K. Lacey, *The Family in Classical Greece* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1968), 33.

2 "In Homeric society, the relationship between father and son was fundamental": Robert Finlay, "Patroklos, Achilleus, and Peleus: Fathers and Sons in the *Iliad*," *Classical World* 73 (1980): 268. Thomas Greene, *The Descent from Heaven: A Study in Epic Continuity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), calls the *Iliad* a "great poem of fatherhood."

3 See Gregory Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans: Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), 16-17, for the idea that even the Trojans have a share in the Achaians' poetic κλέος.

Trojans are at home fighting for its preservation. The Trojans' proximity to their families presents Homer with an opportunity to depict those who are affected by the war, but have no control over it—the women, children, and elderly men who are excluded from the action but have a deep concern as to the outcome. His depiction of the foremost Trojan hero, Hektor, interacting with his family is a sensitive and astute portrayal, and I will begin my investigation with Hektor and his family. The scene in Book Six between Hektor and his wife Andromache is one of the most memorable, because of its poignancy.[4] It also provides an excellent example of the contrasting claims of the vertical and horizontal axes discussed above. Homer portrays Hektor against the background of his family, and explores the tension between heroic duty and the private and personal feelings for home and family, a tension that is present (in varying degrees) for all of the warriors in the *Iliad*.

The famous choice of heroism or homecoming, κλέος or νόστος, is central to Achilleus' dilemma (9.411-16), but it is a choice which also confronts Hektor.[5] He is fighting to save home, family, and city—that is his main goal, but heroism has as its byproduct glory (κλέος), and Hektor appears to value κλέος more highly than his personal safety and that of his οἶκος. We are shown the private side of Hektor, his concern and affection for his wife and baby son, but we also see his constant preoccupation with his public reputation, and the burden of public expectation which is placed upon him. He is presented with the choice of remaining relatively safe inside the walls of Troy with his family, or fulfilling public expectation and fighting in the thick of the battle outside of Troy (6.431, 445). Redfield notes the discord between the private and public claims on the warrior:

> The poet dramatizes the pain of the warrior's role, of the man who, on behalf of his family, must leave his family, so that his very defense of them becomes a betrayal . . . . there is thus a tension between obligations to household and to city, for in defending everyone the

4 John A. Scott, *The Unity of Homer* (New York: Biblo and Tannen, 1965), 210, in his habitually gushing style, remarks that "the scene between the wife, the husband, and the little son, is generally regarded as the very greatest triumph of literary genius."

5 For the "choice of Achilleus," see Sheila Murnaghan, "Maternity and Mortality in Homeric Poetry," *Classical Antiquity* 11, no. 2 (1992): 255. Segal notes the parallel language referring to Achilleus and Hektor, neither of whom return home: Charles Segal, "Andromache's *Anagnorisis:* Formulaic Artistry in *Iliad* 22.437-476," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 75 (1977): 41.

> warrior must set aside his special obligations to those who are most truly his own.[6]

Tait expresses it another way: "There is a continuous accentuation of pathos in the contrast of Hektor's two rôles, that of chief weighed down by the large responsibilities of state, and that of husband, father, son obsessed with private anxieties and fears."[7] But this contrast can also be viewed as a tension between the female and male aspects of the family, between the demands of the οἶκος, an entity which is short-lived, easily destroyed, and associated with females, and κλέος, associated with the male line of the family, immortal, indestructible, and the only prize that can be won even after death.

Hektor operates according to the social norms which govern heroic conduct, which dictate that a glorious reputation should be pursued at all costs.[8] He is exceedingly concerned about what the public thinks of him and his efforts as a hero are propelled by a negative/positive duality: the desire to avoid a bad reputation and the desire to obtain a good one.[9] When his wife Andromache asks him to remain on the rampart, an action he considers less than heroic, he explains that he would "feel deep shame before the Trojans" (6.441-42) if he did this, and says: "I have learned to be valiant and to fight always among the foremost ranks of the Trojans, winning for my own self great glory, and for my father" (6.444-46).[10] Andromache advocates safety, and a practical means of defense ("draw your people up by the fig tree, there where the city is openest to attack, and where the wall may be mounted," 6.433-35), but Hektor's response indicates that glory, for him, outweighs

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6 James M. Redfield, *Nature and Culture in the "Iliad": The Tragedy of Hector* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 123.

7 Marion Tait, "The Tragic Philosophy of the Iliad," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 74 (1943): 53.

8 Redfield, 119, says that "Hector is a warrior not because he loves war but because he is before all else a hero of *aidos*. He has devoted his life to its dictates and to the avoidance of *nemesis*. Hector thus embodies the ideal norm of Homeric society." See also Seth L. Schein, *The Mortal Hero: An Introduction to Homer's "Iliad"* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), 70.

9 For praise and blame as two antithetical concepts linked in the poetic tradition, see Nagy, 222-42.

10 I have quoted Lattimore's translation throughout, and adopted his spelling of names, unless otherwise noted: Richmond Lattimore, trans., *The Iliad of Homer* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951; Phoenix Edition, 1961).

personal safety or familial concern.[11] Glory is pursued for self, father, and (as we shall see) son, with reckless abandon at times, and often to the detriment of wife and οἶκος.

When we hear Hektor and Andromache trade visions of the future (and rather gloomy ones, at that), it is clear that Hektor believes his glory and reputation will outlive him, regardless of what happens to his οἶκος. He sadly envisions an Achaian warrior dragging Andromache away to slavery, while an onlooker nearby remarks: "This is the wife of Hektor, who was ever the bravest fighter of the Trojans" (6.460-61).[12] Hektor imagines his οἶκος destroyed, his wife enslaved, but his reputation as the 'bravest fighter' intact. When it comes to his son, though, he prays for a more cheerful future, and one in which his own glory plays a part.[13] He petitions for Astyanax to be "'better by far than his father', as he comes in from the fighting; and let him kill his enemy and bring home the blooded spoils, and delight the heart of his mother" (6.479-81). Obviously, Hektor expects his reputation to survive, to act as a means of comparison with his son's. But his optimism for his son also extends to the οἶκος, for he pictures it undestroyed, available to sanction and delight in his son's heroic conquests: this is a contrast to his earlier vision, where Andromache is dragged away from his destroyed οἶκος. His son is not a victim, but rather destroys the homes of others.[14] As I mentioned in the Introduction, immortality was conceived of as coming from two sources: fame and children. Hektor's prayer is for both sources to survive—he feels he must fight to win κλέος that will adhere to his family, and he prays for his son to survive and follow in his footsteps. This is the heroic

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11 "Andromache, then, does not ask that Hector play the coward, but that he give up his quest for *kleos*," Marylin B. Arthur, "The Divided World of *Iliad* VI," in *Reflections of Women in Antiquity*, edited by Helene P. Foley (New York: Gordon and Breach Science Publishing, 1981), 33. See also G. S. Kirk, *The Iliad: A Commentary*, General Editor G. S. Kirk, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 217 ad 433-9.

12 Segal, 37, notes that Andromache's "personal identity is defined by her status as 'Hector's wife'."

13 "The blessing which Hector gives his son while he holds him in his arms is phrase for phrase in conscious contrast with the previous despairing speech he uttered about Andromache's lot," Johannes Th. Kakridis, *Homeric Researches* (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1949; New York: Garland Publishing, 1987), 52.

14 "He prays solemnly that he may ruthlessly destroy the sons and husbands and fathers of many other families," Oliver Taplin, *Homeric Soundings: The Shaping of the "Iliad"* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 121.

perception of family in relation to heroism: ideally, both γένος and οἶκος survive, but glory for the male line must be pursued at all costs, even at the risk of destruction.[15]

The *Iliad* not only presents us with the hero's viewpoint, however—the hero's family is allowed to speak and voice its opinion, and this opinion effectively portrays the contrast between the hero and his household. Hektor's family are helpless onlookers, unable to act on their own behalf. Their lives depend on his defence, and they recognize that he must fight. Yet all of them, his aged father Priam, his mother Hekabe, and his wife Andromache, advise him to pursue a more moderate means of defense (6.431-34, 22.84-89, 22.56-58). The family tries to act as a restraining influence on the hero: the preservation of the οἶκος is important to them, κλέος is less so.[16] Although Priam is a part of the male line, a recipient of the glory Hektor hopes to win, from his standpoint he desires only the safety of his family and city. Because of his age, he is as marginalised and defenceless as the women and children. His concern for his οἶκος is emphasised (22.61-76)—not once does he mention the κλέος of Hektor.[17] Hekabe appeals to Hektor, in vain,

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15 This point has been noted by several critics; they tend, however, to describe it as a 'family or glory' dichotomy, whereas I have expressed it as a 'female/οἶκος or male line/κλέος" dichotomy, a tension between the horizontal and vertical axes. For the view of family vs. glory, see Arthur, 37; Antony Andrewes, *The Greeks* (London: Hutchinson, 1967), 197; M. Owen Lee, *Fathers and Sons in Virgil's Aeneid: "Tum Genitor Natum"* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1979), 120; and Mihoko Suzuki, *Metamorphoses of Helen: Authority, Difference, and the Epic* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 20, who says "Hektor is compelled to give up his life with Andromache and Astyanax, not so much for their sake as for the sake of *kleos*." P. A. L. Greenhalgh, "Patriotism in the Homeric World," *Historia* 21 (1972): 534, believes that the *community* is placed above familial and personal glory; W. den Boer, *Private Morality in Greece and Rome: Some Historical Aspects* (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1979), 31, says exactly the opposite. Scott, 217, overlooks κλέος entirely and sees Hektor as "in the war solely as a defender of his family and his state"; and E. T. Owen, "The Farewell of Hector and Andromache," in *Essays on the "Iliad": Selected Modern Criticism*, edited by John Wright (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978), 98, rather effusively substantiates Scott's view: "when at last [Hektor] stands face to face with Achilles, we know that he is fighting for something more, something infinitely more to him than his own life, for when we come to that later scene we cannot fail to see behind him, defenceless but for him, utterly dependent upon his protection, Andromache and her little son."

16 Kakridis speaks of the restraining force of the family: "women, children, and parents, however, not only constitute a driving force for the warrior as he fights in order to protect them; they also exercise upon him a restraining power. Because he loves them and provides for them, it is not easy for him to leave them and go out to the battle, where so many dangers lurk," Johannes Th. Kakridis, *Homer Revisited* (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1971), 70.

17 He even discounts the idea that Hektor will gain glory from fighting Achilleus—he says that Achilleus will win the glory, not Hektor (22.56-58).

through "the two main roles of women in war: the rearing of babies and the tending of the dead."[18] Her appeal is private, rooted in the οἶκος. Andromache also advises a moderate plan, and she expresses a negative attitude towards heroic glory: "the three times that Andromache mentions Hector's valour or military accomplishments she regrets them."[19] Her vision of Astyanax' future portrays Hektor's glory as non-existent among his countrymen, remembered only by enemies seeking vengeance: in her view, κλέος is negligible or malevolent. It requires Hektor's death in order to exist. She believes that the orphaned Astyanax will be forcibly excluded from the communal banquet because of his fatherlessness (22.498)—no fond remembrance of Hektor's glory smooths the way for his son. She also foresees Astyanax being hurled from the tower by an enemy in revenge for a slain father, brother, or son, who had been "beaten down by the hands of Hektor" (24.734-38).[20] The family members' private concerns are voiced to no avail, as they express their desire for the hero to defend them successfully, rather than to pursue glory rashly.

The tension between the differing claims of family and heroism is resolved only partially and only after Hektor's death. Arthur notes that the walls of Troy act as a dividing line between the world of war and the world of family.[21] When Hektor enters the city wall, he provides us with a glimpse of his private family concerns; he leaves the walls behind to face Achilleus in a context where family is irrelevant (at least in Achilleus' mind, 22.338, 351-54). This spatial division between the world of private οἶκος and the world of public warfare is only negotiated after Hektor's death, when his body is at last brought inside the city wall, and inside the home. He is once again brought into the (relatively) private sphere of the οἶκος where the female members of his family (Andromache, Hekabe, and Helen) mourn for him (24.719-76). Thus Hektor is reclaimed both privately

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18 Taplin, 233.

19 S. Farron, "The Character of Hector in the *Iliad*," *Acta Classica* 21 (1978): 42 n.18.

20 In the Epic Cycle, Astyanax is indeed dashed to the ground (by Neoptolemos in one account, Odysseus in another) proving Andromache a more accurate prophet than Hektor.

21 Arthur, 20.

and publicly, and indeed his κλέος does live on in the epic poem itself. The poem simultaneously describes how Hektor's entire οἶκος will be destroyed after Hektor's death, while preserving a vivid and sensitive description of his family. Because of Hektor's κλέος in the poem, his family members receive κλέος within the poem as well.[22]

This discord between the pursuit of glory and the private fears and desires for the οἶκος is also portrayed among the more secondary heroes. For example, the Lykian Sarpedon (a Trojan ally) values the public ideal of protecting the family more than his private desire to remain at home. Even though his own family is not (presently) in jeopardy, he expresses his support for the Trojan cause:

> Yet even so I drive on my Lykians, and myself have courage
> to fight my man in battle, though there is nothing of mine here
> that the Achaians can carry away as spoil or drive off.
> But you: you stand here, not even giving the word to the rest
> of your people to stand fast and fight in defence of their own wives
> (5.482-87).

Yet by fighting to defend the Trojan families, Sarpedon is risking the welfare of his own family, which is utterly dependent on him. He realises he has left behind his "many possessions [including wife and child] which the needy man eyes longingly" (5.480-81). His own οἶκος is at risk in his absence.[23] But he has not come merely with an idealistic desire to preserve the Trojan homes. Like Hektor, he is also fighting for glory, because he is mortal. He tells his companion Glaukos: "Man, supposing you and I, escaping this battle would be able to live on forever, ageless, immortal, so neither would I myself go on fighting in the foremost nor would I urge you into the fighting where men win glory" (12.322-25). Mortals require glory to be remembered and thus to gain some measure of immortality, and this goal is depicted as worthy enough for a hero to leave behind home and family in its pursuit.

The tension between private home life and the public, idealistic defense of the family is expressed even among the anonymous masses of both the Achaian and Trojan fighters. In the *Iliad*, war compels men not only to leave the confines of the home, but also to

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22 For the link between κλέος and epic poetry, see Nagy, 16; Linda Lee Clader, *Helen: The Evolution from Divine to Heroic in Greek Epic Tradition* (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1976), 6.

23 The *Odyssey* clearly shows us the disarray of the οἶκος in the hero's absence.

experience a separation from the home which is magnified by the presence of a physical barrier: the Achaians are separated from their families by the water, the Trojans by the city wall.[24] Among the Achaian men, their own homes begin to exert a pull far stronger than the noble ideal of reuniting Menelaos' family, or than even the more mercenary gains of war (2.134-38).[25] Ironically, Odysseus uses a symbol of familial destruction to encourage the men to stay. He reminds them of the portent interpreted by Kalchas: a snake had eaten the eight nestlings of a sparrow, and then had consumed the ninth bird, "the mother who bore them" (2.300-13). This, Kalchas explains, represents the number of years they will fight in Troy, before taking the city in the tenth year (2.308-29). The kinship of the birds, the picture of a mother and her innocent children, is an important reflection of the aims of the Achaians: they too will consume the mothers and children of Troy, who are portrayed throughout the poem as helpless.[26] The glory obtained by destroying families is made more attractive than reunification with one's own family. Athene encourages this feeling by giving the men strength so that "now battle became sweeter to them than to go back in their hollow ships to the beloved land of their fathers" (2.453-54). The tension between heroism and home is also present for the Trojan men, although their communal ideal (the preservation of all of the Trojan wives and children) is obviously an urgent concern (8.57), and the desire to retreat into the loving arms of family, rather than fight, is more pressing than for the Achaians.[27] For both the Trojan and Achaian fighting men, a balance is sought between the demands of war and of family.

No one of the Trojan and Achaian warriors actually succumbs to the desire to retreat inside the home: battle is indeed "sweeter to them" than homecoming. But Achilleus, the

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24 The ships rotting in Troy symbolise both the long duration of the Achaians' separation from home, and the increasing difficulty of crossing the barrier of the sea to their own οἶκοι (2.134-38).

25 "It becomes clear from the great joy evinced by the Greek soldiers at the prospect of returning home that they have not fought the war with enthusiasm. Memories of their wives and children compel them more strongly than the idea of the abducted Helen," Suzuki, 31.

26 Lacey, 248 n. 9.

27 Helenos tells Hektor and Aineas to rouse the fighting men "before they tumble into their women's arms, and become to our enemies a thing to take joy in" (6.81-82).

hero whose name is announced at the very beginning of the poem, does retreat, and does contemplate homecoming instead of heroic κλέος. Achilleus' character vacillates with respect to heroism and the family. Unlike Hektor's static character, Achilleus develops and changes throughout the poem, and his shifting attitudes towards war and family as well as his own peculiar family background help to shed light on his character's transformation as he "moves from matriarchal to patriarchal influences."[28] Achilleus is unique, an anomalous hero, and his uniqueness is most fully understood in terms of his familial situation. His mother Thetis is immortal, has direct access to the gods, and is not confined to the οἶκος (in fact, she lives with her father in the sea, but she is free to appear to Achilleus at any time, 1.357-59). His father Peleus is mortal, and left behind in the οἶκος (19.333-39). Even the warlike possessions that traditionally pass from father to son are Peleus' because of his marriage to Thetis: armour, spear, and immortal horses were all marriage gifts from the gods.[29] We have already observed the somewhat polarised tension between the vertical axis of κλέος, immortality, and fatherhood and the horizontal axis of οἶκος, mortality/temporal brevity and motherhood/wifehood. These distinctions are actually reversed in Achilleus' case, because of his unusual family. As we shall see, his responses to the heroic world are governed by his unique position between the spheres of mortality and immortality, just as his parentage is a combination of the two.

Achilleus has come to Troy to fight on behalf of two families: his own, and Menelaos'. Like the other Achaians, he is fighting for the public goal of reuniting Menelaos with his stolen wife, Helen: this is the purpose of the war. Yet he is also there because he has been sent by his father (9.439-41) to be trained in the public pursuit of κλέος. Clader argues that this pursuit of glory is Achilleus' main purpose: "Because he [Achilleus] was never one of Helen's suitors, his reason for coming to Troy must have

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28 Lee, 138.

29 See John Heath, "The Legacy of Peleus: Death and Divine Gifts in the Iliad," *Hermes* 120, no. 4 (1992): 387-400, for the significance of the marriage gifts, and how they heighten the sense of Achilleus' mortality. The fact that weapons were passed from father to son is demonstrated by Nestor, who had given his shield to his son Thrasymedes, but borrowed it back on the spur of the moment in 14.9-11.

been primarily to gain κλέος and only secondarily to rescue Helen."[30] Thus he is there as a representative of paternal values, in pursuit of the κλέος associated with the male line.

At the very beginning of the *Iliad* we see Achilleus cease to represent his father and Menelaos in battle. When Agamemnon takes Achilleus' concubine Briseis (an act which Achilleus ironically parallels with Paris' stealing of Helen, 9.337-45), Achilleus' viewpoint shifts from public to private. He no longer focuses on κλέος, glory that is earned on the battlefield, but on τιμή, the proper respect and honour that is due him because of what he has already done on the battlefield.[31] He withdraws from the battle into his hut (his home away from home), and desires to obtain τιμή by means of his mother's influence with Zeus (1.351-56). It is unusual for an epic hero to seek honour by means of his mother, but "Thetis assures that Achilles' absence causes the war to go badly for the Achaeans and thus that his absence leads not to his dishonor, as it would for ordinary heroes, but to his greater glory."[32] He rejects the κλέος associated with mortal, paternal concerns, and seeks glory through his mother, an option unavailable to other heroes.

It is the embassy scene in Book Nine which most clearly reveals that Achilleus' focus has shifted from κλέος to οἶκος. The three speakers, Odysseus, Phoinix, and Aias, ask Achilleus to relent from his anger, and all of their speeches evoke familial (usually paternal) imagery or injunctions. Odysseus reminds Achilleus of his father Peleus' advice: "Keep from the bad complication of quarrel, and all the more for this the Argives will

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30 Clader, 10.

31 Nagy, 118 n. 2, speaks of τιμή as the honour "that a god or hero receives in cult," as opposed to the κλέος of poetry. Taplin's definitions (302-3) of κλέος and τιμή are also quite useful: κλέος is "the subject of talk, hence fame, and above all the immortal glory won by great heroes;" τιμή is "proper recognition, due esteem ... the deprivation of this is a state of *atimia*, of being underrated."

32 Murnaghan, 256.

honour [τίωσ'] you, both their younger men and their elders" (9.257-58).[33] Achilleus rejects this advice, and the appeal to his honour. In his reply, we see a focus on the female relationships in his life.[34] Instead of acknowledging his father's advice, Achilleus talks of his heartache at the loss of Briseis, the "bride of his heart" (9.336), loved deeply by him even though "it was [his] spear that won her" (9.342-43). Granted, "Achilles speaks in the rhetorical heat of the moment," but the passion with which he speaks emphasises the turn his thoughts have taken.[35] Marriage and home have taken the place of battle and glory. He rejects Agamemnon's offer of his daughter in marriage, and thus rejects Agamemnon as a father-in-law: he spurns the martial father-figure.[36] He says his own father will arrange his marriage (9.394), and he speaks of his father in a manner unusual for a hero: he associates him with the οἶκος.[37] When Achilleus concludes his speech, and explains the two possible outcomes of his life (9.410-20), he reveals that for the time being he has clearly chosen νόστος over κλέος, and his thoughts are on mother, future bride, stolen concubine, and aged father in the οἶκος. He values his private family life over his public reputation.

The speech of Phoinix, a "quasi-paternal" figure, is an attempt to prod Achilleus to

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33 Brenk describes this as an appeal to "paternal love," Frederick E. Brenk, "Dear Child: The Speech of Phoinix and the Tragedy of Achilleus in the Ninth Book of the *Iliad*," *Eranos* 84 (1986): 80. He also points out that the advice "might even have been invented or elaborated by Odysseus here, since we know it from no other source" (81). Willcock describes the advice as an "ad hoc invention for the purpose of the present situation," Malcolm M. Willcock, *A Companion to the Iliad* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 101. However, the essence of the advice seems consistent with what the poem reveals of the heroic code, that fathers expect their sons to seek glory.

34 This is even reflected in the use of the simile where he refers to himself as a mother bird bringing food to her nestlings (9.323-25). His public efforts, gaining wives for other men, have gained nothing for himself because his own woman, Briseis, has been taken away.

35 Taplin, 215.

36 On Achilleus' refusal of Agamemnon as a father-in-law, see Redfield, 16; Finlay, 270.

37 Redfield, 17, points out that Achilleus "longs for home because home means for him his father—but his father sent him out to be a warrior; Achilles' mother may value his life before honor, but Achilles cannot disappoint his father's expectations of him."

return to the battle.[38] It has been argued that Phoinix' story about his own life parallels Achilleus' situation. Phoinix obeyed his mother and slept with his father's mistress, and consequently quarrelled with his father Amyntor and went away into exile. "Just as Achilles' self-imposed exile is caused by a dispute with Agamemnon over a maiden, so is Phoenix exiled by his father for a similar reason."[39] If the story is indeed presented as a paradigm for Achilleus, it is a paradigm that demonstrates the permanent separation of father and son, which is not the message Phoinix wishes to convey (after all, he is seeking to reconcile Achilleus and Agamemnon, not advocate permanent alienation). I believe that the tale also illustrates the fatality of valuing mother over father, harmony in the οἶκος over κλέος.[40] By obeying his mother, Phoinix has forever lost his οἶκος, his father, and his (potential) son. His father has cursed him with fatherlessness: Phoinix is sterile (9.454-56). He has no one to win κλέος for him, except for Achilleus whom he has 'adopted' as Peleus 'adopted' Phoinix (9.494-95). Thus Phoinix, by using his own life story, illustrates that his obedience to private, female concerns has blighted his existence. His story contains a warning for Achilleus not to make a similar mistake by overvaluing Briseis. Phoinix "has had a long life, and he has been rich. In fact, his situation is not unlike what Achilleus' would be if he returned to Phthia."[41] I would add that Phoinix has lived a long life, but it has been sterile, and lacking in immortal glory. The two ways for mortals to gain a measure of immortality are through children and κλέος: Phoinix has neither. He is there to advise Achilleus to seek glory, to respect his father's advice, to accept the gifts and re-enter public life. In other words, he advises Achilleus to be the

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38 Ruth Scodel, "The Autobiography of Phoenix: *Iliad* 9.444-95," *American Journal of Philology* 103 (1982): 128. For Phoinix as a father figure, see Brenk, 82 n.11; Finlay, 270; Judith A. Rosner, "The Speech of Phoenix: *Iliad* 9.434-605," *Phoenix* 30, no. 4 (1976): 318.

39 Rosner, 316. See also Scodel, 131: "Both the *Iliad* and the Phoenix story involve a dispute over a concubine." This is one of the very rare examples of father-son conflict in the poems.

40 Bryan Hainsworth, *The Iliad: A Commentary*, General Editor G. S. Kirk, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 119 ad 430-605, states: "The point of the first section is to establish Phoinix' credentials, for he is about to give Akhilleus, a superior figure, some moral advice," but I believe Phoinix' life story *is* a part of that moral advice.

41 Scodel, 133.

opposite of what Phoinix himself is: a sterile, aged, non-hero, separated from his father, lacking in glory.[42]

Phoinix adds a similar message in the story of Meleagros (9.529-59). Although the main point of this story seems to be "You should accept the gifts that are offered and return to the fighting,"[43] there are some implications about familial relations as well. This story demonstrates how damaging to the public good it is when a hero "lays apart with his wedded bride" (9.556).[44] The valuing of private over public leads to disastrous results. First his father Oineus supplicates Meleagros to no avail (9.581-83), then at last even his wife supplicates him, describing how "strangers lead the children away and the deep-girdled women" (9.594). One subtext of the story, then, is to demonstrate that even if one values the private οἶκος and wife over public κλέος, one will be driven to fight in the end: there is no escape, just as for Achilleus, there is no possibility of escaping his fate. Another subtext is the curse of the mother Althaia, the cause of the son's withdrawal (9.565-67). The mother was treacherous, and cursed her son with death (9.571).[45] Up to this point, Achilleus has followed Thetis' instructions and used her as a go-between, but Phoinix' tale is perhaps meant to undermine the constancy of a mother, and to point instead to the seeking of glory in battle as the only solution.[46] It is a lesson that Achilleus himself

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42 In fact, Phoinix' lack of glory, and of a reputation, have caused much debate over his place within Book 9 of the *Iliad*. Some modern scholars believe that his speech is an interpolation, and that the figure of Phoinix is a later addition. For a summary of this debate, see Willcock, 98-100; and Rosner, 314-15.

43 Willcock, 106.

44 This point escapes Hainsworth, 131, who wonders "Why is Alkuone/Kleopatre introduced at such length?"

45 Hainsworth, 132, finds no parallel between the mother in the Meleagros story and Achilleus' mother Thetis, but Thetis' perceived deceitfulness is spoken of later in the *Iliad*. The maternal connection with mortality has been thoroughly explored by Murnaghan, 242-64.

46 Achilleus' mother does fail him, for he has no word about the future from her when he sends Patroklos out to fight (16.51). He has no word from her that Patroklos has stormed the city, nor does she tell him that Patroklos has died (17.406-10). This is shown as unusual, for "often he had word from his mother, not known to mortals; she was ever telling him what was the will of great Zeus" (17.408-9). Achilleus gradually relies less on his mother's messages, less on words, and more on deeds, which are a father's domain. See Peter Walcot, "Plato's Mother and Other Terrible Women," *Greece & Rome* 34 (1987): 17, for Thetis as messenger.

seems to take to heart, when he later believes that his mother "beguiled him (ἔθελγεν) with falsehoods" (21.276). Phoinix employs emotionally-laden father imagery to persuade Achilleus, while tarnishing the image of the mother.

Achilleus seems to be partially persuaded by this speech, halfway between home and battle. After Odysseus' speech Achilleus says he is going home (9.356-61), after Phoinix' speech he says they will decide tomorrow whether to go home or to stay (9.619), but after Aias' speech, he does not mention going home again, and merely says that he will not fight until Hektor reaches the ships of the Myrmidons (9.650-52).[47] In the final speech Aias attempts to show Achilleus that he is overvaluing Briseis, placing her even above a blood relation (9.633-38). He says that a man will accept a blood-price for a brother or a son, but Achilleus is angry "for the sake of one single girl" (9.637). He indicates that Achilleus' anger over Briseis is excessive—an excess that will also be seen in his grief over Patroklos' death. Yet he remains secluded in his shelter, waiting for the τιμή that his mother will obtain for him through the success of his enemies, the Trojans.

When Achilleus is finally drawn out of his private world, it is because the dearest and closest representative of that world, Patroklos, has been slain. Like Andromache's statement to Hektor that he is her father, mother, brother and husband (6.429-30), a close examination of the text reveals that Patroklos is also like an entire family to Achilleus: like a father, son, brother or wife.[48] Patroklos is like a father to Achilleus in that he is the elder (11.786), and he is to act as an advisor for Achilleus (11.787). He is the "representative and spokesman for the patriarchal and communal values that Achilleus rejects in refusing to

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47 Willcock (among others), 111, has noted this shift in Achilleus' attitude.

48 For Patroklos as a father-figure, see Finlay, 270. As a son/child, see Finlay, 271; Richard Janko, *The Iliad: A Commentary*, General Editor G. S. Kirk, vol. 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 316 ad 710; Greene, 47. As a brother, see Kenneth Atchity, "Greek Princes and Aegean Princesses: The Role of Women in the Homeric Poems," in *Critical Essays on Homer*, edited by Kenneth Atchity with Ron Hogart and Doug Price (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1987), 34 n. 3. For the possibility of a sexual relationship between Achilleus and Patroklos, see Mark W. Edwards, *The Iliad: A Commentary*, General Editor G. S. Kirk, vol. 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 155. Although it is obvious that Achilleus and Patroklos had a very close relationship, there are no overt references in the *Iliad* to the relationship having anything of a sexual nature.

aid the Achaians."[49] According to the text, Patroklos was also going to perform two paternally-governed tasks: arrange Achilleus' marriage with Briseis (19.296-99), and introduce Achilleus' son Neoptolemos into Peleus' οἶκος (19.330-33).[50] But Patroklos is also portrayed as a child in relation to Achilleus: a girl crying to her mother (16.7-10), a son mourned by his father (23.222), cubs mourned by a lion (18.318-23).[51] Achilleus sends Patroklos off to battle in a paternal manner, giving cautionary advice (16.83-100), asking Patroklos to win him honour and glory (16.84), and giving him his armour (16.130-54). Thus Patroklos, who was a longstanding member of Achilleus' οἶκος in Phthia (23.84), and the only member of his οἶκος who is constantly present with him, enters the battle and is slain. It is as if Achilleus' entire οἶκος has been destroyed. The strength of Achilleus' grief exceeds what he would feel for his own father or son (19.321-27). His anger drives him back into the battle, not for glory, but to avenge his private loss.[52]

In the *Iliad*, vengeance is embedded in familial soil. Revenge is sought by family members, and is even at times directed against families who are innocent of any wrong. This is portrayed as normal within the bounds of heroic behavior. Thus Nestor advises each Achaian man to stay and fight until "he has lain in bed with the wife of a Trojan to avenge Helen's longing to escape and her lamentations" (2.355-56). One crime against Menelaos' family elicits many crimes against Trojan families. Achilleus' desire for revenge is likewise directed against the entire family, not just the warriors, for he prays to drive the Trojan women to lamentation for the warriors that he kills (18.121-25). He seeks to assuage his own grief by inflicting pain on the families of the men he slays, and in the

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[49] Finlay, 268.

[50] These two functions were noted by Finlay, 270.

[51] For an excellent discussion of the parent-child relationship reflected in the Achilleus-Patroklos relationship, see Elizabeth Block, "Failure to Thrive: The Theme of Parents and Children in the Aeneid, and Its Iliadic Models," *Ramus* 9 (1980): 128-49. See also Carroll Moulton, "Similes in the Iliad," *Hermes* 102, no. 3 (1974): 391; Greene, 47.

[52] See Brenk, 77; Suzuki, 48.

context of the *Iliad* his desire is neither unusual nor excessive. However, his decision to withhold Hektor's corpse from his parents, and his subsequent maltreatment of it *is* shown as excessive and appalling. We have been given glimpses of his previous behaviour in battle, which has always respected the claims of family. He provides a proper burial for Eëtion, Andromache's father (6.414-20), and he accepts ransom for many men, but now, because of Patroklos' death he says he wishes to kill them all, especially the children of Priam (21.105). His excess towards Hektor and his family is described by Apollo, who points out that Achilleus' actions are inglorious, unbefitting a hero (24.52), and spring from an overvaluing of Patroklos: "For a man must some day lose one who was even closer than this; a brother from the same womb, or a son" (24.46-47).[53] Just as Achilleus' overvaluing of Briseis, a wife who is not really a wife, leads to his withdrawal, his overvaluing of Patroklos, a member of the household who is not blood kin, provokes his reentry into battle and his outrageous actions towards Hektor and his family. The resolution of Achilleus' second wrath occurs only when his actions towards Priam and his family are moderated, and he recognises the validity of paternal claims.

Achilleus' previous rebellion against paternal advice (as dispensed by Odysseus and Phoinix in Book Nine) is finally replaced by an acceptance of the claims of paternity and mortality, fully realised in his meeting with Hektor's aged father Priam in Book Twenty-Four.[54] "The last book reveals the *Iliad* as a great poem of fatherhood," and it is indeed full of fathers and paternal imagery, which anticipate the final resolution of Achilleus' wrath, and also provide a structural frame for the poem as a whole.[55] Priam presents himself to Achilleus as an archetypal father,[56] but even before he meets Achilleus he is presented with an opportunity to 'act out' his role as father with a younger, unrelated man. This 'practise run' is provided by the god Hermes, in disguise as a young companion of

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53 Cf. Aias' similar words about Briseis in 9.632-33.

54 "When Achilles ... finally allows Priam a father's rights he ... is accepting the conditions of mortality, and thus humanity," Block, 132.

55 Greene, 47.

56 Taplin, 270.

Achilleus (24.396). Priam has already been informed that Hermes will guide him (24.182), but Hermes' disguise effectively provides an opportunity for interaction between old and young, pseudo-father and son, that anticipates the meeting of Priam and Achilleus.[57] Hermes coaches Priam to entreat Achilleus "in the name of his father, the name of his mother of the lovely hair, and his child, and so move the spirit within him" (24.466-67). Usually when instructions like this are given, the speech is repeated almost verbatim by the instructed person.[58] But Priam does not follow orders. He begins and ends his first speech to Achilleus by asking him to remember only his father (24.486, 504). This proves to be the most effective approach. The old man who has lost his son, and the son who will be lost to his father weep together—Priam for his son, Achilleus for his father and his friend (24.511-12): "the pair of them are united in an unforgettable grouping of grief."[59] Priam and Achilleus help each other to move beyond grief and resume some of the basic activities of life. We find that Priam, like Achilleus, has neither eaten nor slept because of his anguish (24.641-42). They break their fast together, and each settles down to sleep, Achilleus at last sleeping again with Briseis.[60] Achilleus' mother advised him, just a little while earlier, to eat and to sleep with a woman (24.129-31), but it is only after his confrontation and reconciliation with the father-figure that Achilleus releases his mourning and resumes his brief life.

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57 "The god builds up a kind of substitute father-son relationship which is easy by comparison with the really difficult one that Priam is about to enter on," Taplin, 266. See also C. W. Macleod, *Homer: Iliad Book XXIV* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 117 ad 362; Nicholas Richardson, *The Iliad: A Commentary*, General Editor G. S. Kirk, vol. 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 311 ad 362-71.

58 Zeus' instructions to Thetis at 24.112-16 are repeated almost verbatim at 24.134-36. Likewise his orders to Iris at 24.143-58 are repeated at 24.175-87. Macleod, 124 ad 460-7, mentions the few instances when orders are not repeated, and notes that the speaker may make 'diplomatic omissions.'

59 Taplin, 270, who also notes that the use of the dual forms in the Greek help to unite the two men.

60 Achilleus "provides Priam, as a kind of surrogate for the aged father to whom he cannot render the θρέπτρα, his first food and sleep since Hektor's death," Thomas M. Falkner, "'Επὶ γήραος οὐδῷ: Homeric Heroism, Old Age and the End of the *Odyssey*," in *Old Age in Greek and Latin Literature*, edited by Thomas M. Falkner and Judith de Luce (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 60 n. 67. See also Richardson, 322 ad 422. Lee, 126, notes that "we last see Achilles, not sleepless over Patroklos, but sleeping with Briseis, the wrath which began with the loss of her assuaged."

The father-figure does not merely have implications for the development of Achilleus' character: the development of the poem's structure is also enhanced by the claims of fatherhood, and by Achilleus' responses to them. "The bereaved father is a dominant figure in the plot from Chryses to Priam."[61] Chryses seeks to ransom his daughter Chryseis from Agamemnon who has unjustly withheld the girl (1.11-13), just as Achilleus unjustly withholds Hektor from Priam.[62] The resolution in both instances is brought about through the machinations of the gods: Apollo in Book One, Zeus in Book Twenty-Four. Thetis' role as a go-between also recurs at the beginning and end of the poem, but with a significant difference. At the beginning of the poem, Achilleus sent his mother to Zeus to obtain a favour; at the end, Zeus sends Thetis with orders for her son.[63] Rather than using a maternal messenger to manipulate Zeus, the "father of gods and men" gives orders to the mortal hero by means of his mother.

A counterpoint to the male sphere of battle and κλέος is the female and her position in the οἶκος. In the *Iliad*, wives and concubines are the focus of male conflict and tension.[64] The wife is a part of the οἶκος (as a family member but also as a 'possession'), and often her removal from the household results in male conflict: Chryses and Agamemnon contend for Chryseis, Agamemnon and Achilleus quarrel over Briseis, Phoinix and his father Amyntor are alienated because of his father's concubine, and the entire poem is framed by the conflict between Menelaos and Paris over Helen.[65] The

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61 Jasper Griffin, *Homer on Life and Death* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), 123.

62 It is unusual to see a daughter, rather than a son, ransomed. Of course, it is essential that Chryseis *be* a woman whom Agamemnon wants, and tries to replace with Briseis, provoking the wrath of Achilleus and the shape of the whole poem.

63 The parallel is noted by Macleod, 33; Lee, 124.

64 "The pattern of the wrath is really a pattern of bride-stealing and rescue," A. Lord, quoted in Kenneth J. Reckford, "Helen in the *Iliad*," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 5 (1964): 10 n.13.

65 See Kakridis, 104, for mention of this correspondence. Rosner, 316, and Scodel, 131, note the parallel conflict between Achilleus and Agamemnon over Briseis and Phoinix and Amyntor over the unnamed concubine. C. R. Beye, "Male and Female in the Homeric Poems," *Ramus* 3 (1974): 90, notes the similarities between all four conflicts.

removal of these women from the private οἶκος nourishes public anger, resentment, pride and antagonism which is not resolved until the wronged parties feel they have received justice. The process of obtaining justice, namely the return of the woman to her original οἶκος, often results in suffering and destruction for the community as a whole.[66] The Achaians are stricken by a plague until Chryses' daughter Chryseis is returned to him (1.8-52). The Achaians also suffer heavy losses because of Achilleus' withdrawal, while angered over the loss of Briseis (1.1-6, 1.408-12). Both the Achaians and the Trojans lose many lives for the sake of Helen. Almost all of the conflict and carnage in the *Iliad* has its origin in the displacement of a woman from one οἶκος to another.

Ironically, although women are portrayed as the motivating cause of war and strife, the world of war and all of its attendant horrors are frequently contrasted with the world of women, children, and the οἶκος. Pictures of peaceful domesticity offer relief from the visions of butchery that occupy long stretches of narrative.[67] Women may be the *cause* of war, but their environment is portrayed as the polar opposite of war.[68] "In literary discourse, the metaphor of marriage, as a founding and sustaining act of culture, was set against that of war, *polemos*."[69] There is another irony with respect to women and war: the wife attempts to restrain her husband from the battle, yet she wishes him to fight in her

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66 Men, to some extent, have control over their homecoming. For example, Odysseus combats external forces (divine and mortal) to return home. Women, at least in the *Iliad*, witness the utter annihilation of their homes and are incorporated into another man's home. They move from one οἶκος to another, and are shown as powerless to control their destiny.

67 For example, the similes in 4.130-33, 8.271, 11.269-72 and 12.430-36. "Special mention is due to a small group of peculiarly touching similes in the *Iliad*—taken, as if for contrast with camp and battle, from the life of children, or of the family," R. C. Jebb, *Homer: An Introduction to the Iliad and the Odyssey*, 5th ed. (Glasgow: James Maclehose and Sons, 1894), 30-31.

68 "These similes linking war to the life of women and children are the most surprising to a reader of the *Iliad* in that Homer and his characters themselves so often stress the distance between these two realms," David H. Porter, "Violent Juxtaposition in the Similes of the *Iliad*," *Classical Journal* 68 (1972): 16-17.

69 Page duBois, *Centaurs and Amazons: Women and the Pre-History of the Great Chain of Being* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1982), 5.

defence.[70] War and women coexist in a peculiar and uneasily interconnected relationship.

Helen is a woman who exists in this paradoxical relationship with war, and her situation reflects her dual (or should we say 'half'?) nature: she is the "half-wife in a half-home with a man whom she half-loves and half-wishes would go out and get killed."[71] She is paradigmatic of the portable woman in the poem, shifted from household to household. Her position is particularly ambiguous—she is caught, isolated, between two husbands and two households. She has been taken into Paris' οἶκος, yet her integration with the rest of his family has not been particularly successful. She has not been treated well by any of the female family members, and only Hektor and Priam have been kind.[72] She mourns Hektor's death and her own isolation simultaneously:

> No, but when another, one of my lord's brothers or sisters, a fair-robed wife of some brother, would say a harsh word to me in the palace, or my lord's mother—but his father was gentle always, a father indeed—then you [Hektor] would speak and put them off and restrain them by your own gentleness of heart and your gentle words" (24.768-72).[73]

She is isolated in her new family, and "cut off ... from even the most basic knowledge about her family" of origin.[74] As she gazes on the battle scene, looking for her brothers Kastor and Polydeukes, she is unaware that they are dead and buried at her home in Sparta (3.243-45). Allied to two families by her dual marriage, she is a part of neither, but caught

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70 See Jasper Griffin, *Homer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 30; Kakridis, *Homeric Researches*, 51.

71 Taplin, 118.

72 The goddess Iris, who appears to Helen as her sister-in-law Laodike (3.121-24), does call her "dear girl" (νύμφα φίλη), but whether this kindly greeting is meant to be an imitation of Laodike's customary greeting, or merely the goddess's improvisation, is difficult to determine.

73 Briseis also mourns her own situation, while lamenting for Patroklos: see Marilyn B. Skinner, "Briseis, the Trojan Women, and Erinna," *Classical World* 75 (1982): 267.

74 S. Farron, "The Portrayal of Women in the *Iliad*," *Acta Classica* 22 (1979): 16.

in a nebulous world of in-between.[75]

Helen's new husband is partly to blame for her alienation from kin and community in Troy. A warrior's reputation is established by himself among the people, but a woman's reputation is mainly a reflection of her husband's, especially if she has been incorporated into another society as Helen has. Paris is not well-loved by his people (3.453-54). His dishonourable action in stealing Helen from his host's home (3.354), and his frequent lack of concern for the battle being fought outside on his behalf reflect badly on Helen, since he is her 'lord'.[76] Hektor, who acts consistently in pursuit of κλέος, berates Paris, telling him he lacks courage and is "a big sorrow" to his father, his city, and all his people (3.50). Paris is portrayed as heedless of his own family's welfare and as having little respect for the Trojan families who are fighting for his sake (7.388). His relationship with Helen is a complete contrast to Hektor and Andromache's relationship.[77] Whereas Andromache tries to restrain her husband, who thirsts for glory and risks his life in the forefront (22.458-59), Helen must persuade her husband to fight (6.337-39).[78] Her situation depicts the plight of a woman whose husband does not conform to communal values, and does not protect his own household. Paris has stolen her from his host during a time of peace, which is a method of obtaining a wife that no other hero in the *Iliad* has used, and now that he possesses her, he does not defend her in a manner similar to the other heroes. Helen feels shame in her situation, but is powerless to change it. Her condition is representative of all of the wives in the poem: women are shown as helpless spectators, pawns moved back and forth in the men's game of war.

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75 Helen is "involved in a double network of legitimate alliances, through her union with Paris and also through her union with Menelaos," Jean-Pierre Vernant, *Myth and Society in Ancient Greece*, translated by Janet Lloyd (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1980), 56.

76 This is Lattimore's translation of the word πόσις.

77 "The contrast between the two brothers grows stronger, until the scene between Hektor and Andromache presents the picture of a full, profound marriage in dramatic opposition to the patently shallow relationship of Helen and Paris," Clader, 16.

78 Mueller points out that both Hektor and Paris are defined by their differing relationships with women: Martin Mueller, "Knowledge and Delusion in the *Iliad*," in *Essays on the Iliad: Selected Modern Criticism*, edited by John Wright (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978), 110.

Women are not the only spectators: the gods also watch the mortal strife below. Many critics view the gods as a comic counterpoint to the actions of the mortals in the *Iliad*.[79] Certainly, the purely divine οἶκος, excluding mortal offspring, offers a contrast to the mortal families portrayed in the *Iliad*. Yet an examination of the divine family (for all of the gods are related, so Olympos is like one huge οἶκος) shows an intensity of internal strife that is not represented in the mortal families. The divine family is a family at war—with itself. Zeus abusively threatens his wife Hera (1.563, 15.16-17), Hera nags and picks at Zeus (1.540-43), Athene is alternately petted and peeved by her father (5.879-80, 4.23), Ares is the headstrong brute whom no one loves (5.889-91)—in fact, the whole family comes to blows in a mock battle in Book 21 (21.383-513). Whereas among mortals we see the external pressure of war upon the family drawing the family emotionally closer together, although physically tearing them apart—the threat of death leading to poignant partings such as Hektor and Andromache's—the immortals are a remarkable contrast: they generate their own internal strife. An external threat to their household does not exist, and death will never separate them. In fact, troublesome family members must be dealt with by means other than capital punishment, such as ejection from the οἶκος (1.591), or physical binding for long periods of time (15.17-25). These instances of divine domestic violence and power struggles, as Schein notes, hover around the edges of the portrayal of the gods in the *Iliad*, but there are no fully explicated tales of conflict as are found in Hesiod's *Theogony*.[80] Still, the conflict in the divine family, which lacks the serious threat of death, serves as a foil to the tragedy of mortal families and their heart-rending losses.

The tension between public duty and private familial hopes and fears is not felt by the immortals among themselves—it is only when they mix with mortals, and have mortal

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[79] "The gods are often, in the best sense of the word, comic," Lee, 26. See also Schein, 52; Griffin, *Homer*, 21. Synodinou has noted that it is a subjective choice of the critic whether the family relationships of the gods appear amusing or not: Katerina Synodinou, "The Threats of Physical Abuse of Hera by Zeus in the the Iliad," *Wiener Studien* 100 (1987): 18.

[80] Schein, 50: "There are references to the imprisonment of Kronos and the Titans at 5.898, 8.478-81, and 15.187-193 ... we hear of the desire of Hera, Athene, and Poseidon to 'bind' Zeus and of his rescue by Thetis, who 'summoned to great Olympos the hundred-handed one/ whom the gods call Briareos and all men call Aigaion' (1.402-3) ... yet no such divine violence takes place in the *Iliad*, apart from the battle between some of the gods on the Greek side and some of those helping the Trojans."

offspring, that the gods experience the same difficulties as mortals, and the same anguished grief over family members. Their mortal children present them with an interesting dilemma. Although the gods can rescue their sons from battle (5.311-17, 12.402-5), they cannot overrule fate and save them from death. It is implied that they have the power and the will to do so. This does create a tension between public duty and private desire which operates even in the divine realm. The mortal Sarpedon's sacrifice of his personal family life to fulfil his public duty is paralleled by the sacrifice of his father Zeus, who must overcome his private desire to save his son Sarpedon, and yield to fate. For Zeus pities his son and actually considers saving his life, although he is fated to die (16.433-38).[81] Hera rebukes Zeus and points out that if he rescues his son from his fate, then all of the immortals will want to rescue their sons (16.445-49). Zeus must lay aside his personal desire to save his own son, or he will throw the whole social and cosmic order of both gods and men into chaos: the gods will all rescue their mortal sons, and by doing so make them immortal, unable to die because of divine parental protection. The *Iliad* depicts the boundaries between mortality and immortality as firmly fixed, and unable to be changed by divine family members.[82] In the end, Zeus can only act the same as a mortal father would: he has the body returned to Sarpedon's home in Lykia, "where his brothers and countrymen (κασιγνητοί τε ἔται τε) shall give him due burial with tomb and gravestone. Such is the privilege of those who have perished" (16.674-75=16.456-57). The corpse is taken home, the relatives grieve, and Zeus must suffer the same separation as mortals suffer.[83] His grief is portrayed as being so intense that he weeps tears of blood for his son (16.460). The most moving picture of a father's grief is given to the immortal 'father of gods and men,' Zeus. Even the mightiest of the 'blessed immortals' must set aside personal concerns for communal ones, and must feel the intense grief of losing a son.

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[81] Zeus also briefly considers saving Hektor in 22.174-76.

[82] This is suitable for the tragic tone of the *Iliad*. In the *Homeric Hymns* and the *Theogony*, Zeus is able to change the status of mortals to immortals: appropriate to that particular type of poetry which is a celebration of Zeus' power and reign.

[83] Lee, 28, believes that the episode of Zeus obtaining Sarpedon's body "sets the pattern for the father redeeming the son at the end of the poem."

The other gods also desire to protect and avenge their own sons. Ares is so upset by the death of his son Askalaphos that he cries out to the other gods: "you must not blame me for going among the ships of the Achaians, and avenging my son's slaughter, even though it be my fate to be struck by Zeus' thunderbolt, and sprawl in the blood and dust by dead men" (15.116-18). His son is important enough to risk the anger of his own father, Zeus. Ares is convinced not to avenge his son, however, for the sake of the divine community. Zeus has recently threatened all of the gods if they interfere in the battle (15.135-37). So, the powerful god Ares is compelled to set aside personal wishes for the sake of the community. Athene tells Ares "it is a hard thing to rescue all the generation and seed of all mortals" (15.140-41).[84] Ironically it is because Ares' son Askalaphos is the 'seed' of an immortal that he wishes to avenge him. The immortals, because they have mixed with mortals, have to suffer the loss of and separation from their offspring, and they are forced to comply with the divine communal values which dictate that they must allow their mortal family members to die at the appointed time.

Thus the immortals, if left to themselves, would probably quibble for all eternity, and not experience the grief of family loss. It is when they have mortal offspring that they suffer the same emotions as mortal families. For to be mortal is to be part of a family, to love and to have the possibility of losing that love through death. It is to be intimately bound to loved ones, and to experience the severing of those bonds through mortality. In the *Iliad*, we see the humanity of the mortal heroes: they are not spontaneously generated from the ground, from rocks, or from water—they are mortals born into a family and attached to those around them. In fact, it is often at the death of a previously unnamed warrior that we are told about who he is, and a large part of his identity is tied to his

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84 ἀργαλέον δὲ πάντων ἀνθρώπων ῥῦσθαι γενεήν τε τόκον τε.

family.[85] When a warrior fights, he is not only a single entity. He is not merely gambling his own life, but his family's life as well, for with his death comes the dissolution of his οἶκος. The only item salvageable from his death is his personal honour, which can be passed on to his male offspring. The *Iliad* shows both the temporal brevity and the continuity of the home, and how the warrior's identity is tied to his family. Thus the hero Achilleus can resume his heroic career, once he has come to terms with his own parentage, and with the claims of Hektor's family. Patroklos tells Achilleus: "the rider Peleus was never your father nor Thetis was your mother, but it was the grey sea that bore you and the towering rocks, so sheer the heart in you is turned from us" (16.33-35). He "reprove[s] Achilleus' inhumanity by denying his paternity,"[86] but Achilleus' humanity is regained when he recognises the claims of fatherhood. A hero cannot be divorced from his home, and the home cannot be divorced from the hero. This is the dynamic tension of heroism and home depicted in the *Iliad*.

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[85] For example, we hear of Iphidamas for the first and last time in Book 11. He is described as "huge and stalwart" (11.221), but then the description turns to his place of birth (Thrace) his being raised by his grandfather Kisseus, and his recent marriage (to his aunt), and his departure "away from the bride chamber, looking for glory from the Achaians" (11.228). Then there is a description of his encounter with Agamemnon, his death, and then mention of his family again: he "came to help his own people, and left his young wife a bride, and had known no delight from her yet, and given much for her" (11.242-44). Thus a large part of the description of Iphidamas focuses on his family, and the tragedy of his death in relation to them.

[86] Finlay, 272.

Chapter Two: Heroism at Home in the *Odyssey*

In the *Iliad*, the family is an image hovering on the edges of a hero's consciousness, driving him to fight for its protection, but also stirring up the desire to remain alive and come home. In the post-war setting of the *Odyssey*, the magnetic allure of home need no longer be resisted. The role of a hero in war has been completed: he may now return home to resume his role as master (ἄναξ) of his οἶκος. In contrast to the *Iliadic* heroes, Odysseus becomes "the hero of the οἶκος."[1] Part of the story of Odysseus and his οἶκος is the tale of his νόστος and its comparison to the νόστοι of the other heroes. Some, like Nestor, have an effortless homecoming. Others, like Odysseus, experience homecoming pain—true 'nostalgia'—that is more prolonged and piercing. The story of Odysseus' homecoming is filled with familial scenes: we are given the brilliantly-drawn depiction of his own family and its troubled home life in his absence, as well as several depictions of other families whom Odysseus meets on his way home. The shadowy surrealism of the other families contrasts with the almost palpable, realistic portrait of Odysseus' οἶκος. When Odysseus finally reaches his home, he must re-establish his identity within his οἶκος, and renew all of the familial relationships which have been temporarily severed by the twenty-year hiatus of the Trojan War.[2] The hero's return demonstrates that the vertical axis of male descent and the horizontal axis of marriage and οἶκος are bound together and united by the hero himself. The tension between these two axes is present in the *Odyssey*, just as it is in the *Iliad*. The marriage relationship is open to question, treachery, and destruction. The security of the male line and its glory is also emphasised in the *Odyssey*, and the distinction of reuniting father, self, and son is one that is achieved only by Odysseus,[3] a contrast to the tragedy of Achilleus, who wins immortal glory, but is unable to care for father and son. Odysseus' κλέος is that of a man who has successfully

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1 John Halverson, "Social Order in the *Odyssey*," *Hermes* 113 (1985): 143.

2 See Sheila Murnaghan, *Disguise and Recognition in the "Odyssey"* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 20.

3 Nestor and Menelaos are reunited with their sons, but not their fathers.

combined both heroism and the love of home and family.[4]

We saw that in the *Iliad*, the death of a hero entails the death of his οἶκος. The *Odyssey* portrays a different situation: an οἶκος dying slowly in the absence of the living hero. The poet portrays Odysseus' οἶκος, before his return, as being on the brink of dissolution.[5] His son, grown to manhood, is in danger of losing his patrimony and his life (1.250-51); Odysseus' wife, courted by 108 suitors, is likely to be taken to another οἶκος (1.275-78);[6] the suitors are diminishing his flocks, herds, and possessions with their voracious appetites (1.248-50); some of his servants are disloyal to his family's interests (16.304-13); his father is shrivelling away as he grieves for Odysseus (11.195-96); and his mother has already died of grief for her son (11.202-3). Time is running out for Odysseus' οἶκος. He must not only return and reintroduce himself into a home that has not seen him for twenty years, but also stitch together a household that has been slowly unravelling in his absence. He is the cord that will bind together the entire οἶκος.

The text of the *Odyssey* is structurally united by familial themes and motifs. The motif of the treacherous wife is twined throughout the poem, while the relationship of father and son provides a structural frame for the beginning and end of the poem.[7] The *Odyssey*'s initial focus on Odysseus' son reveals a concern with the male line and κλέος that is similar to the *Iliad*. Telemachos, in the beginning, has no father, no κλέος from his

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4 "Odysseus is able to experience both of the lives that Achilles in the *Iliad* is forced to choose between, returning from a life devoted to seeking *kleos* away from home to start over and live out a quiet life at home," Murnaghan, 15.

5 Jasper Griffin, *Homer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 48.

6 I obtained the number of suitors from M. I. Finley, *The World of Odysseus* (New York: Viking Press, 1954), 88.

7 On the father-son relationship as central to the *Odyssey*, see Dorothea Wender, "In Hades' Halls," in *Twentieth Century Interpretations of the Odyssey: A Collection of Critical Essays*, edited by Howard W. Clarke (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1983), 126; Peter V. Jones, "The ΚΛΕΟΣ of Telemachus: *Odyssey* 1.95," *American Journal of Philology* 109 (1988): 498; and Agathe Thornton, *People and Themes in Homer's "Odyssey"* (London: Methuen, 1970), 19.

father, and no κλέος of his own.[8] The *Iliad* portrays κλέος as passed from son to father, and from father to son, but there is a gap in Odysseus' male line. Consequently, no κλέος has come to Telemachos. This is reflected in his uncertainty about his own identity and paternity, for identity is intertwined with knowledge of one's father.[9] Heroes in the *Iliad* unhesitatingly proclaim their paternity as a means of identifying themselves. Even Diomedes, 'son of Tydeus,' who has grown up without his father, knows who his father is. Others seem constantly to present Tydeus' heroic deeds to Diomedes as a paradigm of heroic behaviour.[10] But Telemachos makes the unusual statement that "Nobody really knows his own father" (1.216), evidence that he, at least, is uncertain about his father's identity and his own.[11] He has no one on Ithaka to tell him of Odysseus' heroic deeds at Troy. There is absolutely no news, κλέος, of Odysseus' present whereabouts. Death, according to Telemachos, would have sealed Odysseus' fame, and his glory would have been carried far and wide (1.240). Ironically, because Odysseus has survived the Trojan war, but *has not returned home*, his fame and his son's fame are obscured. Homecoming secures Odysseus' κλέος: in contrast, leaving home establishes Telemachos'.

Athene clearly states that the purpose of Telemachos' sea voyage is to win a good reputation (κλέος) for himself among the people (1.95), as well as to ask about his father's homecoming. The *Telemacheia* is the poetic κλέος of Telemachos, and his κλέος is

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8 "*Telemachus does not really know who his father is* (215-16), and the manner of Odysseus' disappearance (if he has disappeared) means that *Telemachus inherits no* κλέος *from him* (237-40)," Jones, 499.

9 "Young Telemachus must find his father in order to find himself," M. Owen Lee, *Fathers and Sons in Virgil's Aeneid: "Tum Genitor Natum"* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1979), 134. See also Howard W. Clarke, "Telemachus and the 'Telemacheia'," *American Journal of Philology* 84 (1963): 131 n. 6; Laura M. Slatkin, "Genre and Generation in the *Odyssey*," *Metis* 1 (1986): 265; Charles H. Taylor, Jr., "The Obstacles to Odysseus' Return," in *Essays on the Odyssey: Selected Modern Criticism*, edited by Charles H. Taylor, Jr. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1963), 96.

10 For example, see *Iliad* 4.379-400, 800-13. Diomedes is called by his patronymic more often than by his own name, according to W. K. Lacey, *The Family in Classical Greece* (1968; reprint, London: Thames and Hudson, 1972), 248 n. 11. Jones, 497, also parallels Diomedes and Telemachos.

11 The translation quoted throughout this chapter is by Richmond Lattimore, *The Odyssey of Homer* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965; Harper Torchbook, 1968). I have adopted Lattimore's spelling of all Greek names.

inextricably connected to his father.[12] He journeys out of his own οἶκος, the domain of his mother, and into the world of the heroes who are the friends of his father.[13] His travels link him to his father in at least three ways: he undergoes *experiences* similar to his father's, he *hears* about his father and becomes familiar with him through the tales of others, and he is *recognised* as the son of his father.

Telemachos' journey links him to his father experientially.[14] Both men travel on the sea, and both achieve νόστος (homecoming). Although Telemachos encounters stable heroic homes, whereas Odysseus meets with unearthly creatures and strange situations, both of them are linked by their similar experiences: they see the "cities of many men," are received as guests in different homes, return home with valuable gifts, and avoid death at the hands of the suitors.[15] Telemachos' successful journey and homecoming are a proof of his paternity, according to Athene (2.274-75). Parallels between the voyages of father and son are drawn by the suitors (2.332-33), Penelope (4.724-28) and Odysseus (13.418-19): the fact that both of them return home unites them and is one proof of their father-son relationship.

Telemachos has never met his father, and has no one to tell him about his father's exploits in Troy. His visits with Nestor and with Menelaos and Helen provide him (and the poet's audience as well) with information about his father. Critics, both ancient and

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12 "Athena proceeds to educate Telemachos into consciousness of himself as the son of Odysseus," Norman Austin, "Telemachos Polymechanos," *California Studies in Classical Antiquity* 2 (1969): 52.

13 Clarke, 132-33, states (in a roundabout way) that Telemachos needs to remove himself from the feminine sphere of his own οἶκος. Gilbert P. Rose, "The Quest of Telemachus," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 117 (1967): 391, speaks of Telemachos' "initiation into his father's heroic world." See also Robert Schmiel, "Telemachus in Sparta," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 103 (1972): 465.

14 "The son, in order to become spiritually like the father, traces out a reduced, and to some degree symbolic, journey in imitation of his father," Norman Austin, *Archery at the Dark of the Moon: Poetic Problems in Homer's "Odyssey"* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), 182. See also M. J. Alden, "The Role of Telemachos in the *Odyssey*," *Hermes* 115 (1987), 134; Clarke, 138; M. J. Apthorp, "The Obstacles to Telemachus' Return," *Classical Quarterly* 30 (1980): 12.

15 Both Odysseus and Telemachos owe their escape from the suitors to Athene's advice (13.383-85, 16.370). See Victoria Pedrick, "The Hospitality of Noble Women in the *Odyssey*," *Helios* 15, no. 2 (1988): 93, for the term 'stable *oikos*' as opposed to the homes Odysseus encounters.

modern, have felt that "Telemachos' mission is not justified by its results; the information which he brings back is, as might have been expected, inconclusive."[16] It is true that Telemachos does not learn much about if or when his father is coming home, but he does learn *about* his father and what he was like at Troy (and what he may be like when he returns home). Nestor, the aged counsellor we saw in the *Iliad*, reveals that Odysseus was his equal in giving counsel and in planning (3.128-29). Helen tells a story about Odysseus' disguise as a beggar (4.240-64), and Menelaos tells of Odysseus' restraint and endurance, and his ability to resist his wife's voice (imitated by Helen, 4.265-90). These stories educate Telemachos about his father's nature: Odysseus is excellent at advising and scheming, is able to adopt the guise of a beggar, and is able to resist the allure of his wife until the battle is over.[17] Telemachos does, therefore, receive news of his father, even if it is not specific news about his homecoming.[18]

Not only does Telemachos receive κλέος of his father, but he establishes his own κλέος on this journey. He is recognised by the heroic world as the son of Odysseus.[19] Nestor, Helen and Menelaos note the inherent Odyssean qualities that Telemachos possesses, and they affirm Telemachos' paternity. Nestor, the master of verbal expression, notices Telemachos' verbal resemblance to his father: "For surely your words are like his words, nor would anyone ever have thought that a younger man could speak so

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16 Stephanie West, *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey*, edited by Alfred Heubeck et al., vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 53.

17 The parallels between the stories of Helen and Menelaos and Odysseus' homecoming have been noted by S. Douglas Olson, "The Stories of Helen and Menelaus (*Odyssey* 4.240-89) and the Return of Odysseus," *American Journal of Philology* 110 (1989): 391.

18 Menelaos, however, does inform Telemachos that Odysseus is alive and detained by Kalypso (4.555-60).

19 "Here, then, is the κλέος which Athena predicted for Telemachus in 1.95, the account of himself which he needed to hear: he is indeed the true son of his father," Jones, 501.

like him."[20] Helen and Menelaos note Telemachos' physical resemblance to Odysseus, appropriately since Helen is, of course, famed for her physical appearance (Menelaos is handsome, too, if we accept Helen's compliment in 4.264 at face value). Menelaos is the one to compare Telemachos to his father Odysseus, noting the physical resemblance between their feet, hands, head, hair, and eyes (4.149-50). Telemachos' status and κλέος as Odysseus' son are thus established in the heroic world beyond Ithaka. He discovers and affirms his paternity by experiencing a journey parallel to his father's, by hearing about his father, and by being observed as the son of his father.

Telemachos is not only observed, but he is an observer. His journey to the homes at Pylos and Sparta provide him with an introduction to heroic society, and with an opportunity to see how an οἶκος operates after the hero's return. Pylos and Sparta offer a diptych of reunited families: the vertical relationship of father and son is emphasised at Pylos, and the horizontal relationship of husband and wife is prominent at Sparta. We are able to see how essential the hero is to his οἶκος—the poem shifts us from the disarray of Odysseus' οἶκος to the peaceful, well-regulated home of Nestor, and the smooth, superficial orderliness of Menelaos' household.[21] Telemachos is thus provided with paradigms for relationships which he has never seen in his own home.

The first scene on Pylos opens with Nestor, feasting with his sons and companions (3.31-35). Their feast is orderly, a contrast to the suitors' rowdy feasting to which Telemachos is accustomed.[22] Nestor has six sons who are portrayed as well-mannered and obedient (3.411-29) and who live in their father's house in a harmonious coexistence

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20 West notes that "the passage has often been suspected; it offers a rather unconvincing variation on the theme of Telemachus' resemblance to his father, and contains some oddities of expression. Elsewhere (i 208 ff., iv 140 ff.) it is his physical likeness to Odysseus which excites comment, and this is what σέβας μ' ἔχει εἰσορόωντα leads us to expect here. But in fact the resemblance on which Nestor remarks lies in their way of speaking, though the idea is rather confusingly expressed (and wholly unconvincing in the case of a young man who has not seen his father since he was an infant)," West, 167 ad 120-5. I would argue that it is not 'wholly unconvincing.' It is appropriate that Telemachos be recognised, by an 'expert in the field,' as inherently sharing his father's speaking ability. Laura L. Nash, "Concepts of Existence: Greek Origins of Generational Thought," *Daedalus* 107 (1978): 5, sees nothing unusual in the comparison.

21 Clarke, 138.

22 "Telemachus' progress is from the chaos of Ithaca to the cosmos of Pylos and Sparta," Clarke, 138.

(3.395-96). There is no tension whatsoever portrayed in the father-son relationship. Peisistratos, one of Nestor's sons, is roughly the same age as Telemachos (3.49), and his relationship with his father provides a contrast to Telemachos' fatherlessness. Peisistratos is portrayed as being comfortable and confident in the heroic world: he has "had, after all, the benefit of growing up within this mannered society," and his father, at least for a few years, has provided a model.[23] Telemachos lacks the confidence of Peisistratos, who accompanies Telemachos on his journey to Sparta and eases him into the customs of heroic society.

The paradigm of the father-son relationship continues when Telemachos and Peisistratos travel to Sparta. The conversation between Menelaos, Telemachos, and Peisistratos highlights the contrast between the two young travellers—one insecure and fatherless, the other socially adept with a good paternal relationship. Menelaos' remark that "You will have heard all this from your fathers, whoever your fathers are ..." (4.94-95) is ironic: Peisistratos has likely heard the story several times from his garrulous father, whereas Telemachus has no news *of* his father, let alone news *from* his father. Peisistratos takes the conversational lead (which allows Menelaos to note a father-son similarity in speech, 4.206), and he reveals that he has indeed had frequent conversations with his father (4.190-92). Telemachos, on the other hand, is still not secure enough to declare who his father is.[24] Peisistratos does it for him (4.157), and he also portrays Telemachos' fatherless plight, revealing his insight into a situation that is quite foreign to his own: "For a child endures many griefs in his house when his father is gone away, and no others are there to help him, as now Telemachos' father is gone away, and there are no others who can defend him against the evil that is in his country" (4.164-67). Peisistratos and Nestor provide a perfect example of a successful male line of descent; in contrast, Telemachos is unable to demonstrate his inherited heroic sensibility until Odysseus himself returns, and

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23 Clarke, 133. Nestor's absence would have been about ten years compared to Odysseus' twenty. "Pisistratus, as we might expect, resembles his father in character," West, 163 ad 52.

24 When Telemachos is returning home and meets Theoklymenos, he declares: "Ithaka is my country, and Odysseus is my father, if he ever lived; but by now he must have died a dismal death" (15.266-68). This shows progress—at least he is a little more confident about his father's identity.

father and son are reunited.

In Sparta, Menelaos and Megapenthes are another paradigm of father and son, but their relationship is more a reflection of Menelaos' tragic marriage than a glorification of the male line. The name 'Megapenthes' means 'great grief.'[25] Usually the son's name reflects a characteristic of the father, and in this case the name reflects Menelaos' grief because of his marriage. Menelaos' household provides an example of the connection between the vertical and horizontal axes: not only has Helen's infidelity caused grief (horizontal), but so has her barrenness (vertical).[26] The only son of Menelaos is the son of a slave woman, not of Helen. He envies Nestor for his marriage which *has* produced sons, a most important achievement: "Easily recognized is the line of that man, for whom Kronos' son weaves good fortune in his marrying and begetting, as now he has given to Nestor, all his days, for himself to grow old prosperously in his own palace, and also that his sons should be clever and excellent in the spear's work" (4.207-11).[27] "Nestor has obviously enjoyed true felicity in marriage—what is the proof? His son."[28] Instead of achieving immortality by having a glorious, heroic son, Menelaos will be made physically immortal because of his marriage to Helen (4.561-70).[29] It is perhaps presented as the only compensation for

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25 W. B. Stanford, ed., *The Odyssey of Homer*, vol. 1, 2d ed. (1959; reprint, Houndmills: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 68 ad 11; Linda Lee Clader, *Helen: The Evolution from Divine to Heroic in Greek Epic Tradition*, Mnemosyne Supplement no. 42 (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1976), 31.

26 William S. Anderson, "Calypso and Elysium," *Classical Journal* 54 (1958): 5, says the name 'Megapenthes' is "an expression of Menelaus' sorrow for his lost wife." See also West, 194 ad 11. Stanford, vol. 1, 268 ad 11, believes that the grief is because Megapenthes' "servile birth was a consequence of Helen's barrenness. (But there may also be a hint at Helen's unfaithfulness)." Stephen Bertman, "The Ashes and the Flame: Passion and Aging in Classical Poetry," in *Old Age in Greek and Latin Literature*, edited by Thomas M. Falkner and Judith deLuce (New York: State University of New York Press, 1989), 158, makes the interesting point that "despite Menelaus' reclaiming of his wayward wife, once home she could bear him no more children (4.3-14). The once sensuous Helen is now compared to virginal Artemis (4.122), and her barrenness is contrasted with the exotic fertility and abundance of Egypt."

27 "Menelaus' lack of a legitimate son gives a particular poignancy to his conversation with Pisistratus (206 ff.); the point is made at the outset because it is important for a just appreciation of Menelaus' situation," West, 194 ad 12.

28 Schmiel, 466.

29 Anderson, 7.

the son who is a constant reminder of his grief in marriage and begetting.[30]

Grievous as his marriage may be, Menelaos has nonetheless been reunited with his wife.[31] This is the first glimpse we have in Homer of the reunited couple after the events of the *Iliad*.[32] It is also a model of marriage for Telemachos, who has never seen his own parents interact: it is not, however, an ideal model.[33] Helen and Menelaos exhibit a somewhat problematic relationship. Their troubled past and their different natures create a tension between them that contrasts with their luxurious and opulent surroundings.[34] They do not evidence the ὁμοφροσύνη that will be demonstrated in Odysseus and Penelope's relationship.[35] In fact, their opinions and actions differ in almost every instance: Helen says the Achaians fought for *her* sake (4.145), Menelaos says Odysseus fought for *his* sake (4.170). Helen's tale of Troy depicts her as a wife longing to return home (4.259-64), Menelaos' story depicts Helen as using trickery to aid the Trojans and counter her husband's efforts (4.274-80). Menelaos tells Helen to go make dinner (15.93-94), but Helen goes to the storeroom to select a gift for Telemachos (and manages to outshine her husband once again, 15.130). Helen also twice takes action while her husband is debating what to do (4.116-19, 137-46; 15.169-72). Helen's actions appear to be in furtherance of

30 "The two ideas, marriage and begetting, are inextricably interwoven in the context of this scene," Schmiel, 467.

31 Some critics believe Helen and Menelaos' marriage is now very stable and happy: Jack Lindsay, *Helen of Troy: Woman and Goddess* (London: Constable and Company, 1974), 40; John A. Scott, *The Unity of Homer* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California, 1921; New York: Biblo and Tannen, 1965), 186; Howard W. Clarke, *The Art of the Odyssey* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1967), 36. Others (with whom I agree) think there is tension and unhappiness in the relationship: Anderson, 3-4; Schmiel, 468.

32 We also see them in the *Cycle*, and in drama, especially Euripides' *Helen*.

33 One could argue that Nestor's wife has already provided a model: as Schmiel, 471, wryly notes, "Nestor's wife Eurydice fulfills the Periclean ideal of woman so well that one can read *Odyssey* 3 without being aware of her name: she knows her role and could hardly be imagined to have caused Nestor the trouble Helen caused Menelaus."

34 Schmiel, 464.

35 *Pace*, Austin, *Archery*, 188, who believes that "the poem's first exemplars of family *homophrosyne* are the king and queen of Sparta."

her own interest and glorification, rather than the mutual interests of husband and wife. This is a contrast to Penelope, whose decisions, such as the decision to have the contest of the bow, manage to harmonise with her husband's plans (whether consciously or not, we cannot say, 19.575-81).[36] Telemachos is thus presented with a paradigm of a married couple who are not suited to each other in thought or in deed.

Another example of the contradictory nature of Helen and Menelaos' marriage is provided by Helen's action of drugging the company's wine without her husband's knowledge. When the company dissolves in tears because of Menelaos' stories, he forbids further weeping, and insists that they all should turn their thoughts to feasting (4.212-15). His word ought to be sufficient to stop their tears. But Helen covertly takes control of the situation by drugging the wine, thus making the company's inability to weep a result of her actions, not of Menelaos'. Helen's drug has ominous overtones with respect to the family: anyone who "drank it would have no tear roll down his face, not if his mother died and his father died, not if men murdered a brother or a beloved son in his presence with the bronze, and he with his own eyes saw it" (4.223-26).[37] Wohl remarks that "the mere introduction of the image of the slaughter of a family into this dinner scene is strange and unsettling."[38] The juxtaposition of familial slaughter and (wedding) feast recurs in the poem at Agamemnon's death, and at the massacre of the suitors. The theme of forgetting homecoming and family is also echoed in Odysseus' travels, for he and his men meet with several beings who, by means of drugs or other resources, cause forgetfulness of home.[39] This is just one more example of the parallels that are found in the journeys of father and son.

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[36] "Penelope—who, uniquely, acts as [Odysseus'] accomplice without knowing who he is—proposes the contest and insists that Odysseus be allowed to take part," Murnaghan, 21.

[37] The drug could be viewed as positive, in that it dulls pain and sorrow. But just as pain and sorrow have a purpose in real life, so they have a purpose within the poem. It is the sharp edge of pain and desire that drive Odysseus to return home, and dulling of that edge, in the form of forgetfulness, is what brings some of his companions to ruin.

[38] Victoria Josselyn Wohl, "Standing by the Stathmos: The Creation of Sexual Ideology in the *Odyssey*," *Arethusa* 26, no. 1 (1993): 33.

[39] Wohl, 33; Apthorp, 5.

The journeys of father and son are not strictly parallel, however. Telemachos visits the heroic world, whereas Odysseus encounters other creatures and cultures far removed from the sphere of the heroes. As Just has noted, "the theme of the *Odyssey* is not a hero's voyage of exploration but his determined attempt to regain his home."[40] Odysseus encounters *some* places and people belonging to the heroic world, but other encounters are with those who try to instil forgetfulness of homecoming, or who attempt physically to prevent it by violence. There are a few who even try to help Odysseus on his way home. His travels fall neatly into a structural pattern, when interpreted in terms of attitudes towards homecoming and familial relationships (see Figure One). I intend to discuss Odysseus' voyage in this order, then, treating the heroic world first, then the beings that cause forgetfulness, then those who cause harm, and finally those who assist in homecoming. These encounters provide us (and Odysseus) with familial *or* non-familial paradigms which contrast with the situations on Ithaka. "Complete characters exist only on Ithaka, of which characters elsewhere must necessarily be but paradigmatic fragments."[41]

The glimpses of the heroic world that are portrayed reveal the same values we noted in the *Iliad*: father, son, and κλέος are in the fore; women are dubious creatures, at times treacherous, at times merely booty from a sacked city.[42] The journey to Hades allows us to see some of the departed heroes (the ones whom we have not seen Telemachos visit), and see that they are still concerned with father and son, and with honour.[43] Achilleus, even though he says that he would rather be alive and ignoble than dead with glory (11.488-91), indicates that he still values κλέος and its association with male lineage. He wants to hear about his son, whether he "went along to war to fight as a champion" (11.493). He, like the other heroes, wants his son to act heroically and follow in his own

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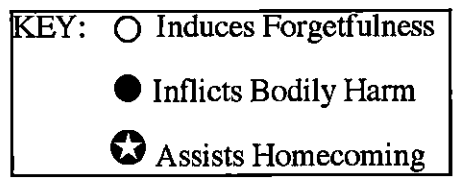
40 Roger Just, *Women in Athenian Law and Life* (London: Routledge, 1989), 220.

41 Austin, *Archery*, 202.

42 Odysseus first encounters the Kikonians after leaving Troy, and he and his men do the usual heroic thing: sack the city, and divide up the women and possessions (9.40-43).

43 I will defer my discussion of Agamemnon, and treat his tale later in the chapter with the rest of the Orestes-paradigm.

Figure One: The Relationship of Family to the Wanderings of Odysseus



HEROIC — Troy (9.39)

HEROIC — Kikonians on Ismaros (9.39-61)

○ Lotus-Eaters (9.84-104)

● Cyclopes (9.105-566)

✪ Aiolos on Aiolia (10.1-79)

● Laistrygones on Telepylos (10.82-132)

○ Circe on Aiaia (10.133-574)

HEROIC — Hades (11.1-640)

○ Sirens (12.165-200)

● Skylla (12.201-59)

○ Cattle on Thrinakia (12.260-402)

● Charybdis (12.426-46)

○ Kalypso (12.447-53)

✪ Phaiakians on Scheria (6.1-332)

HEROIC — Ithaka

footsteps. After Achilleus hears a lengthy description of his son's valour, he strides off silently through the asphodel, rejoicing in his son's distinction (11.540). Achilleus also shows concern for his aged father Peleus (of whom Odysseus has no news): his concerns revolve around Peleus' old age, and his own inability to help and protect him (11.500-504). Achilleus' gloomy, post-heroic existence is a contrast to Odysseus' heroism, for Odysseus has the same concerns for his father and son, but he succeeds in returning home to his son (who has newly-won κλέος) and his old father (whom he revives and rejuvenates). In this poem at least, "Odysseus' human domesticity and self-preservation are better in the end than Achilles' divinity and glorious death."[44]

The trip to Hades does not merely present Odysseus with questions of fathers and sons. In the *Iliad*'s long battle narratives, the genealogy of slain warriors is often given: in *Odyssey* 11, it is dead women, rather than dying men, who are eulogised and given a family history.[45] The women are enmeshed in the nexus of their relationships to male kin: fathers, husbands, and sons.[46] This is another demonstration that women are indispensable participants in the creation of the vertical line of male descent (without them, there would be no sons), yet they are also excluded from the male line and its attendant fame. Like the moon, their glory is a reflected glory, a pale glow received from the brilliance of their male family members. The catalogue demonstrates women's participation in the vertical axis of descent, but the end of the catalogue portrays the ambiguity and treachery that can be found in the horizontal relationship. Phaidra, Prokris, Ariadne, and Eriphyle are women "notorious in the mythic tradition for their infidelity or treachery to men," and Eriphyle, the final woman in the catalogue, is specifically called 'hateful'

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44 Wender, 127-28. See also Thomas M. Falkner, " 'Επὶ γήραος οὐδῷ: Homeric Heroism, Old Age and the End of the *Odyssey*," in *Old Age in Greek and Latin Literature*, 49; John H. Finley, Jr., *Homer's "Odyssey"* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978), 1; Griffin, 75.

45 Doherty believes that "the account of famous women [is] an implicit compliment" to Arete, who is part of Odysseus' 'internal' audience when he is narrating his tale. Lillian Eileen Doherty, "The Internal and Implied Audiences of *Odyssey* 11," *Arethusa* 24, no. 2 (1991): 148.

46 "Long passages in the 'catalogue of heroines' are devoted to the achievements of the fathers, sons and husbands of the women named," Doherty, 154; "The 'catalogue of heroines' ... are not actually heroines at all but rather the daughters, wives, mothers, or rape victims of heroes," Wohl, 36.

(στύγερη) because she betrayed her husband for gold (11.327).[47] Thus the catalogue demonstrates the value of women's reproductive ability, but also portrays the fog of doubt surrounding the marital relationship.

Before Odysseus returns home to grapple with the implications of the ambiguous marriage relationship, as portrayed in Hades, he must first grapple with the dangers posed by the various creatures he encounters as he journeys homewards. Forgetfulness of homecoming is a serious hazard on the homeward voyage.[48] The Lotus-Eaters and their intoxicating blossoms (9.97, 102), the Cattle of Helios and their attractive edibility (12.137), and the Sirens with their alluring stories (12.41-43) all specifically offer a pleasure so strong that the desire for homecoming is either forgotten or utterly abandoned.[49] It is significant that all of these beings lack any familial structure: the afamilial appear unconcerned with familial reunification.[50] Endurance and memory are the keys to homecoming to which Odysseus tenaciously clings.

Even Odysseus, however, can be made to forget home temporarily. Unaffected by the Lotus-Eaters, Sirens, or Cattle, he is charmed and beguiled by Circe and Kalypso. These nymphs are different from the *Iliad*'s portrayal of goddesses who live under the protection of either a father or a husband: they are unmarried divinities who invert the Iliadic portrayal of the portable woman.[51] It is they who incorporate (albeit temporarily) a

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[47] Doherty, 159, thinks that Odysseus interrupts his narrative after the mention of Eriphyle to avoid offending Arete: "the interruption may thus be seen as motivated by tact: the desire to pass over such unflattering stories in silence." If he wished to be tactful, however, why not omit the mention of Eriphyle altogether?

[48] For the link between remembering/forgetting and homecoming, see Douglas Frame, *The Myth of Return in Early Greek Epic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 35-39.

[49] For the parallels between these episodes, see Charles Segal, "*KLEOS* and Its Ironies in the *Odyssey*," *L' antiquité Classique* 52 (1983): 40; Taylor, 88; Apthorp, 13.

[50] "There is no family life at all in many places in fairy-land," W. K. Lacey, "Homeric ΕΔΝΑ and Penelope's ΚΥΡΙΟΣ," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 86 (1966): 55. The Sirens are not given any genealogy in Homer (see Heubeck, vol. 2, 119 ad 39-54). The Lotus-Eaters have no familial structure. The Cattle of Helios do not give birth, and are tended by unmarried nymphs (12.130-36).

[51] E.g. Thetis, *Iliad* 1.358, 1.396.

husband into their own οἶκοι. Neither goddess is interested in helping Odysseus return to his own home; rather, each hopes to possess him as a husband (9.29-33). Sensual appeal, rather than force, is used to detain Odysseus. Circe makes use of drugs (10.235-36), feasting (10.427, 468), and lovemaking (10.480); Kalypso uses charm (1.57) and lovemaking (5.153-155). But Odysseus, with the help of Hermes and his own companions, ultimately escapes from their charms. Hermes gives him the μῶλυ as an antidote for Circe's drug (10.302-7), while Odysseus' companions (after they have all spent a year with Circe) remind him about his homecoming (10.469-74). Hermes also comes to the rescue when Odysseus is unwillingly trapped on Ogygia with Kalypso: he is the messenger who tells Kalypso she must release Odysseus (5.99-115). Kalypso says she had entertained hopes of making Odysseus immortal (5.135-36), but the mortal/immortal boundary is quite fixed and immutable.[52] She admits the futility of her own desire by reciting two paradigms of immortal goddesses who loved mortal men, but whose love did not lead to immortality for the man, but to death meted out by the gods (5.118-28). Unlike her paradigms, Odysseus is not condemned to death by the gods—rather, he wishes he could either die or return home.[53] He rejects immortality through marriage to an immortal. This sort of immortality would deprive Odysseus of the other kind of immortality, the kind gained through children: "Kalypso bears Odysseus no child, nor does Kirke . . . . this childlessness is a further means by which the woman may consign the mortal hero to oblivion, because no one carries on his name."[54] Odysseus rejects an immortal marriage for a mortal one, an immortal death for a mortal life, immortal sterility for reunion with a mortal son.

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[52] It is true that in the *Odyssey* Kastor and Polydeukes have a sort of semi-immortality (11.301-4); Herakles enjoys immortality (11.601-4); and Menelaos will be given immortality in the future (4.561-70) but as we will see in the *Homeric Hymns*, a female is almost always unable to immortalise her mortal lover.

[53] "The immortality offered Odysseus contains many suggestions not of eternal life, but of eternal death," Anderson, 7. Anderson points out the connection between Kalypso, 'the concealer', and death. Immortality through marriage to a goddess stands in contrast to immortality through κλέος: there is no κλέος for Odysseus during the time he is with Kalypso.

[54] Pedrick, 92.

Unlike the lone females who live isolated from any family, the Cyclopes are portrayed as existing in οἶκοι, but in an arrangement devoid of any larger sense of community (9.114-15): the οἶκος is the central social institution.[55] The one Cyclops whom Odysseus and his men encounter, Polyphemos, lacks even the civilising influence of the οἶκος. "Homer's Cyclopes are not immortal ... and so it is natural to give them wives and offspring (115), except of course for Polyphemus, who, the poet's plot requires, must be the most formidable bachelor in literature."[56] Polyphemos may be a bachelor, but even a big, ugly Cyclops has parents.[57] His father is Poseidon (9.519), a relationship that has significance for the entire plot of the poem.[58] It is Polyphemos' prayer to his father Poseidon that stirs up Poseidon's wrath against Odysseus, and his vengeance is directed specifically against Odysseus' homecoming (1.75, 9.531). Vengeance is expressed in a familial context (9.535).

Odysseus' homecoming is at last assisted by the Phaiakians on Scheria. Scheria offers a familial picture which closely resembles previous societies, and provides anticipatory parallels for the scenes which follow. The family of Alkinoös has a negative counterpart in the Laistrygonian family. The Laistrygonian daughter provides directions to her father's palace, her mother is loathsome and terrifying, and her father kills one of the men and prepares him for dinner (10.111-16). In contrast, the attractive Phaiakian daughter Nausikaa gives Odysseus directions to her father's palace, her mother Arete is powerful but benevolent, and her father, King Alkinoös provides hospitality and gifts.[59]

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55 I will pass over Skylla and Charybdis, who, like the Cyclopes, eat men, and like Circe and Kalypso, are lone female 'devourers' who incorporate men. For the term "desiring/devouring female," see Wohl, 26.

56 James N. O'Sullivan, "Nature and Culture in *Odyssey* 9?" *Symbolae Osloenses* 45 (1990): 9.

57 Polyphemos is described as a 'prodigious wonder' (θαῦμ' ἐτέτυκτο πελώριον, 9.190), and his unattractive appearance (a reflection of his unattractive manners) can be inferred from the statement (a classic example of litotes) that Polyphemos 'would not appear as pleasing to [Odysseus'] companions' (οὐδ' ἄρ' ἔμελλ' ἑτάροισι φανεὶς ἐρατεινὸς ἔσεσθαι, 9.230).

58 O'Sullivan, 11.

59 For these parallels, see Gregory Crane, "The *Odyssey* and Conventions of the Heroic Quest," *Classical Antiquity* 6, no. 1 (1987): 18.

The Phaiakians' ease, luxury, and close relationship to the gods have a positive counterpart in the description of Aiolos and his family.[60] Aiolos' family is closely associated with the gods—even their incestuous marriages (six brothers married to six sisters) evoke their proximity to the gods (10.5-7), who also have endogamous marriages.[61] They, like the Phaiakians, try to assist Odysseus in his homecoming by presenting Odysseus with a bag of winds (10.19-21). But Aiolos realises what the Phaiakians do not: that assisting Odysseus' homecoming will incur the wrath of the gods (specifically, Poseidon). When Odysseus returns to Aiolos a second time, minus the winds, Aiolos does not try to help him again, saying: "This [second] arrival means you are hateful to the immortals" (10.75). The Phaiakians too give Odysseus conveyance home, and suffer for it: the returning ship is turned to stone by Poseidon (13.163).

The οἶκος of Alkinoös both resembles and differs from the Ithaka to which Odysseus will return. Like Penelope and Odysseus, Arete and Alkinoös exhibit a relationship in which a fundamental ὁμοφροσύνη is present.[62] They are endowed with five sons, an indication of familial blessedness,[63] and a daughter who is a model of propriety and a paradigm of an adolescent coming of age parallel to Telemachos.[64] Even the fifty maidservants (22.421, 7.103) and the old nurses with the similar names (Eurymedousa,

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60 For these parallels, see Jenny Strauss Clay, "Aeolia, or under the Sign of the Circle," *Classical Journal* 80, no. 4 (1985): 289. Aiolos and Alkinoös are both mortals beloved of the gods (10.2/6.203), feasting is prominently enjoyed (10.9/8.248), they both live in unassailable cities (10.4/6.203), both have intermarriage between family members (10.7/7.63-66), both are interested in hearing stories of Troy (although the experience of war is foreign to them) (10.15/8.91).

61 "The society of Aeolia most closely resembles the community of the Olympians, whose king and queen are simultaneously husband and wife, brother and sister," Clay, 290. Alfred Heubeck, *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey*, edited by Alfred Heubeck and Arie Hoekstra, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 44 ad 7, believes "marriage between brother and sister adds a touch of the exotic."

62 "Arete and Alkinoos are the poems' second exemplars of that domestic harmony which Odysseus praises as the *summum bonum*," Austin, *Archery*, 197.

63 "Three sons is the most popular number, ... but a truly θαλερὸς γάμος ... was much more productive," J. B. Hainsworth, *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey*, edited by Alfred Heubeck et al., vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 297 ad 62.

64 Heubeck, 291. Austin, *Archery*, 201, says that Nausikaa is a 'stand-in' for Telemachos.

7.8, and Eurykleia, 1.428) are doublets seen both in Alkinoös' household and Odysseus' household. The episode also has parallels with Telemachos' visit to Helen and Menelaos: most significantly, both Odysseus and his son are moved to tears by stories, attempt to hide the fact by covering the face with a cloak, and then reveal their identity to the company.[65] Episodes that are widely separate in the poem thus serve to link father and son. The Phaiakian household and situations in some ways set the stage for Odysseus' return and recognition at Ithaka.

Despite these superficial similarities, the existence portrayed on Scheria is quite different from the present state of affairs on Ithaka: the "wider" function of this episode "is to contrast the peace of Scheria with the disorder of Ithaca during the absence of Odysseus."[66] Odysseus' stay on Scheria is effectively placed between his sojourn with Kalypso and his return home. He has already rejected marriage with Kalypso, and its attendant immortality, ease, and bliss. In effect, he has rejected the life the Phaiakians are living: they are closely associated with luxury and immortality (6.203). Marriage with Nausikaa is hinted at (mostly with reference to Nausikaa, rather than to Odysseus): by Odysseus at 6.158-60, 180-85; and by Nausikaa at 6.242-45; 6.275-89. Her father Alkinoös even wishes that Odysseus would stay and marry her, but he presents his proposition as an either/or dichotomy: either Odysseus marries Nausikaa and stays on Scheria, or he returns home (presumably without Nausikaa, 7.311-20). Odysseus chooses homecoming (7.333).[67] He longs for home (8.156-157), even if home, as he later finds,

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65 8.521-9.21, 4.113-45. "Parallel to Odysseus' weeping on Scheria is Telemachus' weeping at Sparta, IV.113-116. Menelaus' tales are not bardic song, but the motif of weeping at a post-prandial entertainment is a thematic link between the Telemacheia and Odysseus' *nostos*," Segal, 23 n. 5; Apthorp, 15; Austin, "Telemachos Polymechanos," 56 n. 16. There is also a parallel between the weeping of Odysseus and the weeping of Penelope: they both "melt" τήκετο (8.522, 19.204). Furthermore, Penelope also weeps at the song of the bard at 1.336.

66 Hainsworth, 291.

67 "In this whole episode of Nausicaa the atmosphere is of great delicacy and tact, with transparent social fictions and hints, and its charm lies precisely in that lack of explicitness," Griffin, 70. Richmond Lattimore, "Nausikaa's Suitors," in *Classical Studies Presented to Ben Edwin Perry by his Students and Colleagues at the University of Illinois, 1924-1960*, Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, no. 58 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1969), 101, sees Nausikaa as the "last and subtlest" of Odysseus' temptations.

is marked not by immortality, but by mortality and decay.[68] The palace of Alkinoös may be guarded by immortal dogs of gold and silver, fashioned by Hephaistos (7.91-94), but Odysseus returns to his faithful dog Argos, who waits on the dung heap for his master's return and promptly dies after seeing Odysseus come home (17.292-397). Alkinoös' orchards have ever-bearing fruit trees (7.112-32)—Odysseus' orchards are tended by his grief-stricken father, who looks like a beggar (24.205-31).[69] His οἶκος in his absence is decaying and disintegrating—a contrast to the immortality associated with Circe, Calypso, Aiolos, and the Phaiakians. But life on Scheria has no attraction for Odysseus, since he is so near to his goal.[70] It is during his stay on Scheria that Odysseus utters generalities about family life, which prepare us for his imminent reunification with his family. His prayer for Nausikaa is a beautiful description of marriage which reflects the like-mindedness that he and Penelope share (6.181).[71] Before his departure he also prays for his own household and the Phaeacians', and prays for Arete in relation to her family and people as well (13.42-46, 61-62).[72] His prayers and wishes centre on home and family, appropriately, since at last these hopes are within his grasp.

With deliberate irony, I will delay Odysseus' homecoming for a few paragraphs at least, for I first want to discuss the important paradigm of Agamemnon's homecoming. It

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68 Despite the numerous hints of a marriage between Nausikaa and Odysseus, there is no doubt that he will return home, without Nausikaa as a new wife.

69 Alfred Heubeck, *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey*, edited by Joseph Russo et al., vol. 3 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 385 ad 222, notes the parallels "between Laertes' orchard and the—albeit idealized—garden of Alcinous."

70 "There is never any doubt that home and Penelope are all he ultimately wants from his life," Charles Rowan Beye, "Male and Female in the Homeric Poems," *Ramus* 3 (1974): 98.

71 Hainsworth, 305 ad 181-5, disagrees with my evaluation, and states that "these moralistic lines, with their almost untranslatable conclusion, have been widely condemned . . . as a superfluous expansion, cumbrously expressed."

72 Odysseus prays to return to a blameless wife and to dear ones unharmed; that the Phaiakians bring cheer to their wives and children; and that Arete has joy in her household, children, people, and king.

is an example which is interwoven with the account of Odysseus' family.[73] Comparisons are drawn between Agamemnon and Odysseus, Orestes and Telemachos, Penelope and Klytaimestra, and Aigisthos and the suitors.[74] Agamemnon has a swift homecoming, brings home all of his companions, has a concubine with him, is slain ingloriously by the new husband of his treacherous wife, and is avenged by his son. Odysseus has a delayed homecoming, loses his companions, brings no concubine, slays all the suitors of his faithful wife, and is assisted by his son. The contrasts between Agamemnon's homecoming and Odysseus' homecoming highlight the trustworthiness of sons (who are blood relatives) and emphasise the potential treachery of wives (who are not blood relatives). After all, a wife can easily obtain another husband in the first husband's absence. "Women are problematic in that their loyalty is necessarily tenuous since they have no basic blood tie to their husband's *oikos*."[75]

The treachery of Klytaimestra is emphasised only in the latter part of the poem: throughout the *Telemacheia*, the dominant aspect of Agamemnon's story is the glory of Orestes, and the treachery of Aigisthos.[76] The Orestes-paradigm is presented as a positive example for Telemachos to emulate, and a negative example to warn Odysseus.[77] Orestes' righteous actions in defence of his father emphasise the security of the bond of blood

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73 "The *Odyssey* clearly considers the tale of Agamemnon important in the working of its main action, the return of Odysseus to Ithaca," Clader, 28.

74 These parallels are mentioned in the article by Edward D'Arms and Karl K. Hulley, "The Oresteia-Story in the *Odyssey*," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 77 (1946): 211-12. The fact that the two families are compared is commonly noted. For example, see Clader, 28; Finley, 77; Heubeck, vol. 1, 17. The references to Agamemnon's homecoming are 1.29-43, 1.298-300, 3.193-99, 3.234-35, 3.248-52, 3.256-312, 4.512-37, 11.384-461, 13.383-84, 24.33-34, 24.95-97, 24.199-202.

75 Wohl, 22.

76 This parallels the movement of the *Odyssey* from a focus on Telemachos and the suitors at the beginning, to Penelope and her concerns in the latter part. The first mention of the story, by Zeus, establishes the view of the gods on such matters, and gives divine sanction to the justice that will be carried out by Odysseus.

77 Schmiel, 471.

between father and son.[78] Orestes' loyalty to his father is never in question, and his slaying of his father's murderer *is* his κλέος.[79] This loyalty is present despite the fact that his father has been absent for a long time—Orestes presumably has not seen his father for ten years, yet the relationship is secure enough that he avenges his father, and is consequently held up as a model for Telemachos to emulate.[80] Interestingly, the paradigm of Agamemnon's family situation is only presented to father and son, Odysseus and Telemachos. It is as if the treachery of Klytaimestra excludes Penelope from the tale, for Penelope is never told this story.[81] Only father and son are warned to keep watch for the treachery of the wife and her suitor(s).

The wife in the paradigm, Klytaimestra, is the family member who, unrelated by blood, betrays the household.[82] In the *Iliad* we saw the woman as portable, moved as property from οἶκος to οἶκος, unable to determine her fate, and as the focus of male conflict. The *Odyssey* shows us a different side of the picture: when a woman is left alone in the οἶκος, without her husband to protect her, it is possible for her to choose a new husband. In both cases, Klytaimestra and Penelope have a man who is nominally in charge of the household: outsiders, however, appear unable to control an οἶκος not their

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78 "Throughout the poem Odysseus' blood relations pose no serious threat to his return," Helene P. Foley, "'Reverse Similes' and Sex Roles in the *Odyssey*," in *Women in the Ancient World: The Arethusa Papers*, edited by John Peradotto and J. P. Sullivan (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 25 n. 21.

79 For Orestes' κλέος, see Rose, 394.

80 "In the *Odyssey*, Orestes is an exemplary figure, untroubled by Erinyes," Robert Parker, *Miasma: Pollution and Purification in early Greek Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 136. The son's vengeance for his father is portrayed as righteous—as Parker, 136, notes, the aspect of matricide is suppressed.

81 Although Penelope is never told the story of Klytaimestra, she herself uses two paradigms, the story of Pandareos (19.518-24), and the unfaithfulness of Helen (23.218-24). The story of Pandareos, about a mother who kills her son, reveals Penelope's anxiety about the vertical relationship with her own son; the story of Helen's unfaithfulness reveals her anxiety about her horizontal relationship with her husband.

82 The 'treacherous wife' appears in Theoklymenos' genealogy: Amphiaros' wife 'had been bribed with presents' (15.247). Eriphyle, the last woman in the catalogue of heroines, also 'accepted precious gold for the life of her own dear husband' (11.327).

own. The bard looking after Klytaimestra is killed for his pains (3.267-69), and Mentor proves ineffectual at looking after Odysseus' οἶκος (2.225-27; 243-51). Agamemnon shows that the betrayal of a wife is felt deeply: he is the only one in the *Odyssey* who blames Klytaimestra, and he never condemns Aigisthos.[83] It may appear that Agamemnon's warning to Odysseus about the treachery of wives is unnecessary—after all, Penelope has been faithful. The audience may know this, but Odysseus' character does not. All the knowledge he has is from his mother Antikleia, and her information is somewhat dated.[84] He is meant to take "Agamemnon's murder by his wife [as] a solemn warning," and he does, as we shall see from his subsequent actions.[85]

Both Agamemnon and Odysseus participate in sexual relationships before returning home. Odysseus' relations with Circe and Kalypso are that of a mortal incorporated into the household of an immortal: he is able to leave Circe because she does not want to detain him against his will (10.489); he leaves Kalypso only because Zeus orders her to release him (5.137-40). In contrast, Agamemnon brings the mortal Kassandra home as his concubine, and his wife's hostility to her is made rather evident (11.422-23).[86] Even before returning home Agamemnon seems to suspect that he will not be welcome to his wife, for he says: "See, I had been thinking that I would be welcome to my children and thralls of my household when I came home"—omitting any mention of his wife (11.430-32).[87] Odysseus leaves all of his relationships behind on lonely islands, and it is clear that he truly desires his own home and his own wife. Unlike Agamemnon, Odysseus

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[83] Wohl, 36; Doherty, 160.

[84] Frederick M. Combellack, "Odysseus and Anticleia," *Classical Philology* 69 (1974): 121, discusses the chronological difficulties in this episode.

[85] Stanford, vol. 2, 213 ad 383-4.

[86] Agamemnon has a similar attitude towards Chryseis in *Iliad* 1.113-15—he favours her more than his wife.

[87] Agamemnon "implies that [he] had hardly expected his wife to welcome him—presumably because of his liaison with Cassandra and the death of Iphigeneia—but he did not expect murder," Stanford, vol. 1, 396 ad 430 ff.

successfully "renegotiates his social relationships" and succeeds in returning home, κλέος intact.[88]

After successfully surmounting the perils and threats of the world beyond Ithaka, Odysseus turns his mind to infiltrating his own οἶκος. He gradually reclaims his identity as father, master, husband, and son. He reveals himself to individuals and groups in what have been termed 'recognition scenes'.[89] Odysseus renegotiates all of his familial roles, and his trial of each household member leads either to restoration and reward, or to death and destruction. These scenes reveal attitudes expressed towards the members of the οἶκος similar to the attitudes portrayed in the *Iliad* and in the Orestes-paradigm: the vertical/male axis is highly valued and trusted, the horizontal/female axis, closely associated with the inside of the οἶκος, is open to question and suspicion. The recognition scenes also have a distinct structure in the poem: the father-son recognitions (blood/vertical relations) frame the recognitions with servants and wife (legal/horizontal relations), which in turn fall on either side of the revelation to the suitors, who are anomalous, non-members of the οἶκος (see Figure 2). The 'trustworthy' reunions, for the most part, occur outside the οἶκος; treachery is associated with inside the οἶκος. As Odysseus again becomes father, master, husband, and son, he successfully combines his private role as master of the οἶκος with his public role as warrior: public and private are at last united in one figure when Odysseus successfully reclaims his household.

Odysseus and Telemachus come home around the same time, uniting the previously separate strands of the *Telemacheia* and Odysseus' wanderings. The meeting of father and son demonstrates clearly the security and primacy of the father-son bond. Telemachos has no physical tokens by which he can recognise Odysseus, unlike the other household

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[88] Foley, 25 n. 21.

[89] For the recognition scene, see Chris Emlyn-Jones, "The Reunion of Penelope and Odysseus," *Greece and Rome* 31, no. 1 (1984): 7; Johannes Th. Kakridis, *Homer Revisited* (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1971): 158; Lee, 135; Murnaghan, 20; Whitman, 84.

Figure Two: Structure of the Recognition Scenes in the *Odyssey*

Type of Reunion	Location with reference to the οἶκος	Relationship
Father-Son	Outside	Blood
Master-Servants	Inside & Outside	Social
Suitors	From Outside, are Inside	Intruders
Husband-Wife	Inside	Social
Son-Father	Outside	Blood

members who recognise him through the tokens of scar, bed, and orchard.[90] But Telemachos has received some indirect 'tokens' of his father through his journey in the *Telemacheia*. Their physical resemblance has been noted by others, and Telemachos has heard of his father's ability to disguise himself as a beggar. After some initial hesitation, he accepts Odysseus as his father. The goddess Athene, associated with Odysseus and his family, is another token that may authenticate Odysseus in Telemachos' eyes.[91] Odysseus, for his part, does not test Telemachos' loyalty as he does the other members of his household. He immediately includes Telemachos in his plans for revenge (16.234), and binds him to secrecy (16.301-4). Telemachos' keeping the secret will be a proof of his paternity, says Odysseus (16.300)—the implication is that true sons never betray or disobey their fathers, and that Penelope is not to be trusted. Both father and son exclude her from their plans, and their actions are encouraged by Athene, who reinforces the perception that only the male line is trustworthy.[92] Telemachos expresses his doubt about Penelope even before he knows his father is present (16.33-35; 73-77; 126), and likely this is a further token of his reliability and loyalty to Odysseus. The reunion of father and son occurs outside of the female domain of the οἶκος, and the plans are laid outside to deal with the treachery inside. Penelope is ostracised.

After Odysseus has 'become a father,' he resumes his role as master. This takes him into the οἶκος, where treachery lurks. Yet not everyone inside the οἶκος is treacherous. Some of the servants are loyal—indeed, although they are not kin, they are very much *like* kin. Eurykleia, the first servant to recognise Odysseus, is indeed like a member of his family. She has been a part of Odysseus' οἶκος for a long time—in fact, she was a

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90 "There can be no such tokens between Odysseus and Telemachus, because Telemachus knows nothing of his father except what he has been told," Alden, 135.

91 Stanford, vol. 2, 271 ad 213: "Telemachus, once he is satisfied about the metamorphosis, accepts O. with rather surprising facility, since O. has offered no real proof of his identity. But the reference to Athena, also his own patron, would help to convince him; and he is young and impressionable."

92 "While Odysseus brings his son Telemachus into his plot at once, making him his partner in deceiving the suitors, he purposefully—and, it is often said, cruelly—excludes his most crucial ally, his wife," Sheila Murnaghan, "Penelope's *Agnoia*: Knowledge, Power and Gender in the *Odyssey*," *Helios* 13 (1986): 106.

member of Laertes' household previously, was almost Laertes' concubine (1.432-33), and as nurse of Odysseus and Telemachos is practically a surrogate mother (1.435).[93] It is she who presented the infant Odysseus to his maternal grandfather Autolykos to be named (19.401-4). Eurykleia expresses the dual aspect of her relationship to Odysseus when she recognises him and addresses him both as 'child' and as 'master': she is his servant, but she is also like a mother.[94] Although she is loyal to Odysseus (her speech even before the recognition scene reveals her faithfulness), he still does not intentionally reveal himself to her (19.390-91).[95] She proves to be a helpful ally, however, as she was for Telemachos when he prepared for his voyage (2.349). Odysseus also acknowledges the close, almost-familial bond between the nurse and himself, but he threatens to kill her if she reveals his secret. His role as master takes precedence, and he will kill all who are unfaithful (19.486-90). Her ability to hide the truth from Penelope (as Telemachos does) proves her loyalty to her master Odysseus, and spares her life.

Odysseus' recognition scene with the faithful menservants, Eumaios and Philoitios, occurs outside of the οἶκος.[96] He tests them, is assured of their loyalty, proves himself by the scar, and obtains two helpers to fight against the suitors.[97] A unique feature of this encounter is Odysseus' promise to the other two men: if he kills the suitors, he says he

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93 They address her as μαῖα, 'mother.' Eurykleia also addresses some of Odysseus' family members as 'dear child': "all the other examples of this form of address are of parents speaking to their children" (with one exception), Manuel Fernández-Galiano, *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey*, edited by Joseph Russo et al., vol. 3 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 307 ad 486.

94 "The first words Odysseus' old nurse speaks to him are subtly chosen by Homer so as to be quite moving: she calls him both 'dear child' and 'my lord' in the same sentence, beginning with her earliest and most private relationship to him, and then shifting to the external reality of the newly discovered situation," Joseph Russo, *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey*, edited by Joseph Russo et al., vol. 3 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 99 ad 474-475.

95 Kakridis, 158.

96 Of course, it is rather simplistic to say that the recognition takes place outside because the participants are male. But it has been noted that Odysseus' motivation for going outside is not very clear (unless, of course, one argues that all of the male recognition scenes take place outside of the house). For the problems with Odysseus' exit from the house, see Fernández-Galiano, 133.

97 This is interesting in light of his previous statement that Athene and Zeus would be all of the helpers he would need (16.260-61).

will "get wives for you both, and grant you possessions and houses built next to mine, and think of you in the future always as companions of Telemachos, and his brothers" (21.214-16). Because the herdsmen have recognised Odysseus as the master of the οἶκος, and have treated his possessions as *his* possessions, they are provided with οἶκοι of their own, and a position as close to family as possible—adoptive sons of Odysseus.[98] Eumaios, who has longed for Odysseus more than returning to his own home and parents (14.140-144), is even more securely incorporated as a member of Odysseus' household, and he is rewarded with a home of his own.[99]

The faithful servants who respect Odysseus' οἶκος receive οἶκοι of their own: the suitors, because of their disrespect for Odysseus' οἶκος, never return to their homes. This is the fundamental offence of the suitors, that they have treated another man's οἶκος as their own.[100] When Odysseus confronts the suitors to carry out his retribution, public and private, outside and inside, heroism and home meet and converge. He recreates his public role as warrior inside his own private home.[101] Instead of a tension between heroism and home, Odysseus employs heroism to deliver his home from the intruders, the suitors. Athene herself (disguised as Mentor) draws the parallel between Odysseus' public heroism in Troy for the sake of Helen and his private fight for his own home (which she depicts as the more important of the two, 22.226-32). At last a hero gets to fight for his own private concerns.

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98 "To call them 'brothers' of Telemachus also seems odd, given the large disparity in age; Eumaeus elsewhere claims (xv 352-79) to have been brought up as a brother to Ctimene, Odysseus' sister," Russo, 171 ad 216.

99 I shall not discuss Odysseus' brief meeting with his faithful serving women—it is his turn to recognise rather than be recognised. This occurs after the suitors and the faithless serving women have been slain, thus there is no danger in the revelation (22.495-501). The women greet and kiss him, and he laments as he recognises them.

100 Anne Amory, "The Reunion of Odysseus and Penelope," in *Essays on the Odyssey: Selected Modern Criticism*, edited by Charles H. Taylor, Jr. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1963), 110; Calvin S. Byre, "Penelope and the Suitors Before Odysseus: *Odyssey* 18.158-303," *American Journal of Philology* 109 (1988): 163; Halverson, 142.

101 J. Finley, 187: "The suitor-slaying revives Troy."

The suitors' deaths are the reverse image of Agamemnon's death: instead of the returning hero being slain by his wife and her lover at a feast (suspiciously reminiscent of a wedding feast), the hero returns and slays the suitors at a feast, then reclaims his wife. The juxtaposition of marriage/feasting and death is effectively employed in both scenes, and in fact the wedding/death opposition has been applied to the suitors at various points throughout the poem. Athene-Mentes and Menelaos express a wish that Odysseus would come home so that the suitors would "find death was quick, and marriage a bitter matter" (ὠκύμοροί τε γενοίατο πικρόγαμοί τε).[102] Odysseus (as the beggar) predicts that "Antinoös may find his death before he is married" (17.466), and Telemachos threatens Ktesippos with death: "instead of your marriage your father would have been busy with your funeral here" (20.307-8). Agamemnon's death is also associated with the wedding feast (or a festival or communal dinner). He describes how inglorious his death was, "being sprawled by the mixing bowl and the loaded tables" (11.419-20). Death inside the οἶκος, at a feast, is disgraceful and unheroic.[103] Agamemnon contrasts his death with the slaughter Odysseus is accustomed to seeing, of men killed in battle (11.417). This disgraceful sort of death, inside the οἶκος, in a non-war context, is dealt to the suitors. Antinoös' death is the first and most dramatic: "He slumped away to one side, and out of his stricken hand fell the goblet, ... and with a thrust of his foot he kicked back the table from him, so that all the good food was scattered on the ground, bread and baked meats together" (22.17-21).[104] Death comes at the feast, instead of marriage. Yet the death of the suitors prepares the way for Odysseus to recreate his marriage to Penelope.[105]

After the suitors are slain, Odysseus is able to resume his role as husband. The actual

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102 1.266, 4.346, 17.137. I was delighted with Cunliffe's (329) definition of πικρόγαμος: "ruing one's wooing".

103 For Agamemnon's unheroic death, see Sven Armens, *Archetypes of the Family in Literature* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966), 72-73.

104 The juxtaposition of death and feasting is also present in Eurymachos' death (22.84-86).

105 "Though the poem unfolds inexorably toward marriage there will be, in fact, no wedding, since the principals in this case are already husband and wife," Norman Austin, "The Wedding Text in Homer's *Odyssey*," *Arion* 1, no. 2 (1991): 237.

reunification of husband and wife occurs in Book 23, but there is some question as to whether Penelope 'intuitively' recognises Odysseus before this time.[106] Even if she does recognise him beforehand (it may be that the ambiguity is deliberately there to tantalise the audience), it is clear from the text that both father and son purposely intend to exclude Penelope from the plot of revenge until after it has been carried out. Certainly Penelope's faithfulness to Odysseus is not without its ambiguities.[107] Because she is not related to Odysseus by blood, and because she is a woman who can be wooed and wed into another οἶκος, she cannot be trusted until the suitors are dead, no matter how faithful she appears to be.[108] Athene herself reinforces the idea that Penelope may marry another man, and she convinces both Telemachos and Odysseus of this. Her words to Telemachos in 15.14-17, informing him that Penelope's father and brother want her to marry Eurymachos, may be a 'white lie,' but Athene's generalisation is enough to make anyone suspicious of Penelope's loyalty: "You know what the mind is like in the breast of a woman. She wants to build up the household of the man who marries her, and of former children, and of her beloved and wedded husband, she has no remembrance, when he is dead, nor does she think of him" (15.20-23).[109] Telemachos seems convinced: his speeches thereafter reveal his apprehension that Penelope will remarry. Athene warns Odysseus also: she says that Penelope grieves for him, but also holds out hope to the suitors (13.279-387). Athene also

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106 For a summary of the scholarship on this question, see Emlyn-Jones, 15 n. 7. Those who vote "yes" for a early recognition are Amory, 100-36; Philip Whaley Harsh, "Penelope and Odysseus in *Odyssey* XIX," *American Journal of Philology*, 71, no. 1 (1950): 10; Whitman, 84. The 'no' votes are Frederick M. Combellack, "Wise Penelope and the Contest of the Bow," in *Twentieth Century Interpretations of the Odyssey: A Collection of Critical Essays*, edited by Howard W. Clarke (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1983), 109; J. Finley, 14 n. 6; Murnaghan, *Disguise*, 21; Stanford, vol. 2, 366 ad 319; Thornton, 96.

107 This has been pointed out by Nancy Felson-Rubin, "Penelope's Perspective: Character From Plot," in *Homer: Beyond Oral Poetry: Recent Trends in Homeric Interpretation*, edited by J. M. Bremer et al. (Amsterdam: B. R. Grüner Publishing Co., 1987), 62.

108 "Odysseus' marriage is the least stable of the relationships through which he recovers his former position," Murnaghan, "Penelope's *Agnoia*," 108.

109 Arie Hoekstra, *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey*, edited by Alfred Heubeck and Arie Hoekstra, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 232 ad 16-17: "The statement is likely to be a white lie on the part of Athena ('the ancient gods were not essentially truthful', Stanford)."

twice prevents Penelope from recognising Odysseus; when Eurykleia discovers the scar, and when Penelope and the 'beggar' are conversing.[110] Thus the patron goddess of Odysseus' family reinforces suspicion of Penelope until the suitors are dead.

Apart from these seeds of suspicion planted by Athene in the minds of both father and son, there is another good reason for the recognition scene to be delayed until after the suitors' death. In the *Iliad*, women act as a restraining force, holding their men back from the fighting.[111] So too in the *Odyssey*, Odysseus' desire for Penelope can "distract him from the task with which he is faced, luring him into a premature enjoyment that costs him the achievement of his true goal."[112] Further, Penelope's weeping over the slain geese in her dream, geese who represent the suitors, calls into question her attitude towards them.[113] Would she try to prevent Odysseus from killing the suitors, if she is fond of them? Odysseus does not let his wife know of his plans, and does not reveal himself until after the suitors are dead. He avoids putting such questions to the test.[114]

Odysseus does not become a 'husband' again until his rivals are dead. Then his wife is again his wife, not a pseudo-widow besieged by suitors. Like the women in the *Iliad*, Penelope is powerless to determine her own fate: she is a woman who is the focus of male conflict.[115] Once the conflict has been violently resolved, it is the proper time for Odysseus to reveal himself. Athene sanctions this revelation by making Odysseus appear

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110 See Russo, 99 ad 478-9, for mention of these verses as an obstacle to the 'subconscious recognition' theory.

111 Kakridis, 70.

112 Murnaghan, "Penelope's *Agnoia*," 106.

113 For Penelope's dream, see George Devereux, "Penelope's Character," *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 26 (1957): 382; Anne Vannan Rankin, "Penelope's Dreams in Books XIX and XX of the *Odyssey*," *Helikon* 2 (1962): 622; Joseph Russo, "Interview and Aftermath: Dream, Fantasy, and Intuition in *Odyssey* 19 and 20," *American Journal of Philology* 103 (1982): 9.

114 Eve Cantarella, *Pandora's Daughters: The Role and Status of Women in Greek and Roman Antiquity*, translated by Maureen B. Fant (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 27.

115 Penelope does not even get to see the results of the contest of the bow. Telemachos sends her away, and Athene keeps Penelope out of the way by sending her into a deep sleep: J. Finley, 19 n. 7.

more handsome after his bath, and by causing the night to last longer for the reunited couple (23.156-62; 241-46). But before the reunion occurs, Penelope has opportunity to test Odysseus. This testing actually reinforces her fidelity to Odysseus—she is not willing to accept any impostor. By her success at rousing Odysseus at the mention of the bed, she also shows that she is like Odysseus, and that Odysseus has met his equal in the testing game.[116] Penelope is the one for whom Odysseus has rejected immortality and an immortal wife, and the qualities of her mind have not faded over time, even if she says her beauty has (18.255, 19.123). Odysseus' mortal wife wins undying κλέος because of her faithfulness to her husband—the only woman in epic to achieve κλέος, usually a male attribute.[117] Because Odysseus does return, her fame is even greater than before (18.255, 19.128): her fame is inextricably linked to his.[118] The final tribute to her κλέος is delivered by Agamemnon in Book 24: he says that Penelope's virtue will make her the subject of heroic song, whereas Klytaimestra will be remembered for her treachery. Then again, he says all womankind has an evil reputation because of Klytaimestra: his words are thus a self-fulfilling prophecy. Indeed, his prediction has come true. Each woman is remembered in the poem for her actions toward her husband—and Agamemnon's words stain each woman with suspicion.[119]

Male-female tension is not only expressed in the husband-wife relationship: the mother-son relationship between Telemachos and Penelope is also strained. Telemachos

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116 Heubeck, vol. 3, 333 ad 182-204; Stanford, vol. 2, 398 ad 182.

117 Penelope's κλέος is closely tied to Odysseus (see Wohl, 45). The only reference to her own κλέος apart from Odysseus is when the suitor Antinoös mentions that Penelope's delaying tactics cause her to "win a great name for herself" but lead to the diminishing of Telemachos' possessions (2.125): this is, of course, an ambiguous type of glory.

118 The fame of Odysseus and Penelope has a verbal correspondence in the words of Odysseus. He speaks of Penelope's fame as "reaching wide heaven," a verbal echo of his expression concerning his own fame. Odysseus: καί μευ κλέος οὐρανὸν ἵκει (9.20); Penelope: ἦ γάρ σευ κλέος οὐρανὸν ἵκανει (19.108).

119 As Felson-Rubin, 61, points out, Agamemnon's words have set "the two heroines in an opposition to one another which has persisted through the centuries."

expresses some hostility, insensitivity, and brusqueness towards his mother.[120] His motivation is similar to Odysseus' exclusion of Penelope: his mother would be a hindrance to his plans. Even before Odysseus' homecoming, Telemachos, with his new-found confidence after talking with Athene-Mentes, orders his mother around. He excludes her from his plans for his sea voyage, ostensibly because weeping would ruin her skin (!) (2.376). When she finds out that Telemachos is gone, Penelope's reaction quite clearly indicates that she would definitely be a restraining influence—she says he would either have to stay, or else leave her dead in the halls (4.733-34). Telemachos feels anxiety over the fact that his patrimony is being consumed, and his mother is the cause of it. Penelope herself realises the difficult position in which she has put her son. Because she is being courted by the suitors, his inheritance and his very life are at stake.[121] There is some tension expressed from her perspective as well, for her son's coming of age is the signal for her to remarry—the very symbol of her union with Odysseus has become the symbol of her constraint to marry another man (18.175-76; 269-70).[122] The tension between mother and son does not seem to be resolved in the text, and we do not see them together again after his harsh words to her in 23.97-104 (for which Odysseus mildly remonstrates with him in 23.111-16).[123]

In the final recognition scene, Odysseus resumes his role as son: "recognition by one's father is, in a way, the final legitimation which establishes a man in his world."[124] This recognition scene has presented problems for critics, for Odysseus' intent to 'test' his father with mocking words (κερτομίοις ἐπέεσσιν 24.240) appears cruel and difficult to

120 For the conflict of Penelope and Telemachos, see Amory, 132 n. 18; J. Finley, 8; Patricia Marquardt, "Penelope 'ΠΟΛΥΤΡΟΠΟΣ'," *American Journal of Philology* 106 (1985): 39; Rankin, 622.

121 Penelope's "inability to settle the issue of the suitors very nearly caused her son's death," Marquardt, 40.

122 Byre, 163; Combellack, "Wise Penelope," 109.

123 Neil Forsyth, "The Allurement Scene: A Typical Pattern in Greek Oral Epic," *California Studies in Classical Antiquity* 12 (1979): 116, thinks that the contest of the bow resolves the tension between mother and son.

124 Whitman, 77.

interpret in light of the other recognition scenes.[125] The suitors are now dead, and Laertes' loyalty to Odysseus is never in doubt.[126] However, Odysseus' 'testing' causes Laertes "to emerge from his self-inflicted isolation and apathy."[127] Laertes' isolation is indeed self-inflicted, but up to this point in the poem the rest of his family have acquiesced to his isolation, and they have excluded him from the affairs of the οἶκος. Penelope at one point desires his help, but Eurykleia advises against it, saying "do not embitter the bitterness of the old man" (4.754). Telemachos also delays giving the news of his own homecoming to Laertes, even though Laertes has ceased to eat and drink in his absence (16.138-47).[128] Odysseus himself warns Telemachos not to tell anyone of his return, including Laertes (16.302). Laertes has removed himself from Odysseus' household, and he is consequently distanced by the household from its concerns. Odysseus' prodding questions in Book 24 result in Laertes' acknowledging himself the father of Odysseus, and they remind him of social obligations, such as the exchange of guest-gifts (24.283-86).[129] Laertes is important to Odysseus: the son is suddenly shocked into revealing himself to his father (24.318-22). His sudden decision contrasts with all of the other recognition scenes which have been carefully contrived by either Athene or Odysseus (with the exception of the Eurykleia scene), and offer a contrast to his unyielding demeanour towards Penelope (19.210-12). The emotion felt for his father is so forceful that Odysseus immediately reveals himself. As in the other scenes, however, Laertes asks Odysseus for proof of his identity. Just as Odysseus and Penelope have the sign of the bed in addition to the sign of Odysseus' scar, so Odysseus shows his father the scar and gives him a sign unique to

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125 Dorothea Wender, *The Last Scenes of the Odyssey*, Mnemosyne Supplement no. 52 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1978), 56, speaks of the cruelty.

126 Thornton, 118.

127 Heubeck, vol. 3, ad 24.244-79; Thornton, 118; Clarke, "Telemachus," 130.

128 "Telemachus, though sorry for his grandfather's despondency, adheres to his plan," Stanford, vol. 2, 269 ad 147-9.

129 Heubeck, vol. 3, 390 ad 289, 293.

father and son, Odysseus' knowledge of the trees his father once gave him.[130] The sign of the trees provides a reaffirmation of the father-son bond, a symbol of the inheritance passed down the male line.

Odysseus has some experiences which link him to his own father, just as Telemachos has experiences which link him to Odysseus.[131] Laertes "has exchanged riches for poverty, fine fabrics for ashes and leaves, growth for decay, order for dissolution."[132] Odysseus, in the guise of a beggar, also adopts a lowly, vagabond position, completely contrary to his true social status. He too experiences 'harsh old age,' since Athene withers his flesh, makes him bald, and dims his eyes (13.430-33). Whereas Odysseus' disguise as an elderly beggar is both put on and taken off by Athene, Laertes' appearance is of his own choosing.[133] Odysseus taunts him with his menial appearance, which belies his true status (24.249-55). Laertes' interest in his personal appearance only returns when his son has been restored to him: he takes a bath, and under the influence of Athene he is rejuvenated.[134] Laertes is also associated with the season of autumn, making his squalid bed in the fallen leaves (11.192-95). Likewise, Odysseus makes his bed in the leaves on Scheria, and has verbal associations with autumn.[135] Both father and son are recalled from a seeming death into life, and are able to live again, united with each other.

Odysseus' reunion with his father in Book 24 fits very well into the structure of the

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130 Heubeck,vol. 3, 394 ad 331-44. See also Carroll Moulton, "The End of the *Odyssey*," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 15 (1974): 164; Wender, *Last Scenes*, 3; Whitman, 86; Falkner, 43.

131 Stephen Bertman, "Structural Symmetry at the End of the *Odyssey*," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 9 (1968): 121.

132 Austin, *Archery*, 102. "Laertes ... is less like a valued elder of the family than a superannuated retainer or discarded beast of burden," Laura M. Slatkin, "Genre and Generation in the *Odyssey*," *Metis* 1 (1986): 265.

133 J. Finley, 204.

134 This is a parallel to the other scenes in which Odysseus and his family are made more attractive by Athene. See Amory, 118; Heubeck, vol. 3, 401 ad 361-83; Thornton, 96.

135 For this argument, see Austin, *Archery*, 102-4.

poem as a whole.[136] As mentioned earlier, all of the recognition scenes are framed by the father-son recognitions. The whole poem is framed by father and son: it begins with the *Telemacheia*, and ends with a *Laertia* (to use a word coined by Falkner).[137] "The appeal of Odysseus' reunion with his father is beyond dispute," and indeed it neatly concludes all of Odysseus' reunions with his family members.[138] Close parallels can also be found between the ending of the *Odyssey* and the ending of the *Iliad*, "both of which involve a sympathetic study of the aged father of one of the leading heroes."[139] Priam's grief has caused him to neglect and debase himself: he is covered with dung (24.163-65), and he has refused food and sleep (24.601; 618). Laertes, whose "self-inflicted suffering also increases the grief for the son whom he believes to be dead,"[140] is also dressed squalidly (24.227-31), has refused food (16.143), and pours dust over his head in grief (24.316). Achilles gets Priam to eat and sleep, just as Odysseus gets his father to eat (*Il.* 24.601, 650, *Od.* 24.360).[141] Yet the two episodes differ: in the *Iliad*, the weeping of the two men is tragic—one weeps for his lost son, the other, for the father to whom he can no longer offer care. Priam and Achilles are not truly father and son, they are merely stand-ins for missing family members. Odysseus and Laertes are truly father and son, and they weep because they are at last reunited. This is the culmination of Odysseus' homecoming.[142]

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136 "The Alexandrians Aristophanes and Aristarchus believed, perhaps, that the poem ended at 23.296, but others have argued on internal evidence that the *Odyssey* cannot conclude with the reunion with Penelope, and that the *nostos* as we have come to understand it must include a reunion of the hero with his father and a settlement with the families of the suitors," Falkner, 23.

137 Falkner, 53.

138 Stephanie West, "Laertes Revisited," *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Association* 35 (1989): 133.

139 Nicholas Richardson, ed., *The Iliad: A Commentary*, General Editor G. S. Kirk, vol. 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 23.

140 Heubeck, vol. 3, 387 ad 231.

141 Falkner, 43; 60 n. 67.

142 Heubeck, vol. 3, 381 ad 205-412.

We have seen how highly the male line of descent is valued, and the success of Odysseus' homecoming is enhanced by the fact that Odysseus comes home and reunites the 'single line' of his family.[143] "Arkeisios had only a single son, Laertes, and Laertes had only one son, Odysseus; Odysseus in turn left only one son . . . in the halls" (16.118-20). The end of Book 24 is a celebration of the reunification of that single line.[144] West points out that "a family with three generations active is decidedly unusual in the epic world."[145] Achilles, the other major hero of epic, is the only other one to have three generations of heroic men alive at one time.[146] The tragedy of Achilles is that his death leaves a gap in the line—he can no longer care for his father, nor observe the heroism of his son. Odysseus' success is that he reunites the three generations, so that he can see the heroism of both father and son. Laertes rejoices that his "son and [his] son's son are contending over their courage" (24.515). He is no longer the Laertes whose shield is "fouled with mildew" from disuse (22.184-85): he has his *aristeia* along with his son and grandson.[147] "In Telemachus, Odysseus and Laertes, three life stages are represented synchronically and against the steady movement of time."[148] They have drawn closer together in age—Laertes has shed some years, Odysseus seems a little younger, and Telemachos has matured. The poem ends with the sight of the three men, united as heroes against the community. As Arthur has noted, it is Hektor's wish come true: the *Odyssey* "culminates in a battle that fulfills every aspect of the fantasy which Hector projects in the Iliad—father and son fight

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143 For the poem's emphasis on fathers, sons, and the male line, see Moulton, 166 n. 55; Foley, 25 n. 20.

144 Falkner, 43; Sheila Murnaghan, "Maternity and Mortality in Homeric Poetry," *Classical Antiquity* 11, no. 2 (1992): 260; Mihoko Suzuki, *Metamorphoses of Helen: Authority, Difference, and the Epic* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 63; Moulton, 166; Wender, "Last Scenes," 74.

145 West, "Laertes Revisited," 115.

146 Although West, "Laertes Revisited," 115, argues that Neoptolemos "notoriously, was precocious."

147 Heubeck, vol. 3, 415 ad 516-27.

148 Falkner, 22.

alongside one another and bring joy to the heart of Penelope."[149] Peace abroad, on Ithaka, and in Odysseus' οἶκος, has now been secured by Odysseus' homecoming.

The οἶκος, a shadowy backdrop in the *Iliad*, is the central goal and focal point of the *Odyssey*. Odysseus' identity and κλέος do not arise merely from sacking cities or killing men, but from "mothers, fathers, sons, and wives."[150] His relationship to his οἶκος, the other, often unseen component of a hero's life, defines who he is. Odysseus moves from being a hero at Troy, to being a leader who loses all of his fighting companions, to being a bit of flotsam tossed by Poseidon on the sea. All that identifies him as a hero is lost, and his identity is regained through his reunification with his family. Who he once was, and who he again becomes, is the son of Laertes, the husband of Penelope, and the father of Telemachos. Who they once were, and who they again become, is Odysseus' father, wife, and son. Only Odysseus' return restores their identities. The οἶκος that was gradually unravelling as time passed is again tightly woven together and secured by the return of Odysseus. The song of the poem celebrates the individual familial strands, as well as the completed tapestry.

149 Marylin B. Arthur, "The Divided World of *Iliad* VI," in *Reflections of Women in Antiquity*, edited by Helene P. Foley (New York: Gordon and Breach Science Publishing, 1981), 35.

150 Foley, 20.

Chapter Three: Homes Divine and Mortal in the *Homeric Hymns*

The portrayal of the family clarified the structure of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. In these poems, we saw that the family can be read as a metaphor of relationship, a means of understanding and structuring mortal interconnections. These poems briefly allude to the familial structure of the divine family. The *Homeric Hymns*, however, depict the gods as existing in a framework of familial relationships as a way of constructing the gods' actions in relation to each other. The mortal families in the *Hymns* are also portrayed in a familial context which is consistent with epic poetry. The immortal family is patterned after the mortal family, but naturally, the concept of immortality introduces some unusual familial variations. I intend to discuss the similarities and differences between the divine οἶκος as it is portrayed in the *Hymns*, and the mortal families who are described in the *Hymns* and in epic poetry. My examination will involve a look at the structure of the four major hymns in relation to each other, an in-depth look at the vertical relationship of father and son and the horizontal marriage relationship, the role of maternity and birth on Olympos, the intersection of gods and mortals through the medium of the family, and the negotiation of the boundary between mortals and immortals by means of the family.

Since the *Hymns* are so numerous and varied, I will not attempt an analysis of each individual one. However, a comparison of the four major *Homeric Hymns* (*Demeter*, *Apollo*, *Hermes*, and *Aphrodite*) yields a framework for understanding the representation of the divine family in the *Hymns*.[1] These four hymns provide balancing treatments of the two axes of familial relationships: the vertical axis of lineage and the horizontal axis of marriage. *Apollo* and *Hermes* deal with the birth and subsequent exploits of Zeus' sons, and *Demeter* and *Aphrodite* describe the marriage/sexual union of Zeus' daughters.[2] The birth of sons is portrayed as highly significant, whereas marriage is portrayed as the significant event for daughters. Only male births are described, except for the birth of

1 By 'major', I mean 'longest in length.'

2 Of course, the *Hymn to Demeter* has as its main focus the maternal concern of Demeter, but Persephone's marriage to Hades is the catalyst for the poem's action.

Athena (an exceptional birth from a male, of a rather masculine deity).[3] The birth of a son, a momentous event among both gods and mortals, allows the poet[s] of the *Hymns* to depict Zeus' success in incorporating new sons into his Olympian order.[4] The marriage, or sexual union, of Zeus' daughters is also a means of demonstrating Zeus' success at avoiding threats to his reign by using his prerogative as a father to arrange his daughters' marriages. He grants Persephone to Hades, and he causes a more fleeting union between Aphrodite and Anchises.[5] Yet even the two hymns about Zeus' daughters contain the birth of sons. In all four of the hymns, the birth or infancy of a son plays an integral role.

Sons could not come more highly recommended than in epic poetry. The son is shown as a trustworthy ally, bound strongly to his father by his blood kinship—a contrast to the socially-bound wife who is potentially treacherous, or the daughter, whose marriage means movement from one οἶκος to another, and thus has a less stable bond to her home of origin.[6] The son is a form of stability against the flux of time, a participant in the diachronic male line. This is not the case in the divine world. Hesiod's *Theogony* represents the immortal son as the cause of fluctuation and change, not as the emblem of stability. We will discuss the Hesiodic succession myth in Chapter Four, but a few remarks are relevant here. Among mortals, there is a natural progression from father to son, cycling through the birth and death of successive generations. Among the gods, there is birth, but no death to compensate for an ever-increasing divine οἶκος. The increase is

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3 The births of Dionysos, Apollo, Hermes, Herakles, Asklepios, the Dioskouroi, Pan, and Helios are mentioned, at least briefly, in the *Hymns*. The birth of Aphrodite (like Athena's, an exceptional birth) is alluded to, Artemis' birth is mentioned in conjunction with Apollo, and Eos and Selene are lumped in with a description of Helios' birth. No female births are depicted in a context that does not include an accompanying male birth.

4 Aside from the decidedly unusual births of Athena and Aphrodite (and perhaps the mortal Pandora), I cannot think of a lengthy depiction of the birth of a daughter anywhere in Homer or Hesiod. Furthermore, the depictions of nursing appear to be limited to male offspring. Clearly the birth and infancy of sons are of great significance, at least in literary depictions.

5 δῶκεν (2.3) is the correct word for 'giving a daughter in marriage.' "[Zeus'] consent to the marriage as father was necessary to make it legal ... but the Rape is also his plan," N. J. Richardson, *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), 138 ad 3.

6 "The continuity of the *oikos* was predicated upon the replacement of the father by the son as *kyrios* and on the redistribution or exchange of the women," Marylin B. Arthur, "Cultural Strategies in Hesiod's *Theogony: Law, Family, Society*," *Arethusa* 15, nos. 1, 2 (1982): 65.

unalterable. The *Theogony* depicts the tension caused by this state of affairs, and the resulting violent succession of son superseding father. But the *Hymns* depict a time after the *Theogony*, when Zeus has established his stable reign.[7] The *Hymns* are in praise of numerous gods, but the figure of Father Zeus is woven throughout, as both the central ruling figure and the head of the family on Olympos. The *Hymns* demonstrate Zeus' success as a ruler and as a father in maintaining his power while satisfying the rest of the family, and avoiding a repetition of the succession that preceded him.

Sons are a form of immortality for mortals. Among the immortals, progeny as a form of immortality is, of course, irrelevant. The question as to *why* the gods have children cannot be answered by examining the *Hymns*: they merely tell us that the gods do have children. "There is in fact one condition to which gods are no less absolutely subject than mortal men: natality."[8] But the birth of the gods, especially sons, is a problematic issue in the theogonic context of succession. In the *Hymns*, each son's birth means that there is one more god who requires his own portion of honour (τιμή). The *Hymns* demonstrate Zeus' success at distributing τιμαί to the satisfaction of his sons, without losing his position as ruler. Apollo and Hermes are neatly assimilated into the Olympian order. They both recognise Zeus as the supreme paternal authority, and in turn they receive their own spheres of influence, their τιμαί. The *Hymn to Apollo* describes Apollo's quest for an oracle (3.215), a form of τιμή that is not only in accordance with his father's will, but a

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7 Clay points out that epic shows us "the fully perfected and stable Olympian pantheon ... the *Theogony* reveals the genesis of the Olympian order and ends with the triumphal accession to power of Zeus. Between theogonic poetry and epic there remains a gap, one that is filled by the Olympian narratives of the longer hymns," Jenny Strauss Clay, *The Politics of Olympus: Form and Meaning in the Major Homeric Hymns* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989), 15. Although I agree with her that the *Hymns* are concerned "with the acquisition or redistribution of *timai* within the Olympian cosmos" (15), I believe that power is shown to be more stable than Clay depicts, and that the *Hymns* are a celebration of Zeus' ultimate success.

8 Andrew M. Miller, *From Delos to Delphi: A Literary Study of the Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, Mnemosyne Supplement no. 93 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986), 40.

means of communicating his father's will to mortals.[9] His search for an oracle takes place on earth, not in Zeus' domain in heaven, and any hostility Apollo expresses is not directed against his father, but against two earthly female beings.[10] His search for the site of an oracle involves the displacement of the stream Telphousa and the slaying of a female dragon—a succession of sorts, but one in accord with Zeus' reign. Apollo covers the streams of Telphousa with a cliff (3.383), as punishment for trying to keep her place for herself; he kills the she-dragon in order to make way for his oracle at Krisa (3.361-63).[11] Apollo is a good son who offers no opposition to Zeus.

Hermes' identity is established in the *Hymn to Hermes* by his relationship to his father. The *Odyssey* shows that Telemachos' quest for his father resulted in establishing his own identity as the son of Odysseus. Hermes, too, goes on a journey which seals his identity as Hermes, son of Zeus, and procures him one aspect of his τιμή as the messenger and guide of the gods. Identity is double-faceted: it includes one's parentage and occupation in addition to one's self.[12] Hermes' father Zeus, to some extent, is the one who bestows both of these aspects (4.173-75). In fact, the two songs that Hermes sings recognise these two facets of identity: his first song celebrates Zeus as his father (and Maia as his mother, 4.56-58); the second song depicts Zeus as the dispenser of portions to the gods (4.427-28). The infant Hermes realises that he must move outside the οἶκος and into the company of the gods if he wants to receive any honour (4.166-75) and he does just that. His dispute with his half-brother Apollo over the stolen cattle provides the motivation

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9 Clay, 44; 94. I am treating the *Hymn to Apollo* as a single hymn. Throughout this chapter, the text references will be numbered in this manner: the first number (e.g. '3') will represent the number of the *Hymn* as given in the *Oxford Classical Text*; the second number (following the period) will represent the line number of the text.

10 "The hymn departs from the usual tradition by making the dragon female," Clay 63-64.

11 Could this be a form of revenge against Hera, who caused his mother Leto so much pain in giving birth to him? He kills the nurse of Hera's son, Typhaon.

12 Even today, identity is largely connected with one's name and occupation. In the *Hymns*, the gods' identities are also established by name, which for them includes familial details (Hermes, son of Zeus and Maia; Artemis, sister of Apollo), and also by what they do, what particular aspect of life they influence. Zeus is often a giver of the first kind of identity, and he is definitely the one who grants the second.

for his journey to Olympos (4.312), where he declares his paternity in front of his father and all the immortals (4.368, 378), thus establishing his reputation as Zeus' son. His speech prompts Zeus to command Hermes to act as guide and lead the way to the stolen cattle (4.392-94). In effect, he gives Hermes his τιμή of being the messenger of the gods. The journey to Olympos thus partially secures Hermes' identity as his son's father, as well as one aspect of his τιμή.[13] Hermes receives his place in the Olympian hierarchy, peaceably and without rebelling against Zeus.[14]

The relationship between mortal fathers and sons in the *Hymns* closely parallels the depictions found in epic. As we have seen, the two forms of immortality that can be obtained by mortals (in lieu of the real thing) are κλέος (lasting glory) and progeny (specifically, male progeny). In epic, naturally enough, κλέος is emphasised. In the *Hymns*, offspring as a form of immortality is brought to the forefront, especially in the *Hymn to Aphrodite*.[15] Aineias is the only form of immortality Anchises will receive: Aphrodite brings up the possibility of changing Anchises into her immortal lover, only to reject the idea. Aineias is the fulfilment of Anchises' prayer (5.102-6), the guarantor of a long line of descent. So too, in the *Hymn to Demeter* Demophoön is portrayed as an extremely precious family member because he is the sole male heir, "born late in

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13 Of course, Hermes receives other τιμαί within the poem, most of them through exchange with his half-brother Apollo. But Zeus is the one who granted Apollo's τιμαί in the first place, so he is indirectly still the source of all Hermes' τιμαί.

14 The *Hymn* shows Hermes as obedient to his father, for when Zeus commands Hermes to act as guide, "illustrious Hermes obeyed, for the mind of aegis-bearing Zeus easily commanded obedience" (4.395-96).

15 "... at least one form of immortality *can* be seen to impinge on mortal lives, for the force of sexual attraction symbolized by Aphrodite does after all renew our species and, in the persons of our children, accomplishes an extension of our lives into the future. Anchises is an excellent representative for all of us who may benefit from this modified kind of immortality, because his primary character in Greek tradition was that of being his son's father, of being at the head of a succession of generations which continued when Priam's branch of the family perished," Peter Smith, *Nursling of Mortality: A Study of the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* (Cirencester, U.K.: Peter D. Lang, 1981), 6. See also Ann L. T. Bergren, "The Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite: Tradition and Rhetoric, Praise and Blame," *California Studies in Classical Antiquity* 8, no. 1 (1989): 29; and Charles Segal, "The Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite: A Structuralist Approach," *Classical World* 67 (1974): 208 n. 7.

[Metaneira's] life, much wished for and welcome" (2.165).[16] Demophoön is the irreplaceable hope for the continuation of his male line. Perhaps this accounts for the almost excessive concern over his upbringing and care.

The *Homeric Hymns* provide us with a fuller depiction of maternity than is found in epic. Epic poetry generally portrays motherhood in a context of grief: Thetis grieves for Achilleus, Hekabe for Hektor, and Penelope for her absent son Telemachos. Maternity among the gods in the *Hymns* has a variety of emotional shades. Leto's pride in her son Apollo contributes to his praise in his hymn (3.12-13, 3.101, 3.126),[17] while Aphrodite's shame in her maternity underscores Zeus' victory over her.[18] Demeter's maternity causes her deep grief at the loss of her daughter. Parallels have been drawn between the grief of Thetis for Achilleus and the grief of Demeter for Persephone: the differences between the two, however, are equally important as the similarities.[19] The *Iliad* portrays the gods as only being touched by grief at the death of a mortal family member, the product of a mixed immortal-mortal union. Even Zeus is shown as unable to avert the destined fate of his son Sarpedon, and Thetis grieves for her unalterably-mortal son Achilleus. In the *Hymn to Demeter*, the loss is not a mortal son, but an immortal daughter; it is not a loss through death, but through marriage; and it is not a loss that Zeus cannot avoid, for he actively plans it. It is an altogether unusual case, for "the normal marriages of the gods do not

16 Only-begotten sons seem to abound in early Greek poetry: Demophoön, Aineias, Achilleus, Neoptolemos, Odysseus, Telemachos, Orestes, Megapenthes. This factor serves to heighten the anxiety over the son's fate: all of the familial eggs are in one basket, in a manner of speaking.

All quotations are from the translation of Apostolos Athanassakis, *The Homeric Hymns* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976).

17 Clay, 43; Thomas W. Allen, W. R. Halliday, and E. E. Sikes, eds., *The Homeric Hymns*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936; Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1963), 229 ad 204.

18 However, there is an interesting contrast between Aphrodite's maternity in epic and in the *Hymn to Aphrodite*. In the *Iliad*, she is most solicitous of her son Aineias, shielding him and carrying him out of the fighting (*Iliad* 5.311-17). In the *Hymn*, Aineas is a source of shame and embarrassment. Aphrodite does not rear him, but leaves his upbringing to the nymphs (5.257). Clay, 192, speaks of the "painful character of her divine maternity."

19 The comparison is made by Mary Louise Lord, "Withdrawal and Return: An Epic Story Pattern in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* and in the Homeric Poems," *Classical Journal* 62 (1967): 241-48; Laura M. Slatkin, *The Power of Thetis: Allusion and Interpretation in the Iliad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

separate them permanently."[20] But Persephone's marriage, for obvious reasons, has close associations with death. It is a forced intimacy with Hades, which severs her communion with gods, mortals, and her mother.[21] The maternal grief of Demeter is thus unnatural and insufferable, compared to Thetis'. Demeter's own siblings are responsible for her distress, for her immortal daughter is forcibly abducted by Demeter's own brother Hades and the abduction is planned by her brother/consort Zeus. Both Thetis and Demeter may be referred to as '*mater dolorosa*,' but their sorrows are in entirely different contexts.[22]

An obvious and important fact of maternity is birth. The *Hymns* appear to focus on birth as a sort of crisis-point: a source of anxiety, pain, pleasure, and status. For example, Hera uses birth as a means of revenge. As recourse against Zeus' birth of Athena, she plans to give birth to a son more powerful than Zeus (3.311-15).[23] It is Hera's prerogative as Zeus' wife to bear his children, and she claims that Zeus has dishonoured her first (ἀτιμάζειν) by bearing Athena himself (3.312).[24] Her reaction is to counter with her own parthenogenic birth of a son more powerful than Zeus, by as much as Zeus was more powerful than his father Kronos (3.339). As Clay remarks, "Hera ... offers the ultimate challenge to Zeus's new order by attempting to reproduce the ancient cycle of

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20 J. Rudhardt, quoted in Clay, 221.

21 Nancy Felson Rubin and Harriet M. Deal, "Some Functions of the Demophon Episode in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter," *Quaderni Ubernati di Cultura Classica* 34 (1980): 14 n. 22, "Persephone's symbolic loss of immortality is depicted at three moments: her plucking of the narcissus, her descent to the underworld, and her eating of the pomegranate seed."

22 Clay, 192, refers to Thetis as 'the *mater dolorosa*' and Kerényi states that Demeter "was looked upon in modern terms as a kind of Greek *mater dolorosa*, although she had no other Madonna-like traits." C. Kerényi, *Eleusis: Archetypal Image of Mother and Daughter*, translated by Ralph Manheim, Bollingen Series vol. 4, no. 65 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1967), 29.

23 "Hera complains that she has been stripped of her *time* and her legitimate wifely prerogative to bear children to her husband," Clay, 68.

24 Although Hera implies it is her duty to bear Zeus' children, not once in the *Hymns* are she and Zeus described as the mutual parents of a child. In Hesiod, they together have Ares, Hebe, and Eileithyia (I found Richmond Lattimore's genealogical tables at the back of his *Theogony* translation very useful). In the *Hymns*, we see Hera bear Typhaon apart from Zeus, and Zeus has Athena apart from Hera. Hephaistos is a disputable case, but nowhere in the *Hymns* is he called Zeus' son.

succession."[25] We see here an interesting distinction between mortals and immortals, regarding the intersection of familial and political power: in the *Odyssey*, the treacherous wife and her lover/new husband oust the head of the οἶκος, who also has some political influence; among the gods, it is the wife and *son* who do the ousting. Marriage is the means in epic, birth is the means in the *Hymns*.[26] Thus the birth of an immortal son is used as a means of revenge, of attempting to assert one's power. In Hera's case, it ultimately fails.

Hera is not the only one who uses birth as a weapon. Birth is one tool Zeus uses to subdue Aphrodite. As in Hera's tale, this story depicts an instance of stolen τιμή—Zeus uses Aphrodite's own power, that of desire and sexual attraction, against her.[27] He has a dual purpose: that she herself should experience the shame of joining in love with a mortal, and secondly, that she might no longer boast about the mixed unions she instigates (5.45-52). So, he unites her with Anchises. But if the union were without offspring, what proof would there be that the union occurred? Aineias' birth is the tangible evidence of Zeus' victory and Aphrodite's shame.[28] She herself says she is ashamed that she "put a child beneath [her] girdle" (5.255), and she names the child Aineas, "because I was seized by awful grief [αἰνὸν ἔσχεν ἄχος] for sharing a mortal man's bed" (5.198-99).[29] Birth is a grievous occurrence for Aphrodite, while a hoped-for event for Anchises.

Giving birth is shown as a painful process, even for a goddess: apparently,

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25 Clay, 68.

26 Clay, 13, notes "it is, then, the female, whether as mother or wife, who relentlessly pursues change and promotes succession."

27 Zeus "can, without any explanation of where or how he got it, wield the power of Aphrodite as 'easily' as she made him breed with women," Bergren, 8 n. 35.

28 Bergren, 32, hints at this idea.

29 Segal notes the irony in that "the *achos* [grief] comes to the immortal goddess because of the birth, not the death, of a child," Charles Segal, "Tithonus and the Homeric 'Hymn to Aphrodite': A Comment," *Arethusa* 19, no. 1 (1986): 45.

immortality does not exempt one from labour pains.[30] The pain of birth has its compensation in the joy of bearing a glorious son, as Leto demonstrates (3.90-126). The divine births that are mentioned in the *Hymns* have a few common traits: they take place on earth, not Olympos, and they are either secret deliveries, or attended by a contingent of goddesses.[31] Zeus' birth of Athena, however, is exactly the opposite. It occurs on Olympos, in full sight of everyone, with no assistance in the delivery.[32] This, I think, is an important distinction in light of the *Hymns* as a whole, which are ultimately a celebration of Zeus' new Olympian regime.[33] Zeus usurps the female ability to give birth, and he does so in a public manner destined to instil awe in the "immortal onlookers" (28.7). The birth occurs on Olympos, which quakes along with the earth and sea (28.9-12). The ability to bear a child, in public, without a midwife is an effective demonstration of Zeus' power and authority.[34] He is shown as in control of *all* τιμαί, even those which are not generally his prerogative.[35]

When gods and mortals intersect in the *Hymns*, they often do so in a familial context.[36] The *Hymn to Demeter* depicts Demeter's rejection of life among the gods, in favour of a rather depressed sojourn among mortals. The medium by which she

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30 At least in poetry it does not.

31 E.g. Dionysos' birth was kept secret from Hera; Leto was attended by the goddesses (3.92); Hera bore Typhaon alone (3.347-51); Maia had Hermes while secluded in her cave (4.5-12); Koronis has Asklepios alone (16.2-3).

32 In later art and literature, Zeus is provided with a 'midwife' (who usually wields an axe): Hephaistos in Pindar's *Olympian Ode* 7.37, Prometheus in Euripides' *Ion*, Prometheus and Hephaistos in Apollodorus' *Library* 1.3.6. In art, one or two Eileithyiai are often shown, or Hephaistos with his axe. Hermes is another possibility, according to Norman O. Brown, "The Birth of Athena," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 83 (1954): 136.

33 Clay, 11.

34 See Brown, 137, for the presence or absence of a midwife.

35 Zeus "appropriate[s] the female capacity for generation," Marylin Arthur, "Politics and Pomegranates: An Interpretation of the Homeric Hymn to Demeter," *Arethusa* 10, no. 1 (1977): 7; Bergren, 8 n. 35.

36 The main intersections occur in the two 'daughter' hymns, *Demeter* and *Aphrodite*.

intersects/interacts with mortals is the family, the οἶκος, and she assumes a disguise that precludes sex and child-bearing. She "looked like an old woman born a long time ago and barred from childbearing and the gifts of wreath-loving Aphrodite" (2.101-2). She thrusts maternity from her with one hand by altering her outward appearance, while beckoning to it with the other hand by seeking the maternal occupation of nurse.[37] Her ability as a nurse is her means of entry into the οἶκος, and the infant Demophoön is the means of her employment. Demophoön acts as a substitute for Persephone, an outlet for Demeter's maternal instincts, and her means of revenge against Zeus and Hades.[38] Demophoön is thus the focus of the divine and the mortal, the centre of the maternal anxiety of both realms.[39]

The differing aims of mortal and immortal mothers are revealed in their actions and attitudes towards Demophoön. Demeter wishes to make him immortal, and secretly proceeds to use her own means towards her goal. She anoints him and breathes on him (2.237-38) and at night she 'hides' him in the fire "secretly from his dear parents." (2.239-40).[40] Metaneira's wish for Demophoön is different. She desires a nurse to rear her son to mortal manhood (stated twice at 2.166-68, 221-22), whereas Demeter uses Demophoön's need for a nurse as her means of keeping a roof over her head, and she pursues her own designs with her infant charge, desiring to "rob Hades of his natural prey, a child of mortals, a child born mortal. In exchange for her stolen child, a child stolen in return."[41] In effect, Demeter is also stealing Demophoön from his natural mother,

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37 See Arthur, "Politics," 15, for Demeter's withdrawal and renunciation of sexuality.

38 Arthur, "Politics," 22, believes "Demophon is also a substitute for the lost Persephone, and Demeter lavishes upon him the affection that later characterizes her reunion with her daughter." Clay, 225, partially disagrees: "The nursing of Demophoon does not simply constitute an expression of frustrated maternal instincts."

39 Clay, 240, notes the parallel anxiety of Metaneira for Demophoön and Demeter for Persephone.

40 Clay, 240, hints at the parallel secrecy of Zeus' and Hades' treatment of Persephone, and Demeter's treatment of Demophoön.

41 Ramnoux, quoted in Clay, 226.

Metaneira.[42] Although Metaneira does not understand what Demeter is trying to do for Demophoön, it is highly questionable that even if she did understand, she would want Demeter to continue. Instead of physical immortality, Demophoön receives undying honour (ἄφθιτον τιμήν, 2.261-263), a form of immortality that appears to be palatable to all parties concerned. Mortal and immortal may temporarily coexist in the same οἶκος, but physical proximity does not necessarily breed a similarity of thought or purpose.

Intercourse, with the subsequent birth of a child, is the more frequently portrayed form of intimate interaction between god and human. The union of Aphrodite and Anchises in the *Hymn to Aphrodite* also demonstrates that physical intimacy does not engender intellectual harmony. Before Anchises even knows the identity of the beautiful woman who suddenly appears before him, he addresses her (tentatively) as a goddess, and offers a prayer: "And with kindly heart grant me to be an eminent man among the Trojans, to leave flourishing offspring behind me, and to live long and behold the light of the sun, prospering among the people, and so reach the threshold of old age" (5.102-6). Anchises' prayer is grounded in mortality: he desires to possess fame among his peers, to have offspring, to remain among his people, and to grow old. Aphrodite, as an immortal, has a different wish. She tells Anchises "but should you live on such as you now are in looks and build, and be called my husband [πόσις], then no grief would enfold my prudent heart. But now you will soon be enveloped by leveling old age, that pitiless companion of every man, and hated even by the gods" (5.241-46). Her wish is for an eternally young husband, but she will not, or cannot, obtain immortality for Anchises. As shown in the *Hymn to Demeter*, age and familial desires are the issues upon which mortals and immortals differ. The gods (especially Aphrodite) hate old age: Anchises, a mortal, prays for it. Aphrodite wants him as a husband, but she does not mention a desire for offspring. Anchises sees offspring as important: it is mentioned in his prayer (5.104); Aphrodite adds "bearing fine children" as an enticement in her proposition to Anchises (5.127), and she

[42] See Clay, 239, for Demeter's 'adoption' of Demophoön.

promises continued potency to Anchises even after their union.[43] He will have "a dear son who will rule among the Trojans, and to his offspring children will always be born" (5.196-97). Fertility is a curse for the immortal mother, but a blessing to the mortal father.

Aphrodite tells Anchises two stories of men immortalised by the gods: these stories serve to highlight the differences in Aphrodite's and Anchises' wishes. The lives of Ganymedes and Tithonos are the exact opposite of the life Anchises prays for. They are not left among their people to be glorious or prosperous, they do not leave behind flourishing offspring, nor do they produce any offspring among the gods—both unions, at least in this *Hymn*, are sterile.[44] Tithonos does reach the 'threshold of old age,' but it is an eternal old age, which neither Anchises nor Aphrodite desires. The paradigms demonstrate how Anchises' prayer could not be fulfilled by his becoming an immortal consort. They also reveal how Aphrodite's wish for his immortalisation is impossible: Zeus, the author of her shameful affair, is the only one who can bestow immortality on a consort. He is not likely to do this, since his aim was to unite Aphrodite with someone of *mortal* status.[45]

The intersection of mortal and immortal is marred by lack of harmony because of their differing statuses, yet the boundary between them is at times successfully crossed in the *Hymns*. This change of status is negotiated by male family members. In the *Iliad*, Zeus was unable to immortalise his son Sarpedon, and he grieved his death. In the *Hymns*, Zeus (and other fathers) are able to change the status of their sons, and precipitate movement between earth and Olympos.[46] Any threat to the divine οἶκος on Olympos is excluded and confined to earth, and Zeus (or another father) has the power to raise whom he chooses from earth to heaven.

The paternal power to cross the mortal/immortal boundary is exemplified by Hermes,

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43 For Anchises' fears of impotence, see Anne Giacomelli, "Aphrodite and After," *Phoenix* 34, no. 1 (1980): 17.

44 "In each case, immortality results in the everlasting loss of what is most valuable in a mortal man's life," Bergren, 32.

45 Bergren, 35, notes that Zeus' plan would be unfulfilled if he were to be successfully petitioned for Anchises' immortalisation.

46 Or, in Persephone's case, beneath the earth in Hades.

who raises his son Pan from earth to Olympos.[47] Pan is born of a mixed union: his father Hermes is a god, his mother is the "fair-tressed daughter of Dryops" (19.34), who is apparently a nymph.[48] Pan is also the offspring of a legitimately married union (a rarity in the *Hymns*), for Hermes and Dryope have a 'blossoming wedding' (γάμον θαλερόν) and 'in the halls' (ἐν μεγάροισιν) Dryope bears her son.[49] This product of a mixed but 'civilised' union turns out to be an unearthly and strange child. The nurse and mother flee immediately after Pan's birth, because of his "wild and well-bearded visage" (19.39). It is Hermes, the father, who acts as nurse for the child, wraps the baby up and takes him to the "abodes of the immortals" (19.43). Having suffered rejection on earth, the boy Pan receives acceptance on Olympos, where he cheers the hearts of all the gods (19.47). The adult Pan himself is a god (19.6), not a mortal, presumably because his father is Hermes.[50]

Hera's children Hephaistos and Typhaon provide a stark contrast to Pan. Both Hera's sons are fatherless, since she produced them on her own, without Zeus.[51] Both children are grotesque or deformed, like Pan, but unlike Pan, their appearance causes their demotion from heaven to earth. Hera rejects Hephaistos because he is "weak-legged and lame" (3.317). She says "I took him with my own hands and cast him into the broad sea"

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47 Hermes, of course, is the god who excels at crossing boundaries. "He represents, in space and in the human world, movement and flow, mutation and transition, contact between foreign elements," Jean-Pierre Vernant, "Hestia-Hermes: The Religious Expression of Space and Movement in Ancient Greece," in *Myth and Thought Among the Greeks* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983), 129.

48 "The nymph in question is Dryope, daughter of Dryops, and originally perhaps an oak spirit," Athanassakis, 102 ad 34. See also Allen et al., 408 ad 34.

49 These are my own translations, since I felt that Athanassakis' renderings of "festive wedding" and "inside the house" slightly misleading. To me, the used of θαλερός in conjunction with γάμος indicates that the marriage was fruitful, not devoid of offspring. Cf. the use of θάλος to describe both Aineias and Demophoön, the guarantors of their families' male line.

50 Hermes himself is the product of a god-nymph marriage, but there appears to be no question about his divinity. The only thing that I can think of that would identify him as a mortal baby would be his reference to milk from his mother's breast (4.267). The consistent depiction is that immortals are nursed or anointed with ambrosia; only mortals take milk: see Sheila Murnaghan, "Maternity and Mortality in Homeric Poetry," *Classical Antiquity* 11, no. 2 (1992): 245.

51 As mentioned earlier, it is difficult to say whether Hephaistos was meant to be the child of Zeus in the *Hymns* or not, but I will treat him as Hera's child alone.

(3.318). Her failure in producing Hephaistos, presumably to counter Zeus' birth of Athena, results in his being rejected and cast down from Olympos.[52] Hera next conceives Typhaon parthenogenically. The Earth, Sky, and the Titans beneath the earth grant Hera's prayer to conceive, and consequently the child Typhaon has strong associations with the earth. Quite naturally, he is not conceived of as being on Olympos, since he is in fact born in opposition to Zeus and his reign. He is born on earth, nursed on earth by a she-dragon, and is a bane on earth: "he worked many evils on the glorious races of men" (3.355). He offers a contrast to Pan, who is born on earth but is benevolent, and is joyously incorporated into the Olympian order. The fatherless renegade Typhaon is confined to earth, where his nurse the dragon is executed by Zeus' son Apollo. Immortal fathers can raise their children to the company of the gods; immortal mothers can only hide their shameful and rebellious offspring on earth among mortals.

Dionysos is another son of mixed parentage. Zeus is his father, the mortal Semele his mother. But Dionysos' immortal status may be a result of his double birth, first from his mortal mother Semele, then from the immortal thigh of Zeus (1.5-6). Secreted on earth to avoid the jealousy of Hera (1.7), he still "grew up by his father's will inside a sweet-smelling cave as one of the immortals" (26.6). Zeus is the giver of mortality and immortality, and it is his paternity that determines Dionysos' status as one of the immortals. Persephone, although both of her parents are immortal, is 'demoted' by Zeus to the depths of Hades. As Clay notes, Persephone moves from heaven to earth to beneath the earth, and back again in a cycle determined by her father.[53] Demeter, of course, is the one who bargains for and obtains her daughter's return to heaven for two-thirds of the year, but it is only because Zeus chooses to grant her request. We have noted that Demeter's attempt to change Demophoön's status is unsuccessful. Paternity determines immortality and a place on Olympos. Maternity is associated with mortality: the mother is unable to grant immortality, and, as demonstrated by Hera, can only move children in one direction, from

[52] In *Iliad* 1.591-92, it is Zeus who throws Hephaistos out of heaven.

[53] See Clay's useful diagram, 266.

Olympos to earth.[54]

Perhaps an examination of the gods' marriages would yield the equity and stability that we have seen lacking in mixed marriages and mixed offspring. Are any of the gods' marriages truly made in heaven? Although the divine husband-wife relationship does not appear to be coloured by the ambiguity and suspicion found among mortals, actual marriages among the gods are rarely represented. Only four goddesses in the *Hymns* are granted the term wife: Hera, Persephone, Gaia, and Aphrodite (as a potential wife).[55] The controlling power of Zeus can be seen behind all of these marriages (except, of course, for that of Gaia who is two generations older than he). Hera is "by far the the most beautiful among the deathless goddesses and the most illustrious child to issue from crafty Kronos and mother Rhea. And Zeus, knower of indestructible plans, made her his modest and prudent wife" (5.41-44). Zeus' wisdom prompts him to make Hera his wife, and this decision ensures that he not only has a beautiful wife, but one that can offer him wise counsel (3.344-46). Zeus' judiciousness in using the counsel of wives and consorts in the *Hymns* is a marked contrast to the world of epic, where Zeus excludes his wife Hera from his plans (he instead assents to Thetis' desires, although with a bit of concern for Hera's reaction, *Il.* 1.518-21). Among mortals in epic, the wife's advice is presented, only to be rejected by the husband, as when Andromache advises Hektor, or Hekabe advises Priam. In the *Odyssey*, we have seen how Penelope is entirely excluded from Odysseus' plans for revenge. The *Hymns* demonstrate Zeus' ability to incorporate and make use of the other gods' talents, even if they happen to be his wives or consorts.[56]

Zeus' control over marriage is made most clear in the marriage of Persephone, where

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54 Murnaghan, 242-64.

55 Hera is called an ἄλοχος in 3.313, 5.40, 5.44, 12.3; Persephone is called ἄκοιτις in 2.79, παράκοιτις in 2.343; Gaia is the ἄλοχος of Ouranos in 30.17; Aphrodite presents herself as a potential ἄλοχος to Anchises in 5.127, 5.148, and in 6.17 all of the gods wish to have her as a κουριδίης ἄλοχος, a 'lawfully wedded wife.' The mortal woman who is Leukippos' wife (3.212) is called a δάμαρ: "the word is remarkable" in the *Hymns*, say Allen et. al., 232 ad 212.

56 Hera is not the only one to offer advice to Zeus. Zeus "confides his tight-knit schemes [πυκινοὺς ὁάρους ὁαρίζει] to Themis as she sits leaning upon him" (23.2-3). Allen et al., 416, note the uncertainty of Themis' status as wife or advisor in this hymn.

Zeus is shown to be the mastermind behind the whole plot.[57] This seems to indicate to some extent the workings of familial relations on Olympos: a brother's wishes take precedence over a sister/consort's and a daughter's.[58] Zeus is depicted as the one in control of making goddesses into lawfully-wedded wives. In Hestia's case, he grants perpetual virginity: "Instead of marriage Zeus the Father gave her a fair prize, and she took the choicest boon and sat in the middle of the house" (5.29-30). Like his favour to Hades, which perhaps is an attempt to avoid any brotherly conflict, his granting of virginity to Hestia could be viewed as a simple solution to avoiding conflict between Poseidon and Apollo, who were both courting Hestia (5.24).[59] This control over chastity and marital unions and consequently reproductive power is perhaps meant to be a reflection of Zeus' success as a ruler, as opposed to his forebears (depicted in the *Theogony*), whose lack of procreative control caused their demise as leaders.[60] Zeus governs everyone and everything on Olympos, and that includes his active participation in matchmaking.

Zeus, then, is the supreme father figure, towering authoritatively in the background of the *Hymns*. He avoids the threat of succession by incorporating his sons into his Olympian order. He avoids other potential dangers by disposing of his daughters: he gives Persephone in marriage to his brother (thus avoiding any conflict with Hades), and he subdues Aphrodite by uniting her with Anchises. Zeus controls Olympos by controlling the dynamics of his family. His roles as father, brother, and husband to a large extent convey the essence of his character. The same principle applies to the rest of the gods: their identities, motivation, and actions cannot be fully understood without an understanding of their familial relationships. Not surprisingly, we have found parallels

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57 "The connivance of Zeus at the rape is emphasized," Allen et al., 127 ad 3. "The active role of Zeus, not only as consenting to the Rape, but as in some sense being at the back of it, is emphasized throughout the *Hymn*," Richardson, 138 ad 3. See also Cora Angier Sowa, *Traditional Themes and the Homeric Hymns* (Chicago: Bolchazy-Carducci, 1984), 55.

58 "Father Zeus ... is a distant, unsympathetic figure, the one who in fact engineered the abduction of his own child in order to gratify his brother," John F. Makowski, "Persephone, Psyche, and the Mother-Maiden Archetype," *Classical Outlook* 62 (1985): 74. See also Clay, 214 n. 47.

59 Clay, 214 n. 47, suggests that Zeus gives Persephone to Hades for political reasons, placing them above his familial concerns.

60 Arthur, "Cultural Strategies," 71: "The right to rule is identified with control over procreation."

between immortal and mortal families, such as the favourable portrayal of sons, and the rather ambivalent treatment of daughters. When viewed throughout the *Hymns*, though, the family of the gods seems somewhat artificial: this is perhaps a modern reaction. The familial relationships of the gods seem at times unrealistic and trivial. Although Demeter's grief for Persephone approaches the pathos and poignancy found among the mortal families in epic, divine familial relationships lack the threat of permanent separation through death, and they seem somewhat savourless and lacking in zest, at least in the *Hymns*. The *Theogony* will provide us with a more piquant blend of familial love and hatred, concord and conflict.

Chapter Four: Homes Divine and Mortal in Hesiodic Poetry

The persona of Hesiod revealed in the *Theogony* and the *Works and Days* is fused with the representation of his family.[1] The familial life of Hesiod is consistent with the ideology of the poems, which depicts the family as a necessary evil among the gods in the *Theogony* and among humans in the *Works and Days*. Patricia Marquardt titled her article "Hesiod's Ambiguous View of Woman"—this chapter might well be titled "Hesiod's Ambiguous View of the Family."[2] Hesiod's depiction of his own family expresses tension between Hesiod and his father, and Hesiod and his brother; his mother is consigned to the shadows of poetic oblivion, for she is never mentioned; and Hesiod himself is portrayed as a "bachelor,"[3] unsoftened by wife or small children. He has a father, now dead, whose choice of occupation and choice of settlement Hesiod does not approve (*WD* 631-41), an alienated brother who is greedy and lazy (*WD* 37), and no mention of a wife and children of his own. Hesiod's negative attitude toward the family is conveyed in his instructions about family life in the *Works and Days*, as well as the *Theogony*.

In the other early Greek poetry we have examined, the father-son relationship is portrayed as valued, stable, and tender. Hesiod's depiction of the succession myth shows

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1 There is a diffuse and ongoing debate about the historicity of Hesiod's character, which I shall confine (with a sigh of regret) to this footnote. Many critics treat Hesiod as a real person, who reveals his personality in his poetry: West avers that "no one supposes Hesiod himself to be an assumed character," M. L. West, *Hesiod: Works and Days* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 34. For examples of those who agree with West, see J. P. Barron and P. E. Easterling, "Hesiod," in *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature*, edited by P. E. Easterling and E. J. Kenney, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 93; William Berg, "Pandora: Pathology of a Creation Myth," *Fabula* 17 (1976): 6; Charles Rowan Beye, *The "Iliad", the "Odyssey", and the Epic Tradition* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1966), 80; Mark Griffith, "Personality in Hesiod," *Classical Antiquity* 2, no. 1 (1983): 37; and Sarah Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves* (New York: Schocken Books, 1975), 1. However, Nagy convincingly argues that "the persona of Hesiod as reflected by his poetry is purely generic, not historical," Gregory Nagy, "Hesiod," in *Ancient Writers: Greece and Rome*, edited by T. James Luce, vol. 1 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1982), 50. For the purpose of this chapter, when I speak of "Hesiod," I am referring to the persona depicted in the poem, regardless of whether a particular man named Hesiod composed the poems in the 8th century B.C.

2 Patricia A. Marquardt, "Hesiod's Ambiguous View of Woman," *Classical Philology* 77 (1982): 283-91.

3 "Family? Wife? Children? *The Works and Days* rather suggests a bachelor," Richmond Lattimore, trans., *Hesiod* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1959; Ann Arbor Paperback, 1991), 5.

tempestuous father-son relationships among the gods, which are only alluded to in the other poems.[4] The father's reign is punctuated by a burst of filial violence (usually occurring soon after the birth of a son), which results in the father's ejection from his position as ruler, and the son's assumption of that position.[5] The gods' generational succession, as opposed to mortal succession, is not a smooth transition, but a movement steeped in conflict.[6] Although the conflict is usually initiated by the father, the defeat of the father is always carried out by the *youngest* son. This choice of the youngest son is intriguing: West believes that "achievement of this order by the youngest of a number of brothers is a favourite motif in folk-lore."[7] This rather dubious view of youth and the 'younger generation,' however, is consistent with Hesiod's view of youth presented throughout his poems, as we shall see.

The first instalment of the succession myth portrays a full-blown, raw emotional hatred between father and sons. Ouranos hates his children because they surpass him—he is "struck by their towering vigor, and their stature and beauty" (618-19).[8] Whereas the *Iliad* shows that it is normal, in fact desirable, for mortal sons to surpass their fathers, for an immortal father the son's superiority is a threat to power. Ouranos' sons are described as 'most terrible' of children (δεινότατος/δεινότατοι παίδων, 137, 155), and the Hundred-Handers are described by the poet as ὑπερήφανα τέκνα (overbearing children,

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4 The *Iliad* provides a few examples of mortal father-son discord: Phoinix and Amyntor; Achilleus' temporary rejection of paternal claims; also, there are hints of unrest among the gods—the Zeus-Ares relationship is strained, to say the least (*Il.* 5.888-901). The *Odyssey* is quite unambivalent in its glorification of the father-son line. The *Hymns* do allude to the dangers of succession, but do not provide a detailed depiction.

5 Sarah C. Humphreys, *The Family, Women and Death* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983), 38, mentions the necessity for "each ruling god to acquire his power through conflict with his father and other enemies."

6 Meyer Reinhold, "The Generation Gap in Antiquity," in *The Conflict of Generations in Ancient Greece and Rome*, edited by Stephen Bertman (Amsterdam: B. R. Grüner, 1976), 21, mentions the conflict between the generations that is inherent in the myth.

7 M. L. West, ed., *Hesiod: Theogony* (1966, reprint; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 204 ad 137. Kronos, Zeus, and the unborn child of Metis are all the youngest sons.

8 The translation used throughout this chapter is Richmond Lattimore's (see note 3 above).

149), yet even before the children are born and manifest these characteristics, Ouranos hates them (155-56). He derives pleasure (ἐπετέρπετο, 158-59) from pushing them back inside Gaia. Paradoxically, the children he hates are very much like himself—fathers and sons are all ἀτάσθαλος, reckless (164; 207-10). The parallel language indicates their shared nature as well as the reasons for their mutual hatred. Thus Ouranos hates his children because of who they are (155), while they hate him because of what he has done (137, 171-72). Emotional hatred is the sole reason given for the intense father-son enmity. This is not the case in the second and third stages of the succession myth. Kronos swallows his children in order to maintain his kingly power (460-62), and for the same reason Zeus swallows Metis (890-94). The story of succession moves from emotional to political motivation, culminating in the orderly and dignified reign of Zeus.[9]

Reproductive control is portrayed as all-important for maintaining the position of king of the gods: "the right to rule is identified with control over procreation."[10] And control of procreation means controlling maternity, for the mother's ability to bear children is depicted as a subversive means of disrupting the status quo. A mortal man must depend on a woman "to produce children to sustain him in old age," but a god does not have this need, and in fact the introduction of a new generation is a threat to his power.[11] Female fertility is portrayed as highly ambiguous and suspicious, a portrayal which neatly dovetails with the whole of the poem, for the *Theogony* culminates in Zeus' success at assimilating the results of female fertility.

Even in the earliest stage of the succession myth, we can see the anxiety surrounding the maternal ability to reproduce. On the one hand, Ouranos "desires love" with Gaia (177), but on the other hand he hates the results of procreation, his children, from the very

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9 Marilyn B. Arthur, "Cultural Strategies in Hesiod's *Theogony*: Law, Family, Society," *Arethusa* 15, nos. 1, 2 (1982): 63, speaks of the succession myth as depicting a "moral evolution which makes the reign of Zeus homologous with the reign of justice."

10 Arthur, 71.

11 Humphreys, 38.

beginning, attempting to prevent the birth of his children (156).[12] But the rampant nature of divine maternity is shown as unconquerable. Gaia's plan of revenge results in a proliferation of birth, and the castration and destruction of Ouranos' reproductive capabilities. His fertility is negated, while Gaia's fertility is powerfully asserted.

Gaia is the most fecund of all the goddesses. She is an exceptional mother in that she can produce children parthenogenically, and also have different gods as mates—an option apparently unavailable to other goddesses.[13] Although she is generally portrayed as a kindly figure, some of her children are a threat to the ruling powers: the Titans to Ouranos, and Typhoeus to Zeus. Gaia's production of Typhoeus has puzzled commentators, for she is shown as consistently helping Zeus to attain and to maintain his kingly position. "Throughout, Gaia plays the part of a wise and benevolent grandmother: with this one exception, that after the defeat of the Titans, she unites with Tartarus, as if in deliberate malice, to produce Zeus' worst enemy, Typhoeus."[14] The birth of Typhoeus demonstrates the instability inherent in female reproduction: birth is a cosmic wild card, an unknown factor that is uncontrollable and threatens the foundations of the universe. Although Gaia *prophetically* helps Zeus at every turn, her fertility is uninhibited and is not necessarily in accord with any regime. Clay refers to it as Gaia's "luxuriant, if sometimes irresponsible, fecundity."[15]

Metis provides the most explicit example of maternity as a threat to male power. She is Zeus' first wife. Although she "knew more than all the gods or mortal people" (887),

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12 Arthur, 67, says that desire and fecundity are "two aspects of female sexuality ... normally separated in Greek thought." I think that the two aspects are consistently combined in the *Theogony* and that the gods cannot seem to have one without the other.

13 Of course, there are other goddesses who reproduce parthenogenically, such as Night, Eris, and Hera. But Gaia produces Ouranos, Ourea, and Pontos parthenogenically; the Furies, Giants, and Ash-Tree Nymphs from the blood of Ouranos; and she mates with Ouranos and Pontos (her sons) as well as Tartaros.

14 West, *Theogony*, 24. He explains this by adducing an Near Eastern analogy, where the son must defeat "a huge and fearsome opponent" before taking the throne: "In Enûma Eliš it is the primeval mother herself, Tiâmat: Zeus' antagonist is not Gaia, but Gaia's son."

15 Jenny Strauss Clay, "The Generation of Monsters in Hesiod," *Classical Philology* 88, no. 2 (1993): 108.

she herself poses no threat: rather, it is her foreordained power to bear a son more powerful than Zeus (894-98).[16] But Zeus is the first ruler to control reproduction successfully, and he does it differently from his father Kronos: he swallows his wife, not his children. Zeus is the first one who attacks the 'problem' at its source: maternity is the threat, children are the result. Several factors contribute to his successful preemptive move: he follows the advice of Gaia and Ouranos (891); he appropriates Metis' own powers of cunning and cleverly deceives her (889-90); he does not try to prevent the birth of Athena, who has already been conceived, but rather he gives birth to her all by himself without a midwife, appropriating the female ability to give birth and using it for his own glory (923-27); and finally, by keeping his wife inside him permanently (899-900), he does not allow the son to be conceived. Further, his first action after gaining the kingship is to make Metis his legitimate wife, ἄλοχος (886). This is almost the first legitimate marriage in the poem, and the first in a long line of marriages ordained and approved of by Zeus.[17] He begins to organise the family structure by controlling maternity and marriage.

When Zeus becomes king, he instates "new sexual politics ... symbolized by Zeus's control of the means of production."[18] One method of control is through exogamous marriage, a stable bond between two gods who are not closely related, as opposed to the loose sexual association between close relatives that we saw earlier in the poem.[19] As the poem moves through the generations of the succession myth, we see that Gaia is quite independent of Ouranos, as far as the ability to reproduce is concerned; Rheia is 'tamed' or

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16 Brown mentions the duality of Metis: "she is a threat to Zeus and at the same time an indispensable aid to Zeus," Norman O. Brown, "The Birth of Athena," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 83 (1952): 133. My distinction is that indeed *Metis* is an indispensable aid, useful to Zeus—it is her *maternal potential* that is a threat. Thetis also has the maternal potential to produce a son more powerful than the father: in her case, the danger is avoided by marrying her to a mortal man.

17 Arthur, 68, notes that "Hekate is the first child of the *Theogony* born, as it were, in wedlock: her mother is called *akoitis*, a term otherwise used only of the wives of Zeus' reign."

18 Richard Hamilton, *The Architecture of Hesiodic Poetry*, American Journal of Philology Monograph no. 3 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 22.

19 The unions move from a mother-son relationship, to brother-sister relationships, to exogamy in the third generation—the notable exception is Zeus: this point is made by Clay, 108 n. 12.

'subdued' in love with Kronos (δμηθεῖσα, 453); Metis is made a formal wife, and completely consumed by Zeus. He fathers the next generation almost entirely himself, and he minimises the number of children being born that are not his own. Among Zeus' children, "marriage has replaced generation."[20] He "proliferates without conflict between generations, and with unparalleled fecundity."[21]

One secret of Zeus' success, seldom noticed by commentators, is that the number of daughters he has far exceeds the number of sons, a feat unparalleled by his predecessors.[22] He has twenty-six daughters, two sons by goddesses, one son by a nymph, and two sons by mortal women—a grand total of five sons.[23] The father-daughter relationship throughout the *Theogony* is shown as non-threatening and benign, a soothing contrast to the perilous father-son relationship and the ambiguous and foreboding husband-wife relationship. Zeus' daughters do not jeopardise his power: "the father-daughter unity of Zeus' rule presents a moment of dynamic stasis."[24] Zeus' daughters represent various aspects of his arrangement of life on earth: the Seasons, Lawfulness, Justice, Peacetime, the Fates, the Graces, Persephone, and the Muses.[25] The daughters are subordinate to Zeus, and they assist him in maintaining the harmony of the universe.[26] Most of them are

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20 Hamilton, 17.

21 Norman O. Brown, *Theogony: Hesiod*, the Library of Liberal Arts (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1953), 23. Zeus' arrangement of divine exogamous marriages, which produce no children, and his monopoly of reproductive freedom ensure his reign forever.

22 Ouranos had twelve sons and six daughters, Kronos had three of each.

23 Zeus begets sons who are benign: "Hermes the good" (939), "Dionysos, giver of good things" (941), and "powerful Herakles" (944), who rids the earth of nasty monsters.

24 Marylin B. Arthur, "The Dream of a World Without Women: Poetics and the Circles of Order in the *Theogony* Prooemium," *Arethusa* 16, nos. 1, 2 (1983): 99.

25 "The emphasis is here placed on these children of Zeus who illustrate their father's dispensation to mankind," Brown, *Theogony*, 10.

26 Arthur, 71, mentions the subordination of females as 'daughter-types,' but she is speaking of Aphrodite, Styx, and Hekate.

virgins, or their marriages produce no children, no sons to threaten Zeus' reign.[27] Athena is the example of the perfect virgin daughter who is subject to her father. She is not the powerful son that Metis would have born, but a daughter who is "the equal of her father in wise counsel and strength" (897)—equal, but not surpassing. She is the "final embodiment of the order of Zeus, but she herself will have no offspring," the "virgin who by refusing marriage never assumes a female role. The only woman who is recognized as a counselor and protector is nonwoman."[28] She is the impressive product of Zeus himself, a showpiece, a daughter who is the crowning glory of Zeus' new order.

Even earlier in the poem, before the Titanomachy, we see Zeus' influence on the family, and how he structures it in accord with himself, assembling and subordinating older female deities within his domain. The narrative grouping of Styx, Leto, and Hekate, which occurs just before the account of Zeus' birth, demonstrates the various ways that Zeus controls procreation and offspring (383-452). He 'adopts' the children of Styx and gives them a home, he makes Leto his consort (admittedly, this happens later in the poem, 918), and he gives Hekate the τιμή of rearing human children, a form of "sublimated fertility" that offers no threat to his power.[29] Styx brings her children to Zeus, "as her own father had advised her" (398)—an indication of daughterly obedience parallel to the obedience of Zeus' own daughters. Styx' children symbolise the "essential qualities of Zeus as ruler," for their names are Rivalry, Victory, Power and Force (384-85).[30] Leto's kindness and sweetness are emphasised in a very abbreviated 'hymn' (405-9), and she is

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27 Arthur, "Dream," 99; Hamilton, 17.

28 Linda S. Sussman, "The Birth of the Gods: Sexuality, Conflict and Cosmic Structure in Hesiod's *Theogony*," *Ramus* 7 (1978): 72; Eve Cantarella, *Pandora's Daughters: The Role and Status of Women in Greek and Roman Antiquity*, translated by Maureen B. Fant (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 28.

29 Arthur, "Cultural Strategies," 69, mentions that Hekate's role as κουροτρόφος is "a form of sublimated female fertility which, inasmuch as it is not directly and literally expressed, poses no threat to the divine patriarchy."

30 Friedrich Solmsen, *Hesiod and Aeschylus*, Cornell Studies in Classical Philology vol. 30 (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1949; New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1967), 32. The translations of the Greek names Ζῆλος, Νίκη, Κράτος, and Βίη are all Lattimore's.

the consort who will bear Apollo and Artemis, the most delightful children of all the Ouranians (920). Hekate's status as the "single child of her mother" (448) is emphasised: as an only daughter, she will offer no opposition to Zeus, and as an unmarried goddess, she will produce no opposition. Thus Zeus honours her in many ways, and makes her protector of children (450-52). These three pro-Zeus goddesses are all related, either by birth or by marriage, and their genealogical description is balanced by the genealogy of the sons of Iapetos, which falls on the other side of the story of Zeus' birth. Thus the birth of Zeus is encompassed on one side by the genealogy of compliant wives and children, on the other by the genealogy of rebellious (or foolish) sons.

Hesiod depicts Zeus as exerting control over mortal procreation, as well. Before Zeus' reign, there were no women among mortals.[31] Zeus devises women as a means of revenge, but the description of the woman's creation is a 'birth' analogous to the birth of Athena in *Homeric Hymn* 28. Athena's birth instils awe in the immortal onlookers (σέβας δ' ἔχε πάντας ὁρῶντας ἀθανάτους, 28.6-7); the woman's appearance creates wonder among immortals and mortal men (θαῦμα δ' ἔχ' ἀθανάτους τε θεοὺς θνητούς τ' ἀνθρώπους, 588-89). The creation of woman thus has a dual parallel with the *Hymns*: Zeus uses 'birth' as a means of inspiring awe, and as a weapon of revenge.[32] It is also a demonstration of his governance of procreation among mortals as well as immortals, for "the introduction of the female implies sex and family—both previously unknown to man."[33] Zeus' woman ensures that mankind does not live a life of unmixed blessing, but instead experiences a tension and anxiety within the context of the family similar to the gods' familial difficulties. Generation is a problem among the gods, as the *Theogony* amply demonstrates, and Zeus does not allow mortals to escape from the ills of family life. Why should the gods suffer alone?

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31 This invariably leads to the question: how did men reproduce before then? Perhaps the Muses did not see fit to divulge this secret to Hesiod.

32 See Pietro Pucci, *Hesiod and the Language of Poetry* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), 102, for the idea of Pandora as a weapon.

33 Pucci, 106.

After describing the creation of woman, Hesiod seizes the opportunity to elaborate on the present-day consequences of Zeus' creation. Hesiod's extended simile of the bees and drones shows that a man must work hard, while the woman remains inside the οἶκος and consumes the fruits of the husband's hard labour. He then elaborates on "another evil" that comes from Zeus—even if you flee marriage and do not desire it (ὅς κε γάμον φεύγων ... μὴ γῆμαι ἐθέλῃ, 603-4), life still has difficulties. Old age comes, and there is no son to look after you, and no one but distant relatives to inherit your property (604-7). And even if you get a good wife, a like-minded one, bad events still happen; and if you have a disagreeable son, well, there is no cure for such an ill (608-12).[34] Hesiod's brief description in the *Theogony* of woman's creation and the poverty and hard work entailed by maintaining an οἶκος is in accord with his portrayal of the family in the *Works and Days*. The family is an oxymoron, like woman: a καλὸν κακόν (585) that one cannot live with, and cannot live without.[35]

The *Works and Days* contains the myth of woman's creation as well, and it is in this depiction that she receives her multivalent name, Pandora. The story has a few additions not found in the *Theogony*, besides her name: the foolish brother Epimetheus is given a greater role; Hermes, absent in the other account, plays a significant part in giving Pandora "lies, and wheedling words of falsehood, and a treacherous nature" (77), and he plays the role of father in giving the bride to Epimetheus;[36] and Pandora is given a πίθος which she opens and scatters troubles for mankind (95).[37] All of these additions have significance in light of the 'teaching' that Hesiod is attempting to provide in this didactic poem. Hesiod wants to give advice to his brother Perses: the foolish Epimetheus who forgets to heed his

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34 I understand the ἀταρτηροῖο γενέθλης as a son, not as a "'sort' of wife" as West believes, *Theogony*, 335 ad 610. See Lattimore's translation, p.159. I would have translated it as "baneful bairn," but I have shown admirable restraint.

35 West, *Theogony*, 329 ad 585, prompted my comment about the oxymoron.

36 Pucci, 98-9.

37 Hamilton, 55, notes only two additions to the story: Epimetheus and the πίθος.

wise brother's advice provides an apt parallel.[38] The thievish, greedy nature of a wife is a motif running throughout the poem, and it is appropriate that Hermes, the god of thieves, should act in the role of her father, bringing her to her new and unsuspecting husband. The πίθος is an appropriate symbol of the trouble women have brought upon the world; of the 'squandering' of household goods that must be poured into the upkeep of a wife,[39] and of the wife's fertility (we remember that fertility has been negatively portrayed in the *Theogony*).[40] The creation of woman depicts the ambiguous nature of the family as Hesiod sees it: wives are treacherous (a theme we have already seen running through all early Greek poetry), but while women are the cause of war in the *Iliad*, they are the cause of work in the *Works and Days*. In war or in peace, wives cause trouble for husbands.

An addition to this ambiguous view of the wife is the foolishness of a brother, a theme apparently unique to Hesiod. The *Iliad* shows brothers as staunch defenders of each other (*Iliad* 14.479-85); the *Hymns* show a strained relationship between the half-brothers Hermes and Apollo, restored by their father (*Hymn to Hermes* 506-7); Perses and Hesiod's tense relationship is unable to be restored by their father, whose death left their inheritance as a contention between them (33-39). Giving advice to a foolish brother is an unusual departure in wisdom literature, where advice is traditionally passed from father to son.[41] Yet the setting of Hesiod's dispute with Perses may also influence his (usually negative) portrayal of sons. An οἶκος should possess only one son, in Hesiod's opinion (376). We have seen a predilection for the portrayal of 'only sons' in the Homeric poems, where the single son is the only hope of continuing the male line, and anxiety is expressed over his survival. Hesiod advises one son for economic reasons—you can pile up the

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38 For the parallels between Perses and Epimetheus, see Hamilton, 55; Katharine Olstein, "Pandora, *Dike*, and the History of Work in Hesiod's *Works and Days*," *Helios* 5, no. 1 (1977): 38; P. Walcot, *Hesiod and the Near East* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1966), 62.

39 This idea comes from John D. McLaughlin, "Who is Hesiod's Pandora?" *Maia* 33 (1981): 17-18.

40 For Pandora's jar as a symbol of fertility, see Giulia Sissa, *Greek Virginity*, translated by Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990), 155-56; Page duBois, *Sowing the Body: Psychoanalysis and Ancient Representations of Women* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

41 Hesiod is "deviating from the usual pattern that a father instructs a son, or a sage a king," M. L. West, *Works and Days*, 34; Griffith, 62.

wealth if you only have one son to support (377). It would also mean no disputes over the father's inheritance, like the dispute of Hesiod and Perses. On the other hand, he muses, you can get more work out of many sons (380). Hesiod presents us with no grand ideas about immortality gained through a son, or the glory and pride of parents in a heroic son—no, Hesiod portrays a son as another mouth to feed, another body to put to work.[42] Children cause as much work as women, as Hesiod's depiction of the silver generation shows: the children are "fatuous and unproductive and [he] locates them with the women ... together in the *oikos*."[43] The pitter-patter of little feet echoes nowhere in Hesiod's poem, unless it is the small boy who helps the farmer cover over the seeds (471).[44] In fact, he specifically advises obtaining a serving maid with no children, "as one with young to look after's a nuisance" (603). Even a young man (κουρότερος) is not much use for work, because he "keeps looking for excitement with other young people" (446-47). Hesiod's bias against children and youth seems to be as strong as his bias against women.

Hesiod's jaundiced view of the family—wife, brother, children—is revised somewhat by the end of the poem.[45] At the beginning, he advises the purchase of a woman for work, not to marry—she is unflatteringly 'yoked' to an oxen in the same sentence (406). In the latter part, although he still takes the opportunity to mention the miseries of having a bad wife who eats you out of house and home, and burns you dry (703-5), he describes precisely what sort of woman to look for as a wife, and what days are good for leading her home (695-705; 695, 800). He even indirectly acknowledges that a wife can actually work and benefit the οἶκος, when he says that on the twelfth day of the month "a wife could set up her loom and get her work going" (779). He describes days

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42 The closest Hesiod gets to describing the joys of having a son is in the *Theogony*'s 'Hymn to Hekate," where a man wins a prize in an athletic contest, and "lightly and gladly carries it home, and brings glory to his parents" (437-38).

43 Thomas M. Falkner, "Slouching towards Boeotia: Age and Age-Grading in the Hesiodic Myth of the Five Races," *Classical Antiquity* 8, no. 1 (1989): 53.

44 West, *Works and Days*, 278 ad 469, says that "the transmitted τυτθός is absurd. It would make the labourer a young child."

45 Hamilton, 75, points out that "brother/relative and wife/woman have been recovered from the extremely negative valuation of the first part of the poem."

that are good for begetting and bearing children (783, 788, 794), and although there are more good days for having boys than for having girls, it still seems that having children is now a useful and beneficial thing. And a brother, who was regarded somewhat suspiciously at the beginning of the poem (371), now ranks higher than a friend (707). Thus by the end of the poem the family is painted in slightly less sombre hues than before. Perses is no longer harangued: "Toward the latter half of the poem, the figure of Perses recedes in favor of a generalized second person singular: it is as if Perses were now tacitly ready to accept the teachings of his righteous brother."[46] The poem ends with Hesiod apparently at peace with his own family, and with the concept of family in general. Yet his ambiguous view of the family, so dominant throughout the poems, leaves a bitter aftertaste and the question, can there be any good to be gained from the family?

[46] Nagy, 59.

Conclusion

Hesiod's portrayal of the family may, for the most part, be grim, but the other early Greek poetry that we have examined provides a more balanced treatment, illustrating the positive and negative aspects of family life. In addition to the emotional tenor provided by the familial depictions in the poems, the family is a construct which is integral to the identities of the characters. It is a means of relating the interconnections of mortals and immortals, a metaphor for the conceptualisation of the cosmos. Nash believes that "generation ... is a metaphor for existence"; I would add that it is not the γένος alone, but the γένος and οἶκος combined as the family which indeed offers a metaphor for understanding and structuring the interpersonal relationships within the poems.[1] The family provides not only a means of structuring relationships but also a structural framework for early Greek hexameter poetry. We have observed that the *Iliad* is framed at beginning and end by a recalcitrant hero who finally accepts ransom from a father for his child, and that the motif of conflict over a wife/concubine is a recurring one. Likewise, the *Odyssey* is framed by beginning with Odysseus' son and ending with his father, or rather ending with the three generations of the male line united in heroism. The motif of the 'treacherous wife' is found throughout the poem. The epics use the positive relationship between fathers and sons as a framing device, whereas the ambiguous relationship of husband and wife is a thread running throughout the poems. The vertical and horizontal familial relationships provide a framework which is both structural and literary.

Familial detail is cleverly woven throughout the *Iliad*, a poem concerned with war and male heroism. The family provides a backdrop, a curtain behind the dramatic action of combat, sweat, wrath, and valour. The poet effectively contrasts the public, male world of war with the private world of the family, and demonstrates that the public sphere, concerned with the pursuit of κλέος for the male line, is ultimately valued above the safety of the seemingly ephemeral οἶκος. Yet the οἶκος, ephemeral as it is, often manages to outlast the warrior, at least long enough to lament the hero whose death also heralds the

1 Laura L. Nash, "Concepts of Existence: Greek Origins of Generational Thought," *Daedalus* 107 (1978): 2.

death of the family. The *Iliad* also portrays the tragedy of women, those highly portable pieces of property who are depicted as the cause of most tension, conflict, and full-scale war. They are incapable of shaping their own destinies, passive onlookers who watch the conflict that exists because they exist. Women are not the only onlookers, however—the gods are the ultimate spectators of the mortal drama being played out below. The family of the gods operates as a foil to the tragedy of mortality. Mortal families are ripped apart by death, while the immortals bicker and scheme in an eternal οἶκος that is untouched by the pain of mortality. They are untouched, that is, except when they have mixed with mortals and produced mortal offspring. Then divine helplessness in the face of human mortality provides a poignancy that is parallel to the mortal grief below. The tragedy of the *Iliad* is expressed in a familial matrix.

The family provides a background in the *Iliad*, a foreground in the *Odyssey*. Homecoming is Odysseus' goal. The poem begins with Odysseus' family as separate strands: Telemachos leaves the οἶκος on a quest for his father, Penelope remains besieged in the οἶκος, Antikleia is dead in Hades, and Laertes has moved away from the city onto a farm. Odysseus' absence has created a gap in both the horizontal and vertical axis. The return of the hero heralds the reintegration of his household ... but not without a fight. The ending of the *Odyssey* portrays the reunification of the three generations of Odysseus' male line: a celebration of γένος which is a fitting conclusion to the epic tale of a hero's struggle homewards. The reunion of husband and wife is negotiated with more care, and the tentative mental sparring of Odysseus and Penelope before and after the recognition scene demonstrates the fragility of the husband-wife relationship, and the difficulties in achieving a satisfactory reunification after twenty years. Yet Odysseus *does* achieve successful reunification, a contrast to his heroic companions, Menelaos, Agamemnon, and Achilles. Odysseus' wife has *always* been faithful, his son becomes a hero before his very eyes, his father is still alive and is rejuvenated so that, like old Nestor in the *Iliad*, he can take part in the heroic action and win himself some κλέος once again. The success of Odysseus is the success of his family.

The *Homeric Hymns* provide us with insight into the divine οἶκος that is only hinted

at in the epic poems. The portrayal of the family in the *Hymns* is a means of praising Zeus' success as head of the divine οἶκος. Immortal sons are potential rivals for the kingly position, yet Zeus manages to make his sons a useful part of the kingdom, without major conflict. Marriage, too, is under the dominion of Zeus. He judiciously regulates his own marriages and those of others, and thus he, as the supreme father figure, dominates most of the familial portrayal in the *Hymns*. He is also the one responsible for raising sons from mortality to immortality (something he appeared unable to do in the tragic portrayal of mortality in the *Iliad*). Father Zeus controls all familial movement between heaven and earth, earth and below the earth.

The *Theogony* shows a very similar picture of Zeus' dominion among the gods: success in the οἶκος means success as a ruler. The *Theogony* provides us with the 'history' of the pre-Zeus eras, and shows the other gods' inability to regulate procreation and to maintain political control. The irresponsible fecundity of Gaia contrasts with Zeus' careful control of procreation. Immortal fathers and sons are enemies at the beginning of the poem, harmonious co-workers in the end. The *Works and Days* moves us to the world of mortals. In this poem, Hesiod reveals his wary attitude towards women and youth, and in fact the family in general. He shows that the family can be useful in running a farm, but they can also be a hindrance: he does not hesitate to point out the pitfalls of family life.

I have generally worked *within* the poems when describing the portrayal of the family. I have not tried to uncover the underlying strata of early Greek thought, out of which the poems grew. Did the Greeks really value male lineage so highly? Was the relationship of husband and wife mired in suspicion and treason? Questions like these would lead to generalisation and speculation about a people that are distanced from us by culture, space, and time. And yet, despite the yawning void between them and us, then and now, we can still read early Greek poetry with comprehension and sympathy. The gap is not unbridgeable. I hope that this thesis has demonstrated that the family, as a concept, provides a sturdy bridge across the chasm. The family is a universal concept (with many variations) which provides a means of understanding who we are and where we are going. If literature is like a mirror in which we see ourselves (and I believe that it is), then early Greek literature shows the family as crucial to a sense of personal identity. Perhaps, in the

twentieth-century world of 'real life' that we inhabit, where genealogy is an antiquated word, where the definition of 'family' is constantly shifting and being redefined, we might do well to pause, and think about what the Greeks portrayed in their poetic fiction: we are who we are, in part, because of who we came from; those who will be will be who they are because of us. Future and past, literature and life, can at least be partially grasped and grappled with by reflecting upon the family.

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