

THE *NÉKYIA*'S CATALOGUE OF HEROINES: Narrative Unbound

The so called 'Catalogue of Heroines' of *Odyssey* XI has had a long history of scholarly controversy. U. von Wilamowitz and F. Focke saw it as a later addition, whereas C. M. Bowra characterised it as "out of place" in the context of the *Nékyia*¹. W. B. Stanford detected a "Boeotian influence" due to the profound similarities with the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* with which he saw possible connections². D. L. Page went even further, arguing that the Catalogue was indeed a "direct imitation" of the *Catalogue of Women* and asserting that not only was it a later addition but also one "loosely attached and carelessly adapted"³. G. S. Kirk, finally, argued more generally that the Catalogue was a later insertion from Boeotian catalogue poetry⁴.

More recent scholarship, however, has reclaimed the Catalogue as an integral part of *Odyssey* XI, recognizing its important function within the wider narrative of Odysseus' homecoming⁵. Perhaps the most important contribution here is that of Lillian Doherty who has pointed out that the passage is crucial to Odysseus' plan of pleasing Arete, the character that both Nausicaa and the disguised Athena (*Od.*, VI, 303-315; VII, 74-76) singled out as vital to his homecoming. Following G. P. Rose's insightful discussion of the dangers that Scheria holds in store for Odysseus⁶, Lillian Doherty underlines the importance of a good reception of the hero on the part of Arete; the catalogue, she argues, can be seen as Odysseus' tactful attempt to satisfy and simultaneously flatter the queen with an account of famous wo-

1. U. VON WILAMOWITZ-MOELLENDORFF (1884), p. 147-151; F. FOCKE (1943), p. 217-222; C. M. BOWRA (1962), p. 45-46.

2. W. B. STANFORD (1947), p. 389-390.

3. D. L. PAGE (1955), p. 35-39.

4. G. S. KIRK (1962), p. 237.

5. See for instance A. HEUBECK, A. HOEKSTRA (1990, p. 90-91), who follow the reading of K. REINHARDT (1996, p. 117) and consider the catalogue to be an "essential part of [...] the book." See also M. D. NORTHROP (1980), who replies convincingly to D. L. Page's arguments.

6. G. P. ROSE (1969) argues that the text offers many warning signs regarding the potential danger the Phaeacians pose for Odysseus.

men of the past⁷. Indeed, Lillian Doherty's line of argument seems plausible and has been generally adopted by scholars since⁸.

In this contribution I will argue that besides the organic narrative function that Lillian Doherty recognises, the 'Catalogue of Heroines' has a vital role in enabling poetic experimentation and metapoetic reflection. This is acknowledged within the text itself, in the famous 'Intermezzo' that follows immediately after the 'Catalogue of Heroines' and that culminates in Alcinous' celebrated reflections on storytelling, catalogues (καταλέγω) and the art of the epic bard (*Od.*, XI, 362-368). Alcinous' remarks need to be read in context and once we take their context into account we realise that they are triggered, very precisely, by the 'Catalogue of Heroines' as a text that self-consciously experiments with the conventions and limitations of epic storytelling.

We can see that the poetic stakes are high in the 'Catalogue of Heroines' not just from the fact that it *is* a carefully constructed catalogue (in itself a marker of poetic ambition in Homer), and from the obvious intertextual resonances with Hesiodic epic, but also from the fact that it highlights the paradox of Odysseus' being able to *see* in the darkness of Hades. In the 'Catalogue of Heroines' Odysseus' ability to see the women, literally transforms the narrative into a spectacle with the verb ἰδεῖν (or εἰσιδεῖν) used a total of ten times by the hero to introduce each heroine⁹.

The insistence of the text on the use of ἰδεῖν has been noticed by scholars, but the interpretations offered have been mainly of a stylistic nature. I. C. Rutherford for instance in one of the most recent discussions of the

7. Lillian DOHERTY (1991) and (1995, p. 94ff.).

8. See for instance Corinne PACHE (1999), who argues on the same lines as Lillian Doherty; and Stephanie LARSON (2000), who takes Lillian Doherty's argument a step further by trying to create a link between the internal audience of the catalogue and a Peisistratid audience of the epic's recital in Athens. Other interpretations include J. HOULIHAN's (1994-1995), who emphasises Melampus' presence in the catalogue and M. SKEMPIS and I. ZIOGAS' (2009, p. 235ff.), who see Arete as a figure from *ehoie* poetry and discuss the way Odysseus exploits that link. Irene DE JONG (2001, p. 282) accepts that the catalogue has a poetic function, but sees its contents as having "no direct relevance to the plot of the *Odyssey*". For more recent discussion see B. SAMMONS (2010, p. 74-102), who observes the differences with Hesiod's *Catalogue of Women* as well as other Homeric catalogues and argues for a unique function of the 'Catalogue of Heroines' in which the poet allows his narrative strategies to be reflected in the mortal narrative of Odysseus, highlighting at the same time its 'deficiencies' compared to the poet's Muse inspired view of the past.

9. Tyro (XI, 235), Antiope (XI, 260), Alcmene (XI, 266), Epicaste (XI, 271), Chloris (XI, 281), Leda (XI, 298), Iphimedeia (XI, 306), Phaedra, Procris and Ariadne (XI, 321), Maira, Clymene, Eriphyle (XI, 326), of all the heroines collectively (XI, 329).

catalogue, notes the formulaic repetition of the introductory line and argues that “formulas amounting to ‘And I saw:’” replace the “*ehoie*-formula” that is found in the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*. The result of such a replacement, I. C. Rutherford concludes, is that the ‘Catalogue of Heroines’ is assimilated to a specific genre of female catalogue poetry¹⁰. I. C. Rutherford’s argument is plausible on its own terms, but I would argue that generic assimilation alone does not adequately explain what is at issue here.

To begin with, the use of the verb ἰδεῖν is not, limited only to the ‘Catalogue of Heroines’ but appears throughout the *Nékyia* when Odysseus introduces a shade¹¹. It is sensible, then, to argue that the insistent use of the verb in the Catalogue serves to create a deliberate visual climax. In this connection we may note that Homer has a metrical alternative to εἶδον in ἤλθε(v) (used at *Od.*, XI, 51, 84, 90, 387 and 467), which could have served to introduce some at least of the female shades. Moreover, forms of ἰδεῖν in the ‘Catalogue of Heroines’ follow after the woman’s name and are placed either at the end of the first hemistich or immediately after¹². In contrast to this the *ehoie* formula is always found at the beginning of the line, which makes the stylistic parallel between the two poems less striking than I. C. Rutherford suggests¹³.

The frequent use of ἰδεῖν in the ‘Catalogue of Heroines’, then, should not be considered just as a matter of formulaic convention or generic signposting. On the contrary, I would argue that its principal function is to highlight Odysseus’ ability to see in Hades and in so doing to raise the poetic stakes: by descending to Hades and *seeing* the shades of the women the hero, and Homer for that matter, offers us a view of the epic tradition that is both legitimate on the genre’s own terms and decidedly novel. Its legitimacy rests on the nexus between poetic form, traditional content and directness of access (configured in visual terms), a distinct characteristic of Muse narrative. The Underworld setting, by contrast, allows for new narrative perspectives, textures and even contents to emerge. This too is configured in visual terms (Odysseus’ ‘seeing’ has to be of a special kind in the context of his journey to Hades ‘the invisible one’ [Ἄ - ἰδης]) but above all it hinges on the

10. I. C. RUTHERFORD (2000), p. 93-94.

11. In Odysseus’ previous meetings the verb is used once for Elpenor (*Od.*, XI, 55) and three times for Antikleia (*Od.*, XI, 87, 141, 143). After the Catalogue it recurs, for instance, at *Od.*, XI, 567, where it is used collectively of all the souls the hero wishes to see. Later on, it refers to Minos (*Od.*, XI, 568) and the great sinners of the past (*Od.*, XI, 576, 582, 593).

12. For instance, Τυρὸ ἴδον (235), Ἀλκμήνην ἴδον (266), μητέρα τ’ Οἰδιπόδαο ἴδον (271).

13. For the *ehoie* formula see *Catalogue of Women* fr. 43a.2, 58.7, 59.2, 181.1, 195.1, 215.1 and 253.1 M.-W.

question of who gets to tell the story. This, I argue, is another defining feature of the ‘Catalogue of Heroines’, although it is less clearly marked than the emphasis on seeing and has therefore been missed in the past: even though Odysseus recites the stories of the women he meets, it is actually the women themselves who tell them, in ways that reflect their own hopes and fears. In some cases this is made explicit: the first entry in the Catalogue, that of Tyro, contains several speech verbs that make the protagonist the narrator of her own story (*Od.*, XI, 236: φάτο, 237: φῆ). Tyro, I argue, sets the tone for the entries that follow: although only two of them contain actual speech verbs (*Od.*, XI, 261: εὔχεται; 306: φάσκει) they all, I argue, are to be understood as the women’s own narratives – or at the very least as focalised through their eyes¹⁴. This is all the more significant since, as I. C. Rutherford notes, secondary focalisation is rare in the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*, with which these stories often overlap¹⁵. Hesiodic heroines in particular never have their words reported in any way: their stories are told by the Muse-inspired third person narrator, whose perspective, it has been shown, broadly resembles that of a (voyeuristic) male audience¹⁶. Drawing on the poetic resources of Hades, the *Nékyia* thus develops a personally inflected view of the epic past that, I argue, suspends important epic values and conventions of storytelling in favour of an approach that comes close in texture and tone to that of lyric poetry.

The meeting with Tyro

The meeting with Tyro is both the longest and, I would argue, the most important in the ‘Catalogue of Heroines’ in that it sets the tone for the other entries in the catalogue. I therefore propose to study it in some detail. As Antikleia is left to fade away from the foreground the heroines rush towards the blood making Odysseus use his sword to control the shades and only al-

14. This appears to be consistent with Odysseus’ programmatic announcement before the beginning of the catalogue where he informed us that each of the women declared her birth to him (*Od.*, XI, 233-234: ἡδὲ ἐκάστη / ὄν γόνον ἐξαγόρευεν).

15. I. C. RUTHERFORD (2000), p. 87, 94. See also Lillian DOHERTY (1995, p. 112), who notes the fact that in the *Nékyia* women are given a voice but argues that this applies only to women who are friendly to men; women who oppose men are silenced.

16. R. OSBORNE (2005), p. 11-14.

low those to the pit to whom he wishes to speak (XI, 231)¹⁷. The first heroine to approach is Tyro, daughter of King Salmoneus:

- 235 Ἐνθ' ἦ τοι πρώτην Τυρῶ ἴδον εὐπατέρειαν,
 ἦ φάτο Σαλμωνῆος ἀμύμονος ἔκγονος εἶναι,
 φῆ δὲ Κρηθῆος γυνὴ ἔμμεναι Αἰολίδαο·
 ἦ ποταμοῦ ἠράσσατ' Ἐνιπῆος θείοιο,
 ὃς πολὺ κάλλιστος ποταμῶν ἐπὶ γαῖαν ἴησι,
 240 καὶ ῥ' ἐπ' Ἐνιπῆος πολέσκετο καλὰ ῥέεθρα.
 Τῷ δ' ἄρα εἰσάμενος γαιήοχος ἔννοσίγαιος
 ἐν προχοῆς ποταμοῦ παρελέξατο διήεντος·
 πορφύρεον δ' ἄρα κῦμα περιστάθη, οὐρεὶ ἴσον,
 κυρτωθέν, κρύψεν δὲ θεὸν θνητὴν τε γυναῖκα.
 245 Λύσε δὲ παρθενὴν ζώνην, κατὰ δ' ὕπνον ἔχευεν. (*Od.*, XI, 235-245.)

Then the first I saw was Tyro, of noble father,
 who said that she was the daughter of flawless Salmoneus,
 and also said she was the wife of Cretheus, son of Aeolus.
 She desired the divine river Enipeus,
 who was the most beautiful of rivers on earth
 and so she used to wander along its fair streams.
 Taking his form the holder and shaker of earth,
 lay with her at the mouth of the eddying river.
 A dark wave, high as a mountain stood about them,
 and with a curve covered the god and the mortal woman.
 And he loosened her maiden girdle, and poured sleep over her.

The first thing to note about this passage is that Odysseus allows Tyro to introduce herself in the first two lines: we read that Tyro *said* (XI, 236 φάτο) she is the daughter of Salmoneus and (XI, 237 φῆ) the wife of Kretheus¹⁸. The repetition of the verb φημί suggests that what follows is

17. It appears that there is a pattern in the way these meetings are said to conclude: when Odysseus is emotionally engaged, as happens with Elpenor, Antikleia and Agamemnon, the shades are left to fade away silently while the next shade or group of shades is announced. Where there is little or no emotional engagement we are told specifically of the shade's departure before the beginning of the next meeting (Teiresias, Achilles, Ajax, Heracles). The reason for this might be to avoid interrupting an emotional meeting just to introduce the next one: by letting the first shade fade away, Odysseus/the poet eases us into the next meeting. A. HEUBECK and A. HOEKSTRA (1990, p. 90), however, see the transition between scenes as a "little forced but keeping with normal epic technique".

18. Lillian DOHERTY (1993), p. 5-6; I. C. RUTHERFORD (2000), p. 94. There may be irony in the choice of the word εὐπατέρειαν since Salmoneus was one of the few mortals that dared defy Zeus and was punished for it: he can hardly be thought of as a 'good father'. On the other hand, the only other woman called εὐπατέρεια in Homer is Helen (*Il.*, VI, 292; *Od.*, XXII, 227) whose father is Zeus and that could point towards an elaborate pun based on Salmoneus' attempt to emulate Zeus, see Barbara GRAZIOSI, J. HAUBOLD (2010), p. 161. For Salmoneus' arrogance towards Zeus and his downfall see Hesiod's *Catalogue of Women*, fr. 30, 1-25 M.-W. and Apollodoros, *Bibl.*, I, 89.

indeed Tyro's own story. That expectation is borne out in the text: Lillian Doherty observes that in the narrative that follows the story of Tyro's love for the river Enipeus is told on her terms, with the verbs ἠράσσατ' - πωλέσκετο expressing actions that are in accordance with the heroine's will: it was Tyro that fell in love with Enipeus, and it was her own decision to wander along its shores¹⁹. This observation acquires further significance when we take into account Lillian Doherty's further point that in Tyro's closely parallel entry in the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* the heroine plays no active role. In this respect a comparison of the Odyssean passage regarding Tyro with that of the Hesiodic Catalogue proves fruitful as it allows us to observe how the tradition of the heroine is perceived and related differently in each catalogue.

Hesiod's version of the Tyro story is decidedly not presented coming from the heroine herself, nor does it reflect her hopes and aspirations. Here it is Poseidon who is said to desire and whose desire directs the action:

..... τῆ]ς γ' ἠράεσκε Ποσειδάων ἐνοσίχθων
] φιλότῃτι θεὸς βροτῶι, οὔνεκ' ἄρ' εἶδος
 πασῶν προὔχεσκε γυναι]κῶν θηλυτεράων. (*Cat.* fr. 30. 32-4 M.-W.)

..... Poseidon the shaker of earth desired her
 and slept with her, a god with a mortal, because
 she was the most beautiful of all women.

Lillian Doherty is certainly right when she argues that in *Odyssey* XI, in contrast with the *Catalogue of Women*, Tyro is portrayed, if not as the master, then at least as the instigator of her own fate; and that even her deceit by Poseidon is carried out in a way that fulfils her fantasy: Poseidon after all does not just rape her, as he could have done, but instead assumes the form of Enipeus (*Od.*, XI, 241), the object of her desire. Moreover, his actions can be considered gentle: he hides himself and Tyro behind a towering wave, puts her to sleep and makes love to her (*Od.*, XI, 243-245). The heroine only finds out who her lover was after the act, when in the only direct speech reported in the 'Catalogue of Heroines' Poseidon introduces himself and warns Tyro not to reveal his identity to anyone:

Αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ ῥ' ἐτέλεσσε θεὸς φιλοτήσια ἔργα,
 ἔν τ' ἄρα οἱ φῶ χειρὶ, ἔπος τ' ἔφατ' ἔκ τ' ὀνόμαζε·
 χαῖρε, γύναι, φιλότῃτι περιπλομένου δ' ἐνιαυτοῦ
 τέξεις ἀγλαὰ τέκνα, ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἀποφώλιοι εὖναι
 250 ἀθανάτων· σὺ δὲ τοὺς κομέειν ἀτιταλλέμεναί τε.
 Νῦν δ' ἔρχεο πρὸς δῶμα, καὶ ἴσχεο μῆδ' ὀνομήνης·
 αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ τοί εἰμι Ποσειδάων ἐνοσίχθων.
 Ὡς εἰπὼν ὑπὸ πόντον ἐδύσετο κυμαίνοντα. (*Od.*, XI, 246-253.)

19. Lillian DOHERTY (1993), p. 6f.

After the god had finished his work of love,
 he held her hand, and spoke words and addressed her:
 'Rejoice, woman, in our union, and as the year makes its turn
 you will give birth to glorious children, for the embraces of the immortals
 are not in vain. And you shall take care of them and rear them.
 Go now to your house, and keep silent and do not name me;
 I am Poseidon, the shaker of the earth.'
 So he spoke and dived into the swelling sea.

At this point it seems that Tyro's perspective no longer matters; yet, paradoxically this is where the narrative reflects it most directly. For what Odysseus does when he reports the words of Poseidon is to repeat Tyro's own account of what she heard, thus relating an actual part of her story. And there is more: by repeating Poseidon's words the heroine does of course reveal his identity, thus defying his command to keep it a secret. The implication is that Tyro has kept her secret throughout her life – but when she gets the chance to speak in Hades she breaks free of the constraints which Poseidon imposed on her.

The significance of this becomes more apparent once we note that Poseidon's warning not to divulge his name is absent from Tyro's story as reported in the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*. It is well known that the two texts come very close at this point with *Od.*, XI, 249-250 being identical with lines 2-3 of fr. 31 M.-W. of the *Catalogue of Women* ²⁰:

.....].[.]..Ποσειδάων λ[
 τέξεις δ' ἀγλαὰ τέκ]να, ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἀποφώ[λιοι εὐναι
 ἀθανάτων· σὺ δὲ τ]οὺς κομέειν ἅτιτα[λλέμεναι τε.
]. ἰν' ἀγλαὰ τέκνα τ[εκ-
 5].τανεμεσσητοι τε[
 ὡς εἰπὼν ὁ μὲν αὐτίς] ἀγαστόγωνι εμ[
].]ῆ ἔβη οἰκόνδε [νέεσθαι
 [.....].ογ. (Cat. fr. 31, 1-8 M.-W.)

..... Poseidon ...
 you will give birth to glorious children, for the embraces of the immortals
 are not in vain. And you shall take care of them and rear them.
 so that you(?) give birth to glorious children ...
 reproach(?) ...
 Speaking thus he dived back into the roaring ...
 (but she?) returned home

The two versions are of course very similar, but after an almost identical beginning the *Nékyia* soon develops in a very different direction: in the *Catalogue of Women*, after announcing the birth of his sons in lines 2-3, Poseidon appears to be solely concerned with Tyro's descendants: in line

20. See D. L. PAGE (1955), p. 37; M. L. WEST (1985), p. 32 n.7; A. HEUBECK, A. HOEKSTRA (1990), p. 92; Lillian DOHERTY (1991), p. 145.

4 we can still read the words ‘in order to / glorious children’, whereas the *τανεμεσσητοι* in line 5 most probably refers to the *ἀγλαὰ τέκνα* of the previous line²¹. Correspondence with the passage of *Od.*, XI is restored in the next two lines of fragment 31 M.-W.. The end of Poseidon’s speech will have come in line 6, with *ἀγαστόγῳι* referring in all probability to the sea²².

What does all this amount to? We can see that in the Hesiodic version of Tyro’s story Poseidon’s self-revelation and warning are omitted. The audience hears Poseidon’s words and is informed of his identity through the poet’s voice, whereas the heroine remains unaware of her divine lover’s name. This is an important observation because it reveals a difference between the two texts not just in content but also on a poetic level. The *Catalogue of Women* has been considered, already in antiquity, as a relative extreme example of pure narrative poetry, meaning that the poet’s voice is dominant and that the characters (heroes, heroines, gods etc.) do not on the whole assume the role of the narrator²³. The fragments of the *Catalogue* that survive appear to confirm that view²⁴. Tyro’s entry is no exception as it is also controlled by the external narrator (poet) including the direct speech of fr. 31, lines 2-5 (M.-W.).

In the *Nekyia* things are quite different: here the primary narrator is a character, Odysseus, and he reports what he has *heard* from Tyro. In *Od.*, XI, 248-252 the situation is even more complex since the lines are narrated by Odysseus, who gives the account of Tyro’s shade, who in turn repeats the exact words of Poseidon as she had heard them²⁵. The direct speech of *Od.*, XI, 248-252 essentially echoes Tyro’s own voice, allowing us at the same time to witness her defying of Poseidon’s warning and the revelation of the secret he had bid her keep (*ἴσχεο μηδ’ ὀνομήνης*, *Od.*, XI, 251)²⁶. We can

21. The gap in fr. 31, line 4 (M.-W.) is almost the same size (16 letters) as the first half of *Od.*, XI, 251 (17 letters): *νῦν δ’ ἔρχεσθαι πρὸς δῶμα*. Thus the first hemistich of *Od.*, XI, 251 could be seen as a possible candidate for supplementing Hes., fr. 31.4 (M.-W.). P. Maas in fact proposes a solution along similar lines whereas M. L. West tries to fit in the motif of silence: *ἀλλ’ ἔχε σιγῆτι μῦθο]ν, ἴν’ ἀγλαὰ τέκνα τ[εκοῦσα*. I find his suggestion improbable because it seems meaningless for Poseidon to ask for Tyro’s silence without having revealed himself, as he does in *Odyssey* XI. For the various suggestions see the critical apparatus in R. MERKELBACH, M. L. WEST (ed.) (1967), p. 21.

22. For the usage and meaning of *ἀγαστονος* see *Lfgre s.v.* The -εμ- that survives could belong to a verb of motion. See also R. MERKELBACH, M. L. WEST (ed.) (1967, p. 21) and the most recent edition by Martina HIRSCHBERGER (2004), p. 103-104.

23. For the terminology see Irene DE JONG (1987).

24. See I. C. RUTHERFORD (2000, p. 87-88) with further bibliography.

25. See Lillian DOHERTY (1993, p. 8-9) for the narrative levels of Tyro’s story in *Odyssey* XI.

26. Note also that when the narrative echoes Tyro’s voice, as it does in the *Nekyia*, it is the heroine that falls in love (*Od.*, XI, 238: *ἠράσσαι[ο]*) whereas in the poet’s narrative of the *Catalogue* it is Poseidon who does so (fr. 30. 32 M.-W.: *ἐράσεκε*).

see then that in contrast with the *Catalogue of Women*, the 'Catalogue of Heroines' in the *Nékyia* allows for the voice of the women to be heard. And when Tyro finally gets her chance to speak she does so uncompromisingly, to the point of defying Poseidon.

Lillian Doherty notes Tyro's defiance and reads in it an initiative that leads to the acquisition of κλέος for the heroine, through the revelation of Poseidon's name. She also argues that the heroine becomes a counterpart of Arete, since they both resist Poseidon's power²⁷. M. Skempis and I. Ziogas take that argument a step further suggesting that "By breaking her silence, Tyro guarantees her place in the *ehoie*-poetry [...] Had she obeyed Poseidon's order, she would remain unknown and unmentioned"²⁸. Thus M. Skempis and I. Ziogas create a direct link between the *Catalogue of Women* and the Catalogue of *Odyssey* XI and conclude by arguing that: "The hint is that Arete should not be afraid of Poseidon, and should speak for Odysseus' cause"²⁹.

I would argue that both of the above interpretations, plausible as they may seem, do not take into consideration two major elements of the Tyro story, namely its context and its source. Starting from the latter, we can be certain that in the *Catalogue of Women* fragment, the ultimate source that provides the poet-narrator with his story is none other than the Muse, as is expressly stated at the beginning of the poem³⁰. In the *Nékyia* however, the source of the story appears to be the shade of Tyro herself, and that is what makes it unique: Poseidon in the *Catalogue* is revealed by the all-knowing Muses, whereas in *Odyssey* XI this is done by the heroine herself. Bearing that in mind, Lillian Doherty's and M. Skempis - I. Ziogas' line of argument regarding the κλέος which Tyro achieves with her defiance, seems to me to lose much of its force; Tyro's story could have been – and in effect was – recorded also by the ultimate guardians of epic tradition: the Muses.

The beginning of the *Catalogue* shows us that the Muses would have been perfectly capable of preserving the heroine's fame as defined by her

27. The reference is to Arete's help to Odysseus despite Poseidon's wrath against the hero, see Lillian DOHERTY (1993, p. 6) and (1995), p. 125.

28. M. SKEMPIS, I. ZIOGAS (2009), p. 236.

29. M. SKEMPIS, I. ZIOGAS (2009), p. 236. See also Lillian DOHERTY (2008, especially p. 69-71) for the similarities between Tyro and Nausicaa.

30. See *Hes. Cat.* fr. 1.1-4 M.-W.: Νῦν δὲ γυναικῶν [φῶλον ἀείσατε, ἠδυέπειαι / Μοῦσαι Ὀλυμπιάδε[ς, κοῦραι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο, / αἱ τὸτ' ἄρισται ἔσαν [/ μίτρας τ' ἀλλόσαντο. "Now sing of the race of women, sweet-singing / Olympian Muses, daughters of Zeus who holds the aegis, / those who were the best women of old [/ and they loosened their girdles."

divine union³¹. There must therefore be another reason for Tyro's actions in *Odyssey* XI, than merely the heroine's claim to glory, and that brings me to the first element I mentioned above, namely the context in which the story is told in the *Nékyia*.

The impenetrable darkness and the perfect isolation of Hades apparently enable the shades-as-storytellers to disclose matters they would not have dared to disclose while still alive. Hades thus becomes a sphere of poetic experimentation, as we can be seen with particular clarity when considering Tyro's story in *Odyssey* XI. Once confined to Hades, Tyro can at last break free from Poseidon's threat and speak her truth. She did not defy Poseidon while she was still alive but kept his secret even though revealing it would have brought her κλέος. Tyro seeks no glory. Rather, she needs to tell her story, a story of personal feelings, hope and loss such as can be heard only in Hades.

2. Women with a voice: the other heroines

1. *Female perspectives on the heroic past*

Tyro's is not an isolated case; almost all heroines in Odysseus' catalogue retell their stories from a very personal point of view. Antiope, the next shade to appear, is a good example, even though her entry occupies considerably less space than Tyro's:

- 260 Τὴν δὲ μετ' Ἀντιόπην ἴδον, Ἀσωποῖο θυγάτρα,
ἦ δὴ καὶ Διὸς εὐχετ' ἐν ἀγκοῖνησιν ἰαῦσαι,
καὶ ῥ' ἔτεκεν δύο παῖδ', Ἀμφιονά τε Ζῆθόν τε,
οἱ πρῶτοι Θήβης ἔδος ἔκτισαν ἑπταπύλοιο,
πύργωσάν τ', ἐπεὶ οὐ μὲν ἀπύργωτόν γ' ἐδύναντο
265 ναίεμεν εὐρύχορον Θήβην, κρατερώ περ ἐόντε. (*Od.*, XI, 260-265.)

Then I saw Antiope, the daughter of Asopus
who boasted to have lain in the arms of Zeus,
and she gave birth to two children, Amphion and Zethus,
who were the first to build the city of Thebes with the seven gates,
and to fortify it with was for they could not live in broad Thebes
without walls even though they were strong.

After catching sight of Antiope (ἴδον) Odysseus introduces her with reference to her father, divine lover and offspring (261-263). That is standard procedure in epic catalogues. However, the use of εὐχετ', which recalls Tyro's φάτο and φῆ, introduces again a personal element into the heroine's

31. Note too that the heroines of both catalogues are remembered not only for their divine lovers but also for their husbands and sons, whom Tyro has as well and who would probably have saved her from oblivion even without the revelation of Poseidon's name.

story: it is Antiope who boasts about her affair with Zeus and their offspring³². The heroine gets the chance to speak and does so by relating the achievements of her two sons, Amphion and Zethus, who, we are told, built and fortified Thebes (XI, 264-265). This reference to the foundation of Thebes has given rise to controversy since it deviates from the well-known tradition of Cadmus founding the city. The Homeric scholia employ a chronological scheme according to which the twins built Thebes before it was destroyed and rebuilt by Cadmus³³. Apollodorus offers a similar solution but with reverse chronological order: according to him, Cadmus founded Thebes and some generations later Amphion and Zethus built its walls³⁴. Pausanias, partially following Apollodorus, attempts to reconcile the two versions by suggesting that Cadmus built the acropolis (the Cadmeia) but then departed to Illyria, leaving Amphion and Zethus to build and fortify the lower city of Thebes, named after Zethus' wife³⁵. Modern scholars have had similar difficulties with reconciling the two versions. W. B. Stanford for instance notes in his commentary *ad Od.*, XI, 261-262 that "later accounts ascribed the foundation of at least the upper city of Thebes to Cadmus", presumably with reference to Apollodorus' or Pausanias' version³⁶. T. Gantz also follows Apollodorus, although he argues that the two traditions had probably been independent from each other³⁷. In the most recent attempt to clarify the matter, D. W. Berman argues that Homer either does not know of the myth of Cadmus as a founder of Thebes, or if he does chooses not to mention it in his narrative. D. W. Berman's suggestion is based mainly on the fact that Cadmus appears only once in Homer and only as Ino's father with no reference to Thebes³⁸. A closer examination of the Homeric text however rules out the possibility that the myth was unknown to the poet and his earliest audiences since the frequent use of the collective name 'Cadmeians' to refer to Theban warriors suggests

32. R. OSBORNE (2005, p. 16-17) notes that the speech verbs differentiate the *Nékyia* catalogue from the *Catalogue of Women* but argues that this is done in order to "flag up" the quality of the divine father.

33. See ΣQ *ad Od.*, XI, 262 and ΣH *ad Od.*, XI, 263. The scholiasts attribute this version to Pherekydes, see ΣV *ad Od.* 11.264, with A. W. GOMME (1913, p. 66f. and 71) who argues in favour of the logograph and against the mythological tradition.

34. Apollodorus, *Bibl.*, III, 21-25 and 41-45. For the wall-building of Thebes see A. HURST (2000).

35. Paus., IX, 5, 6. See Maria ROCCHI (1986) for a discussion of Pausanias' reference to the tomb of Zethos and Amphion in Thebes. See also Diodorus of Sicily who gives the same version at XIX, 3, 4-5.

36. W. B. STANFORD (1947), p. 291.

37. T. GANTZ (1993), p. 467f.

38. D. W. BERMAN (2004), p. 3-4. Cadmus is mentioned in *Od.*, V, 33 as the father of Ino/Leukothea.

knowledge of the tradition about Cadmus³⁹. It would thus appear that the reference to Zethus and Amphion was made deliberately and I would argue that there is good reason for that. Since this is Antiope's story we listen to, the heroine gives priority to the tradition that has her sons as founders of Thebes. Cadmus' presence, which is ignored in Antiope's account, is nevertheless implied by the heroine through the use of *πρῶτοι* which at least hints at a competing tradition. Antiope however remembers, or chooses to remember, only the version that elevates her children whereas the rivalling tradition is silenced.

The next three heroines that Odysseus sees are also closely associated with Thebes: Alcmena, Megara and Epicaste. This time there are no speech verbs to indicate that these are their own personal stories. Nonetheless, I shall argue that a strong personal outlook is still implied in the way the narrative unfolds. Alcmena and Megara are treated in only five lines (*Od.*, XI, 266-270), as one entry with the verb *ἴδον* is used for both of them⁴⁰. The main focus of the entry is on their relationship, as mother and wife, to Heracles. As B. Sammons notes, each heroine views the hero differently: for Alcmena he is the semi-divine son of Zeus (*Od.*, XI, 268), whereas Megara sees him as the mortal son of Amphitryon (*Od.*, XI, 270)⁴¹. These different takes on the hero may, as B. Sammons suggests, foreshadow the end of the *Nékyia* where reference is made to the dual nature of Heracles. However, they can also be seen as reflecting the personal views of the two heroines, even to the point of splitting the traditional story in two: Alcmena, we understand, boasts about her offspring from Zeus, whereas Megara remembers the mortal man she married and silences any references to the tragic nature of their marriage⁴².

There follows the story of Epicaste, which again offers a very personal take on her own tradition:

39. In the *Iliad* the adjective 'Cadmeians' occurs seven times (IV, 385, 388, 391; V, 804, 807; X, 288; XXIII, 680), in contrast with the ethnic 'Theban' (Θηβαῖος) which occurs only once of a warrior (VIII, 120). In the *Odyssey*, 'Theban' is consistently used of Teiresias (*Od.*, X, 492, 565; XI, 90, 165; XII, 267; XXIII, 323) but only 'Cadmeians' (in the genitive Καδμείων) is used of the subjects of Oedipous (*Od.*, XI, 276).

40. M. STEINRÜCK (1994), p. 88.

41. B. SAMMONS (2010), p. 80.

42. B. SAMMONS (2010, p. 80) argues that the hero's double parentage allows for "an ironic play on the double nature of Heracles mentioned later in Book 11". On the same lines the reference to Heracles' unyielding μένος (*Od.*, XI, 270: μένος αἰὲν ἀτειρής) could be playing with the same idea since, as J. REDFIELD (1975, p. 151ff.) argues, μένος is generally understood as an expression of vitality in the Homeric epics, suggesting perhaps that the hero is still alive. Heracles' appearance among the shades at the end of the *Nékyia* resolves the issue. On μένος see further *Lfgre s.v.*

- 270 Μητέρα τ' Οιδιπόδαο ἴδον, καλὴν Ἐπικάστην,
 ἧ μέγα ἔργον ἔρεξεν ἀδρείησι νόοιο
 γημαμένη ᾧ υἱ· ὃ δ' ὄν πατέρ' ἐξεναρίξας
 γῆμεν· ἄφαρ δ' ἀνάπυστα θεοὶ θέσαν ἀνθρώποισιν.
- 275 Ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ἐν Θήβῃ πολυηράτῳ ἄλγεα πάσχων
 Καδμείων ἦνασσε θεῶν ὀλοῆς διὰ βουλᾶς·
 ἧ δ' ἔβη εἰς Αἶδαο πυλάρταο κρατεροῖο,
 ἀναμένη βρόχον αἰπὺν ἀφ' ὑψηλοῖο μελάθρου,
 ᾧ ἄχει σχομένη· τῷ δ' ἄλγεα κάλλιπ' ὀπίσσω
- 280 πολλὰ μάλ', ὅσσα τε μητρὸς Ἐρινύες ἐκτελέουσιν. (*Od.*, XI, 271-280.)

I saw Oedipus' mother, beautiful Epicaste,
 who committed a great deed without knowing it
 by marrying her own son; he, after killing his own father
 married her but straight away the gods revealed all to men.
 And he ruled the Cadmeians in much loved Thebes
 suffering great pains due to the gods' disastrous will.
 She went to strong Hades who fastens the gates
 hanging a noose from a high beam of the roof,
 overcome by her own grief. And to her son she left many pains,
 all these that the mother's Furies bring with them.

Epicaste, as J. Houlihan notes, is introduced “by the biological relationship that she violated”, being both the mother and wife of Oedipus⁴³. This violation is spelled out in the following lines which describe the heroine's actions actively (note the use of ἔρεξεν), as in the case of Tyro: she committed a μέγα ἔργον without however being aware of it. Line 271 summarises efficiently Epicaste's story and at the same time suggests a line of defence against the dreadful reputation which she has acquired: the heroine had no knowledge of the crime she was committing, rather like Deianeira as described in the *Catalogue of Women*⁴⁴.

The crime is explained further in the next line (273), but once the revelation has been made the focus shifts from Epicaste to her son. It is now Oedipus' actions that are described in active terms (note the verbs ἐξεναρίξας and γῆμεν), and he is thus portrayed as the one responsible for the incest. Oedipus' ignorance regarding the parricide and incest he committed is completely overlooked, to the point that one ancient scholiast felt the need to defend the hero by underlining his lack of knowledge as well as intention⁴⁵. Again, there is more than a suggestion that this is how Epicaste

43. J. HOULIHAN (1994-1995), p. 6.

44. Fr. 25.20 M.-W. (δειν' ἔρξ'). E. BARKER and J. P. CHRISTENSEN (2008, p. 19-21) note the change in the meaning of μέγα ἔργον from the great deed of the *Iliad* to terrible/unimaginable deed in the context of the *Odyssey*, and see it as evidence for a general shift from the heroic values of the *Iliad*.

45. See ΣV *ad Od.*, XI, 271: [...] ἀποκτείνας δὲ ἀκουσίως τὸν πατέρα λαμβάνει πρὸς γάμον οὐκ εἰδὼς τὴν μητέρα ἐπιλωσάμενος τὸ τῆς Σφιγγὸς αἰνίγμα [...]

reads the story: from her viewpoint she was a victim of Oedipus' crime, which finds no justification.

What follows confirms, I argue, that the story of Epicaste reflects her own view of the tradition. The version of *Odyssey* XI differs considerably from that of Athenian drama, as well as from the various earlier attestations of the myth. Even though the myth of Oedipus is notoriously complex, combining many different strands of diverse traditional material, I would argue that the version of *Odyssey* XI is deliberately crafted to fit with the heroine's attempt to mitigate her role in the incest⁴⁶.

Let me begin by noting some points of divergence from the myth as it is known from the later Theban plays. In *Od.*, XI, 274 we read that as soon as (ἄφαρ) Epicaste married Oedipus, the gods revealed the terrible truth to everyone, leading to the heroine's suicide⁴⁷. The problem with this storyline however, is that it does not allow enough time for the couple's children to be born and therefore ignores the rest of the Theban saga, including the strife between Polyneikes and Eteocles and the subsequent siege of Thebes⁴⁸. Furthermore, the suggestion that Oedipus remained king in Thebes after the revelation of the incest does not allow for his self-blinding or for the story of his exile from the city.

Scholars have tried different approaches to explain the discrepancies between our passage and later Theban myth. Some have argued that Homer draws from a tradition in which the exile and blinding of Oedipus did not take place⁴⁹. Other scholars assign a different meaning to ἄφαρ following the scholiast's suggestion to translate it not as a temporal adverb (*straight*

46. For the myth and its different versions as well as attempts to identify an 'original' version see L. DEUBNER (1942) and E. FROMON (1949). For attempts to place the myth of Oedipus in Egypt see I. VELIKOVSKY (1960). For more recent discussion see W. BURKERT (2009), who focuses on the Sophoclean version of the myth from an anthropological perspective.

47. E. BARKER and J. P. CHRISTENSEN (2008, p. 23-24) argue that the use of ἀνθρώποισιν in line 274 suggests that Oedipus' saga was a well-known tradition.

48. Oedipus' sons were known to Homer: Polynices is mentioned at *Il.*, IV, 377 and Eteocles a few lines later, at IV, 386.

49. See W. F. WYATT (1996-1997), who, following Eustathius, argues that the story of the blinding and the exile was not known to Homer. His argument is based mainly on the fact that in the *Iliad* (XXIII, 678) Oedipus' tomb is placed in Thebes suggesting a pre-Sophoclean tradition that had the hero remaining and dying there. See also E. CINGANO (1992), who discusses the different versions of Homer, Hesiod and Pherekydes and argues that the mythographer might be referring to the earliest tradition since he mentions events (such as Oedipus' triple marriage) that do not appear at all in the other sources.

away) but as expressing manner (*suddenly*)⁵⁰. In this way the text would allow enough time for the children to be born, but at the expense of stretching the meaning of ἄφαρ to its limits⁵¹. The most recent interpretation by E. Barker and J.-P. Christensen moves away from attempts to disentangle the knot of different traditions and proposes that the passage should be seen in its context in order to be understood. E. Barker and J.-P. Christensen argue that in the general context of the *Odyssey* Oedipus' story is retold in such manner that Odysseus, and his tradition, is portrayed as more successful⁵². E. Barker and J.-P. Christensen are indeed right to argue that context is important and that attention should be paid to *why* and *where* a story is told. However, they fail to appreciate the importance of Hades as the immediate context in which the story of Epicaste is set.

Underworld narratives tend to be personal and subjective, expressing a character's reading of the tradition of which they are a part. Unlike the stories of Tyro and Antiope, that of Epicaste is not expressly presented as her own. However, I argue that it can nonetheless be understood as the version of her story that she wants to remember. I have already noted that the *Odyssey* stresses her ignorance with regard to the incest while saying nothing of the sort about Oedipus. Later on Odysseus again makes a point of contrasting her actions with those of Oedipus: she (ἡ δ', 277) chose death whereas he (ὁ μὲν, 275) chose a wretched life as the ruler of Thebes. The punning epithets πολυηράτω (275) and πλάρταο (277) draw attention to the two characters' very different destinations⁵³. Epicaste's story ends on

50. ΣB *ad Od.*, XI, 274: οὐκ εὐθέως· ἐπεὶ πῶς ἔσχε παῖδας; ἀλλ' ἐξαιφνης. The scholiast's interpretation has been influential and was followed by W. B. STANFORD (1947, p. 391), who translates ἄφαρ as 'after that' and compares *Il.*, XI, 418. A. HEUBECK and A. HOEKSTRA (1990, p. 94), following L. DEUBNER (1942, p. 34-37), propose the similar translation 'after a while, after a year or so, after the birth of their sons'.

51. Pausanias, IX, 4, 2 argues in favour of the temporal meaning by relating a tradition according to which Oedipus had children with his second wife, Euryganeia, and not with Epicaste who indeed died very soon after their marriage. Evanthia TSITSIBAKOU-VASALOS (1989, p. 62-66), following a similar tradition that appears in Pherecydes, 3 F 95, argues for a connection of the *Nékyia* passage with the tradition of the *Oedipodia*, where allegedly the couple did not have any children.

52. E. BARKER, J. P. CHRISTENSEN (2008).

53. The use of πολυηράτω has created confusion as its meaning 'much loved / loved by many', does not seem to fit the context of Oedipus' grim fate. A. HEUBECK and A. HOEKSTRA (1990, p. 94) note that it is only here used of a city and that elsewhere in the *Odyssey* (*Od.*, XV, 126, 366; XXIII, 354) its use seems unproblematic, see also *LfgreE s.v.* In fact, there is nothing problematic about πολυηράτω = 'much-loved' in the present passage if we bear in mind that this is how Epicaste sees it. The scholiast detects a pun of a different kind and translates the epithet as 'much-cursed', see ΣB *ad Od.*, XI, 275: πολλὰς ἄρας καὶ βλάβας ὑπομείνιση παρὰ θεῶν. The scholiast is here clearly influenced by what he perceives to be what context requires: in *Od.*, XV,

the note of resentment that I have argued can be sensed throughout the passage: she has left her Erinyes behind for Oedipus, the true agent of the “great deed”. The phrasing suggests the retribution that is due when mothers suffer an injustice (ὄσσα τε μητρὸς Ἐρινύες ἐκτελέουσιν): we have in ring composition come back to Epicaste’s role as mother, this time glossed entirely on her terms. The many ἄλγεα that Oedipus suffers remain untold, as the shade is not concerned with them – her story has been heard.

So far, the ‘Catalogue of Heroines’ has been consistent in presenting us with a subjective take on the heroines’ past, either explicitly presenting it as their own account, as in the cases of Tyro and Epicaste, or by subtly implying as much, as in the cases of Antiope, Alcmene and Megara. The next entry makes use of both techniques in order to give us yet another alternative version of the epic tradition. Odysseus now sees Chloris, whose story also includes that of her daughter Pero.

Καὶ Χλωρὶν εἶδον περικαλλέα, τὴν ποτε Νηλεὺς
 γῆμεν ἕνδρα διὰ κάλλος, ἐπεὶ πόρε μυρία ἔδνα,
 ὀπλοτάτην κούρην Ἀμφιόνος Ἰασίδαο,
 ὅς ποτ’ ἐν Ὀρχομένῳ Μινυεῖῳ ἴφι ἄνασσεν·
 285 ἣ δὲ Πύλου βασιλεὺς, τέκεν δὲ οἱ ἀγλαὰ τέκνα,
 Νέστορα τε Χρόνιον τε Περικλύμενόν τ’ ἀγέρωχον. (*Od.*, XI, 281-286.)

And I saw the much beautiful Chloris, whom once Neleus
 married for her beauty, after giving countless gifts.
 She was the youngest daughter of Amphion, son of Iasus,
 who once ruled with might over the Minyan Orchomenus.
 She ruled over Pylos and gave birth to glorious children
 Nestor and Chronius and high-minded Periclymenus.

Chloris is characterised by her extraordinary beauty (281-282) which led Neleus to offer countless gifts in order to marry her. This introduction seems to portray her as an object of male sexual desire, and in this respect it comes close to the *Catalogue of Women*, where women are almost exclusively presented as obedient sexual partners⁵⁴. However, this is where the similarities end as in the *Nékyia* the heroine appears to have a very active role indeed since she is said to have ruled over Pylos (285). Ancient readers were divided over this claim, either accepting it as an alternate tradition or emending the text in order to remedy the inconsistency⁵⁵. Even though the

366 he assigns the ‘normal’ meaning to the epithet (πολυήρατον), see ΣΗ *ad Od.*, XV, 366: ἦν καταλαβεῖν πολλοὶ εὖχονται, τὴν πολύευκτον.

54. R. OSBORNE (2005), p. 17.

55. Aristarchus, among others, proposed the reading ἠδέ instead of ἣ δέ, thus assigning Pylos to Amphion’s rule, with ἄνασσεν from the previous line. Herodianus on the other hand, interprets ἣ δέ as intentionally contrasting the male and female rulers, see ΣΗ *ad Od.*, XI, 285. J. HOULIHAN (1994-1995, p. 6) argues that we have here a reference to the “tradition of Neleus as a weak leader”, since Neleus receives no epithet

verb βασιλευε is also used of Andromache's mother at *Il.*, VI, 425, Chloris' case remains unique, for in the case of Andromache's mother the verb in all probability refers to her status as queen rather than her own rule⁵⁶. That is of course unproblematic, and it may be telling that the scholiasts report no disagreements regarding the meaning of the Iliadic passage.

In Chloris' case, however, things are different since her sphere of power (285: Pylos) is clearly distinguished from that of Neleus (284: Orchomenus). Furthermore, the structure of *Od.*, XI, 284-285 with the anti-thetical use of ὅς ποτ' ἐν / ἡ δέ appears to deliberately contrast the two spheres. The implication then is that Chloris established her own rule at Pylos. That this is a unique approach to the heroine's tradition can be established by looking at her entry in the *Catalogue of Women*. The differences are striking:

- 10 Νηλεὺς,] καὶ ῥα θυγάτρ' Ἀμφίωνος Ἰασίδα[ο
 Χλώριν ἐ]ύζωον θαλερὴν ποιήσατ' ἄκ[οιτιν.
 Ἥ δέ οἱ ἐν μ]εγάροισιν ἐγείνατο φαίδιμα τέκ[να,
 Εὐαγόρην τε] καὶ Ἀντιμένην καὶ Ἀλάστορα [δῖον
 Ταῦρόν τ' Ἀσ]τέριόν τε Πυλάονά τε μεγάθυμ[ον
 Δηΐμαχόν τε] καὶ Εὐρύβιον κλειτόν τ' Ἐπίλαον
 Νέστορά τε Χ]ρομίον τε Περικλύμενόν τ' ἀγέρω[χον (*Cat.* fr. 33.a, 6-12 M.-W.)

Neleus made well girdled Chloris,
 daughter of Amphion, son of Iasus, his sturdy wife.
 And she gave birth in the palace to glorious children
 Euagorus and Antimeneus and godly Alastor
 Taurus and Asterius and great hearted Pylaon
 Deimachus and Eurybius and far known Epilaus
 Nestor and Chromius and high minded Periclymenus.

The first thing to note is that in the Hesiodic *Catalogue* the reference to Chloris' beauty on which the *Nékyia* entry insists is absent: as R. Osborne notes, what is beautiful here is her girdle, not the heroine (7)⁵⁷. Similarly, no reference is made to the 'countless gifts' mentioned in the *Nékyia*; in the *Catalogue*, Neleus simply 'made her his wife' (7). Furthermore, whereas in the *Nékyia* Chloris is said to have ruled over Pylos, as we have seen (XI, 285: ἡ δέ Πύλον βασιλευε), in the *Catalogue* she only gives birth to children (8 ἡ δέ ... ἐγείνατο φαίδιμα τέκ[να]); both lines are introduced with ἡ δέ but develop very different ideas: whereas the *Nékyia* passage gives a place to

when both Chloris and her son, Periclymenus do, the latter called ἀγέρωχος, a ἄπαξ in the *Odyssey*, with possible reference to his bravery. For the adjective's exact meaning and possible etymology see W. B. STANFORD (1947, p. 392) and A. HEUBECK and A. HOEKSTRA (1990, p. 95), also *LfgreE* s.v.

56. G. S. KIRK (ed.) (1990, p. 216) and Barbara GRAZIOSI, J. HAUBOLD (2010), p. 200.

57. R. OSBORNE (2005), p. 17.

Chloris in the epic tradition of Pylos, the Catalogue leaves her in the shadow of her twelve sons (9-12)⁵⁸. This brings us to the last and most noticeable difference between the two accounts, regarding the number of male children mentioned. At *Od.*, XI, 286-287 only four children of Chloris and Neleus are mentioned: Nestor, Chromius and Periclymenus, followed by their sister Pero, in contrast with the twelve sons of the Catalogue who are also followed by Pero in a later fragment (fr. 37 M.-W.). Interestingly, the *Iliad* agrees with the Catalogue and mentions the same number of children for Neleus and Chloris, although it does not name them (*Il.*, XI, 692).

The scholiasts suggest that either the sons mentioned in the *Odyssey* are the most important ones, and that they are therefore called ἀγλαὰ τέκνα (285), or that they are the only ones Neleus had with Chloris, the rest being born of other women⁵⁹. As far as the first suggestion is concerned, there is no need to assume that ἀγλαὰ in the *Nékyia* signifies some kind of distinction for the three sons mentioned. The scholia's other suggestion, however, is of greater interest. We have seen so far how Chloris' personalised view of her tradition may be imprinted in her Underworld story with its reference to her beauty and Neleus' wooing, reaching a climax with the claim that she ruled Pylos separately from her husband. In this context for the text to claim that Chloris bore only three sons to Neleus, should come as no surprise. The shade could be taking advantage of her Underworld seclusion to reveal the true parentage of her children in the same way that Tyro did. More likely, perhaps, she cuts short the catalogue of her sons (note that XI, 286 = fr. 33. 12 M.-W., which is the last entry in Hesiod's catalogue of children), in favour of her daughter's story that follows immediately after. The sons are the focus of attention in Hesiod (and in the *Iliad*), so in the alternative realm of Odysseus' Underworld journey, the hitherto neglected story of the daughter comes to the fore. Like the heroines that precede her, Chloris appears to relate her story freely, highlighting the parts that she sees as important and omitting those that she does not.

Having dispatched her three sons almost in passing Odysseus continues his vignette of Chloris' life with the only daughter the heroine had, Pero. Odysseus does not meet Pero's shade, but spends more lines on telling her story than Chloris had to herself (281-287: Chloris; 288-297: Pero)⁶⁰. The special place of Pero in Chloris' story is justified if we assume that the

58. Apollodorus' version seems to presuppose the same tradition as the *Catalogue of Women*, with no reference to Chloris' rule over Pylos; see Apollodorus, *Bibl.*, I, 93.

59. See ΣΗ.V and Q.T. *ad Od.*, XI, 286.

60. Cf. M. STEINRÜCK (1994, p. 88), O. TSAGARAKIS (2000, p. 88) and J. R. HEATH (2005, p. 393). B. SAMMONS (2010, p. 81-82) argues on the other hand that the story of Pero could be a deliberate elaboration on the part of Odysseus.

heroine perceives her daughter as her greatest achievement: Pero is beautiful like her mother (*Od.*, XI, 287: ἰφθίμην Πηρῶ τέκε θαῦμα βροτοῖσι) and her courtship was even more extravagant as she was wooed by all who dwelled around Pylos (*Od.*, XI, 288)⁶¹. Again, there are no speech verbs indicating that Odysseus learnt all this from Chloris herself, but that is surely implied: Chloris looks at Pero in the same manner as the heroes look at their sons as successors of their κλέος and heroic valour, only in the heroine's case beauty is what links her to her mother and matters the most. Pero lives up to expectation as her beauty allows Neleus to demand Iphiclus' cattle in exchange for her hand, thus leading to the story of Melampus' attempt to get the cattle. The fact that Melampus is not mentioned by name but is merely described as 'the blameless seer' (μάντις ἀμύμων, *Od.*, XI, 291), not only implies that the story was well known but also suggests a lack of interest regarding the details of his story⁶²: Melampus is introduced primarily as proof of Pero's beauty, and as a means of marrying her off 'according to the will of Zeus' (Διὸς δ' ἔτελείετο βουλή, *Od.*, XI, 297). The latter formula, a generic marker *par excellence* of epic story-telling (cf. *Il.*, I, 5), confirms that more is at stake here than merely a somewhat elliptical evocation of a familiar story. Chloris' story offers a self-consciously alternative perspective on heroic epic, which omits heroic action as incidental detail and plays up female prowess. Chloris, who ruled over Pylos, cuts short the catalogue of her twelve sons only to elaborate on the commotion which Pero's extraordinary beauty caused in the heroic world. The heroic narrative of what happened during her daughter's courtship, which is extensively covered in the tradition, is reduced in the same way as the list of her sons and Neleus. Chloris looks at her own life and that of her female offspring with pride while ignoring almost completely the dominant male traditions of her lineage. Hers is an extreme example of the female perspective which we also saw in Tyro's defiance of Poseidon and the other heroines' selective recollection of their past.

61. Even though the exact meaning and etymology of ἰφθίμος is unknown, it is generally taken as signifying strength and prominence when used of the living. Here the epithet could be taken as an indication that this is still Chloris' perspective which pervades her daughter's story, explaining why this is not a meeting with Pero's shade. Chloris refers to her daughter as ἰφθίμη because this is how she remembers her. For the meanings and etymology of ἰφθίμος see J. WARDEN (1969) and also *Lfgre s.v.*

62. The story of Melampus is retold in *Od.*, XV, 230ff. Irene DE JONG (2001, p. 283) finds the two versions capable of forming a complete narrative. By contrast, A. HEUBECK and A. HOEKSTRA (1990, p. 95 and 246-248) argue that even if both versions are put together "the story cannot be entirely reconstructed". For a reading of Melampus' story as an alternative *Odyssey* see J. HOULIHAN (1994-1995), p. 8-11. For the use of the Melampus myth in the Homeric epics more generally see Christine HARRAUER (1999).

The next entry of the Catalogue, that of Leda, presents us with a narrative experiment of a different kind. Leda's account showcases how a heroine can choose to forget anything that relates to the female members of her family and instead present herself as defined exclusively by her male relatives and their heroic traditions.

2. *The perspective of the mother: to forget or to remember*

Καὶ Λήδην εἶδον, τὴν Τυνδαρέου παράκοιτιν,
 ἢ ῥ' ὑπὸ Τυνδαρέῳ κρατερόφρονε γείνατο παῖδε,
 300 Κάστορά θ' ἰππόδαμον καὶ πύξ ἀγαθὸν Πολυδεύκεα,
 τοὺς ἄμφω ζωοὺς κατέχει φυσίχοος αἶα·
 οἱ καὶ νέρθεν γῆς τιμὴν πρὸς Ζηνὸς ἔχοντες
 ἄλλοτε μὲν ζώουσ' ἑτερήμεροι, ἄλλοτε δ' αὐτε
 τεθνᾶσιν· τιμὴν δὲ λελόγχασιν ἴσα θεοῖσι. (*Od.*, XI, 298-304.)

And Leda I saw, the wife of Tyndareus.
 She gave birth to two stout-hearted children to Tyndareus,
 Castor, tamer of horses, and flawless boxer Polydeuces,
 who are both held fast alive by the life giving earth.
 But even below the earth they are honoured by Zeus
 alternating between life and death, alive for one day and
 dead for the other. They are honoured equally to the gods.

Leda's entry occupies seven lines of which only the first two refer to her while the remaining five are concerned with her offspring. The heroine is given no epithets and in contrast with the previous heroines appears to be completely defined by her relations to males. She is introduced as the wife of Tyndareus (*Od.*, XI, 298) to whose children she gave birth (*Od.*, XI, 299). The repetition of her husband's name draws attention to the parentage of her children. In conjunction with the dual that follows (*Od.*, XI, 299: κρατερόφρονε [...] παῖδε) it appears designed to reassure the audience that Leda had only two sons, Castor and Polydeuces, and both by Tyndareus. The implication of this statement is of course that it presents us with only part of Leda's tradition, and arguably the less important one: we hear nothing about the birth of Leda's daughters, Helen and Clytemnestra, or her erotic encounter with Zeus, responsible at least for the birth of Helen. Both traditions are well attested elsewhere. In Hesiod's *Catalogue* Leda is said to have borne Tyndareus three daughters, including Clytemnestra⁶³, Castor and Polydeuces are mentioned as Helen's brothers in the context of her courtship⁶⁴. Apollodorus, who has been shown to follow Hesiod's

63. Helen is not named among the three daughters; see *Cat.*, fr. 23-24 M.-W. For the connection of Helen's genealogy with those of Leda's and Tyndareus' see E. CINGANO (2005), p. 120-121.

64. *Cat.*, fr. 197 M.-W., for Castor's and Polydeuces' role in the *Catalogue of Women*, see E. CINGANO (2005), p. 133-135.

Catalogue in his genealogies, names Helen and Polydeuces as the children of Zeus and Leda whereas Pindar also refers to Poludeukes as having divine parentage⁶⁵. It appears that Homer was aware of this tradition though he refers to it only in passing. For instance Helen herself mentions her brothers Castor and Polydeuces in *Iliad* III, stressing the fact that they had the same mother:

Κάστορά θ' ἰππόδαμον καὶ πῦξ ἀγαθὸν Πολυδεύκεα
αὐτοκασιγνήτω, τῷ μοι μία γείνατο μήτηρ. (*Il.*, III, 237-328.)

Castor the tamer of horses and flawless boxer Polydeuces,
my brothers, born with me from the same mother.

Although Leda is not mentioned here, Homer must have known her as the mother of Helen and the twins. He certainly knew Zeus as the father of Helen, as we can deduce from the formula Ἑλένη Διὸς ἐκγεγαυῖα, which is used both in the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*⁶⁶, as well as Menelaus' statement that he is Zeus' son in law (*Od.*, IV, 561). Thus we can safely argue that the omission of Leda's daughters and her encounter with Zeus from the heroine's story cannot be attributed to the poet's lack of knowledge of these traditions. Rather, it would appear that he intentionally glosses over them, reflecting once again how the heroine herself would like to be remembered. The image she projects is that of the faithful wife of Tyndareus and mother of sons of whom she can clearly be proud. Note in particular the emphasis on their strength of mind (κρατερόφρονε, *Od.*, XI, 299) and honour (τιμή, *Od.*, XI, 302, 304), which contrasts strikingly with the traditional view of their 'shameful' sisters as summarised for example in Hes., fr. 176 M.-W., and by Helen herself in *Il.*, III, 236-242⁶⁷. Leda, it would seem, follows the example of Epicaste and conceals those things in her past that are painful to remember. She tries to erase the memory of her shameful daughters, passing over even her own affair.

Zeus does however appear obliquely in her selective memory, as the loving father of Castor and Polydeuces. Why else would he confer honour upon them after death (*Od.*, XI, 301-302)? The pattern is familiar from his relationship with other children such as Heracles (Hes., *Th.*, 532, 954-955)

65. See Pindar, *N.*, X, 49-88 and Apollodorus, *Bibl.*, III, 126 and 134-137 for the Dioscuri. See also A. HEUBECK and A. HOEKSTRA (1990, p. 85) who list the ancient sources of the genealogy. Castor and Poludeukes are not said to be the descendants of Zeus in Homer. Nevertheless, the divine parentage of Helen in conjunction with the honours the twins receive from Zeus after their death, point towards an existing but silenced relation between the ruler of Olympus and Leda's sons.

66. *Il.*, III, 19, *Od.*, IV, 184.

67. How difficult it would be for a family member to deal with that kind of shame is shown by Helen herself when she comments in the *Iliad* that her brothers did not sail to Troy out of shame for her actions (*Il.*, III, 236-242).

and Sarpedon (*Il.*, XVI, 458-461). Moreover, the only other case in the *Odyssey* of mortals receiving immortality, or something close to it, is that of the twins' sister Helen and her husband Menelaus, suggesting yet another connection of Zeus with Leda's children⁶⁸. It would seem, then, that despite attempting to conceal her affair with Zeus, Leda cannot resist highlighting her sons' privileged afterlife. And in doing so she does not only imply their divine parentage but dismisses the alternative view, found in the *Iliad*, that they died a normal death:

᾽Ως φάτο, τοὺς δ' ἤδη κάτεχεν φυσίζοος αἴα
ἐν Λακεδαίμονι αὐθι φίλῃ ἐν πατρίδι γαίῃ. (*Il.*, IV, 243-244.)

So she said, but the where already held fast by life giving earth
back in Lacedaemon, their beloved homeland.

We can see that line 243 is almost identical with *Od.*, XI, 301, the only substantive difference being the use of ζωοῦς instead of ἤδη. In the *Iliad* Castor and Poludeukes are *already held fast* by life-giving earth⁶⁹, whereas for Leda they are *held fast alive*. The strangeness of this formulation, it seems to me, adds grist to the mill of those who argue that the *Odyssey* does sometimes respond directly to the *Iliad* as we know it⁷⁰. In any case, it appears that in the heroine's account fate has been kinder to her family than it was elsewhere in the epic tradition.

Leda's, then, is another typical Underworld story, in that it is personally inflected and fiercely biased. Odysseus does not tell us that this was what she said, but that is precisely how I argue we should read it: it is Leda who plays up the good things in her life and chooses to forget those things that are too painful to remember, going so far as to ignore even her affair with Zeus. We may recall Tyro's story here, and her insistence on divulging her own love affair with Poseidon. Such matters are shrouded in mystery and hence particularly open to the vagaries of selective memory. Leda wants nothing to do with her daughters and therefore suppresses her affair with Zeus; but she is happy to acknowledge his role in granting immortality to her sons. In only seven lines Leda's account successfully presents the audience with a past that neglects well-known epic narratives in favour of the heroine's subjective and selective recollection.

Odysseus, we have seen, encounters women who are proud of their children, or forgetful, or proud of some but forgetful of others. The next heroine he meets belongs to those who remember, despite the fact that her

68. *Od.*, IV, 561-565: Helen and Menelaus are to be transferred to the Elysian fields due to their relation to Zeus.

69. For the formula φυσίζοος αἴα and its connection with death in Homer see Euphrosyne COUGHANOWR (1997).

70. See R. RUTHERFORD (1991-1993).

children's exploits give her no reason to boast. Nevertheless, Iphimedeia, the mother of the giants Otos and Ephialtes not only remembers her sons but also looks back at their crimes in the way a loving mother looks with sympathy at her children's mischief.

- 305 Τὴν δὲ μετ' Ἴφιμέδειαν, Ἀλωῆος παράκοιτιν
 εἰσίδον, ἣ δὴ φάσκε Ποσειδάωνι μιγῆναι,
 καὶ ῥ' ἔτεκεν δύο παῖδε, μινυνθαδίω δ' ἐγενέσθην,
 Ὡτόν τ' ἀντίθεον τηλεκλειτόν τ' Ἐφιάλτην,
 οὓς δὴ μηκίστους θρέψε ζεῖδωρος ἄρουρα
 310 καὶ πολὺ καλλίστους μετὰ γε κλυτὸν Ὠρίωνα·
 ἐννέωροι γὰρ τοῖ γε καὶ ἐννεαπήχεες ἦσαν
 εὖρος, ἀτὰρ μῆκός γε γενέσθην ἐννεόργυιοι.
 Οἳ ῥα καὶ ἀθανάτοισιν ἀπειλήτην ἐν Ὀλύμπῳ
 φυλόπιδα στήσειν πολυάικος πολέμοιο.
 315 Ὅσσαν ἐπ' Ὀλύμπῳ μέμασαν θέμεν, αὐτὰρ ἐπ' Ὅσση
 Πήλιον εἰνοσίφυλλον, ἴν' οὐρανὸς ἀμβατὸς εἴη.
 Καὶ νῦν κεν ἐξετέλεσαν, εἰ ἦβης μέτρον ἴκοντο·
 ἀλλ' ὄλεσεν Διὸς υἱός, ὃν ἠύκομος τέκε Λητώ,
 ἀμφοτέρῳ, πρὶν σφῶιν ὑπὸ κροτάφοισιν ἰούλους
 320 ἀνθῆσαι πυκάσαι τε γένυς εὐανθεί λάχνη. (*Od.*, XI, 305-320.)

Next I saw Iphimedeia, the wife of Aloeus,
 who claimed to have slept with Poseidon
 and gave birth to two short-lived children
 godly Otos and far-famed Ephialtes,
 who life giving earth nurtured to become the tallest
 and most beautiful by far after the famed Orion.
 For they were nine years old and had a width of nine cubits
 and had reached nine fathoms in height.
 And they threatened to bring the cries of furious war
 to the immortals on Olympus.
 They yearned to place Ossa on Olympus and on top of Ossa
 Pelion with the thick forests so as to reach the heavens.
 And they would have achieved it if they had reached adolescence.
 But the son of Zeus, which lovely-haired Leto bore him, killed them
 both, before the down could sprout below their temples
 and the first hair bloom cover their cheeks.

Iphimedeia's story brings back to the forefront the motif of the divine affair that was silenced in the previous encounter. The heroine is initially introduced as the wife of Aloeus (line 305). However, that relationship is overshadowed by her own claim (note φάσκε at line 306) that she slept with

Poseidon and gave birth to two children from him ⁷¹. The use of the speech verb φάσκε reminds us that it is the heroine's own story that we are about to hear. What that means becomes evident once we turn to her children, whose fate occupies the remaining lines of the entry ⁷². In broad outline the story follows well-known traditions about the twins' enormous size (*Od.*, XI, 311-312), their outrageous attempt to attack Olympus (*Od.*, XI, 313-316) and finally their killing by Apollo (*Od.*, XI, 318). Minor omissions, such as the binding of Ares, which is reported in *Il.*, V, 385-391, do not perhaps carry any real significance. But in other respects the story does differ fundamentally from any other known account – and it differs in ways that I would argue are fundamental to Homer's 'poetics of Hades'.

Iphimedeia's story, I argue, is told from the perspective of the loving mother, who cannot help but see her children in a favourable light even when it comes to hubristic exploits such as their assault on Mount Olympus. The tone is compassionate throughout: even before Otos and Ephialtes are named we hear that they were short-lived (*Od.*, XI, 307). With this reference to the early death of the twins, Iphimedeia looks ahead to the event in her life that affected her the most. The Greek conveys her loving regret: μυννθάδιος carries a strong emotive charge in Homer, capturing the regret of loving parents at the premature death of a child ⁷³. Here, the word suggests a *captatio benevolentiae* in circumstances where sympathy for the children is particularly hard to come by.

Otos and Ephialtes themselves are affectionately described in a total of 5 lines (*Od.*, XI, 309-313). *Bona fide* heroic epithets (ἀντίθεον and τηλεκλειτόν at *Od.*, XI, 308) belie the blasphemous act these men are about to commit ⁷⁴. In fact the entire account of their lives is interspersed with

71. The verb φάσκε was used also in the account of Tyro, another famous lover of Poseidon (*Od.*, XI, 236-237). For Iphimedeia see Emily D. T. VERMEULE (1964, p. 294), who notes the presence of the heroine's name in Linear B tablets from Mycenae and argues that she was a Mycenaean chthonic deity, demoted in later mythic tradition to the role of mother of the Giants.

72. A. HEUBECK and A. HOEKSTRA (1990, p. 96) note that the poet presupposes general knowledge of the legend on the part of the audience. It is also mentioned in the *Iliad* (V, 385-391), Hesiod, *Cat.*, fr. 19-21 M.-W., Pindar, *Pyth.*, IV, 88ff. and Apollodorus, *Bibl.*, I, 7, 4. See A. HARDIE (2006) for discussion of the myth's transmission and meaning. For the representation of the twins in art see Erika SIMON (1962), and for a semiotic interpretation of the myth see H. M. DEAL, Nancy FELSON-RUBIN (1980).

73. *Il.*, I, 352 (mother), IV, 478 (parents), XVII, 302 (parents), XXI, 84 (mother); cf. *Il.*, XV, 612, of Zeus' father-like concern for Hector.

74. Hence the scholiast's attempt to attach a negative meaning to at least one of the two epithets: ΣΗ ad *Od.*, XI, 308: τηλεκλειτόν τ' Ἐφιάλην: περιβόητον ἐπ' ἀνδρεία ἢ ἐπι βλασφημία.

words and expressions of affection. For instance, after we have been told that Otos and Ephialtes grew to gigantic proportions, we hear that they were not only the largest but also the most beautiful of all men, second only to Orion (*Od.*, XI, 310). This reference to the Aloades' beauty stands in sharp contrast with the common view of the twins as monstrous creatures⁷⁵. Needless to say, this is how Iphimedeia imagines Otos and Ephialtes, not Odysseus or the poet: despite their monstrous size, which she also admits, their loving mother remembers them as the most beautiful creatures of all.

What follows seriously challenges Iphimedeia's recollection of her children as paragons of beauty and virtue. But she remains unshaken: when the two wage war on Olympus, she only recalls that they would have succeeded if they had reached adolescence (*Od.*, XI, 317). The tone comes close here to that of Iliadic battle narrative, with its mournful epitaphs on warriors killed before their prime⁷⁶. Iphimedeia regrets not the hubris of Otos and Ephialtes but rather the fact that they were killed before reaching their prime and succeeding in their endeavour.

In the final two lines of the story the tone becomes even more intimate, with the heroine remembering her gigantic sons as flowers that were cut before they could blossom (ἀνθήσαι, ἔθανθεί, *Od.*, XI, 320). Two Homeric hapaxes close to each other (319: ἰούλους; 320: εὐανθεί) add colour and emotional intensity to the text. Much of this recalls Stesichorus' *Geryoneis*, with its use of a mother's perspective to make room for emotional and linguistic experimentation⁷⁷. Indeed, more perhaps than any other entry in the 'Catalogue of Heroines', that of Iphimedeia illustrates my claim that the Underworld narrative of *Odyssey* XI enables Homer to explore narrative themes and registers that are self-consciously alternative to those of epic. Iphimedeia's story challenges tradition not by omitting or highlighting events but instead by reevaluating them through one's character's subjective take on the past. Only in Hades, or in the lyric poetry of a Stesichorus, can monsters like the Aloades be presented in an affectionate way.

With Iphimedeia the 'Catalogue of Heroines' has reached its poetic and emotional climax. What follows amounts to not much more than an efficient

75. The scholiast perceptively comments on the studied precision of these lines and adds that the bodies are well-proportioned, ΣV *ad Od.*, XI, 312: δαιμόνιος ἢ ἀκρίβεια. ἀνάλογον γὰρ σῶμα οὗ τὸ πλάτος τρίτον ἐστὶ τοῦ μήκους.

76. See for instance *Il.*, VIII, 155-156 and XXII, 421-423.

77. See *Ger.*, fr. 6 (Curtis). For the *Geryoneis* see Evanthia TSITSIBAKOU-VASALOS (1993), Alexandra ROZOKI (2008), Christina FRANZEN (2009) and the recent edition with commentary by P. CURTIS (ed.) (2011).

denouement. Odysseus now speeds up his account, presenting the final six women in only seven lines ⁷⁸:

Φαίδρην τε Πρόκριν τε ἴδον καλήν τ' Ἀριάδην,
 κούρην Μίνωος ὀλοόφρονος, ἦν ποτε Θησεὺς
 ἐκ Κρήτης ἐς γουνὸν Ἀθηνάων ἱεράων
 ἦγε μὲν, οὐδ' ἀπόνητο· πάρος δέ μιν Ἄρτεμις ἔκτα
 325 Δίῃ ἐν ἄμφιρῦτῃ Διονύσου μαρτυρήσιν.
 Μαῖρᾶν τε Κλυμένην τε ἴδον στυγερὴν τ' Ἐριφύλην,
 ἣ χρυσὸν φίλου ἀνδρὸς ἐδέξατο τιμήντα. (*Od.*, XI, 321-327.)

I saw Phaidra and Procris and beautiful Ariadne
 the daughter of baleful Minos, who Theseus once
 led from Crete to the high hill of sacred Athens
 but did not enjoy her since first Artemis killed her
 on sea girted Dia on the account of Dionysus.
 I saw also Maira and Clymene and hateful Eriphyle
 who accepted gold in exchange for her dear husband.

In the first group only Ariadne's story is briefly given, whereas Phaidra and Procris are only mentioned by name. Ariadne is called beautiful (*Od.*, XI, 321) and as usual in the Catalogue is characterised by her relations to men: she is the daughter of Minos (*Od.*, XI, 322) and the lover of Theseus ⁷⁹. However, Ariadne was killed, before reaching Athens, by Artemis at Dia on the testimony of Dionysus (XI, 324-325). There appears to be a slight divergence here from later tradition, according to which Theseus abandoned Ariadne at Dia and Dionysus married her instead, but the account is too brief to allow for any conclusions to be drawn ⁸⁰. With the next group of heroines Odysseus' narrative is even more rushed, presenting the final three women in a flash. Maira, Clymene and Eriphyle pass before our eyes, but only latter receives an epithet and a line that sums up her story. The reference to 'hated' Eriphyle who betrayed her husband (*Od.*, XI, 326-

78. Cf. H. EISENBERGER (1973, p. 178) and A. HEUBECK, A. HOEKSTRA (1990), p. 97. Elisabeth MINCHIN (2001, p. 92) argues that catalogues in the *Odyssey* have a "mounting intensity" rather than gaining in pace before an interruption.

79. Minos appears later in the *Nékyia* (*Od.*, XI, 567-570) where Odysseus calls him Διὸς ἀγλαὸν υἱὸν (*Od.*, XI, 567), thus creating an apparent discrepancy with ὀλοόφρονος in the account of Ariadne. Ancient scholars noticed the problem and proposed either that Minos is baleful towards the ones he judges in Hades or that the judge Minos and the father of Ariadne are two different persons, see ΣQ and T *ad Od.*, XI, 322. T. B. L. WEBSTER (1966, p. 23), on the other hand, argues that the epithet is appropriate as it refers to the stance Minos had against Theseus, the main character in Ariadne's life. For the meaning of ὀλοόφρων see V. J. MATTHEWS (1978), A. HEUBECK, A. HOEKSTRA (1990, p. 52) and also *Lfgre s.v.*

80. For a discussion of the myth throughout antiquity see T. B. L. WEBSTER (1966). For the story of Ariadne's abandonment see Plutarch, *Thes.*, XX. Finally see Σ B.Q. *ad Od.*, XI, 325, where it is stated that Ariadne was killed because she had intercourse with Theseus in the sacred grove of Dionysus at Dia, hence leading to the god's anger.

327) suggests that we have left behind the world of female-focalised narrative. As the shades fade away the women's voices are replaced by the familiar voice of Odysseus, bringing us back to the reality of Scheria and the issues at hand.

3. Conclusions

The *Nékyia*, I have argued, showcases Odysseus' extraordinary ability to penetrate the darkness of Hades and thus to meet and converse with the shades of the dead. In the 'Catalogue of Heroines' that follows the first three meetings Odysseus has in Hades, the theme of seeing in the dark becomes, if anything, even more prominent: Odysseus uses the verb ἰδεῖν or εἰσιδεῖν a total of ten times. With the theme of 'seeing' comes an emphasis on poetic representation: Odysseus gains access to the past in an analogous manner to Homer when he narrates events in the traditional 'vivid' song of the Muses, to which we have no access.

Yet, Odysseus is no bard and cannot rely on the Muses for inspiration. Elsewhere in Homer, this is a hindrance but in Hades, where even the gods' vision fails, Odysseus' reliance on first-hand experience becomes a source of strength. In *Odyssey* XI, the divine knowledge of the Muses is mediated by the human gaze of the traveller Odysseus and that gaze brings with it a shift in poetic emphasis. When Odysseus encounters the heroines in his catalogue, all the traditional elements of Hesiodic *ehoiai* poetry are there: the catalogue form, the focus on women, the brief introduction of the heroines and their relationships with the male figures in their lives. Yet, an important difference can also be seen: although Odysseus informs us only intermittently that he relates the stories of the women as they told them I argue that that is precisely what he does throughout the catalogue. So, instead of just telling the story of Tyro or Epicaste or Iphimedeia as a bard might have done, he (re)produces their own very partial narratives full of personal longing and regret. At a fairly basic level, there is good reason why that should be so: in order to access the past without the aid of the Muses, Odysseus literally needs to visit its representatives in Hades, to see them, hear their stories and then relate them to his audience. But the exercise, it would appear, takes on a poetic significance of its own, allowing Odysseus (and Homer) to tell stories that seem more akin to the lyric experimentations of a Stesichorus than the voice of the epic bard.

In line with the experimental nature of *Odyssey* XI, each heroine approaches her past in a different way. Tyro for instance seizes the opportunity to break her silence and name Poseidon as the father of her children, neglecting the god's warning not to reveal him. Antiope too boasts a divine lover, but focuses on a revisionist story of her sons: she insists that they

built and fortified Thebes, thus silencing competing traditions about Cadmus. Two more heroines choose to gloss over uncomfortable aspects of their past, though not in order to elevate their offspring but rather in an attempt to erase the memory of their deeds. Thus Epicaste does not mention any children from her marriage to Oedipus, and Leda suppresses her affair with Zeus as well as the birth of her daughters, Helen and Clytemnestra. Chloris shifts the emphasis from her sons to her daughter, and Iphimedeia, finally, presents in a positive light even her sons' attempt to conquer the Olympians.

One thing, however, remains stable in all this variety: the Catalogue showcases how well-known traditions of epic can be recast in Underworld narrative. Odysseus' visit to Hades allows new voices to be heard and old stories to be told differently. There is a revisionist potential to the 'poetics of Hades' which will become important in the second half of the *Nékyia*. For the positive reaction which Odysseus receives from his Phaeacian audience clears the path for the recasting of the hero's own tradition through the interviews with the shades of his Trojan War companions in the second part of the *Nékyia*.

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