

The Best of the Olympians:
The Character of Apollo in the Homeric Epics and Hymns

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Abstract

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This dissertation is primarily a character study of the god Apollo in Homeric poetry. A close analysis of Apollo's characterization over the course of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* reveals that this god, who has been the topic of few dedicated Homeric studies, serves a synthesizing function in the overarching narrative of the Homeric Epics. By foregrounding Apollo and enlisting poems where the god is the main focus, such as the Homeric Hymns, I argue that, over the course of the Homeric Epics, Apollo undergoes a type of coming-of-age story that is highly correlated with the depiction of "the Best of the Achaeans," an epithet that is associated with Achilles in the *Iliad* and Odysseus in the *Odyssey*. Whereas the Iliadic relationship between Apollo and Achilles is characterized by antagonism, misrecognition, and fragmentation, the opposite is true in the *Odyssey*, during which a symbiosis develops between the same god and Odysseus. This complex progression of Apollo's story, with its ultimate emphasis on unification,

tracks closely with the panhellenic dynamics that were dominant in a crucial period in the evolution of Homeric poetry itself.

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Introduction

I believe that it is not an exaggeration to say that, as the god of music and poetry, Apollo would have a special role within the Homeric Epics.¹ Although recent monographs have been dedicated to this god, there have been no modern attempts to study his characterization in Homeric poetry exclusively, and his role therefore comes to the fore by dint of comparison with other gods or with individual heroes.² It may have been noted that the title of this study is, at least in part, a playful nod to Nagy's groundbreaking study of Homeric poetics, *The Best of the Achaeans*, which, in advancing theories of the Homeric Epics evolution in the oral tradition, added specificity to the definition of the Greek hero. Although the hero, and Achilles in particular, is the primary focus of his book, Nagy is able to explicate the nature of other characters and gods by virtue of their relationship to the main hero, the "best of the Achaeans," an epithet that, though it is attached to a number of characters that feature in limited micro-narratives, Nagy concludes, "Achilles deserves in the *Iliad* while Odysseus comes to hold it in the *Odyssey*" (1999b, 35). As the title of my dissertation suggests, however, I will shift the focus from hero to god, and this change in perspective leads my study in an independent direction, as it seeks to explain a major, but often overlooked, aspect of Apollo's characterization in the Homeric Epics. Namely, the god who is the steadfast opponent to the Achaean's enterprise at Troy, and to Achilles in particular in the *Iliad*, also becomes a patron to the success of Odysseus' homecoming at Ithaca in the *Odyssey*. Apollo, therefore, stands next to "the best of the

¹ We find this jurisdiction of the god highlighted at the end of Book 1 in the *Iliad*, when Apollo plays the lyre and leads the Muses in song (1.601-604). In the balance of this study, I will use the term "Homeric Epics" to refer to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* collectively.

² For a recent monograph on Apollo generally, both his role in cult and in myth, see Graf (2009). Apollo is the point of focus in Miller's study of Roman literature (2009).

Achaean” in both poems, and, in terms of the relationship between main hero and god, a narrative trajectory can be detected that evolves from antagonism to symbiosis.

My choice of title was also prompted by the fact that, in an integral scene within the *Iliad* that alludes to the god’s role in the death of Achilles, Apollo is actually referred to as the best of the gods (θεῶν ὄριστος, 19.413), a fact that is greeted with defiance from the poem’s main hero. This honorific comes from the mouth of one Achilles’ prophetic horses, themselves divine gifts from Poseidon, and is a curious appellation for the god to achieve in the *Iliad*, a poem that mostly depicts Apollo, even though he demonstrates his destructive potential at the outset of the epic, as participating in an antagonistic relationship with the “best of the Achaeans” that is never fully resolved, and as the recipient of slights, to which he largely demurs, from his fellow Olympians. The *Iliad*, therefore, depicts an Apollo who has yet to achieve his full status not only among the Achaeans but also his peer group, but this status can be contrasted with the *Odyssey*’s characterization of the same god, the one to whom Odysseus prays at a crucial moment during his homecoming. This is the moment when the hero achieves victory in a bow contest—a jurisdiction that itself falls under the purview of Apollo—and his triumph happens to coincide with a festival of Apollo that is being celebrated on Ithaca.

The few existing studies that center on a Homeric Apollo tend to view the god monolithically, with little attempt to explain the variances in the god’s characterization found in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Indeed, there are enough significant differences that one could enlist them in a separatist argument, but, on the contrary, I maintain that there are thematic motivations for these variations and that they are a key unifying force between the two poems.³ Specifically, the

³ Although an acknowledgement by most of the oral nature of the Homeric epics has led to scholarly debate about the unity of their genesis, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* seem to respond to one another at a high level in a number of thematic categories. As Burgess suggests, “perhaps the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*

trajectory of the super-narrative⁴ of the Homeric Epics, I contend, depicts a coming-of-age story for Apollo, a story that parallels the evolution of the “best of the Achaeans,” where the unsuccessful maturation of the Iliadic Achilles, who is prophecized to be cut down in his prime by the arrows of Apollo, can be contrasted with the fulfillment of Odysseus’ potential, which reaches its apotheosis under the aegis of Apollo. The reading that I will put forth, therefore, posits that Apollo plays a cohesive role in the Homeric Epics, where the “best of Achaeans” can be contrasted not only through their primary characteristics, but in their contrasting attitudes toward Apollo, in which the aggression and even hostility of the former hero gives way to the respect and reliance of the latter.⁵

The coming-of-age story of Apollo that I sketch out over the next chapters occurs over the super-narrative of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, where images of fragmentation and antagonism in the former poem eventually give way to unity and symbiosis in the latter.⁶ This movement

eventually became valued enough, not least for their sociopolitical functions, that they became stabilized in reperformance" (2009, 3). For alternate theories on composition, see West (2011) and (2014).

⁴ I use this term super-narrative to describe the over-arching story that I see occurring over the course of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Nagy employs the term micro-narrative to define individual characters and scenes that provide context for the macro-narrative of the main hero in the *Iliad*.

⁵ Many have noted that Achilles is a champion of force (βίη) and Odysseus of artifice (mêtis). See, in particular, Nagy, who examines these differences within a “best of Achaeans” theme, and specifically the tradition of a quarrel between these two that is alluded to in the *Odyssey* (1999b, 45). In the foreword of the revised edition of “The Best of the Achaeans,” Nagy sees the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as a complementary system within the “best of Achaeans” theme: “just as Achilles emerges as the “best of the Achaeans” in the *Iliad*, so too Odysseus becomes “best of the Achaeans” in the *Odyssey*. Moreover, the kléos or epic glory of Achilles in the *Iliad* is both complemented and contested by the kléos of Odysseus in the *Odyssey*.”

⁶ It has long been noted that the *Odyssey* does not explicitly repeat material from the *Iliad* (“Monro’s law” (1901, 325)). As opposed to commentators such as Page (1955, 158), who concludes, based on Monro’s law, that the Homeric Epics were separate entities, Nagy believes such avoidance is itself proof of an awareness: “If the avoidance was indeed deliberate, it would mean that the *Odyssey* displays an awareness of the *Iliad* by steering clear of it. Or, rather, it may be a matter of evolution” (1999b, 21). Increasingly arguments have been forwarded that are dependent on the assumption that the traditions that evolved into our Homeric Epics were aware of and alluded to one another (Burgess, J. 2003), and some have asserted an even stronger intertextual relationship between these poems, arguing that both were eventually fixed into written texts, and intertextual allusions can be detected that refer to these specific texts. For these arguments, see especially Pucci (1987) and Tsagalis (2008).

somewhat mirrors prevailing theories on the development of the poems themselves, tracking closely with the panhellenic evolution of the Greek city-states. Nagy holds, for example, that, as the Homeric Epics evolved, they moved from an early period of "multiformity" to one of "centralized diffusion," and essential to this process would be a performative context that allowed for a gathering of diverse groups and the subsequent dispersal of a more unified tradition. In this evolutionary model, multiformity would not completely cease to exist but the poems would rather become more rigid over time, continuing into the Hellenistic period. Despite this movement toward uniformity, the poems would nevertheless retain vestiges of the relatively earlier localized traditions. The large panhellenic religious festivals that began to occur in the 8th century would have started this process of centralization, with the Panathenaea and performance reforms of the Pisistridae, where the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were performed at regular intervals, serving as particularly important phase in the movement toward uniformity in the 6th century (Nagy, G. 2001, 111). Moreover, According to Nagy, the competition between Achilles and Odysseus for the title of "the best of the Achaeans" and its attendant kléos "could have been achieved only through sustained artistic reaction to the predilections of audiences who listened generation after generation to the kléos of the Achaeans" (1999b, 41).

To highlight the coming-of-age story of Apollo that occurs over the course of the Homeric Epics, I begin by examining a number of mutually-reinforcing characteristics that can be found in the god Apollo and the hero Achilles in the *Iliad*. In my first chapter, I examine how diction normally associated with mortal heroes can also be found in the divine sphere, and more specifically, how the notion of fame (κλέος) is a particular concern for the young Apollo. Nagy has convincingly demonstrated that κλέος is bound up with the idea of the type of immortal fame that is conferred by poetry and that Achilles is its main recipient in the *Iliad* (1999b, 16, *passim*).

To see Apollo as achieving this type of fame, we therefore need to broaden our perspective of this god's influence as existing beyond the narrative confines of the *Iliad*. It has long been noted that Achilles and Apollo share certain physical traits, and Nagy makes a strong case that the anger of the god and the hero are somehow related.⁷ I put forth an argument that the fame of Apollo and that of Achilles are, through their antagonistic relationship, mutually dependent, but that the god will be the ultimate beneficiary of κλέος outside the explicit parameters of this poem. That the god will be the eventual victor in this contest is evident both through allusions to hero cult and to the death of Achilles in the *Iliad*, and, by contrast, through the eventual symbiotic relationship that will be achieved between Odysseus and Apollo in the *Odyssey*.

In my second chapter, I analyze how the Iliadic characterization of Apollo portrays, in essence, a bifurcated personality, in which, on the one hand, he arrives as the destructive far-shooting god, whose aloofness from the Achaeans is indicated largely by a penchant for archery, but, on the other, he also demonstrates a capacity to heal, a function that is also linked to unifying function of poetry and music. The polar extremes of this god's personality are already on display in the Book One of the *Iliad*. Also in my second chapter, I begin to probe how this poem suggests the localized aspects of his personality by employing subsidiary characters who possess external markers of a local affiliation with Apollo, but whose success or failure, also points to the eventual prioritization of the god's beneficent attributes. To that end, I conclude the chapter by arguing that, while the poem largely eschews explicit reference to Apollo's center of prophecy and cultic influence, Delphi, the god's presence is truly felt in his ability to control the scope of the *Iliad*'s macro-narrative, positioning him as a metapoetic force, a role that will spill over into the *Odyssey*.

⁷ For the physical similarities of the hero and the god, who are both depicted as perpetually epebic, see Burkert (1975, 11).

The final chapters of this study then become more comparative in nature, not only deepening the contrast between Achilles and Odysseus within the Apolline framework of the Homeric Epics but also demonstrating that themes that evoke this contrast exist within the Homeric Hymns and other forms of archaic poetry. Although Apollo does not directly appear as a character within the narrative of the *Odyssey*, I argue in my third chapter that his presence is nevertheless felt in motifs that are evident during Odysseus' own evolution over the course of the poem. It can be said, for example, that the *Iliad* begins with the anger of Apollo, and the *Odyssey* with the anger of Helios, and I pursue a number of thematic elements that introduce parallels between these gods, such as their capacity both to destroy and to bring delight. The proem of the *Odyssey* has long been faulted for the emphasis that it places on the Helios episode, but Odysseus, unlike his crew, escapes his solar escapade unharmed, leading to a fundamental change in his relationship with the gods, and ultimately with Apollo.

To support this thesis and to highlight additional contrasts between the Iliadic Achilles and Odysseus in the *Odyssey vis a vis* their relationship to Apollo, I open up the comparative analysis further, introducing certain Homeric Hymns that feature Apollo prominently. While most would place the creation of the Hymns after that of Homeric Epics, I contend that the latter poems contain evidence of suppressing certain signifiers of Apollo's influence that would become more pronounced in the late-Archaic and early-Classical period, an indicator that the poems can often be more archaizing than archaic.⁸ It would be an easy enough matter for the Homeric Epics to completely eradicate any reference to, say, the wealth of Delphi, but they not only leave traces of its existence on the surface of the poem but also allude to the site of Apollo's oracle in crucial scenes, and the same situation holds true for the other major site of this god's

⁸ This tendency can also be detected in, say, the lack of explicit reference to hero cult. For this argument, see in particular Nagy (2012).

influence, Delos. This leads me to conclude that the Epics were well aware of the underlying traditions that gave shape to the Delian and Delphic mythology centering around Apollo's birth and eventual ascendancy to the Olympian pantheon, if not to the extant Homeric Hymns themselves. The *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, which chronicles a competitive cattle raid between siblings and provides an exemplum of an evolution from an antagonistic to a symbiotic relationship, is featured heavily in my concluding chapters, as is the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, where both Hymns become important lenses through which to assess the Apolline associations of "the best of the Achaeans."

My final chapters also contrast, using an Apolline framework, the conclusion of the *Iliad* with the homecoming of Odysseus. Whereas the former ends with images that are rife with misrecognition, betokening the continuation of strife and the ongoing rift between the mortal and divine spheres, the success of the latter is predicated on scenes of recognition between husband and wife and their successful prayers to Apollo, ushering in a moment where hero and god almost seemingly become one during a festival in the god's honor, and where, I contend, the hero will become the vehicle that brings the god's unfulfilled boasts from the *Iliad* to fruition. If Apollo's bow and lyre were separate entities in the *Iliad*, serving as yet another symbol of fragmentation, these instruments are brought into harmonious accord in the hands of Odysseus, who, like Apollo, must destroy before he can unite. Unlike certain Iliadic characters, however, Odysseus has no apparent aspirations to godhood, and the conclusion of the *Odyssey* shows him reestablishing order by carefully delineating a hierarchal structure that places the figure of the poet at its epicenter, with Apollo implicitly rising to his rightful position of honor. The overarching reading of the Homeric Epics that I put forth, therefore, highlights this god's evolution to the force that has wide generic jurisdiction over poetry in general, and, as such, the

end result is a narrative that depicts a fulfillment of Apollo's potential. This study concludes with an analysis of a genre that actively seeks to celebrate Apollo, the paeon, and, more specifically, with a close examination of Pindar's *Paeon 6*. With this poem as my final focus, I assert that the underlying structure and implicit message of this literary paeon is evident in the Homeric Epics as well. In the end, both are celebrations of the power of poetry to unite—all under the aegis of Apollo.

Chapter 1. Apollo at Olympus: A Background for the God's Anger in the *Iliad*

Although the *Iliad* generally highlights the present action of the unfolding Trojan War, it often hints, through allusion or partial reference, at mythological backstories that, given their brevity or seeming incompleteness, can easily be discounted as being relatively insignificant to the poem as a whole. Often, however, these references can prove to be illuminating in providing a fuller understanding of an individual character or in offering commentary on the broader thematics of the poem. Slatkin, for example, has demonstrated that the role of Thetis takes on additional significance if we understand her power over Zeus as stemming from a prophecy concerning a potential threat from Achilles, a threat that is only hinted at in the *Iliad* and that is elucidated more clearly in theogenic literature. In her preface to *The Power of Thetis*, Slatkin stresses the general importance of understanding such truncated references:

For an audience that knows the mythological range of each character, divine or human, not only through this epic song but through other songs, epic and non-epic the poet does not spell out the myth in its entirety but locates a character within it through allusion or oblique reference. He thereby incorporates into his narrative another discourse, one that makes its appearance on the surface of the poem through oblique references, ellipses, or digressions, evoking for his audience themes that orient or supplement the events of the poem in particular ways. What becomes instrumental in this mode of composition is not only what the poet articulates by way of bringing a given myth (with its associated themes) into play, in relation to his narrative, but also what is left unsaid; for his audience would hear this as well.

(1991, XV)

In this chapter, I put forth a reconstruction of the "story" of Apollo that effectively predates his dramatic entry into the poem, and, to do so, I will bring together a number of allusions, oblique references, and vignettes in the *Iliad* that have to do with his early life. When these references are assembled into a cohesive whole, we can begin to perceive a plot line in the poem that celebrates a type of coming-of-age story, as it were, wherein Apollo is depicted as being in the

process of ascending to his lofty status and assuming his role among the pantheon of Olympian gods.

It has been noted that the assemblage of the gods into the Olympian pantheon is part of the same reflex that can be detected in the panhellenicizing tendencies of the *Iliad*, in which references to local cults and potentially associated myths are suppressed in the service of a more universal construct.⁹ In the eighth century BCE, as the Homeric epics were approaching the forms known to us, one such panhellenicizing trend outside of the poems themselves was the development of Apollo's sanctuary at Delphi,¹⁰ but there is only one scant reference in the poem to the seat of the god's prophetic influence. The *Iliad*, therefore, doesn't completely eradicate the existence of this institution within the scope of its narrative – a move that it could have easily accomplished – but leaves traces of its presence on the surface of the poem for thematic effect, and I will pursue this effect in more detail in a subsequent chapter. I bring up Delphi here by way of analogy, since the poem only has a few explicit references to Apollo's career that antedate the action of the poem, and they are presented in a rather desultory fashion, replete with seeming inconsistencies, but I hope to arrange them in such a way as to demonstrate their thematic importance in shaping our overall view of Apollo within the *Iliad*.

To accomplish this, my reading of Apollo's story in the *Iliad* will rely heavily on connecting the diction normally associated with Homeric heroes to the vocabulary that we find associated with the young god's dealings with his fellow Olympians, especially Poseidon.

Muellner broke ground with his extensive analysis of the word εὐχομαι (pray/boast/proclaim),

⁹ See Nagy, who states, "From the internal evidence of its contents, we see that this poetic tradition synthesizes the diverse local traditions of each major city-state into a unified PanHellenic model that suits most city-states but corresponds exactly to none; the best example is the Homeric concept of the Olympian gods, which incorporates, yet goes beyond, the localized religious traditions of each city-state" (1999b, 7). Clay pursues a similar argument in connection to the *Homeric Hymns* (1989).

¹⁰ For an archeological perspective on these trends, see Snodgrass (2006).

demonstrating how Homeric heroes proclaim their excellence and obtain glory (κλέος) in a given field upon their success on the battlefield (1976, 76–83). Nagy, in turn, has shown how the notion of κλέος is integral to our understanding of the Homeric hero, particularly Achilles, and of the artistic agenda of the poem itself (1999b, 16, *passim*). If we turn to the divine sphere, however, we will find that the poem applies a similar dictional register to Apollo's relationship with other Olympians. The first section of this chapter explores how these dictional parallels indicate that Apollo, like a Homeric hero, is involved in a struggle for status, contending within the action of the poem to assert his domain or realms of power. In the second section, I connect these themes with the celebrated anger of Apollo that dramatically colors the opening of the poem, and, through a close assessment of the vocabulary of anger, primarily μῆνις and χόλος, I further refine a thematic reading of the god's character in the *Iliad*.

Heroic Diction and the Early Career of Apollo in the *Iliad*

Apollo makes a dramatic entrance within the first 100 lines of *Iliad*, and the anger of the god, whose wrathful arrows fell countless Achaeans, has garnered its fair share of critical attention. In his extensive study of the Greek hero, Nagy, for example, has productively mined the parallels between the anger of Apollo and that of Achilles to demonstrate that the portrayal of this hero is uniquely shaped by the diction normally associated with the divine sphere and most specifically with Apollo.¹¹ Although I will eventually turn to this topic, I have chosen to begin this chapter on Apollo in the *Iliad* not with a focus on the god's famous entrance into the poem but rather on some comparatively obscure references in the poem to his early life. I believe this approach has several merits, not the least of which is that it will allow for a focus on the

¹¹ In particular, Nagy notes that "*álgea* in the diction of the *Iliad* may denote two kinds of grief for the Achaeans: (1) the plague resulting from the *mēnis* of Apollo and (2) the dire military situation resulting from the *mēnis* of Achilles" (1999b, 75).

development of Apollo as a character in the poem, since these references to his early career at Troy, though they appear late in the narrative, provide potential motivation for his actions throughout the *Iliad*. By analyzing these scenes first, we will, in effect, be piecing together Apollo's Iliadic chronological biography. In addition, this approach will also help to illustrate my contention that if we invert Nagy's focus and lay emphasis on how this particular god is shaped by the dictional choices normally associated with the largely secular sphere of heroes, we will uncover a uniquely Iliadic Apollo, a representation of the god that seems to be formed more by the pull of the overall thematics of the poem rather than the push of cultic influence.¹²

There is no detectable reference to the birth of Apollo in the *Iliad*, and his earliest exploit in the poem hinges on his rather strange early connection with Troy, where he takes part in building its illustrious walls. We learn of the curious story of the creation of Troy's sturdy walls from the god Poseidon, who refers to them in comparison to a new structure that has just been built by the Achaeans. After they lose a number of men, the Achaeans create a communal burial mound, outfitting it with ramparts and a defensive trench, all of which is so cunningly wrought that the Olympian gods stop and marvel, but it instead causes Poseidon to lament,

‘Ζεῦ πάτερ, ἦ ρά τις ἐστὶ βροτῶν ἐπ’ ἀπείρονα γαῖαν
 ὅς τις ἔτ’ ἀθανάτοισι νόον καὶ μῆτιν ἐνίψει;
 οὐχ ὀράας ὅτι δ’ αὐτε κάρη κομόωντες Ἀχαιοὶ
 τεῖχος ἐτειχίσσαντο νεῶν ὕπερ, ἀμφὶ δὲ τάφρον
 ἤλασαν, οὐδὲ θεοῖσι δόσαν κλειτὰς ἐκατόμβας;
 τοῦ δ’ ἦτοι κλέος ἔσται ὅσον τ’ ἐπικίδναται ἠώς;
 τοῦ δ’ ἐπιλήσονται τὸ ἐγὼ καὶ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων
 ἦρω Λαομέδοντι πολίσσαμεν ἀθλήσαντε.

Father Zeus, is there any man of the mortals on the boundless earth
 who still will tell his purpose and plan to the immortals?
 Don't you see that the unshorn Achaeans—they again—

¹² Burkert, who has extensively studied both sides of this equation, the myth and cult of Apollo, states that the evolution of Apollo into a unified presence "is due probably more than the case of the other gods to the power of poetry (1981, 145).

have built a wall in defense of their ships, and have drawn a trench around it, and they did not give to the immortals splendid hecatombs?
 Surely its fame will continue as far as the light of dawn spreads.
 And they will forget the one that Phoebus Apollo and I
 built in toil for the hero Laomedon.¹³

(7.446-453)

This Achaean wall and ditch serve a number of significant functions within the narrative, as Tsagalis notes: "(1) they help the narrator pin down the various phases of both the Achaean retreat and the Trojan attack, as Zeus starts fulfilling the promise he made to Thetis in *Iliad* I; (2) they function as a means of intratextual misdirection, creating the illusion of safety for the Achaeans; and (3) they delay the return of Achilles to the war" (2012, 103–4). Other commentators have also taken note of the importance of the wall, but few offer an explanation for the visceral reaction that it elicits in Poseidon,¹⁴ which in my view, is the passage's most remarkable component, specifically the notion that an Olympian god is concerned that the fame (κλέος) of a man-made creation will eclipse that of a divinity.

The Greek word κλέος is typically translated as "glory" or "fame," but this does not capture the full scope of its importance in the Homeric epics. The concern for κλέος is usually the jurisdiction of Homeric heroes. It is κλέος, for example, that will serve as a solace for Achilles when he trades a long life and successful return home (νόστος) for a short, glorious career at Troy, as the hero succinctly states, ὄλετο μὲν μοι νόστος, ἀτὰρ κλέος ἄφθιτον ἔσται (a

¹³ All translations are mine, unless otherwise noted.

¹⁴ The exception to this is Maitland, who frames the episode, and its connection to others, as an ongoing rivalry between Poseidon and Zeus and states, "In the Homeric poems, Poseidon is a jealous god. He resents wall-building and navigation, two fundamental skills of the growing community. The voice of reason, pointing out that no deity need be threatened by such endeavors, is allocated to Zeus, as the future embodiment of those principles important to the established community: justice, hospitality, the keeping of oaths" (1999, 11). I, however, will focus on the meaning of the contentious relationship between Poseidon and Apollo, which will be discernible when we come to additional episodes that pick up on the theme of the Achaean wall.

return home was lost for me, but there will be imperishable fame, *Il.* 9.413).¹⁵ Partly for this reason, a Homeric hero may be willing to fight and die for κλέος, which is a compensation that allows one to attain an existence that approximates that of the gods, whose natural lifespans are themselves imperishable. If left there, this definition of κλέος, with its emphasis on immortality, would seem to be less of a concern for the gods than the mortal heroes, but Poseidon implies that his and Apollo's creation is, in effect, in competition with the κλέος of the Achaean wall. If we refine the concept of κλέος and the specifics of its imperishable nature, however, it is possible to see why the *Iliad* might portray a deity as being consumed by such a thing. In particular, as Nagy has shown, Achilles' κλέος will stem from the fame conferred by the *Iliad* itself and its confidence in its own eternal survival.¹⁶ In other words, in his desire for, or choice of, κλέος, Achilles evinces a metapoetic self-consciousness of the importance of the poem in which he appears, and he achieves this fame by being the main character of what Nagy calls the "macro-Narrative" (2013, 1§21–25).

Although, in the passage under review, Poseidon initially laments that humans have neglected to offer sacrifice, he later focuses his concern on the Greek wall and declares that its κλέος will cause humans to forget (ἐπιλήσονται, 7.452) the one at Troy built by him and Apollo. His complaint, then, goes beyond a desire to be acknowledged through sacrifice, which, among other things, is a form of being mindful of the gods through ritual. Specifically, his concern is

¹⁵ The word κλέος can be formulaically paired with the adjective ἄφθιτον (imperishable), as it is here, to convey the eternal nature of the fame. Nagy sees this collocation, which is present in other poems such as the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, as a reflex of "a common Indo-European poetic expression" (1992, 122–43).

¹⁶ He shows the word's connection to the production of poetry, stating "*kléos* should have meant simply 'that which is heard' (from *klúō* 'hear'), and indeed the poet hears *kléos* recited to him by the Muses (again, *Iliad* II 486). But then it is actually he who recites it to his audience. Here the artist's inherited message about himself is implicit but unmistakable. In a word, the Hellenic poet is the master of *kléos*. 'That which is heard', *kléos*, comes to mean 'glory' because it is the poet himself who uses the word to designate what he hears from the Muses and what he tells the audience" (Nagy, G. 1999b, 16).

that a human creation will supersede a divine one, leading to the latter being forgotten. Given that the act of forgetting is linked to darkness and even death in early Greek poetics,¹⁷ it can be said that Poseidon here is, in a certain way, evincing a worry about his own immortality. This may seem like a strange concern to put in the mouth of a deathless god, and an Olympian no less, who was celebrated throughout the Greek world and was the ongoing recipient of cult.

Although gods are, by their very nature, immortal and cannot die, the *Iliad* nevertheless employs a number of metaphors that are close approximations of death for a god. These metaphors include being injured, as occurs to Aphrodite (5.335–339), being bound, which Hera had once experienced (15.22–24), and being thrown out of Olympus and cast down to earth, which occurs to Hephaestus (1–590–93), among others. In this way, although the poem may seem to show the divine and mortal worlds as being distinct, the gods can indeed become enmeshed with the temporality of mankind.¹⁸ And this idea seems to frame Poseidon's concern over κλέος. If the creation of Troy's walls is under siege by the manmade structure and its attendant κλέος, it is implied the divine structure may not necessarily be permanent in the face of a κλέος that does not acknowledge the gods, and, as we shall see, this situation will require a defense that becomes tied to the poetics of the *Iliad* itself.

While the poem puts these concerns in the mouth of Poseidon, I will argue that they have even greater ramifications for Apollo. This is apparent if we first analyze the composition of the

¹⁷ This perhaps can be seen in the presence of the root of the verb ἐπιλήσονται in the word Lethe, the river of forgetfulness in the underworld. See Detienne (1967, 22–27) for an in-depth analysis on the connection between memory and light and forgetting and darkness, an idea that Nagy examines in terms of marked and unmarked speech (1990, 58–61). See Nagy, too, for the relationship between λᾶθη and its functional opposite, mnē>, "'remember, have in mind', a root that can also mean 'have the mnemonic powers of a poet' in the diction of archaic poetry" (Nagy, G. 1992, 44).

¹⁸ For an eloquently argued discussion on how the gods experience temporality, see Garcia's Chapter 5, "The Impermanence of the Permanent: The Death of the Gods?" (2013). Muellner also touches upon this theme (1998, 120). For the notion of the diminution of a gods' power through binding, see Vernant and Detienne (1991, 115–16).

wall, and then follow through on the progression of the thematics of the wall throughout the balance of the poem. The Achaean wall may be magnificent in many facets of its construction, and the poem is quick to point those out, but most significantly it is a burial mound:

ἦμος δ' οὐτ' ἄρ' πω ἠώς, ἔτι δ' ἀμφιλύκη νύξ,
 τῆμος ἄρ' ἀμφὶ πυρὴν κριτὸς ἔγρετο λαὸς Ἀχαιῶν,
 τύμβον δ' ἀμφ' αὐτὴν ἓνα ποίεον ἐξαγαγόντες
 ἄκριτον ἐκ πεδίου, ποτὶ δ' αὐτὸν τεῖχος ἔδειμαν
 πύργους θ' ὑψηλοῦς, εἴλαρ νηῶν τε καὶ αὐτῶν.

When it was not quite dawn, and still morning twilight,
 then a chosen contingent of Achaeans gathered about the pyre,
 and about it they made a single tomb, drawing it out,
 a common tomb, from the plain, and next to it they constructed a wall
 and high towers as a defense for the ships and themselves.

(7.433-37)

This construction is, in fact, not just any burial mound, but rather a mass grave of anonymous Achaean soldiers.¹⁹ Up to this point in the poem, with its compressed time frame, one of the most destructive events portrayed was the plague initiated by the anger and arrows of Apollo, which causes pyres of corpse to burn constantly on the earth (αἰεὶ δὲ πυραὶ νεκύων καίοντο θαμειαί, 1.52). After this event, the Achaeans offer up hecatombs to Apollo and a chosen contingent sing a song of appeasement, a paean, to the offended god (1.472-474), but the “best of the Achaeans,” Achilles is not in attendance at this ritual, which, as we will see, dooms its long-term success. It is noteworthy, therefore, that Poseidon’s main complaint is that the wall is constructed without a ritualistic acknowledgement of the gods, with no hecatomb having been offered. In contrast to the sacrifice and paean that temporarily brings delight to Apollo’s ears (1.472-474), the wall is a purely secular construction.

¹⁹ Garcia sees the night-time gathering of a select group of men as an "occulted activity" (2013, 100). For a review of scholarly discussion relating to Greek burial rites, see Shive (1996).

Zeus' immediate reaction to Poseidon's complaint addresses both the seeming absurdity of a gods' concern over κλέος and the potential underlying competition with Apollo.²⁰ Like a perturbed parent, Zeus scolds Poseidon for whining, reminding him, the god of the earthquake, of his status in the Olympian hierarchy. While, according to Zeus, a lesser god in strength may legitimately have such a complaint, Poseidon, whose fame already extends as far as the light of dawn, need only lift a finger to bury the Argives' wall with sand (7.454-463). Later, at the beginning of Book 12, we will learn that this in fact will happen. Poseidon and Apollo, aided by the rain of Zeus, will divert the local rivers and inundate the wall of the Greeks until it is covered in sand and completely obliterated (12.1-33).²¹ The gods here act in harmony in their destructive goal, but this is a narratorial projection that predicts an occurrence that will happen outside the scope of the poem.

While the significance of the wall has escaped the notice of most, Garcia perceptively observes that its construction is necessitated by Achilles' absence and the wall, in effect, operates as a temporary stand-in for the hero himself; and Nagy seems to be on to something when he notes that it operates as one of "the 'props' that mark the Achaean expedition" ... destined to "be obliterated once the expedition is over" and specifically that the wall as funeral marker "is consciously offered as a variant of the tradition that tells how the Achaeans had made a funeral

²⁰ Morse observes that Poseidon has a special affection for this type of fame: "No other god worries about his *kleos* in either of the Homeric epics, but plenty of Greek and Trojan warriors do" (2010, 107). Zeus' reaction here suggests that such a concern might be appropriate for a god who has yet to attain a certain status, however.

²¹ Scodel notes the peculiarity of this passage, which represents the only place in the *Iliad* where the heroes are described as semi-divine (ἡμίθεος), evoking the Hesiodic age of heroes, and she suggests, moreover, that it is the place where the Trojan War operates on the motif of a destruction myth, which may have ultimately been borrowed from a Near Eastern flood myth (1982, 32–33).

mound for the dead Achilles by the Hellespont (*Od.* 24.80–84).²² If Nagy's suspicion is correct, the potential κλέος of the wall comprised of anonymous Achaean soldiers, which is of such a concern to Poseidon, is analogous to the future marker of Achilles' hero cult, and both memorials are therefore related to Apollo, who in both extra-Iliadic tradition and the *Iliad* itself, has a role in the future death of Achilles.²³ It is therefore worthwhile to continue exploring the god's relationship with these seemingly-permanent but ultimately-ephemeral structures.

Although both of the walls, Achaean and Trojan, are projected to be temporal, we are told that as long as Hector stood, as long as Achilles continued in his anger, as long as Priam's city was unsacked, the Greek wall remained firm (ἔμπεδον ἦεν, 12.11). The Greek wall, then, frames the narrative sequence of the major events of the poem, and it stands in an uneasy balance with the fortification of Troy, but both structures are destined to fall after the poem's end.²⁴ Although a détente is predicted between the gods, and Poseidon and Apollo will eventually act in concert to bring down the Greek wall, the two are mostly in conflict during the action of the poem. Poseidon may at first pair himself with Apollo in the building of Troy's walls, but the elder god is generally pro-Achaean throughout the poem, while Apollo is the powerful patron of the Trojans and Hector. There is seemingly an incongruity, therefore, between the two gods' affiliations, based purely on their assistance in building Troy's walls, with each god backing a different side despite their formative roles in the city's origin.

²² Garcia sees both walls, Achaean and Trojan, as belonging to the "temporal order of specific heroes (Achilles and Hector) as well as that of the entire age of heroes (2013, 130). Nagy's quote is part of a suspicion he offers as a note (1999b, 9§16 n. 37).

²³ For a review of the tradition of Achilles' death, see Burgess (2009).

²⁴ Taplin argues that these walls could not be more different, with the Trojan wall having more of a sense of permanence than the makeshift nature of the Achaean wall (Taplin, O. 1995, 94), but this is refuted by Garcia, who stresses the poetic effect of the walls equivalency and who states, "the narrative achieves a sense of temporal depth through the representation of the two walls that, though integral and intact at present, are fated to be overthrown" (2013, 131).

This story is highly allusive and, if left unelaborated, would leave us wanting, but additional details are fortunately provided in Book 21 (435-467). As the hour of Hector's death approaches, the gods' positions seem to harden, and old enmities bubble to the surface. With this as a backdrop, Poseidon challenges Apollo to a fight, reminding him of their early days at Troy, where they were forced into servitude to the king Laomedon. According to Poseidon's current version of events, Zeus had sentenced these two gods alone to serve the Trojan king for a year, in return for payment. In this version, Poseidon seems to alter his earlier reference to these events, when he claimed that he and Apollo had built the walls together (7.446-453). In the later version from Book 21, there is a distinct division of labor. The elder god states that he was responsible for the construction of the walls, while Apollo attended his herds of cattle on Mt. Ida. Some have seen these two versions as contradicting one another and go on to claim the version in Book 7 was an unsatisfactory interpolation or that the stories represent variant traditions.²⁵ We, however, can perhaps see the seeds of competition between the two gods even in Poseidon's earlier description, when the two built Troy's walls while in contention (ἀθλήσαντε, 7.453),²⁶ and I argue that this competition eventually motivates a change in Poseidon's story over the course of the narrative.

Poseidon's story from Book 21 has to do with the dividing line between the Olympian gods in the *Iliad*. At the end of Apollo's and Poseidon's term of serving Laomedon, the king refuses to pay the gods, even having the temerity to threaten to lop their ears off and sell them into slavery (21.454-455). This offense drives Poseidon into his alliance with the Greeks, and he cannot comprehend why his nephew, Apollo, has not had the same reaction, peevishly asking

²⁵ For a synopsis of these claims, see Kirk (1990, 290, vol. 2), who seems to subscribe to this view.

²⁶ The full line is ἦρω Λαομέδοντι πολίσσαμεν ἀθλήσαντε. Most translations treat ἀθλήσαντε as taking Laomedon as the dative object, as in "in toil for Laomedon, we two built the city," which is how I translated it earlier. Now, having introduced the theme of competition between Apollo and Poseidon, I would revise that translation to: "we two in contention built the city for Laomedon."

him, "don't you remember this, how many great evils we two, alone of all the gods, suffered at Ilium? ... And now you show kindness to the people of this man" (οὐδέ νυ τῶν περ / μέμνηται ὅσα δὴ πάθομεν κακὰ Ἴλιον ἀμφὶ / μούνοι νῶϊ θεῶν ... τοῦ δὴ νῦν λαοῖσι φέρεις χάριν – 21.441-443 & 458). When Poseidon's two versions of events are compared, we can perhaps see the basis for a charge of inconsistency in the god's logic. He initially in Book 7 evinced a concern that the fame of the Achaean construction would threaten to efface the creation of the Trojan wall. Given that concern, one would think that he, like Apollo, would stand in continuing support of the Trojan structure, but it is Apollo who rallies to defend the Trojan wall repeatedly throughout the poem, whereas Poseidon later, in Book 21, prioritizes Laomedon's disrespectful behavior, though the god would have been fully aware of that in the earlier episode, and chastises Apollo for his support of the Trojans. Some have seen Apollo's ardent support of the Trojans in the *Iliad* as evidence of an eastern or Anatolian origin for the god, and etymologies for his name have been put to support such a conclusion,²⁷ but I argue that this alliance, which is more tenuous than most suppose, can be traced more to the poetics of the *Iliad*, where he obtains a central role as the divine antagonist to Achilles, whom, as we shall see, he in many ways resembles.²⁸

Along these lines, if we return to Zeus' earlier admonishment of Poseidon's extreme reaction to the Achaeans' fortification, a rationale for Apollo's support of Troy begins to emerge. Unlike Poseidon, whose fame, according to Zeus, already stretches as far as the light of dawn (7.454-463), Apollo, as part of a new generation of gods, is portrayed as still being in the process of obtaining this status in the *Iliad*.²⁹ Apollo, then, is the lesser god in current status who should

²⁷ See Brown, for example, for a summary of the historical debate concerning efforts to link the god etymologically with the Hittite god Apaliuna, a deity known for hunting and trapping. (2004, 247 ff).

²⁸ Nagy provides an extensive exploration of the ritual antagonism between a hero and god, including Apollo and Achilles, (1999b, 289–97), and this is theme to which I will return.

²⁹ That Apollo is part of newer generation of gods is not only in accord with his attendant mythology but also with what has been discovered in material remains. As Burkert notes, "The diffusion of the Apollo

very well be concerned with the defense of his creation, and who was unnamed in Zeus' earlier formulation. Despite his earlier admission in Book 7, Poseidon has reversed course in the charged environment of Book 21 and stripped Apollo of his involvement in the creation, exerting his authority over the younger god. Far from being an inconsistency, a variant tradition, or even an interpolation, as some have asserted, the opposing positions that Poseidon takes are perfectly reconcilable with his change in attitude toward the younger god. By disassociating Apollo from the actual construction of Troy's walls, he presumably intends, given the argumentative nature of the proceedings, to provoke the younger god into a confrontation by diminishing his role to that of a mere shepherd on Mt. Ida and stripping him of his creative potential, marked by his early affiliation with Troy's construction.

In the face of such powerful opposition, Apollo refuses to be baited into a fight, and his demurral is framed within the lexicon of heroic diction, voiced by his sister, Artemis. When the young goddess hears that her brother is backing away from Poseidon's challenge, she takes it as an act of cowardice, exclaiming,

φεύγεις δὴ ἐκάεργε, Ποσειδάωνι δὲ νίκην
 πᾶσαν ἐπέτρεψας, μέλεον δέ οἱ εὖχος ἔδωκας;
 νηπύτιε τί νυ τόξον ἔχεις ἀνεμῶλιον αὐτῶς;
 μή σε νῦν ἔτι πατρὸς ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ἀκούσω
 εὐχομένου, ὡς τὸ πρὶν ἐν ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσιν,
 ἅντα Ποσειδάωνος ἐναντίβιον πολεμίζειν.

So you are fleeing, far-shooter, and to Poseidon the entire victory
 you bequeathed, and granted him an unearned boast.
 Fool, why do you hold on to that powerless bow now?
 Let me no longer hear you in your father's halls
 boasting, like you have formerly among the immortals,
 that you would war against Poseidon face to face.

(21.472-477)

cult is already complete at the time when our written sources begin, about 700. In the epics, Apollo is one of the most important gods. In spite of this, the impression remains that Apollo is not only a youthful god, but also a young god for the Greeks. There is no clear evidence for him in Linear B" (1981, 144).

The charge against Apollo as being an empty boaster is a formidable one. The Greek noun that I translated above as boast (εὐχος) can also have the sacral meaning of prayer, but the extensive study of Muellner shows that the word (and its verbal form, εὐχομαι) only carries that meaning when a mortal addresses an immortal. When two parties on more equal footing come into contact, the term is used in the sense of a secular boast, but it need not carry the pejorative associations that are present in the English word. It is often used by Homeric heroes to contentiously or truthfully proclaim their superiority in a certain area – age, prestige, nobility, beauty, physical skill, etc. – and in so doing the hero obtains a fame that transcends mortality (κλέος) in this particular realm. For this reason, the boast, which often takes the form of εὐχομαι εἶναι + superlative, is not made lightly.³⁰ As Nagy demonstrates, such proclamations are at the heart of the conflicts in the *Iliad* (1999b, 69–82). Agamemnon uses this boast on multiple occasions, with one instance reported by Achilles himself, ... ὃς νῦν πολλὸν ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν εὔχεται εἶναι ([Agamemnon], who proclaims that he is now by far the best of the Achaeans, *Il.* 1.91). Here, Agamemnon is reported to boast that he is the best (ἄριστος), but the formula is used with more specificity later, when he sends the embassy to Achilles and asserts his authority, καί μοι ὑποστήτω ὅσσον βασιλεύτερός εἰμι / ἢδ' ὅσσον γενεῇ προγενέστερος εὐχομαι εἶναι (let him submit to me, inasmuch as I am more kingly, and as I proclaim to be elder than him in birth, 9.159-161).³¹

As with the term κλέος, the word εὐχομαι, in the sense of secular boasting, is most often associated with Homeric heroes, and yet we find both terms applied to Apollo's relationship with

³⁰ See Muellner (1976, 76–83).

³¹ See Nagy (1999b, 45).

Poseidon.³² Many other examples of this type of boasting, or proclaiming contentiously, using such formulaic diction can be found in conflicts between heroes in the *Iliad*, but fewer, by far, are discernible in disagreements among the gods. One such exception I would like to explore relates to Thetis, whom Achilles addresses as follows, "I often heard you in the halls of my father boasting, when you kept proclaiming that you alone among the immortals warded off baneful ruin for the dark-clouded son of Cronos (πολλάκι γάρ σεο πατρός ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ἄκουσα / εὐχομένης ὄτ' ἔφησθα κελαινεφεῖ Κρονίῳνι / οἷη ἐν ἀθανάτοισιν ἀεικέα λοιγὸν ἀμῦναι, 1.396-398). The diction here closely parallels Artemis' reporting of Apollo's boast, and, far from being ad hoc invention created for the moment,³³ these scenes are related thematically, since they both concern a succession myth relating to Zeus' rise to power.

I expand on this theme in the next section, but, for the moment, would like to pursue further how heroic diction shapes the conflict between Apollo and Poseidon. To this end, the dispute that erupts between Agamemnon and Achilles is an especially apt paradigm. In both cases the elder party who, for the moment, possesses greater prestige forces the younger party to demur, creating – to put it mildly – resentment and anger. Although Agamemnon lays claim to the best of the Achaeans, it is the younger hero whose father had taught him to always be the best (αἰὲν ἀριστεύειν: 11.784).³⁴ We will recall, too, that Achilles, who possesses greater martial, physical and even verbal skills—if not social status—than Agamemnon, would have killed the king, had not Athena intervened in an early conflict (1.188-218).³⁵ Although it is often stated that Apollo is a model for the character of Achilles and the lexicon of the divine sphere shapes

³² Willcock notes this apparent anomalous nature of this boast, stating "Nothing at all makes it probable that Apollo should have made a practice of boasting in this way" and attributes it to formulaic "ad hoc invention" (1977, 50)

³³ Willcock (1977, 50).

³⁴ See Nagy for expanded comments on this passage (1999b, 2§3).

³⁵ Ibid.

the nature of the hero,³⁶ we find here an example where this process has been inverted, and the diction of heroic conflict informs the depiction of a god. Due to the complex nesting of the narrative structure, however, it is often impossible to disentangle which character is primary and which is secondary, and who is a model for whom. Given the dearth of extant sources predating the *Iliad*, we are given no external roadmap to navigate this impasse. In my view, then, it is preferable to state that within the *Iliad* there is a multidirectional and mutually-reinforcing process of character development between Achilles and Apollo.

The conflict between Agamemnon and Achilles is, of course, central to the structure of the *Iliad*, while the curious story of the early life of Apollo and his dispute with Poseidon is seemingly peripheral, but the latter gains in importance when the correspondences between the mortal and divine sphere are made discernible. Agamemnon dishonors Achilles by stripping him of his war prize, the girl Briseis, and Poseidon's actions are analogous, depriving Apollo of his cherished association with Troy's walls. The significance of the latter altercation is emphasized when the heroic diction of the mortal sphere that frames the main conflict of the epic is imported into the world of the Olympians. Nagy asserts, and rightfully so, that "the *Iliad* belongs to Achilles" (1999b, 2§3.), and the nature of the hero is at the core of his study. By flipping the focus and laying the stress of the god Apollo, here and elsewhere, I argue that this claim can equally be made of Apollo, on whom I confer the epithet the "best of the Olympians" in order to stress the importance of his relationship with the Homeric hero.³⁷ That is not to say the poem is asserting that the young god will usurp the power of his father, Zeus – though this does seem to be an implicit threat that has been dealt with in the past through his punishment of serving

³⁶ See, for example, Rabel (1990).

³⁷ See my introduction for more details on this epithet and its relationship to Nagy's scholarship.

Laomedon at Troy³⁸ – but rather is portraying an Apollo who is in the act of asserting his domains or functional jurisdictions, with music and poetry being chief among them.³⁹

If we assess one of the *Iliad's* more specific internal references to the nature of κλέος, it is possible to see that applying the epithet "best of the Olympians" to Apollo is appropriate for the long-range trajectory of the Homeric Epics. In the beginning of Book 7, Hector, through the intercession of Apollo, hatches a plan to challenge whoever is the best of the Achaeans (Ἀχαιῶν ὅς τις ἄριστος, 7.50) to a man-to-man combat. Later, he makes a speech in which he details how he will behave after he conquers his challenger: he will strip the corpse of its armor and dedicate it to the temple of Apollo, but in all other ways will treat the body with respect, rendering it back to the Achaeans for a proper funeral. He then projects what some future traveller might say when passing the remnants of the funeral mound, ἀνδρὸς μὲν τόδε σῆμα πάλαι κατατεθνηῶτος, / ὄν ποτ' ἄριστεύοντα κατέκτανε φαίδιμος Ἴκτωρ. / ὣς ποτέ τις ἐρέει: τὸ δ' ἐμὸν κλέος οὐ ποτ' ὀλεῖται (this is the burial mound of a man who died long ago, whom, when he was at his best, illustrious Hector slew. Someone will say this someday, and my κλέος will never perish, 7.89-91). To the victor, then, will go the spoils of κλέος. Nagy, however, notes that Hector's proclamation is laden with irony, since it will actually be Hector who dies at the hands of Achilles, and the Trojan will be part of the κλέος of the hero who is the true embodiment of the best of the Achaeans. Moreover, it is seemingly Achilles' tomb that Hector is describing, agreeing in content with its depiction at the end of the *Odyssey*, where it is situated on a headland of the Hellespont and acts like a beacon to those who will see it in the future (οἱ μετόπισθεν

³⁸ The *Iliad* does not explicitly state the motivation for this punishment, but I put forth a plausible option from extra-Iliadic myth in the following section, which will assert that Apollo's anger (μῆνις) stems in part from a dispute over cosmic status.

³⁹ For more on the theogonic relationship of Apollo and Zeus within the context of anger, see Muellner (1998, 96–102).

ἔσονται, *Od.* 24.91).⁴⁰ It is possible to take this one step further, however, and to take note of a further irony.

Based on Hector's definition of κλέος – where a warrior, when he is defeated at his best, becomes part of the conquering party's κλέος – a large portion of what will bring about Achilles' κλέος is the fact that his life will be brought to an end not by any mortal but by the god Apollo himself, an act that is not represented in the *Iliad* itself but that is nevertheless alluded to in a number of ways. As we shall see, despite being the culmination of an antagonism that characterizes the relationship during the action of the *Iliad*, the death of Achilles will actually represent a point of unification between the two in cult,⁴¹ though the poem can only refer to this event obliquely and prospectively. If Achilles achieves his κλέος in part through his death being brought to fruition by Apollo, we can say that, based on Hector's definition, the god, too, gains renown in this process, bringing low the best of the Achaeans. This creates a mutually-reinforcing process of character development that will only reach its apex outside the narrative confines of the poem but that can be felt through allusions, among other means, within the ongoing action.

Artemis does not supply the specifics of Apollo's challenge to Poseidon, but it appears the contentiousness between the two has been simmering for quite some time. This is evident when she states that Apollo in the past (ὡς τὸ πρὶν, 21.476) has made his intentions clear of warring against Poseidon and she expects him to make these claims again in the future. In disgust at her brother's impotence in the face of Poseidon's truculence, she then turns her pointed verbal barbs toward a particularly cherished symbol of Apollo's persona, his bow, calling it ineffectual (ἀνεμώλιον, 21.474). Literally, this word means windy, and is often used to describe

⁴⁰ Nagy (1999b, 2§3).

⁴¹ A formulation made by Nagy (1999b, 142), and an idea that I pursue in more detail in a later chapter.

speech acts that lack authority, as in to speak words of wind, such as when Odysseus castigates Agamemnon for questioning the Achaean's bravery in Book 4 (ταῦτ' ἀνεμώλια βάζεις, *Il.* 4.355). In this retort of Odysseus, the expression ταῦτ' ἀνεμώλια essentially describes the opposite of a speech-act that consists of an authoritative utterance, or a symbiosis between word and action, between even ritual and myth. Martin explores such authoritative utterances and he puts forth, as examples of these marked speech-acts, expressions such as ἔπεα πτερόεντα (winged words) and μῦθος, the latter of which he defines as “a speech-act indicating authority, performed at length, usually in public, with a focus on full attention to every detail” (1989, 12). Moreover, Martin connects these authoritative speech-acts to the performance of oral poetry itself.⁴² Therefore, Artemis' attack against Apollo, when she essentially calls him an empty boaster with a powerless bow, represents quite a serious charge, particularly given the multivalent nature of his god's bow and his ongoing association with music and poetry.⁴³

Picking up on Martin's work, Nagy adds another word that denotes an authoritative public speech-act, and that is the verb ἀπειλέο, which he proposes as an etymology for Apollo's name. A variety of etymologies have been put forth for Apollo to account for his functional essence. His name, for example, has been connected to his destructive potential via the verb ἀπόλλυμι (Plato, *Cratylus*, 405e); but Nagy's suggestion points in another direction. The verb ἀπειλέο means to promise, boastfully promise, or threaten. For Nagy, then, Apollo, even as early as Homer, is “the god of authoritative speech, the one who presides over all manner of speech-acts, including the realms of songmaking in general and poetry in particular” (Nagy, G. 2004, 189). Given the nature of our discussion on boasting in this section, it would seem that the

⁴² For more on the topic, see Martin (1989, 12 & 31–35) and Nagy (1996, 135).

⁴³ Archery will be the topic of a subsequent section.

thematics of Apollo's early life and his feud with Poseidon dovetail nicely with Nagy's theory, though the poem shows this realm of the god as emerging and in the process of formation.⁴⁴

We will need to wait to see whether Apollo's boast that he would take a stand against Poseidon was made in vain and lacked authority, as he has no immediate response to his sister, and walks off in silence. To reinforce the generational status quo and to provide a picture of what may have occurred to Apollo had he directly challenged Poseidon, the *Iliad* treats us to a somewhat comic scene in which Hera strips Artemis of her quiver—the young goddess' symbol of power that she shares in common with Apollo—and boxes the upstart's ears with her own weapons, since her rebuke of her brother had run counter to the Achaean leanings of the elder goddess (21.476-495). Having posited that the dispute between Poseidon and Apollo has been long simmering, even predating the action of the opening of the poem, and that the heroic diction of grappling for hierarchal position is pervasive throughout the scenes that deal with their interactions, I now link this topic to the self-proclaimed theme of the poem, which is heralded by the poem's first word, anger.

The Anger of ... Apollo

In the last section, I placed Apollo's conflict with Poseidon within the framework of the diction typically associated with Homeric heroes, and examined the relevance of terms such as κλέος and εὔχομαι. While these terms are part and parcel of the heroic dictional register of the *Iliad*, they occur less frequently in the divine sphere, and when they do they therefore become quite marked. Using a similar type of analysis, I now turn attention to the diction that surrounds

⁴⁴ Nagy's argument concerning the etymology is broad, and is not necessarily based on the content of the *Iliad* that we are discussing here, but he does note a certain irony that is applicable: "the god who promises the fulfillment, the *télos*, of his own speech-acts, is himself the incarnation of promise, not fulfillment" (2004, 141). By contrast, I will eventually argue that the god's promise is ultimately fulfilled through the vehicle of Odysseus.

the topic of anger, and argue that, as early as its proem, the *Iliad*, in order to deepen a connection between Achilles and Apollo, deliberately inverts the terms of anger that were traditionally associated with the hero and the god. With our focus firmly on Apollo, we will find that this move by the poem heightens the underlying themes of competition and a quest for status that seem to motivate the god's actions, as he vies with challenges not only from a hero like Achilles but also from his fellow Olympians, particularly from representatives of the earlier generation who had received their apportionment of honor before the new god's arrival. The god's anger, I suggest, is a response to the inherent challenges he faces in his coming-of-age story, and is therefore bidirectional, pointed primarily at Achilles and Poseidon.

The poetic voice of the famous opening lines of the *Iliad* establishes one of the poem's overarching themes, when it asks the Muse to sing of the destructive anger (μῆνιν, 1.1) of Achilles, but it has also been noted that there is a certain parallelism between the anger of Achilles and that of Apollo, who appears early on in the poem, and that μῆνις can be defined more specifically as a type of divine anger, which in turn has opened up a fecund pathway to explore the nature of the character of Achilles.⁴⁵ It is by dint of this comparison that the Iliadic Apollo garners his fair share of critical interest, though the god himself is rarely in the limelight for long, and his dramatic entrance into the poem often dominates the focal point of this interest. While the anger of Apollo is in fact called μῆνις in the body of the poem (1.64), the opening of the *Iliad* first states that the god's far-reaching destruction is brought about not from μῆνις but from another word for anger, χόλος, or its verbal form (χολωθεῖς, 1.9). This is a distinction that

⁴⁵ The subject of anger and specifically μῆνις, given its primary position as the first word of the poem, has received much critical attention. See especially Watkins (1977, 187–209), Nagy (1999b), and Muellner (1998). Although the importance of anger has been studied in monographs and chapters devoted to individual Homeric characters – *The Wrath of Athena* (Clay, J. Strauss 1983), "The Wrath of Thetis" (Slatkin, L. 1991), and *The Anger of Achilles* (Muellner, L. 1998), for example – strangely enough no such concentrated effort has been devoted to Apollo.

has not received much critical attention. This section, in large part, will be an exegesis of the *Iliad's* opening, and, as such, it will assess this dictional distinction between these words for anger in effort to define thematically the rage of Apollo, both its origins and consequences.

The opening of the *Iliad* immediately establishes the broad thematics of the poem, implicitly linking Achilles and Apollo in their importance to the entire undertaking by placing an emphasis on their wrath:

μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος
 οὐλομένην, ἣ μυρὶ Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε' ἔθηκε ...
 τίς τ' ἄρ σφωε θεῶν ἔριδι ζυνέηκε μάχεσθαι;
 Λητοῦς καὶ Διὸς υἱός: ὃ γὰρ βασιλῆϊ χολωθεὶς
 νοῦσον ἀνὰ στρατὸν ὄρσε κακὴν, ὀλέκοντο δὲ λαοί

Sing, Muse, of the anger of Achilles, son of Peleus,
 the destructive anger that set countless sufferings upon the Achaeans ...
 Who then of the gods brought these two together to contend in strife?
 The son of Leto and Zeus, for he, angered at the king,
 caused a baneful plague to arise among the army, and the troops kept dying.

(1.1-2 & 8-10)

To highlight some of the thematic and dictional parallels between Achilles and Apollo, I have elided several lines from the proem, but will return to them in a moment. For the present, however, we can try to appreciate the poetically-stylized relationship between the hero and the god that is already being constructed within the first 10 lines of the *Iliad*. While Apollo's anger is not specifically labeled as μῆνις here, it is connected to that idea by a combination of word choice and theme. Achilles' μῆνις is modified by the adjective οὐλόμενος, a participle from the verb ὄλλυμι, and this word is emphasized syntactically by enjambment. As a result of Apollo's becoming angered at Agamemnon, the troops keep perishing, and this action is described by the verb ὀλέκοντο, which is formed off the same verb stem as ὄλλυμι. The emphasis on the destructive nature of the forms of anger referenced in the proem will persist throughout the

poem. That this destructive emphasis is never fully resolved is evident in the mutual recriminations that hero and god will lodge against one another near the *Iliad*'s conclusion, when Achilles calls Apollo "the most destructive of all the gods" (θεῶν ὀλοώτατε πάντων, 22.15), and when the god, in addressing a divine council, refers to the hero as destructive Achilles (ὀλοῶ Ἀχιλῆϊ, 24.39).⁴⁶

Significantly, however, the poem first describes Apollo's anger with the participle χολωθεῖς (1.9, finite verb = χολόω; noun form = χόλος). χόλος is a near synonym of μῆνις, but with important distinctions.⁴⁷ Although χόλος and μῆνις are stylistically linked, the *Iliad* seems to be making a dictional distinction between them, and it is, therefore, worth assessing their nuances. Recently, Walsh has analyzed the word χόλος and its related forms in detail, and remarks that it "is the warrior's anger *par excellence*" (2005, 163). In Book 1 of the *Iliad* it refers most often to the dispute between Achilles and Agamemnon. In strong contrast to this, within the entire poem, the noun μῆνις outside of the divine sphere is only applied to the hero Achilles. Seeing that the anger of Achilles is often identified as the theme of the *Iliad* – a conclusion largely based on the position of μῆνιν as the poem's first word – most critical attention has understandably been given to the word μῆνις. Watkins, for example, states that "the association of divine wrath [μῆνις] with a mortal by this very fact elevates that mortal outside the normal ambience of the human condition toward the sphere of the divine" (1977, 690). There is an

⁴⁶ Segal notes that it is exceptional for a mortal to be referred to with this adjective, as it is almost exclusively used with gods (Charles Segal 1971, 58).

⁴⁷ Muellner states that χόλος, like other anger words, can be a near synonym of μῆνις, and it often refers back to the theme of μῆνις after that theme has been established, but that χόλος can also be "a complex term with its own significance" (1998, 7). It cannot be said, however, that, in the above passage, the theme of Apollo's μῆνις has already been established, unless one already sees a link with Achilles. Because his interest is largely in the word μῆνις, Muellner leaves the theme of χόλος relatively unexplored. Watkins asserts that other anger words often substitute for μῆνις in a taboo formulation, where subjects cannot speak of their own μῆνις (1977). Watkins' idea is rejected by Turpin (1988) but defended by Muellner (1998, 189–94).

inverted relationship, however, between the words μῆνις and χόλος, in the sense that, although they are near synonymms, the former is quite marked when it is applied to a human, and the latter is marked when associated with a divinity, and Walsh notes that, in Book 1, Apollo accounts for the only instance of χόλος outside of the heroic sphere.⁴⁸ The proem of the *Iliad*, therefore, seems to be cross-pollinating these terms with additional significance by shifting a term most typically applied to a warrior's wrath, χόλος, to Apollo in the the very same context where it ascribes a divine term for anger, μῆνις, to the hero Achilles.

By way of comparison, it is noteworthy that variant proems of the *Iliad* existed and some were more explicit in linking the anger of Achilles and Apollo than the version that has come down to us. Aristoxenus, for example, claimed that some texts had these three verses in place of 1-9:⁴⁹ ἔσπετε νῦν μοι, Μοῦσαι, ... / ὅπως δὴ μῆνις τε χόλος θ' ἔλε Πηλείωνα / Λητοῦς τε ἀγλαὸν υἱὸν. ὁ γὰρ βασιλῆι χολωθεῖς (Tell me now, Muses, how anger and wrath seized the son of Peleus and the glorious son of Leto; for he, angered at the king ...). In this version, we see a direct pairing of μῆνις and χόλος, which together take hold of both Achilles and Apollo, so there is no distribution of the forms of anger nor differentiation between the characters themselves. There is even some ambiguity in determining to whom, either Achilles or Apollo, the pronoun ὁ and the participle χολωθεῖς might be referring. In our version, however, the expressions of anger are separated and are seemingly treated as isolated cases. In the remainder of the poem, and the anger of the hero and the god are interwoven into the diction, thematics, and symbolic substructure of the entire work, furthering the nuances behind their poetically-stylized relationship.

⁴⁸ Walsh (2005, 173).

⁴⁹ See Kirk (1990, 52, vol. 1).

Walsh notes that, in addition to being the visceral, immediate form of a warrior's rage, *χόλος* has three major sources of origin: it can emanate from a contest, often when the outcome is either considered unfair or the challenge is issued across social boundaries; from a quarrel, specifically a *νεῖκος* with attendant *ἔρις*; and from the death of a friend or loved one.⁵⁰ Walsh's categorization of *χόλος* maps neatly onto the competitive relationship that eventually emerges between Achilles and Apollo. The third category, *χόλος* generated from the death of a friend, is perhaps most easy to discern in their relationship, given that Apollo is the primary agent of Patroclus' death, but the other two categories are just as relevant.

Although this first category of *χόλος* is generally associated with heroes, it can also result from "a challenge across social boundaries ... such as between gods and mortals" (Walsh, T. 2005, 171), and, within the *Iliad*, the Muses themselves become one of the few examples of its operation in the world of the divine. They do so when they take umbrage at the boasting of the Thracian singer Thamyras, who proclaims he would win (*εὐχόμενος νικησέμεν*, 2.593) in a contest against the Muses. In anger (*χολωσάμεναι*, 2.598), they strike him blind and make him forget his poetic art. Notably, a seemingly insignificant detail in this myth creates a link to Apollo, who is himself capable of such targeted rage in a Homeric setting: the poem makes a point of revealing that Thamyras is making his way from Eurytus the Oechalian (*Οἰχαλίθηεν ἰόντα παρ' Εὐρύτου Οἰχαλιῆος*, 2.596), who lost his life when he boasted that he could outdo Apollo in archery. It is of interest that, in the *Odyssey*, this challenge evokes *χόλος* from Apollo, *χολωσάμενος γὰρ Απόλλων / ἔκτανεν, οὐνεκά μιν προκαλίζετο τοξάζεσθαι* (And for that reason great Eurytos perished straightaway, and didn't reach old age in his home: for Apollo, having grown angry, killed him because Eurytus challenged him to a bow contest, 8.226-28). As we

⁵⁰ For his detailed analysis of the origins of *χόλος*, see (2005, 168–82).

shall eventually see, the coupled allusion to Thamyris and Eurytus in the *Iliad*, where divine χόλος is elicited by mortal challenges in agonistic setting will be a useful point of comparison in the characterization of Achilles and Odysseus in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, respectively.

Walsh's second category for an origin of χόλος, a contentious quarrel, or more specifically a νεῖκος with attendant ἔρις (2005, 170–71), is a direct Iliadic reference to the relationship of Apollo and Achilles. The proem answers its own question when it states that it was the son of Leto, Apollo, who set Achilles and Agamemnon together in strife (ἔριδι, 1.8). Although the chronology of the narrative in the body of the poem will focus on the slight to the priest Chryses, the proem seems to suggest that Apollo deliberately sets the two Achaeans against one another. And there is also an implicit link to the long-term quarrel that will also inform Achilles' relationship with the god. As Nagy has noted, νεῖκος in the *Iliad* is the term that signals the theme of the death of Achilles, who is destined to die through the agency of Apollo, though this act occurs outside the narrative confines of the poem; and in the song of Demodocus (*Od.* 8.72-82), "the νεῖκος and all that happened thereupon are described as the Will of Zeus."⁵¹

In the lines I elided from the proem, there is a very compact reference to the will of Zeus that brings these themes together: Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή (the plan of Zeus was being fulfilled, 1.5). By itself, this narratorial aside seems innocuous enough, since all things in the end may be attributed to Zeus' will, but the theme can be placed into a more specific context if compared with other traditions.⁵² The will of Zeus is a motif that is at the heart of the *Cypria*, a poem from the Epic Cycle, and which a scholion indicates had the same line in its opening section as *Iliad*

⁵¹ Nagy (1999b, 130).

⁵² For more on the theme of the plan of Zeus and its connection to other traditions, see Marks, particularly his Chapter 6, "Divine Plan and Narrative" (2008).

1.5.⁵³ In that poem, the plan of Zeus, though, is to instigate the Trojan War because the world had become overpopulated, and the poem treats the war like a global destruction story, such as the type found in flood myths.⁵⁴ In the opening of the *Iliad*, however, the "plan of Zeus" theme is perfectly nested between the references to the anger of Achilles (μῆνιν, 1.1) and that of Apollo (χολωθεῖς, 1.9). While the anger of both characters may stem from the actions of Agamemnon, the subtext of the proem, I argue, is already picking up on the implicit and poetically-stylized antagonistic relationship between Achilles and Apollo that the poem chronicles as the narrative unfolds and that existed in extra-Iliadic traditions as well.⁵⁵

Though the antagonism between god and hero would have been familiar motif to ancient audiences, the *Iliad*'s proem, by inverting the anger terms normally associated with Achilles and Apollo, could have presumably upset such an audience's expectations, as is suggested by the last category for the origin of χόλος, the death of someone close to the hero. Walsh goes so far as to claim that this theme of χόλος could have been a tradition in itself, related to the anger of Achilles, and specifically associated with the death of Patroclus. In his view, this tradition would have operated in a similar manner to the returns (νόστοι) and spawned a number of poems, of which our *Iliad* would only be a single representation.⁵⁶ Indeed, it is explicitly χόλος, not μῆνις, that is identified as the force that drives Achilles, a man of extremes, to his most savage expressions of that rage after the death of Patroclus, including the performance of a type of perverted sacrifice, with Achilles himself stating, δώδεκα δὲ προπάραιθε πυρῆς ἀποδειροτομήσω / Τρώων ἀγλαὰ τέκνα σέθεν κταμένοιο χολωθεῖς (In front of the pyre, I, enraged from your

⁵³ *Cypria* Fr. 3: Scholiast on Homer, *Il.* i. 5 in *Hesiod, the Homeric Hymns, and Homerica* (1914).

⁵⁴ For more on the motif of world destruction myths within the *Iliad*, see Scodel (1982).

⁵⁵ This theme is evident in poems from the Epic Cycle, and it even flows to the next generation, where Achilles' son, Neoptolemus, is killed by Apollo at Delphi, most famously in Pindar's *Paean 6*.

⁵⁶ Walsh (2005, 199–201).

death, will cut the throats of 12 illustrious offspring of the Trojans, 18.336-37).⁵⁷ If Walsh's argument is correct, the word *χόλος* would have had an intimate association with the hero Achilles, and yet the proem of the *Iliad* goes out of its way to link this form of anger to the god Apollo, and to assign importance instead to Achilles' *μῆνις*.

If, as Walsh suggests, there was an operating tradition around the *χόλος* of Achilles, it would behoove us to explore if there was a similar tradition around the *μῆνις* of Apollo. As the extensive work of Muellner shows, the noun *μῆνις* is, with the exception of Achilles, exclusively found within the divine sphere. More specifically Muellner asserts that *μῆνις* is not simply divine anger nor is it rage directed from one individual toward another but rather a "cosmic sanction ... a social force whose activation brings drastic consequences to the whole community" (1998, 8). Muellner further observes that *μῆνις* "is the irrevocable cosmic sanction that prohibits some characters from taking their superiors for equals and others from taking their equals for inferiors" (1998, 31). Muellner arrives at his conclusions by examining some of the paradigmatic instances of this form of anger, and one of the more telling scenes has to do with the anger of Zeus.

When Ares becomes enraged over the death of one of his sons he threatens to break an injunction laid down by his father, Zeus, an action that, according to a narratorial aside, would thereby illicit an even greater "*χόλος* and *μῆνις* than before" (15.121-122). The war god needs to be restrained by Athena, who explains that, if he persists in his plan, Zeus "will take hold of he who is guilty and he who is not, one after the other (*μάρψει δ' ἐξείης ὅς τ' αἴτιος ὅς τε καὶ οὐκί, Il. 15.137*).⁵⁸ Although *χόλος* and *μῆνις* are here paired in the person of Zeus, the global outcome of the anger, according to Muellner, suggests the over-riding influence of *μῆνις*, where the

⁵⁷ Nagy also sees this particular stage as characteristic to the theme of Achilles' *χόλος*: "The subsequent application of *mēnis* is restricted by the composition specifically to the anger that Achilles felt over the slighting of his *tīmē* at the very beginning of the action. The anger that Achilles felt later over the killing of Patroklos is nowhere denoted by *mēnis*." (1999b, 69–81).

⁵⁸ Muellner examines this passage in detail (1998, 5–9).

emphasis is not necessarily that the guilty party will be punished but rather the community as a whole indiscriminately. Muellner, however, is largely interested in pursuing the term μῆνις, and therefore glosses over the collocation here of χόλος and μῆνις, terms which the *Iliad* tends to keep separate but that are paired, as we saw earlier, in the alternate proem known to Aristoxenus, where they refer collectively to both Achilles and Apollo. In comparison, the proem of the *Iliad* that has come down to us stylistically distributes μῆνις to Achilles and χόλος to Apollo, while separating these individual elements by the compact reference to the "will of Zeus," and it does so all within the first nine lines. It is therefore of great interest that, in the above reference to the anger of Zeus, there is both χόλος and μῆνις, the only place in the poem where such a compact collocation explicitly exists.

By suggesting that Ares could potentially evoke a greater (μείζων, 15.121) χόλος and μῆνις, the poem seems to be referring back to an earlier instance of Zeus' anger that was mentioned at the beginning of Book 15, and this in turn taps into a theme that is only obliquely referenced in the *Iliad*, namely past threats to his claim to power. When Hera deceives Zeus by inducing him into a deep slumber so that she and Poseidon could rekindle the Trojan war and aid the Achaeans, Zeus himself recalls an episode of his earlier rage. He doesn't hesitate to make his consort remember that, despite their indignation over Hera's punishment – being suspended in unbreakable bonds – the other Olympian gods could do nothing to help her, since "whomever I would catch, / I kept on hurling from the threshold till at last he arrived / powerless on earth" (ὄν δὲ λάβοιμι / ρίπτασκον τεταγὼν ἀπὸ βηλοῦ ὄφρ' ἄν ἴκηται / γῆν ὀλιγηπελέων, 15.22-24).⁵⁹

We can draw some relevant conclusions from this scene. Muellner sees μῆνις as proceeding downstream from the theogenic origins of Zeus' original rise to power. For him, this

⁵⁹ Ibid.

theme is ubiquitous but unstated in Hesiod's *Theogony*, which acts like a prooimion and provides a background for the opening of the *Iliad*, where the word takes on its prominence. In this formulation, Apollo's μῆνις is a substitute for his father's and it ultimately serves as a bridge to the μῆνις of Achilles.⁶⁰ Although direct references to it are largely suppressed, Zeus' μῆνις is, according to Muellner, primary and paradigmatic and is imported from theogonic poetry into the world of heroic epic. Although titled *The Anger of Achilles*, Muellner's work is more specifically a detailed analysis of the word μῆνις, and its focus is therefore directed toward the beginning and end point in the transference of μῆνις, from the divine to the heroic world. His book is invaluable in its insight that μῆνις is ultimately derived from disputes concerning the cosmic hierarchy and that its expression is global in scope. The prominence of Apollo's role in the poem and his intricately intertwined relationship with Achilles, however, indicate that this god is much more than simply a stand-in for Zeus' μῆνις.

The μῆνις of Apollo seems to have a story and a coloring of its own. Although the proem of the *Iliad* initially labels the god's anger as χόλος, when Apollo's prophet, Calchas, is asked by Achilles why the god has grown so angry (ὄ τι τόσσον ἐχώσατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων), he answers the question by substituting the term μῆνις in his response, ὦ Ἀχιλεῦ κέλεαί με Διὶ φίλε μυθήσασθαι / μῆνιν Ἀπόλλωνος ἐκατηβέλεται ἄνακτος (Achilles, dear to Zeus, you bid me to pronounce the wrath of Apollo, the lord who strikes from afar, 1.64 & 1.74-75). According to Calchas, it is not because of a faulty vow or botched sacrifice but rather because of Agemamnon's slight to the local priest that the god has visited the plague of his arrows on the Achaeans (1.92-100). Calchas therefore explicitly introduces the theme of Apollo's μῆνις into the poem, but, given the nature of this form of anger, which often is spawned by a challenge to

⁶⁰ Muellner (1998, 95–97)

status, there appears to be more to Apollo's violent reaction, which seems to be extraordinarily excessive, given that it is induced by a single slight to a local priest.⁶¹

The god's violent reaction, I assert, has to do with his own position in the Olympian hierarchy, and this is discernible if we relate Apollo's quest for status, which I began probing under the rubric of boasting in the last section, to other instances where a god or goddess threatens cosmic order because of a slight to their status. We are told that, along with Poseidon, Apollo found himself on earth, where the gods are compelled to serve the interests of the Trojan king for a year. This indicates that these gods at one time felt the weight of Zeus' μῆνις. As we saw earlier in defining the term μῆνις, this theme is often evoked by the *Iliad* through allusion to a type of theomachy between the Olympians, where Zeus asserts his power globally. This battle would have most likely post-dated the Titanomachy—described most famously in the Hesiodic *Theogony*, when Zeus and his siblings defeated the Titans—and, as the gods take their positions in the conflict of the Trojan War, we can witness the residual effects of the earlier skirmishes for power. The *Iliad*, however, only gives us brief allusions to a mythical register that was perhaps quite expansive in the Archaic period. In general, it seems that the poem goes out of its way to suppress the myths that are theogonic in theme and that have to do with divine succession.

This is a subject of interest to Slatkin, who examines the role of Achilles' mother, Thetis, who becomes more significant to the poem as a whole when we come to understand her part in Zeus' rise to power, a part we can only glimpse in the *Iliad*. Thetis is, like her son, a creature of constant sorrow, and in the *Iliad* their grief is conflated, as Thetis herself suggests, ὄφρα δέ μοι ζῶει καὶ ὄρᾳ φάος ἠελίοιο ἄχγυται, οὐδέ τί οἱ δύνamai χραισμῆσαι ἰοῦσα (for my part as long as

⁶¹ Apollo's proclivity toward anger and cosmic sanction is also reflected at the opening of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*: when the god first enters an Olympian assembly, all the gathered deities collectively, with the exception of Leto, recoil in terror when the young god first comes into view and bends his bow (1-4).

Achilles lives and sees the light of the sun, he grieves, and in no way, though I go, am I able to assist him, 18.61-62). Slatkin, moreover, observes that Thetis, although she is characterized primarily by her ἄχος, has the ability, much like Demeter after the abduction of Persephone, to menace cosmic order through an implied μῆνις, and the entire chain of events can be traced back to her mythology, only alluded to in the *Iliad*. The primary cause of her suffering was being forced by Zeus to submit to a marriage to a mortal, and this occurred because it was prophesized that she had the potential for bearing a son greater than his father, which meant that marriage to Zeus would begin the entire world order over again.⁶² We can thus see here the workings of a succession myth operating under the surface of the poem, a myth that, in effect, tells the story of Achilles' being the potential son of Zeus, though the god, when he becomes privy to the prophecy, forecloses that possibility.

Slatkin is able to tease out the details of Thetis' mythological background through a comparative analysis of both the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* and Pindar's *Isthmian 8*, and she concludes that the *Iliad* largely suppresses references to Thetis' history primarily because of the genre in which it operates:

The implicit wrath of Thetis has an analogous source ... we see that these two myths share in the first place a preoccupation with the imposition and preservation of the existing hierarchy of divine power. Both the *Hymn to Demeter* and Pindar's *Isthmian 8*, in its treatment of Thetis's mythology, are equipped by the nature of their genres to emphasize this concern ... The *Iliad* is about the condition of being human and about heroic endeavor as its most encompassing expression. The *Iliad* insists at every opportunity on the irreducible fact of human mortality, and in order to do so it reworks traditional motifs ... The values it asserts, its definition of heroism, emerge in the human, not the divine, sphere.⁶³

⁶² Slatkin (1991, Chapter 3, "The Wrath of Thetis").

⁶³ Ibid.

Through a type of transference, the "resonant though subordinated" mythology of Thetis informs the life of Achilles, and "the parent's story becomes the child's story."⁶⁴

Slatkin's analysis is laudable, but I would like to pursue the idea that this is a multidirectional process and that, although the *Iliad* may seem to give primacy to the lives of its mortal heroes and the general idea of mortality, the theogonic material remains particularly relevant, despite its apparent suppression, by highlighting the very nature of the Homeric hero's relationship with the gods. After all, Slatkin, in an earlier work, asserts that for a genre to exist it has to have an interdependence with another genre or genres, "in which they have complementary functions in conveying different aspects of a coherent ideology or system of beliefs about the world" (1986, 260), and Nagy concludes that "Homeric poetry is a genre that becomes a container, as it were, of a vast variety of other genres" (1999a, 28). When such a holistic system suppresses material, as the *Iliad* seems to with cosmogonic and theogonic themes, it will find expression elsewhere, and both systems or subgenres within the system will inform one another through their interdependency.

The *Iliad* does not specify why Apollo and Poseidon were sentenced to a year in Troy in subservience to its king Laomedon. Within the extant mythic tradition from the Archaic period, there is one plausible cause for Apollo's sentence: in the Hesiodic *Catalog of Women*, after Zeus kills Asclepius, the son of Apollo, with a thunderbolt for bringing someone back from the dead, Apollo in anger retaliates by killing the Cyclopes, the ones who originally supplied Zeus with the thunderbolt in the Titanomachy. After first threatening to hurl Apollo into Tartarus, Zeus lessens the sentence to a year's servitude in Troy (Hes Fr 54 MW). Extra-Iliadic tradition, therefore, gives us a motive for the young god being caught up in the cosmic μῆνις of his father. An

⁶⁴ Ibid.

unexpressed subsequent accord has evidently been struck, however, and the Apollo in the current action of *Iliad* is seemingly in alignment with his father.

Outside of the *Iliad*, however, there is no plausible reason that has come down to us for Poseidon's inclusion in this myth of Troy's foundation. While it is entirely possible that one existed, it is just as likely that the *Iliad* paired Poseidon with Apollo to highlight a secondary cosmic conflict, which is playing out at the time of the poem's action. Having considered the latent competition and potential succession myth suggested by Achilles averted rivalry with Zeus, we can view, as Muellner does,⁶⁵ Achilles' μῆνις as an epic stand-in for that of Zeus, who is the divine father that was denied to Achilles by the stratagem of marrying Thetis to the mortal Peleus. In this view, Apollo would be an important, though subordinate, link in a chain of, if you will, μῆνις transference,⁶⁶ but I have additionally posited that Apollo's anger seems to have a story of its own that is connected, in one direction, with an ongoing rivalry with Poseidon and, in another direction, with Achilles. In the last section, I asked what the source of Apollo's continual boasts might be (i.e., in what area he might contend with the power of Poseidon), and I now connect this question with both the potential source of his μῆνις and its resolution.

Because there is little evidence of current conflict between Apollo and his father in present tense of the poem, the younger god has seemingly conformed to his status under Zeus, even becoming the messenger and mouthpiece of his father's will, but this is not the case with

⁶⁵ "Since Homeric epic has veered away from the Theogonic *mênis* of Zeus and toward the epic *mênis* of Achilles, it is not surprising that it does not acknowledge this myth despite at least one clear opportunity to do so. The myth about Peleus and Thetis attests to an archetypal competition between Achilles and Zeus in Theogonic terms, which is inherent in the performance sequence I am suggesting. However, the plot of the *Iliad* deflects this competition in such a way as to render Achilles the Zeus of heroes with respect to his *mênis*, yet without marking him as Zeus's antagonist. Achilles' divine antagonist is Apollo instead" (Muellner, L. 1998, 95).

⁶⁶ "In my view, the *mênis* of Apollo serves as a bridge between the Hesiodic *mênis* of Zeus and the Homeric *mênis* of Achilles" (Muellner, L. 1998, 98).

Poseidon, who continues to chafe under his brother's dictates.⁶⁷ When in Book 15 Poseidon takes the field in contravention of one of his brother's edicts, Zeus passes along a message for Iris to deliver to him:

παυσάμενόν μιν ἄνωχθι μάχης ἠδὲ πτολέμοιο
 ἔρχεσθαι μετὰ φῦλα θεῶν ἢ εἰς ἄλα δῖαν.
 εἰ δέ μοι οὐκ ἐπέεσσ' ἐπιπέισεται, ἀλλ' ἀλογήσει,
 φραζέσθω δὴ ἔπειτα κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατὰ θυμὸν
 μή μ' οὐδὲ κρατερός περ ἐὼν ἐπιόντα ταλάσση
 μεῖναι, ἐπεὶ εὐ φημὶ βίη πολὺ φέρτερος εἶναι
 καὶ γενεῇ πρότερος:

Order him to cease from war and battle
 and to come among the tribes of gods or to the dread sea.
 If he will not obey my words, but will pay no regard,
 then let him consider in his mind and soul
 that, though being strong, he would not dare await me when I come against him,
 since I well proclaim to be much stronger in violent force
 and elder by birth.

(15.160-66)

Within this scene, Zeus demands that Poseidon retreat to his specific domain, the sea, and asserts his overbearing force as well as his position by birthright, but, as Poseidon's response will make clear, he is not at all in agreement. Poseidon replies that each of Kronus' children was allotted a domain (ἕκαστος δ' ἔμμορε τιμῆς, 15.189), with Poseidon taking possession of the sea and Zeus the sky, but earth, along with Olympus, was still common territory of all these gods (ἔτι ξυνή πάντων, 15.193). Zeus is thus, in Poseidon's opinion, unfairly asserting his authority over a peer who has equal honor (ὀμότιμος, 15.186) and he should reserve his threats for his own children (15.197-99). While this is his explicit response, Poseidon is also implicitly exerting his own ability "to menace the cosmic order" (Muellner, L. 1998, 29).

I have translated the word τιμῆ in line 15.189 as "domain," but this is another word that is multivalent in Homer and has slightly different meanings when it is expressed in the human or

⁶⁷ For a detailed analysis of the ongoing feud between Poseidon and Zeus, see Maitland (1999).

divine sphere. In the latter occasions, which is the backdrop of the current scene, it can mean domain,⁶⁸ in the sense of an apportioned realm, which in this scene refers even more specifically to the division of the universe among the Olympians, a cornerstone of theogonic literature, while in the former it means honor generally and, more specifically, that which is a sign of honor—an apportionment or gift. This sense is evident when Agamemnon takes away Achilles' war-prize, Briseis, and the king dishonors (ἠτίμησεν, 1.356, the privative verb form related to the noun τιμή) the grieving hero, who has now absented himself from his comrades. The potential connection between human and divine sense of the word, however, is evident in Achilles' tearful address to his mother, Thetis: μήτηρ, ἐπεὶ μ' ἔτεκός γε μινυθιάδιόν περ ἔόντα / τιμὴν πέρ μοι ὄφελεν Ὀλύμπιος ἐγγυαλίξαι / Ζεὺς ὑψιβρεμέτης: νῦν δ' οὐδέ με τυτθὸν ἔτισεν (Mother, since you bore me though being short lived, Olympian Zeus, the high-thunderer, should have handed over honor to me, but now he did not honor me at all, 1.352-354). Slatkin notes that this address takes the form of a prayer and that Achilles is, through his mother, reminding Zeus of a past favor, when Thetis married a mortal to ensure cosmic harmony, resulting in Achilles' being a mortal, and one with a short life (μινυθιάδιόν) at that, instead of contending against Zeus himself.⁶⁹

Moving back and forth between the divine and the heroic sphere, we can perhaps see at this point that Poseidon's stance against Zeus' authority is not dissimilar to Achilles' famous rebellion against Agamemnon. This is an observation that Muellner (1998, 109) notes, further

⁶⁸ The closest definition offered by *LSJ* for the sense here is an "office," though in the divine sphere this would equate to a domain. For more on this sense of the word as it is employed in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, see Clay (1994, 28).

⁶⁹ "The typical arrangement of prayers as represented in archaic poetry, we remember, consists of the invocation of the god or goddess, the claim that the person praying is entitled to a favor on the basis of favors granted in the past, and the specific request for a favor in return—based on the premise that this constitutes a formal communication of reciprocal obligations between god and hero" (Slatkin, L. 1991, 62).

reinforcing the parallelism by documenting that Agamemnon makes a claim to be superior (φέρτερος, 1.186 = 15.164) to Achilles, as well as his elder (γενεῖ προγενέστερος εὐχομαι, 9.161), a claim that is resonant in Zeus' stance against Poseidon quoted above (15.160-66).⁷⁰ In the previous section, I linked Apollo to Achilles through the diction of boasting, and asserted that they are both the younger aggrieved parties forced to demur to individuals with greater status, Poseidon and Agamemnon, respectively. Just as Poseidon chafes against his brother Zeus' dictates and his apportionment of power, Apollo makes continual threats against his uncle Poseidon, bringing this type of contest for privileges into the next generation of Olympians. Their generational conflict is evident in the language that Poseidon uses when, attempting to bait Apollo into fight, he reminds his nephew of the earlier service to Laomedon, telling Apollo to initiate the hostilities,

ἄρχε: σὺ γὰρ γενεῆφι νεώτερος: οὐ γὰρ ἔμοιγε
καλόν, ἐπεὶ πρότερος γενόμεν καὶ πλείονα οἶδα.
νηπύτι' ὡς ἄνοον κραδίην ἔχεις:

Begin, for you are younger in age and
it would not be good for me, since I am elder and know more.
Fool, how thoughtless a heart you possess.

(21.439-442)

While Muellner's parallel is attractive here, Poseidon's anger is never called μῆνις, either explicitly or metaphorically, and the long-term implications of a comparison between Poseidon's rebellion and that of Achilles in the *Iliad* are therefore somewhat limited, unless we move the parallel down one level, and apply it to Apollo.

Apollo's anger, for example, is described as μῆνις when Patroclus has the temerity to attack Troy's walls despite being rebuffed three times by the god. When he is upbraided by

⁷⁰ cf. *Il.* 21.439-440. See also Morse, who views the connection through the rights of kingship (2010, 106–8).

Apollo and retreats before the fourth attempt, Patroclus thereby avoids the far-shooter's μῆνις (μῆνιν ἀλευάμενος ἑκατηβόλου Ἀπόλλωνος, 5.444). Although the term μῆνις is associated on several occasions with the anger of the gods generally, the *Iliad* only references its actual activation in the divine sphere within the ongoing action of the poem with respect to Apollo. That Apollo's anger is called μῆνις highlights not only his thematic proximity to Achilles, who is the only heroic character to have an activated μῆνις, but also that he has learned well from his own father.⁷¹ Unlike the paradigmatic μῆνις of Zeus, which targeted and continues to threaten his fellow Olympians, the μῆνις of Apollo, however, permeates the borderline that divides gods from mortals, and finds its victims among the Achaeans.

Central to Zeus' ongoing power is the continual threat of his μῆνις, the force of which his siblings and children have felt at one time or another, as well as an apportionment of a domain (τιμῆ) that is perceived as adequate by the interested parties. Apollo's continual boasts in the Olympian halls that he will contend with Poseidon suggests that this god is in the process of asserting his domain or domains during the ongoing action of the *Iliad*, and it makes perfect sense, given the paradigm of Zeus' rise to power, that Apollo must first competitively assert his destructive potential, which manifests itself spectacularly and, as we would expect given the backdrop of μῆνις, globally at the outset the poem. The target of his wrath, however, is not his fellow Olympians but rather the mortals, specifically the Achaeans, who have chosen not to give him honor.

The interlocking narrative pattern that exists between Achilles and Apollo therefore begins as early as the proem, where μῆνις, though it is attached to Achilles in the first line, is

⁷¹ Martin's comments concerning the *Iliad's* depiction of learned behaviors are perhaps applicable here: "The *Iliad* is largely about situations in which power is in dispute, up for grabs ... rhetorical skill at self-presentation can be learned by Homeric heroes; indeed, it must be acquired, and Homer shows how the education takes place" (1989, 23).

also a strain of Apollo's anger, which lethally commingles with *χόλος*, the warrior's anger *par excellence*, creating a potent combination that will be felt by all the Achaeans and eventually Achilles himself. While *μῆνις* with its global consequences seems to flow downstream from the paradigm of Zeus' anger, it takes on a certain specificity and coloring in the figure of Apollo, and it is this particular form of *μῆνις* that largely characterizes the anger of Achilles, especially during his period of withdrawal from the Achaeans. If, as Watkins asserts, Achilles' is pulled into the divine sphere through his association with *μῆνις*,⁷² it can similarly be said that the god Apollo is pulled into the heroic world through his association with *χόλος*, not to mention the other markers of heroic diction, such as *κλέος* and *εὐχομαι*, that characterize his Iliadic portrayal. With that said, it is time to turn to Apollo's actual entrance into the poem, where we can add more specificity to a definition of his anger, meet the tool of its implementation, and assess how that anger can be appeased. In so doing, we will be turning to the means by which Apollo can effectuate his boast, to the far-shooter's bow, and to his lyre.

⁷² Watkins (1977, 690).

Chapter 2. Apollo at Troy

In the first two sections of this chapter, I look further into the anger of the Iliadic Apollo by analyzing it in conjunction with the implement in which it originally manifests itself, the far-shooter's bow, but will also pair his destructive wrath with its seeming opposite, a reputation as a god of healing and music, which are realms that are already visible as early as Book 1 of the *Iliad* and that, when taken as a complement to his destructive capacity, begin to reveal a complex yet unifying vision of his essence that will fully exert itself over the course of the Homeric Epics. The seeming lack of coordination between the bow and the lyre continues to inspire some to conjecture on Apollo's origins, where the former is somehow related to his eastern roots. Carpenter, for example, who does the service of chronologically and regionally analyzing images of Apollo in the visual arts, states "In the archaic imagery of Attica it is the bow-bearing hunter of men and monsters that Apollo is the twin of Artemis ... and, like her, his source is also to be found in the East ... Homer knew both Apollo the archer and Apollo the musician but kept them quite separate (*Il.* 1-44-52 and 603), while in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* ... the two forms have been synthesized." He also sees a similar progression in the physical medium, which can be detected in, say, the "Golden Image" of Apollo at Delos, where he holds a bow in his left hand and the Graces in his right, each of whom holds a musical instrument (1994, 79). I contend, however, that the separation of the god's divine powers is deliberate in the *Iliad*, and is in keeping the themes of fragmentism and localization that imbue his characterization.⁷³ These themes, however, slowly give way to a unifying realm that the poem cedes to him and that has received little critical attention: Apollo becomes the metapoetic force that controls the scope of

⁷³ The emphasis on Apollo's destructive power in the *Iliad* is noted by Maronites, who observes that there is only one reference to the god's musical activity in the poem, but that the adjectives associated with his destructive capacity are abundant. This situation can be contrasted with the *Odyssey*, which displays a more balanced depiction of the god (2009, 81).

the poem, ensuring that the super-narrative of the Homeric Epics moves toward its rightful teleology, and this realm will be the topic of this chapter's concluding section.

The Iliadic Bow

Apollo unleashes his mighty bow in Book 1, and levels countless Achaeans, demonstrating his destructive potential. This dramatic opening image of the epic far-shooter, however, can obscure a holistic image of the god. It even prompted the ancients themselves to speculate that the god's essence was destructive, as evidenced by an early folk etymology linking Apollo's name to the verb ἀπόλλυμι, meaning to destroy (Plato, *Cratylus*, 405e). Book 1 of the *Iliad* should be enough alone to disabuse us of this notion, since it ends not with the god reveling in the chaos he has brought about within the Greek camp but rather with his leading a chorus of Muses in song to the delight of all the Olympian Gods (1.601-604). Taken as a whole, then, Book 1 of the *Iliad* acts as a microcosm of the entire poem with respect to Apollo, and the epic begins by throwing emphasis on the god's capacity to destroy, which is our first concern.

Apollo first appears at the behest of a local priest who has come to the Achaean camp to take back his abducted daughter. The priest, Chryses, is from Chryse, a town on the southern-western coast of the Troad.⁷⁴ The names of the priest and his daughter, Chryseis, serve to obliquely reinforce this localization. In addition to the glorious ransom he brings to exact his daughter's return, Chryses arrives "holding in his hands the wreaths of the far-shooter, Apollo, on a golden scepter (στέμματ' ἔχων ἐν χερσὶν ἐκηβόλου Ἀπόλλωνος / χρυσέῳ ἀνὰ σκῆπτρῳ, 1.14-15), clearly indicating that he is a representative of this specific god and invested with his

⁷⁴ For a discussion on the exact location of Chryse and its associated Smintheum, see Cook (1973, 233–34).

authority.⁷⁵ Although it is perhaps attractive to think that Apollo's ardent support of this local priest and later of the Trojans in general is perhaps an indication that this god had his roots in Asia Minor,⁷⁶ this scene at the beginning the *Iliad* indicates that such an allegiance is far from automatic, and the dynamic between the pull of local affiliation and the global manifestation of the god's power is ever present. If the *Iliad* is suggesting something about the origins of the god, these suggestions are quickly overshadowed by the universal ramifications of the god's overarching role in the poem.

Although Chryses is from the Troad, it is clear that he is not necessarily a natural enemy of the Achaeans, as he initially wishes them success in their efforts to sack the city, ὑμῖν μὲν θεοὶ δοῖεν Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχοντες / ἐκπέρσαι Πριάμοιο πόλιν, εὖ δ' οἴκαδ' ἰκέσθαι (may the gods who inhabit Olympus grant the city of Priam to you to sack, and for you to arrive home safely, 1.19). The poem may place an emphasis on the regional affiliation of the priest, but, when he makes an appeal for the Achaeans to return his daughter, there is only a request that they respect this god's universal power, ἀζόμενοι Διὸς υἱὸν ἐκηβόλον Ἀπόλλωνα, “revering the son of Zeus, the far-shooter Apollo, 1.19). By so doing, the Achaeans are given the opportunity to come into a closer relationship with a god who, as the balance of the poem suggests, has a more intimate connection with the Trojans,⁷⁷ but this chance, though proving successful in the short term, ultimately passes them by, and a conflict that informs the entire poem is set in motion.

⁷⁵ Martin notes that the scepter itself is an important instrument to denote authoritative speech In Homer (1989, 105)

⁷⁶ As asserted by Wilamowitz (1908) and seconded by Nilsson (1952, 132).

⁷⁷ Although the Greeks do have a prophet of Apollo, Calchas, in their company, they address him in a manner that suggests a certain distance from him, as when Achilles states, οὐ μὰ γὰρ Ἀπόλλωνα Διὸς φίλον, ᾧ τε σὺ Κάλχαν / εὐχόμενος (For, by Apollo, dear to Zeus, to whom *you*, Calchas, pray ... , 1.86-91). I emphasize the “you” with my own italics in the translation here, since this statement presages later references to the god, such as Achilles' angry charge against Hector when the Trojan later averts disaster through the intervention of Apollo, νῦν αὐτὲ σ' ἐρύσατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων, / ᾧ μέλλεις εὐχεσθαι ἰὼν ἐς δοῦπον ἀκόντων (Now again Phoebus Apollo has saved you, the one to whom you are likely to pray

As opposed to his earlier appeal for respect, Chryses' plea for vengeance is replete with localizing references. When Agamemnon angrily dismisses him, the priest of Apollo retreats along the shore, far from the troops and pleads for retribution to Apollo:

κλυθί μευ ἀργυρότοξ', ὄς Χρύσην ἀμφιβέβηκας
 Κίλλάν τε ζαθέην Τενέδοιό τε Ἴφι ἀνάσσεις,
 Σμινθεῦ εἴ ποτέ τοι χαρίεντ' ἐπὶ νηὸν ἔρεψα,
 ἦ εἰ δὴ ποτέ τοι κατὰ πίονα μηρί' ἔκηα
 τάρων ἠδ' αἰγῶν, τὸ δέ μοι κρήηνον ἐέλδωρ:
 τίσειαν Δαναοὶ ἐμὰ δάκρυα σοῖσι βέλεσσιν.

Hear me, Silverbow, you who protect Chryse and holy
 Cilla, who rule by force over Tenedos,
 you Smintheos, if ever I roofed a temple for your pleasure
 or burnt for you the copious thigh bones
 of bulls and goats, bring this wish to fulfillment for me:
 May the Danaans pay for my tears with your missiles.

(1-37-42)

At this juncture, Apollo is referred to as the god who protects the regions of Chrysa, Cilla, and Tenedos, all precincts around Troy, and the priest's personal involvement in building local temples and offering sacrifice is the ultimate largesse to the god that conjures his presence (1.37-42). Although there is a formulaic nature to the prayer,⁷⁸ there is also a strong local element to it. It has been noted that "the invocation is not a standard list of titles (as in Achilles' prayer to Zeus, *II*. 16.233-235) but is used specifically to characterize the local priest of the regional Apollo"

when coming upon a barrage of spears, 20.448-49). Achilles' statement here dictionally replicates one earlier made by Diomedes when Hector dodges a spear blow and recognizes that the Trojan is under the protection of the god (11:361-63 = 20:448-49).

⁷⁸ See Lang on the formula for this complex prayer (1975, 309-14), and Muellner on the reciprocity for past favors in invocations such as these (1976, 18-66).

(Edwards, M. 1980, 8). His prayer, moreover, ends with an obscure, perhaps local, epithet of the god, Smintheos, that possibly evokes Apollo's association with plagues.⁷⁹

The prayer scene is largely localized, but the priest's last line, calling for retribution, asks for a type of substitution, where the tears of the local agent of the god are transformed into Apollo's arrows, which will embroil the entire community of Achaeans. Agamemnon's intransigence sets off a chain reaction that leads to disastrous consequences, as Apollo descends from Olympus:

ὥς ἔφατ' εὐχόμενος, τοῦ δ' ἔκλυε Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων,
βῆ δὲ κατ' Οὐλύμποιο καρήνων χωόμενος κῆρ,
τόξ' ὤμοισιν ἔχων ἀμφηρεφέα τε φαρέτρην:
ἔκλαζαν δ' ἄρ' ὀϊστοὶ ἐπ' ὤμων χωομένοιο,
αὐτοῦ κινηθέντος: ὃ δ' ἦϊε νυκτὶ ἐοικώς.
ἔζετ' ἔπειτ' ἀπάνευθε νεῶν, μετὰ δ' ἰὸν ἔηκε:
δεινὴ δὲ κλαγγὴ γένητ' ἀργυρέοιο βιοῖο:
οὐρῆας μὲν πρῶτον ἐπώχετο καὶ κύνας ἀργούς,
αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' αὐτοῖσι βέλος ἔχεπευκὲς ἐφίεις
βάλλ': αἰεὶ δὲ πυραὶ νεκύων καίοντο θαμειαί.

So Chryses spoke, praying, and Phoebus Apollo heard him.
Down from the Olympian peaks went the god angry in his heart,
while holding his bow and covered quiver on his shoulders.
The arrows on his shoulders rattled as he, full of fury
moved. And he was coming on like the night.
Then he sat far from the ships, and let fly an arrow.
Terrible was the noise of his silver bow.
He first attacked the mules and quick dogs,
but then, releasing the piercing shaft, he struck the men themselves,
and pyres of corpses were burning thick.

(1.43-52)

⁷⁹ Explanations connecting this epithet to the mouse, a spreader of disease—the word for this rodent was allegedly *sminthos* in a local dialect—were prevalent in antiquity (Strabo, Geography 13.604, after Callinus of Ephesus) and the –inth- sequence suggests the "epithet preserves the name of an indigenous divinity supplanted by Apollo" (Graf, F. 2009, 24). Material remains also show that there was a Smintheum, a regional temple to Apollo, in the area of Chryse (Cook, J.M. 1973, 233).

The bow and arrows of Apollo have been interpreted in a variety of ways. Muellner, who places an emphasis on the paradigmatic role of Zeus' μῆνις, sees the arrows as akin to Zeus' thunderbolts, and draws our attention to the continual conflagration of funeral pyres that burn in the Greek camp after the god's arrows hit their mark in the opening scene of the poem. To be sure, the bow of Apollo here becomes a symbol of his μῆνις, and a tool of remote destruction visited upon an entire community. There is merit in considering, as Muellner does, Apollo's μῆνις a substitute for his father's, since the far-shooting god, perhaps like no other in the *Iliad*, seems to be in accord with Zeus. Nagy, however, sees a more intimate link between the anger of Achilles and that of Apollo, and notes in particular the parallelism between the hero and the god that occurs when the Achilles absents himself from his fellow Achaeans. He observes that, in addition to the word for divine rage (μῆνις), the poem applies the same vocabulary to the devastating consequences of this rage that are associated with Achilles and Apollo. In both cases, their wrath brings about pains for the troops:

Like the word *menis*, *algea* 'pains' too serves as key to the plot of the *Iliad*. Just as Apollo chronologically has *menis* over the abduction of Chryseis (I. 75) before Achilles over the abduction Briseis, so also the Achaeans have *algea* from Apollo before they get *algea* from Achilles.

(1999b, 74).

These pains visited on the Achaeans by Apollo are a direct result of the god's arrows that are cutting down the troops. Moreover, the god's epithet, ἐκηβόλος (far-shooter) denotes a certain distance and aloofness that also comes to characterize Achilles after he is infused with μῆνις when Agamemnon disinherits him of his war-prize, Chryseis, a situation that become evident when the Achaeans suffer λοιγὸς (devastation or ruin) during the Battle of the Ships, because "they were 'apart from Achilles,' who had *menis*" (1999b, 75), and λοιγὸς is exactly what Apollo

brings into effect with his arrows shot from afar in the opening scene of the poem, though in that case it refers more specifically to devastation by plague.⁸⁰

Therefore, the anger (μῆνις) of Achilles and Apollo can be further categorized by a certain aloofness, which for Achilles is represented as a movement away from his comrades, and for Apollo as a distance from mortals, epitomized by his penchant for archery. It has been noted, moreover, that archery in general was not a particularly native endeavor for the Greeks, nor was it considered especially noble.⁸¹ Graf sums up this attitude well when he states:

In the world of Greek warrior ideology, archery is a problematic affair. The hoplite, the warrior in heavy armor, is the ideal Greek fighter ... The ambivalent Paris is an archer, a warrior who prefers the bedroom ... In the reality of Greek warfare, archers were either epebes or they were foreigners, Cretans or Lycians. Again, Apollo is rather ambivalent; the hoplite's goddess is Athena, with helmet, breast armor, and shield.

(2009, 15)

If Lycians were noted for archery, the aloofness conjured up in Apollo's epithet ἐκηβόλος (far-shooter) can therefore be linked to another of his appellations, Λυκηγενής (Lycian-born, *Il.* 4.101, 119), which some have interpreted as evidence of a Lycian origin for the god,⁸²

⁸⁰ Blickman provides a statistical analysis of the term in λoιγός in the *Iliad*, and also sees affinities between Apollo and Achilles through this term, along with their μῆνις. He further observes that the term μῆνις is only applied to Achilles' rage against Agamemnon, and ultimately sees the affinities between the hero and the god dissolving, stating that "Achilles, having imitated Apollo's μῆνις, later diverges from his divine model by failing to relent and to ward off λoιγός" (1987, 9).

⁸¹ See Diomedes' dismissive response to Paris, after the archer shoots him in the foot, as an example (11.385-395).

⁸² In summarizing the prevailing views of his contemporaries, Otto states, "[Apollo] appears to have derived from Lycia, where his mother also originated. But with this hypothesis, in itself attractive, other and bolder conjectures have been ventured: that as an Asiatic deity Homer puts him wholly on the side of the Trojans; and that his original character, still obvious at the opening of the *Iliad*, is that of a terrible death-dealing god." (1954, 64–65).

suggesting both a connection with archery and, more generally, a type of distant foreignness.⁸³

Although other possibilities for the etymology of Λυκηγενής have been adduced,⁸⁴ the *Iliad* does show Apollo as having a special affinity for Lycia, seen particularly in his personal relationship with the Lycians Glaucos, whom he heals; Sarpedon, whom he helps convey upon his death; and, as we shall see, the archer Pandaros.⁸⁵ And this in turn plays well with the notion of "otherness" that is also present in his associations with the localities in the Troad listed by Chryses and his designation as Smintheos. Indeed, the archer who shoots from afar and who brings sudden, unexpected death to the troops is a fitting etiological explanation for the onset of an epidemic illness such as the plague, which may also be interpreted as emanating from a foreign source.⁸⁶

Although archery was viewed as somewhat alien to the Greeks in the Archaic period, that was not the case in Egypt and the ancient Near East, where the bow was known as a weapon of hunting and warfare, as well as an important indicator of monarchical power, often shown in the hands of gods and kings in graphic representations, and in literary sources where it was used to suggest a symbolic connection between the divine and mortal worlds through the institution of

⁸³ It is perhaps of interest that, as Cohen observes, hunting scenes in Greek art illustrate that bows and arrows were not a preferred weaponry among archaic Greeks. Of the two types of bows, simple and compound, the latter was associated with Scythians, while the former, closer to a native Greek bow, is often held by Apollo in artistic depictions (1994, 699–700). It is impossible to determine the type of bow Apollo wields in the *Iliad*, however.

⁸⁴ An association both with wolves and also light have been offered as etymologies for Λυκηγενής. See Graf (2009, 123) and Bryce (1990, 145).

⁸⁵ A problem exists with the character Pandaros, in that the poem is inconsistent in his representation, reporting at one point that he is part of a contingent that hails from the city Zeleia (2.824–27), which is in the Troad, leading Bryce to conclude that the Lycian representation of Pandaros may relate to a pre-Homeric tradition (1977, 216). It has been observed, however, that the Lycians as a group provide a “coming from afar” motif in the plot of the *Iliad* and Pandaros fits within that poetic framework. See Tsagalis for this theme (2012, Chapter 4). Levaniouk notes that the name of Pandaros “is probably Anatolian in origin,” and, in particular is associated with a region that had a prominent cult of Apollo. In addition to a name, he shares traits with Pandareos, a mythical character evoked in a prayer of Penelope in the *Odyssey* (2011, 284–85).

⁸⁶ Thucydides, for example, reports that there were claims that the plague of Athens originated in Africa (2.48.1).

kingship.⁸⁷ In the hands of an Iliadic warrior, however, the bow seemingly lacks this connection—even met with a sense of scorn—and is not until Odysseus takes up this weapon at the conclusion of the *Odyssey* that such symbolic links can be discerned, where the bow denotes not only the sign of rightful kingship but also a connection of the rightful king to his divine patron, who, in the case of the returning Ithacan, is, I assert, none other than Apollo.

By contrast, Achilles has no discernible connection with archery, but, given the *Iliad's* proclivity for inserting vignettes into the narrative that comment on the greater storyline, it will be worthwhile to take the time to examine minor characters who share this particular skill with the archer god, Apollo. Graf's earlier comments about archers, where most of hail from Crete or Lycia, may have been a general observation, but the *Iliad* seems to agree with his remarks, with two archers, Meriones and Pandaros, tracing their origins to these locales, respectively. Though both of these characters pray to Apollo, who is the patron god of archery, they have opposing fates, and the stories of both archers provide insights on the trajectory of Apollo's characterization from the *Iliad* to the *Odyssey*, as well as on the god's relationship with the "best of the Achaeans" in Homeric Epics.

Pandaros is a renowned archer, a Lycian on the Trojan side, who is induced by Athena, disguised as a mortal, to shoot an arrow at Menelaus, thus breaking an uneasy truce in Book 4. Athena wheedles him to undertake this audacious deed by appealing to his desire for fame, claiming that he will win renown or glory (κῆδος, 4.95) from all the Trojans and chiefly from Paris, their most famous archer, if he only pray first to the Lycian-born Apollo, renowned for the

⁸⁷ For further information, see Wilkinson, who examines early iconography from Egypt and the Near East and who concludes that, while Egyptian renderings of archery tended to show the arrows pointed at their targets by line of site, those influenced by the "Mesopotamian tradition" were more naturalistic, with the archer pointing well above the target and sometimes shown in the sitting position (1991, 98–99). I point this out, since Apollo is described as firing from a sitting position (ἔζετ' ἔπειτ' ἀπάνευθε νεῶν, μετὰ δ' ἰὸν ἔηκε, 1.47).

bow (εὔχετο δ' Απόλλωνι Λυκηγενεῖ κλυτοτόξω, 4.119). Pandaros takes up the charge, and fires his shot, but it is deflected by Athena and only scratches Menelaus. Some have seen Pandaros, through his connection with archery, as a Paris-type figure,⁸⁸ but I prefer to view him as a partial reflection of a character who dwells one level higher, since Pandaros' bow and arrows, his link to Lycia, and, perhaps most importantly, his heroic diction evoke another archer with purported Lycian roots, Apollo himself.

The scene featuring Pandaros and Menelaus is notable for all the densely-packed references to glory and fame in a variety of forms, but one word that is lacking within this thematic framework is κλέος. This word will be associated with Pandaros in a later scene, however, when Aeneas wheedles his comrade-in-arms to fire an arrow at Diomedes, who, operating in his *arestaia*, is described by Pandaros as "the best of the Achaeans" (ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν, 5.103). Initially, when he thinks his shot has met with success, Pandaros associates the favorable outcome to his local Lycian links with Apollo: οὐδέ ἔφημι / δῆθ' ἀνσχίσεσθαι κρατερὸν βέλος, εἰ ἐτεόν με / ὄρσεν ἄναξ Διὸς υἱὸς ἀπορνύμενον Λυκίηθεν (I claim he, [Diomedes, the best of the Achaeans], will not long bear the strong arrow, if in truth the lord, son of Zeus, called me forth setting out from Lycia, 5.103-105). Diomedes, however, prays to Athena, who heals his wounds. Seeing this, Pandaros is dispirited, but Aeneas attempts to motivate the archer to rejoin the fray with these encouraging words: Πάνδαρε ποῦ τοι τόξον ἰδὲ πτερόεντες οἴστοι; / ᾗ οὐ τίς τοι ἐρίζεται ἐνθάδε γ' ἀνὴρ, / οὐδέ τις ἐν Λυκίῃ σέο γ' εὔχεται εἶναι ἀμείνων (Pandaros, where are your bow, your winged arrows, and your fame? In which no one in

⁸⁸ See Tsagalis (2012, Chapter 4).

this world—no mortal, at any rate—vies with you, and no one in Lycia boasts to be better than you, 5.171 & 173).⁸⁹

The only way his enterprise will not succeed, Aeneas tells the archer, is if he goes up against an angry god: εἰ μὴ τις θεός ἐστι κοτεσσάμενος Τρώεσσιν / ἱρῶν μηνίσας: χαλεπή δὲ θεοῦ ἔπι μῆνις (unless he is some god who has harbored a grudge against the Trojans, having grown angry over religious matters. And the anger from a god is harsh, 5.178-79). Aeneas places emphasis on μῆνις through repetition of the term, but here we see an additional outgrowth of that anger into κότος, the anger of the long-term feud. Walsh sees a certain irony in this passage, since "it is not a god's κότος that is issue at Troy" (2005, 50), and there seems to be little to suggest in the scene that a god's anger will prevent Pandaros' shot from finding its mark. But Pandaros does not succeed partly because he has become a pawn in a larger struggle, one between Apollo and Athena, and partly because his prayer to Apollo is unsuccessful.⁹⁰

In a short span of time, he then renounces his association with archery, and, strangely enough, harkens back to his father's advice that he should be a charioteer and spearman in Troy, and this memory leads him to renounce his affiliation with the bow:

τὼ ῥα κακῆ αἴση ἀπὸ πασσάλου ἀγκύλα τόξα
ἦματι τῷ ἐλόμην ὅτε Ἴλιον εἰς ἐρατεινὴν
ἠγεόμην Τρώεσσι φέρων χάριν Ἑκτορι δίῳ.
εἰ δέ κε νοστήσω καὶ ἐσόψομαι ὀφθαλμοῖσι
πατρίδ' ἐμὴν ἄλοχόν τε καὶ ὑπερεφῆς μέγα δῶμα,
αὐτίκ' ἔπειτ' ἀπ' ἐμεῖο κάρη τάμοι ἀλλότριος φῶς
εἰ μὴ ἐγὼ τάδε τόξα φαεινῶ ἐν πυρὶ θεῖην
χερσὶ διακλάσας: ἀνεμῶλια γὰρ μοι ὀπηδεῖ.

⁸⁹ For more on the importance of formulaic expressions on secular boasting using the verb εὔχομαι and its connection to κλέος in this scene, see Muellner (1976, 82).

⁹⁰ Though, up to this point, I have been focusing on two specific forms of anger as they apply to Apollo, the term κότος is perhaps associated with Apollo here. Poseidon significantly refers to the κότος that both he and Apollo felt when they were abused by the Trojan king Laomedon. Later Apollo will experience κότος against Athena when she thwarts his designs in a horse race during the funeral games of Patroclus.

Therefore, with evil fate I seized the curved bow from the peg on that day when I took the lead for the Trojans as kindness to glorious Hector. If I should make my way home and look with my eyes upon my homeland, my wife, and high-roofed halls, then immediately may a stranger cut my head off from me, if I don't set this bow in the blazing fire, having shattered it with my hands: for it attends me worthless as the wind.

(5.209-215)

After making this pronouncement, Pandaros puts trust in his spear and threatens Diomedes, ἦ μάλα σ' οὐ βέλος ὠκὺ δαμάσσατο πικρὸς οἰστός: / νῦν αὖτ' ἐγχείη πειρήσομαι αἶ κε τύχωμινῶν αὖτ' ἐγχείη πειρήσομαι αἶ κε τύχωμι (Quite surely the swift missile, the bitter arrow, did not kill you. Now, in turn, I will try my fortune with the spear, if I should succeed, 5.278-79). He then lands a glancing blow at close range against Diomedes from a chariot driven by Aeneas. Initially thinking his spear blow was deadly, he exalts over the presumed fallen hero, "you gave me a great boast" (ἐμοὶ δὲ μέγ' εὖχος ἔδωκας, 5.285), But in the end, Diomedes—and his protectress, Athena—has the last laugh when, recognizing the wound is not life-threatening, the hero taunts the archer turned spearman, ἦμβροτες οὐδ' ἔτυχες (you missed, and didn't hit, 5.287), and then easily dispatches his adversary, whose head rolls ignominiously in the dust.

I read the story of Pandaros as a tale of failed κλέος – a field of renown that, through the medium of Homeric poetry, transcends mortality – and a vignette of a minor character's attempt to seize the macro-narrative. I have liberally quoted from Pandaros' time in the limelight because I believe its thematics point in two related directions: the first is that Pandaros' lack of success is matched by the temporary acquiescence to other gods by the Iliadic Apollo, whose own continual boasts in his father's halls go unfulfilled, and the second is that the Lycian archer's failure will more than be compensated by the eventual success of Odysseus in the *Odyssey's* bow scene, where a clear contrast can be drawn between Pandaros' disavowal of his bow—and

negative wish for an unsuccessful homecoming—and Odysseus eventual success with the same weapon. The trajectory of this pattern is in accord with my assertion that, over the course of the Homeric Epics, the poems cumulatively depict a coming-of-age story for Apollo, who leaves behind both his local associations and his somewhat limiting reputation as a "destroyer," the far-shooting archer, to become a panhellenic deity with a more comprehensive resume. Although the culmination of this process occurs through the person of Odysseus, we can begin to view its initial phases here, through the lens of Pandaros' failure.

Significantly, the diction of Pandaros' failure is mirrored in the divine sphere by Apollo's refusal to back up his own boasts that he has continually made among his fellow Olympians. We will recall that, in the face of a challenge by Poseidon, Apollo demurs at the climactic moment, leading Artemis to exclaim that Apollo has given Poseidon a boast, thus rendering his vaunted bow as worthless, μέλεον δέ οἱ εὖχος ἔδωκας: / νηπύτιε τί νυ τόξον ἔχεις ἀνεμώλιον αὐτῶς (And you granted him a boast in vain. Fool, why do you now in such a way hold the bow, worthless as wind, 21.473-74). As can be seen, at the height of his supposed *arestia*, Pandaros, believing he has dispatched the "best of the Achaeans," employs similar diction, claiming that Diomedes presumed death has given him a great boast, which is the positive equivalent to the boast that goes unfulfilled by Apollo. Pandaros' success is short lived, however, and, after failing to fell either of his targets, he eventually forswears his affiliation with the bow, rejecting it as worthless as wind (ἀνεμώλια, 5.215). Indeed, the would-be champion has, as Diomedes suggests, "missed the mark" (οὐδ' ἔτυχες, 5.287).

Earlier, I analyzed the word ἀνεμώλια in relation to worthless speech acts, pronouncements that are not backed up by successful action, and related this notion to the etymology of Apollo's name proposed by Nagy, who puts forth an argument that the god's name

is related to ἀπειλέω, which means to promise, boastfully promise, or threaten, thus rendering him "the god of authoritative speech, the one who presides over all manner of speech-acts, including the realms of song making in general and poetry in particular" (2004, 189).⁹¹ Though Apollo is the god of "the god of authoritative speech," Nagy further observes that there is a certain irony to this formulation: "the god who promises the fulfillment, the *télos*, of his own speech-acts, is himself the incarnation of promise, not fulfillment" (2004, 141). The idea of promise here is embedded in the comparison between the perpetually ephobic appearance of both Apollo and the hero Achilles, and this state of permanent youthfulness in turn connects to the etymology of Apollo's name, which Nagy (2004, 142) and Burkert (1975, 11) relate to the seasonal recurring festival at Delphi, the *appelai*, which is a "Feast of the Epebes". The notion that Apollo is the god of promise, not fulfillment, is on full display in his relationship with Poseidon in the *Iliad*, a status that Artemis relentlessly drives home when she describes the god's bow as ἀνεμώλιον. Thus, one could read that, without evidence of a proper fulfillment of a promise or boast, there is a certain incompleteness to the god portrayed in the *Iliad*.

Pandaros' attempt to kill "the best of the Achaeans" with an arrow is, of course, reserved for the god Apollo himself, who will be the agent of Achilles' destruction outside the narrative of the poem.⁹² Although Pandaros is a comparatively minor character in the overall scheme of the *Iliad* and he never receives explicit support from the god that he somewhat resembles, his story is an illustration of how the poem makes use of subordinate scenes and characters to provide commentary on the macro-narrative. The story of Pandaros is the tale of a warrior who, in an

⁹¹ For greater detail, see my section "The Anger of ... Apollo" and, in particular, Martin's argument on authoritative speech acts (1989, 12 & 31–34).

⁹² This is evident from internal Iliadic allusions, which I cover in greater detail as this study progresses, and to external tradition. According to Proclus' summary of the *Aethiopsis*, for example, Paris and Apollo kill Achilles, a scene tersely described thus, "Achilles, having put the Trojans to flight and pursuing them toward the city, is killed by Paris and Apollo" (τρεψάμενος δ' Ἀχιλλεὺς τοὺς Τρῶας καὶ εἰς τὴν πόλιν συνεισπεσῶν ὑπὸ Πάριδος ἀναιρεῖται καὶ Ἀπόλλωνος, (West, M.L. 2003, 5.3)).

effort to attain κλέος, exceeds his station and by trying to kill "the best of the Achaeans" implicitly competes with the god he resembles, Apollo. Although his hubris brings about his downfall, Pandaros' story nevertheless tells us something about the god of whom he is, in some sense, a partial reflection. To a certain extent the failure of Pandaros subordinates the significance of Apollo's Lycian connection, which, though present in the poem, is inherently local in nature and comes to be displaced by the god's more universal and panhellenic role.

To that end, Pandaros' story conjures up images of other warriors who not only exceed their station and thus violate their status as subordinate characters but also, in their role as substitutes, convey a sense of localization that their major counterparts leave behind in their movement as the main characters of panhellenic Epos. The most telling parallel for our purposes is the relationship between Patroclus and Achilles. Patroclus and Achilles have a number of affinities that the *Iliad* presents as extending to their earliest days together. Both characters, for example, have a capacity to heal. During the period of Achilles withdrawal from his comrades, Patroclus is confronted by the sight of a wounded comrade, Euryplus, who has taken an arrow to the thigh and who begs for assistance, asking Patroclus to use the healing art that he has learned from Achilles, whom the wise centaur Chiron had taught (11.828-832).⁹³ By alluding to an affinity between the two heroes, the *Iliad* highlights a major difference between them at this juncture in the poem, since Patroclus quickly rushes to his fallen comrade's aid, while Achilles remains intransigent against all efforts to get him to rejoin the fray.

Achilles, still bent with rage over Agamemnon's slight, refuses to take on the role a healer, but he does acquiesce to Patroclus' request to let him don Achilles' special armor, a move that not only makes Patroclus a substitute for the more famous hero but will prove to be the

⁹³ Despite what may have been a thorough tradition associated with Achilles' time under the tutelage of the centaur, "there still appears to be a general process at work whereby Chiron is consciously excluded from the *Iliad*" (Mackie 1997, 3).

young man's undoing. Despite Achilles' injunction to turn back even if Zeus should grant him victory and glory (κῦδος, 16.89), the allure of such honors inexorably pulls Patroclus to his ruin. Indeed, Patroclus is destined to perish in a manner that echoes many of the details of the death of Achilles. Among those details, the most significant for our purposes is the involvement of Apollo, a fact that leads Burgess to conclude, "that Apollo is involved in the death of Patroclus seems to be evidence that this [death] scene imitates the death of Achilles, for the famous participation of Apollo in the slaying of Achilles is probably a specific motif that belongs to that hero's story" (2003, 75). If there is a strong correlation between the deaths of the two characters and if Patroclus is largely an Iliadic amplification of a minor figure in extra-Iliadic myth,⁹⁴ there must be a thematic impetus for his crucial role in the poem.

Patroclus's death, in fact, positions him as a surrogate for his more famous companion, and this, in turn, provides crucial evidence for the nature of the relationship between Achilles and Apollo as envisioned by the *Iliad*.⁹⁵ Patroclus' role as a substitute is more than suggested by the young man's assumption of all of Achilles' outer symbolic markings, his almost-indestructible bronze armor. When Patroclus assumes the epic mantle of Achilles by taking on his armor, he becomes heedless of his mate's former injunction to turn back at the wall of Troy (16.92-94), and is brought low by Apollo. As Nagy states, "within the timelessness of epic, the Funeral of Patroklos will have to serve as indirect compensation to Achilles for the absence of ritual τιμή that is his due" (1999b, 119). In this argument, Achilles is denied ritual τιμή in the *Iliad* because this is the province of hero cult, which is "strictly local," but he is "becoming Panhellenic by way of Epos" (1999b, 118–19), and is rewarded instead by its undying fame

⁹⁴ Burgess (2003, 73).

⁹⁵ See in particular Nagy's discussion on the word *therapon* as a ritual substitute (1999b, 292) and (1992, 134–35).

(κλέος ἄφθιτον, 9.413). Nagy arrives at this conclusion by first analyzing the poetic treatment of Achilles' son, Neoptolemus, who also dies through the intercession of Apollo, as depicted most explicitly in a poem of Pindar, his *Paean* 6.⁹⁶ The character of Neoptolemus is integral to Nagy's formulation of "ritual antagonism," where "antagonism between a hero and god in myth corresponds to the ritual requirements of symbiosis between hero and god in cult" (1999b, 120). In the *Iliad*, the cultic dimension between Achilles and Apollo is latent, but nevertheless influences the poem's presentation of the mutual character development that informs the relationship between hero and god, where a symbiosis is never explicitly realized.

Now that we have assessed Patroclus' role as a type of substitute for Achilles, we can superimpose that relationship on the character Pandaros, who, I assert, plays a somewhat similar role for Apollo, where the archer's local affiliations and outer signifiers comment on a larger character in the poem. Like Patroclus, Pandaros is outfitted with the most significant outer markings of his would-be patron. In the case of Patroclus, he wears Achilles' armor, while the Lycian Pandaros is invested with Apollo's bow (Πάνδαρος, ᾧ καὶ τόξον Ἀπόλλων αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν, Pandaros, to whom Apollo gave the bow, 2.827). Both Patroclus and Pandaros are temporarily beset with an obsession for fame that leads to their indirectly competing against their more dominant models, and thus to their deaths. Because Patroclus is a more developed character than Pandaros, we can see that, in his desire for fame, he leaves behind a capacity to heal, which is a latent characteristic of Achilles himself. It must be said that this is a characteristic of Apollo, too, and it is perhaps no accident that the single occasion of Apollo's healing of an individual in the *Iliad* occurs in connection with a Lycian, Glaucos. The god also comes to the assistance of another Lycian and Zeus' son, Sarpedon, and conveys the hero back to his homeland, a scene

⁹⁶ I will take up this poem in a subsequent discussion of Delphi, the locale where this hero's bones were said to rest, and consider some of the possible political and artistic goals in Pindar's treatment of this hero.

which emphasizes the establishment of local hero cult.⁹⁷ Given his personal intercession with these other Lycians, one would think that Apollo would come to the assistance of Pandaros, but he does no such thing. This Lycian archer comes to distrust his local connections as well as the power of the bow, and his death is all but assured.

In acting as a substitute and providing the ritual τιμή and localized hero cult that Achilles will lack as a result of his becoming Panhellenic by way of Epos, Patroclus provides us with important comparative information, without which the character Pandaros would simply be a failed archer. With this comparison in mind, however, we can read the archer's failed bid for κλέος as a telling feature of Apollo's character development in the *Iliad*. It allows us, moreover, to connect the seemingly individual strands of the god's role in the poem that we have been tracing thus far in this chapter. I used the term "character development" to describe Apollo's evolving role in the poem, because, as I read it, the god that enters the beginning of the *Iliad* with such destructive fanfare is a young divinity with something to prove. Much like the character Pandaros, whose treacherous bowshot breaks an uneasy truce, the Apollo at the beginning of the poem uses his bow primarily for its destructive effect. The priest Chryses has summoned the god by evoking the local connections that have been fostered in the Troad, but the *Iliad* also suggests that the god has a strong local link to Lycia, a land known for its archers, and, as a tutelary divinity of Hector, he appears to be a stout defender of the entire Trojan alliance. Despite all his heroic posturing, where his boast that he could kill the "best of the Achaeans" would bring him κλέος, Pandaros eventually loses his head via a process that begins by his forswearing the power of his bow. This power, moreover, was associated with his Lycian affiliation to Apollo, as can be seen by his boast when he believes his initial bowshot was successful. Although Pandaros

⁹⁷ For more on the death of Sarpedon and hero cult, see Nagy (1992, 122–42).

makes prospective vows to the god, Apollo apparently chooses not to intervene on Pandaros' behalf, effectively allowing Athena to have the day, just as he does with Poseidon, temporarily refusing to back up his continual boasts.

Leaving aside allusions to Paris' (and Apollo's) successful bow shot against Achilles for the moment, I will note simply here that the *Iliad* does give evidence of a successful Bowman in a micro-narrative, the Cretan Meriones, who displays his fealty to Apollo and whose prayer, as opposed to that of Pandaros, meets with success, winning an archery contest against Teucer during the funeral games of Patroclus. The contestants are required to fire at a dove that is bound by a cord, with the winner being the one to hit the bird. Teucer's failure is expressed thus: οὐδ' ἠπειλήσεν ἄνακτι / ἀρνῶν πρωτογόνων ῥέξειν κλειτὴν ἑκατόμβην. / ὄρνιθος μὲν ἄμαρτε: μέγῃρε γάρ οἱ τό γ' Ἀπόλλων (And he hadn't promised to sacrifice a splendid hecatomb of lambs to the lord. He missed the bird, for Apollo begrudged it to him, 23.865). We can contrast this with his comrade's success: ἀτὰρ δὴ οἷστον ἔχεν πάλαι, ὡς ἴθυνεν. / αὐτίκα δ' ἠπειλήσεν ἐκηβόλω Ἀπόλλωνι / ἀρνῶν πρωτογόνων ῥέξειν κλειτὴν ἑκατόμβην ... ἀντικρὺ δὲ διῆλθε βέλος (But Meriones was long holding an arrow, when he was aiming. And immediately he promised to the far-shooter Apollo to an illustrious hecatomb of first-born lambs ... And the arrow passed straight through [the dove], 23.871-73 & 876).

It has been noted that Meriones bears certain similarities with another archer who has Cretan connection, Odysseus, who assumes a Cretan persona upon his return to Ithaca. Haft, for example, comments that "it is striking how many characteristics Odysseus and Meriones share," noting the common elements of speed and skill with weapons, particularly their prowess with the spear and bow (1984, 298).⁹⁸ The details of the Iliadic bow contest itself also bear some surface

⁹⁸ Concerning this character, see also Clay (1983, 84–89) and Levaniouk (2011, 172–75).

resemblance to the one in the *Odyssey*, in that the successful contestant in the *Iliad* will win 10 double-headed axes (πελέκεας δέκα, *Il.* 23.823), and Odysseus needs to fire an arrow through the handle of the same type of implement (πελέκεων, *Od.* 21.421), perhaps showing an additional link to the hero's Cretan persona, since that weapon was a significant cultural symbol to that island.⁹⁹ Thus, the role of both of these Iliadic archers, Pandaros and Meriones, provides commentary on the action outside of their limited micro-narratives, even pointing toward important components of Odysseus' eventual relationship with a god who will be an integral figure in his successful homecoming. In contrast to Pandaros' failure, the success of Meriones is predicated on his promise to sacrifice a hecatomb to Apollo, and the verb used to describe this action is ἠπειλήσεν, from ἀπειλέω, the same verb Nagy suggests is behind the etymology of Apollo's name.

The Iliadic Lyre

If Patroclus' death, which occurs largely through the intercession of Apollo, provides Achilles with ritual τιμή and localized hero cult, the ignominious death of Pandaros shows the hazards of viewing Apollo as simply localized god with arrows of destruction, as the god, like Achilles, is becoming panhellenic by way of Epos. While Apollo establishes his destructive credentials at the outset of the poem and while the image of the angry, retributive god captures one's immediate attention, Apollo is capable of being appeased. After Agamemnon realizes the enormity of his error, the Achaean leader arranges for Chryseis to be returned to her father. Although I viewed the Lycian archer Pandaros as a partial and localized reflection of the god Apollo, the paradigm of that minor character is largely negative. In much the same way that Pandaros takes on the outer trappings of the god, though, the priest Chryses does the same,

⁹⁹ Also known as the labrys, "the double-axe has always been considered as one of the most important religious symbols in Minoan Crete" (Haysom, M. 2010, 35).

holding the wreathed scepter of Apollo as a representation of his patron's authority. In a certain way, he becomes an archer, too, when, through his prayer formula, Apollo's arrows become a type of recompense or substitute for the priest's tears (τίσειαν Δαναοὶ ἐμὰ δάκρυα σοῖσι βέλεσσιν, 1.42). After his daughter has been returned, however, the priest of Apollo rescinds his earlier plea that brought about Apollo's intercession, telling the god to abate from his wrath "and remove now the deadly plague from the Danaans" (ἤδη νῦν Δαναοῖσιν ἀεικέα λοιγὸν ἄμυνον, 1.456). Unlike the limited exemplum of Pandaros, the priest Chryses highlights his patron's capacity to both destroy and, by bringing the plague to an end, to heal. In this case, the god is not a healer of individuals, as he is for the Lycian Glaucos, but of entire populations. The priest's new prayer, asking Apollo to ward off the plague (λοιγὸν ἄμυνον), also happens to echo Patroclus' admonishment of Achilles, who could do the same and profit future generations, if only he would set aside his anger (τί σευ ἄλλος ὀνήσεται ὀψίγονός περ αἶ κε μὴ Ἀργείοισιν ἀεικέα λοιγὸν ἀμόνησ;, 16.23).¹⁰⁰ As the earthly representative of a god and administrator of his local cult, the priest is, of course, the ritual substitute *par excellence*, and Chryses provides a well-developed pathway to assess the Iliadic Apollo more completely. In contrast to Patroclus, who essentially takes a hit for a more significant character in the macro-narrative, the priest Chryses never competes with Apollo, and remains a positive exemplar of the god's complete power.¹⁰¹ In essence, this turn of events that centers on Chryses casts Apollo in his role as a healer, a role that will become more pronounced in later antiquity.

The priest's requested reversal of the plague must be followed by elaborate rites of obeisance by the Achaeans, who offer not only sacrifice but also a lovely choral song to the god:

¹⁰⁰ For more on the dictional significance of the phrase λοιγὸν ἀμῦναι, specifically with respect to the etymology of Achilles' name, see Nagy (1999b, 5§10-13).

¹⁰¹ Farone discusses the possibility that the Chryses episode may have originated as a separate hymn to Apollo, which, in the author's opinion, would explain some of the "inconsistencies" of the *Iliad's* first book (2016, 397 ff.).

οἱ δὲ πανημέριοι μολπῇ θεὸν ἰλάσκοντο / καλὸν ἀεΐδοντες παιήονα κοῦροι Ἀχαιῶν / μέλποντες ἐκάεργον: ὃ δὲ φρένα τέρπετ' ἀκούων (All day long the young men of the Achaeans were propitiating the god with song, celebrating the one who works from afar, and he, in hearing it, took delight in his heart, 1.472-474). When Apollo hears this song, his anger seemingly dissipates, and the plague comes to an end, with the god even sending the Achaeans a favoring wind (1.475). It can be said that the god's reaction here, where his heart is gladdened upon hearing the song (φρένα τέρπετ' ἀκούων, 1.473), is the functional opposite of the angry response that was elicited at the point of Chryses' initial prayer that drew the god down from the peaks of Olympus (1.42).

Specifically the song that pleases Apollo's heart is a paean, and this particular version of the song from the *Iliad* comes close to embracing the textbook definition of that genre.¹⁰² I stated earlier that, when the plague comes to an end, Apollo is effectively cast in the role of a healer, and one of the possible theories behind the origin of the paean is its apotropaic function as well as a connection to the god Paean, who was at one point "an independent deity in Mycenaean Bronze Age Greece" (Graf, F. 2009, 16). In Book Five of the *Iliad*, the story is told of Hades being wounded by an arrow of Heracles, but Paean applies pain-killing drugs and heals the wounds (τῷ δ' ἐπὶ Παιήων ὀδυνήφατα φάρμακα πάσσων / ἠκέσατ', 401-402), and the same line is used in conjunction with the mending of Ares' wounds, which were received at the hands of Diomedes. Eventually, Paean would become yet another epithet of Apollo, but there is scholarly

¹⁰² Although there is no consensus on what defines this genre, Hellenistic scholars had a set of criteria in mind when they categorized lyric poetry, and Ford summarizes this well with respect to the paean in Book 1 of the *Iliad*: "Those who stress continuities in literary history could remark that Homer is Hellenistic enough to describe the paean formally as a dance song (μολπῇ), functionally as a song of appeasement (ἰλάσκοντο), and socially as a Greek song, performed by young men under a leader (κοῦροι Ἀχαιῶν). A textbook paean, then, sung to Paian/ Apollo to ward off plague" (2006, 289).

disagreement as to whether such a link existed in the *Iliad*.¹⁰³ What is clear, however, is that, in the *Iliad*, the paean, a form of choral lyric poetry that may have had its origins as a song for the healing god Paeon, had become the province of the god Apollo, as the Achaeans demonstrate when they perform their choral song for the god.

As the above examples concerning the god Paeon indicate, the *Iliad's* Paeon, if he is in fact represented an independent deity, has the specialized role of healing other gods. In a way, though, the end of Book 1 of the *Iliad* suggests that Apollo has taken on this role, and he does so through his music, as the concluding scene from that book demonstrates. At the request of Achilles, Thetis has come to Zeus to request that he grant a series of Trojan victories that will cause the Achaeans to give the hero his rightful honors. After Zeus grants Thetis' prayer, the jealousy of his consort, Hera, threatens to tip the gods into discord, but Hephaestus initiates a banquet that pacifies the parties and culminates in a song led by Apollo, who acts like a chorus leader for the Muses:

ὥς τότε μὲν πρόπαν ἦμαρ ἐς ἠέλιον καταδύντα
δαίνυντ', οὐδέ τι θυμὸς ἐδεύετο δαιτὸς εἴσης,
οὐ μὲν φόρμιγγος περικαλλέος ἦν ἔχ' Ἀπόλλων,
Μουσάων θ' αἰ ἄειδον ἀμειβόμεναι ὀπι καλῆ.

So then the entire day until the sun's setting
they were feasting, and in no way did their hearts lack of the fair banquet,
nor of the beautiful lyre that Apollo was holding
nor of the Muses, who were singing in response with lovely voice.

(1.601-604)

The banquet and song led by Apollo on Olympus shares some features with the Achaeans' earlier paean. Both last the entire day (cf. *πρόπαν ἦμαρ* 1.597 and *πανημέριοι*, 1.472). There is also an emphasis on equal apportionment, where Hephaestus pours out nectar to all the gods

¹⁰³ See Graf for a summary (2009, 16). In my view, however, this seems to be yet another archaizing moment in the poem.

(ἄλλοισι θεοῖς ἐνδέξια πᾶσιν / οἶνοχόει γλυκὸν νέκταρ, 1.597-98), and the young men performing the paeon first distribute drink fairly to all (νόμησαν δ' ἄρα πᾶσιν, 1.471).

These songs, then, contrast sharply with the opening of the poem, which was highlighted by the discord occasioned by slights to hierarchal status, and with Apollo's entrance, where he arrives like the night (ὃ δ' ἦϊε νυκτὶ ἐοικώς, *Il.* 1.47) and his arrows transport death by plague. In both the human and divine realms, the choral songs at the end of Book 1, therefore, mark a moment of communal harmony that resonates through its music. The paeon of the Achaeans had been preceded by an elaborate sacrifice led by Apollo's priest Chryses, and the diction indicating the satiety of the participants and fair apportionment creates an equivalency between the two celebrations, one in the Troad and the other on Olympus (οὐδέ τι θυμὸς ἐδεύετο δαιτὸς ἔϊσης, 1.468 = 1.602). As Nagy has pointed out (1999b, 43–45, *passim*), the word for banquet, δαῖς, is related to the verb meaning "to apportion," δαίωμι, indicating the importance of fair allotment of the sacrificial offering among the human participants, as well as a form of communication and reciprocity with the divine world.¹⁰⁴

The dichotomy between the beginning of Book 1, where Apollo unleashes his death-dealing bow, and its end, where the god plucks his lyre before a delighted audience of Olympian gods couldn't seemingly be stronger, but a close kinship exists between the bow and the lyre, and their relationship is actually suggested by the symmetry of the opening and closing of Book 1.¹⁰⁵ Both the bow and the lyre are, of course, stringed instruments, and, as such, they emit a sound

¹⁰⁴ In practice, sacrificial offerings were not exactly equal, with one participant, such as a priest, often receiving a larger share of the meat, and the etiology behind the myth of Prometheus' attempt to trick Zeus (*Theogony*) into choosing bones covered in fat indicates that the gods themselves receive a different allotment. For an extended study on the representation of sacrifice in the *Iliad*, see Hitch (2009, Chapter 3).

¹⁰⁵ Others have noted that a relationship exists between the bow and the lyre, but most analyses focus on the *Odyssey* in observing this link. See, for example, Benardete (2008). The two instruments, one of destruction and the other of delight, are explicitly, as Graf notes, linked in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* (2009, 33).

when they are employed. The *Iliad*, in fact, goes out its way to emphasize the terrible sound of Apollo's bow when its arrows are let loose at the beginning of the poem, δεινὴ δὲ κλαγγὴ γένητ' ἀργυρέοιο βιοῖο (And a dread twang emitted from his silver bow, 1.49). Similarly, an emphasis is placed on the dire noise Pandaros' bow produces, λίγξε βιός, νευρὴ δὲ μέγ' ἴαχεν (the bow twanged, and the string was making a great cry, 4.125).¹⁰⁶ While the dispiriting noise made by the archer's bow may seem to be fully removed from Apollo's exceedingly beautiful lyre (φόρμιγγος περικαλλέος, 1.603), the two can be considered the extremes of a continuum. This is evident from the associated symbolism that attaches to both, where Apollo, when he fires his bow at the beginning of Book 1, arrives like the night, but his song at the book's end lasts the entire day. For the moment, I will not elaborate on the possible solar metaphor that is present here, preferring instead to take this topic up comparatively in conjunction with an analysis of the *Odyssey* in a subsequent chapter.

Although it is perhaps easier to see the connection between the bow and the lyre outside of the confines of the *Iliad*, I will restrict myself currently to a discussion of the poem's internal evidence for such a link, both through its thematics and its diction. I stated earlier that, despite the many similarities between Achilles and Apollo, the hero is not an archer, but he is, like Apollo, a lyre player, and the scene in which we find him plucking his instrument seems to coalesce the varying Iliadic descriptions that attend Apollo's bow and the lyre.¹⁰⁷ After the

¹⁰⁶ The verb ἴαχῶ is also used to describe battle cries or shrieks (LSJ). Moreover, the adjectival form of the verb characterizing the twanging or whistling sound that was issued by Pandaros' bow (λίγξε, 4.125) is used to describe the sound of Achilles' lyre, λιγείη, in scene I will take up in a moment.

¹⁰⁷ The bow and the lyre are usually connected within the context of the *Odyssey*, but, due to the Iliadic portrayal of archery in general, commentators typically handle the two instruments separately. Achilles, of course, is the consummate spearman. Mackie, who detects a link between Achilles' spear and lyre via the tutelage of Chiron, has the following to say about the bow, "in the *Iliad* no self-respecting aristocrat of the highest order would be seen dead near a bow and arrow (for the *locus classicus* see Diomedes' sentiments at 11.385-95). In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus is an exceptional archer (8.215 ff. etc.), but he leaves his bow and arrow behind when he ventures to Troy" (1997, 7).

Achaean suffer a number of losses during Achilles' extended absence, they muster an embassy in order to persuade him to enter the battle again, and they find him occupied thus,

τὸν δ' εὗρον φρένα τερπόμενον φόρμιγγι λιγείῃ
καλῆ δαιδαλέῃ, ἐπὶ δ' ἀργύρεον ζυγὸν ἦεν,
τὴν ἄρετ' ἐξ ἐνάρων πόλιν Ἡετίωνος ὀλέσσας·
τῇ ὅ γε θυμὸν ἔτερπεν, ἄειδε δ' ἄρα κλέα ἀνδρῶν.
Πάτροκλος δέ οἱ οἶος ἐναντίος ἦστο σιωπῇ ...

The found him delighting his heart with his high-pitched lyre,
fine and cunningly wrought, and on it was a silver bridge;
he won it from the spoils after he sacked the city of Eetion.
Achilles charmed his own spirit with it, and sang of the fame of men.
In silence Patroclus sat alone opposite him ...

(9.186-190)

We will recall that the choral paean performed by the Achaean youth, which closely resembles Apollo's song on Olympus, brought delight to the god's heart, and both songs seemingly portend some form of communal accord. In contrast to the choral refrains of these songs, Achilles' lay is not only monodic it also brings delight only to his own heart (φρένα τερπόμενον, 9.186; cf., Apollo's reaction to the Achaeans' paean, φρένα τέρπετ' ἀκούων, 1.433). Some have interpreted this expression as the epitome of the genre of the heroic epic and thus characteristic of the *Iliad* itself,¹⁰⁸ but the song of Achilles actually serves to highlight the separation of the hero from those around him.

Unlike the paean of the Achaeans, which is characterized by an equitable banquet and resounds all the way up to the delighted ears of Apollo, Achilles' song apparently does not transfer to those around him, nor are there any outside participants, highlighted by the fact that Patroclus sits alone in silence. Nagy interprets this scene differently, believing that Patroclus is

¹⁰⁸ See, for example, Muellner, who states, "... if the μῆνις that is the subject of the *Iliad* were the μῆνις of Zeus, it would not be an epic poem—in the Homeric traditions own terms, κλέα ἀνδρῶν" (1998, 95). Hainsworth concludes that "Akhilleus the hero sings of the heroic deeds that he is no longer allowing himself to perform" (Kirk 1990, 88, vol. 3).

waiting to sing his own epic, as implied by the word κλέος being part of the warrior's name (Nagy, G. 1999b, 102–15). But the song that Achilles sings, along with its attendant circumstances, is in keeping with the anger that has caused him to withdraw from his own troops. I have already looked at the divergent pathways that separate Patroclus from Achilles during the latter's period of aloofness in connection with the role of healing, and later, Patroclus eventually comes to perceive the gulf that has grown between himself and the withdrawn Achilles.¹⁰⁹ After the Achaeans suffer a number of setbacks and their leaders are hobbled by their individual wounds, a distressed Patroclus encounters Achilles, whom he addresses crossly:

... σὺ δ' ἀμήχανος ἔπλευ Ἀχιλλεῦ.
 μὴ ἐμέ γ' οὖν οὐτός γε λάβοι χόλος, ὄν σὺ φυλάσσεις
 αἰναρέτη: τί σευ ἄλλος ὀνήσεται ὀψίγονός περ
 αἶ κε μὴ Ἀργείοισιν ἀεικέα λοιγὸν ἀμύνης;
 νηλεές ...

But you're impossible, Achilles!
 Let not this anger at any rate, which you cherish, seize me,
 O brave one. What will another who is born later profit from you,
 if you don't dispel this shameful ruin from the Argives?
 You pitiless one.

(16.20-24)

Thematically, Patroclus' diagnosis of Achilles' anger here agrees with that of the other ambassadors in the embassy scene, who lament the anger that has led the hero to withdraw from

¹⁰⁹ Mackie notes a certain similarity between Achilles' tune and Virgil's depiction of Orpheus, who sits alone and tries to console himself with song after the death of Euridice. In both songs, the emphasis is on separation and not communion. Achilles soothes himself with his lyre, which connects it with healing, where music and healing are "two sides of the same coin ... It is partly in these qualities that he resembles Apollo in the *Iliad*. Apollo is himself described as healer and lyre player in the poem (16.514ff. and 24.63), and these are two aspects of a strong thematic connection between the god and the hero" (1997, 7–8). I agree with Mackie's observation about the connection with music and healing, but Achilles' focus on individual healing, which separates himself from those around him, leads to a communal plague, of sorts, where his comrades perish, linking him more to Apollo's anger, rather than to the god's role as a communal healer.

his peer group. It is as if the ambassadors would all like Achilles to sing a different song than the one they hear him playing on his lyre.

Achilles' song, though remarkably compressed, may be contrasted with others of the κλέα ἀνδρῶν type. In the *Odyssey*, for example, when Demodocus sings of the κλέα ἀνδρῶν, the thematic κλέος reaches all the way to sky (... τότ' ἄρα κλέος οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἵκανε, 8.74), suggesting a level of communication between men and gods. And Penelope asks the poet Phemius to sing of "the deeds of both men *and* gods that poets make famous" (ἔργ' ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε, τά τε κλείουσιν ἀοιδοί, 1.388). The exclusive nature of Achilles song to the realm of heroes alone, however, is perhaps best contrasted with the opening of the Hesiodic *Theogony*, which I quote at length:

ἐκ γάρ τοι Μουσέων καὶ ἐκηβόλου Ἀπόλλωνος
 ἄνδρες ἀοιδοὶ ἔασιν ἐπὶ χθόνα καὶ κιθαρισταί,
 ἐκ δὲ Διὸς βασιλῆες: ὃ δ' ὄλβιος, ὃν τινα Μοῦσαι
 φίλωνται ... / ἀοιδὸς
 Μουσάων θεράπων κλέεα προτέρων ἀνθρώπων
 ὑμνήσῃ μάκαράς τε θεοῦς, οἳ Ὀλυμπον ἔχουσιν ...,

From the Muses and far-shooting Apollo
 epic poets and citharodes exist upon earth,
 but kings are from Zeus. And he is blessed whomever the Muses
 cherish ... / the poet,
 the attendant of the Muses, sings of the fame of earlier men
 and of the great gods who inhabit Olympus ...

(96-101)

Achilles' song, with its singular focus on the fame of heroes, is cut from a different cloth than the Hesiodic opening, which gives equal acknowledgement to both gods and heroes while, at the same time, addressing proper hierarchal relationships between the mortal and divine spheres. While some may attribute this to the nature of the represented genres—heroic epic versus

theogonic poetry—the *Iliad* as Epos, we will recall, can encompass all subgenres (Nagy, G. 1999a, 28), indicating that Achilles is potentially limiting himself in his song.

Given the above, it is noteworthy that Achilles' lyre itself, in a way, symbolizes the hero's eventual death. Achilles acquires his lyre through his sack of Thebe, from which he obtains several other possessions that are indicative of both of his chivalric past¹¹⁰ and his mortality. From this raid, he obtains the horse, Pedasos, which is the animal that Sarpedon strikes while aiming at Patroclus. According to Zarker, the fall of the horse foreshadows the moment when Achilles' crest rolls in the dust off the head of Patroclus, itself presaging the death of Achilles himself (1965, 113). In the sack of Thebe, the Greeks also obtain Chryseis, whose return sets in motion the events that eventually lead to the hero's death. As can be seen, the possessions from this raid all in some way hint at the hero's mortality, and, when Achilles chooses to sing of κλέα ἀνδρῶν on this lyre, this, too, resonates with that theme.

Along these same lines, we may also see that the reaction of the ambassadors, such as Phoenix, to Achilles' song also presages the hero's death. Significantly Phoenix, after hearing Achilles' song, offers up a seemingly different story, which is also conforms to the κλέα ἀνδρῶν theme: οὕτω καὶ τῶν πρόσθεν ἐπευθόμεθα κλέα ἀνδρῶν / ἠρώων, ὅτε κέν τιν' ἐπιζάφελος χόλος ἴκοι: / δωρητοί τε πέλοντο παράρρητοί τ' ἐπέεσσι (In this way, we have learned of the fame of heroic men, when violent anger beset one, they were open to gifts and moveable with words, 9.524-26). Phoenix offers up the mythic paradigm of Meleager, who like Achilles, refuses to enter battle to defend his comrades and kin (9.553). Despite providing a seemingly positive

¹¹⁰ Zarker asserts that there was perhaps a more extensive tradition relating to Achilles' exploits around Troy, and we are only privy to it by allusion, primarily when Andromache describes the destruction of her family at Thebe by Achilles (6.411-30), who nevertheless respects the corpses with proper burial. For Zarker, when Achilles strums his lyre, "Once again Homer is evoking the Achilles of the past, the Achilles who was the heroic chivalric ideal, fearless, invincible in battle, kind and humane in victory" (1965, 114).

paradigm to persuade Achilles to rejoin battle, Phoenix largely glosses over an important detail of the myth: Meleager, like Achilles, is destined to perish through the intercession of Apollo in extra-Iliadic myth.¹¹¹

Returning to the contrast between the embassy scene's song of Achilles, which seemingly downplays the role of the gods within the genre of heroic epic, and the paean of the Achaeans, which, at its core, is a communal song celebrating the god Apollo, we can detect what appears to be a strong distinction between one genre with war and strife as its theme and another associated with accord and healing, not to mention the performative context of one delivered in choral refrains in a ritual setting and the other played monodically on the shore at Achilles' tent where there is a lack of a responsive audience. After the communal sacrifice and song to Apollo has been completed and the sun has set (ἠέλιος κατέδυν, 1.475), the worshippers rest, and the next morning Apollo sends them on their way with a favoring wind (τοῖσιν δ' ἴκμενον οὐρανὸν ἴει ἐκάεργος Ἀπόλλων, 1.479), but, when they return to camp, it is quite apparent that Achilles was not in attendance at this ritual, with the narrative laying strong emphasis on the hero's ongoing wrath, αὐτὰρ ὃ μῆνιε νηυσὶ παρήμενος ὠκυπόροισι / διογενὴς Πηλεΐδος υἱὸς Πόδας ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεύς (But by the swift ships he keeps raging on, divine-born, swift-footed Achilles, the son of Peleus, 1.488-89). Thus, with the absence of the best of the Achaeans, the song of rapprochement with the god, though a short-term success, is all but doomed to fail.

Apollo and the Metapoetics of Prophecy

Archeological finds make it clear that sometime in the 8th century BCE large-scale institutions that facilitated a movement toward panhellenism began to arise, and one of those

¹¹¹ Nagy notes this common theme in Pindar's *Paeon 6* (78-80) and in Hesiodic fragments. He treats this myth in terms of the degree of difference in which the friends and family of Meleager are ranked (1999b, 104-11).

institutions was the site of Pythian Apollo's sanctuary at Delphi.¹¹² Though Apollo will become intimately associated with the oracle at Delphi, and, as the spokesman for the wishes of his father, will be known as the god of prophecy,¹¹³ in the *Iliad* there are no explicit references to large-scale Delphic consultations, such as the type that are numerous in, say, the work of the historian Herodotus. Delphi is mentioned once briefly outside of the catalogue of ships, but this reference surfaces at a moment of conflict during the embassy scene, in which Achilles metaphorically uses Delphi as symbol of material wealth. Achilles' reference to Pytho has received little critical scrutiny,¹¹⁴ but I view it as having considerable value if we assess it in light of the antagonism between the hero and the god, and, especially, if we link that antagonism with a motif of threats to Delphi that exist in extra-Iliadic tradition.

During the embassy scene, Odysseus attempts to persuade Achilles to accept Agamemnon's offer of untold wealth, but Achilles makes light of the riches, stating that he wouldn't accept Agamemnon's act of contrition even if all the plenty of pre-war Troy were on the table. And, in a similar vein, he would reject the riches of Delphi, too:

οὐδ' ὅσα λάϊνος οὐδὸς ἀφήτορος ἐντὸς ἐέργει
 Φοίβου Ἀπόλλωνος Πυθοῖ ἔνι πετρῆεσση.
 ληϊστοὶ μὲν γάρ τε βόες καὶ ἴφια μῆλα,
 κτητοὶ δὲ τρίποδες τε καὶ ἵππων ξανθὰ κάρηνα,
 ἀνδρὸς δὲ ψυχὴ πάλιν ἐλθεῖν οὔτε λειῖστη
 οὔθ' ἐλετή, ἐπεὶ ἄρ κεν ἀμείψεται ἔρκος ὀδόντων.

Nor [would I take] however much the marble threshold of the archer,

¹¹² See Snodgrass (2006, 198ff). Nagy also notes that this period happens to coincide with an important stage in development in the Homeric Epics (1999b, 7).

¹¹³ In the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, for example, the god's first words are: εἴη μοι κίθαρίς τε φίλη καὶ καμπύλα τόξα, / χρήσω δ' ἀνθρώποισι Διὸς νημερτέα βουλήν (May the lyre and the bent bow be dear to me, and I will proclaim the infallible plan of Zeus, 131-132).

¹¹⁴ The primary exception to this is Nagy, who sees a connection to the tradition of Achilles' son, Pyrrhos, who plunders Delphi, and to the impious figure Phleguas and his kin, who similarly attacked the Delphic shrine, and, in some versions of the mythic variants, are killed by Apollo (1999b, 121).

Phoebus Apollo, holds within rocky Pytho.¹¹⁵
 For cattle and fat sheep are obtainable by raid,
 and tripods and the tawny heads of horses are gainable,
 but the returning of a man's life is neither raidable
 nor catchable, when it departs from the barrier of his teeth.

(9.404-409)

Thematically, Achilles' hypothetical rejection of the riches of Delphi appears to be more than a metaphor, in that it strikes an ominous note when we consider that the hero is not destined to remain removed from his comrades, but, after the death of Patroclus, itself occasioned by Apollo's intercession, will return to battle, at which point the antagonism between hero and god will become quite explicit. Though, in the embassy scene, Achilles professes to prefer life over these riches, he in fact will later plunder Troy and, in a later direct interaction with Apollo laments that if he only had the power, would even make Apollo pay the price for Patroclus' death (ἦ σ' ἄν τισαίμην, εἴ μοι δύναμις γε παρείη, 22.21).

Thus, given these future actions, Achilles' suggestion that the riches of Delphi are attainable can be viewed as more than a hypothetical threat, and the listed potential booty moreover has specific associations with Delphi. Heroic competition with Apollo at Delphi is not unattested, with the tripod especially being a focal point of contention.¹¹⁶ Heracles, for instance, was envisioned as being in competition with Apollo, and their antagonism was famously depicted in the curious vignette of their "Struggle for the Delphic Tripod." This theme was represented on the pediments of Siphnian Treasury in Delphi and was quite popular in vase

¹¹⁵ The Homeric epics and Hymns regularly refer to Delphi by this designation. See Kirk (1990, 116, vol. 4. Hainsworth).

¹¹⁶ For the tripod as general symbol of Delphi, see Dietrich, who states, "in Classical times the tripod appeared on coins as representative of the entire sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi. The tripod was the oracle on which sat the Pythia or more frequently Apollo, despite its historical origins" (1976, 6).

paintings in antiquity.¹¹⁷ In the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, the primary point of contention between the young god and his older brother is a cattle raid, where Hermes steals Apollo's herd, but, early in the poem, the upstart god, phrases his antagonism as a raid against Delphi itself: εἴμι γὰρ ἐς Πυθῶνα μέγαν δόμον ἀντιτορήσων: / ἔνθεν ἄλις τρίποδας περικαλλέας ἠδὲ λέβητας / πορθήσω καὶ χρυσόν, ἄλις τ' αἴθωνα σίδηρον (For I will go to Pytho to break open his great house, from which I'll plunder plenty of beautiful tripods and cauldrons and gold, and plenty of shining iron (178-180). In these stories related to Heracles and Hermes, the threats to Delphi are quite explicit, and they tap into a theme that is implicitly evoked by Achilles' seemingly benign rhetoric.

Another indicator of Achilles' potentially antagonistic attitude toward Delphi can be gleaned from his predilection to privilege Zeus, who has his own prophetic center at Dodona. When we compare Achilles' description of the main prophetic centers associated with Apollo and Zeus—Delphi and Dodona, respectively—a definite contrast can be noted. In Book 16, with the granting of Thetis' earlier prayer in mind, Achilles again prays to Zeus, and asks for his assistance in allowing Patroclus to repel the Trojans from their attack on the Greek ships and to return unharmed. In a special rite, Achilles pulls out a cup, a gift from his mother that is dedicated to pouring libations to Zeus exclusively (16.227), and he appeals to the god in his prophetic capacity at his oracle at Dodona:

Ζεῦ ἄνα Δωδωναῖε Πελασγικὲ τηλόθι ναίων

¹¹⁷ See Ridgway for a summary of this theme in iconography and a reassessment of the importance of pediments (1965, 1–5). This topos can also be found in Apollodorus, who tells of Heracles' troubles with a certain Eurytus the Oechalian. Wishing to wed, the hero comes to Oechalia because he has heard of the king's challenge, which offers his daughter to anyone who could defeat him in an archery competition. Though he wins the competition, Heracles is never granted the prize. Later the hero is falsely accused of a cattle raid and is joined by one of Eurytus' sons, Iphitus, whom Heracles, going mad, kills. The hero then seeks dispensation for his crime at Delphi. When none is offered by Apollo's priestess, he plunders the god's temple and carries off a Delphic Tripod, only to be prevented by Apollo himself, who fights off the challenge, and later the hero must spend three years in servitude to expiate his crimes (2.6.2).

Δωδώνης μεδέων δυσχειμέρου, ἀμφὶ δὲ Σελλοὶ
 σοὶ ναίουσ' ὑποφῆται ἀνιπτόποδες χαμαιεῦναι,
 ἡμὲν δὴ ποτ' ἐμὸν ἔπος ἔκλυες εὐξαμένοιο,
 τίμησας μὲν ἐμέ, μέγα δ' ἵψαο λαὸν Ἀχαιῶν,
 ἦδ' ἔτι καὶ νῦν μοι τόδ' ἐπικρήνηνον ἐέλδωρ:

Lord Zeus, Dodonian, Pelasgian, dwelling far away,
 ruler of the frigid winter of Dodona, and the Sellians
 dwelling about you, your interpreters lying on the ground with unwashed feet,
 you once both heard my word as I prayed
 and honored me, and mightily beat down the troops of Achaeans,
 and yet even now bring this wish to pass for me.

(16.233-238)

Through the intercession of Thetis, Achilles' had been honored earlier when Zeus allowed the Trojans to gain the upper hand during the hero's absence, and the above scene emphasizes Achilles' closeness to Zeus, where his allegiance can perhaps be felt in the contrast between the humble setting of Zeus' prophetic seat and the riches of Delphi that he had earlier theoretically rejected. Nevertheless, Zeus only grants the first of the hero's prayers; the second, a successful return for Patroclus, is denied, suggesting that Zeus may not fully reciprocate this closeness.¹¹⁸

Along these lines, it is also noteworthy that, despite Achilles' professed special relationship with him, Zeus never specifically refers to the fate of the hero, a fact that Burgess detects:

After the narrator, the gods and especially Zeus must be regarded as the most credible sources of future events. There is no reference to the death of Achilles by Zeus ... It is particularly striking that in his broad prediction of the future in Book 15 (59-77) Zeus states that Patroclus and Hector will die but fails to mention the death of Achilles (perhaps tact on the part of Zeus when addressing Hera: Janko 1992:234) ... but divinities who do not have a close relationship to Achilles only speak vaguely of the coming death of Achilles. The lack of authoritative delineation of Achilles' fate, as well as vague references to it by various characters, paradoxically emphasizes the hero's fate.

¹¹⁸ Achilles' prayer, with its localized epithets for Zeus, bears a curious resemblance to the one offered by Chryses in Book 1, which brought out the wrath of Apollo. For Chryses as a model for Achilles, see Rabel (1988).

(2009, 46).

Despite his professed allegiance to Zeus, the hero, as the narrative progresses, is actually moving closer to the outcome of his relationship with Apollo. His comments concerning Delphi foreshadow the antagonism that, despite the similarities between god and hero, will come to characterize their relationship. While we only see hints of this antagonism in Achilles' attitude throughout the *Iliad*, visions of the hero's death, in which Apollo will play a prominent role, come increasingly into focus through acts of prophecy, and these predictions set Achilles and Apollo on a collision course.

As with any discussion of prophecy and fate, difficult questions will arise and there will be multiple possible interpretations, but Achilles' conception of the future is an important part of his characterization and this in turn reflects on Apollo's own role in the poem. As Burgess has noted, Achilles in the *Iliad* has been privy to continuing prophecies from his mother, and he is also exposed to predictions of his future by other characters who present a variety of perspectives on his death.¹¹⁹ In fact, Achilles is the only character in the poem who has knowledge of his own death, and although this event "is not portrayed in the narrative boundaries of the *Iliad*, it is frequently mentioned, and in the later books is noticeably stressed" (Burgess, J. 2009, 43). Given that prophetic knowledge is an important part of Achilles' characterization; that there is a discernible movement in the poem, where this knowledge becomes increasingly more in line with the tradition of the hero's death; and that, as the poem progresses, there is a noticeable increase in the antagonistic relationship between Achilles and Apollo, who is known as a god of prophecy, it will behoove us to examine the theme of prophecy in detail with respect to Achilles and Apollo.

¹¹⁹ See Burgess' Chapter 3, "The Destiny of Achilles in the *Iliad*," for an overview (2009, 43–54).

Perhaps the most critically-analyzed passage relating to the death of Achilles is in the embassy scene, when the hero paradoxically states he has two potential fates (διχθαδίας κήρας): one to battle on in Troy and win imperishable renown (κλέος ἄφθιτον) but to die young, and the other to return home and live a long life (9.410-416). Burgess has shown that Achilles' reference to a double fate is essentially inconsistent with the foreknowledge of his death that he receives elsewhere in the poem: "It is clear that no other passages in the *Iliad* support Achilles' assertion in Book 9 that he can choose to live. Achilles is never unaware that he will die at Troy, nor does he ever think his fate is avoidable" (2009, 51–52). As with other apparent inconsistencies in the poem, there are those who claim that the scene is ad hoc invention.¹²⁰ And Burgess himself rationalizes Achilles' talk of going home as "untruthful" or "misleadingly speaking of choice" or "as a threat, perhaps made with delusion," but nevertheless concedes that "there are larger poetic effects that result from the overall treatment of the topic" (Burgess, J. 2009, 50, 52 & 54).

Specifically, these effects, I believe, have to do with the metapoetics of the *Iliad*, where the poem reveals a self-conscious awareness of its own relationship with the broad dictates of tradition. The *Iliad* could very well choose to depict Achilles as turning his back on Troy and having a long life. Thus, Achilles' proclamation of a double fate is essentially truthful, but this outcome would completely violate the broad dictates of tradition that represent the hero perishing at Troy through, in most versions, the arrows of Apollo in conjunction with Paris.¹²¹ And such wholesale inventiveness would violate one of the primary missions of oral poetry in a

¹²⁰ See Willcock (1977, 49). He is seconded by Hainsworth, who qualifies this position somewhat by conceding that choice could have been a motif associated with the tradition of Achilles' youth (Kirk 1990, 117, vol. 3).

¹²¹ For a reconstruction of the *fabula*, or sequential series of motifs, of Achilles' death, see Burgess (2009, 27–42).

song culture.¹²² It is my contention that, in the *Iliad*, Apollo becomes the force of order that keeps the poem marching toward the super-narrative of tradition.

This fact can be witnessed in the many moments of divine intercession by the god that become more prevalent after the death of Patroclus but that also occur early in the poem. For example, when Diomedes, in his moment of glory in Book 5, contends against the gods, he does not shrink from attacking Apollo himself. A narratorial aside that comments on the attitude of Diomedes, who does not revere the great god (ἀλλ' ὃ γ' ἄρ' οὐδὲ θεὸν μέγαν ἄζετο, 5.434), recalls the stern warning of Chryses from Book 1, when he tells the Achaeans to revere Apollo (cf. ἀζόμενοι Διὸς υἱὸν ἐκηβόλον Ἀπόλλωνα 1.21), the violation of which initiates the plague. When Diomedes attempts to strip the armor of a wounded Aeneas, despite Apollo's protection, the god eventually puts him back in his place:

ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ τὸ τέταρτον ἐπέσσυτο δαίμονι ἴσος,
 δεινὰ δ' ὀμοκλήσας προσέφη ἐκάεργος Ἀπόλλων:
 φράζεο Τυδεΐδη καὶ χάζεο, μηδὲ θεοῖσιν
 ἴσ' ἔθελε φρονέειν, ἐπεὶ οὐ ποτε φῦλον ὀμοῖον
 ἀθανάτων τε θεῶν χαμαὶ ἐρχομένων τ' ἀνθρώπων.

But when, equal to a god, Diomedes rushed forth a fourth time,
 Apollo, who works from afar, threatening terribly, addressed him:
 Beware, son of Tydeus, and give way, and do not
 desire to think yourself equal to the immortals, since the race
 of deathless gods and that of men who travel upon the earth is never similar.¹²³

(5.438-442)

¹²² Nagy states, "We must keep in mind that even the traditional oral poet does not really "create" in the modern sense of authorship; rather, he re-creates for his listeners the inherited values that serve as foundations for their society. Even the narrative of epic, as we have noted, is a vehicle for re-creating traditional values, with a set program that will not deviate in the direction of personal invention, away from the traditional plots known and expected by the audience. If, then, the *aoidós* is an upholder of such set poetic ways, he is not so far removed from the *rhapsōidós* as from the modern concept of "poet" (Nagy, G. 1992, 42).

¹²³ Apollo's stern warning for Diomedes to know his place brings to mind the famous injunction, γνῶθι σεαυτὸν (know yourself) that Pausanias (10.24.1) states was found on the temple of Apollo at Delphi.

Although we have seen that the *Iliad* shows the dividing line between the mortal and divine spheres as being more permeable than one might think, Apollo here draws a stark distinction that Diomedes threatens, particularly upon his fourth charge. When Apollo upbraids Diomedes, the hero temporarily retreats somewhat, avoiding the far-shooter's wrath (μη̄νιν ἀλευάμενος ἑκατηβόλου Ἀπόλλωνος, 5.444), which, we will recall, is a cosmic sanction against an entire community even though the slight may have been initiated by an individual.

Muellner views the formulaic phrase δαίμονι ἴσος (equal to a god—or to a supernatural power, 5.438) as drawing an equivalency between the heroic warrior, at the moment of his battle-ground excellence, and the god he competes with and resembles, namely Ares:

In the case of a warrior in his *aristeía*, the diction and themes of battle narrative make it plain that the god whom the warrior incarnates and competes with is Ares himself. Thus the formula δαίμονι ἴσος, ‘equal to the god’, which occurs nine times in the *Iliad*, is always and only used of a hero in his *aristeía*, whether it be Diomedes, Patroklos, or Achilles himself.

(1998, 12)

Although this formulaic phrasing occurs in a martial setting, Nagy argues that we find similar language relating to another god, namely Apollo, in contexts where the hero is represented as a poet.¹²⁴ And in the context of the above scene relating to Diomedes and in subsequent scenes where we find a similar counting motif, the god against whom the warrior is directly contending is Apollo, indicating that the subject of poetics may be just as relevant, in not more, than that of war.

Moreover, if we analyze some parallel scenes that have this god at their center it will be possible to see that these warriors' charges, if successful, would result in the premature fall of

¹²⁴ Nagy notes that, at the moment of death, a hero loses his identity to the antagonistic god who takes his life, qualifying him as *therapon*, or ritual substitute, of that god. A *therapon* of Ares becomes equal to Ares at the time of his death. Just as the hero as warrior may lose his life to Ares, the hero as poet may lose his life to Apollo, as evidenced in the biographical tradition of poets such as Aesop and Archilochus (1999b, 307–8).

Troy, in violation to the mandates of tradition and to the poem's internal logic. In Book 16, Patroclus makes a similar attack against Apollo. Seemingly indestructible in Achilles' armor, Patroclus, in his role as a ritual substitute for Achilles, is on the verge of toppling Troy, an action that would be a violation of Achilles' earlier admonition to turn back before an attack on the citadel itself (16.95). It is at this point, when Patroclus, a seemingly minor character outside the *Iliad*,¹²⁵ is about to bring about the fall of Troy, that Apollo steps in to the fray. With the tide of victory in the balance, a poetic aside opines on the power of the god:

ἔνθά κεν ὑπίπυλον Τροίην ἔλον υἷες Ἀχαιῶν
 Πατρόκλου ὑπὸ χερσὶ, περὶ πρὸ γὰρ ἔγχει θῦεν,
 εἰ μὴ Ἀπόλλων Φοῖβος ἐϋδμήτου ἐπὶ πύργου
 ἔστη τῷ ὀλοᾷ φρονέων, Τρώεσσι δ' ἀρήγων ...

Then the sons of the Achaeans would have taken high-gated Troy
 by the power of Patroclus, as he rushed forth and around with his spear,
 if Phoebus Apollo had not, at the well-built wall,
 made a stand, pondering destruction for Patroclus and aiding the Trojans.

(16.698-701)

If Patroclus were successful in his quest, it would radically reconstruct the fall of Troy, a series of stories captured in such poems as the *Iliou Persis* and the *Little Iliad*, whose underlying tradition—if not the poems themselves—the *Iliad* shows increasing awareness of in its final books.¹²⁶

The past contrary-to-fact conditional statement indicates that, if it were not for Apollo, such a radical revision would have indeed occurred and the city would have been taken prematurely—that is, before Achilles' confrontation with the city's protector, both mortal and divine. Apollo's role in ensuring that the narrative is propelled forward to its proper conclusion is

¹²⁵ Burgess observes that Patroclus, while perhaps not a complete Iliadic invention, is little represented in iconography from the archaic period (2003, 75–77).

¹²⁶ For a thorough and general analysis on the relationship between Homeric poetry and the traditions of the Epic Cycle, see Burgess (2003), who applies the same framework specifically to the death of Achilles (2009).

evident in other scenes that are characterized by similar past contrary-to-fact statements.¹²⁷ For example, when Menelaus, in a battle with a relatively minor character, Euphorbus, is about to wrest Achilles' armor back from the Trojans after the death of Patroclus, Apollo must step in again, ἔνθά κε ρεῖα φέροι κλυτὰ τεύχεα Πανθοΐδαο / Ἄτρεΐδης, εἰ μὴ οἱ ἀγάσσατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων (Then the son of Atreus would have easily carried off the famous armor from Euphorbus, had not Phoebus Apollo begrudged him, 17.70-71).¹²⁸ Through this action, Apollo ensures that the armor will find its way to Hector, propelling the narrative toward the confrontation of the poem's main heroes.

In these contrary-fact-statements, we are given examples of what would have happened without Apollo's intervention, and this logic is similar to the motif of counting that is present in the attacks of Diomedes and Patroclus. The attack of Patroclus itself is described in terms that mirror Diomedes' charge against Apollo. First, there are three attacks from someone who is described as equal to a god, and this action then elicits a stern warning from Apollo himself. In the case of Patroclus, however, the god's direct address introduces the idea of fate of Troy,

ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ τὸ τέταρτον ἐπέσσυτο δαίμονι ἴσος,
 δεινὰ δ' ὁμοκλήσας ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα:
 'χάζεο διογενὲς Πατρόκλεες: οὐ νύ τοι αἶσα
 σῶ ὑπὸ δουρὶ πόλιν πέρθαι Τρώων ἀγερώχων,
 οὐδ' ὑπ' Ἀχιλλῆος, ὅς περ σέο πολλὸν ἀμείνων.

But when he, equal to a god, rushed for a fourth time,
 Apollo, upbraiding him terribly, addressed him with winged words:
 Give way, divine-born Patroclus: it is not now destiny

¹²⁷ Commentators have generally noted that this rhetorical device is used to express incidents that are outside of Homer's tradition. See Louden, who argues that this device can also shift the narrative in a new direction, for a review of this theme (1993, 198).

¹²⁸ The minor character Euphorbus has been interpreted in a variety of ways, with some seeing him as a doublet of Paris, while others, interestingly, as a reflection of Achilles. This latter interpretation would mean, that, given that Patroclus himself is a surrogate for Achilles, the scene of his death would should show, *mirabile dictu*, Achilles killing himself. Allan, who summarizes the prevailing theories on Euphorbus, argues instead that he is a stand-in for Hector. According to Allan, Apollo's denial of the armor prefigures the real fight and struggle over the body and armor of Patroclus (2005, 1–16).

that the city of noble Trojans be destroyed by your spear,
nor by Achilles, who is better than you by far.

(16.705-709)

Apollo's words do not suggest that Troy will not fall but rather that neither Patroclus nor Achilles will be the agent of its destruction, potentially an allusion to Odysseus' role in that event. Be that as it may, the god seems mainly interested in an appropriate deferral of the action, and not the absolute protection of Troy, or, by extension, its protector, Hector.

The first meeting between Achilles and Hector fuses the same language and imagery that marked Diomedes' attack against Apollo, as well as Patroclus' futile attempt to topple Troy. In this skirmish, Hector is foiled by Athena, who effortlessly knocks away a missile hurled by the hero, and Achilles is befuddled by Apollo, who shrouds Hector in a mist. After Achilles makes three attacks, he withdraws in disgust:

ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ τὸ τέταρτον ἐπέσσυτο δαίμονι ἴσος,
δεινὰ δ' ὀμοκλήσας ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα:
ἔξ αὖ νῦν ἔφυγες θάνατον κύον· ἦ τέ τοι ἄγχι
ἦλθε κακόν· νῦν αὐτέ σ' ἐρύσατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων,
ὃ̑ μέλλεις εὐχεσθαι ἰὼν ἐς δοῦπον ἀκόντων.
ἦ θὴν σ' ἐξάνυω γε καὶ ὕστερον ἀντιβολήσας,
εἴ ποῦ τις καὶ ἔμοιγε θεῶν ἐπιτάρροθός ἐστι.

But when, like a god, Achilles rushed a fourth time,
shouting terribly, he addressed Hector with winged words:
Once again you have escaped death, you dog, and surely close to you
disaster came. Now again Phoebus Apollo saved you,
the one to whom you, coming upon a barrage of missiles, are likely to pray.
No worries, I'll truly finish you off in battle later,
if by chance one of the gods is my defender, too.

(20.447-451)

Given the presence of Apollo here, it is significant that the term for protector or defender (ἐπιτάρροθός) is used in the *Odyssey* when, as retold in Hades, the suitors come to realize that Odysseus, when he fires his first arrow and kills Antinous, is under the protection of some deity

(*Od.* 24.182). In the *Iliad*, Achilles, like Diomedes and Patroclus, is described by the narration as similar to a god (δαίμονι ἴσος) as he attacks Hector and his supporter, Apollo, and yet he is also cast, as the one aggrieved, in the role of the god himself in the direct address portion of the above quote, since his language follows the model of the earlier retorts from Apollo to Diomedes and to Patroclus.

Although, as the poem approaches its conclusion, the potential exists for a recognition scene where the hero fully comes to understand the god's role in his life and death, such a moment is always kept just out of reach. And this in fact is the operating metaphor involved in the first actual encounter between the hero and Apollo. At the end of Book 21, Achilles gives chase to the god, who is disguised as the Trojan Agenor.¹²⁹ As fast as Achilles chases, though, the form of Agenor/Apollo remains just out of his clutches (δόλω δ' ἄρ' ἔθελεγεν Ἀπόλλων / ὡς αἰεὶ ἔλποίτο κινήσεσθαι ποσὶν οἴσι – Apollo beguiled him with a trick, that he always would hope to overtake him with his feet, 21.604-605). The impossibility of a mortal overtaking a god is then pointed out by Apollo:

‘τίπτέ με Πηλέος υἱὲ ποσὶν ταχέεσσι διώκεις
αὐτὸς θνητὸς ἐὼν θεὸν ἄμβροτον; οὐδέ νύ πώ με
ἔγνωσ ὡς θεός εἰμι, σὺ δ' ἄσπερχές μενεαίνεις ...
οὐ μὲν με κτενέεις, ἐπεὶ οὐ τοι μόρσιμός εἰμι.’

Why, son of Peleus, do you pursue me with your swift feet—
you being a mortal, and I a deathless god? You haven't yet
recognized that I am a god, and you rage ceaselessly ...
You will not kill me, since I am not fated for you.

(22.8-10 & 13)

Apollo's address here is reminiscent of his earlier admonishment of Diomedes, who is told about the sharp boundary between gods and men, and of the prophecy given to Achilles by his divine

¹²⁹ Others, such as Edwards, have noted that the scene involving Agenor foreshadows the later encounter of Achilles and Hector (1987, 50).

horses, who tell him that he is fated to die (μόρσιμόν, 19.417) through the force of a man and a god, namely Paris and Apollo. Therefore, when Apollo claims that he is not fated (μόρσιμός) for Achilles, it should remind Achilles of his own fate, and the god's words "may be viewed as implying the antithesis, "but you are fated to be killed by me" (Burgess 2009, 47).¹³⁰ Achilles replies with hostility:

ἔβλαψάς μ' ἐκάεργε θεῶν ὀλοώτατε πάντων
 ἐνθάδε νῦν τρέψας ἀπὸ τείχεος ...
 νῦν δ' ἐμὲ μὲν μέγα κῦδος ἀφείλεο, τοὺς δὲ σάωσας
 ῥῆϊδίως, ἐπεὶ οὐ τι τίσιν γ' ἔδεισας ὀπίσσω.
 ἦ σ' ἂν τισαίμην, εἴ μοι δύναμεις γε παρείη.

You deceived me, far-worker, the most-deadly of all gods,
 and turned me here away from the walls ...
 Now you have stripped me of great glory, and saved [the Trojans]
 easily, since in no way did you have a fear of reprisal hereafter.
 Surely, I would make you pay the price, if I had the power.

(22.15-16 & 19-21)

Achilles' reference to Apollo as the most-deadly (ὀλοώτατε) of gods is significant, in that it perhaps evinces an awareness of his own mortal limitations and the role the god will play in his own death, but it also is a limited reflection of the god's potential influence, as it only acknowledges one aspect of his persona. This misrecognition is seemingly multi-directional, since Apollo will refer to Achilles in a similar manner during a council of the gods at the end of the poem, telling the august company that, like a lion that yields to its strength and forcefully takes a feast, the hero has lost (or destroyed) a sense of pity, ὡς Ἄχιλεὺς ἔλεον μὲν ἀπόλεσεν, 24.44).

Shortly after Apollo reveals himself to Achilles, the theme of the chase resurfaces in Achilles' confrontation with Hector. No matter how quickly Achilles chases, his opponent

¹³⁰ In drawing this conclusion, Burgess cites Schoeck (1961).

remains just outside his grasp. As long as Hector has the god's support, he cannot be caught or killed: ὡς δ' ἐν ὄνειρῳ οὐ δύναται φεύγοντα διώκειν: / οὔτ' ἄρ' ὁ τὸν δύναται ὑποφεύγειν οὔθ' ὁ διώκειν: / ὥς ὁ τὸν οὐ δύνατο μάρψαι ποσίν, οὐδ' ὃς ἀλύξαι (And as in a dream, it's not possible to overtake the one fleeing—neither can the flee outrun the pursuer, nor pursuer catch the flee, 22.199-200). The syntax of the Greek in above passage suggests a certain sameness between the pursuer and the pursued, where their differences have almost arrived at a vanishing point, and yet a gulf exists between them that cannot be bridged.

All this will change, however, with the return of the counting motif. When they reach the springs of the city for the for the fourth time, the scales of fate tip against Hector. Apollo takes his leave. Given the god's assiduous support of Hector and Troy throughout the poem, the extreme economy of the line in which Apollo departs is certainly striking: λίπεν δέ ἐ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων (And Phoebus Apollo left him, 22.213). The ease with which Apollo removes his support suggests that the god's focus all along was not necessarily the absolute defense of Troy but rather that the city will fall at its appointed time. As Hector is about to die, the Trojan and Achilles have one last exchange:

φράζεο νῦν μή τοί τι θεῶν μήνιμα γένωμαι
 ἥματι τῷ ὅτε κέν σε Πάρις καὶ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων
 ἐσθλὸν ἐόντ' ὀλέσωσιν ἐνὶ Σκαιῆσι πύλῃσιν ...
 τὸν καὶ τεθνηῶτα προσηύδα δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς:
 τέθναθι: κῆρα δ' ἐγὼ τότε δέξομαι ὀππότε κεν δῆ
 Ζεὺς ἐθέλη τελέσαι ἠδ' ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι.

Beware now, lest I in some way become for you a source of the gods' wrath
 on that day when Paris and Phoebus Apollo
 will destroy you, though brave, at the Scaean gates ...
 God-like Achilles addressed him, now dead:
 Be gone with you! I will receive my fate whenever
 Zeus should desire to bring it to pass, and the rest of the deathless gods.

(22.358-360 & 364-366)

It seems that heroes, particularly those in the chain of victims that began with Patroclus, can acquire the gift of prophecy and insight in their last moments, a power that is typically reserved for the gods and a select few men.¹³¹ And Patroclus' dying breath first testified to the power of Apollo, when he concludes that the Hector could not have accomplished that task without the gods' assistance, especially Apollo, *ἀλλά με μοῖρ' ὀλοή καὶ Λητοῦς ἔκτανεν υἱός* (But destructive fate and the son of Leto killed me, 16.849). Achilles' horses had prophesized his own death using the same collocation, though more ambiguously, attributing his downfall to "a great god and mighty fate" (*ἀλλὰ θεός τε μέγας καὶ Μοῖρα κραταιή*) on a day of destruction (*ἤμαρ ὀλέθριον*, 19.409-10).

Hector's warning to Achilles, a type of prophecy that points to Paris and Apollo, provides the most detail thus far in the poem concerning Achilles' death, and it warns that disrespect of Hector's corpse will lead "a cause of wrath" (*μῆνιμα*, 22.358), which is an alternate (neuter) noun form of *μῆνις*, the type of wrath that was featured in the first line of the poem. The potential exists, then, for an unending cycle of vengeance. Although Achilles' immediate reaction is seemingly to dismiss Hector's prophecy, his retort here, if we recall the hero's earlier assiduous adherence to Zeus alone, seems to be a broader acknowledgement of all the gods, but given all the prophecies of Apollo's role in his death, this god is conspicuously absent in Achilles' boastful retort to Hector, highlighting the hero's ongoing, and perhaps even growing, antagonism toward the god.¹³²

¹³¹ For the similarity in the speeches of the dying warriors Patroclus and Hector, see Bassett (1933, 132–35).

¹³² cf. Achilles' earlier prayer to Dodonian Zeus alone (16.233-238) and the more universal oath the narration describes in Book 3: *ὧδε δέ τις εἶπεσκεν Ἀχαιῶν τε Τρώων τε: / 'Ζεῦ κῦδιστε μέγιστε καὶ ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι* (And so someone of the Achaeans and Trojans would say, Glorious and great Zeus and the other immortal gods ... (3.298-301).

Despite Achilles' apparent success, however, Apollo's support of Hector does not come to complete halt with the hero's death, since he acts as an agent of temporary preservation for Hector's corpse, continually restoring it to a pristine condition despite Achilles' attempts to desecrate it (24.19-21). As with Apollo's preservation of the Trojan walls, his protection of Hector's corpse can be described as an act of temporal deferral that is roughly concomitant with the narrative's end. Garcia sees a connection between the preservation of Hector's body and the special care given to that of Sarpedon and Patroclus, and he states,

These three figures function as links in a larger chain—the bond of fate that links the destruction of Troy inevitably with the death of Achilles, the best of the Achaeans. According to the logic of the *aristoi* in the *Iliad*, a man can be *aristos* ‘the best of his kind’ only temporarily, for by becoming victor over another, he marks himself as the potential victim of a still greater foe ... With the death of Hector, Achilles' death is a foregone conclusion ... I argue that the anticipatory care given to Achilles' corpse, as foreshadowed in the way the gods treat Sarpedon, Patroklos, and Hector, is itself an analogy for the epic tradition's goal of preserving Achilles' κλέος ἄφθιτον ‘unwithered fame’ ... that the preservation of these exquisite corpses serves as an analogue within the poem for the very project of the epic commemoration of Achilles—as if the epic were a “freezing” of temporal flow against the ravages of time.

(2013, 66)

Garcia, however, ultimately sees Achilles' κλέος ἄφθιτον as participating in this process of degeneration. He interprets ἄφθιτον as "not (yet) withered," and thus, in his opinion, the poem "acknowledges both the demise of its hero and the potential of its own ultimate decay" (2013, 9). Elsewhere, I have argued that Achilles, despite his ascendancy and string of victories at the end of the poem, is indeed marked to be the victim of a greater foe, and that adversary is a deathless god, a fact that bolsters an ongoing and mutually-reinforcing fame between hero and deity.

And the primacy of Apollo is implied within the poem by his ability to check the best of the Achaean's strength, which manifests itself spectacularly with the desecration of Hector's body, where the attempted eradication of his adversary's physical memory is narrated with the

counting motif. This theme is replayed when Achilles has his divine team drag Hector's corpse around the remnants of Patroclus' funeral pyre three times (24.14). Apollo, however, employs as golden aegis to prevent Achilles' plan from taking effect:

τοῖο δ' Ἀπόλλων
 πᾶσαν ἀεικείην ἄπεχε χροῖ φῶτ' ἐλεαίρων
 καὶ τεθνηότα περ: περὶ δ' αἰγίδι πάντα κάλυπτε
 χρυσεῖη, ἵνα μὴ μιν ἀποδρύφοι ἐλκυστάζων

... But Apollo
 warded off each outrage of his to Hector's skin, pitying the man,
 though dead, and he covered everything with his aegis
 made of gold, so that Achilles, in dragging him about, wouldn't tear off his flesh.

(24.19-22)

I will have more to say about the myths and symbolism that I believe are underlying this scene, in a subsequent chapter, where I examine some parallels that exist in the *Homeric Hymn to Pythian Apollo*, but, for the moment, will merely point out that the above passage indicates that however much the hero may exert force, his actions will ultimately be checked by a more powerful adversary. Again, the god who is truly in charge of the macro- or super-narrative of the Homeric Epics, Apollo, stymies a hero's attempt to obtain a dominant or even totalizing type of fame.

Despite its repeated presence in a number of critical scenes, the counting motif has received little attention from commentators. Some have seen something inherently fundamental about the numbers involved in this motif: "To try and fail to do something three times remains a normal, human pattern for failure; to make a fourth attempt is to move into a shady realm between god and man ... The narrative establishes an order through prohibition: no humans are allowed beyond three assaults, and if any should go as far as a fourth, they will be punished" (Buchan 2005, 51). While the attempt at something three times is not necessarily a human

pattern for failure, it certainly is a folktale motif,¹³³ but the second portion of Buchan's formulation is more convincing, in that, within the *Iliad*, the fourth attempt does verge into the shady realm between god and man. More specifically the god in question is Apollo, since he is always present when this motif appears.

Moreover, the reckoning involved here evokes the mathematical reasoning in Calchas' prophecy in Book 2, as reported by Odysseus, who tells of a sacrifice at Aulis when a great portent appeared (ἐφάνη μέγα σῆμα, 2.308). A serpent devours eight sparrow hatchlings and then their terrified mother suffers the same fate, after which the same god who sent the serpent turns the creature to stone. From this portent, Calchas, the prophet of Apollo, concludes that the sparrows represent nine years of fighting, with the war's conclusion in the 10th year signified by the petrified serpent (2.299-332). The mathematical logic involved in these stories, all having to do with something monumental happening after an increment of nine, is present, on a micro scale, in Diomedes' and Patroclus' direct attacks on Apollo. Nine, of course, is a multiple of three, so success on the fourth attempt would be somewhat akin to Calchas' prediction for the end of the Trojan War in the 10th year, which also happens to be associated with the death of Achilles, both in extra-Iliadic tradition and in prophetic moments within the poem itself.

Although the god who sends the portent on Aulis is identified as Zeus, the number nine is closely associated with Apollo in the poem. In Book 1, for example, the Achaeans' funeral pyres caused by the arrows of Apollo burn for nine days before the conciliatory paeon is performed. And in Book 24, Achilles ominously tells Priam the story of Niobe, whose children are killed by Apollo and Artemis for their mother's crime of boasting that she is more fertile than Leto. The children's corpses are exposed to the elements for nine days, and then the mother, like the

¹³³ e.g., the motif is featured in many of the fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm.

serpent in Calchas' prophecy, is turned to stone, becoming a symbol of perpetual or fossilized grief (24.601-620). External to the poem, Leto is reported to have labored for nine days on Delos before giving birth to the god (*Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, 89–126), and there is also attestation that the number nine was integral to cultic practices and festivals associated with this god at Delphi.¹³⁴

If these counting motifs, one with a concluding note on four and the other on ten, share a similar logic, we can extrapolate that success of a micro-narrative, such as the ones containing Patroclus', Diomedes', and Achilles' assaults, would very well preclude the macro-narrative as described by Calchas' prophecy from achieving its teleology, the sign of which, as the prophet states, "is late, late in fulfillment, and its κλέος will never perish" (ὄψιμον ὀψιτέλεστον, ὄου κλέος οὐ ποτ' ὀλεῖται, 2.335). For Nagy, Calchas' prophetic vision is the epitome of Homeric poetry visualizing itself as rigid, and he then goes on to equate this poetry with the act of oracular prophecy:

At the moment of the equation, however, the Troy story is still in the process of being narrated. The narration is in progress, it is current, and it will not be over until it is over. Once it is really over, then and only then will the narration become rigid like the petrified serpent - and permanent The epic poetry of Homer figures itself as the fulfillment of the prophecies made in its own past, and to that extent the epic is coextensive with oracular poetry: just as oracular poetry guarantees the future, epic poetry can guarantee the past.

(2010b, 1§8-12)

At the end of the poem, Achilles himself conjurs up a story that has to do with calcification, and that is the story of Niobe, whose children perish by the arrows of Apollo and Artemis for their mother's crime of boasting that she is more fertile than Leto.

¹³⁴ Dietrich comments on some of the traditions where the number nine is closely associated with Apollo and, in particular, Delphi, such as the legend that Pytho surrounded Delphi with nine coils, as told in Callimachus, *Hymn IV*, and relates this fact to the working of the Delphic calendar (1976, 9). And Levaniouk notes that the Pythian festival occurs in nine-year cycles (2011, 82).

Although the divine siblings operate somewhat in unison, Apollo has the jurisdiction over the killing of the male children, whereas Artemis is responsible for the females' demise: τοὺς μὲν Ἀπόλλων πέφνεν ἀπ' ἀργυρέοιο βιοῖο / χωόμενος Νιόβῃ, τὰς δ' Ἄρτεμις ἰοχέαιρα (Apollo killed the boys from his silver bow because he was angry at Niobe, and Artemis, the shooter of arrows, killed the girls, 24.605-06). The 12 children's corpses are exposed to the elements for nine days, but the gods relent on the tenth and allow the children to be buried, the point when Niobe, having become exhausted from her tears, thinks of food. Achilles' interpretation of the myth lays emphasis not on the retributive vengeance of the sibling gods but rather on the fact that, despite her grief, Niobe eventually partakes of food. Like Niobe, both Achilles and Priam, grieving over their respective losses, break their fast and share a feast, and even make preparations to sleep, actions that focus on their mortality. The chronology of the myth also becomes incorporated into the fabric of the poem, as is evident when Priam details the schedule of events that will ensue when his son's body is returned to him. Just as Niobe's children lay unburied for nine days, so too will the body of Hector lie in state for that span of time, after which, on the 10th day, it will be buried and the Trojans will partake in a feast. After these rituals of lament are concluded, however, the Trojans will eventually turn their minds back toward battle (24.659-69). And thus, on one hand, the funeral of the hero represents a concluding chapter, but, on the other, it portends an open-ended continuation of strife.

Though Achilles' version of the Niobe myth emphasizes the brief respite when the grieving mother partakes of food, his tale nevertheless concludes with an image of calcification.

Niobe is eventually turned to stone, becoming a symbol of perpetual or fossilized sorrow:

ἦ δ' ἄρα σίτου μνήσατ', ἐπεὶ κάμε δάκρυ χέουσα.
 νῦν δέ που ἐν πέτρῃσιν ἐν οὕρεσιν οἰοπόλοισιν
 ἐν Σιπύλῳ, ὅθι φασὶ θεάων ἔμμεναι εὐνάς
 νυμφάων, αἶ τ' ἀμφ' Ἀχελώϊον ἐρρώσαντο,

ἔνθα λίθος περ ἑοῦσα θεῶν ἐκ κήδεα πέσσει.

But she then had remembrance of food, when she tired from pouring forth tears.
And now somewhere among the rocks in the lonely mountains
in Sipylos, where they say exist the lairs of the nymphs
who dance about Achelous,
is where, though stone, she broods over the griefs from the gods.

(24.601-620)

In his attempt to persuade Priam to join him in a meal, though, Achilles largely glosses over the etiological conclusion of the Niobe myth, where she, in effect, becomes a rock outcropping that perpetually pours forth tears in the form of a mountain stream.¹³⁵ If Achilles is using the Niobe myth as a paradigm, the story's conclusion seems to represent an awareness in the hero that, though the Trojan War itself is about to conclude, he, like Niobe, may ultimately be remembered as one who competed with the gods, specifically Apollo, and paid the price, permanently calcified in an image of grief. Though the poem concludes with the warrior at the peak of his powers, his recognition of his own mortality suggests that the prophesized ascendancy of Apollo will eventually come to fruition.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ This conclusion is more explicit in other versions of the myth such as Ovid's (*Met.* 6-303-12). For a history of the scholarly debate behind the timing of Niobe's eating and turning to stone as well as the mythic variations of this theme, see Pearce (2008, 13–25).

¹³⁶ Although it may be impossible to pinpoint the exact moment when Achilles comes to terms with his fate, this potential moment of recognition seems compatible with Nagy's definition of the unseasonal hero. With respect to Achilles, Nagy opines, "he will achieve a maturity, a seasonality, at the moment in the *Iliad* when he comes to terms with his own impending heroic death" (2013a, 1§28). Though this recognition portends a type of symbiosis with his antagonistic god in hero cult, Nagy nevertheless concedes that the god achieves a type of victory, where he becomes the dominant member and the hero the recessive member in a symbiotic relationship: "At the moment of death, the hero of epic in effect loses his identity to the god who takes his life" (1999b, 307).

Chapter 3. A Change in Focus: From Antagonism to Symbiosis

If assessed independently, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* each would seem to project very different notions of the god Apollo. In the former poem, he becomes the steadfast opponent to the Achaeans and particularly to Achilles, and he thwarts them at every turn, while in the latter there would seem to be a rapprochement, evinced largely in the god's relationship with Odysseus.¹³⁷ This is only one very noticeable difference, though a number of others exist, and I will point to them as the balance of this study progresses. This chapter is largely transitional in nature, moving from the Iliadic focus of the preceding chapters to a comparative analysis of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and, more specifically, it will shift the perspective from the relationship that existed between Achilles and Apollo to the one that will eventually come into view upon Odysseus' homecoming with the same god.

Celestial Dynamics and the Education of Odysseus

A fair share of critical attention has been directed to the solar imagery present in the *Odyssey*. In fact, Nagy has gone so far as to state "the epic plot of the *Odyssey* operates on an extended solar metaphor" (1992, 225), and Frame has convincingly demonstrated the pervasiveness of solar symbolism in individual episodes involving Circe, the Cyclops, and the Laestrygonians, among others, where the solar connections are sometimes latent and other times overt (1978, Chapter 3). These commentators largely reach their conclusions independently of any extensive discussion of Apollo, a fact that is not surprising when we consider that this god doesn't formally appear as a direct character in the *Odyssey* nor is he generally thought to have

¹³⁷ For the moment, suffice it to say that most noticeable evidence of this in the *Odyssey* is the fact that Odysseus prays to Apollo, most significantly when, with all the accoutrements of archery in hand, the hero reveals his actual identity to the suitors and asks the god to grant him his prayer for their destruction (22.5-7).

solar associations as early as the Homeric Epics.¹³⁸ Apollo's presence looms large in the *Odyssey*, however. The purported ritual occasion of Odysseus' return to Ithaca, a festival of Apollo, seems to be more than an interesting side note to the poem, and recently Levaniouk has convincingly demonstrated its thematic importance to the poem as a whole.¹³⁹ While I do not contend that the *Iliad*, or even the super-narrative of the Homeric Epics, operates on a solar metaphor, I do argue that both the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* tap into solar mythology and its offshoots for poetic effect, and I hope to demonstrate this through a comparative dictional and thematic analysis not only of the Homeric Epics, but also the Hymns.

The presence of Apollo figures heavily in the proem of the *Odyssey*. This may seem like a strange contention, since nowhere is there a direct reference to the god in the opening lines of the poem. If we have the opening of the *Iliad* in mind when we read the proem of the *Odyssey*, however, a thematic connection between Helios and Apollo can be discerned. And if one accepts a link between these two characters, the parallelism can serve as a useful point of embarkation to trace the thematic trajectory of Apollo's role from one poem to the other. Some commentators have recognized that there is a certain formal symmetry between the beginning the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, but the proem of the latter, particularly its emphasis on the Helios episode, has long been faulted for its incongruity with the rest of the poem's narrative.¹⁴⁰ More recently, there has

¹³⁸ Most modern commentators point to Euripides' *Phaethon* (224-226) as the earliest possible evidence linking Apollo to the sun, and observe that this identification was not common until the Hellenistic or Roman times, though this topic has a long and complicated history in scholarship. See Fontenrose on the history of scholarly debate (1940, 429–31).

¹³⁹ See in particular (2011, 275–318).

¹⁴⁰ Heubeck's *Commentary on the Iliad*, for example, states, "The proems of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are strikingly similar ... The resemblance between the two proems may partly reflect a traditional pattern for beginning a long heroic narrative, but the parallelism is so close as to suggest that the poet of the *Odyssey* modelled his opening on that of the *Iliad* ... The emphasis given to [the Helios] episode is striking. In fact this severe condemnation of Odysseus' companions is not borne out by the narrative" (Heubeck and Hoekstra 1990, 67–71).

been an effort to study the thematic purpose of the symmetry of the poems' openings,¹⁴¹ and I will do the same, though, to the best of my knowledge, no one has recently explored the cohesive role of Apollo in the two proems, and this is my intent.

The opening of the *Odyssey* is rather surprising in that it stresses an individual episode as being primarily culpable for Odysseus' tumultuous return, and it singles out not the famous feud that erupts between Odysseus and Poseidon after the Cyclops episode nor any other transgression as the cause of his many wanderings but focuses rather on the recklessness of Odysseus' men who devoured the cattle of the Sun:

πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα καὶ νόον ἔγνω,
 πολλὰ δ' ὅ γ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμόν,
 ἀρνύμενος ἥν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἐταίρων.
 ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὣς ἐτάρους ἐρρύσατο, ἰέμενός περ:
 αὐτῶν γὰρ σφετέρησιν ἀτασθαλίησιν ὄλοντο,
 νήπιοι, οἳ κατὰ βοῦς Ὑπερίονος Ἥελίοιο
 ἤσθιον: αὐτὰρ ὁ τοῖσιν ἀφείλετο νόστιμον ἦμαρ.

He saw the cities and knew the mind of many men,
 and in his heart suffered many pains upon the sea,
 while striving to secure his life and the return of his comrades.
 But, though he desired it, not even so did he save his mates,
 for they were destroyed by their own recklessness –
 fools, who devoured the cattle of Hyperion Helios,
 and he took away their day of return.

(1.3-9)

Odysseus will lose scores of men at various junctures during his return, and the Cattle of the Sun episode on Thrinacia does not predate many of those deadly encounters, so we must ask ourselves why this particular episode is so poetically privileged as to find its way into the proem.

Frame convincingly argues that the Indo-European root *nes-*, which is detectable in the word *νόστος* in the proem and even in the name Nestor, meant not only a “return from death” but also, implicitly, a “return from darkness,” and this, in turn, taps into the theme of solar dynamics

¹⁴¹ See, for example, Cook, E. (1995, 15–48).

and myth (1978, 6–33). It may seem counterintuitive to associate the sun with the darkness, but this is understandable if we keep in mind archaic conceptions of cosmology, which emphasize the dual nature of the sun. When the sun completes its daily journey, it sinks into the river Okeanos, but, because it is immortal, it does not die but rather completes its journey in some way. The exact method of its return before sunrise is somewhat ambiguous. In certain conceptions of archaic cosmogony, it was felt that the sun traveled through the infernal regions, giving it an ambivalent nature, explained thus by Eliade and Holt:

This ambivalence might be expressed rather like this: though immortal, the sun descends nightly to the kingdom of the dead; it can, therefore, take men with it and, by setting, put them to death; but it can also, on the other hand, guide souls through the lower regions and bring them back next day with its light.

(1996, 137).

Despite the inherently dual nature of the sun, Frame notes that it is difficult to discern a positive role for Helios in the *Odyssey*, and can only offer up an etymology for the Sun god's daughters, Phaethousa and Lampeia, and their mother Neaira as a possible allusion to the god's connection to salvation.¹⁴²

But I would like to point to a different pathway that is associated with an epithet of Helios, which is apparent when Odysseus reports some advice Circe had given him: ἦ μοι μάλα πόλλ' ἐπέτελλε / νῆσον ἀλεύασθαι τερψιμβρότου Ἡελίοιο (She quite often admonished me to shun the island of Helios, who gives delight to mortals – 12.268-269). In an earlier section, I looked at the verb τέρπω and its connection not only with feasting but with the joy brought about by music, specifically the lyre. In the *Iliad*, the paeon sung by the Achaeans brought delight to Apollo's heart (1.472-474), while Achilles delighted his own heart by strumming his lyre and

¹⁴² In particular, Frame sees Neaira's name as connected etymologically to néomai, and thus she is a goddess of renewed light of salvation (1978, 41). For more on these names, see also Nagy (1999b, 198–200).

singing of κλέα ἀνδρῶν (9.186-190). Although Helios is capable of bringing delight to mankind (τερψιμβρότου), Circe's advice highlights the high potential for destruction that can result from a direct encounter.

While there is little that explicitly states that Apollo has solar associations in the *Iliad*, he does seemingly share with Helios of the *Odyssey* this two-fold capacity, as emphasized by the opening and closing of Book 1, where he at first "arrives like the night" (ὁ δ' ἦϊε νυκτὶ ἐουκῶς, *Il.* 1.47), and an anonymous group of Achaeans lose their lives by means of the god's arrows, but then, seemingly inspired by the paean of the Achaeans that brings joy to his heart, he plays the lyre and conducts the music that characterizes the harmonious celebration on Olympus, a banquet that, like the paean of the Achaeans, lasts the entire day: ὥς τότε μὲν πρόπαν ἦμαρ ἐς ἠέλιον καταδύντα / δαίνοντ' (Then they feasted the entire day until the setting sun – *Il.* 1.601-602). Though it may seem prosaic to suggest that night and darkness are associated with death and that day and light are related to life, I argue these themes intricately spread out in a number of unanticipated directions in Homeric poetics, and provide an intertextual connection between the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and even the Homeric Hymns. While Helios is clearly an individual character, he nevertheless shares much in common with Apollo, particularly if we read the Homeric poems comparatively.

If we restrict ourselves to the divine sphere for the moment, it can be said the *Iliad* begins with the anger of Apollo, and the *Odyssey* with the anger of Helios. While the anger of Apollo, though it changes in character, lasts the entirety of the *Iliad* and dramatically casts a shadow over the life of the poem's main hero, Helios' anger only figures heavily in the proem and in one episode of the *Odyssey*, and Odysseus himself rather easily sidesteps this god's wrath by sleeping through his crew's destruction of the Helios' cattle. If we are looking for an analogue in the

Odyssey for the antagonistic relationship between Achilles and Apollo in the *Iliad* it would seem that Odysseus' feud with Poseidon would be a more logical choice, as this god is responsible for the many travails of the hero at sea, and an antagonism exists between the two until the end of the poem, but, again, the poem strangely throws emphasis on Helios. If we set the role of Helios in the *Odyssey* alongside that of Apollo in the *Iliad*, however, we will detect significant parallels between the two gods, and I contend that the Homeric Epics consciously exploit these parallels as a means of moving Odysseus into a symbiotic, rather than antagonistic, relationship with Apollo over the course of its narrative.

When Odysseus returns from the land of the dead, he and his men share in a feast with Circe that employs the exact language that concludes the end of the first book of *Iliad* (ὡς τότε μὲν πρόπαν ἤμαρ ἐς ἠέλιον καταδύντα / δαίνοντ', *Il.* 1.601-602 = *Od.* 12.29-30). In the *Iliad*, this line describes the full-day banquet enjoyed between the gods on Olympus, characterized by Apollo playing his lyre and the Muses harmoniously replying in kind. This harmony quickly gives way to possible images of dissention when night falls. At the beginning of Book 2, Zeus remains awake, hatching plans to glorify Achilles, in accordance with Thetis' wishes, by bringing about Achaean losses during the hero's absence. In the *Odyssey*, the banquet also seems to suggest a moment of harmony that gives way to a turning point, since it is at this banquet that Circe, herself said to be the daughter of Helios, pulls Odysseus away from his comrades to give him privileged information on how to navigate his way through the potentially devastating encounter with Helios.

The turning points that are suggested by these dictional and thematic parallels, therefore, point in two different directions for the poems' main heroes, Achilles and Odysseus, and, with this in mind, it is possible to discern that Circe's advice to Odysseus is nothing less than a primer

on how to comport himself in his relationship with the immortals, and the tutelage provides an interesting contrast to the attitude of a truculent warrior such as Achilles. When he is informed of how to negotiate a middle course through the six-headed monster and the whirlpool, Odysseus, unaccustomed to flight from terror, asks if he can take on Scylla by force, to which Circe replies,

‘σχέτλιε, καὶ δὴ αὖ τοι πολεμῖα ἔργα μέμηλε
καὶ πόνος: οὐδὲ θεοῖσιν ὑπεῖξεται ἀθανάτοισιν;
ἢ δέ τοι οὐ θνητῆ, ἀλλ’ ἀθάνατον κακόν ἐστι,
δεινόν τ’ ἀργαλέον τε καὶ ἄγριον οὐδὲ μαχητόν:
οὐδέ τις ἔστ’ ἀλκή: φυγέειν κάρτιστον ἀπ’ αὐτῆς.

Headstrong man, again the deeds and labor of war
are a concern to you. Won't you yield to the immortals?
She is surely not mortal, but is a grievous immortal,
terrible, vexatious, wild, and not to be fought with.
There is no defense; it is best to flee from her.

(12.116-120)

Circe's warning to Odysseus not to engage the immortals with hostility is similar in tone, content, and even diction to Achilles' direct confrontation with Apollo in the *Iliad*, where the god puts the hero in his place, reminding him that his concern *should* be with deeds of war and not in contending directly with the gods, and, more specifically, with him: ἤ νύ τοι οὐ τι μέλει Τρώων πόνος ... οὐ μὲν με κτενέεις, ἐπεὶ οὐ τοι μόρσιμός εἰμι (Surely now some business of the Trojans is your concern now ... You will not kill me, since I am not fated to die, 22.10-12). Though similar to Apollo's warning to Achilles, Circe's advice is calculated to bring about a safe return for the hero by giving him a roadmap to deal with the challenges he is about to face.¹⁴³ Although Odysseus takes this advice to heart, Achilles remains intransigent and he dramatically asserts that he would make Apollo pay the price, if he only had the power (ἤ σ’ ἄν τισαίμην, εἴ μοι δύναμις γε παρείη, 22.21).

¹⁴³ Brooks argues that Circe is telling Odysseus that he needs a “post-heroic” response to be successful with the challenge (1977, 455).

Without Circe's advice, it presumably would have been the intention of Odysseus to engage the immortals with force and hostility, as suggested by his original bellicose posturing when he first hears of the obstacle of Scylla. Following quickly on this advice concerning the monster is Circe's admonition for Odysseus, when he comes to Thrinacia, the island of the Sun, to leave the god's cattle unharmed at all costs (12.127-141). By pairing the Scylla episode with a subsequent encounter concerning divine cattle, the *Odyssey* evokes a specific type of folkloric dragon-slaying motif where a hero overcomes a chthonic monster and is potentially awarded with the gift of cattle.¹⁴⁴ In effect, Circe tells Odysseus that he should not be the type of hero who takes on such a labor, but rather he should honor the immortals and to consider their possessions sacred.

One such hero who engaged in such a labor is Heracles. The possession of cattle and its ever-attendant concern, cattle rustling, are prevalent motifs throughout mythology, and the theft of divine cattle in particular is quite often connected with solar myths.¹⁴⁵ Perhaps the most well-known myth concerning this topos relates to one of the labors of Heracles, the theft of the cattle of the monster Geryon. This story makes a brief appearance in the *Theogony* (287-94; 981-83), where Heracles slays the monster on the sea-girt island of Erythea, which is envisioned as existing in the far West, at the ends of the earth beyond Okeanos. The hero then guides the shambling (εἰλιπόδεσσι, 290) cattle back across Okeanos to holy Tiryns. In this version of the story, the solar connection must be inferred from the fact that the action takes place in the land of the setting sun.

¹⁴⁴ As Watkins notes, the dragon-slaying myth is “quasi-universal” (2001, 227). We will therefore need to isolate the elements that create useful parallels for a comparative analysis.

¹⁴⁵ Solomon provides a synopsis of such myths (1994, 40). See, in particular, Frame (2010, 102–29) and Lincoln on this theme (1976, 42–65).

We get additional details on this story of this journey, however, from later archaic poets, such as Peisander and Stesichorus, both of whom refer to the cup of Helios, which Heracles briefly commandeers to complete his journey. In his fragmentary *Geryoneis*, Stesichorus describes how Helios gets into his restored cup and descends into night, while Heracles enters a laurel grove (Page 1962, fr185). A fuller account of this story, in which the altercation between Heracles and the sun is more explicit, is given by Apollodorus, who most likely based his version on that of Stesichorus (Page 1962, 144). In this version, Heracles, who has become parched while crossing the Libyan desert, fires an arrow at Helios. In admiration of the hero's courage, Helios then gives the Heracles his golden cup to cross Okeanos. After killing Geryon with an arrow, Heracles loads the cattle in the cup and makes a return crossing (*Bibliothèque* 2.5.10).¹⁴⁶ As perhaps can be seen in this version of the myth, the relationship between hero and god morphs from one of potential antagonism to one of eventual symbiosis. And unlike a solar hero such as, say, Phaethon, Heracles is successful in his effort to become a temporary substitute for the Sun.¹⁴⁷

Cook also sees a parallel between the Cattle of the Sun episode and the myth of Geryon, and associates this connection with Vedic myth, stating, "In the myth of Herakles and Geryon, we have the cattle raid denied Odysseus and his men. Like Vrtra/Ahi, Geryon is three-headed. Like Helios, he kept a herd of cows at his island home beyond the banks of ocean ... In sum, the mythological traditions to which the *Cyclopeia* and Thrinakian episode belong concern the appropriation of cattle representing the life-force" (1995, 85–86). In their eventual encounter

¹⁴⁶ For a summary of the local traditions in which this mythic pattern appears, see Burkert (1982, 84).

¹⁴⁷ The Geryon myth is most often related to the monster Cacus found in Virgil (*Aeneid* 8) and Livy (I 7.4-8.1), and Tsagalis, through this link, sees a connection to Helios in the *Odyssey*: "Cacus was associated with the underworld, so stealing sacred cows could be a metaphor for a threat against the regular order of the universe, alluding to the potential release of the dead. This brings us surprisingly close to Helios' threat against Zeus in *Odyssey* 12.377-383" (2008, 174).

with Helios, Odysseus and his crew will follow dramatically divergent pathways, where the former survives and moves inexorably closer to his homecoming, while the latter are destroyed by their folly of conducting what amounts to a botched sacrifice in consuming the cattle of the Sun.¹⁴⁸

When Helios, having become enraged (*χωόμενος κῆρ*, 12.376) at the crew's transgression,¹⁴⁹ threatens to invert the permanent order of the cosmos by sinking into Hades (*δύσομαι εἰς Αἴδαο καὶ ἐν νεκύεσσι φαεῖνω*, 12.383), Zeus punishes the transgressors with his thunderbolt. The end result is that the ones who actually killed the cattle have their day of return taken from them. The encounter with the sun leads the crew into the land of the dead, but Odysseus survives unscathed. The Helios episode, which is foreshadowed in the *Odyssey's* proem, therefore encapsulates the poem's central theme of return—in particular a return from death—that is suggested by the cognates *νόος* and *νόστος* (1.3 & 5), and it does so within an overtly solar context, where it can be said that Odysseus, in accordance with the solar pattern explained by Eliade and Holt above, is reborn.

Odysseus escapes unscathed from this episode because he had fallen asleep at the moment his comrades began fomenting their plot, and the hero, when he is among the Phaeacians, highlights that this occurred as a direct result of his piety. When strong winds

¹⁴⁸ The men are forced to use of leaves and water instead of the normal sacrificial accoutrements of barley and wine (12.391-396). For an in depth discussion of the crew's ritualistic violations, see Vernant (1998, 164-69).

¹⁴⁹ Interestingly, Apollo's anger at the beginning of the *Iliad's* narrative is described with the same collocation. When the god arrives with his arrows rattling on his shoulders, and he is specifically described as *χωόμενος κῆρ* (angered at heart, 1.44). Achilles later asks if the god is angered (*ἐχώσατο*, 1.64) over a flawed sacrifice, to which Calchas instead replies with a different anger term (*μῆνιν*, 1.75). The verb *χώομαι* has not received the intense critical scrutiny of other anger terms, but Walsh does note that Homeric poetics repeatedly brings it in close contact with *χόλος* as "coordinated elements," as occurs in *Od.* 8.227 and 8.238 (Walsh, T. 2005, 3 and 15). Although Walsh does not spend much time on the verb *χώομαι*, he does note that it is "closely related to both *khólos* and *mēnis*" and is worthy of further study (2005, 78).

prevent Odysseus' crew from sailing and food starts to run scarce, the hero leaves his comrades and heads inland where he prays to the collective gods:

δὴ τότε ἔγων ἀνὰ νῆσον ἀπέστιχον, ὄφρα θεοῖσιν
 εὐξαίμην, εἴ τίς μοι ὁδὸν φήνειε νέεσθαι ...
 ἠρώμην πάντεσσι θεοῖς οἱ Ὀλυμπον ἔχουσιν:
 οἱ δ' ἄρα μοι γλυκὸν ὕπνον ἐπὶ βλεφάροισιν ἔχευαν.
 Εὐρύλοχος δ' ἐτάροισι κακῆς ἐξήρχετο βουλῆς:

At that time I departed into the interior of the island to pray to the gods,
 whether one would show me the way to return home ...
 I prayed to all the gods who dwell in Olympus,
 and then they poured sweet sleep on my brow.
 And Eurylochos initiated his horrid plot to his fellows.

(12.333-34 & 338-39)

Odysseus here prays to the gods collectively (θεοῖσιν), but wonders whether one in particular will be the patron of his homecoming, and it is at this point that he is granted sleep by the gods, thereby avoiding the fate of his mates. On its face, sleep may seem a rather passive method to escape culpability, but, by being mindful of an appropriate relation to the gods and of Circe's advice, Odysseus will survive the Helios episode, returning from the unconsciousness of sleep, an analogue of death,¹⁵⁰ resulting in a type of rebirth that, based on the hero's own retelling of events, seems to be predicated on his piety. A clear contrast becomes evident if we turn to the end of the *Iliad* and the role of sleep as it pertains to Achilles, which, along with food, is a signal of the hero's mortality in the meal he shares with Priam.¹⁵¹ Though it could be argued that this represents a type of rebirth for the hero, who sets aside his anger and comes to terms with his mortality, this very act propels him, if the increasingly clear prophecies of the *Iliad* are any indication, a step closer to his death, precipitated by the arrows of Apollo.

¹⁵⁰ For a treatment of the theme of sleep and its relationship to death and rebirth, see Morse (2010, 161–65).

¹⁵¹ Segal (1971) notes that there is a progression in the weariness of Achilles, reaching its apex in Book 24.

When he exhorts his comrades to avoid the herd (12.321), Odysseus, moreover, effectively become a guardian of Helios' cattle, a position that, when coupled with the theme of sleep, links him with a myth that tells the story not of a competitive cattle raid against the Sun's cattle but rather of the herd's steward and even savior.¹⁵² This tale, which seems to have traditional elements,¹⁵³ can be found in Herodotus (9.92.2-95), and it concerns the shepherd Euenius, who was one of the select few in the region of Apollonia allowed to tend a herd sacred to the Sun. This is not a well-known story, so I will provide a brief summary of its salient details. During the day, the herd of the Sun is pastured by a river but by night was pent up in a cave. When it is his turn to keep watch, Euenius, however, falls asleep, and a portion of the herd is devoured by wolves. When this tragedy is uncovered, the townspeople blind the shepherd. But from that point forward the herd becomes barren and the land yields no crops. The villagers then inquire at the oracles of Delphi and Dodona what the source of the trouble might be, and it is declared that they were unjust in punishing Euenius, since the gods themselves had sent the wolves. The townspeople then make restitution and Euenius is rewarded with the gift of prophecy.

An obvious parallel exists between Euenius and Odysseus in that they both fall asleep during the slaughter of Helios' cattle, but the episode in Herodotus makes explicit what is somewhat opaque in the *Odyssey*, in that the story marks both a turning point in a mortal's relationship with the gods and a positive encounter with the cattle of the Sun as a moment of intellectual rebirth. Frame notes that the "intelligence" of the mortal, which in the case of

¹⁵² The theme of sleep is also a prominent feature in Livy's telling of the myth of Cacus, who steals Heracles' cattle, obtained from Geryon, after the hero falls asleep.

¹⁵³ An observation by Frame, who analyzes the myth in more detail (1978, 43–45).

Euenius is highlighted by his becoming a prophet, is apparent in traditional tales having to do with the cattle of the Sun:

That “intelligence” was a highly traditional element in myths of the Sun’s cattle is supported by a comparison with Vedic Sanskrit. In Vedic mythology cattle are closely associated with the phenomenon of sunrise; in particular, the “winning of cattle” and the “winning of light” are closely related mythical deeds. Both of these deeds, furthermore, depend on “intelligence” rather than “strength”; this is clear from the myth of the Panis.

(Frame 1978, 44–45)

Frame goes on to note that, although Indra is the one to rescue cattle from the Panis – a type of demon that lives on the edge of earth – this act is made possible by the occult knowledge of the priests that accompany him (1978, 45). The story of Euenius, therefore, coincides with the broad argument that I have been laying out, namely that, in passing on privileged information to Odysseus, Circe is in the process of training the hero to be a more devout, almost priestly, figure in his relationship with the gods.¹⁵⁴ In turn, this sets up an obvious contrast with Achilles’ antagonistic relationship with Apollo, and this contrast, in terms of Indo-European mythology at least, may also play into the traits that are often cited as the main points of departure between the primary characters of the Homeric Epics, namely the *biē* of Achilles and the *mētis* of Odysseus.

A Prelude to the Homecoming

When a storm-tossed Odysseus arrives in Scheria, he finds himself among a people, the Phaeacians, who have a storied past that is closely bound to their relationship with the gods. Over the course of more than six books, the *Odyssey* unveils their history, which unfolds along with Odysseus’ recounting his many travails at sea. Segal notes the transitional nature of this episode:

¹⁵⁴ It has been noted that Odysseus experiences an evolution in his theological perspective over the course of the *Odyssey* and that the Cattle of the Sun episode is important phase in that evolution. See primarily Segal, who chronicles the hero’s pathway from his bellicose relationship with Poseidon to a force that helps usher in a Zeus-led order after the Helios episode (1994, 197–216).

The Phaeacian episode is the crucial point of transition between two very different worlds of experience, the war in Troy and the kingdom of Ithaca ... The Phaeacians face backward as well as forward: back to the adventures after Troy and Troy itself; forward to the future struggle with the suitors.

(1992, 14 & 18)

It can be said, in fact, that the evolution of this people, particularly their relationship with the Olympian gods, and specifically with Apollo, has a certain parallelism with the growth of Odysseus himself, as he inexorably marches toward his homecoming and confrontation with the suitors.

The Phaeacians, in fact, are colonists who have been forced to migrate because of their proximity to violence. In Book Six, the *Odyssey* provides the impetus for their emigration:

οἱ πρὶν μὲν ποτ' ἔναιον ἐν εὐρυχόρῳ Ὑπερείῃ,
 ἀγχοῦ Κυκλώπων ἀνδρῶν ὑπερηγορέοντων,
 οἳ σφεας σινέσκοντο, βίηφι δὲ φέρτεροι ἦσαν.
 ἔνθεν ἀναστήσας ἄγε Νausίθοος θεοειδῆς,
 εἶσεν δὲ Σχερίη, ἐκάς ἀνδρῶν ἀλφιστάων,
 ἀμφὶ δὲ τεῖχος ἔλασσε πόλει, καὶ ἐδείματο οἴκους,
 καὶ νηοὺς ποίησε θεῶν, καὶ ἐδάσσατ' ἀρούρας.

The Phaeacians dwelt previously in spacious Hyperia,
 near the Cyclopes, overbearing men
 who kept plundering them, and they were mightier in strength.
 From there god-like Nausithous caused them to move, led them,
 and settled them in Scheria, far off from those who toil,
 drew up a wall for the city, built houses,
 erected the gods' temples, and divided the land.

(6.4-10)

Like Odysseus, the Phaeacians are harried and forced to move on because of the threats posed by the Cyclopes, who are the offspring of Poseidon.¹⁵⁵ Their emigration, forced by the aggressiveness of the Cyclopes, is a physical movement away from these one-eyed creatures, but

¹⁵⁵ The Cyclops Polyphemus is the son of Poseidon and "to judge by their lawless behavior these are the same Cyclopes in ix (cf. ix 273 ff.)" (Heubeck and Hoekstra 1990, Vol. 1, 292). In Hesiod's *Theogony*, the Cyclopes seem to have a different origin.

this movement also captures the more abstract notion that, in many ways, the society of the Phaeacians is a polar extreme to that of the Cyclopes. While a number of contrasts exist,¹⁵⁶ one of the more prominent oppositions has to do with their reverence for the gods. The above quote highlights Nausithoos' piety, where he marks off the precincts of the gods, and the Phaeacians can be witnessed elsewhere on a number of occasions obsequiously pouring libations to Zeus and Hermes (7.136-7.181), for example, but Polyphemus scorns all the gods (9.274-76). Despite the contrasts between these races, they do seem to share a common feature: the Phaeacians, too, actually trace their lineage to the god of the sea. One of the Phaeacians' earliest forbearers was the king of the giants, Eurymedon, but he led his reckless race to ruin, leaving behind only a daughter, Periboea, who, through intercourse with Poseidon, gave birth to Nausithous (7.56-62), the father of Alcinous.¹⁵⁷

Despite a lineage that can be traced to Poseidon, the god Apollo also figures heavily in the Phaeacians' history. One story in particular should capture our attention, and that involves Apollo's killing of Alcinous' brother, who also happens to be the queen Arete's father, Rhexenor. We are not given many details about this man, but his name etymologically has the meaning of "the breaker of men" and it happens to be an epithet used for Achilles in the *Iliad*.¹⁵⁸ Therefore, if this etymological meaning is any guide, this man's characteristics were quite dissimilar to

¹⁵⁶ For a full accounting, see Segal, who contrasts the high civilization of the Phaeacians – their social nature and outward expansion through ship building – with the primitive and isolationist Cyclopes (1962, 33).

¹⁵⁷ Frame sees parallels between the geneology of these Phaeacians and that of Nestor, and provides an in-depth analysis of their background (2010, 243–329)

¹⁵⁸ Frame also notes a correspondence between Rhexenor and one of Nestor's brothers, who, like Achilles is killed by Apollo, and states, "But the warrior nature of the brother who died has already been fully brought out in the case of Rhexenor by his name, "breaker of men," which could not be more significant, both in itself and in what it says about Nestor's myth. In itself Rhexenor is otherwise an epithet in the Homeric poems, and it is used of only one hero, namely Achilles himself (there are four occurrences in the *Iliad* and one in the *Odyssey*)" (2010, §2.115).

those of his brother, the peace-loving Alcinous. The *Odyssey* reports this story in quite abridged form:

Ναυσίθοος δ' ἔτεκεν Ῥηξήγορά τ' Ἀλκίνοόν τε.
 τὸν μὲν ἄκουρον ἐόντα βάλ' ἀργυρότοξος Ἀπόλλων
 νυμφίον ἐν μεγάρῳ, μίαν οἴην παῖδα λιπόντα
 Ἀρήτην: τὴν δ' Ἀλκίνοος ποιήσατ' ἄκοιτιν

Nausithous was father to Rhexenor and Alcinous.
 Apollo the silverbow smote the former when he was without a male heir,
 a bridegroom in the chamber, and he left behind a single daughter, Arete.
 And Alcinous made her his wife ...

(7.63-66)

While we have no stated motivation for the death of Rhexenor, his name and a certain parallelism with Achilles suggests that the *Odyssey* has crafted a Phaeacian history that has broad parallels with the fall of Troy, specifically with respect to those aspects that pertain to Apollo and his role in the killing of Achilles. Rhexenor, the breaker of men, clearly did something to elicit the anger of Apollo, and we do not necessarily need to know the specifics, since much of the Phaeacians' existence seems to be derived comparatively, and the allusion to an Achilles-like character who dies young through the anger of Apollo allows us to view the Phaeacians as a type of an "other," through which the *Odyssey* depicts an alternate pathway to the ravages of war and its aftermath that mark the *Iliad* as well as the poems from the *Epic Cycle* concerning the fall of Troy and the *Nostoi*.

But the Phaeacians emerge from their tumultuous history relatively unscathed and, upon Odysseus' arrival, seem to enjoy a particularly close relationship with the gods. Indeed, they inhabit a paradisiacal setting, where the constant West Wind provides crops that are always at the ready (7.112-132). In general, the Phaeacians know little labor, and their relations with the gods recall the Hesiodic golden age portrayed in *Works and Days* (109-120). Another identification

that has been noted is the similarity between the Phaeacians and the Delians described in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*.¹⁵⁹ At the end of the Delos section of the *Hymn*, Apollo strides across his many precincts – the crags of Cynthus, various islands, and groves – and surveys his points of his worship, and yet his attention is drawn to Delos, his birthplace, which brings particular delight to his heart. The *Hymn* describes the local population as follows,

ἔνθα τοι ἑλκεχίτωνες Ἴάονες ἠγερέθονται
αὐτοῖς σὺν παιδεσσι καὶ αἰδοίης ἀλόχοισιν.
οἱ δέ σε πυγμαχίῃ τε καὶ ὄρχηθμῶ καὶ ἀοιδῇ
μνησάμενοι τέρπουσιν, ὅτ' ἄν στήσωνται ἀγῶνα.
φαίη κ' ἀθανάτους καὶ ἀγήρωσ ἔμμεναι αἰεὶ,
ὅς τόθ' ὑπαντιάσει, ὅτ' Ἴάονες ἀθροοὶ εἶεν:
πάντων γάρ κεν ἴδοιτο χάριν, τέρψαιτο δὲ θυμὸν
ἄνδρας τ' εἰσορόων καλλιζώνους τε γυναῖκας
νῆας τ' ὠκείας ἠδ' αὐτῶν κτήματα πολλά.

There the shambling-robed Ionians gather
along with their children and reverent spouses.
And they, mindful of you, delight you with boxing, dancing, and song
when they put on their contests.
One might say they are deathless and always unaging,
he who comes upon them when the Ionians are gathered.
For he would see the grace of them all, and would take delight in heart
looking upon the men, the well-girdled women,
their swift ships, and their great many possessions.

(147-155)

Like the Delians, the Phaeacians have swift ships, which are gifts from Poseidon, and put on athletic and poetry competitions, to name but a few of these groups similarities.

Odysseus himself, in fact, registers a connection with Delos when he first lands in Scheria and sets eyes on the young princess Nausicaa,

¹⁵⁹ Frame also sees a resemblance between the Phaeacians and the Ionians of the *Hymn*, which, for him, paints a picture of an audience at the Panionia, a festival on Delos where the Homeric epics would have been performed, predating their performance at the Panathenaea. "Performances of the Homeric poems at the Panionia could not have lasted much into the seventh-century BC. They would have ended before the time of the Delian *Hymn to Apollo*, but not long before" (2010, 554–55). Burkert places a later date on what he views as the combined Delian and Pythian sections of the poem (1987, 54). I will take up this poem in greater detail in a subsequent chapter.

οὐ γάρ πω τοιοῦτον ἶδον βροτὸν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν,
οὔτ' ἄνδρ' οὔτε γυναῖκα: σέβας μ' ἔχει εἰσορόωντα.
Δήλω δὴ ποτε τοῖον Ἀπόλλωνος παρὰ βωμῶ
φοίνικος νέον ἔρνος ἀνερχόμενον ἐνόησα.

For I have never looked upon such a mortal with my eyes,
neither man nor woman. Reverence seizes me as I look upon this vision.
In truth, I once saw such a one next to the altar of Apollo at Delos,
when I took notice of the new shoot of a palm springing up.

(6.160-163)

While there are no specific references to the birth of Apollo or Artemis in the poem, it is clear from this passage that the *Odyssey* was certainly familiar with the myth, as its symbols are immediately evoked upon Odysseus' landing at Scheria, and a comparison of Nausicaa with Artemis herself. The palm that Leto grasps as she gives birth¹⁶⁰ becomes a point of fixation for Odysseus when he passes through Delos, where he, rapt, gazes long at the vision (6.167-168), and here he uses it as a reference point in Scheria, transferring the image to Nausicaa. Later, the hero will more explicitly elevate Nausicaa to a religious dimension, promising to pray to her as a god, if he should reach home safely (τῶ κέν τοι καὶ κεῖθι θεῶ ὧς εὐχετοόμην / αἰεὶ ἤματα πάντα: σὺ γάρ μ' ἐβίωσας, κούρη, 9.467-68).

Although Poseidon and Athena are often seen as the gods most instrumental to the Phaeacians' existence, the former looms over the population with a threat to destroy their harbor (13.173), and the latter explicitly takes her leave of Odysseus as he enters the palace of Alcinous. When Odysseus crosses the threshold, the hero's temporary abode is accompanied by the radiant image of a rising sun or moon (7.84).

δῶνε δ' Ἐρεχθῆος πυκινὸν δόμον. ἀντὰρ Ὀδυσσεὺς
Ἀλκινόου πρὸς δώματ' ἔει κλυτά: πολλὰ δέ οἱ κῆρ

¹⁶⁰ As described most elaborately in the *Homeric Hymn to Delian Apollo*. The τοῖον in line 162 is ambiguous. Sourvinou-Inwood finds this to be a pointed reference to Artemis, who appears opposite to the palm shoot on vase paintings (1991, 99–143). In Pindar's *Nemean 6*, however, Apollo and Artemis are the ἔρνη (37) of Leto. See Garvie (1994, 128) for a detailed discussion of the passage.

ὄρμαιν' ἴσταμένω, πρὶν χάλκεον οὐδὸν ἰκέσθαι.
ὥς τε γὰρ ἠελίου αἴγλη πέλεν ἠὲ σελήνης
δῶμα καθ' ὑπερεφῆς μεγαλήτορος Ἄλκινόοιο.

[Athena] made her way to the well-built house of Erechtheus. But Odysseus went toward the famous domicile of Alcinous. His heart leapt strongly as he stood there, before he proceeded to enter the brazen threshold. There was a beam of light as if from the sun or the moon emitting down from the high-vaulted halls of great-hearted Alcinous.

(7.85-89)

This vision appears to be bi-directional, pointing back to the *Iliad*, specifically to celestial imagery that can be found on shield of Hephaestus, on which the sun and moon appear simultaneously within a cosmological depiction, ἐν μὲν γαῖαν ἔτευξ', ἐν δ' οὐρανόν, ἐν δὲ θάλασσαν, / ἠέλιόν τ' ἀκάμαντα σελήνην τε πλήθουσεν (On it [Hephaestus] wrought the earth, the sky, the ocean, the inexhaustible sun, and the moon in full – 18.483-484). And it looks forward to Odysseus' homecoming on Ithaca, since the same symbols, are evoked on the shroud that Penelope is in the process of weaving for Laertes (24.146-147).

The shield of Hephaestus also has a similar bedazzling effect when viewed by the poem's main hero. In the hands of Achilles, the shield is an instrument of war, but its artistic rendering contains not only the grisly images of a city in battle but also one at peace. Specifically, the one activity that is most pervasive throughout the city of peace is the performance of poetry, particularly lyric poetry. After describing the cosmological background of the shield, the *Iliad* moves into the details of the city at peace,

ἐν τῇ μὲν ῥα γάμοι τ' ἔσαν εἰλαπίνας τε,
νύμφας δ' ἐκ θαλάμων δαΐδων ὑπο λαμπομενάων
ἠγίνεον ἀνὰ ἄστρῳ, πολὺς δ' ὑμέναιος ὀρώρει:
κοῦροι δ' ὀρχηστῆρες ἐδίνεον, ἐν δ' ἄρα τοῖσιν
αὐλοὶ φόρμιγγές τε βοῆν ἔχον ...

In one city, there were weddings and banquets,
and under burning torches they were leading the brides

from their chambers through the city, and a great wedding song arose.
And a group of young men whirled in dance, while among them
flutes and lyres continuously rang out.

(18.492-496)

The brilliant shield of Achilles, therefore, contains representations of harmony in the form of wedding song and the ecstatic dance of the young men, but, in a poem consumed with strife, such images are difficult to discern.¹⁶¹ We get glimpses of Achilles as the ideal king, however, at the end of the *Iliad* during the funeral games of Patroclus and, similarly, the poetic tradition could often portray him as the ideal bridegroom, all of which position him as a candidate for a leading citizen in the city of peace.¹⁶² What here, in the *Iliad*, are unrealized attributes, which are overshadowed by the epic strife in the story in which Achilles appears, are, in the *Odyssey*, attainable potentialities for Odysseus.

Odysseus' time among the Phaeacians represents a microcosm of this shift in focus that, in a sense, allows us to see the attributes of the city of peace come into view.¹⁶³ When Odysseus lands in Scheria, the threat of violence hangs heavily in the air, but his first meeting with Arete and Alcinous allays many of the hero's concerns. Alerted by Athena to the Phaeacians' famous reticence toward foreigners, Odysseus approaches the king and queen obsequiously, falling before Arete and grasping her knees. When Odysseus meets the king, he fears the worst after Alcinous takes exception to the fact that his daughter, Nausicaa, didn't bring the hero directly to

¹⁶¹ This general observation concerning the universal aspects of the shield, where it is composed of all components of life, as compared to the emphasis on war and destruction found elsewhere in the poem has been noted by others. See in particular Schadewaldt (1944) and Taplin, the latter of whom states, "the shield is a microcosm, not a utopia, and death and destruction are also there, though in inverse proportion to the rest of the poem" (1980, 12).

¹⁶² For Achilles as an ideal but doomed bridegroom, see Nagy (2008, 18–51).

¹⁶³ Segal sees the peaceful Phaeacians as providing an integral role to the reintegration of Odysseus into humanity in the broadest sense (1994, 12–64).

the palace, an act that is a threat to her virtue. Odysseus tries to calm Alcinous by assuring him that the delay was caused by his own embarrassment, to which the king replies,

‘ξεῖν’, οὐ μοι τοιοῦτον ἐνὶ στήθεσσι φίλον κῆρ
μαψιδίως κεχολῶσθαι: ἀμείνω δ’ αἴσιμα πάντα.
αἶ γάρ, Ζεῦ τε πάτερ καὶ Ἀθηναίη καὶ Ἄπολλον,
τοῖος ἐὼν οἷός ἐσσι, τά τε φρονέων ἅ τ’ ἐγὼ περ,
παῖδά τ’ ἐμὴν ἐχέμεν καὶ ἐμὸς γαμβρὸς καλέεσθαι
αὐθι μένων: οἶκον δέ κ’ ἐγὼ καὶ κτήματα δοίην,
εἴ κ’ ἐθέλων γε μένοις ...

Stranger, the heart in my breast is not such
to be riled vainly to anger. All things appointed by the gods are better.
Would that—father Zeus, Athena and Apollo—
being such a man, thinking thoughts that I do, you could
marry my daughter and, remaining here, be called my son-in-law.
I would give you a house and possessions,
if you would remain willingly ...

(7.309-315)

From the above passage, we can see that Alcinous is cut from quite a different cloth than the epic figures whom Odysseus is accustomed to meet. The verb *χολῶ* (7.310) figured heavily in our analysis of the *Iliad*, but is found much less frequently in the *Odyssey*, and here it is actively eschewed by Alcinous. Far from being roused quickly to anger, he actually moves almost instantly to thoughts of a union between his family and Odysseus. His overriding ethic, ἀμείνω δ’ αἴσιμα πάντα (All things appointed by the will of the gods are better),¹⁶⁴ seems to have held the king in good stead in not only his relations to the gods and but also the well-being of his constituents.

Although Alcinous renounces anger in favor of a potential union, Odysseus, when he is among the Phaeacians, is still given to episodes of this emotion. When the hero, yet to reveal his identity, is later confronted by a young Phaeacian in a sporting competition and accused of not

¹⁶⁴ Odysseus will later use the noun αἴσιμα, related to αἴσιμα, as a justification in slaughtering the suitors. For an analysis of αἴσιμα and its relationship to feasting, see Nagy (1999b, 7§21).

having the look of an athlete, he exhibits his athletic prowess and tells the Phaeacians that he was motivated to enter the contest “because the [young man] angered me excessively” (ἐπεὶ μὲν ἐχολώσατε λίην, 8.205). He reveals, however, that, although by far best at these endeavors (τῶν δ’ ἄλλων ἐμὲ φημι πολὺ προφερέστερον εἶναι, 8.221), he, unlike the heroes of old, is careful not to challenge the gods directly. He offers up Heracles as an example and then moves on to the cautionary tale of Eurytus the Oechalian. For Odysseus, this story evidently has a paradigmatic element, since Apollo, too, experiences the same form of anger (χόλος) due to a direct challenge: τῷ ῥα καὶ αἴψ’ ἔθανεν μέγας Εὐρυτος, οὐδ’ ἐπὶ γῆρας / ἵκετ’ ἐνὶ μεγάροισι: χολωσάμενος γὰρ Ἀπόλλων / ἔκτανεν, οὐνεκά μιν προκαλίζετο τοξάζεσθαι (And for that reason great Eurytus perished straightaway, and didn’t reach old age in his home: for Apollo, having grown angry, killed him because Eurytus challenged him to a bow contest, 8.226-28). When Odysseus explicitly lumps together Heracles and Eurytus in their brazen challenges to the gods, he sets himself apart from the heroes of yore and begins establishing his credentials as a new type of hero. The tale of Eurytus may foreshadow the bow contest with the suitors, since the *Odyssey* tells us that it is actually Eurytus’ bow that is awaiting the hero’s return on Ithaca (21.11-41),¹⁶⁵ but, by contrasting Odysseus with these heroes, the poem is already alluding to the fact that the weapon will have a novel use, particularly in conjunction with Apollo.

In the oath above, Alcinous actively evokes Apollo, and he does so within the context of a proposed marriage, and this god’s significance to this race is suggested on an additional peaceful front: the way that they commune with the deities during banquets. Alcinous explains to Odysseus that his people, like the giants before them, still live in such proximity to the gods that, should they meet one by chance, the deity will not bother to disguise itself (7.204-206). And on

¹⁶⁵ Other traditions state the bow originated from Apollo himself. For details see Clay (1983, 89–96) and Jones (1992, 80–81).

special occasions when they have feasts, the gods join them at the table: αἰεὶ γὰρ τὸ πάρος γε θεοὶ φαίνονται ἐναργεῖς / ἡμῖν, εὗτ' ἔρδωμεν ἀγακλειτὰς ἐκατόμβας, / δαίνυνται τε παρ' ἄμμι καθήμενοι ἔνθα περ ἡμεῖς (Because up till now the gods always appear to us in bodily form, whenever we sacrifice illustrious hecatombs, and they feast seated next to us – 7.201-203). These celebrations seem to approximate the early-Greek ritual of the Theoxenia, or guest-feast of the gods, where the deities themselves were evidently treated as direct participants in the celebration.¹⁶⁶ Such a celebration was the purported occasion of Pindar's *Paeon 6* at Delphi, a poem that recounts the death of Achilles' son, Neoptolemus, through the intercession of Apollo. Although there is dearth of non-literary information on these celebrations, Nagy notes that, if Pindar's paean is any indication, the preeminence of Apollo at Delphi made this god the honoree of the Delphic Theoxenia, and the themes of these performances, specifically the paean, tended to pay honor to him in particular, with the death of Achilles being a traditional theme (1999b, 60).

The general nature of the theoxenia as practiced by the Phaeacians takes on a specific Apolline aspect when we consider the prominence of this god in the songs of their poet in residence, Demodocus. Nagy observes that in the songs of Demodocus distinctions between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* can be discerned, as exemplified by different types of *kléos* attributed to the epics' main heroes – Achilles' *kléos* of *bíē* and Odysseus' *kléos* of *mētis*.¹⁶⁷ I will take a slightly different tack, and suggest that the songs of Demodocus highlight another divergence between these heroes: their relationship with the god Apollo. I contend that it is no coincidence that Apollo figures heavily in the songs of Demodocus, the first of which alludes to an epic

¹⁶⁶ For evidence on the general ritual of the Theoxenia, see Rutherford (2001, 310).

¹⁶⁷ See Nagy (1999b, 45–46, 48–49). For a different perspective, see Patjak, who views the difference between Achilles and Odysseus as residing primarily in the type of kingship each epic is portraying, and this is expressed in the types of "poems" each hero composes in his own epic (2014, Chapter 3).

quarrel between Achilles and Odysseus at Troy, and the second to Ares' affair with the wife of Hephaestus, Aphrodite. That Apollo would appear in these songs is in keeping with this god's significant role among the Phaeacians, but, when paired with one another, the individual songs of Demodocus also have strong implications for the hero Odysseus. While the first song thematically chronicles the grievous fall of Troy and Odysseus' epic past, and thus has an obvious connection to the hero, the second, which contains light-hearted material more suitable to lyric poetry—the intrigues of the gods' romantic affairs—has a more tenuous connection, but nevertheless points toward his future. In fact, when these songs are thematically related, we will see that the end result is a paradigm for the growth of Odysseus as a Apolline character who commands a full range of material, foreshadowing his eventual homecoming, when he will establish a symbiotic accord with Apollo, at the very moment a religious festival is unfolding to celebrate that same god.

In the first song of Demodocus, the poet makes reference to a quarrel (νεῖκος, 8.75) between Achilles and Odysseus, whom he refers to collectively as the best of the Achaeans (ἄριστοι Ἀχαιῶν, 8.78, note the plural adjective), at a rich feast of the gods (θεῶν ἐν δαίτι θαλείῃ, 8.76). I have already suggested that the background information of the Phaeacians implies a certain closeness to the god Apollo and that their method of conducting feasts evokes the Theoxenia, or guest feast of the gods, where it is claimed that divinities banqueted directly with the human participants, and the first song of Demodocus provides a Delphic backdrop for such as celebration, serving as the location and ritual occasion for a quarrel between the main heroes of the Homeric Epics. At Delphi Agamemnon receives a startling prophecy:

ὦς γάρ οἱ χρείων μυθήσατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων
 Πυθοῖ ἐν ἡγαθέῃ, ὅθ' ὑπέρβη λάινον οὐδὸν
 χρησόμενος: τότε γάρ ῥα κυλίνδετο πήματος ἀρχὴ
 Τρωσὶ τε καὶ Δαναοῖσι Διὸς μεγάλου διὰ βουλάς.

For thus Phoebus Apollo, issuing an oracle to him, proclaimed
 in holy Pytho, when [Agamemnon] crossed over the stone threshold
 while seeking a response. Then the beginning of the pain was unfurling
 for the Trojans and Danaans in accordance with the plan of great Zeus.

(8.79- 82)

Some, including Nagy, have seen an undeniable connection between this aspect of the song and the proem of the *Iliad*, while others view the song as an *ad hoc* invention that anticipates the story of the Trojan Horse, which Demodocus will later sing at the behest of Odysseus and which is considered his third song.¹⁶⁸

Given that the reference to an argument between Achilles and Odysseus is unattested outside the *Odyssey*, it leads Nagy to believe that Demodocus is touching on a tradition that lies outside the poems that have come down to us (1999b, 59), and that the poet "is in control of two distinct themes that permeate the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*—themes that define the central hero of each epic" (1999b, 25). Turning to external sources such as the Scholia to the *Iliad*, Nagy concludes that the conflict between the two heroes boils down to a difference of opinion on how to overthrow Troy, with Achilles championing force (*bíē*) and Odysseus artifice (*mētis*) in accordance with their defining characteristics (1999b, 45).

While this may be entirely true, I would add that an additional theme runs through the Homeric Epics that neatly contrasts the two heroes and that is abundantly present – indeed, almost overdetermined – within the context of their argument and its Delphic background: there is a fundamental reshaping in the relationship between Apollo and “the Best of Achaeans,” whether he is Achilles in the *Iliad* or Odysseus in the *Odyssey*, over the course of the poems. The

¹⁶⁸ Broeniman states, "Like Finsler, Marg, and Clay – to name only a few – I feel the similarities between Demodocus' first song and the proem of the *Iliad* are too strong to be dismissed or considered accidental, and these similarities force one to recall *prima facie* the opening lines of the *Iliad* ... Demodocus' first song is an Iliadic song, which means its hero is Achilles and βῆ is the heroism thus promoted." (1996, 10). For a contrasting argument, see Finkelberg (1987, 128–32).

confrontational attitude that Achilles evinces toward the god in the *Iliad* gives way in the *Odyssey* to one of respect and eventually reliance for Odysseus toward the same god. It can be said, moreover, within the broad expanse of tradition, Achilles becomes an example of failed maturation, felled by the arrows of Apollo, an outcome alluded to frequently in the *Iliad*, but Odysseus will ultimately encapsulate the opposite outcome, and this contrast can be detected within the trajectory of the songs of Demodocus, where Apollo, too, in a sense, successfully matures from one song to the next.

In particular, the relationship between Hermes and Apollo that emerges within the second song of Demodocus depicts a side of Apollo that was largely absent from the *Iliad*.¹⁶⁹ In addition to the story of Hephaestus, Aphrodite, and Ares, this song features the collective gods' reactions to the uncovered intrigue, with the mirthful exchange between Apollo and Hermes being quite prominent. In an earlier chapter on the *Iliad*, I examined Apollo's intergenerational conflict with Poseidon, and argued that the *Iliad*, in a way, depicts a youthful god in the process of coming into his full powers. Although Apollo is typically represented in his perpetually-ephebic state in both literary and physical arts, the second song of Demodocus features a comparatively mature god, *vis-a-vis* Apollo's status as an older brother to Hermes.¹⁷⁰ In this scene, a world-wise Apollo asks whether his younger sibling would be willing to suffer a penalty such as the type that Ares had undergone in order to lie with Aphrodite.¹⁷¹ When Hermes replies that he most certainly would, even if the bonds were three times as strong as those that captured Ares, laughter erupts among all the gods, save Poseidon, who pledges surety if Ares is set free

¹⁶⁹ Although a variety of myths tell of Apollo's romantic intrigues, these themes are difficult to detect in the *Iliad*. One exception would be his snatching away Marpessa in the myth of Meleager, as told by Phoenix in the embassy scene.

¹⁷⁰ Carpenter claims that images of Apollo in sixth-century Attic art were wildly variable, showing the god both bearded and beardless, and he states, "to the Attic vase painters of the mid-sixth century his age was simply not an issue" (1994, 78).

¹⁷¹ Levaniouk refers to Apollo in this scene as a "teasing older brother" (2011, 74).

from his bonds (8.335-349). Apollo and Hermes, then, act as a close-knit fraternal unit, with Apollo acting as a mentor, or older brother, to the upstart Hermes, and the two are opposed to Poseidon, the god whose enmity Odysseus has incurred elsewhere.

The Homeric Hymn to Hermes

The relationship of these siblings is perhaps most famously represented in the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, where the two, to put it mildly, are not always in accord, but where the plot of the poem ultimately documents the trajectory of their reconciliation, which is achieved through an acceptable distribution of godly powers. In the compressed narrative of the *Hymn*, Hermes is both the upstart challenger to his older relation but also, when an accord is ultimately struck, a bestower and recipient of gifts. As a challenger to Apollo, Hermes, in one of his first actions after he is born, absconds with his older brother's cattle, but a truce is later reached that revolves around the distribution of prophetic and musical powers. It so happens that the *Hymn* uses song as a means to differentiate the upstart Hermes of the poem's beginning from the relatively mature Hermes at the end of the *Hymn*, as the young god sings two songs that have completely different tones,¹⁷² and these songs in turn provide a useful basis to further our discussion on the differences between the types of poetry associated with Achilles in the *Iliad* and with Odysseus in the *Odyssey*. The two songs of the young god are separated by Hermes' rebellious cattle raid, and it will therefore be necessary to discuss the thematics of this raid in conjunction with the topics of these songs.

Just as Apollo appears to be somewhat mature compared to Hermes in the second song of Demodocus, in the *Hymn* his presence is rendered rather mature and austere by virtue of comparison to the rascally infant Hermes, whose many actions at the outset of the *Hymn* are

¹⁷² Johnston notes that the two songs of Hermes, one of which occurs before the cattle raid and the other after it, serve "to emphasize the important changes in Hermes' nature and status" (2002, 112).

seemingly calculated as a direct affront to his older brother, who will eventually take on a role in the poem that equals or surpasses that of Hermes. The first song of Hermes (54-61) precedes the narrative of his raid on Apollo's cattle, and I read both activities as provocations, particularly since the first song is concomitant with Hermes' invention of the lyre, an instrument that will ultimately come under the province of Apollo.¹⁷³ The theme of the first song is a theogony; however, its scope is not global, but it exclusively celebrates instead the story of Hermes own birth:

θεὸς δ' ὑπὸ καλὸν ἄειδεν
 ἐξ αὐτοσχεδίας πειρώμενος, ἥύτε κοῦροι
 ἤβηται θαλίησι παραιβόλα κερτομέουσιν,
 ἀμφὶ Δία Κρονίδην καὶ Μαιάδα καλλιπέδιλον,
 ὡς πάρος ὠρίζεσκον ἑταιρείῃ φιλότῃτι,
 ἦν τ' αὐτοῦ γενεὴν ὀνομακλυτὸν ἐξονομάζων:

The god sang beautifully,
 making improvisational tests—just as young men
 in their prime taunt recklessly at feasts—
 and he sang about Zeus, the son of Kronos, and lovely-sandaled Maia,
 how they formerly kept conversing in intimate love,
 and he proclaimed his own illustrious lineage.

(54-59)

Though the simile suggests the setting of symposium,¹⁷⁴ the theme of the song, which proudly announces his own family line and establishes the young god's *bona fides*, must be viewed in conjunction with the actual setting, where Hermes takes his invention inside the gloomy cave where he was begotten and plays his newly-invented lyre only to himself, and perhaps to his

¹⁷³ Most who attempt to date the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* place it after the *Hymn to Apollo*, in which the god's first declaration (127-32) lays claim to the lyre, as well as the bow and prophecy, as elemental components of his persona. Based on the possible influence of the *Hymn to Apollo* and other considerations, Richardson states that a sixth-century date is suggested for the *Hymn to Hermes* (2010, 24). For a linguistic attempt at dating the Homeric Hymns, see Janko (1982).

¹⁷⁴ The evocation of the symposium has led some to conclude that Hermes has a high estimation of a form of music that suggests a comparison to personal lyric poetry, such as the type practiced by Archilochus and other poets of the Archaic period (Richardson, N. 2010, 22–24).

mother, who sits alone in silence, a nymph who eschews the company of the other deathless gods (5-10). Although the subject of Hermes' song is a theogony, it only contains the story of his own birth, and it therefore shares much with the type of heroic boasting that is prevalent in the *Iliad*, where a character proclaims his own excellence by virtue of his lineage or mastery of a certain skill.

In fact, I would like to show that the first song of Hermes thematically parallels, both in tone and backdrop, the famous lay of Achilles during the embassy scene of the *Iliad* (9.189). Like Hermes, who in his gloomy cave has only the unresponsive audience of his mother, Achilles at his tent only has an audience of one, Patroclus, who sits across from his comrade in silence (ἐναντίος ἦστο σιωπῆ, 9.190). Unlike Achilles in the embassy scene, however, Hermes explicitly longs for a life outside his current cramped existence, complaining that the cave is gloomy and that he longs to live with the other gods amidst the wealth of Olympus, and his subsequent actions will be the pathway by which he achieves his goal.¹⁷⁵ In fact, as the actual son of Zeus, the god has the inherent qualifications to mount a successful challenge.

It is not only the setting that links Achilles' song with that of Hermes but also a number of additional attending circumstances. While the anger of Achilles that led to his withdrawal is reminiscent of that of Apollo himself at the outset of the poem, suggesting the two share certain attributes, the hero comes to have an increasingly antagonistic relationship with the god, as will Hermes shortly after he sings his first song. In earlier chapters, I suggested that Achilles' attitude toward Delphi, which he voices in the embassy scene shortly after he is discovered playing on his lyre, evokes a traditional theme of a Delphic challenge, where the material wealth associated with such a location can be gained (ληϊστοὶ μὲν γὰρ τε βόες καὶ ἴφια μῆλα, κτητοὶ δὲ τρίποδες τε

¹⁷⁵ Shelmerdine notes a similarity between this cave and the one of Calypso in the *Odyssey*, and that Hermes' longing for escape, despite its pleasant trappings, is somewhat similar to Odysseus' (1986, 56).

καὶ ἵππων ξανθὰ κάρηνα, *Il.* 9.406-407). It so happens that the bulk of the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* is taken up by a description of a cattle raid, and that, in addition to this raid, Hermes evinces a very Achilles-like attitude toward Delphi. When the young god is chastised by his mother for his early brazen actions, Hermes retorts that he is not content with his current lot, being without offerings and prayers, and that his goal, as a son of Zeus, is to have honors equal to Apollo (ἀμφὶ δὲ τιμῆς, / κἀγὼ τῆς ὀσίης ἐπιβήσομαι, ἧς περ Ἀπόλλων, 173-74).¹⁷⁶ In an earlier section that dealt with Apollo's feud with Poseidon in the *Iliad*, I analyzed the word τιμῆ, and argued that, when applied to a divinity, this word can mean domain or jurisdiction, in the sense of a god's functional realm. This conclusion is corroborated here in the *Hymn*, since, shortly after his desire for honor equal to Apollo, Hermes further threatens to plunder Apollo's prophetic center, Delphi itself:

εἴμι γὰρ ἐς Πυθῶνα μέγαν δόμον ἀντιτορήσω:
 ἔνθεν ἄλις τρίποδας περικαλλέας ἠδὲ λέβητας
 πορθήσω καὶ χρυσόν, ἄλις τ' αἶθωνα σίδηρον ...

For I will go to Pytho to break open his great house,
 from which I'll plunder plenty of beautiful tripods and cauldrons
 and gold, and plenty of shining iron ...¹⁷⁷

(178-180)

Hermes here makes an explicit threat against the riches of Delphi, but, unlike Achilles, the god has the wherewithal to vie for the prerogatives of his older brother's precinct.

It has been demonstrated that in Indo-European cultures the cattle raid, which is mythically stylized in the *Hymn*, can be an important coming-of-age ritual. A successful foray would prove a young man's ability to provide for his family, would serve as an important

¹⁷⁶ For Achilles as the potential son of Zeus, see my earlier section "The Anger of ... Apollo" and Slatkin (1991, Chapter 3. "The Wrath of Thetis").

¹⁷⁷ At the peak of his mortal powers and acting the part of the magnanimous king, Achilles unloads his ship and distributes the wealth to the participants of Patroclus' funeral games. Among these prizes are tripods and iron.

precursor to his status as a warrior, and would even determine the amount of honor he would receive.¹⁷⁸ The cattle raid of Nestor when he was young man (*Il.* 11.670-761) often serves as useful example of such raids. The *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* largely conforms to this pattern, as suggested by the rewards of wealth that Hermes promises his mother, as well as the honor he will eventually receive in the eyes of his father. What is unusual in the *Hymn* is that in most cattle raiding myths the young man must take on and even kill either a formidable enemy or, in more mythically-stylized accounts as Heracles' raid on Geryon, a monster. Hermes, however, confronts his older brother, Apollo, and the two will eventually become fast friends. The *Hymn*, therefore, chronicles an evolution from an antagonistic to a symbiotic relationship between the raider and the rightful owner of the cattle. In turn, it can be said that the evolution of Hermes' relationship with Apollo in the *Hymn* provides a useful case to contrast Achilles' and Odysseus' association – in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, respectively – with the same deity, as we shall see through the vehicle of Hermes' second song.

When Apollo discovers Hermes' theft, the brazen infant feigns innocence and the two eventually take their case to Zeus, who affects a reconciliation, which is in turn linked to Hermes' second song.¹⁷⁹ Hermes agrees to return the stolen herd to Apollo and to cede to his older brother his newly-invented lyre, and Apollo, in exchange, grants Hermes the role of a cowherd (497-95), and a form of divination having to do with the bee maidens of Parnassus (550-567), though the elder god maintains augury and the prophetic role of voicing Zeus' will for himself. Unlike the first song of Hermes, which focused on his own lineage and which glorified

¹⁷⁸ See in particular Lincoln (1976), Walcot (1979), and Johnston (2002, 112 ff).

¹⁷⁹ Richardson notes that, as a type of comedy culminating in a mock trial, this scene resembles, to some extent, the second song of Demodocus, where the gods debate the consequences of Ares' adultery (2010, 21).

Zeus alone, his second song, sung just prior to the time of the exchange of the above divine privileges, lauds all the gods, a theogony that embraces the entire pantheon:

... τάχα δὲ λιγέως κιθαρίζων
 γηρύετ' ἀμβολάδην — ἐρατὴ δέ οἱ ἔσπετο φωνή — κραίνων
 ἀθανάτους τε θεοὺς καὶ γαῖαν ἐρεμνήν,
 ὡς τὰ πρῶτα γέγοντο καὶ ὡς λάχε μοῖραν ἕκαστος.

... Playing the lyre quickly and clearly
 he sang, striking up his song, and a lovely voice attended him, completing
 the story of the deathless gods and the dark earth,
 how they first came into existence and how each god obtained its share.

(425-29)

Earlier in the Hymn, Hermes had evinced a burning desire to ascend to the Olympic pantheon himself, and this was discernible by his actions during a ritual of sacrifice, when he slaughters two of Apollo's cattle. In that scene, he cuts the offering into 12 portions, presumably destined for the established Olympians,¹⁸⁰ but he becomes overcome by the smell of meat and desires his own share: ἔνθ' ὀσίης κρεάων ἠράσσατο κύδιμος Ἑρμῆς: / ὀδμὴ γάρ μιν ἔτειρε καὶ ἀθάνατόν περ ἔόντα / ἦδεῖ' (Whereupon glorious Hermes began to desire the offering of meat, for the sweet smell oppressed him, though he was immortal, 130-33). The concessive clause at the end of the sentence seems to indicate that, though he is god, Hermes is overcome with the desire to consume the meat, which would put him more in league with mortal heroes, since gods were said to only partake in ambrosia (e.g., *Il.* 14.170), but he does not give in to this desire, and instead seeks to obtain these honors by continuing his challenge to Apollo.

When Hermes strikes up his lyre and sings his second song, however, much has changed, occasioned by Zeus' intercession, and the tune enraptures Apollo, prompting him to seek the lyre for his own. His reaction as an audience member can be contrasted with the lack of audience not

¹⁸⁰ Some have seen this as a specific reference to the cult of Twelve Gods at Olympia, leading to the conclusion that the Hymn may have been performed for first performance at that location. See Burkert (1984).

only for Hermes' first song, which is played largely to himself, but also for the song that Achilles sings during the *Iliad's* embassy scene, where Patroclus sits across from his comrade in silence, and, like the embassy members, seemingly rues the fact that the hero will not return to battle. In the *Iliad*, the song does not inspire Patroclus to emulate the withdrawn Achilles, but rather he will eventually don his comrade's armor, going forth as an incarnation of Achilles as the aggressive warrior, a move that will cost the young man his life. And if we extend this chain of events, this will eventually result in the death of Achilles through the agency of Apollo.

Conversely, the second song of Hermes propels the singer, Hermes, and his audience, primarily Apollo, into a symbiotic relationship, where each will grow in status through the exchange of divine privileges. When Hermes is in possession of the lyre, he makes a point of lauding all the gods in due order (κατὰ κόσμον, 433) in his second song. Smitten by the sound of the lyre, Apollo seeks the instrument for his own. Moreover, according to Apollo in the *Hymn*, the lyre is what makes it possible for one to participate in merriment (εὐφροσύνην, 449), and this sentiment shares much in common with the song Odysseus professes to prefer. In fact, Odysseus, when he is among the Phaeacians, specifically uses the word εὐφροσύνη to describe the type of song that brings him the most delight, as he attempts to steer Demodocus away from the epic themes of his earlier song (*Od.* 9.6).

The movement from antagonism to symbiosis that is detectable in the two songs of Hermes also coincides with symbolism of darkness and light, and even sunset and sunrise, that are evident in the *Hymn*. In the early portions of the *Hymn*, night is primarily the province of Hermes, as evidenced by the collocation of his epithets at the poem's beginning: καὶ τότε ἔγείνατο παῖδα πολύτροπον, αἰμυλομήτην, ληιστῆρ', ἔλατῆρα βοῶν, ἠγήτορ' ὄνειρων, νυκτὸς ὀπωπητῆρα, πυληδόκον (And at that time, [Maia] bore a son of many winning wiles, a robber, a

thief of cattle, a leader of dreams, an attendant of night, a watcher at the gate, 13-15). Hermes uses the cover of night to commit his act of theft, and drives Apollo's cattle toward Pylos, which itself has been associated with the liminal idea of light and darkness,¹⁸¹ where he then hides his new possessions in an enclosed shelter (αὔλιον, 106). In recapitulating the story of the theft to his father, Apollo lays emphasis on the darkness associated with Hermes cave, the place where the young god is eventually discovered: ἐν λίκνῳ κατέκειτο μελαίνῃ νυκτὶ ἐοικώς, / ἄντρῳ ἐν ἠερόεντι κατὰ ζόφον (He, [Hermes], lay down in his cradle, similar to dark night, in the gloomy cave under darkness, 358-60). The diction here is evocative of Apollo's entrance in the *Iliad*, when he arrives like the night (νυκτὶ ἐοικώς, 1.47), and fires his arrows of plague. And this point of comparison to a youthful Hermes is apt if we view the Homeric Epics as documenting the far-shooter's own coming-of-age story. In the *Hymn*, the emphasis on darkness creates a link between the cave where Hermes was born and his defiant act of hiding away of the cattle.

The movement of the cattle, animals that are often associated with sustenance and life in Indo-European traditions,¹⁸² from the open position of their pasture in the light of day to their enclosure in the darkness of night is also reminiscent of Herodotus' retelling of the story of Euenius. We will recall Euenius as the shepherd who was responsible for guarding a herd sacred to the Sun but who falls asleep when the beasts are penned up in a cave at night, at which point they are attacked by wolves. In recompense, the local villagers blind him, but he eventually becomes a prophet when the gods intercede on his behalf. As can be seen, the elements of light and darkness, the cave, and a sacred herd are all present in the narrative of the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*. But perhaps most strikingly both Euenius and Hermes become prophets at the end of their stories. Hermes achieves this status not only because he directly challenges Apollo via his

¹⁸¹ See Frame's comments on these associations of Pylos (2010, Chapter 5).

¹⁸² See Frame, esp. (2010, 49).

cattle raid but also because he invents the lyre, giving himself the accoutrements of a poet, a role coveted by Apollo. If the *Hymn* associates much of Hermes story with night and darkness, it is the lyre that is associated with day and light: ἠῶος γεγονῶς μέσῳ ἡματι ἐγκιθάριζεν, / ἔσπεριος βοῦς κλέπεν ἐκηβόλου Ἀπόλλωνος (born at break of dawn, he played the lyre at mid-day; at evening, he stole the cattle of far-shooting Apollo, 17-18).

While Hermes' theft of Apollo's cattle is associated with darkness and while Apollo's threats to cast his brother into Tartarus (255),¹⁸³ and even to put him into a state of permanent sleep (ὄστατον ὕπνον, 289) may recall the destroying deity from the beginning of the *Iliad* who arrived like the night for the Achaeans, the *Hymn* largely depicts Apollo, the god who will eventually gain possession of the lyre, with the opposite imagery of light. He, for example, approaches Hermes' cave at the break of day, and his entrance throws light into the gloom, where he is able to descry the bright treasures that lie in its every nook and cranny (235-50), and he doesn't fail to take notice of Hermes' stratagem of hiding the lyre under the cover his armpit (240-45). During his period of antagonism toward his older brother, Hermes actually professes to be in awe of Helios (Ἡέλιον δὲ μάλ' αἰδέομαι καὶ δαίμονας ἄλλους, 381), which, given the *Hymn's* playful use of metaphors for light and darkness as well as Helios' association with Apollo, can be seen as yet another provocation, somewhat akin to the *Hymn's* position that Hermes was inventor of the lyre.

Shelmerdine, in fact, notes several thematic parallels between the *Hymn* and the Helios scene in the *Odyssey*. Most importantly, when Hermes is overcome by the smell of meat and desires to consume the flesh of Apollo's sacrificed cattle, he behaves much like Odysseus' shipmates who are destroyed for slaughtering Helios' divine herd, but, by deciding to abstain, the

¹⁸³ In the Hesiodic *Catalog of Women* Zeus issues a similar threat against Apollo when the young god kills the Cyclopes, but the sentence is lessened to serving the Trojan king Laomedon for a year (Hes Fr 54 MW), a period in which Apollo was also said to be a cowherd (*Il.* 21.435-467).

god will act more like Odysseus. This comparison leads to the conclusion that there is an association of Apollo with Helios, since they are both the possessors of the divine herd that has been violated. For Shelmerdine, then, the *Hymn*, which she dates to the last quarter of the 6th century, is aware of an identification of Apollo with Helios.¹⁸⁴

Although Hermes provocatively claims to be in awe of Helios, he, after successfully negotiating the coming-of-age ritual of the cattle raid, eventually moves toward a spiritual kinship with Apollo.¹⁸⁵ In fact, it can be said that, by the end of the *Hymn*, Apollo ushers Hermes, who at the beginning of the poem is an outsider, into his new peer group of the Olympians. Johnston puts it this way:

Thus the poet of the *Hymn* portrays the relationship between an older male and a younger male exactly as we would expect in a "coming-of-age" tale: the older male will accept, support, and even train the younger male in skills that he himself has mastered, so long as the younger male acquiesces in his proper, subordinate role. But the poet of the *Hymn* goes even further: Apollo is portrayed not only as a model, sponsor, and teacher for Hermes, but also as a figure who personally can either facilitate or prevent Hermes' entry into the Olympian family and thus into his own mature identity.

(2002, 121)

¹⁸⁴ She states, "Although the earliest evidence for the identification of Apollo with Helios elsewhere is in Aeschylus, I believe the hymnist also intended one here. But even if we do not see in it a reference to Apollo, the mention of Helios at this point in the hymn could hardly fail to recall Odysseus' adventure with that god's cattle ... By stressing the difficulty of resisting this temptation, the hymnist brings clearly to mind Odysseus' own struggle, and again makes an implicit comparison between the prudent hero and the clever god. Whatever theories we may form about the religious implications of Hermes' refusal to eat, this scene provides a clear parallel between the god and the hero whose 'odyssey' he mimics, in his need to leave a safe and comfortable home, to travel, and to prove himself by resisting temptation" (Shelmerdine 1986, 58–59).

¹⁸⁵ It is noteworthy that, in modern Crete, the cattle raid is still used to forge just such a kinship between a younger man who performs the raid and the elder party from whom the cattle are stolen—once the possessions are returned to the original owner (Herzfeld 1985, Chapter 8). Haft (1996, 27–48) interprets the eventual friendship of Hermes and Apollo in the *Hymn* in light of Herzfeld's observations. See also Johnston (2002, 113).

Apparent in the *Hymn*, therefore, is the analogue of Apollo's role seen elsewhere as either a destroyer or benefactor of ephebic youth, but an emphasis is placed on a beneficent outcome here.

Thus far we have seen some parallels between the *Hymn* and the *Odyssey*, including a solar theme evoked by the roles of Apollo and Helios, and I have also argued that the Hermes of the beginning of the *Hymn* is also somewhat reminiscent of the Iliadic Achilles, as evidenced by their challenges to Apollo, by their antagonistic attitudes toward Delphi, and by the types of songs that they sing. Of course, it is impossible for Achilles, as a mortal, to make a successful challenge to surpass the god Apollo, and the hero cannot, like Hermes, be recognized as a close peer in the end. In the *Iliad*, Achilles, in his antagonistic relationship with Apollo, goes through all the motions that we observe in the challenger Hermes of the *Hymn*, but the hero never fully relents and accepts a subordinate role, bringing about his eventual death. In essence, Achilles' relationship with Apollo, therefore, represents a cautionary coming-of-age story, resulting in a failure of maturation, when it is compared with the bonds that are eventually forged between the older and younger brother in the *Hymn*. The global theogony that Hermes sings at the end of the *Hymn* functions as means to strengthen those bonds, as does his gift of the lyre, which Hermes tells Apollo operates as the merriment of night and day (εὐφροσύνην νυκτός τε καὶ ἡματος, 482).

While I have endeavored to demonstrate that the *Iliad* operates as a cautionary coming-of-age story, where it can be said that Achilles is destroyed in part by his challenge to Apollo, I would like to return to how we can view Odysseus in the *Odyssey* as occupying the opposite end of the spectrum, where the hero enters into a symbiotic relationship with the same god. To elucidate this, we can again use the thematics of the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, which shares much in common with the *Odyssey's* depiction of Odysseus among the Phaeacians and with the

themes that are present in Demodocus' songs. The microcosm of the *Hymn* puts on display the quick maturation of Hermes, from the impish challenger at the poem's beginning to the somewhat contrite, though still powerful, subordinate to his brother at its end. Odysseus, of course, shares the epithet *πολύτροπος*, literally translated as "of many turns," with Hermes in the *Hymn* (13, 439), and both are cut from the mold of the archetypal trickster.¹⁸⁶ Beyond these similarities, Levaniouk notes that Odysseus, like Hermes in the *Hymn*, is depicted by a number of instances where the marker of his age shifts, where he is represented alternatively as an aging married man and as a youngster (2011, 67). This is perhaps most apparent when Odysseus is among the Phaeacians, and Athena not only makes the hero physically larger but also changes his appearance to that of an ephebe (6.229-235).

In keeping with his youthful form, Odysseus, between Demodocus' first and second song, more than adequately acquits himself in a number of athletic competitions. The athletic tests that Odysseus undertakes among the Phaeacians are not unlike the competitions that were part of religious festivals that celebrated ephebic coming-of-age rituals. Both Hermes and Apollo were often patron gods of such festivals—the former presiding over the Hermaia and the latter over the Apallai, for example, and during such festivals, agonistic athletics were heavily featured and operated in a similar fashion to the cattle raid featured in the *Hymn*, in that both of these competitions trained young men to be warriors (Johnston 2002, 118). Johnston argues that the Hermaia would have been a suitable performance setting for the *Hymn*. If this were the case, the agonistic scenario of the *Hymn's* narrative would therefore match its performative setting, and it would be unsurprising that the cattle raid is resolved by the interested parties entering into symbiotic, not antagonistic, relationship, an outcome often inculcated through athletics.

¹⁸⁶ For additional shared epithets and parallels between their stories, see Levaniouk (2011, 63–67). Shelmerdine (1986) also points to a number of connections between the *Hymn* and the *Odyssey*.

Although there is no hard evidence that the Hermaia were celebrated at Delphi, the overarching role of Apollo in the *Hymn* and the prominent role of Delphi suggests that this precinct or would have been a fitting locale for its recurring performance, and Johnston also offers up the Pythian Games as possibility.¹⁸⁷

I have already argued that, in a number of ways, the themes associated with the precincts of Apollo are also present among the Phaeacians. As with festivals that celebrate males' maturation, Odysseus' time with the Phaeacians also moves between athletics and the performance of poetry. It is after his athletic triumphs that Odysseus is treated to Demodocus' second song, the story of Ares, Aphrodite, and Hephaestus, which contains the vignette of Apollo's appearance as Hermes' "teasing older brother" (Levaniouk 2011, 74). As mentioned previously, Apollo and Hermes act as a tight knit fraternal unit, which closely matches their relationship at the end of the *Hymn*, and their light-hearted bantering contrasts strongly with the serious tone that Poseidon takes during the unfolding scene of adultery.

If the relationship of Apollo and Hermes in the second song of Demodocus and at the end of the *Hymn* represents a symbiotic kinship, it is important to note that no such thing emerges for Apollo in the *Iliad*, a god who must endure the taunts of his fellow Olympians, including his own sister, Artemis, and uncle Poseidon until the very end.¹⁸⁸ If we acknowledge a relationship between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and read them together as a type of loosely unified narrative, however, we could view Apollo as being in the process of maturation and existing in two

¹⁸⁷ Johnston puts forth a number of other possibilities as well (e.g., Olympia and Pellene) but Delphi and/or Delos are particularly persuasive, given the prevalence of Apollo in the poem (2002, 128).

¹⁸⁸ While Poseidon is Apollo's uncle and not his brother, the myth of Meleager shows that an uncle can be a potential sponsor for a young man in the type of agonistic endeavors that frame a coming-of-age ritual. The story of Meleager largely relates a negative paradigm for such a relationship. The hero kills his uncles not during a cattle raid but after a boar hunt, and his life in turn comes to an end because of his own mother's anger over the killing of her brother. The fullest accounts of this story are in pseudo-Apollodorus (*Bibliothèque* 1.8.2) and Ovid (*Metamorphoses* 8.269–525). For similarities between Meleager and Achilles in the *Iliad*, see Nagy (1999b, 105–6).

different stages, both its problematized beginnings in the *Iliad* and its glorious fulfillment in the *Odyssey*. In the latter poem, it is none other than Odysseus, as evidenced by his shifting age markers, who embodies the mortal exemplar of this process.¹⁸⁹ While Achilles is the hero who may most resemble Iliadic Apollo, Odysseus is the one who embodies this entire coming-of-age process experienced by the god over the course of both poems. This will be even more apparent upon an examination the hero's homecoming on Ithaca, when his symbiotic relationship with Apollo will reach its climax.

¹⁸⁹ Apropos here is Levaniouk's observation concerning Odysseus: "It seems that Odysseus' progress towards Ithaca is represented both by an enactment of his "younger brother" role and by a gradual overcoming of it. Once he has defeated the suitors Odysseus will be able to stop playing a youngster. The final overcoming, however, will have to wait until Ithaca" (2011, 75).

Chapter 4. The Bow and the Lyre

In the last chapter, I noted that, during Odysseus' time with the Phaeacians, there were direct references and allusions to two of the most important locales sacred to the god Apollo, Delos and Delphi, and the same areas figure heavily in the overall trajectory of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*.¹⁹⁰ Though there has been a history of scholarly debate surrounding the topic of the poem's unity,¹⁹¹ Nagy argues forcefully for an artistic as well as socio-political impetus behind the cohesion of its Delian and Pythian sections:

In archaic Greek poetry, the principle of unity in composition may be the result of social as well as artistic factors. In the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, for example, the integrity of the poem results from the fusion of two traditions about Apollo, the Delian and the Pythian, but the artistic fusion of the two distinct traditions implies a corresponding social fusion of two distinct audiences. The worship of Delian Apollo is the founding principle uniting the city-states on the Aegean Islands and on the coast of Asia Minor—precisely those Hellenic areas that are not included in the vast affiliation of city-states united in the worship of Pythian Apollo at Delphi. Since the Homeric Hymn to Apollo is appropriate to the city-states under the sway of the Delian as well as the Pythian Apollo, its range of audience is truly Panhellenic in scope.

(1999b, I§13)¹⁹²

Indeed, this movement toward unity is detectable in the opening lines of the poem, where at first Apollo, much like his opening presence in the *Iliad*, initially elicits a fearful reaction, but in the

¹⁹⁰ Over the years, commentators have given dates ranging from the late eighth to the late sixth century BCE for the *Hymn*, with Burkert and Janko arguing that the final version was composed ca. 525 BCE. See Richardson for a review (2010, 13). Although most would date the *Hymn* after the Homeric Epics and although explicit mention of Delos and Delphi are only mentioned in a few cases, we can surmise that the Homeric Epics were aware, at some stage of their development, of many of the underlying myths and traditions that are incorporated into the *Hymn*, and these themes may have found their way into the Epics through more implicit channels.

¹⁹¹ The connection between the Delian and Pythian sections of the Hymn have a controversial history in scholarship, where separatist theories compete with those from unitarians. For a review of this history, see Miller (1986, 111).

¹⁹² Elsewhere, Nagy puts forth an interesting theory that, based partly on the work of Martin, suggests there is an embedded contest between Homer and Hesiod, since the Delian section is composed in a Homeric style, while the Pythian section is Hesiodic (2011, 298–300).

Hymn the focus on fear and destruction becomes unfounded when the new arrival is disarmed by

Leto:

μνήσομαι οὐδὲ λάθωμαι Ἀπόλλωνος ἐκάτοιο,
 ὄντε θεοὶ κατὰ δῶμα Διὸς τρομέουσιν ἰόντα:
 καὶ ῥά τ' ἀναΐσσουσιν ἐπὶ σχεδὸν ἐρχομένοιο
 πάντες ἀφ' ἐδράων, ὅτε φαίδιμα τόξα τιταίνει ...
 ἢ ῥα βίον τ' ἐχάλασσε καὶ ἐκλήισσε φαρέτρην,
 καὶ οἱ ἀπ' ἰφθίμων ὤμων χεῖρεςσιν ἐλοῦσα
 τόξα κατεκρέμασε πρὸς κίονα πατρὸς ἐοῖο
 πασσάλου ἐκ χρυσεύου: τὸν δ' ἐς θρόνον εἶσεν ἄγουσα.
 τῷ δ' ἄρα νέκταρ ἔδωκε πατὴρ δέπαϊ χρυσεῖῳ
 δεικνύμενος φίλον υἷόν.

I will remember and not forget the far-shooter Apollo,
 whom the gods fear when he goes through the halls of Zeus
 They dart up at his drawing near,
 all of them from their seats, when he stretches his illustrious bow ...
 She unstrung his bow and closed his quiver,
 and taking his arrows from his strong shoulders with her hands,
 she hung his equipment against a pillar of his father's house
 from a golden peg, and leading the way, she sat him on a throne.
 His father set out nectar for him in a golden cup,
 welcoming his dear son.

(1-4 ... 6-11)

Clay sees a link between the peculiarity of the *Hymn's* violent opening and allusions to certain suppressed theogonic battles that had the potential to upset Olympian order, a theme that comes more to the fore in the Pythian section of the poem, but she also contrasts the fear the new god inspires among the Olympians with the flood of joy on Delos that accompanies the moment he takes possession of both the bow and lyre later in the narrative of the poem, when, after Leto finds a suitable place to give birth on Delos, Apollo's first declares, εἴη μοι κίθαρίς τε φίλη καὶ καμπύλα τόξα, / χρήσω δ' ἀνθρώποισι Διὸς νημερτέα βουλήν.' "Let the lyre and the bent bow be dear to me, and I shall prophecy the unfailing will of Zeus to men (131-32). The quick change in the gods' emotions when Apollo first appears at the banquet of the Olympians, therefore, tracks closely with the poem as a whole, from fear to joy.

Whereas many have viewed the incongruities between the first half of the poem, the Delian section, and its second, the Pythian section, as evidence of two separate poems, Clay instead, looking at the *Hymn's* overall thematic sweep, claims that, "As a whole, then, the Hymn presents a unified and comprehensible progression with a complex but linear movement that ends when the new god has established and received his full definition within the Olympian order" (1994, 25). For her this movement parallels the systematic categorization of the Olympian hierarchy, as well as the delineation of the spheres of influence of the individual gods, where local legends and cult practices are suppressed in favor of the poem's panhellenic vision (1994, 24). As I have argued, this general movement from fear to joy, from destruction to unity, is also apparent in the overall trajectory of the Homeric Epic's supernarrative, where the contrasting "coming of age" stories of the "best of the Achaeans" is highly correlated with that of the god who, I argue, is posited as the best of the Olympians, Apollo, the god of poetry and song.

In the *Iliad*, Achilles plays his lyre and sings of the κλέα ἀνδρῶν while, in almost the same breath, ominously alluding to the riches of Delphi, and Apollo, at the end of the poem, compares the hero to a lion who forcefully takes his share of the feast. These potential instances of antagonism, fragmentism, and misrecognition, give way to a different take on the function of poetry in the *Odyssey*. In the first song of Demodocus, the Muses notably prompt the poet to sing of a κλέος¹⁹³ that reaches the broad expanse of heaven (κλέος οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἵκανε, 8.74), and in contrast to the Iliadic Achilles, Odysseus, in his profuse praise of the poet Demodocus, provides his own working definition of a successful song:

οὐ γὰρ ἐγὼ γέ τί φημι τέλος χαριέστερον εἶναι
ἢ ὅτ' εὐφροσύνη μὲν ἔχη κατά δῆμον ἅπαντα,

¹⁹³ The contrasting κλέος of Achilles and Odysseus in the *Odyssey*, evident primarily in the first song of Demodocus and the representation of Achilles in the underworld, has been noted by many. Observing perhaps a moment of intertextuality, Nagy opines that "perhaps this *kleos* also bridges the gap between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*" (1999b, 22).

δαιτυμόνες δ' ἀνά δώματ' ἀκουάζωνται ἀοιδοῦ
 ἤμενοι ἐξείης, παρὰ δὲ πλήθωσι τράπεζαι
 σίτου καὶ κρειῶν, μέθυ δ' ἐκ κρητῆρος ἀφύσσων
 οἶνοχόος φορέησι καὶ ἐγγεῖη δεπάεσσι

For I say that there is no lovelier fulfillment
 than when good cheer takes hold among an entire people,
 and banqueteers listen to the poet in their homes,
 while they sit in a row, and tables next to them are filled with
 food and meat; and, drawing wine from a krater,
 the cupbearer brings it and pours it into cups.

(9.5-10)

Despite this professed predilection in the performative function of poetry, Odysseus must still, like Apollo at the beginning of the *Hymn*, interrupt a feast that is taking place in his absence.

The Homeric Hymn to [Pythian] Apollo and the Conclusions of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*

In tracing Apollo's relationship with the "best of the Achaeans" over the course of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, I have pointed to a pattern of mutual character development between the god and the heroes who come to own this epithet, a pattern that tells Apollo's own coming-of-age story, and it so happens that we have a condensed form of such a narrative in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*.¹⁹⁴ In very general terms, the Pythian portion of the *Hymn to Apollo* summarizes the god's efforts to find a suitable locale for his oracle, and the narrative follows chronologically the story of his birth at Delos. After extensive travels, he eventually strikes upon the land that will become Delphi, but it is occupied by Pytho, a she-dragon that is terrorizing the land in conjunction with Typhoan, an equally sinister creature that Hera had brought into existence to

¹⁹⁴ It is noteworthy that in antiquity the *Homeric Hymns* were thought to be "prooimion" or openings to larger works. This is mostly deduced from Thucydides, who states, δηλοῖ δὲ μάλιστα Ὅμηρος ὅτι τοιαῦτα ἦν ἐν τοῖς ἔπεσι τοῖσδε, ἃ ἔστιν ἐκ προοιμίου Ἀπόλλωνος (And it is quite clear that such things were in the following lines of Homer that are from a prooimion of Apollo, 3.104.4). The historian was referring to performances of the Hymns at festivals where athletic and choral poetic competitions occurred, primarily at pan-Ionian gathering on Delos and Ephesus, 3.104.1-5).

punish Zeus for one of his dalliances. Apollo slays the she-dragon with a strong arrow, and then, largely through the assistance of Helios, causes the body of the monster to decay. Though this action, the god garners the epithet Pythian Apollo, a name that, according to the Hymn, is etymologically related to the verbal action of causing something to rot (372-378). Despite this accomplishment, Apollo later realizes that his land is devoid of worshippers, and therefore induces, through the trickery of some metamorphoses, a group of passing Cretan sailors to land at Delphi, where they become the first celebrants of Apollo to sing his song of praise, the paean. I contend that thematic and dictional parallels to this myth are evident both in Achilles' attempts to desecrate the body of Hector at the end of the *Iliad* and in certain details of Odysseus' homecoming, and these parallels will reveal that the overarching structure of the *Hymn to Apollo* has an analogue in the super-narrative of the Homeric Epics.

The *Homeric Hymn to [Pythian] Apollo* is centered around a successful boast over the body of his adversary, Pytho, whose death serves as a necessary precondition to attract the first human celebrants of his fame to the new site of his oracle. The *Hymn* describes the dread presence of Pytho and the moment of its death thus:

ὄς τῆ γ' ἀντιάσειε, φέρεσκέ μιν αἴσιμον ἦμαρ,
 πρὶν γέ οἱ ἰὸν ἐφῆκε ἄναξ ἐκάεργος Ἀπόλλων
 καρτερόν: ἦ δ' ὀδύνησιν ἐρεχθομένη χαλεπῆσι
 κείτο μέγ' ἀσθμαίνουσα κυλινδομένη κατὰ χῶρον.
 θεσπεσίη δ' ἐνοπή γένετ' ἄσπετος: ἦ δὲ καθ' ὕλην
 πυκνὰ μάλ' ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα ἐλίσσετο, λείπε δὲ θυμὸν
 φοινὸν ἀποπνεύουσ': ὃ δ' ἐπηύξατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων:
 ἐνταυθοῖ νῦν πύθευ ἐπὶ χθονὶ βωτιανείρη.
 οὐδὲ σύ γε ζώουσα κακὸν δῆλημα βροτοῖσιν
 ἔσσειαι, οἷ γαίης πολυφόρβου καρπὸν ἔδοντες
 ἐνθάδ' ἀγινήσουσι τεληέσσας ἐκατόμβας

Whoever came upon her, his fated day carried him away,
 until the far-shooter, Lord Apollo, fired an arrow at her,
 a missile quite strong. And broken by grievous pains
 she lay there wounded, gasping greatly and rolling on the ground.

An awful, unutterable scream was emitted. Through the woods
 she coiled here and there quite tightly, but let go of her life,
 breathing out blood. And Phoebus Apollo boasted over her:
 Now rot here upon the ground, the nurse of men.
 And you, no longer living, will not be a dread bane to men
 who eat fruit from the fertile earth
 and offer up perfect hecatombs.

(356-66)

Here, as the last lines indicates, Apollo becomes a champion for mankind by ridding the land of a scourge.¹⁹⁵ The god's actions are calculated to ensure a symbiotic relationship between his divinity, which will enjoy the ongoing benefit of consecrated hecatombs (τεληέσσας ἑκατόμβας), and mankind, who are dependent on the fruit of the earth (καρπὸν ἔδοντες). The future tense of the final verbs indicates, moreover, that the threat of the she-dragon is prospective to Apollo's future worshipers.¹⁹⁶

The sequence of the god's actions here are similar to the *Iliad's* depiction of the slaying of Hector and the subsequent desecration of his body by Achilles. Hector, of course, is a man, and no monster like Pytho, but, as his impending death approaches and as he gives in to his anger during his confrontation with Achilles, he is described thus:

ἀλλ' ὃ γε μίμν' Ἀχιλῆα πελώριον ἄσσον ἰόντα.
 ὡς δὲ δράκων ἐπὶ χειῆ ὀρέστερος ἄνδρα μένησι
 βεβρωκῶς κακὰ φάρμακ', ἔδω δέ τέ μιν χόλος αἰνός,
 σμερδαλέον δὲ δέδορκεν ἔλισσόμενος περὶ χειῆ:
 ὡς Ἴεκτωρ ἄσβεστον ἔχων μένος οὐχ ὑπεχώρει
 πύργῳ ἔπι προὔχοντι φαεινὴν ἀσπίδ' ἐρείσας

But Hector awaited prodigious Achilles as he drew nearer.
 And like a huge mountain serpent in its hole that has consumed
 vile poison awaits a man, and a terrible anger has set upon him,
 coiling in its hole and looking on dreadfully, just so
 Hector, possessing an inextinguishable anger, gave no quarter,

¹⁹⁵ Clay notes that the battle scene is greatly compressed, "which on the evidence of artistic representations, must have been a very popular set piece, and formed the narrative core of the Delphic *nomos*" (1989, 64).

¹⁹⁶ Of the extant versions of this myth from antiquity, the *Hymn* is the only one where the dragon is female (Fontenrose 1980, 21).

propping up his shining shield against the jutting tower.

(22.92-96)

There are enough dictional and thematic correspondences between the *Iliad* and the Pythian section of the *Hymn* to suggest a level of specificity and a link between the two, either between the extant poems themselves or between the traditions that shaped them.

Just as Apollo boasts over the body of Pytho, ordering the body to rot upon the spot, Achilles, who remains defiant in the face of his own potential demise at the hands of Apollo, issues an imperative to Hector, who had warned Achilles about the consequences of his actions: φράζεο νῦν, μή τοί τι θεῶν μήνιμα γένωμαι / ἤματι τῷ ὅτε κέν σε Πάρις καὶ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων / ἐσθλὸν ἐόντ' ὀλέσωσιν ἐνὶ Σκαιοῖσι πύλῃσιν (Beware now, [Achilles], lest I in some way become a source of the gods' wrath on that day when Paris and Phoebus Apollo will destroy you, though brave, at the Scaean gates, 22.358-360). In response, Achilles vaunts, τέθναθι: κῆρα δ' ἐγὼ τότε δέξομαι ὅπποτε κεν δῆ / Ζεὺς ἐθέλη τελέσαι ἢδ' ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι. (Be gone with you! I will receive my fate at the time Zeus should desire to fulfill it, and the rest of the deathless gods, 22.365-66).¹⁹⁷ The imperative employed by Achilles at the moment of Hector's death (τέθναθι, die!) operates in a similar fashion to Apollo's command (πύθει, rot!), particular given the fact that Achilles will, in short order, attempt to eradicate the physical presence of his adversary's body.

Apollo's victory over Pytho is ultimately encapsulated by his fulfilled boast, when he commands the monster to rot on the very spot that will serve as the epicenter of his oracular font, (ὃ δ' ἐπηύξατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων: / ἐνταυθοῖ νῦν πύθει, 367-68). He achieves this accomplishment by bringing about a symbiotic alignment between deities, when, after he kills

¹⁹⁷ Though he does not comment on these lines from the *Iliad*, Miller notes that Apollo's boasting in the *Hymn* has a model in Achilles' vaunting over his victims (1986, 89).

the monster, he enlists the assistance of Gaia and the sun god to eradicate any evidence of Pytho's presence, with the exception of its name:

... ἀλλά σέ γ' αὐτοῦ
 πύσει Γαῖα μέλαινα καὶ ἠλέκτωρ Ὑπερίων.
 ὧς φάτ' ἐπευχόμενος: τὴν δὲ σκότος ὄσσε κάλυψε.
 τὴν δ' αὐτοῦ κατέπυσ' ἱερὸν μένος Ἥελίοιο,
 ἐξ οὗ νῦν Πυθῶ κικλήσκειται: οἱ δὲ ἄνακτα
 Πύθιον ἀγκαλέουσιν ἐπώνυμον, οὔνεκα κεῖθι
 αὐτοῦ πῦσε πέλωρ μένος ὄξεος Ἥελίοιο

... But on that very spot
 dark Gaia and beaming Hyperion caused you to rot.
 So [Apollo] spoke boasting over her. And darkness covered her eyes.
 There the holy strength of Helios putrified her,
 from which the place is called Pytho, and men
 call the lord "Pythian" as an epithet, because there
 on that very spot the keen strength of the sun caused the monster to rot.

(372-378).

Through this symbiotic action, the archer god bolsters his fame by absorbing his victim's name and garnering the epithet Pythian, which the *Hymn* etymologically connects with this process of putrification (πῦσε, from the verb πύθω).¹⁹⁸

As with the putrification of Pytho's body in the *Hymn*, the earth and the sun play an important role in the desecration of Hector's corpse, which Achilles drags on the ground around the pyre of Patroclus. Achilles first brings Hector's body to the site of the pyre and stretches it face down in the dust, but Apollo provides the last line of defence to the desecration of the corpse:

¹⁹⁸ Theories exist concerning the history of the site at Delphi that contend the precinct was first the site of worship for an earth goddess. Aeschylus' *Eumenides* gives a succession of goddesses, starting with Gaia, who issued oracles from the site before it was handed over to Apollo (1-8). Those who support the archeological evidence for such a claim include Nillson (1950, 467) and Coldstream (1977, 178). Burkert is more skeptical (1981, 48). According to Clay, by ignoring or suppressing the canonical history of the site and suppressing Delphic institution such as the Pythia, the female priestess who utters oracular prophecies, and by inserting instead the novelty of a she-dragon, "the radical revision of the accepted Delphic dogma betrays the profoundly Olympic orientation of the Hymn" (1994, 28).

τῷ δ' ἐπὶ κυάνεον νέφος ἤγαγε Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων
 οὐρανόθεν πεδίον δέ, κάλυψε δὲ χῶρον ἅπαντα
 ὅσσον ἐπεῖχε νέκυς, μὴ πρὶν μένος ἠελίοιο
 σκήλει' ἀμφὶ περὶ χροῶ ἵνεσιν ἠδὲ μέλεσσιν

And Phoebus Apollo brought a dark cloud over it
 from the sky to the plain, and it covered all the land,
 however much the body covered, so that the power of the sun
 wouldn't first rake away the flesh around the sinews and limbs.

(23.189-191)

What Apollo is preventing Achilles from accomplishing is, I contend, the very thing the god himself achieved in the *Hymn* in conjunction with Helios, when, after Apollo kills Pytho, the strength of the sun causes the dragon to rot.

If this suggestion seems fanciful, I would point out that a simile in the *Iliad* does indeed compare Achilles to the sun, and, when it does so, it employs the exact same epithet of Helios found in the *Hymn*. When Achilles takes the reins of his divine team of horses, we find the collocation ἠλέκτωρ Ὑπερίων (τεύχεσι παμφαίνων ὡς τ' ἠλέκτωρ Ὑπερίων—beaming brightly in his armor just like the sun Hyperion, 19.394), and the *Hymn*, in the quote above, employs this same rare epithet to describe Helios.¹⁹⁹ Sired on the fringes of earth, these miraculous horses, which some have suggested have solar connections,²⁰⁰ even have the gift of prophecy. Despite the resplendent simile that compares Achilles to the sun, the horses attempt to bring the hero back to earth by evoking his eventual death and highlighting the power of Apollo:

ἀλλά τοι ἐγγύθεν ἦμαρ ὀλέθριον: οὐδέ τοι ἡμεῖς
 αἴτιοι, ἀλλὰ θεός τε μέγας καὶ Μοῖρα κραταιή.

¹⁹⁹ Though Hyperion is the father of Helios in Hesiod's *Theogony*, the former name is used primarily as a patronymic, as in Helios Hyperion, in the *Iliad* (8.480), and Helios is conceived of as the sun god who travels across the sky (Gantz 1996, 30).

²⁰⁰ See Nagy (1973, 159), who arrives at this conclusion through an analysis of the verbal form ἄρπυια and its connection to the snatching winds in solar myth. These horses' lineage can be traced to the Harpy Podargos: Ξάνθον καὶ Βαλίον, τῷ ἅμα πνοιῆσι πετέσθην, / τοὺς ἔτεκε Ζεφύρω ἀνέμῳ Ἄρπυια Ποδάργη / βοσκομένη λεμῶνι παρὰ ῥόον Ὠκεανοῖο (Xanthos and Balios, which both flew on the winds, and which the Harpy Podargos bore while pasturing in a meadow next to the stream of Ocean, 16.149-51).

οὐδὲ γὰρ ἡμετέρη βραδυτῆτι τε νοχελίη τε
 Τρῶες ἀπ' ὄμοιου Πατρόκλου τεύχε' ἔλοντο·
 ἀλλὰ θεῶν ὄριστος, ὃν ἠϋκομος τέκε Λητώ,
 ἔκταν' ἐνὶ προμάχοισι καὶ Ἴκτορι κῦδος ἔδωκε.
 ... ἀλλὰ σοὶ αὐτῷ
 μὀρσιμόν ἐστι θεῶ τε καὶ ἀνέρι ἴφι δαμῆναι.

But the day of destruction has drawn nigh for you. And we
 are not the cause, rather a great god and mighty fate.
 For it was not due to our sluggishness and laziness
 that the Trojans siezed the equipment from the shoulders of Patroclus,
 but the best of the gods, whom lovely-haired Leto bore,
 killed him in battle and gave glory to Hector.
 ... But for you yourself
 it is destined to be forcefully destroyed by a god and a man.

(19.409-414; 416-417)

If, as Xanthus suggests, Achilles, like Patroclus, is destined to fall through the agency of “the best of the gods” (θεῶν ὄριστος), the hero, as he will do later when confronted with specific details of his eventual death by Hector, remains defiant, telling his interlocutor that he is well aware that it is his fate to die far from home but that, nevertheless, he will not relent: οὐ λήξω πρὶν Τρῶας ἄδην ἐλάσαι πολέμοιο (I will not stop until the Trojans are driven to a surfeit of war (19.423). And it can be said that the culminating action of the hero’s defiance revolves around the desecration of Hector’s corpse.

Though Achilles’ plans concerning the treatment of Hector’s corpse are initially thwarted, his attention turns to acts of memorialization for Patroclus, and the site of the pyre becomes the focal point of the hero’s actions, and, like Apollo in the *Hymn*, he seems intent on creating a religious precinct for future worship. The hero, for example, is particularly keen to have his instructions followed concerning the boundaries of the site, first ordering that the Achaeans douse with wine “the entire site, however much the strength of fire consumed” (πᾶσαν, ὅποσον ἐπέσχε πρὸς μένος, 23.238). The spatial reference in this dictional formula is

comparable to the one found where Apollo generated a cloud to cover the entire body of Hector (ὄσσον ἐπεῖχε νέκυς), acting as a countervailing force to the strength of the sun (μένος ἠελίοιο, 23.191). And if we turn to the *Hymn*, the formula μένος + genitive is also employed, with an emphasis on place, to describe the strength of the sun: (τὴν δ' αὐτοῦ κατέπυσ' ἱερὸν μένος Ἡελίοιο, 375; αὐτοῦ πῦσε πέλωρ μένος ὄξέος Ἡελίοιο, 378). In the *Hymn*, this emphasis is achieved through repetition of the adverb αὐτοῦ, the very spot where the monster rots, since this will serve as focal point of the god's future temenos.

When Apollo first set eyes upon the site below Parnassus that will serve as the site for his oracle, he begins establishing the boundaries of his precinct: ἔνθα ἄναξ τεκμήρατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων νηὸν ποιήσασθαι ἐπήρατον (There the lord Phoebus Apollo signaled that a lovely temple be built, 285-86). The god himself lays out the foundation, but later the tribes of men construct its edifice, and the site is to become the subject of perpetual song for future generations (ἀοίδιμον ἔμμεναι αἰεὶ, 299).²⁰¹ From the retrospective vantage point after the death of Pytho, we can see that this location will revolve around the very spot where the monster was putrified by the power of the sun. Analogously, Achilles orders that the detritus of the flames (i.e., his defeated foes, the young Trojans and their horses) that lie on the borders remain and that a memorial be created that will start off small but will be built higher in future generations (23.245-249). His actions after the flames of Patroclus' pyre die down therefore suggest that the hero is marking out a temenos, and this is corroborated when his comrades comply with his request: τορνῶσαντο δὲ σῆμα θεμειλία τε προβάλοντο / ἀμφὶ πυρὴν (They marked off the burial site and produced foundations around the pyre, 23.255-56).

²⁰¹ For a negative paradigm of this sentiment, see the lament of Helen, who curses the day she and Paris met, wishing instead that she had been borne away by a gust of wind to edge of ocean, realizing that she is destined to be a subject of song for future generations, οἷσιν ἐπὶ Ζεὺς θῆκε κακὸν μόρον, ὥς καὶ ὀπίσσω / ἀνθρώποισι πελώμεθ' ἀοίδιμοι ἔσσομένοισι (Zeus ordained an ill fate for [Paris and me], that thereafter we may be famous in song for men to come, *Il.* 6.357-58).

Though, in the *Hymn*, Helios causes the body of Pytho to decay, the ultimate boast eventually accrues to Apollo when he absorbs his opponent's name, which, though an epithet that is generated from a local conflict, will nevertheless continue to travel with him and serve as reminder of his past conquests, and correspondingly it is clear that Achilles' focus is not only on the local site at Troy but also some unspecified future location. At his request, the bones of Patroclus, which lie at the epicenter of the extinguished fire and are easy to discern (ἀριφραδέα, 23.240), are transferred to an urn and carried to Achilles' hut. Reference to the urn, which will contain the comingled bones of Patroclus and Achilles, is also found in the *Odyssey* (24.73-78), and Nagy argues that this vessel is a symbol of the hero's future immortalization "where the tumulus that contains his bones is pictured as a kind of lighthouse overlooking the sea and flashing a beacon light of salvation for sailors whose lives are threatened by the dangerous waters of the sea" (2013b, 666-67).²⁰² As we have seen, this site is also evoked in the *Iliad* through Hector's definition of heroic κλέος, in which the burial site of a defeated warrior will serve as marker of the victorious party's fame (7.89-91).

I have argued that the dominant beneficiary of this process will be Apollo; that Achilles, in the embassy scene, makes an ominous though implicit threat against the epicenter of Apollo's power, Delphi; that his subsequent actions after the death of Patroclus, occasioned by Apollo, effectively bring the threat to fruition; and that counting motif represents the possibility for a mortal character in a micro-narrative to upset the grander super-narrative tradition, with Apollo being the continual force that circumvents these human efforts. It is therefore significant that we again find this counting motif when Achilles drags the body of Hector three-times around the site of Patroclus pyre (24.14). Apollo had earlier prevented the power of the sun from dissolving the

²⁰² For more on the specifics of this urn, see "Patroclos, Concepts of an Afterlife, and the Indic Triple Fire" (1980), in which Nagy has a more elaborate discussion on cremation, where his argument touches upon Patroclus' pyre but is largely framed by an exploration of Indic myth.

flesh of Hector's corpse (23.189-191), and the god again must be a preventative force when Achilles directly attempts to achieve the same outcome that the sun had almost achieved:

τοῖο δ' Ἀπόλλων
 πᾶσαν ἀεικείην ἄπεχε χροῖ φῶτ' ἐλαίρων
 καὶ τεθνηότα περ: περὶ δ' αἰγίδι πάντα κάλυπτε
 χρυσεῖη, ἵνα μὴ μιν ἀποδρῦφοι ἐλκυστάζων

... But Apollo
 warded off each outrage of his to Hector's skin, pitying the man,
 though dead, and he covered everything with his aegis
 made of gold, so that Achilles, in dragging him about, wouldn't tear off his flesh.

(24.19-22)

That Achilles himself is aware of the symbolic significance of his actions is embedded in the fact that the rising of the sun serves as an impetus for his own movement:

... οὐδέ μιν ἠὼς
 φαινομένη λήθεσκεν ὑπεῖρ ἄλλα τ' ἠτόνας τε.
 ἀλλ' ὅ γ' ἐπεὶ ζεύξειεν ὑφ' ἄρμασιν ὠκέας ἵππους,
 Ἔκτορα δ' ἔλκεσθαι δησάσκετο δίφρου ὀπισθεν,
 τρις δ' ἐρύσας περὶ σῆμα Μενoitιάδαο θανόντος

Nor did dawn, shining on sea and its banks, escape Achilles' notice.
 But then he yoked his speeding steeds upon his chariot, and
 bound Hector to drag behind his litter,
 pulling him three times around the burial mound of the dead son of Menoitios

(24.14-17)

However much the hero may exert his force, his actions are prevented from taking effect by his divine nemesis, who possesses the ability to best the hero either by generating the shadow of the earlier cloud or by employing his brilliant aegis.

Achilles' actions concerning the treatment of Hector's body are often taken to be in concert with the general desecration of the corpse theme that runs through the *Iliad*,²⁰³ but we

²⁰³ Although some commentators over the years have offered up a primitivist argument that the mutilation of the corpse theme was part and parcel of the warrior society that the *Iliad* depicts, Segal instead pursues the progression of this motif, which reaches its apex with Achilles' mistreatment of

have now seen some aspects of Achilles' actions that have an Apolline analogue, suggesting an additional motivational force for a hero who, through his actions at Troy, is shaping his unwithering fame. The topic of κλέος is evident in the *Hymn* as well. Encouraged by his success in defeating Pytho, Apollo returns to a site that had earlier rejected him, the spring Telphousa, who had sent the god off to his presumed destruction, desiring fame for herself, ὡς εἰποῦσ' Ἐκάτου πέπιθε φρένας, ὄφρα οἱ αὐτῇ / Τελφούση κλέος εἶη ἐπὶ χθονί, μηδ' Ἐκάτοιο (So speaking, she persuaded the mind of the far-shooter, so that she might have fame upon the land, and not Apollo, 275-76). His eventual return, however, brings about her destruction, and, as he had done over the body of Pytho, he exults over her,

ἐνθάδε δὴ καὶ ἐμὸν κλέος ἔσσεται, οὐδὲ σὸν οἴης.
ἦ καὶ ἐπὶ ῥίον ὥσε ἄναξ ἐκάεργος Ἀπόλλων
πετραίης προχυτῆσιν, ἀπέκρυσεν δὲ ῥέεθρα
καὶ βωμὸν ποιήσατ' ἐν ἄλσει δενδρήεντι,
ἄγχι μάλα κρήνης καλλιρροῦ: ἔνθαδ' ἄνακτι
πάντες ἐπὶ κλησὶν Τελφουσίῳ εὐχετόωνται ...

My fame will be here, and not yours alone.
And the lord, far-shooting Apollo thrust a headland
with a pouring of stone, and he hid the rivers
and made an altar in the wooded grove,
quite near the lovely-flowing spring.
And here everyone prays to the lord as Telphousian as an epithet ...

(381-86)

Others have noted that the Telphousa episode is reminiscent of Delos' earlier fears that Apollo is rumored to be ruthless (ἀτάσθαλον), and that the two separate encounters with the

Hector's corpse, to demonstrate a purposeful arc in the rising barometer of the hero's violence, and concludes that the mutilation theme "does indeed arouse in Homer repugnance and even some measure of moral outrage," and that, in particular, "the meeting between Hector and Achilles constitutes one of the strongest contrasts between civilized values and the savagery contained in the corpse theme" (1971, 13 & 34).

anthropomorphic spring also frame the Pytho scene.²⁰⁴ Though the outcome of Telphousa's relationship with Apollo is seemingly negative and marked by an image of literal calcification, being covered in a shower of rock, the spring will still share in a portion of the god's fame through the etiological signifier of their antagonistic relationship, celebrated in the god's localized epithet. But this spring will wallow in relative obscurity compared to the epicenter of Apollo's eventual worship, Pytho, or Delphi, which will serve not only as a local precinct but also as an eventual panhellenic gathering spot and a launching point for disbursing his fame broadly.

If the *Hymn* were to end with the eradication of the serpent Pytho, though, Apollo's glory would be incomplete, since he would lack worshipers at Delphi. In order for his fame to be noised abroad and perpetuated, Apollo will first need the assistance of human celebrants, and this is the theme that dominates the remainder of the Pythian section of the *Hymn*. I have argued that the antagonism that marks the relationship of Apollo and Pytho in first portion of the *Hymn* has an analogue in the *Iliad*, in which Achilles' actions follow the general trajectory of Apollo's primordial battle at Delphi. The hero kills his adversary, described as serpent, and attempts to eradicate the physical presence of the fallen enemy in a manner that evokes the participation of Helios in the *Hymn*. He does so in fulfillment of a vow or boast, stating πάντα γὰρ ἤδη τοι τελέω τὰ πάροιθεν ὑπέστην / Ἴκτορα δεῦρ' ἐρύσας (I am fulfilling everything promised earlier, having dragged Hector here, 23.20-21), where that act of fulfillment contrasts with the sacrificial evidence of the eventual symbiotic relationship that will emerge between Apollo and his future worshipers, who will offer him ongoing perfected or consecrated hecatombs (τεληέσσας ἐκατόμβας, 366). Moreover, Achilles, at the height of his powers, has his comrades sing a paean

²⁰⁴ Clay states that Apollo does not use his power for random violence, but to punish pride and wickedness, and that Telphousa is, like Typhon, on the side of the enemies of Olympus (1989, 73). For narrative ring composition and the linking of these episodes, see Miller (1986, 56–59).

over the death of Hector (22.391), in which there is no mention of the god who is normally the addressee of such songs, Apollo. Therefore, though Achilles' actions may parallel those of Apollo in the *Hymn*, the hero's antagonistic attitude toward the god contrasts strongly with the god's first celebrants, the group of passing Cretan sailors that the *Hymn* posits were the god's first priests, interpreters of his oracle, and the originators of the paean.

In the concluding section of the Pythian portion of the *Hymn*, Apollo, through a series of metamorphoses, compels a passing contingent of Cretan merchants to land at Crisa. The god first, in the form of dolphin, lies on the deck of their ship like a great and terrible monster (κεῖτο πέλωρ μέγα τε δεινόν τε, 401), and a propitious wind takes the sailors past a land where Helios, who gives joy to men (τερψιμβρότου Ἡελίοιο, 411) pastures his herds, and the ship even travels past Ithaca before reaching its final destination.²⁰⁵ Here, the sailors become awestruck by the next metamorphosis, ἔνθ' ἐκ νηὸς ὄρουσε ἄναξ ἐκάεργος Ἀπόλλων, / ἀστέρι εἰδόμενος μέσῳ ἤματι: τοῦ δ' ἀπὸ πολλαὶ / σπινθαρίδες πωτῶντο, σέλας δ' εἰς οὐρανὸν ἵκεν (There, from the ship the far-working lord Apollo leapt, seeming like a star at mid-day: many sparks flew from him, and the beam reached to heaven, 443-45).²⁰⁶ We may contrast this image, where Apollo is like a star at mid-day, with the similes that describe Achilles at the peak of his antagonism toward this god at the end of the *Iliad*, where the beam from the flame emitted from his head reaches the sky (ὡς ἀπ' Ἀχιλλῆος κεφαλῆς σέλας αἰθέρ' ἵκανε, 18.214) and where an image of asterism later compares the hero to the brightest star in the night sky, a baneful signifier of Troy's eventual destruction and perhaps his own: λαμπρότατος μὲν ὃ γ' ἐστί, κακὸν δέ τε σῆμα τέτυκται, / καί τε

²⁰⁵ For possible links to the *Odyssey* in these lines, see Janko (1982, 130–31).

²⁰⁶ Though the manifestation of Apollo may evoke other divine arrival scenes, Richardson observes that there may be a particular point to his divine radiance, since he is the god of purity and light, just as his appearance as an ephebe (449) reminds us that he is a patron of young men (2010, 141).

φέρει πολλὸν πυρετὸν δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσιν (It is the most brilliant light, but it produces a deadly sign and brings much fever to wretched mortals, 22.30-31).²⁰⁷

I have already asserted that, with respect to Apollo, the *Iliad* ends *in media res*, granting Achilles a type of temporary victory by holding his eventual death in perpetual abeyance, but the completion of god's boast and the fulfillment of his promise will in fact be enacted by Odysseus in the *Odyssey*. To that end, a number of parallels exist between the *Hymn*, especially its Pythian section, and Odysseus' homecoming, wherein he takes on a variety of Apolline characteristics that become apparent even before the famous bow contest. It is significant that Odysseus first self-fashions himself a shipwrecked Cretan upon his initial landing on Ithaca, the very same origins as Apollo's first priests on Delphi.²⁰⁸ While some might argue that this is only a passing coincidence, there are a number of ancillary details that link the travels of Odysseus and his Cretan alter ego both to the sailors of the *Hymn* and to the god that they will eventually come to worship, Apollo.²⁰⁹

We may recall that a disagreement arose between Odysseus and Nestor about the best manner to achieve a successful return. The two heroes eventually choose different routes, and

²⁰⁷ This star arrives in mid-July, and "the following period, until mid-September, is one of intense heat in Greece and Asia Minor, and it was thought that Sirius was responsible for fevers at this time" (Richardson and Kirk 1993, 108). Tsagalis notes that Achilles is somewhat like Orion in that he will be killed by an enraged Apollo, and Orion is killed by Apollo's sister, Artemis (2008, 166). For an analysis of asterism on the shield of Achilles, see Hardie (1985).

²⁰⁸ For a thorough examination of Odysseus' Cretan persona and the three Cretan lies that he tells, see Levaniouk, who pursues additional avenues of interpretation, including a broad theme of the renewal that is suggested by the relationship between the Cretan myths of the family of Minos and the stories Odysseus tells. This theme, in turn, is appropriate to the occasion of the festival of Apollo being celebrated on Ithaca at the moment of the hero's return (2011, 82–108).

²⁰⁹ Nagy observes that Odysseus' Cretan story has elements that connect it with the theme of sacrifice and the sacral lore of Delphi. Specifically, Odysseus, in the guise of the Cretan adventurer, emphasizes the plundering of Egypt to such an extent that it can be compared to the plundering of Troy, and the Cretan leader holds a sacrificial *dais* (14.249-51), creating a link to the setting that serves as quarrel between Odysseus and Achilles in the first song of Demodocus, Delphi. That the Delphic Oracle was involved in the launching of expeditions to found new cities makes Delphi an ideal location to evoke in an epic where the destruction of one city and the founding of another may be a theme (1999b, 139).

Nestor's route home is aided by Poseidon, who sends the hero a sign at Lesbos, indicating that he should cross the Aegean to Euboea, and even provides the old man a propitious wind for fair sailing, leading him eventually back to Pylos (3.168-183). The same god, of course, becomes the main hindrance to Odysseus' homecoming. As I noted in an earlier section, the *Odyssey* makes it clear that Pylos is largely affiliated with Poseidon and, to a lesser extent, Athena. Moreover, I endeavored to chronicle how the Phaeacians themselves serve as a precursor to Odysseus' return to Ithaca, in that they, despite an appearance of allegiance to Poseidon, evince many links to Apollo. It is of great interest, therefore, that Odysseus, when he first meets a disguised Athena on his return to Ithaca, tells her a story that he, a Cretan, reduced to the necessity of plunder, was unwillingly diverted by a strong wind to the island from one of his true goals, Pylos (13.256-290). In the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, the same basic situation holds true for the Cretan sailors, merchants or pirates who are diverted to Delphi from their original destination of Pylos (397-402). While Apollo is the obvious controlling force in the *Hymn*, taking command of the Cretans' ship through a variety of means, his presence is more implicit, though no less significant, to Odysseus' homecoming.

The Cretan alter ego of Odysseus, therefore, potentially evokes the etiology of Apollo's first priests, the first to interpret his oracle and to sing the god's paeon, but the hero's actual travels also closely match those of the god who will become sailors' patron deity. Prior to the formation of the god's prophetic center at Delphi, the *Hymn* tells us that Apollo either rejects or is rejected by a number of unsuitable locations, such as lands already associated with Poseidon (230-39) until he eventually settles on Delphi (290), but, as we've seen, the land is already occupied by the dread presence of Pytho. Apollo is motivated to kill the monster with his arrows specifically because it threatens to be a bane to the men who will bring perfected hecatombs

(τεληέσσας ἐκατόμβας, 366) in the god's honor. Like Apollo in the *Hymn*, Odysseus, after moving past lands associated with Poseidon, which for Odysseus include the Island of the Cyclopes and even, to some degree, Scheria, must undergo a type of initiatory contest that will be won with a bow at a site that will serve as his home base. When Odysseus lands on *Ithaca*, he finds his home beset by the suitors, and they constitute a similar thematic threat to the one at Delphi, since an imminent festival is the occasion for the hero's return, a religious festival celebrating Apollo. And, as we shall see, the suitors will indeed imperil the holy hecatombs of the god, desecrating a sacrifice in his honor.

I have posited that Odysseus, through his Cretan persona, shares certain similarities with the original Cretan priests of Apollo as depicted in the *Hymn*, the first to interpret his oracular messages and to sing his song of praise, and, through his actual identity, with the god himself in the *Hymn*, since his herds, and the god's, have been ritualistically violated by the suitors. I believe both comparisons can be valid, particularly if we consider the feat the hero achieves at the moment of the bow contest, where the god and man seemingly become one, with Odysseus hitting a mark no man has ever achieved (22.5-8), and wielding the bow like a master of the lyre (21.404-11), scenes which I will analyze more fully in the next section. The symbiotic unity the hero achieves with the god allows him to act out his vengeance while invested with an archer's prowess that borders on the superhuman, firing a shot that first pierces through 10 axe handles and successfully completing the contest, implying that Apollo has indeed heard his and Penelope's prayers.

Hitting the Mark: Successful Prayers and The Festival of Apollo

When Odysseus, dressed as a beggar and asking for a portion of the feast, first finds himself among the suitors, he ironically addresses their leader Antinous, "seeming not the worst,

but the best, of the Achaeans, since you appear like a king" (17.415-16). This barb cuts two ways, since it evokes not only Odysseus himself, whom the suitors are threatening to overthrow by becoming his substitute,²¹⁰ but also Achilles, two characters whose fame is compared elsewhere in the poem. When Antinous responds to the beggar, stating, ‘τίς δαίμων τόδε πῆμα προσήγαγε, δαιτὸς ἀνίην (What god brought forth this bane, the killjoy of the feast? 17.446)²¹¹ he seemingly evokes this comparison, as the collocation of πῆμα and δαιτὸς can allude to the argument between Achilles and Odysseus that takes place at a sacrificial feast (θεῶν ἐν δαιτὶ θαλείῃ, *Od.* 8.76), a setting that served as a backdrop for Apollo's prophecy concerning the beginning of pains associated with the fall of Troy (πήματος ἀρχή, 8.81). Nagy argues that the word πῆμα, in both the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*, can refer to the great suffering precipitated by the death of Achilles (1999b, 62–63), and he also notes that the two instances where we find πῆμα and δαῖς in close proximity also happens to be where we strangely find our only references to Delphi in the Homeric Epics (1999b, 57), with the other being the embassy scene, where Odysseus addresses Achilles and tells the hero he will not be without a feast, though the Achaeans are facing great pains (9.225–230). Shortly thereafter, the aloof hero compares the offering with the riches of Delphi (9.404-05), ultimately rejecting the entreaties to return to battle. While Nagy doesn't comment on the scene between Antinous and Odysseus in this context, I would like to look further at potential allusions to Apollo's precinct at Delphi that lurk beneath the surface of Odysseus' return.

²¹⁰ For Odysseus as a model for the suitors, see Levaniouk (2011, 67).

²¹¹ I translate ἀνίην as the accusative of the noun ἀνία in apposition to πῆμα, largely because δαιτὸς is genitive. Most translations seem to take ἀνίην as the infinitive of the verb ἀνιάω.

The festival (δαῖς) to which this suitor refers is presumably the religious festival that looms as the backdrop of the hero's return.²¹² In Book 20, when the suitors are in the act of plotting the murder of Odysseus' son, Telemachus, their attention is diverted to the preparations of an upcoming celebration. Heralds lead forth the holy hecatombs (ιερὴν ἑκατόμβην) of the gods, and they come to a spot sacred to Apollo: τοῖ δ' ἀγέροντο κάρη κομόωντες Ἀχαιοὶ / ἄλσος ὕπο σκιερὸν ἑκατηβόλου Ἀπόλλωνος (the long-haired Achaeans collected beneath a shady grove of Apollo, the archer god, 20.277-78). As Levaniouk notes, this festival has all the earmarks of the apellai, which were ...

assemblies of the Dorians held at seasonally recurring festivals, from which the Doric form of the god's name, Apellon, may derive. Burkert points out that the feast of the apellai at Delphi is the feast of the epheboi, young males who are coming of age. And, of course, Apollo himself is most often depicted as an ephebe, beardless and long-haired. Given Apollo's primary concern with the transition of male youths to full adulthood, it is likely that the festival on Ithaca in the *Odyssey* is an occasion celebrating the maturation of a new generation, similar in this respect to the festival of the apellai in Delphi.

(2011, 66)

If these festivals celebrated ephebic maturation, the purported ritual occasion that coincides with the return of Odysseus also happens to provide an apt circumstance to contrast the two main characters who contested for the epithet of “the best of the Achaeans” over the course of the Homeric Epics, where the successful return of Odysseus, ushered in under the auspices of Apollo, is diametrically opposed to Achilles' destruction by that same god.

That the suitors and their supporters profess to have a special relationship with Apollo is evident from the outset of Odysseus' arrival on Ithaca. Attended by the swineherd Eumaeus and dressed as a beggar, Odysseus first comes upon the goatherd Melanthius, who is bringing his

²¹² In the compressed time-frame of the *Odyssey*'s final books, the exact timing of the festival is difficult to ascertain, but presumably, given the poetically-charged word δαῖς in conjunction with the rapidly approaching festival, the suitor's reference evokes the upcoming celebration of Apollo.

offering to town for the upcoming festival and who physically and verbally abuses the pair.

When he hears Eumaeus pray for some god to guide his master home to visit retribution for this affront, Melanthius replies with following wish, αἶ γὰρ Τηλέμαχον βάλοι ἀργυρότοξος Ἀπόλλων / σήμερον ἐν μεγάροις, ἢ ὑπὸ μνηστῆρσι δαμείη, / ὡς Ὀδυσῆϊ γε τηλοῦ ἀπώλετο νόστιμον ἦμαρ (Would that Apollo the silver bow strike down Telemachus today in the halls, or that he be brought low by the suitors, just as the day of return was lost for Odysseus in far off place, 17,251-53).

The abuse later continues at the hands of the leading suitor, Antinous, who, becoming angry after hearing one of Odysseus' Cretan tales, hurls a footstool at the beggar. After receiving the blow Odysseus stands firm, and all this serves as a backdrop for Penelope's defense of the man standing before her, 'αἶθ' οὕτως αὐτόν σε βάλοι κλυτότοξος Ἀπόλλων (Would that, in such a way, Apollo, famed for the bow, strike you yourself, [Antinous], 17.494). Her entreaty evinces a desire for the assailant to become the victim, and Penelope's prayer is even strengthened and universalized to include the other suitors by her attendant Eurynome, who continues, 'εἰ γὰρ ἐπ' ἀρῆσιν τέλος ἡμετέρησι γένοιτο: / οὐκ ἄν τις τούτων γε εὐθρονον Ἥῳ ἴκοιτο (If only a fulfillment happen for our prayers, none of these men would arrive at well-throned dawn, 17.496-97). Given what will eventually transpire in the bow scene, Penelope's prayer suggests not only that there will be a reversal, where the assailant will become the victim, but also that there will be a type substitution for the avenging god, whose role, I contend, will be enacted by Odysseus.

The scene of the hurled footstool presages one that, while containing the similar motif of an interrupted banquet, explicitly depicts an act of sacrilege involving Apollo. Shortly after we are told that hecatombs are being led out for a gathering of long-haired Achaeans in Apollo's

shady grove (20.277-78), Telemachus makes efforts to ensure that his father, still disguised as a beggar, will receive an honorary share of the feast, which is being divided out in portions (μοίρας δασσάμενοι δαίνυντ' ἐρικυδέα δαῖτα, 20.280), but Athena does not allow the suitors to refrain from insult so that more pain may set upon the hero's heart (ὄφρ' ἔτι μᾶλλον / δύη ἄχος κραδίην Λαερτιάδην Ὀδυσῆα, 22.285-86). Specifically, Odysseus must withstand the indignity of being the target of a missile hurled by one of suitors. This projectile is nothing less than an ox-hoof carved from the very sacrificial offering to be dedicated to Apollo (20.284-319).

This scene not only demonstrates that the suitors have little regard for the rituals associated with this god but also brings the interlopers' sacrilege in line with the continual depletion of the hero's estate, since the sacrifice was most likely drawn from Odysseus' herds.²¹³ As Nagler observes, the suitors sacrilegious actions and eventual destruction give them an uncanny resemblance to the faction of Odysseus' crew that conducted its own imperfect or perverted sacrifice on Thrinacia, the island of Helios, and it is this connection that may underlie the poetic privileging of the crew's crime in the proem.²¹⁴ He reaches this conclusion partly through an analysis of words in the proem that have some connection to contests in general, where contestants must exert themselves and strive in a win/lose situation, possibly undergoing suffering and pain. Some of the words and phrases from the proem that fit into such a competitive arena are: πάθεν ἄλγεα (he suffered pains, 1.4); ἀρνύμενος (striving to win, 1.5); and

²¹³ To that end, it is of interest that, when Penelope eventually narrates the suitors' violations that she had to endure to Odysseus, she describes the depletion of their estate's herds with the phrase βόας καὶ ἴφια μῆλα (23.304), a phrase that Achilles uses, in the same breath that mentions Delphi, to describe herds that are capable of being rustled (ληϊστοὶ μὲν γὰρ τε βόες καὶ ἴφια μῆλα 9.406), and a collocation that is also associated with cattle of the sun on the island Thrinacia that are destroyed by Odysseus' crew (cf. *Od.* 12.127-128).

²¹⁴ For more on the term "perverted sacrifice" in epic and tragedy, see Seaford, who examines incidents where the subversion of rituals gives them a perverted or anti-sacrificial quality. This can extend to acts of uncontrolled violence that are expressed in terms that evoke, but depart from, the controlled rites of ritual (1989, 90-94).

ἀτασθαλίησιν ([they were destroyed] by their folly, 1.7), the last of which he describes as a sound-alike word for ἄεθλοι (contest). Perhaps even more persuasive is his argument that "'effort' and 'loss by death' are closely connected on an implicit level by an overriding idea of sacrifice," and that both the Thrinacia episode and the suitor scene revolve specifically around instances of perverted sacrifice,²¹⁵ wherein the suitors, like Odysseus' crew, feast on "socially-forbidden cattle" (Nagler, M. 1990, 339–40).

He additionally argues that the suitors, as illegitimate cattle slayers, are symbolically identified with the cattle they consume, and, through an act of inversion, “are soon to be like (cattle) victims,” where Odysseus will later spill their blood in a “surgical strike” (1990, 340). We may also note that, in terms of religious observance, both the crew and the suitors call for a deferral of the action. One of the crew members, for example, attempts to persuade the others to join in the scheme by telling them that they will later appease Helios by establishing a temple in his honor once they return Ithaca. Their violation of the cattle, of course, outweighs their vow to build temples, and they die because of their sinful actions, highlighted both by the temporal deferral of acts of piety to later time and by a botched sacrifice.

Similarly, the suitors not only despoil a sacrifice, they also take actions that are seemingly calculated to appease a god prospectively. When, for example, Antinous sees one after another failing to string Odysseus' bow, he calls for a deferral of the contest:

νῦν μὲν γὰρ κατὰ δῆμον ἑορτὴ τοῖο θεοῖο
 ἀγνή: τίς δέ κε τόξα τιταίνοιτ'; ...
 ἠῶθεν δὲ κέλεσθε Μελάνθιον, αἰπόλον αἰγῶν,
 αἴγας ἄγειν, αἱ πᾶσι μέγ' ἔξοχοι αἰπολίοισιν,
 ὄφρ' ἐπὶ μηρία θέντες Ἀπόλλωνι κλυτοτόξῳ
 τόξου πειρώμεσθα καὶ ἐκτελέωμεν ἄεθλον.

Now throughout the district is the holy festival of the god.

²¹⁵ For a detailed account of this term, see Henrichs (2000).

Who would bend the bow? ...
 In the morning bid Melanthios, the goatherd,
 to bring the goats, those that are most excellent in all the herds,
 so that, dedicating thigh pieces to Apollo, the illustrious archer,
 we may try the bow and complete the contest.

(21.258-59 & 265-68)

This happens to be the same Melanthios who prayed for Apollo to strike down Odysseus' son, Telemachus (17.247-53), and as we can see the offering falls well short of a full hecatomb.

Antinous, moreover, would like to have the contest concluded (ἐκτελέωμεν ἄεθλον) on the following day, the day after Apollo's festival, when he would offer token sacrifice to the god.²¹⁶ The contest is destined to occur on this very day, however, and Telemachus is the first to try his hand at the bow.

Thus far we have seen that the festival of Apollo on Ithaca has elements that connect it with a similar Delphic backdrop in which Odysseus and Achilles are compared within the “best of Achaeans” theme, and furthermore that the occasion sets the stage for a potential coming-of-age story. The one character in the *Odyssey* that would seemingly be a candidate for such initiatory proceeding, however, would be the young man on the brink of maturity, Telemachus, the son of Odysseus. And, in fact, the bow scene does establish the circumstances under which this young man can prove his worth. Although Telemachus was easily rebuffed by the suitors and prays to Athena for guidance at the beginning of the *Odyssey* (2.262-266), we find a changed character as the poem marches toward its conclusion, where the young man threatens to kill one of the insolent challengers to his father's estate. Indeed, as the bow contest begins to develop, Telemachus even goes on to chastise Penelope, claiming the authority of the bow, telling her that "the bow is a matter of concern for all men, but chiefly for me, for mine is the power in the

²¹⁶ Benardete, who offers up a Platonic reading of the *Odyssey*, observes that, “for all we know Antinous might have succeeded, with Apollo's help” (2008, 143), but this ignores the various violations against the god already committed by the suitors.

house" (τόξον δ' ἄνδρεςσι μελήσει / πᾶσι, μάλιστα δ' ἑμοί: τοῦ γὰρ κράτος ἔστ' ἐνὶ οἴκῳ.

21.353). In wonder Penelope retreats to her chamber, because the proclamation (μῦθον, 21.355) of her son affects her greatly.

But the young man is not quite ready to take center stage, for this honor is reserved for Odysseus.²¹⁷ We find that this is the case during the preliminary efforts by the attendees of Apollo's festival to string Odysseus' bow. Telemachus is among the first to attempt to accomplish this feat:

στῆ δ' ἄρ' ἐπ' οὐδὸν ἰὼν καὶ τόξου πειρήτιζε.
 τρίς μὲν μιν πελέμιξεν ἐρύσσεσθαι μενεαίνων,
 τρίς δὲ μεθῆκε βίης, ...
 καὶ νῦ κε δὴ ῥ' ἐτάνυσσε βίη τὸ τέταρτον ἀνέλκων,
 ἀλλ' Ὀδυσσεὺς ἀνένευε καὶ ἔσχεθεν ἰέμενόν περ.

Then he went and stood at the threshold and tried the bow.
 Three times he caused it to quiver in his desire to draw it,
 but three times he released his strength, ...
 And now he would have strung it with his strength, drawing it back on the fourth,
 but Odysseus bent his head in dissent and checked him, though he was eager.

(21.124-26; 128-29)

It is clear that if Odysseus had not checked his son, forcing him to relax his strength, the young man would have been successful in the contest, but it is not quite his time to take control of the proceedings and he must relent.²¹⁸

The number of times that Telemachus draws back the bow is noteworthy, since, in the *Iliad*, the rejection of an effort on the fourth attempt is a repeating theme and the denying deity is Apollo. In an earlier chapter, I analyzed the attempts of warriors to exceed their station and

²¹⁷ Roisman notes that the *Odyssey* employs a number of different strategies to create a mirroring of father and son in order to elucidate differences based on their level of maturity (1994, 2–3).

²¹⁸ According to Segal, the bow itself “foreshadows the due succession of Telemachus” and “his actions are soon to belie this alleged helplessness.” He also observes, however, that Telemachus attempts to string the bow while at the threshold of the court, whereas Odysseus will fire the weapon while seated from inside the palace. The threshold therefore signifies a difference in the development of maturity between father and son (1994, 56 & 80).

topple Troy before its appointed time as a function of the poem's metapoetics, in which the god Apollo operated as a force that propelled the poem toward its proper teleology.²¹⁹ Just as the *Iliad* uses a series of past contrary-to-fact conditions to describe what would have happened without Apollo's intervention, the *Odyssey* does the same for Odysseus' refusal of his son's wishes (21.128-29). Though, in the *Iliad*, warriors such as Diomedes and Patroclus attempt to press their advantage within the context of the "best of Achaeans" theme, the counting motif reaches its climax in the person of Achilles, who circles the pyre of Patroclus three-times with the body of Hector, attempting to desecrate it, but his efforts are repeatedly rebuffed by Apollo. If we map Achilles' direct confrontation with Apollo onto the scene of Telemachus' attempts to string the bow, we will also find a theme of strength is prevalent in both. In the *Iliad*, this theme lingers until the very end and is never fully resolved, even serving as a point of recrimination that the god lodges against Achilles during a final council of the gods, where Apollo compares the hero to a lion who yields to his extreme strength (μεγάλη ... βίη, 24.40) and goes against the flocks of men in order to seize a feast. While it is clear that the relationship between Achilles and Apollo differs dramatically from that of Telemachus and Odysseus, the former in each pairing is attempting to surpass an individual that is a type of model, creating a type of competition. Like Achilles, Telemachus must relent on his fourth attempt and accept that, despite his own formidable and growing strength, he is in the presence of someone stronger still.

In denying Telemachus' efforts to string the bow, Odysseus tells us that the story still belongs to him, and, strange as it may seem, he is the only one who will, as Levaniouk states, "accomplish fully that transition which the festival of Apollo celebrates" (2011, 67). He does so by occupying, at various points in the narrative, both phases of a successful maturation process,

²¹⁹ See my earlier section "Apollo and the Metapoetics of Prophecy."

its challenging early stage and its fruitful conclusion, culminating with his (re)marriage to Penelope. Despite his relatively advanced age, Odysseus is depicted at times as young man who must, in effect, rewoo his wife, during the course of his homecoming. Penelope, of course, is not just a conquest to be won, but a force in her own right, who will be a necessary ally in Odysseus' successful return and victory over the suitors. In this light, we may view Telemachus' dismissive attitude toward his mother, when he dispatches her to her room during the preliminaries of the bow scene, as further evidence that the young man is not quite ready for prime time, for it was Penelope who literally held the key to the bow, an ivory-handled key that she uses to free the weapon from its place of hiding (21.1-5).

In Odysseus' absence, it is Penelope who creates the necessary acts of deferral to bring the action to its proper fulfillment. In order to keep the suitors perpetually at bay, the wily Penelope devises a stratagem in which she will agree to marry after the completion a death shroud that she is weaving for Laertes. She weaves by day and unravels her work each night until she is discovered. Antinous, one of the suitors, tells of the discovery of her deception and its timing,²²⁰

ἤδη γὰρ τρίτον ἐστὶν ἔτος, τάχα δ' εἴσι τέταρτον,
 ἐξ οὗ ἀτέμβει θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν Ἀχαιῶν ...
 ἢ δὲ δόλον τόνδ' ἄλλον ἐνὶ φρεσὶ μερμήριξε:
 στησαμένη μέγαν ἴστον ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ὕφαινε ...

For now it is the third year, and quickly will be the fourth, since she has been maltreating the desire in the breasts of the Achaeans ...

She devised this other trick in her head:

setting up a great loom in her chambers, she began to weave ...

(2.89-90 & 93-94)

²²⁰ This is the first of three different narrations of the shroud, which all vary depending on the perspective of the narrator. For a close analysis of these versions, see Lowenstam (2000, 333 ff.).

Others have noted the connection between weaving and Homeric poetics.²²¹ Nagy, for example, equates the variegated layering of weaving to the intricate levels of meaning that result from the pattern of retelling stories through the oral tradition, and he focuses specifically on the Greek word used for self-referential allusion to such crafty designs, *poikilos*.²²² Levaniouk perceptively observes that the *Odyssey* employs a word that places emphasis on the shroud's completion, *τολυπεύω*, in several places, where one might expect to find the unmarked word for the verbal action of weaving, *ὑφαίνω*, and this unusual choice of diction serves to highlight the mutually dependent fame (*kleos*) of husband and wife, since the verb *τολυπεύω* is also used to describe Odysseus' accomplishment of war (2011, 267).²²³

The completion of Penelope's shroud is multivalent, since, though the suitors assume this will represent the winning of the queen's hand by one of their number, its actual completion in the fourth year will usher in their demise and the successful reunion, a type of remarriage, with her husband.²²⁴ In the latter sense, the creation can also be considered a type of wedding garment, not just a death shroud.²²⁵ This is particularly evident in a later description of the

²²¹ For a concise review of connection between weaving and song in Homer and the lyric poets, see Snyder, who also observes that the loom shares certain attributes with the lyre, where the striking of the "strings" with the shuttle is similar to the plucking of the lyre's strings with the plectrum (1981, 193).

²²² Penelope's shroud is not an extensive topic in his study, but Nagy does note that the heroine's work is analogous to the patterns of found on the dresses of female chorus members in Geometric vase paintings (2010a, II§449).

²²³ As Lowenstam observes, the topic of *kleos* occurs in close proximity to the theme of the shroud, particular in the tale's second telling, as narrated by Penelope, who claims that her fame would be greater if her husband were to return (19.128). For Lowenstam, Penelope's weaving represents an effective act of burying her husband and conversely the unraveling revives him and also extends the life of the suitors (2000, 336–37).

²²⁴ It is noteworthy that Odysseus has been absent for more than four years and that, though expressed in years, one might say that the counting motif that is associated with Apollo in the *Iliad* is present here, too, where the shroud is scheduled to be completed soon, at the beginning of the fourth year, which roughly coincides with the celebration of Apollo's festival.

²²⁵ The multivalent nature of Penelope's creation has been noted by others. Levaniouk, for example, observes that, while the garment may ostensibly represent a death shroud for Laertes, it also, from the

shroud that is offered up by one of the suitors in the underworld, in which it is claimed that Penelope washed the garment²²⁶ and it simultaneously shone like the sun and the moon (24.146-147). It has been remarked that this celestial phenomenon is a particularly propitious time for marriage, as it marks the transition from one month to the next, coinciding with the timing of the festival of Apollo, which is in the act of being celebrated at the very moment of Odysseus' return.²²⁷ The completion of the shroud, therefore, entails a binary effect, both of death (for the suitors) and survival (for Odysseus, Penelope, and their extended household), an effect that connects well with the solar theme that is so evident throughout the poem.²²⁸

Shortly after Antinous' request to defer the contest, Odysseus, about to reveal his identity, takes up the bow, making it clear that he will brook no further delay and intends for the completion of the contest to occur on this very day, during the festival of Apollo. Before he does so, he utters a curious remark and his own prayer to Apollo:

οὔτος μὲν δὴ ἄεθλος ἀάατος ἐκτετέλεσται:
 νῦν αὖτε σκοπὸν ἄλλον, ὃν οὐ πῶ τις βάλεν ἀνὴρ,
 εἴσομαι, αἶ κε τύχωμι, πόρῃ δέ μοι εὖχος Ἀπόλλων.

This decisive contest is indeed in the act of completion.
 Now another mark, which no man has ever stuck,
 I will know, if I should be successful, and should Apollo grant me this prayer.

(22.5-8)

retrospective vantage point of the poem's conclusion, displays the reestablishment of his family line as well as the (re)marriage of Odysseus and Penelope (2011, 264 & 272).

²²⁶ For washing garments and the connection to marriage, see Clayton (2003, 47).

²²⁷ See Levaniouk (2011, 271), who cites Austin and others. Alexiou observes that there are sustained parallels between the rituals associated with lament for the dead and traditional songs that are sung when a bride leaves her father's house (Alexiou 1974, 120).

²²⁸ Though there is no scholarly agreement on the exact timing of Apollo's affiliation with the sun and Artemis' with the moon, associations that become somewhat more evident in later antiquity, these gods, as we noted elsewhere, do loom large over Odysseus' return, just as they make an appearance at the end of the *Iliad* via Achilles' evocation of the Niobe myth, where the god and goddess operate primarily in their destructive capacity.

While Odysseus here seems to be offering a rejoinder to Alcinous' remark about the fulfillment of the contest, closely echoing his rival's language, his additional statement that he is about to hit a target no one ever has struck, raises the possibility that the hero's conception of the teleology of the contest is radically different than that of the suitors.²²⁹

Odysseus' insistence for the contest to be concluded on that very day, during the festival of Apollo is not insignificant, since it brings to fulfillment the speech act of his prayer to Apollo during the course of a ritual. Additionally, as Levaniouk observes, this festival day will ultimately conclude with Odysseus and Penelope entertaining each other with their own personal stories, where their individual tales intersect to become special speech acts, and thus "Odysseus' return is both a personal story and a central, reality-defining myth, and its performance a ritual act" (2011, 13). The ability of the couple to share in this moment is predicated on the success of Odysseus' prayer to Apollo. That Odysseus' achievement is founded upon the good graces of Apollo is reflected in the conditional mood of his prayer, *πόρῃ δέ μοι εὖχος Ἀπόλλων* (should Apollo grant my prayer), a formula that is matched by Penelope's own promise of fulfillment, where she proclaims that she will clothe the beggar standing before her, Odysseus in disguise, in lovely raiment and send him wherever his heart bid, should Apollo grant the prayer, *δῶν δέ οἱ εὖχος Ἀπόλλων*, (21.310).²³⁰

²²⁹ Nagler is one of the few that gives these lines intense scrutiny, and argues for a connection between the words *ἄεθλος* and *ἀτασθαλία* (see my earlier analysis of the latter word), thus giving the "contest" an element of ritualized violence in which the hero partakes. The hero furthermore crosses a threshold or boundary to bring Iliadic combat into his household, where "Odysseus's bow, which does not shoot outside, in wars, is both symbol and instrument of the hero's sanction to kill when necessary within his social group." He also notes that Apollo is "in this context a dark god of unregulated combat—precisely the deity to whom Odysseus prays as he crosses the boundary between ritual contest and ritualized murder" (1990, 351–54), though the god is not a main focus of his analysis.

²³⁰ That Apollo is the force who controls the way Odysseus' reunion is to be achieved is noted by Levaniouk, who sees some parallels to the myth of Idas and Marpessa, where there was a threat to their marriage by the bow of Apollo but where Idas withstands that challenge, as well as to the myth of Eos and Orion, where the threat comes from Artemis (2011).

As Nagy points out, when a god heeds a prayer, this represents a successful speech act on the part of the petitioner, a marked utterance where word and action, myth and ritual, coalesce in fulfillment,²³¹ but there seems to be an idiosyncratic element to Odysseus' prayer, since the hero proclaims that he is about achieve, or hit a mark, that no man has accomplished.²³² By hitting a mark no man has ever struck, Odysseus will achieve something no hero who preceded him was able to complete, placing a special designation on his achievement, and giving it an added element that was lacking in other prayerful speech act within the Homeric Epics, and it will be necessary to compare this successful speech act with others of a similar ilk from these poems.

Earlier, I noted that, in the *Iliad*, the priest of Apollo, Chryses, had the power to summon Apollo's wrath because he actually had constructed temples and sacrificed hecatombs in the god's honor throughout the Troad, and he very clearly displays the symbols of his Apolline associations such as his ribbons and scepter. In effect, the priest, as the earthly representative for a god, can take on defining characteristics of his patron god, as can be seen when, by substitution, the tears of Chryses become the arrows of Apollo (τίσειαν Δαναοὶ ἐμὰ δάκρυα σοῖσι βέλεσσιν—May the Danaans pay for my tears with your missiles, 1.42). The conclusion of the *Odyssey*, however, suggests that Odysseus even achieves something of a higher order than a priest such as Chryses. When Chryses prays to Apollo and asks for vengeance, the success of his

²³¹ This is highlighted within the context of the word the word *apeilēō*, which "designates the actual performance of a speech-act, a *mūthos*, while the word *telēō*, derivative of *télos* 'fulfillment' guarantees that the speech-act is really a speech-act, in that the course of events, which amounts to actions emanating from the speech-act, bears out the speech-act. We may compare the Homeric instances where *apeilēō* can be translated as 'vow' in the context of prayers addressed to gods (*Iliad* XXIII 863, 892). In such cases the course of events in the future is predicated on the value of the words spoken as a speech-act: if a god hears a prayer, then the words spoken as prayer are a speech-act, and then the actions promised by the one who prays can bear out the speech-act" (Nagy, G. 2004, 141).

²³² See Crissy for a contrasting viewpoint on this scene. She interprets Odysseus' proclamation as a hubristic mannerism that puts him in league with earlier heroes, especially the bowman Heracles, who challenged the gods (1997, 50–51). In terms of comparison between Odysseus and Heracles in conjunction their use of their bows, which have individual genealogies, Clay, however, sees the former hero as humane and the latter as brutal (1983, 91–97).

speech act brings out the deadly archer, who visits retribution against the Achaeans for the implicit slight against his own godhead.

Though Apollo's honor may have been indirectly insulted, he essentially acts on the priest's behalf, and, through this arrangement, it is clear that the priest is subordinate in this hierarchal order. Similarly, if we take this parallel into the divine sphere, Helios in the *Odyssey*, although he is a god, must petition Zeus and the established Olympians to intercede in a targeted action against the malefactors who consumed his herd, and his plea for vengeance and the prayers of Apollo's priest and the sun god from the *Odyssey* share the same tone of the need for requital (τίσαι δὴ ἐτάρους Λαερτιάδεω Ὀδυσῆος — Provide vengeance against the comrades of Odysseus, the son of Laertes, 12.383). In both acts of retribution there is a degree of separation between the petitioner (Chryses or Helios) and the executioner (Apollo or Zeus). Odysseus' vengeance against the suitors, however, will be enacted through his own person, setting his act apart from the above cited instances of divine intercession.

In an earlier chapter on the *Iliad*, I analyzed the seemingly opposing aspects of Apollo that are on full display as early as the first book of that poem, comparing the destroying archer-god who shoots from afar and who arrives like the night for the Achaeans at the poem's opening with the god who acts as chorus leader of the Muses and who brings delight with his lyre to the collected participants of a banquet on Mt. Olympus at the conclusion of the same book. While these attributes may seem to be oppositions, they can also be viewed as the thematic end points of the generic continuum of poetry itself. As we have seen, while the Homeric Epics display the ability to encompass all the sub-genres within this broad range, certain characters possess attributes that place them comfortably in one camp over the other. The character Achilles, though he may be more nuanced than he seems, is of course well suited for the marshal themes of an

epic poem, whereas the lover Paris seems to be out of place among the welter of the warriors and is a creature designed for the themes of lyric poetry. Nevertheless, both of these characters are lyre players (3.54), two of the only mortals described as such in the *Iliad*.

In the *Odyssey*, it turns out that Odysseus, like Apollo or the two heroes who will meet at the death of Achilles, is a type of lyre player, too, a skill that is highlighted metaphorically at the climax of the bow scene. Before uttering his prayer to Apollo, Odysseus makes his attempt to string his bow, an action which the poem describes thus:

ὥς ἄρ' ἔφαν μνηστῆρες: ἀτὰρ πολύμητις Ὀδυσσεύς,
 αὐτίκ' ἐπεὶ μέγα τόξον ἐβάστασε καὶ ἶδε πάντη,
 ὡς ὄτ' ἀνὴρ φόρμιγγος ἐπιστάμενος καὶ αἰοιδῆς
 ῥηϊδίως ἐτάνυσσε νέφ' περὶ κόλλοπι χορδῆν,
 ἄψαξ ἀμφοτέρωθεν εὐστρεφὲς ἔντερον οἴος,
 ὡς ἄρ' ἄτερ σπουδῆς τάνυσεν μέγα τόξον Ὀδυσσεύς.
 δεξιτερῇ ἄρα χειρὶ λαβὼν πειρήσατο νευρῆς:
 ἢ δ' ὑπὸ καλὸν ἄεισε, χελιδόνι εἰκέλη αὐδήν

So the suitors spoke, but as soon as wily Odysseus
 took up his great bow and viewed it from all sides,
 as when a man well-acquainted with the lyre and song
 easily stretches a cord around a new peg,
 fastening the well-turned sheep gut on both ends,
 just so Odysseus without effort strung his great bow.
 Taking it up with his right hand, he tested the string,
 which resounded beautifully, similar in tone to the swallow.

(21.404-11)

Like a poet such as Demodocus, Odysseus, must now command a full-range of song, first of epic and then of lyric themes, but he must also act out these themes to their fulfillment. In a sense, the hero must first enact the part of Apollo at the beginning of the *Iliad*, using his bow to bring low the Achaeans who have slighted his honor and that of his representatives, before he can then achieve a unity in his household and a telos of harmony and order from strife, the part Apollo plays among the gods in Olympus at the end of the first book of the *Iliad*.

Odysseus therefore achieves success not only by being the consummate bowman during Apollo's festival but also by displaying two skills in which the god excelled in the *Iliad's* first book, namely that of the archer and of a bard, and thus the hero fuses elements in his own person that were treated as distinct in the Iliadic Apollo. In so doing, Odysseus, I contend, becomes the mortal avatar of Apollo and acquires in his own person the full spectrum of the god's powers. Odysseus bardic nature has been well noted as has the connection of the bow and the lyre, but, given that Apollo does not appear directly as a character in the poem, these analyses are typically assessed without reference to this god. Segal, for example, argues that the lyre has a way of bringing together past and present for the hero. Whereas with the bow as a deadly weapon of war Odysseus reactivates his past, “the lyre simile of Book 21 fuses the contradictions of peace and violence in Ithaca, of apparent helplessness (both the bards Phemius and Demodocus are physically ineffective) and actual strength of Odysseus ... In disguise he takes up the bow as a weapon of destruction, but he will use it as a bard uses a lyre, to create ‘harmony’ of order on Ithaca and to reveal and assert the truth and vitality of the past” (1994, 55).²³³

I have already documented some of the themes of inversion that are present in the buildup to the feast of Apollo that serves as the backdrop of Odysseus' homecoming, including when one of the suitors' hurls an ox hoof from a dedicated sacrifice to Apollo at a disguised Odysseus, but it will be up to Odysseus' bow to bring about order from the chaos of this inversion, and to (re)establish a proper hierarchy, where he assumes the position of the rightful king. In keeping with the themes of inversion, when a disguised Odysseus asks for an opportunity to the bend the bow, Antinous accuses the hero of being inebriated and of interrupting the feast, likening him to the drunken Centaurs who, in their fight with the Lapiths

²³³ Benardete notes that, “Homer let Odysseus take over his own story for four books ... Odysseus impersonates other men and tells lies like truth (19.203). This is a privilege Homer accords to no other human being” (2008, 107).

during the wedding of Peirithous, created a divide between gods and men (21.288-310). Similarly, we may recall that one of the concluding images of the *Iliad* was an accusation leveled at Apollo by Hera, who accuses the young god of having a lyre that is always untrustworthy, evidently because he sang a song or made a prophecy during the marriage of Peleus and Thetis, which all the gods had come to celebrate, and its interpretation had not come to pass by the conclusion of the *Iliad* (24.63).²³⁴ Thus, Apollo, too, stands charged with the crime of interrupting a wedding feast, one that is almost prelapsarian, the last moment when the gods and mankind had shared such a close celebratory moment.

When Odysseus, about to reveal his identity, pours the arrows before his feet, utters his curious remark about hitting another mark no man has ever struck if Apollo should grant his prayer, and takes aim at his first human target, the suitors, who have been held at bay by Penelope's weaving stratagem, only have pleasant thoughts of the feast and a potential marriage in mind:

ἦ καὶ ἐπ' Ἀντινόῳ ἰθύνετο πικρὸν οἶστόν.
 ἦ τοι ὁ καλὸν ἄλειςον ἀναιρήσεσθαι ἔμελλε,
 χρύσειον ἄμφωτον, καὶ δὴ μετὰ χερσὶν ἐνώμα,
 ὄφρα πίῳ οἴνοιο: φόνος δέ οἱ οὐκ ἐνὶ θυμῷ
 μέμβλετο: τίς κ' οἴοιτο μετ' ἀνδράσι δαιτυμόνεσσι
 μοῦνον ἐνὶ πλεόνεσσι, καὶ εἰ μάλα καρτερὸς εἶη,
 οἷ τεύξειν θάνατόν τε κακὸν καὶ κῆρα μέλαιναν;
 τὸν δ' Ὀδυσσεὺς κατὰ λαιμὸν ἐπισχόμενος βάλεν ἰῶ,
 ἀντικρὺ δ' ἀπαλοῖο δι' ἀγένοσ ἦλυθ' ἀκωκῆ.
 ἐκλίθη δ' ἐτέρωσε, δέπας δέ οἱ ἔκπεσε χειρὸς

²³⁴ Scodel interprets this reference as "an allusion to a myth which, though not directly preserved in surviving epic, provides a motive for Hera's insulting tone" (1977, 55). According to this theory, Apollo is untrustworthy by Hera's logic because he once sang a prophecy in honor of Achilles at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis that predicted a long and happy life for the hero. As primary evidence for this interpretation, Scodel cites a fragment of Aeschylus (350 Radt; Plato *Republic* 383a-b), and suggests that the story was part of an earlier tradition, with the likeliest source being the lament of Thetis in the *Aithiopsis* (1977, 55–56). This is refuted on various grounds by Burgess, who explains Hera's words, particularly ἄπιστε, as a reference to a general quality she sees in Apollo. He also claims that Thetis' being misled by a prophecy would be inconsistent with the tradition of her foreknowledge of her son's death (2004, 23–30)

And Odysseus was aiming a bitter arrow at Antinous.
 That man, mark you, was about to lift up a lovely goblet,
 golden and two-handled, and he guided it between his hands
 so that he may partake of the wine. But in his mind murder wasn't
 a thought. Who among banqueting men would think
 that a single man among many, even if he were rather strong,
 would bring about death for him and an evil and dark fate?
 But Odysseus, taking aim, struck him with an arrow through his throat,
 and the point went straight through his tender neck.
 He tipped to one side, and the cup fell from his hand.

(22.8-17)

The suitors had earlier denied Odysseus an equitable share of the sacrificial feast on Apollo's festival day, and when Antinous' cup falls to the ground, this moment can even represent the beginning of a correction to a situation that can be traced back to the *Iliad*. We may recall that when a contingent of Achaeans sing a paean to Apollo, they equitably distribute wine to drinking cups and the god takes delight in hearing their song (τέρπετ' ἀκούων, 1.472) even momentarily sending a propitious wind to aid their venture. But Achilles does not attend this ritual, dooming its long-term success, and the hero eventually reveals that he has his own drinking cup, a gift from his mother that is dedicated to pouring libations to Zeus exclusively (16.227).²³⁵ Thus, the equitable distribution of drink during rituals is an important theme in the *Iliad*, too, but in that poem an emphasis falls on a lack of fulfillment of that ritual.

When Antinous' drinking cup spills upon the ground, this moment, I contend, marks the beginning of an Apolline correction to the upset hierarchy not only of Odysseus' estate but also of the Achaean Trojan ventures. This is the moment when the bow, the Iliadic death-dealing instrument of plague when in the hands of Apollo and the treacherous breaker of truces when

²³⁵ I will take up critical theories on the genre of the paean in the next section. For the moment, suffice it to say that one its functions is to present the successful maturation of the best of the polis (Rutherford 2001, 9–10). A literary representation of such a celebration in which the “best of Achaeans” is absent may rightly be questioned.

wielded by the Lycian Pandaros, reaches the peak of its effectiveness through the agency of Odysseus, who handles it like a master of the lyre. Unlike the Iliadic Apollo, who wields each instrument independently, the hero of the *Odyssey* will achieve a harmonious and simultaneous union between the two. In a sense, the bifurcated separation of the Apolline bow and the lyre in the *Iliad* can be thought of as an incomplete stage of the god's development, only to be fulfilled by the harmonious and eventually hierarchal accord effected by Odysseus' triumph that concludes the Homeric Epics, a progression that would dovetail with a coming-of-age story for this divinity.

This is also the moment that Odysseus reveals himself, throwing aside his Cretan persona, and it is noteworthy that the hero's success bears a curious resemblance to the victory of another archer who had predicated his success on the good graces of the archer-god, and that is the Cretan Meriones in the *Iliad*. In an earlier section on the Iliadic bow, I mentioned that the Cretan archer Meriones shares certain qualities with Odysseus, including a Cretan connection, but the most obvious similarity between the Iliadic contest and the one found in the *Odyssey*, however, is that the first-place contestant's prayer is vouchsafed by Apollo, the archer god. The scene of Meriones triumph is described thus:

... ἀτὰρ δὴ οἷστὸν ἔχεν πάλαι, ὡς ἴθυνεν.
 αὐτίκα δ' ἠπειλήσεν ἐκηβόλῳ Ἀπόλλωνι
 ἀρνῶν πρωτογόνων ῥέξειν κλειτὴν ἑκατόμβην ...
 ἀντικρὺ δὲ διήλθε βέλος: τὸ μὲν ἄψ ἐπὶ γαίῃ
 πρόσθεν Μηριόναο πάγη ποδός. αὐτὰρ ἦ ὄρνις
 ἰστῶ ἔφεζομένη νηὸς κυανοπρόροιο
 αὐχέν' ἀπεκρέμασεν, σὺν δὲ πτερὰ πυκνὰ λίασθεν

... But Meriones was long holding an arrow when he was aiming.
 And immediately he promised to the far-shooter Apollo
 to an illustrious hecatomb of first-born lambs ...
 And the arrow passed straight through [the dove], and immediately
 fastened upon the ground in front of the foot of Meriones. But the bird,
 perching on the mast of the dark-prowed ship,

hung down its neck, and its thick feathers collapsed.

(23.871-73 & 876-79)

The scenes of Meriones' and Odysseus' successful bow contests, and the respective deaths of the dove and Antinous, share some dictional elements (e.g., aiming, ἰθύνετο; passing through, ἀντικρὺ; and a focus on the neck, ἀνχένος), and it has also noted that the dove can have nuptial associations.²³⁶

When the dove, a potential symbol of marriage, is struck by Meriones' arrow, it hangs its head and its plumage deflates (λίασθεν, 23.879), and the scene unfolds in the presence of Achilles, who is directing the funeral games. The Cretan's victory is occasioned by the dove's death, and there is also a connection, via the common use of the verb λιάζομαι, to a scene that highlights Achilles' growing weariness as the end of the poem approaches:

ἦμος δ' ἑσπέρουρος εἴσι φάος ἑρέων ἐπὶ γαῖαν,
ὄν τε μέτα κροκόπεπλος ὑπεῖρ ἄλλα κίδναται ἠώς,
τῆμος πυρκαϊῆ ἔμαραίνετο, παύσατο δὲ φλόξ ...
Πηλεΐδης δ' ἀπὸ πυρκαϊῆς ἐτέρωσε λιασθεῖς
κλίνθη κεκμηώς, ἐπὶ δὲ γλυκὺς ὕπνος ὄρουσεν

It was the time when the morning star was proclaiming light upon the earth,
after which yellow-veiled dawn spreads over the sea,
thereupon the funeral pyre was wasting away, and the flame stopped,
and the son of Peleus, having shrunk aside from the pyre,
lay down exhausted, and sweet sleep rushed over him.

(23.226-28 & 30-31)

²³⁶ Athanassakis cites evidence in oral wedding songs in Modern Greek where a harmonious union is signaled by a relationship between an eagle, symbolizing the bridegroom, and a dove, representing the bride, that is not hostile. In the *Odyssey*, an omen appears of an eagle clutching a trembling dove (ἔχε δὲ τρήρωνα πέλειαν, 20.241). The suitors interpret the omen as meaning that their plot to kill Telemachus will not come to fruition, and one of them exhorts the cohort to turn their attention to the upcoming banquet. According to Athanassakis, the omen here would therefore represent a failure for the suitors, and can be contrasted with the success of Odysseus as an eagle in the dream of Penelope (1994, 124). See also Levaniouk (2011, 234).

In the above passage, the participial form of verb λιάζομαι abuts in the following line the roughly synonymous verb κλίνω, meaning to incline or fall and is often associated with the death or decay of vegetation (cf., Od.11.194). When Achilles turns away from the pyre he momentarily succumbs to exhaustion, which may foreshadow the hero's later meeting with Priam and the eventual release of Hector's body, during which he partakes in the normal human requirements of eating, drinking, and sleeping. In the earlier scene, the hero's mortality is further suggested by the presence of the participle that modifies κλίνθη, κεκμηώς, from κάμνω, meaning exhausted here, but it also applies elsewhere to those who are exhausted with life (i.e., the dead). Achilles is no normal mortal, however, and upon being roused from his slumber, still intent on avenging the death of Patroclus, he immediately yokes Hector's body to his chariot and drags it three times around the extinguished pyre, attempting to eradicate the physical presence of the hero, an action I have depicted as the height of his Apolline antagonism.

In the funeral games of Patroclus, Achilles exhibits the qualities of an ideal king, equitably distributing prizes and displaying a potential capacity that will not be fully realized. In the lyric genre, such as the poetry of Sappho (f 105b), Achilles could also be imagined as the ideal bridegroom. And when such a warrior is cut down in the prime of his youth, his death in myth eternally suspends that idealized image while simultaneously deferring his transition from bridegroom to husband in perpetuity.²³⁷ Nagy examines the link between the doomed warrior and a married couple in a connection he sees between the Iliadic Achilles and Hector and Andromache in the wedding song of Sappho 44, where the epithet *kleos apthiton* is found in both cases and which leads him to conclude that the idea of “unwithering fame” can be conveyed though the media of both epic and lyric poetry. He further notes that mediating figure that has

²³⁷ The *Odyssey* may play with this notion within the characterization of the brother of Alcinous, Rhexenor, who dies by the arrows of Apollo as a bridegroom and whose name, in adjectival form, is shared by the Iliadic Achilles. I examine this in further detail in an earlier section on the Phaeacians.

jurisdictions over these genres, and even the ability to transcend them, is Apollo, who is evoked under his epithet Paon²³⁸ in the wedding song of Sappho. While, according to Nagy, Achilles may be playing a lyric theme on his instrument during the embassy scene,²³⁹ he represents an older type of performer from a time when epic and lyric were undifferentiated (i.e., when epic was played to the accompaniment of the lyre), and thus the lyric personality of Achilles is tied to that of Apollo, both represented as perpetually ephobic and as figures of unrealized promise. Nevertheless, as god with control over all forms of poetry and song, Apollo embodies the authority of the poet, and has the ability to transcend any represented sub-genres.

According to Nagy, the point where the authority of a god and that of his human proxy intersect, is the *hymnos*, where the poet, by invoking the deity and performing his part through mimesis, creates an absolutely authoritative performance, such as when Sappho notionally sings the part of Aphrodite in her Song 1, and the identities of the performer and the god essentially merge. In order to be authoritative, *hymnos* not only invokes a god but requires a group to respond, ideally composed of a chorus of singers and dancers, and, by extension, those attending the performance, creating a totalizing point of authority (2008, 37–39). Odysseus dramatically calls on the authority of Apollo in the bow scene and, as we shall see in the next chapter, he also directs a very specific type of performance.

²³⁸ See my earlier section “The Iliadic Lyre” for further information on this epithet in the *Iliad* and elsewhere.

²³⁹ According to Nagy, there is the suggestion that, through the history of his own lyre, Achilles may be playing an Aeolic lyric theme during the embassy scene. The instrument was plundered “from king Eëtion of Thebes (IX 186–189), whom he killed when he captured that city—and who was the father of that greatest singer of lamentations in the *Iliad*, Andromache (VI 414–416)” (2008, 38).

Chapter 5. Conclusion: The Paeanic Order of the Homeric Epics

A festival celebrating Apollo, the god of music and poetry as well as order and reason, is a particular apt occasion to end not only the inverted state of affairs on Ithaca but even the disorder propagated at the beginning of the *Iliad*. If the paeon and sacrificial banquet celebrating Apollo at the beginning of the *Iliad* (1.472-474) were unsuccessful largely because of Achilles' absence from the ritual, and if the relationship of the hero and god eventually morphed into one of direct antagonism, this state of affairs, which concludes the *Iliad*, can be contrasted with the fulfillment of Odysseus' and Penelope's prayers to the same deity, where, in hitting a mark no one has ever struck (22.5-8), the hero and god become almost indistinguishable through their symbiotic relationship. Just as Apollo's violent entrance at the beginning of the *Iliad* tends to draw a preponderance of critical attention and shape interpretation of his character, so too does the killing of the suitors influence a reading of the end of the *Odyssey* and an overall assessment of Odysseus.²⁴⁰ Despite his success in the bow contest and defeat of the suitors, Odysseus, however, will never push his advantage to point of being a competitive threat to the divine sphere. Almost immediately after his defeat of the suitors, in fact, he begins to establish a proper hierarchal arrangement that both evinces his piety and – unlike the *Iliad*, where the hero becomes the focal point of attention – places the figure of the poet at the epicenter of the action. Odysseus' concluding actions, if we view them as achieving a type of reconciliation and

²⁴⁰ It can be said that Apollo's violent entrance at the beginning of the *Iliad* and Odysseus' slaughter of the suitors occur under generally analogous circumstances, where a group of Achaeans, whether guilty or not, meet their end by bow and arrow. Understandably, the hero's killing of his fellow Achaeans is the focal point of much critical commentary – for an examination of some of the ethical aspects of Odysseus' actions, see, for example, Burgess (2014). Kim examines both sides of the equation, seeing Odysseus as inhabiting the role not only of a fugitive killer but also of the founder of a colony, which often occurs under the auspices of violence. Through his oracular role at Delphi, Apollo was often consulted in the founding of colonies, and Kim notes a number of additional Apolline elements in the conclusion of the *Odyssey* that go beyond violence and toward the successful reintegration of Odysseus into society (2017, 123 ff.).

establishing a proper relationship with Apollo, represent a culmination in the movement from Apolline antagonism to symbiosis over the course of the Homeric Epics. In the end, this movement operates in a similar fashion to a dynamic present in a poem that, by its generic nature, explicitly celebrates Apollo, Pindar's *Paeon 6*.

“It is not holy to boast over slain men”: Mercy, Restraint, and Paeanic Order

I have noted that the *Iliad* contains not just one but two paeans. The first, which included the ritualistic appeasement of Apollo (1.472-474), was largely unsuccessful because of the “best of the Achaean’s” absence, whose distance from his fellow troops is caused by his emulation of divine anger (μῆνις):

αὐτὰρ ὃ μήνιε νηυσὶ παρήμενος ὠκυπόροισι
 διογενῆς Πηλεΐδος υἱὸς πόδας ὠκύς Ἀχιλλεύς:
 οὔτε ποτ' εἰς ἀγορὴν πωλέσκετο κυδιάνειραν
 οὔτε ποτ' ἐς πόλεμον, ἀλλὰ φθινύθεσκε φίλον κῆρ

But he raged on, remaining alongside the swift ships,
 Achilles, swift of foot, divine-born son of Peleus.
 And he never came to the gathering that brings men glory,
 nor to battle, but kept wasting away in his heart.

(1.488-92)

This situation suggests the hero’s own potential destruction in terms of unattained epic glory (κλέος), since he refuses to become the direct focal point of the action, where that destruction is signaled by the presence of the verb φθινύθεσκε.²⁴¹ By contrast, Achilles is the initiator of the *Iliad*’s second paean (22.391-92), in which, at the height of the secondary form of his anger (χόλος), he joins with his comrades to celebrate the death of Hector and, as I argued, a presumed victory over Apollo. That Hector is himself a type of divine substitute in the mind of Achilles is signified by the Achaean’s description of his fallen adversary directly after he exhorts his

²⁴¹ See Nagy’s analysis concerning forms of this verb, which negated, operates in connection with the idea Achilles’ unwithering fame (1999b, 185).

comrades to sing a paean, ἠράμεθα μέγα κῦδος: ἐπέφνομεν Ἴκτορα δῖον, / ᾗ Τρῶες κατὰ ἄστυ θεῶ ὡς εὐχετόωντο (We won great glory. We killed god-like Hector, to whom the Trojans prayed throughout the city, as to a god, 22.393-94). Though we see a certain moment of collectivism in Achilles' use of the third-person pronoun that may be appropriate for his proclamation's proximity to the paean, the implicit suggestion is that Achilles, by virtue of his defeat of Hector, will come to inhabit among the Achaeans a similar position that he perceives Hector enjoyed among the Trojans, being the one to whom his comrades will pray, as to a god.

There is some scholarly debate concerning the conditions that are needed to be present in order for a form of religious expression to qualify as a "paean," but most concede that this form of song eventually came to be associated with the god Apollo—in particular with his healing powers—and is characterized by an attitude of prayer and entreaty.²⁴² The most well-known literary incarnation of this genre is known from the paeans of Pindar, and we will turn to an example of one these in a moment. In his exhaustive generic study, Rutherford argues that by the fifth century the paean came to be seen as a communal choral dance that initiated young men into the cult of Apollo and demonstrated the community's strength by exhibiting the best of the πόλις, and that the paean ultimately achieved a fixed structural form, proceeding from opening, to narrative, to prayer (Rutherford 2001, 9–10).²⁴³ Given the above definitions of genre, Achilles' exultation over the body of Hector, in which the glory accrues to Achilles and his

²⁴² Furley and Bremer provide a detailed history and summary of the scholarly debate on the origins and functions of the paean in their chapter on Delphi, (2002, 77–138).

²⁴³ Though Rutherford sees this development as occurring over a period of time culminating in a form that is evident in the 5th Century, others argue that the paean sung in Book 1 of the *Iliad* has enough crucial elements to fit the Hellenistic definition of a classic paean (Ford, A. 2006, 289).

fellow Achaeans and there is no mention of Apollo, can be thought of as representing not only a dramatic slight to the deity but even, one might say, a claim of victory over his godhead.²⁴⁴

We may contrast the focal point that Achilles, as victorious epic hero, believes he will inhabit, where he will, like Hector was among the Trojans, be “prayed to as a god,” with a comparable sentiment voiced by Odysseus, who, at the moment that he is driven to anger (χόλος) by a young Phaeacian, responds with his definition of the figure who deserves to be at the center of attention, the person of the poet: ὁ δ’ ἀσφαλῆως ἀγορεύει / αἰδοῖ μιλίχρη, μετὰ δὲ πρέπει ἀγρομένοισιν, / ἐρχόμενον δ’ ἀνὰ ἄστρῳ θεὸν ὧς εἰσορόωσιν (He speaks unerringly with gentle reverence, and is conspicuous among those gathered, who behold him like a god as he goes through the city (*Od.* 8.169-73).²⁴⁵ As we shall see in a moment, after Odysseus’ defeat of the suitors, the poet Phemius will be the recipient of an act of mercy that, if viewed within the context of a paean, operates as a complete reconfiguration of Achilles’ Iliadic boast after the death of Hector.

Odysseus’ act of mercy is foreshadowed by other similar moments after the slaughter of the suitors that indicate that Odysseus, as the “best of the Achaeans,” will be a completely different representative hero than Achilles. Though these characters have, of course, been compared in a variety of contexts, nonetheless their contrasting relationships with Apollo receive

²⁴⁴ Nagy observes, “To sing a paean in the *Iliad* is to sing Apollo as Paeon, though Paeon is a god in his own right in more archaizing contexts of the *Iliad* (as at V 401 and V 899–901). Elsewhere in the *Iliad*, Achilles calls on the Achaeans to sing a paean, that is, to sing Apollo as Paeon when they celebrate the death of Hector in war (XXII 391)” (1992, 37–38). I have contended, however, that, given the hero’s antagonism toward the god elsewhere and the lack of explicit reference to Apollo, Achilles’ paean celebrates, as it were, a presumed victory over the god. It is as if he is requesting a paean be sung to himself.

²⁴⁵ There are some parallels to other figures of authoritative speech, such as the priest of the king. For such parallels, particularly in reference to the king, see Martin (1989). Odysseus’ definition above, however, is explicitly made in contrast to a person who is physically gifted and this idealized figure, feebler in body (εἶδος ἀκιδνότερος, 8.166), and thus seems to tap into the tradition of poets’ being physically infirmed, such as Demodocus or the biographical tradition of Homer’s blindness.

comparatively little comment. Indeed, a clear moment of comparison occurs when the old nurse Euryclea is about to utter a victorious wail, an ululation, over the fallen bodies of the suitors, but her impulse is checked by Odysseus, who, befouled with blood and filth and looking like a lion who has fed on an ox (22.402-03),²⁴⁶ proclaims,

ἐν θυμῷ, γρηῦ, χαῖρε καὶ ἴσχεο μηδ' ὀλόλυξε:
οὐχ ὅσῃ κταμένοισιν ἐπ' ἀνδράσιν εὐχετάσθαι.
τούσδε δὲ μοῖρ' ἐδάμασσε θεῶν καὶ σχέτλια ἔργα:
οὐ τίνα γὰρ τίεσκον ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων,
οὐ κακὸν οὐδὲ μὲν ἐσθλόν, ὅτις σφέας εἰσαφίκοιτο:
τῷ καὶ ἀτασθαλίησιν ἀεικέα πότμον ἐπέσπον

Rejoice in your heart and restrain yourself, old woman, and do not exult.
It is not holy to boast over slain men.
The fate of the gods and their wicked deeds destroyed them,
for they honored none of the men of earth,
neither bad nor good, whoever came into contact with them.
And thus because of their transgressions, they encountered a shameful destiny.

(22.411-416)

In his review of the paeanic genre, Rutherford attempted to find a common thread that runs throughout these types of songs and formulated:

παιάνες are usually performed by a group of men, not by soloists or women (the female utterance corresponding to the *παιάν* cry is the *ὀλολθγή*) ... an identifiable range of moods was associated with paeanic song-dance performances: they were orderly, dignified, and serene. . . and projected an attitude of controlled celebration and collective strength . . . In these respects, the mood seems to reflect the qualities symbolized by Apollo himself.

(2001, 85)

Although Rutherford does not have the above scene in mind, Odysseus, by checking the nurse's impulse to sing the female version of a paeon over the bodies of the fallen, which thematically matches the song Achilles calls for over the body of Hector, and by calling for restraint, puts

²⁴⁶ In the *Iliad*, the lion simile was often attached to Achilles (e.g., 24.40-44)

himself forward as the true proponent of this genre, as is particularly evident as the poem draws to its conclusion.

That Odysseus, too, turns into an instrument of order primarily through his symbiotic relationship with Apollo, highlighting yet another contrast with Achilles, is evident when we compare Odysseus' words above with a similar speech found in the *Iliad*, since they bear close resemblance to the prophecy of Achilles' horse, Xanthus, who tells Achilles, at the very moment he is seemingly about to take flight after a simile compares him to the sun, that his end is near, ἀλλά τοι ἐγγύθεν ἦμαρ ὀλέθριον: οὐδέ τοι ἡμεῖς / αἴτιοι, ἀλλὰ θεός τε μέγας καὶ Μοῖρα κραταιή (But the day of destruction has drawn nigh for you. And we are not the cause, rather a great god and mighty fate. 19.409-10). Although it was Odysseus' bow that brought the day of destruction upon the suitors, the hero, like the Iliadic prophetic horse, disavows any role in the killing, attributing the outcome to the greater forces outside his control. In both of these cases, that force is Apollo, who in the *Iliad* is destined to kill Achilles, but in the *Odyssey* he is the agent that grants Odysseus' prayer for success.

Thus, although I have argued that the Odysseus and Apollo achieve a type of special symbiotic unity during the competition of the bow scene, the *Odyssey* does not conclude with a cathartic act of destruction and attendant boasting over the body of a victim, but rather almost minimizes the role of the hero in this pivotal act. From this point forward, the *Odyssey*, though the time frame is quite compressed, goes on to focus on the reunification of the hero's estate, the reestablishment of his marriage, and even projects his rapprochement with his antagonistic god, Poseidon.²⁴⁷ Far from receding into the background, however, the presence of Apollo is felt throughout this entire process, from destruction to unity, from terror to delight. While Odysseus,

²⁴⁷ This focus in the conclusion of the *Odyssey* may operate in contrast to other traditions that depicted the exile of Odysseus. See, in particular, Jong's commentary on Book 22 (2001).

through the vehicle of his bow, which he handles like master lyre player, may have obtained a terrible god-like power, his actions almost immediately following his destruction of the suitors set out to delineate the hierarchal division between the mortal and the divine spheres.

Unlike Achilles' desecration of Hector's body or even the coordinated actions of Apollo and Helios in the *Hymn* to eradicate any trace of Pytho, Odysseus, having every reason to boast over his fallen adversaries, does no such thing over his defeated foes. The latter comparison, that which exists between Odysseus's victory over the suitors and Apollo's and Helios' defeat of Pytho, is even suggested within a simile when Odysseus sets in motion certain acts of purification, and the dead suitors are described as fish lying in heaps on the shore, whose life shining Helios has taken away (τῶν μὲν τ' Ἥλιος φαέθων ἐξείλετο θυμόν, 22.388). Given these models, one might expect Odysseus to treat his victims similarly, particularly when he asks for fire to be made ready. But instead a conflagration is kindled to purify his house and perhaps even move beyond his epic past (22.478-84).²⁴⁸

The opportunity therefore presents itself for Odysseus to act in a way that brings together, in his own person, the role of both Apollo and Helios in the *Hymn*, and yet he declines to make a boast over his victims, and credits instead higher powers. And the epicenter or focal point of this reconfiguration is the person of the poet. The bard Phemius makes a fateful decision that allows him to avoid Odysseus' ongoing slaughter:

ἔστη δ' ἐν χεῖρεςσίν ἔχων φόρμιγγα λίγειαν
 ἄγχι παρ' ὀρσοθύρην: δίχα δὲ φρεσὶ μερμήριζεν,
 ἢ ἐκδὺς μεγάροιο Διὸς μεγάλου ποτὶ βωμόν
 ἐρκείου ἴζοιτο τετυγμένον, ἔνθ' ἄρα πολλὰ
 Λαέρτης Ὀδυσσεύς τε βοῶν ἐπὶ μηρί' ἔκηαν,
 ἢ γούνων λίσσοιτο προσαΐξας Ὀδυσηῖα.

²⁴⁸ For the role of fire in rites of purification, see Segal, who argues that Odysseus, through this means, attempts to exorcise his bloody past (1994, 76).

[Phemius] stood holding the clear-toned lyre in his hands
 near to a side door. And in his mind he was anxiously debating two courses:
 whether he should go from the hall and take a seat at the altar of mighty Zeus
 Herkios, a well-built altar, where Laertes and Odysseus sacrificed many
 thigh bones of cattle,
 or whether he should rush forth and beseech Odysseus by the knees

(22.332-37)

Phemius decides upon the first option and, setting down his lyre on the ground between a drinking cup and silver-wrought throne (θρόνου ἀργυροήλου, 22.341) he begs the hero's forgiveness. When Phemius prostrates himself before Odysseus, setting the lyre between the throne and drinking cup, he creates the opportunity to establish a hierarchal order between the singer and the subject of his song, the hero and king.

Others have noted that Phemius occupies a special position in the *Odyssey*,²⁴⁹ but I will focus on the poet's initial act of supplication, since its ritualistic nature, particularly the position of the supplicant, evokes elements of an extant literary paean. The *Odyssey* fits into the larger tradition of the Epic Cycle, including the Nostoi, stories that chronicled the return of the Greek heroes who eventually were forced to atone in various ways for their actions at Troy. One set of these stories centers on Achilles' son, Neoptolemus, who, after the death of his father, arrives at Troy and becomes a main protagonist in the sacrilegious over-reaching of the Greeks.²⁵⁰ His main offense is the murder of the Trojan king, Priam, at the altar of Zeus Herkios while the old man begs for supplication. The mythology that surrounded Neoptolemus was particularly relevant for the Delphians, since the son of Achilles was not only opposed by their patron god, Apollo, but in several versions of his myth he died and was killed at Delphi and eventually

²⁴⁹ See Segal (1994, 86–107) and Pucci (1987, 128–39), among others.

²⁵⁰ Fragmentary versions of this story appear in the *Iliou Persis* and the *Little Iliad*.

became the object of a hero cult there.²⁵¹ The story of Neoptolemus' death is at the heart of Pindar's *Paeon 6*, and, if we examine the structure of this poem closely, parallels to the trajectory of the Homeric Epics will emerge. In what follows, my primary focus will switch from the Homeric Epics to Pindar's *Paeon*, but it will do so in order to illustrate parallel themes in the Homeric poems.

Pindar's *Paeon 6*

In Pindar's poem, Neoptolemus, like his father before him, meets his end through the agency of Apollo. Pindar describes Apollo's intervention as a symmetrical retribution, as both Priam and Neoptolemos meet their ends at the ritualistic setting of a sanctuary, one at Troy, and the other at Delphi:

ὄ[μο]σε [γὰρ θ]εός,
 γέ[ρον]θ' ὄ[τι] Πρίαμον π[ρ]ὸς ἑρκεῖον ἦναρε
 βωμὸν ἐ[πεν]θορόντα, μή νιν εὖφρον' ἐς οἴ[κ]ον
 μήτ' ἐπὶ γῆρας ἰξέμεν βίου· ἀμφιπόλοισ δὲ
 μυριᾶν περὶ τιμᾶν δηρι]αζόμενον κτάνεν
 <έν> τεμέ]νεῖ φίλω γᾶς παρ' ὀμφαλὸν εὐρύν.
 <ίη> ἰῆτε νῦν, μέτρα παιήν]ων ἰῆτε, νέοι

For the god [Apollo] had sworn
 that because he had killed aged Priam as he leapt towards the altar
 of Zeus Herkeios, he would reach neither his kindly home
 nor old age in life. As he quarreled over his vast prerogatives Apollo slew him
 in his own sanctuary by earth's broad navel.
 Ie, sing ie now—measures of paeans—sing ie, young men²⁵²

(112–118).

Because of his sacrilege at Troy, Neoptolemus is killed at Delphi, the spot that will serve as the location of his hero cult. Thus, there is a transference of theme from Troy to Delphi. We may further note that this retribution occurs through a process of inversion, where the perpetrator

²⁵¹ Most see this development as occurring in the sixth century (Currie, B. 2010, 306).

²⁵² All Pindaric quotations and any translations are from Rutherford (2001), unless otherwise noted.

Neoptolemus eventually becomes the victim under analogous ritualistic circumstances. If we turn momentarily to the *Odyssey*, such a process of inversion is also evident in Penelope's wish concerning the lead suitor who hurled a footstool at the disguised Odysseus, when she states, "Would that, in such a way, Apollo, famed for the bow, strike you yourself, [Antinous]," (17.494). In a sense, Odysseus, through his own successful prayer to Apollo, fulfills Penelope's wish and is poised to continue on with additional acts of retribution when he encounters Phemius.

It is significant that the altar of Zeus Herkios, which is the focal point of Priam's slaughter in Pindar's *Paean 6*, figures heavily in the *Odyssey* as well. It sits in a prominent position of the hero's palace, and, as we just saw, Phemius chooses to avoid it when he begs for mercy (22.334-35). In various artistic renderings in antiquity, the position of Priam relative to the altar at the moment of his slaughter could either heighten or mitigate the nature of Neoptolemus' sacrilege.²⁵³ The reference to the altar of Zeus Herkios in the *Odyssey* is therefore freighted with significance, particularly given the Apolline characteristics we have traced in the hero thus far and the ritual setting, the festival of Apollo, that is operating in the background of his homecoming. Though Odysseus, through the success of his prayer to Apollo, is in the position to exact retribution like an avenging god, he chooses not to go down this path, effectively setting the stage to end the cycle of violent retribution. If the deaths of father and son, Achilles and Neoptolemos, come about in Pindar because of an antagonistic relationship with Apollo, it is noteworthy Odysseus does not act benevolently on his own accord, but is actually convinced to

²⁵³ Many sixth-century vase paintings depicted the old man's demise, and poets such as Euripides and Virgil chronicle this episode. The different renderings of the position of the body at the time of death may date back to variant treatment from poems in the Epic Cycle. In the *Iliou Persis*, Neoptolemus infiltrates the walls of Troy and quickly dispatches Priam as he attempts to take refuge at the altar of Zeus Herkeios (Proclus *Chrytomathy* 19–20). According to Pausanias, however, in the *Little Iliad*, Priam is pulled away from the altar and killed by Neoptolemus at the doors of the palace (*Description of Greece* 10.27.2).

follow this path by his son, Telemachus, whom Odysseus explicitly credits for the act of salvation in sparing Phemius and a herald (22.370-373). The good deed (εὐεργεσίη, 22.374) that was done with father and son operating in harmony at the altar of Zeus Herkios, therefore, contrasts strongly with the perpetual cycle of violence portrayed in the poems that delve into the actions of Achilles' son, Neoptolemus, at Troy, particularly his slaughter of Priam at the altar.

By inverting the tradition of Priam's death and chronicling instead the salvation of a poet, the *Odyssey* exempts the family of Odysseus from this vicious cycle of retribution, and it does so by establishing a proper hierarchy for advancing the reputation of the hero through the medium of poetry, all of which occurs during the festival of Apollo. The scene of Odysseus' mercy, moreover, does not merely touch upon this one reference point within Pindar's paean, of Priam's death, but acts as culmination of a process that we have traced over the course of the Homeric Epics, where the antagonism between Achilles and Apollo is replaced by Odysseus' symbiotic relationship with this same god. This process, from antagonism to symbiosis, is also evident in the overall triadic structure of Pindar's Paeon, and it is therefore worthwhile to pursue some of the fundamental parallels that are discernible within these poems.

Although I have largely eschewed conjecture on specific performative scenarios of the Homeric Epics, we are on somewhat more solid footing to assess the possible location and occasion for Pindar's poem. The poem purports to have been first performed in Delphi at the festival of the Theoxenia, or guest-feast of the gods, where, if *Paeon 6* is any guide, the gods themselves were evidently treated as direct participants in the celebration. But a recent discovery by Rutherford that the "text of the song is equipped with not one but two marginal titles ('For the Delphians in honour of Pytho') and a second at the start of the third triad ('For the Aiginetans in

honour of Aiakos a prosodion')” (2001, 306) indicates that more than one locale may have been involved in the performance.

Generically, by their nature, paeans are performed chorally, but Pindar’s *Paeian 6* is anomalous due to the presence of a strong first-person poetic voice found in the first triad, and the exact nature of the poem’s performance has garnered the lion’s share of critical attention. The strength of the poetic voice’s ego is evident the paeian’s opening lines:

Πρὸς Ὀλυμπίου Διὸς σε, χρυσέα
 κλυτόμαντι Πυθοῖ
 λίσσομαι Χαρίτεσ-
 σὶν τε καὶ σὺν Ἀφροδίτῃ
 ἐν ζαθεῶ με δέξαι χρόνῳ
 ἀοίδιμον Πιερίδων προφάταν

Golden Pytho, famed for seers, I beseech you, by Olympian Zeus,
 with the Kharites and Aphrodite, welcome me, the interpreter of
 the Pierides, famed in song, at the sacrificial time (1-6).

Although many early scholars were concerned with the literal “arrival crisis” suggested in the opening lines, they generally concluded that the voice of the invocation referred to the poet and not the chorus, but this point has been hotly contested over the years.²⁵⁴ If we accept that the voice of the first triad is referring to “the poet” and not the chorus, it opens a range of interpretive possibilities that are only beginning to be advanced and that must answer the

²⁵⁴ Subsequent debate was largely shaped by the influence of Lefkowitz (1963), who shifted the focus to the first-person voice by creating a hard and fast generic distinction between Pindar's epinikia and his paeans. She theorized that with the former the ego is always the poet and with the latter it is always the chorus, a distinction that coincides with the individual or communal nature of the respective genres. Her opinion was recently challenged by Kurke, who nicely summarizes the current state of scholarship on the paeianic ego and its relevance to Pindar's *Paeian 6*: “Nonetheless [Lefkowitz'] position . . . has taken root in scholarship, so that many treatments of “Paian 6” simply assume that the ego is the chorus (whether that chorus is taken to be Delphian or Aeginetan). This new critical orthodoxy is unfortunate, given the claim that the choral ego in the first triad of *Paeian 6* had already been devastatingly critiqued and dismantled by Staffan Fogelmark (1972) and again effectively by G.B. D'Alessio (1994). Fogelmark worked through the entire corpus of Pindar and Bacchylides and concluded that “we never hear the chorus called προφάταν” (2005, 88).

question of why Pindar's first triad would deviate from the choral, communal nature of the paeon, provided that we conclude that the work is correctly placed in that genre.

That the poetic voice calls itself “προφάταν” at all is especially charged with meaning, since the purported location of the Theoxenia is Delphi, Apollo’s precinct. As Nagy has pointed out, the prophetes at the Oracle of Apollo at Delphi had a very specific function, “The official prophetes declares, formalizes as a speech-act, the words of the inspired mantis. In the case of the Oracle at Delphi, the office of the inspired mantis was traditionally held by a priestess, known as the Puthia” (1990, 163). The role of the prophetes at Delphi, then, was to act as part of the hierarchal structure that controls the form of the speech-act—that is to put the inspired utterance into poetic form, an act where Apollo operates as hierarchal ambassador for communicating the will of Zeus. Although Pindar's *Paeon 6* is not necessarily oracular poetry, the purported location of Delphi marks the term as being particularly significant. By giving itself the name of prophetes, the poetic voice of the first triad not only provides an important initial indicator that the first triad is not referring to a collective chorus but also foreshadows a potentially aggressive position toward the host Delphians and their traditional role as interpreters of the Oracle at Delphi and their jurisdiction over the entire sanctuary, and this antagonistic position will only be further solidified throughout the triad. Thus, the initial statements of the poetic voice in *Paeon 6* are peculiar within the generic context of a paeon and in relation to the professed occasion of the Theoxenia.

That the poet views himself as existing outside a particular community is further evidenced in his diagnosis of the current problem at Delphi and in his suggested remedy. He has learned that Apollo's precinct has been orphaned of a men's chorus and has arrived to correct this situation:

ὕδατι γὰρ ἐπὶ χαλκοπύλῳ
 ψόφον ἀϊὼν Κασταλίας
 ὀρφανὸν ἀνδρῶν χορεύσιος ἦλθον
 ἔταις ἀμαχανίαν ἀ[λ]έξων
 τεοῖσιν ἐμαῖς τε τιμ[α]ῖς

For at the water of Castalia with its gate of bronze hearing its sound bereft of the dancing of men, I have come to ward off helplessness from your townsmen and my privileges (7-11).

By supplying such a chorus, the poet has a purpose that is twofold: to ward off the helplessness of the “ἔταις”—or kinsmen who are linked locally to the district of Apollo, a rather marked reference to the Delphians—and, significantly, to look after his own honors. These goals, of course, are not mutually exclusive, but they are potentially antagonistic, for the suggestion is that there has been some sort of failure in the Delphians' traditional role of offering up the cult song of the paean, and the poet, who sees himself in the role of a rescuer, is in a position to supplant them and their prophetic relationship with Apollo. It is also possible to discern a strong bifurcation between the interests of the Delphians and those of the poet, as the possessive personal pronouns (“τεοῖσιν ... ἐμαῖς”) from the lines above suggests.

In fact, if we keep in mind Apollo's traditional role as a healer and the relationship of the supplicant to the god inherent in the paean, the poet's claimed purpose is rather startling. It is the poet who has perceived a lack and it is he, like the god, who is in a position to remedy the problem by supplying a chorus of dancers to the proceedings. The dire situation is not unlike, as we shall later see, the allusions to famine and plea for divine relief that are contained in the second and third triad of the poem. There is a need for a chorus, which only the poet can muster. Being in the position to both hear the problem of the Kastalia being orphaned of a men's chorus and then provide a remedy that, as a type of healer, mirrors the functional role of Apollo, the poetic voice suggests a form of creative substitution that not only supplants the Delphians' traditional

relationship with Apollo but also even suggests that he is a proxy for the god himself, who is notably absent in the first triad.

Given the primacy of Apollo within the genre of the paeon, it is noteworthy that the poetic voice assiduously avoids referring to Apollo directly. In the opening lines, for example, the location for the paeon's performance, golden Pytho, gets lead billing, and Zeus and Aphrodite get prominent mentions, as do the Muses, who are lauded even more effusively:

ἀλλά παρθένοι γάρ, ἴσατε, Μοῖσαι
 πάντα. κελαινεφεῖ σὸν
 πατρὶ Μναμοσύνα τε
 τοῦτον ἔσχετε Τεθμόν--
 κλῦτε νῦν. ἔρα[ται] δέ μο[ι]
 γλῶσσα μέλιτος ἄφτον γλυκὺν
 ἀγῶνα Λοξία {ι} καταβάντ' εὐρὺν
 ἐν θεῶν ξενία

But since, virgin Muses, you know all things: you possess this prerogative, along with dark-haired father of Mnemosyne—listen now! For my tongue desires (to sing) a song of honey-sweet perfection now that I have come to the broad gathering of Loxias on the occasion of the guest-festival of the gods

(54-61).

Again, as in the opening lines where the poetic voice is called the tuneful prophet of the Pierian Muses (ἁοίδιμον Πιερίδων προφάταν, 4), we find the Muses given a primary position and a lack of specific reference to Apollo. While the Muses are certainly often cited as a source of poetic inspiration, the absence of Apollo in a paeon is striking and fits in with my assertion above that the poetic voice is putting himself forward as a type of ritual substitute for the god.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁵ Such a substitution is not unattested in archaic poetry. Nagy, for example, cites the case of Archilochus, for such a configuration of poetic authority: “observe the tradition that represents Archilochus as a ritual substitute for divine choral models. The story has it that Archilochus is killed through the indirect agency of Apollo, who at the same time promotes his status as a cult hero. The theme of the poet as ritual substitute could be pursued further, but we must stay on track with the topic at hand, which is the role the poet – let us call him or her the author – actually plays in the chorus. What needs to be shown is the authority of Apollo over song, as formalized by his function as khoregos, is the fundamental model for the concept of authorship in choral lyric” (1990, 364).

Now that I have summarized the first triad of Pindar's paeon and have offered my interpretation of some of the antagonistic elements that exist within the structure of the poem, but are often glossed over by commentators, we can map some of the macro themes from the Homeric Epics onto this paeon to establish a comparative framework. As I documented in earlier chapters and others have noted, the location of Delphi can be found at critical junctures in the *Iliad and the Odyssey*.²⁵⁶ In the former, Achilles sounds an ominous note during the embassy scene when he conflates Agamemnon's offer of riches with the wealth of Delphi (9.404-409). Although he rejects the offer to return to battle, this is but short lived, and, due to Patroclus' death, largely precipitated by Apollo, the hero launches upon his prodigious killing spree that, in conjunction with a growing antagonism with Apollo, characterizes the end of the poem. In effect, then, although Achilles' statement during embassy scene is only hypothetical, his subsequent actions, including his direct confrontation with the god himself and the killing of Hector, depict him acting out this threat against the god's power, culminating with efforts to eradicate the physical presence of his adversary. Earlier I related these actions of the hero to the battle that, according to the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, created the god's precinct at Delphi. Achilles victory over Hector—and perhaps, in his mind, over Apollo—is celebrated with a paeon that nowhere mentions the god that is the addressee of this genre, an act that is notionally similar to the tone of the poetic voice first triad of Pindar's paeon, which neglects to list the god among the honorees. A similarity therefore exists between the Iliadic Achilles and the poetic voice of the first triad of Pindar's paeon. In both cases, it can even be said that a character is attempting to supplant Apollo or to become his substitute, and such an action calls for a dramatic response.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁶ See, in particular, Nagy on this theme (1999b, 57).

²⁵⁷ For a general analysis of the role of divine models—particularly Apollo's relationship with the Muses—for choral leadership, see Nagy (1990, 359–62).

If the tone and themes embedded in the first triad of Pindar's Paean can be construed as antagonistic toward the parochial interests of the purported location of the paean, Delphi, a dramatic change can be witnessed in the movement from the first to the second triad, which contains the mythic paradigm of Neoptolemos' death quoted above. While the first triad is noteworthy for its destabilization of genre and of any expectations set by occasion, the second triad could not be more radically different, as we find present not only all the elements of traditional cult-song but also a collective voice that seems outwardly to capture the appropriate tone and to operate within a thematic framework that is relevant to the occasion. In many ways, then, the second triad can be considered a response to the first: it is a rebuttal to what has been put forth by the poetic voice, and a clarion call for a return to tradition and appropriateness of occasion. And if it is any sense a type of rebuttal, this suggests the possibility that the second triad could very well have been performed by a separate entity from the first, and the embedded themes indicate that a Delphic chorus is represented in some fashion as the performing entity.²⁵⁸

As opposed to the first-person singular statements of the poetic voice that had previously characterized the poem, the second triad opens with a clearly choral refrain rendered in an impersonal voice, “θύεται γὰρ ἀγλαῆς ὑπὲρ Πανελ- / λάδος, ἅν τε Δελφῶν / ἔθνος εὖξατο λι- / μοῦ” (The sacrifice is being offered on behalf of all glorious Greece, which the tribe of the Delphians prayed (to save from) the famine, 62-65). Thematically, these lines refer to a self-effacing act of sacrifice that is claimed to be intended for Panhellas. Here, the “γὰρ” acts in a causal fashion, reinforcing that what is being sung is in fact a response to the first triad. The

²⁵⁸ Recently there have been several theories put forth that admit the possibility of a split performance. Kurke, for example, sees the triads as being performed by two choruses, the first two by the Delphians, and the third by the Aeginetans, with the poetic ego of the first triad mediating the whole proceeding. Rutherford advances three possible scenarios for performance (2001, 335–38). While the exact scenario of performance is notoriously difficult to prove, the thematic movement from one triad to the next indicates, I argue, a monodic opening triad, followed by two choral triads, with the first composed of Delphians and the second of Aeginetans.

present tense of the impersonal verb indicates a representation of sacrifice is actually in progress, but the third-person aorist “ἔϋξατο” lends ritualistic force to the proceeding by yoking the present act to a past prayer that the Delphians offered up to bring about relief from famine. This historical act of Panhellenic assistance through Delphic sacrifice seems to refer to the etiology for the Theoxenia (Rutherford, 2001: 311), and their current prayer is thus a ritualistic mimesis of that past prayer. Implicit in this sacrifice is the authority that the Delphians, primarily their priests, derive from a privileged and ongoing relationship with Apollo and his healing powers. Their act of sacrifice, moreover, is directly analogous to the poet's earlier assertion that he has arrived in Delphi with the intention of warding off the helplessness of Apollo's kinsmen. In this sense, the traditional prayer²⁵⁹ of the Delphians is set in juxtaposition to, and is therefore in a metaphorical competition with, the song of the poet. The Delphians, however, explicitly supply the reference to prayer that, like Apollo, was conspicuously absent in the first triad.

That the Delphians' traditional prayer is in competition with the poet's artistic version is dramatically evidenced in the mythic paradigm that is put forth in the narrative of the second triad. Unfortunately, the opening of the myth is highly fragmentary, but the first discernible section presents us with the death of Achilles where Apollo takes a central role. In this version, Apollo assumes human form in the body of Paris and it is the god himself who fires the fateful arrow against Achilles:

εμβα[λ...
 Πάριος ἐ[καβόλος βροτη-
 σίῳ δέμαϊ θεός,
 Ἴλιου δὲ θῆκεν ἄφαρ

²⁵⁹ Pointing to the literary quality of the second triad in particular, Furley/Bremer state, “This sixth paian of Pindar permits a rare and valuable glimpse of what one might call the high point of choral lyric serving a purely cultic purpose. [There is] a distinction between cult hymns composed for religious service only—they tend to be simple and without literary embellishment—and literary hymns which draw on the former for their structure but ultimately serve a different goal: the entertainment and edification of their human audience” (2002, 112).

ὄψιτέραν ἄλωσιν,
 κυανοπλόκοιο παῖδα ποντίας
 Θέτιος βιατάν,
 πιστὸν ἔρκος Ἀχαι-
 ῶν, θρασεῖ φόνῳ πεδάσαις

he shot...the far-shooting god in the mortal body of Paris and at once postponed the capture of Ilium, binding in bold slaughter the violent child of the dark-haired sea-goddess Thetis, the trusted bastion of the Achaeans (79-86).

If a Delphian chorus were singing this mythic narrative, they would have good reason to highlight an active role for their patron god in human affairs, in that the paradigm serves as a type of warning to a visitor viewed as overly aggressive.

In addition, if the Delphians conceived of their visitors as in any way hostile to their interests, the metaphorical parallel between Troy and Delphi, which is picked up in the symmetrical punishment of Achilles' son, Neoptolemus, seems particularly apt. After the chorus narrates (full quote above) the death of Neoptolemos, it finishes with a traditional cry that is one of the primary markers of the paeanic cult song, <ἰῆ> ἰῆτε νῦν, μέτρα παιηόν]ων ἰῆτε, νέοι (Ie, sing ie now—measures of paeans—sing ie, young men (118). Although over time Neoptolemus himself developed a cult following in Delphi by virtue of his being buried there, the focus here is on the antagonism between hero and god.²⁶⁰ Other extant versions of the myth have Neoptolemos being killed by one of Apollo's Delphian priests, a version that Pindar himself employs in his “Nemean 7” (42-43).²⁶¹ By highlighting an aspect of the mythic tradition that comparatively elevates the role of Apollo, the Delphians dramatically lay claim to their historical

²⁶⁰ “Since ‘Paean 6’ was composed specifically for a Delphic setting and in honor of Apollo, we should be especially mindful of the central role of its hero as the ritual antagonist of the god. For we see here a striking illustration of a fundamental principle in Hellenic religion: antagonism between hero and god in myth corresponds to the ritual requirements of symbiosis between hero and god in cult” (Nagy, 1981: Ch. 7. sect. 4)

²⁶¹ See Currie for a comparison of the two versions and a refutation of the “apology” hypothesis (2005: 330-331).

hegemony of the god's precinct, and this act in turn serves as a rebuttal to the poetic voice's own bid for victory in the first triad.

That the second triad is not only conflating father and son (Achilles and Neoptolemos) but also comparing this pair to the poetic voice of the first triad is signaled by the emphasis on “honors” that is present throughout the poem. The second triad tells us that Apollo slew the young man not only for the sacrilege of killing Priam as he sought refuge at the protective altar but the god also did so while the young man was quarreling over “countless honors” (μυριᾶν περὶ τιμᾶν, 116). Of course, the son in this case is not unlike his father Achilles as depicted in the *Iliad*, a character who could have been further explicated by the Delphians in the corrupt and fragmentary lines of the second triad.²⁶² The mythic paradigm, therefore, is again related to the poetic voice of the first triad, who put forth a specified goal of seeking honors for himself upon his arrival at Delphi.²⁶³ Although some would have the poet's pursuit of “honors” refer to the literal portion of the sacrifice that Pindar was seeking through his identification with the poetic voice,²⁶⁴ I argue that they are meant to have additional metaphorical meaning and that Delphian chorus is deliberately conflating the poetic voice of the first triad with Achilles' actions at Troy, particularly focusing on his antagonistic relationship with Apollo. The emphasis of the myth on

²⁶² Nagy observes, “the more pervasive mode of describing the loss by Achilles of his fair share is by way of the noun *tīmḗ* 'honor' and the verbs formally related to it (see especially *Iliad* I 505–510, 558–559; II 3–4). The word *tīmḗ*, as we have seen, is also appropriate for designating what it was that Pyrrhos had pursued by quarreling over slices of meat.” The other mode of describing Achilles' loss “is the notion of ‘divide, apportion, allot’ inherent in the institution of the dais” (1999b, 132).

²⁶³ Kurke, who contends that the first two triads were performed by the Delphians, sees a pointed contrast between the honors sought by the poetic ego and the deeds of Neoptolemus, which serves to two functions. “First, it reinforces in retrospect the proper ritual status and behavior of the ego in relation to the Delphians. But this first effect works only in service to the second, far more important one: it displaces from the Aeginetan chorus to the ego any possible identification with Neoptolemus” (2005, 109). However, this is a rather elaborate solution, one necessitated by the performance scenario she advances.

²⁶⁴ Kowalzig states, “The straightforward reading of these passages is, I believe, the correct one. . . The 'countless honors are not some abstract concept, but very concretely the sacrificial shares, (2007, 193).

Apollo's direct role in Achilles' death is therefore the Delphian chorus' response to the poet's radical reshaping of the paean, which they view as a threat,²⁶⁵ and, as such, the second triad ends fittingly with the Delphians singing the traditional choral refrain and cry of Apollo's cult-song.

In offering a rebuttal against the “tuneful prophet” who arrived in their midst and who threatens the orthodoxy, the Delphic chorus of the second triad is therefore not unlike the Iliadic Apollo, serving as a conservative force that propels the narrative toward its proper conclusion. While the *Iliad* can certainly be read as a self-contained unit and Achilles' eventual act of mercy and acknowledgement of his mortality serve as a fitting conclusion to the poem, I argued that the lack of a ritual setting, including a paean sung without mention of Apollo—in fact, celebrating a type of presumed victory over Apollo—and a meal shared by Achilles and Priam that occurs in a secular setting, portends a continuation of hostilities that would certainly be familiar to ancient audiences, including Achilles' death by a divinity and the establishment of his hero cult. What the Delphic chorus of the second triad provides in narrating Achilles' death by the arrows of Apollo is the explicit result of the implied threat in the *Iliad*, where a mortal is a potential victor over a god, filling in an important narrative gap that exists between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.²⁶⁶

The Delphic triad of Pindar's paean, where the death of Achilles and then his son Neoptolemos are narrated within the context of a ritual setting and containing all the trappings of cult song, would seemingly provide a fitting conclusion to the chain of events that are detailed at the beginning of *Iliad*, but the paean, too, if it were to end here, would finish on a note of antagonism, where the poetic voice is, if we have the parallel of Achilles and Neoptolemos in

²⁶⁵ Both Kowalzig (2007, 200) and Kurke (2005, 99) highlight the Delphian priests' role in tightly controlling the ritual, such as who has access and the amount of meat apportioned, of the sacrificial feast.

²⁶⁶ By “narrative gap” I mean that the death of Achilles occurs somewhere between the chronological narrative sequence of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Though this event is not explicitly narrated in the Homeric Epics, some of these poems' themes (e.g., banqueting and the distribution of honor) may be a secular expression of the ritual aspects expressed in Pindar's Paean.

mind, killed for seeking honors that are beyond his station. Despite the panhellenic pretensions of their cult song, where there is a confluence of myth and ritual, and despite their conservative rejoinder to the artistic agenda of the first triad, the Delphic chorus creates its own version of a local antagonism that will need to be resolved, as is evidenced by the concluding triad and the entrance of the Aeginetans. Leslie Kurke has done an extensive study on this paean that brings us a long way toward understanding the tensions that might have existed between the Delphians, with their hegemony over apportioning the sacrifice and disseminating the oracle of Apollo, and the outside communities that needed to travel to Apollo's precinct for religious and other reasons, including the recurring artistic and athletic competitions (2005, 95–103).²⁶⁷

An historical tension between local and panhellenic interests may then be at the root of the antagonism evinced within the triadic structure of Pindar's paean. While the first-person poetic voice virtually disappears in the second triad during the Delphian response, echoes of its existence are picked up, both in theme and voice, in the third triad, the section of the poem that deals with the Aeginetans. As hosts of the Theoxenia, the Delphians receive a broad array of panhellenic guests, one of which is of course the poet himself. If this *xenos*-poet were attached in some way to the Aeginetans, as in an artist and patron relationship, this configuration could explain the Delphian response. Embedded in their traditional cult-song is a narratorial warning both to the guest-poet and his client that calls for obeisance to Delphian tradition and to their local religious hegemony, symbolized by the protective altar at Troy and the transference of that theme to Delphi itself. Indeed, the mythic parable seems to foretell the arrival of the Aeginetans, who themselves have solid precedent to lay historic claim to the lineage of Achilles through his father Peleus, himself son of Aeacus, a former king of Aegina, which was famously the gathering

²⁶⁷ Nagy also lists a number of examples of anticlerical sentiments leveled at the proverbial greed of the Delphians (1999b, 120–25).

place of the Myrmidons.²⁶⁸ The mythic paradigm kills off Achilles, and, after his son Neoptolemus has been summoned from across the water, he receives the same treatment at the hands of Apollo.

Although some have seen the third triad as somehow extraneous to the poem as a whole,²⁶⁹ it is a perfectly fitting conclusion that blends together elements of the first two triads. Like the poetic voice of the first triad, the Aeginetan chorus begins by hymning place. Instead of Pytho, however, we are transported to the illustrious island of Aegina: “ὄνομακλύτα γάρ ἔνεσσι Δωριεῖ / μ[ε]δέοισα [πό]ντω / νᾶσος, [ᾗ] Διὸς Ἑλ- / λανίου φαεννὸν ἄστρον” (You are famous in name, island ruling the Dorian sea, O bright star of Zeus Hellanios, 123-126). Subsequently, the chorus makes explicit mention to the genre of the paeon, which in turn is linked to the idea of the feast:

οὔνεκεν οὔ σε παιήνων
 ἄδορπον εὐνάζομεν, ἀλλ’ αἰοιδᾶν
 ῥόθια δεκομένα κατερεῖς,
 πόθεν ἔλαβες ναυπρύτανιν
 δαίμονα καὶ τὰν θεμίζενον ἀρετ[άν].
 ὁ πάντα τοι τά τε καὶ τὰ τεύχων
 σὸν ἐγγυάλιξεν ὄλβον
 ὑρύο[πα] Κρόνου παῖς

For that reason we shall not lay you to rest without a feast of paeans, but you will receive waves of song and declare from where you received ship-guiding fortune and virtue consisting in justice to guests. The wide-seeing son of Cronus who does everything, both this and that, bestowed your wealth on you (127-131).

Here, the paeon itself is described both as an act of sacrifice and the subsequent divine remedy, in that it has the ability to bring about satiety as it comes in waves over the recipient.

²⁶⁸ For the connection between Aegina and the Aiakidai, see Rutherford (2001, 411).

²⁶⁹ Furley/Bremer, “We omit the third triad as it contributes little to our appreciation of Pindar's Delphic paian” (2001: 106).

In this respect, the Aeginetans' paeon is a fusion of the artistic remedy offered in the first triad and the sacrificial prayer of the Delphians from the second part of the poem, as the island itself is presented, in symbolic terms, as a foreign equivalent of the oracle at Pytho. The act functionally encapsulates not only the intentions of the poetic voice of the first triad, who heard that the watery Kastalia was devoid a chorus and offers to provide corrective action, but also the reference to the selfless act of sacrifice that initiates the second triad, which is tied to the etiology of the Theoxenia. In tracing the genealogical roots of their divine heritage, the Aeginetans address both the localized Zeus Hellanios and the Olympian Zeus, who took an active role in the affairs the island,²⁷⁰ and yet they move inexorably toward an acknowledgement of their current host, Apollo. To the extent that they address human conduct in the above lines, the Aeginetans throw emphasis on the virtue of lawful treatment of guests, “τὰν θεμίξενον ἀρετάν.” Their song, therefore, seems to be constructed with the Delphians in mind, and acts as a final rejoinder to the response that the Delphians advanced in the second triad. But a sharp distinction is made between the historic role that the Delphians played in averting famine, and the latent parochial interest the Delphian chorus belies by narrating a mythic paradigm that places emphasis on the agency of Apollo. The idea of lawfulness, which is repeated in the last lines of the poem, indicates that, if there were any tensions or competing interests with the Delphians, they are implicitly with a subset of that group that would use their relationship with Apollo for personal gain.²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ Some have observed that there is an intercalation of the mythical history between Delphi and Aegina. Though fragmentary, the third triad narrates the birth of Aiakos, who is born from Aegina, a nymph who gives her name to the island after being carried away there by Zeus. Local tradition held that Aiakos supplicated Zeus Hellanios to avert a drought, a situation that is parallel to the Delphians prayer to avert plague and the etiology of the Theoxenia. For a summary of these arguments, see Kurke (2005, 85).

²⁷¹ The lawful treatment of guests also happens to be an important theme to the conclusion of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, in which, after the god has revealed his identity and the Cretan contingent sings their paeon, Apollo instructs his new charges on how to maintain control of his precinct. When one of the

In both theme and voice, then, the third triad of Aeginetans represents the collectivization that was lacking but implicitly promised in the poem's opening; however, the concluding triad also harnesses this act of collectivization to the thematic elements that were prominent in the Delphians' reply. Whereas the first two triads were characterized by an undercurrent of antagonism, the third triad functions as a mediating and unifying conclusion to what has preceded it. The first-person singular statements of the poet from the first triad, which I argued were antagonistic to Apollo, give way to the undoubtedly choral, first-person plural statements of the Aeginetans in the third. And the Aeginetans fade from the scene by drawing on a complex image that fuses together themes that have prevailed throughout the poem: πόλιν πατρίαν, “φί- / λείτε] δ’ ἑύφ[ρον]α λαόν / τόνδε καί στεφάνοισι νιν / παν]θαλέος ὑγιε[ίας] σκιάζετε” (love your native city, love this kind people, and cover them with garlands of all-blooming health, 177-181). The metaphor of shade, which in the first triad—when a solution was only prospective—was employed in reference to the inscrutable font of oracular proclamations at the navel of the earth, is fully converted to a source of public health, and the promise now is of victory garlands, an image that brings us back full-circle to the idea of a contest that the poetic voice had suggested in the first triad.

Along these same lines, the poem concludes in a direct supplication to Apollo with the resurrection of the poetic voice, but in a much-modified form and tone from the first triad. Having all but disappeared in the second triad, the poetic voice returns in a form that is barely distinguishable from its choral surrounding: Μοισᾶν / δ’] ἐπαβολέοντ[α] πολλάκι, Παιάν, δέ- / ξ’] ἐννόμων ἐν[οπ]ᾶν (Receive, Paian, one who frequently possesses the harmonious strains of

Cretans speaks up and asks how they are to live on such an impoverished land, Apollo scoffs and tells them that, through their continual acts of sacrifice, they will receive abundant wealth from the gifts brought by visiting pilgrims, but, if they should act wantonly, other men will be their masters (ἄλλοι ἔπειθ’ ὑμῖν σημάτωντορες ἄνδρες ἔσονται, 541). And in the *Odyssey*, the instances where the suitors mistreat the guest (Odysseus, disguised as a Cretan) in their midst are legion, leading to their demise.

the Muses, 181-183). This act of supplication is a far cry from the peremptory tone of the poetic voice from the first triad that sidestepped any direct reference to Apollo. Notably, at the conclusion of the poem, there is no plea for Apollo's intercession or assistance that one would expect from a traditional paean. But there is no need for such a request, as the poem itself is serving that function for its audience, being performed at the nexus point where myth and ritual action intersect. The poem has brought about what was implicitly promised in the first triad: a union of the traditional Muses with the patron host of the gathering, Apollo, and the poet's proper position within that hierarchy. Over the course of the poem and in the third triad particularly, the poetic voice has been integrated by the chorus, and his individual artistic purpose has been converted to one with explicit communal significance. The hierarchal chain is now complete, not only within the divine sphere but also within the means by which Zeus' will is communicated to mankind, and any hint of dissonance is removed in the final refrain.

I would now like to return to the comparison that lead me to introduce Pindar's paean within the context of the Homeric Epics in the first place: the contrast that exists between the death of Neoptolemos and the salvation of the poet Phemius on a similar ritual location of the altar of Zeus Herkios. Just as the Delphic chorus, via its narrated mythic paradigm, kills off Achilles and Neoptolemos through the agency of Apollo, suggesting that the poetic voice of the first triad may suffer the same fate, so too does Odysseus, via the efficacy of his prayer to Apollo, act out a similar mythic paradigm by killing the suitors with his bow, and he is on the verge of doing the same to the poet Phemius. By saving the poet, Odysseus acknowledges that the role of this role possesses a special function that will be necessary for the success of his

endeavor, and he also begins to set to rights a hierarchal structure on Ithaca that will place the figure of the poet at its very center.²⁷²

This proper delineation of roles becomes more evident in the words Phemius uses to sway Odysseus:

γουνούμαί σ', Ὀδυσσεῦ: σὺ δέ μ' αἶδεο καί μ' ἐλέησον:
 αὐτῷ τοι μετόπισθ' ἄχος ἔσσεται, εἴ κεν ἀοιδὸν
 πέφνης, ὃς τε θεοῖσι καὶ ἀνθρώποισιν ἀείδω.
 αὐτοδίδακτος δ' εἰμί, θεὸς δέ μοι ἐν φρεσὶν οἶμας
 παντοίας ἐνέφυσεν: ἔοικα δέ τοι παραεῖδειν
 ὥς τε θεῶ ...

Clasping your knees, I beseech you, Odysseus, respect and have pity on me.
 There will be pain for you yourself in the future, if you should slay the singer,
 the one who sings for both gods and men.
 I am self-taught, and a god has implanted all manner of song in my heart.
 Methinks I sing to you as to a god.

(22.344-48)

Given the parallels we have been tracing, it is significant that the diction of Phemius' warning (αὐτῷ τοι μετόπισθ' ἄχος ἔσσεται) exactly matches Odysseus' exhortation for Achilles to rejoin battle during the embassy scene of the *Iliad* when he tells the absent warrior, who is playing his own song on his lyre, that there will be pain for him in the future (*Od.* 22.345 = *Il.* 9.249) if he doesn't act immediately and ward off the day of ruin for his comrades.²⁷³ The hero doesn't act immediately, and, if the diction indicates that there is a correlation between these scenes, it can be said that Phemius is, in a sense, offering for a different type of song to be sung²⁷⁴ than the one proffered by the Iliadic Achilles, whose song, when evaluated with his future actions, elevates the role of the hero while diminishing or eliminating the presence of Apollo. Similarly, in

²⁷² Pucci observes that Phemius, in an earlier episode, had advocated against Odysseus' return, and his new song therefore becomes one of recantation, and he becomes a poet of praise (1987, 128–39).

²⁷³ For the significance of ἄχος and its relationship to the etymology of Achilles' name, see Nagy (1999b, 80).

²⁷⁴ Biles claims that, unlike Phemius' earlier *Nostoi* song from Book 1, which, like epic song, dealt with the past and death, the new song will feature a theme of survival (2003, 206).

narrating the death of Neoptolemos, the traditional cult song of the Delphians in Pindar's Paean focuses on the other extreme, where an emphasis is on the negative characteristics of the hero and retributive nature of the god.

Moreover, although the verb ἐλέησον in Phemius' plea is evocative of Priam's request at the end of the *Iliad* for Achilles to honor the gods and to relent (ἀλλ' αἰδεῖο θεοὺς Ἀχιλεῦ, αὐτόν τ' ἐλέησον / μνησάμενος σοῦ πατρός, 24.503-04), the notion of pity is also a significant element that, at the end of the poem, frames the distance between Achilles and Apollo, who, in one of his last speeches, claims that the hero, like a lion who forcefully seizes a feast (24.39-40), "just so Achilles has lost his sense of pity," ὡς Ἀχιλεὺς ἔλεον μὲν ἀπώλεσεν (24.44), portending the continuing of antagonism until the point of the hero's death.²⁷⁵ Apollo's proclamation in turn invites Hera's rejoinder regarding a song Apollo sung at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, πάντες δ' ἀντιάσθε θεοὶ γάμου: ἐν δὲ σὺ τοῖσι / δαίνυ' ἔχων φόρμιγγα κακῶν ἔταρ', αἰὲν ἄπιστε (All you gods partook of the wedding. And among them you, [Apollo], feasted, holding the lyre, you companion of evils, always untrustworthy, 24.62-63).²⁷⁶ In both the speech of Apollo and Hera, we find the image of a disrupted banquet, and the same situation holds true during the bow contest and its aftermath for Odysseus, who, though looking like a blood-splattered lion (22.402-03), calls for restraint in the treatment of his victims (22.411-416) instead of violently taking his place at the table and who moves toward a reunion with his wife.

²⁷⁵ For more on the wild animal imagery associated with Achilles and Apollo's value judgment on that savagery, see Segal, who notes specifically that Apollo's speech, which addresses the futility of mangling a corpse, begins to move the Olympian gods, as a group, toward the emotion of pity, and all these changes of mood seem cued to the burning out of Patroclus pyre, which is the moment where a certain weariness begins to be detected in the hero, portending the end of his rampage (1971, 58).

²⁷⁶ Nagy notes that this wedding is a "traditional theme celebrated by the *Cypria* as an appropriate setting for the onset of the entire Trojan Cycle (Proclus 102.14–15 Allen)," and that the *dais* held specific importance for the Aeacids (1999b, 130).

Like Demodocus before him, Phemius is a versatile poet, capable of singing all types of songs, the type of bard who, in singing songs “for both gods and men,” is capable of repairing the schism between the human and divine realms. A necessary precondition for the reparation is a change in the relationship between hero and poet. If Achilles’ song puts him in antagonistic relationship with Apollo, where the hero’s lay threatens to upset an established hierarchy, Odysseus’ act of mercy with Phemius reestablishes that hierarchy by delegating a portion of his bardic role to Phemius. Through the success of the bow scene, Odysseus becomes the focal point of attention and looks to be on the verge of acting a mythic paradigm that has all the trappings of the Delphic story from Pindar’s paeon of Apollo’s vengeance against Achilles and Neoptolemus. Like the position the Delphian chorus asserts for itself in the second triad, Odysseus is on the brink of taking over complete control of the role of the poet.

Phemius’ plea, however, in which he suggests a type of *quid pro quo* where, if spared, he will be able to sing of the hero as to a god, evidently strikes a chord in Odysseus, whose act of benevolence effectively allows him to delegate his bardic function. Nevertheless, as appropriate for a king, Odysseus still controls the topic of song. This arrangement seems to be at least one of the motivating factors behind Odysseus’ decision to spare him, as evidenced by his exhortation to the minstrel abounding in song (πολύφημος ἀοιδός, 22.376), and to a herald whom he also saved from slaughter, to go forth and tell “another that a good deed is much better than a bad one (ἄλλω, ὡς κακοεργίης εὐεργεσίῃ μέγ’ ἀμείνων, 22.373-74). Later, Odysseus provides more instructions to the poet, asking him to create an entertainment that will beguile the remaining victims and possible onlookers to think that, despite the actual ongoing slaughter, a wedding is in progress:

αὐτὰρ θεῖος ἀοιδὸς ἔχων φόρμιγγα λίγειαν
 ἡμῖν ἠγείσθω φιλοπαίγμονος ὄρχηθμοῖο,

ὥς κέν τις φαίη γάμον ἔμμεναι ἐκτὸς ἀκούων,
 ἢ ἀν' ὁδὸν στείχων, ἢ οἱ περιναιετάουσι:
 μὴ πρόσθε κλέος εὐρὺ φόνου κατὰ ἄστυ γένηται
 ἀνδρῶν μνηστήρων, πρὶν γ' ἡμέας ἐλθέμεν ἔξω
 ἀγρὸν ἐς ἡμέτερον πολυδένδρεον: ἔνθα δ' ἔπειτα
 φρασσόμεθ' ὅτι κε κέρδος Ὀλύμπιος ἐγγυαλίξει.

But let the god-like bard, holding his clear-toned lyre,
 take the lead of the sportive dance for us,
 so that someone listening outside might say it is a wedding feast,
 whether that person be walking the road, or those dwelling about,
 lest the fame of suitors' slaughter become wide throughout the city,
 before we reach our land abounding in trees. And then and there
 we will display whatever advantage the Olympian may bequeath us.

(23.133-36)

The situation that presents itself here, where the outer signifiers of a wedding celebration mask the violence, evokes another symbol that possesses a broad contrast in images. Although, in the *Iliad*, Hephaestus' shield includes vignettes from a city at peace, in which the choral refrains of marriage song play while brides are led by torchlight from their chambers and dancers leap to the strains of the flute and lyre (18.492-496), they are balanced by images of violence from a city at war. When Achilles picks up the weapon, he, as he had done earlier through his song on his lyre, delights his own heart (αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ φρεσὶν ἦσι τετάρπετο δαίδαλα λεύσσω, 19.19), and the remainder of his Iliadic life, until almost the very end, is consumed with actions that are commensurate with the city at war. Unfortunately for the hero, fate has conspired to deprive him of his peace-time potential, whether that be the ideal king or the perfect bridegroom, and he must play his part until the end.

When Odysseus takes control of the topic of song, however, he does so in order to steer the focus away from a fame that is derived from slaughter (κλέος ... φόνου, 23.134), and this act of deferment sets the stage for the climactic recognition scene between husband and wife, which will take place as the final notes of this song are dying away. Though Odysseus is still rankled

that his wife refuses to accept his identity and is disposed toward anger, he ultimately passes the final test she puts before him when she asks for her maid to make ready their marital bed. When Odysseus narrates the method of its unmovable construction, having built it out of the living root of an olive tree, and thus revealing to her a sign (οὕτω τοι τόδε σῆμα πιφαύσκομαι, 23.202), she recognizes these manifest tokens he has firmly revealed to her (σήματ' ἀναγνούση τά οἱ ἔμπεδα πέφραδ' Ὀδυσσεύς, 23.206). Her heart melts and she bursts into tears at this moment of full recognition.²⁷⁷

In the *Iliad*, the word σῆμα is also associated with the signifier of hero cult, the burial mound.²⁷⁸ We have already seen that the burial mound (σῆμα) was an important component of Hector's definition of fame, where the physical remnants of the dead hero become the signifier the victorious party's glory in future generations (7.89-91), and Nagy notes the irony that when Hector lays out the terms of his own future fame, he seems to be describing the burial spot of Achilles, which the *Odyssey* states is positioned on a headland of the Hellespont and acts like a signal beacon that shines from afar for the benefit of contemporaneous and future travelers.²⁷⁹ Perhaps attempting to be in control of these signs, Achilles pulls Hector's corpse three-time around the σῆμα of Patroclus (24.14-17). In the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, the god tells the Cretans that the individuals who will be in control of his precinct, the site of Neoptolemos' burial, will ultimately be σημάντορες (542), literally the "ones who give the signal or sign."

²⁷⁷ Nagy connects the semantics of σῆμα with the semantics of thinking, seeing a relationship between a variety of scenes in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* that revolve around recognition (1992, 202–22).

²⁷⁸ For a discussion on σῆμα, meaning burial mound, as a physical stand-in for κλέος, see Sinos (1980, 47), while Sourvinou-Inwood notes additional functional nuances of the word (1991, 131–36).

²⁷⁹ Nagy cites the *Odyssey's* passage concerning Achilles' and Patroclus' burial site (24.80-84) as evidence of hero cult in the Homeric epics, and states that this scene "complements a set of stylized references to what is understood to be the same tomb in the *Iliad* (especially XIX 368–380; XXIII 125–126, 245–248)" (2012, 48).

In the *Odyssey*, when the reunited couple move toward their culminating recognition scene, Penelope states, σήματ' ἀριφραδέα κατέλεξας / εὐνής ἡμετέρης (you have recounted at length the conspicuous symbols of our bed, *Od.* 23.225-26). Within the recognition scene between husband and wife in the *Odyssey* the word σῆμα is therefore associated not with a burial mound but with their marital bed, which, like the turning point in the Iliadic horse race during the funeral games of Patroclus—a burial mound (σῆμα, 23,200)—is fashioned from a tree stump, indicating a degree of longevity to the sign. Though these signs are naturalistic, they can be created by institutions as well, and one of the concluding images of the *Odyssey* projects an allusion to the foundation of cult. Odysseus relates to Penelope some critical information that the prophet Tiresias had given him in the underworld: σῆμα δέ μοι τόδ' ἔειπεν ἀριφραδές, οὐδέ σε κεύσω ([Tiresias] told me this manifest sign, and I will not keep it secret from you, 23.273). Odysseus further relates that is to travel inland with an oar and to stop at the point where someone mistakes the implement for a winnowing fan, indicating an ignorance of the sea. When this moment of misrecognition occurs, he is to plant the oar in the ground and make offerings to Poseidon (11.134-35, 23.281-82).²⁸⁰

In addition, Odysseus relates to Penelope that Tiresias had told him to conduct himself as follows,

ἔρδειν θ' ἱεράς ἑκατόμβας
ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι, τοῖ οὐρανὸν εὐρὸν ἔχουσι,

²⁸⁰ A similar idea of rooting and permanence is present in the creation of temples, as when Pindar describes the etiology of Apollo's temple at Delos, which harks back to the very moment Leto steps foot on the island, a land mass that, according to Pindar, had been known to float on the sea and tossed by the winds: δὴ τότε τέσσαρες ὀρθαί / πρέμων ἀπώρουσαν χθονίων, / ἄν [δ' ἐπικ' ῥάνοις σχέθον / πέτ' ῥαν [ἀδαμαντοπέδιλοι / κίονες, ἔν[θα τεκοῖ / σ' εὐδαί[μον' ἐπόψατο γένναν (then it was that the four straight pillars with adamantine bases rose from the roots of the earth, and on their capitals held up the rock, where she gave birth, and beheld her blessed offspring, Fr. 33d. 5-10). Though the island doesn't float in Homeric poetry, Odysseus had recounted that he was seized with reverence when he noticed a palm springing up next to the altar of Apollo at Delos (6.160-163).

πᾶσι μάλ' ἐξείης: θάνατος δέ μοι ἐξ ἄλδς αὐτῶ
 ἀβληχρὸς μάλα τοῖος ἐλεύσεται, ὅς κέ με πέφνη
 γήρας ὕπο λιπαρῶ ἀρημένον: ἀμφὶ δὲ λαοὶ
 ὄλβιοι ἔσσονται: τὰ δέ μοι φάτο πάντα τελεῖσθαι.

To sacrifice holy hecatombs to the immortal gods who hold wide heaven,
 to all in order. And for me myself death will come away from the sea,
 a death so gentle that it would strike me
 when worn down by bright old age. And thereabouts the people
 will be blest. And he said to me that all this will be fulfilled.

(23.279-284)

The language of fulfillment is evocative of Achilles' ritualistic efforts to mark out a future memorial toward the end of the *Iliad* when he satisfies his promise, dragging his victims to the site of pyre of Patroclus (23.20-23), in which the bones of dead hero are quite discernible (ἀριφραδέα, 23.240). But, in the *Odyssey*, the language of fulfillment is strongly voiced by Penelope, who proclaims that she will clothe the beggar who is in her presence, the disguised Odysseus, in lovely raiment and send him wherever his heart bids if he were to be successful in the bow contest and if Apollo were to grant her prayer (21.310), representing a promise that is projected to be fulfilled if we read it in connection with the prophecy of Tiresias.

If Achilles' actions were performed in an antagonistic challenge to an Apolline hierarchy, Odysseus' and Penelope' coordinated acts of fulfillment bring about a symbiotic accord within that same system, where, at some future point, the hero will travel to discharge a type of office that effects a reconciliation between conflicting camps, potentially even ending the acrimony that was evident in the Iliadic feud between Poseidon and Apollo.²⁸¹ In this sense, the inland sacrifice that Odysseus will perform, where his goal is to dedicate the offerings to "all the gods in due order" (πᾶσι μάλ' ἐξείης) is analogous to the second song of Hermes from the *Homeric Hymn*.

²⁸¹ Purves examines the inland journey of Odysseus as a dislodging of borders, where the hero, in turning his back to the sea, ultimately "leads to a shift in genre that takes the reader (like Odysseus) beyond the epic parameters of Homer's world" (2006, 2).

While the young god initially sang a song that hinted at his competitive aspirations against Apollo—a song that thematically matches the cattle raid he commits against his brother—his second song is a type of Theogony that lauds all the gods in due order (κατὰ κόσμον, 433), precipitating an exchange of divine privileges whereby Apollo obtains possession of the lyre, and Hermes attains his own, though perhaps subordinate, honors. Though Odysseus in the bow contest may have attained a power that was similar to Apollo, unifying the bow and lyre and hitting a mark no man ever has, his subsequent actions set out to reestablish a proper hierarchy that implicitly celebrates this god, where the poet is elevated to his rightful place in an act of mercy that has ritual overtones.

Just as the tone of the poetic voice from the first triad of Pindar's "Paean 6" is recalibrated from one of antagonism to one of harmonious accord, where the strong first-person statements of the opening triad give way to a choral refrain of the third and where parochial interests eventually succumb to a vision of panhellenic unity, so too does the voice of the best of the Achaeans, from Achilles to Odysseus, moderate over the course of the narrative span of Homeric Epics. If Achilles experiences delight during the scenes of the lyre and the shield, this emotion is internalized within the hero, contained within his own heart (φρένα τερπόμενον, 9.186; φρεσὶν ἧσι τετάρπετο δαίδαλα λεύσσω, 19.19), but Odysseus and Penelope celebrate an extended night by entertaining one another with the respective stories (τερπέσθην μύθοισι, 23.300) that ultimately brought about their reunion. The couple thus experience a form of mutual delight during a festival of Apollo, giving their reunion a resemblance to the conciliatory efforts the Achaeans made in a ritual setting in the first book of the *Iliad*, culminating in a paean that brings delight to the god's heart (φρένα τέρπετ' ἀκούων, 1.433). Whereas the ritual of Hector's funeral at the conclusion of the *Iliad* may provide a temporary appeasement of the hostilities, the

fight for Troy is projected to resume (24.659-69), bringing Achilles' traditional death that much closer, but Odysseus' eventual appeasement of his antagonistic god, Poseidon, suggests the potential for a harmony between the human and divine spheres, and the hero may thus achieve a peaceful death. In the unifying third triad of Pindar's paeon, there is no call for a celebratory song to be sung to Apollo, as the poem itself, like the conclusion of the *Odyssey*, performs that function at the point where performance, myth and ritual converge.

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