

Paths of Knowledge

INTERCONNECTION(S) BETWEEN
KNOWLEDGE AND JOURNEY
IN THE GRAECO-ROMAN WORLD

Chiara Ferella
Cilliers Breytenbach
(eds.)

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THIS VOLUME IS MAINLY CONCERNED with two conceptual spheres of experience, journey and knowledge, and how they interconnect in ancient Greco-Roman representations and texts. It is a collection of papers presented at the International Conference *Paths of Knowledge in Antiquity* that was hosted in Berlin in December 2016. The papers provide case-studies from the Greco-Roman world that exemplify the interconnection between the two conceptual domains from two perspectives. First, focusing on actual journeys and concrete paths aimed at knowledge acquisition, such as literary quest stories, *nostoi*, training paths, historical voyages, and the like. Second, using metaphorical mapping, in which elements included in the conceptual domain of knowledge are depicted as connected figuratively to the domain of journey. However, it turns out that these two approaches, despite being useful starting points for textual analysis, are often so deeply intertwined with one another that it is difficult to separate them. Actual journeys often become metaphors for the path towards knowledge acquisition. In turn, journey metaphors are essential for depicting unfamiliar and abstract physical processes and are, therefore, used in theoretical constructions, as it were, *literally*. Finally, the two directions also divide to reveal a third perspective: the metaphorical path to knowledge becomes the pathway through the text, namely the path on which a reader and author set out upon together. The contributions of this volume clearly show to what extent the macro-theme of journey is essential for the narrative of knowledge acquisition.

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THE GRECO-ROMAN WORLD

EDITED BY

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Chiara Ferella

Introduction

This volume is mainly concerned with two conceptual spheres or domains of experience, those of journey and knowledge, and with the way they interconnect in ancient Greco-Roman representations and texts. The conceptual domain of journey is a prototypical example of what G. Lakoff terms the “Source-Paths-Goal” schema.¹ Studies in cognition have demonstrated that prototypical human movement is characterized by progress from a starting point or “source” via a trajectory or “path”, to a destination or “goal”. This “Source-Path-Goal” (SPG) schema is one of the fundamental schemas in human conceptualization,² which not only underlines humans’ understanding of physical movement (the ‘journey’ domain), but also all purposive activities (the ‘quest’ domain), including narration (the ‘story’ domain).³ Indeed, the SPG schema is the key concept underlying all artistic journey discourses.⁴

As claimed by G. Lakoff and M. Johnson in 2003, all the characteristics included in the domain of journey emphasize development and change. Indeed, they emphasize progress along the scale of linear time. This progress can often be seen as a *growth* and an increase in life experience. Consequently, the domain of journey is conventionally employed in terms of a growth from childhood to adult life. In fact, the concept of journey traditionally maps that of life, creating one of the most conventionalized metaphors we live by:⁵

1 Lakoff 1987, 275.

2 Johnson 1993, 166. For supportive experimental research, see Katz and Taylor 2008 and Ritchie 2008.

3 Forceville and Jeulink 2011, 41.

4 Forceville and Jeulink 2011, 41.

5 *Metaphor We Live By* is the title of a study on conceptual metaphor proposed by Lakoff and Johnson 1980. They challenged the traditional view that sees metaphor as a matter of words alone, while arguing that metaphor concerns the way we think, being an unavoidable tool of human conceptual

upbringing. Their Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) has since been developed and refined and is now the most prevalent paradigm in metaphor studies (see above all Gibbs 1994 and Kövecses 2010). By contrasting the standard view that considers metaphor as a mere artistic or rhetorical device, CMT describes metaphor as a phenomenon of human thought processes, based on a cross-domain *mapping* from a source to a target domain. Specifically, the domain from which we draw metaphorical

A large part of the way we speak about life in English derives from the way we speak about journey [...]. Speakers of English make extensive use of the domain of journey to think about the highly abstract and elusive concept of life.⁶

The pervasive and conventional nature of the structural conceptualization of life as a journey is so familiar to us that it often goes unnoticed. Yet without it, any talking or thinking about life would be seriously restricted. The *paths of life*, therefore, are pre-eminently those of human development and growth of a child.

However, the conceptualization of progress in life and human growth often entails the notion of progress in knowledge, namely an *educational growth* seen as an increase in knowledge acquisition from childish ignorance to adult understanding. The paths of one's own life, therefore, often coincide with *the paths of one's own knowledge*. In other words, the conceptualization of life as a journey forms the basis of the conceptualization of knowledge. The mapping between the two domains is clearly entrenched in the idea that moving through life results in the progression of knowledge. Yet the concepts of knowledge and journey are much more deeply intertwined. In fact, it is a common experience that traveling is a means of increasing knowledge and broadening people's points of view. Indeed, gaining insights is facilitated by an encounter outside one's comfort zone with the other. Seeing new places, viewing new cultures, meeting new people, and experiencing different ways of life give us new perspectives on our life and humans; while new experiences in turn can increase our resourcefulness by introducing us to living situations we would never encounter at home.

The relationship between the domains of journey and knowledge is therefore not only that of a metaphorical mapping; more precisely, it is that of a profound interconnection, as actual journeys are concrete opportunities to gain knowledge. The narrative plot involving traveling heroes exploits the correspondences between literal journey and purposive activities that result in an increase of understanding. Additionally, they often involve exploration and the exploratory journey is typically one of pursuit, including the pursuit of truth. Pursuit, like inquiry, involves seeking and finding as well as having the connotation of persistence.⁷ Homer's *Odyssey* is the first and canonical example of a quest story and a journey of pursuit in the Western world.

On the other hand, learning – hence, the acquisition of knowledge – can be conceptualized in our daily experience as an unfolding process, akin to following a spatial trajectory on which we move step by step. This way of conceptualizing elements of the

expressions to understand another domain is called the source domain, while the domain that is understood in this way is the target domain: see Kövecses 2010, 4. From CMT onwards, metaphor theorists have been showing that metaphor is pervasively

used in everyday life and, as metaphor mapping favors analogical reasoning, it plays a fundamental role in our epistemological upbringing.

⁶ Kövecses 2010, 3.

⁷ Turner 1998, 28.

domain of knowledge shows that we have coherently organized data about journeys that we rely on when understanding and expressing the more abstract and elusive conceptual domain of knowledge. Analogously, the process of reasoning relies on the same conceptual mapping.

When we reason, we understand ourselves as starting at some point (a proposition or set of premises), from which we proceed in a series of steps to a conclusion (a goal, or stopping point). Metaphorically, we understand the process of reasoning as a form of motion along a path – propositions are the locations (or bounded areas) that we start out from, proceed through, and wind up at. Holding a proposition is understood metaphorically as being located at that point (or in that area). This very general metaphorical system is reflected in our language about reasoning in a large number of ways.⁸

Ancient authors employ similar conceptualizations of knowledge as a journey when they speak of the ways of songs, paths of a story, methods of inquiry and the like.⁹ Indeed, the pursuit of knowledge depicted as a journey, wisdom represented as the final destination of a long course, and those who aim to know being described as travelers on the too short road of life belong to a metaphorical domain that runs over the history of Greco-Roman literature, if not of Western literature more generally.

This volume aims to explore the interconnection between knowledge and journey by looking at the diverse and multifarious *paths of knowledge* that the Greco-Roman world presents to us. Clearly, journey held a great fascination in ancient Greek and Latin texts from Homer onwards, while ancient sages, literate men, physicians, philosophers, and thinkers alike were eager to travel abroad in order to enlarge their wisdom and acquire new knowledge. However, as we are dealing with ancient societies and texts, some general comments on the cultural context of the notion of journey in the Greco-Roman world, such as those applied in 2000 by D. Fowler in his analysis of the didactic plot of journey in Vergil and Lucretius, are in order:

We are obviously not talking here of catching a plane or taking the train: we are likely to build into our constructions of the concept of travel in the ancient world such notions as the effort of travel, its length, and its dangers. Moreover, the ancient journey cannot be accomplished in one day but requires a number of stops on the way, digressions in which we can temporarily recover our strength. Road are less reliable, and we may need a guide. The situation is particularly true if we travel at night.¹⁰

8 Johnson 1987, 38–39.

9 Cf. Becker 1937; Ferella 2017; and the chapters of Hose and Ferella in this volume.

10 Fowler 2000, 213.

It is worth keeping this cultural contextualization of the concept of the (ancient) journey in mind, while addressing the main issue of the interconnection between journey and knowledge in Greco-Roman texts. For, as we will see in several case studies in this volume, it is each of these elements in the domain of journey that structures and organizes the way in which ancient authors understood and conceptualized notions of knowledge.

By analyzing the elements of didactic poetry as a paradigmatic example of a discursive genre, Fowler explored the didactic plot of the journey in Latin didactic poetry (especially Vergil and Lucretius).¹¹ In his study, he emphasizes three main “paths” that are presented within the main plot: the path of life, namely the path of human development; the path of knowledge or the progress from ignorance to knowledge; and the path through the texts, that is, “the path on which reader and author are setting out together.”¹² All contributions to the present volume show that the interconnection between knowledge and journey can be viewed and analyzed, as one, two, or all of the *paths* that Fowler recognizes.

The central idea of this volume was first explored on the occasion of the International Conference *Paths of Knowledge in Antiquity*, hosted in Berlin in December 2016. The conference was promoted within the initiatives of the Topoi Research Group C-2 *Space and Metaphor in cognition, language, and texts*. These two days of discussion between young researchers and senior scholars of classical studies strongly enriched the theoretical and thematic potential of the C-2 Topoi Research Group, while also establishing a background for the present volume, which collects the proceedings of several papers presented at that conference. We asked conference participants to present case-studies from the Greco-Roman world that exemplify the interconnection between the two domains of journey and knowledge in the Greek and Roman societies and cultures. In particular, we asked them to explore the central theme following two major directions.

First, this interconnection is explored in terms of actual journeys and concrete paths aimed at knowledge acquisition, such as literary quest stories, *nostoi*, training paths, historical voyages, and the like. In the literary accounts of these kinds of traveling experiences, ancient authors made the choice to give particular prominence to individual aspects of that knowledge they may or may not acquire along a given path. At the same time, they made a choice about which specific elements of the domain of journey (including: the path itself, its qualities; movement, process, stages; origin or destination, etc.) they aimed to foreground, and accordingly to conceal, for the sake of the story they wanted to recount. Contributions to this volume clearly show to what extent, in each

11 Fowler 2000.

12 Fowler 2000, 208.

case study, the macro-thematic of ‘journey’ is essential for the narrative of knowledge acquisition.

Second, contributions to this volume also examine the interconnection between knowledge and journey in terms of a metaphorical mapping in which elements included in the conceptual domain of knowledge are depicted figuratively in terms of elements connected to the source domain of journey. The case studies analyzed in this volume compellingly show that in the Greco-Roman literature the more abstract and elusive notion of knowledge is usually seen in terms of the more familiar and less elusive concept of journey. Specifically, contributors successfully emphasize meanings and communicative functions of verbal instantiations of the source domain of journey, and/or aspects of the target domain of knowledge, that the metaphorical instantiations foreground.

However, contributors also show that the two directions we proposed, despite being useful starting points for textual analysis, are often so intertwined in ancient texts that it is in fact difficult to separate them. Actual journeys often become metaphors for the right path to knowledge acquisition: for instance, Abraham’s actual journey becomes an allegory for the soul’s journey to self-knowledge (Joosse). Similarly, Jesus’ journey together with his disciples becomes a macro-metaphor depicting the right way to follow the divine teacher (Breytenbach), while an actual journey to Rome can coincide with a figurative pathway to discover one’s own *Romanitas* (Fascione). In turn, journey metaphors are so essential to depict more unfamiliar and abstract physical processes that, in theoretical constructions, those metaphors end up being used, as it were, *literally*. For instance, Hippocrates maintained that the soul *really* moves within the body during sleep (Shcherbakova). Similarly, according to Empedocles, elements from the objects of sensation *literally* enter the gates of the body and reach the heart by traveling within channels in the body (Ferella). Some contributions, moreover, highlight that the two directions we suggested also ramify in the third direction indicated by Fowler: the metaphorical path to knowledge becomes the pathway through the text (Hose and Oki-Suka). Along a different yet related direction, the actual paths and roads depicted in a text offer the basis for the ‘imaginary’ journey of the reader who, while reading, traverses the same places the author described in his work (Hawes).

The articles collected in this volume cover a wide range of topics and texts by considering diverse authors and areas of studies of the Greco-Roman world: from Homer to Pausanias to Tzetzes and Eustatius, via Hippocrates and the Evangelist Marks; as well as from literature to philosophy to theology, via medicine and history. Yet the volume does not aspire to be exhaustive. It does not aim, therefore, to present a comprehensive survey of the central theme of the interconnections of knowledge and journey in all chief authors and periods of Greco-Roman literature. Rather, it is a collection of ideas generated from an ongoing discussion and, as such, represents a starting point for fur-

ther investigation. Therefore, it collects case studies in which the central theme ramifies in diverse and thought-provoking directions that we hope might foster more extensive and comprehensive reflection within classical studies.

The first paper is dedicated to the most famous voyage and canonical journey narrative of Western literature: the *Odyssey*. The article by Elizabeth Stockdale entitled *With and without you: The νόστοι of Helen and Menelaos and the path to μῆτις* aims to show the correlation between a particular kind of journey, the return journey or νόστος and μῆτις. The author emphasizes that μῆτις, seen as the knowledge gained at the end of the journey, is an important facet of the concept of νόστος in the *Odyssey*. In her paper, Stockdale examines two particular νόστοι within the main narrative of Odysseus' own return: those by Helen and Menelaos. Stockdale demonstrates that their journeying is presented separately in their story-telling in order to foreground the revelation of the knowledge they both gained on their journeys. In conclusion, the author shows that Helen and Menelaos went on the same νόστος as a joint path to individual μῆτις.

The paper by Martin Hose with the title *The journey as device for structuring poetic knowledge: A poetic method in Pindar's Epinicia* shows how the diverse paths of knowledge can be seen as paths through the poetic text or, more specifically, through the texts of Pindar's epinician odes. In fact, the author submits the view that the metaphor of the poem as a journey can provide an underlying structure within several of Pindar's compositions. By analyzing Pindar's metaphor use of different elements deriving from the domain of journey (including the different modes of moving: going, sailing, jumping, flying), Hose demonstrates that a thorough exploration of the metaphors of the song as a path and of the poet as a traveler can soften, if not completely solve, the notorious question of the unity of Pindar's odes. This is then exemplified in Hose's original reading of Pindar's *Nem.* 9 – an ode in which the motif of journey serves as an instrument to generate the poem's unity. In conclusion, the author also shows that the metaphor of the poem as a journey shapes the idea of the 'material' nature of Pindaric poetic composition.

My contribution, entitled 'A path for understanding': *Journey-metaphors in (three) early Greek philosophers*, enriches Hose's results with respect to the pervasive nature of the metaphor domain of journey to illustrate aspects within the domain of knowledge in early Greek thinkers. Specifically, the chapter analyzes the use of journey metaphors by three early Greek philosophers (Heraclitus, Parmenides, and Empedocles), while highlighting the powerful and polyvalent nature of the metaphor cluster of journey to depict aspects of knowledge both with reference to diverse authors and in the same text. Also addressed is the question of the close interplay between journey metaphors, imagination, and philosophical argumentation, above all when a fresh metaphorical stratum is introduced within an already established metaphor, as in the case of Empedocles. Analy-

sis of this particular case shows to what extent metaphor use, and specifically the use of journey metaphors by Empedocles, contribute to original developments in philosophical argumentation and to the construction of physical theories.

In line with my investigation of journey metaphors in philosophy, Mai Oki-Suga's paper, entitled *An invitation from Plato: A philosophical journey to knowledge* also nicely complements Hose's analysis of the metaphor of paths of song as a main route through the text. Specifically, Oki-Suga shows that, in Plato's view, tracing paths to knowledge or traveling in search of knowledge is equivalent to reading a philosophical book. In fact, she shows that Plato conceives of his dialogues as metaphorical journeys to knowledge. In particular, the ascent–descent motif in Plato's *Politeia*, on which the author focuses in her paper, displays a possible way to read Plato's dialogue as a philosophical journey made by Socrates but in fact involving the reader in Plato's own philosophical inquiries.

The following article by Elizaveta Shcherbakova, entitled *The paths of the soul in the Pseudo-Hippocratic De Victu*, focuses on the specific metaphor use of the conceptual domains of journey and knowledge as an illustration of the way in which the knowing entity in humans, the soul, obtains understanding. Specifically, Shcherbakova analyzes a medical text – a notoriously difficult passage in the Hippocratic treatise *De Victu* – that deals with the activity of the soul during sleep. The author shows that this activity is seen as a journey, yet this is not a journey of 'the Pythagorean kind', as scholars have traditionally interpreted. Rather, the soul travels within the body in a way that aims to explain the physiology of the soul/body relationship during sleep in a chiefly materialistic way – a result that complements and enriches my discussion of the use of (journey) metaphors in the construction of physical theories.

In line with Shcherbakova's investigation of the soul and its way to obtain understanding, Albert Joosse, in his contribution entitled *Philo's De migratione Abrahami: The soul's journey of self-knowledge as criticism of Stoic oikeiôsis*, shows that the image of journey can be used in an allegorical way to depict the soul's development and increased understanding. This is in fact the allegorical reading provided by Philo of Alexandria of the biblical account of Abraham's journey from Chaldaea to Palestine. In particular, as Joosse shows, the image of journey is used by Philo in order to depict the soul's activity as a process of self-knowledge. The author thereby demonstrates that the image of journey in Philo's discussion primarily fulfils the philosophical function of criticism: it offers a vehicle to present Philo's Platonizing ideas as an alternative to the Stoic theory of moral progress or *oikeiôsis*.

Cilliers Breytenbach, in his contribution entitled *Incomprehension en route to Jerusalem (Mk 8:22–10:52)*, shows that the scene of the second part of the Gospel according to Mark (8:22–10:52) is a narration about Jesus and his disciples traveling from the north of the Lake of Galilee to Jerusalem in the south. Jesus uses the actual occasion of the journey

as an opportunity to teach his disciples who lack proper understanding of who he really is. The author demonstrates that Mark uses the road (ὁδός) as a backdrop to develop the theme of how the disciples should follow Jesus. By addressing the question of a story in which the teacher acts ‘on the way’ (ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ), Breytenbach shows that Mark’s account of the incomprehension of ‘traveling’ disciples becomes exemplary of the wrong/right way to understand Jesus’ teachings. In other words, in a way that seems to be analogous to that explored by Jooose in the case of Philo’s interpretation of the biblical account, the concept of journey is seen here as a macro-metaphor illustrating the way in which Jesus should be properly followed.

The paper by Greta Hawes, with the title *Pausanias’ Messenian itinerary and the journeys of the past*, explores the way in which Pausanias combines, in his account of Messenia, the concept of knowledge preserved unchanged in texts with the idea of knowledge as something encountered and attained through travel. The author shows that the claim of Messene to an authority rooted in the mythical past of the region runs counter to the usual situation in antiquity, in which knowledge of the past was transmitted, or said to be transmitted, through the continuation of civic, cultic, and communal institutions. The author argues that the interplay between a form of knowledge preserved in texts and knowledge attained through travel is specifically relevant to this text, since it too serves as a fixed, written object, which nonetheless offers opportunities for autonomous exploration and experience to the ‘hodological’ reader-traveler.

In line with Hawes’ investigation, Sara Fascione tackles the theme of the relevance of journey in the first book of Sidonius Apollinaris’ *Letters* with an article entitled *Finding identities on the way to Rome*. The author shows to what extent the motif of the journey in the texts under analysis represents not only an opportunity for personal growth, but also shapes the life of the travelers who, on their way to Rome, rediscover their greater or lesser *Romanitas*.

The last two papers, in a sort of ring composition, return to Homer, by focusing on the reception of the *Odyssey* in different periods by different allegorists and exegetes. Specifically, the paper by Safari Grey, entitled *Homer’s Odyssey in the hands of its allegorists: Many paths to explain the cosmos*, analyzes the idea, held by allegorists and exegetes of Homer’s *Odyssey* from the sixth century BCE until today, that Homer’s epics, intentionally or not, revealed philosophical doctrines about the shape and the working of the cosmos. The author draws particular attention to the ancient grammarian Heraclitus and the Neoplatonic philosopher Porphyry of Tyre, while suggesting that the tradition of cosmic allegorical exegesis of the *Odyssey* is still practiced in modern scholarship, specifically by the Harvard Classicist Professor Gregory Nagy. Thereby, Grey shows the many paths of cosmic interpretation that the *Odyssey* has offered to interpreters of all times.

The last paper, which is by Valeria F. Lovato and has the title *The wanderer, the philosopher and the exegete: Receptions of the Odyssey in twelfth-century Byzantium*, deals with another exegetic tradition, namely that interpreting the journeys of Odysseus as the allegory of the philosopher's struggle to reach authentic philosophical knowledge. Specifically, the author presents the interpretation by Eustatius, in his commentaries on Dionysius the Periegete, who, in order to prove that traveling is a philosophical matter, embarks on an original interpretation of Odysseus' journeys and of the interrelation of his wanderings and superior wisdom. As Lovato shows, Odysseus' voyage gives the cue to Eustatius to present even Homer himself as both a wanderer and a philosopher. The author concludes by comparing Eustatius and another Byzantine exegete, Tzetzes, and highlights the relevance that Eustatius gives to the journey motif as a means to acquire philosophical knowledge.

I would like to conclude this introduction by thanking in a very special way all contributors to this volume as well as all speakers and participants in the Berlin International Conference *Paths of Knowledge in Antiquity*. Although not all participants contributed papers to this book, each did much to foster and benefit the volume's discussion. Additionally, I would like to thank the staff of the research cluster Topoi and of the Edition Topoi, especially Dr. Katrin Siebel and Dr. Nadine Riedl, for their practical support during the conference as well as for their editorial and technical assistance. Many thanks also to the two anonymous referees for their helpful comments and suggestions on a previous draft. The greatest part of the final revision of this volume has been supported by the fellowship I received from the Harvard Center for Hellenic Studies (2017–2018). I am deeply grateful to the Director, Prof. Gregory Nagy, and each staff member of the CHS for the friendly atmosphere of productive collegiality they foster at the Center and for their invaluable practical and intellectual support.

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CHIARA FERELLA

Chiara Ferella studied Classics at the Universities of L'Aquila, Cambridge, Pisa and Munich. She is a research associate at the Johannes-Gutenberg University of Mainz within the Research Training Group 1876 *Early Concepts of Humans and Nature: Universal, Specific, Interchanged*. She is currently a fellow in Early Greek Philosophy of the Harvard Center for Hellenic Studies.

Dr Chiara Ferella
Research Training Group
*Early Concepts of Humans and Nature: Universal,
Specific, Interchanged*
Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz
Hegelstraße 59
55122 Mainz, Germany
E-Mail: ferella@uni-mainz.de;
cferella@chs.harvard.edu

Elizabeth Stockdale

With and without You: The νόστοι of Helen and Menelaos and the Path to μήτις

Summary

Νόστος is a prime feature of Homer's *Odyssey*. The epic contains many νόστοι and the focus is on the main νόστος by Odysseus. This paper discusses the νόστοι by Helen and Menelaos and how their journeying is presented separately in their story-telling. The purpose for this is to reveal the knowledge gained on their journeys; μήτις is an important facet of the concept of νόστος in the *Odyssey*, and therefore Helen and Menelaos adhere to the finite paradigm. An additional purpose is to highlight the κλέος of the individual relating their own νόστος story. Their story-telling reveals they went to the same places, had similar encounters, both gained knowledge, both shifted in voice or shape and both made a return to Sparta. From analyses of this evidence, this paper argues that Helen and Menelaos went on the same νόστος as a joint path to individual μήτις.

Keywords: Homer; Odyssey; Helen; Menelaos; journeying; knowledge

Νόστος ist ein zentrales Element von Homers *Odyssee*. Das Epos enthält viele νόστοι und die wichtigste ist die νόστος des Odysseus. Dieser Beitrag diskutiert die νόστοι von Helena und Menelaos und wie sie getrennt von ihrer Reise berichten. Ziel ist die bei dieser Reise gewonnenen Erkenntnisse herauszuarbeiten. Im Gesamtzusammenhang der *Odyssee* ist μήτις ein wichtiger Aspekt von νόστος, und deshalb passen Helena, Menelaos und ihre Reise auch in dieses Schema. Ein weiteres Ziel ist, κλέος zu erörtern, das jedem der beiden durch das Berichten des eigenen νόστος zukommt. Ihr jeweiliges Erzählen zeigt, dass sie an denselben Orten waren, ähnliche Begegnungen hatten, beide Erkenntnisse gewonnen haben, sich beide verändert haben und nach Sparta zurückgekehrt sind. Dieser Beitrag weist nach, dass sich Helena und Menelaos auf dieselbe νόστος begeben haben: ein gemeinsamer Weg aber mit je andersartiger μήτις.

Keywords: Homer; Odyssee; Helena; Menelaos; Reise; Erkenntnis/Weisheit/Einsichten

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The *Odyssey* is critically defined by the concept of νόστος, the journey home. In Homer, νόστος fundamentally means a return home from Troy by sea. Conceptually, νόστος means both the return itself as experienced by those having returned and the poetic telling of that experience either by those who underwent it, or by the poet.¹ Within the *telling of that experience*, νόστος additionally means a journey home involving the acquisition of knowledge. Though Odysseus' νόστος is the prime focus of the epic, there are in fact many νόστοι in the *Odyssey*. The beginning of the epic is marked by Phemius' song, which tells of the anguished returns of the Achaeans from Troy.² While the other νόστοι include those of Menelaos, Nestor, Agamemnon, Telemachos, Diomedes, Idomeneos, and Philoctetes, one particular journey that has not been examined as pertaining to the concept, is the one by Helen.

Helen is unique in that she is the only woman in Homer to undergo a νόστος. Her νόστος means that she makes a full return to Sparta. Within the journey she adheres to the Odyssean paradigm that the purpose of the journey is not just travel and visual experience, but more importantly, is about the acquisition of knowledge, μῆτις.³ Significantly, she tells of her νόστος just as the men tell of their own and of other men's νόστοι. The telling of the extraordinary journeys to strange and foreign lands, of the people encountered there, the ξενία relations between these people, the knowledge gained from them while encountering foreign lands, and the knowledge gained from gods and ethereal beings are all aspects of her νόστος that enable the gaining of μῆτις and also contribute to individual κλέος. Both Helen and Menelaos tell the stories of their νόστοι separately without mentioning each other. This, I will argue, serves not to consciously exclude the other from the experiences on the journey, but to highlight the κλέος of the person narrating their story.

In book four of the *Odyssey*, Helen and Menelaos tell μῦθοι as part of their hospitality to Telemachos. The nature of their 'tellings' has been argued as forming part of Telemachos' maturation;⁴ knowing about parts of his father's νόστος contributes to his understanding of the development of male κλέος. However, there are multiple purposes

1 Bonifazi 2009, 481.

2 Hom. *Od.* 1.325–327. This is also noted by Barker and Christensen 2016, 93.

3 The importance of μῆτις in the epic is also demonstrated by Odysseus' distinctive epithet πολύμητις;

he is noted by Slatkin and Nagy as the only mortal to bear this epithet in Homer. Slatkin 1996, 236; Nagy 2013, 280–284.

4 Barker and Christensen 2016, 93.

for the stories told by Helen and Menelaos. In their μῦθοι, ostensibly about Odysseus' wanderings and aspects of his κλέος, they also reveal glimpses of sections of their own respective νόστοι.

When "Helen left her fragrant high-roofed inner room"⁵, ἐκ δ' Ἑλένη θαλάμοιο θυώδεος ὑψορόφοιο ἦλυθεν, the poet tells of the accompanying goods that were brought out with her; including the ἀργύρεον τάλαρον⁶ (silver basket) that had been given to her by Alkandre, the wife of Polybos from Egyptian Thebes.⁷ In turn, Menelaos received gifts from Polybos: δὴ ἀργυρέας ἀσαμίνθους, δοιοὺς δὲ τρίποδας, δέκα δὲ χρυσοῖο τάλαντα, "two silver bathing-tubs, a pair of tripods, and ten talents of gold."⁸ Not only is this an example of gift-giving between men and women, specifically between noble men and women,⁹ but also a glimpse into the νόστος to Egypt by Helen and Menelaos. Clearly it was here that they met another leading couple. Through the interaction of guest-friendship, which implied that they stayed at the home of Alkandre and Polybos,¹⁰ they were presented with the gifts in the ritual of hospitality, ξενίαί. Gifts were given to Helen by Alkandre; the description of which focuses on their richness and purpose: weaving and the storing of wool.

χωρίς δ' αὐθ' Ἑλένη ἄλοχος πόρε κάλλιμα δῶρα:
 χρυσέην τ' ἠλακάτην τάλαρόν θ' ὑπόκυκλον ὄπασσεν
 ἀργύρεον, χρυσῶ δ' ἐπὶ χεῖλεα κεκράαντο ...

His wife gave separately her own beautiful gifts to Helen:
 she gave her a golden distaff and a silver basket with wheels beneath,
 and the edges done in gold ...¹¹

The various encounters in Egypt glimpsed in this section of book four allude to the fact that both Helen and Menelaos were together. This was a journey they undertook together, and they interacted with another couple in the Egyptian city of Thebes. In Homer, the journey taken by Helen and Menelaos to Egypt is woven into the *Odyssey's* larger μῦθος; it is incorporated into their joint story: their return from Troy. What is not presented in the text is the journey to Egypt, related by either of them.¹² In fact, the other three ancient sources on Helen and Egypt – Stesichorus, Herodotus, and Euripides

5 Hom. *Od.* 4.121–122. All translations are my own.

6 Hom. *Od.* 4.125.

7 Hom. *Od.* 4.126–127.

8 Hom. *Od.* 4.127–128.

9 Reece 1992, 74–90.

10 For a selected discussion on Homeric gift-giving and hospitality outside the martial context see Reece 1992, 74–90; Woodbury 1967, 1–16. Tracy empha-

sizes the self-sacrificing nature and trust between strangers, while Edwards 1975, 51–72 focuses on comparing details in descriptions and metrical anomalies in hospitality scenes. He highlights the irregularities and inconsistencies as a result of the process of oral composition.

11 Hom. *Od.* 4.130–32.

12 Waern 1985, 165.

– do not mention the journey to Egypt by Helen either. Herodotus, writing later in the second half of the fifth century, thought Homer suppressed the Egypt story and gave his own information on Helen arriving in Egypt shortly after leaving Sparta, adding that King Proteus of Egypt, appalled by Paris’ seduction of Helen, refused to allow Paris to take her on to Troy, thus detaining her in Egypt for the duration of the war.¹³ Stesichorus’ work (which was possibly the inspiration for Herodotus) also states that Helen never went to Troy but stayed in Egypt,¹⁴ and Euripides’ play *Helen* has the true Helen in Egypt while her εἶδωλον is in Troy. The Homeric version, that she visited Egypt on her return from Troy (and it is impossible to ascertain if it is the original story), is woven into the narrative and therefore becomes part of the larger μῦθος. It also supports in a crucial way the values espoused throughout the epic, most notably νόστος, μήτις, and ξενία.

When Menelaos, the men, and Helen have grieved from listening to the stories of Odysseus told by Menelaos,¹⁵ Helen ἐνθ’ αὐτ’ ἄλλ’ ἐνόησ’, “thought of the next thing”.¹⁶ She puts a draught into the men’s wine to make them forget their sorrows and cease crying no matter what emotional pain they were suffering.¹⁷ It is revealed by the poet that these subtle draughts in her possession were

ἐσθλά, τὰ οἱ Πολύδαμνα πόρεν, Θῶνος παράκοιτις
Αἰγυπτίη, τῇ πλεῖστα φέρει ζείδωρος ἄρουρα
φάρμακα, πολλὰ μὲν ἐσθλά μεμιγμένα πολλὰ δὲ λυγρά:
ιητρὸς δὲ ἕκαστος ἐπιστάμενος περὶ πάντων
ἀνθρώπων: ἧ γὰρ Παιήονος εἰσι γενέθλης.

Good things, and given to her by the wife of Thon, Polydamna
of Egypt, where the fertile earth produces the greatest number
of medicines, many good in mixture and many bad:
and there every man is a doctor and more knowledgeable
than all men: for they are of the race of Paiëon.¹⁸

In this, the narrator reveals that the wife of Thon, named Polydamna, from Egypt, gave these drugs – and also the knowledge of the drugs – to Helen. In this isolated section of the text, Menelaos is not mentioned. We are told of Helen’s knowledge and her purpose in drugging the wine to be consumed by the men.

13 Hdt. 2.112–120.

14 This is mentioned in Paus.10.26.1. Stesichorus also composed a poem titled Νόστος but it is fragmentary (PMG209). This is also noted by Bonifazi 2009, 485, n. 485.

15 For a discussion on tears in Homer see Tracy 2014, 223–229.

16 Hom. *Od.* 4.219.

17 Hom. *Od.* 4.220–226.

18 Hom. *Od.* 4.228–232.

Literary criticism of this section of the text has focused on Helen's ambivalent nature; she is neither good nor bad, in that while the drugs she deploys are described as ἐσθλά, the effect of them dulls the senses, and makes the men morally desensitized.¹⁹ Scholarship on Helen has also examined this passage and made much, perhaps to extremes, of her knowledge. While M. Suzuki has referred to it as *uncanny*²⁰ with an underlying sense of otherworldliness, M. Gumpert has referred to her as orientalized and as a witch-doctor and noted that it is difficult to ascertain whether she is good or bad.²¹ Similarly, N. Austin stated that the *Odyssey* has interpreted Helen's magic as a medical skill.²² What has not been examined is the fact that Helen has acquired this knowledge, this μῆτις, on her νόστος; specifically, in her sojourn in Egypt. Contextually this incident focuses on the dulling of the senses of the men to ease their pain and moves forward to Helen's μῦθος regarding her encounter with Odysseus. There is a glimpse, however, of Helen's journey and like the prime journey in the epic, that of Odysseus, Helen's journey also contains the important element of acquired μῆτις, which is essential in achieving κλέος in the *Odyssey*.²³

Menelaos also acquires knowledge in Egypt as part of the experience of his νόστος. The poet provides greater detail on Menelaos' encounters there in comparison to what is revealed of Helen's experiences.²⁴ While Helen gains μῆτις from a leading woman, Polydamna, Menelaos encounters two otherworldly individuals who both give him guidance and specific knowledge for his νόστος. Menelaos reveals,

Αἰγύπτῳ μ' ἔτι δεῦρο θεοὶ μεμαῶτα νέεσθαι
 ἔσχον, ἐπεὶ οὐ σφιν ἔρεξα τελεήσας ἑκατόμβας ...
 καὶ νῦ κεν ἦα πάντα κατέφθιτο καὶ μένε' ἀνδρῶν,
 εἰ μὴ τίς με θεῶν ὀλοφύρατο καὶ μ' ἐσάωσε,
 Πρωτέος ἰφθίμου θυγάτηρ ἄλιόιο γέροντος,
 Εἰδοθέη· τῇ γάρ ῥα μάλιστά γε θυμὸν ὄρινα.
 ἦ μ' οἶώ ἔρροντι συνήντετο νόσφιν

Though I was eager to return the gods held me in Egypt
 here, because I had not offered complete hecatombs to them....
 And now all the food would have gone, and the men's strength as well,
 if one of the gods had not been sorry for me, and saved me,
 Eidothea, the daughter of mighty Proteus, the Old Man

19 Suzuki 1989, 66; Gumpert 2001, 41; Bergren 2009, 314–335.

20 Suzuki 1989, 64.

21 Gumpert 2001, 41. Clader also refers to Helen in this incident as possessing 'witch-like' powers. Clader 1976, 32.

22 Austin 1994, 77.

23 For a detailed discussion on μῆτις in the *Odyssey* see Slatkin 1996, 223–238. Also Nagy 2013, 280–284.

24 For the scene as a whole focussed on Menelaos see Barck 1971, 23–26.

of the Sea, for I moved her heart greatly
when she met me wandering alone ...²⁵

Eidothea, the ethereal daughter of Proteus, the Old Man of the Sea, is the first other-worldly being Menelaos encounters. She gives him instructions to see her father.

πωλεῖται τις δεῦρο γέρων ἄλιος νημερτῆς
ἀθάνατος Πρωτεύς Αἰγύπτιος, ὃς τε θαλάσσης
πάσης βένθεα οἶδε, Ποσειδάωνος ὑποδμῶς:
τὸν δέ τ' ἐμόν φασιν πατέρ' ἔμμεναι ἠδὲ τεκέσθαι.
τόν γ' εἶ πως σὺ δύναιο λοχησάμενος λελαβέσθαι,
ὅς κέν τοι εἴπησιν ὁδὸν καὶ μέτρα κελεύθου
νόστον θ', ὡς ἐπὶ πόντον ἐλεύσειαι ἰχθυόεντα.
καὶ δέ κέ τοι εἴπησι, διοτρεφές, αἴ κ' ἐθέλησθα,
ὅττι τοι ἐν μεγάροισι κακὸν τ' ἀγαθὸν τε τέτυκται
οἰχομένοιο σέθεν δολιχὴν ὁδὸν ἀργαλέην τε.

A certain always truthful Old Man of the Sea frequents these parts,
the immortal Proteus of Egypt, and he knows
the depths of all the seas. He is Poseidon's servant of the whole sea.
And they also say he is my father, who begot me.
If somehow you could lie in wait and catch hold of him,
he would tell you the way to go, the stages of your journey,
and tell you the means to make your way home on the fish-full sea.
And he will tell you too, one cherished by Zeus, if you so wish,
what evil and what good has been done in your palace
while you have been away on your long and difficult journey.²⁶

Eidothea's instructions are important as a signpost to Proteus. Proteus, according to Eidothea, will give guidance to Menelaos for his journey home and give him knowledge of the events in his palace while he has been away. Not only does Proteus have the appropriate navigational knowledge for Menelaos, he also has knowledge about the occurrences within his own palace in Sparta; extraordinary knowledge, as it is an understanding of happenings at a distance from his own sea life. When he finally meets Proteus and wrestles with him till he can force him to respond, Menelaos asks which one of the gods has stalled him on his journey and how he may make his way home.²⁷ Proteus' response provides him with exactly the knowledge Menelaos requested, no more no less. He says,

25 Hom. *Od.* 4.351–352; 363–367.

26 Hom. *Od.* 4.384–393.

27 Hom. *Od.* 4.454–470.

οὐ γάρ τοι πρὶν μοῖρα φίλους τ' ἰδέειν καὶ ἰκέσθαι
οἶκον ἐυκτίμενον καὶ σὴν ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν,
πρὶν γ' ὄτ' ἄν Αἰγύπτιοι, διπτετέος ποταμοῖο,
αὐτίς ὕδωρ ἔλθῃς ῥέξῃς θ' ἱεράς ἐκατόμβας
ἄθανάτοισι θεοῖσι, τοῖ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσι:
καὶ τότε τοι δώσουσιν ὁδὸν θεοί, ἦν σὺ μενοινᾷς.

It is not now your fate to see your own people and return
to your well-made house, and to your ancestral land,
until you have gone back once more to the waters of Egypt,
the river fallen from Zeus, and there have offered holy hecatombs
in honor of the immortal gods who hold wide heaven.
Then the gods will grant you the journey that you so desire.²⁸

In this response, Menelaos learns that he needs to make the necessary sacrifices to honor all the gods so that he may proceed on his journey.²⁹ There is a focus in Menelaos' μῦθος on the concept of the journey and how he needs to acquire μῆτις to complete it.³⁰ In comparison, the glimpses we are given of Helen's νόστος reveal that her acquired μῆτις is in regard to φάρμακα. While Helen's μῆτις is gained on the journey, it is not like Menelaos', which is explicitly for the process of the journey.

Shape-shifting is a common feature of many of the gods. It is particularly the goddess Athena who shape-shifts in the *Odyssey*. In fact, Athena changes shape 16 times in the epic.³¹ Odysseus also changes shape; once on his own, disguised as a Trojan beggar entering Troy,³² and later with the help of Athena, when he is disguised as a beggar so he can enter Ithaca undetected.³³ There are different types of shape-shifting in the epic. Disguise is one type. Both Odysseus and Athena change physical shape as a form of disguise, so that people do not know them. Shape-shifting in the *Odyssey* is an aspect of δόλος; a concept upheld and valued as one result of μῆτις. On their νόστος both Helen and Menelaos *shift*. Helen adapts, *shifts* her voice multiple times so that she is heard and understood to be other women. Menelaos *shifts* his physical shape, adopting the guise of an animal to gain knowledge.

28 Hom. *Od.* 4.475–480.

29 For a discussion of the concept of νόστος by sea see Christopoulos 2001.

30 For further discussion on νόστος and structure in the *Odyssey* see Cook 2014.

31 Hom. *Od.* 1.205 as Mentos, *Od.* 2.268, 401, 416; 22.205–206; 24.503, 547–548 as Mentor; 12.222–

225 as herdsman; 7.19–20 as guide; 5.22 friend of Nausikaa; 19.33–34 as lamp-bearer; 13.288–289 as beautiful woman; 3.371–379 as vulture; 22.238–240 as swallow.

32 Hom. *Od.* 4.244–250.

33 Hom. *Od.* 13.393–403.

Helen's *shifft* takes place at the end of the Trojan war. In his μῦθος, Menelaos relates the circumstances involving the Trojan horse at the gates of Troy.³⁴ He does not focus on himself (though admittedly he does include himself in his μῦθος to ensure his remembrance and therefore κλέος) but on his wife and Odysseus.³⁵ He says,

οἶον καὶ τόδ' ἔρεξε καὶ ἔτλη καρτερὸς ἀνὴρ
 ἵππῳ ἐνὶ ξεστῷ, ἴν' ἐνήμεθα πάντες ἄριστοι
 Ἀργείων, Τρώεσσι φόνον καὶ κῆρα φέροντες.
 ἦλθες ἔπειτα σὺ κεῖσε· κελευσέμεναι δέ σ' ἔμελλε
 δαίμων, ὃς Τρώεσσιν ἐβούλετο κῦδος ὀρέξαι·
 καὶ τοὶ Διήφοβος θεοεἰκελὸς ἔσπετ' ἰούση.
 τρὶς δὲ περιστρίψας κοῖλον λόχον ἀμφαφώσωσα,
 ἐκ δ' ὀνομακλήδην Δαναῶν ὀνόμαζες ἀρίστους,
 πάντων Ἀργείων φωνὴν ἴσκουσ' ἀλόχοισιν·
 αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ καὶ Τυδεΐδης καὶ δῖος Ὀδυσσεὺς
 ἦμενοι ἐν μέσσοισιν ἀκούσαμεν, ὡς ἐβόησας.
 νῶϊ μὲν ἀμφοτέρω μενεήναμεν ὀρμηθέντες
 ἢ ἐξελθέμεναι ἢ ἐνδοθεν αἰψ' ὑπακοῦσαι·
 ἀλλ' Ὀδυσσεὺς κατέρυκε καὶ ἔσχεθεν ἰεμένω περ.
 ἔνθ' ἄλλοι μὲν πάντες ἀκὴν ἔσαν υἴες Ἀχαιῶν,
 Ἄντικλος δὲ σέ γ' οἶος ἀμείψασθαι ἐπέεσσιν
 ἦθελεν· ἀλλ' Ὀδυσσεὺς ἐπὶ μᾶστακα χερσὶ πίεζε
 νωλεμέως κρατερῆσι, σάωσε δὲ πάντας Ἀχαιοὺς·
 τόφρα δ' ἔχ', ὄφρα σε νόσφιν ἀπήγαγε Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη

Here is the way that mighty man acted and the way he endured
 inside the carved horse, where inside we who were greatest
 of the Argives were sitting and bringing death and destruction
 to the Trojans. Then you came there, Helen; you will have been moved by
 some daemon who wished to grant glory to the Trojans,
 and godlike Deiphobos followed you when you came.
 Three times you walked around the hollow ambush, touching it,
 and you called out, calling to them by name, the best of the Danaans,
 and made your voice sound like the voice of the wives of all the Argives.
 Now I and the son of Tydeus and god-like Odysseus
 were sitting there in the midst of them and we heard you calling

34 For discussion on the Trojan horse story as a narrative technique filling in the story between the end of the war and the present episode in Sparta see

Besslich 1966, 48–50; Heubeck 1954, 18ff.

35 For Odysseus' accomplishments as expressed by Menelaos see Nestle 1942, 73.

aloud, and Diomedes and I started to get up, both in mind
 to go outside, or else to answer your voice from inside,
 but Odysseus pulled us back and held us, for all our eagerness.
 Then all the other sons of the Achaians were silent:
 There was only one, it was Antiklos, who wanted to call out,
 but Odysseus, brutally closed his mouth in the clutch of his strong
 hands, held him, and so saved the lives of all the Achaians
 until Pallas Athene led you away from us.³⁶

Helen's actions here are certainly morally questionable. Suzuki says that this episode shows Helen in her devastating spectrum: her infidelity to Menelaos is made worse by her marriage to Deiphobus, and her mimicking of the voices of the wives of the Achaians demonstrates her almost supernatural ability to enthrall and enchant.³⁷ Suzuki does have a point here, though she stretches the argument with mention of Helen's infidelity: Helen's marriage to Deiphobus is not part of the story in the *Odyssey*, but appears in the later *Epic Cycle*, specifically in the *Little Iliad*.³⁸ Regardless, Helen's actions are unsettling. Her attempt to deflect Odysseus from his true purpose, his heroic return, does categorize her with the other femmes fatales he encounters on his journey: a point also noted by Austin, Suzuki, and R. Blondell.³⁹ J. T. Kakridis analyses this episode from a narratological viewpoint and has argued for conflated stories regarding Helen and the horse as a way of understanding the contradictory nature of Helen.⁴⁰

Scholarship on Helen has focused on the unsettling aspects of her mimicking the voices of the Achaian wives.⁴¹ D. Olson in particular has interpreted this particular episode as demonstrating the tensions in the marital relationship, the wider sexual dynamics in the epic of the struggle between male and female, and the lack of trust men place in women.⁴² While there are certainly sexual tensions in the *Odyssey*, specifically between Odysseus and Penelope, the relationship between Helen and Menelaos in the epic shows a reunited couple, at least on the surface, who have endured much. What needs to be highlighted in the Trojan Horse episode, is that Helen *shifts* in voice, which in itself is deceptive. Not only does she assume the voices of the wives of the Achaians, from what is implied in what Menelaos indicates about his own response, Helen also projects her own voice and calls to him. Though this is not a *shift*, her intent appears to be deceptive. Helen demonstrates δόλος, a result of μῆτις. The encounter with the Trojan horse marks the beginning of her journey back to Sparta. Therefore, the beginning

36 Hom. *Od.* 4.271–289.

37 Suzuki 1989, 69.

38 Evelyn-White 1936, 510.

39 Austin 1994, 79; Suzuki 1989, 65; Blondell 2013, 79.

40 Kakridis 1971.

41 For Helen as a contrast to Penelope regarding faithfulness and unfaithfulness see Klinger 1964, 79.

42 Olson 1989, 393–394.

of Helen's *return* is signposted by her μήτις. In addition to this, the intent of this section of the narrative was to highlight Odysseus' μήτις prevailing in the episode concerning the Trojan horse.⁴³

Menelaos' μῦθος is partly aimed at giving information to Telemachos regarding his father. It is a form of maturation for Telemachos.⁴⁴ The beginning of Helen's *return* is triply embedded in that it is within Menelaos' own νόστος (his journey within the horse into and then out of Troy), told during the νόστος of Telemachos, and within the main epic νόστος; Odysseus' νόστος. In this way, Helen's δόλος, a result of μήτις, in this episode, shows the beginning of her *return* in her νόστος, framed within the main νόστος; that of Odysseus, which itself is known for δόλος and μήτις. The μῦθος functions for both Helen and Menelaos, as Menelaos includes himself in this particular μῦθος in book 4, which by doing so also indicates that he as well as Helen possesses δόλος.⁴⁵ After all, he is concealed within the Trojan horse, which is itself deceptive. Helen and Menelaos both show δόλος in this episode, demonstrating that they have this in common with regard to their experiences on their νόστοι. While Suzuki and Blondell have mentioned Helen's moral ambivalence,⁴⁶ in this instance Menelaos is just as culpable. Though his desire to fight for and regain his wife is honorable,⁴⁷ his participation in the duplicitous intent of the Trojan horse makes him a party to deception, δόλος.

Menelaos has another episode where he demonstrates δόλος. In this episode he physically shape-shifts, whereas in the Trojan horse episode he inhabits the *shape* of deception, the Horse itself. Menelaos' physical shape-shifting is performed to gain information from Proteus, the Old Man of the Sea. Menelaos is provided with the means to achieve this by Eidothea, Proteus' daughter. Menelaos relates,

τόφρα δ' ἄρ' ἢ γ' ὑποδῦσα θαλάσσης εὐρέα κόλπον
 τέσσαρα φωκάων ἐκ πόντου δέρματ' ἔνεικε:
 πάντα δ' ἔσαν νεόδαρτα: δόλον δ' ἐπεμήδετο πατρί.
 εὐνάς δ' ἐν ψαμάθοισι διαγλάψασ' ἀλίησιν
 ἦστο μένους': ἡμεῖς δὲ μάλα σχεδὸν ἦλθομεν αὐτῆς:
 ἐξείης δ' εὐνήσε, βάλεν δ' ἐπὶ δέρμα ἐκάστω.
 ἔνθα κεν αἰνότατος λόχος ἔπλετο: τεῖρε γὰρ αἰνώως
 φωκάων ἀλιοτρεφῶων ὀλωτάτος ὀδμή:
 τίς γάρ κ' εἰναλίῳ παρὰ κήτεϊ κοιμηθείη;

43 For Odysseus' *Odyssean* qualities in this episode see Fränkel 1962, 96, 99.

44 For discussion on the education of Telemachos by Menelaos see Petropoulos 2011, 52–56.

45 For detail on the rhetorical sophistication of Helen's and Menelaos' speeches see Janka 2001, 7–26.

46 Suzuki 1989, 70; Blondell 2013, 84–85.

47 Achilles' behavior and reaction to Briseis being taken away from him in the *Iliad* reveals the nature of their relationship. He makes a brief comparison between Menelaos' love for Helen and him fighting for her, and his own love and care for Briseis and fighting for her. Hom. *Il.* 9.339–343.

ἀλλ' αὐτὴ ἐσάωσε καὶ ἐφράσατο μέγ' ὄνειαρ:
 ἀμβροσίην ὑπὸ ῥίνα ἐκάστῳ θῆκε φέρουσα
 ἠδὺ μάλα πνεύουσαν, ὄλεσσε δὲ κήτεος ὀδμήν.
 πᾶσαν δ' ἠοίην μένομεν τετληότι θυμῷ:
 φῶκαι δ' ἐξ ἄλός ἦλθον ἀολλέες. αἰ μὲν ἔπειτα
 ἐξῆς εὐνάζοντο παρὰ ῥηγμῖνι θαλάσσης:
 ἔνδιος δ' ὁ γέρων ἦλθ' ἐξ ἄλός, εὔρε δὲ φώκας
 ζατρεφείας, πάσας δ' ἄρ' ἐπώχετο, λέκτο δ' ἀριθμόν:
 ἐν δ' ἡμέας πρώτους λέγε κήτεσιν, οὐδέ τι θυμῷ
 ὠϊσθη δόλον εἶναι: ἔπειτα δὲ λέκτο καὶ αὐτός.
 ἡμεῖς δὲ ἰάχοντες ἐπεσσύμεθ', ἀμφὶ δὲ χεῖρας
 βάλλομεν: οὐδ' ὁ γέρων δολίης ἐπελήθετο τέχνης,
 ἀλλ' ἦ τοι πρώτιστα λέων γένετ' ἠυγένειος,
 αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα δράκων καὶ πάρδαλις ἠδὲ μέγας σῦς:
 γίγνετο δ' ὑγρὸν ὕδωρ καὶ δένδρεον ὑψιπέτηλον:
 ἡμεῖς δ' ἀστεμφέως ἔχομεν τετληότι θυμῷ.
 ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ ῥ' ἀνιάζ' ὁ γέρων ὀλοφώια εἰδώς,
 καὶ τότε δὴ μ' ἐπέεσσιν ἀνειρόμενος προσέειπε:

Meanwhile she (Eidothea) had dived down into the sea's great bosom
 and brought forth the skins of four seals from the water; and
 all were newly skinned. She planned a trick on her father.
 She hollowed out four beds in the sand of the sea, she sat there
 waiting, and we came very close to her. Then there
 she made us lie down in a row, and spread a skin over each man.
 That was a most dreadful ambush, for the terrible
 stench of those seals, bred in the salt water, badly distressed us.
 Who would want to lie down next to a sea-born monster?
 But she herself rescued us and devised a great help.
 She brought ambrosia, and put it beneath each man's nose,
 and it smelled very sweet, and got rid of the stench of the monster.
 All that morning we waited there, steadfast in spirit,
 and the seals came forth thronging out of the sea, and when they came out
 they lay down in a row along the shore of the sea.
 At noon the Old Man came out of the sea and found his well-fed
 seals, and went over to them all, and counted their number,
 and we were among the seals he counted first; he had no idea
 of any betrayal. Then he also lay down among us.
 We with a yell, sprang up and rushed upon him, seizing him

in our arms, but the Old Man did not forget the craftiness of his arts. First, he turned into a great bearded lion, and then a serpent, then a leopard, then a great boar, and he turned into fluid water, into a tree with high and leafy branches, but we determinedly held on to him with steadfast spirit. But when the Old Man versed in devious ways grew weary of all this, he questioned and spoke to me in words ...⁴⁸

The purpose of Menelaos' shape-shifting is to acquire μῆτις, and this is done both on the journey and for the sake of his return journey. Shape-shifting is certainly about δόλος, deception, in the *Odyssey*. Its purpose enables the hero to proceed on his νόστος; consider Odysseus entering Ithaca disguised as a beggar,⁴⁹ and also Odysseus as described in Helen's μῦθος entering Troy in disguise on the spying mission.⁵⁰ Both of these instances in the prime νόστος in the epic involve shape-shifting as a means to gain μῆτις, knowledge. Menelaos' shape-shifting adheres to this principle. Through the telling of this extraordinary μῦθος, Menelaos ensures that he will be remembered,⁵¹ and therefore he will have achieved κλέος.

Helen's *voice shift* however, is something different. Her purpose for mimicking the voices of the Achaians' wives is not to gain μῆτις. For it reveals that she already knows the color and timbre of their voices, and she has the ability to assume them to the extent that even their husbands are convinced it is their wives outside the Horse. In this way, Helen's *shift* demonstrates her δόλος and μῆτις, not a pursuit of μῆτις. However, her μῆτις, despite its moral ambivalence in this episode, signifies that this is the beginning of her return journey to Sparta. While Helen is outside the Horse, Menelaos is inside, and it is at this juncture that they both have a shared (but independent) experience and begin their *return* to Sparta.

Therefore, νόστος and μῆτις are demonstrated to be interdependent concepts valued in the *Odyssey*, not just in relation to Odysseus' νόστος, but in relation to Menelaos' and Helen's νόστοι as well. Barker and Christiansen consider the νόστοι in the *Odyssey* as glimpses of rival traditions that are woven into the narrative to develop the poem's meanings and exploration of its themes.⁵² These other traditions are not *rivals* per se, but other narratives concerning the individuals involved in and associated with the Trojan war; essentially the Troy stories. The fact that they are incorporated into the narrative

48 Hom. *Od.* 4.435–461.

49 Hom. *Od.* 13.429–440.

50 Hom. *Od.* 4. 239–258.

51 Mueller discusses women and remembering, specifically Penelope and remembering in the *Odyssey*, and how this is associated with κλέος. Moran 1975,

337–362. On remembering in Homer see Mueller 2007, 195–211. On specifically story-telling and κλέος in the *Odyssey* see chapter 1 Olson 1995. For the complexities of κλέος, including remembering and story-telling, see Segal 1983, 22–47.

52 Barker and Christiansen 2016, 90–91.

structure of the *Odyssey* is indicative of their importance in reinforcing the values deemed necessary to be repeated and highlighted in this epic. It is also about the theme of the journey home. Helen and Menelaos each tell their μῦθοι, revealing glimpses into their νόστοι. Their joint νόστος foreshadows the successful return to the οἶκος for Odysseus. Their self-reporting serves the purpose of revealing the knowledge they gained on their journeys, as well as creating individual κλέος for each of them. They both have encounters at the fall of Troy that result in them gaining knowledge, they have the guidance of gods, *shift* in voice or in shape exemplifying δόλος, acquire μήτις in Egypt from foreign and otherworldly individuals, and both return to Sparta. Helen and Menelaos have a joint νόστος as they journey to the same places, have similar encounters, and return together. Their narrations and glimpses into their joint νόστος serve the purpose of highlighting the *Odyssey*'s prime focus, that of the νόστος. The uniqueness of their individual but joint νόστος highlights not only the conceptual facets of the physical and sensory experiences of their journey, but also their pathway to individual maturity; their acquisition of μήτις, which greatly contributes to their κλέος.

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ELIZABETH STOCKDALE

Elizabeth Stockdale, M.A. (Macquarie, 2012), is a Doctoral Candidate, and Lecturer and Tutor in Ancient Greek Literature and Latin Language at Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia. Her current doctoral research is focussed on Homeric epic and the Homeric value systems. Her research interests include Homeric epic, the Homeric hymns, ancient Greek music and comparative ancient epic.

Elizabeth Stockdale
Department of Ancient History
Macquarie University Sydney, Australia
E-Mail: elizabeth.stockdale@mq.edu.au

Martin Hose

The Journey as Device for Structuring Poetic Knowledge: A Poetic Method in Pindar's Epinicia

Summary

This paper analyzes the usage of the journey (incl. the different modes of moving: going, sailing, jumping, flying) as a metaphor or image for poetry in Pindar's epinician odes. It suggests that especially the notorious problems of composition and unity in some Pindaric songs can be if not solved but at least softened by taking more seriously the metaphor of the song as path and the poet as traveler. This is exemplified by a reading of *Nem.* 9, an ode in which the journey from the place of victory to the home of the victor serves as an instrument in generating the poem's unity. The image of the poem as journey or path shapes also the concept of the 'materiality' of Pindaric poetry in contrast to later Greek literature where the book determines the concept.

Keywords: Pindar; Epinician; path; journey; ode as journey; 'Abbruchsformel'

Der Beitrag analysiert den Gebrauch der Reise (einschließlich der verschiedenen Modi von Bewegung: Gehen, Segeln, Springen, Fliegen) als Metapher oder Bild für Poesie in Pindars Epinikien. Er schlägt vor, dass bestimmte Probleme der Komposition und Einheit Pindarischer Lieder leichter lösbar erscheinen, wenn man Pindars Metaphern des Liedes als Weg und des Dichters als Reisenden ernst nimmt. Eine Interpretation von *Nem.* 9 soll dies veranschaulichen; hier wird die Reise vom Ort des Sieges zur Heimat des Siegers zum Instrument, dem Gedicht Einheit zu verleihen. Das Bild vom Gedicht als Weg prägt zudem das Konzept, in dem sich die ‚Materialität‘ Pindarischer Poesie versteht, im Gegensatz zum Konzept des Buches, das die spätere griechische Literatur prägt.

Keywords: Pindar; Epinikion; Weg; Reise; Gedicht als Reise; Abbruchsformel

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Mannigfach begegnet bei Pindar die merkwürdige Vorstellung, dass das Lied dem Dichter ein Weg ist, den er dichtend geht. Many times, the strange notion appears in Pindar that the song is a path for the poet, which he walks while versing.

— Otfried Becker

Starting from this old observation by O. Becker,¹ this contribution focuses on the main topic of this book: the journey. How Pindar uses the ‘path’ as motif – as Becker observes – can be seen as an image or – in its extended form – as a metaphor. It would indeed be a dramatic understatement if one were to state that the importance of the metaphor² in Pindar’s poetic work has not yet been sufficiently researched. The opposite is true: the analysis of exactly this literary device is a recurring topic in Pindar research. In recent years alone the following books were published: G. Patten issued *Pindar’s Metaphors: A Study of Rhetoric and Meaning* in 2009; C. Lattmann *Das Gleiche im Verschiedenen. Metaphern des Sports und Lob des Siegers in Pindars Epinikien* in 2010; and Z. Adorjáni’s *Auge und Sehen in Pindars Dichtung* dates to 2011. Finally, in 2015, B. Maslov added *Pindar and the Emergence of Literature*, which deals thoroughly with “image, metaphor, concept: the semantics of the poetic language”³ This small list could be significantly extended by more Pindar research from the last 50 years: for instance, D. Steiner’s *The crown of song: Metaphor in Pindar* published in 1986. The extensive literature reports by D. Gerber and, recently, A. Neumann-Hartmann list many works dedicated to metaphor or – more generally – the image in Pindar’s poetry.⁴

Thus, the metaphor seems to be, if published research is the measure, arguably the central literary device of Pindaric poetry, through which diverse thematic areas of the epinicia can be expressed: sport and victory,⁵ the symposium,⁶ the effect of song, and finally song itself. Equally, those thematic areas can themselves be used as metaphors for other things. It seems Pindar plays virtuously with ‘tenor’ and ‘vehicle’.

On an abstract-analytical level this shows nothing less than a significant prevalence of this observation in comparison to the concept in Pindaric works. This prevalence is much clearer than in the works of other authors, at least within Greek poetic literature, in which one of the most characteristic features is that potentially general themes are treated in special cases. Does Pindar ‘think in images’?⁷ – this could be asked with reference to a former study.

Without delving too deeply into the complex contemporary discussion regarding metaphor, we can differentiate two functions of metaphor in ancient literature. On the

1 Becker 1937, 68.

2 Explaining ‘metaphor’ would need its own book. For the ancient concepts see Lau 2006.

3 Maslov 2015, 117–245.

4 Gerber 1989; Gerber 1990; Neumann-Hartmann 2010.

5 Lattmann 2010.

6 Athanassaki 2016.

7 In reference to the title of Bernard 1963.

one hand, it can be used to make ‘unfamiliar things’ familiar; with this cognitive acquisition metaphor fulfills one of the fundamental functions of language. On the other hand, metaphor can also make ‘familiar things’ unfamiliar. With Russian formalism in mind, one could name the latter function ‘defamiliarization.’⁸ Here we find a basic condition for the ‘poeticness’ or ‘literatureness’ of a text.

Modern metaphor theory differentiates between ‘dead’ and ‘living’ metaphors; that is, whether or not the metaphoric content of a linguistic expression is still recognized as such in a speaker, listener, or reader community. The differentiation between dead and living metaphors is an empiric task – and hence, when dealing with ancient works without extant speaker communities, is difficult.⁹

Let’s return to the ‘poem as a journey’ in Pindar discussion. Becker has already noted that the basis for the Pindaric image is apparently an old notion of the speech as a journey.¹⁰ This notion also appears in the Homeric epics. Thus, Nestor can preface his speech with the words ἐξείπω καὶ πάντα διίξομαι (*Il.* 9.61), “I will speak forth and walk through everything”. The poet (or singer) can hence be imagined moving too.

Thus, Odysseus asked the Phaeacian singer Demodocus to switch from one topic or theme in his speech to another, ἀλλ’ ἄγε δὴ μετάβηθι καὶ ἴππου κόσμον ἄεισον (*Od.* 8.492), “But now, walk over [=switch] and sing about the construction of the horse.” Demodocus fulfills the request and thus the Epic continues, ... ὁ δ’ ὀρμηθεὶς θεοῦ ἤρχετο (*Od.* 8.499), “he [Demodocus], moved by the god, began”.¹¹ In the same way it can be said of singers like Demodocus that the Muse has taught them the way (= the singing), οὔμας Μοῦσ’ ἐδίδαξε (*Od.* 8.481).

The fact that we find in Hesiod or in the Homeric hymns similar equating of song and way,¹² and, additionally, the fact that the word ‘proem’, which refers to the opening part of a poetic work and is in this function attested in poetry since the fifth century,¹³ contains the meaning ‘pre-way’, indicates with some certainty that the notion that poetry is a journey was known in older Greek poetic works.

In 1935, K. Meuli had suggested in his still-relevant article ‘Skythika’ that the origin stems from the ecstatic netherworld journeys of shaman singers (whose traces are still detectable in the traditions around Musaios, Epimenides, or Aristeas), where the singer literally traveled to the places where the reported events happened: “Wir erschließen also für den griechischen ἀοιδός, und nicht nur für den Propheten und Apokalyptiker,

8 Maslov 2015, 10, in reference to Shklovsky and Jakobson in note 23.

9 Dornseiff 1921, 45, said in a pointed remark: “Welche Gewähr hat man dafür, dass in einem Ausdruck das ursprüngliche Bild noch gefühlt wird, und dass er nicht schon Scheidemünze der Umgangs- oder Dichtersprache geworden ist?”

10 Becker 1937, 68–70.

11 See Becker 1937, 60 n. 52.

12 See for instance *Erga* 659, *Hymn to Hermes*. 451, to this in general Becker 1937, 69.

13 See for instance Pind. *Pyth.* 1.4; *Nem.* 2.3; Aesch. *Ag.* 1354. See also Meuli 1935, 172 n. 3.

ein ekstatisches Erlebnis ganz ähnlicher Art wie beim Schamanen.“ “We attest, thus, for the Greek ἰσοδόξ and not only for the prophet and apocalyptic an ecstatic experience similar in nature to the shaman.”¹⁴

Of course, this would just mean that only one particular type of poetry, the form that leads to the hexametric epics of the historic period, is connected to the concept of journey or travel.¹⁵ In addition, Meuli’s argument has a ‘flaw’: there is a difference between whether a poem is perceived as travel, in which the poem describes what is encountered during the travel, or as having traveled to a destination, and then reporting what happens at that destination (Meuli’s point). More poignantly formulated, it does not follow that the notion of travel would be the characteristic property of a poem, when the very essence of traveling is missing. Meuli’s argument has, thus, not been followed much in literature.¹⁶

If we cannot trace the concept of a song as a path or journey to the narrative epic or the singer shamans, we must look to other forms of poetry for the roots of this concept. One possible starting point is the remark by H. Fränkel, which can be found – *nota bene* – in the register of his book *Dichtung und Philosophie des frühen Griechentums*: “das Lied ‘existiert’ also nicht nur, sondern es ‘geschieht,’ entsprechend dem archaischen Stil eines kontinuierlichen Ablaufs in mannigfachen Figuren [...]” “[T]he poem does not only ‘exist,’ but it ‘happens’ according to the archaic style of a continuous sequence in various figures [...]”¹⁷ If, thus, the archaic Greek poetry, that is, specifically the melic poetry, implicates a ‘happening’ and thus agency¹⁸ that is expressed in the text, it stands to reason that we would also see agency in the references to walking a path. Here, the observations of this article seem to accord with the so-called pragmatic Pindar-interpretations, especially the Italian Pindar research since the 1970s that demands we take into account “gli aspetti situazionali ed extralinguistici della ‘performance’ della lirica pindarica”, “the situational and extra-linguist aspects of ‘performance’ in Pindaric lyric.”¹⁹ In this tradition is the study by E. Krummen that analyzes *Isthmian 4* and *Pythian 5* in the context of Theban, or Cyrenic, festival proceedings.²⁰ But this argument will not be pursued in what follows; even if we can see considerable parts of the Pindaric composition in the context of ritual walking, processions (κῶμοι), or symposia, we can rarely attest based on the individual texts alone that they are referring to such happenings. Can we really conclude – as did Krummen²¹ – from *Nem. 2.24–25* that this song was shown at a komos?

In the *Nemee* we find the following:

14 Meuli 1935, 172–173, quotation 173.

15 See Meuli 1935, 172.

16 Cf., for instance, the criticism, albeit to other points, by Becker 1937, 69–70, n. 55.

17 Fränkel 1969, 587 s. v. Chorlyrik, allgemein.

18 Cf. for instance the *verba visendi* in Alkman Frg. 1

(PMG): V. 40: ὄρω, V. 50: ἦ οὐχ ὄρηται; – here the seeing of the speaker, or rather the prompting of the recipient to see, is expressed.

19 See Cingano 1979, 169.

20 Krummen 1990.

21 Krummen 1990, 276.

... τόν, ὃ πολῖται, κωμάξατε Τιμοδήμωι σὺν εὐκλεί νόστωι·
 ἀδυμελεῖ δ' ἐξάρχετε φωνῶι.

For him [sc. Zeus], oh citizens, arrange a procession, for Timodemos and his glorious return, and start with a sweet-sounding voice.²²

With this double imperative the song concludes, which means that the text imagines an apostrophized audience, the citizens of Acharnae, to organize a procession in celebration of the victory when the victorious Timodemos returns (an exact date is not given; it is an indefinite point in time in the future). In addition, the brevity of the poem indicates that the song occurred where the competition was taking place; or, to reference the fortunate phrase, which Thomas Gelzer derived from Bacchylides (2.11), the song was a Μοῦσα ἀθιγενής.²³ Thus, *Nem.* 2 simply anticipates a potential event in the future; the reference to 'komos' alone does not indicate that the poem took place during such an event. We are, then, left with the text and what happens in the text alone – even if one may assume that the Pindaric songs were not just intended for reading. In the text we find – and this may be seen as one of the accomplishments or attractive aspects of Pindaric lyric – a wide range of concepts (I will avoid categorization into 'metaphors' or 'images' here) about producing poetry and the poet.²⁴

Pindar can see his songs as prayers (*Ol.* 12.1: λίσσομαι; 14.5: εὔχομαι); they can be called 'nectar drink, gift of the Muses' (*Ol.* 7.7: νέκταρ χυτόν, Μοισᾶν δόσιν), or even a kind of 'letter of the Muses' (*Ol.* 6.91: σκυτάλα Μοισᾶν). The range of representations for the entity 'voicing' the text (be it the poet or the choir) is similarly broad: the entity can become an archer and the song an arrow (*Ol.* 2.83; 9.5), or the entity is referred to as a javelin thrower and the song the javelin (*Ol.* 13.33; *Pyth.* 1.44); the poet can be compared to a cork boat floating on the ocean (*Pyth.* 2.80: ἀβάπτιστος εἶμι φελλὸς ὡς ὑπὲρ ἔρκος ἄλμας), signaling how easy the work is for him; or referred to as a long jumper (*Nem.* 5.20); finally, the song itself can even be compared to Phoenician goods sent across the ocean (*Pyth.* 2.67–68).²⁵

If one analyzes the instances that present the song as a path and the entity speaking the song as a 'traveler', a dichotomy becomes apparent that was not treated by Becker. For it is possible – *grosso modo* – to differentiate between a traveling choir, a procession or κῶμος, on the one hand, and a messenger bringing news on the other. While, as already suggested, the traveling choir hints at traditional processions at Greek festivals, the concept of the song being presented as narration by a messenger is somewhat different.

22 Pindar is quoted on the basis of the edition Maehler 1997 and Maehler 2001, the translations follow the excellent German translation of Dönt 1986.

23 See Gelzer 1985, further to Bacchylides in Hose 2000.

24 Still read-worthy: Gundert 1935.

25 Equally the speed at which a 'poetic message' travels: fast like a horse or a ship: *Ol.* 9.23–25.

Archegetes of staging the voice as messenger is Solon's opening of the Salamis elegy (Frg. 1 IEG²):

αὐτὸς κῆρυξ ἦλθον ἀφ' ἡμερτῆς Σαλαμῖνος
κόσμον ἐπέων †ὠιδὴν ἀντ' ἀγορῆς θέμενος.

I came as a herald from lovely Salamis myself
placing, on the market, artful words in a song, instead of a speech.

In Pindar²⁶ this is a common orchestration. For instance, we find in *Nem.* 4.73–74:

Θεανδρίδαισι δ' ἀεξιγυῖων ἀέθλων
κάρυξ ἐτοῖμος ἔβαν.

Gladly I came for the Theandrides as herald of the contests, which strengthen
the limbs.

Similarly, *Nem.* 6.57b–59 has:

[...] ἄγγελος ἔβαν,
πέμπτον ἐπὶ εἴκοσι τοῦτο γαρύων
εὖχος [...].

I come as messenger,
to announce this twenty-fifth victory.

Aside from κῆρυξ²⁷ and ἄγγελος, the text further has μάρτυς – witness (Frg. 94b, 38–39) – or τιμάρορος – a person honoring somebody (*Ol.* 9.83–84) – as metaphors for the function of the (vaunting) poet or their words.²⁸ The second type, that of a choir that is traveling or at least conducting a procession, does not occur less frequently than the first type. The κῶμος or rather the verb κωμάζειν is part of Pindar's core vocabulary.²⁹ Admittedly, this, often with the phrase τόνδε κῶμον,³⁰ without further connotation, refers to the choir singing the song; a 'journey' is not implicit. That being said, there are of course further, more interesting connections. One of those we find in *Nem.* 9, which will be analyzed more thoroughly in what follows. This song has not been praised much by recent scholarship. Th. Poiss, who has written – aside from B. K. Braswell – the most

26 See the collection in Nünlist 1998, 230–232.

27 Compare Pindar *Diib.* Frg. 2.23–24: ἐμὲ δ' ἐξάιρετον
κάρυκα σοφῶν ἐπέων Μοῖσ' ἀνέστας' Ἑλλάδι.

28 Furthermore, the poet can be thought as an 'eagle'; that is, a fast-flying entity: *Nem.* 5.21; 3.80–81
(similarly *Ol.* 2.86–88 and Bakchylides 5.16–38).

Annamaria Peri pointed me also to the specifically Pindaric technique to also combine typologies of traveling (so in *Ol.* 9.23–25, *Pyth.* 11.38–40, *Nem.* 6.53–57).

29 See the evidence in Slater 1969, 296–297.

30 *Ol.* 4.9; 8.10; 14.16; *Pyth.* 5.22.

thorough analysis of this work, has called the song Pindar's "most average";³¹ indeed, it contains all typical elements of an epinicion: stating the occasion, mythos, gnomic reflection, and praise of the victor and his homeland.³² Yet, as Poiss argues, the connection between those parts is not obvious: "zahlreiche Topoi, ein Bündel schwer zu funktionalisierender Wort- und Themenbezüge und ein verunglückter Mythos." "[V]arious topoi, a bundle of hardly functionalizable word and topic relations, and an unsuccessful mythos."³³

It would, hence, be a stretch to interpret *Nem.* 9 as a Pindaric masterpiece. Yet, the concept of the journey in this text is noteworthy: for instance, *Nem.* 9 (possibly written in 474 BC to honor Chromios of Aitnai's victory in the chariot race) starts as follows:

Κωμάσομεν παρ' Ἀπόλλωνος Σικυωνόθε, Μοῖσαι,
τὰν νεοκτίσταν ἐς Αἴτναν, ἔνθ' ἀναπεπταμέναι
ξείνων νενίκανται θύραι,
ὄλβιον ἐς Χρομίου δῶμ'.

We shall organize a procession, o Muses, of Apollo from Sicyon
to the newly founded Aitnai, where open
doors cannot take in more guests,
to the blessed house of Chromios. (v. 1–3)

This song celebrates, as indicated by the reference to Apollo and Sicyon and observed by the scholion *ad loc.*³⁴ for this and the two following songs, a victory not at the Nemean games, but at the so-called Pythian games at Sicyon.³⁵ This is, for this analysis, of importance, as it begins with the request³⁶ to start a procession, for which the origin and destination are also given: Σικυωνόθε ... τὰν νεοκτίσταν ἐς Αἴτναν. The length of the song (11 stanzas with a total of 55 verses) indicates that it is an epinicion that is imagined to be recited not at the place of the competition, but the home city of the victor; that is, Aitnai. The beginning of the song, however, in its combination of hortative and adverb of place – 'from Sicyon' – gives the impression that during the first verses the whereabouts of the speaker/singer is the place of competition. The song itself, thus, is an – imaginary – journey to the destination.

The epinicion can be divided in five parts.³⁷ The first part (ll.1–10) can be called prologue; I will discuss it in due course. The second part (ll.11–27) narrates the mythos

31 Poiss 1993, 29.

32 Braswell 1998, XI.

33 Poiss 1993, 72–74.

34 *Schol. Nem.* 9 (ed. Drachmann 1927, 149–150): ... ἀφ' οὗ καὶ οἱ Σικυώνιοι τὰ Πύθια πρῶτον παρ' ἑαυτοῖς ἔθεσαν. [...] αὐταὶ δὲ αἰ ᾠδαὶ οὐκέτι Νεμεονί-

καις εἰσὶ γεγραμμένα.

35 See Currie 2005, 23.

36 Regarding the verb in subjunctive, see Braswell 1998, 45.

37 See Braswell 1998, 42–44.

of Amphiaros; he had ousted Adrastos to Sicyon (where the latter founded the games), but he then reconciled with him and took him back, which ended in the disastrous move of the Seven against Thebes, where Amphiaros was brought with his chariot to the underworld by one of Zeus' lightning bolts. The third part of the song (ll.28–34) prays for the prosperous future of Aitnai, while the fourth (ll.34–47) reports of Chromios' military successes and rewards. The final and fifth part (ll.48–55) leads to the feast, which then has its – imaginary – start and shall celebrate the victory of Chromios in Aitnai. The individual parts are entwined; because the metric stanzas do not agree in scope with the thematic parts, there is, in addition, a formal entanglement of the whole song.

Part 1 and part 5 seem significant to me. The song begins with the request to the Muses to perform a procession. Given the divine addressees, the procession is independent of time or physical geography. It suffices to name the origin and destination of the procession. At first, however, the song has a concrete time and place: in verse 4 Chromios boards the chariot, with which he won and with which he – apparently – will ride to his home in Aitnai. In that moment, the choir of Muses would start singing: ll.6ff. introduced and justified by a gnome cue this by prompting a lyre and flute (l.8). The connected thematic reference, the crown of the horse race that Adrastos endowed for Apollo, bridges to the mythos.

In this imaginary situation, the choir (sc. of the Muses) should sing the song that follows line 11. The choir of the Muses moves forward together with Chromios on the chariot during the song. Aitnai (the choir prays that it will not share Thebes' fate; 30–31) and Chromios (who is not brought to the underworld through one of Zeus' lightning bolts, but receives Olbos, l.45, from the gods) build counterpoints to Amphiaros and Thebes. With those counterpoints in mind, the choir arrives in the presence of the victory feast, to which verses 48 ff. point. The choir – as well as Chromios and his chariot – have now arrived in Aitnai from Sicyon: the aorist and the origin of the travel πέμψαν ... ἐκ τᾶς ἱερᾶς Σικυῶνος (52–53) mark the end of the journey.

It seems that in this song travel and singing is entwined; origin and destination are connected by the mythos. The journey evidently allows this connection and can serve as a vehicle to lead to a logic of connectedness of the elements. In this respect, maybe this is not Pindar's 'most average' song.

Now for the other type of the traveler, the messenger or 'herald'. It has to be said that the role of the messenger is less developed. However, there is some usage on a simple linguistic level. For instance, when Pindar writes in *Nem.* 4.71–72:

ἄπορα γὰρ λόγον Αἰακοῦ
παίδων τὸν ἅπαντά μοι διελεθεῖν.

For I find no way to walk through the whole story of Aiakos' sons.

This, then, produces an image where the speaker walks through the story, as if it were a physical space, and the structure of the story is determined by that space – or rather in this case: should be determined.

Furthermore, it is possible for Pindar to model even his song as a traveler or messenger. For example, there is the famous phrase in *Nem.* 5.1–3:

οὐκ ἀνδριαντοποιός εἰμι, ὥστ' ἐλινύσοντα ἐργάζεσθαι ἀγάλαματ' ἐπ' αὐτᾶς βαθ-
μίδος ἐσταότ'· ἀλλ' ἐπὶ πάσας ὀλκάδος ἔν τ' ἀκάτω, γλυκεῖ' ἀοιδά,
στεῖχ' ἀπ' Αἰγίνας, διαγγέλλοισ', ὅτι ...

I am not a sculptor, so that I create statues that rest permanently on their pedestal. No, you sweet song, board every transport ship and barge from Aigina and announce that

'Boarding' and 'announcing' are abilities of a messenger and as such the poem is thought.³⁸ A messenger reports what they have seen themselves. Usually this is something contemporary to the audience that they could not see or experience themselves. This, by the way, is the concept of the messenger report in a drama. In this aspect, Pindar 'breaks' with this rule. In *Pyth.* 2.52–56 we find:

ἐμὲ δὲ χρεῶν
φεύγειν δάκος ἀδινὸν κακαγοριᾶν.
εἶδον γὰρ ἐκάς ἐὼν τὰ πόλλ' ἐν ἀμαχανίᾳ
ψογερόν Ἀρχίλοχον βαρυλόγοις ἔχθεσιν
παινόμενον·

I have to forbear the offensive bite of evil speeches. For I could, living in a different world, still see, how Archilochos, fond of blaming, brought himself in helpless situations many times, bloating hate-filled speeches.

Since it seems biographically dismissible that Pindar knew Archilochos, this shows an expansion of the role of the messenger in telling uncontemporary content. The messenger became a time traveler.

If the song can be understood as a journey or path,³⁹ there are some consequences for the materiality of the song. How do you shorten a song (or how do you make it short)? Pindar's most famous *Abbruchsformel* (closing formula) shows how: *Pyth.* 4.247–248:

38 The image that the leader of the choir is a letter is similar: see *Ol.* 6.91.

39 Cf. *Nem.* 6.53–54 or *Frg.* 52h (*Pae.* 7b), 11–14: early poetry (the Homeric epic) is thought to be streets

that are drivable for a chariot; *Isth.* 3 and 4.19: many paths are open to the poet to praise the family of the victor.

μακρά μοι νεῖσθαι κατ' ἀμαξιτόν· ὥρα γὰρ συνάπται καὶ τινα
οἶμον ἴσαμι βραχύν· πολλοῖσι δ' ἄγῃμαι σοφίας ἑτέρους.

It is too long for me to continue the journey on my path. For time hurries me,
and I also know a short way. I can show this skill to many others.

If the song is understood as a path, then shortening the song can only mean to find a short-cut. *Pythian* 4 speaks in the same way when referring to the οἶμος βραχύς that the song walks along and finds. In the world of the image of a path the sudden stopping of the song is plausible; nothing is 'missing' at the end of the song because the logic of the short-cut helps to reach the destination faster.⁴⁰ To be able to understand the song as a path is based on the following requirements: the requirement of the performance of the song in an unspecified here-and-now and the requirement of the song as a 'happening' (H. Fränkel). When those requirements change, as happens clearly in Hellenism,⁴¹ when the song is understood as a text and hence as a material object, then a new metaphor replaces the image of the path. The '*Abbruchsformel*' makes this change apparent, as a Callimachean fragment – from *Victoria Berenikes* (SH 264,1) – shows: αὐτὸς ἐπιφράσσαιτο, τάμοι δ' ἄπο μήκος ἀοιδῆι, "add yourself [sc. the reader] mentally and that way cut some length from the song!"

This fragment⁴² is in the context of the narrative telling how Heracles meets the farmer Molorchos, at whose place he had stayed before, again after the fight with the lion. But the poem does not report the fight with the lion – which should be considered by the reader as complementing the poem – as the poem itself can leave it out and, freed from the obligation of narrating the fight, is made shorter. The effort of the readers, their independent imagination, contributes to this brevity. Callimachus, however, does not form it into the image of a path – for instance, encouraging the reader to take a short-cut. Rather, the song and the book, the roll of papyrus that contains the song, are virtually merged. The song is shortened by cutting something away from it (sc. the material on which it is written). Instead of a path that is traveled with and in the poem, in Hellenism, the song becomes a book.

40 We find the image of the path also in the *Abbruchsformel* of *Pythian* 11,38–40: the poet pretends to have lost his way at a crossing (or at the sea).

41 This change has been thoroughly researched in re-

cent decades; see, for instance Bing 1988 and Bing 2009.

42 Text and translation after Asper 2004, see here in general Hose 2008.

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MARTIN HOSE

Dr. phil. Konstanz 1990, Habilitation Konstanz 1993, has been Professor of Greek at Greifswald (1994–1997) and Munich (Chair of Classics) since 1997. He is member of Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften (since 2001) and served as its Vice-President (2013–2016). He is Chairman of the Graduate School *Distant Worlds*, his research focuses on Greek drama and historiography.

Prof. Dr. Martin Hose
Abteilung für griechische und lateinische
Philologie
Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität
Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 1
80539 München, Germany
E-Mail: m.hose@klassphil.uni-muenchen.de

Chiara Ferella

‘A Path for Understanding’: Journey Metaphors in (Three) Early Greek Philosophers

Summary

This paper analyzes the use of journey metaphors by three early Greek philosophers, Heraclitus, Parmenides, and Empedocles. My investigation emphasizes the powerful, malleable and polyvalent nature of this metaphor cluster both with reference to diverse authors and in the same text. It highlights, moreover, the relationship between metaphor, imagination and philosophical argumentation, above all when a fresh metaphorical stratum is introduced within an already established metaphor. Finally, it investigates to what extent the introduction of a fresh metaphorical stratum contributes to creative thinking and, by structuring and organizing new insights, to theoretical argumentation.

Keywords: Heraclitus; Parmenides; Empedocles; metaphor; journey; path; theoretical argumentation

Dieser Aufsatz untersucht die Verwendung von Reise-Metaphern von drei frühgriechischen Denkern: Heraklit, Parmenides und Empedokles. Meine Untersuchung hebt die ausdrucksstarke, leichtplastische und polyvalente Natur dieses Metaphern-Bereiches sowohl in Bezug auf diversen Autoren, als auch in ein und demselben Text hervor. Im Fokus steht der Zusammenhang zwischen Metapher, Imagination und philosophischer Argumentation, besonders wenn ein neuer metaphorischer Stratus in einen schon etablierten Metapher-Bereich eingeführt wird. Schließlich wird auch untersucht, in wie fern ein neuer metaphorischer Stratus, indem dieser neue Kenntnisse und Einsichten strukturiert und organisiert, zum kreativen Denken und zur theoretischen Argumentation beiträgt.

Keywords: Heraklit; Parmenides; Empedokles; Metapher; Reise; Weg; theoretische Argumentation

I Introduction

By paraphrasing the outset of a book by Z. Kövecses,¹ consider the use in English of the following phrases: *following* a story or feeling *lost* when not *following* it; *going over* a talk; *reaching* a good point; *going around* in circles when arguing ineffectually; *coming* to a conclusion; *following a path* of thoughts; and so on. These phrases would not count in English as using particularly poetic or picturesque language. Yet the expressions in italics are all metaphors related to the domain of journey. We can see that a large part of the way we speak about aspects of knowledge in English derives from the way we speak about journeys. In fact, it seems that speakers of English make extensive use of the concrete and familiar domain of journey when they talk about the highly abstract and elusive concept of knowledge.

Ancient Greek authors analogously spoke about aspects of knowledge by employing journey metaphors. In fact, a traditional, ancient image depicts poetry as a chariot and the poet as a traveler who, following the paths of songs, composes. More generally, ancient Greek terminology depicts the act of composing a song or of storytelling in terms of following paths, the results of this composing in terms of destinations, and the poets or authors who are composing in terms of travelers who, during this journey, acquire and at the same time give form to their knowledge.²

In this paper, I analyze the use of journey metaphors by three early Greek philosophers, Heraclitus, Parmenides, and Empedocles, thereby attempting to indicate the purposes behind their metaphor use. One main question that my analysis aims to raise concerns the powerful, malleable, and polyvalent nature of a metaphor cluster both with reference to diverse authors and in the same text. Another question concerns the relationship between metaphor, imagination, and philosophical argumentation, above all when a fresh metaphorical stratum is introduced within an already established metaphor. More specifically, to what extent does a fresh metaphorical stratum contribute to original and creative developments in theoretical argumentation?

I will show to what extent, despite drawing from the same metaphor cluster, Heraclitus, Parmenides, and Empedocles make use of the conceptual domain of journey

1 Kövecses 2002, 3.

2 See Ferella 2017, 112–114 and the contribution of Hose in this volume. Becker 1937, 100–116, by analysing the development of the traditional motive of ways of songs or ways of stories in Pindar, Herodotus, and the tragic poets Aeschylus and Sophocles, already concluded that journey metaphors developed from spoken language and became, in Homer, a conventionalized way of referring to poetical composition, storytelling, or, more

simply, to talking/writing about something in general. Journey metaphors depicting diverse aspects of knowledge (which either have to be acquired or, once acquired, must be expressed in words) are especially conventional in prose, for instance in Herodotus (where we frequently find expressions such as ἔρχομαι φράσων, λέξων, ἐρέων; ἦμα λέξων or ἄνεμι, ἀναβαίνω, ἐπάνεμι, ἐπὶ τὸν πρότερον λόγον, etc.

in very different ways. However, in all cases, the evaluation of metaphor use is closely dependent upon the context in which journey metaphors are employed. This may raise problems with reference to fragmentary traditions, in which quotations of authors' own words are often given without context. In the present study, this particularly affects our interpretation of Heraclitus' metaphors, which will be analyzed and evaluated by taking into account all possible contextual scenarios. As a consequence, Heraclitus' use of journey metaphors may be either entrenched or highly lively and intentional, depending on which context we account for. On the other hand, both Parmenides' and Empedocles' use of journey metaphors can be considered as unconventional and deliberate; yet they show diverse communicative purposes. Specifically, Parmenides' metaphor use has a strongly paraenetic scope: he uses journey metaphors to dramatize the choice towards his philosophy, depicted as the only path that leads to 'rescuing' truth, in contrast to the path of 'ordinary' people who, because they know nothing, are merely wandering around. Empedocles, on the other hand, not only uses traditional journey metaphors, but also introduces a fresh metaphorical stratum within the established metaphor cluster for argumentative and theoretical purposes: journey metaphors structure and organize his theory of sensation and knowledge acquisition.

2 Heraclitus

Heraclitus' fragment DK 22 B 45 is constructed around journey metaphors:

ψυχῆς πείρατα ἰὼν οὐκ ἂν ἐξεύροι ὁ πᾶσαν ἐπιπορευόμενος ὁδόν· οὕτω βαθὺν λόγον ἔχει.

The one who travels over every road will not find out, by going, the limits of the soul. So deep a *logos* does it/he have.³

3 The fragment is quoted by Diog. Laert. 9.7 as part of a brief and general introduction to the doctrines of Heraclitus. The text of the fragment, in the version reported above, follows the new edition of Laks and Most 2016, vol. 3, 188. See also Mouraviev 2006, III.b/1, 115. However, its translation and interpretation mainly follow Betegh 2009, 398–404. Nevertheless, I am not entirely convinced by Betegh's proposal to exclude ἰὼν from the text (following Tiziano Dorandi, the most recent editor of Diogenes Laertius). The wording πείρατα ἰὼν is the result of an emendation by Diels of the text transmitted by the manuscripts. Specifically, the most important manuscripts, B and P, present πείρατέον (but in

B é is erased), whereas other manuscripts have πείραται ὄν. The correction πείρατα (scil. ψυχῆς) is a good solution on the basis of the Latin translation of the Heraclitean fragment by Tertullian (*terminos animae*). The participle ἰὼν, in this position, is instead more problematic (see von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1927, 276: "so gestellt ist ἰὼν undenkbar"). According to Betegh, since "the participle is not attested in the manuscripts, it does not have the support of Tertullian, and does not seem to add much to the meaning, and its syntactical position may be problematic", the better option is to expunge it from the text. To this I would object that:

Explicit references to the domain of journey are represented by terms such as *ἰών*, ὁ ... ἐπιπορευόμενος and ὁδόν. That they are metaphoric instantiations is suggested by the fact that they are used to conceptualize the abstract notions of soul and *logos*.⁴ Terms such as *πείρατα* and ἄν' ἐξεύροι could also be seen as metaphoric instantiations from the same domain. However, we cannot elucidate Heraclitus' metaphors in all their nuances without first having a general interpretation of the fragment. This is particularly complicated by the fact that the fragment has been transmitted without contextual information and, for this reason, it offers more than one univocal interpretation.

As G. Betegh has shown,⁵ the Heraclitean sentence is composed of four syntactic/semantic units: (a) the soul's limits, which (b) will not be found out; (c) the traveler; and finally (d) the depth of the *logos* that the soul or, according to Betegh's interpretation, the traveler has. A first problem is to identify which soul Heraclitus is talking about. Two interpretations have been offered, according to which the soul is either (1) the divine cosmic soul,⁶ or (2) the individual soul.⁷ According to the second reading, moreover, the individual soul could be further specified as (2a) the specific soul of each (human) individual; or (2b) the particular individual soul of the traveler.⁸

According to (1), the limits of the soul, indicating the internal extremities of the space of the soul, characterize the soul as something that has spatial extension, presenting it in the same way as one of the cosmic masses. In fact, the expression *ψυχῆς πείρατα* recalls the Homeric formulas such as *πείρατα γαίης* (e.g. *Il.* 8.478–479; *Od.* 4.563; *Hes. Erga* 168), *πείρατα Ὠκεανοῖο* (e.g. *Od.* 11.12), or *πείρατα πόντοιο* (e.g. *Il.* 8.478–479). The Homeric parallels could reinforce the idea of the soul as a cosmic mass like the masses of earth and ocean.⁹ In this reading *ψυχή* coincides with the world soul. Consequently, the limits of the world soul are to be taken as concrete points in space, probably

(1) the epic poetry offers examples of the interjected participle *ἰών*, for instance at *Il.* 1.138 (referred by Betegh 2009, 397); and above all (2) Pindar *Pyth.* 10. 29–30, namely the text that animates Diels' emendation, constitutes a relatively strong parallel and helps explain the corruption in the transmitted text at the lowest cost.

4 The definition of the Heraclitean notion of *logos* is a notorious problem, which in a footnote I can only try to explain in very general terms. Evidence from ancient texts indicates that, at the beginning of the fifth century BCE, the term *logos* described an oral or written report usually presented to persuade, please, or teach the public. Yet some pivotal Heraclitean fragments, especially B 1, 2, and 50, suggest that the term can also indicate something that exists independently from the 'reporter'. This challenges the traditional meaning of the word. For a detailed

yet schematic survey of the term *logos* in sixth and fifth-century Greek literature, see Guthrie 1965, I, 420–424. More recently, Gianvittorio 2010 advocates the opinion that Heraclitus' *logos* must be translated as 'discourse' or 'report' in all its occurrences. The interpretation of the concept of *logos* touches on an aspect of Heraclitus' thought that, despite its pivotal nature for the understanding of his philosophy in general, is rather marginal to the comprehension of his metaphor use. For this reason, in the present study, I will leave the term untranslated.

5 Betegh 2009, 405.

6 Kahn 1979; Bollack and Wissmann 1972, 163–164.

7 Marcovich 1967, 367; Dilcher 1995; Pradeau 2002.

8 Betegh 2009, 412.

9 See Betegh 2009, 406. For a parallel, cf. B 36, which treats the soul on a par with the cosmic masses water and earth.

along the vertical direction.¹⁰ According to Heraclitus, no matter how many roads (concrete) travellers travel, they won't be able to discover the (concrete) limits or borders of the world soul, since its *logos* is incredibly deep.

According to this reading, we can consider Heraclitus' use of journey metaphors as 'undeliberate'.¹¹ Spatial metaphors are, in fact, employed to conceptualize an abstract notion, that of the world soul, in terms of a spatially extended mass, similar to the extension of the ocean, the terrestrial crust, and the size of the sky. We could hardly conceptualize and speak about the highly abstract concept of the (world) soul without the use of metaphors.¹² Moreover, as the concept of soul has to be specified in terms of a spatially extended cosmic mass, the metaphors to be used are most likely spatial metaphors like those employed by Heraclitus.¹³ Accordingly, Heraclitus' metaphor use in this case would be undeliberate, as there is no sign of an intentional use of spatial metaphors *as metaphors*, and, consequently, it does not display any particular communicative purpose. Simply, Heraclitus is using metaphors because they are essential tools in order to conceptualize and speak of the abstract concepts of the world soul.

According to (2), on the other hand, the sense of the first part of Heraclitus' sentence will be, in very general terms, that much traveling on the part of the subject does not help discover the nature of the human soul. According to this reading, the reference to the limits of the soul needs to be explored further. In fact, if we are not referring to a spatially extended cosmic soul, what does it mean to say that the human soul has limits? R. B. Onians believes that *πείρατα* here means 'bonds' (rope-ends), implying both 'beginning' and 'end'. Taken in this way, the expression 'bonds of the soul' may not indicate an actual place in the body where the soul has its end and beginning,¹⁴ but a metaphorical place. Accordingly, the end and beginning of the soul could indicate its origin and conclusion, hence the whole parabola of its existence; that is, its fate in this life and, possibly, beyond. In this framework, another Homeric parallel indicates that the word *πείρατα* can signify the end of a certain situation or state of things, signaling the completion or final destination of a process. The word 'limits', accordingly, indicates

10 Betegh 2009, 407.

11 On deliberate metaphor use and its communicative function see Steen 2008 and, more recently, Steen 2017.

12 See the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (or CMT) by Lakoff and Johnson 1980. In their view, metaphor is not simply a device of creative literary imagination; rather, it is a valuable cognitive tool without which neither poets nor 'ordinary' people could conceptualize and express abstract concepts such as time, love, life, death, etc., as well as, in this case, the cosmic soul.

13 Similar observations can be made with reference to the highly abstract concept of time, see Kövecses 2002, 23: "time is a notoriously difficult concept to understand. The major metaphor for the comprehension of time is one according to which time is an object that moves. Many common everyday expressions demonstrate this: 'the time will *come* when ...'; 'Christmas is *coming up* soon'; 'time *flies*'; 'in the *following* week ...'; 'time *goes by* quickly'" (author's italics).

14 This is the interpretation by Marcovich 1967, 367.

the idea of end, completion, or even achievement.¹⁵ Thus, no one could find out the completion of the human soul, its origin and end – hence, its real nature – by traveling over every road. The verb ἐξευρίσκω, expressing the idea of discovering, occurs in other Heraclitean fragments. In B 94, discovery is the result of attentive observation, better still, of control: the Furies, ministers of Justice, “will find it out” if the sun oversteps his measures. Additionally, B 18 claims that “he who does not expect the unexpected will not discover it.” It is worth noting that in B 27, “the unexpected” is the fate of men after death.¹⁶ This parallel, together with the word πείρατα in the sense I indicated above, suggests that the one who travels over every road cannot discern the fate of the human soul. Furthermore, a comparable form of the verb ἐξευρίσκω occurs in B 22:

χρυσὸν γὰρ οἱ διζήμενοι γῆν πολλὴν ὀρύσσουσι καὶ εὐρίσκουσιν ὀλίγον.

Seekers of gold dig up much earth and find little.

The fragment refers to the seeking of something that is highly precious, in this case gold, which lies deep inside the earth’s surface and which can only be found, therefore, through hard effort. In fact, the discovery of a small amount of gold requires that the seeker digs up much earth. The parallel between εὐρίσκω in B 22 and ἐξευρίσκω in B 45 suggests the idea that looking for the fate of the soul, for its beginning and end, is like seeking for gold. Accordingly, in order to find out the limits of the soul, one has to go deep down below the surface of things, searching inside oneself,¹⁷ looking for hidden meanings while digging up many irrelevant elements, because the *logos* lies, like gold, at a great depth.

Thus, following reading (2), we understand the fragment as Heraclitus denying that *traveling over every road* could lead to discovering the nature and fate of the soul. This has mainly been explained in two different ways: either (I) Heraclitus is pointing out an unsuccessful method of research coinciding with traveling over many places. In this case, the ‘limits’ of the soul may potentially be found out if one pursues the right research, which does not include much traveling; or (II) Heraclitus is paradoxically indicating that “only the one who travels every road will not find out the limits of the soul!”¹⁸ In this case the pivotal content of the fragment is that the soul is limitless. Therefore, searching everywhere for the limits of the soul will result in the fundamental awareness that what we are looking for cannot be discovered; for the soul is limitless and this is the truth that only the one who travels every road can find. Reading (II), advocated by Betegh, requires that, in the last phrase of Heraclitus’ fragment, οὕτω βαθὺν λόγον ἔχει, the deep *logos* is not that of the human soul in general, but that of the particular soul of the traveler: “so

15 Cf. e.g. *Od.* 23.248.

16 Cf. Kahn 1979, 129.

17 Cf. DK 22 B 101: ἐδιζησάμην ἔμεωυτόν.

18 See Betegh 2009, 412.

deep a *logos* does he [i.e. the traveler] have”. According to this reading, traveling is taken as a “precondition of having [a soul that has] a deep *logos*”. Betegh’s argument works as follows: in as much as you travel over every road, your *logos* increases and gradually becomes deeper and deeper. That your *logos* increases means that the *logos of your soul* becomes deeper and deeper; yet, as much as your soul has a deep *logos*, its limits cannot be found out. “This is why one will never find the limits of the soul – only such a person will be aware of the limitlessness of the soul,” Betegh concludes.¹⁹

However, there is at least another possible reading for Heraclitus’ fragment. One can interpret it in reference to the individual traveler and still make a point in favor of reading (I), which seems to be more in line with other Heraclitean fragments. This interpretation takes the sentence οὕτω βαθὺν λόγον ἔχει, “so deep a *logos* does he [i.e. the traveler] have”, as ironic: the one who travels over every road in order to inquire into the nature and fate of his soul displays *de facto* a superficial *logos*. In fact, it is not unlikely that we see in this fragment a hint at a method of research that Heraclitus seems to have disliked elsewhere: that kind of inquiry that Heraclitus attributed, for instance, to Hecataeus and Xenophanes (cf. B 40), and which was also pursued by Herodotus. This approach to knowledge consists in traveling all around the known world in order to collect as much information as possible. Yet, this accumulation of factual data is, for Heraclitus, a form of *polymathie*, “much learning” that “does not teach understanding” (B 40). In particular, this way of inquiry is not appropriate to specific kinds of topics, like the *logos* or the nature and fate of the soul. In those cases, Heraclitus seems to recommend introspection or, at least, an in-depth analysis of the object of research.

Note that it is according to this last reading that Heraclitus’ metaphor use displays all its communicative power. Through the images of travelers and the many roads over which they travel, Heraclitus may at first have referred, in a less figurative way, to journeys of knowledge or journeys of discovery – a common practice of early thinkers at Heraclitus’ time. Nevertheless, the notion of journeys of discovery hinted at by Heraclitus can be taken as a metaphor indicating a precise method of research, which, if you are seeking into the limits of the soul, brings about no relevant results. For the soul can be penetrated and discovered only through an in-depth analysis that looks for deep, significant truth. In this reading, Heraclitus employs journey metaphors to depict the one who wishes to know in terms of a traveler, while the ‘roads’ traveled could depict the different methods of inquiry one pursues. Accordingly, knowledge acquired at the end of the learning process is depicted as the destination of a journey or, more precisely, as a discovery resulting from research journeys. Note that, as we have seen above, this idea of a completion achieved at the end of a process is within the Greek concept of *πείρατα* (this also being taken metaphorically). *Ψυχῆς περίρατα*, therefore, turn out to

19 Betegh 2009, 412.

be the fragment's most important words; indeed, the core of the message, outlined by their very first position in the sentence.

3 Parmenides

Parmenides²⁰ of Elea analogously used journey metaphors in his philosophy to talk about topics and methods of inquiry in terms of roads, to refer to those who wish to know as travelers, and to hint at the results of inquiry in terms of destinations. Much more than in Heraclitus, however, in Parmenides journey metaphors and, in particular, the figurative motif connected to *path* constitute the central and unifying motif of his philosophical poem as a whole.²¹ In fact, Parmenides' concepts concerning path, journey, and destination are part of a whole metaphorical scenario: Parmenides (and, in his example, anyone who wishes to know) is a traveler on a journey with his inquiry-goals seen as destinations to be reached. His philosophy could be seen as the vehicle that enables people to pursue those goals. The journey is not easy. First of all, there are different paths one can choose. These paths represent different *ways* of inquiry; hence, different methods of inquiry and diverse arguments resulting from them. There are crossroads where a decision must have been made about which roads and directions one must follow.

To appreciate the centrality of journey metaphors in Parmenides' philosophy, let us consider Parmenides' own words in DK 28 B 2 more closely:

εἰ δ' ἄγ' ἐγὼν ἐρέω, κόμισαι δὲ σὺ μῦθον ἀκούσας,
 αἶπερ ὁδοὶ μοῦναι διζήσιός εἰσι νοῆσαι·
 ἢ μὲν ὅπως ἔστιν τε καὶ ὡς οὐκ ἔστι μὴ εἶναι,
 πειθοῦς ἔστι κέλευθος, ἀληθείηι γὰρ ὀπηδεῖ,
 ἢ δ' ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν τε καὶ ὡς χρεῶν ἔστι μὴ εἶναι,
 τὴν δὴ τοι φράζω παναπειθεῖα ἔμμεν ἀταρπόν·
 οὔτε γὰρ ἂν γνοιῖς τό γε μὴ ἔόν οὐ γὰρ ἀνυστόν
 οὔτε φράσσεις.

Come now, I shall tell – and convey home the tale once you have heard –
 just which ways of enquiry alone there are for understanding:
 the one, that (it) is and that (it) is not not to be,

20 The present analysis of Parmenides' journey metaphors is an abridged version of my previous contribution on the cognitive aspect of Parmenides' two ways of inquiry; see Ferella 2017, to which I also

refer for a more extensive analysis of the fragments quoted in this chapter.

21 Cf. Reale and Ruggiu 2003, 28, 177–182.

is the path of conviction, for it goes with true reality,
 but the other, that (it) is not and that (it) must not be
 this, I tell you, is a trail wholly without report
 for neither could you apprehend what is not, for it is not to be accomplished,
 nor could you indicate it.²²

In the verses above, words relating to the same metaphor cluster are repeated four times within eight lines: we have *ways*, ὁδοί, at l.2, *path*, κέλευθος, and *goes with*, ὀπηδεῖ, at l.4, as well as *trail*, ἀταρπὸν, at l.6. As we can see, not only does Parmenides compare methods of inquiry to paths, but conviction about certain topics and ways of arguing about them is said to *go together* with true arguments, suggesting that developing convincing and true arguments might be understood as following paths. Elsewhere²³ I already demonstrated that this clustering of metaphors from the same domain is to be taken as a device activating metaphoricity. This means that Parmenides is here intentionally drawing attention to the journey metaphors for specific communicative purposes.²⁴

The suggestion that we deal here with textual devices drawing attention to the metaphorical domain of journey gains force if we consider the fact that, in the original layout of Parmenides' poem, the verses of B 2 were closely followed by the verses of B 6:

χρή τὸ λέγειν τε νοεῖν τ' ἐὼν ἔμμεναι· ἔστι γὰρ εἶναι,
 μηδὲν δ' οὐκ ἔστιν· τὰ σ' ἐγὼ φράζεσθαι ἄνωγα.
 πρώτης γάρ σ' ἀφ' ὁδοῦ ταύτης διζήσιος <ἄρξω>,
 αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' ἀπὸ τῆς, ἣν δὴ βροτοὶ εἰδότες οὐδὲν
 πλάζονται, δίκρανοι· ἀμηχανίη γὰρ ἐν αὐτῶν
 στήθεσιν ἰθύνει πλακτὸν νόον· οἱ δὲ φορεῦνται
 κωφοὶ ὁμῶς τυφλοὶ τε, τεθηπότες, ἄκριτα φύλα,
 οἷς τὸ πέλειν τε καὶ οὐκ εἶναι τωὐτὸν νενόμισται
 κού τωὐτόν· πάντων δὲ παλίντροπὸς ἔστι κέλευθος.²⁵

It is necessary to say and think that what is is; for it is to be,
 but nothing is not. These things I bid you ponder.
 For <I shall begin> for you from this first way of inquiry,
 then yet again from that which mortals who know nothing
 wander two-headed: for haplessness in their

22 Text and translation according to Palmer 2009, 364 and 365, slightly modified.

23 Ferella 2017.

24 On attention to metaphors as metaphors, communicative purposes, and deliberate metaphor use, see

n. 11 above.

25 The text and translation of this fragment (except minor modifications) follow Palmer 2009, 366 and 367.

breasts directs their wandering mind. They are borne along deaf and blind at once, bedazzled, indiscriminating hordes, who have supposed that it is and is not the same and not the same; but the path of all these turns back on itself.

Here there are seven words relating to the metaphor cluster of journey within nine verses. Besides the familiar mapping between ways or methods of inquiry and paths (see *όδοῦ* at l.3 and *κέλευθος* at l.9), Parmenides verbalizes the conceptually related idea according to which the one who wishes to inquire is understood as a traveler. In these verses in particular, the focus is on human beings who, since they know nothing, *βροτοὶ εἰδότες οὐδέν*, at l.5 are said to wander around, *πλάζονται*. Yet it is helplessness that directs, *ιθύνει*, their wandering mind, *πλακτὸν νόον*. Thus, men are borne, *φορεῦνται*, along a path that leads to no destination, as it turns back on itself, *παλίντροπός ἐστι κέλευθος*.

Let us, furthermore, extend our analysis to B 7 and B 8.1–2, which might have closely followed B 6 in the original poem:

(7) οὐ γὰρ μήποτε τοῦτο δαμῆι εἶναι μὴ ἐόντα·
 ἀλλὰ σὺ τῆσδ' ἄφ' ὁδοῦ διζήσιος εἶργε νόημα
 μηδέ σ' ἔθος πολῦπειρον ὁδὸν κατὰ τήνδε βιάσθω,
 νωμᾶν ἄσκοπον ὄμμα καὶ ἠχῆεσαν ἀκουῆν
 καὶ γλῶσσαν, κρῖναι δὲ λόγῳ πολύδηριν ἔλεγχον
 ἐξ ἐμέθεν ῥηθέντα

(8) μῦθος δ' ἔτι μῦθος ὁδοῖο
 λείπεται ὡς ἔστιν[.]

(7) For this may never be made manageable, that things that are not are.
 But you from this way of enquiry restrain your understanding,
 and do not let habit born of much experience force you along this way,
 to employ aimless sight and echoing hearing
 and tongue. But judge by reason the strife-filled critique
 I have delivered.

(8) And yet a single tale of a way
 remains. ...²⁶

The repetition of the same metaphor word in this fragment is noteworthy: the term *ὁδός* (in different cases) is repeated thrice within seven verses. Here, as in all occurrences we

²⁶ Text and translation according to Palmer 2009, 366–369.

have analyzed thus far, the word *ὁδός* is used metaphorically to indicate methods or topics of inquiry. Yet it is worth noting that the first reference to *ὁδός* by Parmenides is not in the metaphorical sense of ‘ways of inquiry’ as we find for the first time in B 2.2. Rather, *ὁδός* is one of the first words of Parmenides’ poem as a whole, and we find it twice within the very first five lines of the prologue to his philosophical poem (B 1.1–5). Here, *ὁδός* does not indicate a method of inquiry, but a non-metaphorical²⁷ pathway that Parmenides travels:

ἵπποι ταί με φέρουσιν, ὅσον τ’ ἐπὶ θυμὸς ἰκάνοι,
πέμπον, ἐπεὶ μ’ ἐς ὁδὸν βῆσαν πολύφημον ἄγουσαι
δαίμονος, ἢ κατὰ πάντων ἄτη† φέρει εἰδὸτα φῶτα·
τῆι φερόμην· τῆι γάρ με πολύφραστοι φέρον ἵπποι
ἄρμα τιταίνουσαι, κοῦραι δ’ ὁδὸν ἡγεμόνευον.

The mares who carry me as far as the soul could reach
were leading the way, once they stepped guiding me upon the path of many
songs²⁸
of the divinity, which carries over †all cities† the man who knows.
On it was I borne, for on it were the headstrong mares carrying me,
drawing the chariot along, and maidens were leading the way.²⁹

27 Parmenides’ account of his extraordinary journey in the opening of his poem is presented as an allegory. Crisp 2005, 117, defines allegory as a “superextended metaphor”, namely a metaphor “extended to the point where all direct target reference is eliminated”. See, moreover, at p. 129: “Allegories can be regarded as superextended metaphors. The result of their ‘superextension’, however, is to remove all language relating directly to metaphorical target. What remains is language that refers to and describes the metaphorical source, both literally and non-literally”. We can refer to Parmenides’ proemial journey as an allegory in the sense Crisp points out: “Allegory in literary contexts refers to fiction that are given a continuously metaphorical interpretation [...] What all allegories [...] have in common is that they never refer directly to their metaphorical target. Direct reference is only to the metaphorical source constructed as a fictional situation” (Crisp 2005, 115–116). At pp. 127–128, Crisp clarifies this conclusion: “There is no longer any of that mixing or ‘blending’ of source- and target-related language

that is the linguistic basis for conceptual blending [as for instance in an extended metaphor]. The language of allegory simply refers to and describes the metaphorical source. It thus consists of a set of possible references and predications, or, to speak less literally, the source is construed as a possible, fictional, situation.” Accordingly, we can say that Parmenides, in his introductory depiction of his extraordinary journey, employs non-metaphorically-used, but literally-used language. “A distinction between metaphorically-used and literally-used language can only be drawn in relation to a possible situation. Language relating directly to that situation is literal; language relating to it indirectly is not” (Crisp 2005, 128).

28 Palmer translates “far-fabled”, following Diels-Kranz (“vielberühmt”), Guthrie 1965, II, 7 and Kirk, Raven, and Schofield 1983, 243, but see Mourelatos 2008, 41 n. 93, and Cerri 1999, 167.

29 Text and translation according to Palmer 2009, 362 and 363, slightly modified.

It is not unlikely that Parmenides' audience, when hearing for the first time of the two metaphorical *paths* of inquiry (B 2.2; see above), were immediately led to link them to the *óδός* of many songs they heard in the prologue (B 1.2–3). This hypothesis gains force if we consider the fact that the lines of B 6 appear to be constructed in parallel with the lines of the prologue. In particular, the description of ordinary people in B 6 plays on the contrast with Parmenides' self-representation in the very beginning of his poem. As we have seen above, in B 6 we are told that mortals know nothing (βροτοὶ εἰδότες οὐδέν, B 6.4), while Parmenides is here depicted as a man who knows (εἰδότα φῶτα, B 1.3). Moreover, mortals wander along (πλάζονται, B 6.5), and have a wandering understanding (πλακτὸν νόον, B 6.6), because they are borne along (φορεῦνται, B 6.5). In contrast, mares carry (φέρουσιν, B 1.1) Parmenides along a divine path that leads (φέρει, B 1.3) to a precise, divine destination that coincides with the source of Parmenides' knowledge and philosophy, as we apprehend a few verses later. In contrast, the path of mortals turns back on itself (παλίντροπός ἐστι κέλευθος, B 6.9), and as such, does not lead to any destination or knowledge. Given this, it seems reasonable to conclude that, when hearing of the two ways of inquiry in B 2 and of the depiction of wandering people in B 6, Parmenides' audience has recalled the whole scene of Parmenides' journey depicted in the prologue.

It is worth mentioning that Parmenides' prologue, quoted in its entirety by Sextus Empiricus (*Adv. Math.* VII, 111 ff. = DK 28 B 1), is the account of Parmenides' exceptional journey to the house of Night, in order to meet a goddess who is presented as the source of Parmenides' philosophy. In fact, the rest of Parmenides' philosophical discourse coincides with the words the goddess reveals to Parmenides (addressed throughout in the second person singular) on the occasion of their encounter. As M. M. Sassi (1988) has convincingly pointed out, the first words the goddess reveals to Parmenides confront him with a metaphorical crossroads, namely, as we saw above, with the choice between the two paths of inquiry. As Sassi argued, the motif of the crossroads plays an essential role in several accounts of the soul's journeys to the afterlife that we find in the so-called golden tablets³⁰ and in some of Plato's myths (like the myth of Er in the tenth book of Plato's *Republic*, 614b).³¹

30 The golden tablets are texts found in funerary graves and tumuli of the fifth and fourth century BCE. They consist of brief texts in hexameter, engraved on small pieces of gold, destined to provide post-mortem instructions for the initiates in the underworld. Scholars have suggested that the texts engraved on the tablets come from a more ancient oral tradition that employed, like Parmenides' poem, Homeric material: cf. Edmonds 2004, 32, and Fer-

rari 2007, 120–121. It is worth noting that there are remarkable *verbatim* parallels between the text of the golden tablet from Hipponion and Parmenides' poem: see Ferrari 2005, 115–117. A detailed analysis of the tablets can be read in Pugliese Carratelli 2001; Bernabé and Jiménez 2008; Graf and Johnston 2013.

31 On the myth of Er, see also the analysis by Oki-Suga in this volume.

In fact, accounts of the journeys of the souls to the afterlife follow a recurrent pattern. This includes, among other details, the description of a crossroads between different paths, which the soul has to choose and follow. In these journeys of the soul the crossroads between different paths represent the possibility for the soul to reach salvation, following the right path, or perdition, following the wrong road. The road, in other words, symbolizes the fate of the soul, which in fact is dramatically determined by which path it will follow. Scholars of Parmenides have extensively shown that the prologue to Parmenides' philosophy is full of reminiscences and echoes of these extraordinary, extramundane journeys of the soul,³² not without eschatological and initiatory aspects.³³ Sassi compellingly points out that the philosophical crossroads between two opposite and indeed mutually exclusive methods of inquiry is another element in this framework, even though it is not part of the account of Parmenides' journey in the prologue, but is included in his philosophical discourse.

However, in contrast to the eschatological texts, in Parmenides, the crossroads is a journey metaphor indicating the philosophical choice between two methods of research.³⁴ Yet Parmenides' insistence on journey metaphors as motifs of his philosophical argumentation and the echoes, through these metaphors, both to his own extraordinary journey to knowledge and to the soul's extramundane journeys to salvation or perdition render Parmenides' journey metaphors part of a symbolic (and dramatic) framework. Accordingly, his metaphorical crossroads adopts the symbolic value it has in the accounts of the soul's journeys. Parmenides' journey metaphors serve the purpose of dramatizing one's own choice towards the right way of inquiry.³⁵

Thus, Parmenides' use of journey metaphors intentionally draws attention to a conventional and widely used metaphor cluster, that of the journey depicting aspects of knowledge. His metaphors have, at the same time, argumentative and paraenetic purposes. On the one hand, the idea of a crossroads between two paths of inquiry that the philosopher/traveler must follow if he wants to gain knowledge has a strongly philosophical value in Parmenides' poem, as it is very apt to depict Parmenides' philosophical dilemma and the principle of *tertium non datur*: either it is or it is not. Yet, while the goddess urges Parmenides to adopt a specific method of inquiry, to abandon the antipodal method, and to follow a specific theory about the physical world, Parmenides wishes to present and promote his philosophy by persuading his audience to make the right choice: the choice for his philosophy. In fact, Parmenides' figurative language suggests

32 Cf. Morrison 1955; Feyerabend 1984; Pugliese Carratelli 1988; Sassi 1988; Battezzato 2005, 90; Ferrari 2005, 115–117; Palmer 2009, 58–61.

33 Note that εἰδότες φῶτα (B 1.3) and κοῦρος (B 1.24) have been examined as elements indicating a mystery-initiatory context, as Diels 1897, 49, already

highlighted. See moreover Burkert 1969, 5 with n. 11 and at 14 with n. 32. More recently, see Ferrari 2007, 103.

34 Sassi 1988, 390–391.

35 See Ferella 2017.

the idea that, just like an extraordinary traveler (such as the soul), the one who wishes to know about natural philosophy can make a crucial choice of either the right or wrong path. At the core of his philosophical arguing, therefore, Parmenides might have felt the need to emphasize that choosing his philosophy is not just an option among other valuable alternatives. Rather, it coincides with the sole possibility to gain true knowledge against unawareness. Once the ‘travelers’ have made the effort to choose the unusual but right ‘path,’ they will experience an extraordinary ‘journey’ that ‘will lead’ them to the promised ‘destination,’ the root of true wisdom, and rescue them from their original condition as ‘randomly wandering men.’ Parmenides’ use of journey metaphors, in conclusion, conveys the symbolic and dramatic notion that knowledge of the truth, that is Parmenides’ philosophy, is ultimately a matter of life or death.

4 Empedocles

Like Heraclitus and Parmenides, Empedocles draws from the metaphor domain of journey in order to depict himself as a traveler who, by following a certain path of song, composes his philosophical poem. I am referring in particular to the lines B 3.3–5 that run as follows:

καὶ σέ, πολυμήστη λευκώλενε παρθένε Μοῦσα,
 ἄντομαι· ὧν θέμις ἐστὶν ἐφημερίοισιν ἀκούειν,
 πέμπε παρ’ Εὐσεβίης ἐλάουσ’ εὐήνιον ἄρμα.

And you, virgin Muse, white-armed, much wooed,
 I entreat you: send what is right for creatures of a day
 to hear, driving the well-reined chariot from Piety.

Clearly Empedocles picks up a famous journey motif relating the image of poetry to a chariot in which the poet, guided by his Muse, rides while composing his song. The image of the chariot of poetry is a traditional metaphor. Parmenides’ chariot on which he is borne to the house of Night can be seen as another instantiation of the same image and, as such, it is traditionally identified with the chariot of poetry. In this context, the Daughters of the Sun, who lead the way for Parmenides, are compared to the Muses who traditionally lead the chariot of poetry and the poetical composition.³⁶ Empedocles

36 As Fränkel 1951; D’Alessio 1995; Asper 1997, 21–98; Cerri 1999, esp. 96–98, and Ranzato 2015, 25–28 have shown. In this account note that Parmenides is borne, on his chariot, along a path that is characterized as ὁδὸν ... πολύφημον, “a road ... of many

songs” (B 1.2). This word occurs once in *Od.* 22. 375–376 as an epithet of Phemius, the poet “of many songs” of Odysseus’ house, and in Pindar *Istm.* 8.56a–61 in which it characterizes the Muses’ *thrēnos* on Achilles’ corpse. This is a further element in Par-

might have had precisely this traditional image in mind when he encourages his Muse to drive the chariot (of poetry) from Piety. Through this metaphor he claims for himself the composition of a pious, sacred (εὐσεβής), and divinely inspired song.

Like in Heraclitus and, above all, in Parmenides, in Empedocles we also find the metaphor of people as travelers in the journey of life and, while traveling/living, they may acquire more or less valuable knowledge. In fact, whereas ordinary people just wander along and know nothing, those who wish to know shall leave the common path and change their method of inquiry.

Let us examine Empedocles' fragment B 2:

στεινωποὶ μὲν γὰρ παλάμαι κατὰ γυῖα κέχυνται·
πολλὰ δὲ δεῖλ' ἔμπαια, τὰ τ' ἀμβλύνουσι μερίμνας·
παῦρον δὲ ζῶησι βίου μέρος ἀθρήσαντες
ὠκύμοροι καπνοῖο δίκην ἀρθέντες ἀπέπταν,
αὐτὸ μόνον πεισθέντες, ὅτωι προσέκυρσεν ἕκαστος
πάντοσ' ἐλαυνόμενοι· τὸ δ' ὄλον <τίς ἄρ'> εὐχεται εὐρεῖν;
οὕτως οὐτ' ἐπιδερκτὰ τὰδ' ἀνδράσιν οὐτ' ἐπακουστά
οὔτε νόωι περιληπτὰ. σὺ δ' οὔν, ἐπεὶ ὦδ' ἐλιάσθης,
πεύσειαι· οὐ πλεῖόν γε βροτεῖη μῆτις ὄρωρεν.³⁷

For narrow devices are spread through their limbs,
and many wretched things strike in and dull their meditations.
And having seen [only] a small portion of life in their lifetime,
swift to die, carried up like smoke they fly away
convinced only of that which each has chanced to experience
being driven in all directions. Who then boasts that he has found the whole?
These things are not to be seen or heard by men
or grasped with mind. But you then, since you have turned aside to this place,
shall learn: mortal intelligence certainly rises no higher.³⁸

menides' proem conveying the traditional image of the chariot of poetry led along the path of divinely inspired songs.

37 The text of the fragment follows the reconstruction by Laks and Most 2016, vol. 5, 386–388.

38 The text of the manuscript tradition is not exempt from some problems. The most intricate is related to the last line. In my text I accept the reading transmitted by the manuscripts οὐ πλεῖον γε, considering the modern emendations unnecessary. Like Calzolari 1984, 76 n. 17, and Bollack 1969, III.2, 10 n. 9, I set a punctuation mark after πεύσειαι. Deichgrae-

ber 1938, 23 n. 37, already adopted this 'conservative' solution, whereas Diels-Kranz followed here the nineteenth-century editors who reconstructed the line as follows: πεύσειαι οὐ πλέον ἢ βροτεῖη μῆτις ὄρωρεν. Their text emphasizes the antithesis between human means and divine knowledge. For instance, Kranz's translation "nicht mehr, als sterbliche Klugheit sich regt und erhebt" highlights the idea of a limited human understanding without any differences between ordinary people and the disciple: Empedocles wanted to communicate to Pausanias no more than any other human be-

Sextus Empiricus, who quotes these lines in *Adv. Math.* 7.122–4, refers them to Empedocles’ disdain for sense organs as means to gain genuine knowledge. Human beings are depicted as equipped with narrow devices,³⁹ which, in conjunction with many wretched things dulling their meditations and with a small portion of life,⁴⁰ restrain human beings from finding τὸ ὅλον, the whole. Hence people merely know what they chance to experience and are, for this reason, driven in all directions by their impressions, πάντοσ’ ἐλαυνόμενοι. The image of people being driven in all direction by their powerless senses closely recalls Parmenides’ description of ordinary humans knowing nothing, βροτοὶ εἰδότες οὐδέν, and wandering along because of helplessness that directs their mind. Thus, just like Parmenides, Empedocles uses journey metaphors to depict ordinary people’s unawareness in contrast to a few chosen people who know or will know.

Furthermore, the image of people being driven by their sensorial impressions points to a method of inquiry that is not appropriate to ‘the whole’ and genuine truth. For perceptions are narrow means able to grasp only a small portion of reality. In contrast, in a way that is reminiscent of Parmenides, Empedocles’ disciple is said to have exceptionally chosen a different path. In contrast to ordinary people wandering about, we have seen above that Parmenides is borne on a precise pathway, which people do not usually walk upon. This leads to the divine source of knowledge. Similarly, Empedocles’ disciple has to part from the common path if he wants to gain true knowledge: σὺ δ’ οὖν, ἐπεὶ ὄδ’ ἐλίασθης, πεύσσει. In conclusion, we can see that Empedocles extensively draws from the conceptual domain of journey in order to metaphorically organize and structure his idea of inquiry and knowledge more generally.

ing can know. However, as Calzolari has already pointed out, “l’alterità che il frammento stabilisce tra i mortali impotenti di fronte alla forza delle cose e il soggetto che si è appartato, per così dire, fuori dalla mischia (cfr. v. 8), appare ben più evidente qualora implichi un’antitesi altrettanto marcata tra non-conoscenza e conoscenza alla cui acquisizione sia preliminare (come in Parmenide 1, 9) lo straniamento, appunto, dall’orma del volgo.” Following Calzolari, I maintain that the emphasis on “you” (l. 8) gives prominence to the unique nature of the disciple’s experience in contrast to all other people. At the end of his learning process, Pausanias will be able to know much more than any other ordinary human being.

39 The term *παλάμη*, which originally means “the palm of the hand” and is used as synecdoche to in-

dicate the “open hand” (in opposition to the fist) – hence, “hand” in most general terms – is here used metonymically to indicate sense organs. With regard to sensation, this term conveys the idea that sense organs are able to *grasp* reality, as if sensation were a form of contact. In fact, as we will see in due course, Empedocles argues for perception occurring because of a contact, mediated by effluences, between the organs and the objects of perception.

40 Human beings are depicted as *ὠκύμοροι* at l.4. The epic compound *ὠκύμοροι* always has in Homer the meaning of “destined to prompt death” and “bearer of prompt death”. It denotes extraordinary cases of heroes who hurl themselves upon the enemy. Empedocles in contrast employs it as an epithet for the whole of humanity with a shade of universal pessimism.

4.1 A new metaphorical stratum

In doing so, Empedocles follows a well-established tradition. In fact, in the examples analyzed above, we have seen that Empedocles employs, with minor poetical variations, already established and even entrenched journey metaphors to depict his poetical composition and method of inquiry, hence, more generally, various elements related to the domain of knowledge (the chariot of poetry, the paths of research, ordinary people wandering along, the inquirer as a traveler, knowledge as the destination of the right road of inquiry, etc.). As we have seen, these metaphors have already been activated by Heraclitus and, above all, Parmenides. In the examples that now follow, on the other hand, we will observe much more substantial innovations where Empedocles introduces, within the already established metaphor cluster of journey, a fresh metaphorical stratum. This relates to the cluster under analysis, but contributes, by eliciting creative thinking and structuring new insights, to original developments in theoretical arguing.

Let us look at fragment B 3 and, in particular, ll. 9–14:

ἀλλ' ἄγ' ἄθρει πάσῃ παλάμῃ, πῆι δῆλον ἕκαστον,
μήτε τιν' ὄψιν ἔχων πίστει πλέον ἢ κατ' ἀκουήν
ἢ ἀκοήν ἐρίδουπον ὑπὲρ τρανώματα γλώσσης,
μήτε τι τῶν ἄλλων, ὅποσῃ πόρος ἐστὶ νοῆσαι,
γυίων πίστιν ἔρυκε, νόει δ' ἦι δῆλον ἕκαστον.

But now consider with every power how each thing is clear
without holding any seeing as more reliable than what you hear,
nor echoing ear above piercings of the tongue
and do not in any way curb the reliability
of the other limbs by which there is *a passage for understanding*
but understand each thing in the way in which it shows itself.

In these lines Empedocles urges Pausanias to consider everything “in the way in which it shows itself”, ἦι δῆλον ἕκαστον, with every sense organ he has at his disposal, πάσῃ παλάμῃ.⁴¹ These verses are Empedocles’ advice to Pausanias to sharpen every sense organ and to make correct use of each of them when inquiring into the physical world. Correct use requires, for instance, that Pausanias should not prefer a particular sensation over the other sense organs. Even though sight was traditionally considered as the sensation that “reveals many distinctions and most enables us to know,”⁴² Pausanias shall know

41 See n. 39 above.

42 Cf. Aristotle *Metaph.* 98ca. The same opinion is held

by Heraclitus B 55 and 101a and by the Hippocratic author of *De Arte* 13.1.

each thing in the way in which it shows itself. Each sense organ is in fact a “passage for understanding”, *πόρος ἐστὶ νοῆσαι*⁴³ (B 3.12).

My claim is that Empedocles is building his theory of sensation upon the metaphorical meaning of *πόρος*. The word *πόρος*, which originally indicated a passage over a river or a narrow part of the sea (a strait), metaphorically depicts a passage through a permeable substance such as the skin.⁴⁴ In Empedocles’ theory of sensation, *πόροι* are passages that connect the sense organs at the periphery of the body to a central organ in the body, which functions as the controlling organ.⁴⁵ In the metaphor use of *πόρος* indicating body channels carrying perceptions along the body, we see that the established cluster of journey/knowledge welcomes a new metaphorical stratum: the notion of *traveling ‘quanta’ of knowledge*. In other words, while the established metaphor cluster typically envisages the perceiving and knowing subject as a traveler, the new metaphorical stratum introduces the notion that (material elements coming from) objects of perception and knowledge can travel.⁴⁶ This creative element permits the eliciting of productive reasoning and gives the cue for a new theory of perception and knowledge acquisition that, as we shall now see, rests upon journey metaphors.

That Empedocles builds upon the metaphorical value of the word *poros* in his theory of perception and knowledge acquisition is emphasized by fragment B 133. Here,

43 In Homer, the verb *νόησα* means “perceive by the mind”; hence “apprehend”: τὸν δὲ ἰδὼν ἐνόησε, *Il.* 11.599; οὐ ἴδον οὐδ’ ἐνόησα, *Od.* 13.318, cf. *Il.* 10.550, 24.337, etc. By extension, it also means “think”, “consider”, and “reflect”: φρεσὶ ν. ἐνθ’ εἶπεν ἢ ἔνθα in *Il.* 15.81; μετὰ φρεσὶ σῆσι νόησον Αἰνείαν, ἢ κέν μιν ἐρύσσειαι ἢ κεν ἑάσῃς in *Il.* 20.311; οὐδ’ ἐνόησε κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατὰ θυμὸν ὡς ... *Il.* 15.264; see von Fritz 1943.

44 In Empedocles a further metaphorical meaning for the term *πόρος* is attested indicating a textual passage in a given work (cf. B 35.1).

45 Empedocles did not give a thorough explanation of what these *πόροι* are made of and, above all, what they contain inside: see Theophr. *Sens.* 13. Moreover, the metaphorical use of the term *poros* with reference to sense organs may not be an Empedoclean innovation. Alcmaeon of Croton could have employed this term before Empedocles in order to refer to body channels that connect the eyes to the brain. However, as we do not have Alcmaeon’s words on his theory of perception, but only reports of later sources (specifically Theophrastus and Calcidius), we cannot evaluate his use of the term *poros*

or his metaphorical language in his theoretical discourse. Therefore, Empedocles’ verses remain the first Presocratic first-hand source we have to explore this particular topic. Moreover, even though it could be hypothesized that, because of Alcmaeon’s use, *πόρος* at Empedocles’ time is already on its way to become a technical term in theories of perception and knowledge acquisition, we can be pretty sure that Empedocles still perceives its metaphorical aspect. A strong indication of this is Empedocles’ use of the synonymous word *ἀμαξιτός* for *πόρος* in B 133 (see below) – an unusual word in such a context, which activates the metaphoricity of the whole image. On the estranging effect of rare words in metaphor use and their power to activate metaphoricity in such contexts, see Ferella 2017, 116–117.

46 This idea can be related to the traditional image of words that move and can be moved. In fact they are winged (*Il.* 1.201, 2.7, 4.69 etc.), pass the barrier of the teeth (*Il.* 4.350, 14.83, etc.) and can be put into the listener’s θυμός (*Od.* 1.361, 21.355. Cf. Hes. *Erga* 274).

according to Clemens of Alexandria,⁴⁷ Empedocles presents the divine (τὸ θεῖον) as an entity that cannot be known by sensation:

οὐκ ἔστιν πελάσασθαι ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἐφικτόν
 ἡμετέροις, ἢ χερσὶ λαβεῖν, ἤπερ τε μεγίστη
 πειθοῦς ἀνθρώποισιν ἀμαξιτὸς εἰς φρένα πίπτει.⁴⁸

It is not possible to approach it with our eyes
 or to grasp it with our hands, by which the greatest
 road of persuasion penetrates to the mind of men.

For the present study, the phrase ἤπερ τε μεγίστη/πειθοῦς ἀνθρώποισιν ἀμαξιτὸς εἰς φρένα πίπτει is highly relevant: therein Empedocles expresses the idea that knowledge gained from sense organs such as our eyes or our hands is the most persuasive form of knowledge. What is important to note is that this idea is expressed through a journey metaphor presenting eyes and hands, metonymies indicating the respective sense organs, as the beginning of a road that leads persuasion to the mind. The idea of sensory pores as roads through which sensation and also persuasion can find passage, hence a pathway into the body, suggests the image of traveling objects of perception and knowledge entering the body. In fact, according to Empedocles, some elementary streams of these objects do travel from them through space and may reach the inside of the body, where the controlling and knowing organ lies.⁴⁹

Empedocles' theories of perception and knowledge acquisition are known to us thanks to Theophrastus' systematic treatment of the most important theories concerning perception and knowledge acquisition before Aristotle.⁵⁰ According to Theophras-

47 *Strom.* 5.81. 2 (DK 31 B 133). Clemens quotes the lines together with a fragment of Solon (F 16) and one of Antisthenes (F 24), within a treatment on how to obtain πίστις about topics that are beyond the realm of sense organs and escape, therefore, perception.

48 The text of the fragment follows the reconstruction by Laks and Most 2016, vol. 5, 366.

49 Empedocles variously refers to this organ by the term φρήν (or in the plural φρένες), σπλάγγα and πραπίδες: φρήν: B 134, 4; 23, 9; 114, 3; 133, 4. φρένες: B 5; B 17, 14. πραπίδες: B 110, 1; 129, 2 and 4; 132, 1. σπλάγγα: B 4.3. It is debated both which part of the body they describe exactly, and whether they are used as synonyms to depict the same organ. It can be generally maintained that they all refer to "the part of the thorax that is the physical basis of thinking": see Wright 1995, 164.

50 In his *De Sensibus*, Theophrastus classifies the processes and the objects of perceiving, thinking, and knowing with reference to nine early thinkers, specifically, Parmenides (sections 3–4), Empedocles (7–24), Alcmaeon (25–26), Anaxagoras (27–37), Cleidemus (38), Diogenes of Apollonia (39–48), Democritus (49–82), and Plato (5–6 and 83–91). While relatively little space is given to the theories of Parmenides, Alcmaeon, and Cleidemus, Theophrastus draws more attention to Anaxagoras, Diogenes, and Plato and dedicates to each of them approximately ten sections. However, as we can see, Theophrastus' investigation focuses above all on Empedocles and Democritus, and this is a sign of the importance that these theories have in their philosophical system. Theophrastus' preference for Empedocles and Democritus may also be explained by the fact that these two thinkers argue

tus, Empedocles argues that perception occurs through an adaptation, ἐναρμόττειν,⁵¹ of the perceived things to the pores, πόροι, of each sense organ. The adaptation between sense organs and objects of perception is mediated through ἀπορροαί, literally “streams”, which are continuously emanated from compounds.⁵² These streams get in touch with sense organs and, if they fit them, they may enter the body. Empedocles does not provide precise information about the nature of the *aporroai*. Do they have the same qualities of the objects that emanate them? It seems fair to assume so;⁵³ otherwise it is difficult to imagine how the perceptual objects could be recognized.

Another general inference we may make is that effluences emanating from compounds are themselves made of (at least one of) the four elements. Indeed, Empedocles’ ontology seems to require that, like everything else in the physical world, effluences too are elementary substances. Moreover, words, hence sounds, are regarded as ‘things’ in the epic poems:

In Homer words are winged (*Il.* 1.201, 2.7, 4.69 etc.), go past the barrier of the teeth (*Il.* 4.350, 14.83, etc.) and are put by the listener into his or her θυμός—μῦθον πεπνυμένον ἔνθετο θυμῶ (*Od.* 1.361, 21.355); cf. Hes. *Erga* 274 [...] Such a physical representation of words and thoughts, found in Homer, continues through the work of other Presocratics (Heraclitus is an obvious example) to Plato [...], Aristotle [...] and the Stoics’ assumption of φωναί as σώματα.⁵⁴

It follows that, during the contact between material *aporroai* emanating from the perceptual object and *poroi* in the body, there is an exchange of substance and transit of external elements into the body. Sensation, in other words, is a material *transfer of elementary streams* from the object to the subject of perception. In B 133 it is specified that eyes and hands are limbs by which the road of persuasion leads εἰς φρένα. The transit of sensory elements, therefore, ends in the mind, which, according to Empedocles, is collocated in the chest. To sum up, the sense organs function as ‘gates’ in the body that may be entered by streams of sensory elements. Thus, by listening to Empedocles’ doctrine, by observing things in the world, by smelling, tasting, or touching them, hence by getting in touch with every perceptual item of the physical world, people receive, through

for physiological and quite mechanistic theories that aim to explain sensation and knowledge acquisition in a unified and complex system. This may have led Theophrastus to concentrate on them in order to submit them to his most meticulous criticism. See Sassi 1978, 5–6.

51 At chapter 15, Theophrastus reveals that the word ἀρμόττειν is explicitly used by Empedocles to refer to processes of recognition of things.

52 Cf. Plutarch *Quaest. nat.* 916 D (=DK 31 B 89): σκόπει δὴ, κατ’ Ἐμπεδοκλέα “γνοῦς ὅτι πάντων εἰσὶν ἀπορροαί, ὅσος ἔγένοντο...” οὐ γὰρ ζῶων μόνον οὐδὲ φυτῶν οὐδὲ γῆς καὶ θαλάττης, ἀλλὰ καὶ λίθων ἄπεισιν ἐνδελεχῶς πολλὰ ρεύματα καὶ χαλκοῦ καὶ σιδήρου.

53 Cf. Long 1966, 260.

54 Wright 1995, 259.

their own sensory pores, streams of elementary substance. Through body channels, this substance travels inside the body and reaches the mind. Here the substance of sensation is stored up in order to produce thought and knowledge.

Consider now fragment B 110:

εἰ γὰρ κέν σφ' ἀδινῆσιν ὑπὸ πραπίδεσσιν ἐρείσας
 εὐμένεως καθαρῆσιν ἐποπτέουσις μελέτησιν,
 ταῦτά τέ σοι μάλα πάντα δι' αἰῶνος παρέσονται,
 ἄλλα τε πόλλ' ἀπὸ τῶνδ' ἐκτήσεται· αὐτὰ γὰρ αὔξει
 ταῦτ' εἰς ἧθος ἕκαστον, ὅπη φύσις ἐστὶν ἐκάστωι.
 εἰ δὲ σύ γ' ἀλλοίων ἐπορέξεαι, οἷα κατ' ἄνδρας
 μυρία δειλὰ πέλονται ἅ τ' ἀμβλύνουσι μερίμνας,
 ἧ σ' ἄφαρ ἐκλείψουσι περιπλομένοιο χρόνοιο
 σφῶν αὐτῶν ποθέοντα φίλην ἐπὶ γένναν ἰκέσθαι·
 πάντα γὰρ ἴσθι φρόνησιν ἔχειν καὶ νόματος αἴσαν.

For if, thrusting them in your crowded praecordia
 willingly you will gaze on them with pure meditations
 these things will all be with you throughout your life
 and many other things will spring from these: these will
 increase them, each according to its character, where each has its origin.
 But if you will turn to other things, such as
 the ten thousand wretched things which are among men and blunt their
 meditations,
 quickly they will leave you with the passing of time
 desiring to get to their own spring:
 know that everything has thought and a share of understanding.

What are those things, which under certain circumstances will be with Pausanias throughout all his life, making other things spring from them and increase them, while, under other circumstances, they will leave him and get back to their offspring?⁵⁵ I would argue for interpreting the neutral plurals as all inputs that Pausanias may gain by sensation,

55 The hypotheses of scholars can be divided into those interpreting the neuter plurals either as the four elements or as Empedocles' teachings or true statements about the world. Diels translated them as "die Lehren des Meisters". According to Schwabl 1956 the reference is to "die Grundkräfte der Natur". Long 1966 suggested that σφε refers to "my teachings", or "true statements about the world (conceived in physical terms)", and αὐτὰ ... ταῦτα to

both external elements, that is, teaching in its physical term and to the elements within a body. Bollack 1969, 577, argues for a reference to the "puissances [...] sans doute le six". Trépanier 2004, 160 identifies them *prima facie* with Empedocles' teachings, but these, "in as much as they are true, can be conceived analogously to, or rather simply identified with, the elements themselves".

ranging from Empedocles' words to every single piece of information the disciple has gained by observing, touching, and testing "each thing as it shows itself". In other words, ταῦτα/αὐτά here are likely to correspond to all pieces of *aporroai* emanated by the surrounding world, including Empedocles' words. Moreover, since they are able to increase themselves if pushed firmly in the organs of thought, ταῦτα/αὐτά might also include all 'secondary' notions and concepts one may obtain by reasoning, hence all elements potentially useful to gain and deepen one's knowledge.

As ll.4–5 refer to some sort of growth (αὐτὰ γὰρ αὔξει/ταῦτ(α)), a reference that involves the elements seems to be necessary, unless αὔξει is said metaphorically. As I shall show hereafter, however, we can make sense of these verses in the best way by taking αὔξει literally and assuming that Empedocles is talking of a physical growth.

According to Empedocles' physics, growth is an aggregation of elements, while decrease coincides with their separation. Growth and decrease imply, therefore, that the things subjected to them are material compounds (that is, they are made of elements). However, ταῦτα also indicates something to which one must direct all one's concern and attention. Doing so, ταῦτα will be by you through the rest of your life, while many other things will spring from ταῦτα and increase them. This rules out the four elements as referent:⁵⁶ according to Empedocles' ontology the elements are the principles of everything and the only things that really are. It makes no sense to state, therefore, that other things will spring out *in addition to the elements* and increase them. It follows, therefore, that although ταῦτα/αὐτά are made of elements, the referent here cannot be shifted to the level of the four eternal principles but must stay at the level of perishable compounds.

As we have seen above, all kinds of *aporroai* are made of physical matter, hence of at least one of the four elements. Moreover, in Empedocles' worldview, thoughts may be seen as *somata* of some sort, as they are produced by processing the elementary substances of the *aporroai* stored up and "cut up" in the chest.⁵⁷ Furthermore, the bodily nature of thoughts may be inferred from B 110.4–5: all inputs coming from the environment can multiply if one reflects on them. Yet they increase not only one another, as argued in the lines above, but they also make the mind grow, as we read in B 17.14: ἀλλ' ἄγε μύθων κλυθι· μάθη γὰρ τοι φρένας αὔξει, "But come! Hear my words; for learning will expand

⁵⁶ See n. 55 above.

⁵⁷ Cf. PStrasb. a(ii) 29: ἐκ τῶν ἀψευδῆ κόμισαι δείγματα μ[ύθων.] Here Empedocles invites Pausanias to "store up in his mind", κομίζω φρενί, Empedocles' words as unerring evidence of the truth, ἀψευδῆ δείγματα μύθων. This indicates that effluences (in this particular case those originating from Empe-

docles' words) can be stored up in one's φρήν. Elsewhere, we read that Empedocles' words can also be "cut up", διατέμνω, in one's σπλάγγα (γνώθι διατηθέντος ἐνὶ σπλάγγχοισι λόγοιο, B 4.4). Clearly both passages indicate a process of reflection or meditation finalized to produce new thought and knowledge.

your mind". Here, like in B 110.4–5, it is stressed that the process of knowledge acquisition deriving from Pausanias' attention to, hence his reflection upon, Empedocles' words favors growth in the body and, precisely, in the mind.⁵⁸ As mentioned above, growth is always related to the aggregation of elements. This indicates that thoughts, concepts, epistemic notions, and, in general, all "mental products" of this sort are compounds of elements and have, as does everything else, a physical basis that is subjected to aggregation and separation.

Thus, as we can see, what happens to the body during sensation and knowledge acquisition is depicted as a mechanical process resting upon an array of journey metaphors: streams of elementary substances *departing from* all physical things *move* through space and may *enter* the *gates* of sense organs, *travel* through body *channels* into the body and *arrive* at the central organ in the thorax. Here *aporroai* are stored up, pushed firmly into the mind, gazed upon and assimilated. Since they are made of physical stuff, once assimilated, they produce a growth in the body (specifically, in the mind). Thought production and subsequent mental growth only occur, however, if Pausanias is well disposed towards the inputs the environment continuously *emanates*. Otherwise, the sensory substances of the *aporroai* will *abandon* him quickly and *return* to their spring, hence to the object that *emanated* them. Once again, we observe that metaphor journeys are employed to depict substances of perception and knowledge travel from the object to the person, and even the other way around, if the one who wishes to know is not well disposed to receive them.

By way of concluding, the purpose behind metaphor use in these Empedoclean fragments is highly argumentative: journey metaphors are employed in philosophical, better still in physiological argumentation in order to theorize processes of perception and knowledge acquisition. What is worth noting here is that Empedocles, by drawing from a traditional metaphor cluster, creates a completely new picture. Whereas journey metaphors are traditionally employed according to a standard pattern that depicts those who aim to know as travelers, their method of inquiry as a path they follow, and knowledge as the destination of this journey, the poetic genius of Empedocles uses instantiations from the same metaphor cluster to create an innovative image – elements of knowledge moving through space, entering the body along body channels, and arriving at the knowing central organ. In conclusion, Empedocles' variation of an established metaphorical pattern and his introduction of a new metaphorical stratum result in a creative, original, and well-formulated mechanical theory of sensation and knowledge acquisition. Empedocles' metaphor use is a clear example, I believe, of how influential

58 Note that the expression ὅπη φύσις ἐστὶν ἐκάστῳ in B 110.5 may indicate blood or, more generally,

φρένες as that organ "where each (mental product or epistemic input) has its origin".

(the variations of) a metaphor cluster may be in the production of philosophical reasoning. Furthermore, it unambiguously shows to what extent metaphor use contributes to the formulation of scientific theories, which will have an important legacy for later philosophical speculation.

5 Conclusion

Heraclitus, Parmenides, and Empedocles pervasively employ journey metaphors to depict aspects of knowledge, but have very different ways of using them and, accordingly, diverse purposes when drawing from the same metaphor cluster. Heraclitus employs them either to conceptualize the abstract notion of the world soul or to depict and reject a common method of inquiry coinciding with journeys of research and collection of factual data, which are found to be insufficient when seeking into the soul (and its *logos*). In Parmenides, journey metaphors are employed to depict diverse methods of inquiry but display a highly symbolic and paraenetic purpose: by echoing the destiny of the soul in the afterlife, Parmenides uses these metaphors to dramatize the choice for his philosophy, presented as the only path that leads to vivifying truth. Finally, Empedocles uses the same metaphor cluster both in the ‘standard’ way, to depict poetic composition and ways of inquiry, and by significantly innovating on the traditional pattern for genuinely argumentative purposes: journey metaphors depict the physiological processes of sensation and knowledge acquisition.

All this points to the powerful, malleable, and even polyvalent nature of the metaphor cluster of journey/knowledge among different philosophers and even within the same text (above all in the case of Empedocles). The case studies presented here offered some important glimpses into the relation between metaphor, imagination, and argumentation, above all when a fresh metaphorical stratum is introduced within an already established metaphor. In particular, they pretty well show to what extent the introduction of a fresh metaphorical stratum contributes to original developments in philosophical theories.

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CHIARA FERELLA

Chiara Ferella studied Classics at the Universities of L'Aquila, Cambridge, Pisa and Munich. She is a research associate at the Johannes-Gutenberg University of Mainz within the Research Training Group 1876 *Early Concepts of Humans and Nature: Universal, Specific, Interchanged*. She is currently a fellow in Early Greek Philosophy of the Harvard Center for Hellenic Studies.

Dr Chiara Ferella
 Research Training Group
Early Concepts of Humans and Nature: Universal, Specific, Interchanged
 Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz
 Hegelstraße 59
 55122 Mainz, Germany
 E-Mail: ferella@uni-mainz.de;
 cferella@chs.harvard.edu

Elisaveta Shcherbakova

The Paths of the Soul in the Pseudo-Hippocratic *De victu*

Summary

In my paper I propose a new interpretation of a notoriously difficult passage from the Pseudo-Hippocratic treatise *De victu*, which deals with the activities of the soul during sleep. The passage in question has been interpreted by many scholars as a kind of Orphico-Pythagorean journey of the soul, and thus as key evidence for body-soul dualism in *De victu*. However, as I attempt to demonstrate, the soul does indeed take a journey, but not a Pythagorean one: in my reading of the text, it travels from the periphery deeper inside the body, to a place the author calls the “*oikos* of the soul”. I argue that this *oikos* best corresponds to a kind of ‘cognitive center,’ located in the chest and/or heart-region. This type of soul-journey points not to a dualist but to a materialist interpretation of *De victu*’s psychology. Further, I argue that overall the treatise is closer to the materialist psychophysiology of such fifth century Presocratics as Diogenes of Apollonia.

Keywords: journey; *De victu*; Hippocrates; soul; Diogenes of Apollonia; dualism; materialism

In meinem Aufsatz schlage ich eine neue Interpretation einer notorisch schwierigen Stelle aus der Pseudo-Hippokratischen Schrift *De victu* vor, in der es sich um verschiedene Aktivitäten und Bewegungen der Seele während des Schlafens handelt. Die betreffende Passage wurde von vielen Forschern als eine Art orphisch-pythagoreische Seelenreise gedeutet und galt lange als Schlüsselbeweis für einen Körper-Seele-Dualismus in *De victu*. Wie ich jedoch zu zeigen versuche, unternimmt die Seele tatsächlich eine Reise, aber keine pythagoreische: Laut meiner Hypothese bewegt sich die *psyche* von der Peripherie tiefer in den Körper hinein, zu einem Ort, den der Hippokratische Autor als ‚*oikos* der Seele‘ bezeichnet. Ich behaupte, dass dieses *oikos* am besten als eine Art ‚kognitives Zentrum‘ zu verstehen ist, das sich in der Brust- und / oder Herzregion befindet. Weiter argumentiere ich, dass *De victu*’s Seelenlehre der materialistischen Psychophysikologie solcher Vorsokratiker des 5. Jahrhunderts, wie Diogenes von Apollonia, näher steht.

Keywords: Reise; *De victu*; Hippokrat; Seele; Diogenes von Apollonia; Dualismus; Materialismus

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I wish to express my gratitude to the Mikhail Prokhorov Fund and the School for Advanced Studies in the Humanities at RANEPА that generously offered me a research-grant which made my work on this publication possible.

But then begins a journey in my head,
To work my mind, when body's work's expired

The philosophical world of the pseudo-Hippocratic treatise *De victu* is a strange one. It is a world largely defined by motion, yet it is not a random motion of atoms or flux of matter, but rather an eternal *poreia* of all its constituents. In an apparent imitation of the famous Presocratic philosopher Heraclitus, the author says that “Everything human and divine periodically travels back and forth. The day and the night go from maximum to minimum. The moon – from maximum to minimum. The sun goes from its longest to its shortest path.”¹ According to *De victu*, both the microcosm and the macrocosm are bound to a kind of back and forth path, a continuous oscillation of all things between two cardinal points. This peculiar cosmology seems to be at least partly based on a metaphorical model, which surprisingly is a ‘microcosmic’ one and comes from the world of human technology. A. Peck aptly calls it the “cosmic saw.”² We see this principle operate even at the most basic elemental level of *De victu*’s system. Fire and Water, the two cosmic masses out of which everything else is made, are locked in an eternal game of advance and retreat, always traveling down the same ὁδὸς ἄνω κάτω (*De victu* I.3), just like two carpenters, who are pulling a saw forward and backward.

There is, however, one principal agent in this system of periodically shifting matter that seems to deviate from its prescribed upwards and downwards path. Namely, the soul, or to avoid unnecessary connotations, *psyche*; a term favored by the author of *De victu* but otherwise not very common in the Hippocratic collection. Now, this *psyche* is a genuinely puzzling entity. Firstly, it is essentially a ‘Jack-of-all-trades’ responsible for both mental phenomena, such as cognition, intelligence, and perception, as well as motor and even reproductive function. Secondly, it is described as a mixture of Fire and Water; that is, a material substance made of the same stuff the body consists of. Yet, despite this fact, *psyche* seems to be not fully bound to the body and capable of independent existence.

1 *De victu* I.5: Χωρεῖ δὲ πάντα καὶ θεῖα καὶ ἀνθρώ-
πινα ἄνω καὶ κάτω ἀμειβόμενα. Ἡμέρη καὶ εὐφρόνη
ἐπὶ τὸ μῆκιστον καὶ ἐλάχιστον· ὡς σελήνη ἐπὶ τὸ

μακρότατον καὶ βραχύτατον ... ἥλιος ἐπὶ τὸ μακρό-
τατον καὶ βραχύτατον.

2 In Peck 1928, xiv.

Scholars have long been grappling with this rather enigmatic soul-doctrine in an attempt to pin it to some known type of ancient Greek psychophysiology. But so far, in this respect, the treatise seems to resist even the most basic categorization: it is unclear whether it has a purely Materialist concept of the soul or if it adheres to some form of body-soul Dualism. Many believe, as do I, that the solution to this challenging and important problem lies in the (correct) interpretation of one particular passage, which seems to describe a kind of emancipation, or even a journey, of the soul away from the body. The passage in question comes from the fourth book of *De victu*, which deals with dreams – or more precisely, a particular kind of medically prophetic dream – and even offers a system of medical diagnosis from them.³

In *De victu* IV.86, which is the object of our study, the author attempts to explain the underlying mechanism behind such dreams:

Ἡ γὰρ ψυχὴ ἐγρηγορότι μὲν τῷ σώματι ὑπερητέουσα, ἐπὶ πολλὰ μεριζομένη, οὐ γίγνεται αὐτῇ ἐωυτῆς, ἀλλ' ἀποδίδωσι τι μέρος ἐκάστῳ τοῦ σώματος, ἀκοῆ, ὄψει, ψαύσει, ὁδοπορίῃ, πρήξιει παντὸς τοῦ σώματος• αὐτὴ δ' ἐωυτῆς ἡ διάνοια οὐ γίνεται.

Ὅκοταν δὲ τὸ σῶμα ἡσυχάσῃ, ἡ ψυχὴ κινευμένη καὶ ἐγρηγορούσα* διοικεῖ τὸν ἐωυτῆς οἶκον, καὶ τὰς τοῦ σώματος πρήξιαις ἀπάσας αὐτῇ διαπρήσεται. Τὸ μὲν γὰρ σῶμα καθεῦδον οὐκ αἰσθάνεται, ἡ δ' ἐγρηγορούσα γινώσκει, καὶ ὀρῆ τε τὰ ὄρατὰ καὶ ἀκούει τὰ ἀκουστά, βαδίζει, ψαύει, λυπεῖται, ἐνθυμεῖται, ἐν ὀλίγῳ ἐοῦσα, ὀκόσαι τοῦ σώματος ὑπηρεσία ἢ τῆς ψυχῆς, ταῦτα πάντα ἡ ψυχὴ ἐν τῷ ὕπνῳ διαπρήσεται.

*ἐγρηγορούσα Diels, Jones, Joly; ἐπεξέρπουσα τὰ σώματα M (Marcianus graecus 269 saec. X); ἐγρηγορούσα. τὰ πρήγματα θ (Vindobonensis medicus gr. 4 saec. XI); ἐπεξέρπουσα τὰ μέρη τοῦ σώματος Recentiores, Littré.

Thus, according to *De victu*:

During wakefulness the soul acts as a servant to the body, it is divided into many parts, and does not belong to itself, but gives a part of itself to each bodily function: hearing, sight, touch, locomotion, and all bodily tasks, and does not take itself into consideration. But when the body is at rest, the soul being in motion and awake⁴ manages its own household and performs all the bodily

3 Or *prodiagnosis*, to be more exact, since according to *De victu* dreams of this kind signal diseases that are not yet manifest, which means that the dreams of both sick and healthy people should be studied by the physician. See Hulskamp 2008, 203.

4 'Awake' in my translation obviously renders ἐγρηγορούσα, a reading taken from the manuscript θ, and adopted by most editors and commentators including Joly and Byl 2003; Jones 1931, and more recently Bartoš 2015, 201.

tasks on its own. The body while asleep is devoid of sense, but the soul being awake remains conscious: it sees what is to be seen, and hears what is to be heard, it walks, touches, feels pain, deliberates, all while confined to a narrow space. How many functions there are of the soul and body, the soul performs all of them during sleep.

On first inspection, it would seem that *psyche*, while bound to the body during wakefulness, acquires a degree of autonomy during sleep.

Strangely enough, despite the intense scholarly attention this short paragraph has received in recent years, there still remain glaring textual and interpretative difficulties, which have been overlooked or glossed over by editors and commentators, and which need to be solved, if we are to make sense of what *psyche* actually does, how it acquires its autonomy, and how this autonomous state should be understood. Only after all this textological legwork is done, can we proceed to larger and ultimately more important questions about *psyche*'s material or non-material status and the philosophical origins of *De victu*'s 'psychology'.

De victu IV.86 has first been interpreted by A. Palm as a reflection of what he called an 'Orphic' doctrine.⁵ What Palm meant was that *De victu*'s description of the soul becoming active during sleep and thus acquiring prophetic powers closely resembles the tradition associated primarily with such ancient Greek miracle workers as Aristeas and Hermetimos, who fell into a kind of trance, when their souls would leave their bodies and travel far and wide appearing in different places and foretelling epidemics and natural disasters.

Palm was later followed by E. R. Dodds,⁶ who famously suggested that such doctrines are shamanistic in origin, and then by Marcel Detienne,⁷ who attempted to strengthen Palm's and Dodds' thesis by adducing a fascinating parallel from an apparently 'Orphico-Pythagorean' passage in Plato's *Phaedo* about sleep and purification. In *Phd.* 67c 5–67d 1, *katharsis* is described as a retreat of the soul from the body (πανταχόθεν ἐκ τοῦ σώματος) with the ultimate goal of achieving almost complete independence and liberation from the "bodily shackles".⁸ On first glance, this description of *katharsis*

5 Palm 1933, 62–68.

6 Dodds 1951, 118–119.

7 Detienne 1963, 71–72.

8 Pl. *Phd.* 67c 5–67d 1: Κάθαρσις δὲ εἶναι ἄρα οὐ τοῦτο συμβαίνει, ὅπερ πάλαι ἐν τῷ λόγῳ λέγεται, τὸ χωρίζειν ὅτι μάλιστα ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ ἐθίσει αὐτὴν καθ' αὐτὴν πανταχόθεν ἐκ τοῦ σώματος συναγείρεσθαι τε καὶ ἀθροίζεσθαι, καὶ οἰκεῖν κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν καὶ ἐν τῷ νῦν παρόντι καὶ ἐν τῷ ἔπειτα μόνῃ καθ' αὐτὴν, ἐκλυομένην ὡσπερ

[ἐκ] δεσμῶν ἐκ τοῦ σώματος. In Harold Fowler's translation: "And does not the purification consist in this which has been mentioned long ago in our discourse, in separating, so far as possible, the soul from the body and teaching the soul the habit of collecting and bringing itself together from all parts of the body, and living, so far as it can, both now and hereafter, alone by itself, freed from the body as from fetters?"

does indeed look similar to *De victu* both in thought and in wording.⁹

This outward similarity was accepted unquestioningly by, among others, R. Joly in his seminal edition and standard commentary of the treatise,¹⁰ and thus became received wisdom among modern scholars. Still, there were some dissenters, most notably G. Cambiano, who challenged Detienne's view and proposed an entirely 'Materialist' interpretation of the phenomenon of *enyprnia* in *De victu*.¹¹ He rightly observed that the parallel between *Phaedo* and our Hippocratic author is largely superficial: first, there is no mention of sleep in Plato, and second, *katharsis*, understood as a liberation of the soul from the body, is a desired permanent state and not just a condition that occurs when the body is inactive. Moreover, according to Cambiano, the 'Orphico-Pythagorean' idea that the soul becomes active and wanders away while the body lies in some state of unconsciousness (sleep or trance), is not present in *De victu* at all. In IV.86 it explicitly states that the soul remains active during both sleep and wakefulness.

It is unfortunate that scholars almost entirely overlooked this very valid criticism. Joly, for example, although he cites Cambiano in his commentary, still maintains that there are essentially two concepts of *psyche* in *De victu*, or rather, that the term is used in two basic senses: (1) a material substance and (2) an entity that is presumably immaterial, or at least – and Joly is not very clear on this point – somehow different from the body. This perceived dual nature of *psyche* has troubled scholars ever since. P. van der Eijk¹² tried to escape this conundrum by questioning – quite rightly, I believe – the entire Materialism vs. Dualism framework.¹³ H. Bartoš, although he insists that *psyche* in *De victu* is indeed wholly material – it is a Fire/Water mixture that may be affected by digestion and other bodily processes – seemingly follows the same line of reasoning when he insists that *De victu*'s 'soul-doctrine' is essentially a Materialist interpretation of Pythagorean transmigration. Thus, the same goes for the liberation of the soul during sleep: it is a 'Pythagorean' *χωρισμός* but conceived in Materialist terms.¹⁴

To sum up: most current research seems to agree that the sleep-doctrine in *De victu* IV.86 should be understood as a separation of the soul from the body. It is important, however, to distinguish the two types of 'Orphico-Pythagorean' comparanda typically cited in this context. Detienne thinks that the author of *De victu* is talking about purification, which means that the soul aims to be independent of the body as much as possible

9 Cf. for example *Phd.*: τὴν ψυχὴν ... οἰκεῖν ... μόνην καθ' αὐτήν and *De victu*: (Οκόταν δὲ τὸ σῶμα ἤσυχάσῃ) ἡ ψυχὴ ... διοικεῖ τὸν ἔσωτῆς οἶκον, καὶ τὰς τοῦ σώματος πρῆξις ἀπάσας αὐτὴ διαπρήσσειται. Also note the similarity of expression in the two passages: οἰκεῖν and διοικεῖν, ψυχὴν ... μόνην καθ' αὐτήν and ἡ ψυχὴ ... οὐ γίγνεται αὐτῇ ἔσωτῆς.

10 Joly and Byl 2003, 28: "Ce texte est le témoignage le

plus détaillé d'une doctrine d'origine chamanique: pendant le sommeil, l'âme est ramassée sur elle-même et plus active que pendant la veille?"

11 Cambiano 1980.

12 Van der Eijk 2005, 198.

13 Van der Eijk 2005, 199.

14 Bartoš 2015, 201–207.

and at all times. Others suggest that the closest analogy is not *katharsis*, but another related doctrine, namely the ‘extatic’ journey of the soul when it leaves the sleeping body and travels on its own, thus gaining its prognostic knowledge, as it were, *en route*.

Still, we should ask ourselves: Are both those parallels legitimate? If the soul in *De victu* does indeed make a journey, what is its ‘itinerary’? Besides, if it does indeed separate itself from the body, how exactly does this separation work? Finally, how does the soul become aware of the body’s coming afflictions, the early signs of which it shows us in dreams?

Recently, van der Eijk has proposed an alternative interpretative scheme, according to which the relationship of the soul to the body in *De victu* is that that of degrees of separation, without full separation ever occurring.¹⁵ While I accept that this is indeed the right approach, in my estimation, it can be elaborated further.

If we take a close look at the text as it stands in our best editions we quickly notice that the reading ἐγρηγορέουσα (awake) is not an original manuscript reading but a partial emendation of an originally corrupt text. The tradition diverges in this particular place, and both our oldest and most important manuscript give mostly unintelligible readings. The eleventh-century Vienna codex, which goes by the siglum θ, reads ἐγρηγορέουσα. τὰ πρήγματα. While the earlier Marcianus Graecus (tenth century, siglum M) gives an equally difficult reading, ἐπεξέρπουσα τὰ σώματα. Obviously both variants are incomprehensible as they stand, so neither can be fully accepted, but for some reason most scholars – including Joly, Jones, Diels,¹⁶ and many others – have opted for the smoother and less problematic reading of the MS θ (ἐγρηγορέουσα), but without the incomprehensible τὰ πρήγματα.

I believe, however, that they chose the wrong reading: the form ἐγρηγορέουσα is indeed rare,¹⁷ but the reading given by M, ἐπεξέρπουσα, is an absolute *hapax legomenon* found only in *De victu* IV.86 and nowhere else. Moreover, ἐπεξέρπουσα is supported by other passages from *De victu*: the author says three times that *psyche* ἐσέρπει (‘crawls; ‘creeps’) into the body (*De victu* I.6, 7, 25). Thus, overall, ἐπεξέρπουσα is not only the more difficult reading but also the better one.

But even if we adopt ἐπεξέρπουσα instead of ἐγρηγορέουσα, as I think we should, we are still facing a problem with the word τὰ σώματα, which comes directly after ἐπεξέρπουσα in the manuscript M. The famous editor of Hippocrates, E. Littré, was keenly

15 Van der Eijk 2012.

16 Diels 1910, 146–147; Jones 1931, 475; Joly and Byl 2003, 219.

17 Unlike the more common ἐγείρουσα (present participle of ἐγείρω), ἐγρηγορέουσα (from ἐγρηγο-

ρέω) occurs in the Hippocratic corpus only once (or twice if we accept it in this passage). According to LSJ it appears for the first time in Xen. *Cyn.* 5.11, but is likely a *lectio falsa*, and after that in Arist. *Pr.* 877 a 9.

aware of this difficulty and made the sensible decision to adopt the reading of the *recentiores* of the M family: ἐπεξέρπουσα τὰ μέρη τοῦ σώματος, which to my mind is a far superior editorial choice than the universally accepted ἐγρηγορούσα, especially since we find exactly the same form, ἐγρηγορούσα, directly in the next sentence: ἡ δ' ἐγρηγορούσα γινώσκει etc. Littré takes ἐπεξέρπουσα τὰ μέρη τοῦ σώματος to mean: “l'âme ...parcourant les parties du corps,” which is somewhat vague, because, first of all, ἔρω in ἐπεξέρπω is unlikely to have lost its original meaning of ‘to slither’ (the author deliberately uses the form ἐσέρπω, ‘creep into’, to describe the movements of the soul); and secondly, because it is unclear how Littré imagined the soul’s ‘trajectory’; when it runs or creeps through the extremities of the body, does it travel from periphery to center, or from center to periphery?

We obviously have no examples for ἐπεξέρπω, but the combination of ‘ἐπεξ- + verb of spatial motion + direct object’ is by no means rare. Littré, I think, was quite right in taking ἐπεξέρπω to be broadly synonymous with ἐπέξειμι/ἐπεξέρχομαι, both of which when used in their literal sense with an accusative seem to mean roughly speaking ‘to go entirely through and leave behind’: LSJ gives the following examples of this usage: Hdt. 7.166 τὸ πᾶν γὰρ ἐπεξελθεῖν διζήμενον Γέλωνα (Gelon has been everywhere – literally, has traversed all places – in search of him); Hdt. 4.9 πάντα δὲ τῆς χώρας ἐπεξελθόντα τέλος ἀπικέσθαι ἐς τὴν Ὑλαίαν (having traveled through every part of the country, he finally arrived at Hylaia); and Clearch. (FHG II 315) πάντας τοὺς ὄρειους ἐπεξήει δρυμῶς (went through all the mountain thickets).

These *comparanda* can give us a sense of the type of motion implied in ἐπεξέρπειν, but do not clarify in which direction psyche might be traveling. To solve this problem, we need to take a closer look at the rest of our passage:

(ἡ ψυχὴ) ἐπεξέρπουσα τὰ μέρη τοῦ σώματος διοικεῖ τὸν ἐσωτῆς οἶκον, καὶ τὰς τοῦ σώματος πρῆξις ἀπάσας αὐτὴ διαπρήσεται. Τὸ μὲν γὰρ σῶμα καθεῦδον οὐκ αἰσθάνεται, ἡ δ' ἐγρηγορούσα γινώσκει, καὶ ὀρῆ τε τὰ ὄρατὰ καὶ ἀκούει τὰ ἀκουστὰ, βαδίζει, ψαύει, λυπεῖται, ἐνθυμεῖται, ἐν ὀλίγῳ ἐοῦσα etc.

The soul ἐπεξέρπουσα τὰ μέρη τοῦ σώματος¹⁸ manages its own household and performs all the bodily tasks by itself. The body while asleep is devoid of sense, but the soul being awake remains conscious: it sees what is to be seen, and hears what is to be heard, it walks, touches, feels pain, deliberates, all while confined to a narrow space.

18 I have intentionally left this short phrase untranslated. The meaning of ἐπεξέρπουσα will be discussed below.

Thus, the soul left to its own devices ‘manages its household.’ Scholars have understood the strange expression *διοικεῖ οἶκον* to mean something like ‘minds its own business’ or ‘becomes her own mistress.’ As Wilamowitz has pointed out,¹⁹ *οἶκον οικεῖν* is a generic ‘Ionic formula’ (*Ionisches Sprichwort*); yet, I am convinced that in this particular case it is not generic at all but refers to something rather concrete, for in the next sentence the author says that *psyche* performs all the activities of the body (seeing, hearing, touching, walking, etc.), all while enclosed in an unspecified narrow space (*ἐν ὀλίγῳ ἐοῦσα*).

Scholars have been baffled by this remark as early as S. Mack, who promptly dealt with it by replacing *ἐν ὀλίγῳ* with *ἐνὶ λόγῳ*, thus simplifying and trivializing a perfectly transmitted and absolutely intelligible text. This unjustified emendation, unfortunately, made its way into Jones’ otherwise excellent Loeb edition of *De victu*.²⁰ It should be said in his and Mack’s defense, that at least they acknowledged the problem with *ἐν ὀλίγῳ*, which is more than can be said of modern commentators, who just seem to ignore it altogether. To my mind, the most natural interpretation of this passage would be that *psyche* is confined to a small enclosure, situated somewhere inside the body, and that the enigmatic *oikos* of the soul refers to the same thing. Thus, if during wakefulness the soul is spread throughout the organism and performs all its sensory and motor functions, but during sleep finds itself inside a narrow space or *oikos*, then I suggest it must have arrived there by traversing the extremities of the body (*ἐπεξέρπουσα τὰ μέρη τοῦ σώματος*).²¹

Many have noted that the closest parallel to this doctrine is not Plato, but a much later text – a short tract on medical diagnosis from dreams attributed to Galen called *De dignotione ex insomniis*.²² According to this treatise, medically relevant dreams – that is, dreams that signify disease or disturbance in the body – occur because the soul leaves the sensory organs and dives into its depths:

ἔοικε γὰρ ἐν τοῖς ὕπνοις εἰς τὸ βάθος τοῦ σώματος ἡ ψυχὴ εἰσδύσα καὶ τῶν ἐκτὸς ἀποχωρήσασα αἰσθητῶν τῆς κατὰ τὸ σῶμα διαθέσεως αἰσθάνεσθαι.

It appears that the soul during sleep dives deep into the body, and having left behind the outward sensations, perceives the body’s disposition.²³

This notion of sleep seems to be of Stoic origin or at least stoically influenced: if we are to trust our doxographic sources, the Stoics described sleep as a retreat of the soul from

19 In Fredrich 1899, 206.

20 Jones 1931, 475.

21 The present tense of the participle in this sentence need not be taken literally; that is, as describing an action simultaneous with *διοικεῖ*. For example, in *De victu* I.25 (ὅστις δύναται πλείστους ἀνθρώπους τρέφειν, οὗτος ἰσχυρός· ἀπολειπόντων δὲ τούτων,

οὗτος ἀσθενέστερος; whoever is capable of feeding the most people, is strong; but should they leave, he is weaker), the present participle *ἀπολειπόντων* seems to have both a temporary and a conditional sense and likely refers to a completed action.

22 Bartoš 2015; Hulskamp 2008, 202–204.

23 Gal. On Diagnosis from Dreams 6.833, 17.

the periphery to the *hegemonikon*.²⁴

This similarity between an early Hippocratic text²⁵ and a much later Stoic doctrine is surprising indeed, but before we can attempt to explain it, there are other clarifications to be made. We have learned so far that the soul's journey in *De victu* is not a mystic or a Pythagorean one: the soul does not leave or liberate itself from the body in pursuit of prophetic knowledge but descends into its depths, where its 'home' is to be found. I would suggest that this 'retreat' or 'home' of the soul may cautiously be identified, although my argument is by no means conclusive and should be entertained only as a working hypothesis.

There is in *De victu* another, regrettably no less difficult, paragraph that describes an arrangement or *diakosmesis* of the human organism by a type of creative fire. This fire has arranged everything in such a way that "the large corresponds to the small and the small to the large"; this means that the human body is shaped in 'imitation' (*apomimesis*) of the macrocosm: the stomach corresponds to the sea; the flesh around it to earth; and then there are three concentric circuits, called *periodoi*, situated above the stomach, in the chest-region, and in the 'outer periphery,' which alternatively may be the skin or the head:

Ἐνὶ δὲ λόγῳ πάντα διεκοσμήσατο κατὰ τρόπον αὐτὸ ἐωυτῷ τὰ ἐν τῷ σώματι τὸ πῦρ, ἀπομίμησιν τοῦ ὄλου, μικρὰ πρὸς μεγάλα καὶ μεγάλα πρὸς μικρά· κοιλίην μὲν τὴν μεγίστην, ὕδατι ξηρῷ καὶ ὑγρῷ ταμεῖον, δοῦναι πᾶσι καὶ λαβεῖν παρὰ πάντων, θαλάσσης δύναμιν, ζώων συμφόρων τροφὸν, ἀσυμφόρων δὲ φθορὸν· περὶ δὲ ταύτην ὕδατος ψυχροῦ καὶ ὑγροῦ σύστασιν· διέξοδον πνεύματος ψυχροῦ καὶ θερμοῦ· ἀπομίμησιν τῆς γῆς, τὰ ἐπεισπίπτοντα πάντα ἀλλοιούσης.

καὶ τὰ [μὲν] ἀναλίσκον τὰ δὲ αὖξον σκέδασιν ὕδατος λεπτοῦ καὶ πυρὸς ἐποίησατο ἡερίου, ἀφανέος καὶ φανεροῦ, ἀπὸ τοῦ ξυνεστηκότος ἀπόκρισιν, ἐν ᾧ φερόμενα πάντα ἐς τὸ φανερὸν ἀφικνεῖται ἕκαστα μοίρη πεπρωμένη. Ἐν δὲ τούτῳ ἐποιήσατο πυρὸς περιόδους τρισσὰς, περαινούσας πρὸς ἀλλήλας καὶ εἴσω καὶ ἔξω· αἱ μὲν πρὸς τὰ κοῖλα τῶν ὑγρῶν, σελήνης δύναμιν, αἱ δὲ [πρὸς τὴν ἔξω περιφορὴν]* πρὸς τὸν περιέχοντα πάγον, ἄστρον δύναμιν, αἱ δὲ μέσαι καὶ εἴσω καὶ ἔξω περαινούσαι <ἡλίου δύναμιν ἔχουσι>**.

Τὸ θερμότατον καὶ ἰσχυρότατον πῦρ, ὅπερ πάντων κρατεῖ, διέπον ἅπαντα κατὰ φύσιν, ἄθικτον καὶ ὄψει καὶ ψαύσει, ἐν τούτῳ ψυχῇ, νοῦς, φρόνησις,

24 Compare for example the definition of sleep in another medical text of Stoic origin, the *Definitiones medicae* 19.381.15 "Υπνος ἐστὶν ἀνεσις ψυχῆς κατὰ φύσιν ἀπὸ τῶν περάτων ἐπὶ τὸ ἡγεμονικόν (Sleep is the naturally occurring retreat of the soul from the

periphery to the *hegemonikon*).

25 Scholars for the most part agree that *De victu* cannot be older than the end of the fifth or the beginning of the fourth century BCE. Cf. Joly and Byl 2003, 44–49.

αὔξησις, κίνησις, μείωσις, διάλλαξις, ὕπνος, ἐγρήγορσις· τοῦτο πάντα διὰ παντὸς κυβερνᾷ, καὶ τάδε καὶ ἐκεῖνα, οὐδέποτε ἀτρεμίζον.²⁶

* [πρὸς τὴν ἔξω περιφορὴν] secl. Fredrich ** <ἡλίου δύναμιν ἔχουσι> add. Joly; πρὸς τὰς ἐτέρας ἡλίου δύναμιν Diels–Kranz. Cf. *De victu* IV, 89 ἄστρον μὲν οὖν ἡ ἔξω περίοδος, ἡλίου δὲ ἡ μέση, σελήνης δὲ ἡ πρὸς τὰ κοῖλα.

In a word, all things were arranged in the body, in a fashion conformable to itself, by ire, a copy of the whole, the small after the manner of the great and the great after the manner of the small. The belly is made the greatest, a steward for dry water and moist, to give to all and to take from all, the power of the sea, nurse of creatures suited to it, destroyer of those not suited. And around it a concretion of cold water and moist, a passage for cold breath and warm, a copy of the earth, which alters all things that fall into it. Consuming and increasing, it made a dispersion of fine water and of ethereal fire, the invisible and the visible, a secretion from the compacted substance, in which things are carried and come to light, each according to its allotted portion. And in this fire made for itself three concentric fiery circuits: those towards the hollows of the moist, the power of the moon; those towards the outer periphery, towards the solid enclosure, the power of the stars; the middle circuits, bounded both within and without <has the power of the sun>. The hottest and strongest fire, which controls all things, ordering all things according to nature, imperceptible to sight or touch, wherein are soul, mind, thought, growth, motion, decrease, mutation, sleep, waking. This governs all things always, both here and there, and is never at rest.²⁷

There are numerous problems with this passage, such as, the macrocosmic and the anatomical identification of the three circuits, as well as their physiological function and connection to *psyche* and the ‘hottest and strongest fire’ mentioned at the end of the passage, where it is somehow located.

First, the middle circuit is not identified with the sun *expressis verbis*: the reading “the middle concentric circuits have the power of the sun” (αἱ δὲ μέσαι καὶ εἴσω καὶ ἔξω περαίνουσαι ἡλίου δύναμιν ἔχουσι) is, in fact, a long-accepted editorial emendation. Luckily, however, the exact macrocosmic correspondences of the circuits are established beyond doubt in *De victu* IV.89: ἄστρον μὲν οὖν ἡ ἔξω περίοδος, ἡλίου δὲ ἡ μέση, σελήνης δὲ ἡ πρὸς τὰ κοῖλα (the outer circuit is the circuit of the stars, the middle circuit – of the sun, and the one next to the cavity (of the stomach) is that of the moon).

²⁶ *De victu* I.10.

²⁷ The passage is extremely difficult, and I presently cannot touch on all its philological problems. I

quote the excellent translation by Jones 1931 with a few of my own very slight alterations.

As for their anatomical correspondences, they are even more difficult to pinpoint with any certainty. Hüffmeier infers from a parallel passage (*De victu* I.9. cf.) that they must be identified with the so-called ‘hollow vessels’ (φλέβες κοίλαι).²⁸ As for their physiological function, he describes them as a kind of ‘metabolic center’ (“Zentrum des Stoffwechsels”), since they are the carriers of blood, breath, digested nutrition, and also – it would seem – *psyche*. Although this is far from certain: while the anonymous author does mention a ‘circuit of the soul’ he never plainly equates it with one of the three *periodoi*.

Now, apart from being bound to a certain, not clearly identified circuit, *psyche* is also explicitly associated with a particular type of Fire, which the author calls ‘the hottest and strongest’;²⁹ thus, to understand the soul’s exact role and place in this convoluted scheme, we need to know exactly what this Fire is and where it is located. Joly apparently thinks that the θερμότατον καὶ ἰσχυρότατον πῦρ is the same creative fire mentioned at the beginning of the chapter; that is, the one that arranges the microcosm. He is also vague about its connection to the *periodoi*.³⁰ Jouanna, on the contrary, assumes that the hottest Fire must be placed in the middle circuit, making it thus the *periodos* of the soul.³¹ Bartoš, who prefers to err on the side of caution, thinks this interpretation “certainly possible” but “not conclusive”, yet I suspect that it may be further strengthened if we could get a firmer grasp of the transmitted text.³²

The universal assumption that the phrase that immediately precedes τὸ θερμότατον καὶ ἰσχυρότατον πῦρ is corrupt seems to me far from certain. The Latin translation, which represents a branch of tradition independent from both the manuscripts M and θ, in this case agrees with both of them and does not register a lacuna. It reads: *illi autem qui medii sunt et intus et foris agunt calidissimum (sic!) et fortissimus ignis, propter quod itaque omnia tenet et singula gubernat secus naturam*.³³ Therefore, I do not think that the text needs an extensive emendation such as ἡλίου δύναμιν ἔχουσι but can be read as it stands αἱ δὲ μέσαι καὶ εἴσω καὶ ἔξω περαίνουσαι [verb in the ellipsis] τὸ θερμότατον καὶ ἰσχυρότατον πῦρ etc., which is to be understood as ‘the middle circuits <contains> the hottest and strongest fire’. This, in turn, would correspond perfectly with the *periodos* of the sun – the strongest and hottest fire in the cosmos.

28 This identification is based on *De victu* I.9. cf. Hüffmeier 1961, 71). The expression φλέβες κοίλαι in the Hippocratic corpus refers to many different types of vessels and is of course not to be confused with the modern medical term *venae cavae*.

29 Despite the fact that the soul is regularly described as a mixture of Fire and Water, its identification with Fire is not surprising per se. After all, the soul’s ‘higher’ intellectual qualities seem to depend pri-

marily on its fiery component. Cf. *De victu* I.35.15 ff. For example, when Water dominates in the soul-mixture, the unfortunate owners of such souls are slow and unintelligent.

30 Cf. Joly and Byl 2003, 241.

31 Jouanna 2012, 205.

32 Bartoš 2015, 196.

33 I cite the Latin text according to Deroux’s and Joly’s 1978 edition Deroux and Joly 1978.

This suggests that Jouanna's initial interpretation is likely correct: the sentient and regulatory Fire that contains *psyche* is indeed confined to the middle circuit, which must, therefore, be its *periodos*. Hence, it seems plausible that the 'narrow enclave,' the *oikos* where *psyche* retreats during sleep, is also to be found in this middle *periodos*, which has been alternatively identified as the vessels in the chest region or, more speculatively, as the heart.³⁴ The notion that the chest-circuit is the mysterious 'home of the soul' is, of course, hypothetical; however, it does find some corroboration in a passage from *De victu* III.71 and IV.93 where it is implied that the 'circulation,' or *periodos*, of the soul continues during sleep.

To sum up what we have learned so far: we know that during wakefulness the soul is spread throughout the body. It is likely present in all three bodily circuits but is clearly not confined to them. From a passage in *De victu* I.35 we learn that the soul also travels through certain pathways or channels (*poroi*), which connect it to the bodily periphery and which may become blocked and, thus, hinder its movements. Therefore, I suggest that the psychophysiology of sleep and dreaming in *De victu* is best described as a type of journey or path: while the organism is awake, the soul is dispersed within the circuits and channels, but during sleep it creeps back into its proper home, which (hypothetically) is found in the μέση περίοδος, that is, the circuit blood vessels in the chest region.

The description of the soul's activities during sleep is thus, I believe, devoid of any 'Pythagorean' or 'Orphic' influences. What is described in *De victu* IV.86 is neither an out-of-body journey nor a χωρισμός, but something quite the opposite: the soul never loses contact with the body, neither during wakefulness nor during sleep, it just travels deeper inside the body to its proper 'home,' which I have (strictly hypothetically) placed in the middle circuit in the chest. This journey from the bodily periphery to the *oikos* provides the soul with data on the current state of the body, which are presented in dreams in an indirect form.

How does the soul acquire its knowledge about the state of the body and the not-yet-manifest disturbances, which it later communicates in dreams? The dream-theory in *De victu* is a complex one. The author distinguishes between different types of prognostic dreams according to their subject matter: from dreams that mimic a person's daily activities, to dreams about natural phenomena, or nightmares about misshapen bodies and monsters. Generally speaking, this theory is based on the same parallelism between the micro- and the macrocosmos that we have observed in *De victu* I.10: in dreams all the bodily organs are represented by their macrocosmic counterparts. For example, an irregular appearance of the sun, moon, and stars, is a sign of problems in their respective *periodoi* in the body.

34 Hulskamp 2008, 163; July 1960, 41–43.

Although these dreams are treated as an important diagnostic and prognostic tool, the physiological mechanism by which they occur, although the author tries to explain it in *De victu* IV.86, remains unclear. Most have thought that the soul separates itself from the body and thus somehow gains insight into future events (in this case looming maladies), just like in the tales of the journeys of Hermetimos' or Aristreas' soul. I suggest that the soul does indeed take a journey but a journey of a different kind: it is while traveling through the limbs and the other circuits (towards its home) that the soul amasses its knowledge about the body's current state. In a sense, it is also a 'cosmic journey' since the body is an 'imitation' of the macrocosm.

Bearing all this in mind, we can now touch upon the problem of Materialism versus Dualism in *De victu*. I believe, based on the evidence of *De victu* IV.86, that it is unnecessary to postulate any sort of Dualism or even a special Materialist interpretation of Dualism. On the contrary, *De victu*'s soul-doctrine shows some common traits with a certain type of Materialist psychophysiology, which, although its roots are sometimes traced back as early as Anaximenes, was first fully fleshed out by Diogenes of Apollonia in the fifth century BCE. Diogenes' theory, shared by the author of the Hippocratic tract *De morbo sacro*, postulates a material substance (in the case of Diogenes, warm air), which is the carrier of intellectual, sensory, motor, and to some degree even reproductive function. This air enters the body from without (with breath) and is then distributed inside it via special channels, while a certain 'higher', 'purer' portion of it settles in the brain, which thus becomes a kind of 'command center' within the body. This inner *aer* is also conceived as the actual 'organ of perception', while the eyes, ears, etc. are just its ducts, or channels through which it travels. Thus, I think that overall *De victu* is closer to Diogenes' model than it is commonly believed.³⁵

To reiterate, according to *De victu*, *psyche* is a material substance with a variety of functions from mental to motor and reproductive, which is spread within the body but also has its own proper place, or 'home'. As I have speculated, this home is probably also the locus of higher intellectual and regulatory functions and is situated in the so-called 'middle circuit', that is, blood vessels in the chest/heart region. Also in *De victu* IV.86, the soul is described as exclusively responsible for perception, which echoes Diogenes'

35 Jouanna in Jouanna 2012 has famously and impressively argued that Regimen owes much of its *Seelenlehre* to Empedocles; especially the notion that the Soul's intelligence depends on the state of mixture of its primary constituents. While it is certainly true that there are Empedoclean influences in Regimen's psychology, some points of comparison outlined by Jouanna strike me as less persuasive. For example, *psyche* in both cases is a fluid substance but this is never made explicit in Regimen, on the contrary,

it is said to enter from the outside into every animal that breaths and into people of all ages (*De victu* I.25 ψυχή ... ἐσέρπει ἐς ἅπαν ζῶων, ὅ τι περ ἀναπνέει καὶ ... ἐς ἄνθρωπον πάντα καὶ νεώτερον καὶ πρεσβύτερον). I do not believe this passage can be naturally interpreted as dealing with reproduction, cf. Bartoš 2015, 209. Furthermore, the fact that *psyche* enters the organism, presumably, with breath, points to its gaseous rather than liquid nature.

notion that it is the *aer* and not the sense organs that ‘see and hear.’³⁶ Finally, the idea of the soul retreating inside the body during sleep also finds an interesting parallel in Diogenes: according to Ps.-Plutarch’s *Placita* 5.23, sleep is caused by the channels being filled with blood and the blood driving the *aer* from the periphery into the breast and belly, which thus become warm.

Now if *De victu*, as I suspect, does indeed follow this general outline (although with some obvious deviations), it would partially explain the surprising parallel between *De victu* and the Stoic notion of sleep as a retreat of the soul to the *hegemonikon*. This is not to say that *De victu*’s soul doctrine in general or its theory of sleep specifically is derived directly or exclusively from Diogenes. In fact, there are quite a few crucial differences that need to be emphasized: first of all, *psyche* in *De victu* is never identified with air, although the author does say in *De victu* I.25 that it enters the organism with breath. Second (if my interpretation of *De victu* I.10 is correct), the higher mental powers are associated with the fiery part of *psyche* and are located in the chest, not in the brain, like in Diogenes and *De morbo sacro*. Finally, in Diogenes’ view, the air does not return to the center of cognition (the brain) during sleep but seems to move away from it and proceed from the extremities into the chest and stomach. In *De victu*, on the other hand, the expression ‘the soul’s own home,’ where *psyche* retreats during sleep, suggests to me that what the author had in mind was a path precisely to the body’s cognitive center (just like in our Stoic parallels).

These are all important differences; important enough to suppose that Diogenes of Apollonia is almost certainly not, or not the only, source of *De victu*. I cannot speculate here about other possible influences,³⁷ because it would require a separate investigation, and this is not my primary purpose. I have attempted to show that *De victu*, in its views

36 Willy Theiler (Theiler 1965, 6–10) even suggested that the famous ‘windows-simile,’ which we find in Lucretius (*De rer. nat.* 3.359–361), Cicero (*Tusc.* I.20.46), and Sextus Empiricus (*Adv. Math.* VII.127) and which likens the sensory organs to windows, from where the soul, as it were, peeks out, may go back to Diogenes. It should be noted that ‘*oikos*’ of the soul in *De victu* seems to come from the same metaphorical vocabulary. Interestingly, Diller (Diller 1941, 376–378) thinks that it might be even earlier than that and our Skeptical tradition might be right in attributing this doctrine directly to Heraclitus.

37 Such as Heraclitus. There are in fact some intriguing similarities between some Heraclitean doxography (of Stoic and Peripatetic origin) concerning *psyche* and *De victu*. For example, there is one late but in-

triguing report (Hisdosus Scholasticus (Chalcid. Plat. *Tim.* cod. Paris. I. 8624 s. XII f. 2), according to which Heraclitus said that the souls ‘domicillium’ (*oikos*?) was in the heart, which operates in the body like the sun in the macrocosm (*cor mundi*) and occupies a position in the middle of the cosmos (μέσσαι περίοδοι?). Besides, Heraclitus’ own description of the soul in Fr. 117 DK as a material substance oscillating between a moist and a dry state (dryness being naturally associated with intelligence) shares some common traits with *De victu*’s description of the soul as a σύγκρησις of Fire and Water. Therefore, it would seem that the question of possible Heraclitean influence in *De victu*’s *Seelenlehre* is worth further investigation.

on the nature of the soul, follows a certain long-standing Materialist tradition; but ironically, an incorrect interpretation of the soul's journey as a 'spiritual' one, has led most researchers astray – if the reader will pardon the pun.

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ELIZAVETA SHCHERBAKOVA

studied Classics and Ancient Philosophy at Moscow State University. She received her Candidate of Sciences degree at 2014 and is currently a research fellow at the Centre for Classical Studies at the School of Advanced Studies in the Humanities, RANEPa in Moscow. Her research interests lie in the intersection of Early Greek philosophy, especially Heraclitus, and ancient medicine.

Elizaveta Shcherbakova
Prospekt Vernadskogo, 82, building 9
11957, Moscow, Russia
E-Mail: shagi-ion@ranepa.ru

Mai Oki-Suga

An Invitation from Plato: A Philosophical Journey to Knowledge

Summary

To trace paths to knowledge or to follow the journey searching for knowledge is to some extent equivalent to reading a philosophical book. Plato, who perceives this relation between journey and philosophy, writes his dialogues as if each of his works were a journey to knowledge. This paper inquires into the ascent and descent motif that is the symbolic motion of a philosophical journey and appears in Plato's *Politeia* repeatedly. By means of this motif, Plato depicts the journey of the soul in several different ways. This examination will show a possible way to read Plato's dialogue as a philosophical journey. This journey is undertaken by Plato or the figure Socrates, but at the same time it involves its readers in philosophical inquiries.

Keywords: Plato; philosophy; Republic (*Politeia*); journey of soul; dialogue

Das Lesen eines philosophischen Buches kann in einem gewissen Sinne mit einer Wegbeschreibung oder einer Reise zum Wissen gleichgesetzt werden. Platon, der sich dieses Verhältnisses zwischen Reise und Philosophie bewusst war, verfasste seine Dialoge, als ob sie Reisen zum Wissen wären. Diese Abhandlung behandelt das Begriffspaar Aufstieg und Abstieg, das als symbolische Bewegung der philosophischen Reise in Platons *Politeia* mehrmals verwendet wird. Mit diesem Motiv stellt Platon die Reise der Seele auf unterschiedliche Weisen dar. Meine Untersuchung zeigt eine Leseweise, mit der Platons Dialog als philosophische Reise verstanden werden kann, die zwar von Platon oder der Figur Sokrates unternommen wird, gleichzeitig jedoch den Leser in die philosophischen Fragestellungen miteinbezieht.

Keywords: Platon; Philosophie; Staat (*Politeia*); Seelenwanderung; Dialog

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1 Introduction

At the very end of Plato's *Politeia*, Socrates introduces the Story of Er, which is a report on how souls travel and what they do in the Afterlife. Among several unique elements in this story, the motifs of *anabasis* and *katabasis*, ascent and descent, have attracted scholars' special attention. These motifs, which are mostly used as a pair, appear repeatedly in the *Politeia*.¹ The most famous passage in which this paired motif appears is the Allegory of the Cave in Book 7. In this allegory, a person bound in a cave is depicted as going *up* to the outside, and, after a while, returning *down* to the cave. It is also well known that the dialogue begins with Socrates' word '*kateben*' (I went down), which is sometimes regarded as an allusion to the Allegory of the Cave.² If we compare the first sentence with the last sentence, we cannot doubt that Plato uses the ascent–descent motif intentionally.

The aim of this examination is to understand the framework of Plato's *Politeia*, which sustains the entire philosophical discussion expounded in the dialogue from the perspective of the ascent–descent motif. As the Story of Er shows distinctly, this motif can be seen as a sign indicating the journey of souls. Depicting the journey of souls on different levels, Plato tries to illuminate how we are able to set out our philosophical inquiries, which are likened to journeys.

In the following, I first give an overview of the concept of a journey in a philosophical sense. Then in the second section, I analyze three passages of the *Politeia* in which the ascent–descent motif plays the central role. They are, namely, the Story of Er, the Allegory of the Cave, and the opening scene. The third section compares these passages so that we can see how they are related to each other. Finally, in the fourth section, I propose a possible way to read the *Politeia* as an invitation from Plato, showing the close

1 The English translations taken from the *Politeia* are based on Bloom 1991. I have modified his translations on occasion. The citations from the original Greek text are based on Slings 2003.

2 Referring to Proclus' argument, Burnyeat under-

stands that "Socrates' going down to the Peiraeus and being detained there, somewhat reluctantly" corresponds to "an image of how [...] the philosophers would con–descend, somewhat reluctantly" Burnyeat 1998, 6.

connection between the first and the last sentence of the dialogue. The whole examination shall reveal a possible way to interpret the message Plato places in the last sentence of his second-longest dialogue.

2 Philosophical inquiry as a journey

Before we examine Plato's *Politeia*, an overview of the concept of 'journey' in general will help our understanding of the philosophical journey. It is not easy to define what is and is not counted as a journey. Besides, the existence of several terms in ancient Greek, implying a journey in the broad sense, makes this task more complicated.³ Nonetheless, it is not the main aim of this section to judge which terms belong to the journey category. Let me first loosely define the concept.

Despite the variety of terms, if a certain word indicates a movement that contains the following two elements, we possibly understand it under the concept of a journey: leaving a place with which a person is familiar and acquiring something, whether material or intellectual, that could not be found as long as the person stays at the original location. Using these two conditions, we find that journeys in ancient Greek written material can be grouped into two categories: (1) a journey in the literal sense includes those taken by (quasi-) fictional figures, such as Odysseus, and those reported to be taken by historic figures, such as Plato; and (2) a journey in the metaphorical or intellectual sense does not have to include physical motion but occurs in someone's mind or intellect, sometimes in a conversation.

Journey (1) is characterized by a linear movement in general, even though it includes detours and other adventures. Simplified, such movements are described as 'going there and going back'. People taking this kind of journey, whether they are historical or fictional, depart from their homelands or the places with which they are familiar and, after a while, return to the places where they started their travels. This feature also implies that journey (1) has clear aims or destinations. People's journeys or movements are eventually the means to reach their destinations and fulfill their aims. Consider some examples. In the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, Odysseus leaves his homeland to beat the Trojan enemies. After accomplishing this goal, he tries to return to his homeland. His departure from his homeland has a clear, simple aim and destination. As another example, Plato leaves Athens to answer the request of Dion, who wants him to educate (or to do

3 The apparently most famous one is νόστος, which describes, for example, the process of Odysseus' return home from Troy to Ithaca (cf. *Od.* 1.5). In

Plato's texts, we can find for instance πορεία (cf. *Phaid.* 115a).

philosophy with) the young tyrant of Syracuse.⁴ This goal is not attained in the way that Plato wishes, and he returns to Athens in despair. Nevertheless, his journey has a clear aim and destination.

In contrast, journey (2) does not necessarily include linear movement. Plato's philosophical journey can be pictured with the zigzag motion or the dialectic (*dialektische Aufhebung*).⁵ This difference in the motion can originate from the clarity of the aims that are set in the journeys. The destinations of philosophical journeys are usually quite vague, especially in the case of Plato's so-called aporetic dialogues. Unlike journey (1), people who attempt to go on journey (2) are unsure of what they could retain by undertaking it. Their only aim is to escape the situation where they are trapped in dark and blurred knowledge. Note that this aim differs from that of attaining new knowledge. Those who endeavor to take the philosophical journey do not know at the beginning whether it will be able to bring them something new. This special character entails a tricky problem on its own.

This difficulty is introduced in Plato's *Meno* in the form of the paradox of philosophical inquiries referred to by Meno, who is familiar with the "eristic argument" (*Meno* 80d–e).⁶ The point of the paradox is that we cannot search for a thing if we do not know what it is. Even if we were to find it, we cannot recognize it as the object of our search. Otherwise, if we are able to identify it as such, it necessarily means that we have already known what we are looking for. Hence, the method of philosophical inquiries leads to 'puzzlement' (*aporia*).

Comparing this paradox to our previous observation, we notice that the puzzlement that the paradox leads to characterizes the uniqueness of the philosophical journey. The question that Meno asks Socrates can be formulated as follows and is also directed to those who attempt to make a philosophical journey: how can we take a journey, although we do not have a clear, particular destination? This question does not serve as a spiteful means to refute the inclusion of the philosophical journey under the broader concept of a journey. Rather, its function is to caution; it warns that an intellectual inquiry – that is, the philosophical journey – is unlike a treasure hunt through which someone will discover something given externally.

Related to this point, it should also be noted that the end of a philosophical journey differs from that of journey (1). While journey (1) ends with the return to the traveler's

4 The whole story of Plato's travel to Syracuse is reported in his *Seventh Letter*.

5 The hypothetical method of inquiries (*Phaid.* 100b–102a) and the dialectic (*Rep.* 532b–535a) can be depicted with the zigzag motion.

6 Socrates himself does not view the paradox as a well-formulated argument. He develops the theory of

recollection as the solution or its opposing argument to the paradox after the particular passage. Regarding this paradox, Klein mentions the difference between 'searching' and 'learning' Klein 1965, 90–92. The English translation of *Meno* is based on Sedly and Long 2011.

homeland, namely the place found comfortable, journey (2) ends by reaching the place found uncomfortable, even if it is one's homeland. After the philosophical journey, it is almost impossible to return to the original position from which the journey started.

Despite some peculiarities of journey (2), as long as the movements contain the two previously mentioned elements, we can understand them under the concept of a journey.⁷ If we observe the ascent–descent motif from the perspective of the concept of a journey sketched above, it appears not merely as a repeated motif but as the decisive element that builds the entire dialogue of the *Politeia* as a philosophical journey.

3 Three passages where the ascent–descent motif appears

This section concentrates on the examination of three passages of the *Politeia* where the ascent–descent motif appears: the Story of Er in Book 10, the Allegory of the Cave in Book 7, and the opening scene in Book 1. Let's start our inquiry into Plato's own text.

3.1 The story of Er

Although it is placed at the end of the dialogue, it seems apt to examine first the Story (μῦθος) of Er because it describes the journey of souls more clearly than the two other passages. Briefly, this story has two purposes: to let people know the rewards and punishments that souls shall receive after their bodily deaths and to encourage people to live justly. Instead of telling it simply, Socrates introduces it as a story reported by Er, a “brave man” who died in war (614b3). In the following paragraphs, I focus on two elements of this story: the journey of the soul(s) and Er's role as a messenger.

First, consider the description of the journey of Er's soul. According to Er, his soul “made a journey (πορεύεσθαι) in the company of many” after it left his body (614b8–c1). Er's death itself is portrayed as a journey. Although such a depiction was not unknown at that time,⁸ it is noteworthy that the journey of his soul is not expressed with any word relating to the image of a descent. It implies that Socrates intentionally changes the

7 Plato lets the character Socrates describe his inquiry by comparing it with “the second voyage” (ὁ δεύτερος πλόος) in the *Phaedo*. When Socrates heard that Anaxagoras explains intelligence (νοῦς) as “the cause of everything,” Socrates was pleased (*Phd.* 97b8–c6). However, after examining the argument of Anaxagoras, he is “swept away from his marvelous expectations” (*Phd.* 98b7) and decided to pursue his “second voyage” (*Phd.* 99c9–d1). For the

Greek text, I use Burnet 1900. The English translation is based on Sedly and Long 2011.

8 For example, Herodotus reports the reincarnation (*Seelenwanderung*) as follows: “The Egyptians were the first who maintained the following doctrine, too, that the human soul is immortal, and at the death of the body enters into some other living thing then coming to birth.” Godley 1920, Book 2.123.

place of the afterlife that Homer offered and Homer's followers had inherited.⁹ Socrates does not depict the world of the dead as a place under the earth; it is no longer the *underworld*.¹⁰ The journey of Er's soul ended when his soul "came back to his body" (621b6). However, the journey of the soul(s) portrayed in the story concerns not only Er but also others. Er reports how the souls of others make their journeys. Those who are judged to have lived justly go "up" (ἄνω) to the sky and enjoy rewards and happiness, while those who are judged to have lived unjustly go "under" (κάτω) the earth and receive punishments and torment (614c3–d1). After a thousand-year journey, they gather again. The just souls that rose to the sky "come down" (καταβαίνειν), while the unjust ones "go up" (ἀνέναι) (614d6–e1). The journey of souls in the afterlife is explicitly illustrated by the ascent–descent motif.

The other important point in the story is the role of messenger, which Er plays. The judges who render a decision for each soul inform Er that "he ha[s] to become a messenger to human beings (ἄγγελος ἀνθρώποις) of the things" in the afterlife, "and they [tell] him to listen and to look at everything in the place" (614d1–3). A few pages later, he is again called "the messenger from that place" (ὁ ἐκεῖθεν ἄγγελος) (619b2). Er is instructed to become the messenger, as well as the witness to the truth of the afterlife. To know the truth, humans are in need of a messenger who tells the truth to others and who "save[s]" (σώζειν) the story (621b8).¹¹ This point is decisive if we consider it together with the previous one. As already stated, Plato – or Socrates as the storyteller – seems intentionally to change the picture of the afterlife that has been inherited from Homer and his followers. To tell a new type of journey of the soul, Plato calls neither Odysseus nor Orpheus, who have both been accepted as messengers from the afterlife, but Er as a new messenger.¹²

In this way, Er's story pictorially represents the journey that all souls are fated to take after leaving their bodies. Souls in this story are depicted to some extent as having a close relation with the bodies in which they once dwelled because they are able to move physically, upwards and downwards, at least as far as Socrates – or the original narrator

9 Socrates names "tragedy and its leader, Homer" as those who are said to "know all arts and all things human ... and the divine things too" (598d8–e2).

10 Männlein-Robert emphasizes this point: Männlein-Robert 2014, 55; Männlein-Robert 2016. Some passages imply that the world of the dead is somewhere in or above the sky, which can be compared with the image of the Christian heaven. This world-view is also shared in the soul-chariot allegory of the *Phaedrus* (246a–254e). Additionally, the astronomical observations seem to reinforce the image of the world of the dead as placed somewhere in or above the sky.

11 Halliwell comments on the word 'save' as follows: "The presumable point is that most tales 'perish' as soon as they are told; Plato's sow a seed that can grow in us." Halliwell 1988, 193.

12 Männlein-Robert's view supports this point: "Anders als Odysseus gelangt er jedoch nicht absichtlich, sondern als zufällig ausgewählter Bote dorthin. Sein nüchterner Botebericht wird im Kontext der Politeia vom Philosophen Sokrates referiert und dezidiert als Gegenstück zur homerischen Lügenmärchengeschichte des mythischen Helden Odysseus beschrieben" (Männlein-Robert 2014, 56).

Er – describes them. This ‘saved’ story becomes known through the mouth of a brave warrior, a “randomly selected messenger”.¹³

3.2 Allegory of the cave

Let us move on to examine a passage found in Book 7: the Allegory of the Cave. It is undoubtedly one of the climaxes of the dialogue.¹⁴ In the following paragraphs, we read the text step by step, paying attention to three points that are important for our inquiry: the bound state of prisoners, the compulsion of ascent, and the compulsion of descent.

Socrates begins the allegory with the description of bound people or “prisoners” (δεσμῶται) in the cave to “make an image of our nature in its education and want of education” (514a1–2). Their necks and legs are bound. Therefore, they are unable to flee from the cave and to “turn” (περιάγειν) their heads around (514b1–3). As a result, their heads are always directed toward the wall. A fire is burning behind them; between them and the fire lies a “path” (ὁδός) on which human beings carry all sorts of artifacts (514b3–7). Due to this environment, the prisoners always see only shadows on the wall and believe that these are real. Additionally, since voices and sounds, which originally come from things moving on the path between the fire and the prisoners, echo against the wall, they believe that these voices and sounds come from the shadows (515b7–9). This is “our nature” (ἡ ἡμετέρα φύσις) (514a1–2). It shows how much humans’ visual and auditory perceptions are deceived. Note that people are already “under the earth” (ἐν καταγείῳ) in the cave (514a3), although Socrates does not mention how they have descended to the cave. This means assumedly that humans are generally born with visual and auditory senses that are often hindrances to attaining a higher form of existence.

The second and the third points concern the hypothetical experiment of what happens to the prisoners when released from their yokes. This experiment begins with the scene depicting “someone” (τις) attempting to release a bound person.¹⁵ After doing so, this someone “suddenly compels (ἀναγκάζοιτο) him to stand up (ἀνίστασθαι), to turn his neck around, to walk and look up (ἀναβλέπειν) toward the light” (515c6–8). The prisoner is forced to do all of the acts that he could never attempt in his bound state. The contrast between the prisoner’s situation and what “someone” compels the prisoner to do distinctly illustrates how demanding the first stage of the liberation is. However, the liberation process has just begun. Subsequently, someone “drags him away from the cave by force (βίᾳ) along the rough, steep, upwards way (ἀνάβασις)” (515e5). In this

13 Männlein-Robert 2014, 56.

14 If we follow Szlezák’s argument, the *Politeia* is constructed symmetrically, putting Books 5 to 7 at the center. See Szlezák 1984, 38; Szlezák and Rufner

2000, 920–922.

15 Here, both the person who attempts to release and the person who is released are written in the singular form. For example τις and αὐτῷ at 515d2.

sentence again, using words such as “by force”, “rough”, and “steep”, Socrates emphasizes the difficulty of getting away from the cave. This hardship reflects the requirement of “someone” who compels – but actually helps – the prisoners, because without this someone, the prisoners never dare to escape from the cave. As far as Socrates describes the situation, there is no chance for the prisoners to “stand up” and “turn [their] necks around” by themselves. As a result, nothing ‘outside’ of the cave exists for them. The presence of this someone, who remains anonymous,¹⁶ corresponds to the existence of the world outside the cave. Thus, the passage regarding the prisoner’s liberation includes two significant messages; the liberation must be compelled by someone and its process is extremely difficult. As shown, the liberation process is characterized by an ascending motion, suggested by the words “stand up”, “look up”, and “upwards way”.

The latter part of the hypothetical experiment involves the return of the people who have been released and have gone outside the cave. After staying outside, “they are not willing to mind the business of human beings (τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων), but ... their souls are always eager to spend their time above (ἄνω)” (517c6–d1). If they go back down to the cave, they have to “contest about shadows of justice” with others who still and always will remain in the cave (517d6–9). The discomfort of returning to the cave is not limited to this aspect, however. If those released attempt to liberate other prisoners so that the latter group can also enjoy what the former has savored outside, the latter group resists the former’s efforts; the prisoners “would kill” those who attempt to release them (517a6). Therefore, the released group’s unwillingness to return to the cave originates not only from simple comfort but also from the danger of dying. Nevertheless, the people who have been outside the cave are neither allowed to “remain” (καταμένειν) there nor “be unwilling to go down again” (ἐθέλειν πάλιν καταβαίνειν) (519d4–5). Just as people were compelled to turn their necks around and to go up after they were liberated, now they are forced again to return to the cave. This passage, which seems to hint at Socrates’ death sentence, is also characterized by the compulsory turn from comfort to discomfort.¹⁷ Contrasted to the former one, this turn is described with the descent motion (καταβαίνειν).

Thus, the Allegory of the Cave depicts the ascent–descent motif on two different levels. On one hand, it presents a concrete image of the cave and the prisoners who are

16 We may regard this ‘someone’ as Socrates himself. Männlein-Robert explains this ‘someone’ by comparison with Odysseus, arguing: “Wie Odysseus seine Geschichte, in der er als Οὐτις/ ‚Niemand‘ erforderlich aus der Höhle entkommt, selbst erzählt, so erzählt auch Sokrates sein Höhlengleichnis mit dem τις/ ‚Jemand‘ der aus der Höhle aufsteigen und

herausführen kann, selbst (auch der Armenier Er erzählt das eigene Ergebnis)” (Männlein-Robert 2013, 249).

17 Unlike the ascent, we do not know whether those who go back down to the cave will find comfort there again. Glaucon defines life in the cave as “worse” (χεῖρον) than that outside it (519d8–9).

bound under the earth, released, and then led above; this is the level of the image.¹⁸ On the other hand, the ascent described here does not actually indicate physical movements. Socrates argues that it explains not simply the “twirling of a shell” (στροφή) but “the turning of a soul around (ψυχῆς περιαγωγή) from a day that is like night to the true day” (521c5–7). Since the allegory is defined as “the turning of a soul”, we can also understand the ascending motion in a metaphorical sense. Therefore, it indicates that the incidents described in the allegory actually happen interiorly to human beings, or more precisely, in their souls. Unlike the Story of Er, a soul is able to experience ascent and descent without dying.¹⁹ However, the situation where the liberated are placed is tenser than that faced by Er, for in the worst case, death awaits those who are released. This death may also indicate something that should be understood figuratively, but in any case, the descent clearly involves painful discomfort, which is not mentioned in the Story of Er. Nonetheless, the compulsory moment of descent plays a significant role in the opening scene.

3.3 Opening scene

We can find a clear representation of the descent motif in the opening scene (327a1–328e7). In relation to the previous examinations, three points should be noted: the motif of descent in the first line, the compulsion by Polemarchus, and Cephalus’ request.

Let us start by reading the first line: “I went down to Piraeus yesterday with Glaucon, son of Ariston” (κατέβην χθές εἰς Πειραιᾶ μετὰ Γλαύκωνος τοῦ Ἀρίστωνος; 327a1–2). To reiterate, the very first word of the dialogue is κατέβην (I went down). However, the place where Socrates heads to is neither the underworld nor the cave but the port city Piraeus. A. Bloom comments as “the center of Athenian commerce, it was the place to find all the diversity and disorder that come from foreign lands.”²⁰ Piraeus is the point where diverse cultures and viewpoints meet. The first sentence further includes two details that attract our attention. First, the whole story is introduced as an incident that occurred “yesterday”. The narrator Socrates always tells the story to his interlocutors, as well as the readers of the *Politeia*, in the time frame of “today”. Second, Socrates went down to Piraeus “with Glaucon”, which means that Socrates’ descent is not solitary. This

18 In the beginning of the allegory, Socrates says, “Next, then, ... *make an image* (ἀπεικασόν) of our nature in its education and want of education, likening it to a condition of the following kind” (514a1–2, emphasis added).

19 However, we can also find a point shared with the Story of Er, where death is depicted as a soul’s journey, equivalent to the departure from its body or its physical material. In the Allegory of the Cave, the

cave is pictured as a place where visual and auditory perceptions interrupt a person’s way upwards or paths to knowledge. Thus, the liberation from the cave can be compared with death as the departure from the body. This must be the reason why philosophy is called “practicing dying” in the *Phaedo* (67e5).

20 Bloom 1991, 440–441.

point seems different from the situation of the released who is portrayed as going back down alone among the prisoners in the cave.²¹ Additionally, the person accompanied by Socrates is Glaucon, “son of Ariston”, who is one of Plato’s brothers. Plato is also a “son of Ariston.”²²

The second noteworthy point in the opening scene is the compulsion by Polemarchus. Polemarchus “ordered” (ἐκέλευσε) his slave boy to “order” (κελεῦσαι) Socrates and Glaucon to wait for him (327b3–4). As the author, Plato quotes the boy’s words again, “The boy said, ‘Polemarchus orders (κελεύει) you to wait’” (327b5).²³ Plato uses the word “order” three times in three lines to emphasize the compulsory character of Polemarchus’ words. This compulsion appears more powerful when Polemarchus forces Socrates to choose between two options: either Socrates and Glaucon “prove [themselves] stronger” than Polemarchus and his companions or “stay” with Polemarchus (327c9–11). Polemarchus also adds that Socrates will fail to “persuade” (πειῖσαι) him to let Socrates go because he has no desire to listen to Socrates’ opinion at all. Since Socrates and Glaucon actually have no choice other than staying with Polemarchus and his companions, Glaucon (not Socrates) decides to follow them to Polemarchus’ house.²⁴ Note that the descent to Piraeus is not against Socrates’ will because he himself went there for the purpose of observing the Thracian festival. However, this descent by “turning around” (μετεστράφη) (327b6) and “staying” in Piraeus is against his will.

We can find one more compulsory element in Cephalus’ words, which appear more moderate than those of his son Polemarchus. Cephalus complains that Socrates does not come down (θαμίζειν καταβαίνων) to him in Piraeus very often, which is what he “should” (χρῆν) actually do (328c6). Cephalus’ grievance against Socrates suggests that they normally live in different places. Cephalus resides somewhere ‘down there,’ while Socrates dwells somewhere ‘above.’ Although Piraeus is the crossing point of ‘down’ and ‘above,’ the fact that Socrates and Glaucon meet Polemarchus and Cephalus in the port city and that Cephalus requests that Socrates come down hint at the difficulty for those down there to go above. Cephalus repeats his request at the end of the same passage, “Come here regularly (φοίτα) to us as to friends and your very own kin” (ὡς παρὰ φίλους τε καὶ πᾶν οἰκείους) (328d5–7). Cephalus shows his will to become like Socrates’ “friends” and his “very own kin,” whom Socrates visits often.

The opening scene attracts the readers’ attention to the descending movement with its very first word, although we cannot find its corresponding movement (i.e., the ascent)

21 An example is “if such a man (ὁ τοιοῦτος) were to come down again” (516e3–4). On the other hand, it is possible that there are some people who are released and go outside the cave, because Socrates says “not to permit them (αὐτοῖς) what is now permitted” (519d2).

22 If we accept that the emphasis is placed on the “son of Ariston,” we may be able to consider Plato the actual companion of Socrates in this descent.

23 Szlezák 1985, 273–275.

24 Szlezák 1985, 272.

in Book 1. The situation under which Socrates and Glaucon are placed, confronting Polemarchus who compels them to stay down there, reminds us of the circumstances surrounding those who are liberated and then return to the cave. However, unlike the prisoners who attempt to kill the liberated, the elderly man down in Piraeus expects to become like the ‘friends’ of Socrates. Although the same motif of descent is used in the allegory and in the opening scene, these two passages create opposite impressions.

4 Comparison of the three passages

So far, we have read three passages from the *Politeia*, using the ascent–descent motif as a clue. First, let me summarize them from the perspective of the concept of a journey so that we can understand how the three separate passages are interrelated.

The Story of Er depicts how souls take their journeys, with ascending and descending motions. In other words, the ascent–descent motif connotes the journey(s) of the soul(s) in the *Politeia*. The narrative is told as a true story through the messenger Er. His soul’s journey enables him to convey a new and true perspective on the afterlife, which differs from the widely held view.²⁵ Er’s role as a messenger suggests that the journey, especially that of souls, brings people new *Weltanschauung*, which can be called ‘knowledge’ in the broad sense.

The ascent–descent motif that we sporadically find in the Story of Er appears in the Allegory of the Cave in a clearer way. If we compare the ascending and descending motions of the released with the description of the movements of souls in Er’s story, the process of liberation from the bound state in the cave can be interpreted as a sort of journey. Er, who is released from his body, journeys to the afterlife and after acquiring a new perspective, returns to deliver the message; that is, the new *Weltanschauung*, which will never be obtained as long as one’s soul is detained in one’s body.

Similarly, the opening scene can be regarded as illustrating part of the journey because the descent motif appears quite obviously there. While the journey beginning in the opening scene completely differs from the other two journeys, it is often said that Plato alludes to the Allegory of the Cave and the bitter fate awaiting the people released from the cave in the beginning of the dialogue.²⁶ The descent motif and the description of Socrates being compelled to stay can easily be associated with the same images appearing in the last half of the allegory. Indeed, the opening scene and the allegory share some points in terms of the descent motif. Socrates is not allowed to stay someplace

25 Regarding this point, Halliwell argues: “It is, in effect, a reinvented myth, and as such one contribution to Plato’s larger project of (re)appropriating

the medium of myth for his own philosophical purposes.” Halliwell 2007, 447.

26 For example Burnyeat 1998, 6.

“above” and is compelled to “stay” at the place where people live with others. What is contested in the house of Cephalus can be understood as shadows of justice because the interlocutors of Socrates cannot discover a firm definition of justice in the conversation made in Book 1 of the *Politeia*. Cephalus’ house, where Socrates and Glaucon have just arrived, seems to possess the same characteristics as the cave, where the prisoners compete for the best “knowledge” about shadows, and the surroundings of Er, whose soul has just returned to his body.

However, if we focus too much on the common points, we will lose sight of what the journey in the beginning of the whole dialogue actually is. First, we should not forget one crucial difference between the opening scene and the allegory. Specifically, the people in Cephalus’ house do not try to kill Socrates, while the bound people in the cave would “get their hands on and kill the man who attempts to release and lead up” those who are released and try to liberate other prisoners (517a4–6).²⁷ On the contrary, Cephalus requests that Socrates come down and visit him and his company often (θαμιζεῖν and φοιτᾶν). What, then, does Cephalus’ readiness bring to the journey of Socrates and Glaucon?

To explore this point more precisely, a small excursion to other Platonic texts will be helpful. We can find an expression similar to Cephalus’ words in the *Laches*, one of Plato’s earlier aporetic dialogues. Lysimachus, who had not met Socrates until the day of the dialogue, says to Socrates, “You ought to have visited us often and thought [of] us as your kin” (181c1–2).²⁸ After they become acquainted, Lysimachus says that Socrates should visit him and his company, so they can keep their friendship (φιλία). Needless to say, Lysimachus’ words, “to visit us often” (φοιτᾶν) and “to think of us as your kin” (οἰκείους ἡγεῖσθαι), are equivalent to those of Cephalus.

In the beginning of the dialogue, he promises his interlocutors twice that he will “speak frankly” (παρρησιάζεσθαι) (178a4–5, 179c1–2). After becoming acquainted with Socrates, he asks Socrates to regard him as “one of your best-willing friends” (εὐνούστατον σοι) (181b8–c1). Lysimachus emphasizes his two essential traits: frankness (παρρησία) and goodwill (εὐνοία). Michel Foucault argues that in this text we can “see the series of precautions taken to set up the conditions, the zone of truth-telling.”²⁹ To put it another way, these attributes constitute the preconditions or requisites for those who try to acquire truth. In the *Gorgias* as well, frankness and goodwill are counted as two of the three qualities that Socrates demands of a person “who would sufficiently test (βασανί-

27 As Bloom mentions, the opening scene could be an allusion to Socrates’ trial. Bloom 1991, 310. However, as I point out later, even Thrasymachus does not try to kill Socrates.

28 For the Greek text of the *Laches*, I use Burnet 1903. The English translation of the *Laches* is based on Jowett 1931.

29 Foucault, Ewald, and Burchell 2011, 128–130.

ζειν) a soul" (487a1–3).³⁰ The settings of the *Laches* and the *Gorgias* prepare the space that enables "a permanent test of the soul, a *basanos* (test) of the soul"; in Foucault's words.³¹ Note that these characteristics only offer the space necessary for the emergence of truth. They do not guarantee that dialogues between people with these traits will necessarily produce or discover truth.

Returning to the *Politeia*, if we read the compulsion and the request of Polemarchus and Cephalus from the perspective not only of the Allegory of the Cave but also of "a *basanos* (test) of the soul", we can find an ideal setting for philosophical inquiries in Cephalus' house. Thus, Socrates and Glaucon's descending journey, originally against Socrates' will, begins to acquire a color different from the descent that those released from the cave would experience. While Socrates narrates the allegory conveying the bitter fate of the released, his own descent is heading in another direction that does not lead to that bitter fate. What then is Plato's aim in depicting the discordance between what Socrates tells in the form of an allegory and the situation where Socrates is placed?

5 An invitation from Plato

As mentioned above, the descent motif represented with κατέβην can be associated with the journey of the soul, just as the Story of Er shows. But at the same time, when it appears with a compulsory element, the close connection between the opening scene and the Allegory of the Cave will be emphasized. It is not difficult to regard Socrates heading to Piraeus as parallel to the liberated prisoner returning to the cave. On the other hand, Cephalus' eagerness to be in Socrates' company seems to suggest that something different from the bitter fate that the liberated would suffer is awaiting the figure of Socrates in the *Politeia*. By preparing the house of Cephalus, Plato endeavors to write another scenario, which is different not only from the fate awaiting the liberated in the allegory, but also from the real misfortune that befell Socrates.³² The following investigation shall explain why we can see that the descent of Socrates depicted in the opening scene hints at another fate for the prisoners liberated from the cave, paying attention to the concept of a journey that was the original starting point of our entire inquiry.

As previously stated, the character of Cephalus makes the opening scene distinct from the other two passages. His frankness and goodwill secure the space for the "*basanos* (test) of a soul". Perhaps Thrasymachus, the main interlocutor in Book I, plays a role

30 The rest is *episteme* or knowledge. Socrates tells this to Callicles, who is one of the most hostile figures in Plato's dialogues. For the Greek text of the *Gorgias*, I use Burnet 1903.

31 Foucault, Gros, and Burchell 2010, 366–367.

32 Socrates was sentenced to death for impiety against the gods of Athens and corruption of youth (*Apol.* 19b and 23c).

similar to that of those who “get their hands on and kill the man who attempts to release and lead up” the prisoners. He is indeed aggressive toward Socrates: he “hunched up like a wild beast, he flung himself at us as if to tear us to pieces” (336b5–6). But thanks to the secured space prepared by Cephalus and the dialectical conversation with Socrates, Thrasymachus becomes gradually calm and finally shows his willingness to listen to Socrates.³³

Although the house of Cephalus is portrayed as an appropriate space for the philosophical inquiry Socrates is undertaking, it should be stressed that it is merely the starting point of the philosophical journey. The house where Socrates’ interlocutors gather is not a *óδός* (path) on the journey. Now let’s focus on how Socrates uses the word *óδός* in the opening scene.

After Cephalus requests Socrates visit him in Piraeus more often, Socrates answers, “I am really delighted to discuss with the very old ..., one ought, in my opinion, to learn from them what sort of path (*τινὰ ὁδόν*) it is” (328d8–e2). Here, Socrates compares one’s life, or *way* of life, to *óδός*. The literal meaning of *óδός* is ‘path’ or ‘road’; but here Socrates uses this word in a very metaphorical sense. Its meaning is almost equivalent to ‘life’; to walk the path means growing old and living one’s life. In this sense, the old Cephalus represents one of the predecessors whose footsteps will be followed by the younger people. The path, as life, is not homogeneous for all people. Each person walks his/her own path, but there are several types of paths. The path of Cephalus is characterized by his piety, because in the middle of the discussion Cephalus leaves to “offer a sacrifice to the divine” (331d10). While this behavior seems to portray Cephalus as a devout old man, it can also be regarded as evidence of him being afraid of the afterlife, whose image has been brought to him by the stories he has heard since his childhood.³⁴ Thus, Cephalus is often seen as a figure representing those with conservative views of the afterlife.³⁵

Socrates chooses another path on which Cephalus has not walked. On one hand, Socrates *cannot* follow the footsteps of Cephalus, because Cephalus leaves Socrates and other younger ones, *although* he was eager to talk with Socrates. Many prevailing stories concerning the afterlife hinder Cephalus from listening to the message delivered by Socrates and, as a result, from walking the path Socrates is to walk. On the other hand, Socrates *does not* choose the path Cephalus has chosen, because he has already chosen

33 Thrasymachus urges Socrates to continue talking about the regime at 450a–b.

34 This point is clearly shown in the following words of Cephalus: “The tales told about what is in Hades ... at which he laughed up to then, now make his soul twist and turn because he fears they might be true” (330d7–e2). As to this point, my understand-

ing relies largely on Lear’s following comment: “[Cephalus] can now recognize the Achilles tale as a story, but the tale has already done its psychic work. And by the time he tries in adulthood to think about what courage is, he is already looking out from Achilles’ perspective.” (Lear 2006, 30).

35 For example Blackburn 2006, 28.

another path, which leads upwards. Socrates stayed in Piraeus to show this upward path to his interlocutors.

Yet, an inconsistency appears here. If we assume that the ascent–descent motif described in the allegory is a model of the philosophical journey, the inquiry into justice is supposed to be described with an ascending motion. Thus, I now propose the following interpretation: Socrates needs to descend so that he may ascend with friends with whom he is capable of acquiring a new *Weltanschauung*. This interpretation is supported by the last sentence of the *Politeia*, where Socrates says, “We shall always keep to the upper path” (τῆς ἄνω ὁδοῦ ἀεὶ ἐξόμεθα) (621c4–5). We can associate this expression with the upward way in the cave, which leads to the entrance (or the exit) of the cave (515e6). The “upper path” indicates the path leading to the outside of the cave, the yoke of ignorance. I believe we are allowed to regard this upper path in the last sentence as corresponding to the descent in the first sentence.

The difference between the first and the last sentence is, however, not only the direction. The last sentence has the verb ἐξόμεθα (‘we shall keep’ or ‘we will have’), whereas Socrates uses κατέβην (‘I went down’) in the opening. The *numerus* and the *tempus* of the verbs make a sharp contrast. The change of *numerus* from first person singular to first person plural connotes that Socrates acquired his companions throughout the dialogue, with whom he is able to go above. Socrates’ use of the future form in the last sentence hints that a new philosophical journey is about to begin. But if this is so, who is included in the ‘we’ who shall keep the upper path?

There is no definite answer to this question because Plato does not write about it. However, if we recall that the *Politeia* begins with Socrates’ narration without referring to whom he tells his story about ‘yesterday,’ it seems reasonable to argue that “we” in the last sentence includes not only Socrates’ interlocutors and the attendees there,³⁶ but also the readers of the *Politeia* to whom Socrates tells his story from the viewpoint of ‘today.’ The one who prepares this setting is, needless to say, the author Plato. By making the dialogue open-ended, Plato invites us, the readers of his dialogue, to a further philosophical journey.

36 The dialogue attendees are not equal to the interlocutors of Socrates; that is, Glaucon, Adeimantus, Thrasymachus, Polemarchus, and Cephalus. In addition to these interlocutors, five people are named

(Nicheratus at 327c2 and Lysias, Euthydemus, Charmantides, and Cleitophon at 328b4–7), although there seems to be more people because Socrates says “and some others” (καὶ ἄλλοι τινές) at 327c2–3.

6 Concluding remarks

This paper examined how Plato depicts philosophical inquiries as journeys of souls, using the ascent–descent motif. The Story of Er describes the journey to the afterlife of Er’s soul as well as the journey of others’ souls with ascending and descending movements. In the Allegory of the Cave, the liberation of the prisoners in the cave is pictured with compulsory ascent and descent. The opening scene appears to be an allusion to the Allegory of the Cave at first sight, but our close examination revealed it has some peculiarities that make Socrates’ descent to Piraeus different from the compulsory descent of the liberated prisoners.

By means of the same motif, Plato on the one hand illustrates as philosophical journeys all philosophical inquiries that bring people new perspectives about the world, but on the other hand he tries to convey that we are also undertaking a philosophical journey by reading his dialogue. We should not forget that Plato wrote the *Politeia*. Because it was intended to be published, Plato wrote it with the awareness that it would have readers.³⁷ The role of a messenger was handed down from Er to Socrates and Socrates passed on the message to his interlocutors, especially Glaucon and Adeimantus within literature, but also to his young friend Plato in the real world. Now Plato tries to pass the message he received from Socrates to us, his readers. We open Plato’s books and read them, because we are “really delighted with the very old” philosophers and we think “one ought to learn from them what sort of path” they have made (328d8–e2). The *Politeia* shows us only one of numerous possible paths to knowledge. As the request of Cephalus triggered the discussion led by Socrates, for us, the readers, the *Politeia* functions as an invitation from Plato that brings us to the journey of our own souls. He provokes his readers to participate in the dialectic and write a continuation of his dialogue.

37 It is well known that after Plato’s death people found “a wax tablet with [the] first words of the *Politeia* written and rewritten in different arrangements”. Burnyeat 1998, 4. Diogenes Laertius reports

this anecdote as follows: “Euphorion and Panaetius relate that the beginning of the *Politeia* was found several times revised and rewritten.” Hicks 1938, III. 37. See also Adam 1963, 1.

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MAI OKI-SUGA

Dr. of political science (Waseda, Tokyo) 2017, is a visiting Researcher for the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Tübingen. Her dissertation is titled *Political Art as Psychagōgia: An Interpretation of Political Philosophy of Plato's Politeia*. The focus of her recent research is on Plato's political philosophy and the philosophy of music and education.

Dr. Mai Oki-Suga
Bursagasse 1
72070 Tübingen, Germany
E-Mail: mai.suga@gmail.com

Albert Joosse

Philo's *De migratione Abrahami*: The Soul's Journey of Self-Knowledge as Criticism of Stoic *oikeiôsis*

Summary

This paper considers Philo of Alexandria's interpretation of Abraham's journey from Chaldaea to Palestine, foregrounding Philo's use of the journey as a metaphor to criticize the Stoic theory of *oikeiôsis*. The journey is a metaphor that helps Philo to advance his views about self-knowledge as an alternative to this Stoic theory of moral progress. In this implicit polemic, Philo suggests that the Stoic theory guides us in the wrong direction, remains too immanentist, and posits an end state to a process that has no end.

Keywords: Philo; self-knowledge; Stoics; *oikeiôsis*; polemic

In diesem Aufsatz soll gezeigt werden, dass die Interpretation der Reise des Abraham von Chaldaea nach Palästina im Werk Philons von Alexandrien implizit eine Kritik der stoischen Oikeiôsislehre darstellt. Das Bild der Reise ermöglicht es Philon, seine Vorstellungen über Selbsterkenntnis als Alternative zur stoischen Theorie der ethischen Entwicklung zu formulieren. Durch seine implizite Auseinandersetzung legt Philon nahe, dass die stoische Theorie sich in eine falsche Richtung entwickelt hat; zu immanent bleibt; und einen Endzustand eines Prozesses annimmt, der kein Ende haben kann.

Keywords: Philon; Selbsterkenntnis; Stoiker; *oikeiôsis*; Polemik

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The metaphor of a journey can play many different philosophical roles including, as this paper aims to show, that of criticism. In his treatise *De migratione Abrahami*, Philo of Alexandria interprets the biblical account of Abraham's journey from Chaldaea to Palestine as an allegorical description of the soul's development from attachment to the body and the sensible world, to a grasp of the transcendent deity.¹ An important aspect of Philo's interpretation is that he sees the soul's development as a process of getting to know oneself. This is remarkable considering that *Genesis* 12.1–6, the text of which Philo's treatise offers an exegesis, does not speak of self-knowledge. Why then does Philo choose to talk about self-knowledge in this context? First, because he thinks self-knowledge is an important part of what a soul must acquire to improve itself. Second, and this is what I hope to establish in this paper, the image of the journey, as described in this *Genesis* passage, offers Philo a useful vehicle to present his Platonizing ideas about self-knowledge as a criticism of the Stoic theory of *oikeiōsis* ('familiarization').

While there is much in Stoicism with which Philo agrees, he decidedly rejects their materialism, pantheism, and the positive view of nature in their ethics.² This rejection also shows in Philo's criticism of *oikeiōsis*, which is the theory the Stoics offer to account for moral development. Interestingly, Philo never makes his engagement with this theory explicit.³ The metaphor of the journey is used as a useful vehicle for Philo to develop this criticism because it allows him to show, without having to say it explicitly, that the theory of *oikeiōsis* has been developed in the wrong direction, that true growth needs to surpass the boundaries that *oikeiōsis* sets us, and that self-knowledge is never achieved, only striven for.

1 Philo's concern is primarily exegetical: he believes that Scripture contains the highest wisdom and philosophical truth and tries to bring this out as much as he can. In his case, this has the remarkable implication that interpretations of different passages need not necessarily be philosophically consistent with one another. Moreover, events or people mentioned in the Bible do not necessarily receive the same interpretation in different treatises. For this reason, one ought to be very careful in explaining one Philonic text by means of another. In this paper I have, therefore, kept references to other works of Philo to a minimum, including references to texts that are close to *De migratione (Migr.)*, such as *De Abrahamo (Abr.)* 62–80 and *De somniis (Somn.)* 1.41–67: there are many parallels between these texts, but since Philo's concern in the other two texts is a different one, such parallels function within a different interpretative whole. (My references to Philo's works follow the standard abbreviations of

the *Studia Philonica Annual.*) On the issue of Philo's 'contrainte exégétique' and the relative nature of his thought (relative to a particular text of Scripture), see the emphatic position of Nikiprowetzky 1977, esp. 236–242. – Related to the theme of the journey is that of flight and exile, on which see Runia 2009.

2 See Hadas-Lebel 2003, 271–274, for a brief overview of Philo's attitude towards Stoicism (which emphasizes the continuities between Philo and the Stoics). For an inventory of passages in which Philo uses Platonic and Stoic ideas on the soul see Reydam-Schils 2008. For a corrective of the common view that Philo adheres to Stoicism on the issue of the passions see Lévy 2009, 156–161. Long 2008 urges caution about using Philo as evidence for Stoic views on physics.

3 He does not do so anywhere in his writings: see the important study of Lévy 1998 as well as Lévy 2009, 146–148.

In what follows, I will first briefly introduce three stages of self-knowledge that Philo distinguishes. I will review the Stoic theory of *oikeiôsis* in section two, and provide evidence that Philo engages with this theory in section three. Sections four, five, and six discuss the three stages of self-knowledge in more detail in order to tease out the substance of Philo's criticism of the Stoics.

I Philo's three stages of self-knowledge

From the various statements that Philo makes about self-knowledge in *De migratione*, it is possible, with some simplification, to distinguish three stages: ignorance, study of the senses, and the move towards knowledge of god.⁴ There are some passages that complicate the picture, which I will discuss later. The first stage is that of the natural philosophers, which Philo associates with the Chaldaeans. It is a state of complete ignorance of oneself combined with the illusion that one has knowledge about the universe and about phenomena contained within it. The call to self-knowledge is meant to pull people away from this state and into the next stage of self-knowledge. The second stage of self-knowledge is the study of the body and the senses, which should lead to a discovery of the worth of the intellect. Philo locates it in Haran, the place where Abraham (and his father Terah) lived for a while. It is associated with the realisation that one lacks knowledge about many things, and that one would do best first to get to know oneself. In the final stage, self-knowledge is tied up with knowledge of god. It remains unclear, here as elsewhere in Philo, to what extent one can really have knowledge of god.⁵ This third stage really consists in a transition from the previous form of self-knowledge. Philo mentions the idea that self-knowledge allows us to know god as the cause of everything, an ability that arises by analogy from our acquaintance with our intellect, which is the cause with respect to the rest of our soul and body. At other moments, Philo retracts such epistemic confidence.

4 These are based on the treatise as a whole, as discussed in this paper, but particularly the three stages Philo himself distinguishes in 194–195. Nazzaro 1969 proposed an alternative triad: self-knowledge as (i) an antidote to presumption, (ii) an awareness of human insignificance, and (iii) a route to knowing god. I choose to deviate from this in particular because it contains significant overlap between its second and third stages (and between all stages in Nazzaro's discussion). Cf. also Courcelle 1974, whose brief but sagacious treatment signals

key themes in Philo's corpus as a whole (39–43).

5 On this matter see among other publications Früchtel 1968, 147–163; and Runia 2002, especially 299–303, where he offers an analysis of *Spec.* 1.32–50 and *Praem.* 36–46. Mackie 2009 offers a careful account of Philo's statements about the possibility of seeing god, drawing out both the variance among the ideas found and the factors that may affect their presence (audience, focus of the exegesis, and spiritual advancement of the 'seer').

As we will explore below, Philo presents his thoughts on self-knowledge as part of an alternative view of moral development to the Stoic theory of *oikeiôsis*. However, the three stages of self-knowledge also relate to Plato's philosophical writings. In ways which I will discuss in sections four and five, Philo integrates disparate elements that he finds in the Platonic corpus, especially in the *Phaedrus* and in the *Alcibiades I*. In the *Phaedrus*, Socrates famously comments that he cannot evaluate the truth of exegeses of the Boreas myth in naturalistic terms because he has not yet come to know himself. This move of epistemic modesty is clearly echoed in Philo's first stage. In the *Alcibiades I*, Socrates claims that self-knowledge is knowledge of oneself as a soul. He also, somewhat later, claims that one can know oneself most of all after having come to know everything divine. These comments are related to Philo's second and third stages. Philo's use of these Platonic texts makes clear that he conceives of his criticism of the Stoics as a Platonic criticism. Moreover, they also serve a more specific polemical purpose: like the Platonists, the Stoics also looked to Socrates as a moral example, and the *Phaedrus* and *Alcibiades I* are exactly the kind of texts that provided them with an understanding of Socrates.⁶ Before we explore Philo's thoughts on self-knowledge and their Platonic background further, however, let us remind ourselves of the broad outlines of the Stoic theory of *oikeiôsis* and the way it extends into the Stoic view of our place in the cosmos.

2 Stoic *oikeiôsis* and cosmo-theology

The classic account of *oikeiôsis* is given in Diogenes Laertius. The amount of references to Stoic texts that Diogenes provides inspires confidence that his account presents a more reliably Stoic version of the theory than some other accounts.⁷

They [the Stoics] say that an animal has self-preservation as the object of its first impulse, since nature from the beginning appropriates it (*oikeiousês*), as Chrysippus says in his *On ends* book 1. The first thing appropriate (*prôton oikeion*) to every animal, he says, is its own constitution and the consciousness of this. ... This is why the animal rejects what is harmful and accepts what is appropriate (*oikeion*). ...

And since reason, by way of a more perfect management [than in the case of animal impulse], has been bestowed on rational beings, to live correctly in accordance with reason comes to be natural for them. ... Therefore Zeno ... was

6 On Stoic use of the *Phdr.* as a Socratic text see Brouwer 2014. For the *Alcibiades I* compare Cic., *Tusc.* 1.52; Epict. *Diss.* 3.1.

7 Notably that of Cicero's character Cato in *Fini.* 3.16–

25, which could be orthodox but may well contain Peripatetic thought too: see Schmitz 2014 for an argument to that effect.

the first to say that living in agreement with nature is the end, which is living in accordance with virtue. ... Further, living in accordance with virtue is equivalent to living in accordance with experience of what happens by nature, as Chrysippus says[.]⁸

The key factors in this account are: a) nature; b) the process of 'familiarization', *oikeiôô*; c) constitution; and d) reason. Let us briefly review the theory by looking at each of these.

(a) The theory operates within a framework of naturalism. Nature takes care of its creatures by giving them the impulse to preserve themselves, and as such, the affective motivation to pursue that which helps them prosper and avoid that which threatens their existence. The Stoics provide an argument for this conclusion that means to show the absurdity of two alternative possibilities: that nature would alienate creatures from themselves or that it would leave them indifferent to themselves. The only way for nature's creative action not to be in vain, according to this argument, is if nature also subsequently gives its creatures the impulse to persist, and this happens when creatures identify with themselves.⁹

(b) What nature does is to familiarize (*oikeiôô*) a creature with things in its environment. The verb *oikeiôô* unites different meanings that all play a role in this theory (and I have used several in the last paragraph).¹⁰ *Oikeios* can mean 'one's own', and it is this sense of identification (and of possession in a derivative way) that plays a major role in the initial stages of *oikeiôsis* described by Diogenes above, as well as in the ultimate stages of identifying with the rationality of nature and other rational agents. A related but different sense is 'intimate,' an affective sense that is prominent when Stoics talk about the care taken in choosing what promotes one's life and repelling that which harms it. Common too is the sense 'akin,' to which the description of the social component of *oikeiôsis* makes an appeal: we can imagine other human beings as located in ever wider concentric circles, centred around ourselves, which we are able to draw in, so that those in distant circles come to seem like close kin.¹¹ In this way, we come to assume a moral stance in which we treat other people's interests as our own, or in any case as equal in importance to our own.¹² All these meanings, hard to reproduce in any

8 Diog. Laert. 7.85–87; tr. Long and Sedley 1987.

9 On this argument see Inwood 2016. Philo himself expresses similar ideas in other works, when speaking about divine providence: see *Opif.* 1c; *Praem.* 42; *Spec. leg.* 3.189; *Prov.* 1.26.

10 On the word and the Stoics' use of it see especially Kerferd 1972; Görgemanns 1983, 181–187.

11 The core text here is from Hierocles, preserved in Stobaeus 4.671.7–673.11 (text 57G in the collection of Long and Sedley 1987). For discussion see

Inwood 1984; Konstan 2016.

12 Opinions differ on whether this stance should be described as one of impartiality (e.g. Annas 1993, 159–179, 262–276) or as identification (e.g. Algra 2003). The more 'social' aspect of *oikeiôsis* has sometimes been regarded as different from the initial, personal *oikeiôsis*. See Annas 1993, 265; Inwood 1983; cf. Inwood 1985, esp. 184–194; Inwood 1999. See also Engberg-Pedersen 1986. Lee 2002 and Algra 2003 persuasively argue for the unity of the theory.

particular modern translation, should be kept in mind when we interpret ancient texts about *oikeiōsis*.

(c) It is worth noting that when they describe the object to which one is familiarized, the Stoics do not simply speak of self-love, but of animals' identification or affinity with their *constitution*. It is the structure of one's being. Hence the emphasis we encounter in many Stoic accounts on the different kinds of beings that exist. In the account in Diogenes Laertius, we get a description divided into plants, animals, and reason (I have included only the latter in the citation above). Animals are distinguished from plants because they have impulses, which are necessary for them to reach for and move towards food that does not come to them of its own accord. This impulse is the leading aspect of their soul and, therefore, an important element in the constitution to which an animal feels *oikeios* (a plant has no *oikeiōsis* to impulse). Since this impulse to be *oikeios* with something (and act on it) comes from nature, it is the natural thing to do for an animal to live by its impulse. (In other texts the description is extended to particular *kinds* of animals, with their typical impulses towards and away from e.g. specific other animals like predators or prey.)¹³ Human beings also start out in this way (children in fact have a constitution that is very comparable to that of animals).¹⁴ As reason develops, however, human beings start to notice rational patterns: in the actions they naturally perform and in the workings of nature. When moral development is not stilted, a human being comes to act from a different motivation than before; it acts, not because it has particular impulses to do and avoid certain sets of things, but because acting on such natural impulses is the reasonable thing to do. They come, in other words, to understand themselves as rational beings. For them, reason has become paramount in their constitution, and it is to reason above all that they sense themselves to be *oikeios*. Living rationally, therefore, becomes the natural life for human beings.

(d) In one sense, then, the reasonable life for human beings is a life lived in accordance with the reason (*logos*) that they sense themselves to have or be. The Stoic theory is not, however, a subjectivist theory in which virtuous agents follow the decrees of their own particular reason. The human faculty of reason is essentially the same as the reason that pervades the universe.¹⁵ A virtuous life can, therefore, also be described as a life lived in accordance with the commands of Zeus, the name the Stoics use to refer to cosmic rationality. Indeed, it is a major component of a rational being's understanding of its own constitution that it understands itself as of a piece with God. The fundamental

13 Particularly in Hierocles, *Elements of Ethics* II.19–III.54 (Bastianini and Long 1992); Sen. *Ep.* 121 (on this letter see Bees 2004, 16–45).

14 The focus on children in this kind of argument (there are comparable ones in the Epicurean tradition) has earned them the name 'cradle argument,'

coined in Brunschwig 1986.

15 For the debate about subjectivist readings of *oikeiōsis* (usually taking their bearings from Cicero's account in *Fin.* 3) cf. among others Engberg-Pedersen 1986; Lee 2002.

importance of this cosmic sense of reason also comes to the fore in the last sentence of the citation above, where Chrysippus fine-tunes Zeno's slogan that the best life is a life lived according to nature: it is specifically a life lived in accordance with the experience of what happens naturally. For Chrysippus, then, the rational life is a natural life in two senses: it is natural because nature produced the mechanism by which a human being comes to identify with their rational constitution and because living rationally involves an actual understanding of (and compliance with) the ways and means of the nature of the whole.

It turns out, then, that the theory of *oikeiôsis* flows smoothly into a cosmo-theology.¹⁶ Stoic perfection consists fundamentally in regarding rationality, as expressed in the cosmos and in other rational beings, as one's own. At the same time, the Stoic sage is also very much situated in a particular environment, for which she takes responsibility. As studies in the last decades have shown, rationality requires social involvement and proper care for the body.¹⁷ When the Roman Stoic Seneca addresses this theory in his letter 121, he even speaks of different constitutions that he says belong to different phases of a human life. These two perspectives – one socially embedded, the other cosmic-rational – may lead to theoretical tensions, but they are both central to Stoic ethics.

When we turn to Philo, it is worth stressing two aspects of the Stoic theory. First, there is a great deal of continuity here with the thinking of other ancient schools, particularly the Peripatetics and the Platonists. The differences should not be exaggerated, even if ancient polemic might suggest this. Second, the Stoic theory posits a fundamental continuity between nature and perfection. In terms of the metaphor of *oikeiôsis*, Stoic moral development is at bottom a process of coming to be (and feel) at home in the world; this is very different for Philo.

3 Philo targets *oikeiôsis*

Philo does not speak explicitly of '*oikeiôsis*.'¹⁸ It is nevertheless plausible that he has this theory in view when we consider his use of related words: the root *oikos* (house) and the opposite term *allotriôsis* ('alienation'). Philo finds reason to speak of one's *oikos* in

16 See especially Lee 2002 for the profound connections between *oikeiôsis* and Stoic cosmo-theology.

17 See especially Reydams-Schils 2005; Graver 2007.

18 With one exception in a different context: in 47, Philo speaks of the theoretical life being *oikeiomenos* (appropriate) to a rational being. Elsewhere in Philo, the term *oikeiôsis* and derivatives oc-

cur occasionally. For a markedly polemical use of it (and of *allotriôsis*) see *Post.* 135; *Gig.* 28–29; *Conf.* 82. As Lévy 1998 shows, Philo uses the term to describe the kinship between the mind and the divine, rather than the Stoic process, in an attempt to play down the significance of the Stoic theory: cf. Radice 2008, 142–143; Bonazzi 2008, 246–250.

the text of *Genesis* 12.1 itself: “And the Lord said unto Abraham, Depart out of your land (*gê*), and out of your kindred (*sungeneia*), and out of your father’s house (*oikos*)” (*Migr.* 1)¹⁹ Of course, the presence of the word ‘house’ in a text does not immediately make it a response to *oikeiôsis*; but Philo uses the word in a specific way. He uses *oikos* to mean embodied existence and the human constitution in general, the very condition to which the Stoics say human beings have *oikeiôsis*. Initially, it is true, Philo interprets land, kindred, and paternal home – the three things which the text says Abraham should leave – as the body, the sense, and speech, respectively (paragraphs 2–6).²⁰ In this initial division, leaving the *oikos* is interpreted as a separation from the traps of rhetoric and language (12).²¹ I shall return to this initial use of the word below. Elsewhere in the text, however, Philo employs a broader understanding of *oikos*, in the description of what I have called the second stage of self-knowledge. One should study one’s own *oikos*, Philo says repeatedly when referring to this second stage. In 185, for instance, which is part of a speech that Moses is imagined to have addressed to the Chaldaeans, we read:

Explore yourselves only and your own nature, and make your abode (*oikêsantes*) with yourselves and not elsewhere: ... observing the conditions prevailing in your own individual household (*kata ton idion oikon*), the element that is master in it and that which is in subjection, the living and the lifeless element, the rational and the irrational, the immortal and the mortal, the better and the worse.

This conception of what counts as one’s *oikos* includes the whole of human nature; in terms of the threefold division from the beginning of the text, it includes the body and the senses. The body is termed the *oikos* of the soul in 93. In 187, sense perception is described as the *oikos* of thought (*dianoia*). In 189, the study of the various sense organs and their functioning is called the investigation of one’s individual *oikos*. In 195, Philo makes this identification with the three initial factors explicit, when speaking about the mind’s “study of the features of its own abode (*idios oikos*), those that concern the body, sense-perception and speech”

The things Philo mentions in these various descriptions are the very things about which one can have self-awareness according to the Stoic theory of *oikeiôsis*. They are what make up the human constitution. When he exhorts his readers and the Chaldaeans to study their own *oikos*, then, he calls on them to perform an exercise of self-study that his readers will have recognised as very similar to the initial stages of Stoic *oikeiôsis*.

19 Here, and throughout the paper, I use the translation of Colson and Whitaker 1932, slightly modernized and with occasional modifications.

20 Philo calls the third item *ho kata prophoran logos* (2,

12), using a Stoic term.

21 Philo emphasizes the secondary importance of language by describing it in Platonic terms as only an imitation of the nature of things (12).

What Philo propagates is not Stoic *oikeiōsis*, however. As I mentioned previously, it is conspicuous that he avoids the Stoics' own term of art, *oikeiōsis*, and any form of the verb *oikeiōō*. This already signals his polemical intent.²² Nor is the description above in 185 completely compatible with Stoic self-study: the strong dualism in the passage and the reference to immortality establish a distance from Stoic views.

A second aspect of Philo's treatment of the word *oikos* that makes an engagement with Stoic *oikeiōsis* plausible is the fact that he connects embodied existence with one's home, as the Stoics would do, rather than with some kind of exile. The latter option was certainly open to Philo: he makes this exact move in other treatises,²³ echoing the thought in Plato's *Timaeus* that the mind is a heavenly, not an earthly plant (90a4–7). It is, therefore, a choice on Philo's part that in *De migratione* he describes existence in the body and on this earth as home.

This brings us to the other term that establishes a link between *De migratione* and Stoic *oikeiōsis* plausible: *allotriōsis*, the opposite of *oikeiōsis*. It comes at a prominent moment in the text, when Philo turns to the meaning of the word 'depart' (*apelthe*). He has identified the domains from which one should depart as the body, the senses, and speech. What does it mean to depart from them, however? Philo starts with a warning reminiscent of Plato's *Phaedo*: this is not a call to pursue a real separation, for such a separation 'in being' (*kata tēn ousian*) would mean death. It is rather a call to acquire a mental distance from them. The decisive word here is *allotriōthēti*:

The words 'Depart out of these' are not equivalent to 'Sever yourself from them absolutely,' since to issue such a command as that would be to prescribe death. No, the words import 'Make yourself a stranger to them in judgement and purpose' (*tēn gnōmēn allotriōthēti*).²⁴

Philo's choice of words is precise; through them he reminds his readers of Stoic *oikeiōsis* and makes clear that his moral ideal diverges from the Stoics' moral ideal. He exhorts his readers to de-familiarize themselves from their human constitution.

Terminology that reminds us of *oikeiōsis* recurs a little further on, when Philo discusses what it means specifically to depart from the senses. The mind, he says, has become someone else's property (*allotriion agathon*) in its attachment to the senses and has cast off what is its own (*idion*) (10). It should stop letting itself be alienated (*allotriōsas*)

22 Cf. the remarks about the whole of Philo's oeuvre in Lévy 1998, 156.

23 Philo, in places, treats Abraham's journey itself as a kind of exile. See for instance *Her.* 82: ἀποδημίαν ἡγοῦμενον ὄλον τὸν μετὰ σώματος βίον, ὅποτε δὲ

δύναιτο τῆ ψυχῆ μόνῃ ζῆν, ἐν πατρίδι καταμένειν ὑπολαμβάνοντα; *Conf.* 82; *Somm.* 1.45. Philo cites the passage from *Tim.* in *Plant.* 17 (I am grateful to Albert-Kees Geljon for this reference.)

24 *Migr.* 7.

and finally enjoy its own goods (*ouk othneiôn all' oikeiôn agathôn*) (11). In another variation, Philo expresses the mental distance one should maintain from speech as living separately from it (*dioikizomenon*, 12). So we see that Philo avoids strict *oikeiôsis* terminology but uses words that are very similar to it, including its direct opposite. Moreover, Philo urges the mind to estrange itself from the common objects of Stoic *oikeiôsis*; the way to reclaim that which is its own is by withdrawing from bodily existence.

4 The first station

Referencing Philo's vocabulary has already shown us something of his polemical treatment of *oikeiôsis*. In order to see how Philo's criticism plays out in more detail, let us consider the three phases of self-knowledge in turn. Philo starts his treatise by talking about a departure from the body, the senses, and speech. In terms of the journey of the rational soul (represented by Abraham), however, the beginning is to be found somewhere else, in an attitude that Philo associates with the Chaldaeans. A number of different qualifications come together in Philo's descriptions of the Chaldaeans. They are astrologers, students of the stars and people who "walk on" and "talk air"²⁵ who claim to know the causes of each and every natural phenomenon, who think that good and bad result from particular stellar constellations, who emphasize the unity and harmony of the cosmos, who regard fate as a divinity, and who identify the cosmos with god.²⁶

The Chaldaeans of Philo's text are commonly associated with the Stoics.²⁷ A number of Stoic positions support this connection. First, we saw that the Stoics identify the cosmic order with god and regard heavenly bodies, such as the stars, as gods. Second, they regard fate as identical with this god. Third, they think that moral perfection consists in a type of knowledge; we saw that Diogenes Laertius reports Chrysippus as describing the moral end as "living in accordance with experience of the actual course

25 *Aitherobateite* (184), *aeromytheite* (138) – the latter is an extremely rare word: this is the only occurrence in the corpus of the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, with only four cognate forms (one of which is *aeromythos* in Philo's *De sacr.* 32). Both words are reminiscent of the word *aerobateô* – the charge that Socrates cloudwalked was levelled at him in Aristophanes' *Clouds* (225, cf. 1503; cf. *Pl. Ap.* 19c4) and in 184 Philo speaks of the Chaldaeans floating in the air, clearly alluding to the *Clouds*. Philo redirects the accusation: he has a use for Socrates in his call for self-knowledge and sees the Stoics as the cloudwalkers / air talkers. (Pace Nazzaro 1969, 68 n. 75, who denies any link with Aristophanes for the reason

that Philo uses it "mai parodistico.") The variation *aeromytheite* is likely an allusion to *Phdr.* 229d–230a, cited below. Cf. *ti huper nephelas pèdâis?*; in *Somm.* 1.54 and *meteôroleschôn* in *Somm.* 1.54 and 1.161.

26 Philo describes the Chaldaeans in 136, 138, 178–179, 184, 187, 194. He also presents Abraham as formerly being a Chaldaean. For discussion of the Chaldaeans in other Philonic works see the references in Borgen 1997, 217; Wong 1992.

27 Though rarely identified with them. See among others the discussion in Beckaert 1961, 28 n. 1; Ruhnica 2002, 290 cautions against identification (cf. Sandelin 1991, 132–133).

of nature.²⁸ Fourth, as treatises like Seneca's *Naturales Quaestiones* demonstrate, the Stoics put this conviction into practice by engaging in considerable detail with the study of natural philosophy.²⁹ Not all characteristics Philo ascribes to the Chaldaeans, however, are apposite descriptions of the Stoics. While the Stoics allocated an important role to the mantic art, it would be a misrepresentation to say that they thought that good and bad follow from particular stellar constellations. The idea that the Chaldaeans are astrologers also seems to have more to do with traditional ideas about the Chaldaeans than any specific Stoic convictions. To some extent, then, Philo's Chaldaeans are a mixture. They are, nevertheless, a useful textual instrument for Philo to criticize the Stoics.

Philo uses Platonic/Socratic weapons to develop this criticism. He and his Moses call the Chaldaeans back, down from heaven, towards themselves. He considers them and their claim to know the causes of everything as epistemically arrogant. What they should first do, Philo urges, is to study themselves. This is a call to a Socratic condition. As he puts it in 134, once the Chaldaeans engage in a serious study of themselves, they will discover that they did not know what they thought they knew. Indeed, the highest a human being will ever reach is an awareness of ignorance (more on this below, in section 6). Not only the condition is Socratic, but so is the very move. In Plato's *Phaedrus*, Socrates is asked what he thinks of naturalistic explanations of myths; the myth in question is about Boreas' abduction of a nymph, which some might explain as the North Wind's blowing a girl off a rock. Socrates responds:

I have no time for such things; and the reason, my friend, is this. I am still unable, as the Delphic inscription orders, to know myself; and it really seems to me ridiculous to look into other things before I have understood that. This is why I do not concern myself with them. I accept what is generally believed, and, as I was just saying, I look not into them but into my own self[.]³⁰

Socrates' direct concern in this passage is with demythologizing explanations, as they were apparently propagated by some sophists. The scope of his remarks, however, is broader, and they were interpreted in broader terms in antiquity. Socrates' stance here signals a turning away from natural philosophy to the study of oneself.³¹ Philo appropriates Socrates' exhortation and addresses it to the Chaldaeans, thereby presenting a

28 ζῆν κατ' ἐμπειρίαν τῶν φύσει συμβαινόντων, Diog. Lart. 7.87; also Stobaeus 2.76.8.

29 For Stoic engagement with astronomy and astrology see Jones 2003, esp. 331–342.

30 *Phdr.* (229e4–230a3); tr. Nehamas/Woodruff.

31 Behind this broader interpretation of *Phdr.* 229e4–

230a3, we may also detect the influence of the *Apology*'s contrast between Socrates' behavior and that of the natural philosophers (18a7–19d7) and the so-called autobiography of Socrates in *Phd.* 97b8–99b6, in which the search for natural causes is exchanged for the search for the *good* of processes.

Socratic criticism of Stoic science.³²

Interestingly, however, the condition to which Philo recalls the Chaldaeans is a Stoic condition just as well as a Socratic one. As we saw above, the study of one's own abode is not just any part of Stoic *oikeiōsis*, but is its beginning. Philo, in other words, recalls the Stoics to their own starting point, effectively urging them to travel in the opposite direction from the direction their *oikeiōsis* has taken. For Philo, studying oneself is a middle stage and constitutes progress with respect to the arrogant theorizing about natural phenomena with which he associates the Stoics. The Stoics have mistaken the route, however, treating the middle stage as the beginning of development and its initial stages as its culmination. In this way, the metaphor of the journey helps Philo to criticize the Stoic theory as leading people astray, away from the correct direction of human development.

What is wrong then with the Stoic view? First, as mentioned earlier, Philo criticises their epistemic optimism about discovering the causes of natural processes. All he thinks they have are deceitful opinions. This emerges most clearly in 136, where he addresses the Chaldaeans, and, via them, his readers:

Come forward now, you who are laden with vanity and gross stupidity and vast pretence, you that are wise in your own conceit and not only declare (in every case) that you perfectly know what each object is, but go so far as to venture in your audacity to add the reasons for its being what it is[.]

In order to criticise the Stoics here, Philo can and does appeal to the whole spectrum of Socratic language in its criticisms of sophistic and other false claims to knowledge. To be fair, the Stoics did not claim that they were sages, as Philo was well aware. Nevertheless, their philosophy is premised on the strong possibility that the human mind can achieve perfect knowledge of nature.

Second, the Stoics identify the cosmic order itself as the divine. In a passage in which he explicitly identifies the difference between the Chaldaeans and Moses, Philo presents this deification of the cosmos as a result of the Chaldaeans' being impressed with the harmony of the cosmos (179):

[T]hey have exhibited the universe as a perfect concord or symphony produced by a sympathetic affinity between its parts, separated indeed in space, but house-mates in kinship (*sungeneiai de ou diōikismenôn*). These men imagined that this visible universe was the only thing in existence, either being itself God or con-

32 Philo's charge that the Chaldaeans talk (hot) air (*aeromyteite*, 138) is a pun on Socrates' rejection of the Boreas myth; see note 22.

taining God in itself as the soul of the whole. And they made Fate and Necessity divine[.]

In the notion of sympathy (*sumpatheia*) and that of fate and necessity (*heimarmenê, anagkê*), we recognise core Stoic notions. Philo goes on to note Moses' agreement with the thought that the cosmos is a sympathetic unity, as well as his disagreement with the idea that the cosmos is the primary god (*ho prôtos theos*, 181). The bonds of the universe are not identical to god, but are his powers (*dunameis*): god is transcendent and prior to everything that comes to be (183).

This fundamental disagreement about the nature of god goes beyond Philo's criticism of the theory of *oikeiôsis*, but also constitutes part of it. Stoic *oikeiôsis* ought to lead to a rational being's identification with the divine rational order, to its knowledge of the natural order and its self-perception as a part of this divine whole. In Philo's view, the end stage of *oikeiôsis* is both an instance of epistemic *hybris* and a fundamental misconception of the nature of god and, therefore, of the ultimate end of humanity.

The metaphor of the journey and its different stages allows Philo to present this disagreement as not just a matter of different views. As I suggested above, we are looking at a process of self-awareness gone wrong, which has set its practitioners back. What the Stoics consider progress is actually a regression. Much seems to depend, then, on the way in which Philo's middle stage plays out. What goes wrong when the Stoics conduct self-study? How does Abraham, Philo's rational soul, do better? We will now turn to these questions.

5 Haran: studying one's own home

Philo calls on the Stoics to leave behind natural philosophical speculation and to concentrate on the study of their own homes, just as Abraham lived in Haran after his departure from Chaldaea. As we have seen, this is a recall to the beginnings of Stoic *oikeiôsis*, a recall aimed at a better grasp of what one is.

The difference between Philo's proposal and Stoic self-perception is not immediately evident, however. When we look closely at Philo's descriptions of his middle stage of self-knowledge, at first sight it seems that the Stoics can agree with much of what he says. Take, for instance, Philo's exhortation in 137:

[T]ake knowledge of yourselves, and say clearly who you are, in body, in soul, in sense-perception, in reason and speech, in each single one, even the most minute, of the subdivisions of your being. Declare what sight is and how you see, what hearing is and how you hear, what taste, touch, smelling are, and how

you act in accordance with each of them, or what are the springs and sources of these, from which is derived their very being.

The strong emphasis in this passage on the workings of the senses (which we also find, e.g., in 189) may differ from what the Stoics would emphasize in one's self-perception, but they would not disagree with it either. When Philo raises the question of the origin of the senses, the Stoics can consider that to be a reference to the *hégemonikon*, the leading part of the soul from which the other parts – the senses, the faculty of speech, and the power of reproduction – spring. At the beginning of *De migratione*, Philo himself seems to cite this doctrine, when he speaks of the intellect “sowing in each of the parts of the body the faculties that issue from itself” (3).³³ What Philo writes about studying the senses, then, is not problematic for a Stoic.

Similarly, there is agreement between the Stoics and Philo when the latter speaks of the need to get to know what is good and bad in one's own home. Studying one's own home in 195 involves “com[ing] to know, as the phrase of the poet puts it: ‘All that exists of good and of ill in the halls of your homestead’”.³⁴ There are differences between Philo's and the Stoics' views on goods. The Stoics recognise only moral perfection and actions in accordance with it as good, while Philo would consider other things to be good as well. But these differences are hardly at stake here. The implicit contrast in this passage, rather, is with what Philo has called the Chaldaeans' conviction that good and bad follow from stellar constellations. Here the Stoics can wholeheartedly agree: goodness and evil must be sought in oneself, in one's knowledge or ignorance. With respect to this ethical aspect of self-knowledge, then, the Stoics can also go along with Philo's prescriptions.

In fact, the difference between Philo's middle stage of self-knowledge and the self-perception of Stoic *oikeiôsis* does not lie in the content of what is studied but in the direction in which this study leads. For the Stoics, self-perception leads to an identification with human nature and action in accordance with one's constitution. In a philosophically mature agent, this becomes an identification with the order of the world. For Philo, however, self-study should lead us to overcome the limits of *oikeiôsis*: The process is all about distinguishing the higher from the lower elements in one's constitution, in order to identify with the higher elements and alienate oneself from the lower elements. The natural condition of a human being ought not to be embraced, but to be left behind.

33 The Stoics would say *hégemonikon* or *dianoia* rather than *nous*, but the view is very similar. Note also that with the exception of the generative part, all other Stoic soul parts (the senses and speech) are cited throughout this treatise as elements of one's own home, together with the body.

34 A reference to *Od.* 4.392, a very popular phrase among philosophical writers. (Philo also cites it in the similar context of *Somm.* 1.57.) This ethical aspect of self-knowledge is also emphatically present in *Migr.* 219 and in 189.

The alienating effect of self-study can be clearly observed when Philo mentions the ruling structures in the soul. As we saw in 185, Philo's Moses calls on the Chaldeans to come to know the master and the servant in themselves (and cf. 219). Now, the Stoics too could speak of command in the soul, as is clear from their use of the term *bēgemonikon* to refer to the highest aspect of the soul. Once more, therefore, it is not necessarily the content of what is studied that makes the difference (although Philo perhaps makes a stronger case than a Stoic would be comfortable with). It is rather what the study should lead to (this passage continues the text from paragraph 7 cited above):

[L]et none of them [the body, senses, and speech] cling to you; rise superior to them all; they are your subjects, never treat them as sovereign lords; you are a king, school yourself once and for all to rule, not to be ruled; evermore be coming to know yourself, ... for in this way will you perceive those to whom it befits you to show obedience and those to whom it befits you to give commands.³⁵

Studying the senses and speech, and realising that they are by nature such as to be commanded rather than to be obeyed, here goes hand-in-hand with a separation from them. It is instructive to see that cognitive and political verbs are put in coordinate position in this passage: 'rise superior,' 'treat as subjects,' 'school yourself,' 'be coming to know,' and 'perceive.' The cognitive verbs at the end are not intended to refer to a prior state, subsequent to which you might undertake a mental withdrawal from what you have come to know as subservient. The idea seems rather to be that the process is mutually reinforcing, and that a progressively better knowledge of yourself results from rising above subservient elements.³⁶ Moreover, the recognition of ruler and ruled involves identification with the one and alienation from the other. The verbs in this passage are not only coordinate with each other but also with the verb that occurred just before: 'alienate yourself? As you get to know yourself, then, you also come to identify with your ruling element and to estrange yourself from whatever it is in yourself that does not rule.'³⁷

As in the first stage of self-knowledge, Philo can draw on Platonic texts for this second stage as well. He signals this in a different treatise (*Somn.* 1.58) by likening Socrates, as the person who sought to know himself, to Terah, the father of Abraham who died

35 *Migr.* 7–8.

36 This does not prevent Philo from presenting the two aspects as different phases in the journey elsewhere, for instance in 189: "when you have surveyed all your individual dwelling with absolute exactitude, and have acquired an insight into the true nature of each of its parts, bestir yourselves and seek for your

departure hence, for it is a call not to death but to immortality."

37 On the occurrence of *gnōthi sauton* in 8 and, particularly, the connection Philo makes between it and the phrase *proseche seautōi* which occurs in the Septuagint, see Nazzaro 1970.

in Haran.³⁸ Particularly important, here, is the *Alcibiades I*.³⁹ In this dialogue, Socrates develops an argument for identifying with your soul rather than with your body. This argument hinges on the issue of use and rulership. On the basis of analogies with craftsmen like carpenters, Socrates argues that a human being is whatever it is that uses, not only tools, but body parts like hands and indeed the whole body. It turns out that there is no better candidate for this identification than the soul: it uses and rules the body (*Alc. I* 129b5–130c4). As in Philo, this Platonic text posits a strong discontinuity between soul and body. It is Philo, however, who turns this into an anti-Stoic point and emphasizes the need for alienation as a psychological process.

It is worth staying with the *Alcibiades I* for a moment because it contains a possible model of reference for Philo's connection between the second and third of his stages of self-knowledge. The Socrates in this dialogue continues the philosophical search for self-knowledge by asking how the soul may come to know itself. This is only possible when it focuses on the wisdom in a soul (Socrates implies that one soul needs another in order to understand itself). Moreover, since this wisdom and the divine are alike, understanding oneself involves knowing the divine:

Can we mention anything about the soul which is more divine than that where knowing and understanding are? – No, we can't. – Then that region in it resembles god, and someone who looked at that and grasped everything divine (*pan to theion*), god and understanding, would in this way have the best grasp of himself as well (*houtô kai heauton an gnoiê malista*).⁴⁰

In the model described here, the wisdom present in a soul is similar to the divine. Its similarity both allows you to come to know the divine and seems to be presented as a reason why knowing the divine is necessary for knowing yourself. This last claim is *prima facie* puzzling. Why should it be necessary to know something similar to you in order to know yourself? We must note, however, that the question of self-knowledge in this dialogue is driven by the desire for self-improvement. The most plausible explanation,

38 For discussion see Nazzaro 1969, 85–86; cf. Lévy 1992, 145–146.

39 In addition to the thematic connections, note that *logos* figures in *Alc. I* 129b5–c6, one of the rare passages in the Platonic corpus that expressly distinguish the human being from the *logos* he uses. Among verbal appropriations notice particularly *Migr.* 195, where various elements from the *Alc. I* are used: μαθῶν ἀκριβῶς ἑαυτὸν εἴσεται τάχα που καὶ θεόν, οὐκέτι μένων ἐν Χαρράν, τοῖς αἰσθήσεως ὀργανοῖς, ἀλλ' εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἐπιστραφεῖς. Socrates speaks of knowing oneself *akribôs* in implied ref-

erence to 132c–133c in 130c9; the aorists mirror those of 133c4–6; the phrase *tacha pou eisetai* recalls *tach' an gnoimen/an tach' beuromen* in 129a8–b2 (all of these passages concern self-knowledge). The argument from *Alc. I* that the body is an instrument for the soul was widely referred to by means of the terminology of *organa*; its central teaching that one needs to care for and know the soul was interpreted as Socrates' turning Alcibiades, and, by extension, every one of us, towards himself (*epistrophê*, see Albinus, *Procl.* 5.15–17; *Procl. in Alc., passim*).

40 *Alc. I* 133c1–6.

therefore, is that the divine is the perfect example upon which the soul models itself. An understanding of the divine will also give you an understanding of what you really are, even if this is not *yet* what you are.

How does this Platonic dialogue help us understand the connection between the second and third stages of self-knowledge in *De migratione*? We can appreciate that Philo does not take himself to be saying something new when he connects self-knowledge to knowledge of god. We should focus on *what* he says about this connection (and here I anticipate what we will find in the next section). Philo turns out to engage in some implicit polemic with the Platonic tradition as well. As we shall see, he turns around the order of knowledge suggested by Socrates. In the *Alcibiades I*, knowledge of god is necessary in order to know yourself. Philo suggests that knowledge of yourself is the basis from which to investigate god as well. The effect of this is that knowledge of god comes to seem more and more difficult to reach. Although the Platonic dialogue does seem tentative, to some extent, about this cognitive process (the wording “in this way ... the best”, in combination with the massive condition of having to know *all* of the divine in order to know oneself), Philo’s epistemic caution is much more evident. The difficulty of obtaining knowledge of god is increased by the difficulty of getting to know yourself. Philo agrees with the suggestion in the *Alcibiades I* that self-knowledge can never be completed. So much the more is it difficult to come to know god. It is time to see how these ideas are developed in Philo’s text itself.

6 Beyond *oikeiôsis*

The process of identification with whatever it is that rules in you can be extended, and Philo does extend it, beyond the boundaries of *oikeiôsis*. In this final section, we will consider how he does so. We will also consider two alternative outcomes that Philo seems to present for the process of self-study: analogy and ignorance. Once we consider the way in which Philo presents these outcomes and the tension that exists between them, we will see that his concern was not to describe a specific end point for the process of self-knowledge, but to present it as an ongoing process. The metaphor of the journey once more proves to be very apposite to what Philo wants to communicate.

Let us then consider the ways in which Philo extends the identification of oneself with the ruling element in oneself. There are three telling elements in the text. The first element is the way in which he continues after paragraphs 7–12. In these, as we saw, Philo describes alienation from the body, the senses, and speech. In terms of the stages of the journey, Abraham has already left or is leaving Haran, the place in which the soul studies its own home. Nevertheless, paragraph 13 opens as follows: “So we find that when the

mind (*nous*) begins to know itself (*arxétai gnôrisein heauton*) and to hold converse with the things of the mind (*noêta*), it will thrust away from it that part of the soul which inclines to the province of sense-perception". We notice, again, the combination of getting to know oneself and alienating oneself from the lower elements. The most striking thing about this passage, however, and relevant to the point I am making, is that the mind here is said to *begin* to know itself. Getting to know oneself has only just begun when one has been studying the constitution of the body, the workings of the senses, and the powers of speech. Even when the mind has moved beyond that and started to occupy itself with intelligible objects of study, it is still said to be beginning to know itself.

A second, minor, textual element that points us to the incremental nature of self-knowledge is the use of the word *oikos*. We saw above that Philo uses this word to indicate the whole of the body, the senses, and speech in the contexts in which he speaks of the need to get to know 'your *oikos*,' but that he has a stricter use of the word *oikos* in the opening paragraphs of the treatise (*Migr.* 2–12). We have now seen that, in terms of the progress of Abraham's journey, the opening paragraphs are posterior to many of the passages that speak of the need to study one's own home. The latter are about the need to go to or to dwell in Haran, whereas the beginning paragraphs are about one's departure from Haran. Against this background, Philo's restriction of *oikos* to speech in 2–12 can be interpreted as the result of self-study. The mind has progressively refined its understanding of what counts as 'itself'; just so, the word 'home' is also applied increasingly articulately and strictly, no longer to refer indistinctly to the whole compound of body and soul, but to speech as the immediate setting of the mind.⁴¹

Thirdly, Philo's text also supports the interpretation of a continuous and progressive process of self-knowledge by explicitly stating that when you obtain knowledge that goes beyond knowledge of your human constitution, you are turning towards yourself and obtaining knowledge of yourself. This comes out most clearly in paragraph 195, when Philo recapitulates the three stages of self-knowledge. After he has introduced the second as, "the [mind's] consideration of itself"; he says that in the third stage the mind "withdraw[s] into itself".⁴² Key to understanding statements like this one is the realisation that Philo does not mean to refer to a static entity when he speaks of knowing 'oneself'. The reference of 'oneself' changes according to how far the mind has advanced in the process. On all three counts, then, it seems that the language with which Philo speaks of self-knowledge supports the idea that it is a continuous process.

41 Philo signals this aspect of restriction and articulation by distinguishing *oikos* from *oikia* (3).

42 The aorist denotes temporal priority with respect to knowing god (which Colson's translation does not bring out clearly), but what is termed 'turning

towards oneself' here is different from the study of body, senses, and speech, from which I infer that it also takes place after the departure from Haran (in that sense Colson's translation is justified).

Regarding self-knowledge as a process may also help us with a radical tension in Philo's account between two outcomes of the study of oneself in Haran. There are passages in *De migratione* in which Philo sounds a very confident note about the results of self-study. In 185, for instance, he writes that once you have distinguished the different roles played by different elements in yourself – the master, the servant, that which has soul and that which doesn't, the rational and the irrational, and the immortal and the mortal – you will “gain forthwith (*euthus*) a sure knowledge (*epistême saphê*) of god and of his works”. This is because knowledge of yourself allows you to construct an analogy (186):

Your reason will show you (*logieisthe*) that, as there is a mind (*nous*) in you, so is there in the universe, and that as your mind has taken upon itself sovereign control of all that is in you, and brought every part into subjection to itself, so too He that is endued with lordship over all guides and controls the universe by the law and right of an absolute sway.

In other words, study of yourself will allow you to realise that the structure of the cosmos is similar to the structure of the human being; both have an intelligence that rules the rest. Moses, who here addresses the Chaldaean, seems to be extremely hopeful that this will deliver “sure knowledge of god”⁴³

In other passages, however, Philo presents a very different picture of what results from self-study. Consider what he says in 134:

What, then, is the end (*telos*) of right-mindedness (*phronein orthôs*)? To pronounce on himself and all created being the verdict of folly (*aphrosunê*); for the final aim of knowledge (*peras epistêmês*) is to hold that we know nothing, he alone being wise, who is also alone God.

This passage clearly states that the limit of human knowledge is the awareness of one's ignorance.

Let me briefly digress to highlight the partially polemical aspect of this description of the *telos*.⁴⁴ Philo speaks about it in the course of his exegesis of *Gen. 12.4* – his treatment of *Gen. 12.1–3* has taken up paragraphs 1–126 of the treatise, 127–175 are devoted to *Gen. 12.4*. The *Genesis* account here starts speaking about Abraham's response rather than God's promises: “and Abraham journeyed as the Lord had told him” (*Migr.* 127).

43 As Wolfson 1948, 2.78–80, points out, the letter of this argument is congruent with Stoic arguments for the existence of god; the difference is in the distance between the ruler and the ruled (cf. 80–81).

44 Note that Philo does not seem interested in select-

ing only one formula as his *telos* throughout his works: many different descriptions can in fact be found. For this see Besnier 1999; Runia 1986, 474–475; Bonazzi 2008, 246–250; Dillon 2016, 116–119.

Philo first interprets this journeying in accordance with the Lord's command as similar to "the aim (*telos*) extolled by the best philosophers, to live agreeably to nature" (128). In this description we recognise the Stoic end of life. This reference to the Stoic *telos* prepares us for Philo's own description of the *telos*, which he introduces in 134 (the passage cited above). To see to what extent Philo's alternative description is polemical, let us notice two things.⁴⁵

First, Philo makes clear that he can agree with the Stoic *telos* to some extent. He connects it to the slogan 'to follow god', which we know as a Pythagorean description of the *telos*, and of which Philo says that this is the *telos* according to Moses (131). His alternative is, therefore, not a straightforward rejection of the formula as such. However, and this is the second thing to notice, Philo rejects, as before, the epistemically overconfident attitude of the Stoics. Following god is not the acquisition of perfect knowledge about nature, but the realisation that in comparison with god, human beings are ignorant. Not incidentally the paragraph following 134 is one of the texts in which Philo calls the Chaldaeans down from their heavenly studies to the investigation of themselves.

Again, then, Philo calls the Chaldaeans back from natural philosophy using a Socratic formula – that the limit of knowledge is awareness of our ignorance. How does this square with the optimistic analogy that Moses proposed to the same Chaldaeans? This is a tension that is not going to go away and that characterises Philo's work elsewhere too.⁴⁶ The tension, however, can be mitigated.

After the introduction of the idea of coming to know god through analogy in 185, this idea returns, but with greater caution and also with significant changes to the conception of god that is involved. In 192, Philo offers another explanation of how the analogy works. After a withdrawal from what is mortal about yourself, "you will go on to receive an education in your conceptions (*doxas*) regarding the Uncreate". On the basis of the mind's epistemic separability from the body, senses, and speech – its ability to understand things without these three – Philo's Moses argues that God must be ontologically separate from the world. Again, since the mind has not made the body, it can be contained in it; therefore God, who *has* made the cosmos, cannot be contained in *it*.⁴⁷ With the inference that God transcends the cosmos, these arguments lead to a stronger conclusion than in 185, where ontological separation was not yet (explicitly) at stake. With the stronger conclusion, however, the gap between the basis for the analogy (the mind) and its inference (god) also becomes conspicuously wider. In the second passage

45 As the expression 'the best philosophers' shows, Philo's appreciation of Stoic philosophy is beyond doubt; this makes the fundamental points of disagreement with them all the more pressing in this treatise.

46 It is expressed poignantly and indeed embraced in *Somm.* 1.60. See Früchtel 1968, 147–163; cf. Runia 1986, 436–437.

47 On Philo's view of creation see Runia 1986, esp. 438–446.

in which the analogy recurs, 195, the epistemic confidence in the analogy is very clearly muted:

The third stage is when, having opened up the road that leads from oneself (*aph' hautou*), in hope (*elpisas*) thereby to come to discern the Universal Father, so hard to trace and unriddle, and having come to know itself accurately (*mathôn akribôs*), it will perhaps (*taxa*) also know God.

Here the mind 'hopes' and will 'perhaps' know God. Finally, in the third passage in which the analogy recurs, we find a surprising absence of God. In 219–220, in the course of interpreting what it means that Abraham "travelled through" (216) the land, Philo exhorts the soul by means of an analogy between a human being and the cosmos, along the microcosm – macrocosm model (219–220):⁴⁸

Travel through (*diodeuson*) man also, if you will, o my soul, bringing to examination each component part of him. For instance ... find out what the body is and what it must do or undergo to co-operate with the understanding [etc...]. [220] Travel again through the greatest and most perfect man (*ton megiston kai teleôtaton anthrôpon*),⁴⁹ this universe, and scan narrowly its parts, how far asunder they are in the positions which they occupy, how wholly made one by the powers which govern them, and what constitutes for them all this invisible bond of harmony and unity.

Here God has disappeared from view. The task of grasping him by means of analogy has turned out to be increasingly difficult as the narrative progresses. The point Philo is making is, again, directed against the Stoics. To see how, let us revisit 181, in which Philo explains the disagreement between Moses and the Chaldaeans (whose position he has described in 179, cited above on pages 122–123). The Chaldaeans thought that the cosmos is God or contains God as its soul. Moses disagrees strongly: that which holds the cosmos together is not God, but his invisible powers.⁵⁰ To avoid misunderstanding, Philo adds (182):

Wherefore, even though it be said somewhere in the Law-book: "God in heaven above and on the earth below", let no one suppose that He that is spoken of – since the existent Being can contain, but cannot be contained.

48 On this model in Philo see Borgen 1997, 218–219.

49 In *Her.* 155, Philo reports and ascribes to others the view that the cosmos is a large human being; this pair of human beings (micro- and macrocosmos) is distinct from the pair of 'heavenly man' and 'earthly man', the former of which is the intelli-

ble paradigm after which the latter is created (for discussion see Früchtel 1968, 29–36).

50 On the idea of the *desmos* ('bond') see Runia 1986, 238–241 (interpreting *Tim.* 41b1–6), 448–449 (identified with the *logos*).

This distinction between God in his real being and his powers underlies 219–220 as well. Though at first sight the analogy seems to function on the same level as those in 185 and 192, a closer look reveals that a different item has inserted itself between the mind and god to occupy the place of that to which the analogy leads: the cosmos, unified by the powers of the God who himself remains out of reach for analogical reasoning.

It is striking that Philo now supports cosmological study, when he has called the Chaldaeans down from it time and again. In narrative terms, the journey metaphor and its three stages help keep Philo's study of the cosmos separate from the Chaldaean enterprise. Substantively, the crucial difference is that Abraham has come a long way. He has taken a road on which he has learned to separate the mind and intelligible things from what is below them. His journey has prepared him methodologically, so to speak, for the proper study of the cosmos, since he will now not give in to the temptation to identify the cosmos and god.

I spoke above of two outcomes of self-study and of the tension between them. Over the course of his account, Philo nuances the epistemic optimism about analogical reasoning which he had Moses express in 185. Why then was Moses so optimistic? We might think of this paragraph, the opening section of Moses' address to the Chaldaeans, as tailored to their wishes: their study is undertaken to discover the first god, so Moses at first offers them hope of attaining such knowledge along *his* route. As we proceed in the treatise, and as Philo comes to address his readers, or his soul, a much more careful account comes to the fore, one which may not be as incompatible with the terminal ignorance described in 134 as the optimistic account of 185.

With a clear grasp of God receding behind the horizon, the emphasis of Philo's account returns to where it was at the beginning: to the journey, the process of getting to know yourself. In 7, Philo speaks of coming to know yourself all the time (*panta ton aiôna*). In 219–220, it is through the verb *diodeusai*, 'travel through,' that he expresses the long duration of the process of coming to know oneself.⁵¹ In Philo's reference to the greatest man, even getting to know the cosmos is now conceptualized as part of self-knowledge. In the few remaining paragraphs of the treatise after that, he comments on the need to persist and not give up, even if matters are dark and difficult (*dustheôrêton*, 222). The soul never arrives in Philo's treatise, it journeys on in a process of progressive self-knowledge.

51 On this passage cf. Kotzia-Panteli 2002, 124–131, who rightly stresses the proreptic character of this text and argues that in 217–220 Philo uses Peri-

patetic material (Theophrastus, perhaps dialogues by Aristotle). Cf. *Abr.* 65–66.

7 Conclusion

The process of knowing oneself, as Philo envisages it, cannot be reduced to one epistemic state. It is a movement towards perfection that reaches beyond human nature. The Stoics have been well aware of the moral need to move beyond the concerns for one's own organism. Their theory of *oikeiōsis*, in Philo's view, is right to connect human identity with the order of the whole cosmos. Nevertheless, the Stoics' epistemic overreach blinds their view to the true, modest position of humankind. Had they stayed longer in Haran, i.e., had they better grasped their own nature, they would not have departed on the wrong footing and under false premises. They would have realised that the correct analogy from the position of *nous* in human beings leads not to a divine world soul but to positing a transcendent mind, a creator who is far superior to the cosmos. Indeed, Philo seems to point to a common mistake underlying both the Stoics' account of self-awareness and their cosmo-theology. In both cases, they assume too much of a continuity between the ruling mind and the elements over which it rules. In the initial stages of *oikeiōsis*, this leads to an identification with the body and the senses rather than an alienation from them; in their account of the cosmos, it leads to a failure to posit a radical break between the highest god and the cosmos which he has caused.

Philo employs Abraham's journey of migration as a metaphor to describe the trajectory of the soul. Its first role is to indicate the errors of the Stoics. We ought to come home, he urges, to come down from idle speculation, and to reside within ourselves. This is the true place of *oikeiōsis* and the correct form of familiarization. The second role of the journey metaphor is to emphasize the need to pass beyond Stoic *oikeiōsis*. Study of our home should lead us to move away from it again, to become alienated with respect to the body, senses, and speech, the things with which nature has endowed us. Our task is to see the limits of our home and to leave it behind. The process to which we are called, and this is the third role of the metaphor of the journey, is ongoing: in human epistemic terms, we will never complete self-knowledge, nor will we be able to reach beyond that to get to know the divine itself.⁵²

52 It is beyond the scope of this paper to address the important idea in Philo of God's taking possession of the wise person's mind and of his gift of knowledge (as expressed for instance in *Her.* 265: ἐξοικίζεται μὲν γὰρ ἐν ἡμῖν ὁ νοῦς κατὰ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ πνεύματος ἀφίξιν, κατὰ δὲ τὴν μετανάστασιν αὐτοῦ πάλιν εἰσοικίζεται). See Runia 1986, 437, for a succinct statement of the issue. According to Cazeaux

1965, 18, *Migr.* is composed to lead up to, without ever mentioning, God's revelation of himself as described in *Gen.* 12.7; this may be (cf. *Abr.* 77–80). Perhaps Philo hints at knowledge as a gift in *Migr.* 140 (just after the description of terminal ignorance, the soul bears fruit, "it does not know how") and 35 (part of a section where Philo speaks about his own writing process).

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ALBERT JOOSSE

Dr. phil. Utrecht 2011 is an NWO-VENI post-doctoral researcher in ancient philosophy at the University of Utrecht and a Lecturer in the History of Philosophy at the University of Groningen. His research focuses on self-knowledge and the philosophy of education in ancient philosophy.

Dr. Albert Jooosse
Faculty of Philosophy
University of Groningen
Oude Boteringestraat 52
9712 GL Groningen, Netherlands
E-Mail: L.A.Joosse@rug.nl

Cilliers Breytenbach

Incomprehension *en route* to Jerusalem (Mk 8:22–10:52)

Summary

The second part of the Gospel according to Mark (8:22–10:52) is a narration about Jesus and his disciples travelling from the north of the Lake of Galilee to Jerusalem in the south. On the narrated journey, the disciples follow Jesus and he teaches them, but they do not understand his teaching. For the implied audience the story about the incomprehension of the disciples becomes a negative example of how not to react on Jesus's teaching and the journey itself a macro-metaphor explaining how one should follow Jesus.

Keywords: way; teaching; incomprehension; disciples; Gospel of Mark; narrative frame; macro metaphor

Der zweite Teil des Markusevangeliums (8,22–10,52) ist eine Erzählung über die Reise Jesu und seiner Jünger vom Norden des Sees Genezareth nach Jerusalem im Süden. Auf dieser Reise folgen die Jünger Jesus und werden von ihm unterrichtet, aber sie verstehen seine Lehre nicht. Für die implizierte Zuhörerschaft werden die Erzählungen über das Unverständnis der Jünger zu einem negativen Beispiel dafür, wie man nicht auf Jesu Lehre reagieren sollte. Die Reise selbst wird zu einer Makro-Metapher, die erklärt, wie man Jesus folgen sollte.

Keywords: Weg; Lehre; Unverständnis; Jünger; Markusevangelium; Erzählrahmen; Makro-Metapher

1 A short introduction to the Gospel according to Mark

It is almost *communis opinio* that the Gospel according to Mark (= Mk) is the first gospel ever written.¹ It was written around the Jewish-Roman war of 66–70 CE. A decade or so later it was used by the Gospels according to Matthew and to Luke and known to the author of the Gospel according to John. The Gospel according to Mark is an episodic narrative,² and in telling his story about the teaching, trial, and death of Jesus from Nazareth, the author makes use of several sayings, proverbs, parables, and *chreiai* (pronouncement stories) from the oral tradition attributed to Jesus. He combines this with stories about Jesus and his disciples and narratives familiar to him about Jesus as a healer and exorcist. Most probably, Mark, whoever he was, told his story about Jesus to Christian audiences familiar with the topography of Galilee and Jerusalem.³

The first part of his narrative (Mk 1:16–8:21) is primarily situated in Galilee during the latter part of the reign (4 BCE – 39 CE) of Herod Antipas. The narrated time sets in shortly before this vassal of Rome and son of Herod the Great killed the Jewish prophet John the Baptist (Mk 1:14 and Joseph. *AJ* 18.116–119). The third part of the narrative (11:1–16:8) is located in Jerusalem in the Roman province Judea, whose fifth prefect Pontius Pilate (26–36 CE) had Jesus executed by crucifixion (Tac. *Ann.* 15.44). Jesus was a Galilean crucified on the outskirts of the Roman Empire. Mark's story took communal memory as its point of departure.⁴ The scene of the second part of the Gospel according to Mark (8:22–10:52)⁵ is the journey of Jesus, traveling from the towns of Caesarea on the territory north of Galilee (8:27–33), through Capernaum in Galilee, heading south on the eastern side of the Jordan to pass Jericho (10:46–52) and enter into Jerusalem in Judea (11:1–11). In the story, Jesus, followed by his disciples, is *en route* to Jerusalem and uses the journey as an opportunity to teach his disciples. The special setting of this teaching and its metaphorical meaning will be the topic of our discussion.

1 For an introduction and commentary, cf. Focant 2012.

2 On this see Breytenbach 1985, 138–169.

3 Cf. Bosenius 2014.

4 On this see Breytenbach 2013, 19–56.

5 The earliest commentaries of Meyer and Weiss did not structure the text, but since the introduction of this practice, scholarly commentaries were divided on the demarcation of this part: cf. Wohlenberg 1910, ix (IV. Abschnitt: *Vom Messiasbekenntnis der Jünger bei Caesarea Philippi bis kurz vor der Ankunft in Jericho* 8,27–10,45); Klostermann 1936, I (8:27–10:52 *Jesus auf dem Wege nach Jerusalem*); Lohmeyer 1937

(IV. *Der Weg zum Leiden* (8:27–10:52)); Taylor 1966, 109 (V. *Caesarea Philippi: The Journey to Jerusalem*. viii. 27–x. 52); Pesch 1977, I (Vierter Hauptteil. *Der Weg des Menschensohnes zum Leiden und die Kreuzesnachfolge der Jünger* (8,27–10,52)); Gnlika 1979, 9 (*Die Kreuzesnachfolge* (8,27–10,45)); Lührmann 1987, 141 (*Jesus Weg nach Jerusalem*); Collins 2007, 396 (8:27–10:45 *The Mystery of the Kingdom*); Focant 2012, 336 (*Forth Section: Mark 8:31–10.52*). I found most agreement with Schweizer 1978, 87 (V. *Jesu Offenbarung in unverschlüsselter Rede und die Nachfolge der Jünger* 8,22–10,52).

2 Framing and structuring the journey to Jerusalem

Since, in the Gospel according to Mark the word ἀκολουθέω always has the notion of literally following someone,⁶ Mark uses the road (ὁδός) as a backdrop to develop the theme of how the disciples should follow Jesus.⁷ The concept of ‘following’ entails the one who is followed. The journey has five sections: around Caesarea Philippi (8:27–9:1), on and at the foot of the mountain of transfiguration (9:2–29), on the way to and in the house in Capernaum (9:30–50), attempting to go to Judea via Perea (10:1–31), and finally on the way to Jerusalem (10:32–52).

The first question Jesus asks his disciples on their way (ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ) from Bethsaida to the villages of Caesarea of Philippi, is who the people are and who do they think he is (8:27–28). The pattern of asking and instructing the disciples while traveling is continued after they have left Caesarea Philippi. While traveling through Galilee, Jesus teaches his disciples (9:30–31), and after returning to the house in Capernaum, he asks (9:33) what they discussed on the road (ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ). They do not answer, because on the road (ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ) they discussed who of them is the greatest (9:34). According to 10:1, the Markan Jesus sets out to travel on the eastern side of the river Jordan to the regions of Judea but is interrupted in this first attempt by the crowds and so he first teaches them.⁸ The questions asked by the Pharisees and a rich man (10:1, 17) and the answers given by Jesus (10:2–9, 18–22) lead to further instruction of his disciples (10:10–16, 23–31). When Jesus and the disciples are finally on the road traveling up to Jerusalem (ἤσαν δὲ ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἀναβαίνοντες εἰς Ἱερουσόλυμα) he again teaches his disciples (10:32–34).

When they left Jericho, the blind Bartimaeus was sitting by the roadside. The story of his healing illustrates that the journey is much more than just a journey from the north to Jerusalem in the south. It is a ‘literary’ construct,⁹ framed by two episodes, telling the audience that Jesus healed two blind people, one at the beginning (8:22–52) and one at the end (10:46–52) of the journey. The frame around the journey, the healing of two blind people (8:22–26; 10:46–52), underlines from the beginning to the end of the journey that there is something to see, to understand.

6 Cf. Bauer et al. 1999, *s.v.*

7 On previous research, cf. Bosenius 2014, 251–256.

8 Mk 10:1 is a *crux interpretum*. The phrase ἐκεῖθεν ἀναστὰς refers to the house in Capernaum (9:33). The narrator lets Jesus go towards the regions of Judea (ἔρχεται εἰς τὰ ὄρια τῆς Ἰουδαίας). With κ B C L Ψ 0274 892 2427 etc. one should read the explicative καὶ before πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου. Jesus was intending to travel on the other side (πέραν) of the river Jordan and then into Judea. The phrase συμπορεύονται πάλιν ὄχλοι πρὸς αὐτόν in the next sentence refers the audience back to the motif of the

crowd encroaching on Jesus. As usual, he teaches them (cf. 2:13; 4:1; 5:21, 53; 10:1). In 10:10, Jesus is back in the house in Capernaum and according to 10:17a he makes a second attempt to go out on the road, but the journey is interrupted by the question of the rich man and Jesus’ answers to him and the disciples (10:17b, 18–22, 23–31) and is only continued in 10:32.

9 Cf. also Bosenius 2014, 249, 260–261: “das Bewegungsprofil Jesu im vorliegenden Erzählabschnitt (wirkt) stilisiert”.

This form of framing of a section – with an episode at the beginning corresponding to another at the end of the section – is a compositional technique the narrator already used to frame preceding sections. The first section of the Gospel according to Mark (1:16–3:12) starts at the Sea of Galilee when he calls four fishermen to follow him (1:16–20), then, on the Sabbath, Jesus teaches in the synagogue in Capernaum (1:21–28). The section ends with Jesus healing a man with a withered hand in the synagogue in Capernaum (3:1–6) before he teaches the multitude at the seaside (3:7–12). The pattern is repeated in the next section, which starts with the installing of the Twelve (3:13–19), is followed by the redefinition of Jesus’ family as those doing God’s will (3:20–22, 30–35), and is concluded by the rejection of Jesus in his *patria* Nazareth (6:1–6a) and the sending and return of the Twelve (6:6b–13, 30).

Before we try to determine the function of the frame of the two stories of the healing of the blind (8:22–26 and 10:46–52) around the narrative about the journey to Jerusalem (8:27–10:45), it is important to look at the way in which the narrator structures the journey itself. In typical threefold manner Mark lets Jesus announce his suffering (8:31, 9:31; 10:32–34).¹⁰ Each of these announcements is placed on three different stations on the way, followed by an utterance by the disciples that demonstrates their complete lack of understanding of Jesus’ prospective suffering (8:32–33; 9:33–34; 10:35–40). In every instance Jesus reacts with instructions on how his followers should conduct themselves (8:34–9:1; 9:35–37; 10:41–45).

This threefold pattern indicates that the narrator lets Jesus predict his suffering, death, and resurrection to his disciples and conveys their reaction to it to create a context for further instruction on what it means to follow him on his journey to Jerusalem.

3 Jesus teaching the disciples *en route* to Jerusalem: Mk 8:34; 9:35b–37; 10:43–44

Following Jesus and conformity with his example could be regarded as a decisive trait of the ethics of the Gospel according to Mark. In the first place, it is Jesus who is being followed. He leads the way. We already noted that in Mark the Greek verb ἀκολουθεῖω *includes* the meaning to follow someone spatially. But there is more to this. In his first teaching, after the first failure of the disciples to apprehend his destiny, Jesus sets out the requirements to follow him. These requirements are not restricted to ‘you must go behind me and follow me.’ It also addresses fundamental attitudes of the disciples.

In the second instance it is important to note that the role of those who were called to follow Jesus is presented in an ambivalent way by the Markan narrative. On the way

¹⁰ On Mark’s use of prolepsis, see Toit 2001, 165–189.

Prediction Mk 8:31	Prediction Mk 9:31	Prediction Mk 10:32–34
Incomprehension	Incomprehension	Incomprehension
Mk 8:32–33: He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. Mk 8:33: But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”	Mk 9:32–34: But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him. Mk 9:33: Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, “What were you arguing about on the way?” Mk 9:34: But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest.	Mk 10:35–37: James and John, the sons of Zebedee, ... said to him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory?”
Teaching	Teaching	Teaching

Tab. 1 Repetitive pattern in Mark 8:(27)31–10:45.

to Jerusalem, the disciples are characterized as if they cannot serve as a positive example of how Jesus should be followed, but rather as a negative example of how he has not been followed.

3.1 Mk 8:31+34 (Caesarea Philippi)

After the story of the healing of a blind man at Bethsaida (8:22–26), the disciples and Jesus are on their way from the towns of Caesarea of Philippi through Capernaum and finally towards Jerusalem (8:27–10:45). The first scene in the villages of Caesarea Philippi (8:27–33) is about who Jesus is. According to Peter, who speaks for all the disciples, he is “the Christ”,¹¹ the anointed King in the lineage of King David. In line with a central motif developed since Mk 1:25, Jesus forbids them to tell this to anybody¹² and corrects Peter’s utterance by teaching his disciples that God has ordained (δεῖ) that he (ὁ υἱὸς

11 In the declarative sentence σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστός uttered by Peter in the Gospel according to Mark, the verbal adjective χριστός (from χρίω, ‘to anoint’) is used with the article ὁ and thus means ‘the anointed’ and refers to the Messiah, the Anointed of the Lord as in

Ps 2:2; PsSol 17:32; 18:5, 7.

12 Commandments not to make Jesus’ identity known form a central part of the narrator’s central story line, cf. Wrede 1901, 33–51, 95–101.

τοῦ ἀνθρώπου)¹³ must suffer severely (πολλὰ παθεῖν), be probed and rejected (ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι) by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, be killed (ἀποκτανθῆναι), and after three days rise (from the dead, ἀναστῆναι). Jesus announced his death and resurrection for the first time in the narrative, and Peter as spokesperson of the disciples reprimanded him. By reproaching him, Jesus shows that with the confession “you are the Christ” Peter did not have this type of suffering Messiah in mind. From Peter’s reaction, it is clear that the disciples do not understand the announcement by Mark’s Jesus.¹⁴ He rebukes Peter by using the phrase ὑπάγε ὀπίσω μου, σατανᾶ (Mk 8:33). He calls Peter ‘Satan,’ an Aramaic word (ܫܬܢܐ) meaning ‘adversary’ and usually denoting the ‘enemy’ of God, because Peter has his mind on the things of humans and not the things of God. Literally, he commands him to leave his presence (ὑπάγω), not wishing Peter to follow him any longer. In a speech, carefully constructed from traditional sayings from the synoptic tradition,¹⁵ he teaches them and the crowd accompanying him what following him on this journey entails (8:34–9:1).

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, ‘If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.
35 For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. (Mk 8:34–35 NRS).

Following Jesus necessarily implies an answer to the questions of who he is and on whose authority he acts. The topic ‘following Jesus’ can thus only be discussed in relation to the question of who he is. Jesus, who leads the way to Jerusalem, must suffer there, must be rejected and killed. The Markan Jesus thus first instructs his disciples on what has to happen to him (8:31) and then on how they are to follow him (8:34).¹⁶ The first saying (8:34) states the three conditions for those who want to walk behind Jesus (εἴ τις θέλει ὀπίσω μου ἐλθεῖν¹⁷). In the last instance, to go behind Jesus means to follow him (ἀκολουθεῖτω μοι – Mk 8:34). They should follow Jesus constantly, leaving work, family, and property behind (cf. 10:27–31). But Jesus adds two other conditions for following him. Mark’s Jesus formulates from a male perspective, but since there are women in the group following him from Galilee to Jerusalem (15:41), the women cannot be excluded: those who wants to follow him, must deny themselves (ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτὸν)

13 The Greek expression ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (literally, ‘the Son of the Man’) comes from Aramaic. In Mark, in accordance with a use attested in later Aramaic (ܫܬܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ), it is best taken to refer to Jesus as speaker.

14 The inability of the disciples to understand Jesus’ words and deeds also forms a central part of the narrator’s central story line, cf. Wrede 1901, 95–114.

15 Cf. the parallels to Mk 8:34 in Mt^Q 10:37–38/Lk^Q

14:26–27; to Mk 8:35 in Mt^Q 10:39/Lk^Q 17:33; Mk 8:38 in Mt^Q 10:32–33/Lk^Q 12:8–9.

16 For a detailed analysis of verses 35–38, see the commentaries of Focant 2012 and Collins 2007.

17 The reading of κ Α Β C² K L Γ f¹³ 33 579 etc. is to be preferred over ἀκολουθεῖν in Ɔ³⁴⁵ C³ D W Θ 0214 f¹ 201 etc. In favor of the text in Nestle, K. Aland, B. Aland, et al. 2012, cf. Toit 2006, 44–45.

and take up their pole/*patibulum* (ἀράτω τὸν σταυρὸν¹⁸ αὐτοῦ). The first condition is the prerequisite for the second. Following Jesus requires self-denial, in Greek ἀπαρνέομαι, to act in a wholly selfless manner by giving up all self-interest. People who cannot act in a selfless manner, would also not be able to risk their own lives for the sake of another person, preferring to deny the other person. People who want to go after Jesus must deny themselves up to the point of giving up life, because at the end of the journey Jesus will suffer, be rejected, then killed. In the second condition, the Markan Jesus is indicating how he will be killed. He will have to take up his cross, carry it, be nailed unto it, and die. Those who listened to Mark's story being told would understand that to take up one's cross means to be on the path to be crucified and die, like Jesus did. They would, however, have extended the meaning metaphorically to refer to any action that could lead to death. It is important to note that Jesus is the one that is to be followed by those taking up a cross.

All conditions have a proleptic function that is taken up in later episodes in the narrative. In Mark's story, after celebrating Pesach, Jesus is arrested and all the disciples flee (14:50). They do not take up crosses and are not crucified. Peter, who follows him from a distance (14:54), does not deny himself. Most probably, the historical audiences of the Gospel according to Mark were familiar with these episodes from the Passion narrative. In Mark's story, the episode of Peter's denial is told only later, but it is foreshadowed when Jesus requires self-denial from his followers. When real danger loomed in the *aula* of the high priest, the same Simon Peter who said "You are the Christ" denies Jesus (14:68, 70). Before the cock crowed thrice he had taken an oath, saying "I do not know this man you are talking about" (Mk 14:71).

Why does the author of Mark introduce the motives of self-denial, taking up one's cross, and following Jesus into the speech of Jesus? Only to show that the disciples were not able to deny themselves, that Peter eventually denies Jesus, that none of them were able to take up their cross, and that they all fled? The narrative is not about reporting Jesus' teaching to the disciples and relating their misapprehension of who he is and what is required from them. The narrator intends to use the teaching on the road as a means of communicating and illustrating the requirements of discipleship for those who want to engage in discipleship. The narrator uses the failure of the disciples as a negative example, teaching his own audience to act differently.¹⁹ In the late sixties CE, when the Gospel according to Mark was read to audiences, it was not possible to follow Jesus on the road, but it was perhaps possible to be crucified. It is more likely, however, that audiences would understand the requirement to follow Jesus and the demand to

18 In 14:21 the word σταυρός is used to refer to the *patibulum*. See also the references to Plutarch (*Moralia* 554a), Chariton (42,7), and Artemidor

(2:56) in Bauer et al. 1999, *s.v.*

19 On this see Tannehill 1977, 386–405.

take up one's cross metaphorically. How this is meant is explained by Mk 8:35: to take up the cross would be to describe the willingness to die for the gospel in terms of Jesus' crucifixion. To follow him is to obey his words.

3.2 Mk 9:31–37 (On the road to Capernaum)

Initially all disciples seem to fulfil the first condition and followed Jesus' footsteps on the way to Jerusalem. When they had left the mountain of the transfiguration and passed through Galilee, Jesus again was teaching his disciples, for a second time announcing his suffering and resurrection to them: "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again" (Mk 9:31). Immediately the narrator states that they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him. When they came to Capernaum, to the house of Peter and Andrew, Jesus asked them, "What were you arguing about on the way?" But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest" (Mk 9:33–34).

Those who were required to deny themselves when they wanted to follow Jesus were arguing behind his back about who was the greatest. The contrast between required and actual behavior is severe. What happened on the road (ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ) through Galilee leads to Jesus' teaching in the house at Capernaum. How does the Markan Jesus react? He sits down, calls the Twelve and continues teaching: "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all." He then takes a little child, whom he places among them and takes into his arms, saying: "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me" (Mk 9:37). In his teaching, Jesus disqualifies the behavior of the disciples on the road and shows them the right conduct. Again, his teaching applies to the intended audience of the Gospel according to Mark, using the behavior of the disciples on the road as a negative example. Rather than striving to be the greatest, they should be like the child, who is here used as a symbol of being the last and servant of all.

3.3 Mk 10:32–34 (On the way to Jerusalem)

In the last section of the journey to Jerusalem, Mark addresses the issue of willingness to suffer and to die, repeating the threefold pattern of announcement, incomprehension of the disciples, and teaching by Jesus. They were on the road going to Jerusalem, Jesus was leading them (ἦν προάγων αὐτοὺς ὁ Ἰησοῦς), and they were following. Knowing the thoughts and the feelings of his characters, the omniscient narrator tells the audience that those following Jesus were afraid. Taking the Twelve aside, Jesus reiterates his

announcement that he would suffer in greater detail.

See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death; then they will hand him over to the Gentiles; 34 they will mock him, and spit upon him, and flog him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise again. (Mk 10:33–34)

In light of the expected danger, how will the Twelve deal with the second condition: to take up the cross? Within the Christian tradition of the Gospel according to Mark, this is certainly a metaphoric notion, expressing suffering leading to possible death. This time, not Peter but the two other leading disciples, John and James, the sons of Zebedee (cf. 1:16–20), react with a question that discloses their total misapprehension of the situation. They who have experienced the foreshadowing of Jesus' future glory on the mountain of transfiguration (9:2–8) came up to²⁰ Jesus, who was leading them, and asked him: "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory" (Mk 10:37 NRS). Ignoring Jesus' third announcement, John and James want to reign with him when he retains his glory (10:35–40). From their request it is clear that they do not expect to suffer with Jesus. They still did not accept that he is going to Jerusalem to be handed over, condemned, mocked, and eventually killed. They are heading for glory, public repute.²¹

In reaction to their request, the other disciples became indignant. In the teaching that follows (10:41–45) the Markan Jesus recapitulates the topic of self-denial needed for communal life. He draws a sharp contrast between his followers and the non-Jewish rulers. Among his followers, it should be different. Jesus instructs the disciples that whoever wishes to become great among them must serve the others and whoever wishes to be first among them must be slave of all. He provides motivation for this instruction by referring to his own example. Referring to himself as the Son of Man, he says that he did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as ransom for many (10:45).²² Again, the failure of the disciples to act correctly on the road is the incentive for the narrator to let Jesus instruct them on the demands on those among his followers in leadership positions. His teaching of the Twelve on the road sets the demands for leadership for those who would listen to Mark's narrative.

20 Προσπορεύονται is a historical present.

21 For this sense of δόξα, cf. Bauer et al. 1999, s.v. 3;

Liddell, Scott, and Jones 1996, s.v. II.

22 On this, see Breytenbach 2014, 153–168.

4 Function of the prolepsis and the framing

The disciples follow Jesus from Caesarea of Philippi through Capernaum to Jerusalem. The narrator guides the audience in evaluating the reaction of the disciples in the light of Jesus' teaching on his imminent death and resurrection. From Peter's refusal to accept Jesus as a suffering Messiah among the villages of Caesarea Philippi (8:32b–33), the quarrel on the way back to Capernaum about who is the greatest while Jesus leads them on his way to serve and suffer (9:34), up to the request to reign in glory by John and James (10:35–45), the tension is increased and the grade of incomprehension deepens. The audience will notice the contradiction between Jesus' way and that of his followers. They strive for mundane power, rank, and honor, instead of engaging in mutual service. The Markan Jesus teaches the disciples, stressing that they be humble, willing to suffer, and should serve not reign. The audience is led to dissociate with them and to identify with Jesus, who leads the way he himself is teaching. Unlike the disciples, the audience should understand what it means to follow Jesus.

One has to ask why the journey is framed by two episodes narrating the healing of blind people. In the narrative, incomprehension is depicted by the metaphor of blindness and deafness. The text of the prophet Isaiah played a major role in the origin of this metaphoric speech.²³ Those who do not understand the message are spiritually blind; they have eyes but do not see, have ears but do not hear.²⁴ Just before the journey starts in Bethsaida, the Markan Jesus asks his disciples, who are worried that they do not have enough bread (8:17a–b), "Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not perceive or understand?" They should have understood that he who had fed 6000 and 4000 people,²⁵ could feed them all from one loaf. Echoing the metaphor of the hardening of the heart from Isaiah 6:10, which he left out in 4:12, the author lets Jesus ask (8:17c): "Are your hearts hardened (πεπωρωμένην ἔχετε τὴν καρδίαν ὑμῶν)?" The Markan Jesus continues his speech with a metaphorical allusion to Isaiah 6:9: "Do you have eyes, and fail to see? Do you have ears, and fail to hear?"²⁶ The two framing

23 "Metaphorical expressions can be part of the intertextual relationships between different texts [...]" (Semino 2008, 29).

24 Cf. Mk 4:12: βλέποντες βλέπωσιν καὶ μὴ ἴδωσιν, καὶ ἀκούοντες ἀκούωσιν καὶ μὴ συνιῶσιν, μήποτε ἐπιστρέψωσιν καὶ ἀφεθῆ αὐτοῖς. Mk cites Isaiah 6:9–10 freely, not from the LXX-version (καὶ εἶπεν πορεύθητι καὶ εἰπὸν τῷ λαῷ τούτῳ ἀκοὴ ἀκούετε καὶ οὐ μὴ συνῆτε καὶ βλέποντες βλέψετε καὶ οὐ μὴ ἴδητε [...] μήποτε ἴδωσιν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς καὶ τοῖς ὠσὶν ἀκούσωσιν καὶ τὴν καρδίαν συνῶσιν καὶ ἐπιστρέψωσιν καὶ ἰάσονται αὐτούς) skipping the initial phrase in verse 10 (ἐπαχύνθη γὰρ ἡ καρδία τοῦ

λαοῦ τούτου καὶ τοῖς ὠσὶν αὐτῶν βαρέως ἤκουσαν καὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτῶν ἐκάμμυσαν).

25 Cf. Mk 6:30–44; 8:1–10.

26 Mk 8:18: ὀφθαλμοὺς ἔχοντες οὐ βλέπετε καὶ ὄρα ἔχοντες οὐκ ἀκούετε; Nestle, K. Aland, Black, et al. 1979 suggests that Mk 8:18 cites Jer^{LXX} 5:21 and B. Aland et al. 2014 notes that the verse alludes to it (ἀκούσατε δὴ ταῦτα λαὸς μωρὸς καὶ ἀκάρδιος ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῖς καὶ οὐ βλέπουσιν ὄρα αὐτοῖς καὶ οὐκ ἀκούουσιν). The introductory motif πεπωρωμένην [...] τὴν καρδίαν in Mk 8:17, however, is from Isaiah 6:10 and suggests that the allusion in Mk 8:18 is to Isaiah 6:9.

episodes of the healing of the blind give hope that eventually the disciples will ‘see’ and understand. The two healing stories show that the blindness of those who trusted Jesus was healed, that the incomprehension of the disciples can be overcome.

5 *En route to Jerusalem as metaphor?*

Historically, Jesus was from Nazareth, but was crucified in Jerusalem. Thus, he must have travelled from Galilee to Jerusalem, probably more than once. In his recollection of communal memory, however, why does the narrator tell the story in such a way that Jesus teaches his disciples ‘on the way’ (ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ)? It fits his narrative concept. From the beginning, the theme of ever-larger crowds encroaching upon Jesus is developed.²⁷ He could teach his disciples only in the house of Peter and Andrew or in the boat on the lake.²⁸ On the journey this was easier; here, he was leading those who left everything to follow him (10:28). By letting Jesus predict to his disciples all that must happen (8:31) according to the Scriptures (14:21, 41) – his eminent passion, death, and resurrection – the narrator can explain who this Jesus is. Through these prolepses it becomes clear who is to be followed and where he leads his disciples.

This explanation however, does not suffice. The central concept in the Gospel according to Mark that expresses the relationship between him and his disciples is that they follow him on all his travels through Galilee (6:1; 10:28, 32), that they are with him (3:13–19; 4:10). This concept also draws on the communal memory still reflected in the gospel tradition; namely, Jesus called people to follow him.²⁹ Part of this communal memory is also that Jesus’ disciples did not understand him until after Easter; they failed to follow him until the end.³⁰

Recasting the traditional role of the disciples, who did not understand Jesus, into a highly structured narrative of the journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, the narrator uses the disciples while they are on the road following him as an example of what discipleship and following Jesus should not be. At the outset of the final journey to Jerusalem, Mark uses this tradition to explain the conditions for following Jesus (8:34–35). Every time they fail to understand; but Jesus does not stop teaching them. By telling the story of how Jesus taught the conditions of following him to those with him, the narrator instructs his audience. Of course, the audience cannot follow Jesus from the villages of Caesarea of Philippi in the north uphill to Jerusalem in the south in Judea. But with the

27 Cf. Mk 1:32–33, 45; 2:2, 13, 15; 3:7–9, 20; 4:1–2; 5:21, 24, 27, 31; 6:33–34; 7:14; 8:1.

28 Cf. Mk 7:17; 9:28, 33; 10:10 (house) and 4:10; 8:14–21 (boat).

29 Cf. Mk 1:18; 2:14–15; 10:21; Lk^Q 9:57–59/Mt^Q 11:19–22; Lk 9:61.

30 On this cf. Breytenbach 2013, 39–40.

rise of Christianity after Easter, ‘to follow’ (ἀκολουθεῖν) Jesus became a metaphor for discipleship in general, also in Mark’s narrative.³¹

The audience should ‘follow’ as the disciples should have done, not as they did. Jesus gives direction and with his instruction ‘to follow’ and its conditions, demands action according to his instruction and example. These demands are framed by the spatial metaphor ‘to follow’ and the metaphor functions to give orientation: metaphorically, the audience should go the way Jesus did. It is this metaphoric use of the concept of following Jesus that paved the way to the use of the journey from Galilee to Jerusalem as a macro scene for teaching the disciples what it entails to deny oneself, be prepared to die for the sake of the gospel, and ‘to follow’ Jesus. In this manner, ‘on the road’ (ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ) becomes a metaphor itself. For the narrator, it sets the narrative frame for the story of Jesus teaching his disciples.³² For the audience, it is a metaphorical ‘journey’ on which they are required ‘to follow’ Jesus as he required from his disciples, who failed to understand his teaching. On two occasions, the – for the audience metaphorical – narrative frame ‘on the way’ (ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ) is interrupted by going into a house (εἰς οἶκον – 9:28), being at home (ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ – 9:33; εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν – 10:10). Jesus’ teaching to his disciples in the house includes other topics than how to follow him; such as, how to treat other missionaries (9:38–50), a prohibition on divorce and on remarriage (10:10–16), and how to deal with children and with wealth (10:17–27). Together the scenes of teaching ‘on the road’ and teaching the disciples ‘in the house’³³ serve to include several other aspects of the ethical teaching of Jesus that the narrator wanted his audience ‘to follow’.³⁴

31 See also Toit 2006, 302–304.

32 On metaphor creating narrative frames, cf. Semino 2008, 40.

33 On both scenes, cf. Bosenius 2014.

34 Cf. Breytenbach 2006, 49–75.

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CILLIERS BREYTENBACH

Cilliers Breytenbach, Dr. theol. (München 1983), Dr. theol. habil. (München 1986), ist Professor für Neues Testament an der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin und Außerordentlicher Professor für „New Testament and Ancient Studies“ an der Stellenbosch University. Er ist Autor mehrerer Bücher, darunter *Grace, Reconciliation, Concord. The Death of Christ in Graeco-Roman Metaphors* (Leiden 2010). Zur Zeit leitet er ein Forschungsprojekt zur Expansion des frühen Christentums in Kleinasien und Griechenland.

Prof. Dr. Cilliers Breytenbach
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
Theologische Fakultät
Unter den Linden 6
10117 Berlin, Germany
E-Mail: cilliers.breytenbach@cms.hu-berlin.de

Greta Hawes

Pausanias' Messenian Itinerary and the Journeys of the Past

Summary

Messene was unusual among ancient *poleis*. It was one of the few major settlements on the Greek mainland to be founded in the Hellenistic period. Moreover, on account of this, its claim to a culturally authoritative past rooted in the mythic period could not rest on suppositions about the continuity of knowledge handed down through the continuation of civic, cultic, and communal institutions. This chapter examines how Pausanias' account of Messenia (book four of his *Periegesis*) approaches this dilemma by making knowledge both an artefact preserved unchanged in texts, and a conceptual possession encountered and attained through travel. It goes on to argue that the interplay between these two forms of knowledge is specifically relevant to this text, since the *Periegesis* also serves as a fixed, written object, which nonetheless offers opportunities for autonomous exploration and experience to the hodological reader-traveler.

Keywords: Pausanias; Messenia; travel writing; Homer; genealogy; Greek myth; transmission of knowledge

Messene war eine ungewöhnliche *Polis*. Gegründet in hellenistischer Zeit, war sie eine der wenigen großen Siedlungen auf dem griechischen Festland. Messenes Ansprüche auf eine kulturelle Vergangenheit, die Maßstäbe setzte und in mythischen Zeiten wurzelte, konnten daher nicht auf bloßen Vermutungen über die Kontinuität des Wissens, das durch bürgerliche, kultische und kommunale Institutionen weitergegeben wurde, beruhen. Dieses Kapitel untersucht wie sich Pausanias in seiner Darstellung von Messene diesem Dilemma nähert (im vierten Buch seiner *Periegesis*), indem er Wissen sowohl zu einem Artefakt erklärt, das unverändert in Texten erhalten ist, als auch zu einem konzeptuellen Besitz, der durch Reisen erworben werden kann. Es soll gezeigt werden, dass gerade das Zusammenspiel dieser beiden Wissensformen von größter Bedeutung für den Text ist, da Pausanias' *Periegesis* selbst als ein festgeschriebenes Objekt verstanden werden kann, welches gleichwohl Gelegenheit bietet, vom hodologisch versierten Text-Reisenden eigenständig erkundet und erfahren zu werden.

Keywords: Pausanias; Messenien; Reiseliteratur; Homer; Genealogie; griechische Mythologie; Wissenstransfer

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I Introduction

The idea that knowledge possesses spatial dimensions seems so obvious to us in English that we barely register it as a figural trope. Knowledge can be described as a landscape with disciplinary boundaries and frontiers, intellectual climates, conceptual landmarks and horizons; it can be discovered, explored, and charted.¹ In our hyper-literate culture, knowledge is encoded in stable, tangible forms; and yet we instinctively speak of the textual archive as if it were a living organism, still developing and forming. Even an ancient text can communicate to us as if a present interlocutor: “Herodotus says that...” “He makes the point that...” “This means that...”² Despite the separation of millennia, millennia that have seen the emergence of ever more sophisticated technologies for recording and storing information, we hold to the idea that knowledge is attained through personal, experiential intimacy.

The spatiality of the textual archive overwhelms its potential temporal dimensions: we would naturally say “*where does Herodotus say that?*” (and not, for example, “*when did Herodotus say that?*”). We *look* for information *in particular places* (regrettably we cannot replicate the ambivalence of τόποι or *loci*); we *encounter* characters in novels; we *stumble across* useful references; and when we experience a moment of *aporia* – where we cannot proceed further because we have lost the track we were following – we describe this as a ‘dead-end’. Such figurative language is neither accidental nor insignificant. It accompanies the very practical observation that texts preserve knowledge in material forms but that such knowledge is activated through human action and desire. Transmission is less a facet of precise, disinterested objectivity; it is rather a product of countless interlocking journeys through space and time. For travel is made up of irreplicable moments, of accidental encounters, and of subjective observations. To attribute this sensibility to texts is to lend them an experiential ephemerality.

1 For knowledge as a territory and a journey, see Salmond 1982, esp. 68–72, who rightly goes on to argue for the cultural specificities of such tropes.

2 On this point, Pausanias is instructive: when he uses

present tense verbs of speaking or showing, only context allows the reader to determine if he is referring to a written or an oral source. See Jones 2001, 34.

In this chapter I explore how Pausanias combines the concept of knowledge preserved unchanged through time in texts with the idea of knowledge as something encountered and attained through travel. These two aspects of knowledge are not, as we have seen, antithetical, and Pausanias brings them together in various configurations in his account of Messenia. The particular history of this region, which only emerged as an independent polity in the Hellenistic period, raises questions about how a previously subordinate group might claim to have kept safe and recovered unique knowledge about their past despite a long period of political subjugation. In this context, the necessity of journeying in search of knowledge and the need to exploit the preservative power of texts take on pragmatic pertinence. That said, we must not fall into the trap of assuming that, just because it is observably true that knowledge comes from both personal autopsy and from reading, all claims to have recovered knowledge in these ways are equivalent to 'real journeys.' As we shall see, in Pausanias' vision of Messenia such claims also bear rhetorical weight.

The area of the south-western Peloponnese designated Messenia was, from some point in the archaic period, subject to Lacedaemonian control. It developed a distinctive economic system based on helot labor within scattered, small-scale settlements. In 369 BC Epaminondas' defeat of the Lacedaemonians at Leuctra led to the founding of Messene beneath Mt Ithome as notional head of an independent Messenian polity.³ Pausanias' account reveals that the Messenians had developed this bare outline into a national foundation narrative – the Messenian Wars – of conquest, rebellion, and liberation. We recognize in this historical narrative a prime case-study in the mutually-enforcing power of mythmaking and *ethnogenesis*: it is not merely that Epaminondas' victories created a Messenian polity; the polity *required* stories of subjugation, resistance, and liberation as a foundation for its sense of identity.⁴ In this chapter I am not concerned with the strict historicity of Pausanias' account, nor with the question of whether particular aspects of Pausanias' account accurately transmit sources or attitudes apparent within Messenia at any point in its history. Rather, I take Pausanias' account as an idiomatic artifact in its own right, one that is "the product of his coming to terms with the structural aspects of Messenian memory and of the Messenian landscape, as they had been taking shape over the centuries";⁵ and one that in very real ways shaped how archaeologists and historians have understood and approached the region in the millennia since.⁶ In the three sections that follow, I examine how Pausanias grapples with the

3 Although the city bore the name Ithome, Pausanias calls it "Messene" and I, for clarity, follow his lead. His practice in this regard reflects his general conflation of the founding, ambitions, and perspective of the city, those of the broader Messenian polity, and the region of Messenia as a whole.

4 For the formation of Messenian identity, see esp. Alcock 1999; Alcock 2002, 132–175; Luraghi 2002; Luraghi and Alcock 2003; Luraghi 2008.

5 Luraghi 2008, 323.

6 For the influence of Pausanias' account in these ways, see Alcock, Cherry, and Elsner 2001, 146–153.

problem of conveying knowledge about a place whose relationship to secure knowledge was fraught.

2 The paths of Pausanias

Without Pausanias, we would know much less about ancient Messenia. His fourth book preserves – uniquely – the entire story of the Messenian Wars, and is our only detailed eyewitness account of Messenian topography.⁷ Yet, at the beginning of his account Pausanias comments not on the gaps in knowledge that he *does* fill, but on a particular gap that he cannot fill. So, regarding basic data on the region's eponymous heroine:⁸

I was eager to know the children born to Polycaon by Messene, so I read through (*ἔπελεξάμην*) the *Ehoëae* and the epic *Naupactia*, and then the genealogies of Cinaethon and Asius, but no reference is made to them in these works. I am aware that the *Great Ehoëae* says that the Polycaon who is the son of Butes married Euaichme, the daughter of Hyllus, son of Heracles, but it does not mention the Polycaon who was husband of Messene, nor Messene herself.⁹

With this extravagant display of *aporia*, Pausanias sets out his antiquarian bona fides and his Herodotean aspirations¹⁰ while pointing out a distinctive characteristic of Messenia: its traditions are poorly represented in the panhellenic textual tradition. In fact, without Pausanias' testimony we would assume that Messene was just another colorless eponym: among *our* mythographic resources, neither R. L. Fowler nor T. Gantz have information on her, and W. H. Roscher and J. Larson both send us to Pausanias.¹¹ Aside from some brief genealogical comments in a Euripidean scholion (*ad Or.* 932), only Pausanias offers Messene any kind of literary footprint. He explains her role in the early history of Messenia: she, daughter of the king of Argos and unsatisfied with being married off to the brother of the king of Laconia, persuaded her husband to raise an army and take Messenia as their own kingdom.¹²

7 The Messenian Wars dominate Pausanias' account of Messenia (4.4.1–4.27.11). He mentions two third-century writers as sources: the historian Myron of Priene and poet Rhianos of Bene. We cannot of course know how closely he followed either. See Musti and Torelli 1991, xvi–xxvii.

8 Another prominent comment on the lack of information regarding Messenia appears in Pausanias'

discussion of the hero(in)es associated with the sanctuary at Andania (4.33.6).

9 Paus. 4.2.1. All translations are my own.

10 Pausanias' unusual use of the verb *ἐπιλέγομαι* to mean 'read' here recalls Herodotus' usage. See Jones 2001, 34.

11 Drexler 1965, *s.v.* Messene; Larson 1995, 157.

12 Paus. 4.1.1–2.

We cannot know for sure where Pausanias found this information, but he must have had access to sources within the region itself. Pausanias models himself on Herodotus.¹³ He ascribes his authority to his extensive personal experiences and on-site investigation. This is not merely a rhetorical trope; without falling into the trap of equating autopsy with perfect knowledge, or suggesting that Pausanias offers unmediated access to epichoric sources, it is certainly the case that, whether we can prove that on-site research informs any one specific passage or not, the *Periegesis* is generally a product of personal travel, inquiry, and autopsy, and these affect its perspective.¹⁴

Travel also shapes the structure of the work. The ten books of the *Periegesis* describe the southern and central Greek mainland with each, more or less, dedicated to a different region.¹⁵ This framework, then, necessitates that a certain amount of time – so to speak – is spent in each region of Greece; thus, the small villages and outlying sanctuaries receive attention alongside the major poleis and panhellenic sites, and no region can be left out if the coverage is to be systematic. It is for precisely this reason that Pausanias' account of Messenia exists, and this is why Pausanias must record what he can about the eponym Messene, since such information is part of the standard genealogical material with which he begins each region.

The bulk of the *Periegesis* is taken up in itineraries through each region. These linear paths offer the reader encounters with the sights and traditions of Greece, one after the other. But in fact, there is a tension between the overall structure of the work, which assumes strict separation between each region and its neighbors, and the itineraries, which are concerned with the details of each place on the ground and where such demarcations might not be so clear. As Elsner observes, this collocation of geographical and textual divisions has phenomenological implications:

These borders, as felt by the traveller on the actual land and as announced to the reader by the text, [...] mark not merely lines on a map, but boundaries and thresholds in the *experience* of Greece. They delimit places not simply topographically, but as areas of culture, of race, of identity.¹⁶

13 This aspect of the text has been extensively documented. For details and bibliography, see Hawes 2015, 337–340.

14 The credibility of Pausanias' claims to autopsy was an important feature of his rehabilitation as a reputable author (most notably in Habicht 1985). More recent approaches have rather emphasized the literary aspects of the work (e.g. Hutton 2005; Pretzler 2007) and its reflection of cultural norms and ideological perspectives (e.g. many of the essays in-

cluded in Alcock, Cherry, and Elsner 2001). Such approaches complicate our understanding of Pausanias' relationship to the material he describes without of course undercutting the validity of his on-site observations. For attempted reconstructions of Pausanias' methods, see Jones 2001; Pretzler 2004.

15 The reality is, of course, rather more complicated. The best discussion on the structure of the work as a whole appears in Hutton 2005, 68–82.

16 Elsner 1992, 13. Italics are in original.

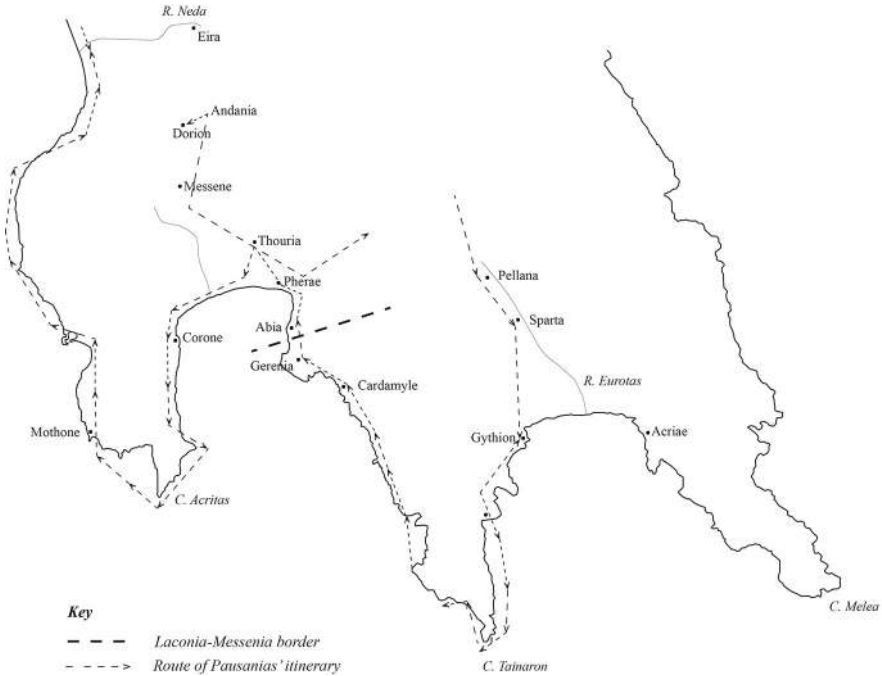


Fig. 1 Itineraries through Laconia and Messenia, *Periegesis* books 3 and 4.

When Pausanias disputes the border between Laconia and Messenia in the western Mani, the tension between geographical and textual integrity is palpable.¹⁷ This border was long contested and territory – notably the Ager Dentheliatis and the sanctuary of Artemis Limnatis – changed hands several times in the Hellenistic and early Imperial periods.¹⁸ The border in Pausanias’ time was the Choerius river, and he uses this to divide his third book – on Laconia – from his fourth – on Messenia (see Fig. 1). But in his account of the free Laconian poleis of the western Mani in the final chapters of book three, Messenian views begin to edge in, so that this area is marked out as notable on account of its ethnic porosity. In essence, Pausanias suggests that the current geo-political border is too far to the north to correspond to an essential cultural divide between the Laconians and the Messenians, and he makes this point not by *telling* the reader this, but by *showing* her: as she reads, the reader ‘travels’ towards and through the area in question, experiencing a textual simulation of contesting voices.

17 Thus, Shipley 2006, 38: “[Pausanias] is working with a model of land division that purports to make political reality conform with ethnic identity, and identifies certain changes [i.e. along the frontier be-

tween Messenia and Laconia] as violations of that code?”
 18 See Cartledge and Spawforth 1992, 138–139; Luraghi 2008, 16–27.

Here are the relevant excerpts from the final chapters of book three:

The inhabitants of Thalamae say that the Dioscouri were born [on Pephnus, a nearby island]. ... The Messenians say that this land was once theirs, and so they consider that the Dioscouri belong more to them than to the Lacedaemonians.

Leuctra is 20 stades from Pephnus. I don't know the reason for the city's name. If, as the Messenians say, it is indeed from Leucippus, son of Perieres, then, I think, this would be why they worship Asclepius above all other gods, since they consider him to be the son of Arsinoe, daughter of Leucippus. ...

I know that the following happened in the territory of Leutra, towards the coast, in my own time. Wind pushed fire into a forest, and many of the trees were burned. The area was laid bare, and a statue of Zeus Ithomatas was found to have been set up there. The Messenians say that this is evidence that Leuctra was once part of Messenia. But it would be possible, if the Lacedaemonians have lived in Leuctra since ancient times, that *they* worshipped Zeus Ithomatas.

Cardamyle, which is included by Homer in the gifts promised [to Achilles] by Agamemnon, has been under the control of the Lacedaemonians at Sparta since the Emperor Augustus separated it from Messenia. ...

The city which is now called Gerenia was in the Homeric epics called Enope. Its inhabitants are Messenians, but it belongs to the league of the free Laconians. Some say that Nestor was brought up in this city, others that he came here as an exile after Heracles took Pylos. Here in Gerenia there is the tomb of Machaon the son of Asclepius, and a sanctuary. ... There is a statue of Machaon standing upright and wearing a crown on his head, which the Messenians call in their local dialect, *kiphos*.¹⁹

With notable regularity, Pausanias gives space to Messenian perspectives on the Laconian side of the border. In doing this, he emphasizes the preponderance of Messenian religio-mythical features there: Leucippus and Nestor were undeniably Messenian heroes (two of the few undisputed ones, in fact, as we shall see), and Zeus Ithomatas – despite Pausanias' skepticism – one of the few paradigmatically Messenian gods.²⁰ That Asclepius and the Dioscouri were Messenian were chancier claims, but could nevertheless be justified.²¹ Highlighting Messenian views within Laconian territory creates a

19 Paus. 3.26.2–11.

20 For his cult as a key element of Messenian identity both before and after liberation, see Alcock 2002,

143–144.

21 The Messenian claim to Asclepius and his family is discussed below.

suggestive ideological undercurrent to what is ostensibly a straightforward topographical description. The reader experiences these places as oriented towards the cultural network anchored across the Messenian border.

We can identify an even subtler example of Pausanias' biases at work in his identification of the sites of the seven cities "near the sea and bordering on sandy Pylos" that Homer has Agamemnon offer to Achilles in his attempt to placate him (*Il.* 9.149–153). When another geographer, Strabo, sets out to identify the locations of these cities, he describes a situation of uncertainty and dispute:

Of the seven cities offered to Achilles, I have already spoken of Cardamyle, Pherae, and Pedasus. Some say that Enope is Pellana, others that it is a place in the vicinity of Cardamyle, and others that it is Gerenia. Some identify Hire as a place on the mountain that is near Megalopolis in Arcadia, on the road leading to Andania (the one which I said is called Oechalia by Homer); but others say that Hire is now Mesola, which is on the gulf between Taygetus and Messenia. Aepeia is now called Thouria, the place I described near Pherae. It is sited on a high ridge, from which it got its name. ... Regarding Antheia, some say it is Thouria, and that Aepeia is Methone; but others say that Asine, which lies between the two, is the most likely of all Messenian cities to be described "rich in meadows" [i.e. the epithet of Antheia, *Il.* 9.151]. In the territory of Asine, on the sea, is the city Corone, and some say that this city was called Pedasus by Homer.²²

Strabo's ambivalence here is a useful point of contrast with Pausanias' approach since Pausanias, by contrast, identifies each of Homer's place names with a single location and mentions no disputes over such attributions. I set out the relevant identifications in Table 1. But of course, this table somewhat skews Pausanias' mode of presentation, for he does not discuss these identifications in a single passage as Strabo does. Rather, as in the examples of Cardamyle and Gerenia in the passage from the end of book three quoted above, he simply notes the Homeric connection when his narrative reaches the appropriate place. Thus, a reader like me wanting to identify all seven cities needs to hunt through Pausanias' third and fourth books and map the resulting data accordingly. Given the evidence of Strabo, we must recognize that Pausanias' seemingly straightforward identification of these cities is in fact the result of a particular interpretative stance. Two consequences of his decision to present the cities in this way would not be apparent to the casual reader of the text, working through it in a hodological manner, and yet they would nonetheless color her understanding of what she had read.

²² Strabo 8.4.5.

Homer (<i>Il.</i> 9.149–153)	Pausanias	Strabo
Cardamyle	Cardamyle 3.26.7	Cardamyle 8.4.4
Enope	Gerenia 3.26.8	Pellana / place near Cardamyle / Gerenia 8.4.5
Hire	Abia 4.30.1	Near Megalopolis / Mesola 8.4.5
Pherae	Pherae 4.1.4; 4.30.2–3	Pherae 8.4.4
Antheia	Thouria 4.31.1	Thouria / Asine 8.4.5
Aepeia	Corone 4.34.5	Thouria / Methone 8.4.5
Pedasmus	Mothone 4.35.1	Methone 8.4.3 / Corone 8.4.5

Tab. 1 The identities of the seven cities offered by Agamemnon to Achilles in Strabo and Pausanias.

Firstly, as we have seen, Pausanias identifies each city categorically. This gives the impression of Messenian consensus on the Homeric passage; in fact, as Strabo showed, most of the Homeric toponyms had several claimants within Messenia. The absence of any hint of disagreement in Pausanias' account strengthens his projection of a unified Messenian polity under the hegemony of Messene; in fact, such unity was much less apparent on the ground.²³ Secondly, whereas Strabo's locations take in Pellana (in Laconia, east of the Taygetos mountains) and Eira (on Messenia's northern border, identified with Hire), Pausanias' cluster tidily around the Messenian gulf (see Fig. 2). Identifying them in this configuration adds implicit weight to the idea that the second-century border is too far to the north. Pausanias' itinerary around the gulf encounters the cities in the same order that Homer listed them. The book division – corresponding to the contemporary border – thus seems to arbitrarily separate into two distinct groups those places forming a tight linguistic and conceptual cluster in the epic. If these seven cities belonged together in Homer, then Cardamyle and Gerenia, now lying in free Laconian territory, should not be detached from the other five.

23 Several poleis within the region had at various times asserted their independence from Messene (e.g. Abia, Pherae, and Thouria were independent members of the Achaean league from the early second century), and alignment with Lacedaemon is evident in Imperial Thouria and Cardamyle (see Luraghi 2008, 26, 37–39). Nonetheless, Pausanias only once suggests disagreement between Messenians, at 4.32.2, over a minor detail. On this passage,

see Luraghi 2008, 326–327. For further evidence of Messenian heterogeneity, see Spencer 1995, 289 (on subtle gradations apparent in archaeological evidence); Alcock 2002, 152–155, 164–167, 171–173 (on divergent memories); Luraghi 2008, 300–323 (on strategies for displaying prestige amongst the elites of Roman Messene). On the general phenomenon of diversity in Roman Greece, see Alcock 2002, 68–73; Jones 2004.



Fig. 2 Locations of the seven cities offered by Agamemnon to Achilles, according to Pausanias.

The observable phenomenon that travel and on-site investigation create knowledge makes a virtue of individual subjectivity: Herodotean-style rhetoric makes the possession of unique information and discriminating judgement products of personal experiences in the wider world. Such knowledge cannot be transferred to another person *tout court* (since the mechanisms that produce it are necessarily individualistic and empirical) but it can be communicated. Pausanias' mode of communicating his knowledge – a series of itineraries – simulate the sensations of travel so that the reader, too, encounters these places in a linear manner.²⁴ Yet her accumulation of knowledge through this process is controlled at each point by the set itineraries that Pausanias has created. She 'sees' only what Pausanias shows, and does not register what he does not mention. Her 'path of knowledge' through the *Periegesis* is not so much a 'real journey' as a matter of literary fact. What is put before her eyes does not change; yet, subjectivity remains at play. For even within this set narrative itinerary she might chose to hunt back and forth, putting

24 Here my approach to Pausanias parallels Michael Scott's description of a reader working her way through Strabo: "Literary constructs of space differ fundamentally from physical ones, since they unfold in a linear fashion as part of a narrative. [...] [The] reader is forced to discover parts of that construct as he travels along with Strabo in his *periplous* journey around the *oikoumene*. Learning is hodological; it is

a process, a journey. Our perspective as readers alternates as Strabo moves in his own spatial perspectives from bird's-eye cartographical description, through mythological and historiographical landscape, to join us as he travels himself around (some of) these regions [...] He learns as he moves through space, just as we do [...]" (Scott 2013, 157).

clues together in different ways. She might create a cumulative map of Homer's seven cities, for example, or her personal affiliations might drive her to resist Pausanias' philo-Messenian biases and to recognize that his highlighting of Messenian perspectives in the western Mani is no objective account of topographical fact. Because Pausanias 'shows' rather than 'tells', only through the experience of reading – that is, traveling along the paths that his itineraries offer – does the reader glean knowledge for herself.

3 The paths of exiles

Two compelling anxieties shaped the myth-making of post-liberation Messenia: the desire to promote a Messenian culture identifiably distinct from that of Laconia, and the desire to afford this culture the dignity of a long lineage. Within a culture in which authenticity and authority were rhetorically aligned to antiquity and originality, the 'break' in Messenian culture through the period of Lacedaemonian control posed a real problem. As Pausanias observes when his itinerary encounters the tombs of two prominent Messenian heroes at *Sparta*, stable political power is a prerequisite for the effective memorializing infrastructures that protect local knowledge:

The disasters which the Messenians suffered and the period of their exile from the Peloponnese have consigned to obscurity many of their early traditions, even now that they have returned. And because *they* no longer know these traditions, anyone who wishes may lay claim to them.²⁵

Whether – and how – Hellenistic Messenians could actually possess accurate knowledge of their pre-Lacedaemonian culture raises practical questions of cultural transmission. Of the two starkest possible responses – that successive generations of enslaved and exiled people carefully cultivated and passed on ancestral knowledge, or that in fact the Messenian past and the traditions of the region were deliberately invented *tout court* at the point of liberation – Pausanias holds optimistically to a version of the former.²⁶ He identifies several mechanisms through which the Messenians might have preserved earlier knowledge intact, and it is to these 'paths of knowledge' that I now turn.²⁷

25 Paus. 3.13.2.

26 Variations on these positions were put forward through the twentieth century by historians of ancient Messenia. For discussion, see esp. Alcock 1999. The work of Susan Alcock and Nino Luraghi (referenced throughout this chapter) has led debate in more productive directions by stressing the inventive power of cultural memory and the opportunis-

tic fluidity of collective identity.

27 In this chapter I am concerned only with Pausanias' assessment of the transmission of Messenian culture, not with the actual processes through which this might have been achieved. Alcock 2002, 132–164, examines the historical and archaeological evidence for opportunities within pre-liberation Messenia for the cultivation and communication of com-

Surprisingly, Pausanias says almost nothing about the activities of the helots – the enslaved population of the region – under Lacedaemonian control.²⁸ Rather, after Aristomenes' defeat he focusses on the various communities beyond the south-western Peloponnese who identified as Messenian exiles. As Pausanias tells it, it was almost entirely *external* agitation which brought about the expulsion of the Lacedaemonians, and the new Messenia was the product of the diaspora's uniform sense of identity and purpose:

After winning the battle at Leuctra, the Thebans sent messengers to Italy and Sicily and to the Euesperitae and they summoned to the Peloponnese Messenians from every other place where they might be. And the Messenians gathered faster than anyone might have expected, driven by a desire for their ancestral land, and by a lasting hatred of the Lacedaemonians.²⁹

Pausanias observes that, despite almost three centuries in exile – longer than any other Greek community – the Messenians preserved their ancestral traditions to a remarkable degree:

In this period they clearly lost none of the customs of their homeland, nor did they relinquish their Doric dialect: still today they preserve the purest Doric of all the Peloponnesians.³⁰

Here is Pausanias' first solution to the problem of Messenia's antiquity: a spectacular feat of trans-generational conservation by a scattered diaspora. This tidy narrative of knowledge preserved 'on the road' has obvious ideological advantages, not least because it offers a vision of how something authentically 'Messenian' might have survived untainted by Lacedaemonian influence. It invests preservative power not in physical spaces, material objects, or the institutions of the polis, but in the ephemeral, everyday phenomena of habitual customs and language within a community of people.

To be integral once more, then, the polity needs these exiles back in their 'proper' territory. But the people also need the land: Pausanias notes that Messenians of the diaspora won no victories at Olympia and yet, "when the Messenians returned to the Peloponnese, their luck in the Games returned too."³¹ Pausanias' second solution for the

munal memories. Luraghi 2008, 202–208, offers an assessment of the emergence of a distinct and unifying sense of Messenian identity in the region in the classical period which is narrower in focus and which stresses the role of *perioikic* communities.

28 See Asheri 1983, 39–41; Figueira 1999, 219–221. The helots are mentioned briefly at 4.23.1, and there is an account of their revolt at 4.24.5–7. Pausanias' general silence regarding the helots parallels the general absence of the centuries of Lacedaemonian

domination from the commemorative landscape of the region. Luraghi 2008, 219–227, argues that this characterizing of the exiles as the true descendants of the old Messenians and the core of the new polity (to the detriment of helot and *perioikic* populations) was the general Theban-Messenian position.

29 Paus. 4.26.5.

30 Paus. 4.27.11.

31 Paus. 6.2.11.

preservation of knowledge exploits this sense of the power of place via comments regarding the conservative capacity of objects buried in the ground. This motif bolsters the significance of the return of the exiles by having them encounter and recognize some aspect of Messenian culture, which had evaded the grasp of the Lacedaemonians. The most prominent merging of these epichoric and exilic lines of reasoning appears in the founding narrative of Messene. The influx of the exiles as a new population of Messenians is paralleled by a return of Messenian heroes: at the ceremonies marking the foundation of Messene, Epaminondas and the Thebans summon back the region's heroes to reside once more in the territory (*ἐπεκαλοῦντο δὲ ἐν κοινῷ καὶ ἥρωας σφισιν ἐπ' ἀνήκειν συνοίκους*³²); in the case of Aristomenes, the celebrated hero of the Messenian wars, they relocate his tomb from Rhodes.³³ But this spatial logic of exile and return operates in tandem with a story that stresses the importance of the new city's fixed location:

Epaminondas thought that it would be difficult to build a city which would withstand a Lacedaemonian attack, and was at a loss as to where this city might be sited. For the Messenians refused to live again at Andania or Oechia, since they had suffered disasters there. ...

Epiteles [an Argive general] was ordered in a dream to go to the place where yew and myrtle had grown on Ithome, to dig in its midst, and to rescue an old woman: she was shut up in a bronze chamber, worn-out, and almost dead. The next morning, he went to the place indicated and dug up a bronze urn. He took it straightaway to Epaminondas, explained about the dream, and urged him to remove the lid and look within. Epaminondas ... opened the urn and found within it sheets of tin, rolled exceptionally thinly.³⁴

Inscribed on these sheets are the mysteries of Andaria. Here writing has both conceptual and material aspects. Conceptually, writing affords support for cultic traditions; materially, writing exists as a precious object. These sheets of tin appeared earlier in Pausanias' account, being buried by Aristomenes.³⁵ There they are described obliquely as "something kept hidden" (*τι ἐν ἀπορρήτῳ*). An oracle foretells that, if these should be preserved safely, then the Messenians would again recover their land. Aristomenes, knowing this, and aware that defeat by the Lacedaemonians is imminent, buries them secretly on Ithome. Only with the retrieval of the texts three centuries – and seven chapters – later does the reader learn what exactly was the mysterious "something" whose preservation was so important. The effect of strategic ignorance in Pausanias' narrative

32 Paus. 4.27.6.

33 Paus. 4.24.3; 4.32.3.

34 Paus. 4.26.6–8.

35 Paus. 4.20.4.

mirrors the function of the texts themselves: they are physically in Messenia through the period of Lacedaemonian control, but the knowledge that they contain is only activated when they are recovered and read.

In both this oracle and an earlier dream,³⁶ the foundation of the new Messene is depicted metaphorically as the revivification of an old woman. Here political change is rendered paradoxically as ancient continuity: Messene is neither a new city nor a colony of Thebes. It is an ancient site inhabited once more by its proper population: immigrants who were not immigrants read texts long unread to found a new city to be home to a culture that is transplanted – yet local – to its new – native – soil. In Pausanias' account, Messenia's legitimacy is vouchsafed by the only mechanisms available to it: residence within the soil, and journeys out of and back into the region. These epichoric and external mechanisms are foils to each other: when the returning exiles' paths cross the tracks of the departing Aristomenes, the new Messene comes into being, and, crucially, the intervening centuries are lithely papered over.

These mechanisms reveal once more the false dichotomy between the stable existence of knowledge in textual form, and the ephemerality of knowledge gained through travel. For, in the case of the rites of Andania, these texts do not exist without their readership. In effect, only through the experience of being read are they activated as objects of knowledge.

4 Homeric paths

My final 'path of knowledge' again concerns the (re-)activation of texts. This time I am concerned not with secrets inscribed onto tin, but with the manifest authority of Homeric epic.

The period of Lacedaemonian control coincided with the flourishing of a panhellenic literature that made some Greek myths prominent beyond their local community and which served as a supra-regional mechanism for their future transmission. We have seen that Messene and Polycaon were practically invisible within this material; Pausanias believes that their descendants ruled for five generations, but he cannot name them.³⁷ With the next dynasty, however, he is on firmer ground. Over six chapters³⁸ he narrates Messenian myth down to the time of the return of the Heracleidae. The major figures in this account can be gathered together into a single genealogy (Fig. 3).

Pausanias' account is exceedingly tidy, and he presents it – remarkably – without mentioning any points of dispute over names or relationships. When we look closely

³⁶ Paus. 4.26.3.

³⁷ Paus. 4.2.2.

³⁸ Paus. 4.2.4; 4.3.2.

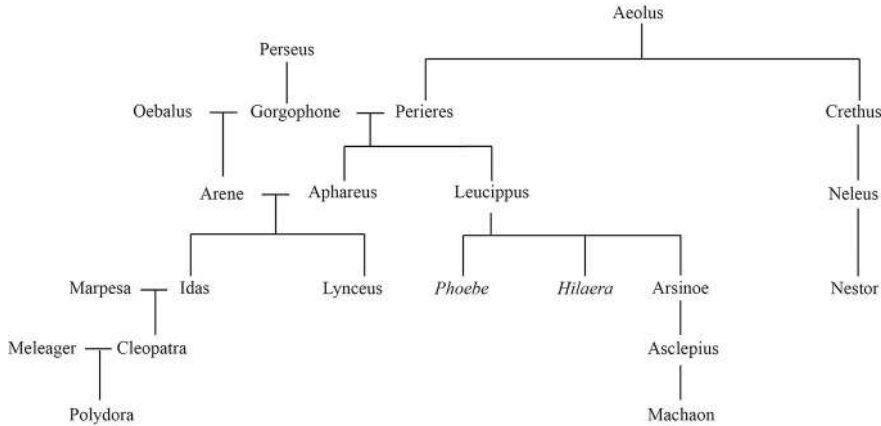


Fig. 3 Trans-Messenian mythic genealogy, after Pausanias 4.2.4–3.2. Figures in italics are not mentioned in this passage, but are well-attested elsewhere in the literary tradition.

at the genealogy it produces, we find that Pausanias has fashioned his Messenian myth-history by recounting the stories associated with the family of Aphareus (which Pausanias places at Arene) and taking care to tie in the other prominent Messenian dynasty, that of Neleus at Pylos.³⁹ We can find independent textual support for almost every element of Pausanias' genealogy; indeed, the Apharetidae and the Pylians are two rare examples of Messenians with prominent roles in panhellenic myth. Homer's 'sandy Pylos' was localized on the Messenian coast from at least the time of Pindar, who calls its ruler Nestor "Messenian".⁴⁰ Arene was much more obscure geographically,⁴¹ but Aphareus' family achieves renown in several ways. Homer preserves the genealogical significance of his son, Idas: Cleopatra, his daughter with Marpessa, is the wife of Meleager⁴² and versions of a story alluded to by Homer, in which Idas challenges Apollo for Marpessa, appeared in Simonides⁴³ and Bacchylides⁴⁴, and on the Chest of Cypselus.⁴⁵ Meanwhile,

39 All of the figures Pausanias mentions in this part of the account are clearly related genealogically to one another with the exceptions of Melaneus and Oechalia (4.2.2–3), whose significance will be discussed below, and Lycus and Caucon, who introduce the mysteries to Andania (4.2.6). Caucon also has a role in the later story of Messene, being recognised as the figure in Epiteles' dream who gives instructions for the retrieval of the hidden texts (4.26.8).

40 Pind. *Pyth.* 6.32–36. The Messenian location was not uncontested. Homer also describes Pylos as near the Alpheus river, suggesting a site in Elis. Despite

Strabo's notable dissenting voice (8.3.7), the Messenian site was generally accepted as Nestor's homeland in antiquity (see Hope Simpson and Lazenby 1970, 82; Visser 1997, 522–531; Allen 1921, 75–79). Pausanias places Nestor in Messenia but accepts the Eleans' argument that it is their Pylos that is mentioned at *Il.* 5.544 (6.32.6) and reports (6.25.3) their interpretation of the problematic *Il.* 5.397.

41 Paus. 5.6.2.

42 Hom. *Il.* 9.555–564.

43 563 PMG.

44 *Fr.* 20A SM.

45 Paus. 5.18.2.

Lynceus' sharp eyesight was proverbial.⁴⁶ Both brothers are killed in a fight with the Dioscouri (Pindar *Nem.* 10.55–74, among others, has this story).⁴⁷ The cause of their dispute is sometimes the Dioscouri's abduction of the Messenian Leucippidae Phoebe and Hilaera, a scene well-represented in Greek art.

Pausanias' tidy account, then, capitalizes on the fact that these parts of Messenian myth existed in textual form. But the pattern of preservation is instructive: Messenian stories are not told – and thus preserved – for their own sake. Rather, these Messenian heroes appear where they intersect supra-regional traditions: Nestor and his sons join the expedition to Troy; the Leucippidae find fame in their abduction by the Dioscouri; Idas and Lynceus take part in the Calydonian boar hunt⁴⁸ and the voyage of the Argo.⁴⁹ Preservation by virtue of intersection is also apparent in Messenian genealogical connections. Few of those who appear in the genealogy in figure 3 belong exclusively to Messenia; aside from Aphareus, Leucippus, and Neleus, and their immediate offspring, the family tree shifts quickly from the prestigious supra-regional *Stammväter* Aeolus and Perseus to the Calydonian line of Idas and Marpessa and the Argolid line of the Neleids. Note that without Arsinoe (the third daughter of Leucippus, to be discussed in a moment), the line of 'exclusive' Messenians quickly ends.

Recognizing the importance of these points of intersection has crucial implications. Pausanias' account of this period of Messenian myth-history leaves us with the distinct impression that Messenia's public, trans-regional mythology diverges little from what can be found in earlier texts. Certainly, Pausanias adds little to this archive. He supplies only one minor detail not attested elsewhere: that Idas' daughter Marpessa, like her own daughter and granddaughter, committed suicide on the death of her husband.⁵⁰ Pausanias is an author notoriously enamored of diverging and obscure mythic trivia; yet in this instance he reveals no hint of a more extensive tradition available locally. Mythical knowledge 'on the ground' seems coextensive with – and, we might suspect, largely derived from – the literary archive.

Where the Messenian tradition *is* extended, it is done by exploiting opportunities proffered by this archive. In his account of Pherae, Pausanias adds another branch to the trans-Messenian genealogy that he had traced earlier:

They say that the founder Pharis was the son of Hermes and Phylodameia, daughter of Danaus. They say that he had no sons, just a daughter, Telegone. Homer gives the descendants of Telegone in the *Iliad*: Crethon and Ortilochus

46 Pind. *Nem.* 10.61; Ap. Rhod. 1.153–5; Palaephatus 9.

47 On sources for the deaths of the Apharetidae, see Gengler 2003; Sbardella 2003; Drexler 1965, 97–100. For the various genealogies that connected Leucippus, Tyndareus, and Aphareus (in some sources they

are full brothers, elsewhere half-brothers), see Gantz 1993, 180–181; Fowler 2013, §13.2.

48 Apollod. 1.8.2.

49 Ap. Rhod. 1.151–2; Hyg. *Fab.* 14.

50 Paus. 4.2.7.

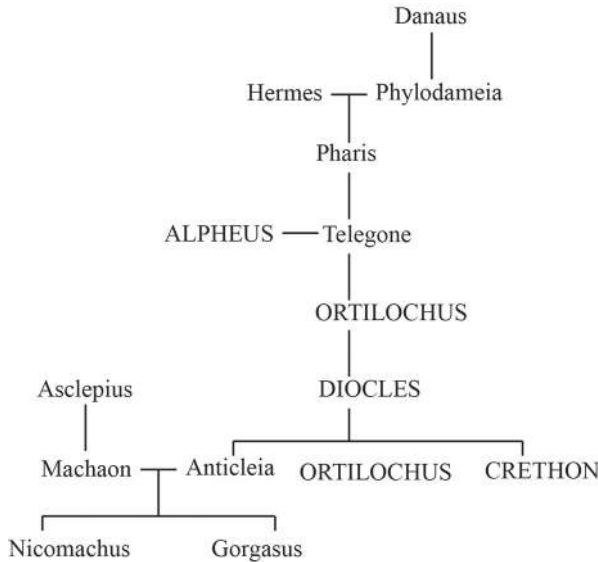


Fig. 4 Mythic genealogy of Pherae, after Pausanias 4.40.2–3. Figures in upper case also appear in *Iliad* 5.541–560.

were the twin sons of Diocles; Diocles himself was son of Ortilochus, son of Alpheus. But he does not actually mention Telegone, who, in the Messenian account bore Ortilochus to Alpheus.

I heard this further information at Pherae: as well as his twin sons, Diocles had also a daughter, Anticleia, and her sons were Nicomachus and Gorgasus, whose father was Machaon, son of Asclepius. They remained at Pherae and inherited the kingdom after Diocles died.⁵¹

Here Pausanias reveals quite clearly the two composite sources for this lineage: the male line comes from Homer and women are added by the Pheraeans as ‘pegs’ to connect into other traditions (see Fig. 4). To begin with the former: the four generations beginning with Alpheus appear in the *Iliad*. This genealogy is given as Aeneas kills the brothers Ortilochus and Crethon and thus seemingly ends the dynastic line.⁵² Their father, Diocles,

51 Paus. 4.30.2–3. Pausanias spells the name of this city Φαραΐ (hence its founder is Pharis/Φάρης). Elsewhere, including in Strabo and Homer, it is spelt Φηραΐ. I use ‘Pherae’ throughout this chapter for consistency.

52 Hom. *Il.* 5.541–560: ἔνθ’ αὐτ’ Αἰνεΐας Δαναῶν ἔλεν ἄνδρας ἀρίστους / υἷε Διοκλῆος Κρήθωνά τε Ορσίλοχόν τε, / τῶν ῥα πατήρ μὲν ἔναϊεν εὐκτιμένη ἐνὶ Φηρῇ / ἀφνειὸς βιότοιον, γένος δ’ ἦν ἐκ ποταμοῖο / Ἀλφειοῦ, ὅς τ’ εὐρὸν ῥέει Πυλίων διὰ γαίης, /

ὅς τέκετ’ Ὀρτίλοχον πολέεσσ’ ἀνδρεσσιν ἄνακτα· / Ὀρτίλοχος δ’ ἄρ’ ἔτικτε Διοκλῆα μεγάλθυμον, / ἐκ δὲ Διοκλῆος διδυμάονε παῖδε γενέσθη, / Κρήθων Ὀρσίλοχός τε μάχης εὐ εἰδότε πάσης. / τῷ μὲν ἄρ’ ἠβήσαντε μελαινῶων ἐπὶ νηῶν / Ἴλιον εἰς εὐπωλον ἄμ’ Ἀργείοισιν ἐπέσθη, / τιμὴν Ἀτρεΐδης Ἀγαμέμνονι καὶ Μενελάῳ / ἀρνημένω· τῷ δ’ αὖθι τέλος θανάτοιον κάλυψεν. / οἴω τῷ γε λέοντε δῶ ὄρεος κορυφῆσιν / ἐτραφέτην ὑπὸ μητρὶ βαθείης τάρφεισιν ὕλης· / τῷ μὲν ἄρ’ ἀρπάζοντε βόας καὶ ἴφια

is described as residing in Pherae and being descended from Alpheus, which “flowed through the land of the Pylians.”⁵³ In the *Odyssey*, Telemachus visits Diocles in Pherae *on route* from Pylos;⁵⁴ a generation earlier, Odysseus had stayed with the elder Ortilochus “in Messene”: it was there that he received his famous bow and quiver from Iphitus, son of Eurytus.⁵⁵ These allusions suggest that Pherae was an integral node in the Homeric network of heroes; indeed, that Odysseus visits Ortilochus to reclaim flocks lost in an earlier raid implies a fuller set of stories now lost. Again, it is their intersectional quality which ensured that these tidbits of the Messenian past survived to be rediscovered: the story of Odysseus’ bow and quiver brings Ortilochus into the ambit of the Ithacaean story; Telemachus’ journey across the Peloponnese makes Pherae a waystation. In a very real sense, it is only through engagement with a world of traveling heroes that these Messenians won lasting renown. Indeed, the deaths of Ortilochus and Crethon – and, almost more importantly, their genealogy – are recorded *precisely because* the pair left Pherae to fight at Troy.

What Homer gives the later Messenians is largely names, not stories. From suggestive references, Imperial Pherae reasserted the heroic luster of its past, yet there is no suggestion in Pausanias that these particular names were targets for further invention. The figures *added* to the Homeric lineage turn out to be of greater local importance. Pherae traces its eponym Pharis to that standard *Stammvater* Danaus, and uses his daughter Telegone to connect these to the Homeric genealogy (as Pausanias notes, Homer had not named the mother of the elder Ortilochus). The addition of Anticleia (found only in Pausanias) to the end of Homer’s genealogy affords opportunities in other directions: as sister to Ortilochus and Crethon, she continues the line after their deaths at Troy. As mother of Nicomachus and Gorgasus, she links the otherwise obscure heroes of Pherae’s healing sanctuary into the whole genealogical network. As wife of Asclepius’ son Machaon, she is a local node in the trans-Hellenic network of sanctuaries of Asclepius and, via Asclepius’ alternative Messenian genealogy, she connects Pherae to the trans-Messenian family tree mapped above (Fig. 3). Let’s look at this mechanism in more detail.

The dominant tradition, supported by the sanctuary at Epidaurus, made Asclepius the son of a Thessalian heroine, Coronis. But Hesiod provided a variant parentage for

μηλα / σταθμούς ανθρώπων κεραΐζετον, ὄφρα
καὶ αὐτῶ / ἀνδρῶν ἐν παλάμησι κατέκταθεν ὄξει
χαλκῶ· / τοίω τῶ χεῖρεσσιν ὑπ’ Αἰνείαιο δαμέντε /
καππεσέτην, ἐλάτησιν ἐοικότες ὑψηλῆσι.

53 The unstable location of the kingdom of Pylos in Homer is noted above.

54 Hom. *Od.* 3.488–490.

55 Hom. *Od.* 21.15–19. It must be noted that, in a notorious geographical problem, this meeting is also described as taking place “in Lacedaemon” (Λακεδαίμονι, 21.13). Pausanias glosses the passage as meaning that the meeting took place in Pherae (Paus. 4.1.4.)

the god by naming Arsinoe, daughter of Leucippus, as his mother.⁵⁶ Leucippus' other daughters, Hilaera and Phoebe, exist in myth only to be abducted by the Dioscouri (see above). Arsinoe has no role in that story; *she* exists seemingly only to give birth to Asclepius. Pausanias reports a "fountain of Arsinoe" at Messene,⁵⁷ but nothing else about her. Nevertheless, the city certainly exploited the Hesiodic variant to enhance the prestige of its Asclepeion.⁵⁸ More relevant to our study is how the claim that Asclepius was Messenian created a different way of reading Homer's geography, which in turn allowed for – or, one might say even say, 'required' – the transplantation of other heroes connected to him.

The Messenian Asclepius brought with him – so to speak – two sons. In the Catalogue of Ships, his sons, Machaon and Podaleirius, lead men from "Tricca, craggy Ithome, and Oechalia, city of Eurytus".⁵⁹ In keeping with their claim to Asclepius, the Messenians could produce locations for these place names to rival the better-known Thessalian sites. Ithome was, of course, the mountain above Messene, Tricca a ruined village somewhere in the hinterland,⁶⁰ and Oechalia the present-day Carnasion.⁶¹ Messenia also had physical relics to support this reading: Machaon's tomb was at Gerenia (the free Laconian city whose Messenian identity Pausanias stresses, as noted above).⁶² His remains were brought 'home' by Nestor, who in the *Iliad* tends his wounds in a 'neighborly' fashion.⁶³

Pausanias reviews the various claimants for "Oechalia, city of Eurytus" across Greece and declares the Messenian Carnasion the "most likely" (μᾶλλον εἰκότα) given that the bones of Eurytus are there, displayed along with the bronze urn in which Epiteles had discovered the rites of Andania.⁶⁴ Pausanias includes the arrival of Eurytus' parents Melaneus and Oechalia in his myth-history of the region; they are given the land for their city by Perieres.⁶⁵ Quite notably, however, although this two-generation lineage is chronologically located within Messenia's past, it is not connected into the trans-Messenian genealogy that we have been tracing in any way; nor is there any hint of how the further stories of this family were understood to have impacted the region, or how the sack

56 Hesiod *fr.* 50 M-W [=Paus. 2.26.7] confirmed in part by schol. Pind. *Pyth.* 3.14 [= Hesiod *fr.* 51 M-W]. Pausanias' reporting of this variant in book two is notably skeptical: he declares it "the furthest from the truth" (ἤκιστα ... ἀληθῆς), suggesting that it was invented by Hesiod, or interpolated into his work, to suit Messenian interests. He offers no skeptical remarks in book four, however. On Asclepius' various birth stories, see Gantz 1993, 71–72; Fowler 2013, 76.

57 Paus. 4.31.6.

58 This complex dates from the first half of the second

century BC. Its bold iconography reflects Messene's political ambitions: see Themelis 1994, 29–30; Sineux 1997, 15–18; Luraghi 2008, 282–285; Muth 2007, 183–185.

59 Hom. *Il.* 2.730.

60 Paus. 4.3.2.

61 Paus. 4.2.2–3.

62 Paus. 3.26.9–10.

63 Hom. *Il.* 11.597–598; Paus. 4.3.2.

64 Paus. 4.2.3; 4.33.5.

65 Paus. 4.2.2–3.

of Oechalia by Heracles (the subject of a lost epic by Creophylus, who placed the city in Euboeia) was localized. The transplantation of Eurytus is thus obviously a move necessitated by the need to claim Oechalia in order to then claim Asclepius and his sons. Certainly, there is nothing necessarily Messenian about this hero. That said, it reveals a notable textual coincidence. There are two passages in Homer which have Eurytus' name and that of his city in close proximity to the names of Messenian locations. We have already seen the first of these: Odysseus receives his bow and quiver at the house of Ortilochus "in Messene" from Iphitus, son of Eurytus, who has traveled there from Oechalia.⁶⁶ In the second, another traveler from Eurytus' Oechalia, the singer Thamyris, is killed at Dorion, in the district of Pylos.⁶⁷ Pausanias mentions both these passages in his Messenian book.⁶⁸ These passages do not of course place Oechalia – or Eurytus – in Messenia, but they do offer an association ripe for exploitation for those in pursuit of Messenia's past.

Pausanias' account reveals one way of creating a coherent trans-Messenian genealogy out of the fragments of it available in the existing archive. What we cannot know, of course, is how his tidy arrangement corresponds in its details to the bricolage pursued by any particular community at any particular time within Messenia itself. The unique survival of Pausanias' account of Messenia means that his version is *the* version of Messenian genealogy. We get to see what he shows us. In this instance we can look behind his account, tracing some of the machinations that transformed one archive – exploitable passages from Homer and Hesiod – into another – the 'complete' Messenian lineages of the *Periegesis*; but we cannot know what alternative pasts also existed.

Once more, of course, we see knowledge emerging from the interface between the stability of texts and the fluidity of travel. Pausanias' 'traveling narrative' requires him to add to the 'overview' of Messenian myth he gives in the first chapters of book four; the view also from Pherae, where local concerns added new nodes to the Homeric genealogy. Pharis, Nichomachus, and Gorgasus lacked the mobility that allowed their relatives to win renown in Homer. Epic captured the heroic web woven from the intersecting paths of heroes who intervened in each other's stories and whose families became intertwined. Homeric and Hesiodic epic kept these heroes traveling by making them part of a textual tradition that extended across the Greek-speaking world, so that every Greek community encountered the same set of – now canonical – stories. But Pausanias' local heroes are beneficiaries of a very different narrative tradition, one that offers a frozen

66 Hom. *Od.* 21.5–41.

67 Hom. *Il.* 2.591–601. Kirk 1985, 216, suggests that the identification of Homer's Oechalia in Messenia "may [...] have developed from confusion engen-

dered by this very passage". He notes that Hesiod (*Ehoëae* fr. 59.2–3, 65 West) places the story not at Dorion, but on the Dotian plain; that is, in Thessaly.

68 Paus. 4.1.4; 4.33.7.

peek at a configuration of this lineage a millennium later. They survive because they became caught up in a text – Pausanias’ – which brings narrative attention to their specific locale.

5 Conclusion

William Hutton has argued that Pausanias’ account of Messenia should be understood not only on its own terms, but within the ambit of the entire *Periegesis*. The care with which Pausanias assembles his work suggests that he “envisioned at least some members of his audience reading the text from beginning to end, rather than diving into it and out of it in random intervals, as most modern readers are wont to do.”⁶⁹ Such readers, he argues, would notice pertinent parallels and points of contrast as they went. Thus, at a macroscopic level, the victory of the Romans over the Greeks narrated in book seven (the fourth to last book) is the mirror image of the victory of the Messenians over the Spartans narrated in book four.⁷⁰ This observation would open up further correspondences: “the reader sensitive to context” would read Pausanias’ forceful account of the ruins of Arcadian Megalopolis⁷¹ in antithesis to his earlier description of the flourishing of Messene.⁷² Hutton’s final correspondence is the most pertinent to our study. The *Periegesis* ends abruptly, with a description of a ruined Asclepion at Naupactus. The sanctuary was founded by a certain blind man, Phalysius. He miraculously regains his sight after opening a sealed tablet, and he reads its contents. This final story, Hutton argues, should put the reader in mind of both the earlier revelation of the bronze tablets recovered at Messene and her own role as reader of a text filled with the knowledge of the past. Thus,

Pausanias seems to be claiming that his text of revelation and discovery can help to restore something that the Greeks have lost: a clear vision of their rightful place in a world where they have become gradually more peripheral and unexceptional. The mysteries of the Great Gods of Messenia have their counterpart in the mysteries of Hellas that Pausanias has revealed to his readers. The sort of redemption that the Messenians enjoyed, which is denied to the Greeks at the end of Pausanias’ account of the Achaean wars, is finally granted in some small

69 Hutton 2010, 425.

70 Hutton 2010, 429–436. The idea that Pausanias’ narrative of Messenian subjugation and liberation offers a model for Greeks under Imperial rule has also been developed elsewhere. See Langerwerf 2008,

199–204; Elsner 1992, esp. 15–20; Auberger 2000; Casevitz and Auberger 2005, x–xii; Musti 1996, 27.

71 Paus. 8.33.1.

72 Hutton 2010, 445–446.

degree to those Hellenes and phil-Hellenes who make it all the way to the end of the *Description of Greece*.⁷³

At first sight, this would seemingly cohere with my argument through this chapter, that Pausanias finds narrative utility in the capacity of texts to maintain knowledge in stable, atemporal forms until such time as it is reactivated by the reader. But considered in another way, it runs counter to it. For, as readers, we are autonomous travelers. Perhaps Pausanias did indeed envision a readership who would read his every word in the order that each appears and appreciate the text finally as an object of revelation and political resistance; perhaps he did not. Certainly, he offers no clear programmatic statements that might shape his readers' approach: he shows rather than tells. Perhaps a reader working through the entire *Periegesis* in order would encounter the ruins of Megalopolis in book eight and cast her mind back to the construction of Messene in book four; perhaps, given the surfeit of detail and digressions in the intervening chapters, she would not. Perhaps she would make some other quite unpredictable association; perhaps she would have resorted to skim-reading by this point in any case. For this is how it is with readers: we fall short of the ideal; there's no telling which paths we will choose to take in our reading, nor indeed which paths are even possible.

Tracing 'paths of knowledge' through Pausanias' account of Messenia reveals not just the mechanisms that created, encoded, and preserved knowledge, but a tolerance towards the idiomatic – even tendentious – styles of reading that afforded these mechanisms their authority. Pausanias' Messenians do not merely find letters scratched onto tin; they recognize these writings as the mysteries of Andania and understand their recovery as analogous to the resuscitation of the dying old woman of Epiteles' dream. Only by reading them in this way can "something kept hidden" take its place in the story of Messene; and only by reading them in this way can Messene's founding take place at this place. Likewise, Pausanias' Messenians do not read Homer to witness the emotional turmoil of Achilles' μήνις; they dip into it hunting for proper nouns that might be Messenian heroes and Messenian cities. They approach Homer as I have approached Pausanias: as a textual archive full of documentary material, evidence for the past. Moreover, the apparent success of such conclusions justifies the style of reading that created them. When I extract from Pausanias' words charts that map Agamemnon's seven cities or the genealogical traditions of Messenia as if Pausanias means to be quite clear on these matters, I am not creating my own text – for that remains stable – but I am finding my own path through, seeking whatever past which can be recovered through it.

73 Hutton 2010, 453. Prefigured in important ways by Porter 2001, 91–92.

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TABLES: 1 Greta Hawes.

GRETA HAWES

is Senior Lecturer in Classics and Ancient History at the Australian National University. She is author of *Rationalizing myth in antiquity* (OUP, 2014) and editor of *Myths on the map: the storied landscapes of ancient Greece* (OUP, 2017). Her next book, *Pausanias in the world of Greek myth*, will appear in 2020 with OUP.

Greta Hawes
 School of Literature, Languages and Linguistics
 Australian National University
 Canberra ACT 0200
 E-Mail: greta.hawes@anu.edu.au

Sara Fascione

Finding Identities on the Way to Rome

Summary

The theme of the journey has a primary relevance in the first book of Sidonius Apollinaris' *Letters*. It represents not only an opportunity of personal growth, but also a way to rediscover the paths that lead to the very bases of *Romanitas*. In this sense, the *peregrinatio* shapes the life of travellers: on the way to Rome Sidonius Apollinaris, born in Lyon, really becomes Roman (Sidon. *Epist.* 1.5); Eutropius, who decides to remain in Gaul, refuses his cultural identity, turning into a *peregrinus* in his own land (Sidon. *Epist.* 1.6).

Keywords: journey; *peregrinatio*; Sidonius Apollinaris; *Romanitas*; identity

Das Thema der Reise ist im ersten Buch der *Briefe* von Sidonius Apollinaris von zentraler Bedeutung. Es zeigt nicht nur eine Möglichkeit des persönlichen Wachstums auf, sondern auch den Weg, der zu den Grundlagen der *Romanitas* führt. In diesem Sinne gestaltet die *peregrinatio* das Leben der Reisenden: Der in Lyon geborene Sidonius Apollinaris wird auf dem Weg nach Rom wirklich Römer (Sidon. *Epist.* 1.5); Eutropius hingegen, der beschließt in Gallien zu bleiben, lehnt seine ihm innewohnende kulturelle Identität ab und wird somit zum Ausländer (*peregrinus*) im eigenen Land (Sidon. *Epist.* 1.6).

Keywords: Reise; *peregrinatio*; Sidonius Apollinaris; *Romanitas*; Identität

Sidonius Apollinaris' journey from Lyon to Rome in AD 467,¹ described in letter 1.5 to Herenius, has a prominent relevance in his letter collection. The structure of the first book of Sidonius' *Letters* is devised in order to present at its core a thematic unit consisting of the letters 5–10, entirely devoted to the period spent by Sidonius in Rome and in Italy.² Once he arrived at the court of Anthemius in Rome as legate of his land,³ Sidonius pronounced a panegyric in praise of the Emperor, which led to his election as prefect of the city.⁴ Then, it is natural that Sidonius gives particular relevance to both the 'Roman period,' which is the acme of his political career, and to the journey (*peregrinatio*) that begins it. The latter represents not only the path that led him to the honor of the prefectural office, but also a pilgrimage to the sacred places of Roman identity, in the city that he defines in letter 1.6.2, as *domicilium legum, gymnasium litterarum, curiam dignitatum, verticem mundi, patriam libertatis*.

In the letters of the Roman period, the journey takes on different functions, all intimately connected. The journey from Lyon to Rome is an itinerary through history and literature. In retracing the different literary places, Sidonius travels through time, from the idealized past to the present, represented by Rome. The path taken also involves an interior process. The Gallo-Roman aristocrat gradually interiorizes the ideal of *Romanitas*, and, assuming his duties towards the community, embraces the republican values, perceived as the very essence of the Roman World.

It is telling that Sidonius opens both the letter to Herenius⁵ and the whole 'Italian digression' of the first book of the collection with the term *peregrinatio*, in this way giving a precise mark to the entire unit of letters 5–10. The word *peregrinatio*, with its semantic area, leads to different meanings, all connected to the adverb *peregre* ('abroad,' 'in a foreign land'). In particular, *peregrinatio* means 'journey in a foreign land' and 'pilgrimage,' while the verb *peregrinari* and the attribute *peregrinus* also refer to the condition of the exiled and to that of the foreigner, who cannot be considered Roman.⁶

1 The datation of the travel is linked to that of the election of Anthemius to the role of Emperor: Loyen 1970, 245.

2 After letter 1.5, the description of Sidonius' journey to Rome, and letter 1.6, an *exhortatio* to his friend Eutropius to have the same experience, Sidonius puts: the letter to Vincentius (1.7), concerning the process to the prefect Arvandus in Rome; the letter 1.8, an ironical description of Ravenna; the letter 1.9, the narration of the events that led the author to compose the panegyric in honor of the emperor Anthemius and obtain the position of *praefectus urbi*; the letter 1.10, where Sidonius refers to his responsibilities as *praefectus urbi* in Rome.

3 The reason for the embassy is not revealed. Sivan

1989 states that the delegation aimed at supporting Arvandus and his policy of cooperation with the Goths and Burgundians.

4 Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 1.9.6.

5 Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 1.5.1; for an account of the steps of the journey see Piacente 2005.

6 On the specific meaning of the term *peregrinus* in comparison with *advena*, *alienigena*, *alienus*, *barbarus*, *hostis* see Ndiaye 2005. In respect to the juridical differences between *cives* and *peregrini* see Liebeschuetz 1998. The scholar underlines that in the imperial constitutions, since the fourth century onwards, the term *peregrinus* refers to the condition of individuals not settled in their territory of origin rather than to the status of non-citizens or non-Romans living

That of the pilgrimage is a 'living metaphor'; this suggestive definition, proposed by Jacques Fontaine in an essay on the function of the *peregrinatio* in Augustine's works,⁷ also suits Sidonius' Letters. *Peregrinatio* is the term employed by the Gallo-Roman author to define his own exile from the Auvergne,⁸ his natural homeland; but it is also the word used for the path to the 'true' homeland, Rome,⁹ that leads him to the accomplishment of his mission of defender of the *Romanitas*. However, the verb *peregrinari* and the noun *peregrinus* still keep the legal connotation that refers to the status of foreigners in contrast with that of citizens (*cives*).¹⁰

The interest of the addressee of letter 1.5 for the places crossed by Sidonius is related to their strong evocative power due to their links with the past. All the Gallo-Roman aristocrat Herenius knows about the glorious past of Rome, and thus of his own origins, is in fact based on a mere bookish knowledge (*lectio*). It is only through the works of the poets, the monuments, and the commemoration of the famous battles, that the fifth-century *nobilitas* learns its history and feels part of it.¹¹ Sidonius, however, by passing through Italy, can testify to his friend that he has seen what Herenius has only read about in books, and that he has traveled through the cultural memory underlying the concept of Romanity.

Having left Lyon and crossed the Alps, the author begins both a physical and literary journey. It is a path through the memory¹² of the past of Rome, in which the reality and the literary dimension are melded. Therefore, Sidonius mentions only the places in some way connected with antiquity or with the literary tradition. He looks to the landscape that has been the scene of major events, or that has been described by the *auctores*, and interiorizes it. By doing this, he rediscovers his own identity and origins. The Po river, for example, gives him the opportunity¹³ to mention Ovid's *Phaetontias*

within the boundaries of the Empire; furthermore, the word is still used after the *Constitutio Antoniniana* to mark the distinction between the inhabitants of the Empire and those who lived beyond the Roman frontiers. On the contrary, Mathisen 2006, 1020–1021, states that the term *peregrinus* keeps its original juridical meaning in late antiquity.

7 Fontaine 1998.

8 See for example the use of the term with reference to the condition of exile in Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 7.16.1: *Facis, unice in Christo patrone, rem tui pariter et amoris et moris, quod peregrini curas amici litteris mitigas consolatoris*; 9.3.3: *per officii imaginem vel, quod est verius, necessitatem solo patrio exactus, hoc relegatus variis quaquaversum frangor angoribus quia patior hic incommoda peregrini, illic damna proscripti*. Born in Lyon, Sidonius had numerous family ties in the Auvergne, where he held the episcopal function from ca. 470.

The author feels a strong sense of belonging both to the place of his birth and to his elective homeland. See Bonjour 1980.

9 Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 1.5.1.

10 Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 1.6.2.

11 Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 1.5.1: *sollicitus inquiris ... quos aut fluvios viderim poetarum carminibus inlustres aut urbes moenium situ inclitas aut montes numinum opinione vulgatos aut campos proeliorum replicatione monstrabiles ...* The term *replicatio* expresses the action of unrolling the volumen on which a literary work is written; the historical battles are then commemorated through the reading of the *auctores* who mention them: see Köhler 1995, 187.

12 On the meaning of the term *memoratus* in this context see Longobardi 2014.

13 Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 1.5.3.

sorores;¹⁴ Cremona recalls Verg. *Ecl.* 1 and the figure of the shepherd Tityrus,¹⁵ while Rimini and Fano bring to Sidonius' mind Julius Caesar's revolt and the famous battle of the Metaurus.¹⁶

Ravenna, instead, does not arouse any kind of interest in the author. The city has nothing to do with the past idealized by Sidonius. Indeed, there is a contrast between the beauty of the river landscapes described a few lines before¹⁷ and the unhealthiness of marshy Ravenna.¹⁸ The journey, thus projected into the past, ends with the arrival in the *Urbs*. Its sacredness is immediately tangible: Sidonius crosses first the *pomerium*, the sacred enclosure for ancient Rome, and then arrives in the basilica of Peter and Paul, which represents the heart of Christian Rome.¹⁹

Thus, the account of the travel through the places of Roman identity comes to an end; in describing his activities in the city so painstakingly reached, Sidonius becomes suddenly biting. Once in Rome, he cannot accomplish his mission, the reason being the wedding of the Goth Ricimerus with the daughter of the emperor Anthemius, concluded *in spem publicae securitatis*.²⁰ It is impossible to establish whether the author is annoyed because the cumbersome marriage prevents him accomplishing his mission after the long journey, or because of the indignation with which the Gallo-Roman aristocrat perceives the wedding between a princess and a barbarian.²¹ What is, however, evident, is the clash between the dreamy dimension of the journey in rediscovery of the past and the disappointment with the reality of Rome's current events, which are so different from the idea he had dreamed of.²²

The sudden awakening in the present, so far removed from the expectations that many readings, the education received, and the same *peregrinatio* had built, is stressed by *nunc*, placed in an emphatic position to introduce the description of the celebrations that overwhelm the city (Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 1.5.10 *Igitur nunc in ista non modo personarum sed etiam ordinum partiumque laetitia* [...]). Furthermore, the anaphora of *iam*, which clearly imitates the style of the epithalamic poetry is not aimed in this case at highlighting the trepidation for the wedding ceremony and for the preparation of the

14 Ov. *Met.* 2.340.

15 Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 1.5.3.

16 Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 1.5.7.

17 Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 1.5.4.

18 Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 1.5.5.

19 Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 1.5.9. For the representation of Rome in Sidonius Apollinaris' works see Behrwald 2012, 283–302.

20 Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 1.5.10.

21 For the perception of 'mixed' marriages see Sivan 1996; Guidetti 2007, 165; Mathisen 2009. These marriages were not infrequent and were regulated

by specific laws; for example, *CTh.* 3.14.1 *de nuptiis gentilium* (370 ca.), which imposed capital punishment in the case of marriages between *provinciales* and *gentiles*. The unions between the exponents of imperial aristocracy and the warlords of German origin are widely attested: see Soraci 1974; Blockley 1982. Perhaps, in the case of the letter here analyzed, Sidonius' indignation could not, or at least not only, be caused by the marriage of a Roman princess to a Gothic military chief, but by its importance for the safety of the whole Empire.

22 Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 1.5.10–11.

bride. On the contrary, it expresses the anxiety with which the ambassador awaits the end of the celebrations, so that all the participants in the festivities could return to more important activities.²³

Rome seems to be taken by a paradoxical subversion of values, anesthetized by what is defined by Sidonius as an *occupatissima vacatio*.²⁴ In the *Urbs, per omnia theatra, macella, praetoria, fora, templa, gymnasia*, resonates the confusion of the *Fescennini* for the wedding of an imperial princess with a general of Germanic origin. On the contrary, as regards the activities through which Rome has built its greatness (*studia ... negotia ... iudicia ... legationes ... totus actionum seriarum status*) there reigns an unnatural silence (underlined by the verbs *silere ... quiescere ... conticescere*), so that every important and serious activity becomes 'a foreigner' (and here again we find the verb *peregrinari*) *inter scurrilitates histrionicas*. For the first time since the beginning of the letter, the theme of the *peregrinatio*, introduced by the verb *peregrinari*, reappears. However, the meaning of the verb in this context is opposite to that of the noun that opens the letter. The *peregrinatio*, namely the journey, is thwarted by the current events in Rome, where seriousness has become a foreigner (*peregrinetur*).

This semantic game cannot be fully understood without a comparison with the letter 1.6 to Eutropius, which represents a *pendant* of the letter to Herenius. The reason why Sidonius writes to the Gallo-Roman nobleman while he is still on the way to Rome is of vital importance.²⁵ The author wants to divert the friend from his domestic tranquillity and persuade him to join the court of the emperor in the eternal city. Since Eutropius is healthy in body and strong in soul, as well as equipped with horses, clothes and servants,²⁶ Sidonius does not understand why he is afraid of going abroad (*in aggredienda peregrinatione*); a nobleman like Eutropius, the author immediately adds, cannot consider a real *peregrinatio*, a journey to a foreign land, the path that would lead him to Rome, his true homeland, *in qua unica totius orbis civitate soli barbari et servi peregrinantur*.

In the same paragraph, there is a threefold recurrence of *peregrinatio/peregrinari*, which produces an amphibological game that clearly connects this letter to the previous one. The term *peregrinatio*, meaning 'journey', opens both letters; furthermore, in both cases there is a passage to the verb *peregrinari* in the sense of 'to be or act like a stranger'. Moreover, this passage is related in both cases to the fulfilling of public duties and is put in a context that recalls the 'cumbersome' presence of the barbarians. Thus, the letter 1.5 to Herenius and the letter 1.6 to Eutropius are parts of a diptych, whose link is represented by the function of the journey to Rome for the inclusion in the *Romanitas*.

23 Sid. Apoll. Epist. 1.5.11: *iam quidem virgo tradita est, iam coronam sponsus, iam palmatam consularis, iam cycladem pronuba, iam togam senator honoratus, iam paenulam deponit inglorius*

24 Sid. Apoll. Epist. 1.5.11.

25 Sid. Apoll. Epist. 1.6.1: *scribendi causa vel sola vel maxima*.

26 Sid. Apoll. Epist. 1.6.2.

This comparison also highlights that going to Rome takes on particular significance in the eyes of Sidonius, not only in terms of linkage with the Roman cultural and literary past, but also for its social and political implications. It is evident that, in order to be considered a true Roman, the journey to the core of the Roman world is not enough. It is also necessary to embrace the main principles of *Romanitas* and, among these, the political militancy, that civic engagement which is obligatory for the *boni*, who have the duty of taking care of the community.

Right at the beginning of letter 1.5, Sidonius writes that his *peregrinatio* to Rome has been made *secundum commune consilium*. The term *communis* in this context can be referred to the author and the addressee ('our decision'), or to the wider community of friends and Lyonnese aristocrats ('joint decision'). The scene where Sidonius leaves, surrounded by friends and relatives who hug and farewell him, has considerable similarities with the image of the Arvernian *civitas* that tightens the heroes Costantius and Ecdicius, respectively in letters 3.2 and 3.3. With his words, Constantius restored harmony to the community divided into factions and exhausted by the siege of the Visigoths; Ecdicius defeated in battle the Visigoths who surrounded the city. Moreover, these 'twin' passages allude to Pliny's panegyric, where the Emperor Trajan is surrounded by an adoring crowd on his return from the war.²⁷

The comparison between the letter 1.5 to Herenius, the letters 3.2 and 3.3 in praise of the two Gallo-Roman noblemen Costantius and Ecdicius, and the common reference to Pliny, clearly put Sidonius' journey in a communal dimension. The author aims to represent himself as the ideal aristocrat who seeks to serve the State with his qualities and means, derived from his education and his social position.

According to the ethics underlying Sidonius' letters, the noble and the Roman appear as such only when they come out of their private state to fulfill the duties that their birthplace and their studies require.²⁸ Illustrative in this regard is Sidonius' exhortation to his friend Syagrius,²⁹ who, despite being the successor to an illustrious Gallo-Roman family, prefers to remain in his country estates rather than pursue a political career (Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 8.8.2: *Redde te patri, redde te patriae, redde te etiam fidelibus amicis ... !*). Behaving *ut bubulcus* (Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 8.8.1), Syagrius does not deserve the good name of his family, to belong to the aristocratic circle represented by his friends and, above all, inclusion in the *patria*. Ignoring his civic duties, the aristocrat loses the tie that connects him to his ancestors and makes him worthy of the privilege of friendship with the other members of the *nobilitas*; he loses the right to be considered a citizen of the land for

27 Plin. *Pan.* 22; Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 3.2.1; 3.3.5–6. On the influence of Pliny's model on this passage see Giannotti 2016, 125.

28 For the relevance of the *officia* for late antique Gallo-

Roman aristocrats see Sivonen 2006, 10–31.

29 We have little information about Syagrius: see Jones and Martindale 1971, 1042 (Syagrius 3); Kaufmann 1995, 349–350.

which their ancestors and friends served and fought. Therefore, it appears clear that the sense of belonging to the homeland is determined by ethical-behavioral features, which are only partly linked to the rights of birth or ethnic origin.³⁰ It is, instead, a privilege acquired by respecting a system of cultural, ethical, and political norms. It is, though, a privilege that can be easily lost; the noble who does not endeavor to obtain the *toga palmata* is similar to a foreigner or exiled (*peregrinus*), an outsider by his own choice.

Furthermore, it is necessary to underline that the expression *se reddere patriae* in letter 8.8 also recalls the idea of returning home. It is noteworthy that the theme of the *reditus* is also present in the *incipit* of letter 1.9. The letter, addressed like letter 1.5 to Herenius, explains Sidonius' vicissitudes in Rome after the wedding of Ricimer³¹ (Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 1.9.1: *Post nuptias patricii Ricimeris, id est post imperii utriusque opes eventilatas, tandem reditum est in publicam serietatem*). After the festivities, which have undermined the order that should have reigned in Rome, after the marriage is concluded *in spem publicae securitatis*, and, above all, after the temporary *peregrinatio* of the *res publica* and its seriousness, Rome returns now *in publicam serietatem*; the city awakes and goes back to the criteria that the ideal of Romanity imposes.³² Also in the letter to Syagrius, then, Sidonius depicts the image of a path, this time from a foreign territory to the homeland – as if, through the choice of becoming *consul*, Syagrius could return home after having distanced himself from the *Romanitas*.

Once again there is a path to take. Letter 1.5 opens with the *peregrinatio* to Rome, the journey from the native land to the real homeland, while letter 1.9 opens with the *reditus* of Rome from its temporary 'exile' to its true condition. Not surprisingly, it is in the second letter to Herenius that Sidonius tells how, having returned the public seriousness, he received the honor of the prefectural office. Sidonius' *peregrinatio*, therefore, undertaken for the common good, allows the author himself, with his own service in favor of the community, to reach the heart of the *Romanitas* and embody the ideals this represents. The author, however, faces a paradoxical situation. He embarked on a journey to rediscover his true homeland, Rome, and what it stands for, and found instead a place where the Roman institutions had been relegated to the condition of foreigners.

Contrariwise, Eutropius does not want to go to the *Urbs* because he does not understand that this is his true home, and thus, remaining in his villa, he behaves more like a farmer than an educated aristocrat, sharing the condition of those barbarians and slaves who are the only ones who can be considered *peregrini* in Rome. Therefore, Eutropius

30 Writing on the 'deterritorialization' of the Roman concept of *patria*, Herescu 1961 underlines that already in Cicero's works the sense of belonging to Romanity is created by behavioral factors more than by territorial ties.

31 The two letters are probably parts of the same epis-

tle: see Köhler 1995, 265.

32 An interesting comparison can be made with Mart. *Epigr.* 2.11–12, where the end of Nero's tyranny is presented as a restitution of Rome to itself: *Reddita Roma sibi est et sunt te praeside, Caesar, / deliciae populi, quae fuerant domini*.

is paradoxically a foreigner, a *peregrinus* in his own homeland, while travel abroad (*peregrinatio*) would make him feel really at home. Rural tranquility is, for the aristocrat, a way to waste the chances that birth in a senatorial family could offer, and to miss the opportunity to cultivate himself.

The linkage between letter 1.5 and letter 1.6, which makes them complementary, has been perhaps undervalued by scholars. It is clear that the two letters are connected by the topic and their context. The first is the description of the journey to the *Urbs*, the second an *exhortatio* to have the same experience, composed on the way to Rome. However, the relationship between the two letters is deeper. Without the letter to Eutropius, the letter to Herenius is just a *reportage* of a journey between reality and fiction. The following epistle, however, clarifies the primary function that this journey has, as seen from Sidonius' point of view; that is, the intimate appropriation of Romanity. The result of the *peregrinatio* is not only a list of literary *loci* experienced in reality, but also an active civic engagement in favor of the public community – even in the fifth century, the period of the Empire's deepest crisis, when the republican values are mere ideals.

The relationship of complementarity between the two letters is also emphasized by the reference to Horace's satire 1.5. It has already been noted by scholars that letter 1.5 (addressed to Herenius), in terms of position, theme, and textual references, recalls Horace's description of the *iter Brundisinum*.³³ Also letter 1.6 to Eutropius seems to be connected to satire 1, 6, although in a less direct way. This focuses on the theme of the superiority on the rights of birth of moral nobility, which must be shown with actions, while Sidonius in his letter encourages his friend Eutropius to deserve the privileges that a noble birth offers.

Then, the *peregrinatio* is a path that leads man from the condition of foreigner to that of true Roman, a way not only to improve himself, but also the political and social *status quo*. This is exemplified by the case of Eutropius. Sidonius in his letters continues to follow his friend's journey to the core of Romanity. In letter 3.6 the author states that Eutropius, having just become prefect, is now worthy of his nobility because of his actions. By doing so, he overturns the topic of the first letter to the friend, letter 1.6 (note that the two letters are in the same position in each book): Eutropius is no longer a *peregrinus* but a real Roman, and so he has restored the order that, in the previous letter, had been broken.

In conclusion, being or not being a real Roman, is for Sidonius a matter of choice. It is no coincidence that letter 1.6 ends with the term *confinis*, used by the author in the sense of 'near',³⁴ when he says that he does not want to be a passive witness to his friend's

33 See Gualandri 1979, 50–52; Mazzoli 2005–2006, 174.

34 Editors have given different translations for the

word *confinis*: see for example Anderson 1936, 367: "I have nothing to do with such wickedness"; Loyer 1970, 20: "je ne suis ni de près ni de loin complice

extreme negligence (Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 1.6.5: *sin autem ... mavis, ... Epicuri dogmatibus copulari, ... testor ecce maiores, testor posteros nostros huic me noxae non esse confinem*). The use of a metaphor concerning space in this context is significant. In a letter, whose main topic is the definition of the criteria of inclusion in the *Romanitas*, the word *confinis* indicates the boundaries of the *patria*. For the fifth-century aristocrat, this consists in the choice of finding his own identity and cultivating himself in order to pursue the highest good. This, it is now clear, can only happen on the way to Rome.

de telle perversité”; Köhler 1995, 63: “dann rufe ich unsere Nachkommen als Zeugen an, daß ich an dieser Untat keinen Anteil habe!”; Bellès 1997, 170: “jo no tinc res a veure amb aquesta perversitat”. The translation ‘near’ here proposed tries to render

the spatial metaphor produced by the combination of the verb *determinare* (‘demarcate boundaries’) and *confinis* (literally ‘boundary’). For the metaphor see Köhler 1995, 229.

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SARA FASCIONE

Sara Fascione is currently post-doc researcher at the Katholische Universität Eichstätt-Ingolstadt as Marie Curie Fellow (P.R.I.M.E. – Marie Curie Actions. Host institutions: Katholische Universität Eichstätt-Ingolstadt; University of Edinburgh). Her research focuses on late antique epistolography and on the representation of identity and otherness in Sidonius Apollinaris' Letters.

Dr. Sara Fascione
Katholische Universität Eichstätt-Ingolstadt
Universitätsallee 1D
85072 Eichstätt, Germany
E-Mail: sara.fascione@ku.de;
sarafascione@gmail.com

Safari Grey

Homer's *Odyssey* in the Hands of its Allegorists: Many Paths to Explain the Cosmos

Summary

The allegorical exegetic tradition was arguably the most popular form of literary criticism in antiquity. Amongst the ancient allegorists we encounter a variety of names and philosophical backgrounds spanning from Pherecydes of Syros to Proclus the Successor. Many of these writers believed that Homer's epics revealed philosophical doctrines through the means of *hyponoia* or 'undermeanings'. Within this tradition was a focus on cosmological, cosmogonical and theological matters which attracted a variety of commentators despite their philosophical backgrounds. It is the intention of this paper to draw attention to two writers: Heraclitus, and Porphyry of Tyre. This paper also intends to demonstrate that the tradition of cosmic allegorical exegesis is still practiced in modern scholarship.

Keywords: Homer; literary criticism; allegory; Heraclitus; Porphyry; cosmology; metaphor

Die allegorische exegetische Tradition war wohl die populärste Form der Literaturkritik in der Antike. Unter den antiken Allegorien begegnen wir einer Vielzahl von Namen und philosophischen Hintergründen, die von Pherecydes von Syros bis zu Proclus der Nachfolger reichen. Viele dieser Autoren glaubten, Homers Epen enthüllten philosophische Lehren durch Hyponoie oder ‚Unterschätzung‘. In dieser Tradition lag der Fokus auf kosmologischen, kosmogonischen und theologischen Fragen, die trotz ihrer philosophischen Hintergründe eine Vielzahl von Kommentatoren anzogen. Es ist die Absicht dieses Artikels, auf zwei Autoren aufmerksam zu machen: Heraklit und Porphyry von Tyrus. Das vorliegende Werk soll zudem zeigen, dass die Tradition der kosmischen allegorischen Exegese in der modernen Wissenschaft noch immer praktiziert wird.

Keywords: Homer; Literatur-Kritik; Allegorie; Heraclitus; Porphyry; Kosmologie; Metapher

1 Introduction

The idea that Homer composed allegorical works, and the associated practice of exegesis pursued by later philosophers and critics, were both prevalent by the end of the fifth century BCE and continued well into the late Roman and Byzantine periods.¹ Among the ancient allegorists we encounter a variety of names and philosophic backgrounds spanning from Pherecydes of Syros to Proclus the Successor. Many of these writers believed that Homer's epics, intentionally or not, revealed philosophical doctrines through the means of *hyponoia* or 'undermeanings'.² What is most striking about these accounts, despite differences in the authors' philosophical leanings or periods of practice, is the common practice of cosmic interpretation.³ It is the intention of this paper to draw attention to a few such writers – including the ancient grammarian Heraclitus and Neoplatonic philosopher Porphyry of Tyre.⁴ However, this paper also intends to suggest that the tradition of cosmic allegorical exegesis is still practiced in modern scholarship, through an analysis of the works of Harvard Classics Professor Gregory Nagy.⁵ Through this brief survey, this paper intends to demonstrate, first, that when we speak of allegorical interpretations of Homer, what we often mean is cosmic allegory, and secondly, that these interpretations continue through current academic discourse.

2 Allegory

The inclusion of allegory as a poetic tool was attributed as early as the seventh century BCE to Archilochus and Alcaeus.⁶ As early as the sixth century the critical application of the allegorical exegesis to the works of the poets began with Pherecydes, and Theagenes of Rhegium.⁷ In this practice, "allegory is used to designate a range of non-literal expression from extended metaphors to maxims (*gnōmai*) to riddles."⁸ However, the exact prevalence of allegorical exegesis throughout antiquity is a contested topic. Some scholars would argue that it was an eccentricity, particularly of late antiquity, which can be

1 Bruns 1988; Lamberton and Keaney 1992; Browning 1992, 146; Lamberton and Keaney 1992, xiii, xvi, xxiii; Struck 2004, 5, 18; Russell and Konstan 2005, xiii, xiv; Tzetzis 2015.

2 Tate 1934, 107.

3 The terms 'philosophy' and 'science' are used throughout as a broad rubric to reflect an amalgam of what we would identify today as disparate disciplines – such as cosmology, physics, horology, theology, meteorology, cosmogony, medicine, and soteriology, to name a few – and even those we now consider pseudo-disciplines, such as astrology and

divination. 'Astronomy' is used to refer to specifically astrophysical phenomena.

4 Heraclitus Homeric Problems; Porph. *De antr. nymph.*

5 Nagy 1990a; Nagy 2013. Also see Frame 1978.

6 Heraclitus Homeric Problems 5.

7 Fragment DK 7 B5 (= Origen, *C. Cels.* vi, 42); fragment DK 8 A2 (= Porphyry, *Homeric Questions* i, 240, 14); Struck 2004, 26–27; Ford 2002, 69 n. 6; Kennedy 1990, 85 and MacPhail 2011, 240–241.

8 Ford 2002, 72.

“skipped over” by serious scholars of literary criticism to whom it can have “no possible redeeming interest.”⁹ This opinion seems to stem from a desire to obey Aristotelian parameters (to which allegorists do not comply despite the fact that the *Poetics* seems to demonstrate the exception, rather than the rule, regarding allegoresis in antiquity).¹⁰ A systematic survey of literary criticism in antiquity instead demonstrates that allegorical practices were not rare.¹¹ In defense of its popularity P. Struck remarks that “if during Plato’s time the Homeric professors were famous for textual criticism [or] grammatical commentary [...] we would expect to see these methods [...] caricatured [in comedy],” rather than the allegorists, who were indeed lampooned by Aristophanes in *Peace*.¹²

While the number of allegorical interpreters through antiquity far exceeds¹³ the number of vocal allegorical adversaries, the weighty reputation of the latter creates the illusion of a disproportionate and more officious sense of disapproval.¹⁴ Yet, even the strongest adversaries could not avoid the odd exegesis in their own works. Aristotle is often cited as the primary antagonist of allegorical exegesis. The *Poetics* argues that *ainigma* is a flaw, and that good poets should always strive to ensure clarity within their works. His concerns therefore are aesthetic ones; he “side-steps allegorical reading(s)” for the sake of “clear language.”¹⁵ The fragments of Aristotle, however, reveal that he considered his own allegorical solutions to Homer. Fragment 175 concerns the oxen of Helios, to which the scholiasts report that “it was read as a physical allegory [by Aristotle]. The seven flocks of fifty cattle belonging to the sun was the mythical representation of the 350 [...] solar days of the lunar year.”¹⁶ Eustathius supported this interpretation, remarking that “they say Aristotle read these herds allegorically as the 350 days in the twelve lunar months.”¹⁷ G. W. Most has identified Fragment 175 as “a single apparent exception” and yet R. Lamberton has also identified Fragment 149 as an allegorical interpretation made by Aristotle.¹⁸ Aristotle’s interpretation concerned the apparent Homeric paradox that Helios can see all and hear all (*Il.* 3.277) and yet requires Lampetia to inform him of the destruction of his cattle (*Od.* 12.374–375), which he explains by arguing that Lampetia symbolically represents Helios’ sight.¹⁹ A final example can be found in *Metaphysics* 12.1074b whereby Aristotle interprets the inspired sayings of the ancient thinkers regarding the divine quality of the heavenly bodies.

9 Kennedy 1990, 78; Struck 2004, 6; Lamberton and Keaney 1992, xvi.

10 Struck 2004, 7, 51, 63–65.

11 Tate 1929, 142–154; Richardson 1975, 77–81; Ford 2002, 67–89; Struck 2004, 17–18.

12 Struck 2004, 43; *Peace* 38–51; it is also telling that allegorists do not appear among the defenders of Homer listed by Aristotle in his *Poetics* 1460b.

13 For a cursory list see Struck 2004, 5.

14 Cicero, Quintilian, and Balbus, for example, are

seen as “standard among allegorical commentators” in their opposition to it, Struck 2004, 115.

15 Lamberton and Keaney 1992, xiii; Richardson 1992, 30–40; Struck 2004, 51, 63–65.

16 Fragment 175 in Rose 1886.

17 F 175 R3 (= Eust. 1717 on Hom. *Od.* XII.130); Barnes 1984.

18 Most 2010, 26 n. 1; Lamberton and Keaney 1992, xiv–xv.

19 Fragment 149 in Rose 1886.

The same incongruity can also be found in Plato, another popular example of anti-allegorical thinking in antiquity. Socrates' censure of allegorical interpretation is presented in three arguments. First, he disapproved of the easy access to lofty philosophical truths made so easily available to the undereducated by allegorists.²⁰ He also remarks, rather contradictorily, that Homer's poems should not be allowed into the ideal city "whether they are allegorical or not" because the young are not able to distinguish it.²¹ Finally, he claims that one cannot assert the truth of an interpretation because the poet himself cannot be asked his intent.²² Plato/Socrates' objection therefore seems to stem from either elitist intellectual practice, or his more usual concerns regarding validity. However, these concerns did not prevent Plato from practicing,²³ and indeed commending,²⁴ allegorical exegesis in his own works. Cicero and Plutarch were also contradictory in their anti-allegorical stances. Cicero has Vellius accuse both Zeno and Chrysippus of twisting the meaning of fables in *On the Nature of the Gods*, and yet explains the mythical account of Uranus' castration as an intelligent rendering of physical phenomena in the same text.²⁵ Plutarch similarly rejects astrological and cosmic allegory as a method for defending Homer, and then makes use of allegorical methods in his other works.²⁶

Many of the ancient grammarians and philosophers who practiced allegorical exegesis proposed that Homer, intentionally or unintentionally, embedded allegory in his works for the purposes of education.²⁷ It was perceived, therefore, that authors like Homer contained within their words a gods-given authority on a range of subject matter. Tate explains the phenomena thus: "it [allegory] was practiced [by the philosophers] in order to make more explicit the doctrines which students of the poets believed to be actually contained within the poet's [i.e. Homer's] words."²⁸ These doctrines, of course, frequently reflected the writer's own philosophical bias, a practice that continued down to the Neoplatonists and could arguably be found in contemporary interpretations as well.²⁹

20 Pl. *Resp.* 378a; Pl. *Thet.* 180d.

21 Pl. *Resp.* 378d.

22 Pl. *Prt.* 347e–348a.

23 Pl. *Thet.* 153c–d, 180c–d; Pl. *Cra.* 398b–c, 404b–e, 407a–b and Pl. *Phdr.* 229c–e.

24 Pl. *Cra.* 407a–c; Pl. *Prt.* 316d; Plat. *Ion* 530b–d; Plat. *Lys.* 214b–d and Ps.-Plat. *Alk.* 2.147b.

25 Cic. *nat.* 1.41, 2.63–2.72; Struck 2004, 188.

26 Plut. *aud. poet.* 19e–20a; Plut. *Is.* 351, 352a, 361e,

362e, 363d.

27 Ar. *Ran. (batr.)* 1034; Xen. *Symp.* 3.5, 4.6–7; Strab. *geogr.* 1.2.3, 1.2.17; Polyb. 34.4.4; Paus. 8.8.3; Diog. Laert. 9.22; *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* Vol.3 fr.654, 655; Cornut. *Theol. Gr.* 35.75.18–35.76.5; Ps.-Plut. *Mor.* 879c–880d; Struck 2004, 118.

28 Tate 1934, 107.

29 Tate 1934, n. 13.

3 Cosmic allegory

Regardless of their specific philosophical inclinations, the most common feature among many interpreters of Homer was that they attributed to Homer the mastery of a number of academic disciplines that rely on astronomical knowledge.³⁰ The earliest record we have of cosmic allegory is also our first record of Homeric exegesis, where we are told Pherecydes interpreted the interaction between Zeus and Hera in *Iliad* 1.590 and 15.118 to be “the words of god to matter, which god put in order”; in short, a cosmogonical allegory.³¹ Similarly, both Theagenes and Metrodorus, another of our earliest allegorists, provide examples of cosmic allegory, referring to the gods and heroes as elemental forces.³² The Derveni Papyrus is perhaps the most extensive early example of purely cosmic allegory, although it pertains to Orphic mythology and so will not be discussed here.³³

This prevalent belief that literary interpretations of Homer are bound up with ontological ones naturally leads commentators to allegorical analysis of cosmic phenomena. So much so that marrying the philosophical doctrines of the construction (cosmogony) and nature (cosmology) of the universe with Homeric verse became the most common philosophic convention, practiced by Zeno, Diogenes, and Apollodorus, among others.³⁴ For instance: Porphyry discusses Homeric horology in his passage on ‘saffron-robed Dawn’; Plutarch despairs of divinatory interpretations pertaining to the planets; both Strabo and Hipparchus dub him the father of geography; and Heraclitus, like many other philosophers, read his cosmic theologies in Homer’s works.³⁵ For example, Theagenes’ states:

For indeed they say that the dry fights with the wet, the hot with the cold, and the light with the heavy; furthermore, that water extinguishes fire, but fire dries water. Similarly, the opposition accrues to all the elements out of which the universe consists ... He [Homer] arranges battles by naming fire Apollo ... the water Poseidon ... the moon Artemis, the air Hera.³⁶

30 Schenkeveld 1976, 52; Heraclitus of Ephesus (attr.) in Kahn 1981, 113.

31 Fragment DK 7 B5; Baxter 1992, 120; see also Anaximenes in Buffiere 1973, 115–117.

32 Fragment DK 8 A2; fragment DK 61 A4; Richardson 1975, 68–70; Struck 2004, 28.

33 Laks and Most 1997.

34 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 4; see also Zen. *Homeric Questions*; Republic: Chrysippus *On the Republic*; *On the Gods*; Philo *On Piety*; Diogenes of Babylon *On*

Athena: Apollodorus of Athens *On the Gods*; Russell and Konstan 2005, xiii.

35 Porphyry’s *Homeric Questions* 8.4–15 in MacPhail 2011, 129; Plutarch’s *On How to Study Poetry* in Goodwin 1878, 4; Strab. *Geogr.* 1.1.2 and for example Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 22 and 33; Pl. *Tht.* 152e; Arist. *Metaph.* 983b.

36 Porphyry’s *Homeric Questions* 20.67–75 in MacPhail 2011, 241.

In this brief extract Theagenes discusses what we would now call physics (the opposition of universal elements), cosmology (the composition of the universe), astronomy/astrology (by identifying planetary bodies such as the moon with divinities), and even meteorology (associating weather phenomena with deities). It should be emphasized, therefore, that the majority of critics and interpreters of antiquity should not be exclusively discussed in philological or literary contexts, but rather in theological and cosmogonical ones.³⁷ The next part of this paper will aim to demonstrate with examples the extent to which ancient allegoresis relied on cosmic allegory.

It is an important caveat, however, to first distinguish these interpreters of metaphor and allegory (both ancient and modern) from those who drew what can be called astronomical *data*, such as eclipses and asterisms, from Homer's epics.³⁸ This paper attempts to avoid discussing whether or not Homer's epics recorded specific astronomical events, such as eclipses, and instead focusses upon how various scholars of Homer, from past to present, have interpreted his works as containing a kind of 'philosophical cosmology'. To this end, the word 'cosmic' is used to refer largely to cosmogonical, but also 'astro-philosophical' narratives, or narratives concerning the relationship between man's soul and the universe; whereas the term 'astronomical' is used to identify observations of specific celestial phenomena. These astronomic observations are, of course, equally informative to the broader theme of 'Homer and Astronomy', but they do not concern the metaphorical scope of this volume, and as such will be dealt with at a later time.

4 Heraclitus

Heraclitus the 'Allegorist' was a grammarian flourishing in the first century CE and is perhaps the most famous interpreter of Homer from antiquity. Heraclitus' text, most commonly titled *Homeric Problems*, argued that it was the responsibility of philosophers and grammarians to intuit Homer's works, and glean from them philosophical and scientific truths.³⁹ While Heraclitus was neither the first, nor last, student of Homer to elucidate allegorically 'encoded' cosmic knowledge from Homer's works; *Homeric Problems* has been selected for exploration in this paper for several reasons. First of all, his is one of the largest extant and comprehensive treatises dedicated to Homeric allegory, and as such provides an effective example of what can be considered first-century allegori-

37 Long 1992, 51.

38 Modern examples include Schoch 1921, 19–21; Lorimer 1951, 86–101; Gendler 1984, 489–490; Lori 1989, 57; Mavrommatis 2000, 112–114; Flan-

ders 2007, 82; Baikouzis and Magnasco 2008, 8823–8828; Tomboulidis 2008, 130–133; Theodossiou et al. 2011, 22–30.

39 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 5, 75; Tate 1934, 106.

cal Homeric criticism.⁴⁰ Fundamentally, Heraclitus explicitly identifies what he does as allegorical exegesis, unlike earlier writers.⁴¹ He is also the first critic to make so much use of the term *allegoria* and its cognates, which appear on almost every page of the treatise.⁴² Heraclitus openly defines allegory as a literary trope, in much the same manner as Quintilian; they also both refer to the same example in order to demonstrate that allegory is a form of extended metaphor.⁴³ Heraclitus also belongs to the small group of allegorical commentators that assume authorial intent.⁴⁴ Finally, Heraclitus also dedicates the majority of his discourse to cosmological interpretation – which spans a range of cosmological themes, such as the origin of the universe and the interactions of its constituent elements – as well as referencing particular astronomical phenomena, and as such provides the best example for the present discussion.

Heraclitus devotes a number of passages to cosmological explanations. He argues that “Homer has given us indications of the basic elements of the natural world”, which in turn are the “origin[s] of all things.”⁴⁵ In short, he believed that Homer’s texts contained allegorical accounts of the birth of the universe (cosmogony) and the composition of its constituent parts, or elements (cosmology). In *Problems* 23, for example, Heraclitus interprets the oath from *Iliad* 3.276–280 with a cosmological eye:

Ζεῦ πάτερ Ἴδηθεν μεδέων κύδιστε μέγιστε,
Ἥελιός θ', ὃς πάντ' ἐφορᾷς καὶ πάντ' ἐπακούεις,
καὶ ποταμοὶ καὶ γαῖα, καὶ οἱ ὑπένερθε καμόντας
ἀνθρώπους τίνυσθον ὅτις κ' ἐπίορκον ὁμόσση,
ὑμεῖς μάρτυροι ἔσθε, φυλάσσετε δ' ὄρκια πιστά:

Father Zeus, ruler of Ida, noblest and greatest,
and Helios, observer of all things and listener of all things,
and rivers and earth, and you below whose work is to chastise
dead men, those who swear their oaths falsely:
you are the witnesses, trusted to keep guard this oath.⁴⁶

Following the tradition before him, Heraclitus claims that the divinities listed in the oath represent the physical elements: æther/fire (Zeus), air (Hades), water (rivers), and

40 Cornutus has also provided us with a large allegorical treatise; however, he claims to summarize the works of others (Cornut. *Theol. Gr.* 35.76.6–35.76.9) and as such Heraclitus has been selected as the primary account. For a list of similarities see Struck 2004, 153–154 n. 28–41.

41 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 1.5.

42 Struck 2004, 152–153; The words *ainigma* and *sum-*

bolon are also used throughout as synonymous with allegory.

43 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 5; Quint. *inst.* 8.44.

44 Long 1992, 42; Struck 2004, 152. For more on issues of authorial intent and allegorical exegesis see Struck 2004, 28, 44, 149.

45 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 23.22.

46 Hom. *Il.* 3.276–3.280 (translation by the author).

earth, as well as adding the Peripatetic ‘force of rotation’ (Helios).⁴⁷ Similarly, in his discussion of the Binding of Hera (*Il.* 15.18–21) Heraclitus maintains that the story is merely an analogy of “a theological account of the creation of the universe”, referring again to the four constituent elements of cosmic creation: æther/fire, air, water, and earth.⁴⁸ He moves on from this passage to discuss another two oaths: Hera’s from *Il.* 15.36–15.38, and Poseidon’s from *Il.* 15.186–193. In these instances, however, Heraclitus couples “an allegory of the original four elements” with a cosmogonical account of the threefold division of the Homeric universe.⁴⁹

The tripartite division of the universe is a common cosmogonical trope found in a range of ancient literature.⁵⁰ But it was Poseidon’s speech of *Il.* 15 that was selected by Heraclitus for close examination:

τρεις γάρ τ' ἐκ Κρόνου εἰμὲν ἀδελφοὶ οὗς τέκετο Ῥέα
 Ζεὺς καὶ ἐγώ, τρίτατος δ' Αἴδης ἐνέροισιν ἀνάσσω.
 τριχθὰ δὲ πάντα δέδασται, ἕκαστος δ' ἔμμορε τιμῆς:
 ἦτοι ἐγὼν ἔλαχον πολὴν ἄλα ναίεμεν αἰεὶ
 παλλομένων, Αἴδης δ' ἔλαχε ζόφον ἠρόεντα,
 Ζεὺς δ' ἔλαχ' οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἐν αἰθέρι καὶ νεφέλῃσι:
 γαῖα δ' ἔτι ξυνὴ πάντων καὶ μακρὸς Ὀλυμπος.

Three we are born of Kronos, sons of the same mother who bore us – Rhea
 Zeus, and myself, the third is Hades who is lord of those beneath the earth.
 All was divided into three, and each received his rightful portion:
 truly, I for myself obtained the lot of the grey salt-sea to dwell in forever
 when the lots were cast, Hades obtained the lot of murky darkness,
 Zeus obtained the lot of broad heaven amid the æther and clouds:
 Gaia remains common to all, as does high Olympus.⁵¹

Heraclitus explains that when Homer speaks of Kronos he actually refers to the concept of Time ‘the root of the four elements’, while his wife Rhea represents the perpetual flow of the universe (*rhysis*).⁵² Together therefore, Time and Flow are imagined as the parents of the remaining (four) elements. Zeus’ heaven again is the domain of fiery æther, water belongs to Poseidon, Hades receives ‘unilluminated air’, while earth (Gaia) sits at the very center ‘common to all.’⁵³ In this manner, Heraclitus believed, Homer

47 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 23; for further discussion of the elements see 7, 15, 24, 26, 36, 39. For further discussion of Heraclitus’ philosophical inclinations see Thompson 1973, 10–13, 155–162; Struck 2004, 142–143.

48 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 40.

49 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 41.

50 *Atrahasis* (SBV) 1.12–18, 2.16–19, 2.30–33, 10; Hes. *Theog.* 413, 427; Achilles’ shield *Il.* 18.493 and *Hymn to Demeter* 33.

51 Hom. *Il.* 15.186–193 (translation by the author).

52 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 41.

53 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 41; Hom. *Il.* 15.193.

expressed the origins of the elements (from Time and Flow, Kronos and Rhea) as well as their universal placements. He further argues that Homer repeatedly referred to ‘these [cosmic] matters’, usually through the medium of oaths.⁵⁴ That the fundamental aspects of the cosmos should be the generic content of oaths should not be surprising when such an oath effectively encompasses the whole universe – making it the most powerful and binding of vows, as Hera demonstrates:

ἴστω νῦν τόδε Γαῖα καὶ Οὐρανὸς εὐρὺς ὕπερθε
καὶ τὸ κατειβόμενον Στυγὸς ὕδωρ, ὅς τε μέγιστος
ῥρκος δεινότατός τε πέλει μακάρεσσι θεοῖσι

Know this, Gaia and broad Ouranos above
and the Stygian water that flows below, this is
the greatest and most formidable oath of the blessed gods.⁵⁵

Heraclitus further argues that Homer expressed this cosmogonic trope most clearly in the account of Achilles’ shield from *Il.* 18.478–613:

In forging the Shield of Achilles as an image of the revolution of the cosmos, [Homer] has shown by clear evidences how the universe originated ... and how its different parts were formed.⁵⁶

It is clear, therefore, that Heraclitus believed the Homeric epics contained allegorical references to the cosmogonic origins, and construction of the elements of, the universe. The account of Achilles’ shield as a cosmogonical metaphor raises matters of celestial geometry. The roundness of Achilles’ shield, according to Heraclitus, intentionally evokes the roundness of the universe.⁵⁷ This analogy is reinforced by *Problems* 36, which discusses the spherical nature and rotation of the universe according to evidence found in *Il.* 8.16. Heraclitus here claims that “Homer gives the dimension of the sphere on geometrical principles”, which in turn inform his knowledge of the shape of the cosmos.⁵⁸ Homer calls the sun *elektor/heliktōr*, meaning ‘spiraler’, “because he measures off the world day and night by his circular movement”.⁵⁹ According to Heraclitus, Homer knew that the universe was spherical and that the paths of sun and moon demonstrated that fact, because the Shield of Achilles represented it.

Heraclitus also makes much of what he calls his ‘First Allegory’; namely, “that Apollo is identical with the Sun, and that one god is honoured under two names”, and devotes

54 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 41.

55 *Hom. Il.*: 15, 36–38 (translation by the author).

56 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 43; Crates also interpreted the Shield as *kosmopoīia* (Eustathius fr. 1167).

57 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 43, also, 47–48.

58 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 36.

59 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 44.

much time to this association – even connecting Apollo’s arrows metaphorically with the shafts of the sun.⁶⁰ Heraclitus’ analysis of Apollo as the sun also contains a discussion of the seasons – particularly using lines from the *Iliad* to demonstrate that the “season when the Greeks fell sick was the summer.”⁶¹ However, this is not so much an allegorical interpretation as a poetic one. It is relatively easy to glean from lines such as “Then did ox-eyed Queen Hera send untiring Helios unwillingly into the river of Okeanos” that the poet is referring to long summer days without enumerating all the examples of soldiers sweating in the heat as Heraclitus does in *Problems* 10.⁶² However, its inclusion within the list of Heraclitus’ allegories provides further evidence of his preoccupation with the breadth of Homer’s cosmic wisdom.

Heraclitus continues his horological readings of Homer in *Problems* 39, where he discusses the joining of Zeus and Hera on Mount Ida from *Il.* 14.347–353. This episode was often cited as clear evidence of Homer’s desire to lead young men into immorality, but Heraclitus calls it simply “an allegorical way of speaking of the spring.”⁶³ For Heraclitus, the floral imagery and growth of new grass (*Il.* 14.347) combined with the dewy weather (*Il.* 14.351) both serve to mark this sexual encounter as a metaphor for the birth of spring.⁶⁴

References to actual astronomical features, such as the constellations, are limited to the description of Achilles’ Shield in *Problems*.⁶⁵ Yet, the rest of the text seems almost entirely devoted to uncovering evidence of Homer’s cosmic knowledge, or what Heraclitus calls Homer’s “scientific theology in allegorical form.”⁶⁶ Furthermore, while the majority of this study has considered the *Iliad*, Heraclitus also devoted some 20 paragraphs to the *Odyssey*. Here, a few cosmic allegories are uncovered, such as the account of Proteus, whose shape-shifting is likened both to the elements and the primordial origin of the universe.⁶⁷ Similarly, Aeolus’ twelve children are connected to the twelve months of the yearly cycle, while Aeolus himself is described as a master of time, represented by his control over the seasonal winds.⁶⁸ Furthermore, Heraclitus names Odysseus as “the first man to foretell good sailing weather by his knowledge of astronomy,” implying that Homer also possessed the same navigational knowledge.⁶⁹ Finally Heraclitus, like many astronomers after him, also associates Theoclymenus’ prophecy from *Odyssey* 14 with a solar eclipse.⁷⁰ However, the remainder of the *Odyssey* section is largely devoted

60 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 6.13, see also 7–17, 52; Cornut. *Theol. Gr.* 32; Ps.-Plut. *Life of Homer* 202.

61 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 8.

62 Hom. *Il.* 18.239–239.40 (translation by the author); Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 8–11.

63 Pl. *Resp.* 390c; Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 39.

64 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 39.

65 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 49–50.

66 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 58.

67 Hom. *Od.* 4.456–458; Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 66, 65. For more on shape-shifting see section 2.

68 Hom. *Od.* 10.6–22; Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 71.

69 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 70.

70 Hom. *Od.* 14.62; Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 74–75; see also n. 6 (above).

to a consideration of Odysseus as a symbol of various philosophical virtues.⁷¹ In summary, Heraclitus interprets both Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as receptacles of allegorical truths pertaining mostly to cosmic and astronomical matters. Yet he adds to the *Odyssey* a deeper moral truth; an interpretation that was continued in Porphyry's allegorical reading of Homer.

Towards the end of his discussion of Homer's *Odyssey*, Heraclitus presents a series of questions to Plato, in an attempt to rebut his accusations of impiety in the standard practice of the Homeric Apology. He writes scathingly of how Plato's works reflect his own sexual proclivities: "It is only natural therefore that ... Plato's conversation [should be] the loves of young men"; while Homer's works piously record "the life of heroes."⁷² Furthermore, he implies that a work containing references to "Heaven and the universe ... earth and sea ... sun and moon and the motions of the fixed stars and planets" – such as Homer's – is a true philosophical work, suggesting that he believed Homer to be a greater philosopher than Plato (though he seems to ignore the cosmic account from the myth of Er for the purposes of this argument).⁷³ However, the link between the cosmos and divinities is not the only reason why a writer of cosmological allegory should be considered pious; Heraclitus suggests that the *Odyssey* is a tale of virtue – which provides the intuitive reader with a formula for celestial salvation through the veil of allegory:

After all this, can Homer, the great hierophant of heaven and of the gods, who opened up for human souls the untrodden and closed paths to heaven deserve to be condemned as impious?⁷⁴

5 Porphyry of Tyre

For both Heraclitus and Porphyry, those who see in Homer mere fabrication, rather than intentional allegory, miss the point of the poets.⁷⁵ They also share a similar soteriological concern for the relationship between the heavens and the soul.⁷⁶ In the third century CE, Porphyry made similar connections between celestial salvation and the narrative of Homer's *Odyssey* as Heraclitus did, though his extant allegorical interpretation centers on a particular passage from *Odyssey* 13, rather than the breadth of the Homeric corpus.⁷⁷

71 A common conceit, see Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 78; Aristoph. *Ran.* (*batr.*) 1034; Xen. *mem.* (*apomn.*) 1.3.7; Basil of Caesarea *Oratio ad adolescents* 5; a comprehensive overview can be found in Montiglio 2005, 43, 147, 172, 178–179, 188, 194, 196, 205–206, 209.

72 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 78.

73 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 77; Pl. *Resp.* 10.

74 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems* 76; see for example Dowden and Livingstone 2011, 283–300; Adluri 2013, 343–356.

75 Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 4 (trans. Taylor 1917).

76 Lamberton and Keaney 1992, xx.

77 Hom. *Od.* 13.93–112. Porph. *antr.* (*nymph. antr.*).

Porphry is thought to be the author of a text also called *Homeric Questions*, though this concerned only the *Iliad* and does not contain as much theological-cosmological allegory as Heraclitus.⁷⁸ The narrative passage of Homer's *Odyssey*, which primarily concerned Porphry, pertains to a description of the Ithacan coastline, known as the *Cave of the Nymphs* (*De antro nympharum*), portrayed when Odysseus finally returns home. The cave is described thus:

αὐτὰρ ἐπὶ κρατὸς λιμένος τανύφυλλος ἐλαίη,
 ἀγγόθι δ' αὐτῆς ἄντρον ἐπήρατον ἠεροειδές,
 ἱρὸν νυμφῶν αἰ νηϊάδες καλέονται.
 ἐν δὲ κρητῆρές τε καὶ ἀμφοροῆες ἕασιν
 λάϊνοι: ἔνθα δ' ἔπειτα τιθαιβώσσοσι μέλισσαι.
 ἐν δ' ἴστοι λίθιοι περιμήκεες, ἔνθα τε νύμφαι
 φάρε' ὑφαίνουσιν ἀλιπόρφυρα, θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι:
 ἐν δ' ὕδατ' ἀενάοντα. δῦω δέ τέ οἱ θύραι εἰσίν,
 αἰ μὲν πρὸς Βορέαο καταβηταὶ ἀνθρώποισιν,
 αἰ δ' αὖ πρὸς Νότου εἰσὶ θεώτεραι: οὐδέ τι κείνη
 ἄνδρες ἐσέρχονται, ἀλλ' ἀθανάτων ὁδός ἐστιν.

But upon the head of the harbor there is an olive tree with long-pointed leaves;
 Nearby, is a cave that is lovely and misty-dark;
 it is sacred to those sea-Nymphs, called the Naiads.
 Within are mixing bowls and amphorae
 made of stone; where the bees store their honey.
 Inside, set upright are very tall stone looms, there the nymphs
 weave their cloths of sea-purple – a wonder to see.
 In there, water is ever-flowing. Two entrances it has
 the one facing the direction of Boreas [North Wind], where men descend
 the other one facing the direction of Notos [South Wind], which is more divine:
 that way men cannot enter, only immortals take that road.⁷⁹

Porphry, like Heraclitus, is explicit that he continues a tradition of allegorical interpretation.

the poet [Homer], under the veil of allegory, conceals some mysterious signifi-
 cation;
 thus compelling others to explore what the gate of men is and also what is the

78 Porphry's *Homeric Questions* in MacPhail 2011.

79 Hom. *Od.* 13.102–112 (translation by the author).

gate of the Gods:

[and] what he means by asserting that this cave of the Nymphs has two gates.⁸⁰

This demonstrates a continuation of both the tradition of Homeric allegorical interpretation, and the newer application of Neoplatonic philosophical tenets to Homer's corpora.⁸¹ However, unlike Heraclitus' more general overview, Porphyry's allegorical interpretation of *Odyssey* 13 sets out a specific cosmological argument, providing an excellent counterpoint for study. First he argues that the Ithacan cave represents a cosmic gateway through which man journeys to godliness through ascending or to birth by descending.⁸² Second, Odysseus' encounter with Athena outside the cave represents his completed spiritual transformation (or ascension) from man to god – through the power of his reason and wisdom.⁸³ Though Porphyry's purpose for demonstrating such a 'truth' is outside the remit of this paper, it was arguably to encourage (Neoplatonic) philosophers to expand their rational discourse towards a contemplation of higher matters.⁸⁴

Porphyry first outlines the theological and philosophical significance of caves – particularly in their relation to the universe and the journey of the soul into generation. He states that “caves in the most remote periods of antiquity were consecrated to the Gods” and that “theologians consider caverns as symbols of the world.”⁸⁵ His definition of ‘theologians’ here seems to extend both to philosophers, such as Plato (“Plato showed that the world is a cavern”), as well as religious practitioners, such as the Mithraists (“wherever Mithra was known, they propitiated the God in a cavern”).⁸⁶ Porphyry therefore asserts that Homer's passage is an allegorical rendition of the connection between the cave as a symbol of the universe, and the transmigration of the soul, as discussed by philosophers and practiced by Mithraists. The former assertion is outlined through his celestial explanation of Homer's Ithacan cave.⁸⁷ In particular, the end of the *Odyssey* passage:

Two entrances⁸⁸ it [the Cave of the Nymphs] has,
the one facing the direction of Boreas [North Wind], where men descend [un-

80 Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 1.

81 Lamberton and Keaney 1992, 117, 126; Struck 2004, 142; Vernant 1980, 212.

82 Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 10–14.

83 Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 15.

84 Hoffman 2014, Abstract.

85 Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 9; 4.

86 Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 3; 9, see also Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 2: “Thus also the Persians, mystically signifying the descent of the soul into the sublunary

regions, and its regression from it, initiate the mystic in a place which they denominate a cavern”. See Pl. *Resp.* 514a–520a; perhaps also Paus. 1.17.5; Dio Cass. 4.50; Strab. *Geogr.* 5.4.5; for more on caves and their significance Clausen 1990, 42; Hardie 1977, 279; Ogden 2001, 43; Ustinova 2009.

87 Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 9.

88 The term ‘*thurai*’ was used by later philosophers to refer metaphorically to the entrances to the soul (e.g. Aristain. 2.7); Liddell and Scott 1940, s.v. θύρα.

derground?]⁸⁹

the other one facing the direction of Notos [South Wind], which is more divine: that way cannot be entered by men, only immortals take that road.⁹⁰

Porphyry draws a direct parallel between the Northern and Southern gates of the Ithacan cave with the Northern and Southern celestial tropics: Cancer and Capricorn respectively.⁹¹ He writes that “Cancer is the gate through which souls descend; but Capricorn that through which they ascend” because “Cancer is indeed northern, and adapted to descent; but Capricorn is southern, and adapted to ascent”.⁹² That is to say that the (celestial) Tropic of Cancer lies halfway between the celestial equator (a projection of our equator upon the sky), and the most northern star; whereas the (celestial) Tropic of Capricorn lies halfway between the celestial equator, and the most southern star. Therefore, to reach the central regions of both sky and earth (where the Greeks positioned themselves) one must travel south, or ‘descend’ from the Tropic of Cancer, and north, or ‘ascend’ from the Tropic of Capricorn. Furthermore, he makes connections between, on the one hand, the Tropic of Cancer or the Northern gate for human souls, and on the other; the Tropic of Capricorn or Southern gate for immortals:

The northern parts, likewise, pertain to souls descending into generation.

And the gates of the cavern which are turned to the north are rightly said to be pervious to the descent of men; but the southern gates are not the avenues of the Gods, but of souls ascending to the Gods.

Porphyry here notes an important caveat – that the Southern gate is not exclusive to the gods, but to immortals. Meaning that it is possible for a man’s immortal soul to cross this gateway.⁹³ On this account, the poet does not say that they are the avenues of the Gods, but of immortals; this appellation being also common to our souls, which are *per se*, or essentially, immortal.⁹⁴

Porphyry therefore draws clear connections between the transmigration of the soul and Homer’s sacred cave throughout *On the Cave of the Nymphs*. He further reinforces this connection in three stages. First, he emphasizes the significance of water as a spiritual conduit – “for water co-operates in the work of generation” (*On the Cave of the Nymphs* 7) – when referring to the “ever-flowing [or ever-lasting] water” of *Odyssey* 13.109. This

89 The term *kataibatai* was used by Aristophanes to describe Hermes leading souls down to the underworld in his role as psychopomp in *Peace* 649; Liddell and Scott 1940, s.v. καταιβεταί.

90 Hom. *Od.* 13.109–109.12 (translation by the author).

91 Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 10.

92 Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 11.

93 Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 11.

94 Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 11.

belief is no doubt connected to Thales' precept that water is a progenitor.⁹⁵ Second, Porphyry draws a connection between the life-giving quality of water and the nymphs as symbols or manifestations of souls. He writes that "souls are *profoundly* steeped in moisture" and "therefore, souls proceeding into generation are the nymphs called naiades" because of their association with water.⁹⁶ Here, Porphyry also explains why Homer describes the amphorae within the cave as being filled by the honey of bees (*Od.* 13.106), rather than wine, water, or perfume, because Nymphs were "peculiarly called bees" by the "ancients."⁹⁷ Ergo the specific assemblage of water, Naiads (who are also called sea-Nymphs in *Od.* 13.104), and bees, together symbolize "souls descending into generation."⁹⁸ Porphyry asserts, therefore, that Homer's Ithacan cave is a cosmic conduit through which immortal souls descend into birth.⁹⁹ Porphyry's interpretation represents a movement away from Heraclitus' more general defense of Homer as a learned and pious man who expressed truths about the origin and structure of the universe in metaphor, towards a deeper interpretation of Homer's *Odyssey* as an allegory of spiritual salvation.

This is perhaps best expressed in his analysis of Athena. That Athena is presented as an embodiment of wisdom serves only to draw this transmigration in-line with the Neoplatonic goal of philosophical reason.¹⁰⁰ Porphyry calls the olive-tree that spreads its branches above the cave the "true enigma." He explains that the olive sits at the head of the cavern, as Athena sprung from the head of Zeus, and that it symbolizes the intelligent design behind the construction of the universe (symbolized by the cave). Therefore, Odysseus returns home, and

Here, naked, and assuming a suppliant habit, afflicted in body, casting aside everything superfluous, and being averse to the energies of sense, [he] sit[s] at the foot of the olive and consult[s] with Minerva by what means [h]e may most effectually destroy [the dark] passions which reside in the soul.¹⁰¹

In short, Athena is the embodiment of wisdom, which Odysseus – as representative of the philosopher – must humbly solicit in order to reach godliness through the cosmic portal symbolized by the Ithacan cave.

This association between astronomical gates and the path of the soul is a very common trope found throughout antiquity, especially among those philosophers and religions concerned with spiritual salvation.¹⁰² It is clear through his focus on Athena as a

95 Arist. *Metaph.* 283b.

96 Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 4; 5 (original italics).

97 Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 7.

98 Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 4.

99 Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 14.

100 Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 15–17.

101 Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 16.

102 Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 11: "Parmenides mentions these two gates in his treatise *On the Nature of Things*, as likewise that they are not unknown to the Romans and Egyptians."

font of wisdom and reflection of the Demiurge, however, that Porphyry interprets the Homeric text with a Neoplatonic bias.¹⁰³ He builds on the assertions of Heraclitus – that Homer’s text contained not only cosmological but also moral wisdom – and adds that Homer encoded within his account of the Ithacan cave, and Odysseus’ return home, an allegorical recipe for eternal salvation. This development perhaps clarifies Heraclitus’ closing assertion that Homer “opened up for human souls the untrodden and closed paths to heaven.”¹⁰⁴

Both examples have demonstrated the assertion that some of the best examples of literary criticism from antiquity should be better called cosmological allegoresis. Understanding the passages in this way serves two purposes. First, it places our understanding of ancient literary criticism better in line with their perception of the ancients who were considered “not nobodies but competent students of the world, and well equipped to philosophise about it via symbols and riddles.”¹⁰⁵ Cornutus’ view demonstrates the popular belief that “the poem is primarily a vehicle for profound truths about the cosmos and our place within in.”¹⁰⁶ This is a factor that can be overlooked if we attempt to restrict our understanding of ancient literary criticism to simple philological or literary contexts in order to reflect our own biases.¹⁰⁷ The concept of “the poet as a solitary genius attuned to the hidden truths of the cosmic order” is demonstrably present in the ancient critics, but it also has its echoes in contemporary scholarship.¹⁰⁸ For example, Bremer interprets Homer’s description of Hephaestus defeating Scamander as a contest between the elemental forces of fire and water, representing an inversion of the cosmic order.¹⁰⁹ This interpretation is not so different to those posed by the likes of Heraclitus when describing Homeric accounts of the universe.

6 Gregory Nagy

The tradition of cosmic allegorical interpretations of Homer established by Greek thinkers has continued into modern Classical studies. The remainder of this paper, therefore, concentrates on the comprehensive interpretation of Homeric metaphorical symbolism as found in several works by the Harvard Classics Professor Gregory Nagy.¹¹⁰ Nagy has been selected for study as he subtly imitates scholars of the exegetic tradition. First, he has himself produced a work entitled *Homeric Questions*, in line with many classical

103 Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 15.

104 Homeric Problems: 76.

105 Cornut. *Epidrome* 76.

106 Struck 2004, 151.

107 Ford 2002, 70.

108 Struck 2004, 13.

109 Bremer 1987, 39.

110 Namely Nagy 1990a; Nagy 2013. See also, for example, Marinatos 2001, 381–416.

allegorists, which he himself cites.¹¹¹ He also provides an interpretation of Odysseus' journey that relies on cosmic allegory and analogy, utilizing the language of ancient interpreters such as *ainos*, *sēma*, and *symbolon*.¹¹² Furthermore, like Porphyry before him, Nagy argues that Odysseus' return home is reflective of a mystical journey "embedded in the plot of the *Odyssey*" "as a metaphor."¹¹³ However, instead of analyzing a singular passage as Porphyry had, Nagy combines broader philological premises found throughout the text with narrative analysis. He demonstrates that the *Odyssey* comprises a unified account that combines the motions of the sun with a journey of spiritual awakening.

An important caveat: Nagy's interpretation relies heavily on constructions of Indo-European roots drawn from conclusions made by linguist Douglas Frame.¹¹⁴ However, it is important to make clear that this paper is not concerned with proving or disproving the validity of Frame's, or Nagy's, linguistic claims inasmuch as it is concerned with the fact that his, and Nagy's, works reflect a continuation of the tradition of cosmological interpretations of Homeric texts.¹¹⁵

Nagy argues, in brief, that the *Odyssey* is a text "built on the symbolism of rebirth from death, as verbalised in the *noos/nostos* of Odysseus himself"; and importantly for this study, "visualised in the dynamics of sunrise after sunset."¹¹⁶ There are several facets to this argument. First is that the themes of *noos* ('consciousness') and *nostos* [or *neomai*] ('return') are both pivotal to the *Odyssey*'s narrative. Second, that *noos* and *nostos* are linguistically connected by the same Indo-European root. This suggests that the two are also metaphorically connected inasmuch as the *nostos*, 'return', is both physical and 'psyche-cal'. The connection between 'return' and 'consciousness' further draws upon associations with both: light, reflected in analogies of sunrise and sunset; and life, reflected in analogies of spiritual awakening. Therefore, Nagy believes, the *Odyssey* is a text that ultimately combines three layers of meaning or metaphor: (1) the physical return home and (2) the awakening from sleep/death, which is set within (3) the cosmic framework of sunrise and sunset.

Nagy's argument builds upon D. Frame's theory that the terms *noos* and *nostos* both stem from the same Indo-European root **nes-*.¹¹⁷ *Noos* is constructed as **nos-os*, derived from **nes-*, while *nostos* is a nominal derivative of *neomai* – itself stemming from the same lexical root.¹¹⁸ Frame asserts that once the "semantic difficulty" between these two terms is removed, it can be demonstrated that 'mind' and 'return home' were "once

111 Nagy 1996, 1; his claim places him in the company of Heraclitus, Porphyry, Aristotle, and Zeno (c.f. Diog. Laert. *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* 7.1.4).

112 Porphyry *Homeric Questions* 23.2, 24.5, 46.6, 52.19; Struck 2004, 23, 73; Ford 2002, 74; Nagy 1990a, 202–222; Nagy 1990b, 148, 192–94, 196–200.

113 Nagy 2013, 275.

114 Frame 1978.

115 Macksey 1979, 1270; Combella 1981, 225–228.

116 Nagy 1990a, 93.

117 Frame 1978, ix.

118 Frame 1978, ix–x.

closely related in the Greek language”¹¹⁹ Furthermore, it is precisely this close relation that affiliates the terms with a fundamental myth of humankind: the return to life that is itself “universally associated with the mythology of the returning sun.”¹²⁰ This association with the sun is drawn from the meaning of the Greek root *nes-*, which Frame documents as “a return from death” and therefore implicitly also “a return from darkness”; given that – in Greek myth – the underworld is a place where the sun does not shine.¹²¹ It is therefore through this connection with the role of the sun that Frame gives the Indo-European root **nes-* a meaning of “a return to light and life”; that is, “from darkness and death.”¹²² Nagy argues in support of this interpretation that “the very idea of consciousness as conveyed by *noos* is derived from the metaphor of returning [*nostos*] to light from darkness, as encapsulated in the moment of waking up from sleep.”¹²³

This theory of a linguistic connection between *noos* and *nostos* relies upon the argument that the terms are also thematically connected throughout Homer’s *Odyssey*. Indeed, both Frame and Nagy would argue that the terms are not merely thematically connected, but that the theme of ‘returning to light and life’ is itself the very core – or rather the very plot – of Homer’s narrative. Frame, for example, asserts that “the words *noos* and *neomai* come readily to mind in connection with Odysseus”; and argues that their presence in the proem of the *Odyssey* highlights their significance:

ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, μοῦσα, πολύτροπον, ὃς μάλα πολλὰ
πλάγχθη, ἐπεὶ Τροίης ἱερὸν πτολίεθρον ἔπερσεν
πολλῶν δ’ ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα καὶ νόον ἔγνω,
πολλὰ δ’ ὅ γ’ ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμόν,
ἀρνύμενος ἦν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἐταίρων.¹²⁴

Though, of course, the relative placement of the terms does not of itself infer a thematic connection. Therefore, Frame demonstrates that, within the first hundred lines of the *Odyssey*, Homer tells us repeatedly that the story is an account of the homecoming (*nostos*)¹²⁵ of a man who is characterized by his *noos*.¹²⁶ In short, he argues that the *Odyssey* is thematically founded upon these two terms.

However, the real evidence for the fundamental thematic nature of these terms is elucidated throughout *The Myth of Return*. Here, Frame outlines the importance and prevalence of the terms through an assessment of their lexicographical connection and association with each other, drawing upon various examples from both the *Odyssey*, and

119 Frame 1978, x, 4.

120 Macksey 1979, 1270.

121 Frame 1978, 19–21.

122 Frame 1978, 28–33; Nagy 2013, 297.

123 Nagy 2013, 299. The metaphor of sleep to which Nagy here refers is undoubtedly Homer’s pairing

of Sleep (*Hypnos*) and Death (*Thanatos*) as brothers (Hom. *Il.*: 16.681, also; Hes. *Theog.* 775).

124 Hom. *Od.* 1.1–5; Frame 1978, ix. My emphasis.

125 Hom. *Od.* 1.5, 1.77.

126 Hom. *Od.* 1.3; 1.66; Frame 1978, x.

antithetically, the *Iliad*. Space does not allow for a full appraisal of Frame's examples; suffice to say that extensive connections are made with other Greek sources including Parmenides, Plato, and Pindar;¹²⁷ as well as non-Greek evidence, largely Vedic Sanskrit, but also Germanic and Albanian sources.¹²⁸ It is not the intention of this paper to outline Frames' argument further than to present his linguistic connection between *noos* and *nostos*, and subsequently his translation of the root **nes-* as a "return to light and life"; which serves as the background for Nagy's metaphorical reading of Homer's *Odyssey*.

From these premises, Nagy connects the narrative of Odysseus' return home (*nostos*) with both the cosmic mechanics of the rising and setting sun, as well as the mystical enlightenment (*noos*) of the soul.¹²⁹ Like the "esoteric Neoplatonists" Nagy interprets the narrative of the *Odyssey* as fundamentally a spiritual one.¹³⁰ He writes that "this return of the hero from the realm of darkness and death into the realm of light and life is a journey of the soul."¹³¹ Also like Porphyry, Nagy utilizes a passage from *Odyssey* 13 to demonstrate his contention that the *Odyssey* is a composition of three simultaneous narratives: "built on the symbolism of rebirth from death, [...] verbalised in the *noos/nostos* of Odysseus himself, and visualised in the dynamics of sunrise after sunset."¹³² However, unlike Porphyry, Nagy relies on philological (rather than philosophical) methods in order to demonstrate the integral nature of these layers of metaphor within the narrative. Yet, he still does so within a cosmological framework.

The passage in question immediately precedes the description of the Ithacan Cave so loved by Porphyry. It reads:

When they leaned back, tossing the salt-sea with the blades of their oars
then a delightful sleep fell upon his eyelids,
an un-waking, pleasant sleep, nearest to death.
As on a plain four stallions yoked together
all at once spring forward beneath the blows of the lash
and rising aloft they stir up to pass over their path;
so too did the poop raise and swell, while behind her
surged the great, seething, load-roaring sea.
The unfailing ship ran without rest: not even the circling
hawk could accompany her, lightest of all flying things.
So swiftly she ran over the sea, cutting through the swell,
carrying the man, resembling a God, with his cunning,
one who had suffered very many pains, deep down in his spirit;

127 Frame 1978, 153–160.

128 Frame 1978, 125–162.

129 Nagy 1990a, 258–9; Nagy 2013, 298, 275.

130 Lamberton and Keaney 1992, 124.

131 Nagy 2013, 307.

132 Nagy 1990a, 93.

through wars of men, cleaving through waves of adversity.
 He now slept without trembling, [no longer seized by] his great suffering.
 When the brightest star rose above the horizon, with the great
 messenger of the light, early-born Dawn,
 then did the seafaring ship approach the island.¹³³

Nagy uses this passage to demonstrate the three layers of metaphor – associated with the ‘return to light and life’ – that run throughout the plot of the *Odyssey*.¹³⁴ He writes that the two meanings of *nostos* and *noos* “converge at [this] single point in the master myth of the *Odyssey*.”¹³⁵ Here, Odysseus’ sleep is likened to death (*Od.* 13.79–80), and therefore his subsequent waking (*Od.* 13.188) can be likened to a return to life. Nagy writes that Odysseus’ sleep “makes him momentarily unconscious” where he “forgets”¹³⁶ all the “algea” he has suffered, and that his return to the shore of Ithaca coincides with the rising of the morning star (*Od.* 13.102).¹³⁷ Odysseus’ homecoming is therefore synchronized with both “the moment of sunrise”, and “the moment of awakening from a sleep that most resembles death.”¹³⁸ In short, Odysseus’ physical return home is reconciled with both a psychological awakening, and the symbolism of enlightenment and rebirth reflected in the rising sun. Nagy applies Frame’s linguistic analysis to this passage by combining the metaphor of returning and awakening, with the cosmic mechanisms of sunrise.¹³⁹ This is a cosmic trope, as blatant as Porphyry’s cave entrances or Heraclitus’ description of Achilles’ shield, dressed in modern academic parlance. To this end, Nagy’s cosmic interpretation is less explicit than the works of Heraclitus, or indeed Porphyry, but that is not to say that the cosmic element of this tripartite metaphor is not important. Indeed, it is the association between the passage of the rising sun that thematically connects the otherwise disparate ‘return’ and ‘consciousness’. In short, there can be no spiritual return (or psychic awakening) without the metaphor of returning to light.

Nagy develops this connection between leaving darkness and returning to life through an exegesis on the importance of caves in the *Odyssey* narrative.¹⁴⁰ Frame also draws attention to the metaphorical significance of caves during his discussion of Nestor as a character famed for his *noos*.¹⁴¹ Whilst Frame’s critic F. Combellack writes condescendingly that “gates have long had for some theorists almost as great a fascination as caves”, their relevance to this study is already established through their treatment in Porphyry’s

133 Hom. *Od.* 13.78–95 (translation by the author).

134 Nagy 2013, 300–301; for Porphyry’s use of *metaphora* see Struck 2004, 73.

135 Nagy 2013, 299.

136 The verb is *λελασμένως*, which Nagy here connects to *ληθ* ‘forget’.

137 Nagy 2013, 300.

138 Nagy 2013, 300.

139 Nagy 1990a, 219.

140 Nagy 2013, 306–308.

141 Frame 1978, 90–93.

treitise.¹⁴² Rather, it is not modern academics who are preoccupied with caves, but ancient Greek theorists and religious practitioners, and so to dismiss them in modern literary studies would be a disservice. Nagy argues that “the grand theme of returning to light and life takes shape at the beginning of *Odyssey* 11 when Odysseus starts to make his descent to Hades.”¹⁴³ The *katabasis* narrative is described by Nagy as a psychic experience, that is to say a spiritual or metaphysical one, which is reflected in the descent to darkness and return to light experienced by Odysseus.¹⁴⁴ He draws the same metaphor from Odysseus’ experiences in Calypso’s cave, as well as that of the Cyclops.¹⁴⁵

For Nagy, the physical experience of returning to light after being within the darkness of a cave (or the underworld) is associated metaphorically with both the metaphysical experience of returning to life from death, and the cognitive experience of achieving enlightenment after ignorance. The same metaphorical association was made, rather more famously, by Plato.¹⁴⁶ Indeed, like the philosopher of Plato’s cave, Nagy believes that the linguistic connection between *noos* and *nostos* allows for an interpretation of Odysseus’ journey as a path of enlightenment, because in the proem “we can see that Odysseus is [...] struggling to save his soul *psukhē*. That struggle is the journey of his soul, undertaken by the *noos* ‘mind’ of Odysseus.”¹⁴⁷ Furthermore, the connection between caves and the cosmos (specifically regarding the role of the sun) is long-standing and found in a variety of mythological literature, as already demonstrated in the analysis of Porphyry’s *Cave of the Nymphs*. Therefore, it is not inconceivable that Nagy should read significance into them in the works of Homer.

The cosmic element to the triple metaphor of the *Odyssey* is expanded in the connection Nagy draws between Odysseus and the god Hermes in his role as psychopomp – an association never clearly examined in antiquity. In his discussion of Odysseus’ epithets, Nagy writes that:

The adjective πολυτροπος “of many turns” [...] ¹⁴⁸ serves as an epithet of Hermes, god of mediation between all the opposites of the universe. As a mediator between light and dark, life and death, wakefulness and sleep, heaven and earth, and so on, Hermes is πολυτροπος “of many turns.”¹⁴⁹

According to Nagy, the epithet *polutropos* was originally attributed to Hermes, and applied to Odysseus in order to deliberately evoke these cosmic and spiritual associations of the god as a conduit between this world and the next; light and life to darkness and

142 Combellack 1981, 226; see n. 86.

143 Nagy 2013, 306.

144 Nagy 1990a, 218; Nagy 2013, 307.

145 Nagy 2013, 306.

146 Pl. *Resp.* 514a–520a.

147 Nagy 2013, 313

148 This is a literal translation of *polutropos* based on the roots *polus* ‘many’ and *tropos* ‘turning’. It is also translated as such by Barnouw 2004, 27.

149 Nagy 1990a, 34; for Hermes’ epithet see Hom. Hymn 4 (*to Hermes*) 13, 439.

death. Furthermore, both the epithet's prominence in line 1 of the proem and its identifying characteristic – recognized by Circe because of her knowledge from Hermes – are used to reinforce this interpretation.¹⁵⁰ Nagy connects the role of Hermes as psychopomp to the sun in another Homeric extract.

The extract in question is the Second Nekyia episode from the opening of *Odyssey* 24 where Hermes leads the ghosts of the suitors Odysseus has killed to the underworld.¹⁵¹ Here, Nagy draws attention to the sun's relationship to the descent (and ascent) of souls through the presence of the Gates of Helios described by Homer in this passage.¹⁵² He argues that the Gates of Helios in *Odyssey* 24 are the same Gates to Hades passed through in the *katabasis* scene (*Od.* 5.646f.) – implying that “the *psukhai* ‘spirits of the dead’ traverse to the underworld through the same passage travelled by the sun when it sets.”¹⁵³ Furthermore, Hermes, in his role as psychopomp, is directly connected to these same gates inasmuch as his epithet *pulēdokos* suggests that one of his fundamental roles is to meet souls at these cosmic portals.¹⁵⁴ Another of Hermes' attributes highlighted in this extract is as the wielder of the caduceus, which has the power to render men unconscious (i.e. remove their *noos*).¹⁵⁵ This aspect of his character supports Nagy's interpretation of Hermes as a divine manifestation of the ‘return to light and life’ theme.

The prominence of Hermes' caduceus in relation to the overarching theme of Nagy's interpretation was also noted by Frame when he discussed the role of Hermes.¹⁵⁶ However, in his example Frame draws on the ransom of Hector made by Priam from *Iliad* 24.¹⁵⁷ Priam's journey to visit Achilles in order to retrieve the body of his son is made within a similar cosmic framework to that found by Nagy within the *Odyssey*. Priam meets Hermes at the Tomb of Ilus at sunset and returns with Hermes as the sun rises.¹⁵⁸ It is only then that Hermes leaves.¹⁵⁹ Frame describes Priam's pseudo-*katabasis* as “a journey into ‘darkness and death’ and a ‘return to light and life’” where the exchange between Achilles and Priam, in imitation of the *Odyssey* narrative, “makes a traditional connection between the words *noos* and *neomai*.”¹⁶⁰

Nagy also connects the solar cycle and the underworld through his discussion of Okeanos. Just as in Porphyry's interpretation of the cave, Penelope's death wish in *Odyssey* 20 also seems to suggest that water is a conduit to the underworld:

Artemis, queenly goddess, daughter of Zeus, would you now
fire an arrow into my breast, and pull the spirit from me

150 Hom. *Od.* 1.1, 10.330–331; Nagy 1990a, 34.

151 Hom. *Od.* 24.1–15.

152 Nagy 1990a, 225. See also Frame 1978, 81–115.

153 Nagy 1990a, 226.

154 Homeric Hymn 4 (to Hermes) 15; Nagy 1990a, 226.

155 Hom. *Od.* 24.3.

156 Frame 1978, 153.

157 Frame 1978, 153. See also Juaregui 2011, 37–68.

158 Hom. *Il.* 24.350; 24.694.

159 Hom. *Il.* 24.694.

160 Frame 1978, 156.

this moment; or might a hurricane come
and bring me down to the misty-dark path
casting me into the outpouring, refilling Ocean.¹⁶¹

In this instance, however, the water is directly designated as Oceanus – the stream that perpetually flows, rather than symbolized by the Naiads.¹⁶² Interestingly, the adjective used here to describe the path of Oceanus, ἡερόεντα, is the same used in *Odyssey* 13 to describe the Ithacan Cave.¹⁶³ However, Nagy does not make reference to this. He instead sums up Penelope's understanding of the process of death as follows: "when you die, a gust of wind carries your spirit to the extreme west where it drops you into the Okeanos; when you traverse the Okeanos you reach the underworld which is underneath the earth."¹⁶⁴ In short, Oceanus is the conduit through which souls pass in order to enter the underworld. This is a process clearly stipulated elsewhere in Homer; namely, when Odysseus crosses the Ocean on his way to and from the underworld and when the souls of the suitors also first pass Oceanus when descending to Hades.¹⁶⁵ What is central to this paper, however, is that Nagy draws a close parallel between the role of Oceanus and the cycle of the sun as pathways to the underworld.

For the sun itself, Okeanos has an analogous function: when the sun reaches the extreme west at sunset, it likewise drops into the Okeanos; before the sun rises in the extreme east, it stays hidden underneath the earth. When the sun does rise, it emerges from the Okeanos.¹⁶⁶

Furthermore, he connects both again to the cosmic narrative of returning to life, which he attributes to the *Odyssey* story: "thus the movements of the sun into and from the Okeanos serve as a cosmic model for death and rebirth."¹⁶⁷ Just as, for Heraclitus, Oceanus represents the resolution of things that die "into the constituents from which it grew."¹⁶⁸

These factors, among others not examined in this paper, combine to lead Nagy toward the conclusion that "the entire plot of Odysseus' travels is interlaced with a diction that otherwise connotes the theme of sunset followed by sunrise. To put it more bluntly, the epic plot of Odysseus' travels operates on an extended solar metaphor."¹⁶⁹ This interpretation of both Nagy and Frame clearly demonstrates a continuation of the ancient tradition – presented above – that awards the Homeric texts – specifically the *Odyssey* –

161 Hom. *Od.* 20.61–20.65 (translation by the author).

162 As implied by the adjective ἀψορροῦ in l.65.

163 Hom. *Od.* 13.103.

164 Nagy 1990a, 246.

165 Hom. *Od.* 11.13, 12.1, 24.11.

166 Nagy 1990a, 246 (citing Hom. *Il.* 7.421–423 and Hom. *Od.* 19.433).

167 Nagy 1990a, 246.

168 Heraclitus *Homeric Problems*: 22.

169 Nagy 1990a, 225.

with cosmic allegorical significance. This allegorical reading of Homer, as we have seen, also frequently lends itself to a spiritual one, inasmuch as the cosmic cycle is inherently associated with the transmigration of souls in pagan beliefs. It is clear that Nagy is not motivated by Porphyry's philosophical leanings, or a Mithraist's soteriological concerns. Rather, Nagy is following what he believes to be a linguistic interpretation that reaches conclusions based in comparative mythology.

Yet, the results are the same. It seems clear from this brief survey alone that the tradition of Homeric allegorical interpretation, which has now spanned some 26 centuries, is one intimately concerned with the role of the cosmos in the journeys of people and their souls. It is hoped that further examination of this topic may provide insight as to why Homer's texts in particular elicit such 'universal' appraisal.

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SAFARI F. GREY

Safari F. Grey is currently pursuing Doctoral studies in Classics, Ancient History, and Archaeology at the University of Birmingham. Her PhD thesis concerns the significance of epithets, names, and forms of address in Homer's *Odyssey*. She also teaches Academic Writing Skills for humanities undergraduates at the University of Birmingham.

Safari F. Grey

Department of Classics, Ancient History and Archaeology
College of Arts and Law
University of Birmingham
Edgbaston, United Kingdom B15 2TT
E-Mail: ISG540@student.bham.ac.uk

Valeria Flavia Lovato

The Wanderer, the Philosopher and the Exegete. Receptions of the *Odyssey* in Twelfth-century Byzantium

Summary

This paper will explore the reception of Odysseus' wanderings in twelfth-century Byzantium. Taking into account the Homeric writings of both Eustathius of Thessaloniki and John Tzetzes, I aim to demonstrate that the association between journey and knowledge was extremely productive in the context of the intellectual debates of the time. More specifically, I will show that the development of this traditional theme allowed the major Byzantine scholars to express their own standpoint on crucial matters such as the definition of philosophy, as well as to elaborate on their conception of Homer and their own activity as Homeric exegetes.

Keywords: Homer; Tzetzes; Eustathius; Byzantine scholarship; philosophy; Plato

Der vorliegende Artikel befasst sich mit der Rezeption der Odyssee im Byzantinischen Reich des 12. Jahrhunderts. Ausgehend von den Interpretationen Homers durch Eustathius von Thessaloniki und John Tzetzes zeige ich, dass die Verbindung zwischen Reisen und Wissen im Zentrum der intellektuellen Debatten der Epoche stand. Die Auseinandersetzung mit dieser traditionell wichtigen Thematik erlaubte es namhaften byzantinischen Gelehrten ihren Überzeugungen in wichtigen Fragen wie der Definition der Philosophie Ausdruck zu verleihen. Darüber hinaus bot sie ihnen die Möglichkeit, ihre Auffassung Homers und der eigenen Tätigkeit als Exegeten Homers zu erläutern.

Keywords: Homer; Tzetzes; Eustathius; byzantinische Gelehrsamkeit; Philosophie; Platon

I Part one: Eustathius of Thessaloniki

Before leaving Constantinople to become archbishop of Thessaloniki, Eustathius wrote a long commentary on Dionysius Periegetes, which he presented to John Doukas at some point after 1168.¹

In an interesting passage of the introduction to this work, the Byzantine scholar expounds on the usefulness and prestige of the *periēgēsis*.² The Ancients – he remarks – considered travelling an activity befitting the greatest of heroes: those who spent their lifetime exploring the world, such as Dionysus and Heracles were the most admired. Eustathius goes on to state that travelling is also a *philosophon* and *basilikon chrēma* (an activity suitable for philosophers and kings). To further persuade his reader, the scholar mentions two kings that were renowned for their travels, namely Alexander the Great and the Pharaoh Sesostris. He then moves on to the wanderings of Odysseus and Plato, whom he equally defines as ‘philosophers’

Καὶ Πλάτων δὲ, φασὶ, τοῦ πράγματος ἐρώων, οὐ μόνον ἐπὶ Σικελίαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπ’ Αἴγυπτον ἀπεδήμησε. Σεμνύνει δὲ καὶ τὸν Ὀμηρικὸν Ὀδυσσεὶα οὐχ ἦττον τῶν ἄλλων τὸ πολλῶν ἀνθρώπων ἰδεῖν ἄσπετα καὶ νόον γνῶναι. Καὶ οὕτω συνάγουσιν οἱ παλαιοὶ ἐκ πολλῶν τὴν περιήγησιν φιλόσοφον εἶναι τι χρῆμα καὶ βασιλικόν.³

They say that also Plato, who was fond of the thing (i.e. the *periēgēsis*), travelled not only to Sicily but also to Egypt. Having seen the cities of many men and having known their mind, the Homeric Odysseus deserves to be honoured no less than the others. Thus, on the basis of many considerations, the Ancients conclude that exploring and describing the world is an activity suitable for philosophers and kings.⁴

If such a definition applies perfectly to the great Athenian thinker, it may sound more surprising when used to refer to the protagonist of the *Odyssey*. Of course, Eustathius was aware of the exegetic tradition interpreting the journeys of Odysseus as the allegory of

1 For the date of composition of the *Parekbolai* on Dionysius Periegetes see Cullhed 2014, 7^{*}–8^{*}, who briefly discusses previous studies. On Eustathius’ life and works see a recent overview with an extensive bibliography in Ronchey and Cesaretti 2014, 7^{*}–30^{*}.
2 Eust. *in Dion. per.* epist. 482–490 Müller (Ἱστοροῦσι δὲ καὶ ὅτι διὰ τὸ ταύτης χρῆσιμον Ἡρακλῆς τε καὶ Διόνυσος ἐξετόπιζον ἑαυτοὺς, τὴν τῶν κλιμάτων γνῶσιν σπουδάζοντες. Καὶ ὅτι καὶ Ἀλέξανδρος διὰ

τοῦτο ἐφιλοτιμήσατο τὸν ἦψον ἱστορῆσαι ὠκεανόν. Καὶ Σέσωστρις δὲ, φασίν, ὁ Αἰγύπτιος πολλὴν περιεληλυθὼς γῆν πίναξί τε δέδωκε τὴν περίοδον, καὶ τῆς τῶν πινάκων ἀναγραφῆς οὐκ Αἰγυπτίους μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ Σκύθαις εἰς θαῦμα μεταδοῦναι ἠξίωσε).

3 Eust. *in Dion. per.* epist. 490–496.

4 Unless stated otherwise, all translations have been done by the article’s author.

the philosopher's struggle to reach authentically philosophical knowledge.⁵ Nevertheless, despite his reliance on other sources, the learned archbishop provides an original interpretation of the connection between Odysseus, his wanderings, and his superior wisdom. Several examples from Eustathius' writings will help illustrate how he came to develop such an interpretation.

1.1 The wisest of the Achaeans

The long-established association between travelling and knowledge allows Eustathius to resolve an endless debate that had captivated generations of scholars and continued to intrigue his contemporaries and colleagues, including Tzetzes. For centuries, poets, writers, and exegetes had been trying to decide which hero truly represented the Homeric ideal of wisdom and eloquence. Needless to say, the two favored candidates had always been Nestor and Odysseus, the wise King of Pylos and the resourceful son of Laertes, respectively.⁶

This age-old debate was mostly prompted by the second book of the *Iliad*, where the two heroes played an essential role in preventing the untimely flight of the Achaean army.⁷ In such a crucial moment, it was Odysseus and Nestor who managed to both calm and rebuke their confused comrades, thus providing an essential contribution to the final victory of the Greeks. In commenting on this very episode, Eustathius cannot help but participate in the controversy over who of the two heroes can claim supremacy. After a thorough analysis of the form and contents of the two speeches, Eustathius has no doubts: despite his evident talent and cleverness, Odysseus cannot surpass the admirable Nestor, who is able to take up and improve not only the style but also the ideas of his younger rival's speech.

5 Philosophers' interest in the *sophos* Odysseus dates back to Plato, and it would be impossible to summarize here the multifarious interpretations adopted by each philosophical and exegetical school. For a general overview see Montiglio 2011 and Jouanno 2013 (see especially pp. 191–222 on the Cynic and Stoic interpretation and pp. 223–231 on the Neoplatonic and Neopythagorean Odysseus). For Odysseus-*philosophos* see also the dated but still interesting study by Buffière 1973, 365–391 (with some insightful references to Eustathius' *Parekbolai*). On the reception of Odysseus by Neoplatonic and Christian interpreters see Lamberton and Keaney 1992, 126–130 and Pépin 1982, 3–18 (a useful comparison between the Neoplatonic and Christian Odysseus).

6 On the continuous competition between the two

heroes, see e.g. Pl. *Hipp. min.* 364c, 3–7, Lib. *Pro-gymn.* 8, 3, 12, 4–6 and the anonymous commentary on Dionysius Thrax's *Ars Grammatica* (*Grammatici Graeci*, vol. 1.3, p. 371, 29–33 Hilgard: Γίνεται δὲ τὸ συγκριτικὸν προὔποκεμένου τοῦ ἐν συγκρίσει πράγματος, οἷον ἄνδρειότερος Ἀχιλλεὺς Αἴαντος ἢ προὔποκεμένης τῆς ἀνδρείας, καὶ ἴσφοτέρως Ὀδυσσεὺς Νέστωρ ἢ προὔποκεμένης τῆς σοφίας).

7 On the traditional comparison between Nestor's and Odysseus' speeches in *Il.* 2 see e. g. Ps.-Dion. Hal. *Ars Rhet.* 8, 12, 29–31 (ἴθην καὶ παρέσχετο τοῖς πολλοῖς ζήτησιν, πότερος ἀμείνων ῥήτωρ ἐν τοῖς λόγοις τούτοις, Ὀδυσσεὺς ἢ Νέστωρ· καὶ μαρτύρονται γὰρ τὸν Ὅμηρον ἐκάτεροι λέγοντα, ὡς τὸν μὲν Ὀδυσσεὶα ἐπήνεσεν τὸ πλῆθος, τὸν δὲ Νέστορα ὁ Ἀγαμέμνων).

ὥστε δύο τούτων ὄντων ῥητόρων τοῖς Ἕλλησι, τὸν μὲν Ὀδυσσεύα καλὸν εἶναι, ἄριστον δὲ τὸν Νέστορα, ὅσγε καὶ πολλὰ τῶν τοῦ Ὀδυσσεύως νοημάτων, ὡς εἴρηται, διορθώσεται ἐπισκευάζων καὶ ἐκ ταπεινοῦ ἀνάγων εἰς τὸ σεμνότερον, καθὰ δειχθήσεται, Ὀμήρου κἀνταῦθα φιλοτίμως δεικνύντος, ὡς τὸ αὐτὸ νόημα οὕτω μὲν ῥηθὲν οὐ πάνυ καλὸν ἔσται, οὕτω δὲ λεχθὲν ἔσται ἄριστον.⁸

Therefore, being Odysseus and Nestor the rhetors of the Greeks, we can conclude that the former is skilled, but the latter, Nestor, is the best. Indeed, he shall correct many of Odysseus' ideas both by rephrasing them, as it has just been said, and by elevating them from their original ordinariness, as it will be shown later on. In this case, too, the ambitious Homer shows that the same idea, if phrased in a certain way, is not very well expressed, whereas it will be perfectly formulated when phrased in another way.

However, the archbishop's initial assessment of Odysseus' skills seems to gradually evolve over the course of the *Parekbolai on the Iliad*⁹. When analyzing the speech that the son of Laertes addresses to Achilles in *Iliad* 19,¹⁰ Eustathius observes that Odysseus seems to aim to outshine the older Nestor in this episode, thus making up for the defeat he had suffered in book two. According to the exegete, even though Nestor still remains an unsurpassed model of rhetorical talent and Odysseus cannot beat him, Odysseus can at least compete with him, showing skills that at the beginning of the *Iliad* had not yet been refined.

Ὅρα δὲ καὶ ὡς ἐν μὲν τῇ βῆτα ῥαψωδίᾳ ὑπὸ Νέστορος Ὀδυσσεὺς ἤττηται, κρατηθεὶς τὸν περὶ τὰς αὐτάς (5) ἐννοίας ἀγῶνα, ἐνταῦθα δὲ αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν παρευδοκμεῖ, ἀμείνω τὴν δευτέραν δημηγορίαν καὶ στρυφνοτέραν ἐκθέμενος, φιλοτιμησάμενος τοῦτο, ἵνα μὴ τὸν οἰκεῖον ἀπελέγξῃ ἔπαινον.¹¹

Observe that, if in the second book Odysseus is outshone by Nestor in a rhetorical competition over the expression of the same concepts, in this case, he manages to surpass himself, since his retort is better phrased and more severe (than Achilles' speech). Odysseus is compelled to do so by his own ambition, lest his former self-praise be disclaimed.

8 Eust. in *Il.* 1.336.25–30 van der Valk.

9 Eustathius authored two lengthy commentaries on the Homeric poems, the *Parekbolai on the Iliad*, edited by M. van der Valk, and the *Parekbolai on the Odyssey*, edited by J. G. Stallbaum (E. Cullhed is currently working on a new edition of the latter work, part of which has been published as a PhD thesis:

see Cullhed 2014). In this paper, when alluding to both commentaries, I refer to them simply as the *Parekbolai*. Otherwise, I always specify which of the two commentaries I am dealing with.

10 Hom. *Il.* 19.154–237.

11 Eust. in *Il.* 4.317.5–8.

In Eustathius' interpretation, therefore, Odysseus is far from being a fixed character. In the course of the *Iliad*, the hero is able to evolve, gradually acquiring the experience he lacked at the beginning of the poem.

The final and decisive transformation, however, takes place in the *Odyssey*. In a passage clearly reminiscent of the commentary on Dionysius Periegetes, Eustathius insists again on the importance of travelling, the most enriching experience of all. After again quoting the example of Dionysus and Heracles, who spent their lives exploring the world, Eustathius proceeds to examine the well-known comparison between Nestor and Odysseus. This time, however, it is the son of Laertes that manages to eclipse the old King of Pylos.

Σημείωσαι δὲ ὅτι πλείω ἐμπειρίαν ὁ ποιητῆς ἐνταῦθα τῷ Ὀδυσσεὶ ἐπιμαρτύρεται ἢ περ ἐν Ἰλιάδι τῷ Νέστορι. ἐκεῖνος μὲν γὰρ, μιᾶ ἐναβρύνεται ὁδῶ τῇ ἐκ τῆς Πύλου εἰς τοὺς Θετταλικοὺς Λαπίθας (*Il.* 262–270). Ὀδυσσεὺς δὲ, πολλῶν ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα καὶ νόον ἔγνω· (*Od.* 1.3) πλὴν οὐκ ἤδη τοῦ Νέστορος ἦν ὁ Ὀδυσσεὺς ἐν Ἰλιάδι σοφώτερος, οὐπω γὰρ ἦν τότε τοιοῦτος, ἀλλὰ μετὰ Τροίας ἄλωσιν, γῆν τε μακρὰν ἐπῆλθε, καὶ πολλὴν ἐμπειρίαν συνήγαγεν. οὐ μόνον πλανηθεῖς, ἀλλὰ καὶ πολλὰ καὶ οὐχ' ἀπλῶς πολλὰ, ἀλλὰ καὶ μάλα πολλὰ (cp. *Od.* 1.1). εἴη δ' ἂν ὁμοίος τῷ Ὀδυσσεὶ, καὶ παλαιὰ τε πολλὰ τε εἰδῶς (*Od.* 2.188; 7.157; 24.51: Nestor, Echeneus). καὶ ὃς γῆραὶ μὲν κυφὸς ἔην, πολλὰ δὲ ἦδει (*Od.* 2.16: Aegyptius). οἷς ἀνάπαλιν ἔχει, ὁ ἄκοσμά τε πολλὰ τε εἰδῶς (*Il.* 2.213: Thersites).¹²

Remark that here Homer credits Odysseus with more experience compared to Nestor in the *Iliad*. Indeed, the latter takes pride in just one journey, which led him from Pylos to the Lapiths in Thessaly (*Il.* 262–270). Odysseus, on the contrary, saw the cities of many men and got to know their minds (*Od.* 1.3). Save that Odysseus was not yet wiser than Nestor in the *Iliad*, since at that time he was still not the man he would become in the *Odyssey*. However, after the capture of Troy, he travelled through many lands, thus gathering much experience. Indeed, he has not just 'wandered' but he has wandered much, and not even 'much' but 'very much' (cp. *Od.* 1.1). Odysseus might, therefore, be compared to "he who knows many and ancient things" (*Od.* 2.188; 7.157; 24.51: Nestor, Echeneus), as well as "he who, despite stooping from old age, knew many things" (*Od.* 2.16: Aegyptius). To these, is to be contrasted "he who knows many inappropriate things" (*Il.* 2.213: Thersites).

12 Eust. in *Od.* 1.5.20–26 Stallbaum.

According to Eustathius, the experience that Nestor has gathered through his long life can no longer compete with the knowledge acquired by Odysseus in the course of his endless wanderings. Travelling is seen as the most educative of all experiences and Nestor, despite his old age, is surpassed by Odysseus, who can now be considered to be the wiser and more experienced one, despite being younger than his rival.

Inspired by his numerous sources and relying on a thorough analysis of the Homeric poems, Eustathius represents Odysseus' journey as a difficult path towards knowledge and wisdom. As the learned archbishop points out in another extract from the *Parekbolai on the Odyssey*, during his long travels Odysseus manages to investigate not only the mind of the people he encountered, but also his own.¹³ Each phase of Odysseus' journey can, therefore, be seen as a new stage in a progressive acquisition of self-consciousness and self-control. Consequently, the diverse creatures faced by the hero represent a specific passion or instinct the wise man needs to overcome before being deserving enough to go back to Penelope, whom generations of exegetes interpreted as the personification of Philosophy itself.

To provide some examples, according to this line of interpretation, Circe represents the temptation of pleasure, which can transform those who cannot resist it into animals.¹⁴ Likewise, Calypso stands for the excessive preoccupation with one's own bodily wellness, another impulse that the true *philosophos* should be able both to control and ignore.¹⁵

1.2 The philosopher's difficult path towards authentic *philosophia*

Of course, this kind of moral exegesis was particularly appealing to the Byzantine authors, as it provided them with the perfect justification for their interest in Homer.¹⁶

13 Eust. in *Od.* 1.5.27–31 (Ἰστέον δὲ καὶ ὅτι νόον ἐνταῦθα ἐστὶ νοῆσαι, οὐ μόνον τὸ κατὰ νοῦν τινὰ θέμενον ἔθιμον καὶ νόμιμον ἐν ἔθνεσι [...] ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸν τὸν τοῦ Ὀδυσσεύος νοῦν). As E. Cullhed points out in his critical apparatus, Eustathius might have drawn this interpretation from some scholia on the first line of the *Odyssey* (see Cullhed 2014, 22 and schol. DFNs and DJeR²⁸ α 3f–g Pontani).

14 As remarked by Buffière 1973, n. 51 p. 379, this interpretation can already be found in Heraclit. *All.* 72.2 (Ὁ δὲ Κίρκης κικεῶν ἡδονῆς ἐστὶν ἀγγεῖον, ὃ πίνοντες οἱ ἀκόλαστοι διὰ τῆς ἐφημέρου πλησμονῆς σωὼν ἀθλιώτερον βίον ζῶσι). In his *Parekbolai on the Odyssey*, Eustathius both adopts and enriches this exegesis: see e.g. Eust. in *Od.* 1.381.9–10; 16–20, where Odysseus resists Circe's dangerous charm

thanks to his *paideia*, symbolized by the mysterious *mōly*. On the various interpretations of the Circe episode, see also the useful overview by van Opstall 2017, 270–274.

15 On the Neoplatonic origin of this exegetical trend, see Pépin 1982, 5–6 and Montiglio 2011, 146. According to Buffière 1973, 461–464, this interpretation of the Calypso episode could also stem from a Neopythagorean background. Eustathius is clearly familiar with this reading, which he quotes and analyses in his *Parekbolai on the Odyssey* (see Eust. in *Od.* 1.17.7–20).

16 On the revival of Homer in twelfth-century Byzantium see Pontani 2015, 368–370 and Cullhed 2014, 3*–5*. Dated but still instructive is Browning 1975 (see especially pp. 25–29).

As mentioned earlier, Eustathius too accepts this allegorical reading of the poems. In the very first pages of the *Parekbolai on the Odyssey*, he clearly defines Odysseus' wanderings as a sort of psychological journey that each *sophos* should make to master his own passions and instincts. Only thus, will the sage finally obtain the self-control that befits the accomplished *philosophos*. However, despite often appropriating this exegetic trend, Eustathius seems to have a broader understanding of the meaning and contents of the *philosophia* Odysseus strives to reach during his wanderings.

As it would be too long to list all of the different nuances the archbishop attributes to the notion of philosophy, I shall here focus on an example that I deem particularly interesting, as it will help us understand how Eustathius blends the ancient exegetic tradition with his own personal beliefs. In the passage I examine, the Byzantine scholar is especially focused on providing a negative definition of philosophy. To be more precise, in the case at stake, Eustathius does not establish what an accomplished *philosophos* should learn; on the contrary, his goal is to determine what the lover of *sophia* should *not* be learning.

The Homeric passage prompting Eustathius' considerations is the aforementioned episode of the encounter between Odysseus and Calypso. After relating the traditional interpretation, according to which the beautiful goddess was the symbol of an excessive preoccupation with the body, the exegete presents the reader with yet another explanation. Such an interpretation has no parallel in any of Eustathius' usual sources and can therefore be considered as the expression of his personal position.¹⁷ Indeed, according to the Byzantine exegete, being the daughter of Atlas, Calypso could also be seen as the very embodiment of astrology, a discipline which was very popular in Eustathius' times.

ταύτη δὲ τῆ Καλυψοῖ σύνεστι μὲν ὁ ἀποτελεσματικὸς φιλόσοφος Ὀδυσσεύς. ὁ καὶ Πλειάδας τε Ἰάδας τε θεωρῶν καὶ σθένος Ὠρίωνος κατὰ τὸν ποιητὴν (cp. *Od.* 5.272–275 and *Il.* 18.486) καὶ τὰ ἐξῆς. ποθεῖ δὲ ὅμως μάλιστα καὶ τὴν μεθοδικὴν καὶ κανονικὴν φιλοσοφίαν. ἀφ' ἧς ὡς οἶά τινος πατρίδος ὀρμώμενος, εἰς ταῦτα ἦλθε καὶ εἰς ἐκείνην ἐπανακάμπτειν γλίχεται ἧς χωρὶς οὐκ ἔστι φιλοσοφεῖν. ὅτι δὲ τοιαύτη τις ἢ Πηνελόπη, δῆλον ἔσται ὅτε τὸν ἰστὸν θεωρήσομεν τὸν ὑπ' αὐτῆς ὑφαινόμενον τε καὶ αὔθις ἀναλυόμενον.¹⁸

It is with this manifestation of Calypso that Odysseus lives. Here, the hero stands for the philosopher interested in astrology, he who observes the Pleiades, the Hyades, and Orion's night, and so on, to quote the poet's words (cp. *Od.* 5.272–275 and *Il.* 18.486). Nevertheless, the desire he feels for methodical and

17 As remarked by both Buffière 1973, 388–389 and Cullhed 2014, 80 (see especially his critical *apparatus*

ad loc.).

18 Eust. in *Od.* 1.17.38–43.

systematic philosophy is much stronger. Odysseus left the latter as one might leave one's own fatherland and he has come this far; but now he desires to go back to this kind of philosophy, without which philosophy itself cannot exist. The fact that this latter kind of philosophy is symbolized by Penelope will be apparent when we observe the web that she weaves and then untangles.

It is interesting to remark that astrology was especially cherished by Emperor Manuel I and by some of the most prominent literati of the time, including John Tzetzes.¹⁹ Going against this trend, Eustathius had often voiced his disapproval of a discipline that he believed to be, at the very least, frivolous and totally unfounded.²⁰ Apparently, his preoccupation with the dangerous charm exerted by astrology was so strong as to infiltrate his *Parekbolai on the Odyssey*. After all, Homer represented an essential component of Byzantine education. Therefore, the *Parekbolai*, addressed to the archbishop's young students, were a perfect occasion to discuss the contents of the ideal *paideia*, which allowed no room for the study of the planets and their alleged influence on human life.

The philosophical knowledge that Eustathius' pupils were expected to aspire towards can sometimes be difficult to define, but it certainly did not include what he saw as petty and useless fields such as astrology. Just as Odysseus found the moral and intellectual strength to finally abandon the fascinating but dangerous Calypso, the lover of *sophia* had to be able to suppress his interest for noxious and secondary disciplines, in order to continue his difficult but rewarding journey to Ithaca.²¹ There, he will finally reunite with Penelope, whose superiority to the maidservants can be compared to the supremacy of philosophy over all the other sciences.²²

19 On the popularity of astrology at the imperial court see Mavroudi 2006, 73–83.

20 On Eustathius' hostility towards astrology see Cullhed 2014, *44–45 and Kazhdan and Simon 1984, 180–182.

21 Eust. in *Od.* 1.17.7–11; 14–17; 20 (and especially lines 14–17: Ἐρμού μέντοι ὡς ἐν τοῖς μετὰ ταῦτα αἰνίζεται ὁ ποιητῆς μεσιτεύοντος ὃ ἐστὶ λόγου, γέγονε τῆς κατὰ τὴν φιλοσοφίαν ποθουμένης πατρίδος, ἧγουν τοῦ νοητοῦ κόσμου. ὅς ἐστι κατὰ τοὺς Πλατωνικοὺς, ψυχῶν πατρὶς ἀληθής. ὁμοίως, γέγονε καὶ τῆς Πηνελόπης φιλοσοφίας, λυθῆις καὶ ἀπαλλαγῆις τῆς τοιαύτης Καλυψοῦς). This theme resurfaces in another interesting passage of the

Parekbolai on the Odyssey (Eust. in *Od.* 1.22.11–16).

While commenting on the famous encounter between Odysseus and the Cyclops, Eustathius suggests an original interpretation that is clearly reminiscent of his exegesis of the Calypso episode. According to the learned archbishop, the Cyclops is the symbol of the κατάστασις τῶν οὐρανίων; therefore, Odysseus' blinding of the Cyclops represents the philosopher's decision to avoid the study and observation of the planets (τὸν τοιοῦτον Κύκλωπα ἐκτυφλοῖ ὁ φιλόσοφος Ὀδυσσεὺς, ἧγουν τῆς θέας καὶ θεωρίας αὐτοῦ φιλοσόφως καθικνεῖται καὶ παραγίνεται).

22 See Eust. in *Od.* 1.27.10–19.

1.3 The exegete is a traveler

If in the *Parekbolai* the gradual acquisition of *paideia* and *sophia* is often depicted as a long and demanding voyage, so is the process of reading and interpreting the very poems that are the primary focus of the *Parekbolai* themselves. After all, according to a widespread biographical tradition, Homer too had been a wandering sage.²³ If this was true, what better way to acquire wisdom and knowledge than to read the very teachings of the wisest and oldest *sophos* of all? We might say that, in Eustathius' view, interpreting and understanding the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* becomes a sort of journey within a journey: to complete the path towards *paideia* and *sophia*, it is necessary to face another equally demanding voyage, namely the long journey across the immensity of Homeric poetry.

Indeed, in the preface of his commentary on the *Parekbolai on the Iliad*, Eustathius often compares the study of Homer to a long journey. Travelling across the works of the great poet is an enterprise that one cannot face without proper directions. To follow the right path, a guide is needed. Therefore, his *Parekbolai* are presented as a compass that guarantees a safe journey to those who intend to cross the expanse of Homer's poems. Only with Eustathius' guidance can they avoid becoming lost in the immensity of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

ἦν δὲ τὸ φιλικὸν θέλημα διὰ τῆς Ἰλιάδος ἔλθειν καὶ ἐκπορίσασθαι τὰ χρήσιμα
τῷ διεξοδεύοντι, οὐ λέγω ἀνδρὶ λογίῳ, ἐκείνῳ γὰρ οὐδὲν ἄν τῶν τοιοῦτων
εἰκὸς λανθάνειν, ἀλλὰ νέῳ ἄρτι μανθάνοντι.²⁴

It was my friends' wish that I should journey through the *Iliad* and provide other travelers with what is useful: I am not referring to the learned man (it is unlikely that he might be unaware of any such things), but to the young who have just started to learn.

The representation of the exegete as a sort of guide and fellow traveler is further developed in the very first lines of the preface to the *Parekbolai on the Iliad*. In this case, however, Eustathius perceives his exegetical activity as a maritime journey across the vast waters of the Homeric Ocean.

The comparison between the breadth of the poems and the immensity of the sea was a traditional motif that the Byzantines were familiar with.²⁵ Before them, many ancient

23 Both Eustathius and Tzetzes were familiar with this biographical tradition that probably originated with the anonymous *Vitae* of the poet. More specifically, both scholars often refer to Homer's journey to Egypt, where he gathered precious material for his poems. See e.g. Eust. in *Od.* 1.2.22–29 with Pizzone 2014, 178–179 and Tzetz. *Exeg.* p. 53.1–8

Papathomopoulos.

24 Eust. in *Il.* 1.3.5–7.

25 On the image of Homer as the ocean in Tzetzes and Eustathius see Cesaretti 1991, 180–181 and 214–215 respectively. For Eustathius' refashioning of this traditional theme, see also the excellent analysis by van den Berg 2017.

authors had developed this imagery to stress the unparalleled talent of the great Homer: compared to his oceanic abundance, the works of all the other poets were nothing but small rivers.²⁶ Eustathius, however, further refines this motif, blending it with another widespread simile that equaled the sweetness of Homeric poetry to the melodious voices of the Sirens. It is the very combination of these two images that opens the archbishop's monumental *Parekbolai on the Iliad*.

Τῶν Ὀμήρου Σειρήνων καλὸν μὲν ἴσως εἴ τις ἀπόσχοιτο τὴν ἀρχὴν ἢ κηρῷ τὰς ἀκοὰς ἀλειψάμενος ἢ ἀλλ' ἑτέραν τραπόμενος, ὡς ἂν ἀποφύγῃ τὸ θέλημα τρον. μὴ ἀποσχόμενος δέ, ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς ῥῆθης ἐκείνης ἐλθὼν, οὐκ ἂν, οἶμαι, οὔτε παρέλθῃ ῥαδίως, εἰ καὶ πολλὰ δεσμὰ κατέχοι, οὔτε παρελθὼν εἴη ἂν εὐχαρις.²⁷

Maybe it would be better to avoid Homer's Sirens from the beginning, either turning away or plugging one's ears with wax, so as to escape their enchantment. But if one did not avoid them and started travelling through their song, I believe that he would not easily sail by even if he were restrained by many ties, nor, having done so, would he be graceful²⁸.

If the Homeric poems are here compared to both the ocean and the Sirens' song, we cannot help but conclude that Eustathius, who travels across the abyss and is able to resist the creatures' voice, is nothing but the equivalent of Odysseus himself. Continuing along this sequence of parallelisms, we might also suggest that the exegete's readers correspond to Odysseus' companions: neither could survive the dangerous trip without the guidance of their master.

26 For a well-known example see Dion. Hal. *Comp.* 24.16–19 Radermacher (κορυφή μὲν οὖν ἀπάντων καὶ σκοπός, ἐξ οὗ περ πάντες ποταμοὶ καὶ πᾶσα θάλασσα καὶ πᾶσαι κρήναι, δικαίως ἂν Ὀμηρὸς λέγοιτο).

27 Eust. in *Il.* 1.1.1–4.

28 For the sake of simplicity, I adopt here the translation proposed by van den Berg 2017, 32, who suggests to render εὐχαρις as 'graceful or elegant'. According to this interesting interpretation, Eustathius is here warning his readers that only through an accurate and scrupulous study of Homer can one become an educated and graceful orator. However, the meaning of this passage – and especially of the term εὐχαρις – remains doubtful, as recently pointed out by E. van Opstall (see van Opstall 2017, 277–278, n. 43). I am convinced that a comparison with the long section of the *Parekbolai on the Odyssey* where Eustathius comments on the Sirens' episode might

help solve the enigma. Particular attention should be devoted to a short paragraph where Eustathius again uses the adjective εὐχαρις to describe the (difficult) situation Odysseus found himself in after listening to the Sirens' song (Eust. in *Od.* 2.19.19–21: Εἰ δὲ μετὰ τὰς Σειρήνας μεγάλοις κακοῖς περιέπεσεν Ὀδυσσεύς, ἔστιν ἠθικῶς ἐκλαβέσθαι αὐτὸ εἰς δεῖγμα τοῦ ἔπεσθαι ὡς ταπολλὰ τῇ ἡδονῇ τέλος οὐκ εὐχαρι). In my opinion, the similarities between this passage and the preface to the *Parekbolai on the Iliad* bring to the fore Eustathius' ambivalent attitude towards the dangerous charm exerted by Homer and his poetic voice. The archbishop seems to imply that as Odysseus had to face dire consequences after listening to the Sirens, so the reader of the Homeric song might be exposed to the ambiguous effects of the poetic voice, whose charm is both pleasant and treacherous.

Despite drawing from different sources, in this passage Eustathius emphasizes the elements that better fit both his perception of Homeric poetry and his conception of the exegetic activity. More specifically, the learned archbishop seems not only to stress the beauty and the magnificence of the Homeric Ocean, but he also appears to be drawing the reader's attention to its potential dangers. The immensity of the poems is at the same time majestic and threatening, since it can hide fascinating and dangerous creatures, such as the Sirens, Calypso, and Circe, that only the wise philosopher Odysseus can face safely.

This insistence on the dangers of poetry is a recurring motif in Eustathius' commentaries and is particularly evident in his detailed interpretation of the very episode that opens the *Parekbolai on the Iliad*, namely the encounter between Odysseus and the dangerous Sirens. Indeed, in commenting on this famous passage of *Odyssey* 12, the exegete resumes traditional themes such as the comparison between the Sirens' voices and Homeric poetry.²⁹ Odysseus is presented again as the ideal teacher and philosopher, who can safely guide his disciples through the dangerous waters of the Sirens' domain.³⁰ However, despite stating that a secure journey across the Homeric Ocean is possible as long as one follows a reliable guide, Eustathius does not appear completely convinced by his own statements. On more than one occasion, he seems to wonder whether it would have been better for Odysseus to plug his ears and avoid the Sirens' song, as he taught his comrades to do.³¹ Elsewhere, he observes that in this situation the hero's friends proved to be more restrained than their guide, since they could resist the very temptation Odysseus succumbed to.³² Moreover, at the very end of his commentary on the same episode, the archbishop reaches the surprising conclusion that all the pain

29 See e.g. Eust. in *Od.* 2.4.26–29 (‘Ὅρα δ’ ἐν τούτοις τοῖς Ὀμηρικοῖς ὀκτῶ στίχοις, ὡς ἐτόλμησεν ὁ γλυκὺς καὶ μελίγηρὺς ἀοιδὸς Ὅμηρος ὑποκρίνεσθαι τὰς Σειρήνας ὡς ἐν ἠθοποιῶν, οἷα εἰδῶς τὴν ποιήσιν καὶ μάλιστα τὴν αὐτοῦ Σειρήνων οὖσαν ἀοιδὴν. ἔοικε γὰρ ἐν οἷς εἶπε τὰ καθ’ ἑαυτὸν ὑπαινίττεσθαι ὁ ποιητής, καὶ ὅπως εἰπεῖν, τὰ τῆς ποιήσεως).

30 On Odysseus' decision to plug his comrades' ears with wax see Eust. in *Od.* 2.3.40–43. In this passage, the wax used by Odysseus is interpreted as the symbol of the philosophical teachings the hero imparts to his disciples: ὁ δὲ κηρὸς ... πρὸς ἀλληγορίαν δὲ φιλοσόφον τινα διδασκαλίας λόγον ὑπαινίττεται.

31 See Eust. in *Od.* 1.4.1–4, where Eustathius goes as far as to say that sometimes even the *sophos* needs to be restrained, exactly as Odysseus was held back by his friends, who proved to be more self-controlled (ἐγκρατέστεροι) than their master (ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ μέ-

γας ὀρθοῖτ’ ἂν ποτε ὑπὸ σμικροτέρων κατὰ τὴν τραγωδίαν, εἰκὸς καὶ τὸν φιλόσοφον εἰ ποτε τῶν Σειρήνων μὴ χρεῶν ὄν ἀκούειν, ὁ δὲ πειρᾶται τοῦτο κωλύεσθαι ὑπὸ τῶν φίλων παρηγγελμένων κανόνι φιλίας, μὴ καὶ προσεπισπάσαιτο βλάβος τι καὶ αὐτοῖ, προσεσηκῆτος τοῦ φιλοσόφου ἐταίρου τῆ λιγυρᾶ τῶν Σειρήνων ἀοιδῆ).

32 See e.g. Eust. in *Od.* 1.4.1–4 and 1, 2, 3.21–25 (αὐτὰρ ἐπειδὴ τὰς γε παρήλασαν, οὐδ’ ἔτ’ ἔπειτα φθογγῆς Σειρήνων ἠκούομεν οὐδὲ τ’ ἀοιδῆς, αἴψ’ ἀπὸ κηρὸν ἔλοντο ἔμοι ἐρίρηρες ἐταῖροι, ὃν σφιν πᾶσιν ἄλειψα, ἐμέ τ’ ἐκ δεσμῶν ἀνέλυσαν (cp. *Od.* 12.197–200), ἐγκρατέστεροι δηλαδὴ αὐτοῖ φανεῖντες Ὀδυσσεῶς. ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἤττητο τῆς ἡδονῆς, ὁ δὲ μαρτύριόν ἐστιν ὅσον ἰσχύει ἡδονῆ, οἱ δὲ, πρὸς ἰσχύος ἔχοντες ἀπαγαγεῖν τὸν κηρὸν καὶ ἀκούσαι τῶν Σειρήνων, οὐκ ἐποίησαν οὕτως).

and tragedies the son of Laertes had to face after his encounter with the Sirens were the consequence of his inability to avoid their songs.³³

If we now go back to the introduction to the *Parekbolai on the Iliad*, we might note that this text is characterized by the same ambivalence.³⁴ Even though he deeply admires the great Homer and the majestic immensity of his work, Eustathius is also conscious of its dangers. Despite all the precautions he took, the philosopher Odysseus was tempted, imprisoned, and endangered by the Sirens and the other creatures he met during his long travels across the sea. Likewise, the exegete will have to face the hidden dangers of the Homeric Ocean. Regardless of the risks, Eustathius shall set sail anyway, just as Odysseus did. However, being well aware of the perils of the journey, he tries to at least warn his companions, suggesting that “maybe it would be wiser to completely avoid the Homeric Sirens”³⁵. A rather unexpected introduction indeed, especially if we keep in mind that the archbishop devoted almost an entire lifetime to interpreting the voice of these very Sirens.

2 Part two: John Tzetzes

It is now time to turn to Eustathius’ slightly older colleague and rival, namely the irascible *grammatikos* John Tzetzes.³⁶ As we will see, Tzetzes too elaborates upon the theme of Odysseus’ wanderings. However, despite relying on the same sources that inspired Eustathius’ works, he adopts a completely different perspective.

Let us start with the very same topic we analyzed at the beginning of the section devoted to Eustathius, that is, the comparison between Odysseus and Nestor. We have seen that the archbishop’s opinion evolved along with Odysseus’ skills and personality. Despite being extremely wise and eloquent, in the *Iliad* the son of Laertes was outshone by the more experienced Nestor. In the *Odyssey*, however, the situation was reversed: thanks to his journeys, Odysseus had acquired unparalleled knowledge and experience, finally surpassing his older comrade.

33 See Eust. in Od. 2.19.19–21, quoted and discussed previously (footnote 28, p. 226).

34 On the similarities between the preface to the *Parekbolai on the Iliad* and Eustathius’ commentary on the Sirens episode see also the interesting remarks by Cesaretti 1991, 225–226.

35 Eust. in *Il.* 1.1.1: Τῶν Ὀμήρου Σειρήνων καλὸν μὲν

ἴσως εἰ τις ἀπόσχοιτο τὴν ἀρχὴν ...

36 On Tzetzes’ life and works see the dated but still useful study by Wendel 1948, and, more recently, Grünbart 1996 and Grünbart 2005, as well as Rhoby 2010. The date of Tzetzes’ death has recently been the subject of an interesting debate between Agiotis 2013 and Cullhed 2015.

2.1 Nestor versus Odysseus revisited

If compared to Eustathius' rather complex attitude, Tzetzes' stance appears to be more clear-cut. According to the quick-tempered *grammatikos*, there are no doubts: Nestor had always been and would always be far superior to Odysseus. Despite this fact, however, Homer decided to give more prominence to the son of Laertes, devoting an entire poem to celebrating his supposedly adventurous journey. According to Tzetzes, such a debatable choice was dictated by the poet's desire to show his own rhetorical skills: writing an encomium of Nestor or Ajax, who were undoubtedly gifted, was too easy a task for the great Homer, who preferred to spend countless words on behalf of despicable figures such as Diomedes and, even worse, Odysseus. In Tzetzes' opinion, the Homeric poems – and the *Odyssey* especially – were nothing other than a long *Eulogy of the Fly*, a rhetorical exercise that Homer wrote only to show his ability to glorify even the lowest of the low.

Ὁ Ὅμηρος πρὸ πάντων δε ρητόρων, φιλοσόφων,
 αἰνεῖ τὸν Διομήδην μὲν παρ' ὄλην Ἰλιάδα (750)
 καὶ Ὀδυσσέα σὺν αὐτῷ ἔν γε τῇ Ἰλιάδι,
 καὶ ὄλην βίβλον ἔγραψεν ἐγκώμιον εἰς τοῦτον,
 ἦν ἐξ αὐτοῦ Ὀδύσσειαν τὴν κλῆσιν ὀνομάζει.
 Τὸν Αἴαντα τὸν μέγαν δε τῶν Ἀχαιῶν τὸν πύργον,
 καὶ Νέστορα τὸν σύμβουλον, τὸν μελιχρὸν ἐκείνον. (755)
 Ὡνπερ τὴν λυσιτέλειαν στρατῷ τῷ τῶν Ἑλλήνων
 ἴσασι καὶ αἱ ἄψυχοι τῶν ἀναισθήτων φύσεις.
 Ῥητόρων ὧν δεινότατος ἀπάντων τῶν ἐν βίῳ
 σιγᾶ καὶ παρατρέχει δε δεινότητι τῶν λόγων,
 ἔν ἧ καὶ δύο τὰ ρητὰ φήσας εἰς τούτους μόνα, (760)
 εἰς δὲ ἐκείνους ἰκανοὺς λόγους πληροῦν βιβλία.
 Τὸ ἀσθενὲς γὰρ δέεται πολλῶν ἐρμηνευμάτων·
 τὸ δ' ἀληθὲς καὶ ἰσχυρὸν οὐ δεῖται ποικιλίας.
 ...
 Τὸ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἐπαινεῖν, ψύλλας, φαλάκρας, μυίας,
 καὶ ψέγειν τὴν ῥητορικὴν καὶ ἐπαινεῖν θανάτους,
 αἰνεῖν καὶ τὴν πενίαν δὲ πλοῦτον αὐτὴν δεικνύντα, (800)
 καὶ Διομήδην καὶ αὐτὸν αἰνεῖν, τὸν Ὀδυσσέα
 ὑπὲρ τὸν μέγαν Αἴαντα καὶ Νέστορα ἐκείνον,
 κἂν Ὅμηρος καὶ ταῦτα δε δεινῶς παραδεικνύη,
 καὶ πάντα τοιοῦτότροπον ἔπαινον τὲ καὶ λόγον,
 τὸν προφανῶς τοῖς φανεροῖς γράφοντα τάναντία, (805)
 ἤττονα λόγον λέγουσι τὰ φιλοσόφων γένη,

ὡς ταῖς Νεφέλαις δέικνυσι καὶ ὁ Ἀριστοφάνης,
τῷ παίζειν.³⁷

Before all the other rhetors and philosophers, Homer | praises Diomedes in the whole *Iliad* | and along with him he commends Odysseus, again in the *Iliad*. | He has also composed an entire poem in praise of the latter, | and this poem is called *Odyssey* from the name of this hero. | As for Ajax, the gigantic tower of the Greeks, | and Nestor, the counsellor whose words were as sweet as honey, | – their usefulness to the Greek army is well-known | also to lifeless and senseless creatures – | they are left out and neglected by Homer, who, following the rhetorical method of forcefulness, | says once or twice about them the words I have mentioned before,³⁸ | while filling entire books with long speeches about the other two. | Indeed, weak arguments need multifarious explanations, | whereas the true and strong ones have no need of variety. ... | The praise of such things as fleas, baldness, and flies, | the blame of rhetoric and the praise of death, | the encomium of poverty that presents it as the authentic wealth, | the praise of Diomedes and of Odysseus himself | above Ajax the Great and the famous Nestor | – even if Homer skillfully demonstrates this as well – | and every other eulogy or discourse of this kind, | that amounts to writing the opposite of what is evident, | is called 'weaker argument' by the philosophers' ranks, | as Aristophanes, joking, shows in his *Clouds*.³⁹

Despite his apparent admiration for the 'golden Homer,' Tzetzes never comes to terms with the poet's decision to write an entire poem in praise of a worthless traitor such as Odysseus. In order to exalt the son of Laertes, not only did Homer alter the truth – an unforgivable crime in Tzetzes' eyes – but he also neglected the true protagonists of the war of Troy, such as Nestor, Ajax, and the great Palamedes, who was treacherously killed by Odysseus himself.⁴⁰ Determined to restore the authentic version of the Trojan War, the scholar will even launch into the composition of a new poem, the *Carmina Iliaca*, where each hero shall finally get the space and renown he deserves.

37 Tzetz. *Hist.* 11.749–763; 788–808 Leone.

38 Cp. Tzetz. *Hist.* 11.787–797.

39 Tzetzes' interest for the *hēssōn logos* antedates his well-known scholia on Aristophanes' *Clouds*. Homer is represented as the inventor of this dubious rhetorical technique already in the *Allegories on the Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The extracts from the *Chiliads* here quoted represent only the final stage of the scholar's

reflection upon this topic.

40 Tzetzes goes as far as to identify with both Ajax and Palamedes, whom he considers to be the *true* heroes of the Trojan War. In some passages of his works he even depicts himself as the 'living portrait' of Palamedes (see *All. Il. prol.* 724–734 Boissonade and *Hist.* 3.173–184). On the reasons for Tzetzes' affinity with the wise hero see Lovato 2016, 330–336.

2.2 Philosophy, the art of telling plausible lies

In light of these considerations, it is no surprise that Tzetzes never accepts the well-established allegorical interpretation of Odysseus' wondrous travels. To him, the hero's wanderings are far from being a long journey towards knowledge and self-consciousness; on the contrary, they appear to be nothing other than a protracted piratical jaunt, in the course of which the son of Laertes kidnaps princesses, tricks kindly kings,⁴¹ and mingles with prostitutes and the like.⁴²

Actually, on closer inspection, we might say that, in Tzetzes' interpretation, Odysseus also manages to gradually acquire a deeper self-consciousness and show his true self. However, in his understanding, the hero's authentic nature proves to be a rather repulsive one, as Tzetzes' reading of the encounter with Circe clearly shows:

Τζέτζης τὸν Ὀδυσσεά δέ φησιν ἐκχοιρωθῆναι
πλέον τῶν φίλων τῶν αὐτοῦ, ἐφ' ὀλοκλήρῳ ἔτει
τῇ Κίρκῃ συγκαθεύδοντα πορνείοις τοῖς ἐκείνης.
Οὕτως ἡ Κίρκη λέγεται καὶ γὰρ χοιροῦν ἀνθρώπου.⁴³

Tzetzes claims that Odysseus became more of a pig | than his comrades, because
for an entire year | he slept with Circe in her brothels. | For this reason, Circe
is said to be capable of transforming men into pigs.

Far from representing the symbol of the *philosophos* that faces temptation and rescues his dehumanized comrades, Odysseus revels in pleasure (*hēdonē*), showing his unrestrained nature and proving himself to be less controlled than those he was supposed to lead.

Not surprisingly, when dealing with the episode of the Sirens, Tzetzes does not even take into account the traditional interpretation, according to which the creatures' voice represented the poetic song. Far from being the symbol of the accomplished *philosophos* who can approach poetry without being affected by its potentially dangerous appeal,

41 See e.g. Tzetzes' interpretation of the Polyphemus episode (*All. Od.* 9.111–179 Hunger and *Hist.* 10.914–930). According to the scholar, who is clearly drawing from Mal. *Chron.* 5.17–18 Thurn, Odysseus' blinding of the Cyclops is nothing but the allegorical magnification of a much less heroic feat: despite having been generously welcomed by the Sicilian King Polyphemus, Odysseus and his companions kidnapped their host's daughter, who was the "apple of the king's eye".

42 See Tzetzes' reading of the Circe episode, discussed here, as well as his interpretation of the encounter

between Odysseus and the Sirens (*Hist.* 1.346–355), which will be examined in the following pages. As remarked by van Opstall 2017, 271 n. 32, the euhemeristic representation of the Sirens and Circe as *pornai* can already be found in Ps.-Heracl. *De incred.* 14 and 16, respectively. On the Sirens as prostitutes in Greek and Latin literature see also Courcelle 1975.

43 Tzetz. *All. Od.* 10.14–17. On this interpretation of the Circe episode see also Tzetz. *All. Od.* 10.33–34, as well as Braccini 2011, 53.

the figure of Odysseus holds no allegorical meaning.⁴⁴ What is more, Tzetzes even suggests that the mysterious Sirens might be nothing but humble *pornai* that try and attract every passing traveler.⁴⁵ Nothing could be farther from the complex and deep analysis developed by Eustathius.

On closer inspection, however, there might be at least one common element between the two otherwise incompatible interpretations of Tzetzes and Eustathius. Indeed, in some cases, Tzetzes too seems to consider Odysseus as a fitting symbol for the *philosophos*. In his eyes, however, the kind of philosopher the Homeric hero might represent is always a *negative* and *unreliable* one.

In a letter addressed to the *philosophos* Stephanos, Tzetzes complains about the unreliability of his addressee, who never kept his promise to send the scholar a precious notebook. In order to stigmatize his correspondent's deceitfulness, the disillusioned *grammatikos* declares:

καὶ τὴν φιλοσοφίαν ἐντεῦθεν καλῶ οὐ γνῶσιν τῶν ὄντων ἢ ὄντα εἰσίν, ἀλλὰ διδασκαλίαν καὶ παιδευσιν τοῦ ‘ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὄμοια’⁴⁶

From now on, I will define philosophy not as the science of the true nature of things, but as the discipline that teaches how to tell “many lies that seem to be true”.

As Tzetzes himself explains in the *Chiliads*, a verse commentary on his own *Letters*, this quotation comes from the *Odyssey*. More specifically, the line cited is the well-known passage of *Odyssey* 19 where the poet describes Odysseus' ambiguous skill in telling plausible falsehoods.⁴⁷ To criticize the unreliable Stephanos, Tzetzes compares him to the most untrustworthy hero of all; consequently, Stephanos' would-be science becomes nothing else than masterful lying.⁴⁸

2.3 Plato, an Odyssean philosopher

Apart from the untrustworthy Stephanos, there is at least one other *philosophos* that attracts Tzetzes' violent criticism and is seen as deserving of association with the repugnant

44 Even when he mentions the widespread interpretation according to which the Sirens were the symbol of *hēdonē*, Tzetzes refuses to acknowledge Odysseus' restraint. Moreover, the scholar does not seem to approve of this reading, which he clearly ascribes to other poets and interpreters (see e.g. Tzetz. *Hist.* 1.336–338: Μόνον δὲ ταύτας παρελθεῖν φασὶ τὸν Ὀδυσσεά | κηρῶ μὲν παραχρίσαντα τὰ τῶν

ἐταίρων ὄτα | αὐτόν δε κατακούοντα κρεμάμενον ἰστίῳ).

45 Tzetz. *Hist.* 1.346–345.

46 Tzetz. *Epist.* 32, p. 48, 3–6 Leone.

47 See *Hist.* 8.52–56, where Tzetzes clearly refers to Hom. *Od.* 19.203.

48 For a more detailed analysis of these passages see Lovato 2016, 339–342.

Odysseus. I am referring to Plato, whose famous travels Eustathius likened to the wanderings of the philosopher Odysseus. As we will see, Tzetzes too seems to establish a connection between the Homeric hero and the Athenian thinker. However, his agenda is rather different from that of the learned archbishop.

The association between Odysseus and Plato features for the first time in an interesting passage of Tzetzes' *Carmina Iliaca*, a poem meant to both summarize and correct the traditional version of the war of Troy. In a scholium that our scrupulous *grammatikos* adds to his own text, Odysseus' undeserved popularity is compared to Plato's absurd theories. More specifically, in the passage at hand, Tzetzes criticizes Homer's unbelievable account of the funeral games in *Iliad* 23. According to the poet, the small and hideous Odysseus almost won the wrestling contest against the enormous Ajax, an outcome that our scholar considers rather dubious, at the very least. To stress the unreliability of the Homeric account, Tzetzes concludes that the Iliadic version, as with Plato's *Republic*, is to be considered as unlikely as a white raven.⁴⁹

νῦν δὲ Διομήδης τοῦτον (*scil.* τὸν Αἴαντα) τιτρώσκει καὶ Ὀδυσσεὺς πάλῃ νικᾷ
 ..., δόξαν Ὀμήρῳ ὡς ὕστερον ἔδοξε Πλάτωνι πλάσαι τὴν πολιτείαν καὶ φιλο-
 σοφοῖς ἑτέροις ἐπινοεῖν ἄλευκούς τινα κόρακας'.⁵⁰

But now, in Homer's opinion, Diomedes wounds Ajax and Odysseus defeats him in the wrestling contest ...: similarly, later on, Plato deemed appropriate to make up his *Republic* as other philosophers thought it right to theorize their white ravens.

This theme is further developed in a long section of the *Chiliads*, entirely devoted to Plato's dubious accomplishments. As a general remark, we might note that Tzetzes gives Plato exactly the same – negative – features that he usually ascribes to Odysseus. Just as the son of Laertes, the Athenian philosopher does not deserve his fame. His philosophical works, for example, are nothing but the result of theft and trickery. As Odysseus tried unsuccessfully to surpass the superior Palamedes and finally decided to resort to treachery, so Plato betrayed his own benefactors, stealing their ideas and passing them off as his own.⁵¹ Both Plato and Odysseus, moreover, shared a tendency to flattery and parasitism, as shown by their opportunistic attitude towards the powerful.⁵² The similarities between the two, however, become even more apparent when Tzetzes proceeds

49 According to Leone's critical apparatus, Tzetzes might have drawn this evocative simile from *Anth. Pal.* 11.417.4.

50 Tzetz. schol. in *Carm. Il.* 2.241b, p. 196, 9–12 Leone.

51 See e.g. *Hist.* 10. 790–803 (Plato's dialogues are nothing but the result of plagiarism) and 865–875 (Plato

plots against Dionysius, who had welcomed him in Sicily and generously supported his work).

52 On Plato's tendency towards flattery see Tzetz. *Hist.* 10. 814–820, a short *historia* with the telling title Ὅτι τυράννου ὁ Πλάτων ἐθώπευεν (On Plato, the tyrant-flatterer).

to describe Plato's famous journeys. In this case too, the philosopher's travels are compared to Odysseus' long wanderings. However, the implications of such a connection are rather different to those stated by Eustathius in the preface to his commentary on Dionysius Periegetes.

For instance, in a long extract from the *Chiliads*, Tzetzes clearly compares Odysseus' adventure in the Laestrygonians' land to Plato's dangerous encounter with the Aeginetans. The latter, who loathed Athens with all of its citizens, had once tried to stone Plato to death when he happened to be sailing by their island. Similarly, the Laestrygonians almost killed Odysseus and destroyed his trireme by throwing enormous rocks in its direction.⁵³

Κατὰ τοὺς Λαιστρυγόνους οὖν τότε καὶ Αἰγινῆται,
πρὸς τοὺς λιμένας τρέχοντες μίσει τῷ Ἀθηναίων,
μικροῦ ἂν διεχρήσαντο τὸν Πλάτωνα τοῖς λίθοις.⁵⁴

On the day, following the Laestrygonians' example, the Aeginetans, | driven by their hatred towards the Athenians, rushed to the harbor | and almost stoned Plato to death.

Some lines later, moreover, Plato's famous trip to Sicily is equalled to the hero's perilous navigation through Scylla and Charybdis.⁵⁵

Τοῦτο τρισσάκις ἔπλευσεν ὁ πάνσοφος ὁ Πλάτων. (985)
Τρις γὰρ ἔλθων εἰς Σικελοὺς τρισσάκις ἀπηλάθη.
Ἔδρα γὰρ ἔχθρας Δίῳ καὶ τῷ Διονυσίῳ.⁵⁶

Three times the most wise Plato sailed across this strait: | having gone to Sicily three times, three times he was driven away, | having drawn upon himself the hatred of Dion and Dionysius.

As we have already pointed out, Tzetzes' interpretation of Odysseus' travels was hardly flattering to the wily hero. Far from being the allegorical representation of the wise man's path towards *sophia*, Odysseus' journey is seen as nothing more than a piratical enterprise. We can, therefore, safely conclude that by comparing Plato's travels to those of Odysseus, Tzetzes hardly intends to compliment the Athenian philosopher.

In the case of Plato's journeys, however, Tzetzes' criticism appears to be even harsher. A closer analysis of the latter two excerpts⁵⁷ shows that the *grammatikos* does not limit

53 See Hom. *Od.* 10.118–132.

54 Tzetz. *Hist.* 10.939–941.

55 See Hom. *Od.* 12.234–259.

56 Tzetz. *Hist.* 10.985–987.

57 See Tzetz. *Hist.* 10.939–941 and 985–987, discussed here.

himself to depicting the Athenian thinker as a sort of treacherous and hateful replica of Odysseus. In Tzetzes' representation, Plato is not only despicable but also rather ridiculous. For instance, if the son of Laertes is threatened by gigantic creatures throwing equally gigantic rocks towards his ship, Plato barely avoids being stoned to death by a group of furious – but much less impressive – Aeginetans. Moreover, in Plato's case the perilous navigation through Scylla and Charybdis is nothing but a sort of grotesque coming and going caused by the philosopher's utter incompetence. Since his conspiracies never worked out, the treacherous Plato was constantly banished from Sicily by his former protectors and had to sail across the deadly strait over and over again. Odysseus might indeed have been repugnant and insufferable, but at least his perfidious plans were effective.

2.4 The exegete is a new Moses

In light of these considerations, we will not be surprised to observe that Tzetzes does not seem to use the travelling or sailing metaphor in order to depict his exegetic task. Of course, as it has already been pointed out, the famous comparison between the vastness of the Homeric poems and the immensity of the sea was familiar to Tzetzes, who employs it in many passages of his works. However, his use of this traditional theme is much different to that of Eustathius, who did not hesitate to depict himself as a new Odysseus, ready to cross the potentially dangerous waters of the Homeric sea.

Having an extremely negative opinion of Odysseus and seeing Homer as a skillful but often unreliable rhetor, Tzetzes could never adopt a similar imagery. Far from being another Odysseus, the *grammatikos* sees and represents himself as a new – or even a better – Homer.⁵⁸ Adopting a totally different perspective to that of his colleague, Tzetzes does not perceive his exegetic activity as a long and difficult journey: to him, interpreting the immense sea of the Homeric poems amounts both to a building and a bridling process. Far from being an insignificant sailor faced with the overwhelming immensity of the sea, the Byzantine *grammatikos* appears as a miraculous builder of bridges, as a reincarnation of the great Cyrus who tamed the impetuous waters of the Gyndes.⁵⁹ The Ocean that sometimes frightened the Odyssean Eustathius poses no threat to Tzetzes, who chooses another symbol for his exegetic efforts, that of the biblical Moses.⁶⁰ Why undertake a difficult and dangerous crossing, when you already have the skills to not just navigate, but to utterly part and control the waters of the Homeric sea?

58 See for example the introduction to Tzetzes' *Allegories of the Iliad* (vv. 480–487): addressing the Empress Bertha-Eirene, the scholar proudly declares that the readers of his *Allegories* can do without

Homer and all the other poets who wrote about the Trojan War.

59 Tzetz. *All. Od. prol.* 19–31.

60 Tzetz. *All. Il. prol.* 24–31.

3 Conclusion

Despite being almost exact contemporaries and despite belonging to the same environment, Tzetzes and Eustathius could not have been more at odds. As we have just seen, though they both spent much of their life reading and interpreting Homer, they had completely different perceptions of the import of their exegetical work. Even though he deeply admired Homer, Eustathius was also well aware of the potential dangers of his enchanting songs. Consequently, he saw himself as a practiced sailor that was nonetheless always exposed to the unpredictable waters of the Homeric Ocean. Tzetzes too was conscious of the potential risks that the Homeric reader might face: these dangers, however, were much less subtle and more easily confronted than those perceived by Eustathius. In Tzetzes' view, reading the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* might be a perilous task, not because of the seductive nature of their myths, but because of the many lies Homer told in order to celebrate his favorite heroes. These falsehoods, however, can be easily unmasked by the competent exegete, who is able to both identify and correct Homer's fabrications, just as Moses was capable of controlling the apparently untamable currents of the Red Sea.

This difference in the way the two exegetes both perceive and depict Homer can be traced back to their contrasting personalities. However, their divergent life experiences and careers might have equally played a role in molding their opinions and beliefs. Contrary to Eustathius, Tzetzes always had to struggle to make a living from his literary career. Thus, he was constantly forced to advertise himself and his own work to attract the attention of rich patrons who might be willing to finance his works. In such a context, presenting oneself as a new and better Homer was undoubtedly an effective strategy of self-promotion. Eustathius, on the contrary, quickly integrated into the Constantinopolitan cultural elite and often obtained the prestigious and well-paid posts that Tzetzes unsuccessfully longed for. Along with his more restrained personality, such a successful career might explain the archbishop's more careful approach to Homer, whose poems were one of the main topics of his well-attended lessons. Similar considerations might explain the two scholars' different approaches to philosophy.⁶¹

61 It is important to remark that in Comnenian times, philosophy was at the centre of a rather heated debate. Not only were the literati divided between partisans of rhetoric and advocates of philosophy (see Garzya 1973), but philosophy itself had undergone a strict trial after the conviction of the Neoplatonist John Italos (see Kaldellis 2007, 228–230 and Magdalino 1993, 332–333). Of course, both Eustathius and Tzetzes were involved in these debates and their different treatment of Odysseus and Plato might be

a consequence of the stances they adopted in this respect. For instance, it is possible that Tzetzes' particularly violent attacks against Plato were aimed at gaining imperial favour, which, as we know, was essential to the scholar's survival. Moreover, Tzetzes' fierce outbursts against the Athenian thinker might also stem from his rather problematic attitude towards philosophy in general. Despite aspiring to write a commentary on Aristotle (Agiotis 2013) and in spite of being a sincere admirer of Pythagoro-

Yet, in spite of the various factors that might be at the heart of Tzetzes' and Eustathius' irreconcilable perspectives, the two exegetes share a commonality, namely the crucial role they both assign to Odysseus and his legendary wanderings. Even though he is seen and interpreted in opposed ways, the hero is constantly involved in the two scholars' discussions over the reception of the Homeric poems and the relevance of philosophy, both essential issues in Comnenian times⁶². After having divided generations of scholars, poets, and writers, Odysseus keeps captivating the most prominent literati of twelfth-century Byzantium, confirming once more the irresistible charm of his multifarious nature and his mysterious travels, which can take on different meanings time and again. Both intriguing and disconcerting, the son of Laertes is always ready to guide any willing traveler along an unpredictable journey across ideas, themes, and issues as *polytropoi* as himself.

ras, the scholar repeatedly claims the superiority of rhetoric to philosophy (see e.g. Tzetz. *Hist.* 11.720–736, where Tzetzes contrasts the rhetors' βιωφελῆ διδάγματα with the philosophers' ἀσυντελῆ διδάγματα πρὸς βίον). In many instances, moreover, he insists that a *grammatikos* like himself is undoubtedly more knowledgeable and competent than any philosopher (cp. schol. in Aristoph. *Nub.* 255.12–15 Holwerda: ὅς τοιοῦτος γραμματικὸς πολλῶ φιλοσόφων ὑπέρτερος· οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἐπικαλοῦνται φιλόσοφοι ὡς φιλοῦντες σοφίαν, οὐχ ὡς εἰδότες).

Such criticism might have been elicited by his difficult relationship with the members of the so-called Senate of the Philosophers (see Pontani 2015, 385 and Luzzatto 1999, 53–55). These considerations might also help explain why Tzetzes had such a negative opinion of Odysseus, a character that for centuries had been interpreted as the very symbol of the *philosophos*.

62 Here I refer mainly to the time period stretching from the reign of Alexios I to that of Manuel I (ca. 1081–1180).

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VALERIA FLAVIA LOVATO

Valeria Flavia Lovato obtained her PhD in Greek Literature and Philology at the Universities of Turin and Lausanne (March 2017), where she currently holds the status of scientific collaborator. Her research focuses on the reception of Homer in twelfth-century Byzantine scholarship. She has just concluded a research fellowship on the project *Homer Between Two Worlds: the Reception of Homer in the Renaissance, from Byzantium to the West* (University of Sassari). From January 2019, she will be a Swiss National Science Foundation postdoctoral fellow at the University of Southern Denmark (Odense), with a research project on Isaac Comnenus Porphyrogenitus.

Dr. Valeria Flavia Lovato
Località Senin 114
11020 Saint-Christophe (AO), Italy
E-Mail: valeriaflavia.lovato@unil.ch

CHIARA FERELLA, Dr. phil. (Pisa 2011), studied Classics at the Universities of L'Aquila, Cambridge, Pisa and Munich. She is a research associate at the Johannes-Gutenberg University of Mainz within the Research Training Group 1876 *Early Concepts of Humans and Nature: Universal, Specific, Interchanged*. She is currently a fellow in Early Greek Philosophy of the Harvard Center for Hellenic Studies and has published on early Greek philosophy, Orphisms and metaphor use in ancient philosophy.

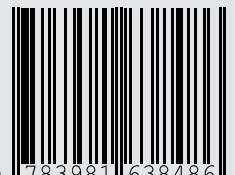
CILLIERS BREYTENBACH, Dr. theol. (Munich 1983), Dr. theol. habil. (Munich 1986) is professor for New Testament at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and professor extraordinary for classics at Stellenbosch University. He is the author of several monographs, including *Grace, Reconciliation, Concord. The Death of Christ in Graeco-Roman Metaphors* (Leiden 2010). Currently he heads a Research Programm on the Expansion of Early Christianity in Asia Minor and Greece.

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