

**The Parent-Child Relationship and the Homeric Hero in the  
*Iliad* and the *Odyssey***

by

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## Declaration

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts, in the Graduate Programme in  
Classics, University of KwaZulu-Natal,  
South Africa.

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. All citations, references, and borrowed ideas have been duly acknowledged. I confirm that an external editor was not used. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in Classics in the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Science, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. None of the present work has been submitted previously for any degree or examination in any other University.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

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## Abstract

This dissertation examines the depiction of the parent-child relationship in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. In this examination, I focus on the representation of this phenomenon as it applies to Achilles and Hector, as the respective protagonist and antagonist of the former poem, and to Odysseus, the protagonist of the latter. The parent-child relationship has been selected as the subject of investigation on the grounds of the fundamental nature and extensive presence of this phenomenon in human life, and, consequently, in literature. The primary reason for the selection of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* for this study of the literary representation of this phenomenon is the status that these poems enjoy as the earliest extant works in Western literature, whose reputation and influence have endured through the centuries to modern times. The other reason is that they provide a rich source of the literary representation of the parent-child relationship. The inclusion of both Homeric poems in the investigation offers a broader spectrum of parent-child relationships and a wider range of parent-child related situations, issues, and outcomes.

In each poem, the poet concentrates on the biological parent-child relationships of the heroes, although other supplementary relationships also feature. Assisted by narratological analysis, I examine the three heroes' parent-child relationships in terms of their triadic structure of father-mother-son, and of the dyadic relationships encompassed by this triad, namely, father-son, mother-son, and father/husband-mother/wife. Each hero is depicted as both a son and a father; hence the triads to be examined are, for Achilles, the Peleus-Thetis-Achilles natal triad and the Achilles-[Deidamia]-Neoptolemus procreative triad (represented in the poem only by the father-son relationship), for Hector, the Priam-Hecuba-Hector natal triad and the Hector-Andromache-Astyanax procreative triad, and for Odysseus, the Laertes-Anticleia-Odysseus natal triad and the Odysseus-Penelope-Telemachus procreative triad.

A significant feature to emerge from the examination of each of these triads and associated dyads is the poet's use of the affective dimension of the parent-child relationship to make the epic hero more accessible, and the epic situations and events more meaningful to the audience. In addition to exploiting the universal appeal of the affective dimension, the examination of the representation of this relationship in the poems provides insights into socio-culturally determined aspects of the society depicted. On the structural thematic level the parent-child relationships of Achilles and Hector in the *Iliad*, and of Odysseus in the *Odyssey* provide a thematic thread woven into the central theme of each poem. Thus we see that these heroic epics tell stories that are not only about heroic warriors, but also about the other participants in their natal and procreative triads: their parents, wives, and sons.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Preamble

The reason for the choice of the parent-child relationship in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as a subject for investigation is that both the parent-child relationship and the poems may be described as foundational: the parent-child relationship is arguably the most fundamental of human relationships, and the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are the earliest surviving works of Western literature. Furthermore, the parent-child relationship is a phenomenon which is not only fundamental to but also pervasive in human existence; hence its representation in literature through the ages has been equally extensive. Similarly, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, as well as providing the foundations of Western literature, have enjoyed an enduring reputation and influence over the centuries. A factor which has contributed significantly to the universal appeal of these poems is their engagement with the human condition, an essential and universal aspect of which is the parent-child relationship – every human being is the child of parents and many are the parents of children; hence the poems provide a rich source of the representation of parent-child relations. All of the above indicate that an enquiry into what the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* have to say about the parent-child relationship is not only a topic of intrinsic human and literary interest, but also provides the foundation for further study of this relationship in later Western literature.

### 1.2 Contextualization of the topic

#### 1.2.1 Introductory

Some clarification is required with regard to the terms used in the title of this study, namely, ‘The parent-child relationship and the Homeric hero in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*’. The term ‘Homeric’ comes from the common denomination of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as the Homeric poems,<sup>1</sup> while the term hero is used in the sense of the leading male character in a literary work. The inclusion of this definition of the term ‘hero’ is necessitated by the fact that the Homeric poems, being heroic epics, are

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<sup>1</sup> Further explanation on the nature and relationship of these two poems follows in 1.2.2

extensively populated by heroes of the mythological variety, that is, the distinguished warriors of the Heroic Age. From this assemblage of heroes of the mythological variety this study singles out the literary hero or protagonist of each poem as the focus of investigation. In the *Iliad* two such heroes are featured, the protagonist Achilles and the antagonist Hector, one in each of the opposing armies in the Trojan or Iliadic War, whereas in the *Odyssey*, as the title suggests, the protagonist Odysseus stands alone as hero. These literary heroes are, of course, prime examples of the distinguished warrior type of hero as well, hence aspects of the heroic code, which defines such heroes, also feature in the depiction of the protagonists/ antagonist of these poems.

There remains the first term in the title, namely, the parent-child relationship, which is the aspect of these three heroes which constitutes the subject of the study. In the context of this study, the phrase 'parent-child relationship' encompasses all aspects of the interconnectivity which exists in the reproductive unit of man, woman, and offspring.<sup>2</sup> The term 'offspring' is used here to indicate that 'child' is not limited to young children.

### **1.2.2 The Homeric poems**

In view of the vast amount of literature generated by the as yet unresolved debate on the origin and nature of the Homeric poems, it seems necessary to preface a study on a Homeric theme with some comments on these issues. For centuries going back to antiquity the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were linked under the common denomination of 'Homeric poems' on the grounds that both poems were ascribed by the ancient Greeks to a single supreme poet whom they called Homer or simply 'the Poet'.<sup>3</sup> This situation prevailed until the eighteenth century, when certain analytical critics began to question the integrity of the poems and their ascription to a single author. The attack on the integrity of the Homeric poems by the Analysts was vigorously opposed by the Unitarians, who defended the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as unified works of literature by the same author.

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<sup>2</sup> My assumptions regarding this entity are explained further in 1.2.3 below.

<sup>3</sup> Even in antiquity there were some dissenting voices: in about 100 B.C. some critics, labelled as the *Cwr<sup>5</sup>zontej* (Separators), argued that differences both in content and style between the poems called for their ascription to separate authors.

The situation has changed since the 1930s as result of the work of Milman Parry and his successors (in particular Lord (1960) and Kirk (1962)) which initiated the development of the theory of oral composition as being applicable to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The oral traditional theory of the composition of the Homeric poems has advanced from the mechanistic formulaic system originally proposed by Milman Parry in 1928<sup>4</sup> to a theory which recognizes that an oral tradition can produce works of literature of a level of artistry equal to that of written literature.<sup>5</sup> In spite of wide acceptance of the contribution of oral traditional poetry to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, a lack of unanimity on a number of Homeric issues persists. A number of questions continue to be debated: Was the method of composition oral or written? When were the Homeric epics composed? Were they composed by a single poet? Which poem enjoys priority of composition?

The unresolved status of the first question is reflected in the divergent positions on this matter adopted by the editors of the recent commentaries on the *Iliad* (Cambridge, 1985) and the *Odyssey* (Oxford, 1988). Kirk (1985: 1-16), the editor of the *Iliad* commentary, represents the oralist position, while Heubeck (1988: 11-12), in his general introduction to the *Odyssey* commentary, argues convincingly for the written composition of the Homeric poems. This unresolved question is concerned with the genesis of the poems, whereas the present study, while taking cognizance of scholarly work on their genesis, is primarily concerned with the poems as we have them, namely, literary texts.<sup>6</sup> Hence, for the purposes of this study, the following comment by A. Amory Parry (an oralist) seems relevant: 'All narrative poetry presents characters, recounts actions, describes a world, implies values, and so on. At a certain level it makes no difference to a critical interpretation whether a poem is written or oral' (1971: 14).

With regard to the compositional date of the poems, the most widely, though not unanimously, held view puts the creation of the poems in the latter half of the eighth century B.C.<sup>7</sup> This date places them some five hundred years after the possible

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<sup>4</sup> See Parry 1971: *passim*.

<sup>5</sup> For an account of this development see Foley 1988 and 1991.

<sup>6</sup> For a recent significant exposition of the poems as literary texts see Griffin 1980.

<sup>7</sup> Morris (1986: 91-93) presents the arguments in favour of the second half of the eighth century B.C. as the date for the coming into being of the Homeric texts, as opposed to later dates, for example, Jensen's

historical date of the Trojan War, which provides their setting, thus allowing for a five hundred year long oral tradition. This is the date of composition assumed for the purpose of this study.

Traditionally it has been assumed that the composition of the *Iliad* preceded that of the *Odyssey*, but there is no solid evidence to support this assumption. That the question of order of composition was a subject of debate in antiquity is indicated by a passage in Seneca's *De brevitae vitae* in which this question and the question regarding unity of authorship are linked: 'Graecorum iste morbus fuit quaerere ... prior scripta esset *Ilias* an *Odyssia*, praeterea an eiusdem essent auctoris' (*Brev. Vit.* 13.2).<sup>8</sup> Seneca goes on to make it clear that he regards these questions as examples of unprofitable scholarly enquiry. Another passage from antiquity (Per<sup>8</sup> [youj 9.11-15) also links these two questions by describing the *Iliad* as the earlier composition of the same author. In this passage Longinus expresses the view that the *Iliad* was the product of Homer's youth and the *Odyssey* a product of his old age.

In regard to current opinion on the order of composition, the prior composition of the *Iliad* represents the majority opinion (Kirk 1985: 10; Heubeck 1988: 12-13). Prevailing opinion on the question of unity of authorship is in favour of two authors. Heubeck (1988: 7) states that even modern Unitarians for the most part opt for two different authors, Homer and 'the poet of the *Odyssey*'.

What is significant for the purpose of this study is the fact that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are interrelated in genesis, form, and content in that they are narrative epic poems generated by the same Greek oral tradition extending over a period of some five hundred years, and operate in the same mythological setting, that is, the world of the heroes of the Trojan War and the Olympian gods.

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(1980: 96-171) argument for a sixth-century date. Morris' arguments for the earlier date include Herodotus' reference to Homer as having an upper limit of four hundred years (probably less in view of some form of genealogical counting) before his own time, the shadowiness of the person of Homer in the sixth and fifth centuries, echoes of Homer in the lyric poets of the seventh century, and, what he regards as the most compelling evidence, the language of Homer which places him before Hesiod and the *Homeric Hymns*. The source cited by Morris for this linguistic chronology is Janko (1982: 228-231) who suggests dates of 750-725 B.C. for the *Iliad* and 743-713 B.C. for the *Odyssey*. This dating fits in with archaeological evidence for the mid-eighth century as the date for the adoption of writing in Greece.

<sup>8</sup> 'It was an obsession of the Greeks to question whether the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey* was composed first, and besides whether they were the products of the same author' (*Brev. Vit.* 13.2).

### 1.2.3 The parent-child relationship

#### 1.2.3.1 Descriptive elements

As a starting point in the definition of this particular aspect of the human condition in the context of this study, some descriptive assumptions about the parent-child relationship *per se* are offered. It has functional, affective, psychological, and institutional aspects. The functional obligations of nurture and protection, which are inherent in the relationship and which undergo a reversal of recipients over the life-course, are rendered less burdensome by the affective bond which underpins the relationship.<sup>9</sup> Aristotle, in his discussion of *fil<sup>5</sup>a* in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, provides a Classical Greek perspective on the universal significance of the affective bond in the parent-child relationship. He elucidates the affective dimension of this relationship in his statement that the *fil<sup>5</sup>a* of parents for their children and that of children for their parents is a natural emotion which humans share with animals (*NE* 8.1155a 16-19). He also distinguishes between the nature of parental love and filial love: parents love their children as being part of themselves, whereas children love their parents as the origin of their being (*NE* 8.1161b 19).<sup>10</sup> With regard to the psychological aspect, since the emergence of the modern science of psychology, there has been an increased awareness of the influence of the nature of parents and parenting on the personality development and behaviour of their children. Finally, there is the optional<sup>11</sup> institutional aspect reflected in the parent-child relationship as the core of the conjugal family,<sup>12</sup> an institution which has social and legal ramifications for parents and children.

#### 1.2.3.2 Structural model

In addition to these descriptive elements, the parent-child relationship can be defined in terms of its structure. The structural model which provides the framework for the examination of the parent-child relationship in the Homeric poems is that of a triadic

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<sup>9</sup> The need for the reversal of the recipients of nurture and protection over the life cycle of the parent-child relationship would have been more extensive in ancient societies which were without modern forms of social security.

<sup>10</sup> There is a two-fold reason for the introduction of these comments by Aristotle. In the first place, he provides a perspective on the parent-child relationship from the fourth century B.C., that is, some two millennia closer to Homer than is the present century. Secondly, Aristotle's comments are evidence that reflection on and definition of the parent-child relationship is not an invention of modern psychology.

<sup>11</sup> The term 'optional' is used here to indicate that a parent-child relationship may exist without the formal institution of the conjugal family.

<sup>12</sup> See p. 6.

structure of father-mother-child. Within this triad three dual-directional dyadic interpersonal relationships operate: the mother-child, father-child, and father-mother relationships.<sup>13</sup> These interpersonal relationships are described as ‘dual directional,’ as they represent interaction operating from parent to child, as well as that from child to parent. There is a further gender-based distinction which applies to these dyadic relationships so that we have father-son, father-daughter, mother-son, and mother-daughter relationships. The structure delineated above is intended to provide a framework covering all aspects of interconnectivity between the three participants in the procreative unit.

Every individual participates as the child member of a father-mother-child triad, and many subsequently engage in procreative activity and participate as a parent in another such triad. This triadic relationship certainly exists as a biological reality in the initiatory phase of the relationship, but the form and extent of its continuance varies considerably in practice. If the relationship continues, its traditional sphere of operation is described as a conjugal family. This conjugal family for the individual participating as a child in the triad may be described as his/her natal family, or family of orientation, that is, the family into which one is born, whereas the conjugal family in which he/she participates as a parent may be described as his/her family of procreation, that is, the family one creates through, and following one’s marriage (Parkin 1997: 30).<sup>14</sup>

For evidence of the significance of this triad as a feature of the conjugal family, Aristotle is again called upon for his comments on the husband-wife relationship and the role of children in it. He describes the husband-wife relationship as a natural instinct, the aim of which is not merely procreation, but also to act as a source of utility (τῆς κοινῆς ὀφελείας) and pleasure (τῆς ἡδονῆς) (*NE* 8. 1162a 24-25). Significantly, he also makes the point that ‘children seem to be the bond of the union (which is why

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<sup>13</sup> Although the parent-child triad and its dyadic constituents may be familiar from their representation in the fields of psychoanalysis (notably the Oedipal triad in Freudian psychology) and family therapy (see Baldwin 1991: 27-43), in this study it is simply a framework to provide a format for the examination of the relevant relationships in the poems.

<sup>14</sup> The terms ‘family of orientation’ and ‘family of procreation’ have long been thus applied by social scientists. See, for example, *A Dictionary of the Social Sciences* (Gould and Kolb 1964: 257).

childless people part easily); for children are a good common to both and what is common holds them together' (*NE* 8. 1162a 29).<sup>15</sup>

### 1.2.3.3 Socio-cultural aspects

In view of the nature and genesis of the Homeric poems,<sup>16</sup> one is on rather uncertain ground when speaking of their socio-cultural context. It has been debated whether the social background of the poems is a poetic fiction representing an artificial amalgam or a mixture of various historical periods,<sup>17</sup> or whether it represents a society which had an existence independent of the poems, and if the latter, in which era this society should be placed. The historical options are the Mycenaean world of the poems' setting,<sup>18</sup> or the latter half of the eighth century B.C. world of their composition,<sup>19</sup> or some date in between.<sup>20</sup>

In support of the view that the social background of the poems represents a historical society, Finley (1977: 153) argues that there is too much coherence in the society depicted to allow for its dismissal as a poetic fiction or amalgam. Morris (1986: 83-94) and Raaflaub (1997: 628) take into account comparative evidence based on research into oral composition and pre-literate audiences. This evidence reveals first that the social background must be meaningful to the audience, and second that the 'collective memory' of pre-literate people is limited to three generations. Hence Morris (1986: 94) postulates a social background set in the contemporary period, that is, the second half of the eighth century B.C.<sup>21</sup> He accounts for the obviously archaic elements as being a deliberate attempt to maintain 'epic distance' (1986: 89-91). Raaflaub (1997: 628) accommodates the need to archaize by suggesting a near-contemporary rather than a contemporary social background, 'modern enough to be understandable, but archaic enough to be believable', in terms of which he places the depicted society in the late ninth and the eighth century B.C.

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<sup>15</sup> Translation by David Ross.

<sup>16</sup> See section 1.2.2, above.

<sup>17</sup> See Kirk 1962: 179-182 and Snodgrass 1974: 114-125.

<sup>18</sup> See Nilsson 1933: *passim*.

<sup>19</sup> See Morris 1986: 83-94.

<sup>20</sup> Andrewes (1967: 41-48) suggests the twelfth or eleventh century B.C., while Finley (1977: 48) proposes the tenth or ninth century B.C.

<sup>21</sup> See section 1.2.2, pp. 3-4.

The social institution which is most relevant to this study is the ο-κοῖ, which provides the setting for the functioning of the parent-child relationship. The ο-κοῖ is widely regarded as the fundamental social structure and the primary focus of people in the Homeric world.<sup>22</sup> Donlan (1985: 299) defines the ο-κοῖ as ‘the basic kinship, residential, and economic unit, comprising both ‘house’ (i.e. dwelling, land, animals) and household’. The household refers to the human members of the unit, comprising the family of the master (κῆρυξ) of the ο-κοῖ, plus the labour force and retainers (γεῖνοι). Murray (1980: 41-42, 44) separates the family core of the household, that is, the immediate family of the κῆρυξ, from the economic section, referring to the former as γένος and the latter as ο-κοῖ. He uses the term γένος to refer to the immediate family rather than to an extended kinship group (Murray 1980: 39-40). Patterson suggests that both terms, ο-κοῖ and γένος, should ‘fall under the same semantic umbrella of “family”’ (1998: 2).

It is the family in the narrower sense, that is, the family of the master of the ο-κοῖ that provides the area of operation of the parent-child relationship. Essentially this family is the master’s conjugal family, although his elderly parents under his care may live in his ο-κοῖ as well, as was the case in Odysseus’ ο-κοῖ at the time of his departure for Troy. Over the life-cycle the original nuclear family, of father, mother, and children, might develop into an extended and/or joint family living situation in which the families of procreation of the sons and daughters of the κῆρυξ continue to live in their father’s ο-κοῖ, as is illustrated by the family of Nestor as depicted in *Odyssey* 3.<sup>23</sup> It is not clear from the poems whether it was the norm for a married son to establish his own ο-κοῖ, or to remain a member of the paternal ο-κοῖ during his father’s lifetime; but Humphreys (1978: 200) is of the opinion that ‘the nuclear family already appears to be the normal residential and economic unit in the Homeric poems’, in spite of some examples of large extended families.

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<sup>22</sup> See Finley 1977: 57-58; Humphreys 1978: 201; Redfield 1975: 111. Some scholars, while acknowledging the ο-κοῖ as the basic socio-economic unit in the Homeric world, argue for the co-existence of a rudimentary form of πόλις (city-state) as being a significant socio-political structure: the safety of the individual ο-κοῖ is dependent on that of the πόλις of which it is a part (see Morris 1986: 100-104; Scully 1981: 1-5; Raaflaub 1997: 629-632).

<sup>23</sup> Assuming that ο-κῆρυξ at *Odyssey* 3.396 refers to the living quarters (γεῖνοι as suggested by Stanford (1958: I, 263)) of Nestor’s married sons and sons-in-law, and not their own ο-κοῖ.

In Classical Greece, where the  $\sigma\text{-}\kappa\omicron\jmath$  remained the fundamental unit of society within the city-state,<sup>24</sup> Aristotle (*Pol.* 2533 b) distinguishes three types of relationship in this unit, master-servant ( $\delta\epsilon\sigma\tau\omicron\iota\kappa\Box$ ), husband-wife ( $\gamma\alpha\mu\iota\kappa\Box$ ), and parent-child ( $\tau\epsilon\kappa\nu\omicron\pi\omicron\iota\eta\tau\iota\kappa\Box$ ), existing between the four constituent elements of the  $\sigma\text{-}\kappa\omicron\jmath$ , namely, male, female, child, and servant. So excluding the servant (economic) element, we have the triadic core consisting of the remaining three elements: male/father, female/mother and child.<sup>25</sup> A socio-cultural factor to be taken into account in a consideration of the relationships between these constituent elements is the patriarchal influence in the  $\sigma\text{-}\kappa\omicron\jmath$  as a whole. Hence in the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle cites the relationship between husband and wife as an example of  $\phi\iota\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\alpha$  between unequal parties (*NE* 8.1158 b16). He also makes a gender-based distinction on the type of honour and respect on the part of a child due to his father and that due to his mother (*NE* 9.1165 a24-7), but does not elaborate on the form that this  $\tau\iota\mu\eta$   $\pi\alpha\tau\epsilon\rho\iota\kappa\Box$  and  $\tau\iota\mu\eta$   $\mu\alpha\tau\epsilon\rho\iota\kappa\Box$  should take.

### 1.3 Aim

In broad general terms the aim of the study is, by means of an exposition of what the poet has to say about the parent-child relationship, to demonstrate how and to what extent the depiction of this relationship contributes to these poems both individually and jointly in order to gain some insight not only into the role of this relationship in the stories that are being told, but also into the issues affecting the relationship which are generated by these stories. The Trojan War and its aftermath provide the setting for these stories, hence the disruptive or even fatal effects of this war loom large in the poems. It is therefore the intention of this study to show how these disruptive and fatal elements of war affect the three heroes in the context of the parent-child relationship. It is envisaged that an examination of the depiction of the parent-child relationship will demonstrate the influential presence of this phenomenon in these texts as poetic structures, and in so doing provide the opportunity to consider the nature of this

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<sup>24</sup> See Aristotle *Politics* 1253 a16, where he acknowledges that the  $\rho\eta\lambda\iota\jmath$  is made up of households, and *Nicomachean Ethics* 1162 a18-19, where he states that the  $\theta\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\alpha$  is earlier and more necessary than the  $\rho\eta\lambda\iota\jmath$ .

<sup>25</sup> This exclusion is not intended to detract from the significance of the master-servant relationship in the  $\sigma\text{-}\kappa\omicron\jmath$ , but to distinguish the nature of the parent-child relationship from that of the master-servant relationship.

human relationship as a phenomenon which has universal elements generated by nature, encompassing human nature, as well as those which are socio-culturally mediated.<sup>26</sup> With regard to the first of these envisaged outcomes, on the assumption that a notable element of these poems, as primary examples of great literature, is human relationships, it is to be expected that the parent-child relationship as the foremost of human relationships will play a prominent role in the stories related in each poem. Then with regard to the consideration of the twofold nature of the parent-child relationship, it is intended to address a number of issues which arise from its depiction in the poems. Aspects reflecting a universal element of human nature are to be found in the bonds of affection which tie parents to children and vice versa, and in the related issue of premature death in the context of the parent-child relationship, while socio-culturally mediated aspects are the issues of patriarchy and a hero's need of or desire for κλῶς (fame or reputation) as they affect the parent-child relationship.

#### **1.4 Methodology**

The approach adopted in this study may be regarded as traditional and philological insofar as it involves the demonstration of original authorial intent in its historico-cultural context. Nevertheless there are elements of modern literary theory in the employment of narratology in the analysis of the text, and the incorporation of the findings of oral traditional theory in the assumptions regarding the nature and genesis of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. In addition, some cognizance is taken of perspectives of feminist and psychoanalytical theories, although these theories do not substantially inform the approach adopted in the study.

There are two aspects of the process of investigation – external and text-based. The external aspect comprises the attempt to establish a literary and historical context for the poems by making use of the findings of scholarship in the fields of oral traditional theory and the social history of early Greece. Thereafter, the investigation, while

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<sup>26</sup> The reference to 'universal nature' and 'socio-cultural mediation' is made from an essentialist rather than a structuralist perspective; the meaning intended here is that the essence of the phenomenon encompasses both elements that reflect the culture of a specific society and those that have a universal relevance. This explanation is deemed necessary to avoid confusion with a concept to be found in the structural anthropology of Claude Lévi-Strauss, namely, the binary opposition of nature/culture which is mediated by the cultural structuring of 'nature'. See Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology* (1968) and *The Raw and the Cooked* (1969).

incorporating insights from the aforesaid external sources, is primarily text-based involving an exposition and discussion of those sections of text which demonstrate the function and nature of the parent-child relationship.

The following aspects are to be examined:

- a) the nature of the various manifestations of the parent-child relationship in the poems, that is, the forms it takes, namely, the father-mother-child triad and the various dyadic relationships within this triad, and the roles and functions of the participants in the relationship over the life-course;
- b) the pivotal role of the parent-child relationship in regard to the themes and action of the poems;
- c) the method, that is, the narrative techniques used to present parent-child references, which take the form of dramatised and reported scenes involving parents and their children, as well as descriptions of and allusions to such scenes, descriptive and definitional references to parents and their children, and the use of patronymics and parental epithets.

The focus on the narrative techniques arises from the fact that narrative epic texts provide the material for the investigation of the parent-child relationship. In the explication of the relevant sections of these narrative texts the study is indebted to the narratological model developed for application to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* by De Jong (1987 and 2001) from the earlier models of Bal (1985) and Genette (1980). This model and its specialised terminology provide useful tools for a more systematic analysis of the Homeric texts. The more systematic analysis of the narrative form helps to bring the meaning of the content into clearer focus. Clarity and understanding are enhanced by the presence of a primary narrator and primary narratees as text-internal representatives of the author and his audience, both of which in the case of Homeric poems are unknown entities. The text consists partly of the story narrated by this narrator, who is external to it, in the form of narrator-text, and partly of character-text, that is, direct speech addressed by internal characters (secondary narrators) to other characters (secondary narratees). In addition 'point of view' (focalization) is added to the equation, whereby a distinction is made between straightforward narration which represents the point of view of the narrator (simple narrator-text) and that in which the point of view of a character or characters is embedded (complex

narrator-text containing embedded focalization).<sup>27</sup> In the *Iliad* narrator-text makes up 55% of the text, 5% of which contains embedded focalization, while the remaining 45% of the text is in the form of character-text. In the *Odyssey* the corresponding statistics are 33%, 5%, 67% (De Jong 1997: 314).

With regard to composition, the body of the study comprises two chapters, one of which presents the evidence for the depiction of the parent-child relationship in the *Iliad*, and the other performs the same function for the *Odyssey*. As these chapters are concerned with the presentation of evidence, they are largely expository in nature.

### **1.5 Literature review**

The parent-child relationship as it relates to the Homeric poems or to the Homeric world does feature in various forms in existing secondary literature. The distinction drawn here between the Homeric poems and the Homeric world is intended to indicate two categories of literature: interpretive studies that deal with the relationship in its literary context and historical studies that deal with the relationship as an aspect of social history. The present study falls in the former category.

Of significance in the first category is Beye's (1993) work on ancient epic poetry, encompassing his interpretations of the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, the *Argonautica*, and the *Aeneid*. In this work the parent-child relationships of the heroes of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* feature as an integrated part of the comprehensive interpretation of the poems as a whole. The present study differs from the type of approach adopted by Beye, namely, that of working through the poems from beginning to end and discussing events and issues as they occur in the story, in that it adopts the parent-child relationship as the starting-point and primary area of focus.

Some studies in the first category offer specific psychological interpretations, as, for instance, Lee's (1979) Jungian interpretation of the role of parents in the personality development of the son in the *Aeneid* and its Homeric models. In this work Lee focuses on Aeneas, but a chapter is devoted to the topic in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Achilles has also been subjected by MacCary (1982) to a psychoanalytic

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<sup>27</sup> Narratological terms employed in this study are glossed in an Appendix Glossary, pp. 158-159.

interpretation based on the Freudian and post-Freudian theory of the pre-Oedipal narcissistic phase of personality development, with its implications for his relationship with Thetis and mother-surrogates, and Peleus and father-surrogates. But as indicated earlier,<sup>28</sup> a psychological model has not been adopted in this exposition of the parent-child relationship.

Felson (1994), providing an example of works which focus on the mother in the parent-child triad, focuses on Penelope, including her dyadic relationships with Odysseus and Telemachus. She approaches the topic from a rather subjective psychologically based audience response perspective. In another work focusing on a female participant in the parent-child relationship but from another perspective, Slatkin (1991) deals with the mythological complexities in Homer's narrative and character portrayal in relation to Thetis; thus the mother-son relationship of Thetis and Achilles features in a mythologically based work.

In addition to these substantial works, specific participants in or aspects of the parent-child relationship have been the subject of numerous articles and essays. For instance, Finlay (1980) writes on the roles of Patroclus, Achilles, and Peleus in the portrayal of the father-son relationship as an illustration of patriarchal values in the *Iliad*, whereas Mills (2000) sees multiple aspects of parental care in the relationship of Achilles and Patroclus heightened by its expression in similes. Various aspects of the father-son relationship of Odysseus and Telemachus have also featured in a number of articles. For instance, Alden (1987) compares the type of father-son theme to be found in the *Odyssey* to parallels in other epic traditions. Jones (1988) and Roisman (1994) focus on the poet's characterization of Telemachus in terms of his resemblance to his father, Jones dealing with the aspect of Telemachus'  $\kappa\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ , and Roisman with the quality of  $\kappa\epsilon\tau\epsilon\sigma\tau\epsilon\iota\alpha$ . An important aspect of father-son relations over the life-course, namely,  $\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\sigma\tau\epsilon\iota\alpha$ , entailing a reversal of the nurturing roles of father and son, as it is represented in the *Iliad*, is the subject of an article by Felson (2002). The mother-son relationship as it relates to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* has also received attention in articles. Leach (1997) compares the mother-son relationships of Thetis and Achilles, in the *Iliad*, and Venus and Aeneas, in the *Aeneid*, focusing on the social construction

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<sup>28</sup> See p. 10.

of maternal behaviour. The Penelope-Telemachus relationship in the *Odyssey* features in an article by Clark (2001), in which he gives his interpretation of the scenes in which Telemachus ‘dismisses’ his mother from the hall.<sup>29</sup> The husband-wife dyad has also received attention: this relationship, as represented by the Hector-Andromache and Odysseus-Penelope relationships, features in Felson and Slatkin’s (2004) essay, which explores the Homeric epics in terms of gender. The present study differs from the aforementioned articles in that it focuses on the full spectrum of parent-child relationships in which each of the three heroes participates.

Works in the second category are relevant to the present study insofar as they provide knowledge of the social historical context of the parent-child relationship in the Homeric world. These works encompass findings from anthropology and archaeology in addition to the main source – the Homeric poems. These findings have been assembled and assessed in a number of historical works on Homeric society and the Greek family. Of significance in the collaboration between Anthropology and Classics are the works of Humphreys (1978) and Redfield (1975). Humphreys argues that such a collaboration, involving the application of a modern anthropological approach in attempting to supply the missing pieces, is useful for an understanding of Classical culture. Redfield describes his study on the *Iliad* as standing between the humanities and the social sciences. In this work, in which he presents a picture of the *Iliad* as a work of art and as a picture of Homeric culture, he stresses the necessity of understanding the poet’s culture.

In answer to the question on the historicity of Homeric society, Finley (1977, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1954) produced an influential work in which he reconstructs Homeric society as an historical entity.<sup>30</sup> Finley’s views on the ο-κοj reflect an authoritative patriarchy, and with reference to the parent-child triad, he sees the father-son relationship as being more significant than the husband-wife relationship. On the other hand Pomeroy (1975) presents a more balanced view of male-female relations in the ο-κοj.

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<sup>29</sup> See pp. 103-104.

<sup>30</sup> Other scholars however, such as Snodgrass (1974), express a sceptical view on the historicity of the world reflected in the Homeric poems.

With regard to works in the historical category with a narrower focus, a number of volumes on the Ancient Greek family have appeared over the past forty years, reflecting the growing interest in this area of social history. Beginning with Lacey (1968), this group includes Cox (1989), Golden (1990), Pomeroy (1997), and Patterson (1998). Although these histories of the family in Ancient Greece focus chiefly on Athens of the Classical period, two, Lacey and Patterson, in their chronological treatment of the subject, include a chapter on the Homeric family, for which sources other than the Homeric poems are limited. Lacey bases his reconstruction of the family in Homeric society entirely on his interpretation of evidence from the Homeric poems. He notes the family centred nature of Homeric society with its focus on the  $\sigma\text{-}\kappa\omicron\jmath$ , but does not attempt to deal with the emotional climate in this institution. Similarly Patterson deals with family structure, the institution of marriage, and the status of women in the family, but an account of the affective ties is absent. This absence is remedied in Pratt's (2007: 24-40) essay, which is of particular significance to the present study. This essay appears in a collection, edited by Cohen and Rutter (2007), dealing with many aspects of childhood in the Greco-Roman world over a period extending from the society represented in Homer to late antiquity. Pratt discusses the parent-child relationship in the *Iliad* as a structure of care, which forms an essential theme in the poem.

The foregoing selection is intended to show that while the parent-child relationship has featured in a variety of ways in existing secondary literature, the present study differs in approach and scope from these works, to which it is nevertheless indebted for insights regarding specific aspects. In view of these differences, it is felt that there is a gap in the existing literature which can be filled by a comprehensive parent-child study, such as this, in which the depiction of all the parent-child relationships of the heroes of both Homeric poems is examined in terms of the practical structural model of the parent-child triad and its component dyads. It is deemed that such an investigation will more adequately demonstrate the overall impact of the parent-child motif as woven into the central theme of each poem so as to be a feature that is both complementary and unifying.

## 1.6 Note on texts and translation

The texts used are the Oxford Classical Texts: *Iliad*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., edited by D. B. Monro and T. W. Allen; *Odyssey*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., edited by T. W. Allen. All translations throughout this work, unless otherwise indicated, are my own.

## Chapter 2

### The parent-child relationship in the *Iliad*

#### 2.1 Introduction

The selection of the *Iliad* as the starting point for the discussion of the depiction of the parent-child relationship in the two poems is based on its precedence in narrative chronology and probable precedence in composition.<sup>31</sup> This chapter attempts to demonstrate the thematic significance of parent-child relationships in the *Iliad* by considering the nature and extent of their depiction in the poem. As the narrative of the *Iliad* is concerned with certain events of the Trojan War related to the wrath of Achilles, the parent-child relationship is presented in terms of participants in these events. The story-line with its siege setting means that the characters include the besiegers and the besieged, thus offering the opportunity for the representation of two diverse aspects of the effects of war on the participants and their families. This twofold aspect is reflected in the portrayal of the protagonist, Achilles, and the antagonist, Hector. The focus will naturally fall chiefly on the parent-child relationships of these two primary characters. But, these are not the only characters, human and divine, who contribute to the significance of this relationship in the poem.

On the mortal level there are the parent-child relationships of secondary and minor characters, all of which contribute to the prominence of this relationship in the narrative. In the first place, there are those that contribute directly to the development of the central theme. The events leading to the eruption of Achilles' wrath, thus setting the central theme in motion, are initiated by a parent-child relationship – the father-daughter relationship of Chryses and Chryseis. The parent-child relationships of some of the Greek heroes are interwoven into the development of the 'wrath'

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<sup>31</sup> For the probable earlier compositional date of the *Iliad*, see pp. 3-4.

theme. In *Iliad* 9 the families of Agamemnon and Phoenix are introduced in arguments to persuade Achilles to relent. For the same reason in *Iliad* 11, Nestor, addressing Patroclus, introduces the father-son relationship within his own family of orientation (11.669-760), as well as that of Patroclus (11.764-789). Secondly, there are the parent-child relationships which are peripheral in terms of the development of the central theme, but which play a supportive role in relation to the overall prominence of the parent-child relationship in the poem. This category includes references to the parent-child triads of minor characters who participate in the battle-scenes, and those whose names are included in lists of participants, both Greek and Trojan.

In addition to these human parent-child relationships, a number of parents and children in the Olympian family also feature in the sphere of divine action in the narrative. Zeus, *patēr ōndrōn te theōn te* ('father of men and gods', *Il.* 1.544), appears as a guiding force, the supreme father figure. In relation to his Olympian family he appears as the father of children by three different consorts: Hera and her children, Hephaestus, Ares, and Hebe; Leto and her children, Apollo and Artemis; Dione and her daughter, Aphrodite. In addition Zeus is depicted in the father-daughter relationship with Athene, without reference to her mother, Metis, and in the father-son relationship with Hermes, again without reference to his mother, Maia.<sup>32</sup> Finally, as regards Zeus' relationships with mortal women, Greek myth is quite extensively populated with his mortal children owing to his rather promiscuous lifestyle. In the *Iliad* his relationship with one of these mortal children, Sarpedon, his son by Laodamia, is significant in that it reinforces the motif of paternal loss of a son.

The final aspect of the depiction of the parent-child relationship in a supporting role is to be found in twenty odd similes scattered throughout the poem, the content of which depicts the parent-child relationship, in some cases involving the parent-child relationship in the animal world. These parent-child similes comprise only a fraction of the two hundred and fifty two similes in the *Iliad*. Most of *Iliad's* similes occur in narrator-text, but of those in character-text the majority are uttered by Achilles.<sup>33</sup> This

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<sup>32</sup> The Zeus-Athene and the Zeus-Hermes relationships are the only two of Zeus' many parent-child relationships which also feature in the *Odyssey*.

<sup>33</sup> See Moulton (1977: 100) for statistics on the nature and subject matter of the similes in the *Iliad*.

trend is reflected in the parent-child similes, fifteen of which are in narrator-text. Of these, thirteen are used in battle-scenes to recall the attention of the audience to the parent-child motif, while the other two (one animal and one human) relate Achilles' mourning of Patroclus to the paternal loss of a child motif (*Il.* 18.315-322 and 23.221-229). Achilles is also the speaker in two of the character-text parent-child similes, of which again one is animal and the other human (*Il.* 9.323-324 and 16.7-10). Thus the device of the parent-child simile can be used in a supporting role to refocus the attention of the audience on the motif of the parent-child relationship in general, or to underline its depiction in relation to Achilles and his wrath.

The prevalence of the parent-child relationship on these various levels suggests that it has a significant role to play. The following examination of the narrative will point out that, in terms of the stated theme and the major characters thereof, the parent-child relationship has a pivotal role to play in theme development and characterization, and that the depiction of this relationship constitutes a major portion of the emotional content of the poem.

## 2.2 Achilles

Mānin Æeide, qeÐ, Phlh□Ðdew 'Acilαoj  
 o<sup>l</sup>lom<sub>(</sub>nhn, □ mur<sup>5</sup>' 'Acaio'j Ælge' \_qhke (*Il.* 1.1-2)<sup>34</sup>

The well-known opening lines of the *Iliad* encapsulate the central theme of the poem. At the beginning of this invocation of the Muse the protagonist is introduced by his name qualified by a patronymic adjective, but in the genitive case indicating that it is not Achilles himself, but his māni j which forms the central theme of the poem. The ensuing exposition of Achilles' parent-child relationships will therefore be in the context of the depiction of the development, climax, and purging of his wrath.

Achilles is a member of both a family of orientation and a family of procreation, neither of which has a place in the narrative present which is restricted to events localized in the environs of Troy. His father, Peleus, is at home in Phthia far from the Trojan action, thus precluding any direct depiction of the triadic relationship or the father-son dyad, but there are a number of passages in the form of character-text

<sup>34</sup> 'Sing, goddess, of the destructive wrath of Achilles, the son of Peleus, which brought countless sufferings upon the Achaeans' (*Il.* 1.1-2).

containing significant allusions to both of these aspects. From his natal triad it is only the mother-son dyad that features in live action: there are four vivid and significant scenes involving dialogue between Achilles and his mother. Achilles' family of procreation has very sparse representation in the text. His son, Neoptolemus, is in Scyros (*Il.* 19.326), and the mother in this triad, Deidamia, is not mentioned at all.

### 2.2.1 The Peleus-Thetis-Achilles triad

The first allusion to this triadic relationship occurs in the 'quarrel scene' where the wrath of Achilles is initiated. The allusion is made by Nestor (*Il.* 1.277-280) when, attempting to defuse the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon, he addresses Achilles as *Phleōdh*, and refers to the divinity of his mother (*qeē d( se ge<sup>5</sup>nato mōthr*). In Nestor's opinion the son of Peleus, in spite of being goddess-born, should accept the superiority of the sceptred king, Agamemnon, as supreme commander of the Achaean forces. Although, as a character, Nestor is using this allusion in the context of his advice to Achilles as the recipient of his speech, in the larger context the poet is ultimately addressing the external audience on the need to accept the human social order (although divinely ordained), thus illustrating the poem's concern with the affairs of mortals and mortality rather than with divine matters.<sup>35</sup> Even so, the affairs of mortals are subject to divine influence and interference. In the *Iliad* it is an accepted fact that Achilles is the mortal son of a mortal father, with his immortal mother being the odd one out in this triad. That the conditions attached to Achilles' mortality are a contributory factor to his anger is revealed when Achilles, calling upon his mother, complains of the unfairness of this situation: not only is he mortal but he is destined to have a short life, to which is added his dishonourable treatment by Agamemnon (*Il.* 1.351-356).

The second allusion to Achilles' family of orientation also occurs at a pivotal juncture in the development of the central theme, namely, during the first mother-son scene in which Achilles requests his mother to intercede with Zeus. On this occasion the allusion is made by Achilles himself in his speech to his mother, who has come to him in his distress:

*pollōki gōr seo patr-j ,n<sup>8</sup> megōroisin Ēkousa*

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<sup>35</sup> See Slatkin (1991: 30-52) on the thematic importance of mortality with reference to the Thetis-Achilles relationship.

e┘com,nhj, l't' \_fhsqa kelainef,[] Kron<sup>5</sup>wni  
o<sup>7</sup>h ,n ØqanÐtoisin Øeik,a loig┘n Øm<sup>2</sup>nai,  
|pp┘te min xundasai 'Ol┘mpioi uqelon Ælloi (Il.  
1.396-399)<sup>36</sup>

Here Achilles paints a picture of his family in the home of his mortal father, where he often listened to his mother's tales of her divine adventures among the Olympians. He follows with a detailed allusion to the events which form the basis for Zeus owing his mother a favour.<sup>37</sup> It is significant that this explanatory allusion, which throws light on Thetis' successful intercession, is situated in a familial context with the young Achilles in his parental home, a homely situation in which the audience can share. Yet there is the discordance of the mortal father-divine mother family situation, illustrated with telling effect by the contrast between the homely setting and the nature of the content of the story that Thetis used to tell her son.

Another point to note is that, although the mother-son relationship is brought to the fore by the depiction of live action and the use of character-text both in this scene between mother and son (Il. 1.360-427) and the subsequent scene of Thetis' intercession (Il. 1.495-530), the presence of the father is not excluded. In addition to the aforementioned reference to his father's home, Achilles is frequently referred to in the narrative preceding this first mother-son encounter by patronymics<sup>38</sup> (starting in line 1) in both simple narrator-text and character-text.<sup>39</sup> Finally, in the narrator-text immediately preceding the scene in which Thetis intercedes with Zeus on behalf of her son, there is a triadic reference, diogen┘j Phlaoj u<sup>3</sup>┘j (Il. 1.489).<sup>40</sup>

<sup>36</sup> 'For often I have heard you in father's home boasting, when you said that you alone among the immortals warded off shameful destruction from the cloud-wrapped son of Cronus, when the other Olympians wished to bind him hand and foot' (Il. 1.396-399).

<sup>37</sup> See Slatkin (1991) for an extensive discussion on how Homer uses allusions to the mythology of Thetis to contribute to the central themes of the poem.

<sup>38</sup> This form of paternal identification is also used in the appellation of other heroes in the Homeric poems.

<sup>39</sup> Narrator-text: 1.1, 188, 197, 223, 245, 306, 489; Character-text: 1.146, 277, 322. The various case forms of the patronymics, PhlhiÐdhj, Phle┘dhj, Phle┘wn, or the phrase Phlaoj u<sup>3</sup>┘j, are used in terms of the metric requirements of the line; but the use of a patronymic *per se* is intended to bring Achilles' father to the attention of the audience.

<sup>40</sup> This applies if one takes the adjective to mean literally 'divine born', as in Vergil's 'natus dea', rather than a more generalised reference to Zeus used to emphasize the royal status of kings and princes.

Thetis' successful intervention has such disastrous consequences for the Greeks that eventually Patroclus attempts to persuade Achilles to relinquish his wrath. In this scene a further reference to the Peleus-Thetis-Achilles triad is introduced in the speech in which Patroclus reproaches Achilles for his implacable anger as being a negation of his parentage:

nhle(j, o<sup>1</sup>k Æra so<sup>5</sup> ge pat<sup>l</sup>r □n <sup>3</sup>pp<sup>7</sup>ta Phle<sup>1</sup>j,  
o<sup>1</sup>d<sup>+</sup> Q<sup>1</sup>tij m<sup>1</sup>thr: glauk<sup>l</sup> d<sup>1</sup> se t<sup>5</sup>kte q<sup>l</sup>lassa  
p<sup>1</sup>trai t' ðl<sup>5</sup>batoi, <sup>l</sup>te toi n<sup>7</sup>oj <sup>9</sup>st<sup>8</sup>n Øphn<sup>1</sup>j. (Il.  
16.33-35) <sup>41</sup>

The pointed reference to each of Achilles' parents in Patroclus' accusation indicates that he is attempting to remind Achilles that his unfeeling behaviour is very far from that to be expected from parents of such calibre. Patroclus' words, contrasting this particular father and mother to objects as daunting and unfeeling as the 'grey sea' and 'sheer crags', contain the implication that his parents were caring – something that has been demonstrated earlier in the poem.<sup>42</sup> While thematically it is significant that this reference to Achilles' parental family is in the context of his anger and its consequences for the Greeks, it has further relevance for the development of the theme of the poem in that Patroclus' words persuade Achilles to permit him to participate in the battle as his substitute. Patroclus' subsequent death at the hands of Hector drives Achilles' anger in a new direction and to new heights.

In *Iliad* 18, the book in which this new phase of Achillean anger begins, there are three further references to the triadic aspect of Achilles' family of orientation, again in the form of character-text. In the first and the last of these three speeches, Thetis expresses her feelings about her family of procreation. These two allusions to this family triad are made at significant junctures in the unfolding of the narrative: first in her speech to her sisters immediately preceding her second conversation with her son, and then in her conversation with Hephaestus immediately before making her request for new armour for her son. At *Iliad* 18.54-60, Thetis, speaking to her sister Nereids, laments the bitterness of bearing and raising a child born to suffer. In this lament she

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<sup>41</sup> 'Pitiless man, indeed the knightly Peleus was not your father, nor was Thetis your mother, but the grey sea and the sheer crags gave birth to you, so hard hearted are you' (Il. 16.33-35).

<sup>42</sup> In Thetis' words and actions in *Iliad* 1, and in the references to Peleus' fatherly behaviour recounted in the embassy scene in *Iliad* 9.

links the three members of Achilles' family of orientation as she expresses her regret that she and her son will never be together again in Peleus' house, thus emphasising the permanent disruption of this parent-child triad in consequence of the Trojan War:

... τῆν δ' οἷοι ἵπποδ, xomai a'tij  
οἷκαδε νοστήσαστα δῆμον Πηλεΐον ἐῶσω. (*Il.* 18.59-60)<sup>43</sup>

So although Thetis is generally found in the palace of her father, Nereus (perhaps to be nearer to her son, encamped on the seashore), it appears that she would be at her husband's house if their son were there. This state of affairs is substantiated by Achilles' earlier reference to his mother's presence in his father's home (*Il.* 1.396-397).

Later in *Iliad* 18 Thetis again alludes to her family of procreation when, speaking to Hephaestus, she bemoans her fate to experience so many sorrows, including marriage to a mortal by the will of Zeus:

ἄκ μιν μ' ὀλλῶν ἔλιῶν ὀνδρῶ δῆμασσην,  
ἀἶκα δὲ Πηλεΐ, καὶ ἄτλην ὄνροιο ἐνῆν  
πολλῷ μῆτι' οἷκοι ἄλοισα. | μιν δὲ γῆρα ἴλυρ  
κεῖται ἄνῶ μεγῆροιο ὄρμηνοιο, ἔλλα δὲ μοι νῶν:  
ὕπν ἄπεῶ μοι δὲκε γενεῶσαι τε τραπεμένη τε,  
ἄχοον φρῶν: (*Il.* 18.432-437)<sup>44</sup>

In the preceding lines Thetis has painted a very grim picture of Achilles' family of orientation from her perspective, emphasizing the problematic nature of the immortal mother-mortal father-mortal child triad. She then (437-444) launches into a repetition of her lament to her sisters (56-62) on the bitterness of bearing and raising a child born to suffer.<sup>45</sup> The oral epic technique of repeated speech may have been used for compositional convenience, but repetition also serves to enhance the narrative. In this

<sup>43</sup> '... never again will I receive him, having returned home safe, into the house of Peleus' (*Il.* 18.59-60)

<sup>44</sup> 'Of all the other sea-nymphs he made me subject to a mortal husband, to Peleus, the son of Aeacus, and I submitted to the marriage-bed of a mortal, very much against my will. Now afflicted by mournful old age, he lies at home, but now I have other troubles, since he has given me a son to bring into being and to raise, supreme among heroes' (*Il.* 18.432-437).

<sup>45</sup> For a discussion of this repeated passage in relation to the mother-son relationship see p. 27.

instance it serves to emphasise the sentiments of the speaker, Thetis, and to characterize her as a mother.<sup>46</sup>

The second allusion in *Iliad* 18 to Achilles' family of orientation triad (sandwiched between the two of Thetis) is made by Achilles informing his mother of the loss of his beloved friend, Patroclus, and of his own armour given to him by Peleus:

... t<sub>7</sub>n Øp<sup>ˈ</sup>lesa, te<sub>7</sub>cea d' <sub>3</sub>Ektwr  
 dV<sup>ˈ</sup>saj Øp<sub>(</sub>duse pel<sup>ˈ</sup>ria, qa<sup>?</sup>ma <sup>4</sup>d<sub>(</sub>sqai,  
 kalð: t<sub>Æ</sub> m<sub>+</sub>n Phlα□ qeo<sup>8</sup> d<sub>7</sub>san Øgla<sub>Æ</sub> d<sup>ˈ</sup>ra  
 □mati t<sub>7</sub> <sup>l</sup>te se broto<sup>?</sup> Øn<sub>(</sub>roj <sub>1</sub>mbalon e<sub>7</sub>n□.  
 a<sup>7</sup>q' <sup>l</sup>felej s<sub>¶</sub> m<sub>+</sub>n a<sup>ˈ</sup>qi met' ØqanðtVj <sub>1</sub>l<sup>5</sup>Vsi  
 na<sup>5</sup>ein, Phle<sub>¶</sub>j d<sub>+</sub> qnht<sub>l</sub>n Øgag<sub>(</sub>sqai <sub>Æ</sub>koitin. (*Il.* 18.82-  
 87)<sup>47</sup>

Here the lost armour, a wedding gift to his father, reminds Achilles of the marriage of his parents, a circumstance which, in his present frame of mind, he wishes had never taken place.<sup>48</sup> The last two extracts reveal that two of the participants in this triad look upon the marriage as a matter for regret rather than rejoicing, while the third participant, Peleus, away in his halls in Phthia, is not given the opportunity to comment. All three of these extracts from *Iliad* 18 draw attention to the problematic nature of a marriage between a mortal and an immortal and the implications it has for their son.

In *Iliad* 20, during the narration of the battle scene after Achilles' re-entry, his family of orientation is further emphasized in two references, both in the form of character-text, to the divine mother-mortal father-mortal son triad. These references compare Achilles' family to that of Aeneas. At 105-109, Apollo, in disguise, encouraging Aeneas to engage in combat with Achilles, says:

... ka<sup>8</sup> d<sub>+</sub> s<sub>(</sub> fasi Di<sub>7</sub>j ko<sub>7</sub>rhj 'Afrod<sup>5</sup>thj  
 ,kgegd<sub>¶</sub>men, ke<sup>ˈ</sup>noj d<sub>+</sub> cere<sup>5</sup>onoj ,k qeo<sup>?</sup> ,st<sup>5</sup>n:

<sup>46</sup> See de Jong (1987: 179-194) on narratological aspects of repeated speech.

<sup>47</sup> 'I have lost him, and Hector, after killing him, stripped him of the gigantic armour, wonderful to behold, and splendid, the beautiful gift that the gods gave to Peleus on the day when they put you in the marriage-bed of a mortal man. I wish that you had gone on living there with the immortal sea-nymphs and that Peleus had married a mortal wife' (*Il.* 18.82-87).

<sup>48</sup> See p. 30 for the continuation of this speech as it relates to the mother-son relationship.

ε μ+ν γør Diγj ,sq', ε d' ,x εl<sup>5</sup>oio γ(rontoj. (   
*Il.* 20.105-107) <sup>49</sup>

So although having a divine mother and a mortal father may make for a measure of dysfunctionality in a family, a goddess for a mother has some advantages for the heroic status of the son: the superior divine status of the mother is reflected in the heroic prowess of the son. In the narrative context Apollo is stressing the superior divine status of Aeneas' mother in order to encourage him. With reference to this description of Thetis as a lesser goddess, Slatkin (1991: 80-81) draws attention to the pre-eminent status of the Olympian gods in relation to the non-Olympians in Homeric epic as a whole.

In the verbal exchange preceding the combat between Achilles and Aeneas, the latter, in a family- and genealogically-laden speech, also points out the similarity in family type:<sup>50</sup>

7dmen d' øll□lwn gene□n, 7dmen d+ tokæaj,  
 prγklut' økoγontej \_pea qnht~n ønqr~pwn:  
 ↓yei d' o▶t' ær pw s□ ,mo□j 7dej o▶t' ær' ,gw soγj.  
 fas<sup>8</sup> s+ m+n Phlαoj ømγmonoj \_kγονon e-nai,  
 mhtrγj d' ,k Q(tidoj kalliplokðmou εlos γdnhj:  
 a↓tæ r ,g ~n u<sup>3</sup>γj megal□toroj 'Agc<sup>5</sup>sao  
 e▶comai ,kgegðmen, m□thr d( mo<sup>5</sup> ,st' 'Afrod<sup>5</sup>th:  
 t~n dλ n?n ,teroi ge f<sup>5</sup>lon pa'da klaγsontai  
 s□meron: ...

(*Il.* 20.203-211) <sup>51</sup>

In this speech Aeneas describes the family structure which forms the basis of this study. He refers to the parents (tokæej) as a couple in relation to their son, as well

<sup>49</sup> '... and they say that you are born of Aphrodite, the daughter of Zeus, but he is the son of a lesser goddess, for the one is the daughter of Zeus, whereas the other is the daughter of the old man of the sea' (*Il.* 20.105-107).

<sup>50</sup> It would seem that Homer did not consider there to be any socio-cultural distinction between Greek and Trojan in respect of these two parent-child triads.

<sup>51</sup> 'We know each other's descent, and we know each other's parents, for we have heard from mortal men the traditional tales, but in fact you have never seen mine, nor I yours. Men say that you are the son of blameless Peleus, from the mother sea-born Thetis of the lovely locks; but I profess that I am born the son of great-hearted Anchises, and that my mother is Aphrodite. But, as it is, one or the other of these two couples will weep for a loved son tomorrow' (*Il.* 20.203-211).

as identifying the father and the mother by name. It should be noted that he gives precedence to the mortal father in each instance, even though the mother is immortal. Aeneas does not openly boast of his mother being the greater goddess, but she is the only one of the four parents who is referred to simply by her name without any descriptive epithets, as if her name were enough, with no further introduction or qualification being necessary. He continues tracing his paternal ancestry back to Zeus as well. Similarly, at *Iliad* 21.188-189 Achilles, triumphing over Asteropaeus, son of the river Axius, claims that Peleus is the grandson of Zeus. So Achilles, like Aeneas, has heroic status and military prowess inherited from his father, as well as that linked to the divine status of his mother. The family comparisons made by Apollo and Aeneas serve to maintain the significance of the parent-child theme even in the heat of battle.

There are two further battle-scene allusions to the triadic aspect of Achilles' family of orientation. The first is in the form of character-text spoken by Achilles in response to the supplication of Hector's half-brother, Lycaon:

o-lc | rðvj o+oj ka<sup>8</sup> ,g<sup>ˆ</sup> kal<sub>7</sub>j te m<sub>(</sub>gaj te;  
 patr<sub>7</sub>j d' e<sup>7</sup>m' Øgaqo'o, qeE d<sub>(</sub> me ge<sup>5</sup>nato m<sub>□</sub>thr:  
 Øll' \_pi toi ka<sup>8</sup> ,mo<sup>8</sup> qðnatoj ka<sup>8</sup> mo'ra kratai<sub>□</sub>: (*Il.*  
 21.108-110) <sup>52</sup>

These words express similar sentiments to those expressed by Aeneas. In this case it is Achilles expressing his awareness of the fact that, in spite of the heroic status of his father, the divine status of his mother, and his own consequent superior status, imminent death is his destiny.

The other battle-scene reference to Achilles' family of orientation triad occurs at what should be the culminating point of Achilles' vengeance-seeking anger, namely, the slaying of Patroclus' killer, Hector. It comes in the dying Hector's plea to Achilles to return his body to the Trojans:

l<sup>5</sup>ssom' †p<sub>+</sub>r yucaj ka<sup>8</sup> go<sub>7</sub>nwn s<sup>ˆ</sup>n te tok<sub>□</sub>wn,  
 m<sub>□</sub> me \_a parE nhus<sup>8</sup> k<sub>7</sub>naj katadðyai 'Acai<sup>ˆ</sup>n,

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<sup>52</sup> 'Do you not see what kind of man I am, fine and huge? I am the son of a noble father, and a goddess mother gave birth to me. But still let me tell you even for me there is death and resistless fate' (*Il.* 21.108-110).

Øllæ s¶ m+n calk7n te þlij crus7n te d,dexo,  
 d7ra tÐ toi d7sousi patl7r ka8 p7tnia m¶thr,  
 s7ma d+ o7kad' 9m7n d7menai pÐlin, ...

(*Il.* 22.338-342) <sup>53</sup>

Hector's supplication of Achilles is made after the fatal blow has been struck, thus it differs from the previous supplications by vanquished Trojans, who beg for their lives in exchange for ransom to be willingly offered by their fathers.<sup>54</sup> A further point of difference is that the parents of both the supplicated person and the suppliant are implicated in this entreaty, but at this stage Achilles is oblivious to the significance of parental love and needs. His emphatic refusal of the request brings to mind Patroclus' words at *Il.* 16.29-35 (see p. 20).

Finally, in *Iliad* 24 there are two further descriptive references to Achilles' family of orientation, again in the form of character-text. At 56-62 Hera, in response to Apollo's complaint about Achilles' mistreatment of Hector's body, says:

e7h ken ka8 to7to te7n \_poj, Ørgur7toxe,  
 e4 dl |mln 'Acila¶ ka8 3Ektori q¶sete tim¶n.  
 3Ektwr m+n qnht7j te guna7kÐ te q¶sato maz7n:  
 a7tEr 'Acille7j 9sti qebj g7noj, ¶n 9g7 a7tØ  
 qr7ya te ka8 Øt5thla ka8 Øndr8 p7ron parÐkoitin,  
 Phl(¶, þj per8 kari f5loj g7net' ØqanÐtoisi.  
 pÐntej d' ØntiÐasqe, qeo5, gÐmou: ...

(*Il.* 24.56-62) <sup>55</sup>

On this occasion the marriage of Peleus and Thetis is referred to without mention of the bride's reluctance, an aspect about which Thetis has complained. But, of course, in the present situation Hera has her own agenda – the refutation of Apollo's argument. In terms of the overall narrative context this allusion to the Achilles-Thetis-Peleus

<sup>53</sup> 'I entreat you by your life, by your knees, by your parents do not allow the dogs to devour me by the ships of the Achaeans, but do you yourself accept the bronze and gold in plenty, the gifts which my father and lady mother will give you, and send my body back home ...' (*Il.* 22.338-442).

<sup>54</sup> Cf. *Il.* 6.46-50; 10.378-381; 11.131-135; 21.70-96.

<sup>55</sup> 'You might well say this, lord of the silver bow, if you would give equal honour to Achilles and to Hector. Yet Hector was mortal and suckled at a women's breast, but Achilles is the son of a goddess, whom I myself reared and cherished and gave as a bride to her husband, Peleus, who was very dear to the hearts of the immortals. For you, gods, all went to the wedding' (*Il.* 24.56-62).

triad at this juncture foreshadows the role which this triad is to play in the resolution of the anger which is driving Achilles to such extremes.

The second of these descriptive references is made by Achilles after he has been purged of his anger, when he says to Priam:

ἄϊ μᾶν καὶ Φηλαῖα θεοῖσιν ἄσπετος ὄφρα δῖος ἄχιλλεύου  
 ἔκγονος γενετᾶϊ: πῦρτα γὰρ ἔπειθ' ὄνυσσ' ἔπειθ' ἔκκαστο  
 ἄλβη τε πλοῦτος τε, ἄνασσα δὲ Μυρμιδόνισσι,  
 καὶ οὐρανὸν ἄντι θεῶν ποσειδάων ἄκοιτιν.  
 ὅλλ' ἔπειθ' καὶ τὸν γάμω γένηται κῆρ, ἄττι οὐρανὸν  
 παρδῶν ἄν μεγῆροισι γονεῖ γένοτο κρείοντων,  
 ὅλλ' ἄνα παρδᾶ τῆκεν παρῖον: ὄδῃ νῦν τῆγε  
 γηρῶσκα κομῶζω, ἔπειθ' ἄλλα θλίβῃ πῦρτα  
 βῆμα ἄν Τροίην, σὺ τε κῆρ δῖον ἄτῃ κῆρ. (Il.  
 24.534-542) <sup>56</sup>

This speech sums up Achilles' feelings, in the present situation, about his family of orientation. He shows awareness of the good fortune of his father when young, including being married to a goddess. But all this good fortune proved to be a mixed blessing: Achilles' sentiments expressed in the second half of the extract reflect a sense of the failure of his parental family and his role as a son in relation to his father. For in the cycle of family life a son should take care of his aging parents. In Achilles' case, this filial duty is limited to his mortal father, as his mother is a goddess and therefore will not age.<sup>57</sup> The feelings expressed here by Achilles in relation to the problematic nature of this parent-child triad complement the sentiments expressed at *Iliad* 18.82-87 (see p. 22).

This brings to an end the exposition of the references to the triadic parent-child aspect of Achilles' family of orientation made by various characters. These references have

<sup>56</sup> 'So also to Peleus the gods gave bright gifts from his birth: for he surpassed all men in good fortune and riches, and he ruled over the Myrmidons, and on him, although mortal, they bestowed a goddess as his wife. But on him the god heaped misfortune as well, because no generation of sons to be rulers was born to him in his house, but he begot only one all-untimely son; and now I do not take care of him as he grows old, since very far from my fatherland, I am sitting here in Troy, causing misery for you and your children' (Il. 24.534-542).

<sup>57</sup> Felson (2002: *passim*) discusses the concept of *qr̄pt̄ra* and its role in the *Iliad*.

been considered sequentially, demonstrating their occurrence at significant junctures in the narrative from the first book through to the final book, where Achilles shows that he has reached a new level of self-awareness.

### 2.2.2 The mother-son relationship: Thetis and Achilles

Within the triadic parent-child structure there are the two interpersonal parent-child relationships of mother-child and father-child, both of which may be influenced by the third interpersonal relationship between the father and the mother. I begin with the mother-child relationship, as, of the two in which the child is a participant, it is the one that is forged first.

The nature of the Thetis-Achilles relationship is revealed by Thetis addressing third parties and in scenes depicting interaction between mother and son. Thetis describes her relationship with her son from birth to manhood in the following words addressed to her Nereid sisters:

° moi 9g´ deil□, ° moi dusaristot7keia,  
 σ t' 9pe<sup>8</sup> ·r t(kon u<sup>3</sup>7n 0m7mon0 te krater7n te,  
 \_xocon fr¨wn: | d' 0n(dramen \_rne□ -soj:  
 t7n m+n 9g´ qr(yasa, fut7n `j goun\_ 0lwaj,  
 nhus<sup>8</sup>n 9pipro(hka korwn<sup>5</sup>sin 4Ilion e<sup>7</sup>sw  
 Trws<sup>8</sup> machs7menon: ...  
 (*Il.* 18.54-59)<sup>58</sup>

These words reveal much about this mother-son relationship from Thetis' perspective: her conflicting feelings of misery and pride; the fact that she played an active part in nurturing her son from birth through childhood to manhood; acknowledgement of her role in sending him forth as a warrior to Troy. She then goes on (59-60) to lament that there will be no n7stoj (home-coming) for Achilles and reunion for mother and son in the house of Peleus.<sup>59</sup> The other third party to whom Thetis gives this account of her relationship with her son is Hephaestus at *Iliad* 18.437-441, which is, as discussed on p. 22, a repetition of 18.56-60.

<sup>58</sup> 'Woe's me, I am wretched, woe's me, unhappy mother of the noblest son, since I gave birth to a son, noble and strong, supreme among heroes; and he shot up like a young plant. I nurtured him like a tree on an orchard's slope. I sent him forth with the curved ships to Ilium to fight against the Trojans ...' (*Il.* 18.54-59).

<sup>59</sup> Lines 59-60 are quoted on p. 21 as one of Thetis' allusions to the parent-child triad.

Mention has already been made of the fact that there are four live encounters between Thetis and Achilles.<sup>60</sup> As will emerge from the following discussion thereof, these four emotionally charged scenes reveal much about this mother-son relationship. Achilles' relationship with his mother is introduced when he tearfully calls on her to help him avenge his honour (*Il.* 1.351-427). The other encounters occur at *Iliad* 18.35-144, where Thetis comes of her own accord to comfort her son in his grief at Patroclus' death; at 19.1-39, where she gives her son the gift of new divine armour; and finally at 24.126-142, where she approaches her son to give him Zeus' message to accept ransom and hand over Hector's body.

The narrative form of these four scenes is primarily character-text, but each of these mother-son conversations is preceded by narrator-text describing the physical contact between mother and son. Thetis' feelings for her son are initially expressed through this physical contact in each instance.<sup>61</sup> In this way the emotional aspect of the mother-son bond is communicated to the audience in narrator-text. By means of this technique the poet allows the narrator to elicit the emotions of the audience:

ka<sup>5</sup> "a pÐroiq' a<sup>↓</sup>to'o kaq,zeto dÐkru c,ontoj,  
ceir<sup>5</sup> t, min kat,rexen, \_poj t' \_fat' \_k t' |n maze:  
(*Il.* 1.360-361)<sup>62</sup>

t, de bar¶ stenÐconti par<sup>5</sup>stato p,tnia m¶thr,  
|x¶ d, kwk, sasa kÐrh lÐbe paid, j s'o'o,  
ka<sup>5</sup> " ' |lofurom, nh \_pea pter, enta prosh, da (*Il.*  
18.70-72)<sup>63</sup>

\_n t' Æra o<sup>3</sup> f? ceir<sup>5</sup> \_poj t' \_fat' \_k t' |n maze  
(*Il.* 19.7)<sup>64</sup>

ε d, mÐl' Ægc' a<sup>↓</sup>to'o kaq,zeto p,tnia m¶thr,

<sup>60</sup> See p. 18.

<sup>61</sup> The expression of parent-child love (or need thereof) through physical contact is depicted in the *Odyssey* as well.

<sup>62</sup> 'She sat down beside him as he wept, and she caressed him with her hand, and she spoke and addressed him by name' (*Il.* 1.360-361).

<sup>63</sup> 'His honoured mother stood beside him as he groaned deeply, and with a piercing cry she took hold of her son's head, and feeling compassion for him she spoke winged words to him' (*Il.* 18.70-72).

<sup>64</sup> 'She clung to his hand and spoke and addressed him by name' (*Il.* 19.7).

ceir<sup>5</sup> t<sub>1</sub> min kat<sub>1</sub> rexen \_poj t' \_fat' \_k t' |n<sub>1</sub> maze  
 (Il. 24.126-127)<sup>65</sup>

These physical expressions of feelings exhibit varying degrees of intensity, from the gentle caressing action of stroking, introducing the first and last scenes, to the more intense attempts (involving holding as opposed to stroking) at consoling him in his grief and guilt over Patroclus' death and subsequent excessive mourning.<sup>66</sup> These variations serve as a comment on Thetis' empathetic awareness of the varying depths of her son's emotions. These descriptive narrator passages establish Thetis' role in the relationship as one of tenderness and maternal affection even before further light is thrown on the relationship in the ensuing character-text, in which it is always Thetis who initiates the conversation, and in so doing, she further emphasizes her maternal attachment by addressing Achilles as t<sub>1</sub> knon rather than by his given name.

In the first mother-son encounter, Thetis opens the conversation by asking her son to reveal what is troubling him, and not to conceal anything from her. His detailed response (Il. 1.365-412) is evidence of the openness of communication between mother and son, which is indicative of a solid emotional relationship. In addition to his description of his problems, his reply contains a request for his mother's assistance in implementing his own plan to avenge the insult to his honour. He also gives his reasons as to why he thinks she might successfully intercede with Zeus on his behalf. This speech, as is that in which he initially calls upon his mother (Il. 1.352-356), is based on Zeus' debt to his mother for services rendered, and to her son on account of his unfair destiny. His self-possession in this well-thought-out plan does not seem to indicate 'a state of almost infantile emotional dependence on his mother' as asserted by Lee (1979: 128); thus it seems that Lee's description of the contrast between Achilles' state of maturity in *Iliad* 1 and 24 is too extreme.

In her response to her son, Thetis reveals her frustration and bitterness at being helpless in the face of his destiny, namely, a life that is not only short but unhappy (Il.

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<sup>65</sup> 'His honoured mother sat down very close to him, and caressed him with her hand, and spoke and addressed him by name' (Il. 24.126-127).

<sup>66</sup> The repetition 1.361 and 24.127 is another example of Homer's technique of using repetition to characterize Thetis as a mother.

1.413-418). This sentiment is reiterated in her words to her sisters (*Il.* 18.59-62) and to Hephaestus (*Il.* 18.440-443).<sup>67</sup> In spite of this feeling of helplessness, she agrees to carry out her son's request, and does in fact provide practical help in meeting his needs: she successfully intercedes in obtaining Zeus' assistance in influencing events so as to assuage the insult to her son's honour, she acquires new armour from Hephaestus for him, she preserves Patroclus' body and assists at his funeral,<sup>68</sup> and finally she delivers the message from Zeus which opens up the way for the purging of Achilles' wrath.

Although she is able to provide this important practical assistance, Thetis is unable to avert Achilles' early death. The impact of this factor on their relationship is illustrated by the fact that it is mentioned in Achilles' first words addressed to his mother at *Iliad* 1.354-356 and in three of their four conversations. It is the main topic of conversation in the second mother-son encounter (*Il.* 18.70-137), where Achilles' awareness of the effect on his mother of his coming death at Troy is revealed when, after expressing the wish that his father had married a mortal woman,<sup>69</sup> he says:

n?n d' 6na ka8 so8 p(nqoj ,n8 fres8 mur5on e7h  
 paidTj Øpofqim,noio, tTn oJc †pod,xeai a'tij  
 o7kade nost□sant', ... (*Il.* 18.88-90)<sup>70</sup>

The fact that he refers to himself in the third person emphasizes his awareness of his mother's perspective on the loss of her son. He feels for his immortal mother being doomed to grieve for her dead son for eternity. In the ensuing conversation the inevitability and imminence of Achilles' death is referred to by both mother and son. In the narrator's introductions to the character-text spoken by mother and son the emotional state of each is described. Thetis, kat@ d@kru c,ousa ('shedding tears'), acknowledges the imminence of his death, which is linked to Hector's death.

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<sup>67</sup> In the *Iliad* Thetis is always depicted as having accepted, not without pain, the fact of Achilles' mortality and brief life. There is no reference to the myths concerning her efforts to make him immortal or prolong his life, and her abandonment of father and son in response to Peleus' opposition to her efforts. On the unverifiable assumption that these stories were pre-existing, their absence may be an illustration of Homer's selectivity in the use of existing mythology in terms of thematic requirements. Various aspects of this mythological selectivity and/or innovation are discussed by Slatkin (1991) and Braswell (1971). See also the reference to this aspect of the Thetis-Achilles relationship on p. 47.

<sup>68</sup> See *Odyssey* 24.43-94 for Agamemnon's description of the role of Thetis at Achilles' funeral.

<sup>69</sup> See *Iliad* 18.82-87, quoted on p. 22, as an expression of Achilles' feelings about his natal triad.

<sup>70</sup> 'But now there must be in your heart a measureless grief for the death of your son, whom you will never again welcome on his return home, ...' (*Il.* 18.88-90).



relationship of Peleus and Achilles is not absent from the narrative or from the heart and mind of Achilles.

### 2.2.3 The father-son relationship: Peleus and Achilles

Although the presence of the father-son relationship is felt in the narrative from the first line, where Achilles is introduced qualified by a patronymic, and continues to be emphasised in this way, the depiction of the nature of this relationship is of necessity less direct than that of the mother-son relationship. In addition to the aforementioned method of relating Achilles to his father, the audience learns about this father-son relationship from character-text spoken by those who witnessed the relationship in action and by Achilles himself, as well from narrator-text describing Achilles' actions and feelings. Not surprisingly, given the apparently unhappy marital relationship, in the dialogue between mother and son Thetis reveals nothing of the father-son relationship.

#### 2.2.3.1 Third party evidence

The third party evidence is provided by two men, namely, Odysseus and Nestor, who visited Peleus' home during the recruitment drive for the Trojan expedition, and by another two men, namely, Phoenix and Patroclus, who had been members of Peleus' household. The first witness to provide information about the Peleus-Achilles relationship is Odysseus as first speaker in the embassy sent by Agamemnon to persuade Achilles to abandon his boycott. He recalls the words spoken by Peleus to his son on the eve of his departure for Troy:

τῆκνον ἄμῃν, κέρτοιο μάτην Ἀχαιῶν τε καὶ Ἡρῆ  
 δῖσος', ἀτὰρ κ' ἄλλωσι, σὺ δ' ἐμὲ γὰρ μεγαλήτορα κούρην  
 ἔσκειν ἄν στήθεσσι: φιλοφροσύνῃ γὰρ ὄμεινον:  
 ληγμέναι δ' ἄριδοιο κάκομητόν, ἄφρα σε μύλλον  
 τῶσ' Ἀργείων ἄμῃν νόιοι ἄδ' ἄγροντες. (Il. 9.254-258)<sup>73</sup>

<sup>73</sup> 'My son, as for strength, Athene and Hera will grant it, if they are willing, but do you curb the great-hearted anger in your breast, for friendliness is better; and cease from baneful quarrelling in order that the Argives, young as well as old, may honour you more' (Il. 9.254-258).

These words of advice to his son in the form of embedded character-text are Peleus' sole verbal contribution to the narrative. Hainsworth (1993) in his commentary on these lines questions the authenticity of Odysseus' direct quotation of Peleus' speech and suggests that it is an example of *prosopeia*, although he does concede that the quotation of Peleus' speech is emotively effective. It seems likely that for this reason Homer intended this speech to be a direct quotation of the words of Peleus, thereby bringing the father into the presence of the son, who was the original addressee. So in narratological terms we have Odysseus and Achilles as secondary narrator-focalizer and secondary narratee-focalizee respectively in Odysseus' speech as a whole, while in the embedded speech we have Peleus and Achilles as tertiary narrator-focalizer and tertiary narratee-focalizee respectively.<sup>74</sup> While taking cognizance of the fact that Peleus' words of advice are repeated by Odysseus to serve a particular agenda, they do throw some light on the Peleus-Achilles relationship, namely, Peleus' awareness of his son's strengths and weaknesses. This awareness is indicative of an intimacy between father and son, which is what one would expect from a man who exhibits the 'fatherliness' that Peleus does. Felson (2002: 38) describes Peleus as a *patēr upios* (gentle father) and *tokeiōn filōn* (dear parent).

His fatherliness is further illustrated by his relationships with Phoenix and Patroclus. The nature of these relationships is revealed in character-text spoken by these two characters. Phoenix, the second speaker in the above mentioned embassy, serves as the second witness when he describes his own relationship with Peleus, which occurs as a result of his flight from his own dysfunctional family:<sup>75</sup>

οἱ Φηλαῖα Ἐνακίη: | δέ με πρὶ φρῶν ἴπεδετο,  
καὶ μὲν οὐφίλησ' ἔμε τε πατὴρ ἴν παῖδα φίλον  
μόνον θλιγέτον πολλοῖσιν οὐκ ἐδέσσει (Il. 9.480-482)<sup>76</sup>

Later in the narrative Patroclus (as a ghost) speaks of Peleus in the following terms:

ἄνα με δεξιμένοις οὐκ ἐμάσιν ἔππετα Φηλεῖι

<sup>74</sup> See Appendix Glossary, pp. 158-159.

<sup>75</sup> Phoenix had been forced to flee from the anger of his father who had cursed his son with sterility for sleeping with his father's concubine, at the instigation of his jealous mother.

<sup>76</sup> '[I came] to lord Peleus who readily accepted me and loved me, even as a father loves his son who is an only child amid many possessions' (Il. 9.480-482).

–traf( t' 9nduk(wj ka<sup>8</sup> sTn qerḐpont' |nḡmhnen (Il.  
23.89-90)<sup>77</sup>

Thus in the first extract we see Peleus exhibiting fatherly love towards Phoenix and in the second fatherly nurturing of Patroclus. His paternal acceptance of these two fugitives is not only beneficial to them personally, but has implications for his only son. Phoenix as a young man, accepted and loved as a son, is able to assist the elderly Peleus in the upbringing of his only 'all-untimely' son, to whom Phoenix, doomed to childlessness, acts as a surrogate father. In the case of the boy refugee, Patroclus, Peleus carefully nurtures him to become a suitable qerḐpwn of his son.<sup>78</sup>

After the failure of the embassy, Nestor, who was also present at the parting of Peleus and Achilles, contributes further information about this relationship and Patroclus' supporting role (Il. 11.764-788). In character-text addressed to Patroclus he reminds him of his father Menoetius' advice to him with regard to Achilles, namely, that although inferior in rank and strength, Patroclus was older and wiser, and therefore had an advisory role in guiding Achilles. This fatherly advice of Menoetius to his son Patroclus, like that of Peleus to Achilles, is presented in embedded character-text aimed at having a greater impact on Patroclus, the secondary narratee-focalizee, by making him tertiary narratee-focalizee as well.<sup>79</sup>

With regard to the abovementioned father and surrogate father relationships, Finlay (1980) suggests that Peleus, the father, and Phoenix and Patroclus, his two assistants in the performance of fatherly duties, represent the patriarchal order which Achilles is rejecting by his refusal to participate in the war. But it seems to me that Achilles' response to Odysseus' speech suggests that his rejection is limited to Agamemnon as an unworthy representative of that order (Il. 9.308-429). In fact, Achilles reaffirms his acceptance of the paternal and patriarchal role of his own father when he states that Peleus will seek out a suitable wife for him (Il. 9.393-394). Achilles' rejection of Agamemnon's version of the patriarchal order is understandable in the light of the fact

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<sup>77</sup> 'There knightly Peleus accepted me in his house and brought me up carefully and designated me as your companion' (Il. 23.89-90).

<sup>78</sup> In the quotation above I have translated the term qerḐpwn as 'companion', that is, a designated or official companion, as opposed to a companion in the informal sense. Finley (1977:104) uses the term 'retainer' for qerḐpwn, as a free, even aristocratic, attendant of a great noble.

<sup>79</sup> See Appendix Glossary, pp. 158-159.

that Agamemnon's behaviour in his role as 'father' of the expeditionary force stands in stark contrast to the paternal behaviour of Peleus. It is the contention of this study that the embassy episode and the related Nestor-Patroclus scene serve to demonstrate the nature of Peleus' paternal role as head of his household in contrast to Agamemnon's handling of his role as head of the expeditionary force: Peleus has been a prime example of a gentle and caring father in his relationship with his son, whereas Agamemnon as the prime father figure to the Achaean forces has behaved arrogantly and competitively, as reflected in his reaction to the Chryses-Chryseis situation.

Another way in which two of these witnesses, namely, Phoenix and Nestor, contribute to the presentation of the parent-child relationship, and in particular the father-son aspect thereof, in the development of the central theme is through the Homeric technique of using paradeigmata, whereby Phoenix and Nestor introduce their own and other parent-child relationships as examples to reinforce their arguments. In the case of Phoenix (*Il.* 9.434-605), the dysfunctional triadic parent-child relationship in his family of orientation, where there is a vengeful maternal influence and anger between father and son over a concubine, is contrasted with the fatherly love and acceptance exhibited towards him by Peleus. Phoenix follows this autobiographical paradigm with a mythological one in which the parent-child relationship of Meleager features. In Phoenix's speech both his autobiographical and the Meleager paradeigmata revolve around unfair treatment and anger involving father, mother, and son. In the context of the embassy, one may find parallels to these paradeigmata in the situation involving Achilles and Agamemnon, who is the symbolic father of the Achaean forces. It is significant that Phoenix, aiming at bringing to an end a disruption in this larger social unit, bases his arguments on disruptions in the more fundamental parent-child relationship.<sup>80</sup>

Nestor (*Il.* 11.669-760) precedes his thematically significant request to Patroclus with a lengthy paradigm in which he narrates some of his own youthful exploits which illustrate the caring paternal attitude of his own father, Neleus:

... geg[ra]qe[i] d[er] fr[ater] na Nhle[us],

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<sup>80</sup> The sudden introduction into the narrative of Phoenix as a member of the embassy has given rise to various interpretations, for example, Leaf and Bayfield (1895: 446), from the analysts' point of view, regard it as a late interpolation, but Braswell (1971: 22-23) explains it as an example of Homeric mythological innovation. Scodel (1997: 211-216) offers an explanation of the 'difficulties' in the Phoenix episode in terms of her model of the oral poet's relationship with his audience. See also Scodel (1982) and Rosner (1976) for detailed discussions of the speech of Phoenix.

o□nekÐ moi t┘ce pollÆ n┘J polem┘nde ki┘nti. (Il.  
11.683-684)

... o┘d┘ me Nhle┘j  
e<sup>7</sup>a qwr□ssesqai, Øp┘kruyen d┘ moi <sup>6</sup>ppouj:  
o┘ gÐr p<sup>¨</sup> t<sup>5</sup> m' \_fh <sup>7</sup>dmen polem□□a \_rga. (Il. 11.717-  
719)<sup>81</sup>

He follows this example of his own father with a description of the Peleus-Achilles father-son parting, in which he focuses on Peleus urging his son to excel in everything, and concludes by repeating Menoetius' parting instructions to his son, Patroclus (see p. 34). It is this reminder that galvanizes Patroclus into action. From this point he begins to play a more active role in the narrative.

The nature of Patroclus' role in relation to that of Achilles has given rise to various interpretations, for example, Schein (1997; 1984) sees him as a 'substitute or surrogate' (1997: 356) for Achilles in the way that his actions and death serve as a reflection of the subsequent actions and death of Achilles, events which lie outside the time-span of the poem. On the other hand, Finlay (1980) sees Patroclus as a reflection of Peleus in that he represents the patriarchal values embodied by Peleus. This study, in terms of its focus on parent-child dynamics, sees Patroclus as being the recipient of all Achilles' feelings of filial and paternal affection, in the absence of his father and son, hence the extreme grief he suffers on the death of Patroclus. At *Iliad* 19.321-327 he explicitly compares Patroclus' death with that of his father and/or his son:

... o┘ m┘n gÐr ti kak<sup>¨</sup>teron ællo pÐqoimi,  
o┘d' e<sup>7</sup> ken to<sup>?</sup> patr┘j Øpofqim┘noio puqo<sup>5</sup>mhn  
...  
ð┘ t┘n, ┘j sk┘r┘J moi \_ni tr┘fetai f<sup>5</sup>loj u<sup>3</sup>┘j (Il.  
19.321-322; 326)<sup>82</sup>

<sup>81</sup> 'And Neleus rejoiced in his heart that so much had turned out well for me, who was young to go to war' (Il. 11.682-683); 'Nor did Neleus allow me to take up arms and hid my horses from me. He said I did not yet have any knowledge of the business of war' (Il. 11.717-719).

<sup>82</sup> 'For I could have suffered nothing worse, not even if I learned of the death of my father ... Or him, my dear son, who is being raised for me in Scyros' (Il. 19.321-322; 326).

We see at *Iliad* 19.328-337 his personal grief at the loss of Patroclus is exacerbated by the fact that, in the light of his destined death at Troy, he had hoped Patroclus would fulfil the role of surrogate father to Neoptolemus, on the assumption that Peleus would either be dead or near death. Thus Patroclus, an adopted member of Achilles' family of orientation, should have been the replacement link between Achilles' two families. From Patroclus himself there are some revealing comments about Achilles' relationship with his parents (*Il.* 16.33-35) and with his father (*Il.* 23.89-90) in passages of character-text addressed to Achilles.<sup>83</sup> The first comment implies that Achilles has experienced a caring upbringing from his parents, while the second explicitly describes how Peleus nurtured Patroclus to be a  $\alpha\epsilon\rho\theta\rho\omega\nu$  to his only son.

### 2.2.3.2 Achilles on his father

Achilles' first reference to his relationship with his father occurs in his aforementioned response to Odysseus (*Il.* 9.308-429). Here he thinks of himself in the role of dependent son in his father's home. Phoenix (*Il.* 9.440) describes him as  $\nu\pi\rho\iota\omicron\upsilon$  (like a child) at the time he left for Troy. He reveals himself as a compliant son, willing to accept his caring father's patriarchal role. His vehement rejection of Agamemnon reinforces the implied contrast to Peleus' paternal style. In Achilles' response to Phoenix (*Il.* 9.607-619), the expression of his love for his surrogate father, Phoenix, may be taken as an indication of even stronger feelings for his real father, taking into account the natural bond between a son and his biological father, as well as the fact that Peleus was a nurturing father. In his rebuke to Phoenix for arguing in support of reconciliation with Agamemnon, his words,

$\kappa\alpha\lambda\gamma\eta\nu\tau\omicron\iota\sigma\iota\nu\sigma\mu\omicron\sigma\tau\epsilon\nu\kappa\alpha\delta\epsilon\iota\nu\lambda\gamma\kappa'\sigma\mu\kappa\alpha\delta\upsilon$  (*Il.*  
9.615),<sup>84</sup>

reveal the expectation engendered by the kind of fathering he has received from Peleus.

The depth of Achilles' filial feelings for his father is evident from remarks which indicate how disturbing his father's death would be for him. At *Iliad* 16.16, rebuking

<sup>83</sup> For the texts of these references see pp. 20 and 33, above.

<sup>84</sup> 'It is the right thing for you to vex with me the man who vexes me' (*Il.* 9.615).

Patroclus for tears shed for the suffering of the Achaeans, he offers the hypothetical deaths of either of their fathers as a genuine cause for grief:

τῶν κε μάλ' ὄμφοτ, ῥων ὀκάκο<sup>5</sup>μεγα τεγνῆ<sup>6</sup>των. (*Il.*  
16.16)<sup>85</sup>

At *Iliad* 19.315-327 he compares the extreme grief he is suffering over Patroclus' death to the suffering he would undergo if he were to hear of the death of his father, or that of his son.<sup>86</sup> This claim is verified by the narrator-text describing Achilles' expression of grief at 24.507-516 where he is described as weeping alternately for his father and for Patroclus.

The reciprocal nature of the depth of feeling which is shared by Peleus and Achilles is illustrated by the empathy which is revealed by the focalization of Peleus' feelings through Achilles at *Iliad* 18.330-332, 19.321-325, and 19.334-337, where Achilles imagines the grief his father would suffer on the death of his son. In each case he links the untimely end of Patroclus to his own imminent death. This concern for the loss to be suffered by Peleus is reinforced by the simile used to emphasize Achilles' emotions at the funeral of Patroclus:

ῥῆ δ' πατρὸς παῖδ' ἱδρῆται ἵστα<sup>5</sup>κα<sup>6</sup>ων,  
νυμφ<sup>5</sup>ου, ἔῃ τε γὰρ ἔνδεῖλο<sup>6</sup>ι<sup>7</sup> ὀκῶχσε τοκάαῃ (*Il.* 23.222-  
223).<sup>87</sup>

It is evident that Achilles is keenly aware of the consequences for his father created by his choice of the glory option offered by his dual destiny. The consequences involve both the emotional devastation caused by the loss of a child, and the implications of not having a son to repay  $\gamma\rho\iota\pi\tau\rho\alpha$ . This dual aspect of emotional needs and the need to render and receive  $\gamma\rho\iota\pi\tau\rho\alpha$  is seen in the climactic scene involving Achilles and Priam, where Priam, after establishing the link between himself and Peleus, describes the lot of an elderly father who does not have a son to take care of him:

κα<sup>8</sup> μὲν ποῦ κε<sup>9</sup>νον περὶναι, τὰ ὄμφ<sup>8</sup>ῃ ἑῃ ντεῖ

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<sup>85</sup> 'If either of them were dead, we should indeed be distressed' (*Il.* 16.16).

<sup>86</sup> This passage not only reveals the depth of Achilles' feelings for his father, but has also been cited (p. 36) as an illustration of Achilles' association of Patroclus with Peleus and Neoptolemus.

<sup>87</sup> 'As a father mourns when he burns the bones of a newly-married son, whose death has devastated his wretched parents' (*Il.* 23.222-223).

te<sup>5</sup>rous', o<sup>1</sup>d( t<sup>5</sup>j ,stin ørln ka<sup>8</sup> loig<sub>T</sub>n Øm<sup>?</sup>nai. (*Il.*  
24.488-489)<sup>88</sup>

Felson (2002: 35) describes *qr(ptra* as comprising not only the necessities of life (not an issue in Peleus' case), but also 'the preservation of honor and protection from enemies and detractors'. Furthermore, the foundation of the significance of the repayment of *qr(ptra* lies in 'emotional solidarity between parent and child' (2002: 40). Thus repaying *qr(ptra* to parents who have been caring and nurturing is not merely a duty but an expression of filial love. This aspect of the father-son relationship is first demonstrated by Achilles in his caring treatment of Phoenix, his surrogate father, at the conclusion of the embassy episode in *Iliad* 9. In the scene with Priam surrogacy again plays a role: his anguish at being unable to provide *qr(ptra* to his own father is alleviated by the substitution of Priam. His role of surrogate son is displayed in his nurturing, caring treatment of Priam, as demonstrated by the physical attempt at reassurance at *Iliad* 24.508-509, and by his insistence that Priam should eat at 24.601-620. It is this scene which provides the final evidence of the depth and intensity of Achilles' filial feelings for his father.

#### **2.2.4 The husband/father-wife/mother relationship: Peleus and Thetis**

The third interpersonal dyad in Achilles' natal family is the relationship that precedes and initiates the parent-child triad, but, owing to the absence of Peleus from the narrative action, there is no depiction of interaction between its two participants. Nevertheless there are reasons for the inclusion of a discussion of this relationship. First is the fact that its two participants, as the immortal mother and mortal father of the protagonist have significant roles to play in the 'wrath of Achilles' theme, even though Peleus' role is played *in absentia*. Another reason is that in the depiction of the various triads, in which the three heroes under discussion participate as sons or fathers, this is the only parent-parent dyad which does not appear to be based on a close and loving bond.

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<sup>88</sup> 'And perhaps his neighbours, who are all around him, are giving him a hard time, nor is there anyone to ward off ruin and destruction' (*Il.* 24.488-489).

The only textual evidence regarding the nature of the Peleus-Thetis relationship is to be found in Thetis' complaint to Hephaestus about her familial problems (*Il.* 18.432-444),<sup>89</sup> the foundation of which is her marriage to a mortal. She states that from the start she was an unwilling participant in the relationship, as the marriage to a mortal was forced on her by Zeus (432-434). She then goes on to describe the present state of the relationship, which is that her age-afflicted husband is languishing at home (434-435); so from Thetis' perspective the interpersonal relationship between her and her mortal husband is unsatisfactory, a situation caused by his mortal status rather than any personal defect. The incompatibility of this mortal husband-divine wife relationship is borne out by the fact that while the aging mortal is detained at home in Phthia, the ageless goddess is able to flit about between Nereus' palace, the Greek camp, and Mount Olympus. Homer thus leaves the audience with this one-sided view of the relationship, as there is no indication in the *Iliad* regarding Peleus' feelings about his relationship with his divine wife.

The problematic nature of this parent-parent dyad does not affect the other two dyadic relationships as each parent is shown to have enjoyed a loving and nurturing relationship with Achilles, who in turn is depicted as exhibiting reciprocal filial feelings.<sup>90</sup> On the other hand, the incompatibility which characterizes the parent-parent dyad is shown to underlie the tensions present in the Peleus-Thetis-Achilles triad.<sup>91</sup>

### **2.2.5 Achilles' family of procreation**

In the demonstration of Achilles' role as son in his family of orientation, mention was made of his other role in the father-son relationship: that of father of a son in his family of procreation, although his family of procreation as a triadic structure does not feature in the *Iliad*. In fact Deidamia is not even mentioned, and the Achilles-Neoptolemus dyad receives only two brief references, both of which were rejected by Analyst critics as being interpolations. Achilles' adventures in Scyros are not

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<sup>89</sup> Lines 432-437 of this passage have been quoted on p. 22 as an illustration of the Peleus-Thetis-Achilles triad.

<sup>90</sup> See sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3.

<sup>91</sup> See section 2.2.1.

mentioned in the *Iliad*.<sup>92</sup> In fact, Achilles' remarks at *Iliad* 9.392-393, in which he asserts that Peleus will find a bride for him, and Briseis' speech at *Iliad* 19.297-299, in which she claims that Patroclus had said that he would ensure that she became Achilles' lawful wife, indicate that Achilles had no communally recognized marriage in Phthia.<sup>93</sup>

The first reference to Neoptolemus is made by Achilles when addressing the corpse of Patroclus:

δῆ, τέτνον ἴδω σκῆπτρον μοι ἔνι τρυφῆται φῶλοιο ὑπὸ γυῖο,  
 εἴ ποῦ ἔτι ζῆει γένεοιο Νεοπτόλεμοιο γένεοιο

. (Il.19.326-327)<sup>94</sup>

This brief and sudden introduction of the Achilles-Neoptolemus dyad at *Iliad* 19.326-333 led Analysts to regard this passage as a late interpolation for a number of reasons, both linguistic and chronological.<sup>95</sup> Going back to an even earlier period in Homeric criticism, line 327 is one of the lines athetized by the Alexandrian scholars Aristarchus and Aristophanes. But in more recent times Felson (2002: 44) gives a rational explanation for the introduction of Neoptolemus at this juncture: Achilles has been transported in his imagination to his home where his father is missing his absent son, who, in fact, will never return and be able to render *σκήπτρον*, and this reminds him that Patroclus will be unable to play his planned role of taking Neoptolemus back to Phthia. Edwards (1991: 272) points out that Achilles first associates Patroclus with their fathers and home in Phthia at *Iliad* 16.13-16, and this association recurs on a number of occasions<sup>96</sup> after Patroclus' death.

It is significant for the argument of this study that in the passage referred to above (*Il.* 19.321-337) Achilles links his two experiences of the father-son relationship, in his family of orientation and his family of procreation, thus bringing to the fore his feelings for his biological father and son, feelings which he has been experiencing

<sup>92</sup> Our knowledge of the Scyros connection is derived from the later Cyclic poems: the Achilles-Deidamia marriage in Scyros is recounted in the *Cypria*, and Neoptolemus' coming to Troy from Scyros in the *Little Iliad*. As Edwards (1991: 273) points out, we do not know to what extent Homer's knowledge of events external to his narrative corresponds to these later accounts.

<sup>93</sup> See Patterson (1998: 56-60) on the nature of the institution of marriage in the Homeric world.

<sup>94</sup> 'Or him, my dear son, who is being raised for me in Scyros, if by chance godlike Neoptolemus is still alive' (*Il.* 19.326-327).

<sup>95</sup> See Leaf and Bayfield (1898: 477-478) and Monro (1893: 355-356; 363).

<sup>96</sup> *Iliad* 18.88-90, 101, 330-332.

through various surrogates. The depth of his feelings for his father has already been indicated, and here he links these filial feelings with his paternal feelings for his father. He also associates both father and son with Patroclus, who has been depicted in the narrative in both a paternal and a filial role in relation to Achilles. This passage constitutes the only allusion to the tripartite patriline in which the hero stands between his father and son (although *in absentia*).<sup>97</sup>

Another connection between Achilles' relationships with Peleus and Neoptolemus is that both relationships are experiencing separation, occurring for each relationship at a different stage in the life cycle of that relationship. Achilles has been raised by a nurturing father from whom he is separated at a time when his elderly father requires care, whereas Neoptolemus is growing up in the absence of his father and is thus being deprived of the fatherly care which Achilles enjoyed as a child. This aspect of war-induced separation receives fuller treatment in the depiction of the Odysseus-Telemachus relationship in the *Odyssey*.

In terms of the development of the central theme this allusion occurs at the significant juncture when Achilles has just renounced his anger against Agamemnon and is now consumed by his new grief-induced and vengeance-driven anger. Achilles' revelation of these linked feelings and concern for father and son in this passage find an echo in the Achilles of the *Odyssey*, where, at *Odyssey* 11.492-503, the shade of Achilles asks Odysseus for news of his son and his father.<sup>98</sup> Odysseus is unable to provide any information about the latter, but describes Neoptolemus' exploits at the fall of Troy. The last Odysseus sees of Achilles' shade is it striding off,

ghqos fnh L o<sup>3</sup> u<sup>3</sup>fn fhv Øride<sup>5</sup>keton e-nai. (*Od.*  
11.540)<sup>99</sup>

It is significant that it is pride in his son's achievements which allows an adjective such as ghq<sub>7</sub> sunoj to be applied to Achilles, even in his misery in the underworld.

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<sup>97</sup> In the *Aeneid* the Anchises-Aeneas-Ascanius patriline is memorably depicted at the start of Aeneas' journey (*Aen.* 2.721-724), while in the *Odyssey* the Laertes-Odysseus-Telemachus patriline is depicted when they stand together in the final abortive battle which signifies the end of Odysseus' journey (*Od.* 24.505-515).

<sup>98</sup> Felson (2002: 45-46) draws attention to the similarity of Achilles' concern for his father expressed in this passage to his feelings in the *Iliad* which are instrumental in determining his reaction to Priam's request.

<sup>99</sup> '... rejoicing in what I said about his son being famous' (*Od.* 11.540).

The second brief reference to Achilles' son also occurs at a significant point in the narrative, namely, the introduction to the Achilles-Priam scene, when Hermes gives advice to Priam on the form his supplication to Achilles should take so as best to stir up his emotions (quoted on p. 44 below). Hermes' advice is that Priam should adopt the traditional form of supplication, namely, to clasp the knees of the supplicated person and appeal in the name of his parents, and other family members, where applicable (Richardson 1993: 320).<sup>100</sup> In this case Hermes' suggestion encompasses the three most important people in Achilles' life, namely, his father, mother, and son. The fact that in the ensuing narrative Priam makes no mention of Achilles' mother and son is interpreted by analyst critics as evidence for regarding these two lines as spurious.<sup>101</sup> But as is explained on pp. 44-45, Priam, in terms of the narrative situation, has his reasons for focusing solely on Achilles' father in his supplication.

The inclusion of Neoptolemus in the narrative, and the manner thereof, reveals that in Achilles' family of procreation there is a strong emotional bond between father and son, whereas there appears to be no bond between Achilles and the mother of his son. A similar situation may be observed in Achilles' family of orientation, where the narrative depicts strong and reciprocal mother-son and father-son bonds, whereas the parent-parent relationship is problematic.

### **2.2.6 The parent-child relationship and the resolution of Achilles' anger**

In the sequence of events that leads to the final resolution of Achilles' anger each of his parents has an active (Thetis) or a passive (Peleus) role to play. This concluding sequence of events involves Achilles' laying aside of his original grievance in exchange for the grief-induced and intensified anger caused by the death of Patroclus at the hands of Hector. As it was his mother who was instrumental in the success of his withdrawal in *Iliad* 1, so it is she who obtains from Hephaestus new armour for her son to replace his father's god-given armour, thus enabling him to re-enter the

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<sup>100</sup> This form of supplication is demonstrated in greater detail by Nestor in his appeal to his fellow Achaeans to stand firm (*Il.* 15.659-666).

<sup>101</sup> See, for example, Leaf and Bayfield (1898: 593).

fighting, where he exercises his wrath with ever increasing savagery, culminating in the fatal encounter with Hector and his subsequent inhumane treatment of Hector's body. Likewise it is his mother who is called upon to initiate the resolution of her son's wrath. Whereas her first intervention was performed at the request of her son and the second on her own initiative, this third intervention is on the instructions of Zeus (*Il.* 24.110-116). The first and the last interventions represent a reversal of roles: from the sequence of Achilles, the son, requesting Thetis (his mother) to intercede with Zeus (the father-god) in the first instance, to the reverse sequence of Zeus requesting/instructing Thetis to intercede with Achilles in the last.<sup>102</sup>

Thetis carries out Zeus' instructions in the fourth and final scene between mother and son (*Il.* 24.120-147). After repeating Zeus' message regarding his personal displeasure and that of the other Olympians at Achilles' mistreatment of Hector's body, she makes her personal request:

Ø11' Æge dØ 1?son, nekro'o d+ d(xai Æpoina. (Il.  
24.137)<sup>103</sup>

To which Achilles responds obediently:

t[]d' e7h: |j Æpoina f(roi ka8 nekTn Ægoito,  
e4 dØ prjfroni qum\_ 'Olmpioj a|tTj Øn`gei. (Il.  
24.139-140)<sup>104</sup>

Thetis has initiated the resolution of her son's wrath and now the paternal influence enters to bring about his release from the madness of *mānij* (wrath).

The paternal aspect is built up, prior to the scene between Achilles and Priam, by the description of Priam as a mourning father:

pa'dej m+n pat(r' Æmf8 kaq[]menoi \_ndoqen a|laj  
dØkrusin e6mat' \_furon, | d' ,n m(ssoisi geraiTj  
,ntupEj ,n cla5nV kekalumm,noj: Ømf8 d+ pollØ  
kTproj \_hn kefal[] te ka8 a|c(ni to'o g(rontoj,

<sup>102</sup> Lee (1979: 124-125 and 128) draws attention to the significance of this reversal in terms of the fulfilment of the plan of Zeus, and the assertion of paternal influence.

<sup>103</sup> 'Come now, release him and accept ransom for the body' (*Il.* 24.137).

<sup>104</sup> 'So be it; let him bring the ransom and take away the body, if the Olympian himself so earnestly urges it' (*Il.* 24.139-140).

t[̄]n "a kulind[̄]menoj katam[̄]sato cers<sup>8</sup>n s[̄]si. (I  
l. 24.161-165) <sup>105</sup>

It is not all fathers and sons, however, for Priam's daughters and daughters-in-law are also brought into the scene, and at *Iliad* 24.200-216 Hecuba appears, begging her husband to stay at home and mourn their son with her. There are further father-son references in the scene in which Hermes (u<sup>3</sup>τn f<sup>5</sup>lon, 333), sent by his father Zeus, escorts Priam to Achilles' tent. The fatherliness of Priam is emphasized by Hermes who addresses him as p̄ter (363) and ends his opening speech with the words f<sup>5</sup>lJ d( se patr<sup>8</sup> ,<sup>5</sup>skw ('I take you for a beloved father', 371). At the end of the journey he reveals his divine status and mission, and gives Priam the following instructions on how to supplicate Achilles:

t[̄]nh d' e<sup>4</sup>selq[̄]n lab+ go[̄]nata Phle[̄]wnoj,  
ka<sup>8</sup> min †p+r patr[̄]j ka<sup>8</sup> mht(roj ž^k[̄]moio  
l<sup>5</sup>sseo ka<sup>8</sup> t(keoj, <sup>6</sup>na o<sup>3</sup> s[̄]n qum[̄]n †r<sup>5</sup>nVj. (Il. 24.465-  
467) <sup>106</sup>

In this prelude to the ensuing father-son climax, Hermes does not forget the third member of the parent-child triad, thus stressing Achilles' emotional attachment to both his parents. He also strengthens the father-son aspect when he suggests the inclusion of Achilles' son in the appeal.<sup>107</sup>

In the event, Priam uses only Achilles' father in his appeal (Il. 24.486-506). After not only clasping Achilles' knees, but kissing his ce'raj / dein̄j Øndrof[̄]nouj ('terrible man-slaying hands', 478-479), he introduces his supplication with the words:

m̄asai patr[̄]j so'o, qeo'j ,pie<sup>5</sup>kel' 'Acille?',  
thl<sup>5</sup>kou ~j per ,g'n, †lo[̄] ,p<sup>8</sup> g[̄]raoj o[̄]d[̄]: (Il. 24.486-  
487) <sup>108</sup>

<sup>105</sup> 'The sons, sitting around their father within the courtyard, drenched their clothes with tears, and in their midst the revered old man, an outline only, wrapped in his cloak; there was much dung on the head and neck of the old man, for while rolling in it he scraped it over with his hands' (Il. 24.161-165).

<sup>106</sup> 'But you yourself go inside and clasp the knees of Peleion and entreat him for the sake of his father and his lovely-haired mother and his child, in order to stir the heart within him' (Il. 24.465-467).

<sup>107</sup> For discussion of the allusions to Neoptolemus in the narrative see pp. 40-42.

<sup>108</sup> 'Achilles like the gods, remember your father of the same age as me, on the threshold of baneful old age' (Il. 24.486-487).

This departure from Hermes' instructions can be plausibly explained by the fact that Priam, as a father, and being aware of the similarity between himself and Peleus, chooses to focus solely on the father figure in his supplication, which has the desired effect, as is illustrated by the ensuing narrator text:

ἔωϊ φῆτο, τὸ δ' ἄρα πατρὶς ἴψ' ἕμερον ἄρσε γῆοιο:  
(*Il.* 24.507) <sup>109</sup>

Priam's supplication is the last in a succession of Trojan supplications, all of which have been rejected. This makes the emotional impact of this paternally motivated acceptance all the more effective, particularly as it follows in the wake of the brutal rejection of Hector's supplication. Following line 507 there is further narrator-text depicting the moving scene between Achilles and Priam. After Achilles has gently disengaged himself from the clasp of the suppliant Priam, there is an outpouring of grief by both the suppliant and the supplicated: Priam grieving for his son, Hector, and Achilles alternately for his own father, to whom he is unable to provide the care needed from a son by an aging father, and for Patroclus, whom he also failed to protect. The protective role of a leader in relation to his followers is equated with that of a father to a son, and in this case his follower was his dearest friend. Thus we have illustrated in Achilles' reaction both kinds of paternal care required of a man: the kind required of an adult son for his father when the cycle of life has brought about a reversal of the roles of giver and recipient of protection and care, as well as the straightforward care of a father for a son.

This outpouring of father-son associated grief has a purging effect and the wrath of Achilles is finally laid to rest, as is indicated by the calm and philosophic words he addresses to Priam (*Il.* 24.517-551). Although his wrath has been purged, Achilles, through the mature self-awareness he has attained, is aware of the danger of his temper erupting (568-570 and 583-585). Nevertheless his final dealings with Priam are described by the narrator in the following reassuring terms:

ἔωϊ ἄρα φωνήσας ἑπέ κάρπυε' ἄρα γῆροντοῖ  
ἄλλαβ' ἀδελφῶν, μή ποτε δεύσει' ἑνὸς κούρου. (*Il.* 24.671-  
672) <sup>110</sup>

<sup>109</sup> 'Thus he spoke, and stirred up in Achilles a desire to weep for his own father' (*Il.* 24.507).

Just as Achilles' initial reaction to Priam's plea is expressed by Achilles gently touching Priam's hand, so the scene between them ends with this reassuring physical contact. This gentle physical contact is in stark contrast to Achilles' treatment of Priam's sons.

Priam's involving of Achilles' father in his entreaty is not the only occasion on which Peleus is used in an attempt to assuage the wrath of Achilles. In *Iliad* 9 the members of Agamemnon's conciliatory embassy use father-based arguments in their attempts to persuade Achilles to relinquish his anger. But whereas these references to his father fail to move Achilles, in *Iliad* 24 the emotion evoked by the similarity of the elderly Priam to his own father finally has the power to purge Achilles of his wrath. It seems significant that the earlier failed arguments did not involve Thetis, who at that stage was actively supporting her son in his anger-driven boycott, whereas in *Iliad* 24, prior to Priam's visit, Thetis has been sent by Zeus to persuade her son to return Hector's body to the Trojans. This joint action by Zeus, the father-god, and Achilles' mother, Thetis, further emphasizes the fact that even in this situation, where the father-god is asserting his patriarchal control, Achilles' mother still has a significant functional role to play.

Amidst the father-son interplay, in the scene between Achilles and Priam, the third member of Achilles' natal family triad is not forgotten. Achilles twice introduces his mother into the conversation: at 24.534-542 where he describes the nature of his parental family, as well as at 24.561-562 where he refers to his mother's role in his decision to return Hector's body. The maternal or mother-child aspect is further accentuated by Achilles' mythological allusion to Niobe grieving for her six sons and six daughters, killed by Apollo and Artemis to avenge the insult to their mother, Leto (*Il.* 24.602-617). So the final resolution of Achilles' anger is not entirely paternally motivated as the maternal influence is consciously brought into the narrative in character-text spoken by Achilles himself.

From a psychoanalytical perspective, Lee (1979: 128-129), in his study focusing on the father-son relationship, sees the paternal element as predominant in the resolution

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<sup>110</sup> 'After saying this, he took hold of the old man's right hand at the wrist in order that he might have no fear in his heart' (*Il.* 24.671-672).

of Achilles' wrath. He interprets the role of mother-son and father-son relationships in personality development, in Jungian terms, as the evolution from the irrational to the rational, or, in archetypal terms, as the evolution from matriarchy to patriarchy. But he does concede that in the personality development of the epic hero the attainment of the maturity in which he assumes the paternal role does not involve the rejection but rather the assimilation of the maternal aspect in the eventual achievement of 'the full integration of his powers' (Lee 1979: 129).

From a more pragmatic and historically based perspective, one may assume that these developments represent, in the patriarchal  $\sigma\text{-}\kappa\omicron\jmath$  of the Homeric world, the change of the sphere of influence, from that of the mother to that of the father, as a son grows from baby and toddler to a boy and youth, when he begins to learn about and participate in the activities of his father's world.<sup>111</sup> This changing situation is likely to have caused inner conflict for the mother in that her instinctual maternal need to nurture and protect was being infringed upon by the demands of society. The fulfilment of his role in heroic society would have required the son to go to war, entailing the possibility of an early death. The poem makes it clear that the mother of an adult son would be unable to switch off this natural maternal behaviour in spite of this societally imposed division of labour in parental responsibilities. In the case of Thetis, the fact that she is immortal makes it all the more difficult for her to accept not merely her son's mortality but also the early death destined for him if he is to achieve the  $\kappa\lambda\text{ }\omicron\jmath$  of a hero. Nevertheless, Thetis, in the *Iliad*, does not attempt to use her divine power to avert this destiny. As mentioned earlier,<sup>112</sup> the stories of Thetis' unilateral attempts to make her son immortal and her subsequent abandonment of husband and son in response to her husband's attempts to thwart her efforts have no place in the narrative; instead the poet has the triadic parent-child relationship of the hero's family of orientation playing a central role in the main theme of the poem.<sup>113</sup>

The foregoing exposition of the depiction of the central role in the narrative of the Peleus-Thetis-Achilles triad has demonstrated the importance and persistence of the

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<sup>111</sup> Felson (2002: 36) cites texts of the immediately post-Homeric Archaic period (*Hymn to Demeter* 166=221; Hesiod's *Works and Days* 130-33) as evidence of the gendered division of labour in the raising of a boy.

<sup>112</sup> See p. 30, note 67.

<sup>113</sup> For references to Homer's mythological selectivity see p. 30, note 67.

triadic nature of the parent-child relationship, as reflected in the fact that in the man's world of the Homeric hero, for Achilles, the maternal presence remains a significant factor even at the end when he assumes paternal maturity. In the culmination of the 'wrath' theme we have the interplay of maternal and paternal influences in that, in addition to this ongoing maternal presence, there is the role played by Achilles' deep feelings for his father in the purging of his anger.

### 2.3 Hector

In terms of the central theme of the poem Hector, although strictly speaking the antagonist, may be regarded as the second hero of the *Iliad*. Hector is Achilles' counterpart on the Trojan side, in that he is their greatest and most feared warrior. This is evident from the first reference to him in the poem:

□ pot' 'Acillaoj poql °xetai u+aj 'Acai~n  
 s mpantaj: t- te d' o► ti dun□seai Øcn rmen- j per  
 craisme'n, e't' ·n pollo<sup>8</sup> †f' 3Ektoroj Øndrof- noio  
 qn□skontej p<sup>5</sup>ptwsi: ...  
 (*Il.* 1.240-243)<sup>114</sup>

These words, addressed by Achilles to Agamemnon in the 'quarrel scene', reveal that Hector is regarded as the chief threat to the Achaeans. Achilles sees him as playing the same role for the Trojans as he himself does for the Achaeans, namely, that of principal warrior, on whom their success depends. In addition, as their greatest warrior and the son of the Trojan king, Priam, he is acknowledged as the military leader of the Trojans; as is indicated in the opening lines of the Catalogue of the Trojans and their allies:

Trws<sup>8</sup> m+n fgem- neue m( gaj koruqa<sup>5</sup>oloj 3Ektwr /Priam<sup>5</sup>  
 dhj (*Il.* 2.816-17).<sup>115</sup>

Following these references to his prowess as a warrior and a military leader in *Iliad* 1 and 2, Hector's actions in the early battle scenes in *Iliad* 3-5 serve to demonstrate the leading position he holds among the Trojans. His pre-eminence is further emphasised in character-text spoken by his allies, Pandarus (*Il.* 5.211) and Sarpedon (*Il.* 5.472-492), and by the reaction of an enemy, Diomedes (*Il.* 5.596).

<sup>114</sup> 'Truly some day a great longing for Achilles will come upon every one of the sons of the Achaeans. Then you will not be able to provide any assistance, when many fall, slain by man-slaying Hector' (*Il.* 1.240-243).

<sup>115</sup> 'In command of the Trojans was great Hector of the shining helm, the son of Priam' (*Il.* 2.816-17).

Hector's prowess and position play a dual role in connection with the wrath of Achilles and its disastrous consequences. In the first phase of Achilles' anger, which is directed against Agamemnon, Hector is chiefly responsible for the Trojans sending so many Achaeans to the realm of Hades. But when Patroclus becomes one of Hector's victims, Achilles' anger enters a new phase – a grief-induced desire for vengeance against Hector. Even after he has killed Hector, he continues to express his anger by mistreating his corpse. Achilles is finally purged of his anger when he submits to the pleas of Hector's father, Priam, who has come to ransom the body of his son. After this wrath-cleansing scene, the poem ends not with Achilles but with the funeral of Hector. Thus Hector's story is woven into the central theme of the *Iliad* from its early stages to its end. Hence Redfield (1975: 27) expresses the view: 'In some sense the story of the *Iliad* is the story of the relation between these two heroes.'

As regards the parent-child relationship, Hector, like Achilles, is depicted as an adult son in his family of orientation and a father of a young son in his family of procreation. But whereas Achilles is depicted primarily in the former role, Hector is depicted as participating fully in both roles. The contribution of these two parent-child triads to the story of Hector is revealed in sequential stages in the course of this story.

### **2.3.1 Hector's family of orientation**

The first aspect of Hector's parent-child relations to feature in the narrative is that of the father-son dyad in his family of orientation. Hector and his father, Priam, first participate in the action at the Trojan assembly (*Il.* 2.786-808). Here Priam is depicted as presiding over the assembly and Hector as dismissing it preparatory to going into battle. The only character-text is spoken by Iris (disguised as Hector's brother, Polites), whose words reinforce the socio-political co-operative relationship between father and son, with Priam depicted as the wise elder statesman in time of peace, whereas Hector is urged to co-ordinate the military operations now that the city is under attack. This type of relationship is also demonstrated at Priam's second appearance in the narrative, when he is summoned to preside over the oath-taking ceremonies which precede the single combat between Paris and Menelaus (*Il.* 3.250-

319). While Priam attends to these formalities, Hector takes care of the practical side of organizing the combat. Again there is no character-text exchange between father and son. Thus the Priam-Hector relationship is first introduced in the impersonal sphere of public life in the *p<sub>7</sub> li j*, as opposed to the personal sphere of the *o-koj*.

Thus in *Iliad* 1-5 the position of Hector as the Trojan counterpart of Achilles is established. In addition, there are references and scenes which reveal some information about Hector's family of orientation, namely, that he is the son of Priam, the king of Troy, that he shares in the political life of his father, that he has siblings, and that he is functionally the senior son.<sup>116</sup> Then in *Iliad* 6, part of which takes place within the walls of Troy, further details are revealed about Hector's family of orientation, at the personal *o-koj* level, before his family of procreation is introduced. At *Iliad* 6.242-250 there is a narrator-text description of the home of Hector's family of orientation:

'All' lte d<sub>l</sub> Pri<sub>ð</sub>moio d<sub>7</sub>mon perikall, ' <sup>6</sup>kane,  
xest□j a<sup>4</sup>qo<sub>7</sub>sVsi tetugm(non, a<sub>7</sub>t<sub>Er</sub> <sub>9</sub>n a<sub>7</sub>t<sub>7</sub>  
pent□kont' \_nesan q<sub>ð</sub>lamoi xesto'o l<sup>5</sup>qoio,  
plhs<sup>5</sup>on øll□lwn dedmhm(noi: \_nqa d<sub>+</sub> pa'dej  
koim~nto Pri<sub>ð</sub>moio par<sub>E</sub> mnst□j øl<sub>7</sub>coisin:  
kour<sub>ð</sub>wn d' <sub>8</sub>t<sub>7</sub>rwqen <sub>9</sub>nant<sup>5</sup>oi \_ndoqen a<sub>7</sub>l<sub>aj</sub>  
d<sup>7</sup>dek' \_san t<sub>7</sub>(geoi q<sub>ð</sub>lamoi xesto'o l<sup>5</sup>qoio,  
plhs<sup>5</sup>on øll□lwn dedmhm(noi: \_nqa d<sub>+</sub> gambro<sup>8</sup>  
koim~nto Pri<sub>ð</sub>moio par' a<sup>4</sup>do<sup>5</sup>Vj øl<sub>7</sub>coisin. (Il.  
6.242-250)<sup>117</sup>

This passage describes extended and joint family living arrangements.<sup>118</sup> But this description is not consistent with the other descriptions of the living arrangements of

<sup>116</sup> The poem does not reveal whether Hector is the eldest by birth.

<sup>117</sup> 'But now he reached Priam's very beautiful palace, furnished with polished colonnades, and inside it were fifty bedchambers of polished stone built next to one another; here the sons of Priam slept beside their wedded wives. On the other side, within the courtyard facing these were his daughters' twelve roofed bedchambers of polished stone, built next to one another; here Priam's sons-in-law slept beside their tender wives' (Il. 6.242-250).

<sup>118</sup> Leaf and Bayfield (1895: 394) compare this type of family living-arrangement with the 'common house' system which was prevalent in mediaeval Italy, where a joint family lived together in the house of a common ancestor during his lifetime. The joint family normally included the sons and daughters-in-law, and the unmarried daughters of this man.

Paris and Hector, who are depicted as having their own conjugal establishments, implying a nuclear family living arrangement. For instance, at *Iliad* 3.421, reference is made to Paris' 'very beautiful house' (d<sub>1</sub>mon perikall<sub>1</sub>(a)). In *Iliad* 6 more detail is given about this house:

3Ektwr d<sub>+</sub> pr<sub>1</sub>τ<sub>1</sub>j d''mat' 'Alexðndroio beb<sub>1</sub>kei  
 kalð, tð " ' a<sub>1</sub>τ<sub>1</sub>j \_teuxe s<sub>1</sub>n Øndrðsin o<sup>9</sup> t<sub>1</sub>t' Ærist  
 oi  
 □san 9n<sup>8</sup> Tro<sup>5</sup>v 9rib''laki t<sub>1</sub>ktonej Ændrej,  
 o<sup>6</sup> o<sup>3</sup> 9po<sup>5</sup>hsan qðlamon ka<sup>8</sup> d''ma ka<sup>8</sup> a<sub>1</sub>lhn  
 9gg<sub>1</sub>qi te Priðmoio ka<sup>8</sup> 3Ektoroj 9n p<sub>1</sub>lei ÆkrV.  
 (*Il.* 6.313-317)<sup>119</sup>

After this visit to his brother's house, at line 370 Hector proceeds to his own 'well inhabited' or 'well built house' (d<sub>1</sub>mouj 9<sub>1</sub> naitðontej).

Although there is some inconsistency regarding living arrangements in Priam's family of procreation, the number of sons mentioned in 245 is later verified by Priam:

pent□kontð moi □san, Lt' uluqon u<sup>+</sup>ej 'Acai''n:  
 9nneaka<sup>5</sup>deka m<sub>1</sub>n moi 9k<sup>4</sup>aj nhd<sub>1</sub>oj □san,  
 to<sub>1</sub>ij d' Ællouj moi \_tikton 9ni megðroisi guna'kej. (*I*  
*l.* 24.495-497)<sup>120</sup>

Priam here confirms the polygamous nature of his family of procreation. Richardson (1997: 325-326) cites the exegetical scholia bT: 'It is the custom for foreign kings to have children from several women.' Thus Priam as a foreign king is depicted as polygamous in contrast to the monogamous Greek heroes. Redfield (1975: 243) suggests that Homer, through inherited tradition, was aware of the polygamous nature of Priam's household, but did not really understand how a polygamous household worked. Three of Priam's wives are mentioned in the *Iliad*: Hecuba, introduced in *Iliad* 6; Kastianeira, briefly alluded to at *Iliad* 8.302-305 in connection with the death of their son, Gorgythion; and Laothoe, the mother of two of Achilles' victims, namely, Polydorus, referred to by the narrator as the youngest (ne''tatoj) and most

<sup>119</sup> 'And Hector went to the fine house of Alexandros, which he himself had built together with the men who at that time were the best craftsmen in fertile Troy; they had built for him a bedchamber, a hall, and a courtyard close to those of Priam and Hector on the acropolis' (*Il.* 6.313-317).

<sup>120</sup> 'I had fifty sons when the sons of the Achaeans came; nineteen were from one womb, and the rest other women bore to me in my palace' (*Il.* 24.495-497).

loved (f<sup>5</sup>l<sup>t</sup>atoj) of Priam's sons (*Il.* 20.409-410), and Lycaon, who mentions his mother in his unsuccessful supplication of Achilles (*Il.* 21.70-96). Priam also refers to Laothoe as the mother of these two sons, about whose fate he is uncertain:

ka<sup>8</sup> g<sub>er</sub> n<sup>2</sup>n d<sub>o</sub> pa'de, Luk<sub>ona</sub> ka<sup>8</sup> Pol<sub>dwron</sub>,  
o<sub>l</sub> d<sub>namai</sub> <sup>4</sup>d<sub>ein</sub> Tr<sup>wn</sup> e<sup>4</sup>j <sub>Æ</sub>stu Øl<sub>ntwn</sub>,  
to<sub>g</sub> moi Laoq<sub>h</sub> t<sub>keto</sub>, kre<sup>5</sup>ousa gunaik<sup>n</sup>.  
Øll' e<sup>4</sup> m<sub>n</sub> z<sup>ousi</sup> met<sub>strat</sub>, □ t' ·n <sub>peita</sub>  
calko<sup>?</sup> te cruso<sup>?</sup> t' Ø<sub>polus</sub>meq': <sub>sti</sub> g<sub>er</sub> <sub>ndon</sub>:  
pollØ g<sub>er</sub> °pase paid<sup>8</sup> g<sub>rwn</sub> |nom<sub>klutoj</sub> <sub>Althj</sub>. (*Il.*  
22.46-51)<sup>121</sup>

This passage makes it clear, by referring to her dowry, that Laothoe is a recognized wife and not a concubine.

Of the fifty sons alluded to by Priam, twenty two are mentioned by name in the poem. Richardson (1993: 325-326) suggests that, excluding the abovementioned three sons of other mothers, it is possible that the remaining nineteen are the nineteen sons of Hecuba, mentioned at *Iliad* 24.496. If this is so, it concentrates the focus on the Priam-Hecuba-their children triad more firmly. In any event it is this marriage, and more particularly the Priam-Hecuba-Hector triad which features most prominently. The structure of Hector's family of orientation is more complex than the simple tripartite structure of Achilles' family of orientation, yet it is only the similar tripartite Priam-Hecuba-Hector relationship, and the dyadic aspects thereof which have a significant role to play in the narrative of the poem.

After the two narrative-text episodes involving Priam and Hector referred to above and various allusions to Hector as the son of Priam, it is at *Iliad* 6.86-88 that the third member of this triad is introduced in character-text spoken by Hector's brother, Helenus. Hecuba is not mentioned by name, but is referred to as the mother of Hector and of the speaker. Helenus' instructions to Hector result in the mother-son encounter between Hector and Hecuba at *Iliad* 6.251-285. This meeting takes place in a triadic

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<sup>121</sup> 'For even now I cannot see two sons, Lycaon and Polydorus, among the Trojans huddled up in the city; these Laothoe, a princess, bore to me. But if they are alive with the encamped army, then, in truth, we will ransom them with bronze and gold, for it is inside; for the aged Altes of famous name gave much to his daughter' (*Il.* 22.46-51).

parent-child context in that Hector meets Hecuba in the palace of Priam, the detailed description of which immediately precedes the mother-son meeting. In action, reminiscent of Achilles and Thetis at *Iliad* 1.360-427, Hector seeks out his mother in order to request her to perform a task. Like Thetis, Hecuba greets her son with affection and opens the conversation with words expressing care and concern. The narrator-text describing Hecuba's manner of greeting her son,  $\_n\ t'\ o^3\ f^? \text{ ceir}^5\ \_poj\ t'\ \_fat'\ \_k\ t'\ \_n\text{-}mazen$  (6.253),<sup>122</sup> is repeated later (*Il.* 19.7) to introduce a Thetis-Achilles conversation. This formulaic line, used to express affectionate greeting, derives its emotive effect from  $\_n\ \dots\ f^?$  ('clung to', literally 'grew on').

Another echo of the first Thetis-Achilles scene is to be found in the fact that Hecuba opens the conversation with a question regarding Hector's return to the city, expressing concern that the reason may be that he has been worn out by the Achaeans. In the Thetis-Achilles scene, Thetis inquires as to the cause of his distress:  $t_{\text{c}}knon, t^5\ kla^5eij$ ; ('Child, why do you weep?', *Il.* 1.362). Hector's response, like that of Achilles, contains a request that his mother should perform a task involving the supplication of a divinity. Nevertheless there is a significant and characterizing difference in the nature of these requested supplications: Thetis is to appeal to Zeus for the benefit of her son, whereas Hecuba is to supplicate Athene on behalf of the people of Troy.

As Thetis does in her four mother-son conversations, Hecuba addresses her son by the term,  $t_{\text{c}}knon$ , with its strong maternal connotation of giving birth ( $t^5ktein$ ). Hecuba further illustrates her maternal instinct, reflected in the function of providing nourishment, by her suggestion that her son requires refreshment in the form of wine. Hector's refusal of her offer of wine is indicative of his responsibility and sense of duty. He ends his conversation with his mother by sharing with her his dissatisfaction with his errant brother, Paris. This complaint by the son to his mother about the failings of a sibling reflects a situation familiar to mothers. It also serves to introduce Hector's second port of call, the house of Paris.

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<sup>122</sup> 'She clung to his hand, and spoke and addressed him by name' (*Il.* 6.253).

### 2.3.2 Hector's family of procreation

As his visit to his parental home was not social but had a purpose, namely, to request his mother to supplicate Athene, so his visit to his brother's home is not social but for the purpose of rebuking him for shirking. But it also provides the poet with the opportunity of introducing into the narrative a conversation between Hector and his sister-in-law, Helen, which ends with Hector explaining to her his final destination in the city before returning to battle:

ka<sup>8</sup> g<sub>er</sub> 9g<sup>1</sup>n o<sup>4</sup>k<sub>7</sub>nde 9le<sub>7</sub>somai, 1fra<sup>7</sup>dwmai  
o<sup>4</sup>k<sub>aj</sub> 8loc<sub>7</sub>n te f<sup>5</sup>lhn ka<sup>8</sup> n<sub>p</sub>ion u<sup>3</sup><sub>7</sub>n.  
o<sup>1</sup> g<sub>er</sub> o-d' e<sup>4</sup> \_ti sfin 1p<sub>7</sub>tropoj 6xomai a<sup>1</sup>tij,  
□ □dh m' 1p<sub>7</sub> cers<sup>8</sup> qeo<sup>8</sup> dam<sub>7</sub>wsin 'Acai<sup>1</sup>n.  
(Il. 6.365-368)<sup>123</sup>

These words, which introduce Hector's family of procreation into the narrative, reveal his love for his wife and child as well as his awareness of the uncertainty of their future as a family. As is the case with both of Achilles' families, we see that Hector's family of procreation has the simple triadic structure of father-mother-son. Hector's words also locate his wife and baby son, together with the servants, in his o-k<sub>oj</sub>, representing the normal sphere of parent-child interaction, from which his participation in the war separates him.

At his house Hector learns that Andromache's anxiety about the progress of the battle has caused her to rush off to the Scaean gate tower to observe events. The housekeeper's description of Andromache rushing off mainom<sub>7</sub>nV e<sup>4</sup>ku'a ('like a woman driven mad', *Il.* 6.388) foreshadows her action at *Iliad* 22.437, and aptly describes her state of anxiety engendered by the depth of her feelings for her husband. The long scene (*Il.* 6.390-502) which follows when Hector and Andromache finally encounter one another at the Scaean gate depicts in detail the nature of the triadic parent-child relationship in Hector's family of procreation, offering an intimate picture of family dynamics in a city under siege.

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<sup>123</sup> 'For I am going to go to my own house to see my servants and my dear wife and baby son. For I do not know if I shall come back to them again, or if the gods will forthwith cause me to die at the hands of the Achaeans' (*Il.* 6.365-368).

First Andromache and Astyanax are identified in thumbnail sketches (*Il.* 6.390-502), then the parent-child interaction begins. The joy that Hector has in his son is at first expressed in his silent smile as he gazes at Astyanax when they meet (*Il.* 6.404). Andromache's feelings for her husband are at first expressed by the manner of her tearful physical greeting of her husband: there is a repetition of the formulaic line using the phrase, *\_n ... fʔ ceir*<sup>5</sup> (406). The first passage of character-text, which opens the conversation, begins with Andromache's moving description of what his death will mean to Astyanax and to her personally:

daim<sub>7</sub>nie, fq<sup>5</sup>sei se t<sub>7</sub> s<sub>7</sub>n m<sub>(</sub>noj, o<sup>l</sup>d' ʔlea<sup>5</sup>reij  
 pa'dð te nhp<sup>5</sup>acon ka<sup>8</sup> \_m' Emmoron, □ tðca c□rh  
 seʔ \_somaï: tðca gðr se kataktan<sub>(</sub>ousin 'Acaio<sup>8</sup>  
 pðntej ʔformhq<sub>(</sub>ntej: ʔmo<sup>8</sup> d<sub>(</sub> ke k<sub>(</sub>rdion e<sup>7</sup>h  
 seʔ Øfamarto<sub>7</sub>sV cq<sub>7</sub>na d<sub>7</sub>menai: o<sup>l</sup> gÆr \_t' Ællh  
 \_stai qalpwr□, ʔpe<sup>8</sup> ·n s<sub>7</sub> ge p<sub>7</sub>tmon ʔp<sup>5</sup>spVj,  
 Øll' Æce': o<sup>l</sup>d<sub>(</sub> moi \_sti patl<sub>r</sub> ka<sup>8</sup> p<sub>7</sub>tnia m□thr. (*I*  
*l.* 6.407-413)<sup>124</sup>

She goes on to emphasise her total reliance on Hector, as the head of her family of procreation, for love and protection, since she is the only survivor of her natal family. The fact that her father and brothers were killed by Achilles serves to increase her fears regarding Hector's safety. There follows her heartfelt plea that Hector direct the defence of the city from within the walls for the sake of his son and wife. Andromache's plea, based on foreboding, foreshadows the pleas in *Iliad* 22 of his parents, faced with the reality of the immediate conflict between Hector and Achilles.

Hector replies to Andromache with a gentle explanation as to why he cannot grant her request. His explanation reveals the tension caused by familial needs conflicting with the warrior's need to achieve *kl<sub>(</sub>oj*:

□ ka<sup>8</sup> ʔmo<sup>8</sup> tðde pðnta m<sub>(</sub>lei, g<sub>7</sub>nai: ØllÆ mðl' a<sup>4</sup>n~j

<sup>124</sup> 'My dear, your courage will destroy you, you have no pity for your baby son or unhappy me, who will soon be your widow; for soon all the Achaeans, rushing upon you, will kill you; and for me it would be more profitable to sink into the ground, after I am deprived of you. Nor will there be any other comfort for me, when you have met your death, only grief, for I have no father or revered mother' (*Il.* 6.407-413).

a<sup>4</sup>d(omai Tr<sup>˘</sup>aj ka<sup>8</sup> TrJÐdaj ɜlkesip(ϭlouj,  
a<sup>7</sup> ke kak<sub>⊥</sub>j ˘ j n<sub>⊥</sub>sfin ØluskÐzw pol(μοιο:  
o<sup>⊥</sup>d( me qum<sub>⊥</sub>j Ænwgen, ɜpe<sup>8</sup> mÐqon ˘mmenai ɜsql<sub>⊥</sub>j  
a<sup>4</sup>e<sup>8</sup> ka<sup>8</sup> pr<sup>˘</sup>toisi metÆ Tr<sup>˘</sup>essi mÐcesqai,  
Ørn<sub>⊥</sub>menoj patr<sub>⊥</sub>j te m(γα kl(οj ḏd' ɜm<sub>⊥</sub>n a<sup>⊥</sup>toʔ. (Il.  
6.441-446)<sup>125</sup>

So it is not only to avoid the shame of being regarded as a coward by the Trojans, both men and women, but it is also on account of personal inclination and inculcation that he needs to go out and fight in the forefront. The glory won by so doing is not only personal but embraces his father as well, illustrating an aspect of the father-son relationship. He goes on (446-465) to reveal that he is conscious of the fact that his need to achieve kl(οj may lead to his death presaging the fall of Troy, and the implications this will have. His words reveal his feelings about those towards whom he has responsibilities and those whom he loves. He describes himself as being troubled by the pain to be suffered by the Trojan people, by his parents, and by his brothers, but as being most troubled by the thought of Andromache being led away as the captive of some Achaean.

Following this initial exchange, there is a passage of narrator-text describing the touching scene in which father, mother, and son (the complete triad) participate. First the description of the baby's fright at his father's plumed helmet, when Hector attempts to take him in his arms, is made more emotively effective by the embedded focalization through which the emotions of the baby are conveyed:

ɜWj e<sup>4</sup>p ˘n o<sup>˘</sup> paid<sub>⊥</sub>j |r(xato fa<sup>5</sup>dimoj ɜEktwr:  
˘y d' | pÐ□j pr<sub>⊥</sub>j k<sub>⊥</sub>lpon ɜ˘x<sup>˘</sup>noio tiq□nhj  
ɜkl<sup>5</sup>nqh <sup>4</sup>Ðcwn, patr<sub>⊥</sub>j f<sup>5</sup>lou ˘yin Øtucqe<sup>5</sup>j,  
tarb□saj calk<sub>⊥</sub>n te <sup>4</sup>d+ l<sub>⊥</sub>fon <sup>3</sup>ppioca<sup>5</sup>thn,  
dein<sub>⊥</sub>n Øp' ØkrotÐthj k<sub>⊥</sub>ruqoj ne<sub>⊥</sub>onta no□saj. (Il.  
6.466-470)<sup>126</sup>

<sup>125</sup> 'Truly, my dear wife, to me as well all these things are a matter of concern; but I would have terrible shame before the Trojans and the Trojan women in their trailing robes, if like a coward I kept away from the battle. Nor does my spirit bid me, since I learned always to be brave and to fight together with the foremost Trojans, winning great glory for my father and myself' (Il. 6.441-446).

<sup>126</sup> 'After saying this, glorious Hector reached out for his son; but the child cried and shrank back upon the bosom of his well-girdled nurse, alarmed by the appearance of his dear father. Frightened he saw

This incident lightens the situation momentarily, and both parents laugh out loud as Hector removes his helmet. There follows at 474 the description of the behaviour of an affectionate father:  $k_{\uparrow}se\ p\alpha l_{\downarrow}\ te\ cers^5n$  ('he kissed him and dandled him in his arms'). After which Hector prays to Zeus and the other gods that his son may win even greater  $kl_{\downarrow}oj$  than his father. As we have seen above this glory is not restricted to the son who achieves it, but also reflects on his father. Here Hector implicates the mother as well when he says that her son's battlefield achievements would gladden the heart of his mother (481).

The ensuing passage of narrator-text illustrates Hector's sensitivity to his tearfully smiling wife's feelings:

$dakru_{\downarrow}en\ gel\delta sasa:\ p_{\downarrow}sij\ d'\ \text{,}l_{\downarrow}hse\ no\ \square\ sa j,$   
 $ceir^5\ t_{\downarrow}\ min\ kat_{\downarrow}rexen,\ \_poj\ t'\ \_fat'\ \_k\ t'\ \_n_{\downarrow}maze$   
*(Il. 6.484-485)*<sup>127</sup>

The second line, describing Hector's gentle caressing action, is used twice to describe Thetis' caressing of her son (*Il.* 1.361 and *Il.* 24.127), hence it reveals much about the nature of Hector's feelings for his wife that his treatment of her is equated with that of a mother's treatment of a beloved child. Then addressing her as  $daimon^5h$ , he tries to reassure her and gently tells her to go home and occupy herself with women's work while he attends to men's work (486-493).<sup>128</sup> After they have parted, this episode ends with narrator-text describing Andromache and her handmaidens mourning for Hector in anticipation of his death. This premature mourning foreshadows Andromache's two later appearances in the narrative after the death of Hector.

'Pathos' is a term which aptly describes the overall effect of this episode, and one may speculate as to whether this scene provided the inspiration for Euripides pathos-evoking technique of bringing children on stage. The scene is dramatic in that it contains dialogue in the form of character-text. But looking at the scene as a whole one can see how the narrative technique of alternating complex narrator-text and

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the bronze and the crest shaggy with horse-hair nodding dreadfully, to his mind, from the top of the helmet' (*Il.* 6.466-470).

<sup>127</sup> '... she smiled through her tears; and her husband noticed and felt pity for her, and caressed her with his hand, and spoke and addressed her by name' (*Il.* 6.484-485).

<sup>128</sup> See pp. 103-105 for discussion of the repetition of these formulaic lines in the *Odyssey*.

character-text contributes to the emotive effectiveness of this scene involving a young husband and wife and their baby son.

### 2.3.3 Parental and conjugal reactions to Hector's death

It is in *Iliad* 22 that Hector's families of both orientation and procreation next feature in the narrative action. This is the book in which the fatal encounter between Achilles and Hector takes place. The intervening books have seen the Achaeans driven back to their ships by Hector and the Trojans, and the crucial turning point of Patroclus' death at the hands of Hector. It is at this juncture, when the clash between Hector and the vengeance-seeking Achilles seems inevitable, that the first scene in which all three members of the Priam-Hecuba-Hector triad are present takes place. In this episode Hector's parents, on the city wall, entreat their son, awaiting Achilles outside the city gate, to return to the safety of the city rather than face certain death at the hands of Achilles. The joint nature of the parental intercession, represented by their successive entreaties, is emphasized by the parents' proximity to each other on the wall.

Priam's plea represents the first words in the poem that he addresses to Hector. The speech to his son is preceded by narrator-text describing his emotions:

=mwxen d' | g(rwn, kefalλn d' L ge kγyato cers<sup>8</sup>n  
 †yγs' Ønascγmenoj, m(ga d' o<sup>4</sup>mwxaγ ,geg<sup>7</sup>nei  
 lissγmenoj f<sup>5</sup>lon u<sup>3</sup>γn: | d+ propθroiqe pulθwn  
 sst□kei, Aemoton mema<sup>7</sup>j 'Acila□ mθcesqai:  
 tγn d' | g(rwn ,leeinθ proshγda ce)raj †regnγj: (Il.  
 22.33-37)<sup>129</sup>

In the ensuing character-text Priam addresses Hector as f<sup>5</sup>lon t(koj, and begs him not to await the attack of Achilles. He then launches into a long speech (38-76) bemoaning the loss of so many sons, whose loss to the Trojan people is minor compared to what Hector's death will mean to them and to members of his family, especially to Priam himself. A vivid and grim picture is painted of the brutal and sordid end that Priam is likely to suffer after the fall of Troy. After the speech,

<sup>129</sup> 'The old man groaned, and raising them aloft he smote his head with his hands, and with much groaning he called out in supplication of his beloved son; but he had taken a stand in front of the gates, relentlessly bent on fighting Achilles. The old man, stretching out his hands, addressed piteous words to him' (Il. 22.33-37).

narrator-text describes him tearing out his hair, a typical expression of grief in mourning.<sup>130</sup>

Priam's appeal to Hector is followed by Hecuba's second speech to her son. As in her first speech, the typical maternal role of the mother as provider of nourishment and comfort to her child is brought up. This maternal theme is reinforced by the descriptive narrator-text which precedes Hecuba's supplication of Hector:

m□thr d' a'q' s t, rwqen | d rreto dÐkru c, ousa,  
k lpon Øniem, nh, s t, rhfi d+ mazTn Øn, sce:  
ka<sup>5</sup> min dÐkru c, ous' \_pea pterTenta prosh rda:  
<sup>0</sup> s Ektor, t, knon , mTn, tÐde t' a' deo ka<sup>5</sup> m' , l, hson  
a l t□n, e<sup>7</sup> pot, toi laqikhd, a mazTn , p, scon:  
t n mnasai, f<sup>5</sup> le t, knon, Æmune d+ d□□on Ændra  
te<sup>5</sup> ceoj , ntTj , n, mhd+ prTmoj <sup>6</sup> staso to r tJ  
sc, tlio j: ... <sup>1</sup> (Il. 22.79-86)<sup>131</sup>

The fact that the circumstances in which these words are spoken are far more desperate than those of her earlier speech is reflected in her very emotional actions and words here. Hector does not heed his parents' pleas. In fact, in his internal debate (22.99-130) he does not mention any family members. His primary motivation for not seeking refuge in the city is the preservation of his kl, oj. But in his final words, his supplication of Achilles (22.338-342), he does refer to his parents and their willingness to ransom his body.<sup>132</sup>

The next triadic parent-child scene occurs when the parents' fears for their son at the hands of Achilles have been realised and they see his body being dragged in the dirt (Il. 22.405-436). The structure of this scene is similar to that described above – narrator-text depicting the emotional reaction of each parent, followed by character-text spoken in turn by each parent:

<sup>130</sup> Cf. Il. 22.405-406; 18.27; 24.710-711.

<sup>131</sup> 'And from the other side forthwith his mother wept and wailed, opening the fold of her bosom, she held out a breast with the other hand; and in tears she addressed winged words to him, "Hector, my child, have regard for these and have pity on me myself, if ever I offered to you a care-banishing breast, be mindful of this, dear child, and ward off the destructive man from within the wall, and do not make a stand as the foremost man against this man, o unkind one ..."' (Il. 22.79-86).

<sup>132</sup> See p. 25, above, for Hector's supplication of Achilles.

5Wj to? m+n kek7nito kðrh þpan: f d, nu m[]thr  
 t<sup>5</sup>lle k7mhn, Øp7 d+ liparlñ \_rriye kal7ptrhn  
 thl7se, k<sup>7</sup>kusen d+ mðla m,ga pa'd' 9sido?sa:  
 =mwxen d' 9leeinÆ patlr f<sup>5</sup>loj, Ømf<sup>8</sup> d+ lao<sup>8</sup>  
 kwkut\_ t' e<sup>7</sup>conto ka<sup>8</sup> o<sup>4</sup>mwg[] katÆ Æstu (Il. 22.405-  
 409)<sup>133</sup>

Priam is beside himself, rolling in the dung. His speech is addressed to his people (lao<sup>5</sup>), who are attempting to restrain him. He first expresses his need to go as a suppliant to Achilles to ransom the body of his son. Here he introduces his belief that Achilles will take pity on him because of his similarity to Achilles' own father. Then he concludes with these words which reveal the depth of feeling which both parents have for Hector:

... 7j 7felen qan,ein 9n cers<sup>5</sup>n 9m[]si:  
 t<sup>7</sup> ke koressðmeqa kla<sup>5</sup>ont, te murom,nw te,  
 m[]thr q', o min \_tikte dusðmmoroj, ðd' 9g<sup>7</sup> a<sup>7</sup>t7j. (I  
 l. 22.426-428)<sup>134</sup>

The linking of mother and father here reflects the strong bond between Hector's parents, a bond which is absent in the depiction of Achilles' family of orientation.

Hecuba's verbal reaction which follows is in the form of a tearful lament addressed to her son:

t,knon, 9g<sup>7</sup> deil[]: t<sup>5</sup> nu be<sup>5</sup>omai a<sup>4</sup>nÆ paqo?sa,  
 se? Øpoteqnh<sup>7</sup>toj; 7 moi n7ktaj te ka<sup>8</sup> þmar  
 e<sup>7</sup>cwlø katÆ Æstu pel,skeo, pbsi t' 7neiar  
 Trws<sup>5</sup> te ka<sup>8</sup> TrJ[]si katÆ pt7lin, o<sup>6</sup> se qe7n 7j  
 deid,cat': ... (Il. 22.431-435)<sup>135</sup>

In this informal lament she expresses her all-consuming sense of personal loss, as well as her pride in the reputation he enjoyed among all the Trojans and Trojan women, his

<sup>133</sup> 'Thus his head was all covered in dust. And now his mother tore her hair and threw the bright veil far from her; she wailed very loudly as she looked upon her son. His dear father groaned piteously, and all the people round them kept on with the wailing and lamentation through the city' (Il. 22.405-409).

<sup>134</sup> 'Would that he had died in my arms; thus we two would have had our fill of lamenting and weeping for him, both his mother, who gave birth to him, ill-fated, and I myself' (Il. 22.426-428).

<sup>135</sup> 'My child, I am wretched; why do I live and suffer terribly now that you are dead? You who by night and by day used to be my pride throughout the city, and a saviour to all the Trojans and Trojan women throughout the city, they who had received you as a god' (Il. 22.431-435).

κλ(ο)j. As mentioned earlier, it was fear of losing this reputation that prevented Hector from taking heed of his parents and seeking safety behind the city walls.

After this Priam-Hecuba-Hector action, Andromache makes her second appearance at *Iliad* 22.437, where she is found, in obedience to Hector's instructions, engaged in household tasks. When she hears Hecuba's voice raised in lamentation, suspecting that her fears for Hector have been realised, she once more rushes *mainðdi 7sh* ('like a mad woman', 460) to the gate. Her reaction on seeing Hector's body being dragged around is vividly described in narrator-text (463-476). She faints and her headdress is thrown from her head as she falls. The mention of the headdress prompts a detailed description thereof and it is linked to her wedding day.<sup>136</sup> When she recovers her senses, Andromache tearfully addresses her dead husband (477-514), expressing her personal grief, the extent of which is reflected in the wish that she had never been born, and then, at greater length, the implications of Hector's death for his son. She ends by expressing her regret that Hector's body lies at the mercy of the dogs and worms, now that it has been deprived of the burial rites due to him by his parents and his wife. The brief phrase, *n7sfi tokwn* ('far from your parents', 508), is Andromache's first reference to Hector's relationship with his parents. Previously she has focused on her family of procreation and her own family of orientation, a preoccupation which reflects the social norm that in the event of widowhood a woman returned to her family of orientation (not an option in Andromache's case). The first occasion in the narrative that the paths of Hector's parents and his wife cross occurs when she joins them on the wall to lament Hector's death. This lack of explicit interaction need not imply that there is a distance between Andromache and her husband's parents, but is rather a reflection of selective presentation of events in order to emphasize the significance of Hector's filial and paternal roles in relation to his families of orientation and procreation respectively.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Richardson (1993: 157) cites the exegetical scholia bT on 468-470: 'he reminds us of her former happiness, so that by stressing her change of fortune he may increase the effect of pity'.

<sup>137</sup> Vergil (*Aen.* 2.453-457) assumed that Hector's parents enjoyed a close relationship with Andromache and their grandson.

The depiction of the Priam-Hecuba-Hector triad is continued when the narrative, after describing happenings in the Achaean camp, moves back to Troy at *Iliad* 24.159. The scene of mourning in the palace of Priam is described by the narrator (quoted on p. 44): Priam is huddled in his cloak with his head and neck covered in dung; he is surrounded by his weeping sons, while all through the palace his daughters and the wives of his sons are mourning. Although he is in a state of such abject grief, he promptly responds to the divine instruction to go to Achilles to ransom Hector's body. But he first calls Hecuba to inform and consult her. The ensuing dialogue between husband and wife illustrates the interactive relationship between the father and mother in this triad. Priam asks his wife for her opinion on whether he should approach Achilles. Her reaction is one of horror and disbelief that he should want to carry out this scheme. She suggests:

... nʔn d+ kla<sup>5</sup>wmen Æneugen  
 omeni ɔn megðrJ: t d' ˘j poqi Mo'ra krataiɓ  
 gignom( nJ ɔp( nhse l<sup>5</sup>nJ, ɓte min t( kon aɓtɓ,  
 Ørg<sup>5</sup>podaj kɓnaj ɓsai ɓ˘n Øpðneuge tokɓwn,  
 Øndr<sup>8</sup> pðra kraterɓ, ...  
 (*Il.* 24.208-212)<sup>138</sup>

Hecuba here again reveals the strong mother-son bond, going back to the day he was born, but she also expresses the need to share her mourning with his father. After these words she reveals the violent reaction of a mother whose child has been harmed: she expresses the desire to sink her teeth into and devour his slayer's liver.

Priam answers her by telling not to try to dissuade him from going, and informing her that he is determined to go even if it should result in his own death. He ends with words that reveal his deep paternal attachment:

... e<sup>4</sup> d( moi a-sa  
 teqnðmenai parɓ nhus<sup>8</sup>n 'Acai˘n calkocit˘nwn,  
 boɓlomai: aɓt<sup>5</sup>ka gðr me katakte<sup>5</sup>neien 'Acilleɓj  
 Øgkɓj ɓɓɓnt' ɓmɓn u<sup>3</sup>ɓn, ɓpɓn gɓou ɓx ɓron e<sup>6</sup>hn.  
 (*Il.* 24.224-227)<sup>139</sup>

<sup>138</sup> 'Now let us mourn [our son] from far away as we sit in our palace. But for him even thus did resistless Fate spin with her thread at his beginning, when I myself gave birth to him, that he should satiate the swift-footed dogs, far from his own parents, in the hands of a stronger man' (*Il.* 24.208-212).

Lines 237-264 show that, as was the case with Achilles, extreme grief is translated into anger: Priam chases his followers from his presence, and takes out his anger on his surviving sons. Then there is further interaction between husband and wife at *Iliad* 24.283-321. Here Hecuba has her final say on her husband's proposed visit to the Achaean camp, when she states that she will only support him in his purpose if it receives the visible sanction of Zeus. She then shares with Priam in the pouring of the libation to Zeus. When Zeus sends a clear sign, it is with Hecuba's endorsement that Priam sets out on his mission to supplicate Achilles. So although Hecuba is not physically present at the thematically significant meeting of Priam and Achilles, her endorsement of Priam's mission implies that Hector's body is ransomed by both father and mother.

It is in the ensuing ransoming scene that the wrath of Achilles is finally purged, and the body of Hector, the maltreatment of which was the final expression of this wrath, is returned to his parents. Yet the purging of the wrath does not end the poem, and the narrative continues with a final episode depicting Hector's return to Troy. The arrival of his body is described in narrator-text:

Øgco? d+ xꞑmblhnto pulÐwn nekrꞑn Ægonti.  
 pr~tai tꞑn g' Ælocꞑj te f<sup>5</sup>lh ka<sup>8</sup> pꞑtnia mꞑthr  
 till(sqhn, ꞑp' Æmaxan ꞑ~trocon Øꞑxasai,  
 Øptꞑmenai kefalαj: kla<sup>5</sup>wn d' Ømf<sup>5</sup>staq' ꞑmiloj. (Il.  
 24.709-712)<sup>140</sup>

The depiction of Hector's families of orientation and procreation concludes with the funeral laments delivered by his wife, representing his family of procreation, his mother, representing the parental aspect of his family of orientation, and the wife of his brother, Paris, representing the sibling aspect of his family of orientation. The

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<sup>139</sup> 'If it is my destiny to die by the ships of the bronze-clad Achaeans, I wish it; let Achilles slay me at once after I have taken my son into my arms and I have satisfied my desire for weeping' (Il. 24.224-227).

<sup>140</sup> 'They met him near the gates as he brought in the dead. His beloved wife and august mother pulled out their hair in mourning and were first to dart up to the well-wheeled wagon and to touch his head; and weeping the assembled throng stood around him' (Il. 24.709-712).

wider community adds their mourning to these familial laments. This widespread grieving reflects Hector's role in the community extending beyond that of the two family units of which he is a member.

Andromache's lament (*Il.* 24.725-745) is addressed in turn to her husband (±ner, 725) and to Astyanax. She laments the fact that she has been left a widow with a baby son, and that they are faced with the sufferings of women and children in the aftermath of the sacking of the city, an inevitable consequence for Troy since it has been deprived of its protector. She ends with the statement:

Ørht<sub>7</sub>n d<sub>+</sub> toke<sup>?</sup>si g<sub>7</sub>on ka<sup>8</sup> p<sub>(</sub>nqoj -qhka<sub>j</sub>,  
 3Ektor: 9mo<sup>8</sup> d<sub>+</sub> mðlista lele<sup>5</sup>yetai Ælgea lugrð.  
 o<sub>7</sub> gðr moi qn<sub>7</sub>skwn lec<sub>(</sub>wn 9k ce'raj <sub>7</sub>rexaj,  
 o<sub>7</sub>d<sub>(</sub> t<sup>5</sup> moi e-pej pukin<sub>7</sub>n <sub>7</sub>poj, o` t<sub>(</sub> ken a<sup>4</sup>e<sup>8</sup>  
 memn<sub>7</sub>mhn n<sub>7</sub>ktaj te ka<sup>8</sup> umata dðkru c<sub>(</sub>ousa. (*Il.*  
 24.741-745)<sup>141</sup>

These words reveal Andromache's awareness of the grief of his parents, for whom it is so unnatural to be predeceased by a child; but parental grief, in her opinion, cannot compare to the 'bitter pain' of a wife deprived of her husband so precipitately and unnaturally.

Hecuba addresses her lament (748-759) to Hector, as the dearest by far of all her sons:

3Ektor, 9m<sub>(</sub> qum<sub>(</sub> pðntwn pol<sub>7</sub> f<sup>5</sup>ltate pa<sup>5</sup>dwn (*Il.*  
 24.748)<sup>142</sup>

She focuses on his piety, to which she attributes the fact that his body has escaped disfigurement. Helen opens her lament in a similar format to that of Hecuba, replacing pa<sup>5</sup>dwn with da<sub>(</sub>rwn ('husband's brothers', 762). She focuses on a quality of Hector that was important to her, namely, his kindness, as he was (apart from Priam) the only person in his family of orientation and the wider community who treated her with kindness.

<sup>141</sup> 'Hector, you left for your parents accursed weeping and grief; but for me most of all there will remain bitter pain: for you did not die in bed and stretch out your arms to me; nor did you speak a word of wisdom for me to remember forever through the nights and days of weeping' (*Il.* 24.741-745).

<sup>142</sup> 'Hector, by far the dearest to my heart of all my sons' (*Il.* 24.748).

After these laments by women from these various family branches, Priam takes over and supervises the funeral rites of his son. The poem, which begins with a reference to the wrath of Achilles and its disastrous consequences, ends with a reference to the burial of Hector:

ἤϊω ὁ γ' ὄμφερον τῶν ἑκτοροῖν ἵπποδῆμοιο. (*Il.*  
24.804)<sup>143</sup>

This account of Hector's funeral serves to foreshadow the funeral of Achilles, thus underlining the prominent motif of the imminent death of Achilles, which is woven into the central 'wrath' theme. Just as there was a vicarious merging of Priam and Peleus in the culmination of the 'wrath' theme, so in the final episode in the poem there is a prospective merging of the funerals of Hector and Achilles. Although Achilles' funeral falls outside the time span of both Homeric poems, the *Odyssey* does provide a retrospective description of this event (*Od.* 24.43-94), in which the prominent role of Thetis, accompanied by her sister Nereids and nine Muses, provides a parallel to that of Hector's womenfolk at his funeral.

## 2.4 Conclusion

The first observation to be made in summing up the foregoing examination of the depiction of the parent-child relationship as it applies to the protagonist and the antagonist in the *Iliad* is that the triadic and dyadic aspects of the relationship in the natal families of both these heroes are interwoven into the central theme of the poem so as to play a pivotal role in the development and conclusion thereof. On the other hand, the parent-child relationship in each family of procreation makes a less direct contribution to the 'wrath' theme, and may rather be described as playing a supporting role in contributing to the emotional impact of the 'death' motif.

A comparison of the personnel of the parent-child triads of each hero reveals some noteworthy common features as well as some differences. First, with regard to the two heroes themselves, as adult sons and as fathers they are depicted as the protectors of their families of both orientation and procreation, a role that is not only a social

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<sup>143</sup> 'Thus they conducted the burial of Hector the tamer of horses' (*Il.* 24.804).

obligation but arises from the emotional bond, both filial and paternal, which motivates both Achilles and Hector. But, as warriors in the Heroic Age, they can only find fulfilment in the achievement of *k1 (oj* in the military sphere. Heroic *k1 (oj* can lead to the attainment of the status of a respected elder, such as that of Peleus and Priam, but it also exposes a man to the risk of a premature death. Hence this need to achieve *k1 (oj* causes a conflict of interest for Achilles and Hector in their roles as sons and fathers.

With regard to the depiction of the heroes' fathers, both Peleus and Priam are characterized as 'good' fathers who have reached the stage at which, as aging parents, they require reciprocal nurturing from their sons. Both fathers were distinguished warriors in their youth, reputations which their sons are emulating. The manner of representation of the Peleus-Achilles and Priam-Hector father-son relationships differs on account of the circumstances of the story. In the case of the former, Peleus' absence necessitates the revelation to the audience of various aspects of this relationship by means of third parties reporting his words and actions. In addition, the words and actions of Achilles are used to reveal the depth of his feelings for his father. Priam, on the other hand, as a participant in the action, is able to act and speak for himself and in so doing illustrate the nature of his relationship with Hector.

In respect of the status of the mothers of the heroes, a significant difference is encountered: Achilles' mother, Thetis, is a goddess, whereas Hector's mother, Hecuba, is an ordinary mortal. This maternal difference is reflected in their sons: Achilles is a superhuman hero (although mortal) and Hector is an ordinary human hero. In spite of this divine-mortal antithesis, there are similarities in the depiction of these two mothers. Formal and functional similarities have been noted in the live encounters between Thetis and Achilles and Hector's meeting with his mother in *Iliad* 6. An overall similarity is to be found in their depiction as maternal stereotypes: mothers who are devoted to the adult sons to whom they have given birth and whom they have raised to manhood. They are both ultimately mothers who mourn the premature deaths of these sons, into whose lives they have put so much effort.

Thetis' divine status also affects the structural nature of Achilles' natal parent-child triad: immortal mother, mortal father, and mortal son. The mixed nature of this triadic structure indicates a degree of incompatibility. On the other hand, Hector's natal parent-child triad, consisting of three mortals, is singularly human, as Priam and Hecuba do not have the benefit of any divine ancestry. As a consequence this homogeneous triad is better able to function as a unit.

The role played by the parent-child triads in the two heroes' natal families is not merely structural and functional, but has a significant emotional component as well. In the depiction of Achilles' natal parent-child triad there is seen the disruptive effect of war-generated separation – a separation destined to be permanent. With regard to the ultimate form of separation, much is made of the pain suffered by parents when the war deprives them of a beloved son. This universal aspect of parent-child experience is underscored by reduplication, with the emotions experienced by Priam and Hecuba in relation to the actual death of Hector in the *Iliad* being used to foreshadow those to be experienced by Peleus and Thetis in relation to the imminent death of Achilles.

With regard to the depiction of families of procreation, in the case of Achilles the triadic structure of the parent-child relationship is not mentioned, there being only two brief references to the father-son dyad in this unit. Nevertheless both these references are thematically significant in that the representation of Achilles as being a father himself lends credibility to the father-son understanding and emotions exhibited by him in the wrath-purging scene he shares with Priam. The narrative method used in the depiction of Hector's family of procreation is very different to the brief references to that of Achilles: we see a vivid and extensive scene of live action featuring all three members of the triad (*Il.* 6.365-502), as well as the depiction of Andromache's words and actions after the death of her husband (*Il.* 22.463-514). The manner of representation of the Hector-Andromache-Astyanax triad and the dyadic relationships encompassed by it is designed to generate sympathy, so that the dissolution of this triad as a result of the death of Hector is acutely emotive. Thus the depiction of the procreative parent-child relationship of each of these heroes has a contribution to make to the emotional content and impact of the poem.

By the end of the poem we have, in the Greek camp, a saddened Achilles, purged of the anger that led to so many deaths on both sides, awaiting his own death, in the full knowledge of how devastating a loss it will be to both his mother and his father. In Troy, we have Hector's procreative and natal families and all the people of Troy mourning the death of Hector. By any standards this can only be described as an unhappy ending for all the participants in the parent-child relationships of the two heroes. The audience is left with an acute awareness of this pain-generating aspect of the war: we have experience of the death of heroes who are sons and fathers, and the grief and suffering caused by their deaths to the other members of their parent-child triads.

## Chapter 3

### The parent-child relationship in the *Odyssey*

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter will examine the depiction of the parent-child relationship as it relates to the central theme of the *Odyssey*. The focus will therefore be on the parent-child relationships involving the *Ændra pol̄tropon* (*Od.* 1.1) identified in the opening line as the subject of the poem. These relationships comprise the Laertes-Anticleia-Odysseus triad in his family of orientation and the Odysseus-Penelope-Telemachus triad in his family of procreation. Odysseus' position, immediately prior to his participation in the Trojan expedition, *vis-à-vis* each of these families can be inferred from the instructions, regarding family and household matters, which he gave to Penelope on the eve of his departure for Troy. I have, therefore, isolated from its narrative context the following passage, in which Penelope gives a verbatim account of these instructions:<sup>144</sup>

t̄ ōk̄ o-d' ū k̄n m' Øn̄(sei qe-γ j, □ ken ɛl̄w  
a-γto? ɔn̄<sup>8</sup> Tro<sup>5</sup>v: so<sup>8</sup> d' ɔnq̄ðde p̄ðnta mel̄γntwn.  
memnasqai patr̄j ka<sup>8</sup> mht̄(roj ɔn meḡðroisin  
~j n̄n, □ -ti m̄llon ɔme? Øpon̄sfin ɔγntoj:  
a-γt̄er ɔpl̄n dl̄ pa'da geneī[santa 7dhai,  
ḡmasq' ^ k' ɔq̄l̄vsqa, te-γn kat̄ d̄ma lipo?sa. (*Od.*  
18.265-270)<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Odysseus' parting instructions are repeated verbatim by Penelope in a speech addressed to Eurymachus. Like Stanford (1962: II, 309), I do not see any justification for the view that this embedded speech is a fabrication invented by Penelope.

<sup>145</sup> 'I do not know whether the god will let me come back or if I shall die there in Troy. Let everything here be in your care. Look after father and mother in our palace, as you do now, or even more since I shall be far away. But when you see our son is bearded, you may marry whomsoever you like, forsaking your home' (*Od.* 18.265-270).

The description of Penelope's new responsibilities, necessitated by Odysseus' absence and possible death, reveals that prior to his departure Odysseus as a husband and father was the lord of his conjugal household and responsible for his wife and young son; in addition, in terms of the cyclical development of his family of orientation, he had assumed responsibility for his elderly father and mother – a responsibility he shared with his wife. This assumption of responsibility for his parents by Odysseus and his wife reflects the centrality of Odysseus' family of procreation, which forms the nucleus of Odysseus'  $\sigma\text{-}\kappa\omicron\text{j}$ , while his elderly parents are additional family members in his household. The scenario referred to at 269-270 reflects the situation in Odysseus' family of procreation at the point where the narrative begins, nineteen years having elapsed since his departure. The changes in the circumstances of his parents during the intervening years, namely, the death of his mother and the withdrawal of his father from the town to his farm, are not reflected in this passage.

Odysseus' natal and procreative family units feature prominently in the poem since the action of the first half of the poem revolves around, on the one hand, Odysseus' suffering and adventures in his quest to be reunited with his wife, son, and parents, and, on the other, the effect of his long absence on these family members; while in the second half the action is concerned with his reunion with his procreative family and with Laertes, his surviving parent. In addition to these biological parent-child relationships, Odysseus has a surrogate mother in the goddess Athene,<sup>146</sup> who provides divine assistance to Odysseus in his quest to reach home and re-establish his dislocated family relationships. The depiction of the parent-child relationship in other royal families, namely, those of Argos, Pylos, Sparta, and Scheria, contributes to the centrality of the Odyssean parent-child motif by providing contrasting or supportive reflections of this relationship.

### **3.2 The introduction of the parent-child motif**

The first book of the *Odyssey* serves as an effective introduction to the various threads that make up the complex plot of the poem, and in so doing emphasizes the significance of the role of the parent-child relationship. This book can be divided into

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<sup>146</sup> See 3.5, pp. 128-140 for Athene's maternal role.

five sections, namely, the proem in which the Muse is invoked (1-10), the beginning of the narrative in the form of narrator-text (11-21), the first live action taking place on Mount Olympus, in the form of a conversation consisting of character-text and linking narrator-text (22-95), and finally a lengthy scene of live action taking place in Ithaca (96-444). In each of these sections, as the various elements of the plot and the various characters are introduced, Odysseus' as yet unfulfilled desire of a home-coming and its integration with his loved ones is featured in increasing detail.

The audience learns from the proem that the subject of the poem is Odysseus, who is identified as the hero of the poem without being named but by being described in the following terms:

ἄAndra moi ἄnnepe, Moῶsa, πολῖτροπον, ἄj mḗla pollḗ  
 plḗgcqh, ἄpe<sup>8</sup> Tro<sup>5</sup>hj ἄerῖn ptol<sup>5</sup>eqron ἄperse: (Od.  
 1.1-2).<sup>147</sup>

The active and passive meanings of the epithet πολῖτροποj, namely, the passive 'much-turned' having the meanings 'much-travelled', 'much-wandering', and the active 'turning many ways' having the metaphorical meanings of 'versatile', 'wily', both have relevance to Odysseus.<sup>148</sup> The relative and temporal clauses indicate that the story of the poem is concerned with his post-Trojan War experiences on his extended and wide-ranging homeward voyage. On this voyage his efforts and sufferings are for the sake of personal survival and bringing about the home-coming (nῖστοj) of his comrades (4-5). He is subsequently absolved of responsibility for failing to save his comrades (6-9). The first nine lines of the proem engender the expectation of a chronological account of Odysseus' wanderings, but in the final line the muse is invited to begin ἄmῖ qen ('from some place or other', 10), and she chooses to begin the story at a point shortly before the end of Odysseus' decade-long voyage.

The second section comprises eleven lines of narrator-text, which begins with a description of Odysseus' current situation (11-15): at this point he is the only one of the expeditionary force's survivors who has not yet reached home as he is being held captive by the nymph, Calypso, who wants him as her husband, whereas he is

<sup>147</sup> 'Tell me, Muse, of the much-travelled / wily man who wandered very much after he sacked Troy's holy citadel' (Od. 1.1-2).

<sup>148</sup> See Liddell and Scott. 1896. *ad loc.*

described as *n<sub>7</sub>stou kecrhm<sub>1</sub>non žd<sub>+</sub> gunaik<sub>7</sub>j* ('yearning for his home-coming and his wife', 13).<sup>149</sup> The term *n<sub>7</sub>stoj*, used here for the second time, encompasses reunion with all his loved ones, and the fact that his wife is singled out here should not be taken to imply that she is the most significant loved one, but simply reflects the focus on the husband-wife relationship in this situation where Calypso desires Odysseus as her husband (*p<sub>7</sub>si<sub>j</sub>*), but Odysseus longs for his own wife. This section concludes with a reference to Poseidon's role in preventing Odysseus from being free of his struggles and being among his loved ones, even now at the time which the rest of the gods have pre-destined for his return to Ithaca:

*øll' l<sub>te</sub> d<sub>ø</sub> \_toj []lqe periplom<sub>1</sub>nwn ,niaut<sup>~</sup>n,  
 t<sup>~</sup> o<sup>3</sup> ,pekl<sup>~</sup>santo qeo<sup>8</sup> o-k<sub>7</sub>nde n<sub>1</sub>esqai  
 e<sup>4</sup>j 'Iqðkhn, o<sup>1</sup>d' \_nqa pefugm<sub>1</sub>noj []en ø<sub>1</sub>qlwn,  
 ka<sup>8</sup> met<sub>ø</sub> o<sup>+</sup>si f<sup>5</sup>loisi. qeo<sup>8</sup> d' ,l<sub>1</sub>airon p<sub>7</sub>pantej  
 n<sub>7</sub>sfi Poseid<sub>ø</sub>wnoj: ...*

(*Od.* 1.16-20)<sup>150</sup>

Here the reunion with loved ones, which was previously implied in the term *n<sub>7</sub>stoj*, becomes more concrete in the phrase *met<sub>ø</sub> o<sup>+</sup>si f<sup>5</sup>loisi*.

The reference to Poseidon and the other gods serves as a link to the introduction of the first live action in the poem, depicting the gods assembled in the palace of Olympian Zeus, in the absence of Poseidon (22-95). In the ensuing conversation between Zeus and his daughter, Athene (addressed as *p<sub>ø</sub>ter fm<sub>1</sub>tere Kron<sup>5</sup>dh* (45) and *t<sub>1</sub>knon ,m<sub>7</sub>n* (64) respectively), the parent-child relationship receives emphasis from the outset, when Zeus, in the narrator's introduction to the opening speech, is described as *pat<sub>ø</sub>r øndr<sup>~</sup>n te qe<sup>~</sup>n te* (28). The conversation then opens with Zeus commenting on Agamemnon's disastrous *n<sub>7</sub>stoj* and its sequel, the vengeance of his son, Orestes. This story is referred to by various characters on

<sup>149</sup> At *Od.* 7.259, Odysseus reveals that he had been held captive by Calypso for seven years.

<sup>150</sup> 'But when, with the revolving of the seasons, the year came in which the gods destined him to return home to Ithaca, not even then was he free of trials, and among his loved ones. All the gods took pity on him, except Poseidon' (*Od.* 1.16-20). My translation adopts the temporal rather than the local meaning of the adverb *\_nqa* (18).

several occasions during the course of the narrative in order to draw attention to the parallels with and contrasts to Odysseus' *nῆστοις*.<sup>151</sup>

Athene's response to her father gives the first indication of her love for Odysseus, which determines her active role in the poem as Odysseus' divine protector or surrogate mother.<sup>152</sup>

ØllÐ moi Ømf' 'Odusα□ da□froni da<sup>5</sup>etai □tor,  
dusmῆrJ, ῑj dλ dhq⊕ f<sup>5</sup>lwn Ἐπο p□mata pÐscei  
n□sJ ,n Ømfirῑtv, ῑqi t' ῑmfalῑj ,sti qalÐsshj. (*Od.*  
1.48-50)<sup>153</sup>

In these lines Athene expresses her feelings for Odysseus in his distress at being kept away from his loved ones.

The two current obstacles to Odysseus returning home to his loved ones, mentioned in the narrator-text (11-21), are expanded upon in the conversation between Athene and Zeus: Athene gives more details about the Calypso situation (50-59), while Zeus accounts for Poseidon's continuing persecution of Odysseus, which in turn has its origin in a parent-child relationship, that of Poseidon and his son, Polyphemus, who was blinded by Odysseus (64-75). Zeus' account includes a description of the Poseidon-Thoosa-Polyphemus parent-child triad.

The conversation ends with Athene proposing her plan of action (81-95), which involves two divine interventions: Hermes is to go to Ogygia to secure Odysseus' release, while she is to visit Odysseus' son, Telemachus, in Ithaca, thus introducing a new parent-child element, namely, the role that Telemachus is to play in the narrative. Athene also mentions the suitor problem, which is a major home-based obstacle to Odysseus' reunion with his family.

The scene then shifts to Ithaca, where the events of the final section of this introductory book take place (96-444). Here the parent-child triad of Odysseus'

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<sup>151</sup> In addition to the above, Agamemnon's *nῆστοις* is referred to by Mentos-Athene (1.298-302), Nestor (3.193-200 and 254-316), Mentor-Athene (3.232-235), Menelaus (4.91-92), Proteus (4.512-549), and Agamemnon (11.409-456, 24.95-97 and 191-202). See De Jong (2001: 11-14) for a discussion of the role of this embedded story in the narrative.

<sup>152</sup> For evidence on Athene as a surrogate mother, see pp. 128-140.

<sup>153</sup> 'But my heart is broken for wise but unlucky Odysseus, who for so long apart from his loved ones suffers misery on a wave-washed island, which is in the middle of the sea' (*Od.* 1.48-50).

family of procreation is introduced, with the son, Telemachus, and the mother/wife, Penelope, first participating in the action, while the absent Odysseus is constantly in the minds of both his wife and his son. The suitors, who are a threat to the continued existence of this family unit, also make their first appearance in the action. At the end of the book the nurse, Eurycleia, is introduced. She has a place in Odysseus' families of both orientation and procreation, as she served as the nurse of Odysseus and subsequently of his son, Telemachus. The narrator-text identifying her provides the opportunity for a reference to the relationship of Odysseus' parents:

τῆν ποτὲ Λαερτιάδην πρῶτον κτετόσσην ἑοῦσι,  
 πρῶτον βῆν ἄτ' ἑοῦσαν, ἑικοσθοῖα δ' ἄδωκεν,  
 ἄσα δ' ἄμιν κεδνὸν ὀλέγετο τῆν ἑνὴν μεγέθοισιν,  
 ἐλπίδ' ὀπίπετο μίκτον, ἑλπίδ' ὀλέγετο γυναικίη:  
 (*Od.* 1.430-433)<sup>154</sup>

Here for the first time Odysseus' mother is mentioned, though not by name (γυναικίη, 433), while Odysseus' father is referred to by name (430), and earlier as well by Athene, disguised as Mentès, in conversation with Telemachus (189). The narratorial anecdote related in the last line of the passage gives an interesting insight into the nature of the marital relationship of Odysseus' parents: it reflects Laertes' sensitivity to the feelings of his wife, and the unique position of honour and respect which she enjoyed in the household of her husband.

### 3.3 Odysseus and his family of orientation

The narrative provides scenes depicting Odysseus' reunions with his mother (in the form of a ghost) and with his father. The former occurs in *Odyssey* 11 during Odysseus' narration of his visit to the underworld, and the latter constitutes his final familial reunion in *Odyssey* 24. In addition, there are a few retrospective glimpses of Odysseus' family of orientation.

From the time that the poet first introduces Odysseus into the action as Calypso's unwilling guest in *Odyssey* 5, it is clear that his only desire is to return home to Ithaca. At Alcinoüs' banquet in Scheria, the final Poseidon-induced delay on his homeward

<sup>154</sup> 'At one time Laertes purchased her with his own wealth, when she was still in the prime of youth, and he gave the price of twenty oxen; he honoured her like a cherished wife in his house, although he never shared her bed, thus avoiding the displeasure of his spouse' (*Od.* 1.430-433).

journey, Odysseus begins the narrative of his wanderings by revealing his name and patronymic (εἰς Ἰθάκην Ὀδυσσεύς Λαερτιάδης, 9.19), and describing his homeland, Ithaca. Before launching into the story of his earlier adventures experienced on his homeward voyage, Odysseus expresses his sentiments on the value of home, to which he links his parents:

ἄνθρωπος οὐδὲν γλυκίον βίῃ πατρῷοιο οὐδέ τι τοκῶν  
 γῆνεται, εἴπερ κατὰ τίς ὀπίπροσι πῶνα ὀκον  
 γὰρ ἔστιν ὀλλοδαπὸν ναεὶ ὀπῆνευε τοκῶν. (Od. 9.34-36)<sup>155</sup>

These sentiments of Odysseus, although expressed as a generalization, emphasize the importance to him of his own parents in relation to his longed for home-coming.

### 3.3.1 Odysseus' reunion with his mother

In *Odyssey* 9-12 Odysseus, as secondary internal narrator, takes over the function of the primary external narrator.<sup>156</sup> In *Odyssey* 11 he describes his meeting with the ghost of his mother in the underworld. His description of this meeting provides the dual opportunity for characterizing this mother-son relationship and for allowing Odysseus to obtain information about both his family of orientation and his family of procreation. At *Odyssey* 11.84-87 Odysseus describes his reaction on seeing the ghost of his mother, whom he had left alive and well when he set out for Troy:

ἄνθρωπος οὐδὲν γλυκίον βίῃ πατρῷοιο οὐδέ τι τοκῶν  
 γῆνεται, εἴπερ κατὰ τίς ὀπίπροσι πῶνα ὀκον  
 γὰρ ἔστιν ὀλλοδαπὸν ναεὶ ὀπῆνευε τοκῶν. (Od. 11.84-87)<sup>157</sup>

This passage, providing a build-up to the mother-son meeting (*Od.* 11.153-203), which takes place after Odysseus' prescribed consultation with Teiresias, serves to further identify Anticleia. In the only previous reference to her at *Od.* 1.433 (see 3.2, p. 72) she was identified as the wife of Laertes. In this passage for the first (and only) time Anticleia is referred to by her name, and is further identified as the mother of

<sup>155</sup> 'So there is nothing sweeter than a man's fatherland and parents, even if he dwells in a rich house far away in a foreign land, apart from his parents (*Od.* 9.34-36).

<sup>156</sup> See Appendix Glossary, pp. 158-159.

<sup>157</sup> 'Now came the ghost of my dead mother, great-hearted Autolycus' daughter, Anticleia, whom I left alive when I went to holy Troy. I wept on seeing her and I pitied her in my heart' (*Od.* 11.84-87).

Odysseus and the daughter of Autolycus. The last line of the passage, in which Odysseus describes how the realization that his mother had died in his absence caused him to be moved to tears and filled with compassion, reveals him as a loving son to his mother.

At the commencement of the meeting proper, Anticleia's reaction on recognizing her son, described at line 154 as ἰλοφουρομένη (wailing), is similar to Odysseus' emotional reaction, mentioned above, thus revealing a reciprocal emotional attachment. Anticleia's revelation (*Od.* 11.202-203) that she pined to death on account of her missing son is the ultimate confirmation of her devotion to him. This emotional aspect is further illustrated during their meeting when, after hearing this news, he is seized by a longing to embrace her:

tr<sup>8</sup>j m<sub>+</sub>n ,form□qhn, ,l(ein t( me qum<sub>⊥</sub>j Øn''gei,  
tr<sup>8</sup>j d<sub>+</sub> moi ,k ceir~n ski□ e<sup>7</sup>kelon □ ka<sup>8</sup> ἰne<sup>5</sup>rJ  
\_ptat': ,mo<sup>8</sup> d' Æcoj ἰx¶ gen( sketo khr<sub>⊥</sub>qi mblon,  
ka<sup>8</sup> min fwn□saj \_pea pter<sub>⊥</sub>enta prosh<sub>⊥</sub>dwn:  
°Mater ,ml, t<sup>5</sup> n<sub>⊥</sub> m' o<sup>⊥</sup> m<sup>5</sup>mnej ,l(ein mema~ta,  
\_lfra ka<sup>8</sup> e<sup>4</sup>n 'A□dao f<sup>5</sup>laj per<sup>8</sup> ce're bal<sub>⊥</sub>n<sub>te</sub>  
Ømfot( rw kruero'o tetarp''mesqa g<sub>⊥</sub>oio; ...<sup>1</sup> (*Od.* 11.206-  
212)<sup>158</sup>

Vergil's borrowing (*Aen.* 2.792-795) of this description for Aeneas' account of his encounter with the ghost of his wife, Creusa, is evidence that its pathos, evoked by the intensity of emotion expressed in Odysseus' thrice repeated attempt to clasp his mother's insubstantial γ<sub>⊥</sub>ch, continued to exert its desired effect on later readers. The unrestrained emotions expressed in these actions and words of a man noted for his self-control reveal the depth of Odysseus' feelings for his mother. In this reunion Odysseus' unfulfilled need to hold her in his arms and weep with her foreshadows the actions depicted in his reunions with the other f<sup>5</sup>loi in his life: his son, wife, and father.

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<sup>158</sup> 'Three times I sprang forward and my spirit urged me to clasp her, but three times she flitted from my arms like a shadow or a dream. For me the pain became even sharper in my heart, and I spoke and addressed her with winged words: "Mother, why do you not stay for me, as I strive to clasp you, so that even in the house of Hades we may throw our loving arms around each other, and have our fill of numbing weeping? ..."' (*Od.* 11.206-212).

During the conversation with his mother Odysseus is finally able to obtain some news of his parents and his family of procreation. With regard to the latter Tiresias had already prophesied that on his return home he would have to deal with arrogant suitors devouring his livelihood and pursuing his wife (*Od.* 11.115-120). Now from his mother Odysseus seeks concrete details about what has been happening at home in his absence. At *Odyssey* 11.171-179 Odysseus questions his mother, seeking information first about the cause of her death, then about his father, son, and finally about his wife. His mother replies in reverse sequence (181-203): Penelope has not moved on and still grieves for her missing husband (the suitor problem did not exist at the time of Anticleia's death); Telemachus is successfully performing a substitute role in the absence of his father (although he could not have been more than thirteen at the time of Anticleia's death);<sup>159</sup> Laertes leads a reclusive life unsuitable for a man of his status, is overcome by a longing for his son's return, and afflicted by old age; finally, as remarked above, Anticleia reveals that she died of longing for the missing Odysseus, thus confirming her complete devotion to her son. Thus the news Odysseus receives about the other two members of his procreative triad is fairly reassuring, whereas the news about his parents reveals the deleterious effect that his absence has had on his family of orientation. As with the parents of the two Iliadic heroes discussed in the previous chapter, we see in Odysseus' parents an all-consuming emotional attachment of parents to their adult son.

### 3.3.2 The Laertes-Anticleia-Odysseus triad

Odysseus' meeting with his mother's ghost in the underworld reveals the Laertes-Anticleia-Odysseus triad to be in a state of permanent disruption: Odysseus is still wandering far from home, and his absence has caused the self-inflicted isolation of his father and the death of his mother. The devastating effect of his absence on each parent is evidence of the depth of feeling involved in the father-son and mother-son dyads.

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<sup>159</sup> See also pp. 91-92 below for further reference to Anticleia's account of Odysseus' family of procreation.



speaks of the ‘measureless grief’ (p(,nqoj mur<sup>5</sup>on, 88) which his failure to return home will cause his mother.

Eumaeus turns from thoughts of Anticleia’s death to thoughts of the role she played in his life, thus providing the opportunity for a characterizing anecdote about his former mistress (*Od.* 15.361-370.). She had behaved in a maternal way to the slave boy, Eumaeus, raising him alongside her daughter, Ctimene, treating him almost like her own child:

o□nekÐ m' a<sup>↓</sup>tℓ qr(,yen Þma Ktim(,nV tanup(plJ,  
 qugat(,r' <sup>4</sup>fq<sup>5</sup>mV, tℓn |plotÐthn t(,ke pa<sup>5</sup>dwn:  
 t□ |mo? ,tref<sub>γ</sub>mhn, |l<sup>5</sup>gon d+ t<sup>5</sup> m' βsson ,t<sup>5</sup>ma. (*O*  
*d.* 15.363-365)<sup>162</sup>

He goes on to say that Anticleia’s affection for him continued even after he had grown up and no longer lived in the family home. The portrayal of Anticleia as a surrogate mother in this anecdotal analepsis (flashback), related by the recipient of her mothering, adds to the depiction of the loving mother-son relationship she and her own son enjoyed.

The next retrospective glimpses into Odysseus’ family of orientation occur in *Odyssey* 19. First at 353-356 Penelope reveals that Eurycleia, who has previously appeared as Telemachus’ former nurse, had also been Odysseus’ nurse from the time of his birth. Then, at 392-466, there occurs a long digression depicting incidents, from the periods of Odysseus’ infancy and youth, featuring his family of orientation and its ties with Anticleia’s family of orientation. The family situation presented in this episode illustrates the continued connection of a married daughter and her child to the maternal family of orientation. In terms of narrative technique, the scenes depicted here are in the form of an analepsis to explain Eurycleia’s recognition of Odysseus from the scar on his leg.<sup>163</sup> The outline of this ‘scar recognition’ episode is as follows:

<sup>162</sup> ‘For she herself brought me up together with Ctimene of the flowing peplos, her fine daughter, the youngest of her children; I was brought up with her, and she [Anticleia] treated me almost the same as her’ (*Od.* 15.363-365). This reference to Ctimene is the only indication that Odysseus had a sister, or possibly more than one, if one takes into account the use of the superlative and the plural in |plotÐthn pa<sup>5</sup>dwn (youngest of her children, *Od.* 15.364). Hoekstra (1989: 255) suggests that it may be a ‘loosely applied epic phrase’. It is clear from *Od.* 16.119 that Odysseus was the only son.

<sup>163</sup> De Jong (2001: 476-477) presents the arguments on whether this analepsis should be regarded as a narratorial anecdote or the embedded focalization of Eurycleia (see Glossary, pp. 158-159).

Eurycleia recognizes the scar, resulting from a boar's tusk wound suffered by Odysseus, when he had gone to Parnassus with Autolycus and his sons; the reference to the scar serves to introduce a long digression, which expands on all the aspects mentioned in the introductory lines of the episode, and in so doing presents the audience with a few intimate cameos illustrating familial relationships from Odysseus' early life.

First, Autolycus himself is identified as Odysseus' maternal grandfather, and is described as a man ἄϊς ὀνείρ᾽ ἄποις ἄκαστος / kleptos ἄνδρ᾽ ἄρκυς τε ('who surpassed everyone in thievery and the deceptive oath', *Od.* 19.395-6). Judging from this description of Autolycus, Odysseus' reputation for trickery is the result of a trait inherited from his maternal grandfather.<sup>164</sup> The identification of Autolycus is the prelude to the depiction of a visit he made to the home of his daughter and son-in-law shortly after the birth of their son (399-412). The narration of this scene encompasses narrator-text and character-text addressed by the nurse, Eurycleia, to Autolycus, and by Autolycus to his son-in-law (ἄμβροϊς) and daughter (κυκυθήρη). These speeches comprise Eurycleia's request to Autolycus to supply a name for the baby, and his response in which he names the baby, and promises gifts to be collected by the grandson, when he has grown up (ἄβυσσος, 410), from his grandparents' home, referred to as μητρῴον μάγαδ᾽ ἄμα ('great maternal home', 410). The content of this scene from Odysseus' infancy thus confirms the existence of a close bond between Odysseus and his mother's family of orientation.

The narrative then jumps ahead to the period when Odysseus has come of age, and the details of the aforementioned visit to his maternal grandparents' home are recounted, beginning with the warm welcome given to Odysseus by Autolycus and his sons, and by his grandmother, Amphithea:

τῆν μάτηρ ἄϊς ἄμβροϊς τε καὶ ἄκυς ἄτολκοιο  
 ἄνδρ᾽ ἄσπυζοντο ἄπῆσσι τε μελλίκοισι:  
 μήτηρ δ᾽ ἄμφικλοῖς μητρῴης ἄδυσσῆς

<sup>164</sup> See Stanford (1962: 332) and Russo (1992: 96) for comments on and citations for this Autolycean inheritance.

k<sub>Γ</sub>ss' Æra min kefal<sub>□</sub>n te ka<sup>8</sup> Æmfw fðea kalð. (Od.  
19.414-417)<sup>165</sup>

In this description we see again the expression of affection through physical contact (cf. *Od.* 11.206-212, 16.213-214, 23.207-209, and 24.318-320). The welcoming scene is followed by a description of the entertainment provided for the young Odysseus by Autolycus and his sons. This entertainment includes the boar-hunt which provides the platform for the narration of Odysseus' youthful heroic exploits in the company of his mother's brothers, as well as the explanation of the origin of the scar. The episodes depicting the naming of Odysseus by his maternal grandfather, and Odysseus' subsequent visit to his grandparents' home represent the only occasion in either of the Homeric poems when emphasis is placed on the relationship between a child and his maternal grandparents.

The scene then shifts back to the home of Odysseus' parents in Ithaca for the conclusion of the analepsis. Here a similarly vivid picture of parent-child interaction is depicted in narrator-text, in which the happy parents welcome their son on his return. They are concerned about his injury and anxious to hear about his adventures, thus presenting the young Odysseus with an opportunity to practise his story-telling, a skill which the Phaeacians and poem's external audience experienced firsthand in *Odyssey* 9-12:

t<sub>Γ</sub>n m<sub>+</sub>n Ær' A<sub>↓</sub>t<sub>Γ</sub>luk<sub>Γ</sub>j te ka<sup>8</sup> u<sup>3</sup>(ej A<sub>↓</sub>tol<sub>Γ</sub>koio  
e<sup>˘</sup> <sup>4</sup>hsðmenoi ðd' ØglaÆ d<sup>˘</sup>ra por<sub>Γ</sub>ntej  
karpal<sup>5</sup>mwj ca<sup>5</sup>ronta f<sup>5</sup>lhn ,j patr<sup>5</sup>d' \_pempon  
e<sup>4</sup>j 'Iqðkhn. t<sub>˘</sub> m<sub>(</sub>n "a patl<sub>r</sub> ka<sup>8</sup> p<sub>Γ</sub>tnia m<sub>□</sub>thr  
ca<sub>'</sub>ron nost<sub>□</sub>santi ka<sup>8</sup> ,xer<sub>(</sub>einon ðpanta,  
o<sub>↓</sub>lln <sub>˘</sub>t<sub>t</sub>i pðqoi: | d' Æra sf<sup>5</sup>sin e<sup>˘</sup> kat<sub>(</sub>lexen  
˘j min qhre<sub>Γ</sub>ont' \_lasen s<sup>?</sup>j leuk<sub>˘</sub> |d<sub>Γ</sub>nti,  
Parnhs<sub>Γ</sub>nd' ,lq<sub>Γ</sub>nta s<sub>¶</sub>n u<sup>3</sup>ðsin A<sub>↓</sub>tol<sub>Γ</sub>koio. (Od.  
19.459-466)<sup>166</sup>

<sup>165</sup> 'Autolycus and the sons of Autolycus welcomed him kindly with handshakes and gentle words; and Amphithea, the mother of his mother, clung to Odysseus and kissed him on his head and both his fine eyes' (*Od.* 19.414-417).

<sup>166</sup> 'And so Autolycus and the sons of Autolycus, after healing him well and furnishing him with splendid gifts, sped him happily on his way to his beloved fatherland, to Ithaca. Then his father and his lady mother rejoiced at his return home and were asking for all the details of how he received a wound;

These final lines of this explanatory interlude present a miniature *nḡ stoj*, very different to the marathon *nḡ stoj* which forms the subject of the poem as a whole. The former involves the swift journey of a happy traveller who is welcomed home by his joyful father and mother, whereas the latter involves the long-drawn-out journey of a wanderer, who suffers much distress *en route* (including the loss of his mother), and who on arrival at home is faced with the dangerous situation of the suitors before he can be happily reunited with his loved ones.

The final reference to the parent-child triad in Odysseus' family of orientation occurs just before Odysseus and his father are reunited. At *Od.* 24.290-296 Laertes, addressing the as yet unrecognized Odysseus, laments the imagined fate of his son:

... Ḷn pou tāle f<sup>5</sup>lwn ka<sup>8</sup> patr<sup>5</sup>doj a<sup>7</sup>h<sub>j</sub>  
 ḡ( pou ḡn pḡntJ fḡgon <sup>4</sup>cq<sub>r</sub>ej, □ ḡp<sup>8</sup> c<sub>r</sub>sou  
 qhrs<sup>8</sup> ka<sup>8</sup> o<sup>4</sup>wno'sin ,lwr g<sub>r</sub>net': o<sup>1</sup>d<sub>r</sub> ḡ m<sub>r</sub>thr  
 kla<sup>2</sup>se periste<sup>5</sup>lasa pat<sub>r</sub> q', o<sup>6</sup> min tek<sub>r</sub>mesqa:  
 o<sup>1</sup>d' Ḃlocoj pol<sub>r</sub>dwroj, ḡc<sub>r</sub>frwn Phnel<sub>r</sub>peia,  
 k<sup>2</sup>kus' ḡn lec<sub>r</sub>essin ḡḡn p<sub>r</sub>sin, ḡj ḡpe<sub>r</sub>.kei,  
 ḡfqalmo<sub>r</sub>j kaqelo<sup>2</sup>sa: ...

(*Od.* 24.290-296)<sup>167</sup>

We see here Laertes' unhappiness that at death his son was deprived of the care which was his due. The sentiments expressed by Laertes are reminiscent of those expressed by Priam, Hecuba, and Andromache regarding Hector at *Iliad* 22.426-428, 24.204-208, and 22.508-514 respectively. This care involves both his parents and his wife, thus exemplifying the married man's dual role in the two nuclear units to which he belongs. With regard to relationships in Odysseus' family of orientation, Laertes' reference to the shared responsibility of both mother and father for bringing him into the world (o<sup>6</sup> min tek<sub>r</sub>mesqa, 293) illustrates the close mother-father bond in this triad.

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and to them he recounted the whole story of how, on a hunt, a boar had gashed him with its white tusk, when he had gone to Parnassus with the sons of Autolycus' (*Od.* 19.459-466).

<sup>167</sup> 'Somewhere far from his loved ones and his fatherland, either somewhere in the sea fish have devoured him, or on dry land he has become the booty of wild beasts and vultures; neither did his mother, nor his father, who brought him into the world, weep over him as he lay wrapped in a shroud; nor did his richly-dowered wife, prudent Penelope, wail over her husband on his death-bed and close his eyes, as is proper' (*Od.* 24.290-296).

### 3.3.3 Odysseus' reunion with his father

Although it is not until the final book of the poem that Laertes is introduced in live action, his presence in the background is woven into the narrative from the first book. His presence is established by references to him by the narrator and by various characters. These references take the form of patronymic references to Odysseus (u<sup>3</sup>τj Laert,w, 'Oduseŋj Laertiðdhj) and allusions to Laertes himself. The most significant of the latter are those in which various characters refer to his withdrawal to the country and his reduced lifestyle (Mentes-Athene at 1.189-193, Anticleia at 11.187-196, and Eumaeus at 15.353-357 and 16.138-145), and those in which suggestions to bring him into the action are made and quashed (Penelope / Eurycleia at 4.735-754 and Eumaeus / Telemachus at 16.138-153). These references form a preparatory pattern culminating in the live action of the recognition scene between Odysseus and Laertes in *Odyssey* 24. Thus the climactic nature of this father-son reunion is, in my opinion, weighty evidence for regarding this book as an integral part of the original poem.<sup>168</sup>

At *Odyssey* 24.226 Odysseus sees his father for the first time in twenty years. There follows a vivid description, in narrator-text focalized by Odysseus, of Laertes working in the garden (227-231). Laertes' shabby appearance and his menial labour serve as confirmation to Odysseus of what he had heard from Anticleia and Eumaeus regarding the sorry state into which his father had fallen. Odysseus' first reaction on seeing his father is similar to his reaction on seeing his mother's ghost (*Od.* 11.87) – he is overcome with emotion and weeps:

τj n d' ~j o'n 9n7hse polτtla7 d'o7j 'Oduseŋj  
g[ra] teir7menon, m7ga d+ fres<sup>8</sup> p7n7oj \_conta,  
stð7j 7r' †pτ blwqrln †gcnhn kat7 dðkruon e-be. (*Od.*  
24.232-234)<sup>169</sup>

Then he is in a quandary as to whether he should immediately kiss and embrace his father and reveal all the details of his return, or whether he should

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<sup>168</sup> For summaries of the controversy regarding the authenticity of *Od.* 23.297-24.548, see Stanford (1962: II, 404-406) and Heubeck (1992: 342-345 and 353-354).

<sup>169</sup> 'But now as godlike much-enduring Odysseus observed him, worn out by age and bearing a great sorrow in his heart, he stood beneath a tall pear-tree and let his tears fall' (*Od.* 24.232-234).

pr<sup>2</sup>t' ,xer(,oito ,kastÐ te peir[<sup>1</sup>saito ('first probe and examine all the particulars', 238). He decides upon the latter approach (240), and there ensues a long process of probing and subterfuge (241-314) before the reunion is effected.

The logic behind Odysseus' decision to 'test' his father and the employment of subterfuge at this stage, now that the threat posed by the suitors has been disposed of, has been questioned in the past, but two recent commentaries (De Jong 2001 and Heubeck 1992) give satisfactory explanations of the narratorial and actorial motivation<sup>170</sup> for Odysseus' choice of approach. De Jong (2001: 576) accounts for the narratorial motivation by arguing that the aim of the delayed reunion is to create greater dramatic impact, as a quick revelation of identity, after the long and careful build up to the father-son encounter, would have been anticlimactic. Heubeck (1992: 389-390, 396-397) justifies Odysseus' personal motivation by arguing that the pe'ra (trial), which Odysseus employs, involves a question and answer technique to force his father step by step out of 'his self-inflicted isolation and apathy' (Heubeck 1992: 390). Hence the meaning of kertom<sup>5</sup>oij ,p(essin peirhqanai (*Od.* 24.240) is 'to draw him out with provoking words', that is, to shake him out of his withdrawn state. There is no implication of testing his loyalty or of cruel intention. This interpretation negates Kirk's (1962: 250) criticism of Odysseus' pe'ra of his father as being unnecessary and cruel, as well as Stanford's (1962: II, 421) explanation of the pe'ra as being part of Odysseus' 'habitual caution and craftiness'. On the contrary, Odysseus' decision to approach his father in this way is based on affection, and on understanding of and concern for his father's state of mind.

Odysseus' probing finally arouses Laertes from his apathy, and he is able to express his grief. On witnessing his father's unrestrained emotions, Odysseus is unable to restrain his own emotions, and reveals himself to his father in the manner he briefly considered as an option at 236-7:

,Wj fÐto, t<sup>7</sup>n d' Æceoj nef, lh ,kÐluye m, laina:  
 Ømfot, rVsi d+ cers<sup>8</sup>n ,l<sup>7</sup>n k<sup>7</sup>nin a<sup>4</sup>qal<sup>7</sup>essan  
 ce<sup>7</sup>ato kEk kefalaj poliaj, £dinÆ stenac<sup>5</sup>zwn.  
 to<sup>2</sup> d' `r<sup>5</sup>neto qum<sup>7</sup>j, ØnÆ " )naj d, o<sup>3</sup> udh

<sup>170</sup> See Appendix Glossary, pp. 158-159.

drim¶ m(noj pro▷tuye f<sup>5</sup>lon pat(r' e<sup>4</sup>sor¬wnti.  
k¬sse d( min perif¶j ,piÐlmenoj đd+ prosh¬da:  
°ke)noj m( n toi l'd' a¬t¬j ,g'', pÐter, |n s¶ metallpј  
,  
uluḡon e<sup>4</sup>kost¬ \_te□ ,j patr<sup>5</sup>da ga'an. ...<sup>1</sup>  
(Od. 24.315-322)<sup>171</sup>

Laertes' initial response to Odysseus' revelation is to request proof, and it is only after Odysseus has provided the evidence of incidents from his youth that the recognition scene reaches its culmination with a description of Laertes' emotional reaction on recognizing his son:

„Wj fÐto, to? d' a¬to? l¬to ḡo¬nata ka<sup>8</sup> f<sup>5</sup>lon □tor,  
s□mat' Ønagn¬ntoj tÐ o<sup>3</sup> \_mpeda p( frad' 'Odusse¬j:  
Ømf<sup>8</sup> d+ paid<sup>8</sup> f<sup>5</sup>lJ bÐle p□cee: t¬n d+ pot<sup>8</sup> o+  
e+lēn Øpoy¬conta pol¬tlaј d'oј 'Odusse¬j.  
(Od. 24.345-348)<sup>172</sup>

In the first line of the passage the depiction of the physical effects of the shock of recognition and the realisation that his son has finally returned is no less effective for being a formulaic line. At the culmination of the final recognition scene the narrator presents the touching picture of Odysseus holding his momentarily unconscious father to his breast.

That Laertes has been effectively aroused from his depression is illustrated by his first words when he regains consciousness: he expresses concern about the danger from those seeking to avenge the slaughter of the suitors. Odysseus' reply reveals his protectiveness towards his elderly father:

qÐrsei, m□ toi ta?ta met⊕ fres<sup>8</sup> s□si mel¬ntwn. (Od.  
24.357)<sup>173</sup>

<sup>171</sup> 'So he spoke, and then a dark cloud of grief enveloped him. He picked up the black dust in both his hands and poured it over his grey head, groaning loudly. Odysseus' heart was stirred within him, and a sharp shock shot through his nostrils as he looked upon his dear father. He leapt towards him, kissed and embraced him, and said: "Father, I am that very man, about whom you are asking; I have come back in the twentieth year to my fatherland ..."' (Od. 24.315-322).

<sup>172</sup> 'So said Odysseus; and Laertes' knees and the heart within him slackened, as he recognized the sure proofs which Odysseus had made known. He threw both his arms around his beloved son; and much-enduring godlike Odysseus caught the fainting man to him' (Od. 24.345-348).

<sup>173</sup> 'Be of good courage! Don't let these matters trouble your mind' (Od. 24.357).

Laertes' return to well-being is further illustrated by Athene's rejuvenation of him (*Od.* 24.367-371) and by his expression of the wish to be in possession of his former warlike prowess, which would have enabled him to fight alongside Odysseus in the battle against the suitors (*Od.* 24.375-382). His final speech in the poem reveals that he has been transformed from misery to happiness as he stands alongside his son and his grandson to face the vengeance-seeking relatives of the suitors in battle:

τῆς ἡμέρας μοι φίλῃσιν ὄδε, θεοῖσιν ἄμειβαντα καὶ πατρὶσιν:

ὅτε γὰρ ἐγὼ καὶ ἄλλοι τῶν ὀρέωντων ἐπὶ δῶρον ἔσομαι.

(*Od.* 24.514-515)<sup>174</sup>

Laertes' earlier wish is fulfilled when with Athene's aid he is able to cast his spear successfully to initiate the battle (*Od.* 24.520-524). So this heroic father-son relationship has a happy ending, unlike the Peleus-Achilles and the Priam-Hector relationships in the *Iliad*.

### 3.4 Odysseus and his family of procreation

The effect of Odysseus' absence on this family unit, and its re-establishment brought about by his return constitute the major theme of the poem. Hence the depiction of the Odysseus-Penelope-Telemachus triad and the three dyadic relationships encompassed by it occupy a great deal of space in the *Odyssey*. This is to be expected since this triad forms the nucleus of Odysseus' household. Although material and economic aspects of his *οἶκος*, which, together with his own leadership qualities, form the basis of his power in the kingdom he rules, are important to Odysseus, it is this family unit which occupies more of his attention.<sup>175</sup> Both his wife and son have prominent roles to play in the narrative. In fact they participate in the live action from *Odyssey* 1, while Odysseus makes his first appearance in *Odyssey* 5. Mother and son participate in the action individually and in combination on several occasions during the course of the narrative before Odysseus is reunited with each of them individually and the disrupted triadic relationship is restored.

#### 3.4.1 The Odysseus-Penelope-Telemachus triad

<sup>174</sup> 'What day is this for me, dear gods? Truly I am very happy, for both my son and my grandson are engaged in a contest over valour' (*Od.* 24.514-515).

<sup>175</sup> This is not to say that Odysseus is not still deeply attached to his parents. See section 3.3.

Telemachus is the first of the three to participate in the action at *Odyssey* 1.113ff., but even before his appearance he is introduced to the audience by Athene, when she outlines her plan for him (*Od.* 1.88-95). That Telemachus was not invented for this poem, but was part of the tradition associated with Odysseus is evidenced by the fact that in the *Iliad* Odysseus twice refers to himself as the father of Telemachus (*Il.* 2.260 and 4.354). Telemachus' first appearance in the action is in the form of narrator-text in which he is described as daydreaming of the return of his father, an event that would put an end to the disrupted state of this family and get rid of his mother's suitors (*Od.* 1.114-117). It is Telemachus who makes the first reference to this triadic relationship in response to a question from Athene (disguised as a visitor, Mentos) regarding his Odyssean paternity:

m□thr m,n t' ,m, fhsi to? \_mmenai, a↓tEr ,g" ge  
 o↓k o-d': o↓ gDr p" tij ,Tn g7non a↓tTj Øn,gnw.  
 (*Od.* 1.215-216)<sup>176</sup>

These words capture the essence of this triadic relationship as it is at this juncture: Telemachus has an active relationship with his mother, but is unsure of his identity as his father's son as he has no personal experience of his father, who left on the Trojan expedition when Telemachus was a baby (cf. *Od.* 4.112, 11.448-449). In her response, in which she attempts to raise Telemachus' sense of self-awareness and self-worth, Mentos-Athene refers to Penelope by name for the first time in the poem:

o↓ m,n toi gene□n ge qeo<sup>8</sup> n"numnon |p<sup>5</sup>ssw  
 qakan, ,pe<sup>8</sup> s, ge to'on ,ge<sup>5</sup>nato Phnel7peia. (*Od.*  
 1.222-223)<sup>177</sup>

As the conversation continues, at *Odyssey* 1.231-251 Telemachus elaborates on the unhappy situation of the family in his father's absence. In addition to his distress at the unknown fate of his father, there is the problem of his mother's unwanted suitors, who are not only a threat to his mother and himself, but an economic threat as well:

t7ssoi mht,r' ,mln mn~ntai, tr7cousi d+ o-kon.

<sup>176</sup> 'Mother says that I am his, but I am not sure; for there is no man as yet who himself knows for certain his own father' (*Od.* 1.215-216).

<sup>177</sup> 'The gods have not made your generation inglorious hereafter, since Penelope bore a son such as you' (*Od.* 1.222-223).

ε δ' οἷτ' ὀρνεῖται στύγετον γέμον οἷτε τελευτῶν  
 ποίασαι δὲ νῆται: τὸ δ' εὖ φῖν ἴσους ἄδοντες  
 ὀκνοῦμεν: τῆκα δὲ με διαρραῖσους καὶ ἀτῆν. (*Od.*  
 1.248-251)<sup>178</sup>

The issue of the disruption of the triadic aspect of Odysseus' family of procreation and the economic aspects thereof continue to be brought to the attention of the audience by Telemachus. In *Odyssey* 2 he summons the Ithacan assembly to discuss not public business but what he describes as ἑμῶν ἀτὸς κρίσις, ἢ μοι κῆρ ἄμπεσεν ὀκῆ (*'my own need, the trouble which has befallen my house', 2.45*). He then goes on to describe the same unhappy situation which he had explained earlier to Mentis-Athene (*Od.* 1.245-251). In *Odyssey* 3, during the course of his journey in search of news of his father, this family situation is brought up again in the conversation between Telemachus and Nestor (*Od.* 3.201-217). In *Odyssey* 4 Telemachus, continuing his search, visits Menelaus in Sparta. Before he is aware of his visitor's identity, Menelaus brings up the issue of Odysseus' unknown fate, and speculates on how distressing it must be to his family, the members of which he identifies as follows:

Λαῖρθη γὰρ ἢ γέρων καὶ ἑμῶν Πηνελόπεια  
 Θηλέμαχος γὰρ, ἢν λέπε νῶν γεγάθη, ἑὸς ὀκῆ. (*Od.*  
 4.111-112)<sup>179</sup>

He thus associates the aged Laertes with Odysseus' wife and child and Odysseus' conjugal home. The omission of Anticleia may perhaps be attributed to the poet's assumption that Menelaus would have had news of her death. Subsequently, after his identity has been revealed, Telemachus tells Menelaus the story of how his father's absence is affecting him and his mother (*Od.* 4.316-331).

As part of his experience on his travels Telemachus is exposed to family life in the homes of Nestor and Menelaus, who feature as examples of heroes who have

<sup>178</sup> 'They all court my mother, and consume my house. She neither rejects a marriage hateful to her, nor is she able to make an end of it; and they with their eating lay waste my house; and soon they will destroy me myself' (*Od.* 1.248-251).

<sup>179</sup> 'The old man, Laertes, and prudent Penelope, and Telemachus, whom he left a new-born in his house' (*Od.* 4.111-112).

achieved successful  $\eta\sigma\tau\omicron\iota$ . The orderly family life in these homes provides a strong contrast to the disorderly state of affairs in Telemachus' own home. At Pylos Telemachus finds Nestor, surrounded by his sons, presiding over a gathering of the men of Pylos in the celebration of a festival of Poseidon. At nightfall Telemachus accompanies Nestor, his sons, and sons-in-law to Nestor's palace, where the hospitality and domestic circumstances are described in narrator-text (*Od.* 3.386-403). Then (3.404-476) the domestic activities of the following day are depicted in narrator- and character-text. The homeliness and the involvement of all the members of Nestor's family, namely, his six sons (mentioned by name), his sons-in-law, his wife Eurydice, his daughters, and his daughters-in-law, are emphasized. Although Nestor's safe and speedy return has brought about the domestic harmony depicted in this scene, Telemachus and the audience are reminded that Nestor's family had suffered the loss of a son, Antilochus, at Troy: his death is recalled by his father, Nestor (*Od.* 3.111), and by his brother, Peisistratus (*Od.* 4.187-202).

In *Odyssey* 4 when Telemachus, accompanied by Nestor's son, Peisistratus, arrives at Menelaus' palace in Sparta, he finds a double wedding-feast in progress. The participants in the weddings are identified in narrator-text descriptions: Hermione, the only child of Menelaus and Helen, is to be married to Achilles' son, Neoptolemus, and a daughter of Alector is to be married to Megapenthes, the son of Menelaus and a slave-girl (*Od.* 4.4-14). Thus we have here a family differing in many ways from Nestor and Eurydice's traditional and wholesome family. The Menelaus-Helen-Hermione triad had been disrupted by the Helen-Paris interlude, which was the cause of the war which disrupted so many other families on both sides, but here Helen is depicted as the mistress of the house of her first husband, and acting as the perfect hostess to their guests. Another interesting feature of this family is the recognition of Menelaus' illegitimate son, Megapenthes, as the son of the family.

In addition to Telemachus' personal exposure to the reunited families of Nestor and Menelaus, both he and the audience are reminded by these two heroes and by the engineer of his trip, Athene (disguised as Mentor on this occasion), of the disastrous home-coming of Agamemnon. Nestor first, in conversation with Telemachus, refers briefly to the fate of Agamemnon at *Odyssey* 3.193-200, and then, in response to a

request from Telemachus, he tells the story at some length (254-316). Between Nestor's two speeches on the subject, comes Mentor-Athene's remark suggesting that Agamemnon's experience was the worst possible outcome of a  $n_7$   $stoj$ . When Telemachus is in Sparta, Menelaus, in similar fashion to Nestor, also first makes a brief reference to Agamemnon's murder (*Od.* 4.91-92) and later in an embedded speech he repeats Proteus' version of the whole story (*Od.* 4.512-549). The role of Agamemnon's son, Orestes, as the avenger of his father, is held up as an example to Telemachus, and not for the first time, as this was the example Athene (disguised as Mentos) had used when she urged him to put his childhood behind him and assert himself as a man (*Od.* 1.296-300).

At *Odyssey* 4.625 the scene shifts from Sparta to Ithaca, and Telemachus is absent from the action until the beginning of *Odyssey* 15, where he reappears still in Sparta. Here he is visited by Athene, and in the ensuing dialogue she urges him to return home to look after his property, as it seems that the remarriage of his mother to Eurymachus is imminent.<sup>180</sup> This remarriage would mean the dissolution of Odysseus' already disrupted conjugal family. Athene goes on to describe what implications this remarriage would have for the  $o-koj$  which had been his father's and would now be his own:

$m_7$   $n_7$   $ti$   $se^?$   $\emptyset$   $khti$   $d_7$   $mwn$   $9k$   $ktama$   $f_7$   $rhtai$ .  
 $o-sqa$   $g\mathbb{E}r$   $o+oj$   $qum_7j$   $9n^8$   $st_7$   $qessi$   $gunaik_7j$ :  
 $ke^5nou$   $bo_7$   $letai$   $o-kon$   $\downarrow$   $f_7$   $llen$   $\downarrow$   $j$   $ken$   $\downarrow$   $pu^5v$ ,  
 $pa^5dwn$   $d_+$   $prot_7$   $rwn$   $ka^8$   $kourid^5oio$   $f^5loio$   
 $o^{\downarrow}k_7$   $ti$   $m_7$   $mnhtai$   $teqnh_7$   $toj$   $o^{\downarrow}d_+$   $metallp$ . (*Od.* 15.19-23)<sup>181</sup>

These words are aimed at spurring on Telemachus to return to Ithaca; hence they are not necessarily a true reflection of the behaviour to be expected of Penelope in the event of her remarrying.

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<sup>180</sup> Stanford (1962: II, 239) points out that this may be a fabrication of Athene, as there is no other evidence in the poem about this remarriage.

<sup>181</sup> 'Let no property be carried from the house without your permission. For you know what kind of disposition is in the breast of a woman: she wants to enrich the house of the man she marries, and of the children of her former marriage and of the beloved husband, who is now dead, she is no longer mindful, nor does she inquire after them' (*Od.* 15.19-23).

After his return to Ithaca, Telemachus describes the disrupted state of the family triad for the last time before he is reunited with his father (*Od.* 16.122-128). On this occasion the recipient of the speech is the beggar guest in Eumaeus' hut, who is actually the long-absent member of the triad in disguise. In this last reference to the situation his words are a repetition of his first words on the subject, when he explained the situation to Mentos-Athene at *Odyssey* 1.248-251 (quoted on p. 85).

Penelope is the second of the three to take part in the action, when at *Odyssey* 1.328-361 she descends from her chamber to make her first appearance before the suitors in a scene which further illustrates the current state of the triadic relationship.<sup>182</sup> She requests the bard, Phemius, to sing a different song, as the story of the home-coming of the Greek heroes from Troy exacerbates her longing for her husband (337-344). Her request elicits a negative response from Telemachus, who suggests that she is overly concerned with Odysseus, as he was not the only one who suffered an unsuccessful  $\eta\gamma\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon\gamma$ . His argument might seem to be in conflict with own longing for his father, expressed earlier, but, as De Jong (2001: 32) points out, it is a reflection of the different kinds of longing experienced by Penelope and Telemachus. Penelope's longing arises from her missing the man she has known and loved, whereas Telemachus is longing for the return of a man whom he has never known.

As in the first dialogue between Penelope and Telemachus, referred to above, the absent Odysseus is involved, so in the other five mother-son encounters he features in various ways. In the second and third conversations (*Od.* 17.36-50 and 96-165), Penelope questions Telemachus on what news of Odysseus he has learned on his trip abroad. In the fourth encounter (*Od.* 18.214-242) the conversation concerns the treatment of the beggar guest (Odysseus in disguise). The fifth conversation (*Od.* 21.343-358) arises from Penelope's interference in the matter of the participation of the same beggar-Odysseus in the contest of the bow, and ends with Telemachus' dismissal of her from the great hall. In the final exchange between mother and son (*Od.* 23.96-110), the subject of the conversation is Penelope's refusal to acknowledge Odysseus after he has revealed his identity and disposed of the suitors.

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<sup>182</sup> This scene reflects not only the triadic aspect of the Odysseus-Penelope-Telemachus parent-child unit, but also illustrates aspects of the dyadic relationships: see pp. 103-105 (Penelope-Telemachus) and p. 120 (Odysseus-Penelope).

In addition to her conversations with Telemachus, Penelope speaks of her family problems to other characters as well: Medon and the suitors, the maids, Antinous, Eurymachus, and finally the beggar-Odysseus. At *Odyssey* 4.680 she begins by asking the herald, Medon, on what errand the suitors have sent him to her; then from 685-695 she addresses her remarks to the absent suitors, accusing them of repaying Odysseus' earlier fairness by wasting the property of his son. After Medon responds with the information that Telemachus has secretly gone abroad and that the suitors are planning to ambush him on his return journey, she tearfully addresses her maids in a lament on the sorrows she has experienced as a wife and mother:

Kl?te, f<sup>5</sup>lai: per<sup>8</sup> gÐr moi 'Olmpioj Ælge' \_dwken  
 ,k pas(wn, lssai moi |mo? trÐfen ðd' ,g,nonto,  
 □ pr<sup>8</sup>n m+n p\_ sin ,sql\_ n Øp''lesa qumol(onta,  
 panto<sup>5</sup>Vj Øret□si kekasm(non ,n Danao'sin,  
 ,sql\_ n, to? kl(oj e\_l r¶ kaq' `EllÐda ka<sup>8</sup> m(son \_Argoj  
 .  
 n?n a´ pa'd' Øgapht\_ n Ønhre<sup>5</sup>yanto q\_ellai  
 Økl(a ,k megÐrwn, o\_l d' |rmhq(ntoj Ækousa. (Od.  
 4.722-728)<sup>183</sup>

At *Odyssey* 16.413 Penelope makes her second appearance before the suitors in the great hall, after she has heard they are again planning to murder her son. On this occasion she reproaches Antinous in similar vein to the reproach addressed to Medon and the suitors at *Odyssey* 4.685-695, referred to above: Odysseus had saved Antinous' father from the fury of the people of Ithaca, but now Antinous repays Odysseus by devouring his livelihood, courting his wife, trying to kill his son, and causing great distress to herself (*Od.* 16.418-433).

Penelope makes her third appearance before the suitors in the great hall at *Odyssey* 18.206, when the beggar-Odysseus is present. Here for the first time after so many

<sup>183</sup> 'Hear me, dear friends, the Olympian has given me pain beyond all who were born and brought up together with me, who once lost a noble, lionhearted husband, who excelled among the Danaans in all kinds of virtues, a noble man, whose fame extends through Greece and into central Argos. Now again the storms have carried off my darling son without a trace from the palace; nor did I hear that he was setting out' (*Od.* 4.722-728).

years Odysseus sees his wife again. In a speech addressed to a suitor, Eurymachus, she admits that in terms of Odysseus' parting instructions to her (quoted on p. 68) the time has come for her to remarry, now that their son has come of age; but she will only do so with reluctance and sorrow:

nϣx d' \_stai lte dλ stuger┘j gĐmoj Øntibol□sei  
 o┘lom(nhj ,m,qen, taj te zeϣj lbon Øph┘ra. (Od.  
 18.272-273)<sup>184</sup>

Penelope's final statements on her family situation are made in the conversation she has with the beggar-Odysseus in *Odyssey* 19. This conversation falls into two sections, in both of which she brings up the issue of her remarriage, which will signify the dissolution of her conjugal family. In the first part, after describing her attempts to avoid remarriage (including the ruse of weaving a shroud for Laertes), she explains her current situation:

n?n d' o┘t' ,kfug(ein d┘namai gĐmon o┘te tin' Ællhn  
 mätin \_q' e┘r<sup>5</sup>skw: mĐla d' ┘tr┘nousi tokæj  
 g□masq', ØscalĐv d+ pĐ□j b<sup>5</sup>oton kated┘ntwn,  
 gign"skwn: udh gĐr Ønlr o+┘j te mĐlista  
 o<sup>7</sup>kou k□desqai, t┘ te ze┘j k?doj ┘pĐzei. (Od.  
 19.157-161)<sup>185</sup>

Her unwillingness to remarry reveals her loyalty to Odysseus, but the situation is now critical: her parents are pressuring her to remarry, and, although she does not say her son is pressuring her, she is aware of her son's vexation over the depredation of his livelihood; she is also aware that she is no longer needed as guardian of the o-koj, as her son is now capable of performing this function. She is faced with pressing socio-economic reasons for dissolving the conjugal family unit, in spite of her personal feelings on the matter.

When the conversation resumes, at *Odyssey* 19.525-534 she describes the inner conflict she is experiencing as a result of this dilemma: whether to continue to maintain her current conjugal home or to remarry. On this occasion she makes it clear

<sup>184</sup> 'And there will be a night when a hateful marriage will fall to my baneful lot, for Zeus has robbed me of happiness' (Od. 18.272-273).

<sup>185</sup> 'Now I can no longer escape a marriage, nor devise another plan. My parents strongly encourage me to marry, and my son is vexed at those devouring his livelihood, for he is aware of it; for he is already a man and very well able to take care of a house, which Zeus endows with glory' (Od. 19.157-161).

that her son is now pressuring her to remarry and leave the house of her husband. (See pp. 100-101 for aspects of this passage pertaining to the mother-son relationship).

References to this triad are also found in the narrative thread which traces the activities of the third member, Odysseus. In this way the poet indicates the importance of his conjugal family to Odysseus, and maintains its narrative significance. Although Odysseus' desire to return home to his  $\text{f}^5\text{loi}$  is emphasised from the beginning of the poem, it is in *Odyssey* 5, in which he first participates in the action, that he speaks of Penelope, his own house, and  $\text{n}_7\text{stimon } \square\text{mar}$  (day of home-coming) in conversation with Calypso:

$\text{p}_7\text{tnia } \text{qe}\text{D}, \text{m}\square \text{moi } \text{t}_7\text{de } \text{c}^{\cdot}\text{eo: } \text{o-da } \text{ka}^8 \text{ a}^{\downarrow}\text{t}_7\text{j}$   
 $\text{p}\text{Dnta } \text{m}\text{Dl}', \text{o}\blacktriangleright\text{neka } \text{se}'\text{o } \text{per}^5\text{frwn } \text{P}^{\text{hnel}}_7\text{peia}$   
 $\text{e-doj } \text{Økidnot}, \text{rh } \text{m}, \text{geq}_7\text{j } \text{t}' \text{e}^4\text{sDnta } ^4\text{d}, \text{sqai:}$   
 $\text{£ } \text{m}_+\text{n } \text{g}\text{Er } \text{brot}_7\text{j } , \text{sti}, \text{s}\text{¶ } \text{d}' \text{ØqDnatoj } \text{ka}^8 \text{ Øg}\square\text{rwj.}$   
 $\text{Øll}\text{£ } \text{ka}^8 \text{ ` } \text{j } , \text{q}, \text{lw } \text{ka}^8 \text{ , } \text{ldomai } \text{umata } \text{p}\text{Dnta}$   
 $\text{o}^7\text{kad}, \text{t}' \text{ , } \text{lq}, \text{menai } \text{ka}^8 \text{ n}_7\text{stimon } \square\text{mar } ^4\text{d}, \text{sqai.}$   
*(Od. 5.215-220)*<sup>186</sup>

These words are Odysseus' diplomatic response to Calypso's inference that it is longing for his wife that prevents him from accepting her offer of becoming the immortal lord of the household of an immortal who cannot be matched in stature and beauty by a mortal.

The next opportunity which is given to him to make specific reference to family members occurs in *Odyssey* 11, in which he relates his experiences in the underworld. Here he seeks news of all family members – mother, father, son, and wife – when he meets the ghost of his mother, who represents his first contact with Ithaca since his departure (*Od. 11.170-179*).<sup>187</sup> With regard to the triadic aspect of his family of procreation he asks:

$\text{e}^4\text{p}_+ \text{d}, \text{moi } \text{mnhst}\alpha\text{j } \text{Øl}_7\text{cou } \text{boul}\square\text{n } \text{te } \text{n}_7\text{on } \text{te},$

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<sup>186</sup> 'My lady goddess, do not be angry with me for this. I myself well know all these things: the fact that circumspect Penelope is clearly inferior in form and stature compared with you; for she is mortal, but you are immortal and ageless, but even so I wish and long all my days to go home and see my day of return' (*Od. 5.215-220*).

<sup>187</sup> See also p. 75 for Odysseus' conversation with his mother's ghost.

ð̄+ m(nei parE paid<sup>8</sup> ka<sup>8</sup> \_mpeda pðnta fulðssei  
 □ udh min \_ghmen 'Acai~n Lj tij Æristoj.  
 (*Od.* 11.177-179)<sup>188</sup>

His words reveal his concern about the continued existence of his conjugal household and the role of his wife therein. This inquiry also has relation to his parting words to his wife (*Od.* 18.265-270, quoted on p. 68), whereby he left his wife in charge of everything until their son should come of age. The news which Anticleia is able to give him is reassuring:

ka<sup>8</sup> l<sup>5</sup>hn ke<sup>5</sup>nh ge m(nei tetlh<sub>7</sub>ti qum\_  
 so'sin ,n<sup>8</sup> megðroisin: |□zura<sup>8</sup> d( o<sup>3</sup> a<sup>4</sup>e<sup>8</sup>  
 fq<sup>5</sup>nousin n<sub>7</sub>ktej te ka<sup>8</sup> umata dakru ceo<sub>7</sub>sv.  
 s<sub>7</sub>n d' o► p'' tij \_cei kal<sub>7</sub>n g(raj, ØllE ,khloj  
 Thl(,macoj tem(nea n(,metai ka<sup>8</sup> da'taj ,□saj  
 da<sup>5</sup>nutai, 'j ,p(,oike dikasp<sub>7</sub>lon Ændr' Øleg<sub>7</sub>nein:  
 pðntej gE<sub>r</sub> kal(ousi. . . .

(*Od.* 11.181-187)<sup>189</sup>

This first news which Odysseus receives about his family of procreation reveals that his wife remains true to him, her constant tears being an expression of her loyalty. In addition his son (although only about thirteen years old) is coping in the performance of his absent father's duties. Odysseus also learns that his royal power and his royal domains are intact. This then was the understanding of his family situation which he had when he landed on Calypso's island, where he was detained for seven years without any further news.

Odysseus' encounter with another ghost, that of Agamemnon (*Od.* 11.385-464), serves to underline the significance of his conjugal family to the n<sub>7</sub>stoj of the hero. Here Agamemnon contrasts his own disastrous home-coming to what Odysseus

<sup>188</sup> 'Tell me about the will and intention of my wedded wife, whether she remains with our son, and steadfastly watches over everything, or whether she has already married the man who is the best of the Achaeans' (*Od.* 11.177-179).

<sup>189</sup> 'Very much so, she remains with enduring heart in your palace; and always the miserable nights and days pass away while she weeps. No one yet has taken over your royal prerogative, but Telemachus enjoys unhindered your royal lands, and partakes of equally shared banquets, which it is fitting that a judge should enjoy; for all invite him' (*Od.* 11.181-187).

can expect when he returns to Ithaca, because, unlike Clytemnestra, Penelope is virtuous and well-intentioned (446). He recalls Penelope and Telemachus as they were when the Greek expedition set out for Troy, and the father-son reunion which awaits Odysseus:

□ m(,n min n(,mfhn ge n(,hn katele<sup>5</sup>pomen fme<sup>1</sup>)j  
 ,rc(,menoi p(,lem(,nde: p(,□j d(, o<sup>3</sup> □n ,p<sup>8</sup> maz(,  
 n(,pioj, (,j pou n(,n ge met' Øndr(,n<sup>6</sup> zei Øriqm(,  
 (,lbioj: □ g(,r t(,n ge pat(,r f<sup>5</sup>loj (,yetai ,lq(,n,  
 ka<sup>8</sup> ke<sup>1</sup>noj pat(,ra prospt(,xetai, □ q(,mij ,st<sup>5</sup>n. (O  
 d. 11.447-451)<sup>190</sup>

In addition to providing the stage for the narration of his weird and wonderful adventures, Odysseus' brief sojourn in Scheria represents his first contact, since leaving Troy, with a human (though somewhat idealised) society – that of the Phaeacians. Among the Phaeacians he is able to experience normal peace-time activities for the first time since his departure from Ithaca, some twenty years earlier. Through the intervention of Athene and with the assistance of Nausicaa, the daughter of the royal family, Odysseus becomes the guest of the king and queen, Alcinous and Arete. This father-mother-daughter triad and Odysseus' interaction with them are depicted in great detail in the three books (*Odyssey* 6-8) which precede Odysseus' narration of his adventures.

Prior to Odysseus' meeting with Nausicaa, there is a charmingly intimate scene in which the parent-child relationship in this family is depicted (*Od.* 6.650-680). As Odysseus is not present, this scene is for the benefit of the audience. Apart from its contribution to the central theme by creating a picture of domestic harmony in order to accentuate what Odysseus has for so many years missed and longed for, this scene is of interest as being the only one in Homeric epic in which parent-daughter interaction among mortals is depicted. The only other father-mother-daughter interaction depicted is to be found in the *Iliad* and features two divine triads, those of Zeus-Dione-Aphrodite (*Il.* 5.370-430) and Zeus-Leto-Artemis (*Il.* 21.489-513).

<sup>190</sup> 'For sure we left her a young wife, when we went to war; and there was an infant son at her breast; now I suppose he sits among men by rank – lucky man! For truly his dear father, after coming back, will see him, and he will embrace his father, as is right' (*Od.* 11.447-451).

From *Odyssey* 6.134, at which Odysseus and Nausicaa meet, Odysseus is exposed to the dynamics of relationships in the Phaeacian royal family. The happy conjugal relationship between Alcinous and Arete and their close relationship with their daughter provide a model for Odysseus to aspire to on his return to Ithaca. For despite the obvious attractions offered by a life in this family, Odysseus remains firmly focused on his return to his own family home. On his departure from Scheria, Odysseus' farewell wishes to Alcinous and the Phaeacian nobles are a reflection of his own wishes for the conjugal family to which he is returning:

... Ømḥmona d' oʷkoi Ækoitin  
 nostḥsaj eḥroimi sḥn Ørtem,essi fʷloisin.  
 ḥmeʷj d' aʷqi m,nontej ,ʷfraʷnoite gunaʷkaj  
 kouridʷaj kaʷ t,kna: ...

(*Od.* 13.42-45)<sup>191</sup>

Likewise at *Od.* 13.59-62 his farewell words to Arete represent his wish for a similar fate for himself after his home-coming:

Caʷr, moi, , basʷleia, diamper,ḥj, eʷj Ḷ ke garaḥj  
 ḶlqV kaʷ qḥnatoj, tḥ t' ,p' Ønqrʷpoisi p,Ḷlontai.  
 aḶtḐr ,gʷ n,omai: sḥ d, t,rpeo t,d' ,nʷ oʷkḶ  
 paisʷ te kaʷ laoʷsi kaʷ 'AlkinḥḶ basilaḶ. (*Od.*  
 13.59-62)<sup>192</sup>

When Odysseus finally reaches Ithaca, he receives his first news of his wife and son in his conversation with Athene, who speaks of Odysseus himself and the other two members of his procreative family, and of the situation which prevails in his o-kōj. Remarking on Odysseus' self control, Athene says that any other man on arriving home would have rushed off happily to see his children and his wife in his home, or at least have sought news of them, but Odysseus prefers personally to 'make trial of'

<sup>191</sup> 'When I return, may I find a blameless wife at home together with my loved ones safe and sound. May you remaining here bring joy to your wedded wives and children' (*Od.* 13.42-45).

<sup>192</sup> 'Farewell, o queen, forever, till old age comes to you, and death, which is the lot of men. I am going; but do you have joy in this household, in your children, your people, and king Alcinous' (*Od.* 13.259-262).

(peirðw) his wife (*Od.* 13.333-336). In spite of this preference Athene goes on to inform him of his wife's loyalty:

... σ t( toi a▶twj  
 βstai 9n<sup>8</sup> megðroisin, †□zura<sup>8</sup> d( o<sup>3</sup> a<sup>4</sup>e<sup>8</sup>  
 fq<sup>5</sup>nousin n7ktej te ka<sup>8</sup> umata dðkru ceo7sv. (*Od.*  
 13.336-338)<sup>193</sup>

As can be seen, Athene's description of Penelope's loyal behaviour is virtually a repetition of Anticleia's description thereof (*Od.* 11.181-183, quoted on p. 92). The effect of this formulaic repetition is to emphasize the loyalty of Penelope, to both Odysseus, the internal narratee in both cases, and to the audience, the external narratees. Athene in addition describes Penelope's handling of the suitors, who for three years have been courting her in her husband's palace, again emphasizing her continuing loyalty to him (*Od.* 13.375-381):

ε d+ s7n a<sup>8</sup>e<sup>8</sup> n7ston †durom(nh katε qum7n  
 pðntaj m+n \_lpei ka<sup>8</sup> †p<sup>5</sup>scetai øndr<sup>8</sup> 8kðstJ,  
 øggel<sup>5</sup>aj pro□e'sa, n7oj d( o<sup>3</sup> Ælla menoip. (*Od.*  
 13.379-381)<sup>194</sup>

The suitor problem was an issue which came into being after Anticleia had died, but Odysseus had been forewarned by Teiresias that he would have to deal with arrogant suitors on his return home. Next, Athene informs him of the absence of his son on a mission to Sparta to seek news of his father. This information given by Athene is the first news of his wife and son that Odysseus has heard since his meeting with his mother's ghost in the underworld some seven years previously.

In *Odyssey* 14 Odysseus receives news of the Odysseus-Penelope-Telemachus triad from a different perspective. The information is provided by Eumaeus, the swineherd, to his guest, the beggar (Odysseus in disguise). Eumaeus talks about his master, who has been missing for many years and is presumed dead (*Od.* 14.40-44, 61-70), and

<sup>193</sup> '... but she, just as before, sits in your palace, and always the miserable nights and the days pass away, while she weeps' (*Od.* 13.336-338).

<sup>194</sup> 'And she, although she always grieves in her heart for your home-coming, feeds all with hope and makes promises to each man, sending him messages, but her mind purposes other things for him' (*Od.* 13.379-381).

about the suitors, who are courting his absent master's wife (89-108). In response to Odysseus' request for the identity of his master, as he might have some news of him, Eumaeus describes how his mistress in her anxiety to hear news of her husband is the victim of charlatans (120-130). Eumaeus also reveals his own anxiety about his master's son, Telemachus, whose life is threatened in an ambush by the suitors (174-184). Thus in the course of this conversation Eumaeus, as a non-member, but close associate of the triad, describes to the beggar-Odysseus, an apparent outsider, his view on the current situation in this family unit.

Finally the beggar-Odysseus receives insider information from the other two members of the triad. In *Odyssey* 16 he hears Telemachus' views on the current state of affairs in this family unit. At this point the Odyssean thread of references to the family triad meets the Telemachan thread, when Telemachus, for the last time, describes the suitor problem as an effect of his father's absence in the same words he used when he first described the situation to Athene (*Od.* 16.122-128=1.248-251. See p. 85). At *Odyssey* 19.157-161 and 525-534, the other insider, Penelope, speaks to the beggar-Odysseus about the situation in this family triad, signifying the meeting of the Penelopean and the Odyssean threads of triadic references (See pp. 90-91).

The drawing together of the three threads of triadic references seems to be building up to a joyous triadic reunion when, at *Odyssey* 23.85ff., the three come together in the hall, after Odysseus has revealed his identity to all and disposed of the suitors; but Penelope is unable to recognize him. Hence the expected joyous triadic reunion does not form part of the narrative. The failure of the reunion to take place immediately annoys Telemachus but is accepted with understanding by Odysseus, all of which is expressed in an oblique conversation between the three: Telemachus breaks the silence by addressing his mother, and both she and Odysseus address their remarks to him (*Od.* 23.96-116). It is only later, when Telemachus is otherwise occupied, that the family unit is finally re-established in a prolonged dyadic recognition scene between Odysseus and Penelope (*Od.* 23.156-296), reminiscent of the recognition scene between Odysseus and Telemachus (*Od.* 16.172-232).<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> For more detail on the Odysseus-Telemachus and the Odysseus-Penelope recognition scenes see pp. 113-114 and 124-127 respectively.

### 3.4.2 The mother-son relationship: Penelope and Telemachus

The interpersonal relationship between Penelope and Telemachus features prominently in the narrative. The audience is provided with insights into this relationship by means of conversations between Telemachus and various third parties,<sup>196</sup> by Penelope's words, addressed to third parties, and actions relating to her son,<sup>197</sup> and by live encounters between mother and son.<sup>198</sup> It should be noted that many of the passages listed here as illustrations of the mother-son relationship have already featured in the discussion of the Odysseus-Penelope-Telemachus triad, in the previous section, the main thrust of which was to emphasize the disruption of this triad and the resultant suitor problem – a situation caused by the prolonged absence of Odysseus. It is therefore to be expected that this situation would have implications for the interpersonal mother-son relationship. These passages depict with psychological realism the complex relationship between a single mother and a son who is on the threshold of manhood. In the case of Penelope and Telemachus this difficult stage in the mother-son relationship is exacerbated by the problematic situation in which they find themselves, being pressured by the suitors.

The mother-son relationship, like the triadic relationship, is introduced in the conversation between Telemachus and Mentès-Athene (*Od.* 1.156-318). In this conversation the first allusion to the relationship is by Telemachus, in his remark about his knowledge of his paternity being based on his mother's assertion thereof (215-216). These lines were quoted on p. 84 to illustrate the disrupted triadic situation, but Telemachus' remark also suggests both the fundamental nature of a relationship beginning at the time of his conception, and the existence of a functioning relationship between him and his mother. An implication of the mother-son relationship functioning in the total absence of the father is that Penelope's maternal influence has been prolonged through Telemachus' adolescence, the period during which his father would normally have facilitated the son's introduction into the world of men.

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<sup>196</sup> For Telemachus and third parties, see *Od.* 1.215-216, 222-223, 245-251, *Od.* 2.50-59, 129-145, 372-376, *Od.* 4.316-331, *Od.* 15.10-42, 513-517, *Od.* 16.31-35, 113-134, 328-341, *Od.* 17.6-9, *Od.* 20.339-341.

<sup>197</sup> For Penelope and third parties, see *Od.* 4.681-695, 703-741, 758-766, 787-794, 795-841, *Od.* 18.269-270, *Od.* 19.157-163, 518-539.

<sup>198</sup> For mother-son encounters, see *Od.* 1.328-364, *Od.* 17.36-60, 96-165, *Od.* 18.214-242, *Od.* 21.343-358, *Od.* 23.96-110.

Mentes-Athene's response (*Od.* 1.222-223, quoted on p. 85) in which she praises both mother and son (Penelope for giving birth to such a fine son, and Telemachus for being such a fine son), although primarily aimed at increasing Telemachus' sense of self-worth, also draws attention to the forging of the bond between mother and son through the birth process. But the relationship arising from this fundamental bond has been complicated by the suitor issue, which Telemachus describes to Mentes-Athene at *Odyssey* 1.245-251 (quoted on p. 85 in relation to its illustration of the triadic situation). The fact that his patrimony is literally being devoured by this horde of suitors for the hand of his mother, whose inability to take decisive action is prolonging the situation, is a cause of tension in the mother-son relationship. Telemachus' frequent reference to the suitor problem underlines its significance for him: he brings up the subject twice in the Ithacan assembly, first in his speech to the assembled people (*Od.* 2.50-59), and then in his response to Antinous' demands (*Od.* 2.129-145), subsequently he brings up the subject in his conversations with Nestor in Pylos (*Od.* 3.205-207), and with Menelaus in Sparta (*Od.* 4.316-331), and also after his return to Ithaca to the beggar-Odysseus (*Od.* 16.122-128).

An aspect of the Penelope-Telemachus relationship, which is revealed by Telemachus' first description of the suitor problem (*Od.* 1.245-251), is that he has left all decision-making in the hands of his mother. This is behaviour which might be expected of a child. As it is necessary for the implementation of Athene's plan for Telemachus (he is to play an active role in Odysseus' achievement of a successful home-coming) that he should move on from childhood and assert himself as a man, Mentes-Athene ends a list of instructions to Telemachus with the words:

... οἰδῆ τῷ σε κρῆ  
 νηπιῖδαι ἴκεῖν, ὅπερ οἰκῆτι τήλοιοι σσῶ. (*Od.* 1.296-297)<sup>199</sup>

The step advocated here obviously impacts on the mother-son relationship, as does the preceding list of instructions of what he should do to take control of the situation and restore order in his οἶκος: the first step is to summon the Ithacan nobles to an assembly where he can announce his course of action to all. Of particular relevance to

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<sup>199</sup> '... You should not keep on acting in a childish fashion, since you are no longer so young' (*Od.* 1.296-297).

the mother-son relationship is Mentès-Athènè's instruction on the course of action he should follow with regard to his mother's remarriage:

mnhstara<sub>j</sub> m<sub>+</sub>n ḡp<sup>8</sup> sf<sub>(</sub>tera sk<sup>5</sup>dnasqai Ænwcqi,  
 mht<sub>(</sub>ra d', e<sup>7</sup> o<sup>3</sup> qum<sub>⊥</sub>j ḡformbtai gam<sub>(</sub>esqai,  
 •y<sup>7</sup>tw m<sub>(</sub>garon patr<sub>⊥</sub>j m<sub>(</sub>ga dunam<sub>(</sub>noio: (Od. 1.274-  
 276)<sup>200</sup>

The anacoluthon used in the clause, mht<sub>(</sub>ra ... •y<sup>7</sup>tw, seems to indicate a deliberate attempt by Athènè to soften the advice concerning his mother, as she is aware that the nature of the mother-son bond makes the idea of ordering his mother to leave their home unpalatable.

That this is the case is revealed in the ensuing assembly by Telemachus' response to Antinous' more forceful presentation of the same advice:

mht<sub>(</sub>ra sln Øp<sub>⊥</sub>pemyon, Ænwcqi d<sub>(</sub> min gam<sub>(</sub>esqai  
 t<sub>⊥</sub> lte.. te patr<sub>⊥</sub>r k<sub>(</sub>letai ka<sup>8</sup> Ændðnei a<sub>⊥</sub>t<sub>⊥</sub>. (Od. 2.113-114)<sup>201</sup>

To which Telemachus responds:

'Ant<sup>5</sup>no', o► pwj \_sti d<sub>⊥</sub>mwn Ø<sub>(</sub>kousan Øp<sub>~</sub>sai  
 σ m' \_tec', σ m' \_qreye: ...  
 (Od. 2.130-131)<sup>202</sup>

He begins his argument with the most significant reason, the mother-son bond, based on the maternal role of giving birth and rearing. He then goes on to give financial hardship and social disapproval as further reasons for not sending his mother back to her parental home against her will (Od. 2.132-137).

In addition to giving Telemachus instructions on how to manage the issue of the suitors and his mother's remarriage, Mentès-Athènè proceeds to interfere further in

<sup>200</sup> 'Order the suitors to disperse to their own homes, and your mother, if her heart is eager to be married, let her go back to the great house of her powerful father' (Od. 1.274-276).

<sup>201</sup> 'Send your mother back, and order her to be married to any man her father urges, and who also pleases her' (Od. 2.113-114).

<sup>202</sup> 'Antinous, I cannot drive from the house against her will the mother who bore me, who raised me' (Od. 2.130-131).

the mother-son relationship by instructing him to go abroad in search of news of his father (*Od.* 1.278-286). This trip to Pylos and Sparta is Telemachus' first separation from his mother, from whom it is kept secret; hence it represents Athene's engineering of the process of disengaging Telemachus from his mother's sphere of influence in order to bring him closer to his father's world.

Many of Telemachus' comments on his family situation reflect a tension in the mother-son relationship resulting from their divergent areas of concern: Telemachus is chiefly concerned with preserving his patrimony, while Penelope is chiefly concerned with maintaining her marriage to Odysseus. Nevertheless, that each is aware of the other's interest and feelings is illustrated on a number of occasions in character-text spoken by Telemachus and Penelope. For instance, Telemachus' consciousness of Penelope's feelings about remarriage is revealed by the repetition of *stuger*τn *gðmon* ('hateful marriage') in reference to his mother's feelings on the subject (*Od.* 1.249 and 16.126). A further instance of the use of repetition to illustrate Telemachus' awareness of his mother's difficult position is to be found at *Od.* 16.73-77 and 19.524-529. In the first of these passages, Telemachus (addressing Eumaeus, in the presence of the beggar-Odysseus) describes his mother's inner conflict in the following terms:

mhtr<sup>8</sup> d' ,m□ d<sup>5</sup>ca qumτj ,n<sup>8</sup> fres<sup>8</sup> mermhr<sup>5</sup>zei,  
 □ aτto? par' ,mo<sup>5</sup> te m,nV ka<sup>8</sup> d~ma kom<sup>5</sup>zV,  
 eτn□n t' a<sup>4</sup>dom,nh pτsioj d□moiτ te famin,

□ udh ðm' ,phtai 'Acain~n Lj tij Æristoj  
 mnbtai ,n<sup>8</sup> megðroisin Ønler ka<sup>8</sup> ple'sta pτrvsin. (*Od.*  
 16.73-77)<sup>203</sup>

Turning to the other passage, one finds Penelope describing, to the beggar-Odysseus, her own inner conflict in very similar words. In both the 'to remain' and 'to remarry'

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<sup>203</sup> 'My mother is in two minds: whether to stay here with me and take care of the house, respecting both her husband's bed and the judgement of the people, or whether now to go off with the best man of the Achaeans who courts her in the palace and offers the most' (*Od.* 16.73-77).

options, although there is some variation to accommodate the change in person, and some expansion in the wording, the meaning is the same:

ῥῆ j ka<sup>8</sup> ,mo<sup>8</sup> d<sup>5</sup>ca qumῥj ῥr<sup>ῖ</sup>retai \_nqa ka<sup>8</sup> \_nqa,  
 ῥδ+ m,(nw par῔ paid<sup>8</sup> ka<sup>8</sup> \_mpeda p῔nta ful῔ssw,  
 ktasin ,m῔n, dmJ῔j te ka<sup>8</sup> ῥyeref+ j m,(ga d<sup>ῖ</sup>ma,  
 e῔n῔n t' a<sup>4</sup>dom,(nh pῥsioj d῔moiῥ te famin,  
 ῔ udh ῔m' ,pwmāi 'Acai<sup>ῖ</sup>n ῔j tij ῔ristoj  
 mnbtai ,n<sup>8</sup> meg῔roisi, por<sup>ῖ</sup>n ῔pere<sup>5</sup>sia ,dna (Od.  
 19.524-529)<sup>204</sup>

The remainder of Penelope's assessment of the situation reveals, in turn, her understanding of her son's chief area of concern, namely, the ongoing damage to his patrimony:

pa'j d' ,mῥj ῔oj \_hn \_ti n῔pioj ῥδ+ cal<sup>5</sup>frwn,  
 g῔masq' o῔ m' e<sup>7</sup>a pῥsioj kat῔ d<sup>ῖ</sup>ma lipo<sup>ῖ</sup>san:  
 n<sup>ῖ</sup>n d' ῔te d῔ m,(gaj ,st<sup>8</sup> ka<sup>8</sup> ῔bhj m,(tron <sup>3</sup>k῔nei,  
 ka<sup>8</sup> d῔ m' ῔rbtai p῔lin ,lq,(men ,k meg῔roio,  
 kt῔sioj ῔scalῥwn, t῔n o<sup>3</sup> kat,(dousin 'Acai<sup>o5</sup>. (Od.  
 19.530-534)<sup>205</sup>

Penelope's words here also reflect her awareness of the change which has taken place in the mother-son relationship with her son's attainment of maturity – he has become more independent. This independence is reflected in his changed attitude to her remarriage. With regard to her assertion that he is praying (῔r῔tai, 533) for her to leave their home on account of the economic burden posed by the presence of the suitors, De Jong (2001: 479) suggests that Penelope may be exaggerating, as there is no evidence elsewhere in the poem of Telemachus 'praying' for the departure of his mother from their home, even though it would put an end to the suitor problem. She

<sup>204</sup> 'So my mind is divided and starts in this direction, then that: shall I stay with my son and keep watch over everything, my property, maids, and great high-roofed house, respecting both my husband's bed and the judgement of the people, or now go off with the best man of the Achaeans, who courts me in the palace, offering countless wedding-gifts' (Od. 19.524-529).

<sup>205</sup> 'My son, while he was still young and thoughtless, would not let me marry and leave the house of my husband; but now that he is full-grown and come to man's estate, he even prays for me to go back out of the palace, being vexed over the property, which the Achaeans are devouring' (Od. 19.530-534).

feels that his current desire for her to remarry and leave their home arises from his concern about the depredation of his patrimony.<sup>206</sup>

In spite of these divergent interests, it is the fundamental nature of the mother-son bond which prevents either mother or son from taking decisive action. Telemachus states emphatically that he cannot force his mother, who bore and raised him, to leave their house (*Od.* 2.130-131, quoted on p. 99), even though he has begun to assert himself as lord of the house, as depicted in the first mother-son encounter (*Od.* 1.345-361; see pp. 103-104).

His filial feelings for his mother are further revealed in his words to Eurycleia at *Odyssey* 2.373-376, where he gives his reasons for keeping his departure secret from his mother:

Øll' ḷmoson ml mhtr<sup>8</sup> f<sup>5</sup>lv tðde muqḷsasqai,  
 pr<sup>5</sup>n g' ḷt' ·n ḡndekðth te duwdekðth te gḷnhtai,  
 ḷ aḷtḷn poqḷsai ka<sup>8</sup> øformhqḷntoj øko<sup>?</sup>sai,  
 ḷj ·n ml kla<sup>5</sup>ousa katæ crḷa kalḷn <sup>4</sup>ðptv. (*Od.* 2.373-376)<sup>207</sup>

The need to keep his departure secret from his mother does not form part of his instructions from Athene, but may be attributed to his feelings for his 'beloved' mother, his awareness of her feelings for him, and his desire to spare her distress. West (1988: 153) offers a narratorial motivation as well: Telemachus' departure should not be delayed by a prolonged and emotional leave-taking.

Similarly, on his return from his trip, after he has already arranged for the news of his safe return to be conveyed to Penelope, his words addressed to Eumaeus at *Odyssey* 17.6-9 reveal a son's awareness of maternal anxiety:

ætḷ', ḷ toi mḷn ḡgḷn e-m' ḡj pḷlin, ḷfra me mḷthr  
 ḷyetai: oḷ ḡðr min prḷsqen paḷsesqai ḷḷw  
 klauqmo<sup>?</sup> te stugero<sup>o</sup> ḡḷoiḷ te dakruḷentoj,

<sup>206</sup> See also *Od.* 4.686-687, 18.280, 19.159-161 for further references by Penelope illustrating her awareness of her son's concern about his patrimony.

<sup>207</sup> 'But swear not to speak of this to my beloved mother, until it is the eleventh or the twelfth day hereafter, or until she misses me herself or hears that I have gone, so that she may not weep and spoil her lovely complexion' (*Od.* 2.373-376).

pr<sup>5</sup>n g' a<sup>l</sup>t<sub>1</sub>n me <sup>7</sup>dhtai: ...

(*Od.* 17.6-9)<sup>208</sup>

As was the case regarding Athene's instructions on his departure, Telemachus' attention to his mother's feelings here does not form part of Odysseus' instructions for his return to the house. These words suggest that although Telemachus is aware of maternal anxiety, he does not understand this expected emotional behaviour, but regards it as something a son has to accept and attempt to alleviate.

In addition to Telemachus' assessment of the reaction to be expected of his mother, her actual reaction and words are also depicted. At *Odyssey* 4.703-705, when she has learned from the herald, Medon, of her son's trip and danger, her reaction is vividly described in narrator-text:

₅Wj fÐto, tαj d' a<sup>l</sup>to? l<sub>1</sub>to go<sub>1</sub>nata ka<sup>8</sup> f<sup>5</sup>lon □tor,  
dλn d<sub>1</sub> min Ømfas<sup>5</sup>h ₉p<sub>1</sub>wn lÐbe: t<sup>ˆ</sup> d<sub>1</sub> o<sup>3</sup> ᵀsse  
dakru<sub>1</sub>fi plasqen, qalerλ d<sub>1</sub> o<sup>3</sup> ᵀsceto fwn□. (*O*  
*d.* 4.703-705)<sup>209</sup>

After Medon has departed, detailed narrator-text describes further the devastating effect of this news about her son on Penelope:

tλn d' Æcoj Ømfec<sub>1</sub>qh qumofq<sub>1</sub>ron, o<sup>l</sup>d' Ær' ᵀt' ᵀtlh  
d<sup>5</sup>frJ ₉f<sub>1</sub>zesqai poll<sup>ˆ</sup>n katÆ o<sup>-</sup>kon ₉<sub>1</sub>ntwn,  
Øll' Ær' ₉p' o<sup>l</sup>do? +ze polukm□tou qalÐmoio  
o<sup>7</sup>ktr' ᵀlofurom<sub>1</sub>nh: ...

(*Od.* 4.716-719)<sup>210</sup>

There follow three passages of character-text spoken by Penelope, which illustrate further the depth of her love for her son. The first is addressed to her maids, who are

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<sup>208</sup> 'Father, I am going to the city now, so that my mother will see me, for I think she will not cease from her bitter weeping and tearful lamentation until she sees me myself' (*Od.* 17.6-9).

<sup>209</sup> 'So he spoke, and her knees and her heart grew weak; for a long time speechlessness robbed her of words; her eyes filled with tears, and her full voice was held in check' (*Od.* 4.703-705).

<sup>210</sup> 'A heart-breaking pain enveloped her, nor did she have the strength to sit down on a chair, although there were many in the house, but sat in the entrance to her well-wrought chamber, weeping piteously' (*Od.* 4.716-719).

wailing (min rizon, 719) about her. She laments the fact that her ‘beloved son’ (pa’d’ Øgaphtn, 727) has been taken from her, as previously her husband had been (*Od.* 4.722-734). The second is a prayer to Athene to save her ‘beloved son’ (f<sup>5</sup>lon u+a, 765), in return for the honour Odysseus had previously paid her (*Od.* 4.762-766). The third is addressed to her sister, who appears to her as an apparition in a dream. In this speech she laments that in addition to her husband having sailed away and not returned, her ‘beloved son’ (pa<sup>8</sup>j Øgaphtj, 817) has now also gone off on a ship. She proceeds to describe her feelings about her son’s situation in the following terms:

n?n a’ pa’j Øgaphtj \_bh ko<sup>5</sup>lhj ,p<sup>8</sup> nhj,  
 n[]pioj, ohte p7nwn e’ e<sup>4</sup>d’j oht’ Øgorðwn.  
 to? dl ,g’ ka<sup>8</sup> mblon |dromai u per ,ke<sup>5</sup>nou. (*Od.*  
 4.817-819)<sup>211</sup>

She has grieved for her missing husband for so long that this grief has become a chronic pain, but now her maternal protectiveness causes her to grieve more acutely for her son, whom she regards as a vulnerable child because he has no experience in the men’s world into which he has departed.

It is clear from the above that she has difficulty in accepting the mother-son separation process, which Athene has initiated. The comments about her family situation, which Penelope makes to the beggar-Odysseus, after Telemachus’ safe return (*Od.* 19.160-161 and 530-534, quoted on pp. 90 and 100 respectively), reveal that she is aware that her son is now a man, but the thought of parting from him contributes significantly to her tormented state with regard to remarriage. At *Odyssey* 19.518-523 the simile she uses to describe her inner conflict involves Pandareus’ daughter, the nightingale, pa’d’ |lofurom,nh 4Itulon f<sup>5</sup>lon (‘mourning her beloved son, Itylus’, 522).<sup>212</sup> The mother-son involvement in this simile illustrates the significance of the separation from her son as a factor in her reluctance to

<sup>211</sup> ‘Now again my beloved child has gone away in a curved ship, a child unskilled in action and speaking. For him I grieve even more than for the other one’ (*Od.* 4.817-819).

<sup>212</sup> Stanford (1962: II, 336) supplements the meagre details given by Homer with the information that Pandareus’ daughter, Aedon, who had only one son, Itylus, was so jealous of her sister-in-law, Niobe, who had many children, that she intended to kill Niobe’s eldest son, but mistakenly killed Itylus. Zeus pitied her and changed her into a nightingale so that she could mourn her son in beautiful song.

remarry.<sup>213</sup> Penelope goes on to list all the things she would have to give up if she were to remarry, placing her son at the head of the list (525-527).

There remains the method of depicting the mother-son relationship in the form of six live encounters between Telemachus and Penelope. The first and fifth of these encounters share similarities of form and structure, and take place during Penelope's first and final appearances before the suitors in the hall (*Od.* 1.328-364 and 21.68-358). The first scene depicting mother-son interaction occurs before Telemachus sets out on his trip abroad and illustrates the beginning of the Athene-initiated changes in the mother-son relationship. The encounter is preceded by Penelope's tearful request to the bard, Phemius, to sing on a different subject, as his story of the return of the Greeks from Troy is too distressing to her (*Od.* 1.337-344). Telemachus intervenes, requesting her not to begrudge the bard his choice of song, which enjoys current popularity, on account of her too personal reaction to the content (*Od.* 1.346-355).<sup>214</sup> He then goes on to assert himself as master of the house:

011' e<sup>4</sup>j o-kon <sup>4</sup>o<sup>?</sup>sa t<sup>6</sup> s' a<sup>1</sup>t<sup>2</sup>aj \_rga k<sup>7</sup>mize,  
<sup>3</sup>st<sup>7</sup>n t' <sup>3</sup>lak<sup>6</sup>thn te, ka<sup>8</sup> <sup>0</sup>mfi<sup>7</sup>p<sup>7</sup>loisi k<sup>7</sup>leue  
 \_rgon <sup>9</sup>po<sup>5</sup>cesqai: m<sup>?</sup>qoj d' <sup>Æ</sup>ndressi mel<sup>□</sup>sei  
 pbsi, m<sup>Δ</sup>lista d' <sup>9</sup>mo<sup>5</sup>: to<sup>?</sup> g<sup>6</sup>er kr<sup>6</sup>to<sup>7</sup> \_st' <sup>9</sup>n<sup>8</sup> o-kJ.  
 (*Od.* 1.356-359)<sup>215</sup>

These words are a repetition of Hector's words to Andromache at *Il.* 6.490-493, apart from the contextual variation of m<sup>?</sup>qoj (358) for p<sup>7</sup>le<sup>6</sup>mo<sup>7</sup> (*Il.* 6.492); hence they were considered by Aristarchus to be an interpolation. West (1988: 120) describes these words of Telemachus as 'adolescent rudeness', and tends to agree with Aristarchus' view that these lines are suspect.<sup>216</sup> But it seems to me that these lines should be regarded as formulaic phraseology that the poet has used here, as in the

<sup>213</sup> See De Jong (2001: 49) for a list of 'parents and children' similes in the *Odyssey*. See also Moulton (1977: 141-145). Anhalt (2001: *passim*) discusses the use of the nightingale simile in some detail.

<sup>214</sup> See p. 88 for the depiction in this scene of the triadic aspect of the parent-child relationship in Odysseus' family of procreation, and p. 120 for the depiction of the Penelope-Odysseus relationship.

<sup>215</sup> 'But go to your quarters and attend to your own work, the loom and the distaff, and order your hand maidens to ply their work. But let speech be a concern for all the men, but especially for me; for I hold the power in the house' (*Od.* 1.356-359).

<sup>216</sup> Clark (2001: 335-338) questions West's interpretation of Telemachus' words as reflecting rudeness towards his mother, and being therefore suspect. He bases his own interpretation of these lines on the complex semantics of the word m<sup>?</sup>qoj.

*Iliad*, to express paternalistic protectiveness, which is in keeping with Telemachus' assumption of the role of master of the household in terms of the existing patriarchal system. Telemachus, like Hector with respect to his wife, believes that his mother, by focusing on womanly activities, would be protected from the distress which the activities belonging to the world of men occasion.

The similar mother-son encounter (the penultimate) occurs during the scene in which Penelope makes her final appearance before the suitors in the hall to announce the contest of the bow, the winner of which will become her new husband (*Od.* 23.63ff.). During the contest Penelope intervenes in the 'entertainment' by instructing the suitors to allow the beggar-Odysseus to participate in the contest. As in the earlier Phemius episode, Telemachus responds and takes charge of the bow-contest, instructing his mother to return to her quarters and attend to women's tasks, leaving the archery to him and the other men (*Od.* 21.350-353). His words to his mother are expressed in the same formulaic phraseology that he employed at *Odyssey* 1.356-359, with the contextual variation of τῆ xon (bow, 352) for μῶqoj. Once again the use of this formula is, in my opinion, an expression of paternalistic protectiveness, rather than a case of Telemachus openly humiliating his mother, as asserted by Fernandez-Galiano (1992: 163). On this occasion Telemachus is motivated by the need to get Penelope to the safety of her room before the slaughter of the suitors begins.

On both occasions, Penelope makes no reply to her son. The narrator-text description of her reaction is also a formulaic repetition:

ἤ μῆν γὰμβῆσασα πῆλιν ὀκῆνδε βεβῆκει:  
 παίδῳ γῆρ μῶqon pepnum, non ἔqeto qum.  
 ὃ δ' ἄπερ ὄναββσα σῆν ὀmfipῆλοισι γυναῖx<sup>8</sup>  
 κλαῖεν ἄπειτ' Ὀδυσῆα, φῶlon πῆsin, ἄfra ὀ<sup>3</sup> πnon  
 ἔdῆn ὃp<sup>8</sup> blefḏroisi bḏle glaukῆpij 'Aqῆnh. (*Od.*  
 1.360-364 = 21.354-358)<sup>217</sup>

Penelope's reaction of amazement and her pondering his wise speech reflect her awareness of a new development in her relationship with her son. The fact that she

<sup>217</sup> 'She, in amazement, went back to her quarters; for she stored up her son's wise speech in her heart. After ascending to the upper rooms with her attendant women, she wept for Odysseus, her beloved husband, until grey-eyed Athene cast sweet sleep on her eyelids' (*Od.* 1.360-364 = 21.354-358).



ἄν στήθεσσι τὴν φεγγῆντι περ ἀπὸν ἄλεγον: (*Od.*  
17.46-47)<sup>220</sup>

This response to his mother's tearful reception of him is rather brusque because he genuinely does not have time for an emotional scene: he has men's business to attend to, entailing fetching and offering hospitality to his guest, Theoclymenus. This is business he can reveal to his mother, but he is also preoccupied by the fact that he has become the secret accomplice of his father, so that all his interaction with his mother will involve dissimulation. Perhaps his failure to provide her with any news of his trip is because he is overwhelmed by not being able to share his real news with her. The fact that his father has returned does not diminish, but seems to enhance Telemachus' manly assertiveness. For a second time in the narrative he dismisses his mother to her quarters, but on this occasion he does not instruct her to attend to her weaving but to pray to Zeus for vengeance on the suitors; to pray to a god to look favourably on the activities of their menfolk is another aspect of women's work (cf. *Il.* 6.269-279 where Hector instructs his mother to lead the Trojan women in praying to Athene to give her support to the Trojans in battle). On this occasion Penelope again reacts to his words with speechlessness, but she does carry out his instructions.

The third mother-son encounter occurs when Telemachus returns with his guest, Theoclymenus, and provides him with proper hospitality, in the absence of the suitors (*Od.* 17.84ff.). Penelope is depicted as still being anxious to hear Telemachus' news, but this time to avoid a possible repetition of the rebuff, which her first direct inquiry had evoked, she deliberately adopts an indirect approach. While Telemachus and his guest are eating, his mother sits opposite them, *ἴπτ' ἄλθκατα στρωψῶσα* ('turning the delicate thread on her distaff', 17.97) – suitable behaviour for a woman. Penelope then announces to Telemachus that she is going upstairs to her bed of sorrow since he did not have the patience to tell her whether he had heard anything about his father's home-coming. Her choice of words, *οἴδ( ... ) τλήη* ('you did not have the patience', 17.104), illustrates her awareness of a tension in their relationship. She achieves success with this indirect

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<sup>220</sup> 'Mother, do not move me to tears, nor stir the heart within me, after I have just escaped such utter destruction' (*Od.* 17.46-47).

approach as Telemachus relents and gives her an account of his trip, including Menelaus' somewhat dated news about Odysseus being held captive by Calypso.

The fourth mother-son encounter (*Od.* 18.214-243) takes place during Penelope's third appearance before the suitors in the hall.<sup>221</sup> At *Odyssey* 18.206ff., with her beauty enhanced by Athene, Penelope descends from her chamber to appear before the thoroughly enamoured suitors. But she ignores them and addresses Telemachus, 'her beloved son' (ἑ<sup>5</sup>λον υ<sup>3</sup>ῆν, 214), reproaching him for allowing the beggar-Odysseus to be mistreated in their house (214-225). On this occasion Telemachus' response is conciliatory, probably because he feels that his father has matters under control, and the circumstances do not demand any assertion of authority on his part.

The sixth and final mother-son encounter (*Od.* 23.96-110) occurs in the scene in which the three members of the triad come together for the first time after the revelation of Odysseus' identity. In this encounter it is Telemachus who initiates the conversation, prompted by his mother's failure to acknowledge her husband:

māter ὄμν, δῆσμητῆρ, ὀφην(α γυμῆν ἄκουσα,  
 τ<sup>5</sup>φῆ' οἴτῳ πατρῆϊ νοσφ<sup>5</sup>ζεαί, οἴδ<sup>+</sup> παρ' ἀἰτῆν  
 ὄζομ(νη μῆγοισιν ὄνε<sup>5</sup>ρεαί οἴδ<sup>+</sup> μετὰλλῆϊ;  
 οἴ μ(ν κ' ἄλλῃ γ' ὄδε γυλῆ τετληῆτι γυμῆ  
 ὄνδρῆϊ ὄφῆστα<sup>5</sup>η, ἄϊ ο<sup>3</sup> κῆκῆ πολλῆ μογῆσαι  
 ἄλκοί ὄεἰκοστῆ ἄτεῆ ὄϊ πατρ<sup>5</sup>δα γὰ'αν:  
 σο<sup>8</sup> δ' ἀ<sup>4</sup>ε<sup>8</sup> κῆραδ<sup>5</sup>η στῆρεωτῆρῃ ὄστ<sup>8</sup> ἄλ<sup>5</sup>κοίῳ. (*Od.*  
 23.97-103)<sup>222</sup>

Thus the final words addressed by Telemachus to his mother are spoken in a tone of exasperation. His exasperation at his mother's behaviour illustrates his inability to understand her emotions. Misunderstanding generates misjudgement, which is reflected in his use of the term δῆσμητῆρ, and his claim that she has always been

<sup>221</sup> Stanford (1962: II, 308) comments on the view of Monro and Wilamowitz that lines 214-243 are an interpolation, but finds their arguments inconclusive.

<sup>222</sup> 'Mother, so unmotherly, having a hard heart, why do you turn away from my father, and not sit beside him and ask him questions and inquire after him? No other woman would withdraw in this way, with such unbending spirit, from her husband, who, after much suffering, has come back to his native land in the twentieth year. But you have always had a heart harder than stone' (*Od.* 23.97-103).

hardhearted – hardly fair to Penelope who has been shown to be a loving mother. Penelope’s response to Telemachus reveals that the cause of her inability to respond in the way that he expects is that she is in shock (*Od.* 23.105-107); so Telemachus’ final words to his mother provide evidence of a lack of understanding on his part.

### 3.4.3 The father-son relationship: Odysseus and Telemachus

The depiction of the father-son relationship of Odysseus and Telemachus falls into three phases: the pre-interpersonal relationship phase, the meeting and reunion, and the interactive phase. The pre-interpersonal relationship phase is featured in *Odyssey* 1-4, 11, and 13-15. The meeting and reunion dominates the first half of *Odyssey* 16, and from 16.225 through to the end of the poem the interactive phase is depicted.

The pre-interpersonal relationship phase is represented in the narrative from Telemachus’ perspective first. When Telemachus makes his first appearance, he is fantasising about his absent father:

βστο γῆρ ὄν μνηστᾶρσι φῶλον τετιμῶνοϊ ἴτωρ,  
 ἴσσημένοϊ πατῆρ’ ὄσσηται ὄν φρεσῶν, ἐπὶ ποσσὶν ὄλησῶν  
 μνηστῆρων τῶν μὲν σκῆδασιν κατὰ δῆματα γέσῃ,  
 τιμῶν δ’ ἀΐεται ἄκοι καὶ κτήμασιν ὄσσησσοι. (*O*  
*d.* 1.114-117)<sup>223</sup>

This character-text description of Telemachus’ thoughts precedes the long conversation between him and Mentis-Athene (*Od.* 1.155-318), during the course of which Mentis-Athene attempts to make Telemachus more aware of the bond he shares with Odysseus.

Although in the above passage Telemachus daydreams of the return of his father, his words at *Odyssey* 1.161-162 and 166-168 indicate that he believes his father is dead. Mentis-Athene immediately attempts to disabuse him of this belief by assuring him that his father is alive, and then she begins her programme of revitalising the long dormant father-son bond by reminding him of his physical resemblance to his father:

ὄλλ’ Ἔγε μοι τεύχε εἴπω, καὶ ὄτρεκῶν κατὰ δῆλον,

<sup>223</sup> ‘For he sat among the suitors, sorrowing within his heart, seeing in his mind’s eye his noble father, how he would come back and bring about a scattering of the suitors throughout the house, and regain possession of his rightful honour and be lord of his property’ (*Od.* 1.114-117).

e<sup>4</sup> dl ɔx a<sup>1</sup>to'o t<sub>1</sub>soj pɔ̃j e<sup>4</sup>j 'Odusαoj.  
 a<sup>4</sup>n<sup>~</sup>j m<sub>+</sub>n kefal<sub>1</sub>n te ka<sup>8</sup> ɫmmata kalɛ ɔoikaj  
 ke<sup>5</sup>nɯ ...

(*Od.* 1.206-209)<sup>224</sup>

Telemachus' immediate response, that he knows his father only by hearsay from his mother, reveals the tenuous state of the Odysseus-Telemachus relationship at this stage.

But Mentos-Athene persists in her attempt to make Odysseus a more vivid figure to his son by recalling the kind of man she knew him to be from past personal encounters (*Od.* 1.253-266).<sup>225</sup> Mentos-Athene's success in embedding the concept of the father-son relationship in Telemachus' thinking is reflected in the short simile he uses in thanking her for the advice she has given him:

xe'n', ɔ̃ toi m<sub>+</sub>n ta<sup>?</sup>ta f<sup>5</sup>la frɔn<sub>(</sub>wn ɔgore<sub>1</sub>ei<sub>j</sub>,  
 ~j te pat<sub>1</sub>r ɔ̃ paid<sup>5</sup>, ka<sup>8</sup> o<sup>▶</sup> pote l<sub>1</sub>somai a<sup>1</sup>t<sup>~</sup>n. (*Od.*  
 1.307-308)<sup>226</sup>

Subsequently, in the guise of Mentor, Athene again brings up the 'inherited traits' aspect of the father-son relationship, when she states that if Telemachus has inherited the ability of his father, he too will be a hero:

Thl<sub>(</sub>mac', o<sup>1</sup>d' ɫpisqen kak<sub>1</sub>j ɫsseai o<sup>1</sup>d' ɔno<sub>1</sub>mwn,  
 e<sup>4</sup> d<sub>1</sub> toi so<sup>?</sup> patr<sub>1</sub>j ɔn<sub>(</sub>staktai m<sub>(</sub>noj ð̃,  
 o<sup>+</sup>oj ke<sup>+</sup>noj ɫhn tel<sub>(</sub>sai ɫrgon te ɫpoj te.

(*Od.* 2.270-272)<sup>227</sup>

<sup>224</sup> 'But come tell me and speak truly whether you are really Odysseus' own son, grown so big; you are uncannily like him about the head and the fine eyes' (*Od.* 1.206-209).

<sup>225</sup> One may assume from the following narrator-text reference, e<sup>4</sup>dom<sub>(</sub>nh xe<sup>5</sup>nɯ, Taf<sup>5</sup>wn ɛg<sub>1</sub>tɔri, M<sub>(</sub>ntV ('taking on the likeness of a guest-friend, Mentos, the lord of the Taphians', *Od.* 1.105), that Athene had assumed the disguise of a genuine guest-friend of Odysseus.

<sup>226</sup> 'My guest, truly you speak these kind words from your heart, like a father to his son, and I will never forget them' (*Od.* 1.307-308).

<sup>227</sup> 'Telemachus, henceforth you will not be a coward nor without understanding, if indeed there is instilled in you your father's manly spirit, such as he was in the accomplishment of deed and word' (*Od.* 2.270-272).

Athene's assumption of the guise of Mentor, in accompanying Telemachus on his trip abroad, provides a further tangible father-son link, illustrated by her words:

to'oj gÐr toi ʒta'roj ʒg´ patr''ŋj e<sup>4</sup>mi (Od. 2.286)<sup>228</sup>

The narrator has previously informed the narratees (and audience) that Mentor had been the ʒta'roj whom Odysseus, on his departure for Troy, had appointed in a caretaker capacity in respect of his household (Od. 2.225-227).

During Telemachus' travels to Pylos and Sparta, his hosts reinforce the paternal resemblance theme introduced by Athene. In Pylos Nestor remarks on the resemblance of Telemachus' manner of speaking to that of Odysseus, and goes on to describe the experience he and Odysseus shared in making a contribution to the Greek cause as like-minded orators:

... s( baj m' \_cei e<sup>4</sup>sorŋwnta.  
 ŋ toi gÐr mʔqo<sup>5</sup> ge ʒoikŋtej, oŋd( ke fa<sup>5</sup>hj  
 Ændra ne''teron ˘de ʒoikŋta muqŋsasqai.  
 \_nq' ŋ toi βoj m+n ʒg´ ka<sup>8</sup> d'oj 'Odusseŋj  
 oŋte pot' e<sup>4</sup>n Øgorŋ d<sup>5</sup>ca bÐzomen oŋt' ʒn<sup>8</sup> boulŋ,  
 Øll' ,na qumŋn \_conte nŋJ ka<sup>8</sup> ʒp<sup>5</sup>froni boulŋ  
 frazŋmeq' 'Arge<sup>5</sup>oisin ŋpwj ŋc' Ærista g,noito. (Od.  
 3.123-129)<sup>229</sup>

Thus Nestor confirms that Telemachus has inherited an important element of his father's kl(oj, namely, his excellence as an orator.

In Sparta the father-son resemblance theme continues. Here, even before Telemachus' identity has been revealed, Helen is the first to draw attention to the physical resemblance of the young guest to Odysseus, and she therefore assumes that he must be Odysseus' son, Telemachus (Od. 4.141-146). Menelaus responds:

oŋtw nʔn ka<sup>8</sup> ʒg´ no(w, gŋnai, ˘j sŋ ʒŋskeij:

<sup>228</sup> 'For to you I am a companion of the kind inherited from your father' (Od. 2.286).

<sup>229</sup> '... A feeling of awe possesses me when I look upon you. For truly your words are like his; nor would anyone think that a younger man could be so similar in speaking. Truly, while I and the great Odysseus were there, we never spoke on opposite sides, neither in the assembly, nor in the council, but being of one mind, we wisely and thoughtfully pointed out to the Argives how things would turn out best' (Od. 3.123-129).

ke<sup>5</sup>nou gɛr toio<sup>5</sup>de pɔdej toia<sup>5</sup>de te ce'rej  
 ʃfɔalm̃n te bola<sup>8</sup> kefalɔ t' ɔfɔperq( te ca'tai. (*Od.*  
 4.148-150)<sup>230</sup>

Menelaus thus goes further than his wife's reference to a general resemblance by specifying particular points of resemblance.

In addition to the confirmation of the resemblance he bears to his father, Telemachus is brought closer to his father's heroic world by his contact with Nestor, Menelaus, and Helen, people who had been at Troy with his father, and are able to relate to him anecdotes of their experiences with Odysseus in the heroic sphere of the Trojan war. By the time Telemachus leaves Sparta to return home he is given some reassurance to dispel his previously expressed belief that his father is dead, when Helen interprets the eagle omen as a sign that Odysseus is either on his way to Ithaca to wreak vengeance on the suitors, or is already there (*Od.* 15.172-178).

The father-son relationship from Odysseus' perspective is introduced retrospectively in his relation of the story of his visit to the underworld. Here Odysseus has indirect contact with his son by way of conversations with the ghosts of his mother and Agamemnon. First, in response to his inquiry, he hears from his mother how, at the time of her death, his son, as a teenager, was coping well in the absence of his father (*Od.* 11.184-187; see also pp. 91-92). Then in his conversation with Agamemnon's ghost, the father-son relationship is again brought to the fore when Agamemnon reminds him of the joy he can expect from the reunion with his son (*Od.* 11.449-451, quoted on p. 93). Agamemnon's description foreshadows the actual reunion of Odysseus and Telemachus, and is contrasted with Agamemnon's own disastrous home-coming when he was murdered before he could set eyes on his son. At the time of hearing these words Odysseus was unaware that a further seven years were to elapse before this joyous reunion would take place.

After Odysseus' return to Ithaca in *Odyssey* 16, he makes his next indirect contact with his son through conversations with Athene and Eumaeus. At *Odyssey* 13.412ff. when Athene tells Odysseus she is going to Sparta to fetch Telemachus, who is absent

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<sup>230</sup> 'Now I too notice, my lady, it is so just as you compare them; his feet were the same, and his hands were the same, the glances of his eyes, and his head and the long hair upon it' (*Od.* 4.148-150).

on a mission in search of news of his father, he shows concern at his son being exposed to danger unnecessarily, when he questions Athene's decision to allow him to go on this mission:

t<sup>5</sup>pte t' Ær' o▶ o<sup>3</sup> e-pej, ɣn<sup>8</sup> fres<sup>8</sup> pðnta <sup>4</sup>du'a;  
 □ <sup>6</sup>na pou ka<sup>8</sup> ke'noj Øl'menonj Ælgea pðscv  
 pɣnton ɣp' Øtrɣgeton, b<sup>5</sup>oton d, o<sup>3</sup> Ælloi \_dousi. (*O*  
*d.* 13.417-419)<sup>231</sup>

Athene then reassures him that his son is not suffering any hardships, and that he will evade the suitors' ambush on his return journey.

At *Odyssey* 14.174-184 Odysseus has further indirect contact with his son through Eumaeus, who describes Telemachus to Odysseus, disguised as a beggar:

... tɣn ɣpe<sup>8</sup> qrɣyan qeo<sup>8</sup> \_rne□ -son,  
 ka<sup>5</sup> min \_fhn \_ssesqai ɣn Øndrðsin o▶ ti c, reia  
 patrɣj ɣo'o f<sup>5</sup>loio, d, maj ka<sup>8</sup> e-doj Øghtɣn (*O*  
*d.* 14.175-177)<sup>232</sup>

Once again the physical resemblance of father and son is mentioned, on this occasion to Odysseus. Eumaeus also expresses his concern that Telemachus will not live to achieve his full inherited potential because he has gone off on this ill-advised trip, exposing himself to ambush by the suitors. Eumaeus' concern echoes that of Odysseus expressed to Athene earlier.

*Odyssey* 16 features the reunion of Odysseus and Telemachus, but this reunion is preceded by a 'dress-rehearsal' featuring the reunion of Eumaeus and Telemachus. At *Odyssey* 16.11ff. Eumaeus' paternal feelings for Telemachus provide the setting for Odysseus' first sight of the grown son, whom he last saw as a baby:

o▶ pw pbn e<sup>7</sup>rhto \_poj, lte o<sup>3</sup> f<sup>5</sup>loj u<sup>3</sup>ɣj  
 \_sth ɣn<sup>8</sup> proqɣroisi. ...  
 (*Od.* 16.11-12)<sup>233</sup>

<sup>231</sup> 'Why did you, knowing in your mind all things, not tell him? Or was it in order that he too, wandering over the barren sea, should suffer hardships, while others devour his livelihood?' (*Od.* 13.417-419).

<sup>232</sup> 'The gods made him grow like a young plant, and I thought that among men he would not be at all inferior to his dear father, admirable in stature and form' (*Od.* 14.175-177).

<sup>233</sup> 'He had hardly finished speaking, when his beloved son stood at the front-door' (*Od.* 16.11-12).

Eumaeus greets Telemachus affectionately, kissing his head, eyes, and hands. The father-son nature of Eumaeus' reception of Telemachus is emphasised by a simile:

~j d+ patlr |n pa'da f<sup>5</sup>la fron(wn ØgapÐzV  
 9lq7nt' 9x Øp<sup>5</sup>hj ga<sup>5</sup>hj dekÐtJ 9niaut\_ ,

mo<sup>2</sup>non thl\_ geton, t\_ \_p' Ælgea pollÆ mog□sV (*Od.*  
 16.17-19)<sup>234</sup>

This simile, to which the reunion of Eumaeus and Telemachus is compared, foreshadows the subsequent reunion of Odysseus and Telemachus with a reversal of roles: the long absent son represents the long absent Odysseus, while the father who is suffering hardship in the absence of his son represents Telemachus who is suffering hardship at the hands of the suitors. Another way in which the narrator emphasizes the father-son concept in *Odyssey* 16 is by the frequent use of periphrastic denomination – more frequently than in any other book (De Jong 2001: 385). Odysseus is referred to as ‘father’ at 42, 192, 214, and 221, and Telemachus is referred to as ‘son’ at 11, 178, 190, 308, 339, and 452.

From *Odyssey* 16.11 when Telemachus enters Eumaeus' hut, Odysseus, while continuing to hide his identity, gathers firsthand knowledge of his son by observing him interacting with Eumaeus, and by listening to their conversation. Then Odysseus has his first experience of engaging in conversation with his son, without experiencing full father-son interaction, as Telemachus is unaware that the beggar-Odysseus is his father. But by means of Telemachus' revelations about his family situation, Odysseus is made aware firsthand of the difficulties his son is experiencing.

Eventually Athene intervenes (*Od.* 16.167) and initiates the father-son reunion scene. The scene begins when Odysseus transformed by Athene appears before his beloved son, who at first thinks this handsome stranger, who has suddenly appeared, must be a god. Then pol\_ t1a\_j (much-enduring) Odysseus identifies himself:

°o► t<sup>5</sup>j toi qe\_ j e<sup>4</sup>mi: t<sup>5</sup> m' ØqanÐtoisin 9□skeij;  
 ØllÆ patlr te\_ j e<sup>4</sup>mi, to<sup>2</sup> e<sup>6</sup>neka s¶ stenac<sup>5</sup>zwn

<sup>234</sup> ‘As a kindly-minded father caresses his only darling son, who has come from a distant land in the tenth year, and for whom he has suffered many hardships’ (*Od.* 16.17-19).

pÐsceij Ælgea pollÐ, b<sup>5</sup>aj †pod,gmenoj Øndr<sup>~</sup>n.<sup>1</sup>  
 5Wj Æra fwn□saj u<sup>3</sup>†n k†se, kÆd d<sub>+</sub> parei<sup>~</sup>n  
 dÐkruon βke cambze: pÐroj d' \_ce nwlem<sub>+</sub>j a<sup>4</sup>e<sup>5</sup>. (*Od.*  
 16.187-191)<sup>235</sup>

The narrator-text describing the release of Odysseus' pent up emotions reveals the effort he had exercised in maintaining self-control from the moment he first saw his son. When Telemachus persists in his disbelief, Odysseus rebukes him:

Thl,mac', o► se \_oike f<sup>5</sup>lon pat,r' \_ndon 9†nta  
 o►te ti qaumÐzein peri<sup>~</sup>sion o►t' ØgÐasqai: (*Od.* 16.202-  
 203)<sup>236</sup>

He then goes on to explain his metamorphosis as being the work of Athene.

Telemachus is finally convinced and responds emotionally to Odysseus as his father:

... Thl,macoj d<sub>+</sub>  
 Ømficuge<sup>8</sup>j pat,r' 9sq††n †d†reto, dÐkrua le<sup>5</sup>bwn.  
 Ømfot,roisi d<sub>+</sub> to'sin †f' 6meroj ,rto g†oio:  
 kla'on d<sub>+</sub> lig,wj, Ædin<sup>~</sup>teron u t' o<sup>4</sup>wno<sup>5</sup>,  
 fanai □ a<sup>4</sup>gupio<sup>8</sup> gamy<sup>~</sup>nucej, o+s<sup>5</sup> te t,kna  
 Ægr†tai 9xe<sup>5</sup>lonto pÐroj petehnÆ gen,sqai:  
 (*Od.* 16.213-218)<sup>237</sup>

The depiction of the emotional reunion between father and son is heightened by the introduction of the much-discussed bird simile. Stanford (1962: II, 271) comments that the only point of contact is the shrillness and intensity of the weeping. The absence of a contact point between the weeping of the reunited father and son and the strong notion of bereavement expressed by the weeping of the two parent birds causes Stanford to find the simile 'curiously inept' in this context. But De Jong (2001: 346) suggests that father and son may be presumed to be mourning the twenty years of the

<sup>235</sup> “‘Truly I am not a god; why do you compare me to the immortals? But I am your father, for whose sake you experience much sorrow and suffer many hardships, in submitting to the violence of men.’ Thus he spoke, and he kissed his son, and shed tears down his cheeks and let them fall to the ground; but before he always held back’ (*Od.* 16.187-191).

<sup>236</sup> ‘Telemachus, it is not right for you to wonder too much at your own father when he is here, nor to be astonished’ (*Od.* 16.202-203).

<sup>237</sup> ‘Telemachus embraced his noble father and cried aloud, shedding tears, and the desire for weeping welled up in both; they wept shrilly and more intensely than birds of prey, sea-eagles or vultures with hooked talons, whose children hunters stole before they were full-fledged’ (*Od.* 16.213-218).

father-son relationship that has been taken from them. When they have had their fill of weeping, the father-son reunion is complete. The elaboration of the reunion scene by the method of delayed recognition is to be repeated in Odysseus' subsequent reunions with Penelope and Laertes.

The long dormant interpersonal relationship between father and son now begins to function. From here on (*Od.* 16.221) the thread depicting father-son interaction runs through the narrative, determining the course of events. Odysseus involves Telemachus as his ally in the plot to get rid of the suitors. The closeness of the interaction between father and son is underscored by their shared secrets. The intimacy of shared secrecy is captured in the lines depicting the secret smile and glance exchanged between Telemachus and Odysseus:

₅Wj fÐto, me<sup>5</sup>dhsen d' <sup>3</sup>erl (j ThlemÐcoio  
 ₉j pat(r' |fqalmo'sin <sup>4</sup>d'n, Øl(eine d' |forbᵗn. (*Od.*  
 16.476-477)<sup>238</sup>

When Telemachus returns to the palace he has to interact with his mother, while keeping this huge secret from her. In the conversation, in which he gives her an edited version of his trip, his current and his retrospective preoccupation with the father-son relationship is reflected in the simile he uses to describe Nestor's reception of him:

dexÐmenoᵗ d( me ke'noj ₉n |yhlo'si dᵗmoisin  
 ₉nduk(wj ₉f<sup>5</sup>lei, ~j e<sup>7</sup> te patlᵗr sᵗn u<sup>3</sup>ᵗn  
 ₉lqᵗnta crᵗnion n(on Ællogen: `j ₉m+ ke'noj  
 ₉nduk(wj ₉kᵗmize sᵗn u<sup>3</sup>ᵗsi kudal<sup>5</sup>moisin. (*Od.*  
 17.110-113)<sup>239</sup>

It is significant in terms of the father-son motif that the fatherly patriarch, Nestor, was the first of his father's Trojan War comrades whom Telemachus encountered.

After the beggar-Odysseus arrives at the palace later in *Odyssey* 17, the suitors, through their arrogant behaviour in the presence of the newly established father-son

<sup>238</sup> 'Thus he spoke; the princely Telemachus smiled, catching his father's eye, but avoiding the swineherd' (*Od.* 16.276-277).

<sup>239</sup> 'He received me in his lofty house, and attentively cherished me, as a father his own son who has recently returned from elsewhere; so he attentively took care of me along with his renowned sons' (*Od.* 17.110-113).

alliance, unwittingly continue to demonstrate the deservedness of their imminent punishment. The scene in which father and son continue their dissimulation in the presence of the suitors continues through to the end of *Odyssey* 18, when the suitors return to their homes for the night, giving father and son the opportunity to interact, as they carry out the next stage of their plot (*Od.* 19.1-49).

On arising the next morning, Telemachus immediately shows concern for the well-being of his father. In his inquiry to Eurycleia, regarding the overnight hospitality shown to the beggar-Odysseus, he reiterates his misgivings about his mother's capabilities as a hostess (*Od.* 20.129-133). The fact that he is looking at the hypothetical situation from his father's perspective confirms that Telemachus now identifies with his father. After the arrival of the suitors, Telemachus continues to be attentive to the needs of his father during the feasting:

pƆr d' ·r' 'Odussα□ mo'ran q, san o' pon, onto  
 7shn, ~j a↓to<sup>5</sup> per ,lƆgcanon: `j gƆr Ɔn"gei  
 Thl,macoj, f<sup>5</sup>loj u<sup>3</sup>τj 'Odussαoj qe<sup>5</sup>oio. (Od.  
 20.281-283)<sup>240</sup>

Telemachus' identification with and resemblance to his father continue to be stressed. His identification with his father is illustrated at *Odyssey* 20.311-319 by his repetition of the sentiments expressed to him by the beggar-Odysseus (*Odyssey* 16.105-112) that he would rather die fighting the suitors than watch them carry on with their reckless behaviour in the house of Odysseus. At *Odyssey* 21.125-130 the father-son resemblance motif is continued when Telemachus is shown to be equal to the feat of stringing his father's bow, and would have done so, had his father not signalled to him to stop as it was not part of the plan.

After the beggar-Odysseus has performed the archery feat according to plan, the narrator describes the signal between father and son, and Telemachus taking up his position next to his father as a fellow warrior (*Od.* 21.431-434). These lines serve as the prelude to the slaughter of the suitors in *Odyssey* 22. Odysseus initiates the

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<sup>240</sup> 'But those who were working placed before Odysseus a portion equal to what they had for their own portion; for this was the command of Telemachus, the beloved son of godlike Odysseus' (*Od.* 20.281-283).

slaughter, and at *Odyssey* 22.92 Telemachus enters the fray, and proves a worthy ally in the battle, in which father and son are assisted only by Athene (disguised as Mentor) and two loyal servants.

After the suitors have been successfully disposed of, the next step is the reunion of Odysseus and Penelope. It is made clear that the re-establishment of this interpersonal relationship is the preserve of husband and wife; Telemachus does not have a role to play here. After the exchange between Telemachus and Penelope (*Od.* 23.96-110; see pp. 107-108), Odysseus also addresses his son, urging him to give his mother the opportunity of finding for herself the proof she needs to establish his identity as her husband:

Thl<sub>1</sub>mac', □ toi mht<sub>1</sub>r' <sub>9</sub>n<sup>8</sup> megðroisin <sub>1</sub>ason  
peirðzein <sub>9</sub>m<sub>1</sub>qen: tðca d<sub>+</sub> frðsetai ka<sup>8</sup> Æreion. (*Od.*  
23.113-114)<sup>241</sup>

This conversation, in which Penelope and Odysseus each address remarks, pertaining to each other, to Telemachus, illustrates the current state of the dyadic relationships in this triad.

Although the reunion between Odysseus and Penelope is strictly between the two of them, the father-son interaction continues with Telemachus serving as his father's principal ally in a new campaign to counter the new threat to the re-establishment of their family unit and Odysseus' successful return to the kingdom, namely, retaliation by the families of the slaughtered suitors. At *Odyssey* 23.124-128 Telemachus' words show he has complete confidence in his father and accepts his leadership in this campaign:

a<sub>1</sub>t<sub>1</sub>j ta<sup>2</sup>tð ge le<sup>2</sup>sse, pðter f<sup>5</sup>le: sln gÆr Ør<sup>5</sup>sth<sub>n</sub>  
matin <sub>9</sub>p' Ønqr<sup>2</sup>pouj fðs' <sub>1</sub>mmenai, o<sub>1</sub>d<sub>1</sub> k<sub>1</sub> t<sup>5</sup>j toi  
Ælloj Ønlr <sub>9</sub>r<sup>5</sup>seie kataqnht<sup>2</sup>n Ønqr<sup>2</sup>pwn.  
fme<sup>1</sup>j d' <sub>9</sub>mmema<sup>2</sup>tej ðm' <sub>9</sub>y<sub>1</sub>meq', o<sub>1</sub>d<sub>1</sub> t<sup>5</sup> fhmi  
Ølka<sub>j</sub> deu<sub>1</sub>sesqai, <sub>1</sub>sh d<sub>1</sub>nam<sup>5</sup>j ge pðrestin.  
(*Od.* 23.124-128)<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>241</sup> 'Telemachus, now surely allow your mother to make trial of me in the palace, and soon she will know me better' (*Od.* 23.113-114).

The first stage of Odysseus' strategy in this campaign entails a typically Odyssean deception, the pseudo-wedding party distraction, the execution of which is left in the hands of Telemachus. While Telemachus is engaged in carrying out this part of his father's strategy, the recognition scene between Odysseus and Penelope takes place (*Od.* 23.154-240; see pp. 125-128).

The final stage of the depiction of the Odysseus-Telemachus father-son relationship takes place on the following day, after the last of Odysseus' familial reunions, that of Odysseus and his father, Laertes (*Od.* 24.226-355; see pp. 81-83). Odysseus, Telemachus, and Laertes participate as comrades-in-arms in the military phase of Odysseus' strategy to counter the threat of the vengeance-seekers. The account of the Odysseus-Telemachus interaction concludes with their pre-battle conversation and the ensuing abortive battle against the vengeance-seekers. In the pre-battle exchange between Odysseus and his son utterance is given to the concept of their shared blood as a fundamental element in the father-son relationship:

°Thl,mac', ũdh m+n t7de g' e7seai a7t7j 9pelq~n,  
 Øndr~n marnam,nwn 6na te kr5nontai Æristoi,  
 m[] ti kataisc7nein pat,rwn g,noj, o9 t7 pÐroj per  
 Ølk[] t' ðnor,V te kekÐsmega pbsan 9p' a-an.<sup>1</sup>

T7n d' a7 Thl,macoj pepn7menoj Ønt5on hÐda:  
 o7yeai, a7 k' 9q,lVsqa, pÐter f5le, t7d' 9n8 gum7  
 o► ti kataisc7nonta te7n g,noj, ~j Øgore7eij.<sup>1</sup>  
 (*Od.* 24.506-512)<sup>243</sup>

This hereditary bond is further underscored by the fact that Laertes is also present; thus three generations of fathers and sons stand together to face the enemy. After Laertes' initial successful spear-cast, the ensuing battle is described in father-son terms:

9n d' 7peson promÐcoij 'Oduse7ij ka8 fa5dimoj u37j,

<sup>242</sup> 'Look to these things yourself, dear father; for they say that your tactical skill is the best among men, nor is there any man among mortals to compete with you. We will follow you eagerly, nor do I think there will be a want of any prowess, as long as there is strength in us' (*Od.* 23.124-128).

<sup>243</sup> "'Telemachus, now you will learn, having come into action where men do battle in order to be judged the best, not to disgrace the blood of your fathers, we who have in the past excelled in prowess and manhood all over the world.'" The wise Telemachus answered, "You will see, if you wish to, dear father, that in my present spirit I will not disgrace your blood, as you phrase it" (*Od.* 24.506-512).

τῆρpton d+ x<sup>5</sup>fes<sup>5</sup>n te ka<sup>8</sup> \_gcesin Ømfigῆoisi.

(*Od.* 24.526-527)<sup>244</sup>

The narrator goes on to say that the partnership of father and son would have destroyed all their opponents, had Athene not intervened at the behest of her father in order to bring events to a peaceful conclusion. Thus in the course of the narrative the Odysseus-Telemachus relationship is depicted as developing from the non-functional situation in *Odyssey* 1, where Telemachus fantasises about the return of the warrior father he has never known, to the stage where the reunited father and son fight side by side as fully fledged warriors.

#### **3.4.4 The husband/father-wife/mother relationship: Odysseus and Penelope**

The third dyadic interpersonal relationship involved in the parent-child triad, namely, that between the two parents, features prominently in the depiction of Odysseus' family of procreation and in the poem as a whole. Although this relationship features as live interaction between Odysseus and Penelope only in *Odyssey* 19 and 23, the audience is presented with a build-up to this live interaction by frequent and varied references to the relationship.

This relationship is first introduced from Odysseus' perspective immediately after the invocation of the Muse, when his longing for his wife and home-coming are introduced in association with his imprisonment by Calypso, who is intent on having him as her husband (*Od.* 1.13-15); so in these three lines the terms for husband (ῆρσιῆ) and wife (ῆυνῆ) are the first familial terms to appear in the poem. In *Odyssey* 5, in which Odysseus makes his first appearance in live action, he reveals, in a conversation with Calypso, that he is unwilling to exchange his mortal wife for the superior attractions of a divine wife; but he also makes it clear that Penelope is only part of the whole home-coming package he pines for (*Od.* 5.215-220).

Having turned his back on becoming the immortal husband of a goddess on Ogygia, Odysseus' return to Ithaca is further delayed by another shipwreck, this time on the Phaeacian island of Scheria. Here the king (overtly) and queen, and their daughter all

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<sup>244</sup> 'And Odysseus and his glorious son attacked the foremost fighters, and struck with swords and double-pointed spears' (*Od.* 24.526-527).

view Odysseus as a prospective husband for the daughter. But they become aware of and respect Odysseus' fixed purpose to be reunited with his own loved ones in Ithaca.

It is among the Phaeacians, at a royal banquet, that the poet next provides Odysseus with the opportunity of mentioning Penelope. This opportunity occurs during his own narration of his conversation with his mother's ghost (*Od.* 11.155-224). In this conversation Penelope features as part of the package of his loved ones, home, and royal power, but his specific questions about his wife (177-179, quoted on p. 92 in relation to the triadic aspect of his family of procreation) reveal that he does have concerns as to whether she is still his wife or has moved on. In her reply his mother's ghost informs him that Penelope is waiting for him, spending her days and nights in wretched longing. Agamemnon's ghost, after an initial warning, based on his bad experience with his own wife, that Odysseus should not be too open with his wife, proceeds to assure Odysseus of the likelihood of Penelope's loyalty based on her character:

l<sup>5</sup>hn gÆr pinut□ te ka<sup>8</sup> e´ fres<sup>8</sup> m□dea o-de  
koꝛrh 'Ikar<sup>5</sup>oio, per<sup>5</sup>frwn Phnelꝛpeia. (*Od.* 11.445-  
446)<sup>245</sup>

Penelope is thus very different in character to Agamemnon's wife, Clytemnestra. The factual news from his mother and Agamemnon's assessment would have reassured Odysseus, and given him hope to hold on to during the seven years of enforced hospitality at the hands of Calypso. Hence, when he is taking leave of the Phaeacians, he expresses the expectation that he will find 'a blameless wife' (Ømꝛmona Ækoitin) in his house (*Od.* 13.42).

After Odysseus returns to Ithaca, Athene remarks on his unnatural need to 'make trial of' (peir□seai, *Od.* 13.336) his wife, and volunteers the same reassuring news about Penelope that he had heard from his mother's ghost (*Od.* 11.181-183 = 13.336-338). The next person Odysseus meets, Eumaeus, also describes to him how Penelope longs for her husband:

ka<sup>5</sup> o<sup>3</sup> †duromꝛnv blefÐrwn Æpo dÐkrua p<sup>5</sup>ptei,

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<sup>245</sup> 'The daughter of Icarus, circumspect Penelope, is exceedingly wise and in her mind is well versed in counsels' (*Od.* 11.445-446).

□ q(mij 9st<sup>8</sup> gunaik<sub>7</sub>j, 9pln p<sub>7</sub>sij Ælloq' 1lhtai. (*Od.*  
14.129-130)<sup>246</sup>

Thus Odysseus hears from various characters how strong his wife's feelings for him are.

These assertions are confirmed in the narrative thread depicting Penelope, where her words and actions demonstrate her feelings for her absent husband. Her first appearance at *Odyssey* 1.328-369 begins with her tearful request to the bard Phemius:<sup>247</sup>

... ta<sub>7</sub>thj d' 0popa<sub>7</sub>e' 0oidaj  
lugraj, 0 t<sub>7</sub> moi a<sup>4</sup>e<sup>8</sup> 9n<sup>8</sup> st□qessi f<sup>5</sup>lon kar  
te<sup>5</sup>rei, 9pe<sup>5</sup> me m0lista kaq<sup>5</sup>keto p<sub>7</sub>nqoj Ælaston.  
to<sup>5</sup>hn gÆr kefal0n poq<sub>7</sub>w memnhm<sub>7</sub>nh a<sup>4</sup>e<sup>8</sup>  
0ndr<sub>7</sub>j, to? kl<sub>7</sub>oj e<sup>1</sup>r□ kaq' `Ell0da ka<sup>8</sup> m<sub>7</sub>son 4Argoj  
. (*Od.* 1.340-344)<sup>248</sup>

The fact that this song about the difficulties experienced by the Greeks returning from Troy elicits so personalized a reaction from Penelope reveals how strongly she feels about her long-absent husband. The depth of her love and longing for her husband is further emphasized by the conclusion of her first appearance, which takes the form of the recurring narrator-text description of Penelope weeping for her husband after returning to her quarters.<sup>249</sup>

In Penelope's next appearance, at *Odyssey* 4.675-841, although the focus is on her distress on hearing of Telemachus' secret mission and danger from ambush (See pp. 102-103), it is significant that she twice expresses her distress about her son as an accumulation of her grief at the prior loss of her husband (*Od.* 4.724-725 = 814-815). Similarly, after Telemachus' safe return, Penelope's first conversation with him in *Odyssey* 17 reveals both her joyful relief at his return and her anxiety to find out

<sup>246</sup> '... and as she laments, the tears fall from her eyes, as is right for a wife when her husband has perished in a foreign land' (*Od.* 14.129-130).

<sup>247</sup> See pp. 88 and 103-5 for the triadic and mother-son aspects of this scene.

<sup>248</sup> 'But cease from this mournful song, which always distresses the loving heart within my breast, since unbearable sorrow touched me most of all. For so dear a person I long for as I am constantly reminded of my husband, whose fame is far-reaching throughout Hellas and central Argos' (*Od.* 1.340-344).

<sup>249</sup> See *Od.* 1.363-364 = 16.450-451 = 19.604-605 = 21.357-358.

whether he had any news of Odysseus, while in their second conversation Penelope focuses on the latter aspect once more.

In *Odyssey* 18 the Odyssean and the Penelopean threads depicting the build up to their eventual reunion come together when Odysseus and Penelope are in the great hall of the palace at the same time, although Penelope is unaware of the presence of her husband. Penelope's visit to the hall is preceded by her words expressing her grief and longing for her husband:

a<sup>7</sup>qe moi `j malak<sub>T</sub>n q<sub>D</sub>naton p<sub>7</sub>roi<sub>4</sub>Artemij £gnl  
a<sup>1</sup>t<sup>5</sup>ka n<sup>2</sup>n, <sup>6</sup>na mhk<sub>t</sub>' |durom<sub>nh</sub> kat<sub>E</sub> qum<sub>T</sub>n  
a<sup>4</sup>~na fqin<sub>rw</sub>, p<sub>7</sub>sioj poq<sub>ousa</sub> f<sup>5</sup>loio  
panto<sup>5</sup>hn Øret<sub>n</sub>, <sub>9</sub>pe<sup>8</sup> \_xocoj <sub>en</sub> 'Acai~n. (Od. 18.202-205)<sup>250</sup>

Then Odysseus has his first glimpse of his wife as, with her beauty enhanced by Athene, she descends from her quarters into the hall (Od.18.206-211). The effect she has on the suitors is described:

t~n d' a<sup>1</sup>to<sup>2</sup> l<sub>rw</sub>to go<sub>nat</sub>', \_rJ d' £ra qum<sub>T</sub>n \_qelc<sub>qen</sub>  
',  
p<sub>D</sub>ntej d' ðr<sub>santo</sub> para<sup>8</sup> lec<sub>essi</sub> kliq<sub>anai</sub>. (Od. 18.212-213)<sup>251</sup>

As in the scene in which his son first appears before him in *Odyssey* 16, Odysseus' reaction on first seeing his wife after all these years is not described; it is left to the imagination of the audience. The only reaction of Odysseus that is described by the narrator is his happiness when Penelope succeeds in eliciting gifts from the suitors (Od. 18.281-283). As a result of her success, this is the only occasion when after an appearance in the hall Penelope does not retire to her quarters to weep for Odysseus.

In *Odyssey* 19 the renewal of their relationship draws even closer when they engage in two conversations, but without husband-wife interaction, as Penelope is still unaware

<sup>250</sup> 'Would that chaste Artemis would give me death as gentle a death immediately so that I might no longer waste away my life grieving in my heart, and longing for the manifold virtue of a loving husband, since he was the most outstanding of all the Achaeans' (Od. 18.202-205).

<sup>251</sup> 'Their knees went slack and their hearts were spell-bound with desire, and all prayed to lie beside her in bed' (Od. 18.212-213).

that the beggar-Odysseus is her husband;<sup>252</sup> thus the situation is similar to that of the conversation between the beggar-Odysseus and Telemachus at *Odyssey* 16.90-129. Prior to the beggar-Odysseus and Penelope conversation, Odysseus explains to Telemachus his purpose in conversing with Penelope as being to ‘probe’ (ἔρεζω, *Od.* 19.45) her. Odysseus’ use of this term in relation to his preliminary dealings with his wife is similar in meaning to πεῖρδομαι used by Athene in this context at *Odyssey* 13.336.<sup>253</sup>

In the first conversation (*Od.* 19.104-360), Penelope is very open with the beggar-Odysseus, telling him about her problems and her feelings for her husband. With regard to the latter she says:

ὅλλ' Ὀδυσῆα ποῦσα φῶλον κατατόκομαι ἴτωρ (*Od.*  
19.136)<sup>254</sup>

Odysseus now becomes personally acquainted with the thoughts and feelings of Penelope, when he hears firsthand what others had previously told him. When she tells him about the shroud strategy, Odysseus also learns how resourceful she has been in her efforts to preserve their marriage (*Od.* 19.137-156). This kind of resourcefulness involving deception reveals a quality in Penelope with which Odysseus can identify and hence appreciate. Thus in this conversation we have Penelope being very open and Odysseus continuing to dissemble:

ἄϊσκε γεῖθεά πολλεῖ λῆγν ἔτμοισιν ἴμοῖα (*Od.* 19.203)<sup>255</sup>

He is not being heartless but is able to hold his emotions in check. When his stories about Odysseus move Penelope to tears, the narrator makes it clear that he is not unmoved by her distress:

... ἀτῆρ Ὀδυσσεῖ  
 κῦμα μὰν γοῶσαν ἔλν ἔλῃ ἀρεῖ γυναῖκα,  
 ἴφγαλμοῖ δ' ἔϊε κῆρα, ἴσταν δ' ἄσῃ δeroj  
 ὄτρῳ μαῖ ἔν βλεφθροῖσι: δῆλῳ δ' ἔγε δῆκρῳα κῆρῳεν  
 (*Od.* 19.209-212)<sup>256</sup>

<sup>252</sup> Some scholars consider that Penelope does recognize Odysseus in the beggar. See Harsh (1950: 1-21) and Amory Parry (1963: 100-121).

<sup>253</sup> Russo (1992: 77) interprets the meaning of ἔρεζω as something like ‘prod’.

<sup>254</sup> ‘But longing for Odysseus, I waste away within my heart’ (*Od.* 19.136).

<sup>255</sup> ‘Speaking many lies, he made them like truths’ (*Od.* 19.203).

Although he is unwilling to reveal his identity, he finds it difficult to witness her suffering. In his speech at *Odyssey* 19.262-307 he attempts to comfort her and reassure her of her husband's imminent return:

, gḡnai a<sup>4</sup>do<sup>5</sup>h Laertiðdew 'Odusαoj,  
 mhk,ti n<sup>2</sup>n crḡa kalḡn ,na<sup>5</sup>reo mhd, ti qumḡn  
 take pḡsin goḡwsa: nemess~ma<sup>5</sup> ge m, n oḡd, n:  
 ka<sup>8</sup> gḡr t<sup>5</sup>j t' øllo'on ḡdḡretai Ændr' ḡl, sasa  
 kour<sup>5</sup>dion, t, t, kna t, kv filḡthti mige'sa,  
 □ 'Odusα', ḡn fasi qeo'j ,nal<sup>5</sup>gkion e-nai. (*Od.*  
 19.262-267)<sup>257</sup>

He then attempts to convince her by means of a detailed story that Odysseus is close at hand and will soon be home (*Od.* 19.268-307). But Penelope continues to be despondent and expresses the conviction that Odysseus will never return home.

The dialogue between Penelope and the beggar-Odysseus is resumed at *Odyssey* 19.508, after the Odysseus-Eurycleia digression. The thought that it is near bedtime prompts Penelope to reveal to the beggar-Odysseus the turmoil she is accustomed to experience when she lies in bed sleepless:

aḡtḡr ,pe<sup>8</sup> nḡx ḡlqV, ,lv<sup>5</sup>s te ko'toj ḡpantaj,  
 ke'mai ,n<sup>8</sup> l, ktrḡ, pukina<sup>8</sup> d, moi ømf' ḡdinḡn kar  
 ḡxe'ai meled~nai ḡdurom, nhn ,r, qousin. (*Od.* 19.515-  
 517)<sup>258</sup>

She goes on to describe the cause of this inner torment: whether to stay in the house with her son, remaining true to her marriage, or to move on. Thus, once again Odysseus hears from the source the intimate thoughts and feelings of his wife. The scene ends with a further tearful confirmation of Penelope's love for Odysseus:

øll' □ toi m, n ,g ḡn ḡper''□on e<sup>4</sup>sanabbsa

<sup>256</sup> 'But Odysseus in his heart pitied his wife as she wept for him, but his eyes, as if of horn or iron, stood unmoved under his eyelids; by guile he hid his tears' (*Od.* 19.209-212).

<sup>257</sup> 'O respected wife of Laertes' son Odysseus, no longer destroy your beautiful complexion, nor cause your heart to waste away, weeping for your husband. Nor do I blame you: for any woman mourns after losing the wedded husband to whom she has been united in love and borne children, even a lesser one than Odysseus, whom they say is like the gods' (*Od.* 19.262-267).

<sup>258</sup> 'But when night comes, and sleep has overpowered all, I lie on my bed, and close-packed about my throbbing heart sharp cares torment me as I grieve' (*Od.* 19.515-517).

l,xomai e<sup>4</sup>j e<sup>1</sup>n□n, o' moi ston<sub>7</sub>essa t,tuktai,  
a<sup>4</sup>e<sup>8</sup> dΘkrus' ,mo'si pefurm<sub>1</sub>nh, ,x o` 'Odusse<sub>1</sub>j  
o<sup>7</sup>cet' ,poy<sub>7</sub>menoj Kako□lion o<sup>1</sup>k |nomast□n. (Od.  
19.594-597)<sup>259</sup>

These lines are to a large extent a repetition of the words addressed by Penelope to Telemachus at *Odyssey* 17.101-104, thus, in the course of her conversations with the two men in her life, they are made aware of the sorrows she suffers in the privacy of her bedroom. *Odyssey* 19 then concludes with the familiar narrator-text description of Penelope returning to her quarters to weep for Odysseus (*Od.* 19.604-605).

The beginning of *Odyssey* 20 describes the troubled night spent by husband and wife, separate, yet in close proximity. Odysseus tosses and turns, tormented by thoughts of the behaviour of the disloyal maids and the suitors, and the difficulties entailed in gaining the upper hand over so many suitors. Athene appears and attempts to alleviate his concerns, and after Odysseus eventually drifts off into an Athene-induced sleep, the narrator turns to Penelope's troubled night:

e<sup>1</sup>te t<sub>7</sub>n □pnoj \_marpte, l<sub>7</sub>wn meled□mata gumo<sup>2</sup>,  
lusimel□j, £locoj d' £r' ,p<sub>1</sub>(greto k<sub>1</sub>dn£<sup>4</sup>du'a,  
kla'e d' £r' ,n l<sub>1</sub>ktroisi kagezom<sub>1</sub>nh malako'sin. (Od.  
20.56-58)<sup>260</sup>

When she has had her fill of weeping, she prays to Artemis; in her prayer the depth of her love for Odysseus is revealed in her wish for death so that she can be with Odysseus, even though in the underworld, rather than to continue to live and marry an inferior husband (*Od.* 20.81-82), a wish she had expressed earlier at *Odyssey* 18.202-205 (see p. 121). She ends her prayer with an account of a vivid dream she has just had and which she considers has been sent by a god to torture her:

t□de g£r a' moi nukt<sup>8</sup> par<sub>1</sub>(draqen e<sup>7</sup>keloj a<sup>1</sup>t<sub>7</sub>,  
to'oj ,n o<sup>+</sup>oj □en £ma strat<sub>7</sub>: a<sup>1</sup>t£r ,m<sub>7</sub>n kar  
ca'r', ,pe<sup>8</sup> o<sup>1</sup>k ,f£mhn |nar \_mmenai, Øll' □par udh.  
(*Od.* 20.88-90)<sup>261</sup>

<sup>259</sup> 'But verily I shall go upstairs and lie on my bed, which for me has become wretched, always wetted with my tears, ever since Odysseus went to visit unmentionably evil Ilium' (*Od.* 19.594-597).

<sup>260</sup> 'When limb-relaxing sleep took hold of him, freeing his heart from cares, his dutiful wife woke up and wept as she sat in her soft bed' (*Od.* 20.56-58).

The narrator then links husband and wife in the ensuing description of Odysseus' response to the sound of her weeping:

ταῖ δ' Ἐρα κλαίοντες ἴπα σφινετο δ' ὄϊ Ὀδυσσεύϊ:  
 μέμνηται δ' ἄπειτα, δῆκῃσε δ' ὄϊ κατὰ γυμνά  
 ἔδῃ γιγνῆσκουσα παρεστῆμεναι κεφαλᾶφι. (O  
 d.20.92-94)<sup>262</sup>

The final scene in which Penelope and the disguised Odysseus appear together is that of the contest of the bow in *Odyssey* 21. In this scene there is no dialogue between them, but Penelope is once more revealed as being sympathetic towards him, when she intervenes on his behalf, insisting that he should be allowed to compete. Her participation in this scene ends with the final repetition of the lines describing her withdrawal to her quarters to weep for Odysseus (*Od.* 21.357-358).

After the slaughter of the suitors in *Odyssey* 22, the stage is set for the culmination of the depiction of the Odysseus-Penelope relationship – their reunion. The leisurely depiction of this husband-wife reunion occupies the whole of *Odyssey* 23. As a prelude to the actual reunion, we have the depiction of the process of delayed recognition. The process begins with Penelope's initial reaction to Eurycleia's announcement that Odysseus is downstairs and has killed the suitors:

ἄνδρ' ἄφακ', εἰ δ' ἄγερῃ καὶ ἐπιλήκτροιο γοροῖσα  
 γρηῶ περιπλήκῃ, βλεφθῆρων δ' ὄπιθεν δῆκρουον βκε (O  
 d.23.32-33)<sup>263</sup>

But she is subsequently assailed by doubts and disbelief. Eurycleia is the first to rebuke Penelope for failing to accept the news of Odysseus' return, accusing her of having a *γυμνά* ἔπιστοϊ ('mistrustful heart', 23.72).

When Penelope descends into the hall to see for herself, her thoughts and feelings are focalized in narrator-text:<sup>264</sup> she ponders whether to keep her distance and make

<sup>261</sup> 'For on this night there slept beside me one like him, as he was when he went away with the army; and my heart rejoiced since I thought it was not a dream but already a waking vision' (*Od.* 20.88-90).

<sup>262</sup> 'God-like Odysseus heard the sound of her weeping; then he was full of cares, and she seemed to him in his heart to be beside him (literally, 'by his head') and to already recognize him' (*Od.* 20.92-94).

<sup>263</sup> 'So she spoke; and Penelope rejoiced and, leaping from the bed, embraced the old woman, and let the tears flow from her eyes' (*Od.* 23.32-33).

further inquiries, or to immediately approach and acknowledge him by kissing his head and taking him by the hand. In the event she just sits at a distance facing him, while Odysseus sits waiting for her to make the first move; the result is a long silence, eventually broken by Telemachus. His speech and Penelope's response (*Od.* 23.97-110) have already been discussed (pp. 96, 107-108, 116-117) for the light they shed on the triadic and the other two dyadic aspects of the parent-child relationship. Of significance for the relationship under discussion here is the terminology used by Telemachus. First, he uses the terms 'mother' (m̄t̄hr) and 'father' (p̄t̄hr) in referring to Penelope and Odysseus, and then switches to the terms 'wife' (gun̄) and 'husband' (Øn̄r). The dual terminology used here reflects the dual nature of the interpersonal relationship of the parents in the parent-child triad. The husband-wife bond is also illustrated by Penelope's response in which she informs Telemachus that there are aspects of the relationship between her and Odysseus that belong to them alone.

After an interlude of interaction between Odysseus and Telemachus, and Odysseus' bath and enhancement by Athene, the recognition scene proceeds. At this stage Odysseus, in finally expressing impatience at Penelope's continued failure to recognize him, uses the same words that Telemachus had used in his rebuke of his mother (*Od.* 23.168-170 = 23.100-102, quoted on p. 108). Penelope's reaction is to test him on the secret, known only to her and Odysseus, regarding the construction of their bed (*Od.* 23.177-180). When he passes the test by demonstrating his knowledge of this secret, her reaction is described by the narrator:

̄Wj f̄t̄o: t̄aj d' a<sup>1</sup>t̄o<sup>2</sup> l<sup>1</sup>r̄to go<sup>1</sup>r̄nata ka<sup>8</sup> f<sup>5</sup>lon̄ t̄tor,  
 s̄mat' Ønagno<sup>1</sup>r̄sV t̄t̄ o<sup>3</sup> \_mpeda p<sup>1</sup>frad' 'Odusse<sup>1</sup>r̄j:  
 dakr<sup>1</sup>r̄sasa d' \_peit' <sup>4</sup>q̄lj dr̄t̄men, Ømf<sup>8</sup> d<sup>+</sup> ce<sup>1</sup>raj  
 deir̄ b̄t̄ll' 'Odusā, k̄t̄rh d' \_kus' ðd<sup>+</sup> prosh<sup>1</sup>r̄da:  
 (*Od.* 23.205-208)<sup>265</sup>

There follows her speech in which for the first time she addresses Odysseus by his name. In this speech the following words are of significance in characterizing this husband-wife relationship:

<sup>264</sup> See Appendix Glossary, pp. 158-159.

<sup>265</sup> 'So he spoke; and her knees and her heart grew slack as she recognized the sure signs that Odysseus had provided. Then bursting into tears, she ran straight to him, threw her arms around Odysseus' neck, kissed his head, and addressed him' (*Od.* 23.205-208).

... geo<sup>8</sup> d' °pazon †□zṛn,  
 o<sup>9</sup> n~□n Øgðsanto par' Øll□loisi m,nonte  
 obhj tarpanai ka<sup>8</sup> g□raoj oᵀdṛn <sup>3</sup>k,sgai. (*Od.* 23.210-  
 212)<sup>266</sup>

These words express her awareness of what shared happiness they would have experienced, had they not had to endure this long separation. She suggests that the happiness engendered by their husband-wife bond was too great to escape divine jealousy.

The account of their reunion continues in great detail. First, Odysseus' reaction to her speech is described in narrator-text, followed by a simile to explain the emotions experienced as in recognition and acceptance they are reunited:

₅Wj fðto, tᵀ d' \_ti mblon †f' <sup>6</sup>meron ,rse gṛoio:  
 kla'e d' \_cwn Ælocon qumar,a, k,dna <sup>4</sup>du'an.  
 ~j d' ᵀt' ·n Øspðsioj gα nhcom,noisi fan□V,  
 °n te Poseidðwn eᵀerg,a nα' ,n<sup>8</sup> pṛntJ  
 "a<sup>5</sup>sV, ,peigom,nhn Øn,mJ ka<sup>8</sup> kṛmati phgᵀ:  
 pa?roi d' ,x,fugon poliaj Ḃlṫj upeirṫnde  
 nhcṫmenoi, pollḂ d₊ per<sup>8</sup> cro, t,ṫtrofen Ḃlmh,  
 Øspðsioi d' ,p,ban ga<sup>5</sup>hj, kakṫthta fugṫntej:  
 ~j Æra t□ Øspastṫj \_hn pṫsij e<sup>4</sup>soro"sv,  
 deiraj d' o► pw pðmpan Øf<sup>5</sup>eto p□cee leuk". (*Od.*  
 23.231-240)<sup>267</sup>

As in the reunion of Odysseus and Telemachus, the emotional impact of this reunion is heightened by the use of a simile. Heubeck (1992: 338) finds the development of the dominant idea of the simile, namely, joyful welcome home, 'strange' with the shift in viewpoint from that of the shipwrecked Odysseus to that of Penelope welcoming him home. But the shift in viewpoint seems to me to be particularly

<sup>266</sup> 'The gods gave us misery because they begrudged that we two staying together should have full enjoyment of our youth and reach the threshold of old age' (*Od.* 23.210-212).

<sup>267</sup> 'So she spoke; and still more she stirred in him the desire of weeping. He wept holding his dear dutiful wife. Just as when the land appears welcome to men swimming, whose well-made ship Poseidon has wrecked on the sea, weighed down by the strong wind and waves; and a few escape the grey sea by swimming to the shore, and much spray is encrusted on their skin, and gladly they set foot on land, having escaped an evil fate; so welcome to her was her husband as she looked upon him, nor could she loose her white arms from his neck' (*Od.* 23.231-240).

effective by reason of its inclusiveness in identifying the joyful emotions of Odysseus with those of Penelope. The description of the reunion begins with Odysseus holding his wife in his arms, and with the shift in viewpoint ends with the emphasis on Penelope holding Odysseus in her embrace, thus underlining the two-directional nature of their relationship.<sup>268</sup>

In Penelope's final words in the poem, spoken in response to Odysseus' account of Teiresias' prophecy, she expresses optimism with regard to the future:

e<sup>4</sup> m+n dl garðj ge qeo<sup>8</sup> tel,ousin Æreion,  
 ,lpwr□ toi \_peita kak~n †pðluxin \_sesqai. (*Od.* 23.286-  
 287)<sup>269</sup>

After these words spoken by Penelope, the remaining events of the night, continuing and completing the husband-wife reunion scene, are depicted in narrator-text. The narrator describes how they retire to bed at 23.296 (the disputed end of the poem),<sup>270</sup> and follows quite naturally with a description of Telemachus and the rest of the household also going off to bed, after which the narrator continues with further intimate details of the reunion:

T´ d' ,pe<sup>8</sup> o´n filḡthtoj ,tarp□thn ,rateinaj,  
 terp,(sqhn mḡqoisi, prḡj øll□louj ,n,(ponte (*Od.*  
 23.300-301)<sup>271</sup>

The repetition of two forms of t,rpw stresses the enjoyment they have in the normal husband-wife activities of which they were deprived for so long, and recalls the sentiments expressed by Penelope at *Odyssey* 23.211-212 (quoted on p. 126). After the narrator has described their exchange of news, Penelope and Odysseus finally fall asleep, bringing to a conclusion this lengthy reunion scene.

The account of the husband-wife relationship does not end there, but concludes on the following morning with Odysseus' final words to Penelope. His words reflect a return to practical matters of the real world, after the excitement and emotional extremes of

<sup>268</sup> See Podlecki (1970: 89-90) for his comments on the effectiveness of this simile.

<sup>269</sup> 'If the gods are bringing about a better old age, then there is hope that there will be an escape from your troubles' (*Od.* 23.286-287).

<sup>270</sup> See p. 81, note 168 regarding the authenticity of *Od.* 23.297-24.568.

<sup>271</sup> 'When the two had had full enjoyment of sweet love-making, they enjoyed themselves in conversation, telling their news to each other' (*Od.* 23.300-301).

the previous night. Now that their partnership has been re-established, Odysseus and Penelope will take care of the *o-koj* together, but with a division of labour, reflecting the different areas of competence of women and men. After this statement on their joint but differentiated roles in the *o-koj*, Odysseus announces his present business of visiting his father and dealing with the expected backlash from the events of the previous day. His speech ends with instructions to Penelope on what she and her women are to do in his absence when the news of the slaughter of the suitors gets out:

e<sup>4</sup>j †per\_ ' Ønabbsa s¶n Ømfip\_ loisi gunaix<sup>8</sup>n  
 βsqai, mhd\_ tina proti\_ sseo mhd' ,r\_eine. (Od.  
 23.364-365)<sup>272</sup>

Thus the account of the husband-wife relationship ends on this note of paternalistic protectiveness, whereby Odysseus desires the women to be kept safe in their quarters, sheltered from the hurly-burly of the men's world, while he puts on his armour and goes off to attend to men's business.

### 3.5 Athene as surrogate mother

Unlike the protagonist of the *Iliad*, Odysseus does not have a divine mother. As has been shown in the previous chapter, Thetis in her capacity as Achilles' mother plays a prominent role in the development and conclusion of the central theme of the *Iliad*. In the *Odyssey* Athene, fulfilling a function similar to that of Thetis in the *Iliad*, plays an even more pivotal role in the development and conclusion of the theme of the poem.<sup>273</sup> The actorial motivation<sup>274</sup> for Athene's assumption of this prominent role is based on the special relationship she and Odysseus share – a relationship which is illustrated and alluded to not only in the *Odyssey*, but also in the *Iliad*. In the latter Athene is represented as a warrior-goddess who assists the Greeks in general, but who shows particular (but not unique) favour to Odysseus, whom she assists and protects on those occasions in the narrative when he features prominently.<sup>275</sup>

<sup>272</sup> 'Go upstairs with your attendant women, sit tight there, and do not look at anyone, or ask any questions' (Od. 23.364-365).

<sup>273</sup> See Murnaghan (1995: 75-77) for a discussion of the roles of Thetis and Athene in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* respectively.

<sup>274</sup> See Appendix Glossary, pp. 158-159.

<sup>275</sup> Pope (1960: 119) argues that statistically the distribution of aid and advice by Athene in the *Iliad* is too even to warrant the description of her treatment of Odysseus as being special.

On these occasions, several different ways in which Athene stands by and protects Odysseus are depicted. At *Iliad* 2.169-332, it is Athene who is at Odysseus' side, encouraging and assisting him to take effective action in preventing the premature and precipitate departure of the Greeks from Troy. In the battle scene at *Iliad* 5.676ff., when Odysseus is pondering whether to go after the wounded Sarpedon, the son of Zeus, or to seek further glory by slaughtering a number of Lycians, it is Athene who prompts him to adopt the latter course, thus saving him from responsibility for the death of Zeus' son. There is also an example of Athene being on hand to save Odysseus' life when at *Iliad* 11.434-439 Odysseus is wounded, but Athene prevents the spear from penetrating his vital organs.

The most extended account of *Øriste*<sup>5</sup>a performed by Odysseus in the *Iliad* is to be found in the Doloneia, the undercover operation of Diomedes and Odysseus, which occupies a great deal of *Iliad* 10. In this episode Athene features prominently as the divine assistant of both these heroes. She is introduced into the episode from the moment the volunteer Diomedes, in selecting Odysseus as his companion on the raid, offers as one of the qualities that qualify Odysseus for this role the fact that *file*<sup>8</sup> d( s Pall@j 'Aq□nh ('Pallas Athene loves him', *Il.* 10.245). Although Diomedes does not mention it here, he too is a hero to whom Athene shows particular favour, hence it is to be expected that Athene will feature in this undertaking by these two heroes. As a prelude to the raid, after Athene herself has indicated her presence by a bird sign (*Il.* 10.274-276), her support in this undertaking is sought in turn by Odysseus and Diomedes in prayers addressed to her (*Il.* 10.277-294). An excerpt from Odysseus' prayer to Athene reveals his conception of their relationship:

kl'q<sup>5</sup> meu, a<sup>4</sup>giγcoio Diτj t(koj, σ t( moi a<sup>4</sup>e<sup>8</sup>  
 ,n pÐntessi pγnoisi par<sup>5</sup>stasai, o' d( se l□qw  
 kinτmenoι: n'n a'te mÐlistÐ me f'lai, 'Aq□nh (*Il.*  
 10.278-280)<sup>276</sup>

Athene hears their prayers and assists them throughout the raid; in consequence, after their safe return, Odysseus acknowledges Athene's support by dedicating to her the

<sup>276</sup> 'Hear me, daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus, you who always stand by my side in all my labours, nor does any movement of mine go unnoticed by you: now again treat me with special love, Athene' (*Il.* 10.278-280).

spoils of the slain Trojan spy, Dolon (*Il.* 10.570-571). The episode (and the book) ends with both heroes pouring out an offering of wine to Athene.

But it is not only in military situations that Athene assists Odysseus in the *Iliad*, where the last example of the goddess's intervention on his behalf occurs in the footrace during the funeral games for Patroclus. At *Iliad* 23.768-779, Athene, in response to Odysseus' request, causes the leading runner, Ajax, the son of Oileus, to slip in the cattle dung, thus enabling Odysseus to win the race. Ajax's reaction is to utter the petulant complaint:

᾿ pᾱpoi, ᾱ m' ᾱblaye qeᾱ pᾱdaj, ᾱ tᾱ pᾱroj per  
 mᾱthr ᾱ j 'Odusaᾱ par<sup>5</sup>statai ᾱd' ᾱparᾱgei. (*Il.*  
 23.782-783)<sup>277</sup>

This is the only occasion when utterance is given to the term 'mother' in connection with Athene's relationship with Odysseus.<sup>278</sup> Although one would not normally associate Athene, the virgin warrior-goddess of the *Iliad*, with motherliness, her constant support and protection of Odysseus does exhibit the devotion associated with the divine mother of Achilles and the mortal mother of Hector.

These Athene-Odysseus episodes from the *Iliad* serve to corroborate Nestor's statement to Telemachus, at *Odyssey* 3.219-222, regarding the special relationship between the goddess and Odysseus during the Trojan War:

e<sup>4</sup> gᾱr s' ᾱ j ᾱqᾱloi filᾱein glaukᾱpij 'Aqᾱnh  
 ᾱ j tᾱt' 'Odussaoj perikᾱdeto kudal<sup>5</sup>moio  
 dᾱmᾱ ᾱni Trᾱwn, ᾱqi pᾱscomen ᾱlge' 'Acaio<sup>5</sup>:  
 oᾱ gᾱr pw ᾱdon ᾱde qeoᾱj ᾱnafandᾱ fileᾱntaj

<sup>277</sup> 'Oh for shame! In truth the goddess made my feet slip; she who, just like a mother, always stands by and comes to the aid of Odysseus' (*Il.* 23.782-783).

<sup>278</sup> Jackson (1999: 55-58) links Ajax's reference to the maternal nature of Athene's relationship with Odysseus to the tradition that Anticleia conceived Odysseus as the result of being raped by Sisyphus, and subsequently gave birth to him in Athene's shrine at Boeotian Alalcomenae. This divergent tradition regarding Odysseus' parentage was either not known or not selected by Homer, as in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* Odysseus is the son of Laertes.

ἤϊ κεῖν Ἰθάκῃ παρ᾽στᾶτο Πάλλῃσιν (Od. 3.218-222)<sup>279</sup>

Although in the context of the *Iliad* Athene's attention to Odysseus is not exclusive, the nature of her constantly being on hand when he needs her seems to be sufficient justification for Nestor's assertion. It is a relationship which represents an element of continuity in the depiction of these two characters in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. But in the former it represents but one of several examples of various Olympians supporting various favoured heroes, with Athene herself showing favour to more than one hero; whereas in the latter this relationship features more extensively and uniquely, with Athene featuring as the sole supportive deity, devoting her attention exclusively to the protagonist, Odysseus, and his family. Thus her role changes from that of multiple patronage to that of sole tutelage, and may be described as that of a surrogate mother or, to use the terminology of later European mythology, a 'fairy godmother'.

Athene's first speech in the poem (Od. 1.45-62) is a supplication of Zeus on behalf of Odysseus, and the words she uses to describe her feelings about his unhappy situation reveal the depth of her love for him (see Od. 1.48-50, quoted on p. 71). The maternal aspect of this supplication of Zeus is reflected in the fact that it is reminiscent of Thetis' maternal supplication of Zeus (*Il.* 1.503-510), in which she draws attention to the unhappy situation of her son.

Athene (disguised as Mentès) next appears in Ithaca, where she is depicted as acting in a nurturing role in her interaction with Telemachus, when she attempts to make him aware of his inherited potential, and offers him practical advice on what action to take in his difficult situation. Telemachus himself acknowledges the parental nature of her treatment of him; he actually thinks of her as being fatherly rather than motherly for two reasons: she is disguised as a man, and he is conscious of the need of a father figure. But, as has been seen in the *Iliad*, it is also the role of a mother to give advice to her adult son. Compare Thetis' speech to Achilles at *Iliad* 19.29-37, where she says that she will take care of Patroclus' body, and urges her son to resume his role as a

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<sup>279</sup> 'If only grey-eyed Athene would be willing to love you as formerly she took care of Odysseus in the land of the Trojans, where we Achaeans suffered hardship – for I never saw the gods showing affection as openly as Pallas Athene did in openly standing by that man' (Od. 3.218-222).

leader and a warrior; there follows the narrator's description of the effect her speech has on her son:

ῥWj Æra fwn□sasa m(noj poluqars+j 9nake (Il. 19.37)<sup>280</sup>

Athene next appears in the guise of Mentor in order to continue her nurturing of Telemachus. Vivante (1970: 65) describes Athene as a *kourotrophos* in relation to Telemachus (though Homer does not use the term in this context).<sup>281</sup> This continued nurture takes the form of guiding and supporting him on his first foreign adventure. By so doing, she is supplying a need which is a cause of anxiety to his own mother; this anxiety is expressed by Penelope at *Odyssey* 4.818,<sup>282</sup> when she bemoans the fact that in going on this voyage he is out of his depth on account of his inexperience in fighting and speaking. After Odysseus' return to Ithaca, Athene takes care of Telemachus' return; she appears to him undisguised for the first and last time when she advises him to return home and to avoid the ambush planned by the suitors (*Od.* 15.1-42). After Telemachus' return to Ithaca in *Odyssey* 16, his father takes over the parental role, and there is no further need of parent-child type interaction between Athene and Telemachus.

Athene's attentive care extends to Penelope as well. On the several occasions when Penelope retires to bed to weep for Odysseus, it is Athene who ultimately provides relief in the form of sleep.<sup>283</sup> When Penelope's distress is at its most acute, after she has heard of her son's secret voyage and the impending danger to him, the narrator describes how Athene has to be even more inventive in devising a way of alleviating her distress: it requires the intervention of the Athene-devised dream apparition of Penelope's sister to sooth her (*Od.* 4.756-841).

Athene's care for Telemachus and Penelope is merely an extension of her care for Odysseus, who is the chief focus of her attention. After all the action involving Telemachus, Penelope, and the suitors in the first four books, Athene has to intercede with Zeus on Odysseus' behalf for a second time (*Od.* 5.7-20), before he initiates

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<sup>280</sup> 'With these words she inspired all-daring courage' (*Il.* 19.37).

<sup>281</sup> Vivante (1970: 65) defines the term *kourotrophos* as 'a goddess rearing the young'.

<sup>282</sup> Quoted on p. 103 in illustrating the mother-son relationship.

<sup>283</sup> *Od.* 1.363-364 = 16.450-451 = 19.604-605 = 21.357-358.

Odysseus' release from Ogygia, as a first step in the final stages of his  $n\eta\sigma\tau\omicron\jmath$ . Like her first intercession in *Odyssey* 1, her second intercession is reminiscent of Thetis' intercession with Zeus in *Iliad* 1, but Athene's intercession takes the form of a complaint rather than a supplication.

The depiction of Athene's programme of personal care of Odysseus begins from *Odyssey* 5.382, when Poseidon has departed the scene after wrecking Odysseus' raft. First, she uses her divine powers to control the elements (382-387). Then, she inspires Odysseus in his decision-making for survival tactics (427-437). When he is safely on dry land and lies exhausted in his bed of leaves, it is Athene who attends to him:

...  $t\grave{u} d' \text{Æ}r' \text{'A}q\text{□nh}$   
 $\text{□pnon } \text{,p' } \text{┘mmasi ce?'} \text{, } \text{°na min pa}_{\text{┘seie t} \text{Dcista}$   
 $\text{duspon}_{\text{,oj kam} \text{D} \text{toio, f}^5 \text{la bl}_{\text{(far' } \text{Ømfikal}_{\text{┘yaj. (Od.}$   
 5.491-493)<sup>284</sup>

Athene continues to take care of Odysseus during the time he spends in Scheria by facilitating his acceptance by the Phaeacians. First, she masterminds the meeting of Nausicaa and Odysseus on the river-bank. Here she enhances the appearance of Odysseus (the first of four such actions) in order to impress Nausicaa.

After the departure of Nausicaa, the first interaction between Odysseus and Athene takes place when he addresses a prayer to the goddess:

$Kl?q^5 \text{meu, a}^4 \text{gi}_{\text{┘coio Di}_{\text{┘j t}_{\text{(koj, 'A} \text{trut} \text{'nh:}$   
 $n?n d\text{□ p}_{\text{(r meu } \text{Ækouson, } \text{,pe}^8 \text{ p} \text{Droj o} \blacktriangleright \text{pot' } \text{Ækousaj}$   
 $\text{"aiom}_{\text{(nou, } \text{┘te m' } \text{┘rraie klut}_{\text{┘j } \text{,nnos}^5 \text{gajoj.}$   
 (Od. 6.324-326)<sup>285</sup>

This prayer reveals Odysseus' awareness of her lack of support during his persecution by Poseidon, and contains a hint of reproach. Her failure to fulfil her expected role of always standing by him is a matter he brings up again when he meets her face to face in Ithaca (see p. 135). On the present occasion following his prayer, the narrator-text, focalized by Athene, shows that she acknowledges his prayer, but is not yet willing to

<sup>284</sup> 'And Athene poured sleep on his eyes in order to free him most quickly from his toilsome weariness by sealing his eyelids' (*Od.*5.491-493).

<sup>285</sup> 'Hear me Atrytone, daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus, and listen to me now at any rate, since formerly you did not listen to me ship-wrecked, when the glorious earth-shaker battered me' (*Od.* 6.324-326).

meet him face to face out of respect for her father's brother, Poseidon (*Od.* 6.329-331).

Consequently, during the remainder of his stay in Scheria, Athene continues to provide care, but remains incognito. In *Odyssey* 7, as he makes his way to the palace of Alcinous, she first shrouds him in a protective mist as part of her loving care (ἔλα φρονιῶσ' ἄνθρωπον, 42), then, disguised as a little girl, she acts as his guide (*Od.* 7.14-77). In *Odyssey* 8 she adopts another disguise, that of the royal herald, in order to facilitate Odysseus' introduction to the Phaeacians in their Assembly; for this introduction she again enhances his appearance so that he will make a favourable impression (*Od.* 8.7-23). Finally, disguised as a Phaeacian man, she provides him with moral support in the discus-throwing contest.

After all this varied attention, as a presence in the background or in disguise, prior to his arrival in Ithaca, she is again on hand when he awakes after being finally deposited, while asleep, on an Ithacan beach by the Phaeacians (*Od.* 13.113ff.). It is here that the first of the delayed recognition scenes, which play a role in Odysseus' ἀναστροφή, takes place. This recognition scene culminates in the first face-to-face contact between Athene and Odysseus since his departure from Troy. The recognition scene is prolonged by the adoption of subterfuge on the part of each of them: Athene appears to Odysseus in the guise of a princely young shepherd, while Odysseus pretends to be a Cretan exile. But of course his pretence does not deceive Athene. Her reaction to his attempt at deception is indicative of her affection for him:

ἄνθρωπον φέτο, μετὰ δὲ γλαυκῶπις Ἄρη,  
 αἰεὶ τὴν κείνου κείνου: δὲ μὲν δ' ἄνθρωπον  
 καλεῖται μετὰ τὴν κατὰ ὄψιν ἄνθρωπον: (*Od.* 13.287-289)<sup>286</sup>

Her expression of affection by caressing him is reminiscent of a Thetis-Achilles encounter in the *Iliad*, but in those mother-son encounters there is no smiling. Murnaghan (1995: 75) comments on the underscoring of the similarity of the

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<sup>286</sup> 'So he spoke, and the goddess grey-eyed Athene smiled and caressed him with her hand; and her appearance had become that of a woman, beautiful and tall, and skilled in glorious works of weaving' (*Od.* 13.287-289).

supportive roles of these two goddesses by the parallel construction of this first face-to-face Athene-Odysseus encounter and the first Thetis-Achilles encounter in *Iliad* 1.

Athene then addresses Odysseus for the first time in her own persona. The bantering tone of her speech exhibits both amusement and an appreciation of Odysseus' wily nature, which is so similar to her own. Here we have revealed in Athene's own words the basis of the affinity which exists between her and Odysseus:

Øll' Æge, mhk( ti ta?ta leg''meqa, e<sup>4</sup>d<sub>7</sub>tej Æmfw  
 k( rde', ,pe<sup>8</sup> s¶ m( n ,ssi brot~n ⊥c' Æristoj EpÐntwn  
 boul□ ka<sup>8</sup> m¶qoisin, ,g´d' ,n pbsi qeo'si  
 m□ti te kl( omai ka<sup>8</sup> k( rdesin: ...

(*Od.* 13.296-299)<sup>287</sup>

Their most distinctive qualities are similar and complementary. Athene uses the term k( rdoj twice: first, as an attribute in which they both have proficiency, and then, as an attribute for which she, of all the gods, is most renowned. Stanford (1962: II, 210) states that in Homer the primary meaning of k( rdoj is 'skill, cunning, wile'.

Athene then goes on to tease him because, in spite of his aforementioned accomplishments, he failed to recognize her:

... o<sup>1</sup>d+ s¶ g' -gnwj  
 PallÐd' 'Aqhna<sup>5</sup>hn, ko(rhn Di<sub>7</sub>j, σ t( toi a<sup>4</sup>e<sup>8</sup>  
 ,n pÐntessi p<sub>7</sub>noisi par<sup>5</sup>stamai žd+ fulÐssw (*Od.*  
 13.299-301)<sup>288</sup>

Here Athene herself confirms her attentiveness and protectiveness towards Odysseus, which has previously been referred to by others. Odysseus' response includes a complaint (*Od.* 13.316-323) that she had not stood by him in the period from his departure from Troy until his arrival in Scheria.<sup>289</sup> In her reply to Odysseus' reproach,

<sup>287</sup> 'But come, let us no longer speak of this, for we are both skilled in cunning wiles, since you are far the best of all mortals for tactics and stories, and I among all the gods am renowned for wisdom and cunning wiles' (*Od.* 13.296-299).

<sup>288</sup> 'And you did not recognize Pallas Athene, the daughter of Zeus, who always stands by and keeps watch over you in all your labours' (*Od.* 13.299-301).

<sup>289</sup> Many, since the time of Aristarchus, have regarded 320-323 as an interpolation on the grounds that the depiction of events in Scheria gives no indication that Odysseus was aware of Athene's presence. But Stanford (1962: II, 211) points out that the audience was aware of Athene's presence, and Homer sometimes allows himself the licence of assuming his characters know what the audience knows.

Athene explains that she did not openly support him in order to avoid a confrontation with her father's brother, Poseidon (*Od.* 13.341-343). Athene's statement here is consistent with the Athene-focalized narrator-text at *Odyssey* 6.329-331, mentioned above (p. 133).<sup>290</sup>

After this recognition and explanation, Athene continues her support by advising Odysseus on the strategy to be employed in re-establishing his position in his household. The narrator-text at *Odyssey* 13.372-373 indicates the ease and familiarity in their relationship.<sup>291</sup>

Τῷ δ' ἄκαχεζομένην ἔραϊ παρ᾽ ἐπιπέδῳ  
 φράσσει μνηστῆρας ἰσχυροῖσιν ἄλοχρον. (*Od.*  
 13.372-373)<sup>292</sup>

During this plotting Odysseus requests Athene's input on the strategy to follow, and asks her to give him now the kind of help she gave him at Troy:

Ὀλλ' ἄγε μάτιν ἴφηνον, ἔπειθ' ὅπως σόμαι ἀτόλμῳ  
 πέρι δὲ μοι ἀτόλμῳ σταδί, μνηστῆρας δ' ἄνευσα,  
 ὅπως ἴτε Τροίηντας ἰσχυροὺς κροῖσθαι. (*Od.* 13.386-388)<sup>293</sup>

In response Athene promises that she will stand by him. She then goes on to inform Odysseus (and the audience) of the details of her plan of action, which includes bringing Telemachus back from Sparta. Odysseus' questioning of Athene's action in sending him on this dangerous and seemingly unnecessary trip further illustrates the familiarity in their relationship (*Od.* 13.417-419). The scene ends with another one of the transformations of his appearance, which contribute to her assistance in his achievement of a successful *νόστος*. His transformation into a beggar is brought about by physical contact: *μιν . . . "ἔβδη πέμθσσε"* ('she stroked him with her wand', 13.429).

<sup>290</sup> Some have difficulty in accepting the validity of Athene's reason, regarding it as a weak excuse for leaving Odysseus to his own devices for such a long period. Clay (1987: *passim*) attributes Athene's absence to her continued wrath against Odysseus.

<sup>291</sup> This description is reminiscent of that of Thetis and Achilles at *Il.* 24.141-142 (see p. 31).

<sup>292</sup> 'The two sat down by the trunk of the sacred olive and plotted the downfall of the arrogant suitors' (*Od.* 13.372-373).

<sup>293</sup> 'But come weave a plan how I shall pay them back. Stand beside me, inspire much-daring courage, as when we destroyed the splendid crowning battlements of Troy' (*Od.* 13.386-388).

At *Odyssey* 16.156-159 Athene appears to Odysseus as herself for the second time in the poem with a repetition of the phraseology used to describe her first appearance at 13.288-289 (quoted on p. 134). Her purpose on this occasion is to initiate the reunion of Odysseus and Telemachus. She again reassures Odysseus of her continued support in the impending conflict with the suitors – a reminder that she is also a warrior goddess (*Od.* 16.170-171). She again uses her ἄβδoς to transform him, this time enhancing his appearance. She then withdraws leaving the reunion to father and son.

When Odysseus, disguised as a beggar goes to the palace, Athene continues to manipulate events in accordance with her promise to stand by Odysseus. At *Odyssey* 18.69-70, preparatory to the beggar-Odysseus' fight with Irus, another beggar, Athene is described as:

... αἰτῆρ ἄγῳnh  
 Ἐγχι παριστῆnh μῆλε' ὑδανὲ ποίμηni λαῶnh (*Od.* 18.69-70)<sup>294</sup>

Following Odysseus' successful encounter with Irus, Athene masterminds Penelope's first appearance before Odysseus:

Τῷ δ' ἄρ' ἄρῃ<sup>8</sup> φρέσ<sup>8</sup> γάκε γεῖ γλαυκῶπι<sup>8</sup> ἄγῳnh,  
 κοῖρῃ Ἰκαρῶοιο, περὶ φρονίῃ Πηνελόπ<sup>5</sup>ει,  
 μνηστῆσσι φανῶναι, ἵπῳ πετῶσειε μῆλιστα  
 γυμῶν μνηστῆρων ἄδ<sup>4</sup> τιμῆσσι γῆνοίτο  
 μβλλοῖν περὶ πῆσι<sup>7</sup> τε καὶ ὑ<sup>3</sup>ποῖ πῶρο<sup>5</sup>ι ἔν. (*Od.*  
 18.158-162)<sup>295</sup>

For the occasion Athene enhances Penelope's appearance; the enhancement is described in great detail at *Odyssey* 18.190-196.<sup>296</sup>

After the suitors have returned to their homes for the night, Athene's supportive role is emphasized, when Odysseus is twice described as:

<sup>294</sup> 'But Athene, standing close beside the shepherd of the people, filled out his limbs' (*Od.* 18.69-70).

<sup>295</sup> 'But now the goddess grey-eyed Athene put it into the mind of circumspect Penelope, the daughter of Icarus, to display herself before the suitors in order to open their hearts all the more, and to become even more prized in the eyes of her husband and son than she was before' (*Od.* 18.158-162).

<sup>296</sup> For a detailed discussion of Athene's role in this first encounter between Penelope and Odysseus, see Byre (1988: 159-173).

mnhst□ressi f7non s7n 'Aq□nV mermhr<sup>5</sup>zwn (Od. 19.2 = 19.52)<sup>297</sup>

There follows the long interview between Penelope and the beggar-Odysseus, of which Athene leaves Odysseus in control; but that she is on hand is indicated at *Odyssey* 19.476-479, when she prevents Penelope from noticing Eurycleia's recognition of Odysseus.

When Odysseus retires to bed after the interview with Penelope, he is unable to sleep, tossing and turning as he ponders the desperate situation in which he finds himself – a situation where he is so outnumbered by the suitors. Athene then makes her third 'maternal' appearance in her own feminine form at *Odyssey* 20.31. She rebukes him for the lack of confidence which prevents him from resting contentedly now that he is in the same house as his wife and son. In response to Odysseus' expression of doubt about achieving success against the suitors, Athene again rebukes him for not having sufficient trust in her:

sc7tlie, ka<sup>8</sup> m7n t<sup>5</sup>j te cere<sup>5</sup>oni pe<sup>5</sup>qeq' 8ta<sup>5</sup>rJ,  
 Lj per qnht7j t' 9st<sup>8</sup> ka<sup>8</sup> o7 t7sa m□dea o-den:  
 a7t8r 9g7 qe7j e<sup>8</sup>mi, diamper7j o se ful8ssw

9n p8nt7ssi p7noij. ...

(Od. 20.45-48)<sup>298</sup>

She here comforts him by reiterating her previous assurances of always standing by him. This encounter ends with a repetition of the narrator-text, o<sup>3</sup> □pnon 9p<sup>8</sup> blef8roisin 7ceuen ('she poured sleep on his eyes', 20.54), representing a basic maternal function.

Another way in which Athene promotes the interests of Odysseus is by justifying the violence of his revenge against the suitors through the expression of her own hostility towards them. Her hostility is first made known in her conversation with Telemachus

<sup>297</sup> 'Devising the slaughter of the suitors with the help of Athene' (Od. 19.2 = 19.52).

<sup>298</sup> 'Impossible man! Anyone trusts even a lesser companion who is mortal and does not know so many plans. But I am a god and continuously keep watch over you in all your labours' (Od. 20.45-48).

in *Odyssey* 1, where she expresses the wish that Odysseus might ‘lay hands on the shameless suitors’ (*Od.* 1.254). Likewise, in her first face-to-face encounter with Odysseus in *Odyssey* 13 she incites him with the words:

diogen+j Laertiðdh, polum□can' 'Odusse?,  
 frðzeu ᵐpwj mnhstārsin Ønaid,(si ce)'raj ,of□seij,  
 o° d□ toi tr<sup>5</sup>etej m,(garon kðta koiran,(ousi,  
 mn''menoi Øntiq,(hn Ælocon ka<sup>8</sup> ,dna didontej: (*Od.*  
 13.375-378)<sup>299</sup>

Then in the events leading up to the fateful contest of the bow, narrator-text describes how Athene continues to incite Odysseus to vengeance:

Mnhstaraj d' oᵒ pðmpan Øg□noraj e<sup>7</sup>a 'Aq□nh  
 l''bhj <sup>7</sup>scesqai qumalg,(oj, ᵒfr' \_ti mðllon  
 dᵒh Æcoj krad<sup>5</sup>hn Laertiðdew 'Odusaoj. (*Od.*  
 20.284-286)<sup>300</sup>

The book (prelude to the contest of the bow) ends with narrator-text stressing the joint and justifiable action to be taken by Odysseus and Athene against the suitors – justifiable on the grounds that the suitors initiated the wrongdoing.

When the attack, referred to above, does take place in *Odyssey* 22, Athene, disguised as Mentor, provides the practical assistance to be expected of a warrior-goddess guardian. Odysseus addresses her as if he believes that it is Mentor, but the ensuing narrator-text reveals that he suspects that it is Athene (*Od.* 22.210). In the battle Athene does not use her full power to grant an easy victory, but allows Odysseus and his son to earn some glory. In the guise of Mentor, she fights at their side for a while and then withdraws in the form of a swallow to watch over proceedings from her perch in the rafters (*Od.* 22.236-240). On occasion she uses her divine power to assist Odysseus’ party by hampering the efforts of the suitors: at *Odyssey* 22.203 the narrator describes how Athene ‘made fruitless (,t''sia qāken) many of their spear casts’. Finally, at *Odyssey* 22.297-299 she does reveal her warrior-goddess power to cause the suitors to scatter in panic:

<sup>299</sup> ‘Royal son of Laertes, resourceful Odysseus, think how you can lay hands on the shameless suitors, who for three years have been lording it over your house, courting your godlike wife and offering wedding gifts’ (*Od.* 13.375-378).

<sup>300</sup> ‘But Athene would not altogether allow the arrogant suitors to keep from heart-grieving outrage, so that still more pain might make its way into the heart of Laertes’ son Odysseus’ (*Od.* 20.284-286).

d̥l t̥t' 'Aqhna<sup>5</sup>h fqis<sup>5</sup>mbroton a<sup>4</sup>g<sup>5</sup>d' Øn,scen  
 †y̥gen ɔx †rofaɟ: t̥n d̥ fr,nej ɔpto<sup>5</sup>hqen.  
 o<sup>3</sup> d' ɔf,(bonto kat̥ m,garon b̥ej `j Øgela'ai: (Od.  
 22.297-299)<sup>301</sup>

Athene's intervention is followed by the description of the victory of Odysseus' party as they chase and slaughter the panic-stricken suitors. The pursuit and slaughter of the suitors is made more vivid by the use of a second simile in which the pursuers are likened to vultures swooping down on lesser birds (302-309).

Before the culmination of Athene's role as guardian or surrogate mother in the second Ithacan battle scene, she is able to provide some assistance in the Odysseus-Penelope reunion episode, where she allows them to work things out on their own, but does provide a certain amount of facilitation. Her first action in this regard is to transform Odysseus from an old beggar to a handsome godlike man. Then, after Penelope has finally recognized him, Athene prolongs the night in order to accommodate their reunion (Od. 23.241-246). Her nurturing behaviour towards Odysseus is illustrated in the lines explaining her motivation for delaying the arrival of dawn:

|pp̥te d̥ " 'Odusaa ɔ,lpeto †n kat̥ qum̥n  
 e<sup>1</sup>naj βj Øl̥cou tarp̥menai ðd̥ ka<sup>8</sup> ̥pnou (Od. 23.345-  
 346)<sup>302</sup>

Only then does she permit the arrival of dawn.

Athene's final intervention as guardian of Odysseus and his family occurs from *Odyssey* 24.472 to the end of the poem. Her role in this final episode may be compared with Thetis' final intervention in *Iliad* 24. As Thetis' final intervention takes place on the instructions of Zeus, so the final Athene episode begins with a conversation between her and Zeus. But in this instance the dialogue is initiated by Athene, requesting to know his intentions with regard to the impending conflict between Odysseus and the vengeance-seeking relatives of the suitors. Zeus, while

<sup>301</sup> 'Then Athene held up the men-destroying aegis from aloft on the roof, and they were scared out of their wits. They stampeded through the hall like a herd of cattle' (Od. 22.297-299).

<sup>302</sup> 'When she considered Odysseus had had his heart's content of being in bed with his wife and of sleep ...' (Od. 23.345-346).

authorizing Athene to do as she pleases, nevertheless gives her detailed instructions on how the situation should be resolved:

ἄπερ δὲ μνηστᾶραϊ ἄτ' ἔσ' αὐτὸ δ' ὄϊ 'Οδυσσεύϊ,  
Ἄρκια πιστῆ ταμῆντεϊ | μᾶν βασιλεὺ τῶ ἀεὶ,  
ἔμε' ἵ δ' ἀ' παῖ δὴν τε κἀσὶν ἄτῶν τε φῆνοιο  
ἄκλῆσιν ἄτῶν: τὸ δ' ὀλλῆλουϊ φιλῆντων  
ἄϊ τῆ περὶ οἶον, πλοῦτοϊ δ' ἀ καὶ εἴρῃ φιλῆντων. (Od.  
24.482-486)<sup>303</sup>

Thus the scene is set for the restoration of the pre-Trojan War status quo in the kingdom as a whole.

Athene hurries from Olympus to put her father's 'suggestion' into effect; but first, on her own initiative, she allows the battle to begin so that Odysseus, Telemachus, and Laertes can win some further familial *κλῆρον*. As in the battle in the hall, in this final battle scene Athene appears in the guise of Mentor. So at this point in *Odyssey* 24 we have Athene's first interaction with Odysseus' father, balancing her initial interaction with Odysseus' son in *Odyssey* 1. It is indicative of her intention to restore patriarchal order in Ithaca that she inspires Laertes to draw first blood. After Odysseus and Telemachus have had a chance to join in the fighting, Athene brings the short-lived battle to a conclusion by striking terror into the opponents when, in obedience to the 'suggestion' of Zeus, she uses her divine voice to instruct them to settle matters without further bloodshed. But Zeus himself has to send a thunderbolt to forcefully remind Athene to prevent Odysseus from killing all his fleeing opponents. She obeys her father and her last words addressed to Odysseus convey to him Zeus' feelings on the matter (see *Il.* 24.133-137, where Thetis conveys Zeus' message to Achilles). The poem then ends with narrator-text emphasizing Athene's role in the re-establishment of peace and order in Odysseus' kingdom.

### 3.6 Conclusion

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<sup>303</sup> 'Since godlike Odysseus has punished the suitors, after taking sure oaths, let him be king for always, and let us bring about a forgetting and forgiving of the slaughter of sons and brothers; then let them love one another as in the past, and let there be wealth and peace in abundance' (*Od.* 24.482-486).

The foregoing examination of the depiction of the parent-child relationship as it occurs in Odysseus' families of orientation and procreation reveals that both triadic and dyadic aspects of this relationship dominate the main narrative of the poem. The main narrative occupies *Odyssey* 1-8 and 13-24; the remaining four books, dealing with Odysseus' wanderings, are in the form of a retrospective narrative in which Odysseus takes over the role of narrator. The narrative present of the poem encompasses some forty days in the twentieth year from his departure; nevertheless, events covering the whole of Odysseus' life, from birth to a peaceful death in old age, are woven retrospectively and prospectively into the narrative. The foregoing examination also reveals that quantitatively the depiction of various aspects of Odysseus' family of procreation occupies more of the live action than does that of his family of orientation.

The aforementioned quantitative predominance of Odysseus' family of procreation may be taken as evidence that this family unit is central in Odysseus' world, while his parents occupy a peripheral yet significant place in this world. Odysseus may have moved on, but the depiction of his parents reveals that he remains the centre of their world. The significance for Odysseus of all these  $\epsilon^5\lambda\omicron\iota$  – both his parents and his wife and son – is illustrated by the emphasis on the longing to be reunited with them. Highlights for the hero are his individual reunions with his mother (in the form of her ghost), his son, his wife, and finally his father. Each of these reunions is depicted as a live encounter between the two participants. This full complement of live encounters reflects a distinct contrast with the method of the depiction of Achilles' parent-child relationships in the *Iliad*, where the only live encounters are those between Achilles and his mother. But of Odysseus' live parent-child encounters that with his mother differs from the others both in narrative form and in content: Odysseus is the secondary internal narrator of the encounter, and his mother is dead, hence the reunion has no future.

The fact that Odysseus' biological mother died more than eight years prior to the narrative present provides the opportunity for the introduction of Athene as a divine substitute mother to perform a role which exhibits a number of parallels to that of Achilles' biological divine mother in the *Iliad*. In her role as Odysseus' divine

substitute mother, Athene makes a considerable contribution to the happy ending of the *Odyssey*, whereas Thetis is unable to avert the unhappy ending of the *Iliad*, where the funeral rites of Hector foreshadow those of Achilles. There are also structural similarities in the depiction of Laertes in the *Odyssey* and Peleus in the *Iliad*. As was the case with Peleus, Laertes remains out of sight but not out of mind until the final book of the poem, when there is a live father-son encounter which corresponds to the vicarious father-son encounter in the final book of the *Iliad*, when Achilles identifies Hector's father with his own father.

With regard to the extensive representation of Odysseus' family of procreation, a significant extra dimension is added to the Odysseus-Penelope-Telemachus triad in that Telemachus, as the son on the brink of manhood, features prominently as a character in his own right in the depiction of the triadic and dyadic aspects of this family unit. By the end of the *Odyssey* Telemachus, participating in live action, finds himself at a similar stage of development within his family of orientation to that of Achilles at the time he was recruited for the Trojan expedition. But unlike Achilles, who had experienced paternal nurturing in reaching this stage, Telemachus has grown up without paternal guidance. Then, in a reversal of the narrative method of representation, the retrospective character-text references to Odysseus and Penelope as a young husband and wife with their baby son, at the time of Odysseus' departure for Troy, recall the depiction of the live interaction of the Hector-Andromache-Astyanax triad in *Iliad* 6.

Another aspect of the parent-child triad, which the foregoing examination reveals as featuring prominently in the *Odyssey*, is the existence of a strong emotional bond between the two parents as husband and wife: not only is the Odysseus-Penelope relationship extensively depicted, but it is also made clear that a loving husband-wife relationship had existed between Laertes and Anticleia in Odysseus' family of orientation. In the *Iliad*, although absent or unsatisfactory in Achilles' parent-child relationships, this aspect is illustrated in the depiction of the Hector-Andromache relationship in Hector's family of procreation, and in the Priam-Hecuba relationship in his family of orientation.

With regard to the qualitative aspect of the depiction of the parent-child relationship in the *Odyssey*, a significant feature is that the interpersonal relationships are portrayed with a psychological realism which continues to be meaningful and effective even for a modern audience. Thus a universal aspect of the parent-child relationship is to be found in the depiction of the feelings and emotions involved in the two parent-child triads in which Odysseus participates. In spite of the universal appeal exhibited in the portrayal of these interpersonal relations, one should also be aware of the socio-cultural mediation of the patriarchal society in which this portrayal takes place.

The socio-cultural element is reflected in the focus on the  $\sigma\text{-}\kappa\omicron\jmath$  to be found in the *Odyssey*, where much of the action takes place in Odysseus'  $\sigma\text{-}\kappa\omicron\jmath$ , and in those of various host families visited by Odysseus and Telemachus. Odysseus'  $\sigma\text{-}\kappa\omicron\jmath$  plays a significant role in the dynamics of his family of procreation. The simple parent-child triad of this only-child family is seen clearly as the nucleus of his  $\sigma\text{-}\kappa\omicron\jmath$ . The disruption of this triadic nucleus caused by the absence of the head of this patriarchal household features conspicuously in the narrative. Odysseus'  $\sigma\text{-}\kappa\omicron\jmath$  is patriarchal in the sense that as the father he is head of the household and responsible for the protection thereof; but, as is made clear in his final speech to Penelope, she has her own role to play in the management partnership. Patriarchy in Odysseus' household therefore takes the form of a protective paternalism towards his  $\epsilon^5\lambda\omicron\iota$ , although it must be admitted that those who threaten his rule are ruthlessly dealt with. The distinct domestic focus in the *Odyssey*, in comparison to the *Iliad*, may be attributed to the fact that the narrative present of the former is situated in peace-time and deals with the home-coming of the protagonist, whereas the action of the latter takes place in war-time when the protagonist is far from home, and the antagonist has responsibilities which are not limited to his own  $\sigma\text{-}\kappa\omicron\jmath$  but extend to the defence of the city under siege.

## Chapter 4

### Conclusion

After the foregoing examination of the depiction of the parent-child relationships in which Achilles and Hector, the two heroes of the *Iliad*, and Odysseus, the hero of the *Odyssey*, feature as sons or fathers, there remains the task of recapitulating and making some concluding remarks in order to sum up how the approach adopted in this study has served to demonstrate the significance of the parent-child relationship as a feature of these poems and as a universal human phenomenon. The approach adopted, as set out in Chapter 1, my Introduction, involved the examination of the depiction of the parent-child relationship in terms of its triadic structure and the dyads which it encompasses. This examination was facilitated by the employment of narratological tools in the analysis of the relevant sections of the text. This analysis revealed that the representation of the parent-child relationship is to be found primarily in the form of character-text supplemented by narrator-text describing actions through which the feelings and emotions of the participants in the various parent-child triads are expressed.

In Chapter 2, I dealt with the parent-child relationships of Achilles and Hector as the protagonist and antagonist in the *Iliad*. It was noted, however, that the representation of the parent-child relationship in this poem is not limited to these two primary characters, but extends to secondary and minor characters in the human sphere of action, as well as to the Olympians in the divine sphere, and in addition it receives figurative representation in similes. This extension of the representation of the parent-child relationship not only reflects the ubiquity of this phenomenon, but also supplements the central role played by the parent-child relationships of the Achilles and Hector.

The examination of Achilles' parent-child relationships began with the triadic aspect of the parent-child relationship in his family of orientation. A review of those sections of the narrative where the Peleus-Thetis-Achilles triad is featured revealed that, owing

to the physical absence of Peleus from the events related in the main story, the representation of this triad is limited to allusions to it. These allusions are contained in character-text presented by various third parties and by two of the participants, Achilles and Thetis. It was noted that these allusions are made at crucial junctures in the narrative. A significant aspect of the Peleus-Thetis-Achilles triad is that it is composed of a mortal father, divine mother, and mortal son – a structure which has implications arising from the mortality-immortality issue.

I followed the examination of the allusions to Achilles' natal parent-child triad with an investigation of the three dyadic relationships encompassed by it: the Thetis-Achilles mother-son relationship, the Peleus-Achilles father-son relationship, and the Peleus-Thetis husband/father-wife/mother relationship. This investigation revealed that the depiction of these dyadic relationships varies in the scope and manner of representation.

The mother-son dyad is the only one which is presented in the form of live interaction between the two participants. These mother-son encounters were shown to be composed primarily of character-text effectively supported by some descriptive narrator-text. In these scenes Thetis is portrayed as a devoted mother, much distressed by her son's present unhappiness and imminent death, while Achilles, though preoccupied with his own concerns, is shown to demonstrate sympathy for his mother's lot.

The next dyad to receive attention was the father-son relationship of Peleus and Achilles. As in the case of the triadic aspect, Peleus' absence precludes any live interaction between father and son; nevertheless some important details of the nature of this father-son relationship are revealed by means of character-text presented by third parties, whose remarks portray Peleus as a good father. This third party evidence is strengthened by Achilles' words and actions which demonstrate the depth of his feelings for his father. Indeed, Achilles' grief over Peleus' lot, in the final book of the *Iliad*, provides one of the most poignant sequences in the poem.

The third of the dyadic relationships, that in which the two parents are the participants, was the next subject to be treated. The discussion of this relationship

revealed that its representation in the poem is both limited and one-sided. The story offers no opportunity for interaction between Peleus and Thetis. The only evidence for the state of this relationship is to be found in a single speech in which Thetis expresses her dissatisfaction with the relationship: she was reluctant to submit to marriage to a mortal in the first place – a reluctance which is vindicated by the present state of the relationship, namely, that she, an ageless goddess, finds herself tied to an aging husband (*Il.* 18.429-435).

I next looked at the somewhat tenuous representation of the parent-child relationship in Achilles' family of procreation, the depiction of which is limited to two brief character-text allusions to the father-son relationship of Achilles and Neoptolemus. Arguments were put forward for the existence of actorial and narratorial motivation for the inclusion of Neoptolemus on these two occasions, in spite of the Analysts' rejection of these passages as interpolations.

The section on Achilles' parent-child relationships concluded with an examination of the contributions of his parents to the denouement of the 'wrath' theme. This climactic situation is initiated by Thetis and culminates in the merging of the Peleus-Achilles and Priam-Hector father-son relationships in the encounter between Achilles and Priam in *Iliad* 24. The discussion of this encounter was preceded by the description of the earlier scene of Priam in mourning for Hector, a scene in which the depiction of Priam's emotions creates for the audience an awareness of the grief that Peleus is to experience on the death of his son Achilles.

I then shifted my focus to Hector and his parent-child relationships. First, the members of the Hector-Priam-Hecuba triad were introduced, in that order, in keeping with the sequence reflected in the narrative. In *Iliad* 2 and 3 the father-son relationship is introduced in its formal context, with Priam officiating as king of Troy and his son Hector functioning as the military leader of the Trojans. Then, in *Iliad* 6 details about Hector's natal family and parental home precede the introduction of the third member of the triad, Hecuba. At this point I discussed further the composition of Hector's family of orientation: his father, Priam, is a polygamist and is father to fifty sons and at least twelve daughters. Thus Hector's family of orientation is revealed to be very different in structure and extent to that of Achilles, for whom the parent-child triad

represents his entire family of orientation. The ensuing mother-son meeting contains the only parent-child dialogue featuring Hector and a parent. Structurally, this Hecuba-Hector mother-son conversation is reminiscent of the first conversation between Thetis and Achilles.

After the completion of the introduction of Hector's natal parent-child triad, his family of procreation was introduced, observing the sequence in *Iliad* 6. This family, like Achilles' natal and procreative families, is limited to a father-mother-son triad. This triad is presented in the form of live interaction involving all three members. The depiction of the Hector-Andromache-Astyanax meeting constitutes the only scene in the poem where there is direct interaction between all three members of a parent-child triad. The triadic interaction which takes place in this scene also serves to illustrate the dyadic relationships of parent-parent, father-son, and mother-son.

Attention was then focused on *Iliad* 22 where the next parent-child action involving Hector takes place. The action begins with an account of parental reaction to the impending Achilles-Hector encounter. This parent-child scene takes the form of narrator-text descriptions of the emotions and actions of each parent, followed by their speeches in which they entreat their unyielding son to avoid the confrontation with Achilles by taking refuge in the city. Hector's failure to comply with his parents' pleas on this occasion, and with Andromache's plea in *Iliad* 6, is based on his reasoning that the maintenance of his κλῶς is dependent on his being at the forefront in defence of the city.

The examination of Hector's parent-child relationships continued with a description of the poet's representation of parental and conjugal reactions to his death. Thus we see the story of Hector continuing after his death in the form of the actions and words of first his parents and then his wife. The reaction of his parents is presented in a scene composed of narrator-text describing the emotional reaction of each parent, followed by the parents' speeches addressed to their dead son – speeches which movingly illustrate their parental love and sense of loss. This parental scene is immediately followed by a scene in which Hector's family of procreation comes to the fore. The scene of conjugal reaction has a similar format to the preceding parental

scene: there is a vivid and detailed description of Andromache's reaction to his death, followed by her speech addressed to her dead husband – a speech in which she includes their son, Astyanax. Thus, we have the three members of the procreative triad involved in this scene, although Hector is dead and cannot interact with them any longer. Nevertheless he is the focus of his families of both orientation and procreation in the mourning process.

I next dealt with the account, at *Iliad* 24.159-321, of the events leading up to the ransoming of Hector's body. These events include the description of parental grieving and interaction between Priam and Hecuba, culminating in Priam's mission to Achilles to ransom Hector's body. There follows the scene where the stories of the protagonist and the antagonist merge in the identification of Priam with Peleus and the resultant purging of the wrath of Achilles.

The examination of Hector's natal and procreative parent-child triads concluded with a description of Hector's funeral which provides an epilogue to the *Iliad*. The account of Hector's funeral comprises the laments of his wife, his mother, and his sister-in-law Helen, followed by Priam's supervision of the burial rites; thus, we have members of Hector's families of both procreation and orientation joining together at his funeral. It was noted that the account of Hector's death and funeral, and of the grief and loss experienced by his parents, wife, and son is intended to foreshadow the coming death and funeral of Achilles, and the implications thereof for his parents and son. Thus Chapter 2 ended with the emphasis on death causing the permanent disruption of each hero's natal and procreative triads.

In turning to the *Odyssey* in Chapter 3, the focus shifted from the disruptions caused by death on the heroes' natal and procreative families, to those caused by prolonged separation and uncertainty. In this chapter I concentrated on those relationships in which the hero of the poem, Odysseus, participates first as a son and then as a father. I began by showing how the first book of the poem serves to introduce the various story elements and characters, and in so doing emphasizes the fact that the parent-child relationship is to play a prominent role in the central theme of the poem, namely, the nostos of Odysseus.

In the section on Odysseus' family of orientation, I dealt with four episodes which are the primary sources of representation of Odysseus' natal parent-child triad and the three dyadic relationships it contains. In these episodes the poet employs a variety of narrative techniques to portray the Laertes-Anticleia-Odysseus triad. First, there is the episode depicting interaction between Odysseus and his mother's ghost (*Od.* 11.152-225), an episode which does not form part of the main sequence of events, but which occurs as an embedded story told by Odysseus in the section of the poem where he functions as secondary narrator (*Od.* 9-12). In his narration of his meeting with his mother he embeds character-text presented by her, who thus acts as a tertiary narrator in imparting news about the effect of his absence on this parent-child triad.

After the primary narrator has resumed his function, we have the second method used by the poet to emphasize the disrupted state of this parent-child triad: it is in the form of character-text presented by an outsider, Eumaeus. In these speeches both Anticleia's ghost and Eumaeus speak about the effect of Odysseus' absence on each parent, thus creating a triadic allusion, as well as illustrating the depth of feeling present in the three dyads.

The third narrative method, by means of which the audience is presented with information about Odysseus' family of orientation, takes the form of a lengthy narratorial analepsis (*Od.* 19.392-460), in which events occurring at the periods of Odysseus' infancy and coming of age are recounted. Of interest in this retrospective narrative is that not only is the father-mother-son triad revealed as a close and happy unit, but a prominent role is given to Odysseus' relationship with his maternal grandparents. This is the only occasion in the Homeric poems where the relationship between a character and his maternal grandparents comes to the fore.

The depiction of the parent-child relationship in Odysseus' family of orientation culminates in the live action of the scene in which the emotional reunion of Odysseus and his father takes place (*Od.* 24.226-360). This scene is composed of narrator-text, describing with telling effect the emotions of father and son, interspersed with dialogue. The reunion scene illustrates the loving bond between father and son and

reflects the reinstatement of a sole surviving dyad of the previously totally disrupted Laertes-Anticleia-Odysseus triad.

The fact that the discussion in this study of the parent-child relationship in Odysseus' family of procreation is four times as long as is that of the parent-child relationship in his family of orientation reflects the prominence of the former in the narrative of the poem. The parent-child triad of Odysseus, Penelope, and Telemachus, and its father-son, mother-son, and husband/father-wife/mother dyads receive extensive coverage in the course of the narrative; hence I treated each of these aspects of this parent-child relationship in some detail.

The triadic aspect was demonstrated by tracing its representation as it relates to each of the three participants. From the point of view of Penelope and Telemachus, the main issue is the disruption of the triad caused by the long absence and possible death of Odysseus, while from Odysseus' point of view the emphasis is on his desire to be reunited with his wife and son. The three separate threads of triadic references eventually merge in the reunions of Odysseus, first with his son, and then with his wife, so that the disrupted triad is reconstituted.

The mother-son dyad is the only aspect of the parent-child relationship that is intact when the poem begins; hence it is represented from *Odyssey* 1 as a functioning relationship in the narrative. I dealt with this relationship as represented in conversations between Telemachus and third parties, in Penelope's actions and her words addressed to third parties, and in the encounters between mother and son. This mother-son relationship differs from those in the procreative families of the two Iliadic heroes in that the son is on the threshold of manhood and can therefore function as a full character. The interpersonal mother-son relationship is affected by the absence of Odysseus, as Telemachus is raised in a single-mother household, so that we have, in this disrupted triad, the son having to deal with the difficult stage of passing from boyhood to manhood without the guidance of a father. A further problem, arising from the absence of Odysseus, is that the mother-son relationship is shown to have been put under strain by the erosive presence of the suitors.

The next dyad to be examined was that of Odysseus and Telemachus. Here I distinguished three phases in the representation of the father-son relationship: the pre-interpersonal phase, the meeting and reunion in *Odyssey* 16, and the subsequent interactive phase, which continues to the end of the poem. The reunion scene, which provides the centre-piece in the depiction of the father-son relationship, illustrates the intense emotions of father and grown son who have been apart since the son's infancy. The hereditary aspect of the father-son bond is emphasized in the first phase by comments on the physical resemblance between son and father, and in the final phase by the emphasis on their consanguinity.

The final dyad, that of husband/father and wife/mother, features prominently in the poem, hence I devoted a detailed section to the illustration of the Odysseus-Penelope relationship. The pre-reunion phase of this relationship was described by tracing separately the narrative threads representing the perspectives on the relationship of Odysseus and Penelope in turn, until the threads merge in *Odyssey* 18, when they first appear together in the hall. The relationship is then demonstrated further in the two conversations between the disguised Odysseus and an unwitting Penelope (*Od.* 19.100-360; 508-599). Finally, the whole of *Odyssey* 23 is devoted to the build up and eventual reunion of Odysseus and Penelope. The portrayal of the Odysseus-Penelope relationship shows them not only in the role of parents, but also as husband and wife and partners in the management of the ο-κοῖ.

The final Odyssean parent-child relationship to be discussed represents an addition to the two biological parent-child triads. It was argued (section 3.5) that Athene performs the role of surrogate mother to Odysseus. The special relationship which Odysseus and Athene share in the *Odyssey* was shown to have its foundations in the Odysseus-Athene relationship in the *Iliad*. A further maternal connection was demonstrated by noting parallels between the Thetis-Achilles relationship in the *Iliad* and the Athene-Odysseus relationship in the *Odyssey*.

Although the investigation outlined above was divided into two chapters reflecting the two poems which supply the subject matter, elements of continuity or commonality between the two poems in respect of the representation of the parent-child

relationships of the three heroes emerged. The first of these elements which deserves mention is the contribution made by the parent-child relationships of the heroes to the development and culmination of the central theme of each poem.

In the *Iliad* the story has as its central driving force the wrath of the protagonist Achilles, which involves two stages. In the first his anger is directed against Agamemnon, and finds expression in his plan to punish him by boycotting the fighting with the intention that the Achaeans should suffer defeat in his absence. In the second stage his anger is directed against Hector as the slayer of Patroclus, and finds expression in his furious re-entry into battle. In both these stages Achilles does not stand alone, but initially seeks and continues to receive the active support and assistance of his mother, while his absent father is shown to be a motivational factor, as a result of positive paternal influence in Achilles' early life and the consequent strong father-son bond between them.

With regard to Hector's role in the 'wrath' theme, he initially, as leader of the Trojan forces, promotes the intended outcome of Achilles' withdrawal, but he assumes the role of antagonist when Patroclus becomes one of his victims. In both stages Hector's parents have a role to play. In the first stage, as military leader of the Trojans, he enjoys the ceremonial support of his father (in the single combat episode in *Iliad* 3) and his mother (leading the Trojan women in the supplication of Athene in *Iliad* 6). In the second stage Hector's father and mother attempt to influence the course of events by appealing to their son to avoid the fatal confrontation with Achilles. Thus in the *Iliad* we have in its developmental stages a theme of anger-driven conflict in which the parents of both protagonist and antagonist have specific roles to play. Then, in the case of Hector, we have an additional contribution featuring his procreative triad, since his wife, who involves their infant son as an added inducement, makes an earlier appeal to her husband to avoid exposing himself to danger.

In the culminating phase of the 'wrath' theme, as far as Hector is concerned, the tragedy of his death is made explicit in the depiction of the desperate grief of his parents and his wife, the mother of his son. Then, Achilles is shown to be finally purged of his wrath in the context of maternal and paternal influence. In the concluding episode of the poem, Hector's funeral, the burial of the final victim of

Achilles' wrath represents the laying to rest of the 'wrath' theme. It is noteworthy that the action in this episode is provided by mourning members of Hector's natal and procreative families.

When we turn to the *Odyssey*, we see a very different theme reflecting the fact that the action of the *Iliad* takes place in a war-time situation, whereas that of the *Odyssey* takes place in the aftermath of the war. The theme of the *Odyssey* was shown to be the long-delayed but ultimately successful  $\eta\sigma\tau\omicron\jmath$  of its hero, Odysseus. The nature of the theme means that the story is not only about the wandering hero but also about his  $\epsilon^5\lambda\omicron\iota$  left at home. His dearest loved ones are his parents and his wife and son, all of whom have role to play in the  $\eta\sigma\tau\omicron\jmath$  theme. For Odysseus, desire to be reunited with his loved ones is the driving force behind his determination to achieve a successful  $\eta\sigma\tau\omicron\jmath$ , while for his parents, wife, and son, his absence is the dominant force in their lives. As the  $\eta\sigma\tau\omicron\jmath$  theme unfolds Odysseus is depicted in a number of reunion scenes in succession: with his mother's ghost, his son, his wife, and finally, his father. The restoration of order in Odysseus'  $\omicron\kappa\jmath$  and the reconstitution of his war-disrupted procreative triad feature prominently in the final stages of the central theme. Although his mother's earlier grief-induced death signifies the dissolution of his natal triad, the father-son dyad is re-established at the end of the poem.

An element to be found in both poems that deserves mention is the role played by the parent-child relationship in humanizing the heroes, who are legendary warriors from the heroic past. A hero interacting with his parents, or wife, or child, is seen in a universally human situation, which makes him more accessible to the audience. Of note in illustrating this aspect of the parent-child relationship in each poem are the four Thetis-Achilles conversations, the Hector-Andromache-Astyanax scene, the depiction of Priam and Hecuba in the scenes leading up to and following Hector's death, and the climactic Priam-Achilles scene in the *Iliad*, and the reunion scenes which Odysseus shares with his mother, father, wife, and son in the *Odyssey*.

A related area of commonality is to be found in the portrayal of the participants in the various parent-child triads of the heroes. First, in the portrayal of the natal triads of all three heroes, we find a degree of idealization. Beginning with the mothers, all three

are portrayed as devoted mothers: Thetis is shown to be selflessly loving and supportive of Achilles in his distress; Hecuba's speeches reveal the depth of her love for and her pride in Hector; the fact that Odysseus' absence causes the grief-induced death of Anticleia is telling evidence of the depth of her feelings for her son. With regard to the elderly fathers, Peleus, Priam, and Laertes, all have royal status and in their younger days were distinguished heroes, while in the personal sphere they are depicted as loving fathers. In the case of Peleus, the evidence of others regarding his fatherliness is corroborated by the strong filial love demonstrated by Achilles. Priam's words and actions in the situations of Hector's danger and death, and of his own mission to bring home Hector's body provide sufficient evidence of the depth of his feelings for his son. Similarly, Laertes' action of self-imposed isolation and his words and actions, when he eventually appears in *Odyssey* 24, are evidence of his paternal love. All three heroes are depicted as responding to this parental love with reciprocatory filial feelings. For Hector and Odysseus, these ideal natal parent-child triads are completed by a strong interpersonal husband-wife bond between the parents, whereas in Achilles' natal parent-child triad there is little evidence of a husband-wife bond, this being the only blemish in the parent-child relationship as depicted in the natal parent-child triads of the heroes.

Secondly, the three heroes are also portrayed as participants in procreative triads, although in the case of Achilles the portrayal of his procreative relationship is limited, comprising only his expression of his feelings for his son, Neoptolemus, who is being raised elsewhere. The scantiness of the portrayal of Achilles' procreative triad is remedied by the vivid portrayal of Hector's procreative triad which receives representation in the form of live interaction involving all three participants. We see Hector as an affectionate father, who has hope for his baby son's future greatness (which in turn will reflect back on Hector himself). He is also shown to be a loving and protective husband to Andromache. She, as the only survivor of her family of orientation, is entirely dependent on Hector for practical and emotional support, and is depicted as a loving wife and mother, who is fearful for the life of her husband and a fatherless future for her son. But Hector fails in all these roles because of his drive towards lasting  $\kappa\lambda\omicron\upsilon\eta$ . The poet presents a loving and close-knit family, but one which we know is on the brink of disaster.

In the *Odyssey* the three members of Odysseus' procreative triad are portrayed in some detail. Much of the narrative in this poem is devoted to the effects of separation on the individuals and their interpersonal relationships, but by the end of the poem they are reunited and their relationships with one another are restored. Odysseus' love for his wife and son, who has grown up in his absence, is demonstrated by his determination to return to them, and in the emotionality of the father-son and husband-wife reunions. Telemachus' filial feelings are demonstrated by his longing for the father he has never known, and by the intense emotion expressed at their reunion, which is followed by instant father-son bonding. The mother-son bond between Penelope and Telemachus is depicted with great realism: it remains close in spite of being placed under strain. Penelope is a loving, if somewhat overprotective mother, while Telemachus, although he is beginning to assert his independence, obviously cares for his mother. Penelope's love for Odysseus is displayed in her constancy and her tearful longing for her long-absent husband, culminating in their emotional reunion in *Odyssey* 23.

Thus we see in the portrayal of the participants in these parent-child triads the kind of feelings and emotions which are universally understood and accepted as the ideal, so that the audience-accessibility of these characters is not limited by time and space. Although the type of relationship is idealized, these fathers, mothers, and sons are depicted in situations which are far from ideal. They are faced with issues such as separation and death, issues which are again universally applicable to any parent-child relationship. In the *Iliad* there is great emphasis on the grief experienced by parents who are faced with the death of a child, an event which contradicts the natural order in the life-cycle of the parent-child relationship. In the *Odyssey* the separation issues which affect the interpersonal relationships of Odysseus and the other members of his natal and procreative families – issues of loss and lack of closure associated with a loved one being missing – are not limited to the patriarchal  $\sigma\text{-}\kappa\omicron\text{j}$  of their depiction in this poem, but are of universal relevance.

In addition to these aspects of the parent-child relationship, which may be regarded as universal, Homer includes in his depiction of the parent-child relationship concepts

which are socio-culturally based. Of significance in this respect is the patriarchal nature of Homeric society as a whole and consequently of the  $\sigma\text{-}\kappa\omicron\jmath$ , as the fundamental unit of this society. Modern thinking, particularly that of the feminist movement, has largely discredited the concept of patriarchy as being oppressive to women; hence certain behaviour exhibited by members of the triads and certain relationship situations may be distasteful to a present-day audience. In this regard an example is the seemingly rude or dismissive behaviour exhibited by Telemachus towards his mother on certain occasions, but in the context of a patriarchal household, the poet is depicting him as being paternalistically protective in his recently assumed role as head of the household.

Another socio-cultural concept which is shown to affect the parent-child relationships of the three heroes is that of a hero's  $\kappa\lambda\text{ }\omicron\jmath$ , the fame or glory required for the achievement and maintenance of heroic status. For a hero the pursuit of military glory should be regarded as a necessary rather than a selfish choice. As expressed by Hector (*Il.* 6.445), his  $\kappa\lambda\text{ }\omicron\jmath$  as a warrior is not only personal but extends to his father, Priam. Consequently, as a father himself, Hector prays that his own son, Astyanax, may follow in his footsteps by achieving  $\kappa\lambda\text{ }\omicron\jmath$  as a warrior, and in so doing make his mother proud as well (*Il.* 6.476-481). This attitude is reflected in the references to Peleus and Thetis sending the young Achilles on the Trojan expedition to earn  $\kappa\lambda\text{ }\omicron\jmath$  as an unavoidable stage in his fulfilling his heroic potential. For Hector and Achilles, the pursuit of  $\kappa\lambda\text{ }\omicron\jmath$  is to prove fatal, thus representing the permanent disruption of their parent-child triads, and being a source of grief to the remaining members thereof.

Finally, there is a genre based aspect of the parent-child relationship to be found in the Homeric poems, namely, the role of a divine mother. In the *Iliad* Thetis, Achilles' biological mother, as a supportive and protective parent, has a pivotal role to play in the central theme of the poem. In the *Odyssey* this role is assumed by Athene, who makes up for Odysseus' lack of a biological divine mother by supporting and protecting him, and playing an even more definitive role than Thetis in the *Iliad*, in the development and conclusion of the central theme of the *Odyssey*. It would seem that in a world, where the conduct of important affairs was in the hands of men, effective maternal support on a heroic scale could only be afforded by a goddess.

The role of the divine mother as an aspect of the parent-child relationship in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* points to the role of Venus in Vergil's *Aeneid*, the primary Roman descendent of the Homeric poems. This association prompts an observation regarding the usefulness of the present study as the basis for further investigation of the depiction of the parent-child relationship in literature, in view of the primacy of the Homeric poems in the history of Western literature. As the starting point for the extension of the groundwork provided in the present study, I propose an investigation of the parent-child relationship in Vergil's *Aeneid*, with reference to its Homeric models.

I conclude with a brief assessment of the overall impression created by the representation of this fundamental human phenomenon in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The parent-child relationship is a pervasive theme running through both poems. The significance of this relationship surfaces at pivotal points in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. In the concluding scenes of the *Iliad*, we see parental, filial, and conjugal love exhibited in the context of premature death (actual and impending) of a hero. The *Odyssey's* central focus is on the separation and reunion of the hero's parent-child triads. More than anything else, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are poems about the love and longing of parents for their children, children for their parents, and parents for each other. And this focus explains, in part, why we can see ourselves in these poems, and why these poems still speak to us today.

## Appendix

### Glossary

The explanations of narratological terms in this glossary are adopted from De Jong (1987; 2001).

**actorial motivation:** the analysis of the ‘why’ of the story in terms of the aims and intentions of a **character**. An actorial motivation is usually explicit. Compare **narratorial motivation**.

**analepsis (flashback):** the narration of an event which took place before the point in the story where we find ourselves. A distinction can be made between internal analepses (which recount events falling within the time limits of the main story) and external analepses (which recount events falling outside those time limits). Compare **prolepsis**.

**character:** imaginary person playing a role in the narrative.

**character-text (speeches):** the **narrator** ( in full: the external primary narrator-focalizer) embeds in his **narrator-text** a character-text, presented by a character, who, thus, functions as an internal **secondary narrator-focalizer**.

**embedded focalization:** the representation by the narrator in the narrator-text of a character’s focalization, i.e., perceptions, thoughts, emotions, or words (indirect speech).

**embedded speech:** speaking characters in their speeches report (as indirect speech) or even quote (as direct speech) the words of other characters.

**focalization (point of view):** the position from which or angle of vision under which the narrator presents his story.

**focalizee:** recipient of the focalization of the focalizer.

**focalizer:** the person (the narrator or character) through whose eyes the events and persons of a narrative are 'seen'.

**narratees:** the representatives in the text of the hearers/readers (audience). They are the addressees of the narrator (in full: the primary narratees-focalizees). A character who is the recipient of character-text, presented by another character, functions as an internal **secondary narratee-focalizee**. The recipient of the embedded speech of a tertiary narrator-focalizer functions as a **tertiary narratee-focalizee**.

**narrator:** the representative of the author in the text (in full: the **primary narrator-focalizer**). A character presenting character-text functions as an internal **secondary narrator-focalizer**. When the internal secondary narrator-focalizer embeds in his character-text the speech of another character, this character functions as a **tertiary narrator-focalizer**.

**narrator-text:** those parts of the text which are presented by the **narrator**, i.e., the parts between the speeches. We may further distinguish between simple narrator-text (when the narrator presents his own focalization) and complex narrator-text containing **embedded focalization** (when the narrator presents the focalization of a character).

**narratorial motivation:** the analysis of the 'why' of the story in terms of the aims and intentions of the narrator. In Homer the narratorial motivation always remains implicit. Compare **actorial motivation**.

**prolepsis (flashforward, foreshadowing):** the narration of an event which will take place later than the point in the story where we find ourselves. A distinction can be made between internal prolepses (referring to events within the time limits of the main story) and external prolepses (which refer to events which fall outside those time limits). Compare **analepsis**.

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