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Arete's Words: Etymology, *Ehoie*-Poetry and Gendered Narrative in the *Odyssey*

Marios Skempis – Ioannis Ziogas

This paper deals primarily with Arete's role in the *Odyssey* and offers a gendered as well as a generic interpretation of this figure's grounding in the narrative. Arete's laconic stance in the so-called Phaiakia has raised controversy over the way in which the queen of Scherie is to be involved in the prime theme of the poem, Odysseus' nostos.¹ It is not only the few and extremely cautious words spoken by Arete that are under discussion in this essay, but also the formalities of further speeches that frame her textual presence and determine her reception by ancient and modern audiences. The first part of this paper tackles the question of whether and to what extent Homer made use of etymological practice in shaping Arete's role in the *Odyssey*. On this ground, we suggest and subsequently analyze the etymological potential of Arete's name and the function of these etymologies in the narrative dynamics of the poem. Our main focus will not be on acknowledging or discovering possible etymological or para-etymological derivations, but examining whether the etymologies suggested are justified by the narrative and how they affect our reading of the *Odyssey*.

1. Etymology and Narratology

Etymological as well as para-etymological practices operated by the narrator in the field of onomastics and denomination are of great significance in interpreting narrative texts, and especially the Homeric epics since, in most cases, the narrator does not consider the meaning of a proper name fixed; on the contrary, there seems to be a constant interplay between primary or explicit meaning established by linguistic derivations and secondary or implicit meaning as this can emerge from con-

1 For an assessment of this issue see Hölscher 1960; (1989)³1990, 122–34; Fenik 1974, 105–30.

text-specific parameters. The semantic flexibility of a proper name and its subsequent potential for multiple interpretations allow it to be inscribed within a set of circumscribed, embedded narratives, all familiar with and subordinate to the main narrative. Of course, etymology as a textual phenomenon can entail a certain amount of poetic subjectivism since it shows how the narrator (either primary or secondary) perceives the meaning of a name and how she/he wishes to project it to her/his narratees, internal and external. Etymologizing, however, serves as a rhetorical device that binds the literary character to the story, ‘the events as dispositioned and ordered in the text’;² it constitutes the means by which characters are embedded in narrative situations, while it may also reflect the *etymon* of the name-bearer as well as her/his ensuing ambiguities. The etymologies of Arete, in specific, as proposed in the following sections, will show that name-etymologizing stipulates manifold relations between narrative segments that are concerned with the name-bearer. In other words, the etymology of a proper name is to be identified as a mechanism formatting narrative structures.³

Etymology is compressed narrative, and unpacking the etymological potential of a word is to deploy its narrative force (*uis*).⁴ Etymologies are enmeshed in narrative structures, and thus their use calls for a narratological approach. The etymology of a name, in particular, is closely associated with the characterization of a figure. Given that etymologizing is a dynamic process of revealing or constructing the meaning of a name, etymological analyses are crucial to interpreting the traits of characters as they are presented or perceived not only by the primary narrator, but also by the internal narrators. Defining the meaning of a name is a power game.⁵ Thus, etymologies can reveal character features, which are real or artificially constructed or representative of class or type.⁶

2 De Jong – Nünlist – Bowie 2004, xviii.

3 On the narrative use of name-etymologizing see Calame 1995, 174–85; on speaking names foreshadowing the plot see the analysis of Aristophanes’ *Thesmophoriazousae* in Bierl 2001, 276–82.

4 *uis*, the force of the word, means the etymology of a word in Latin.

5 For an illuminating discussion of the power inherent in etymologizing see Struever 1983. Nagy (1979) 1999, 69–93, Peradotto 1990 and Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2007 have explored the narrative dynamics of etymologizing in the Homeric epics. On etymology and narratology see also Tsitsibakou-Vasalos (this volume).

6 See Phelan 1989, a narratological study of characterization. Phelan distinguishes the mimetic, thematic, and synthetic traits of a character.

As a means of implicit or explicit characterization, the meaning of a name often foreshadows the words and/or acts of a character, or informs the external and internal narratees about the character's past. Thus, etymologies can function as prolepses, anticipating certain character features, or as analepses, recalling marked qualities of a figure. Yet, the etymology of a name is not always confirmed by the narrative, but often negated (a narrativized case of etymologizing *e contrario*), and thus the narrator can misdirect the audience/readers. Anticipating the fulfillment of a name's etymology can also activate a retardation effect or create suspense (*Spannung*).

Etymologies can also form a second narrative level which goes in line with or opposes the main narrative. On the one hand, they may be explanatory in relation to the main plot and the motivation of a character, while, on the other, the implications of an etymological analysis may contrast with the main narrative. In the latter case, etymology transcends the basic narrative structure since the meaning derived from an etymological approach points to an alternative narrative version; or it can result in an independent thematic unit that may further function as a complementary excursus. In other words, etymology can be seen as a second narrative voice, which is sometimes in harmony with and other times in opposition to the plot.

After making these preliminary remarks on the association between narratology and etymology, and establishing etymology as a starting-point for our approach, we may proceed to examine the significance of Arete's name. We shall first deal with the etymology from ἀράουαι.

2. Arete-ἀράουαι

The Arete-ἀράουαι connection has been acknowledged long since by various scholars.⁷ The basic argument is that this etymology befits a character who is 'to be prayed to' by Odysseus.⁸ Hence, the name 'Arete' fulfills its function in the *Odyssey*. Peradotto, however, objected to the connection between Odysseus' supplication to Arete and the etymology of her name from ἀράουαι.⁹ The basis of his objection is that nowhere is this root used of prayers directed to any but divine beings.

7 See Stanford 1974 *ad* 7.54; Frame 1978, 79 n. 73; Ahl – Roisman 1996, 58.

8 On the semantics of ἀράουαι and its affiliation with the context of Homeric prayer see Morrison 1991, 147 with n. 8; Lateiner 1997, 246; Pulleyn 1997, 70–6.

9 Peradotto 1990, 108.

His observation is valid, but his conclusion needs reconsideration. We argue instead that this etymological connection contributes to the poet's purpose to present the Phaiakian queen as an elevated, goddess-like figure. So, let us first examine whether our point is justified.

First of all, when the disguised Athene presents Arete to Odysseus, we learn that the Phaiakian people look upon the queen as a goddess (7.71: οἱ μὲν ῥα θεὸν ὡς εἰσορόωντες). There are also two formulas used of Arete, which allude to her divine status. The first is the expression θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι (6.306) used for the handicrafts of her spindle.¹⁰ The same formula is used when Odysseus marvels at the harbors, ships, markets, and walls of the Phaiakians (7.45). Arete's works remind us of the semi-divine status that the Phaiakians enjoy. What is more, the formula θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι (6.306; 7.45) used both of Arete's female handicrafts and of constructions that belong to male oriented activities (ships, market place etc.) anticipates the gender juxtaposition between Alkinoos and Arete which is about to follow.

The second formula which might point to Arete's divine status, is φίλα φρονέησ' ("she has friendly thoughts", 6.312 = 7.75).¹¹ This formula is used several times in the *Odyssey* for Athene. In the Phaiakian episode, in particular, the formula refers to the friendly thoughts that Athene has toward Odysseus (7.15; 42). We will see that this formula, referring to Athene's divine support of her protégé, is transferred from Athene to Arete. When Athene, disguised as a young girl, meets Odysseus, she tells him that his safe homecoming depends on the friendly thoughts of the Phaiakian queen:

εἴ κέν τοι κείνη φίλα φρονέησ' ἐνὶ θυμῷ,
ἐλπωρὴ τοι ἔπειτα φίλους ἰδέειν καὶ ἰκέσθαι
οἶκον ἐς ὑπόροφον καὶ σὴν ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν.

So if she (scil. Arete) has thoughts in her mind that are friendly to you, then there is hope that you can see your own people, and come back to your house with the high roof and to the land of your fathers.

(7.75–7)¹²

10 This expression is used of divine (*Il.* 5.725; 18.83; 18.377; *Od.* 8.366; 13.108) or godlike works (*Il.* 10.439; *Od.* 7.45).

11 Louden 1999, 11 notes on φίλα φρονέησ' at 7.75: 'Elsewhere in Homer this term (and its opposite κακὰ φρονέων) usually describes a deity's attitude toward a mortal.'

12 All translations of the *Odyssean* passages cited are taken from Lattimore 1999 with occasional slight adaptations, whereas the *Hesiodic* ones from Most 2007.

At the end of book 6 (6.324–6), Odysseus prayed to Athene and asked to come among the Phaiakians ‘loved’ (φίλον) and ‘pitied’ (ἐλεεινόν). Let us examine Odysseus’ prayer to Athene and its relation to Arete closer:

αὐτίκ’ ἔπειτ’ ἤρᾶτο Διὸς κούρη μεγάληο·
 ‘κλυθί μοι, αἰγιόχοιο Διὸς τέκος, Ἄτρυτώνη·
 νῦν δὴ πέρ μευ ἄκουσον, ἐπεὶ πάρος οὐ ποτ’ ἄκουσας
 ῥαιομένου, ὅτε μ’ ἔρραιε κλυτὸς ἐννοσίγαιος.
 δός μ’ ἐς Φαίηκας φίλον ἐλθεῖν ἢ δ’ ἐλεεινόν’.
 ὡς ἔφατ’ εὐχόμενος, τοῦ δ’ ἔκλυε Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη·
 αὐτῶ δ’ οὐ πω φαίνεται’ ἐναντίη· αἶδετο γάρ ῥα
 πατροκασίγητον· ὁ δ’ ἐπιζαφελῶς μενέαινε
 ἀντιθέω Ὀδυσῆϊ πάρος ἦν γαῖαν ἰκέσθαι.
 ὣς ὁ μὲν ἐνθ’ ἤρᾶτο πολὺτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς,
 κούρην δὲ προτὶ ἄστυ φέρεν μένος ἡμιόνοϊιν.

And immediately thereafter [Odysseus] prayed to the daughter of great Zeus:

‘Hear me, Atrytone child of Zeus of the aegis,
 and listen to me now, since before you did not listen
 to my stricken voice as the famous shaker of the earth battled me.
 Grant that I come, as one loved and pitied, among the Phaiakians.’
 So he spoke in prayer and Pallas Athene heard him,
 but she did not yet show herself before him, for she respected
 her father’s brother, Poseidon, who still nursed a sore anger
 at godlike Odysseus until his arrival in his own country.
 So long-suffering Odysseus prayed, in that place,
 but the strength of the mules carried the young girl on, to the city.

(6.323–7.2)

Odysseus prays to Athene and the narrator frames his prayer with the verb ἤρᾶτο at the end of book 6 and at the very first line of book 7. This verb here seems to allude to Arete’s etymology from ἀράουμι and functions as an anticipatory echo of the supplication scene that is about to follow (7.139–152). Odysseus’ prayer to Athene follows Nausikaa’s advice that he should supplicate her mother (Arete’s name remaining unmentioned). After Odysseus’ prayer, the disguised Athene gives him the same advice: his homecoming depends on the queen (7.75–7). We see that Odysseus’ prayer, framed with ἤρᾶτο, is placed between Nausikaa’s and Athene’s similar advice, that Arete is the key-person to enable the hero’s homecoming.¹³ To put it in another way,

13 Nausikaa’s advice (6.303–15): Odysseus should supplicate her mother–ἤρᾶτο (6.323) – Odysseus’ prayer–ἤρᾶτο (7.1) – Athene’s advice: Odysseus’ homecoming depends on Arete (7.53 ff.).

Odysseus' prayer anticipates his supplication to Arete. What is more, the fact that Arete's etymology is anticipated in a prayer to a goddess points to her divine status. Athene hearkens to Odysseus' prayer, but she appears disguised as a girl out of respect for her uncle Poseidon, who is enraged with Odysseus. It turns out that Athene could not help Odysseus straightforwardly. The fulfillment of Odysseus' prayer is to be made through Arete, and that is what Athene does. She delegates the prayer addressed to herself to the Phaiakian queen. Athene is φίλα φρονέουσα (7.15) to Odysseus, but his safe return home depends overtly on the friendly disposition of the queen (7.75–7), not that of Athene. The redirection of Odysseus' plea from Athene to Arete, alluded to by the Arete-ἀράουμαι etymology and the parallel φίλα φρονέουσα (7.15 for Athene) and φίλα φρονέησ' (7.75 for Arete), elevates Arete's status to a divine level.¹⁴ She is to play Athene's role and she will play this role well. It is interesting in this respect that Athene does not appear openly out of respect for her uncle Poseidon (6.229–30: αἶδετο γὰρ ῥα/πατροκασίγνητον). Arete eventually wants to support Odysseus, but must also respect her husband and uncle Alkinoos (who is her πατροκασίγνητος, the brother of her father Rhexenor). Poseidon also stands in Arete's way since she knows that helping Odysseus is against his will.¹⁵

The fact that Odysseus' prayer to Athene anticipates the supplication scene and the potential etymology of Arete should not surprise us. Homer often uses this technique in order to achieve effects not stated plainly in the narrative. By using a word alluding to the etymology of a character, the poet invokes this character without mentioning her/him by name. When Odysseus leaves Kalypso's island, for instance, he is washed up naked onto Scherie and faces a difficult dilemma; if

14 Beye 1966, 177 notes that Athene's presentation of Arete 'serves to magnify' Arete; see also Rose 1969, 404.

15 Doherty argues that Arete can be seen as braving Poseidon's wrath by helping Odysseus. She compares Tyro's defiance to Poseidon's order that she remain silent (11.251–2) with Arete's cautious silence. By telling Tyro's story, Odysseus is inviting Arete to speak and help him against Poseidon's will. See Doherty 1993; 1995, 125. That Odysseus' adventure in Scherie as well as his encounter with Arete should be set against the theme of Poseidon's wrath against Odysseus is for the first time implied in 7.34–5, where the narrator makes the connection of the Phaiakians with the realm of Poseidon fairly explicit. In this respect, it is also significant that Arete herself descends from Poseidon (7.56–66). On Poseidon and the Phaiakians cf. Reinhardt 1960, 122 ff.; Aronen 2002, 92 f., 99 f.

he rests by the river, he may freeze to death, but if he climbs up the slope to the shady wood and lies down to rest in the thick brushwood, he may become prey to wild beasts. He finally finds a sheltered copse guarded from cold and wild beasts. We see here that the first thing Odysseus must do upon his arrival on a new island after leaving Kalypso ('the Concealer') is to hide and thus secure himself. Odysseus' eager willingness to shun eternal concealment and oblivion is now challenged by his need to be hidden and thus survive. In this passage, the poet alludes to Kalypso by means of her etymology:

ὥς Ὀδυσσεὺς φύλλοισι καλύψατο. τῷ δ' ἄρ' Ἀθήνη
 ὕπνον ἔπ' ὄμμασι χεῦ', ἵνα μιν παύσειε τάχιστα
 δυσπρονόος καμάτοιο, φίλα βλέφαρ' ἀμφικαλύψας.

So Odysseus covered himself in the leaves, and Athene
 shed a sleep on his eyes so as most quickly to quit him,
 by veiling his eyes, from the exhaustion of his hard labors.

(5.491–3)

Odysseus now has to cover and shield himself from death, something that Kalypso was also willing to do by granting him immortality. Kalypso is now absent, but at the same time present under cover of her etymology. It is a nice touch that Kalypso is here concealed, true to her name. What is more, her function of concealing passes from Odysseus finally to Athene, who covers his eyes with sleep. ἀμφικαλύψας is the very last word of book 5; a book where Kalypso is a very prominent figure. Athene now takes over her functions as she pours sleep that covers Odysseus' eyes (7.14–7). We see that Athene takes over Kalypso's role and etymology at the end of book 5 and continues to do so in book 7, as she pours mist over Odysseus in Scherie.

Tsitsibakou-Vasalos has recently called the compositional technique at issue 'transference of etymology.'¹⁶ This technique is an indispensable tool in enriching narrative structures, since it 'creates pairs of surrogate or foil figures, forms alliances or enmities, most importantly of mortals and immortals...'.¹⁷ Elaborate cases of transference of etymology contribute to understanding the interaction of characters in the plot, and consolidate the structure of the narrative.

In *Od.* 5.491–3 the technique of transferring the etymology of a character to another functions as a transitional device. This sort of trans-

16 See Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2003, 119–29; 2007, 60–6.

17 Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2007, 61.

ference is marked by the formula δεινὴ θεός, occurring right after Athene has poured mist to cover Odysseus on his way to Alkinoos' palace (7.41); a characterization applied elsewhere to designate only Kalypso (7.246; 255; 12.449) and Kirke (11.8; 12.150), the initial 'blockers' and eventual 'helpers' of Odysseus' nostos.¹⁸ Furthermore, the motif of the 'dread goddess' is curiously linked in the cases of Athene and Kalypso to female affection (7.42: φίλα φρονέουσα; 7.256: ἐνδυκέως ἐφίλει; 12.450: μ' ἐφίλει): both goddesses show their love towards the hero by covering him. This instance of 'transference of etymology' seems, then, to have a rather ambivalent effect: it does not only point out the occasional similarity of Athene's role to that of Kalypso in terms of covering and sentimental connection to the hero, but also stresses the discrepancy between the two of them since Athene uses the covering device in order to advance Odysseus' nostos, certainly not to block it. On a further level, Athene hands over her role as a recipient of Odysseus' prayer to Arete at the beginning of book 7. We see Odysseus' fate passing from Kalypso to Arete through Athene. The transition is made through Kalypso's and Arete's etymologies (Kalypso – Athene [ἀμφικαλύψας]/Athene [ἡρᾶτο] – Arete).

This transition underscores Arete's divine status. We have already mentioned the parallels between Arete and Athene. There are also similarities between Kalypso and Arete. In Kalypso's first appearance mention is made of the goddess' hearth and weaving (5.59–62). Likewise, in Arete's first appearance, Nausikaa approaches her mother, who sits by the hearth spinning her spindle (6.52–3). Another goddess that Arete shows parallels with is Kirke. Louden pointed out the similarities between Kirke and Arete, commenting on the pattern φίλα/κακὰ φρονέουσα, and argued that Kirke, who is first κακὰ φρονέουσα (10.317), changes her evil thoughts to friendly ones and helps Odysseus to return to his country.¹⁹ She is at first hostile, but after asking who he is (10.325: τίς πόθεν εἰς ἀνδρῶν;) and learning Odysseus' identity, she changes her attitude. Likewise, Arete, first cautious and suspicious, asks about Odysseus' identity (7.238: τίς πόθεν εἰς ἀνδρῶν) and becomes finally φίλα φρονέουσα after Odysseus' account of the heroines he met in the under-

18 On the inherent ambivalence of women as 'blockers and helpers' in the *Odyssey* see Foley 1995, 107. Within this context, Beye 1974, 95 speaks of an 'archetype', on which the poet of the *Odyssey* relies in order to fabricate the representation of each individual woman of the poem.

19 See Louden 1999, 6, 11.

world. We see that Arete's role in the *Odyssey* is constantly paralleled with goddesses.

Though presented as if she were a goddess, Arete is definitely not a goddess as far as the *Odyssey* is concerned. However, she appears to flirt with the divinized status acquired by the heroines of Greek cult after their death. In the *Odyssey*, against the contentions of older scholars,²⁰ the deification of a mortal is possible. In his trip from Ogygia to Scherie, Odysseus' raft is wrecked by Poseidon and finally the hero is saved by the intervention of Ino-Leukothea (5.333–5). Ino-Leukothea enters the list of powerful female figures that save Odysseus and facilitate his homecoming. Her appearance before Odysseus' arrival at Scherie gives us the important information that a mortal woman can become a goddess (τὸν δὲ ἴδεν Κάδμου θυγάτηρ, καλλίσφυρος Ἰνώ,/ἧ πρὶν μὲν ἔην βροτὸς ἀυδήεσσα,/νῦν δ' ἄλὸς ἐν πελάγεσσι θεῶν ἐξέμμορε τιμῆς, 'The daughter of Kadmos, sweet-stepping Ino called Leukothea, saw him. She had once been one who spoke as a mortal, but now in the gulfs of the sea she holds degree as a goddess', 5.333–5). Deification of women is also a recurring motif in the *Ehoiai*.²¹ Iphimede becomes Artemis Enodia (fr. 23a.22–6 M.-W.) and Phylonoe becomes immortal and ageless (25a.10–2 M.-W.). Fr. 91 probably refers to Ino-Leukothea and her apotheosis (Hirschberger 2004, 79). The deified Ino in the *Odyssey* might point to a motif and a character of the *Catalogue of Women*. Odysseus' deliverance by this heroine precludes the importance of Arete and the *Catalogue of Women* in Odysseus' nostos.

Helen, as she appears in book 4, is another example of a demigoddess. Arthur pointed out that Helen's elevated status in book 4 is related to her semi-divine nature. She also commented on Helen's similarities with Arete and argued that their elevated status is singled out as anomalous. Helen's and Arete's presence in the megaron after the meal and their participation in the reception of a *xeinos* mark them out as exceptional female characters.²² Arete does not only participate in the recep-

20 Wilamowitz 1884; Rohde 1950; Farnell 1921 argued that there is no trace of hero cult in Homer. This view has been challenged by Hack 1929; Hadzisteliou-Price 1973; 1979; Lyons 1997, 7 ff., *passim*.

21 For apotheosis as a recurring motif in the *Catalogue of Women*, see Rutherford 2000, 87–8; Hirschberger 2004, 79; 2008, 122–5.

22 Arthur 1984, 16–19. See also Doherty 1992, 162 ff.; 1995, 76; Wohl 1993, 32–5.

tion of Odysseus, but also declares him as her own *xeinos* (11.338).²³ Another parallel between Helen and Arete is that their exceptional authority seems to be a source of tension with their husbands. It is true that we find a similar implicit, but easily traced conflict between husband and wife both in Sparta and Scherie. Helen's divine descent guarantees Menelaos' immortality (4.569), but her peculiarly high status as a woman is a cause of domestic friction. In short, Arete's parallel with Helen hints at her exceptionally high position. We have reasons to suspect that the queen belongs to the world of the heroines, like Helen and Leukothea, an aspect that Odysseus will later on exploit successfully.

3. Arete-ἄ(ρ)ρητος

Arete's name and the narrative dynamics of its etymology are not exhausted with the Ἀρήτη-ἄράομαι nexus. We suggest that her name is also associated with ἄ(ρ)ρητος ('unspoken,' 'ineffable') and examine whether this hypothesis can be supported by the narrative. Arete's name most likely derives from the adjective ἀρητός.²⁴ The etymology of this adjective is, however, doubtful; it could derive either from ἀράομαι or be a variant of ἄρρητος.²⁵ Both etymologies of ἀρητός, from which Arete's name derives, are narrativized in the *Odyssey*.²⁶

Let us examine first whether our text suggests a relation between Arete and ἄρ(ρ)ητος. In the beginning of book 6, when Nausikaa,

23 A comparison with a similar scene in Nestor's palace reveals that the queen does not join the men, but appears only later sleeping at her husband's side (3.404); see Arthur 1984, 18–9.

24 Eust. *Od.* 1474.43–4; 1567.54–5. Cf. *LfgreE s.v.* Ἀρήτη and Ruijgh 1967, 153 n. 287 on the link of the personal name Ἀρητος to ἀρητός.

25 The adjective ἄρρητος with double ρ must be a later spelling of ΑΡΗΤΟΣ (see Eust. *Il.* 4.10.4 ὅτι δὲ τὸ ἀρητὸν πένθος ἄρρητον τινὲς γράφουσι, δῆλον, καὶ ὡς οὐκ εὐαρεστοῦνται οἱ παλαιοὶ τῇ γραφῇ and the remarks in *LfgreE s.v.* ἀρητός). It is indicative that the double ρ in ἄρρητος was considered superfluous by the ancient etymological dictionaries (*Et. Mag.* 237.42–4 *s.v.* γογγύζω: Ἡ τὸ γογγύζω ἀπὸ τοῦ γογγύζω πλεονασμῶ τοῦ ρ, ὡς ῥητός ἄρρητος).

26 On ἀρητὸν and ῥηθῆναι (ἀεὶ ῥητόν) see Apion fr. 20 N. with Rengakos 1992, 44; sch. *D Il.* 17.37c; sch. *Il.* 24.741. Furthermore, the Hellenistic poet Aratus, to give an example similar to Arete, puns on his name and the word ἄρρητον, as Peter Bing argued, at *Phaen.* 1–2: ἐκ Διὸς ἀρχώμεσθα, τὸν οὐδέποτ' ἄνδρες ἔωμεν/ἄρρητον. Callimachus makes the same pun in one of his epigrams (*Ep.* 27.3–4 Pf.: λεπταί/ῥήσιες, Ἀρήτου [...]). See Bing 1990.

after her dream, goes to report it to her parents, the narrator makes clear that she will speak both to her father and her mother:

Αὐτίκα δ' Ἥως ἦλθεν ἐϋθρονος, ἧ μιν ἔγειρε
 Ναυσικάαν εὔπεπλον· ἄφαρ δ' ἀπεθαύμασ' ὄνειρον,
 βῆ δ' ἴμενα διὰ δώμαθ', ἴν' ἀγγείλειε τοκεῦσι,
πατρὶ φίλω καὶ μητρὶ· κιχῆσατο δ' ἔνδον ἐόντας.
 ἧ μὲν ἐπ' ἐσχάρη ἦστο σὺν ἀμφιπόλοισι γυναιξίν,
 ἠλάκατα στρωφῶσ' ἄλιπόρφυρα.

And next the Dawn came, throned in splendor, and wakened the well-robbed

girl Nausikaa, and she wondered much at her dreaming
 and went through the house, so as to give the word to her parents,
 to her dear father and her mother. She found them within there;
 the queen was sitting by the fireside with her attendant
 women, turning sea-purple yarn on a distaff.

(6.48–53)

However, Nausikaa will not disclose her dream (or her intention to marry), but will ask her father to provide her with a chariot in order to do the laundry by the river. This is a case of misdirection²⁷ the effect of which is to make Nausikaa's reticence more conspicuous, as de Jong points out.²⁸ What is more, Nausikaa will not speak in the end to her mother, but only to her father. This is a second misdirection since the anticipation of a speech to the Phaiakian queen is not fulfilled, and, therefore, it is emphasized that the queen is not addressed.²⁹ Arete's name is not mentioned either. Although the narrator describes her sitting by the hearth and spinning her spindle, she is not introduced by name.³⁰ We see Arete on stage, but her name remains 'unmentioned'; we expect Nausikaa to speak to her, but Arete is not to be spoken to. Later on, when Nausikaa advises Odysseus to go to Alkinoos' palace

27 The poet applies this poetic device in order to manipulate his audience by creating expectations that are eventually not fulfilled; by interspersing false indications that lead to an outcome other than the one that will actually occur. The aim of such strategies is usually to increase the suspense about the way the story unfolds or surprise the audience. On Homeric misdirection see Morrison 1992, de Jong 1997b, 321–2.

28 De Jong 2001a *ad* 6.49–51.

29 It is odd that Nausikaa does not address her mother about washing the clothes since the task of doing the laundry might be more in the jurisdiction of the lady of the house. The subject of Nausikaa's request to her father makes her failure to address her mother more prominent. See Ahl – Roisman 1996, 59.

30 Alkinoos' name, on the other hand, has been mentioned at 6.12.

and supplicate her mother because his return depends on her, Nausikaa mentions Alkinoos' name twice (6.299; 302), but refers to Arete as μητέρα ἑμήν (6.305). Here the absence of Arete's name is more conspicuous. It makes sense that Odysseus needs to know the name of the queen since he has to supplicate her, but Nausikaa's silence about her mother's name leaves Arete's name still 'unmentioned'.³¹ And although one acknowledges the natural way in which Nausikaa refers to Arete as 'mother', her silence does manage to bring about a quite tantalizing retardation effect.³²

The supplication scene also suggests Arete's etymology from ἄ(ρ)ρητος.³³ When the mist that covered Odysseus disperses, everyone is speechless (7.144: οἱ δ' ἄνεω ἐγένοντο). From all the speechless Phaiakians Odysseus has to address the queen. When Odysseus finishes his supplication, everybody is again silent (7.154: οἱ δ' ἄρα πάντες ἀκήν ἐγένοντο σιωπῆ) and above all Arete. She now has become 'speechless' from 'unspoken' and will keep her silence for a long time. Ekheneos breaks in and tries to resolve the awkward situation, but he ignores Arete and advises Alkinoos how he should deal with the stranger (7.155–66). Alkinoos follows his advice and commands Pontonoos to pour wine and make a libation to Zeus of the suppliants (7.167–81). Then he speaks to the Phaiakian leaders (7.186). Although Odysseus supplicated Arete, she remains completely unmentioned afterwards.

It is only when the Phaiakian leaders withdraw that Arete breaks her silence. It turns out that she did not speak to Odysseus because what she had to say was not to be spoken publicly. Arete noticed that Odysseus wore the cloak and tunic that she had made herself and that her daughter took to wash. Therefore, she knows that Odysseus most likely met Nausikaa. The fact that he wears these clothes makes him suspicious and

31 Later on, after Odysseus will have learned Arete's name and genealogy from the disguised Athene (7.63–78), he will start his supplication to Arete by stating her name and her father's name (Ἀρήτη, θύγατερ Πηξήνορος ἀντιθέοιο, 7.146). On the revelation of Nausikaa's and Arete's names, see Olson 1992.

32 In Homeric poetry this sort of retardation in naming a hero constitutes a rather usual poetic technique; cf. *Il.* 1.307/337 (Patroklos); 1.351/413 (Thetis) – we owe this point to Magdalene Stoevesandt. It is a fact, though, that the interval between the introduction of a figure and its naming lasts in Arete's case unusually long, exceeding the boundaries of a book (6.52–7.54). On retardation technique in the *Odyssey* see Rengakos 1999.

33 On the supplication scene see Pedrick 1982, 138; Crotty 1994, 134; Naiden 2006, 39; Dreher 2006. Newton 1984, views this scene of supplication as a metaphor for 'the ritual of rebirth'.

Arete skeptical to grant him his requests. Her silence is cautious and prudent since she does not reveal her concerns in public and thus tarnish her daughter's reputation (see Besslich (1966) 1990, 61–9). We see now Arete's etymology functioning in a different direction. While Ekheneos and Alkinoos ignored her and left her unmentioned, she herself proves her name to mean a person who knows what and especially when something is not to be spoken. But when the occasion is appropriate, she finally asks Odysseus bluntly:

‘ΞΕΪΝΕ, τὸ μὲν σε πρῶτον ἐγὼν εἰρήσομαι αὐτή·
 τίς πόθεν εἰς ἀνδρῶν; τίς τοι τάδε εἴματ’ ἔδωκεν;
 οὐδὲ φῆς ἐπὶ πόντον ἀλώμενος ἐνθάδ’ ἰκέσθαι;’

Stranger and friend, I myself first have a question to ask you.
 What man are you and whence? And who was it gave you this clothing?
 Did you not say that you came here ranging over the water?

(7.237–9)

Arete's use of εἰρήσομαι, a cognate with ἄρρητος (see Chantraine s.v. 2 εἶρω), is here particularly significant. εἰρήσομαι seems to allude to Arete's name *e contrario*; the queen negates her unutteredness, rendered so far as suppression of her importance by Alkinoos and Ekheneos, and as silence on her own part, and speaks. οὐ φῆς seems to set up a further etymological wordplay on Arete's narrative profile as ἄρ(ρ)ητος as well as an anticipatory echo on οὐτις and Odysseus, especially since Odysseus will not reveal his name to Arete. His name will be also unuttered and hence he will remain very much a 'nobody.'³⁴ If we acknowledge the Arete-ἄρ(ρ)ητος connection, the narrator's delay to mention Arete's name can be paralleled to Odysseus' long delay in revealing his name to the Phaiakians. Odysseus' movement from anonymity to heroic *kleos* is analogous to Arete's elevation from being an unknown character, probably invented by the poet of the *Odyssey*, to a heroine that finally acquires *kleos* by her place in the *Catalogue of Women* (fr. 222 M.-W.).³⁵

34 The parallel between Odysseus and Arete on the basis of their names can first be made through Odysseus' epithet πολυάρητος, which is the name that Eurykleia implicitly suggested that Autolykos should give to Odysseus (19.404). Peradotto 1990, 108, 120–42 discusses Arete's name and its relation to Odysseus' epithet πολυάρητος. Note also that Odysseus has been mentioned obliquely as a πολυάρητος θεός by Nausikaa at 6.280. On the implications of the epithet see also Murnaghan 1987, 39–41.

35 ἄρρητος can mean a person without *kleos*. See *LfggrE* s.v. ἄρρητος B2: 'von Menschen ungenannt, ruhmlös', cf. Hes. Op. 2–4: ... Δι' ἐννέπετε .../ὄν τε διὰ βροτοὶ ἄνδρες ὁμῶς ἄφατοὶ τε φατοὶ τε,/ῥητοὶ τ' ἄρρητοὶ τε...

As a character given prominence in the *Odyssey*, she resembles Kalypso. The names of Kalypso ('the Concealer') and Arete ('the Unmentioned') are very suitable to these heroines who rise from concealed anonymity to epic prominence by enabling Odysseus' travel back home; a travel that for him is always a travel from anonymity to heroic fame.

Odysseus, being the master of manipulating his own name, seems to have grasped Arete's connection with ἄρ(ρ)ητος. In his response, he first tells her that what she asks is hard to be spoken. He goes on to say that he will tell her what she asks him, but then he gives an abbreviated version of his wanderings and, what is more, he does not say who he is or where he is from:³⁶

‘ἀργαλέον, βασιλεία, διηνεκέως ἀγορεῦσαι,
κῆδε’ ἐπεὶ μοι πολλὰ δόσαν θεοὶ Οὐρανίωνες·
τοῦτο δέ τοι ἔρέω, ὃ μ’ ἀνείρεαι ἠδὲ μεταλλάς.

It is a hard thing, O queen, to tell you without intermission,
all my troubles, since the gods of the sky have given me many.
But this now I will tell you in answer to the question you asked me.

(7.241–3)

Odysseus' answer to Arete contains linguistic traits that underpin the proposed Arete-ἄρ(ρ)ητος connection further: the use of ἔρέω and ἀνείρεαι, both cognates with ἄρρητος, invites us to acknowledge a striking and persistent allusion to Arete's name.³⁷ Odysseus will end his speech to Arete with a ring composition, saying that he spoke, as was asked to do, although he was distressed (7.297: ταῦτά τοι ἀχνύμενός περ ἄληθειήν κατέλεξα).

At this point, it is worth mentioning Virgil's adaptation of 7.241–2. Dido asks Aeneas at the end of book 1 of the *Aeneid* to tell her about the ambush of the Greeks, the downfall of the Trojans, and his wanderings (1.753–6). Then everyone is silent (2.1). Aeneas answers to the Phoenician queen more or less as Odysseus answered to the Phaiakian queen:

infandum, regina, iubes renouare dolorem

‘Queen, you are asking to renew an ineffable pain.

(*Aen.* 2.2)

The word *infandum*, emphatically placed at the head of the line, corresponds to the Greek word ἄρρητον. Virgil here alludes to Odysseus' an-

36 See Besslich (1966) 1990, 60–1.

37 διηνεκέως ἀγορεῦσαι (7.241) actually recalls the etymology of ἄρρητος from ἀειρήν, attested at sch. D *Il.* 17.37c; sch. *Il.* 24.741.

swer to Arete and we suggest that he also alludes, in the subtle way of an Alexandrian poet, to Arete's etymological connection with ἄρ(ρ)ητος. By doing so, he leaves Arete's (but also Dido's) name unmentioned, but at the same time, implied. Virgil manages to hint at the scene he adapts here by means of a witty paradoxical pun; Arete is mentioned by remaining 'unmentioned'.

Turning back to the *Odyssey*, after 8.445 Arete will remain silent and unmentioned until book 11. Her silence does not reduce her importance in the narrative.³⁸ We argue against scholars who believed that, although Arete is proclaimed to be the key-person for Odysseus' return, her role is afterwards downplayed.³⁹ Doherty argues convincingly that Odysseus organizes the first half of his *apologoi* as an attempt to win over Arete.⁴⁰ Odysseus realizes that the Phaiakian queen has the power to either facilitate his *nostos* or keep him in Scherie trapping him in a world of anonymity forever. Arete's ambivalent power resembles that of the goddesses Kalypso and Kirke. All these women threaten Odysseus' *nostos* but finally offer valuable help. It seems that the queen can decide whether Odysseus will return home or stay marooned in the fictional and isolated Scherie.⁴¹ Odysseus does not seem to have forgot-

38 Arete's name and its etymology from ἄρ(ρ)ητος provide a nice paradox that explains her function and her importance in the *Odyssey*; by remaining unmentioned for a long time, she is present through the etymology of her name. To put it in another way, the etymology of her name evokes her presence through her silence. The emphasis of her importance by means of her withdrawal from the forefront of the narrative resembles Achilles in the *Iliad*, whose absence from the battlefield does not reduce his importance, but rather emphasizes how crucial he is for the war.

39 Nitzsch 1826–40, 2.138; Thomson 1949, 419; Fenik 1974, 105 ff.; Pedrick 1988, 87.

40 See Doherty 1992; 1995, 87–160. See also Minchin 2007a, 20–1 = 2007b, 266.

41 Tsitsibakou-Vasalos suggests an intriguing etymological parallel between Ares and Arete. Ares' etymological relation to ἀράομαι/ἀρά (cf. sch. A *Il.* 18.521b; Hsch. 7145) suggests that the god is 'a curse, a bane' (*per litteras*). Being a belligerent god, Ares is also ἄρ(ρ)ητος, unpersuaded by words and reason. Thus, Ares shares the same etymological potential with Arete, but while the god of war develops the dark sides of his etymologies in the *Iliad*, the Phaiakian queen activates the positive dynamics of her etymologies in the *Odyssey*. Ares and Arete have a relation of polarity. The Iliadic Ares is a baneful god that defies negotiation, while the Phaiakian queen stands for supplication and persuasion. Arete, the daughter of Rhexenor ('Breaker of Men'), incorporates the *semata* of Ares, who is a man-slaughtering god (cf. παύσασθαι βροτολογίων

ten Nausikaa's (6.310–15) and Athene's (7.75–7) advice that his safe return to his longed-for fatherland depends on Arete. If he wants to return to Ithaca and claim his *kleos*, he has to talk his way out of Scherie by winning her over. The only way to accomplish that is to speak of his unspeakable woes.

4. Gender and Generic Tension in Scherie

The above section has made apparent Arete's double etymological dynamics, which indicates her centrality in the Phaiakian episode. In the following section we argue that Arete belongs to a generic frame that renders her role in the narrative comprehensible. This generic frame, the so-called *ehoie*-poetry, and its narrative conventions seem to be the point where Arete's semantic multivalence and her prominent role in the gender-system of the *Odyssey* intersect. The Phaiakian episode provides a nice glance at the harmonic cooperation of gender and genre mechanics. We are invited to see how gender roles are performed in an archaic epic context, and to what extent the narrative contributes to the construction of gender identities and inter-gender relationships.⁴²

In specific, attention is drawn to the fact that the gender of the narrator (Odysseus) and the narratee (Arete) holds a key position in establishing communication, and consequently that this configuration imposes a certain discourse upon the narrative so that communication can be achieved after all. Moreover, the episode of Odysseus' encounter with the Phaiakians contains an instance of inter-genre transference of a gendered narrative mode, i. e. the stylized narrative patterns of *ehoie*-poetry, within an already explicitly gendered genre. Thus, we are called to observe how the gendered narrative of *ehoie*-poetry works in an epic praising a male hero, and what kind of narrative purposes it serves.

⁴² Ἄρη' ἀνδροκτασιῶων, *Il.* 5.909), but reverses the qualities of the Iliadic god of war, accommodating the values of the new epic. Note also that Demodokos' song about Ares and Aphrodite (*Od.* 8.266–366) may activate the juxtaposition between Ares and Arete in the Phaiakian episode. In sum, the etymological parallels between Ares and Arete highlight the antithetical/foil relation between the god of war and the Phaiakian queen, and adumbrate Arete's function in the *Odyssey*.

42 For current insights into the relationship of narratology to gender studies see Lanser 1986, Nünning 1994, Prince 1996.

We have already mentioned that Arete's high position makes her comparable to a heroine of the *Catalogue of Women*. Let us examine this point closer. We begin with Athene's presentation of Arete to Odysseus (7.53–77). When the disguised Athene introduces Arete's genealogy, we move from the world of heroic epic poetry, which focuses synchronically on heroes of a certain age and time, to the diachronically oriented catalogue poetry. Athene's language emphasizes this generic shift, and frames Arete and her genealogy within the poetic tradition of the *Catalogue of Women*.

Earlier as well as contemporary Homeric research has curiously overlooked a trait intrinsic to the presentation of Arete in book 7: the fact that Athene's speech makes extensive use of linguistic elements and especially formulas that recall the typical language of the so-called *ehoie*-poetry. To begin with, the explicitly genealogical frame of the narrative that Athene puts forward in order to introduce Arete is to be identified as a distinctive feature of this kind of female-oriented narrative mode. According to the genealogical tree given, Arete's grandmother was Periboia, who is described as a woman of exceptional beauty (7.57: γυναικῶν εἶδος ἀρίστη). This expression, attested hapax in the Homeric epics, constitutes an allomorph of the recurrent Iliadic formula θυγατρῶν εἶδος ἀρίστη⁴³ and should be semantically associated with γυναικῶν φύλον ... αἱ τότε ἄρισται ἔσαν in the proem of the Hesiodic *Ehoiai* (fr. 1.1–3 M.-W.) as well as with the introductory section of the Odyssean 'Catalogue of Women' (11.225–7: [...] αἱ δὲ γυναικῆς / [...] / ὄσσοι ἀριστήων ἄλοχοι ἔσαν ἡδὲ θυγατρῆς).⁴⁴ Its narrative function is to mark and activate the *ehoie*-genre – a turn made all the more explicit as soon as the genealogy reaches its intended point of reference, Arete. This association of Arete with the semantics of ἀρίστη, mainly addressing beauty and social status, on the one hand urges us to think of a poet suggesting an oblique wordplay – this wordplay might be implied, as Alkinoos asks his wife to fetch the best chest with a clean cloak and a chiton in it for the stranger to use after his bath (8.423–4: δὴ ῥα τότε Ἀρήτην προσέφη μένος Ἀλκινόοιο· δεῦρο, γύναι, φέρε χηλὸν

43 *Il.* 2.175 (Alkestis); 3.124, 6.252 (Laodike); 13.365 (Kassandre); 13.378 (daughter of Atreids); *hDem.* 146 (Kallidike); cf. also *hVen.* 41: μέγα εἶδος ἀρίστη ἐν ἀθανάτησι θεῆσι (Hera). Cf. Meier 1976, 144 with n. 3. On female εἶδος in the Hesiodic *Ehoiai* see Osborne 2005, 10 f.

44 Lyons 1997, 10 f. notes the thematic connection of the two Catalogues in terms of these 'best women' (ἀρίσται). See also Irwin 2005, 41.

ἀριπρεπέ', ἢ τις ἀρίστη [Thereupon the king Alkinoos said to Arete:/ 'Come, wife, bring out a magnificent coffer, the best one you have']). On the other hand, the term is followed within the narrative by another superlative, *πρώτη*, stressing Arete's primary position in the episode (cf. 7.53: *πρώτα*).

In addition, the formal elements that directly follow the sequence οἴην ... Ἀρήτην point towards conceiving Arete's entry as a disguised form of an *ehoie*: line 7.66 touches on the union of Arete and Alkinoos, brought forth by the formula 'he made her his wife' (*ποιήσατ' ἄκοιτιν*). That the formula occurs seven times in the *Ehoiai* in a marriage context is surely indicative of the formula's connection to *ehoie*-poetry.⁴⁵ In the following line the theme of Arete's exceptional *τιμή* is addressed (7.67–8: *καί μιν ἔτιο' ὡς οὔ τις ἐπὶ χθονὶ τίεται ἄλλη/ὄσσοι νῦν γε γυναιῖκες ὑπ' ἀνδράσιν οἶκον ἔχουσιν* ['and (scil. Alkinoos) honored her as no other woman on earth is honored, such women as there are now and keep a house under their husbands']).⁴⁶ In the Homeric epics men usually honor men, whereas their respect towards women is expressed only twice in the *Odyssey*, with regard to Arete and Eurykleia. In the case of Eurykleia, we find a slightly similar wording as well as a concise genealogy (1.428–33: *τῷ δ' ἄρ' ἄμ' αἰθομένας δαΐδας φέρε κεδνὰ ἰδυῖα/Εὐρύκλει', Ὡπος θυγάτηρ Πεισηνορίδαο,/τὴν ποτε Λαέρτης πρίατο κτεάτεσσιν ἑοῖσι,/πρωθήβην ἔτ' ἐοῦσαν, ἕικοσάβοια δ' ἔδωκεν,/ἴσα δέ μιν κεδνῇ ἀλόχῳ τίειν ἐν μεγάροισιν,/εὐνῇ δ' οὔ ποτ' ἔμικτο, χόλον δ' ἀλέεινε γυναικός* ['and devoted Eurykleia went with him, and carried the flaring/torches. She was the daughter of Ops, the son of Peisenor,/and Laertes had bought her long ago with his own possessions/when she was still in her first youth, and gave twenty oxen for her,/and he favored her in his house as much as his own devoted/wife, but never slept with her, for fear of his wife's anger']).⁴⁷ The similarity of the phrasing relat-

45 Cf. fr. 23a.31, 33a.7, 85.5, 190.6 M.-W.; fr. 5.59, 6.1, 11.12 Hirschberger. Mureddu (1983) 119 recognizes the formula as a variant of the type (*φίλην*) *κεκλήση/ποιήσατ' ἄκοιτιν*. Cf. Dräger 1997, 24.

46 Wagner-Hasel 2000a, 206 and 2000b, 191–3 believes that the exceptional *τιμή* that Arete enjoys in Scherie is interwoven into the 'soziales Geleit', which in the ritual of guest-friendship rests on the fabrication of signs made from textile. On Arete as hostess see Pedrick 1988, 86–87, 92–3.

47 On the parallel Arete-Eurykleia in terms of *τιμή* see Wagner-Hasel 2000b, 205. Eurykleia's low social status seems to be a good reason why the alleged formula might have been modified in this case. Eurykleia's moral integrity and the fact that she functions as a surrogate for Antikleia show her to be a rather distorted

ing τῖω to a discourse of τιμή is, however, to be found also in the *ehoiē* of Alkmene. The diction at Hes. *Eh.* fr. 195.16–7 M.-W. = *Scut.* 9–10 (ἦ δὲ καὶ ὡς κατὰ θυμὸν ἔδον τίεσκεν ἀκοίτην, / ὡς οὐ πῶς τις ἔτισε γυναικῶν θηλυτεράων [‘and in her spirit she honored her husband as no other female woman ever yet honored hers’]) is strongly reminiscent of *Od.* 7.67–8, although the circumstances of attributing τιμή are not exactly identical.⁴⁸ Alkmene was not being honored by her husband like Arete, but honored her husband in a unique manner. It is our contention that the discourse related to female τιμή, as presented in the cases of Eurykleia, Arete and Alkmene, belongs to a fixed concept of an orally transmitted genealogical poetry, the *ehoiē*-poetry. The poet of the *Odyssey* must have inherited this concept and the subsequent vocabulary from an allegedly pre-Hesiodic genealogical tradition.⁴⁹ Thus, by the time of Hesiod it seems to have been already established as a formula.

These parallels can explain why Odysseus proceeds to relate his encounter with famous heroines and, what is more, why these tales are appealing to Arete.⁵⁰ Minchin (2007a, 20–1 = 2007b, 266) has recently argued that Arete responds positively to the tales of Odysseus in *Od.* 11.336–7 and encourages him to continue because she enjoys listening to them. This is true, but Minchin fails to explain why Odysseus’ storytelling is so appealing to her as to make her break her protracted silence and retract her cautious behavior concerning Odysseus’ reception as a guest. It is, in our view, precisely the well-established nexus based on multiple implicit and explicit allusions to *ehoiē*-poetry that helps us to comprehend Arete’s approval of the excursus of the ‘Catalogue of Women’ in the *Odyssey*. As a result, when Odysseus decides

image of a noble woman; on this see Skempis (forthcoming). In this respect it should be noted that only Eurykleia and Eumaios out of the slaves of Odysseus are worthy of acquiring a concise genealogical entry by the poet. On this see Higbie 1995, 7 f.

48 Hirschberger 2004, 366 on fr. 91.9–10 and Hunter 2005c, 253 n. 51 note the similarity in poetic expression, but do not comment on the stylization of the formulaic language of the *Ehoiai*. Neitzel 1975 and Cohen 1989–90 do not include the passage in their studies as an example of Homeric reception in Hesiod.

49 On the existence of such a pre-Hesiodic tradition see West 1985, 125; Rutherford 2000, 89–93; Hirschberger 2004, 63, 64 f.; Hunter 2005a, 2; Nasta 2006, 64–8; Arrighetti 2008. Rutherford 2000, 93–6 even believes that an early version of the Hesiodic *Ehoiai* was available to the poet of the *Odyssey*.

50 This point has recently been put forward also by Doherty 2006, 313 f., who nevertheless does not develop her argument on a textual basis.

to interrupt his story right after he has finished reciting the heroines he met in the Underworld, he does not do so randomly, and accordingly, the self-interruption is far from unexpected.⁵¹ Odysseus wants to test the efficiency of the narrative skills he has employed to serve a concrete goal: that of gaining Arete's sympathy by acknowledging the importance of the heroines in the epic universe of the *Odyssey*.

In the light of this generic interpretation we should now turn back to reassess the verse that introduced Arete (7.65–6: ἐν μεγάροφ μίαν οἴην παῖδα λιπόντα/Ἀρήτην): she was the one and only daughter of Rhexenor, the brother of Alkinoos. The word οἴη not only expresses the genealogical particularity of Arete, but furthermore implicitly marks her uniqueness as a female Homeric character; it designates, to put it in Kahane's words, her 'existence as a heroic one-of-a-kind' (Kahane 1997, 118). Further we suggest that this precise word (οἴην) might be thought of as subjected to a process of semantic fluctuation, fairly equivalent to R. Barthes' famous notion of anchorage and his 'floating chain of signifieds.'⁵² Thus, it sets up an allusive interplay with οἴη. Bearing in mind the predominantly genealogical context of Athene's speech so far, a reader would be enticed to see in the pronoun an alluring association with the marker of female genealogical poetry (ἡ) οἴη⁵³ and subsequently to read the passage as a proper *ehoie*. Against this background, Kahane maintains that 'within the specific discourse of Homeric hexameter there are significant pragmatic links between the word *oios* (alone, on his own) and the word *hoios* (such a.../what a..., as an expression of emotion), [...]. This idea should not surprise us. What Milman Parry termed calembour (more serious than a pun) is a recurrent feature of Homeric poetry: autme//and aute//; omphe//and odme//; demos// (fat) and demos//(people) are some well known examples, all localized (like the rhythm in later poetry) at the end of the verse' (Kahane 1997, 121–2). We suggest that a further instance of this calembour might be the semantic approximation of οἴη to οἴη in Athene's speech.⁵⁴

51 For a different view on this matter see Rabel 2002; Graziosi – Haubold 2005, 47; Minchin 2007b, 242.

52 Barthes 1977, 39.

53 On the formula see West 1985, 35; Cohen 1989–90, 60–5; Rutherford 2000, 83–5; Hirschberger 2004, 30 f.; Nasta 2006, 59–64; Arrighetti 2008, 13–4.

54 Cf. the relevant remark in Minchin 1996, 13: 'The connectedness of his material at associative and semantic levels would have been of considerable assistance to Homer as he sang his lists and catalogues'.

Of course, in our case there is no double mentioning of οἴη and οἴη, which would make the phonetic parallelism somewhat explicit, and accordingly, no *ehoie*-formula. That the *ehoie*-formula, however, is not attested in the ‘Nekyia’,⁵⁵ the most straightforward instance of *ehoie*-poetry, can be explained on a narratological basis: Odysseus’ apologoi, where the ‘Catalogue of Women’ is integrated, requires a formulaic expression adapted to Odysseus’ first-person narrative of his encounter with the heroines instead of the *ehoie*-formula, which is appropriate to third-person narration.⁵⁶ In other words, Odysseus does not need here the formula in order to make the transition to the *ehoie*-poetry.⁵⁷ In our view, it is exactly the position of οἴην, appropriated in a passage making extensive use of formulas connected to *ehoie*-poetry and above all introducing a female figure, that effectively triggers the allusive play with the *ehoie*-formula.

The use of variants of the *ehoie*-formula in the *Odyssey* as a means of alluding to the genre of *ehoie*-poetry as crystallized in the Hesiodic *Ehoiai* is not unique. When Telemakhos speaks of his mother to the suitors, οἴη functions as a signpost of poetry related to the *Catalogue of Women*.⁵⁸

Ἄλλ’ ἄγετε μνηστῆρες, ἐπεὶ τόδε φαίνεται ἄεθλον,
οἴη νῦν οὐκ ἔστι γυνή κατ’ Ἀχαιίδα γαῖαν,

But come on suitors, since there is a prize set before you, a woman such as there is none in all the Akhaian country now.

(21.107–8)

Telemakhos invites the suitors to the bow contest which has Penelope as its prize (ἄεθλον). Note that the wooing of a woman as well as a

55 In this respect, Rutherford 2000, 93–4 believes that the *ehoie*-formula might have been ‘replaced with a set of formulas amounting to “And I saw:” τὴν δὲ ... ἶδον ..., καὶ ... εἶδον ... and so on’ and that ‘the Nekyia catches and preserves for us an earlier stage in the development of *ehoie*-poetry’.

56 On the implications of Odysseus’ first-person narration in the apologoi see Reinhardt 1960, 58–62; on the arrangement and significance of the apologoi see Most 1989 and Bierl 2007.

57 Nasta 2006, 60 points out: ‘Au fil des apparitions Ulysse reprend chaque fois le même tour introductif: (ἶδον .../ ἔσιδον ... εἶδον...) “J’ai vu .../Je vis encore .../Je vis aussi ...”. Ailleurs, selon la spécificité des contextes, ἢ οἴη aurait pu fonctionner comme une formule de relance, tout aussi véhémentement que l’itération du verbe qui faisait revivre dans l’*Odyssée* un témoignage focalisé par le narrateur’.

58 Cf. Nasta 2006, 63–4.

woman set as the prize of a contest are recurring motifs in the *Ehoiai*.⁵⁹ The female excellence of Penelope, who is said to be the best of the Akhaian women, is also thematically associated with the Hesiodic *Ehoiai* (cf. fr. 1.1–4 M.-W.). Thus, the passage quoted above relates Penelope to the most characteristic formula and themes of the *Ehoiai*. Penelope is actually compared to the heroines of the *Catalogue of Women* by Antippos: ἔργα τ' ἐπίστασθαι περικαλλέα καὶ φρένας ἐσθλὰς/κέρδεά θ', οἷ οὐ πώ τιν' ἀκούομεν οὐδὲ παλαιῶν,/τάων αἰ πάρος ἦσαν εὐπλοκαμῖδες Ἀχαιαί,/Τυρώ τ' Ἀλκμήνη τε εὐστέφανός τε Μυκῆνη ('to be expert in beautiful work, to have good character and cleverness, such as we are not told of, even of the ancient queens, the fair-tressed Akhaian women of times before us, Tyro and Alkmene and Mykene, wearer of garlands'; *Od.* 2.117–20). Within this context, οἷα seems to set up an allusion to the *Ehoiai*.

However, this generic interplay is not without tension in Scherie. We argue that the undercurrent of the gender conflict in the Phaiakian episode is reflected upon the generic interplay between heroic and *ehoie*-poetry. Arete is a woman who enjoys a higher status than usual (see Arthur 1984, 16–9). Alkinoos honored her as no other woman/wife on earth is honored (7.67–9). Her authority is so strong that she can even resolve quarrels among men (7.74).⁶⁰ Nausikaa's and Athene's advice to Odysseus to supplicate Arete further elevate her exceptional status. We contend, however, that her elevated status is a cause of covert tension in Phaiakia. When Odysseus beseeches her, her subsequent silence causes Ekheneos' intervention. Ekheneos ignores her and the fact that Odysseus supplicated her, and addresses Alkinoos. Subsequently, Alkinoos addresses the Phaiakian leaders and also ignores his wife, who is sitting next to him. It also seems that Alkinoos and Arete have constantly opposite attitudes towards Odysseus. While Alkinoos is garrulous and friendly to Odysseus, and offers him Nausikaa's hand, Arete

59 Several episodes of the *Catalogue* develop the motif of the wooing of a woman and the woman is often the prize of a contest. Atalanta's suitors woo her by competing with her in a foot race (fr. 72–6 M.-W.). Sisyphos woos Mestra on behalf of his son Glaukos, promising countless wedding gifts (fr. 43a.21: μύρια ἔδνα). The *Ehoiai* conclude with the lengthy episode of the wooing of Helen (fr. 196–204 M.-W.), which is actually a contest of wealth. On the motif of wooing in the *Odyssey* see Tsitsibakou-Vasalos (this volume).

60 On the idealized image of Arete as presented in Book 7 see Wohl 1993, 29–32; Latacz 1994, 105–11; Whittaker 1999; Felson – Slatkin 2004, 105 with n. 41; Buchan 2004, 190–3.

is silent and skeptical. Alkinoos is initially enthusiastic, whereas Arete is cautious and suspicious with the stranger. While Alkinoos speaks publicly and makes his offer without knowing the identity of the stranger, Arete speaks in private and asks Odysseus bluntly who he is. Alkinoos offers Odysseus gifts and is confident about his safe return (8.424–32), whereas Arete warns Odysseus that he might be robbed by the Phaiakians on his way home (8.443–5). When Arete has been won over and suggests that the Phaiakians bestow more gifts upon her guest, the gender tension reaches its peak. Arete sees the bond of *xenia* with Odysseus as a personal one (11.338: ξείνος ... ἐμός ἐστιν; see Doherty 1995, 80). Thus, she replies obliquely to Ekheneos (7.159–66), who addressed his speech to Alkinoos, using the word ξείνος three times and passing over the fact that Odysseus had supplicated Arete and not Alkinoos. Ekheneos now intervenes for a second time. He politely seconds the queen's suggestion, but notes that this business belongs to Alkinoos (11.344–6). Alkinoos agrees with Arete's proposition, yet in seconding her he uses the same formulaic language in which Telemakhos rebuked Penelope: μῦθος/πομπή δ' ἄνδρεσσι μελήσει/πᾶσι, μάλιστα δ' ἐμοί· τοῦ γὰρ κράτος ἔστ' ἐνὶ οἴκῳ/δήμῳ (1.358–9 ~ 11.352–3).⁶¹ This is the men's business, not Arete's, who urged the Phaiakians not to make haste to send Odysseus away (11.339: τῶ μὴ ἐπειγόμενοι ἀποπέμπετε; 11.352: πομπή). Telemakhos utters these words while his authority is seriously questioned. By alluding to book 1, the poet parallels the two situations.⁶² Alkinoos of course is not weak like Telemakhos, but the repetition of the lines implies that Arete's intervention might intrude into the male sphere of authority. In book 1, Penelope is excluded from the audience of Phemios' song and retreats to her place after being rebuked. Alkinoos also rebukes Arete (though subtly), but not only has Arete enjoyed Odysseus' stories (unlike Penelope whom Phemios' song grieved), but also Odysseus attempted to win her over by choosing a subject matter and a treatment of his topic that would please her.

61 For this formula and possible interpretations of the tensions between Arete and Alkinoos, see Doherty 1991, 151; Wohl 1993, 31–2, 38, 42. Cf. Hektor's answer to Andromakhe in *Il.* 6.492–3, (πόλεμος δ' ἄνδρεσσι μελήσει/πᾶσιν, ἐμοὶ δὲ μάλιστα, τοὶ Ἰλίου ἐγγεγάσιν), a passage also pregnant with gender tension; see Rutherford 1991–93, 51; Kahane 2005, 168–71.

62 See Doherty 1992, 166.

Arete belongs to the genre of female ἀρετή, and we know from Hes. *Eh.* fr. 222 M.-W. that she had a place in the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*. Within the narrative of the *Odyssey*, Athene's speech to Odysseus contains two pieces of advice; an overt one (that is to beseech the queen) and a covert one (that is that Arete belongs to the genre of the *ehoiai*, and therefore should be treated respectfully). Odysseus will exploit the second hint while relating the heroines he met in the Underworld. In order to ingratiate Arete, he will turn to the genre to which Arete belongs.

Let us examine some parallels between Athene's presentation of Arete's genealogy and Odysseus' foray into the 'Catalogue of Women': Odysseus relates at length Poseidon's affair with Tyro. Likewise, Athene mentioned Periboia's affair with Poseidon.⁶³ Tyro is also referred to as βασιλεια (11.258), a title also given to Arete (7.241; 11.345). Tyro's husband Kretheus was her uncle, according to *Eh.* fr. 30 M.-W. Likewise, Alkinoos and Arete are uncle and niece. The silence motif is also important in Tyro's story (see Doherty 1993). Poseidon asked Tyro that she not reveal their affair (11.251–2). However, Tyro defies his order as she reports her affair to Odysseus. It is striking that Poseidon's words are given in direct speech (*Od.* 11.248–52), although in book 11 women do not speak directly, but their stories are reported in indirect speech by Odysseus. The direct speech stresses Tyro's defiance. The revelation of the affair is against Poseidon's prohibition, and his words, which are supposed to remain concealed, resound in direct speech. Doherty argues that Tyro and Arete, like Odysseus, can be seen as resisting the will of the god Poseidon. Tyro's defiance consists of breaking the taboo of silence, while Arete can also be seen as braving Poseidon's wrath by helping Odysseus (Doherty 1995, 125). By breaking her silence, Tyro guarantees her place in the *ehoie*-poetry. Hence, her name acquires *kleos*. Had she obeyed Poseidon's order, she would remain unknown and unmentioned. Her only escape from anonymity is the fame ensuing from her affair with Poseidon. Therefore, Odysseus' story of Tyro would be targeting Arete's cautious silence. The hint is that Arete should not be afraid of Poseidon, and should speak for Odysseus' cause. Odysseus' return home will guarantee Arete's fame. Since Odysseus features as a poet of *ehoie*-poetry, and Arete belongs to this poetic universe, he is her chance to escape ano-

63 Doherty 2006, 313 points out some parallels between the stories of Tyro and Periboia.

nymity. The epic world of Odysseus has not been incompatible with the world of the heroines. On the contrary, the one guarantees the *kleos* of the other.

As already mentioned, the gender tension in Phaiakia is reflected upon the generic interplay with the *ehoie*-poetry. Ekheneos is the key-character that connects the gender with the generic tension. In his twofold intervention, he ostentatiously passes over Arete and emphasizes Alkinoos' authority. He is twice referred to as 'hero' (7.155, 11.342: ἥρωσ Ἐχένης) by the narrator – a rather peculiar appellative considering the standards of the peaceful Phaiakians, who refrain from any kind of warrior activity.⁶⁴ As a character underscoring Alkinoos' authority and undermining Arete's,⁶⁵ his characterization as ἥρωσ may implicitly presuppose an attempted generic shift, which the representative of the heroic world tries here to squeeze out. In this respect, it is significant that these two formulaic references to Ekheneos are carefully placed by the poet after 'Arete's *ehoie*' (7.155–7) and after the 'Catalogue of Women' (11.342–3a) respectively.⁶⁶ Ekheneos undermines Arete's power by pointing to Alkinoos' authority and thus exemplifies the undercurrent of conflict between the king and the queen of Scherie.⁶⁷ In this way, he seems to react implicitly against *ehoie*-poetry. His reaction points against the potential establishment of powerful female figures like Arete and the women of the Catalogue in the narrative of the *Odyssey*. This would signal a grave 'adulteration' of the heroic poetry by *ehoie*-poetry. Besides, the significant name of Ekheneos, the one

64 On the use of ἥρωσ in Homer see now van Wees 2006, 366–70, who argues against a secular meaning.

65 On this see Doherty 1995, 68 f., 77 f.

66 On the interventions of Ekheneos see the brief remarks in Hölscher (1989)³1990, 128 and Garvie 1994, 196 *ad* 7.155–6; cf. Heubeck 1989, 98 *ad* 11.342–6, Latacz 1994 and Mori 2001, 93, 111 on the same passage.

67 As far as Arete is concerned, her father's name seems to reveal an analogous semantics of gender conflict, on the condition that one accepts the paternal nomenclature as an *ad hoc* invention by the poet of the *Odyssey* in order to indirectly serve the characterization of Arete: Πηξήνωρ (7.63) is the one who 'breaks armed ranks' (cf. *LfggrE* s.v. πηξήνωρ: 'men-breaking, shattering (the ranks of) his opponents') and subsequently his daughter displays the same trait, though certainly not on the battlefield. The similar function of Eurykleia's paternal nomenclature (*Od.* 1.429; 2.347; 20.148: ὤπιος θυγάτηρ Πεισηνορίδαο) is treated in Skempis (forthcoming). On the identification of epic women with their fathers see Olson 1992, 4 n. 13.

who ‘possesses ships’,⁶⁸ suggests the Homeric aristocratic ideal, and makes him particularly appropriate to bring up the subject. The emphasis on Ekheneos’ age in both instances as γέρον and Φαιήκων ἀνδρῶν προγενέστερος emphasizes the significance of the old counselor’s opinion. But one is also inclined to think that this reference may also imply the character’s reaction to a lapse of the traditional heroic epic into the thematically diverse genre of the ‘Catalogue of Women’.⁶⁹ It is a fact that the *Odyssey* significantly refines the epic tradition, in particular the ideal of the Iliadic warrior hero, and consequently reflects on the evolution of the epic genre.⁷⁰ We believe that the Phaiakian episode offers a concrete example of this evolutionary tendency inherent in the *Odyssey* by projecting a generic tension between heroic epic and *ehoie*-poetry.

At 11.363–76, Alkinoos says that Odysseus does not seem to be a dissembler or a thief. Thus, he answers obliquely to Odysseus’ suggestion that he would be willing to stay for one more year in Scherie, should that be more profitable for him (11.355–61). Alkinoos’ attitude to Odysseus is again at odds with that of his wife; while Arete seems willing to shower Odysseus with gifts and delay his escort home (11.339–41), Alkinoos is not at all willing to have Odysseus for one year in Scherie and increase his gifts. Oddly enough, Alkinoos says that Odysseus has surveyed skillfully the story of his own sorrows and of all the Argives (11.368–9). This is of course a strange statement. First of all, Odysseus did not say anything about the sorrows of the Argives, much less about all the Argives. Odysseus has just finished relating his encounter with the heroines, but Alkinoos not only does not praise, but deliberately passes over this part of Odysseus’ account. Then, he asks Odysseus to change the subject. Alkinoos dismisses the ‘*ehoie*-poetry’ and asks Odysseus to tell them about his comrades who followed him and died at Troy. We see here that Alkinoos is interested in the Iliadic stories of Odysseus. His request is that Odysseus change genre and move from the female catalogue to the male-oriented heroic poetry. He phrases this request by leaving the *ehoie*-like part of Odysseus’ account

68 See von Kamptz 1982, 63; Braswell 1982, 133 n. 12; Pedrick 1988, 86–7; Wohl 1993, 29–31.

69 For a different approach cf. Wagner-Hasel 2007, 329 f.: ‘der greise Heros Ekheneos repräsentiert mit seinem Alter eine Art Körpergedächtnis, in dem ebenso wie in den Geweben der Frauen das Wissen um zentrale Werte der Gesellschaft aufgehoben ist’.

70 For the most recent discussion on this see Slatkin 2005, 316 ff.; cf. Pucci 1995.

completely unmentioned.⁷¹ Alkinoos seems to imply that Odysseus should speak about the heroes who died at Troy, about the epic world that he claims to be a part of, and not about the women of *ehoie*-poetry. Arete's fascination with the account of the heroines and Alkinoos' request that Odysseus change topic and thus genre represent the gender tension reflected upon the generic question.

Hence, our reading proposes an *ehoie*-frame that starts in a rather oblique way with Athene's speech in book 7 and ends more straightforwardly with the 'Catalogue of Women' in book 11. Odysseus' narrative in the 'Nekyia' extols female virtue and particularly motherhood through the long conversation with Antikleia in the Underworld.⁷² It is worth noting that *ehoie*-poetry provides a particularly suitable 'vessel' for praising motherhood due to the matrifocal emphasis on the presentation of the genealogies of heroes.⁷³ Gera is right to acknowledge that Arete is the first of Odysseus' listeners to react to his Catalogue, where the encounter with his dead mother Antikleia is recounted – it seems that the narrative activates Arete's motherly responses.⁷⁴ It is also noteworthy that Nausikaa refrains from naming Arete, but refers to her twice merely as 'mother' (6.305; 310), a designation which brings forth the text's accent on Arete in her capacity as a mother. In this respect, it might be no coincidence that Odysseus decides to narrate the meeting with his dead mother, perhaps seeking to create a link with Arete and her position in Scherie. The point seems to be that in his cultural background, i. e. that of an epic hero, one's mother is as highly respected as Arete appears to be in the community of the Phaiakians.

5. Conclusion

The usefulness of the formal references to *ehoie*-poetry lies on creating a codified channel of communication between Odysseus and Arete. This kind of poetry, standing at the heart of an innovative epic, provides a

71 Still, οἶα (11.364) in this context might allude to *ehoie*-poetry.

72 On the details and implications of this conversation see Combellack 1974, Ahl – Roisman 1996, 126–34, and especially Tracy 1997, 361–3.

73 Cf. Lyons 1997, 5. On the matrifocal and subsequently matrilineal character of the genealogies in the Hesiodic *Ehoiai* see West 1966, 34 f.; Heilinger 1983, 28. Pace Finkelberg 1991, 308, who speaks of an explicit patrilineality in Greek genealogical poetry relying on West 1985, 31–50.

74 Gera 1997, 48; cf. Loudon 1999, 119 f.

heuristic tool for honing inter-gender communication. *Ehoie*-poetry is, however, a code, which is phatically articulated, though left unclassified, unnamed, at times even covert, as in the case of Arete's entry. One sees in the reaction of Ekheneos that this sort of poetry can cause a disruption on the heroic conceptualization of the epic collective and its representatives, i. e. men. Arete's narrativized etymologies and her affinity to genealogical poetry about women in the Phaiakian episode serve to establish a social communication, which transgresses gender and genre. Besides, the two etymologies of Arete's name which have been discussed in this paper exhibit the paradoxical nature of her name's semantics: on the one hand, it claims communication as its basis and, therefore, fosters narrative by suggesting the necessity of her being addressed by Odysseus; on the other, it reveals a character more or less challenging communication since she remains silent most of the time after Odysseus has supplicated her. Yet, in Arete's case, the meaning of her name as well as her generic affiliation with *ehoie*-poetry have a concrete narrative function: Odysseus understands Athene's hint in book 7, i. e. that his safe homecoming depends on a heroine of genealogical poetry, and when the time comes, he veers his narrative to Arete's world, a world of female *arete*. He seems to be aware that his epic nostos passes through *ehoie*-poetry, just as Arete's *kleos* passes through Odysseus' nostos.