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JRAL ASSOCIATION GRADUATE SCHOOL

THE EXPERIENCE OF SPACE IN RELATION TO ARCHITECTURE IN THE HOMERIC EPICS

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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ABSTRACT

Is there a concept of space 'before' philosophy? The thesis addresses a question which is relevant to contemporary architectural theory but it attempts an answer through the examination of the Homeric text. The general relevance of this is because the Homeric text may be said to be historical antecedent to the development of philosophy. Therefore it provides the possibility for a different understanding of space. What makes the Homeric text a kind of text-case is that it predates the concept of space itself – in the sense of Platonic *chora* 'receptacle', that is, space as container. Our reading of the Homeric text is governed by an attempt to reconstruct the possible experiences of spatial relations as they are conveyed by the Homeric discourse. The thesis concentrates upon central Homeric terms *chore/os, domos, thure, megaron* and *thalamos,* in order to analyse them in terms of the experiences of which they were an element. This involves a close analysis of the Homeric text. But this reading faces two major obstacles in the attempt to restore the historical and specific character of the Homeric categories. These two obstacles are different sides of the coin 'anachronism'. One major form of anachronism is to permit the philosophical definition of space and of architectural elements to define the Homeric relations whereas those relations actually predate and may be thought to be independent of philosophy. The second obstacle to this reading is aspects of philosophy which has systematically reduced the independence of the Homeric text by allowing terms to be defined by philosophy and then projected backwards as Homeric reading.

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

CHAPTER 1. ***EPOS*** / 'SPEECH' - EXPERIENCE AND DISTANCING 16
1.1. Introduction
1.2. The Homeric Text within the Orality-Literacy Debate
1.3. Speech - Experience within the Homeric Text
1.3.1. Speech and the Body
1.3.2. Speech as Listening and Distancing

CHAPTER 2. ***CHORE - CHOROS*** / 'SPACE' AS EXPERIENCE 58
2.1. Introduction
2.2. Space as Container within Different Theories
2.3. Space in Homer
2.3.1. Philological Account of *Chore - Choros*
2.3.2. *Chore - Choros* within the Homeric Text
2.3.2.1. *Chore* : Things and Identity
2.3.2.2. *Choras Anthropon* : The Space of the Narrative
2.3.2.3. *Choros* : Event as Immobility
2.3.3. Gender Distinction
2.3.4. *Choros* and the Domestic

CHAPTER 3. ***DEMAS - DOMOS*** / 'BODY' - 'HOUSE' : ON STRUCTURE 105
3.1. Introduction
3.2. The 'Body and the Building' Relation within Architectural and Linguistic Theories
3.3. *Demas - Domos* Relation within the Homeric Epics
3.3.1. *Demas* / 'The build of the body' : Structure as Trans-fixed Appearance
3.3.2. *Domos* / 'House' : Con-structure as Trans-fixity
3.3.2.1. *Dedmemenos* / 'Constructed - Tamed'
3.3.2.2. *Endon* / 'Inside' as Structure

CHAPTER 4. ***THURE - PULE*** / BEING AT THE 'DOOR' - BEING AT THE 'GATE' : AMBIGUOUS BODIES AND DISEMBODIED VISION. 158

4.1. Introduction
4.2. *Thure/Pule* within Linguistic Theories
4.3. *Thure/Pule* within the Homeric Text
4.3.1. The Crossing of *Thure/Pule* as Change of Experience
4.3.2. Being at *Thure/Pule* : On Ambiguity
4.3.2.1. Ambiguous Bodies
4.3.2.2. Ambiguity and Power
4.3.3. *Horai* and *Horan*: 'Time' and 'Sight' as Control Mechanisms
4.3.3.1. The Ambiguity and Aggressiveness of Sight
4.3.3.2. Disembodied Vision

CHAPTER 5. ***MEGARON*** / 'HALL' :TRANSFORMATION AS CENTER 206

5.1. Introduction
5.2. *Megaron* and the Homeric Rituals
5.2.1. Hospitality as a Process of Transformation
5.2.2. Feasting and Incorporation
5.2.3. Mourning and the Re-constitution of *Domos*

CHAPTER 6. ***THALAMOS*** / 239
'STORE-ROOM, WOMEN'S-CHAMBER, BEDCHAMBER' :CONTAINMENT - DANGER - FIXITY

6.1. Introduction
6.2. *Thalamos* as Container
6.2.1. Things and Containment
6.2.2. Immediate Intimacy and Danger
6.2.3. Fixity and Locking

BIBLIOGRAPHY 269-276

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INTRODUCTION

The object of the thesis is the Homeric text insofar as it can illuminate the category of space in the Homeric period. The project has two different kinds of sources. On the one hand there was a concern to understand the Homeric text, in the context of a historical project of reconstructing the Homeric experience of space, and on the other hand there was my interest as a practicing architect in understanding the nature and signification of space in different historical cultural contexts. The fact of being an architect I hope equips me with a *quasi*-intuitive approach to the issue of space, an issue that dominates the relation between architecture and philosophy within post-modern discourse, especially within the discourse of deconstruction.[1] So although the topic of the thesis seems to be a historical project, it is indirectly related to contemporary architectural theory, insofar as the investigation of the cultural construction of space entails the study of such elements of architecture as 'door', or 'room', the distinction of 'inside / outside', the notions of 'center' and 'construction / structure', and even the category of 'house', all of which are normally considered to have an almost 'natural' status within architectural discipline. The study is concerned

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[1] Note that a well-known contemporary collaboration between architecture and philosophy, between Eisenman and Derrida, was developed on Derrida's reading of the Platonic *chora*. On the relation between architecture and philosophy, see WIGLEY, M., 1995: *The Architecture of Deconstruction: Derrida's Haunt,* MIT Press. B. Genocchio also argues that "...most contemporary theorisations of space are built around the assumption of a declining Cartesian spatial order. This is a spatiality associated with Western metaphysics and its tribe of grids, binaries, hierarchies and oppositions. As this conception of a fixed, ordered space begins to give way to views with 'more flexible and equitable organizations', so 'postmodernist' discourse has largely come to be associated with a critique of Cartesian space. When it comes, however, to considering its replacement, opinions are fundamentally diverse." GENOCCHIO, B., 1995: "Heterotopia and its Limits," *Transition,* Issue 41, pp. 33.

with distinguishing and differentiating how these elements are experienced in a different culture. Such an approach is also in line with the current concern within architectural theory with ways in which philosophical discourse has repressed differences in order to produce a universalized discourse on space.[2] So antiquity has a privileged strategic status since it is marked by the intervention of 'philosophy'.[3] The choice of the Homeric text as object of the research is thus not accidental. It is a text that 'predates' the advent of philosophy, but whose analysis has been massively dominated by post-Platonic interpretations and philosophical descriptions. The thesis tries to answer the question of what it felt like 'before'. But of course we can only approach the text if we are aware of all those concepts which run from Plato to ourselves and which we should not project back onto the analysis of the Homeric. Our investigation is thus both historical and conceptual.

The thesis, perhaps against initial appearances is essentially a contribution to architectural thought. This raises the question of its relation to classical studies. Obviously much of the material is taken from classical sources and obviously must be judged by conventional standards of classical scholarship. Nonetheless it does not pretend to be a contribution to classical studies. There is no attempt to reconstruct the

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[2] E. Casey, in his study on the history of place, writes: "At work as well in the obscuration of place is the universalism inherent in western culture from the beginning. This universalism is most starkly evident in the search for ideas, usually labeled 'essences,' that obtain e*verywhere* and for which a particular *somewhere*, a given place, is presumably irrelevant. Is it accidental that the obsession with space as something infinite and ubiquitous coincided with the spread of Christianity, a religion with universalist aspirations?" In contrast he argues that contemporary "...rediscoveries of the importance of place [share] a conviction that place itself is no fixed thing: it has no steadfast essence." CASEY, S.E., 1997: *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*, University of California Press, pp. xii, 286.

[3] The notion of philosophy perhaps has a historical origin, that can be traced back to Plato. In any case it is from the work of J. Derrida that this notion of philosophy is drawn.

historical reality behind the Homeric text; nor is there even an attempt to provide an exhaustive analysis of the discourse of Homer. Had that been the aim, then all sorts of evidence from classical studies would have been relevant and would have formed a necessary part of the thesis. But in fact, the thesis is much more restricted than this and is governed not by the protocols of historical reconstruction, but by a series of questions within architectural theory. These questions are as it were the starting point but also the limitation of the scope of the thesis. Doubtless this will produce a form of argument and the use of evidence which will at times seem eccentric and perhaps insufficient if interpreted as historical claims about Homeric Greece. But this is not the object of the thesis.

Another clarification must be entered concerning the relation of the thesis to philosophical concepts. Clearly philosophical concepts have been influential in determining the concepts of most fields of humanistic inquiry. The problem presents itself in this thesis as this: if the attempt to reconstruct the Homeric categories requires the critique of interpretations derived from 'philosophy', how are we to identify the 'philosophical'? Or put the other way, how does one identify the Homeric (those fragments which have been repressed by philosophy but not erased)? Throughout the thesis we argue against philosophical concepts while making continuous reference to 'experience'. We need to clarify this point. By experience we do not mean something epistemologically related to sense data. This would inevitably reproduce a 'philosophical' distinction between the sensible and the intelligible, a distinction which strangely and for us decisively enough coincides with the invention of Platonic *chora* (χώρα) 'receptacle'. The distinction between thinking and sensing – – and ultimately between mind and body – is for us inextricably tied to a concept of space as container, a container that receives, informs and defines. What we call

experience is also a concept, of course. But we mean something definite by it – whatever describes the 'specific' character of the culture (at an empirical level) or whatever refuses to be generalized (at a theoretical level). In this thesis 'experience' describes the specific differences and manifestations of the 'Homeric' as opposed to Platonic and post-Platonic. Secondly, the status of deducing experience from a literary text constitutes an important problem for this research. Our argument does not depend upon the direct translation of the poem into an account of social reality. In this sense we have tried to avoid a sociology of experience in which 'reality' is read off from a poem.[4] We adopt a more conditional position. We do assume that the categories of affects derived from the text did have some role in ancient Greece, but we make no strong claim as to their exclusiveness or even as to the social power of the affects identified. To put it more simply, we do not claim that the text reflects reality, but we do assume that the Homeric listeners made sense of the poems.

In analysing the text we try to avoid that form of philological analysis which is strongly governed by philosophy. There is a kind of Heideggerian approach which reconstructs historical experience by showing that the origin of the word encapsulates reality. Our aim is simply to test some hypothesis of architectural theory in a philological way. The particularity of the Homeric text, a text before philosophy, offers the possibility of investigating the relation of a non-philosophical language with 'architecture'. Terms that later become part of the philosophical discourse, such

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[4] R. Finnegan in her study on oral poetry writes: "What is the relationship between poetry and society? Does oral poetry 'reflect' the society in which it exists?...Large questions of this sort – the typical concerns of the sociology of literature – are abstract and elusive. They cannot be avoided in any sociological approach to poetry, but to move only on the level of such abstract and vague questions can lead to frustration – or to tautology." FINNEGAN, R., 1977: *Oral Poetry, its nature, significance and social context*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 214.

as *logos* and *choros*, we believe can be examined in a non-philosophical context, though only with great difficulty. In the case of the Homeric text its description is so much dominated by post-Platonic interpretations that the research into its category of space cannot really be started until it is freed from its previous anachronistic readings. Anachronism here is not just contained in subsequent interpretations but is itself very much an effect of *chora*, of space conceived as a container. To give just an example: that which according to our interpretation constitutes a difference at the level of experience between the Homeric term *chore* and the Platonic *chora*, is reduced within scholarship to a linguistic difference between the endings *-e* and *-a*, and assigned a spatial difference in their origins – Ionic or Attic, a difference which is rendered indifferent. Our analysis is philological but clearly in conflict with much contemporary scholarship and involves a critique of Emile Benveniste's etymology. It is of course easy to accuse others of anachronism and there may be a blind spot of our own anachronisms. But we argue it is only through a critique of anachronism that we can approach and establish a relation with the Homeric text. Throughout the thesis we try to deconstruct and defamiliarize categories that have been rendered 'natural' or 'self-evident' in order to understand that they are culturally constructed and specific.[5] As we try to identify what is unique in the Homeric experience of space, we come to face the anthropological problem of establishing the difference[6] between the Homeric

[5] Derrida writes: "De-construction therefore analyses and questions conceptual pairs which are currently accepted as self-evident and natural, as if they hadn't been institutionalized at some precise point, as if they had no history. Because of being taken for granted they restrict thinking." DERRIDA, J., 1986: "Architecture Where Desire Can Live," Jacques Derrida Interviewed by Eva Meyer, *Domus* no. 671, April 1986, pp. 17-27, (reprinted in *Theorizing a new Agenda For Architecture: An Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965-1995*, K. Nesbitt ed., Princeton Architectural Press, 1996, pp. 146.)

[6] On the problem of identity and difference in anthropology see COUSINS, M., 1989: "In the Midst of Psychoanalysis," *New Formations*, n. 7, pp. 84.

Greeks and us, or other cultures. It is not our aim to produce a comparative analysis, but to establish the minimum conditions of avoiding anachronism. Thus comparison is not conducted in a systematic way, for there is a need to establish only differences rather than elaborate wholesale historical comparisons.[7] Each issue which we address is chosen as an arena of conflicting interpretations which may enable us to have a more differentiated understanding of the Homeric terms. Even when we argue in relation to a philosophical 'before' we are not interested in the issue of 'before' and 'after' as such, but in how the distinction might throw light on the nature of the Homeric categories of space. Comparison then is a means of clarification. Sometimes this involves a negative approach; we define not what something is, but what it is not, in order to reach a higher degree of clarification. This will also involve showing the possible associations that a reader can make and the traps of misunderstanding which can follow. In other words our 'strategy' is to alert the attention of the reader to his/her presuppositions which might form an obstacle to understanding the terms. This makes the reading an uncertain adventure rather than an exercise in the application of a method. For the fact is that our strategies of reading work upon more fronts than could be subsumed into a method. Nor does the thesis make any attempt – as one might have expected – to relate textual evidence and archeological remains. It is not the problem of Homeric dating[8] which is the reason for this exclusion, so much

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[7] We believe that each historical period deserves to be studied for its own sake and not for the purpose of a comparison, but we also acknowledge that comparison is indeed inevitable.

[8] "Yet, one is faced with the well-known problem: does Homer portray the institutions of his own period (late 8th c. BC, according to widespread opinion), those of the three preceding centuries (11th-9th/early 8th c. BC), those of the remote Mycenaean era (13th-12th c. BC), or lastly an amalgam of the institutions of all these period? ...It is commonly assumed that the epics include elements and features of the Mycenean, Dark Age and 8th c. strata, and that they also contain later interpolations." MAZARAKIS, A., 1987: *From Rulers' Dwellings to Temples: A Study of the Origins of Greek*

as the fact that to use archeological evidence to control or validate the hypothesis of the thesis raises a mass of complicated theoretical and scholarly issues which have never been addressed critically.[9] Indeed the ordinary sense of 'archeological evidence' is not directly relevant to our research. 'Archeological evidence' is not innocent and can never be an unproblematic *corpus* which validates or refutes hypotheses formulated elsewhere. In this sense 'archeological evidence' is not directly relevant to our research. 'Archeological evidence' is not simply 'evidence' but another text to be decoded. Archeology itself has a history, and has been conducted under anachronistic rubrics which identify spaces in the rediscovered remains of buildings, according to criteria which post-date those remains. In fact 'archeological evidence' is a 19th century construction, which still moves – in so far it concerns the representation of architectural remains – in accord with 19th century categories of the function of spaces and indeed the names of spaces. Briefly one might refer here to the persistent tendency of the 19th century archeology to identify rooms with archeological sites without inquiring whether the category of the 'room' is remotely historically appropriate.[10] While we have not used 'archeological evidence'

Religious Architecture in the Protogeometric and Geometric Periods, unpublished Ph.D. Univ. of London pp. 378. What matters in the present thesis however is whether the text predates the advent of philosophy, and in that sense the problem of its exact dating lies beyond our concerns.

[9] M. Jameson, who examines the relation between textual evidence and archeological remains of ancient Greek houses at least acknowledges the problems involved, but without analysing them. JAMESON, M., 1990: "Private Space and the Greek City," *The Greek City: From Homer to Alexander*, Os. Murray and S. Price eds., Clarendon Press, Oxford.

[10] Although there is an ongoing debate on the interpretation of evidence in archeology (see HODDER, I., 1986: *Reading the Past: Current Approaches to Interpretation in Archeology*, Cambridge University Press), we suggest that the representation of architectural remains – as is also the case with architectural representation in general – remains conventional and thus already entails a specific interpretation of the findings. However, it is interesting to note that Hodder's excavations at Çatalhöyük (Neolithic settlement in Turkey) acknowledge this problem and are seeking to document the site not according to

to refute or validate our hypothesis, we might think that our arguments in fact could generate a new type of archeological classification. In the two last chapters of the thesis it becomes obvious that archeology not only adopts the conventional methods of architectural representation in order to produce its drawings, but in fact directly inherits categories from orthodox architectural theory, such as 'room' and 'house' – in order to interpret its findings. Thus another problem has to be confronted, which is the correspondence between language and architecture. A natural correspondence between terms such as *thalamos, megaron,* and specific locations within the Homeric house is not usually questioned within scholarship. However our investigation, instead of taking all these as given and attempting to validate both by reference to archeological remains, opens up a new area of inquiry whose implications concern the experience of the Homeric language and architecture. To explore this issue in more detail would be impossible in the context of the present Ph.D. But it is hoped that this thesis can open a new point of departure for research in a critical archeology, and it is one we would like to pursue.

A limited number of previous works which deal with our topic sharply differ from our approach. In R. Martienssen's book, *The Idea of Space in Ancient Greek Architecture*,

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'rooms', but according to human activity which occupied the space. The team of researchers who apply 'micromorphology' to study the use of space, write: "Anthropological studies of the use of space have illustrated that space is defined by architectural units is endowed with meaning through practice, through the activities carried out in that space, which are both informed by, and therefore representative of, sociocultural behaviour and conceptual schemes...Analysis of microstratigraphic sequences enables study of the intended and actual uses of space by examination of the types of floors or surfaces, the impact of activities on those surfaces, the relationship between sediments, artefacts and organic remains in deposits, and post-depositional alterations." MATTHEWS, W., FRENCH, C., LAWRENCE, T.,

one can easily trace the influence of 19th century theories of space.[11] C. Doxiades adopts a positivist – in the sense of being measurable – concept of space to analyse the so-called 'exterior space' *via* measurements and the theory of proportion.[12] A. Antoniades is directly concerned with Homeric space in his book, but in fact what he does, as he describes it, is "...to read the building program in Homer and undertake a synthetic approach."[13] J. P. Vernant does discuss space before philosophy, but with no direct reference to the Homeric text. He writes on the mythological pair of Hestia and Hermes.[14] He inscribes his distinction between mythical space and rationalized space within the distinction between the mythological and the rational. This distinction may well mark an advance in addressing the problem but the distinction that it employs is still itself a 'philosophical' distinction. Thus his mythological space is itself structured on pairs of oppositions that are considered natural, i.e., feminine/ interior/ private as opposed to masculine/ exterior/ public. These oppositions may have been valid for Greeks at a later period, but given the intervention of philosophy in constructing these oppositions, we cannot infer that they apply to the Homeric text as well.

CUTLER, D., 1996: "Multiple Surfaces: the Micromorphology", *On the surface: Çatalhöyük 1993-95*, I. Hodder ed., British Institute of Archeology at Ankara, pp. 302.

[11] MARTIENSSEN, R., 1958: *The Idea of Space in Ancient Greek Architecture*, Witwaterstand University Press.

[12] DOXIADES, C., 1972: *Architectural Space in Ancient Greece*, MIT Press.

[13] ANTONIADIS, A., 1992: *Epic Space*, Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York.

[14] VERNANT, J-P., 1983: "Hestia-Hermes: The religious Expression of Space and Movement in Ancient Greece," *Myth and Thought among the Greeks*, Routledge, pp. 127-75. There is no reference to the goddess Hestia in the epics, but only of *hestie* (ἱστίη) 'hearth'. It would be interesting to investigate the kind of experience evoked by this term for it denotes an architectural element of the Homeric house. However, to take the identification of the hearth with the goddess Hestia for granted in order to follow Vernant's argument, or to develop a discussion on religion, seems to us inappropriate for research which is mainly concerned with architectural theory.

The difference of our approach can be understood by presenting a brief synopsis of our research. The thesis includes six chapters; each one addresses a different Homeric term in order to illuminate the experience evoked by it within the text. Each term also introduces issues which involve both historical and theoretical problems. Each chapter inevitably entails a critique of a word's previous interpretations, while focusing upon its detailed textual analysis. New interpretations are thus produced. This helps to generate an understanding – at an anthropological level – of the difference between the Homeric Greeks and us or Plato, and also opens up a different perspective for architectural theory. The chapters are relatively autonomous and each has its own introduction and conclusion. Each term and its associated experience is presented in such a way as to add a piece to the mosaic of the Homeric experience. The thesis does not pretend to be exhaustive but indicates and proposes a new approach to the Homeric text, and a different understanding of the issue of space.

The first chapter is introductory; it addresses the complex relation between Homeric language and experience, and criticizes the way the Homeric text is conventionally located within the orality-literacy debate. The analysis of *epos* 'speech' is intended to displace a whole series of polarizing arguments such as the abstract and concrete nature of language, the distinction of form and content, as well as arguments about perception – conceived as a universal *a priori* category – that relates visual experience to distancing and opposes to it hearing, related to participation. In unraveling these theoretical arguments the chapter opens up an anthropological and historical hypothesis concerning the relation between speech and the body. This centers on the experience of what we call the 'multiple body', a body

in which the corporeal, mental and psychological are interwoven.[15] As a result we can better understand that our distinction between the mind and the body is in fact a construct of our culture and neither natural nor universal. The chapter also introduces to us the play of 'distancing' as an effect of speech and the experience of hearing in the epics; this marks another difference between our concept of subjectivity and of Homeric individuality. In fact Homeric speaking was not experienced as an expression of a thinking subject. Homeric identity is indeed produced within the experience of speech but paradoxically as an effect of distancing. This is another reason why the Homeric text will not fit into the terms of the orality-literacy debate, where vision is considered as distancing and hearing as participation.

The second chapter analyses the Homeric experience of space evoked by two Homeric terms, the feminine *chore* and the masculine *choros*, where *chore* involves the experience of things, and *choros* that of events. Homeric 'space' is non-enduring and cannot be separated from the things and events that generate it. This rather awkward form is used in order to differentiate from the Platonic *chora* as well as from Newtonian and even post-structuralist conceptions of space as container of either things or events. This analysis also involves a central critique of the contemporary scholarship which anachronistically interprets the Homeric terms according to post-Platonic conceptions of space and place. Moreover it enables us to begin to understand the Homeric experience of things as being co-produced with their *chore* and may be attached to the 'multiple body' conferring its identity. The barbaric

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[15] 'Multiple body' is an ugly formulation that tries to establish in its awkwardness a literal form of distinguishing the difference between Homeric body and our concept of a divided body and mind. Unfortunately the formulation will have to reappear throughout the thesis as a reminder of the difference.

character of this definition is, at least in part, an effect of the difficulty of differentiating something from our habitual way of stating it. At stake here is an identity which is non-enduring and which will not fit into our concepts of subject-object and their relation, for that whole scene is a direct consequence of a conception of space as container.[16]

The third chapter examines the relation between body and house indicated by the linguistic similarity of the Homeric terms *demas* and *domos*. We seek to show that the relation between body and building, where an ideal, mathematical and male body which serves as a model for architecture is reflected in the way scholarship (specifically Benveniste) interprets the relation between *demas* and *domos* as a linguistic relation based on a common Indo-European root meaning 'construction'. Once we are aware that such a relation is not natural but historically constructed, then we are able to understand the relation of the Homeric terms which is established on the 'paradoxical' experience of 'trans-fixity'. Both Homeric house and body are experienced as fixed and transformable simultaneously, and such experience cannot be separated from the experience of inclusion, feminine gender and control.

The three next chapters examine terms that are directly related to architecture, for they have always been interpreted as specific elements of the house. We have not attempted to examine in this thesis all the terms related to the Homeric house. But we have chosen those terms that seem relevant to the interpretation of the Homeric space, for they give us the opportunity to challenge the conventional approach of scholarship. The fourth chapter approaches the category of the door and the gate by examining the Homeric terms *thure* and *pule*. The contemporary conception of door

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[16] See chapter on *chore-choros*, section 2.3.2.1., especially pp. 79-84.

and gate as functional objects or as symbols of separation between different spaces is again reflected in the way the scholarship interprets the two terms. By contrast we argue that such a conception indicates a repression of an anxiety that binds the experience of doors and gates and which can be detected through the detailed analysis of the Homeric terms. Indeed *thure* and *pule* are experienced not only as specific things but as the evocation of the experience of the transition from one category of experience to another and as such invest Homeric bodies with ambiguity when related to them.

The fifth and sixth chapter examine two more 'architectural' Homeric terms, *megaron* and *thalamos*. Both terms provide an opportunity to challenge the notion of a house as an ensemble of rooms where 'room' is a general concept specified through the notion of function. For both *megaron* and *thalamos* are conventionally interpreted within scholarship as rooms with specific functions and locations within the Homeric *domos*. *Megaron* is usually translated as the 'central room of the house' where domestic rituals such as hospitality, feasting and mourning are performed. Such a notion of ritual rests upon a concept of space in which it can be contained, or 'take place'. If we consider this as an anachronism then we can understand that what we call Homeric ritual is in fact an experience of a controlled transformation, central to the survival of any *domos*, achieved through the repetitive movements of the Homeric bodies. And it is those bodies that produce the non-enduring Homeric space called *megaron*. *Thalamos*, which is conventionally variously and bafflingly interpreted as 'store-room', 'women chamber' and 'bed-chamber', evokes the experience of containment; an experience of immediate intimacy reserved for the members of the house, produced through sight, smell, sleep and intercourse. *Megaron* and *thalamos*

on this reading are not so much names of specific rooms within the Homeric house, but specific categories of experience.

This outline shows it is impossible to answer the issues raised within the thesis by considering them simply as historical problems of reconstruction. It is only by acknowledging the theoretical problems involved that we can open up a new field of inquiry. If we try to answer the anthropological question of how the Homeric experience of space differs from our concept of space and place we inevitably become more aware about our concepts and more importantly that ours are neither universal nor inevitable. In that sense our 'philological' approach to the terms through which we analyse the Homeric experience of space indeed refer us to issues of contemporary architectural theory, and generates a new perspective to consider not only the issue of space but also to rethink the categories of house, room, or door, together with the way that our gender and other identities are constructed.[17] Our research tries to understand how the Homeric 'spatial' vocabulary works, but it cannot produce a new literary translation[18] of the Homeric terms. Perhaps it can produce its effects in terms of architecture. As such, it might have an impact on the production of architecture, not in the sense that the theory provides the guidelines for

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[17] On the relation between gender identification and space in contemporary architecture, A. Betsky notes: "starting in the 1980s...some designers thought that they needed to create spaces that would challenge those traditional distinctions between inside and outside, between the planned and the experienced, between artificial and natural, and between useful and pleasurable that had made the cultural stereotypes of men and women into real, lived experiences." BETSKY, A., 1995: *Building Sex: Men, Women, Architecture, and the Construction of Sexuality*, William Morrow and Company, Inc. New York, pp. 176.

[18] It proposes, however, an understanding of the so-called inconsistencies which are conventionally interpreted as a grammatical phenomenon. Incoherence in grammar indicates – according to our interpretation – a repression of inconsistencies at the level of experience.

the architectural practice, but because there is a relation between language and architecture, between the language of architecture and the architectural language. The thesis cannot propose a more appropriate concept of space for, to anticipate an unlikely conclusion, the very 'concept' of space might be the very mark of repression,[19] and in fact the title of the research is profoundly and inevitably anachronistic.

For the Greek terms discussed within the text a transliterated form is used (always in italic, and without the definite article 'the') as well as the Homeric original in parenthesis, while the conventional translation (from the Homeric dictionary or Liddell-Scott) follows in inverted commas. To give an example: *megaron* (μέγαρον) 'hall'. Only the translation of the Homeric quotations are in the main text, and it is always accompanied by the Homeric text in the footnote. The translation of R. Lattimore is used unless otherwise stated, while the additions of the author are enclosed in brackets. The exhaustive analysis of the Homeric terms was facilitated by the Ibycus program, but was always integrated with the examination of the broader context in which they occur.

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[19] "...unlike the unconscious, place is not so controversial or so intrusive or embarrassing as to require repression. On the contrary, just because place is so much with us, and we with it, it has been taken for granted, deemed not worthy of separate treatment. Also taken for granted is the fact that we implaced beings to begin with, that place is an a priori of our existence on earth. Just because we cannot choose in the matter, we believe we do not have to think about this basic facticity very much, if at all." CASEY, E.S., op. cit., pp. x. This is a conventional approach to the issue of space/place. We do not suggest that a repression is involved in space/place, but we argue instead, that the conception of space/place is in itself a mechanism of repression. See chapter on *chore - choros*.

1

EPOS

'SPEECH' - EXPERIENCE AND DISTANCING

1.1. Introduction
1.2. The Homeric Text within the Orality-Literacy Debate
1.3. Speech - Experience within the Homeric Text
1.3.1. Speech and the Body
1.3.2. Speech as Listening and Distancing

1.1. INTRODUCTION

What is the relation between language and experience within the Homeric text? This is not a question which can be given a direct answer. Indeed, to pose it opens onto a most complex area within the human sciences – complex because it lies in a space where unresolved theoretical questions meet historical investigation. That is to say, an answer would require us to have an adequate theoretical grasp of the relation[1] between language and experience before we investigated what the relation was in a particular historical text. But no such situation exists nor is any in prospect. It is not that there is no theory of the relation between language and experience, but that there are too many, each competing for our assent. Moreover, much of historical

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[1] On the difficulty of thinking the relation between two things, M. Heidegger writes: "We immediately conceive the relation in terms of the things which in the given instance are related. We little understand how, in what way, by what means, and from where the relation comes about, and what it properly is *qua* relation. ..It remains dark to us what determines their real relation, and from what source what we so casually call the 'real' really comes." HEIDEGGER, M., 1971: "The Nature of Language," *On the Way to Language*, Harper and Row, pp. 83.

investigation is unconsciously coded and determined by particular theories of the relation between language and experience. At the same time research cannot wait for the clarification of the theoretical issues and the researcher must adopt a strategy towards work which sits uneasily between philosophical accounts of language on the one hand and anthropological and historical linguistic analysis on the other hand. We find that the strategy of Jacques Derrida illuminating and helpful at this point.[2] This is not a question of being for or against what is now called deconstruction; it is a matter of attending with great care to what we might think of a double register of inquiry – theoretical and historical – at the point where those two registers intersect. This requires a certain tack. In this thesis, we try to avoid coming to a view about the so-called concrete or abstract character of the Homeric language, just as we have tried to avoid confronting large ontological questions[3] of the type: What belongs to language and what to experience in the Homeric text? These questions cannot adequately be resolved in the scope of this thesis. Rather we have adopted a strategy of attempting to avoid such questions in the service of putting new problems forward which in the end we hope will, if not resolve the general questions, at least produce a more adequate representation of them. A central plank of our strategy is to avoid anachronism at every level – both in our interpretations and as a ground for criticizing other interpretations. This involves an attempt to be as aware as possible of our own

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[2] To work at the edge of philosophy and anthropology is not impossible given the existing contamination between the two. J. Derrida argues that while different domains of knowledge – anthropological, historical, etc. – cannot found themselves in any other way than on presuppositions that do not belong to their knowledge or their competence, and while these presuppositions therefore constitute a style of onto-phenomenological questioning, conversely this fundamental questioning cannot protect itself from a hidden – anthropological, historical, etc. – contamination. DERRIDA, J., 1993: *Aporias*, Stanford University Press, California.

categorial presuppositions concerning the general relation between language and experience and the particular meanings and translations we make of the Homeric text. To make things worse, the Homeric text is not just any kind of text. It is the first Greek literary product which, in the form that was handed to us, as J. Svenbro pointed out, "has the air of a transcription of a voice."[4] It is this fact which situates the Homeric text not just as a text whose interpretation raises theoretical and historical problems. For these problems are compounded and over-determined by the fact that the Homeric text is the central text in the continuing debate over the distinction of orality and literacy.[5] This debate has a tendency to polarize oral and written cultures in a differential, almost oppositional relation to the nature of language and perception.[6] Scholarship dates the Homeric text in the 8th century BC, and C. Segal writes:

"By the end the eight century BC, the Greeks had developed the North Semitic syllabary into an alphabetic writing far better suited to their own language than the Mycenaean syllabary had been.

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[3] On the assumptions about essence, identity and truth that such questions imply, see DERRIDA, J., 1992: "The First Session," *Acts of Literature*, Routledge.

[4] SVENBRO, J., 1993: *Phrasikleia: An Anthropology of Reading in Ancient Greece,* Cornell University Press, pp. 28.

[5] A. Ford writes: "It is surely a delicate, even paradoxical business to define a genre of poetry that stands on the verge of orality and literacy, for closely attached to any literary description are notions of text, forms, and authors that may well be irrelevant to the 'song culture' of archaic Greece...". FORD, A., 1994: *Homer: The Poetry of the Past,* Cornell University Press, pp. 14.

[6] On the relation between language and perception in orality-literacy theory see ONG, W.J., 1982: *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*, Methuen. For an account of the orality-literacy debate in relation to the Homeric Epics see: GRIFFIN, J., 1983: *Homer on Life and Death*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, and EDWARDS, M. 1987: *Homer, Poet of the Iliad*, Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press.

Nevertheless, because of the preceding centuries of oral culture and the limited technology, the spoken (and sung) word continued to have a privileged place."[7]

Segal attributes to the Homeric text the supposed features of an oral culture. He distinguishes Ear-knowledge from Eye-knowledge, the former being related to orality, the second to literacy.[8] Hence, models of oral cultures provide a theory from which to draw conclusions about both language, experience, and their mutual relation. Indeed, the orality-literacy debate is important for our research because it makes a connection between modalities of language: oral-written, and modalities of perception: acoustic-visual. But without ignoring or underestimating the importance of the debate, we shall need to understand its presuppositions, situating it within its own historical and theoretical context in order to step out of the mutually exclusive oppositions it proposes. For the debate severely limits the strategies of interpretation which we wish to employ and we would be reduced to repeating the opposition produced by the debate. In effect, we shall not adopt any theory of orality as a ready-made model to be applied within the study of the Homeric text. Our strategy will focus on destabilizing the conceptual order of the oppositional model: oral / form / concrete / acoustic / participatory - written / content / abstract / visual / distancing, through which Homeric language is usually approached. A number of classical scholars, in the context of literary criticism, have already done much to question the structuring of opposites that govern the original orality-literacy debate[9] and their work on the Homeric text serves

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[7] SEGAL, C. 1995: "Spectator and Listener", *The Greeks*, ed. J-P. Vernant, The University of Chicago Press, pp. 191.

[8] Ibid.

[9] The traditional opposition between speech and writing has been challenged by Derrida in his reading of Plato. DERRIDA, J., 1981: "Plato's Pharmacy", *Dissemination*, University of Chicago Press. For a

as a basis for our argument. The difference of our approach is inscribed in the different interest that an architect has in the Homeric text in contrast to a philologist. In a cross-disciplinary project as this, one works more as a *bricoleur*.[10] The research – which is specifically concerned with the experience of the Homeric space – remains focused on the relation between language and perception and not on the issue of Homeric language as such. The destabilization of opposites will not produce a new theory about the relation between Homeric language and experience, but it will produce specific effects. In fact, it will permit us to understand the kind of experiences evoked by the Homeric 'spatial vocabulary' and to differentiate them from our 'architectural language'. It will also make us aware that as the Homeric language shapes a specific experience of space, in a similar way, our architectural language informs and determines our language of architecture. Thus the traditional distinction between theory and practice in architecture becomes problematic.

In this chapter, however, we seek to investigate the way language was experienced, and the mechanism through which language evokes experience within the epics. This will identify two points; it will open up the complex relation between speech and the body, and will introduce to us the play of 'distancing' as an effect of

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similar approach to the Homeric text see LYNN-GEORGE, M., 1988: *Epos: Word, Narrative and the Iliad*, Macmillan Press. An earlier draft of the thesis was criticized for the lack of reference to contemporary scholarship within classical studies which dealt with the issue of the Homeric language. This draft now incorporates a far more extensive reference to this literature and will be found distributed through the chapter. For ease of reference I list their appearance here: FORD 1994: fn. 5, 36, 63, 76, 88, 107 / LYNN-GEORGE 1988: fn. 9, 20, 24, 89, 92, 94 / KAHANE 1994: fn. 12, 26 / FINNEGAN 1977: fn. 14, 15, 19, 33 / SHIVE 1987: fn. 18 / AUSTIN 1975: fn. 25, 48 / SACKS 1987: fn. 27 / SCHEIN 1984: fn. 28 / MARTIN 1989: fn. 45, 61, 71, 115 / AHL 1984: fn. 63 / THALMANN 1988: fn. 63 / MONSACRÉ 1984: fn. 64, 68 / SULLIVAN 1988: fn. 65, 66 / LATEINER 1995: fn. 83 / GOLDHILL 1991: fn. 92, 114 / GROTTY 1994: fn. 94, 107, 112 / REDFIELD 1975: fn. 100, 107.

[10] Lévi-Strauss describes the *bricoleur* as the one who constructs using the material at hand.

speech and the experience of hearing. But before we can do this we will have to address the way in which the Homeric epic is situated within the orality-literacy debate, in order to refuse the answer – which it gives us in the context of opposition between the oral and the written – to the question: what kind of language is the Homeric language and what is its relation to experience? This will involve dealing with two points in the orality -literacy theory in respect to the Homeric text; the form vs content as far as it concerns the modality of language, and the acoustic vs visual concerning the modality of perception.

1.2. THE HOMERIC TEXT WITHIN THE ORALITY-LITERACY DEBATE

In a recent book C. Calame summarizes what contemporary scholarship accepts about the Homeric text:

> "The first Greek literary product for us consist of epic poems that display traits generally considered characteristic of oral poetry [formulas, typical scenes etc.]; but it is impossible to discount the intervention of writing in the process of composition, at least in the state in which these poems have been passed on to us. Moreover, they are in part the product of a society that had a knowledge of a system of writing [linear B], although it does not seem to have made use of it for literary purposes. Lastly, we can assert that the epic poems were communicated orally, given the descriptions of performances contained in them."[11]

This statement not only indicates that the study of the epics is still inscribed within the debate, that started sixty years ago, but also indicates the reduction of the gulf between orality and literacy which originated the debate.[12] The Homeric text

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[11] CALAME, C., 1995: *The Craft of Poetic Speech in Ancient Greece*, Cornell University Press, pp. 31.

[12] "From the early 1960's there has been a steady stream of modifications, revisions, and surveys of the oral-formulaic theory." KAHANE, A., 1994: *The Interpretation of Order: A Study in the Poetics of Homeric Repetition*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, pp. 5.

constituted the starting point of the debate and served as its paradigm of orality *par excellence*. This happened in 1928, when Milman Parry had written a dissertation which would revolutionize Homeric studies.[13] He put forward an hypothesis that stressed the dependence of the choice of words and word-forms on the shape of the hexameter line. "A single hexameter line is a relatively independent unit which usually coincides with a sentence or fairly self-contained phrase. Whole lines can thus be repeated in this 'formulaic' way, and this happens in the Homeric epics."[14] The repetitions in the Homeric text have been noticed before, "but Parry took the further step of using this formulaic style to prove that the Homeric poems were 'orally' composed."[15] Parry argued that there are great differences between written and oral texts in their essential qualities as well as in their origins. He advanced a theory about the genesis of the Homeric text, namely, that it is the product of a long tradition of singers, who compose their songs orally, each performance anew, with the aid of so-called formulas, combinations of words which are regularly used under the same metrical conditions. The question of the origins of the text determined its literary assessment. This implied for Parry that critics have no right to attach a specific, contextually determined significance to the fixed epithet.[16] If a given phrase is formulaic, it would appear to be used simply for metrical convenience and not for a calculated poetic effect in its context.

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[13] PARRY, M., 1971: *The Making of the Homeric Verse*, Oxford.

[14] FINNEGAN, R., 1977: *Oral Poetry, its nature, significance and social context*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 59.

[15] Ibid, pp. 60. Finnegan also writes that this approach "has a deep influence on Homeric studies; though not all scholars accept the theory *in toto*, few can ignore it...but the idea that oral composition was in some way involved in the creation of the epics is now widely accepted." Ibid, pp. 66.

[16] DE JONG, I.J.F., 1995: "Homer as Literature: Some Areas of Research," *Homeric Questions*, J.G. Gieben, pp. 130.

Formulaic systems under Parry's analysis were what set oral poetry apart from literate poetry, in what rapidly grew into a binary contrast, consisting of two mutually exclusive opposites.[17] A number of studies of Homeric language and meter have refined Parry's conclusions and in particular have tended to question whether the formular system was as inflexible as Parry thought it.[18] Other scholars have illuminated the debate by setting the assumptions involved in it against the historical background and intellectual movement in which they were formulated. R. Finnegan has clearly shown the connection of orality theory and its presuppositions concerning the artist, the work of art, and the notion of evolution with Romanticism.[19] M. Lynn-George[20] made evident Parry's Homeric 'system of language' similarities and differences from de Saussure's 'language as system' structural linguistics.[21] The problem of semantics, meaning and context in relation to the Homeric text has also drawn the attention of scholars and is widely studied. W. Ong argues that meaning in

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[17] THALMANN, W.G., 1992: *The Odyssey: An Epic Return*, Twayne, pp. 24-5.

[18] D. Shive gives an account of the relation between Parry and his predecessors as well as his successors, and notes that hardly any scholar remains a rigid Parryist today, but "Parry is the Gordian knot tying up oral poetry and Homeric studies." SHIVE, D., 1987: *Naming Achilles*, Oxford University Press, pp. 124.

[19] FINNEGAN, R., op. cit., pp. 30-40.

[20] His illuminating critic of orality theory is based on Derrida's discussion of the speech – writing dichotomy. He writes: "The history of Western literature is thus conceived as a linear development, and a development structured by the disposition of an antithesis. Whatever terms are selected to construct this schema – and Parry one finds the primitive / the sophisticated, the traditional / the original, the universal / the particular, the general / the individual, – the schema derives its plausibly from the fundamental opposition of speech and writing and the indisputable historical 'evidence' that one is added to the other only much later in time." LYNN-GEORGE, M., op. cit., pp. 73.

[21] The similarities have been noted by other scholars as well. E. Bakker, writes: "In fact, not long before Parry published his two French theses, Ferdinand de Saussure, the champion of structural linguistics, had presented an account of grammar and language to which Parry's notion of formulaic systems bears a

an oral culture is situational[22] and writes in relation to Parry's theory and the problem of meaning in Homeric epics:

"...in Parry's concept there is a deeper stratum of meaning not immediately apparent from his definition of the 'formula' a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given 'essential idea'." This 'essential idea' in turn "is not subject to clear, straightforward formulation but is rather a kind of fictional complex held together largely in the unconscious."[23]

This has a decisive consequence for the way in which the terms of the debate are set up. It models the distinction between oral and written upon the division of language in terms of form and content, in which orality is supposed to stress the form and literacy to stress the content. As against this, we are arguing – as do contemporary scholars in Homeric literary criticism – that the division form-content is itself an anachronism if it is used to buttress the distinction between orality and literacy. An

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striking similarity." BAKKER, E.J. 1995: "Noun-Epithet Formulas, Milman Parry, and the Grammar of Poetry," *Homeric Questions*, J.G. Gieben, pp. 97-125.

[22] "Oral cultures of course have no dictionaries and few semantic discrepancies. The meaning of each word is controlled by what Goody and Watt call 'direct semantic ratification,' that is, by what the real-life situations in which the word is used here and now. The oral mind is uninterested in definitions. Words acquire meanings only from their always insistent habitat, which is not, as in a dictionary, simply other words, but includes also gestures, vocal inflections, facial expressions and the entire human, existential setting in which the real, spoken word always occurs...The late A. Amory-Parry made the same point about the epithet *amymon* applied by Homer to Aegisthus: the epithet means not 'blameless,' a tidy abstraction with which literates have translated the term, but 'beautiful-in-the-way-a-warrior-ready-to-fight-is beautiful... The oral word...never exists in a simply verbal context, as a written word does. Spoken words are always modifications of a total existential situation, which always engages the body." ONG, W.J., op.cit., pp. 47, 49, 67. This is also true for our use of speech, and indicates the coexistence of the two modalities, although we tend not to recognize or to overestimate the literate one. A further indication lies in the very fact that we can approach oral cultures, even though in a literate way.

[23] Ong quotes in this point D.E. Bynum, and his theory of 'clusters' as the organizing principles of the formulas. Ibid. pp. 25.

analytic distinction has become confused with the historical hypothesis.[24] However the degree to which the form-content distinction still shadows the approach of the epics is shown by the fact that Homeric scholars still feel the need to set up their analysis implicitly or explicitly against this problem. Note, for instance the opening lines of Austin's book: "Surface and depth, around these terms revolves the major task of Homeric literary criticism",[25] where surface and depth stands for form and content. To cite a few more authors:

"...oral-formulaic theory minimizes, or at least severely limits, the role of semantics and semantic-context sensitivity, while in the present study the greatest emphasis is placed on semantics and hence literary studies."[26]

"...the method of collecting all attestations...what a better tool than context could we want for adding content to form in our understanding of the traditional nature of Homeric phrases?"[27]

"Parry's theory has also been modified by the recognition that where thrift is not absolute, considerations of context or dramatic effect may govern the poet's choice of which of two possible epithets to use."[28]

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[24] "Even before Parry invoked 'the grand dichotomy' his work was structured by a conventional dichotomy between language and thought, which was later to be distributed between the oral and the written." LYNN-GEORGE, M., op. cit., pp. 61.

[25] AUSTIN, N., 1975: *Archery at the Dark of the Moon: Poetic Problems in Homer's Odyssey*, Berkeley, University of California Press, pp. 1.

[26] KAHANE, A., op. cit., pp. 8.

[27] SACKS, R., 1987: *The Traditional Phrase in Homer: Two Studies in Form, Meaning and Interpretation*, E.J. Brill, pp. 18.

[28] SCHEIN, S.L., 1984: *The Mortal Hero: An Introduction to Homer's Iliad*, University of California Press, pp. 8.

Now, we also feel the need to point out our objections to proposing an opposition which is no more than the reflection of a mode of analytical thinking about language and which may impede us in approaching the way that language was experienced as it is presented within the Homeric text. Moreover, because the text is a contaminated case – it is a written text which permitted the survival of an oral culture – we should be wary of thinking form and content separately. E. Havelock, who in a number of studies elaborated the effects of the introduction of writing in Ancient Greece,[29] recognizes the singularity of epics. In his book entitle *The Muse Learns to Write*, he argues about the

> "necessary revision of a previous simplistic view...present in *Preface to Plato*, that the two epics, though obviously written down (or we would not have them) were compositions of primary orality: that is, their textual existence and shape represent a faithful rendering of purely acoustic laws of composition as these governed not only style but content. This had always been the contention of firm oralists (M. Parry, Lord, Kirk).....The epics as we now know them are the result of some interlock between the oral and the literate: or, to vary the metaphor, the acoustic flow of language contrived by echo to hold the attention of the ear has been reshuffled into visual patterns created by the thoughtful attention of the eye."[30]

The necessity for a more blurred line between orality-literacy in the case of the epics is now established within scholarship, and our research accepts in line with such a position.[31] We propose an analysis within the semantic field of the text that will take

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[29] A collection of essays on this topic has been published in HAVELOCK, E., 1982: *The Literate Revolution in Greece and its Cultural Consequences*, Princeton.

[30] HAVELOCK, E., 1986: *The Muse Learns to Write*, Yale University Press, pp. 12-3.

[31] See THOMAS, R., 1992: *Literacy and Orality in Ancient Greece*, Cambridge, and LA MATINA, M., 1994: *Il Testo Antico: Per una Semiotica come Filologia Integrata*, Working Papers 1, pp. 154. La Mattina argues that the form and the semantics of the language are interrelated and stresses the need to integrate the analysis of the syntax in Havelock's theory of orality with an analysis within the semantic field of the Greek texts, either archaic or classic :"Sono persuaso che le considerazioni di Havelock circa la struttura della frase greca in un contesto orale debbano sollecitare una riformulazione della prospettiva

into account the manifestations of its mnemonic structure, in the sense that we have to take into account the fact that the text was meant to be recited or heard and not read. This has specific consequences on the structure of the language that cannot be reduced to a set of rules applied to all oral cultures such as W. Ong proposes.[32] As we shall show in each of the following chapters the possibility of different Homeric terms to evoke distinct experiences lies in the fact that these experiences are embedded in both the 'content' of the terms and the 'form' of language. This combination is unique in relation to the Homeric text and might mark its difference from other texts.

But we need to return to the above quotation of Havelock, for it is important in our research, insofar as it introduces us to the second and more interesting argument of the orality-literacy debate, that is, the shift from modalities of language to modalities of perception.[33] W. Ong, as well as Havelock does, argues that

"the shift from oral to written speech is essentially a shift from sound (acoustic space) to visual space...sight isolates, sound incorporates. Whereas sight situates the observer outside what he views, at a distance, sounds pours into ears...Vision dissects...By contrast with vision, the dissecting sense, sound is thus a unifying sense." He goes on introducing the notion of distancing as the effect of

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con cui i testi greci arcaico-classici vengono di solito trattati. Tale riformulazione dovra tener conto sia dei fattori di una (ipotetica) sintassi orale (ritmo, frase asintattica, paratassi, ecc.), sia dei fattori di una (ipotetica) semantica orale (formato narrativo, personificazione, ecc.)".

[32] ONG, W., op.cit.

[33] "This is the theory particularly associated with Marshall McLuhan, about the significance of 'oral culture' and its differentiation from the 'visual' culture of the written word. McLuhan's basic theory postulates a crucial difference between the world of 'typographic man', whose universe depends on the visual written word, and that of 'oral' or 'auditory man', which includes both the culture of non-literate peoples, untouched by writing, and the 'post-literate' world, in which once again 'oral modes' flourish. In the view of McLuhan and its associates, crucial factors both in social organization and man's psychical make-up and perceptions, have to do with the technology of communications." FINNEGAN, R., op. cit., pp. 254-5.

writing: "The distancing which writing effects develops a new kind of precision in verbalization by removing it from the rich but chaotic existential context of much oral utterance."[34]

Here another problem emerges; it is not just that the Homeric text falls between the categories of oral and written, and that hence we cannot simply treat it as oral with the consequences for experience that theories of orality insist upon.[35] It is rather that the Homeric text actually gives us the opportunity to deconstruct the presuppositions that underlie the distinction between sound as participation, corresponding to a more concrete language, and vision as distancing that corresponds to a language that permits abstraction. This distinction between visual and acoustic perception has remained unchallenged, but has even been reinforced in contemporary scholarship.[36] In a recent article C. Segal writes:

"But this encounter between the tangible and the distant is also an aspect of what Eric Havelock calls the 'literate revolution'...Ear-knowledge depends on the direct, personal contact, from speaker to listener, from tongue to ear. Eye-knowledge allows a more distanced, speculative, and impersonal relation to information, especially when this is transmitted through the written message of a speaker who is not physically present."[37]

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[34] Ibid, pp. 117,72, and 103.

[35] W.J. Ong argues that "in a primary oral culture thought and expression tend to be of the following sorts: Additive rather than subordinative, Aggregative than analytic, Redundant or copious, Conservative or traditional, Close to the human lifeword, Agonistically toned, Empathetic and Participatory rather than objectively distanced, Homeostatic, and Situational rather than abstract." Ibid, passim.

[36] A. Ford writes: "The works of Havelock and Ong aim to show that writing is not just a neutral technology but may effect a transformation of consciousness and create a new relationship between speaker and what is spoken..." Ford does not examines the kind of transformation, his concern focuses only on whether the transformation might be 'instantaneous'. FORD, A., op. cit., pp. 135.

[37] SEGAL, C., op.cit., pp. 193.

What is taken for granted in such arguments is an idea of perception as fixed, simple, and universal.[38] But if we are to argue that perception is itself at least in part culturally constructed, then the form and the status of hearing and vision are shaped within a culture, whose members speak and see in a specific way. To refer here to sound as inevitably involving participation, and vision as inevitably involving distancing in the context of the epics, is to essentialize those human attributes. We shall have to examine in detail the specific way that seeing was experienced in the text,[39] as the collision between the seeing and the seen. J-P. Vernant[40] has already presented this in an exemplary fashion, this experience of seeing, which is also reflected in the writings of Greek authors after Homer. Moreover, one can insist that perhaps in an oral culture not only sound but also vision may be participatory, and

[38] "[Derrida's] startling remark, 'there never has been any perception.' This is, of course, not a rejection of any familiar everyday experience, but a rejection of a concept, a concept that is an idealized and, one might say, logicized abstraction from our common everyday experience. It is the concept of perception, not as the awareness of circumstances in which we live and move and have our being, but rather as the pure immediate awareness of a sensory content which, although complicated by retentions and protentions, has no intrinsic reference to any such actual circumstances." GARVER, N., 1972: "Preface," *Speech and Phenomena*, Northwestern University Press, pp. xxiii.

[39] See chapter on *Thure-Pule.*

[40] As J-P. Vernant puts it: "...instead of three distinct facts- physical reality, sensory organ, mental activity- there was, to explain vision, a sort of luminous arm like a tentacle, which through the eyes extended one's organism outside itself. By reason of the kinship between the three phenomena, which all consisted equally of a very pure fire giving light without burning, the optical arm combined with the light of day and with the rays emitted by objects. Blending with them, it formed a single body (*soma*), perfectly continuous and homogeneous, which belonged as a whole both to oneself and to the physical world. Thus one could touch, wherever and however far it might be, the external object by sending out an extensible bridge made of the same matter as the thing that was seen, as the one who was seeing, as the light that enable sight. One's gaze operated in the world where it found its place like a piece of that world." VERNANT, J-P. 1995: "Introduction," *The Greeks*, ed. J-P. Vernant, University of Chicago Press, pp. 14.

thus both sound and vision were experienced as participation especially in the context of the Homeric text. But this is something to be investigated rather than asserted.

If we do not accept the orality-literacy debate as the explanatory model and if we dispense the opposition at the level of perception that it proposes, then the whole issue will have to be viewed in different terms. Our analysis will in fact argue that 'distancing' is a feature of speech and hearing in the epics. This does not prevent us from recognizing that there is indeed a change with the introduction of writing in Greece. But that it remains to be clarified what this change exactly is. We may be able to think the effect of writing as the visualization of the distancing feature of speech; as the transformation of the experience of seeing (transformation of visual perception), and not as a transition from one global type of perception to another, that is, from hearing which is considered participatory to vision-as-distancing. But to demonstrate this we have to investigate speech and consequently hearing as presented in the text.

1.3. SPEECH EXPERIENCE WITHIN THE HOMERIC TEXT

Given the fact that epics were meant to be recited and not to be read, the language of Homeric text should be considered as transcribed speech,[41] hence the title of the chapter *Epos*. Consequently, two areas of inquiry open up and permit us to consider a twofold aspect of the relation between speech and experience. Firstly, the indications provided within the vocabulary of speech in the text enable us to understand how speech was experienced, and secondly the context of epic performance, as it is

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[41] "At least one explicit reference to the use of writing (Z169) can be found in the Homeric poems; this allusion concerns the utilitarian production of a message, however, and not the use of writing in the literary domain." CALAME, C., op.cit., pp. 29.

described in the poems, shows in what way audience experienced epics, and hence illuminates the mechanism through which speech evokes experience.

1.3.1. SPEECH AND THE BODY

Let us pose the following question: What is different in the way speech was experienced within the context of Homeric epics? Because Greeks are both distant and familiar to us we need to clarify our ideas about speech in order to avoid anachronisms, even before start approaching the text.[42] "The current view declares that speech is the activation of the organs for sounding and hearing."[43] We also conventionally distinguish between a speaker who emits sounds expressing his thoughts, feelings etc., and a listener who receives the sound, and makes sense of what he hears. Speech is then distinguished as sound, meaning and reception, that postulates a further distinction between a listener and a speaker. Of course the very possibility of these series of distinctions presupposes the existence of the category of consciousness. But if this subjectivity, and the interiority that becomes manifested by

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[42] "The Greeks are distant from us, from the ways we act, think, and feel, ways that are so familiar to us that they seem to be natural, to go without saying, but from which we must detach ourselves when we turn towards the Greeks; otherwise we shall find them in our way when we make that turn." VERNANT, J-P., op.cit., pp. 2.

[43] "What does it means to speak? The current view declares that speech is the activation of the organs for sounding and hearing. Speech is the audible expression and communication of human feelings. These feelings are accompanied by thoughts. In such a characterization of language three points are taken for granted. First and foremost, speaking is expression. The idea of speech as an utterance is the most common. It already presupposes the idea of something internal that utters and externalizes itself. If we take language to be utterance, we give an external, surface notion of it at the very moment when we explain it by recourse to something internal. Secondly, human speech is regarded as an activity of man...Hence we cannot say 'Language speaks'...Finally, human expression is always a presentation and representation of the real and the unreal." HEIDEGGER, M., 1971: "Language," *Poetry, Language, Thought*, Harper and Row, pp. 192.

speech is a commonplace for us, there is no need to suppose that the situation was exactly the same in the context of the epics. Therefore let us shift our attention from the speaking subject to speech as it is presented in the text.

An obvious step to start such a study would be that of drawing up an inventory of verbs meaning 'to speak', all of which we translate simply as 'say'. But we should be aware that the idea of an inventory and meaning and even the notion of word as a distinct entity, corresponds to the way we think and use the language. In the poems, words can not be separated from the rhythmic flow of the epic performance, and be treated as objects situated in a list, a dictionary, used as labels or carrier of meanings.[44] Having in mind these limitations, we can make our list, use our dictionaries, always taking into consideration the context of the poem, where the word we analyse is situated.

Even though we already choose *epos* – because of its relation to epic – as the title of the chapter, this is not the only word in the text that refers to language as speech. Nor does it correspond to a term that unifies the experience of speech,

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[44] W.J. Ong attributes to writing such 'use' of words: "Writing makes 'words' appear similar to things because we think of words as the visible marks signaling words to decoders. We can see and touch such inscribed 'words' in texts and books. Written words are residue. Oral tradition has no such residue or deposit. When an often-told oral story is not actually being told, all that exists of it is the potential in certain human beings to tell it...Even the concept of a 'word' as a discrete entity apart from a flow of speech seems somewhat text-based...The sense of individual words as significantly discrete items is fostered by writing, which here as elsewhere is diacretic, separative...Early manuscripts tend not to separate words clearly from each other, but to run them together...Chirographic and typographic folk tend to think of names as labels, written or printed tags imaginatively affixed to an object named...Print cultures have invented dictionaries in which the various meanings of a word as it occurs in datable texts can be recorded in formal definitions. Words thus are known to have layers of meanings. Dictionaries advertise semantic discrepancies." ONG, W.J., op.cit., pp. 11, 31, 61, and 47.

because such term does not exist.[45] This reminds us the case of the category of body in the poems, where no term designates it as "an organic unity which supports the individual in the multiplicity of its vital and mental functions."[46] A variety of words are used instead, and each of them can refer to various domains, i.e., organic realities, vital forces, psychic activities, divine inspirations or influxes. Now we cannot be sure what the consequences are of this lack of a general functional term for 'speech' or the 'body' in our sense.[47] But it seems reasonable to assume that there are some consequences. This situation was also forced by B. Snell in respect to vision.[48] The case of speech is similar. We find ourselves in an odd situation as we attempt to

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[45] "The term 'speech' itself poses problems, since there is no uniform Greek designation for these instances of direct discourse, and the English equivalent carries associations with formal rhetoric that may not lie behind the poetic intent of the original. The scholarship on Homeric direct discourse, influenced by the entire rhetorical tradition of post-Homeric Greece, has neglected this fundamental distinction; it has not occurred to investigators that perhaps not all Homeric speeches are at the same level of importance." MARTIN, R., 1989: *The Language of Heroes: Speech and Performance in the Iliad*, Ithaca and London, pp. 46.

[46] VERNANT, J-P., 1989: "Dim Body, Dazzling Body," *Zone: Fragments for a History of the Human Body*, Part I, ed. M. Feher, pp. 21.

[47] The absence of the so-called general or abstract terms in oral cultures was interpreted by anthropologists but also by the authors of the orality and literacy debate as an indication of the concrete character of language in such societies, in contrast to abstraction as the main feature of language in literate ones.

[48] SNELL, B., 1960 : *The Discovery of the Mind*, Harper and Row, pp. 1-22. For a critic of Snell see AUSTIN, N., op. cit., pp. 83-5. He writes: "Although Snell avoids the distinction between abstract and concrete as being subject to question, he makes a similar distinction: between particular and general, between articulation and synthesis. Homer, Snell believes, knows the parts but not the whole; modes of vision but not vision; parts of the body but not body; parts of the soul but not soul". Austin proposes a way out by using the methods of structural anthropology. He argues: "[Snell's] assumption is that the only vehicle for concepts or categories is the individual word. We need rather to examine complexes of words to find ways in which they relate to each other, and thus to find in their relations the general concepts." In our research we are not interested in finding the general concept of speech in the epics, not because it also falls into the general-particular dichotomy but because this exceeds the scope of the thesis.

register the words that refer to speech in the text. The vocabulary of speech is so rich that is difficult to enumerate, far more to investigate each single term in its context.[49] It is not possible to be exhaustive, or even to enlist the whole variety of forms that each word entails. Furthermore, this variety of terms is quite difficult to grasp and transcribe. Dictionaries, in order to differentiate one term from another, use them in opposition to each other or distinguish between metaphorical and literal meaning. We shall see further on, from where this difficulty arises. We are well aware that our research will remain partial, and indeed profoundly lacking in its analysis of the Homeric terms for speech. Given the focus of the thesis on the Homeric 'spatial vocabulary' our choice of speech-terms to be examined is strategic, but at least can give us a hint about the relation of speech and experience in the epics.

We can start with a well-known verb *legein* (λέγειν). This is a term that does not occur very often in Homer, and in that sense it would appear the least likely to take up. But we have already noted that this is a strategic choice. In fact, to give an adequate translation of *logos* (λόγος) – the noun that stems from it – would require an entire history of philosophy. A term that will become the 'ground' for philosophical discourse enables us to clearly differentiate its earlier conception. The opportunity of the Homeric text is that we can study the signification of *logos* (λόγος)[50] and later on

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[49] To give an indication, the vocabulary that involves speech contains such distinct verbs that denote the utterance as: λέγω, εἶπον, εἴρω, φημί, μυθέομαι, αὐδάω, φωνήζω, φθέγγω, φράζω, ὀαρίζω, καλέω, ὀνομάζω, βοάω, ἀγορεύω, ἀπαμείβω, ἀγγέλλω , or verbs denoting the act of hearing speech as: ἀκούω, κλύω, ἀΐω. In addition each of the verbs presents a variety of related words. For instance, related words to the verb μυθέομαι within the text, include μῦθος, ἀκριτόμυθος, πολύμυθος, μυθολογεύω, μυθήσομαι, ἀπομυθήσομαι, προσμυθήσομαι, παραμυθέομαι.

[50] The noun *logos* occurs only in the plural once in Iliad (O393: ἔτερπε λόγοις) and once in the Odyssey (α56: αἰεὶ δὲ μαλακοῖσι καὶ αἱμυλίοισι λόγοισι θέλγει). In both passages it evokes the pleasure (*terpein)* or the enchantment (*thelgein)* that 'words' produce.

in the text, *choros* (χῶρος) before philosophy, though as we shall see this 'before' brings with it theoretical problems. What is it to translate a text before philosophy where the very idea of 'translation' carries with it so much philosophical baggage? We should not begin by asking what does *logos-legein* mean, as if there were an original, authentic meaning, an essence of the word that can be discovered in the Homeric text. For we face an immense difficulty, in that the philosophical conception of the relation between speech and that of a mental activity – what we call thinking, be it in the form of logic, syllogism, or dialectic, all this is so deeply rooted in us that it is difficult not to assume that it existed in Homer.

If we examine the passages where *legein* occurs in the text, in some of them can be translated with the verb 'speak',[51] but there are also instances where it is obvious that the same form of verb should be translated as 'collecting'. These are the passages where Homer refers to people collecting, gathering things that lie on the ground, such as pieces of wood to light a fire,[52] cattle-gear (pieces) of armour,[53] bones of a dead person,[54] thorn-hedges to make a fence,[55] or where it denotes the collection of people into a place to perform a specific action.[56] In one passage[57] *lego*

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[51] B221, 435, N275, 292, Y244, γ240, ε5, λ374, μ165, ν295, ξ197, 362, ο487, τ203, ψ308.

[52] Θ507: And heap many piles of firewood (ἐπὶ δὲ ξύλα πολλὰ λέγεσθε), Θ547: And heaped many piles of firewood (ἐπὶ δὲ ξύλα πολλὰ λέγοντο)

[53] Λ755: and picking up their magnificent armour (ἀνά τ' ἔντεα καλὰ λέγοντες)

[54] Ψ239: we shall gather up the bones of Patroklos, the son of Menoitios (ὀστέα Πατρόκλειο Μενοιτιάδαο λέγωμεν), Ω793: gathered the white bones up (ὀστέα λευκὰ λέγοντο) , ω72: we gathered the white bones (λέγομεν λευκ' ὀστέα)

[55] σ359: assembling stones for fences (αἰμασιάς τε λέγων). Although Homeric dictionaries define αἰμασιάς as 'thorn hedges', Lattimore translates it as stones.

[56] N276: If now beside the ships all the best of us were to assemble for a hidden position (παρὰ νηυσὶ λεγοίμεθα πάντες ἄριστοι ἐς λόχον), ι335: and I myself was the fifth, and allotted with them (αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ πέμπτος μετὰ τοῖσιν ἐλέγμην)

is used with the noun *arithmos* (ἀριθμός), usually translated as 'number'– though not in the sense of a distinct entity – so the dictionaries give to it the meaning of enumerate, which is also applied to *lego* as narrate in the sense of collecting, recollecting, and enumerate. The connection has been made. Some might assume that speech in the case of *lego* is experienced as 'collecting'. The next step would be to ask: Did Homeric Greeks experience speech as *logos* in a more concrete way, than we do? Did they experience words in a concrete way as things? We do not know. In fact we do not know for reasons which are not just scholarly ignorance. For the fact is that we do not have an agreed frame for agreeing about how we experience speech. In any case we should be suspicious of such hypothesis because of its similarity with the way we think the words as objects. To agree with the hypothesis is just as arbitrary as to suppose that they experienced the collecting of a piece of wood, or bones in an abstract way. We only know that they experienced both – speech as *lego* and the collection of what we call concrete things – in a similar way. Similarly, we can not say whether the experience should be called concrete or abstract, exactly for the terms concrete and abstract are part of a categorical separation which is ours and not theirs. We shall return to this below.

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[57] δ451-3: and counted (*lekto*) their number, and we were among the first he counted (*lege*); he had no idea of any treachery. Then he too lay down (*lekto*) among us (λέκτο δ' ἀριθμόν. / ἐν δ' ἡμέας πρώτους λέγε κήτεσιν, οὐδέ τι θυμῷ / ὠΐσθη δόλον εἶναι· ἔπειτα δὲ λέκτο καὶ αὐτός). Note that in the passage the middle voice form *lekto* occurs twice, and is given two different translations. The fist one stems from *lego* and is translated as 'count', while the second from *lecho* and translated as 'lay down'. This phenomenon is interpreted as homophony and occurs with other verbs as well. We propose to understand that homophony is not simply a grammatical phenomenon, but indicates a similarity at the level of experience. Thus, *lekto* evokes the experience of 'count' and 'lay down', as inseparable. However, we shall elaborate more on the phenomenon of homophony in the chapter on *Domos*.

In Iliad B222, the only person in the poems who has a deformed body, *legein* (λέγειν) 'speaks' with a *oxea* (ὀξέα) 'piercing voice', *oneidea* (ὀνείδεα) 'reproachful words.[58] He is *aischistos* (αἴσχιστος) 'disfigured', described as *pholkos* (φολκός), *cholos* (χωλός), *kurtos* (κυρτός) and *phoxos* (φοξός), that is, bow-legged, lame, hunchback, with a sharp-pointed head with little hair on the top of it. He has in his *phresin* (φρεσίν) 'lungs',[59] *epea* (ἔπεα) 'words' which are *akosma* (ἄκοσμα) 'shameful'.[60] The voice that comes out from this deformed body is also deformed. The fact that Thersites is making just accusations about Agamemnon is of no importance whatsoever. Odysseus beats him with a metal-studded rod, and the whole army is satisfied when he topples over in pain, his back bleeding.

This passage problematizes and once again, brings us back to the distinction, which is so common for us today, between the form and the content of speech.[61] We

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[58] B212-224: Thersites of the endless speech, still scolded, who knew within his head many words, but disorderly; vain, and without decency, to quarrel with the princes with any word he thought might be amusing to the Argives. This was the ugliest man who came beneath Ilion. He was bandy-legged and went lame of one foot, with shoulders stooped and drawn together over his chest, and above this his skull went up to a point with the wool grown sparsely upon it...he, crying the words aloud, scolded Agamemnon. (Θερσίτης δ' ἔτι μοῦνος ἀμετροεπὴς ἐκολώα, / ὃς ἔπεα φρεσὶν ἧσιν ἄκοσμά τε πολλά τε ἦδη, / μάψ, ἀτὰρ οὐ κατὰ κόσμον, ἐριζέμεναι βασιλεῦσιν, / ἀλλ' ὅ τι οἱ εἶσαιτο γελοῖον Ἀργείοισιν / ἔμμεναι, αἴσχιστος δὲ ἀνὴρ ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθε· / φολκὸς ἦν, χωλὸς δ' ἕτερον πόδα, τὼ δὲ οἱ ὤμω / κυρτὼ ἐπὶ στῆθος συνοχωκότε· αὐτὰρ ὕπερθε / φοξὸς ἦν κεφαλήν, ψεδνὴ δ' ἐπενήνοθε λάχνη. /.../ὀξέα κεκλήγων λέγ' ὀνείδεα../.../αὐτάρ ὁ μακρὰ βοῶν Ἀγαμέμνονα νείκεε μύθῳ).

[59] On the interpretation of *phresin* as 'lungs', see ONIANS, R.B., 1994, *The Origins of European Thought about the Body, the Mind, the Soul, the World, Time, and Fate*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 27.

[60] *Kosmos* in the text denotes 'order', 'arrangement', and 'ornament'.

[61] The problem of form and content of language in the epics is, as we have already seen, complex. It can again be illustrated by the way dictionaries define the well-known word *muthos* (μῦθος), a Homeric term that we shall not investigate. The problem that arises is the distinction between form and content of language that is implied in *muthos* intended as story, and opposed to *logos*, or *epos*. Chantraine gives the following definition: "μῦθος: suite de parole qui ont un sens, propos, discours, associé a ἔπος qui désigne le mot, la parole, la forme, en s'en distinguant, contenu des parole, avis, intention, pensée,

do not want to argue that the form of speech is more important than the content in the poems. It is more a case of recognizing that the separation between content and form is in fact a separation between thought as content and speech as form.[62] If we were to accept such a distinction, then we could talk about a discrepancy between the two – a right thought that is expressed in a wrong form – in the above passage, and try to explain it. We might say that what is wrong is that a soldier accuses a king.[63] However, what interests us here is the very fact that a deformed soldier has the ability to insult kings. We would do better to try to evade the distinction, and the text

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histoire, etc." CHANTRAINE, P. 1968: *Dictionnaire Étymologique de la Langue Grecque*, Paris, s.v. μῦθος. Note also what Fournier writes: "Μῦθος en effet désigne la pensée qui s' exprime, la language, l' avis, voir la 'language interieur'. Si μῦθος est le fond, la pensée, ἔπος en est la forme materielle, le récipient, l' expression inerte." FOURNIER, H., 1946: *Les Verbs 'dire' en Grec Ancien*, Thesis, Paris, pp. 215. For a detailed analysis of *muthos* and *epos* in the context of speech-act theory see MARTIN, R., op. cit., who displaces the content-form distinction to that of the speaker-addressee (pp. 12).

[62] R. Garland presupposes the distinction when he writes: "Thersites...is in fact the only Achaian who has the courage to articulate in public what the rest of the army has surely been thinking in private." GARLAND, R., 1995: *The Eye of the Beholder: Deformity and Disability in the Graeco-Roman World*, Duckworth, pp. 80.

[63] "True, Thersites' judgment of the warrior kings is not unlike the judgment we ourselves might want to pass on them... But the criticism is not done in the right way by the right person." AHL, F., 1984: "The Art of Safe Criticism in Greece and Rome", *AJP* 105, pp. 174. A similar assumption underlies the interesting analysis of Thalman, who attributes to Thersites the role of scapegoat and uses Marxist theory to discuss the ideology of a class society in the Homeric text. To support his argument he has to dismiss any possible relation between Thersites' deformed body and deformed speech. THALMANN, W.G., !988: "Thersites: Comedy, Scapegoats, and Heroic Ideology in the Iliad", *TAPA* 118, pp. 15. On the other hand A. Ford argues: "Not only does Thersites threaten the political order by challenging Agamemnon, but the rabble-rouser is an aesthetic offense as well: ugly and misshapen, his speech is abundant but without order (*akosma epea, ou kata kosmon*). The order he violates is at once political and aesthetic. His lack of measure in speech (*ametroepes*) and lack of distinctions (*akritomuthes*) threaten the hierarchies that make heroic action possible and the ordering that makes an account of that action possible." FORD, A., op. cit., pp. 86.

supports this. The deformed voice of the cripple Thersites,[64] exhales with breathing, comes out from his lungs where *phresi* (φρεσί) 'lungs' are intended as both the organ, the seat of utterance, the seat of thought and the seat of feeling.[65] How then one can talk about a form and content of speech where these two are coterminous?

The difficulty of avoiding such distinctions is manifested in the way dictionaries define *phren* (φρήν): "The meaning of the word *phren* stands midway between its literal and its figurative [metaphoric] sense; it means the heart and the parts about the heart, and signifies the seat of thought, will, feeling; mind, soul, heart, consciousness".[66] Dictionaries as we have already said, often have recourse to metaphor in order to deal with the complexities of the Homeric speech terms. But the proposed metaphorical meaning can be quite misleading. It might lead us to think that

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[64] H. Monsacré writes: "Ainsi, et c'est chose reconnue depuis longtemps, si Thersite est l'anti-héros par excellence, c' est au moins autant le fait de sa lâcheté que celui de sa laideur... Thersite, hors jeu: pour exister, les vertus héroïque doivent être attestées, confirmées par la beauté physique de celui qui les pratique. L' inadéquation d' un personnage comme Thersite au monde des héros est résumée dans sa laideur. Ses défauts physiques induise sa couardise: quasi infirme, voûté, presque chauve, en regard des canons homériques de la beauté virile, il est l' exact contraire du guerrier accompli. A la fois le plus laid (*aischistos* II, 216) et le plus faible (*chereioteron*, II, 248) des Grecs...". MONSACRÉ, H., 1984: *Les Larmes d' Achille: Le héros, la femme et la souffrance dans la poésie d' Homère*, Albin Michel, pp. 52-53.

[65] S.D. Sullivan in her study on *phren* argues that there is a "strong connection of *phrenes* with speech". She also notes: "*Phrenes*...can denote 'that which thinks' and also 'that which is thought'. Since this ambiguity exists, both meanings must be assumed to be present in the different passages where *phrenes* occur. Thus, in the description of *phrenes* as a faculty indeterminately corporeal, 'faculty' includes both that which acts and the action itself...Person and *phrenes* remain distinct, although joined in a close relationship." SULLIVAN, S.D., 1988: *Psychological Activity in Homer: A Study of Phren*, Carleton University Press, Canada, pp. 186, 30.

[66] AUTENRIETH, G. 1991: *Homeric Dictionary*, Duckworth, s.v. φρήν. Sullivan writes on the relation of consciousness with *phren*: " Was the awareness of *phrenes*...a part of [the Homeric man's] notion of 'self', or was it separate? The relationship between these two types of awareness remains unclear." SULLIVAN, S.D., op. cit., pp. 198.

the Homeric language is more concrete than ours, which is characterized by entailing many abstract concepts. Indeed metaphor itself does not exist as a term in the Homeric text, and this is obvious if we consider the philosophical dimension.[67] Metaphor: to transfer and transform from abstract to concrete. Rather we should think metaphor as a tool to help us approach another and distant culture; as a vehicle to communicate the two registers: the corporeal : the concrete, and the mental or psychological : the abstract. The abstract and the concrete are only ontologically distinct for us, because they correspond to a further distinction between the mental and the corporeal. But what the Homeric language expresses it is not its concreteness – in the sense that words correspond to things and not to abstract concepts – but rather that speech does not exist independently from the body that speaks. The body twines the corporeal and the psychological.[68] In this sense there is no distinction between a mental and a corporeal experience. *Lego* as collecting pieces of wood and *lego* as collecting memories is above all the activity of a 'multiple' body, one which is not as it is for us always already divided into body and mind.[69] As P. Vivante notes

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[67] Derrida showed the philosophical connotations of metaphor in DERRIDA, J., 1982: "White Mythology: Metaphor in the text of Philosophy," *Margins of Philosophy*, Harvester Wheatsheaf, pp. 207-72.

[68] H. Monsacré acknowledges the non distinction between mental and corporeal experience but attributes it to the concreteness of the Homeric language. She writes: "Par une étroite imbrication des phénomènes physiques et moraux, par la tendance générale du vocabulaire homérique à être plutôt concret qu' abstrait, l' expérience physique et spirituelle sont souvent confondues. L' absence de cloisonnement rigide entre activités physiques et mentales est un trait assez typique de l' épopée: les mots *thumos*, *etor*, *ker*, *kradie* – et dans une moindre mesure *phren* qui se rapporte assez souvent à la vie intellectuelle – signifient tantôt l' organe, tantôt la fonction de l' organe". MONSACRÉ, H., op.cit., pp. 51-2.

[69] The relation of speech and body is also manifested in the later Greek attitude to read aloud, interpreted by Svenbro as giving a voice, and thus a body to the written text. He argues: "The writer necessarily depends on the voice of the reader. At the moment of reading, the reader relinquishes his

"this is why Homer never opposes *ergon* (ἔργον) 'deed' to *epos* (ἔπος) 'word' – a commonplace of classical authors."[70] Yet dictionaries do define *epos* as opposite to *ergon*. However, although we are contesting this opposition of terms, this does not indicates a sameness.[71] It would be better to say that *ergon* and *epos* in the Homeric text, are distinct activities because performed by different parts of the 'multiple' body.[72]

The unity of body, voice and deed, is explicitly manifested in the passage where Odysseus warns Thersites not to insult the kings again.[73] His words should be

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voice to what is written and to the absent writer. That means that his voice is not his own as he reads. While it is employed to bring the dead letters to life, it belongs to what is written. The reader is a vocal instrument used by the written word (or by the one who wrote it) in order to give the text a body, a sonorous reality." SVENBRO, J., op.cit., pp. 3. We might consider the possibility that writing introduce the distinction between body and mind. In a sense literacy – experienced as silent reading – creates the condition for the experiencing of the disembodied voice, that characterize self-consciousness. The transformation of visual perception experienced as distancing, is another feature of literacy. However we shall examine further on how speech in Homer is already interwoven with the play of differentiation and identity, though in a way that can not be compared to self-consciousness.

[70] Vivante also notes: "Thus in the Homeric phrase ἔργον τε ἔπος τε word and deed are not opposed to each other but form a kind of hendiadys expressing one sole idea: Il.15.234, Od.11.346; cf. Il.1.77, 108, 19.242, Od.2.272,3.99, 4.163, 15.375." VIVANTE, P., 1975: "On Homer's Winged Words," *Classical Quarterly* 25, pp. 11.

[71] Martin notes that in the context of the speech-act theory "between the two terms no distinction is drawn. Both are performances. The poetry anticipates Austin and Searle in treating speech as act, part of an economy in which talk about one's action is as important as deeds themselves, and in which no feat can survive without its afterword." MARTIN, R., op. cit., pp. 146.

[72] Having said that, we might understand why such distinct categories of humans – heralds, prophets, doctors, bards, carpenters, strangers and suppliants – are called, in the text, *demioergoi* (δημιοεργοί) 'creators'. The difficulty arises because we associate creation with the production of a tangible, visible object.

[73] B256-61: And this also will I tell you, and it will be a thing accomplished. If once more I find you playing the fool, as you are now, nevermore let the head of Odysseus sit on his shoulders, let me nevermore be called Telemachos' father, if I do not take you and strip away your personal clothing. (ἀλλ' ἔκ τοι ἐρέω, τὸ δὲ καὶ τετελεσμένον ἔσται· / εἴ κ' ἔτι σ' ἀφραίνοντα κιχήσομαι ὥς νύ περ ὧδε, / μηκέτ' ἔπειτ'

considered as *tetelesmenon estai* (τετελεσμένον ἔσται) 'being accomplished'. If not, i.e., if there is a separation between word and deed this would transform his body; the head of Odysseus would be separated from his shoulders. Not only that, Odysseus would not be called the father of Telemachos any more. This last consequence not only indicates that his relation with his son would be resolved. The separation of father and son is nothing more than the separation of the proper name (Odysseus) and the epithet (Telemachos).[74] Odysseus would not be Telemachos 'the one who fights away', any more. He would become an-other. Speech as deed is inseparable from the body, but speech experience is also related to identity and difference, as we shall see in the third part of the present chapter. "Individual identity has two aspects: a name and a body."[75]

We can now investigate in more detail, how different voices, always intended as both content and form, correspond to different bodies, that utter them. The epic vocabulary is extremely rich in words involving the production of sounds (ὄπα, ἐνοπή, φθογγή, φωνή, αὐδή, ὄσσα, ὀμφή, κληδών...), all of which we translate as 'voice'. [76] We shall refer for this part our study to Jenny Clay's article where she examines the different

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Οδυσῆϊ κάρη ὤμοισιν ἐπείη, / μηδ' ἔτι Τηλεμάχοιο πατὴρ κεκλημένος εἶην, / εἰ μὴ ἐγώ σε λαβὼν ἀπὸ μὲν φίλα εἵματα δύσω).

[74] "In other words, the name of the son is an epithet for the father or the grandfather...That is a statement that should be taken absolutely literally...The epithet that is attached to [Odysseus] in the epic proclaims the same thing as the name of his son. The exploit of the father is summed up in a name, a name that may, on its own account, be developed in narrative." SVENBRO, J., op. cit., pp. 70.

[75] VERNANT, J-P., *Zone*, op.cit., pp. 40.

[76] H. Fournier distinguishes the words for voice that are related to verbs of saying and conveys the character of each term. His assumptions about language become evident as he classifies each term according to its physical, physiological, intellectual and expressive aspect. FOURNIER, H., op.cit., pp. 232. For a discussion on the terms that denote "the voice of song", see FORD, A., op. cit., pp. 172-197.

terms for the voice in Homer. She writes that *aude* (αὐδή) 'voice' "seems to be a distinguishing characteristic of human beings and differs both from animal noises and divine speech...a divinity may be called αὐδήεσσα when using human speech". She argues that in order to appear to mortals, a god needs to change not only his body, but his/her voice as well.[77] She also suggests that there are two Homeric words for divine voice: ὀμφὴ and ὄσσα. P. Vivante adds another two φῆμις and κληδών.[78] *Ossa* (ὄσσα) is often translated as 'rumour' or even 'divine rumour." The close relation of voice and body, the need for a voice to have a body, is reflected in the personification of *Ossa*. Zeus, who never appears to mortals, sends his voice embodied in the form of the messenger-voice *Ossa*.[79] *Omphe* (ὀμφή) is also sent by gods, and lingers about a person as the manifestation of an invisible divine body.[80] The lack of a body that utters the voice is evident in the case of φῆμις and κληδὼν as well.

How can we approach this dissociation of divine voice and body? Does it indicate that gods do not have a body? As Vernant pointed out they do have a body, though a different one and consequently a different voice.[81] A divine bodily presence

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[77] "The Shield of Achilles shows the gods to be both larger and more beautiful than men. Hence the assumption of a human form requires a diminution of their stature. But a complete metamorphosis also demands a concomitant change in voice or manner of speaking. The Homeric gods, then, differ from men not only in immortality and stature. A less obvious but equally important difference is the fact that the gods speak differently than men, and thus to appear as men and to speak like them, the gods must change both in *demas* and *aude*." CLAY, J. 1974: "*Demas* and *Aude*: The Nature of Divine Transformation in Homer", *Hermes* 102, pp. 136.

[78] VIVANTE, P., op.cit., pp. 11.

[79] B93-4: and Rumour walked blazing among them, Zeus' messenger, to hasten them along (μετὰ δέ σφισιν Ὄσσα δεδήει / ὀτρύνουσ' ἰέναι, Διὸς ἄγγελος.) See also ω413, α282, β216.

[80] B41: the divine voice drifting around him (θείη δέ μιν ἀμφέχυτ' ὀμφή), and also Y129: [he] does not hear all this from god's voices (οὐ ταῦτα θεῶν ἐκ πεύσεται ὀμφῆς).

[81] "In many ways, the divine super-body evokes and touches upon the non-body. It points to it; it merges with it. If it were to swing to one side, to turn itself into the absence of body, the denial of body, it

is seen and recognized only with difficulty, and this might be attributed to the specific character of visual perception in Homer.[82] Furthermore, for every recognition including that of mortals, bodily presence is never enough. This fact helps us to shift our investigation elsewhere. What interests us then is not the relation between the divine voice and body, but the very fact that divine voice is always perceived, heard and recognized as such, i.e., as something different. It will be this kind of research that introduces another way of experiencing speech, denoted by the term *phemi*, which will be examined further on in the chapter. The analysis of the Homeric words for voice will remain partial, nevertheless we can make a last remark to underline the relation of body and voice. A term such as *orthia* (ὀρθία) denotes the posture of the body, the voice that comes out from a body that stands in upright position,[83] while *opa* (ὄπα) indicates its rhythmic movement.[84]

In conclusion, Homeric speech is always an activity of a multiple but not divided body – not the expression of an inner self – by means of the organs of speech. In this case it would be anachronistic to use a number of our analytic distinctions as if they captured a phenomenological level of the experience of speech. Such analytical

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would upset the very equilibrium of Greek polytheism in its constant, necessary tension between the darkness in which the visible human body is steeped and the radiant light with which the god's invisible body shines." VERNANT, J.-P., *Zone*, pp. 19-43.

[82] See above note 40.

[83] Lateiner, in his analysis of the Homeric 'body language", writes: "Posture – the static body – and gesture – the dynamic body – underlie and underline language." LATEINER, D., 1995: *Sardonic Smile: Nonverbal Behavior in Homeric Epic*, The University of Michigan Press, pp. 28. It seems, however, that the relation is more immediate than this.

[84] "*Opa* refers to vocal quality or timbre, especially a clear or shrill tone. Thus the Muses have *opa* as do Circe and Calypso when they sing, Odysseus as he delivers a speech, or Hecuba when she cries out at the sight of Hector slain." CLAY, J. op.cit., pp. 135.

distinctions would include: form and content, thought and expression and the linguistic distinction – which Saussure made – between *langue* and *parole*. Again it should be emphasized that from the other side of the issue it is not a question of asserting that empirical Homeric reality destroys the validity of those distinctions but rather that those distinctions can never yield the form which experience took. The entire topography of speaking, thinking and sensation has to be thought in a quite different and specific relation. Speech is an action of the body, not something that can be divided – as we do – between meaning and sound.

1.3.2. SPEECH AS LISTENING AND DISTANCING

Central to Ong's and Havelock's works is the assertion that sound and hearing in oral cultures are intrinsically participatory. W. Ong writes:

> "For an oral culture learning or knowing means achieving close, empathetic, communal identification with the known, getting with it. Writing separates the knower from the known and thus sets up conditions for 'objectivity', in the sense of personal disengagement or distancing."[85]

In this section we shall challenge this notion of participation and communal identification in Ong's sense. By contrast, we shall argue that speech in the Homeric text can in fact be experienced as distancing, where distancing is understood as an interplay between differentiation and identification. In doing so we hope to displace the central opposition in which these two terms are treated within the orality-literacy debate; that is, orality/identification versus literacy/differentiation. In order to do so, we shall have to focus on the performance of the poems as depicted within the text, which describes the way that bards communicated experience to their audience. But,

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[85] ONG, W.J., op.cit., pp. 46.

before that, we need to consider one of the main terms that denotes speech in the text, which will illuminate another aspect of Homeric speech experience. We shall see how speech – in the sense of *phemi* – was always already experienced as a listening. The verb *phemi* (φημί) usually translated as 'say', was analysed in detail by the linguist E. Benveniste. Benveniste connects *phemi* with Latin terms such as *fas, fatus, fama, infans, fabula*, through the Indo-European root **bha-*, in order to explain how the general meaning 'to speak' came to be specialized in the sense *fas* 'divine law'." He asks:

"What is the precise sense of 'to speak' with this verb? What particular features distinguish it from all the other expressions relating to speech?" And he argues: "the root **bha-* designates speech as something independent of the person uttering it, not in virtue of what it means but in virtue of its very existence. Thus what has been said, Lat. *fatum*, or what is being said *fama*, Gr. *pheme*, Hom. *demou phemis*, 'vox populi', is charged, as impersonal speech, with a positive religious value: *pheme* is itself a god (*theos...tis*) (Hesiod, Works 764). He continues: "In the Odyssey there is frequent mention of the *demou phemis* 'the rumour of the people, the voice of the people...the word [*phemis*] does not denote individual speech. ..*pheme* is an emanation of words, whether it refers to rumour, reputation, fame, or an oracle. Finally, the verb *phasthai...phato* is to taken literally not simply as 'he said' but 'this utterance emanated from him'." [86]

[86] Benveniste points the fact that the conjugation of *phemi, phato* is partly active and partly middle. Apart from *phemi* he examines other related terms such as "*pheme* 'fame'; *phemis*, which has virtually the same sense 'rumour, conversation, gossip' and also *phatis* 'word, rumour, report... *thesphatos: athesphatos* 'limited (by destiny)': 'not limited.'" He argues: "We see why the root of *phemi*... came to indicate the manifestation of a divine saying: this is because it is always impersonal, because there is always something confused about it, always something mysterious just as the first beginnings of speech on the lips of a child [infant] are mysterious... This power of speech, cut off from its human source, and often of divine origin, can easily become a magic power...this root **bha-*, which in the vocabulary of Indo-European expressed this strange, extra-human power of the word, from its first awakening in the human infant to its collective manifestations, which were regarded as the expression of a divine voice." BENVENISTE, E. 1973: *Indo-European Language and Society*, Faber and Faber, pp. 407-15.

Benveniste's point is that *phemi* indicates the "act of speech which is impersonal and not individualized". In what sense can one speak about impersonal or individualized speech in the context of the epics? If self-consciousness is foreign to the culture depicted in the poems, what does the term 'individual' indicate? Nonetheless, Benveniste's remarks still have a value. What seems promising is the connection of *phemi* with the divine in the sense that divine is recognized as something different, and there is massive textual evidence of such a recognition. We can approach then the problem of identity and difference as evoked by the experience of speaking as *phemi*, which in turn will relate as to the setting of Homeric performance.

Phemios is the bard in Odysseus' palace, who escapes the slaughter. He says to Odysseus as he asks for mercy:

I am taught by myself, but the god has inspired in me the song-ways of every kind.[87]

E. Dodds argued that no contradiction is involved here because what the bard says is that he does not copy his songs but reworks what the god has taught him.[88] What seemed a contradiction to us initially, reveals the specific way that the experience of speech (in the form of song in this passage) for Phemios 'the one who speaks in the

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[87] χ347 :αὐτοδίδακτος δ' εἰμί, θεὸς δέ μοι ἐν φρεσὶν οἴμας / παντοίας ἐνέφυσεν.

[88] "'I am self-taught' says Phemios, 'it was a god who implanted all sorts of lays in my mind'. The two parts of his statement are not felt as contradictory; he means, I think, that he has not memorized the lays of other minstrels, but is a creative poet who relies on the hexameter phrases welling up spontaneously as he needs them out of some unknown and uncontrollable depth; he sings 'out of the gods,' as the best minstrels always do." DODDS, E.R., 1951: *The Greeks and the Irrational*, Berkeley Press, Boston, pp. 10. For the form-content distinction that underlies this kind of approach, see FORD, A., op. cit., pp. 31-4.

way of *phemi'* establishes a specific relation between individuality and the other,[89] the different, in our case, the god. J-P. Vernant reminds us that "Individual identity has two aspects: a name and a body. The proper name is that particular social mark attributed to a subject in order to consecrate its uniqueness within the species it belongs."[90] Identity is produced by listening, one always hears one's name, which gives one an identity but also marks a relation to someone else, to a different person, to the other who is the male ancestor. "The name of the son is an epithet for the father or the grandfather," J. Svenbro argues.[91] Phemios the singer is the son of Terpias – whose name stems from *terpo* (τέρπω) 'to pleasure', indicating the pleasure that is produced in erotic or bardic contexts, as we shall see further on. Thus identity is created by listening to a name which is always the same – fixed – and through which someone is simultaneously identified and differentiated from his ancestor. Although, a name is not always enough for the recognition of someone's identity, nonetheless the recognition of identity is always achieved through speech.[92] If we examine all the scenes of recognition within epics, we shall see that they all involve speech, for sight is not a secure medium of recognition. As we shall discuss in the chapter on *thura,*

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[89] "The speaking subject is also subject to the word of others, himself spoken in his speaking. If Achilles almost assumes the role of bard for his own deeds, asserting (*phemi*) his achievements with an extended simile for his sufferings, he also cites the prior discourse (*phesi*) which has already traced the design of his destiny." LYNN-GEORGE, M., op. cit., pp. 109.

[90] "Similarly, it is the body that gives a subject his identity, by distinguishing him from all his peers through his appearance, his physiognomy, his clothing and his insignia." VERNANT, J-P. *Zone*, op.cit., pp. 40.

[91] See above note 74.

[92] Lynn-George notes that the Homeric culture is one of discourse "in which the subject, like everything else, is a construct of speech." LYNN-GEORGE, M., op. cit., pp. 130. See also Goldhill who writes: "'A/the man' is *made up* by the language in which he represents himself and is represented." GOLDHILL, S., 1991: The Poet's Voice: Essays on Poetics and Greek Literature, Cambridge University Press, pp. 56.

Odysseus is not recognized by sight back in his home. His father, son, even his wife sees only a stranger. It is Eurukleia, his nurse, who identifies him. She recognizes him not though sight but by touching his scar, and because she is able to recollect a remote story about it.[93] Here it is within speech as listening (acoustic) – and not through vision – that identity and difference are produced within the Homeric text.[94]

We can now return to Phemios, the bard. The god, recognized as the other, inspired him. Divine inspiration has nothing mysterious about it. What is translated and thus transformed as inspiration is described in the text as an act exercised on the body of the bard: the god blows the songs into his lungs. We need though to remember that body does not only designate the 'organic'. To be able to sing is to be able to listen, for *aio* (ἀΐω) 'to listen', literally means 'breathe in'.[95] Speaking in the context of performance, that is, reciting or singing, is thus always already listening. *Thespesios* 'marvelous', a term related to *phemi*, is applied to the songs of Sirens, and it is a term that denotes the divine origin of the song.[96] And Homer the poet of epics says in B484:

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[93] τ392-3: at once she recognized that scar, which once the boar with his white tusk had inflicted on him (αὐτίκα δ' ἔγνω ἠ οὐλήν, τήν ποτέ μιν σὺς ἤλασε λευκῷ ὀδόντι.)

[94] K. Crotty argues: "The opaque narrative of the *Odyssey*, in more truly conveying the autonomous self, in turn reflects the listener's self. The listener's deepened awareness of his own autonomous self – a self that likens him to the hero who suffers, desires and understands – is the culmination, the *telos*, to which the *Odyssey* looks forward." GROTTY, K., 1994: *The Poetics of Supplication: Homer's Iliad and Odyssey*, Cornell University Press, pp. 210. See in contrast "the aesthetics of anaesthetisation", the indifference with which the original Homeric audience responded to the epic recitation, according to Parry's theory of orality. LYNN-GEORGE, M., op. cit., pp. 78.

[95] ONIANS, R.B., op. cit., pp. 74.

[96] BENVENISTE, E., op. cit., pp. 408.

Tell me now, you Muses who have your homes in Olympos. For you, who are goddesses, are there, and you know all things, and we have heard only the rumour of it and know nothing.[97]

What is translated as 'rumour' is *kleos* (κλέος) related to *kluo* (κλύω) – that denotes hearing in the sense of hearing epos,[98] and indicates sound in its sonority,[99] as in the case of hearing songs. Conventionally this invocation of the muse by the bard, is explained in terms of the legitimization of what the bard sings.[100] We propose instead, to understand that it is the experience of speech, as always already a listening (and related to the interplay of differentiation and identity), that characterizes epic recitation. The passage mentioned above is extremely valuable for our research as it makes clear that it is differentiation that locates. We usually think alterity in spatial terms. Something different is assigned a different place[101] – the Muses as different from the mortals are located in a different place, in Mount Olympos. We even think that location itself produces differentiation. But it is the differentiation achieved

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[97] B484: Ἔσπετε νῦν μοι, Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι / ὑμεῖς γὰρ θεαί ἐστε, πάρεστέ τε, ἴστέ τε πάντα, / ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέος οἷον ἀκούομεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν

[98] *Kleos* (κλέος) denotes the acoustic experience with which the epic is concerned. Survival in memory depends on the ear, in the form of *kleos.* NAGY, G., 1979: *The Best of Achaeans: Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, writes that *kleos*, 'that which is heard, glory', derives from the verb *kluo*, 'hear'. He argues that the IE root **kleu-* itself meant not only 'hear' in general but also 'hear poetry' in particular.

[99] "*Kleos* belongs entirely to the word of sounds. In Iliad Homer tells us about himself: 'All that we hear is a *kleos*'; and the verb used for 'hear' is *akouein (*Il 2.486). If *kleos* is not acoustic, it is not *kleos.* This sonority of *kleos* is confirmed by etymology...In English, the adjective 'loud' is another significant relative of *kleos."* SVENBRO, J. op. cit., pp. 14.

[100] "...the epic is a social institution, and the Muse is appealed to...legitimate the institution." REDFIELD, J., 1975: *Nature and Culture in the Iliad: The Tragedy of Hector*, Chicago, op. cit., pp. 40.

[101] Vernant argues on the difference between mortal and immortal body in relation to location: "One of the functions of the human body is that it precisely positions every individual, assigning him one and only one location in space. A god's body escapes this limitation no less than it does that of form. The gods are here and there at the same time..." VERNANT, J-P., *Zone*, op. cit., pp. 39.

within speech that produces locality and not the other way around. Nevertheless, the production of space within speech is experienced as a specific kind of space – space as container, in the sense of containing the alterity. In that sense distancing is experienced in relation to both identification and differentiation and also in relation to the space of the narrative which is always a space of containment. The experience of space within epics will be examined in the next chapter. Let us have a closer look now at the experience of distancing within epic recitation.

An epic performance is structured by the experience of speech as differentiation and identity, and within an interplay of distancing in many aspects. It is not only the differentiation of bard and god, the bard himself must be differentiated from his audience. There is evidence in the text as to how this can be achieved as a play of distancing. Firstly the bard is an outsider, he comes from elsewhere, he does not belong to the household, he is a *xeinos.*[102] Secondly, he is usually blind.[103] The blindness of bards is conventionally interpreted by J-P. Vernant as an indication of internal vision, insight.[104] But this seems to us an anachronism and we propose that it can be understood as reinforcing distancing. Given the specific character of vision in the epics, the exchange of gazes between bard and audience would have as an effect

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[102] "The separation of song from the active experience of life is represented at a more mundane level in the Odyssey by the social position of singers and singing. The singer, is a public figure, a *demioergos* like a seer or a physician (17.380-7), and as such he does not belong to the household for which he sings. It seems always to be an outsider (*xeinos* 17.382) less attached to his patrons than even a seer, for the gods are his audience as well as the source of his skill." WALSH, G.B., 1980: *The Varieties of Enchantment: Early Greek Views of the Nature and Function of Poetry,* The University of North Carolina Press, pp. 15

[103] This the case of Demodokos in θ63 and Thamyris in B599.

[104] VERNANT, J-P., 1983: *Myth and Thought Among the Greeks,* Routledge, pp. 81-2.

the collision of seeing and the seen.[105] Gazing at the body of a blind bard is what creates differentiation.[106]

The play of distancing is also manifested within the song. Epic is about distancing. The bard recites a story about another place the past; this past also takes place in a remote location. Sometimes in the story within the story, different, extra-human beings – Kirke, Kuklops, Sirens, Skulla and Charubdis – are located in these remote places. This is due to the specific structure – in the sense of both form and content – of the epic narrative which produces space as the container of that which is both different and distant, as we have already pointed out. However, within Homeric scholarship the usual approach to this issue is to provide an explanation in relation to the so called 'content' of the epic. E. Havelock argues:

"Mycenean was the suit of clothes in which the tale had to be dressed to give a distance and dignity to certain institutions and attitudes which were contemporary.."[107]

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[105] "In performance poetry, however, the fact that the audiences see the physical body of the real author (the poet) before them must be considered...When he performs, his body, his foot-beat and his voice all become part of the larger text; for example, his stature, whether or not he is blind, and his gender could affect an audience looking upon him." FELSON-RUBIN, N., 1994: *Regarding Penelope: From Character to Poetics,* Princeton, pp. 10, 149.

[106] See DERRIDA, J., 1993: *Memoirs of the Blind: The self-portrait and Other Ruins,* The University of Chicago Press.

[107] HAVELOCK, E., *The Muse*, op. cit., pp. 11. J. Redfield, on the other hand, approaches epic distance differently: "The epic distance...gives rise to a contrast between the themes of song and their effect...The bard sings of sorrow and death, but his songs give pleasure." J. REDFIELD, op. cit., pp. 39, see also A. FORD, op. cit., pp. 53-4. K. Crotty, who considers supplication "as a model for understanding the poetics of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*", writes: "Yet, in highly emotional situations (of the kind where supplication is likely to occur), the distancing serves a useful purpose, for it can enable the one afflicted to get out from under the immediate throes of emotion." CROTTY, K., op. cit., pp. 18.

This kind of explanation accords with a certain conception of the form and content of language. We have already argued about the anachronism of such approach in relation to the Homeric text. Nevertheless our argument about the play of distancing within the epic performance faces a major difficulty, when it confronts the usual interpretation of the way that relations between bard and audience are established. W. Ong writes:

" When a speaker is addressing an audience, the members of the audience normally become a unity, with themselves and with the speaker."[108]

Segal also argues that

"the oral performance engages its audience in a total response, physical and emotional as well as intellectual. Poetry recited or sung in such circumstances involves an intensively personal rapport between bard and audience... scenes of involved narration and reception may perhaps be regarded as ideal analogies or models for the relation that the bard hopes to create between himself and his audience."[109]

How do we deal with this apparently persuasive piece of common sense? Looking at the terms that describe performance within the text we can find clues to support our argument. Three terms *euphrosune, thelksis* and *terpsis* are related to both erotic and bardic contexts. There are mainly used to foster the interpretation of the relation between bard and audience as identification. *Euphrosune* (εὐφροσύνη), the effect produced whenever a bard delights all his listeners, is also associated with the effect a husband can have on his wife, or a wife on her husband. That is, like a bard, a spouse can effect *euphrosune* in a marriage-partner."[110]

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[108] ONG, W. J., op. cit., pp. 47.

[109] SEGAL, C., op. cit., pp. 196.

[110] FELSON-RUBIN, N., op. cit., pp. 142.

When Penelope and Odysseus had enjoyed (*etarpeten*) their lovemaking they took pleasure (*terpesthen*) in talking, each one telling his [or her] story.[111]

Terpsis (τέρψις) a germination of a form of *terpo* (τέρπω) links the semantic domains of lovemaking and storytelling and underscores their correspondence.[112] The partners experience both kinds of exchange, bardic and erotic. The term *thelksis* provides more evidence. N. Felson writes:

"The words *thelksis* (θέλξις) and *thelgein* (θέλγειν) occur fifteen times in the Odyssey in poetic or erotic contexts. Cumulatively, they tell Homer's listeners to beware of enchantment. When Odysseus enchants his audience, he is after profit; the Sirens are destructive when they enthrall seafarers with the lure of knowledge. *Thelksis* is ambiguous in value. *Thelksis* is a form of domination by one side, the enchanter, who perpetrates his or her will on the enchanted. When the interaction works optimally, and the enchanted willingly complies, *euphrosune* results. Otherwise, the victim of *thelksis* is resentful."[113]

Thelksis 'enchantment' is experienced as both danger and pleasure.[114] *Thelksis* is this interplay of distancing: it is a mechanism of controlling differentiation and identification.[115] Whenever identification takes over the audience, the performance

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[111] ψ300-1: Τὼ δ' ἐπεὶ οὖν φιλότητος ἐταρπήτην ἐρατεινῆς, / τερπέσθην μύθοισι, πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἐνέποντες

ψ308-9: Ὀδυσεύς πάντ' ἔλεγ'· ἡ δ' ἄρα τέρπετ' ἀκούουσ', οὐδέ οἱ ὕπνος / πῖπτεν ἐπὶ βλεφάροισι πάρος καταλέξαι ἅπαντα.

[112] "Love-making and narrative are alike the occasions for 'delight' [*terpsis*]...The *philotes* between Odysseus and Penelope ...is ultimately a model for the relationship between the poem and its listeners." CROTTY, K., op. cit., pp. 182-3.

[113] FELSON-RUBIN, N., op. cit., pp. 183, note 53.

[114] On *thelksis* see also GOLDHILL, S., op. cit., pp. 60-66.

[115] For a similar approach see R. Martin, who argues: "The text of the *Iliad* contains such markers of narration (by which the audience is included in performance) as well, devices that have been seen as breaking the illusions of the narrative's immediacy – deistic pronouns, rhetorical questions, tense shifts are some....of course, this does not 'prove', that the *Iliad* is an oral poem in any sense. It does, however, force us to rethink the relationship of contact and distance in the epic. Rather than being opposed, these features coexist...I suggest...that Homer uses an attested epic convention for both establishing contact

must stop.[116] Thus, – as the term *thelksis* help us to understand – epic performance is not a mechanism of simple identification of the audience with the bard. Within *domos* 'house' which evokes the experience of control – in *megaron* with the bard, or in *thalamos* with the spouse – *thelksis* controls distance, and insures a differentiation within identification. But in the unknown territory, where Sirens live, and which is nothing else but an unknown experience – the *thelksis* of their song is only a danger.[117] Hence, there is a relation between *thelksis* and location, but where location belongs to the category of experience and not to the concept of space.

Had we adopted a theory of orality as an adequate model to be applied in the study of the Homeric language, we would have finished our research before it could started. For we would have had to accept the experience of speech simply as participation, and thus also to accept that identification is the only mechanism through which speech can evoke experience within the epics. Instead, by uncovering and refusing the presuppositions of the orality-literacy debate (i.e., the content versus form distinction of language, and the concept of perception as universal) we have discovered a rewarding area of investigation, which has permitted us to mark the difference

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and at the same time keeping distance between himself and the audience of the *Iliad*." MARTIN, R., op. cit., pp. 233-5.

[116] This occurs in Phaiakia, when Alkinoos stops the bard as soon as he notices Odysseus' grief. On this passage Walsh writes "Odysseus's grief seems as fresh and sharp as if he wept for something immediate and real, rather than a song about the past...no healing distance separates experience from its poetic representation." WALSH, G.B., op. cit., pp. 4. Thalmann also relates enchantment to the temporal distance; "temporal distance is what enables a narrative of even painful events to give pleasure." THALMANN, W.G., op.cit., pp. 127.

[117] See DOHERTY, L.E., 1995: "Sirens, Muses, and Female Narrators in the Odyssey", *The Distaff Side: Representing the Female in Homer's Odyssey*, Oxford University Press, pp. 81-92.

between the Homeric experience of speech and our concept of language. To summarize and inevitably simplify, now we have established that Homeric speech is always experienced as an activity of the 'multiple' body – an ungainly term which we use simply to mark that the corporeal, the psychological and the intellectual are all interwoven – which of course renders our usual distinction between mental and bodily experiences an impossibility.[118] In effect, Homeric speech is experienced always as the audition and not as the expression of a thinking subject. Yet speech as listening is not experienced as 'participation' but rather as distancing, where distancing is the interplay of both differentiation and identification. In contrast we think of distancing as differentiation, and as the result of visual experience. Furthermore, Homeric identity and alterity are produced within the experience of speech as an effect of distancing, and not in relation to space with which we usually associate both.

Last but not least, Homeric speech can evoke experience, for in the Homeric text form and content of language cannot be dissociated. As we shall see in the following chapters, each term we examine in its context – i.e., in the flow of epic language – will uncover the mechanism through which a specific experience is evoked as a result of both the form and the content of Homeric language, and it is this combination that marks and makes unique the relation between Homeric language and experience.

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[118] For ease of exposition we will entail this meaning every time we refer to the Homeric body.

2

CHORE-CHOROS

SPACE AS EXPERIENCE

2.1. Introduction
2.2. Space as Container within Different Theories
2.3. Space in Homer
2.3.1. Philological Account of *Chore - Choros*
2.3.2. *Chore - Choros* within the Homeric Text
2.3.2.1. *Chore* : Things and Identity
2.3.2.2. *Choras Anthropon* : The Space of the Narrative
2.3.2.3. *Choros* : Event as Immobility
2.3.3. Gender Distinction
2.3.4. *Choros* and the Domestic

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a real difficulty in its exposition. The problem of trying to present the experience of space in the Homeric epics is overburdened with the fact that we inherit conceptual and linguistic conceptions about the nature of space and place which are extremely difficult to bracket off in the investigation of a text which we propose has a very different concept of space – indeed perhaps no concept of space – and where the linguistic terms used to designate spatial relations may have no equivalent in our conceptual usage and in the meaning of our words. Clearly this introduces the most complex issues of translation[1] and of analysis. We must attempt to avoid the anachronism of imposing our usage upon the Homeric text. At the same time, freeing the Homeric text to represent its own 'meanings' is peculiarly difficult

[1] It is the conception of language as form and content which makes translation possible. A different approach to language – an approach which thinks form and content simultaneously – immediately raises problems for translation. On the specific relation between original and translation see DERRIDA, J., 1979: "Living On: *Border Lines*," trans. James Hulbert, *Deconstruction and Criticism*, New York, Seabury Press, pp. 75-176.

since we may have no ready words or concepts with which to represent them. We are engaged in a double process in attempting to suspend our experience while representing an experience which is perhaps quite alien to us. Such an investigation is condemned to the status of a hypothesis that is unverifiable – a reading of the Homeric text in which one does not know whether one has brought too much or too little of one's understanding of space to the problem.

Our research does not try to give an account of the Greek concepts of space, or the Greek experience of space in general. It is only concerned with Homeric 'space', a space we might imagine to be outside the grasp of philosophy, given that the Homeric text predates Plato and therefore offers the possibility of a different understanding of space, different from that which has been made canonical by Platonic *chora*, that is, space as container or receptacle. Indeed, Platonic *chora* is used in the research in an absolutely paradigmatic way and is set against the Homeric *chore/os*. For Plato's concept of *chora* is now regarded as the origin of systematic thought about space in the West, and we attempt to identify what ideas of space may lie 'outside' philosophy, or, to put it temporally, 'before' philosophy. *Chora* – and especially its interpretation by Derrida – has dominated the recent discussion on space in architecture, but this research is not concerned with Homeric 'space' in general[2] but is limited to those elements which are relevant to architectural discourse.

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[2] Classical scholarship clearly demonstrates that many of the references to 'space' in Homer involve landscape or indicate the significance of travel and navigation relevant to an experience of space cosmology. (AUSTIN, N., 1975: *Archery at the Dark of the Moon: Poetic Problems in Homer's Odyssey,* Berkeley, University of California Press, REDFIELD, J., 1975: *Nature and Culture in the Iliad: The Tragedy of Hector*, Chicago, VIDAL-NAQUET, P. 1986: "Land and Sacrifice in the Odyssey: A Study of Religious and Mythical Meanings," *The Black Hunter: Forms of Thought and Forms of Society in the Greek World,* J. Hopkins University Press.) The notion of landscape was invented in 19th century, and in that sense it would be anachronistic to use it in our analysis of Homer.

We can put our own argument in a brief summary. The terms that are conventionally translated as 'space' or 'place' in the text are the feminine *chore* (χώρη) and the masculine *choros* (χῶρος). We shall argue that both these terms describe space as definite forms of experience, and that each term evokes a distinct field of experience. We argue that *chore* involves the experience of things, while *choros* involves the experience of events. In both cases these things and events cannot be separated from the 'space' they generate. From the beginning we have to understand that this implies a quite different experience of spatial matters from those of classical antiquity and still more from modernity. The category of space opened up by *chore* and *choros* is constitutively linked to the thing or event which 'occupies' it. Indeed it is co-extensive with the scale and the duration of the things and events. Clearly this is quite different from the Platonic concept of *chora* (χώρα) space as 'receptacle', and it is as far as possible from the modern Newtonian concept of space as infinite, homogeneous, and empty. Throughout this chapter it will be vital to continuously bear this in mind. We can only elaborate the Homeric usage if this difference is maintained.

The research differentiates *chore-choros* (a gender distinction) but also *chore-chora* (a distinction in dialect: Ionic-Attic). There is a linguistic convention that the gender of nouns does not affect their signification and that meaning is treated as indifferent in the case of the dialects; at the same time this does not preclude the possibility of further speculating upon the way concepts of gender and dialect are an effect of linguistics as a consequence of space as container.

Paradoxically, we could have included landscape, not because of its status as being relevant to the Homeric space, but because of the current importance attached to landscape in architecture and urbanism as an architectural element.

In order to develop our interpretation of how *chore* and *choros* were experienced within the Homeric text, a number of major issues will be raised:

1. The place/space distinction in relation to *chore - choros* within the epics,

2. The implications of the gender differentiation manifested in the two Homeric terms,

3. The relation between *epos* (ἔπος) 'speech' and *chore/os* (χώρη/ος) 'space',[3]

4. The question of identity and alterity - usually thought of as effects of space.

These will be the major areas in which we will attempt an alternative interpretation to that given in conventional scholarship. However, it is one thing to announce our interpretation but quite another to sustain it in the face of the influence, one might even say the force, of post-Homeric conceptions of space. Indeed our argument about the 'meaning' of the terms *chore* and *choros* is almost indistinguishable from a critique of contemporary scholarship – that it is anachronistically determined in its reading of the Homeric text by post-Homeric conceptions of space and place.

It may turn out that we in turn have insufficiently freed ourselves from those conceptions in this text but at least the direction of our research is clear – to free the reading of the Homeric text from subsequent meanings and concepts of space and place. The difficulty of this operation is not restricted to a substitution of other terms where others might find 'space' and 'place'. It is not reducible to finding a better translation. It involves tracing out all the implications of the terms and thus will lead us into issues which at first seem considerably removed from issues of space and place – for example the question of identity and the way in which identity is

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[3] The whole chapter evolves around the differences between Homeric terms and 'space'. In that sense, we use the word 'space' as a mark of translation, that underscores a relation between the two, and which is not exclusively that of sameness.

constructed. Or the relation of the space of narrative in the epic, or the difference in gender between *chore* and *choros.* Yet each of these areas is transformed when we free the reading from anachronism.

These initial remarks on the Homeric text stress the power of the Platonic or Newtonian conceptions of space to govern our reading of the Homeric text, and the difficulty of breaking away from that influence. For this reason, before we go any further, we need to further clarify our understanding of the difference between the Homeric *chore/choros* on the one hand, and the Platonic *chora* and the Newtonian concept of space/place on the other. Indeed, we also need to glance at the post-structuralist theory of space as event, given its strange affinity and also its differentiation from our interpretation of Homeric *choros.* However we are not attempting a brief history of concepts of space here, but only their initial differentiation.

2.2. SPACE AS CONTAINER WITHIN DIFFERENT THEORIES

In a recent book K. Algra presents in detail a wide range of the concepts of space in Greek thought.[4] But for the limited purpose of our research, we shall confine ourselves to the Platonic concept and specifically to Derrida's interpretation of *chora.*[5] Derrida's text is important to us because it explores a suggestion, already advanced by Heidegger, that the very notion of a 'concept' of space might be an effect of Platonic philosophy.[6] *Chora*, the Platonic 'receptacle', is related by Derrida to the

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[4] ALGRA, K., 1995: *Concepts of Space in Greek Thought*, E. J. Brill.

[5] DERRIDA, J., 1987: "Chora", *Poikilia: Études offertes à J-P. Vernant*, ed. EHESS. For the English translation see: DERRIDA, J., 1995: "Khora", *On the Name*, Stanford University Press.

[6] "...the transformation of the barely apprehended essence of place (*topos*) and of *chora* into 'space' defined by extension was initiated by Platonic philosophy, i.e. in the interpretation of being as *idea.*

question of reception, conception[7] and definition. *Chora* plays a crucial role not just in the manifest content of space, but in what might be thought of as the spatial relations of the conceptual order as such. This introduces a necessary dizziness in thinking about *chora*. In fact, *chora* is as much about the space of thinking as it is about the thought of space. In that sense the differentiation between Homeric and Platonic terms should be understood as a differentiation produced by the intervention, perhaps even the invention, of 'philosophy' as such. If this is so, we can now reformulate the problem as a question: How does the intervention of philosophy inflect the experience of space? Or: How does a theory of ideas generate a certain concept of space as container in the form of Platonic *chora*, and in what sense does Homeric experience of *chore-os* differ from it?

Chora is defined by Plato as a third kind of being, neither intelligible nor sensible but which is produced by necessity:

"Wherefore also we must acknowledge that one kind of being is the form [*eidos*] which is always the same, uncreated and indestructible, never receiving anything into itself from without, nor itself going out to any other, but invisible and imperceptible by any sense, and of which the contemplation is granted to intelligence only. And there is another nature of the same name with it, and like to it, perceived by sense [*aistheton*], created, always in motion, becoming in place [*topo*] and again vanishing out of place, which is apprehended by opinion jointly with sense. And there is a third nature, which is space [*chora*] and is eternal, and admits not of destruction and provides home for all created things, and is apprehended, when all sense is absent, by a kind of spurious reason, and is hardly real – which we, beholding as in a dream, say all of existence that it must of necessity be in some place [*en tini topo*] and occupy a space

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Might *chora* not mean: that which abstracts itself from every particular, that which withdraws, and in such a way precisely admits and 'makes place' for something else?" HEIDEGGER, M., 1959: *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Ralph Manheim, New Haven, Yale University Press, pp. 66.

[7] "It is difficult indeed, but perhaps we have not yet thought through what is meant by *to receive*, the receiving of the receptacle, what is said by *dechomai, dechomenon*. Perhaps it is from *khora* that we are beginning to learn it – to receive it, to receive from it what its name calls up. To receive it, if not to comprehend it, to conceive it." DERRIDA, J., "Khora", op.cit., pp. 95-96.

[*katechon choran tina*], but that what is neither in heaven nor in earth has no existence." (Timaeus 52a.)"[8]

Chora is produced by the separation between intelligible and sensible, between thinking and experience. According to the Platonic text, *chora* is that which does not belong to either of them, but that which marks or even produces the separation as such. Actually it is the theory of ideas as a realm separated from the realm of experience that necessitates a concept of space as enduring container – in order for the things to be defined – which is also neuter, though it seems feminine.[9] It is also important that for Derrida *chora* should be understood as both an invested place (i.e., the place occupied by someone) and a general place (a place neutralized and unmarked), but not quite the same as abstract space, (the kind of space produced within Cartesian philosophy).[10] Moreover, we can underline another distinction that

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[8] ἓν μὲν εἶναι τὸ κατὰ ταὐτὰ εἶδος ἔχον, ἀγέννητον καὶ ἀνώλεθρον, οὔτε εἰς ἑαυτὸ εἰσδεχόμενον ἄλλο ἀλλοθεν οὔτε αὐτὸ εἰς ἄλλο ποι ἰόν, ἀόρατον δὲ καὶ ἄλλως ἀναίσθητον, τοῦτο ὃ δὴ νόησις εἴληχεν ἐπισκοπεῖν· τὸ δ' ὁμώνυμον ὁμοιόν τε ἐκείνῳ δεύτερον, αἰσθητόν, γεννητόν πεφορημένον ἀεί, γιγνόμενόν τε ἔν τινι τόπῳ καί πάλιν ἐκεῖθεν ἀπολλύμενον, δόξῃ μετ' αἰσθήσεως περιληπτόν, τρίτον δέ αὖ γένος ὂν τὸ τῆς χώρας ἀεί, φθορὰν οὐ προσδεχόμενον, ἕδραν δὲ παρέχον ὅσα ἔχει γένεσιν πᾶσιν, αὐτὸ δὲ μετ' ἀναισθησίας ἁπτὸν λογισμῷ τινὶ νόθῳ, μόγις πιστόν, πρὸς ὃ δὴ καὶ ὀνειροπολοῦμεν βλέποντες καί φαμεν ἀναγκαῖον εἶναί που τὸ ὂν ἅπαν ἔν τίνι τόπῳ καὶ κατέχον χώραν τινά, τὸ δὲ μήτ' ἐν γῇ μήτε που κατ' οὐρανὸν οὐδὲν εἶναι. The English translation is by B. Jowett, from: PLATO, 1983: *Collected Dialogues*, ed. D. Hamilton, H. Cairns, Princeton.

[9] We disagree in this point with A. Bergren's criticism of Derrida's interpretation. [BERGREN, A., 1992: "Architecture Gender Philosophy," *Strategies in Architectural Thinking*, eds. J. Whiteman, J. Kipnis, R. Burdett, Chicago Institute for Architecture and Urbanism, MIT Press.] Derrida argues that *chora* should 'not be attributed properties of a determinate existent', that is, the female gender. Our understand is that *chora* though belonging to the female gender has to be produced as neutral within philosophy. In this way femininity can be defined in connection with proper place, exactly because place is considered neutral. In contrast to that, we shall argue that the experience of Homeric *chore* and femininity cannot be dissociated.

[10] "For on the one hand, the ordered polysemy of the word always includes the sense of political place or, more generally, of *invested* place, by opposition to abstract space. *Khora* 'means': place occupied by someone, country, inhabited place, marked place, rank, post, assigned position, territory or region. And in fact, *khora* will always already be occupied, invested, even as a general place, and even when it is

exists within the Platonic text, between *topos* as the specific location and *chora* as the abstract container. We can now see that this distinction is produced by the concept of space as a container and as a consequence is not appropriate distinction within the Homeric text. Derrida also addresses the relation of stories – mythic or ontological – and *chora*, where the later operates as the receptacle, which contains the former. Under this light, we can understand why the questioning of space within philosophy is associated not only with ontology, but with cosmology as well.[11] From Aristotle to Kant, space is among the categories,[12] where the question of category (as Derrida showed[13]) cannot be dissociated from the question of Being.

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distinguished from everything that takes place in it. Whence the difficulty...of treating it as an empty or geometric space, or even, and this is what Heidegger will say of it, as that which 'prepares' the Cartesian space, the *extensio* of the res *extensa*. But on the other hand, the discourse of Socrates, if not the Socratic discourse, the discourse of Socrates in this precise place and on this marked place, proceeds from or affects to proceed from errancy, from a mobile or nonmarked place, in any case from a space of exclusion which happens to be into the bargain neutralized...[Socrates] holds himself in a third genus...and in the neutral space of a place without place, a place where everything is marked but which would be 'in itself' unmarked. Doesn't it already resemble what others, later, those very ones to whom he gives the word, will call *khora*?" DERRIDA, J., "Khora", op.cit., pp. 109.

[11] Derrida's essay criticizes the traditional readings that attempt to fit *chora* into the classical oppositions between *muthos* and *logos,* because he argues it exceeds opposition as such.

[12] Aristotle's categories were: substance, quantity, quality, relation, time, place, posture, state, action, passion." COLLINS, S., 1985: "Categories, concepts or predicaments?", *The Category of the Person: Anthropology, Philosophy, History*, ed. M. Carrithers, S. Collins, S. Lukes, Cambridge University Press, pp. 76, note 5. H. Lefebvre, presents in a clear way how the history of the concept of space is related to the notion of category. He writes: "The thinking of Descartes was viewed as the decisive point in the working-out of the concept of space, and the key to its mature form. According to most historians of Western thought, Descartes had brought to an end the Aristotelian tradition which held that space and time were among those *categories* which facilitated the naming and classing of the evidence of the senses. The status of such categories had hitherto remained unclear, for they could be looked upon either as simple empirical tools for ordering sense data or, alternatively, as generalities in some way superior to the evidence supplied by the body's sensory organs. With the advent of Cartesian logic, however, space had entered the realm of absolute. As Object opposed to Subject, as *res extensa* opposed to, and present to, *res cogitans*, space came to dominate, by containing them, all senses and all

This concept of space as container has survived within philosophical discourse since Plato, though it has taken different forms. Newtonian space became "that homogeneous expanse, not distinguished at any of its possible places, equivalent towards each direction, but not perceptible with the senses".[14] For Leibniz, it is "the sum total of the ordering relations that hold between physical entities".[15] Both are still related to the concept of container. As Lefebvre notes: "...philosophical and scientific thought comes to conceive of a space without things or objects, a space which is somehow of a higher order than its contents, a means for them to exist or a medium in which they exist. Once detached from things, space understood as a form emerges either as substance (Descartes) or else, on the contrary, as 'pure *a priori*' (Kant)."[16] For Kant, space is one of the conditions of experience. It cannot be grasped as such, but must be considered as the medium in which we experience the objects extended in it:

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bodies. Was space therefore a divine attribute? Or was it an order immanent to the totality of what existed? Such were the terms in which the problem was couched for those philosophers who came in Descartes' wake- for Spinoza, for Leibniz, for the Newtonians. Then Kant revived, and revised, the old notion of the category. Kantian space, albeit relative, albeit a tool of knowledge, a means of classifying phenomena, was yet quite clearly separated (along with time) from the empirical sphere: it belonged to the *a priori* realm of consciousness (i.e. of the 'subject'), and partook of that realm's internal, ideal – and hence transcendental and essentially ungraspable – structure." LEFEBVRE, H., 1991: *The Production of Space*, Blackwell, pp. 1-2.

[13] DERRIDA, J., 1982: The Supplement of the Copula: Philosophy before Linguistics, *Margins of Philosophy*, Harvester Wheatsheaf, pp. 175-206.

[14] "Space is, in Newton's view, essentially an absolute, independent, infinite, three-dimensional, eternal, fixed, uniform 'container' into which God 'placed' the material universe at the moment of creation." RAY, C., 1992: *Time, Space and Philosophy*, Routledge, pp. 99.

[15] "In everyday speech this concept of space...has its counter-part in expressions conveying the location of particular things in terms of their surroundings, as in 'a fish is swimming in the water'..." ALGRA, K., op.cit., pp. 17.

[16] LEFEBVRE, H., op.cit., pp. 218.

"...human experience results from two sources: intuitions and concepts...The human mind has a structure or form, which orders the material of sensation into intuitions and concepts; this structure or form is two-fold, the pure forms of intuition – space and time – and the pure forms of the understanding- the categories. None of these forms of ordering experience could arise from experience, since they must be presupposed if any recognizable experience can occur at all. Thus they are *a priori*."[17]

According to Kant's theory of space, which is in a way an ungraspable 'container' of experience, our own investigation 'on the experience of space' would be logically impossible. What provides us, however, with the possibility of our investigation in the first place, is that we do not consider space as a basic *a priori* category of consciousness, with the consequence that there is nothing else to be said, but as an entirely problematic notion; an at least partly historical category to be deciphered within a particular culture. The space we are talking about then, seems to be similar to what is called anthropological place.[18]

Since space as container seems to be produced 'by necessity' within philosophy, what kind of experience do the Homeric terms evoke and can we approach them without colonizing them under the flag of 'container'? These are the problems that we shall confront in the following pages.

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[17] COLLINS, S., 1985: op.cit., pp. 55. Collins also notes: "In Kant, space and time are pure forms of intuition rather than categories for the following sorts of reason: they are not general concepts, admitting of a plurality of instances, like the concept blue being instantiated in various blue things, but are necessarily dimensions of a single and directly experiencable reality. We experience objects as extended *in* space and time, in a literal sense; whereas in the case of categories, causation for instance, we do not directly and literally experience one object or event causing another." Ibid., pp. 77, note 36.

[18] AUGÉ, M. 1995: *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, Verso.

2.3. SPACE IN HOMER

Firstly we examine the ways in which scholarship approaches the Homeric terms. We try to show how philological accounts of *chore/os* continue in fact to be deformed by subsequent philosophical theories. As a consequence, Homeric terms are being approached *via* and under the sign of the concept of the Platonic *chora*. Moreover, we suggest, it is this unintended philosophical force which determines the Homeric feminine form *chore* as a formal variation of *chora*, and thus it is taken for granted that the two share a common meaning. In fact, *chore* in dictionaries is always in brackets, or as we would argue repressed by the action of philosophical decision.

2.3.1. PHILOLOGICAL ACCOUNT OF *CHORE - CHOROS*

Dictionaries distinguish between the feminine *chora* and the masculine *choros* even though their differentiation is unclear in the given definitions.[19] Etymological theories eliminate any difference between masculine and feminine forms in favor of a neutral essence enclosed in an 'original' root. Space as *chora/os* is produced as neutral in both philosophy and etymology. This is due to the ontological presuppositions of etymological theories, as manifested in their search for the original meaning of the words. Here we shall refer to two different theories of derivation.

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[19] Chantraine for instance, writes that both *chora* and *choros* indicate in-placement though the former has more specific uses. CHANTRAINE, P., 1968: *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque*, Paris, s.v. χώρα. See also LIDDELL, G.H. and SCOTT, R., 1991: Greek-English Lexicon, Oxford, s.v. χώρα, χῶρος.

Hofmann[20] relates *chora/os* with Hesiodic *chaos*[21] via the Indo-European root **ghei-*, which indicates 'lack', 'gap', 'yawing'. It gives a cosmological and ontological interpretation of *chora.* Chantraine, on the other hand, rejects the above etymology and proposes a possible connection with *choros* (χορός) 'dance,' because he argues, both *choros* (χορός) and *choros* (χῶρος), denote a delimited space.[22] In that way he accepts a common meaning of the two words, whose similarity, especially in their transliterated form is obvious. However, what makes such a relation possible is that which is not stated by Chantraine, namely the development of theories about space-time. This is evident in the adoption of his theory by Indra Kagis McEwen. She writes that in Iliad *choros* (χορός) is both the 'dancing place' and the 'dance' and that fact "reflects the tendency towards localization or spatialization of the purely temporal."[23] What is taken for granted in this temporality of dance, is a notion of time as the accumulation of distinct units. Movement can be divided and frozen[24] and in that sense space is produced as a section at any distinct moment of a

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[20] HOFMANN, J.B., 1974: *Etymologicshes Wörterbuch des Griechischen*, München 1950, Greek translation by A. Papanikolaou, Athens, s.v. χῶρος.

[21] The word *chaos* does not occur in the Homeric text. Furthermore, the possibility of connecting *chaos* to *choros* presupposes the notion of *kenon* 'emptiness' a term introduced by the Greek philosophers in their attempts to define *choros* and *topos*. (See ALGRA, K., op.cit., pp. 31-7.) In that sense, the above etymology is based on a philosophically conceived notion of *chora*.

[22] CHANTRAINE, P., op.cit., s.v. χώρα. He writes on the etymology of *chora:* "En ce cas il faudrait plutôt chercher du côté de χορός, qui désigne lui aussi un espace délimité. Très incertain de toute facon."

[23] She refers to Iliad Σ590-605, and writes: "One of the many things this passage reveals is that *choros* is not only dancing floor, or dancing place, but the dance itself. The word *choros* (or one of its compounds) is used nine times in the Iliad, but only once,....does it appear, unequivocally, to mean a place for dancing and not the dance....in the later Odyssey, *choros* continues to refer to the dance, but appears several times as dancing floor." KAGIS McEWEN, I., 1993: *Socrates' Ancestor: An Essay on Architectural Beginnings*, MIT Press, pp. 58.

movement.[25] This very possibility of time's division merely reflect the way we think about time today.[26] However, time as *hore* (ὥρη) in the Homeric text denotes the 'right time' that something occurs,[27] and as such cannot be constrained to produce space in the way described above. Nevertheless, what is important in this relation between *choros* (χῶρος) and *choros* (χορός) is not any etymological derivation, but the very fact that *choros* (χορός) in the Homeric text denotes both the dancing place, the dance and the group that dances.[28] In that sense it brings together location, activity

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[24] A. Perez-Gomez for instance, considers labyrinth as a "frozen choreography." PEREZ-GOMEZ, A. 1994: "Chora: The Space of Architectural Representation", *Chora 1: Intervals in the Philosophy of Architecture*, McGill-Queen's University Press.

[25] Note that in post-stucturalist theories on space as event the production of space is similar. The notion of fragmented time differentiates our interpretation of *choros* (χώρος) which presents certain affinities with post-structuralist theories as we shall see later on.

[26] Heidegger notes that we conceive time as "the temporal sequence of 'nows' and space as the "spatial side-by-side (beside, in front, behind, above, below) of the points here and there". He continues: "To the calculating mind, space and time appear as parameters for the measurements of nearness and remoteness, and these in turn as static distances". HEIDEGGER, M. 1971: "The Nature of Language", *On the Way to Language*, Harper and Row, pp. 102. We can understand better now the production of space as frozen moments of a movement. At the core of such conception of space is the possibility of measuring a static and enduring unit. It is this method that is applied in contemporary architectural theories of design. However the relation of architecture and space is another issue all together. We shall touch upon it below.

[27] *Hore* (ὥρη) occurs 4 times in Iliad (B468, 471, Z148, Π643), and 14 times in Odyssey (γ334, ε485, ι51, λ330, 373, 379, ξ407, ο394, ρ176, σ367, τ510, φ428, χ301). In all passages indicates the right or fitting time for something to occur: the right time for sleep, eating, telling stories, getting married etc. The plural *horai* (ὧραι) is related to repetition and automaton, Horai being the guards of the gates of heaven. In no case has time in Homer any relation – in the sense that is not being experienced as divided in units – either to χορὸς or χώρη / ος and especially in the sense of producing space.

[28] "*Choros*, is not only dance and dancing place. *Choros* is also the group that dances...is people doing something together, a group with a shared purpose.." KAGIS McEWEN, I., op.cit., pp. 74.

and bodies[29] and leads the way for an understanding of *choros* (χῶρος) as experience. We shall return to this later.

We would like also to remark on the variation of the feminine ending, -*e*(-η) instead of -*a*(-α), that is common to other words as well, and explained as a peculiarity of the Homeric dialect.[30] In Plato the feminine form is *chor-a* (χώρ-α), in Homer *chor-e* (χώρ-η). The ending -*e*(-η) is considered to be an Ionic form of the Attic ending -*a*(-α). Here a formal difference is interpreted in terms of the location in which it is produced.[31] But what underscores such an interpretation is a conception of space as container and thus producer of difference in the sense of separation. This separation we are supposed to accept as 'natural' between forms of language: Attic and Ionic. Overshadowing this is a non-stated separation between the form and content of language itself. A formal difference is interpreted simply in terms of the geographical place where it was produced. As such it seems to many philologists to be a simple and natural difference which needs no further explanation; Ionic form did one thing, Attic did another, but what they are doing is identical. The philologist is here Plato's victim; he repeats the philosophical distinction between form and content, while at the same time repeating the notion of space as container. In fact, the

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[29] *Agore* is another term that in Homer denotes both the gathering place, the speech (activity) delivered in the gathering, and the gathered men. It is interesting however, that in classical Athens *agora* becomes a fixed location in the *polis*, which contains activities (not only public debating, but all kinds of business), bodies, and things (*agora* means also things sold in the forum). It is also used as a mark of time: Αγορά πλήθουσα indicates the forenoon, when the market-place was full. This occurs exactly because *agora* is meant as a fixed space that contains and gives identity.

[30] "**η** is regularly found when, in Attic, **α** only would be admissible, e.g. ἀγορή, ὁμοίη, πειρήσομαι." AUTENRIETH, G., 1991: *Homeric Dictionary*, Duckworth, pp. xvii.

[31] Ionia is Homer's homeland, or in any case the place where the epics were produced, whereas Attica is Plato's homeland. In the case of *chore, chora*, note also that a difference between "spatial" terms is given a "spatial' explanation; or is it not just a coincidence?

situation is much more complex. The conception of territory or culture as a container and producer of different dialects is related to a conception of language as the container of meaning. As a consequence, the form and content of language can be thought of independently, and in the case we are considering the variation of form is thought to leave the content, the meaning of words, intact. But this very assumption about language, about the separation of form and content is itself shadowed by the Platonic conception of the container. By contrast we are attempting to approach the Homeric distinctions without these assumptions. We can now understand why dictionaries merely note a difference of form between *chore* and *chora*, but we cannot accept this. What is marked by the variation of form might be a real difference in the experience that each term evokes. The dictionaries' reduction to localized formal difference might mark the repression of what is a difference at the level of experience. Put another way, the conventional distinction between the form and content of language might indicate a repression of language as experience.

If we reject these formal distinctions we must also reject the distinction which is drawn by K. Algra. He argues:

"...*chora*... is the one which appears earliest in the written sources. Its basic meaning seems to be 'land/region/ ground'...When applied to a smaller piece of ground chora gets the meaning 'stretch/field/ ground / place'...In Homer χώρα may also mean 'land / shore' as opposed to 'sea'...In those cases where chora should be translated 'place / space' the idea is always that of an extension, whether two- or three-dimensional, which is occupied or which can be occupied... [In] its original sense [*chora*]...is an extension which can be occupied (taken)."[32]

Clearly Algra approaches the Homeric *chore* through the philosophical concept of Platonic *chora*. He eliminates the formal difference by transforming the Ionic *chore*

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[32] ALGRA, K., op.cit., pp. 33.

into the Attic form *chora*. He represses any trace of difference between experienced and conceived space, between *chore* as experience and *chora* as container. To the philosophical concept of *chora* as container, he simply adds an original Homeric term of meaning, without questioning what 'meaning' might mean in Homeric context, nor the presupposition that relates meaning, remoteness and originality. As a consequence and in line with his interpretation, Algra ignores the masculine *choros* in Homer, a term which cannot be formally connected with the Platonic concept.

We refer to Algra as an illustration of the confusion with which scholarship approaches the Homeric term. It is also worth noting that some scholars who privilege the study of the concept of space draw exclusively from philosophical texts.[33] They either ignore Homeric *chore/os*, or they describe Homeric 'space' without questioning 'space' as such in Homer, that is, as *chore/os*.[34] The bond forged by Plato between philosophy and *chora* is strong and radical and the way scholarship approaches – or does not approach – the Homeric terms in a post-Platonic fashion is more than an indication of the level of difficulty found in attempting to disrupt the

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[33] The investigation of Greek space is limited to the Greek philosophical concepts. See for instance, SORABJI, R., 1988: *Matter, Space and Motion: Theories in Antiquity and their Sequel*, Duckworth, ALGRA, K., op.cit., or CORNFORD, F.M., 1936: "The Invention of Space", *Essays in Honor of G. Murray*.

[34] When scholars describe Homeric 'space', they presuppose a concept of space as container of functions, or actions. D. Maronitis writes on the Homeric *Homilia*-space, 'speech-space': "The sense of *Homilia* requires that we distinguish between act and space where it occurs: the latter facilitates the former, while adding its own, complementary signs...In conclusion: Each theme has its own temporal and spatial ὑποδοχή ['receptacle']." Note that the word he uses ὑποδοχή 'receptacle', describes *par excellence*, the Platonic concept of *chora*. MARONITIS, D.N., 1990: "The Homilia-Space and its Signs: From the Iliad to the Odyssey", *Ο Ομηρικός Οικος: Από τά Πρακτικά τού Ε' Συνεδρίου γιά τήν Οδύσσεια (11-14 Σεπτεμβρίου 1987)*, Ιθάκη, pp. 105-26. The same attitude also characterizes A. Antoniadis when he describes Epic Space. ANTONIADIS, A., 1992: *Epic Space*, Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York.

established way of thinking of space as a container, in order to make the shift from space as a concept to *choros/e* as experience.

One important element is the feminine-masculine grammatical forms of Homeric terms.[35] Insofar as this distinction is not completely ignored by the scholars, there is a tendency for the distinction to be treated in terms of the opposition of the specific-abstract nature of space. For example, Chantraine implies that *choros* is more generic than *chora*, which has more specific uses,[36] while Indra Kagis McEwen takes the opposite stance, and proposes that the Homeric term *choros* is more "defined", than *chore*.[37] Both arguments are conditional upon an implicit acceptance of the place/space distinction, as it appears in terms of the opposition: specific-abstract.[38] Now, we have nothing to say here about the problematic debate on space/place as

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[35] We have already argued at the beginning of the chapter that we intend to consider form and content of Homeric language simultaneously, and in that sense we refuse to interpret the use of feminine or masculine endings as accidental and depending on the form of the verse. Our hypothesis is that different words in Homer evoke different experiences.

[36] See above note 19.

[37] "In the Iliad *chore*, which is the Ionic form of *chora,* is a scant space (*olige chore)* between, such as that between a horse and a chariot...*Choros,* the masculine form of *chora* or *chore,* in general denotes a space that is somewhat more defined than the feminine *chora*...In the Odyssey, where the word more often than not appears in its masculine, *choros,* form, the tendency is for it to mean place as location, but also land, country, or territory." KAGIS McEWEN, I., op.cit., pp. 81-2. Indra Kagis McEwen interprets the Homeric terms according to Platonic and Aristotelian concepts of extension and container. As we shall see, it is no surprise that in such philosophical interpretation she makes use of the term 'place' in order to differentiate the two terms.

[38] M. Augé writes: "The term 'space' is more abstract in itself than the term 'place'...It is applied in much the same way to an area, a distance between two things or points, or to a temporal distance. It is thus eminently abstract, and it is significant that it should be in systematic if still somewhat differentiated use today, in current speech and in the specific language of various institutions representative of our time." AUGÉ, M. op.cit., pp. 82. Even Yi-Fu Tuan, who investigates space and place from the point of view of their experience, seems to follow the same line of thought when he writes that place is security and space is freedom. TUAN, YI-FU, 1989: *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*, University of Minnesota Press.

such, nor with its presumed correspondence with *chora/topos*,[39] since these debates far exceed the scope of this thesis. But we must point out that the distinction space/place can be drawn only on the basis of accepting a philosophical conception of space as a neutral container.[40] The *chora/topos* distinction is one of a series of separations produced within the Platonic concept of receptacle. *Topos* is present, we can say 'by necessity', within the definition of *chora* in the Timaeus.[41] Both *chora* and *topos*, are philosophical terms and therefore absent from the Homeric text. As a consequence any attempt to relate the distinction between *chore/choros*, and space/place, or *chora/topos,* will confuse our investigation. Furthermore when *chora,* as we have already discussed, is conceived as a neutral container, everything is given

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[39] Algra criticizes "the 'automatic' translations often found in the scholarly literature, which assume a one-to-one correspondence between *topos* and 'place' and *chora* and 'space'". He adds: " The Greeks did not have a terminological distinction matching the conceptual distinction between place and space." ALGRA, K., op.cit., pp. 32.

[40] We would like to note that Michel de Certeau – who has an interesting approach to space – does not avoid the concept of container in distinguishing between space and place, even though for him it is place that seems to operate as the container. M. Augé comments on Certeau's *"L' Invention du Quotidien"*: "Space, for him, is a 'frequented place', 'an intersection of moving bodies' : it is the pedestrians who transform a street (geometrically defined as a place by town planners) into space. Thus place is seen as an assembly of elements coexisting in a certain order and the space as animation of these places by the motion of a moving body." AUGÉ, M., op.cit., pp. 79-80. E. S. Casey in an article entitled "Retrieving the Difference Between Place and Space", gives a brief historical account of the debate. In order to denote his argument about the place/space distinction, he quotes Descartes: "All places are full of bodies" and Bergson: "Our space is empty and unlimited". Besides any kind of difference denoted by the terms 'full' and 'empty', what struck us is the concept of container that underscores both terms in the above quotes. CASEY, E.S., 1989: "Retrieving the Difference Between Place and Space", *Journal of Philosophy and the Visual Arts*, ed. A. Benjamin, pp. 54-57.

[41] Note also that it is by necessity, according to Plato, that *chora* itself is produced; a necessity created by the theory of ideas, that is by the separation between sensible and intelligible. However, as the concept of *chora* is 'difficult to grasp', so is *topos*, and the distinction between the two remained an unresolved problem for Greek philosophers – who 'by necessity', had to bring the term *kenon* into their theories. On the distinction between the Greek terms see ALGRA, K., op.cit.

its place. This has two consequences if we interpret Homeric *chore/os* through the Platonic concept; it will lead us to ignore the gender distinction as such, because of the neutrality of *chora*, or it will lead us to attribute the gender distinction to the distinction of genders. We then have to describe *chore* as the feminine place, and *choros* as the masculine space, both of them deriving from the concept of *chora* as proper place as introduced by Plato. But in fact, Homeric *chore* (χώρη) - *choros* (χῶρος) give us other choices to consider. We will delay our solution to the problem in order to consider each term in its Homeric context.

2.3.2. *CHORE-CHOROS* WITHIN THE HOMERIC TEXT

The word *chore* (χώρη) appears five times in Iliad and three in Odyssey, *choros* (χῶρος) 16 and 17 times respectively. The co-presence of two grammatical types of different genders *chore* (feminine), and *choros* (masculine) is given two different but not quite distinct translations in the Homeric dictionaries.[42] *Chore* is translated as 'place, space, regions, countries', *choros* as 'space, plot, spot, region'.

Our hypothesis is that the two terms evoke distinct experiences. The difference between the two cannot be accommodated within a translation that operates as definition because, as we have seen, such definition turns out to be a philosophical definition originating in Plato. In this sense we cannot decide, except on contemporary grounds, whether to translate either of them as space or place, because they predate the philosophical distinction between space and place.[43] They describe

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[42] AUTENRIETH, G., op.cit., s.v. χώρη, χῶρος.

[43] We can describe the transformation which occurred with the advent of Platonic *chora*, as the separation, the split, between intelligible and sensible (experience and thinking or *eidos* and thing), that produced the split between thing and its place, and also between space and place in the form of *topos*

how space is produced and experienced, and they both exceed and fall short of any definition. We shall limit ourselves to the description of *chore* as the effect of things, and *choros* as the effect of events; whereas effect should be thought neither in terms of cause, nor in terms of time. In doing so we are aware of a certain defeat since the categories of 'things' and 'events' are not without their philosophical ancestry. We can summarize the issues that the investigation of the Homeric text will open up; these are:

-The relation between *chore* and things, where things are not so much situated in, but produce the very possibility of 'space/place'.[44] This relation illustrates how a body acquires identity as an effect of *chore*, as it opens it up. This marks a difference from our concept of 'space/place' and the Platonic *chora*, both conceived of as containers and thus producers of identity.

-The relation between *choros* and experience, where *choros* is not intended as the container of experience but rather as co-produced with events. The fact that experiencing bodies constitute the possibility of a non-enduring *choros* marks the difference from our conception of space as infinite, homogenous and empty.

-Furthermore, Homeric *chore/choros* dissolve and do not withstand experience, they survive as narrative within *epos*, where they are reproduced as distinct and enduring entities. In that sense, the epic narration of Odyssey about c*horas anthropon* (χώρας

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and *chora* (*chora* intended as a container with specific locations in it). The status of all these entities has remained unclear, and necessitates definition, conception and reception.

[44] Note Heidegger's approach to the Greek experience of space: "The Greeks had no word for 'space.' This is no accident; for they experienced the spatial on the basis not of extension but of place (*topos*); they experienced it as *chora*, which signifies neither place nor space but that which is occupied by what stands there. The place belongs to the thing itself. Each of the various things has its place. That which becomes is placed in this local 'space' and emerges from it..." HEIDEGGER, M., 1959: *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, op.cit., pp. 66.

ἀνθρώπων) 'countries of people' will give us the opportunity to challenge the thinking of 'spatial distance' in terms of identity and the other, as we argue that identity is an effect of *chore* and alterity – as distancing[45] – the effect of *epos.*

Having in mind all the above, we can proceed now with the investigation of the Homeric text. We shall start with:

2.3.2.1. *CHORE* (χώρη) : Things and Identity

"We would have to learn to recognize that things themselves are places and do not merely belong to a place." HEIDEGGER, M., 1973: "Art and Space," *Man and World: An International Philosophical Review*, Vol. 6, No. 1, February.

Of the eight occurrences of the word in epics, one passage in particular helps us to introduce our arguments. It is a well-known passage in Odyssey, where Odysseus provides the clinching evidence of his identity to his wife. His identity, as master of his house, is demonstrated by its connection with his bed as it 'remains in place'.[46]

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[45] See chapter on *Epos* as distancing.

[46] What man has put my bed in another place? But it would be difficult for even a very expert one, unless a god, coming to help in person, were easily to put it in another place...but of men there is no other living mortal, not even in the full strength of his youth, who could easily move it away, since a great mark is wrought into the artfully fashioned bed. It is I who made it and nobody else. There was the bole of an olive tree with long leaves growing in full flowering in the courtyard, and it was thick, like a column. I laid down my chamber around this, and built it, until I finished it, with close-set stones, and roofed it well over, and added the compacted doors, fitting closely together. Then I cut away the foliage of the long-leaved olive, and trimmed the trunk from the roots up, planing it with a brazen adze, well and expertly, and trued it straight to a chalkline, making a bed post of it, and bored all holes with an auger. I began with this and built my bed, until it was finished, and skillfully embellished it with gold and silver and ivory. Then I lashed it with thongs of oxhide, dyed bright with purple. In this way I proclaim and make manifest the sign/token. But I do not know now whether the bed is still firmly in place, oh woman/wife or if some man has cut underneath the stump of the olive and moved it elsewhere.

ψ184-204: τίς δέ μοι ἄλλοσε θήκε λέχος; χαλεπὸν δέ κεν εἴη / καὶ μάλ' ἐπισταμένῳ, ὅτε μὴ θεὸς αὐτὸς ἐπελθὼν / ῥηϊδίως ἐθέλων θείη ἄλλη ἐνὶ χώρῃ. / ἀνδρῶν δ' οὔ κέν τις ζωὸς βροτός, οὐδὲ μάλ' ἡβῶν, / ῥεῖα μετοχλίσσειεν, ἐπεὶ μέγα σῆμα τέτυκται / ἐν λέχει ἀσκητῷ· τὸ δ' ἐγὼ κάμον οὐδέ τις ἄλλος. / θάμνος ἔφυ τανύφυλλος ἐλαίης ἕρκεος ἐντός, / ἀκμηνὸς θαλέθων· πάχετος δ' ἦν ἠΰτε κίων. / τῷ δ' ἐγὼ ἀμφιβαλὼν θάλαμον δέμον, ὄφρ' ἐτέλεσσα, / πυκνῇσιν

Many scholars have analysed this passage because of its importance as the scene of final recognition in Odyssey. We shall refer only to Froma Zeitlin's recent paper, as one of the most sympathetic.[47] She argues convincingly how the identity of Odysseus, and the fidelity of Penelope are both related to the bed, or as she writes: "through the device of an object that can be minutely described, located in space, and recalled to its functions and emblematic status through the opportunity given to Odysseus to reclaim it in the act of narrating how he first made it." She concludes that the bed is a "sign-symbol of recognition...a mental construct, an image in the mind's eye."[48] What could be more natural? But our scepticism is that interpreting Homer according to criteria of what seems 'natural' for humans to do and think always runs the risk of anachronism. We would like to propose an interpretation which uncovers the presuppositions about place in order to open up the possibility of an understanding of the term *chore* included in it.

There are a number of references to 'the place of the bed' in the translation, such as 'put [the bed] in another place', 'moved it away', 'the bed is still firmly in place', 'moved it elsewhere', although the term *chore* occurs only once in the passage:

But it would be difficult for even a very expert one, unless a god, coming to help in person, were easily to put it in another place (ψ186: ῥηϊδίως ἐθέλων θείη ἄλλῃ ἐνὶ χώρῃ).

λιθάδεσσι, καί εὖ καθύπερθεν ἔρεψα / κολλητὰς δ' ἐπέθηκα θύρας, πυκινῶς ἀραρυίας. / καὶ τότ' ἔπειτ' ἀπέκοψα κόμην τανυφύλλου ἐλαίης, / κορμὸν δ' ἐκ ῥίζης προταμὼν ἀμφέξεσα χαλκῷ / εὖ καὶ ἐπισταμένως καὶ ἐπὶ στάθμην ἴθυνα, / ἑρμῖν' ἀσκήσας, τέτρηνα δὲ πάντα τερέτρῳ. / ἐκ δὲ τοῦ ἀρχόμενος λέχος ἔξεον, ὄφρ' ἐτέλεσσα, / δαιδάλλων χρυσῷ τε καὶ ἀργύρῳ ἠδ' ἐλέφαντι· / ἐν δ' ἐτάνυσσ' ἱμάντα βοὸς φοίνικι φαεινόν. / οὕτω τοι τόδε σῆμα πιφαύσκομαι· οὐδέ τι οἶδα, / ἦ μοι ἔτ' ἔμπεδόν ἐστι, γύναι, λέχος, ἦέ τις ἤδη / ἀνδρῶν ἄλλοσε θῆκε, ταμὼν ὕπο πυθμέν' ἐλαίης.

[47] ZEITLIN, F.I. 1995: "Figuring Fidelity in Homer's Odyssey," *The Distaff Side: Representing the Female in Homer's Odyssey*, ed. Beth Cohen, Oxford University Press, pp. 117-52.

[48] Ibid, pp. 146.

What is clearly taken for granted in the translation and thus in the interpretation is a category of place as enduring, of a location which is independent of a thing. The interpretation of space as a container is firmly in play in such translations. According to this view, the bed has a proper place where it should remain 'firm' *empedon.* This notion of the bed's proper place opens up the logical possibility of dislocation, that is, the separation of place and thing. Both place and thing are enduring facts that can exist independently of each other. But if this is so, Odysseus' anxiety is a puzzle. How can the displacement of a bed be the main feature of an *anagnorisis*? In order to answer this Zeitlin and others have recourse to the idea of symbolization. The stationary character of the bed 'symbolizes' both Odysseus' identity, and Penelope's fidelity. The bed is in the proper place and so guarantees the unbroken marital bond. The right thing in the right place symbolizes that the husband is indeed the husband and the wife has remained a wife. But recourse to the philosophical idea of a symbol requires the idea of space as container in order to produce within it that localization which we are calling the proper place of the bed.

In order to produce an alternative interpretation we should consider first the term *thesmos* (θεσμός). It is a term used once in the Homeric text, precisely in relation to Odysseus' bed.[49] It denotes both place and institution. This indicates that both place and institution are being produced and experienced simultaneously.[50] The verb *tithemi* (τίθημι) is used repetitively in the passage of the *anagnorisis*, and translated as

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[49] ψ296: They then gladly went together to bed, and their old ritual (οἱ μὲν ἔπειτα/ ἀσπάσιοι λέκτροιο παλαιοῦ θεσμὸν ἵκοντο)

[50] During the classical period *thesmos* takes up exclusively the meaning of law, institution, ritual. This is follows the conception of Platonic *chora* as container, where law and place can be thought of as separate entities.

'put'. However, *tithemi*, has not only the sense of to 'put' but also 'to create'. *Tithemi* denotes a foundational act, not in the sense that a thing is being 'put in a place' and from this an institution (*thesmos*) is being produced. We propose instead, that thing, place and institution are being experienced as inseparable.[51] Their combination is unique and – what seems more strange – non-enduring.

Odysseus' bed is in fact a thing co-produced with its place. Indeed, the impossibility of moving the bed from its place is marked by the term *chore*. They exist in their conjunction. In the phrase in which *chore* is used, Odysseus states that only a god can move the bed. His fear is not that another man can remove the bed, for he knows this is impossible. The bed can only be cut off from the olive-tree of which it is an integral part. If that had happened his identity would have been shattered and with his identity, his marriage. His anxiety therefore, is literally about the bed and its *chore*. Nor is it about the bed and its place as a symbolic representation of the faithful character of his wife. This situation in which the question of the bed is also the question of Odysseus' identity exists because the *chore* is not an enduring container within which institutions and things have a place. Things, places and institutions have a relation which is more immediate and visceral than this. We should not be satisfied with the idea that a thing is just an 'object' that exists independently and at certain distance from a 'subject'. This is altogether too philosophical a way of describing the world. Odysseus' bed, or Achilleus armor or precious gifts are experienced as *thauma*

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[51] Benveniste relates etymologically *tithemi* with the Indo-European root **dhe-*, and writes: "it designates the domain, the site and also the thing put." The Greek terms, *thesmos*: 'that which is laid down by law, ordinance' and *themethla*: a building term meaning 'base, foundation' derive according to him from the same root. BENVENISTE, E., 1973: *Indo-European Language and Society*, Faber and Faber, pp. 381.

idesthai (θαύμα ἰδέσθαι) 'a marvel to see'[52] . This seeing is not a philosophical scene in which an object is visually perceived by a subject, a scene reduced to the formal properties of a little Cartesian event. There is an immediate collision: seeing smashes into the seen in a way that exceeds philosophical decorum. Seeing is an action, being seen is an event. We have to understand the whole passage in a way which respects the fact that place is not something which requires the idea of space as a container in which a thing has not settled into the philosophical destiny which accords it the attribute of enduring through time. Of course, *chore*, things and institutions evoke the experience of being immovable, but immovability is not only the physics of a thing in a place in space. How should we understand the immobility imposed on a woman by the institution of marriage, her status as a thing (to be exchanged) that is also a kind of *thauma idesthai*, and the feminine form of *chore*? We shall return to that.

We examine at this point another passage which refers to the place of Odysseus' bow,[53] which is of course another object of recognition. The identity of Odysseus is revealed because he is the only one able to use it. There is a special relation between Odysseus' body and this thing, the bow. The combination of the two produces his identity. The bow enhances the power of his body to fight and kill the suitors. The bow produces its *chore* 'place'. Once again the thing, the place, and the identity are all entangled in a way which is constitutive of the 'meaning' of *chore*. Two points should be made about the relation of identity to space. Space is normally thought of as neutral, objective and passive -a backdrop to our enduring identities.

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[52] Prier considers these things that are *thauma idesthai* as proto-phenomenological objects. PRIER, R.A., 1989: *Thauma Idesthai: The Phenomenology of Sight and Appearance in Archaic Greek*, Florida State University Press.

[53] φ366: They spoke, and he took the bow and put it back where it had been. (ὣς φάσαν, αὐτὰρ ὁ θῆκε φέρων αὐτῇ ἐνὶ χώρῃ)

Against this we do not simply want to argue in contrast that specific identities[54] are produced in specific places. This must also be questioned in the light of the Homeric term *chore.* For is not only that identity is altered or achieved in respect to the space that contains a body, but that such space itself is non-enduring. The term *chore* opens the possibility of understanding the construction of identity as a combination of body /'objects' relation. It opens the way to approach the category of 'objects' in the Homeric text. We need to bear in mind that identity is being experienced and produced in a variety of ways in Homer. In the chapter on *Epos,* we described one of these modalities, that is, the way identity is produced within the experience of language.[55] In the case of *chore* identity is produced as a relation of the body to things, where things are being experienced as extensions or as supplements of the body. Thus, identity does not result from a difference, in the sense of a difference from something other, to an alterity, but is produced by the body's appropriation of an excess. It is generated by the experience of the things as the body's extensions. We might repeat at this point, that the subject within Cartesian philosophy is constituted by a relation with an object, where the object is always separated and distanced from the subject. It is worth noting that the constitution of the subject itself presupposes a certain concept of space – the Cartesian container. But Homeric individuality is produced within a body's relation to things. It is within such a relation that space as *chore* is produced and experienced.

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[54] The term identity suits such conception of matching between bodies and places. We should note however, that it is misleading in the case of the Homeric text, where of course, there is no such term. In any case the notion of identity within Homeric text is problematic.

[55] See section 1.3.2., especially pp. 49-50.

The difficulty of shifting our thinking from space as a container to *chore* as extended experience is further evidenced by our inability to propose a translation of the various passages that would evoke space as non enduring experience. On the other hand, this difficulty can also indicate that the experience of *chore* is reproduced as an enduring entity within the mnemonic structure of the poem, and thus survives in language.[56] Having that in mind, we approach the term *chore* in three other passages as the 'space' produced by bodies in a state of immobility and not as a location that exists independently and can be occupied by bodies. We refer to the sitting body of Nestor,[57] – which as an old man's body features restricted movement[58] – and the bodies of Hektor[59] and Amphinomos[60] described at the moment where they start moving and thus when the relation between body and *chore* is being dissolved. We wish to clarify at this point, that there is another possible understanding of the above passages, one that we do not favour. One might argue that *chore* is produced when a body moves while being in the same spot; in the case of Nestor from the standing to the sitting position (εζετο), or in the other two cases, in the act of turning (στρέψεσθαι/στρεφθείς). We reject such an approach because it again implies a concept of space-time.

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[56] It is interesting to note in relation to the shield of Achilleus – which is considered as the representation of space – how space as the narration of events becomes enduring space at the moment of its representation on a thing that is also part of Achilleus' identity.

[57] Ψ349: So spoke Nestor the son of Neleus, and turned back to his place and sat down. (Ὣς εἰπὼν Νέστωρ Νηλήϊος ἄψ ἐνὶ χώρῃ / ἕζετ', ἐπεὶ ᾧ παιδὶ ἑκάστου πείρατ' ἔειπε.)

[58] In Ψ621-3, Achilleus tells Nestor: never again will you fight with your fists nor wrestle, nor enter again the field for the spear-throwing, nor race on your feet; since now the hardship of old age is upon you.

[59] Z515: He came on brilliant Hektor, his brother, where he yet lingered before turning away from the place where he had talked with his lady) Ἕκτορα δῖον ἔτετμεν ἀδελφεὸν εὖτ' ἄρ' ἔμελλε / στρέψεσθ' ἐκ χώρης ὅθι ᾗ ὀάριζε γυναικί. / τὸν πρότερος προσέειπεν Ἀλέξανδρος θεοειδής.)

The next three passages[61] are far more confusing because of an adjective that indicates quantity. The common interpretation expressed in the way these passages are translated either accepts a notion of *chore* as an abstract entity that can be measured, or considers that the term denotes a stretch of land. In all three passages we should note the reference to the lack of space (*olige, ou polle*). We propose to interpret this lack, not in the sense of pure extension but in relation to the events described as 'taking or non-taking place within'. However, these passages can be further clarified only after we examine the other Homeric term, i.e., *choros*.

We saw that in the Homeric text *chore* is part of the experience of things whereas within Platonic philosophy the separation between thing and *chora* occurs. However, the status of *chora* in relation to things remains unclear, and it is treated as a thing. We would like to examine at this point the plural form of *chore, choras* which occurs only once in Odyssey in the expression *choras anthropon* (χώρας ἀνθρώπων) 'countries of people'.

2.3.2.2. *CHORAS ANTHROPON* : The Space of the Narrative

We do not intend to consider *choras* as just the plural form of the feminine *chore*, we shall argue that the term evokes a specific experience. The expression occurs as we

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[60] π351: He had not yet said all before Amphinomos, turning from his place, saw the ship inside the depths of the harbor. (οὔ πω πᾶν εἴρηθ', ὅτ' ἄρ' Ἀμφίνομος ἴδε νῆα,/ στρεφθεὶς ἐκ χώρης, λιμένος πολυβενθέος ἐντός.)

[61] Π67: and the others, the Argives, are bent back against the beach of the sea, holding only a narrow division of land (οἱ δὲ ῥηγμῖνι θαλάσσης / κεκλίαται, χώρης ὀλίγην ἔτι μοῖραν ἔχοντες / Ἀργεῖοι), P394: so the men of both sides in a cramped space tugged at the body in both directions (ὣς οἵ γ' ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα νέκυν ὀλίγῃ ἐνὶ χώρῃ / εἵλκεον ἀμφότεροι), Ψ520: there is not much space between as he runs a great way over the flat land (οὐδέ τι πολλὴ / χώρη μεσσηγὺς πολέος πεδίοιο θέοντος)

have noted, only once; this is when the Phaiakian King Alkinoos asks Odysseus to narrate his adventures in Od. θ572-6.

So come now and tell me this and give me an accurate answer: Where you were driven off your course, what countries peopled by men (*choras anthropon*) you came to, the men themselves and their strong-founded cities, and which were savage and violent, and without justice, and which were hospitable and with a godly mind for strangers. [62]

Scholarship distinguishes between a real and mythical world in Odyssey, the latter contained within the narration of Odysseus in Alkinous's palace. In addition Phaiakian land is being considered as occupying "a strategic place at the junction of the two worlds."[63] We shall not comment upon this distinction between the real and the mythic in general, for we are more interested in what way the mythic – constituted as otherness or alterity[64] – is introduced as a narrative within the narration of the Homeric text. We have already argued how identity is produced within the experience of *chore*, rather than in a relation to otherness. On the other hand the experience of

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[62] θ572-6: ἀλλ' ἄγε μοι τόδε εἰπὲ καὶ ἀτρεκέως κατάλεξον, / ὅππῃ ἀπεπλάγχθης τε καὶ ἂς τινας ἵκεο χώρας / ἀνθρώπων, αὐτούς τε πόλιάς τ' εὖ ναιεταούσας, / ἠμὲν ὅσοι χαλεποί τε ἄγριοι οὐδὲ δίκαιοι, / οἵ τε φιλόξεινοι καί σφιν νόος ἐστὶ θεουδής.

[63] P. Vidal-Naquet writes: "In effect, as has often been recognized, the Odyssey contrasts a 'real' world, essentially the world of Ithaka, but also Sparta and Pylos to which Telemachos goes, with a mythical world that is roughly coterminous with that of the stories in Alcinous's palace...Charles Segal has observed that the Phaeacians are "between the two worlds": they are placed at the intersection of the world of the tales and the "real" world, and their main function in the poem is to transport Odysseus from the one to the other." VIDAL-NAQUET, P. 1986: "Land and Sacrifice in the Odyssey: A Study of Religious and Mythical Meanings," *The Black Hunter: Forms of Thought and Forms of Society in the Greek World*, J. Hopkins University Press, pp. 18 and 26.

[64] We do not intend to investigate how otherness or alterity is constituted within the Homeric text. Vidal-Naquet (Ibid.) argues that the differentiation is based on food. But we have argued in the chapter *Epos* about the Homeric experience of speech as hearing and distancing, i.e. as that which entails the experience of alterity (differentiation, otherness). In that sense we might say that *epos* already operates as a container – container of alterity – within which *chore/os* are re-produced as containers.

distancing and alterity is produced within the experience of speech. How should we approach the term *choras anthropon*, which seems to combine the experience of space and alterity, and, specifically, evoke the experience of space as container of alterity? The narration within narration that contains the description of alterity indicates a structure of *epos* as receptacle, where space as well operates as container, container of alterity. Space is produced as enduring in order to receive, and thus to keep alterity separate; the enduring *choras* is produced as such in fiction, as fictional, as is the other.[65] In this sense, the interdependence of speech and space becomes obvious. What secures and reinforces the experience of alterity as separate is the experience of a container in the structure of the *epos* 'speech', that reproduces an experience of space as a container. The experience of a container is that which separates[66] and gives rise to oppositions such as identity and alterity.

Chore/os can not be accommodated within a discourse which is regulated by such pairs of opposites as separation-relation, distance-proximity, and ultimately identity and alterity. This is because – as we have already argued – identity and alterity belong to distinct experiences in Homer. The experience of identity is evoked by *chore*, whereas that of alterity by *epos*. Only the appropriation of *chore/os* from *epos*, 'speech' and the mainly philosophical *logos* made it possible to theorize *chora* in terms of alterity-identity as a pair of opposites, both of them generated in the context of speaking or ultimately thinking about space. Within the Platonic text not

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[65] In the text of ancient Greek geographers, alterity produced as fiction continue to be established on the acoustic experience. (See Herodotos)

[66] "Any part of the container can receive anything. This indifference becomes separation, in that contents and container do not impinge upon one another in any way. An empty container accepts any collection of separable and separate items; separateness thus extends even to the contents' component elements." LEFEBVRE, H., op.cit., pp. 170.

only is *chora* a receptacle, but the text itself becomes a receptacle, a receptacle of stories,[67] the central one being the narration of the mythic land of Atlantis. Furthermore, Okeanos, a mythic land in Homer, is considered by Plato as a container of ancient allegorical meanings. [68] Okeanos the mythic land becomes itself the container of myths. Language and space become entangled, or perhaps language appropriates space?

Choras anthropon should be understood as evoking the experience of alterity and distance, because it is produced as such within a specific structure of the Homeric language. In that sense it differs both from *chore,* and *choros* which we shall examine next. However, we know that the Homeric Epics were compiled during the 6th century BC.[69] How has this fact influenced the structure of *epos* as container – in the sense of assembling together in this part of the poem all the narration about 'mythic

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[67] "...each narrative content – fabulous, fictive, legendary or mythic, it doesn't matter for the moment – becomes in its turn the content of a different tale. Each tale is thus the *receptacle* of another. There is nothing but receptacles of narrative receptacles, narrative receptacles of receptacles. Let us not forget that receptacle, place of reception or harbouring/lodging (*hypodokhe*), is the most insistent determination (let us say 'essential', for reasons which must already be obvious) of *khora*....A structure of inclusion makes of the *included* fiction in a sense the theme of the prior fiction which is its *including* form, its capable container, let us say its receptacle." DERRIDA, J., "Khora", op.cit., pp. 117. In that sense the experience of container is a possibility within the structure of language, and it is of no surprise that a language with a specific structure, i.e., the philosophical language of Timeaus (the Platonic text that contains the knowledge of the world's creation) produced by 'necessity' the concept of space as container in the term *chora.*

[68] "...Plato suggests that the 'ancients' had deliberately hidden allegorical meaning in entities like Ocean by a kind of encryption as if to keep their truths out of the reach of the unliterate public." ROMM, J.S., 1992: *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought: Geography, Exploration, and Fiction*, Princeton University Press, pp. 177.

[69] "...Pisistratus compiled and composed our *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, gathering dispersed and disparate κλέα of Achilles and Odysseus and fashioning these into monumental epics...". SHIVE, D., 1987: *Naming Achilles*, Oxford University Press, pp. 4.

lands'– and what would be the consequences for the passage – but even for the term itself – where the term *choras anthropon* occurs?

2.3.2.3. *CHOROS* (χῶρος) : Event as Immobility

"....does ...space exist independently of the experiencing body?" TSCHUMI, B., 1995: *Questions of Space*, AA Publications, pp. 34.

As we have mentioned, *choros* occurs 16 times in Iliad, and 17 in the Odyssey. It is worth noting that in the majority of Iliadic passages (in 11 of them), the word *choros* appears in the context of a fight. Twice, in Δ446 and Θ60, it is used in a formulaic way (the lines Δ446-51 and Θ60-5 are identical), to denote a fight as such.

Now as these advancing came to one place and encountered (*choron*), they dashed their shields together and their spears, and the strength of armored men in bronze, and the shields massive in the middle clashed against each other, and the sound grew huge of the fighting. There the screaming and the shouts of triumph rose up together of men killing and men killed and the ground ran blood.[70]

The above translation of *choros* as 'place', points towards its interpretation as the specific location where the clash between two armies occurs. It is natural for us to think of *choros* as the 'place', where an action 'takes place', that is, as the receptacle of an action. This accords with our own conception of space as an abstract, homogeneous and empty container, where an event can 'take place', producing a differentiation (a place, a spot, a location) in otherwise undifferentiated space. It is also possible, *a propos* of the above passage, to think of *choros* as a field of relations, in the way Leibniz defined space. But once again, space is conceived as a preexisting entity, namely, that which provides the possibility of any relation. If we try to discard

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[70] Δ446-51 and Θ60-5: Οἳ δ' ὅτε δή ῥ' ἐς χῶρον ἕνα ξυνιόντες ἵκοντο, / σὺν ῥ' ἔβαλον ῥινούς, σὺν δ' ἔγχεα καὶ μένε' ἀνδρῶν / χαλκεοθωρήκων· ἀτὰρ ἀσπίδες ὀμφαλόεσσαι / ἔπληντ' ἀλλήλῃσι, πολὺς δ' ὀρυμαγδὸς ὀρώρει. / ἔνθα δ' ἅμ' οἰμωγή τε καί εὐχωλὴ πέλεν ἀνδρῶν, / ὀλλύντων τε καὶ ὀλλυμένων, ῥέε δ' αἵματι γαῖα.

the concept of space as produced within philosophy, that is, as container, how we might approach *choros* in the above passage?

We might think that *choros* is produced by the clash itself, by the event itself, and endures as long as the event continues. Might not the experience of *choros* in Homer, be similar to a post-structuralist concept of space as event?[71] We have already discussed this possible connection. Once more we repeat that what differentiates Homeric *choros* and post-structuralist space is the concept of space-time that underlines the latter. Our hypothesis is that not only is time experienced differently in Homer (for which there is substantial evidence[72]) but that the experience of *choros* as event is not associated with time at all. In that sense, we can say that *choros* and event are produced simultaneously, where simultaneity does not refer to time but to modality.

The very term 'event' is may be misleading because it seems to associate an action with the time within it unfolds. We experience an event in relation to time which has a duration, in the same way that space has an extension, because we

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[71] See TSCHUMI, B., op.cit.

[72] R.B. Onians writes: "In modern European thought there has prevailed the conception of time as a homogeneous medium analogous to empty space. Bergson and Einstein have from different angles helped to dethrone that concept. For the Homeric Greeks time was not homogeneous...The early Greeks felt that different portions of time had different quality and brought this change or that, favored this activity or that, ὧραι...In Il.xxii,209 ff. the ἦμαρ is not the day of the month nor is it shared by others, it is the time, the destiny experienced by an individual, Hector; and it is time of a specified kind, 'fatal', 'of fate'...Homer is concerned with individual men and individual times, recognizing that time differs for different persons or collections of persons, even though they may be near together in space, e.g. victor and vanquished; for each it is colored with this or that, is experienced as this or that fate. Homer identifies the 'day' with the fate experienced.... ἦμαρ is the fate experienced by the individual, not the daylight universally shared, and it does not last just a day but is a phase of fortune of greater or less duration. ONIANS, R.B., 1994: *The Origins of European Thought About the Body, the Mind, the Soul, the World, Time and Fate*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 411-14 passim. See also note 27.

conceive both as measurable entities in the context of our analytical thinking. But, what we call 'event' in the Homeric text is experienced not as a movement from one point of space to another – which presupposes space conceived as container – but as a state of immobility. This might sound strange, but in both passages there is an equilibrium of forces between the two armies, and neither is able to defeat the other. As long as the fighters remain entangled, the fight is without result and *choros* endures. *Choros* is thus experienced in relation to a state of immobility generated by an activity (action) which has no outcome. This is consistent with the experience of time as fate in Homer. As *choros* endures and the fight continues without an outcome, both armies share the same fate.[73] The duration of time is indifferent, or we might say that as long as *choros* endures, time collapses. However, when time as the change of fate reasserts itself, *choros* vanishes.[74] *Choros*, produced by the clash of the two armies, dissolves as a result of their separation. One army withdraws and the term used in the text is *choreo.* The verb *choreo* (χωρέω) 'withdraw', related etymologically to *choros* (χῶρος),[75] occurs only in Iliad, 12 times, all of them in relation to

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[73] The fourth rhapsody ends describing the non-conclusiveness of the fight: Δ543-4: For on that day many men of the Achaians and Trojans lay sprawled in the dust face downward beside one another.

[74] In Θ68-88, it is time as fate that dissolves the *choros* of the collision between the two armies, as the Greeks are not able to stand against Trojans: Θ68-88: But when the sun god stood bestriding the middle heaven, then the father balanced his golden scales, and in them he set two fateful portions of death, which lays men prostate, for Trojans, breakers of horses, and bronze-armored Achaians, and balanced it by the middle. The Achaians' death-day was heaviest. There the fates of the Achaians settled down toward the bountiful earth, while those of the Trojans were lifted into the wide sky; and he himself crashed a great stroke from Ida, and a kindling flash shot over the people of the Achaians; seeing it they were stunned, and pale terror took hold of all of them. Then Idomeneous dared not stand his ground, nor Agamemnon...

[75] See CHANTRAINE, P., op.cit., s.v. χώρα.

fighting.[76] It is worth noting that whereas in the Homeric text *choreo* denotes 'withdrawal', in later Greek writers it acquires the meaning of 'contain'.[77] This fact accentuates the interdependence of *choreo* and *choros.* For the conception of *choreo* as 'contain' follows the advent of the Platonic concept of *chora* as 'receptacle'. Even within the Homeric text, *choreo* is usually attributed a philosophical interpretation. Homeric dictionaries assimilate the definition of 'withdrawal' to expressions such as 'give place', or 'make room'. Nevertheless, this kind of interpretation presupposes that the concept of *kenon* (κενόν) 'emptiness' is synonymous with *chora* as 'space', and this conception is not foreign to Greek philosophy. As a consequence, we oppose the understanding of *choreo* within the Homeric text, as that 'withdrawal' that produces space by freeing;[78] that is, by producing emptiness, and thus preparing space as neutral container that can receive whatever. We propose instead, that *choreo* indicates the non-enduring feature of the Homeric *choros*, as long as, it denotes the dissolution of *choros* resulting from the separation of bodies, that simultaneously experience and produce it.

We can interpret *choros* in a similar way in the three following Odyssean passages:

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[76] Δ505, M406, N324, 724, O655, Π588, 592, 629, P101, 316, 533, Σ244 . In three of the above passages *choreo* occurs in the following formulaic phrase: Δ505, Π592, P316: The champions of Troy gave back then, and glorious Hektor...(χώρησαν δ' ὑπό τε πρόμαχοι καὶ φαίδιμος Ἕκτωρ..)

[77] See CHANTRAINE, P. op. cit, and LIDDELL, G.H. and SCOTT, R., op.cit, s.v. χωρέω. Note that the related verbs *hypo-choreo* (ὑπο-χωρέω) and *ana-choreo* (ἀνα-χωρέω), denote 'withdrawal' in Homer as well as in later historical periods. The former occurs 3 times only in Iliad and in relation to fight (Z107, N476,X96), whereas the later 12 times in Iliad (Γ35,Δ305,E107,K210,411, Λ189,440, N457,P30,729, Y196, 335) and 3 times in Odyssey (ρ453,461, χ270).

[78] Heidegger writes: "To empty a glass means: To gather the glass, as that which can contain something, into its having been freed. To empty the collected fruit in a basket means: To prepare for them this place." HEIDEGGER, M., "The Art of Space", op.cit., pp. 11.

ν228: Dear friend, since you are the first I have met with in this country (ὦ φιλ', ἐπεί σε πρῶτα κιχάνω τῶδ'ἐνὶ χώρῳ,)

ο260: Dear friend, since I have found you in this place, making sacrifice (ὦ φίλ' ἐπεί σε θύοντα κιχάνω τῶδ' ἐνὶ χώρῳ)

κ271: Eurylochos, you may stay here (Εὐρύλοχ', ἦ τοι μὲν σὺ μέν' αὐτοῦ τῶδ' ἐνὶ χώρῳ)

In the first two, what is translated as 'in this place' or 'in this country', is not a preexisting location but the *choros* which is produced and experienced by the events of the two bodies' meeting. In the third one, 'here' denotes in a similar way, the *choros* produced and experienced by the standing bodies.

Having argued for the non-enduring quality of *choros*, how we should understand the two passages where Odysseus and Hector 'measured off the distance first '(χῶρον μὲν πρῶτον διεμέτρεον : Γ315) in which the duel between Alexandros and Menelaos will 'take place'?

Now when these two were armed on either side of the battle, they strode into the space between (*es messon*) the Achaians and Trojans, looking terror at each other; and amazement seized the beholders, Trojans, breakers of horses, and strong-greaved Achaians. They took their stand in the measured space (*diametreto eni choro*) not far from each other raging each at the other man and shaking their spearshafts.[79]

The translation clearly implies a concept of space as that which can be measured into units. Now we should not only understand the act of measuring or the measured space in the context of that abstract thinking that relates geometry and arithmetic. *Dia-metreo* in Homer indicates the act of passing over; it is an activity of the body, which measures and experiences at the same time. Moreover the duel between Menelaos and Alexandros is a ritual; they fight on behalf of their armies and the

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[79] Γ340-5: Οἱ δ' ἐπεὶ οὖν ἑκάτερθεν ὁμίλου θωρήχθησαν, / ἐς μέσσον Τρώων καὶ Ἀχαιῶν ἐστιχόωντο / δεινὸν δερκόμενοι· θάμβος δ' ἔχεν εἰσορόωντας / Τρῶάς θ' ἱπποδάμους καὶ ἐϋκνήμιδας Ἀχαιούς. / καί ῥ' ἐγγὺς στήτην διαμετρητῷ ἐνὶ χώρῳ / σείοντ' ἐγχείας ἀλλήλοισιν κοτέονται.

measuring is the demarcation of a territory in which the ritual will be performed.[80] Thus the question concerns the relation between ritual and *choros*. Not only why space is so important in the context of ritual, but why space is produced as the container of a ritualistic performance? A full answer to these questions, would require a detailed analysis that exceeds the scope of this chapter. But we shall try to indicate a possible answer. It is well known that ritual ensures repetition. In a ritualistic performance there are rules which govern the gestures, the body postures, and the movement of the bodies. As we have argued, in Homer bodies both produce and experience a non-enduring 'space'. When these bodies repeat the actions over and over again in the ritual, the same non-enduring space is produced. The demarcation of a territory is an inversion of the process where the attempt to create a space that is enduring is a way to control the repetition of bodies' actions that will ensure the success of the ritual.[81] So in the Homeric passage the duel fails, because Aphrodite's divine intervention removes Alexandros from the marked ritualistic territory to the perfumed *thalamos*.[82] We might say that it is fear of the unpredictable that constructs

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[80] If one reads the whole passage, one would see the series of rules that must be followed in the duel. In the same way, that is, as the marked space of ritual we can possibly understand two more Iliadic passages, which are formulaic and refer to the *choros* of the *agore* (ἀγορή) 'assembly' the first, and of the *boule* (βουλή) 'council of nobles' the second. See also above note 29.

Θ489-91: Now glorious Hektor held an assembly of all the Trojans, taking them aside from the ships, by a swirling river on clean ground, where there showed a space not cumbered with corpses. (Τρώων αὖτ' ἀγορὴν ποιήσατο φαίδιμος Ἕκτωρ / νόσφι νεῶν ἀγαγὼν ποταμῷ ἔπι δινήεντι, / ἐν καθαρῷ ὄθι δὴ νεκύων διεφαίνετο χῶρος.)

K199: they settled on clean ground, where there showed a space not cumbered with corpses. (ἑδριόωντο / ἐν καθαρῷ ὄθι δὴ νεκύων διεφαίνετο χῶρος.)

[81] In this light we might say that what we call 'organization of space' in ritual architecture is the control of bodies movement in it. But is this only a characteristic of ritual architecture, or of architecture in general?

[82] Γ380-2. In Γ446-50, Alexandros enjoys lovemaking, while the deranged Menelaos is still looking for him in the marked space.

space as enduring. Furthermore, in an enduring space enduring identities are produced as a repression of the inherited elusiveness of both space and identity.[83]

As far as *metron* (μέτρον) 'measure' is concerned it is worth pointing out the connection between the *metron* of space and the metre of language. Homeric poetry is interpreted in later Greek periods as being constituted by metric units, which are called *pous* 'foot'. (*Pous*, the 'foot' of prosody and the foot as a measure of length both exist in later Greek but not in Homer.) Can we speak – in this case of the metre of language – about a spatial metaphor? We do not intend to examine here the context that produced the metric theory. However, such a connection gives us the opportunity to examine the relation between *epos* 'speech' and *choros* 'space' in Homer. We argue that space is re-produced as an enduring entity in the mnemonic structure of language. In this light, we can understand why within the later metric theories *meter* and *pous* 'foot' constitute nothing more or less than the enduring features of a mnemonic structure.

In three passages, one in Iliad and two in Odyssey, *choros* appears as an enduring entity within speech. The term indicates a location specified in the act of speaking, it is the *choros* that Achilleus, Kirke or Athena describe and produce by speech.[84] We have already argued that the form and content of the Homeric language

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[83] The demarcation of the territory is the foundational act at the creation of every town, which will 'contain' the specific behavior and identity of its inhabitants. AUGÉ, M., op.cit., pp. 45.

[84] Ψ138: When these had come to the place Achilleus had spoken of to them (Οἱ δ' ὅτε χῶρον ἵκανον ὅθι σφίσιν πέφραδ' Ἀχιλλεύς)

λ21: and ourselves walked along by the stream of the Ocean until we came to the place of which Circe had spoken (αὐτοὶ δ' αὖτε παρὰ ῥόον Ὠκεανοῖο / ἤομεν, ὄφρ' ἐς χῶρον ἀφικόμεθ', ὃν φράσσε Κίρκη.)

ξ1-2: But Odysseus himself left the harbor and ascended a rugged path, through wooden country along the heights, where Athene had indicated. (Αὐτάρ ὁ ἐκ λιμένος προσέβη τρηχεῖαν ἀταρπὸν / χῶρον ἀν' ὑλήεντα δι' ἄκριας, ᾗ οἱ Ἀθήνη / πέφραδε)

should be considered simultaneously. This permitted us to suggest that *choros* as an enduring entity that 'contains' specific features is produced in a narration 'contained' within the narration. In other words, *choros* becomes a container when language touches on the structure of a container. The same observation is valid for a number of passages where the term *choros* occurs in the context of a simile.[85] We propose to consider similes as interrupting or better as being contained within the narration. Moreover, most of these contained similes refer to the other, the alterity, namely the animal.[86] Thus, the term *choros* within the similes becomes a container,[87] and specifically a container of alterity. Furthermore, *choros* acquires specific characteristics by the adjectives that accompany it. We would like to note that adjectives are attached only to the masculine form of *choros* and contribute to producing it as enduring.

We have no way of approaching a number of passages in which one adjective or a series is attached to *choros*.[88] However, these are not the only passages that

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Note the use of verb *phrazein* in the three passages that Svenbro translates as 'show' and points out that in some cases "denotes the action of transmitting a message by means of a dumb show." SVENBRO, J., 1993: *Phrasikleia: An Anthropology of Reading in Ancient Greece,* Cornell University Press, pp. 16. Also CHANTRAINE, P., op.cit., s.v. φράζω writes: "'faire comprendre, indiquer par des signes ou par la parole". This is interesting as it accentuates the body's relationship with both speech and space.

[85] There are five passages all of them in Iliad, and in the context of a fight. K362, M423, N473, P54, Φ262.

[86] We won't address here the extremely interesting issue of identity as produced within animal similes. We shall only refer to a book by SCHNAPP-GOURBEILLON, A., 1981: *Lion, Héros, Masques: Les représentations de l' Animal chez Homère,* François Maspero, Textes à l' Appui. Here, we would like to make only one remark relevant to our investigation, namely, that action, place and identity should be thought of as co-produced.

[87] What can be the relation of similes – understood in that way – and *rhetorikoi topoi* in the context of Greek philosophy?

[88] ε441-3: but when he came, swimming along, to the mouth of a sweet-running river, this at last seemed to him the best place, being bare of rocks, and there was even shelter from the wind there (ἀλλ' ὅτε

present a difficulty, and we have no other choice but to understand them according to the concept of an enduring container.[89] There is also one passage in which the experience evoked by masculine *choros* seems similar to that of the feminine *chore;* it is the *choros* produced by the immobility of a corpse.[90] How we should interpret these contradictions? Do they constitute a problem for our research? We suggest that they indicate the plurality with which space as *chore/os* is experienced within the Homeric text, and possibly our present inability to understand them. After all, *chore/os* in the Homeric text denote experiences, they are not concepts; experiences

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ποταμοῖο κατὰ στόμα καλλιρόοιο / ἶξε νέων, τῇ δή οἱ ἐείσατο χῶρος ἄριστος, / λεῖος πετράων, καὶ ἐπὶ σκέπας ἦν ἀνέμοιο·)

η278-82: but there, had I tried to set foot on the land, the rough wave would have dashed me against tall rocks in a place that was cheerless, so I backed away and swam again, until I came to a river, and this at last seemed to him the best place, being bare of rocks, and there was even shelter from the wind there (ἔνθα κέ μ' ἐκβαίνοντα βιήσατο κῦμ' ἐπὶ χέρσου, / πέτρῃς πρὸς μεγάλῃσι βαλὸν καὶ ἀτερπέϊ χώρῳ· / ἀλλ' ἀναχασσάμενος νῆχον πάλιν, ἧος ἐπῆλθον / ἐς ποταμόν, τῇ δή μοι ἐείσατο χῶρος ἄριστος, / λεῖος πετράων, καὶ ἐπὶ σκέπας ἦν ανέμοιο)

λ94: come here, to look on dead men, and this place without pleasure (ἦλυθες, ὄφρα ἴδῃ νέκυας καὶ ἀτερπέα χῶρον)

η122-4: There also he has a vineyard planted that gives abundant produce, some of it a warm area on the level ground where the grapes are left to dry in the sun, but elsewhere they are gathering others (ἔνθα δέ οἱ πολύκαρπος ἀλφὴ ἐρρίζωται, / τῆς ἕτερον μέν θειλόπεδον λευρῷ ἐνὶ χώρῳ / τέρσεται ἠελίῳ, ἑτέρας δ' ἄρα τε τρυγόωσιν)

[89] In the following passages, we can only note a relation between *choros* and sight, and ask: how is it possible for a non-enduring *choros* to be seen? Or, to invert the question: how an enduring *choros* can be produced within the experience of seeing?

κ282: ignorant of the land-lay (χώρου ἄϊδρις ἐών)

ι181 : But when we had arrived at the place, which was nearby, there at the edge of the land we saw the cave (ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ τὸν χῶρον ἀφικόμεθ' ἐγγὺς ἐόντα, / ἔνθα δ' ἐπ' ἐσχατίῃ σπέος εἴδομεν ἄγχι θαλάσσης)

K520: When he saw the place left empty where the fast horses had been standing (ὡς ἴδε χῶρον ἐρῆμον, ὅθ' ἕστασαν ὠκέες ἵπποι, / ἄνδράς τ' ἀσπαίροντας ἐν ἀργαλέῃσι φονῇσιν)

[90] Ψ188: and Phoibos Apollo brought down a darkening mist about him from the sky to the plain, and covered with it all the space that was taken by the dead man (τῷ δ' ἐπὶ κυάνεον νέφος ἤγαγε Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων / οὐρανόθεν πεδίονδε, κάλυψε δὲ χῶρον ἅπαντα / ὅσσον ἐπεῖχε νέκυς)

The following passage seems also similar: Ψ420: there was a break in the ground where the winter water had gathered and broken out of the road, and made a sunken place all about (ῥωχμός ἔην γαίης, ἣ χειμέριον ἀλὲν ὕδωρ / ἐξέρρηξεν ὁδοῖο, βάθυνε δὲ χῶρον ἅπαντα).

can be contradictory, whereas concepts – because they are related to definitions – cannot be, or at least, we expect them not to be.

In the passages examined so far, *choros* is not related to 'architecture' or to any kind of construction or domestic environment. However, there are five more to consider, and before we move on to examine the relation between *choros* and construction evoked within the above passages we would like to make a few concluding remarks on the gender distinction of the Homeric terms.

2.3.3. GENDER DISTINCTION

What should be questioned, in the context of the present chapter on *chore-os,* is not how gender distinction is constructed *via* space, but what a gender distinction – which is systematically ignored – indicates. We argue that both *chore* and femininity are experienced simultaneously, and this produces a similar experience of woman and things. The immobility of both supplements masculine identity, and their experience as excess makes their exchange possible. The question of space as producing feminine identities in the sense of 'the proper place assigned to her', is related to the concept of space as container: the proper place to contain and thus to delimit femininity.[91] Moreover it presupposes that *chore* and femininity are experienced as separate.

As far as *choros*, the masculine term, is concerned we do not propose an understanding of masculinity as the space of action in the sense of events.[92]

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[91] See for instance, the instructions for the proper place of the proper housewife in Xenophon's *Oeconomicus.*

[92] Note Mumford's argument on the masculine and feminine space of the cities, as combination of movement and immobility. MUMFORD , L. 1961: *The City in History*, Penguin. However, we explore how the experience of a biological difference is related to the experience of *chore-os* in the Homeric

Nevertheless, masculinity and *choros* as event are experienced as co-produced, but this is not to say that there is a space that can contain and thus inform masculinity, as occurs in later Greek writers. The fact that the distinction masculine-feminine in relation to the two Homeric terms is usually ignored accords with the concept of space as neutral container, which exactly because it is neutral can inform whatever it contains, without being informed by it. A neutral container can also contain locations with specific features, i.e., feminine or masculine. Furthermore, the question in the Homeric text, of specific locations within the house assigned to women, or the production of man's identity as master of the house, does not partake of the experience of *chore-os*, but that of *domos* and domestic experience whose relation with *chore-os* is a specific one.

2.3.4. *CHOROS* AND THE DOMESTIC

Choros occurs in four passages in Homer referring to 'domestic' environment, and once in relation to a 'domestic' activity.[93] Within the four occurrences the term is presented in a formulaic way (περισκέπτῳ ἐνὶ χώρῳ) in connection with Telemachos' *thalamos* 'bedchamber', Kirke's *domata* 'house' and Eumaios' *aule* 'enclosure'.[94]

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text. In no way do we want to advance a theory where anatomy is considered destiny, as Mumford does, attributing the problems of the cities to the disappearance of neat sex separation. Nonetheless, we have no intention of explaining space which is culturally constructed in terms of biology.

[93] φ141: Take your turns in order from left to right, my companions all, beginning from the place where the wine is served out. ('ὄρνυσθ' ἐξείης ἐπιδέξια πάντες ἑταῖροι,/ ἀρξάμενοι τοῦ χώρου, ὅθεν τέ περ οἰνοχοεύει.') In this case *choros* is produced by the activity of wine-pouring.

[94] α425: Telemachos went where, off the splendid courtyard, a lofty bedchamber had been built for him, in a sheltered corner. There he went to go to bed (Τηλέμαχος δ', ὅθι οἱ θάλαμος περικαλλέος αὐλῆς / ὑψηλὸς δέδμητο, περισκέπτῳ ἐνὶ χώρῳ, / ἔνθ' ἔβη εἰς εὐνήν)

κ210: In the forest glen they came on the house of Circe. It was in an open place, and put together from stones, well polished, and all about it there were lions (εὗρον δ' ἐν βήσσῃσι τετυγμένα δώματα Κίρκης / ξεστοῖσιν λάεσσι, περισκέπτῳ ἐνὶ χώρῳ. / ἀμφὶ δὲ)

The phrase *periskepto eni choro* (περισκέπτῳ ἐνὶ χώρῳ) is given different translations in the above passages. It is translated as 'a sheltered corner', 'an open place, or as 'a place with view on all sides'.

The difficulty of translation arises because it takes into account a conception of *choros* 'space' as an enduring entity. In this context the term *periskepto* (περισκέπτῳ)[95] seems to specify a portion of a preexisting space which has a distinct feature; it can be either a conspicuous, open or protected site which is chosen for a *thalamos,* a *domos* or an *aule* to be constructed. Such an interpretation of space as a preexisting, enduring entity is perceived as what sets apart, producing difference. *Choros* in Homer is not related to separation, or distinction between, for instance, inside – outside or open – closed. However, this separation and differentiation can be related to the verb *demo* 'to construct', which evokes the experience of both

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The following two quotes refer to Eumaios' *aule* 'enclosure':

κ252: And found a fine house in the glen. It was in an open place, and put together from stones, well polished.(εὕρομεν ἐν βήσσῃσι τετυγμένα δώματα καλὰ / ξεστοῖσιν λάεσσι, περισκέπτῳ ἐνὶ χώρῳ / ἔνθα δέ τις)

ξ6: He found him sitting in front, on the porch, where the lofty enclosure had been built , in a place with a view on all sides, both large and handsome, cleared all about, and it was the swineherd himself who had built it, to hold the pigs of his absent master, far from his mistress and from aged Laertes. He made it with stones from the field, and topped it off with shrubbery. Outside he had driven posts in a full circle, to close it on all sides, set close together and thick, and dark of the oak, split out from the logs. Inside the enclosure made twelve pig pens next to each other, for his sows to sleep, in each of them fifty pigs who sleep on the ground were confined. These were the breeding females, but the males lay outside...

Τὸν δ' ἄρ' ἐνὶ προδόμῳ εὗρ' ἥμενον, ἔνθα οἱ αὐλὴ / ὑψηλὴ δέδμητο, περισκέπτῳ ἐνὶ χώρῳ, / καλή τε μεγάλη τε, περίδρομος· ἦν ῥα συβώτης / αὐτὸς δείμαθ' ὕεσσιν ἀποιχομένοιο ἄνακτος.../ ῥυτοῖσιν λάεσσι καὶ ἐθρίγκωσεν ἀχέρδῳ. / σταυροὺς δ' ἐκτὸς ἔλασσε διαμπερὲς ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα / πυκνοὺς καὶ θαμέας, τὸ μέλαν δρυὸς ἀμφικεάσσας. / ἔντοσθεν δ' αὐλῆς συφεοὺς δυοκαίδεκα ποίει / πλησίον ἀλλήλων, εὐνὰς συσίν, ἐν δὲ ἑκάστῳ / πεντήκοντα σύες χαμαιευνάδες ἐρχατόωντο, / θήλειαι τοκάδες· τοὶ δ' ἄρσενες ἐκτὸς ἴαυον

[95] According to dictionaries, *periskepto* (περισκέπτω) means 'covered, shut in on all sides' (σκέπας 'cover, shelter, against the wind', and σκεπάω (σκεπόωσι) 'ward off'). It is related etymologically by some scholars to *skeptomai*, that denotes sight, and in that case it is given the meaning of 'conspicious'. This etymology is discarded by Chantraine. Lattimore in his translation uses both meanings.

construction and structure, and is related to *damno* 'to tame', and the production of fixed identities. *Choros* in all the four passages is related not simply to the 'domestic', environment but to the construction of the 'domestic' as the verbs *demo* and *teucho* indicate. In one of them, a story about the construction of Eumaios' *aule* is narrated which includes the description of inside-outside produced by the construction as such. *Choros* is not the space where the construction 'takes place', *choros* indicates the structure which is co-produced with construction.[96] However, it seems that as speech can appropriate space, reproducing it as enduring, there is another mechanism through which construction, in the experience of *demo*, appropriates *choros*, reproducing it as enduring. Nonetheless an expression of the type 'the space of the house' would be impossible in the context of the Homeric text. Such an expression is related to a conception of construction based on the form and function distinction where both are conceived as neutral and highly abstract components of architecture. The experience that *domos* 'house' evokes within the Homeric text will be addressed in the next chapter.

To conclude the present chapter we will try to mark the differences between our concept of space as container and the Homeric experience of *chore/os*. Obviously possibilities of interpretation should remain open and uncertain given that for the first

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[96] "[Heidegger's] rejection of the familiar sense that a building is produced in space, as distinct from producing space (Raum), or, more precisely, place (Ort). For Heidegger, this sense is seen to be sustained by the basic claim of metaphysics inaugurated by Plato that material objects stand in a preexisting space, offering surfaces to the eye of a subject who also occupies that space, an 'outward appearance' that presents an immaterial idea. The degeneration of philosophy is seen to begin with its ancient account of space." WIGLEY, M., 1995: *The Architecture of Deconstruction: Derrida's Haunt*, MIT Press, pp. 112.

time the Homeric terms are approached for their own sake and not through the filter of later philosophical concepts. What provides us with the possibility of understanding the Homeric 'space as experience' is the fact that *chore /os* are part of our own experience which is repressed, in favour of more abstract thinking about space. What is repressed is the fear of the unpredictability of whatsoever does not endure, be that identities, institutions, or events.[97] The major difference, at an anthropological level, between us and Homeric Greeks might be thought of as manifested in the difference between an experience of *chore/os* and the concept of space/place, which in turn can be described as the degree of toleration for what is fugitive and hence, less controlled relations and actions. The uniqueness of the Homeric case consists of the peculiar effect when non-enduring experiences are produced as enduring within the epic narrative. This provides us with the possibility of both understanding and marking the differences (but probably makes us unable to propose a better literary translation) between:

1. Our subject-object conception which presupposes the Cartesian concept of space as container, a container within which every-one and every-thing can be safely contained because accurately defined; and the non-enduring Homeric identities produced each time anew through a relation of intimacy between bodies, things and *chore*, where things are not placed in, but co-produced with their *chore*.

2. The importance of time, which actually secures our concept of space as 'event', by providing the possibility of its re-production/re-presentation through calculation; and the dissociation of time from the Homeric *choros*, as 'event', where 'event' must be understood as a fatal state of balanced immobility.

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[97] Note that the contemporary concept of event is secured by the concept of time.

3. Our gendered places which of course are spatial containers of gender; and the linguistic gender distinction of *chore/os* which actually evokes the experience of the Homeric distinction of genders, and

4. Our definition of otherness as a territorial confinement; and the Homeric invention of alterity within the 'space' of the epic narrative.

All this may seem at first glance to be far removed from the issue of space and place, but is in fact inextricably connected with it, for a different understanding of space produces a different approach to the issues of identity, alterity, and gender. Moreover, what the above series of differentiation indicates is the plurality of experiences that Homeric *chore/os* evoked. The main difference from our concept of space/place, at a theoretical level, is the impossibility of defining a so-called 'Homeric space', for the very concept of space is the mark of the philosophical concept of definition. We can only approach *choros/e* if we free ourselves from this philosophical anachronism, though we may not always succeed in the attempt.

3

DEMAS-DOMOS

'BODY' - 'HOUSE'
ON STRUCTURE

3.1. Introduction
3.2. The 'Body and the Building' Relation within Architectural and Linguistic Theories
3.3. *Demas - Domos* Relation within the Homeric Epics
3.3.1. *Demas* / 'The build of the body' : Structure as Trans-fixed Appearance
3.3.2. *Domos* / 'House' : Con-structure as Trans-fixity
3.3.2.1. *Dedmemenos* / 'Constructed - Tamed'
3.3.2.2. *Endon* / 'Inside' as Structure

3.1. INTRODUCTION

"..we must carve up the lexical conglomeration which figures in our etymological dictionaries under **dem-* "construct; house" into three distinct and irreducible units:
**doma-*: to do violence; to tame, (Lat. *domare*, Gr. *damao*);
dem( ):* construct (Gr. *demo* and its derivatives, [i.e., ***demas*: form, physical appearance, structure-***domos***: house *qua* construction]);
**dem-:* house, family [Lat. *domus*].
We dissociate, therefore, in the common Indo-European period, the term **dem-* 'family' from all verbal connections. There is nothing more than homophony between **dem-* 'family' and **dem( )-* 'construct'. But it cannot be denied that contaminations came about between the forms issuing from these two roots, as for instance in Homeric Greek between *do(m)* 'house *qua* family' and *domos* 'house *qua* construction'. This is due to a tendency in all the terms of the series to identity social groups with material habitat." (BENVENISTE, E.1973: *Indo-European Language and Society*, Faber and Faber, pp.251.)

Benveniste makes the distinction here between house as construction and house as familial structure. If that is so, how we should approach the relation between *demas* 'body structure' and *domos* 'house construction', given that these are the terms that appear in Homer? Benveniste attempts an etymological analysis which will draw different and separate meanings together in the root **dem-*. The question, however, arises in whether his use of the root **dem-* as construction was an earlier meaning or whether its appearance in his list is the imposition of a later or more logically

developed category whose function is to hold the other terms together in a kind of etymological corset. This question can only be answered in the course of a detailed analysis. But it can also only be answered by reference to a theoretical problem. For the problem has to be answered both at an etymological level and at the level of language of theory. We must avoid imposing upon the word a later or more logically coherent meaning, for that would mean that we abolish the problem philosophically where we should be trying to answer it historically. The problem of giving an analysis of *demas-domos* is that it requires a description of the structure of the category at the point where the category of structure is the very object of investigation. This sets up a problem which is both theoretical and practical. Indeed it is symptomatic of the type of problem which is investigated throughout this thesis, albeit one which confronts it in a indirect and most confusing way. In effect we are trying to put ourselves 'before' the category, as if the category could be described in a neutral and innocent way, but this is impossible to do without borrowing elements of the very category which we are trying to describe. This is the symptom which Derrida identified in his analysis of Benveniste entitled "Philosophy before Linguistics".[1] Nevertheless, the use of the term 'structure' should be understood as a methodological tool;[2] and as we shall investigate the Homeric terms with apparent similarity, we shall unfold a variety of experiences which – we will argue – revolve around that which we call the experience of 'structure'.

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[1] DERRIDA, J., 1982: "The Supplement of Copula: Philosophy before Linguistics", *Margins of Philosophy*, Harvester Wheatsheaf.

[2] Within etymological theories the connection between *demas* and *domos* is made *via* the concept of 'structure', supposedly present in the common root **dem-*. We use 'structure' as a provisional term to name the relation.

The words brought together within linguistic theories to structure the Indo-European root **dem-* 'construct, house' include the following Homeric terms:

do/domos (δώ/δόμος) 'house/construction', *prodomos* (πρόδομος) 'vestibule', *demo* (δέμω) 'to build', *eudmetos* (εὖδμητος) 'well built', *theodmetos* (θεόδμητος) 'god-built', *mesodme* (μεσόδμη) 'central beam', *demas* (δέμας) 'built of the body', *damnemi* (δάμνημι) 'to tame', *dedmemenos* (δεδμημένος) 'tamed/constructed', *admes* (ἀδμής) 'untamed', *damar* (δάμαρ) 'wife', *despoina* (δέσποινα) 'mistress of the house', *dmos* (δμώς) 'male slave', *dmoe*, (δμώη) 'female servant', and *endon* (ἔνδον) 'inside'. Before we enter upon the examination of the above words, which will help us to understand the way that the *demas-domos* relation was experienced in the epics, it is useful to present the ways in which the body and the building relation are conceived within architectural and linguistic theories. Thus we can at least be aware of our presuppositions, when we confront the Homeric terms. The possibilities of anachronistic projections are therefore minimized and any differences between our way of thinking and the Homeric experience can be marked.

3.2. THE 'BODY AND THE BUILDING' RELATION WITHIN ARCHITECTURAL AND LINGUISTIC THEORIES

The relation of the body and the building is always seen as evident. Nothing is more clear in architectural theories than the supposed connection between the body and building. From Vitruvius and Leonardo to Le Corbusier's modulor, the body in its integrity and fixity serves as a basis for measurement and proportion, as a model for Architecture: the art of building. But note that it is a body of a particular kind. Firstly it is a male body, secondly it is a body which itself is modeled on the ideality of

mathematical proportion. Anthony Vidler writes on this analogical relation between body and building:

"In classical theory the (idealized) body was, so to speak, directly projected onto the building, which both stood for it and represented its ideal perfection. The building derived its authority, proportional and compositional, from this body, and, in a complementary way, the building then acted to confirm and establish the body – social and individual – in the world. The principles of Vitruvius traced the origins of proportion to the Greek canons of bodily mathematics, to be incorporated by the architect-sculptor in the column and in the relations of the different parts of the order to the whole, and thence to the building; his ideal of unity was described by the celebrated figure of a man with arms outstretched inscribed within a square and a circle, navel at the center. The theorist of the Renaissance from Alberti to Francesco di Giorgio, Filarete, and Leonardo subscribed to this analogy...The attraction of these formulations lasted well into the eighteen century- and even, in the sheltered enclave of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, much longer. The body, its balance, standards of proportions, symmetry, and functioning, mingling elegance and strength, was the foundation myth of building."[3]

What Vidler's account implies is that it is not the body as such, but a perfect male body which is the image of proportion. Mark Wigley elaborates this by reversing the analogy:

"It is not that the building is being thought of as a body with the classical analogy. Rather, the body is thought of as a building... The first treatise on the interior of the body, which is to say, the treatise that gave the body an interior, written by Henri De Mondeville in the fourteenth century, argues that the body is a house, the house of the soul, which like any house can only be maintained as such by constant

[3] Vidler also distinguishes a second moment in the body-building relation established in the eighteenth century and based on the idea that "the building embodies states of the body or, more importantly, states of mind based on bodily sensation." He writes: "But beginning in the eighteen century, there emerged a second and more extended form of bodily projection in architecture...Here, the building no longer simply represented a part or whole of the body but was rather seen as objectifying the various states of the body, physical and mental. Edmund Burke, followed by Kant and the romantics, described buildings not so much in terms of their fixed attributes of beauty but rather in their capacities to evoke emotions of terror and fear." Regarding postmodern architecture, Vidler argues, it establishes a relation with a specific kind of body, "a body in disintegration." VIDLER, A., 1994: *The Architectural Uncanny*, MIT Press, pp. 71.

surveillance of its openings. The woman's body is seen as an inadequate enclosure because its boundaries are convoluted...Consequently, she must always occupy a second house, to protect her soul...The material of the body, considered as a house, is seen as feminine but its physiological structure is male. Maleness is the structuring of the body."[4]

Thus, the relation is complicated; it is not only that the ideal male body provides the rules for an ideal construction. It is that only the ideal body provides rules for an ideal construction. The fact that a woman, even an ideal woman, cannot provide such rules raises the question of the difference between the inside and outside of the ideal body. That is, the body in question for architecture is one which is determined both by mathematics and by gender. This whole problem is complicated by the fact that the body and building analogy becomes a paradigmatic image for architectural theory, where the so-called materiality of the body becomes as if it were the site for the embodiment of ideas. This equips architecture with the conviction that the materiality of the house can realize the ideas of the architect. We can begin to understand from this point of view a fundamental characteristic of architectural theory. Apparently obvious and natural oppositions such as inside/outside, male/female, material/immaterial, and ultimately construction/structure, are in effect produced by a certain philosophical operation. At one level, it appears that the proper structure of a building has been derived from the human body, as if it were a case of simple material analogy. But in fact this 'body' has been subjected to at least two exclusions: firstly the exclusion of the feminine body and secondly the transformation of the physical male body into a mathematical object. An apparently physical and natural analogy turns out to be no such thing but rather the effect of a powerful and specific philosophical intervention which conceals itself. This concealment is infinitely

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[4] WIGLEY, M., 1992: "Untitled: The Housing of Gender", *Sexuality and Space*, Princeton, pp. 357-8.

extended in that whenever the oppositions re-appear it is assumed that to be a debt which philosophy owes to architecture.

The body-house relation then is not an original 'natural' association but a relation through which philosophy produces a notion of structure while concealing the exclusions through which that concept has been produced. But this concept and its repressions continue to reverberate in linguistic theories which make an etymological connection between *domos* 'house' and *demas* 'structure of the body' *via* the root **dem-* 'construct, house'. The interpretation of this root, which confers the essence of its meaning, is produced by the inclusion of terms related to the house and the 'build' of the body[5] as much as to inclusion (*endon*), gender (*damar, despoina),* and control (*damnemi, admes*). Benveniste, on the other hand, by separating the question of control from the construction of the house and the structure of the family, remains entangled within later philosophical distinctions. That is to say, he accepts the idea of pairs of binary oppositions inasmuch as he establishes the etymological relation between body and house, where both are intended as the materiality that houses something immaterial. Furthermore, when he considers the question of the structure of the family it is always produced as interior. He writes: "...the Homeric form *do*...parallel with Latin *domi, domum* [where the Latin term, for him, designates not an edifice, but the 'home' as a social entity][6], conveys the notion of the house as 'inside'."[7] This way of thinking is perpetuated by Liddell-Scott in defining *demas* as

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[5] We use the term 'build' here in the sense of the 'someone of his build'.

[6] It should be noted that the relation between the construction and the family is not metaphoric in the Homeric text as in Roman times, where *domus* alternatively can be used as a genealogical signifier for the family lineage. By that time the term *domus* was used as a metaphor, but here is not metaphoric.

[7] BENVENISTE, E., op. cit., pp. 249.

the male body;[8] an interpretation which is based upon architectural theories. But this cannot be the case in the Homeric text, since *demas* transgresses the categories not only of gender (male-female), but that of mortals and immortals and of humans and animals. Not only that, but *demas* cannot simply be understood as the 'body', for no such general term exists in Homeric Greece.[9] In sum, *demas* cannot be synonymous with the materiality of the mathematical male body conceived of as a totality. Given that, what is the relation between *demas-domos*, in the Homeric experience? After all we have established that the body could not serve as an abstract ideal model to provide the rules for the building. On the other hand, we will establish that *demo* (δέμω) 'to build' has a non-strict technical sense, and that *domos* is not experienced as the fixed and autonomous product of Architecture.

We shall argue that indeed there <u>is</u> a relation between *demas* and *domos* and even between the rest of the terms brought together by linguistic theories. It can be established by a connection at the level of the experience which these terms evoked. But what these terms evoked was an experience of contradiction, a contradiction in which each of these terms is experienced as something that is fixed and transformable

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[8] LIDDELL, G.H., and SCOTT, R., 1991: *Greek-English Lexicon*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, s.v. δέμας : "the body especially of man".

[9] The use of the term 'body' is inappropriate, but as in the case of the term 'structure' we keep it, having always in mind the difference between the Homeric experience of what we conceive of as 'body'. When we translate *demas* as the build of the body, we immediately, in the act of translation, project our concept of 'body'. We assume that there is a coherent whole which we call 'body' and which has different features such as an exterior (the skin, the visual aspect), an interior (the organic, psychological and cognitive qualities), and a structure (in the sense of being assembled from different parts to form a coherent whole). But it is widely accepted that Homeric Greek does not have a term to designate body as a whole. As J-P. Vernant writes "there is no term that designates the body as an organic unity which supports the individual in the multiplicity of his vital and mental functions." VERNANT, J-P., 1989: "Dim Body, Dazzling Body," *Zone: Fragments for a History of the Human Body,* Part I, ed. M. Feher, pp. 21.

simultaneously.[10] This may be seem an insult to rational thought, but the experience of contradiction as such is perfectly possible. There is but one experience in perceivung a contradiction, but obviously its analysis has to be given in two parts, together with the means whereby these are yoked together. The house may have a tamed female inside and the untamed male outside, where the distinction is secured by the material construction that produces the structure of the family.[11] In such a network of relations the body as a fixed entity can be related to the building as a fixed entity. But as we shall see examining the Homeric text, neither *demas* nor *domos* can be experienced as fixed entities. Thus 'structure' in the Homeric text should be understood as the co-experience of fixity and transformation, that is, as the experience of a contradiction. This contradiction was selected and made into poetic formulas where signs of permanence (formulas) signify transience.

3.3. *DEMAS - DOMOS* RELATION WITHIN THE HOMERIC EPICS

We need to shift from a rationalized way of thinking in order to approach the terms in the Homeric poem and attempt to understand the experience evoked by the terms *demas, demo, mesodme, prodomos, and domos* that – as Benveniste argues – stem from the IE "root **dem*-, which, according to the technique involved, had the sense of

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[10] The use of the term contradiction here is prosaic and common sense rather than any philosophical notion of contradiction. Historically of course this is also related to the fact that the Homeric text predates the first philosophical formulation of contradiction. However we do not want our use of the term contradiction to fall back into the general use of the term contradiction as used by anthropologists such as Levi-Bruhl, who uses the tolerance for contradiction as one of the distinctive criteria for the distinction between primitive and civilized mentality.

[11] "...the house is involved in the production of the gender division it appears to merely secure." WIGLEY, M., 1992, op.cit., pp. 336.

'construct in tiers' for masonry, and 'construct by joinery' for timber construction."

Benveniste writes:

"In Homer, *domos* is accompanied by descriptive epithets; the house is great, high, well constructed, wide, etc. That is to say, it has the characteristics of a construction; the *domos* includes a vestibule, which is called *prodomos*, 'the front part of domos'...The noun *domos*...applies to buildings: 'house', 'temple' and also 'a room', and sometimes 'nest'. Herodotus takes it in the sense of 'an arrangement of stones or bricks' serving for the construction of a wall, or of a house. It is exclusively to construction that *mesodme* 'the large transverse beam' of a building refers...Finally, there is a primary verb *demo* 'construct', which governs objects such as *teikhos* 'wall' and *oikos* 'house'...We add here the noun *demas* 'physical shape, stature, appearance' which was used adverbially as 'in the manner of', literally 'according to the appearance, the form of...'." [12]

We shall start with *demas*, the term which will introduce to us the two shifts we need to make in order to understand that the Homeric 'structure' firstly has always the quality of appearance, and secondly, that the appearance is simultaneously that of fixity and transformation. We shall call it the appearance of **trans-fixity.**

3.3.1. *DEMAS*

'The build of the body' : Structure as Trans-fixed Appearance.

The word *demas* (δέμας) occurs 42 times in the Homeric text, 13 in Iliad and 29 in Odyssey. It denotes the 'body' – both masculine and feminine – of gods, humans, and animals. Because of the etymological relation with the verb of construction *demo* 'to build', it is widely accepted that it refers to a specific quality of the 'body', that is, its 'structure, build'. J-P. Vernant accredits Benveniste's etymology when he writes :

"The term *demas* in the accusative, designates not the body but an individual's stature, his size, his build up of assembled pieces (the verb *demo* signifies the erecting of a construction through superimposed

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[12] BENVENISTE, E., op.cit., pp. 243, 250.

rows, as in a brick wall). It is often used in connection with *eidos* and *phue*: the visible aspect, the carriage, the imposing appearance of what has grown well."[13]

Dictionaries distinguish between two forms of the term which correspond to different meanings. As a noun it means the (stature of the) 'body', whereas as an adverb it means 'in form or fashion like...'.[14] The so-called adverbial form occurs four times in a formulaic way in the context of battle in Iliad.[15] The verse goes as follows: "So they fought on in the likeness of blazing fire."[16] In all the four passages *demas* is translated as 'in the likeness of'. We propose instead to understand that it is the appearance of the 'body' as *demas,* that is assimilated to fire. As the exposition of the rest of the passages tries to show, *demas* evokes that quality of the body that makes it always already assimilated to something else. Needless to say, *demas* should not be understood as a kind of mask, intended as something added, a surface under which something else lies. Even if we accept a relation between *demas* and 'structure', 'structure' should not be understood as what lies underneath, but as a visible quality of the body. Furthermore, if we consider the translation of *demas* as 'the build of the body' in the technical sense of 'assembling together', then the way different parts are assembled in an active individual is always different and changing. *Demas* is experienced as an always changing assemblage that only death fixes. Dead people do not have a *demas*, *demas* is a quality of life, but it is not only the attribute of the mortal body that inevitably changes as a consequence of its mortality. The *demas* of immortal gods evokes their inherent ability to change and being transformed.

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[13] VERNANT, J-P., 1989, op.cit., pp. 22. Chantraine also accepts Benveniste's etymology. See, CHANTRAINE, P., 1968: *Dictionnaire Étymologique de la Langue Grecque*, Paris, s.v. δέμας.

[14] LIDDELL, G.H., and SCOTT, R., op.cit., s.v. δέμας.

[15] Λ596, N673, P366, Σ1.

[16] Ὣς οἱ μὲν μάρναντο δέμας πυρὸς αἰθομένοιο.

The term occurs 15 times in the context of gods' transformation. Their *demas* and voice – when they have to speak[17] – are transformed and assimilated to that of a mortal individual in order to present themselves to humans. It is not our concern here to ask why gods change in order to appear,[18] but to examine their transformation as such. The gods' similarity with mortals is denoted by terms such as *eisamenos/e* (εἰσάμενος/η), *eidomenos/e* (εἰδόμενος/η), *eoikos/uia* (ἐοικώς/νία), all of them denoting the visual experience. The change of their *demas* is the change of appearance. Apollo changes his demas to that of Periphas in order to encourage Aineas (P323: Apollo stirred on Aineias; he had assumed the form of Periphas),[19] Poseidon changes both *demas* and voice to that of Kalchas to address the Argives (N44-5: Poseidon...stir on the Argives... likening himself in form and weariless voice to Kalchas),[20] and both Poseidon and Athena assimilate their *demas* to that of mortal men (Φ285: Poseidon and Athena...with their shapes in the likeness of mortals).[21] In the other 13 passages it is Athena who appears with a different *demas,* usually of a man (10 times)[22] and only

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[17] On the change of voice see chapter on *epos*.

[18] On this topic as well as on the difference between mortal and immortal body, see VERNANT, J-P., op.cit.

[19] P323: Ἀπόλλων / Αἰνείαν ὄτρυνε δέμας Περίφραντι ἐοικώς.

[20] N44-5: Ποσειδάων..Ἀργείους ὄτρυνε... εἰσάμενος Κάλχαντι δέμας καὶ ἀτειρέα φωνήν.

[21] Φ285: Ποσειδάων καὶ Ἀθήνη...δέμας δ' ἀνδρεσσιν ἔικτην.

[22] P555: [Athena...stirring] likened herself in form and weariless voice to Phoenix (Ἀθήνη...ἐποτρύνουσα' εἰσάμενη Φοίνικι δέμας καὶ ἀτειρέα φωνήν), X227: likened herself in form and weariless voice to Deiphobos (Δηϊφόβῳ ἔικυῖα δέμας καὶ ἀτειρέα φωνήν), θ194 : likening herself in form to a man (ἀνδρὶ δέμας εἰκυῖα), ν222-3 : likening herself in form to a young man, a herdsman of sheep, a delicate boy, such as the children of kings are, (ἀνδρὶ δέμας εἰκυῖα νέῳ, ἐπιβώτορι μήλων / παναπάλῳ, οἷοί τε ἀνάκτων παῖδες ἔασι). In repetition five times β268, 401, χ206, ω503, 548: likening herself to Mentor in voice and appearance (Μέντορι εἰδομένη ἠμὲν δέμας ἠδὲ καὶ αὐδήν), and also in Φ285 (see above note 21).

three times of a woman.[23] In all three passages Athena appears with the *demas* of a woman to Odysseus. This is not the place to explain why she appears as a man or a woman, we are concerned only to point out that she is the only one able to do so, that is, to change gender, by changing her *demas*.[24]

Demas is an attribute of both men and women. Hence, gender in relation to *demas* is established at the level of appearance[25] and not as a biological differentiation, as with *domos*. The quality of *demas* as appearance is further reinforced in a passage where δ796 : Athene made an image, and likened it to Iphthimi.[26] Hence, *demas* is a feature of *eidolon* (εἴδωλον) 'that which has the appearance of...' to look like, i.e., to be assimilated. Athena is also involved in the transformation of Odysseus' appearance. He is transformed by her touch, where not only his *demas*, his bodily features, are changed, but also his clothing.

π172-6 :'So spoke Athene, and with her golden wand she tapped him. First she made the mantle and the tunic that covered his chest turn bright and clean; she increased his strength and stature. His dark color came back to him again, his jaws firmed, and the beard that grew about his chin turned black.[27]

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[23] It occurs in the formulaic phrase: δέμας δ' ἠΐκτο γυναικὶ in ν288-9, π157-8: 'likened to a woman beautiful and tall, and skilled in glorious handiwork (δέμας δ' ἠΐκτο γυναικὶ / καλῇ τε μεγάλῃ καί ἀγλαὰ ἔργα ἰδυίῃ), υ31: Athene...wore the shape of a lady (Ἀθήνῃ ...δέμας δ' ἠΐκτο γυναικὶ).

[24] This can probably considered in relation to her paradoxical birth and her status as a virgin. Athena was born not 'of woman' but 'of man': she sprang from the head of Zeus, he 'gave birth' to Athena only after he had swallowed whole the body of his pregnant wife.

[25] "Gender in ancient Greece is independent of anatomy and produced on the external surfaces of the body, which are closely monitored for signs of eye movement, grooming, shaving, posture, gait etc." WIGLEY, M., 1992, op.cit., pp. 356.

[26] δ796 : Ἀθήνη / εἴδωλον ποίησε, δέμας δ' ἠΐκτο γυναικί / Ἰφθίμῃ

[27] π172-6 :Ἦ, καὶ χρυσείῃ ῥάβδῳ ἐπεμάσσατ' Ἀθήνη. / φᾶρος μέν οἱ πρῶτον ἐϋπλυνὲς ἠδὲ χιτῶνα / θῆκ' ἀμφὶ στήθεσσι, δέμας δ' ὤφελλε καί ἦβην. / ἄψ δὲ μελαγχροιὴς γένετο, γναθμοὶ δὲ τάνυσθεν, / κυάνεαι δ' ἐγένοντο ἐθειράδες ἀμφὶ γένειον.

She also intervenes in ψ156-163, enhancing the transformation acquired by bathing and clothing of body. After her intervention Odysseus *demas* is *homoios* (ὁμοιος) 'similar' to that of a god.[28] However, the transformability of *demas* is not restricted to divine intervention.[29] Bathing can have the same result, as when the daughter of Nestor bathes Telemachos.

γ466-8: when she had bathed Telemachos and anointed him sleekly with olive oil, she threw a splendid mantle and a tunic about him, and he came out from the bath looking like an immortal.[30]

Even without being transformed by a bath or by a god, a mortal *demas* can be similar to that of immortals, as with Telemachos who is "looking like an immortal."[31] A woman, Kastaneira, has also the *demas* 'the appearance' of a goddess.[32] Nevertheless, the difference between mortal and immortal *demas* is stated explicitly in two passages, where the goddess Calypso compares herself with Penelope and when Odysseus replies to Alkinoos who sees him as a god.[33] The above passage poses questions about the difference between the mortal and immortal *demas* and about the

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[28] ψ163: then, looking like an immortal, he strode forth from the bath (ἐκ δ' ἀσαμίνθου βῆ δέμας ἀθανάτοισιν ὁμοῖος).

[29] Twice in a formulaic way Penelope attributes the ruination of her *demas* to the gods: σ251-2, τ124: all my excellence, my beauty and figure, were ruined by the immortals (ἦ τοι ἐμὴν ἀρετὴν εἶδός τε δέμας τε / ὤλεσαν ἀθάνατοι).

[30] γ466-8: Τηλέμαχον...αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ λοῦσέν τε καὶ ἔχρισεν λίπ' ἐλαίῳ, / ἀμφὶ δέ μιν φᾶρος καλὸν βάλεν ἠδὲ χιτῶνα, / ἔκ ῥ' ἀσαμίνθου βῆ δέμας ἀθανάτοισιν ὁμοῖος.

[31] θ14: δέμας ἀθανάτοισιν ὁμοῖος. It should be noted that the phrase δέμας ἀθανάτοισιν ὁμοῖος occurs in all the three previous mentioned passages in a formulaic way.

[32] Θ305: lovely Kastianeira with the form of goddess (καλὴ Καστιάνειρα δέμας ἠϊκυῖα θεῇσι)

[33] ε212-3: mortal women can challenge the goddesses for built and beauty (οὐ μέν θην κείνης γε χειρείων εὔχομαι εἶναι / οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φυήν, ἐπεὶ οὔ πως οὐδὲ ἔοικε θνητὰς ἀθανάτῃσι δέμας καὶ εἶδος ἐρίζειν), η209-10: I am not in any way like the immortals who hold the wide heaven, neither in build nor stature, but only to men who are mortal (οὐ γὰρ ἐγώ γε / ἀθανάτοισιν ἔοικα, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν, / οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φυήν, ἀλλὰ θνητοῖσι βροτοῖσιν).

transformation. But, as we have already pointed out, this is not our problem. We are concerned not with the issue of transformation as such, but with the relation of *demas* to transformation. What is important to us is the experience of the term *demas*, which, as the passages demonstrate, is experienced as the capacity of the 'body' to be transformed. In a number of passages *demas* occurs in the context of comparison between humans.[34] Other features of the body, and not only *demas*, are being compared such as *eidos phue, phren* etc. It should be remembered that the Homeric body can not be defined as such but only described in its multiple manifestations. The Homeric body is experienced as multiple in the sense that the corporeal, the psychological and the mental are interwoven, and do not correspond to different domains in the sense of bodily topography. With this in mind we can consider a series of passages that seem to suggest a split between *demas* – the exteriority of an always changing appearance – and something else that appears internal and enduring.

Humans might look like other humans, but in two passages Odysseus looks like (ἐοικε -ας) himself.[35] Odysseus can not be recognized because his *demas* is

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[34] Agamemnon compares his wife Klytaimnestra with his mistress Chryseis who in A114-5: is in no way inferior, neither in build nor stature, nor wit, nor in accomplishment (ἐπεὶ οὔ ἐθέν ἐστι χερείων / οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φυήν, οὔτ' ἄρ φρένας οὔτέ τι ἔργα). See also the following passages: Ω376: [a god] who sent such a wayfarer as you to meet me, an omen of good, for such you are by your form, your admired beauty and the wisdom in your mind (ὅς μοι τοιόνδ' ἧκεν ὁδοιπόρον ἀντιβολῆσαι / αἴσιον, οἷος δὴ σὺ δέμας καὶ εἶδος ἀγητὸς, / πέπνυσαί τε νόῳ), ξ176-7: and I thought he would be among the men one not inferior to his dear father, admirable for build and beauty (καὶ μιν ἔφην ἔσσεσθαι ἐν ἀνδράσιν οὔ τι χέρεια / πατρὸς ἑοῖο φίλοιο, δέμας καὶ εἶδος ἀγητόν), θ116-7: Naubolos, he was best of all the Phaiakians in build and beauty, only except for stately Laodamas (Ναυβολίδης, ὃς ἄριστος ἦην εἶδός τε δέμας τε / πάντων Φαιήκων μετ' ἀμύμονα Λαοδόμαντα), λ469-70, ω16-7: and the soul of Aias, who for beauty and stature was greatest of all the Danaans, next to the stately son of Peleus (Αἴαντός θ', ὃς ἄριστος ἦην εἶδός τε δέμας τε / τῶν ἄλλων Δαναῶν μετ' ἀμύμονα Πηλείωνα).

[35] τ381: as like as you are to Odysseus, both as to your feet, and voice and appearance (ὡς σὺ δέμας φωνήν τε πόδας τ' Ὀδυσῆϊ ἔοικας), υ194: he is like a king and a lord in appearance (ἦ τε ἔοικε δέμας βασιλῆϊ ἄνακτι).

experienced as always changing and not because there is a split between the exteriority of his appearance and the interiority of something else like his 'self'. This becomes all more apparent in two other passages. The first one is a well-known Iliadic passage:

E 800-1.: 'Tydeus got him a son who is little enough like him, since Tydeus was a small man for stature, but he was a fighter.[36]

Dictionaries refer to it in order to reinforce the meaning of the term *demas* as the 'stature' of the body. This is possible because 'small' refers to the size of the body, and reflects the way we associate structure with measurement. But even in this case the term is used in the context of a comparison, assimilation (ἐοικότα)[37] between Tydeus and his son. However, we should not understand the 'size' of *demas* as an attribute of the corporeality of the body where a relation of opposition with the ability to fight, can be established. *Mikros to demas alla machetes* 'small for stature but fighter', should not be understood as a split between psychic strength and visual appearance. *Alla* (ἀλλά) 'but, yet', is used not only in contrasted clauses but in subjoining additional circumstances as well.[38] In fact, the phrase underlines the fact that the body is 'multiple' and that all its manifestations should be considered; its appearance and its fighting ability cannot be separated. They are in a relation of

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[36] Ε 800-1: ἦ ὀλίγον οἱ παῖδα ἐοικότα γείνατο Τυδεύς. / Τυδεύς τοι μικρὸς μὲν ἔην δέμας, ἀλλὰ μαχητής.

[37] It is interesting that in later times the term *eoika*, which in Homer indicates the visual experience, assumes a moral and intellectual value. Chantraine writes on *eoika*: "Ainsi de la notion d' image, de ressemblance issu un group semantique relative au monde intellectuel et moral ἐπεικὴς = δίκαιος / εἰκών, ἴκελος = semblemble / μένος, μενο-εικής = desiderable.]" CHANTRAINE, P., op. cit., s.v. ἔοικα.

[38] AUTENRIETH, G.,1991: *Homeric Dictionary*, Duckworth, s.v. ἀλλὰ.

complementarity, not of opposition. Moreover, *demas* the appearance, is experienced as being transformed as a result of an action, in this case fighting.

Demas is not only a human attribute, it can apply to animals as well.[39] The second passage refers to the *demas* of a dog. Odysseus, pretending that he does not recognize his dog, asks Eumaios: P307-8: The shape of him is splendid, and yet I cannot be certain whether he had the running speed to go with this beauty.[40] Eumaios reassures him : P313: He was such, in build and performance.[41] Once again in this passage *demas* and running speed should be understood in a relation of complementarity. The experience of the animal's *demas*, like that of the human's *demas*, involves the experience of a multiple body always changing – in performance. However, when Circe transforms the human *demas* of Odysseus' companions to that of pigs, the split between changeable appearance and enduring mental attributes is stated explicitly:

κ237-40: When she had given them this and they had drunk it down, next thing she struck them with her wand and drove them into her pig pens, and they took the look of pigs, with the head and voices and bristles of pigs, but the minds within them stayed as they had been before.[42]

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[39] J. Clay notes that *demas* is used of animals only for Odysseus' dog and Odysseus' men turned into pigs, and thus she writes that the term is "largely restricted" to humans. (CLAY, J., 1974: "*Demas* and *Aude*: The Nature of Divine Transformation in Homer", *Hermes* 102, pp. 129). Other scholars argue that when the term is applied to animals indicates anthropomorphism. (see GOLDHILL, S., 1988: "Reading differences: the Odyssey and juxtaposition", *Ramus* 17.I, pp. 14). The question of anthropomorphism – and the assumptions that underlay it – is not relevant to our research; it does not contradict, however, our interpretation of *demas* as a term that evokes the experience of likeness.

[40] ρ307-8 :καλὸς μὲν δέμας ἐστίν, ἀτὰρ τόδε γ' οὐ σάφα οἶδα, / ἢ δὴ καὶ ταχὺς ἔσκε θέειν ἐπὶ εἶδεῖ τῷδε.

[41] ρ313 : εἰ τοιόσδ' εἴη ἡμὲν δέμας ἠδὲ καὶ ἔργα.

[42] κ237-40: αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ δῶκέν τε καὶ ἔκπιον, αὐτίκ' ἔπειτα / ῥάβδῳ πεπληγυῖα κατὰ συφεοῖσιν ἐέργνυ. / οἱ δὲ συῶν μὲν ἔχον κεφαλὰς φωνήν τε τρίχας τε / καὶ δέμας, αὐτὰρ νοῦς ἦν ἔμπεδος ὡς τὸ πάρος περ.

Transformed by a witch, humans acquired the appearance of pigs but retained their ability to think. Nevertheless this is an exception, the split between appearance and thinking is the specific result of witchcraft. Our thesis remains that the non-separation between an exterior changing appearance and internal enduring attributes is the common experience. In fact, having established that *demas* evokes the experience of transformation and assimilation, produced by the body of an active individual, and where there is no split between an exterior appearance and internal fixed attributes, we must note that in all the passages *demas* has always a referent, it is the *demas* of someone and in that sense it is also experienced as the fixed appearance of a specific individual. *Demas* 'the build of the body' introduced us to the experience of a multiple assimilated and transformed body; this is the experience of the active and alive body. *Demas* is always the *demas* of someone, it has a name and in that sense is fixed. Nevertheless it is *demas* that evokes the experience of likeness as such. In that sense *demas* is experienced simultaneously as fixed and transformable. *Demas* evokes the experience of a **trans-fixed** appearance.

At the moment of death the appearance of the body is fixed, even the clothes remain the same.[43] The dead body becomes *soma* (σώμα) 'corpse' before being transformed to *sema* (σῆμα)[44] : a memorial with eternal visible fixity *via* the 'erection'

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[43] "The great importance of the moment of death is very much apparent in the description of the appearance of the dead with wounds exactly as they received them just before they died. Homer describes the warriors at the entrance to Hades still dressed in their bloody armor (Od.11.41)." BREMMER, I., 1983: *The Early Greek Concept of the Soul*, Princeton University Press, pp. 83.

[44] On the two senses of the word *sema*, i.e. an exceptional mark or aspect in its own right and as a sign or token of something else, see ZEITLIN, F. 1995: "Figuring Fidelity in Homer's Odyssey", *The Distaff Side: Representing the Female in Homer's Odyssey*, ed. B. Cohen, Oxford University Press, pp. 118.

(*cheuo)* of the tomb. Elpenor's *sema* is marked with a thing put on the top,[45] which should be understood as the extension of the body that survives after death, and not just as a symbol.[46] The fixed body then is a dead body, a *soma;* as such it disappears by being buried or burned, and gives rise to the construction of the tomb. What remains of the individual, his *psyche,* enters a house, the *domos* of Hades, still having an appearance but not a *demas*. Dead people have a fixed appearance, they are *eidola.* Within the poems the *domos* of Hades occurs 27 times[47] and evokes a state of fixity, the fixity of death, which cannot be separated from a specific construct: the 'house' of Hades. Furthermore, the term *dmethenta* (δμηθέντα) 'be prevailed upon, be tamed' occurs twice in Iliad in relation to death, and denotes the conditions under which a body enters the house of Hades.[48] Another term *dedmemenos* (δεδμημένος) 'tamed'

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[45] Elpenor whose *soma* lays unburied (σῶμα ἄθαπτον, λ53) asks Odysseus not only to bury him but to raise a *sema* as well: λ75: and heap up a grave mound beside the beach of the gray sea, for an unhappy man, so that those to come will know of me. Do this for me, and on top of the grave mound plant the oar with which I rowed when I was alive and among my companions. (σῆμά τέ μοι χεῦαι πολιῆς ἐπὶ θινὶ θαλάσσης, ἀνδρὸς δυστήνοιο, καὶ ἐσσομένοισι πυθέσθαι / ταῦτά τέ μοι τελέσαι πῆξαί τ' ἐπὶ τύμβῳ ἐρετμόν, / τῷ καὶ ζωὸς ἔρεσσον ἐὼν μετ' ἐμοῖσ' ἑτάροισιν).

[46] T. Vidler quotes from J. P. Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*, "The body is not a screen between things and ourselves; it manifests only the individuality and the contingency of our original relation to instrumental-things...This is why my body always extends across the tool which it utilizes: it is at the end of the cane on which I lean against the earth; it is at the end of the telescope which shows me the stars; it is on the chair, in the whole house; for it is my adaptation to these tools." VIDLER, T., op.cit., pp. 81. It is in this direction that we propose to think of the experience of the relations between body and things within the poems.

[47] Most of the passages where δόμον Ἄϊδος εἴσω, εἰν' Αϊδάο δόμοισιν, Αϊδάο δόμους occur are formulaic. The 27 passages that refer to the house of Hades are: Γ322, H131, Λ263, Ξ457, Σ441, X52, 482, Ψ19, ,103, 179, Ω246, δ834, ι524, κ175, 491, 512, 564, λ69, 150, 627, ξ208, ο350, υ208, ψ252, 322, ω204, 264.

[48] Δ99: struck down by your arrow, and laid on the sorrowful corpse-fire (σῷ βέλεϊ δμηθέντα πυρῆς ἐπιβάντ' ἀλεγεινῆς), E646: But beaten down by my hands will pass through the gates of Hades (ἀλλ' ὑπ' ἐμοὶ δμηθέντα πύλας Ἀΐδαο περήσειν).

also indicates in σ236-8, the taming of the body in relation to death.[49] Thus a certain connection – denied by Benveniste – between structure, construction and body taming seems to be in operation within the Homeric experience of the *domos* 'house' of Hades. But what about other houses?

3.3.2. *DOMOS*

'House' : Con-structure as Trans-fixity

Domos (δόμος) 'house' occurs 156 times in the Homeric text, 46 of them in Iliad, and 110 in Odyssey.[50] *Domos* is fixed because – as *demas* does – it has always a name; it is always the house of someone, usually a man. Rarely the names of both a man and woman are used.[51] The fixity that the name confers should be understood not only at the level of family structure but also at that of construction. In Priam's *domos* description the building and the structure of his family cannot be separated.

Z242-50: Now he entered the wonderfully built palace of Priam. This was fashioned with smooth-stone cloister walks, and within it were embodied fifty sleeping chambers of smoothed stone built so as to connect with each other; and within these slept each beside his own wedded wife, the sons of Priam. In the same inner court on the opposite side, to face these, lay the twelve close smooth-stone sleeping

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[49] σ236-8: if only in our house, in such a manner, the suitors could be defeated and bow their heads, some in the courtyard and some inside the house, and the limbs be unstrung in each of them (οὕτω νῦν μνηστῆρες ἐν ἡμετέροισι δόμοισι / νεύοιεν κεφαλὰς δεδμημένοι, οἱ μὲν ἐν αὐλῇ, / οἱ δ' ἔντοσθε δόμοιο, λελῦτο δὲ γυῖα ἑκάστου).

[50] We will not examine the term *do* (δῶ) – according to Benveniste – 'house *qua* structure', even though it would be interesting, it would be too lengthy. Besides, it is sufficient to show that *domos* is not experienced just as construction in order to uncover the philosophical presuppositions that underlie Benveniste's distinction.

[51] Of Hades and Persephone in κ491,564 / of Okeanos and Tethun in Ξ202,303/ of Penelope and Telemachos in o511, σ223,236.

chambers of his daughters built so as to connect with each other; and within these slept, each by his own modest wife, the lords of the daughters of Priam.[52]

Usually the building construction is presented as securing the family structure which is housed within it. We propose instead that the experience of construction cannot be separated from that of 'structure'. In fact, we invent a neologism here to name the paradoxical experience of *domos* as the experience of **con-structure**. We shall also argue that in the case of *domos* fixity and transformation are experienced simultaneously. The two terms are usually considered antithetical in relation to the experience of the house, and are divided in order to be accommodated within temporality (before-after), or topography (inside-outside). In order to mark the simultaneity of time and place which characterizes the Homeric experience of transformation and fixity, we shall name it – using another neologism – the experience of **trans-fixity**.

We need to clarify at this point that we are not concerned here to give an account of *domos* in order to understand the full range of references to the concept of 'house' in the epics. If that were the case, we would have to examine other Homeric terms such as *oikos* and consequently to include questions relevant to the mode of production or the social structure that supports the 'house'.[53] Our research on *domos* in no way exhausts the issue of the Homeric house. Rather, we are concerned to

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[52] Z242-50: Αλλ' ὅτε δὴ Πριάμοιο δόμον περικαλλέ' ἵκανε / ξεστῆς αἰθούσησι τετυγμένον- αὐτὰρ ἐν αὐτῷ /πεντήκοντ' ἔνεσαν θάλαμοι ξεστοῖο λίθοιο / πλησίον ἀλλήλων δεδμημένοι, ἔνθα παῖδες / κοιμῶντο Πριάμοιο παρὰ μνηστῆς ἀλόχοισι, / κουράων δ' ἑτέρωθεν ἐναντίοι ἔνδοθεν αὐλῆς / δώδεκ' ἔσαν τέγεοι θάλαμοι ξεστοῖο λίθοιο / πλησίον ἀλλήλων δεδμημένοι, ἔνθα δὲ γαμβροὶ / κοιμῶντο Πριάμοιο παρ' αἰδοίης ἀλόχοισιν. It should be noted that in the above passage the fixity of *domos* is further accentuated because the description refers to *thalamos* which evokes the experience of fixity within the epics.

[53] In this case, one of course has to examine the assumptions that underscore our general concept of 'house' and not to take it for granted and apply it to the Homeric text.

examine how the construction of the concept of 'house' arises out of the problem of construction. Ultimately, we restrict the research to the references which currently count as architectural elements. To do so we shall follow a specific strategy in approaching the term *domos*. Instead of examining all the 156 citations, we shall consider the passages where *domos* occurs, in the context of the other Homeric terms brought together under the common root **dem-*. Firstly we shall examine the terms which Benveniste uses in order to support his argument about *domos* as construction. We argue that this provides the evidence that the experience of construction and structure cannot be separated. It will also provide some indications in regard to the experience evoked by house understood as con-structure. These indications will be further explored in relation to the terms that – according to Benveniste – belong to the **dem-* 'house as familial structure'. Benveniste sustains his assumption about *domos* as construction by establishing an etymological relation with the verb of construction *demo* 'to build'. What we shall challenge is not the relation as such, but something never questioned because it seems 'natural' and hence taken for granted by Benveniste and others,[54] that is, the strict technical sense of the verb *demo*. In fact, the kind of experience that *demo* evokes within the Homeric text constitutes the starting point of our inquiry on *domos*.

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[54] F. Adrados although he criticizes Benveniste's distinction between *domos* as construction and *domus* as familial structure, assumes the technical sense of *demo*. He writes: "I am aware that Benveniste separates Gr. δόμος from Lat. *domus* which he referred to the 'family', and that this has been accepted by, for example Chantraine, S.V. δόμος. Only this word would come from δέμω. This is impossible for there is total coincidence in the form and the reference to the inhabitants or wealth of the house as we have seen is normal in all these words." ADRADOS, F.R. 1990: "The Semantics of Oikos in the Odyssey", Ο Ομηρικός Οίκος: Από τά Πρακτικά τού Ε' Συνεδρίου γιά την Οδύσσεια, Ιθάκη, pp. 23.

DEMO

'To build' : Construction as Trans-fixity

Demo (δέμω) 'to build' occurs seven times in the poems, five in the active voice in Iliad and two in middle voice in Odyssey. All the passages in Iliad, with *demo* in the active voice, refer to the construction of fortifications, walls and towers which protect either the Greek camp or the city of Troy.[55] Around the tomb where the dead bodies of the warriors lay, the Greeks built a wall to protect themselves from the enemy.

H335-7: And let us gather and pile one single mound on the corpse-pyre indiscriminately from the plain, and build fast upon it towered ramparts, to be a defense of ourselves and our vessels.[56]

In all five passages there is no mention of the means of construction, but the construction is intended as *eilar* (εἶλαρ) 'defense' for the camp, or that which will keep the city *arrektos* (ἄρρηκτος) 'firm, indestructible'. Poseidon, the builder of Troy's wall[57] says: "Φ446-7: Then I built a wall for the Trojans about their city, wide, and very splendid, so none could break into their city".[58] Thus the construction of a wall or a tower seems to fix the city or the camp, and protect it from destruction and dissolution. But the construction is experienced as also transformable, in the event by destruction. We can now better understand the term *pukinos,* (πυκινός) 'firm, compact, firmly put together'. The term occurs five times as an adjective attached to *domos*, and cannot be intended in a technical sense. In all the quotations, *domos* is

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[55] H435-440: (τεῖχος ἔδειμαν πύργους θ' ὑψηλούς) , I349: (τεῖχος ἔδειμε) , Ξ32:(τεῖχος ἔδειμαν).

[56] H335-7: τύμβον δ' ἀμφὶ πυρὴν ἕνα χεύομεν ἐξαγαγόντες / ἄκριτον ἐκ πεδίου· ποτὶ δ' αὐτὸν δείμομεν ὦκα / πύργους ὑψηλοὺς εἶλαρ νηῶν τε καὶ αὐτῶν.

[57] In Θ519 (θεοδμήτων ἐπὶ πύργων) the towers of Troy are been called *theodmetoi* 'god-built'. The term occurs only once.

[58] Φ446-7: Τρώεσσι πόλιν πέρι τεῖχος ἔδειμα / εὐρύ τε καί μάλα καλόν, ἵν' ἄρρηκτος πόλις εἴη.

characterized as *pukinos* at the very moment that someone breaks in,[59] at the very moment that its strength is broken. In conclusion, given the above-mentioned passages where *demo* occurs, there is no evidence of an experience of *demo* in a technical sense, but rather of trans-fixity. To see if this is always the case, and before we proceed to the examination of the middle voice, we will investigate some so called 'technical' terms such as *eudmetos* and *mesodme*.

EUDMETOS / 'well built': Construction as Endurance

Eudmetos (εὔδμητος) 'well built' occurs 11 times: in Iliad six times in relation to elements of the fortifications – *teichos* (τεῖχος) 'wall'[60] or *purgos* (πύργος) 'tower'[61] – and once to *bomos* (βωμός) 'altar'.[62] In Odyssey it refers three times to the well-built *toichous* (τοίχους) 'walls' of a house[63] and once to a *bomos* (βωμός) 'stand for statues'.[64] As far as fortifications are concerned, they are *eudmetoi* inasmuch as they survive the assaults of the enemy. Not all the walls of a house are *eudmetoi.* The walls of Odysseus' house are so in a very specific context, for *eudmetoi* are the walls of Odysseus' *megaron.* The suitors are trapped inside, with no chance to escape from these 'well-built' walls. The term is not an aesthetic term and we should understand it in its relation to *bomos* (βωμός), the word that denotes both the 'altar' of sacrifice and

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[59] K267: breaking into the close-built house (πυκινόν δόμον ἀντιτορήσας). Also in M301 and ζ134, occurs in the context of a simile that refers to the 'breaking' (ρήξασθαι) of a wall. In η88, it refers to Alkinoos' house when Odysseus is about to break in with the help of Athena, and in η81 refers to Athena entering (δῦνε) Erechtheus' house.

[60] M36, 137, Φ516.

[61] M154, Π700,X195.

[62] A448.

[63] υ302, χ24, 126.

[64] η100.

the 'stand' for statues. It is the quality of *bomos* to secure the immobility of statues or the fixity of the ritual. *Bomos* is related to *baino* (βαίνω) 'to go', that not only indicates movement but also in the perfect tense (βέβηκα) has the sense of 'being in a place' and (εὖ βεβηκέναι) 'stand fast'.

One might object that it is because of the technique of construction that the fortification, the house's walls or the *bomos* produce the effects of endurance, stability or immobility. This is a 'natural' assumption for us to make, but even when there is evidence of the technique of construction – as we shall see later on – we cannot separate the technical aspect of a construction from the effects that it produces. Nonetheless, *eudmetos* 'well-built' in the Homeric context is not related to the aesthetic category of beautiful, but to the experience of fixity and endurance. In effect, *eudmetos* evokes the fixity of the construction experienced as that which produces effects of endurance: the durability of fortifications, the trapping of the suitors, the ritual of sacrifice, the immobility of the statues. But how can we understand, if not as a structural element in a technical sense, another Homeric term, related to the same I.E. root **dem*-:

MESODME / 'central beam' : Structural as Transformable Appearance

Mesodme (μεσόδμη), occurs four times and only in Odyssey, twice in relation to the ship, and twice in relation to house. Benveniste argues that the term "designates the central beam that joins together two uprights, two pillars in the interior of the house."[65] Liddell-Scott on the other hand assigns to it two meanings: "1.properly something built in between; hence the part between two upright beams, a panel 2.the

[65] BENVENISTE, E., op.cit., pp. 242.

cross plank of a ship, with a pole through it, for the mast."[66] We cannot understand from the textual evidence what *mesodme* should be. Nevertheless, it is obvious from the two formulaic passages which refer to the ship that *mesodme* is an important element, because the mast is fitted to it.[67] We must be careful not to project any distinction between structural and non-structural elements of a construction, as we do not know if there was such distinction, and further whether it corresponds to ours.[68] The other two passages in Odyssey, where the term is presented in a formulaic way (τ37, υ354: τοῖχοι καλαί τε μεσόδμαι) give us the opportunity to understand *mesodme* as one element among others in the 'structure' of *domos*. In both passages, it involves an uncanny visual experience; the second actually being a vision. In τ37 Telemachos and Odysseus remove the weapons from *megaron* during the night. Meanwhile Athena, unseen by Telemachos, illuminates the place with a lamp. Suddenly Telemachos says:

> Father here is a great wonder that my eyes look on. Always it seems that the chamber walls, the handsome bases and roof timbers of fit and tall columns sustaining them, shine in my eyes as if a fire were blazing (*pyros aithomenoio*).[69] There must be surely a god here[70]

In θ345-57 a seer foresees the slaughter of the suitors:

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[66] LIDDELL, G.H., and SCOTT, R., op.cit., s.v. μεσόδμη.

[67] β423, o289: raising the mast pole made of fir, they set it upright in the hollow hole in the box (ἱστὸν δ' εἰλάτινον κοίλης ἔντοσθε μεσόδμης / στῆσαν ἀείραντες).

[68] The example of the Athenian trireme can highlight our point. For us today, the structure of a ship is constituted by the wooden beams on which subsequently the planks are fitted. The reconstruction of the Athenian trireme has shown, however that the planks were fitted together first and thus constituted what we call the structural part; this is in accordance with the Homeric description of a ship's construction in Odyssey ε241-61. See MORRISON, J., 1986: *The Athenian trireme: the history and reconstruction of an ancient Greek warship,* J.S. Morrison, J.F. Coates eds., Cambridge University Press.

[69] The same phrase occurs in the formulaic use of *demas*.

[70] τ36-40: ὦ πάτερ, ἦ μέγα θαῦμα τόδ' ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ὁρῶμαι / ἔμπης μοι τοῖχοι μεγάρων καλαί τε μεσόδμαι / εἰλάτιναί τε δοκοὶ καὶ κίονες ὑψόσ' ἔχοντες / φαίνοντ' ὀφθαλμοῖς ὡς εἰ πυρὸς αἰθομένοιο. / ἦ μάλα τις θεὸς ἔνδον .

In the suitors Pallas Athene stirred uncontrollable laughter, and addled their thinking. Now they laughed with jaws that were no longer their own. The meat they ate was a mess of blood, their eyes were bursting full of tears, and their laughter sounded like lamentation. Godlike Theoklymenos now spoke out among them: 'Poor wretches, what evil has come on you? Your heads and faces and the knees underneath you are shrouded in night and darkness; a sound of wailing has broken out, your cheeks are covered with tears, and the walls bleed, and the fine supporting pillars. All the forecourt is huddled with ghosts, the yard is full of them as they flock down to the underworld and the darkness. The sun has perished out of the sky, and a foul mist has come over.'[71]

Thus both passages where *mesodme* occurs describe a paradoxical experience in a domestic context. Something familiar and of a fixed appearance appears transformed, foreign, and uncanny[72] .

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[71] υ345-57: μνηστῆρσι δὲ Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη / ἄσβεστον γέλῳ ὦρσε, παρέπλαγξεν δέ νόημα. / οἱ δ' ἤδη γναθμοῖσι γελώων ἀλλοτρίοισιν, / αἱμοφόρυκτα δὲ δὴ κρέα ἤσθιον· ὄσσε δ' ἄρα σφέων δακρυόφιν πίμπλαντο, γόον δ' ὠΐετο θυμός. τοῖσι δὲ καὶ μετέειπε Θεοκλύμενος θεοειδής / "ὦ δειλοί, τί κακὸν τόδε πάσχετε; νυκτὶ μὲν ὑμέων / εἰλύαται κεφαλαί τε πρόσωπά τε νέρθε τε γοῦνα, / οἰμωγὴ δὲ δέδηε, δεδάκρυνται δὲ παρειαί, / αἵματι δ' ἐρράδαται τοῖχοι καλαί τε μεσόδμαι· / εἰδώλων δὲ πλέον πρόθυρον, πλείη δέ καὶ αὐλή, / ἰεμένων Ἔρεβόσδε ὑπὸ ζόφον· ἠέλιος δὲ / οὐρανοῦ ἐξαπόλωλε, κακὴ δ' ἐπιδέδρομεν ἀχλύς". Note that in both passages it is Athena who produces these phenomena, but the presence of a god has no metaphysical implications. We can probably connect Athena's paradoxical birth, her transformations and her role as the god who has the knowledge of the art of construction. Consequently, Athena's paradoxical status is related to the experience of construction as paradox.

[72] It is well known that Freud situated the phenomenon of the uncanny – interpreting it as the return of the repressed – in the domestic and homely domain. A. Vidler, in a section of his book *The Architectural Uncanny*, entitle "Unhomely Houses", traces the relation of the uncanny to the spatial and environmental by referring to nineteenth-century writings. He connects the manifestations of the uncanny as "a lurking unease...a sense of something new, foreign, and hostile invading an old, familiar customary world... eyes that see beyond appearance... an ambiguity between real world and dream...the presence of smoke, which makes obscure what otherwise would have seemed too clear" with "the role of architecture in staging the sensation and in acting as an instrument for its narrative and spatial manifestations". Hence, the uncanny in these narratives is always a spatial uncanny, where temporality and spatiality collapse. VIDLER, A., op.cit., pp. 17-44. It is interesting that the Homeric uncanny – if we can name it thus without committing an anachronism – occurs in relation to what we call the paradoxical experience of 'construction' as con-structure and trans-fixity.

Mesodme is not experienced as a structural element, in the technical sense. However, it is a 'structural' element of the *domos* in the sense that it evokes the experience of something which appears both as fixed and transformable. We can then understand in the Homeric context a phrase which would otherwise be illogical: *Mesodme* is a structural element that is experienced as having a transformable appearance. In fact, a 'purely technical' term such as *mesodme* unravels the possibility of likeness and transformation experienced as uncanniness in relation to the structural elements of the house. Furthermore, it renders explicit the fact that fixity and endurance in relation to *domos* are produced as apparent, have the quality of appearance, inasmuch as the possibility of a transformation always remains also a visual experience. We can return now to the middle voice of the verb *demo*.

DEIMATO / 'To Build' : Construction and Structure

The term occurs only twice and only in Odyssey. In ζ9 there is a description of the foundation of the city of Phaikia by Nausithoos.

ζ9: and driven a wall about the city, and built the houses, and made the temple of the gods, allotted the holdings.[73]

The verb *edeimato* in the middle voice is not used in the above passage with the construction of the city's wall – as it was the case with *demo* – but with the term *oikos*, the 'household', a term which has a wider extension.[74] The use of the verb

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[73] ζ9: ἀμφὶ δὲ τεῖχος ἔλασσε πόλει καὶ ἐδείματο οἴκους καὶ νηοὺς ποίησε θεῶν καὶ ἐδάσσατ' ἀρούρας.

[74] "For the Greeks *oikos* is not a narrow grouping of blood relations. Rather it is a community composed of free, slave, and servile members and of the household inanimate property." BOOTH, W.J., 1995: *Households : On the Moral Architecture of the Economy*, Cornell University Press, pp. 17.

demo in this case has to be understood as evoking the con-structuring of households including both the construction of the actual houses and the family structure. The other passage refers also to a kind of 'building'. The use of the middle voice not only indicates a specific relation between building and builder,[75] but evokes the experience of the con-structure.

ξ5-16: He found him sitting in front, on the porch (*prodomo*), where the lofty enclosure had been built (dedmeto) , in a place with a view on all sides, both large and handsome, cleared all about, and it was the swineherd himself who had built it (deimato), to hold the pigs of his absent master, far from his mistress and from aged Laertes. He made it with stones from the field, and topped it off with shrubbery. Outside he had driven posts in a full circle, to close it on all sides, set close together and thick, and dark of the oak, split out from the logs. Inside (*entosthen*) the enclosure made twelve pig pens next to each other, for his sows to sleep, in each of them fifty pigs who sleep on the ground were confined. These were the breeding females (*theleiai*), but the males (*arsenes*) lay outside (*ektos*).[76]

In the above passage a technical description of *demo* is presented. However, by constructing the enclosure, Eumaios simultaneously produces a structure.[77]

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[75] It is accepted within scholarship that "the middle voice express a connection between the subject and the action of the verb. Theoretically the middle involves the whole subject in the verb's action and expresses the subject in some special relationship to himself...The middle voice has various meanings, the prevailing idea being self-advantage, that is, the subject of the verb is also the recipient or remoter object. Thus the chief uses are: 1. to do a thing for one's-self, 2. To get a thing done for one's-self 3. to do a thing to one's-self." ABBOTT, E.-MANSFIELD, E. D., 1982: *A primer of Greek Grammar*, Duckworth, pp. 65. In the case of *deimato*, the builder - who is always a man - is producing a construction and a structure to which he cannot be detached. See more further on.

[76] ξ5-16: Τὸν δ' ἄρ' ἐνὶ προδόμῳ εὗρ' ἥμενον, ἔνθα οἱ αὐλὴ / ὑψηλὴ δέδμητο, περισκέπτῳ ἐνὶ χώρῳ, / καλή τε μεγάλη τε, περίδρομος· ἦν ῥα συβώτης / αὐτὸς δείμαθ' ὕεσσιν ἀποιχομένοιο ἄνακτος, / νόσφιν δεσποίνης καὶ Λαέρταο γέροντος, / ῥυτοῖσιν λάεσσι καὶ ἐθρίγκωσεν ἀχέρδῳ. / σταυροὺς δ' ἐκτὸς ἔλασσε διαμπερὲς ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα / πυκνοὺς καὶ θαμέας, τὸ μέλαν δρυὸς ἀμφικεάσσας. / ἔντοσθεν δ' αὐλῆς συφεοὺς δυοκαίδεκα ποίει / πλησίον ἀλλήλων, εὐνὰς συσίν· ἐν δὲ ἑκάστῳ / πεντήκοντα σύες χαμαιευνάδες ἐρχατόωντο, / θήλειαι τοκάδες· τοὶ δ' ἄρσενες ἐκτὸς ἴαυον.

[77] It is worth noting that even a descriptive (in a technical sense) adjective such as *koilos*, 'hollow', when applied to *domos*, relates to its structure as much as to its construction. The term occurs once in relation to the *domos* of bees, who in M169-70: will not abandon the hollow house they have made, but stand up to men who come to destroy them, and fight for the sake of their children (οὐδ' ἀπολείπουσιν κοῖλον δόμον,

Construction produces a split between inside and outside which is gender-loaded. The exterior is masculine, while the interior becomes the scene of reproduction. This passage therefore illustrates that construction cannot be taken separately from structure. On the other hand the structure of the split between a female inside and a male outside appears to be produced by the construction. The passage does not give any means of challenging the naturalness of the distinction, or its apparent fixity. It should be noted that topography in general seems to secure and fix the structure. But we elaborate more on that later.

We move on now to examine another term of the same root, *prodomos* (πρόδομος) 'vestibule'. Benveniste argues that it is 'the front part of the *domos*', whereas *domos* is intended as a material construction. *Prodomos* accordingly, being a part of that construction, should be understood in a topographical sense as a specific location within the construction. However, *prodomos* evokes the experience of a specific modality, and secures a specifically <u>domestic</u> structure. The term occurs eight times, two in Iliad and six in Odyssey. Six of them are associated with sleep.[78] Nonetheless, the people who sleep there are not the members of the *domos*, but visitors in a state of non-domestication. But we do not know if *prodomos* simply corresponds to a location within the house. Just because this is the way we link a

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ἀλλὰ μένοντες / ἄνδρας θηρητῆρας ἀμύνονται περὶ τέκνων). From a similar point of view – and not as a descriptive technical adjective – the term ὑψηλὸς 'high' should be considered in relation to *domos*.

[78] I473, Ω673, δ302, ο5, υ1,143, two of which are formulaic Ω673, δ302: προδόμῳ δόμου αυτόθι κοιμήσαντο. Note that the members of the house sleep in *thalamos*. The other two are ξ5, and ο466. The first occurs in the above mentioned passage in connection with the construction of Eumaios' enclosure, whereas the second is associated with men's feasting, and is related to the status of feasting in Homer that it is examined in detail in the chapter on *Megaron*. It goes as follows: ο466-7: There in the forecourt she came upon the cups and the tables of men who had been feasting, associates of my father (εὗρε δ' ἐνὶ προδόμῳ ἠμὲν δέπα ἠδὲ τραπέζας / ἀνδρῶν δαιτυμόνων, οἳ μευ πατέρ' ἀμφεπένοντο).

name and a location in architecture today, it would be an anachronism to take it for granted for the Homeric context.[79] However, we do know that *prodomos* evokes a specific condition, that of a sleeping body, a body which is *dedmemeno* 'tamed' by sleep, and which although being inside the construction of *domos* does not belong to its structure. If construction and structure cannot be separated in the Homeric text, then *prodomos* denotes the state of fixity and transience, the modality through which a sleeping (*dedmemenos)* visitor experiences the Homeric *domos.*

We can examine at this point another term from the root **dem-* which is conventionally interpreted as a case of homophony and related to both house and body, construction and taming.

3.3.2.1. *DEDMEMENOS*

'Constructed - Tamed'

Dedmemenos (δεδμημένος) is a passive participle interpreted, according to the context, either as 'constructed' from the verb *demo* or as 'tamed' from *damnemi.* It occurs ten times, five in Iliad and five in Odyssey. In two of them it occurs in the context of the house and is translated as constructed, while in the rest it refers to the body which is tamed by sleep, death or fatigue.[80] Now in a grammatical system a verb has a nucleus of meaning, and different forms such as tenses, voices, modes etc. But formal grammar is an invention for the ordering of language, and it is obvious that grammar is a system imposed upon the Homeric language. Although grammar is a successful system of classification, there are always blind spots where language seems to exceed

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[79] It is around this problem that the investigation of *thalamos* and *megaron* will revolve.

[80] The term will be examined also in the chapter on *thalamos* because of its connection with sleep.

the system of classification imposed upon it, and so imply other possibilities. The case of homophony that we are discussing might well be one of them and might indicate that language can be something in excess of that which is described by formal grammatical description. If language can be thought of as establishing experience, rather than just representing it, then this homophony might indicate that the experience evoked by *dedmemenos* is that of a state of fixity, which can be a result either of taming or of constructing. Certainly experience is constructed in language in ways which exceed the idea of words as elements of grammar and as bearers of signification. Moreover, there is another passive form *dedmeto* which also represents a case of homophony. It occurs five times in Odyssey. In three of them it is related to a domestic construction[81] and in the other two to the taming of the body by death[82] or under the power of a ruler.[83]

Hence, in the Homeric context, being built was perhaps experienced as the same as being tamed. In the above forms *dedmemenos* and *dedmeto*, the two verbs – *demo* and *damnemi* – seem to collapse or collide in Homeric Greek, though we still need two verbs when we translate them, even in modern Greek. We suppose that a construction is being built, whereas a body is being tamed. This is because we make a

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[81] ι184-5: there was a fenced yard built around with a high wall of grubbed-out boulders (περὶ δ' αὐλὴ / ὑψηλὴ δέδμητο κατωρυχέεσσι λίθοισι), α425-6: a lofty bedchamber had been built for him, in a sheltered corner (θάλαμος περικαλλέος αὐλῆς / ὑψηλὸς δέδμητο, περισκέπτῳ ἐνὶ χώρῳ), ξ6-7: the lofty [enclosure] had been built, in a place with view on all sides (αὐλὴ ὑψηλὴ δέδμητο, περισκέπτῳ ἐνὶ χώρῳ).

[82] ε453-7: Now he flexed both knees and his ponderous hands; his very heart was sick with salt water, and all his flesh was swollen, and the sea water crusted stiffly in his mouth and nostrils, and with a terrible weariness fallen upon him he lay unable to breath or speak in his weakness (ὁ δ' ἄρ' ἄμφω γούνατ' ἔκαμψε / χεῖράς τε στοιβαράς, ἁλὶ γὰρ δέδμητο φίλον κῆρ· / ᾠδεε δὲ χρόα πάντα, θάλασσα δὲ κήκιε πολλὴ / ἂν στόμα τε ῥῖνας θ'· ὁ δ' ἄρ' ἄπνευστος καὶ ἄναυδος / κεῖτ' ὀλιγηπελέων, κάματος δέ μιν αἰνὸς ἵκανεν).

[83] γ304-5: Seven years he lived as lord over golden Mykene, after he killed Atreides, with the people subjected beneath him (ἑπτάετες δ' ἤνασσε πολυχρύσοιο Μυκήνης / κτείνας Ἀτρεΐδην, δέδμητο δὲ λαός ὑπ' αὐτῷ).

differentiation at the level of meaning, not at the level of experience. The experience of a state of fixity which is the result of taming or constructing can only be recovered through the invention of a common root, **dem-*. Benveniste on the other hand refuses to see any relation at all between *demo* and *damnemi*, and expels taming outside 'civilization', when he writes:

"We must recognize another and quite different group. These are the noun forms or verbal forms of a root signifying 'to tame', Lat. *domare*, Gr. *damao, a-damatos* 'indomitable', etc. The sense has no connection with the idea of house, but with a quite different notion, and by a much more satisfactory link. Hittite presents a present tense *damas-* 'to do violence, to oppress, to subject'. It is from this sense that the meaning 'to tame' develops by specialization, and we know that the Gr. verb *damao* at first referred to taming of horses as practiced by equestrian people, a technical development of sense at first limited to a dialectal area, which cannot be attributed to the Indo-European period."[84]

Not only does Benveniste dismiss any connection with the idea of house (read ideal house) but he also refutes any relation with the Indo-European whatsoever. Taming is not appropriate to civilization, and thus must be construed as its 'outside'. But there is no 'outside' outside civilization; civilization produces the outside.

In sum, the verb *demo* 'to construct' should not be understood in a technical sense as 'putting one row over the top of another'. Furthermore, the forms of the active-middle-passive voice evoke different fields of experience in relation to the act of constructing. It is the middle voice which is used to denote the construction of the house, evoking a specific and inevitable relation, that of 'con-structuring', that is, the constructing and structuring simultaneously which creates no possibility of a dissociation between *domos qua* construction and *domos qua* structure. *Deimato* in relation to the house constitutes an institutional act, where the material construct can

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[84] BENVENISTE, E., op.cit., pp. 250-1.

not be dissociated from the structure that it produces, whereas *eudmetos* and *mesodme* enable us to understand the structural fixity and transformation as undivided and related to appearance. The homophony of the passive forms *dedmemenos* and *dedmeto*, on the other hand, evoke the repressed relation of body, con-structure and taming, which appears to be experienced as a state of fixity.

Damnemi within Homeric text denotes the taming of the body, in the sense that refers to the conditions under which a body is overpowered in the context of a fight, weakened by fatigue or wine, or subjected to control of any kind.[85] Does this mean that the transformability of the body is annihilated by taming, hence the body is being experienced in a state of fixity? This is the question to be confronted next. However we shall not examine all the quotes in which *damnemi* occurs, but we shall restrict our research to the Homeric terms which relate to the female and the domestic, to disclose once again the paradoxical experience evoked by such term as *admes.*

ADMES / 'The Untamed' :- Tameable Female

Three terms within the Homeric epic, designate the 'untamed'; *adamastos admeten*, and *admes*. The first occur only once and refers to Hades. Once again, we may note the relation between death, body and taming. Death, which makes a human body tamed (*dedmemenos*), remains itself *adamastos* (ἀδάμαστος) 'untamed'.[86] It is also

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[85] Terms such as ἐδάμη, ἐδάμνα, ἐδάμασσα, ἐδάμημεν, δαμάσας, δαμείς, etc., occur 43 times in the epics in the above mentioned context.

[86] I157-9: Let him give way. For Hades gives not way, and is pitiless, and therefore he among all the gods is most hateful to mortals (δμηθήτω, Ἀΐδης τοι ἀμείλιχος ἠδ' ἀδάμαστος, / τοὔνεκα καί τε βροτοῖσι θεῶν ἔχθιστος ἀπάντων). The term occurs in the context of a comparison. Agamemnon suggests that Achilles

worth noting that Night – associated with Sleep, who is *pandamator* (πανδαμάτωρ) 'all-subduer', 'he who tames all bodies, mortal and immortal',[87] – is called *dmeitera* (δμήτειρα) 'tamer'.[88]

The second term *admeten* (ἀδμήτην) 'untamed' occurs in relation to cows[89] mares,[90] and jennies.[91] It is quite interesting that all the animals are of female gender, and presented as gifts to gods, or as prizes for the winners of games (*agon*) – always of male gender. The state of being untamed makes these animals precious. They are called untamed right to the very moment when they will be tamed by the winner, or sacrificed to gods. The term *admeten* always already entails the *dmesin* (δμῆσιν) 'taming',[92] a male affair, and implies a force exercised upon the body.

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should give way (*dmetheto*) his anger because only death is untamed. Achilles then should be tamed under the power of Agamemnon who is not only a king but elder as well.

[87] Sleep is called *pandamator* twice: Ω5, ι373 : sleep who subdues all come[s] over him (ὕπνος ἥρει πανδαμάτωρ)

[88] It occurs only once in Ξ259, where Night exercised her power on Zeus to rescue Sleep. Note that both Sleep and Hades are masculine, whereas Night is feminine.

[89] Κ292-3 and γ382-3: and I will sacrifice you a yearling cow, with wide forehead, unbroken, one no man has ever led under the yoke yet. (σοὶ δ' αὖ ἐγὼ ῥέξω βοῦν ἦνιν εὐρυμέτωπον, / ἀδμήτην, ἣν οὔ πω ὑπὸ ζυγὸν ἤγαγεν ἀνήρ).

[90] Ψ265-6: and for the second [prize] he set forth a six-year-old unbroken mare who carried a mule foal within her. (ἀτὰρ αὖ τῷ δευτέρῳ ἵππον ἔθηκεν / ἑξέτε' ἀδμήτην βρέφος ἡμίονον κυέουσαν). Reproductive ability makes females precious and tameable.

[91] Ψ654-5: [He set forth the prizes] and tethered there a hard-working six-year-old unbroken jenny, the kind that is hardest to break (ἡμίονον ταλαεργὸν ἄγων κατέδησ' ἐν ἀγῶνι / ἑξέτε' ἀδμήτην, ἥ τ' ἀλγίστη δαμάσασθαι).

δ636-7: I have a dozen horses, mares, and suckling from them hard-working unbroken [jennies]; I would like to break one in, taking it from the others (δώδεκα θήλειαι, ὑπὸ δ' ἡμίονοι ταλαεργοὶ / ἀδμῆτες, κέν τιν' ἐλασσάμενος δαμασαίμην).

[92] Occurs only once in relation to horses' taming by men in P476.

The third term *admes* (ἀδμής) 'untamed' is used in relation to a young virgin, Nausika, at the moment that she seeks a husband, that is, to be tamed.[93] Young females are considered wild, in need of the male taming. Klytaimnestra is not a young virgin, though Aigisthos needs to 'tame' (*damenai*: δαμῆναι) her in order to 'take her into his *domos*'.[94] *Damnemi* (δάμνημι) 'to tame' is a presupposition for the structure of *domos,* in the sense that there is no *domos* without a marriage, so much so that *damnemi* becomes synonymous with to 'give as wife'.[95] However it is in the context of marriage, that is in the context of structuring *domos*, that women are experienced as untamed. *Admes* therefore evokes the experience of paradox, where women are experienced simultaneously as untamed / unfixed and capable of transformation / amenable to fixity. Woman's experience as *admes* entails her appearance

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[93] Nausika is called *parthenos admes* (παρθένος ἀδμής) 'untamed virgin' twice (ζ109 and 228), in the context of meeting Odysseus, whom she considers a possible husband. The same approach to virginity continues in later times as H. King argues : " Children , for the Greeks, are by nature wild (Plato). In particular, the '*parthenos*', "childless, unmarried, yet of the age of marriage", is untamed (*admes*) and must be domesticated before it is even possible for a man to carry on a conversation with her (Xenophon Oeconomicus, 7,10: use of *tithaseuein*). A girl's upbringing is represented as the "taming" or "breaking in" of a filly, and marriage is the end of this process; marriage also opens the process of submission to the yoke of Aphrodite." pp. 111. KING, H. 1993: "Bound to Bleed: Artemis and Greek Women", *Images of Women in Antiquity,* eds. A. Cameron and A. Kuhrt, Routledge, pp. 109-27.

[94] γ264-71: ἀνήγαγεν ὄνδε δόμονδε. Only when Klytaimnestra agrees to follow him, is Aigisthos able to eliminate the guardian that her husband had appointed to watch on her. This a sign that taming can have the woman's consent. In that sense it is not always experienced by women as an act of violence in relation to marriage in Homer. Consider the possibility that males accentuate the role of taming, to balance the power that women acquire by structuring the family.

[95] Γ301: ἄλοχοι δ' ἄλλοισι δαμεῖεν and Σ432: ἀνδρὶ δάμασσεν. In the above passages it is implied that the women do not consent to the taming and are rather forced to it, in the first instance by enemies, whereas in the second Thetis explicitly states that it was against her will and she was forced by Zeus to marry a mortal.

simultaneously as changeable and fixable, untamed and tameable, in the domestic context.

Damar and *Despoina* – the two terms that we shall examine next – name the woman as wife, and according to Benveniste stem from the root **dem-* that denotes the familial structure. This will give us the opportunity to explore the kind of experience evoked by the relationship between woman and house, i.e., that of woman as housed.

DAMAR - DESPOINA / 'Wife - Mistress of the house' : Supplement as Structural

"In social terms, women can be put under the control of men, being assigned a specific space within male culture and society where they can give birth, weave and cook, while being excluded from economic and political spheres. The Greek word for woman *gyne*, is also the word for 'wife', and it was a wife and mother that woman was most fully brought into male culture. Her domestication could be so complete that she would express and enforce the male model of society, including the reason for her own entry into it, yet even here the risk that she would remain wild remains...The Greeks saw the woman as a contrast between the undisciplined threat to social order and the controlled, reproductive *gyne*. The presentation of female maturation as a movement from the first to the second expresses the hope that women can safely incorporated into society in order to reproduce it."[96]

In the above quote, typical of the way scholarship approaches the housing of gender, a topography of the domestic outside-inside, seems to secure and even produce the distinction between outside: untamed-inside: tamed. The female[97] is called *admes* outside or *damar despoina* inside the domestic. However, as in the case of *admes*, we shall show that *despoina* and *damar* evoke the experience of the contradictions in

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[96] KING, H., op.cit., pp. 110 and 124.

[97] We probably need to restate here that gender is experienced differently in different contexts. There is no unified experience of the female, but gender is produced differently in relation to *epos*, *choros/e*, *domos*, *thalamos*, *megaron* and *thure*.

relation to the female gender which is produced as fixed by the topographical distinctions.

DESPOINA

Benveniste relates the terms *despotes* (δεσπότης) 'master of the house' and *despoina* (δέσποινα) 'mistress of the house' with the root **dem* that denotes "the house *qua* family".[98] However, the masculine form *despotes* (δεσπότης) 'master of the house' is nowhere used in the poems.[99] The term *anax* (ἄναξ) 'master, ruler' is used instead, which designates the holder of absolute power, in a sense that is not related to a topographical or other domain.[100] A man can be the *anax* of his army, as much as of his *domos*. The mastery, the masculine power over the house, is linguistically detached from *domos*. That is to say, man does not partake in the experience of contradictions structuring the domestic. His mastery is always experienced as fixed,

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[98] "These two Greek compounds were no longer analyzable in historical times, but the elements are easily recognizable, and their combinations also occur elsewhere: *-potes* (-πότης) and *-poina* (-ποινα) respectively the ancient masculine form **poti* 'master' and the ancient, archaic feminine **potnya* 'misterss'...Now this archaic compound **dem(s)-poti-* 'master of the house' refers in the first component to 'the house *qua* family and not to the 'house *qua* construction'." BENVENISTE, E., op.cit., pp. 242, 249.

[99] Benveniste writes: "It is true that the sense of 'master of the house' has been effaced, or at least weakened, in Greek, where *despotes* signified at an early date 'master' in general, and not only of the house, so much so that in the New Testament it was felt necessary to create *oiko-despotes* to express 'master of the house'. This was because in *despotes* the word for 'house' was not felt any more. As early as Attic prose we find phrases like οἴκου, or οἰκίας δεσπότης '*despotes* of the *oikos*, the *oikia*', when he exercises his authority within the house." Ibid, pp. 248-9.

[100] According to Benveniste "the title of *wanaks* denotes an absolute quality" in both Mycenaean and the Homeric epic : "the *wanaks* is regarded as the holder of royal power, even we cannot define the extend of his territory...*wanaks* is also a divine qualification reserved for the highest of gods...The feminine *(w)anassa* is the epithet of goddesses like Demeter and Athena. Further, when Ulysses sees Nausicaa for the first time he addresses her thus, believing her to be a goddess." BENVENISTE, E., op.cit., pp. 319, 20.

and has is no need to be secured by topographical distinctions. He is the *anax* even when far away. In that sense, whereas he is able to move freely out of the house, he can never be separated from it.[101] Furthermore, he is the one that provides *domos* with fixity by giving it his name. D*omos* – as much as *demas* – has always a name, but this name is always the name of its *anax*, who is the possessor and the ruler.

A woman on the other hand can only be a mistress of her house. Thus, *despoina* seems to designate a relation of fixity and supplementarity between wife and *domos*. But is it only so? The feminine term *despoina* occurs in Odyssey only nine times and shows what kind of mastery is attributed to a wife. The term is applied six times to Penelope, twice to Arete and once to the wife of Nestor. In the absence of Odysseus it is Penelope, his wife, who controls the house. Penelope is called *despoina* four times in relation to Eumaios, the swine-herd. In all of them her mastery over Odysseus' *domos* is undermined. Eumaios is only a 'slave', but takes advantage of the absence of his *anax* and despite the presence of his *despoina* not only constructs a shelter for his pigs, but acquires property, and buys a slave for himself.[102] So the presence of the mistress does not prevent a male slave becoming a master himself, in the sense of constructing and possessing. In three other passages, Eumaios points out

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[101] "In fact, it is the man that is immobile, fixed to the house – in the sense of both family and building. The woman is mobile. Her 'natural' immobility in the interior is enforced in the face of her mobility between houses. The apparent mobility of the man is produced by the confinement of the woman, who is, as Ann Carson argues, at once necessary to the maintenance of the house and the greatest threat to it." WIGLEY, M., "Untitled: The Housing of Gender", op.cit., pp. 336.

[102] The two passages are formulaic: ξ8-9: [it was Eumaios] who had built it, to hold the pigs of his absent master, far from his mistress and from aged Laertes ([Εὔμαιος] δείμαθ' ὗεσσιν ἀποιχομένοιο ἄνακτος / νόσφιν δεσποίνης καὶ Λαέρταο γέροντος), ξ 450-1: [a man whom the swineherd] owned himself by himself and apart from his absent master, and independently of his mistress and aged Laertes (ὃν ῥα συβώτης ἀὐτὸς κτήσατο οἷος ἀποιχομένοιο ἄνακτος, / νόσφιν δεσποίνης καὶ Λαέρταο γέροντος). Eumaios bought Μεσαύλιος [the name of the servant] with his own money (κτεάσσιν ἑοῖσιν).

her weakness and undermines her ability to act as a proper master within the *domos*.[103] However, for a female slave such as Eurekleia, Penelope is a *despoina*,[104] and Odysseus himself recognizes the power of his wife as *despoina* over the female slaves of the *domos*, in his absence.[105] Nevertheless, he is the one who will punish them after the slaughter of the suitors. Penelope as *despoina* appears to supplementing (not very successfully in this case) the power of the husband, when he is away.

Let us see now the other three passages. We do not know anything about Nestor's wife, but Arete is presented in the poem as having equal or even more power than her husband. We learn from the passage that she comes from the same family as her husband and actually is his niece.[106] However, both Alkinoos' and Nestor's wives are called *despoina* in two formulaic passages, in the context of sharing the bed with their husbands. The passages go like this:

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[103] ξ127: and any vagrant who makes his way to the land of Ithaka goes to my mistress and babbles his lies to her, and she then receives him well and entertains him and sakes him everything (ὅς δέ κ' ἀλητεύων Ἰθάκης ἐς δῆμον ἵκηται, / ἐλθὼν ἐς δέσποιναν ἐμὴν ἀπατήλια βάζει· / ἡ δ' εὖ δεξαμένη φιλέει καὶ ἕκαστα μεταλλᾷ), ο374-7: but there is no sweet occasion now to hear from my mistress in word or fact, since the evil has fallen upon my our household, these overbearing men, and greatly the serving people miss the talk in their mistress' presence (ἐκ δ' ἄρα δεσποίνης οὐ μείλιχόν ἐστιν ἀκοῦσαι / οὔτ' ἔπος οὔτε τι ἔργον, ἐπεὶ κακὸν ἔμπεσεν οἴκῳ, / ἔνδρες ὑπερφίαλοι· μέγα δὲ δμῶες χατέουσιν / ἀντία δεσποίνης φάσθαι).

[104] ψ1-2: The old woman, laughing loudly, went to the upper chamber to tell her mistress that her beloved husband was inside the house (Γρηῦς δ' εἰς ὑπερῷ' ἀνεβήσετο καγχαλόωσα, / δεσποίνῃ ἐρέουσα φίλον πόσιν ἔνδον ἐόντα).

[105] τ83: [woman] beware of your mistress, who may grow angry with you and hate you. Or Odysseus may come back (γύναι... μή πώς τοι δέσποινα κοτεσσαμένη χαλεπήνῃ / ἢ Ὀδυσεὺς ἔλθῃ).

[106] η53-5: First of all you will find the mistress there in her palace. Arete is the name she is called, and she comes of the same forebears as in fact produced the king Alkinoos. (δέσποιναν μὲν πρῶτα κιχήσεαι ἐν μεγάροισιν· / Ἀρήτη δ' ὄνομ' ἐστὶν ἐπώνυμον, ἐκ δὲ τοκήων / τῶν αὐτῶν, οἵ περ τέκον Ἀλκίνοον βασιλῆα). The passage continues and exposes in detail their genealogical relation.

η347-8: Alkinoos went to bed in the inner room of the high house, and at his side the lady his wife served as bedfellow.[107]

γ402-4: Nestor himself slept in the inner room of the high house, and at his side the lady his wife served as bedfellow.[108]

The term used for 'bed' is *lechos* (λέχος) while the word *despoina* is accompanied by *alochos* (ἄλοχος) 'wife'. F. Zeitlin writes:

"*lechos* has an institutional meaning. The *lechos* is the basis of a woman's legitimate status as a wife...She is her husband's *alochos*, one who shares the same bed...Loraux, correctly argues for the relation between *lechos* and *lochos* (of childbed), as signifying the connection between sex and reproduction in legitimating the status of the wife (*alochos*)".[109]

Thus, the woman as wife acquires power by her relation to reproduction, since reproduction forms the basis for the institution of marriage. Moreover, marriage constitutes the presupposition for the construction and the structure of any *domos*. In this context, *despoina* evokes the experience of the supplementarity that is also structural. *Despoina* 'the mistress of the house' appears simultaneously as supplement to and producer of power. *Despoina* partakes of the experience of *domos* in the sense that both terms evoke the simultaneous experience of a 'contradiction', in the sense that the relation between *despoina* and *domos* can never be that of fixity.

Despoina evokes the experience of a feminine mastery that appears both to structure and supplement *domos*. As a supplement it can be detached from the *domos* but as structural must remain fixed. That leads us to the second term for the wife, *damar*. *Damar* will provide us with more clues to understand the experience of fixity and transience of the wife in relation to *domos*.

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[107] η347-8: Αλκίνοος δ' ἄρα λέκτο μυχῷ δόμου ὑψηλοῖο, πὰρ δὲ γυνὴ δέσποινα λέχος πόρσυνε καὶ εὐνήν.

[108] γ402-4: Νέστωρ... δ' αὖτε καθεῦδε μυχῷ δόμου ὑψηλοῖο, τῷ δ' ἄλοχος δέσποινα λέχος πόρσυνε καὶ εὐνήν.

[109] ZEITLIN, F., op.cit., pp.125 and 148/n.25.

DAMAR

For Benveniste "not only *despotes* but also *damar* is no longer analysable in Greek itself, a word which denotes 'she who administers the house'."[110] He argues that it stems from the same root **dem-* which denotes the house as family. He writes: "It is generally accepted that *damar* (δάμαρ) 'legitimate wife' belongs to the same word-family and is analyzed into *dam-* 'house', and *-ar* from the root of ἀραρίσκω 'to order, to arrange'."[111] Hoffman[112] and Chantraine accept Benveniste's etymology. Chantraine notes that in Homer the term that denotes the legitimate wife is always accompanied by the name of the husband.[113] For Hesychius the term designates the woman who has a husband.[114] Liddell-Scott[115] on the other hand as well as the Homeric dictionary[116] proposes a connection with *damnemi* 'to tame'. We do not intend to arbitrate between the etymologies; though it should be noted that, as an examination of the passages shows, there is no indication whatsoever in the Homeric text of *damar* as 'she who administers the house'. Benveniste's etymology might apply to the wife as depicted within Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*. If there is any relation

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[110] Ibid, pp. 249.

[111] Ibid, pp. 242.

[112] HOFMANN, J.B., 1950: *Etymologishes Wörterbuch des Griechischen*, München, Greek translation by A. Papanikolaou, Athens, 1974, s.v. δάμαρ.

[113] CHANTRAINE, P., op.cit., s.v. δάμαρ : "Terme archaique qui désigne l' épouse legitime, toujours accompagné du nom du mari chez Hom."

[114] HESYCHIUS, 1953: *Alexadrini Lexicon*, Hauniae, Ejnar Munksgaard, s.v. δάμαρ: ·γυνή... ἔχουσα ἄνδρα (Ξ 503)"

[115] LIDDELL, G.H., and SCOTT, R., op.cit., s.v. δάμαρ.

[116] AUTENRIETH, G., op.cit., s.v. δάμαρ, δμώς.

to the Homeric use of *ararisko* as 'to fit together'[117] then *damar* should be understood not as 'she who arranges *domos*'[118] but rather: 'she who is fitted to it'.

Damar occurs two times in the Iliad and three in the Odyssey. In all passages the term *damar* is always accompanied by the name of the husband. She is always the wife of someone, and seems to have the status of being a possession. In Γ122-4, not only the name of the husband but also the name of the father is mentioned as well.

Γ122-4: the wife of Antenor's son, whom strong Helikaon wed, the son of Antenor, Laodike, loveliest looking of all the daughters of Priam.[119]

It should be noted that: "Marriage itself was seen as the giving of the woman by one lord, her father, to another, her husband; here [in Homer] as in Athens in the classical period the woman was the passive object of the marriage, something exchanged between two lords."[120] Her status as possession is reinforced when *damar* is mentioned in the context of the possessions of *domos*[121] in δ126-7: Alkandre, the wife of Polybos, who lived in Egyptian Thebes, where the greatest number of goods are

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[117] See LIDDELL, G.H., and SCOTT, R., also AUTENRIETH, G., op.cit., s.v. ἀραρίσκω.

[118] The closest to a sense of ordering *domos* in Homer is evoked by the term *diakosmeo* 'put in order'. It occurs only once (χ440) in relation to *domos* it is the task of female servants and not of the wife. The context to which the term occurs is interesting because it is by 'got all the house back in order' (πάντα δόμον διακοσμήσησθε) that any the traces of the suitors' slaughter within Odysseus *domos* is being eliminated.

[119] Γ122-4: Αντηνορίδαο δάμαρτι, / τὴν Αντηνορίδης εἶχε κρείων Ἐλικάων / Λαοδίκην, Πριάμοιο θυγατρῶν εἶδος ἀρίστην.

[120] BOOTH, W.J. op.cit., pp. 18.

[121] In seven passages – three in Iliad and four in Odyssey – *domos* is related to the wealth and specifically to K*temata* 'possession' I382, δ127, ξ 291. and *keimeilia* 'possessions which were stored in chests', Λ132, Σ290, or just to property that 'lays' *keitai* θ254, 257. For more on this kind of property see chapter on *thalamos*.

stored in the houses.[122] In the case of the husband's death *damar* is mentioned in relation to her parents in law:

Ξ502-4: the beloved father and mother , they can weep for him in their halls, since neither shall the wife of Promachos, Alegenor's son, take pride of delight in her dear lord's.[123]

Damar forms part of the fixed structure of *domos*, a structure that under such circumstances, such as the death of the master, would be dissolved. With the death of the husband *domos* becomes *hemiteles* (ἡμιτελής) 'half-complete, desolate', there is now no possibility of reproduction[124] and thus survival.[125]

The remain two passages are formulaic and refer to Penelope. The context of both is the courting of Penelope by the suitors: ω125: We were courting the wife of Odysseus, who had been long gone.[126] The richest of the suitors Ktesippos, who hopes to acquire her:

υ288-90: Ktesippos...in the confidence of his amazing possessions, courted the wife of Odysseus, who had been so long absent [127]

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[122] δ126-7: Αλκάνδρη, Πολύβοιο δάμαρ, ὃς ἔναι' ἐνὶ Θήβῃς / Αἰγυπτίης, ὅθι πλεῖστα δόμοις ἐν κτήματα κεῖται.

[123] Ξ502-4: πατρὶ φίλῳ καὶ μητρὶ γοήμεναι ἐν μεγάροισιν· / οὐδὲ γὰρ ἡ Προμάχοιο δάμαρ Αλεγηνορίδαο / ἀνδρὶ φίλῳ ἐλθόντι γανύσσεται.

[124] *Domos hemiteles* occurs only once: B700-1 whose wife (*alochos*), cheeks torn from grief, was left behind in Phylake and marriage half completed; a Dardanian man had killed him: (τοῦ δὲ καὶ ἀμφιδρυφὴς ἄλοχος Φυλάκῃ ἐλέλειπτο / καὶ δόμος ἡμιτελής, τὸν δ' ἔκτανε Δάρδανος ἀνήρ).

[125] The 'bringing up' *trepho* (τρέφω) of the children is always implied but never stated in relation to *domos* except of the cases of 'anomaly' that is when children are being raised in another *domos* from which they originate and sometimes are being incorporated to reinforce this new *domos via* marriage. *Trepho* occurs in relation to *domos* within the following passages: Λ223, N466, Ξ202, 303, Φ479, Ψ84.

[126] ω 125: μνώμεθ' Ὀδυσσῆος δὴν οἰχομένοιο δάμαρτα.

[127] υ288-90: Κτήσιππος... / ὃς δή τοι κτεάτεσσι πεποιθὼς πατρὸς ἑοῖο / μνάσκετ' Ὀδυσσῆος δὴν οἰχομένοιο δάμαρτα.

In effect, Penelope is called Odysseus' *damar,* fitted to his *domos* – as his property is – in the very context of becoming the wife of someone else. In that sense *damar* evokes the experience of wife as both fitted to the structure of her husband's *domos*, and as that which would transform the structure of his *domos*.[128] Once again the wife is experienced as both supplementing and structuring of *domos.* We shall proceed now to another term that applies to the servants within *domos*:

DMOS/DMOE: **'He / she that belongs [as both member and property] to the house.'**

According to Benveniste the two terms: "...*dmos* (δμώς) 'the servant, the slave', *dmoe* (δμωή)'the female servant', that is those who form part of the household",[129] are associated with the root ***dem-*** 'house *qua* family'". Chantraine does not discard Benveniste's etymology but considers the possibility of a connection with *damnemi* 'to tame', since as he argues, it fits better in certain Homeric formulas.[130] He refers to the α397-8, Σ398 passages where the term λητσσατο 'carry off as booty' is used, and includes the acquisition of servants. We can also add here the formulaic verse in which the status of slaves as property in relation to the house (*doma*) appears.[131] However, our problem is not to choose between Benveniste's and Chantraine's approaches but to understand the pitfalls of a 'rational way' of thinking when dealing with the experience of paradox.

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[128] We can mention here two passages in which two wives undo the structure of *domos* by having sexual intercourse [even giving birth B512] in secret (θ268) – not of course with their husbands though within his *domos.*

[129] BENVENISTE, E., op.cit., pp. 249.

[130] CHANTRAINE, P., op.cit., s.v. δμώς.

[131] Τ333, η225, τ526: κτῆσιν ἐμήν δμῳάς τε καὶ ὑψηρεφὲς μέγα δῶμα.

We shall not examine the passages in detail where the terms occur.[132] We shall only refer to a secondary source. W. J. Booth writes on the relation between master and servants in Homer :

"To be such a lord meant to rule over possessions but as well over the persons, free and unfree of the household...Odysseus without mercy, put to death twelve of the servants who had shared his household. Those unfree servants or slaves are property...Though they were considered as property to be given away, for example, as a prize for winning a race (Iliad 23.262) - it would be wrong to think that they were therefore considered as mere things, radically inferior in their person to the free household members...This [is] to us [a] so paradoxical combination of the treatment of slaves as property and the recognition of them as persons...To be a member of a household, then, is to be enmeshed in a *philia*, to belong to and to recognize this community as one's own and to have a place in the oikos hierarchy."[133]

What Booth refers to as paradoxical combination is the experience that the term *dmos/e* evokes, that is, the experience of slaves that appear to be both exchangeable and fixed, fixed in the sense of belonging to the domestic. It is worth recalling that to be *philos* of someone should be understood in the sense of being an extension of another body, without acquiring the status of property.[134] We should understand the experience of *dmos/e* as involving slaves both as members and belongings of the *domos*, where being a member of the household is to be a member of the master's or the mistress's own body. Nevertheless, there is a tendency to separate the contradictory experience of the slaves *via* the 'inside-outside' topography. Hence, a

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[132] Though it would be very interesting it would exceed the purpose of the chapter. We shall make only one remark that is relevant to our research. Among the duties of the *dmoai* is to wash and cloth the body of others. (Ω581 and in a formulaic repetition in Ω586, δ49, θ454, ρ88: τὸν δ' ἐπεὶ οὖν δμῳαὶ λοῦσαν καὶ χρῖσαν ἐλαίῳ / ἀμφὶ δὲ μιν χλαίναν καλὴν βάλον ἠδὲ χιτῶνα) Hence, they are involved in the transformation of the body because as we have seen washing is a means of transforming the body sometimes beyond recognition.

[133] BOOTH, W.J., op.cit., pp. 18, 19, 20.

[134] See chapter on *megaron*.

slave within *domos* should be considered as a member, whereas he becomes exchangeable property when moved outside, to be sold or given away. However, the terms *dmos/e* as such evokes the experience of the contradiction, which seems to be split by the 'separation' effect of topographical distinction inside/outside.

3.3.2.2. *ENDON*

'Inside' as Structure

Benveniste argues that the opposition inside-outside is produced within the term *domus* which designates "home as a social entity".[135] Although he does not refer to the Homeric term *endon* translated either as 'inside' or as 'in the house, at home', he considers that the Homeric term *do* 'house *qua* familial structure', designates the house as interior. Benveniste's distinction between construction and structure, enables him to consider the structure always as interior, which is produced by the construction. As we shall see, it is only within a definite philosophical operation, that structure comes to be identified with interiority and in a relation of opposition to an outside. It would seem indeed that the philosophical concept of 'structure' produces the topographical distinction of inside-outside, where the interior is conceived as the domain of fixity, hence proper to the feminine taming. Is the experience of

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[135] "We must therefore separate Gr. *domos* 'building, house' and Lat. *domus*, which designates not an edifice, but the 'home' as a social entity, whose incarnation is the *dominus*. Consequently, *domus* entered into contrasting pairs, the second term of which designates what is outside the circle of the home: *domi militiaeque, domi: peregre, domesticus; rusticus*; the couple *domi:foris* 'home-outside' shows that the word **dhwer-* 'door' designated the frontier, seen from inside, between the inside and the outside world. BENVENISTE, E., op.cit., pp. 239.

'interior'[136] within the Homeric text actually different from this? We shall argue that whereas in philosophy, 'structure' is conceived as interior in a topographical sense, in the Homeric text, *endon* is experienced as 'structure', i. e., as paradox, in the sense that is experienced as trans-fixity. Hence *endon* does not denote the 'inside' as topography but it evokes the experience of 'inside' as trans-fixity, in relation to both Homeric house and 'body'.

Endon (ἔνδον) 'inside', occurs 54 times in the Homeric text, 16 of them in Iliad and 38 in Odyssey. In most there is a reference to the 'inside' of a dwelling, being that a house, Eumaios' hut or Kuklop's cave. However, nine passages relate to the 'inside' of the 'body',[137] in particular to *phrenes* (φρένας) 'lungs',[138] *kradie* (κραδίη) 'heart',[139] and *enkephalos* (ἐγκέφαλος) 'brain'.[140] Might it be then that in the Homeric text, the 'body' is experienced as having an interior other than the organic?[141] We have already argued in relation to *phrenes* 'lungs', how the mental, the psychological and the organic are interwoven and as such constitute the experience of what we call

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[136] We translate *endon* as interior, and we do not include in our examination other Homeric terms such as, *entos* (ἔντός) 'inside' or *entosthen* (ἔντοσθεν) 'from within', which are usually in the text in relation to *ektos* (ἐκτός) 'out of', *ektosthen* (ἔκτοσθεν) 'from without'.

[137] Note that the related terms *endothi* (ἔνδοθι) 'within' and *endothen* (ἔνδοθεν) 'from within' refer to both house and body as well.

[138] λ336, σ249: for beauty and stature, and the mind well balanced within you (εἶδός τε μέγεθός τε ἰδὲ φρένας ἔνδον ἕῖσας) ξ: 178: but some immortal upset the balanced mind within him (τὸν δέ τις ἀθανάτων βλάψε φρένας ἔνδον ἕῖσας), ω382: and your heart within you would have been gladdened (σύ δέ φρένας ἔνδον ἐγήθεις).

[139] Occurs twice in a simile in υ13-16: the heart was growling within him (κραδίη δέ οἱ ἔνδον ὑλάκτει).

[140] Occurs three times in a formulaic way in Λ97-8, M185-6, Y399-400: and the inward brain was all spattered forth. So he beat him down in his fury (ἐγκέφαλος δὲ / ἔνδον ἅπας πεπάλακτο· δάμασσε δέ μιν μεμαῶτα).

[141] J. Redfield writes: "the interior I is none other that the organic I." REDFIELD, J. *Le Sentiment Homerique du Moi*, pp.100.

the multiple body.[142] The same is valid for *kradie* 'heart'.[143] The third term *enkephalos* 'brain' occurs in relation to the body's taming (*damasse*). It is always the scattering of the brain that brings the fixity of death, so the brain is clearly related to the changing feature of life. Nonetheless, the body is always experienced as multiple and transfixed when alive. In fact, we have to understand that the category of the organic is not a relevant category in relation to the Homeric body, and that *endon* does not designate the interior as topography.

If a body is alive, *endon* is experienced as its multiplicity and trans-fixity. This is difficult for us to apprehend. For we distinguish an interior of the body, constituted on the one hand by the organic which is enduring, and feelings and thoughts that are transformable one the other. Moreover, because of the conception of interior as fixed, organic, psychological and mental are being conceived as that which constitutes the fixity of the Self, which can represent itself in a variety of ways in the outside. So whereas our concept of the interior of the body presupposes the topographical split between its inside and outside; *endon* in relation to the Homeric body is experienced as the trans-fixity of being alive, which does not necessitate any split between a fixed interior Self and a transformable outward representation.

Moreover, it is the experience of *domos* as trans-fixity that reverberates in the Homeric experience of *endon* in relation to house.[144] We are not going to examine the

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[142] In the Homeric dictionary *phren* is defined as the lungs, i.e., organ, but also the seat of thought, will, feeling, mind, soul, heart, consciousness, even life. AUTENRIETH, G., op.cit., s.v. φρήν. See also the chapter on *Epos*.

[143] In the Homeric dictionary *kradie* is defined "as center of circulation: life, as seat of emotion, of thought, reason." Ibid, s.v. κραδίη.

[144] On the relation between house and interior, Wigley writes: [Heidegger] always describes the home as a kind of interior...From his earliest texts, Heidegger always insists that the fundamental sense of the word 'in' is not spatial in the sense of the occupation of a 'spatial container (room, building)" but is the

relevant passages here, but we would like to make an observation. It is surprising to notice that the term *endon*, accompanied by the participle of the of the verb 'to be', occurs in a formulaic way 20 times in the text. The form *endon eonton* in particular, occurs six times and it refers to the things existing in the house, be that food[145] or objects.[146] Food and objects are stored – remaining in a state of fixity – within *thalamos*. Food is brought to *megaron* to be cooked (transformed) and subsequently consumed, or an object which lays in *thalamos* is brought in to use. However, we tend to ignore the consequent experience of food or objects within the house as that of trans-fixity and we privilege the fixity as the prevailing modality of whatever 'is' in the house. In effect, we acknowledge that whatever 'is' in the house, 'is' in a specific modality. Hence it becomes quite obvious why 'is' will become entangled with the philosophical concept of 'structure'. To put it another way, the question of being as essence always already evolves around interiority and cannot be thought independently of the structure of philosophy. It is quite clear now why the house becomes a metaphor for philosophy, for the question of structure's interiority and essence cannot be separated. What is repressed however in this philosophical concept of 'structure' as interior is the contradiction evoked by the interior experienced as 'trans-fixity'.

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sense of the familiar." WIGLEY, M. 1995: *The Architecture of Deconstruction: Derrida's Haunt,* MIT Press, pp. 111.

[145] η166: and let the housekeeper from her stores give the stranger a supper (δόρπον δὲ ξείνῳ ταμίη δότω ἔνδον ἐόντων) , ο77, 94: I tell the woman to prepare a dinner out of what we have here in abundance (εἶπω δὲ γυναιξὶ / δεῖπνον ἐνὶ μεγάροις τετυκεῖν ἅλις ἔνδον ἐόντων), T 320: and my heart starved for meat and drink, though they are here beside me (αὐτὰρ ἐμὸν κῆρ / ἄκμηνον πόσιος καὶ ἐδητύος ἔνδον ἐόντων).

[146] φ178, 183: and bring out from the inside stores a great wheel of tallow (ἐκ δὲ στέατος ἔνεικε μέγαν τροχὸν ἔνδον ἐόντος).

When Benveniste establishes the relation of opposition between familial structure as interior, and the door as its exterior,[147] he does so through a philosophical operation, within which the material construction is conceived as that which separates the two sides of a contradiction. The door becomes the boundary between the interior and exterior. As we shall show in the following chapters, *thure* 'door' in the Homeric text, evokes the experience of the paradoxical trans-fixity as unbearable, and as such this experience of trans-fixity splits. But it is not split into an outside and an inside but into *thalamos* and *megaron*. In the following chapters will shall try to show that *thalamos* evokes the experience of fixity, and *megaron* that of transformation. In that sense *thure, megaron* and *thalamos* can not be experienced, but only in their relation to *domos* as con-structure. However, unlike the way we conceive them as always being locations within the house, they evoke specific experiences without necessarily corresponding to specific places.

We hope that the detailed examination of the Homeric terms has shown the relation between what Benveniste wants to present as distinct notions, that is, construction, structure and taming. We have tried to established that what is interpreted as a linguistic similarity between terms is in fact a similarity produced at the level of experience. The Homeric terms we have examined in fact evoke the experience of 'structure' which can be described as the experience of contradictions that is always at the level of appearance. That is to say, contradiction is not established between an appearance that is exterior and transformable, and a structure that is interior and fixed. 'Structure', in the Homeric context, is the experience of a paradox in the sense

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[147] See above note 135.

that always evokes the experience of an appearance that is both transformable and fixed. A similarity then at the level of experience generated the invention of a common root **dem-*; the experience of 'structure' was transformed to a linguistic category.

The chapter also challenges the 'naturalness' of the so-called 'purely technical' terms in the Homeric text. As for the relation between the specific manifestation of the Homeric 'body' called *demas* and the experience of the Homeric 'house' called *domos*, we have established that it is not a metaphorical one. Both terms evoke a similar experience and neither operates as a model for the other. *Demas* is a gendered body which, even though it is experienced as the body of a specific individual, can be transformed or assimilated to another body. The experience of *demas* is that of an always changing body of an active and alive individual. A similar experience is that of *domos*. Although it is a specific construct it is always experienced as changing, for it cannot be dissociated from the issues of both familial structure and 'taming'. The experience of the 'trans-fixed' however, can not be defined; thus with the advent of philosophy, and the wish for definition, not only space was conceived as a container but also the house itself became a container of the family; a material construct that contains the familial structure. In such context the body also becomes a container; a body construct that contains the self. This wish for definition and fixity also generated the concept of prototype, the ideal. Instead of a multiple and gendered body, maleness and mathematics become ideals for the body in a context of oppositions (male-female, rational-irrational). As for the house, the ideal of architecture is produced as a set of rules for construction. A new relation is

established between the ideal body and the ideal architecture to substitute for the relation between *demas* and *domos*.

Now the root **dem-* loosely holds together the common experience evoked by the terms examined. What Benveniste does however, is to separate them into distinct units of meaning, in order that they accord with the series of binary oppositions produced by philosophy. Had we accepted Benveniste's interpretation our research could only reinstate and project once more the philosophical distinctions back to the Homeric text. At least we have tried to avoid this anachronism. Of course we may not be aware of our own anachronisms and which can perhaps be detected in the fact that we still want to establish a relation between body and building. Throughout the thesis the body is the category through which we try to understand the experience of 'space' and 'house'. But in our case it is a multiple, always transformed and gendered, body. We try to recognize that any relation between body and building is not naturally derived but culturally constructed, and by investigating the relation we can mark the differences between Homeric experience of *domos* and our concept of architecture. In the next chapters we shall see how the categories through which we think architecture are constructs of our culture[148] and cannot be applied to the Homeric experience of the house.

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[148] Throughout this thesis we have contrasted the world of the Homeric text with something else, sometimes 'our culture', sometimes with the rise of philosophy. We do not feel compelled in the thesis to elaborate these distinctions or to place chronological definitions upon them, for we consider this thesis to be not a work of historiography but an attempt to recover as far as possible specific Homeric meanings which have been lost through the application of retrospective readings, whatever we take the point from which that retrospective applies to be.

4

THURE-PULE

BEING AT THE 'DOOR' - BEING AT THE 'GATE' AMBIGUOUS BODIES AND DISEMBODIED VISION

4.1. Introduction
4.2. *Thure/Pule* within Linguistic Theories
4.3. *Thure/Pule* within the Homeric Text
4.3.1. The Crossing of *Thure/Pule* as Change of Experience
4.3.2. Being at *Thure/Pule* : On Ambiguity
4.3.2.1. Ambiguous Bodies
4.3.2.2. Ambiguity and Power
4.3.3. *Horai* and *Horan*: 'Time' and 'Sight' as Control Mechanisms
4.3.3.1. The Ambiguity and Aggressiveness of Sight
4.3.3.2. Disembodied Vision

4.1. INTRODUCTION

Doors and gates are usually thought of as functional objects even when considered as symbols of separation between two domains; for separation is conceived as the function they fulfill. Moreover, they are either described in terms of their form and function, or inscribed in the domains they separate. In fact, doors or gates are mainly discussed in relation to the outside-inside opposition where this opposition is conceived as natural. But we cannot rely upon these conventional certainties. Our analysis of the Homeric *thure* (θύρη) 'door' and *pule* (πύλη) 'gate' cannot rely on notions of function or symbol any more than we accept as 'natural' the inside-outside distinction without committing an anachronism. For as we shall see, these categories are a contemporary construction and therefore we can not read them back into the Homeric text. We must pursue a different analysis. We will argue that the terms *thure* and *pule* evoke an experience of transition within the Homeric text. But the transition in question is of a specific kind. 'Transition' is the transition from one category of

experience to another which is not reducible to the question of space or place. We shall elaborate more on this point later, but we would like to make clear that it is not what comes before or after the transition – in temporal and spatial terms – that concerns us primarily. For such an analysis would abolish the experience of transition *par excellence*. In fact, our task is to uncover the variety of phenomena evoked by the terms *thure* or *pule* in order to understand the effects that the experience of transition has on the 'multiple' Homeric body. We are not attempting to assimilate *thure* and *pule* to the contemporary post-modern category of 'transitional spaces or non-place'.[1] For the terms *thure/pule* belong to definite categories of experience and are not merely locations of a specific kind, or functional objects. Nonetheless, *thure/pule* involve the experience of specific things – what we call door/gate – and as such are experienced as being co-produced with their space (in the sense of *chore*) and their connection with the body produces specific types of identities which as we shall show, belong to the order of ambiguity. This means that the Homeric experience of transition is bounded with a certain fear. 'Time' and 'sight' become devices for controlling ambiguity while insuring the change from one category of experience to another. This change always affects the Homeric body, and leads to a paradoxical 'literal' disembodiment of vision. Our approach to these issues breaks with the way the Homeric terms are discussed within scholarship, and we shall try to explain why.

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[1] M. Augé defines in an anthropological analysis, the 'non-place' as the contemporary place in which we are in transit, such as the shopping mall, the motorway or the airport lounge. AUGÉ, M., 1995: *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, Verso.

4.2. *THURE - PULE* WITHIN LINGUISTIC THEORIES

A passage by Emile Benveniste involves a series of assumptions which are common to the way the Homeric term *thure*[2] is approached within scholarship. Benveniste argues that in Indo-European languages the word for the door establishes a relation of opposition with the word for the house that stems from the root **dem-*. He writes:

"We have here, on closer examination, an opposition which could not have been foreseen, and which contrasts two terms that are not by nature antithetical, because one is the word for 'house' and the other the word for 'door'. Here a notion came into play with lexical consequences, that of 'door'... The Indo-European form is ***dhwer-***, in the reduced grade ***dhur***, Greek *thura* (θύρα), generally in the plural, because it seems that the door was conceived of as having various elements. ***dhwer-*** is an unanalysable term by itself, which cannot be attached to any verbal root, and its etymological signification escapes us; but it is possible that we have here a term for a material object which owes its name to the function which it fulfills... What is important to stress is the concordance of the adverbial usages of ***dwer-*** in Latin and in other languages...Gr. *thura* 'door' and *thuraze* (θύραζε) 'outside'...We have here an adverbial form which was fixed at a very early date and became independent, so much so that *thuraze*, having lost in Homeric times its connection with *thura* 'door' (of the house), it was possible to say ἁλός θύραζε 'out from the sea' in the Odyssey (5,510; cf Il. 16,408)... Such correlations, the antiquity of which is evident, explain the nature of the idea. The 'door', ***dhwer-***, is seen from the inside of the house: it is only for the person inside the house that 'at the door' can signify outside'. The whole of the phenomenology of the 'door' proceeds from this formal relation. For the person who lives inside, ***dhwer-*** marks the limit of the house conceived as an interior and which protects the inside from the menacing outside...This door, according to whether is open or shut, becomes the symbol for separation from, or communication between, one world and the other. It is through the door that the *dominus*

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[2] It should be noted that *thure* is considered the ionic form of the attic *thura*. According to our hypothesis stated in the chapter on *chore/os*, the variation of form indicates a variation of experience. As a consequence in classical Athens *thura* might be experienced differently, and we already know from vase painting and written sources, the close relation between women and *thura*, whereas in the Homeric text women are usually kept away from *thure*. As with the case of *chora-chore*, dictionaries only state the variation of form between the ionic *thure* and the attic *thura*. Benveniste and others do not make any distinction between the two terms.

opens on an extraneous and often hostile world... The rites of passage through the door, the mythology of the door, give a religious symbolism to this idea."[3]

In order to establish the opposition between house and door – two terms which as he writes "are not by nature antithetical" – Benveniste has to refer to a 'natural' opposition, that of the inside-outside, by contrasting the house as the inside and the door as its outside. He does not question the nature of this opposition any more than he does his assumption that the interior is secure and the exterior is hostile. But as we have argued in the chapter on *domos*, it is through a philosophical operation that the idea of a house in which the interior is safe because considered fixed, is contrasted to an exterior which is dangerous because contingent, open as it were to any event. The situation is further complicated in so far as the interior and the exterior are not only conventionally conceived as specific sites but also acknowledged – within anthropology – as recognized cultural topographies within which humans acquire specific identities. Anthropologically any place 'in-between' is considered as a passage of transition, and whatever is placed there acquires an ambivalent status and so is invested with 'symbolic' value.[4] There is of course a rich literature on the

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[3] BENVENISTE, E., 1973: *Indo-European Language and Society,* trans. E. Palmer, Faber and Faber, London, pp. 254-6 passim.

[4] V. Turner writes : "...transitional beings...may even be nowhere [in terms of any recognized cultural topography], and are at least 'betwixt and between' all the recognized fixed points in space-time of structural classification." TURNER, V., 1970: *The Forest of Symbols*, Cornell University Press, pp. 97. In that sense, a transitional role is a dangerous one, for it entails the non-fixity, the non-categorization of social roles and thus a certain degree of unpredictability. The creation of a strict code of passage from one social role to another which usually involves the ritual of crossing the door, is as an attempt to control a fearful situation. We have discussed, in the chapter on *choros,* the specific relation of space and ritual, namely how space – in the sense of *choros* – is produced as enduring, to contain and thus insure the process of ritual.

symbolic function of door/gate, and the rites of passages through the door.[5] The door, conceived as that which separates the inside from the outside, becomes the space of a transition which provokes a certain 'cultural' fear. This is the assumption that underlies Benveniste's consideration of the door as a symbol of separation, and also communication. Now, Benveniste attempts first to eliminate and secondly to rationalize this fear in a double movement within his arguments On the one hand he dissociates the door from transition by nominating the door 'the outside'. In doing so he eliminates transition and thus the fear. On the other hand he recognizes the door as the symbol of separation or communication and so for him the door is either a material object with a specific function or it is a symbol. But none of these comes about by 'nature'. It is only within a specific conception of an object that it can exist both in its materiality and as a symbol. The material and symbolic sides of an object are not in opposition, but are both produced by, and both share and sustain, the same conceptual or philosophical assumptions about their 'nature'. Symbol and material object belong to the same philosophical register. The very notion of 'function' rationalizes the whole issue of the door by embracing it as both symbol and material object. It may be that the symbolic function and the actual function of an object seem

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[5] The Dutch anthropologist Arnold van Gennep, who introduced the notion of transition as one stage of the 'life crises' ceremonies, writes: "It seems important to me that the passage from one social position to another is identified with a territorial passage, such as the entrance into a village, or a house, the movement from one room to another, or the crossing of streets and squares. This identification explains why the passage from one group to another is so often ritually expressed by passage under a portal or by an 'opening of the doors'. These phrases and events are seldom meant as 'symbols'; for the semicivilized the passage is actually a territorial passage. In fact, the spatial separation of distinct groups is an aspect of social organization...In short a change of social categories involves a change of residence, and in fact is expressed by the rites of passage in their various forms." VAN GENNEP, A., 1960: *The Rites of Passage*, trans. M.B. Vizedom and G. L. Caffe, Routledge, pp. 192.

to separate again two different domains: the mythological, or religious on the one hand, and the rational on the other. But this distinction has nothing 'natural' about it. When the door is seen as belonging to these domains then the fear of transition is interpreted as a mythological or religious fear which invests nothing more than an object with a specific function. We can see now why we cannot use notions as 'functional object' or 'symbol' unproblematically in respect to the Homeric terms without committing an anachronism. We propose instead that *thure/pule* were experienced as things, in the sense that there is no positive reason to make a separation between the material and the symbolic. As far as the inside-outside distinction in relation to *thure*, we do not argue that the distinction between inside-outside does not exist in the Homeric language, but that *thure* was not experienced in terms of this distinction and still less was synonymous – as Benveniste argues – with one of its parts, that is, 'the outside'.[6] The question that arises for us can be formulated as follows: Is there any relation between Homeric *domos* and *thure* apart from that which is established by the philosophical opposition of the inside-outside proposed by Benveniste? We argue that indeed there is. If house as *domos* evoked the experience of contradiction – as we have already shown in the chapter on *domos* – *thure* evoked the effects that contradictions had on the Homeric body. In fact, our analysis will represent the variety with which these effects are manifested within the Homeric text.

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[6] There is in fact a passage in which the term *ektos* (ἐκτός) 'outside' occurs in relation to both *thure* and *domos*, and this reinforces our view that *thure* is not simply synonymous with the outside. The passage goes like this φ190-1: and great Odysseus himself came from the house to join them. But after they were out of the way of the doors and the courtyard (ἐκ δ' αὐτὸς μετὰ τοὺς δόμους ἦλυθε δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς. / ἀλλ' ὅτε δή ῥ' ἐκτὸς θυρέων ἔσαν ἠδὲ καὶ αὐλῆς)

Benveniste's proposed relation between *domos-thure* produces another relation, that between 'geographical space' and *pule* 'gate'. In fact, after discussing the house-door relation he establishes another opposition, that of domestic-geographic.[7] Although Benveniste does not refer to *pule* in his text, it has a direct influence on the way the domestic/geographic opposition – one which seems to be considered as 'natural' within literature – overshadows the interpretation of *thure/pule* relation. Here is an example. P. Chantraine notes that *thure* is distinguished from *pule*, inasmuch as the first denotes the door of a house and is based on the idea of the outside, while the second denotes the door of a city and, as it often indicates the entrance into the countryside, has a geographical value.[8] The proposed differentiation is based on the idea that both door and gate are specific objects[9] in specific locations. The difference of location confers the different names and may also generate different formal configurations of the object. But if the difference is produced by locality, why is the distinction between house and geography not marked? Indeed the distinction is conventionally thought of in a relation of opposition which is reflected upon the *thure-pule* distinction. Now we are

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[7] Benveniste notes: "...an ancient relationship : the uncultivated ground, the waste land, as opposed to the inhabited area. Outside this physical community, which constitutes the family or tribal habitat, stretches the waste land. This is where the extraneous world begins, and what is strange is necessarily hostile. The Greek adjective derived from *agros* 'field', is *agrios*, which means 'wild', 'savage', and so gives us more or less the counterpart of what is called in Latin *domesticus*, which brings us back to *domus*." BENVENISTE, E., op.cit., pp. 256-7.

[8] See CHANTRAINE P., 1968: *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque*, Paris, s.v. θύρα, πύλη.

[9] We have already seen how Benveniste defines *thura* as a material object. Insofar as *pule* is concerned Chantraine notes – as does Hofmann (HOFMANN J.B., *Etymologishes Wörterbuch des Griechischen*, München 1950, Greek translation by A. Papanikolaou, Athens 1974) – that the etymology of the term is unknown, and then he adds: "Frisk pense que ce serait en emprunt dans la vocabulaire technique de la construction". Thus *pule* is considered as a 'technical' term that corresponds to a specific object. CHANTRAINE P., op.cit., s.v. πύλη.

not able in this text to analyse what may fall under the category of – that which we anachronistically[10] call – 'geographic', within the Homeric text, and which can bring light to the distinction house-country and consequently to that of *thure-pule*. However, what is important for our research is that both *thure* and *pule* – whether the door of *domos* or the gate of Hades – denote a transition. Our analysis is not aimed at defining the difference between them. Rather we attempt to displace the analysis from the question of difference between one object and another, to the question of transition, which we think more relevant in the Homeric text. Indeed, what marks the difference of our approach in relation to *thure/pule,* is that we intend to analyse the experience of transition as such, while the conventional analysis focuses on the domains separated by the door/gate.[11] Such an approach may well reflect the way we think about doors and gates today, and is inappropriate for the analysis of the Homeric terms.

Benveniste's interpretation that *thure* is "a term for a material object which owes its name to the function which it fulfills" reveals the contemporary conception of the door which he maintains. For us doors fulfill a general function: that is, to

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[10] The term *geographia* (γεωγραφία) 'geography' is not an Homeric but a later Greek term.

[11] S. Goldhill, discussing the "animal-guarded doorways", writes: "The boundaries of the civilized order of the *oikos* are defined in part by opposition to the outside world of the wild, the uncivilized, the uncultivated." GOLDHILL, S., 1991: *The Poet's Voice: Essays on Poetics and Greek Literature*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 12. Although Goldhill "builds on Redfield's" distinction between Nature and Culture (REDFIELD, J., 1975: *Nature and Culture in the Iliad: The Tragedy of Hector*, Chicago), he is also well-aware of the inherent restrictions of such interpretative scheme. He argues: "...how can 'nature' and 'culture' be regarded simply as a 'grid' of oppositions for producing the answers to the text's significance? For their construction in the continuing process of reading leads always to further, constitutive aspects. 'The grid' cannot, finally, exhaust (the reading of) the text. In other words, treating 'nature' and 'culture' as absolute, predetermined values may undermine their value as heuristic devices for the interpretation of the *Odyssey*." GOLDHILL, S., 1988: "Reading differences: juxtaposition and the *Odyssey*", *Ramus* 17.I, 1-31, pp.18-19.

separate two distinct spaces. We move from one to the other without thinking that by crossing them any change of what we call 'ourselves' occurs, for the 'self' is considered as an enduring unlocalized category. Even if we have to adapt our behavior to the change of location, this change is apprehended as a change at the level of appearance, where the split between an outward changing appearance and an internal enduring self is not a problem. What occurs during the transition however, is never thought of. But we need to imagine the consequences that the experience of transition may produce in the context of the Homeric text, where there is no evidence for such a concept of self. In this light Benveniste's statement that this notion of the door is so "deeply and enduringly inscribed in the Indo-European languages"[12] that even today we refer to the door as the boundary between inside-outside, may reveal repression – inaugurated by philosophy – of the experience of the door, as an experience of transition. Of course his assumptions about the inside-outside distinction are standard in the way the Homeric terms *thure* and *pule* are confronted within scholarship. In so far as *thure* is concerned it is interpreted either as entrance, access,[13] or as exit. [14] *Pule* on the other hand is considered – as we have already seen – by Chantraine as entrance. This seems like the contemporary separation of exits and entrances, or even the division of a door with one wing for entrance and one for exit. Such a separation might be interpreted as an attempt to alleviate an ambivalent

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[12] BENVENISTE E., ibid.

[13] AUTENRIETH G., 1991: *Homeric Dictionary*, Duckworth, s.v. θύρη, and LIDDELL, G.H. and SCOTT, R., 1968: *A Greek-English Lexicon*, ed. Sir H.S. Jones, Oxford, s. v. θύρα-(η).

[14] CHANTRAINE P., op.cit., s.v. θύρα. Chantraine, who accepts Benveniste's theory writes: "Le radical de θύρα ... s'est prêté à la constitution de nombreuse formes adverbiales important, expriment notamment l' idée d' 'au dehors'... Comme dans l' autres langues indo-européenes ce nom de la porte a forni des adverbes de sens 'dehors'."

situation, and create a neutral space where points of tension vanish. But there is no evidence within the Homeric text of such an entrance-exit distinction and such definitions of *thure/pule* are no more than contemporary projections. We shall argue that the ambiguity evoked by the term *thure/pule* can be detected within the context in which the terms occur in the Homeric text. In fact the acknowledgment of ambiguity is what differentiates the Homeric experience of *thure/pule* from the contemporary conception of door/gate as functional objects, a conception which represses and ignores any signs of ambivalence and contradiction.

We have already anticipated in the introduction that transition within the Homeric experience should be understood as a transition from one category of experience to another. But it is necessary to remember that when we refer to experience this should be understood as the way the body in its multiple manifestations (mental, psychological, corporeal) is connected with whatever surrounds it, where body and surrounding objects inform each other. In that sense, any change of experience is a change to the body. This is an important point that marks the difference between the experience of the Homeric *thure/pule* and the contemporary conception of door/gate, and also differentiates the way we use the notion of transition – as a transition at the level of experience – in our analysis of the Homeric terms.

4.3. *THURE - PULE* WITHIN THE HOMERIC TEXT

Thure occurs 15 times in Iliad, and 55 in Odyssey, while *pule,* 60 in Iliad, and four in Odyssey. In the Homeric text, *thure* (θύρη) – generally in plural[15] – denotes the

[15] The term appears in the singular form *thuren* only 8 times, in Ω316,453, χ155,157,201,258,275,394.

'door',[16] while *pule* (πύλη) – also usually in plural[17] – the 'gate'.[18] Quite often there is a detailed description of the way the door/gate was locked, and also reference to parts of the construction such as the threshold and the posts. We would like to make two remarks, one in relation to the plural form and another in relation to the name attached to both. We cannot decide from the textual evidence if the plural has to be understood – as Benveniste suggests – in relation to a formal feature of the door/gate, i.e., namely that they are made from different elements or that they have two wings. We have to discard the first because all doors/gates are made from various elements but the plural form is not always used. We could always have recourse to Parry's theory of orality to propose that the choice of the specific form corresponds to metric purposes. But we have already shown in detail in the chapter on *Epos* our position in relation to the orality-literacy debate. It is quite interesting to note that in two instances the same door is in the singular form when closed and in plural when opened.[19] We might say that when the door is closed it is perceived as one piece – if we accept that most Homeric doors have two wings, which of course we do not know from the textual evidence – whereas when it is opened is perceived as made up of

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[16] The adjectives attached to it are: *phaeine* (φαεινή) 'gleaming', *pukinos araruia* (πυκινῶς ἀραρυῖα) 'firmly joined together', *eukleis* (εὐκλῃῖς) 'close shutting', *euerkes* (εὐερκέες) 'well enclosed', *pukinai* (πυκιναί) 'firm', *kolletai* (κολλῃταί) 'firmly bounded together', *upsulai* (ὑψηλαί) 'high', *chruseiai* (χρύσειαι) 'golden'. AUTENRIETH, G., op.cit, s.v. θύρη.

[17] The term occurs in the singular form *pules* only twice in E466, Π712.

[18] The adjectives attached to it are: *diklides* (δικλίδες) 'double-folding', *upsulai* (ὑψηλαί) 'high', *eu poietai* (εὖ ποιηταί), 'well constructed', *puka* (πύκα) 'firm', *stibaros araruiai* (στιβαρῶς ἀραρυῖαι) 'firmly joined together'. AUTENRIETH G., op.cit., s.v. πύλη.

[19] Ω453-455: The [door] was secured by a single door-piece of pine, and three Achaians could ram it home in its socket and three could pull back and open the huge [bar of the doors] (θύρην δ' ἔχε μοῦνος ἐπιβλὴς εἰλάτινος, / τὸν τρεῖς μὲν ἐπιρρήσσεσκον Ἀχαιοί, / τρεῖς δ' ἀναοίγεσκον μεγάλην κληῖδα θυράων), χ394-399: {he knocked at} the door...she opened the doors (κινήσας δὲ θύρην....ὤϊξεν δὲ θύρας).

more than one element. Then again, we might note that the singular is used when it refers to a closed door, that is, when transition is blocked. But there is another way of thinking this through, namely the relation of the plural grammatical form of *thure/pule* and its relation to the experience of transition. Such an analysis can only exist as a suggestion for we can not decide definitively on the textual evidence how the plural should be understood.

Gates and doors have always a name, the gates of Heaven, of Dreams, of Hades, of Troy, the door of *megaron,* of *thalamos* etc. Such names are conventionally interpreted as an indication that the door/gate belongs to the specific location that confers its name. But the above names evoke categories of experiences and do not simply correspond to specific locations, and so we propose a different approach. In fact, the name of the door/gate does not indicate the border of a distinct space but rather the sort of changes required for the transition, that is, for the change to the category of experience that the term *thalamos, megaron,* Hades, etc., evoke. Before we proceed to the examination of the terms in their Homeric context, we would like to repeat that *thure/pule* evoke the transition from one field of experience to another, and thus constitute the experience of being in a state of change which implies changes of the experiencing body. These changes involve the whole phenomenology of the Homeric body and include change of status, gestures, body postures, and even change of shape.

Our analysis of the Homeric text is divided into three parts; the first approaches the act of crossing the door/gate and the changes of the body that accompany it, the second revolves around the ambiguity produced as an effect of a prolonged sojourn at *thure/pule*; the third examines the devices that control and insure

the change from one category of experience to another. We shall start with the implications of crossing *thure/pule*.

4.3.1. THE CROSSING OF *THURE/PULE* AS CHANGE OF EXPERIENCE

In the contemporary context 'going through' doors/gates is considered as a change of place. We go from one room to another within our house, in or out of the house, and this has little or no consequences. We open and close these objects, whose 'function' is to separate distinct spaces. But for the Homeric Greeks the crossing of *thure/pule* was not experienced as a change of place, but as a change of experience and as such had effects on the Homeric body. Though, we shall refer to *thure/pule* as the place of change throughout the text, that place is as co-produced with the specific things called *thure/pule* and hence place and thing can not be separated. To understand the change better at the level of experience that the crossing of *thure/pule* entails we shall refer to the Homeric term *oudos* (οὐδός) 'threshold'.[20] The etymological connection of *oudos* with *hodos* (ὁδός) 'way, journey, path, road', pointed out by Chantraine,[21] is reinforced by the description of the gates' construction in H338, 435:

"And let us built into these walls gates strongly fitted that there may be a way though them for the driving of horses." [22]

However, being on *hodos*, implies a condition of continuous change. The need for Odysseus' recognition, upon his return, can be inscribed in the experience of the

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[20] The other term Homeric term for the threshold, *belos* (βηλός), will be examined further on in the text.

[21] CHANTRAINE P., op.cit., s.v. ὁδός.

[22] H338-40: πύργους ὑψηλοὺς εἶλαρ νηῶν τε καὶ αὐτῶν. / ἐν δ' αὐτοῖσι πύλας ποιήσομεν εὖ ἀραρυίας, / ὄφρα δ' αὐτάων ἱππηλασίη ὁδός εἴη. See also H435. The term *oudos* occurs 45 times in the epics.

journey as a process of change, for both status and the body.[23] In this way, the Homeric expression *geraos oudos* (γήραος οὐδός), in ρ196, can be interpreted either as 'the path', or as 'the threshold of old age', because both denote a state of transition and change – that of becoming old. Transition itself is experienced as the stepping over the threshold. The above mentioned quotation regarding the gates' construction, further instructs us that the epithet *eurus* (εὐρύς) 'broad, wide' should not be understood as a word denoting an abstract concept of width associated with a number (i.e. the width of the door is 1.00m), but as a level of experience, where the width of the gate is related to the movement of bodies. It is in relation to the body that crosses it that *thure/pule* is experienced as wide or narrow in σ385-6:

the gates of the house, although they are wide, would suddenly be too narrow as you took flight to escape from the forecourt.[24]

The change of experience that the crossing entails involves the change of social status. This social status is manifested through a complex code of body postures and gestures, and in that sense we may say that the change of social status involves bodily changes.[25] An example illustrates our point. As we shall see in the chapter on

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[23] On pelegrinage as a liminal state see: TURNER V., 1990: *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic action in Human Society*, Cornell University Press.

[24] σ385-6 : τὰ θύρετρα, καὶ εὐρέα περ μάλ' ἐόντα, / φεύγοντι στείνοιτο διὲκ προθύροιο θύραζε. See also Ψ74: Hades' house of the wide gates (εὐρυπυλὲς Ἄϊδος δῶ). The same 'kinesthetic' experience is expressed in the use of adjectives related to the height of the door which occur in a number of passages: Φ544: gate-towering Ilion (ὑψίπυλον Τροίην), Z416: Thebe of the towering gates (ὑψίπυλον Θήβην), Σ274: and the great gateways, and the long, smooth-planed, close-joined gate timbers that close to fit them shall defend our city (ὑψηλαί τε πύλαι σανίδες τ' ἐπὶ τῇς ἁραρυῖαι / μακραὶ ἐΰξεστοι ἐζευγμέναι εἰρύσσονται.)

[25] On the body as a register of the social code, see BREMMER, J., ROODENBURG, H., eds., 1991: *A Cultural History of Gesture*, Polity Press.

megaron, the crossing of the door is part of the ritual of hospitality, and entails a change of social status. The stranger (*xeinos*) – whose status is ambiguous while standing at the door, being both a potential enemy and friend – undergoes a ritualized crossing of the *thure* to erase his ambiguity and consolidate his role as a friend of the house, inside the house. The gifts that are given to him at his departure, operate as tokens of friendship and alliance, for it is possible that otherwise as he changes his role and place, he might become an enemy. The door then is experienced as the place of change, where the change of social status is achieved through a complex code of gestures and body postures.[26] It is worth noting that members of the house do not have to undergo any ritual every time they cross the *thure*, for the repetition of the first crossing has a decreasing importance.[27] However not all members cross, or are related to the different doors of the house in the same way, as we shall see below.

The changes to the body that the act of crossing involves are clearly revealed in an extreme case of transition. In the Homeric text the phrase "'to cross' *perao* (περάω), the gates of Hades" is equivalent to dying.[28] However the condition of *perao*

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[26] For a detail analysis of gestures and body postures in the context of hospitality, see chapter on *megaron.*

[27] From later sources we know that in the context of ancient Greek marriage, the bride has to undergo a ritualized threshold crossing in her new home. For A. Van Gennep such a ritual belongs to the "Rites of the first time: these rites are simply rites of entry from one domain or situation into another, and it is natural that, once the new domain or situation has been entered, the repetition of the first act has a decreasing importance. Furthermore, psychologically, the second act no longer presents anything new: it marks the beginning of habituation. VAN GENNEP A., op.cit., pp. 177.

[28] E646: but beaten down by my hands will pass through the gates of Hades (ὑπ' ἐμοί δμηθέντα πύλας Ἀΐδαο περήσειν). The Homeric phrase that occurs twice – ξ156, I312: For as I detest the doorways of Hades (ἐχθρὸς γάρ μοι κεῖνος ὁμῶς Ἀΐδαο πύλῃσι) – is inscribed to the conception of the gates of Hades as equivalent to death.

(περάω) 'passing through, penetrate, traverse'[29] the gates, is not the simple act of dying. Although Patroklos and Helpenor are already dead they cannot cross the gates of Hades. They appear to their companions – Patroklos to Achilles,[30] and Elpenor to Odysseus[31] – and ask to be buried. Burial ensures that the body will be transformed, that it will become invisible to the living, and this transformation is the condition of entering the territory of Hades where invisibility reigns. "The very name of the god of the underworld, Hades, Ἀΐδης may be an alpha-privative form, from the verb of seeing...*idein* (ἰδεῖν). His place is that of unseen and the unseeable."[32] To stay at the gate of Hades without crossing it *tachista* (τάχιστα) 'very quickly',[33] – to be dead and still have a body visible in its corporeality even if it be nothing more than a *soma* 'corpse'– implies an ambiguous and intolerable situation. Moreover, the transformation of the body, necessary for the change of place, does not lead to its complete disappearance. Dead people become *eidola*. They still have the visual

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[29] It is worth noting the etymological connection – proposed by Hofmann – of *perao* (περάω) with the Greek terms: *peiro* (πείρω) 'pierce through, *poros* (πόρος) 'ford, path', *porthmos* (πορθμός) 'strait', and the Latin *portus* 'port, door'. HOFMANN J.B., op.cit., s.v. πείρω. The underline connection between them could well be, the conception of water as a boundary. In the Homeric text the river Ocean is the boundary between the world of living and the world of dead (κ511). On the relation between water and threshold, see TRUMBULL H.C., 1896: *The Threshold Covenant*, Edinburgh, T. and T. Clark, pp. 135.

[30] Ψ71: Bury me as quickly as may be, let me pass through the gates of Hades. The souls, the images of dead men, hold me at a distance, and will not let me cross the river and mingle among them, but I wander as I am by Hades' house of the wide gates (θάπτέ με ὅττι τάχιστα πύλας Ἀΐδαο περήσω. / τῆλέ με εἴργουσι ψυχαὶ εἴδωλα καμόντων, / οὐδέ μέ πω μίσγεσθαι ὑπέρ ποταμοῖο ἐῶσιν, / ἀλλ' αὕτως ἀλάλημαι ἀν' εὐρυπυλὲς Ἄϊδος δῶ)

[31] λ51: But first there came the soul of my companion, Elpenor, for he had not yet been buried (Πρώτη δὲ ψυχὴ Ἐλπήνορος ἤλθεν ἑταίρου· / οὐ γάρ πω ἐτέθαπτο). Elpenor says to Odysseus in λ73-4: and do not go and leave me behind unwept, unburied, when you leave...but burn me (μή μ' ἄκλαυτον ἄθαπτον ἰών ὄπισθεν καταλείπειν / ἀλλά με κακκῆαι)

[32] DU BOIS P., 1990: *Torture and Truth*, Routlege, pp. 81.

[33] See above note 30.

'aspect' *eidos* of the living person, although they lack the vital force and the very corporeality of the body.

The importance of the door or gate is constituted by the act of crossing, because the crossing implies a change of experience that always involves a change of the body. Now these changes of the body give to *thure/pule* their importance, but bind them with a certain fear as well. In fact, the fear refers to the permanent imprint of signs of ambiguity on the body - or to what we might call the acquisition of a monstrous body – as a result of a prolonged sojourn at the place of change.

4.3.2. BEING AT *THURE/PULE* : ON AMBIGUITY

The Homeric text testifies that dwelling at *thure/pule* generates monstrosity. Thus at *thure/pule* remain creatures with improper bodily forms, or humans in a 'limbo' state. These bodily effects of ambiguity are unbearable, and as a consequence, a mechanism of control is put in place. Indeed, we shall argue that the Homeric terms *thure/pule* not only evoke the ambiguity that frames the experience of transition but also its control. Before we examine the devices of control we shall present the ambiguity which – as we have just said – is generated not by crossing but by tarrying at *thure/pule.*

4.3.2.1. AMBIGUOUS BODIES

Humans who sit at *thure/pule* never present corporeal deformities, but both state and status have effects on their body. On the other hand, corporeal monstrosity is a common feature of Homeric monsters, such as Gorgo, Skulla, or Kuklops. All of them

sit either at *thure*, or *pule* but in the context of what is anachronistically called 'geographical space'. We propose however to call this space, 'the space of narrative' – in the sense of the specific narrative structure of the spatial container. In fact, this is further evidence that the distinction between the experience of *thure* and *pule* must be something different from what is commonly thought of, i.e., as a difference simply corresponding to the taken for granted domestic-geographic distinction. But we are not able to provide an answer on this issue, as we have already pointed out; so let us proceed to examine first, what kind of creatures dwell at doors or gates, and how ambiguity is imprinted in their appearance.

The very god Hades does not cross the gates of his territory. He is characterized in the text, as *pulartao krateroio* (πυλάρταο κρατεροῖο) 'he who fastens the gates firmly.'[34] His head is covered with the *Aidos kunee* (Ἄϊδος κυνέην) 'the cap of Hades', which renders invisible the person who wears it.[35] *Kunee* indicates in the text the 'soldier's cap', that can be made of different materials, *kunee aigeie* (κυνέη αἰγείη) for instance, indicates the cap made of 'a goat-skin.' But, *kunee* is related to the word *kuon* (κύων) 'dog' and dogs are pre-eminently the guardians of the doors. Hades then, as 'he who fastens the gates firmly', sojourns at this place of ambiguity, covering his head with a dog-skin; the mask of a dog does acquire an ambiguous appearance: a human body and an animal head. Two other creatures guard his gates. The dog Kerberos (Κέρβερος) and the Head of Gorgo (Γοργείη κεφαλή). Although

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[34] Occurs twice, in N415: as he goes down to Hades of the gates, the strong one (εἰς Ἄϊδός περ ἰόντα πυλάρταο κρατεροῖο), and in λ277: while she went down to Hades of the gates, the strong one (ἡ δ' ἔβη εἰς Ἀΐδαο πυλάρταο κρατεροῖο)

[35] E845.

Homer refers to the dog of Hades,[36] the name Kerberos is never mentioned in the text. Hesiod in Theogony (311) describes him as having 50 heads (πεντηκοκέφαλος). Thus Kerberos does not fit into the category of dog, it is a dog-monster. The Head of Gorgo is an extraordinary creature, a *pelor* (πέλωρ) 'monster' with a terrifying gaze.[37] However, it is not only the gates of Hades that is a place of horror; every gate or door is a potentially horrifying place. *Skulle* and *Charubdis* safeguard a narrow passage of the sea. *Skulle* – her name is etymologically connected to *kuon* (κύων) 'dog'– is also a *pelor* (πέλωρ) 'monster. Her extraordinary body is inside a cave while her six heads are outside, and at this location of between, at the *thure* of the cave, she devours the raw flesh of her victims.[38]

μ85-94 and 118-9 :"In that cavern Skulla lives, whose howling is terror. Her voice indeed is only as loud as a new-born puppy could make, but she herself is an evil monster. No one, not even a god encountering her, could be glad at that sight. She has twelve feet, and all of them wave in the air. She has six necks upon her, grown to great length, and upon each neck there is a horrible head, with teeth in it, set in three rows close together and stiff, full of black death. Her body from the waist down is holed up inside the hollow cavern, but she holds her heads pocked out and away from the terrible hollow ...She is no mortal thing but a mischief immortal, dangerous difficult and bloodthirsty, and there is no fighting against her, nor any force of defense." [39]

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[36] Θ367-8: [when Herakles] was sent down to Hades of the Gates, to hale back from the kingdom of the dark the hound of the grisly death god (εἰς Ἀΐδαο πυλάρταο προΐπεμψεν / ἐξ Ἐρέβευς ἄξοντα κύνα στυγεροῦ Ἀΐδαο)

[37] λ633: and green fear took hold of me with the thought that proud Persephone might send up against me some gorgonish head of a terrible monster up out of Hades (ἐμὲ δὲ χλωρὸν δέος ἥρει, / μή μοι Γοργείην κεφαλὴν δεινοῖο πελώρου / ἐξ Ἄϊδος πέμψειεν ἀγαυὴ Περσεφόνεια)

[38] μ256: right in her doorway she ate them up (αὐτοῦ δ' εἰνὶ θύρῃσι κατήσθιε κεκληγότας)

[39] μ85-94 and 118-9: ἔνθα δ' ἐνὶ Σκύλλη ναίει δεινὸν λελακυῖα. / τῆς ἦ τοι φωνὴ μὲν ὅση σκύλακος νεογιλλῆς / γίγνεται, αὐτὴ δ' αὖτε πέλωρ κακόν· οὐδέ κέ τίς μιν / γηθήσειεν ἰδών, οὐδ' εἰ θεὸς ἀντιάσειε. /τῆς ἦ τοι πόδες εἰσὶ δυώδεκα πάντες ἄωροι, /ἓξ δέ τέ οἱ δειραὶ περιμήκεες, ἐν δὲ ἑκάστη / σμερδαλέη κεφαλή, ἐν δὲ τρίστοιχοι ὀδόντες, / πυκνοὶ καὶ θαμέες, πλεῖοι μέλανος θανάτοιο. / μέσση μέν τε καὰτά σπείους κοίλοιο δέδυκεν / ἔξω δ' ἐξίσχει κεφαλὰς δεινοῖο βερέθρου... ἡ δέ τοι οὐ θνητή, ἀλλ' ἀθάνατον κακόν ἐστι, / δεινόν τ' ἀργαλέον τε καὶ ἄγριον οὐδὲ μαχητόν.

Kuklops (Κύκλ-ωψ) 'he who has a round eye,' is another *pelor* (πέλωρ) 'monster',[40] who sits at the *thure*[41] of his cave to prevent the escape of Odysseus, who blinded him and made him powerless. In the Iliad, at the gates of the camp of Greeks, two fighters, sons of Lapithai, resist the attack of the Trojans.[42] However they are not ordinary humans. Lapithai fought and defeated the Centaurs, creatures that are half horse and half human.[43] In the Homeric text Centaurs are called (φηρσίν ὀρεσκῴοισι) 'wild beasts of the mountains'.[44] Moreover, the name of one of the Lapithai is (Λεοντῆα) 'Lion'.[45]

It is only at gates, doors and passages of the unknown and fictional territory of 'geography'[46] that extraordinary creatures dwell and it is clear that the fear does not refer to what lies beyond the gate, the door or the passage, for the danger is always at this place of transition, which should consequently be crossed quickly. Moreover, each of the above 'in-between' creatures is unique as it is related to the experience of

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[40] ι428: the monstrous Cyclop (Κύκλωψ ... πέλωρ)

[41] ι417: and sat down in the entrance himself, spreading his arms wide (αὐτὸς δ' εἰνὶ θύρῃσι καθέζετο χεῖρε πετάσσας)

[42] M127: since in the gates they found two men of the bravest, high-hearted sons of the spear-fighting Lapithai (ἐν δὲ πύλῃσι δύ' ἀνέρας εὗρον ἀρίστους /υἷας ὑπερθύμους Λαπιθάων αἰχμητάων)

[43] "The Centaurs were beings on the threshold between human and equine nature; they marked the limit between animal and human being, between *anthropos* and *therion*. The Centaur appears first on Kassite boundary stones as a guardian of limits." DU BOIS P., 1991: *Centaurs and Amazons: Women and the Pre-History of the Great-Chain of Being*, University of Michigan Press, pp. 27.

[44] A268. "*Pher/ ther* (φήρ / θήρ) means a wild beast, but indicates any monster, such as Centaurs (Hom.), the sphinx or the satyrs". See HOFMANN J.B., op.cit., s.v. θήρ. Dogs in Homer are called *thereteres* (θηρητῆρες) 'hunters of the wild beasts'. The ability of hunting is never apart from the ability of the hunter to share the attributes of his victim.

[45] M130.

[46] On geography as fiction see ROMM, J.S. 1992: *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought: Geography, Exploration, and Fiction*, Princeton University Press.

the place it dwells. Their very presence at *pulai* (or *thure* of caves) expresses the ambiguity and the fear en-framing the experience of transition. This ambiguity gives shape to their bodies. The continuous movement of the snakes on the head of the Gorgo, or the many heads of Skulle and Kerberos marks the continuous, unpredictable and fearful change which occurs at the point of transition. The acquisition of a body 'in-between', a monstrous body, is the result of dwelling in a place of transition, of an 'in-between'; a place where categories of species roles are no longer distinct.[47] Given this, is it possible for humans to dwell at *thure* or *pule,* and with what consequences? As we shall see, humans can stay close to the door/gate, but very rarely do humans remain *eini thuresi/ eini pulesi* (εἰνί θύρῃσι/εἰνί πύλῃσι) 'at the door/at the gate', at the very point of transition, and if they do it involves an ambiguity of his/her state or status.

In δ809, while Penelope sleeps and dreams, she stays at the gates of Dreams.[48] In the Homeric text sleep is very similar to death.[49] It is a condition of 'in-between' life and death. The body of the sleeping person lies motionless and shares features of both a live 'body' and that of a *soma* 'corpse'. Penelope is not just sleeping but dreaming as well. We should not think of dreaming as just a 'mental' activity for as we have argued, we can not project our dualistic distinction between mind and body

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[47] R. Brilliant writes: "The hybrid monster exemplifies the very fact of the transgression of boundaries, of a transition not yet accomplished, still frozen in place, and, as such, even more to be feared because of its palpable deformation of the natural categories of being. Whether such creatures are born monstrous, as was the Minotaur, or subsequently made that way through magic, they retain the power to shock us, to shake our sense of what is right in the world." BRILLIANT, R., 1995: "Kirke's Men: Swine and Sweethearts", *The Distaff Side: Representing the Female in Homer's Odyssey*, Oxford University Press, pp. 168.

[48] δ809: Penelope, sleeping very sweetly in the dreams' gateway (Πηνελόπεια, ἠδὺ μάλα κνώσσουσ' ἐν ὀνειρείῃσι πύλῃσιν)

[49] Sleep is the twin brother of death.

back onto the Homeric Greeks. Dreaming was understood as an action of the body.[50] This reinforces the experience of a sleeping and dreaming body as a body with ambiguous features. A body 'in-between' action and death. Being in this state of 'in-between' Penelope dwells – not metaphorically but literally *en oneireiesin pulesin Oneiron* (ἐν ὀνειρείησιν πύλῃσιν) 'at the gates of Dreams' – evoking the 'in-between' location of the gates.

In ρ530 the suitors are sitting at the door of Odysseus' palace.[51] Their social status is ambivalent. Awaiting Penelope's decision that will make one of them a member of the household, they are all in a status of transition. Each one is a member of his own *oikos* but they all come to eat at Odysseus' house without having yet been accepted as friends of his *oikos*. Their position at the *thure* thereby expresses the ambiguity of their status, which is invested with anxiety. Penelope characterizes them as the *are* (ἀρή) 'curse' of her house.[52] When Odysseus arrives, he dislocates them from the *thure*, and traps them inside the *megaron*, where *megaron* is not just a room of the Homeric house but a term that evokes the experience of controlled transformation; he closes the doors.[53] The whole fight with the suitors takes place

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[50] A. Amory also relates Homeric dreams with action though in a different way, when she writes : "In Homer dreams are regularly omens demanding some action." AMORY A., 1966: "The Gates of Horn and Ivory", *Yale Classical Studies* 20, pp. 30.

[51] ρ530: these people sit by the doors and play their games (οὗτοι δ' ἠὲ θύρῃσι καθήμενοι ἐψιαάσθων) and also π344: and there in front of the palace gates they held an assembly (προπάροιθε θυράων ἑδριόωντο).

[52] ρ538.

[53] A closed door entails always already the possibility of the opening. It never establishes a definitive distinction between spaces. It provides security and danger at the same time. It would be interesting however to analyze in detail the consequences that the closing or the opening of the door has in relation to the experience of transition and not in relation to the separation of spaces, especially because the locking of the doors is mentioned quite often in the Homeric text. This could also throw light on the issue, discussed above in this text, of the plural grammatical form of *thure/pule*.

about the *thure.* Yet it is Odysseus this time who stands in front of the closed doors,[54] strong, fearful and still in an ambiguous status. He will remain there as long as the fight continues and until his role as the master of the house is restored after killing the suitors.

Like the suitors, another ambiguous category is that of beggars who are also located *thuraze* 'at the door'.[55] Even when accepted in *megaron* they sit on the threshold facing towards the interior.[56] We shall examine in more detail the category of beggars and their social status in the chapter on *megaron.*

4.3.2.2. AMBIGUITY AND POWER

One important attribute of ambiguity is power. In B788 old and young men are holding an *agore* (ἀγορή) 'assembly' at the doors of Priam.[57] This passage seems

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[54] In the following quotes Odysseus gives instructions for the closing of the doors, as this is the most important part of his plan: φ236: bar the tightly fitted_doors that close the hall (κληῖσαι μεγάροιο θύρας πυκινῶς ἀραρυίας), φ240: your task is to make fast the courtyard door with the bolt, and tie the fastening quickly upon it (θύρας ἐπιτέλλομαι αὐλῆς κληῖσαι κληῖδι, θοῶς δ' ἐπὶ δεσμὸν ἰῆλαι). The suitors will try to remove him from the doors: χ76: try to push him back from the doors and the threshold (εἴ κέ μιν οὐδοῦ ἀπώσομεν ἠδὲ θυράων), χ91: he might be forced to give way from the doors (εἴ πώς οἱ εἴξειε θυράων), χ107: while I am alone, they might force me from the doorway (μή μ' ἀποκινήσωσι θυράων μοῦνον ἐόντα). In sum, the whole fight between Odysseus and the suitors as described in φ126-399, evolves about the doors.

[55] Note that *thuraze* is always translated as outside by Lattimore π276: if they drag me by the feet through the palace to throw me out of it (διὰ δῶμα ποδῶν ἕλκωσι θύραζε), τ68-9: Take yourself out of the door, you wretch, and be well satisfied with your feast, or you may be forced to get out, with a torch thrown at you (ἀλλ' ἔξελθε θύραζε, τάλαν, καὶ δαιτὸς ὄνησο· ἢ τάχα καὶ δαλῷ βεβλημένος εἶσθα θύραζε), υ179: will you take yourself outside? (οὐκ ἔξεισθα θύραζε).

[56] ρ339: he sat down then on the ashwood threshold, inside the doorway (ἵζε δ' ἐπὶ μελίνου οὐδοῦ ἔντοσθε θυράων)

[57] B788-9: these were holding assembly in front of the doors of Priam gathered together in one place, the elders and the young men (οἳ δ' ἀγορὰς ἀγόρευον ἐπὶ Πριάμοιο θύρῃσι / πάντες ὁμηγερέες ἠμὲν νέοι ἠδὲ γέροντες), also H345-6: there was an assembly...before the doors of Priam (ἀγορή γένετ'....παρὰ Πριάμοιο θύρῃσι)

contradictory, but the door is the place of contradiction. In the passages previously examined, it is obvious that the presence of extraordinary creatures at this location is evidence of the fear of the ambiguous status (or in a terminology of ritual, a liminal role) which attaches to this place of transition. But what is fearful is also powerful. Whoever can remain at the condition of 'between' acquires power. One aspect of this power is the power of speech. In the Homeric context it is the *agore* at the door, in the context of Athenian democracy the actual *bema* (βῆμα) 'a pace, step, footstep, a place to set foot on,' at the *agora*, where the speaker stands in order to address his audience. Both Athenian *bema* (βῆμα) and the Homeric *belos* (βηλός) 'threshold' stem from the verb *baino* (βαίνω) 'to go, walk, step'. Of the three Homeric references to *belos*, two depict Zeus exercising his power. He stands on the *belos* of his palace in Heaven and throws other gods down to the earth.[58] In the third, the goddess Iris stands at the *belos* of the god's Zephyros palace to announce a message.[59] All three passages communicate an experience of *belos* as the location – where location is co-produced with the thing, in this case the threshold – of power and speech.

Indeed, power can be related to the capacity to construct a door or a gate. The difficulties of making doors and gates require special skills in order to balance the weights and make the door and thus the whole structure stand. *Stathmos* (σταθμός) is both 'the weights in balance,' 'the posts,' and 'the shelter for men and beast.' Being a key point of the whole construction, the door is the object of 'special care',[60] and is

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[58] A591: he caught me by the foot and threw me from the magic threshold (ῥῖψε ποδὸς τεταγὼν ἀπὸ βηλοῦ θεσπεσίοιο), O23: throw him from the threshold (ῥίπτασκον τεταγὼν ἀπὸ βηλοῦ)

[59] Ψ201-4: Iris stood on the stone doorsill...and spoke her word to them (θέουσα δὲ Ἶρις ἐπέστη βηλῷ ἔπι λιθέῳ ...εἶπε δὲ μῦθον).

[60] In the text the reference to the construction of the door is repetitive. The carpenter, the material and the mode of construction are mentioned: ρ340: the doorpost of cypress wood, which the carpenter once

considered as an element, the foundation of the house. In the Homeric text Agamemnon expresses his wish to sack the city of Troy, by saying that he will set light to the door of Priam's palace.[61] This association between the master of the house and the door of the house was quite usual.[62] If staying at the door is dangerous for others, the master of the house exercises his power there, by being at the strongest part of the house. The door where *agore* is held in the Homeric text is not any door, but the *thure* of Priam, the king of Troy. By staying at his door Priam is doubly a master: master of the house, master of the city.

In two instances in the text, the door/gate appears as simultaneously the locus of power and ambiguity and is split into two distinct doors/gates. The door/gate of power and the door/gate of ambiguity mark the status of those who cross them. In v109, the cave of the Naiades in Ithake has two *thurai* with different entrances, one

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had expertly planed, and drawn it true to a chalkline (σταθμῷ κυπαρισσίνῳ, ὅν ποτε τέκτων ξέσσεν ἐπισταμένως καὶ ἐπὶ στάθμην ἴθυνε), φ43: she had come up to the oaken threshold, which the carpenter once had expertly planned and drawn it true to a chalkline, and fitted the door posts to it and joined on the shining door leaves (οὐδόν τε δρύϊνον προσεβήσετο, τόν ποτε τέκτων ξέσσεν ἐπισταμένως καὶ ἐπὶ στάθμην ἴθυνεν, ἐν δὲ σταθμοὺς ἄρσε, θύρας δ' ἐπέθηκε φαεινάς), Ξ167,338: Hephaistos closed the leaves in the door-posts snugly (Ἥφαιστος, πυκινὰς δὲ θύρας σταθμοῖσιν ἐπῆρσε). We should also relate to that the myths of human sacrifice at the door to secure the foundation of a construction. See TRUMBULL H.C., op.cit., pp. 53.

[61] B415: lit the castle gates with the flames' destruction (πρῆσαι δὲ πυρὸς δηΐοιο θύρετρα).

[62] "The gates are equivalent to the power of whose are within the gates. Thus also, when the overthrow of a city is foretold in prophesy, it is said, that 'the gate is smitten with destruction," TRUMBULL H.C., op. cit., pp. 15. The identification is common in different cultural contexts: Jesus' identification with the door as a locus of justice, and the 'High Gate' denoting the Sultan as judge at the gate of his palace. It is also worth noting the power of the heroes who are able to stay at the door/gate, to confront and destroy the monsters, i.e. Herakles, Perseus etc. We might also interpret the contemporary marks of individuality at the door – the most common being the inscription of owner's name – as a sign of identification between the owner and the main door of the house, where it is the ownership that confers the power.

for the powerful mortals and the other for immortals.[63] While gods may retain their powerful status when crossing the door of a divine cave, mortals cannot enter it without experiencing fear. In a different context, in v109-12, Penelope describes the distinction between the two gates of dreams, a distinction further accentuated by the use of different materials for their construction:

> Stranger, truly dreams are by nature perplexing and full of messages which are hard to interpret; nor by any means will everything [in them] come true for mortals. For there are two gates of insubstantial dreams; one [pair] is wrought of horn and one of ivory. Of these, [the dreams] which come through [the gate of] sawn ivory are dangerous to believe, for bring messages which will not issue in deeds; but [the dreams] which come forth through [the gate of] polished horn, these have power in reality, whenever any mortal sees them.[64]

Thus staying *eini thuresi/eini pulesi* (εἰνί θύρῃσι/εἰνί πύλῃσι), should be not understood in a purely topographical sense. The 'phrase' also evokes a specific 'status' acquired by those who sojourn in this place. But we need always remember that this occurs not because *thure/pule* constitute a specific location, but inasmuch as they are experienced as things which are co-produced with their place (in the sense of *chore*) and which generate specific identities within the bodies that are related to them.[65] This enables us to understand why *thuraze* (θύραζε) should not be translated

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[63] v109-12: It has two entrances, one of them facing the North Wind, where people can enter, but the one towards the South Wind has more divinity. That is the way of the immortals, and no men enter that way (δύω δέ τέ οἱ θύραι εἰσίν, / αἱ μὲν πρὸς Βορέαο καταιβαταὶ ἀνθρώποισιν, / αἱ δ' αὖ πρὸς Νότου εἰσί θεώτεραι· οὐδέ τι κείνῃ / ἄνδρες ἐσέρχονται, ἀλλ' ἀθανάτων ὁδός ἐστιν).

[64] τ562 ·ξεῖν', ἦ τοι μὲν ὄνειροι ἀμήχανοι ἀκριτόμυθοι / γίγνοντ', οὐδέ τι πάντα τελείεται ἀνθρώποισι. / δοιαὶ γάρ τε πύλαι ἀμενηνῶν εἰσίν ὀνείρων· / αἱ μὲν γὰρ κεράεσσι τετεύχαται, αἱ δ' ἐλέφαντι. / τῶν οἳ μέν κ' ἔλθωσι διὰ πριστοῦ ἐλέφαντος, / οἳ ῥ' ἐλεφαίρονται, ἔπε' ἀκράαντα φέροντες· / οἳ δὲ διὰ ξεστῶν κεράων ἔλθωσι θύραζε, / οἳ ῥ' ἔτυμα κραίνουσι, βροτῶν ὅτε κέν τις ἴδηται. The translation is by AMORY A., op.cit., pp. 31.

[65] Unfortunately, this awkward sentence will re-appear in the text. If the reader can overlook this awkwardness, the formulation is directed towards: 1. Distinguishing between being produced by

in a simple topographical sense – as Benveniste suggests and other scholars accept, that is, as 'outside'. The term occurs in relation to the house,[66] but also in different contexts such as the holes of the axes,[67] a ship,[68] body,[69] river,[70] and the sea.[71] It is the last instance that Benveniste uses as an example to reinforce his arguments about the *thure* and the concept of 'outside'.[72] We are not necessarily proposing a different translation, since our language probably does not posses a term that corresponds to the Homeric experience of transition, as described in this chapter. But what *thure* and *thuraze* have in common is that both evoke the experience of transition within the Homeric text. This is true; however they differ because *thure* evokes the experience of a specific thing we call 'door' from which *thuraze* appears – at least in the quotations that do not refer to the house – dissociated. To think both *thure* and *thuraze* only through the concept of 'outside' would be to erase any trace of the experience of transition and with it anxiety that crisscrosses the Homeric text.

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location and coming into being as co-existent with place and thing, 2. That the experience influences the identity of a body which falls within the relation.

[66] ζ53 τῷ δὲ θύραζε ἐρχομένῳ..,ι418 εἴ τινά που μετ' ὄεσσι λάβοι στείχοντα θύραζε, ι444 ἔστοιχε θύραζε, ι461 πέμπε θύραζε, μ254 ἔρριψε θύραζε, ο62 βῆ δὲ θύραζε, π276 ποδῶν ἕλκωσι θύραζε, σ386, φ299 διὲκ προθύροιο θύραζε, τ68-9 ἔξελθε θύραζε...εἶσθα θύραζε, τ566 ἔλθωσι θύραζε, υ96 θῆκε θύραζε φέρων , υ179 οὐκ ἔξεισθα θύραζε;, φ90 ἠέ θύραζε κλαίετον ἐξελθόντε, Σ415 βῆ δὲ θύραζε, ο451 ἅμα τροχόωντα θύραζε, χ375 ἐξελθόντες μεγάρων ἕζεσθαι θύραζε ἐκ φόνου εἰς αὐλήν, ο465 δόμων ἐξῆγε θύραζε,υ361 δόμου ἐκπέμψασθε θύραζε, υ367 τοῖς ἔξειμι θύραζε, χ456 ταὶ δ' ἐφόρεον δμῳαί, τίθεσαν δὲ θύραζε, φ387 ἐξ οἴκοιο Φιλοίτιος ἄλτο θύραζε Ω572 Πηλεΐδης δ' οἴκοιο λέων ὣς ἄλτο θύραζε, Σ29 δμῳαὶ...ἐκ δὲ θύραζε ἔδραμον.

[67] φ420-3: ἦκε δ' ὀϊστὸν / ἅντα τιτυσκόμενος, πελέκεων δ'οὐκ ἤμβροτε πάντων /πρώτης στειλειῆς, διὰ δ' ἀμπερὲς ἦλθε θύραζε /ἰός χαλκοβαρής

[68] Σ447: οὐδὲ θύραζε εἶων ἐξιέναι

[69] Ε694 :ἐκ δ' ἄρα οἱ μηροῦ δόρυ μείλινον ὦσε θύραζε

[70] Φ29: ποταμοῖο..τοὺς ἐξῆγε θύραζε, Φ237

[71] Π407: ἰχθὺν ἐκ πόντοιο θύραζε, ε410: ἁλὸς πολιοῖο

[72] To rehearse briefly his line of thought: if in the above quote *thuraze* can only be translated as 'outside', given the linguistic relation with the word for the door, *thure* was also conceived as 'outside'. See above pp. 161.

4.3.3. *HORAI AND HORAN* : 'TIME' AND 'SIGHT' AS CONTROL MECHANISMS

The experience of transition that *thure/pule* evokes induced a double anxiety in the Homeric Greeks. One the one hand – as we have just showed – a prolonged sojourn at the door/gate generates a fearful ambiguity. On the other hand, there is an anxiety that crossing of *thure/pule* will not result in the appropriate transformation and that this will destroy the established order of experience named *thalamos, megaron*, Hades, etc. Homeric Greeks responded to this double fear by setting up mechanisms of control, in order to guarantee the appropriate passage. These mechanisms involve the experience of 'time' and 'sight'. It would be interesting to analyse the general relation between fear and ambiguity in the Homeric context, but this is beyond the scope of the thesis. We will restrict ourselves to examining the specific mechanisms whereby ambiguity is eliminated, at least as this is presented in the text.

The mechanism exists as what might be described as a 'compression of time'. *Thure* and *pule*, being 'places' of transition, must be crossed quickly. In receiving the stranger, the host quickly approaches the door as soon as he sees him.[73] In α119,[74] Homer explicitly states that it is improper to let a visitor wait at the *thure, detha* (δηθά) 'for long'. In other passages verbs used to denote the crossing of doors[75] or gates,[76]

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[73] ξ34: came hurrying to him across the porch (ἔσσυτ' ἀνὰ πρόθυρον), δ37: the men hurried through the hall (μέγαροιο διέσσυτο) κ230,312: at once she opened the shining doors, and came out (αἶψ' ἐξελθοῦσα θύρας ὤϊξε φαεινὰς).

[74] α119-20: [Telemachos] saw Athene and went straight to the forecourt, the heart within him scandalized that a guest should still be standing at the doors ([Τηλέμαχος] εἶσιδ' Ἀθήνην, / βῆ δ' ἰθὺς προθύροιο, νεμεσσήθη δ' ἐνὶ θυμῷ / ξεῖνον δηθὰ θύρῃσιν ἐφεστάμεν)

[75] φ387: Philoitios sprang to his feet and went outside the house (ἐξ οἴκοιο Φιλοίτιος ἅλτο θύραζε), Ω572: the son of Peleus bounded to the door of the house like a lion (Πηλεΐδης δ' οἴκοιο λέων ὡς ἅλτο θύραζε), ο191: drove them out the front door (ἔλασαν προθύροιο), Ο123: sprung up and out through the forecourt (ὦρτο διὲκ προθύρου).

underline this speed: *seuo* (σεύω) 'set in violent motion, chase' / *elauno* (ἐλαύνω) 'to thrust, drive through / *ornumi* (ὄρνυμι) 'rouse, spring up' / *allomai* (ἅλλομαι) 'leap, spring' / *memaa* (μέμαα) 'press forward, eager, quick'. Because crossing of the threshold should be quick, we can refer to a 'compression of time', which operates to speed the transition and thus minimize the ambiguity and fear that accompanies it. However, it should be remembered that Homeric experience of time does not easily fit our concept of time, that is, a thing which can be divided into units of measurement. By contrast, the Homeric experience of time as the term *hore* (ὥρη) indicates, is related to the 'right time' within something occurs. It is illuminating that the *Horai* (Ὧραι) 'Hours', the personification of *hore*, are the guards at the Gates of Heaven, whereas these Gates are *automata* (αὐτόματα) 'they move of themselves'.[77] Thus a repetitive – always the same – opening and closing of the gates is achieved through a mechanical device which controls the time of crossing and eliminating – or we might better say repressing – any fear of ambiguity.

We might as well say that the 'compression of time', manifested at the *thure/pule*, announces a compression of 'space', in the sense that the experience of being at the door/gate is virtually eliminated. An example comes from the myth of the Labyrinth. The space of the Labyrinth is the experience of ambiguity and anxiety that the prolonged crossing of the *thure/pule* produces. Moreover, two ambiguous

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[76] B808: all the gates were opened and the people swept through them (πᾶσαι δ' ὠΐγνυντο πύλαι, ἐκ δ' ἔσσυτο ὁ λαὸς), H1: Hektor the glorious swept on through the gates (πυλέων ἐξέσσυτο φαίδιμος Ἕκτωρ), X413: storming out of the Dardanian gates (ἐξελθεῖν μεμαῶτα πυλάων Δαρδανίαων).

[77] E749-51, Θ393-5: and moving of themselves groaned the gates of the sky that the Hours guarded, those Hours to whose charge is given the huge sky and Olympos, to open up the dense darkness or again to close it. (αὐτόμαται δὲ πύλαι μύκον οὐρανοῦ ἂς ἔχον Ὧραι, / τῆς ἐπιτέτραπται μέγας οὐρανὸς Οὔλυμπός τε / ἠμὲν ἀνακλῖναι πυκινὸν νέφος ἠδ' ἐπιθεῖναι)

creatures are related to it, a woman, Ariadne, and a monster, the Minotaur. To return to the Homeric text, we may note that to compensate for the compression, another 'space' in front of the door has been developed. In the majority of Homeric passage related to *thure*, action 'takes place' at the *prothuron* (πρόθυρον).[78] Benveniste argues:

"...On the other hand, the material sense of ***dhwer-*** is reflected in certain ancient derivatives connected with architecture, like Greek *pro-thuron* (πρόθυρον) 'vestibule' (literally what is in front of the door)"[79]

However, *prothuron* should not be understood merely in relation to architectural topography. The term does not signify simply the 'space before' the door, but evokes the anticipation of the experience of the *thure*. *Prothuron* evokes a state of preparation for the changes that the crossing necessitates. To insure the change, a mechanism of control is set up, which includes mainly *horan* (ὁρᾶν), a visual activity, the guarding of *thure/pule*. The already established relation of the Homeric experience of vision with ambiguity and aggressiveness not only establishes vision as an appropriate mechanism of control, but generates its 'disembodiment' as well. This disembodiment of vision is imprinted on the configurations of the *thure/pule*.[80] Every door/gate has two surfaces with different configuration, for the crossing is done from both directions, and the changes required are of a different kind. Between these

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[78] It is worth noting that: "... tragedy happens in a *prothuron*, a space before a door. The characteristic tragic settings is some kind of boundary, usually a gate or door...and stage action often focuses on the door" PADEL, R., 1990: "Making Space Speak," *Nothing to Do with Dionysos? Athenian Drama In Its Social Context*, eds. J. Winkler, F. Zeitlin, Princeton University Press, pp. 355.

[79] BENVENISTE, E., op.cit. pp. 256.

[80] This category of the disembodiment of vision is spell out in more detail below, on section 4.3.3.2.

different 'facades'[81] there it is the 'collapsed space'[82] of the transition. In the Homeric text only one 'facade' is usually described, that which we might call 'entrance', because it involves the direction of crossing that necessitates major changes, and it is this the very same surface that becomes the site of 'disembodied vision'.

Let us see now the description of such a surface, the king Alkinoos' palace main door, so vividly presented in the Odyssey. Because this is the door of *domos*, the description refers to the surface facing towards the 'outside' which should be experienced as 'entrance' for the visitors.

η81-94: But now Odysseus came to the famous house of Alkinoos, but the heart pondered much in him as he stood before coming to the bronze threshold. For as from the sun the light goes or from the moon, such was the glory on the high-roofed house of great-hearted Alkinoos. Brazen were the walls run about it in either direction from the inner room to the door, with a cobalt frieze encircling, and golden were the doors that guarded the close of the palace, and silver were the pillars set in the brazen threshold, and there was a silver lintel above, and a golden handle, and dogs made out of gold and silver were on each

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[81] In Roman times Janus, the god with the double face was a gate-god, see TRUMBULL H.C., op.cit., pp. 97.

[82] In contemporary horror films, from this collapsed space of the threshold extraordinary creatures come into the world. It is also worth noting that the door, sight and monsters are related in films of this genre. C. Clover writes: "[In] Cronenberg's *Scanners*... Revok... drills a small hole in his forehead, just at the bridge of his nose, to let the 'people' out, and then covers it over with a bandage on which he paints an eye. A 'door,' he explains to Dr. Ruth, 'I put an eye on the door so they won't know it's a door, and they can't get back in because they see the eye.' What appears to be an eye, in other words, is in fact a mask-and not only a mask, but a secondary, counter defective mask, designed and installed after the fact to protect a natural and original vulnerability. ...To keep... [the 'people'] out, he must establish an appearance of awareness and vigilance (the 'eye'). Thus is established the notion of seeing as a weapon-awareness as an aggressive tool. Revok the monster scanner, using the 'eye' in his head to control and destroy others." CLOVER, C. 1992: *Men, Women and the Chain saws: Gender in the modern horror film*, BFI publishing, pp. 192.

side of it, fashioned by Hephaistos in his craftsmanship and cunning, to watch over the palace of great-hearted Alkinoos, being themselves immortal, and all their days they are ageless.[83]

Odysseus has only one choice in front of this glorious entrance: to cross it quickly[84] and unseen, for else he will be subjected to the laws of hospitality.[85] Athena wraps him in a deep mist[86] while he is passing by the Phaiakians to reach the queen. However, he can cross the threshold without being seen in the first place, because the guards do not see him. Silver and golden dogs *phulasso* (φυλάσσω) 'watch over' the palace. They are *phulakes* (φύλακες) 'guards', whereas 'real' dogs are *thuraoroi* (θυραωροί) 'guards of the *thure*. The very fact however that silver and golden dogs can substitute for live ones is a result of what we calling the disembodiment of vision. Before elaborating these issues we shall present the different kinds of watching over the *thure/pule* in the epics.

In the Homeric text four terms are used to denote the guards: *thuraoros* (θυραωρός) 'guard of the *thure*', *pulaoros* (πυλαωρός) 'guard of the *pule*', *phulax* (φύλαξ) 'guard',

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[83] η81-94: αὐτὰρ Ὀδυσσεὺς / Αλκινόου πρὸς δώματ' ἴε κλυτά; πολλὰ δέ οἱ κῆρ / ὀρμαιν' ἱσταμένῳ, πρὶν χάλκεον οὐδὸν ἱκέσθαι. / ὣς τε γὰρ ἠελίου αἴγλη πέλεν ἠὲ σελήνης / δῶμα καθ' ὑψερεφὲς μεγαλήτορος Αλκινόοιο. / χάλκεοι μὲν γὰρ τοῖχοι ἐληλέατ' ἔνθα καί ἔνθα, / ἐς μυχὸν ἐξ οὐδοῦ, περὶ θριγκὸς κυάνοιο; / χρύσειαι δὲ θύραι πυκινὸν δόμον ἐντὸς ἔεργον· / ἀργύρεοι δὲ σταθμοὶ ἐν χαλκέῳ ἕστασαν οὐδῷ, / ἀργύρεον δ' ἐφ' ὑπερθύριον, χρυσέη δὲ κορώνη. / χρύσεοι δ' ἑκάτερθε καὶ ἀργύρεοι κύνες ἦσαν, / οὓς Ἥφαιστος ἔτευξε ἰδυίῃσι πραπίδεσσι / δῶμα φυλασσέμεναι μεγαλήτορος Αλκινόοιο, / ἀθανάτους ὄντας καὶ ἀγήρως ἤματα πάντα.

[84] η135: lightly {quickly} he stepped over the threshold and went on into the palace (καρπαλίμως ὑπὲρ οὐδὸν ἐβήσετο δώματος εἴσω). Lattimore translates *karpalimos* as 'lightly', but in fact the term has the meaning of 'swift, quick' and it is used as an epithet of feet.

[85] See chapter on *megaron*. It is interesting also to note "...the custom in Greece of welcoming a victor in the Olympian games into the city through a breach in the walls, instead of causing him to enter by the gates, with its implied subjection to all the laws of hospitality." TRUMBULL H.C., op.cit., pp. 7.

[86] η139-40: but now long-suffering great Odysseus went on through the house, wearing still the deep mist Athene had drifted about him (αὐτὰρ ὁ βῆ διὰ δῶμα πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεὺς πολλὴν ἠέρ' ἔχων, ἣν οἱ περίχευεν Αθήνη).

and *skopos* (σκοπός) 'watcher'. Each of the above terms differentiates the guards not only by the places they guard, but also by the senses through which they perceive when in action. With the exception of *phulax* the other three are related to sight.

Thuraoros (θυραωρός) is literally he who *horan* (ὁρᾶν) 'watches' over the *thure*. The term occurs only once in the text (X64) and refers to the dogs. But, the fact that "a newly arrived stranger confronts a guard dog at the door"[87] and nobody else, is evidence that only dogs were regularly employed as guards *en protesi thuresin* (ἐν πρώτῃσι θύρῃσιν) 'at the first door' of the house. The ambivalent role of the dog as faithful but possibly hostile to its master situates it at the *thure*. Priam denotes this fear when he says:

X66-71: "my dogs in front of my doorway will rip me raw, after some man with stroke of the sharp bronze spear, or with spearcast, has torn the life out of my body; those dogs I raised in my halls to be at my table, to guard my gates, who will lap my blood in the savagery of their anger and then lie down in my courts." [88]

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[87] "This motif occurs five times in the Odyssey in a variety of forms...The immortal gold and silver dogs, the work of Hephaistus, that guard the palace of the Phaeacian king Alkinous (η91-94)... The eerie reception of Odysseus' men by the enchanted wolves and mountain lions surroundings Circe's palace, which fawn on the men and wag their tails at them like dogs greeting their master (κ212-19)... The four dogs of Eumaeus, which like wild beasts, attack Odysseus and force him to sit helplessly on the ground (ξ21)... Later upon the arrival of Telemachus, these same dogs do not bark but with fawning and tail-wagging welcome a master whom they recognize (π4-10)... [while] these same dogs, upon the arrival of Athena, cower, with a whimper, to the other side of the steadying (π162-63... Odysseus' reception by his old dog Argus (ρ291-327)." REECE, S., 1993: *The Stranger's Welcome: Oral theory and the Aesthetics of the Homeric Hospitality Scene*, The University of Michigan Press, pp. 14-5.

[88] X66-71: αὐτόν δ' ἄν πύματόν με κύνες πρώτῃσι θύρῃσιν /'ωμηστὰι ἐρύουσιν, ἐπεί κέ τις ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ / τύψας ἠὲ βαλὼν ῥεθέων ἐκ θυμὸν ἕληται, / οὓς τρέφον ἐν μεγάροισι τραπεζῆας θυραωρούς, / οἳ κ' ἐμὸν αἷμα πιόντες ἀλύσσοντες περὶ θυμῷ / κείσοντ' ἐν προθύροισι.

For its savagery the dog is considered an ambivalent animal, characterized as *lusseter* (λυσσητήρ) 'one who rages'; a term related etymologically to *lukos* (λύκος) 'wolf' the 'symbol' of blood-thirstiness in the text.[89] The ever present possibility of becoming a wild beast again – even though the dog has been tamed and rendered obedient to his master – invests the dog with ambiguity,[90] and puts it at the door. Odysseus addresses the suitors – another ambivalent category – as 'dogs'.[91] In the text, the term dog also denotes shame, and is mainly applied to women.[92] In λ441-56, the ghost of Agamemnon – killed by his wife – advises Odysseus not to share with his wife everything he knows. "Tell her part of it but let the rest be hidden in silence,"[93] for, he explains "there is no trusting in women."[94] In this phrase the fear of the unpredictable 'nature' of women is evident. But although women are an ambiguous category, and so comparable to dogs, a woman's place is certainly not at the door and especially not at the front door. A woman's place is where she will preserve her domesticated status: in *thalamos*; where the term *thalamos* evokes a field of experiences which is dictated by the reproduction of fixity. Though it constitutes part of the experience of *domos, thalamos* may or may not correspond to a specific location within the Homeric house. The only woman in the epics who opens the door

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[89] See Δ471, Λ720.

[90] On the dog as a taboo animal, and the association with the woman see: LEACH, E., 1964: "Anthropological Aspects of Language: Animal Categories and Verbal Abuse," *New Directions in the study of Language*, ed. E. Lenneberg, MIT Press, pp. 23-61. On dogs in Homer: REDFIELD, J., op. cit., pp. 192-203, and GOLDHILL, S., 1988, op. cit., see also above note 11.

[91] χ35: ὦ κύνες.

[92] Z344, τ91.

[93] λ441: τῷ νῦν μή ποτε καὶ σὺ γυναικί περ ἤπιος εἶναι / μηδ' οἱ ἅπαντα πιφαυσκέμεν, ὃν κ' ἐῢ εἰδῇς, / ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν φάσθαι, τὸ δὲ καὶ κεκρυμμένον εἶναι."

[94] λ456 : ἐπεὶ οὐκέτι πιστὰ γυναιξίν.

is Circe and she is of course a witch. The case of Klytaimnestra is used by Homer only as an excuse for the mistrust of the women.[95]

The second term *pulaoros* (πυλαωρός) is literally he who *horan* 'watches' over the *pulai* and occurs only twice in the text. In Φ530 *pulaoroi* open and close the gates of Troy,[96] and in Ω681 where Hermes tries to escort Priam from the Greek camp without being seen by the guards.[97] They are characterized as *agakleitoi* (ἀγακλειτοί) 'illustrious, glorious', in the first occurrence, and *hieroi* (ἱεροί) 'strong, mighty, holy, sacred', in the second.

The *phulax* can stand either in front of a *thure* or of a *pule*.[98] What distinguishes him from the guard proper of these locations i.e. *thuraoros* and *pulaoros,* is that he guards during the night. The danger of falling asleep,[99] or of 'failing to perceive' *lanthanein* (λανθάνειν) [100] during a 'very dark night'(νύξ

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[95] In λ432, Agamemnon says that "she with thoughts surpassingly grisly splashed the shame on herself and the rest of her sex, on women still to come, even on the one whose acts are virtuous." (ἥ δ' ἔξοχα λυγρὰ ἰδυῖα / οἵ τε κατ' αἶσχος ἔχευε καὶ ἐσσομένῃσιν ὀπίσσω / θηλυτέρῃσι γυναιξί, καὶ ἥ κ' εὐεργὸς ἔῃσιν.)

[96] Φ530-2: [Priam] beside the wall set in motion the glorious guards of the gateway; 'Hold the gates wide open in your hands, so that our people in their flight can get inside the city...' (Πρίαμος... ὀτρύνων παρὰ τεῖχος ἀγακλειτοὺς πυλαωρούς, / ''πεπταμένας ἐν χερσὶ πύλας ἔχετ' εἰς ὅ κε λαοὶ / ἔλθωσι προτὶ ἄστυ πεφυζότες).

[97] Ω680-1: how to escort King Priam from the ships and not be seen by the devoted gate-guards (ὅπως Πρίαμον βασιλῆα / νηῶν ἐκπέμψειε λαθὼν ἱερούς πυλαωρούς).

[98] K127: with the sentries before the gates (πρὸ πυλάων ἐν φυλάκεσσι) also I477 in relation to *thure*, see note 99.

[99] K181-2: they found the leaders of the pickets by no means asleep but all of them were awake, and sat by their weapons (οὐδὲ μὲν εὗδοντας φυλάκων ἡγήτορας εὗρον ἀλλ' ἐγρηγορτὶ σὺν τεύχεσιν ἧατο πάντες), Ω444-7: there were sentries, who had just begun to make their dinner, but about these the courier Argeiphontes drifted sleep, on all, and quickly opened the gate, and shoved back the door-bars, and brought in Priam (οἱ δὲ νέον περὶ δόρπα φυλακτῆρες πονέοντο, / τοῖσι δ' ἐφ' ὕπνον ἔχευε διάκτορος Ἀργειοφόντης / πᾶσιν, ἄφαρ δ' ὤϊξε πύλας καὶ ἀπῶσεν ὀχῆας, / ἐς δ' ἄγαγε Πρίαμόν).

[100] I474-7: but when the night had come to me in its darkness, then I broke the close-compacted doors of the chamber and got away...unnoticed by the guarding men (ἐπήλυθε νὺξ ἐρεβεννή / καὶ τότ' ἐγὼ θαλάμοιο θύρας πυκινῶς ἀραρυίας / ῥῆξας ἐξῆλθον... / λαθὼν φύλακάς τ' ἄνδρας), Ω566: he could not get by the pickets (οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν φυλάκους λάθοι). *Lanthano* (λανθάνω) in the Homeric text has the meaning of 'escape notice

ἐρεβεννή) is always underlined by the text. The ability to 'hear' *akouo* (ἀκούω)/*aio* (ἀΐω), is more important than sight. His task too is to preserve[101] the situation as it is, because his ability to harm is reduced. Sight, as we shall show later on, is aggressive and 'he hardly sees'.

The *skopos* (σκοπός) watches the 'geographical' space, or the interior of the house. In both cases he/she does not remain in a place all the time, as the other guards do. In the case of geographical space, it is always a man that *skopiazein* (σκοπιάζειν) 'spies from a high place' as he stays at *skopie* (σκοπίη) 'look-out place', on a rock or mountain. He must be confident in the speed of his feet in order to run and inform the others of what he saw.[102] In the context of the house, the text inform us that *skopos* of the house is a woman, though an 'aged one' *greus* (γρῆυς).[103] Eurukleia, an old woman, is the *skopos* of the female servants in Odysseus' *megaron.*[104] Aged women enjoy freedom of movement and in the context of the epics men trust them.[105] Both Telemachos and Odysseus made Eurukleia their confidante, unlike Penelope.

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of, unperceived by' but also of 'make forget, forget.' The implication of forget as related to perception is quite intriguing.

[101] It is worth noting that in the Homeric text *phulake* (φυλακή) is the 'out-post' whereas in later Greek the 'prison.'

[102] B792-3: who confident in the speed of his feet kept watch for the Trojans aloft the ancient burial mound (Τρώων σκοπὸς ἷζε ποδωκείησι πεποιθὼς / τύμβῳ ἐπ' ἀκροτάτῳ.....δέγμενος).

[103] The status of aged women is different from that of the aged men who keep their place in *megaron* and enjoy *geras* (γέρας) 'the meal of honor.'

[104] χ393-6: [Telemachos] opened the door and called out to the nurse, Eurekleia: 'Rise and come here, aged woman, you who watch over all that the serving women do here in our palace ([Τηλέμαχος]... κινήσας δὲ θύρην προσέφη τροφὸν Εὐρύκλειαν· / ''δεῦρο δὴ ὅρσο, γρηῦ παλαιγενές, ἥ τε γυναικῶν / δμῳάων σκοπός ἐσσι κατὰ μέγαρ' ἡμετεράων).

[105] See BREMMER, J,. 1987: "The old women of Ancient Greece", in *Sexual Asymmetry: Studies in Ancient Society,* eds. J. Blok, P. Mason, Amsterdam, pp. 192.

Eurukleia is *periphron* (περίφρων) 'very sensible,'[106] and she calls other servants *kunes* (κύνες) 'bitches'.[107] This freedom of movement may well be attributed to their special status. Old women had outlived their biological usefulness.[108] Having lost their fertility and their femininity they belong to a category between male and female. As such they become persons who are proper door and key-keepers inside the house, though they can not watch over the main door.[109] Eurukleia controls – opens and locks[110] but also stays behind closed doors spying[111] on the house. Her ability to watch and keep her mouth shut make her a *skopos*. No 'winged words' escapes the

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[106] τ353-7: I do have one old woman, whose thoughts are prudent...circumspect Eurekleia (ἔστι δέ μοι γρηῒς πυκινὰ φρεσὶ μήδε' ἔχουσα... περίφρων Εὐρύκλεια). It is as a result of being 'full of years' [γρηΐ δέ μιν εικυία παλαιγενέι Γ386, γρηῢ παλαιγενές χ395, παλαιή τ348], 'that old women are considered wise within the text [τ346: not unless there is some aged and virtuous woman whose heart has had to endure as many troubles as mine has (εἰ μή τις γρηῢς ἐστι παλαιή, κεδνὰ ἰδυῖα, / ἥ τις δὴ τέτληκε τόσα φρεσὶν ὅσσα τ' ἐγώ περ)].

[107] τ372.

[108] J. Bremmer argues that "Women existed in order to serve the males whether for sexual pleasure or the higher interest of producing an heir. An old women resembled an object that had passed its usefulness and could now be discarded." BREMMER J., op.cit., pp. 203.

[109] In the Homeric text there is no evidence of old women or even men, opening or guarding the main door of the house. This role is attributed to dogs. However in classical times the situation is different:
"For the male Athenians it was totally unthinkable that a decent women who had not yet reached the menopause would open the door and in this way expose herself to a perfect stranger. In his *Characters* (28.3), Theophrastos stresses that only courtesans would open the door in person. A decent female porter therefore had to be an *old* woman. It even looks as if old women were indeed regularly employed as door-keepers, since in Euripides' Troiades (194f.) Hekabe dolefully wonders whether, now that she is a prisoner of war, she will have to keep watch in the hall...In the mythological tradition, this custom is most probably reflected in the story that the Graai (Old Women) were custodians of the Gorgones."
BREMMER J., Ibid, pp. 193.

[110] α441-2: [Eurekleia] went out of the room, and pulled the door to behind her with a silver hook, and with a strap drew home the door bolt ([Εὐρύκλεια]... βῆ ῥ' ἴμεν ἐκ θαλάμοιο, θύρην δ' ἐπέρυσσε κορώνῃ / ἀργυρέῃ, ἐπί δὲ κληῖδ' ἐτάνυσσεν ἱμάντι).

[111] The role of *skopos* as spy can be seen also in the case where Hephaistos uses Sun to spy on his unfaithful wife Aphrodite. The Sun tells him about the meeting of the lovers and thus Hephaistos is able to trap them [θ302 : for Helios watch for him, and told him the story (Ἥλιος γάρ οἱ σκοπιὴν ἔχεν εἶπέ τε μῦθον)].

'fence of her teeth', her words are 'without wings'[112] and remain inside her. S*keptesthai* (σκέπτεσθαι), a verb related to *skopos*, means in later Greek 'to think.' In the Homeric text *skeptesthai* indicate not only a prying gaze, "a shooting phenomenon, that surveys and irrevocably grasps its object once found,"[113] but also the ability to keep secret the knowledge she has gained. Although Eurukleia has no power of action, she becomes powerful by conveying to her master the secrets of the house that she alone knows. Odysseus orders her to speak and identify the female servants who dishonored him and who therefore deserve to die. Their lives are in her hands and she promises she will speak the 'truth' *aletheie* (ἀληθείη).[114] Truth thus denotes a continuous surveillance, an alertness of the senses,[115] from which nothing escapes *lanthanein,* and includes the ability to keep the information acquired concealed[116] – as it were in *lethe* – until the moment of its revelation. If for the *phulax* it is very easy to *lanthanein* 'to escape notice', the *skopos* – being in

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[112] χ398: she had no winged words for an answer (τῇ δ' ἄπτερος ἔπλετο μῦθος).

[113] "The occurrence of this verb are few (three) in Homer, but nevertheless extremely interesting. In Odyssey,... between Scylla and Charybdis Odysseus and his crew look suddenly (*idomen)* with terror at Charibdis as Scylla snatches away six men. 'Throwing a sharp, spying glance into the ship [*skepsamenos d' es nea]* and at the same time after my companions [*meth' hetairous*], at that moment" says Odysseus, "I grasped with my *noos* their feet and hands above as there were being raised aloft"(μ245-9)...[In Π361] Hector 'spies out' the sources of danger. His experience consists of a personal, almost physical 'thrust' aimed at the sources of danger, whether they be sound or the direct sight of oncoming spears. His experience is a synaesthetic one. It makes no complete distinction between sound and sight. His 'spying'... is something more than in what we designate as visual perception...*Skeptesthai* [as] kind of bold, snatching hiddeness...the accustomed duty of sitting sentinel (*skopos* hire). B792 To snatch information and run. And it is not just any piece of information; it is true and sure." PRIER R.A., 1989: *Thauma Idesthai: The Phenomenology of Sight and Appearance in Archaic Greek*, Florida State University Press, pp. 33.

[114] χ420: I will tell you the whole truth (ἀληθείην καταλέξω).

[115] Note the experiential quality of truth in Homer in relation to later metaphysical speculations.

continuous alertness, perceiving and keeping his knowledge – is able to speak true. Interestingly enough *lethe* (λήθη B33) 'forgetfulness', is related to the gates: *Lethos* is the son of *Puleos* (B843, P288) and "the name of the son is an epithet for his father."[117]

However it is not only the sight of the guards which is located at the *thure* or the *pule*. When Hephaistos, with the help of the penetrating sight/light of the *skopos* sun, discovers his wife with her lover, the gods come and stand in front of the door laughing, as they 'gaze upon'(*eis-oran*) the trapped lovers. This is not a spectacle for the women, and all goddesses should remain in their homes instead.[118]

In Γ149, old men sit at the gates of Troy, discussing and watching the fight that takes place outside the walls. Priam invites Helen to look (ἴδῃ). The verb used is again *horan* (ὁρᾶν). From the same place Priam and Hekabe watch the death of their son. In X25, Priam (ἴδεν ὀφθαλμοῖσι) 'watched with his eyes' Achilles coming to kill his son, and both he and his wife try to persuade Hektor to enter the gates, where he could be safe. Hekuba in despair, shows her bare breast as a last resort to persuade him. Women's breasts can be their compensation for their un-powered gaze, as we shall see later on.[119]

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[116] Hence the conception that the truth is hidden in the body, made torture a means to recover it. See DU BOIS P., 1990: *Torture and Truth*, Routledge.

[117] SVENBRO J., 1993: *Phrasikleia: An Anthropology of Reading in Ancient Greece*, Cornell University Press, pp. 78.

[118] θ324-7: θηλύτεραι δὲ θεαὶ μένον αἰδοῖ οἶκοι ἑκάστη. ϡ ἔσταν δ' ἐν προθύροισι θεοί, δωτῆρες ἑάων· ϡ ἄσβεστος δ' ἄρ' ἐνῶρτο γέλως μακάρεσσι θεοῖσι ϡ τέχνας εἰσορόωσι πολύφρονος Ἡφαίστοιο. Note that εἰσοράω means 'look upon, gaze upon steadily, behold, endure the sight, look on with admiration, revere, respect'.

[119] X80-3. Note that: "Anthropologists tell us that iconographically pictures of eyes and pictures of breasts are identical." DE FOREST, M., 1993: "Clytemnestra's Breast and the Evil Eye", *Woman's Power, Man's Game*, ed. M. De Forest, Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, pp. 131.

4.3.3.1. THE AMBIGUITY AND AGGRESSIVENESS OF SIGHT

J-P. Vernant presents in an exemplary way the Greek experience of vision, when he writes:

"...for the Greeks, vision was only possible if there existed a total reciprocity between what was seen and the one who saw, conveying if not a complete identity between the two, then at least a very close kinship. Because the sun in the sky illuminated all things, it, too, was an eye that saw everything; and if one's eye saw, it was because it radiated a sort of light comparable to that of the sun. The ray of light that emanated from the object and made it visible was of the same nature as the optical ray that issued from the eye and enabled it to see. The emitting object and the receiving subject, the light rays and the optical rays, belonged to the same category of reality, about which we can say that the physical-psychic opposition was foreign to it, or that it was both on physical and psychic order. Light was vision, and vision was luminous...the language itself testified to this ambivalence. The verbs that describe the acts of seeing and watching, *blepein, derkesthai, leussein*, used as direct objects not only the thing the gaze focused on, but also the igneous-luminous substance projected by the eye just as one might throw a projectile. And these rays of fire, which we would call physical, carried with them the feelings, passions, and conditions of the soul, which we call psychic, of the one who was looking. The same verbs also use as grammatical objects terms denoting terror, savagery, murdering fury. The gaze, when it reached the object, transmitted to it what the viewer, upon seeing it, experienced."[120]

On one hand, it is the specific relation, described by Vernant, a *quasi*-identification between the seeing and the seen that invests sight with ambiguity. On the other it is the relation between light and sight that makes vision harmful and also permits what we are calling 'disembodiment of vision'. This ambiguity and aggressiveness binds together sight and the experience of the *thure/pule* by establishing vision as an adequate mechanism of control. The vocabulary of watching over *thure/pule* testifies to that. *Skopos* not only denotes the person who gazes, but also the target, the object

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[120] VERNANT, J-P., 1995: "Introduction" *The Greeks*, ed. J.P. Vernant, The University of Chicago Press, pp. 13.

on which one fixes one's eye. The reciprocity between the seeing and the seen, the gazing and the gazed at, is illuminating. The contest that Penelope sets the suitors in φ75-6, is to take Odysseus' bow to string it "with the greatest ease, and send an arrow clean through all the twelve axes", i.e., to shoot though the holes of the axes so as the arrow would 'come out' *thuraze* (θύραζε) – literally at the door.[121] During the battle the warrior has to see a chink in the shining armor and shoot the arrow through it, in order to wound a rival. The sight denoted by the word *skopos* is a sight that pierces, a penetrating stare. This way of seeing makes the 'subject' and the 'object' collide. The sight of the *skopos* of the house penetrates all the openings of the house. *Ope, opaia*[122] is both the sight and the opening.[123] The eye and the door become identical, by way of the verb *horao* that indicates a "durative, intense, lengthy regard."[124] The site of the sight is the opening of the door or the gate, the point of transition, the place of change. Furthermore, the person who sees, the way of seeing, the place from which he sees, and what he sees are never apart: *Scopos -scopiazein - scopie - scopos.*

Moreover, the aggressiveness of sight is due to the relation between sight and light. The phrase "glancing and shooting fire from his eyes (πῦρ δ' ὀφθαλμοῖσι δεδορκώς τ446), describe in the epics, the experience of sight, as light emitted from the eyes. [125] In the context of the battle many linguistic expressions reveal the aggressiveness of the sight/light. R.A Prier writes:

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[121] φ420-3: ἦκε δ' οἵστὸν / ἄντα τιτυσκόμενος, πελέκεων δ'οὐκ ἤμβροτε πάντων / πρώτης στειλειῆς, διὰ δ' ἀμπερὲς ἦλθε θύραζε ἰός χαλκοβαρής.

[122] *Opea* – which stems from the verb of seeing (*opopa*) – denotes in the Homeric text, an opening, a hole, while *peri-ope* the look-out place.

[123] CHANTRAINE P., op.cit., s.v. ὀπή.

[124] PRIER R.A., op.cit., pp. 269.

[125] "The Greeks believed that the glance had power, mainly power to harm. According to popular optic theory, the eyes emitted rays, which made vision possible. Plutarch (Quaestiones Convivales 682f-683a)

"As Achilles shows himself without armor to the Trojans in Iliad Σ205-14, Athena throws her *aegis* about him and pours around his head a cloud of gold: 'she fired from him an all appearing blaze (*phloga pamphanoosan*), and as signal fires burn after the setting of the sun, so the beam blazed up for all to behold themselves'...The hero actually emits, or more exactly 'appears as', a beam of light. His power lies in his armor. From his shield appears afar a gleam/beam (*selas*) like the moon (T374). Homer compares this far-reaching gleam to that of a burning fire *(selas ..kaiomeno pyros)*. His helmet, waving with golden plumes, is like a star in appearance (T38-2)... His eyes among these arms appeared forth terribly under their lids as if beams of light (T16-7). Achilles is not only reflecting light by or in his armor (we are not dealing here essentially with any kind of physical principle of reflection), he also actually is seen to emit light from his body. He is light incarnate...Achilles then becomes light himself and as such he is powerful that no other man dare look upon face to face (*anten eisideein*)." Prier also argues in relation to *derkesthai* the verb that "describes the glance of light and terror. This particular linguistic experience entails the darting, sharp and deadly glance of a snake (*drakon*) and, if one wishes to bring etymology to bear, also a connection with light itself: the streaming of light from the eyes. There is moreover, specific evidence in the Iliad (M202-9) of a close relationship between *drakon* and *teras* (marvel, portent), the "power of sight" and appearance that experientially links the glancing "that" to the perceiving "this". It is justifiable, therefore, to regard as identical the flashing fury of the archaic hero (*deinon paptainon*: ω179) and the terror of a Gorgon on a hero's shield (*deinon derkomene* Λ37)... Sight and light become one."[126]

Eyes and shining surfaces both project light, they are both aggressive and can harm an enemy in battle. The bright shields (*sakeon phaeinon*), blind the enemy in N340-2. In a different context another term *opis* (ὄπις) 'sight' also denotes harm. It refers to the

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gives a scientific basis for belief in the evil eye by adapting Democritus' theory of simulacra, emanations from the eye (Diels 77). The English language reveals the prevalence of this notion: words for light (flash, flare, gleam, glow) are also used to describe the glance. Moreover, the rays emitted by the eye had physical force in that they could transmit the observer's feelings. That is, the glance had the power to foster or harm the person or object observed. Consequently, a glance charged with envy and malice would naturally hurt what was viewed. For this reason, Plutarch likened φθόνος to poisoned arrows (Quaestiones Convivales 681e). "pp.132...Zeus' thunderbolt, his traditional weapon, is hurled not by his powerful hand, but from his eyes (Ag.469-70)... Seeing involves both power and danger." DE FOREST M., op.cit., pp. 141.

[126] PRIER R.A., op.cit., passim.

sight of the Gods, and the Gods' gaze always entails punishment.[127] We would suggest a further recognition of the aggression of sight – this time in relation to the veil. We now want to propose a different approach to the issue of veil and the feminine gaze in Homer, an issue not unrelated to this analysis. The following quotation can be described as the conventional approach to veil and femininity within scholarship:

"Women live relatively secluded lives inside their homes and are veiled and/or chaperoned when they go out...In the epics both married and unmarried women are veiled in public and are accompanied by female servants (Γ141, α331, ζ100, σ182). Even Kalypso, together with Odysseus, is veiled (ε232), and in an absolute crisis Andromache and Hekabe do not appear unveiled on the walls of Troy (X406, 468)_ When they do leave the inner apartments, they should not expose themselves fully to the view of unknown and potentially dangerous men. When Homeros speaks of the beauties of the female face he speaks of hidden charms."[128]

Furthermore, within the context of ritual the veil is interpreted as a means, and symbol of separation between the woman and whatever lies outside. The normal interpretation is that this separation protects the woman from the gaze of others (usually men). But given the aggressiveness of the gaze we might think differently. A veil that covers the eyes negates the female gaze. The light that flashes from the eyes is impeded, does not reach the other and thus is neutralized; it is unable to harm. A

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[127] Π385-8: when Zeus sends down the most violent water in deep rage against mortals...because they care nothing for what the gods think (ὅτε λαβρότατον χέει ὕδωρ / Ζεύς, ὅτε δή ῥ' ἀνδρεσσι κοτεσσάμενος χαλεπήνῃ, / οἳ... θεῶν ὄπιν οὐκ ἀλέγοντες). It is interesting that Lattimore replaces the Gods' gaze with Gods' thinking because contemporary conceptions consider the two activities as separate and corresponding to different parts of a divided body. Note also the fear that the gaze entails, but again Lattimore translates it as 'regarded' which has to be understood literally and not only as a mental activity - thinking: ξ88 there falls strong fear of how they may be regarded (τοῖς ὄπιδος κρατερὸν δέος ἐν φρεσὶ πίπτει).

[128] NAEREBOUNT, F.G., 1987: "Male-Female Relationships in the Homeric Epics", *Sexual Asymmetry: Studies in Ancient Society,* eds. J. Blok, P. Mason, Amsterdam, pp. 119.

veiled woman is only partially protected, since the gaze of others can reach her, and there is no evidence that the gaze's capacity to harm is limited to catching the other's eye. But what is more important is that the veiled woman has been divested of her power to harm with her gaze. It was not just that women were considered vulnerable, but rather that they were considered to exercise with their eyes a powerful fascination. This indicates the ambivalence with which femininity was understood.[129]

In battle the shining shield was not only defensive but indeed, an aggressive weapon, to blind the enemy. When Hektor considers surrendering himself to Achilles, of laying aside his shield and his weapons, he compares his naked self to a woman.[130] When the extra-eye, the extra shining harmful gaze of the Gorgo on his shield is removed, he becomes powerless, like the women who are deprived of the power of their gaze. The speculation that "*anthropos* (ἄνθρωπος) 'human', is the *aner* (ἀνήρ) 'man' with *ops* (ὄψ) 'face/sight'",[131] is revealing. The veiled women, with hidden face/sight, can be assimilated to animals.[132] They become *kunes* 'dogs'. When a woman dares to gaze she is *kunopis*, 'has the face/sight of a dog'; disaster will occur, the existing social order will be overturned. Unfaithful wives Aphrodite, Helen and Klytemnestra, all them have the dog's the gaze (*kunopis*). The veil then constitutes a surface, a protective facade not for the woman who wears it, but for

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[129] "Women and children seem to have been accounted by all as the most liable to injury, while also some women were held to be the most powerful fascinators" ELWORTHY, T.F., 1895: *The Evil Eye*, J. Murray, London, pp. 14.

[130] X124-5: but he kill me naked so, as if I were a woman, once I stripped my armour from me (κτενέει δέ με γυμνὸν ἐόντα αὖτως ὥς τε γυναῖκα, ἐπεί κ' ἀπὸ τεύχεα δύω).

[131] PRIER R.A., op.cit., pp. 71.

[132] "Women who are to be exchanged between men as a marker of that culture, approach the status of the other within. Men's hope is that women will remain silent possession, token of exchange....A civilization which excluded women from humanness and made them both invisible and analogous to animals." DU BOIS P., *Centaurs and Amazons*, op. cit., pp. 104.

those who might otherwise be looked at by her. The armor of the warrior, the surface of the *thure/pule* with the gleaming precious metals become sites of disembodied vision and thus a mechanism of control, or to be more accurate a device of defense.

4.3.3.2. **DISEMBODIED VISION**

Given the assimilation of sight and light, gleaming golden and silver dogs can be as effective guards as the live dogs. In the description of the front door in Alkinoos' palace, the shining surface of the door has the aggression of a gaze. In the context of battle, the shield is the site of another gaze, that of the Gorgo. The figure of the Gorgo on the surface of the shield is doubly effective. Not only does it possesses a terrifying gaze but it shines too. The story of Persus who cut off Gorgo's head, can be interpreted as the transformation of the Gorgo into a mask. Already in Homer the severed head of the Gorgo guards Hades. Within the head dwells a shining surface: the place of a disembodied gaze. *Thureos* (θυρεός), in the Homeric text, indicates the stone that closes the opening of a cave. In later times it denotes the shield – with all the representations of monsters on it – that is situated above the door, upon the opening of the relieving arch. The image of Gorgo is used to guard the entrance of various buildings, temples, as well as houses.[133]

The shining 'exterior' surfaces of a door/gate are the site of a 'disembodied vision'; the sight of the guards is substituted by the shining surface – the *glene* (γλήνη) 'the pupil of the eye' is replaced by the *glenea* (γλήνεα) 'shining objects'. As the light blinds, the shining door/gate, like the shield, becomes a device of defense.

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[133] In Athens, images of Gorgons stood on the rooftops and repelled the invader with their sharp teeth and bulging eyes....Dogs were used quite loosely for monsters.....the role of protective guardian shared by dog and Gorgon" DE FOREST M., op.cit., pp. 135.

The precious materials upon the front door of a palace represent the power of the king, not because of their monetary value, but because of their blazing power to harm and thus defend their owner. The gaze of the guards and the disembodied gaze of the shining surface can defend because they are aggressive.[134] The experience of *thure/pule* entails aggression as a mechanism to insure the change that the crossing always necessitates. This can be illustrated with a final example which presents the consequences of a violent crossing, that is one without a change. It is the passage where Hector eliminates the defense and destroys the gate of the Greek camp:

M460- 71: and the gates groaned deep, and the door-bars could not hold, but the leaves were smashed to a wreckage of splinters under the stone's impact. Then glorious Hektor burst in with dark face like sudden night, but he shone with the ghastly glitter of bronze that girded his skin, and carried two spears in his hands. None could have stood up against him, and stopped him, except the gods, when he burst in the gates; and his eyes flashed fire. Whirling, he called out across the battle to the Trojans to climb over the wall, and they obeyed his urgency. Immediately some swarmed over the wall, while others swept in through the wrought gateways, and the Dannans scattered in terror among their hollow ships, and clamor incessant rose up.[135]

Hektor has changed 'places', but without changing his role, so that the normal distinction between the two spaces established by the gate, is violently obliterated. Hektor, bursting through the gates, becomes light itself.[136] He has become the shining

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[134] See LACAN, J., 1977: *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, The Hogarth Press, pp. 118.

[135] M460- 71 : μέγα δ' ἀμφὶ πύλαι μύκον, οὐδ' ἄρ' ὀχῆες / ἐσχεθέτην, σανίδες δὲ διέτμαγεν ἄλλυδις ἄλλη /λᾶος ὑπὸ ῥιπῆς, ὁ δ' ἄρ' ἔσθορε φαίδιμος Ἕκτωρ / νυκτὶ θοῇ ἀτάλαντος ὑπώπια, λάμπε δὲ χαλκῷ / σμερδαλέῳ, τὸν ἕεστο περὶ χροΐ, δοιὰ δὲ χερσὶ / δοῦρ' ἔχεν· οὔ κέν τίς μιν ἐρύκακεν ἀντιβολήσας /νόσφι θεῶν ὅτ' ἐσᾶλτο πύλας· πυρὶ δ' ὄσσε δεδήει. / κέκλετο δὲ Τρώεσιν ἐλιξάμενος καθ' ὅμιλον / τεῖχος ὑπερβαίνειν· τοὶ δ' ὀτρύνοντι πίθοντο. / αὐτίκα δ' οἱ μὲν τεῖχος ὑπέρβασαν, οἱ δὲ κατ' αὐτὰς / ποιητὰς ἐσέχυντο πύλας· Δαναοὶ δὲ φόβηθεν' / νῆας ἀνὰ γλαφυράς, ὅμαδος δ' ἀλίαστος ἐτύχθη.

[136] His eyes shoot fire that blinds, and thus darkens the eyes of who sees him. Hence the shining Hektor is also dark like the night.

surface of the defense. The two facades of the gate have become one. There is no space in-between the two for the gate itself has been breached. The Dannans flee – *phobos* (φόβος) is both the fleeing and the fear – as they have lost their place, they have lost their role. The destruction of the gate has destroyed the order of normality.

We hope that what constitutes the major difference between the Homeric experience of the *thure/pule* and the contemporary concept of door/gate is reflected in our mode of analysis. The particularity of the Homeric experience of the door/gate is that the terms *thure/pule* evoke both a category of experience, and the experience of a specific thing. The experience is that of the transition from one category of experience to another. Ambiguity and anxiety are unleashed by this transition and thus mechanisms of control such as time and sight are set up to eliminate ambiguity and insure change. By contrast, previous approaches to the topic reflect contemporary conceptions of door/gate, and discussed them in terms of separation, function and symbol. This ignores the issue of transition as such. We believe this to be an indication of a repression, a sign of the anxiety with which the experience of door/gate is still linked.

5

MEGARON

'HALL'
TRANSFORMATION AS CENTER

5.1. Introduction
5.2. *Megaron* and the Homeric Rituals
5.2.1. Hospitality as a Process of Transformation
5.2.2. Feasting and Incorporation
5.2.3. Mourning and the Re-constitution of *Domos*

5.1. INTRODUCTION

The problem which we examine in this chapter is the examination of a term which is always thought of as an architectural term, in the sense that it corresponds to a specific 'room' of the Homeric house. Such an understanding of *megaron* (μέγαρον) has never been challenged and whole archeological theories have been 'build up' upon a major assumption – that the *megaron* is a room. From the early attempts at its reconstruction, to its identification with any (central) regular shape in early Greek archeological remains, to the theories which viewed it as the early form of the Greek temple, it is as if there were a simple relation between language and architecture – *megaron* is a word for a room. However, the correspondence between names and rooms, where each room has a name that corresponds to its function, should be understood not as a natural relation but as the consequence of the complex combination of contemporary conceptions of language, architectural theories, and architectural representation. Indeed, it is within archeological representation (that is,

drawings of buildings) that this correspondence became conventional. Clearly we are dealing not with the problem of translation but with an architectural problem and aspects of archeological representation. We do not have to examine the use of names as 'labels' in architectural and archeological drawings in great detail to understand the problem involved in such a practice. It involves a profound anachronism in both the conception of the relation between language and architecture (*megaron* equals room), and the relation between language and drawings (this is a room). But behind these there is another anachronism which uses a contemporary projection to determine the conventional approach to *megaron*. This is the assumption – never questioned within scholarship – that a house is an assemblage of rooms, where 'room' is the general concept which is specified through the notion of function. And yet there is no Homeric term that corresponds to the term 'room'. Instead we have terms such as *megaron*, and *thalamos*, which we can not simply nominate as 'rooms' without repeating the anachronism.

We will argue here that *megaron* (and *thalamos*) indeed constituted part of the Homeric house in that it partakes of the experience of *domos*. But if the experience of *domos* is, as we have tried to show, that of a series of contradictions, in the sense of trans-fixity, *megaron* evokes the fields of experience within *domos* that involve this transformation.[1] Moreover, if *megaron* is usually interpreted as the central part around which the Homeric house develops, we would like to point out that the center in question is not a matter of geometry. The center is determined by the category of experience which governs the experience of the house and might or might not correspond to a geometrical center. It is in fact, the experience of transformation that

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[1] For relevant section on *domos*, see pp. 155.

the Homeric term *megaron* evokes which creates the experience of 'center'. Reference to 'architectural elements' (columns, walls, hearth, etc.) in the text, gave rise to reconstruction and still reinforces the conviction that *megaron* corresponds to a specific room. We argue, however, that what we call 'architectural elements', were in fact experienced as things which as such are not specific locations within *megaron,* but produced their place (in the sense of *chore*) inasmuch as they produced specific identities for the bodies connected with them.[2] The production of identities is central to the experience of *megaron*, to the transformation we refer to, and involves the transformation and reinstatement of identities. In fact, the text describes in connection with *megaron,* a series of activities usually interpreted as rituals, such as hospitality, feasting, or mourning, all of which, as we shall see, involve important transformations.

5.2. *MEGARON* AND THE HOMERIC RITUALS

According to the Homeric dictionary[3] *megaron* is related to the architectonic, and is defined as a 'hall, large room'. More specifically it refers to: men's dining-hall, chief room of the house, women's apartment, housekeeper's apartment in upper story, the sleeping-apartment and in a wider signification, the house itself. In the wider signification of house, *megaron* is considered as denoting 'either a man's house or

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[2] For fuller statement of this formula see chapter on *Chore-Choros*, pp. 79-84.

[3] AUTENRIETH, G., 1991: *Homeric Dictionary*, Duckworth, s.v. μέγαρον.

palace, or (rarely) a god's, even a tent.'[4] As far as the etymology is concerned, no relationship to a verb is proposed either by Hofmann,[5] or by Chantraine.[6]

In these definitions the term *megaron* appears confusingly to have more than one meaning and thus appears to correspond to different parts of the house. What is taken for granted though, is that the meaning itself corresponds not to a place as such, but to an activity, which is 'contained' within a specific room, which in turn is contained somewhere within the Homeric house. The appearance of a rather random plurality of references stems from the assumption that a room should only contain one major function. Indeed when a specific function cannot be attached to the term then *megaron* cannot be a specific room and has to be attributed to a 'wider' signification - 'the house'. Thus a spatial conception of containment underscores the very concept of reference. It would be anachronistic – according to what we have said in relation to *chore/os* – if we were to read this or indeed any Homeric term unproblematically *via* the concept of containment. We shall propose an analysis of the term *megaron* in relation to the activities to which the Homeric term is related, but would wish to drop the previous assumptions about room, function, reference and ultimately containment. We hope that a more adequate interpretation will emerge. We are not so much looking for a definition of *megaron*, but for the kind of experiences it evokes within the Homeric text.

In both Iliad and Odyssey the term *megaron* occurs 299 times. This is too large a number of quotations to analyse one by one. Instead we will examine the

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[4] ADRADOS, F., 1990: "The Semantics of Oikos and its Semantic Field in the Odyssey", *Ο Ομηρικός Οίκος: Πρακτικά τού Ε' Συνεδρίου γιά τήν Οδύσσεια*, Ιθάκη, pp. 21.

[5] HOFMANN, J.B., 1974: *Etymologishes Wörterbuch des Griechischen*, München 1950, Greek translation by A. Papanikolaou, Athens, s.v. μέγαρον.

[6] CHANTRAINE, P., 1968: *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque*, Paris, s.v. μέγαρον.

activities related to it, activities which include guest-reception, feasting, and mourning, for the light they throw on the field of experiences that the term *megaron* evokes. They all involve a strict code of performance: a succession of events, gestures, postures in so far as a kind of transformation in relation to the participants occurs at some stage of their performance. During hospitality a stranger is transformed into a friend, by feasting together the members of the family and friends are incorporated again and again into the group, and when a death occurs, it is through mourning that the members re-constitute their roles and hence their *domos.* In fact these activities are so central to the survival of *domos* that they are usually interpreted as rituals.[7] But we find the category of ritual is itself problematic.[8] We propose instead that the repetitive movement of bodies be characterized as producing a non-enduring space, named *megaron.* Now the only way to reconstruct this non-

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[7] It is worth noting that the term *megara* is used in relation to the ritual of *thesmophoria*: "At the end of each spring, [women] took slaughtered pigs down into pits, or *megara*, dug into the ground; here the dead animals were left to putrefy." SENNET, R., 1994: *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization,* Faber and Faber, pp. 71.

[8] The problem of the definition of ritual is addressed by Ian Morris: "Ritual is one of those words where we all know what it means but no one can define it. Most would agree that ritual involves action, and is governed by rules of who should do what. It should be repeatable, but ritual and custom are not the same. Nor is just any regularized behavior ritual, although all activity may be said to have ritual aspects..." MORRIS, I., 1992: *Death-Ritual and Social Structure in Classical Antiquity*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 8. Rituals are usually related to place, they are refereed to as 'taking place', and it is probably the presupposed relation between ritual space and religion that give rise to the theories that *megaron* is the first form of the Greek temple. As Rathje argues: "In Greece it is difficult to distinguish between domestic and sacred buildings in this period. New theories see the "temples" as converted houses or dining-halls; in fact the earliest sacred buildings had the function of providing a setting for sacrifices and sacred meals (Drerup (1969), 123-8)." RATHJE, A., 1990: "The Adoption of the Homeric Banquet in Central Italy in the Orientalizing period," *Sympotica: a Symposium on the Symposion*, ed. Oswyn Murray, Oxford, pp. 286. Thus again the term ritual brings with it a concept of place as containment. We put forward an hypothesis in the chapter on *chore/os* that the demarcation of

enduring space is by studying in detail the gestures and postures of the bodies that produced it. For the body is the charter of a social code, and "to interpret and account for a gesture is to unlock the whole social and cultural system of which it is a part."[9] By understanding the code we can understand how transformation was achieved and therefore apprehend the category of experience that the term *megaron* evoked for the Homeric Greeks.

5.2.1. **HOSPITALITY AS A PROCESS OF TRANSFORMATION**

Xenie (ξενίη), the term that denotes 'hospitality', is related to *megaron* in the Homeric epic.[10] In Iliad Γ207, Antenor, referring to Menelaos and Odysseus, says that he hosted (*exeinissa*) them and made them friends (*philesa*) in *megaron*, and observed the stature (*phuen*) and the thoughts (*medea*) of both. But what he actually learnt, as he describes in detail, is a series of body postures and gestures of both when seated or standing addressing the Trojans. He says:

Γ207-224: To both these I gave in my halls kind entertainment and I learned the natural way of both, and their close counsels. Now when these were set before the Trojans assembled and stood up, Menelaos was bigger by his shoulders but Odysseus was the more lordly when both were seated. Now before all when both of them spun their speech and their counsels, Menelaos indeed spoke rapidly, in few words but exceedingly lucid, since he was no long speaker nor one who wasted his words though he was only a young man. But when that other drove to his feet, resourceful Odysseus, he would just stand and stare down, eyes fixed on the ground beneath him, nor would he gesture with the staff backward and forward, but hold it clutched hard in front of him, like any man who knows nothing. Yes, you would call him a

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territory can insure the repetition of body movements and thus insure the ritual. In fact, the relation between ritual and space is quite complicated, but we shall not elaborate more on this.

[9] THOMAS, K., 1991: "Introduction", *A Cultural History of Gesture*, Jan Bremmer and Herman Roodenburg eds., Polity Press, pp. 11.

[10] Z216: ξείνισ' ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν, γ353: παῖδες ἐνὶ μεγάροισι λίπωνται ξείνους ξεινίζειν, η189: ξεῖνον ἐνὶ μεγάροις ξεινίσσομεν, θ41: ξεῖνον ἐνὶ μεγάροισι φιλέωμεν, etc.

sullen man, and a fool likewise. But when he let the great voice go from his chest, and the words came drifting down like the winter snows, then no other mortal man beside could stand up against Odysseus. Then we wondered less beholding Odysseus' outward appearance. [11]

The ritual of hospitality actually constitutes a series of body postures and gestures, as we shall show.

The term *xeinos* (ξεῖνος) means stranger and/or guest, and this is usually interpreted to reflect the basic ambivalence[12] of archaic society towards strangers, a dubious class who could prove to be either friendly or hostile.[13] This conventional

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[11] Γ207-224: τοὺς δ' ἐγὼ ἐξείνισσα καὶ ἐν μεγάροις φίλησα, / ἀμφοτέρων δὲ φυὴν ἐδάην καὶ μήδεα πυκνά. / ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ Τρώεσσιν ἐν ἀγρομένοισιν ἔμιχθεν στάντων μὲν Μενέλαος ὑπερεῖχεν εὐρέας ὤμους, / ἄμφω δ' ἑζομένων γεραρώτερος ἦεν Ὀδυσσεύς · / ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ μύθους καὶ μήδεα πᾶσιν ὕφαινον / ἤτοι μὲν Μενέλαος ἐπιτροχάδην ἀγόρευε, / παῦρα μὲν ἀλλὰ μάλα λιγέως, ἐπεὶ οὐ πολύμυθος / οὐδ' ἀφαμαρτοεπής, ἦ καὶ γένει ὕστερος ἦεν. / ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ πολύμητις ἀναΐξειεν Ὀδυσσεύς / στάσκεν, ὑπαί δὲ ἴδεσκε κατὰ χθονός ὄμματα πήξας, / σκῆπτρον δ' οὔτ' ὀπίσω οὔτε προπρηνὲς ἐνώμα, / ἀλλ' ἀστεμφὲς ἔχεσκεν ἀΐδρεϊ φωτὶ ἐοικώς, / φαίης κε ζάκοτόν τέ τιν' ἔμμεναι ἄφρονά τ' αὖτως. / ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ ὄπα τε μεγάλην ἐκ στήθεος εἵη / καὶ ἔπεα νιφάδεσσιν ἐοικότα χειμερίῃσιν, / οὐκ ἂν ἔπειτ' Ὀδυσῆϊ γ' ἐρίσσειε βροτός ἄλλος, / οὐ τότε γ' ὧδ' Ὀδυσῆος ἀγασσάμεθ' εἶδος ἰδόντες.

[12] "This ambivalence is encapsulated in the term ξεινος, which has a broad semantic range, from "a guest-friend from a foreign country, who is to be treated with all the respect of an 'insider'" (a φίλος), to "a potentially hostile stranger, who is outside one's own social group" (a non-φίλος)." REECE, S., 1993: *The Stranger's Welcome: Oral Theory and the Aesthetics of the Homeric Hospitality Scene*, The University of Michigan Press, pp. 19. This ambivalence put the *xeinos* under the protection of Zeus, in this case called *Xenios* Zeus.

[13] E. Benveniste writes: "In Greek *xenos* designates the 'stranger' and the verb *xeinizo* refers to 'hospitable behavior'. This cannot be understood except by starting from the idea that the stranger is of necessity an enemy and correlatively that the enemy is necessarily a stranger. It is always because a man born elsewhere is *a priori* an enemy that a mutual bond is necessary to establish between him and the EGO relations of hospitality, which would be inconceivable within the community itself. This dialectic 'friend-foe', as we have seen, is already operative in the notion of *philos*: an enemy, even one's adversary in battle, may become temporarily a *philos*, as the result of a pact concluded according to the rites and customary pledges...Rites, agreements and treaties thus interrupted this permanent situation of mutual hostility which existed between people or cities. Under the protection of solemn conventions and by means of exchange arrangements, human relationships could develop, and as a result the words for agreements or legal status came to denote sentiments." BENVENISTE, E., 1973: *Indo-European Language and Society*, Faber and Faber, pp. 294.

way in which scholarship approaches the term, is through the notion of meaning and the play of opposites. We propose by contrast to understand the term *xeinos* not in terms of opposites, but as indicating a process of becoming, a space of transformation. *Xeinos* does not 'mean' enemy, or friend, but evokes a specific state in which someone is in a process of becoming either enemy, stranger or friend. The categories should not be understood in opposition to each other or as mutually exclusive. It is through hospitality that this process of becoming, this space of transformation, is established, whereby a stranger becomes a guest and may be transformed into a friend *philos* (φίλος) of *oikos*. This transformation can be made, but only if certain rules are respected on the part of both guest and host.[14] A strict succession of events, gestures, and body postures, as well as the contact with specific things produce the non-enduring space, called *megaron*, and also prescribe and insure the outcome of the transformation, namely the becoming *philos*.[15] But before we go any further we would like to see the implications which being *philos* 'friend' entail. S. von Reden writes:

> "The semantic field of this key term of the Greek language ranges in the epics from 'beloved' to 'one's own'. The heart, limbs, clothes, treasures, wives, husbands, compatriots, guest-friends and the fatherland all belong to the repertoire of *philos* objects, being at once beloved and owned. The qualities which distinguish a warrior are not just personal qualities but objects attached to his body or belonging to his household as well as friends and kin."[16]

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[14] Note the well-known Spartans' hospitality violation, by the most notorious guest, Paris, who had seized his host's wife, Helen.

[15] For description of non-enduring space see chapter on *Chore - Choros*.

[16] VON REDEN, S., 1995: *Exchange in Ancient Greece*, Duckworth, pp. 45.

Something that is very close can be considered as one's own and consequently acceptable and pleasing. To become *philos* must be thought of as becoming an extension of another's body, in the sense of all bodily manifestations, the corporeal, the mental and the psychological.[17] The servants accompany the lady of the house when she enters *megaron.* They are extensions of her body, a human shield, to reinforce her in the presence of men – or even to protect men from her power. It is very important for a host to have many friends, not only for the actual extension of his body, but also because even when they are far away, there is always the possibility of re-attachment. The 'network' of friends marks the 'geographical space' and endows power to an *oikos.* Odysseus will continue to be Alkinoos' friend even when he is far away in his homeland.[18]

Within a succession of events, becoming *philos* occurs in the sense of being incorporated by another body. According to S. Reece – who described Homeric hospitality in detail – the ritual entails the following stages: arrival, reception, seating, feasting, identification, bedding down, bathing, gift giving, and departure.[19] During what is described as the three first stages of the ritual, that is, between arrival and seating, the increasing intimacy between guest and host occurs as the stranger moves from the *prothuron* to the heart of *megaron.* This is not a simple case of moving, but a change from one category of experience to another; the stranger moves from the

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[17] Benveniste presupposes a distinction between an emotive and possessive signification of *philos* when argues against the second, but such a distinction would be anachronistic in respect to the Homeric text. BENVENISTE, E., op.cit., pp. 273-88.

[18] ι18: be your friend and guest, though the home where I live is far away from you (ὑμῖν ξεῖνος ἔω καὶ ἀπόπροθι δώματα ναίων).

[19] Our description of hospitality is mainly based on S. Reece's book (see above note 12), which includes an exhaustive reference to the relative Homeric passages, only a small part of which is quoted here.

preparation for the change (*prothuron*) to the transformation as such (*megaron*). This move is manifested in a series of gestures and body postures that accompany every change of experience.

On arrival the visitor must wait in the area 'in front of the doorway' until the host, who is the master of the house, notices him and either offers hospitality or sends him away. If the visitor is a social equal, coming as an *angelos* (ἄγγελος) 'messenger' or a *xeinos* (ξεῖνος) 'guest', he *histemi* (ἵστημι) 'stands'[20] at the doorway. *Histemi*, denotes 'standing firmly and erect', that is in an 'upright posture'. But to have an upright posture, to be *orthos* (ὀρθός), indicates strength: by standing straight, the body becomes bigger and this has consequences for the quality of its voice. *Orthia* (ὄρθία), is the 'high-pitched, loud, shrill, clear voice', a strengthened voice, inasmuch as the erect body facilitates the raising of the voice. In fact, to stand upright and firmly makes possible a strong voice, and is interrelated with a certain social status. By contrast, if the visitor is socially inferior, coming as a 'beggar' *ptochos* (πτωχός) or a 'suppliant' *heketes* (ἱκέτης), he 'sits' *izo* (ἵζω)[21] at the doorway in a posture that indicates submission and helplessness. The very term *ptochos* (πτωχός) 'beggar', stems from the verb *ptesso* (πτήσσω) 'bend with fear, terrify' (πεπτηώς 'cowering, crouching'/ πτώξ 'timid, hare'). *Ptochos* then indicates the posture in which the body is bent. A beggar is also called *aletes* (ἀλήτης) 'person that roams about' (ἄλη 'roaming without knowledge, nor hope of rest, ceaseless wandering'). A 'suppliant', *hiketes* (ἵκέτης) – a term stemming from the verb *hiko* (ἵκω) to arrive'– also has a bent posture, the posture

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[20] στῆ...ἐπὶ προθύροις...οὐδοῦ ἐπ' αὐλείου (α103-104) / ἐν προθύροισι δόμων...στῆσαν (δ20-22) / ἔθνα στάς (ε75) / ἱσταμένῳ πρὶν χάλκεον οὐδὸν ἱκέσθαι (η83) / ἔνθα στάς...ὑπέρ οὐδόν ἐβήσετο δώματος εἴσω (η133-35) / ἔσταν δ' ἐν προθύροισι (κ220) / ἔστην δ' εἰνὶ θύρῃσι...ἔνθα στάς (κ310-11) / ἔστη ἐνὶ προθύροισι (π12) / στητήν ἐρχομένῳ (ρ261) / στάν δὲ πρόσθ' αὐτοῖο (Ι193) / στῆμεν ἐνὶ προθύροισι (Λ777).

[21] παρὰ σταθμοῖσιν ἐπ' οὐδοῦ ἑζόμεθ' (κ62-63) / ἕζετο...ἔνθα κεν ᾧ πὰρ σταθμῷ (ξ31-32) / ἵζε δ' ἐπὶ μελίνου οὐδοῦ ἔντοσθε θυράων, κλινάμενος σταθμῷ (ρ339-40).

of supplication. A beggar is someone who has lost his property and wanders around with nowhere to stay.[22] A suppliant on the other hand is someone who arrives because he cannot stay where he was before. Neither can remain firm, and this has a direct effect on their bodies in the adoption of a bent posture.

Waiting at the 'threshold' *oudos* (οὐδός), is considered as the first stage of the ritual: waiting at a boundary, waiting for a transformation to occur through the act of crossing the boundary. At this point the visitor must declare his social status by adopting the appropriate body posture, for his social status will determine the proceedings of the ritual. To remain, however, in a place where the members or the friends of the *oikos* are not intended to stay – they just cross it – is also to declare his wish to be transformed, to become a guest by the act of his movement from the doorway to the main hall. As we have pointed out this translation has to be understood as a change at the level of experience, and not simply in terms of topography.

The next stage is the reception. "A host's reception of a visitor follows a conventional sequence: the host catches sight of the visitor, hesitates at first to offer hospitality,

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[22] Odysseus he himself disguised as a beggar gives us the depiction of beggars as he responds to the servant who wants him out of *megaron*. He says in τ71-80: "I wander, why do you hold such an angry grudge against me? Is it because I am dirty, and wear foul clothing upon me, and go about as a public beggar? The need is on me, for such is the lot of vagabonds and men who are homeless. I too was one who lived in my own house among people, prospering in wealth, and often I gave to a wanderer according to what he was and wanted when he came to me; and I had serving men by thousands, and many another good thing, by which men live well and are called prosperous, only Zeus, son of Kronos, spoiled it all - somehow he wished to..." (δαιμονίη, τί μοι ὧδ' ἐπέχεις κεκοτηότι θυμῷ; / ἦ ὅτι δὴ ῥυπόω, κακὰ δέ χροϊ εἵματα εἶμαι, / πτωχεύω δ' ἀνὰ δῆμον; ἀναγκαίη γὰρ ἐπείγει./ τοιοῦτοι πτωχοὶ καὶ ἀλήμονες ἄνδρες ἔασι. / καὶ γὰρ ἐγώ ποτε οἶκον ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ἔναιον / ὄλβιος ἀφνειὸν καὶ πολλάκι δόσκον ἀλήτῃ / τοίῳ, ὁποῖος ἔοι καὶ ὅτευ κεχρημένος ἔλθοι· / ἦσαν δὲ δμῶες μάλα μυρίοι ἄλλα τε πολλά, / οἵσίν τ' εὖ ζώουσι καὶ ἀφνειοὶ καλέονται. / ἀλλὰ Ζεὺς ἀλάπαξε Κρονίων, ἤθελε γάρ που...)

then rises from his seat, approaches him, attends to his horses, takes him by the hand, bids him welcome, relieves him of his spear, and leads him into *megaron*".[23] At this stage the host's and guest's bodies come closer. The 'approach' involves sight and touch. The first contact between the host and the guest – from the Homeric experience of sight as collision between the seeing and the seen – is the actual sighting of the visitor, and is usually denoted by a form of the verb *horao* (ὁράω) 'to see'.[24] Then the host rises from his seat; the verb is usually *anorouse* (ἀνόρουσε) 'spring up',[25] alternatively *aneste* (ἀνέστη) 'to rise up'.[26] Since it is improper to let a visitor wait at the door – as we have show in the chapter on *thure* – the proper host approaches quickly.[27] The host is now the first to make the second contact with the visitor by 'grasping' *haireo* (αἱρέω) one or both of his hands; only the right hand is specified, never the left.[28] The verb *haireo* is given the following meanings in the dictionaries: 'to take with the hand, grasp, seize/ to take away/ to get into one's power, conquer, overpower'. This contact of the hands implies both the host's power

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[23] REECE S., op.cit, pp. 17.

[24] πολύ πρῶτος ἴδε(α113) / εἶσιδ' (α118) / ἴδον (γ34-ξ29) / ἴδετο (δ22) / ἰδοῦσα (ε78) / ἰδόντες, θαύμαζον δ' ὁρόωντες (η144-45) / ἴδε (Ι195-Σ382) / θάμβησεν ἰδὼν (Ω483) / ταφὼν (π12-Ι193-Λ777).

[25] ἀνόρουσε (π12-Ι193-Λ777).

[26] ἀνέστη (Ι195).

[27] An investigation of the different ways of walking and its interrelation to social roles would be interesting in the context of the Homeric text. Sennet writes: "Greek culture made walking and standing expressions of character. Walking with long strides appeared manly; Homer wrote admiringly of Hector, "The Trojans drove forward in close throng, and Hector led them, advancing with long strides". (O306-10). Whereas "when the goddesses Hera and Athena appeared before Troy to help the Greeks, they [according to Homer] resembled "in their steps the timorous doves"- exactly the opposite of the striding heroes". SENNET, R., op.cit., pp. 49.

[28] χεῖρ' ἕλε δεξιτερὴν (α121) / ἀμφοτέρων ἕλε χεῖρα (γ37) / χειρὸς ἑλὼν (η168-Λ778) / ἕν τ' ἄρα οἱ φῷ χειρὶ (Σ384, 423). On the relation between the right hand and the handshake see HERMAN, G., 1987: *Ritualised Friendship and the Greek City*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 50-4.

over the passive visitor and his will to accept responsibility for him.[29] There is a rule of exchange in the giving and controlling; the host offers hospitality but submits the visitor to his control. Sometimes a host greets a visitor with a formal speech,[30] and relieves him of his spear[31] (disarming) before he enters the house. Finally the two bodies are moving together as the host leads the visitor from the *prothuron* to *megaron*. But the host 'leads' *ago, hegeomai* (ἄγω, ἡγέομαι) and the visitor 'follows' *hepomai* (ἕπομαι).[32] Even after the visitor becomes friend the hierarchy is not abandoned.

The reception of Odysseus in Alkinoos' *megaron* is an example of the reception of the visitor. The shipwrecked Odysseus meets princess Nausicaa, who assists him and directs him to her father's palace.[33] She advises him to insure his reception by transgressing the code of hospitality, that is, not to wait at *prothuron*, but to walk quickly towards the center of *megaron*, and reach the queen. Athena wraps him with mist to make him invisible so that he traverses *megaron* unseen. Odysseus avoids the first contact, that is the eye contact with his host, and thus does not submit himself to the aggression of his host's sight. The Phaiakians and the king see him suddenly as he touches the queen's knees. His crouching position communicates his subordination. But at the same time it is he who touches first, not the hand but the

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[29] Not all touching of hands has the same implications: Achilles holds the right hand of the king Priam, to encourage him. In this case the verb used is λαμβάνω, and not αἱρέω: Ω671 Ὣς ἄρα φωνήσας ἐπὶ καρπῷ χεῖρα γέροντος / ἔλλαβε δεξιτερήν, μή πως δείσει' ἐνὶ θυμῷ. The clasping of hands between two friends is interpreted as a sign of non-aggression by HERMAN, G., op.cit., pp. 51.

[30] Χαῖρε, ξεῖνε (α123) / χαίρετον (δ60-I197).

[31] ἐδέξατο χάλκεον ἔγχος (α121-π40-ο282).

[32] ἡγεῖθ', ἡ δ' ἕσπετο (α125) / εἰσῆγον (δ43)/ ἕπεο προτέρω (ε91-Σ387) / ἕποντο (κ231) / εἰσαγαγοῦσα (κ233,314) / ἑπόμην (κ313)/ ἕπεο (ξ48) / εἰσαγαγὼν (κ49) / πρότερω ἄγε (I199)/ ἐς δ' ἄγε (Λ778) / πρόσω ἄγε (Λ778).

[33] ζ110-322.

knees of the queen. This gesture immobilizes the queen, impedes her movement, and puts her in a passive role. Knees (*gounata*) in the context of the Homeric text, are related to strength, to such a degree that the phrase *luein tinos gounata* (λύειν τινός γούνατα) becomes synonymous with 'to slay him'. In this posture Odysseus address the queen as a suppliant. Then he sits on the ashes at the hearth of *megaron,*[34] thereby acquiring a specific identity which is produced through the connection of his body with the hearth. A detailed investigation is needed to establish the way 'hearth' was experienced within the Homeric text if we want to understand the kind of identity that such a connection generates. He crouches in the ashes. Putting ashes on his body might be interpreted as a wish to become incorporated as a friend of the house. Even if he has violated the code, even if he stands in the middle of *megaron*, by crouching in the ashes he declares himself to be a suppliant under the control of the king, who now has to decide whether he will grant him the role of guest. Indeed, Alkinoos takes him by the hand, *anastesas* 'restoring Odysseus' upright posture', and leads him to sit close to him in the place of honor, on the chair of his beloved son. Odysseus washes his hands, and the feasting starts.

After the initial reception of the guest and the contact of the bodies the next stage of the ritual is seating. "Once inside the house, a host's first provision for a visitor is a seat. A proper host offers a seat at the place of honor: [either offers his own seat, or

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[34] η155: So he spoke, and sat down beside the hearth in the ashes next the fire (Ὣς εἰπὼν κατ' ἄρ' ἕζετ' ἐπ' ἐσχάρῃ ἐν κονίῃσι / πὰρ πυρί).

the seat beside him].[35] ...The actual seating is signified by a form of the verbs ἕζομαι, ἵζω, ἱδρύω, εἶσα, καθεῖσα... Niceties of etiquette may be observed in the types of seats offered to visitors: θρόνος, κλισμός, δίφρος. The *thronos* (θρόνος), a chair with upright back and armrests, is usually reserved for gods, nobles, and for guests who are invited to take the seat of honor, but is never used by women. The *klismos* (κλισμός), a chair with a reclined back, is used by men when feasting or relaxing and by women. The *diphros* (δίφρος), a stool, is used especially by subordinates and servants."[36] In fact, while a chair is just a chair, it changes the status of whoever sits upon it. Seats create a state of differentiation, and indicate a hierarchy. "Upon his homecoming Odysseus' own elevation in stature from beggar to master is visualized concretely by his change in seats from a *diphros* δίφρος, (τ97,101,506-φ243,420) to a *thronos* θρόνος (ψ164)."[37] This transformation is a change from one category of experience to another, from the threshold (σ110), to the center of *megaron* (ψ90). All sitting however, implies submission of some kind,[38] it imposes a role of passivity upon all the participants, and announces the next stage of the ritual. The intimacy of bodies is succeeded by another kind of intimacy: incorporation. The time for feasting has come.

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[35] "..great social significance is seen in the fact that people of rank are placed beside the host and provided with tables and couches while others sit on hides on the floor..(η169-I199,215-21, Ω475) ...A hierarchy and etiquette, or rather a law is established." RATHJE A., op.cit., pp. 281.

[36] REECE S., op.cit, pp. 22.

[37] REECE S., ibid.

[38] As the historian Jan Bremmer points out, "sitting carried as much value in Greek culture as did standing and walking, but more ambivalent value. By the time of Pericles, the gods were often sculpted in sitting positions, for instance, during feasts of the gods. Yet to sit was also to submit, as when a young girl came to the house of her new husband and signified her submission to his rule in a ritual which made her sit for the first time by his hearth. Vase paintings depict urban slaves also, performing their tasks either sitting or crouching down". BREMMER, J., 1991: "Walking, Standing and Sitting in Ancient Greek Culture", *A Cultural History of Gesture*, eds. Jan Bremmer and Herman Roodenburg, Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, pp. 25-26.

5.2.2. **FEASTING AND INCORPORATION**

Eating and drinking is a ritual in the sense that strict rules apply and are repeated.[39] It is also logically prior to all the other rituals performed since it creates through incorporation[40] the minimum sense of community[41] within the group without which there would be no ritual. By eating, the participants incorporate the same animal (food), and are therefore themselves incorporated into the group. A transformation is achieved through communal feasting. Eating the beloved or enemy, should be understood as an attempt to attach and preserve them within one's one body. But the two bodies, the eating and the eaten never quite become one and there is always the possibility of fission.[42] This is true also of the group. If participants always retain

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[39] "The history of food and foodways, is therefore not so much an economic history of shortages or surpluses, nor even a sociology of power structures, but rather the history of the ritualization of an essential human activity", ELIAS, N., 1978: "The Civilizing Process" *The History of Manners*, trans. E. Jephcott, Blackwell, Oxford.

[40] Incorporation is a term used in psychoanalysis. "Incorporation...is present in daily life not only when we devour something in the literal sense in order to compensate for stress, but also of course in the figurative sense and in different forms of the system of oral symbolism which are omnipresent in groups, such as the communion belonging to fusion phenomena, cannibalistic phantasies (devouring, suction, imbibing) or in the oral rituals marking the stages of life in a system of social relationships. ROUCHY, J.C., "Archaic Processes and Transference in Group Analysis," *The Journal of Group Analysis*, pp. 245.

[41] "Early Greek society possessed a relatively homogeneous social structure, without a formal priestly caste or a centralised power structure. Its rites of consumption may therefore be characterized as forms of commensality, rituals of eating and drinking together, as equals and as expression and reinforcement of community values." MURRAY O., 1990: "Sympotic History," *Sympotica: a symposium on the Symposion*, ed. Oswyn Murray, Oxford, pp. 5.

[42] This interpretation is in line with the way the term incorporation is defined – within the psychoanalytical work of M. Torok – in opposition to introjection. ROUCHY, J. C., op.cit., pp. 244.

their autonomy within the group, the regular repetition of the communal meal will be central to the survival of the community.

Eating and drinking have been interpreted as reflecting and reinforcing social organization. It is here that the distinction between the Raw and the Cooked is established.[43] In the Odyssey the Kuklops are uncivilized, they have no *agore*, or communal feasts, and therefore are cannibals. Oswyn Murray notes: "we may say that just society "inhibits" or "problematizes" sexual relations in order to control them, so it "problematizes" another of man's most basic pleasures, that of eating and drinking, in order to create and support its socio-cultural structures."[44] In the Homeric text, with the exception of the term *ariston* (ἄριστον) 'breakfast'– which is related to a verb denoting the act of eating (*esthio*) – the other terms referring to the banquet indicate a diversity of values beyond that of nourishment.[45] *Dais* (δαίς), the most common term for the banquet in Homer, means 'portion', 'share', and indicates the distribution of food. However not all participants (δαιτυμόνες), acquire equal shares. *Geras* (γέρας) honor is the privilege of meat, reserved for the host and elders.

Feasting is a men's affair. Women, with the exception of the lady of the house, are excluded from the banquet. Moreover only men can assume the role of strangers. Even the goddess Athena takes the appearance of a man (Mentor) in order to enter Odysseus' palace as a stranger in α105. The exclusion of women from these activities can be highlighted by the research on their relation to *thalamos*. Women servants enter *megaron* to accompany their mistress, and for the preparation of the feast. The

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[43] LEVI-STRAUSS, C., 1968: *L' Origins des manieres de table*, Paris.

[44] MURRAY, O., op.cit., pp. 4.

[45] The terms are: δαίς, ξενία ,έρανος, δείπνον. SCHMITT-PANTEL P., 1992: *La cite au banquet: Histoire des repas publics dans les cites greques*, Ecole Francaise de Rome, pp. 5.

handmaid provides water for handwashing and prepares the table, while the housekeeper serves the bread and other food.[46] The handmaid also cleans up at the end of the banquet, a task that is probably related to the relation of woman and impurity in general. The housekeeper, an old woman in the case of Eurukleia, is the person that keeps the key of *thalamos*, where food and precious objects are stored. The food that is secured and preserved in *thalamos* – the 'place' for preservation – is brought to *megaron* – the 'place' for transformation, to be consumed and transformed.

Sons participate in the banquet. Children sit on their father's knees. Andromache is worried for her son's future, for an orphan does not have a father to sit on, and therefore is excluded from the banquet. Adolescents act as wine-pourers, standing by the participants.[47] Other adults sit at their seats with the tables in front of them.[48] Beggars sit on the ground, at the threshold of *megaron*, and they fail to keep a firm place during the banquet, as will see below. When everyone is settled, eating and drinking can start. The repetitiveness of the feasting ritual is evoked through the repetitive (formulaic) way with which the feasting is described.[49]

In fact, as Bruit argues: "the ritual aspect of the food derives from its insertion into a complex of gestures and patterns of behavior, and not from its intrinsic value

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[46] α136,140-δ52,56-η172,176-κ368,372-ο135,139-ρ91,95. However, it is a man, the carver, who serves the platters of meat, and the herald who pours the wine: α141,143-δ57,58-ο140,141.

[47] In the Odyssey Menelaos' son acted as a wine-pourer during his father's meal (A470-I175-Y234-α48-γ339-ο141-φ271). A girl, Hebe, poured nectar for the gods.

[48] I199-Ω126,457-α130-γ32-υ136.

[49] οἱ δ' ἐπ' ὀνείαθ' ἑτοῖμα προκείμενα χεῖρας ἴαλλον (α149-δ67,218-ε200-θ71,484-ξ453-ο142-π54-ρ98-υ256-I91,221-Ω627) / δαίνυντ', οὐδέ τι θυμὸς ἐδεύετο δαιτὸς ἐΐσης (π479-τ425-A468,602-B431-H320-Ψ56). The feast ends when everyone feels the pleasure (τάρπησαν) of being sated (κορεσσάμενοι, πλησάμενοι), with food and drink.

[as nourishment]."[50] Feasting is an activity related to *megaron,* which involves a kind of transformation central to the survival of a group. Hence we might say that the term *megaron* itself evoked this experience of transformation that was also understood as central for the Homeric *domos.* Within the text, feasting is mainly depicted in the context of hospitality. Reece writes: "The sharing of a feast is one of the most intimate means by which a stranger is welcomed into a home, for the banquet is the primary locus for participation in *xenia*; significantly, the term ξείνια, ξεινήια may specifically denote the food offered to a guest."[51] In the process of rapprochement, the host can offer his own portion of honor, the *geras*, as he offers his own seat to his guest.[52] Bruit writes:

"Communal consumption, or consuming the same type of food, constitutes another mode of communication, which is nearer to the exchange necessarily implied by the *xenia*. To eat together, to eat at the same table, is to belong to the same element; it is as we have seen, to enter, though symbolically and in a precarious way, into a common status...Further the term *xenia* describes in itself a type of relation founded on mutual recognition and reciprocity. Hospitality in fact supposes...that those who practice it recognize each other in some way similar, in worship, rites, or language. *Xenos*, then designates not any stranger, but another Greek from a different city."[53]

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[50] BRUIT L., 1990: "The Meal of Hyakinthia: Ritual Consumption and Offering," *Sympotica: a symposium on the Symposion*, ed. O. Murray, Oxford, pp. 170.

[51] This occurs in δ33-ε91-Λ779-80-Σ387,408. REECE S., op.cit. pp. 22.

[52] "A truly generous host may "bestow great honor" (γεραίρω ξ437,441-H321) on his guest by relinquishing his own "designated portion" (γέρας δ66), the fatty "chine" (νῶτον) of the cow, pig, sheep, or goat (δ65,66-θ474,483-ξ437,441-H321,322-I206,208)." Ibid, pp. 23.

[53] BRUIT L., op.cit., pp. 170-1.

Due to the incorporation achieved through eating and drinking together, guest and host are both transformed and can now be identified as members of the same community, though not as equals. Communal feasting supposes a certain relation between a basic equality at the same time that it establishes hierarchy.[54] But once the transformation is achieved then the guest, this other Greek, can speak.

The mouth is not only the organ for eating but for speech. Speech is related to food: "Plutarch informs us that it was a Greek custom from Homer onwards to combine eating and drinking with "spiritual food"(Quaest. Conv. 79), and he refers to the feeling at the time of Homer that it was well to eat and drink before talking (I 83-95)."[55] However, the expression 'spiritual food' does not describe the Homeric experience of speech, for – as we have shown in the chapter on *epos* – speech is an activity of the multiple Homeric body, a body, that is, where no distinction between spiritual and corporeal is drawn, and the mouth was more than just an organ. Although we cannot investigate the general relation between food and speech we can at least establish a connection between the two in the context of communal feasting, and hence with *megaron*. If for us today a topographical relation can be established between eating and speaking, namely taking 'in' and pulling 'out' of the mouth, for the Homeric Greeks this is not so. For them the distinction between eating and speaking was experienced as the relation between incorporation and differentiation –

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[54] Schmitt-Pantel argues that the feast of hospitality is ambivalent, for one the one hand it belongs to the register of gift, a gift given by the host, and thus marks a social hierarchy, on the other hand the communal consumption necessitates a certain degree of equality. Thus the tension is constant between the two opposite but closely connected aspects of the feast of hospitality: the equality and the hierarchy. SCHMITT-PANTEL P., op.cit., pp. 56-57.

[55] RATHJE, A., op.cit., pp. 279.

which is not a relation of opposition. Following the incorporation (which forms the group) through eating, there comes the revelation of the guest's identity (as member of the group), through speech.

Reece describes the ritualistic formality through which the identity of the guest is revealed: "The stranger is to remain anonymous throughout the meal. On his arrival, the host assures him that he will not inquire into his identity or business until after the meal. Blame is attached to those who breach this convention. The manner in which a guest's name is requested and revealed takes on a ritualistic formality. The inquiry entails a request for information about a stranger's homeland and parentage, his means of transportation and business in the land. The host often expresses great concern that the stranger answer truthfully and accurately. In turn, the stranger's revelation of his identity and business is often preceded by assurances that this information will be true and accurate. The information provided may include the stranger's name, parentage, homeland, means of transportation, and business".[56] During the exchange of speech both host and guest remain seated, both have a passive stance. No description of their postures and gestures is given in the text. The terms related to the act of listening is *akouo* (ἀκούω) 'listen, learn of by hearsay, give ear to, obey'. The exchange of speech during the banquet is a reciprocal obeisance.

Feasting includes story-telling. The narrator can be the guest, or other participants of the feast. Sometimes story-telling is performed by a professional bard with the accompaniment of a lyre. In this the bard (*aoidos)* sits in the center and leans against a column.[57] Both bard and listeners remain seated and still, in a reciprocal

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[56] REECE S., op.cit., pp. 26.

[57] θ66: μέσσῳ δαιτυμόνων, πρὸς κίονα μακρὸν ἐρείσας.

passivity during the performance.[58] Story-telling is experienced as *thelksis* (θέλξις) 'enchantment', that is – as we have seen in the chapter on *epos* – as an interplay between differentiation and identification. Story-telling is a mechanism of incorporation into a group. We might understand another kind of 'entertainment', which is characterized by its aggressiveness, as an effect of a group formation: it is the 'entertainment' provided by beggars at a banquet. A beggar, we have seen, is a man with a bent posture. The adjectives used to characterize him are: (πανδήμιος) 'begging in all the places', (ἀνιηρός) 'trouble-some',[59] (κακοείμων) 'ill-clad', (κακός) 'ugly in appearance', (λευγαλέος) 'wretched, shameful, ruinous, poor'. The beggar has a deformed body, with which he can entertain the audience. The suitors laugh when two such deformed bodies, two beggars, Odysseus and Iros, are fighting. As for the voice which issues from such bent a body, it is not worth listening to, and provokes anger and violence. This happens when Odysseus, disguised as an ugly old beggar, speaks to the suitors. Beggars also exhibit an inability to stay still. Once accepted in *megaron* they usually stay by the door, but entertain others by moving around, and it is possible for them to be thrown out at any moment. We might think of beggars at the banquet as the 'scapegoats' that any community needs, to restore or guarantee its unity.

Megaron is also considered as the 'place' for the instruction of male youth. Sons remain silent beside their fathers, eating and listening to debates and stories, with which their fathers instructed them in 'public'. The *megaron* must be inscribed

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[58] Referring to theatre R. Sennet observes: "The theatre put this aspect of sitting to use in tragedy: the seated audience was literally in a position to empathize with a vulnerable protagonist, for both the spectators' and the actors' bodies were placed in a "humble, submissive position to higher law." SENNET, R., op.cit., pp. 60.

[59] ἀνιάζω 'be disgusted of, weary of' / ἀνιάω 'be annoyed' / ἀνίη 'burden, weariness'.

in the process of transformation to adulthood. On the other hand, the lady of the house enters *megaron*, dressed in the appropriate way and accompanied by her servants.[60] Once there, she stands or sits by an architectural element of the house, a column, the hearth, *stathmos*, or a wall. It is possible to speak about the 'appropriate place' for the lady of the house in relation to the symbolic meaning of the elements themselves. But we have argued consistently in previous chapters against such an approach to the Homeric text. And we have tried to show how what we call 'objects' were experienced as things co-produced with their *chore*. In this sense the column, the wall, etc., are not objects in a specific place where the lady may stand; they are things which produce their *chore* and when the lady touches them she acquires a specific identity. These things become extensions of her body. And it would be worth investigating what different kinds of identities the different things produced. In the context of this chapter however it is enough to bear in mind just this relation between things and identity. *Megaron* evokes the experience of transformation, and this involves the transformation or the reinstatement of identities achieved *via* incorporation, speech and the body's connection with specific things. Standing by the *stathmos*, column, etc., the lady of the house reinstates her identity and her status. She usually sits facing her husband, whom she addresses only when spoken to.[61] Because of the experience of sight as collision we might interpret this as an identification

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[60] σ182-184.

[61] ψ88-91: But then, when she came in and stepped over the stone threshold, she sat across from him in the firelight, facing Odysseus, by the opposite wall, while he was seated by the tall pillar looking downward (ἡ δ' ἐπεὶ εἰσῆλθεν καὶ ὑπέρβη λάϊνον οὐδόν, /ἕζετ' ἔπειτ' Ὀδυσσῆος ἐναντίον, ἐν πυρὸς αὐγῇ, /τοίχου τοῦ ἑτέρου· ὁ δ' ἄρα πρὸς κίονα μακρὴν ἧστο κάτω ὁρόων.)

between the two. In fact, Penelope can not look at Odysseus' face before his final recognition.[62]

Two women in the text, Arete and Helen, can be story-tellers among men, in *megaron.* The norm is that speech is a male attribute. To some extent the voiceless compensate for their enforced silence. *Megara gunaikon* 'women's *megara*', are where women speak. But it is another kind of speech. In Γ125 Helen *uphaine* (ὕφαινε) 'was weaving' and thus *enepasse* (ἐνέπασσεν) 'narrating' battle stories onto the cloth.[63] Ladies, when in the main *megaron* among men, have always their spindle with them. Weaving then can be interpreted as a form of speech. On the other hand, *medea* (μήδεα) 'thoughts' and *muthos* (μῦθος) 'speech' can both be (ὑφαίνω) 'woven' as in the case of Menelaos and Odysseus in Γ212.[64] A. Bergren argues: " ...early Greek thought draws an analogy between woven fabric, poetry, and *metis* by making each the object of a verb 'to sew' or 'to weave.'"[65] But it is not a matter of analogy; what a grammatical phenomenon reveals is an indication at the level of experience, namely that speaking was experienced as an activity of the Homeric body, and the lady of the house in *megaron* transforms the narration of words to a narration of images.

When the entertainment ends everyone goes to sleep. *Thalamos* is usually where the members of the house sleep. For the guest a bed is placed either in *megaron* or in the portico immediately outside it, at the *aithousa*[66] or *prodomos.*[67] If *thalamos*

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[62] ψ107: [I cannot] look him strait in the face (οὐδ' εἰς ὥπα ἰδέσθαι ἐναντίον).

[63] Γ125: she came on Helen in the chamber; she was weaving a great web, a red fording robe, and working into it the numerous struggles (τὴν δ' εὗρ' ἐν μεγάρῳ, ἣ δὲ μέγαν ἱστὸν ὕφαινε / δίπλακα πορφυρέην, πολέας δ' ἐνέπασσεν ἀέθλους)

[64] Γ212: when both of them spun their speech and counsels (ἀλλ' ὅτε μύθους καὶ μήδεα πᾶσιν ὕφαινον).

[65] BERGREN, A., 1983: "Language and the Female in Early Greek Thought," *Arethousa* 16, 1-2, pp. 73.

[66] υπ' αἰθούσῃ γ399-δ297-η336,345-Ω644.

is the 'place' to secure and preserve the status of the members of the house, to sleep in *megaron* denotes the status of the guest: a friend of the house, who can always be transformed into its enemy.

5.3. MOURNING AND THE RE-CONSTITUTION OF *DOMOS*

When Achilles delivers the corpse of Hektor to his father, Priam asks him:

Ω660-67 : 'If you are willing that we accomplish a complete funeral for Hektor, this , Achilleus, is what you could do and give me pleasure...Nine days we would keep him in our palace (*megarois)* and mourn him, and bury him on the tenth day, and the people feast by him, and on the eleventh day we would make the grave-barrow for him, and on the twelfth day fight again; if so we must do." [68]

In fact, what Priam describes is a funeral ritual.[69] Again *megaron* appears to be related to an experience of transformation within the Homeric house, which as such

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[67] ἐν προδόμῳ δ302-υ1,143-Ω673.

[68] Ω660-67: εἰ μὲν δή μ' ἐθέλεις τελέσαι τάφον Ἕκτορι δίῳ, / ὧδέ κέ μοι ῥέζων, Ἀχιλεῦ, καχαρισμένα θείης...ἐννῆμαρ μέν κ' αὐτὸν ἐνὶ μεγάροις γοάοιμεν, / τῇ δεκάτῃ δέ κε θάπτοιμεν δαινῦτό τε λαός, / ἑνδεκάτῃ δέ κε τύμβον ἐπ' αὐτῷ ποιήσαιμεν, / τῇ δὲ δυωδεκάτῃ πολεμίξομεν, εἴ περ ἀνάγκη.'

[69] Ian Morris includes death among the rites of passage. He writes: "...Rite of passage: The biological death of an individual sets off a more prolonged social process of dying. The first stage, the "rite of separation," is a ceremony which moves those involved out of their normal conditions of life into the second stage, a liminal status. Some of the survivors take on the role of mourners, while the deceased moves from being a person to a corpse and some kind of soul is usually liberated from the body. These transitions may happen at the moment death is announced, or at some later point; all at once, or more gradually. The actors are often secluded and polluted, and reverse much of their normal behavior. The mourners may wear very formal clothing, or may be disheveled; they may be solemnly silent, or they cry hysterically; they may combine all these acts. In some places these statuses last only moments; in others, years. Their length and intensity vary according to who is involved. The third stage, the 'rite of aggregation," restores normalcy. The mourners return to social life, but without the deceased; the corpse is finally laid to rest; and the soul joins the ancestors. This tripartite rite-of-passage sequence is prominent in ancient descriptions of funerals, and the rituals effecting these changes in status repeatedly remind all involved of the relationships they are involved in, through the inversion and affirmation of norms." MORRIS I., op.cit, pp. 10.

necessitates a strict code of rules, always involving the multiple manifestations of the body. The transformation we are talking about is a transformation related to a deceased inasmuch as to Homeric *domos*. It is Andromache, the wife of Hektor who announces the consequences of her husband's death. The transformation of her status from wife to widow is related once more to *megaron* when she says:

Ω725-32: "My husband, you were lost young from life, and have left me a widow in your house (*megaroisi*), and the boy is only a baby who was born to you and me, the unhappy. I think he will never come to age, for before then head to heel this city will be sacked, for you, its defender, are gone, you who guarded the city, and the grave wives, and the innocent children, wives who before long must go away in the hollow ships, and among them I shall also go..."[70]

The changes that the death brings have bodily effects on the mourners. As Patroklos lies dead, Achilles refuses to eat.

T319-20: But now you lie here torn before me, and my heart goes starved for meat and drink, though they are here beside me, by reason of longing you [71]

P. Pucci writes: "Mourning ...mimes death and its effects; accordingly the mourner refuses food, the source and support of life."[72] Patroklos can survive through Achilles, but we are not talking here of the mental activity of memory, and the *pothos* (πόθος) 'desire' of Achilles is merely a specific feeling. The body in its multiplicity – that is, as a fusion of the corporeal, mental, psychic – has to accommodate another

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[70] Ω725-32: 'ἄνερ, ἀπ' αἰῶνος νέος ὤλεο, κὰδ δέ με χήρην / λείπεις ἐν μεγάροισι, πάϊς δ' ἔτι νήπιος αὖτως, / ὃν τέκομεν σύ τ' ἐγώ τε δυσάμμοροι, οὐδέ μιν οἴω / ἥβην ἵξεσθαι, πρὶν γάρ πόλις ἤδε κατ' ἄκρης / πέρσεται, ἦ γὰρ ὅλωλας ἐπίσκοπος, ὅς τέ μιν αὐτὴν / ῥύσκευ, ἔχες δ' ἀλόχους κεδνὰς καὶ νήπια τέκνα, / αἳ δή τοι τάχα νηυσὶν ὀχήσονται γλαφυρῇσι, / καὶ μὲν ἐγὼ μετὰ τῇσι...

[71] T319-20: νῦν δὲ σὺ μὲν κεῖσαι δεδαϊγμένος, αὐτάρ ἐμὸν κῆρ / ἄκμηνον πόσιος καὶ ἐδητύος ἔνδον ἐόντων / σῇ ποθῇ

[72] PUCCI, P., 1987: *Odysseus Polutropos: Intertextual Readings in the Odyssey and the Iliad*, Cornell University Press, pp. 169.

body, and nothing is allowed to interrupt this process, not even hunger. Athena prevents hunger by dropping divine food to Achilles.[73] Men while mourning make their body dirty. Mourning Priam says:

> Ω639-40: I have been grieving and brooding over my numberless sorrows and wallowed in the muck about my courtyard's enclosure [74]

Dirt is interpreted as matter out of place:[75] hence, in the context of ritual, becoming dirty becomes equivalent to being out of place, and thus out of social role; mourners are considered as being in a liminal stage.[76] But this approach still presupposes the specific conception of place as containing and even producing the social roles, which we have argued against. We argue instead, that to become dirty, which entails one's

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[73] T353-4: she dropped the delicate ambrosia and the nectar inside the breast of Achilleus softly, so no sad weakness of hunger would come on his knees (ἡ δ' Ἀχιλῆϊ / νέκταρ ἐνὶ στήθεσσι καὶ ἀμβροσίην ἐρατεινήν / στάξ', ἵνα μή μιν λιμὸς ἀτερπὴς γούναθ' ἵκοιτο)

[74] ἀλλ' αἰεὶ στενάχω καὶ κήδεα μυρία πέσσω / αὐλῆς ἐν χόρτοισι κυλινδόμενος κατὰ κόπρον.

[75] DOUGLAS, M., 1966: *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, New York, Pantheon Books.

[76] "Liminality is a term borrowed from Arnold van Gennep's formulation of *rites de passage*, "transition rites" – which accompany every change of state or social position, or certain points in age. These are marked by three phases: separation, margin (or *limen* – the Latin for threshold, signifying the great importance of real or symbolic thresholds at this middle period of the rites, through *cunicular*, "being in a tunnel," would better describe the quality of this phase in many cases, its hidden nature, its mysterious darkness), and reaggregation. The first phase, separation, comprises symbolic behavior signifying the detachment of the individual or the group from either an early fixed point in the social structure or from an established set of cultural conditions (a state). During the intervening liminal period, the state of the ritual subject (the "passenger," or "liminal",) becomes ambiguous, neither here nor there, betwixt and between all fixed points of classification; he passes through symbolic domain that has few or none of the attributes of his past or coming state. In the third phase the passage is consummated and the ritual subject, the neophyte or initiant reenters the social structure, often, but not always at a higher status level." TURNER, V., 1990: *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic action in Human Society*, Cornell University Press, pp. 231-2.

own body becoming covered with matter, might rather be an attempt to incorporate the dead body. In this light we can better understand the bathing and the cutting of hair that marks the end of the funeral – the cremation of the corpse[77] – as the inverse process, that is, the dissociation from the diseased which marks the end of mourning. When the heralds try

Ψ40-6: to persuade the son of Peleus to wash away the filth of the bloodstains, he denied them stubbornly and swore an oath on it: 'No, before Zeus, who is greatest of gods and the highest, there is no right in letting water come near my head, until I have laid Patroklos on the burning pyre, and heaped the mound over him, and cut my hair for him.

Women take care of the dead body.[78] F. Zeitlin argues:

"Bodiliness is what most defines [the woman] in the cultural system that associates her with the physical process of birth and death...Thus it is women who most often tend the bodies of others, washing the surface of the body or laying it out for its funeral. Theirs is the task of supplying the clothing that covers the body and they have a storehouse of robes which may encircle the male victim in textured folds...She seems to know, whether consciously or not, how vulnerable, how open-how mortal in fact- is the human body."[79]

Because women come into direct contact with the corpse, it is not necessary for them to have recourse to the masculine ways of incorporation described above. After preparation, the body of the deceased is laid on a bed[80] and is displayed in *megaron*.

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[77] εἰ πεπίθοιεν /Πηλεΐδην λούσασθαι ἀπο βρότον αἱματόεντα.. / αὐτὰρ ὅ γ' ἠρνεῖτο στερεῶς, ἐπὶ δ' ὅρκον ὄμοσσεν / ''οὐ μά Ζῆν', ὅς τίς τε θεῶν ὕπατος καὶ ἄριστος, / οὐ θέμις ἐστὶ λοετρά καρήατος ἄσσον ἱκέσθαι / πρίν γ' ἐνὶ Πάτροκλον θέμεναι πυρὶ σῆμά τε χεῦαι / κείρασθαί τε κόμην.

[78] Ω582: Then Achilleus called out to his serving-maids to wash the body and anoint it all over (δμῳὰς δ' ἐκκαλέσσας λοῦσαι κέλετ' ἀμφί τ' ἀλεῖψαι)

[79] ZEITLIN F., op. cit., pp. 74.

[80] When Achilles delivers the corpse of Hektor to his father he says: Ω599: your son is given back to you, aged sir, as you asked it. He lies on a bier (υἱὸς μὲν δή τοι λέλυται γέρον ὡς ἐκέλευες, /κεῖται δ' ἐν λεχέεσσ'). In the funeral representations of the Greek Geometric art, the bed is depicted as a bier on which a dead

The funeral bed is not a specific bed but one removed from *thalamos* – a term which does not just correspond to the 'place for sleep' but evokes the experience of fixity. Even if the body posture remains the same, a member of *domos* lies in *thalamos* when living and in *megaron* when dead.[81] What is conventionally interpreted here as a change of location, from *thalamos* to *megaron,* must be understood as a change from one category of experience to another, from fixity to transformation. For the transformation of the deceased, from living being to corpse, involves the transformation of the *domos*, which has to be re-constituted at the end of the funeral. The deceased remains in *megaron* in the process of his transformation from a dweller in the house to a dweller in Hades. His *demas* (δέμας) 'the build of his body' will be transformed to *skie* (σκιή) 'a shadow' in the *skioenta* (σκιόεντα) 'shadowed' *megara*[82] in the process of leaving *domos* 'the house' for ever. Around the corpse the women sit, and raise the funeral song. The wife, the mother, and other women, close relatives of the deceased, start speaking.

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body is displayed in the *prothesis* or carried to funeral in the *ekphora.* On the form of the high-legged bed as depicted in the Greek Geometric art, J. Boardman, argues "we can but speculate whether its construction did not deliberately allow for other than sleeping- as a status symbol, for the display of the living, and ultimately for the display of the dead". BOARDMAN J., 1990: "Sympotic Furniture", *Sympotica: a symposium on the Symposion*, ed. Os. Murray, Oxford, pp. 123.

[81] This is valid in the context of the Homeric text, whereas in later times reclining in beds becomes a well known feature of *symposion*.

[82] The phrase *megara skioenta* occurs quite often in the text. It is usually interpreted as an indication that *megaron* was a room with no openings and thus dark. But we just want to point out the relation of darkness with ritual and transformation in general. Note that the repetitive phrase (formula) *skioonto te pasai aguiai* (σκιόωντό τε πᾶσαι ἀγυαί) 'all the journeying ways were darkened' in the Homeric text, denotes the end of the day. It is in the darkness that everything is transformed and all movement has to stop.

Ω719-24: they laid him then on a carved bed, and seated beside him the singers who were to lead the melody in the dirge, and the singers chanted the song of sorrow, and the women were mourning beside them. Andromache of the white arms led the lamentation of the women, and held in her arms the head of manslaughtering Hektor.[83]

During funerals, women have the privilege of speech in *megaron*. However, they address their speech to someone actually absent, for they speak to the dead. But as we have already shown speech permits differentiation and is experienced as distancing. So in addressing the dead, women set off the process of differentiation, and distancing from the deceased. This inverse process culminates with the funeral feasting after the burial which actually signals the return to normality. The mourners, that is, the members of *domos,* can eat because the dead is no longer the only thing that can be attached to their body. By eating together they reconstitute their *domos*. *Megaron* is not the setting that contains the ritual of mourning, *megaron* evokes this experience of mourning, that is, an experience of transformation, which is central to the re-constitution of any *domos*.

We can now understand better the relation of *megaron* and death, not in the case of mourning but of murder. We refer to the killing of the suitors by Odysseus, and the slaughter of Agamemnon by Aigisthos. The question is not that of *megaron* as the appropriate or not place for a murder, as conventionally the issue is treated.[84] The fact is that both the killing of the suitors and the murder of Agamemnon involve a transformation related to their house; Odysseus' *domos* is re-constituted, whereas

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[83] Ω719-24: τὸν μὲν ἔπειτα / τρητοῖς ἐν λεχέεσσι θέσαν, παρὰ δ' εἶσαν ἀοιδοὺς / θρήνων ἐξάρχους, οἳ τε στονόεσσαν ἀοιδὴν / οἳ μὲν ἄρ' ἐθρήνεον, ἐπὶ δὲ στενάχοντο γυναῖκες. / τῇσιν δ' Ἀνδρομάχη λευκώλενος ἦρχε γόοιο, / Ἕκτορος ἀνδροφόνοιο κάρη μετὰ χερσὶν ἔχουσα.

[84] "..Murder at a banquet? We can only say that as literature these scenes draw their strength from the background of peaceful fellowship against which the act of cruelty is set.." SLATER, W.J., "Sympotic Ethics in the Odyssey," *Sympotica: a symposium on the Symposion*, ed. Os. Murray, Oxford, pp. 216.

Agamemnon's is actually destroyed. It is worth noting however, that the killing of Odysseus' unfaithful female servants occurs not in *megaron* but in *aule* (αὐλή) 'courtyard', and is also another kind of death; hanging, a non-pure death as Telemachos says.[85]

In sum, *megaron* evokes the experience of transformations; transformations which are central to the Homeric *domos*: a stranger is transformed into friend; members of the *domos* affirm their incorporation again and again, or its re-constitution is achieved following a death. These transformations however need to be controlled, so that the outcome is insured. This is achieved through a strict code which includes a repetitive movement of bodies that produces the experience of a non-enduring space, called *megaron*. This does not necessarily correspond to a specific location within *domos* and this conception of *megaron* is far away from that of a specific room of the Homeric house which contains the domestic rituals. Such an interpretation can only be produced by the anachronistic conception of a house as an assemblage of rooms which 'contain' different functions, and as such cannot be the appropriate methodological tool with which to approach the Homeric experience of *megaron*. In fact, the difference between the term *megaron* and its translation 'hall' is that

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[85] χ462: μὴ μὲν δὴ καθαρῷ θανάτῳ. This kind of death is considered appropriate given that it is intended as the punishment of their sexuality "Strangulation, for the Greeks, meant shedding no blood...As a form of human death, strangulation or hanging evoked horror, but as a means of suicide it can be again related to shedding no blood. To avoid the bloodshed of rape or unwanted defloration a bloodless suicide is appropriate...Strangulation can therefore be culturally opposed to unwanted sex, the avoidance of the latter may be appropriately achieved through the former, although it may be carried out after the event...The real *parthenos* does not bleed...becoming a *gyne* involves a series of bleeding." KING, H., 1993: "Bound to Bleed: Artemis and Greek Women", *Images of Women in Antiquity*, ed. A. Cameron and A. Kuhrt, Routledge, pp. 119.

megaron evokes an experience of transformation, while we always think of the 'hall' as a room.

6

THALAMOS

'STORE-ROOM, WOMEN'S-CHAMBER, BEDCHAMBER'
CONTAINMENT - DANGER - FIXITY

6.1. Introduction
6.2. *Thalamos* as Container
6.2.1. Things and Containment
6.2.2. Immediate Intimacy and Danger
6.2.3. Fixity and Locking

6.1. INTRODUCTION

With *thalamos* (θάλαμος) we must once again – as in the case of *megaron* – discard the accepted correspondence between a word and a room, where room is the general concept specified through the notion of function, or rather intended as the container of a function. But this time we are in a peculiar situation; for *thalamos* in fact does evoke the experience of containment without being conceived as a room. This seems like a paradox. But, as we shall see, the difference between the conventional definition of *thalamos* and the experience evoked by it is inscribed in the difference between a general concept of container through which a word is defined, and the experience of containment evoked by the word itself.

It is accepted within scholarship that *thalamos* is related to architecture in constituting an important part of the Homeric house, in corresponding to a series of rooms such as the 'store-room' the 'women's-chamber', and the 'bedchamber'. By contrast we will argue that these things are indeed thought of as rooms in the sense of

containers not because they belong to a general and universal class of 'rooms' which are necessarily contained, but because the containment we refer to here is a direct experience of the object named by this word and is directly evoked by the Homeric language. This experience of containment is the effect not of belonging to a general class of 'room' but because of what we will call an 'immediate proximity', an intimacy achieved in a variety of ways. These include visual and olfactory stimulation, the immediate contact of bodies in sexual intercourse, and the close encounter of the sleeping multiple Homeric body with its dreams. This immediate and uncontrolled proximity constitutes a danger and has to be reserved only for the members of the house – which are already in a relation of intimacy – through the device of the locked door that isolates and re-produces as fixed this specific category of experience, the experience of containment, i.e., *thalamos*. Our approach here seeks to challenge both the established definition of *thalamos*, but also of femininity, for *thalamos* is mainly referred to in the literature as a container of femininity. Women and things stored are assimilated, and both interpreted through the concept of container. Femininity and container appear intermingled. But we are not interested here in the history of philosophical phantasies but in the way experiences are generated within the Homeric text.

The usual approach to *thalamos* is to treat sexual difference as a binary opposition, in which case this 'natural' opposition between male and female, is made to reflect a difference in the spatial organization of the Homeric house: male is to *megaron* as female is to *thalamos*. But *thalamos* is not so much the place for women and objects but the experience of an intimacy which is not defined by womanhood; nor is *megaron* exclusively and constitutively related to males. This way of thinking

of gender as a binary opposition runs parallel with thinking of space as the container of gender. This is very clear in the well known distinction between public and private space, where *megaron* equals male and public, and *thalamos* female and private. Nor could discussions about public and private domains in the context of Athenian democracy be relevant,[1] for there is a scholarly recognition that the very distinction is not valid in the case of Homeric epics.[2] The fact is that binary oppositions themselves can only be deployed in a logical space which in effect is a container. Indeed the logicians' orthodox definition of binary opposition as one whose terms are 'mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive' is in fact a figure which requires a spatial containment so that no other possible logical case can escape from the container of proposition. It may indeed be that the proposition together with the denial of its opposite is the figure which at the level of philosophy most encourages the idea of space as a container. To speak of containing the proposition that 'if p then not q', is one of the most important elements of the notion of space as container. But we

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[1] "The house, let us now observe, is the property of the male and his family line. The *oikos* is the visual symbol of paternal heredity which entitles sons to succeed their fathers as proprietors of its wealth and movable goods and as rulers over its inhabitants...Yet the house, as we know, is primarily the proper domain of the woman, to which the social rules of the culture assign her, while its men go forth into the outside world to pursue manly accomplishments in war and politics." ZEITLIN, F., 1990: "Playing the Other: Theatre, Theatricality, and the Feminine in Greek Drama," *Nothing to Do with Dionysos?: Athenian Drama in its Social Context,* eds. J. Winkler, F. Zeitlin, Princeton University Press, pp. 76. On the relation between the emergence of Greek city-state, democracy and the public-private distinction see REDFIELD, J., 1995: "Homo Domesticus," *The Greeks*, ed. J-P. Vernant, The University of Chicago Press.

[2] A. Rathje writes: "In Homer too the public and private spheres seems to be rather interchangeable." RATHJE, A., 1990: "The Adoption of the Homeric Banquet in Central Italy in the Orientalizing period," *Sympotica: a Symposium on the Symposion*, ed. Os. Murray, Oxford, pp. 286. We argue of course that the distinction itself is not valid for the Homeric text, for it presupposes a certain concept of space, that of container.

propose that *thalamos* and *megaron* cannot be reduced to binary oppositions, but rather exist as complementary experiences that in fact structure the experience of trans-fixity, i.e., of the Homeric *domos.* By refusing to accept that *thalamos* is simply the proper place of female gender and objects, we open up a field of inquiry on the specific, and non-philosophized experience of containment and interiority within the Homeric epic. And in order to understand *thalamos* in its context, visual and olfactory experience will be investigated as will themes regarding women, marriage, sexual intercourse, sleep, dreams, storage, and locking.

6.2. *THALAMOS* AS CONTAINER

In the Homeric dictionary *thalamos* is given the following definition: "room (opp. large hall, μέγαρον, δῶμα), hence the rooms of the rear portion of the house, e.g., women's chamber, room for weapons, store-room, bedchamber."[3] The dictionary also refers to a reconstruction drawing of Odysseus' house, where different rooms which bear the name *thalamos* are been located in the rear portion of the house. What is obvious in the above definition is that *thalamos* is treated in the same way as *megaron*, that is, governed by the presupposition of the correspondence between names, rooms and archeological representation. Furthermore, etymological dictionaries are no more illuminating, not only because of the limits of etymology which is itself an interpretation to be deciphered in its own historical context, but also because both Hofmann[4] and Chantraine[5] regard the etymology of *thalamos* as

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[3] AUTENRIETH, G., 1991: *Homeric Dictionary*, Duckworth, , s.v. θάλαμος.

[4] HOFMANN, J.B., 1974: *Etymologishes Wörterbuch des Griechischen*, München 1950, Greek translation by A. Papanikolaou, Athens, s.v. θάλαμος.

[5] CHANTRAINE, P., 1968: *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque*, Paris, s.v. θάλαμος.

uncertain. For both however, *thalamos* corresponds to an interior room.[6] Room and 'interior' of course are synonymous, but what they are talking about is a degree of interiority, which can only be determined by the domestic topography. Indeed it is considered that *thalamos* as a store-room might be located underground, and as a bedroom or the women's chamber in the upper part of the house. In fact location and function are absolutely necessary for the definition-specification of the otherwise general concept of room. It is conventional to define a room by saying: it is a bedroom on the first floor, because this corresponds to our category of a building. But we should not project our categories on the Homeric text unquestionably. We can only illuminate the problem by a careful reading of the text itself.

In the Iliad and Odyssey the term occurs 71 times, 31 of them in relation to women, marriage or intercourse, 11 in relation to sleep and 29 in relation to 'storage'. Indeed *domos* is unthinkable without women, marriage, reproduction, the storage of food and treasures, and as a 'place' that men can rest and sleep in safety. All these 'activities' constitute an integral part of the Homeric house, and they are usually interpreted as that which confers fixity upon the Homeric *domos*. There is a specific relation between the structure of *domos* and these activities. Not only are they thought of as being performed in the house but they also reinforce the conception of house as interior, for such activities need to be conducted in the very interior of the house, in a kind of secret zone. Our difficulty lies in disentangling and distinguishing the way we approach *thalamos*, which does involve the experience of a container, from the general and in our view erroneous use of the category of container by using an *a*

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[6] Chantraine defines *thalamos* as "chambre intérieure de la maison, chambre de la maîtresse de maison, chambre où l'on enferme les provisions et les objets précieux". Ibid

priori concept of space from which also depends the categories of house and rooms. At the level of translation it is true we have no other real term in our language to call it other than 'room'. But theoretically we are seeking to differentiate the specific room-like quality of *thalamos* from the *a priori* room which is imposed upon us by philosophy. In order to do this we should first see the ways *thalamos* is conceived as container within scholarship, and seek to mark the difference of our approach.

As far as *thalamos* as a store-room is concerned, the idea of a chamber with specific features, a store-room in which precious objects are under lock and key, has never been challenged. But what interests us is the specific relation between the stored things and *thalamos*, a relation which is usually reduced to the contained and container in which the existence of container is necessarily thought of independently of the contained. Under such an interpretation the container is always prior to any contained thing; indeed any-thing can be defined as that which is been contained within a prior-existing container. It is obvious that such an approach involves a concept of the container which determines the definition of what is contained. We have argued that such concept is foreign in the Homeric text. But then how is it that a specific experience of 'containment' is produced? We shall argue that there is a specific relation between things and *thalamos* manifested in the Homeric text which will provide us with the possibility of understanding the text without a general concept of container. We postpone this for a moment in order to see the conventional way that scholarship approaches the relation of femininity and *thalamos*. For when *thalamos* is defined as the women's chamber, it is actually understood as the room which contains femininity. It is taken for granted that *thalamos* is a container, and that femininity is that which needs to be contained and restricted. We could say that the

concept of femininity presupposes the concept of container. For it is indeed through later Greek texts – especially those of medical writers which discuss feminine physiology – that scholars argue successfully about the feminine need for containment. Because women are considered wet[7] they require a place to contain them. Because of their wetness women share the attributes of the liquids, have no solid shape, hence may leak and invade others' 'space'. Moreover women are not capable of self-restraint and must have boundaries imposed upon them. A. Carson writes:

> "In such a society, individuals who are regarded as especially lacking in control of their own boundaries, or as possessing special talents and opportunities for confounding the boundaries of others, evoke fear and controlling action from the rest of society. Woman are so regarded by men in ancient Greek society, along with suppliants, strangers, guests, and other intruders. But the threat which woman pose is not only greater in degree than that presented by other transgressors of boundaries; it is different in kind".[8]

Of course we can interpret the Homeric text in relation to this danger of the transgression of boundaries, understood as the overturning of an established social

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[7] Pinault writes in relation to women: "Another factor that established women as colder than men was a deeply rooted system of analogies and polarities, which are evidenced in Greek literature and philosophy dating back to Homer and the Presocratics, and which portrayed the superior quality of body and mind as warm and dry and early on associated these qualities with men. Women, by the habit of thinking in terms of binary pairs, were wetter and colder...We can see this cultural pattern associating fat with cold, wet, female, barbarian, and infertility in a very interesting fifth-century Hippocratic work: Airs, Waters, Places." PINAULT, J. R., 1993: "Women, Fat, and Fertility: Hippocratic Theorizing and Treatment" *Woman's Power, Man's Game*, ed. M. De Forest, Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, pp. 81. But how can we presuppose that the thinking in pairs of opposites or polarities characteristic of the fifth-century Greek thought, can also be valid for the Homeric text? On this issue see LLOYD, G.E.R., 1966: *Polarity and Analogy: Two Types of Argumentation in Early Greek Thought*, Cambridge.

[8] CARSON, A., 1990: "Putting her in her place: Women, Dirt and Desire," *Before Sexuality: The Construction of Erotic Experience in Ancient Greek World*, eds. D. Halperin, J. Winkler, F. Zeitlin, Princeton, pp. 135.

order. But this is not enough. Of course we could say, for example, that in the Iliad the Trojan war is presented as the result of a woman's stepping out from her house, while in the Odyssey Penelope keeps the order as long as she remains confined within her *thalamos.* But such an approach obviously presupposes the general concept of house and rooms as containers and thus forces us into a reading of the Homeric text which is anachronistic. If there is an experience of 'containment' within the Homeric text, we have to understand how it is specifically produced rather than deduced from some *a priori* relation. This is not a purely logical exercise, for it can help us to understand the relation between femininity and *thalamos.* We shall argue below that in fact femininity is produced not as a consequence of some general category of 'being feminine' but as an effect of the relation between the body and things, a relation, which is attained with the immediate proximity, the intimacy which is called *thalamos.* As far as *thalamos* as bedroom is concerned, it is normally understood as a room with the specific function of sleep. But the sleep of the male members of the household is an integral part of the con-structure of the Homeric *domos.*

6.2.1. THINGS AND CONTAINMENT

There are a number of passages where *thalamos* is described as what might be interpreted simply as a store-room, for in 29 passages it is mentioned in relation to things contained in it.[9] In β337, Telemachos enters his father's *thalamos*, where precious objects as well as foods are 'contained':

β337-43: he went down into his father's high-roofed and wide storeroom, where gold and bronze were lying piled up, and abundant clothing in the bins, and fragrant olive oil, and in it jars of wine, sweet to

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[9] Δ143, Z288, 316, 321, Ω191, 275, 317, β337, 348, γ441, ζ74, θ439, ο99, π285, τ17, 53, φ8,42, χ109, 140, 143, 155, 157, 161, 166, 174, 179,180, ω166.

drink, aged, were standing, keeping the unmixed divine drink inside them, lined up in order close to the wall, for the day Odysseus might come home even after laboring through many hardships.[10]

Another description of Odysseus *thalamos* is given when his wife Penelope enters it to fetch his bow for the contest of the suitors:

φ4-15-20...51-2: With her attendant women she went to the inmost recess of the bedchamber. There were stored away the master's possessions. Bronze was there, and gold, and difficult[l]y wrought iron, and there the backstrung bow was stored away, and the quiver to hold the arrows. There were many painful shafts inside it. These were gifts from a friend.... Then she went up to the high platform, where there were standing chests, and in these were stored fragrant pieces of clothing.[11]

If we made an inventory of things stored in *thalamos*, the textual evidence shows that it would include various objects made of precious metals – armour and weaponry included – food, clothing[12] and even the precious color purple.[13] All of them might be given as gifts to guests, and are usually interpreted as 'status symbols'.[14] We have

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[10] β337-43: ὁ δ' ὑψόροφον θάλαμον κατεβήσετο πατρός, / εὐρύν, ὅθι νητός χρυσός καί χαλκός ἔκειτο / ἐσθής τ' ἐν χηλοῖσιν ἄλις τ' ευώδες ἔλαιον. / ἐν δέ πίθοι οἴνοιο παλαιοῦ ἡδυπότοιο / ἕστασαν, ἄκρητον θεῖον ποτόν ἐντός ἔχοντες, / ἑξείης ποτί τοῖχον ἀρηρότες, εἴ ποτ' Ὀδυσσεύς, / οἴκαδε νοστήσειε καί ἄλγεα πολλά μογήσας.

[11] φ8-15-20...51-2: βῆ δ'ἴμεναι θάλαμόνδε σύν ἀμφιπόλοισι γυναιξίν / ἔσχατον, ἔνθα δέ κειμήλια οἱ κειμήλια κεῖτο ἄνακτος, / χαλκός τε χρυσός τε πολύκμητός τε σίδηρος. / ἔνθα δέ τόξον κεῖτο παλίντονον ἠδέ φαρέτρη / ἰοδόκος, πολλοί δ' ἔνεσαν στονόεντες ὀϊστοί, / δῶρα τά... ἡ δ' ἄρ' ἐφ' ὑψηλῆς σανίδος βῆ, ἔνθα δέ χηλοί / ἕστασαν, ἐν δ' ἄρα τῆσι θυώδεα εἵματ' ἔκειτο.

[12] Z288-9: [Hekabe] descended into the fragrant store-chamber. There lay the elaborate wrought robes, the work of Sidonian women (αὐτή δ' ἐς θάλαμον κατεβήσετο κηώεντα, / ἔνθ' ἔσαν οἱ πέπλοι παμποίκιλα ἔργα γυναικῶν / Σιδονίων). ζ74: the girl brought the bright clothing out from the inner chamber (κούρη δ' ἐκ θαλάμοιο φέρεν ἐσθῆτα φαεινήν), also φ52 (see above note 11).

[13] It is mentioned only once in: Δ143-4: it lies away in the inner room, and many a rider longs to have it, but it is laid up to be a king's treasure (κεῖται δ' εν θαλάμω, πολέες τέ μιν ἠρήσαντο / ἱππῆες φορέειν, βασιλῆϊ δέ κεῖται ἄγαλμα).

[14] Rathje defines the *keimelia* as 'status symbols'. He writes: They are prestige objects and represent the status of the owner. Some may even have a premonetary value...they were probably placed in the *thalamos* of the house but taken out and used at particular occasions...Imported wine was a status

already discussed our opposition to such an approach to the Homeric text.[15] To consider that an object is a symbol implies that it has a double existence as an object *per se* and as a symbol. This is inevitably connected with a specific conception of language, in which a word both corresponds to a 'real' object and to its symbolic meaning. In contrast, we are just interested in the experience that a term evokes within the Homeric text. We are not interested in defining the general class of things stored, but how they were experienced. The text informs us that these were experienced as *keimelia* (κειμήλια), that is, things that *keitai* (κεῖται) 'lie'. E. Benveniste writes:

"In Homeric society wealth was a composite thing with a broad distinction on two different levels, between *keimelia* and *probata*...The opposition *keimelia/probasis* [Od.2, 75: *keimelia te probasin te*] refers to possessions of two different categories, a distinction which seems to be essential in the economy of Homeric world: Immovable or 'lying (*keimelia* from κεῖμαι 'I lie'), i.e. immovable property and movable property (*hosa probainei*)...All that 'lies' (*keitai*), *keimelia*, precious metals in ingots, gold, copper and iron, is opposed to *ta probata*, property on the hoof, consisting of the herds and live-stock in general." [16]

The status of immobility in the sense of *keitai* also characterizes the *ktemata* (κτήματα) 'possession, property[17] – (*ktasthai* (κτᾶσθαι) 'acquire for one's self ,

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symbol like all the other imported goods with which the *aristoi* surrounded themselves; this accords well with the description of the *thalamos* of Odysseus." RATHJE A., op.cit., pp. 281.

[15] See chapter on *thure-pule*, pp. 163.

[16] BENVENISTE, E., op.cit., pp. 38.

[17] Gernet writes on the status of the objects that are called *ktemata*: "Le droit de disposition qui s' y applique est absolu; il s' atteste éminemment dans l' institution de la part du mort: les objet en question suivrent le chef dans sa tombe. Enfin, cette notion spécifique se traduit dans la vocabulaire où la désignation de *ktèmata*, s' applique par préférence à cette catégorie de biens; le mot met l' accent sur l' idée d' 'acquisition', acquisition à la guerre, dans les jeux, par des dons, - mais jamais, en principle, dans un commerce mercantile." GERNET, L., 1968: *Anthropologie de la Grèce Antique*, Paris, pp. 96.

possess property, servants, wife') – and is related to *domos*.[18] However, what *keitai* 'lies' and thus might be stored is not characterized merely by immobility, for it might be carried out of *domos*.[19] *Ktemata* in fact, accompany Helen when she moves from Menelaos' to Alexandros' house and *vice versa*.[20] What is more important from our point of view is not the opposition between movable and immovable property, which has the teleological character of becoming the authoritative categories within Roman property law, but the fact that although categories of possession appear to be described as immovable-fixed, they are in fact that which is movable *par excellence*. Such mobility of the *keimeilia* and *ktemata* is in line with our interpretation of *domos* as the experience of trans-fixity, but is conventionally interpreted in the context of exchange. It is not only the exchange of gifts, but within the Homeric text, possessions which can be exchanged for living and dead humans captured by the enemy.[21] What makes this exchange possible however is not only, as we might think, the similar status of 'immobility' that characterizes both the captured body and the possessions. What actually makes exchange possible is the specific relation that

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[18] I382, δ127: Thebes of Egypt, where the greatest possessions lie up in the houses (Θήβας Αἰγυπτίας, ὅθι πλεῖστα δόμοις ἐν κτήματα κεῖται)

ξ291: Phoenicia, where lay this man's house and possessions (Φοινίκην, ὅθι τοῦ γε δόμοι καί κτήματ' ἔκειτο)

Λ131-3: Take us alive, son of Atreus, and take appropriate ransom. In the house of Antimachos the treasures lie piled in abundance, bronze is there, and gold, and difficult[l]y wrought iron (ζώγρει Ατρέος υἱέ, σύ δ' ἄξια δέξαι ἄποινα· / πολλά δ' ἐν Αντιμάχοιο δόμοις κειμήλια κεῖται / χαλκός τε χρυσός τε πολύκμητός τε σίδηρος)

Σ290: the lovely treasures that lay away in our houses have vanished (ἐξαπόλωλε δόμων κειμήλια καλά)

[19] θ254-7: bring ...the clear-voiced lyre, which must have been set down somewhere in our palace...the herald rose up to bring the hollowed lyre out of the king's house (κιών φόρμιγγαν λίγειαν / οἰσέτω, ἥ που κεῖται ἐν ἡμετέροισι δόμοισιν. /...ὦρτο δέ κῆρυξ / οἴσων φόρμιγγα γλαφυρήν δόμου ἐκ βασιλῆος)

[20] H350: give back Helen of Argos and all her possessions (ἄγετ' Αργείην Ἑλένην καί κτήμαθ' ἅμ' αὐτῇ)

[21] Priam exchanges possessions that lie in his *thalamos* for the corpse of his son Hektor in Ω275-6: Then they carried out [of *thalamos*] and piled into the smooth-polished mule wagon all the unnumbered spoils

every-body might have with some-thing, or with another-body. Things as well as bodies can be attached to a specific body,[22] experienced as its extensions, and provide it with a specific identity. The kind of intimacy achieved between things and bodies is very important in order to understand the experience of *thalamos* as store-room. Odysseus gives a first sign for his recognition by describing the clothes he was wearing when he left his *domos*, and which were stored in his *thalamos*. Penelope says :

τ255-7: I myself gave him this clothing, as we describe it. I folded it in my chamber, and I too attached the shining pin, to his adornment [23]

He gives the second sign of his identity through another thing of his possessions, his bow, again stored in his *thalamos*.[24] But it is the final recognition of his identity produced *via* another thing of his *thalamos*, his bed, that gives us the first clue that things are not simply contained within, but in fact produce the experience of containment, i.e., *thalamos*. Odysseus' bed is literally rooted on the ground as he made it by cutting the upper part of an olive tree. This thing, his bed, is not contained within his *thalamos*, but rather it is the bed, the thing itself that literally constructs around it the *thalamos*, the experience of containment. He says:

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to be given for the head of Hektor (ἐκ θαλάμου δέ φέροντες ἐϋξέστης ἐπ' ἀπήνης / νήεον Ἑ-κτορέης κεφαλῆς ἀπερείσι' ἄποινα.). As far as the exchange of captives with possessions from *thalamos* see below note 27.

[22] The captive-body might be attached to a master-body and become a slave. See our approach to *dmos* in the chapter on *domos.*

[23] τ255-7: αὐτή γάρ τάδε εἵματ' ἐγώ πόρον, οἷ' ἀγορεύεις, / πτύξασ' ἐκ θαλάμου, περόνην τ' ἐπέθηκα φαεινήν / κείνῳ ἄγαλμ' ἔμεναι.

[24] φ4-52. See above note 11.

ξ192-4: I laid down my chamber around this, and built it, until I finished it, with close-set stones, and roofed it well over, and added the compacted doors, fitting closely together.[25]

This specific relation between things and *thalamos*, which we name the experience of containment -for lack of a better term- is evoked in the Homeric language by the use of a series of epithets, applied to both. These are: *polukmetos, poludaidalos, euodes* and *theodes.*

Thalamos is called *polukmetos* (πολύκμητος) 'well-wrought' only once.[26] *Polukmetos* however is an epithet used five more times but only in the formulaic phrase *chalkos te chrusos te polukmetos sideros* (χαλκός τε χρυσός τε πολύκμητός τε σίδηρος) 'bronze, and gold and difficult[l]y wrought iron'. These are referred to in the respective passages as *keimelia* or *ktemata* and as such are things stored in *thalamos*.[27] The case of *poludaidalos* (πολυδαίδαλος) 'cunningly wrought' is similar.

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[25] ξ192-4: τώ δ' ἐγώ ἀμφιβαλών θάλαμον δέμον, ὄφρ' ἐτέλεσσα, / πυκνήσιν λιθάδεσσι, καί εύ καθύπερθεν έρεξα, / κολλητάς δ' ἐπέθηκα θύρας, πυκινώς ἀραρυίας.

[26] δ718: but sat down on the floor of her own well-wrought bedchamber (ἀλλ' ἄρ' ἐπ' οὐδοῦ ἷζε πολυκμήτου θαλάμοιο)

[27] *Thalamos* is mentioned only in one (φ9, see above note 11) of the five instances. In ξ323-6 the term used is *megaron*, for the *keimeilia* do not belong to the master of the house but he keeps them until his friend Odysseus – to whom these precious objects belong- takes them in his own house. As the *keimelia* are in the process of being transferred, they belong to the experience of *megaron* and not to that of *thalamos* . The passage goes like this: ξ323-6: and he showed me all the possessions gathered in by Odysseus, bronze, and gold and difficult[l]y wrought iron...such are the treasures stored for him in the house of the great king. (καί μοι κτήματ' ἔδειξεν ὅσα ξυναγείρατ' Ὀδυσσεύς / χαλκόν τε χρυσόν τε πολύκμητόν τε σίδηρον...τόσσα οἱ ἐν μεγάροις κειμήλια κεῖτο ἄνακτος). In the remaining 3 passages *domos* and *endon* indicate the storage, and it is worth noting that in all of them, these *keimeilia* can be exchanged for a living person. Z45-8: Take me alive, son of Atreus, and take appropriate ransom. In my rich father's house the treasures lie piled in abundance; bronze, and gold and difficult[l]y wrought iron (ζώγρει, Ατρέος υἱέ, σύ δ' ἄξια δέξαι ἀποινα·/πολλά δ' ἐν ἀφνειού πατρός κειμήλια κεῖται / χαλκός τε χρυσός τε πολύκμητός τε σίδηρος), K378-9: Take me alive, and I will pay my ransom: in my house there is bronze, and gold and difficult wrought iron (ζωγρεῖτ' αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν ἐμὲ λύσομαι/ ἔστι γάρ ἔνδον / χαλκός τε χρυσός τε πολύκμητός τε σίδηρος), Λ132--5: In the house of Antimachos the treasures lie up in abundance, bronze, and gold and difficult wrought iron, and our father would make you glad with abundant repayment were he to hear we

The adjective is used only once with *thalamos*,[28] but seven times in relation to skillfully wrought things usually stored in it[29] and once applies to the 'skilled Sidonian craftsmen' that wrought a mixing-bowl of silver,[30] that is, another precious object.

The use of these two epithets might be interpreted as referring to two kinds of constructs, *thalamos* on the one hand and crafted objects on the other, where both have the same attributes. However we propose that they indicate that the things stored confer their features upon the experience evoked by the term *thalamos*. The 'contained' produces the experience of containment and is not merely contained inside a pre-existing though similar container.

The same may be said for the next two epithets *euodes* (εὐώδης) and *theodes* (θηώδης), which refer to smell. Both are translated as 'fragrant'.[31] *Theodes* occurs three times, twice in relation to clothing stored in *thalamos*,[32] and once to *thalamos* itself.[33] *Euodes* also occurs three times in the text. In β339 applies to the *euodes elaion* (εὐῶδες ἔλαιον) 'fragrant oil' stored in Odysseus *thalamos* whereas in Γ381 *euodes* is

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were alive by the ships of the Achaians (πολλὰ δ' ἐν Ἀντιμάχοιο δόμοις κειμήλια κεῖται / χαλκός τε χρυσός τε πολύκμητός τε σίδηρος,/ τῶν κέν τοι χαρίσαιτο πατὴρ ἀπερείσι' ἄποινα, εἰ νῶϊ ζωοὺς πεπύθοιτ' ἐπὶ νηυσὶν Ἀχαιῶν).

[28] ζ14: she went into the ornate chamber, in which a girl was sleeping (βῆ δ' ἴμεν ἐς θάλαμον πολυδαίδαλον, ᾧ ἔνι κούρη / κοιμᾶτ')

[29] 4 times in relation to a corselet (Γ358, Δ136, H252, Λ436) once to a shield (Λ32), a golden gift (ν11), and a chair (Ω597).

[30] Ψ743: since skilled Sidonian craftsmen had wrought it well (ἐπεὶ Σιδόνες πολυδαίδαλοι εὖ ἤσκησαν)

[31] Another epithet *keoeis* (κηώεις) also translated as 'fragrant', occurs four times in relation to Alexandros' bedchamber (Γ381), as well as Priam's and Menelaos' store-rooms (Z287, Ω190 - ο98). From the textual evidence we cannot establish the difference between *theodes, euodes keoeis.*

[32] The first refers to the clothing with which Kalypso dresses Odysseus when he leaves her island ε264: and put fragrant clothing upon him (εἵματά τ' ἀμφιέσασα θυώδεα) The second refers to the clothing stored in Odysseus' *thalamos* φ51 (see above note 11).

[33] It is the *thalamos* of Helen in δ121 (θαλάμοιο θυώδεος ὑψορόφοιο)

Alexandros' *thalamos*[34] where he, shining in his raiment, will seduce Helen. In ε64 *euodes* is the smell of the cypress around the cavern of Kalypso, a cavern from whence seductive perfumes spread all over the island, where Odysseus is detained by the nymph.[35] As the perfumed *thalamos* does, this perfumed island evokes the experience of confinement.[36] This experience of smell introduces us to another effect of *thalamos*: that of intimacy.

6.2.2. IMMEDIATE INTIMACY AND DANGER

If *megaron* evokes the experience of transformation, and entails the ritualized and controlled proximity of bodies by which strangers are incorporated albeit temporarily in *domos*, then *thalamos* evokes the experience of a containment which is an effect of an immediate and uncontrolled proximity which is reserved for members of the house. The ways through which this intimacy occurs include visual and olfactory stimulation, sexual intercourse and dreaming.

In Ω191 Priam descends into his fragrant, cedar, high-roofed *thalamos*, which contains many precious things (*glenea*).[37] The term *glenea* (γλήνεα) denotes 'gleaming objects'. Different passages inform us that gold and bronze objects are

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[34] Γ382: and set him down again in his own perfumed bedchamber (κὰδ δ' εἶσ' ἐν θαλάμῳ εὐώδεϊ κηώεντι.)

[35] ε59-64: There was a great fire blazing on the hearth, and the smell of cedar split in billets, and sweetwood burning, spread all over the island...There was a growth of grove around the cavern, flourishing, alder was there and the black poplar, and fragrant cypress (πῦρ μὲν ἐπ' ἐσχαρόφιν μέγα καίετο, τηλόσε δ' ὀδμή / κέδρου τ' εὐκεάτοιο θύου τ' ἀνά νῆσον ὀδώδει / δαιομένων../ ὕλη δέ σπέος ἀμφί πεφύκει τηλεθόωσα, / κλήθρη τ' αἴγειρός τε καί εὐώδης κυπάρισσος).

[36] In two passages (see further on in the text) *thalamos* is experienced as a prison. It is quite interesting that this occurs in relation to men.

[37] Ω191-2: he himself went into the storeroom, which was fragrant and of cedar, and high-ceilinged, with many bright treasures inside it. (αὐτός δ' ἐς θάλαμον κατεβήσετο κηώεντα / κέδρινον ὑψόροφον, ὃς γλήνεα πολλά κεχάνδει)

among the many things contained in *thalamos* intended as a store-room.[38] We may therefore assume that *glenea* refers to such objects. Another term of the Homeric text is g*lene* (γλήνη) and denotes the 'pupil of the eye'.[39] The linguistic proximity between the gleam in the eye and the object implies a proximity between the two. The gleaming eye and the gleaming object are connected by the act of seeing and by the light which springs from both. These objects are precious not for their monetary value, but because they can be worn on the body and produce the power of both aggression and seduction. The weapons stored in *thalamos* are just such dangerous gleaming objects that spring light and wound the enemy. But we have already shown that the Homeric experience of sight entails the collision of seeing and the seen. The dazzling effect of *glenea* or *daidala*,[40] generates the intimacy between such things and the Homeric bodies that experience them. Hera wears a robe with *daidala polla* (δαίδαλα πολλά) so that her husband will be seduced on seeing it.[41] A gleaming object can produce such intimacy. Hence such objects should be normally kept out of sight and used only to achieve this proximity, as in the context of hospitality or sexual intercourse, or of course in battle. In a number of passages the term *thalamos* occurs in relation to the gifts given to or by friends in the context of *xenia*.[42] Now a gift of

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[38] β337, θ439.

[39] ι390, Θ164.

[40] Among the objects stored in *thalamos* are included crafted pieces of work and called *daidala* (δαίδαλα) and as such are experienced as *thauma idesthai* 'a wonder to behold'. As we have seen *thalamos* itself is called *poludaidalos.* For a detailed study on *daidala* see FRONTISI-DUCROUX, F., 1975: *Dédale: Mythologie de l' Artisan en Grèce Ancienne*, Paris.

[41] Ξ179. See also further on in the text.

[42] Note that gifts are stored and locked in *thalamos*, to be secured and preserved. They are removed to *megaron,* to be transferred into the guest's property. Arete fetch from *thalamos* the gifts for Odysseus in θ438-40: Meanwhile Arete brought from out of her chamber the splendid chest for the stranger, and in it laid the beautiful presents, the clothing and the gold which the Phaiakians had given (τόφρα δ' ἄρ' Ἀρήτη

hospitality is conventionally interpreted as the "material symbol of friendship."[43] By contrast, we suggest that they be understood as generating a literal and immediate intimacy between guest and host, an intimacy that long outlasts the departure of the guest, as long as he continues to have the gift in his possession. It is through such a thing that the guest's identity can be recognized, and this feature of such objects, that they confer identity upon Homeric bodies, creates the need for them to be kept fixed and stored behind the locked doors of the *thalamos*. It is this experience that produces the experience of *thalamos* as a closed container. If a guest achieves proximity in this way in order to become a *philos* 'friend', this is because members of the house have already been stamped by this intimacy. Indeed is not only humans that they are called *philoi*, but also food or clothes. Whatever is in *thalamos,* shall be *philoi*. This is an indication of the intimacy between body and things, as well as between bodies themselves. *Philotesia erga* denotes sexual intercourse within the Homeric text and is

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ξείνῳ περικαλλέα χηλόν / ἐξέφερεν θαλάμοιο, τίθει δ' ἐνί κάλλιμα δῶρα, / ἐσθῆτα χρυσόν τε, τά οἱ Φαίηκες ἔδωκαν). Menelaos, Helen, and their son bring from *thalamos* Telemachos' gifts in o99- 109: Meanwhile he himself went into the fragrant chamber, not alone, but Megapenthes and Helen went with him. But when they came to the place where they had their treasures stored, the son of Atreus took up the goblet, handled on both sides, and told Megapenthes to carry the mixing bowl, that was made of silver; but Helen went to stand by the storing boxes, where there were elaborately wrought robes. She herself had made them. And Helen, shining among women, lifted out one of them, that which was the loveliest in design and the largest and shone like a star. It lay beneath the others. (αὐτός δ' ἐς θάλαμον κατεβήσετο κηώεντα, ϡ οὐκ οἷος, ἅμα τῷ γ' Ἑλένη κίε καὶ Μεγαπένθης. / ἀλλ' ὅτε δή ῥ' ἵκανον ὅθι οἱ κειμήλια κεῖτο, Ἀτρεΐδης μέν ἔπειτα δέπας λάβεν ἀμφικύπελλον, / υἱόν δέ κρητῆρα φέρειν Μεγαπένθε' ἄνωγεν / ἀργύρεον· Ἑλένη δέ παρίστατο φωριαμοῖσιν, ἔνθ' ἔσαν οἱ πέπλοι παμποίκιλοι, οὓς κάμεν αὐτή. / τῶν ἕν' ἀειραμένη Ἑλένη φέρε, δῖα γυναικῶν, / ὃς κάλλιστος ἦην ποικίλμασιν ἠδέ μέγιστος, ἀστὴρ δ' ὡς ἀπέλαμπεν, ἔκειτο δέ νείατος ἄλλων.)

[43] "Gifts (ξεινήια, δῶρα, δωτίνη) are offered by a host to a guest, never vice versa, as a material symbol of their bond of friendship. In return, the host expects the guest to remember him (μεμνημένος δ592-θ431, μιμνήσκεται o54, μνῆμα o126), and as a purely practical consideration, to reciprocate with an equally valuable gift sometime in the future (ἀμοιβής α318, ἀμοιψάμενος ω285)." REECE, S., 1993: *The Stranger's Welcome: Oral theory and the Aesthetics of the Homeric Hospitality Scene*, The University of Michigan Press, pp. 35.

usually translated as 'love's delights'. But intercourse occurs in *thalamos*, and Zeitlin writes:

"Merely to enter the bedroom is to gain access to the innermost region of the house, its protected core. This is the domain the woman inhabits, once she has been brought into the household as the lawfully wedded wife, and whose benefits she enjoys because of her relationship with her husband that is symbolized, above all, in her sharing of his bed...The bed, of course, is the place for sex and therefore the central and virtually indispensable feature of any description of sexual activity in Homeric narrative...An invitation to lovemaking may or may not begin with a formal move to the bedchamber (*es thalamon t' ienai*), but a constant feature of such scenes is an explicit mention of mounting a bed (*eune* : e.g.., 10.333-34, *noi d' epeita eunes hemeteres epibesomen*), followed by some version of the formulaic expression "they mingled together in" *eune* and *philotes*: (*ophra migente eune kai philoteti*, 10.340, 334-35). Claude Calame translates this phrase to mean "unite in amorous exchange in a bed" and suggests that each term is properly placed to designate the three components of the sexual act: a bed (*eune*), commerce or exchange (*meignumi*), and a fiduciary aspect (*philotes*) that signifies the reciprocal nature of the erotic relationship."[44]

Thus the intimacy of intercourse is always achieved through a thing, the bed. However the immediate intimacy[45] can be dangerous if conducted without the previous ritualized proximity of marriage. Circe asks Odysseus to lie in bed together (*migente eune kai philoteti*) so that they may have trust and faith in each other. But he

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[44] ZEITLIN, F., 1995: "Figuring Fidelity in Homer's Odyssey," *The Distaff Side: Representing the Female in Homer's Odyssey*, ed. Beth Cohen, Oxford University Press, pp. 123-4.

[45] Vernant interprets erotic relationship in terms of limits and the experience of the 'other'. Though this can be valid in later times, we can not project unproblematically the notion of 'otherness' to the Homeric Greeks. He writes: "The sexual dichotomy or duality of roles in an erotic relationship forces each partner to experience his own incompleteness in the impulse towards the other. That relationship is evidence of the individual's inability to remains within his limits, to be satisfied with what he is,.to accept himself in his uniqueness, without seeking to duplicate himself in and through the other, the object of his amorous desire". VERNANT, J-P., 1990: "One...two...three...Eros", *Before sexuality: The Construction of Erotic Experience in Ancient Greek World*, eds. D. Halperin, J. Winkler, F. Zeitlin, Princeton, pp. 465-479.

would not go into her *thalamos* unless she swears a great oath that she would not hurt him:

κ339-41: You treacherously ask me to go into your chamber, and go to bed with you, so that when I am naked you can make me a weakling, unmanned. I would not be willing to go to bed with you unless you can bring yourself, O goddess, to swear me a great oath that there is no other evil hurt you devise against me.[46]

Thalamos describes the relation of woman to marriage.[47] Helen depicts the quitting of her marriage to Menelaos as a coming out of *thalamos.*[48] A direct connection between marriage and *thalamos* is made in a number of passages:

Λ226-7: Kisseus detained him there and gave him his daughter. Married he went away from the bride chamber, looking for glory.[49]

Women do not wear their veil when in *thalamos*. Their gaze, the dazzling clothes, scintillating jewelry, and the perfume that wraps their bodies produces the experience of femininity. This femininity is itself produced in relation to the *thalamos*; we do not mean restricted to *thalamos* but produced. Homeric femininity is defined by sight and smell within a physical intimacy, an intimacy which operates as a mechanism of

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[46] κ339-41: δολοφρονέουσα κελεύεις / ἐς θάλαμόν τ' ἰέναι καὶ σῆς ἐπιβήμεναι εὐνῆς, / ὄφρα με γυμνωθέντα κακόν καί ἀνήνορα θήῃς.

[47] *Thalamos* in later times keeps the meaning of the 'bride-room' *nymphikos oikos* (νυμφικός οἶκος) while Aphrodite is called *'thalamos'* queen' *thalamon anassa* (θαλάμων ἄνασσα). See HESYCHIUS, 1953: *Alexadrini Lexicon*, Hanuiae, Ejnar Munksgaard, s.v. θάλαμος.

[48] Γ174-5: I came hither following your son, forsaking my chamber, my kinsmen, my grown child, and the loveliness of girls of my own age. (υἱεῖ σῷ ἑπόμην θάλαμον γνωτούς τε λιποῦσα / παῖδά τε τηλυγέτην καὶ ὁμηλικίην ἐρατεινήν).

[49] Λ226-7: αὐτού μιν κατέρυκε, δίδου δ' ὅ γε θυγατέρα ἣν / γήμας δ' ἐκ θαλάμοιο μετά κλέος ἵκετ'. Also Ρ36·χηρώσας δέ γυναῖκα μυχῷ θαλάμοιο νέοιο, Σ492: νύμφας δ' ἐκ θαλάμων, Χ63 θαλάμους κεραϊζομένους, δ263·νοσφισσαμένην θάλαμόν τε πόσιν τε

seduction. We have only to read the passages that describes women emerging form their *thalamos*. Both Helen[50] and Penelope[51] come out from their fragrant 'rooms' glittering like gold and comparable to goddesses. But the text gives us a detailed description of how this experience of femininity is produced as an actual placing of things on the body, perfume that penetrates everywhere[52] and shining objects which provoke the collision of sight with the things stored in *thalamos*. Hera enters her *thalamos* and does not emerge from it before making all the necessary attachments for the seduction of Zeus.

Ξ166-88 and Ξ331-40: She went into her chamber, which her beloved son Hephaistos had built for her, and closed the leaves of the shining door, then first from her adorable body washed away all stains with ambrosia, and next anointed herself with ambrosial sweet olive oil, which stood there in its fragrance beside her, and from which, stirred in the house of Zeus by the golden pavement, a fragrance was shaken forever forth, on earth and in heaven. When with this she had anointed her delicate body and combed her hair, next with her hands she arranged the shining and lovely and ambrosial curls along her immortal head, and dressed in an ambrosial robe that Athene had made her carefully, smooth, and with many figures upon it, and pinned it across her breast with a golden brooch, and circled her waist about with a zone that floated a hundred tassels, and in the lobes of her carefully pierced ears she put rings with triple drops in mulberry clusters, radiant with beauty, and, lovely among goddesses, she veiled her head downward with a sweet fresh veil that glimmered pale like the sunlight. Underneath her shining feet she bound on the fair sandals. Now, when she had clothed her body in all this loveliness, she went out from the chamber... She also tries to persuade her husband to enter *thalamos* for intercourse: If now your great desire is to lie in love together here on the peaks of Ida, everything can be seen. Then

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[50] δ121: Helen came out of her fragrant high-roofed bedchamber, looking like Artemis of the golden distaff (ἐκ Ἑλένη θαλάμοιο θυώδεος ὑψορόφοιο ἀ ἤλυθεν Ἀρτέμιδι χρυσηλακάτῳ ἔικυῖα).

[51] ρ36, τ53: But now circumspect Penelope came down from her chamber, looking like Artemis, or like golden Aphrodite (Ἡ δ' ἴεν ἐκ θαλάμοιο περίφρων Πηνελόπεια, / Ἀρτέμιδι ἰκέλη ἠέ χρυσῇ Ἀφροδίτῃ).

[52] The immediate proximity achieved by smell made it the medium of communication between mortals and immortals in the context of Homeric sacrifice. M. Detienne writes: "In that the perfume of the spices burned on the altars establishes a vertical line of communication between men and gods, its role is apparently similar to that of the pungent smoke from the fatty meat burned in honor of the Olympians." He also points out the seductive power of perfume. DETIENNE, M., 1977: *The Garden of Adonis: Spices in Greek Mythology*, The Harvester Press, pp. 39.

what would happen if some one of the gods everlasting saw us sleeping, and went and told all the other immortals of it? I would not simply rise out of bed and go back again into your house, and such a thing would be shameful. No, if this is your heart's desire, if this is your wish, then there is my chamber, which my beloved son Hephaistos has built for me, and closed the leaves in the door-posts snugly. We can go back there and lie down, since bed is your pleasure.[53]

Zeus does not enters the *thalamos* but uses another trick to hide from the view of others. The sight of intercourse is actually a punishment used by Hephaistos for his unfaithful wife:

θ277-8: he went to his chamber where his own dear bed lay, and spun his fastenings around the posts from every direction[54]

The lovers, Aphrodite and Ares will be trapped on the bed and Hephaistos will open the doors of *thalamos* to invite the gods to the threshold and look upon them. What should remain hidden from view, behind the closed doors of *thalamos* will become a spectacle. However, we are not able to grasp fully why this is a punishment. We might understand that the intimacy of intercourse is reserved for the married couple which has already undergone a ritualized proximity. The involvement of others – for

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[53] Ξ166-88: βῆ δ' ἴμεν ἐς θάλαμον, τόν οἱ φίλος υἱὸς ἔτευξεν / Ἥφαιστος, πυκινὰς δὲ θύρας σταθμοῖσιν ἐπῆρσε / κληῖδι κρυπτῇ, τὴν δ' οὐ θεὸς ἄλλος ἀνῷγεν· / ἔνθ' ἥ γ' εἰσελθοῦσα θύρας ἐπέθηκε φαεινάς. / ἀμβροσίῃ μὲν πρῶτον ἀπὸ χροὸς ἱμερόεντος / λύματα πάντα κάθηρεν, ἀλείψατο δὲ λίπ' ἐλαίῳ / ἀμβροσίῳ ἑδανῷ, τό ῥά οἱ τεθυωμένον ἦεν· / τοῦ καί κινυμένοιο Διός κατά χαλκοβατὲς δῶ / ἔμπης ἐς γαῖάν τε καί οὐρανὸν ἵκετ' ἀϋτμή. / τῷ ῥ' ἥ γε χρόα καλόν ἀλειψαμένη ἰδέ χαίτας / πεξαμένη χερσὶ πλοκάμους ἔπλεξε φαεινοὺς / καλοὺς ἀμβροσίους ἐκ κράατος ἀθανάτοιο. / ἀμφὶ δ' ἄρ' ἀμβρόσιον ἑανὸν ἕσαθ', ὃν οἱ Ἀθήνη / ἕξυσ' ἀσκήσασα, τίθει δ' ἐνὶ δαίδαλα πολλά / χρυσείης δ' ἐνετῆσι κατά στῆθος περονᾶτο. / ζώσατο δέ ζώνῃ ἑκατὸν θυσάνοις ἀραρυίῃ, / ἐν δ' ἄρα ἕρματα ἦκεν ἐϋτρήτοισι λοβοῖσι / τρίγληνα μορόεντα, χάρις δ' ἀπελάμπετο πολλή. / κρηδέμνῳ δ' ἐφύπερθε καλύψατο δῖα θεάων / καλῷ νηγατέῳ, λευκὸν δ' ἦν ἠέλιος ὥς· / ποσσὶ δ' ὑπό λιπαροῖσιν ἐδήσατο καλὰ πέδιλα. / αὐτάρ ἐπεὶ δὴ πάντα περὶ χροῒ θήκατο κόσμον / βῆ ῥ' ἴμεν ἐκ θαλάμοιο... and Ξ331-40: εἰ νῦν ἐν φιλότητι λιλαίεαι εὐνηθῆναι / Ἴδης ἐν κορυφῇσι, τὰ δὲ προπέφανται ἅπαντα· / πῶς κ' ἔοι εἴ τις νῶϊ θεῶν αἰειγενετάων ἄλλη εὖδοντ' ἀθρήσειε, θεοῖσι δὲ πᾶσι μετελθών / πεφράδοι; οὐκ ἂν ἔγωγε τεὸν πρὸς δῶμα νεοίμην ἐξ εὐνῆς ἀνστᾶσα, νεμεσσητὸν δὲ κεν εἴη. / ἀλλ' εἰ δή ῥ' ἐθέλεις καί τοι φίλον ἔπλετο θυμῷ, / ἔστιν τοι θάλαμος, τόν τοι φίλος υἱὸς ἔτευξεν / Ἥφαιστος, πυκινὰς δὲ θύρας σταθμοῖσιν ἐπῆρσεν· / ἔνθ' ἴομεν κείοντες, ἐπεί νύ τοι εὖαδεν εὐνή.

[54] θ277-8: βῆ ῥ' ἴμεν ἐς θάλαμον, ὅθι οἱ φίλα δέμνι' ἔκειτο· / ἀμφὶ δ' ἄρ' ἑρμῖσιν χέε δέσματα κύκλῳ ἅπάντῃ.

seeing is a collision, and thus an involvement – will interfere and disrupt their immediate intimacy.

Seduction is not a monopoly of women. For what we are calling manifestations of femininity can be attached to the body of a man as well. Aphrodite sends Alexandros into his perfumed *thalamos,* and attaches to his body shinning objects to seduce Helen. She also forces Helen to meet him, by saying :

Γ391-2: he is in his chamber now, in the bed with its circled pattern, shining in his raiment and his own beauty.[55] Thus she accompanies her and: when they had come to Alexandros' splendidly wrought house...she, shining among women, went to the high-vaulted bedchamber.[56]

There Helen refuses to look upon him[57] for she fears the immediate intimacy of sight, and Alexandros has to use another device to persuade her: speech.[58] As we have shown, the *thelksis* of the speech is the interplay of differentiation and identification. Finally Helen can resist no more and follows him to bed.[59]

Thalamos is also the 'place' for sleep. As we have noted, the sleeping body encounters its dreams. Since the Homeric body is multiple and the corporeal,

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[55] Γ391-2: κεῖνος ὃ γ' ἐν θαλάμῳ καί δινωτοῖσι λέχεσι / κάλλεΐ τε στίλβων καί εἵμασιν.

[56] Γ421-3: Αἱ δ' ὅτ' Αλεξάνδροιο δόμον περικαλλέ' ἵκοντο, ../ ἣ δ' εἰς ὑψόροφον θάλαμον κίε δῖα γυναικῶν.

[57] Γ427: turning her eyes away (ὄσσε πάλιν κλίνασα.).

[58] He says to Helen in Γ441-6: Come, then rather let us go to bed and turn to love-making. Never before as now has passion enmeshed my senses, not when I took you the first time from Lakedaimon the lovely and caught you up and carried you away in seafaring vessels, and lay with you in the bed of love on the island Kranae, not even then, as now, did I love you and sweet desire seize me. (ἀλλ' ἄγε δή φιλότητι τραπείομεν εὐνηθέντε / οὐ γάρ πώ ποτέ μ' ὧδέ γ' ἔρως φρένας ἀμφεκάλυψεν, / οὐδ' ὅτε σε πρῶτον Λακεδαίμονος ἐξ ἐρατεινῆς / ἔπλεον ἁρπάξας ἐν ποντοπόροισι νέεσσι, / νήσῳ δ' ἐν Κραναῇ ἐμίγην φιλότητι καί εὐνῇ, / ὥς σεο νῦν ἔραμαι καί με γλυκὺς ἵμερος αἱρεῖ) .

[59] Γ447-8: he led the way to the bed; and his wife went with him. So these two were laid in the carven bed. (Ἦ ῥα, καὶ ἄρχε λέχος δέ κιών· ἅμα δ' εἵπετ' ἄκοιτις / Τὼ μέν ἄρ' ἐν τρητοῖσι κατεύνασθεν λεχέεσιν).

psychological and mental are all intermingled, Homeric dreams are not experienced as the products simply of mental activity; they have a corporeal register. The body of the dream and the body of the dreamer are intimately connected but unregulated.

ζ14: [Athena] went into the ornate chamber, in which a girl was sleeping, like the immortal goddesses for stature and beauty, Nausikaa, the daughter of great-hearted Alkinoons, and beside her two handmaidens with beauty given from the Graces slept on either side of the post with the shining doors closed. She drifted in like a breath of wind to where the girl slept, and came and stood above her head and spoke a word to her, likening herself to the daughter of Dymas.[60]

Sleep is a state of vulnerability where the body comes in contact with *eidola* and ghosts. This unregulated intimacy cannot be avoided, since even a locked door cannot keep dreams out of *thalamos*. In δ802 Penelope is sleeping in her *thalamos* and Athena sends her a dream. A dream is an *eidolon*, in that it has the appearance of a person but lucks its vital force. *Eidolon* enters *thalamos* through the key-hole, sits by the head of sleeping person, and talks. During sleep the body is naked or almost naked,[61] and a body without its attachments, its *phila eimata,* is a vulnerable body.

Thalamos evokes this experience of immediate intimacy. For this reason it is also dangerous and is reserved for members of the house. It has to be re-produced as contained, fixed, in the interior of *domos* behind closed doors, and we should

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[60] ζ14: βῆ δ' ἴμεν ἐς θάλαμον πολυδαίδαλον, ᾧ ἔνι κούρη / κοιμᾶτ' ἀθανάτῃσι φυὴν καὶ εἶδος ὁμοίη, / Ναυσικάα, θυγάτηρ μεγαλήτορος Ἀλκινόοιο, / πὰρ δὲ δύ' ἀμφίπολοι, Χαρίτων ἄπο κάλλος ἔχουσαι, / σταθμοῖϊν ἑκάτερθε, θύραι δ' ἐπέκειντο φαειναί. / ἡ δ' ἀνέμου ὡς πνοιὴ ἐπέσσυτο δέμνια κούρης, / στῆ δ' ἄρ' ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς καί μιν πρὸς μῦθον ἔειπεν, / εἰδομένη κούρῃ ναυσικλειτοῖο Δύμαντος.

[61] α431. See below note 67.

remember that a closed *thure* is experienced as that which separates and isolates categories of different experiences.

6.2.3. FIXITY AND THE LOCKED DOOR

In β337 a description of Odysseus' *thalamos*, where precious objects and foods are kept is given. His *thalamos* is locked. The person that is responsible for "locking" is a woman, but an aged one,[62] and we have already shown the relation of the aged woman to the doors of the Homeric *domos*. It is true that in φ4-52, Penelope also holds the key to her husband's *thalamos* and an extended description of its opening is given:

φ4-5...42-50: in her solid hand took up the beautiful, brazen and artfully curved key, with an ivory handle upon it...When she, shining among women, had come to the chamber, and had come to the oaken threshold, which the carpenter once had expertly planed and drawn it true to a chalkline, and fitted the door posts to it and joined on the shining door leaves, first she quickly set the fastening free of the hook, then she inserted the key and knocked the bolt upward, pushing the key straight in, and the door bellowed aloud, as a bull does, when he feeds in his pasture; such was the noise the splendid doors made, stuck with the key, and now they quickly spread open.[63]

The closed door of *thalamos*[64] contributes to the experience of *thalamos* as containment and fixity, which confers fixity to *domos*. A series of passages refer to

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[62] β345-7: To close it there were double doors that fitted together with two halves, and there by night and day was a woman in charge who, with intelligent care, watched over all this, Eurukleia the daughter of Ops the son of Peisenor (κληισταί δ' έπεσαν σανίδες πυκινώς αραρυίαι, /δικλίδες, εν δέ γυνή ταμίη νύκτας τε καί ήμαρ / έσχ', ή πάντ' φύλασσε νόου πολυιδρείησιν, / Ευρύκλει', Ώπος θυγάτηρ Πεισηνοριδάο). In later times aged women (*graiai)* keep the keys of *thesauroi.*

[63] φ4-5...42-50: εἵλετο δὲ κληῖδ' εὐκαμπέα χειρὶ παχείῃ, / καλὴν χαλκείην, κώπῃ δ' ἐλέφαντος ἐπῆεν. /... Ἡ δ' ὅτε δὴ θάλαμον τὸν ἀφίκετο δῖα γυναικῶν / οὐδόν τε δρύϊνον προσεβήσετο, τόν ποτε τέκτων ξέσσεν ἐπισταμένως καὶ ἐπὶ στάθμην ἴθυνεν, / ἐν δὲ σταθμοὺς ἄρσε, θύρας δ' ἐπέθηκε φαεινάς · / αὐτίκ' ἄρ' ἦ γ' ἱμάντα θοῶς ἀπέλυσε κορώνης, / ἐν δέ κληῖδ' ἧκε, θυρέων δ' ἀνέκοπτεν ὀχῆας / ἄντα τιτυσκομένη. τὰ δ' ἀνέβραχεν ἠΰτε ταῦρος / βοσκόμενος λειμῶνι, τόσ' ἔβραχε καλὰ θύρετρα / πληγέντα κληῖδι, πετάσθησαν δέ οἱ ὦκα.

[64] There are a lot of passages in which the door of *thalamos* is mentioned. We quote here a passage in which the door is used in a simile Ω317: as big as the build of the door to a towering chamber in the

the weapons of Odysseus locked in *thalamos*, and this is an important fact in his plan to kill the suitors and reconstitute his *domos*. The failure to safeguard the closed door jeopardizes the whole enterprise.[65] *Thalamos* is also referred to in 3 passages as a kind of prison, as a place of confinement, due to its closed doors:

I473-5: one [watcher was] in the ante-chamber before the doors of the bedroom. But when the tenth night had come to me in its darkness, then I broke the close-compacted doors of the chamber and got away.[66]

Thalamos is also a locked 'room' where men as well as women sleep. Telemachos' *thalamos* is in fact mentioned several times. But sleeping in *thalamos* evokes the fixity of *domos*, as it is only reserved for its members. The suitors spend their day eating and entertaining themselves in Odysseus' house but when it is time for sleep they go to their homes, whereas Telemachos goes to his *thalamos* :

α 423-42: and the black night came on as they were taking their pleasure. Then they went home to go to bed, each to his own house, but Telemachos went there, off the splendid courtyard, a lofty bedchamber had been built for him, in a sheltered corner. There he went to go to bed, his heart full of problems, and devoted Eurekleia went with him...He opened the doors of the close-compacted bedchamber, and sat down on the bed and took off his soft tunic and put it into the hands of the sagacious old woman, and she in turn folded the tunic, and took care of it for him, and hung it up on a peg beside the corded bedstead. Then she went out of the room, and pulled the door to behind her with a silver hook, and with a strap drew home the door bolt. [67]

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house of a rich man, strongly fitted with bars. (ὅσση δ'ὑψορόφοιο θύρη θαλάμοιο τέτυκται / ἀνέρος ἀφνειοῖο ἐῢ κληῖσ'ἀραρυῖα)

[65] π285, τ17,χ109, 140, 143, 155, 157, 161, 174, 179, 180, ω166.

[66] I473-5: ἄλλο δ' ἐνὶ προδόμῳ πρόσθεν θαλάμοιο θυράων / ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ δεκάτη μοι ἐπήλυθε νὺξ ἐρεβεννή, / καὶ τότ' ἐγὼ θαλάμοιο θύρας πυκινῶς ἀραρυίας / ῥήξας ἐξῆλθον Also in I582,588 thalamos is related to confinement, but this time is voluntary and not enforced.

[67] α423-42: τοῖσι δέ τερπομένοισι μέλας ἐπὶ ἕσπερος ἦλθε / δὴ τότε κακκείοντες ἔβαν οἰκόνδε ἕκαστος / Τηλέμαχος δ', δθι οἱ θάλαμος περικαλλέος αὐλῆς / ὑψηλός δέδμητο, περισκέπτῳ ἐνὶ χώρῳ, / ἔνθ' ἔβη εἰς εὐνήν πολλὰ φρεσί μερμηρίζων. / τῷ δ' ἄρ' ἅμ' αἰθομένας δαΐδας φέρε κεδνὰ ἰδυῖα / Εὐρύκλεια.../ῷῖξεν δὲ θύρας θαλάμου πύκα ποιητοῖο, / ἕζετο δ' ἐν λέκτρῳ, μαλακὸν δ' ἔκδυνε χιτῶνα· / καί τόν μέν γραίης πυκιμηδέος ἔμβαλε χερσίν./ ἡ μὲν τὸν πτύξασα καὶ ἀσκήσασα χιτῶνα, / πασσάλῳ ἀγκρεμάσασα παρὰ τρητοῖσι λέχεσσι, βῆ ῥ' ἴμεν ἐκ θαλάμοιο, θύρην δ' ἐπέρυσσε κορώνῃ, / ἀργυρέῃ, ἐπὶ δὲ κληῖδ' ἐτάνυσσεν ἱμάντι.

And even when guests sleep in the house of the host they never sleep in *thalamos,* for *thalamos* is reserved to members of the household. In a way *thalamos* and sleep structure the experience of *domos,* generating the effect of fixity. The structure of Nestor's *domos* is denoted through the experience of *thalamos* when his sons "coming out of their chambers gathered in a cluster about him."[68]

We can better understand this relation through another Homeric term *dedmemenos* (δεδμημένος), a term that can be translated either as 'tamed' or 'constructed'. As we have argued in the chapter on *domos, dedmemenos* evokes an experience of fixity, and is related to sleep, death, and the tiredness of the body. The term occurs ten times, five in Iliad and five in Odyssey; eight of them relate to sleep, one to death and one to tiredness. [69] Most interesting for our research are the two formulaic passages where it denotes the construction of Priam's *thalamoi*:

Z242-50: Now he entered the wonderfully built palace of Priam. This was fashioned with smooth-stone cloister walks, and within it were embodied fifty sleeping chambers of smoothed stone built (*dedmemenoi*)_so as to connect with each other; and within these slept each beside his own wedded wife, the sons of Priam. In the same inner court on the opposite side, to face these, lay the twelve close smooth-stone sleeping chambers of his daughters built so as to connect with each other; and within these slept, each by his own modest wife, the lords of the daughters of Priam[70]

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[68] γ412: περὶ δ' υἷες ἀολλέες ἠγερέθοντο / ἐκ θαλάμων ἐλθόντες.

[69] ξ317-9: his own dear son had come on me when I was beaten by weariness and cold air, and lifted me up by the hands, and led me home to the house of his father (τοῦ γὰρ φίλος υἱὸς ἐπελθών / αἴθρῳ καί καμάτῳ δεδμημένον ἦγεν ἐς οἶκον, / χειρὸς ἀναστήσας, ὄφρ' ἵκετο δώματα πατρός)

σ236-8: if only in our house, in such a manner, the suitors could be defeated and bow their heads, some in the courtyard and some inside the house, and the limbs be unstrung in each of them (οὕτω νῦν μνηστῆρες ἐν ἡμετέροισι δόμοισι ϡ νεύοιεν κεφαλὰς δεδμημένοι, οἱ μὲν ἐν αὐλῇ, / οἱ δ' ἔντοσθε δόμοιο, λελῦτο δὲ γυῖα ἑκάστου)

[70] Ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ Πριάμοιο δόμον περικαλλέ' ἵκανε / ξεστῆς αἰθούσῃσι τετυγμένον- αὐτὰρ ἐν αὐτῷ / πεντήκοντ' ἔνεσαν θάλαμοι ξεστοῖο λίθοιο / πλησίον ἀλλήλων δεδμημένοι, ἔνθα δὲ παῖδες / κοιμῶντο Πριάμοιο παρὰ μνηστῆς ἀλόχοισι, / κουράων δ' ἑτέρωθεν ἐναντίοι ἔνδοθεν αὐλῆς / δώδεκ' ἔσαν τέγεοι θάλαμοι ξεστοῖο λίθοιο / πλησίον ἀλλήλων δεδμημένοι, ἔνθα δὲ γαμβροί / κοιμῶντο Πριάμοιο παρ' αἰδοίης ἀλόχοισιν

The above passage describes the *domos* of Priam, and describes its construction and its structure at both the level of the material and the corresponding structure of the family. *Dedmemenos* is not simply 'built', but fixed in a specific way, and this fixity is evoked by *thalamos*, in its relation to sleep and marriage. There are 5 passages in which in a formulaic way the expression *dedmemeno hupno* (δεδμημένω ὑπνω) occurs.[71] However this time sleep is related to death.[72] Death is the twin brother of sleep (Ξ231), for in both the body is in a state of immobility and fixity.[73] Tiredness also produces this effect of immobility. *Dedmemenos* then evokes the experience of fixity of both the body and *thalamos*.

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[71] K1-3: Now beside their ships the other great men of the Achaians slept night long, with the soft bondage of slumber upon them; but the son of Atreus, Agamemnon, shepherd of the people, was held by no sweet sleep as he pondered deeply within him (Ἄλλοι μὲν παρὰ νηυσὶν ἀριστῆες Παναχαιῶν / εὗδον παννύχιοι μαλακῷ δεδμημένοι ὕπνῳ· / ἀλλ' οὐκ Ατρεΐδην Αγαμέμνονα ποιμένα λαῶν / ὕπνος ἔχε γλυκερός πολλά φρεσίν ὁρμαίνοντα)

Ω677-9: Now the rest of the gods and men who were lord of chariots slept nightlong, with the easy bondage of slumber upon them, only sleep had not caught Hermes the kind god, who pondered now in his heart (Ἄλλοι μέν ῥα θεοί τε καὶ ἀνέρες ἱπποκορυσταὶ / εὗδον παννύχιοι μαλακῷ δεδμημένοι ὕπνῳ· / ἀλλ' οὐχ Ερμείαν ἐριούνιον ὕπνος ἔμαρπεν / ὁρμαίνοντ' ἀνὰ θυμόν)

o4-7: She found Telemachos there with the glorious son of Nestor, sleeping in the forecourt of worshipful Menelaos. Indeed, the son of Nestor was held fast in the softening sleep, but the sweet sleep was not on Telemachos, wakeful with anxious thoughts (εὗρε δὲ Τηλέμαχον καὶ Νέστορος ἀγλαὸν υἱόν / εὕδοντ' ἐν προδόμῳ Μενελάου κυδαλίμοιο, / ἦ τοι Νεστορίδην μαλακῷ δεδμημένον ὕπνῳ· / Τηλέμαχον δ' οὐχ ὕπνος ἔχε γλυκύς, ἀλλ' ἐνὶ θυμῷ)

η318: until which time giving way to slumber you may rest, and they will...bring you back to your ..house (τῆμος δὲ σὺ μὲν δεδμημένος ὕπνῳ λέξεαι...δῶμα)

ν119: set him down on the sand, he was still bound fast in sleep (ἐπὶ ψαμάθῳ ἔθεσαν δεδμημένον ὕπνῳ)

[72] Ξ482: you must sometimes die, as this man did. Think how Promachos sleeps among you, beaten down under my spear (ἀλλά ποθ' ὧδε κατακτενέεσθε καὶ ὔμμες. / φράζεσθ' ὡς ὑμῖν Πρόμαχος δεδμημένος εὕδει / ἔγχει ἐμῷ)

[73] In later times *thalamos* is related to death. Sappho refers to *thalamos* once in her poems. A young girl who died before getting married will be accepted by Persephone in her *kuanos thalamos*: 002.7.489.1: Τίμαδος ὧδε κόνις, τάν δή πρό γάμοιο θάνοισαν / δέξατο Φερσεφόνας κυάνιος θάλαμος.

Marriage as well as sexual intercourse within marriage contributes to the production and re-production as of the fixity of *domos*. We know that both are related to the experience of *thalamos*. The marital bed in *thalamos* produces the institution of marriage. Odysseus in order to secure his marriage has a bed rooted in the earth. He uses the trunk of a big olive tree (olive tree in the text is *euodes*), to make his bed, and then he builds his *thalamos* around this tree-bed.[74] When Penolope in order to test him, asks the servants to move this bed out of *thalamos*, Odysseus is in despair since this would mean that someone had destroyed the one thing through which he can reclaim his identity. The recognition of Odysseus' identity is achieved through an object in his *thalamos*, and his reunion – read intimacy – with his wife is achieved by sexual intercourse; the fixity of his *domos* is re-produced behind the sealed doors of his *thalamos*.[75]

The relation between things, *thalamos*, marriage and the structure of *domos* is also revealed in a passage when Helen offers a guest-gift to Telemachos; she says to him:

o125-28: I too give this gift, dear child: something to remember from Helen's hands, for your wife to wear at the lovely occasion of your marriage. Until that time let it lie away in your palace (*megaron*), in your dear mother's keeping;[76]

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[74] Antoniades interprets the above passage, producing a drawing of Odysseus' bedchamber with an olive tree in the middle. ANTONIADES, A., 1992 : *Epic Space*, Van Nostrand Reinhold, N.Y.

[75] ψ295: When she had brought them to the chamber she went back. They then gladly went together to bed, and their old ritual (ἐς θάλαμον δ' ἀγαγοῦσα πάλιν κίεν. οἱ μὲν ἔπειτα / ἀσπάσιοι λέκτροιο παλαιοῦ θεσμόν ἵκοντο)

[76] o125-28: δῶρόν τοι καὶ ἐγώ, τέκνον φίλε, τοῦτο δίδωμι, / μνῆμ' Ἑλένης χειρῶν, πολυηράτου ἐς γάμου ὥρην, / σῇ ἀλόχῳ φορέειν, τεῖος δὲ φίλῃ παρὰ μητρὶ/ κεῖσθαι ἐνί μεγάρῳ.

The term used here is not *thalamos* but *megaron*, because the gift is to be transferred, it no longer belongs to Odysseus' *domos*, is not part of his *thalamos;* but it will lie in Telemachos' *thalamos* only when he constructs and structures his own *domos.*

The term *thalamos* evokes the experience of containment, which is generated by the things contained. It is through the shining precious metals, the glittering works of woven clothing, armory, weaponry, the smell of food, perfumed oils, and the vulnerable naked sleeping and dreaming body, that an experience of seduction and danger is produced. It is an experience of immediate intimacy, of sight, smell, or intercourse. Only members of the *domos* are permitted to have such an intimacy, for they have already acquired it by becoming members of the house. Moreover, it is by 'attaching' to their bodies the things 'stored' in *thalamos* that members of the house produce their identities, and it is very important in order to keep the identity to keep the things fixed. A closed and locked door delimits this dangerous experience; this is an experience which is quite different from a conventional understanding of *thalamos* as the name for a series of specific rooms that contain different functions, and in a relation of opposition to *megaron.* The difference lies between the conception of *thalamos* as a room, that is, as a specific container, and the experience of containment evoked by it. What makes it difficult to describe this difference, however, is that we do not have a more appropriate contemporary term to name this experience.

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