1 From the *Odyssey* to the *Iliad*, and Round (and Round) Again

ADRIAN KELLY

It is now a scholarly commonplace that the *Odyssey* not only knows of the *Iliad*, but refers directly to that poem.[1] Central to this *opinio* is the status of poetic allusion in the archaic age. Scholars were once reluctant to think that early bards directly interacted with one another's texts in the manner of Apollonios and Vergil,[2] but they have become more prepared to see the cultural dynamics of these later, more obviously literate ages in the poetry of Homer, Hesiod, and their contemporaries. We cannot rule out this kind of direct interaction *a priori*, of course; it is as impossible to assert as it is to deny the existence and circulation of fixed 'texts' in the earliest stages of Greek literary history, whether we think of them as actual physical artefacts in the traditional sense, or as conceptual phenomena with sufficient levels of stability or integrity beyond single performances to permit the kinds of allusion suggested.[3] This lack of certainty, therefore, encourages an interpretative framework able to encompass a range of textual models rather than being predetermined by one, and the current chapter aims *obiter* to

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[1] See, e.g., Rutherford 2013: 80 (and 77–81 generally): 'it is hard to deny that the *Odyssey* is composed with an eye to its predecessors – including the *Iliad* itself'; also Pelling 2020: 22–6; and the introduction to Nelson 2023. This chapter follows Hinds 1998: 34–47 in distinguishing between 'allusion' as a specific reference to a particular version of a song or story, and 'intertextuality' as a generic reference to a less reified (and in this case, more traditional) background. The former is most likely a development, evolution, or refinement of the dynamics inherent in the latter. Any distinction is messy in practice, since the interactions invariably look similar and operate on a continuity of basic modalities: even if it exists only in the memories of its composer/performer and the audiences who have experienced it, a song can acquire the textual stability offered in a single performance or series of such moments, and so does not demand writing to exist beyond performance, though the technology of writing clearly represents an important evolutionary stage in that stability.

[2] The classic cautionary voice is Fowler 1987, explicitly arguing against what he saw then as the rising trend in the study of early Greek lyric, but cf. now Fowler 2018; Kelly 2015c.

[3] For a version of the latter, see Nagy 1979: 42–58. These phenomena could have taken several forms, e.g. a series of similar performances given in a certain time and place, or a group of singers preserving a master poet's repertoire, *vel sim*.

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contribute to an ongoing project aimed at developing such a framework.[4] For that reason, and to avoid slippage of both terminology and concept, we adopt here the acronym PST (performance/song/text) to refer to a poetic entity without assuming a particular form for it. Our main purpose, however, is to argue that allusion's resurgence is retrograde and mistaken, since it largely ignores the poetic particularities of the age, and oversimplifies the complex and rich networks of meaning informing the poems that have survived. So we will proceed by examining some recent arguments for a direct, textualised relationship between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, in order to show that allusion of this sort is not the best guide for interpretation, but along the way to suggest more constructive means of interpreting the features that have been deployed to tie these texts together.

Of course, the idea of some direct or deliberate relationship between the Homeric poems is hardly new; the ancients divided themselves into those who attributed both epics to Homer and those who did not,[5] and the biographism so typical of their traditions naturally exerted its influence in this area too.[6] Modern scholars have hardly been immune, either: Richard Janko's influential glottochronology of early Greek epic, for instance, slides easily into a diachronic frame where the *Iliad* is a poem of Homer's youth, the *Odyssey* of a more mature age.[7] This is entirely understandable, since the quantitative and qualitative difference between these two epics and everything else was already apparent in the classical period, and the desire to read them in direct dialogue with one another has long proved overwhelming.[8] But the practice of later ages is not our concern here, and we need to be wary of simply importing their conceptions into our own models. Instead, we want to see how the first audiences for these poems were experiencing and interpreting them, at some point early in the archaic period.

In this context, allusion is problematic as the prime or only means for interpretation, and for two reasons. Firstly, the arguments for linking the poems in this way are not strong, and almost entirely subjective: they

[4] See, e.g., Kelly 2020, 2022, and (forthcoming).

[5] See above all Usener 1990 (with Griffin 1991); Rutherford 1991–3: 37–8 (= 2001: 118–19); Schironi 2018: 627–39.

[6] Graziosi 2002: 55–7, 165–8.

[7] See now the restatement in Janko 2012, with a thorough critique by McConnell 2019.

[8] This can also be fruitful and insightful, as e.g. Rengakos 2002, Rutherford 1991–3 (= 2001) or Grethlein 2017. I disagree with Rutherford's judgement that 'we have conceded too much to the oralists' (1991–3: 38 = 2001: 119), but this was largely directed against those who would deny any textual integrity in the archaic period (i.e. the 'crystallisation' theory of Gregory Nagy), which is not the position of the majority of oralists, and certainly not of this one.

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depend largely on seeing difficulties where there are only opportunities, and they tend to narrow down the sources and types of meaning at play. Secondly, even if we do grant the allusive link, it can hardly have been the only or even the dominant method of interaction at work for their first audiences.[9] PSTs like these (and many, many others) were experienced largely in performance, a context which itself enabled many different kinds of audience engagement (as we shall see), and this must affect the levels of textual stability and integrity required for an allusion to 'work', that is, to trigger the audience's awareness, understanding, and invocation of that other PST. Together, these considerations should make us pause before resorting to an allusive explanation, especially because it often adds almost nothing not already clear from a traditional perspective, and misses much, if not most, of what is going on.

Accordingly, this chapter focuses on two examples of allusive interaction – an apparent reference to previous versions of the *Odyssey* in Amphimedon's conversation with Agamemnon (*Od.* 24.164–9), and Demodokos' supposed reference to the *Iliad* in his first song (*Od.* 8.72–83). The second of these cases has long been a feature in the scholarly landscape, but we shall treat them in the above order because the first case involves a type of demonstration which is in some sense the logical precursor of the second. These passages have been chosen because they have played a prominent role in constructing the link between the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*, and because they illustrate not only the weaknesses of the allusive method as a whole but also, and equally, the advantages of a more traditionally-oriented approach.

The *Odyssey* on Its Own Past? Amphimedon's Mistake (*Od.* 24.164–9)

An attractive first step for those arguing for allusion between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* is finding the same phenomenon 'within' the *Odyssey* itself.

[9] A point conceded by Currie 2016: 29–33: 'the prospects of an audience perceiving an allusion are not identical with the question of whether an allusion is "there" . . . the appreciation of allusion, like that of many of the finer features of Homeric poetry . . . is likely to have been the province of the connoisseur' (31: cf. also 220, when talking about the various versions of the 'seduction' scene in Greek and Near Eastern poetic traditions). Aside from looking like a convenient way to justify any allusion whatsoever, this downplaying of the audience's capacities sits ill with Currie's own criticisms of others on this point (cf., e.g., Currie 2021), and one wonders why an archaic poet would be so unambitious as to skew the composition to suit merely one (or two?) people in the audience.

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This is not an 'intratextual' reference to another part of the same text,[10] but an external reference to a recognisably different PST which predates, indeed predicates, the current one. If this kind of interaction between the *Odyssey* and a distinct predecessor can be established, the argument goes, then the chances for similarly externalised reference to other PSTs like the *Iliad* can only grow. Unsurprisingly, given the contiguities between the allusive method and the development of Neoanalytical studies from their Analyst foundations, some recent attention has focused on a long-standing *zētēma* in the final book of the *Odyssey*, where the shade of Amphimedon recounts the way in which the suitors were killed, and gives a lengthy account of their wooing of Penelope (24.121–90). During this narrative, the fortuitous coincidence between Odysseus' presence in the palace and the contest of the bow becomes something a little more deliberate (164–9):

> ἀλλ᾽ ὅτε δή μιν ἔγειρε Διὸς νόος αἰγιόχοιο,
> σὺν μὲν Τηλεμάχῳ περικαλλέα τεύχε᾽ ἀείρας
> ἐς θάλαμον κατέθηκε καὶ ἐκλήϊσεν ὀχῆας,
> αὐτὰρ ὁ ἣν ἄλοχον πολυκερδείῃσιν ἄνωγε
> τόξον μνηστήρεσσι θέμεν πολιόν τε σίδηρον,
> ἡμῖν αἰνομόροισιν ἀέθλια καὶ φόνου ἀρχήν.

> But when the mind of aigis-bearing Zeus roused him (sc. Odysseus),
> with Telemachos he picked up the fine armour
> and placed it into the bed chamber and closed the bolts,
> while he bade his wife in his manifold cunning
> to set the bow before the suitors, and the grey iron,
> prizes for us, in our dreadful fate, and the beginning of our slaughter.

The narrative offered here does not fit with the story as it is told in the *Odyssey*, in which Penelope only really knows that her husband has returned once she finishes questioning him in Book 23,[11] nor does it match the poet's description of the moment when Penelope decides to set the bow contest, for the thought is put into her mind by Athene (21.1–4; note 21.2–3 = 24.168–9) and Odysseus was not its source. This discrepancy (amongst others) has given rise to much scholarly consternation, sometimes linked with the once-popular theory that Penelope recognises

[10] See, e.g., Bakker 2013 (with Kelly 2015b). That one PST could refer to another part of itself is uncontroversial, though even an extensive series of such 'Fernbeziehungen' (Reichel 1994) over a wide space cannot show that the written text in question was composed with the aid of writing, or could not be conceived and executed without it.

[11] See Kelly 2012, with further bibliography.

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Odysseus much earlier in the narrative.[12] In the current climate, however, that theory has been revived to make Homer nod to previous versions of his own tale, versions in which Odysseus and Penelope *did* conspire together to bring about the death of the suitors:

> The assumption here of a deliberate narrative strategy [sc. of reference to a prior version] is supported by the apparent self-consciousness of the interaction . . . [sc. as in] the use of Amphimedon's shade at *Od.* 24.124–85 . . . it is intriguing how close Amphimedon's version is to that of the reconstructed hypothetical forerunner of the *Odyssey* . . . the *Odyssey* poet is exploiting the dead suitor's perspective in order, once again, to juxtapose his [viz. the poet's] version of Odysseus' homecoming with the (main) version of the *Odyssey*.[13]

No longer signs of multiple authorship or poetic incompetence, then, as earlier Analysts and Neoanalysts held, but one of many putative intentional references to earlier versions of the story, signs to the audience that *this* PST is going to be different from the ones they may have heard. The method is more than a little circular: a hypothetical text is reconstructed from features within the PST in order to explain those features. To some extent, any method ends up confirming its predicates, but what makes the argument especially dubious in this case is the fact that the phenomenon in question – that is, a character retelling the poet's narrative, frequently with a difference in the recollection of that narrative – is very common in early Greek *epos*, with over 200 examples in the *Iliad* alone.[14] Any interpretation of this example in *Odyssey* Book 24 should take that evidence into account.

Let us just review the most famous cases: when speaking to Demeter, Persephone references the use of force in Hades' feeding her the pomegranate (*HDem.* 413) which is not supported by the poet's own narrative

[12] For discussion and earlier references, see e.g. Page 1955a: 122–8 (demolished by Fenik 1974: 45–7); also Russo, Fernandez-Galiano and Heubeck 1992: *ad* 24.167–77, 368–9; Danek 1998: 478–84; West 2014: 299–300.

[13] Currie 2016: 53–4 (~ 2006: 21–2). For reviews of this work and its approach, see Rozier 2018, Andersen 2019. The statement above is one plank in a larger argument that the *Odyssey* 'quotes' an earlier version of itself, to which we shall return below. In the unquoted sections, Currie admits that this is not strictly narrative inconsistency, and recognises the subjectivity in Amphimedon's summary. Nowhere, however, does he note how common this kind of difference is, and how this might affect the necessity – or 'attractiveness' – of invoking another PST to explain it. The subjectivity of the character's account is accepted by most scholars as sufficient explanation: see West 2014: 299–300.

[14] See Kelly 2018 (principally on the *Iliad*). These differences affect both major and minor episodes and runs of narrative, with a variety of difference and dissonance between the character's telling and the poet's.

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(*HDem*. 371–4); when talking to Alcinoos (*Od*. 7.303–6), Odysseus pretends that the plan to enter the *polis* on Scheria was his plan, not Nausicaa's, as the poet had made clear (*Od*. 6.258–96); when retelling his quarrel with Agamemnon to his mother (*Il.* 1.384–6), Achilleus neglects to mention the fact that his opponent offered to recompense Apollo without what Achilleus paints as his crucial intervention; reflecting her son's qualities, Thetis retells the story of the *Iliad* to Hephaistos as part of her request for a new set of armour (*Il.* 18.444–56), this time omitting the embassy of the Achaeans to her son; speaking to the Phaeacians (*Od.* 12.389–90), Odysseus references part of a conversation between Calypso and Hermes which the poet had omitted to mention in his narrative of their encounter in Book 5; finally, Odysseus' recapitulation of his adventures to his wife (*Od*. 23.310–43) makes minimal mention of his dalliances with Circe and Calypso, nor indeed any mention of Nausicaa, to whom he promised to make constant prayer 'as to a god' when he got home (*Od.* 8.467–8; nb. αἰεί ἤματα πάντα 468).

Rightly or not, the default explanation for these variations – right back to the ancients – has been the misprision or subjectivity of the character repeating the poet's story, revealing something about motivations and (mis)understandings:[15] Persephone feels somewhat self-conscious about her mother's direct question, realising that she has in fact done the very thing which will doom her to spend a third of the year with Hades (*HDem.* 398–400); Odysseus is trying to quell parental dissatisfaction with his young helper (*Od*. 6.298–301); whether he is aware of his creativity, an angry Achilleus is feeling the need to self-exculpate in front of his mother, while she naturally wants to put the best garment on his behaviour when relating the same matter to Hephaistos later in the poem (*Il.* 18.428–43); Odysseus has to explain to the Phaeacians how he knows, à la bard, what Helios and Zeus said to one another (*Od*. 12.374–88); finally, Odysseus wisely does not flaunt to his long-enduring wife the extent of his sexual infidelity. All of these examples, in other words, work on an interpretable and meaningful basis within the PST, namely that the characters are not possessed of the same kind of knowledge shared by the poet and his audience, and review their own and others' actions in a subjective way. The disjunctions illuminate the character and their limited, partial perspective in the circumstance. They remind the audience of its privileged position, with all the possibilities for meaning and engagement that such a dissonance creates.

[15] See Kelly 2018: 355–6, 357–8. The line between misprision and subjectivity is necessarily rather slight.

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The same explanation applies to our case from *Odyssey* Book 24: the shade of Amphimedon concludes that Penelope and Odysseus have been working together, for the coincidence between his return and her proposal of the contest, though the external audience knows that it was prompted by Athene, seems to him too good to be true. It is both the natural inference for that character to make in that setting, and simultaneously the result of an understandable desire to make his destruction seem to be the master plot of epic's wiliest character and a famously intelligent woman.[16] Once more, it leads the audience to reflect on the multiple causation bringing Odysseus back home and into the repossession of his house – the assistance of Athene and Zeus' approval all the way from Book 1, the workings of fate, the many excellences of the hero himself, everything dovetailed perfectly into the poet's telling. All these themes will be played out in the rest of Book 24 as the ramifications of the *Mnesterophonia* ripple outwards from Odysseus' hall into the final battle with the suitors' families, who suffer the same limitations in understanding as their sons.

So the discrepancy at hand is not only found in every narrative PST we possess from the archaic period, but it is tremendously 'meaningful' – to borrow one of Currie's criteria for identifying allusions – within the framework of the poem and passage in question. There is no need and, given the typicality of this topos, very little warrant to look beyond the given PST and the comparison it makes in order to understand why the discrepancy exists, and what it is doing for the poet and his listeners. In some sense, by defining this strategy as a topos, we are invoking something external to the PST itself, namely the audience's experience with that topos, which must be derived from other PSTs. However, everyone would grant an archaic audience some generalised experience of, and familiarity with, the ways and means of *epos*; what we do not know is whether they knew any specific earlier versions of the *Odyssey*, and the question at hand is precisely whether or not such versions existed, let alone

[16] Tom Nelson notes to me that the cases above show a character with a motive for the change, whereas it is harder to see that kind of dynamic here, but the disjunction can be of several types (error, self-deception, partial understanding) and one can without difficulty imagine that Amphimedon feels the need to make his victorious opposition seem as impressive and cunning as he can. If a closer parallel is needed, i.e. of a straight factual 'error', one might compare *inter alia* Menelaos reassuring Agamemnon that his armour protected him from Pandaros' arrow (*Il.* 4.184–7) – a natural inference from its failure to kill him, of course, but the poet has shown us that it was Athene's action (127–31) that saved him, since the armour had failed to do that job (132–40): the poet repeatedly stresses that the arrow passed 'through' the very items (διὰ . . . ζωστῆρος 135, διὰ θώρηκος 136, διάπρο . . . καὶ τῆς [sc. μίτρης] 138) for which Menelaos credits his survival: Kelly 2018: 358.

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whether they existed in a sufficiently stable state to permit detailed allusion.[17] The kind of externality that does not depend on a central *disputandum* seems, therefore, a better postulate.

The variation between the versions of the narrator and his characters goes well beyond these well-known cases. About two-thirds of the *Iliad*'s 200-plus cases of character retellings concern some divergence in detail, but the technique is so fundamental to the poet's narrative technique that he uses it even when there are no noticeable differences.[18] However one explains the pervasiveness of the practice,[19] there is no reason or need to take discrepancies between the poet's narrative and a character's retrospective version of that narrative as anything other than a topos, fully explicable within the terms, parameters, and aims of the PST in which it appears – and as something with which the poems' first audiences were entirely familiar. To argue, instead, that a discrepancy of this sort should be interpreted allusively, that is, *only* or even *primarily* as a reference to a prior PST, would amount to saying that every time we find such a difference, we should conclude that the poet is referring to such a prior version. This is patently absurd, since we would be dealing with a huge number of *Iliad*s and *Odyssey*s (etc.) and/or an *Iliad* and *Odyssey* so thoroughly and precisely known that an audience could note hundreds, often tiny, variations from their narratives.

One could respond that such an allusion might not be the principal or even a primary source of meaning for its audience, but a 'nice little *lagniappe* for those in the know' (as my co-editor puts it). This is indeed an attractive way of viewing it, yet that is not at all how it has been justified in the discussion, where the features which trigger the audience's awareness of an allusion can *only* or *best* be explained in this way, because otherwise the PST makes either *no* sense or *less* sense than the 'original' version to which it is apparently alluding.[20] Currie notes the scholarly 'attention and controversy' attracted by the 'inconsistencies"' in *Od.* 19.96–604, so that 'to

[17] For the once-popular theory that the *Odyssey* refers to previous versions based around the Cretan adventures in Odysseus' lying tales, see e.g. Reece 1994, Marks 2008: 110. Beck 2020 demonstrates conclusively that the scholiastic basis for this theory is entirely illusory.

[18] For instance, in the series of encounters between Ares, Athene, Dione, Zeus, and Aphrodite about the wounding of the latter in *Iliad* Book 5 (361–2, 376–80, 405, 424–5), the characters constantly report and summarise to one another what the poet has just narrated, without any difference between the poet's version and that of the characters.

[19] Kelly 2018 argues that this disjunction is a way of bolstering the authority of the poet and his narrative, by deflecting attention away from questions about the truth value of that story and instead directing all focus of that sort on the characters and their (mis)understandings.

[20] Currie 2016: 48–55 (~ 2006: 15–23).

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postulate a lost earlier version with which the *Odyssey* is interacting has been one way of making sense of the peculiarities of the *Odyssey*'s narrative'; the variations from this version are so great that 'it seems reasonable to say that the audience is *constantly required* by the text to think in terms of such an alternative narrative' (italics mine).[21] This is no *lagniappe*. It is the very centre of interpretation, and its strength relies on its necessity.

However, let us momentarily concede the possibility that some of the first waves of audience members would have known an *Odyssey* (or a *nostos* poem that included Odysseus' story, as might be envisaged in Phemios' song in Book 1), and would have been able to compare the two. If this audience, or a part thereof, knew of a version of this PST in which Odysseus and Penelope worked closely together, and if we grant that Amphimedon' mistake is a relic of, or a knowing nod to, this version, then what effect would this have in the context of the second *Nekuia* in *Odyssey* Book 24?

Firstly, the audience adds this dynamic to their understanding of the *topos* we have been examining, since knowledge of an(other) *Odyssey* does not erase the wider tradition, which would form by far the largest part of their poetic conglomerate. So all the things we have observed about the character's retelling of the poet's tale remain in play. Secondly, and perhaps most obviously, comparison underlines the novelty in this treatment, as the audience recalls the (apparently) usual close collaboration between Penelope and Odysseus. This in turn emphasises even more the individual excellences of the hero, able to achieve the *nostos* without the aid of perhaps his most important ally within the household, but it also reduces Penelope's active role in his return, making even clearer on the one hand the subjugation of the female within the *nostos* storyline, and on the other showing the moral purity of her actions, since she maintains her loyalty to her husband even to the point where all seems to her entirely lost and she is about to embark on another marriage.[22]

A nice result, yet all of this dovetails perfectly with the conclusions we reached earlier, *without* the allusion: as we suggested there, Homer sets out the almost unbelievable series of coincidences, the many strands of causation, which have brought Odysseus home in triumph, and the poet places

[21] Currie 2016: 48–9 (~ 2006: 16: 'can go some way to explaining the peculiarities of the *Odyssey*'s narrative'). The earlier work makes no reference to the audience 'constantly required' to import the prior version.

[22] Cf. the conclusions of Currie 2016: 55 (~ 2006: 23): 'Penelope becomes exceptionally isolated and long-suffering . . . Odysseus becomes excessively cautious, almost addicted to disguise.'

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even more stress on his individual achievement in managing to expel the suitors, while the conclusions about Penelope's character and motivations stand with or without a comparison with any prior PST(s). In other words, a primarily allusive reading ends up at the same point as a traditionally intertextual one.[23] We understand the same things, though that understanding is more superficial, less complete, because it focuses attention on only one source rather than all those available.

The similarity in results should not surprise us, for two reasons: firstly, the poet of the *Odyssey* must have realised, even if he knew a previous version of this poem or story and wanted to allude to it, that every member of his audience must have had a huge range of other *epos* in mind. That was a resource too profound, too natural, and too powerful not to use. Secondly, the comparative technique – whether it draws on a specific PST in allusive terms or a totalised experience of all other PSTs in intertextual terms – operates on fundamentally the same basis; indeed, the former requires the latter, since there is always relational meaning of some sort to be brought into play. Allusion is a more focused version of the traditional phenomenon; from intertextuality it comes. But, in this case, if it is there, it is at best an additional source of meaning for the poet and his audience.

The *Odyssey* 'on' the *Iliad*? Demodokos' First Song (*Od.* 8.72–83)

Much like their analytical predecessors, allusively purposed critics also look to whole episodes in the *Odyssey* as references to the *Iliad*, and the same kind of counter-arguments in the last section can be evoked here as well. The most famous case is Demodokos' first song in *Odyssey* Book 8, which has long been held to be a covert reference to the *Iliad*, namely a reference where the details match only enough to hint at, rather than specify, its target.[24] Why the poet opted for a cloak-and-dagger approach, riddling at

[23] One might suggest that an allusion 'de-authorises' the alternative by characterising it as a mistaken tradition, yet this has to assume not only the prior version's existence but also a prominence, even a canonical status, sufficient to warrant its cancellation. Given that no trace of such a tradition survived into the classical world and beyond, at what point does the chain of *obscura per obscuriora* become too long to sustain?

[24] As seemingly the first step in this direction, Σ a.5–8 *ad Od.* 8.77 (Pontani) suggests that the oracle 'riddles at the anger of Achilleus' (τὴν Ἀχιλλέως μῆνιν αἰνιττόμενον). For treatments (all with further bibliography), see Marg 1956, esp. 17–18; Nagy 1979: 15–65; Braswell 1982: 130–1

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rather than just summarising the *Iliad*, has never been made particularly clear, especially if that poem was so well known as to warrant such an allusion, and if that allusion was intended to be so central to the audience's experience of this part of the *Odyssey*.[25] Let us begin by reviewing the text (*Od.* 8.72–83):

αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πόσιος καί ἐδητύος ἐξ ἔρον ἕντο,
Μοῦσ᾽ ἄρ᾽ ἀοιδὸν ἀνῆκεν ἀειδέμεναι κλέα ἀνδρῶν,
οἴμης, τῆς τότ᾽ ἄρα κλέος οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἵκανε,
νεῖκος Ὀδυσσῆος καὶ Πηλεΐδεω Ἀχιλῆος, 75
ὥς ποτε δηρίσαντο θεῶν ἐν δαιτὶ θαλείῃ
ἐκπάγλοισ᾽ ἐπέεσσιν, ἄναξ δ᾽ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων
χαῖρε νόῳ, ὅ τ᾽ ἄριστοι Ἀχαιῶν δηριόωντο.
ὣς γάρ οἱ χρείων μυθήσατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων
Πυθοῖ ἐν ἠγαθέῃ, ὅθ᾽ ὑπέρβη λάϊνον οὐδὸν 80
χρησόμενος· τότε γάρ ῥα κυλίνδετο πήματος ἀρχή
Τρωσί τε καὶ Δαναοῖσι Διὸς μεγάλου διὰ βουλάς.
ταῦτ᾽ ἄρ᾽ ἀοιδὸς ἄειδε περικλυτός·

But when they put from them the desire for food and drink,
Then the Muses stirred the bard to sing the glorious deeds of men,
from that story path,[26] the fame of which then reached broad heaven,
the quarrel of Odysseus and Peleus' son Achilleus, 75
how they once fought in the festival feast of the gods
with hostile words, and the lord Agamemnon
was joyful in his mind, that the best of the Achaeans were fighting.
For so Phoibos Apollo spoke to him the prophecy
in holy Pytho, when he crossed the rocky threshold 80
to consult the oracle; for then the beginning of pain was rolling
on the Trojans and the Greeks through the plans of great Zeus.
These things then did the famous bard sing.

n. 5; Clay 1983: 96–112, 241–6; Finkelberg 1987; Taplin 1990; Rutherford 1991–3; Danek 1998: 142–50; Currie 2016: 140; Grethlein 2017: 122–3.

[25] Taplin 1990: 112 considers that this would have been 'too crude', which is hard to understand, when scholars routinely characterise the *Works and Days*' account of the two types of Eris (*WD* 11–24) as an explicit correction of the *Theogony*'s claim that there is only one such figure (*Th.* 223–5, 226–30). That is not an argument in favour of allusion between these poems (though once more that seems to be the consensus); Clay 2003: 6–8 persuasively suggests that this 'correction' is a programmatic alteration of a traditional 'fact' designed to introduce the theme of pairs which so dominates the *Works and Days*. She links that fact with the *Theogony*, but the notion that Eris was a singularity was presumably widely held, and so hardly needs that poem to make the point.

[26] For this partitive interpretation of οἴμης, see n. 46.

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Scholars have suggested that several features of this song combine to make the piece look like an allusion to the *Iliad*, since they are also contained in the *Iliad* – the quarrel between two prominent Greeks; the role of Apollo; the 'plans of Zeus' theme; the hostile interactions of the characters Agamemnon, Odysseus, and Achilleus; even some shared formulae and phraseology.[27] Somewhat like the trope discussed in the last section, however, we shall see that all of these features are extremely common in what is left of early Greek *epos*. Naturally, given the *Iliad*'s survival, extraordinary length, and scope, these features are *also* in that poem, but identifying them as so 'Iliadic' as to strike an audience as primarily or even exclusively alluding to that poem is just an extreme version of the common 'what you see is all there is' (WYSIATI) fallacy.[28]

In pointing to a typological or traditional status for shared features we are not trying to deny them meaning or relevance but to establish the poetic realities with which both artist and audience were working, so as then to address the interpretative possibilities thereby enabled.[29] Let us begin on the most detailed level, language and formula, with the argument that Πηλεΐδεω Ἀχιλῆος (3× *Il.*) is a quotation of the more common and slightly longer formula Πηληιάδεω Ἀχιλῆος found at *Iliad* 1.1. Yet this is a formula, by definition one of the features shared potentially by every poet and potentially every PST; how could an audience isolate just one – especially a different one – from another? One might respond that poets could quote a striking or untraditional use of a formula: granted, Πηλεΐδεω Ἀχιλῆος is used individually at *Od.* 8.75, in that this is the only time that this formula is found at the end of the verse, but this kind of mobility is precisely why the epic language creates doublets of this sort, as Bryan

[27] The most authoritative discussion is Marg 1956, to whom we owe the notion of an 'Augenblickserfindung' here (similarly Finkelberg 1987); cf., e.g., Taplin 1990: 112: 'Instead [sc. of a direct quotation], there are similarities – Achilles, verbal dispute, the impending fall of Troy, the Διὸς βουλή/βουλάς'; Rutherford 1991–3: 48–9 (= 2001: 136): 'The motifs of Agamemnon's error, delusive prophecy, and the will of Zeus, all recall important themes of the *Iliad*.' Currie 2016: 140 does not use this case for his reconstructed *Odyssey*, but he invokes it whilst approving of Matthew Wright's (2005: 136) observation about Euripides' use of mythological references to address the external audience: '[r]eferences of this type are striking and unnatural whichever way they are viewed. They sit uneasily within the fictional situation in which they are uttered . . . [i]t is striking how aptly these observations . . . might be applied to the *Odyssey* (e.g. *Od.* 1.326–7, 350–2, 8.74–82, 9.19–20, 9.263–6)'. Currie provides no argument for the idea that Demodokos' song (or any of the other examples given) is either 'striking and unnatural' or that it 'sit[s] uneasily within' the context of the *Odyssey*.

[28] For the original statement, see Kahneman 2011; for attempts to apply this principle to archaic poetry, see n. 4.

[29] This seems to have escaped Burgess 2017: 109 (with n. 87), 116.

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Hainsworth pointed out long ago.[30] There are many such longer/shorter alternatives in *epos*, which exist in order to increase the poet's ability to generate the required noun in a variety of situations and places within the verse. Even an audience's basic familiarity with the dynamics of the *Kunstsprache* would make such a single, targeted identification massively unlikely – unless we wish to suggest that all such pairs have such an allusive function and point to specific PSTs now lost.[31]

Similarly, it is hard to see why Διὸς μεγάλου διὰ βουλάς (*Od*. 8.82) should invoke Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή (*Il*. 1.5). Admittedly, they express the same 'plan of Zeus' theme, but this very common notion is found in a variety of guises all over early Greek *epos*.[32] One could still try to connect the two expressions, but we have to remember that they belong to their own, *different* formular systems. Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή is found in two other places in extant *epos* (*Od*. 11.297 and *Cypria* fr. 1.7 Bernabé), and has long been a mainstay of Neoanalysis, which argues that the *Iliad* poet here is borrowing from or alluding to the *Cypria*'s story of depopulation.[33] Διὸς μεγάλου διὰ βουλάς, on the other hand, belongs to another, more common system (gen. noun + διὰ βουλάς ||) applied to a variety of agents but mostly (5/8×) to Zeus;[34] exactly the same expression is used in Hesiod (*Th*. 465), and the mini-system for this deity is not found in Homer beyond our *Odyssey* passage.[35] Surely, even a thoroughly allusively trained audience would find it difficult to link these two poems on the basis of formulae expressions which are different from one another, and precisely paralleled elsewhere.

Next, from phraseology to typical theme. Whether we choose to follow Richard Martin in his definition of the *neikos* as a kind of typical speech-act

[30] Hainsworth 1968: 30–2, esp. 30–1 n. 3 for a list which contains our expression.

[31] One can agree with Taplin 1990: 112 that the possibility of allusion in the case of a formulaic phrase 'is a matter of how it was perceived', but the audience's perception was informed by the whole of their experience with the *Kunstsprache*, not just this one example in just one PST.

[32] The collocation Διός + βουλή is flexible in declension and position: *Il*. 12.241, 13.523–4, 20.15; *Od*. 13.325–7, 14.327–30 (= 19.296–99); *HHDem*. 8–10; *HHAp*. 132; *HHAphr*. 23; Hes. *Th*. 465, 730; *WD* 79, 99.

[33] Such arguments do not really cope with the Odyssean example, where it falls at the end of the embedded story of Melampous in Odysseus' narrative to the Phaeacians, and has no conceivable link with the *Cypria* whatsoever.

[34] See *Il*. 15.71; *Od*. 11.276, 437; Hes. *Th*. 465, 572, 653 (only examples not verse-final); *WD* 71; *Scut*. 378.

[35] The poets have the choice of Διὸς μεγάλου διὰ βουλάς || (*Th*. 465 – and *Od*. 8.82), or Κρονίδεω διὰ βουλάς || (*Th*. 572, *WD* 71); *Th*. 653 generates the phrase into a speech by Zeus, where the usual genitive noun is replaced by the possessive adjective. All these examples come from Hesiod, but we never see scholars trying to refer *Od*. 8.82 to him.

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in early *epos*,[36] we can see that a quarrel over resources of various sorts (war-prizes, a piece of land, a flock, a bride, etc.), and frequently at a banquet or formal division of spoils, is very common even in what little we have – or know – of early Greek *epos*. It is the basis for the plot of the *Works and Days*, the *Thebais* (frr. 2–3 Bernabé), the *Aithiopis*, the *Iliad*, and the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, while individual quarrels over a wide range of issues occur within every poem, including that between Odysseus' Cretan bastard and his brothers in his fake tale to Eumaios (*Od.* 14.208–10), or that among the Calydonian heroes and defenders over the hide of the eponymous boar (*Il.* 9.547–9), the fight between the Lapiths and Centaurs (*Il.* 1.260–73), the several outbreaks in the funeral games for Patroklos (*Il.* 23.448–99, 566–613, etc.), the inset dispute between the Pylians and Epeians that leads to open war between them (*Il.* 11.670ff.), etc. The list goes on, and no wonder: conflict is an obvious starting point for epic narrative, given the highly competitive and *timē*-driven ethos of heroic society, allowing the poet to focus on interesting consequences and their often drawn-out, messy resolution. The poetically fruitful difficulties for the distributor in these situations hardly need a case-by-case elaboration, and the Homeric tradition even supplies a formula for the particular care to be exercised by the one responsible for the allocation of prizes ([ὣς] μή τίς οἱ ἀτεμβόμενος κίοι ἴσης : *Il.* 11.705; *Od.* 9.42, 549). So the presence of a quarrel in Demodokos' song is far from compelling evidence of an allusion to the *Iliad*, any more than it is to any other of the many PSTs which were based on or contained this very typical theme.

So, if formular language and typical themes are not enough to establish the link, then perhaps the personnel can. Surely the concatenation of Agamemnon, Achilleus, and Odysseus must allude to the *Iliad*? Well, surely not. Any PST about the Trojan War would naturally involve all of these characters: Achilleus has the most evolved and extended formula system of any character in *epos*, whilst the systems for both Agamemnon and Odysseus are so well developed that one can be sure of their traditional tenacity. Furthermore, the same characters were tenacious in another sense: the *Cypria* speaks of another quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilleus before the army's arrival in Troy, caused apparently by the latter's late summons to dinner (ὕστερος κληθείς; arg. 50–2 Bernabé),[37]

[36] Martin 1989.

[37] It is not particularly clear from Proklos whether this quarrel occurs on Tenedos or Lemnos. Neoanalysts have tried to connect all these stories, with e.g. Kullmann 1960: 272 suggesting that Demodokos' song actually refers to the *Cypria*'s quarrel; cf. Clay 1983: 98–101; Danek 1998: 147–50.

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the Atreidai fall out with one another after Troy's sack (*Od.* 3.134–50: Odysseus sides against Agamemnon), and Odysseus leaves his first set of travelling companions so as to return to Troy (and Agamemnon) from Tenedos after another 'evil strife' had arisen (*Od.* 4.160–4); even putting aside the quarrels listed just above, these very people were prone to getting angry, and with one another.

In such a context, it must be significant that Demodokos does not tell us that Agamemnon and Achilleus are quarrelling as they do in the *Iliad*, but Odysseus and Achilleus, and doing so well before the story time of the *Iliad*.[38] That these two particular characters are more widely opposed, or opposable, in *epos* is clear already from the embassy in Book 9 of the *Iliad*, where Odysseus' speech brings forth Achilleus' harshest reply to the three ambassadors, including the famous 'I hate like the gates of Hades' theme (312–13);[39] from their opposition in the assembly in Book 19, where Odysseus forces Achilleus to take the compensation from Agamemnon (one cannot help think that Achilleus' rueful ἐν [δ'] ἀγορῆι οἱ ἄλλοι ἀμείνονες at 18.106 refers to Odysseus); and more widely from the polar opposition in their fates – Achilleus dies in Troy and is the greatest of the Greek heroes to be buried there, while Odysseus survives the war and is the last Greek hero to return home, each fate encapsulating the individual's *particular* claim to fame. Both characters, moreover, are offered the chance of a different life: Achilleus reminds us that he was given the choice of a long life without glory and a short but glorious life (*Il.* 9.410–16), while Odysseus is explicitly presented by Calypso with the possibility of

[38] See Kullmann 1960: 221–2, n. 4. If we think of an allusion to a particular story or song here, it is much more likely that the reference points to the *Cypria* (see n. 37) or, rather, whatever PST covering its material was known to the Homeric poet; *contra* Danek 1998: 142–50. See Spelman 2017 for a similar conclusion with regard to Sappho fr. 44. The suggestion of West 2013: 98, that the *Odyssey* poet here 'substitutes Odysseus for Agamemnon because Odysseus is in Demodocus' audience', need not detain us.

[39] Scholars usually explain this as a shot at Odysseus, specifically his replacement of Agamemnon's rather haughty demand for Achilleus' obedience with a more generalised appeal to his sense of *philia* (9.300–6; cf. 158–61), and they also point to his own similar claims in the *Odyssey* when in Eumaios' hut (*Od.* 14.156–7) as a response to the *Iliad*. Both speakers, in fact, use the 'gates of Hades' theme in similar circumstances, when they are doing the very thing of which they are complaining: Achilleus has no intention of leaving Troy, and Odysseus is trying to trick his interlocutor into giving him the gift of a cloak. The theme is, in other words, a marker of a disingenuous statement from the narrative's chief hero. Taplin 1990: 109–10 argues, somewhat diffidently, that *Od.* 14.156–7 quotes *Il.* 9.312–13, and suggests that seeing the trope instead 'as a commonplace in the oral tradition . . . deprives the duplication of any significance'. It does nothing of the kind. In fact, just as with the first case in this chapter, a traditionally oriented view considerably enhances the passage's meaning; cf. Bowie 2013: ad loc., 189, who notes both allusive and non-allusive (viz. 'humorously grand') interpretations.

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immortality if he remains with her (*Od.* 5.206–10). Given, also, the fundamental irony that the war is won by Odysseus' trick of the Trojan Horse, and *not* by the kind of straightforward assault which finds its most natural representation in the figure of Achilleus, one can hardly conclude that a reference to a quarrel between these two characters must induce an archaic audience to think of one particular PST, when they are involved in so many disagreements, and of a PST in which they do *not* have an open quarrel. Theirs is a natural, fruitful opposition, widespread and meaningful throughout early *epos*, not the proprietary innovation of any one PST.[40]

Similarly productive is the role of the divine, specifically of Apollo's involvement in the story (the 'will of Zeus' we have already covered). As one of the chief pro-Trojan deities in the war, and yet also possessed of a conflicted history in the previous sack of Troy, when he was abused and denied payment by Laomedon after helping to build the city walls (*Il.* 21.441–56), he is a constant presence in the tale, and he will play a very prominent role in the death of Achilleus later in the war. Furthermore, the Homeric poems provide some, but not very good, precedent for Pytho's role: Delphi is a major cult site for the god (*Il.* 9.404–7), and oracular consultation before a particular venture is seen in the involvement of Dodona in several of Odysseus' lying tales (*Od.* 14.327 = 19.296).[41] However, many more parallels for this kind of consultation can be found in the (later attested) poems of the Epic Cycle,[42] where the abundant oracles and prophecies have even been seen as characteristic of the wider cyclic treatment of the Trojan War story – rather *unlike* the *Iliad*, in which they remain relatively rare and unimportant. If there is an allusion to be uncovered in Demodokos' reference to Apollo's oracle, it seems more likely to predicate an episode in some PST other than the *Iliad*.[43] In any case, the theme's general prominence in early Greek *epos* certainly makes its presence in Demodokos' song somewhat unpromising as evidence of a direct link specifically with the *Iliad* where, let us remember, there is no such oracle.

The discussion so far has been negatively purposed. It has shown that none of the features shared between Demodokos' first song and the *Iliad*

[40] See the excellent discussion of these two characters by Grethlein 2017, all of whose conclusions stand without the kind of allusive relationship between the poems on which he relies (though he calls it, without really explaining the notion, 'oral intertextuality').

[41] Cf. also *Il.* 16.233–5; Parke 1967: 1–19.

[42] Cf. Kullmann 1960: 221–3; Griffin 1977: 48 (2001: 383–4); West 2013: 109; Rengakos 2015: 158–9; Sammons 2017: 202–5 (more generally on prophecy and omens).

[43] See nn. 37–8 and n. 46.

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actually point allusively to that particular contrivance of epic narrative but look intertextually to a much wider and more versiform tradition. This demonstration applies both to the individual features and to their combination, since it is hard to imagine any PST about the Trojan War without the same characters (mortal and divine) and the same themes – a quarrel of some sort, an oracle, a feast, and the overall governance of Zeus as guarantor of the narrative. That is not a limitation on their meaning in the *Odyssey*, one hastens to add; formulaic phrases and typical themes carry with them associations and resonances which bring the narrative to life. For instance, Zeus-linked διὰ βουλάς expressions are used when the action so motivated is destructive *and* epoch-changing in his favour, ranging from the overthrow of Kronos (*Th.* 465), the summoning of the Hundred-Handers to determine the battle against the Titans (*Th.* 653), to the creation of Pandora so as to punish mankind for Prometheus' intercession on their behalf (*Th.* 572 = *WD* 71).[44] From a traditionally oriented perspective, the expression Διὸς μεγάλου διὰ βουλάς intimates that Demodokos' topic, an episode at the beginning of the Trojan War heralding its associated suffering, is intimately bound up with Zeus' self-interest; though the *Odyssey* poet does not specify precisely how the material is to be related to Zeus' hegemony (any more than the *Iliad* poet does in his proem), the presence of the theme heightens the song's implications and advertises its importance – as well as that of its singer.

In these terms, the Homeric poet uses a typical proemic structure to depict Demodokos' song.[45] The poet on Scheria works in a tradition explicitly approved by Odysseus himself, a witness to the events from which the song arises (*Od.* 8.487–91). The particular narrative, whether known to the audience or not (an unanswerable question),[46] is above all a believable one, containing the typical themes and characters from the kind

[44] The final example, *Scut.* 318 (οὗ διὰ βουλάς), describes the making of Herakles' shield, essential equipment for Zeus' son as he brings order – in this narrative the defeat of Ares' son Kyknos and the construction of a new temple. The expressions for other agents are similarly significant but more variable: the sack of Troy (*Il.* 15.71), the continuation of Oidipous' reign in Thebes (*Od.* 11.276), the destruction of Atreus' house by Helen and Klytaimestre (*Od.* 11.437).

[45] See Harden and Kelly 2014. Marg 1956: 17 lists questions which the song (as depicted in the *Odyssey*) does not answer, but it is not supposed to; the 'advertisement' portion of the proem is designed to get the audience interested and play up the significance of the coming song, not to answer all the questions it raises.

[46] My co-editor suggests to me that the audience's knowledge of the quarrel is implied by *Od.* 8.73 (οἴμης, τῆς τότ' ἄρα κλέος οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἵκανε), where οἴμης is coterminous with the song denoted in the next verse (νεῖκος Ὀδυσσῆος καὶ Πηλεΐδεω Ἀχιλῆος), since the claim to fame otherwise makes little sense; cf. Thalmann 1984: 123–5; Ford 1992: 41–3. This would help the current argument, but I follow, e.g., Garvie 1994: ad loc., 253, in taking the genitive οἴμης as

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of story with which the audience is familiar. The quarrel between the two heroes more obviously sets up a thematic opposition vital for the *Odyssey*, which makes its central hero the most significant figure in the celebration and commemoration of the *nostos* stories after the end of the Trojan War.[47] In keeping with Telemachos' statement about the most popular song being the 'newest' (*Od.* 1.351–2), it makes a suggestive argument for the supremacy of PSTs about the Trojan War among Homer's audience, and places all these war narratives as the precondition for this current story about Odysseus' wanderings; one can read this as poetic (ant)agonism or simply as contextualisation within the tradition.[48] As noted above, a quarrel between these two characters also fits into a wider oppositional thematic between Odysseus and Achilleus, given the centrality of choice to their respective fates – one to return home despite all the odds, the other to die in Troy. They achieve the same thing, fame in epic song, but through very different means. This opposition is obviously significant in the context of the *Odyssey*, not because it aims itself at the Achilleus of the *Iliad*, but because it helps to inform the entire traditional discourse between these characters and the kinds of stories one can tell about them. The song of Demodokos thus contributes strongly to the wider scheme whereby the poet of the *Odyssey* intimates the superiority of *his* hero and *this* PST above all others.

Once more, after all this 'meaningfulness', let us concede the possibility that a covert allusion to the *Iliad* is being made in Demodokos' song. Once more, allusion would not be the primary or most obvious source of meaning for an early archaic audience, who could draw on the totality of their experience with Odysseus and Achilleus in *epos*. That knowledge, and its application to the current PST, remains the same: the opposition between the characters, the process of self-definition, the characterising and aggrandisement of the current PST, all this comes across with or without a direct interaction. Indeed, the primary effect of an allusion would

partitive, i.e. 'from the story-path' (sc. of the Trojan War), in which the quarrel is simply one episode within that group of stories.

[47] Followed by many others (e.g. Wilson 2002), Nagy 1979: 22–5 suggests that their traditional opposition concerns the clash between the two qualities of μῆτις and βίη which Odysseus and Achilleus are meant to represent. This is simplistic, since all βασιλῆες are supposed to have (in practice, variable) access to these two qualities: see now Grethlein 2017 for a more nuanced comparison between these two characters.

[48] We need not choose one alternative to the exclusion of the other, since the tradition would not have been monovalent or monolithic: if the audience knew of a story in which Odysseus is the most important *nostos* hero, then the *Odyssey* complemented it, but if the audience (or parts thereof) knew a different tale, it competed with that one. Both options must remain open.

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be to make these points even more clearly, but in another way, by subsuming and subordinating the *Iliad* to the current song; at the same time, it would also 'authorise' the *Iliad* by locating it in the heroic age, putting it into the mouth of a singer using the same authorial and source strategies as the Homeric poet, and delivering it to an audience both contemporary (if not quite coterminous) with the world of the heroes and appreciative of its value.

The dynamic is not simply oppositional, but the inclusive (ant)agonism we find all over the place in Greek literary history, and one which works perfectly well, once more, without an allusion to the *Iliad*. Whatever the source of Demodokos' song, its constituent themes and characters reflect on the authority of the Homeric poet, the purpose and status of the *Odyssey*, and the impressiveness of its central character. It may do all of these things *also* by reference to the *Iliad*, but that reference is not necessary to achieve the desired result. This does not mean this PST could not be part of the audience's inheritance; any members of the audience who knew, or knew of, the *Iliad* well enough to recognise the riddle (once, that is, they solved for themselves the question of why it is delivered as a riddle) would also derive meaning from that source. Again, however, this comes within the wider streams of traditional meaning already located. To focus, or refocus, all our attention on just one PST inevitably impoverishes our understanding of this episode and the poet's ambition in constructing it.

Conclusion: Intertexts and Allusions, *Iliad* and *Odyssey*

This chapter has not argued that the *Odyssey* was composed without reference to the *Iliad*; though I think that is true, there simply is no space here to answer every one of the arguments which have sought to link the two poems – the scope of the texts, division into twenty-four books, focus on a single character, etc. A refutation of that case would take a book of its own, though it would proceed in the same way we have above, pointing out the contingent nature of what has survived, tracing the same or similar features in what evidence we have or can reconstruct of what has been lost, and so on, so as to show that such a direct relationship is neither likely nor required to understand what the *Odyssey* is trying to achieve in its traditional context. Instead, what we have sought to do here is much more limited: to show, in two case studies, that allusion is the less suitable tool to use when thinking about the relationship between poetic phenomena in early Greek *epos*. Allusive arguments are, in themselves, weak; they may be

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nailed together, but the resulting edifice is far from stable and can be interpretatively equalled – or bettered – without much difficulty.

The reason for that is simple: we do not know whether the kind of extra-performative stability required for detailed allusions between different PSTs existed in the early archaic period, though we can be more certain that it came into being over the course of that period and the following centuries.[49] What did exist throughout, and this would be granted even by the most dedicated alluders, was a performance culture with an audience profoundly experienced in a wide range of stories and the narrative techniques used to convey them. The epic poets relied upon this when they composed their songs, and it remained the primary resource for artist and audience long after written texts came into being, simply because those texts would have been extraordinarily rare, and their impact on the conception and profession of poetry would have been gradual and complex. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* have come down to us as paired, almost conjoined, written artefacts, and they were considered as such by the classical period, but their later reception is not a sure guide to the moment of their original composition and promulgation. By all means, let us look at the textual culture of these later ages and see the continuities spanning all periods of ancient literary history. But let us not lose sight of the individuality – dare I say the interestingness – of that first period, even though our records of it remain limited. If we cannot rule out allusive dynamics in this literature, let us not fall into pretending that they were the first, the most important, or even a particularly prominent resource for the poets and their audiences.

[49] Kelly 2015c. When it happened is disputed; some scholars would place it much earlier than I do, and the process cannot be entirely straightforward to reconstruct given the state of the evidence. Nor is it likely to be a simple process (as Currie 2021: 349–50 oddly interprets my argument), since e.g. Hipponax shows neither particular knowledge of nor allusive engagement with Homer (Kelly forthcoming), whilst his rough contemporary Stesichoros definitely does.

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