

THE NAME OF THE TREE: RECOUNTING ODYSSEY XXIV 340-2*

The hills had been there for a million years: the house and the oak trees for a hundred or more: the apple trees for perhaps fifty¹

Bringing it all back home, *Odyssey* xxiv holds an encounter with narration in the relative calm of Laertes' garden, a final and significant retrospection and re-narration of narrative. Always 'une mise en scène du Père', Narrative invites us to relive with Odysseus the 'inferential walk' on which his father once took him through the trees of his childhood.² We explore with and through him the force of narration in forming his (or any?) life-story. Of the signs that persuade father to recognize son, the scar on Odysseus' thigh has sutured healthy readings; the fruit-trees in Laertes' orchard have scarcely picked their weight.³ This essay explores the sign of the trees, beginning with its interaction with the scar, as the staging of an exemplary model of cultural/narrative productivity.

To see these trees for the epic wood is to concentrate on the details in their parable, which insists that details, 'each and every detail', are its point, its régime, its particularity (ἔκαστα, ... ἔκαστα, ... ἔκαστος, xxiv 337, 339, 342). The text was already preparing this protreptic toward minding about the intimacy embedded in particulars, when Odysseus balanced the urge to reunion between 'telling the details or first asking and testing out the details' (ἔκαστα / εἰπεῖν ... / ἢ πρῶτ' ἐξερῆοιτο ἔκαστα τε πειρήσαιο, 236-8), and claimed that the informant he was inventing had not brought himself 'to tell the details' (ἔκαστα / εἰπεῖν, 261-2). The fruit-trees can indicate to careful readers that all depends, in gardening, life and narrative, on 'a keen eye for (agri)cultural detail'. Just such detail as this sign, its design and signifying. The farm has its own idioms, dialect and discourse on heroism and epic.⁴

Caring for *how* the sign of the trees bears meaning is one crucial detail. In particular, we observe how the very same memory that fixes an identity round the marks left by life on the

* This truncated essay is for Daniel Goldhill. Planted at our Cambridge Graduate Literature Seminar, it first cropped at Pat Easterling and Nick Lowe's ICS Greek Seminar Series on Narrative. I have counted (on) many friends, some anonymous—but especially the Editor.

¹ C.R. Milne, *The path through the trees* (London 1979) 243: this book—and its trilogy—develops, in Christopher Robin's quest to evade but nevertheless to rejoin Father, the most caring environ/mentality anyone could wish.

² R. Barthes, *Plaisir du texte* (Paris 1973) 20, cf. T. de Lauretis, *Alice doesn't. Feminism, semiotics, cinema* (Basingstoke 1984) 107 ff. The epic figures its senescence, from Telemachus, suitors, sons of Nestor, etc., to Laertes, the fathers of the Suitors, pappy Eumaeus, Philoetius, Dolios and 'his' Sicilian crone, cf. T.M. Falkner, 'Ἐπὶ γήραος οὐδῶ: Homeric heroism, old age and the end of the *Odyssey*', in *Old age in Greek and Latin literature*, T.M. Falkner and J. de Luce (eds.), (SUNY 1989) 22 f. 'Inferential walk': U. Eco, *The Role of the reader* (Bloomington 1979) 32. C.W. Spinks, *Semiosis, marginal signs and trickster* (Basingstoke 1991) 83 comments, 'Something in the text tells the reader not to take the text in a literal sense, but to look for other "meanings"... Eco defines semiotics as "the discipline studying all systems capable of lying"... *stat rosa pristina nomine, nomina nuda tenemus*. (U. Eco, *The name of the rose* (London 1984): 'Last Page', quoting Bernard of Clairvaux, cf. B.K. Gold, 'Mitte sectari, rosa quo locorum sera moretur: time and nature in Horace's *Odes*', *CPh* 88 (1993) 18 n. 8.)

³ Fruitless debate over 'the' end of the *Odyssey* must be the main reason: anything in xxiv falls into (at least) a penumbra of secondariness. Surprisingly, this Landmark in World Literature eludes J. Peradotto, *Man in the middle voice. Name and narration in the Odyssey* (Princeton 1990) and M.A. Katz, *Penelope's renown. Meaning and indeterminacy in the Odyssey* (Princeton 1991). But see S. Goldhill, *The poet's voice. Essays on poetics and Greek literature* (Cambridge 1991) 18-21, M. Lynn George, *Epos: word, narrative and the Iliad* (Basingstoke 1988) 23-4. On the scar, cf. esp. M. Ellmann, 'Polytropic man: paternity, identity and naming', in *The Odyssey and A portrait of the artist as a young man*, in *James Joyce: new perspectives*, C. MacCabe (ed.) (Brighton 1980) 84-6, B.E. Goff, 'The sign of the Fall: the scars of Orestes and Odysseus', *CA* 10 (1991) 259-67.

⁴ Falkner (n.2) 45, 'Throughout the poem Odysseus shows a keen eye ...' (My brackets) The farm is where nothing happens, so expect an anti-heroic adventure in anti-heroics. Cf. R. Buxton, *Imaginary Greece. The contexts of mythology* (Cambridge 1994) 78 f.

body takes shape in the insistence of signs and meanings as a ‘scarring’ of the mind.⁵ The ecology of Laertes’ trees frames terms, one last time, for the ecology of his son; but the narrative sets a trap for Odysseus’ identity. The retrospect impelled by regard for the trees pins him to his origin, to the hold that origins have over individuality: paternity both sites Odysseus and entitles him to site his son (and estate). For this father’s son is, after all is said and done, himself a son’s father. Yes, the parable of Laertes’ fruit-trees can show/tell us what *counts* in the *Odyssey*—how the thinking of the text marks out a person’s personality, conditioning and channelling the self in and as the thinking it does, the thinking that shapes it and the thinking along the way about this business of shaping and being shaped; how selves are formed by, and form, their existence as knowing and knowable beings with their place in the social order. But in *this* family plot, we (should) have learned to suspect that any telling of formative experience tells less of the formation of experience than of telling and the authority of narration.⁶ Odysseus neither simply submits to nor patronizes his father; rather, the *Odyssey* challenges us to recognize, if we can, the dynamical system of liaison that powers the negotiation between them. Will the parable’s framing in the narrative turn us toward its retailing and retelling? Through the promised bounty of the trees, the poem warns its readers to scrutinize whether the *Odyssey* has delivered, ever delivers, on its narrative contract with us (any) better than Laertes and Odysseus could manage with each other (340-2):

ὄγυνας μοι δῶκας τρεῖς καὶ δέκα καὶ δέκα μηλέας,
 συκέας τεσσαράκοντ’· ὄρχους δέ μοι ὄδ’ ὀνόμηνας δώσειν
 πεντήκοντα ...’

‘Pear you gave me, three and ten; and ten apple;
 fig, forty; vine-rows you named, like this,
 you’d give me, fifty...’

I. SCARRED TREES

It was an open place, where they met, with a row of saplings round. The Baron rode up and down the row two or three times, without looking at his son. though he had seen him. ... ‘I hear that you are busying yourself for the common good.’

‘I hold dear the forest in which I live, lord father.’

‘Do you know that part of the wood is our property...?’

‘Yes, my lord father. On the Belrio area there are thirty chestnuts, twenty two ashes, eight pines, and a maple.’...

‘Do you realize that you could lead noble vassals with the title of Duke? ... You are now eighteen years of age ... It is time you considered yourself an adult ... I no longer have long to live ... Do you remember you are the Baron of Rondò?’

‘Yes, lord father. I remember my name.’

‘Do you wish to be worthy of the name and title you bear?’

‘I will try to be as worthy as I can of the name of man, and also of his every attribute.’

⁵ Or heart: Mary Beard points out to me a certain futurity of the binary sign of ‘scar + trees’ in Hellenistic inscription of love *into* the growth of the tree, Callim. *Ait. fr.* 73 Pf., Virg. *Ecl.* 10.53 f., etc.

⁶ This too should be turned around: storytelling is where storytelling has always been theorized, before and after theory, cf. R. Chambers, *Story and situation. Narrative seduction and the power of fiction* (Manchester 1984) 23.

'Take this sword, my sword.'

... 'Thank you, lord father ... I promise I will make good use of it.'

'Farewell. my son.'⁷

I.1 Faint Laertes came around—to be kissed, leapt on and claimed for father by the alarming stranger who just mocked him with a yarn that hurts like bereavement. He required this wild visitor to his farm to 'speak a thoroughly-indicative sign he can find persuasive' (σήμα τι ... εἰπέ ἀριφραδές, ὄφρα πεποίθω, 329). 'Many-wiled Odysseus' produces his pair of such signs in his response (331-44). They are faithfully 'read/recognized' by Laertes as 'well-grounded indicative signs', the narration underwriting Laertes' acceptance of the sign while mimetically rehearsing his acceptance in focalising its release of information through him: 'the recognition of the signs as sure, sure for him, their surety, indicated to him that this was, indeed, finally: Odysseus /' (σήματ' ἀναγνόντος τά οἱ ἔμπεδα πέφραδ' Ὀδυσσεύς /, 346).⁸ ἔμπεδα, 'in the ground', economically energizes the word's standard sense, 'secure', with its faded-etymological image, implanting its one-word summary and re-play of the working of the second of the son's signs, which turned on the guaranteed surety of an orchard harvest, and staged this surety as a figure for the surety of its guarantee as a sign.

But ἔμπεδα also entwines the pair of signs with their predecessors, especially the sign of the tree-bed which Penelope recognized as convincing, with the same formulaic fainting and acceptance as Laertes'.⁹ The Laertes scene further grounds the epic in the culture of the soil, to be completed, Tiresias' 'thoroughly-indicative sign' foretold, when one day in a strange land Odysseus' destiny will draw him to concretize this same image by 'sticking in the earth' his misread oar/winnowing shovel.¹⁰

Laertes' recognition is affirmed bodily: his response is at once to embrace his own/dear son. Now 'much-enduring' and 'blessed', now accepted (not least *as* Odysseus), Odysseus supports overwhelmed Laertes through a second spell out for the count and the narrative resumes briskly, through a brief exchange of counsel and resolve, after the father commandeers the transcendent paternity of Zeus for the economy of his own Olympian order (351).¹¹ Father's mind races to worry about impending attack. Son bucks him up: let this not trouble his thoughts, they should dash straight for the nearby farmhouse where friends and food await.¹² He systematically caps

⁷ I. Calvino, *Our ancestors: Baron in the trees* (London 1980) 178 f.

⁸ On φράζω here of 'both the visual sign and the spoken message', marking an 'inferential' mode of communication, and ἀναγνώσκω as a verb of recognition' of what 'need not be structured by a conventionalized code', cf. D. Steiner, *The tyrant's writ. Myths and images of writing in ancient Greece* (Princeton 1994) 18, 26. This alone means that *no Odyssean signs may be read off*.

⁹ xxiii 205-6: here ἔμπεδα (205) foregrounds the image of the still-rooted tree/bed-sign, sure sign of the living sureness of his λέχος ('marriage/bed/wife'), from Odysseus' description of it as ἡ ... ἔτ' ἔμπεδον ... ἡέ τις ἤδη / ἀνδρῶν ἄλλοσε θῆκε, ταμῶν ὑπο πυθμέν' ἐλατῆς (203-4, cf. F.I. Zeitlin, 'Figuring fidelity in Homer's *Odyssey*', in B. Cohen (ed.), *The distaff side. Representing the female in Homer's Odyssey* (Oxford 1995) 117-52). Cf. J.M. Snyder, 'The significant name in Lucretius', *CW* 72 (1978) 229 on *Empedo-cles*.

¹⁰ xi 129, xxiii 276. Cf. Falkner (n.2) 52, Peradotto (n.3) 60 ff. Goldhill *père* puts his oar in, noting xiii 295, ... μύθων τε κλοπίων οἷ τοι πεδόθεν φίλοι εἰσὶν, where disguised Athene verbally strokes her wary protégé's Ithacan incorrigibility.

¹¹ 352, cf. 325-6. The pragmatic force of Laertes' accented 'if' at 352—'if truly the suitors have paid for their sinful terrorism'—lowers the reserve/repudiation that could have been loading his 'if' at 328—'if you come here as Odysseus, Odysseus my son ...'. He tacitly accepts Odysseus' calling their 'home *ours*' (ἡμετέροισι δόμοισι, 325) just as Penelope had finally acknowledged the σήματ' ἀριφραδέα ... εὐνῆς ἡμετέρης, xxiii 225-6.

¹² In ἐφοπλίσσῳσι (360), a ruse of metaphor invents an instant meal to 'get ready'/helps fetch verbal reinforcements already to 'equip with arms'. Dinner will 'fortify' the diners, so this is a para-Arming Scene, harbinger of the ensuing fight, to be repeated on the literal plane when the alarm goes up (ἀλλ' ὀπλιζώμεθα

father, re-shapes Laertes' thinking; up-dates and re-orientates him; directs attention towards his own powers of planning:¹³ in short, *Odysseus* gives the orders, polite but masterful to the end, as from the start, of the scene.¹⁴

Now the episode insists all through that it is undergoing severe temporal/textual compression.¹⁵ The narrative 'interlude' thus signals pregnant ellipsis, warning that it *should* take longer to handle this reunion than it will; the subject deserves it. This rhetorical figure persists up to the untidy scrappiness that brings the poem to a sudden halt. If the steadying of the tale in the imposition of a truce serves for partial dénouement, nevertheless both the suddenness of the intervention by the massively re-doubled *dei ex machina*,¹⁶ and the final caveat that Pallas Athene remains, still, in her *Odyssey* disguise as 'Mentor' (548), the very figuration of fictional simulation,¹⁷ oblige reflective readers to search themselves and supplement the given text with unexpressed, perhaps unsayable, explication.

No doubt attention to the restoration of father and son, their restoration to grandson and to retainers, to their commons and to the bloom of life, can bring the narrative home to roost in resolution, obedient to the Father(s), and back in the Narrator's fold. But against the impending dissonance of public fraction and fracas which the episode momentarily masks, the orchard-scene does not *simply* trope narrative determinacy. On the one hand, true, its intrication of deixis, naming, classification and e/numeration with authorization, surety, guaranteed signification and patriarchal 'seeing I-to-I' must count as the ultimate proscription of *metis* from the text. The sign of the trees does animate truth-telling declaration, as Laertes is found, alone, faced by his son alone, so none may overhear the story of their original aloneness, together in the orchard, the pledge of their togetherness. In unveiling the self, these words restore the long-lost parental embrace, abolition of distance (347). But on the other hand, the telling of the sign is itself yet another transaction in the text of *metis*, a ruse of transparency, revelation, truth-telling. The sign of the trees works *with* determinacy to constitute the exchange of the text, the distinctive guise of Odyssean textuality. Much more, and therefore at once far less, is achieved by the determinacy than a truth-telling closure of the gap between sign, signified and signifiers. Rather, determinacy itself is paraded as a site for narrative textuality and its force is thereby deconstructed.

θάσσον. ... ἐν τεύχεσσι δύνοντο, 495 f.).

¹³ κατὰ φρένα, 353 vs. μετὰ φρεσὶ σῆσι, 357; τάχα, 353 vs. τάχιστα, 360: the last word; / ἐνθάδ', 354 vs. ἐγγόθι ... / ἐνθα δέ, 358 f.; ἐπέλθωσιν ... ἐποτρύνωσι, 354 f. vs. ἐφοπλίσωσι, 360, προὔπεμψ', 360; the pair have *three* allies waiting at the homestead, 359 f. vs. 'all' the host of Ithaca plus their possible reinforcements 'all over' Kephallenia, πάντες ... πάντη, 353-5.

¹⁴ S. Bertman, 'Structural symmetry at the end of the *Odyssey*', *GRBS* 9 (1968) 119, diagrams how the exchange in 349-60, Laertes' fear for Odysseus' counsel (prompt-and-prohaeresis), is central and pivotal to the parallel sequences from 205-348 and 361-412, which fit farmhouse and garden together as 'interlude' and 'episode'.

¹⁵ τάχα δ' ἄγρῶν ἴκοντο, 205, τάχιστα, 360: cf. μάλα δὲ χρῆσπευδόμεν ἔμπης, 324, Rumour ὄκα κατὰ πτόλιν οἶχετο πάντη, 413; τάχιστα, 532. The narrative figures symmetrically its own massiveness, between the Telemachy's longueurs, where Nestorian hyper-entertainment over-delayed the story with ostensibly unfocussed story-telling before it could begin, and the summary Ithacan conclusion, cf. Redfield (n.15) 240, Falkner (n.2) 39. All episode embedding opens the terms of interpretability to a range of options: see Chambers (n.6) 33 ff.

¹⁶ First Athene's roar 'hold(s) back from war' the Ithacans; then, when Odysseus swoops with a yell of his own, Zeus sinks a bolt in front of his daughter who explains/re-doubles it with her order to 'hold back from war, stop in his tracks' Odysseus (/ ἴσχεσθε πτολέμου, 531, / ἴσχεο, παύε δέ ... πολέμοιο, 543): no one, least of all Odysseus, may undo the decisive force of Laertes' divine moment of inaugural killing. Proscription of ὁμοίου πολέμοιο, 543, also evokes banishment of any further action/poetry.

¹⁷ P. Pucci, *Odysseus Polytropos. Intertextual readings in the Odyssey and the Iliad* (Cornell 1987) 22, 'Athene names the specific epic destination of Odysseus ... Athene also stands for the polytropic style of the *Odyssey*, for its intriguing, baffling ironies, its playful allusiveness, its many facets and mirrors'. Pucci has written a poignant response to the present essay.

I.2 The scar binds *both* Laertes' signs into the poem's complex *systematic* of recognition narratives of many different types, including Odysseus' lying tales, as told to Athene, Eumaeus, Antinous, Penelope and now, in xxiv, Laertes.¹⁸ Young Telemachus was told, straight, and then shown, at length: those who witness the scar are the aged, Eurykleia, Eumaeus, Philoetius and now, in xxiv, Laertes. For Eurykleia, *seeing* the scar instantly brought back the story of the scar and with it remembrance and recognition; Eumaeus and Philoetius, by contrast, were purposely *shown* the scar once Odysseus had pressurised their open declaration of support and 'read their minds' loyalty' (xxi 205). Laertes particularly plays off against this last pair: he will be 'Eumaeus' to Dolios' 'Philoetius'.

But Narrative *never* coincides with its system, or structure. Recapitulation interfaces the Eumaeus and Penelope recognitions; the roles of Odysseus, then of Telemachus, in controlling the divulging and dissemination of the Eumaeus, Antinous and Penelope tales are themselves part of an interlacing of re-told tales of The Return, in variously convergent and divergent versions from those previously presented by the narration and/or by Odysseus. Thus the scar has been positioned both as an unmonitored sign, and as a corroboration or attempt at sole proof, before finally, with Laertes, it is the first of what proves to be a pair of signs offered as decrypting the truth.

Some signs (the 'proof' of the bow, for example, and the tree-bed) were told the once and then obliterated, but the relaying of Recognition through intermediaries decisively diffracts what and how we learn to recognize through its narration.¹⁹ The scar sign was prohibited by Odysseus for Eurykleia to tell to Penelope, then received with the unmistakable absence of a flicker by Penelope when joyfully blurted to her by Eurykleia—along with the story of this prohibition. And this relaying, whether in or instead of repetition, both underscores and undermines the structuring of mirror-scenes, parallelisms, echoes, analogies and counter-analogies which run through the unfolding and returning narrative.²⁰ Again, the lying tale told to Athene-in-disguise back on the Ithacan beach, which leads to Athene permitting herself to be recognized and so leads her to allow Ithaca to be recognized, does serve as chief structural matrix (model *and* anti-model) for the Laertes scene;²¹ but Penelope's disregard for the assurance that the scar is there to assure recognition recurs here, too, in the contrast between Laertes' ordeal and the herders' easy acceptance later in the episode of display of the scar as adequate proof, to disturb any schematic functioning of that structural relationship. So that, and how, the scar is re-doubled for Laertes is significant: but how does this impact on its re-doubling with the novelty of the nonce sign of the fruit-trees? Answers compete for the light:

I.2.1 Does the scar key the following sign of the trees? We surely want to go along with Laertes, and work with *both* these long-awaited and now hurried signs. Scar and Trees *can* run in parallel as complementaries. Scar tells of a public rite, the tribal acclamation of a new member whose successful handling of some 'ephebic' ritual is added to the stock of storytelling

¹⁸ Cf. C.H. Whitman, *Homer and the Homeric tradition* (Harvard, 1958) 201-5. For the eyes of death, recognition was on sight, otherwise unmediated: Antikleia, and Argus: S. Goldhill, 'Reading differences: The *Odyssey* and recognition', *Ramus* 17 (1988) 1-31 shows how Argus both models and anti-models with Laertes, they stalk the margins of the discourse of *metis* around recognition. Osmotic dog barks up the right tree undistracted by guise and disguise; hidebound dotage sweeps the scent under a carpet of leaves, blind to the quarry there under his nose, staring him in the face. So, the place of the Odyssean body is designed by visibility, inconclusively.

¹⁹ Goldhill (n.3) 11, 'Recognition is part of the relationship (to be) recognized.'

²⁰ 23.73-84. Cf. Ellmann (n.3) 84, 'The scar again must tell its story. We are unlikely ever to encounter a more loquacious scar.'

²¹ 'Odysseus appears well-dressed before Athena and Laertes: the narrative must explain his wealth', T. Todorov, *The poetics of prose* (Oxford 1977) 62. Cf. B. Fenik, *Studies in the Odyssey* (Hermes Einzelschriften 30, 1974) 49, C. Moulton, 'The end of the *Odyssey*', *GRBS* 15 (1974) 163.

memories of the culture, tattooed onto the new adult hunter/warrior's body to be the fame of his name.²² From the cradle, the 'truth' of Odysseus' every moment is liable to revelation, for the text that Autolycus inscribed on him stamped society's approbation on whatever heteronomy his individuality might grow into. Such are the ways of the ancestors, their accreditation and ownership of a (never your own) self.

We can accordingly read the trees as staging a similar, but more private, testamentary, rite—a quietly unassuming but foundational moment in the tradition of the estate. Laertes had meant the conversation on that 'imaginary walk' to brand his boy's mind. Passage there into the Law/lore of the Father gave the boy meaning, and (a) language, an image-repertoire, for (dealing with) life. Odysseus learned not just this or that item, not just what learning is, learned not just cognitively, but folded all this into the activity of relating to his teacher, holding to his environment, grafted onto his experience.²³ All such instances of enculturation are context-specific, and determinative accordingly. This 'boy' and his father now rendezvous in the place pre-designed to mark successive seasons in his maturation. The orchard was ordained the primal place of Odysseus' memory-scape, 'where he spent his childhood', where infant aphasia passed into the order and classification of culture, preparation for the journey away to win his spurs and return a (the) *man*; and, one day (ago), for returning with the fame of a victor in war to claim for his own. The trees, these trees, have oriented Odysseus through every scrape, each doubt. He is cathected to the spot, grafted.²⁴

Perhaps, even, *if* these trees were 'planted for his son', then the garden sympathetically itself grew up with him.²⁵ Then, 'the orchard-story, with its evocation of the youth of the trees that are still surrounding the speakers, tells of continuity and endurance', where 'the scar tells of change'. Between them, Odysseus' twin signs can comprehend the lifeline set out in the grand narrative of *nostos*, with a belated bow to *paideia*. The epic poem, we remember, was how early Greek society told itself to remember, and how to remember.²⁶

I.2.2 The scar is *also* a good model for trees in that it(s) telling) tells what the trees stay silent about. Because it functions as an analepsis of Eurykleia's passion of recognition, the scar sign supplies Laertes' moment with a reminder that recognition incorporates the unblocking of feelings—relationships as well as relatedness. The story of the scar came to Eurykleia's mind as a 'flashback' of 'almost a hundred lines', in which she focalized the saga of Autolycus' interception of Odysseus from babe to adult around her own role in the story, as its initiator.²⁷

²² Cf. Goff (n.3) 264, 'The scar that effects the recognition of Odysseus proves him a man, both when it is acquired and again when its rediscovery confirms his status.'

²³ 'Learning language is not learning—"cognition" of—some "thing"; rather, it is the development of a strategy (or rather, a context-specific tactic) for dealing with the world in particular instances of world dealing, instances always charged with need, desire, demand.' (R. Schleifer, *Rhetoric and death. The language of modernism and postmodern discourse theory* (Illinois 1990) 191).

²⁴ Cf. G. Ulmer, *Teletheory. Grammatology in the age of video* (London 1989) 135. J.S. Duncan and N.G. Duncan, 'Ideology and bliss. Roland Barthes and the secret histories of landscape', in *Writing worlds. Discourse, text & metaphor in the representation of landscape*, T.J. Barnes and J.S. Duncan (eds.) (London 1992) 34 f. discuss R. Barthes, *Incidents* (Paris 1977) 13-20, 'La lumière du sud-ouest', e.g. 20, 'My body is my childhood, such as history made it. ... Bayonne, the countryside of my childhood'. For the model of filiation as attachment by story to a place, the story making the place, giving it a place in the culture as the site for 'its' narrative, cf. J.C. Nohrberg, 'Justifying narrative: commentary within Biblical storytelling', in *Annotation and its texts*, S.A. Barney (ed.) (Oxford 1991) 15. The work of Dennis Potter, from *The singing detective* to *Cold Lazarus*, obsessively visited/revisits the tree-perch of a boy's childscape for creative instauration (on the subject of primal blockage).

²⁵ Goldhill (n.3) 19; cf. Falkner (n.2) 44, 'It seems likely that not long after planting the orchard Laertes showed it to his young son and gave him various trees to call his own.' Eurymachus planted more than he knew by picking 'picking for dry-stone walls and planting tall trees' as suitable labouring for beggar Odysseus (18.359).

²⁶ Goff (n.3) 267. See P. Connerton, *How societies remember* (Cambridge 1989).

²⁷ Ellmann (n.3) 82, I.J.F. de Jong, 'Eurykleia and Odysseus' scar: *Odyssey* xix 393-466', *CQ* 35 (1985) 517.

She once held and beheld this seasoned body as the unnamed neonate she proffered to its—his—grandfather. He returned to the family hearth bearing the scar as the mark of near-unmanning, near-fatal, ordeal barely survived along with its bearer, and bearing with him the telling of its story, the adventure, the danger. For Nurse, the scar tells forever of her care for Odysseus, baby-minding still the hero she knew he would and had become. Odyssean temporality is at work in the syncopation which narrative focalization re-presents to the reader here: all Odysseus' days concertina-ed into Eurykleia's unchanging thought-swaddling; the patterned development of the hero's career monitored by the tribe; and in the same words, the parents view, straddling *oikos* and outside world, encompassing all the views, that all-encompassing view.

In its different tellings, the scar sign refers us to this lesson of affective sociality, through the congruence and inter-implication of the perspectives of characters in their stories of themselves and each other.²⁸ The emotion-filled glimpse of *pais* ('son' and/= 'child') in father's eye, where the boy will never ever grow up enough to grow out of the regard, is 'lent' by Scar to Trees, to be supplied by reading: 'to Laertes (and to Odysseus vis-à-vis Laertes) the real Odysseus is the little boy *trotting* after his father in the orchard' ... 'He describes himself as a little boy *trotting* along beside his father in the orchard and learning the names of all the trees.'²⁹ In the poem, the son withholds from *his* recounting of the scene any such *direct* expression of affect as this 'trotting'. Instead he projects his release of focal and mimetic details that recapture (re/present) bye-gones out and away onto the flora and the condition of their care. The telling of the memory mimes the father's preferred perspective, as if Laertes is the 'Autolycus' of this story rather than the 'Eurykleia': the parent taught the child to bring back his experience as a tale to tell him, as if he wanted to hear the tale, not to hoard it. How did the boy find the world, not how does he stir the pangs ... Can the care-full parent-child bond negotiate the Scylla and Charybdis of arbitrary and wilful meddling with the child ('Autolycus') and trapping and growth-restrictive coddling of him ('Eurykleia')? The frame for this encounter between Laertes and Odysseus amplifies the problematic nature of the father/son relationship. Its importance and danger consist first in its burden to maximise mutual, undeterminable, understanding, and then in its provocation for outsiders to import their own fixation into their necessarily appropriative reading of the intimacies of others, and other cultures.

The multiple tellings of the scar sign *can* pay off in reading the abstemious régime of the present accounts of both the signs, scar and trees, given this father. They direct us to read between the lines, and to contemplate the protocols which govern the discourse(s) of parent and child. For the father, scar and trees are what he would give his right—and left—arm for: the twin signs of his son bring them together, they release his twin arms, he brings and they bring the pair of them together, ἀμφὶ δὲ παίδι φίλω βάλε πηχέε (347). As we shall see, the gardener's physical expression of caring 'for' (in the Greek, ἀμφί) his garden proves to have set the terms for the recognition by signs. Now we can appreciate further the tension between the eloquent silence of Laertes' labour and the verbal loquacity of Odysseus' intrusive alias. The un-caring self waxed lyrical on the subject of caring. The text spoke already, under cover, of the unspeakable love of father and son. So the scar, and its present reticence, helps speak the reticence of the trees.

I.2.4 Yet the scar is easily seen as a defect needing to be *completed* by the trees. Scar tells of Odysseus afar, in the land of reportage, fiction, invention. Trees substitute a straight-forward

²⁸ So Goldhill (n.3)19, 'Each use of the scar is different, as the sign is differently manipulated, tells a different story, and constructs a different relation between the partners in recognition.'

²⁹ D. Wender, *The last scenes of the Odyssey, Mnemosyne Suppl.* 52 (Leyden 1978) 61; Goff (n.3) 267. My *italics*. (This is 'trotting' after Rieu's Penguin translation.)

declarative approach to language, earthing the circuit of signals between father and son, across the dangerous gap of paternity, never quite secured.³⁰ ‘At the figural level, ... the sign “scar” ... evok(es) ... the relationship between the nurse and the boy, as against that of Penelope and Odysseus, for which an erotic “clue” is figuratively more fitting’. The trees best maintain the characteristic exclusivity of Odyssean closeness: ‘the bodily sign, the scar, is the least “intimate” detail. Intimacy in the *Odyssey* is conveyed rather through personalized knowledge about the outside (the trees in the orchard ...), or through the privatization of the outside (the olive tree in the bed ...).’³¹ The trees, as we shall see, can complete the scar’s bio-script for the *man* by pointing finally to what it was all for, from the start. Rereading the rise to maturity and the fame of the name as means and not end, the garden-metaphor tends and attends to where life all along has been tending: a futurity of plenitude—where ‘fullness is remembrance (the past, the Father)’.³²

The scar is (also) so defective, it needs to be *supplanted* by trees.³³ Scar tells of Odysseus in the grasp of the devious trickster’s example. It will not serve, we now see, to reach Laertes, awakening, as if this was—all along; and now—its set purpose, all the pain for the Father of that ‘family romance’ in which Freud’s child is transported away from their parentage in real mundanity and off to some nobler, right royal, other family. Trees compliment their originator and recipient, substituting his creatively invented counting of blessings for Scar’s inventiveness, the curse of its nomination. The trees scarcely make ‘a story’. They are reserved for family business, memorable only to the Laertiads. Purpose-made for the negotiation of paternal/filial relations: Laertes’ bid to keep everything in his garden in place, just where he put it, including his grown-up son; Odysseus’ scheme of offering submission to his father’s careful mechanism for abolishing time and retaining control, while vindicating his improvisational autonomy by usurping the narration. We can see *both* their games.

Scar entirely masks, in this telling, its centring on the naming of Odysseus (if only from Laertes’ ears), but the power of Trees lies very largely in the ‘naming’ they speak of, an odd, impersonal, common-or-garden nomination (ὄνδμασας ... ὄνδμηνας, 339, 341). The view from Laertes’ orchard shows up Scar’s import for understanding epic ‘onomatopoetics’ as embarrassingly limited, a mere reading of Homer for the fame of a heroic fiction, the fool’s gold of a fetishized pun. As if the *Odyssey* were, formally and finally, about ‘Odysseus’, that Paper Tiger nobody, merely the success-story of a(n anti-orthodox) *kleos*, dateline Nowhere. But Trees, and these trees, would reclaim the language of the Homeric text for a manual on culture, the propagation of settlement as tradition. Which is where we come in.

I.2.5 Another detailed reading will find that the (much-touted) scar is recapitulated here precisely to be *set aside*, dispelled from the text by the (unheralded) fruit-trees. Odysseus was

³⁰ Katz (n.3) esp. 18 f., 170 ff., exposes ‘the *Odyssey*’s ideology of exclusivity’ which is specially thematized in ‘Penelope’s inscrutability as the logic of narrative truth’. ‘Indeterminacy is encoded into the text’, which ‘will not, in the end, vouchsafe us a sure sign of its truth’. Laertes’ trees must put in question Katz’s view (11) that ‘the reunion between Penelope and Odysseus is unquestionably the high point of the poem, and the *telos* toward which its narrative development tends, ... the poem’s dénouement’: J.L. Beizer, *Family Plots. Balzac’s narrative generations* (Yale 1986) esp. 4, 7 explains why text can display no unproblematic father, no proper meaning assured against slippage in narrative.

³¹ Pucci (n.17) 90.

³² R. Barthes, ‘Digressions’, in *The grain of the voice: interviews. 1962-80* (New York 1986) 118.

³³ Cf. Katz (n.3) 179, ‘... having offered the proof of the scar (xxiv 331-35), he realizes the insufficiency—or perhaps the inappropriateness—of this *sema*, and goes on to provide a reckoning of the trees and the orchard that compose his patrimony’; Goldhill (n.3) 19, ‘The addition of a further token to what was previously sufficient is itself significant and puts a strong focus on the addition’.

asked, 'speak a sign' (σήμα ... εἶπε, 329), but his words 'first' turned Laertes to use 'his eyes' to observe the scar 'here' (πρῶτον τήνδε ... ὀφθαλμοῖσι, 331). Thereupon, in a new effort at heartfelt transparency, follows an exclamatory outburst of clarity, the recollection dredged from the primal memory-bank, in the excited impatience of self-interruption:

‘/ οὐλήν μὲν πρῶτον ...
/ εἰ δ’ ἄγε τοι καί ... / εἴπω ...’

‘/ Firstly, on the one hand the scar...
/—Hey, come on then, let me as well tell...’ (331-7)

Whatever Odysseus thought he might have been in train to say to Laertes when he began with the scar (already committing himself to go on to further material or materials), in the event he found himself reaching out—instead, not as well?—and finding that rosy childhood day, the day of the trees. The trees that shade the talkers now, as they talk/look at, to, and for, each other. Odysseus uses the scar written onto his body, but instinct has him pull out a special bond for sire and son to share, a unique sign that spells the special exclusivity of their relationship, their relatedness, for good.

II. THE LIE OF THE LAND

A son cannot judge his father,—least of all, I, and least of all such a father who, like you, has never hampered my liberty in anything.’ Arkady’s voice had been shaky at the beginning: he felt himself magnanimous, though at the same time he realised he was delivering something of the nature of a lecture to his father; but the sound of one’s own voice has a powerful effect on any man, and Arkady brought out his last words resolutely, even with emphasis.³⁴

The tree is already an image of the world ... We are tired of the tree ... We must no longer place our faith in trees ... Many people have a tree planted in their heads ...³⁵

II.I But these trees and this scar are but Odyssean ‘signs’—they relay us from words to more words, yet more words, as if this is the way to reach the heart of things. Do these words tell us any more than ‘Odysseus’ or any of the others did? *Can* they? Does their pledge of sincerity, Laertes’ pain, confer privileged verity? How, when even these words, in this scene, are already lost, caring, scaring, scarring, in the shadow of Odysseus’ last performance? Lost to context.

The orchard is itself the context for the signs. The context they share with the deceptive conversation that Odysseus inflicted on Laertes, the cancelled play of a mocking deferral of recognition which plays foil to the ‘true’ signs of scar and trees. There may be space enough here to recognize the work of grief, the toll of the years written on another’s life, body, mind, heart, to feel how it feels to care ... But the words Odysseus found for his role as the Stranger, here as before, tell us more besides—their very redundancy made them work way beyond the task of framing the truth-telling as expressive centre for attention. Odysseus’ rhetoric was

³⁴ I. Turgenev, *Fathers and sons* (New York 1967) 24, cf. 42: the returned son’s strange-r *alter ego* explains ‘why some of the trees ... had not done well’: ‘You ought to have planted silver poplars here by preference, and spruce firs, and perhaps limes, giving them some loam. The arbour there has done well’, he added, ‘because it’s acacia and lilac; they’re accommodating good fellows, those trees, they don’t want much care.’

³⁵ G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *On the Line* (New York 1983) 5, 10 f., 33, *cit.* Ulmer (n.24) 140 f.: *ibid.* 136: Ramus’ ‘tree-diagrams’ re-placed the classical mnemotechniques of topology; Saussure’s account of the ‘General principles’ of the arbitrary ‘Nature of the linguistic sign’ in his *Course in general linguistics* (London 1983) 65 ff.) began from the sign of the tree, using the relations between the pictorial icon of ‘(a/the/this) tree [or ‘Tree’]’ and the graphic mark ‘*arbor*’ to model those between concept and sound pattern; Lévi-Strauss, *The savage mind* (London 1972) 159 took the tree for his own favoured model for systematizing classification.

expansively assertive. Instant appraisal of the care denied and lavished—diverted from the gardener’s self onto his plants; expert listing of what is growing; unsparing description of the distressed figure this Lear cuts. This is to be a convincing performance of how to address someone’s serf. At the same time the performance is tuning Odysseus’s well-stocked mind, not (just) his tongue, (back) into Laertes’ way of thinking, and of being—as the sign of the trees will confirm. But still, even as the son tells his royal father he is a serf who looks like a king and tells him to listen carefully to his own mini-Odyssey of a tale about the / ἄνδρα he once entertained at home (265 f.),³⁶ he is accreting power to himself so comprehensively that the example may govern his eventual production of signs ‘for’ his father.

II.2 The son plays (fictional) host. He spins a yarn in which he voices Odysseus’ words, show-cases what are self-quotations (269 f.). He bestows authority on Odysseus, that is. And the subject he chooses is the son’s naming of his father: when Odysseus gives Laertes his rightful name, as the son of his father, ‘Arkeisiades’, he places him genealogically with a propriety that is matched only by Eurykleia and, finally, Athene in the poem (270; iv 744, xxiv 517: at the death). This move will turn out to have accomplished something like a preemptive anticipation of the telling of the sign of the trees, where the son will quote, so authorise, the word of the father in the orchard flashback which pretends to affiliate, so ‘authorise’ the son, the son’s existence, his place in his father’s poem, with its second cataloguing of the plants that have already been ‘accounted for’ by the Stranger (246 f.).

The point that the first lie works up to may threaten to set aside firmly, once for all, the teaching which the sign of the trees may position, or merely pose, as the pedagogy incarnated in the chip-off-the-old-block’s filial acceptance of his father’s scheme of values. If the Stranger first took over the scene for his own, to appraise, describe, assign its truth, and fitted orchard round its ministrant in an instant improvisation of brandished insight, his first lying tale further impresses on his audience a value-system that admits no argument or negotiation, a firmly-posed and firm conception of *what counts*, smuggled into the text with the winsome power of the anecdote. As the father overhears incognito his son’s successful sociality from some fly-on-the-wall nobody-in-particular, he is told his son’s worth: Odysseus brings the recognition of his own worth as his story, first counting out verbally the counted-out gifts paid out as due valuation of the mutual esteem between host and guest (οἱ δῶρα πρόρον ξεινηία οἶα ἔφκει ... οἱ δῶκ’ ... δῶκα δέ οἱ ..., 273-9), then ending his own self-trumpeting second lie with the hope he brings that he and his double, whom he is re-doubling, will take the relationship on further and give the exchange a future (δῶρα διδώσειν, 314: the last words, before Laertes’ first collapse). The tributes chosen *for* Odysseus *by* this clandestine Odysseus are paraded before the old man, then, in a preemptive bid to fix terms for warming to wealth: ‘gold and silver, first, then fabrics; craft-products: ingots, mixing-bowl, cloaks, rugs, mantles, tunics, along with their producers; quality goods, at that: well-worked ingots, floral bowl, fine mantles, good-looking craftsmen with faultless products, for the choosing.’³⁷ The last words of all, ἄς ἤθελεν αὐτὸς ἐλέσθαι (279), deliver the punch-line summation of the work of figuration that the catalogue transacts: the sketch has precisely been delineating ‘what Odysseus himself would, given a free rein,

³⁶ For this parodic recapitulation of the poem’s inception: still re-veiling the name, or beyond the name the self, cf. Goldhill (n.3) 18 f.

³⁷ The two Odysseuses image perfect satisfaction in an emphatically balanced vision of self-accountability: ‘I gave of gold on the one hand’ (=274) ‘and I gave on the other some silver’ (= 275); ‘a dozen single cloaks ~ *ditto* rugs’ (= 276), (~) ‘*ditto* mantles ~ *ditto* tunics, to go with them’ (= 277); to go with these four verses of even-keeled apportionment, ‘separately, again, four women’, who themselves match their looks to their products’ (278 f. On the exchange of gifts, cloth, (dis)guise, cf. E. Block, ‘Clothing makes the man: a pattern in the *Odyssey*’, *TAPhA* 115 (1985) esp. 3 n.8).

choose to be his own'. Here Odysseus chooses for himself, in disguise, his own self.

In the second lying tale, we find the son giving himself a name, a punning self-origination in the fictionality of *metis*. His puns *re-name his father*,³⁸ then award himself the pun-name 'Eperitos' ('The Chosen One'), a choice name chosen specially to spell, but not authorise, the sense 'Sir Strife' (306).³⁹ This commandeering of origins before the father could complete Odysseus' quest: destiny and dynasty were only sign-posts toward his ultimate goal, of self seeking.

II.3 Now both these lying tales translated into a peremptory idiom of his own choosing the imagery of 'caring' which the stranger keyed in his first words. Not for himself, it must seem, the κομιδή round which the gardener has, he perceives, fashioned his, bowed, self: in this Odyssean life, you 'take/fetch/centre on' what you 'care for'; and this tells who you are, your stereotype, your place, in language, discourse, society. Where beggars constitutionally lie for their 'provisions', the mariner relies on 'year-round supplies', the guest has a 'wash-and-brush-up', an aged parent 'looks after' a long-missed prodigal son 'with love'—the Odyssean world is full of these concrete images of modulated treatment.⁴⁰ The son proved able to read the dutiful lesson of the *agros*. He seized the moment to explicate on behalf of the gardener he faces, so on behalf of the role his father has chosen for his own, and so in the name of the father's preferred fashioning of the self, the model of Laertian self-denying κομιδή for his plants and trees.⁴¹ The son will show himself able to play this the part his father wrote for him, able and *prima facie* fit to recite once more the Parable of the Orchard-Trees.

But the narrative has before that performance shown so many points of view in the many-minded make-up of ('Autolycean') Odyssean *metis* that it may prove hard to accept transcendent revelatory status for the Trees as Odysseus' determinant proprioceptors. Can anything be even

³⁸ The naming of the father (*cf.* the lie to Eumaeus, naming father 'Kastor son of Hylax', xiv 204: 'Beaver son of Barker'), 'Lord Apeidas Polupemonides' ('Unstinting Muchwoeson', 305: Peradotto (n.3) 144 mentions the rival, *Polupamon, 'Much Wealth'), presumably works with 'Arkeisiades' as from ἀρκεῖν ('suffice, be plenty', M.J. Flaumenhaft, 'The undercover hero: Odysseus from dark to daylight', *Interpretation* 10 (1982) 26; *cf.* 'Pheidon' in the tale to Eumaeus, xiv 316. Peradotto (n.3) 144 favours 'Unsparing—*sc.* of the Suitors'.); but with an evidently Oedipal/schizoid thrust of fathering the grandfather to turn the tables on father, as the 'Laertes' of this line is derived from the *polu-* sobriquets of his son, in a parody of the original christening of *Odysseus* as 'Master Hate' by the punster grandfather which is recalled to us immediately by Odysseus' self-naming for strife. (On Odysseus and *ὀδύσσομαι, see Peradotto 129 ff.: *ὀδύρομαι, 'feel pain, express it', gets missed out, though this gloss by nomination links Odysseus (from i 55, v 153, 160 on) to the rest of his family and his father Laertes (iv 110, 740 f., xv 355, xvi 145) and is acted out in the orchard-scene, where 'Mr. Pain' inflicts this his truth upon himself and his reflector-figure, upon himself through the pain he brings and means for his reflector.) The schizophrenic 'becomes' his own parent—he lives to elude, play across, 'the ultimate linguistic dependence of one meaning (self, child) upon its opposite (other, parent)', R. Harland, *Superstructuralism* (London 1987) 173.

³⁹ *Cf.* Peradotto (n.3) 144. This impromptu self-naming (Odysseus first named his stranger self at xix 183: not 'the beggar from Crete, an anonymous stranger in a world which regards a person's name and genealogy as his primary identity', but 'Aithon', *cf.* A.J. Haft, 'Odysseus, Idomeneus and Meriones: The Cretan lies of Odysseus', *CJ* 79 (1983-4) 302) actively intervenes in the social theatre of language in a display of mastery through teasing *metis*, pretending to read back the truth of the life to a primordial baptism: the life-story of one ἐξ Ἀλύβαντος ('from Wandersworth', 304, as if *ἀλάομαι; or 'from Painland', *ἀλύω: *cf.* Peradotto (n.3) 144 f. On the whole set of aliases, *cf.* S. West, 'Laertes revisited', *PCPhS* 35 (1989) 140 n.72.).

⁴⁰ κομιδή: xiv 124; viii 232 f.; viii 451-4; ... ἐφίλει ... ἐκόμιζε, xvii 111-3. See L. Kurke, *The traffic in praise. Pindar and the poetics of social economy* (Cornell 1991) 41 f. n.14: 'to preserve' or 'to convey safely home'. 'The epic itself ... emerges finally as the ultimate structure of care', M. Lynn-George, 'Structures of care in the *Iliad*', *CQ* 46 (1996) 20.

⁴¹ 245-7, *cf.* Falkner (n.2) 42; Redfield (n.15) 232 recognizes that 'Culture is often quite literally gardening, and a master-symbol of the poem of equal standing with Odysseus' scar and Penelope's bed—is Dolius' garden' (*sic*); 229: 'Nobody promised him a rose garden.' The narrative enfolds this topological topology within its detailed vision of the Sicilian servant/wife's 'care' for old Laertes/Dolios (κομέσκειν, 212, 390).

second nature to (father-baiting) Odysseus? We look to see (how) the conversation and the signs mediate the re-negotiation of filiation between a pole marked as temporizing preliminary, a hold-up at great cost, and a pole marked as a *fiat*, a breakthrough to (we may reason) equally great joy. The lies pit intrusion, imposition and trespass against the signs' surrender, permit and admittance. We have been brought to the orchard, not the farmstead, not the palace, not just the island, for rapprochement between father and son. Instead of meeting up, they resist meeting and then resist the resistance, until their meeting is exposed as a particular construction out of resistance—Odysseus shying away into non-committal babble and Laertes taking refuge in the solitude of unconsciousness. Between the lies and the signs we read between the lines and the sighs—to find the two phases of the orchard-scene interpenetrating, each the token of its enantiodromous other, twin *tesserae*. Signs scar and implant the lies. The Scar lies, open to view—and the Trees give the lie of the land.

III. GARDENER'S WORLD

*For three years he had been planting trees in this wilderness. He had planted one hundred thousand. Of the hundred thousand, twenty thousand had sprouted. Of the twenty thousand he still expected to lose half ... There remained ten thousand oak trees to grow where nothing had grown before. ... I told him that in thirty years his ten thousand oaks would be magnificent. He answered quite simply that if God granted him life, in thirty years he would have planted so many more that these ten thousand would be like a drop of water in the ocean. Besides, he was now studying the reproduction of beech trees ... He was also considering birches ... A friend of mine ... among the forestry officers of the delegation told me ... 'He knows a lot more about it than anybody. He's discovered a wonderful way to be happy!' ... More than ten thousand people owe their happiness to Elzéard Bouffier.*⁴²

III.1 Trees have been playing their part all along in constructing the *Odyssey's* many-layered ledger of human identity. Sign of displacement to the wrong isle (Calypso's νῆσος δεινδρήεσσα, i 51), reintegration with Ithaca's trees was primed for the goal of Return throughout the adventures (emblemized in the denial to sight of Ithaca's δένδρεα τηλεθάοντα, xiii 196), and was thrust before us as the specific target of the present visit to the ἀγρὸν ... πολυδένδρεον. Here 'good old father is to be espied blending with the camouflage of his tree haunt' (πολυδένδρεον ἀγρὸν ἐπειμ' / ὀψόμενος πατέρ' ἐσθλόν, xxiii 139, 359 f.). Trees amplify the sense of 'Return' some more, unfolding the paternal stake in ἦν γαίαν ('the self's own land', i 21)⁴³ as the withheld object of desire and so *telos* and end of the narrative (= ὀπὸ πατρῆδος αἰης, i 75). Getting into the many-layered cleverness of sharing with his ἄλοχος the 'many-layered' cleverness of the sign of the πυκινὸν λέχος was as welcome to the restored couple as landfall to shipwrecked swimmers (xxiii 182, 177; 233-8): getting to the 'fatherland' is affectively performed in xxiv in the encounter with father, in their heartland. If this saga grafts wife-bed-home-*oikos* onto father-estate-patrimony-*polis* with its links between Penelope's olive-tree-bed and Laertes's orchard of trees, the unique singularity of these two signs of particularity and belonging also reinforces the self-contained autonomy of the islander clan and the parsimonious self-sufficiency of its genealogical 'family-tree': one scar, one dog, one bow (?), one oar, one orchard, one island—as one wife and one son—and, finally (and logically), one father.⁴⁴

⁴² J. Giono's seminal tale, *The man who planted trees* (London 1985) 18, 20, 30, 38.

⁴³ Here the text originally gave Odysseus his own name and so began its destiny as Narrative to stage an act of naming. See M. Ragussis, *Acts of naming. The family plot in fiction* (Oxford 1986), Beizer (n.30).

⁴⁴ Flaumenhaft (n.38) 26 shows how the only child syndrome of these 'lone wolves' chimes with their 'cunning' ability to feed themselves a-plenty on modest means (xiv 325 f.).

Nevertheless, sociality all along permeates the narrativisation of our singular Man, so that the private colloquy in the seclusion of the arbour is hustled along, between the dead off to join the throng of ghosts and the discordant cries for vengeance in the Ithacan agora, its pace dictated by the irresistible press of the outside world on their vital interests. The *language* of the orchard is already working at the heart of the recognition scene to deliver over the clan to a common (or garden) neighbourliness of humanity. As Laertes digs round his φυτόν, devoting his care to every φυτόν (227, 242; 246), his son wonders whether he should κύσσαι καὶ περιφύνοι ἐδὼν πατέρ' (236), as he later does: κύσσε δέ μιν περιφύς (320). While Dolios will kiss Odysseus' hand, his sons welcome him verbally and ἐν χεῖρεσσι φύοντο (398, 410), before taking their proper places, seated beside their father. In the father's enfolding his son (ἀμφὶ δὲ παιδὶ φίλω βάλει πῆχυν, 347), the caring concern of tender-ness is incarnate, just as it was in Laertes' gardening (φυτόν ἀμφελάχαινε, 242, ἀμφιπολεύειν/–εις ὄρχατον, 244, 257). So the sign of the trees chimes in with its surroundings and trades for clarity with its contextual frames. It has its own specific domain in the narrative and works therein as a prototype for imaging thought. The distinctive view from the garden models *nous* as *nostos* differently, making a difference within the larger pattern.

III.2 The whole country estate of Laertes showcases a world of application to work in a particular realm. The agros is rendered καλός, by repeated investments of labour (μάλα πόλλ' ἐμόγησεν, 205-7), whether in the form of manhandling stone (223-5) or of a hum-drum spot of digging and hoeing round trees, plants, vegetables (227, 242). These could be equally famishing, just as back-breaking, no less exhausting, in their different ways.⁴⁵ The two manifestations of work split between sociality, teamwork, foreman over squaddies, on the one hand, and solitary autonomy on the other; fitly applied to the respective tasks of emphatically solid disjunction of inside from outside, in the forms of protective outworks defining and circumscribing owned property as properly their own, and of diligently constant employment of skill and know-how to develop resources and maximise output. The labourers 'put their backs into it' some more—to get back for a bite, a feet-up, a rest (μογέοντες, 388); the text has them supervene on another stint of 'labour' duly completed: the 'work/hardship' of the kitchen chores, just over before their arrival to join the dinner-table (παύσαντο πόνου τετύκοντό τε δαίτα, 384). This interlacing of 'jobs' re-doubles when Odysseus excuses his serf an unnecessary errand (πένεσθαι, 407) and we leave the scene with 'one and all hard at it, busily working—on their appetites' (ὥς οἱ μὲν περὶ δεῖπνον ἐνὶ μεγάροισι πένοντο: /, 412: the last word).

Matching this valedictory reminder of the episode's discourse on *ponos* in all its tonal registers, the whole episode was emblazoned with a pronounced introductory framing as the scene of temporary retreat and seclusion from epic struggle (ὥς εἰπὼν δμῶεσσιν ἀρήϊα τεύχε' ἔδωκεν ..., 219). That point of division, where the narrative path toward Dolios' board splits between Odysseus' diversion through the garden and his gang's direct cut to the kitchens, is the marked moment which poises and proposes transactional exchange between on the one side *domos* +/- *deipnon*, and on the other *pater* and *polukarpos aloe* (214, 220, 215; 216, 221). Both scenes, in short, are marked as the other of warrior-narrative, a 'time-out' or ludic preterition for homely and farmyard *teuchea* (contrast the *teuchea*, 'arms', 498, 534, in the show-down fight, cf. 380). Things look different from these side-lined elsewheres, including Homer's *Odyssey*.

⁴⁵ This could be a redolent/smelly spot of muck-spreading, if not in their text then in the horticultural reader's mind, see S. West, 'Cicero, Laertes and manure', *CQ* 39 (1989) 553-5, on Cic. *De Sen.* 54, *Laertam ... colentem agrum et eum stercorantem*.

Now Odysseus, recall, already paraded his gardener's eye before Laertes, reeling off the species all around him and reading in them the product of loving nurture (κομιδή) projected away from himself and onto the plants by the old man (244-51). And now he is 'recalling how he learned to tend that very orchard'.⁴⁶ What Laertes gave Odysseus was a gift, a promise, a script and a pledge. His life was to be spent realising the estate so that he would yield the patrimony as stipulated in advance. The trees would live. They would flourish. Laertes would see they kept their seasonal calendar through the years, lived up to the conditions, responded to loving care, and, before all, were there. They were there, always, awaiting Odysseus, bringing him back home, determining his objectives and ordering his priorities, his pre-destination and promised land. Fruitful and deep-rooted caring, the gardener's jolly world: 'the orchard story, with its evocation of the youth of the trees that are still surrounding the speaker, tells of continuity and endurance.'⁴⁷

III.3 But the differences between Odysseus' response to Laertes' work and the tour of the estate he produces from memory can lead us to a more sensitized appreciation of the account he gives of his father's attempt to inculcate in him the gardening habit, which would tie him to the cultivation of a local knowledge and settle in him an internalized body memory and rhythm.⁴⁸ For an estate can spell for some 'the garden where they could not fail to want to be but, like so many landowners, have chosen to stay away from'. On one side, 'trees are the cultivated landlord's visible signature on the land, the means by which he at once acknowledges, enhances and appropriates—in a word, improves—its virtue'; on the other, 'if I am not a woodcutter, I can no longer "speak the tree", I can only speak about it, on it'. The tree marks one and all, but differently—the nobleman, who may be reminded, as its branches wave over his head, whilst wandering in his hereditary domains, of the illustrious ancestors by whom it may have been planted; and ... the peasant who, passing it in his way to his daily labours, recalls, as he looks at it, the sports of his infancy round its venerable trunk, and regards it at once as his chronicler and land-mark'.⁴⁹

'Trees are often most appealing in old age', they may be "older than I am and I can't help feeling that makes them wiser". Trees can spell, for example, free 'walking through the woods ... with the senses open and the attention floating'—or a people's respect for their power over erosion of their soil.⁵⁰ Details make all the difference.

Laertes' 'trees' may even count as a misnomer, for what the sign sees as essentially fruit-machines: 'Odysseus is placed now as the son, the inheritor, and he is to inherit the trees (which produce food, which are rooted in the soil of the *oikos*, which need human care across the

⁴⁶ S. Murnaghan, *Disguise and Recognition in the Odyssey* (Princeton 1987) 29.

⁴⁷ Goff (n.3) 267, '... the scar tells of change'; 'Homer ... must have felt the rightness of these signs, the appropriateness of the olive' (bed) 'and fruit trees both to the continuity ... of the royal family and to the renewal of Ithaca by the return of the king', K.J. Reckford, 'Some trees in Virgil and Tolkien', in *Perspectives of Roman Poetry*, G.K. Galinsky (ed.) (Texas 1974) 64.

⁴⁸ So H. Erbse, *Beiträge zum Verständnis der Odyssee* (Berlin 1972) 99, 108, 'um seine Freude an der Gartenarbeit zu wecken um die Liebe zum Gartenwesen in ihm zu wecken.'

⁴⁹ S. Pugh, *Garden, nature, language* (Manchester 1988) 94; P. Womack, *Improvement and romance. Constructing the myth of the highlands* (Basingstoke 1989) 67; R. Barthes, *Mythologies* (St. Alban's 1973) 146; J.G. Strutt, *Sylva Britannica* (1882), cit. S. Daniels, 'The political iconography of woodland in later Georgian England', in *The iconography of landscape*, D. Cosgrove and S. Daniels (eds.) (Cambridge 1991) 51. Remember: 'different social segments, each with a different past, will have different memories attached to the different mental landmarks characteristic of the group in question', Connerton (n.26) 37 (summarising Halbwachs).

⁵⁰ D. Lowenthal, *The Past is a foreign country* (Cambridge 1985) 135, 53, citing Peter Tate, 'a chronicler of the New Forest'; Ulmer (n.24) 149; W.E. van Beek and M. Banga, 'The Dogon and their trees', in *Bush base: forest farm culture, environment and development*, E. Croll and D. Parkin (eds.) (London 1992) 57-75.

generations).⁵¹ Our listed ‘pear ... vines’ belong, as much as to a fruiterer’s patch in the discourse of ‘trees’, to a frugivorous slice of the Odyssean discourse of the *gaster*, food as the point of the ‘poor man’s labour’ (πένεσθαί ... πόνος), of the beggar’s patience and of the rich man’s possessions.⁵² The landscapes of the *Odyssey* offer timber for the marine, all-purpose olive, screens round cave anti-dwellings, and the tall green trees of home. Mouth-watering gardens in fairy-land, Hell, and now home are a rather different ecological domain.⁵³ Laertes’ hoeing his own, long, row has told us how pomi-/viti-/culture (*et sim.*) insists on a particular approach to life: the year’s round of careful tending, that entire dendranthropology. Now when his son tells the sign of the fruit-trees, what trace of this ethos remains, in his account? None, at first blush.

IV. COUNT YOUR SELF ...

A tree is a tree. Yes, of course. But—

... The concept of tree is vague, it lends itself to multiple contingencies. True, a language always has at its disposal a whole appropriating organization (this tree, the tree which, etc.). But—⁵⁴

IV.1 Whatever (isotopia) Laertes (thought he) taught Odysseus in the first place, the son seems to have learned to value his trees *as a set of objects*, so produces a bald listing—shorn of laboriousness and care. He beholds neither the magical bounty of a Phaeacian paradise, nor the reward for georgic exertion, but a hoarder’s tally indexing profit.⁵⁵ The voice’s bare counting of the trees indicates what is to count—and at the same time transvalues accountancy, the self rule of ‘classes of iconized figures endowed with the grammatical determinations of quantification (indefinite, partitive, complete, definite, etc.). ... By simultaneously encompassing the quantification of subjects and objects, ... junction itself is quantified: a single subject for *n* objects, a single object for *n* subjects, a single subject for a single object, and so on. These distinctions enable us to establish and differentiate between, for example, hoarding, consuming, distributing, and sharing.’⁵⁶

Time and practice have, will have, reinforced, and reinforce, will reinforce, Odysseus’ respect for computation and the ideology and identity produced by its habituation.⁵⁷ We will know the

⁵¹ Goldhill (n.3) 19.

⁵² Pucci (n.17) 173 ff.

⁵³ See P. Vidal-Naquet, ‘Land and sacrifice in the *Odyssey*: a study of religious and mythical meanings’, in *Myth, religion & society*, R.L. Gordon (ed.) (Cambridge 1981) esp. 91 f. esp. on the olives; for other copses/gardens cf. v 63 f., 68 f., 238 f., vii 114 ff., ix 182 f., x 150, xi 587 ff., W. Richter, *Die Landwirtschaft im homerischen Zeitalter*, *Archaeologia Homerica* H (Göttingen 1968) 140 f., R. Meiggs, *Trees and timber in the ancient Mediterranean World* (Oxford 1982) 108 ff. S. Isager and J.E. Skydsgaard, *Ancient Greek agriculture. An introduction* (London 1992) 41 f., deal with this ‘orchard of considerable size’ under ‘Other fruit trees’.

⁵⁴ Barthes (n. 49) 129, 132. Does Laertes’ sign open dendrochronology?

⁵⁵ For the *Odyssey*’s poetic and ethic of accumulative ‘hoarding’ cf. P. Pucci, ‘The proem of the *Odyssey*’, *Arethusa* 15 (1982) 51. Alcinous’ Eden, cf. Falkner (n.2) 45. See Pugh (n.49) 49, 96 f. on Macclary’s letter about the Rousham kitchen-garden as the plethora of cornucopia turning into ever more detailed statistics and stock-taking, from effusion to steward’s accountancy, and D.E. Wayne, *Penshurst. The semiotics of place and the poetics of history* (London 1984) 117 on Jonson’s shift of emphasis from the Penshurst garden ‘to the greater utilitarian value of the orchards’.

⁵⁶ A.J. Greimas and J. Fontanille, *The semiotics of passions. From states of affairs to states of feelings* (Minnesota 1993) 215.

⁵⁷ Cf. Connerton (n.26) 11, ‘A tradition of behaviour is unavoidably knowledge of detail.’ On the ‘mercantile mind’ and its meticulous recording of numbers that ‘serves to signify an ideology and mark an identity’, see R. Hodge, *Literature as discourse. Textual strategies in English and history* (Cambridge 1990) 93 f., analysing the social stylistics in *Advice to a young tradesman*, by B. Franklin—‘a printer as well as author, and his firm won the

Odyssey, too, by what it counts and how it counts it: crew (a score for a ship; 52 for a Phaeacian/oceanic trip), ship's provisions, shipmates lost and days logged; the men counted into base-camp and exploring parties, seals on the shore, head of herd rustled, maids gone to the bad ... And, treasure-gifts galore, the sides tabulated for the final reckoning, the showdown.

IV.2 The framing scene for the sign of the trees has just shown that, if father taught son to count their fruit-tree blessings, then Laertian discourse had long been used to forego them for counting the years he had been deprived of the fruit of his body, and of news of him: *πόστον δὴ ἔτος ἐστὶν ὅτε ... τόδε δὴ πέμπτον ἔτος ἐστὶν, / ἔξ οὗ ..., ἤλυθον εἰκοστῶ ἔτει ...* (288, 309 f., 322). This entirely sums up what Laertes has become. Odysseus'—and *Odyssey's*—discourse has for its part foregone them for counting up the proceeds of *xenia*, the *δῶρα ... μυρία* which he dreamed up, from himself to himself, when foiling father, in the performance of enumeration we already examined as the son's choice of self-ish person-to-be: '7 talents + 1, 12 + *ditto, ditto, ditto*; in addition: x 4' (283; 274-9). The pair will turn, hurriedly, from the signs' no-time-to-lose précis of profusion—the Scar's bounty of *ἀγλαὰ δῶρα* from Autolycus (xix 412, 460) and the 113 Trees, in just 5 + 9 hexameters—, to face the immediate crisis with a snap dead-reckoning of the sides: *τέσσαρες ἀμφ' Ὀδυσσοῦ ἔξ δ' υἱεῖς οἱ Δολιχιοῦ / ἐν δ' ἄρα Λαέρτης Δολιχίος τ'*: with the supplement of Mentor/Athene, a baker's dozen. They arm to face Ithaca, where back in the palace '4 shields, 8 spears and 4 helmets' had been counted out of the armoury for the then four fighters, to fight the *ἀριθμός* of (unarmed) suitors that Telemachus had reckoned were too many for just the pair of his father and himself: 'not just a ten or score of 'em, but much more: 52 (Dulichians) + 6 valets; 24 (Same); 20 (Zacynthus); 12 (Ithaca); 1 herald; 1 bard; 2 attendants: i.e. 108 + 10 non-combatant extras' (497 f.; 502 f.; xxii 110 f.; xvi 244 ff.).⁵⁸ But we shall scarcely lose sight—with them—of what we have been shown and learned to expect from the epic about what we and Odysseus think he has brought back home.

A wealth of experiences to recount, tales of much-endurance matched by much-improvisation, scrapes with their escapes, persistence through elasticities: *πολύ- ... πολλά / ... / πολλῶν ... / πολλά ... κτλ.* (i 1-4).⁵⁹ It is a question, a question from the sign of the trees, whether we, Odysseus and/or Laertes, are to regard Trees as the matrix for Odysseus' career—of double-or-quits daring, rolling for the millions; or whether any of us sees Laertes' model as eventually discarded as anti-model in the face of the vagrant/adventurer's shiftless experience, or as more or less congenitally antipathic to Odysseus' conception of *κομιδή*, his desire.

IV.3 For we have been encouraged throughout the poem to look hard at treasure and evaluate responses to it as we go—for the characters and for what they make of us. The great tableau for the parade of counting-house counting-out of material riches is Telemachus' visit to Menelaus' palace: 'bronze, gold, amber, silver, ivory—but no joy in lording this wealth'; '2 baths, 2 cauldrons, 10 talents, silver and gold gifts picked up in Egypt'; and the proposition to buy the boy with a shower of '3 horses, plus chariot, and a cup—declined with Ithacan sense and toned down to a more modest mixing-bowl, silver plus gilding' (iv 72 f., 93; iv 128 ff.; iv 590 ff., 600

first contract to print money for the state of Philadelphia'. On the articulation of the self in collecting, cf. S. Stewart, *On longing. Narratives of the miniature, the gigantic, the souvenir, the collection* (Duke 1993) esp. 162 f., 'Ironically ... the fetishist's impulse toward accumulation and privacy, hoarding and the secret, serves both to give integrity to the self and at the same time to overload the self with signification.'

⁵⁸ For the count, cf. D. Matz, *Ancient world lists and numbers. Numerical phrases and rosters in the Graeco-Roman civilizations* (London 1995) esp. 199, for 108 Suitors.

⁵⁹ See the remarkable work on this in Pucci (n.17) *passim*, and cf. Pucci (n.58) 55 ff., Peradotto (n.3) 115 ff.

ff., 615 f.). This treasury talk is a world away from the vision that that soiled lord of the soil Eumaeus, with his '12 sties @ 50 sows each + 360 boars; 4 guard-dogs', gives stranger Odysseus of Odysseus' riches, through Ithacan lenses: 'In toto worth a score of properties. On t' mainland: Cattle: 12 herds. *Item* Flocks: *ditto*. *Item* Pigs: *ditto*. *Item* Goats: *ditto*. On Ithaca: Goats: 11 herds. *Add*: Eumaeus pigs' (xiv 14 ff.; xiv 98 ff.).

If we have learned to read Telemachus as Laertes' inverse and Eumaeus as Laertes' parodic *alter ego*,⁶⁰ they help to point up the mind-print Odysseus leaves in the series of enumerations of his own proceeds through the poem: '7 talents gold + 1 mixing-bowl + 12 amphorae wine' to undo Cyclops; the imaginary, or rather fictionalized, treasures the stranger Odysseus invents for himself, first with Eumaeus, 'bronze, gold, much-worked iron, enough for a somebody and his heirs unto the 10th generation', then with Penelope: 'enough for a man and his heirs unto the 10th generation', and finally with Laertes: '7 talents gold, solid-silver mixing-bowl, 1 doz. each robes, rugs, cloaks, tunics; plus 4 jennies' (xiii 215 ff.; xiv 324 f.; xix 293 ff.; xxiv 275 ff.). Anything Odysseus 'brings' with him from his travels (his κομιδή) is destined to join (that is: add to and alter the character of) his old Ithacan treasures in the safe back home with Penelope, 'bronze, gold, iron', matched against 'bow, quiver, arrows'; these arms carry Odysseus' identity as well as his salvation in the fight to come, for they are gift proceeds which bring their tale with them, worth 12 rustled mares from Lacedaemon, or 300 Ithacan sheep, back when Odysseus proved himself a fitting hunter-warrior ephebic comrade to Iphitus, leaving home παιδνδς έών, just as in the sign of the trees, and returning an adolescent, ready to join the big boys where even an Iphitus would lose his life for these selfsame mares. The bow was, and proves still, a formative influence—once the legacy of a father to a son, Eurytus' to Iphitus, and, formerly reserved for use on his home ground, kept in safe Ithacan storage pending the hero's return, like Laertes' trees (xxi 10; 11; 21 ~ xxiv 338; xxi 32 f.).

In Mentès/Athene's under-cover exchanges with Telemachus we may come close to the Odyssean goddess's own construal of wealth. It seems she would downgrade preciousness furnished by metals beside mettle burnished by fighting-gear, for s/he tells the boy how 'father gave Odysseus the poison to tip his arrows—they were that close' and when she declines his offer of a treasure-δώρον, in return for unforgettable counsel, ώς τε πατήρ φ παιδί, on the grounds that s/he's 'in a hurry' and happy to collect 'on the return journey', we ourselves can only resolve not to forget to await the moment for that reciprocal exchange to be paid off: δώρον δ' όττι κέ μοι δοϋναι φίλον ήτορ άνώγη | ... καί μάλα καλόν έλών· σοί δ' άξιον έσται άμοιβής. / (i 264; 308, 311, 315-18). These last words, spoken at take-off, set up a hermeneutic for reading the poem. Ask what Athene 'brings back' with her (= κομιδή), for Telemachus, whether as Mentès, Mentor, or Zeus' daughter, in the άμοιβή she presides over to the very end of the narrative. The narrative of narrative as exchange, careful, generational exchange.

We must especially have been comparing along the way Odysseus' own scheme of values, as captured in his reflex paranoia on the unknown beach of Ithaca over his haul of Phaeacian goodies—'13 robes + 13 tunics + 13 talents gold, from 13 royal contributors; add Euryalus' bronze-silver-ivory sword, Alcinous' gold chalice, and Arete's mantle-&-tunic twinset'—'A curse on those wicked Phaeacian fibbers! Hold on, let's tot up the stuff—/ they may have done a bunk with something of mine in their ship's great big hatches' (άλλ' άγε δή τά χρήματ' άριθμήσω

⁶⁰ Cf. Falkner (n.2) 53; e.g. xvi 17 ff., Eumaeus greets Telemachus 'like a father an only son come home from abroad in the tenth year'. The story of Eumaeus' displacement, τυτθός έών, from home (xv 381) shows up deracination as the limit-condition of the Laertiads: cf. Menelaus' uncomprehending or challenging proposition that he 'would have transplanted Odysseus and his family from Ithaca to some fine city in Argos' (iv 175 f.) and the notice that those phantastical 'Phaeacians had upped and migrated to their new land' (vi 4 ff.).

...). Accordingly, he totted up ‘the exquisite tripods, cauldrons, gold and fine robes—and found nothing missing’ and then, deaf to Athene/Ithacan shepherd’s generous catalogue of the riches of Ithacan ecology, invented a story centred on explaining his dereliction on the beach plus all the loot, incidentally painting himself a murderous desperado (no prey for a shepherd), before taking up Athene’s suggestion that he ‘hide the stuff ..., stick the stuff right this second in the back of the magic cave so it’ll stay safe and they can get on and work out the best plan’: Odysseus duly fetched it all inside, ‘gold and bronze and robes. Gifts made in Phaeacia’. For Odysseus, these gifts, ‘the gold, bronze and robes, more than he ever could have lifted from Troy’ promised for him by Athene, are the natural climax to his telling of the *Odyssey*, told in bed to Penelope, ‘... sent him home on board ship, plus bronze, gold and plenty of robes for giftsssszzzz ...’ (viii 390 ff., 403 ff., 430 ff, 441; xiii 215 f., 217 f., 242 ff., 258, 262, 273, 283; 259-70; 304 ff., 362 ff., 367 ff.; v 38 f; xxiii 231 f.; 342: τοῦτ’ ἄρα δεύτατον εἶπεν ἔπος, ὅτε οἱ γλυκὺς ὕπνος ...). Hidden in Odyssean exclusivity, within the coffer specially provided by Arete for this engrossing treasure, locked by Odysseus with his super-canny combination-knot learned from Witch Circe, under the owlish eye of Athene, the narrative displays this secret as the badge of Odyssean *metis*. The *man’s* choice of iconized fetish—as we say, his ‘ship come in’.

IV.4 In this spirit, we should scrutinize the final lines of the sign of the trees, what they say but also what they *do*, by being the last word and gloss on what has up to this point been the display of an objectivised desire, and so attested an unvarnished desire for objectivisation. Here the vines named-and-promised by Laertes are dwelt on—for a moment of effulgence—in lyrical rapture on the promise of a seasonal abundance of grapes: ‘each (row of) vines was productive the vintage long (διὰ τρύγος), the bunches on them are at every single stage up here, whenever the seasons of Zeus’ sky weighed them down to the ground from on high’ (342-4).

Odysseus’ relating of his story could, after all, prove confluent with his father’s hope for how he should turn out to think, or perhaps his retelling of the story is to work its spell on him as it gets back, past the ‘careless-ness’ of his accountancy, to retrieve the authentic empathy programmed into the original adventure by its designer, Laertes. Readers very likely recall stranger Odysseus’ first words to Penelope, ‘following a teasing—or hinting—refusal to discuss his own identity’, the famous Reverse Simile in which he ‘compar(es) her fame to that of a just and pious king’, who ‘upholds justice, and the black earth bears wheat and barley, and the trees are heavy with fruit, / the flocks reproduce secure (‘rooted-in-the-ground’) ... etc.’ (βρίθησι δὲ δένδρεα καρπῶ / τίκτη δ’ ἔμπεδα μῆλα ... κτλ.).⁶¹ If the poem has shaped its narration into something resembling *Hora*, the flowing together of many separate rhythms into a single rhythm, and [if] the discovery of this principle enables Odysseus to return to his place at the only possible and right moment’,⁶² then Laertes’ trees may be claiming a very special status for horticulture’s particular set of inflections to the ordering of nature as a master-trope shaping

⁶¹ H. Foley, “Reverse similes” and sex roles in the *Odyssey*, in *Women in the ancient world. The Arethusa papers*, J. Peradotto and J. Sullivan (eds.) (SUNY 1984) 63 f., 19.112 f.

⁶² N. Austin, *Archery at the dark of the moon* (Berkeley 1975) 8. The Narrative is seeded all through with this message: the years go round and the right year arrives, the year went by at Circe’s, the seasons turned round, months wasted away, the days were long, the fourth year came for Penelope’s ruse and the seasons came, the months wasted away and many days were passed; rich Libya is where ewes produce x 3 *p.a.*—and milk the year round, Ithaca has every kind of timber and there is water the year round, Eurymachus’s wages for the beggar would guarantee food the year round... (i 16; x 467 ff.; xix 152 f., xxiv 142 f.; iv 85 ff.; xiii 246 f.; xviii 360). The fruit-trees relate to the normative attention in the poem to both the general conception of the generation as the proper structuring principle for society (C. Segal, ‘The Phaeacians and the symbolism of Odysseus’ return’, *Arion* 1 (1962) 47) and to topical instances of this, as in the correct temporal placing of couples within their generations (M. Suzuki, *Metamorphoses of Helen. Authority. difference and the epic* (Cornell 1989) 87 f.).

the *Odyssey*'s thinking 'from the beginning'. The specialized lexis διατρύγιος signifies expertise in tending the vintage through to its ultimate garnering and embodies in language the habit of habitual devotion which shapes the gardener's tender-ness into a perpetual life at home: in this one word, held up for Odysseus and us to savour as he speaks it by its framing in this critical moment of re-citation of his lesson for life as the word (which 'must have been') used by Laertes, used by a Laertes, finally recognized by Odysseus as the value of the anti-mercantile ideology of paternal rootedness.⁶³ Son and father are buttoned together by this word they now come to share; desire in the son is trained, now if never before, the way father had in (his tree-lined) mind—or so, at least, the performance ends by—parrotting? διατρύγιος, a world in a word.⁶⁴

IV.5 Narrative focalization between Odysseus and Laertes may, as always, threaten the textual moment with etiolated localization and dull the edge of the framing of this scene within its episode, but the numb/ers of the trees are not to be discounted: '13 + 10, 40; 50 later', remembers Odysseus—but in what kind of counting? For instance, did it survive when Pope re(-)counted '/ Twelve ... / And ten ... Full fifty ...; and many a row / of various vines'?, or does he reveal his care-lessness.⁶⁵ Don't the actual numbers in the sign of the trees deserve to be examined with great care, in the form they attract: exactitude,—with as much care as that knot on Odysseus' casket of treasure?

References to the passage in the scholarship and in this essay have indicated some version of ostensive identification here, as the point and message of the sign of the trees and its retailing under and among 'the trees themselves'.⁶⁶ Numbers are standardly seen as 'monosemic':⁶⁷ did Laertes' and does Odysseus' enumeration close the gaps between signifiers and signifieds,⁶⁸ welding minds-to-language-to-reality so that 'showing' was/is 'telling' was/is 'thinking' (ἀριφραδέξ, 329, φράσαι, 331, πέφραδ', 346, φρένα, 349, 353, φρεσί, 357)? If scar and trees are invested with this force by the will of Odysseus to reach his father, so that to aver self-presence he mimes bodily commitment in the 'handedness' of the act of counting, in his insistent deixis, and in the remembered walk in the wake of his father across the very scene of utterance, then we can read his—their—numbers as connoting a monological evidentiality, a self-identical

⁶³ The olive, *arbos... factura nepotibus umbram* (Virg. *Georg.* ii 57 f.), is—perennially—the Greek paradigm of peasant temporality, the nostalgia of 'the "natural wisdom" of traditional practices', where 'even into their old age they continued to plant olive trees ... without considering costs and returns. They knew that they would die and that *they should leave the earth in good order for those that came after them*, perhaps simply for the earth itself ...' (Castoriadis in J. Tomlinson, *Cultural imperialism* (London 1991) 160. My emphasis.). Cf. D. Davies, 'The evocative symbolism of trees', in Cosgrove and Daniels (n.49) 34, 'Practical symbolism'. Consider the modelling in the *Odyssey*'s hyperbole for Odysseus' fantasised treasures, 'enough even to the 10th generation' (xiv 325 f., xix 294 f.).

⁶⁴ For discussion of the technical gloss, a *hapax* and the solitary Homeric compound adjective in 'δτα-', διατρύγιος, cf. Richter (n.53) 145 f., J. Russo, M. Fernandez-Galiano, A. Heubeck, *A commentary on Homer's Odyssey. Volume III. Books XVII-XXIV* (Oxford 1992) 399, n. ad loc.

⁶⁵ A. Pope, *The Odyssey of Homer* (London 1903) 374. Why the '30 + 22 + 8 + 1' of Calvino's *Baron in the trees*, (n. 7) Cosimo, Jr.?

⁶⁶ E.g. Isager and Skydsgaard (n.53) 41, 'It is only when the hero is able to *recount* the number of trees given to him by his father when he was a child that Laertes acknowledges his identity. These are 13 pear trees, 10 apples, 40 figs and 50 rows of vine—in other words an orchard of considerable size laid out far from the built-up area.' (My emphasis).

⁶⁷ Todorov (n.21) 102 f. Cf. Spinks (n.2) 38, 'Numbers are the most semantically neutral of signs; their semantic carrying capacity is seen as limited to some narrow concept of amount, number or quantity. Mathematics prides itself on its precision, specificity and semantic monovalence in signs, and the history of numbering suggests such an object-centred origin since numbering records were usually inventories.'

⁶⁸ To use another idiom, does knowledge by acquaintance fuse here with knowledge by description—where parallel lines meet? Cf. G. McCulloch, *The game of the name* (Oxford 1989) 231.

prestation.⁶⁹ The extrusion of *metis* from these numbers, the purity of their denotation, serves to exemplify determinacy, to connote the surety of transmission which they guarantee.

Now some numbers are going to serve such purposes better than others. '13', we could say, is in Greek a pretty determinate number, a good start to ostension. 'Here are these unique pear-trees', there are thirteen of them, not twelve, not Pope's dozen, not ten-or-so, but—using these fingers to point to, and the same digits to check off, the count on these hands—'13 pear-trees', no more nor less—not a partridge in sight. First of Homeric Greek's line of numbers beyond ten to 'spell out' what it is made of, 'three-and-ten', and so in a sense a number without a name: a number which is not *called* anything, thirteen is, however, a poor textual trace for miming determinacy, as the succeeding 'ten apple' at once demonstrates.⁷⁰ For see what happens when chiasmus between / ὄγγνας ... μηλέας / makes you read: ... τρεῖς καὶ δέκα καὶ δέκα Not, that is, '13 + 10', but '3 + 10 + 10'. If this still ties the performance to a circum-ambulatory double-handed ostension, then it is unlikely that the match of / ὄγγνας ... μηλέας / with συκέας τεσσαράκοντ': 'fig 40', can leave any such sense in play, as those '10s' fall away from the rhythmic tapping of finger-tips in handfuls and into 'a rough dozen or two, two score; and, next, half a ton, lots, plenty ...'. This is the progressive reassurance of 'plenty'—enough in each bunch to mean that none of the species will die out, on even the worst-case projections, none, that is, of the species named here, so by extension none of the others either.⁷¹

In any case, some degree of slippage from the purposed ostensive itemization must turn us instead to the categorically different topic of promissory profusion, once we arrive at the halt and shift which comes with ὄρχους ... / ... πεντήκοντα, 'vines, in rows, 50', where the '50' matches the preceding verse's '40' in metrical *sedes*, just as the 'fig' had aped its preceding and rhyming 'pear', and the sense of '3 (and 10)' leading to the '4' of '40' and the '5' of '50' combines with the doubling of '(3 and) 10' 'and 10' which is doubled in '(4)-ty' and '(5)-ty', and redoubled in μοι ... μοι and δῶκας ... δώσειν (340 ff.). Whatever Odysseus and/or Laertes began and begin to count alters through the counting and the counting alters along with it. And this could be exactly what counts as this sign of the trees, what counts in the sign, what it signifies and how it and this signify.

IV.5 To return to the Scar for one more missing moment, we may now attend to the particular force of determinacy which its signification as the signature of Odysseus' bodily identity stands for and indeed points to: οὐλήν μὲν πρῶτον τήνδε φράσαι ὀφθαλμοῖσι (331). For by contrast, the Trees smuggle in with a display of determinacy, which has them appear to map the itinerant adventurer's body directly onto his origin and destination in the homeland-and-fatherland, a complementary, or indeed supplementary, perhaps supplanting, purpose. They work with and through their determinacy, undoing it and enacting a different drama of signification

⁶⁹ Handedness: Spinks (n.2) 31. Deixis: ἐνθάδ', (Laertes), answered by: τήνδε ... δεῦρο ... ἐνθα, 331, 335, 343. Walk: διὰ δ' αὐτῶν / ἰκνεύμεσθα, 338 f.

⁷⁰ For pioneering in the 'anthropology of numbers', see T. Siebers, *Morals and stories* (Columbia 1992) 208 f., T. Crump, *The anthropology of numbers* (Cambridge 1992). On world mapping, tool usage, etc., cf. Spinks (n.2) 31. For nameless numbers, cf. 13 in German, either 13—or from another point of view 14—in English, 17 in French or Italian, and 18 in Latin.

⁷¹ Remember the longer list of species in 246 f. This '13' is an *hapax* in the *Odyssey* (A '13th day, so sail', xix 202, Alcinous 'a 13th royal', viii 391 only; cf. '13's in *Iliad* v 387 (months hard labour), x 495 and 561 (baker's dozen of victims) only). There are a dozen '10's in the *Odyssey*, but this '40' is another *hapax* (There are just the 9 '40's of ships in the *Iliad's Catalogue*.) '50's in the *Odyssey* are 'maids', vii 103, xxii 421, 'sheep' and 'droves of pigs', xii 130, xiv 15, 'companies of men', xx 49, or these 'vines, rows of vines' (And there are '52' Phaeacian rowers, viii 35, 48, and '52' Dulichian Suitors, xvi 247; *Iliad* has sixteen, or so, '50's-or-so'.)

through their shifting away from targeting and tabulation, itemization and appropriation, and towards a round(ing)-up of the blessings of life-before-and-after-epic.

Laertes himself could have smuggled in a trajectory for 'his' sign for his son, to lead as if without a seam from what the eye could see, the voice breathe on and the mind's 'I' realize, with scarcely a flicker, just barely a pause, on toward an infinite myriad of riches, mimed by his son's re-run as perhaps by himself in the sign's premiere, in the multiplier-effect that the choice of ὄρχοι for 'vines' / 'rows of vines'⁷² imports into the eldorado he handed his son's image-repertoire: where once ran each vine, his promise envisaged, increase would produce a whole row, as the 'two-dimensions' of the count of '3 + 10 + 10 + 40 + 50' yielded in the exposition to the ratio, or projection, of a 'three-dimensional' simulation of bounty. The vigorous growth of the fructuous vine completes what has become a pledge of exponential proliferation: everything coming up roses ...

As the father took his neophyte round, the boy mimicked this mapping of future plenty in a call-and-response game which wired up the lad's body and tongue to the ancestral circuitry: the meaning is not in the sign, but in the 'bodily practices' that bring the sign's signification to fruition, for 'habit is a knowledge and a remembering in the hands and the body; and in the cultivation of habit it is our body which "understands"'. Laertes' programme is to cultivate a habit, the habit of cultivation, cultivation as habituation, the process of enculturation, acculturation as processing. 'What has to be learned is not an abstract idea, or a set of tricks, nor even a ritual, but a concrete, coherent manner of living in all its intricateness.'⁷³ In the repeating of the peripatetic lesson, it now comes to fruition—the lesson in fructification itself fructifies.

IV.6 Laertes' trees are solidly and uncontroversially ἔμπειρα; what is at stake is how, quite, they may be held to be ἀριφραδέη. The 'game' that Laertes talked and walked into his son played 'to-and-fro' with the desire of the child, teaching him a place to be in the world, the world as a place to be, the world-to-be as his ... bowl of cherries. Odysseus must take it all 'on trust' from Laertes, from the very counting to the life-sign, from Laertes who had counted up every last tree,—this one here now, then that one there ...,—that a tally would confirm what he affirmed: '13 of this sort, 10 of those, 40 of the other—and 50 of these, later'. 'One inescapable point is that we take a great deal on trust about how the world is and has been, and imbibing all this is at the same time our basic training in the use of many of the natural names and other words we are familiar with.'⁷⁴ Thus the 'inferential walk' around the nursery served as an initiation marking an 'entry to language' and broadened or superseded the scar's personal baptism. As the slip of a lad repeatedly 'asked for' each—(blank), he was rewarded with the name of that kind of—(thing); thus the 'pear-trees' were, so to say, his even as he learned what to ask for, what and which they were: he had, but had not, asked for them; he had learned the names of each of the trees, these trees, and cumulatively gained from his synopsis of the variety of species in the category of 'tree', or 'fruit-tree', or 'food-source', the makings of a classificatory paradigm; he had acquired the trees and knowledge of trees, or carpology, as part of his repertoire for life

⁷² Cf. Richter (n.53), 131. When Hardy's Tess says 'What's the use of learning that I am one of a long row only...?' (see Ragussis (n.43) 179), the answer may take the form of pondering the idea of the 'row' in arboriculture, where even the individual identity of a tree depends, as particularly for the pear which quickly degenerates into scrub, on cultivation by a Laertian hoeing and digging, where the rows ordain them, make them, simultaneously, countable and rewardingly fruitful. See J.C. Brown, *Let me enjoy the earth. Thomas Hardy and nature* (London 1992) esp. 160-8 on Hardy's image-repertoire around 'the tree'.

⁷³ Connerton (n.26) 72-104, 'Bodily practices'; Oakeshott, *cit. ibid.*, 11.

⁷⁴ McCulloch (n.67) 267. Cf. Ragussis, (n.43) 198 ff., Proust on childhood as 'the age in which one believes one gives a thing real existence by giving it a name'.

as well as his livelihood and portion in life. But he was all along being coopted, too, into a system of values and colonized by a father's ruse for transmitting a life-plot through his son's synapses. That turn up the garden path was to implant an encephalogram of ideology: 'The gift a father gives his son is life, and the right to give life in turn to his son.'⁷⁵

V. C.F. LINNÉ

*A very distinguished-looking gentleman ... explained that a woman of great wealth had ... left a very wonderful estate to be used as a public park ... The fine feature of this park was the large number of splendid trees of many varieties that grew in it, and his difficulty was to label those trees. ... First one and then another offered suggestions. These embodied such ideas as the obvious importance of using the common name of the tree as well as its scientific name; including information as to its value for lumber, some advice on reforestation. and various other items of interest. Some one suggested setting up a shrine under each tree with a leaf, flower, seed, or some other characteristic feature. Another thought the labelling could be used as a game, each player (visitor) to be directed from one tree to another of the same species by an arrow. And so on and so on. After about two hours Dr. Wissler rapped on the table and said: 'Ladies and gentlemen, it is now ten-thirty, and unless some one has a very important question to ask ...' This brought the gentleman ... to his feet again. He asked for just a moment more in order that he might express his great appreciation of the very interesting discussion he had just listened to. But, he added, there was still one question he would like to ask if permitted, and, as no one objected, he said: 'How shall I label my trees?'*⁷⁶

VI The particular clarification which Scarification lends the Trees may now come into focus. Both signs concern nomination. Together they demonstrate how much is entrusted to the 'nomen-clatter' of language. 'Because the constative is also performative, it too produces what it names' ... 'That the object class has a name ... does signify that it is an object that plays a defined or established cultural role. That it has a name means it is a sort of thing'.⁷⁷ Thus, as we have seen, when Odysseus tells the story of Autolycus' baptism of himself and the scary vindication of the investment in him, implicitly he names himself, whereas when Odysseus tells the story of Laertes' induction of himself into his/their garden of delights, in his recounting he explicitly 'names the trees' which Laertes had once 'named-and-given or promised' (ὠνόμασας ... ὀνόμηνας, 339, 341), in the one word that speaks of 'naming' as, at once, 'empowering-through language'.⁷⁸ The signs feature and spotlight, as well as similarities, the differences between naming one of 'us' (for the *Odyssey* billed as '[a] man'), and naming a tree, or fruit-tree, or food-source, and the difference these differences make to us through the people we encounter and the particular world(s) of things we inhabit, and *vice versa*.

⁷⁵ Wender (n.29) 61 f. Cf. Ragussis (n.43) 244, 'The study of personal naming reveals the ways in which we use persons to construct our own allegories of meaning.'

⁷⁶ C.E. Cummings, 'Labeling—Help yourself', in 'East is East and West is West (Some observations on the World's Fairs of 1939 by one whose main interest is in museums)' *Bulletin of Buffalo Society of Natural Science* 20 (1940) 236 f. Mary Beard gave me this gem.

⁷⁷ S. Petrey, *Speech acts and literary theory* (London 1990) 104; M. Baxandall, 'Exhibiting intention: some preconditions of the visual display of culturally purposeful objects', in *Exhibiting cultures. The poetics and politics of museum display*, I. Karp and D. Lavine (eds.) (London 1991) 35. Cf. Peradotto (n.3), 'Chapter 6: *Outis*: The noman-clature of the self', and esp. 96 ff., along with McCulloch (n.67) and Ragussis (n.43), particularly helpful accounts of philosophical and literary theorizing through the name and naming.

⁷⁸ 'Names the trees': Whitman (n.18) 305. On Homeric use of ὀνομαίνω/ὀνομάζω, cf. Erbse (n.48) 214 f., Wender (n.29) 49. Peradotto (n.3) did not consider this (sort of) passage and so missed the all-important borderlands of 'naming', where its conceptualization is very likely most strikingly contested. Commentary must interpose glossatory 'sense' in its promise to specify 'meaning': '339. ὀνομασας: 'named, identified by species' ... 340-1: ... **onomênas**: ... lacks close parallels in epic. ... The related onomazô is so used with the sense of 'specify' ... so that we are led to ... understand the meaning 'promise'.' (Russo, Fernández-Galiano, Heubeck (n.63) 399, *nn. ad locc.*)

V.2 Homeric, and (most) other trees have, as yet, had no ‘proper name(s)’: ‘Pear, son of pear, born and raised on Ithaca’, ‘Poirot’, ‘Blossom’—except as clusters and clumps considered as collectives, ‘Lime Grove’, ‘Fig Lane’.⁷⁹ Instead, the name of the tree names the species and naming a tree does not individuate a particular tree. Where it may matter to us that a person’s name does not enable us to recognize them, we may often speak of trees without bothering much over what is particular to one tree against others.⁸⁰ Most of us don’t make a habit of allowing a tree an individualized biography, let (al)one make its name. Rather, ‘we’ standardly take the tree to exemplify those concrete nouns, the names of physical objects, which have so ubiquitously featured in accounts as the origin (*lege*: paradigm) of language itself.⁸¹

And so we may find ourselves (t)reading in Odysseus/Laertes’ tracks that lead through the orchard, trying out this introduction to the imperatives of linguistic appellation through the matrix of the fruit-trees, learning the place of the person defined against the environment and envisaging how the world and people look when defined through the model used on the orchard. On the one hand, the gardener can but see that people are in each other’s eyes much more like trees, they (must?) treat one an(d)other the way they treat trees, than they may recognize; and on the other, a misplaced cult and cultivation of the fame of the name can appear from the allotment, from the sidelines, to risk being rooted in over-insistence on the distinctiveness of the proper name as the property of a person.

V.3 For the Trees can, once more, redress the import of the Scar: all along, the *Odyssey* has presented its attention to the name in the World of Odysseus, to naming and to making a name, as the problematic of the human encounter with humanity, so many strangers meeting-and resisting each other, telling (of) signs-and-lies so as to treat and be treated by others as more or less than trees, more or less in the way of a gardener’s fruit-trees, yet forever pushing their claims to be special, to be Somebody, to be, ultimately, the *man*. Thus, a person’s ‘name’ may be both the least informative, opaque, and blank thing about them, or the most important, intractable and delicate. The *Odyssey* parades episode after episode where a person’s name is opened seamlessly into the wider field of designations which give them meaning. ‘A person’s source includes parentage, ancestry, race, and birth-place, and epic language sometimes uses the same vocabulary for all these. *Genos*, for example, can refer to paternity, to line of descent, and

⁷⁹ The naming of such may encapsulate and promote a particular attitude toward trees and the politics it imports onto at least the lips of those who must use the label to lead their lives, e.g. Daniels (n.49) 47 ff., ‘Planting and patriotism’: ‘New plantations were named after Nelson and other victorious British admirals’. The tree there was definitively labelled: Timber, for the Marine.

⁸⁰ For the particular/general issue in the *Game of the name*, cf. Ragussis (n.43) 211. Cf. T. Moore and C. Carling, *The limitations of language* (Basingstoke 1988) 93 f., on ‘the assumption that the similarities between individual apples outweigh their differences’; 21-3, for ‘the case of the Douglas fir—or was it a Scots pine?—... meant to be a simple case of language anchored in the external, physical world. ... But even this was not really a simple case. ... How much more room for uncertainty, for differing judgements when it is the intangible, invisible, immaterial we want to talk about. (—‘As long as we are all standing looking at the tree, it is unlikely to have any consequence that we call it a Douglas fir and he calls it a Scots pine.’—) Each of us must experience even the world around us differently, though fortunately the differences between us are often insignificant. As for the inner, private worlds, there each of us is on our own—which is not to say we do not share many of our hopes and fears and fantasies with others.’ The *Odyssey*—

⁸¹ E.g. J.T. Irwin, *American hieroglyphics. The symbol of the Egyptian hieroglyphics in the American Renaissance* (Yale 1980) 32 f. But cf. K. Hamsun, *Pan* (London 1974) 90 f., ‘You good forest, my home, God’s peace, shall I tell you from my heart ... I stop, turn in all directions and, weeping, call birds, trees, stones, grass and ants by name, I look about and name them each in turn.’ Compare Provost Bateson’s surprise, Moore and Carling (n.79) 87, on ‘a graduate who had come to know a flock of Bewick swans so well she claimed she could identify around 450 of them individually. She had given them all names. ... She expressed surprise ... that anyone should have doubted her ability since most people can recognise a large number of human faces’.

to place of birth.’⁸²

What cannot be decided, but what is displayed as the undecidable, in the sign of the Trees may be what we can make of the sharing of this same vocabulary, the tale of the garden tour, between two minds which are both being joined by their iteration of it and being differentiated by their relation to its repetition, the telling of the garden excursion.⁸³ When this re-telling is told to us, the ‘naming of the (fruit-)trees’ operates at a cluster of levels, and our reading positions us around the differences therein. These trees are here, to live up to the word-bond, as promised, to the very last plant: ἔκαστα, ... ἔκαστα, ... ἔκαστος (337, 339, 342). But we need not point to the trees above and around—the speech-act of the patrimonial promise is what we should heed. In any case, father did not point to any vines in the first place, but promised them for a future perfect where they might then be counted up. The point of the grapes, at least, was to image what might be counted on in the long run, so counting them up would now be about the fulfilment of promise, not about empirical verification of factual details. So ‘trees, as fixed elements on a piece of land, serve as the land’s identifying markers, and the possession of knowledge concerning them itself marks the son as their owner.’⁸⁴ In the trade in meaning between the episode and the epic, the scenes and the episode, between the figures of father and son and their ‘then’ and their ‘now’, the poem delivers plentiful returns in its play with(in) ideological attitudes to life-values, expressed both through language and through things.

V.4 The fruitarian can find the details deserving the unlimited care of attention. The naming of species may spell a mere list, sufficient exemplification, of Ithaca-through-her-flora, or of the compound profits accruing to the entrepreneurial cropper; but the gardener could see a lesson, of gladdening bounty, or of meaningful bio-diversity, in the flow of pomiferous pear-and-apple enclosing their line, in contrast with the succulent fig that follows, before, a departure from the rest, the trailer vine. The lyrical expatiation on the racemiferous vine, as the ‘detail’ (ἔκαστ-) betokens a care for the special aspects of an environment that the gardener belongs to as much as it belongs to him. After the hard- and the fleshy-fruits, those σταφυλαί (343) incarnate a maximal climax of proliferating abundance; prizing this image-repertoire could breed a person who, just maybe, would cultivate clustering on the social, familial, level, too? Such an attitude to the working of language as this dendrolatry, could hardly be further from the active intervention into language represented by the inventive improvisation of Autolycaean baptism. The *Scar*; the *Trees*.

Neither scar- nor tree-sign is done the honour of a half-decent telling; both are, as we saw, bound by a number of pressures and pretexts to be ‘rush-jobs’. Their allusive mentioning veils the meeting of minds between father and son from the reader, so that, for example, we may not *decide* whether Odysseus displays his *metis*, whether he attributes it to Laertes, bestows it on or, it may be, withholds it from him, by laying it aside as in this instance inapposite; if we expect a show of likemindedness between father and only-begotten son, then we must look into the marked brachylogy of these all-too-momentary pieces of précis and be prepared to amplify the two parties’ agreement to accelerate past the business of recognition into the motivation of

⁸² A. Webber, ‘The hero tells his name. Formula and variation in the Phaeacian episode of the *Odyssey*’, *TAPhA* 119 (1989) esp. 7. The regular naming of Odysseus by patronym has Laertes repeatedly ‘name’ his son for himself, part of the ‘proper name’ which makes and marks out the name as proper, cf. Goldhill (n.3) 19.

⁸³ Murnaghan (n.46) 31 has Laertes give his ‘dependant ... only a token portion of his inheritance’—a pro-portion of his portion. By this reasoning, Odysseus smuggles in notice to his father that he had understood or come to understand the attempt to tie him to the farm with a ‘some now, some later’ routine. This is to glimpse resistance through a ‘realist’ child’s ‘I’ with a vengeance—one who would presumably go on to mimic father’s rose-tinted promises of seasons of mellow fruitfulness in silently sardonic protest: ‘How little father knew how it would all turn out, how little he knew this son?’

⁸⁴ Katz (n.3) 179.

canny instant calculation, ingrained readiness for action, pragmatic seizure of initiative as second-nature—take that ‘inferential walk’, in short. The *Odyssey* has earlier indulged its audience with full-scale diplomacies of courtship between man and wife and larded one extended rustic joust of wit with simplicity when master confronted swineherd.⁸⁵ Either the text does show actively imaginative readers father and son negotiating their meaning to each other and in each other’s eyes; or we are diverted by much ado about nothing;⁸⁶ or—the dynamics of the plot carry all before them. Perhaps the pace has hotted up and recognition, even by the father, is no longer the issue, now that the suitors are slain,⁸⁷ the return of Odysseus is written undeniably in bloodshed, and we must be bent on the show-down and ‘resolution’. In the last case, the wily story-teller doubtless palms off his own trickiness to evade articulation of the in-itself supreme moment of self-recovery, ‘sacrificed’ to the climax of dénouement. The returning question, anyhow, of what is at stake when we take narrative to be bent on recognition?

Both signs size son up against father: σὺ ... με; ἐγὼ δ’ ... σὺ δ’ (333, 337-9). In the story of the scar, Odysseus recalls a time when father and mother sent their boy off to grandfather’s, when he was a pawn in their game; the orchard-sign has Odysseus claim to be Laertes’ ‘boy’, by re-winding to when he was not just son, but rather ‘a child’, so ‘childish’ (ἐμδὸς παῖς, 328, παιδωνδὸς ἑών, 338). His father then, if ever, surely enjoyed a power-relation of 1:0 over Odysseus, ‘handing out’ the ‘gifts’ that Autolycus had delivered in the scar-story, in a triply affirmed parade of bounty (δῶρα, 335; ἔδωκας ... δῶκας ... δώσειν 337, 340, 342). Odysseus, then, dutifully hands his father exactly what he is asked and what he was programmed for, long long ago, as if for this very moment, or, we could second guess, just for any and all the moments there might ever be when filial submission might be in place: the child was primed to tell of his programming, and so to give back to his father what his father had implanted in him, the ‘gift’ of those words, the obligation to pay them back over, on request (μοι νῦν εἰπέ, 329, εἶπω ... μοῖ ποτ’ ... μοι ... μοι ᾧδ’, 337, 340, 341; cf. ... μοι, 335, for Autolycus).

The son offers deference, as his search for the sign his father asks him to give turns him back to the scene where his father gave him all his little self asked for: dependence.⁸⁸ But as he speaks, there is no dialogue, he silences Laertes and re-sites even as he re-cites what were once his words.⁸⁹

V.5 Odysseus no longer ‘asks for’ gifts, he is the one doing the telling: he eases into his place, his words shape a vicinity radiating out from himself at and as centre. ‘He *names the trees* which his father gave him as a child.’⁹⁰ He is like the ‘full-grown pear-tree’ under which he

⁸⁵ On pig-man Eumaeus’ reception as ‘parodic foretaste’ see F. Williams, ‘Odysseus’ homecoming as a parody of Homeric formal welcomes’, *CJ* 79 (1986), 395, cf. J. Runding, ‘A politics of eating: feasting in early Greek society’, *AJPh* 117 (1996) 179-215, esp. 187 f.; for Horace playing Eumaeus, cf. J. Henderson, ‘Horace, *Odes* 3.22 and the life of meaning: stumbling and stampeding out of the woods, / blinking and screaming into the light, / snorting and gorging at the trough, / slashing and gouging at the death’, *Ramus* 24 (1995) 103-51.

⁸⁶ See Chambers (n.6) 124 on amphigory, duplicitous narrative where the display of concealing is used to conceal—nothing.

⁸⁷ Cf. C.R. Trahman, ‘Odysseus’ lies (*Odyssey*, Books xiii-xix) *Phoenix* 6 (1952) 35 n.15, ‘The lie Odysseus tells Laertes (xxiv 303-14), unlike the earlier fictions, is not prompted by necessity’; Moulton (n.21) 164, ‘His identity no longer needs to be concealed *from his enemies*.’ (My emphasis.)

⁸⁸ So Goff (n.3) 267. Katz (n.3) 179 mistranslates ‘I asked you *about each of them*’. But as we see, she is not *wrong*. (My emphases.)

⁸⁹ So Katz (n.3) 179, ‘... quoting, in all likelihood, Laertes’ own words’. The odd sequence of tenses in 343 f. could half-suggest a sliding in and out of citation and repetition, as Monro half-suggested (*pace* D.L. Page, *The Homeric Odyssey* (Oxford 1966) 107).

⁹⁰ Whitman (n.18) 205. (My emphasis) Cf. McCulloch (n.67)181, ‘Your vicinity is an area allotted to you for some given purpose, usually with you located somewhere near the centre.’

has stood, while he lied to and mocked his anguished father (234). *Prima facie* the Arkeisiad genetic trait of monocarpous reproductivity blessed fathers and sons with enviable solidarity of interests; but there was also a threat for only son Odysseus, in his undivided encounter with father. The scar-tale, however, reminds us that this mother's son had also imprinted on Penelope's father, trickster Autolycus, 'perhaps a more satisfactory father figure for Odysseus than Laertes', who had named him for his own cleverness, and intervened at the critical moments in his life from cradle to maturation.⁹¹ Now that Odysseus has disposed of the suitors,⁹² father Laertes has this last chance to vindicate his own heroic status as leader of the clan, and so impress his paternity on his son. This coming-together of father and son puts the bathsalts, or the seasoning, in the preparation of Laertes' *aristeia*. Too late for yesterday's fight, the has-been bids for Odysseus' undivided admiration with muttered bluster over former glories (376-82), then marches off to reclaim the son by his side. Mission improbable.

VI. THE LORDS AND SONS OF THE SOIL

*As all things come to an end, even this story, a day came when they were in sight of the country where Bilbo had been born and bred, where the shapes of the land and of the trees were as well known to him as his hands and toes.*⁹³

VI.1 The two signs, scar and fruit-trees, hallow with hunting and farming cultural charisma the banquet sequence which structures the end of the *Odyssey*, kitted out in the modality of rustic miniaturism. Now Odysseus the beggar-king has cleaned up after the festive excess of the suitors' carnivalization of his *oikos*, the tale briefly mocks the Iliadic Kings and Battles confined (by Hermes) in the 'house of Hell' and adjourns to the anti-heroic margins of the farmstead to prepare for transumption to the level of the *demos* and the *Odyssey's* final riposte of flexible response, containment of (civil) war and acceptable truce (emplotted by Athene).

This meal, then, looks back to triumph, enacts return and serves as half-way house toward the last act. The orchard-scene has Odysseus stop off to gather in a fellow-guest,—or is it the host?,—encountered on the way to dine with the host-apparent, Dolios & Sons, to sup at the *oikos* planted by Laertes on his estate. Here we hear tell of an οὔτος ἀνήρ (260) who knew enough to tell the stranger he was really on Ithaka, but wasn't on the ball enough, couldn't bring himself to ἔκαστα / εἰπεῖν (261 f.): this fictional figure of Odyssean *metis* could, so to speak, have been Dolios, could be Laertes, should be the host. And here we hear tell, too, of the great 'white-tusked pig' (boar) which scarred Odysseus 'on Parnassus' at his coming-out-party (331 f.) and of the 'fifty vine(-row)s' kept 'always on tap' by Laertes, 'whenever Zeus's seasons loaded them up on high' (341-4). Odysseus meanwhile has the oven roasting, and the mixing-bowl filling: he has ordered an instant dinner of best pork (215). Late-arrivals, Odysseus and Laertes find the kitchens carving up piles of meat and blending fire-in-the-belly wine (364).

⁹¹ Goff (n.3) 265: the oddness of 'matrilineal' baptism, however, blesses in the guise of penalizing the hero destined for great things. Solidarity: Goldhill (n.3) 18, cf. J.M. Redfield, *Nature and culture in the Iliad* (Chicago 1975) 111 for this idyll. Threat: Ellmann (n.3) 82. Autolycean naming: Lévi-Strauss (n.35) 181, 185, suggests that in its most extreme form the 'embodied name', the one-off, 'is a free creation on the part of the individual who gives the name and expresses a transitory and subjective state of his own by means of the person he names'. Cf. Pucci (n.17) 88 f., 'And so the scar assumes for us a figurative meaning both as the mark, left on Odysseus' body, of his relationship with Autolycus and as the mark, left in Odysseus' name, of his Hermes-like characterization.'

⁹² Cf. Goff (n.3) 264, 'The point in the narrative where this recognition is effected finds Odysseus on the brink of another great exploit, and the recounting of the story can be seen to act as a guarantee of his continued success.'

⁹³ J.R.R. Tolkien, *The hobbit, or there and back again* (New York 1966) 283.

VI.2 Two links remain, to complete the scene. Laertes, first, must take his place at the head of the table, back in the fold again: and the pot is aboiling for him, cooking him back to culture, a Pelias who made it. As beggared Odysseus experienced before his time old age as disfigurement and disguise, the result of bearing hardship so many times over and then the bar to recognition of self and of worth, so Laertes wears his rustic weeds, dejected solipsism and self-neglect as a guise of far-gone decrepitude. *Both* men are 'restored' by the reintegration of their *oikos*, and this, it may be, 'removes the imbalance inherent in ... the relationship of father and son, an imbalance which, at this time in their lives, makes the son more powerful than his aged father'.⁹⁴ The trick of respecting the principle of the father's incarnation of the social order of patrimony and property while not imposing a forced over-valuation of his person either on the narration or on the son's self-determination is precariously managed, if it is, by the attenuated text's modulation through farmyard manners toward the symbolic gesture of the dynasty's self-assertion over the rest of Ithaka vested in its representative chief, Laertes. Indeed the reader's familiarity with the business of guest-friendship within hospitable sociality works, as it had at Eumaeus' hut, to shake and mock the ordering of roles around Laertes. A parodic re-distribution and dislocation in the pattern has the request for the visitor to 'place' himself satisfied with the favour of an engaging anecdote and the obliging provision of biographical details and the institution self-celebrated in an account of reciprocal generosity in entertainment and gift-giving which grants the 'host' all the recognition, uplift and support it can muster—long before the narrative arrives at the dining-hall. Anticipated along with these features are both the gratifying performance of verbal trickery, inventiveness and ironic display of audience-mastery which readers may particularly have learned through Odysseus' spell in Phaeacia, and also the unpleasantnesses most of us especially associate with the suitors' treatment of the wizened beggar Odysseus, the degrading mockery of the apparently defenceless down-and-out 'old man', the beggar/jester/parasite/scapegoat-butt.⁹⁵ The visit to Laertes' garden takes the would-be guest to invite the proper host to the party; locates the after-dinner conversation before the hostelry has even been reached; makes the host the figure of fun. Odysseus' infamous mocking of Laertes fits the Looking Glass world of this final episode—guest at his own house, stranger in the bosom of his family, the Prodigal Father, an occasion to rattle the paradigms of normality.⁹⁶ *Pièce de résistance* on this menu is Father, venially victimised because symptomatic jolliness, because rustic diversion, because served up as bizarre hors d'oeuvre in a feast of fun-to-come. Orchard and farmhouse trade-off, the plenitude of the one scene bought with the evacuation of its pair.

⁹⁴ Murnaghan (n.46) 30-1, *cf.* 28-35, Austin (n.61) 102-5.

⁹⁵ Wender (n.29) 56 f. pardons any heartlessness in Odysseus' 'test' of Laertes as typically esteemed Greek wiliness; Moulton (n.21) 163 f. names the equation of the father, the orchard and the inheritance a 'major theme'; Fenik (n.21) 47 ff. concludes that Odysseus acts from '—let us say it openly—force of habit'; W.G. Thalmann, *Conventions of form and thought in early Greek epic poetry* (Johns Hopkins 1984) 234 n.28 finds 'it natural that Odysseus ... should—practically as a reflex—treat his father in the same way'. In the same way, that is, as Athene treated him in xiii, *cf.* 326 ff.; and as Penelope treated her strange visitor in xix, *cf.* 215 ff.; complicated in the relaying between Odysseus and Telemachus in xxiii, 113 ff., esp. 181, where wife is (to be) allowed to test her man; diffracted in Odysseus' 'test' to see if he can wangle a cloak from Eumaeus, xiv 459, and when he and his son mean to 'test' the faith of the servants, xvi 300, etc. For ancient efforts to heal/purge the text of Odyssean sadism *cf.* N.J. Richardson, 'Recognition scenes in the *Odyssey* and ancient literary criticism', *PLLS* 4 (1983) 227 f. Ragussis (n.43) 85 learns from Hawthorne's Pearl that 'What the child learns from her father is how to realize her own pain through another's. Father and child meet on that common ground where each can say: I now can put myself aside for another, instead of living in terror of being put aside by another'. He warns to the idea?

⁹⁶ In arguing that Odysseus' *nostos* as a whole is a parody of the formal welcome, Williams (n.83) 396 identifies 'six stages ... in the formal reception of a Homeric guest: 1) a stranger approaches royal host and royal attendants; 2) attendants respond to the stranger; 3) the host greets the stranger; 4) the host offers a token of hospitality, either in person or through his attendants, and reproaches attendants for any misbehavior; 5) the host or attendants feed the stranger; and 6) the host inquires about the stranger's identity'.

VI.3 Second, Dolios is missing; and wanted. When Odysseus headed off from his ‘serfs and son’ (213), bound for the orchard, ‘he didn’t find Dolios ... or any of the serfs and sons ... But he found, all on his own, Father (222-6), ‘alone’, ready to ‘find’ an *à deux* encounter in a brace of signs.⁹⁷ He knew the farmhouse was ‘where the serfs had their grub, took a seat and rested up’, run by ‘an old Sicilian woman who always took good care of the old man (*sc.* Laertes)’ (209-12). Thus Laertes and Odysseus looked lively and ‘found’ (363) their serfs and (grand)son at the farm; and the Sicilian woman ‘washed and anointed Laertes with olive-oil’, or to put it another way, Athene built him up to superman physique (366; 367-74).

Now ‘the party is ready, they’re taking their seats and reclining, just reaching to tuck in’ (385-6). When, just in time, ‘enter old man Dolios, plus sons, bustling back from the fields now that Mother, yes, that ancient Sicilienne, who always took good care of them and the old man (*sc.* her old man, Dolios), has called them in’ (387-90. The wording echoes 211 f. very closely.) We know that all the time we spent demolishing, then patching up, Laertes in the orchard, there has been hard work going on further afield: rock-fetching to make a dry-stone perimeter wall (223-5).

There is, we have realised, a strong narrative investment in superimposing Laertes/Dolios (through the Sicilian serf/wife-and-mother), and Laertes-and-son-and-his-son-and-the swineherd and cowherd serfs/Dolios-and-his-sons, the serfs. However we motivate this insistence, in the interests of parading the ethical values of labour, or from the point of view of a *microcosmia scenographica*, we may catch here a telling imperative from the narrative to correlate and counterpose the recognition of Laertes and of Dolios (& Sons). The scene presents the poem’s preferred banquet to effect and celebrate the *nostos* of Odysseus. And the striking feature of it is that, long in the tooth as they may be, these vintage old men steal the show.

Thanks to ‘father’ Zeus (518), ‘son of Arkeisios’ Laertes (517) will rejoice to lead the phalanx of his son and grandson in utter defiance of ancient demographic probabilities and endoxal knowledge (xvi 117 ff.), and will match Odysseus’ slaying of Antinous with his still more weasel-worded father Eupheithes’ scalp. ‘Son-of-Kronos’ Zeus (539, 544) effortlessly amplifies his patriarchal shot with the bolt from the blue that restrains ‘Laertes’ son’ and ‘daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus’ Athene (547) and her band of heroes from further action and—narrative. And ...

VI.4 And Dolios-and-co.’s recognition of Odysseus surely makes a fitting comment on our maturing and now-seasoned understanding of what is involved in ‘re-cognition’. After a few moments of astonishment, Odysseus ‘sweetly called the old man to take his seat, skip the “I’m amazed” routine and sup, because everybody had been kept from reaching for food for ages—since all of eight or nine hexameters earlier, in fact—waiting inside, expecting you any moment, waiting for an eternity’ (393-6, echoing 385 f.). This is, as advertised, jolly fun—a *reductio* of a ‘Lying Tale’ from the Stranger. And Dolios’ reply is suitably in tune. No nonsense about a sign for Farmer Dolios. He kissed his master’s hand and with a ‘Praise be, thank the lord’ and a ‘Hallelujah’, he asked his (nameless) ‘Dear/Friend’ (ὦ φίλ’, 400), ‘tell something truly true, so it counts as knowing’ (403). Just as you wonder if after all the old codger is politely letting everyone know he, ‘Dolios’, Mr. Tricks, isn’t taken in by fibbing strangers and suppose that he will require some kind of verification of this snappily impatient and jovial prodigal, you find this lord of the lodge is thinking ahead fast—and true—to visions of the sagacious Penelope as the last to know, and offering to send a runner off (404 f.). Odysseus takes one line to sit Dolios back down on his sore old behind: ‘She knows already; no chore

⁹⁷ This is the cap to the foil of xxiv 15, / εἶπον δέ ..., where the suitor souls encounter the Iliadic dead. The rhetorical marking of: ‘...didn’t find X but found Y ...’, is an Odyssean solitary.

for you there' (406-8). There is rustic rapport in these exchanges—between lord and serf; no occasion for *metis*, this, it's all taken care of long since.⁹⁸ The recognition phase of the narrative is over.

VI.5 The *Odyssey* is, it may seem, all over bar the—shouting; and the shooting. For the Ithacans who gather in the square to wrangle and break up into polarised factions, there is no further question that Odysseus is back, adding carnage to his carelessness with crew. And Odysseus is authenticated, now, by all too many witnesses, dead and alive; he is, past proof, his re(-k)nown. And just this may be acted out in what must count as the very last of the formal scenes of recognition in the poem: a six-at-one-blow affair. In just three verses the half-dozen sons of Dolios 'surrounded famous Odysseus and welcomed him out loud and with firm hand-clasps, before taking their seats by father' (409-11). For this determinate knot of youths—ξξ (497), not just the shortest of Greek numbers, its most economical multiplier, but an enumerative precision (?) in the count of worthies, each individual a single precious unit, the few to face a many, to be sure a farm-house-full, but this full, no more no less⁹⁹—as for Telemachus, and us, Odysseus is what he must be, he is whatever they, or we, get told. What else could he amount to? For them, for us?

Laertes' and our stay with the homeliness of the garden tries out for size the *Weltanschauung* borne by the specialised language of hoeing and digging, gloves and gaiters—the work of 'furze-hook', 'faggot-bonds' and 'leggings' in Hardy's perennial *Return of the native*, with its (Laertian) insistence on leatheriness, leathern and leathery accoutrements all animal skin naturalizing/bestializing human body. From this corner of the island epic, all is judged according to comfort, looking to the next (fur)row, an adoxographic plainness of purpose reaching clean across the farmyard. Heroic daring, dash, individualism recedes, is at a discount.¹⁰⁰ It all traces back here, anyhow, and from here as from Hell it all looks small beer.¹⁰¹

If the farmhouse is the *Odyssey's* 'hobbit-hole',—all arm-chair and tobacco-jar, the last word, in *xenia*,—then Laertes would have his great son remember to see things that homely way: maybe realise his fame as a wanderer's tale to entertain the local people over dinner, just as bed dwindled him to a sailor back in port spinning his self congratulatory yarns for his wife; maybe press on from the farm and its microscopics, on to his next 'test of time' in the imminent show-down and just desserts for the Ithacan avengers. How much of an impression can the 'hobbit-hole' of The Trees have left on that treasure- and pleasure-seeker Odysseus—now, or ever?

VI.6 Those miniature Doliad recognition-scenes serve as narrational 'fades'. Dolios turns his

⁹⁸ Hence πολύμητις, 406: more than meets the eye if you take this Dolios to be the father of the unfaithful pair Melanthius and Melantho. On this Homeric Question, see Wender (n.29) 54 f., J.H. Finley, *Homer's Odyssey* (Harvard 1978) 231, Moulton (n.21) 164 n.50.

⁹⁹ There is but one '6th' in Homer, of the sons of Nestor, iii 415; there are, I suppose, 6 other '6''s in the *Odyssey*, ix 60 (crew), x 6 (6 + 6 sons and daughters, in fact), xii 90-110-246 (necks of Scylla, so crew snacks), xvi 248 (attendants on Suitors), xxii 252 (Suitors to throw first at the heroes). There are, in a way, 6 '6''s in the *Iliad*, v 270 (colts reared), 641 (ships), vii 247 (6/7 layers of shield), xxiii 741 (-gallon *krater*), xxiv 399 (other sons + yours truly), 604 (more sons and daughters). On the body language of Dolios and his sons here, D. Lateiner, *Sardonic smile: nonverbal behavior in Homeric epic* (Michigan 1995) 140, n. 2.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. R.B. Rutherford, 'At home and abroad: aspects of the structure of the *Odyssey*', *PCPhS* 31 (1985) 133-50.

¹⁰¹ Lynn-George (n.3) 24: 'In one sense this world is confined in space ... It is not the immense spatial realm of the wanderings. And yet a great distance opens up within this same place. ... Odysseus, a traveller in time, traces his way back to a more remote world and wandering, the small steps of a far-off day as the orchard of childhood is recalled ... recalling finally the names—the words which construct the worlds of Odysseus, who repeats them in the telling of the tale of the trees, the trees which ... like many tales, including the Homeric epic, tell of time and transformation.'

moment into (due) subordination to Penelope's recognition and the heroic sequence that transformed banqueting suitors into dismal late arrivals in Hades' halls as culmination of the saga. Thus are legitimated readerly feelings of diminuendo about xxiv. The Dolios Boys defer to father, who 'leads the way' here as at work (225). Father and sons join in the rejoining of father and son, in a structure of longing and belonging where recognition can be easily recognized as a structuring principle, itself then a structure. These sons form the supplementary figure of an '*etc., etc. ...*'. On the one hand, they reinforce and complete the process of recognition as reintegration and return; and dissolve this process into welcome, celebration and fame. On the other hand, their scene dies away in sympotic jollity, the light-hearted joke-language of feasting as more 'hard slog' added to the affective imagery of embrace as 'growing round'. In the meantime the lads get for themselves a formative story in which their grasp of the hero's hand will have made men of their epebic selves, even as the hastening narrative sets them into the receding background and the plot presses inexorably on to the last highlight. As Antinous' father reminds us at once (427-9), Odysseus must recruit this expanded 'family' of companions to take the place of his lost crew as the story reverses the process of loss which it reads back analeptically from its beginning in the loneliness of Calypso's island-for-two. As 'Recognition' proliferates, it loses to other considerations the edge it had in earlier clinches. The epic's first audience listening to Odysseus' tale, the estate manager's 'six' lusty 's(ci)ons' model, in themselves, that prolific *Growth of the soil* which Laertes' Ithacan family of trees plants for patriarchy in the thought of the poem. (*And fade ...*)

VI.7 And as they fade, Narrative has performed in Laertes' orchard a lesson in simple complexity: the details ...

Said Baccin: 'That tree, and that tree,
Yes, I planted that tree ...'

Under the olives
Some saecular, some half-saecular.¹⁰²

JOHN HENDERSON

King's College, Cambridge

¹⁰² Peasant in the vagrant dendrophilist E. Pound's *Canto LXXXVIII* (1955): recalling boyhood Pennsylvania's streets named after trees in 1957, Pound 'remembers his father planting pear, peach and cherry, and he asks his correspondent about the oak ('purty tall in 1900') and the apple tree. ... Late in life ... he returns ..., goes out ... in search of an evergreen which he and a friend had planted behind the church years before. ... "His father's name was Homer." (C. Tomlinson, *Poetry and metamorphosis* (Cambridge 1983) 62-4, citing H.D.)