FORMAL ANALYSIS OF RECOGNITION SCENES IN THE *ODYSSEY*

Abstract: Type-scenes have been studied and analysed for over seventy years. This paper presents a more detailed analysis of one type-scene, the 'recognition scene', than has previously been attempted, with the aim of moving towards a better-structured understanding of the 'syntax' of type-scenes generally. The structure of the recognition scene is dissected into motifs and 'moves', all of which are tabulated; this is the core of the analysis. The ensuing points of clarification elaborate on the definitions and assumptions built into the analysis. Following this is an assessment of the 'syntax' and quantifiable elements of the recognition scene. The discussion closes with a general assessment of the more literary face of recognition scenes, discussing them in the context of the plan of the second half of the *Odyssey*.

THE second half of the *Odyssey* features a set of type-scenes that I term *recognition scenes*, which are represented nowhere else in Archaic poetry. There are fifteen such scenes throughout *Od.* 13-24. They are defined by a common set of motifs in a fairly stable sequence, and therefore fall into the category of 'typical scenes', described originally by Arendt and explored more recently by Lord, Edwards, Reece and others.[1] This article presents the most detailed formal analysis to date.

The sheer number of examples of this type-scene, and the complexity of its formal structure, make this an ideal case for examining the 'syntax' of type-scenes. By syntax I mean regularities in the use of motifs in a type-scene format and in how they relate to one another. For in these fifteen examples there emerge certain trends that would not be obvious to the casual observer: trends in, for example, how the sequence of motifs may be shuffled; how the recognition scene relates to other kinds of type-scenes; and how motifs, strings of motifs, or even entire scenes, may be reduplicated. After a while the accumulation of these regularities begins to look something like a set of grammatical rules, though far less strict than that of an everyday language: thus the term 'syntax'.[2]

The specific findings presented here may also be seen as programmatic for further development of a set of narratological tools and vocabulary for studying the mechanics of Homeric narrative and 'composition-by-theme'. ('Theme' refers simply to any regular combination of motifs in oral poetry, following Lord's usage; by extension, it has come to be used more generally of any patterns in oral-traditional poetry, such as type-scenes in Homeric epic.[3]) This approach, emphasizing formal analysis, complements an approach such as that of Minchin, who focuses on the type-scene as an aspect of performance and of the performing poet's skill.[4]

The semantics of the recognition scene are one important aspect of its 'grammar'. A formal structure that has specific cultural and literary significance is of obvious importance both for 'oral theory' (in the sense of the study of 'thematic' composition) and for the semiotics of the *Odyssey*. However, given the technical detail of this analysis, the literary significance of the type-scene in each of its instantiations cannot be adequately discussed here; this is not the place to deliver a detailed commentary on half a Homeric epic.

---

[1] Arendt (1933); Lord (1960); Fenik (1968); Krischer (1971); Edwards (1980), (1992); Reece (1993); Minchin (2001) 32-72. (I omit Fenik (1974), as he says less there about type-scenes.)

[2] This use of the word 'syntax' may be compared to the notion of 'story grammars', an idea derived from the hypothesis in some anthropological schools of thought that generalized tale-types underlie a particular story. Zumthor (1983) 125-44 also speaks of 'une grammaire de la poésie orale' and makes an equation of oral style to formulaic style. However, the idea of 'story grammars' is perhaps most notable for the criticisms it has attracted:

see e.g. Garnham (1983), Black and Wilensky (1984), Rosenberg (1991) 99-100, 256-67, Smith (1978) 193-4 (cited by Rosenberg).

[3] Lord (1960). Note that for many scholars 'type-scenes' or 'typical scenes' are understood as repeated sequences of *everyday* actions, which is clearly not the case here: Odysseus' reunion with his family is by no means routine. In my usage 'type-scene' refers to any repeated set of motifs, especially where framing and sequence are distinctive features.

[4] Minchin (2001) 32-72.

Instead, this paper will first delineate the formal structure of this type-scene, proceed to discuss in detail the 'grammatical' constraints and possibilities revealed in the various permutations of the structure and motifs of the type-scene, and conclude by assessing in general terms the thematic use and significance of this type-scene in the plan of the second half of the *Odyssey*. Immediately below in part 1, *Formal structure*, I first present a list of the components of the recognition scene; this is followed by a complete tabulation of the *Odyssey*'s fifteen recognition scenes, giving line-numbers for each motif. Next comes part 2, *Points of clarification*, which explains issues in the previous section and the assumptions underlying the dissection of the type-scene into motifs. Part 3, *Analysis*, examines in detail the morphological constraints and possibilities shown in the various permutations of the recognition scene – its 'grammar'. Finally in part 4, *Recognition scenes in the plan of Odyssey 13-24*, I assess the use of this type-scene in more literary terms.

1. FORMAL STRUCTURE

I label these type-scenes 'recognition' scenes not because all of them feature a recognition of Odysseus by a member of his family, but because wherever there is such a recognition, it is narrated in one of these scenes.[5] Recognition, in other words, is the most prototypical function of this type-scene, but not a *sine qua non*. This peculiarity of terminology is indicative of the fact that I am sidelining recognition as such – as a literary and cultural phenomenon in the *Odyssey* – in favour of a more technical discussion.[6]

Within each recognition scene there are four possible *moves*, and within each move a sequence of *motifs*. Analysis of type-scenes into motifs follows the tradition of, for example, Bernard Fenik's analysis of battle scenes in the *Iliad*. To pick out a higher level of structure within the type-scene (the 'move') is closer to Steve Reece's analysis of hospitality scenes, which has some hierarchization of motifs; and indeed the term 'move' is taken from Vladímir Propp, in whose model of folktale narratives a tale can consist of multiple moves, which may interrupt one another or follow in series; but *within* the move a regular sequence of motifs is normally followed.[7]

The four possible moves in the recognition scene are:

(1) TESTING: Odysseus tests the addressee's loyalty.[8] Functionally this is not simply the addressee's loyalty to Odysseus personally; it is the addressee's commitment to the integrity of the *oikos*.

(2) DECEPTION: Odysseus deceives the addressee. He disguises his identity and tells a false story about his travels.[9]

(3) FORETELLING: Odysseus, disguised, foretells the return of the real Odysseus.

(4) RECOGNITION: Odysseus reveals his true identity and a full reunion takes place. The FORETELLING and RECOGNITION moves are a multiform of one another, and therefore no scene features both of them: after a TESTING and/or DECEPTION, Odysseus may *either* foretell his return *or* reveal himself. Consequently, in accordance with a variation on the principle of economy, the two moves share many of their motifs.

---

[5] The analysis of Emlyn-Jones (1998a) 131-4 is a particularly important precursor to this analysis, and prefigures many elements of the formal structure outlined here.

[6] On recognition, reunion, and recognition scenes in the broader sense, see for example Kakridis (1971); Stewart (1976); Richardson (1983); Murnaghan (1987); Most (1989); Goldhill (1991) ch.1; Walter (1992); Henderson (1997); Gainsford (2001). See also Emlyn-Jones (1998b) for further bibliography and review.

[7] Fenik (1968); Reece (1993); Propp (1968). Reece's

summary of the hospitality scene pattern is given 6-7; discussion of motifs 12-39; analysis of all examples of the scene 207-31.

[8] *Cf.* stage 3 in Emlyn-Jones' analysis, 'Odysseus tests the other's loyalty; the test is passed (or, in the case of the suitors and disloyal servants, failed)' (Emlyn-Jones (1998a) 131).

[9] *Cf.* stage 2 in Emlyn-Jones' analysis, '... Odysseus is pressed for his identity, in reply to which he tells a false story ...' (Emlyn-Jones (1998a) 131).

In the summary of recognition scene motifs below, T refers to a motif in the TESTING move, D is DECEPTION, F is FORETELLING and R is RECOGNITION. Moves tend to overlap, but motifs within moves tend to follow a regular sequence (another parallel with Propp). The 'protagonist' is typically Odysseus himself, still disguised at the beginning of the scene (the 'Stranger'). There are exceptions, however: in scenes 12-13 it is Eurykleia who breaks the news of Odysseus' return to Penelope, and in the 'two-way' recognition scenes (1, 7 and 14; see *Points of clarification* (g), below) both characters act simultaneously as protagonist and addressee.

T1: Unknown to the addressee, the protagonist – and the audience – observe one or more of the following:

    T1a: the addressee displays evidence of his/her loyalty (often by excellent performance in a hospitality scene; *cf.* motif II, below);

    T1b: the addressee displays the detrimental effects of the Enemy and of Odysseus' absence;

    T1c: the addressee displays disbelief that Odysseus is still alive (*cf.* F2, R3 below).[10]

T2: The protagonist decides to test the addressee (*cf.* D1).[11]

T3: The protagonist questions the addressee with a view to testing him/her.

T4: The relationship is shown to be intact, or the loyalty of the addressee is revealed.

D1: The protagonist decides to deceive the addressee (*cf.* T2).

D2: The protagonist gives a false identity.

D3: He tells a false story of his travels and how he gained information on them.

D4: He recalls meeting Odysseus.[12]

F1: The protagonist foretells Odysseus' return.

F2 (=R3): The addressee expresses disbelief.[13]

F3 (=R4): The addressee wishes it were true.

F4 (=R5): The addressee asserts that Odysseus is dead.

F5 (=R6): The protagonist is willing to swear an oath that Odysseus will return.

F6: The addressee refuses, rejecting the Stranger and/or reiterating disbelief.

R1: The protagonist's appearance is enhanced by Athene, thus adding impact to his revelation; this often involves a bath.

R2: The protagonist reveals him/herself.

R3 (=F2): The addressee expresses disbelief.

R4 (=F3): The addressee wishes it were true.

R5 (=F4): The addressee asserts that Odysseus is dead.

R6 (=F5): The protagonist is willing to swear an oath that Odysseus has returned.

R7: The addressee requests evidence.

R8: The protagonist gives evidence.[14]

R9: Joy and weeping at recognition.[15]

[10] *Cf.* stage 2 in Emlyn-Jones' analysis, '... The other speaker refers frequently in conversation to Odysseus, usually introducing the topic shortly after meeting him' (Emlyn-Jones (1998a) 131).

[11] *Cf.* Emlyn-Jones (1998a) 132, 'a desire to provoke or upset is clearly in Odysseus' mind just before his main conversation with Penelope at 19.45-6'.

[12] *Cf.* stage 2 in Emlyn-Jones' analysis, '... a false story in which he claims to have seen Odysseus on his travels ...' (Emlyn-Jones (1998a) 131).

[13] *Cf.* stage 5 in Emlyn-Jones' analysis, 'The other refuses to believe' (Emlyn-Jones (1998a) 131).

[14] *Cf.* stage 6 in Emlyn-Jones' analysis, 'Odysseus gives a sign (σῆμα) as a proof of identity' (Emlyn-Jones (1998a) 131).

[15] *Cf.* stage 7 in Emlyn-Jones' analysis, 'Final recognition, accompanied by great emotion on both sides' (Emlyn-Jones (1998a) 132).

In addition to the above, certain motifs may be found in recognition scenes which do not necessarily belong to a specific move:

I: Boundary marking start of scene.
II: Hospitality scene motifs; the motifs of a meal (IXa, b, c in Reece's analysis) and questioning (XIa) are often co-extensive with T1 (see under T1a, above).[16]
III: Boundary marking end of scene. When following motif R9, this often takes the form of a character's weeping being interrupted (or potentially interrupted).[17]

Table 1 is a tabulation of scenes and the motifs they contain, with line-references. Note that:
(i)   All the main motifs in the type-scene are listed in the order shown above, except that motifs I and II are at the top of the table and motif III at the bottom.
(ii) Each scene is numbered and also designated by the name of the addressee: thus '6. Telemachos'. Certain characters appear in more than one scene (in most cases, this is when the disguised Odysseus foretells his return several times); these scenes are designated 'Eumaios #1', 'Eumaios #2', *etc.*
(iii) The term 'inv.' after a name refers to the 'inverse' reading of a two-way recognition scene: for an explanation of this term see *Points of clarification* (g), following the tables. Briefly, a two-way scene is one in which the two characters involved act simultaneously as protagonist and as addressee; thus in '1a. Athene', Athene is the addressee, but in '1b. Athene inv.' she is the protagonist.

2. POINTS OF CLARIFICATION

The following points are to clarify the above lists and the assumptions underlying the analysis.

(a) Motifs I and III: framing

As noted above, motifs I and III are not an integral part of any particular move in the recognition scene. I and III are concerned with the framing of the type-scene as a whole, *discrete* episode. Framing is often important as a cognitive cue both for the performing poet and the audience, assisting each in creating a conceptual framework for their respective activities of narrating and hearing/interpreting the narrative. For a discussion of framing techniques used, see *Analysis* (b) below.

Normally the four moves overlap to some extent; they are not generally framed as discrete from each other, though there is usually a sort of caesura before the FORETELLING/RECOGNITION move (see *Analysis* (d), below). However, within each move the order of the motifs is generally regular (with some irregularities; see *Analysis* (e)): this strongly suggests that moves have a quasi-autonomous status of their own, as sequential patterns that govern how a scene develops. As noted above, this is parallel to Propp's use of the term 'move'.

(b) Motif II: hospitality

Often another type-scene, the 'hospitality scene', analysed in detail by Steve Reece (1993), interlocks with or overlaps with a recognition scene. Such situations are designated here very generally as 'motif II'. In several such situations the hospitality scene actually interacts with the recognition scene and serves the function of motif T1a: excellent performance as a host in a hospitality scene shows a kind of integrity in the addressee's relationship to the *oikos* and to its ethical responsibilities. In particular, the motif of giving the guest a meal (hospitality motif IX) can be

---

[16] All references to hospitality scene motifs follow Reece's numeration.

[17] *Cf.* stage 8 in Emlyn-Jones' analysis, "'On to business'" (Emlyn-Jones (1998a) 132).

employed as a means of showing that the addressee is fit to be a full member of Odysseus' *oikos* (recognition motif T1a); however, that then permits the meal to be used in isolation from a hospitality scene, and it becomes a common feature of the recognition scene as well, as in scenes 4 and 5, motif II. It is, in other words, appropriated to the recognition scene from the hospitality scene. The same thing happens frequently with two other hospitality scene motifs, namely identification of the guest (XI; *cf.* recognition motif D2) and exchange of information (XII; *cf.* recognition motifs D3-D4). It is clear that there is a great deal of overlap in the semantics of hospitality and recognition scenes; but whereas hospitality scenes appear even outside Homer, recognition scenes are confined to the second half of the *Odyssey*.[18]

(c) Motif T1: observing the addressee

Motif T1 is concerned with displaying the addressee as someone who still participates in a firm, if dormant, relationship with Odysseus. The three sub-motifs T1a, T1b and T1c fulfil this function in different ways. They all signify the potential for restoration of relationships and the reintegration of the *oikos*: they create a character's eligibility to be reintegrated, in other words. Although there are three distinctive ways of expressing this – represented by these three sub-motifs – nevertheless, because they all serve essentially the same function, there is no set order in which they appear and they can be repeated almost without limit, as in scene 2. I have therefore designated them all as hierarchized under one motif, T1. (See *Analysis* (c), below, for further discussion.)

I have labelled some passages as motif T1a and T1b where an addressee expresses the motif *on behalf of* another member of Odysseus' household: where, for example, a character describes the detrimental effects of Odysseus' absence on another character. So scene 6 (Telemachos) contains exemplars of motif T1b on behalf of Penelope (16.126-7) and Laertes (137-53). In the tables above these vicarious appearances of motifs T1a and T1b are shown with line numbers in square brackets.

(d) Moves and their independence

Because FORETELLING and RECOGNITION are multiforms of one other, a single recognition scene can contain no more than three of the four moves. Indeed, only six scenes contain the maximum of three. Additionally, only a small proportion of scenes that I have identified as examples of the type-scene do contain a RECOGNITION. In other cases it is a misnomer to call this a 'recognition' scene, but I have continued to do so, partly out of respect for tradition and partly for convenience, but primarily because the *idea* of recognition is always the teleological focus of the scene.

The criterion for distinguishing the moves from each other is independence, which is to say, no move can require another as a prerequisite for its presence. A DECEPTION, for example, is usually accompanied by a TESTING; however, scene 3 has a DECEPTION without a TESTING, and this demonstrates their independence. The FORETELLING and RECOGNITION moves, as noted above, are mutually exclusive, but this is only an apparent exception, as they are variants of one another. A single move may even appear on its own: so scene 5 contains only a TESTING, and 12-13 contain only a RECOGNITION.

A result of this independence is that each move has a quasi-autonomous force (as suggested above, in (a)). Each is a miniature type-scene in its own right, with its own teleology, sequence, etc.; in practice, of course, they tend to agglomerate. In other words, the moves are collected together at a relatively low level in a cognitive hierarchy of scene patterns: the larger pattern of the 'recognition scene' subsumes, or conversely emerges from, an agglomeration of patterns of testing, deception, etc.

---

[18] If more of the Cyclic epics survived, of course, this picture might be very different.

Motif	1a. Athene, 13.253-86	1b. Athene inv., 13. 187-96, 221-371	2. Eumaios #1, 14. 1-173	3. Eumaios #2, 14. 185-408	4. Eumaios #3, 14. 453-533	5. Eumaios #4, 15. 301-39	6. Telemachos, 16. 1-220	7a. Penelope #1, 19.44 (or 96)-251	7b. Penelope #1 inv.,19. 213-51
I		Change of scene, 187b	Change of scene, 1-4	Explicit change of topic, 185	Bridge-scene (end of dinner), 453-6	Change of scene, 301-2	Bridge-scene (day-break), 1-3		Formulaic, 213
II			Book 14, *passim*	185-90	453-6	301-2	41-5, 49-55, 57-9, etc.	96-105	
T1			3-108, 133-8a				41-89, 126-7, 137-53	124-61	
T1a			3-14, 20-5, 33-58a, 80, 96-104				41-5, 57-9, 78-84	127-8, 137-56, [160-1]	
T1b			16b-19, 26-8, 40-3, 58b-67, 81-108, 137b-8a				69-77, 85-9, [126-7], [137-53]	124-36, 154, 157-9	
T1c			44, 68-71, 89-90, 133-7a						
T2		189-96			459-61	303-6		44-6	215-17
T3		256-86	115-17		503-6	307-24	91-8		218-19
T4		287-99a	138b-47		508-19	326-39	112-17,147-9	203-12	221-48
D1	253-5	189-96			459-61			44-6	
D2	256-86	221b-5		199-234			62-4	172-84	
D3	256-86	237-49	120b	235-359	468-82		65-6	168b-70	
D4			118-20a	321-30	468-502			185-202	
F1			149-64	331-3			(100b-1)		
F2			166-71a	363-71					
F3			171b-3						
F4				366b-70					
F5			151-60	391-400					
F6				386-7, 401-6					
R1							154-85		
R2		299b-310					187-9		
R3		324-7					192-200		
R4									
R5									
R6									
R7		328						215-19	
R8		344-52					202-12	221-48	
R9		353-60					213-19	249-50	
III		Bridge-scene, 361-71	Explicit change of topic, 185	Bridge-scene (dinner-time), 407-8	Bridge-scene (nightfall) 520-33	Change of speaker, 340	Formulaic, 220	Formulaic, 251	Formulaic, 251

Table 1.

Motif	8. Penelope #2, 19.252-316	9. Eurykleia, 19.317 (or 343)-507	10. Philoitios, 20.185-239	11. Philoitios & Eumaios, 21.188-229	12. Penelope #3, 23.1-38	13. Penelope #4, 23.39-84	14a. Penelope #5, 23.85-116, 153-246	14b. Penelope #5 inv., 23.85-116, 153-246	15. Laertes, 24.205-360
I	Formulaic, 251-2		New character enters 185-8	Change of scene, 188-90	Change of scene, 1-4		Change of scene, 85	Change of scene, 85	Change of scene, 205-6
II		317-56	190-4						297-301
T1	253-60	343-68	190-225					93-5	205-34, 281-96
T1a	253-7a	343-8	190-200a, 209-10, 217-20a, 224-5						205-12, 281-6
T1b		361-8	200b-23						226-34
T1c	257b-60		207-10						289-96
T2				193-4				85b-7, 107b-16	235-41
T3		476-90		195-8				174-81a	242-314
T4		492-502		200-4				181b-204	315-17
D1									235-41
D2									303-6a
D3	287-93								306b-8
D4	271-99								265-79, 309-13a
F1	268-70, 300-2a, 305-7		232-4						
F2	312-13								
F3	309-11		236-9						
F4	314-15								
F5	302b-4		227-31						
F6	316								
R1		386-8a					153-63		(365-82)
R2		388b-94, 473-5		205-16	5-9	40-57	96-103, 166-72	205-8	320-6
R3					11-24	58-67			
R4						60-1			
R5						67-8			
R6						78-9			
R7							105-10, 174-81a		328-9
R8		395-466		217-21	26-31	70-9	113-16, 181b-204	209-30	331-44
R9		467-72		222-5	32-8		205-40	231-40	345-8
III	Change of topic 317	Bridge-scene, 503-7	Change of focus, 240	Formulaic change of topic, 226-9		Bridge-speech, 80-4	Formulaic, 241-6	Formulaic, 241-6	Bridge-, speeches, 349-60

Table 1. continued

To say that scene patterns are linked and agglomerate is to say that they are connotative; there are strong semantic links, as well as formal links, between them. DECEPTION connotes TESTING – why does Odysseus deceive Eumaios, Penelope, Laertes? There are particular reasons in each particular case, but none applies universally; whereas his reason for *testing* them is always the same, to test their loyalty –, and so where there is a DECEPTION there will tend to be a TESTING as well. The link works simultaneously at the semantic level (deception is an effective way of testing someone) and at the formal level (both events will tend to be framed together in a single scene, thus agglomerating as a single type-scene).

Conversely, it is because of the tendency of moves to agglomerate that they connote each other.[19] This agglomerative tendency seems also to have brought about the strong link between the recognition scene and the hospitality scene, though this link appears to be primarily semantic rather than formal.

(e) Formal slippage due to semantic connotations

This tendency for moves to connote one another creates slippages between them: a certain muddling of motifs. A motif can appear even when its usual significance is inappropriate; or a motif can be omitted even when it is needed for the scene to make sense fully.

An extreme is reached in scene 7, where hospitality scene motifs take the place of recognition motif T1a but do not actually demonstrate Penelope's fidelity or her adherence to norms of hospitality. She provides the Stranger (i.e. Odysseus disguised) with a seat; the incident is elaborated (19.96-102, hospitality motif VIII); and then she questions him about his identity (19.104-5, hospitality motif XIa) using typical formulae that provide a strong formulaic link with formal hospitality scenes.[20]

Odysseus later gives a (false) identity and origins (XIb, 19.165-84 = recognition motifs D2-4), and other hospitality motifs follow later (bath, offer of a bed, etc.). The above sequence does not in any obvious sense *exemplify* any moral rectitude through hospitality or fidelity to the *oikos*; rather it implies, or *signifies* continued membership of the *oikos* (motif T1a).[21] Laertes' questioning of the Stranger (24.297-301),[22] to which Odysseus again gives a lying answer (again motifs D2-4), serves the same function in the same way. Good performance as a host in a hospitality scene is a formalized sign of moral rectitude, just as bad performance as a host also has wider ramifications (Polyphemos is the prime example); elements of the hospitality type-scene disseminate into the recognition scene, and *vice versa*.

In a case such as the recognition scene with Laertes (scene 15), the cruelty of the TESTING of Laertes makes it seem that evidence of the addressee's loyalty is being presented not for the sake of Odysseus but for the sake of the audience of the epic; or, perhaps one might say, for the sake of the formalized significative effect of the recognition scene.[23] The addressee never fails the

---

[19] Lord (1991) 54, similarly discusses deception and recognition as conjoint events. From comparative evidence he makes the further observation that deception is atypically, athematically absent from the Nausikaa episode in *Odyssey* 6; and so, we should conclude, its absence is significant. Where deception is absent, so too are acknowledgement and reintegration: Odysseus will never set up *oikos* with Nausikaa. However, Homeric narrative differs from the Slavic variants that Lord cites: there the Stranger typically reports the hero's death and burial, while in the *Odyssey* the hero's imminent return is consistently foretold.

[20] 19.105 = 1.170, 10.325, 14.187, 24.298, *h. Cer.* 113; and 19.105a = 7.238a. 19.105 also = 15.264, not in a formal hospitality scene, but even that passage displays other hospitality motifs.

[21] The construction of this scene is discussed in detail in Gainsford (2001).

[22] Note again the formula, 24.298 = 19.105.

[23] Book 24 is included in this analysis in spite of reservations among Homeric scholars concerning the 'authenticity' of that book. This is because the recognition scene with Laertes is, formally speaking, flawless. It therefore reflects a far better acquaintance with the forms of Homeric narrative style than that displayed by any poet or scholar since the beginnings of Homeric scholarship. By formal standards, then, it is as 'authentic', in the sense of 'traditional', as any piece of Homeric narrative can ever be.

TESTING within a formal recognition scene; therefore, in cases where there is no 'genuine' doubt of the addressee's loyalty, such as that of Laertes or when an addressee undergoes multiple testings, the importance of the TESTING is more symbolic than anything else: it acts as a confirmation of familial integrity, rather than a rebuilding of that integrity. This point is particularly important when the TESTING move is overlaid by a formal hospitality scene, which may potentially even take the place of the move altogether, as in the case of 19.96-105 discussed above.

A similar muddling might be expected to arise between two motifs within the recognition scene, T1c and F4/R5, since both have the same semantic content: each represents the addressee's expression of a belief that Odysseus is dead. But as it turns out, in all exemplars of these motifs (scenes 2, 8 and 10 for T1c, and 3, 8 and 13 for F4/R5), it is trivial to determine from the context whether an expression of disbelief fits into the TESTING sequence or to the FORETELLING/RECOGNITION sequence. It would appear that the force of sequence – or, from the perspective of a performing poet, 'cueing' might be a better word – in the thematic structure of the narrative is, in this instance, enough to pin an expression of disbelief *either* to the one move *or* to the other, without ambiguity.

(f) Isolated motifs appearing outside recognition scenes

I have omitted from the analysis the motif of a portent which is correctly interpreted as an omen of Odysseus' imminent return or of the Suitors' deaths. This could be argued to belong to the foretelling pattern on the grounds that it often appears in conjunction with motifs F2 and F4. However, it always appears in isolation from the other moves of TESTING and DECEPTION. More importantly, portents appear here and there throughout the whole *Odyssey* and only occasionally involve Odysseus himself, whereas the scenes that I have identified as examples of a formal 'recognition scene' occur only in the second half of the epic. I do not present a separate analysis of scenes featuring this motif, as it has no obvious connection with the action of reintegration of the family.[24]

(g) Two-way recognition scenes

The recognition scene is bilateral. Each character needs to recognize, or rather acknowledge, the other; and this acknowledgement must be both a semantic or ideological statement and also a formal sign within the narrative language of Homeric epic. This bilaterality is especially betrayed by the existence of *two-way* recognition scenes: scenes 1, 7 and 14 below. In these scenes each character is testing, deceiving and revealing him/herself to the other, acting simultaneously as protagonist and addressee, in two recognition scenes superimposed on top of one another. The effect is reminiscent of a *stretto* in a fugue, where a theme overlaps with itself.

In such a situation it is not simply a case of motifs from the two simultaneous scenes interlocking with each other, alternating from one scene to the other; rather, passages serve as nucleic motifs in both scenes at once. A single event (e.g. the lying story of Odysseus in scene 1, 13.256-86) may serve two functions: as a deception motif in one sequence (D1, D2, D3: Odysseus deceiving Athene) and as a testing motif in the other (T3: Athene makes sure of Odysseus' continuing *mētis* by his attempt to deceive her).

---

[24] Examples are 2.146-208, 15.160-83, 15.525-38 and 17.150-65. Odysseus is involved with examples at 19.535-69 and 20.102-21. A slim connection with recognition scenes proper could be argued in the former of these as the passage is juxtaposed with scene 9 (Eurykleia, 19.343-507). Other examples of FORETELLING motifs occurring in isolation include 1.415-16 (F4, F2), where Telemachos expresses a lack of faith in divination; 2.281-4 (F1), where Athene mentions the impending death of the Suitors to Telemachos in passing; 2.361-6 (F4), where Eurykleia expresses a belief that Odysseus is dead.

The 'other' character in these two-way scenes is female in the examples we have: Athene once, Penelope twice. Three exemplars are insufficient to tell whether or not this is coincidence. In both cases the bilateral character of the scene imparts a kind of ambiguity to the narrative: in Penelope's case this is certainly related to the ambiguity of gender roles and the indeterminacies surrounding her narrative generally.[25] In Athene's relationship to Odysseus there is a different kind of ambiguity: whereas Odysseus is the keystone to his family's reintegration, Athene, as divine patron, is part of the key to his own recovery of his heroic identity.

3. ANALYSIS

(a) Scene length

Scenes range in length from 34 lines (scene 1a, Athene) to 224 lines (scene 3, Eumaios #2). The shortest scenes with full framing at the beginning and end (i.e. motifs I and III) are the 39-line scenes 5 (Eumaios #4) and 7b (Penelope #1 inv.); the shortest scene to feature multiple moves is the 42-line scene 11 (Philoitios and Eumaios), which is exceptionally tightly constructed and framed.

The mean length of recognition scenes using the line-numbers in the tables above is 112.4 lines, with a standard deviation of 69.1. These figures will vary depending on whether interludes (e.g. the preparations for the fake party and Odysseus' bath in scenes 14a/b; the scar-narrative in scene 9) and framing devices (motifs I and III) are included.

This is much shorter than the length of hospitality scenes as analysed by Reece, where a scene may occupy a whole book or even multiple books;[26] but longer than, say, the typical arming scene analysed by Arendt, which varies between six and 35 lines.[27] On the other hand, the arming scene is generally built into the structure of an extended *aristeia*, which is far longer.[28] These variations, and the large standard deviation even just in the case of recognition scenes, do not suggest that there is any particular 'standard' length for a type-scene; rather the reverse. However, it may be noted that the longest exemplar of a given type-scene never seems to exceed the shortest in length by a factor of more than ten.

(b) The framing of recognition scenes

Certain characteristic ways of framing a scene exist. The most characteristic way of framing the beginning of a recognition scene (motif I) is a change of setting (scenes 1b, 2, 11, 12, 14a/b, 15). The appearance or introduction of a new character is also a typical occasion to begin a recognition scene (scenes 2, 6, 10, 15). Twice with Eumaios a recognition scene begins with a new conversation after a meal, with the formula αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πόσιος καὶ ἐδητύος ἐξ ἔρον ἔντο (14.454 = 15.303, scenes 4 and 5);[29] twice scenes with Penelope also begin with a formula, ἡ δ' ἐπεὶ οὖν τάρφθη πολυδακρύτοιο γόοιο (19.213 = 19.251, scenes 7b and 8).[30] On one occasion it is simply a change of topic in conversation (scene 3); on another, the very powerful conceptual break of a night provides the narrative break (scene 6).

[25] See, for example, Foley (1978), Katz (1991), Felson-Rubin (1994).

[26] The hospitality scene where Eumaios welcomes Odysseus occupies most of *Od.* 14; the hospitality scene where Alkinoos and the Phaiakians welcome him has its motifs spread out over Books 6, 7, 8, 11 and 13.

[27] In the *Iliad* Idomeneus' and Teukros' arming scenes are six lines each (13.240-5 and 15.478-83 respectively); Achilles' is 35 lines (19.364-98). The shortest fully developed arming scene is Paris' (11 lines, *Il.* 3.328-38). In the *Odyssey* there are brief quasi-arming scenes at 23.366-70 and 24.496-501, both involving several

characters arming themselves rather than a single individual.

[28] Agamemnon's, Idomeneus', Patroklos' and Achilles' arming scenes all act as preludes to their respective *aristeiai* (*Il.* 11.15-46, 13.240-5, 16.130-54, 19.364-98); Teukros' appears at the end of his *aristeia*. The arming scene in *Od.* 24 also has strong semantic links with the idea of *aristeia*.

[29] 'When they had put aside their desire for drinking and food ....'

[30] 'And when she had taken her fill of much-tearful lamenting ....'

Scene-endings also follow typical patterns. The end of a conversation ends a scene six times (scenes 1b, 3, 4, 9, 10, 13); six times emotional weeping ensuing from the conversation produces the break (scenes 6, 7a/7b, 11, 14a/14b), with associated formulae: scenes 6 and 11 close with καί νύ κ' ὀδυρομένοισιν ἔδυ φάος ἠελίοιο, | εἰ μή (16.220-1 = 21.226-7);[31] *cf.* scenes 14a/b καί νύ κ' ὀδυρομένοισι φάνη ῥοδοδάκτυλος Ἠώς, | εἰ μή (23.241-2)[32] and scenes 7a/b, ἡ δ' ἐπεὶ οὖν τάρφθη πολυδακρύτοιο γόοιο (19.251 = motif I in scenes 7a and 8, above).[33] On other occasions it is a change of topic, usually with a change of speaker as well (scenes 2, 5, 15; the formula θάρσει, μή τοι ταῦτα μετὰ φρεσὶ σῇσι μελόντων[34] concludes scenes 1b and 15, 13.362 = 24.357); and once it is the powerful break of nightfall (scene 4; notice also the parallels in the formula 16.220-1 = 21.226-7 ≈ 23.241-2, noted above).

(c) Reduplication: 'couplets' of scenes and multiple cycles of a move
Scenes may appear in 'couplets',[35] where two scenes appear paired together with the same characters as protagonist and addressee. Examples of this are scenes 2-3 (Eumaios #2 – Eumaios #3), 7-8 (Penelope #1 – Penelope #2, including both 7a and 7b) and 12-13 (Penelope #3 – Penelope #4, with Eurykleia as protagonist). 'Couplets' of a scene have a kind of antistrophic effect, where one scene reinforces the other. The more idiosyncratic, even atypical, aspects of one will tend to be repeated in the second, as in scenes 2-3, where Eumaios repeats the same striking claim that beggars are liars in the context of the FORETELLING move.

Note especially in the third couplet, scenes 12-13, that the couplet as a whole is framed at the start (motif I, 23.1-4) and at the end (motif III, 23.80-4), but that there is no distinct framing between the two scenes. Conversely, in the couplet of scenes 2-3, both scenes are framed individually, both at the beginning and end, and in between as well (14.1-4, 14.185, 14.407-8). The couplet of scenes 7-8 is not framed at the start, but is framed in the middle (19.251 doubles up as motif III in scenes 7a/b and as motif I in scene 8) and at the end of scene 8 (19.317), which incidentally leads directly into the recognition scene with Eurykleia, scene 9.

There are reduplications not only of scenes but also of moves within a single scene. To avoid confusion, I refer to such repetitions of a move as *multiple cycles* of that move: it would be wrong to assume *a priori* that the tendency to have pairs of moves is the same tendency as the reduplication of whole recognition scenes, though that idea is obviously very attractive.

Examples of this are: two cycles of the TESTING move in scene 6; two cycles of RECOGNITION in scene 14a; and two cycles of both TESTING and DECEPTION in scene 15. I tabulate these in Table 2, below.

The double cycle in scene 14a is explained by the interlude in the middle of the scene, where preparations are made for the fake wedding which deceives the Suitors' families: there the first cycle of the RECOGNITION move is more properly a foreshadowing of the actual RECOGNITION.

Note also that in view of the existence of these cycles, it is unclear whether scenes 12 and 13 should properly be regarded as a couplet, or instead as two cycles of the RECOGNITION move within one framed scene. I have tabulated them as a couplet of two scenes, but the alternative is perfectly viable. The unclarity tends to validate the idea that the tendencies to have *couplets of scenes*, and *repeated cycles of moves* within scenes, are in fact the same tendency.

---

[31] 'And now the light of the sun would have set on them as they wept, but ....'

[32] 'And now the rosy-fingered Dawn would have appeared on them as they wept, but ....'

[33] See n.30 above.

[34] 'Take heart; let these things not cause trouble to your thoughts.'

[35] This term is to be distinguished from 'doublets' or 'doubling', words which in Fenik's usage refer to all multiple occurrences of a motif, and not solely to *pairs*. Fenik uses the terms to refer to reduplication of characters, names, locations, etc. Examples in the *Odyssey* are the doublets of the maidservants, Eurykleia and Eurynome; or of the two farmsteads of Eumaios and Laertes; or of the two herdsmen, Eumaios and Philoitios.

6. Telemachos		
Motif	1st cycle	2nd cycle
T1	16.41-89	[126-7], [137-53]
T3	91-8	—
T4	112-17	147-9

14a. Penelope #5		
Motif	1st cycle	2nd cycle
R1	—	153-63
R2	23.96-103	166-72
R7	105-10	174-81a
R8	113-16	181b-204
R9	—	205-40

15. Laertes		
Motif	1st cycle	2nd cycle
T1a	24.205-12	281-6
T1b	226-34	—
T1c	—	289-96

15. Laertes		
Motif	1st cycle	2nd cycle
D1	24.235-41	—
D2	—	303-6a
D3	—	306b-8
D4	265-79	309-13a

Table 2.

Trying to pinpoint these cycles also raises issues over how to interpret the very protracted example of motif T1 in scene 2 (Eumaios #1). The sequence of the TESTING and DECEPTION moves appears as in Table 3:

Table 3.

T1a: 3-14, 20-5, 33-58a, 96-104 T1b: 16b-19, 26-8, 40-3, 58b-7, 81-108 T1c: 44, 68-71, 89-90	T3: 115-17	D4-D3: 118-20	T1b: 137b-8a T1c: 133-7a	T4: 138b-47

Unlike the situation in scenes 6 and 15, no definite cycles may be observed here. Even in scenes 6, 7a and 10 there are multiple appearances of the sub-motifs T1a, b and c in no particular order. It therefore appears that these sub-motifs can be repeated almost without limit. The reason that motif T1 is so protracted here is surely the extraordinary need to validate the character of Eumaios, so as to give him a place in the narrative. He is being observed not only by Odysseus but by the audience too, who, being unfamiliar with a figure so far removed from heroic myth, need an especially elaborate introduction to him. Philoitios is similarly subjected to a fairly protracted observation: motif T1 occupies two thirds of his recognition scene (scene 10).[36]

(d) Overlapping and embedding of motifs and moves
Motifs can be co-extensive. In scene 1a, motifs D2 and D3 are co-extensive; in scenes 1b, 4 and 15, motifs T2 and D1 coincide. Motif II, representing the appearance of hospitality scene motifs in the recognition scene, is particularly prone to this: in scene 5 it coincides with motif I, in scene 10 with part of motif T1, and in scene 15 with part of motif T3. Hospitality scenes also fill large proportions of Books 14, 16 and 19 of the *Odyssey*, thus overlapping with scenes 2, 3, 4, 6, 7a and 9 as well: the overlap is usually with motif I, the opening frame of the scene (scenes 2, 3 and 4), or T1, in which the addressee demonstrates continued loyalty to Odysseus' household by showing good hospitality to the protagonist (scenes 2, 6 and 9).

There is a tendency for motifs to be *embedded* in other motifs within the DECEPTION move. In scene 3, motif D4 is embedded in D3; and in scenes 4 and 8, motif D3 is embedded in D4. This can occur in other moves as well: in scene 6, in the second cycle of the TESTING move (tabulated above), the motif T4 is embedded in T1; and in scene 15 the whole second cycle of the T1 motif is embedded within motif T3.

---

[36] Compare also the extraordinary introduction given to another marginal figure, Theoklymenos, in 15.222-58.

Moves can also be embedded in other moves or overlap with them, but this is perhaps to be expected. It is notable that the containing move is normally the TESTING move (the exception is scene 8, where it is the FORETELLING that is doing the containing). In scenes 1b, 2, 4 and 7a, the DECEPTION move is embedded in the TESTING move; in scene 6, a brief DECEPTION move is embedded within motif T1; in scene 9 a substantial RECOGNITION move is embedded in the TESTING; and in scene 15, both cycles of the DECEPTION move are embedded in the TESTING. In scene 8, motif F1 is used to frame the DECEPTION move, which is followed by a full FORETELLING move (including a reiteration of F1). Similarly in scene 7a, motif T2/D1 is followed after a break by a full exposition of T1, then the rest of the DECEPTION move (D2-D3-D4), and finally the close of the TESTING move (T4).

More striking is when two moves are embedded or co-extensive, but there is a sharp conceptual break between them and the third move. This occurs in scenes 1b, 2 and 7a, where a case of the DECEPTION move embedded in the TESTING move is followed by a clean break before the FORETELLING/RECOGNITION move, in scene 1b (13.299, a change of topic in mid-speech), scene 7 (14.148, a change of speaker), and scene 7a (19.212-15, a new conversation beginning with the formula ἡ δ' ἐπεὶ οὖν τάρφθη ... = motif I in scenes 7b and 8, motif III in scenes 7a/b).

The FORETELLING/RECOGNITION is normally marked off by a break of some kind from what has gone before. The only case of a FORETELLING/RECOGNITION that is *not* separated from the previous moves is in scene 9, where, as noted above, the RECOGNITION is embedded in the TESTING. This is the scene with Eurykleia, and this is not the only respect in which it is unusual.[37]

(e) Motifs out of sequence
The tabulation of motifs shows that there are occasions where the sequence of motifs within a move is broken. This happens with greater frequency than one might predict on the basis of an analogy with Propp's model of 'wondertale functions': Propp insists that the sequence of functions within a move, in his model, is virtually unbreakable except by reduplication of a move. In recognition scenes there is rather more variation, especially in the DECEPTION and FORETELLING moves. Note that the variation of sequence in the RECOGNITION move is much smaller, which is surprising, given that the FORETELLING and RECOGNITION moves are multiforms of one another.

In the TESTING move there are no anomalies that cannot be accounted for by either the embedding of motifs within others or the presence of two cycles of the TESTING move. Unusual sequences in the order of T1a, b and c within motif T1 are not actually anomalous, as pointed out earlier. These sub-motifs are denoted as sub-motifs precisely because there seems to be no fixed sequence to them, and because it appears they can be replicated almost indefinitely: scene 2 is the main example of this seemingly limitless replication (tabulated above, separately).

There is variation in the sequence of DECEPTION motifs in scenes 2 and 7a: in scene 2 the sequence is D4-D3, and in scene 7a the sequence is D1-D3-D2-D4. This variability seems to correspond to the relatively frequent occurrence of embedding of motifs within the DECEPTION move (see above on scenes 3, 4 and 8) and one case of a double cycle of the DECEPTION move (scene 15).

In FORETELLING moves the sequence is less regular, following the sequence as tabulated only in scene 3, but not in scenes 2, 8 and 10. Motif F5 moves around within the sequence flexibly: in scene 2 it is embedded within F1; in scene 8 it is preceded and followed by multiple occurrences of F1; and in scene 10 it appears before F1. It appears that F5 tends naturally to appear either before or after the cluster of F2-F3-F4, as these motifs are spoken by the addressee, whereas F1 and F5 are spoken by the protagonist.[38] (In my tabulation, F5 is given its late placing because of the case of scene 3, and the parallel placing of R6 in scene 13.)

---

[37] E.g. the 71-line scar-narrative, which acts as an extraordinarily lengthy motif R8, Odysseus' evidence of his identity. The same story comes to only five lines in scene 11.

[38] I am indebted to an anonymous reader at *JHS* for pointing this out.

Within RECOGNITION moves it is difficult to tell if there is a similar tendency with the same motif (motif R6 = F5), as the motif appears only once, in scene 13; there the motif is embedded within motif R8. The sequence of motifs is anomalous elsewhere only in scene 9, where the order is R1-R2-R8-R9-R2; that is, the only anomaly is the reduplication of motif R2 at the end, before the resumption of the TESTING move.

4. RECOGNITION SCENES IN THE PLAN OF *ODYSSEY* 13-24

(a) Odysseus' reunion with his family

The recognition scene is all about reunion and is an integral part of the *nostos*-narrative of the epic. Odysseus' *nostos* takes place at multiple levels: it is not just about a geographical return, first to Ithaca, then to his house, then to his bedroom; nor is it confined to the political restoration that is enacted by the slaughter of the Suitors and by Odysseus' resumption of his status as 'king' of Ithaca. Even the final appeasement of Poseidon, of which Odysseus reminds us in 23.264-84, is not the central objective of the *nostos*-narrative.

Recognition represents a further aspect of *nostos*, what we might call a 'familial' restoration: that is, a restoration of Odysseus to his appropriate function or role in the system of relationships that make up his family. Not only does he have to be restored as head of his *oikos*: an individual relationship with each member of his household must be restored, one by one, recognition scene by recognition scene. The importance of this 'functional' aspect of *nostos* is kept in view even in the first half of the epic. It is Kalypso's desire to usurp the position of wife to Odysseus that keeps him from his *nostos* (1.15, 5.209-18). Nausikaa wants to assimilate Odysseus into a newly constituted *oikos* of their own, with its own succession and genealogy, and with guest-gifts from the Phaiakians coming dangerously close to doubling up as a dowry. While Odysseus is absent from home he is nameless not only to the Phaiakians, but to his family too, as is suggested when he introduces himself to the Cyclops: 'My mother and father and all my friends name me Nobody' (9.366-7). The consequence of listening to the Sirens, we are told, is to be deprived of one's *nostos* and one's family (12.41-5). In these situations the loss of family stands for the loss of *nostos*. And for Odysseus the regaining of family, and consequent achievement of *nostos*, is represented through a sequence of formal recognition scenes.

All the various kinds of restoration combined – geographical, political and familial – together constitute the *nostos*-narrative and, to stretch a point, the *Odyssey* itself. The reintegration that Odysseus seeks is reintegration with the household *as a whole*; he acts as a keystone to the integrity and continuity of the *oikos*. We therefore have a bipolar relationship: on one side, Odysseus, and on the other, the *entire* family, as a corporate entity which depends on him as a source of safety, as a patriarchal source of genealogy, and as a symbol that gives it its identity (it is not just any family, it is the family *of Odysseus*).

Just as Odysseus' presence equates to a state of reintegration (for the *oikos*, for Odysseus' own heroic identity, and for the status of Telemachos, Penelope and others – that is to say, both for the family as a corporate entity and for individual family-members too), so also his absence equates to disintegration, disjunction and disorder, again for all alike, and with all the concomitant risks of invasion by outsiders, Suitors, the threat of the discontinuation of genealogy, and so on. While Odysseus is absent, the family might as well be any family: it is without a name, just as Odysseus is a hero without a name. In this bipolar relationship of hero and family, Odysseus' absence contains within it the disjunction of the family as a whole. Not just their disjunction from him, but their disjunction *per se*: from each other and from their normative roles. As long as Odysseus is absent, or not fully reunited with the *oikos*, Penelope will always be *on the verge of* infidelity; Telemachos' intermediate status between youth and adult hero will never be fully resolved; Eumaios, more pragmatically, will not receive from his master a home, a plot of land,

or a wife (14.62-7, 21.213-15); and Laertes' grief and separation from the *oikos* (both geographical and political) will forever keep him marginalized and liminal, 'on the threshold of old age' (ἐπὶ γήραος οὐδῶι, 15.348). '[F]or each of these figures the process of (mis)recognition of Odysseus is different; and for each something different depends on Odysseus' return' (Goldhill (1991) 7).

So as well as the one-to-many reintegration (Odysseus and family) there is a cluster of one-to-one idiosyncratic, particularized relationships (Odysseus and Penelope, Odysseus and Telemachos, etc.). It is from the clustering that the larger narrative emerges. Each of these one-to-one relationships is expressed in recognition. Household-members cannot make just any acknowledgement of the semantic, symbolic and ideological fact of Odysseus' return: it is encoded in recognition type-scenes, a formalized system, expressed through the medium of repeated sequences of motifs. In this respect it is the *same* process in each figure. Everyone has something different at stake, yes, but simultaneously everyone has something *the same* at stake. It is within the formal system that the differences appear; and it is in the very *type*-ness of type-scenes that the meaningful dimension of reintegration lies.

So the formal system, the sameness of the type-scenes, exists alongside the individual characters, the particularities of each individual's situation; it is not a case of individual characters being fitted into a niche that stood vacant during Odysseus' absence, re-inserted into an autonomous, abstract system of relationships. The existence of two-way recognition scenes, in particular, tells us that it is a two-way, personal, *relationship* that is being restored.

Although the problems faced by each individual household-member, noted above (Telemachos' liminality and lack of assurance of succession; Penelope's ambiguity; and so on), vary, the solutions to these problems are strikingly similar. Perhaps surprisingly, the solution implicates the status of being a hero in one way or another. This is most explicit for Telemachos and Laertes, who stand by Odysseus at the end of the epic, where Laertes rejoices to see his son and grandson competing in *aretē* (24.514-15); and it is Laertes who makes the only kill in the battle of Book 24 and, uniquely in the *Odyssey*, his victory is honoured with the formula δούπησεν δὲ πεσών, ἀράβησε δὲ τεύχε' ἐπ' αὐτῶι (24.525 'he fell with a crash, and his arms clattered upon him'). For these two characters, reintegration takes the form of coming as near as possible to, or in Laertes' case returning to, a state of full hero-hood. It is a demarginalization: reintegration means coming away from the margins towards to the centre of things, towards the normative position of being a hero. They have been marginalized in a global sense by Odysseus' absence, and in a particular, individualized sense by, in Telemachos' case, this liminal state between youth and adulthood, and in Laertes' case by his age and his physical separation from the *oikos*. These two have something the same at stake: one is a not-yet-hero, the other one is a once-was-hero, so the process is particularly vivid for them. Telemachos constantly needs to fill his father's shoes, while Laertes is (cruelly?) provoked out of his retirement.

For other figures the same holds true; if less graphically, it is because they do not need quite so much provocation, because there is less of a contest between them and Odysseus, or because they do not have the marginalizing grief of old age. Eumaios and Philoitios are also in on the *mnēstērophonia*, and have a place in one of the (heroic) arming scenes that lead to the battle of Book 24 (23.366-70). Penelope cannot fight in battles; but she, like Helen alone, has *kleos* and *aretē* as a woman, and an army of Suitors. She is Odysseus' counterpart in every way, a paradigm for a non-masculine heroic ethos. She is the περίφρων ('prudent') to Odysseus' πολύμητις ('cunning'), the member of his household who tricks *him* in the recognition scene of Book 23.[39]

---

[39] *Cf.* also the confusion of gender roles in similes: see Foley (1978). This is particularly applicable to the simile in 23.233-40 which compares Penelope, rather than Odysseus, to a sailor escaping the sea.

(b) Eligibility to take part in a recognition scene

Since the means of representing each individual reintegration is the recognition type-scene, eligibility to take part in a recognition scene is an important issue. Since the recognition scene has to do with reunion, there will be none between, say, Odysseus and any of the Suitors: when Odysseus reveals himself to them, a very different set of symbols is needed. Members of his own family are the prime candidates, and by extension, members of the *oikos* in a broader sense: the two herdsmen, Eurykleia, and even Athene. For this purpose Athene counts as a 'household-member' inasmuch as she acts thematically as patron to the *oikos*, as well as the heroic patron of Odysseus, in the sense that Apollo is a patron for Hektor: she plays the part of a domestic, rather than heroic, deity.[40] These four characters, along with others who have abbreviated recognitions (the faithful maidservants in 22.497-501; Dolios' family in 24.391-411), are not members of the family *per se* but are the tendrils of a socio-cultural *oikos* that extends beyond the sanguinary relationships of the family.

These characters are both inside and outside the *oikos*. On the one hand, they are beyond genealogical succession, and the problems posed for them by Odysseus' absence are not *oikos*-threatening ones, but threaten them alone. Preservation of these characters is incidental to Odysseus' *nostos*; they are expendable. (Notice how Melanthios and the unfaithful maidservants are killed with no hint that their continued existence is of any importance to the existence or stability of the *oikos*.)

On the other hand, they are assimilated into the sphere of family and succession, so that their own concerns are displaced by those of Odysseus' *oikos*. These thematic tendrils have a tendency to fill gaps in the staff of Odysseus' household as needed, drawing in material from outside and recontextualizing it; Eumaios and Eurykleia, former nobles themselves who have been removed from their original familial context, partake most strikingly in this characteristic of 'drawn-in-ness'. Eumaios, at 14.140-4, explicitly affirms that his membership in Odysseus' *oikos* takes precedence over any sense of belonging to the one he was born into. This drawing-in is something that needs justification and ratification: it provides the occasion for Eumaios' telling his story.

The dividing-line between the genealogical family and those beyond that *limen* is particularly emphasized when Odysseus makes the two herdsmen, in their conjunct recognition scene (scene 11), this promise (21.215-16):

> καί μοι ἔπειτα
> Τηλεμάχου <u>ἑτάρω τε κασιγνήτω τε</u> ἔσεσθον.

>   ... and then, as far as I am concerned,
> you will be the *companions and brothers* of Telemachos.

ἑτάρω τε κασιγνήτω τε are astonishingly strong words. With this promise Odysseus actually makes them candidates for succession: he assigns them a place *inside* the sanguinary system of relationships.

Aside from assigning them a place in succession, these lines are particularly to the point concerning the issue of eligibility for the recognition scene. Eumaios and Philoitios, placed in the

---

[40] Hoekstra (1989), commenting on *Od.* 13.221-5, argues, 'Athena's intervention ... is a reminiscence of Mycenaean times when ... she was the patron of the princes and their household goddess.' He draws the parallel of 7.80-1, where Athene comes to Athens and enters the house of Erechtheus. Hainsworth (1988) 325 observes that the vocabulary there ('Ερεχθῆος πυκινὸν δόμον) suggests an association with the royal household rather than with 'the apparatus of cult', though Athene's relationship with Erechtheus/Erichthonios is certainly paralleled in cult too.

same position relative to Odysseus as is Telemachos, are thereby assimilated to the actant role of 'addressee' in the recognition scene. These lines, in effect, are their authority for taking part in a recognition scene at all. Yet because their newly acquired status is specific to the formalized context of the recognition scene, room is left for any wider implications of the lines – such as any genuine heredity – to be ignored at the narrative's convenience; they can be 'companions and brothers' for the purpose of reintegration, but this can be conveniently forgotten later on.

(c) Recognition scenes and semiotics: type-scene as signifier

Odysseus' dog Argos (17.291-327) is a different matter. The scene with Argos involves recognition, but it is not a formal recognition type-scene; other considerations take priority. For example, this narrative of someone long-absent returning home to find his aged dog still waiting for him sounds suspiciously folkloric: if other narrative patterns already overdetermine this scene, then a formal recognition scene would be out of place.[41] But it is still recognition, of a sort, if not a formal sort; the absence of the type-scene itself tells us something about recognition scenes. Goldhill (1991) 12-13 examines this scene in particular depth, though he introduces it by emphasizing its functional *similarity* to other recognitions. He identifies four contexts in which the scene has significance: as 'another arrival ... at an animal-guarded threshold', as an unmediated recognition 'without the vagaries of speech', as a model of the 'faithful *philos*', and as a way of focusing on the moment of entrance into the house.[42] The second of these is most pertinent here. All the other relationships Odysseus has with his *oikos* are mediated by recognition scenes (and still more pervasively, by speech, according to Goldhill), but here no tokens are needed for there is no mediation; there is no disjunction to be repaired. There has never been anything coming between him and Odysseus, nothing mediating their relationship: not language, nor any obligations. There is no formal recognition scene for Argos because there is nothing needing to be acknowledged.

Tokens, signs for the benefit of the addressee that Odysseus has truly returned, are not the only signs that are important in recognition scenes: a recognition scene, as a type-scene, and as a formal, conventional structure, *is itself* a sign. The scene itself denotes reintegration, both to an audience of the epic and also as part of the system of signs that make up the narrative structure of the *Odyssey*. But conversely, if the question is asked, what is this thing 'reintegration' that the recognition scene signifies, the answer must be that reintegration looks like a series of recognition scenes. The type-scene is a sign representing something happening in the narrative, and simultaneously is one of the building-blocks of the narrative.

5. CLOSING REMARKS

In terms of the 'grammatical' properties of Homeric narrative, the details discussed in the *Analysis* above are the most important formal results of this analysis. The discussions there of (a) scene-length and (c) 'couplets' and their quasi-antistrophic effect are of general importance to understanding how an oral poet makes use of formal structures in organizing his narrative.

---

[41] Slavic parallels enrich still further the traditional overtones of this scene by suggesting the possibility that Eumaios, also present in this scene, might recognize Odysseus as a result of Argos' recognition. Lord's thematic outline of Slavic Return Songs ((1960) 252-5, Theme Six, 'Arrival Home and Recognitions') shows parallels for a hero being recognized by his horse, and in one case hounds, *and consequently* by a groom or trusted servant: see especially stories E and e. *Cf.* Lord (1991) 55: 'again an almost-recognition by Eumaeus is inter-rupted by the part of the story concerned with Odysseus's son [i.e. 17.328-9]'. As another overdetermining factor there is the fact that the 'dog at the door' is a typical motif in hospitality scenes, motif IV in Reece's analysis ((1993) 15, 169-70). One of the anonymous readers at *JHS* has suggested a further parallel in the Central Asian epic of Alpamysh, where Argos' role is given to an aged camel: a translation is now accessible in Reichl (2001).

[42] See also Goldhill (1988), Rose (1979).

Secondly, the consideration given to (b) framing of scenes and (e) sequence of motifs is well suited to present interest in frame theory, which Bakker recently has used for his linguistic analyses of framing techniques in Homeric narrative,[43] but also has much in common with the older style of reading that sees Homeric narrative as divided into discrete episodes (represented by, for example, van Groningen and Notopoulos[44]).

Finally, the notes on (d) overlapping and embedding of moves and motifs, taken in conjunction with the closing discussion of the function of recognition scenes in *Odyssey* 13-24, provide an avenue for approaching the problem of how formal structures can adopt a semantic function as *literary* themes in a literary-mythological work such as the *Odyssey*: when themes overlap, it is important to realize the layers of meaning that are being added. *Points of clarification* (e), above, shows that this can be important when there is an overlap between a recognition scene and a hospitality scene.

As well as throwing light on the mechanics of Homeric narrative, this approach can give due recognition to the performing poet for the quality and degree of skill involved in the manipulation of type-scene motifs. It is to be hoped, for example, that the narrative complexities and levels of meaning revealed by this analysis will suggest that some comparatively unpopular passages of the *Odyssey* – Book 14, in particular – deserve rehabilitation as complex pieces of literature that are worth looking at closely. *Odyssey* 14 receives a less favourable assessment from Kirk (1962) 360-8; but the analysis here shows that, in terms of formal structure alone, the book is composed of three recognition scenes and a hospitality scene. Much thought and care have gone into *Odyssey* 14. If no attention is paid to the literary values represented by and contained in a formal structure of this kind, then the analysis of type-scenes is little more than an esoteric hobby; but with that recognition, type-scene analysis can be a powerful interpretive tool.

PETER GAINSFORD
Victoria University of Wellington

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arendt, W. (1933) *Die typischen Scenen bei Homer* (Berlin)

Bakker, E. (1997) *Poetry in Speech: Orality and Homeric Discourse* (Ithaca, NY)

Black, J.B. and Wilensky, R. (1984) 'An evaluation of story grammars', *Cognitive Science* 3, 213-29

Edwards, M.W. (1980) 'Convention and individuality in *Iliad* 1', *HSCPh* 84, 1-28

— (1992) 'Homer and oral tradition: the type-scene', *Oral Tradition* 7.2, 284-330

Emlyn-Jones, C. (1998a) 'The reunion of Penelope and Odysseus', in McAuslan and Walcot (1998) 126-43 (originally in *G&R* 31 (1984) 1-18)

— (1998b) 'Addendum', in McAuslan and Walcot (1998) 153-4

Felson-Rubin, N. (1994) *Regarding Penelope: From Character to Poetics* (Princeton)

Fenik, B. (1968) *Typical Battle-Scenes in the Iliad* (*Hermes* Einzelschrift 21, Wiesbaden)

— (1974) *Studies in the Odyssey* (*Hermes* Einzelschrift 30, Wiesbaden)

Foley, H. (1978) '"Reverse similes" and sex roles in the *Odyssey*', *Arethusa* 11, 7-26

---

[43] See especially Bakker (1997).

[44] See, e.g., van Groningen (1935), (1937); Notopoulos (1949) (esp. 7-9), (1951) (esp. 83-7), (1964) 58-60.

Gainsford, P. (2001) 'Cognition and type-scenes: the *aoidos* at work', in F. Budelmann and P. Michelakis (eds), *Homer, Tragedy, and Beyond: Essays in Honour of P.E. Easterling* (London) 3-21

Garnham, A. (1983) 'What's wrong with story grammars', *Cognition* 15, 145-54

Goldhill, S. (1988) 'Reading differences: juxtaposition and the *Odyssey*', *Ramus* 17.1, 1-31

— (1991) *The Poet's Voice: Essays on Poetics and Greek Literature* (Cambridge)

Hainsworth, J.B. (1988) in A. Heubeck, S. West and J.B. Hainsworth (eds), *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey* 1 (Oxford)

Henderson, J. (1997) 'The name of the tree: recounting *Odyssey* XXIV 340-2', *JHS* 117, 87-116

Hoekstra, A. (1989) in A. Heubeck and A. Hoekstra (eds), *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey* 2 (Oxford)

Kakridis, J. (1971) 'The recognition of Odysseus', in J. Kakridis, *Homer Revisited* (*Publications of the New Society of Letters at Lund* 64, Lund) 151-63

Katz, M.A. (1991) *Penelope's Renown: Meaning and Indeterminacy in the Odyssey* (Princeton)

Kirk, G.S. (1962) *The Songs of Homer* (Cambridge)

Krischer, T. (1971) *Formale Konventionen der homerischen Epik* (Munich)

Lord, A.B. (1960) *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge, Mass.)

— (1991) 'Homeric echoes in Bihać', in A.B. Lord, *Epic Singers and Oral Tradition* (Ithaca, NY) 49-56 (originally in *Zbornik za narodni život i običaje* 40 (1962) 313-20)

McAuslan, I. and Walcot, P. (eds) (1998) *Homer* (Oxford)

Minchin, E. (2001) *Homer and the Resources of Memory. Some Applications of Cognitive Theory to the* Iliad *and the* Odyssey (Oxford)

Most, G. (1989) 'The stranger's stratagem: self-disclosure and self-sufficiency in Greek culture', *JHS* 109, 114-33

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

Notopoulos, J.A. (1949) 'Parataxis in Homer: a new approach to Homeric literary criticism', *TAPhA* 80, 1-23

— (1951) 'Continuity and interconnexion in Homeric oral composition', *TAPhA* 82, 81-101

— (1964) 'Studies in early Greek poetry', *HSCPh* 68, 1-77

Propp, V.I. (1968) *Morphology of the Folktale*, tr. L. Scott and L.A. Wagner (2nd edn, Austin) (originally *Morfológija skázki* (Leningrad 1928))

Reece, S. (1993) *The Stranger's Welcome: Oral Theory and the Aesthetics of the Homeric Hospitality Scene* (Ann Arbor)

Reichl, K. (2001) *Das usbekische Heldenepos Alpomish: Einführung, Text, Übersetzung* (*Turcologica* 48, Wiesbaden)

Richardson, N.J. (1983) 'Recognition scenes in the *Odyssey*', *Papers of the Liverpool Latin Seminar* 4, 223-5

Rose, G. (1979) 'Odysseus' barking heart', *TAPhA* 109, 216-20

Rosenberg, B.A. (1991) *Folklore and Literature: Rival Siblings* (Knoxville)

Smith, B.H. (1978) *On the Margins of Discourse* (Chicago)

Stewart, D.J. (1976) *The Disguised Guest: Rank, Role and Identity in the* Odyssey (Lewisburg)

van Groningen, B.A. (1935) 'Éléments inorganiques dans la composition de l'Iliade et de l'Odyssée', *Revue des Études Homériques* 5, 3-24

— (1937) *Paratactische Compositie in de Oudste Griekche Literatuur* (Amsterdam)

Walter, H. (1992) 'Die Wiedererkennungsszenen in Homers Odyssee. Überlegungen zur Wirkungsweise des Anagnorismos', *RPL* 15, 61-9

Zumthor, P. (1983) *Introduction à la poésie orale* (Paris) (also published in English as *Oral Poetry: An Introduction*, tr. K. Murphy-Jody (Minneapolis 1990))